

# Welcome to Main Range National Park

A skyline of impressive peaks, escarpments and ridges beckons in the distance. Let the breathtaking views, hidden valleys and timeless forests sheltering seldom-seen and rare creatures lure you into this ancient mountain range.

“Wild yet accessible is how I think of Main Range, from some of the highest mountains in Queensland to crystal clear streams, there’s something for everyone! Main Range offers a place to discover, rest, contemplate, exert, connect and energise for young and old alike.”  
*Ranger Steve*

## Explore a living ark

Step out of your car and onto a track winding through towering forests. Pause by a mountain stream or waterfall; climb a peak. Snap a picture-postcard scene, picnic, camp, birdwatch or simply escape into a precious World Heritage Area within a short drive of Brisbane.

Scenic, rugged and brimming with life, the 34,689ha Main Range National Park straddles the Great Dividing Range section of the Scenic Rim—a spectacular arc of mountains stretching from Mount Mistake to Springbrook.



This is the northern tip of the Gondwana Rainforests of Australia World Heritage Area—recognised for its ongoing geological processes, evolutionary history and as one of the most biologically diverse and interesting areas in the world. Gondwana Rainforests of Australia is one of the top ten biodiversity hotspots in Australia, and few places on Earth contain so many plants and animals so closely related to their ancestors.

Be captivated by this remarkable and stunningly beautiful living ark.

## Ways to visit

Pull up for a quick break, or stay for a day or week to relish a memorable mountain escape amid ancient peaks, dramatic escarpments and forest-cloaked slopes and valleys. A different experience awaits at each of the park’s distinct sections: Cunninghams Gap, Spicers Gap, Queen Mary Falls or Goomburra.

## Day visits

Relax in a tranquil bird-filled opening in the forest, watch water plummet over a waterfall or while away the hours by a burbling stream. Lace up your boots and get to know the park and its wildlife on a leisurely forest stroll or exhilarating hike. Visit heritage sites and reflect on days gone by.

## Places to camp

Sleep outdoors in a wild place not far from the city. Shady camp sites, open grassy areas for caravans, and remote walk-in tent sites all deliver camping-adventures to remember.

Book your camp site well in advance at [qld.gov.au/Camping](http://qld.gov.au/Camping), especially for stays during school holidays and long weekends.



Bolwarra is a primitive flowering plant that evolved some 66 million years ago and is pollinated exclusively by tiny weevils.

*Photo: © Glenn Leiper (flower)*



View of Main Range National Park from Mount Cordeaux track  
Photos: © Sarah Hoskman;  
© Pauline Garner (Ranger)



Day-use areas at a glance	Facilities	Description
1 Kurrajong picnic area (Goomburra)		Unwind beside Dalrymple Creek then take off to discover lookouts and forest trails at the head of the Goomburra Valley. Toilets, information and camping areas nearby.
4 West Gap Creek picnic area (Cunninghams Gap)		Detour off the busy highway to relax at this bird-filled, creek-side haven in the forest.
5 The Crest (Cunninghams Gap)		Step out of your car and onto a track winding through lush rainforest, to a lookout, up a mountain peak or alongside a trickling stream.
6 Pioneer picnic area (Spicers Gap)		The dappled shade of eucalypts, abundant birdlife and pioneering heritage make for a refreshing change of pace.
7 Spicers Gap		Bump along a narrow unsealed track to the crest of what was once the only trafficable route from the Darling Downs to Moreton Bay.
9 Queen Mary Falls		Chattering parrots and the sounds of running water greet you at this idyllic, sun-drenched opening in fragrant eucalypt forest.

Camping at a glance	Facilities	Description
2 Poplar Flat (Goomburra)		Fall asleep to Dalrymple Creek gurgling in the background. Wake to forest birds and bell miners chiming in the tree-tops.
3 Manna Gum (Goomburra)		Discover nature at this peaceful creek-side clearing. Warm your fingers by the campfire listening to the calls of Fleay's barred frogs and the screeches of possums, gliders and owls.
8 Spicers Gap		Spot a snoozing koala or rummaging bandicoot from your camp amid eucalypts and she-oaks at the eastern gateway to historical Spicers Gap Road.

Remote walk-in bush camps



If you are an experienced off-track walker with specialist equipment and well-developed navigation skills, there's a secluded camp site without facilities just for you. Visit [qld.gov.au/MainRange](http://qld.gov.au/MainRange) for options and bushwalking tips.

Photos: © J Asche (left);  
Maxime Coquard © Qld Govt (middle);  
© Karen Smith (right)

## How to get there

**Cunninghams Gap** is a mountain pass on the busy Cunningham Highway 116km south-west of Brisbane and 50km east of Warwick. Stop for a picnic or take off on a walk. Most walks begin at the Crest car park, near a monument to Allan Cunningham—the first European to locate the gap in 1828.

