

What follows is a comprehensive list of the range of individual activities available during your next camp at Merricks Lodge. Our Program Manager will work with you to develop a program of activities specifically tailored to meet the objectives of your camp and the needs of your group.

## EXCITING PROGRAM OPTIONS!

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>
Off-Site Bike Rides	After a skills session at Merricks Lodge, participants will take the easy ride along one of the local bike paths to explore the local environs. The journey can include or end with some educational options, visits to local attractions or free time on the beach.
Estuary Ecosystems Paddle	Estuaries are often viewed as a smelly drain that leads to the sea. After a canoeing skills session on the Merricks Lodge lake, participants will travel to the Merricks Creek estuary for a dawn paddle to explore the ecosystem and see it come to life in the early morning. This activity can include an overnight stay in swags at the Balnarring Foreshore Reserve, educational input before and after the paddle and some worksheets to help participants maximise the educational value of this experience.
Marine & Coastal Education	Led by the highly respected Dolphin Research Institute, participants will learn about our fragile marine and coastal environments through interactive presentations such as <i>Marine Treasures</i> , <i>Whale Out of Water</i> and <i>Balnarring Beach Explorers</i> .
Environmental Science	What a better way to meet some work requirements than in the context of fun and rewarding camping experience. Possibilities include soil and water testing, habitat investigations, leaf structure and all linking with VELs and curriculum requirements for your students.
'Hands on' Habitat Restoration	Participants will focus on restoring a specific habitat to its natural state while learning about the impact, both negative and positive, we can have on the many ecosystems that we live amongst. And yes, you will get your hands dirty with a great feeling of having made a real difference at Merricks Lodge.
Sea Kayaking Journeys	Following a kayaking skills session and safety briefing, this activity presents an opportunity to paddle along the foreshore in either Western Port or Port Phillip Bays. Journeys such as Merricks – Balnarring and Flinders – Pt Leo are possible. This is an ideal activity to combine with a beach walk, educational talk, or some curriculum based work requirement.
Initiative Activities	Do you need your group to work well together? Through the fun of experimental learning and careful facilitation, participants will undertake a number of fun yet challenging activities (eg. Back door, diminishing all aboard, helium hoop) to explore the dynamics of real team work.
Surfing	Our instructors have worked on the Mornington Peninsula for well over 10 years and are experts within the Surf School industry. They hold an abundance of local surf break knowledge so they can always source out the best conditions on the day in order to provide a first class surfing experience to our clients. Sessions include the following: Learn to Surf education, safety & ocean awareness To identify a rip current & other dangers Surfboard handling & paddling skills How to negotiate the surf & catch the best waves
SUP	Stand Up Paddle Boarding allows you to ride waves, explore the coastline or just paddle around for fitness. The major advantage of SUP is that you get a total body workout without even knowing it. Stand up paddling improves your core strength, balance, flexibility, promotes emotional calmness and is lots of fun. Our qualified and passionate instructors

	will teach our clients water safety and local environmental conditions, basic board handling and basic paddle techniques.
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Many school groups see camps as an opportunity for their students to experience the outdoors, to have fun, and to learn about themselves and their relationships with others. These are fantastic objectives which are all achievable through various activities. There is also great potential in meeting these needs whilst achieving other educational objectives at the same time. We recognise the challenge for teachers in creating work requirements for students that are engaging and fun whilst still being connected and relevant to the many curriculum areas and topics. The opportunity exists in the camping context to explore the curriculum areas of Health & Physical Education, Personal Development, Civics & Citizenship, Humanities and Science, whilst at the same time, achieve the more traditional outcomes of a school camp.

## OUR POPULAR PROGRAM OPTIONS!

### Great ways to 'get wet'

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>
Snorkel - Theory & Pool	Participants spend approx. 30 minutes in a theory session where they learn about the equipment and techniques used in snorkelling. Then, after 'gearing up', a pool session follows where participants put the theory into practice and learn how to snorkel safely.
Snorkel - Pier	Following a <i>Snorkel - Theory &amp; Pool</i> session, participants gear up and are taken by an instructor for a snorkel under a local pier. In groups of no more than 8, the instructor will help participants enjoy the experience by pointing out marine animals and explaining about the different things under the pier.
Snorkel - Boat	Usually following a <i>Snorkel - Pier</i> session to ensure that participants can snorkel safely, they will gear up, and then travel by boat to a snorkelling site in Port Phillip Bay – usually "Pope's Eye" followed by the seal colony at "Chinaman's Hat". Again participants are guided by an instructor in smaller groups.
SCUBA - Experience	Usually following a <i>Snorkel – Theory &amp; Pool</i> session, participants gear up and are shown the basic techniques used in SCUBA diving and given the opportunity to experience the wonders of SCUBA diving.
SCUBA - Pier	After learning the basics of using SCUBA equipment in the <i>Scuba – Experience</i> session, participants put their newly learnt skills into practice to explore the marine life around the Portsea Pier.
Kayaking – Flat Water	After discussions about safety and instruction on kayaking techniques, the group hits the water and puts the techniques just discussed into action, either through a series of games or activities more suited to older groups.
Kayaking - Surf	A short flat water session is given (if not done so already) to insure the safety of all participants once in the surf. Participants will learn the techniques of how to catch a wave, and then spend the rest of the session in the surf, trying to perfect the technique.
Canoeing	Conducted on the protected lake at Merricks Lodge, participants will be taught the basic techniques of canoeing, how to use the oar and control the canoe. Following this, a series of challenging activities will be undertaken to practice the skills and enhance teamwork.
Beach Swimming & Bogies Boards	Beach swimming and Boogie Boarding gives participants the opportunity to safely enjoy the waves at the beach. They will be given a wetsuit to keep warm and assist with buoyancy with boogie boards and surf mats being provided.
Surfing	Participants will travel to a local surf beach for a surfing lesson. After gearing up with a wetsuit and surf board, participants have the opportunity to learn and practice the basic techniques of surfing.
Aqua Challenge	A series of quick and fun competitive team activities conducted at or around the pool area. Teams rotate around the various activities to achieve the best possible score in the time

