

Walk:

Wollemi National Park: Wheeny Walls East and Wheeny Creek Pool

Leader

Yuri Bolotin

Maps

Mountain Lagoon, Kurrajong. GPS setting WGS84.

Walk Description and Route

Leave some cars at the end of McMahons Road and drive the others to the corner of Old Coach House Road and Bells Line of Road, Kurrajong Heights. Walk north, then north east on the ridge and descend underneath the cliffs at around GR 816 926. Traverse eastwards till GR 825 929, then come down to Wheeny Creek. Walk downstream to the big pool at GR 838 939. Exit to Zorbas Trail and walk to McMahons Road. Mostly exploratory. About 15 km (9 km on trails). Scrambling and exposure.

Rating

5M. M323E

Gear Recommendations

2 litres of water, GPS, PLB, appropriate head and footwear, electrolytes, maps, compass, first aid kit, tape (leader only). Change of gear for afterwards.

Date walked

20 March 2026.

The Party

Yuri Bolotin (leader), Lyndal Tegel, Lou Denel, Diego Camiruaga Pizarro, 4.

The Weather

A day of variable weather conditions: sunny and hot one minute, cool and ready to rain another, although there had not been any precipitation all day. High humidity and almost no wind. The cloud cover ranged from 10 to 100%, often within less than half an hour. Temperature range 17 to 25 degrees C.

Background Notes

On 26 January 2026, I led a walk immediately west of the area we were going to explore today, naming continuous deeply sculpted walls, 60-100 metres in height, coloured in orange, brown and yellow, that begin at GR 806 919, Mountain Lagoon topographic map, Wheeny Walls. One of today walk's objectives was to explore a continuation of these walls going east from where we had exited last time. The second goal was to revisit a large pool on Wheeny Creek I had been to during my trip of 24 February 2017 as at that time I did not produce detailed track notes.

Track Notes

Note: time references in the text relate to Grid References in the table at the end of these Track Notes.

A few cars were left at the end of McMahons Road, Kurrajong Heights (155 m). I then took some passengers and drove to the start of the walk at the corner of Old Coach House Road and Bells Line of Road (570 m). I knew there would be some ups and downs during this trip, but the 400 metres plus difference between the start and finish points was going to be a distinct advantage of doing it in this direction.

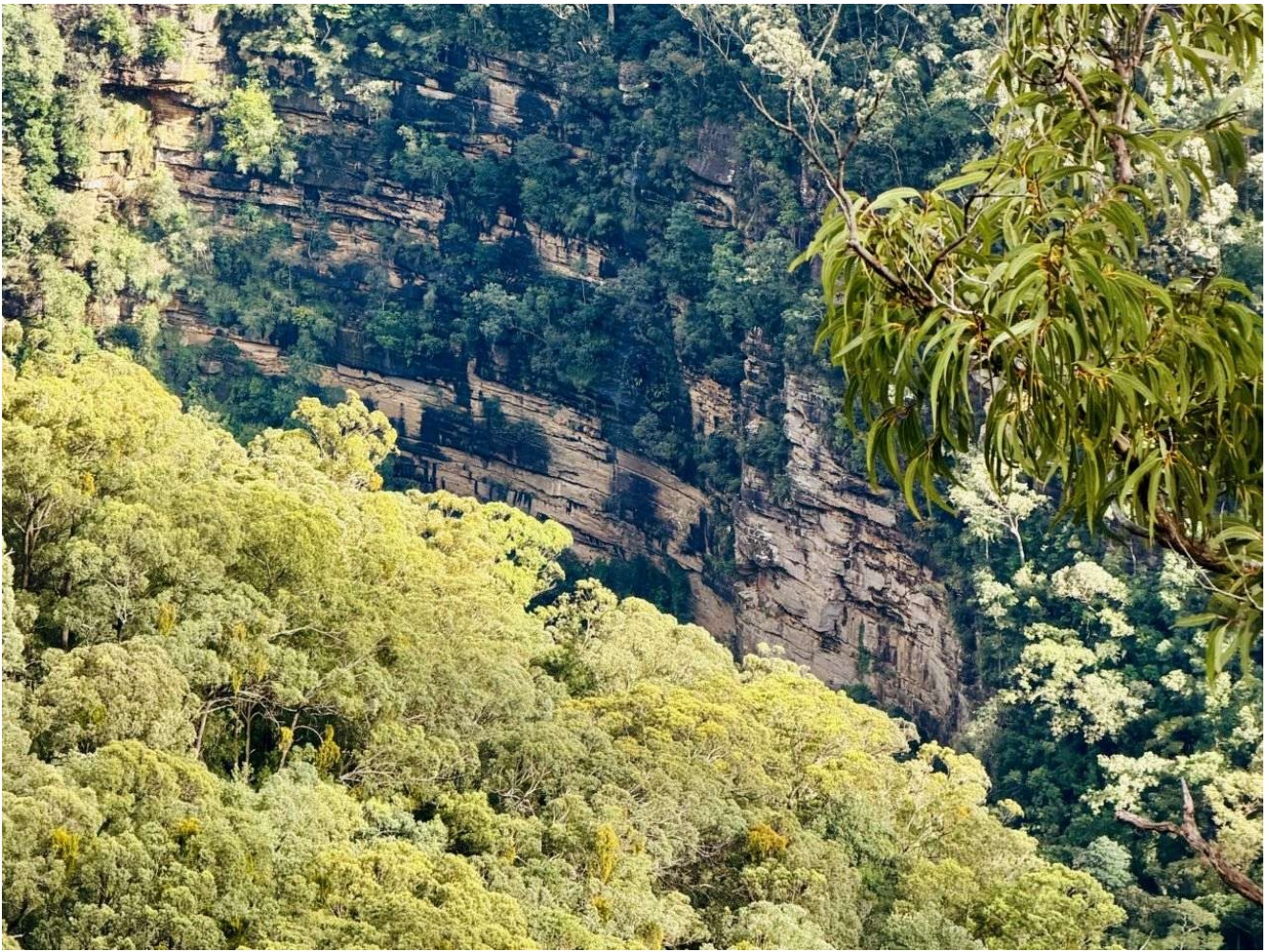
Our adventure commenced at 0755. After carefully negotiating a couple of hundred metres along the busy Bells Line of Road (*The most dangerous part of the walk*, I always say), we skirted the edge of the private property to the east to emerge at the national park trail twenty-two minutes later. Plodding along steadily, the party reached the highest point of the walk (611 m) by 0830, and nine minutes later, we made it to the trail junction, where we turned north east.

