

# Nightcap National Park

and Whian Whian State Conservation Area



## HISTORY

Lured by the chance for employment in difficult times, timbergetters began logging in the Whian Whian area in the 1830's. The rainforest giant, Red Cedar, was particularly sought after for its beautiful glowing red timber.

Due to the actions of the Terania Native Forests Action Group between 1976 and 1979, national attention was focused on the extent of logging in the Nightcap area. Nightcap National Park was declared in 1983, with significant additions in 1999. Whian Whian State Conservation Area was created in 2003.

Almost 5000 hectares of Nightcap National Park was given World Heritage status in 1989 when it was added to the Central Eastern Rainforest Reserves of Australia (CERRA) group.

## NATURAL LANDFORMS

Spectacular features such as waterfalls play an important part in shaping the natural environment. The precipitous drop of Minyon Falls is the dramatic result of thousands of years of erosion. Exposed rock pinnacles such as the 'Sphinx', which is visible from Lismore and surrounding areas, are probably the result of wind erosion.

## FEATURES

Nightcap National Park and Whian Whian State Conservation Area are situated in far north-eastern New South Wales between Murwillumbah to the north-east and Lismore to the south. Together they encompass about 10500 hectares of the Nightcap Range.

The parks are located on the southern rim of the caldera of the Mount Warning shield volcano. The dominant massifs, sheer cliff walls, lush green gullies and spectacular waterfalls, which make up the parks, are relics of the area's volcanic past.

## NATURAL COMMUNITIES

Basalt and rhyolite lava flows from the Mount Warning volcano have influenced the vegetation communities in the area. Warm temperate rainforest is found throughout the parks on soils with a rhyolitic base while sub tropical rainforest is supported by nutrient rich basalt soils.

The Nightcap Range has the highest annual rainfall in New South Wales. The subtropical and warm temperature rainforest communities found in the parks have links to the ancient supercontinent of Gondwana. Nightcap National Park is one of 50 reserves in north-east NSW and south-east QLD which make up the Central Eastern Rainforest Reserves of Australia World Heritage area. All of these reserves contain similar vegetation communities and provide an insight into the past.



Copyright OEH

Repentance Creek

## THINGS TO SEE AND DO



Camp in the forest at **Rummery Park**. Take a short walk up Boggy Creek to Minyon Falls. Camping fees apply.



All picnic areas have barbeques, toilets and picnic tables with shelters and information.

**Mt Nardi Picnic Area** is accessed from Nimbin by a 12 kilometre narrow sealed road. Numerous walking tracks start from Mt Nardi including a link track to the Historic Nightcap Track.

**Terania Creek Picnic Area**, the scene of historic protests to save the rainforests of NSW from further logging, is located at the end of the Terania Creek Road. The narrow twisting dirt road is 14 kilometres in length, originating in the Channon. This area is subject to temporary closures at certain times of year. Please observe signage to avoid inconvenience.



**Minyon Grass Picnic Area** is accessed from Minyon Drive and offers the most spectacular views of Minyon Falls from a wheelchair accessible platform.

**Minyon Falls Picnic Area** is situated on Minyon Drive above Minyon Falls. On clear days there are views to the ocean from the waterfall's edge, which is accessed from a wheelchair accessible platform. For your own safety please stay on the walkway and platform. No abseiling or rock climbing is permitted.



Copyright OEH

Minyon Falls

## A CHANGING VIEW OF THE LAND

The parks are located within the traditional lands of the Widjabul clan of the Bundjalung Nation. Evidence from recorded sites suggests Aboriginal use of the Nightcap Range for at least the last 4000 years.

This area is of major significance to the local Aboriginal people and is respected for its rich tradition and value. Minyon Falls are part of a greater cultural landscape that includes other major landmarks such as Mount Warning (Wollumbin) and the Pinnacle, in the Border Ranges.



Copyright OEH

Epiphytes are abundant such as this Elkhorn



Copyright OEH

Rummery Park Camping Area

## GETTING THERE

You can reach the parks by five separate public roads from the south. All are unsealed, with the exception of the access to Mt Nardi.

