

# Surprisingly spectacular

Surrounded by six national parks (including the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area) and beautiful rolling landscapes, the Lithgow district is a mix of stunning wilderness and rural splendour. It provides an extraordinary outdoor experience which will surprise and intrigue.

**Climb to the top of a cliff and take in a view that will take your breath away.**

Follow long and deep valleys carved over millions of years with picturesque streams and man-made lakes. Adventure into wild wilderness with forests of ancient trees and damp ferny glens. Lithgow has so many secrets waiting to reveal themselves.

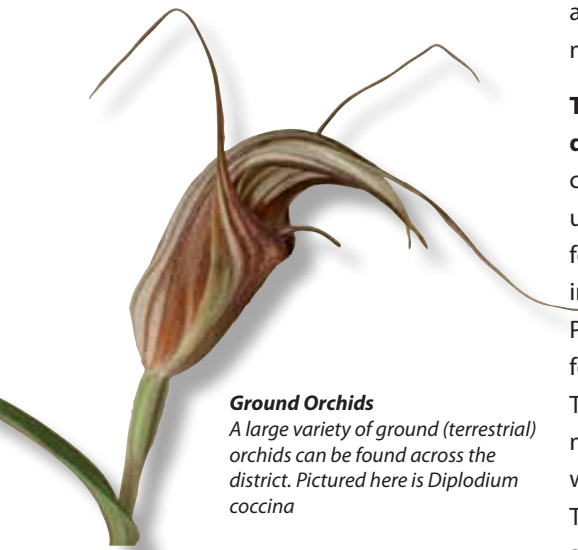
**The flora and fauna of the Lithgow district are surprisingly diverse.** Tiny copperwing butterflies that depend upon one type of ant for breeding and feeding. Giant dragonflies that only live in the shrub swamps of the Newnes Plateau. Endangered Regent Honeyeaters found breeding in the Capertee Valley. The Wollemi Pine hidden from man for millions of years. The Genowlan Pea of which about only 19 plants are known. The eastern spotted quoll. These are just a few of the special plants, birds and animals that inhabit our region.

**Our local community is proud of its conservation efforts and many visitors participate in programs to protect local species.** Tree planting with landcare groups, the *Save Our Swamps* project and native animal breeding projects all help ensure the future of our natural environment.

**Country roads meander through the district and over every hill a new view awaits you.** Pull off to the side of the road and enjoy a few quiet moments or picnic by a pristine lake or stream. Historic towns, villages and old industrial and mining areas are scattered throughout the region and provide an interesting focal point for your travels.

**Lake Lyell, Lake Wallace and Thompsons Creek Dam** provide not only a haven for birdlife, but also opportunities for water sports and fishing.

**In all honesty, you will be astounded by the diversity of Lithgow's natural wonders.**



#### **Ground Orchids**

A large variety of ground (terrestrial) orchids can be found across the district. Pictured here is *Diplodium coccinea*

*Within 10 minutes of the CBD you're in wilderness*



# nature, up close and personal

the widest enclosed canyon in the world

## spectacular lookouts

six national parks



### **Spectacular valleys**

*The Capertee Valley, one of many scenic valleys in the Lithgow area, is the widest enclosed canyon in the world. Shown here is an aerial view of Glen Davis in the Capertee Valley*

# National parks & forests

*We don't like to boast, but...*

Not many regions can claim to have six national parks in their area, let alone six as spectacular as those you'll find in the Lithgow area. When you add the Kanangra Boyd National Park to the south, it truly makes for a remarkable nature-based destination.