The end of the trail was recorded at 0903, two hundred metres further than shown on the topographic map. Now the real adventure could begin as we made our way off-track along the ridge through moderate scrub, which, surprisingly, was not as wet as I had expected, given the drizzle overnight. At 0919, from the top of a small high point, we began descending on a much steeper gradient towards the edge of the escarpment, where the party arrived fifteen minutes later.

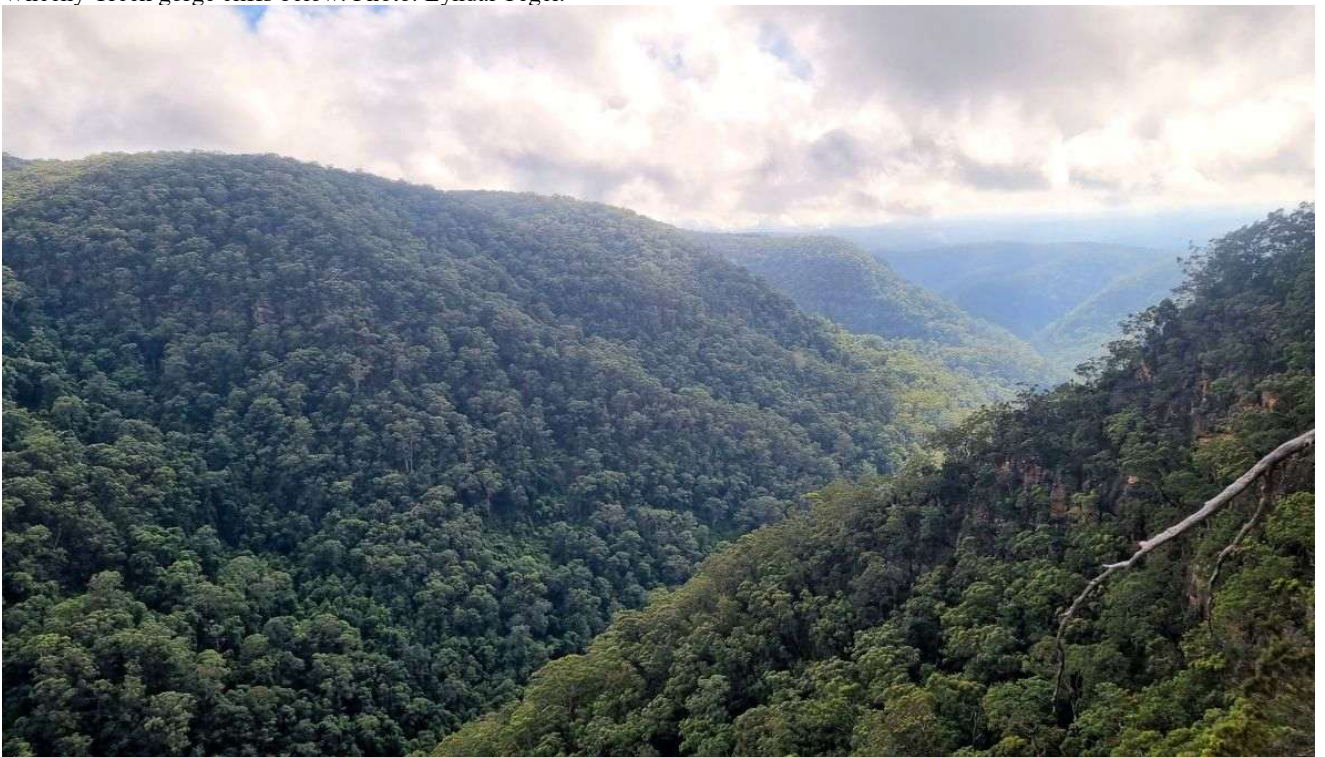
This spot was very special, and we spent some time here to enjoy the most magnificent views towards Wheeny Creek, 250 metres below us, and its spectacular gorge. To the west, we could see all the way to Wheeny Gap and the very steep spur leading to Wheeny Panorama, visited and named on 10 December 2024. The sun, sneaking out of the dense cloud cover for a few seconds, created a beam of light illuminating huge orange sandstone cliffs below that wonderful lookout. Much closer to us, across a tributary gully, stood the easternmost section of Wheeny Walls we had explored recently. Turning our heads eastwards, we could gaze along the Wheeny Creek gorge for many kilometres. The constantly changing weather patterns, with shifting clouds in the sky and light effects on the ground, made this view even more dramatic.