The parks are approximately 30 kilometres north of Lismore and 30 kilometres south-east of Murwillumbah.

## CARING FOR THE PARK

- Leave your pets and firearms at home, as they are not permitted.
- Enjoy the wildlife but do not disturb plants, animals, bushrock, Aboriginal sites or historic places. All are protected.
- Be careful with fire. Use only fireplaces provided. Observe any total fire bans.
- Use only firewood provided or better still use gas stoves.
- Firewood is not provided. Bring your own firewood or better still use gas stoves.
- Drive carefully and keep to public roads. All vehicles must be registered and drivers licensed.
- Keep the park clean and safe for wildlife. Please take your rubbish home.
- Observe all signs, as they are there for your safety and to help you enjoy your visit.
- Keep to walking tracks, as they are designed to have minimal impact.
- Be considerate of other park users – keep your noise to a minimum.
- Please do not feed the wildlife.
- Drinking water is not provided.

## MORE INFORMATION

NPWS Richmond River Area Office,  
7 Northcott Crescent Alstonville NSW 2477.

Tel: 6627 0200

Email: [northernrivers.region@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:northernrivers.region@environment.nsw.gov.au)

## GENERAL INQUIRIES:

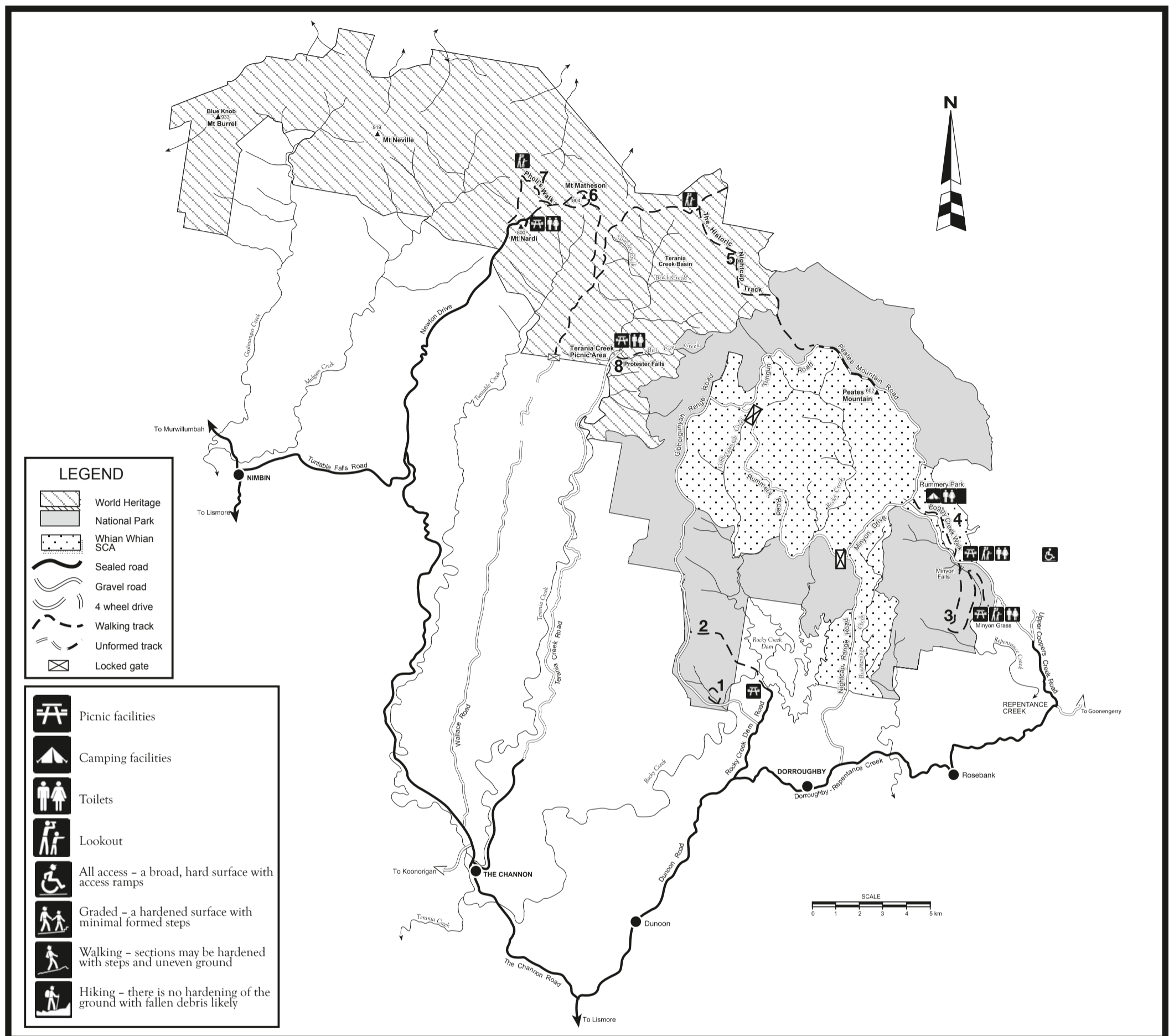
T: 13000PARKS (1300 072 757)

