



**North Sydney**  
harbour foreshore  
bushwalk guide





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*Smoothey Park, Wollstonecraft*

# Introduction

North Sydney is fortunate to have several areas of bushland left to enjoy in the surrounds of urbanisation. Many of these are on the harbour foreshore, combining places of natural beauty with spectacular views.

This Harbour Foreshore Bushwalk Guide is intended to help you appreciate the richness and diversity of North Sydney's bushland. Along with practical information on the length of walks and transport options, we have included some information on the Aboriginal and European history of the area and the types of flora and fauna you might expect to see.

Urban bushland is under increasing pressure from a range of factors including development, pollution, stormwater runoff, invasive weeds and introduced animals. We all need to share responsibility for protecting the bushland that remains. I urge you to enjoy North Sydney's bushland and help to protect it for future generations.



Jilly Gibson  
Mayor of North Sydney



## Aboriginal Cultural Heritage

North Sydney is rich in Aboriginal culture and history. Before Europeans arrived, the traditional owners of this region, the Cammeraygal (also known as the Gameraigal or Gamaragal Clan), lived on and cared for this land. They were a powerful clan in the region. The Cammeraygal lived a sustainable lifestyle in keeping with the Dreaming. This area provided bountiful water resources with easy access to the harbour for bark canoes. Bush resources for food and tools were plentiful, leaving plenty of time for Spiritual practice and ceremony.

It is written in history that the Cammeraygal were the main clan in the region. They held the initiation ceremonies for men and were feared, but also looked up to. The Cammeraygal were known over a very wide area and early historians wrote and drew of their ritual ceremonies. Early paintings show the Cammeraygal tooth removal ceremony.



Aboriginal sites tour run by the AHO

For the Cammeraygal people their way of living with Country and spirit followed the rules of the Dreamtime and was learned and expressed in the Dreaming. Obligations for family and each other were expressed in Kinship lore and with Totems.

After colonisation, diseases ravaged the Aboriginal population. The devastation shattered a way of life, displacing local bands and tribes throughout the Sydney region. It is not known how many Cammeraygals survived this disaster, but the push by Europeans to take over their land and the 30-year war for the Country of Sydney resulted in great losses and further displacement.

North Sydney's foreshore areas have some of the finest examples of Aboriginal cultural sites on the lower North Shore. The oldest archaeological finding has been dated at 7,500 years old. Large caves and shelters along waterways and trade routes were another popular location for local clans.

Signs of their occupation can still be found throughout the region today. Such sites include middens, rock shelters with archaeological deposits, open camp sites, rock engravings, axe grinding grooves and rock paintings. These sites provide direct physical evidence of thousands of years of Aboriginal history, occupation and culture and provide visible links to the past. The sites are important to Aboriginal people and are a connection to Dreamtime, expressed in the present as the Dreaming. Aboriginal people have been working with Council and land owners for many years to protect these places and educate the wider community.

North Sydney was the first Council in Australia to employ an Aboriginal Heritage Officer at the local government level.

All Aboriginal sites are protected by law.

For further information contact the Aboriginal Heritage Office:

Ph: (02) 9976 1682

<http://www.aboriginalheritage.org/>



*Hand and fish stencils in foreshore rock shelter Stanton Library*



*Red Spider Flower*

## Flora of North Sydney

Australia's flora is unique, evolving in isolation from the rest of the world and adapting to Australia's harsh environmental conditions. Fire has also shaped the vegetation of this land, for in addition to natural ignitions it was used by Aboriginal people as a form of farming. Rainforest communities were once prominent in Australia. It has been proposed that the use of fire has contributed to the successful evolution of fire tolerant plant species, that now dominate the landscape.

Six thousand years ago, during the last ice age, North Sydney was about 12km inland from the coast. Today, North Sydney's remnant bushland is on the edge of a drowned river valley – Sydney Harbour otherwise known as Port Jackson. The geology of the area is predominately Hawkesbury Sandstone, producing poor sandy soils deficient in nitrogen and



*NSW Christmas Bush*



phosphorus, conditions that our local plants have adapted to perfectly.

Today, with the absence of naturally occurring fires, many bushland areas are slowly losing species that require fire for seed germination. Coupled with increases in moisture and nutrients around stormwater drains, the balance has been tipped in favour of exotic weeds which dominate some bushland areas at the expense of our native species (see Bush Weeds on page 14 for more information).



*Handsome Flat Pea*



*Crowea*



*Prickly Moses*



*False Sarsaparilla*



## Bush Plants

### **Sydney Red Gum** (*Angophora costata*)

Smooth-barked Apple

A medium-sized tree with convoluted limbs and rather large open crown. Bark is shed from the whole tree in irregular oval, thin plates or scales, leaving a slightly dimpled surface. Newly revealed bark is bright orange-pink-brown but becomes grey with age. Leaves are opposite, bright green with parallel side venation. New leaves are bright blood red. Cream flowers from October to January. Fruit/nuts are slightly woody with 5 main ribs and 5 small teeth on the rim.



