

PILLIGA POTTERY AND BARKALA FARM HIDDEN VALLEY WALK

CHECK POINTS

(Notes read clockwise from start.)

- [1] Start & finish at Eagle Valley Cottage
- [2] Track junction, turn right
- [3] Track junction, turn right
- [4] Cypress Pine Tree at gorge
- [5] Froggy Lookout
- [6] Hidden Valley Lookout
- [7] Track junction, turn left or right
- [8] Hidden Valley Creek, turn right
- [9] Track junction, start of short cut
- [10] Fence & gate, turn right
- [1] Eagle Valley Cottage

A 5 km loop walk or 4.2 km via the short cut. Allow 2 - 4 hours
Elevation change of 120m
Lower end of Hidden Valley Creek 430m asl and
Hidden Valley Lookout 550m asl.

Grades are gradual with some steeper sections before [4] & [5] and after [7].

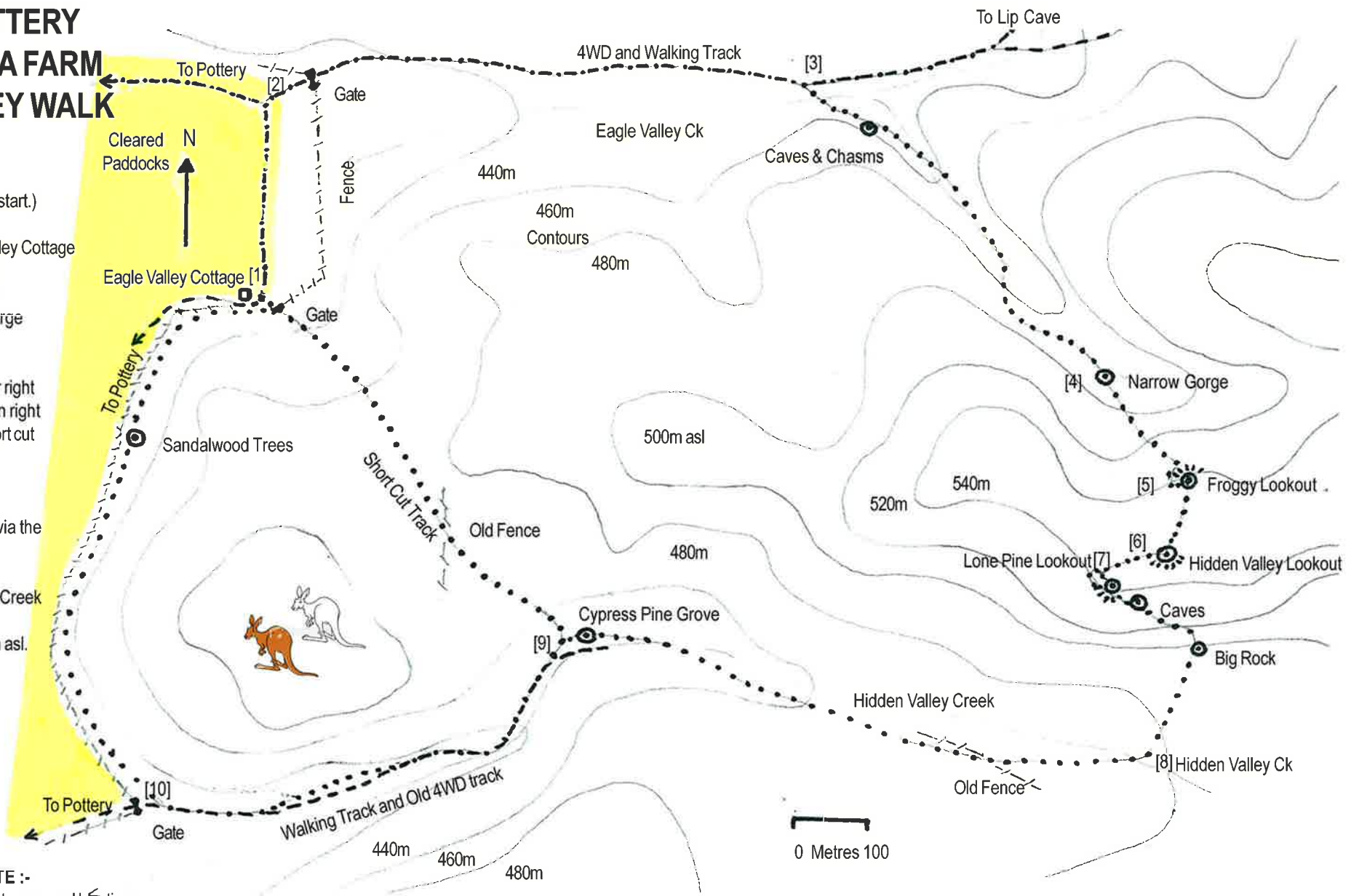
MAP USERS PLEASE NOTE :-

To simplify map details, all distances and locations are approximate only.

CAUTION:-

This walk has steep sections with loose rocks and some slippery rocks when wet (which is not very often). There are unfenced cliff edges.

NOT SUITABLE FOR SMALL CHILDREN.