The view west from the escarpment. Wheeny Gap is on the left-hand side, and Wheeny Panorama is left of the centre. Photo: Yuri Bolotin.



Wheeny Creek gorge cliffs below. Photo: Lyndal Tegel.



The view of Wheeny Creek gorge, looking east from the escarpment. Photo: Yuri Bolotin.

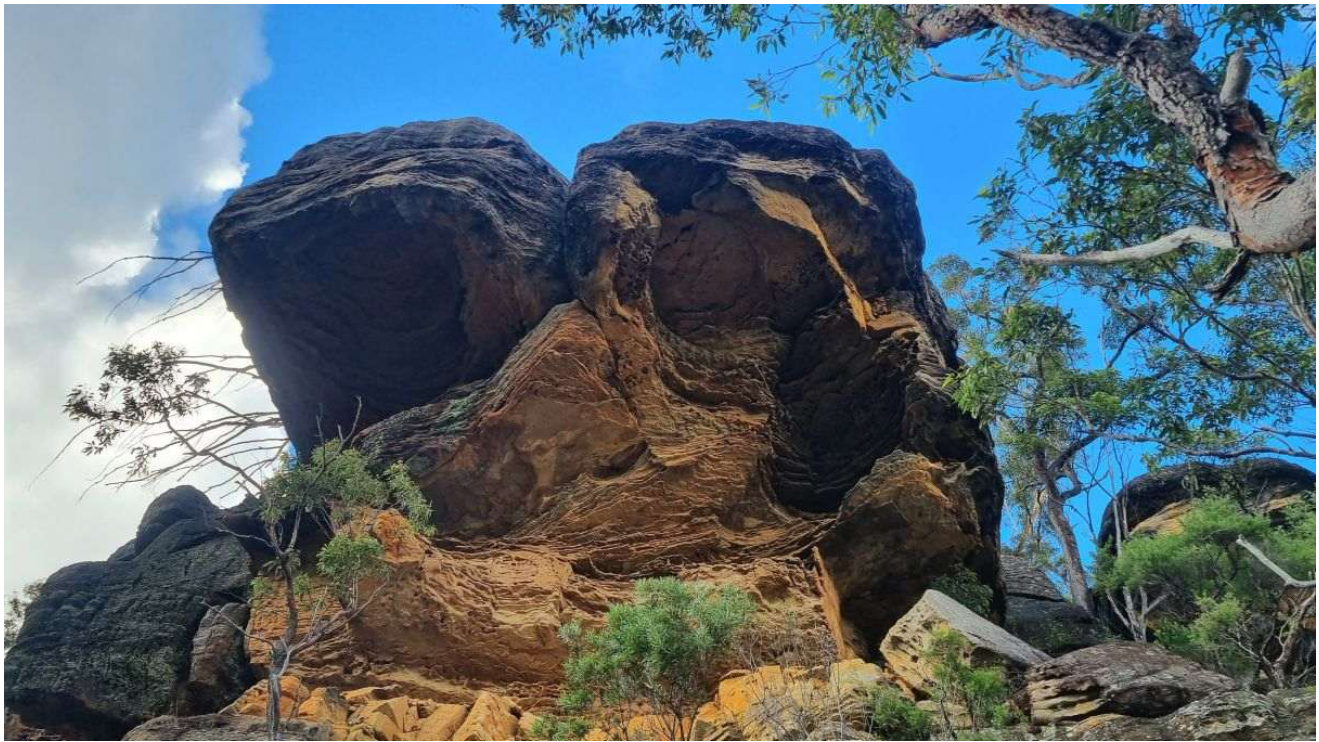
After about eight minutes of this heavenly bliss, it was time to come down to earth and to the question of descending underneath the enormous crags we were standing on. At first glance, it seemed impossible, but

we soon located a steep ramp a little to the left of the lookout, leading below the first level of cliffs. Here, we briefly stopped to check a dry deeply eroded semi-collapsed cave and a ledge that began at the far end of it that, unsurprisingly, quickly terminated at an abyss. That confirmed the need to descend much further before a walkable way of route would be reached.



