

# Dinner Plain Track Notes



## Dinner Plain

Pure High Country

### Dead Timber Hill



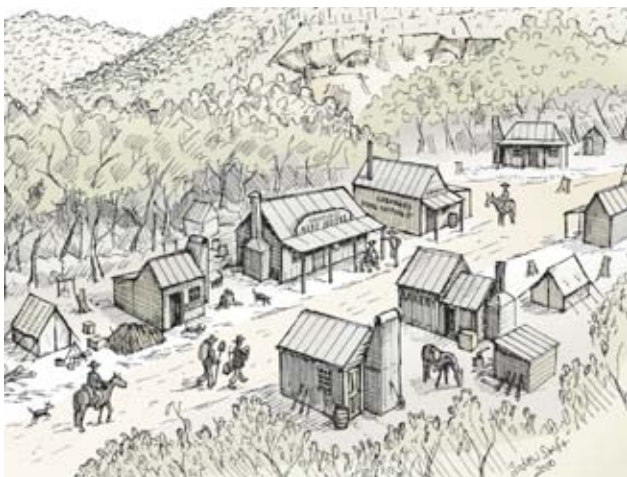
**4km return (1.5 hours), Grade 4 Walking Track**

This enjoyable walk, through Snow Gum forests that are slowly recovering from the devastating 2003 bushfires, offers breathtaking views and unforgettable sunset vistas over Mt. Hotham.

Starting from Dinner Plain Hut, follow Fitzzy's Cirque to the sign marking the crossing point to the northern side of the Great Alpine Road and the track leading to the Forest Walks trailhead which serves three walks – *Room with a View*, *Montane Walking Trail* and *Dead Timber Hill* (see separate track notes).

#### Geology

Dead Timber Hill, at 1653m above sea level, is a rocky outcrop immediately north of JB Plain at the point at which the Great Dividing Range turns sharply south. It is on the watershed that defines the catchments of the Cobungra River to the north and the Dargo and Victoria Rivers to the south. The outcropping rocks are basalt, evidence of volcanic lava flows millions of years ago. Dead Timber Hill has a precipitous northwest face which resulted from erosion of the softer sedimentary rocks that form the deeper layers of the earth's crust. The Great Alpine Road is on the hill's southern slope and, as a result, is often icy due to shading in winter months.



The Cobungra mining township at Brandy Creek  
Illustration by Andrew Swirt

#### History

Overlooking Brandy Creek and the Cobungra River, Dead Timber Hill was once known as the Cobungra Diggings. Deep lead and stream gold deposits were worked in the upper reaches of the Cobungra River and at Brandy Creek from the 1860s. In 1884 there was a rush to the area when a party of Italian miners cleaned up 900 ounces of gold from their claim. A peak population of nearly 400 lived briefly in the area at this time.

Starting at the Dinner Plain end at the 200 metre mark of the walk, a side path leads to the **CRB (Country Roads Board) Hut** at the roadside. Built in 1926, it survived the Black Friday fires of 1939 and is regarded as the best preserved CRB hut of its type in Victoria. It was one of a series of such huts built to shelter patrolmen working to keep the Great Alpine Road open during the non-winter months. Construction of the road began in 1874 and was completed in 1883, enabling miners and others to travel across the Alps from Harrietville to Omeo.



Wedge Tailed Eagle Image Flagstaffotos

#### The Walk

Views of Dinner Plain village can be enjoyed just off the track to the left about 20 minutes from the start of a walk.

The tree canopy - *Eucalyptus pauciflora* – Snow Gum - is very dense because of regrowth after the 1939 fires that destroyed a vast area of the Victorian Alps and the lowlands as far as Omeo. The remarkable survival mechanisms of these trees can be observed the length of this walk. Snow Gums are equipped with lignotubers, a starchy swelling of the root crown which stores nutrients and buds from which stems reshoot, resulting in regenerating trees forming a multi-trunked, coppiced habit. These differ from many other eucalyptus species which have epicormic buds along the stem allowing them to grow new lateral branches the length of the trunk after fire.

From the summit there are excellent views across the valleys to peaks that include Higginbotham, Hotham, Loch and Feathertop. This is a great place to spot Wedge Tailed Eagles – *Aquila audax* – which can often be seen in pairs circling overhead in thermal currents searching for prey. These majestic birds are readily identified by their 'wedge' or rhombus-shaped tails.

## Be Prepared

The best months for walking in the alpine environment are from November through to April, however, weather conditions can change rapidly, and snowfalls and blizzards can occur at any time of the year. (*The Bushwalking Season is from the November Melbourne Cup Weekend to mid May.*)

### Be prepared with:

- Wind and waterproof jackets
- Warm clothing – hat, gloves, sunglasses, and strong footwear
- Food and water
- First aid kit and sunscreen
- Map and compass
- Check the weather forecast before departing
- Let someone know where you are going
- Mobile phone (reception in some areas)

### Caution

Bushfires have damaged snowgums, which are now regenerating but dead branches are shedding with the new growth. High wind days may result in falling limbs and branches. It is not recommended to use the track on windy days. Please be aware that snakes are active during warm months.



## Dead Timber Hill

Grade of Walk:	Grade 4, as per <i>The Australian Walking Track Grading System</i>
Distance:	4km return
Time:	1.5 hours
Gradient:	Level with some gradual steep sections
Quality of Path:	Mostly formed track, with some obstacles
Steps:	Occasional steps
Experience required:	Some bushwalking experience recommended

For more information on Dinner Plains Tracks & Trails, visit [www.visitdinnerplain.com.au](http://www.visitdinnerplain.com.au).



Alpine Shire

