

# Cooktown Walking Trails



## Cooktown Scenic Rim Walk

Cooktown is a laid-back coastal community situated at the northern end of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area on Cape York Peninsula. It is the last major town on Australia's east coast and is famous for its historical significance and its varied walks through spectacular scenery.

The Scenic Rim Walking Trail passes through bushland, along roads, paved paths, and rough tracks, catering for every level of fitness. The walk sections can be completed in a single day, but the special features of the area are better appreciated if the walks are spread over a few days.

**Contact Information for the Scenic Rim Walk:**  
Cook Shire Council Ph: (07) 4069 5444  
Queensland Parks & Wildlife Service Ph: (07) 4069 5777

### 1. Bicentennial Park to Cooktown Cemetery

**Difficulty Level:** Easy  
**Distance:** 2.4 kilometres  
**Duration:** 45 minutes  
**Access:** Self Guided  
**Contact Information:** Cook Shire Council

**Walk Description:** The first two sections of the walk are a pleasant stroll, but the mosquitoes own this territory so carry insect repellent. The 1.2 kilometre section from Hogg Street to the cemetery is an ungraded track. The first 50 metres weaves through melaleuca scrub, where short side paths lead to an upturned steam-train tender and a timber-shored well.

### 2. Cooktown Cemetery to Mount Cook

**Difficulty Level:** Easy  
**Distance:** 2.6 kilometres  
**Duration:** 45 minutes  
**Access:** Self Guided  
**Contact Information:** Cook Shire Council  
**Walk Description:** The cemetery has all the signs and information needed for a self-guided tour, it is easy to enjoy wandering through the grounds, reading the epitaphs and pondering Cooktown's chaotic past. The walk then takes you through the streets of Cooktown to the base of Mount Cook.



### 3. Mount Cook

**Difficulty Level:** Strenuous  
**Distance:** 6 kilometres (return)  
**Duration:** 3 - 4 hours (return)  
**Access:** Self Guided  
**Contact Information:** Queensland Parks & Wildlife Service  
**Walk Description:** From the Hannan Drive carpark the trail enters a sheltered bushland gully and winds amongst granite boulders. Green Corp workers have enhanced the walk by constructing a track with granite steps that blend with the surroundings. Shortly before the trail mounts the long spur to the summit, a short path on the right leads to a lookout with views over Cooktown. From the junction the summit trail zigzags up to a saddle where another short path leads to a lookout with coastal views. All the lookouts on Mount Cook are on top of large boulders. At the rear of the tower near the summit there is visitor book in a metal cupboard and a small rainwater tank.

### 4. Finch Bay to the Botanic Gardens

**Difficulty Level:** Moderate  
**Distance:** 800 metres  
**Duration:** 15 minutes  
**Access:** Self Guided  
**Contact Information:** Cook Shire Council  
**Walk Description:** At low tide Finch Bay is a wide stretch of sand only a few hundred metres long, sheltered by rocky headlands to the south and north. At the northern end of the beach the trail continues to the Botanic Gardens and Cherry Tree Bay.

### 5. Finch Bay to Cherry Tree Bay

**Difficulty Level:** Moderate  
**Distance:** 1 kilometre  
**Duration:** 30 minutes  
**Access:** Self Guided  
**Contact Information:** Cook Shire Council  
**Walk Description:** The Finch Bay to Cherry Tree Bay section climbs amongst large granite boulders through open eucalypt forest, with rocky outcrops providing good vantage points for unimpeded views of the coastline. The trail emerges at the southern end of the small sheltered beach, a popular snorkelling location. This secluded retreat can only be accessed on foot.

