

# Kosciuszko National Park

## High Plains area walks and trails



[nationalparks.nsw.gov.au](http://nationalparks.nsw.gov.au)

Explore this wild corner of Kosciuszko. The High Plains area spoils you with summer walks, horse rides and bike trails leading you to hidden huts, homesteads, and gorges.

You'll need to take a map to make sure you follow the correct route, as horse pads in the area often resemble walking tracks.

Times for all tracks are based on estimated walking times.

### BLUE WATERHOLES WALKS

Discover an amazing landscape of towering limestone cliffs and crystal-clear streams, as you walk along remote tracks to caves and gorges.

Be prepared for several creek crossings. You'll need a permit to access all caves except Cooleman, Murray's and Barbers caves.

#### Topographic maps

- Peppercorn 1:25 000
- Rules Point 1:25 000

#### 01 Clarke Gorge walking track



- Grade 5 walk • Short steep hills • Occasional steps
- Rough unformed track • Limited signage
- Some bushwalking experience recommended

5km return, 3.5–4.5 hours

From the lookout at Blue Waterholes, follow the creek downstream before crossing to the other side of Cave Creek. After 300m you'll enter Clarke Gorge, named after Rev Clarke, a geologist who studied the area in the 1850s.

Continue through the gorge past several small cave entrances in the gorge walls. Follow Cave Creek downstream to the waterfall. This marks the end of the walk. Return the same way.

#### 02 Nichols Gorge walking track



- Grade 4 walk • Short steep hills • Occasional steps
- Rough track, many obstacles • Sign posted
- Some bushwalking experience recommended

7km loop, 4–6 hours

From the carpark at Blue Waterholes, follow Blue Waterholes Road past the locked gate upstream along Cave Creek. Turn right at the walking track marker, following Cave Creek onto Nichols Gorge track. The gorge is named after Horatio Nichols who assisted Rev Clarke.

Walk for 200m to Cooleman Cave, which you can explore with a torch. Continue 1.5km upstream, crossing Cave Creek several times before reaching the keyhole entrance to Murray Cave. You can explore this cave for 200m. It's recommended you take at least 2 torches, in case batteries run flat.

The walk then climbs out of the gorge to the left of Murray Cave and emerges onto the open plain. From here you'll see several dolines or depressions. The first is a solution doline, formed by the gradual dissolving and removal of limestone by rainwater. The next is a collapsed doline or sinkhole. Continue to follow the track markers back to Cave Creek.

Cross here or, if it's flowing, follow it downstream until another sink is reached. The creek disappears underground into Cave Creek, re-emerging at Blue Waterholes. Only after heavy rain will the creek flow past this point.





Photo: Blue Waterholes (E.Sheargold/OEH)

Continue, passing several small dolines until you reach Blue Waterholes Road. Turn right and return to the carpark.

## HIGH COUNTRY PLAINS WALKS AND RIDES

Journey through mountain woodlands to high country huts, and immerse yourself in high country pioneering heritage. In summer, explore the network of trails on foot, by bike or by horse. In winter, you can cross country ski or snowshoe in this area.

### Topographic maps

- Tantangara 1:25 000
- Rules Point 1:25 000
- Rendezvous Creek 1:25 000
- Denison 1:25 000
- Ravine 1:25 000

### 03 Gooandra Homestead walk and ride



• Grade 3 walk

9.4km return, 3.5 hours

This day walk, or moderate ride, begins at the Gooandra trail head, on Snowy Mountains Highway, around 6km north of Kiandra.

Follow the trail across the Eucumbene River, through sub-alpine frost hollows on the Kiandra Plain. You'll pass Six Mile Gold Diggings, circa 1864, and the headwaters of Gooandra Creek, before reaching the intersection with the footpad to Gooandra Homestead.

Gooandra was built in 1913. Around 12,000 sheep were held on this lease, along with a woolshed and yards. The area's pioneering history goes back to the Kiandra gold rush, and you can still see the remnants of a miner's hut built in 1864,

about 20m away. This structure is believed to be the oldest in Kosciuszko National Park.

**Alternative routes:** If you want to shorten the route by 1km each way, you can drive along Gooandra management trail, and park near the Eucumbene River crossing. Closed winter.

