

Our Favourite Walks



*A Collective Effort from the Bushwalkers of the
National Parks Association of NSW*

Forward

This modest booklet arose following the closure of the National Parks Association walks program on March 24th 2020 during the Covid19 pandemic to avoid physical distancing. As much as we all love the bush the NPA recognised that travel to walks on public transport and in confined spaces in cars was not ideal and might expose our members to undue risk of infection.

While I am able to get out, with just my wife and using just my own vehicle, and while I am able to find quite isolated patches of bushland with the appropriately wide walking tracks to avoid others in the event that I do meet them – the benefits of having a home on the edge of the city, a car and national parks close by – I was only too aware that many of our members were not in such a privileged position and would appreciate some connection to the bush they love and to the people whose company they enjoy.

And so this project was launched! On 28th March I wrote to a suite of NPA walkers inviting them to write up their favourite walks with the intention of compiling the stories into a book that can be shared by the entire NPA family. The brief was modest. All writers had to do was to note:

1. Where it is
2. Basic description of the route
3. What makes it so special?

I did ask for an image or two.

That of course committed me to not just collecting, compiling and editing the rest (and all errors are mine) but in writing up my own favourite walks. You can imagine that was a tricky exercise. I have led walks for NPA for 43 years and have completed many other walks as well. I will never forget the first trip to the Himalayas, in 1978, the long route to Everest base camp. I will forever remember my 9 day extended trip from Lake St Clair to Cradle Mountain, taking in the side trips on offer. Nor will I forget the extended walk from Kiandra to Thredbo or the Coast to Coast crossing of England, the climb up Mount Kinabalu or many route-finding journeys through Morton National Park.

But I could not include them all so I have decided on just a few. Some of the magical reasons why I have spent a life-time walking and intend to spend another life-time on the same pursuit for it is within the bush that we are able to grow.

“Only by going alone in silence, without baggage, can one truly get into the heart of the wilderness. All other travel is mere dust and hotels and baggage and chatter.” – John Muir

The results are here before you. When we meet again, in our beloved national parks, we need not go in silence but we go with respect, sharing the journey, treading the paths we lay out. Perhaps we even use this book to guide our way

Brian Everingham (editor)

Contents

The Grand Tetons	Brian Everingham
Mount Rainier	Brian Everingham
The Great Ocean Walk in Victoria.	James Moule
Cradle Mountain to Lake St Clair	Faye Bingham
Nancy's Peak, Porongurup NP, WA.	Cheryl Sharma
Larapinta Trail Section 3	Brian Everingham
Sassafras Gully at Springwood.	David Noble
Fairy Bower in Morton National Park.	Valerie Atkinson
Waterfall to Otford	Pamela Campbell
Heathcote to Bundeena	Bandula Gonsalkorale
Cleaning up Newnes	Jim Romanovski
Rose Bay to South Head	Sue Wicks
Mount Solitary	Diah Hendarwan
Helensburgh Circuit	Adrian Jones
Sarah Anne Rocks	Sheila Walker
Illawong	John Prats
Diamond Head Loop	Brian Everingham
Kiama Coast Track	Kevin Mills
Walumarra Track, Palona cave and Forest Path	Vera Segoh
Marley Fire Trail (or, a photographic journey)	Brian Everingham

The Grand Teton National Park

Wyoming, USA

Brian Everingham

Not far out of Jackson Hole in Wyoming, USA there is a majestic national park called the Grand Tetons and in September 2010 it was my first walk on an NPA walking/study trip to the NW corner of the USA. It is a walk I'll never forget.

Having arrived overnight after a long, long flight I have to say we were somewhat confused and sleepy while we were being briefed by the local rangers and perhaps we did not take in all that was said about being safe amongst the wildlife of an American national park but more about that anon.



Pretty well everything was new, including the butterflies, and I was in Heaven. We set out and it proved to be a day of walking and wildlife! We saw moose (a bull), black bear (sow and cub), Yellow Bellied Marmot, Pika, Red Tree Squirrel and Least Squirrel. We also saw an American Dipper and a host of other delightful sights. But best of all, we walked, alone, and the route was around Jenny Lake, up to Hidden Falls, then on to Inspiration Point and way up into Cascade Canyon. I could do it again and again.

Somewhere up in the mountains, beyond anyone else in our party, we stopped in a delightful glade for our lunch. The autumn colours were coming through and the soft sun made us sleepy. We relaxed, closed our eyes, soaked in the scene.



It was then that I heard a sound.



Now that advice came back: if one sees a moose remember it is more dangerous than a bear. Get in your car (we were 10km away from any vehicle). Failing that climb a tree (we were in a meadow and there were just shrubs). So what to do? I did what you'd expect of me. I grabbed my camera and had a delightful time. It was a truly magnificent moment that will live forever in my memory.



Brown Bear and cub



Mount Owen

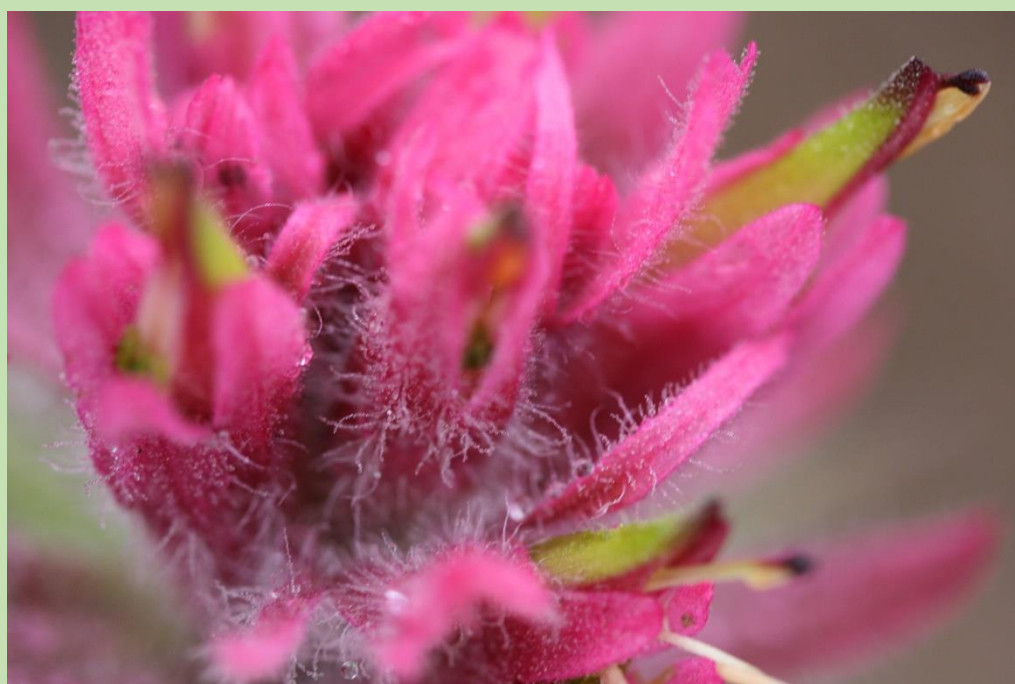
Mount Rainier National Park

Washington, USA

Brian Everingham

On that same journey that took in the Grand Tetons we also visited Mount Rainier National Park. Mount Rainier is an active volcano and at 14,410 feet above sea level it is truly an impressive sight. If it blows it will make the eruption of Mount St Helens eruption in 1980 seems like a fizzer.

We began our walk at the appropriately named Paradise, a honeypot for tourists, but quickly disappeared into the countryside and spent the rest of the day in rain; rain that soon turned into sago snow.



Wildlife was plentiful on this walk.



As were views, whenever the cloud lifted.