## Coastal Banksia (*Banksia integrifolia*)

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A shrub or tree to 16m, easily recognised by white leaf undersurfaces that ripple silvery in the wind. Bark is rough, hard and grey. Leaves are stiff, leathery dark green with entire margins (juvenile leaves are toothed), whiteness on the underside of leaves is due to a layer of fine white felty hairs. Pale yellow flowers mainly during winter.

Banksia blossoms were an important source of nectar and sugar for Aboriginal people who sucked the nectar or made sweet drinks by soaking the blossoms in water.



## White Spider Flower (*Grevillea linearifolia*)

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A graceful, slender spreading shrub usually to 2m high. White flowers, from July to October, in a tight cluster projecting beyond the leaves.



## **Bracken Fern** (*Pteridium esculentum*)

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Erect fern with harsh stiff fronds to 1.5m high. Rough red-brown stems with green fronds.

Bracken starch was an important resource to Aboriginal people and eaten raw or cooked. Around Sydney, fern starch was flavoured with crushed ants! Juicy young stems were rubbed into bites to relieve insect stings.



## **Mat Rush** (*Lomandra longifolia*)

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A large 50cm tufted herb with shiny, tough, strap-like leaves, ends are prominently toothed and quite spikey. Flowers between September and November, with cream clusters on a prickly much-branched inflorescence, exudes a heavy lacquer scent.

Aboriginal people used the tough leaves for weaving dilly bags, mats, fish and bird traps. Its seeds were treated, dried and ground to make flour.



## **Blue Flax Lily** (*Dianella caerulea*)

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A tufted herb to 50cm, distinguished in Spring by the rich blue flowers and bright yellow anthers. The fruit ripens from green to a rich purple berry in summer. Leaves are hard, stiff and glossy dark green with tiny scattered teeth on margins.

Aboriginal people ate the fruit and used the tough leaves to make strong fibre.



*Drawings by Les Robinson  
'Field Guide to the Native Plants of Sydney'*



## Bush Weeds

**Bushland is constantly under threat from the invasion of weeds and escaped garden plants** that thrive due to disturbance, lack of fire, increased nutrients, dumping and altered bushland ecology.

Not all green is good green! Have you spotted these common weeds (they may even be lurking in your garden)?

Bushcare is helping to fight the battle against weeds.  
See the section *What is Bushcare?*

For more information about weeds and their effective control, contact the Bushland Project Officer on 9936 8100.



*Mickey Mouse Plant or Ochona*



*Large-leaf Privet*



*Ground Asparagus Fern*



*Asthma Weed or Pellitory*



*Blue Morning Glory*



*Madeira Vine*



## Wildlife of North Sydney

**North Sydney supports a surprising variety of wildlife.** Although much of North Sydney's native fauna diversity has declined, many species still survive and some native species have benefited from urbanisation and are quite common in the area.

Some more common inhabitants of North Sydney's bushland reserves include Tawny Frogmouths, the Laughing Kookaburra, Rainbow Lorikeets, Ringtail Possums, Honeyeaters, Butcher Birds, Magpies and Currawongs.

All native fauna is protected by law.

Not all wildlife is cuddly and furry. In fact, the vast majority of species diversity is in the insect world. They make up 90% of the world's inhabitants and are fundamental to ecosystem function.



*Musk Lorikeet*



Some of North Sydney's less common inhabitants to look out for include Powerful Owls, Hawks and Kestrels, King Parrots, Rosellas, Herons, Sacred Kingfishers, Spangled Drongos, Figbirds, Silvereyes, White-browed Scrubwren, Superb Fairy-wrens, migratory Channel-billed Cuckoos, Koels and Microbats.

Many species have suffered as a result of deforestation, resulting in a lack of tree hollows, loss of dense, sheltered understorey vegetation and altered bushland ecology. Nestboxes installed in urban trees and bushland help to provide homes where hollow bearing trees are absent.

Feral and introduced animals such as Foxes, Indian Mynas, Honey Bees, domestic cats and dogs are also threatening native fauna, along with an increase in dominant aggressive or predatory native birds such as Noisy Miners and Pied Currawongs.

If you are a keen wildlife observer or you'd like to report a rare sighting, contact the **Bushland Management Team** on 9936 8100 or visit [www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/wildlifewatch](http://www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/wildlifewatch).

Providing green corridors that connect our bushland reserves and enable wildlife to move between habitats is vital for the long-term sustainability of our urban fauna. Home gardens can help provide this critical linkage. If you are interested in converting your garden into a native haven, please contact Council's **Bushland Project Officer** and receive free professional advice as well as native plants to get you started! Call 9936 8100.



