

Great and local walks in Queensland

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Queensland covers approximately 1.8 million square kilometres (668,000 square miles) and almost five percent of that area is protected national park boasting an incredible choice of world-class short, half-day, full-day and multi-day walks.

Great! Walks of Queensland

Great! Walks are a series of world-class walking tracks through some of the State's most beautiful natural areas, including three World Heritage Areas. Each of the walks offers a range of experiences from short, easy strolls to half, full-day walks and extended overnight adventures to ensure people of all ages and abilities can enjoy the walks. http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/parks_and_forests/great_walks/

Carnarvon

The Carnarvon Great Walk links the Carnarvon Gorge and Mount Moffatt sections of Carnarvon National Park, an area of outstanding natural beauty and human history set within the highlands of the Central Queensland Sandstone Belt. The full circuit walk which is 86 km in length, is destined to become one of Queensland's great walking experiences - a true adventure to remember. <http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/parks/canarvon-great-walk/about.html>

Conondale Range

Conondale Range Great Walk is located at the Booloumba Creek, Sunshine Coast Hinterland. Ancient rainforest, cascading waterfalls, crystal clear creeks, tall open forest, and expansive 360 degree views are just some of spectacular features you will encounter as you walk. A range of walking experiences are offered within this great walk - from short strolls to the challenging four day, 56 km, full circuit walk. <http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/parks/great-walks-conondale-range/about.html>

Cooloola

The walk links the Noosa North Shore to Rainbow Beach via the eastern high dunes known as the Cooloola sandmass - one of the largest accumulations of wind-blown sand found along the Queensland coast. Built up over the last 500,000 years, it conserves unique dune, lake and vegetation systems. To the west lies the upper Noosa River - one of the unspoiled river systems in Queensland. Up to 102km long, this extensive walking track system winds through rainforest, tall eucalypt forest, dry coastal woodland and heath plains. <http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/parks/great-walks-cooloola/about.html>

Fraser Island

The entire 90km Fraser Island Great! Walk takes six to eight days to complete, and shorter routes are available. Explore the world's largest sand island on foot and discover ever-changing landscapes, stunning scenery and fascinating natural and cultural heritage including towering rainforest, crystal-clear lakes, coloured sands and vast sand dunes. <http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/parks/great-walks-fraser-island/index.html>

Gold Coast Hinterland

The 54km Gold Coast Hinterland Great! Walk links the Gondwana Rainforests of Australia World Heritage Area of Lamington and Springbrook plateaus via the scenic Numinbah Valley. The walk passes through the ancient volcanic landscape of the Tweed Volcano and lush rainforest with relics of Gondwana flora and fauna. <http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/parks/great-walks-gold-coast-hinterland/index.html>

Mackay Highlands

Walk along the rim of an ancient volcano and into the Eungella and Homevale National Parks through rugged, mountainous terrain, dense rainforest, deep gorges and steep escarpments. Eungella National Park is also home to the elusive duck-billed platypus. <http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/parks/great-walks-mackay-highlands/index.html>

Sunshine Coast Hinterland

This 58km walk meanders through some of the Blackall Range's most scenic areas featuring warm subtropical rainforest, tall open eucalypt forest and picturesque waterfalls. Look out for more than 100 species of birds, 70 reptile species and more than 30 frog species recorded in the area and watch overhead for soaring peregrine falcons. <http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/parks/great-walks-sunshine-coast/index.html>

Wet Tropics

The longest of the Great! Walks, the Wet Tropics Walk is located north of Townsville, inland from Ingham and Cardwell and is a continuous walking track that extends 110km from Wallaman Falls to Blencoe Falls traversing the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. <http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/parks/great-walks-wet-tropics/index.html>

Whitsunday

Go bush in the Whitsundays and take the 30 kilometre journey through the Conway State Forest to Airlie Beach. Highlights of the walk include majestic tropical rainforest and views across to the Whitsunday Islands. The tracks are of varying distance and difficulty and while the entire walk takes three days, shorter walks are linked to the main track. <http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/parks/great-walks-whitsunday/index.html>

