




Girrakool to Wondabyne Station

(Darkinjung & Guringai Country)

 3 h 45 min to 4 h

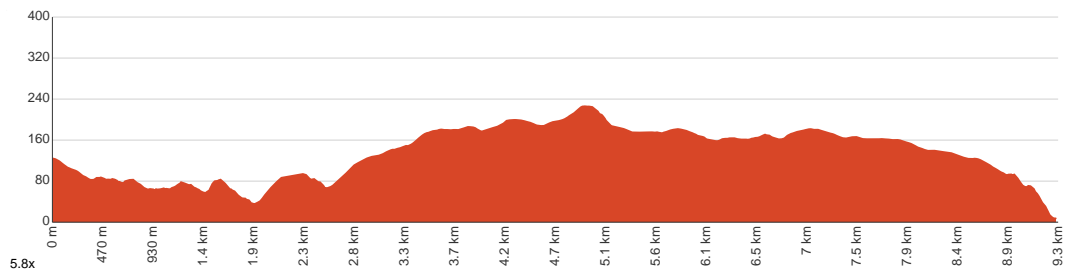

9.3 km
One way


↑ 360 m
↓ 478 m


Hard track



This walk starts from the Girrakool picnic area and winds south, through the Brisbane Waters National Park. The walk crosses some long rock flats and climbs to the top of Scopas Peak, providing views spanning right across the park. The walk then continues down to Wondabyne station, and provides an optional side trip to the Kariong Brook falls. Let us begin by acknowledging the Darkinjung & Guringai people, Traditional Custodians of the land on which we travel today, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.



Class 4 of 6 Rough track, where fallen trees and other obstacles are likely	
Quality of track	Rough track, where fallen trees and other obstacles are likely (4/6)
Gradient	Very steep (4/6)
Signage	Minimal directional signs (4/6)
Infrastructure	Limited facilities, not all cliffs are fenced (3/6)
Experience Required	Some bushwalking experience recommended (3/6)
Weather	Storms may impact on navigation and safety (3/6)

Getting to the start: From Old Pacific Highway, B83

- Turn on to Quarry Road then drive for 75 m
- Keep left onto Girrakool Road and drive for another 640 m

Before you start any journey ensure you;

- Tell someone you trust where you are going and what to do if you are late returning
- Have adequate equipment, supplies, skills & knowledge to undertake this journey safely
- Consider weather forecasts, park/track closures & fire dangers
- Can respond to emergencies & call for help at any point
- Are healthy and fit enough for this journey

If not, change plans and stay safe. It is okay to delay and ask people for help.

