

Bushfire Education



Bushfires in Our History, 1851–2009

Date	Nickname	Location	Deaths	Losses	Area covered (hectares)	General
6 February 1851	Black Thursday	Victoria Portland, Plenty Ranges, Westernport, Wimmera, Dandenong	12	1 million sheep	5,000,000	
1 February 1898	Red Tuesday	Victoria South Gippsland	12	>2000 buildings	260,000	
14 February 1926	Black Sunday	Victoria Warburton	31			These fires raged across Gippsland throughout Feb and into March, killing 61 people & causing much damage to farms, homes and forests
Dec 1938- Jan 1939		New South Wales Snowy Mts, Dubbo, Lugarno, Canberra	13	Many houses	73,000	Many pine plantations lost; fire began in NSW and became a 72 km fire front in Canberra
13 January 1939	Black Friday	Victoria Throughout the state – Noojee, Woods Point, Omeo, Warrandyte, Yarra Glen, Warburton, Dromona, Mansfield, Otway & Grampian Ranges	71	1300 buildings Town of Narbethong destroyed	1,520,000	Fires widespread from December 1938 – January 1939; many forests and 69 timber mills destroyed
3–4 March 1942		Victoria Hamilton, South Gippsland	1	22 buildings 2 farms 100 sheep		Fire burnt on a 96 km front at Yarram, Sth Gippsland
22 December 1943		Victoria Wangaratta	10		Thousands of acres of grass country	
14 January- 14 February 1944		Victoria Central & Western Districts, esp Hamilton, Dunkeld, Skipton, Lake Bolac	32	700 homes Huge stock losses	>1,000,000	Plant works, coal mine & buildings destroyed at Morwell, Yallourn
1 December 1951		ACT Molongolo Valley, Mt Stromlo, Red Hill, Woden Valley, Tuggeranong, Mugga	2	2 houses 40 farm buildings Observatory buildings	10,000	

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		Hill				
Nov 1951- Jan 1952		New South Wales North-west NSW, Wagga Wagga, Pilliga	11		>4,000,000	
5 February 1952		Victoria Benalla	Several		100,000	
14-16 January 1962		Victoria The Basin, Christmas Hills, Kinglake, St Andrews, Hurstbridge, Warrandyte, Mitcham	8	>454 homes		Fires in the Dandenong Ranges and on the outskirts of Melbourne
17 January 1965		Victoria Longwood	7	6 houses		Major grass fire
21 Feb-13 March 1965		Victoria Gippsland		>60 houses & shops 4,000 stock	750,000 of forest 40,000 of grassland	Burnt forest and grassland
7 February 1967	Black Tuesday	Tasmania South-east Tasmania, Hobart	62	1293 houses 128 other major buildings 85,000 stock 5,400 km fencing	264,270	Estimated cost - \$45 million; 110 fires burnt within a 50 km radius of Hobart
19 February 1968		Victoria Dandenong Ranges, The Basin, Upwey		64 houses >10 other buildings	1,920	
Sept 1968- Jan 1969		New South Wales South Coast, Blue Mts, Illawarra	14	>150 houses >80 other buildings	>2,000,000	
8 January 1969		Victoria Lara, Daylesford, Bulgana, Yea, Darraweit, Kangaroo Flat, Korongvale	22	230 homes 21 schools/churches/halls >12,000 stock	800,000	280 fires broke out on the same day; 17 trapped motorists died on Geelong- Melbourne freeway at Lara
14 December 1972		Victoria Mount Buffalo			12,140	Forest fire that burnt for 12 days
12 February 1977		Victoria Western Districts: Penshurst, Tatyoon, Streatham, Creswick, Pura Pura, Werneth, Cressy, Rokewood, Beeac, Mingay, Lismore, Little River	4	108 houses 340 other buildings 236,000 stock	103,000	
1 January 1978		Western Australia South-west W.A.	2		31,500	
15 January 1978		Victoria Bairnsdale	2	1 house 36 buildings 6,500 stock		

