

# Omeo Region Track Notes



## Bentley Plain Walks

### The Bentley Plain Natural Features and Scenic Reserve Walks – Ensay/Swifts Creek

Three scenic and easy walks from the historic Moscow Villa hut offer a rare chance to experience up close beautiful natural environments reserved from logging. Covering around 150 hectares of sub-alpine grassland, wet heathland and forest, the plain supports a variety of sensitive ecosystems unique to this environment including extensive alpine sphagnum bogs and associated fens.

The 67km drive to Bentley Plain can be approached as a loop from either Ensay or Swifts Creek. The views along the way are simply spectacular. From Swifts Creek, head for Tongio via the Bindi and then Nunniong Roads and enjoy the sweeping panorama of the Bindi Valley and Mount Tambo from the Bindi Lookout. Further on ahead of the Reserve, pause to marvel at the incredible Washington Winch, a relic of past logging operations.



Moscow Villa Hut

As the road climbs to over 1000 metres to the reserve, Red Box-dominated woodlands give way to alpine forest and giant soft tree ferns and the massive trunks of Peppermint Gum, Manna Gum, Alpine Ash and Silvertop Ash tower overhead.

Pack a picnic and spend the day exploring these lovely walks or bring a tent and stay for a while, soaking up the sounds of the babbling creeks and the rich bird life which inhabits this special place.

*Please be aware that log trucks use these roads. Road surfaces may become hazardous after heavy rain.*



Bentley Creek Walk boardwalk



### Bentley Creek Walk

1.7km loop (45 minutes to 1 hour return)

Grade 3. Short steep hills, formed track, some obstacles. Signposted.

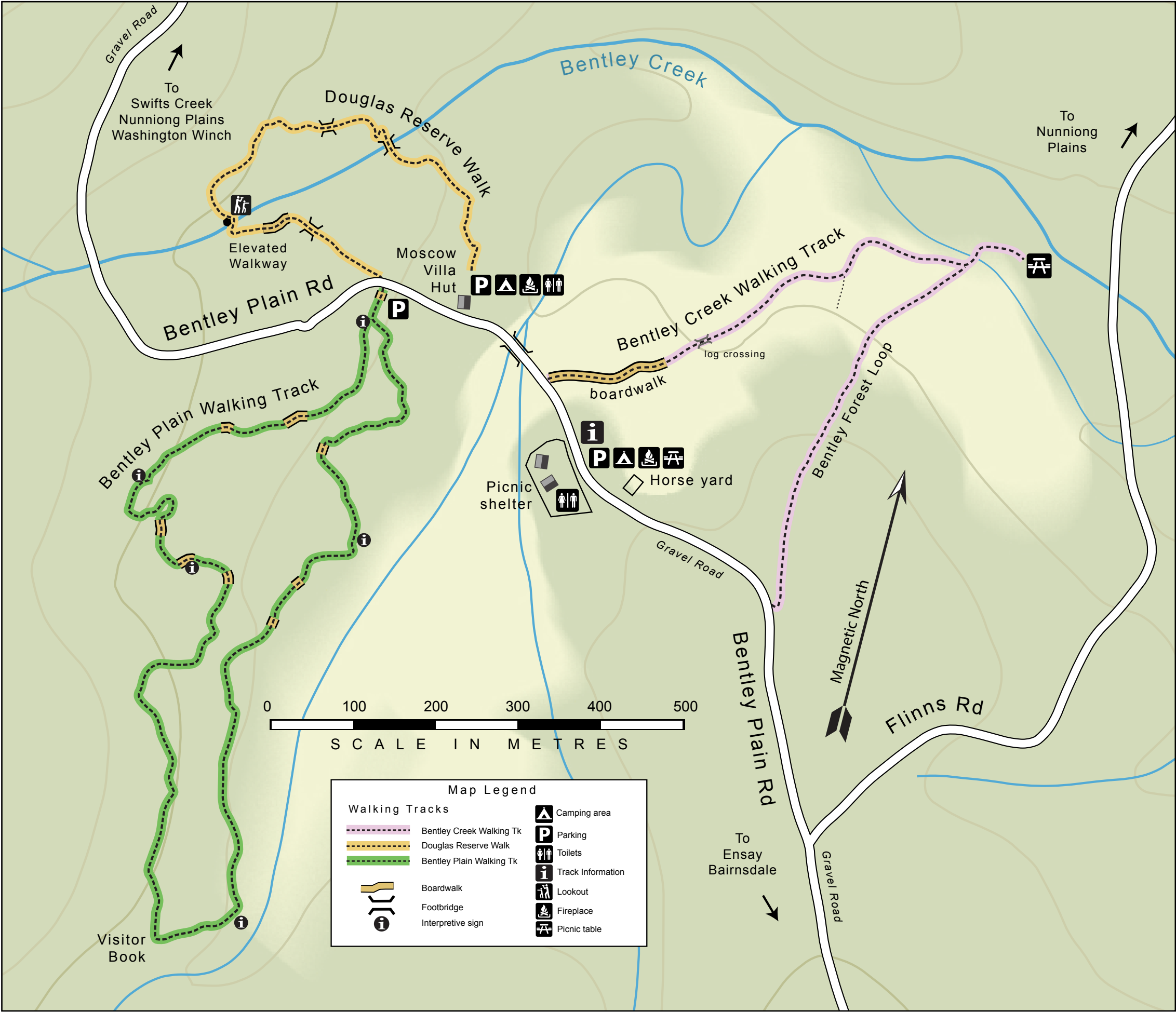
Access this delightful alpine grassland walk from the Bentley Plain campground picnic area, a hundred metres from the Moscow Villa hut.

