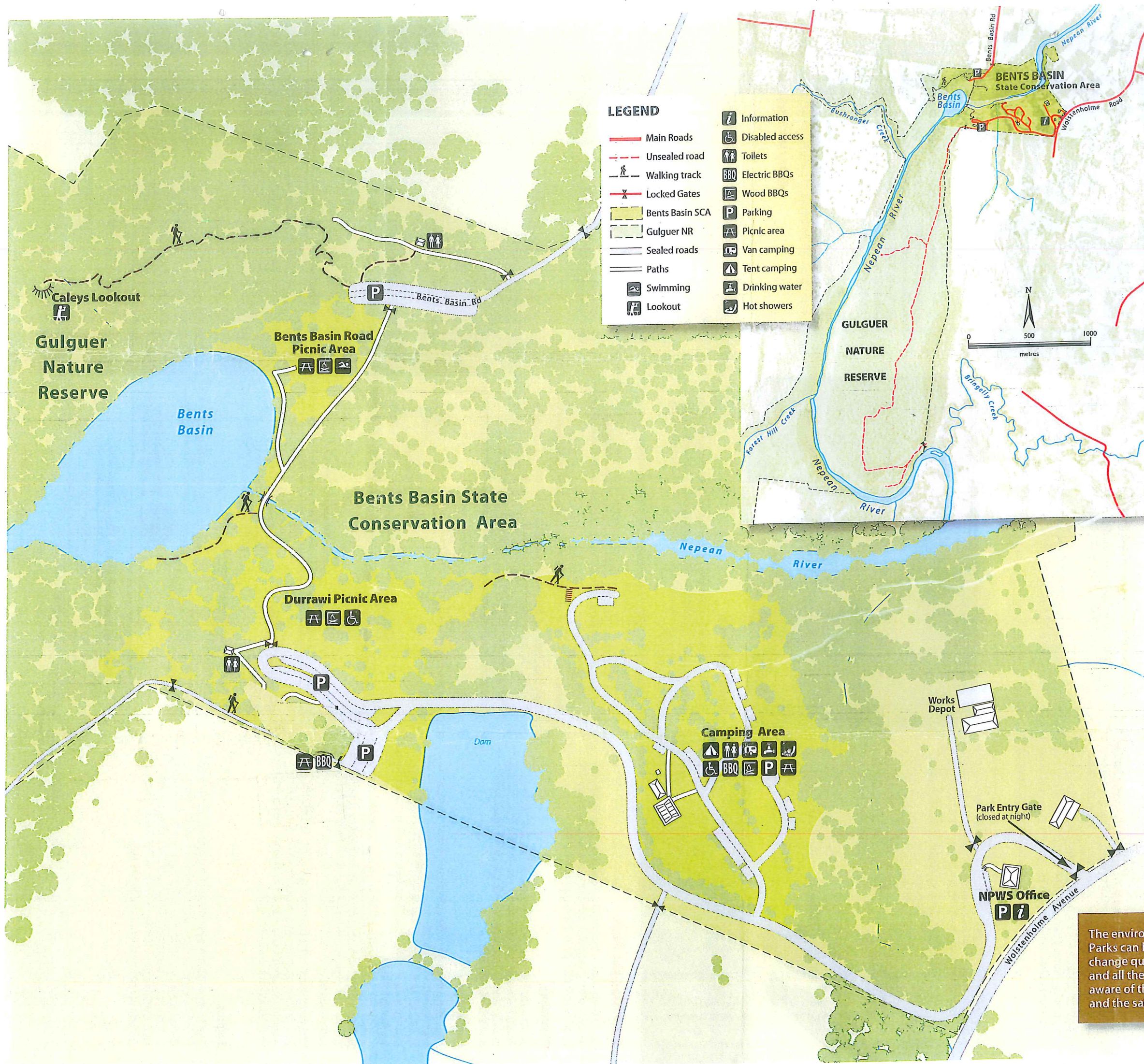




Camping

Bents Basin provides 14 hectares of vehicle based camping. Camp sites are suitable for tents, caravans, camper trailers and motor homes; camping beside your vehicle is permitted. Facilities include accessible toilet amenities, hot showers, fire rings, electric & wood barbeques, drinking water and rubbish bins. Fees apply and booking in advance is essential for long weekends and school holidays.

Remember: be a thoughtful camper and allow your neighbours to also enjoy their stay by respecting the campground rules.

Additional facilities, which may be hired for a day or for your entire stay, include:

- Camp kitchen with a large fridge, stove, hot plate, bain-marie and washing up facilities with hot and cold water.
- Camp shelter (20m x 10m) located outside the camp kitchen. Chairs, tables and electricity are available with the shelter.