**Spicers Gap** was the main route used in the late 1800s for travel between the Darling Downs and Brisbane. Turn off the Cunningham Highway 5km west of Aratula onto Lake Moogerah Road, then take the sealed/unsealed Spicers Gap Road (not suitable for small city cars) up the range past the camping area to Governors Chair. Vehicle access from the west leaves the Cunningham Highway 1.5km west of the QPWS office at Cunninghams Gap, and ends 1.6km west of Governors Chair. From there you must walk, ride a bicycle or horse along the historic section of Old Spicers Gap Road towards Governors Chair. The western access road requires a high clearance 4WD and is closed in wet weather.

**Queen Mary Falls** is a scenic picnic area 11km east of Killarney via Spring Creek Road (or 64km south-west of Boonah via The Head Road over Teviot Range). The winding mountain roads offer spectacular views, but are not suitable for caravans.

**Goomburra** is nestled into the western foothills of Main Range. Situated 175km south-west of Brisbane, it is a tranquil creek-side base from which to explore deep into valleys and densely forested ranges. From Toowoomba or Warwick, turn off the New England Highway 3km south of Allora onto Goomburra Road (which becomes Inverramsay Road), and follow the narrow winding road for 35km. From Brisbane, turn north off the Cunningham Highway at Gladfield (25km west of Cunninghams Gap) and travel 8km to join Inverramsay Road and continue to the park.

Goomburra can be reached by car in dry conditions, but the last 6km of the road is unsealed, can be slippery when wet and has many creek crossings. You need a 4WD or high clearance 2WD to drive up the range to lookouts. Roads can be closed after heavy rain.



## Further information

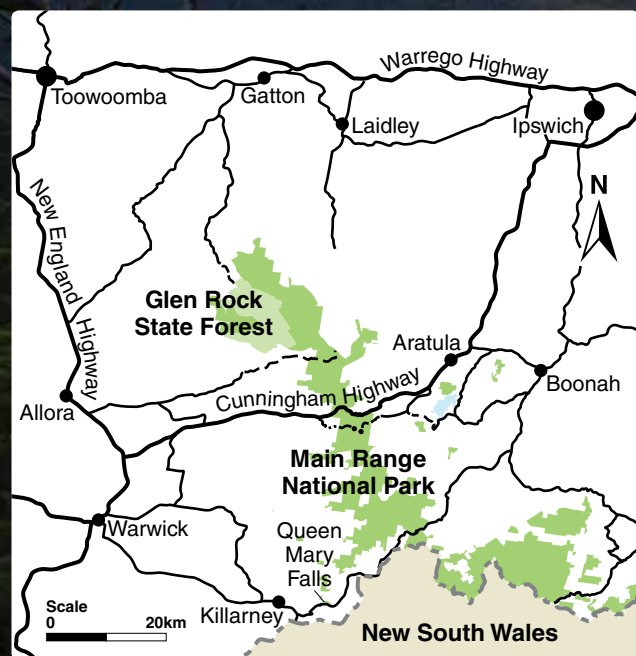
-  [qld.gov.au/NationalParks](http://qld.gov.au/NationalParks)
-  [qld.gov.au/Camping](http://qld.gov.au/Camping)
-  [qld.gov.au/ParkAlerts](http://qld.gov.au/ParkAlerts)  
(access, closures and conditions)
-  [qldnationalparks](https://www.facebook.com/qldnationalparks)
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Scan to check  
park alerts

Check road conditions before you visit at [qldtraffic.qld.gov.au](http://qldtraffic.qld.gov.au) or phone 13 19 40.

This brochure is also available online at [qld.gov.au/ParkBrochures](http://qld.gov.au/ParkBrochures)



## Gondwana beginnings

Spectacular landforms and a diversity of plants and animals tell us about the shaping of life on our planet.

The break-up of the supercontinent of Gondwana and the uplift along Australia's east coast, about 120–180 million years ago, formed the Great Diving Range. Then, as Australia drifted over a volcanic hotspot, the Main Range shield volcano spewed forth lava extending from Ipswich and Boonah west to Warwick. In the 23 million years since, water gushing down steep slopes has eroded peaks and sheer cliff lines on the eastern side of the range and exposed plugs and dykes across the Fassifern Valley. To the west behind the escarpment, gentler ridges give way to valleys and plains beyond.

Precious remnants of the vast ancient forests that once covered Gondwana grow in sheltered, isolated pockets of moist, fertile soils. See survivors of prehistoric times—such as mosses, liverworts, ancient ferns, primeval pines (such as hoop pines) and primitive flowering plants (including bolwarra). They reveal insights into the evolutionary stages of our amazing flora before eucalypts, acacias and other fire and drought-adapted plants swept aside most of the rainforests as Australia moved north and became drier.

## Treasured for all time

Aboriginal place names for many prominent peaks reflect the ongoing connection Aboriginal people have with the forests, steams and landforms of Main Range. Barguggan (Spicers Peak), Jirramun (Wilsons Peak) and Mount Roberts were smoke signal stations used for communication—long before Europeans found the ways to cross these ranges, log the forests, and come to value the land's natural wonders.

## Mountain magic

The magic of Main Range is its mosaic of different habitats—depending on aspect, soil type and elevation.