*Superb Fairy-wren  
Photo: P. Smith*



*Powerful Owl  
Photo: P. Smith*



*Brushtail Possum  
Photo: Sydney Wildlife*



## How to Help Care for the Bush

Council regulations are in force to help protect bushland areas in North Sydney. You can help by following these simple rules:

- Keep dogs on a leash at all times, unless in a designated leash-free area, especially when walking through the bush. Unleashed dogs can disturb, chase, scare, injure and kill native fauna.
- Carry doggy bags, pick up after your dog and dispose of in a rubbish bin. Nutrients from dog faeces cause pollution in our waterways and impact on bushland.
- If you live near a bushland reserve, keep your cat indoors especially at night. Cats are prohibited from entering bushland reserves designated as Wildlife Protection Areas (WPA).



*Grey Butcherbird*

- Keep to the formal walking tracks. Using or making informal walking tracks damages vegetation, causes erosion and can lead to irreparable damage.
- Mountain biking, rock climbing, abseiling and competitive/organised orienteering are not permitted in any of North Sydney's bushland reserves.
- Take your rubbish with you.
- Do not pick native vegetation or flowers as this removes their ability to set seed and reproduce.
- Do not disturb any fauna.
- Do not dump mulch, green waste, soil, building waste or other rubbish in bushland. Report illegal dumping to Council.
- Do not remove any Aboriginal artefacts, e.g. shells from midden sites.
- Do not release possums into bushland as possums are highly territorial. Contact Council on 9936 8100 for further information on solving possum problems.
- Do not light fires at any time.

Please note that camping is not permitted in North Sydney parks and reserves.

Report injured wildlife to:

- Sydney Metropolitan Wildlife Services (Sydney Wildlife): 9413 4300
- WIRES (Wildlife Information, Rescue & Education Service): 1300 094 737
- Wildlife Hospital, Taronga Zoo: 9969 2777



*Water Dragon*



*Kookaburra*



## What is Bushcare?



*Enjoy some fresh air, help your environment and be a good bush neighbour.*

Bushcare is a volunteer program operated by North Sydney Council throughout the local area. There are twelve groups working in many bushland areas around North Sydney. Participants meet monthly, fortnightly or weekly to rehabilitate bushland areas. Supervision, equipment, plants and free training in bush regeneration are provided. Council also offers other programs and activities to support community interest in the environment, bushland and wildlife. If you are interested in becoming involved or have any questions, please telephone the **Bushcare Officer** on 9936 8100 or look on the web for further details

[www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/bushcare](http://www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/bushcare).  
[www.facebook.com/bushcare](http://www.facebook.com/bushcare).



# Suggested Reading

## Self-guided Walking Brochures

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The following detailed and informative walking maps are available at the North Sydney Council Customer Service Centre and in the Stanton Library:

- Aboriginal North Sydney. Available for purchase \$5 from Stanton Library.
- Historical North Sydney – 10 walks with accompanying map, produced by North Shore Historical Society. Available from Stanton Library.
- North Sydney Circle Walk: World Class Walking Circle Walk – A 45km walk in six segments circling North Sydney. Available from Council's Customer Service Centre and Stanton Library.
- Sharing Sydney Harbour, Walking Coastal Sydney brochures and maps. Available from Council's Customer Service Centre or [www.walkingcoastalsydney.com.au](http://www.walkingcoastalsydney.com.au).
- The Gadyan Track – Berry Island Reserve & Cremorne Point Foreshore Walk.
- The Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability self-guide brochure. Available from the Coal Loader Genia McCaffery Centre and Council's Customer Service Centre.

Brochures can be downloaded from [www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au](http://www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au).

## Books

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- Benson & Howell (2000). *Sydney's Bushland: more than meets the eye*. Royal Botanic Gardens, Australia.
- Low, T (1988). *Wild food plants of Australia*. Angus & Robertson Publishers.

## Useful Field Guides







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- Abell & Jacobs (1995). *Burnam Burnam's Wildthings*. Sainty & Associates.
- Robinson, L (1991). *Field Guide to the Native Plants of Sydney*. Kangaroo Press.
- Slater, P (1986). *The Slater Guide to Australian Birds*. Lansdowne Publishing Pty Ltd.
- Triggs, B (1996). *Tracks, Scats and other Traces: a field guide to Australian mammals*. Oxford University Press, Australia.
- Smith P. & Smith J. (2010) *North Sydney Council Natural Area Survey*. [www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/NAS](http://www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/NAS).