Yes, the scenery and the isolation were special but equally the flowers, mammals and birds were wonderful. I adored the Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel and the Hoary Marmot. And we also enjoyed seeing more Black Bear. Could there have been a better day?



Stellars Jay

GREAT OCEAN WALK – VICTORIA

by James Moule

OVERVIEW

Not to be confused with the Great Ocean Road, this walk commences at Apollo Bay and stays mostly on the coast, ending at The Twelve Apostles near Port Campbell. The total length is about 104km.

Motorists who rave about the Great Ocean Road are missing out on magnificent scenery that can only be seen from the track. The best of the Great Ocean Road is north-east of Apollo Bay, quite a different area, and the road is well inland through the Cape Otway area so the coastal views are minimal. Being in the path of the Roaring Forties, walkers have to be prepared for extreme weather, especially for strong winds.

Another attraction is the history that is attached to sections of the walk, including ship wrecks and evidence of early settlements.

Getting to and from the walk requires travelling on the Great Ocean Road so walkers get a double dose of wonderful scenery, as well as other experiences.

The track is well-formed and traverses a range of landscapes, including tall forests, pristine beaches, spectacular coastlines and significant rivers. There is an abundance of wildlife throughout the length of the walk, especially kangaroos, koalas and birds of many species.

It is possible to complete the track as a pack walk but we did it by car shuffles, staying in the comfort of a house in Apollo Bay. There are good camp sites along the walk and also cabins at Bimbi, at about the half way mark. It is a one-way track so everyone has to start from Apollo Bay. The Victorian national parks people publish an excellent map that is essential for all walkers.

DAY 1 - Apollo Bay to Shelly Beach Picnic Area (10km walk)

This is an easy start to the week. Beginning at the Visitor Information Centre, the GOW follows the path along Apollo Bay's foreshore to Marengo and west to Three Creeks Beach which is a good place for lunch. Then we climbed up the hill into the forest. This is a good time to look for koalas at Shelly Beach picnic area as Day 2 will not give any spare time.





Three Creeks Beach

DAY 2 – Shelly Beach Picnic Area to Parker Inlet (22km walk)

This is the longest stretch in one day and includes some steep sections through tall forest.

Walkers have to cross the Elliot River and this is best done at low tide.

The walk follows the Elliot River Track, then Elliot Road, Parker Road, Johnson Track, Blanket Bay Track and Telegraph Track. The beach at Blanket Bay is the only one on the GOW that is suitable for swimming. From Blanket Bay, the track is back on the coast, heading south-west to Parker Inlet. The crossing of the Parker River is best done at low tide so walkers might have to wait until it is safe to cross.



Parker Inlet

DAY 3 - Parker Inlet to Aire River (12km walk)

In the morning, the track follows the coast towards Cape Otway. The area is particularly rich to wildlife including Gang Gang parrots and kangaroos. The Cape Otway Lighthouse area (high entrance fee) is a good place for lunch before moving inland to the Cape Otway Lookout and then meeting the coast again before continuing to Escarpment Lookout. From there, it is a short walk inland to Aire River.



Cape Otway Lighthouse

DAY 4 - Aire River to Johanna Beach (13 km walk)

Walkers cross the Aire River and join the coast at Sentinel Rock Lookout. There are lots of koalas in the manna gums at Aire River and excellent coastal views throughout the day. The track touches the Great Ocean Road at Castle Cove, a good spot for lunch, then continues inland through an isolated section of the Great Otway National Park to Johanna Beach Lookout. The walk along the beach on soft sand is a hard way to end the day.



Trekking along Johanna Beach into a strong headwind

DAY 5 - Johanna Beach to Ryan's Den (14 km walk)

Walkers start from Johanna Beach and soon start moving inland through farming country. There are many hills, both up and down, in this section, with excellent views around Milanesia Beach. A visit to the Ryan's Den Lookout is worthwhile.



Near Milanesia Beach

DAY 6 - Ryan's Den to Devil's Kitchen (17 km walk)

From the Ryan's Den track head, walkers head to Wreck Beach where the anchors of two wrecks can be seen. Depending on the tides, you can follow the beach to Devil's Kitchen, then walk back along the GOW to Wreck Beach.



Anchor from the wreck of "Fiji" in 1891.

DAY 7 - Devil's Kitchen to Port Campbell (15 km walk)

Around Princetown, the track passes through wetlands so binoculars are useful to observe bird life. Lunch should be around Gellibrand River, where swimming is possible. The track then enters Port Campbell National Park. Walkers should aim to get to the major highlight of the GOW, The Twelve Apostles, as early as possible. There are several lookouts in the area and drinks, etc. are available from the Visitors Centre.



LAKE ST CLAIR TO CRADLE MOUNTAIN

Faye Bingham

Early January in about 1977 a group of 6 set out for our 10 day walk from Lake St Clare to Cradle Mountain in Tasmania.

The group (not all had been known to each other prior to the decision to do the trip) had spent many an afternoon and evening pouring over maps in order to determine which side trips to include, how long to walk each day, where the best places were to camp for the evening and what provisions and equipment to carry.

Remember this was at a time of H framed canvas packs (no sternum straps or waistbands to give support), oilskin wet weather jackets (no Gore-Tex) and tennis shoes (if you chose not to wear heavy boots) and fairly poor quality heavy tents or in the case of Brian and I a flimsy but roomy department store affair which would have been a disaster in a snow storm.

Everything included in our packs was weighed, discussed, debated as to its necessity including amount of underwear, toothpaste, toothbrush, deodorant and finally included or discarded. Each day's food was carefully portioned out, the Surprise peas and corn, carrot and beans, Deb mashed potato, dehydrated egg, dehydrated apple and onion flakes, various dried Rosella concoctions, TVP, tea, sugar, coffee, hot chocolate, fruit saline, biscuits, scroggin and so on. One of our group brought dehydrated ice cream, but even in Tasmania it remained a runny mess! Remember this was all before the now readily available freeze dried food. And we took no alcohol!

Clothing which was minimal included track suits, bush shirts, shorts, jumpers and no light weight puffer jackets, branded shirts, or thermals. In those days there was the checked flannel shirt.

We slept on green insulating mats that were effective in keeping in warmth but did nothing to protect from a stone or twig that invariably lodged beneath the tent. 40 plus years ago the body was more flexible and hips recovered quickly from lying on hard ground and necks survived pillows made from the excess clothing we carried stuffed into our sleeping bag cover.

Sleeping bags with a cotton inner sheet were bought from Paddy Pallin the only store I recall other than disposal stores that specialized in camping gear.

Sadly disposal stores (set up to sell surplus army material after the war) no longer exist. Many an interesting item was purchased from these stores that have now been replaced by large chain stores such as Kathmandu, Mountain Design etc. who in turn are disappearing to be replaced by on line shops!

I recall we all met in Tasmania and after preliminary walks we were transported by bus or taxi to Lake St Clair where we began the walk around lunchtime. The weather had been very warm but we heard that at Cradle Mountain a group had been snowed in the week before at Kitchen Hut, so we knew that the weather was changeable.

On day one our packs were at maximum capacity and weight. I clearly remember one of our party carrying a heavy rucksack on his back and his 10 day supply of lunch time biscuits in a day pack on his front! As the days rolled by the day pack decreased in size then vanished incorporated into rucksack.

The views everywhere except at our feet were magical – the lake, mountains, misty vistas, vibrant green and red vegetation, pristine high mountain lakes, quaint huts.



The track varied from forested areas to plains and from pleasant and easily seen to exceedingly wide and deeply muddy. Although there was duckboard it was minimal. This was a time before the major onslaught of walkers to the area and before commercial walks had become common in the park. There were no private upmarket cabins in which to overnight.

