

This 33km trail will take you on a journey to an ancient mountain, now a world famous rock climbing venue

Cycle along pathways the Aboriginal people walked before Europeans and discover grasslands that host up to 500 plant species. Climb sand dunes and see magnificent canola fields stretching to the horizon. You may spot a goanna or kangaroo or catch a glimpse of one of our fastest birds of prey. You may also hear trees singing in the wind.

Look for

Grey kangaroos and swamp wallabies which live near the top of the mountain and ground dwelling short-beaked echidnas, shingleback lizards, tree and sand goannas and the eastern brown snake. At night you may see ringtail and brush tail possums foraging for food.

Listen to

Birdsong. Over 100 species of birds have been recorded at Mt Arapiles including weebills, thornbills, honeyeaters, lorikeets, parrots, kookaburras, galahs, magpies, rosellas, robins, blue wrens and wedge tail eagles.

Scan the skies for

The Peregrine Falcon, one of the fastest birds on earth.

About the bike trail

The Arapiles Bike Trail starts near Natimuk's central parking area opposite the National Hotel near the skate park. Toilets and electric BBQ's are located beside the car park. An Orientation Sign about the trail is located here.

What sort of bike?

The trail is a 33km off road recreational trail looping through the natural landscape of Natimuk, Natimuk Lake, Mitre Lake, Mitre Rock and Mt Arapiles. Mountain bikes are the most suitable for this trail.

You'll find ten interpretive signs with stories along the trail. The trail can be completed as a loop or divided into smaller sections.

Natimuk to Natimuk Lake

Natimuk to Natimuk Lake is a 3.7km flat ride on compacted gravel. This section follows Natimuk Creek between Natimuk Lake and Natimuk. Start this trail next to the old courthouse building in the Main Street.

Natimuk to Mt Arapiles car park

Natimuk to Mt Arapiles Car Park is a 10km relatively flat ride on compacted gravel. Start this trail next to the rotunda and the artillery gun just near the skate park.

At the rotunda the path follows Natimuk Creek out of town to Gladigau Rd and then winds its way to the camp ground at Mt Arapiles. The picturesque Mt Arapiles is always in sight.

Mt Arapiles car park to Mitre Rock

Mt Arapiles Car Park to Mitre Rock is a 3.3km undulating ride along a predominantly 4-wheel drive track. The track follows the base of Mt Arapiles on the Centenary Park Access Track before heading out of the park crossing the Natimuk-Frances Rd to reach Mitre Rock.

Mt Arapiles car park to Vinegar Hill

Mt Arapiles Car Park to Vinegar Hill is an 8km undulating ride along an unsealed surface. This trail follows the Centenary Park Access Track before heading towards Mitre Rock. From Mitre Rock, the trail heads north through the Mitre Lake Reserve toward Vinegar Hill with magnificent views. There is no formed trail and riders may have to negotiate fallen trees and variable ground conditions. This section of the trail is not suitable in wet conditions.

Mt Arapiles car park to Natimuk Lake

Mt Arapiles Car Park to Natimuk Lake is a 23km ride on mixed undulating terrain including quiet shared dirt roads, specific bike trail, some unused road reserves and on-road sections. This scenic section takes you along the base of Mt Arapiles, past Mitre Rock (if time allows take in the view from the top of Vinegar Hill) and Mitre Lake and back along the edge of Natimuk Lake. This section will take you right to the Natimuk Lake Caravan Park, with shower, barbeque and camping facilities. This section of the trail is an off road section. There is no formed trail and riders may have to negotiate fallen trees and variable ground conditions. This section of the trail is not suitable in wet conditions.



The Arapiles Big Sky trail is located in Natimuk, 26km to the west of Horsham in western Victoria.

The Arapiles Big Sky Trail connects the small town of Natimuk to Mt Arapiles which rises dramatically from the Wimmera plains. Mt Arapiles is a world renowned rock climbing area. There are over 2000 climbing routes and some of the climbs are among the world's hardest. While at Mt Arapiles there are bush walks or other short rides that you can do. From the top of Mt Arapiles you get magnificent views of the surrounding areas stretching from the Little Desert National Park in the north to the Grampians in the east.

Just a short ride away is Mitre Rock which also provides great climbing routes and short walks and Mitre Lake which is part of a natural chain of wetlands that stretch from Douglas in the south to the north of Mt Arapiles. Closer to Natimuk, Natimuk Lake is a popular recreational place where people enjoy fishing, waterskiing and various other water based activities.

On the trail

The Arapiles Trail is unique in Victoria in that it traverses mainly broad acre farm land. In this area crops include wheat, barley, canola (yellow flowers) and various beans, lentils and pulses. You may also see sheep or cattle grazing in the paddocks. Farming operations vary from season to season. In autumn and winter many farmers are sowing crops. During this time emerging crops may be sprayed. Spring will see the cutting of pasture and crops for hay. People who experience hay fever may wish to take appropriate precautions before riding at this time.

Ploughing of strips beside fences is still common practice for containment of fire and riders may see this happening in late spring and early summer. Summer is harvesting time and farmers are busy day and night. You'll see farm equipment such as headers harvesting crops. If you see machinery adjacent to the trail, it may be better to wait until it has moved away before continuing.

Photo credits:
Mt Arapiles and the canola field, John Mibus
Mt Arapiles and cyclists, Donna Bridge
Mitre Lake, Swans on Natimuk Lake, Rock and Bike, Mark Radford
Ester Bollinger on 'Undertaker', Simon Mentz

www.arapilesbiketrail.com.au

arapiles big sky
bicycle trail
NATIMUK • VICTORIA



Horsham Rural City Council
(03) 5382 9777
council@hrcc.vic.gov.au
www.hrcc.vic.gov.au
www.visithorsham.com.au

This trail was built with funding from Horsham Rural City Council, Macpherson Smith Community Alliance, the Victorian Government and the Australian Government.



trails

33km  Full trail

3.7km  Natimuk to Natimuk Lake

10km  Natimuk to Mt Arapiles Car Park via Gladigau Road

23km  Natimuk to Mt Arapiles Car Park via Natimuk Lake

3.3km  Mt Arapiles Car Park to Mitre Rock

8km  Mt Arapiles Car Park to Vinegar Hill

What do I need to do?

- Don't forget drinking water. There is no drinking water available on the trail
- Wear sunscreen and appropriate protective clothing
- Avoid cycling in the heat of the day

Code of Conduct

- Observe local signs and restrictions
- Do not disturb plants and animals
- Give way to stock on the path
- Respect property and livestock of landholders
- Take rubbish home or place it in bins
- Don't litter- especially cigarette butts
- Alert other users of your approach and pass at reduced speed
- Keep to the left

- Beware of traffic at road crossings
- Pull over when large machinery passes
- Close any gates on the trail
- Keep dogs on a leash and clean up after them
- Dogs are not allowed in reserves
- No motor bikes, trail bikes or horses are permitted on the trail
- The park will be closed on a Code Red day

Phone coverage

You may not be able to get coverage in some areas of the trail. To be connected to Police, Ambulance or Fire Services key in 112.

Bike repairs

Before you leave, take a bicycle tube repair kit in case of puncture. The nearest bike shop is in Horsham.

Horsham Cyclery
87-89 Wilson Street Horsham 3400
Phone 5381 1899
www.facebook.com/HorshamCyclery