### 04 Mosquito Run trail



• Grade 4 walk

34km return (all huts), 10 hours

Ghost Gully to:

Hainsworth Hut: 3.5km one-way, 1–2 hours

Old Currango: 12.1km one-way, 4–5 hours

Bill Jones Hut: 15km one-way, 5–6 hours

Enjoy great views across the plains as you ride through snow gum woodlands. This mostly flat to moderate trail, with a few rolling hills, is also a suitable Grade 4 walk.

Starting at Ghost Gully, park your car at the designated horse camping area, 4.5km east of Long Plain Road on Port Philip trail. From here, head north along Mosquito Creek trail. Hainsworth Hut is 3.5km on the right. Continue for around 6.5km then veer right for Old Currango. The hut is 1.8km along the access trail.

Ride 1.8km back to Mosquito Creek trail to the junction with Bill Jones trail. Bill Jones Hut is on the tree-line, west of the junction. There's also a horse pad from Mosquito Creek trail that heads to the hut along the tree-line. Return the way you came.

**Extra sections:** For a longer ride, continue to either Blue Waterholes or Pockets Hut, which becomes the Pocket ride.

For Blue Waterholes, head east across the plain for 2.3km, then turn left onto Blue Waterholes trail. Continue for about 3km. At Blue Waterholes, all riders must remain on the Blue Waterholes trail.

For Pockets Hut, head east across the plain for 2.3km, then turn right on Blue Waterholes trail for 4.8km. Organise a car shuttle from the locked gate at Gurrangorambla Creek, on Pockets Saddle Road. Ghost Gully to Pockets Hut is part of the Australian Alps walking track.

**Hainsworth Hut:** This simple corrugated iron structure with a wrap-around chimney was built around 1951. It sits in a sheltered valley with a pretty creek.

**Old Currango Homestead:** Constructed of hand split timbers around 1873, it's the oldest building in the park. The homestead has spectacular views overlooking Currango Plains towards Mt Bimberi.

**Bill Jones Hut:** The corrugated iron hut is in a sheltered spot amongst the snow gums. Built in the 1950s, it's one of the last-built grazing era huts.

## 05 Pocket ride



• Grade 4 walk

13km return (all huts), 8 hours

Gurrangorambla Creek to:

Oldfields Hut: 3.1km one-way, 1–2 hours

Pockets Hut: 5km one-way, 2–3 hours

This easy ride, also a suitable Grade 4 walk, starts from the locked gate at the northern end of Pockets Saddle Road, at Gurrangorambla Creek. Oldfields Hut is 3.1km from here or Pockets Hut is 5km.

To reach Oldfields Hut, ride along Pockets Saddle Road and turn right onto Murray Gap trail. The trail winds up a steep hill and down to the hut. Return to your start point, or take Blue Waterholes trail then Pockets Hut trail.

Pockets Hut is 5km from Gurrangorambla Creek. Travel along Pockets Saddle Road and turn left onto Blue Waterholes trail, then right onto Pockets Hut trail to reach the hut.

**Extra sections:** From Pockets Hut, you can return the way you came or connect with Mosquito Run trail. Alternatively, continue on to Blue Waterholes, which lengthens the route by approximately 14km return. At Blue Waterholes, all riders must remain on the Blue Waterholes trail.

**Oldfields Hut:** Built in 1925, this picturesque timber slab hut has great views across a secluded valley to Mt Bimberi.

**Pockets Hut:** Built in the early 1930s as part of Currango Station, this weatherboard hut

has 4 rooms with a large fireplace. Camping is permitted in the open area beside the hut.

## 06 Nungar walk and ride



• Grade 2 walk

23km return, 8 hours

Start at Nungar Creek trail, which is 8km along Tantangara Road from Snowy Mountains Highway. Witses Hut is 11.5km along the trail.

This undulating ride, or Grade 2 walk, travels alongside the winding Nungar Creek, to the Tantangara Dam trail intersection. Keep an eye out for red-necked wallabies and wedge-tailed eagles. You'll pass through sub-alpine woodland and plains and see evidence of the 2003 and 2007 wildfires as you approach Witses Hut. Return the same way.