Walking long distance despite blisters, sun burn, sore shoulders and hips and weary muscles allows the mind to calm and the worries of the world to disappear. A routine, a new rhythm of life emerges. Nothing matters except the next step, the next view, the next meal and the next camp. You can vanish into your own world while sharing that world with your companions.

The first night was spent camped near Narcissus Hut. Here we reduced our packs by one evening meal and a breakfast but the pack felt no lighter!

We chose not to stay in the huts as they attract rats and possums but near them on flat grassy dry ground where sunset and sunrise are clearly visible.

The most special wildlife experience occurred one sunny morning when our tent doors were left wide open for gear to air and a family of baby quoll decided it was the best place to conduct a game of tag. There are no photographs of this special moment or any other part of this walk as no cameras were carried in an age before digital photography.

The notorious Black Pete who stole food from packs was mentioned whenever we encountered other walkers. We never encountered Black Pete at Ducane Hut though and did not lose any food to wildlife. I wonder how many generations of Black Pete have existed at Ducane Hut.

Only once did we stay in a hut overnight. It may have been Old Pelion Hut. We stayed there because the heavens had opened. We were soaked and had no chance of staying dry let alone drying out in our inadequate tents. The hut on arrival was crowded but there was room for us. By late evening

however the hut had people sleeping on the floor and the table. Those not elevated were in real danger of attack by ferocious leeches that had no respect for closed doors.

Leeches caused an incident that was much laughed about when the walk was completed but deemed serious at the time. Tiredness occurs on long distance walks and I remember one day perhaps at lunchtime a party member packed up, stood up and discovered a leech on the bottom. This caused a minor scene. Tent poles were thrown and words were said, but only to the leech and the tent poles. We then began the afternoon walk and the rhythm kicked in. After all it was yet another sunny afternoon with brilliant views to experience.

Pine Valley and the Acropolis were our first side trip – perhaps two nights. Here there were invigorating swims in the glacial lakes for the more adventurous members followed by long periods of shivering and hot tea.

I remember the beautiful sphagnum mosses that we walked across in the Mt Pelion East and West area and the breath taking views of those peaks.

Tiger snakes were talked about but I cannot remember if we ever saw them.

I can visualize the tall Barn Bluff and Mt Ossa, and the path ever onward. It is a truly wonderful vista captured in my memory if not on Kodak film.

Our path took us past Windermere and Waterfall valley Huts, past the occasional walker heading in the opposite direction. At one point we met a lone European walking towards Lake St Clair carrying little food and no tent. It concerned us at the time – no wonder people get into difficulties, He must have got out though as we didn't hear of anyone lost.



Lunches allowed us to rest, enjoy the view, freshen up, chat and prepare for the afternoon walk. They also allowed romance to blossom. Two members of the party who had not met prior to this

walk being planned got to know each other more and more over the 10 days. Later a wedding followed and they remain together to this day still cherishing the outdoors even if they are no longer active walkers.

An early camp meant time for a good wash, perhaps washing of clothes, tending to tired blistered feet and drinking of lots of tea.

We completed our walk at Cradle Mountain. Many of the group climbed over the large boulders and attained the summit. Some like me were just glad to see it and finished our climb just below the top.

We stayed in the original cottages at Waldheim that last night and celebrated our accomplishment returning to civilization the following day.

It was a wonderful walk completed in our youth in a magnificent area when the path was trod by but a few.



All of us on that walk maintain a connection and a love for the Australian bush and our wonderful National Parks.

The Larapinta Trail

Section 3: Jays Creek

Brian Everingham

In May 2014 I took an NPA party to the Larapinta Trail, using a company to provide guides, food and transport and we therefore were able to take the pick of the days and truly focus on the countryside rather than just putting our heads down and trudging from end to end.

The entire walk was a special experience, given the company and the fact that during this May we followed rains, had a plethora of wildflowers and yet had pleasant weather: not too hot but also not yet the cold nights that can be endured in the Centre at the best of times.



In summary we walked along the rocky bed of Jay Creek, cutting through the Chewings Range to the Fish Hole, following an old camel path over a rocky bluff and then walking via the Tangentyere Junction to cross over the pass via the low route and into Standley Chasm.

On our way we learnt about the Holly Grevillea (*Grevillea wickhamii*), Lemon-Scented Grass (*Cymbogon cimbiguus*), Finke River Mallee (*Eucalyptus sessilis*) and Fork Leafed Corkwood (*Hakea divaricata*).

But apart from the botany and the fauna surely what makes this a memorable day was the sky. That sky, that blue, that sharpness brings to life the art of Namatjira! It opens our senses to colour. It brings us all alive.



Our walk finished with several of us exploring the iconic Standley Chasm and then with a mango ice cream in the kiosk before we drove on into our private bush camp at Standley Chasm.



Sassafras Gully Walk

David Noble

Sassafras Gully at Springwood is a true delight. Beautiful creeks, waterfalls, rainforest, abundant wildlife, orchids, fungi, and several great swimming holes.



There are many ways of visiting Sassafras Gully at Springwood. There is the Victory Track from Faulconbridge, and four tracks at least, from Springwood – the one that starts from Sassafras Gully Road, the nearby Wiggins Track from Yondell Ave (reached via Bee Farm Road), and the track that follows Magdala Creek – which can be reached via three tracks near the start of the gully. The last is the track from Martins Lookout.

I will describe the walk from Sassafras Gully Road to Sassafras Gully and then to Glenbrook Creek, and along Glenbrook Creek to its junction with Magdala Creek and returning to Springwood via Magdala Creek.

It's a short easy 15-minute walk to the trackhead, from Springwood Station. This is best done by walking west along Macquarie Road, not turning off down Homedale St (ignore Sassafras Gully signs), and continuing along to Short Street. On the way you pass an interesting Springwood memorial, which has information about the history of the town. Turn down Short St and then turn left and follow Valley Road up a short hill to reach the turn off to Sassafras Gully Road. The track starts at the end of the road where there is a carpark, sign and map.

Now for some history. The tracks into Sassafras Gully probably date from around 1870. In those days it was referred to as "Flying Fox Gully". A large part became a council reserve in 1888. People used to walk to a large pool called "The Lagoon", which is on the junction of Sassafras Gully and Glenbrook Creeks. That pool is still there, but the Flying Fox Camp has moved on.



The descent from the start of the track at Sassafras Gully Road to the valley floor is about 200 m. Near the start of the track, listen and look for birds. Also look out for orchids. There are often some in flower along the first few minutes of the walk.



A short way down, the track passes a stone ruin, probably the remains of an old picnic shelter. It's hard to tell if it was ever completed. Lower down, and hard to see if you descend, easier to see if you walk up, there is a memorial carved into a rock. It was chiselled in 1917 by a local, Robert Scott, as a tribute to Paddy, his dog.

After negotiating some tricky steps, the track crosses a small creek and then descends through some sandstone overhangs. It then crosses the now larger creek. You are now in cool temperate rainforest. Just after you cross a small side creek, an old, and now overgrown track turns off on the right and goes up into a hidden amphitheatre. If you have time this can be worth exploring.

Soon the track passes through another overhang. At the end, look out for a spring. A leaf is often inserted into the rock to ensure a good spout of water. I have never seen this not flowing in 60 years of visiting the valley.

The track now gently descends to reach the junction with Numantia Creek. This is also the turn off to the Victory Track to Faulconbridge. The turn off is signposted – but the turn off is very easy to miss as the first few metres of the Victory Track follow the rough bouldery creek bed. It worth pausing here and looking up into the trees for the orchid *Adelopetalum exiguum*. It flowers around the end of March.

