

Discover

the Gwydir Shire

Experience the geological wonders, visit the historical sites and discover the exceptional bird life within the Gwydir Shire



Experience geological wonders, visit historical sites and discover the exceptional bird life within the Gwydir Shire. Encompassing a diverse landscape that is both picturesque and productive, the Gwydir Shire, located in northern NSW, is 9,122 square kilometres in size and reaches almost to the Queensland border.

The southern boundary of the Shire is the Nandewar Range, separating the Gwydir and Namoi catchments. The Horton Valley and Cobbadah districts, renowned for their agricultural productivity also make up part of the southern area of the Shire.

The Gwydir River enters the Gwydir Shire where it spills from Copeton Dam and meanders in a westerly direction

through the town of Bingara and the village of Gravesend.

Heading north from Bingara is the town of Warialda and village of Coolatai, where the countryside opens into an undulating vista of basalt soil farmlands. The northern area of the Shire includes the wheat growing areas of Yallaroi, Crooble, Croppa Creek and North Star, and has long been referred to as the 'Golden Triangle'.

Warialda was first settled on the banks of Reedy Creek in 1937. The town is of significant historical importance, being the original administrative centre for the North West in the days of early European settlement. Historic buildings still remain.



Ezzy's Crossing public reserve

Horton River

Located 30kms from Bingara, the Horton River is the major tributary of the Gwydir River rising on the eastern flanks of the Nandewar Volcano.

Part of this area is an ancient shoreline as evidenced by coral reefs, beach sand remnants and marine fossils.



Ezzy's Crossing is an historically significant area located on the northern bank of the Gwydir River near Gravesend and has been adopted by the Warialda Royal Hotel Anglers Club, and Gravesend and District Historical Society.

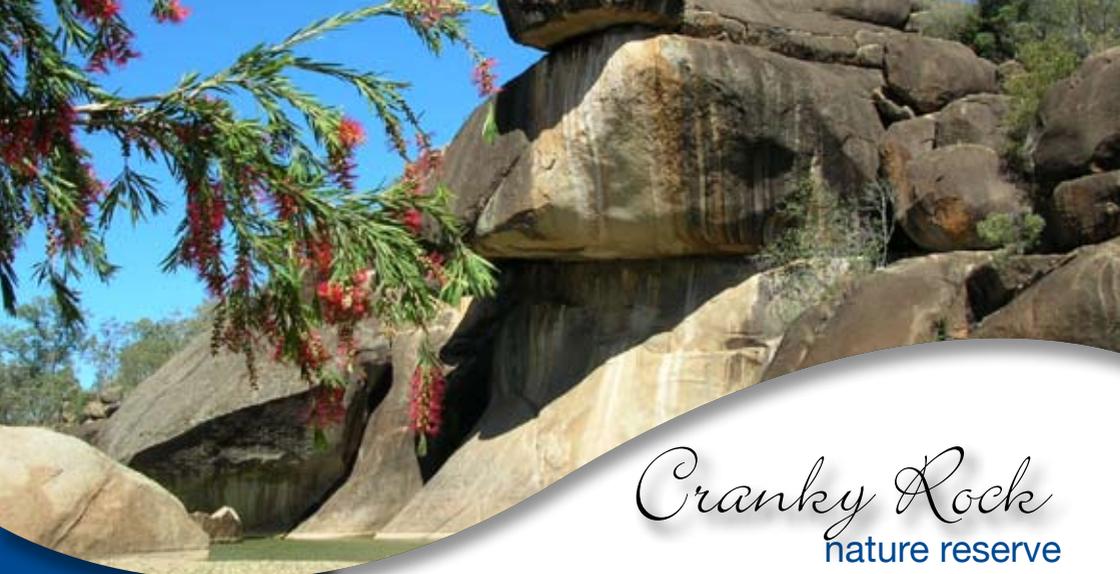
Ezzy's Crossing Public Recreation Reserve was identified as an historical site during the Gwydir Heritage Study conducted in 2005, and is managed by the Department of Lands with Gwydir Shire Council assisting with maintenance.

Ezzy's Crossing covers approximately 43ha (107 acres) and is situated adjacent to the Gwydir Highway, 15 minutes west of Warialda on the banks of the Gwydir River.

Ideal for water activities and camping, the area boasts a sand beach to the water's edge and is a haven for wildlife, with readily accessible fishing sites along the banks. The area is stocked with fingerlings on a yearly basis by local fishing groups.

Ezzy's Crossing was named after a local settler Frank Ezzy who (pre 1900) used a boat to ferry people across the river at this site.





Cranky Rock nature reserve

Smooth-barked Apples *Angophora leiocarpa*

Stunning examples of these trees can be found in the Koorilgur Nature Reserve in Warialda.

