Our natural environment

The Gold Coast offers a huge range of active and passive ways to enjoy our beautiful environment.

From our stunning coastal strip to our bush-clad hinterland and parks, there are many options to explore and discover the natural side of our city. Altogether, the City of Gold Coast boasts some 29,000 hectares of parkland and natural areas including more than 1000 hectares of wetland reserves and waterways corridors, hosting a diversity of wildlife and providing a wealth of peaceful places to discover nature.

Beaches and walks

The Gold Coast is known world-wide for its 52 kilometres of beautiful surf beaches – from South Stradbroke Island and the Spit in the north to Kirra and Snapper Rocks in the south. Along this stretch are 40 patrolled beaches to ensure your safety.

Our beaches and coastal waterways are used for a range of recreational activities – from surfing, stand up paddle boarding and kite surfing to swimming, walking and fishing.

More Gold Coast has stories and information on our beaches and coastal walks.

- Southern Gold Coast named as the 8th world surfing reserve
- For the love of Gold Coast beaches
- Five awesome water sports to try this summer
- Spend a day at the beach with photographer Willem Ungermann

There are lots of opportunities to discover the coastline on foot or by bike, using our many foreshore walks and bikeways, including the 36 kilometre Gold Coast Oceanway network from the Gold Coast Seaway (The Spit) to Point Danger in Coolangatta. See our links to coastal leisure and recreation activities below.

Parks and waterways

With over 3800 parks and reserves across the Gold Coast, there are many hidden treasures just waiting to be discovered!

There’s an experience for everyone at the beautiful Gold Coast Botanic Gardens, the Broadwater Parklands and Palm Beach Parklands, just to name a few. Pack a picnic, grab your friends and family, and explore our very own natural playgrounds. Parks are a place of adventure and discovery, peace and tranquillity, recreation and play. So what are you waiting for? Go and discover your own little piece of nature.

Use our Park Finder to find a park near you, or search by facility to find a park that meets your needs. Discover our top nature parks, our great scenic parks, our favourite kids parks, as well as our tips for the best open spaces to exercise and get fit, go bushwalking, horse riding, walk the dog or find a BMX track, or get together for a barbecue with friends and family.

Our parks and recreation pages will also help you discover ways to access and enjoy some of the sites purchased through the City of Gold Coast’s (City) Open Space Preservation Levy (OSPL), which has enabled the City to secure thousands of hectares of the most ecologically and strategically significant natural areas to protect them and the precious wildlife habitats they provide.

Rainforests and bushwalking

The Gold Coast is one of the most biodiverse cities in Australia. With over 100,000 hectares of world heritage-listed rainforests, there is an abundance of natural flora and fauna for you to explore.

Some of the most popular national parks are Natural Bridge, Springbrook National Park; Springbrook National Park and Waterfall and Binna Burra in Lamington National Park.

To find a park or forest, visit the website for the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing.

Bushwalking tracks provide a great way to explore the beauty of the Gold Coast’s natural environment while being active and healthy. Visit our Bushwalking page to find out about the great bushwalking trails on the coast.
More Gold Coast has stories and information on our rainforests and national parks:

- Five Southern Gold Coast drives
- Amazing waterfalls on the Gold Coast
- Springbrook opens new suspension bridge
- Discover the Gold Coast Hinterland and park areas
- Top bushwalking trails on the Gold Coast

For more rainforest and bushwalking ideas, visit Gold Coast Tourism's website.

Related information

- Beach cameras
- Beaches to Bushland Volunteer Landcare Program
- Bushwalking
- Discovering our coast
- Foreshores
- Gold Coast beaches
- Leisure activities
- NaturallyGC program
- Popular parks to BMX and skate

Jump to key information

Key information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Queensland Government - Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit Gold Coast – Natural Attractions and National Parks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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