Instead of turning off on the Victory Track, keep following the main track, which crosses the side creek you have been following, and then continues along the main gully, now called Sassafras Creek, before crossing it. This is easy going. The descending has now finished. At the creek crossing, the track now leaves the Sassafras Gully Reserve and enters Blue Mountains National Park. The walk along this section is particularly nice. In autumn and early winter look on the forest floor for fungi. Lianas drape from the trees. Listen and look for lyrebirds. Keep your eyes peeled for Diamond Pythons.



At the junction with Glenbrook Creek, the track passes through a small clearing, sometimes used as a campsite. A giant boulder here is often festooned with small rock orchids. This is a good place to stop and explore. If the weather is warm it's also a great place for a swim. A short way downstream is "The Lagoon" – a marvellous swimming hole. It has a shallow end and a deep end and the water is always clean looking.

Nearby – in Glenbrook Creek, just upstream of the Lagoon is an interesting area of creek bed – a rock slab has been eroded by cobbles into a mass of swirl holes.



To continue, cross the smaller Sassafras Creek just upstream of the Lagoon, and keep following the track on the true left side of Glenbrook Creek. The walking now is quite different from what was upstream. The creek is a lot bigger, and the creek bed is full of River Gums (*Tristania* sp.) that are entrained to point downstream by regular floods.

This section of the track can be subject to damage when trees fall over. After about 30 - 40 minutes of walking you reach the junction with Magdala Creek. This is a good place to stop for lunch. If it is a hot day – there is a good pool 50 m away, just below the junction of the two creeks.

You leave the track along Glenbrook Creek here and follow the track up Magdala Creek. It starts quite steeply, but that is not typical of the going. It is a very gentle and slow climb all the way back to Springwood. As you walk to Springwood, there are 9 creek crossings required. Unless there has been heavy rain, the creek can usually just be stepped over without difficulty.

A short way along the track you pass two waterfalls, the first is Martins Falls. A short turn off leads to the base of the falls. This fall is named after an early resident of the Springwood area, Sir James Martin, who was a former Prime Minister (of NSW, this was before Federation). A short way further upstream is Magdala Falls. There is no formed track to the base of these falls, and it is a rough side trip. I would avoid swimming in this creek – as it has headwaters right behind the shops and houses of Springwood.



Martins Falls

Above Magdala Falls, the track crosses the creek for the first time. Then it climbs up and passes under some overhangs. It then makes a sudden left hand turn, where a rougher track continues on at that level. This is the Batman Track as it goes to Batman Crescent at Springwood. So make sure you take the left hand turn and climb down steeply to cross a small side creek.

The walk back is pleasant going, the track passes through alternating sections of rainforest and drier woodland. Look out for birds and fungi. As you approach Springwood, there are more side-tracks. One, on your right, goes to Lawson Lookout and Raymond Road. Another turns off on the left and crosses a wooden footbridge and goes to Picnic Point and Homedale Street. This is a shorter way back to Sassafras Gully Road if you parked a car there. If going to the Station, continue up the main track. The last part, through fairy Dell ends with a short but steep climb to the road behind the shops of Springwood.



Fairy Bower – a Love Affair

Valerie Atkinson

When you grow up on a river in the Riverina and climb the highest thing around, in our case the 60 foot Windlight tower that generated our 32 volt power, and look around you, on a clear day you can see forever. Straight horizon, 360 degrees. Later I went south, crossed the mountains and saw the sea. Later still I went skiing in those mountains, and elsewhere. Once, while still a schoolgirl, our family drove to Sydney, so I had seen the Three Sisters. But I had no conception at all of the enormous sandstone plateau around Sydney etched deeply with gorges, sheer vertical drops, rain-forested gullies, tree ferns, a whole unique set of flora. That was until a romance with an English geologist was reactivated and he invited me up from Melbourne to visit him in the Southern Highlands where he was then based.

Mike took me to Fairy Bower in the Morton National Park. We nearly didn't make it. Driving towards Bundanoon in his old Morris Major he suddenly discovered a big black spider had fallen on his crotch. He swerved quite violently, luckily kept control. So we did get to the start of the path down to the Fairy Bower Falls. There I encountered not just a waterfall but a whole new world. So many things flowering, in particular *Lambertia formosa*, or mountain devil, which I've loved since. It so obligingly blooms nearly all year round. Those deep pinky-orange petals glow, almost iridescent. The spikey seed pods really do have devil faces. Then as we descended water oozed from the rocks, there were ferns – maidenhair, tree ferns, bird's nest, coral – and vines and fungi. So many colours and shapes, such abundance. Not knowing much at all about Australian botany away from the saltbush plains I had no idea that these were all native plants. I had seen wildflowers in WA. That was the "Wildflower State". I didn't realise that the sandstone country around Sydney also had extraordinary botanical diversity.



We heard the falls before we reached them, and smelt the dampness, then climbed down the slippery and rusty moss-covered old stair-case next to long taut roots or vines, getting sprayed as we went. The creek bounced around over boulders before joining the Bundanoon Creek which eventually flows via the Kangaroo Creek into the Shoalhaven River. These days to access the foot of the falls I think you need to turn left at the top, go along the path towards the Amphitheatre, then double back and wend your way down. Alternatively, you park at Tooth's Look-out and follow a path down from there.

I think Fairy Bower clinched the deal. We married in 1979. Our ramshackle Moss Vale house was our second home. My mother came to visit when Mike was working OS. A visit to Fairy Bower was top priority because of an experience when she was a boarder at PLC Goulburn in the 1920's. They had a school excursion to Fairy Bower – I was imagining it like Picnic at Hanging Rock which was not long out (1975). She grew up on the plains of the Riverina too, but in her day there were no doco films, glossy photographic books, no TV of course. Other worlds she had to imagine through her interpretation of written descriptions with maybe a black and white etching to assist. For her the experience as a fourteen-year old of Fairy Bower had been absolute fairyland. She was terrified that such a precious memory would be shattered. She walked then with a stick – the walking frame and wheelchair came later. Determinedly she made her way down steep uneven steps, over rough terrain, crawled under a big tree that had fallen over the trail, and we got to the falls. She found it just as magical as she had remembered it for all those years.

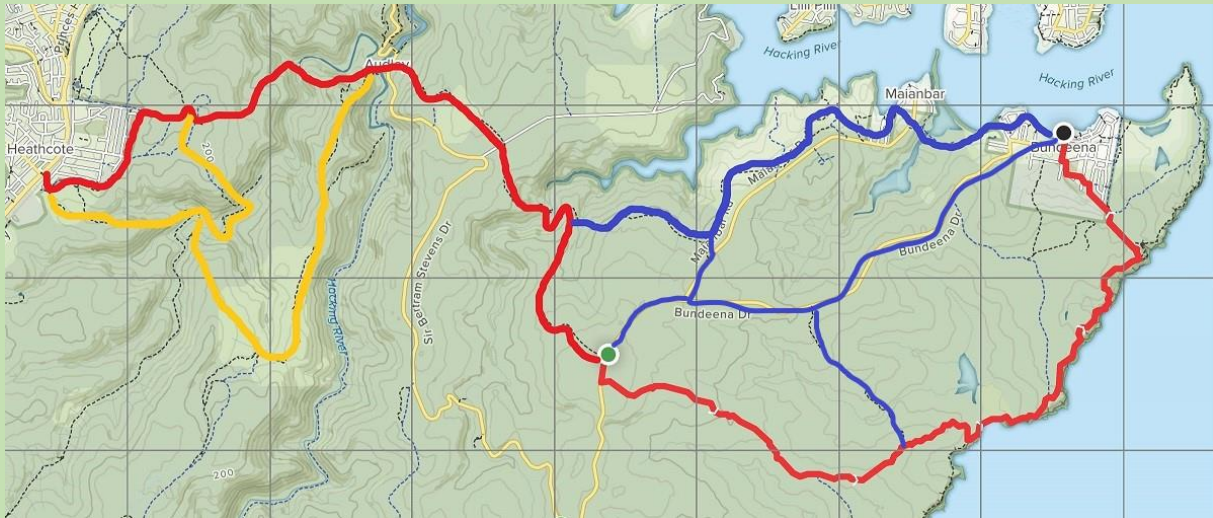
Over the next four decades visitors from interstate, overseas, wherever, came to stay in our freezing house (for some that's all they remember!), hopefully warmed by roast dinners, wine and a big fire and were taken on the mandatory walk down to Fairy Bower. We learnt more about the botany. We saw lyre birds in full display, swaying and strutting. After Mike's death when I sold up I could have moved anywhere, eg back to Melbourne where I had lived happily for many years. My friends are scattered. But the sandstone country, these amazing forested canyons for miles around Sydney, waterfalls trickling down, crashing down, the ferns and orchids and hibbertias and grevilleas and dracophyllum, black cockatoos, spinebills, a rose robin, patterns on rocks and scribbly gums, the souging of wind in casuarinas.... on and on....these have captured me. It was Fairy Bower that started it all.