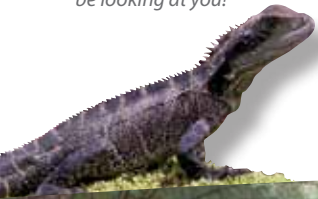


## **Wollemi Pine**

*In 1994 the Wollemi Pine was discovered. Known as a 'living fossil' because its closest relatives are seen in fossils from the Cretaceous period of 100 million years ago and it is similar to the Jurassic period of 150 million years ago.*

## **Reptiles**

*Reptiles of many different shapes and sizes are found throughout the area. Keep your eyes open on bushwalks for tiny skinks to large goannas. They may well be looking at you!*



## **WOLLEMI NATIONAL PARK**

**The Wollemi National Park is the largest wilderness area in NSW and is part of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. It is a maze of canyons, cliffs and undisturbed forest.**

The landscape ranges from exposed rocky tops to deep protected valleys. The flora varies in response to this endless variety of habitat with extensive tall open woodlands, heath and lush patches of rainforest. It is home to the Wollemi Pine.

Newnes Historic Site, one of the largest self-contained shale oil production schemes which operated between 1906 and 1937, and the Glow Worm Tunnels which provided access for the railway to Newnes are within the Park.

**Access to the Park can be made from Newnes in the Worgan Valley, the Glow Worm Tunnels on the Newnes Plateau and Glen Davis in the Capertee Valley.**

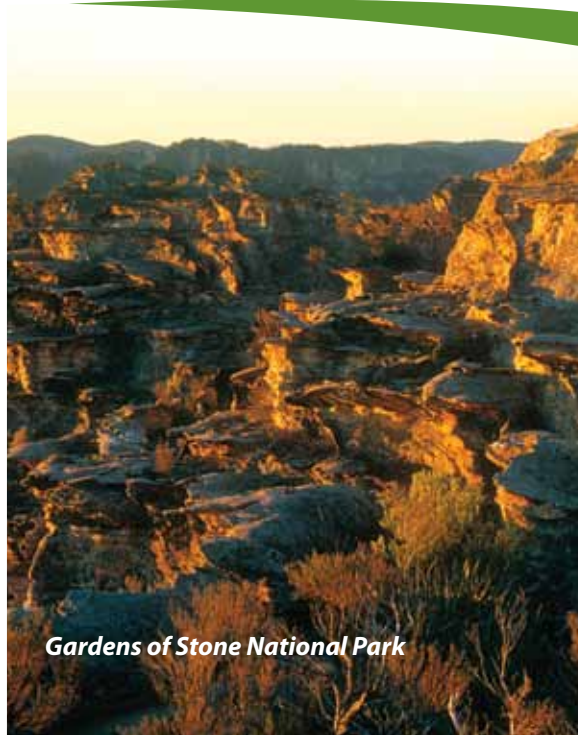
## **GARDENS OF STONE NATIONAL PARK**

**Pagoda rock formations are a prominent feature** of the 15,230 hectare Gardens of Stone National Park which is part of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area and conserves a terrain varying from limestone outcrops to sandstone escarpments.

Banksias, dwarf she-oak and other wind-pruned heathland plants grow amongst the rocky outcrops to complete a garden-like effect.

Below the cliffs, steep slopes with eucalypt forest and woodland support rare animals such as koalas, yellow bellied gliders and powerful owls. The drier ironbark – box woodlands near Capertee are important habitat remnants for the rare Regent Honeyeater and Turquoise Parrot. The park has limited visitor facilities apart from a few fire trails which provide walking opportunities.

**Access to the Park can be made from the Newnes Plateau, Ben Bullen and Capertee Valley.**





*Wildflowers* can be found all year round and draw visitors to the Lithgow area from far and wide.

### BLUE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

The spectacular drives to Lithgow through the Blue Mountains National Park along the Bells Line of Road from Richmond and the Great Western Highway via Katoomba and the Three Sisters are two of the most iconic drives in the World. Extensive bushwalking tracks and scenic lookouts are available throughout the Park which is part of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. For the more adventurous rock climbing, abseiling and canyoning are permitted.

*Access to the Park can be made from Mt Victoria, Clarence, the Bells Line of Road and Great Western Highway.*

### TURON NATIONAL PARK

Taking time out with car-based camping and trout fishing along the Turon River are the highlights of a stay in this national park. Open eucalypt forest and river oaks were once the site of one of the state's major gold fields, and the area is rich in colonial and Aboriginal heritage.

