6 Take a minute to sit here and listen for birds, the wind in the trees... You might identify the Yellow Box, Yellow Gum and Red Gum trees as well as the Callitris, Golden Wattle and Black Wattle. Each will flower at different times to support all year round the migratory birds and animals which rely on this habitat. Keep your eye out for clumps of Mistletoe which provide perfect habitat for Mistletoe birds and other honeyeaters.

7 Because most Australian mammals such as possums and gliders are nocturnal, you may not see many animals on your walk. However if you look in the sand here you may be able to find tracks or scats (droppings) of animals - kangaroos, lizards, goannas, snakes, introduced deer, koalas and possums.

8 The open grassy woodland vegetation community gives way here to a Heathy Woodland. The soil is sandier and a different suite of shrubs is evident, most notably the Silver Banksia, Pricky Ti-Tree, Calytrix and the yellow flowering Hibbertia. In the greater Grampians there are more than 50 unique vegetation communities based on different soils, aspect, elevation, climate and the vegetation.

9 Depending on the time of year and the plant species which are flowering, a variety of bird species may be encountered. The noisy communal White Winged Chough with their constant chatter are entertaining. You may hear the unusual call of the Black-faced Cuckoo Shrike. Other common birds here are the Yellow-Rumped Thornbills, the Gang Gang Cockatoo, Grey Fantail, Superb Blue Wrens and Crimson Rosellas. You may be lucky enough to see Goannas, Yellow Footed Antechinus or Fat-tailed Dunnart.

10 Looking west from here you can see the magnificent Grampians Ranges. The Grampians National Park covers 160,000 square kilometres of a diverse range of geological and environmental assets. The park also protects cultural heritage. These woodland flats with the bountiful Mt William Creek and nearby Wimmera River and tall forests would have provided the local Jadawadjali people with ample food. Cultural heritage sites of scar trees, middens and rock art in the area are evidence of a rich aboriginal history and traditions.

11 If you look around these trees you may see clumps with different coloured leaves. These are Mistletoes, a parasitic plant that gets it nutrients from the host tree by tapping into the tree's branches. The brilliant coloured Mistletoe Bird eats the berries and ejects it droppings containing the seed onto the tree's branches. It is a naturally occurring native plant which adds to the nectar and food available for wildlife. There are different species of Mistletoe including Buloke Mistletoe.

12 Native grasses are a component of many different plant communities and form the function of protecting our fragile soils as well as providing niches for other plants and fauna. In this area you may be able to identify Weeping Grass, a green couch-like grass with slender arching flowering stems, the rusty coloured Kangaroo Grass, several different Wallaby Grasses, the decorative Tussock Grass, Spear Grass and Common Wheat Grass.

This walking trail is a community project completed by local volunteers, acknowledging the support and sponsorship by the following:

PROJECT PLATYPUS Upper Wimmera Landcare · Parks Victoria · Buloke and Northern Grampians Landcare Network · State Government Victoria · Department of Sustainability and Environment · Horsham Rural City Council urban rural balance · Dadswells Bridge Progress Association

Dadswells Bridge

Mt William Creek

NATURE TRAIL

Distance: Easy Stroll - 1hr / 2kms

The walk starts from the Giant Koala or park your vehicle near the tennis courts and commence at the bridge. Pets and Motorbikes are prohibited in the National Park.

1 In 1865 it became necessary for a road to be surveyed between Stawell and Horsham by the nearest possible route. Thomas W. Dadswell designed, and supplied timber and iron for a bridge across Mt William Creek to make this road possible for vehicles. The Western Highway bridges were built in 1867 and the area became known as Dadswells Bridge. The Mt William Creek flows from the foot of the Grampians near Moyston and into the Wimmera River at Marma, some 15km north from here.

2 Along this section of the Mt William Creek are a number of large pools which provide crucial refuges for wildlife in periods of drought. Tortoise, Water Rats, Platypus and water birds of many varieties have been recorded in this vicinity. The well vegetated banks provide habitat and protection for wildlife. Platypus eat up to 50% of their body weight in food daily so need a healthy environment which supports fish, shrimps, worms and other aquatic life.

3 The condition of remnant vegetation varies along this track, largely according to the level and nature of disturbance it has experienced over the years. This small triangle is relatively weed free as the soil crust with its lichen and moss cover is intact. Shrubs include Daphne Heath, Emu Heath, Sticky Hop Bush, Golden Wattle and Thryptomene. In spring a variety of blue, yellow and white annual lilies carpet the area.

4 Many species of our wildlife rely on logs or hollows to provide nesting and roosting sites or protection from predators or weather extremes. The mature trees here and fallen logs and branches provide excellent habitat. Look up, down and around and see how many hollows these mature trees provide. It is estimated it takes 80 years growth to provide sizeable hollows to accommodate larger species such as owls.

5 This section here is rich in flora with over 25 species of grasses and groundcover plants. Many will flower in spring but there will always be something of interest - the fluffy heads of the Wallaby Grasses, the silver foliage of the Common Everlasting and the brilliant cerise of the Magenta Storksbill. Be careful not to trample the orchids and lilies as you wander.