

Sensing the rainforest

Dorrigo National Park

Location description and highlights

Dorrigo National Park is located astride the Great Escarpment at the edge of the Dorrigo Plateau and above the heart of the Bellinger Valley. Its magnificent rainforests are part of the Gondwana Rainforests of Australia World Heritage area, are of international significance, and are easily accessed via boardwalks and sealed walking tracks. The Skywalk boardwalk is perched over the canopy and Walk With The Birds boardwalk winds through the mid-levels of the forest.

About this program

This program aims to highlight the wonders of the rainforest without technical interpretation of rainforest features, and without requiring written records of the activities. Activities encourage the use of all the senses to get a feel for rainforest as a special environment. It is a fun program for all ages, adults included.

Objectives

Students will enjoy a visit to World Heritage subtropical rainforest and engage in different ways of experiencing the environment, using all their senses.

Students will practice trust and care in team activities.

Program outline

- Group meets at Dorrigo Rainforest Centre - welcome by Discovery Rangers.
- Toilet break.
- Walk 1km to The Glade Picnic Area, track grade: easy.
- Walk 600m circuit and return to the Glade Picnic Area for bus pickup.
- Farewell by Discovery Rangers.

Links to support material for schools

About Dorrigo National Park

- www.environment.nsw.gov.au/nationalparks/parkhome.aspx?id=N0011

Resource package - Dorrigo National Park

- Booklet: Discovering Gondwana: A guide to Dorrigo National Park
- Booklet: Under the Canopy
- Fact sheet: Forest types of Dorrigo National Park
- Fact sheet: Human Impacts on rainforests of Dorrigo Plateau
- Fact sheet: Why is rainforest important?
- Worksheet: Sun and shade in rainforest
- Worksheet: Rainforest food chains
- Worksheet: Rainforests Stage 1, 2, 3
- Student project model - Cut-out rainforest model

Additional references

Rainforest general

- www.rbg Syd.nsw.gov.au/education/Resources/rainforests
- www.teachers.ash.org.au/jmresources/rainforest/links.html

Activity outline

Levels:

Stages 1-6

Key learning areas:

Key outcomes:

- Students investigate a rainforest environment
- Students work in small teams requiring trust, respect and care

Location:

Dorrigo National Park

Length:

Two and a half hours

Time of Day:

Either morning or afternoon

Design technique:

- Students encouraged to investigate and use all their senses
- Students engage in a range of fun activities and quiet reflection

Equipment used:

Colour sample cards, slide frames, blind-folds, mirrors, spy tubes

Additional equipment:

Nil

Teacher resources:

Classroom resource package available on DECCW website.

Student resources:

