



# waterfall way

a new journey,  
a new story ...

An exciting journey of discovery,  
linking Coffs Coast to the New England Tableland,  
through a landscape rich in culture and natural history.  
Come and start your own story.

*A new journey, a new story ...*



‘Thank you’

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New England to Coffs Coast Cross Region Sustainable Tourism Strategy.

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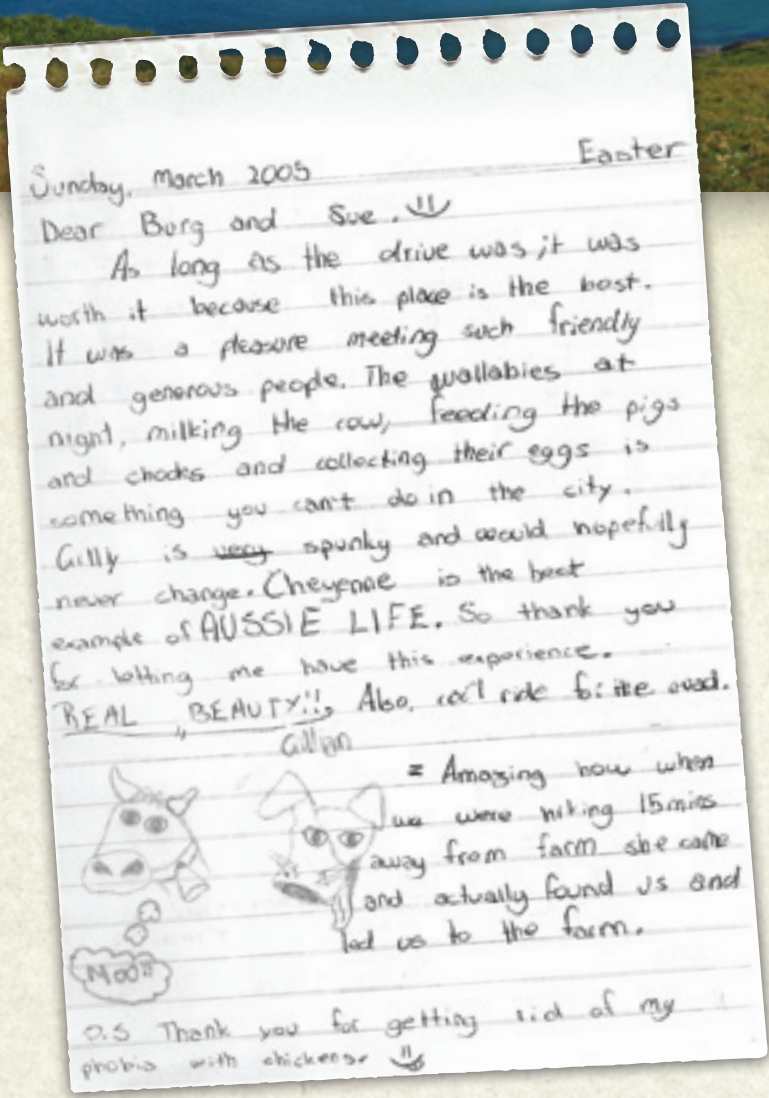
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A new journey, a new story . . .

Bellbirds (extracts from)

By channels of coolness the echoes are calling,  
And down the dim gorges I hear the creek falling:  
It lives in the mountain where moss and the sedges  
Touch with their beauty the banks and the ledges  
Through breaks of the cedar and sycamore bowers  
Struggles the light that is love to the flowers;  
And, softer than slumber, and sweeter than singing,  
The notes of the bell-birds are running and ringing.  
The silver-voiced bell-birds, the darlings of daytime!  
They sing in September their songs of the May-time;  
When shadows wax strong, and the thunder bolts hurtle,  
They hide with their fear in the leaves of the myrtle;  
When rain and the sunbeams shine mingled together,  
They start up like fairies that follow fair weather;  
And straightway the hues of their feathers unfold  
Are the green and the purple, the blue and the golden.

( . . . )  
Welcome as waters unvisited by the summers  
Are the voices of bell-birds to the thirsty far-comers  
When fiery December sets foot in the forest,  
And the need of the wayfarer presses the sorest,  
Pent in the ridges for ever and ever  
The bell-birds direct him to spring and to river,  
With ring and with ripple, like runnels who torrents  
Are toned by the pebbles and the leaves in the currents.

Henry Kendall



# The Waterfall Way

Boundaries and positions are approximate



## Visitor Centres:

### Walcha

51w Fitzroy Street, Walcha.  
Phone 02 6774 2460.

### Uralla

104 Bridge Street, Uralla.  
Phone 02 6778 4496.

### Armidale

82 Marsh Street, Armidale.  
Phone 02 6772 4655.

### Guyra

New England Highway, Guyra.  
Phone 02 6779 1876.

### Dorrigo

Hickory Street, Torrigo.  
Phone 02 6657 2486.

### Bellingen

Doepel Street, Bellingen.  
Phone 02 6655 1522.

### Urunga

Pacific Highway, Urunga.  
Phone 02 6655 5711.

### Nambucca Heads

Cnr. Pacific Highway and Riverside Drive,  
Nambucca Heads.  
Phone 02 6568 6954.

### Coffs Harbour

Cnr. Pacific Highway and McLean Street,  
Coffs Harbour.  
Phone 1300 369 070 or 02 6648 4990.

### Woolgoolga

Boundary Street, Woolgoolga.  
Phone 02 6654 8080







# Introduction

Somewhere high on the Great Dividing Range, rain is falling. It is filling the lagoons where Japanese snipe fly thousands of kilometres to come to feed, it waters cool-climate vines, swelling grapes for the next vintage. A little creek flows across the high pastures and through forests, until it plunges over a waterfall. In the waterfall's spray and mist, a rainbow appears and the river descends into deep, gorge country, the home of the brush-tailed rock-wallaby.

Ancient, mossy forests, a remnant of Gondwana, drip with water. **Shady rainforests drink their fill**, while bats feast on nectar high in the canopy. The river grows wider and deeper as it approaches the coast. High above the trees, a sea-eagle soars, searching for fish in the water below.

