

The Silver Banksia Walk is approximately 2km from Story 1 at Mellish Street to Story 8 near Wallace Street. It will take about an hour to walk, on flat pathways suitable for wheelchairs and prams. However, you can commence your walk at any point to enjoy Spring Creek and its stories.

1 The first official report of gold in Beechworth area was by 3 prospectors on 3rd August 1852. They made their find about 100m upstream from Newtown Bridge. By January 1853, 8000 miners had arrived to try their luck along Spring Creek, which was altered dramatically as the creek bed was dug, washed, and sluiced. Noticeable environmental damage can be seen in the erosion of creek beds, exposed banks and changes in the natural flows.

Mining alert: notice the deep cutting which channels Spring Creek through solid granite under Newtown Bridge to the falls.

2 This small wetland area may appear messy and uninteresting but wetlands are among the most important and productive ecosystems on Earth. They provide habitat, water and an abundant food source for many animals including birds, frogs, invertebrates and fish. Wetlands become refuge areas for plants and animals in times of drought and are nurseries for fish and migratory bird populations.

Wildlife alert: listen carefully and you may hear the distinctive sound of the Pobblebonk (or banjo) frog, *Limnodynastes dumerilii* which gets its name from its distinctive banjo-like 'bonk' call. The call is usually repeated every few seconds. One calling frog usually triggers several nearby frogs to call in quick succession. These calls can be heard any time of the year coming from vegetation, streams or burrows in creek banks.

3 Willows were introduced into Australia during the 1800s to stabilise stream banks, produce the raw materials to make baskets and cricket bats, and provide shelter and forage for livestock. But willow trees propagate easily and spread rapidly. Willows have infested waterways throughout south-east Australia and become a major environmental problem - taking over from native plant species, altering the course of many waterways and reducing water flows and water quality.

Willow alert: Willows have been removed from the banks of Spring Creek but notice where rock drops have been placed to stop erosion of the creek banks.

4 Wallace Park Arboretum dates from the 1890s when the first trees were planted to celebrate Queen Victoria's jubilee. It originally covered over 24 acres. Arboretums are designed to provide a pleasant and ornamental space where people can enjoy contact with nature. They also provide specimens of exotic tree species for scientific study and education. Some of the exotic species in this parklike setting include conifers and two different species of oak.

Arboretum alert: can you identify the oak trees?

X
START HERE

1
GOLD STORY

2
WETLANDS STORY

3
WILLOW STORY

4
ARBORETUM STORY

5
REVEGETATION STORY

6
CHINESE GARDENS STORY

7
WOODLAND GLADES STORY

8
INDIGENOUS STORY



The Stormwater Treatment wetlands are part of an innovative water-sensitive urban design. The wetlands remove sediment and water-polluting nutrients from stormwater runoff before it enters the creek.

Wildlife alert: The ponds provide habitat for an abundant variety of native wildlife. What can you spot in the wetland today?

5 Beechworth Landcare took on the revegetation of this section of Spring Creek in 2005. Landcare volunteers removed willows, broom and gorse, and then planted hundreds of local native plants. The removal of weed species and their replacement with indigenous species will improve water quality and also encourage native aquatic animals to return. As the plants grow other animals including birds and hopefully koalas will be seen along Spring Creek.

Local plant alert: look for the species signs and notice examples of the silver banksia, *Banksia marginata*, our icon species.

Wildlife alert: look for bird species such as crimson rosellas, New Holland honeyeaters and the cheeky willy wagtail.

6 These gardens are living tribute to the thousands of Chinese miners and their descendants who played an integral role in the history of Beechworth. Chinese miners dominated the Beechworth goldfields in the 1860s and remained in large numbers well into the twentieth century.

Tree species alert: when you wander through these beautiful gardens you will find weeping cherries, japanese maples, willow leaf oaks and silver birches.

7 The Glades provide a beautiful all-seasons environment for large-scale public artworks. The interglade forest is heavily planted with indigenous trees and shrubs including blackwoods and strappy-leaved lomandra. You can enjoy the Masonry Blades sculpture with its references to Ned Kelly, walk the labyrinth, and learn about indigenous culture by viewing the pebble mosaics of Eddie Harris.

Art alert: can you spot the thylacine in the mosaic?

8 This area of Spring Creek pays respect to the indigenous people who have passed through Beechworth, over many thousands of years, on their journey to the high country. Plantings here provide examples of native trees, herbs and grasses used by aboriginal people of the region for food, shelter, implements and basket making.

Indigenous resource alert: can you find the grass that the indigenous people used to make damper?

