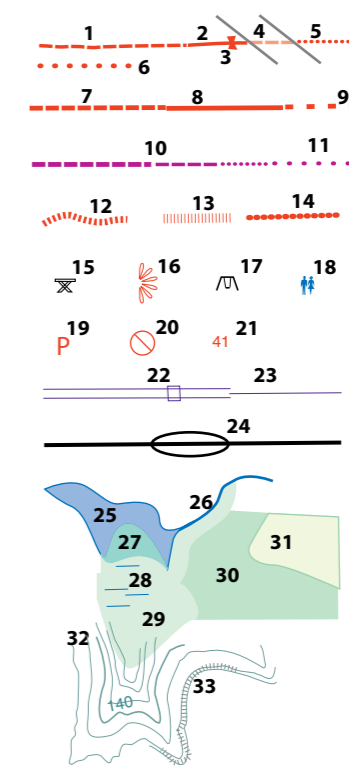
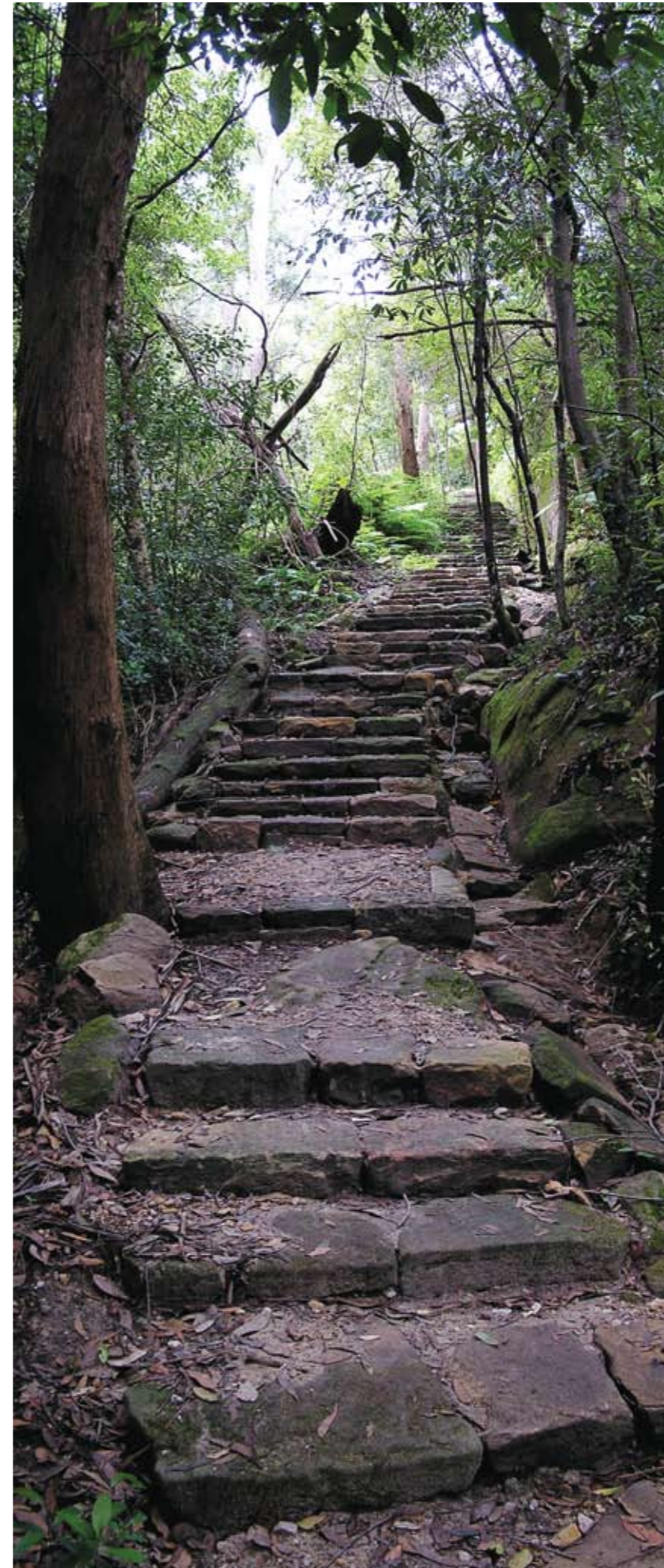