Ramble along rugged escarpments with giant spear lilies clinging to cliffs below. Subtropical rainforest hugs moist gullies while the sunny slopes burst with eucalypts, grasstrees, wattles and casuarinas. Be delighted by the intricate and brightly-coloured flowers of low-growing heath plants rooted in shallow soils on rocky outcrops and exposed peaks.

Discover species you've never seen before. Main Range is home to more than 478 animal species, including 252 birds. Long-nosed potoroos, Hastings River mouse, brush-tailed rock-wallabies, eastern bristlebirds and the Border Ranges leaf-tailed gecko are just some of the vulnerable species living here.

Witness wedge-tailed eagles soaring overhead, treecreepers scurrying up tree trunks on sunny mountain-sides and honeyeaters sipping nectar from blossoms. Spot Cunningham's skinks lazing on rocks, koalas snoozing in eucalypts by day, or greater gliders and yellow-bellied gliders moving through tree-tops at night.

Feel refreshed in the cool shaded rainforest surrounded by age-old forest giants, towering strangler figs, tangled vines, epiphytes, buttress roots, palms, mosses and tree ferns. This is the secret world of some of the world's most ancient songbirds—the Albert's lyrebird, rufous scrub-bird and satin bowerbird. Keep an eye out for logrunners, green catbirds, noisy pittas, rainforest slugs, snails and the beautiful (but endangered), Richmond birdwing butterfly.

Spot spiny crays, mountain galaxias and frogs in and around clear mountain streams.



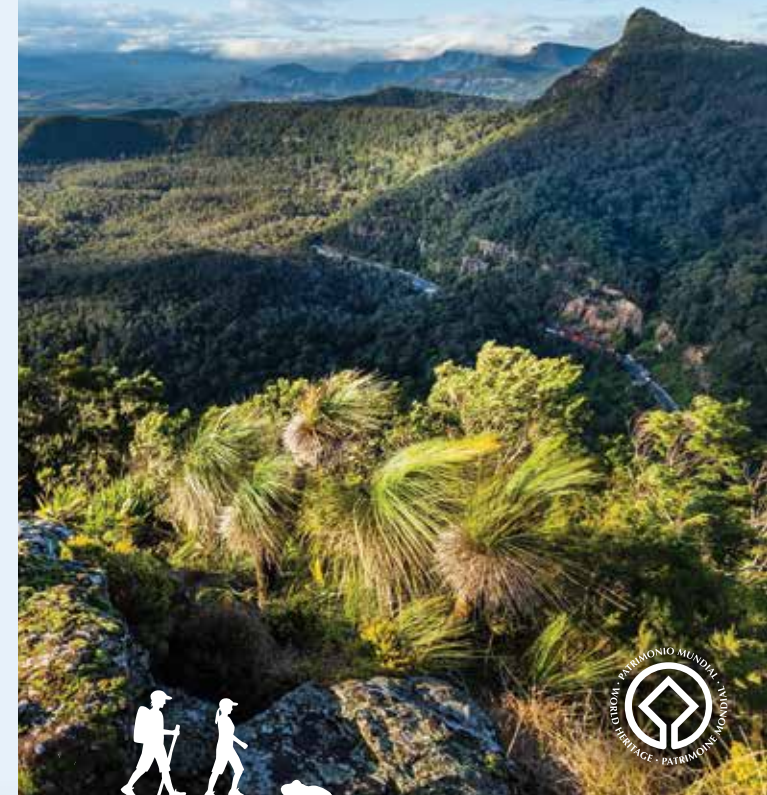
Hear the throaty "ok-ok-ok-ok-ok" call of Fleay's barred frogs after rain. This frog species is in danger of becoming extinct.

Photos: Harry Hines © Qld Govt; Maxime Coquard © Qld Govt (background)





# Main Range National Park



## Show you care

- Leave pets at home—domestic animals are not permitted.
- Let wildlife be wild. Never feed birds, wallabies or other wildlife as this upsets the balance of nature and harms them in the long term. Animals can also become aggressive.
- Bring it in, take it out! Take all rubbish (including food scraps, cigarette butts and sanitary items) away with you.
- Bring sealable containers for your food and rubbish so that wildlife cannot get into it.
- Use a fuel stove. Bring your own firewood (such as untreated mill off-cuts) to use in barbecues where provided. Elevated barbecues or braziers are welcome provided the ground underneath them is protected.
- Open fires are prohibited at all remote walk-in camp sites.
- Generators are not permitted in camping areas.

## Do frogs and the forest a favour

- Stay out of creeks, keep to tracks and never disturb, handle or remove tadpoles, shift rocks or trample vegetation.
- Clean your boots, clothes and equipment of soil and seeds before and after your visit and help stop the spread of weeds and harmful organisms (such as root fungus).
- Keep waterways free of soap, detergents, shampoo and sunscreen. Bathe or wash equipment at least 100m from creeks or streams.
- Use toilets at picnic and camping areas. If you must 'go' in the bush, bury human waste and toilet paper at least 15cm deep and 100m away from waterways.