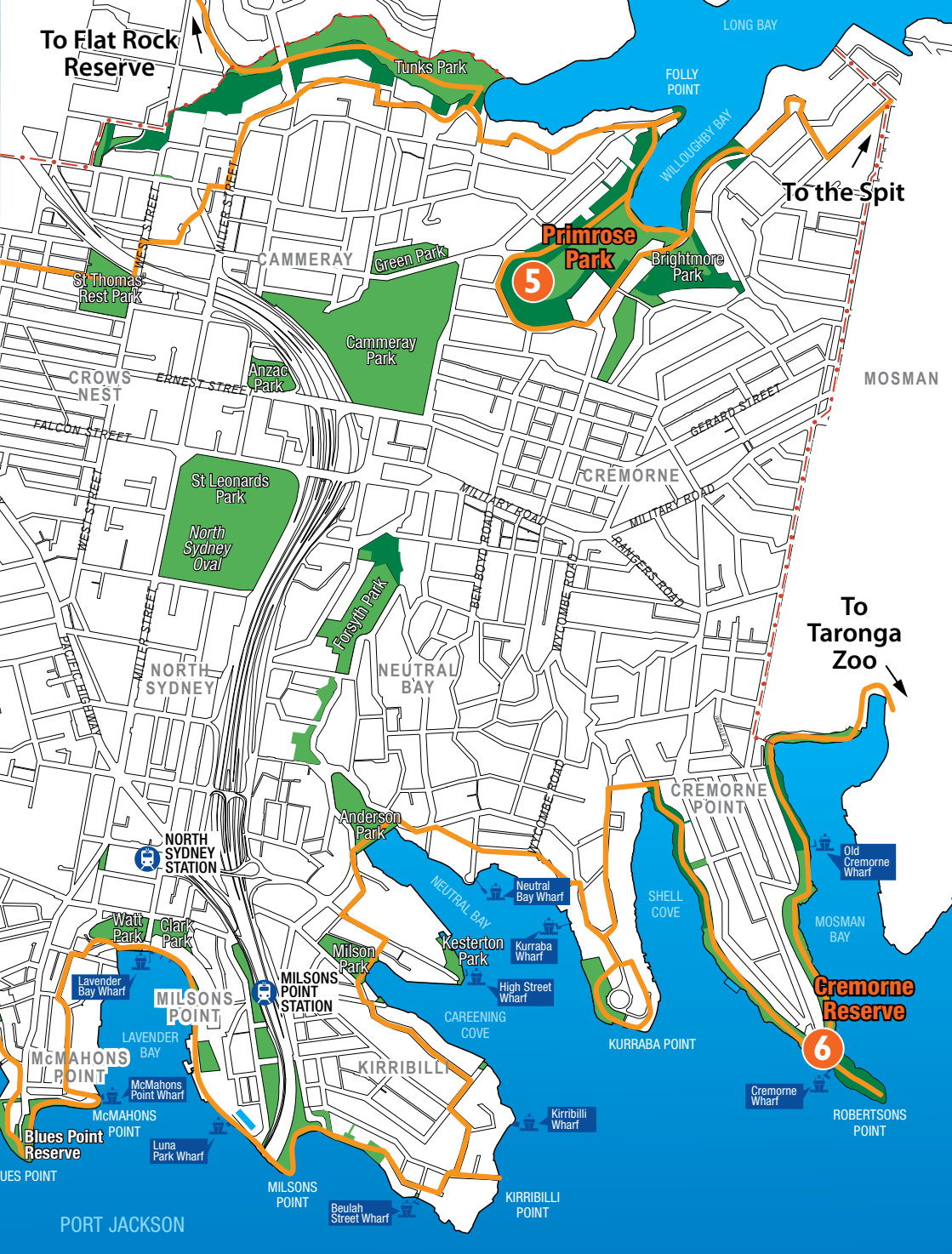
# Map of Foreshore Walks in North Sydney

- 1 **Smoothery Park / Gore Cove Reserve**
- 2 **Berry Island Reserve**
- 3 **Badangi Reserve**
- 4 **Balls Head Reserve, Coal Loader Parklands & Carradah Park**
- 5 **Primrose Park**
- 6 **Cremorne Reserve**