Winding slowly, the river fills the wetlands where black swans nest. Tiny fish dart through the waters of an estuary edged with mangroves. **The sea is roaring, surf tumbling onto a wide, sandy beach and farther out, in the ocean at the edge of the continental shelf, a humpback whale is calling to her calf.**

This is the *Waterfall Way* - an awe-inspiring journey from the high tablelands of New England through the

rainforests and down to the Coffs Coast. It is home to rare and endangered plants and animals that live in an incredible variety of habitats. It is a new journey for you to explore, and a new story to experience.

*This is the Waterfall Way, an awe inspiring journey from the high tablelands of New England through the rainforests and down to the Coffs Coast.*

*Each journey is like a story that leaves you wanting to know what happens in the next chapter...*

The people who live around the *Waterfall Way* region are keen to welcome you and share their stories, their places and their produce. So, take a walk with a local guide, learn to milk a cow, taste locally-grown and prepared food and wine, discover an Aboriginal perspective, bicycle through a new landscape or wait quietly at dawn to see the birds.

Each journey is like a story that leaves you wanting to know what happens in the next chapter. It's a story you can come back to again and again, discovering more each visit.

Take your time and the *Waterfall Way* will unfold for you with new people and places that are worth slowing down to experience.

The journeys that follow are a taste of the *Waterfall Way*. You'll find all the information you need to create your own journey with details about places to stay, places to visit and things to do on the *Waterfall Way* website at:

[www.visitwaterfallway.com.au](http://www.visitwaterfallway.com.au)

*A new journey, a new story...*



## Tread Softly Mortal Man

Elaine Delaney, Walcha

The mist hangs low on distant hills  
Slowly creeps and gently spills,  
Into the valleys and gullies below.

Earth lies still, all moist and damp  
The dew so soft on leaf and plant,  
Reflecting delicate webs of lace.

Lyrebirds call from deep in the bush  
Parrots screech shrilly breaking the hush,  
Wallabies pause - and then resume flight.

Fresh mountain streams with sparkling force  
Drop swiftly over rock and gorge,  
Chuckling 'neath the moss and fern.

Wombats meander along well beaten paths  
Eagles circle high, riding wind drafts,  
Kangaroos laze idly in leafy shade.

Nature's cycle since time gave birth  
Brings peace, pervading sky and earth.  
Mortal man tread softly,  
guard these treasures -

Be aware!

Ebor Falls in full flow



1. Kunderang fishing



2. Ladyfinger palm

3. Farming



4. Local trout



5. Cool climate wine



6. Native Raspberry

## A Taste of the Way . . .

*Food and wine bring us together*

"I use the Dorrigo Pepper that grows in the paddocks around town. Dorrigo cheese, boysenberry jelly and wine, local beef and potatoes. The red soil makes good potatoes, I like to mash them or bake them whole.

We get 100 inches of rain here and that means great feed for the cattle. The area used to be famous for its butter but that's not made now but there is a local cheese maker making double brie, fetta and camembert that I use on a cheese platter with quince paste, or I crumble the fetta over a salad with roasted beetroots.

I look for locally-grown herbs from people's gardens and I use the Dorrigo Pepper that's native to the area. It's harvested by two local high school students who dry it over the bakery ovens. They dry the berries and leaves and bag it up to sell."

Kenton Shaw, Dorrigo

Relaxing over a good meal with family, friends, plenty of conversation and laughter is a wonderful way to enjoy the local produce of the *Waterfall Way*.

Share a yarn with the people who grow and produce the local food and wine as you visit their farms along the *Waterfall Way*. Meeting the people and tasting their produce is your personal introduction to the country and its food and wine.

Give your visit a regional flavour by buying food at the growers' markets and ask at restaurants for dishes made with local ingredients.

Trying locally-produced food and wine is a great way to enjoy the *Waterfall Way* region while looking after the environment and supporting local communities. Eating locally means that the food is fresh and doesn't have to travel long distances to markets and shops. When you buy locally-grown produce, you connect to the community that you visit and also reduce your ecological footprint.

Succulent fruits, honey and seafood are the highlights of the subtropical coastal region, where the abundant sunshine and water create sensational local produce. You'll find restaurants serving local food and wine, and roadside stalls selling the produce grown in lush valleys and on sunny hillsides.

Visit the Macksville region to try the local bush tucker of lillipillies, Davidson plums, lemon and aniseed myrtle, native limes and macadamia nuts. These local ingredients give the special flavours to the award-winning Macksville sausages. Locally-grown and processed macadamias are available as plain or flavoured varieties for you to try and buy.

Around Urunga, taste the local honey with its rich, full flavour from the coastal forests. The bees do well here, where plentiful rainfall means that the trees and plants produce an abundance of flowers.

The volcanic soil of the valleys is a rich source of nutrients for organically-grown fruit and vegetables. The light winter frosts create a great range of sweet citrus for you to try, including mandarins, pomelos, oranges, lemons and grapefruit. In summer, the warmer weather ripens juicy mangoes and sweet, ladyfinger bananas.

The local winery uses French hybrid grape varieties suitable for the subtropical climate to produce easy-

drinking, fruit-driven wines which are available from the cellar door and at local hotels and restaurants.

Along the coast at Coffs Harbour, you'll find a fleet of fishing boats that venture out daily to catch local fish. They bring home a diverse catch, because the sea here carries the warm currents from the north and the cooler waters from the south. You can choose from a wide range of fresh fish that includes snapper, kingfish, tuna, pearl perch and parrot fish. Cook the fish yourself or try a seafood meal around the Coffs Harbour jetty or in one of the local restaurants.

Coffs Harbour is famous for a certain large yellow fruit so you shouldn't miss tasting the local bananas, avocados, blueberries and strawberries while you're in the area.

Heading north along the coast, you'll know you've reached Woolgoolga when you see the distinctive Guru Nanak Sikh temple on the hill. There's a large Sikh population in this small beachside village and the annual Curryfest in April is the best time to try a wide variety of curries.

As you travel inland the soils and climate change as the road climbs through the rainforest. **If the coast provides a starter and dessert, the mountains provide the main course of beef, lamb and potatoes.**

Dorrigo is famous for its potatoes, grown in the rich red soil. Team the potatoes with Dorrigo Pepper, a spicy seasoning from the leaves and berries of a native plant that is harvested locally and sold in the town. While you're here, try the local fruit wines and jellies and taste the Dorrigo cheeses.