**Extra sections:** From Witses Hut you can create a through trip by continuing south-west along Nungar trail for an extra 11.5km, to Snowy Mountains Highway at Kiandra. You may get wet feet crossing the Eucumbene River near the highway.

**Witses Hut:** This vertical slab hut was built around 1952, on what was once Tantangara Station using timber from Tantangara Homestead (circa 1880s).

## WINTER ACCESS

Long Plain Road and Tantangara Road (beyond the dam wall) are closed in winter from June to October long weekends. This period may be extended so it's a good idea to contact:

Tumut Visitor Centre **Ph: (02) 6947 7025**

## 07 Murrumbidgee ride



• Grade 4 walk

20km return (all huts), 8 hours

Murrumbidgee bridge crossing to:

Townsend Hut: 4km one-way, 1–2 hours

Pedens Hut: 6km one-way, 2–3 hours

Love Nest in

the Sallees: 8.5km one-way, 3–4 hours

This moderate ride, or Grade 4 walk, includes several river crossings and becomes more challenging the further you go. Start on Tantangara Road at the Murrumbidgee bridge





Photo: Old Currango Hut (M.Vanderveer/OEH)

crossing, 20km from Snowy Mountains Highway. Pocket Saddle Road is beyond the bridge.

Walk or ride your bike up Circuits trail - a real heart-starter. Continue to Circuits Hut (total of 3.2km) or turn left onto Pedens trail, and cross Gulf Plain for the other huts. Turn left onto Townsend trail for Townsend Hut (sign posted).

Ride back to Pedens trail and continue until you reach the track leading to Pedens Hut. Return to Pedens trail, then after a while turn left onto Murrumbidgee trail. Love Nest in the Sallees Hut is located off Murrumbidgee trail (not marked), 200m north of the Clear Ridge and Murrumbidgee trail intersection.

**Alternative routes:** For a shorter trip, Circuit's Hut is 3.2km one-way from the Murrumbidgee bridge, along Circuit's trail.

For a downhill start to the ride, start at the intersection of Pockets Saddle Road and Murrumbidgee trail. Head past Love Nest in the Sallees, Pedens, Townsend, and Circuit's huts and back out to Murrumbidgee bridge.

For a longer ride, Circuits trail connects with Schofields trail, which meets Tantangara Road near Wares Yards campground. Organise a car shuffle back to your start point.

**Townsend Hut:** Constructed around 1940, the corrugated iron hut has lovely views down the valley. It's a great spot to go fishing in the river (licence required). Listen out for lyrebirds.

**Peden's Hut:** Built in 1929, this corrugated iron and timber slab hut uses materials from a 1890s slab hut.

**Love Nest in the Sallees Hut:** This vertical slab hut is nestled amongst black sallees above Payten's Creek. Don't forget to duck as you enter Kosciuszko's only 'humpy'.

## 08 Plain ride



• Grade 4 walk

21km return, 7 hours

Schofields trail head to:

Schofields Hut: 6km one-way, 2 hours

Circuits Hut: 10.5km one-way, 3.5 hours

This easy to moderate ride, or Grade 4 walk, starts at from the Schofield's trail head on Tantangara Road. Schofield's Hut is 6km along Schofield's trail, crossing Nungar Creek. Circuits Hut is 10.5km from Tantangara Road, following Schofields then Circuits trails.

For a longer ride, continue along Circuits trail to the intersection of Pedens trail. From here you can start the moderately difficult Murrumbidgee ride or organise a car shuttle.

**Schofields Hut:** The simple hut is best known for its 16-pane window.

**Circuits Hut:** Built in 1938, this pretty weatherboard hut is more like a house, with 4 rooms and a verandah. It sits among mature black sallees overlooking Gulf Plain. Circuits Hut was part of only 3 freehold grazing properties in what is now Kosciuszko National Park.

## 09 Gavels and Brayshaws Hut loop



• Grade 3 walk

27km loop, 9 hours (all huts)

Snowy Mountains Highway to:

Gavels Hut: 5.5km one-way, 2 hours

Brayshaws Hut: 16km one-way via Gavels Hut trail

Start at Boundary trail, off the Snowy Mountains Highway, near the park entrance. Gavels Hut is 5.5km north of the highway. Turn left at the junction onto Gavels Hut trail.