Be mesmerised in cooler months by the fluid, mimicking calls of elusive Albert's lyrebirds (middle inset); Southern angle-headed dragon; Satin bowerbird.  
 Photos: © Bruce Thomson (middle inset); © Robert Ashdown (dragon); © Chris Whitelaw (bowerbird)

## Explore safely

Main Range has many natural hazards, so be careful and don't take risks. Your safety is our concern but your responsibility.

- **Stay on the tracks and supervise children closely.**
- **Take care near cliff edges, at lookouts, near waterfalls, creeks and slippery rocks.**
- **Wear protection:** sturdy walking shoes, a hat, long sleeves and long trousers. Pack warm clothing and a raincoat as the weather can change quickly in the mountains.
- **Use insect repellent** for ticks and leeches.
- **Avoid contact** with wildlife and with the leaves of stinging trees, stinging nettles and other prickly shrubs.
- **Carry sufficient drinking water.** Water from all sources (including taps) must be boiled or treated before drinking.
- **Never walk alone.** Always tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return.
- **Avoid visiting in extreme weather.** Take extra care in rainy, windy or foggy conditions. Falling trees and limbs, flash flooding and landslips occur at any time. In dry conditions wildfires can sweep quickly up mountain-sides.
- **Check conditions and stay informed.** Visit [qld.gov.au/ParkAlerts](http://qld.gov.au/ParkAlerts) for park closures, [bom.gov.au](http://bom.gov.au) for weather conditions and [qfes.qld.gov.au](http://qfes.qld.gov.au) for fire danger warnings and fire bans. Check road conditions before you visit at [qldtraffic.qld.gov.au](http://qldtraffic.qld.gov.au) or phone 13 19 40.

## In an emergency

Call Triple Zero (000) or use the **Emergency+** app ([emergencyapp.triplezero.gov.au](http://emergencyapp.triplezero.gov.au))

Mobile coverage is unreliable, but you can often get a signal at higher locations that have a view to the east of the dividing range.





Photo: © Sarah Haskmann

## Explore on foot

Magnificent Main Range has walks to suit everyone. Meander through towering forests, stroll by a creek, explore heritage sites or get your blood pumping on an exhilarating climb to a peak.

### Walking tips

Choose walks that suit your abilities and time available. You'll need drinking water, a hat and sturdy ankle-supporting footwear. Most tracks lead to lookouts or near water, so watch your step near cliff edges and on slippery, muddy sections. Stay on tracks, keep children close and remind them not to run ahead.

Grade & Symbol	Suits	Track description
<b>Grade 2</b> 	Families with young children. No bushwalking experience required.	Tracks may have a compacted surface with gentle incline sections and some steps.
<b>Grade 3</b> 	Most ages and fitness levels. Some bushwalking experience recommended.	Well-defined tracks may have short steep hill sections, a rough surface and many steps. May have unfenced cliff edges, obstacles and be partly overgrown.
<b>Grade 4</b> 	Experienced bushwalkers with moderate levels of fitness.	Tracks may be long, rough, very steep and overgrown. Caution is needed near cliff edges and naturally occurring lookouts.
<b>Grade 5</b> 	Very experienced bushwalkers with specialist map reading and navigation skills and a high level of fitness.	Tracks are likely to be rough, very steep and unmarked, with many obstacles. Caution is needed near cliff edges and naturally occurring lookouts.

## Walks around Goomburra

### ① Dalrymple circuit

**1.2km return (allow 30min)**

Criss-cross Dalrymple Creek beneath a canopy of towering white-trunked manna gums. Perfect for all the family—stop and look for tadpoles, crayfish, insects, fish and birds.

### ② Cascades circuit

**6.5km return (allow 3hr)**

Follow the water's edge upstream past cascades and rocky pools. Search the forest for reminders of timber harvesting that took place here between 1840 and the mid-1980s.

### ③ Ridge track

**5km return (allow 2.5hr)**

Ramble uphill into open forests of New England Blackbutt. Admire views into the valley below and, if lucky, glimpse glossy black-cockatoos feeding in sheoak trees.

Loose gravel can make steep sections slippery, especially upon descent. For a longer 7.6km (3.5hr) journey, add the northern section of the Cascades circuit.

### ④ North Branch track

**7km return (allow 3.5hr)**

Be serenaded by a symphony of bird and frog calls as you rock-hop back and forth across the unspoilt north branch of Dalrymple Creek.

### ⑤ Araucaria Falls

**3.6km return (allow 1.5hr)**

Take a short track to a small but splendid waterfall flanked by rainforest dominated by hoop pines. Sit quietly and reflect on the beauty that surrounds you.