Lou and Yuri exploring the ledge that went nowhere. Photo: Lyndal Tegel.

Fortunately, another ramp did not take long to present itself. It was steep and slippery but it led us down to the right around a corner and eventually to a comfortable ledge that seemed to continue for some distance. At 0954. A small but pretty cave featuring both honeycomb and Liesegang Rings formations was photographed here. We saw castellations of enormous crags towering high above our heads but there was no way of getting closer to them from here.



The view of the cliffs from below the lookout point. Photo: Yuri Bolotin.



A pretty cave underneath. Photo: Yuri Bolotin.

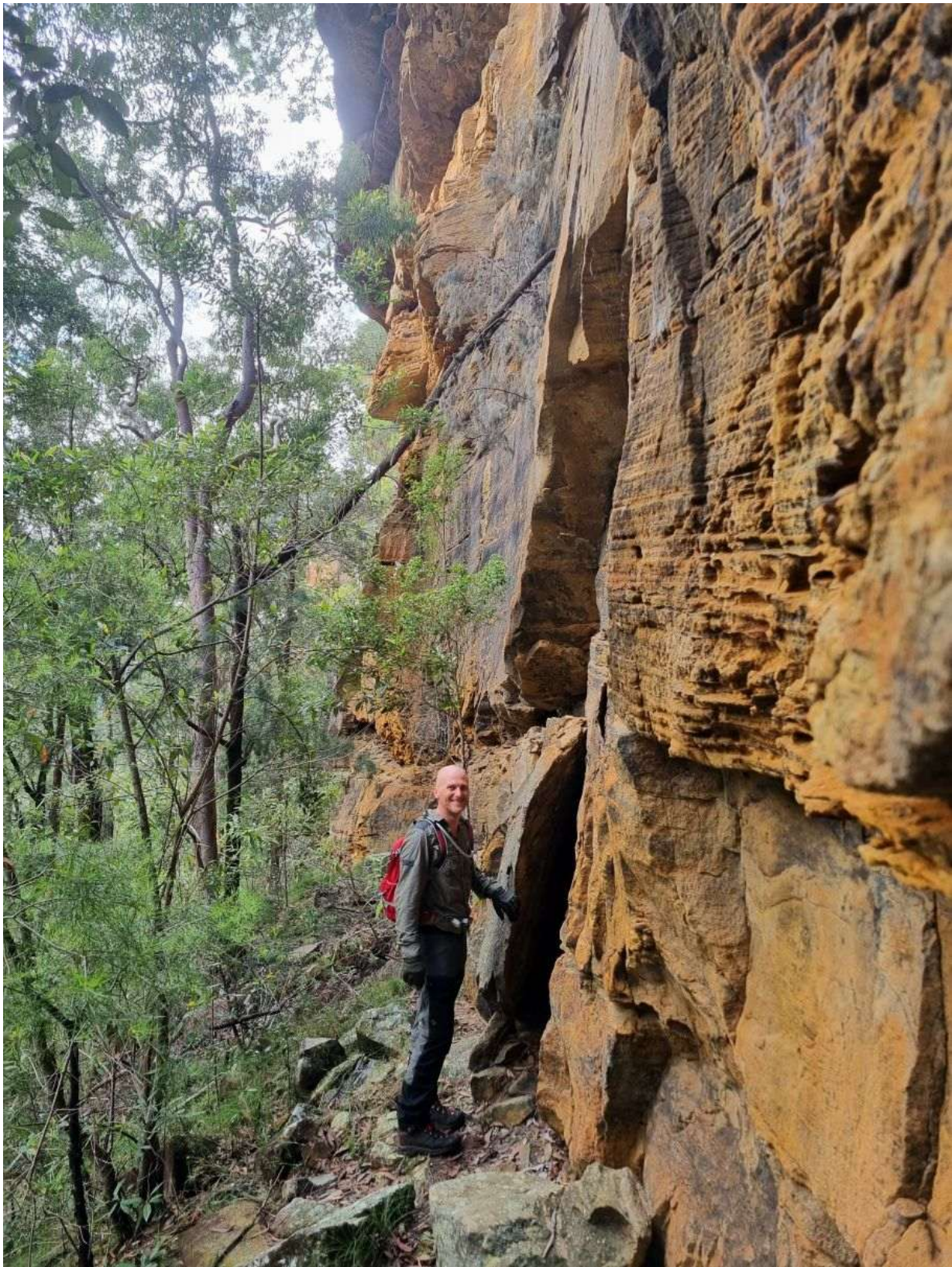
We soon came to a gully dissecting the landscape, then crossed it and tried to carry on at the same level but soon ran into the cliffs. The easiest way forward was to retrace and use the watercourse to descend further. This brought us to a terrace area below all major cliffs, but the walls here were broken up and the ground, soaking wet. It was time for morning tea, but I suggested we continue for a while longer, to find somewhere a bit more comfortable. That we did and eventually came to a dry rocky spot at the tip of a small promontory, a much better place to have our break, from 1025 till 1037. We noted a small cave here with interesting erosion features.