Bushland reserves and localities

- 1. The Glade and William Lewis Park p98**
Small but valuable remnants of Blue Gum High Forest
- 2. Granny Springs Reserve p99**
Valuable Blue Gum High Forest remnant in the commercial heart of Turramurra
- 3. Sheldon Forest and Rofe Park p100**
Blue Gum High Forest, forest of shale/sandstone transition, sandstone gully rainforest; fungi, terrestrial orchids and a beautiful waterfall
- 4. Twin Creeks Reserve and Browns Field p106**
Small volcanic diatreme with subtropical rainforest, diverse sandstone ridgetop and valley flora
- 5. Fox Valley p110**
Diverse sandstone ridgetop flora, sheltered Lane Cove River valley with tall forest
- 6. Lorna Pass p114**
Blackbutt forest and forest of the shale/sandstone transition, gully rainforest, ridgetop heath and woodland
- 7. Beecroft Reserve and neighbouring reserves p119**
Tall, open Blackbutt forest makes this a serenely beautiful area despite motorway encroachment
- 8. Pennant Hills Park and Devlins Creek p124**
Coachwood forests and pools of Devlins Creek contrast with diverse sandstone ridgetop flora
- 9. North Epping Oval p130**
Small but diverse reserve featuring forest on the shale/sandstone transition
- 10. STEP Track p132**
Track circuit through sandstone bushland, a hanging swamp and wet sclerophyll forest along the Lane Cove River
- 11. Auluba Reserve p136**
Florally-rich Blackbutt forest on an outlier of Mittagong Formation
- 12. Upper Terrys Creek p138**
Shale sandstone transition and Blue Gum High Forest in the upper reaches of this tributary
- 13. Macquarie University area p142**
Isolated but important remnants of forest on Ashfield Shale and the shale/sandstone transition
- 14. Shrimptons Creek p144**
Tall forest remnants along shallow valley with popular walking and cycling trail
- 15. Browns Waterhole p146**
Sandstone valley system with Sydney Blue Gum forest on alluvium, and florally diverse moist heathland
- 16. Bicentennial Park p150**
Forests in the shale/sandstone transition zone; geologically-interesting old quarry face
- 17. De Burghs Bridge p151**
Unusual floral assemblages on sandstone intruded by dolerite; gorge of Lane Cove River
- 18. Blackbutt Reserve p156**
Sandstone valley with Blackbutt forest and sandstone gully rainforest; small hanging swamps
- 19. De Burghs Bridge to Fullers Bridge p159**
Serene riverscapes with aquatic flora and fauna; diverse sandstone forest and woodland floras
- 20. Sir Phillip Game Reserve p168**
Scenically varied sandstone bushland with river flat forest
- 21. Blue Gum Park p170**
Quiet, secluded rainforest valley close to busy suburb and commercial district
- 22. Mowbray Park and Fairyland p172**
Sheltered sandstone and alluvial bushland and forest bordering serene mangrove lined river; historic Fairyland Pleasure Grounds
- 23. Ferndale Park p176**
Sheltered sandstone valleys with beautiful gully rainforest; close to Chatswood centre
- 24. Wallumatta Nature Reserve and Field of Mars Reserve p180**
Extensive bushland from the shale/sandstone transition to mangroves and salt marsh
- 25. Sugarloaf Hill to Magdala Park p184**
Easily accessible mangrove and salt marsh system, river views and quiet sandstone bushland, good birdwatching
- 26. Blackman Park to Stringybark Creek p188**
Mangroves, and extensive, grassy and reedy salt marsh
- 27. Upper Stringybark Creek p190**
Secluded sandstone valley nestling among medium density suburbs
- 28. Buffalo Creek Reserve to Boronia Park p193**
Biologically rich mangroves and sheltered sandstone bushland
- 29. Tennyson Park p198**
Sheltered sandstone valley with rainforest and tall eucalypt forest
- 30. Tambourine Bay Reserve to Warraroon Reserve p200**
Strikingly beautiful conjunction of sandstone bushland and quiet bay with mangroves
- 31. Lane Cove Bushland Park and Gore Creek Reserve p204**
Closest real rainforest to Sydney CBD, sheltered and florally-rich sandstone valley noted for its endangered fungal community
- 32. Shell Park to Greenwich Point p208**
Confluence of Lane Cove and Parramatta Rivers meet; waterside reserves with sweeping views



Legend

- 1. Regular walking track, well used and in good condition at the time of compilation
- 2. Regular walking track with sealed surface, cycleway
- 3. Gate or barrier
- 4. Track passes beneath road bridge or overpass
- 5. Track in poor condition, eroded, overgrown, excessively steep and slippery, narrow or petering out
- 6. Route follows road or grassed area
- 7. Wide track, service trail or firetrail
- 8. Sealed trail, cycleway
- 9. Track closed or abandoned
- 10. Great North Walk
- 11. Great North Walk follows road or grassed area
- 12. Steps
- 13. Boardwalk, low-level footbridge
- 14. Historic road
- 15. Picnic spot
- 16. Scenic spot or viewpoint
- 17. Playground
- 18. Toilets (no guarantee they are open)
- 19. Off-road parking
- 20. No access at trackhead
- 21. House number next to trackhead
- 22. Main powerline with pylon
- 23. Local powerline
- 24. Railway station
- 25. Pool, dam broadwater, inlet, tidal reach
- 26. Watercourse, creek, stream
- 27. Mangroves and salt marsh
- 28. Freshwater swamp
- 29. Bushland other than national park
- 30. National park bushland
- 31. Grassed or parkland areas, ovals, sports fields
- 32. Contour intervals: minor – 4 m, major – 20 m
- 33. Cliff or rocky dropoff

ADVICE AND DISCLAIMER

The condition of tracks may change with time and their representation on these maps is not a guarantee of access or safety. STEP accepts no responsibility for injury and inconvenience arising from information contained in the maps, or the omission of information therein.

