

THE PALMS NATIONAL PARK



Tucked away in the hills east of Cooyar, The Palms National Park is a gem worth making an effort to visit. Small in size, but big in nature, this tiny patch of remnant rainforest is filled with impressive piccabeen palms, towering fig trees and a rich suite of birdlife.

At the heart of The Palms is an almost-exclusive stand of piccabeen palms *Archontophoenix cunninghamiana* clinging to a waterlogged depression. Encircling the palms is subtropical rainforest and dry vine forest, leading to open eucalypt forest on drier exposed locations.

Wildlife finds refuge in the forest where it is moist, and thrives at the junction between different forest types.

The Palms is a great place for a stopover en-route to the Bunya Mountains, or when driving between Cooyar and Yarraman.

The park is 8 km north-east of Cooyar along a sealed but narrow road.

To get there, turn east off the New England Highway just north of Cooyar, 94 km north of Toowoomba and 28 km south-west of Yarraman.

WALKING TRACK

The Palms Circuit – 650 m (15 min return)

Class 3

This short track encircles the palm forest—palms one side, dry vine forest on the other. Admire piccabeen palms, a large strangler fig, bunya and hoop pines, and buttressed trees along the track and boardwalks through the rainforest.

Look for grey-headed flying-foxes roosting in the palm trees above the creek in summer, or on the ground for noisy pittas and black-breasted button-quails during winter and spring.

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The Palms Circuit is not wheelchair accessible.

CAMPING

Camping is not permitted in The Palms National Park.

ACCOMMODATION

Limited accommodation is available in Cooyar and Yarraman with a greater range of options at larger towns in the region.

PICNIC AND DAY USE AREAS

A small picnic area has picnic tables and wood barbecues (no firewood provided).

VIEWING WILDLIFE

The Palms National Park might be small, but that makes it even better for seeing the rainforest plants and animals for which it is a refuge.

The spring-fed creek running through the park is always damp and becomes quite wet after good rain. Listen for the calls of frogs in warmer months and watch the birds and other animals that come to the creek to drink.

Summer is also the best time to see the flying-foxes which rest by day in the park and fly by night to feed on forest fruits in the surrounding hills and valleys.

More than 90 species of birds have been recorded at the park. Watch for rose-crowned fruit doves or green catbirds feeding on fruits of piccabeen palms and figs. Listen for the distinctive calls of wonga pigeons or brown cuckoo-doves echoing through forest. See eastern yellow robins and white-browed scrub wrens flitting through the shaded understory and brown or buff-rumped thornbills feed busily in sunny patches at the forest edge. Barking owls have also been seen here.

Red necked pademelons and swamp wallabies can sometimes be seen thumping noisily through the gully.

OPEN

The Palms National Park is open 24 hours a day.

PETS

Domestic animals are not permitted in The Palms National Park.

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Expect warm to hot summers and cool to cold winters. Temperatures peak at more than 35 °C in December and drop below freezing overnight in winter. Most rain falls during the summer months, often as storms.

For more information see the tourism information links below or the [Bureau of Meteorology](#).

PARK HISTORY AND MANAGEMENT

The Palms National Park comprises two separate sections, together totalling an area of 73 hectares. The section open to visitors is 12.4 hectares in size and was first gazetted a national park in 1950.

Surrounded by cleared grazing lands, the park provides a refuge for many plants and animal communities that thrive in the sheltered spring-fed gully. It protects Araucarian microphyll vine forest which is a regional ecosystem of concern.



The grey-headed flying-fox is the only Australian flying fox to have a collar of orange-brown fur circling the neck. Photo Michelle Wright



Piccabeens grow best in waterlogged soil. Photo Karen Smith

The Palms National Park map