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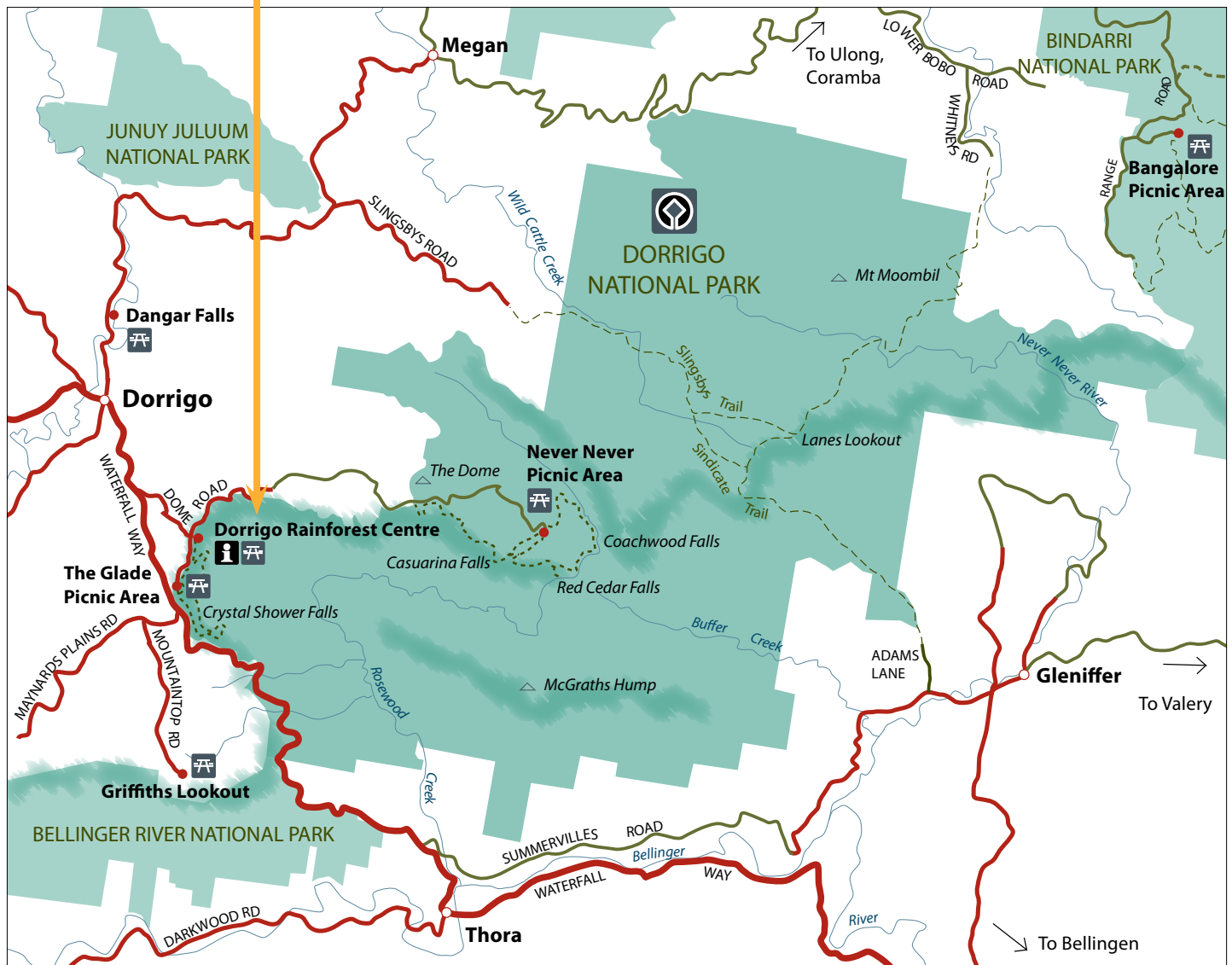
Dorrigo National Park

Location map

Meet at Dorrigo Rainforest Centre

Dorrigo Rainforest Centre is 4 km from Dorrigo, via Waterfall Way and Dome Road.

Dorrigo is 125 km from Armidale via the Waterfall Way, (approximately 1hr 45mins by bus) and 42km from the Pacific Highway/Waterfall Way intersection (approximately 50 mins by bus).



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Level of difficulty

Easy
Not suitable for wheelchairs

What to bring and wear

Raincoats, hats, walking shoes, water
First Aid kit, including treatment for leeches and ticks.

Park facilities

Toilets, electric barbecues and picnic tables at Dorrigo Rainforest Centre and The Glade Picnic Area
Raised boardwalks
Sealed walking tracks
Toilets, electric barbecues and picnic tables at The Glade Picnic Area

Supervision

Discovery Rangers will guide and encourage students as they carry out their field studies. It is the responsibility of the school to provide sufficient numbers of adult supervisors as required by the NSW Department of Education and Training. Students should be accompanied by their class teacher, who will be expected to assist in keeping the students on focus.

Student behaviour

For their own safety, students should be instructed to stay with the group at all times. They must not jump or climb on either the vegetation or any structures in the park.

If students will be visiting the National Parks Shop and making purchases, this should be done in groups of six or less, accompanied by a teacher and without any school bags or backpacks.

Photo permissions

Photos of your group may be taken during this activity for use in National Parks and Wildlife Service promotional products. Please advise any objections.



