

# Who uses Sydney's Parks?

Reference for this article:

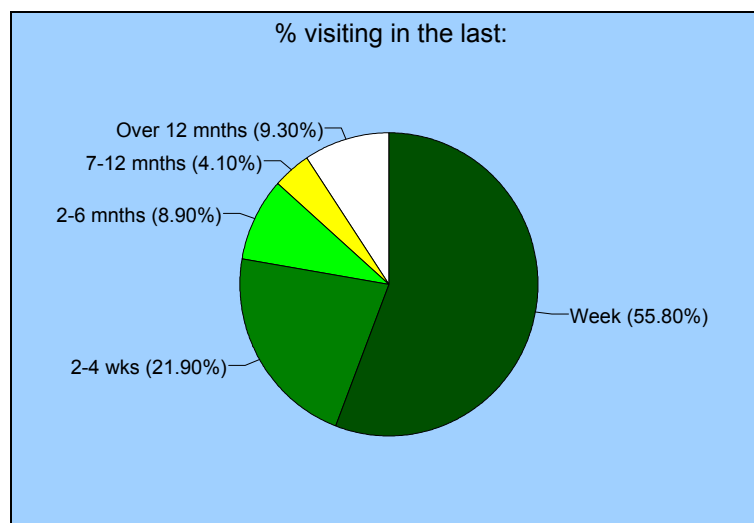
Sydney Urban Parks Education and Research Group (2003) *Who Uses Sydney's Parks?* SUPER Group, Sydney, at: [www.supergroup.org.au](http://www.supergroup.org.au).

The article presents selected results from the 2001 telephone survey of 1500 people aged 18 years and over living in the metropolitan area of Sydney, which was conducted for SUPER Group by Environmetrics in November 2001. The results presented here cover all park use in the Sydney Metropolitan area, including the major parks managed by SUPER Group and local parks managed by local government.

## Overall Park usage

Figure 1 indicates that 55.8% of residents visited a park in the week prior to interview and altogether 91.7% visited a park in the last year. So less than 10% had *not* visited a park in the last year.

**Figure 1. Urban park visiting by Sydney residents**

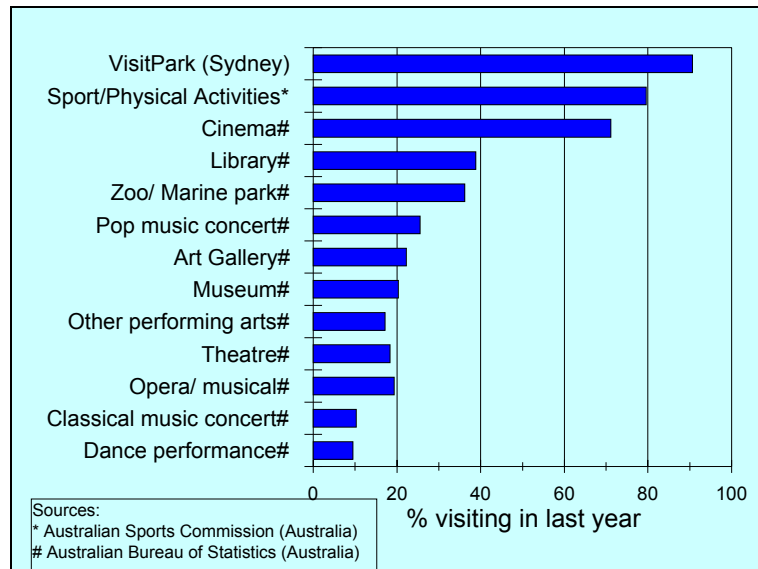


## Comparison with other leisure facilities

Figure 2, which draws on other data sources for comparison, demonstrates that this level of visiting is higher than for any other public leisure facility. It should be noted that the second most popular activity, 'Sport and physical activities' includes walking (29%) and both formal and informal sport participation, which takes place in a variety of types of facility, including parks; there is therefore

overlap between visiting parks and participation in sport and physical activities.