LEGEND

- 4WD tracks
- Walking tracks
- Lookout
- Feature
- Check point [3]
- Elevation 460m
- Cleared land
- asl = above sea level



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Thanks go to :-

- ~ Pilliga Pottery & Barkala Farm for their support in providing this walking opportunity.
- ~ Many Wwoofas for help in track construction.
- ~ Kerry Lowe for developing the tracks, bushwalking information and brochure compilation.



HIDDEN VALLEY WALK NOTES

(notes read clockwise from start)

CAUTION: This walk has steep sections with loose rocks and some slippery rocks when wet (which is not very often). There are unfenced cliff edges.

NOT SUITABLE FOR SMALL CHILDREN

- 0.0 [1] Start from Eagle Valley Cottage outback dunny. Head in a northerly direction to meet the Ridge Top Walk 4WD track. 0.25 km
- 0.25km [2] Track junction. Turn right (E) and follow the 4WD track through a single gate/fence. N.B. Leave all gates as you find them, ie if gate is shut, leave it shut; if gate is open, leave it open. Continue up the valley which narrows and has rocky cliffs on both sides to check point [3]. 0.75 km
- 1.0km [3] Track junction. Turn right (SE) onto the Hidden Valley Walk. Cross Eagle Valley Ck and come to some interesting cliffs, caves and wombat holes. Follow the cliff base past a narrow chasm and a man made rock wall blocking another narrow chasm. The track then enters a tributary of Eagle Valley Ck. Follow this valley and cross the creek twice before starting a steep section up the side of the gorge. The track levels out onto a rock platform overlooking the twin forked head of the gorge. 0.60 km
- 1.6km [4] Cypress Pine Tree (*Callitris columellaris*) overlooking the narrow gorge. A good spot to rest and watch the wildlife. Note the ferns and a small rockhole. Continue in a southerly direction, cross a smooth rock gully and follow a thickly vegetated ridge. Further on you will see a small cave in the gully to your right before rising over another rock platform which leads to a small but deep cave. Follow the cliff to the right and curve back upwards (to the left) to check point [5]. 0.25 km
- 1.85km [5] Froggy Lookout (about 540m asl). This lookout was named after two French women who helped construct this part of the track. A ridge featuring Bernard's Lookout is visible about 2km to the NW. Take a sharp right turn (S) over a rocky patch, then a sandy patch through thick *Calytrix* (Heath Myrtle) scrub to check point [6]. 0.15 km
- 2.0km [6] Hidden Valley Lookout. The highest point on the walk, about 550m asl. There are good views to the south and south west. Hidden Valley is right below you. Turn right (W) along the ridge where you pass lots of ironstone, a dark sedimentary rock more resistant to erosion than sandstone. Continue down onto a rocky platform and several turns later arrive at check point [7]. 0.10 km

- 2.1km [7] Track junction. Turn left and walk along the cliff edge to the Lone Pine Lookout (about 540m asl). See excellent views to the S plus the Warrumbungles. A great photo and rest stop. Retrace your tracks back to [7] and follow the signs down below the cliff line to the left. This next section has several caves with very sandy bases. Look for animal tracks in the sand and note the different sandstone weathering patterns. There are two steep areas, so take extra care with your footing. As the terrain starts to level out, turn right just before a large rock. Head SW through a very sandy patch with smooth barked gums and the odd *Macrozamia* palm. This area is frequented by emus. 0.40 km
- 2.5km [8] Hidden Valley Ck. It may not be discernable but this checkpoint is in the middle of the creek which is broad and rarely has water. Go down the creek and cross through an old fence and follow it for about 150m. This area is frequented by emus and black cockatoos. Further on cross the creek and go onto the northern bank and pass through a Cypress Pine Grove before checkpoint [9]. 1.00 km
- 3.5km [9] Track junction and short cut turn off. (See details below for this track). Turn right (N) if you wish to take a short cut back to Eagle Valley Cottage, otherwise veer left and follow the creek in a SW direction. From this point on, the walk closely follows an old 4WD. Continue down the creek for about 700m to checkpoint [10]. 0.70 km
- 4.2km [10] Fence and gate. Turn right (NW) and follow the fence on your left. Pass through a sparse clump of Sandalwood trees, about 12 in total. These parasitic trees, *Santalum lanceolatum* produce small edible plum like fruits and would have been a valuable bush tucker to the local aborigines. Further on you will pass a large Cypress Pine tree hugging an even larger *Angophora floribunda* (rough barked apple) tree. Keep following the fence around as if you were going to go past the Cottage until you come to a small gate. Go through the gate and return to Eagle Valley Cottage. 0.80 km
- 5.0km [1] Start & Finish - Eagle Valley Cottage

SHORT CUT TRACK WALK NOTES

From check point [9] to [1] is about 700m. From the southern end the walk follows an old 4WD track which peters out (disappears) into an Ironbark woodland with a thick *Calytrix* understorey. About 250m from [9] you will pass over an old fence and about half way along the track you will be on the high point of a flattish saddle. Proceed down two sparsely vegetated rock platforms, through a sandy Cypress Pine grove and back to Eagle Valley Cottage.

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HIDDEN VALLEY WALK



Illustration by Neville. W. Cayley

A 5 km loop walk featuring 3 lookouts, a narrow gorge, many caves and lots of interesting plants.
Allow 2 to 4 hours

There is an optional short cut reducing the walk to 4.2km.
Allow 1.5 to 3 hours

Take only photos and leave only footprints.

Enjoy your walk.

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BARKALA FARM

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