



# Recreation in The Hawkesbury



The Hawkesbury, located some 50km northwest of Sydney, has a wealth of recreational opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy. The urban centres of Windsor and Richmond are rich in historic parks and buildings, sporting grounds and open space. The Hawkesbury River, a great national asset, flows through the region from near Penrith to Wisemans Ferry. Water sports and other water-based activities are popular on the River and its tributaries. Adjacent rural lands and the uplands of the lower Blue Mountains and further north towards the Hunter provide contrasting scenic amenity and other recreational resources. Plan a visit to the many pleasant parks and reserves throughout the area – check the list below for those that suit your needs best.

| Suburb & Reserve   | General Leisure                    |                              | Active Recreation                        |                       |   | Water Activities   |              |                               | Facilities |         |                               | Other Features             |      |   |  |                |                      |                 |
|--|------------------------------------|------------------------------|--|-----------------------|---|--------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|------------|---------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|------|---|--|----------------|----------------------|-----------------|
|  | Picnicking                         | General walking <sup>1</sup> | Bushwalking/Birdwatching (B)/Camping (C) | Children's Playground | Cycling (C), BMX(X), Mountain Bike (M), Skateboarding (S) | Open Space - games | Horse riding | Canoe Access & Boat ramps (R) | Swimming   | Fishing | BBQs – Electric (E), Wood (W) | Shelters, Tables & Benches | Bins | Toilets – Open 24 hours (O), Restricted (R) | Special Use – Weddings (W), Markets/Stalls (M) | Scenic Lookout | Heritage & Memorials | Disabled Access |
| Windsor  | Governor Phillip Park              | +                            | +  |                       |   | +                  |              | +R                            |            |         | E                             | +                          | +    | O   |  |                | +                    | +               |
|  | Howe Park                          | +                            | +  |                       |   |                    |              |                               |            | +       |                               |                            |      |   |  |                | +                    | +               |
|  | Macquarie Park                     | +                            | +  | B                     | +   |                    |              | +                             |            | +       | E                             | +                          | +    | O   | W  |                | +                    | +               |
|  | McQuade Park                       | +                            | +  |                       |   | C                  | +            |                               |            |         |                               |                            |      | O+R   | W  |                | +                    | +               |
|  | Thompsons Square                   | +                            |  |                       |   |                    |              |                               |            |         |                               |                            |      |   |  |                |                      | +               |
| South Windsor  | Pool Park                          | +                            |  |                       |   | +                  |              |                               | +          |         |                               |                            |      | O   |  |                |                      | +               |
|  | Berger Road Lake Reserve           |                              |  |                       |   |                    | +            |                               |            |         |                               |                            |      |   |  |                |                      |                 |
| Clarendon  | Ham Common                         | +                            | +  |                       | +   | C, S               | +            |                               |            |         | E                             | +                          | +    | O   |  |                | +                    | +               |
| Richmond   | Richmond Park                      | +                            | +  |                       | +   |                    | +            |                               |            |         |                               |                            |      |   | M  |                | +                    | +               |
|  | Smiths Park-Pughs Lagoon           | +                            |  | B                     |   |                    |              | +                             |            | +       | E                             | +                          | +    | O   | W  |                |                      |                 |
| North Richmond   | Hanna Park/Hawkesbury Park         | +                            | +  |                       | +   | S                  | +            | +                             |            | +       | E                             | +                          | +    | O   | W  |                | +                    | +               |
|  | Peel Park                          | +                            | +  | +                     | +   | M, X               | +            |                               |            |         |                               |                            |      | R   |  |                |                      |                 |
| Freemans Reach   | Streton Lookout                    | +                            |  |                       |   |                    |              |                               |            |         |                               |                            |      |   |  |                | +                    | +               |
| McGraths Hill  | Colbee Park                        | +                            |  |                       |   | X                  | +            |                               |            |         |                               |                            |      | R   |  |                |                      |                 |
| Pitt Town  | Cattai Bridge Reserve              | +                            |  |                       |   |                    | +            |                               | +          |         |                               |                            |      |   |  |                |                      | +               |
| Wilberforce  | Chain of Ponds Reserve             | +                            | +  | +B                    |   | M                  | +            | +                             |            | +       |                               |                            |      |   |  |                |                      |                 |
|  | Wilberforce Park                   | +                            |  |                       |   |                    | +            |                               |            |         | E                             | +                          | +    |   | W  |                |                      | +               |
| Central Colo & Upper Colo  | Colo Park                          | +                            |  |                       |   |                    | +            | +                             | +          | +       |                               |                            |      | O   |  |                |                      | +               |
|  | Upper Colo Reserve                 | +                            | +  | +C                    |   | M                  | +            | +                             | +          | +       | E                             | +                          | +    | O   |  |                |                      |                 |
| Yarramundi, Navua, Bowen Mountain, Kurrajong, Kurrajong Heights & Bilpin | Yarramundi Reserve                 | +                            | +  | +B                    |   | M                  | +            | +                             | +          | +       |                               |                            |      |   |  |                |                      |                 |
|  | Navua Reserve                      | +                            |  | B                     |   |                    | +            | +                             | +          | +       | W                             | +                          | +    | O   | W  |                |                      |                 |
|  | Bowen Mountain Park                | +                            |  |                       | +   |                    | +            |                               |            |         | E                             | +                          | +    | R   |  | +              | +                    |                 |
|  | Kurrajong Memorial Reserve         | +                            |  |                       | +   |                    | +            |                               |            |         |                               |                            |      | O   |  |                | +                    |                 |
|  | McMahon Park                       | +                            | +  | +                     | +   |                    | +            |                               |            |         | E                             | +                          | +    | O+R   |  |                |                      |                 |
|  | Powell Park                        | +                            |  |                       | +   |                    | +            |                               |            |         |                               |                            |      |   |  |                |                      | +               |
|  | Bellbird Hill Reserve              | +                            |  |                       | +   |                    |              |                               |            |         |                               |                            |      |   | O  |                |                      | +               |
| Northeast to Ebenezer, Lower Portland and St Albans                      | Bilpin Park                        | +                            | +  | +                     |   |                    | +            |                               |            |         |                               |                            |      | O   |  |                |                      |                 |
|  | Ebenezer Church Reserve            | +                            | +  | +B                    |   |                    | +            |                               |            | +       | W                             | +                          | +    | O   |  |                | +                    | +               |
|  | West Portland Head Road Lookout    | +                            |  |                       |   |                    |              |                               |            |         |                               |                            |      |   |  |                |                      | +               |
|  | Skeleton Rocks Crown Reserve       | +                            |  |                       |   |                    |              | +                             |            | +       |                               |                            |      |   |  |                |                      |                 |
|  | Half Moon Farm (Restricted access) | +                            |  | B, C <sup>2</sup>     |   |                    |              | +                             |            | +       |                               |                            |      | O   |  |                |                      |                 |
| St Albans Reserve  | +                                  |                              | B  | +                     |   | +                  |              |                               |            | +       | W                             | +                          | +    | O   |  |                |                      |                 |