Further inland, the high country grows tasty beef and lamb. **In Guyra, they celebrate the local produce every year with the Lamb and Potato festival in January.** Close to Guyra you can catch and taste locally produced trout, which are grown and smoked on the farm.

South of Walcha, berry farms produce an extensive variety of berries for jams and berry wines. Grapes also grow well and the high country around Armidale produces an impressive range of wines. The region's climate with summer rain and cool winters creates wines with a distinctive regional character. The climate favours cool European grape varieties that produce softer, fruitier styles of wine. **Combine the wines with some local beef or lamb for a taste of the *Waterfall Way*.**

### Dorrigo Pepper *Tasmannia stipitata*

Dorrigo Pepper is a rainforest shrub that grows around Dorrigo. It has long thin leaves and creamy white flowers in summer.

Dried leaves and berries give a sharp, hot, spicy flavour used as a seasoning like black pepper.



7. Pepper bush

Male and female flowers of the Dorrigo Pepper grow on separate plants. The berries grow on the female plants; they are blackish, oval-shaped and grow up to a centimetre long.

Add Dorrigo Pepper at the end of cooking for a hot seasoning. If you prefer a milder seasoning, add it during cooking.

Sea Fishing - Coffs Headland



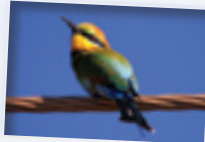
1. Galah



2. Moonee



3. Rainbow Bee-eater



4. Wedgetail Eagle



5. Mother of Ducks Lagoon



6. Sawmy Fringmouth



## Meet the Birds . . .

### *The way of an eagle in the air*

*"The swans come in October and November when the weed grows. I see them flying in groups of half a dozen to 15, three or four times a day. In summer when they're out there in the wetland the honking is like a symphony of swans. If you could, you'd put it on toast and eat it."*

*"I like to take people to go and see the little cygnets hiding in the bushes. People really get a rush when they see half a dozen cygnets ducking and diving. If I close my eyes I can just see it - the big males honking to tell all the others you're coming."*

*"It's special to see four or five hundred black swans happily munching away. It's a sight you don't forget."*

Dennis Ryan, Macksville

The *Waterfall Way* is a wonderful meeting place for birds. The region is like a huge crossroads with birds arriving from the south and the north of Australia. Others fly in from Japan, New Guinea or the Philippines. The exciting diversity of habitats means that birdwatchers have the chance to see a wide range of species in one region.

If you're looking for your first jabiru, an endangered regent honeyeater, the nest tunnels of the rainbow bee-eater or black swan cygnets, then there are some special places to visit along the *Waterfall Way*.

**Dangar's Lagoon, just outside Uralla on Thunderbolt's Way, is a favourite with waterbirds because it is one of the few lagoons in the area that usually has water.** It was declared as a Wildlife Refuge in 1972 and more than 110 species of birds have been recorded there. Take a walk around the lagoon to the bird hide where you may be able to watch pink-eared, blue-billed and musk ducks, shovelers, hardheads, Australasian and hoary-headed grebes and great crested grebes, whiskered terns, sharp-tailed sandpipers, marsh sandpipers and greenshanks to name just a few of the visitors.

Another popular breeding and feeding ground for waterbirds is the **Mother of Ducks Lagoon in Guyra. Next to the town's golf course, this lagoon is a freshwater wetland in a volcanic crater, 14km around.** Take a walk along the edge to watch for black ducks, black swans, straw-necked ibis, grey teals, hoary-headed grebes, musk ducks, swampheens, woodhens and Japanese snipe. The Japanese snipe breed in Japan then leave in August for the long journey to Australia through Taiwan, Eastern New Guinea and arrive in Australia at Cape York to fly down the east coast for the Australian summer. This important migration route for waders is covered by an international agreement to protect feeding and breeding sites for waterbirds.

As you journey down from the high plateau into the rainforest at Dorrigo the habitat changes and so does the birdlife. Follow a walk through the rainforest to discover the birds that prefer life in the cool, green light under the tree canopy. Walking along the path you'll hear rustlings in the leaf litter where birds are hunting for insects. There are plenty of scrubwrens and brush-turkeys along the tracks. Look out for the bright red and green king parrots, yellow and black regent bowerbirds,

and the green catbird with its call that sounds like a cat or a wailing baby.

Travelling down to the coastal regions, you'll find another range of habitats for local and visiting birds. Rainbow bee-eaters dig their metre-long nesting tunnels near the coast here. These brightly-coloured birds fly south from the Kimberley and Gulf of Carpentaria to breed here. You can often see them during summer along the Lake Road at Woolgoolga where an area is fenced off to protect their nests. They nest in groups and help each other to dig their nesting tunnels and share the incubation and feeding of their chicks. You can watch them catch bees, wasps and other insects as they swoop from their perches near their nesting site.

Muttonbirds or wedge-tailed shearwaters visit Coffs Harbour between August and May to breed on Muttonbird Island. Walk along the Coffs Harbour breakwater to reach the island where the shearwaters nest. They dig or repair burrows on the island and lay their eggs underground. The best time to watch them is when they return at dusk with food for their mates and chicks in the burrow. By April the chicks are fully grown and may weigh more than their parents. Most of the adults leave the island first and the chicks follow early in May.

South from Coffs Harbour along the coast at Boambee and Sawtell are good spots to look for the brilliant yellow and black regent honeyeater. This bird was once common in New South Wales but now only 1500 birds are estimated to survive in Australia. This is one of several woodland birds that have severely declined due to vegetation clearance.

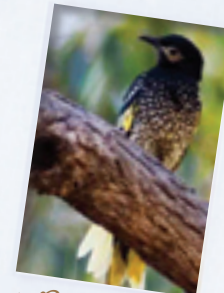
Mangroves provide valuable habitat for fish and birds and at Urunga you can explore the mangroves without getting your feet wet. Take a walk along the boardwalk that starts at the southern end of the caravan park for a chance to watch estuarine birds feeding in the mangroves.