**Figure 2. Visiting selected leisure venues, Australia, 2000/2001**



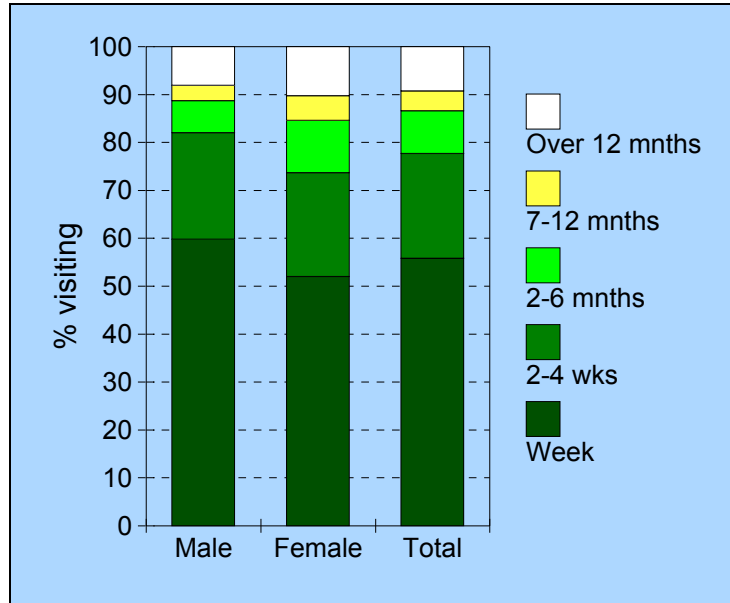
### Socio-demographic characteristics

Do all social groups and residents of all parts of the metropolitan area visit parks equally? This question is considered in relation to gender, age, country of birth, level of education, economic status/occupation and region of residence.

## Gender

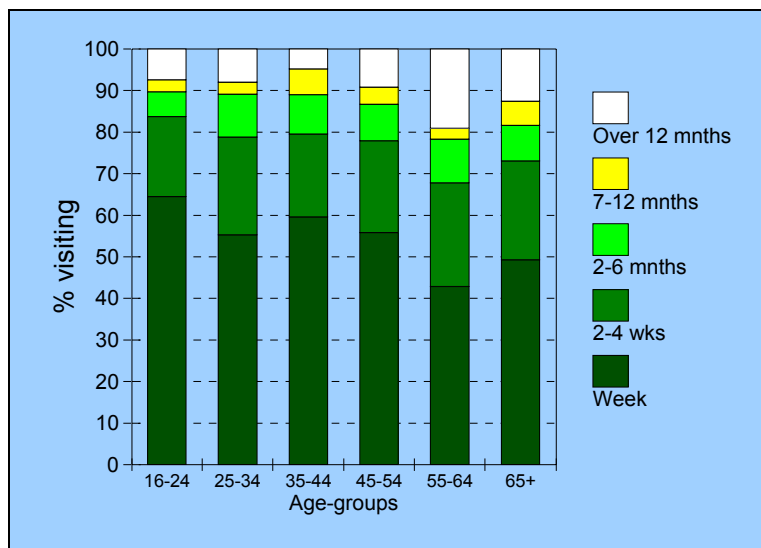
Figure 3 indicates that the proportion of women visiting parks is about 2% less than for men.

**Figure 3. Sydney residents visiting at least one park, by gender, 2001**



## Age

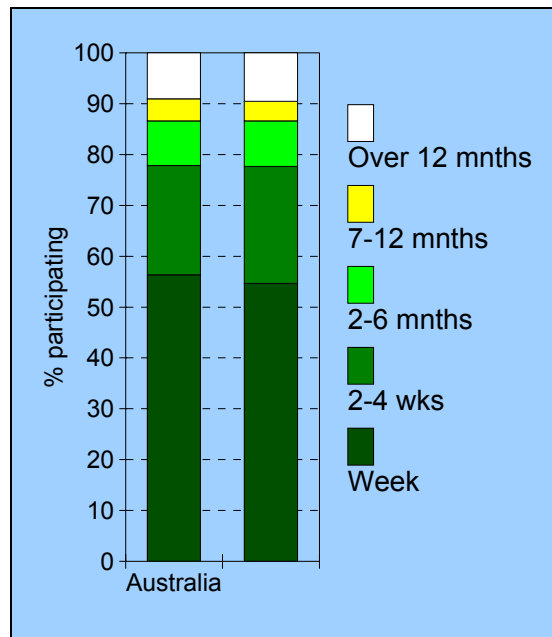
Figure 4 shows a dip in the visit levels in their mid-50s to mid-60s, with a 'bounce back' in the retirement years.