### ⑥ Winder track

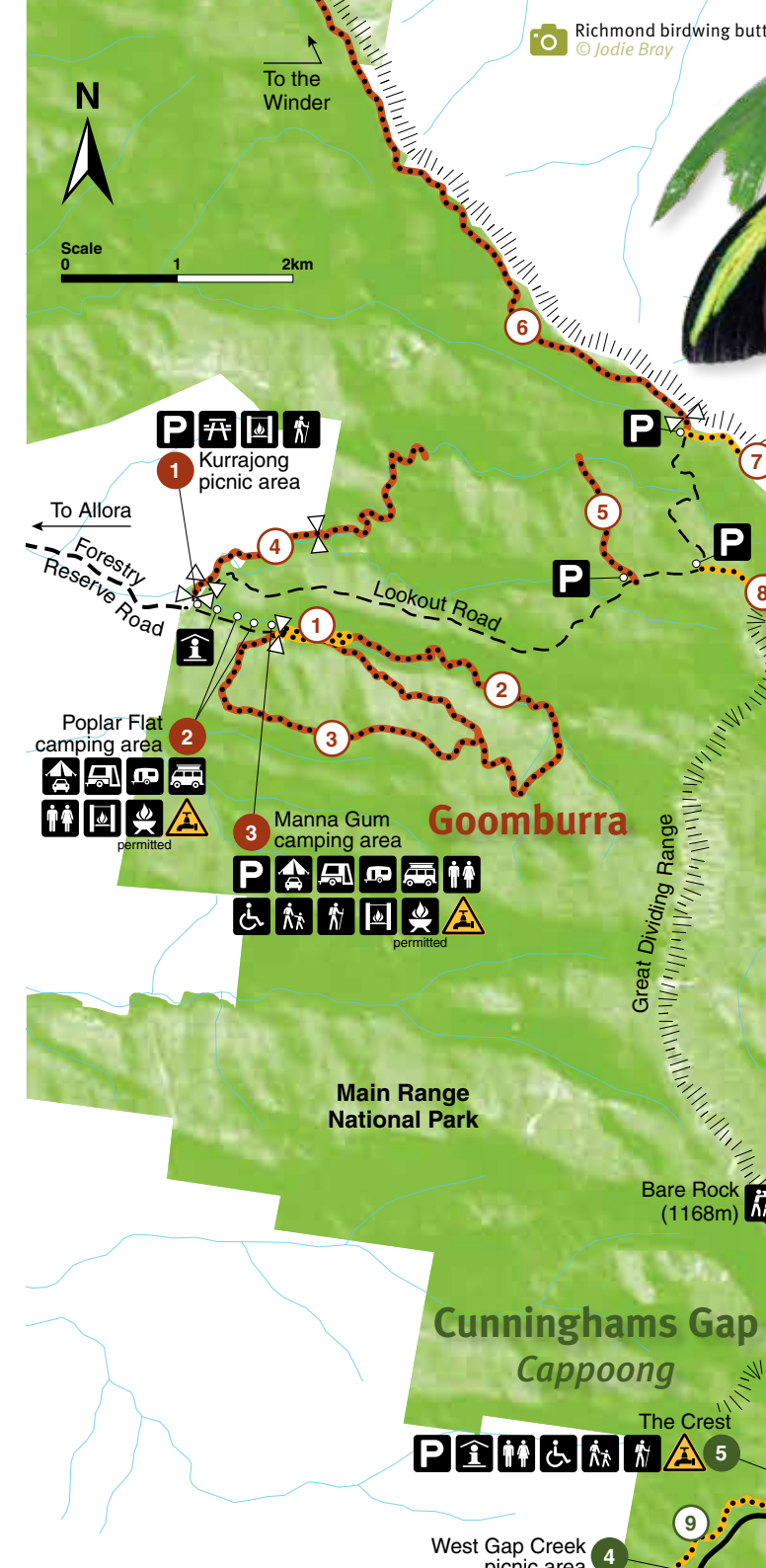
**12km return (allow 4hr)**

Your adventure along an old logging track deep into the rainforest ends at the Winder—a relic from the days when huge forest giants were harvested from the Mistake Range.

