

COMPILED FROM READER RESPONSES

QUEENSLAND HIDDEN GEMS

INSIDE

The A to Z of 30 Queensland places you may not be aware of, from gorges to waterfalls and more ...

 **BUS 4x4**

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* Based on reader responses in 2020



Wunya*, welcome to Queensland

Queensland is a place like no other. Our garden is a one-million-year-old rainforest. Out the back is a red desert of dinosaur bones. Our swimming pool is the world's largest reef.

However, many people still don't know the hidden gems in our own backyard. Hence Bus 4x4 ran a campaign called **The Top 30 Places in Queensland you may not be aware** on social media in 2020. We hand-picked 25 and invited our readers to suggest the balance 5 places to complete the Top 30.

Enjoy the list and let us know if you have any suggestions.

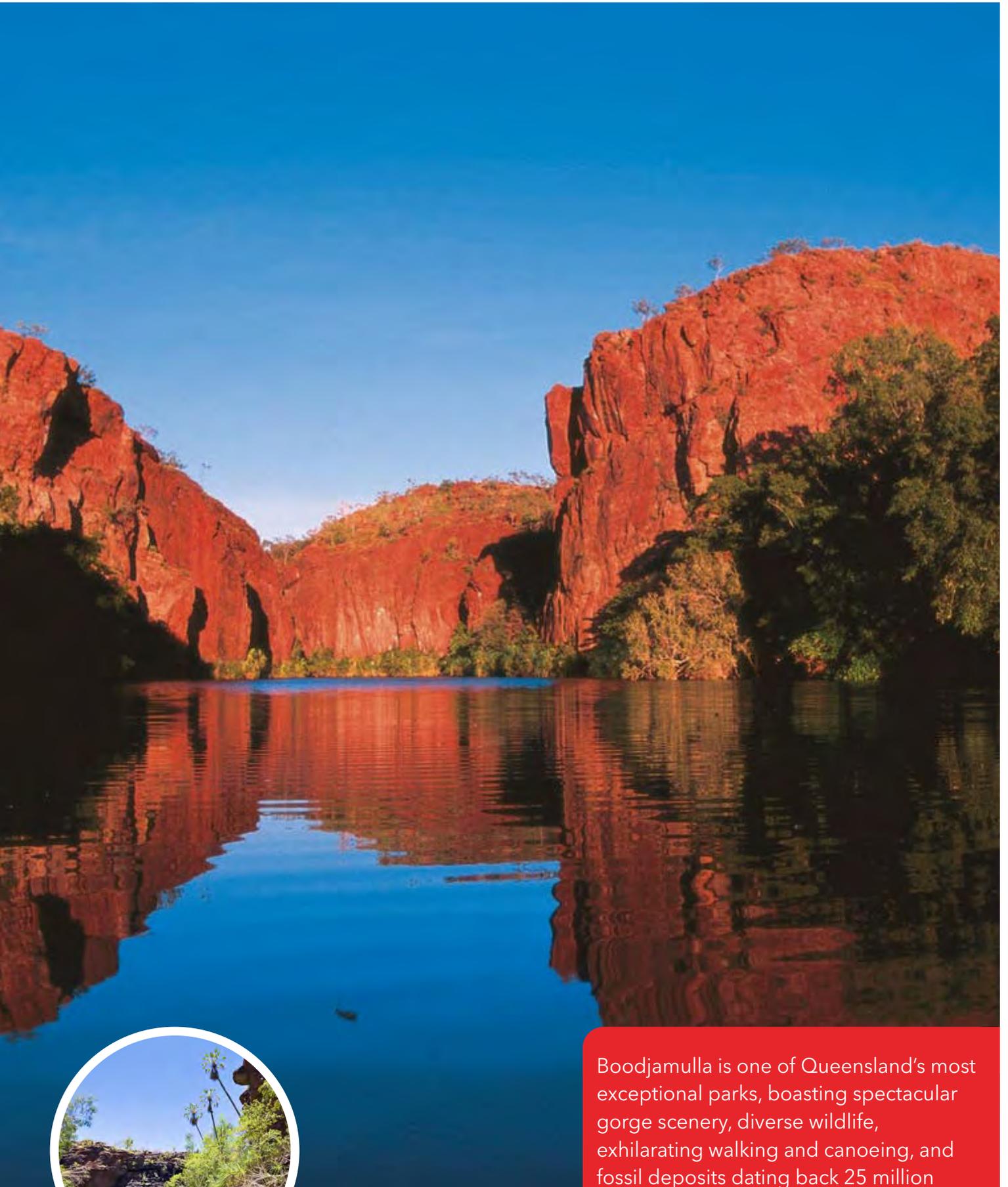
* Greetings in Yuggera language of Brisbane

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The twin towns of Agnes Water and 1770 are located at the southern end of the Great Barrier Reef, 90 minutes north of Bundaberg. They offer pristine beaches and an extensive range of wildlife.





Boodjamulla is one of Queensland's most exceptional parks, boasting spectacular gorge scenery, diverse wildlife, exhilarating walking and canoeing, and fossil deposits dating back 25 million years. The Riversleigh World Heritage Site is located within the National Park.



Byfield Forest, where you get to see coastal scenery, sand dunes, rainforest and pinnacles under 1 hour from Rockhampton. Here picturesque recreation areas are surrounded by rainforest-edged creeks, rugged mountains, pine plantations, ancient cycads, massive parabolic sand dunes and rugged pinnacles.



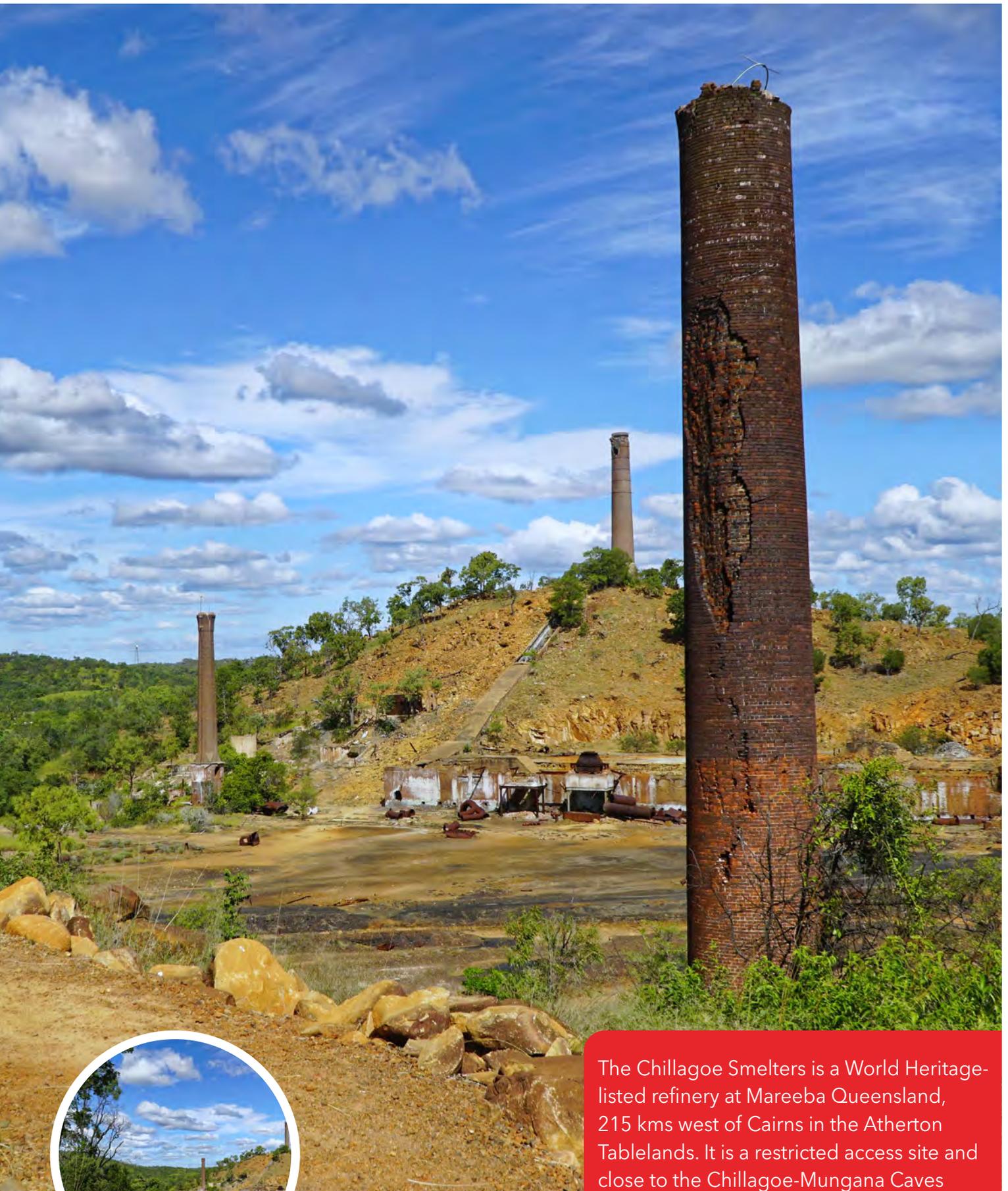


The Sunflower Route which has been made famous on Instagram is a 26km drive through the Darling Downs and Southern Downs country of Queensland. Summer is the best time to take in the wonder and splendour of the Sunflower Route. Depending on the season's rainfall, late December through to March is the most likely period to view blooming sunflowers.