*Access to the Park can be made from the Castlereagh Highway just north of the Village of Capertee.*

### MARRANGAROO NATIONAL PARK

Reaching 1200m in height, the Park features both snow gums and the endangered Purple Copperwing Butterfly along with platypus in the Coxs River. Mountain bike or bushwalk to the top of Mt Walker. Camping at the Lake Lyell Camping Area or along the Coxs River is available. Fishing, canoeing and power-boat sports are permitted on the adjacent Lake Lyell.

*Access to the Park can be made from the Rydal/Hampton Road.*

### CAPERTEE NATIONAL PARK

Gazetted in June 2010, the Capertee National Park is yet to be opened to the public. This new national park lies between the Castlereagh Highway and the Capertee Valley.

### EVANS CROWN NATURE RESERVE

Two towering granite tors, overlooking the village of Tarana, are a feature of this park. A 3 km return walk (moderate with steps) will take you up to the large rock formations.

*Access to the Park is along Honey Suckle Road which runs off the Tarana to Sodwells road.*

For further information on camping, bushwalking and activities contact: Blue Mountains Heritage Centre and National Parks Shop, End of Govetts Leap Road Blackheath

[www.environment.nsw.gov.au](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au)



### STATE FORESTS

Recreational use of the State forests in the Lithgow district is very popular.

Orienteering, mountain biking, four wheel driving, motorbike riding, bushwalking, camping, birdwatching and mushrooming are all popular activities. The forests consist of native vegetation and radiata pine plantations which both contribute to the economy of Lithgow and Oberon.

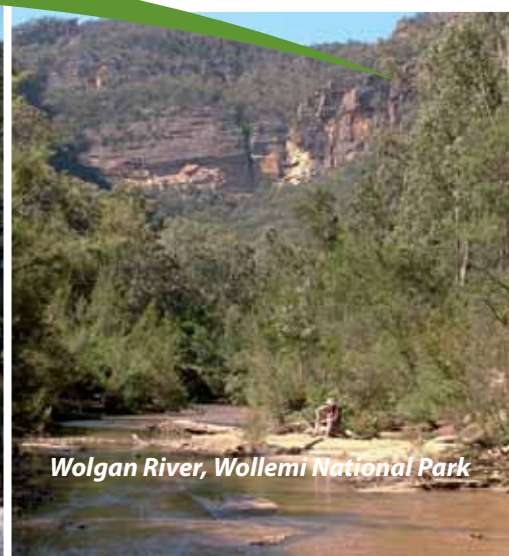
State forests that are open for use are: Sunny Corner, Lidsdale, Newnes, Hampton, Ben Bullen and Jenolan State Forests.

*Further information: Lithgow Visitor Information Centre or Forests NSW*

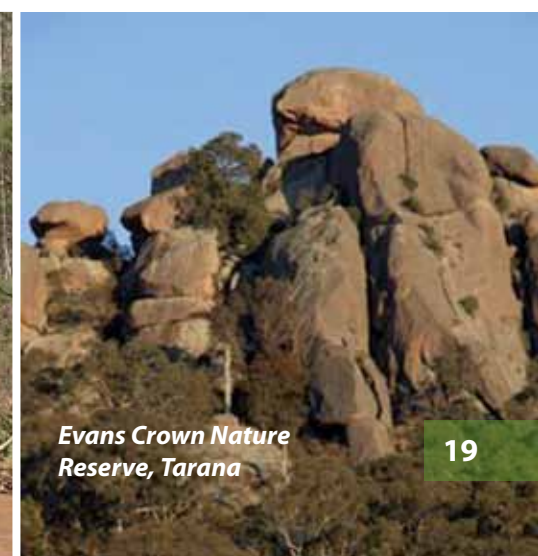
[www.forest.nsw.gov.au](http://www.forest.nsw.gov.au)



Blue Mountains National Park, Dargan



Wolgan River, Wollemi National Park



Evans Crown Nature Reserve, Tarana

# Scenic drives

## within close range of Lithgow

There are many drives in the Lithgow area. Start your journey in Lithgow, or simply pick up the trail from where you are staying.