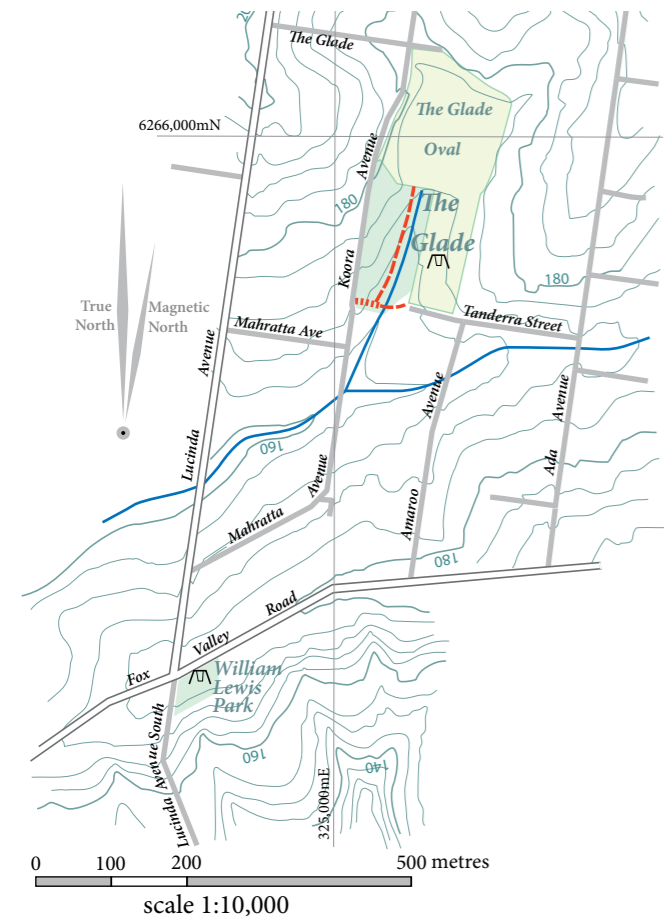
Local advice should be sought before swimming. All freshwater pools should be regarded as polluted and unsafe.

The depiction of bushland areas on this map is not a guarantee of access or right of way; please stay on the tracks. Taking short cuts can damage native vegetation, spread weeds and lead to erosion.

Trails, tracks, steps, boardwalks and bridges

Top left: Bushland reserves host an extensive network of service trails.
Above right: Lovers of nature and quiet bushland prefer narrow, leafy tracks like this one.
Bottom left: Boardwalks and bridges protect sensitive wetlands from erosion and trampling and keep tracks open during floods and king tides.
Below: The weir roadway crossing near Fullers Bridge is “multi-use”, by walkers, picnickers, cyclists, service vehicles and wildlife.
Opposite: Sandstone was always in abundant supply for construction of steps along walking tracks and many were built by conscripted labour during the Great Depression. Nowadays, the range of materials used extends to concrete, wood and steel, though modern sandstone steps built by skilled stonemasons are a charming feature of several walking tracks.





These two pages feature examples of small bushland reserves that preserve forests on Ashfield Shale soils around the upper reaches of the Lane Cove catchment. The soils support Sydney Blue Gum and Grey Ironbark trees and other species that do not thrive on thin sandstone soils. The most important plant community of the undulating shale landscape was Blue Gum High Forest but that is now preserved in just a few isolated enclaves.

1. The Glade and William Lewis Park

The Glade borders Koora Ave in Wahroonga. It is around 2 ha in area and is now fenced off. It is entirely tall forest, the principal trees being Blackbutt (*Eucalyptus pilularis*) and Sydney Blue Gum (*E. saligna*). In addition there are Smooth and Rough-barked Apples (*Angophora costata* towards the lower ground and *A. floribunda* towards the north). There are small Forest Oaks and Black Sheoaks (*Allocasuarina torulosa* and *A. littoralis*), some small Turpentines (*Syncarpia glomulifera*) and a lone Red Mahogany (*E. resinifera*).

There are several understorey trees and shrubs, the principal and most conspicuous being Celery Wood (*Polyscias elegans*) with its clean trunk and dark-green, umbrella-like canopy. There are several species of wattles, though one or two may be interlopers since they occur on the forest margins. They include *Acacia parramattensis*, Hickory (*A. implexa*), *A. fimbriata* and *A. longissima* (the latter certainly native to the area). There are small specimens of Hairy Clerodendrum



The forest of The Glade is rich in tree species. The two tall trunks in the left background are Blackbutts. There is a gleaming white Sydney Blue Gum towards the right. Celery Woods grow in front of the Blackbutts while the tree on the right is a Rough-barked Apple. The ground flora is a rich mix of native ferns and native and exotic herbs, shrubs, twiners and creepers. This area is now fenced off, and dramatically changed by an ongoing bush restoration program. Hopefully the ground flora will recover its former diversity.

(*Clerodendrum tomentosum*) and Blueberry Ash (*Elaeocarpus reticulatus*).

An extensive bushcare programme is current, but previously the forest floor was covered with vines and creepers. Most were native, such as Water Vine (*Cissus antarctica*), Native Grape (*Cayratia clematidea*), Wonga Wonga Vine (*Pandorea pandorana*), Wombat Berry (*Eustrephus latifolius*), *Tylophora barbata* and Old-man's Beard (*Clematis aristata*). Silkpod Vine (*Parsonia straminea*) had climbed almost to the top of one tall Blackbutt.

Other areas of forest floor were open and ferny, covered with False Bracken (*Calochlaena dubia*), Gristle Fern (*Blechnum cartilagineum*) and *Hypolepis muelleri*.

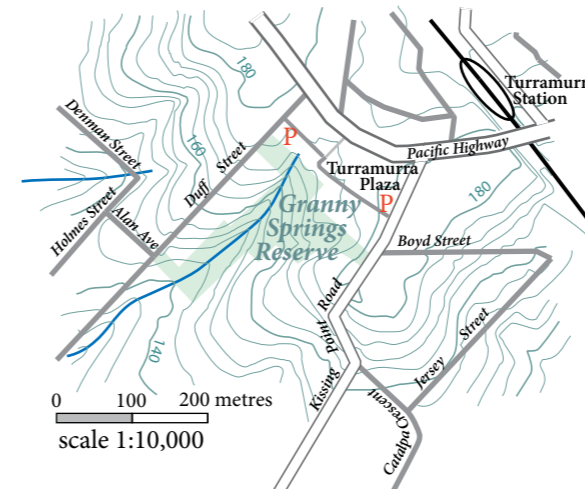
William Lewis Park

William Lewis Park sits on the corner of Fox Valley Rd and Lucinda Ave South. Its shale-based soil is of the Glenorie soil landscape, and stony and lateritic. There is a small stand of Sydney Blue Gums but the principal tree is Grey Ironbark (*Eucalyptus paniculata*) and there are one or two particularly fine specimens (p21). The other rough-barked tree species in the reserve is Rough-barked Apple (*A. floribunda*).

