



NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF NSW

protecting nature through community action

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# Walks in the Wollongong area

## Short Walks

### 1. Mt Mitchell Lookout – Stanwell Park

With a one hour steady climb from Lawrence Hargrave Drive, just south of Stanwell Park village this walk passes through tall gums with plenty of bird sounds. It joins the Forest Track and ascends about 250 metres before finding a sizeable rock platform at the highest point. There are majestic views north, east and south. The cliff edges are not fenced making the walk unsuitable for toddlers. This is an excellent walk, highly recommended.

Length: 4km return

Time: 1-2 hours

Grade: Medium to Hard – some steep ascent

Access: Limited parking at Wodi Wodi track head, Lawrence Hargrave Drive, 1km south of Stanwell Park shops or walk ~800m north from Coalcliff railway station. Take care on roadway.

### 2. The Goat Track – Stanwell Park Station to Stanwell Tops

West of Stanwell Park village there is a varied walk that climbs the escarpment to the plateau above. The first part of the walk is in rainforest and as you ascend there is dryer eucalypt forest. Once at the top you can walk north via Stonehaven Road and carefully crossing Lawrence Hargrave Drive to Kelly's Falls. Or just explore the bushland on top of the plateau where there are a number of intersecting tracks and informal lookouts with views back to the coast and to Mt Mitchell to the south. Note the cliff edges are not fenced making the walk unsuitable for toddlers.

Length: 3km return

Time: 1-2 Hours

Grade: Medium to Hard – steep ascent

Access: Stanwell Park railway station – western platform

### 3. Helensburgh Historic Railway / Glow Worm Tunnel

From Helensburgh Station exit the main car park and cross Tunnel Road. Follow the open passageway along an abandoned railway line passing an old Helensburgh Railway Station sign. Proceed through the tunnel which is about 623m long. Take a torch and maybe gum boots would be good.

Length: 1.25km return

Time: 1 hour

Grade: Easy – family friendly

Access: Helensburgh railway station

### 4. Sublime Point Nature Trail – Woodward Track

Visitors to Sublime Point lookout wanting to experience some of the wonderful bushland the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area has to offer will find the Woodward Loop Nature Trail the ideal choice. It has varied and interesting flora with many wildflowers in spring. Starting from a track head immediately behind the picnic area amenities block will take walkers in the easier anti-clockwise direction. A picnic table will be found part way around the loop that provides the opportunity to sit and enjoy the surroundings.

Length: 400m loop

Time: 30 minutes

Grade: Easy – family friendly

Access: Sublime Point Lookout north of Bulli Pass

### 5. Austinmer to Sublime Point Lookout

This iconic Illawarra walking track can be accessed from Austinmer railway station (on foot or by car) by firstly crossing the rail bridge to the west. Ignore Hill Street and continue up Balfour Rd and on to the top of Asquith Street. At the T intersection turn left and a track head is found. A well formed track leads up the escarpment (some 1000 steps) to the summit at Sublime Point (alternative start point). There are five resting stations and nine sets of ladders before arriving to witness great views from the top. For safety, always face the ladders climbing up or down. In wet and muddy conditions boot cleaning facilities are located at the ladders. Toilets and café are located at the lookout.

Length: 2km (from tack head) or 4km (from station) return

Time: 2-3 Hours

Grade: Hard – steep ascent

Access: Austinmer railway station or Asquith St Austinmer

### 6. Wollongong Botanic Garden

The Wollongong Botanic Garden is about 3km north west of Wollongong CBD and is situated at the base of Mt Keira. It has an area of just over 27 hectares. Set on gently undulating land, a network of paths leads through diverse habitats such as woodlands, arid zone and rain-forest. Check website for more details.

Length: Up to 2km

Time: Variable

Grade: Easy – family friendly

Access: Main entrance is on Murphy's Avenue with others on North-fields Avenue and Madoline Street.

Wollongong Botanic Garden lunchtime bird walk: a free guided walk led by Illawarra Birders Club discovering the Garden's rich bird life. First Thursday in the month 12.30 to 1.30pm, bookings not required. Meet at the Discovery Centre.

