



Australian Government  
Director of National Parks



# Australia's Green Cauldron

An ancient volcanic landscape, now a living Gondwanan rainforest.

Australia's Green Cauldron landscape is a mysterious melting pot of rich volcanic earth, deep green rainforest, breathtaking scenery, shining blue waters and rare Gondwanan (prehistoric) wildlife. Its World Heritage-listed subtropical rainforests, along with 72 national parks and reserves, provide a spectacular environment for plants, animals and humans alike.

At the heart of this landscape lies the majestic Wollumbin Mt Warning, the first point on the Australian continent to be lit up by the rays of the morning sun. To the Bundjalung Nation and other Aboriginal tribes, the name Wollumbin has several meanings, including cloud catcher. The magnificent landscape was created from an ancient caldera — the eroded remains of an extinct shield volcano.

Captain James Cook gave the mountain its English name in May 1770 to warn other sailors of the dangerous offshore reefs his ship the Endeavour encountered while exploring Australia's eastern coast.

## UNIQUE AND DIVERSE WILDLIFE

Australia's Green Cauldron is home to more than 230 different species of birds such as the powerful owl, marbled frogmouth and the eastern bristlebird. Over 200 threatened plants and animals can be found across the landscape, and more than 100 species are endemic — found nowhere else on earth.

The region is also home to the highest diversity of mammal species in Australia, including unique animals such as the parma wallaby, the yellow-bellied glider and the golden-tipped bat.

## WHERE GREEN MEETS BLUE

On heading east, mountain rainforests give way to a spectacular marine environment, home to secluded beaches and popular surfing spots. Off-shore, cold southern ocean currents and warmer northern waters meet in ancient underwater volcanic landscapes.

These currents provide nutrient-rich havens for species such as loggerhead turtles, bottle-nosed dolphins and the endangered grey nurse shark. Julian Rocks, also known as Nguthungulli, is a popular diving spot in the Cape Byron Marine Park and is estimated to contain more than 1000 marine species.

## LINKING LANDSCAPES

The rainforests of Australia's Green Cauldron protect the most extensive area of subtropical rainforest in the world and are part of the World Heritage-listed Gondwana Rainforests of Australia — a chain of more than 50 rainforest reserves stretching some 1,000 kilometres along the east coast of Australia.

These rainforests are relics of ancient forests that existed before Australia broke away from the supercontinent some 80 million years ago. Few places on earth contain so many plants and animals that remain relatively unchanged from their ancestors in the fossil record — primitive tree ferns, cycads and hoop pines, freshwater crayfish and glow worms and reptiles including chelid turtles, the leaf-tailed gecko and angle-headed dragon.

### *Listen out for the lyrebird*

Found only in the subtropical rainforests of Australia's Green Cauldron is the unique Albert's lyrebird. A reclusive bird with remarkable mimicry abilities, its talents are not limited to natural sounds — lyrebirds are also famous for their eerily accurate reproduction of human activities such as sound of engines and the clicking of cameras.

## A VIBRANT, COMMITTED COMMUNITY

Indigenous Australians consider the landscape to be of great cultural and spiritual significance, providing an important source of food, medicine and shelter. There is a dreamtime story that Wollumbin was a place for spirit warriors, and when it storms, thunder and lightning are the scars of their battles.

The ancient energy said to radiate from the landscape has attracted people from across the globe in search of a sustainable lifestyle.

Australia's Green Cauldron was the site of some of the earliest environmental movements in Australia, driven by an energetic community committed to conservation values. This philosophy still continues today.

A diverse range of activities take place across the region, ranging from organic, biodynamic and permaculture farming, spiritual retreats, sustainability festivals, straw-bale and mudbrick housing displays, alternative energy generation and character-filled markets stocked with local

## HELP PROTECT THIS UNIQUE ENVIRONMENT

You make your own contribution to conserving our natural world when you visit Australia's Green Cauldron. Low-impact activities such as bushwalking, cycling and canoeing all provide fantastic opportunities to get off the beaten track and discover new worlds that are like nothing else on earth

### *Wwoof your way across the Green Cauldron*

Willing Workers on Organic Farms is an international organisation that helps people arrange work on farms in exchange for food and board. Most farms are based on organic, biodynamic or permaculture farming principles and provide a great opportunity to become involved in the local community and experience a unique way of life. Stays can be as short as a few days or last up to about six months. For more information go to

[www.wwoof.com.au](http://www.wwoof.com.au)

### *Birding for Australia*

Help contribute to the science behind Australia's conservation efforts. Go birdwatching, write down the species you see and record your data online in the Australian Bird Atlas. For more information go to

[www.birdsaustralia.com.au](http://www.birdsaustralia.com.au)



Lyrebird



Mount Warning National Park

For more information on this landscape or to learn about other naturally beautiful places which offer a different but uniquely Australian experience. Visit [www.australia.com/nl](http://www.australia.com/nl)