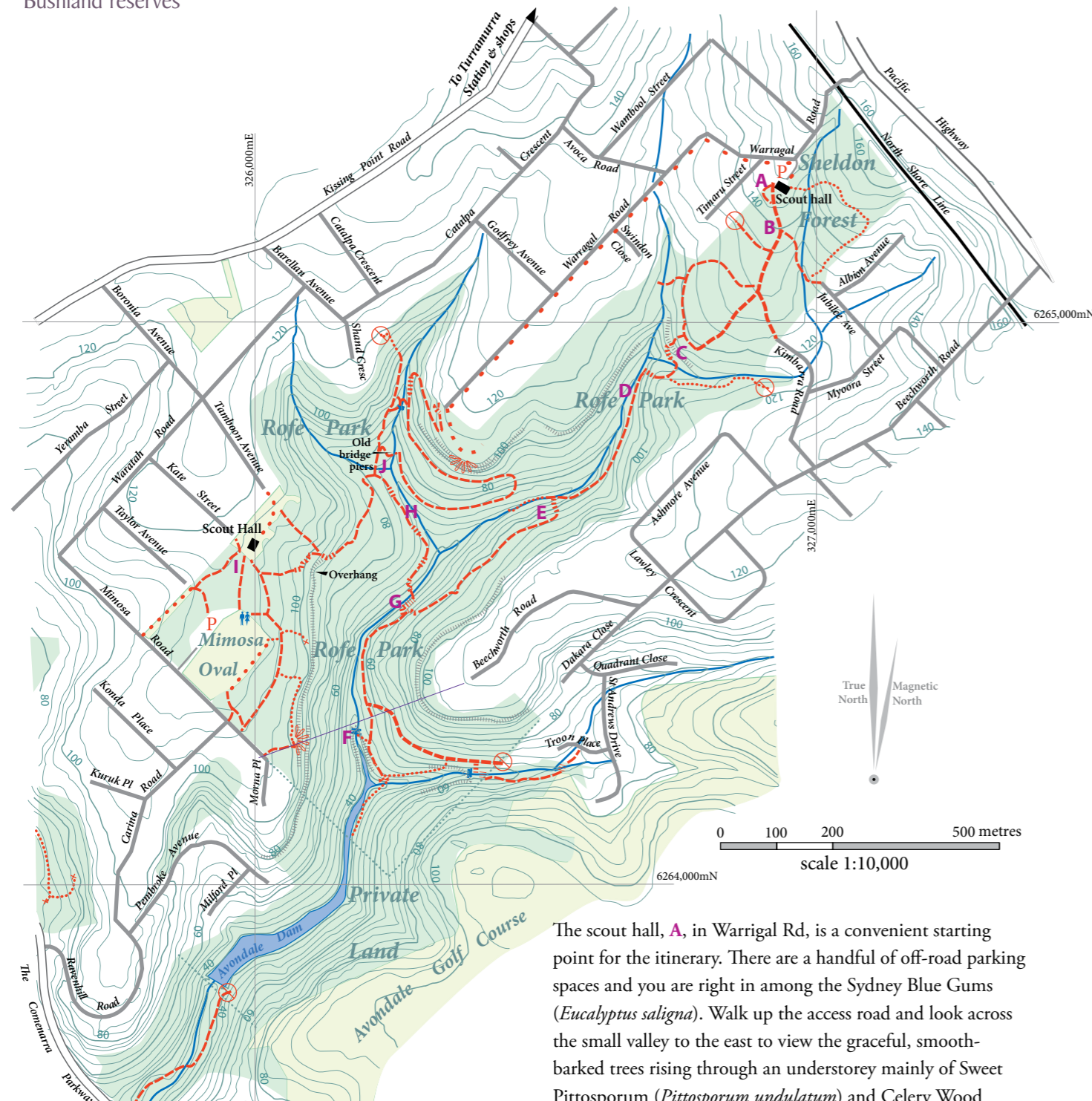
2. Granny Springs Reserve

Granny Springs Reserve is directly behind Turrumurra Plaza shopping centre. Although small it contains some of the largest Sydney Blue Gums in the district. Its value is considerable because it is visible to thousands of shoppers, many of whom would not normally go anywhere near bushland, let alone Blue Gum High Forest. Because of the steep terrain, deep soils, location and looming development pressures it is a highly vulnerable site.

The main tree species are Sydney Blue Gum and Blackbutt. Grey Ironbark also occurs, but most of the other trees are of the understorey. These include *Pittosporum* spp., Celery Wood, Lillypilly (*Syzygium smithii*) and Native Quince (*Alectryon subcinerus*). All are native to the Sydney area though the last one probably not to local bushland. Volunteer bushcare is gradually improving the floral balance of the forest, parts of which are now relatively weed free, but large areas remain infested.



A mighty Sydney Blue Gum specimen in Granny Springs Reserve.



3. Sheldon Forest and Rofe Park

Sheldon Forest is the most important remnant of the endangered Blue Gum High Forest plant community in the Lane Cove catchment. Southwards where the Ashfield Shale bedrock is replaced by Mittagong Formation and then Hawkesbury Sandstone, Sydney Blue Gums merge into Blackbutt forest, and then into sandstone gully rainforest with a dense canopy formed by Coachwoods. The damp forest and gully floors are exceptionally rich in fungi species. Waterfalls also provide a haven for ferns. The ridgetop woodland around Mimosa Oval features specimens of Narrow-leaved Stringybark.

