

Welcome to Bunya Mountains National Park

Enter the world's largest stand of bunya pines and breathe in fresh, cool mountain air. Gaze at the stunning panorama from a high-altitude grassland 'bald', spot colourful parrots, tiny jewelled fungi and tumbling waterfalls. Spy watchful wallabies and soaring birds of prey. Feel the connection to a landscape that has sustained people from ancient times to current generations. There's nowhere else on the planet like the Bunya Mountains—your senses will be nourished here, as will your spirit.

The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and the Bunya Peoples Aboriginal Corporation ask that you care for and respect this special place. It is a place for us all to enjoy—for now and for future generations.

“ These mist-covered mountains are a world away from the surrounding countryside. After 20 years working in this park, its ageless diversity and raw majesty of nature still amazes me. From forest giants to tiny blossoms, endangered ecosystems to stories of the past and enduring cultural connections, there are so many things to discover and treasure in Queensland's second oldest national park.

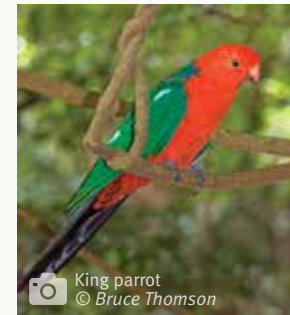
Ranger Kelvin

Tourism and Events Qld (Background); Robert Ashdown © Qld Govt (Ranger)



Michael O'Connor © Qld Govt

Seek refuge from a noisy, busy world or the searing heat of a summer's day. Delight in a rainforest stroll, a mountain-top picnic, or simply enjoy the scenery and panoramic views over the plains below.



King parrot
© Bruce Thomson

Catch a brilliant flash of crimson, green or blue as colourful parrots and inquisitive satin bowerbirds swoop to a nearby branch.

Reconnect with family, friends, or just yourself, where people have been gathering for thousands of years.



©Tourism and Events Qld



Southern boobook owls (right);
Satin bowerbird (far right).
© Joel Thomas (right); © Qld Govt (far right)

Relax or explore

Laze over lunch in a scenic picnic area. Be invigorated by a walk through the forest or camp overnight and gaze up at the twinkling stars. Let the spirit of the mountains envelop you, and feel refreshed.

Dandabah is the most popular spot on the mountain. Surrounded by bunya pine forest, the picnic area has electric barbecues, an abundance of colourful birdlife and is the entrance for short and long rainforest walks. The camping area, local natural history museum, small grocery store, restaurants and accommodation options are nearby. Be sure to visit the **park visitor centre** and **outdoor interpretive displays** to learn more about the park.

For less crowds and more sun head to **Westcott** and **Cherry Plain**. Spy fairy-wrens, finches and scurrying skinks in open grassy areas. Look for shy black-breasted button-quails in the dry rainforest gully a short distance along the track from Cherry Plain. Westcott has wood barbecues and a small camping area.

Near the park's northern entrance is historic **Burtons Well**, a natural spring excavated in the early 1900s to provide clean water for bullocks and horses. Relax nearby over a picnic in the shelter shed or shade of stately stringybarks; or camp overnight. Admire magnificent grasstrees and panoramic views to the east.

Russell Park, managed by the Western Downs Regional Council, also offers several walks, lookouts and picnic areas. They are not featured in this guide, but you'll find them just off the road heading south towards Dalby.



© Karen Smith



© Tourism and Events Qld



Encounter wildlife

Listen for the songs of forest birds and the croak of frogs in gullies and streams. Glimpse grey goshawks and wedge-tailed eagles soaring, or topknot pigeons wheeling overhead. Encounter carpet pythons basking in patches of sunlight and owls in the dark of night.

There's more than 210 bird species to tick off your list at the Bunyas; with king parrots, crimson rosellas, kookaburras, brush turkeys and satin bowerbirds easy to see around picnic areas.

Watch for green catbirds, paradise rifle-birds and red-legged pademelons deep inside the rainforest. Scan the forest floor for tell-tale signs where noisy pittas have been feasting on land snails, or birds have dropped partly-eaten fruit from the canopy above.