Further south near Macksville you can visit the wetlands where black swans breed and you may see the impressive jabiru or black-necked stork, standing over a metre high.

The *Waterfall Way* covers an incredible range of habitats where new and experienced birdwatchers will find a wonderful variety of species to watch and enjoy.

### Regent Honeyeater *Xanthomyza phrygia*

Also known as warty-faced honeyeater and embroidered honeyeater. Mugga ironbark trees provide a good food source for these birds when in flower, as do white box, yellow box, Blakely's red gum, swamp mahogany, spotted gum, mistletoe and bottlebrush (*callistemon*). They also eat insects, lerps and some fruit if necessary.



7. Regent Honeyeater

Once spread throughout at least four states and one territory, there are now only an estimated 1,500 to 800 birds still left in Australia, existing in small populations throughout NSW, Victoria, ACT and QLD. It is regularly sighted up to 300km inland from the coast, but numbers have dropped dramatically in the past few decades due to land clearing, drought and competition for food. It breeds around Bundarra/Barraba, and also in the Capertee valley near Lithgow. Both areas are where much of the recovery efforts for the species are being undertaken.

Protecting and enhancing important habitat areas will benefit the environment as well as the regent honeyeater and other wildlife.

Birdwatching at Dangar's Lagoon - Uralla





## The Way Less Travelled . . .

*Take some time out*

"Settled into camp and had a great spot to set up my tent. Made a cup of coffee and went to the rim edge to watch the sunset.

Awesome colours of reds and oranges intertwined with the hazy blues/grey tones of the night shadows highlighting the breadth and depth of the valley before me. Seemed like I was so in touch with the spiritual world and was transfixed in my comfy position in awe.

In the stillness of the twilight a lyrebird came wandering to within 20 metres, until he spotted my tiny movement for adjustment for a clearer look at him. He fled over the steepness into the dark shadows below. The calling by his companions in the gorge echoed into the thin cooling air of the night.

Cont...

Experience the world on foot. Walking helps you slow down, connect with the earth and become rejuvenated. Relax as you experience the panoramic lookouts, the waterfalls and the many different environments with their special plants, birds and animals. These walks are just a small sample of the variety of walks along the *Waterfall Way*.

For more information about walks along the *Waterfall Way*, visit the website at [www.visitwaterfallway.com.au](http://www.visitwaterfallway.com.au)

### 1 Bundageree Rainforest walk, Bongil Bongil National Park. Easy - 6km return.

**Access;** From Pacific Highway, 6km north of Urunga. Follow Tuckers Rock Road to car park at end. This easy walk follows a track through remnant rainforest parallel to the coast. The rainforest here has adapted to the sandy soil and salt winds. You'll see banksias, tea-trees, strangler figs and eucalypts. Look up in the trees for elkhorn ferns and orchids. Flycatchers, honeyeaters, whipbirds and bowerbirds are often heard and sometimes seen as they flit between the trees.

The track emerges from the shade into bright sunlight at Bundagen Headland where the tea-coloured waters of Bundageree Creek flow into the sea. On the beach, you may find shells, coral and cuttlefish bones washed up on the sand. Explore the miniature worlds of the rock pools and look out for pied cormorants and sooty oystercatchers perching on the rocks.

You can return the way you came or walk back to the car park along the beach.

### 2 Woolgoolga Waterfall walk, Sherwood Nature Reserve. Easy - 2.8km return. Picnic tables and toilet at car park.

**Access;** From Pacific Highway turn west at Woolgoolga roundabout along Pullen Street and Creek Road for 3km to left hand turn to Sherwood Nature Reserve.

A rare remnant of old growth subtropical rainforest in the region. This area was logged for cedar and only small areas of rainforest remain. The walk is shady and mainly flat. After rain there may be water over several creek crossings. The rainforest plants include yellow carabeen with its buttressed trunk,

red cedar and coachwood. There are many bird's nest and elkhorn ferns high in the trees, and vines which wrap around trunks and loop from branches. It's a popular place for birdwatchers and the picnic area is a good spot to see goannas attracted by the barbeques.

The walk leads to a bridge over the creek and up steps to see the small waterfall which runs after rain.

### Flying-fox walk, Bellingen. Easy - 1-2km circuit.

**Access;** Through the old Bellingen caravan park, Hammond Street to Bellingen Island.

Hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of grey-headed flying-foxes make Bellingen Island their home. Walk quietly through Bellingen Island along the marked paths and look up to see the bats roosting in the trees during the day. They hang upside down to sleep, wrapping their wings around their bodies. They also spend the day grooming, squabbling and changing position on the trees.

These fruit bats fly away to spend the night eating fruit, pollen and nectar. They prefer native plants but will eat cultivated fruit when other sources are scarce. Lavenders Bridge is the best spot to watch them leave around dusk.

### 4 Norman Jolly Memorial Grove, Nymboi-Binderay National Park. Easy - 800 metres. Picnic tables and toilet at car park.

**Access;** From Bostobrick follow the unsealed Moonpar Road for 11km to Norman Jolly picnic area.

Park beside the picnic area under the tall canopy of tallowwoods, brush box and Sydney blue gum to walk along the Coachwood Walk. The two largest tallowwood trees here are estimated to be 600 years old. These trees are rare survivors of the local logging industry and give an insight into how the ancient forests would have looked.

Continue along a bush trail, crossing a timber bridge on the tramline track that was used to take timber to bush mills when the forest was logged in the 1930s.



### 5 Warrigal circuit, Cathedral Rock National Park. Easy - 1km circuit. Picnic tables and toilet at car park.

**Access;** From Guyra Road, 13km north of Ebor. Start from Native Dog camping area.

A walk through the dry woodland of Cathedral Rock National Park with views from granite outcrops. This walk has plenty of interpretive signs with information on the park and its plants and animals. Look for native orchids and *Styphelia perileuca*, a plant special to this area. Because it mainly occurs in this area it is listed as a Rare or Threatened Australian Plant (ROTAP). The Ebor *styphelia* has yellow-green, tube-like flowers with fine, pink stripes. It blooms in spring and summer.

Watch for woodland birds including rose robins, flycatchers and pardalotes. The area is named for the dingo and you may see one if you're very lucky.