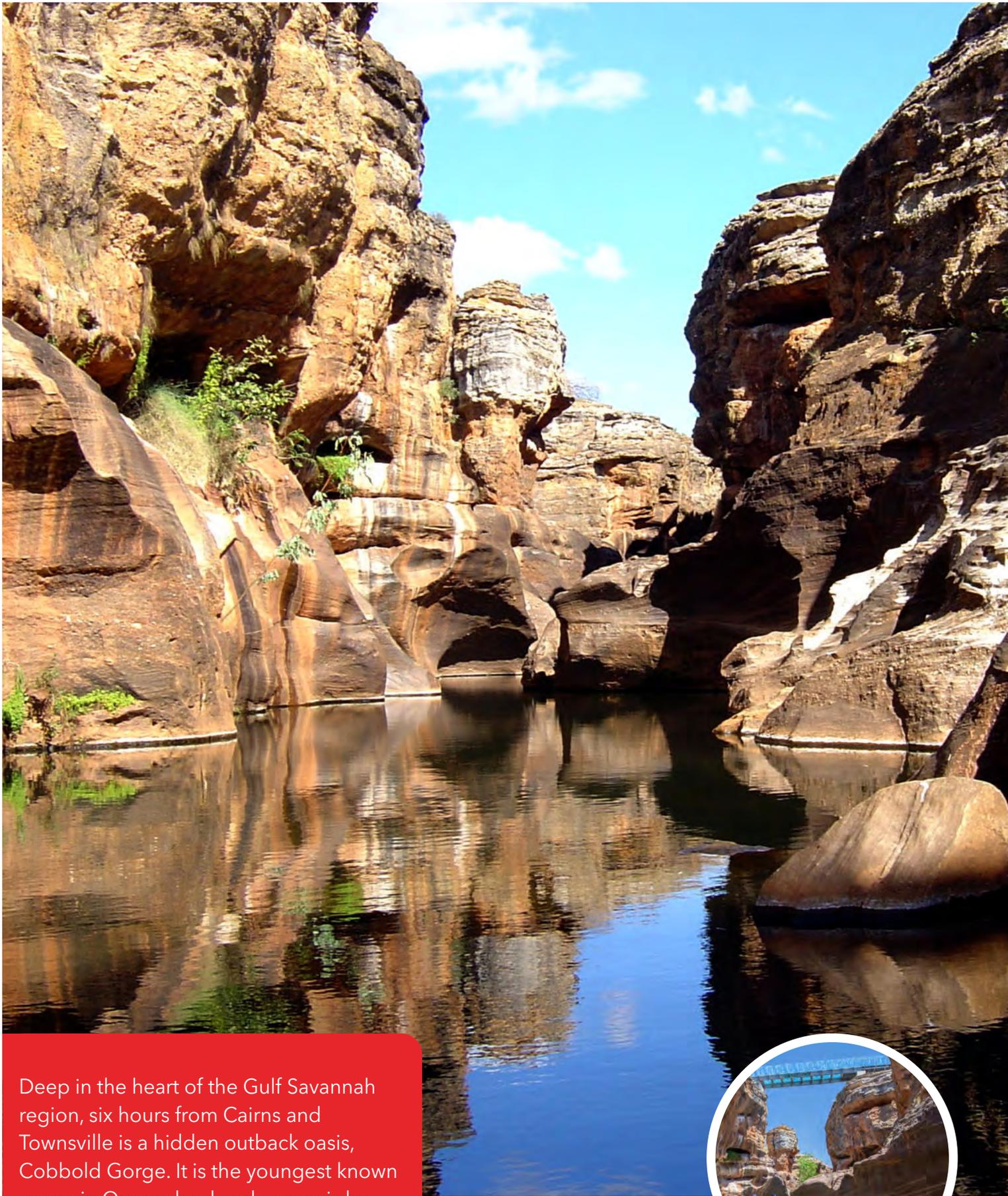


Everyone knows the Whitsundays, but not many visit Champagne Bay on Thomas Island where if you wiggle your toes in the sand, you will see millions of bubbles rise to the surface like you are standing in a glass of champagne!



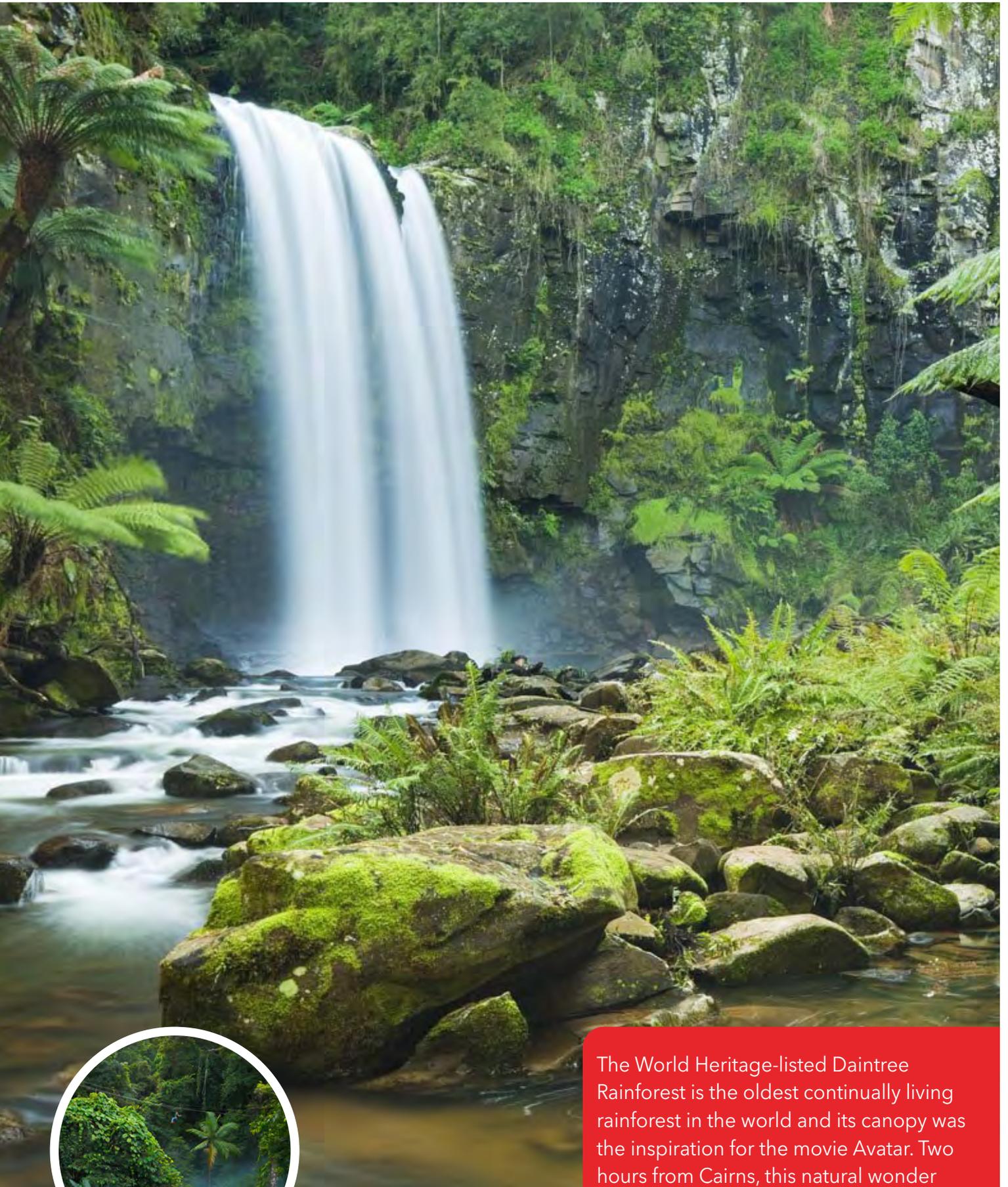


The Chillagoe Smelters is a World Heritage-listed refinery at Mareeba Queensland, 215 kms west of Cairns in the Atherton Tablelands. It is a restricted access site and close to the Chillagoe-Mungana Caves which feature limestone caves and small galleries of Aboriginal rock art.



Deep in the heart of the Gulf Savannah region, six hours from Cairns and Townsville is a hidden outback oasis, Cobbold Gorge. It is the youngest known gorge in Queensland and access is by guided tour only.



