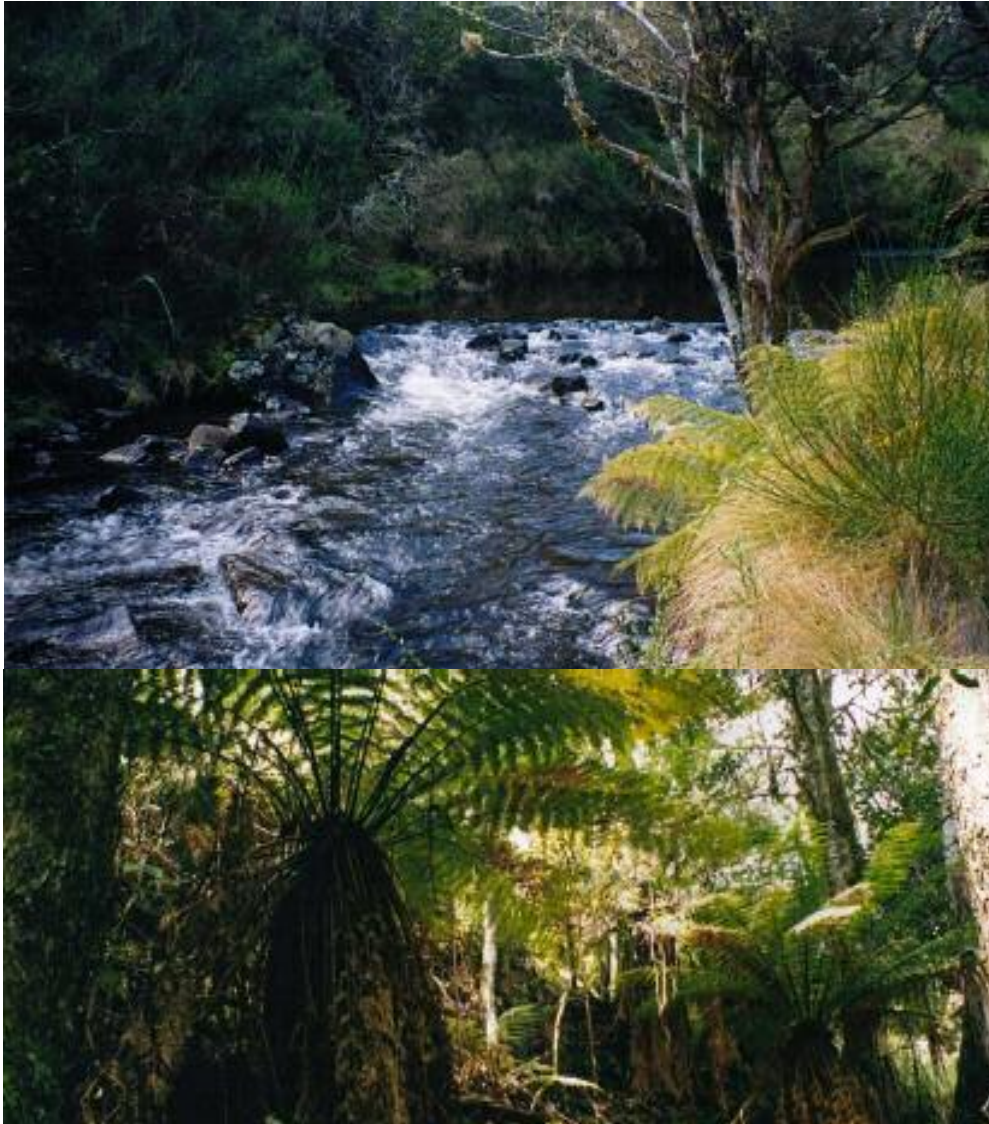


# **DEVIL'S HOLE - MANNING RIVER CIRCUIT**

## **Track Notes**



**ABOVE: Views from the Devil's Hole - Manning River Circuit**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This walk is a fairly easy five hour walk along established roads and trails within the Barrington Tops State Forest. It covers about 15km in total. But don't be put off by the number of kilometres covered, for it really is quite an easy walk, especially if you take your time - there is no reason why you can't take all day to complete the walk. This document allows you to print off as many copies as you need in order for you to follow the circuit suggested.

Another suggestion is that you could make a weekend of the Devil's Hole - Manning River Circuit by camping at the Devil's Hole Camping Area. The camping area is a fairly basic and secluded campsite of the main Barrington Tops Forest Road. The turn off to the campsite is opposite the Devil's Hole Picnic Area and the short walk to Devil's Hole Lookout, which provides excellent views of the Mount Carson and the Moppy River Valley wilderness (or Devil's Hole, as it is known). In short, the Devil's Hole Camping Area is an excellent base for a weekend bushwalking and camping trip.