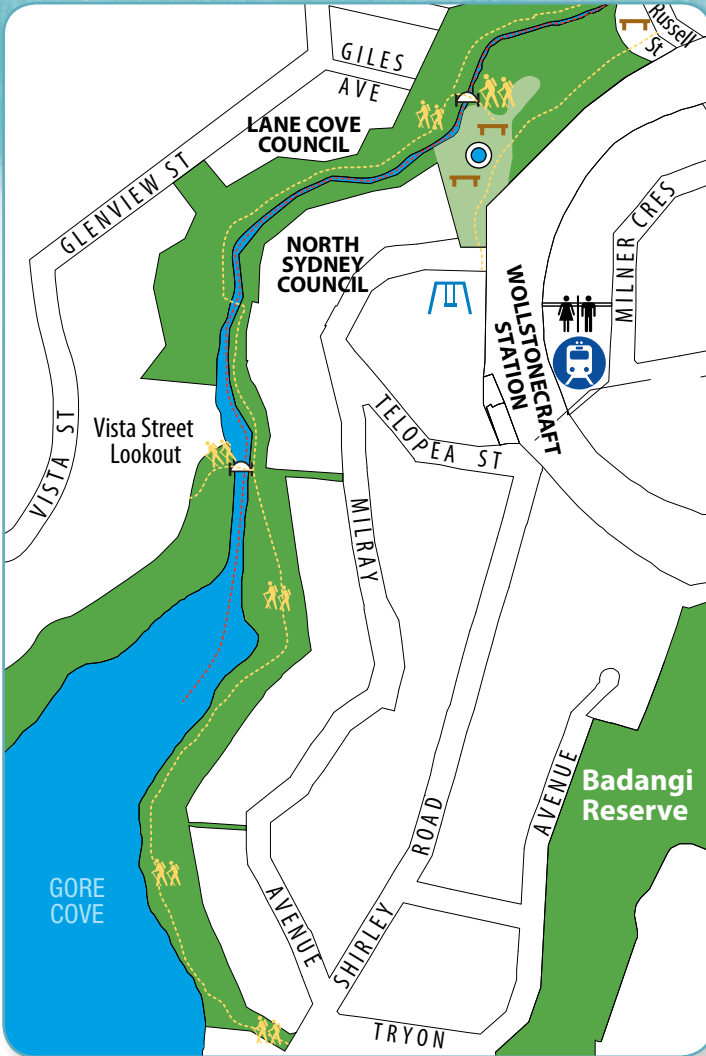
## LEGEND

-  Parkland
-  Bushland
-  Train station
-  Ferry terminal
-  NSC boundary
-  Main walk tracks





# Smoothey Park and the Gore Cove Track, Wollstonecraft



- LEGEND**
- Parkland
  - Bushland
  - Bush track
  - Seating
  - Council boundary
  - Toilets
  - Playground
  - Water Bubbler
  - Bridge





*Berrys Creek*

## **GRADE/TIMING**

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Moderate-grade walk. Sturdy shoes recommended. Gore Cove to Smoothey Park 1.5km (45 minutes); Gore Cove to Vista Street 0.9km (25 minutes). Creek crossing not recommended during or after heavy rain.

## **HISTORY**

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Aboriginal people frequented this valley and used the creek as a fresh water supply for thousands of years. Shell middens can be found in the area. You can imagine coming down from the hot ridge top to enjoy the sheltered and shady environment by the creek.

Smoothey Park was named after Mr S Smoothey, an Alderman of North Sydney Council from 1911 to 1920. Both Smoothey Park and Gore Cove were part of the original Berry/Wollstonecraft estate. Historic European features of Gore Cove include stone rubble walling, a rock-cut chamber and various rectangular cuts in the base of Berrys Creek.

The Smoothey Park Bushcare group was formed around 1994. Bush regeneration along Gore Cove Track began in 1997.

## ACCESS

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Park in Russell Street off River Rd and walk through Smoothey Park before heading down along the creek and follow the creek line down to Gore Cove. The track will bring you out onto Shirley Road, just before Berry Island.

The train to Wollstonecraft station will take you directly to Smoothey Park. Walk alongside the creek line on the Gore Cove Track. This will take you to Shirley Road and Berry Island. A 5-10 minute walk up Shirley Road will take you back to the train station.

## OUTLOOK

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West to Holloway Park, Greenwich and the Shell Oil Refinery.

## INTEREST SPOTS

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Soak in the rainforest microclimate along the creek line and down in the gully. Keep an eye and ear out for many locally rare bird species. Walk up to the Vista Street Lookout for a spectacular birds eye view over Gore Cove, Berry Island and Sydney Harbour.

## FLORA/FAUNA

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The Gore Cove Track passes through several vegetation communities and provides habitat for a range of wildlife, one of the most diverse in North Sydney.

At the top of Smoothey Park you will find Blackbutt Gully Forest; the remnant Turpentine trees are an indication of shale influenced soils. This soil type may have originally supported Blue Gum High Forest. Angophora Foreshore Forest then becomes dominant as you head towards Gore Cove. This open-forest is distinguished by its upper storey of Sydney Red Gums. Along the creek line you will find Sandstone Gallery Rainforest, which has a closed canopy dominated by Lillypilly, Coachwoods and Sweet Pittosporum, as well as Privet\*. As you leave the gully, the vegetation merges back into Disclimax Sandstone Scrub dominated by Peppermints and Coastal Banksias with an understorey of Grass Trees, flowering shrubs, Mat Rush and ferns. Locally rare Flannel Flowers are found further along the Gore Cove Track in the more open Angophora Foreshore Forest towards Berry Island.