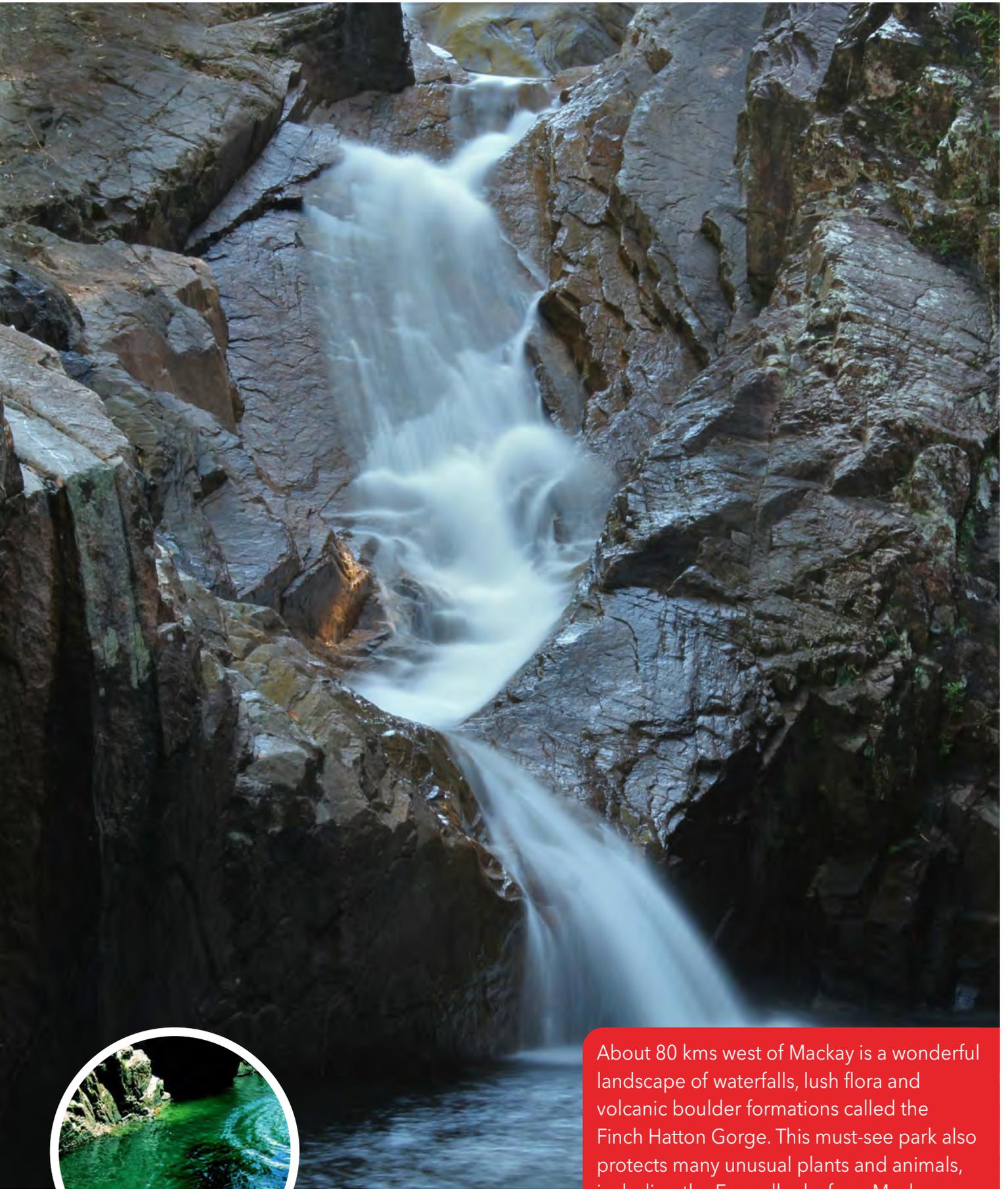


The World Heritage-listed Daintree Rainforest is the oldest continually living rainforest in the world and its canopy was the inspiration for the movie Avatar. Two hours from Cairns, this natural wonder reveals breathtaking beauty unlike any other.

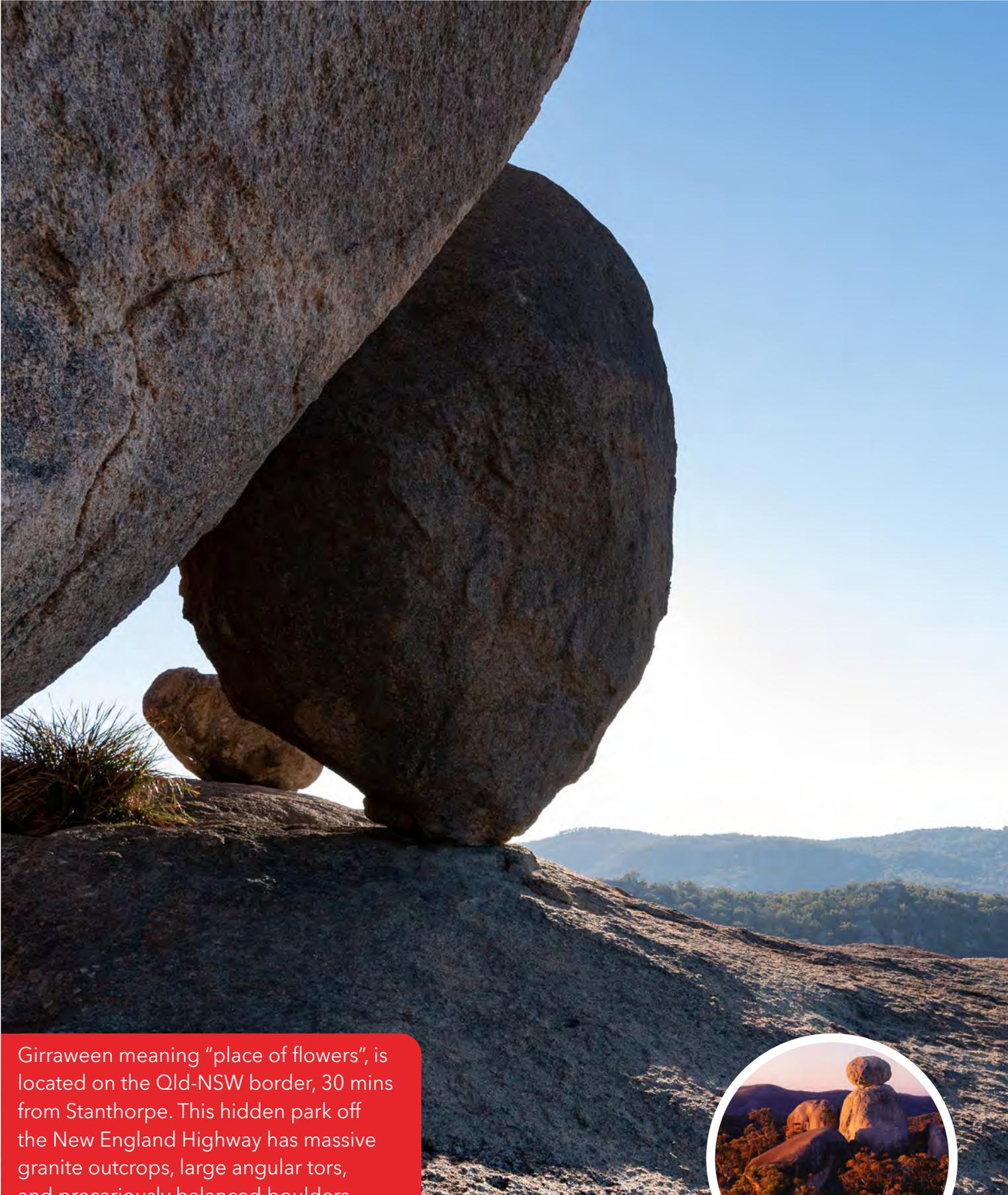


Fairy Pools are natural rock pools hidden in the Noosa National Park. You will need to take a long walk from the Main Beach using the Coastal Track to find this well hidden spot where you can swim in the sea without being swept out by ocean waves.