Contact the Lithgow Visitor Information Centre for more details or download information from:  
[www.tourism.lithgow.com](http://www.tourism.lithgow.com)



### Glow Worm Tunnel Road

The scenic drive along the Newnes Plateau to the Glow Worm Tunnel follows the former railway line which went to the Newnes Shale Oil Works in the early 1900s.

### 2 HOUR – LITHGOW TOWN DRIVES

#### Heritage Buildings

Enjoy driving along Main Street and residential streets to see a range of heritage buildings. Stop at the shopping centres along the way.

#### Lookouts and Blast Furnace Park

Visit the spectacular Hassans Walls Lookout, Braceys Lookout and Blast Furnace Park.

### 4 HOUR TOWN AND COUNTRY DRIVES

#### Heritage Museums

Visit Eskbank House Museum, the Small Arms Factory Museum and the State Mine Heritage Park to gain an insight into the social, industrial and manufacturing history of Lithgow. Check for opening times.

#### Wallerawang and Portland

Visit scenic Lake Wallace, Wallerawang Shopping Centre and the historic St Johns Church before exploring Portland with its recreated advertising signs and heritage shopping centre. If time permits travel to Mt Piper Power Station and visit the Energy Expo.

#### Lake Lyell and Lake Wallace

Travel via scenic Magpie Hollow Road to Lake Lyell. Stop for the views at the Lake Wall. Continue to Rydal, back to the Great Western Highway to Wallerawang and Lake Wallace where you can picnic, birdwatch, swim, play or walk.

### ONE DAY TOWN AND COUNTRY DRIVES

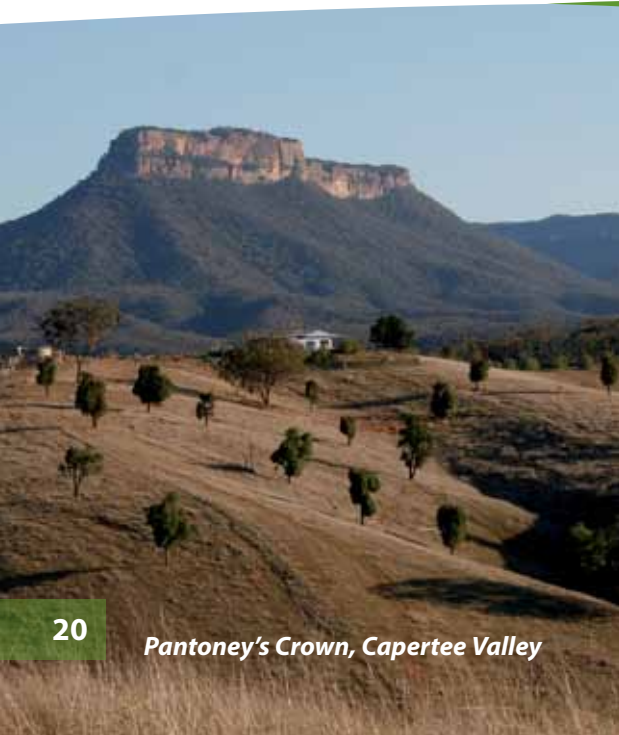
Refer to the Greater Blue Mountain Drives for further information.

#### Wolgan Valley

Stop at Lake Wallace and Wallerawang then drive to the Wolgan Gap Lookout before dropping into the valley. Its a spectacular drive along the valley floor to Newnes. Enjoy bushwalks, paddling in the Wolgan River or walk around the old mining ruins (allow 2 hours, moderate). 48 km unsealed road (return).