The scout hall, **A**, in Warrigal Rd, is a convenient starting point for the itinerary. There are a handful of off-road parking spaces and you are right in among the Sydney Blue Gums (*Eucalyptus saligna*). Walk up the access road and look across the small valley to the east to view the graceful, smooth-barked trees rising through an understorey mainly of Sweet Pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*) and Celery Wood (*Polyscias elegans*). There are a few large Blackbutts (*E. pilularis*) an occasional Grey Ironbark (*E. paniculata*).

Walk to the right of the scout hall and follow the trail a short distance to the junction, **B**. The Sydney Blue Gums have diminished and the dominant tree is now Blackbutt. There are single specimens of White Stringybark (*E. globoidea*), Red Mahogany (*E. resinifera*) and Rough-barked Apple (*Angophora floribunda*). Larger shrubs include Narrow-leaved Wattle (*Acacia longissima*) and Large Mock Olive (*Notelaea longifolia*). There are Blackthorn shrubs (*Bursaria spinosa*), Prickly Beard Heath (*Leucopogon juniperinus*) and Native Raspberry (*Rubus parvifolius*), typical of heavier-type soils. *Maytenus silvestris* and Native Indigo (*Indigofera australis*) also grow here.

There is a wealth of climbing, twining and trailing plants.

There include Wombat Berry (*Eustrephus latifolius*), Happy Wanderer (*Hardenbergia violacea*), Wonga Wonga Vine (*Pandorea pandorana*) and Old Man's Beard (*Clematis aristata*). Two tick trefoil species (*Desmodium rhytidophyllum* and *D. varians*) also grow here: they also favour heavier soils. There are patches of Common Silkpod (*Parsonia straminea*) and Bearded Tylophora (*Tylophora barbata*). The groundcover, Kidney Weed (*Dichondra repens*) is widespread.

Explore the forest floor along the various trails here. There are numerous small herbs. Blue trumpet (*Brunoniella* sp.) flowers in summer, as does Pastel Flower (*Pseuderanthemum variable*). Several species of daisies have been recorded including the everlastings *Xerochrysum bracteatum* and *Coronidium scorpioides*, and mauve *Brachyscome angustifolium*. Spotted Hyacinth Orchid (*Dipodium variegatum*) is a particularly conspicuous summer flower.

Follow the main broad trail down towards **C** on top of a sandstone bluff. You have left the deep soils of the Blue Gum forest behind, and the ground here is of the Lucas Heights soil landscape over Mittagong Formation. Blackbutts dominate and Turpentines (*Syncarpia glomulifera*) have become common and the understorey has thickened. Among the pittosporums and other shrubs and small trees you may see the occasional Tree Heath (*Trochocarpa laurina*), the largest member of the heath family (Ericaceae-Styphelioideae) in the Sydney region, and attractive when sporting its colourful new growth.

Down into the rainforest

The view from the sandstone bluff is of a valley filled with forest. There are tall Blackbutts and Smooth-barked Apples and a sense of thicker, darker vegetation deeper down. After the main trail swings to the right, take the track to the left down a succession of sandstone steps to a small side valley. A few specimens of *Correa reflexa* grow near the track. Cross the creek (often dry) and follow the track around to the right and down the metal steps. Turn left and head down the valley. You are now at **D**, and it is best that you do this section in the middle of a sunny day because light levels are low in the dense forest of small Coachwoods (*Ceratopetalum apetalum*), Sweet Pittosporums and Black Wattles (*Callicoma serratifolia*). This is one of the best examples of sandstone gully rainforest in the catchment. It supports a diversity of fungi species among the leaf litter in autumn and early winter. Commonest are *Dermocybe austroveneta* and *Austropaxillus infundibuliformis*. The latter is conspicuous but the former less so because its pale greenish-brown coloration blends in with the leaf litter. With sharp eyes you may see the beautiful, deep purple *Cortinari archeri* (p105). But this is just a start. In a wet autumn and winter you may see different fungi species every time you visit.

At **E**, by a pool in the creek, the track climbs steeply to the left through a thicket of Grass Trees (*Xanthorrhoea arborea*) and you will enter a tall, open forest of Blackbutts,

small Turpentines, Sydney Peppermints (*Eucalyptus piperita*), Smooth-barked Apples and Black Sheoaks (*Allocasuarina littoralis*). Common small trees and large shrubs include Old Man Banksia (*Banksia serrata*), Christmas Bush (*Ceratopetalum gummiferum*), Blueberry Ash (*Elaeocarpus reticulatus*), *Pultenaea flexilis* and geebung (*Persoonia* spp.). Down-slope the valley supports tall Blackbutts and Smooth-barked Apples, plus Forest Oaks (*Allocasuarina torulosa*).

Waterfalls, ferns and potholes

The track descends through rocks to a level stretch next to the creek. Follow it past the branch track to Troon Place. At **F** the creek disappears over a waterfall about 7 m high (p102). You can reach the base via a slippery scramble. Here is "fern heaven". On the wet rocks grow *Blechnum ambiguum*, *Christella dentata*, Rough Maidenhair (*Adiantum hispidulum*), small Rasp Fern (*Doodia caudata* var. *caudata*) plus the primitive Fork Ferns *Psilotum nudum* and *Tmesipteris truncata*, (p102) the best specimens of the latter hanging from a low ledge to the left. King ferns (*Todea barbara*) grow on higher ledges. The splash pool used to be deep and rocky but is now silted up. The falls are fringed by a stand of Grey Myrtle (*Bachhousia myrtifolia*), with Coachwood and Water Gum (*Tristaniopsis laurina*).

