POPULATION
- Town 1,800
- Shire 3,100

STOCK
- Cattle 75,000
- Sheep 850,000

ELEVATION
- Town 1067m (3051')
- Highest point 'The Flags' 1493m (4898')

AVERAGE RAINFALL
- Town 660mm (26")
- Highest over 1270mm (50")

TEMPERATURE
- Summer averages: maximum 25ºC, minimum 12ºC
- Winter averages: maximum 12ºC, minimum -2ºC

HISTORICAL FACTS
- Home to Dunghutti/Dunggadi Tribe for 6,000 years
- Oldest town and first settlement on the New England Tablelands
- European Discovery by explorer John Oxley 1818
- Walcha’s Open Air Gallery has the most public art per head of population in Australia
- In 1930 Walcha Road Train Station became the busiest non-metropolitan freight terminal in NSW. This was due to the aerial spreading of superphosphate, an Australian first, which saw stock carrying capacities treble
- Oxley Wild Rivers National Park has over 1,100 recorded plant species – more than any other National Park in NSW
- In 2014, Walcha became home to the world’s finest ‘paddock grown’ bale of wool, at 11.6 microns

PROMINENT LOCAL IDENTITIES
- John Oxley: Explorer
- Nat Buchanan: Explorer and pioneering pastoralist
- Esther Stace: World record ‘Highest Sidesaddle Jump’, clearing 6’6”
- Casey Stoner: Moto GP World Champion

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

BY AIR OR RAIL
- Tamworth and Armidale are approximately a one hour flight to/from Sydney, there are several daily commercial flights. An airstrip is available for private use at the Walcha Aerodrome 5km west of Walcha.
- Daily train services to/from Armidale and Sydney are available via Walcha Road. A bus transfer is available to/from Walcha for the Sydney service.

DISTANCES
- Armidale 65km
- Tamworth 90km
- Gloucester 146km
- Port Macquarie 182km
- Sydney 410km via Thunderbolts Way
- Sydney 496km via New England Hwy
- Brisbane 525km via New England Hwy
- Newcastle 270km via Thunderbolts Way

KEY
- New England Highway
- Pacific Highway
- Oxley Highway
- Thunderbolts Way
- Bucketts Way
- Rail Service
- Flights

Walcha Visitor Information Centre
25w Fitzroy Street, Walcha NSW 2354
Phone 02 6774 2460

www.walchansw.com.au
**Oxley Falls (19km) – camping (fee applicable), day use area. Mooraback Road – 30 minute loop walk.**

- **Cobcroft – day use area, Carabeen Walk** – one hour through rainforest.
- **Diversions en-route**
  - Mary’s View – Amazing lookout with 270° views of the New England tableland, Macleay River, Oxley Wild Rivers NP and gorges. At Kookaburra turn onto Carrai Road, follow signs along Cochrane and Warrick Roads via Dasy Plains.
  - Hoppy’s Lookout – 3km north of Racecourse Trail and Coachwood Road intersection
  - Georges Junction (Georges and Macleay Rivers junction) on the Ardmore - Kempsey Road (back towards Ardmore). Fishing, swimming, camping.

- **Moomel Forest Road – tourist drive loop off the Oxley Highway through rainforest.**
- **Moommel Gulf National Park**
  - Moomel Forest Road – tourist drive loop off the Oxley Highway, returning to Walcha along Blackendell Road OR Upper Yarrawitch River Road
- **New Country Swamp – camping (free) and day use area. Moomel Gulf Walk** – 30 minute loop walk.

- **Nowendoc National Park**
  - Lucky Barker Camping Area – camping (fee) and day use area, walking tracks. Access 5km along Wrights Road, 4WD access only, trailers permitted. 5km south of Nowendoc on Thunderbolts Way.

**The Surrounding National Parks of Walcha Are Dramatic, Awe Inspiring and Spectacular. This Is ‘Where Wild Rivers Run’**

**Oxley Wild Rivers National Park**
- Low range 4WD required. Recommended two day drive camping at Daisy Plains Huts or eight hours return to Walcha from Mary’s View Walcha – Kangaroo Flat Road (55km east of Walcha on the Oxley Highway) – Mooraback Road – Racecourse Trail (4WD) – Coachwood Road – Carrai Road – Old Kempsey Road – turn left to Ardmore / turn right to Kempsey.
- Werrimbe National Park
  - Werrimbe NP has some beautiful areas that are accessible from Kangaroo Flat Road, that are unsealed from the Oxley Highway – Mooraback – camping (free) and day use area. Mooraback Nature Trail, 30 minute walk. Platypus Pools loop, two hour walk.

- **Cottan-Bimbang National Park**
  - Myrtle Scrub Road – unsealed, 2WD dry weather access only. One hour loop tourist drive off the Oxley Highway through rainforest. Day use area on the Cells River.