In the next part of the traverse, there were shallow gullies to cross and fields of brown boulders, as well as some beautiful trees, especially Grey Gums, Yellow Bloodwoods and Angophoras. It was slow going due to the narrow, inclined, and sometimes non-existent ledges. I noticed that we were gradually descending as we walked along, being pushed down by the cliffs.

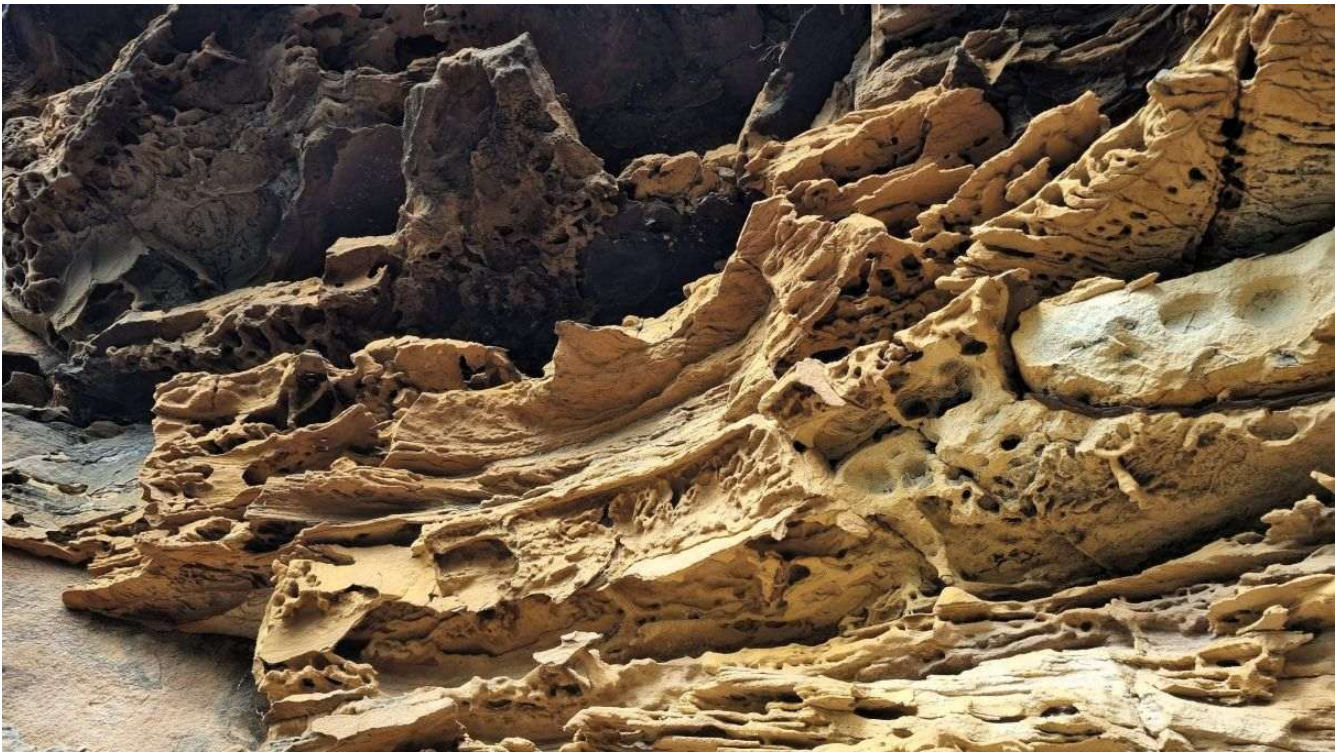


A beautiful forest along the traverse. Photo: Yuri Bolotin.

At 1100, there was a sudden change in the landscape, when we found ourselves underneath continuous giant eroded walls of orange, brown and grey rock. There were a couple, but not many, finely eroded sections, but the crags themselves were the most wild, jagged and dramatic-looking we had seen today.



Diego at the walls. Photo: Yuri Bolotin.