Out in the open forest, grey fantails, tree-creepers and honeyeaters forage among leaves and flowers, and red-necked wallabies laze on the grass. Glimpse skinks and Burton's legless lizards scurrying off the track and watch for koalas overhead.

Be enchanted by fireflies flickering through the forest on warm, spring evenings at dusk. Wait with anticipation in warmer months for the sunset flight of tiny chocolate wattled bats from the old timber school house at Dandabah—Australia's largest known maternity colony.

Then, by torchlight you might spot bandicoots and antechinus fossicking in leaf litter or brushtail and ringtail possums foraging in tree tops.

Peek in rock pools for the huge tadpoles of great barred frogs
Robert Ashdown © Qld Govt



They came from the north, south, east and west travelling hundreds of kilometres along traditional pathways, across hot, dry land, towards the Bunya Mountains—and the promise of cool forests, cold mountain streams and the nourishing flesh of bunya nuts.

For generations Aboriginal peoples gathered to feast and celebrate the bounty of the bunya nut harvest—to share stories, settle disputes, pass on wisdom, marry, trade and to receive strength from Mother Earth.

Today the Bunya Mountains are a gathering place and refuge for us all.

Follow the Great Bunya Drive

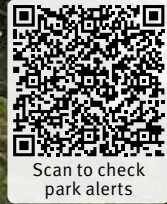
Bunya Mountains National Park is about 200km north-west of Brisbane and 125km north-west of Toowoomba.

Follow the Great Bunya Drive signs from Dalby, Jondaryan, Kingaroy, Nanango or Yarraman to rise up from the plains and surrounding farmlands to this very special place.

All access roads to the Bunya Mountains are steep, winding and narrow and not suitable for long and/or heavy vehicles. Discretion is urged with respect to caravans, motorhomes and buses.

Further information

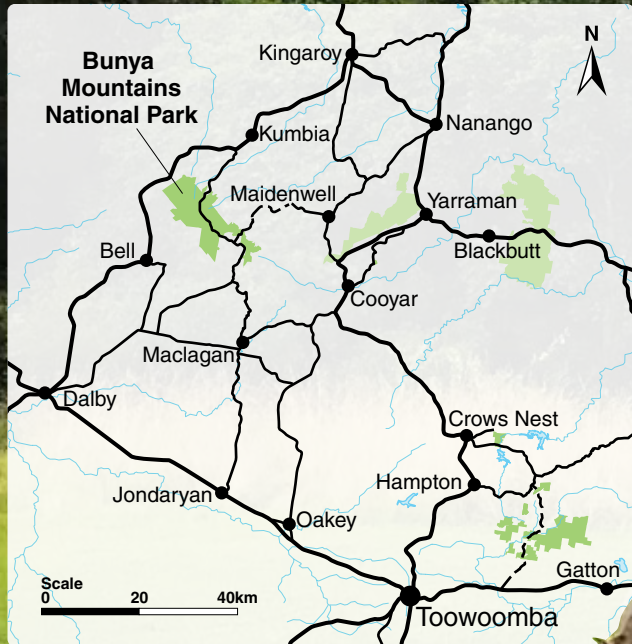
-  qld.gov.au/NationalParks
-  qld.gov.au/Camping
-  qld.gov.au/ParkAlerts
(access, closures and conditions)
-  [qldnationalparks](https://www.facebook.com/qldnationalparks)
-  [@QldParks](https://www.instagram.com/QldParks); [#QldParks](https://www.instagram.com/QldParks)



Scan to check park alerts

This brochure is also available online at qld.gov.au/ParkBrochures

Check road conditions before you visit at qldtraffic.qld.gov.au or phone 13 19 40.



