

# WOLLONGONG AREA

15 walks

[regional Satellite map](#)

## Use Wollongong 9029-2-S 1:25,000 topographic map

Wollongong is situated on the Illawarra coast about 85km south of Sydney, Australia. It is a major regional centre with a population of approximately 190,000 and is nestled between the Illawarra Range and the Tasman Sea along a relatively narrow coastal plain. The region was first settled in 1799. Despite being a major urban and industrial centre, there are many walks within easy reach of public transport and accommodation.

**1. The Harbour walk**, 3km return, easy grade. Park your car in [Stuart Park](#). Walk south along North Wollongong beach before accessing the sealed walking/bike track to the harbour, which passes rocky shores, rock pools, public swimming pool, Brighton beach and the harbour. Continue through the harbour following the footpath up to Flagstaff Point and admire the view. A pleasant walk, with birds usually encountered including Sooty Oystercatcher, Silver Gull, Kelp Gull, Crested Tern, Little Pied Cormorant. Little Penguin can occasionally be found in the harbour or viewed fishing just offshore. In the afternoons, numerous seabirds follow the fishing boats back to the harbour, including Fluttering, Wedge-tailed and Short-tailed Shearwaters, Black-browed, Wandering Shy and Yellow-nosed Albatross, Southern and Northern Giant Petrels.

**2. Seabird excursions.** SOSSA was founded by members of the New South Wales Albatross Study Group (NSWASG) in 1994. It was set up to be an umbrella organisation for many study groups concerned with studies of Southern Ocean biodiversity. It is a wildlife research and conservation group which consists of dedicated people both professional and amateur. These people share a common interest and concern for the environment and the wildlife of the Southern Oceans. History: The New South Wales Albatross Study Group grew from the work of J.D. (Doug) Gibson, A.R.(Allen) Sefton and others, who began catching and marking wandering albatrosses at Bellambi NSW in 1956. Following the passing of Doug Gibson in 1984, the NSWASG based in the Illawarra continued under the guidance of Harry Battam who started banding

albatrosses as an assistant to Bill Lane at Malabar in 1958 The NSW Albatross research is the longest continuous study of albatrosses anywhere in the world today. It then started seabird study trips from Wollongong and now Kiama where records of species and numbers are recorded as well as banding and releasing of rehabilitated injured seabirds.

Link [SOSSA](#)

Email: [sossa@tpg.com.au](mailto:sossa@tpg.com.au) Website: [www.sossa-international.org](http://www.sossa-international.org)

**3. Puckeys Estate Reserve**, 3km [Puckeys Estate reserve](#) loop, easy grade. Park your car in [Stuart Park](#). Follow Fairy Creek west and cross over the main road / pedestrian bridge. Veer to the right and across a couple of wooden bridges before veering northward to follow the creek's north arm to Fairy Meadow Beach. Habitat is open banksia and casuarina woodland, with rich bird fauna, including Little Wattlebird, New Holland Honeyeater, Yellow Thornbill, Yellow-rumped Thornbill, White-plumed Honeyeater, Southern Emu-wren, Eastern Yellow Robin, White-browed Scrubwren, Rufous Whistler, Striated Heron, Purple Swamphen, Clamorous Reed Warbler, Golden-headed Cisticola and Silvereye. Return to your car, via the beach, the bike track or retrace your steps.

**4. Tom Thumb Lagoon**, 2km return, easy grade. Take coal loader road south off the southern end of Corrimal St. Wollongong. [Park opposite](#) the sewerage treatment plant. The lagoon is a small remnant of a once expansive wetland that has been reclaimed for industrial and harbour facilities. Walk over the bike track bridge and follow the track westward. The bridge crosses the Great Southern Drain which is tidal. A saltmarsh is found on the southern side of the bike track. After about 1km a small lagoon is on the north side of the track. Return to your car the way you came. Mostly common waterbirds present but some uncommon species have been recorded over the years. Species include Chesnut Teal, Great Egret, Black-fronted Dotterel, Red-kneed Dotterel (rare), Black-winged Stilt, Striated Heron, Masked Lapwing.

**5. Wollongong Botanic Gardens**. 3km, [Botanic Gardens](#) is an easy grade. Access is via Murphys Rd., Keiraville. A well maintained series of tracks wind through the Gardens with native forest towards the western end of the parklands. Good range of birds can be found including Noisy miner, Eastern Rosella, Satin Bowerbird, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike,

Rainbow Lorikeet, Rufous Whistler, occasional Rose Robin and Australian Brush Turkey in the rainforest section. From the western boundary of the Gardens it is possible to walk to the Mt. Ousley track (below) and join the Mt. Keira ring track (below)

**6. Mt. Ousley track.** 2km return, moderate grade. Access is from a parking area off the switch-back on [Mt. Keira Rd.](#) Walk along a well maintained track before descending Mt. Ousley then climb back up a vague track that joins the main track and return to your vehicle. Some good forest along way with birds similar to those recorded along the Mt. Keira ring track below.