Campfires and Barbeques

Campfires are permitted only where fire places are provided. Portable gas and wood or heat bead BBQs are permitted but must be supervised by a responsible person at all times. Ash from barbeques must be disposed of in the bins provided. Be sure to extinguish the coals fully before discarding.

Fire wood is not supplied in the camping area however bags can be purchased at the Bents Basin office during office hours.

Total Fire Bans

When a total fire ban has been declared it's an offence to light a fire, this includes barbeques that burn solid fuels (eg. wood or charcoal).

In the event of a total fire ban consider the following:

- Alternative menu options that don't require barbequing,
- Use the electrical barbeques provided, or
- Gas barbeques may be used but only in authorised barbequing areas and they must be supervised by a responsible adult at all times.

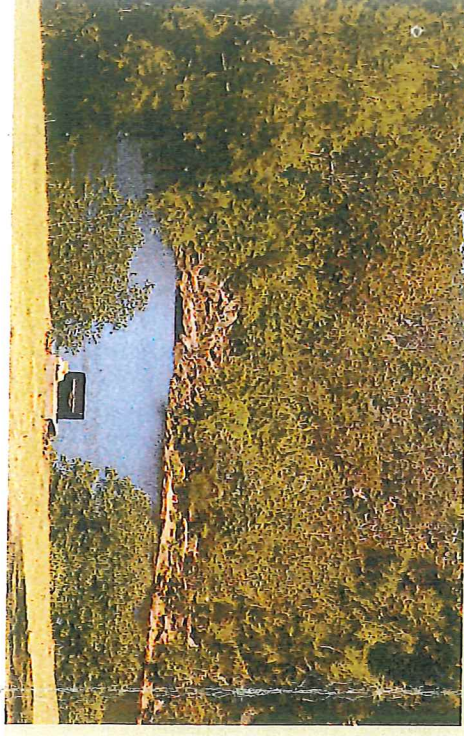
Bushwalking

Caley's Lookout Track is a 1.2km return walk of a moderate grade. The walk takes you up the escarpment from the Bents Basin Road picnic area to a lookout that takes in the views to the east over the basin.

When walking remember to:

- Tell someone where you are going
- Take plenty of drinking water
- Wear sturdy footwear and sun protection
- Observe safety precautions and stay away from cliff edges.

The environment in parks will always present risks to visitors. Parks can be very remote and rugged places, weather can change quickly, rivers, lakes and the sea may be unpredictable and all the native animals are wild. Please visit parks but be aware of the risks and take responsibility for your own safety and the safety of any children in your care.



Top: Nepean River, Gulguer Gorge Nature Reserve
Bottom: View across the basin from picnic area

About the Landscape

Bents Basin was gazetted as a state conservation area in 1980 as a reserve of about 400 ha. In 1994, 350 ha of the reserve was declared as Gulguer Nature Reserve due to its unique characteristics.

The basin is a geological formation known as a 'scour pool' and was created over time by fast flowing floodwaters of the Nepean River exiting the Gulguer gorge. The basin is approximately 22m deep and 27m above sea level. Waters from the basin travel some 150km along the Nepean and Hawkesbury rivers before reaching the ocean.

Cultural Connections

Bents Basin or 'Gulguer' as it is known by the local Aboriginal Gundangara, Dharawal and Darug groups, holds great significance.

Gulguer is an Aboriginal word meaning falling, or shooting down, or swilling round resulting in a large round hole. This possibly refers to the movement of the water in the basin when the Nepean River floods.

The Gulguer waterholes significance to the Aboriginal people is associated with an ancestral creature called Gurungadge or Gurungaty; thought to be a malevolent giant eel or aquatic monster. A prominent figure in the ancestral stories of the area, Gurungadge had a reputation for drowning and eating foreign Aboriginal people who came to drink from the water hole.

The area is also believed to have been a trading place used by the three groups. This assumption is supported by archaeological finds of tools that were made from materials that are not found at Bents Basin. Bents Basin and the adjoining Gulguer Nature Reserve are home to many Aboriginal artefacts and rock art.

The first European to visit the area was the explorer and botanist, George Caley. He arrived in 1802 and named it "Dovedale" after a valley in Derbyshire, England. He returned in 1804 to collect plant specimens for preservation. Later the area was renamed "Bents Basin" after Justice Ellis Bent who became Judge Advocate of NSW in 1809.

M Hinkson 2001, Aboriginal Sydney, A guide to important places of the past and present.