There are a range of other longer walks in the area that include a 5.8km walk to the top of Cathedral Rock with views of the tablelands.

### 6 Point Lookout, New England National Park. Easy - Less than 1km. Picnic tables and toilet at car park.

**Access;** From *Waterfall Way* turn along Point Lookout Road, mainly unsealed.

An easy walk from the Point Lookout car park to two viewing platforms with views to the north, east and south. On a clear day you may see the Pacific Ocean 70km away. Point Lookout is 1562 metres above sea level, perched on top of a steep escarpment. Listen for the superb lyrebird mimicking other birds and even car alarms and cameras.

There is a selection of other walks in the area including the 2.5km Eagles Nest Track that descends into a mossy, Antarctic beech forest, a remnant of the Gondwana forests of 80-million-years ago.

### 7 Wollomombi Gorge, Oxley Wild Rivers National Park. Easy - 1-2km. Picnic tables and toilet at car park.

**Access;** From *Waterfall Way*, 40km east of Armidale.

A great place to see the gorge and waterfalls after rain. There are several short and easy walks along the rim of the gorge, from the picnic area to lookouts to see the waterfalls. The park is listed on the World Heritage Register for its extensive dry rainforest and rare and threatened species.

The falls are among the tallest in Australia with a total height of more than 200 metres.

### 8 Heritage walk, Uralla. Easy - 1-2km circuit. Toilet at Visitor Information Centre.

**Access;** Start from the Uralla Visitor Information Centre on the corner of Bridge and Salisbury St.

Pick up a leaflet from the Visitor Information Centre before you start and follow the trail to walk past 34 historic buildings that include McCrossin's flour mill, built in 1871 and now a museum, the Coachwood and Cedar Hotel, with its iron lace balcony and Uralla granite quoins, as well as old banks, churches, meeting halls and private homes.

Much of the iron lace in Uralla was made locally at the New England Brass and Iron Lace Foundry.

### 9 Sculpture walk, Walcha. Easy - 1-2km. Picnic tables and toilet at McHattan Park.

**Access;** Start from McHattan Park, Fitzroy Street, Walcha.

Pick up a leaflet about the artworks from the Visitor Information Centre on the corner of Fitzroy and South Streets. This collection of more than 25 sculptures and public artworks creates an interesting and dramatic walk around the town. James Roger's sculpture, *Song Cycle* dominates the town centre from the roundabout. A collection of sculptures and street furniture follows the Apsley River, and the town entrances are marked with wood and steel sculptures.

Then the moon rose from the horizon in the same orange glow that was previously experienced the night before. I had been lying here for about three hours, taking in all the beauty that surrounded me but could not move until the moon had risen to the point that it again highlighted the mountainous terrain before me. Silence is deafening. Unreal!!!"

Charlie Winter, Walcha



## Superb Lyrebird *Menura novaehollandiae*

Males from 800-1000mm including 500-600mm tail, females smaller. Upper parts chocolate brown with paler brown underparts. The adult male has an ornate tail, with two long central plumes, 12 filaments and two outer feathers which, in display, assume the shape of a lyre. Males create earth display mounds where they display and sing to attract a female.



14. Lyrebird

They can mimic almost any sound including chainsaws, horns, alarms and even trains but they usually copy the sounds of other birds and mammals. Females incubate the single egg, and the young fledge in six weeks. Lyrebirds are found in wet eucalypt and rainforest.

Lyrebird on Point Lookout walking track

## Walking story - key:



- 1 Bundageree Rainforest walk, Bongil Bongil National Park
- 2 Woolgoolga Waterfall walk, Sherwood Nature Reserve
- 3 Flying-fox walk, Bellingen
- 4 Norman Jolly Memorial Grove, Nymboi-Binderay National Park
- 5 Warrigal circuit, Cathedral Rock National Park
- 6 Point Lookout, New England National Park
- 7 Wollomombi Gorge, Oxley Wild Rivers National Park
- 8 Heritage walk, Uralla
- 9 Sculpture walk, Walcha

"We were unloading our backpacks at Wattle Flat, when we were asked by a somewhat overweight lady in thongs how far we'd walked. Peter said "About 300 km from Opsley Falls - we're going through to Boff's Harbour". She looked up and down at our 60- plus aged faces and said "Well, that'll keep you out of the nursing home for a bit longer!" Now all our longer trips have become "Nursing Home Walks".

David Lawrence, Armidale



1. Dorrigo

2. Ebor Falls

3. Mt Yarramajak cycling

4. Cycle trip

5. Rocky River

6. Urunga

## Another Way to Travel . . .

*Cycle from the top of the range down to the sea*

"I enjoy the continuous challenge of cycling and especially in our area where each ride is an adventure. The landscape varies from open farmland and dairy farms to forests, rainforests, rivers, creeks with creek crossings and magnificent tall trees, some 400 years old."

"The views looking over the rolling hills of the Great Dividing Range are magnificent and seem to beckon you to come and ride over them. The views over the rolling hills of the farmland, particularly in spring when the grass is lush, are superb. Rides through the rainforest sections are always cool with ample bird and animal life."

"On one ride we encountered two beautiful lyrebirds in the middle of the road and they didn't move but just stared at us as we rode past."

George Hudson, Urunga

### Guyra to Urunga

From the top of the range at Guyra down 1330 metres to the sea at Urunga you'll ride across high tablelands, take a steep descent through the rainforest and follow the coastal rivers to the sea. All but 4km of the road is sealed and most of the ride is on quiet backroads with little traffic. It's a good idea to avoid mid-winter when it can be snowing at Guyra and summer holidays when the traffic is heavier.

You won't need camping gear because you'll find accommodation and places to eat each night. Visit the *Waterfall Way* website [www.visitwaterfallway.com.au](http://www.visitwaterfallway.com.au) for information on public transport.

### Day one: Guyra to Ebor - 83km.

Start Guyra 1330 metres. Guyra is at the top of the Great Dividing Range but that doesn't mean it's all downhill. The ride to Ebor is across the tablelands with many undulations. There are no food or water stops so you'll need to carry whatever you require for the ride.