1. Dogs must be on a leash in all parks except Pool Park, South Windsor; 2. Group camping permitted by arrangement with Council.

Reserves throughout the Windsor-North Richmond area offer attractive open space for passive and active recreation. Most have walking paths, grassy areas for games and shade for picnics. Shelters, tables and benches and toilet facilities are nearby.



Macquarie Park, just opposite Windsor, offers a sandy beach



Howe Park is a popular lunchtime venue



Governor Macquarie statue at McQuade Park, Windsor

Children's playground at Ham Common, and Streton Lookout at Wilberforce

## WINDSOR, RICHMOND AND NORTH RICHMOND

Some of the larger parks, such as McQuade Park and Richmond Park, include sports grounds and also children's playgrounds. Both of these parks are of considerable historic significance as they incorporate the 'great squares' of Governor Macquarie, planned in 1810-1811 when he established his townships on the Hawkesbury. As part of the Hawkesbury's bicentennial celebrations (1994) tree-planting to commemorate the pioneers was undertaken and a life-sized bronze monument of Lachlan Macquarie, sculptured by local artist, Frederic Chepeauz, was unveiled in McQuade Park. A section of McQuade Park has been annexed to form Memorial Park, an area containing memorials dating from 1903 that commemorate those that served in the Boer War and in World War I and II.