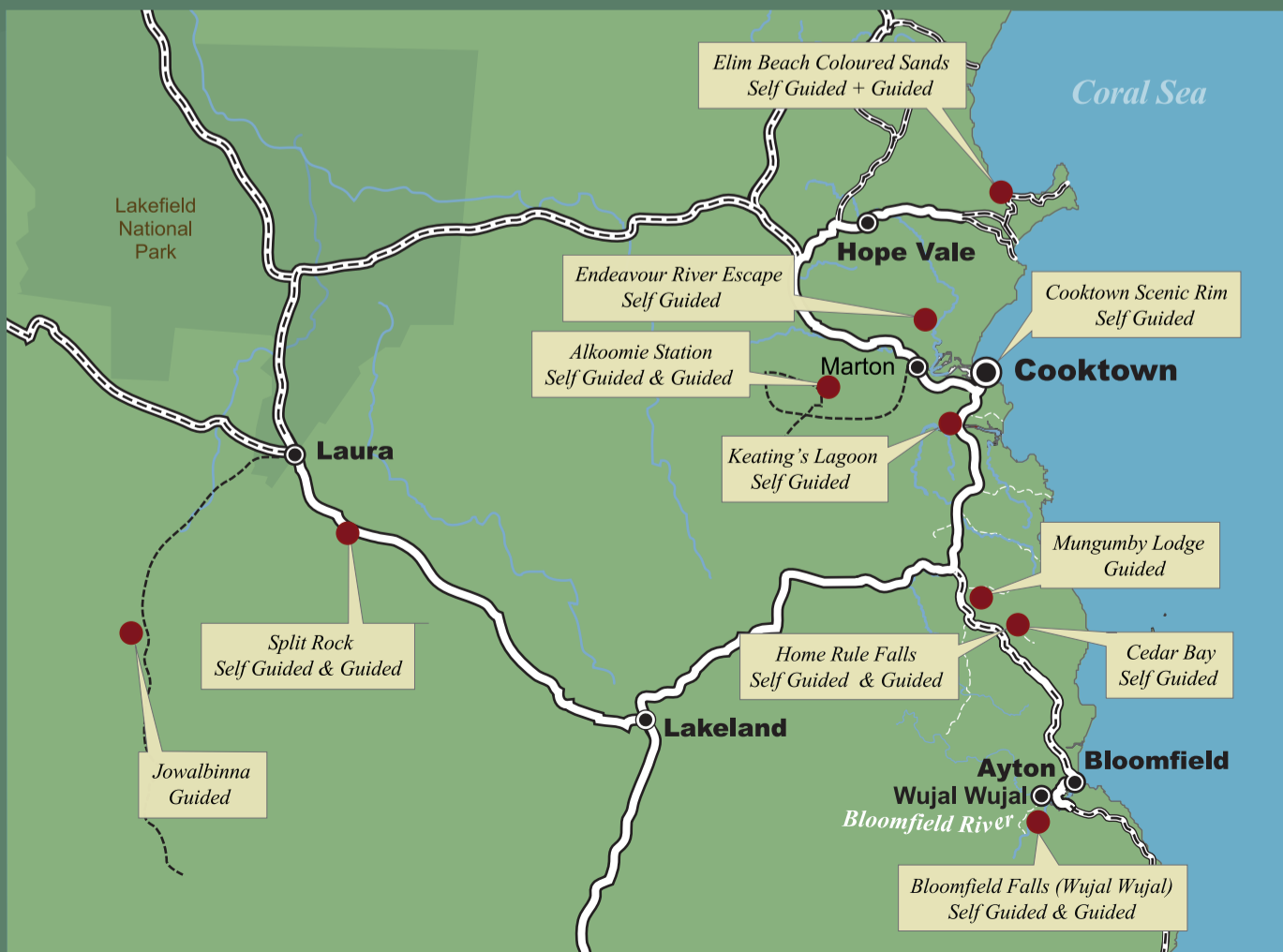
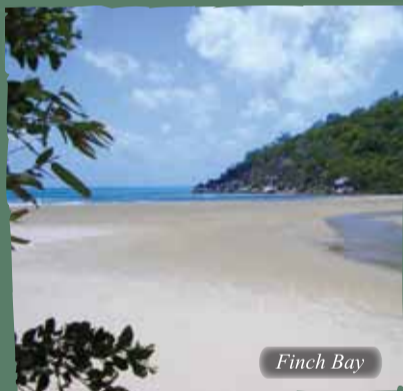


### 6. Cherry Tree Bay to Grassy Hill

**Difficulty Level:** Moderate  
**Distance:** 800 metres  
**Duration:** 20 minutes  
**Access:** Self Guided  
**Contact Information:** Cook Shire Council  
**Walk Description:** The steep, rough, 800 metre section from the beach to Grassy Hill is marked with flagging tape and old fishing buoys. The trail runs parallel to a rocky watercourse through open forest before veering toward a saddle where it levels out as it approaches Grassy Hill Road.