Caley's Lookout



Getting There

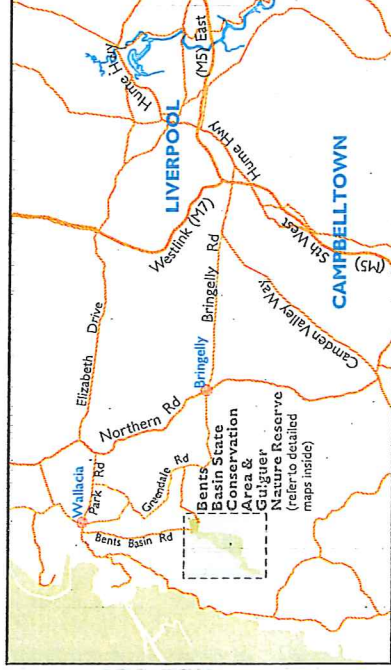
Bents Basin State Conservation Area and Gulguer Nature Reserve are situated on the Nepean River approximately 8 km south of Wallacia, and 56km south west of Sydney. There are two access routes to the park.

1. Via Bents Basin Rd - Follow Silverdale Road from the roundabout at Wallacia.
2. Via Wolstenholme Ave - from the north, follow Greendale Road from Wallacia; or from the south, follow Greendale Road from Bringley.

Note: Access to the campground is via Wolstenholme Ave only.

Park Use Fees - A park use fee applies to all vehicles that enter the park, both coins and credit cards are accepted.

Pets - Pets are not permitted in the park at any time.



Information and Bookings

Bents Basin Office,
Wolstenholme Ave
GREENDALE NSW 2550

For information and bookings:
Please call 13000 PARKS (72757)

Online bookings visit
www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au

www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au



General information:

The National Parks and Wildlife Service is part of the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water NSW
59-61 Goulburn St, Sydney (PO Box A290 Sydney South 1232)
Ph: 1300 361 967

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Department of
Environment, Climate Change and Water NSW



Plants and Animals

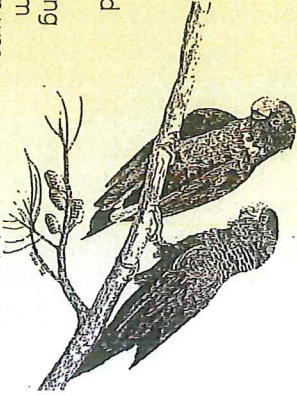
Bents Basin and Gulguer Nature Reserve provide protection to a rich diversity of flora and fauna with some 334 species of native plants and 187 species of native animals identified.

The vegetation is characteristic of the transition between the plateaus of the Blue Mountains and the plains of the Sydney Basin. Of significance is the Camden white gum (*Euclalyptus benthamii*) with only two known naturally occurring populations, one of which is at Bents Basin and the other in the Kedumba Valley of the Blue Mountains. Equally significant is the vegetation community known as the Cumberland Plain Woodland (CPW). CPW has declined dramatically since European settlement through the clearing of land for agriculture. CPW is characterised by open wooded forest with grey box (*Euclalyptus moluccana*), forest red gum (*Euclalyptus tereticornis*) and a grassy understorey dominated by kangaroo grass (*Themeda australis*).

Significant fauna species include the regent honey eater, Cumberland Plain land snail, eastern bentwing bat, sooty owl and the glossy black cockatoo. Some more common animals that can be seen include the eastern grey kangaroo, brush-tailed possum, sugar glider, echidna, flying fox and the common wombat. Snakes are also seen during the warmer months and include the green tree snake, diamond python and the red-bellied black snake.

The Inn and surrounding landscape of Bents Basin and Gulguer Nature Reserve has been recognised and listed as a site of both cultural and natural significance on both the State and National Heritage Register.

Black Cockatoos
by Gavin Gatenby



Exploring the Park

Bents Basin State Conservation Area and Gulguer Nature Reserve offer a variety of opportunities to enjoy a day visit or an extended stay in the camping facilities.

Picnicking

Bents Basin has two picnic areas (Durrawi and Bents Basin Road). Each area is in close proximity to the basin. Facilities include tables, shared electric BBQ, drinking water, toilets and shower facilities.

Swimming

The main attraction of Bents Basin is the basin itself. It's a popular swimming destination and provides an idyllic spot to paddle with children. Kayaks and inflatable swimming aids are welcome. Motorised devices including model boats are not permitted.

The basin is a natural water body and is subject to flooding. Care must be taken when swimming, considering submerged objects and water depth. Children must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult.

The water level in the basin can rise to a level considered unsafe for swimming after heavy rainfall events. This can result in the closure of the basin to all water based activities until conditions return to normal.

Fishing

The Nepean River offers fishing opportunities for all levels of enthusiasts. Fishing is permitted in the basin, river and dams located within the park. Fishing licences are required in accordance with the NSW Fisheries Act. Licences are NOT available from the Bents Basin office. Spear fishing and netting are not permitted within the park.