Whitsunday Ngaro Sea Trail

Lofty peaks, sandy beaches, secluded forests and azure waters create an unforgettable backdrop to the Whitsunday Ngaro Sea Trail. For a challenging walk, climb Whitsunday Peak and enjoy spectacular 360 degree views over the Whitsunday islands and mainland. Gain an insight into Ngaro life and culture at Ngaro Cultural Site in Nara Inlet. Choose a leisurely walk to Chance Bay or stretch out across South Molle Island's 11.5km track network. The Whitsunday Ngaro Sea Trail has something for everyone. <http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/parks/whitsunday-ngaro-sea-trail/index.html>

Local Walks

As well as the Great! Walks there are many and varied walking experiences available to enthusiasts throughout the various regions of Queensland. These following are just a sample of what is on offer.

Brisbane

Go to the top floor of a high rise building in the State capital and you'll see national parks in the distance in all directions. Mt Coot-tha in the western suburbs is filled with walking tracks, while Daisy Hill between Brisbane and the Gold Coast is home to the Venman Bushland National Park, one of the region's major koala habitats. To the north and still close to the city are the Boondall Wetlands and likewise Brisbane Forest Park is only a short drive from the CBD. It has 14 separate recreation areas and more than 30km of walking tracks passing by remote gorges, sheltered pockets of sub-tropical rainforest, and expanses of eucalypt woodland. http://www.queenslandholidays.com.au/qldhols_06/destinations/brisbane/experiences/natural-encounters.cfm

Central Queensland

The Deepwater National Park near Agnes Water has beaches and headlands on one side and palm forests and deepwater lagoons on the other. A great site for bird watching, between January to April the turtle hatchlings also emerge from their nests. Inland is Carnarvon National Park, one of the most famous in the region and popular with visitors from around the world. It has 21km of walking tracks, towering white sandstone cliffs and Aboriginal rock art sites dating back more than 20,000 years. http://www.queenslandholidays.com.au/experiences/natural-encounters/walks/walks_home.cfm

The Outback

Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park is one of Queensland's most scenic national parks and features spectacular gorge country and sandstone ranges. It is also home to World Heritage Area of The Australian Fossil Mammal Site (Riversleigh), one of the most significant fossil deposits in the world and the richest known fossil mammal deposit in Australia. http://www.queenslandholidays.com.au/experiences/natural-encounters/walks/walks_home.cfm

Southern Queensland

Girraween National Park in the southern corner of the State and the Bunya Mountains to the north are two of the most popular walking destinations in this region. Girraween is filled with massive granite outcrops, balancing boulders and clear tumbling cascades. Wild flowers and wildlife also abound. It's also the one spot in Queensland where snow sometimes falls. The Bunya Mountains National Park is as the name suggests, home to forests of giant bunya pines. http://www.queenslandholidays.com.au/experiences/natural-encounters/walks/walks_home.cfm

Townsville

Some of the most popular walks in this area are on beautiful Magnetic Island, only 8km offshore. The national park has 25km of interpretive walking tracks and is home to Australia's largest population of koalas in the wild. Near Cardwell, Hinchinbrook Island's rugged terrain challenges wilderness hikers on the internationally famous, 32km Thorsborne Trail. Hinchinbrook's extensive mangrove forests are among the richest and most diverse in Australia and features salt pans, eucalypt forest, rainforest, freshwater melaleuca swamps, heaths and sloping mountain rock pavements. http://www.queenslandholidays.com.au/qldhols_06/destinations/townsville/experiences/natural-encounters.cfm

Tropical North

There are approximately 150 managed walks in the World Heritage Listed Wet Tropics ranging from short, popular boardwalks to long distance treks with overnight camping. The Misty Mountains is one of the most comprehensive range of wilderness walking trails offering up stunning waterfalls, spectacular rainforest, crystal clear creeks and magnificent vistas. These are Australia's first network of long distance walking trails in high altitude rainforest environment and comprise more than 130km of trails for walkers of all levels. http://www.queenslandholidays.com.au/experiences/natural-encounters/walks/walks_home.cfm

For more information on walking in Queensland visit: <http://www.queenslandholidays.com.au/experiences/natural-encounters/walks/great-walks.cfm>