

# The Styx

## Self-drive/walking guide

Take a torch along to get a good look at the inside of the tree. Eucalypt trees take more than 100 years to develop hollows for birds and animals to nest in. The large hollows that have developed in this 400 year-old giant provide fantastic habitat for creatures such as Pigmy Possums, owls, bats and Black Cockatoos.

There is a 30 minute, moderate to difficult track marked between the Chapel Tree and the Christmas Tree.

Follow the pink tags and wind your way through more fantastic forest. You'll exit the forest on the same road you entered it from and can either return the same way or walk down the road to your car.

### 7. Shinglebend

800 metres further along the Styx Road (about 150 metres before Jacques Road on the right) is the start of the track to the picturesque Shinglebend.

This is a lovely shingle bank on the Styx River surrounded by rainforest. Shinglebend suffers occasionally from flood damage.

Walk quietly as you approach the river, keeping your eyes open for platypus and native water rats.

Shinglebend is the perfect spot for lunch or a snack – don't miss it. Note: We advise that you do not swim here as it can be dangerous due to submerged logs and the swift current.

Although the Styx River and Road wind further down the Valley, there is no reliable exit from the Styx Road at Karanja. This is a private road with gates that are often locked. Feel free to explore the rest of the valley, but you will need to retrace your route back out to Maydena.

When leaving the Styx Valley be alert for the overpass, and turn hard left immediately after it to rejoin the main road. (If you miss this turnoff you could be driving for a long time!) Turn left at the bitumen road to return to Maydena.

### DISCLAIMER

*Visitors to this area should be aware that natural hazards occur within Tasmania's forest environments. The Wilderness Society accepts no liability for any injury or damage resulting from such hazards.*

### THE STYX CAMPAIGN

The Wilderness Society has been working for the protection of the Styx Valley for more than 20 years. Since 1999, the campaign has focused on encouraging visitors to experience the beauty of the Styx for themselves.

In December 1999, the Wilderness Society decorated a 77-metre giant in the Valley with 3000 fairy lights and a huge star. The giant Eucalyptus regnans – the tallest Christmas tree in the world – received international media attention and logging in the area was successfully delayed.

In November 2003, a tree sit dubbed the Global Rescue Station was suspended 65 metres above the ground in the canopy of Gandalf's Staff. The Station drew global attention over the summer of 2003–04, highlighting the destruction of Tasmania's ancient forests.

The tension between environmentalists trying to protect Tasmania's ancient forests and timber workers trying to protect their industry has existed for decades, but with the Tasmanian timber industry in collapse, a way forward is here.

In 2010, a Statement of Principles was agreed to by conservation groups, timber communities, forest unions and the industry with the view to developing a comprehensive Tasmanian Forest Agreement. The agreement represents the best chance in a generation to secure lasting peace in Tassie's forests and the permanent protection of places like the Styx Valley.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

#### Write to the Prime Minister

Write to express your support for the protection of our Tassie's growth forests, including the Styx. Visit [www.pm.gov.au/contact-your-pm](http://www.pm.gov.au/contact-your-pm)

#### Sign up for updates via Facebook, Twitter and email

Visit [www.wilderness.org.au/tasmania](http://www.wilderness.org.au/tasmania) for more details.

#### Join The Wilderness Society

Or make a tax-deductible donation to our Styx campaign. Freecall 1800 030 641 or visit [www.wilderness.org.au/join](http://www.wilderness.org.au/join)

#### Shop at The Wilderness Society Shop

Visit us at Shop 8, Galleria, 33 Salamanca Place, Hobart. All profits from the shop go toward our campaign to protect Tasmania's forests.

### THE STYX VALLEY OF THE GIANTS

The Styx Valley lies 70 kilometres west of Hobart (about 90 kilometres by road) on the edge of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area – one of the great temperate wilderness areas on Earth.

The tallest trees in the Styx are the mighty Eucalyptus regnans – the tallest hardwood trees and flowering plants on Earth. The Styx also contains large areas of tall Eucalyptus obliqua, Eucalyptus delegatensis and rainforest. These forests are home to many species of native wildlife, including the majestic Wedge-tailed Eagle, the Eastern Pigmy Possum, the Yellowtailed Black Cockatoo, owls and rosellas. Other features of the valley are limestone caves, the high dolerite bluffs of the Snowy Range, the winding, tannin-stained Styx River, and several waterfalls.

The Styx Valley forests are some of the most 'carbon dense' in the world. As trees grow they draw in carbon from the atmosphere. This carbon is locked away in the trees, and in forest debris and soils. Protecting old-growth forests like the Styx from logging is one of the cheapest and quickest ways we can help avert dangerous climate change.