	provided. A non-competitive and more co-operative variation is also possible. Can be run on-site or at a local beach.
<b>Couta Boat Sailing</b>	In groups of no more than 12, participants board 'Kauri Chief' (a traditional gaff rigged Couta boat) at Sorrento. After discussing some safety issues and some basic principles of sailing, Kauri Chief sets sail for a tour around parts of Port Phillip Bay. Even though it is a large boat, participants may still get wet from rain or spray from the waves and sea.
<b>Pacer Sailing</b>	Participants undertake both a theory and practical component of sailing. They first learn the basics of sailing using models and diagrams, the rig their own 4 metre 'pacer' dinghy in groups of three. Once rigged they venture into the shallows to learn the techniques involved in manoeuvring the sailing dinghy. Participants the board their yacht and sail around buoys and practice capsizing drills under the supervision of the instructors in nearby motorised inflatable boats.
<b>Aqua Safety</b>	A session designed to explore different aspects of safe behaviours in and around water. Focuses on water safety, boat safety, sea safety or a combination of all three. Consists of an information component as well as a practical section where participants will 'get wet'. Depending on the needs of the group, instructors will cover areas such as the differences in PFD's (lifejackets), buoyancy aids and how they can be used; how to preform water rescues; safe entry into water' an insight into aspects of safe boating; discussing different types of boats and what safety contents they require; exploring a life raft and so on.
<b>Raft Building</b>	Working in teams of 4 - 6, participants are given some basic materials (rope, wood, plastic pipes) to build a raft that should float. Once completed, the team check its seaworthiness by putting on a PFD and paddling it across the pool or lake. The success of the raft depends on the team work and ingenuity of the team.

## Great ways to stay dry!

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Mountain Biking</b>	Participants will be given a bike and helmet and taught the basics of bike riding and bike control when going off road; to ensure they are capable to continue throughout the session. The group is then taken over several prepared elements to develop their skills. Put together, these elements make up a circuit and participants are given the opportunity to ride around the 'circuit'.
<b>Tree Climb</b>	Participants climb one of two specially prepared trees using safety ropes, harnesses and helmets (all supplied). Instructors teach the techniques of 'belaying' and participants will 'belay' each other supported by others around them. An emphasis on teamwork and encouragement is used and often requires climbers to move outside their comfort zone.
<b>Boat Tour</b>	Leaving from Portsea Pier, participants will explore the southern parts of Port Phillip Bay visiting 'Popes Eye' and 'Chinaman's Hat' and hearing about the history of the quarantine station and South Channel Fort.
<b>Orienteering</b>	Participants are shown how to read a compass and how to pace out distances. With these skills, they navigate their way around the campsite in groups of 3 - 6 to locate and record a series of letter hidden around the campsite. These letters are part of a puzzle which when combined with some vowels, create the solution to a global problem that we all must face.
<b>Bush &amp;/or Beach Walks</b>	There are many beautiful bush and beach walks around the Mornington Peninsula. One such walk is to Bushrangers Bay which takes approximately 40 minutes (one way). Once at the beach students can explore the rock pools, play games on the beach and if circumstances are acceptable, they may be able to swim or boogie board. The group then walk out or can continue on to Cape Schanck and explore the lighthouse and rocky cliffs.
<b>Horse Riding</b>	Participants will travel in small groups exploring some of the beautiful areas of the Mornington Peninsula, and along the way, experience the thrill of horse riding such as trotting, cantering, galloping and most importantly, stopping.

# Merricks Lodge Activities

<p><b>Merricks Challenge</b></p>	<p>A series of quick and fun competitive team activities conducted at or around the oval area. Teams rotate around the various activities to achieve the best possible score in the time provided. A non-competitive and more co-operative variation is also possible.</p>
<p><b>Pond Dipping</b></p>	<p>Pond dipping involves students using fine mesh nets to sweep through the water, collecting animals, insects and invertebrates. Students are then able to examine the creatures they've caught, record and discuss finding, and begin to critically evaluate the health of the ecosystem.</p>

**Don't be limited by the list above!** We are always open to thinking about how we can meet your particular needs through the camping experience. Whether it's recreational, educational, cultural, historical or spiritual, we are happy to work with you to tailor a program to you particular requirements – **Just ask!**