



Ngunnawal people
welcome you to
namadgi national park

namadgi



Square Rock Walking Track



ACT
Government



Healthy Parks
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The Square Rock Walking Track rewards the visitor with the best of what Namadgi has to offer—forests of Snow Gum and Alpine Ash, magnificent granite boulders and spectacular wilderness views.

The walk starts at the Smokers Gap car park on Corin Road near the Smokers Gap entrance to Namadgi National Park. After following Corin Road for 200 metres, the track crosses the road and climbs steadily uphill before rounding a knoll and emerging at Square Rock, a prominent outcrop of large granite boulders. There are some stone steps along the way and at Square Rock itself, steep cliffs and steel ladders. About 750 metres before Square Rock, a track leads to Orroral Valley Lookout. The Square Rock walk can be extended by returning via Smokers Trail then back up the road to the car park.

Geology

Granite boulders and rock outcrops lay all over this landscape. The granite formed deep underground about 400 to 450 million years ago and forced its way up into the existing sedimentary rocks. Over millions of years, the sandstones and shales

eroded away, finally exposing the granite. The rounded shapes of the boulders are due to a combination of physical and chemical weathering. Expansion and contraction of the boulders causes 'onion-skin' weathering where the outer layers separate from the main bulk of the rock in thin layers. Often boulders are undercut to produce natural shelters.

Aboriginal significance

Aboriginal rock shelters and artefacts found in the area indicate Aboriginal people lived here in the mountains of Namadgi. Smokers Gap, at the start of the walk, is thought to be a place where Aboriginal people camped during summer while they sought Bogong Moths on the mountain-tops and hunted animals from the surrounding forest.

Mountain flora

Snow Gums grow in the cool, high altitude areas of Namadgi National Park and are the most common tree on this walk. Their leaves are tough and leathery and well-adapted to the cold. Scribbles on the smooth, grey and white bark are the work of the tiny larvae of Scribbly Gum Moths as they eat the bark.

In spring and early summer, colourful wildflowers make the walk particularly rewarding. The brown and yellow flowers of the Narrow-leaf Bitter Pea bloom in spring, and afterwards, triangular pods containing two, hard-coated seeds appear.

Mountain wildlife

Swamp Wallabies with their dark bodies and long black tails, browse on shrubs within this forest. Red-necked Wallabies which have reddish rumps and backs and a pale coloured tail can also be seen during summer. Look for their prints in boggy areas. Frogs can be heard calling from creeks, bogs and ponds adjacent to the track. Wombats are evident by their large, oval or U-shaped burrows, and their cube-shaped droppings that are often left on top of prominent rocks and logs to mark their feeding areas. Fresh diggings may be the work of wombats or echidnas. You may be lucky enough to encounter the Olive Whistler, a medium sized, olive-brown backed bird foraging for insects amongst the tea-trees by the frost hollows.

Males call on and off during the breeding season from September to January. During winter, the birds descend to lower ground. Their call is more variable across their range than any other species.