I haven't been back for over a decade. It's time I did so.

Heathcote to Bundeena

Bandula Gonsalkorale

There are different routes to go from Heathcote to Bundeena, depending on several factors: length, time, elevation gain, avoiding street walking, avoiding fire trails etc. The length varies from about 20km to 32 km, the longest if you start off on the Karloo Track and go to Bundeena via the Coastal Track.



From Heathcote you could take the shorter route to Audley via shorter and easier East Heathcote and Engadine Tracks, passing through an area with many Gymea Lilies close to Heathcote depending on the time of year, or the longer more challenging Karloo Track that takes you past the beautiful Karloo Pool and the 'whaleback' rock outcrops, named after their resemblance to whales surfacing for air. Along the way you may also see beautiful flowers, again depending on when you go.



Along the Engadine Track you go past the Kangaroo Creek Pools at the junction of Engadine Creek and Kangaroo Creek. A great place to take a short break and enjoy the view.



You cross the Hacking River at Audley and climb up along a heavily eroded section of the Winifred Falls Fire Trail until you reach the top. From there you get a beautiful view over the surrounding area.



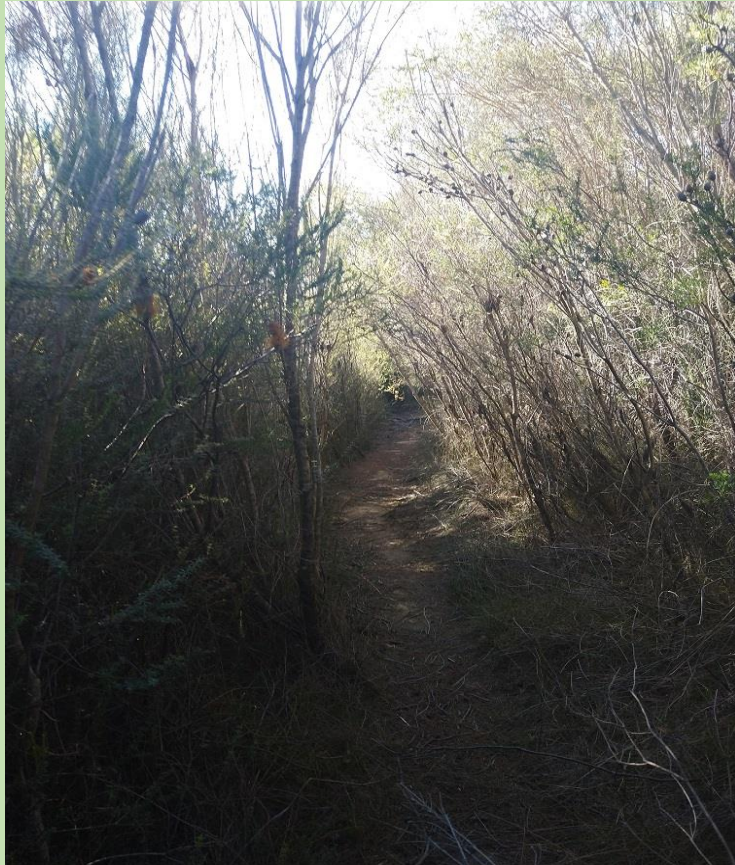
Then the track becomes quite easy most of the way. You cross Warumbul Road and after a short walk along a flat fire trail, you walk down a fairly steep section to Winifred Fall. It is a popular spot for visitors on weekends and you are likely to see quite a few people, including families with children on the track from Warumbul Road to Winifred Falls.



Soon after Winifred Falls, you get to the South West Arm Pool, a giant bottle green lagoon with high cliffs on both sides. If there are any kids around, they would be jumping into the water from the cliffs on the side. You then cross the creek and continue along the Winifred Falls Track.



About 2 km after Winifred Falls, you turn right at the intersection in to Mount Bass Trail to take the long route to Bundeena via the Little Marley Fire Trail or Marley Trail and the Coastal Track. Alternatively, continue along on to Anice Falls, another great spot to admire the views. From Anice Falls, after about 2 km, you could take the shorter route to Bundeena along the Bundeena Drive to Bundeena or continue along an overgrown track to Maianbar and then to Bundeena.



The track runs almost parallel to the Maianbar Road, but it is far enough away that you don't hear road noise. It is a narrow track with foliage on either side almost covering the top of the track, and on some sections the track becoming a trench filled with dead branches.

After about 4 km, you could continue along the track to Maianbar or take a right turn on to Maianbar Road and walk along the road to Maianbar.

If you continue along the track it takes you along the ridge and from vantage points along the way you would see the Hacking River below the view across the water. You could take a side trip down to the Hacking River and back. The track leads you into Maianbar, a tiny coastal village north of Bundeena. After a short walk through the village and a steep

track descent, you across bridge over the Cabbage Tree basin.



Then it's an easy walk through Bonnie Vale Campground and Bonnie Vale Picnic Area to the ferry wharf.

The route via Mount Bass Trail is the longer route, about 27 km. After about 2.5 km, you get to Bundeena Drive. Then you could either turn left and walk along the road for about 3 km and walk down the Marley Trail, or turn right and almost immediately turn left into Little Marley Fire Trail. If you go along the Marley Trail, you go past an old concrete pipe, passes a couple of rock platform and descends to near Deer Pools, a good place to stop and have a breather. The Marley Trail joins the Little Marley Fire Trail.

The Little Marley Fire Trail is a wide unshaded fire trail most of the way. It winds its way towards the coast and the Marley Trail joins it about a 1 km before it reaches the Coastal Track just before Marley Beach. After a pleasant walk along the beach the track passes across Marley Creek where you may need to remove your boots or end up with sloshy boots depending on the tide. There's a steep climb to the top of the cliff and you continue along the cliff edge with beautiful view of the cliffs. You walk past Wedding Cake Rock, which is fenced off, though on weekends you would see people on the wrong side taking selfies! After that you walk over some beautiful almost white rock formations.



Soon after that you turn left and walk along a short track that takes you into Bundeena. After about a 1.5 km walk along streets, you reach the Bundeena Ferry Wharf.

The different paths from Heathcote to Bundeena takes you through beautiful and different landscapes with breathtaking views and you get to see many varieties flowers and birds along the way.