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

# Nightcap

## National Park

and Whian Whian State Conservation Area



### WALKING TRACKS



**1. Big Scrub Loop** (1.5 kilometres, 45 min, moderate). Starting off Gibbergunyah Range Road, visitors can stroll amongst some of the best examples of remnant rainforest in NSW. See large figs, abundant birdlife and crystal clear creeks.



**2. Rocky Creek Dam Walk** (2 kilometres one way, 45 min, moderate). Begin at Rocky Creek Dam picnic area. Walk through regenerating rainforest on the dam's shores into large untouched forest before emerging through flooded gum plantation at Gibbergunyah Range Road. Retrace your steps to the Rocky Creek Dam picnic area.



**3. Minyon Loop** (7.5 kilometres, 4½ hours, moderate - hard). Beginning at either Minyon Grass or Minyon Falls picnic areas this walk takes visitors through changing vegetation to the base of the falls past a large unlogged Brushbox stand and along the escarpment edge. For visitors wishing to walk only to the base of Minyon Falls the walk begins at Minyon Grass and is a 4 kilometre return walk taking around 2 hours. Both walks have steep climbs out.



**4. Boggy Creek Walk** (2 kilometres one way, 45 mins, easy). Starting at Rummery Park, this track leads to

Minyon Falls along beautiful Boggy Creek. The track starts in Blackbutt forest and includes a series of small waterfalls and pools along the quiet creek.



**5. Historic Nightcap Track** (16 kilometres one way, 1½ days, moderate - hard). This walk goes between Mt Nardi and Rummery Park and can be started at either end. The track overlaps parts of the original trail used by travellers and postal workers between Lismore and Murwillumbah in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Bush camping is permitted on this walk but visitors must use portable stoves and carry out their own rubbish.



**6. Mt Matheson Loop** (3 kilometres, 1½ hours, easy - moderate). Originating at Mt Nardi, the Mt Matheson Loop heads out through the lush rainforest encircling Mt Matheson. Drier vegetation communities are found near the cliff edges. The Pholis Gap and Historic Nightcap tracks split off from this walk.

*For reasons of public safety and threatened species conservation there is no access to the top of Tuntable Falls. Access to the bottom of the falls is also not possible as it is through private property.*



**7. Pholis Gap** (4 kilometres return, 1½ hours, moderate). The track was named after Athol Pholis who was killed by a tree fall while working in the area. Beginning at Mt Nardi the track meanders through rainforest for a kilometre before splitting off the Mt Matheson Loop and descending towards the escarpment edge. Drier vegetation dominated by grass trees and New England Blackbutt typify the walk to Pholis Gap which offers views of Mt Warning and surrounding valleys.



**8. Protesters Falls** (1.4 kilometres return, 45 min, easy). Visit Protester Falls at Terania Creek Picnic Area. This easy walk winds its way through Bangalow Palms to the base of the falls. Swimming is not permitted in the area as it is home to the endangered Fleay's Barred Frog.

NB: Please observe all warning signs for walking tracks.