*\* introduced weed*

Down on the mud flats a number of estuary communities can be found including Estuarine Swamp Oak Forest, Mangrove Forest and Coastal Saltmarsh. Estuarine Swamp Oak Forest and Coastal Saltmarsh are both listed as Endangered Ecological Communities under the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act while Estuarine Mangrove Forest provide breeding and shelter sites for a plethora of migratory and marine species.

This walk will delight wildlife watchers. The diversity of vegetation and the creek support a variety of bird life. Those with keen eyes may be surprised at what they find. Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrikes, Kingfishers, Robins, Wrens, Treecreepers, Wattlebirds, Whistlers, Pardalotes, Thornbills, Parrots and Rosellas have all been sighted along this track, with residents reporting hearing the Eastern Whipbird and a Powerful Owl. Bring your binoculars! Many seabirds such as Herons live down at the mudflats, and Ringtail Possum dreys can also be seen along the track.

Skinks scurry around the leaf litter and the Brown-Stripped Marsh Frog and the Common Eastern Froglet live in the areas of runoff that pass through the bushland into the creek. Three microbat species have also been recorded in this reserve: Gould's Wattle Bat, Large-footed Myotis and the Large Bent-wing Bat. The only recording in North Sydney of the native ground dwelling marsupial, the Brown Antechinus (often mistaken for a mouse or rat), has been along the Gore Cove Track. Mind your step!



*Mud flats supporting coastal saltmarsh in Gore Cove*

# Berry Island Reserve, Wollstonecraft – the Gadyan Track



Take a self-guided walk around Berry Island on the Gadyan Track, which has interpretive signage detailing the rich Aboriginal history and heritage of the island. 'Gadyan' is a Sydney Aboriginal language word for the Sydney cockle, a shellfish common in the middens on the island. The signage takes you to rock engravings and describes the lifestyle of the Cammeraygal people.

- LEGEND**
- Parkland
  - Bushland
  - Bush track
  - Toilets
  - Trackhead signs
  - Water bubbler
  - BBQ
  - Dog bin
  - Picnic table and seating
  - Playground



*Berry Island Reserve, 1937  
Photo: Stanton Library*

## **GRADE/TIMING**

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15 minute, 750m easy-grade bushwalk that loops around the island.

## **HISTORY**

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The Aboriginal cultural history and evidence of an interpretation of the Dreaming can be seen in numerous shell middens, axe grinding grooves and the large engraving found here. The area is still regularly used today by Aboriginal people in leading guided walks and helping non-Aboriginal people learn about Aboriginal heritage and culture.

In the early 19th century, this small island was attached to the property of Edward Wollstonecraft on the mainland by a stone causeway over mud flats. After he died, the property was passed to his sister and her husband, Alexander Berry. There was great debate over the use of the area for commercial and/or residential purposes. Public protests saw that the island was dedicated as a nature reserve for public recreation in 1926, along with Balls Head Reserve. In the 1960s the mudflats were filled in with car bodies, building rubble and relocated soil to create a grassed area.

Bush regeneration has been carried out on the island since 1980.

## ACCESS

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Turn off the Pacific Highway in to Shirley Road at Crows Nest and drive to the end. Limited street parking is available.

A 10 minute walk from Wollstonecraft Station down Shirley Road.

## OUTLOOK

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West to Greenwich Point, south to Balmain and Birchgrove and east to Balls Head and the historic Coal Loader.

## INTEREST SPOTS

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Aboriginal midden sites, watering hole and rock engravings.



*Berry Island*

## FLORA/FAUNA

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Berry Island consists of relatively untouched remnant Hawkesbury Sandstone vegetation, one of the most pristine bushland areas in North Sydney. As you walk around the island you will pass through Angophora Foreshore Forest towering with Sydney Red Gums and a stunning understorey of flowering shrubs such as White Spider Flower, pink flowering Crowea, Wattles, Banksias and the green and red bells of Correa.

Shallow soils throughout the interior of the island supports Kunzea Scrub vegetation community an open scrub dominated by Tick Bush, which makes important habitat for Ringtail Possums.

On the South Western edge of the Island Sandstone Foreshore Scrub can be found on the steep sandstone slopes adjacent to the harbour.