Follow the creek upstream from **G**, crossing after a short distance. Turn right to follow the west bank. The track curves to the left and follows a side valley. At **H** the water disappears into a solution pothole and under a small natural bridge. Such karst-like features are common in sandstone drainages.

Stringybarks, rare shrubs and orchids

Follow the track around to the left and climb the hill to the scout hall at **I**. The commonest trees in the sandstone woodland here are ageing and rather moribund Narrow-leaved Stringybarks (*Eucalyptus sparsifolia*, p103). Lack of fire has meant they have produced hardly any seedlings. They are accompanied by Red Bloodwoods, Smooth-barked Apples and Broad-leaved Scribbly Gums (*Eucalyptus haemastoma*). The rare shrub *Melaleuca deanei*, listed as vulnerable, used to grow near one of the tracks but can no longer be found there. Specimens of Gosford Wattle (*Acacia prominens*), rare in the metropolitan area, also grow near the scout hall along with the more common Fringed Wattle (*Acacia fimbriata*). These are showy plants when in flower and may be garden escapes. *Acacia echinula*, rare in the catchment, also grows in the nearby bushland.

Return to the valley bottom at **J** for the return walk. Take some time to explore the beautiful bushland in this corner of Rofe Park. If you are timely and sharp-eyed you may spot a colony of the bizarre Fringed Helmet orchids (*Corybas fimbriata*, p105), rare in the Lane Cove Valley. You can retrace your route, or shortcut back via Warrigal Rd.



Above: Tick Trefoil (*Desmodium rhytidophyllum*) is a common trailing plant in Sheldon Forest. The knobby seed pods with tacky, clinging surfaces distinguish it from similar-foliaged Kennedia. Bottom inset – flowers; top inset – flower and pods of closely related *D. varians* which grows in the same sites.

Left: Sydney Blue Gums (*Eucalyptus saligna*) tower above Sweet Pittosporum (*P. undulatum*) and Celery Wood (*Polyscias elegans*) in Sheldon Forest.

Below: The waterfall upstream of Avondale Dam at map point F, on a wet day.



SHELDON FOREST AND ROFE PARK

Above: Old Man's Beard (*Clematis aristata*) scrambles across a clump of Native Indigo (*Indigofera australis*). Both species grow in the Blue Gum High Forest, and the Blackbutt forest that grows on the shale/sandstone transition in the lower part of Sheldon Forest.

Below: Fork Fern (*Tmesipteris truncata*), a primitive, fern-like epiphyte, hangs from a ledge to the left of the waterfall. It lacks a proper root system and lives rather like seaweed, attached to rocks in damp crevices and under ledges.

Below: Narrow-leaved Stringybarks (*Eucalyptus sparsifolia*) are common in the woodland south-west of the scout hall (I) at Kate St. Narrow juvenile leaves discriminate the tree from Common Sandstone Stringybark (*E. oblonga*) which is widespread in Ku-ring-gai Chase.





White Fingers (*Caladenia catenata*)



Superb Greenhoods (*Pterostylis grandiflora*)



Nodding Greenhood (*Pterostylis nutans*)



Pixie Caps (*Acianthus fornicatus*)



Cradle Orchid (*Corybas aconitiflorus*)



Fringed Helmet Orchid (*Corybas fimbriata*)

SOME STRANGE AND BEAUTIFUL ORCHIDS FROM SHELDON FOREST AND ROFE PARK

COLOURFUL FUNGI OF SHELDON FOREST AND ROFE PARK

Coral Fungus (*Ramaria formosa*)