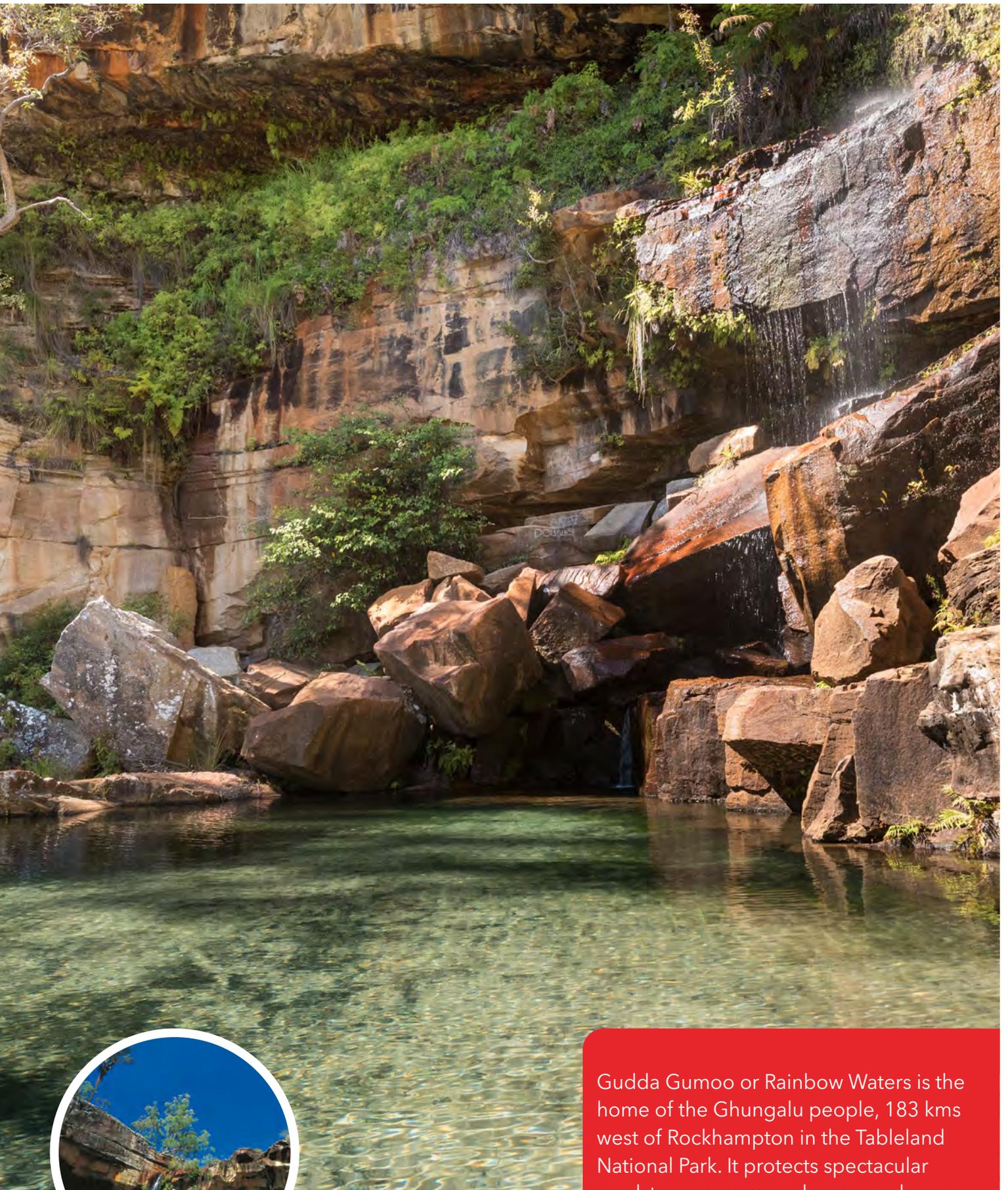
About 80 kms west of Mackay is a wonderful landscape of waterfalls, lush flora and volcanic boulder formations called the Finch Hatton Gorge. This must-see park also protects many unusual plants and animals, including the Eungella dayfrog, Mackay tulip oak, Eungella spiny cray and Eungella honeyeater.



Girraween meaning “place of flowers”, is located on the Qld-NSW border, 30 mins from Stanthorpe. This hidden park off the New England Highway has massive granite outcrops, large angular tors, and precariously balanced boulders interspersed with spectacular wildflowers in spring.



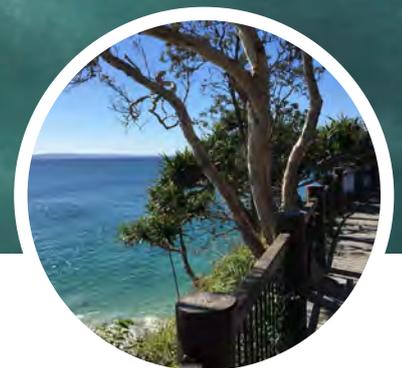
Gudda Gumoo Gorge



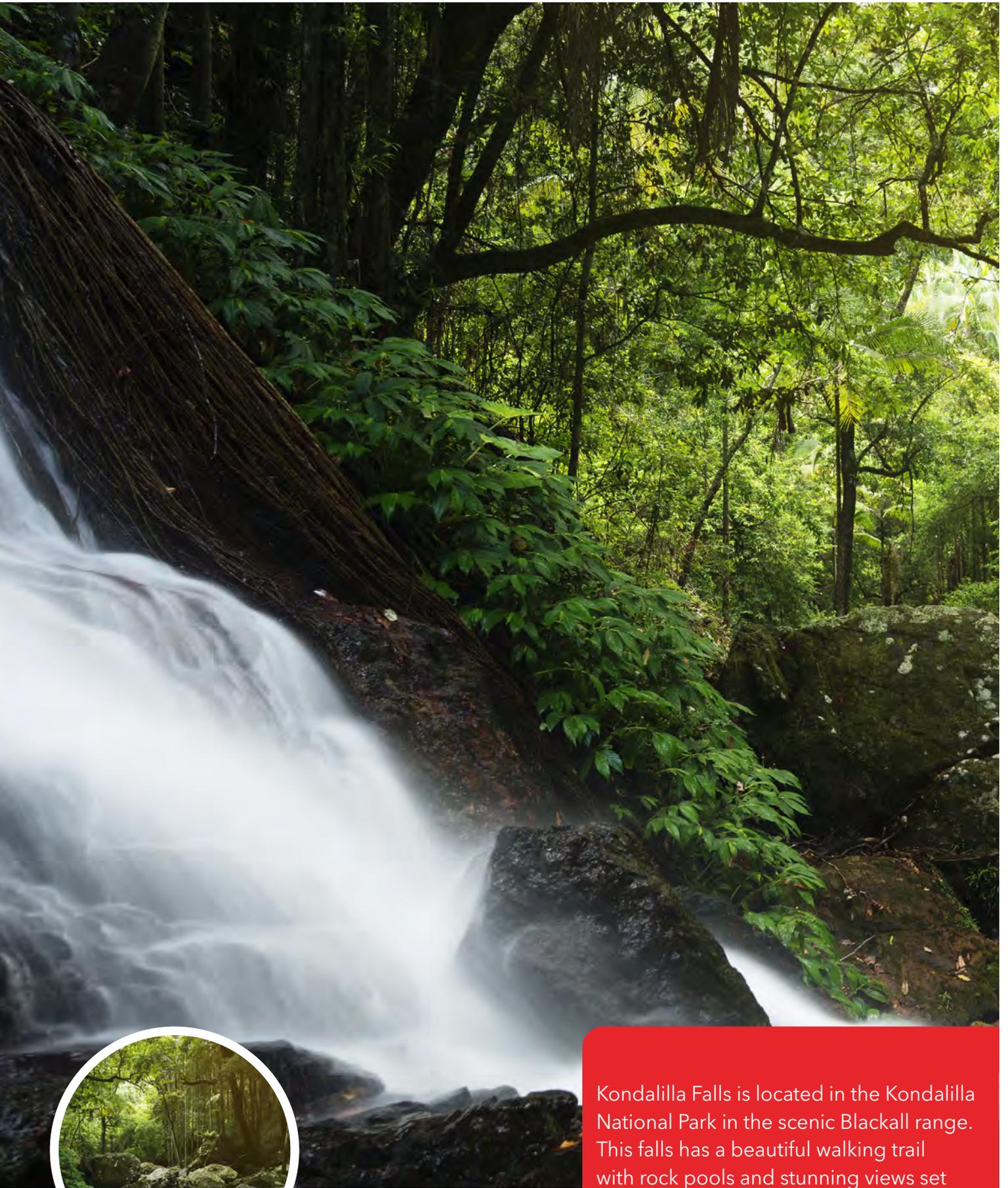
Gudda Gumoo or Rainbow Waters is the home of the Ghungalu people, 183 kms west of Rockhampton in the Tableland National Park. It protects spectacular sandstone scenery and you can also see vivid rock art.