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

#### Take care on the roads

Although suitable for two-wheel-drive vehicles, the roads through the Styx get slippery in the wet, and very dusty in the dry. Drive no faster than 50 kilometres per hour and slow down for potholes, corrugations and other hazards. Note: The Styx Bridge has a five tonne limit, which excludes use by larger buses. Ensure you have a spare tyre and jack.

Drive slowly in the evening and at dusk to spare wildlife and beware of logtrucks, especially if you decide to drive into these areas on a weekday.

#### Go with adequate supplies

These are dirt roads, many kilometres from the nearest township and out of mobile phone range. Fill your petrol tank before leaving Maydena. Bring food, water, sunhat, raincoat and stout shoes. After leaving Maydena there are no more built toilets, so bring toilet paper and a shovel.

#### Bushfire warning

Please do not light campfires or smoke cigarettes while in the forest. It is not advisable to visit the forest on days of total fire ban or high wind.

# WHAT TO SEE

## 1. Getting there

Drive through the Tyenna Valley to Maydena (90 kilometres from Hobart) on the Gordon River Road. Go 2.5 kilometres past Maydena and turn right onto the gravelled Florentine Road. Turn right again onto the Styx Road and drive beneath the overpass. You are now in an active logging area so beware of log trucks and industrial vehicles.

Stay on the Styx Road and drive past Roberts, Risby Basin, Stump, Maynes, Mueller, and Gold Creek Roads. You can glimpse the mountains of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area on your right as you go.

## 2. The Styx Bridge

After about 10.4 km you will come to the Styx Bridge. Stop here to see the beautiful junction of the Styx and South Styx Rivers. Here the river has a mysterious feel, its waters stained a tea colour by patches of buttongrass further upstream.

## 3. 9B Walk

A new walking track has been created in the threatened forest of coupe SX9B. Turn right onto Jubilee Road, cross the bridge and pass through the gate before taking the first left turn. Follow this road through the remains of forest that was Coupe SX9C, logged in early 2010.