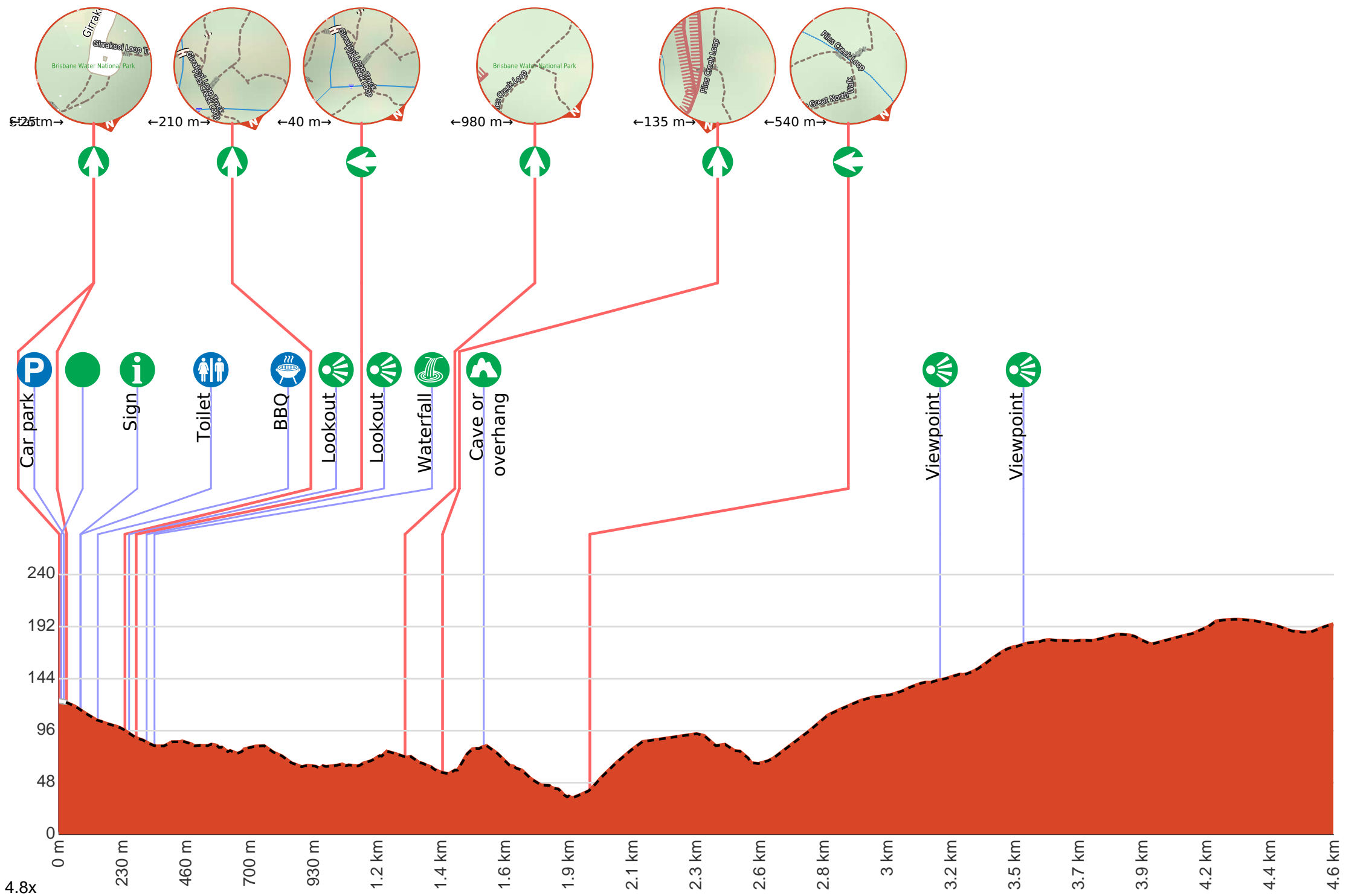
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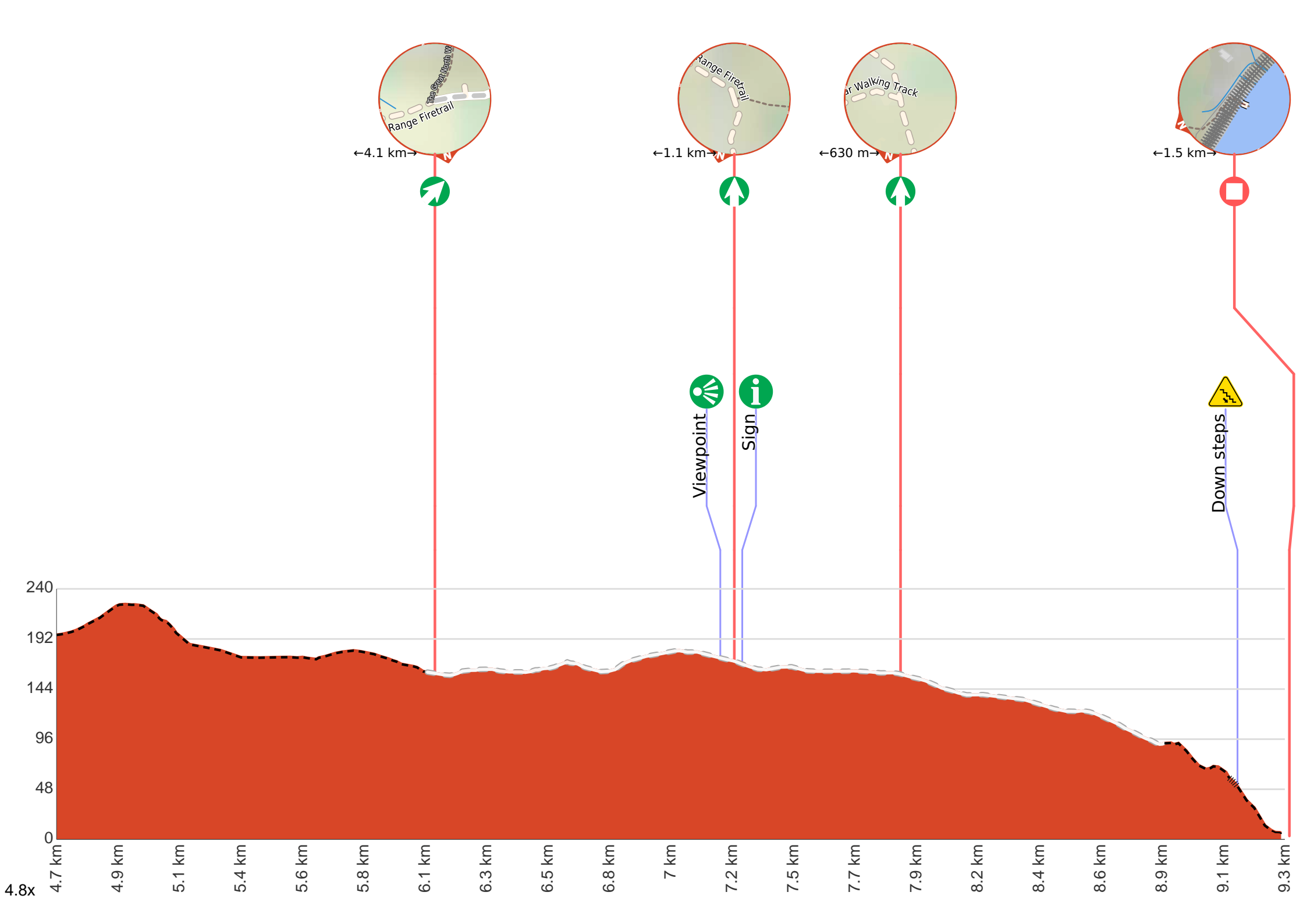