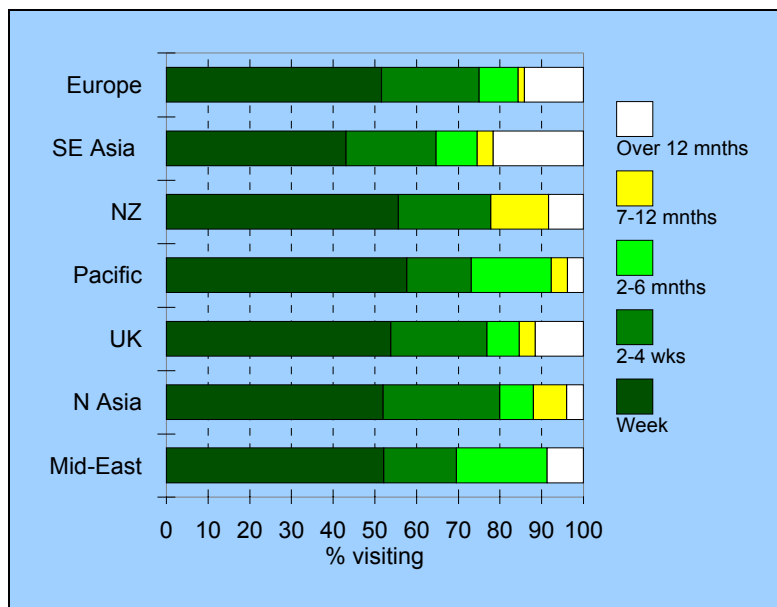
### Country of birth

Figure 5 shows that, overall, there is no difference in park visiting between Australian-born and overseas-born residents, but Figure 6 shows some variation among groups born in particular regions, with the SE Asia-born residents' visit rate being some 10% below the average, although still at 80%.

**Figure 5. Sydney residents visiting at least one park, by Australia/Overseas born, 2001**



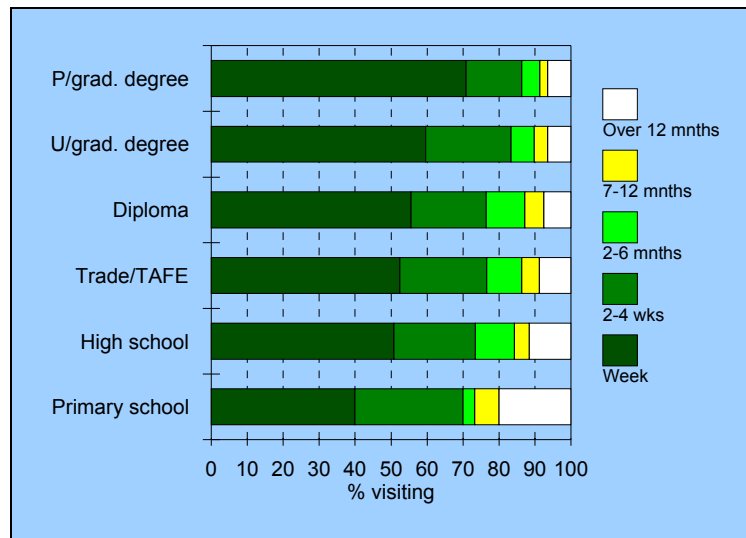
**Figure 6. Sydney residents visiting at least one park, by Country of birth, 2001**



## Education

Figure 7 shows little variation in park visitation by education level, with the exception of those whose highest level of education was primary school, a group made up of a small number (2%), mainly of the elderly, who did not received secondary education.

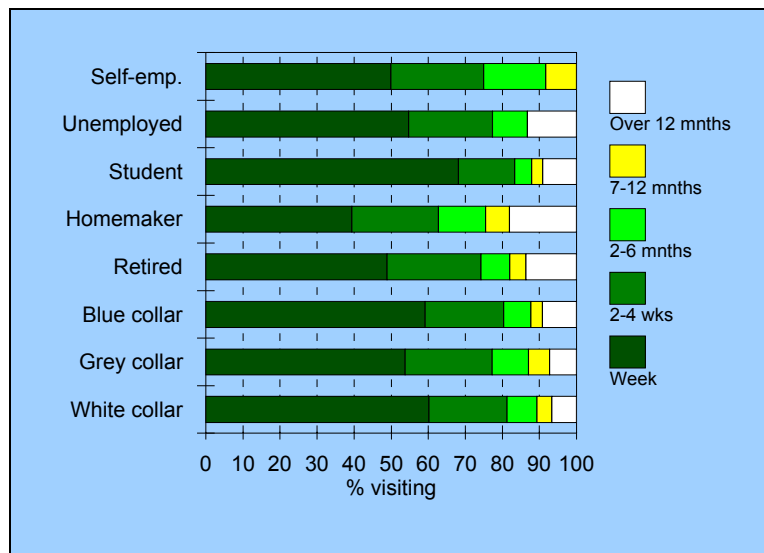
**Figure 7. Sydney residents visiting at least one park, by level of education, 2001**