Walk with the Birds

Excursion planner



Wonga Walk

National Park code of behaviour

- All features in the park are protected and nothing may be damaged or removed
- Stay on the walking tracks
- Light fires only in the fireplaces provided
- No pets are allowed
- Respect the rights of others and keep noise to a minimum
- Please take all litter home

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Safety information

This document provides background information to assist teachers in their risk management planning for excursions. Please make your own risk assessment based on the information provided. Information is current as at January 2010. Contact the Discovery Coordinator if more information is required.

Activity: Discovery Ranger guided walk on boardwalks and bitumen sealed walking track. Return distance is from 1km to 6.4km, vertical rise about 75 metres.

Potential risks	Suggested control strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allergic reactions to plants and animal bites. Poisonous and prickly plants, especially Giant Stinging Tree. Snakes and ticks. Biting insects such as bees, wasps and mosquitoes. Pre-existing medical conditions Interactions with other visitors. Students lost or separated from group. Variations in track surfaces (trip hazards) and overhanging branches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students to wear suitable walking shoes (no thongs or sandals) and long clothing. Discovery Rangers to provide safety talk identifying hazards and emphasising care and respect for each other and the public. First aid kits to be carried by group leaders. Ensure students are closely supervised by teachers/carers, walk in an orderly manner (no running), remain on the track and keep together as group. Hazards on track to be identified to whole group when encountered. Brief teachers/carers on route and procedure for waiting at all track intersections. Adjust walking pace on steep sections. Students susceptible to asthma to carry personal ventolin inhaler. Students at risk of anaphylactic shock to have access to own EpiPen according to individual health plan. High risk students to be identified and monitored by teachers/carers. Advise participants to check for ticks and leeches during and after the activity.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Severe weather conditions. Strong winds and storms causing falling vegetation, hail or lightning strikes. Exposure to sun, rain or cold conditions. Atmospheric conditions such as dust or smoke. Risk of bushfires in the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head teacher to contact Area Office for advice if severe weather or very high fire danger is predicted. Students should wear warm clothes and raincoats (no umbrellas) or sun hats and long sleeves/pants depending on forecast. Postpone or shorten excursion if severe weather warning issued and high likelihood of storm impact in local area. Postpone excursion in periods of very high dust or smoke pollution. Postpone excursion in periods of very high to catastrophic fire danger.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steep slopes beside tracks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify steep sections and walk in single file on inside of slope. Stop on inside of slope to allow for other visitor to pass.

Safety information

Location:

Dorrigo Rainforest Centre
Dorrigo National Park
Dome Road, Dorrigo NSW 2453

Staff Accreditation:

All Discovery Rangers have current Senior First Aid accreditation and carry first aid kits.
All Discovery Rangers have been screened for child-related employment and have completed a Prohibited Employment Declaration

Access:

Suitable for all age groups and all fitness levels. Seek advice for wheelchair use. Wheelchair accessible carpark, picnic area, toilets, display, Skywalk and limited walking tracks.

Emergencies:

Staff are trained to deal with emergency situations and emergency procedures are in place.
The emergency evacuation area is located at the Dorrigo Rainforest Centre. Discovery Rangers have been instructed to call an ambulance whenever there is any doubt as to the continued well-being of a student or other visitor. Ongoing supervision of students following first aid treatment will be the responsibility of the visiting school.

Contact details:

Site Management
NPWS North Coast Region
Dorrigo Plateau Area
Dome Road (PO Box 170)
Dorrigo NSW 2453
Ph: (02) 6657 2309
Fax: (02) 6657 2145

Education Program
National Parks Discovery for schools
Discovery Coordinator
Dorrigo Rainforest Centre
Dorrigo NSW 2453
Ph: (02) 6657 2309
Mob: 0428 247 297
Fax: (02) 6657 2145
email: North.CoastRegionDiscovery@environment.nsw.gov.au
In an emergency call 000
NPWS after hours duty officer 02 6642 3620