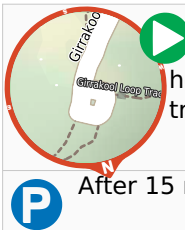







Getting started: From the lower side of the car park, this walk follows the 'To The Great North Walk' sign down the path to the lower picnic area. The walk passes the toilet block (on the left) and comes to another picnic area. The path passes through this picnic area to turn right following the 'Piles Creek Loop Track' sign down the steps. The footpath then leads to an intersection with the Broula Lookout track (on the left) and a 'car park' sign pointing back up the hill.

From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Girrakool Loop' sign down along the stone path. The path soon heads down some steps and comes to a fenced and signposted 'Illoura Lookout'.




From the Girrakool Road **Start** heading along *Girrakool Road* (a vehicle track).

P After 15 m to find the car park.





After another 10 m (from the Girrakool Road) **continue straight** (a walking track).


 Girrakool Picnic Area (about 20 m back from the start).





Girrakool picnic area is a wonderful family destination, just 5 minutes' drive from Kariong. The picnic area provides all the necessary facilities for a full day's activities, including barbecues, tables, shelters, water and toilets. National Park fees apply. The main picnic area is on the eastern side of the car park, and smaller, older picnic area is at the north-eastern corner of the car park. The southern Girrakool picnic area is located near the toilets. The picnic area is dedicated to John 'Jack' Higgs, the first superintendent of Brisbane Water National Park, and Mrs Vera Murdoch, who provided the funds. 'Girrakool' is an Aboriginal word meaning 'place of still waters'.

 After 70 m pass the sign (on your right).

 Then pass the toilet (10 m on your left).

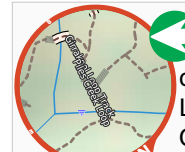
 After another 60 m pass the BBQ (25 m on your left).


 After another 100 m (from the Girrakool Loop Track) **continue straight**, to head along Girrakool Loop Track.

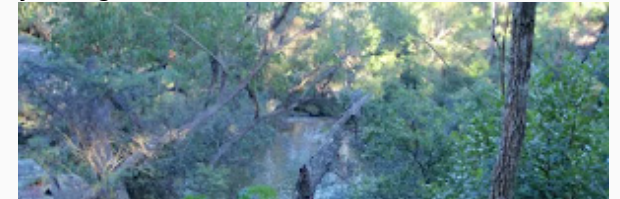
 After another 15 m find the "Broula Lookout" (40 m on your left).




Broula Lookout is fenced and a fairly short walk down from the Girrakool picnic area. Over time, the trees in the area have grown, filtering what would otherwise be a great vantage point for the Piles Creek waterfall. Broula is an Aboriginal word referring to a place of trickling water.

 After another 25 m (at the intersection of Girrakool Loop Track & Piles Creek Loop) **turn left**, to head along Piles Creek Loop.

 After another 40 m find the "Illoura Lookout" (on your right).