Locally known as 'Tumbledown gums' these are large evergreen trees with smooth, beautiful pink to copper-red bark during summer. As the bark matures the hues change to grey.

Cranky Rock is a classified nature reserve approximately 5km east of Warialda with a 3km drive off the highway to the reserve. Cranky Rock is a large boulder in a jumble of giant boulders on the edge of Reedy Creek settled in the most fantastic positions by past volcanic upheaval.

Established walking trails suit walkers wanting either an easy stroll or a more challenging walk. Explore the fascinating rock formations, try fossicking, or just sit and soak up the peaceful atmosphere.

Signs of traditional Aboriginal culture can be seen within the nature reserve among the plant life. Cranky Rock is known as a past special meeting place of significance for the early Aboriginals, used to settle disputes and perform ceremonies.

Cranky Rock is an excellent bird watching area and attracts many bird watching groups. In excess of 70 species of birds have been sighted around the waterhole and Reedy Creek, including large flocks of Masked Woodswallow and White-browed Woodswallow.





The beautiful *Gwydir River*

Copeton Dam

is situated on the Gwydir River between Inverell and Bingara and is recognised as one of the nation's best inland fishing locations. Copeton Dam holds three times the volume of water in Sydney Harbour and is home to many fish species such as Murray Cod, yellow belly, catfish, redfin and silver perch – all in plentiful supply.

Copeton Dam on the Gwydir River stores water for irrigation, towns, and stock and domestic use. Water from Copeton Dam flows into the Gwydir River and then onto the Gingham and Lower Gwydir Wetlands.

The Murray Cod Hatchery in Bingara was developed as research revealed that the Murray Cod were not breeding. Cold water being released from Copeton Dam into the Gwydir River was thought to be instrumental in reducing the breeding chances of the Cod.

The Bingara Anglers Club commenced a breeding program for Murray Cod as part of their club priorities. Voluntary workers built several dams, and with a government grant, the Angler's Club set up a working laboratory.

Several years later, the club has been successful in breeding Murray Cod and have now added Golden and Silver Perch to the program. Fingerlings are regularly released into the River and waterways.





In April 1827, explorer and botanist Allan Cunningham set out from 'Segehoe Station' on the Upper Hunter River to explore northern New South Wales on his way to what is now Queensland. It is thought that this journey to the Darling Downs was the highlight of Cunningham's explorations as he found the Gwydir, Macintyre, Dumaresq and Condamine rivers. The exploration party consisted of six men and eleven packhorses. Research shows Cunningham's party crossed the Nandewar Range near the present Bingara-Barraba road, and entered Stoddarts Valley on 18 May 1827.

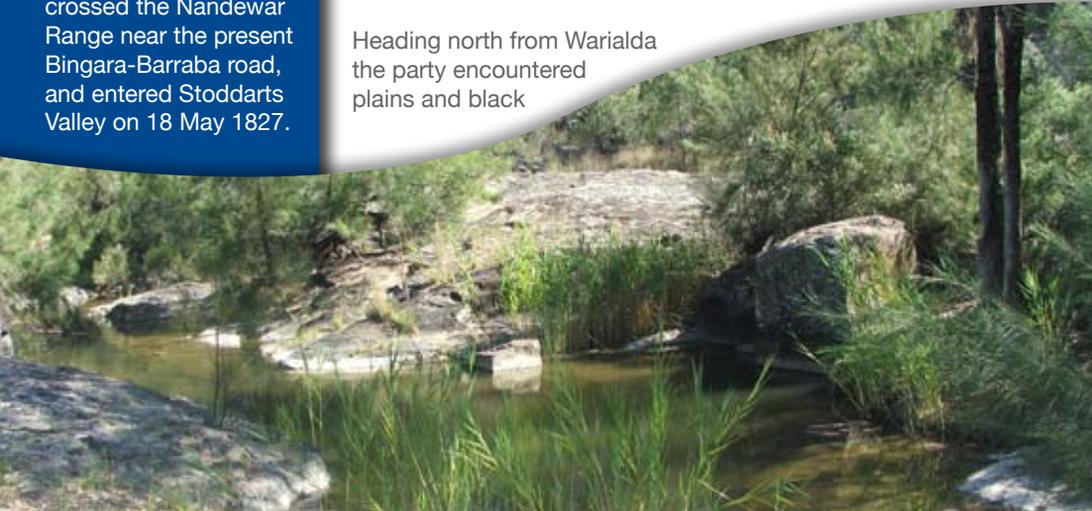
ALLAN *Cunningham* explorer

The exploring party arrived at what is now the Gwydir River in Bingara on 21 May 1827. Cunningham named this river the Gwydir after Welsh nobleman Lord Gwydir. The town of Bingera (renamed Bingara), was later established where Cunningham crossed this river. Leaving the Gwydir River the explorers continued northwards crossing Myall Creek 5km from the river, continuing through to a waterway now known as Reedy or Warialda Creek. This spot is now signposted as Cunningham's Rest.