Russula mariae

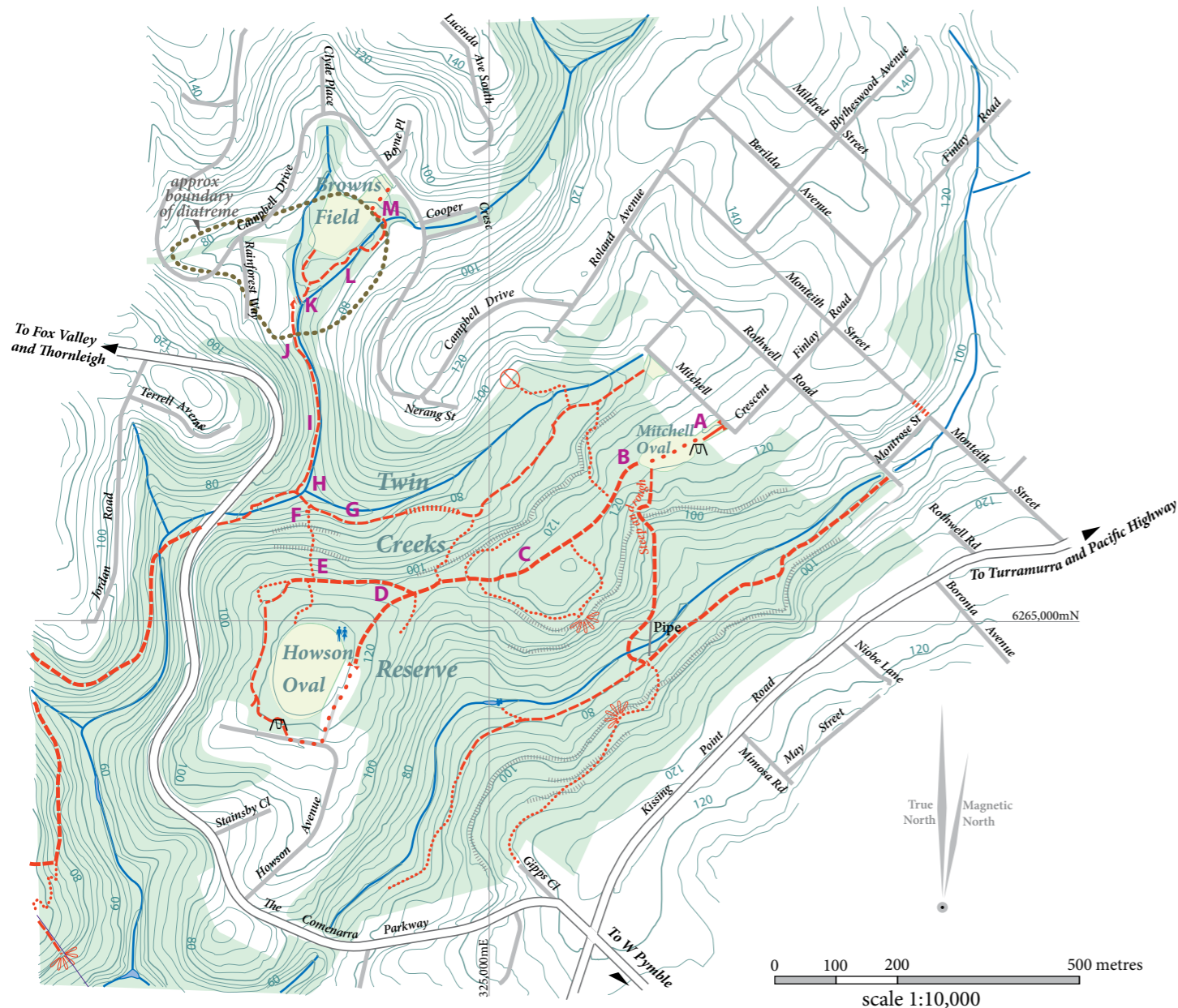


Cortinarius archeri



Cortinarius rotundisporus





4. Twin Creeks Reserve and Browns Field

Twin Creeks Reserve is about 40 hectares in area. It is formed from two small sandstone valleys that eventually join to flow into the Lane Cove River in South Turramurra. Browns Field lies in a third valley, which is much more open because erosion of a subcircular enclave of volcanic diatreme rocks, known as the Fox Valley diatreme, has created a flat floor. The combined reserves contain a wonderful variety of plants and scenery for such a small bushland area. Of special interest are the remnant rainforest flora in the fertile soil of the volcanic diatreme at Browns Field and the creek downstream, and the rich sandstone ridgetop flora, including eucalypts uncommon in the catchment, like Silvertop Ash and Whipstick Ash. Both these communities are threatened by weeds, fire and urban proximity, however they feature active bushcare sites.

Twin Creeks Reserve is best reached via the small Mitchell Oval, **A**, next to the wide turning circle in the bend of Mitchell Crescent. Walk in past the childrens playground and have a look at the excellent volunteer bush regeneration work around the south fringes of the oval. But notice also the trees further into the bush that are affected by dieback.

Diverse sandstone ridgetop woodland

From Mitchell Oval take the broad firetrail, **B**, to the south-west through sandstone ridgetop woodland. In addition to the common eucalypts, Scribbly Gum (*Eucalyptus haemastoma*), Smooth-barked Apple (*Angophora costata*) and Red Bloodwood (*Corymbia gummifera*) there are numerous Silvertop Ash (*E. sieberi*), plus Whipstick Ash (*E. multicaulis*) growing to the right of the track at **C**. Both are rare in the Lane Cove Valley though less rare elsewhere. A stand of Hickory (*Acacia implexa*) grows by the track near **C**.

Along the firetrail there is a rich shrubby flora, especially Tick Bush (*Kunzea ambigua*), Flaky-barked Tea Tree (*Leptospermum trinervium*), Dwarf Apple (*Angophora hispida*), Mountain Devil (*Lambertia formosa*), *Grevillea buxifolia* and *G. speciosa*. There are geebung (*Persoonia pinifolia*, *P. levis* and *P. lanceolata*), Old Man Banksias (*Banksia serrata*), Banksia species (*B. spinulosa*, *B. marginata* and *B. oblongifolia*), hakeas (*H. laevipes*, *H. gibbosa* and *H. sericea*). Shrubby plants of the daisy family *Cassinia aculeata* and *C. denticulata* also grow here. Then there are the attractive flowering shrubs *Woollisia pungens*, *Epacris pulchella*, *Boronia pinnata*, *B. ledifolia*, *Acacia echinula* and *Pultenaea tuberculata*. Dotted Sun Orchids (*Thelymitra ixiooides* var. *ixiooides*), Red Beard Orchids (*Calochilus paludosus*) and purple flags (*Patersonia sericea* and *P. glabrata*) flower here in spring or early summer. Approaching **D** through a small glade with Blackbutts (*Eucalyptus pilularis*) you may see Eastern Yellow Robins.

Descent to tall forest

At **D** take a well-defined trail to the right towards a small abandoned sandstone quarry. Just before the quarry, a narrow, rough track **E** descends northwards into a deep valley. It's a bit of a scramble but worth it for the contrasts in vegetation. Near the bottom you will enter a dense forest of juvenile Turpentines (*Syncarpia glomulifera*) at **F**, then join a main trail which follows the alignment of the valley. This valley **G**, with tall Blackbutts, is quiet and beautiful and worth a detour.