**7. Mt. Keira Ring track.** Part of Illawarra Escarpment Conservation Area. [Mt Keira Ring Map](#)

i. Short loop 1.5km, easy grade with some steeps. Park your car in the small parking bay at the gates leading up [Queen Elizabeth Drive](#) (to Mt. Keira summit). The start of the track is here on the northern side of the road. Descend a gentle grade through forest before entering a beautiful rainforest gully. The moderate climb out of the gully has several benches where you can rest and listen to the multitude of birds in the early morn or late evening. Eventually you come to an intersection where you climb some steps to the road and return to your car. This is one of the best places in the region to view Logrunner and Rose Robin, especially in the morning, while Noisy Pitta (rare) has also been observed here a couple of times.

ii. A 7km loop track of moderate to steep grade. Park your car at the base of [Queen Elizabeth Drive](#) as per above. Follow the start of the walk as per above for the short loop. At the intersection veer to left and continue your descent through rainforest and tall eucalypt forest, eventually coming to a flat section of rainforest with an open rubble-strewn floor. This is about 150m from Mt. Keira Rd elbow. Once you emerge at the road, look from the track continuing on the southern side of the road (signed to Byrong Park), which cuts back over the road after 300m. An intersection is reached another 500m with the left track going to Byrong Park picnic area. Continue on the right fork ascending up western foot of the mount, over the road to the scout camp and back to the starting place. An excellent walk, though it is a bit steep in places. Birds are usually quite good, especially early in the morning,

with possibles including Wonga Pigeon, Logrunner, Rose Robin, Superb Lyrebird, Scarlet Honeyeater, Golden Whistler, Large-billed Scrubwren, Eastern Whipbird, Eastern Yellow Robin, Australian Brush-Turkey, Olive-backed Oriole, Black-faced Monarch, Rufous Fantail, Satin Bowerbird, Green Catbird, Satin Flycatcher.

**8. Mt. Keira summit (Dave Walsh track).** [Mt Keira Summit Map](#) 2.5km loop, easy grade. Drive up Queen Elizabeth Drive off Mt. Keira Rd. to the summit (460m asl). Popular picnic area with plenty of parking, several lookouts, a kiosk and restaurant. From the parking bay proceed to the easterly lookout and enjoy the view. Then walk along a narrow track south along the rim to a southerly lookout, watch for Rockwarbler amongst the sandstone boulders along the way. From the

southern lookout, follow the track that veers to the west and descends slightly (Dave Walsh track), which eventually exists on the road you drove up, follow this back to the car park. Alternatively, from the southern lookout, follow the main track back toward the car park and take the west track that intersects about half way. Good general birdwatching along the way which may include Satin Bowerbird, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike, Yellow-faced Honeyeater, Eastern Spinebill, Crimson Rosella, White-browed Treecreeper, Striated Thornbill.

**9. Mt. Keira to Robertson's Lookout,** [Robertson Lookout track](#) 2km return, moderate to steep grade, part of Illawarra Escarpment Conservation Area. Park your car in the small parking bay at the gates leading up Queen Elizabeth Drive (to Mt. Keira summit). Cross back over Mt. Keira Rd and look for the track entrance to the lookout, which is signposted but sometimes difficult to see. Ascend up a 60m grade, which then flattens out and proceeds to the lookout for superb views of the city and ocean.

**10. Stafford's Farm track,** 4 km return, [Stafford's Farm Track Map](#) easy to moderate grade, part of Illawarra Escarpment Conservation Area. Park your car at the entrance to the walk off Harry Graham Drive about 200m east of O'Brien's Gap. Walk in a north-easterly direction for about 1.5km through rainforest and tall moist eucalypt forest until the end of track is reached, with distant view of the escarpment. On the return leg, take the track that veers to the west and climb up the gentle rise to a small clearing. Superb views of Mt. Kembla and Lake

Illawarra from here. A track to the left takes you back to the main route or continue on straight ahead then start a moderate climb up to Mt. Brisbane, this part of the track is getting overgrown by weeds, but birding is pretty good and there is some fine forest in this area. Return to your car the way you came. Birds may include Bassian Thrush, Golden Whistler, Silvereye, Red-browed Finch, Black-faced Monarch, Australian Brush-Turkey, Pilotbird and Lewin's Honeyeater.

