

6 KOOLMOON CREEK AND WALTERS WATERHOLE

4-6 HOURS LOOP



This 12km loop trail is part of the Misty Mountains Wilderness Tracks. Follow an old logging trail through towering forests to a clear mountain stream. Spend time exploring Koolmoon Creek and its waterholes, waterfalls and old bridge abutments.

Deep within Tully Falls National Park and part of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, this wilderness experience will reward your efforts with breathtaking scenery and amazing wildlife.

LANDSCAPE

This trail travels through the deeply eroded landscape of the Atherton Tablelands escarpment. While the underlying rock is granite (like Bartle Frere), a series of volcanic eruptions about seven million years ago covered much of the region in deep layers of basalt. Over millions of years this has weathered to form rich, red soils and the creeks and rivers have eroded the landscape to create the topography we see today.

VEGETATION

The weathered volcanic soils and high rainfall support rich and diverse forests. Towering Rose Gums *Eucalyptus grandis* and Red Cedars *Toona ciliata* reach high into the canopy, festooned with epiphytes and vines.

Wait-a-while *Calamus* species grows throughout the forest, heading upwards towards the light on long tendrils lined with hooks. The hooks often grab unsuspecting walkers on their skin, clothes and equipment.

FAUNA

Sightings of Southern Cassowaries *Casuarius casuarius* are relatively common along the trail. Swallowing their fruit whole, Cassowaries digest the pulp and deposit seeds over great distances. Their large scats can contain hundreds of seeds and play an integral role in maintaining the diversity of the rainforest. Look for their footprints and scats as you walk along the trail.

One of the more common animals along the trail is the shy Musky Rat Kangaroo *Hypsiprymnodon moschatus*. This amazing marsupial has been living in the rainforests of Australia for millions of years, and is the only surviving member of the genus related to modern kangaroos. They are one of only two diurnal (day-active) marsupials in Australia. Look for them collecting fruit in the leaf litter or crossing the trail. If you come across a tree dropping large amounts of fruit on the trail, it is worth standing quietly for a few minutes and seeing if a Musky Rat Kangaroo or some other frugivore will emerge.

Twelve species of birds are endemic to the Wet Tropics and you may see and hear some of them along the trail. Keep your eye out for Grey Fantails *Rhipidura albiscapa*. These small, grey birds feed on insects in the lower canopy and understorey. They are often bold, approaching walkers to snatch insects disturbed by their movements. Listen for the Grey Fantail's metallic cheek call and chattering in the forest beside the trail.



Cochinbeerum Creek



Walker on Koolmoon Creek and Walters Waterhole Trail



Walters Waterhole Upstream





6 KOOLMOON CREEK AND WALTERS WATERHOLE

4-6 HOURS LOOP



TIPS & SAFETY

- ▼ Misty Mountain wilderness tracks are intended for visitors with advanced bushwalking and navigation skills. You should carry maps and navigation equipment as you may need to find your way along indistinct trails.
- ▼ Plan your walk to return in daylight hours. Let someone responsible know where you are going, when you expect to be back and what to do if you do not return.
- ▼ Check the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service webpage ([parks.des.qld.gov.au](http://parks.des.qld.gov.au)) for park alerts, management and safety information, and to book your camping.
- ▼ Reduce the spread of weeds and fungal diseases by cleaning mud and seeds from your equipment (shoes, backpacks, bikes, etc.) before you head off.
- ▼ Walk to the conditions and within your abilities. Be careful on slippery slopes, cliff edges and at water crossings.
- ▼ Wear appropriate clothing and safety equipment.
- ▼ Take plenty of drinking water. Carry a first aid kit and know how to use it.

GETTING THERE

From Ravenshoe travel 1.2km to the Kennedy Highway, then south along Tully Falls Road for 15.2km to the Waters Waterhole trailhead and parking area on the left-hand side of the road.

TRAIL INFORMATION

The trail is described in a north to south direction.

- A. Walters Waterhole trailhead.
- B. 500m – Koolmoon Creek crossing. This is the same creek that you will cross again at Walters Waterhole.
- C. 3.0km – creek crossing.
- D. 3.5km – junction. Turn right towards Walters Waterhole.
- E. 4.4km – Coochimbeerum Creek crossing. Take a break at this tranquil location. Look for birds, such as Spectacled Monarch *Symposiachrus trivirgatus* in the vegetation along the creek as they hawk for flying insects.
- F. 5.0km – junction with Koolmoon Creek Track. Keep right.
- G. 6.0km – track to Walters Waterhole. Turn off old logging track at the sign and follow the trail to the right and down on to Koolmoon Creek.

Enjoy a break at the waterhole. Downstream is an old crossing of Koolmoon Creek with the abutments of the bridge still visible. Downstream of this are a series of waterfalls, leading to Walters Waterhole. The area just downstream of the old bridge provides a great place to relax and enjoy the view down to the larger waterhole. To rejoin the trail, cross Koolmoon Creek safely upstream and join the old logging track.

- H. 7.1km – sign facing downhill indicates Walters Waterhole in 1.1km. Continue on the trail heading uphill.
- I. 10.5km – pass through gate.
- J. 10.6km – car park off Tully Falls Rd. Turn right and head uphill on Tully Falls Road.
- A. 12km – Walters Waterhole trailhead.

If you liked this trail, you might also like these other 10 Top Tableland Trails:

#4. **Majors Mountain Trail.** Follow old logging trails and narrow tracks through the forest for rewarding views over the surrounding forest from the summit of Majors Mountain.

#8. **Canabullen Falls .** Mountain bike ride or walk this rainforest trail to majestic Cannabullen Falls. With two smaller sets of falls immediately upstream plunging into a large pool, and then the impressive Canabullen Falls downstream providing sweeping views over the valley below, this walk is worth the effort.

BEST TIME TO GO

The best time to enjoy the Walters Waterhole and Koolmoon Creek Trail is during the dry season (April–October). At other times of the year heavy downpours, low cloud, high temperatures and intense humidity are common.