### 7. Grassy Hill

**Difficulty Level:** Moderate  
**Distance:** 750 metres to summit, 1.4 kilometres summit to Captain Cook's statue  
**Duration:** 1.5 hours (return)  
**Access:** Self Guided  
**Contact Information:** Cook Shire Council  
**Walk Description:** From Grassy Hill's 162 metre summit, a fantastic 360 degree view takes in Cooktown, the Endeavour River and its tributaries, the surrounding mountains, and the Coral Sea.



## Keating's Lagoon

**Difficulty Level:** Easy  
**Distance:** 390 metres (return)  
**Duration:** 20 minutes (return)  
**Access:** Self Guided  
**Facilities:** Bird hide, interpretive information, picnic area and car park.  
**Contact Information:** Cooktown office of the National Parks and Wildlife Service Ph: (07) 4069 5777  
**Special Features:** A bird hide provides a perfect spot for spying on magpie geese, black ducks, whistlers and brolgas, especially towards the end of the dry season.  
**Walk Description:** This natural freshwater lagoon creates an ideal habitat for wetland vegetation, which provide abundant food for animals and migratory water birds. This seasonal wetland is often completely dry during the winter and early summer months.



# Regional Walking Trails

walking trails



The history is just the beginning...

## Rainforest Coast

### Mungumby Lodge

**Available walks:** Nocturnal Rainforest Walk or Half day Hidden Falls Trek & Swim

**Difficulty Level:** Moderate

**Duration:** 1.5 hours and half day

**Access:** Guided by appointment only

**Facilities:** Accommodation

**Contact Information:** Mungumby Lodge Ph: (07) 4060 3158

**Walk Description:** Pristine tropical rainforests, waterfalls and local knowledge are highlights of these guided walks.

### Cedar Bay

**Difficulty Level:** Strenuous

**Distance:** 28 kilometre (return)

**Duration:** 6 - 8 hours each way

**Access:** Self Guided (permit required) - track begins on the private property of the Home Rule Rainforest Lodge, who allows access via their property and provides detailed advice to walkers.

**Facilities:** None en route

**Contact Information:** Queensland Parks & Wildlife Service, Cooktown Ph: (07) 4069 5777

**Walk Description:** Trail includes beautiful tropical rainforest, rugged mountains and a palm fringed beach. Please contact Queensland Parks & Wildlife Service for further information as alternate routes and water taxi are available to / from Cedar Bay.

### Home Rule Falls

**Difficulty Level:** Moderate

**Distance:** 2.6 kilometre (return)

**Duration:** 1.5 hours (return)

**Access:** Self Guided (must register at Home Rule Rainforest Lodge) or Guided with Nyungkal Rangers based at Home Rule Rainforest Lodge.

**Facilities:** Accommodation and camping facilities at walk start.

**Contact Information:** Nyungkal Ranger Headquarters Ph: (07) 4069 5147

**Walk Description:** It is a gradual climb to an impressive three-tiered waterfall that plunges into a deep pool between gorge walls of vertical slate. You'll love the beautiful tropical rainforest and refreshing swimming opportunities.



Home Rule Falls

### Bloomfield Falls

**Difficulty Level:** Easy

**Distance:** 400 metre (return)

**Duration:** 30 minutes (return)

**Access:** Self Guided or Guided

**Facilities:** Parking at start of walk.

**Contact Information:** Wujal Wujal Shire Council Ph: (07) 4060 8155

**Walk Description:** A short stroll down a uneven rocky path to a viewing point for the falls, which are especially spectacular after the wet season. Why not join a guided walk with a local Aboriginal tour? Swimming is not advised due to the possibility of crocodiles.