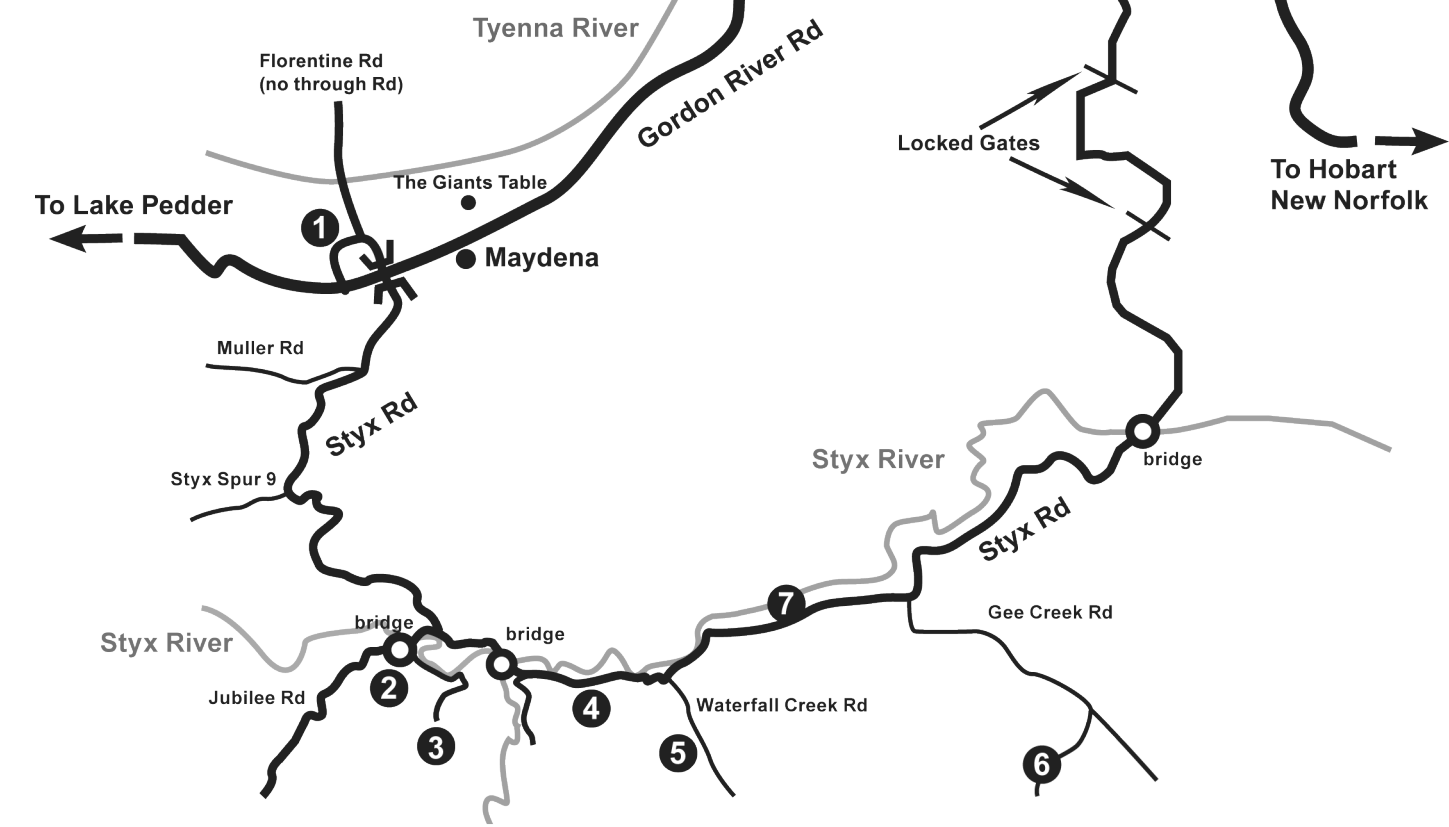
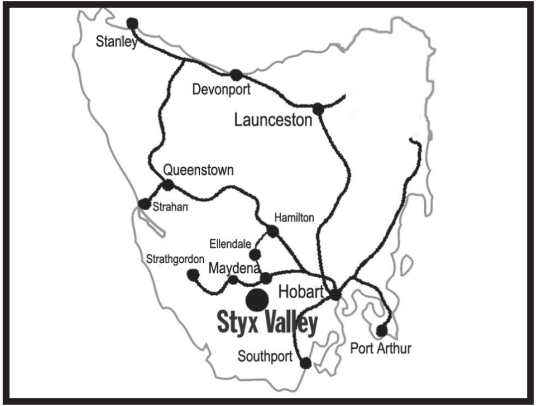
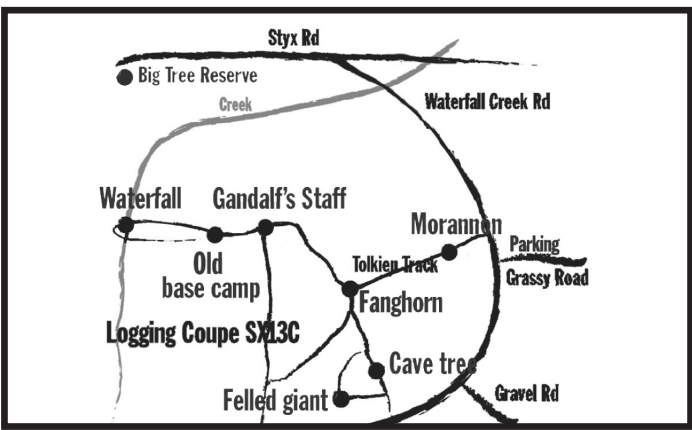
Wind your way up hill to the very end of the road and follow the pink tags that wind a loop through spectacular giants. Wilderness Society volunteers are measuring the carbon contained within this patch of forest in a Citizen Science project that confirms it as some of the most carbon-dense forest in the world.

## 4. The Big Tree Reserve

This tiny reserve was established to protect some of the giant trees that are found throughout the valley. In 2005 this reserve was expanded to include the Tolkien Track. A boardwalk has been established to provide a quick circuit of the reserve.

## 5. The Tolkien Track

600 metres on from the Big Tree Reserve, turn right onto Waterfall Creek Road. Drive for 800 metres and park near the small grassy track on your left. Walk back down the road 40 metres to the start of the Tolkien Track.



This track winds through spectacular forest that was once threatened by logging. Use the map to explore the network of trails. You can retrace your steps to return to the road near your car, or join the road further up and walk back down the hill to your car.

There is plenty to see on this track. Walk under Morannon, the 'Black Gate'; see the 75 metre giant with twin trunks named 'Fangorn'; enter the Cave Tree; walk along the trunk of the Felled Giant; and stand in awe under Gandalf's Staff, the 84 metre tall giant that was host to the Global Rescue Station. in 2003.

If you're in the mood for a longer walk, follow the track to the intimate seclusion of the waterfall (20 minutes). Note: Track can be slippery.

## 6. The Chapel Tree

Once on the Styx Road again, continue 2.9 kilometres then turn right onto Gee Creek Road. Veer right again after 800 metres onto Skeleton Road. About a kilometre up the hill from the creek you will see markers indicating the 50 metre track to the Chapel Tree. This tree is the second most massive living thing in Tasmania. It is so old the hollowed out centre has breached the trunk, creating a peaceful 'chapel' big enough to walk into.