A new boardwalk has been built across the plain to protect the precious alpine grassland environment, across alpine fen, wet heathlands and alpine grassland as it follows the course of the picturesque Bentley Creek.

In the open heart of the plain look up and enjoy sweeping 360 degree panoramas of the high forested ridges above. To the west look for the Mount Nugong fire tower, once staffed by Bill Ah Chow who built the Moscow Villa as a shelter in the 1940s.

Above the plain, the walk meanders through varied communities of trees and shrubs which offer shelter and food to countless mammal, bird, amphibian, reptile, insect and fungus species. Look for the olive green trunks of Black Saltees – *Eucalyptus stellulata*, and the smooth white trunks of the stately Candlebark – *E. rubida*. In spring the walk transforms into a colourful wonderland of native wildflowers, including Dwarf Buttercup, *Ranunculus millanii*; Marsh Daisy, *Bracyschome radicans* and Tasmanian Bladderwort, *Utricularia monanthos*. Taller shrubs include Small-fruit Hakea, *Hakea macrocarpa*, and Common Cassinia, *Cassinia aculeate*. Low shrubs include Swamp Heath *Epacris paludosa*, Thready Beard-heath *Leucopogon pilifer* and Sticky Everlasting *Ozothamnus thyrsoides*. Mountain Aciphyll, *Aciphylla simplicifolia*, Delicate Bush Pea *Pultenaea tenella*, and Alpine Trachymene *Trachymene humilis*, all rare flora species, also grow here.

Walks of the Bentley Plain Natural Features and Scenic Reserve - Nunniong State Forest



Douglas Reserve Walk

400 metres return (15 minutes)  
Grade 3. Short steep hills, formed track, some obstacles. Viewing platforms & boardwalks.  
Singposted, many steps.

The Douglas Reserve honours Moray Douglas, Swifts Creek's first district forester. Douglas who championed the creation of the reserve while working in the area between 1958-1966 to show how the Nunniong Forest was before logging. The area became permanently reserved in 1978.

Of high conservation value, the reserve comprises old growth forest featuring many large Alpine Ash - *Eucalyptus delegatensis*, Candlebark - *E. Rubida* Mountain Gums - *E. dalrympleana*, Soft Tree Ferns - *Dicksonia antarctica*, Mountain Pepper - *Tasmannia lanceolata*, Mountain Tea Tree - *Leptospermum grandifolium* and many other species of tree and flowering plant. In late spring/early summer keep your eyes open for the plethora of alpine flowers including orchids and everlasting daisies. The reserve is a haven for birdlife. Listen for Superb Lyrebirds - *Menura superba* - as they expertly mimic other birds of the forest and watch out for the distinctive scratchings they make in leaf litter in their search for insects.

This pretty, easy to moderate walk loops through the reserve, crossing a branch of the Bentley Creek where sphagnum moss beds, massive fallen eucalypts and tall tree ferns offer walkers a rare glimpse of senescing montane dry woodland and montane damp forest environment in its natural state.



Picnic area and shelters



Bentley Plain Walk

Return loop 2.5km (1 - 1.5 hours)  
Grade 3. Short steep hills, formed track, some obstacles. Interpretive signage & boardwalks.

Thick, soft leaf litter covers much of the track along this beautiful walk which meanders beneath a canopy of giant eucalyptus trees and mountain tea tree, through sphagnum moss beds and opening to vistas across the ecologically significant environment of the Bentley Plain.

This reserved area features many old forest trees that offer important habitat to many birds and mammal species, including the endangered Powerful Owl and resident glider possums.



Birdwatchers are drawn to this place for the sheer variety of woodland birds the forest supports.

Many important and endangered flora species can also be found here such as Rough Eyebright, Strawberry Buttercup, Marsh Daisy and Tasmanian Bladderwort. An amazing variety of fungus of all shapes and sizes can be seen along this walk, particularly after rain and in the throughout autumn.

Look for evidence of Emus along the walk, their large black scat studded in season with remains of the Mountain Pepper berries they nibble as they wander through the forest.



Bentley Plains Walk

## The Washington Winch

On the Nunniong Road enroute to the Bentley Plain Reserve, the Washington Winch is well worth a look. This relic of past logging operations is the only steam powered engine of its kind in Australia, imported from the USA in the 1920s. The winch was used to haul big logs up steep slopes to the road and on to the waiting log trucks.



Washington Winch

For more information about visiting the Omeo region, go to:

[www.omeoregion.com.au](http://www.omeoregion.com.au)

To find out more about exploring East Gippsland, visit

[www.discovereastgippsland.com.au](http://www.discovereastgippsland.com.au)

or free call 1800 637 060.

Comprehensive track notes for other walks of the Omeo region are available for download from these sites.

Being physically active every day is important at every age to help promote good health and wellbeing.

Walking is a great way to keep active! It is free, it's easy and it can be done anywhere. Enjoy a walk in your local area today!

### To make the most of your walks, be prepared!

The weather in this area can change quickly. Wear a hat and sturdy footwear, and make sure you carry water, sunscreen, insect repellent and a waterproof jacket. Be aware that venomous snakes are a natural part of the Australian environment and are active during warmer months. Never attempt to pick them up – quietly wait for them to pass.

Emergency information: Dial 000

Please note that the maps contained in this brochure may not be suitable for navigation purposes for all walks.