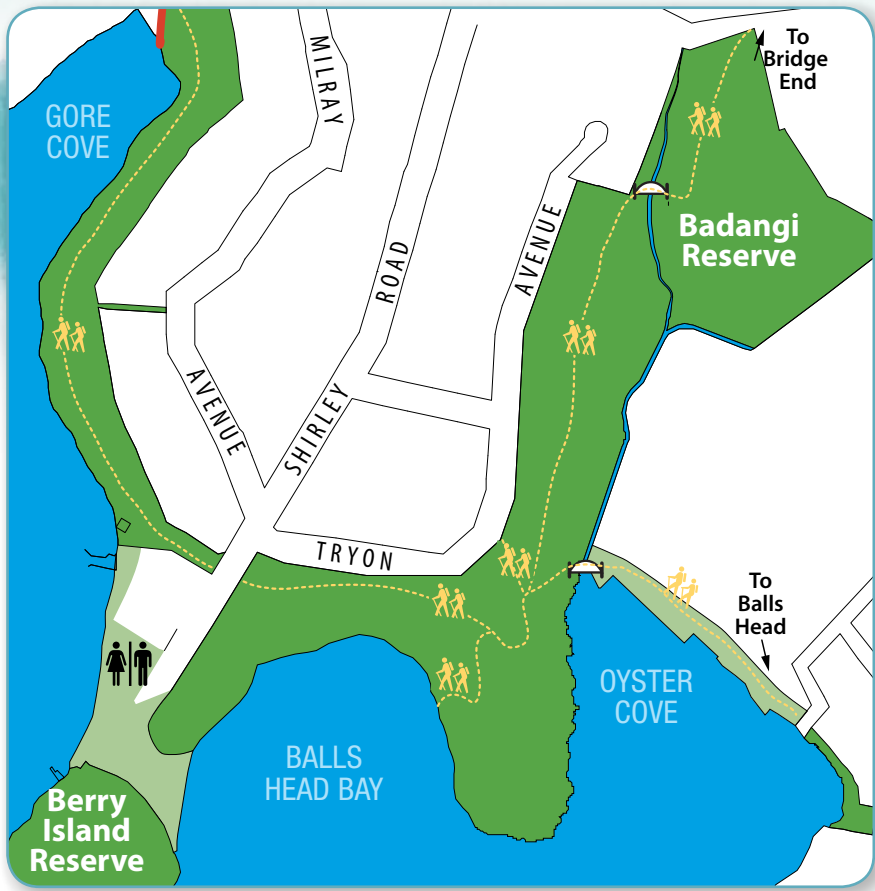
Some locally rare plant species can also be found on the island, including *Acacia longissima*, *Banksia oblongifolia* and *Eucalyptus paniculata* (Grey Ironbark).

Berry Island is home to a few bird species, lizards and Ringtail Possums. A resident pair of Masked Plovers can be seen regularly on the lawn verge and Welcome Swallows are often seen gliding above the mown grassed area feeding on insects. A wildlife corridor was first planted along the western side of the grass reserve in 1998. Further planting was undertaken by community volunteers on National Tree Day in 2010.



Silvereye  
Photo: Neil Fifer, 2004

# Badangi Reserve, Wollstonecraft



- LEGEND**
- Parkland
  - Bushland
  - Bush track
  - Toilets
  - Bridge
  - Creek

‘Badangi’, is a Sydney Aboriginal language word for Rock Oyster. Information signage throughout the walk reveals the fascinating history of this bushland reserve.





*North Shore Gas Works, Oyster Cove, 1914  
Photo: copyright AGL*

## **GRADE/TIMING**

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An easy-grade 30-minute walk. Walk along the entire track and either exit via stairs onto Bridge End or follow the same track back. Alternatively, cross the bridge at the south-eastern edge of the reserve and walk east along Oyster Cove foreshore towards Balls Head.

## **HISTORY**

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Aboriginal people would have eaten and made tools and medicine from the bushland of this area and used the resource of fresh water from the creek that once ran through this bushland. The area's sandy coves were perfect for leisure and food gathering.

A small open section of this creek is still present through Bridge End and the remaining section now lies underground. The deep harbour frontages of Balls Head Bay and Oyster Cove promised a great industrial future for the North Shore. It was believed that it would one day rival places such as Darling Harbour on the south side for maritime industry and shipping. One of North Sydney's earliest industries, a sugar refinery, was established on the foreshores of Oyster Cove in the 1850s; this was later converted to a kerosene works in the 1860s. The buildings were reused in 1917 as part of the Oyster Cove Gas Works which

operated from the site (now a residential development) until 1983. Only a sample of the original buildings remain and are now incorporated into this development.

Badangi Reserve also formed part of Berry Estate, which was granted in the early years of settlement. Tryon Avenue was named after Sir George Tryon, Rear Admiral of the Royal Navy from 1884 to 1887 and the first admiral to occupy Admiralty House, Kirribilli.

The Badangi Reserve Bushcare Group was formed around 1993 and along with North Sydney Council, has been responsible for rehabilitating this bushland.

## **ACCESS**

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Turn off the Pacific Highway into Shirley Road at Crows Nest. Drive down to the end of Shirley Road towards Berry Island. The Badangi Reserve walk starts on the left facing Berry Island at the corner of Shirley Road and Tryon Avenue.

By public transport, take the train to Wollstonecraft station and walk 5-10 minutes down Shirley Road.

