

Lava Flows Precinct

Tumuli (Lava Blisters)

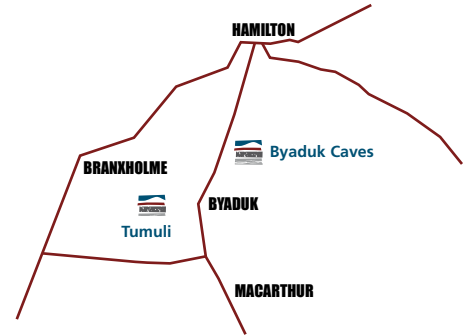


Located between Wallacedale and Byaduk in the Harman Valley, this feature is believed to be one of only three sites in the world where tumuli (lava blisters) or dome-shaped mounds are found. (The other sites are in Africa and Iceland).

The tumuli are circular mounds or hummocks of rock up to 10 metres high and 20 metres in diameter, and are considered to be not only unique in Australia, but most likely rare on a world scale.

When the surface of a lava flow quickly crusts over, pressure in the liquid lava beneath can cause the crust to rise. Generally, it forms irregular broad mounds and hollows known as Stony Rises, but occasionally, it creates smaller, steep-sided domes called tumuli. These are believed to have formed where the pressure was localised, or there was a small soft spot in the crust.

You may notice how the crust has cracked open and been tilted to one side as it was pushed up. In some places, bulbous lobes of lava that were squeezed out of the cracks are also evident. Usually, the dome is completely solid, but occasionally, part of the liquid core drains out and the top of the dome subsides to leave a central hollow or doughnut-shaped mound.



FORMATION OF TUMULI

A lava flow spreads and a thin crust develops.



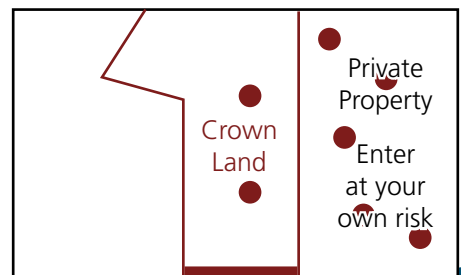
Pressure in the liquid part domes up the thickening crust.



Some tumuli push up, crack open and squeeze out bulges of liquid. In others, the lava drains back and the top subsides.



Finally the whole mass solidifies.



Old Crusher Road

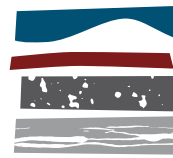
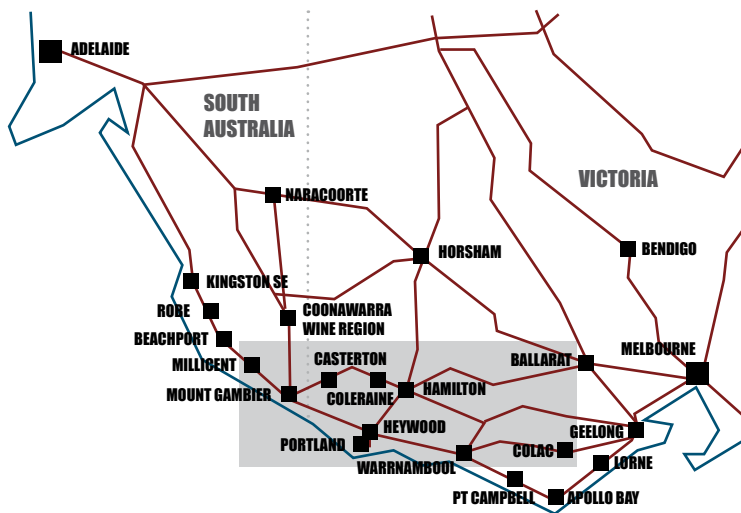
How to get there?

The Tumuli are near the limits of the Harman's Valley flow at Wallacedale, 13 kilometres west of the Byaduk Caves, on the old Crusher Road

Things to do:

No walks have been established at this location, which serves as an observation site.