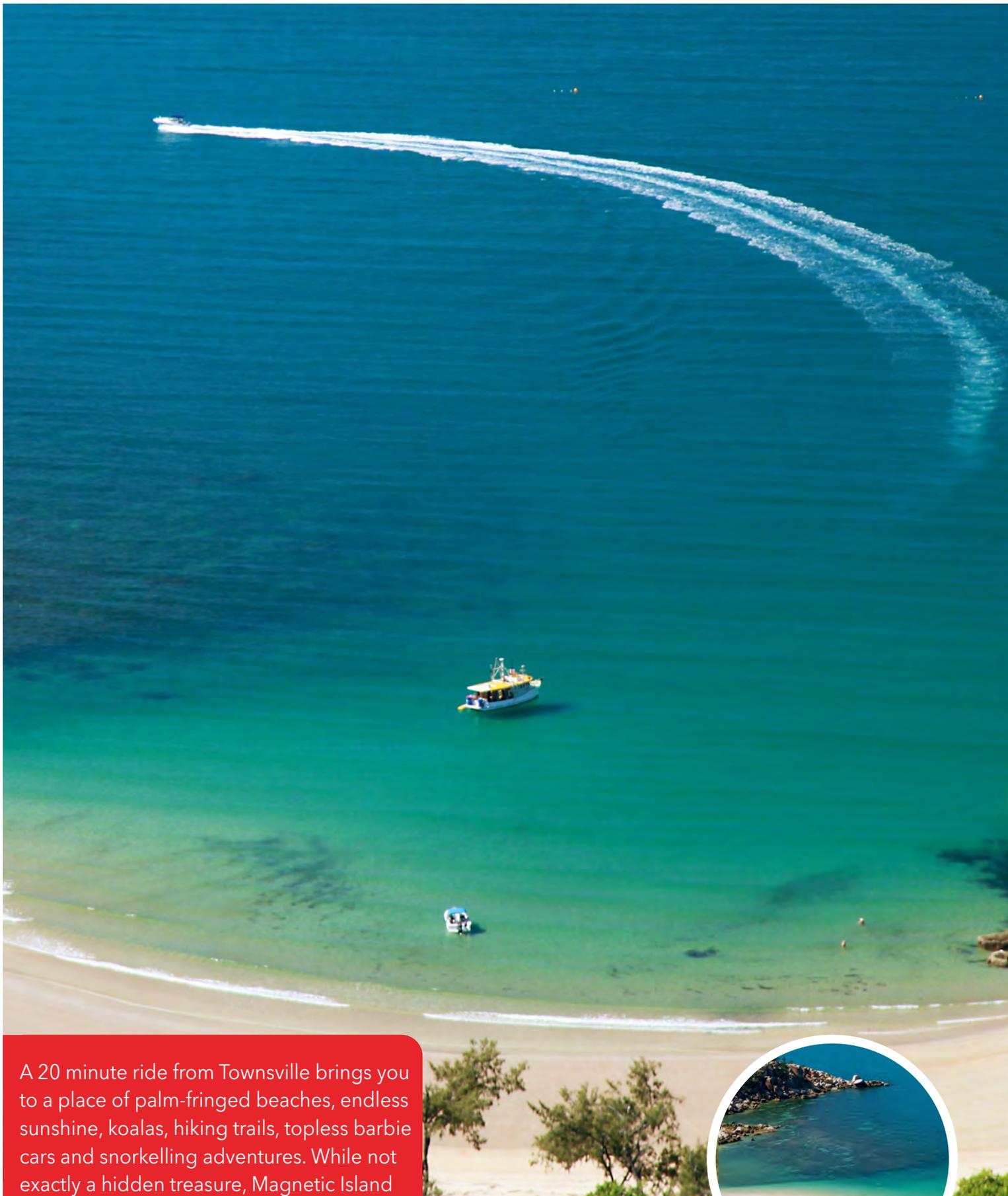
Hells Gates is a dramatically named high bluff on Noosa Heads with spectacular views of the coastline. You can also see migrating whales during July to November. You need to access designated viewing areas only due to a 10 metre vertical drop!



Kondalilla Falls



Kondalilla Falls is located in the Kondalilla National Park in the scenic Blackall range. This falls has a beautiful walking trail with rock pools and stunning views set amongst a lush rainforest.



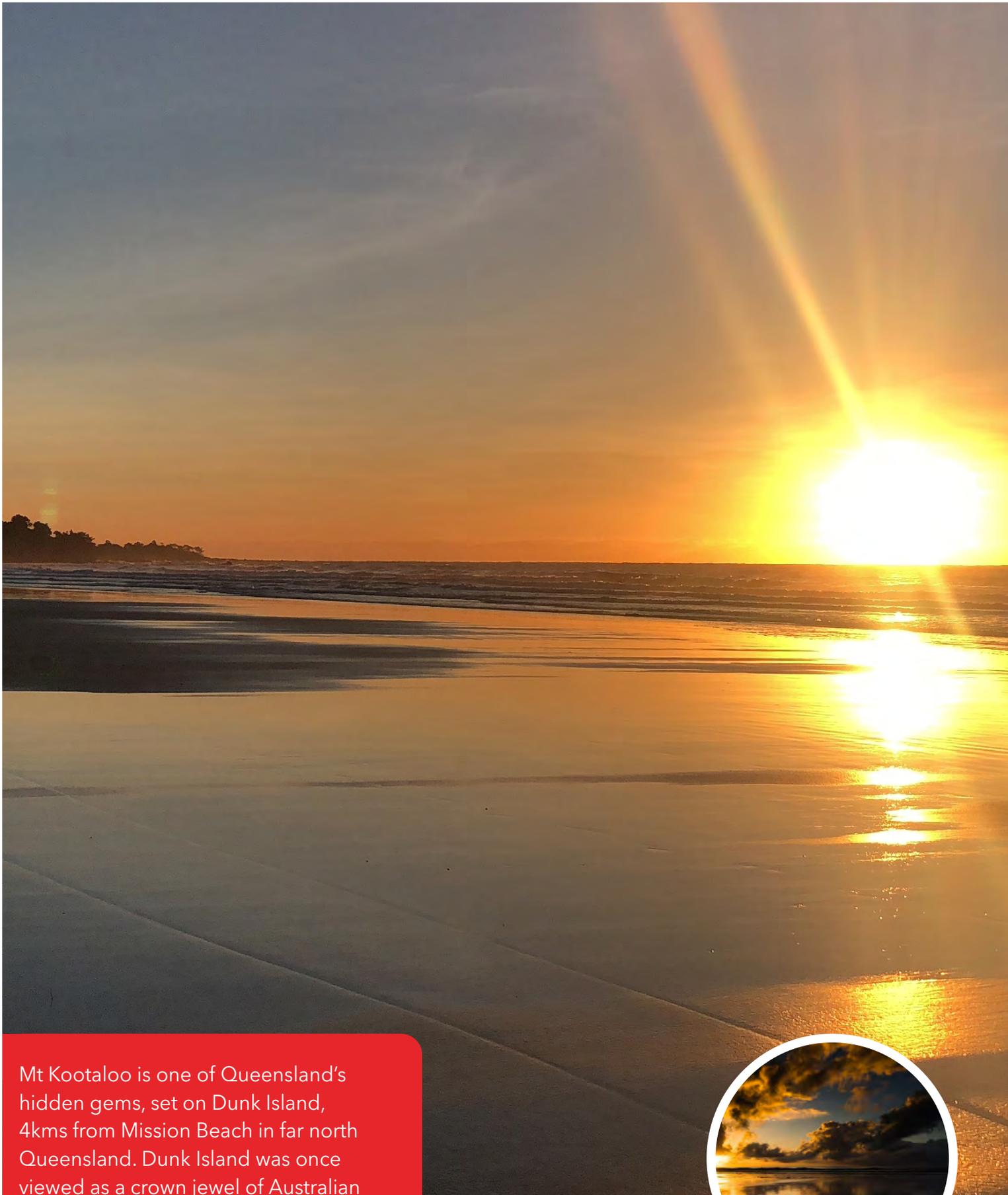
A 20 minute ride from Townsville brings you to a place of palm-fringed beaches, endless sunshine, koalas, hiking trails, topless barbie cars and snorkelling adventures. While not exactly a hidden treasure, Magnetic Island nevertheless boasts of natural beauty and serenity of an island paradise.



Mamu Tropical Skywalk



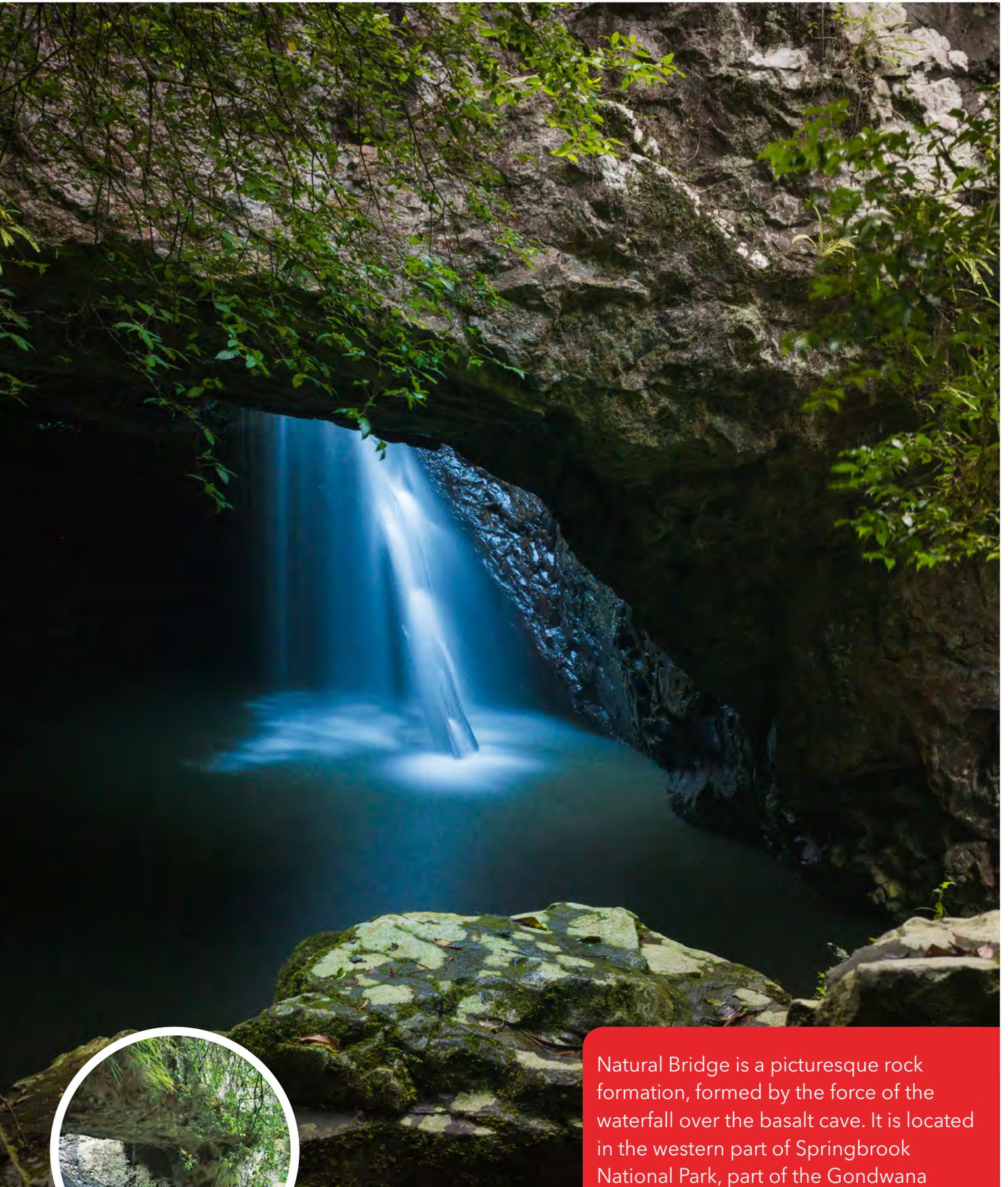
The Mamu Tropical Skywalk is a 350 metre long elevated walkway located within the Wooroonooran National Park in Innisfail. The cantilever provides tantalising views over the North Johnstone river gorge overlooking a pristine rainforest-clad mountainous landscape.