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Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service,
Department of Environment and Science.
Bp0069 March 2021.
Printed on eco-friendly paper to save energy and resources.
Photos: © Lise Pedersen (cover); Robert Ashdown © Qld Govt (above)



King orchid (above);
Honeyeaters and insects are drawn
to grassstrees at the mountain edge (right).
Robert Ashdown © Qld Govt (above/right)



Behold nature

Discover how rainfall, aspect, elevation and fire create a fascinating mix of forest types across the Bunya Mountains.

Rainforest covers most of the park—9 different types. Be awed by the raw majesty of moist subtropical rainforests where bunya pines and huge strangler figs emerge above the canopy of Mowbullan whitewoods, booyongs and red cedars. Marvel at the variety of plants and admire tree trunks draped in vines, orchids and epiphytes. You'll notice at lower elevations a change to dry rainforests and vine thickets with prickly plants in the understorey. See scrubs of narrow-leaved bottle-trees and brigalow on western and northern slopes.

In stark contrast to the lush, shady rainforest, open areas of natural grassland balds containing the vulnerable Bunya Mountains bluegrass are dotted across the mountains. You'll sometimes see fires being used to prevent these endangered ecosystems being overtaken by woodland or rainforest plants. Visit a bald and you might spot a rare Bunya sunskink—they don't live anywhere else.

Venture out to exposed ridges and the sunny western cliff-line to find open forests and woodlands splashed with the colours and textures of forest red gums and stringybarks growing above wattles, grassstrees and other flowering shrubs.

Step back in time

A walk through the bunya pine forest is like stepping back into pre-historic times when ferns were dominant—before the arrival of conifers and flowering plants.

With crowns that emerge above the forest canopy, hoop pines and bunya pines have ancient connections. These trees are not true pines but belong to the Araucariaceae family—a dominant feature of Australia's forests in wetter times. Ancestors of hoop and bunya pines were widespread across the globe at the time of dinosaurs, about 200 million years ago. Today bunya pines grow naturally in only a few locations, and the largest stand anywhere on Earth is here at the Bunya Mountains.

Bunya pines grow on the moister areas along the range crest where you can recognise their distinctive dome-shaped crowns. In summer you will see many large soccer ball-sized bunya cones with 50–100 'nuts' surrounded by a thick, fleshy outer-casing. These heavy cones crash to the forest floor where possums, melomys (a native rat) and other animals eat the nuts and help disperse the seeds through the forest. Hoop pines grow in drier areas on lower slopes and have a less rounded crown and light papery, wind-dispersed seeds.



Michael O'Connor © Qld Govt

Share cultural connections

Feel the connection with a landscape that has been both a sanctuary and a resource for people for thousands of years.

The Bunya Mountains have been revered as a gathering place for countless generations—the landscape's bounty shared between local and visiting Aboriginal groups. Take time to respect strong and enduring cultural connections.

Imagine the shouts of 'Timber!' echoing through the forest while for almost a century loggers cut and hauled forest giants from the mountain top to supply markets for building products.

Appreciate the hardships faced by early settlers and by visitors who, long before there were proper roads, travelled to the Bunyas to revel in the scenery and to relax. We are fortunate that some lobbied hard to ensure these mountains were protected for all in an amazing national park gazetted in 1908.

Stay safe

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

- Pack warm clothing and raincoats as weather is changeable.
- Avoid contact with leaves of stinging trees, stinging nettles and other prickly shrubs.
- Wear long sleeves, long trousers, sturdy walking shoes, a hat and insect repellent. Check regularly for ticks.
- Take care on rocks, near waterfalls and at lookouts.
- Supervise children closely. Ensure they do not run ahead out of sight. Remind children to wait at track junctions so they don't take a wrong turn; and to stay put if they become lost or unsure where they are.
- Take extra care when walking or driving in rainy, windy or foggy conditions.
- Falling trees and limbs, flash flooding and landslips occur naturally at any time. Avoid visiting in extreme weather.
- Avoid standing under bunya pines in summer, as this is the time when their heavy cones drop from the canopy above.

Did you know?