### Alkoomie Station Walks

**Difficulty Level:** Easy to moderate walks available

**Distance:** 3 to 7 kilometre

**Duration:** Varies

**Access:** Self Guided and Guided

**Facilities:** Luxury homestead accommodation, self-contained unit or self-contained fully furnished tents.

**Contact Information:** Alkoomie Station Ph: (07) 4069 5463

**Walk Description:** Whether on a gentle stroll or more energetic hike on this working cattle property, you will discover some of the region's amazing native flora, including beautiful orchids and the ancient cycads and grasses. See spectacular escarpments and enjoy safe swimming in one of the natural rock pools.

### Elim Beach - Coloured Sands Walk

**Difficulty Level:** Easy

**Distance:** 600 metre (return)

**Duration:** 30 minutes (return)

**Access:** Self Guided and Guided

**Facilities:** Campground with amenities

**Contact Information:** Eddie Deemal Ph: (07) 4060 9223

**Walk Description:** A scenic beach walk to the mesmerising sandstone cliffs known as Coloured Sands. A path up the cliff leads to stunning views to Cape Bedford. You'll enjoy spectacular sunrises and sunsets on this walk. There are also more beach walks at low tide towards Cape Bedford.

## Hope Vale, Clark & Endeavour Valley

### Endeavour River Escape

**Difficulty Level:** Easy to Moderate

**Distance:** Walk 1 - The right branch of the Endeavour River, 1 km return or Walk 2 - Cameron Creek, 3 km return

**Duration:** Walk 1 - 30 minute return / Walk 2 - 1 hour return

**Access:** Self Guided (detailed guide notes provided)

**Facilities:** Bush camping, modern camp kitchen, toilets, showers.

**Contact Information:** Leanne Rayner Ph: (07) 4069 5084

**Walk Description:** If you enjoy butterflies, birds and native wildlife the rainforest walks along the Endeavour River or Cameron Creek will delight you. The very rare Cooktown Palm also flourishes on the property along with grass trees, fan palms and rainforest plants.

## Lakeland & Lawa

### Split Rock - Rock Art Galleries

**Difficulty Level:** Moderate

**Distance:** 4 kilometres

**Duration:** 2 hour circuit

**Access:** Self Guided or Guided

**Facilities:** Boardwalks, interpretive information, toilet and car park.

**Contact Information:** Quinkan & Regional Cultural Centre Ph: (07) 4060 3457

**Walk Description:** These galleries are listed by UNESCO as being among the top 10 rock art sites in the world. A circuit walk leads you through a landscape of eucalypt and sandstone escarpments to outcrops that shelter numerous rock paintings.

### Jowalbinna Rock Art Walks

**Difficulty Level:** Moderate

**Distance:** Varies

**Duration:** Half day or 3 hour tours available

**Access:** Guided

**Facilities:** Camping

**Contact Information:** Steve Trezize, Ph: (07) 4060 3236

**Walk Description:** This walk offers safe swimming in the creek, Quinkan rock art and spectacular sandstone escarpments. Access is by 4WD only. Contact trail management for further details.



**Nature's Powerhouse Accredited Visitor Information Centre**  
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**FREE CALL 1800 174 895**

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Home Rule Falls photo courtesy Mark Roy

[www.cooktownandcapeyork.com](http://www.cooktownandcapeyork.com)

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## Leave Only Footprints...

Cook Shire offers a variety of options for bush walks in diverse environments from the rainforest to the beach, mountain tops to the savannah. There are walks from short strolls to advanced hikes so choose a trail to suit your fitness levels and enjoy our beautiful natural environment on foot.

Ask the friendly staff at Nature's Powerhouse VIC for maps and information on walking trails in the region or buy Tropical Walking Trails of North Queensland published by Footloose Publications.

### REMEMBER! THINK SAFETY

Be aware and prepared - take a hat, water, insect repellent, wear sturdy walking shoes, and walk only to your level of fitness.



Alkoomie Station



Nyungkal Ranger