#### Historic Villages, Churches and Cemeteries

Explore the Hartley Historic Site, visit the tea rooms and galleries in Hartley Village, drive along Coxs River Road or Jenolan Caves Road to Hampton. The Rydal/ Hampton Road will take you to Rydal.





**Heritage Drives.** Many interesting heritage buildings can be seen in the towns and villages as you travel throughout the Lithgow area.

Back track 5kms and travel to Sodwells and Tarana. Stop at Evans Crown Nature Reserve for a 3km return walk (moderate) to the top of the tors. Visit Tarana before heading over to Meadow Flat and back to Lithgow.

**Zig Zag Railway, Newnes Plateau, Glow Worm Tunnel**

Take a ride on the spectacular Zig Zag Railway at Clarence before heading along the Newnes Plateau through native and pine forests to the Wollemi National Park. A 2km return walk (moderate) will take you to the Glow Worm Tunnel. Take a torch. 70km unsealed road (return).

**Capertee, Capertee Valley, Rylstone**

Visit Pearsons Lookout for an expansive view over the widest enclosed canyon in the world. Stop at the village of Capertee for refreshments. Visit Glen Davis, Glen Alice, Dunville Loop and then Rylstone and Kandos before heading back to Lithgow via Ilford. Scenic rural landscapes, towering escarpments. 30km of unsealed roads (approximate).

**DRIVES OF SPECIAL INTEREST**

**Furnace, Fire and Forge**

If you are into heritage, spend a day or two following the Furnace, Fire and Forge trail around the Lithgow area. See pages 14-15.

**Wildflowers**

Wildflowers can be found all year round in the Lithgow area. Hassans Walls Reserve, Newnes Plateau, national parks and just by the side of the road are all good places. Take your time to explore.

**Wild and not so wild animals**

Kangaroos and wallabies can often be seen in paddocks in rural areas. Keep your eye out for them and also for wombats, any time of day, but particularly early morning and late afternoon. A wide variety of cattle, sheep, alpacas, goats and horses can also be seen grazing.

**Birdwatching**

The Lithgow area provides some of the most rewarding birding experiences in Australia. From Hampton in the south to Capertee Valley in the north, you can find many different bird species including raptors soaring overhead, water birds on farm dams, in streams and on lakes and tiny birds in shrubs and bushes.

Visit the Lithgow sewage ponds, notable for the rare Blue-billed Duck as well as Lake Wallace where over 110 species have been recorded, particularly water-loving birds. Look for the unusual Musk Duck and Great-crested Grebe.

Officially designated as an internationally Important Bird Area, a remarkable 236 species of birds have been recorded in the Capertee Valley. The altitude and soil types result in a diversity of plant species which attract different bird communities – the makings for a truly remarkable birdwatching experience.



**Regent Honeyeater**

*The Regent Honeyeater is listed as rare. A habitat replanting program is being carried out by the community in the Capertee Valley where it is known to breed.*



**Rydal to Hampton Road**



**Hassans Walls Lookout, Lithgow**



**Newnes Plateau**

# Regional drives

## Exploring further afield

The Lithgow area is part of the Blue Mountains, Lithgow and Oberon Tourism Region which when combined provides an extraordinary range of adventure, nature-based, cultural and relaxation experiences.

There are a number of drives which you can take in the Region that will enhance your stay in Lithgow. For further details see the following websites or contact the Lithgow Visitor Information Centre.

### TABLELANDS WAY

The Tablelands Way Experience meanders along the western side of the Blue Mountains connecting Canberra, Goulburn, Oberon, Lithgow, Mudgee and Muswellbrook. It describes some of the nature-based trails to explore around Lithgow which have also been described in brief in this guide.

[www.tablelandsway.com.au](http://www.tablelandsway.com.au)



### GREATER BLUE MOUNTAINS DRIVE

The Greater Blue Mountains Drive is a network of touring routes along the roads and highways of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.

Lithgow is centrally located in the heart of the Drive with roads leading from the south from Oberon and Goulburn, north from Rylstone and Muswellbrook and east from Sydney and the Blue Mountains. Maps and a book are available from Visitor Centres. The book also outlines Discovery Trails around the Lithgow area.