Bunya pines develop fruiting cones every year from mid-summer to autumn; producing a larger number than usual about every 3 years. At a time that aligned with this natural event, large groups of Aboriginal people would travel along traditional pathways to take part in what is today known as the 'Bunya Festival' lasting up to several months. The edible nuts of the bunya pine were a ceremonial food of great significance—and remain so today.



Michael O'Connor © Qld Govt



Robert Ashdown © Qld Govt

In an emergency

Call Triple Zero (000) from your mobile phone or the pay phone at Dandabah. Mobile coverage is unreliable, but you can often get a signal near Mount Mowbullian or the park visitor centre.



Large-leaved stinging trees sprout where a hole in the canopy lets in sunlight.

Michael O'Connor © Qld Govt

Bunya Mountains National Park





To Kingaroy ↑



Legend			
	National park		Information
	Restricted access area		Parking
	Creek		Park office
	Cliff line		Toilets
	Sealed road		Wheelchair access
	Class 3 walking track		Picnic area
	Class 4 walking track		Sheltered picnic table
			Barbecue—wood
			Barbecue—coin
			Short easy walk
			Natural viewpoint
			Constructed lookout
			Camping
			Camping—car access
			Camper trailer
			Motorhome
			Caravan
			Showers
			Accommodation
			Restaurant
			Telephone
			Mountain peak
			Water— treat before drinking

Mount Kiangarow
1135m

Burtons Well

Bunya Mountains
National Park

Bunya Mountains Road

Ghinghion
Lookout

9

Bottle
Tree Bluff

Cherry Plain
Lookout

Cherry Plain

Koondaii
Creek

Koondaii
Lookout

Westcott

Little
Falls

Paradise
Falls

Paradise

Big
Falls

Barker Creek
Lookout

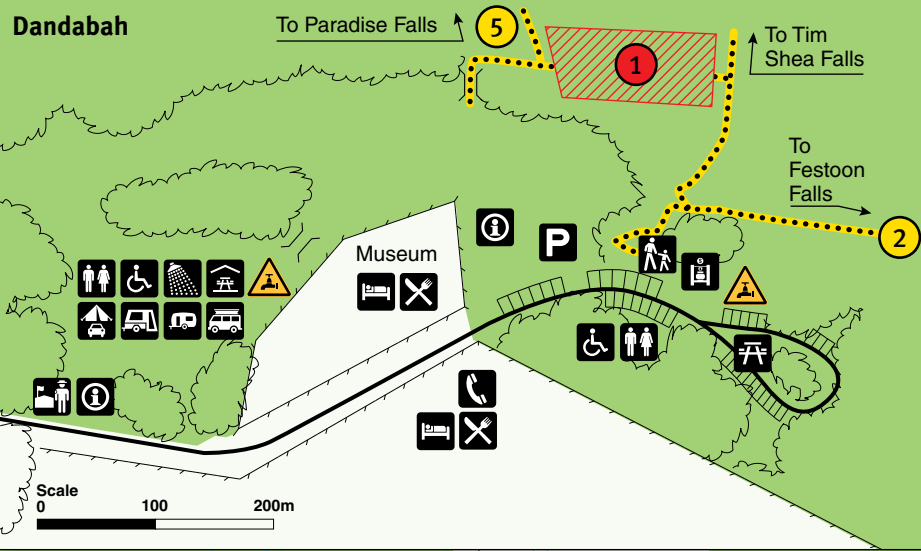
Big Falls
Lookout

Pine Gorge
Lookout

Tim Shea
Falls

Saddle-tree
Creek

Festoon
Falls



Ranger favourites

“It’s great seeing visitors with such big smiles enjoying our iconic park. From the

birds and wallabies, to the walks and views, there's nothing like spending time in the Bunya Mountains.