Leave Guyra along Ollera Street East (east side of the New England Highway) and turn into the Ebor Road following the signs to Ebor. Follow this road all the way to the *Waterfall Way*, then turn left there and ride 4km to Ebor. It's worth stopping at Ebor Falls to see the waterfall.

You'll find overnight accommodation and food in Ebor but it is best to book in advance.

### Day two: Ebor to Dorrigo - 57km.

Start Ebor 1300 metres. Today you'll notice more downhills as you drop nearly 600m to Dorrigo. The environment changes as you descend through moist forests lining the road. There is a small shop at Tyringham where you can buy food and drink.

Ride through Ebor along the *Waterfall Way* for 9km, then turn left on the road to Grafton through the localities of Hernani and Glen Fernaigh. Tyringham is 30km from Ebor and 1km off your route, so if you decide to visit the shop you will need to return the way you came and then turn east along the Tyringham Road to Bostobrick. Follow the road to Bostobrick and then through North Dorrigo to Dorrigo. There is a good choice of places to stay and eat in Dorrigo, and you can visit Dangar Falls, just north of town.

### Day three: Dorrigo to Urunga - 58-62km depending on route.

Start Dorrigo 760 metres. You'll lose most of your altitude on the first 14km of today's ride as you descend through the rainforest on the *Waterfall Way*. Take special care on this section as the road is narrow and winding, and you may need to stop

and allow other vehicles to pass. Bellingen has plenty of places to stop for lunch.

Descend on the *Waterfall Way* from Dorrigo towards Thora but turn left before you reach Thora along Summervilles Road (14km from Dorrigo) to stay on the north bank of the Bellinger River. There are two unsealed sections of about 4km in total along this road. Follow the road left to Gordonville and turn right at the Gleniffer crossroads to follow the Gleniffer Road to Bellingen (35km), then either stay on the north side for North Bank Road or cross the bridge over Bellinger River to the south side for South Arm Road.

**Option one:** North Bank Road. Bellingen to Urunga 23km. Total 58km. From the roundabout on the north side of Bellingen bridge follow Wheatley Street which becomes North Arm Road. This road leads through dairy country and there are good views back to the mountains. After 12km from the roundabout follow the road under the Pacific Highway, then turn right to cross a bridge over the Bellinger River. Then turn left and follow North Street and Yellow Rock Road. As you approach Urunga, turn left into Vernon Crescent. At the end of the road take the walkway down to the river and then up the ramp to the highway. Cross the bridge over the river then turn left (don't cross the highway) and follow the road down hill. Turn left and cross the railway bridge and follow the road to the centre of Urunga.

**Option two:** South Arm Road to Urunga 27km. Total 62km. This ride includes a one-and-a-half km climb up Hospital Hill out of Bellingen. Head southwest out of Bellingen on Church Street then up Bowraville Road. Turn left onto South Arm Road and follow this road along the north bank of the Kalang River. Turn right onto Short Cut Road which comes out on the Pacific Highway. Cross the highway, turn right and ride into Urunga.

There are places to stay and eat in Urunga and connections to rail and bus.

### New England Hairpin Banksia *Banksia spinulosa* var *neoangelica*

An attractive shrub growing to about 1.5 metres high on granite or basalt rock, in heath and woodland, flowering with big, orange 'bottlebrushes' in late autumn or winter. First identified one km north of turnoff to New England National Park, Ebor-Armidale road, 1986.

There is a huge range of banksias you can grow to attract nectar-eating birds to your garden. Banksias enjoy full sun and good drainage.



7. Banksia spinulosa

Learning to kayak in Bellingen





1. Brush-tailed rock-wallaby

### Brush-tailed rock-wallaby *Petrogale penicillata*

Endangered species. Lives in rocky areas in sclerophyll forest. Uses caves and rock cracks as shelter during the day. Feeds during the night on native grasses, roots and bark.

There are about 30,000 Brush-tailed Rock-wallabies left in the world today, and probably 75% of those live in the Clarence/Macleay Gorges along the Waterfall Way. In 1900, at least 50,000 were shot in Tenterfield, and in 1902, 37,000 were shot around Armidale.

Looking out over Hole Creek/Blue Mountain Creek - Walcha



## The Way of the Child . . . .

### Discover new places together

There are a lot of activities for families to enjoy along the *Waterfall Way*. It's a great way for families to explore together; finding out about birds, animals and plants. Travelling from the ocean to the high tablelands, you can observe mini-worlds in the rock pools, watch dolphins in the sea, paddle along a tranquil river, walk through a shady rainforest, look for possums, bats and stars at night, and find out where milk comes from.

Take the opportunity to join one of the holiday programs that give families a chance to discover new places together.

Coffs Coast has a wealth of beaches to enjoy and it's also a great place to go out to sea to watch the whales in the Solitary Islands Marine Park. **Humpback whales migrate up and down the coast between June and November.** They travel north to breed inside the Great Barrier Reef and return south with their calves to spend summer in the Antarctic. Humpback whales can grow to 16 metres long and weigh up to 45 tonnes but they can still launch themselves from the water and land with a giant splash. This is called breaching and may be done many times in succession. **They** come close to the coast here and there are some good lookouts from headlands but you'll have a better chance of seeing whales from one of the boats that offer whale watching tours from Coffs Harbour.

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service also runs whale watching from the viewing platform on Muttonbird Island using powerful viewing scopes and binoculars. Join a group, and the Parks staff can tell you about whales and their behaviour.

While whales are a big reason to visit the coast, there are some fascinating little creatures to see here too. With a life cycle that every child wants to know about, butterflies are as beautiful as they are interesting. Discover how a caterpillar changes into a chrysalis and then into a butterfly, and enjoy walking through the colourful clouds of butterflies from all over Australia. These butterflies live indoors in a protected environment so you can see them whatever the weather.

If your family is looking for some active adventure on the water, then a canoe trip on the Bellinger River is a fun way to explore a new environment. Paddling along the river, you'll see the world from a new angle. From the canoe you can watch for

turtles and jumping fish in the water, koalas in the trees and eagles in the air. Stop for a swim in the river or find a quiet picnic spot on the bank.