[www.GreaterBlueMountainsDrive.com.au](http://www.GreaterBlueMountainsDrive.com.au)



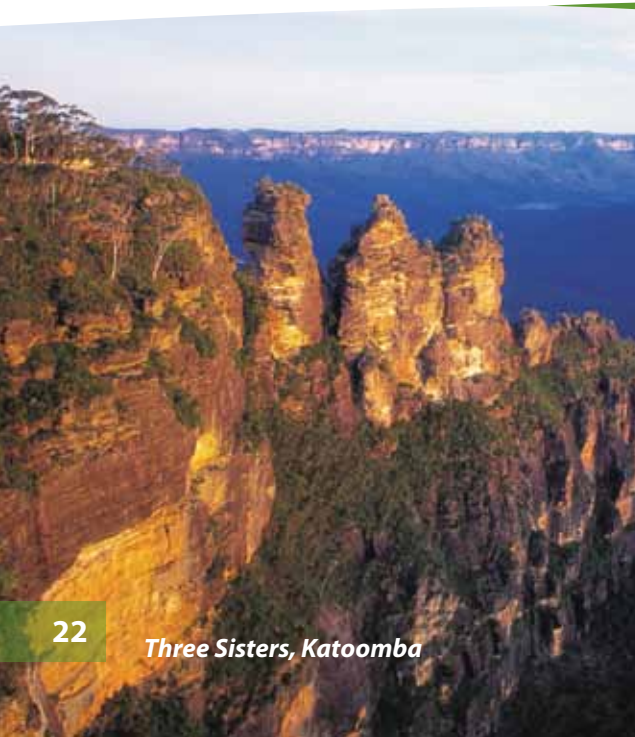
### 1 DAY BOTANISTS WAY

Exploring all things botanical along the Bells Line of Road from Lithgow to Mt Wilson, Mt Irvine, Mount Tomah to Richmond, the Botanists Way is designed to showcase the incredible diversity of plant life of the Blue Mountains and Lithgow areas.

Start at either end, spend time around Lithgow exploring plant life on Hassans Walls Reserve and Newnes Plateau, visit the gardens at Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine, stop at the scenic lookouts of Pierces Pass and Mount Banks and spend time at the Mount Tomah Botanic Gardens where you will find the Blue Mountains World Heritage Interpretative Centre.

Contact Lithgow or Hawkesbury Visitor Centres or Mount Tomah Botanic Gardens for more information.

[www.tourism.lithgow.com](http://www.tourism.lithgow.com)





**Flora and Fauna.** A diversity of birds and animals can be easily seen as you drive around the region.

### 1-2 DAYS JENOLAN CAVES, KANANGRA WALLS, OBERON

Take a 45 minute drive from Lithgow, along a road that follows high ridgetops with panoramic views. Wind your way through rural pasturelands, native and pine forests and down a scenic mountain to Jenolan Caves, one of the oldest cave systems in the world. There are walking tracks in external caves and along the river and you can choose from any number of cave tours. From Jenolan take the road towards Oberon and turn off to the Kanangra-Boyd National Park to view an 800 metre deep gorge with towering cliffs and rolling blue ridges (40km unsealed road). The town of Oberon is the highest town in the Blue Mountains Region and provides a restful place to stop. Wind your way back to Lithgow after a busy day.

If you want more time to explore why not stay over and make sure that you see everything there is to see. Spend another day and make the journey past Mount Werong to the old silver-lead-zinc mining village of Yerranderie (172km unsealed road total). Check road conditions with Oberon Visitor Centre.