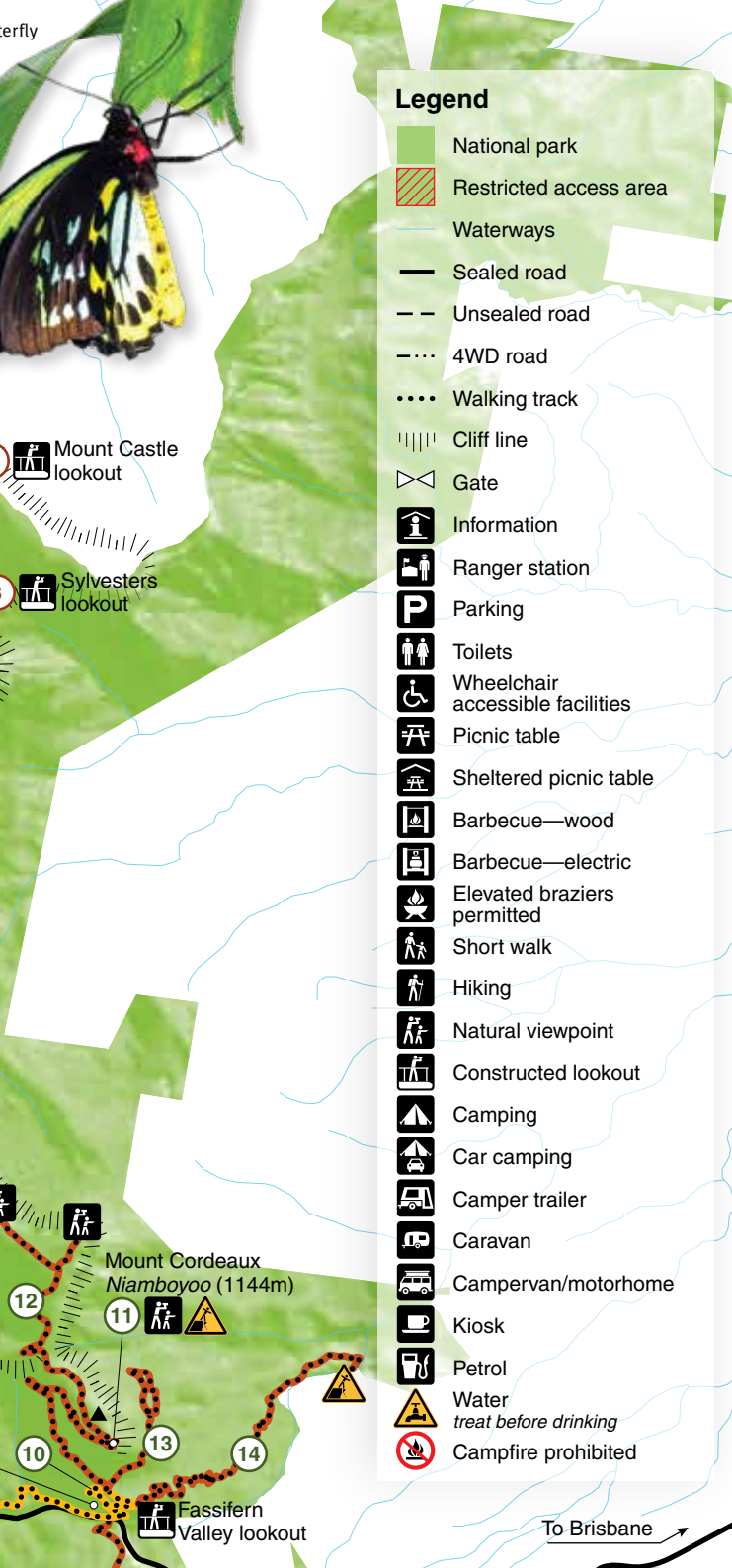
### ⑦ Mount Castle lookout

**960m return (allow 30min)**

Be mesmerised by rainforest scattered with magnificent







## Walks from Cunninghams Gap

### 9 **Box Forest track**

**5km return (allow 2hr)**

Follow West Gap Creek beneath massive brush box trees. Listen out for frog calls, the whirring of satin bowerbirds and chiming of bell birds.

### 10 **Rainforest circuit**

**1.6km return (allow 25min)**

Stroll to the sights and sounds of lush rainforest adorned with mosses, ferns and epiphytes. Enjoy the warmth of the sunshine and scent of eucalypts at Fassifern Valley lookout while you gaze over ancient volcanic peaks far below.

### 11 **Mount Cordeaux**

**6.8km return (allow 2.5hr)**

Rainforest gives way to grasstrees, banksias and giant spear lilies hugging the impressive 1144m peak. Rest on the rocky slab below the summit and delight in sweeping views towards Brisbane and south across 'The Gap' to Mount Mitchell and the peaks beyond. Ten people per group recommended at the lookout. Supervise children closely.

### 12 **Bare Rock track and Morgans Walk**

**12.4km return (allow 4.5hr)**

Trek past Mount Cordeaux and rise to temperate rainforest along the ridge top and awe-inspiring panoramas in all directions. Rainforest clothes the escarpment north of Bare Rock.

### 13 **Palm Grove circuit**

**4.4km return (allow 2hr)**

A charming grove of dense piccabeen palms thrives in the shadow of imposing Mount Cordeaux. Look for topknot pigeons, wompoo fruit-doves and a multitude of other birds feasting on the bright red palm fruit.

## Walks around Spicers Gap

### 16 **Mount Mathieson trail**

**8.1km return (allow 3hr)**

Hike a rough trail uphill through lofty eucalypts and lush rainforest, admiring views across the face of Mount Mitchell towards Cunninghams Gap. Return via the Heritage trail and Spicers Gap Road.

### 17 **Pioneer Graves**

**260m return (allow 15min)**

Pay homage to lives tragically lost in harsh pioneering days. A large stone cairn marks a small cemetery where it is believed up to 13 people are buried.

### 18 **Moss's Well**

**120m return (allow 10min)**

This small, wildlife-attracting spring—named after the area's first road contractor—once sustained thirsty travellers and weary horse or bullock teams.

### 19 **Governors Chair lookout**

**300m return (allow 15min)**

Take in the picturesque panorama from a rocky cliff edge—a favourite resting spot for 19th Century Queensland governors on their bumpy journey via cart or carriage through Spicers Gap. Take care near the cliff edge and supervise children.

### 20 **Heritage trail**

**3.2km return (allow 1hr)**

Learn about 'macadamised' pavements and other techniques adopted when constructing the old Spicers Gap Road, used by heavy drays and wagons more than 160 years ago.