Opposite McQuade Park on Moses Street is the impressive St Matthews Church of England, designed by ex-convict architect Francis Greenway and built between 1817 and 1822.

At Richmond Park a major feature is the pavilion, built in 1883-84 that served as a grandstand for sporting functions and other events. Other historic features include an 1892 ornamental fountain, a World War I memorial flanked by earlier cannon (1855) restored by the Richmond Air Base, and the Country Women's Association kiosk, built in the 1950s.

Hanna Park and Hawkesbury Park at North Richmond are more recently developed and have excellent facilities. They are the result of a joint venture between the Hanna Match Group, Hawkesbury City Council and the community. The riverbanks, stabilized by the planting of many thousands of trees, provide shade and a fishing platform provides for those wanting to try their luck, or just do a little birdwatching. Canoes can be launched from the low bank nearby. An attractive arbour is very popular for weddings.

Ham Common, a linear reserve opposite the RAAF base, includes a delightful children's playground, cycle paths and shaded spots for picnics. A kiosk adjoins the tourist information centre and parking and toilets are close by.

Ham Common was initially part of the more extensive Richmond Common, established in 1804 by Governor King for the use by settlers as grazing lands. An airfield was first established in 1912 on part of the land by Australia's first licenced pilot, William Ewart Hart. The RAAF, established in 1921, took over the airfield in 1923 and in 1925 No 3 Squadron was established there. A memorial



Richmond Park's historic pavilion



Governor Phillip Park boat ramp, Windsor

to the RAAF is present on part of the reserve and nearby is Friendship Park.

The boat ramp at Governor Phillip Park is favoured for launching ski-boats and other trailer boats. Access for canoes is readily available here and also at Macquarie Park. The latter, with its broad sandy beaches, has been used for well over 100 years as a picnic spot but has had a chequered history due to the many floods that damaged the area. Today a refurbished Macquarie Park House (built 1930) provides a café and seafood restaurant for visitors and the riverbanks have been replanted with stands of trees to provide pleasant picnic sites and grassy areas of recreational value.

Smiths Park and Pughs Lagoon (named after the pioneer Edward Pugh) are at the western end of Windsor Street, Richmond. A scenic and tranquil area, the park is favoured for picnics and passive recreation, the lagoon for fishing and bird-watching. Amenities include BBQs, a shelter and toilets. The historic church of St Peters, built 1837-1840, is present on the slopes above the lagoon.



Travelling northeast from North Richmond on Terrace Road leads to Streton Lookout with its superb view of Freemans Reach and the adjacent rich agricultural riverflats of the Hawkesbury River.

## FREEMANS REACH AND WILBERFORCE

Streton Lookout is named after the well-known artist Arthur Streton, who with Tom Roberts and Charles Conder formed the Heidelberg Group of landscape painters in the 1890s. The small reserve has picnic tables and toilet facilities.

Terrace Road joins Kurmond Road and continues on to Wilberforce. Named in honour of William Wilberforce, a philanthropic British politician who campaigned strongly for the abolition of the slave trade, it is one of Macquarie's five towns, established in 1810. Wilberforce Park today reflects part of the planned central town square with historic schoolhouse and church nearby. It is a pleasant park for picnics and a BBQ with both open space and shady areas present.

Contrasting with Wilberforce Park is the bushland setting of Chain of Ponds Reserve on Stannix Park Road. An area of tall gum trees with grassy ground cover, it is very popular for bushwalking, mountain bike riding and horse riding. A shelter with picnic tables is available.



