

Greater Blue Mountains

Dates:

Sunday, 12th March, to Tuesday 21st March, 2006

(10 days)

Cost: \$1,800

Style: Budget Accommodation

Start & Finish: Sydney

Discover the Blue Mountains World Heritage values and some of the outstanding natural values of the Sydney sandstones. The World Heritage Site covers seven National Parks and the Jenolan Caves. Visit six of these: Blue Mountains, Kanangra Boyd, Jenolan, Gardens of Stone, Wollemi and Yengo. The region contains an enormous floristic diversity, grand sandstone escarpments, vast wilderness areas, wonderful bush-walking opportunities, challenging adventure, spectacular scenery and a rich history. It is also a botanical refugia area, harbouring many rare and primitive plants, the most famous of which is the Wollemi Pine. It also has very significant cultural values. Traverse this area from Wisemans Ferry to Jenolan Caves and discover one of the great natural wonders of the world.

Guide: John Sinclair is an internationally recognized conservationist, who has been organizing safaris to Australia's World Heritage areas since 1984. This will be the fourth GO BUSH safari he has led to the area since the Blue Mountains were inscribed on the World Heritage List.

Style: This safari is based on budget and shared cabin accommodation with a maximum of 20 safarists travelling in a 22 seat Coaster bus. All safarists will be rostered to assist with catering.

Price: Included is all transport, accommodation and meal costs, and access to all sites.

Despite its proximity to Sydney, relatively few people have explored the vast World Heritage area which reaches north almost to the Hunter River. The western part is known even less. This safari attempts to cover the whole wonderful World Heritage site.

Itinerary

Day 1; Sunday, 12th March: Depart Sydney (Central Station) at 8.00 am. To Wisemans Ferry beside the Hawkesbury River. At Devine's Hill inspect the convict-built Old Great North Road which is included in a draft World Heritage nomination of Australia's great convict heritage sites in one of its most difficult sections. Appreciate the great scenery of the Hawkesbury area.

Accom: Wisemans Ferry.

Day 2; Monday, 13th March: Explore the little known Yengo National Park with its rich collection of Aboriginal rock engravings. Visit Finchley Trig. Then see some other surviving Aboriginal rock art near the Putty Road, before passing many of the huge open cut coal mines of the Hunter. Visit a famous horse stud in the Hunter Valley on the edge of Wollemi near Denman.

Accom: Sandy Hollow.

Day 3; Tuesday, 14th March: Visit Widden Valley, on the northern section of Wollemi National Park before leaving the Hunter region to travel via Widden Cutting and Ferntree Gully to Rylstone.

Accom: Frank's Hideaway.

Day 4; Wednesday, 15th March: Explore the impressive pagodas at nearby Dunns Swamp in Wollemi National Park and seek out some of its rare plants and other wildlife as well as taking time to swim.

Accom: Frank's Hideaway.

Day 5; Thursday, 16th March: We will take a day trip out to historic Glen Davis, once the centre of an oil shale industry, and visit Gardens of Stone National Park as well as other features of the lesser known side of the Blue Mountains.

Accom: Frank's Hideaway.

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Day 6; Friday, 17th March: To Kanangra Walls (Boyd Plateau), Kanangra-Boyd National Park, for a walk through wonderful heath, with stunning views to Pioneers Prospect on Mt Maxwell.

Accom: Binda Cottage, Jenolan Caves.

Day 7; Saturday, 18th March: Start the day by visiting the World Heritage Jenolan Caves Karst Conservation Reserve to take a guided caves tour. Head then to the upper mountains via Hartley stopping at Mount Victoria. Take some short walks near Blackheath overlooking the Grose Valley.

Accom: Blackheath Cottages.

Day 8; Sunday, 19th March: Visit some of the iconic Blue Mountains sites in the Katoomba area including the Three Sisters. Take a walk in the Valley of the Waters. After lunch explore some of the Lower Blue Mountains including the Glenbrook Area.

Accom: Blackheath Cottages.

Day 9; Monday, 20th March: Take a stimulating walk along Narrowneck Ridge among the wildflowers to the Ruined Castle and sortees near Blackheath: Evans Lookout, Govetts Leap, Pulpit Rock.

Accom: Blackheath Cottages.

Day 10; Monday 21st March: Return to Sydney via Bell's Line of Road, with a diversion to Mt Wilson, taking time to walk the Grose wilderness at Mt Banks or Pierces Pass to appreciate parts of the Grose Valley wilderness at the core of the Blue Mountains NP. Arrive Central Station Sydney at about 5.30 - 6.00 pm.