### 7. Tom Thumb Lagoon (Wollongong Greenhouse Park)

Just south of the Wollongong CBD, opposite the corner of Springhill Rd and Bridge St is Wollongong Greenhouse Park, a former rubbish dump and now a bushland restoration project. There is a perimeter circuit walk plus a trail to the top of the small hill. A bit of an oasis in the industrial landscape.

Length: return 2.5km

Time: 1–2 hours

Grade: Easy

Access: Park Tate or Keira Streets or walk 1.4km from CBD.

### 8. Mt Kembla Summit Track

Mt Kembla summit is one of the highest and most recognisable points on the Illawarra escarpment. It affords wonderful views of southern Wollongong. The summit track head can be found a short distance to the east of the Mt Kembla lookout carpark and climbs steadily through forest to the summit. From here extensive coastal plain and ocean views can be seen as well as across to the southern highlands as you ascend. A highly recommended walk. Also see walk 15.

Length: 3km return

Time: 2-3 Hours

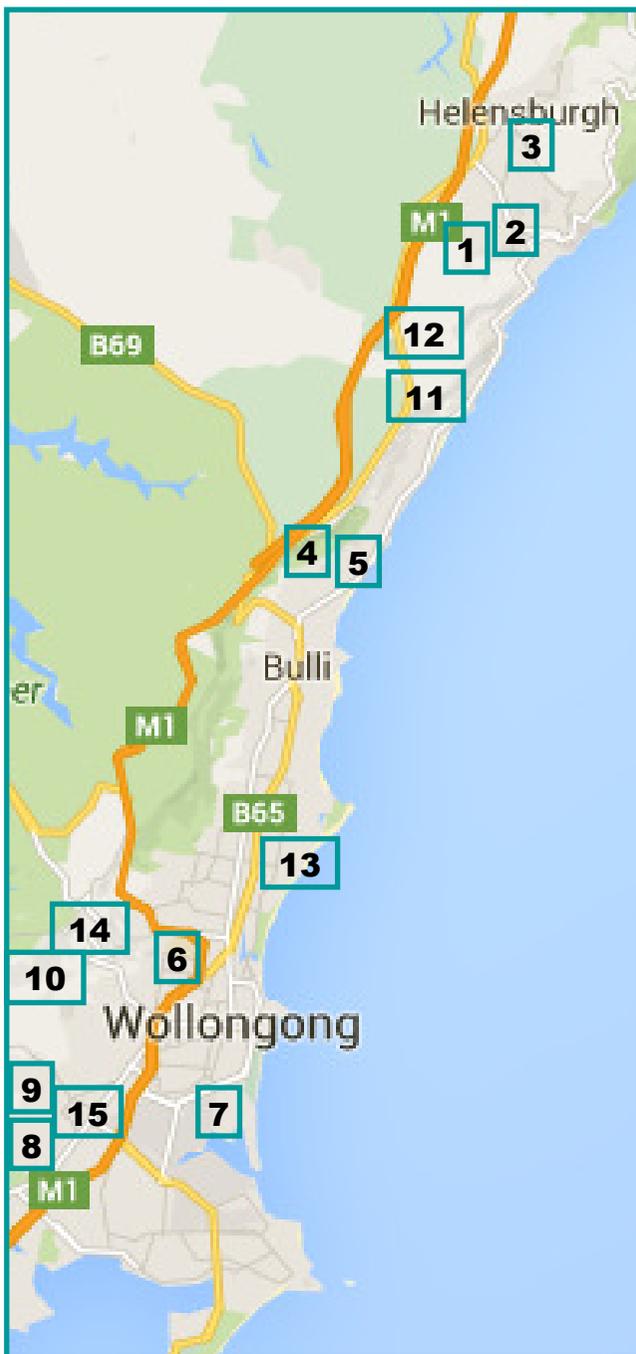
Grade: Medium — Hard. Steep ascent and 1 short ladder.

Access: Mt Kembla lookout carpark—Upper Cordeaux Rd

#### Safe Walking Tips

- *It's best not to walk alone*
- *Take plenty of water and food for the walk*
- *Use sunscreen, wear a hat and suitable clothing*
- *Tell someone where you are going*

## Walk Location Guide



Courtesy of Google Maps

### 9. Mt Kembla Memorial Pathway

Mt Kembla Village has a rich but also disastrous mining history and this pathway is dedicated to those that have worked there.

