

U3A Southlakes

Walking the Lake

Sandy Creek Saunter

Correct as at 10th February, 2018

Overview and Track Information

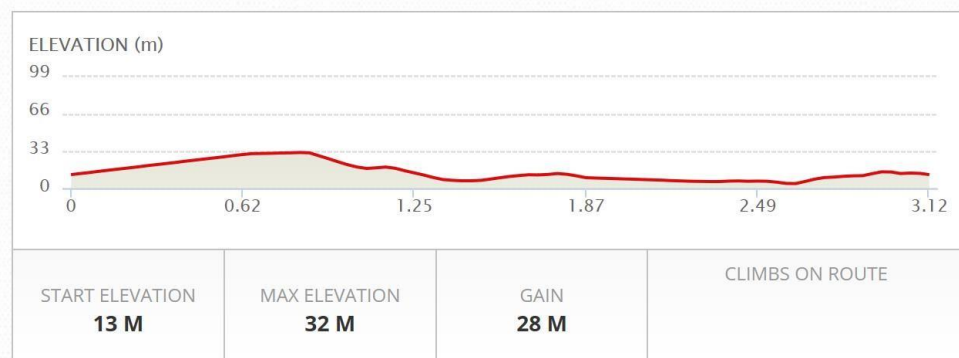
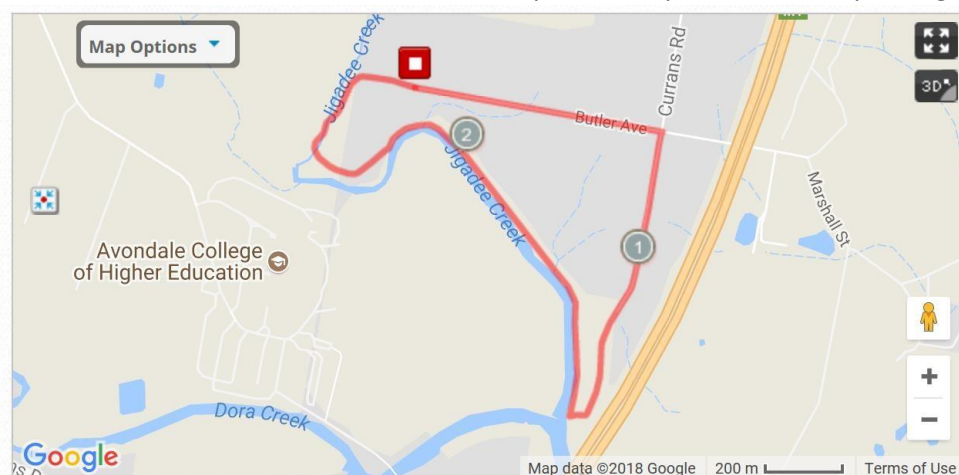
This is an easy to moderate walk of about three kilometres. The first 1.5 km is along the edge of made roads through open farmland, with the remaining split between fire trail and well-defined bush path. They pass through small sections of paperbark in the low lying areas, interspersed with mostly swamp mahogany forest. Along the creek we are likely to see water dragons, azure kingfishers and kookaburras. We will certainly hear, but not necessarily see, bell miners, more commonly known as bellbirds; they're especially noisy around the 2km mark.

Meeting Point & Getting There

The meeting point is the turning circle at the end of Butler Avenue, Cooranbong. Butler Avenue runs off Currans Road, which, in turn, runs off Newport Road.

Map and Elevation Profile

The walk begins and ends at the end of Butler Road, marked by the red square on the map, and goes clockwise.



Background & Source

This walk came from an old brochure from the now-defunct Dora Creek Catchment Group. We have modified it to make it a circuit, rather than a there-and-back, walk. The brochure identifies the creek as Sandy Creek, as does the Avondale map and the Fitbit exercise map, but all other maps identify it as Jigadee Creek. It is unnamed on the NSW Department of Lands 1:25,000 topographic map 9131-1N.

Track notes

From the meeting point walk uphill along Butler Avenue to the intersection with Currans Road. Turn right into Currans Road.

Follow Currans Road to the locked gate. Go through the locked gate and follow the fire trail.

At the end of the fire trail go right down the wooden steps to the creek bank.

This is the junction of Sandy/Jigadee Creek, coming in from your left, and Dora Creek, flowing straight towards you. On your left is the M1 road bridge. Across Sandy Creek is the Avondale College campus and its Sandy Creek Walk. The water at this junction is 11m deep and this was once a popular swimming spot for the students of Avondale college.

There are two options now:

Alongside the creek, heading away from the M1, is a faint foot track, which follows the creek bank for a couple of hundred metres to a small clearing with a home-made rope swing.

Alternatively, climb back up to the fire trail and turn left. After about 80m look for the well-defined but unsignposted foot track on the left. Follow the foot track for about 100m through the scrub to the same clearing.

The house above the clearing with the verandahs is the original house once owned by the Wallace family. R.J. Wallace was an early Swansea landowner, whose family expanded around the lake.

From the clearing continue to follow the track upstream along the creek. The track passes through a small paperbark swamp. These swamps provide an important habitat for birds, frogs and lizards and are home to many types of fern as well as peat moss, gahnia and blue flax lily. They filter the stormwater of pollutants and they retain silt, preventing them from reaching the creek.

Continue to follow the track through an area that has been cleared and covered in weeds and regrowth and enter another paperbark swamp. Just before the creek begins to swing left you will come to a track junction.

The track on the right leads back to the cars and is part of the original walk laid out by the Dora Creek Catchment Group. Only take this if you want to finish early.

Keep following the track along creek enjoying the varied bird life. Note the number of bell birds through this section.

After a short time the creek begins to swing right, and soon you will see a small path off to the left to the creek. This brings you to the Fallen Log Bridge, once used as a short cut to Avondale College. It is not safe to use these days.

Return to the main track and follow it to the end of Butler Avenue.