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Australia may be referred to as a relatively young nation, but the well-preserved ancient landscape provides many precious windows into the past. The Kanawinka Global Geopark can take you on an amazing journey through this landscape, enabling visitors to travel back in time over thousands and thousands of years.

The surface geology of South Western Victoria and South Eastern South Australia is a striking contrast of sweeping plains and spectacular mountains which are largely the product of volcanic activity. In fact, with six sites of international significance and 14 of national significance, this area is Australia's most extensive volcanic province.

The history of these geological masterpieces stretches back to the Tertiary and Quaternary eras, when great outpourings of volcanic material through vents took place. Lava flows spread evenly across the existing plains, followed valleys, flowed under water, and in some cases forced upwards into rough, stony hills called tumuli, or steeper scoria cones.

In total, the flows cover an area of some 23,000 square km, extending north to the hills beyond Ballarat, and reappearing in a small section of south-eastern South Australia. This area is known as the Newer Volcanics Province, and features nearly 400 individual eruption points, most of which occurred between 4.5 and 2 million years ago.

Many of the eruptions were witnessed by the indigenous peoples of the area who have inhabited this region for up to 45,000 years, and feature prominently in stories of the Dreamtime.

Aboriginal people also made use of the stones from the lava flow to construct channels linking the wetlands, weirs, fish-traps, wind breaks and stone huts, and excellent examples created by the Gunditjmarra people can be found around Western Victoria's Lake Condah region in particular.

Later, during the 1870s and 80s, European settlers utilised the volcanic stone cleared from the land to construct dry stone walls in order to grow crops and introduce stock. Many examples can be found surrounding Corangamite on the Dry Stone Walls Heritage Trail.

The region's spectacular and intriguing volcanic landscape also offers a range of other visitor experiences, from a 45-minute tour to the surface of Mount Gambier's Blue Lake, to the gruelling trek up Mount Schank and down to the crater floor.

In western Victoria, you can go on a chartered boat tour to Lady Julia Percy Island, which has the largest colony of Australian fur seals in the southern hemisphere. Or, take The Alan Marshall Walking Tour of Mount Noorat and the nearby township, or swim in the turquoise-coloured waters of Lake Surprise.

There are also plenty of picturesque picnic and camping spots just waiting to be discovered. Alternatively, you can take your time and spend the night in one of the numerous towns in the Kanawinka Global Geopark.

The Geopark is known as KANAWINKA GEOPARK, meaning Land of Tomorrow from the Buandik people. It is also the name of a geological fault line from Naracoorte Caves to Bass Strait at Portland and a Parish name west of Casterton about 1911 so all levels of the history, Geological, Indigenous and European are brought together in one name.

The Kanawinka Geopark was declared the 57th Member of the Global Network of National Geoparks assisted by UNESCO on June 22, 2008.



Accredited Visitor Information Centres

Victoria

Casterton

Shiels Terrace
03 5581 2070

Colac

Cnr Queen & Murray
Streets
03 5231 3730

Dunkeld

Parker Street
03 5577 2558

Hamilton

Lonsdale Street
1800 807 056

Nelson

Leake Street
08 8738 4051

Port Campbell

26 Morris Street
03 5598 6089

Port Fairy

Railway Place,
Bank Street
03 5568 2682

Portland

Lee Breakwater Rd.
1800 035 567

Warrnambool

Flagstaff Hill
Merri Street
1800 637 725

South Australia

Beachport

Millicent Road
08 8735 8029

Millicent

Mt Gambier Road
08 8733 0904

Mount Gambier

The Lady Nelson
Jubilee Hwy East
1800 087 187

Penola/Coonawarra

27 Arthur Street
08 8737 2855



Camperdown

Old Court House
179 Manifold Street
03 5593 3144

Lake Bolac

2110 Glenelg Hwy
03 5350 2204