Mt Kootaloo is one of Queensland's hidden gems, set on Dunk Island, 4kms from Mission Beach in far north Queensland. Dunk Island was once viewed as a crown jewel of Australian tourism, before it was severely damaged by Cyclone Yasi in 2011.



Natural Bridge



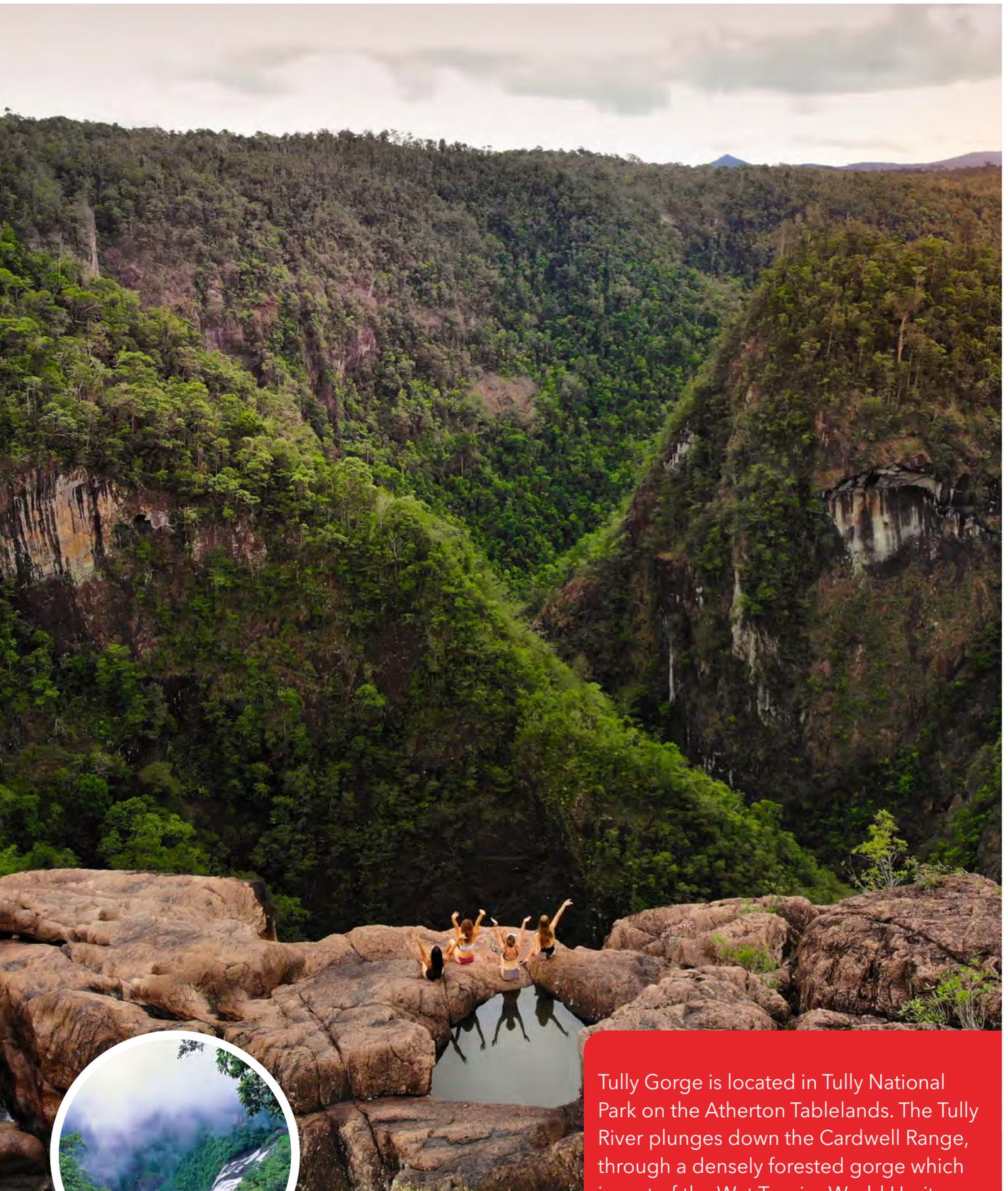
Natural Bridge is a picturesque rock formation, formed by the force of the waterfall over the basalt cave. It is located in the western part of Springbrook National Park, part of the Gondwana Rainforests of Australia World Heritage Area.



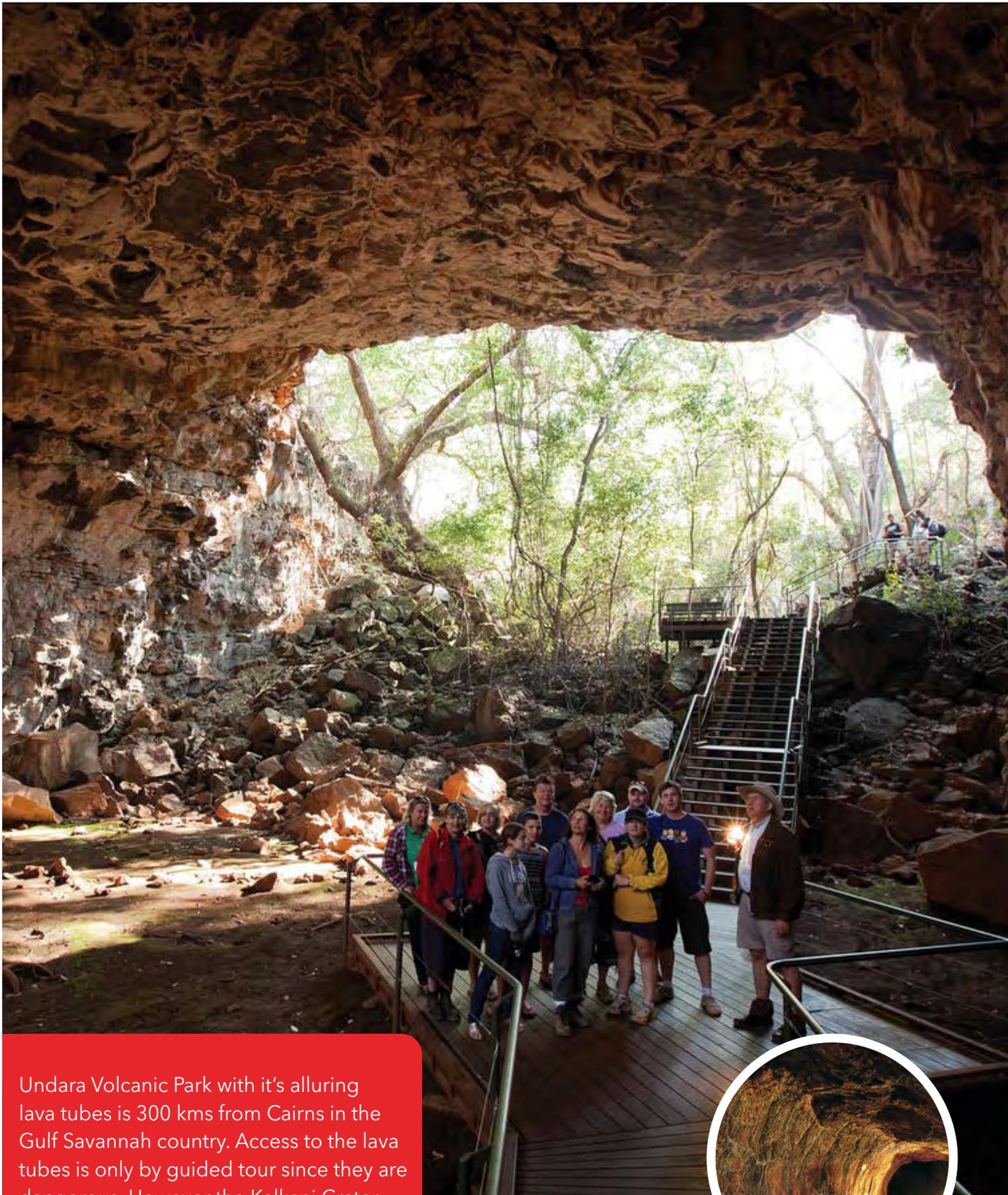
Dripping Rock and the Overhang is a 3.2km hike located in the Cania Gorge National Park in Queensland's North Burnett Region. Enjoy the 70m sandstone cliffs and wildlife including rock wallabys, bettong, platypus and over 90 bird species.



