

# ROBERTSON – MERYLA HIGHLANDS

22 walks

[regional](#)

[Satellite map](#)

This upland plateau 500-900m above sea level offers a diversity of excellent bushwalking and birdwatching locations. There is a range of accommodation at Robertson and Moss Vale, while there is a small camping ground at Fitzroy Falls. Bush camping is possible in Meryla State Forest and remote camping in Morton National Park.

**Use Robertson (9028-4-N), Kangaroo Valley (9028-4-S) and Bundanoon (8928-1-S) 1:25,000 topographic maps**

## Robertson NR

1. A small 10 ha reserve which [preserves rainforest](#) that once covered a huge area of the Robertson tableland. Nevertheless it provides a short walk through an interesting landscape. Birds often found include Eastern Yellow Robin, Grey Shrike-thrush and Large-billed Gerygone.

**Bellmore Falls and Hindmarsh lookout** This is part of [Morton National Park](#). Picnic tables, toilets and several vantage points over Kangaroo Valley and the falls make this a great spot to visit. The falls are only 3km from Robertson.

2. **Falls loop:** 1.5km return, easy grade. From the car park, simply walk around the road (gets busy on weekends), and take the well sign-posted short tracks to [Hindmarsh Lookout](#) and then Bellmore Falls, then continue onto Barrengarry Creek which creates the falls. Vegetation is forest with a tall shrubby understorey. Birds include Crescent Honeyeater, Red-browed Treecreeper, Eastern Spinebill, Azure Kingfisher, Crimson Rosella, Peregrine Falcon.

**Wingecarribee Reservoir** The reservoir is part of the Sydney drinking water supply. A [picnic ground](#) at the north west corner of the reservoir provides a short walk around the picnic ground and extensive views over the reservoir.

3. **Picnic ground.** The woodland of the [picnic ground](#) can produce some good birds such as Fuscous Honeyeater, Striated Thornbill, Varied Sittella, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, while the surrounding area sometimes has Little Raven. The reservoir is home to a large population of Great Crested Grebe which are easily observed from the picnic

grounds. Hoary-headed Grebe, Black Swan and Musk Duck are other regular species.

**Yarrawa State Forest** An interesting area not often frequented. To get there, follow the signs out of Robertson towards Bellmore Falls and take the [Wallaby Hill Rd.](#) Park at the gate at the end of the road.

**4. McAndrews Gap**, 4km return, easy grade. From the [gate walk](#) for approximately 1 km and take the left hand track. A lookout over Kangaroo Valley is at the end. Habitat includes farmland and open woodland.

**5. Keenans Pass**, 6km return, easy grade. From the [gate walk](#) for just over 2km through farmland then open woodland, taking the right hand track about 150m past an old track up to Yarrawa trig. Continue downward through wet forest and rainforest for another 1km until a gate in private property is met. Return to your car the same way.

**6. Hindmarsh Pass**, 9km return, easy grade. From the [fork in the track](#) described above, take the left hand track and continue on for another 2.5km to a gate into private property. Open woodland and forest with a variety of birds including Eastern Rosella, Grey Currawong, Scarlet Robin, Sacred Kingfisher, Spotted Quail-thrush

**Fitzroy Reservoir** This [reservoir](#) is part of the Sydney drinking water supply. A relatively shallow water body with limited public access on its eastern shores, where trout fishing is popular.

**7. Reservoir walk**: 2km, easy grade. Access is via a car park on the east side of the reservoir on Pearsons Rd., approximately 3km from [Fitzroy Falls](#) towards Robertson. An informal track leads from the car park north to the boundary with private property and south to the dam wall. Open woodland and forest is the home of many birds including Varied Sittella, Striated Thornbill, Grey Shrike-thrush, Eastern Spinebill. On the waterbody, Musk Duck and Great Crested Grebe are regular amongst the waterbirds, while Black-fronted Dotterel is often found on the shoreline.

**Fitzroy Falls area** Part of Morton National Park. Popular picnic area and information centre. The falls have several good walks and some good birdwatching areas. The loop track is the best location in the region to get views of Pilotbird, which often follow Lyrebirds around in the gully of the Loop track.

**8. Loop track:** 1.5km return, easy grade. Track begins at top of falls and leads to one lookout and through moist fern gullies and open forests. Birds include Gang-gang Cockatoo, King Parrot, Satin Bowerbird, Superb Lyrebird, Yellow-throated Scrubwren, Pilotbird

**9. East rim:** 8km return, easy grade. Track begins at top of falls and follows the Loop track to Warragong lookout, then through forest and the valley rim to Lamond lookout. From here you can take the (east) left hand track to the main road, then south for 800m, then back onto the pipeline track and right again onto a track that will bring you to another lookout after 300m. Return to the car park via the rim track and Valley View lookout. Great bush birding and plenty of views over Yarrunga Creek valley and the waterfalls. Birds include Brown-headed Honeyeater, Scarlet Robin, Buff-rumped Thornbill, Peregrine Falcon.