### 1 DAY MT YORK, MT VICTORIA, BLACKHEATH, MEGALONG VALLEY

Venture out to Mt York to the site of the original Coxs Road into the Lithgow area and for views of the Hartley Valley. The heritage village of Mt Victoria is worth a stop with tea rooms, a picture theatre and hotels. Visit Blackheath village as well as the National Parks and Wildlife Visitor Centre. There are numerous lookouts overlooking the Grose Valley including Govetts Leap, Evans Lookout and Pulpit Rock. On the other side of the highway, a drive along the Shipley Plateau reveals further lookouts. The road down into the Megalong Valley goes through the rainforests of Blackheath Glen before opening up under the escarpments.



**Exotic mushroom** picking in the radiata pine plantations in the Oberon and Lithgow area is becoming increasingly popular. Make sure you know which ones are safe to pick by calling into the Oberon or Lithgow Visitor Information Centres.

### 1 DAY KATOOMBA, LEURA, WENTWORTH FALLS

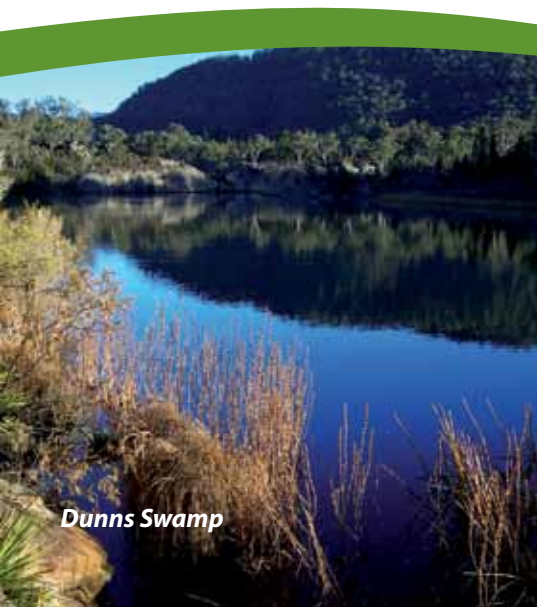
Katoomba is the home of the iconic Three Sisters. Take the turn off to Blue Mtns Drive 5 just west of Katoomba and travel around the escarpments of the Jamieson Valley stopping at lookouts along the way. This road takes you to the Three Sisters and then on to Leura and Wentworth Falls where you find more lookouts. Bushwalks and waterfalls are a feature, so take your time. Katoomba, Leura and Wentworth Falls are full of cafes and restaurants, along with speciality shops. You can spend the whole day exploring nature or, if you prefer, spend a relaxing day in the shops and cafes.

### 1 DAY BATHURST

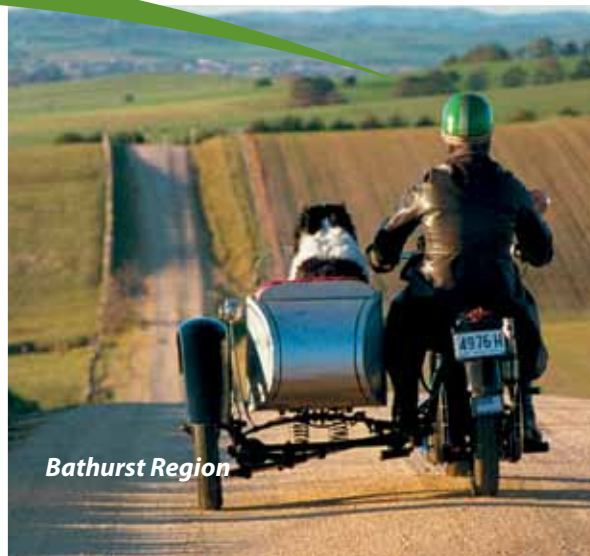
Travel up the Castlereagh Highway to Ilford, across to Sofala (take a side-trip to Hill End if time permits) and then to Bathurst before heading back to Lithgow.

### 1 DAY MUDGEE

With many wineries, Mudgee is a great place to visit. Travel direct via the Castlereagh Highway or take the scenic drive through the Capertee Valley to Rylstone, Lue and then to Mudgee.



Dunns Swamp



Bathurst Region



Kanangra Walls