Ranger Owen



Kids enjoying time in nature (above). Bunya pines in fog (right);
©Tourism and Events Qld (above); Brett Roberts © Qld Govt (right)



Dandabah camping area
Robert Ashdown © Qld Govt



Colourful birds are never far away
Robert Ashdown © Qld Govt

“To see mist swirling around the mountain tops and the diversity of so many vegetation types and animals in one area is simply spectacular.”
Ranger Tony

“I like the sudden contrast of stepping from the cool, dark rainforest into the warm, bright sunlight of an open grassy bald.”
Ranger Martin



Barker Creek Lookout track (bottom).
Robert Ashdown © Qld Govt (bottom)



Fallen lacebark flowers on Koondaii circuit
© Bruce Thomson



Red-necked wallaby
Maxime Coquard © Tourism and Events Qld



Karen Smith © Qld Govt (above); Robert Ashdown © Qld Govt (right); © Bruce Thomson (far right)

Explore on foot

Be enticed into the cool, inviting rainforest to wander amid towering trees, breathe moist mountain air and feel your body, mind and spirit being replenished. The park's 35km of walking tracks weave in and out of rainforest, vine scrub, eucalypt forest and grasslands and offer stunning mountain views and plentiful wildlife. Delight in a short stroll or truly escape on a longer, more challenging hike.

Eastern Rainforest tracks (map references 1–5)

Enter at Dandabah or Paradise and venture deep into the rainforest past trickling streams to find tumbling waterfalls and impressive views to the east.

1 Bunya Bunya track	CLOSED	Entry to this area is currently prohibited while the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service works to manage the cause of tree deaths on this section of track.
2 Scenic circuit	4km return (Allow 1hr 20min)	Admire towering bunya pines and hoop pines, charming rock pools and giant strangler figs. Feel the spray of water tumbling over Festoon and Tim Shea falls and soak up warm sunshine and stunning views at Pine Gorge Lookout. If time is short, walk in an anti-clockwise direction and turn back at Festoon Falls or Pine Gorge Lookout.
3 Barker Creek circuit	10km return (Allow 3–4hr)	Listen for green catbirds and wompoo fruit-doves as you wind through arguably the most exceptional bunya pine rainforest on the planet. Watch for carpet pythons basking in the sunshine of a grassy bald or patch of eucalypt forest and take the short detour to Big Falls Lookout.
4 Barker Creek Lookout	5.4km return (Allow 2hr)	Learn from signs about different rainforest trees as you meander along Barker Creek past Paradise Falls and Little Falls and on towards Big Falls and Barker Creek lookouts. Rest on the grassy bald above Big Falls and gaze out over the falls and valleys filled with hoop pines. The true splendour of Big Falls is only revealed after heavy rain.
5 Dandabah to Paradise	3km one way (Allow 1hr) (6km return, 2hr)	Enjoy a wonderful easy walk through spectacular rainforest with huge bunya pines. This is a great walk to do on its own or as part of the Barker Creek circuit.

Western walks (map references 6–10)

Vegetation and scenery change as you head out to the western escarpment or rise to the mountains' highest peak. Most of these tracks start and finish at picnic areas along the bitumen road and can be linked together to make a longer walk. To avoid a long return trip, park a car at an exit point or arrange to be picked up.

6 Paradise to Westcott	3.2km one-way (Allow 1hr 15min) (6.4km return, 2.5hr)	Be captivated by magnificent rainforest, cross Little Pocket (a small high-altitude grassland bald) then head to the exposed western escarpment and views over the Darling Downs. Arrange to be picked up at the end, retrace your steps or continue to Cherry Plain picnic area.
7 Koondaii circuit	2.5km return (Allow 1hr)	Views towards Bell, Dalby and open plains in the distance reward your steep descent zig-zagging in and out of open forest to Koondaii Lookout. Delight in the carpet of velvety-pink lacebark flowers covering rainforest sections of track in late summer. It's easier to walk this circuit in a clockwise direction.
8 Koondaii Lookout	4.8km one way	Follow the cliff line where shady rainforest gives way to sunny eucalypt-clad ridges with sweeping views. See brown quail and skinks in areas of thick

Stay a while

Take refuge from a busy world and discover what the Bunya Mountains mean to you. Be surrounded by nature at one of three national park camping areas. Book your camp site well in advance at qld.gov.au/Camping, especially for stays during school holidays.

