



# Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute



The Greater Blue Mountains was recognised by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in the year 2000 as an exceptional example of temperate eucalypt-dominated forest and woodland. Recognition by UNESCO positions the Greater Blue Mountains among nearly 900 properties around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity.

## The Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area

Its ancient and dramatic landforms contain rock escarpments, plateaus, waterfalls, gullies and narrow canyons that have evolved over tens of millions of years. The Greater Blue Mountains Area comprises eight national parks: Blue Mountains, Wollemi, Kanangra-Boyd, Nattai, Yengo, Gardens of Stone, Thirlmere Lakes and the Jenolan Caves Karst Reserve, forming the largest integrated system of a million hectares of protected area in New South Wales.

### Key ecological features

The area contains and protects more than 100 species of eucalyptus (of the 700 identified Australia-wide) and at least another 150 plant species found only in this region.

It is the catchment and lungs of the Sydney basin, providing essential ecosystem services, including the water supply for Sydney's population of over four million.

More than 400 animal species inhabit its gorges and tablelands, including threatened or rare species of conservation significance, such as the Tiger Quoll, Koala, Yellow-bellied Glider, Giant Dragonfly and Long-nosed Potoroo, and rare reptiles including the Green and Golden Bell Frog and the Blue Mountains Water Skink.

The Greater Blue Mountains has the densest and most diverse network of walking tracks in Australia, providing access for millions of visitors each year to some of the most spectacular sights in the country.

Caring for the World Heritage Area is complex and challenging. The protected area is impacted by neighbouring agri-industrial development, and urban development (population 80,000) extends through the area itself, along a major highway extending from the western to eastern border. Tourism, climate change, fire, and introduced plant and animal species present significant challenges to land management.

Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. Our cultural and natural heritage are irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration.

UNESCO

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The Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute was established as a not-for-profit organisation in 2004, with members including research organisations and government management agencies responsible for the World Heritage Area.

## Mission

To broker and facilitate research and community engagement that supports collaboration in the conservation and management of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.

## Goals

**To collectively identify the knowledge** needed for the conservation and adaptive governance of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area and its environs.

**To define, broker and coordinate interdisciplinary research** that addresses identified knowledge gaps.

**To build and maintain partnerships** to actively support the creation, uptake and use of knowledge.

## Members

### Founding members

Australian Museum  
Blue Mountains City Council  
Botanic Gardens Trust, NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC)  
Parks and Wildlife Group, DECC  
Sydney Catchment Authority  
University of New South Wales  
University of Sydney  
University of Western Sydney

### Latest members

Hawkesbury–Nepean Catchment Management Authority  
University of Technology, Sydney

## Activities

The Institute's primary activities of **brokering and facilitating interdisciplinary research and community engagement** are based on projects, workshops and forums in the key program areas of:

### Natural and cultural heritage

- Biodiversity conservation
- Bushfire ecology and management
- Impacts of introduced species
- Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural heritage

### Sustainable development

- Urban and agri-industrial impacts and sustainability
- Tourism
- Integrated catchment management

For information on projects, please visit [www.bmwhi.org.au](http://www.bmwhi.org.au).

## Funding

Being an independent, not-for-profit organisation, the Institute's funding is derived from member contributions, project grants, sponsorship and benefaction.

The Institute is a registered deductible gift recipient. Tax-deductible donations are welcomed from those interested in furthering our work.

The Institute acknowledges the Darug, Gundungurra, Wanaruah, Wiradjuri, Darkinjung and Tharawal Nations as the traditional owners of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area

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