In the valley the vegetation changes abruptly to include wet sclerophyll and rainforest species. There are Coachwoods (*Ceratopetalum apetalum*), Cheese Trees (*Glochidion ferdinandi*) and Scentsless Rosewood (*Synoum glandulosum*). Several climbers grow here, including Five-leaf Water Vine (*Cissus hypoglauca*), Morinda (*Morinda jasminoides*), Wonga Wonga Vine (*Pandorea pandorana*) and Old Man's Beard (*Clematis aristata*).

Rainforest gully

To the left at **H**, another, larger creek joins from the north. The stream leads down from the Fox Valley diatreme and rainforest species dominate the valley floor flanked by some large specimens of Turpentine, Blackbutt and Smooth-barked Apple. One particularly hefty Turpentine (p108), more than 4 m in circumference, is one of the largest native trees in the Lane Cove catchment. Powerful Owls (*Ninox strenua*) roost regularly in the dark canopy of this area (p109).

Follow the track on the west bank to the right, towards **I**. Here are Grey Myrtle (*Backhousia myrtifolia*), Lillypilly (*Syzygium smithii*), Coachwood and Sassafras (*Doryphora Sassafras*). Shrubs include Wilkiea (*Wilkiea huegeliana*) and the short-lived Native Hydrangea (*Abrophyllum ornans*), though these have not been seen here recently. Also here are Tree Heath (*Trochocarpa laurina*), Brush Muttonwood (*Myrsine*

howittiana) and Sandpaper Fig (*Ficus coronata*). Large specimens of Frosty Wattle (*Acacia schinoides*) grow along the creek bank. These short-lived trees often become moribund.

There are thickets of tangled vines including Lawyer Vine (*Smilax australis*), Pearl Vine (*Sarcopetalum harveyanum*), Snake Vine (*Stephania japonica*), Morinda and Water Vine (*Cissus antarctica*). Ferns include tree ferns (*Cyathea cooperi* and *C. australis*), Gristle Fern (*Blechnum cartilagineum*) and Bat's Wing Fern (*Histiopteris incisa*). False Bracken (*Calochlaena dubia*) is very common across the lower hillslopes, but Giant Maidenhair Fern (*Adiantum formosum*) and Shield Fern (*Polystichum australiense*) can no longer be found and may have died out, smothered by a mass of Lantana and Small-leaved Privet. Fortunately Christella (*Christella dentata*), Strap Water Fern (*Blechnum patersonii*) and Fishbone Water Fern (*B. nudum*) still grow on the creek banks. Pools used to harbour numerous Cox's Gudgeon (*Gobiomorphus coxii*), but no fish of any kind have been seen in recent times.

At **J** the route is heavily infested with Lantana and other weeds. The valley broadens suddenly as you cross the geological contact between the Hawkesbury Sandstone and the Fox Valley diatreme. Note some interesting "exotic native" trees in the mown, grassy area. River Oaks (*Casuarina cunninghamiana*) tower to 20 m. They are native to larger rivers like the Hawkesbury-Nepean and inland watercourses.

Browns Field

Cross the wooden footbridge at **K**, and follow the track towards the Browns Field Oval. After a short distance it intersects the Browns Field Walking Track. You are surrounded by a rainforest community and it is hard at first to pick the tree species. As well as the broad-leaved plants seen downstream you will pass Jackwood (*Cryptocarya glaucescens*), a medium-sized tree on the right near the creek crossing at **L**. Smaller trees and shrubs near the track include Celery Wood (*Polyscias elegans*), Koda (*Ehretia acuminata*) and Guioa (*Guioa semiglauca*). Downstream is an extremely tall Cabbage Tree Palm (*Livistona australis*). Also just downstream is a small bank of claystone or shale; not itself volcanic, but a mass of country rock that was blown up or had slumped into the volcanic vent. It is mantled by Fragrant Fern (*Microsorium scandens*).

The main tree species growing on the creek banks are Sassafras, Lillypilly and Sandpaper Fig. Past the crossing you will enter a miniature forest of juvenile Sassafras (*Doryphora sassafras*). Near the track there is a bank of the moss *Dawsonia polytrichoides* looking like a tiny pine forest. Emerging into the bright light you pass through tangled banks of water vines (p36) before re-crossing the stream on a sandstone ledge at the north-east edge of the diatreme at **M**. Suggest that you retrace your steps through the bush rather than returning by road. You may spot species you missed first time through.



Above: A large Silvertop Ash (*Eucalyptus sieberi*), a common tree along the ridgetop trail.

TWIN CREEKS RESERVE AND BROWNS FIELD

Below: Hickory (*Acacia implexa*) grows in isolated stands in different parts of Twin Creeks Reserve, especially along the ridgetop trail, but in few sites elsewhere in the catchment. It resembles Blackwood (*A. melanoxylon*) of furniture fame.



Above: One of the largest trees in the Lane Cove catchment, this hefty Turpentine (*Syncarpia glomulifera*), more than 4 m in circumference at chest height, grows a short distance upslope from the stream that flows down from Browns Field.

Below: *Clavicornia pyxidata* is one of the many bizarre or colourful fungi fruiting bodies that burst through the leaf litter in wet autumn-winter weather in the valley bottoms of Twin Creeks Reserve.



Above: Powerful Owls (*Ninox strenua*) inhabit the valleys of Twin Creeks and Browns Field. This one is clutching its breakfast: a Ringtail Possum.

Right: A tall, twin-trunk specimen of Sassafras (*Doryphora Sassafras*), a common tree at Browns Field but not found elsewhere in the catchment.

Below: Hedgehog Wattle (*Acacia echinula*) is a prickly but showy small wattle, found in a few places in the Lane Cove Valley, including Twin Creeks Reserve and Rofo Park, but is nowhere common.

