



Maria Island National Park

Maria Island is a special place with something for everyone – intriguing history, historic ruins, sweeping bays, rugged cliffs, mountains, and abundant wildlife.

Located off the east coast of Tasmania, the island is easily accessed by passenger ferry. Once on the island you will discover a place where there is no traffic, no shops and no worries.

Geological processes and sea level fluctuations have created some dramatic landforms and geological formations, on the island such as the Fossil Cliffs and the coloured and patterned sandstone formations of the Painted Cliffs. The varied topography and vegetation types gives a range of great walking opportunities.

The island's long and layered history of human occupation can be experienced in the many historic buildings and ruins.

Maria Island is a haven for wildlife, including a number of threatened species successfully introduced to the island in a bid to increase their numbers. Sighting of sea eagles, dolphins, whales and seals is also common from the island.

The marine section of the park protects spectacular underwater seascapes and a diverse range of plants, invertebrate and fish communities, offering excellent snorkelling and scuba diving opportunities.

Getting there

Maria Island is situated off the east coast of Tasmania and can be accessed by the passenger ferry which operates between the town of Triabunna and the island settlement of Darlington. From Hobart, take the Tasman Highway (A3) to Sorell, continue north through Orford and follow signs to Triabunna. The drive is about 90 km and takes approximately 1.5 hours. For ferry operator details and fares phone Triabunna Visitor Centre on 6256 4772 or visit the Parks and Wildlife website at www.parks.tas.gov.au

National park entry fees apply on Maria Island. Passes are available statewide at National Park Visitor Centres (including the Commissariat Store on Maria Island), online at <https://passes.parks.tas.gov.au>, as well as Service Tasmania shops, Visitor Information Centres and aboard the Spirit of Tasmania.



Things to do

A great variety of activities can be enjoyed on Maria Island. These include exploring the historic buildings and ruins and learning from the displays in the Commissariat Store, Coffee Palace, Mess Hall and William Smith O'Brien's Cottage.

There are many walks on the island showcasing Maria's diverse landscapes, natural features and cultural heritage. Walks vary in duration from 10 minutes to overnight.

Many of the roads on Maria Island are suitable for mountain biking. Cycling is permitted on constructed roads and in the open grassy areas around Darlington. As there is no traffic on the island it is an excellent environment for families with children to explore by bike. Bikes are available for hire from the Ranger Station. Safety helmets should be worn at all times.

Maria Island is known to be one of the best bird watching locations in Tasmania with 11 of the 12 endemic bird species occurring there.

Abundant wildlife roams freely over the island, offering visitors the chance to see kangaroos, wallabies, pademelons, wombats and Cape Barren geese in their natural habitat.

The marine section of the park encompasses some excellent areas for snorkelling, swimming and scuba diving. Please respect the fragile marine environment and remember to observe regulations in the "No Fishing" zone.

Facilities

Day visitor facilities

The Visitor Information and Reception Centre is located in the island's oldest building, the stone Commissariat Store. The store features a range of interpretive displays and brochures. After ferry arrivals it is attended by park staff for park pass sales, accommodation/camping check-in and payment, and information on the island's natural and cultural features and recreational opportunities.

A Ranger Station and public pay-phone are situated close to the centre of Darlington. Just behind the sand dunes of Darlington Bay is a large open-sided shelter with gas barbecues (gold coin donation), fireplaces and picnic tables. Water and toilets are nearby.

Accommodation and camping

Basic bunkhouse-style accommodation is available in the old penitentiary at Darlington. There are nine rooms with six bunk beds each and vinyl mattresses, a table and seating, a wood-fired heater, and shelving. These rooms accommodate up to six people. A tenth room accommodates up to 14 people. Bookings need to be made in advance. Toilet and washing up facilities are located nearby. Gas operated hot showers are available in the amenities block near the camping/barbecue area. (Unless water restrictions apply). \$1 coins are required.

The Darlington camping area is situated behind the beach on Darlington Bay Beach (500 metres south from the jetty). There is a barbecue shelter, camp kitchen and toilets with hot showers (\$1 coins). Campers may also use the Penitentiary Mess Hall (gas cooking and electricity). Camp Fees apply. Camping areas are also located at French's Farm and Encampment Cove some 3-4 hours walk away.

These two sites have composting toilets and a limited amount of tank water is available. Portable stoves are required for cooking. Camping fees do not apply in these areas.

Note – bookings are not required for any of the camping areas on Maria Island.

Water

Water is a precious resource on the island due to dry weather and high seasonal demand. Water is sourced from Darlington's reservoir and rainwater tanks. Water may contain contaminants and health authorities recommend boiling or treatment.

Fireplaces

Fireplaces and some firewood are provided in Darlington. Fires should be lit in designated fireplaces only. In Darlington firewood is available from a corral near the main bridge on Bernacchis Creek, just down the road from the Ranger Station. Firewood should be used sparingly to reduce demand on this natural resource.

What to bring

A good map is recommended for visitors wishing to explore the island. The Maria Island National Park Map and Notes can be obtained from Service Tasmania offices statewide and on the island from the Commissariat Store. There are no shops on the island therefore all provisions must be brought with you. Bedding, lighting and cooking equipment are required by those planning to stay in the Penitentiary.

Visitors are asked to take all rubbish off the island with them as there are no rubbish bins or waste disposal services on the island.

Important

Maria Island is one of the few areas in Tasmania that remain unaffected by the root rot fungus *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, which is a serious threat to native plants. To minimise the risk of introducing this fungus, be sure to clean all soil carrying equipment such as hiking boots, bicycles and camping gear.

Help keep wildlife wild by refraining from feeding the animals. Processed foods are unsuitable for native animals and are known to cause a range of health problems including a disease known as lumpy jaw, which affects kangaroos and wallabies. Feeding wildlife also leads to human dependence and behavioural problems.

Further information

Maps are available online at www.tasmap.tas.gov.au, from Service Tasmania and outdoor shops.

TASMAP 1:25 000 series, Maria Island Map & Notes 2003; Parks & Wildlife website www.parks.tas.gov.au;

Contact

Maria Island National Park Ph: 03 6257 1420

Please leave a message if unattended.

Accommodation can also be booked by emailing: maria.island@parks.tas.gov.au