**10. West rim:** 5km return, easy grade. Track begins at top of falls and leads to several spectacular lookouts. Return via same route. (Valley walk: Descends 600m from the west rim track, steep grade and often closed, ask at the information centre).

**11. Redhill fire trail,** 7km return, easy grade. Leads from the end of Fitzroy St, or from Twin Falls lookout on the west rim walk above. Walk through heath and open woodland to a ford over Redhill Ck. Excellent birding and great wildflower displays in late winter and spring. Birds include Satin Flycatcher, Flame Robin, Dusky Woodswallow, Crescent Honeyeater, Southern Emu-wren, Beautiful Firetail.

**12. Manning Lookout,** 1.5km return, easy grade. From the Nowra-Moss Vale Rd. take the [Manning Point Lookout Rd.](#) which is about 1km east of the Myra Vale Rd. which goes to Robertson (watch for Flame Robins on the fences). A car park is at the end of the road. Walk the track which leads to three lookouts with extensive views of Kangaroo Valley. Reasonable birdwatching with highlights including Crescent Honeyeater, New Holland Honeyeater and Peregrine Falcon.

**13. Barrengarry Pass,** 2 short informal walks. From Manning Lookout turnoff continue east along the [Kangaroo Valley Rd.](#) for approximately 2km. Just before you commence the descent down Barrengarry Pass, an old logging track can be found on the north side of the road. This overgrown track can be followed for several hundred metres through tall forest with lots of turpentine. Good birding including Red-browed Treecreeper, Crested Shrike-tit, Golden Whistler, Golden Bronze-Cuckoo, Eastern Whipbird. Return to your car and drive down Barrengarry Pass. Along the flat bench you will see a national parks

sign saying Coachwood rainforest, park here. Again, an old logging track can be followed through rainforest for a couple of hundred metres. Logrunner is regular here, as is Rose Robin, Black-faced Monarch, Brown Cuckoo-Dove, Green Catbird, Satin Bowerbird.

**McPhails Fire Trail** Part of Morton National Park, [McPhails Fire Trail](#); these two walks take in some excellent remote forest. It is possible to camp overnight and explore the area further, but take suitable supplies and inform the Park office at Fitzroy Falls of your intentions if travelling alone.

**14. Kangaroo lookout**, 13km return, easy grade. From Fitzroy Falls drive east along the [Kangaroo Valley Rd](#). About 1.5km after crossing a canal there is a track with a locked gate on the south side of the road, park here. Climb over the gate and follow the track along the canal until it becomes a large pipe with a track over it. Cross the pipe here and continue on around three bends in the track until you reach a crossroad. Go straight ahead heading for a large surge tank that is situated at the end of the pipeline. Around 1.5km past the surge tank you will pass some safety fencing with Danger signs. Turn left at the end of the fencing next to a Danger sign and follow an old track for 100m. Turn left and follow a series of five or six Danger signs along a poor track to an old 4WD track and the escarpment edge and a spectacular view of Kangaroo Valley.

**15. McPhails trail**, 14km return, easy to moderate grade. Follow the above route to Kangaroo lookout until you come to the crossroad. Instead of going straight, take the right trail along [McPhails Fire Trail](#). A short way along is a small landslide that is easily negotiated with care. After about 1.8km from the crossroad you come to a regenerating clearing, the site of the old McPhail farm. The track turns to the south here through moist forest with the butte of Mount Carrialoo on your right. (It is possible for the adventurous to climb the mountain, but refer to NPWS booklet "Kangaroo Valley and adjacent National Parks" for details of this steep climb). After veering to the east again a crest is reached with a steep descent in front of you. Do not proceed down here (it leads to Bendeela), but retrace your steps the way you came.

Birds on these two tracks is diverse and include Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Crimson Rosella, Satin Bowerbird, Red-browed Treecreeper, Crescent Honeyeater, Olive-backed Oriole, Superb Lyrebird, Pilotbird, Mistletoe bird, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Large-billed Scrubwren, White-eared Honeyeater.

**Meryla State Forest** [Meryla State Forest](#) is approximately 12km south of Moss Vale. Access is via Meryla Rd which is found off the Moss Vale to Fitzroy Falls Rd. The 4,200 ha forest contains a variety of open woodland and forest types. Meryla Fire Trail and Gunrock Creek Fire Trail can be traversed by 4WD track off the Meryla Rd. if desired. A good couple of days can be spent exploring the forest and adjacent Morton National Park via the walks described below.