“My favourite walk is my next walk” (Paddy Pallin)

Helping Newnes recover after the fires

Jim Romanowski

When I look back on my short walking history of 5 years there are numerous memorable walks, countless incidents of note, many individuals that have brighten my day, lasting impressions a plenty.

Then there is a walk or an event that is uplifting.

After the devastating bush fires and I was involved in a clean-up day at Newnes. Yes, a different type of walk! But uplifting and etched in my memory it will always be.

We may not have walked 35km in a day, climbed mountains to magnificent views or crossed raging rivers but to see many bush walkers giving their time and energy to help was inspiring.





As bushwalkers we pick a walk we like, on a day that suits with a leader we prefer and proceed if the climatic conditions are acceptable.

We tend to be spoilt and can take much for granted.

So, it is tremendous to see many bushwalkers doing something that is inconvenient, unselfish and in true mateship for which Australia has been noted..... helping out during the aftermath of a devastating bush fire.

Rose Bay to South Head

Sue Wicks

Saturday 28 March 2020 t'was the day it was done.

I write in the spirit of "the best walk is the one you've just done" (anon) and of Roy and HG Nelson's advice that too much walking is never enough.

This walk is in Sydney Harbour National Park and from Rose Bay to South Head in Vaucluse. The beauty of this is one is that one can be extend it to La Perouse.

I did this walk, already planned, on the day of Brian's challenge/assignment/homework with 2 other nameless, to protect the innocent, local NPA members so that we abided by the new rules of separation from each other.

This is atypical of what I usually write which is dry technical writing and project proposals for contracts with banks. Apologies for any poor punctuation or spelling or grammar.

The Rose Bay to South Head walk is on the southern shore of Sydney Harbour National Park is in the eastern suburbs of Sydney and in the Federal Electorate of Wentworth. The seat is named after William Charles Wentworth who was one of the colonies ruling class whose house is passed along the way.



Getting to the start is easy. One catches a bus from the city and then it's downhill from New South Head Road, turn right/east, walk along the harbour edge until Nielson Park is reached, then a few streets, more harbour edge until the red and white lighthouse is reached.

It is special because it's close to home, accessible by public transport and a great area to be in.

I also get to say hello (?) to my lovely dead friend Sister Mary D'arcy who is buried in the nun's cemetery, because she was one, along the way and reminisce of the day of her burial. I

thought on the day that I was on the set of the movie by Peter Weir, Picnic At Hanging Rock, with a heavy mist swirling making the area really creepy and ominous of doom, but nothing untoward happened.



It provides the walker with

- ☐ Wonderful views and glistening water
- ☐ Children frolicking
- ☐ Ferries and Yachts
- ☐ Grownups doing a variety of things
- ☐ Naked men flaunting their bodies
- ☐ Can be extended south to La Perouse
- ☐ Planes and helicopters
- ☐ Flora and fauna
- ☐ ...

Yesterday was different than usual as the Watsons Bay pub was closed because of the current pandemic and so no ice cold beer for thirsts to be slaked. Fish and chips were readily available though for those who forgot their lunch or followed that tradition of binning it.

Police helicopters were patrolling. Robertson Park was unusually empty for a Saturday with a choice of tables available.

And we all had a real good time.

Sarah Anne Rocks

Sheila Walker

Recently, a group of us went to Tasmania with Adrian and Julie Jones. We had just completed eight days of pack walking in the Walls of Jerusalem and the Central Plateau and had moved on to Arthur River on the west Coast. Arthur River is located on the northern end of the Tarkine Wilderness, an area that I had not previously visited. For me, the Tarkine conjured up images of expansive coastal scenery, lush rainforests, wild rivers and spectacular waterfalls. These were the images I had seen on glossy calendars of photos taken by the famous early wilderness photographer, Olegas Truchanas and his protégé, Peter Dombrovski. Thus, it was with great anticipation that I looked forward to visiting the Tarkine. Sarah Anne Rocks did not disappoint.



The Tarkine is a 447,000 ha reserve in Tasmania's north west which includes Australia's largest remaining tract of cool temperate forests with many towering old growth trees. Where the Arthur River meets the Southern Ocean is the location of the Sarah Anne Rocks, a strip of dramatic coastal rock formations named after the Tasmanian watercolour artist, Sarah Anne Fogg.

The walk starts at the precinct of a small shack community. These fishing retreats date back to the 1950's and the shacks have been handed down over the generations. Many of these early dwellings have now been upgraded or rebuilt to become quite large and permanent looking. It is thanks to the government, who, in recent years lifted restrictions on shack owners that allowed rebuilding and extensions to be carried out. Indeed calling them shacks is a misnomer

as some of them look quite grand. Effectively, shack dwellers achieved recognition of their right to legitimacy which eventually led to their right of ownership by dint of occupation. Subsequently, the government allowed shack dwellers to buy their blocks. This is how it has come to be that a few lucky owners hold freehold land in prime locations in a conservation area.

We continued past the shacks, walking over continuous mounds of ancient aboriginal shell middens. This took us to the water's edge and to a cluster of amazing geological formations. These striated, multi- coloured, sharp edged and lichen encrusted rocks displayed colours ranging from vivid orange to greenish white. Against the backdrop of the violent Southern Ocean, the scenery was raw and wild and totally exhilarating.





We lingered to take many photos and then continued, following the coastline along the Kelp Farmers Track. The beaches were strewn with huge quantities of flood logs that had washed down the rivers and out to sea only to be washed back onto the beaches. It created huge piles of driftwood entangled amongst massive clumps of bull kelp. The dead kelp left on the beaches is still gathered up today. Dried and pulverised, it is useful as an organic fertiliser.





We continued following the coastline until we reached a remote fishing shack where we then turned around and headed back to the car park. We had covered a mere 10 km but what a day of spectacular scenery and amazing photo opportunities.

In subsequent days, we continued our journey south to Corinna Wilderness, where we kayaked on the Pieman and Savage rivers and walked in the lush rain forest of the Tarkine. Truly an amazing experience.

I am indebted to Ghada El Ghouli and Adrian Jones for sharing their photos. I had unfortunately dropped my iPhone into the lake in the Central Plateau and was therefore without a camera for this section of the trip.

Sheila Walker

My Favourite Walk - Illawong

By John Prats

It's not in a national park but in a suburban remnant bushland. Not that it's better than some of the national park walks I've done but what makes it a favourite is its accessibility as we happen to live next to it. It's a great place to chill out and maybe get away from noisy neighbours. This bushland is located at Illawong and surrounds Audrey Bay on the Woronora River, the main tributary to the Georges River. The walk itself skirts one side of the bay. This walk could best be described more of as a photography walk so it may not burn too of many of your calories. The place is only small but, for a keen observer, it's packed full of interesting fauna and flora – among them powerful owls, boobook owls, swamp wallabies and various other birds including one that made its appearance, for better or worse, just a year ago: the Brush Turkey. There is also some interesting flora such as terrestrial orchids and also fungi. The walk itself is only short but passes through interesting grounds and vistas along Audrey Bay and further in to thick bushland, indeed almost a rainforest. Although there are houses on both sides of this little catchment, once you are down amongst the trees you'll feel as though you're in some remote wilderness. Although only a short walk it's still best to wear good bushwalking shoes as the track can be rough in parts. You would also be wise to have a mossy repellent handy as there are may be some mossies at a certain section of the track.