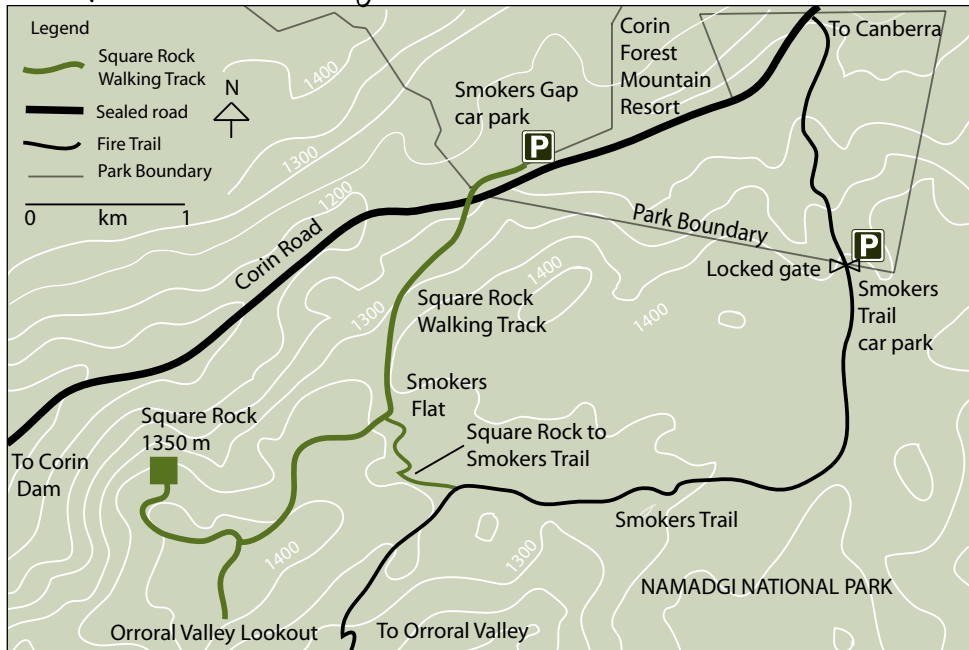
Fire

For the last 20 million years, fire has been a prominent part of most Australian landscapes including this one. The plants here have developed ways of coping with and surviving particular fire patterns. For example, Snow Gums are able to sprout new leaves and branches from large underground tubers. Alpine Ash are usually killed by fire but release millions of seeds afterwards. Evidence of fires can be seen in blackened tree trunks, thick revegetation regrowth, shattered rocks and changes in the mix of species.

Smokers Flat

About half way along the track is Smokers Flat, a flat, grassy herbfield with heathy bog on the edges. It is treeless due to cold air, flowing from surrounding higher areas, restricting tree germination. Eucalypts such as Black Sallees, with their olive-green trunks, occur around the edges, while adjacent slopes have Mountain Gum, Candlebark and Snow Gum. A primitive water plant, Austral Pillwort, which is rare in the ACT, and a threatened herb, Austral Toadflax are also found here. Tea Trees surrounding the bog provide habitat for the Olive Whistler, one of the rarest bird species in the ACT.

Square Rock Walking Track 8 km return Moderate Grade



Olive Whistler

Further information

Namadgi National Park Visitor Centre, Naas Road,
Tharwa, ACT 2620
Phone: (02) 6207 2900
Canberra Connect: 13 22 81
Website: www.tams.act.gov.au
Email: namadginationalpark@act.gov.au
Australian Alps Website: www.australianalps.environment.gov.au
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At Square Rock Lookout

You have climbed 270 metres to get to Square Rock which is around 1400 metres above sea level.

Please take care near the steep cliffs.

To the south-west, between Mt Gingera and Little Ginini, lies Snowy Flat, a Sphagnum Moss bog which stores water, purifies it, then releases it slowly during dry periods. Mountain wetlands play a vital role in maintaining Canberra's water supply.

Black Rock Skinks can be found basking on the rock platforms in sunny weather while Wedge-tailed Eagles glide above the cliffs on the warm updrafts. Lyrebird calls echo from distant gullies on still winter days. Enjoy the view!

Namadgi National Park

Namadgi National Park was declared in 1984 taking its name from the Aboriginal word for the ranges in the south-west of the ACT.

Suggestions for walkers

- Bring food and water.
- Wear comfortable, sturdy walking shoes.
- Bring binoculars and a camera.
- The weather can change quickly at any time of year so be prepared with suitable clothing.
- Advise someone of your plans. Use walks registers.

Leave no trace

- **Leave your pets at home.** Domestic pets are prohibited as they disturb native animals and other park visitors.
- **Carry it in, carry it out.** There are no bins so please take all your rubbish home for disposal or recycling.
- **Leave animals, plants and rocks where you find them.** Each has its place in nature.
- **Use a fuel stove.** They are quicker, cleaner and better for the bush. Open fires are not permitted in Namadgi National Park. Fires are permitted only in fireplaces provided at campgrounds and picnic areas. The nearest constructed barbecues are provided at Corin Dam and Woods Reserve. Bring your own wood.
- **Got to go?** Use a toilet or take a walk at least 100 paces from waterways. Dig 15 cm with a trowel, then cover waste with soil. The nearest toilets are located at Woods Reserve and Corin Picnic area at the end of Corin Road.
- **Stay on track.** Even if it's muddy or dusty, don't widen tracks. Motorised vehicles are not permitted beyond public roads, car parks or locked gates.
- **Respect heritage sites.**
- A camping permit is available from the Namadgi Visitor Centre and is required for overnight camping in the Cotter Catchment portion of the park.



Black Rock Skink



Narrow-leaf Bitter Pea



Bidjee Widgee



Fringe Lily



Derwent Speedwell



Alpine Shaggy-pea