Tully Gorge

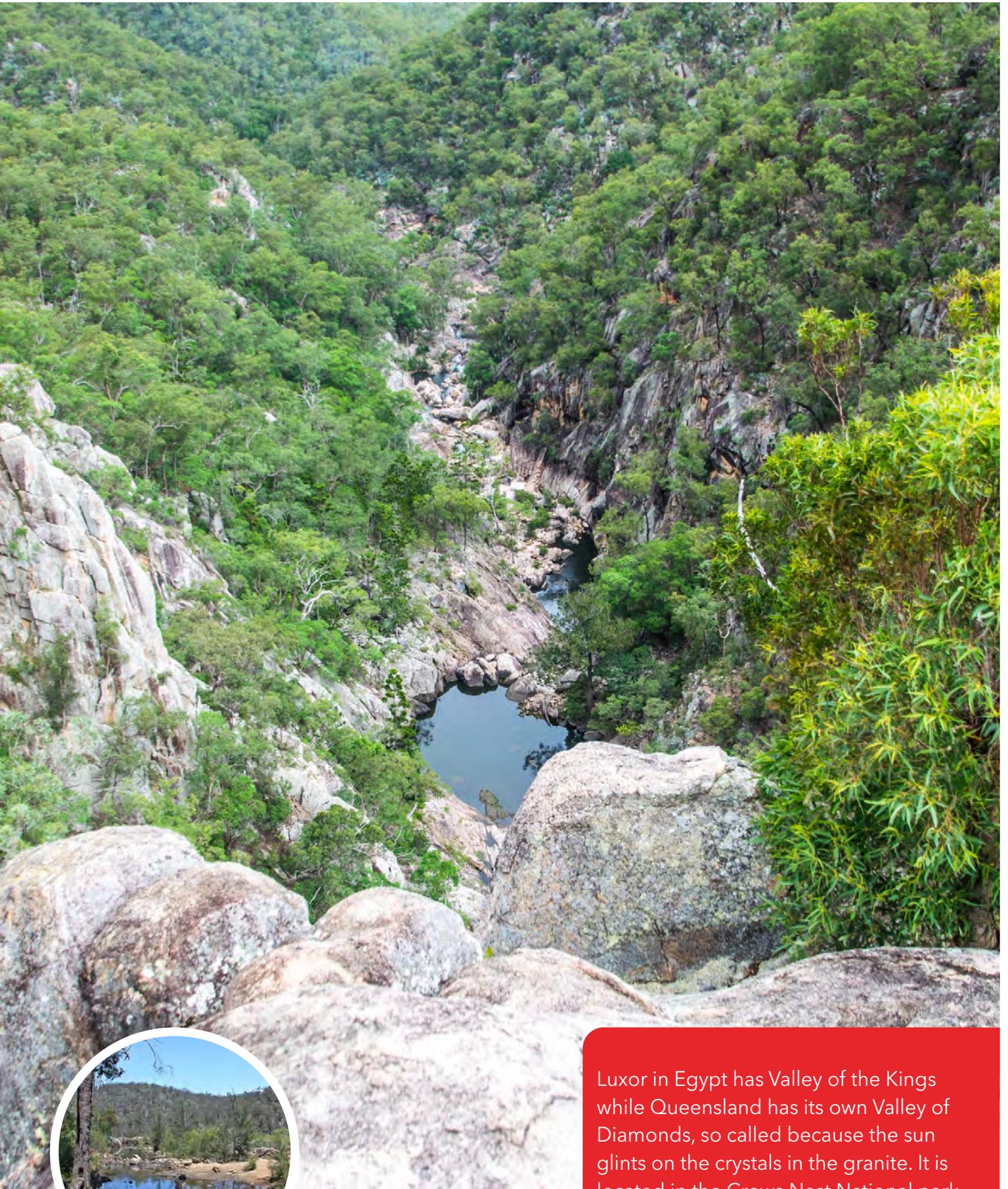


Tully Gorge is located in Tully National Park on the Atherton Tablelands. The Tully River plunges down the Cardwell Range, through a densely forested gorge which is part of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.



Undara Volcanic Park with its alluring lava tubes is 300 kms from Cairns in the Gulf Savannah country. Access to the lava tubes is only by guided tour since they are dangerous. However the Kalkani Crater rim does not need a tour guide.





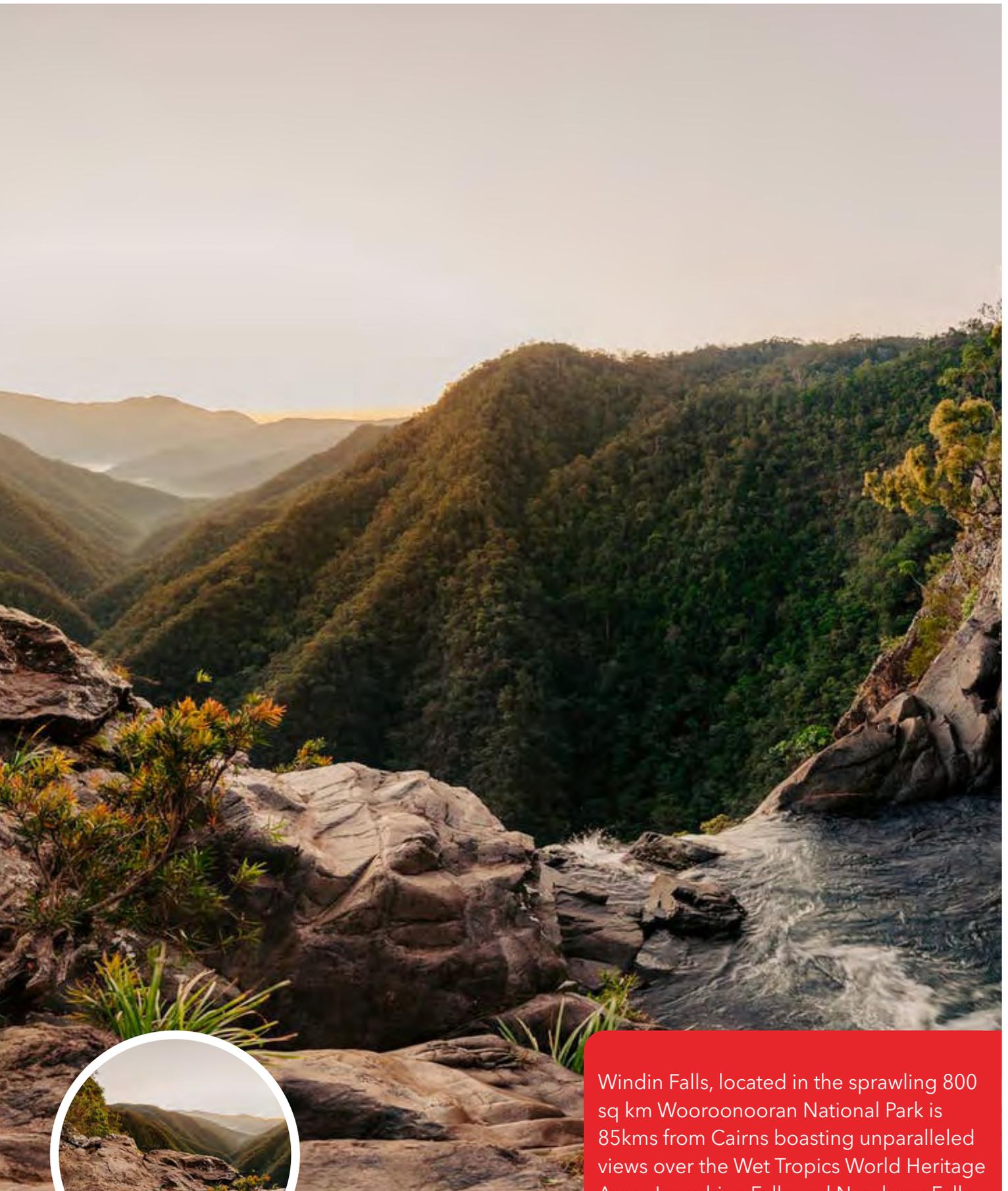
Luxor in Egypt has Valley of the Kings while Queensland has its own Valley of Diamonds, so called because the sun glints on the crystals in the granite. It is located in the Crows Nest National park, about 56 kms from Toowoomba.



Wallaman Falls are the highest, permanent, single-drop waterfalls in Australia. They are located in the Girringun National Park, 51 kms south-west of Ingham and home to some of the oldest rain forests on earth.