**16. Gunrock Creek Falls**, 2km or 6km return, easy grade. Park at the second bridge crossing along [Meryla Rd](#) (Gun Rock Creek). Walk south for 200m then turn left onto a 4WD track (Gunrock Ck. Fire trail). Walk another 300m then turn left again onto another track (Gunrock Falls Fire Trail). About 400m along this track is the creek, the falls are about 50m downstream. Return to your car the way you came, or alternatively walk further through open woodland along the fire trail for another 2km until Redhill Rd is reach. Return the way you came. Good bush birding right along the trail with species such as Spotted Quail-thrush, Grey Currawong, Buff-rumped Thornbill, Leaden Flycatcher, Striated Pardalote, Horsefield's Bronze-Cuckoo, White-eared Honeyeater and Chestnut-rumped Heathwren.

**17. Patons fire trail**, 4km return, [Paton's fire trail](#) easy grade. Continue on Meryla Rd. from Gun Rock Creek bridge, past the Link Fire Trail for 200m and a parking area will be found on right side (west) of the road. Walk west along the fire trail for about 2km, returning the same way through woodland and forest. There is an old clearing about 1km along the trail on the right that adds variety to birds encountered.

**18. Meryla fire trail**, 8km return, [Meryla fire trail](#) easy grade. Continue along Meryla Rd. past Sandy Creek Fire Trail for 1.4km. Park at the intersection an old quarry is on the west side of the road. Walk east along the escarpment with spectacular views south through Crankeys Creek valley to Lake Yarrunga. The track continues east, then south, then north east to the State Forest boundary. Return to your car the same way, or for the keen walker, continue on until you meet Gunrock Creek Fire Trail and follow this north to Meryla Rd near Gunrock Creek Bridge, then back to your car via Meryla Rd, a total distance of about 15km.

**Meryla Pass, part of Morton National Park** Meryla Pass was first traversed by Charles Throsby in 1818 when an aboriginal named "Timealong" guided him down this traditional route into Kangaroo Valley.



**19. Crankeys Creek:** 9km or 13km return, moderate to steep grade. Continue along Meryla Rd. for about 1km past the Meryla Fire Trail intersection and park opposite the locked gate. From the top of Meryla Pass descend through tall moist forest and rainforest to Gales Flat, an abandoned property. Progress further through tall moist forest for another 1km to a road junction and another gate. Take the left hand track and walk another 2km through tall forest to a causeway at Crankeys Creek. This is the turn-around point for this walk. For the keen walker, the track continues for another 2km along [Griffins fire trail](#) to Yarrunga Creek and eventually to Jacks Corner, (see Kangaroo Valley walks). Return the same way, remembering the walk is uphill and steep in sections. Birds include Black-faced Monarch, Noisy Friarbird, Crescent Honeyeater, Rose Robin, Golden Whistler, Cicadabird.

**20. Lake Yarrunga:** 14km return, generally moderate grade with some short moderate to steep grades. Descend Meryla Pass as for [Crankeys Creek](#) walk above. At the road junction 3.5km from the top, take the right hand fork and follow this west then south for 3km. The lower sections of the track may be overgrown, and a compass or GPS and topographic map are essential for this walk. This track disappears into [Lake Yarrunga](#), though it once crossed the creek and continued to Kangaroo Valley before the Lake was created by Tallowa Dam in 1970. Vegetation is tall moist forest and rainforest and there are many relicts of road works conducted in the 1880's.

**21. Wombat Hill lookout,** 10km return, generally easy grade with one moderate grade near the start. Park your car opposite Meryla Pass gate. Head south onto the ridge top and follow this for about 5km until you reach the lookout. There are numerous vantage points along the spectacular escarpment edge 500m above Yarrunga Creek. The prominent knoll to the east between the rim and the creek is [Wombat Hill](#), while in the distance Mount Carrialoo dominates the skyline. The walk is predominantly through woodland with some heath. Birds include Beautiful Firetail, White-throated Treecreeper, White-eared Honeyeater, Crescent Honeyeater, Buff-rumped Thornbill, Rufous Whistler, Spotted Pardalote, Rockwarbler, Striated Thornbill.

**22. Rebeccas View,** 5km return, [Rebeccas View](#) easy grade with one short moderate grade near the start. Park your car opposite Meryla Pass gate. Head south onto the ridge top and follow that for another 500m until you come to a track heading off to the right (west). Follow this track through woodland and heath for about a kilometre to the escarpment overlooking Sandy Creek, 300m below.