**11. Mt. Nebo track** 5km return, easy grade with one steep section (100m), part of the Illawarra State Conservation Park. Can be done in conjunction with Stafford's Farm track above. This walk begins at the major bend in [Harry Graham Drive](#) about 500m east of O'Brien's Gap. An easy walk for 1.5km through some excellent rainforest and tall moist eucalypt forest before coming to a steep sealed section of the track, descend this to walk along the saddle then up a gentle slope to Mt. Nebo (251m). Remnant of old Wollongong water supply pipe can be found as well as a small waterfall that has eroded along an igneous intrusion. Excellent views to the city and Mt. Kembla can be found along the way. This is one of the best places in the region to find Logrunner, while other birds encountered may include Golden Bronze-Cuckoo, Brush Cuckoo, Fan-tailed Cuckoo, Eastern Whipbird, Large-billed Gerygone, Brown Gerygone, Rufous Fantail, Black-faced Monarch, Yellow-throated Scrubwren, and Eastern Yellow Robin. Return to your car the way you came.

**12. Mt. Kembla ring track.** 5km loop through tall eucalypt forest and rainforest, easy grade with one short steep descent, [Mt Kembla Ring Trap \(Map\)](#) is part of Illawarra Escarpment Conservation Area. Proceed towards the village of Mt. Kembla along Cordeaux Rd off the Princes Highway at Unanderra. At the T-intersection, turn left (which continues as Cordeaux Rd.) and drive for another 1km. Park under the powerlines and look for the track entrance on the northern side of the parking area. Walk for 30m till you come to an intersection and turn right (left is the summit walk below). You soon start to climb a down a series of steps through rainforest dominated by cabbage palms. After about a kilometre you arrive at an intersection with a small pond on the left. Turn left here, (right descend into private property after another kilometre and the Farmborough Fire Trail). Follow the track for about 3km back to Cordeaux Rd. and turn left, you are now only a kilometre from your car. Good bush birding here with species such as Yellow-throated Scrubwren, Superb Lyrebird, Bassian Thrush, Golden Whistler,

Olive Whistler (rare), Brown Gerygone, Brown Cuckoo-Dove, Brush Cuckoo, King Parrot, Wonga Pigeon to name a few.

**13. Mt. Kembla summit track.** [Map](#) 3 km return through tall eucalypt forest, moderate grade, part of Illawarra Escarpment Conservation Area. Proceed to the car park as described in the previous walk and follow the common track start. At the intersection, veer to the left (an old degraded sign is on the ground). The track then ascends constantly for 1.5km, becoming a bit vague as you approach the 500m contour, though it's not too difficult to re-find the track. The summit (530m asl) is only 150m across and there are two lookouts with tracks leading to them, the southern one gives a superb view over Dapto and Lake Illawarra, the eastern one overlooking Wollongong, Port Kembla, Mt. Nebo and Mt. Keira to the north. Good bush birding along the way with birds of prey such as Whistling Kite, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Peregrine Falcon and Grey Goshawk often observed from the summit. Return to car the way you came.

**14. Mt. Kembla bridle track.** [Map](#) 2.5km return through tall eucalypt forest and rainforest, moderate grade, part of Illawarra Escarpment Conservation Area. Proceed to car park as per walk 13. The track head is at the southern side of the car park. The track descends to the railway line and returns the same way.

**15. Mt. Burelli ridge track.** [Map](#) 8km return through tall eucalypt forest and rainforest, moderate grade, part of Illawarra Escarpment Conservation Area. Proceed to car park as per walk 13. Walk further along Cordeaux Rd for about 500m until you reach a locked gate opposite a switch-back in the road. A sign for the ridge track is at the gate. The track climbs steadily roughly following the powerlines for a further 700m until you reach Mt. Burelli (530m asl). The track then follows the ridge for another 3km to O'Brien's Gap. Return to your car via Harry Graham Drive or retrace your steps. An excellent walk, even if it's a bit tiring in places. Habitat changes constantly along the way and birding is generally excellent with a variety of species such as Crested Shrike-tit, Red-browed Treecreeper, Variegated and Superb Fairy Wrens, Cicadabird, White-naped Honeyeater, Yellow-tailed Black

Cockatoo, Crimson Rosella, Sacred Kingfisher, Spotted Pardalote, Leaden Flycatcher and Grey Butcherbird.