Chain of Ponds Reserve is a favoured mountain bike and horse riding area

Yarramundi Reserve on Springwood Road and the adjoining Navua Reserve, which is accessed via Grose Vale and Grose River Roads are popular venues for water-based recreation (canoeing, swimming, fishing) and for birdwatchers.



Panoramic views from Bellbird Hill, near Bilpin



Memorial Park at Kurrajong



The specimen Bunya Pine at Bowen Mountain Park

A superb area for a day's excursion or weekend camp is the Upper Colo Reserve, reached from Singleton Road via Colo Heights Road, or from Upper Colo Road.



Horse riding is a popular pastime at Upper Colo Reserve

Northeast from Windsor there are historic sites well worth visiting such as the early 19th century Ebenezer Church, schoolhouse and cemetery. Spectacular lookouts and river reserves nearby provide idyllic picnic and walking areas.



The beach on Swallow Rock Reach is popular with skiers



Bird viewing platform at Half Moon Farm

A great variety of venues is available throughout the Hawkesbury region for sporting events and active recreation.



BMX track at Colbee Park



Trying out the new North Richmond Skate Park

## YARRAMUNDI, NAVUA, BOWEN MOUNTAIN, KURRAJONG, KURRAJONG HEIGHTS AND BILPIN

At the confluence of the Grose River and the Hawkesbury, the water quality is good for swimming and the extensive sandy banks and shallow water between Navua and Yarramundi Reserve make it a safe area for children to play. It is a great place to relax and enjoy the scenery. For those wanting active recreation there are opportunities for canoeing, mountain bike riding, or horse riding.

Contrasting with the river settings are the upland parks at Bowen Mountain, Kurrajong, Kurrajong Heights and Bilpin. Bowen Mountain Park is a delightful small park with magnificent views to the east. It features a huge Bunya pine in the centre, has a shelter, picnic tables and a childrens playground. At Kurrajong there is a small Memorial Park on Old Bells Line of Road and a short distance further west is McMahon Park. This is an extensive park with tall gumtrees shading walking tracks and picnic areas.



Shady children's playground, Bowen Mountain

There is a sports ground with a clubroom and seating for visitors. Toilet facilities are provided. An attractive place to stop for a picnic, to watch the cricket or just to wander along the bush tracks. If travelling further west to Bilpin and beyond a stop at the Bellbird Hill Lookout is well worthwhile for the extensive views across the whole of the Sydney basin. A short distance away is Powell Park, also a pleasant spot for a picnic and short walk, or if time permits a game of tennis. A childrens playground and toilet block are available.



Children playing in the water at Navua Reserve, Grose Vale

## THE COLO

There is something at Upper Colo Reserve for all the family: the river bed is sandy, the water shallow and safe for children to swim and play in. There are opportunities for bushwalking, mountain bike riding and horseriding, and open space for games. It is a quiet and pleasant place to relax, to enjoy a picnic or BBQ. Toilets, a shelter, BBQ and rubbish bins are provided. If planning to camp overnight it is essential to book and there is a small fee.

Another pleasant picnic area is at Colo Park, just off the Singleton Road at Central Colo. There are some shaded areas, open space and access to the river. It is a good place to launch canoes to explore the river, or to swim or fish from the bank. A shelter and toilets are immediately across the Lower Colo Road adjacent to Morans Rock. Two plaques on the sandstone rock commemorate local people who served in the First and Second World Wars.



Pleasant camping area at Upper Colo Reserve



Trigger plants are showy against the sandstone



The blue wren is one of the colourful birds of this area

## EBENEZER, LOWER PORTLAND, LEETS VALE AND ST ALBANS

A few kilometres northeast from Windsor, off King Road, is Ebenezer Church Reserve, also known as Argyle Bailey Memorial Reserve and Swallow Rock Reach Reserve, a linear reserve along the Hawkesbury River. Adjacent to the reserve is the historic Ebenezer Church, built between 1808 and 1820, and associated schoolhouse and cemetery. The cemetery has many interesting headstones of members of pioneer families.

