

Rainforest the big scrub

GONDWANNA WORLD HERITAGE RAINFOREST PARKS OF THE NORTHERN RIVERS REGION

From the imposing spire of Mount Warning circled by volcanic rim rainforests, to the sweeping sands of coastal National Parks, the Northern Rivers is a region where nature sets the pace. Rainforests are the oldest vegetation type in Australia. The luxuriant rainforests found throughout the region range from palm filled sub-tropical to cool temperate rainforests, characterised by ancient Antarctic beech. The Gondwana World Heritage listing bestowed on these rainforest parks is testimony to their significance as places of great natural and cultural value.

Wollumbin (Mt Warning) National Park

Mt Warning is the remnant central plug of an ancient volcano now eroded down to half its original height. The 4.4 kilometre climb from Breakfast Creek winds through ever changing rainforest to the summit where you are rewarded by 360 degree views of the Tweed Valley. The return walk takes about five hours, and is considered strenuous with a steep rock scramble near the summit. Visitors are advised not to undertake the summit walk after noon in winter months as completing the walk in darkness is dangerous. 12 km south-west of Murwillumbah, off Kyogle Road.

Border Ranges National Park

Located on the western rim of the Mt Warning caldera, this spectacular rainforest park has the highest concentration of marsupial species and one of the highest levels of species diversity of bats, birds, reptiles and amphibians in Australia. Numerous waterfalls are a feature of this park. Day use picnic areas, BBQ's and spectacular views are provided at Bar Mountain, Blackbutt Lookout and Antarctic Beech. Sheepstation Creek and Forest Tops camping areas provide water, shelter sheds, wood and composting toilets. There are a variety of signposted walks in the park, from 100 m strolls to 10 km hikes. The Park is traversed by the 64 km Tweed Range Scenic Drive which can be reached via the Wiangaree turn - off on the Summerland Way, or the Barkers Vale turn - off on the Murwillumbah - Kyogle road.

Nightcap National Park and Whian Whian State Conservation Area

Minyon Falls, with its awesome 100 metre waterfall and picnic area, provides a good starting point for the 30km Whian Whian Forest Drive. This scenic route passes by Rummery Park which is a great picnicking and camping spot. An eight kilometre loop walk, beginning at either Minyon Falls or Minyon Grass takes visitors to the base of the falls and along the escarpment edge. The park features a variety of forest eco-systems containing rare and endangered plants and animals including koalas, red-legged pademelons, and Albert's Lyrebird. Drive through the village of the Channon to the lush World Heritage rainforests of Terania Creek, with its picnic area and shaded 1.4km return walk to the breathtaking Protesters Falls. There are a variety of other walks at Mount Nardi Picnic Area, including the Historic Nightcap Track. Reached via sealed road from Nimbin, 35 km north of Lismore. Whian Whian Forest Drive (unsealed) is off the Lismore - Mullumbimby road.

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