- **Moomel Gulf National Park**
  - Moomel Forest Road – tourist drive loop off the Oxley Highway, returning to Walcha along Blackendell Road OR Upper Yarrawitch River Road
- **New Country Swamp – camping (free) and day use area. Moomel Gulf Walk** – 30 minute loop walk.

- **Nowendoc National Park**
  - Lucky Barker Camping Area – camping (fee) and day use area, walking tracks. Access 5km along Wrights Road, 4WD access only, trailers permitted. 5km south of Nowendoc on Thunderbolts Way.

**Across Oxley Wild Rivers National Park**

- **Wingham Wanderer**
  - MANNING VALLEY CARTOGRAPHIC MAP
  - Alternatively – Mt George – Coopacupriona/Nowendoc Road – Nowendoc – Walcha

- **Enfield Forest Road: Manning Valley Cartoscope Map**
  - Walcha – Enfield Forest Road (60km east of Walcha on the Oxley Highway) – Enfield Range Road (60km at least 1.5 hours) – Coopacupriona/Nowendoc Road (37km / 45 minutes) – Nowendoc – Walcha (via Thunderbolts Way or Brackendale Road)

- **Mummel Gulf National Park Explorer**
  - Walcha – Enfield Forest Road (60km east of Walcha on the Oxley Highway) – Enfield Range Road (60km at least 1.5 hours) – Coopacupriona/Nowendoc Road (37km / 45 minutes) – Nowendoc – Walcha (via Thunderbolts Way or Brackendale Road)

- **Wauchope Wanderer**
  - MANNING VALLEY CARTOGRAPHIC MAP
  - Walcha – Kangaroo Flat Road (55km east of Walcha on the Oxley Highway) – Mooraback Road – Racecourse Trail (4WD) – Brushy Mountain (three options) Creek crossings may be impassable after heavy rain.
  - Coorawamboomba Road – diversion (Platuee Beech) – Oxley Highway
  - Camerons Bluff – Forbes Forest Road – Mount Boss – Oxley Highway
  - Hastings Forest Way – Wauchope

**ABORIGINAL PEOPLE: 6,000 YEARS**

The Dunguhtti (or Dunggubbi) Tribe are believed to have lived in the region for around 6,000 years prior to European settlement. The tablelands served as a place for ceremonies – evident by traces of Bora grounds near Walcha – and a place to trade goods. In the cooler months the tribe retreated to the eastern gorge country where it was warmer and fish and animals were plentiful.

**EUROPEAN DISCOVERY: 1818**

Explorer, John Oxley was the first ‘official’ European to the district. In search of new farming lands beyond the Hunter Valley. He climbed the steep rugged ranges, and traversed from west to east over the southern end of the tableland he had discovered, now known as the New England. On 8 September 1818, Oxley and his expedition camped by a good waterhole on the Apsley River (named after the Secretary of the State for the Colonies, Lord Apsley) approximately 1.2 km south of the current township of Walcha. Oxley wrote of this new found country in his journal as being ‘the finest open country, or rather park, imaginable’. A country of ‘running waters, on every hill a spring and in every valley a rivulet’. He reported this to his friend Hamilton Collins Sempill of ‘Belltrees’ in the Hunter Valley who was to become the first settler to the area.

**EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT: 1832**

Hamilton Collins Sempill, the first settler, based his headquarters near the campsitie used by Oxley in 1818. He established a 25,000ha run which he named ‘Walcha’, building slab huts not far from where ‘Langford Homestead’ now stands.

**The Town and Other Settlers**

Within a few years other pastoral runs, Ohio, Bergen-op-Zoom, and Europambela, were established, taking up the valleys and creeks running into the Apsley River. During the 1840’s the district was sparsely occupied by men with sheep, and names and localities heard today date from that time – Surveyors Creek, Aberdeen, Ingleba, Glen Morrison, St Leonards, Branga Park, Branga Plains, Wattpaloo, Yarroitch, Tia, Emu Creek, Moona Plains, and Winterbourne. In the 1840’s, Sempill returned to Scotland and his Walcha run was subdivided. Near the head station, occupied by Jamieson and Mackenzie in 1845, a small village developed with an inn, store and post office, blacksmith and butcher. This service centre – situated at the crossroads leading north-south and east-west, and on a permanent waterhole – developed into the town of Walcha.

**Industry**

Wool has dominated the economy since early days with diversification into fat lambs, beef cattle, dairy, timber harvesting and milling.

**The Derivation of the Name Walcha... A Mystery**

The name, Walcha (Woi-waa), could have been derived from Aboriginal origins, with three potential meanings sun, deep waterhole and water. However the spelling strongly suggests that the origins came from the association of two pastoral properties, Walcha Run and Bergen-op-Zoom Run, with places in the Netherlands. The town of ‘Bergen-op-Zoom’ stands on the Walcheren River, and these places were well known to the early settlers because of a major campaign in 1809 called the Walcheren Expedition, fought during the British wars with Napoleon.
experience the highs