

South Lawson Waterfalls

Location: Start at South Lawson Park in Honour Ave, Lawson. There is a small car park opposite Livingstone Ave where this walk starts.

Duration: 2 hours

Grade: Easy - Moderate

Features: waterfalls, creeks, lookouts,

Trip Notes:

Where else would you find five impressive waterfalls in a short bushwalk? We start at a sign detailing the route (and the waterfalls) by descending a long row of stone steps. About half way down there is an intersection of tracks – the one on the left will be our return route while the track on the right goes to the old golf course. We continue straight ahead down the steps where we can already hear the sound of the first waterfall – Adelina Falls.

Following the damp and muddy path we descend through a hanging swamp to reach a junction, where a 50 metre detour to the right takes us to Adelina Falls. We cross over a small wooden bridge nestled amongst ferns. An old moss covered barbecue stands in what once may have been a cleared picnic area and the rock wall covered in ferns is being sprinkled with shimmering sprays of droplets. After soaking up the atmosphere of this fairyland we follow the creek back to the junction.

The trail here is very muddy, especially when going through the hanging swamps; there are a couple of bridges to cross and the track mainly follows the creek. Here we pass tumbling cascades with various slippery side tracks that lead to the water. The orange angophoras emerge through the ferns and the whip birds strike their call. Eventually the track swings up a couple of steps to the right but before going up, a worn foot pad takes us around a boulder giving a dizzying look over one branch of Junction Falls (a bit dangerous and not recommended for those who are averse to heights!).

The main track heads up the steps between a fence and a rock shelf and soon we cross a creek over the top of the other branch of Junction Falls, which actually comprises two waterfalls, one from Ridge Creek and the other from Lawson Creek, that meet nearby. Winding our way down steep stone steps and turning left before the long wooden bridge, we reach the first waterfall. The water cascading down layers of rock, the fallen trees, green ferns and coachwoods standing tall all make this an impressive place. A little memory plaque is fixed on the rock beside us and we sit and watch the falls in this peaceful spot.

Crossing the long wooden bridge and heading around a boulder takes us to the other section of Junction Falls. This is another delightful spot where the waterfall cascades over the rock face, splashing on the rocks below while an old picnic table provides a seat from which to admire the surroundings.

Continuing along the track with the creek now on our right, the vegetation is a bit drier. We pass some weathered rock overhangs on our left and soon come to a set of steps. To get to Federal Falls continue straight ahead, down the pretty leaf littered path that takes us to the falls.

Here we are in a sort of cavern and there is a huge rock shelf protruding out to the falls. Rocks covered in velvety green moss, coachwood trees and the beautiful falls flowing through a wide beach make this a spectacular place. It's a terrific spot for a break and a picnic, and a place that kids can enjoy and explore.

After savouring this waterfall, we head back to the steps which we climb, past the old painted writing on the rocks with distances given in miles and yards. The steps rise steeply to a little lookout and we continue through the bush, passing by blooming yellow wattle before descending to the creek. There is a slightly difficult crossing as we need to rock hop - the original bridge is no longer there, however preparations are evident for a new crossing. The path meanders through the bush and soon a little detour leads down to a charming spot beside a small waterfall – another nice place for a picnic. The track then continues away from the waterfall past mossy rocks and logs; there is peaceful silence here as the creek gently bubbles with the sweet ring of bird calls in the air.

Soon we get to some steps, but before heading up we continue straight ahead to visit Cataract Falls. In this lovely oasis stands an old gnarled tree amongst sparkling ferns and flowing water, making this a beautiful place. This is the last of the main waterfalls on this loop, but we get to follow its course for some time as we head back to the steps and ascend the escarpment. About half way up a detour to the left leads to an engaging view overlooking the top half of Cataract Falls.

Eventually the track meets a wider path where we turn left (turning right will eventually take you to Terrace Falls). We follow the sign to Lawson and we catch various glimpses of Cataract Falls from a few small lookouts. In one stands a lovely memorial seat dedicated to a couple who “loved these mountains”.

The track soon comes out at another car park, so we continue past this and past the picnic table and large fireplace, and follow the brown walker sign. Blooms of wattle and grevilleas with old man banksias line this sandy trail. Eventually we meet our original track and turning right up the stone steps gets us back to the start.