## Economic status/occupation

Figure 8 again indicates little variation across occupational groups, with the exception of home-makers, which includes mostly women, reflecting the findings in relation to gender, above.

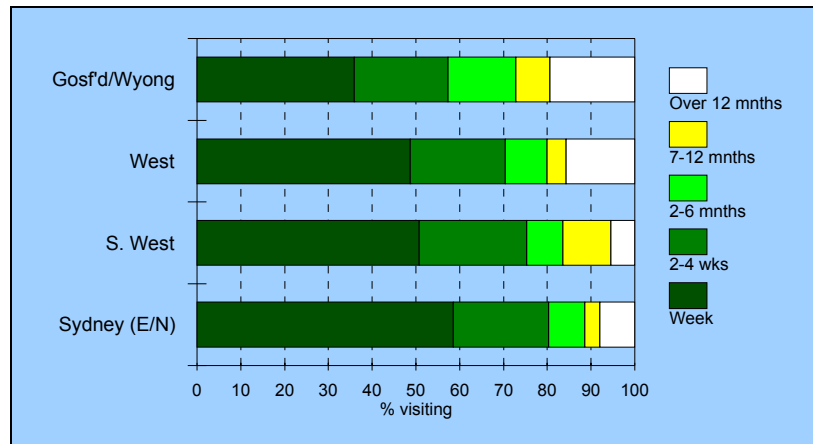
**Figure 8 Sydney residents visiting at least one park, by economic status, 2001**



## Region of residence

Figure 9 shows a lower than average visit rate by Gosford/Wyong residents - the reason for this has not yet been investigated.

**Figure 9. Sydney residents visiting at least one park, by region, 2001**

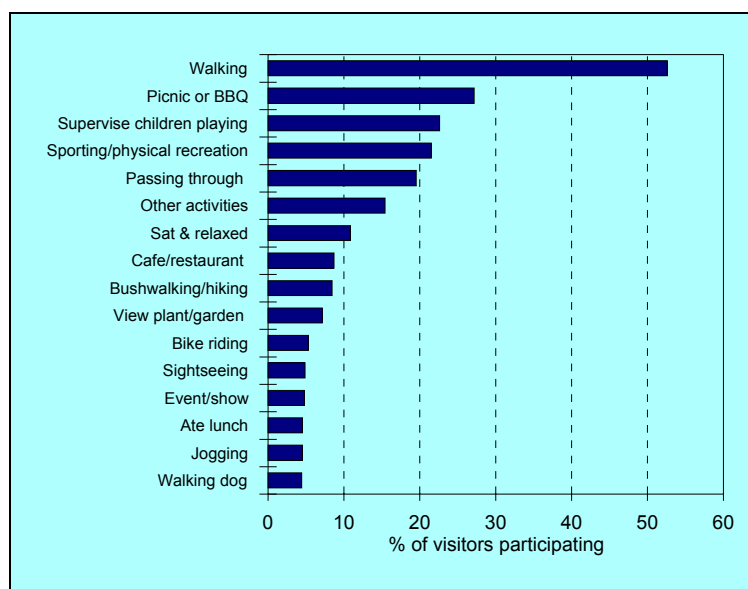


Overall, it is not possible to find any social group with a visit level more than about 10% below the average. This 'reach' suggests that urban parks play a unique role in the community, but with the potential to offer even more.

## Activities

Figure 10 shows the activities visitors engage in when visiting parks. Informal activities - walking, picnicking and supervising children's play - dominate.

**Figure 10. Activities on last park visit**



## Values

Table 11 shows that Sydneysiders value parks mainly for appreciating the beauty of nature and as a place to relax.

**Table 11. The value of parks**