The Reserve is well shaded and has shelters with small tables and benches. Toilet facilities are available. A short track leads down to a sandy beach which is popular for swimming, fishing and picnicking. Ski boats often use the beach as a base for their activities. Just above the beach a bridge crosses a deep gully and this is the start of a walking track along the high riverbank to another picnic area, also reached via Ebenezer Wharf Road.

Bushcare volunteers have been active in this area for a number of years and the bush and wildlife are coming back. High quality interpretative signs add interest to the walk.

If travelling further northeast the West Portland Head Road Lookout provides excellent views of the Hawkesbury. Situated on the high cliffs downstream of Kent Reach, the small reserve is a good stopping off point for morning or afternoon tea. The road continues on to Lower Portland where there is a choice of routes: a ferry crosses the Hawkesbury to join River Road on the east, or travelling straight on you cross the Colo River to Greens Road.

Signposted almost immediately on the right is Skeleton Rocks Reserve which provides access for canoes and other small boats to both the Hawkesbury and Colo Rivers.

Greens Road follows the northern shore of Liverpool Reach and then winds up to Bicentenary Road. A side-road off this provides access to Half Moon Farm at Leets Vale. This has interesting wetlands and regenerating bushland and offers great educational and recreational opportunities.



Enjoying a bushwalk in Ebenezer Church Reserve



River view from West Portland Road Lookout

It is currently available for scouting and school group camps by arrangement with the Council.

St Albans Reserve, on the Macdonald River has shady grassed areas, picnic tables and a children's playground. There are wood BBQs and toilet facilities. The reserve borders the river and provides access for canoeing downstream to the river mouth and the Hawkesbury.

## GENERAL SPORTING ACTIVITIES

Swimming centres are located in Church Street, South Windsor and East Market Street, Richmond. Both centres have swimming clubs and offer a variety of activities.

A major sporting complex with excellent facilities for cricket, baseball, softball and soccer is at Bensons Lane near Richmond. Other venues provide facilities for Australian Rules, athletics, netball, rugby league, basketball, hockey, bowling, golf, gymnastics and squash. Skateboarding and BMX sites are also present near the main urban centres. A motor cycle club, gun club and four-wheel drive club also operate in the area.

The main tennis centres are located at Windsor Road, Richmond and Stewart Street, South Windsor. A range of courts are available elsewhere within the local government area.

Power boats, canoeing, waterskiing, and water polo are all popular. Special annual events include the Hawkesbury Canoe Classic and the Bridge to Bridge Waterski Classic and Powerboat Classic.

Polo, showjumping, trail riding, western riding, hacking, eventing and dressage are all favoured.

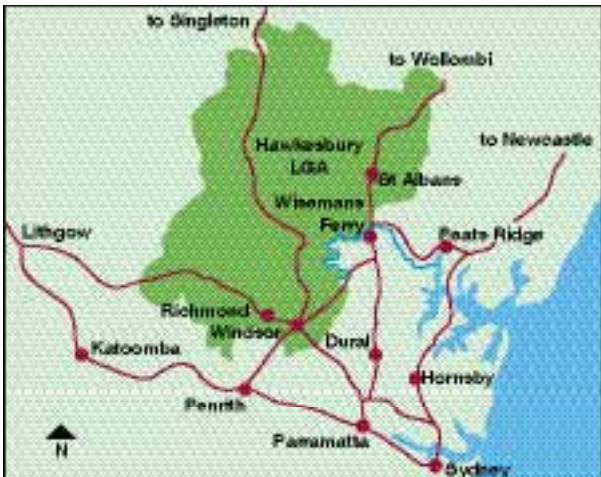


Part of the sporting complex at Bensons Lane on the flats near Richmond

Pony clubs, riding clubs and a race club also operate within the region.

For further information see the Hawkesbury Sports Council, phone 4571 2252.

Camping grounds: for information on access and fees phone 4560 4528.



Hawkesbury City Council  
366 George Street Windsor NSW 2756  
Telephone 4560 4444  
www.hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au



McQuade Park, a popular venue for weddings