

DESTINATION

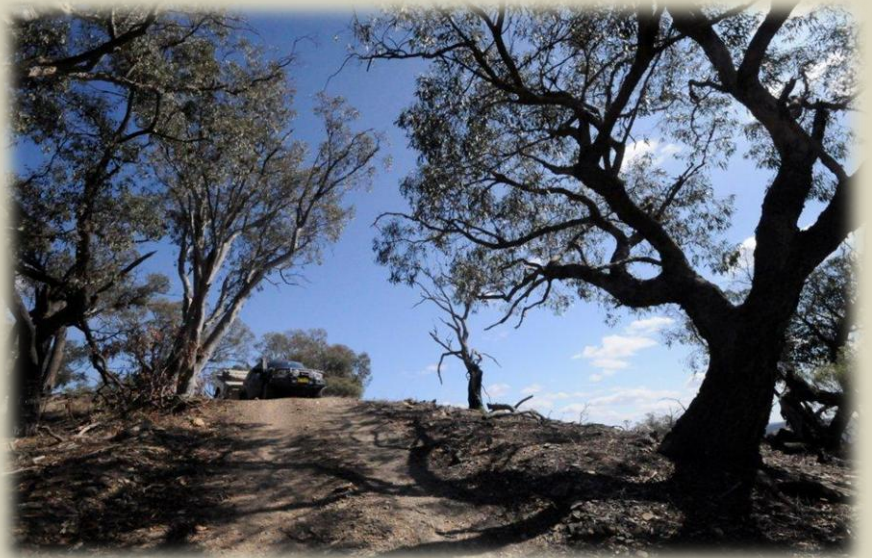
Abercrombie River National Park

New South Wales

Abercrombie River National Park preserves steep sections of forested tableland, amidst less rugged, cleared country that has become pine plantations and grazing land. Abercrombie offers varied 4x4 driving conditions and magnificent river-side campsites.

Abercrombie River National Park was gazetted in 1995, to preserve some of the last remnants of mountain woodland in the south-western central tablelands and to maintain the pristine quality of the Abercrombie River water catchments.

The topography varies from very steep hills in the north-eastern section, with altitudes above 1000 metres, to gentler slopes in the south-west at altitudes around 500 metres.



Two Park entrances make a visit easy for different 4x4 vehicle abilities and driver tastes. The Park tracks are kept in good condition and there's no evidence of wet-weather abuse. It's possible to visit the Park all year around, but note that summers are hot and winters are very cold with snow and ice risk. There's no reliable water so you need to be self sufficient.

If you have a capable 4x4 with high ground clearance and low range gearing you'll love the extremely steep section that are accessed from the eastern Park entrance, off Felled Timber Road. If your vehicle is less capable, you're feeling less adventurous or you're towing a camper trailer, the safe entrance is the western one, via Arkstone Road.



Trailers are prohibited on the very steep Park tracks that lead from Felled Timber Road and Brass Walls Fire Trail and rightly so, because there is high risk of a serious accident, caused by a trailer over-running its towing vehicle on down slopes that are too steep to stand on.

This eastern Park entry is also dry-weather only, because the slopes are loose shale or clay covered.

Almost the entire Park is open woodland, with the dominant tree being the mountain gum. Grey-green grass clumps cover the gravelly ground. The open nature of the forest allows good views of the surrounding mountains and deep valleys. Casuarina fronds whistle in the breezes along the river edges. Near the Park boundaries there are brilliant views of the surrounding pastoral land.

On a quiet mid-week visit we saw wallabies, eastern grey kangaroos and dozens of different bird species. At night we could hear the pleading cries of frogs.



Abercrombie River National Park is easily reached from the all-bitumen Oberon-Goulburn road that runs through some of NSW's best pastoral country. If travelling up from Goulburn you pass through a small satellite section of the Park at Bummaroo Ford, after a spectacular mountain descent to the Abercrombie River.

At the two entrances to the Park are metal boxes containing visitor guides. The guide has a mud-map of the tracks and some information about the Park. All the tracks are signposted, so navigation is relatively simple.

If you want to check the amazing contours you're driving through and have some insurance against missing signposts use a topographic-map GPS or pick up paper topo maps of the area.

Since the Park mud map was drawn there have been some changes to track layouts, with the main one being a short-cut route to Little Bald Hill from the south-running Bald Hill Fire Trail. The old fence-line track from the locked gate boundary near Bald Hill is now closed and the new, shorter route is signposted.

In a capable 4x4 vehicle it's possible to enter the steep section of the Park and drive to one of the south-western camping areas for an overnight stay; then drive out via the western entrance next day. This two-day route takes in the very steep sections first, followed by a drive down to the flatter regions. The return loop to the Park's northern entrance passes through more protected areas, with better soil, where the trees are larger and logging once took place.

If you're towing a trailer, enter via the western side and set up camp on the first day, then tour the steep sections in your solo 4x4 next day.

Softroaders are incapable of handling the Bald Hill sections, but it's possible to loop through most of the Park tracks.





Bush camping is permitted in the Park, but fires aren't allowed other than within the steel fire rings at the official campsites at Silent Creek, The Beach and The Sink. Silent Creek has tree-shaded flat, grassed areas and is ideal for larger groups.

The Beach campsite fronts a Casuarina-lined waterhole that's ideal for a dip on a hot day. The Sink is close to a small patch of private property, where a long-term 'local' has a self-sufficient, idyllic homestead.



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FACT FILE

Where

The Felled Timber Road entrance to the demanding section of the Park is 104 kilometres north of Goulburn and 45 km south of Oberon.

The easier-driving entrance off Arkstone Road is further north, 7km south of Black Springs.

Time required

3 days

Best time to go

All year round, but winter nights are freezing, summer days are very hot

What to do

Easy to very demanding 4x4 driving, camping, bird and animal watching, canoeing and fishing.

Maps

NP 'mud map' and topo maps covering Arkstone, Fullerton and Gurnang.

Camping

Silent Creek, The Beach and The Sink campsites have 'drop' toilets and there are dozens of possible bush camp sites along the river banks. Take your own drinking water. Carry your rubbish out with you.

Permits

There are no permits or camping fees necessary, but a fishing licence is required. Most fish species are protected, other than for introduced trout – catchable from October to June – and river blackfish.

Track closures

Abercrombie River National Park tracks are closed after heavy rain and at times of extreme bush fire risk.

Last fuel

Goulburn, Taralga and Oberon.

Contact

National Parks and Wildlife Service
38 Ross Street, Oberon NSW

Phone: 02 6336 1972

Opening hours: 9:00am-4:30pm
Monday-Friday