## Walks at Queen Mary Falls





Box Forest track  
Maxime Coquard © Qld Govt

## Remote area bushwalking

Experience the challenge of navigating steep climbs, rocky outcrops, dense forest and rugged cliffs to reach a secluded spot or mountain-top camp site that is all yours.

The best months for hiking are April to September to avoid hot conditions and stormy weather.

To hike off-track you **MUST** be fit, experienced and suitably prepared! Ensure you have the relevant camping permits, topographic maps, guidebooks, a compass or GPS, a personal locator beacon (PLB), hiking companions and all necessary equipment, food and water. The availability of fresh water depends on the season and rainfall. Severe weather or planned burns can sometimes cause sections of the park to be closed, so always check [qld.gov.au/ParkAlerts](http://qld.gov.au/ParkAlerts) before you head out.

See [qld.gov.au/MainRange](http://qld.gov.au/MainRange) for remote area bushwalking tips.



### Scenic Rim Trail—opening in 2019/20

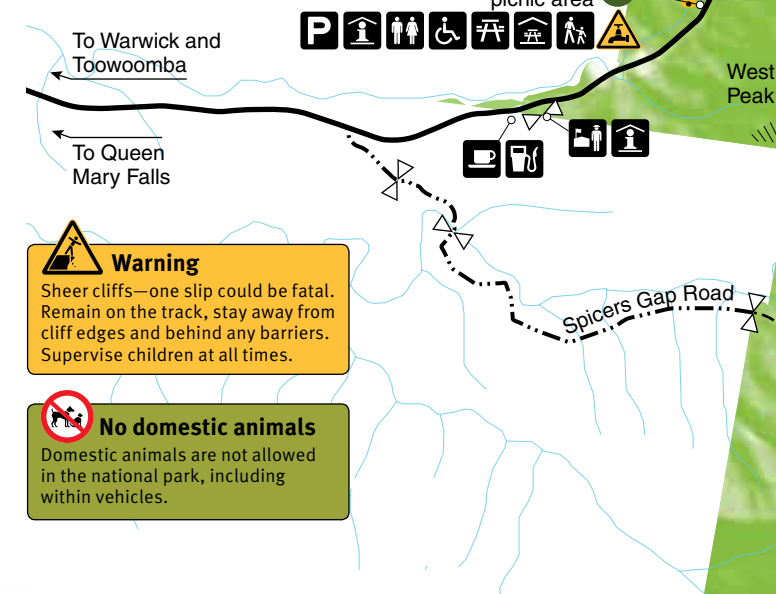
Beginning on private land near Thornton in the Laidley Valley, the Scenic Rim Trail is a challenging 4 day, 38km trek following a rough, mostly unformed track south along Main Range to Cunninghams Gap. For camping permits and route information visit [qld.gov.au/ScenicRimTrail](http://qld.gov.au/ScenicRimTrail). To enjoy an extended 5 day luxury guided Scenic Rim Trail experience, visit [spicersretreats.com/scenic-rim-trail](http://spicersretreats.com/scenic-rim-trail)

hoop pines as you wind to the escarpment edge. Enjoy superb vistas over the pink-hued trachyte cliffs of Mount Castle towards Laidley Valley, Little Liverpool Range and Brisbane in the distance.

### 8 Sylvesters lookout

940m return (allow 30min)

Feel the breeze flowing up the escarpment as you snap picture-postcard views across Fassifern Valley to peaks of the Scenic Rim. In spring, giant spear lilies adorning cliff faces sprout impressively-huge, red flower spikes. This often-muddy track through rainforest requires steady footwork, especially around exposed tree roots.

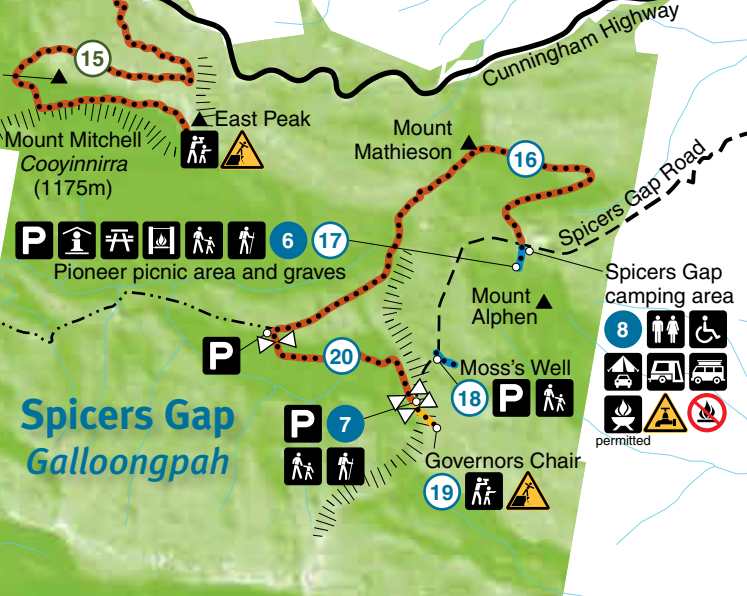


Bushwalking into remote areas is only for experienced and well-prepared (left); reminders of Main Range's ancient volcanic (below left); Sylvesters lookout (below); Pioneer

Photos: © Mark Daly (left); © Tony Kevin PH (below left); Maxime Coquard © Qld Govt (below right); © Chris Whitelaw (right)







### 14 Gap Creek Falls track

**9.8km return (allow 6hr)**

Zig-zag down steep, dry, eucalypt-clad slopes to marvel at water cascading over a 100m cliff. The falls are best after heavy rain but the valley views are lovely in any season. Take plenty to drink and pause for rest breaks on the return climb uphill.