Stage 1: Follows the original railway easement from Mt Kembla Mine to Port Kembla. Historical photos and information can be viewed on the way to Stones Road. Stage 2: Follows a natural and landscaped section consisting of a variety of native plants and trees to Benjamin Road. Stage 3: Climbs steadily on a winding track through mixed eucalypt and privet forest to a point on the escarpment where the Bradford Breaker was situated (used in the processing of extracted coal before rail transport to Port Kembla). A platform has been constructed at this site for viewing the coastal strip.

Length: Up to 4km return

Time: Up to 2 hours

Grade: Easy — medium

Access: Cordeaux Rd, eastern fringe of Mt Kembla Village

### 10. Mt Keira to Robertsons Lookout

Just west of Mt Keira Lookout and connecting with the Mt Keira Ring Track a delightful walk climbs to a high point on the escarpment where there is a viewing platform which provides extensive views of the coastal plains and of Mt Keira itself. (also see walk 14)

Length: up to 4km return

Time: Up to 2 hours

Grade: Easy - medium

Access: Cnr Mt Keira Rd and Queen Elizabeth Drive

## Longer Walks

### 11. Forest Track – Maddens Plains

The Forest Track is an undulating walk along the escarpment edge from an access point on a service road north of Sublime Point to Mt Mitchell overlooking Stanwell Park. It passes through many different vegetation communities and is an excellent introduction to escarpment flora. There are also spectacular coastal views from various vantage points, though care must be taken as they are not fenced and the cliffs are very steep. The track is well maintained with some recent improvements, but may be a little overgrown in places. Walk along the service road in an easterly direction and look for the track head on the left just before the edge of the escarpment. Also see walk 12.

Length: 12km

Time: 5-6 hours return

Grade: Medium – undulating

Access: Gated service road 4.2km north of the Sublime Point lookout turnoff on the Old Princes Highway

### 12. Illawarra Escarpment Traverse — Grand Escarpment Walk

A complete traverse (16.5km) of the northern Illawarra escarpment from

Stanwell Park to Austinmer with many great view points and varied vegetation along the way. Highly recommended.

Public transport friendly.

See separate brochure.

### 13. Bellambi Lagoon and Sandhill Circuit

Starting at Towradgi Park this walk includes beach, bush, lagoon and shared pathway. It has extensive coastal and escarpment views. From the car park at the eastern end of Towradgi Road walk north along the beach for about 1.3km then turn up into the dune at the steps and walk over the dune heading further north. Now walk down through the bush, coming out at the sports field. Walk east back to the beach, around the headland to the north and Bellambi Lagoon. Then look for the shared pathway heading south. It goes along the edge of the lagoon, rich in bird life, and past the caravan park back to Towradgi. A shorter version of the walk is to start and finish at the car park at the beach end of Murray Rd East Corrimal.

Length: up to 5km return

Time: Up to 2 hours

Grade: Easy – some sand walking

Access: Car park at beach end of Towradgi Rd, Towradgi.

### 14. Mt Keira Ring Track

This is an iconic Wollongong and Illawarra Escarpment walk which circumnavigates Mt Keira but unfortunately is partly closed due to a rock fall on the north side of the mountain. Do not let this put you off as the sections that are open are a great rainforest experience. Best starting points are either Byarong Park, a pleasant picnic spot in rainforest, which is part way up Mt Keira Rd from West Wollongong or the same start point for walk 10.

Length: Up to 4km

Time: Up to 2 hours

Grade: Easy - Medium

Access: Byarong Park or Cnr Mt Keira Rd and Queen Elizabeth Drive

### 15. Mt Kembla Ring Track

This walk can be started at the same location as walk 8 but is an easier option. It has a section of excellent rainforest as the track descends to a fire trail which then should be taken to the north and circumnavigates the mountain eventually meeting Cordeaux Rd. The bitumen road must then be walked back up to the car park. This track can also be accessed from the top of Farmborough Rd. Pass through the locked gate and climb up the steep road past historic mining cottages and pit pony stables.

Length: 5km return

Time: 1.5—2 hours

Grade: Easy – some steps

Access: Mt Kembla lookout carpark—Upper Cordeaux Rd