

Pool of Siloam & Lyrebirds Dell Loop

Location: Start at Gordon Falls Reserve, on Lone Pine Ave in Leura. The main part of the reserve has a large open grassy area and some play equipment. This walk starts at the lower end of this reserve, where a sign indicates the start of the track.

Duration: 1.5 hours

Grade: Moderate

Features: waterfalls, creek, beach, caves,

Trip Notes:

Not only does this walk have two beautiful waterfalls, but also two fascinating caves. These caves were once occupied by the Aboriginal people of the area and are one of the two known major occupation sites in the Upper Blue Mountains. The caves lie close to Lyrebirds Dell but our walk begins by first heading to the unusually named Pool of Siloam. Siloam means "sent" in Hebrew and this pool is named after the Pool of Siloam mentioned in the Bible where Jesus sent a blind man to wash in the pool and he came back with his eyesight restored (John 9).

As we trudged along the trail, we were curious to see what this pool looked like. Initially the track gently descends, and is lined with many Banksia trees, but soon gets steeper. Going down well made flights of steps, we are soon surrounded by ferns and mossy trees, the gentle breeze swirling with the refreshing smell of the bush.

We can hear the soothing sound of water, and descending more flights of steps, the stringy bark of the eucalyptus at our feet, our surroundings become more rainforest-like. Another flight of stairs takes us to a rock wall and as we head around the corner a picturesque scene is in front of us - the path weaves and hugs the wall, with ferns and sprays of water glistening above. A pretty set of stepping stones takes us across a damp section where water is travelling down a long vine, and thick moss is flourishing. We catch a glimpse of the pool from here but walk a few more soggy steps down to an intersection where a short detour leads us down to the lovely Pool of Siloam. Here a beautiful waterfall cascades down the dark rock face and coachwood trees and ferns dot the scene. An impressive section of orange layers of rock stands near, creating a cavernous area where the water tumbles and forms a pool at the base. A boardwalk forming a bridge across the creek gives us nice views of the Pool. (Crossing the boardwalk and going up the other side takes on another walk, one which we will not do today).

Retracing our steps back to the intersection we now follow the sign to Lyrebirds Dell. The creek cascades on our right as we go up a small set of steep steps, and then the track flattens out as it follows above the creek. As we walk along we catch glimpses of the pretty creek, in some places surrounded by large king ferns. A little bridge over a watercourse takes us up a pretty set of mossy stone steps and soon we cross the creek on a metal bridge. An arrow points the way as we now head up some steps and walk through a stand of Blue Mountains Ash, their stringy bark strewn across the trail.

Now the creek is below on our left and we slowly ascend through a hanging swamp to get to a large overhang – our first cave. It is cool and quiet in here, the lower part of the wall sprouting with tiny bright green ferns and the distinctive moon crater roof arousing our curiosity and inducing us to stay a while. We can see that this would have been a special place for the Indigenous people.

Continuing along the track now with slightly uneven steps, we pass another mini shelter before going up some steps carved in rock and around an unusual eroded rock form. We can now hear the sound of a waterfall, telling us that Lyrebirds Dell wasn't far away.

Soon we arrive at an enormous cave. This cave at Lyrebirds Dell provides a wonderful shelter, surrounded by a lovely old rock wall and containing 2 picnic tables, with plenty of room to lay down some picnic rugs. We could see that the stone fireplace had been used recently. A wet muddy track hugging a rock wall goes from this picnic area to the edge of the waterfall at Lyrebirds Dell. However the main track to view the falls is down the steps from the cave and across a bridge. A short footpad takes us to the pebbly beach at the base of the falls. Unfortunately there are weeds here from the urban runoff in the area, however it's still a lovely spot and the cool water splashing on the rocks beside a tuft of lush green ferns and the sweet tweets of the birds flying about, make this a delightful spot.

To complete our loop walk, from the bridge we ascend the escarpment up a flight of steps. We are now on the other side of this valley and can see the interesting rock form opposite which we passed earlier. A row of tree stumps forms some stepping stones through a hanging swamp, taking us up to meet a fire trail. Here there is a bench to rest on and a big sign pointing to Lyrebirds Dell from where we came. Turning left along this fire trail, takes us past a picnic area and eventually comes out at the other end of Lone Pine Ave. It's now a short walk back up the road to the start.