Another great place for a family picnic is the Glade Picnic Area in Dorrigo National Park. It's just a 1km walk through the rainforest from the visitor centre or you can drive and park close by. This clearing in the forest has tables, barbeques, toilets and grassy areas where the children can play. Brush-turkeys with their red heads and yellow wattles are frequent visitors here too. **There are a lot of other birds living in the rainforest and you can look for them along the *Walk with the Birds* boardwalk and the *Satinbird Stroll* that start from the picnic area.**

While you can see and hear the birds during the day, most of the animals are active at night. **Explore the rainforest after dark on a guided nocturnal walk to look for possums, bats and insects that feed at night.** You'll need to bring a small torch, walking shoes and warm clothes, and book the walk with the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.

For a real change of pace you can experience life in the bush - away from television, mobile phones and computer games - at a wilderness retreat. Children and adults can find out more about native plants and animals, explore bush trails, try bush tucker and spend the evening under the stars telling stories around a camp-fire.

If you ask your kids where milk comes from, do they answer, 'from the fridge'? Perhaps it's time to take them on a farm stay where they can help feed the pig, collect the eggs and milk the cow. As well as getting to know the farm animals, it's a chance to meet native birds and animals around the farm. In the Walcha area, the gorge country is a wonderful wildlife habitat and you may see brush-tailed rock-wallabies feeding in the evenings.

Experiencing the *Waterfall Way* with children is a great way to share discoveries and experiences that will become stories and memories for years to come.

*"For many kids, nature has become alien. So many are hooked on the techno world these days. There is a need to help awaken young people's sense of connection and belonging to the natural world, to foster an understanding of respect and responsibility for all other living things."*

*Expanding our senses and observation skills can develop awareness and a greater appreciation of nature and oneself. Learning to read the concentric rings of nature is like dropping a pebble in a pond, with conscious awareness and a few learned techniques we can create as few ripples as possible."*

*"There are ways to unlock the secrets to learning the language of the forest. Nature mirrors back to us how we are feeling, if we are still inside ourselves, we get to see more animals and birds: wallabies grooming, birds singing their base line songs - we get to see nature in a more relaxed way - not always hearing bird alarm calls but experiencing things coming towards us rather than running away. Nature itself is the greatest teacher and the earth is the real university."*

Rosemary Yates, Mt Hyland



1. Pig Face



2. Yarrowyck



3. Muttonbird Island



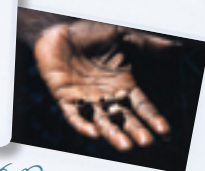
4. Butterfly secrets



5. Apsley Falls



6. Bush tucker



## Yellowfin Bream *Acanthopagrus australis*

Inhabits surf beaches and estuaries in northern NSW. Silver fish with yellow pelvic and anal fins, darker in estuaries. Yellow tail has a black edge. Grows up to 65cm long and 4kg. Peak season in NSW February to June. Popular table fish.



7. Sea Bream

# The Way of Spirit . . .

## Traditional stories and sacred places

"See that's like certain time of the year, you get more types of different fish than other fish, you know like the jewfish might be runnin' pretty well middle of winter or something. Then you might get say, sea bream, they might be around

You see the white yellow butterfly all over the place, down on the beaches there you see 'em flyin' everywhere, well that's when the big sea bream are around. Then you see the whiting and that sort of stuff, you know they're comin' probably November. And that's how they would have worked, like there was a - when those big seasons start, then they'd come together you know

But yeah, all different signs you gotta watch when different fish is comin' through"

Tony Perkins, Yarrowarra

Traditional stories and sacred places are a way to connect with the Aboriginal knowledge of this region. Our journeys touch on ancient pathways and link us to the spirit of the land. Visit the website at [www.visitwaterfallway.com.au](http://www.visitwaterfallway.com.au) for more information.

Aboriginal people tell the story of how the Rainbow Serpent created the gorge at Apsley Falls in the Dreamtime. Take a walk to one of the viewing platforms and you may see a rainbow in the mist of the falling water. The Rainbow Serpent is said to travel underground from the base of the falls to reappear at the mill hole near Walcha on the Apsley River, 20km upstream. The site is marked at Walcha by a mosaic by Gordon Hookey made with the ideas and help of the local Aboriginal community.

Apsley Falls are in the Oxley Wild Rivers National Park, just off the Oxley Highway, 20km south of Walcha. The Rainbow Serpent mosaic in Walcha is opposite the end of Legge Street on Derby Street.

The rock paintings at Mt Yarrowyck Nature Reserve, west of Armidale, tell another story. There is a short walk through the bush to see the paintings that include tracks, circles, short lines and dots painted with red ochre on an overhang under some granite boulders. These paintings are several hundreds of years old. One Aboriginal elder has explained that the paintings are about a ground feeding bird. The toes of the bird tracks are too short to be an emu so they probably represent the plains turkey or bustard.

Mt Yarrowyck is on the Bundarra to Uralla road, about 1km north of the junction with the road to Armidale. The nature reserve is on the right (north) side of the road.

Further north, there is a special area known as the Tingha Stonewoman Aboriginal Area. This place highlights the importance of natural features that occur within the landscape and are associated with the teachings of Aboriginal lore and song lines. We are lucky here in Tingha that the Stonewoman story can, and is, still being told.

The site is a women's teaching area although the local community have agreed that men may also visit this site. The signs tell the story of one of the lores relating to marriage and what the outcomes could be if this lore was ignored. If you visit, take

the time to sit and appreciate this unusual rock feature and think about what the traditional life of the local people would have been like. The community would also appreciate it if visitors left the site before 3.00pm.

To visit the Stonewoman site from Tingha, follow the New Valley Road (Ruby Street) south for 700 metres before turning right onto Kempton Road. Follow Kempton Road for 2.7km before continuing straight ahead on what becomes Long Gully Road, a further 2.1km will bring you to the car park adjacent to Long Creek. You may either drive or walk a further 300 metres south along the road to a pedestrian gate. From here, follow the signs for 750 metres to the site itself.

If you want to learn more about Aboriginal life, the Armidale and Regional Cultural Centre and Keeping Place in Armidale has a well-signed bush tucker walk, and exhibitions of Aboriginal culture and art. The Centre also runs holiday programs and study tours.

The Yarrowarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre at Arrawarra on the coast, north of Coffs Harbour, runs bush tucker and bush medicine guided tours, arts and crafts, and cultural activities. There is a gallery of Aboriginal art and a bush tucker café.

Near the boat ramp at Arrawarra beach, you can see arrangements of stone that were used as a fish trap by Aboriginal people. The trap would be baited with shellfish or meat and the fish would swim in on a high tide and once the trap was full, the entrance would be blocked, catching the fish inside.

Further south, at Yarriabini National Park, a modern sculpture marks the significance of the area to the Gumbaynggirr and Dunghutti people. Yarriabini means 'koala rolling' and is the traditional name for the coastal mountain also known as Yarrahapinni. The sculpture tells the spiritual story of a koala that was cut up by an enemy. The koala's head rolled down the mountain creating a gully on the southern side. The rest of his body became the three peaks of Yarriabini.

Yarriabini National Park is east of the Pacific Highway. Turn east to Scotts Head Road, then south onto Way Way Creek Road which leads to The Pines picnic area and the sculpture.



Grass Trees are very slow growing and may live to 600 years. Trunks only appear after many years.

Flowering often occurs in spring, particularly after a bushfire.

Found in open woodland.

## Green Travel . . .

### *Ways to do your bit*

#### Moon in the morning

New moon  
Crisp night  
Morning comes  
First light  
Purple shadows  
Distant hills  
Sun approaches  
Warmth spills  
Rose madder  
Black trees  
Peach sky  
Fresh breeze  
Moon suspended  
Silver orb  
Day brightens  
Night absorbed.

Anne Andrews,  
Walcha

#### Getting around:

Where you travel and how you travel can make a big difference to the places and the people you visit on holiday.

- By taking a holiday in the country where you live you're helping to reduce carbon emissions caused by international air travel.
- By using public transport instead of driving you're also reducing carbon emissions.
- Walking, cycling or kayaking for part of your holiday will help too.
- If you want to make your holiday carbon neutral there are organisations from where you can buy carbon offsets. See the *Waterfall Way* website for details.

#### Where to stay:

Choosing environmentally-friendly accommodation is only part of being a green traveller. It's as much about what you do during your stay as it is about recycling water and refuse.

- Think about your water use and keep your showers short.
- Turn off the tap while you're brushing your teeth.
- If you're staying in a rural area, your accommodation may be using tank water that relies on rainfall to keep it topped up.
- If you're staying several nights, hang up your towel after use rather than having it changed every day. This saves power and water with reduced laundry needs.
- You can also help to save power by turning off electrical devices and lights when you leave your room.
- Ask about your accommodation's recycling needs and sort your refuse to help.

#### Out and about:

Think local. By buying locally you're putting money back into the community you're visiting. Try local food and wine, eat at locally-owned cafes and restaurants.

- Look for locally-made items for souvenirs. Markets are a great way to find locally-made products and meet the people who make them.
- Join tours led by local operators who know the area well. They can guide you to the best places and tell you the stories that make the place special.
- Respect the environment. If you're going walking, follow existing trails to reduce erosion and take your rubbish back with you.
- Follow National Parks guidelines for bush camping and fires.
- Don't feed the native animals as they can develop diseases from human food or may become dependant on handouts.

## Getting to the *Waterfall Way* . . .

For full information and contact details visit the *Waterfall Way* website at: [www.visitwaterfallway.com.au](http://www.visitwaterfallway.com.au)

#### Car:

- Pacific Highway. Coffs Harbour is 550km north of Sydney and 427km south of Brisbane.
- New England Highway. Armidale is 535km north of Sydney and 466km south of Brisbane.
- *Waterfall Way* from Armidale on the New England Tableland to Coffs Coast.

#### Air:

- Coffs Harbour Regional Airport and Armidale Airport.

#### Train:

- From Sydney, trains stop at Macksville, Nambucca Heads, Urunga, Sawtell, Coffs Harbour.
- From Sydney, trains stop at Walcha Road, Uralla, Armidale.

#### Bus:

- Pacific Highway Sydney to Brisbane buses stop at: Macksville, Nambucca Heads, Urunga, Coffs Harbour, Woolgoolga.
- New England Highway Sydney to Brisbane buses stop at: Uralla, Armidale, Guyra.
- Bus service from Coffs Harbour to Bellingen and Urunga three times a day, Monday to Friday, and to Urunga only on Saturdays. Also Bowraville, Macksville, Nambucca Heads, Urunga, Coffs Harbour.
- Bus service from Coffs Harbour to Armidale, stopping at Dorrigo three times a week.
- Bus Service from Coffs Harbour to Grafton stopping at Korora, Sapphire, Moonee, Emerald Beach, Sandy Beach, Woolgoolga, Safety Beach, Mullaway, Arrawarra, Corindi Beach, Red Rock.
- Buses from Armidale to Guyra, and from Walcha Road to Walcha.

### Grass Tree *Xanthorrhoea glauca*

One of many grass trees found in Australia, *Xanthorrhoea glauca* usually develops a black trunk which may be branched. Long, narrow, green leaves grow from the top of the trunk. A spear-like spike grows from the top of the trunk and small individual white or cream flowers cluster on the spike.



*Grass Tree*

### Noonday axeman (extracts from)

(...)  
Past the railway stations, looking up through the traffic  
at the smoky halls, dreaming of journeys, of stepping  
down from the train at some upland stop to recover  
the crush of dry grass underfoot, the silence of trees.

Axe-fall, echo and silence. Dreaming silence.  
Though I myself run to the cities, I will forever  
be coming back here to walk, knee-deep in ferns,  
up and away from this metropolitan century,

Axe-fall, echo and axe-fall. Noonday silence.  
Though I go to the cities, turning my back on these hills,  
for the talk and dazzle of cities, for the sake of belonging  
for months and years at a time to the twentieth century,

(...)  
the city will never quite hold me. I will be always  
coming back here on the up-train, peering, leaning  
out of the window to see, on far-off ridges,  
the sky between the trees, and over the racket  
of the rails to hear the echo and the silence.

Les Murray



[visitwaterfallway.com.au](http://visitwaterfallway.com.au)

*A new journey,  
a new story...*

