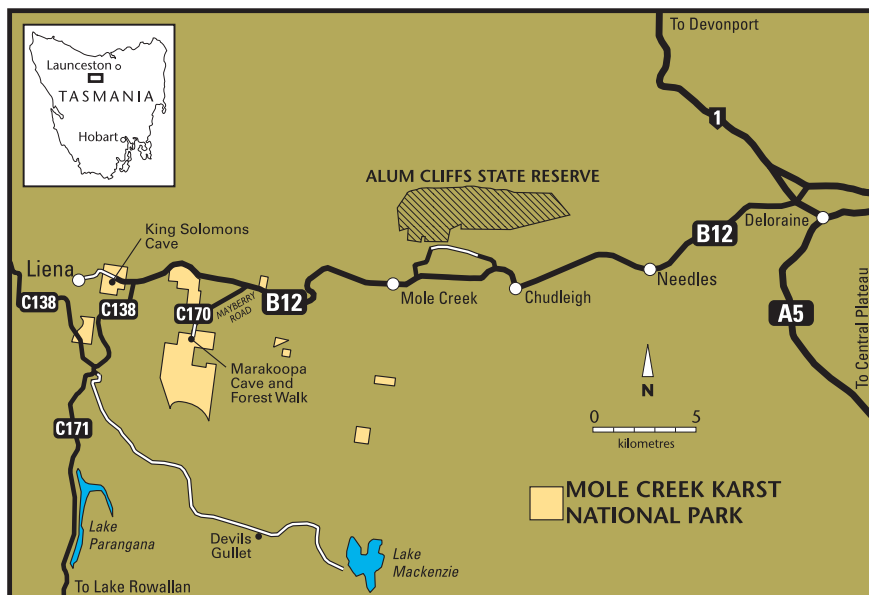




Mole Creek Karst

NATIONAL PARK

Located on the slopes of the Great Western Tiers, in an area of over three hundred known caves and sinkholes, the Mole Creek Karst National Park, protects some of the finest and most visited cave systems in Tasmania. Karst is a Slovene/German word used to describe landscapes formed from the chemical erosion of rocks such as limestone. Water passing through plant material as it drains through the soil can become acidic, dissolving the rocks below to form magnificent caves, gorges and underground features. Marakoopa Cave and King Solomons Cave are open to the public. Both caves are home to animals, which have evolved features to survive in these dark environments. The park also contains rare white gum (*Eucalyptus viminialis*) forests.



Highlights

The highlight of a visit to this park is a guided tour of Marakoopa or King Solomons Cave. Marakoopa Cave has one of the largest glowworm displays in a public access cave in Australia. The smaller King Solomons Cave has many different features including calcite crystals known as 'King Solomons Diamonds'.

National Park Passes are not required to visit the tourist caves, however you will require one if planning to visit other areas of the Mole Creek Karst National Park. Day and Holiday Park Passes are available from the Mole Creek Caves ticket office, 330 Mayberry Road. The full range of passes including Annual and Two Yearly Passes are available from Service Tasmania Shops state-wide (Mon-Fri 9 am-5pm), and from National Park Visitor Centres. The closest Service Tasmania Shops to Mole Creek Karst National Park are at Deloraine and Sheffield. The closest National Park Visitor Centre is at Cradle Mountain.

Getting There

Mole Creek Karst National Park is situated in the central-north of Tasmania about 40 minutes west of

Deloraine. Deloraine can be reached on the A1 from Devonport, Launceston or Hobart (turnoff at Perth). From Deloraine take the B12, about 4 km after Mole Creek take the turn off to the left to Marakoopa Cave. A further 11 km along the B12 takes you to King Solomons Cave. If you plan to visit both caves, remember that it will take about 15 minutes to travel between the two.

When driving at night please be aware that you are sharing the road with wildlife.

Things to do

Have a picnic, take a short nature walk through the beautiful forests or go on a guided cave tour.

Fernglade Walk at Marakoopa - 20 minutes return.