Or, indulge and stay at one of the many holiday houses or cosy cabins just outside the national park: visit southernqueenslandcountry.com.au or search the internet for options.

Places to camp

Dandabah



Share this grassy space with red-necked wallabies and let the kids loose while you watch birds or unwind beneath a backdrop of dome-crowned bunya pines. Close to walking tracks and with the convenience of a small general store, public phone, restaurants and holiday houses nearby, this is a popular place to stay.

Westcott



Relax away from the crowds at the forest edge with sunset views over distant plains. Keep watch for all 3 of Bunya Mountains' fairy-wren species—variegated, red-backed and superb blue.

Burtons Well



Wake to spectacular sunrises and an amazing morning chorus of birds sharing your hillside camp. Marvel at giant grasstrees several hundred years old and stringybarks towering over wattles, grasstrees and other shrubs on an exposed ridge adjacent to rainforest. Look for eastern whipbirds, finches and honeyeaters by day, and possums and gliders by night.

Tick alert

Ticks are active all year round and can cause severe allergic reactions or serious illness. Wear insect



8 Westcott to Cherry Plain

4.8km one-way
(Allow 1.5–2 hr)
(9.6km return, 3–4hr)

ridges with sweeping views. See brown quail and skinks in areas of thick tussocky grass and marvel at elaborate golden blossoms of king orchids adorning cliff edges in spring. Return the same way, arrange to be picked up or link to another track.

9 Cherry Plain to Burtons Well

6km one-way
(Allow 2hr)
(12km return, 4 hr)

Stretch your legs along the Bunya Mountain’s western edge. Wind in and out of rainforest, vine scrub and open forest, revelling in bird song and stopping at lookouts to gaze at the view or watch soaring wedge-tailed eagles. Arrange a pick-up at the end, retrace your steps or extend your walk further by adding another track.

10 Mount Kiangarow



2.3km return
(Allow 1hr)

Climb gradually to the Bunya Mountain’s highest peak and the impressive avenue of tall grass trees and views from the summit. Listen for the distinctive two-part ‘whip-crack’ call of eastern whipbirds and be thrilled at the sight of grey goshawks whooshing over the forest canopy. Time your walk for sunrise or sunset and be mesmerised by the changing hues of light creeping across mountains and plains.

Walking safely

Plan your walks so that you will be safe and have a great time. Take drinking water and nutritious snacks; wear a hat and sturdy ankle-supporting footwear. Keep to tracks and watch your step near cliff edges or on slippery muddy tracks. Please carry this map and keep children close so they do not take a wrong turn.

Walking track classifications

Grade	Symbol	Suits	Track description
3		Most ages and fitness levels. Some bushwalking experience recommended.	Well-defined tracks may have short steep hill sections, a rough surface and many steps. Tracks may have obstacles and be partly overgrown.
4		Experienced bushwalkers with moderate levels of fitness.	Tracks may be extensively overgrown, rough and very steep. Caution is needed near cliff edges and naturally-occurring lookouts.



repellent and check yourself and children regularly for ticks.



Help protect the bunya mountains

- **Leave your pets at home**—domestic animals are not permitted in national parks.
- **Let wildlife be wild.** Never feed birds, wallabies or other wildlife. This upsets the balance of nature and can cause animals to become aggressive.
- **Take your rubbish with you when you leave**—what you bring in, you take out.
- **Do frogs a favour:** stay out of creeks and don’t disturb tadpoles, remove rocks or trample vegetation.
- **Clean your boots, clothes and equipment of soil and seeds** before and after you visit and help stop the spread of weeds and harmful organisms (such as *Phytophthora*).



Protect bunya pines for future times

Use the washdown stations at track entrances to prevent the spread of potentially pathogen-containing soil on boots and equipment into the park, and from the Bunya Mountains to other areas.

Phytophthora (a microscopic, disease-causing plant pathogen) has been found in the soil where groups of bunya pines have died. Limiting the spread of soil is currently our best chance of protecting bunya pines.