An eroded section of the walls. Photo: Yuri Bolotin.



Dramatic jagged bastions of sandstone. Photo: Yuri Bolotin.



Yuri below the walls. Photo: Diego Camiruaga Pizarro.

Twenty-five minutes later, the company came to a spot where, according to the map, the walls were going to diminish and disappear altogether within the next hundred metres. This was a good opportunity to start our descent into Wheeny Creek. Before proceeding, I reflected on the last section of today's walk being a fine continuation of walls we had explored during the previous trip. Based on that, I would like to name the entire stretch of the cliff line investigated on both days, 26 January 2026 and today, Wheeny Walls. They begin at GR 8061 9191 and extend for over two kilometres to end at GR 8248 9286.

Our party now headed down towards Wheeny Creek on a very easy-going, dry spur. It ended above a deep, dark tributary ravine. We scrambled down into the rainforest and soon arrived at a beautiful five metre high waterfall discharging into a large pool, and another smaller set of cascades below. At 1144. Surprised by the strong flow, I had a look at the topographic map to learn that this tributary has extensive catchment starting just east of today walk's highest elevation point we had passed this morning. As the group gingerly clambered down mossy, wet, slippery boulders along the bottom of the gorge, I thought Wheeny Creek could also be slow going today.



Yuri at the waterfall. Photo: Lyndal Tegel.

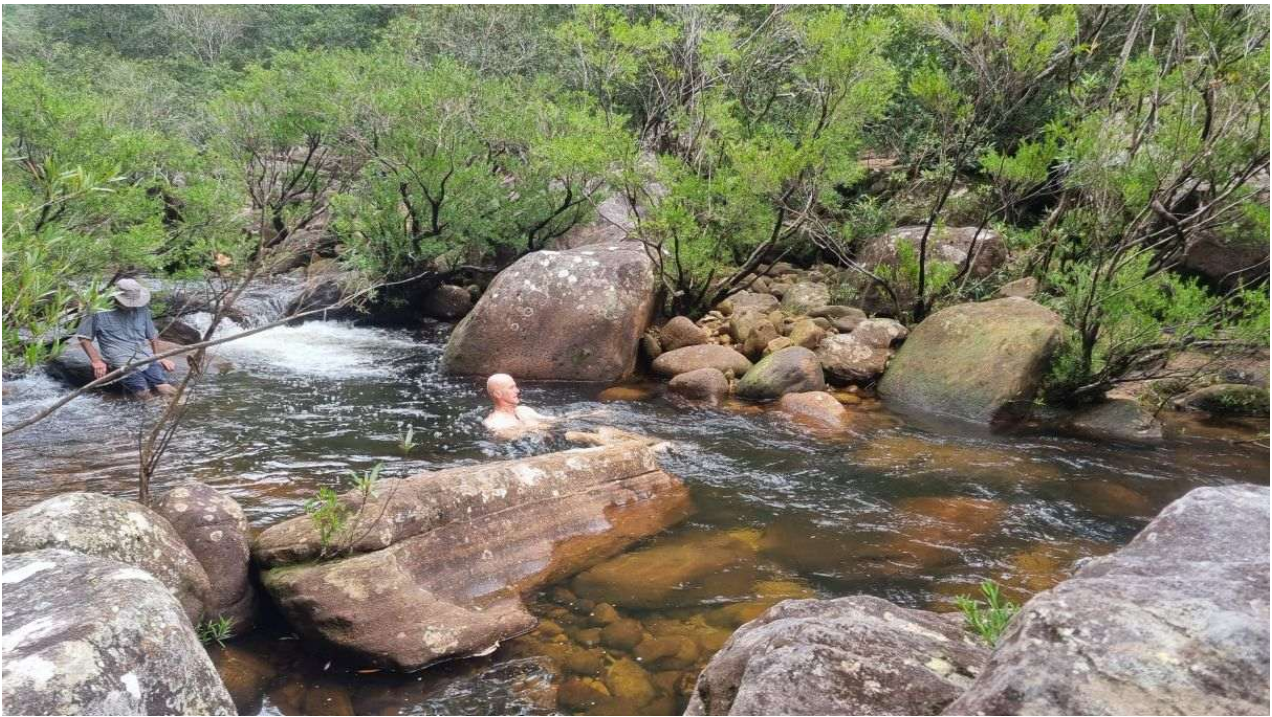
We had to climb up and around the rock walls at the confluence before we could get down to Wheeny Creek about 50 metres downstream. At 1159. A weird-looking Angophora tree was photographed here, with long finger-like protrusions in the lower part of its trunk. There was a lot of water here too, so I thought, for the next 1.5 kilometres that separated us from the big pool, we should try to stay on this southern side and avoid time-consuming and potentially hazardous crossings.



A weird-looking Angophora. Photo: Yuri Bolotin.