A good starting point for this walk is the fire trail entrance opposite Letterbox Lane on Fowler Road. Starting from there you walk through thick grass (watch out for snakes!) which later on clears and then you'll come across a couple of bamboo groves where from old aerial photos there use to be a house probably related to the oyster operations. From here on you start getting a view of the Woronora River and Audrey Bay where you will see the remains of an old oyster lease. The European cultivation of oysters is said to have started in 1872. Audrey Bay was an important oyster cultivation area. At the start, oysters were grown on rocks and these can still be seen at low tide at Audrey Bay. Also on the opposite shore are the remains of the oyster industry such as the sorting platform and other structures. At the end of the bay are the remains of a wrecked oyster barge. Oyster gathering in this area started long before Europeans arrived as indicated by the numerous aboriginal middens. In those middens are found not only shells of rock oysters but also those of mud oysters which are now extinct in the Georges River due to overexploitation by the colonists for the extraction of lime.

Further evidence of aboriginal exploitation of this area is a recently discovered undisturbed overhang with handprints which is thought to have been occupied by the last indigenous person living in a traditional way in the southern Sydney region. There is a midden right below this overhang. NSW Department of Environment and Heritage has been advised of the site and it has been inspected and recorded. There is no track leading to this site.

Eventually you'll reach the remains of an old gate and a short distance from that on the left are stairs leading down to the wetlands and the mangrove area. This was constructed by the water works for servicing of the sewage line as a sewage line runs alongside the creek area. On some occasions this sewage line gets a blockage and workers have to come to clear it. You'll know when there's been such a problem as the smell is unmistakable! Luckily this rarely happens. In the right season, close to the gate, you may find some terrestrial orchids.



Sacred Kingfisher with lunch.

You'll be walking on elevated ground above a mangrove area on the left and then taller gum trees. Soon you'll notice a little creek below. This is usually just a trickle but on rainy days the little waterfall further up can turn into a raging torrent. As we live close by, on strong downpours, we can hear the roaring rush of water over the falls. One can imagine what the little creek would be like on such an occasion. In fact there is a story about some unsavoury characters who didn't know about this when they started a marijuana/drug works on next to the creek. Their enterprise went astray at the first heavy rain – remnants of their equipment such as water containers can still be seen scattered in some sections of the creek.



Tawny Frogmouth with chick. This one took me by surprise as I had walked a number of times under this birds nest and never noticed it – only did when the chick with its white feathers showed up.

As you walk further in you'll notice that the area becomes shadier as the foliage becomes thicker and eventually you'll see on your right a wet rock face which at times could actually be dripping water. I must warn you that I found the area close to it to be a haven for mosses and it's best to be wearing long trousers and long sleeves plus a generous spray of insect repellent (best to apply this at the start of the walk).



Powerful Owl with chicks – these owls are a regular feature of the area.

As you go along the walking track you'll eventually reach the end where it meets the end of a fire trail. You can either turn right and follow the fire trail and eventually reach Sproule Street or Waverly Place or, like I do, turn right and keep on following the track where you'll be crossing a little creek.

You'll then notice some BMX bike jumps made by kids years ago. Keep following the track which rises towards Bradley fire Trail, turn right leading to Bradley Place and make your way back towards Fowler Rd to your starting point. Alternatively, just go back the same way – it's more picturesque and if you applied that repellent it should still be effective (if not – by this time the mossies would be full anyway!).



Brush Wallaby caught in fence. Sometimes wildlife wanders up on the street level, this one was released safely

If you have some remnant bushland close to where you live, why not investigate it – you may be surprised and possibly delighted at what you'll find.

The Diamond Head Loop Walk

Crowdy Bay National Park

Brian Everingham

At a conference I attended in 2019 the delegates were asked to name their favourite national park. That put me in a quandary. How does one choose a favourite park after all those years of visiting, of walking in, of camping and of simply being in our national park system. It was an impossible task but soon enough I would be forced to provide an answer.



I wondered should I name Royal, the park whose nooks and crannies I had explored for the last 45 years. It was tempting. I owed it a lot. Or should I name Kosciusko, a park to which I had taken parties on close to fifty multi-day full pack walks? I was tempted to say Morton, whose “negotiable routes” had all been successfully negotiated over many a rather scratchy walk!

But the more I listened to others speak the more it became clear. People were naming the park that first introduced them to the outdoor world. Well the outdoor world was all around a lad who grew up on a dairy farm and whose western and eastern boundaries abutted forest but the national park just had to be Crowdy Bay.

Situated north of Harrington and south of Laurieton, Crowdy Bay National Park

And within that park there is one, small, easily walked track that still gives pleasure! That is the Diamond Head Loop walk. It takes one from the Diamond Head beach and camping area, over the headlands to Kylie’s Lookout and on down to Kylie’s Rest at the northern end of Crowdy Beach. Along the way there are spectacular seascapes and if one does turn one’s head – and I always do – one sees the Three Brothers. And that, to me, was home!



South Brother Mountain



The walk back to the car is through a forested valley.

It's an easy stroll of just 4.5km, even allowing for the odd side trip but it will remain a special favourite. It is redolent of exploring rock pools, of swimming in delightful beaches, of those mountains behind and the sea in front. Yes, it is my favourite!



DAIRY FARMS TO MAJOR TOURIST ATTRACTION THE KIAMA COAST WALKING TRACK

Kevin Mills

The rugged coast between the Minnamurra River in the north and Gerroa in the south is unique in New South Wales. High cliffs and broad rock platforms at sea level along these 22 kilometres of coastline reflect the volcanic origin of the underlying rocks. The scenery of this district was formed by successive volcanic eruptions from large volcanoes located somewhere offshore and subsequent weathering from around 250 million years ago. The rocks on this part of the coast are called the Blow Hole Latite, a volcanic flow like basalt, and the underlying Westley Park Sandstone, formed of particles of weathered volcanic rock. The famous Kiama blow hole to the north, discovered by explorer George Bass in December 1797 while exploring the coast south of Sydney, is formed in this latite rock.

A long period of erosion cut valleys into the sequence of volcanic flows and intervening sandstones to produce the typical Kiama landscape we see today. The most spectacular scenery is to be seen along the coast, where vertical cliffs up to nearly 40 metres high fall directly into the sea. Glimpses of this coast can be seen from the highway, high above to the west; there is now an opportunity to get up close to this marvellous coastal scenery.

Thanks to the efforts of Kiama Council and land purchases by the NSW Government, much of this coast is now available to the public, the most southern section, known as the Kiama coast walk, is a well-defined walking track with signposts and information plaques. The walk has become very popular with locals and visitors alike since it opened in late 2009.

The northern end of the walk is located at the end of Elanora Road; the southern end is at Warri Beach, beside Warri Lagoon, just to the north of Gerringong. In addition to the high cliffs, there are wave-washed rock platforms, interesting geological features such as dykes and beaches covered in cobbles and boulders. The walk is about six kilometres in length and allows access to some of the most spectacular coast in New South Wales. At a leisurely pace, with time for stopping regularly to admire and photograph the views, the walk takes about 2.5 hours.

The track is mostly high above the sea, providing distant views down the coast as far as Currarong, on the northern side of Jervis Bay. Every turn in the track and each ridge climbed reveals a fresh view of the nearby cliffs and the rolling surf against the rock platforms below. The walk only dips to sea level in a few places; this allows some exploring of the rocky shores and adjacent platforms. This coast is an important part of the geological heritage of the state, as it exhibits a unique geological sequence and special geological and weathering features associated with the very old volcanic rocks.

Like most of this volcanic area, the original forest was cleared for farming, particularly dairying, an industry that was based on the rich soils and high rainfall experienced in this region. Subtropical rainforest once covered the area, growing right to the cliff edges, where low-growing, wind-sheared shrubs took the full force of the ocean winds. This rainforest extended inland to the west and north and covered most of the valleys and ridges surrounding Saddleback Mountain. Tiny remnants of this rainforest, mixed with typical coastal plants like the Coast Banksia *Banksia integrifolia*, can be seen along some sections of the walk. For over 150 years the area was farmed and today almost the entire coast is completely treeless, the grazing paddocks extending to the cliff edges. Since the

farming stopped and stock was excluded by fencing, the native plants are slowly returning to the area around the walk.