The campsite itself is surrounded by many delightful scenes, including a small creek and pond behind the camping area that can be explored. Native wildlife is also common at the campsite, including several wallabies and bird species.

## **2. TRACK NOTES:**

The walk begins from behind the Devil's Hole Camping Area by crossing the ford on the creek. The trail quickly joins up with the Thunderbolt's Trail (turn right at the junction). Thunderbolt's Trail soon joins with Tugalow Trail (leads to Gummi Falls Camping Area) after about 500m. This is the point where the circuit rejoins Thunderbolt's Trail for the return to the Devil's Hole Camping Area later in the walk. For now, continue along Thunderbolt's Trail (to the right).

The trail now rises and falls over several summits of between 1400 and 1420m. Soon a trail heads off to the right; this is Compartment Road 88. Ignore this trail and continue on ahead. Soon you will see Thunderbolts Quarry on your left (1356m). This could provide an area for an overnight camp should you ever decide to follow the entire length of Thunderbolt's Trail. It takes about an hour of easy walking to reach this point of the walk.

Continuing past Thunderbolt's Quarry, the junction of Thunderbolt's Trail and the Pheasant Creek Road (also called Boggy Swamp Trail here) is reached. Turn left at this point and keep an eye out for Bush Turkeys and Lyrebirds in the forest undergrowth. Throughout the walk you will see some amazing stands of tree ferns.

About 1 1/2 hours into the walk you will come across another trail heading off to the right, ignore this and continue on with the main trail. After another 20 minutes you reach

the turn off for the Manning River Camping Area. This short sidetrack is well worth investigating and provides a great place for a rest or even lunch. This camping ground is a very picturesque one and is another brilliant spot to camp. So far you have probably walked about 2 hours in total (not counting any breaks).

Return to the main Pheasant Creek Road and soon you will reach Henry's Bridge and the Manning River Picnic Area. This is yet another great spot for a break, though not as good as the Manning River Camping Area you just left.

Continue to follow Pheasant Creek Road (ignoring the North Branch Road to the right just after the bridge) and soon you will hear a small waterfall in the gully below. These falls are located on Pheasant Creek and I call them Pheasant Creek Falls. It is possible to make your way down to the falls through the vegetation for a closer look, but it is not as easy as it may first seem.

Continuing on the road above Pheasant Creek you eventually reach several trails. The first to the right can be ignored, as can be the second. Upon reaching this second road you have actually reached Tubrabucca Road and you now follow it (to the left). This point marks about 3 hours into the walk.

As you follow Tubrabucca Road, you will come across Wright's Trail heading off to the right (ignore it). After being on Tubrabucca Road for about 30 minutes you reach its junction with the Bullock Brush Road. Follow Bullock Brush Road to the left and forty minutes later you will arrive at Gummi Falls Camping Area on the Manning River. You have now been walking for over 4 hours.

The Gummi Falls area is a very spacious Camping ground, providing yet another basic and secluded camping ground. There seems to be streams all over the place here, with the small Gummi Falls providing another excellent place for a break or meal.

From Gummi Falls you cross the Manning River at a ford and now proceed along the Tugalow Trail, which indicates you are in the home stretch of the walk. The Tugalow Trail is perhaps the most difficult section of the walk, being largely all uphill from Gummi Falls to Thunderbolt's Trail. Be on the lookout for snakes as I have often seen a number of them sunning themselves in this section of the walk.

Upon reaching Thunderbolt's Trail, the walk continues on over an area already covered earlier in the walk. Upon reaching Devil's Hole Camping Area you will have been walking for just over 5 hours (or longer if you really took your time).

### **3. ALTERNATIVE WALKS:**

Only your imagination and navigation skills will limit the number of alternative walks that are possible in this area of the Barrington Tops. Here I list just a couple of these

possibilities.

### **3.1 Gummi Falls Return**

For a two hour return walk from the Devil's Hole Camping Area, you can walk to Gummi Falls via Thunderbolt's and Tugalow Trails. Refer to the main track notes for further details of this section of the walk.

### **3.2 Manning River Ramble**

This alternative will involve the Gummi Falls walk and more. Walk to Gummi Falls Camping Area and follow the Manning River past Henry's Bridge to the Manning River Camping Area. This will take some time, as there is no established track.

The return is the same way or along the route in either direction from the Manning River Camping Area as described in the main Devil's Hole - Manning River Circuit walk.

## **4. MAPS:**

There will be a need to purchase the following 1:25 000 topographic maps:

- Cobark 9234-III-S
- Moonan Brook 9134-II-S

Also useful will be the CMA Tourist Map of Barrington Tops and Gloucester Districts and the Barrington Tops State Forests map from NSW State Forests.