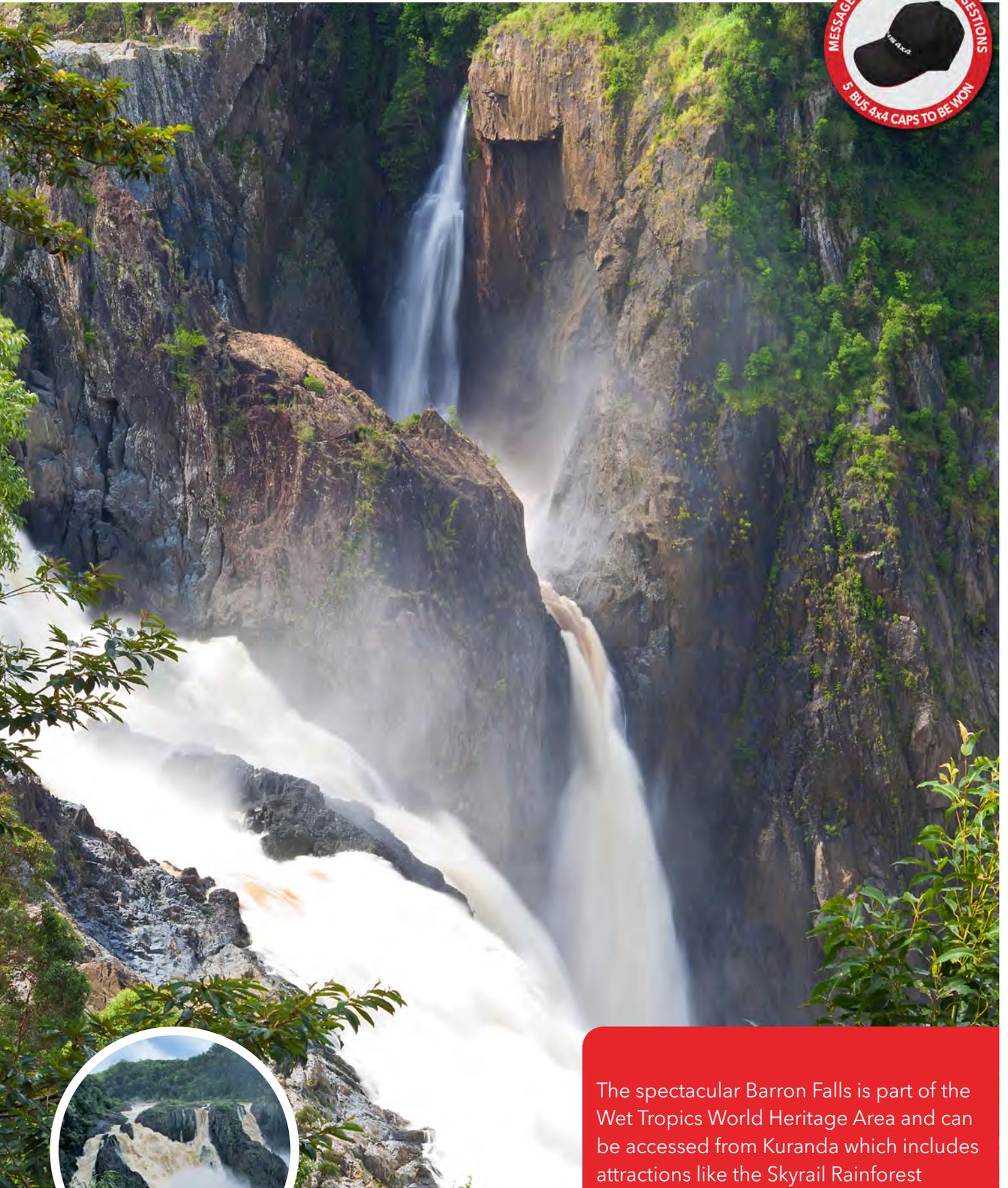
Windin Falls



Windin Falls, located in the sprawling 800 sq km Wooroonooran National Park is 85kms from Cairns boasting unparalleled views over the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. Josephine Falls and Nandroya Falls are also worth visiting.



Zoe Falls on Hinchinbrook Island is part of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. Zoe Falls plummets into a deep blue tropical rainforest lined swimming hole with incredible views at the top.

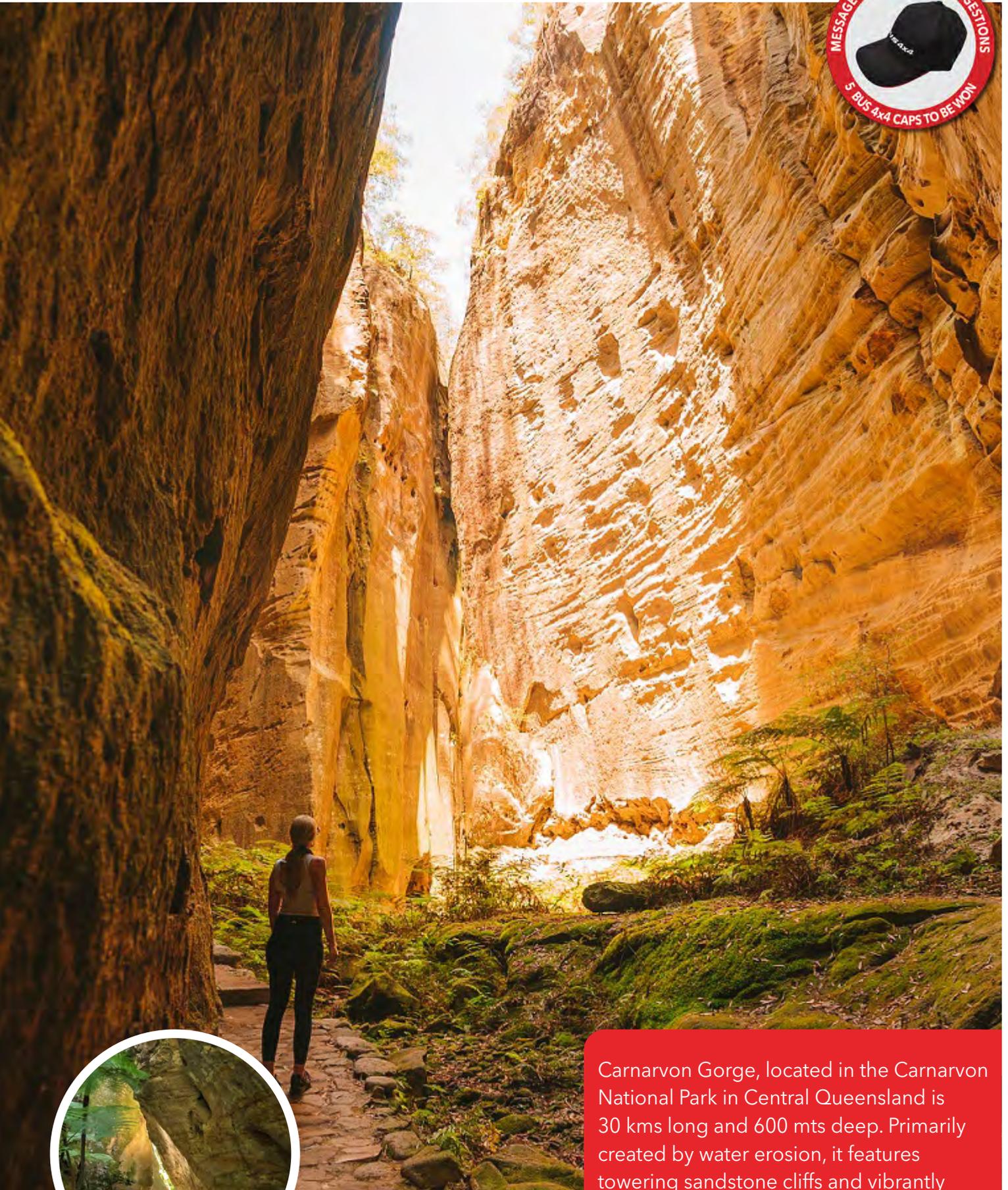


The spectacular Barron Falls is part of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and can be accessed from Kuranda which includes attractions like the Skyrail Rainforest Cableway and the scenic Kuranda Railway.



Mt Etna National Park, named after the volcano in Sicily by the Archer Brothers of Rockhampton is the roosting site for more than 80 per cent of Australia's breeding population of little bent-wing bats. The park is also one of the few places in Australia supporting a colony of vulnerable ghost bats.





Carnarvon Gorge, located in the Carnarvon National Park in Central Queensland is 30 kms long and 600 mts deep. Primarily created by water erosion, it features towering sandstone cliffs and vibrantly coloured side gorges with some of the finest Aboriginal rock imagery in Australia.



The awe-inspiring Glass House Mountains formed 25-27 million years ago from volcanic activity are iconic landmarks on the Sunshine Coast. The incredible Australia Zoo, founded by the famed "Crocodile Hunter" Steve Irwin is located nearby.





Named as Australia's best beach among 11,761 beaches, Nudey Beach is a pristine white sand and coral beach on Fitzroy Island in the Great Barrier Reef region.



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However, many travellers and people living here do not know of the hidden places in Queensland. Bus 4x4 has compiled a list of The Top 30 places in Queensland you may not be aware of. In 2020, we hand-picked the Top 25 and invited our readers to suggest the balance 5 places.

Enjoy the list and let us know if you have any suggestions.

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Note: Information and pictures contained in the e-book is taken from various Government and tourism sources