Marakoopa Cave - There are two unique tours available at Marakoopa Cave as described below. Each tour is approximately 45 minutes in duration.

Underground Rivers and Glow-worms

Tour times | Oct - 31 May

10:00am, 12:00pm, 2:00pm, 4:00pm

Tour times | Jun - 30 Sep

10:00am, 12:00pm, 2:00pm

Visit the lower chamber to be dazzled by sparkling crystals, reflective pools and stalactites. Take time to listen to the music of underground creeks and soak up the silence of abandoned river passages. This easy tour caters for all age groups and levels of fitness.

Cathedral, Gardens, and Glow-worms

Tour times | Oct - 31 May

11:00am, 1:00pm, 3:00pm

Tour times | Jun - 30 Sep

11:00am, 1:00pm, 3:00pm

The magnificent cavern known as the 'Great Cathedral' is a highlight not to be missed. The 'Gardens' feature delicate formations and beautiful colours. Medium fitness levels are required to ascend the stairway to the 'Great Cathedral'.

King Solomons Cave

Tour times | Dec - 30 Apr

10:30am, 11:30am, 12:30pm, 2:30pm, 3:30pm, 4:30pm

Tour times | May - 30 Nov

11:30am, 12:30pm, 2:30pm, 3:30pm

This small but compact cave offers an unforgettable journey. This caters for all age groups and levels of fitness. Tour times are: Low season Tour duration approximately 45 minutes.

Tours operate in both caves every day of the year (except Christmas Day).

Caves tickets for both King Solomons Cave and the two unique tours at Marakoopa Cave are available from the centralised ticket office, located at Mole Creek Caves Office, 330 Mayberry Road. Please follow road signs to Marakoopa Cave. The ticket office is located approximately 600 meters from Marakoopa Cave entrance. Tickets for King Solomons Cave are still available at the King Solomons Cave Guide office only if paying with eftpos visa card, master card or bankcard. Please note that there is no cash held on the premises at King Solomons Cave Guide Office.

Group bookings are essential - please phone 6363 5182. Group discounts are available.

For **tour times** you can contact the Mole Creek Parks and Wildlife office on **6363 5182** (this office is not always attended) or visit **www.parks.tas.gov.au** and navigate to the Visitor's Guide to National Parks.

Cameras and flashlights are permitted in the caves, but tripods are not allowed in the caves. The caves do not have disabled access.

Alum Cliffs State Reserve - Access is from the B12 between Mole Creek and Deloraine. An easy 15 minute walk takes you to a lookout with a view of the Mersey River meandering beneath the Alum Cliffs.

Devils Gullet State Reserve - Follow the B12 past the Marakoopa Cave turn off until you reach the C138. Follow this for 6.3 km then turn left and follow the signs for 14 km to Devils Gullet. A comfortable 15 minute walk will take you to views of the mountains of Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair and Walls of Jerusalem National Parks.

Facilities

There are day use facilities at both Marakoopa and King Solomons caves. These include toilets, picnic shelters, wood and electric barbecues and water. The toilets at Marakoopa have disabled access.

Information panels are located outside each cave entrance.

There are no camping facilities in the park, however there is a privately operated camping and caravan park just outside the township of Mole Creek. The closest guesthouse, bed and breakfast and hotel accommodation is at Mole Creek. Petrol and food can be purchased in Sheffield or Mole Creek. There are no shops in the vicinity of the caves. A public telephone is located at King Solomons Cave. Mole Creek is the nearest place to buy petrol.

What to bring

Good walking shoes and warm clothes as the temperature in the caves is around 9°C.

Weather

Being underground the caves are a good place to visit in almost any weather.

Futher Information

Parks & Wildlife Service Notesheet Series - Parks & Places: Mole Creek Karst National Park.
Parks & Wildlife Website www.parks.tas.gov.au

Contact

Mole Creek Ph: 03 6363 5182. This office is not always attended. Leave a message the Parks & Wildlife staff will get back to you as soon as possible.

Prospect Offices (Launceston) Ph: 03 6336 5312 (Monday - Friday 9 am-4 pm).