There are some narrow tracks with steep climbs and descents. In the southern part of the ride

you'll head through snow gums, mountain gum and alpine ash forests, that open onto the expansive Nungar Plain.

After reaching Gavel's Hut you can either return the way you came. The more adventurous can continue north on the trail that skirts the grassy plain, until you reach Circuits trail. Turn left towards Brayshaws Hut, which is 3.7km along the trail. Keep an eye out for red-necked wallabies, flame robins, and grey-shrike thrush, which are often seen in this area.

If you're equipped for an overnight walk, you can head directly back to Snowy Mountains Highway via Circuits shortcut trail, which is 10.8km from Brayshaws Hut.

**Gavel's Hut:** Built 1931, this quaint timber and corrugated iron clad hut looks over the Nungar Plain. James T Gavel leased the area in the 1930s as summer pasture for 4000 sheep.

**Brayshaws Hut:** Built in the 1950's, this tiny 2m x 3m weatherboard hut was originally a washroom and laundry for the Venables family, of Adaminaby.

## CARING FOR YOUR PARK

- Vehicles, all bikes and horse riding aren't permitted within Clarke Gorge or Nichols Gorge, or in wilderness areas.
- Mountain biking and horse riding are permitted on all public roads and most management trails in the High Plains area.
- Bike riders please slow down. Give way to walkers and horses. Wear a helmet.
- Please stay on formed trails.
- Take water to the horse – hard hooves destroy stream banks.
- Use only weed-free feed.
- Small groups, 4–8 horses, is best.
- Observe all fire restrictions and never leave fires unattended. Consider using gas stoves instead of solid fuel for cooking.
- Bury toilet waste well away from water courses and public areas.
- All plants and animals in the national park are protected. Damage to or removal of any plants or animals is an offence.
- Domestic pets, firearms and chainsaws are not permitted in the national park.

## CAMPING WITH HORSES

You can vehicle base camp with your horse at designated campgrounds in this area, including.

- Ghost Gully campground
- Old Snowy campground
- Long Plain Hut campground
- Cooimbil Hut campground
- Bullocks Hill campground
- Wares Yards campground
- Rocky Plain campground

These campgrounds may also have facilities such as loading ramps and horse yards.

## ACCOMMODATION

Outside winter, you can stay overnight at Currango Homestead, The Pines Cottage, and Daffodil Cottage with your horse.

Maximum 10 horses are permitted at the Currango precinct at any time. There's a horse yard (3 paddocks) a short drive from the accommodation. You'll need to provide feed and water.

There's a limit of 1 horse per guest, subject to availability. Horses must be registered at the time of booking. A nominal fee applies.

Please call **1300 072 757** to book the horse bays.

Year-round accommodation is available at Wolgal Hut, Kiandra or at Yarrangobilly Caves.

## STAYING SAFE

Be aware of the risks and take responsibility for your own safety. Choose walks and activities to match your capabilities. Travel with others and tell someone where you're going and when you'll be back. Always check the weather before leaving and plan ahead.

Visit: [nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/alpine-safety](http://nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/alpine-safety)

### General enquiries

Tumut Visitor Information Centre

**Ph: (02) 6947 7025**

Snowy Region Visitor Information Centre, Jindabyne

**Ph: (02) 6450 5600**

Visit: [nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/kosciuszko](http://nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/kosciuszko)

