

# BACK ROADS TO WINTON DRIVE

## LONGREACH TO WINTON

**Duration: 6 days / 0 km**

Begin your journey in Longreach in Queensland's heartland then follow the scenic back roads to Winton via Lochern National Park, Stonehenge and Jundah.

Follow the Lochern Habitat Drive and explore the 20 kilometres of Thomson River frontage. Take a Four Wheel Drive adventure on the John Egan Pioneer Drive and discover magnificent landscapes sculptured by nature over millions of years. Breathe in the expansive views from Swanvale Lookout on the majestic Johnston Range. In Jundah, follow the Settlers Nature Drive along the Thomson River, a great spot to boil the billy, have a picnic or throw in a line. Discover the world's only recorded Dinosaur Stampede at Lark Quarry Conservation Park where you can view up to 3300 footprints left over 95 million years ago by a herd of over 300 dinosaurs.

This drive includes a mix of sealed and unsealed roads and therefore a Four Wheel Drive vehicle is recommended.

**Experiences: Family Friendly**



Please note that the information contained in this document is current as of the date of creation. Subsequent changes in circumstances may render the information contained in this document no longer accurate. It is the reader's responsibility to verify the accuracy of the information before relying on it. This document should not be considered a substitute for professional advice.

## Longreach

Day: 1

**Start: Longreach End: Longreach**

Begin your drive in Longreach - the heartland of Outback Queensland. While in Longreach, soak up the history and heritage with visits to the Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame, Qantas Founders Museum and Powerhouse Museum. Spend an evening on the Thomson River complete with sunset nibbles, dinner and entertainment. Take a tour through one of the largest classrooms in the world at the School of Distance Education or experience the thrill of a Cobb and Co. ride. Longreach offers a range of motel and camping accommodation. Daily flights from Brisbane are scheduled with QantasLink and twice weekly rail services on the Spirit of the Outback. Hire car facilities are also available.

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# Longreach to Lochern National Park

Day: 2

Start: **Longreach** End: **Camoola**

Heading out of Longreach, follow the Longreach-Jundah Road for about 100 kilometres to the Lochern National Park signpost. Turn right and follow this unsealed road for about 40 kilometres to the park boundary at the Thomson River. Lochern has 20 kilometres of Thomson River frontage. The park protects 24,300 hectares of important habitat, with many lagoons and waterholes providing refuge for birds and other wildlife including hooded robins, Major Mitchell's, cockatoos, Hall's Babblers, fairy-wrens, emus and stately brolgas. Black kites fly overhead and Whistling kites nest and call beside Broadwater Waterhole. Keep an eye out for Red-tailed black-cockatoos flying along the river channels and Budgerigars nesting in the Coolibah trees. The park has no walking tracks but you can wander around the river and waterholes or follow the Lochern Habitat Drive (approximately 40 kilometres return, allow two to four hours). Canoeing and kayaking in Broadwater Waterhole is a popular activity and fishing in the waterholes is permitted (size and bag limits apply). You can also ride your bicycle along the park's Habitat Drive. Bush camping is permitted at Broadwater Waterhole. For more information visit the National Parks and Wildlife website.

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# Lochern National Park to Stonehenge

Day: 3

Start: **Camoola** End: **Stonehenge**

Follow the unsealed road back to the Longreach-Jundah Road and turn right towards Stonehenge. About two kilometres from the Stonehenge turnoff, you can sign the visitor's book - Stonehenge style! This involves writing your town name with stones - a quirky tradition started years ago by the then mailman. Take some time to read through the many town names that can be seen embossed in stone. You'll also pass XXXX Hill, a scenic vantage point with breathtaking 360-degree views of the Thomson River flood plains and surrounding Johnstone Ranges. Call into the Stonehenge Visitor Information Centre for great coffee, friendly service, access to Telstra Mobile 3G and free WiFi. Take a stroll to see the Government Tank on the old stock route where drovers watered the travelling stock. A caravan park and free bush campsites are available in Stonehenge.

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# Stonehenge to Jundah

Day: 4

Start: **Stonehenge** End: **Jundah**

Departing Stonehenge, follow the top loop road to the Longreach-Jundah Road then travel around eight kilometres to the John Egan Pioneer Drive entrance (Four Wheel Drive vehicles only). Discover magnificent landscapes sculptured by nature over millions of years into amazing rock formations. Halfway between Stonehenge and Jundah on the Johnstone Range, is Swanvale Lookout, which provides stunning views, particularly at sunset. Approaching Jundah, watch for the sign posted Native Well - once a valuable source of water for Indigenous people. Learn how these stone wells were manually created. In Jundah, visit the Barcoo Shire Museum offering a window into the early pioneering times of the district or take the Settler's Nature Drive along the Thomson River featuring sign-posted descriptions of native plants. Unique 'Welcome Signs' to the town replicate the historic shop front still seen in Jundah's main street. Each sign is linked together by a walking trail, and contains different information giving an insight into the town's early years. Jundah is the closest town to Welford National Park. Enjoy outback hospitality at the Jundah Hotel, offering for meals and accommodation. A caravan park and free bush campsites are available. Jundah Information Centre and Library offers free WiFi.

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# Jundah to Lark Quarry

Day: 5

Start: **Jundah** End: **Opalton**

From Jundah, turn right on the Windorah Road, passing over the Thomson River bridge then travel approximately 12 kilometres to the Jundah-Winton T-intersection. Follow the Jundah-Winton road through red mulga country to the Juno 'Jump Up' and view the wide expanse of open Mitchell grass plains. Pass open downs country with views towards the Quart Pot Range and see the Mount Felix Cha el Four Repeater station. Mount Felix is one of nine stations scattered throughout the Barcoo Shire providing a safety communications network for residents and travellers. Travel across ancient mesas, gullies and broken escarpments to the world's only known dinosaur stampede site at Lark Quarry Conservation Park. The only way to experience Lark Quarry Dinosaur Trackways is via a guided tour, for which a fee applies. The tour interprets the Trackways from creation to discovery, and tells the story of the drama which unfolded some 95 million years ago when a huge meat-eating Theropod came upon a herd of smaller dinosaurs as they drank at the lake. Learn about the geological history of the area and see up to 3,300 fossilised footprints

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# Lark Quarry to Winton

Day: 6

Start: **Opalton** End: **Winton**

From Lark Quarry Conservation Park, take the Winton-Jundah Road to Winton. This road comprises approximately 45 kilometres of sealed road and 65 kilometres of unsealed road. Winton has a rich history as the birthplace of Waltzing Matilda and QANTAS with links to the Great Shearers' Strike of 1891. More recently it has become known for something far more ancient - Dinosaurs! The region is home to diverse natural history and spectacular Jump Up landscapes. Some popular attractions in Winton include the Australian Age of Dinosaurs housing the world's largest collection of Australian dinosaur fossils. Held over the third week in September, the biennial Outback Festival event offers visitors five days of non-stop outback entertainment including the famous Australian Derby. Rex Air operates twice weekly flights to Winton from Townsville and there is a twice-weekly Rail/Coach service with the Spirit of the Outback from Brisbane. A range of motel, caravan parks and free campsites are available. Stay connected with free WiFi in Winton's main street.

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