

Darby River - Fairy Cove Option - Tongue Pt - Sparkes Lookout - Darby Saddle

Difficulty	Medium/Hard
Length	10.1 Km Option: Fairy Cove 300 m Each Way
Total Ascent	594 m Option: Fairy Cove 45 m
Gradient	Undulations, steep climb to Lookout Rocks Option: Fairy Cove steep
Path	Quality rocky track Option: Fairy Cove difficult

Take a Shuttle Bus or Car Shuffle to start this walk at the Darby River carpark, where there is a toilet. The walk ends at the Darby Saddle.

The track heads Southwest from the carpark, and is signposted 'Fairy Cove', 'Tongue Point' and 'Darby Saddle'. The track passes along arcades of tea tree, as well as through areas of low scrub punctuated with Xanthorrhoea bushes, with their erect, tall flower spikes, Hakea bushes spreading their spiky leaves, and occasionally, at the correct time of year, good examples of the Victorian floral emblem, the Common Heath (*Epacris Impressa*), with their scarlet flowers on display.

After about 2.6 Km, you reach a junction. To the right, the track leads to 'Fairy Cove'. This diversion is optional (330 m each way). It is a steep track, and at the time of this survey, in need of some care and attention. It descends to the inviting beaches of Fairy Cove. Only sure-footed and confident walkers should attempt this trip while the track is in its present condition. The return climb back to the main track is hard work.

Warnings notwithstanding, Fairy Cove is a picturesque, rewarding destination. There is a pile of granite boulders dividing the beach into two parts – boulders which make suitable seats for a break!

At high tide, there would be so little sand exposed that the trip would not be worth the effort required, unless you desire to stand on the platform mid-point in the staircase and watch the waves crash on the rocks.

Back at the junction, continue ahead and, after another 100 m, there is also a track off to the left (South). We will get back to that soon enough.

Continue on down the track straight ahead, and, after another 1.3 Km, some of it on green boardwalk, you reach Tongue Point. Stop at the signpost, which warns of the dangers of exploring the rocks further out towards the tip of the point (don't do it!) Enjoy the view!

When you have taken enough photos, retrace your steps to the last junction, and turn right (South), towards Darby Saddle. The track climbs steadily, through beautiful Messmate forest, She Oaks and Banksia.

After about 1.5 Km, you reach a viewpoint at Lookout Rocks. 'Skull Rock' (South) and 'The Glennies' group of islands (West) can be clearly seen from here!

After another 1.0 Km, there is a short side track left, to Sparkes Lookout. There are equally fabulous views from here. This is perhaps a good spot for lunch.

There is now just one more undulation to go, and 3 Km, with a steady descent, to Darby Saddle.

Walk 16 - Elevation Profile



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