Heading north from Warialda the party encountered plains and black

soils, crossing between Croppa Creek and Ottley's Creek. On their return journey from the Darling Downs in July 1837 the explorers passed to the east of Warialda. The party continued through to Kellys Gully and passed within 3kms of the present village of Warialda Rail.

Continuing in a north westerly direction, the party of explorers discovered the junction of the Gwydir River with the Horton River. It is believed the explorers crossed the Nandewar Range heading south on 16 July 1837.





Bird Brochure

'Bird Routes of Warialda, Bingara and Barraba' brochure is available from both the Warialda and Bingara Visitors Information Centre (VIC) or can be downloaded from the bird watching page on Warialda's web site warialdansw.com.au

The brochure provides a comprehensive directory of birds found in the Shire and identifies more than 200 native birds. The combination of the Gwydir River and its tributaries among the North West Slopes of the Great Dividing Range attracts birds of the inland plains and forests.

Bird Watching & bush walking

Bird watching has become a very popular pastime, second only to gardening. The Warialda, Coolatai, Bingara and Barraba districts are unique bird watching areas and are known as a place where 'the birds from the east meet the birds from the west', resulting in a vast variety of species in the one area.

DVDs showcasing birds within the Shire have been produced, capturing footage of in excess of 100 different species. These are available to view at the Warialda Visitor Information Centre.

Koorilgur Nature Walk in the Stonehenge National Park near Warialda is a 3.6km walk developed for the enjoyment of bushwalkers and those who wish to observe native flora, especially the magnificent Smooth-barked Apples. These gums grow in the sandstone areas around Warialda and attract several bird species. The walk is a grade 2 so you don't need any bush walking experience, the track is mostly sand but may have some rough surface and gentle sloping.





Fossicking

Both Gwydir Council's two main centres of Warialda and Bingara offer excellent opportunities for the amateur fossicker. Warialda is known for deposits of jasper, agate, quartz and petrified wood. Tiger's Gap, 5km east of Warialda on the Gwydir Highway is a popular area for fossicking. Learn the correct techniques to pan for gold and sieve for gemstones at Three Creeks Gold Mine at Upper Bingara; take a metal detecting class and check out the display of nuggets and old artefacts.

Natural *Geological* wonders

Fabulous Folds & Faults

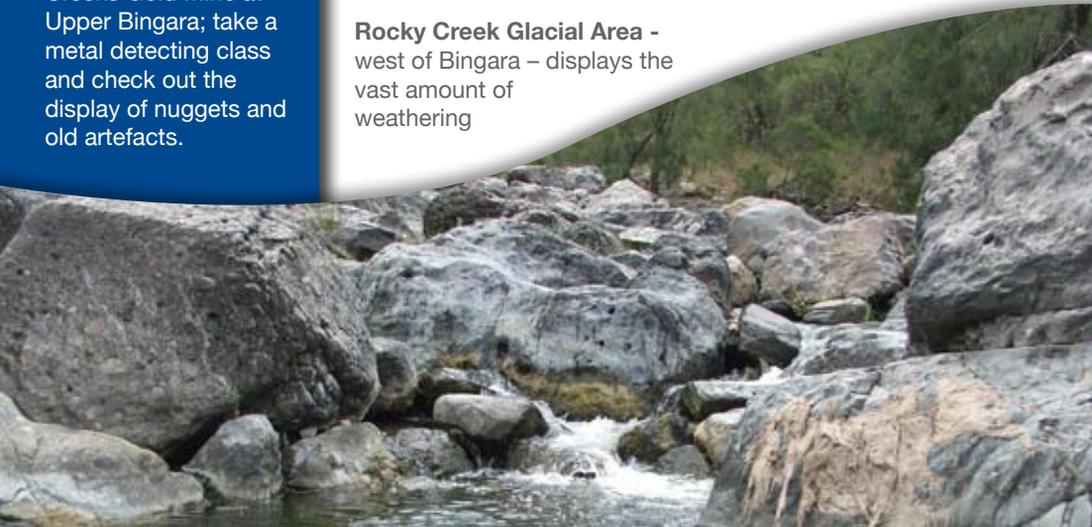
Just west of Bingara exists an amazing section of approximately 340 million year old rocks which were exposed during road works carried out by Gwydir Shire Council. These rocks, which make up the Bingara Range, were laid down as marine sediments during the mid to late Palaeozoic period. Also west of Bingara are the Benbraggie Hills. This range of folds and faults features one of only two diamond deposits in eastern Australia.

