

Wooldridge Recreation & Fossicking Reserve

Located approximately 6km from Uralla, the Wooldridge Recreation & Fossicking Reserve offers ample parking for caravans and campervans, free camping and toilet facilities, picnic tables, wood fired barbecues (subject to fire restrictions) and fresh drinking water.

Relax under the ghost gums on a hot summer's day and be serenaded by the variety of bird life that calls the reserve home. Be sure to keep an eye out for the occasional kangaroo or wallaby passing through.

Gold pans are available for hire at the Uralla Visitor Information Centre at a nominal charge, so why not try your hand at panning for gold just like the early pioneers did all those years ago.

Pets are allowed into the reserve, but owners are requested to keep them on a leash at all times. Please use the rubbish bins provided to dispose of any litter. Shooting is prohibited.

What can be found there?

Crystals—Clear and milky quartz crystals can be found in the creek and in the old creek bed.

Diamonds—Diamonds have been found in the area and are found in recent gravels. Uncut, they resemble small ragged pieces of glass.

Gold—Uralla Gold is very yellow and very fine and can be found in the creek and in the old creek bed.

Garnet—Garnets are crimson red in colour and can be found in recent gravel.

Mica—Mica can be seen in the creek and on the sandy shores. It sparkles like gold, but is much lighter in colour, is flat, and often is black on one side. Mica has no value but is a lot of fun for the younger ones.

Sapphires—Sapphires can be yellow, green, gold or most commonly, blue. These are found in recent gravel.

Topaz—Topaz is transparent and colourless but is normally tinted by impurities and can be yellow, pale grey, blue-brown or wine colour or reddish-orange. These are found in recent gravel.

Zircon—Zircons can be black, brown, orange, yellow or colourless and are found in recent gravel.

Rock Hunter's Rendezvous

Samples of local gem stones can be found at the 'Rock Hunter's Rendezvous' on display at the Uralla Visitor Information Centre and local gold samples can be purchased from the centre.

Your Responsibilities and the Law

You can use—Gold pans, metal/gold detectors, spade, sieves.

You can't use—Powered equipment including any motor or generator driven equipment, dredges, explosives or any liquid or other pollutants.



Panning for gold

1. Fill pan 3/4 full of gravel, then submerge it to fill it with water, and gently shake it back and forth and from side to side with sufficient force to move the lighter gravel out over the edge of the pan.
2. Hold the pan with both thumbs inside the pan with the ridged side away from you. Tilt the pan away from you to catch any gold specks under the ridges and to allow muddy water to wash out.
3. Remove any large stones or gravel.
4. Level the pan from time to time and shake it back and forth to allow the light material to come to the surface and the gold to settle to the bottom.
5. Continue shaking until only fine sand remains in the pan.
6. Use a circular motion to make the water swirl in the pan and watch the edges for gold specks.
7. To remove gold, carefully drain the water from the pan and use a dry finger to press on the gold so that it sticks to your finger. Have a water filled container ready and rinse the gold off your finger into the container.

Fossicking for gems

1. Using two sieves, place one on top of the other and fill the top sieve with gravel wash.
2. Shake the sieves in the water in a circular motion with a slight upward movement to suspend the wash. Wash until only sand and gravel remain.
3. Remove the top sieve and check it for gems. Before returning the contents to the creek, hold the sieve above you and check for any shiny or colourful stones you may have missed.
4. Slightly submerge the second sieve and shake it up and down and from left to right a few times.
5. Take the sieve to a clean flat surface and flip it over. Check the wash for gems.

How to get there

Turn into the Kingstown Rd near the Matilda service station and drive for about 3.5km. Turn right into Devoncourt Rd and follow the sealed road all the way to the end. At the end of Devoncourt Rd you will drive over a cattle grid to enter the Wooldridge Recreation and Fossicking Area.

