



The Hon Barry O'Farrell MP

Premier of NSW

Minister for Western Sydney

MEDIA RELEASE

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PREMIER ABOLISHES BOTANIC GARDEN ENTRY FEES

Entry to the Australian Botanic Gardens, Mount Annan, and the Blue Mountains Botanic Gardens, Mount Tomah, is free from today after the NSW Government abolished entry fees for the two gardens.

Premier of NSW and Minister for Western Sydney Barry O'Farrell said by making the two beautiful gardens free, he is delivering on an election commitment to families in Western Sydney ahead of schedule.

"The Botanic Gardens at Mount Annan and Mount Tomah are great community assets that families should be able to enjoy free of charge," Mr O'Farrell said.

"Many people in Sydney may not realise that we have three Botanic Gardens within easy access – each unique, beautiful and educational in their own way.

"From today all three Botanic Gardens can be enjoyed free of charge – as it should be.

"Mount Annan is the largest Botanic Garden in Australia and is dedicated to native plants, while Mount Tomah in the iconic Blue Mountains is home to cool climate plants from around the world.

"It is only equitable for families in Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains to have the same free access to their Botanic Gardens as visitors to the Royal Botanic Gardens on Sydney Harbour.

"This announcement will make it easier for families to access these parklands to enjoy, relax and learn about our natural and unique environment and do it more regularly.

"I encourage people from right across NSW to visit these gardens - the upcoming school holidays present an excellent opportunity to do so," Mr O'Farrell said.

Mr O'Farrell was joined at today's announcement by newly elected Liberal MPs Jai Rowell (Wollondilly), Chris Patterson (Camden) and Bryan Doyle (Campbelltown).

Each Park currently attracts about 90,000 visitors per year with adult fees \$2.50 per visit at Mount Annan and \$5.50 at Mount Tomah.

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The Australian Botanic Garden, Mount Annan

The Australian Botanic Garden, Mount Annan, situated in Sydney's historic south-west, is the nation's largest botanic garden and is dedicated to native plants. Its 416 ha of native woodland and former settlers' farmland feature over 4000 species of native flora as well as a huge variety of native fauna. Wallabies, echidna and 180 bird species roam freely. It is the only botanic garden in the world with a mountain bike trail, the 7 km enduro trail soon to be expanded to 14 km. The Garden also features large contemporary sculptures, themed gardens, free gas barbecues, walking trails and a restaurant. It is a major event venue and the most popular visitor attraction in the Camden district.

Currently, entry fees are \$2.50 for individuals, \$9 for cars up to 8 people, \$30 for groups less than 15, \$60 for groups larger than 15, and \$120 for coaches.

The Blue Mountains Botanic Garden, Mount Tomah

The Blue Mountains Botanic Garden, Mount Tomah, is on the summit of a basalt-capped peak 1000 metres above sea level in the world heritage listed Greater Blue Mountains. There are 28 hectares of landscaped gardens arranged geographically to display cool-climate plants from around the world, especially those from the southern hemisphere. In 2009, the Garden expanded to include „the Jungle“, a 33 hectare tract of pristine native rainforest with a graded accessible walk. Last year, the World Heritage Exhibition Centre was opened at the Garden. The Garden offers stunning vistas to the north across half million hectares of wilderness in the Wollemi National Park.

Currently, adults pay \$5.50 each, Seniors and Concession holders \$4.40, children \$3.30 and families \$11.

More information is available at www.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au