



McPHAILS TRAIL – Morton National Park

Immerse yourself in this oxygen-rich, tall forest to see why the timber-getters came to Kangaroo Valley

MCPHAILS TRAIL FROM JACKS CORNER ROAD TO THE TOP OF THE ESCARPMENT AND BACK

Grade: Medium to hard.

Steep climb for the first part of the trail then steady climb to the turnaround point.

Good level of physical fitness required.

Length: 11km return. This can also be done as an 8.7km one-way trip with a car shuffle. See below.

Time: 5 hour walk

Assent: 300m



Magnificent trees line the track

OVERVIEW

This walk is all about experiencing the oxygen-rich, moist atmosphere of the tall forest. These forests were logged in the 1800's, first by the cedar-getters, then for hardwood. There are still fine examples of these magnificent trees that brought the timber-getters to Kangaroo Valley. Following the initial steep climb, this old logging track takes you into the heart of the cool, moist forests below the escarpment. The second part of the walk passes the eastern side of Mount Carrialoo and descends to an area of old cleared grazing land, perfect for a lunch stop. The final part of the climb follows high above a pristine creek and takes you to a track junction, which is the turnaround point.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Beware - mountain bikers use this trail and they may be travelling downhill at high speeds!

Although there is plenty of shade, this walk is best done in spring, autumn or winter. If walking in summer avoid the hottest part of the day. The turnaround point is at the service road junction at the top of McPhails Trail. If walking in spring or summer keep an eye out for snakes basking in the heat. All snakes should be treated with caution and left alone. Let someone know where you are going and when you are due back. Dogs are not allowed in the park. There is no mobile phone reception once you leave the village or at the car park. There is intermittent reception on the walk.

HOW TO GET THERE

McPhails Trail starts 7.6km from the Kangaroo Valley post office. From the post office cross Hampden Bridge and take the first left into Bendeela Road. At 6.3km you will pass the Kangaroo Valley Pump and Power Station. After this the road name changes to Jacks Corner Road. At 7.6km, on the right, is the start of the trail (next to road number 180). Park your car where you see a 'Walkers Welcome - Morton National Park' sign.

If you want to make this a one-way trip by mountain bike or walking you can leave one car at the bottom of the trail and one at the top on Moss Vale Road: Drive up Barrengarry Mountain to the top. Park your car at the first locked gate on the left hand side. Follow the service road for 3.2km keeping right at any track junctions. The top of McPhails Trail is on the right of the service road.

TAKE WITH YOU

Take plenty of water as there is no water on the walk (reusable water bottles and drinking water available in the village), sun protection, comfy walking shoes and a first aid kit. Warm and wet weather gear should be included in your pack as weather can change very suddenly. Take snacks or lunch for this half to full day walk. A map or sat nav is a useful addition. Wildflower and bird field guides for enthusiasts.

FLORA

Wet sclerophyll forest and rainforest. Blueberry Ash, Burrawang, Brown Barrel, Cabbage Tree Palm, Callicoma, Coachwood, Jackwood, Daisy-bush, Grass-flag, Lillypilly, Pencil Cedar, Pittosporum, Red Cedar, Rough Saw-sedge, Sandpaper Fig, Sassafras, Sydney Peppermint, Tree Fern, Turpentine, Two-veined Hickory, White Paper Daisy, White or Thin-leaved Stringy Bark, Yellow Stringybark, Grey Gum, Grey Ironbark, Sydney Blue Gum, Mountain Grey Gum, White-top Box.

FAUNA

Gliders, Ring-tailed Possum, Swamp Wallaby, Wombat, Long-nosed Bandicoot, Brown Goshawk, Yellow-tailed Black-cockatoo, Crimson Rosella, King Parrot, Wonga Pigeon, Superb Lyre bird, Satin Bowerbird, White-browed Scrub-wren, White-throated Treecreeper, Eastern Yellow Robin, Golden Whistler, Lewins Honeyeater, Pied Currawong.



RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

Kangaroo Valley is an international award winning responsible tourism destination, help us keep it beautiful for now and future generations.
www.visitkangaroovalley.com.au

Waste – Don't throw rubbish out of your car. When walking don't drop litter or tissues on the trails - carry out whatever you carry in. Dispose of litter in the bins provided in the village or at your accommodation place.

Fire – Avoid lighting fires especially in the bush fire season, usually September to April.

Toilet Etiquette – There are public toilets in the village at Hampden Bridge car park, near the ambulance station and Osborne Park. If away from public toilets bury all waste at least 100m away from water courses. Do not leave disposable nappies etc as litter.

McPHAILS TRAIL

Kangaroo Valley EXPLORER

This part of the trail is a gentler climb. You are now amongst the magnificent trees of the high slopes where the Red Cedar grows. Imagine men felling these huge trees by hand. A series of ladders were erected up the cliff face at Fitzroy Falls to carry the timber up to the tableland, for transportation to the Sydney markets. Red Cedar was a sought after timber but exhausted by 1850 after only 30 years. They are now protected trees and are returning to the forest.

The trail follows high above a pristine mountain creek. Listen for whip birds and Lyrebirds calling to each other.

Open clearing - 3.4km from start. Site of McPhails farm. A great spot to rest or have lunch.

The cedar-getters were the first to clear the brush and to create tracks for the bullock drays, enabling the early settlers to access the land.

Top of McPhails Trail at junction with service road - 5.5km. Turnaround point. You have climbed nearly 300m in elevation. Almost all downhill on the way back!

Creek bed with mossy rocks. The shade of Mount Carrialoo gives rise to different vegetation on the saddle with rainforest species such as Lillypilly, Callicoma and Tree Ferns. The soil here is deeper and richer.

Mount Carrialoo Bench - 2.2km from start. You have climbed 280m in elevation. A red arrow marks a route to the left but this is for experienced walkers only as there is no marked track. Go straight ahead here.

A level area, now overgrown with pioneer plant species hints of old grazing land now abandoned.

Views through the trees to Lake Yarrunga and western Kangaroo Valley.

Tall mixed forest dominated by Peppermints, Bloodwoods and Turpentines. The blackened trunks show the history of fire in this forest. These wonderful old trees provide nesting hollows and food for birds, gliders and possums.

The southern aspect of this slope gives a cool, shady environment where ferns and palms thrive.

5.5km to turnaround point
First 250m of the trail is very steep, after that it is a steady climb.

There are many Indigenous heritage sites and walking trails throughout Kangaroo Valley which date back thousands of years. The Valley was known as a meeting place for the inland Gundungurra people and the coastal Yuin people from the Dharawal and Dhurga language groups.

Alternative start for one way descent.
3.2km to start of McPhails Trail.
8.7km to Jacks Corner Road.

MOSS VALE ROAD

To Kangaroo Valley

3.2km from junction to Moss Vale Road

SERVICE ROAD

MORTON NATIONAL PARK

START

MCPHAILS TRAIL

JACKS CORNER ROAD

To Bendeela Road & Kangaroo Valley

LEGEND

-  Walking track
-  Locked gate
-  Cliff line
-  National Park boundary
-  Parking
-  No pets