Luckily, after the first tricky bit, the going became pretty easy. It was a combination of walking along elevated lightly forested terraces and scrambling through small fields of mostly dry or only moderately wet boulders. At 1251, the company stopped at what looked on the map to be the last significant tributary to replenish our water supplies.

From 1315 till 1344, we had lunch beside the creek. Lou and Diego used this opportunity to go for a quick dip. Lyndal and I preferred to wait till we get to the big pool, now only about 600 m away.



Lou and Diego chilling out in Wheeny Creek. Photo: Yuri Bolotin.

Indeed, once we resumed, our progress was fast and it did not take us very long to make it there by 1422. This large (about 100 m long and 50 m across) tear-shaped body of water, formed by a 90-degree bend of Wheeny Creek, is completely bounded by dense forest. It seemed like Wheeny Creek terminated there, as it was completely hidden from sight. There are no sandy beaches, and access to the pool is a bit tricky due to steep banks covered by thick grass and deep water right at the edges, so not one's idea of a paradise beach. However, this calm reservoir in the middle of the bush, with trees and surrounding hills reflecting on its extensive, still, mirror-like surface, is stunningly beautiful. This time, Lyndal and I went for a swim and the rest of the company stayed on the shore. The water was very pleasantly cool. We had a short swim only, having only spent 12 minutes in this location. I would like to call this exceptional feature Wheeny Creek Pool.



Wheeny Creek Pool. Photo: Yuri Bolotin.

Next, I wanted to check out the cliff line to the east, on our way up towards Zorbas Trail. After a short climb, at 1442, the party came to an exceptional dry cave of large proportions, 30 metres long by 15 metres across by 10 metres high at the drip line, adorned with amazing, prolific multi-coloured, multi-layered decorations. That was another big highlight of this trip. We spent 10 minutes here on photography. This overhang has mostly raked floor but would be suitable for camping a couple of people. I would like to call it Wheeny Chamber because of its grand size.



Yuri and Lyndal in Wheeny Chamber. Photo: Lou Denel.



Diego in Wheeny Chamber. Photo: Lou Denel.



Wheeny Chamber detail. Photo: Yuri Bolotin.



Lyndal in Wheeny Chamber. Photo: Yuri Bolotin.

Resuming our climb, we traversed south west along a few more cliff lines, noting some fine tafoni panels in another overhang 50 metres away, but there was nothing much else of note from there on, so we began our climb towards the trail. At 1519, the group stopped the top of the last cliff line on the edge of the escarpment, to enjoy and take photos of Wheeny Creek gorge and of the Wheeny Creek Pool, mostly hidden by trees.

It took us only five more minutes to reach Zorbas Trail, which in this area was little more than a bush track. Twenty-two minutes later, for no apparent reason, it became a wide forest road.

1633 saw us at the bottom of a very long continuous descent, on the bank of Little Wheeny Creek. I remember crossing it without getting my shoes wet on several occasions, but this time, it had a lot more water. Some of us, including myself, were still able to achieve a dry foot crossing, by engaging in some acrobatics, using overhanging tree branches and slippery rocks, whereas others just waded through, which was far safer.



Lyndal and Diego working out how to cross Little Wheeny Creek. Photo: Yuri Bolotin.

The last section of the trip was up a steep hill. We made it to the parked cars by 1658. The shuffle was completed twenty minutes later.

During today's trip, we saw many different Fungi. Some of the species photographed were Fragile Dapperling, *Leucocoprinus fragilissimus*, Red-staining Stalked Polypore, *Amauroderma rude*, *Boletellus emondensis*, *Boletellus ananiceps*, and *Amanita ochrophylla*.



Fragile Dapperling, *Leucocoprinus fragilissimus*. Photo: Lou Denel.



Red-staining Stalked Polypore, *Amauroderma rude*. Photo: Lyndal Tegel.



Boletellus emondensis. Photo: Diego Camiruaga Pizarro.