Illoura Lookout, Brisbane Water National Park, can be found a short walk south-west of the Girrakool picnic area, following the Great North Walk sign. This lookout provides a filtered view up and down the Leask and Piles Creek junction. There is a view of a waterfall from Piles Creek. Illoura is an Aboriginal word referring to a pleasant or peaceful place.

 After another 7 m (from the Piles Creek Loop) **continue straight**, to head along Piles Creek Loop.



After another 20 m find the "Piles Creek Waterfall" (on your right).



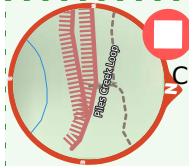
The large waterfall on Piles Creek is south of Girrakool Picnic Area in Brisbane Water National Park. At the Piles Creek Loop track crossing at the top of the falls, there is a large rock platform. The cliff edge is unfenced and would be dangerous to approach for the view. The water falls down the large drop, into a big pool below. The 'Bundilla Lookout' on the other side of the valley provides the only square view onto the falls, but even this only witnesses the top half.



After another 25 m come to "Piles Creek Lookout".



Piles Creek lookout (not formally named), Brisbane Water National Park, sits high on the ridge, east of Piles Creek and north of Rat Gully. This lookout provides views over the Piles Creek valley and can be enjoyed from behind a fence. The valley is surprisingly steep at this point and the views downstream are quite extensive.



Continue another 0 m to find Piles Creek Lookout at the end.



Turn around and retrace your steps back the 25 m to the main route.



Back at the main route turn left and follow on from the 1.4 km waypoint.



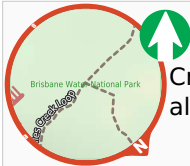
After another 135 m (from the Piles Creek Loop) **continue straight**, to head along Piles Creek Loop.



After another 150 m find the "Monolith Cave" (on your left).

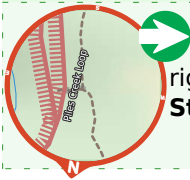


Monolith Cave is an informally named cave and interesting rock formation high on the ridge east of Piles Creek and North of Rat Gully in the Brisbane Water National Park. The cave is a fairly large sandstone overhang on the edge of the track. The cave provides shelter for walkers and is a great spot to rest and enjoy the area. This rock and the more Monolithic rock about 60m to the south are interesting to explore, and provide great views of the surrounding area. Take great care if exploring the rocks.

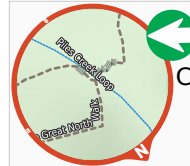


After another 910 m (from the Piles Creek Loop) **continue straight**, to head along Piles Creek Loop.

Start of an optional side trip: An optional side trip to Piles Ck Lookout.



To start this optional side trip turn right here. from the Piles Creek Loop **Start** (a walking track).



After another 390 m (from the Piles Creek Loop) **turn left**.



After another 1.3 km come to the viewpoint.



After another 305 m come to the viewpoint.



After another 1.4 km pass the "Scopas Peak" (25 m on your left).



After another 1.1 km (from the Rifle Range Firetrail) **veer right**, to head along Rifle Range Firetrail (a vehicle track).



After another 1.1 km come to the viewpoint.



After another 55 m (from the Rifle Range Firetrail) **continue straight**, to head along Rifle Range Firetrail.



After another 30 m pass the sign (on your left).



After another 600 m (at the intersection of Rifle Range Firetrail & Pindar Walking Track) **continue straight**, to head along Rifle Range Firetrail.



After another 960 m (from the Rifle Range Firetrail) **continue straight**, to head along Rifle Range Firetrail.



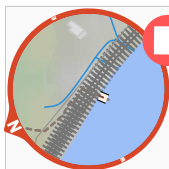
After another 315 m head down the steps (about 30 m long)



After another 165 m come to "Wondabyne".



Wondabyne is situated in Brisbane Waters National Park on the banks of Mullet River, which feeds into the Hawkesbury River north of Brooklyn. The area is defined by the National Park's flora and fauna, the quarry, railway station and a few houses sitting above the water around the river. The quarry produced sandstone building materials, used in the construction of the National War Memorial in Canberra. More recently, in 2000, the quarry was re-opened for restoration of St Mary's Cathedral spire in Sydney. Wondabyne Station, named after the nearby Mt Wondabyne, was built in 1889 and exclusively used for the quarry - it was then known as Mullet Creek Station. The station is one of the smallest on the line and one of very few railway stations in a NSW National Park. When you catch the train to Wondabyne, let the guard know you want to get off at Wondabyne Station, otherwise the train will not stop. Travel in the last carriage as the platform is very short. To catch the train from Wondabyne, wave to the driver.



The end.