The high cliffs are great vantage points for spotting whales as they travel up and down the coast, while seabirds are regularly seen, including Australasian Gannets as they plunge into the water from a great height, returning to the surface with a captured fish.

The walk should be undertaken with due regard to the hazards along the way, particularly dangerous cliff edges. Take the usual walking requirements and don't forget to sit on the grass every once in a while and enjoy the view. A vehicle can be left at each end of the walk to avoid having to walk back to your starting point; although keen walkers will want to walk both directions. Gerringong with its various cafes is the perfect place for a well-earned lunch after completing the walk. One final tip, if walking one way, the walk is best done from north to south, so that you are not walking into the sun.

Kiama Coast Walk Length: Approximately six kilometres. Time one way: 2.5 hours. Grade: Moderate (level to gentle steepness). Navigation: Very easy; route makers and signs are placed regularly along the mown track. Time of Year: Anytime; likely to be very hot in summer, as there is no shade.

Hazards: Cliff edges are very dangerous, so little ones should be supervised at all times. What to Take: Sun hat, water, snacks, strong shoes and clothes appropriate to the season and weather conditions. Don't forget the camera and binoculars.



Rocky beaches occur along the walk; a stand of remnant rainforest can be seen on the cliff edge south of the cove



Cliffs and rock platforms near the southern end of the Kiama Coast Walk; the town of Gerringong can be seen in the distance



Walkers stopped along the Kiama Coast Walk to enjoy the view to the south.

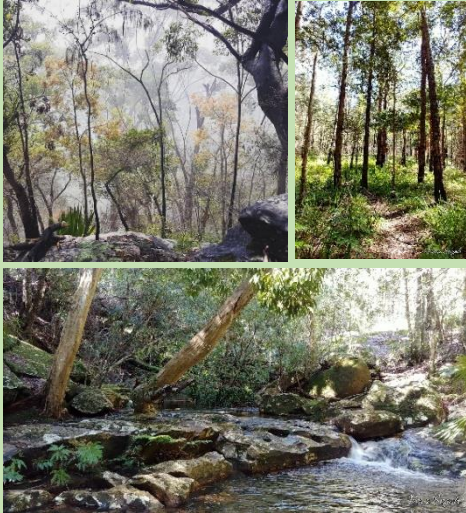


The southern end of the Kiama Coast Walk near Werri Lagoon; houses at Werri Beach in distance.

Walumarra Track, Palona cave and Forest Path

Vera Segoh

Walumarra Track stretches from Sir Bertram Drive all the way to Lady Carrington Drive for 4.2 Km. You can start exploring the track from either Walumarra Fire Trail along Sir Bertram Drive (around 1km before Curra Moor car park if you drive from Audley) or from the other end, where Sir Bertram Drive intersects with Lady Carrington Drive.



Walumarra Track Woodlands in misty Summer (left) and early Autumn (right), Bola Creek Crossing (bottom)



Walumarra Track Heathland

Walumarra Track doesn't have sweeping ocean views like the Royal National Coastal walk from Otford to Bundeena, but it's home to a vast variety of flora ranging in size from the minute *Hygrocybe* species fungi, some of them are no bigger than a pinhead, to the giant Australian Red Cedar. If you do your walk in March or April, this place is full of all sorts of fungi.



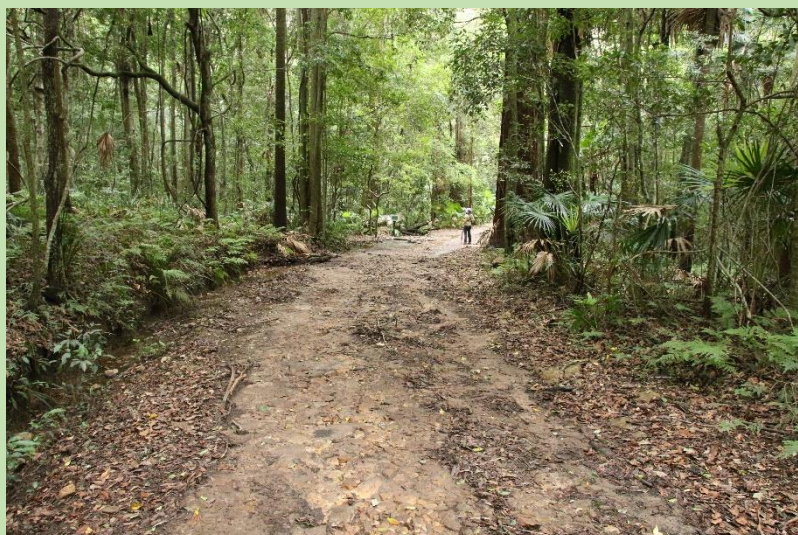
Coral fungi found in Forest Path



*Geastrum sp (top), Hygrocybe Sp (left)
and Entoloma viriscens (right)*

If you start from Walumarra fire trail, you will see the heathland during the first few kilometres of your walk, afterward you will descend into the woodland and finally you'll cross Bola Creek twice before reaching Lady Carrington Drive. Some parts of the subtropical forest around Bola Creeks are barely touched by the sun, giving you the feeling that it's the sort of place fairies come to play.

Depending on the time of year, you'll be able to witness the different wonders of nature that the track has to offer. In August and September, the whole woodland is full of blooming Gymealilies. Orchids are also found in the woodland of the track. In late September to January, you might be able to hear the sound of cicadas. In November and early December, Christmas bushes decorate the rocky areas. After walking for 4.2 km, you'll come up to Lady Carrington Drive. If you turn to the right and continue walking for around one km, you'll see the turn to Forest Path on the left.



Keep walking for another few hundred metres and you'll see a sign saying 'Limestone cave 1.6 km'. That's the track to Palona cave, a limestone cave with stalactites and stalagmites. Behind the cave, there's a waterfall. Not as famous as Winnifred Fall, but just as unique and secluded. The waterfall is decorated with big tree trunk that might have fallen in front of the waterfall years ago.



Palona Cave entrance (top), stalactites and stalagmites (bottom)



Waterfall behind Palona Cave



The Forest Path sign post along Lady Carrington Dr.



The ferns of the Forest Path track

To get back to Sir Bertram Drive, you have to walk back to Lady Carrington Drive. To make the walk complete the Forest Path is not to be missed. The path is full of all sorts of fungi, ferns, palm trees and Australian native trees. To get there, continue walking a few hundred meters and then turn right once you see the sign to Forest Path.

Marley Fire Trail Royal National Park – A Photographic Walk

Brian Everingham



This was one of those half day photographic walks I so enjoy doing and the parks have many such places. They are often worth visiting at different times of the day and also during different seasons and weather. The photographic subjects change with both and the keen photographer gets to play with light.



Mowlee Ridge is a called Marley Fire Trail and it exits the Bundeena Road at Lat 34.11164; Long 151.08657 or GR 236238 on MS Port Hacking, 1:25000. It is worth returning to. While it is a fire trail and shared with cyclists, there are opportunities to view wildflowers en route and at the eastern end there is a delightful potential loop to Wattamolla and along the Coast Track.



Don't forget to check out the rocks. They do make good photographic subjects.









Carrying lots of camera gear makes for a heavy pack but photographic walks are slow, steady and aimed for those who want to look closely, observe nature, take in the hues, and soak in the light, focus on the subject. They are, in many special ways, a communing with the landscape and that makes them special.