Rocky Creek Glacial Area -

west of Bingara – displays the vast amount of weathering

and erosion that has occurred over the years, showing how the original glacial landscape features have been changed by the subsequent flow of water.

Sawn Rocks - another fine example of geological wonder. Situated on the western edge of Mount Kaputar National Park, Sawn Rocks is well worth a visit. These organ-pipe like rock formations, formed from slow cooling lava millions of years ago, hang like sentries over a trickling creek.



Gwydir Shire has so much to offer

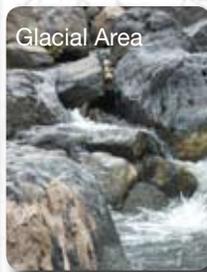
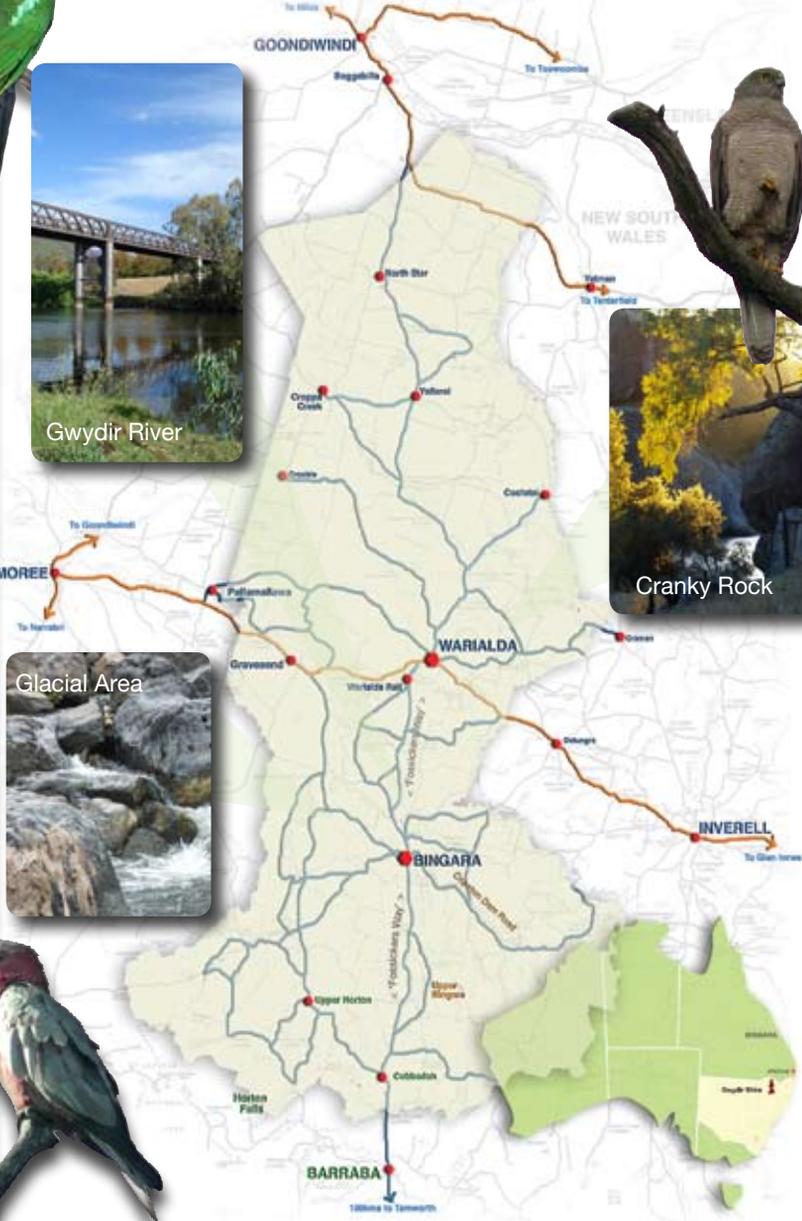
This brochure has been developed to highlight the many environmental resources the Gwydir Shire has to offer.

It is designed to help locals and visitors alike become more aware of our heritage and the need to preserve and conserve significant elements of our environment.

Gwydir Shire Council and the Border Rivers-Gwydir Catchment Management Authority are working together to ensure the environmental and ecological systems present in the Shire remain healthy and sustainable for future generations.

Map of the

Gwydir Shire



website: www.brg.cma.nsw.gov.au

An initiative of the Gwydir Shire Council and funded by The Border Rivers Gwydir CMA through the Australian Government's Caring for our Country Program. Contact Gwydir Shire Council phone: 02 6724 2000 email: mail@gwydir.nsw.gov.au • www.gwydir.nsw.gov.au