### 15 Mount Mitchell

**10.2km return (allow 3.5hr)**

Unparalleled views from the summit's knife-edge ridge are your reward for this energetic walk that starts in rainforest, winds through grasstree-filled woodland and ends in montane heath. You'll feel like a soaring peregrine falcon surveying signs of life on the slopes and valleys far below.

### 21 Cliff circuit

**570m return (allow 20min)**

Behold Spring Creek plunging an impressive 40m into a gorge at the start of Australia's longest river system—the Murray-Darling. Take care when viewing the gorge below.

### 22 Queen Mary Falls circuit

**2km return (allow 40min)**

Admire Queen Mary Falls from above, then descend to creek level and delight in its cool spray and the rainbows created by the mist. Spot statue-like eastern water dragons on rocks. Take care on the causeway as it can be slippery.

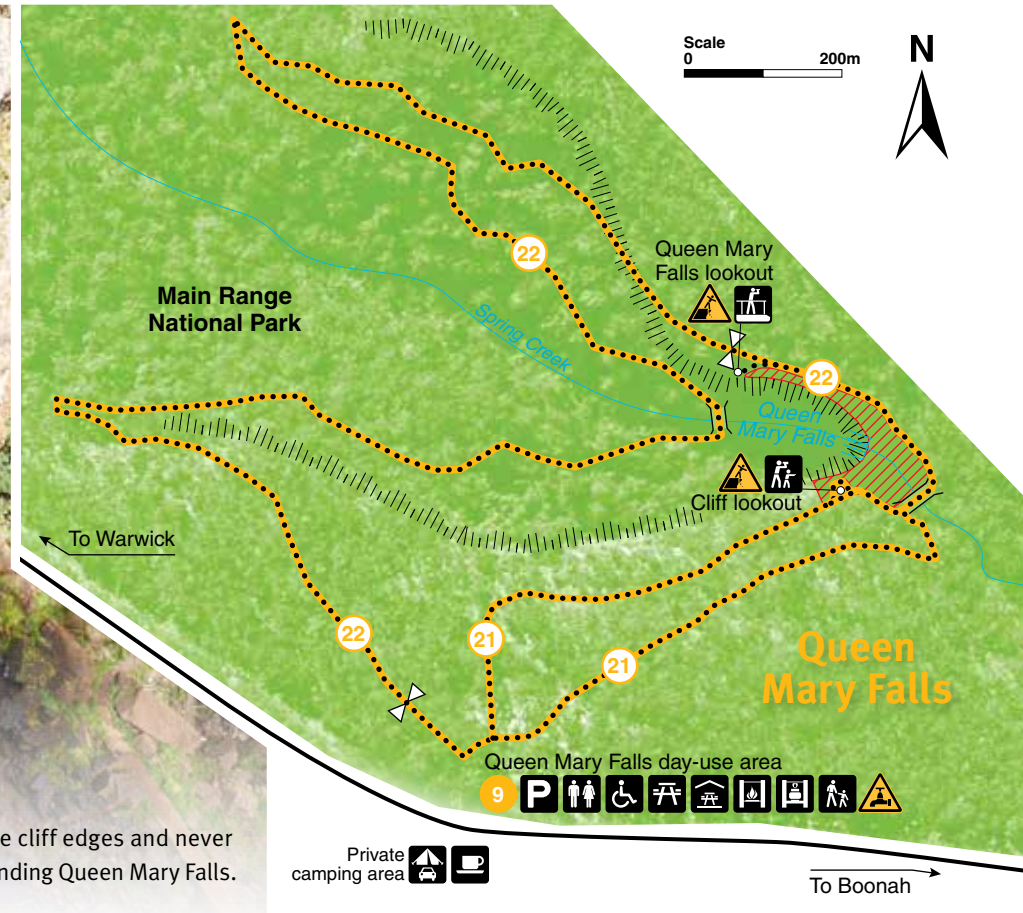
To avoid climbing stairs, return from the base of the falls by retracing your steps; or walk the track in a clockwise direction.

**Caution:** After heavy rain, the circuit track will be closed due to the possibility of rock falls from the cliffs above. Never pass through closed/locked gates.

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Queen Mary Falls tumbles over 20 million year old trachyte rock.  
*Photos: Maxime Coquard © Qld Govt*



### For your safety!

Keep to tracks, stay well back from the cliff edges and never enter the restricted access area surrounding Queen Mary Falls.

Private camping area