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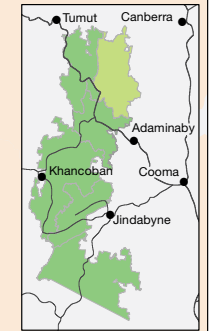
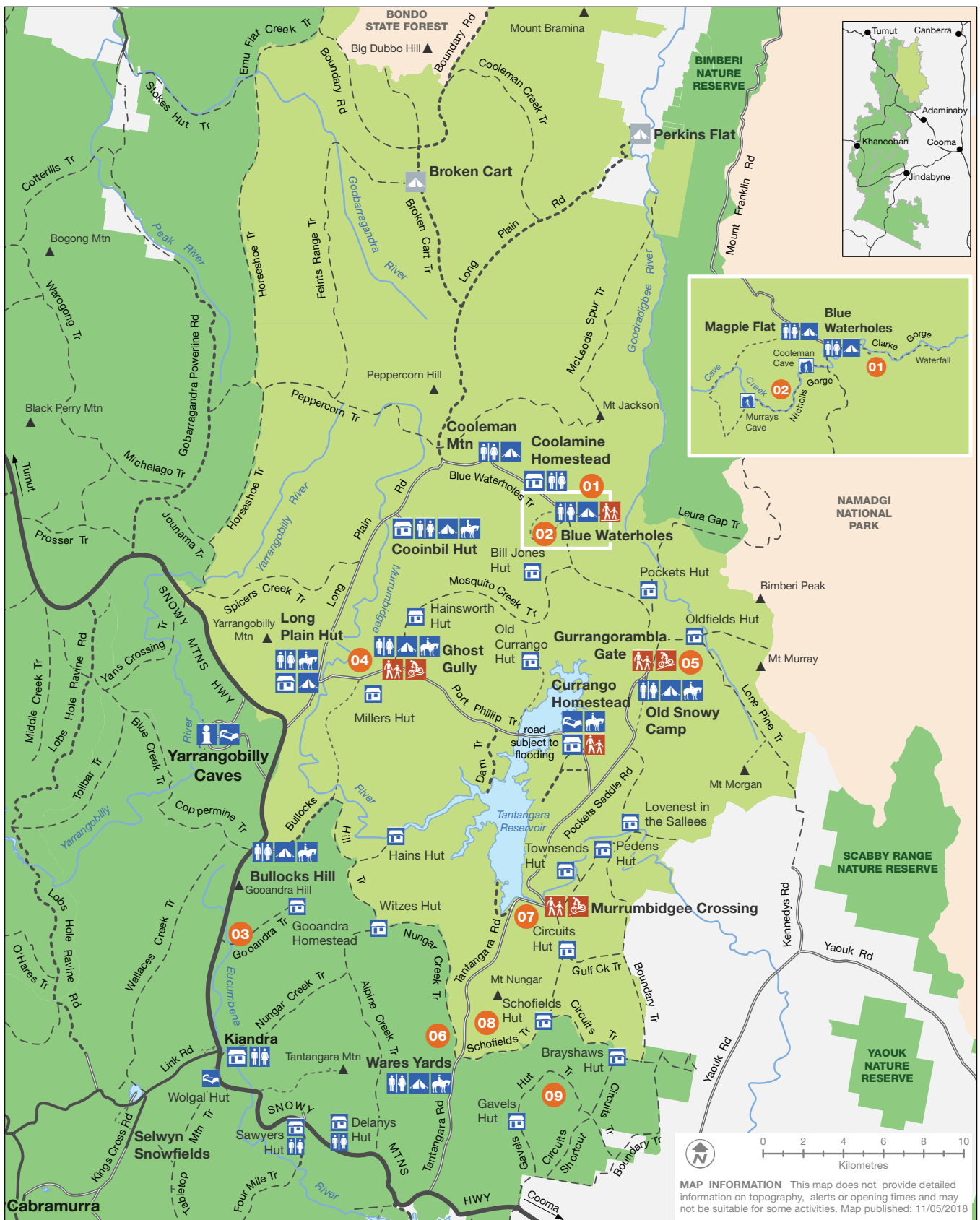


# High Plains area

Kosciuszko National Park



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NAMADGI NATIONAL PARK

SCABBY RANGE NATURE RESERVE

YAOUK NATURE RESERVE

**MAP INFORMATION** This map does not provide detailed information on topography, alerts or opening times and may not be suitable for some activities. Map published: 11/05/2018

- |                     |  |  |                            |                                       |
|---------------------|--|--|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| High Plains area    | Unsealed road - may not be accessible in wet weather | 01 Featured walking track or mountain bike trail | Campground                 | Historic hut                          |
| NPWS reserves       | 4WD trail - may not be accessible in wet weather     | Visitor information                              | Campground (no facilities) | Campground with facilities for horses |
| Other reserves      | Management trail - no public vehicular access        | Toilets  | Picnic area (day use only) | Walking track                         |
| Highway/Sealed road | Walking track  | Accommodation                                    | Cave                       | Mountain bike trail                   |