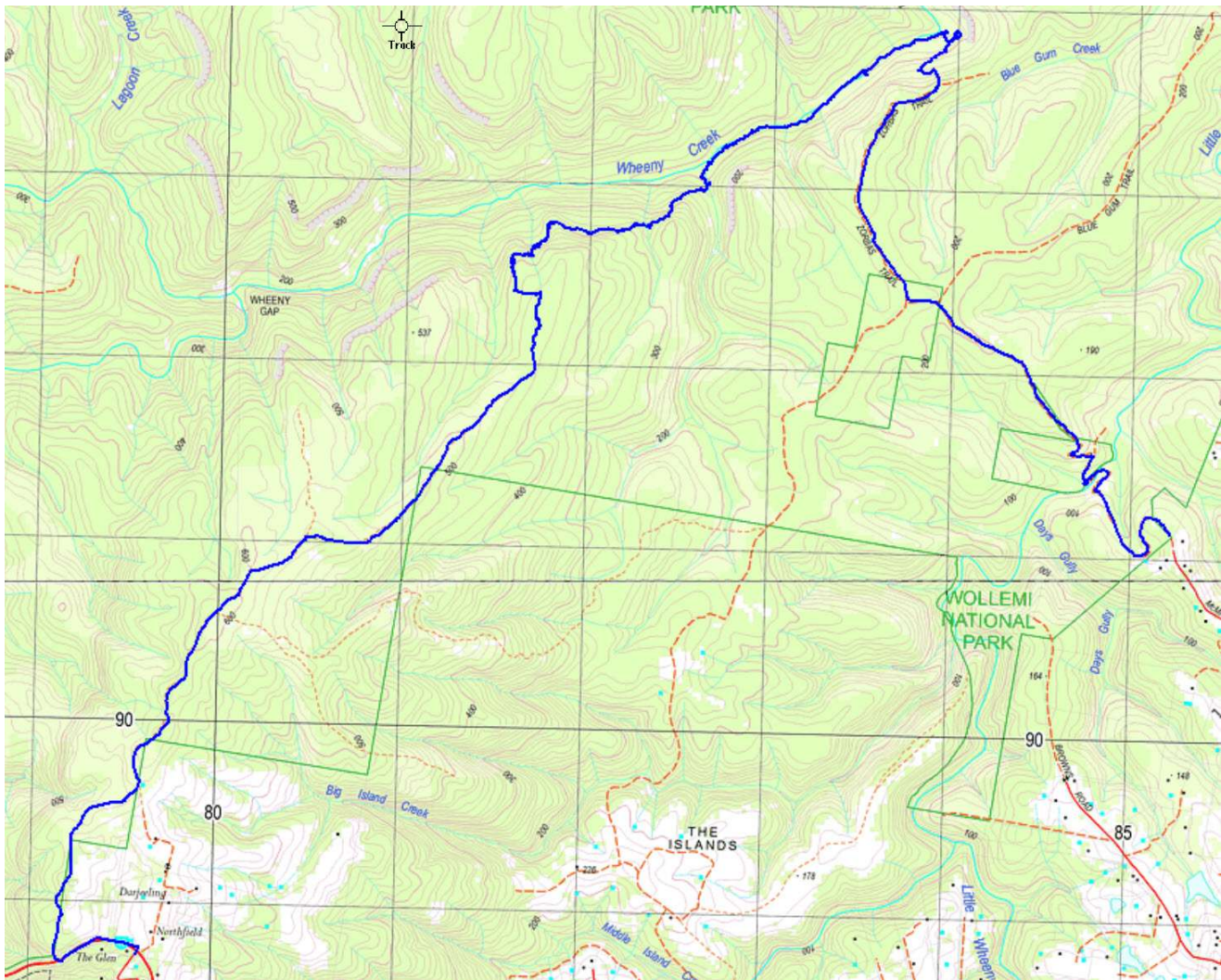


Boletellus ananiceps. Photo: Diego Camiruaga Pizarro.



Amanita ochrophylla. Photo: Yuri Bolotin.

Trip statistics: total distance 14.8 km; total ascent 420 m.



Walk topographic map. Recorded and prepared by Yuri Bolotin.

Table of Times, Locations and Grid References

Time	Location	Grid Reference	Elevation
0730	Cars parked McMahons Road	GR 8521 9114	155 m
0755	Car parked on Old Coach House Road and started walking	GR 7958 8869	570 m
0817	National Park trail	GR 7958 8965	570 m
0830	Highest point on the walk	GR 7993 9054	611 m
0839	Trail junction	GR 8047 9102	590 m
0903	End of the trail	GR 8171 9200	450 m
0919	High point, start of the descent	GR 8173 9238	455 m
0934-0942	Lookout	GR 8158 9258	400 m
0954	Ledge	GR 8163 9260	365 m
1025-1037	Morning tea	GR 8178 9279	295 m
1100	Start of high walls	GR 8214 9275	300 m
1125	Began descending towards Wheeny Creek	GR 8243 9284	250 m
1144	Waterfall on tributary	GR 8263 9300	110 m
1159	Wheeny Creek	GR 8265 9313	90 m
1251	Take water in a tributary	GR 8306 9334	70 m

1315-1344	Lunch and creek dip	GR 8349 9365	60 m
1422-1434	Wheeny Creek Pool and swim	GR 8392 9387	55 m
1442-1450	Wheeny Chamber	GR 8400 9388	75 m
1519	Lookout	GR 8387 9367	145 m
1524	Zorbas Trail	GR 8388 9357	205 m
1546	Trail widens	GR 8347 9300	250 m
1631	Little Wheeny Creek	GR 8475 9141	50 m
1658	At cars on McMahons Road	GR 8521 9114	155 m
1718	Shuffle completed at Old Coach House Road	GR 7958 8869	570 m