



IMAGE: Helena and Aurora Range Gully | Rob Neave

Bungalbin

Helena and Aurora Range

A Special Place

The Helena and Aurora Range is a special place in the Great Western Woodlands. It is situated 100km north of Southern Cross, adjacent to the Mount Manning Nature Reserve.

The range is 704m above sea level and 200m above the surrounding plain. It is the highest range for hundreds of kilometres in any direction. The main part of the range twists and turns for 10kms and is made up of distinctive Banded Ironstone Formation (BIF) outcropping caves and rock faces.

What will you experience?

You will be uplifted by the spectacular scenery, ancient rocks that form outcrops, overhangs and caves; plus remarkable flora and birds (especially in spring). You may also be lucky enough to stumble upon some shy animals like the Western Pygmy Possum or the Pebble Dragon.

Scenic Attractions

Outstanding rock outcrops are accessible at Bungalbin East and also at J5 (see map). There are particularly outstanding views from each location as well as from other high points on the range such as Bungalbin Hill.

Visiting the Range

Bungalbin is accessible via Koolyanobbing (60km north of Southern Cross) and the Mt Dimer Track in the Great Western Woodlands (see map for access from Koolyanobbing). Eleven species of eucalyptus can be seen between Koolyanobbing and Bungalbin.

Naming of the Range

The name Bungalbin comes from the Kalamaia language of the Kalamaia Kapurn people; Traditional Owners of this country. In 1869, the explorer John Forrest named the range Helena and Aurora after Helena Aurora Monger, the daughter of early settler John Henry Monger.

Current Conservation Status

The range is currently a Conservation Park and you are not permitted to bring dogs along when you visit. The WA Government is currently looking at making it a Class A Reserve to give it greater protection, as under WA Law a Conservation Park status still allows mining.

Be prepared

Ensure you have an emergency supply of water and food; there is no access to fresh water or other facilities.

Ensure you have a well maintained vehicle with a full tank of fuel. Road conditions vary - track is mostly gravel and becomes muddy & slippery during and after rain.

Take extra care crossing haul roads.

Please ensure you *leave no trace* and take all rubbish out with you - take only photos, leave only footprints.



IMAGE: Pebble Dragon | Paul Pichugin

Plants of the area

More than three hundred and fifty native plant species are present of which four are THREATENED, *Tetratheca aphylla* subspecies *aphylla*, *Leucopogon spectabilis*, *Acacia shapelleae* and *Lepidosperma bungalbin*. All four are endemic to the range. There are thirteen PRIORITY flora including one species endemic to the area.

Birds and other Animals

One threatened fauna species occurs in the area, the Malleefowl. Three other species are of conservation significance, the Peregrine Falcon, Rainbow Bee-eater and Fork-tailed Swift. More than one-hundred birds and forty-two reptiles have been recorded.



IMAGE: Purple-crowned Lorikeet | Chris Tzaros