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28 Dec 1980-6 Jan 1981		Victoria Sunset Country, Big Desert			119,000	Fire started by lightning strike
1 February 1983		Victoria Mt Macedon		50 Houses	6,100	
16 February 1983	Ash Wednesday	Victoria Monivae, Branxholme, East Trentham, Mt Macedon, the Otway Ranges, Warburton, Belgrave Heights, Cockatoo, Beaconsfield Upper and Framlingham	47	>180 houses >1820 other buildings 27,000 stock	210,000	Over 100 fires burnt in Victoria; estimated damage - \$190 million
16 February 1983	Ash Wednesday	South Australia Adelaide Hills, Mt Gambier, South Barwon	28	383 houses >200 other buildings 10,000 km fencing >200,000 stock		Estimated damage - \$200 million
14 January 1985		Victoria Maryborough, Avoca, Little River, Wilsons Promontory, Mt Buffalo	3	182 houses 400 farms 46,000 stock	>100,000	111 fires started on public land on 14 January
27 Dec 1990-10 Jan 1991		Victoria Strathbogie Ranges	1	17 houses 166 other buildings 13,500 stock		
21 January 1997		Victoria Dandenong Ranges, Arthur's Seat, Gippsland, Creswick	3	41 houses 2 other buildings 1 CFA fire truck	4,150	
2 December 1998	Linton	Victoria Linton	5	1 CFA fire truck	780	5 CFA fire fighters killed
18 December 2000		Victoria Dadswell Bridge		1 house 8,000 livestock (mainly sheep) 5,000 kms of fencing	14,5000 of crop and pasture	
July 2002-Feb 2003		New South Wales Greater Sydney, Hunter Valley, North Coast, Northern, Central & Southern Tablelands Illawarra, South Coast	3	86 houses 3,400 stock	1,464,000	495 fires, 151 days of severe fire activity
17 October 2002	Granite Belt Bushfires	Queensland Ballandean, Glen Aplin	1	10 Houses 11 other buildings	40,000	
8 Jan-19 March 2003	Alpine Fires	Victoria North-eastern Victoria, Gippsland	1(as a result of a road vehicle accident, not as a result of the fire)	41 houses 3 bridges 213 other structures 10,000 stock 3,000 km fencing	1,200,000	80 fires started by lightning; 8 of these combined to form largest bushfire in Vic since 1939
18 January 2003		ACT Namadji, Uruarrah,	4	488 houses >100 other buildings	>157,000	Estimated damage -

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		Pierces Creek, Stromlo, Cotter, Corin, Tidbinbilla, Duffy, Holder, Chapman, Kamah, Curtin, Lyons, Coppins Crossing, Murrumbidgee Valley		Mr Stomlo Observatory 4,000 stock		\$350 million
10 January 2005	Eyre Peninsula	South Australia Wangary, Vanilla, North Shields, Poonindie, Louth Bay, Greenpathc, Yallunda Flat	8	50 houses 47,000 stock	890,000	
31 Dec 2005-31 Jan 2006		Victoria Stawell, Yea, Moondarra, Grampians, Kinglake, Anakie, Ararat, Baw Baw, Glenelg, Golden Plains, Geelong, Horsham, Latrobe, Northern & Southern Grampians, South Gippsland, Moorabool, Murrindindi	2	41 houses 9 houses damaged 359 other buildings 65,598 stock 1,973 klms of fencing	160,000	
1 Dec 2006-7 Feb 2007	Great Divide Complex	Victoria Northeast Victoria, Gippsland		33 houses 13 houses damaged 255 other buildings 1,741 stock 1,357 klms of fencing	>1,154,828	
28 January 2009		Victoria Delburn		44 houses	6,534	
29 January 2009		Victoria Branhholme			40	
4-6 February 2009		Victoria Bunyip State Park		31 houses	26,200	
7 February 2009	Black Saturday	Victoria Numerous towns and localities in the vicinity of Kinglake, Toolangi, Healesville, Buxton, Marysville, Strathewen, St Andrews, Flowerdale, Beechworth, Bendigo, Central Gippsland, Horsham, Coleraine, Churchill, Kilmore, Murrindindi, Upper Ferntree Gully, Maiden Gully, Lynbrook and Narre Warren.	173	>2,056 houses >1,600 other buildings >11,800 stock >10,00 km fencing	450,000	The worst bushfires in Victoria's history and the 8 th deadliest recorded bushfire in the world. The air temperature reached 46.7 in Melbourne – highest recorded temp in an Australian capital city. Estimate of

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						cost of fires by Bushfires Royal Commission – \$4.4 billion.

Localities listed are indicative only.

Compiled from Department of Sustainability and Environment's [Link: Bushfire history – Major bushfires in Victoria <http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/fire-and-other-emergencies/major-bushfires-in-victoria>], Appendix 3 of the [Link: 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission's report <http://www.royalcommission.vic.gov.au/Commission-Reports>], and the Council of Australian Governments Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management, Appendix D <http://www.coagbushfireenquiry.gov.au/findings.htm>.