## **OUTLOOK**

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South to Sydney Harbour and east to a residential development.

## **INTEREST SPOTS**

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Old sandstone walls, pebbled paths and relics from the sugar refinery and kerosene works once present in Oyster Cove; a building of the old Gas Works forming part of the residential development; rare Forest Red Gums.

## FLORA/FAUNA

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Badangi Reserve is predominately an open forest of Sydney Red Gums. Peppermints and Red Bloodwoods are found throughout the reserve with a patch of Blackbutt (*Eucalyptus pilularis*) Gully Forest vegetation located in the north-western section of the reserve. A small community of rare Forest Red Gums (*Eucalyptus tereticornis*) are located near the southern foreshore of the reserve. In 2010, Council's Natural Area Survey identified this vegetation community as a rare eastern variant of the endangered Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest. Wattles, ferns and the peppery smell of Zierias are common in the understorey.

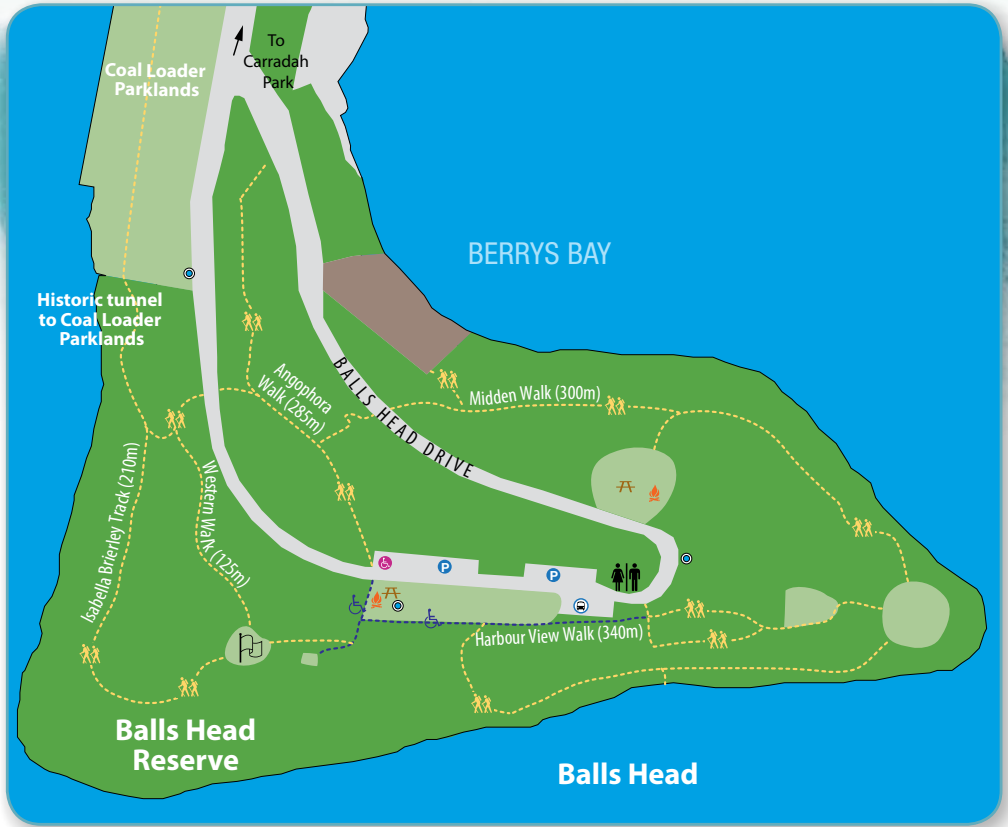
Tawny Frogmouths nest annually along Tryon Avenue and Eastern Toadlets pop up in various locations after rain. A chorus of Kookaburras, Butcherbirds, Lorikeets and, in spring and summer time, Koels can be heard. Butterflies flutter along the shrub layer.

Bridge End has a large variety of small birds such as Fairy-wrens, Robins, Scrub-wrens and Spotted Pardalotes. The gully area along the creek line is dotted with Coachwood, Lillypilly and mature vines that reach high into the canopy. The area is noted for the diverse fungi species that emerge after rain.



Badangi Reserve

# Balls Head Reserve, Waverton



- LEGEND**
- Parkland
  - Bushland
  - Quarantine Depot
  - Bush track
  - Disabled track
  - Water Bubbler
  - Mini bus parking
  - Carpark
  - Disabled parking
  - Toilets
  - BBQ
  - Flag pole
  - Picnic table



*Balls Head looking south-west*

## **GRADE/TIMING**

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A moderate 20-40 minute walk around the headland. There are several walking tracks in the vicinity. Foreshore bushland is fragile and highly erodible. Please help protect this environment by keeping to formed paths.

## **HISTORY**

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This reserve contains many Aboriginal sites including archaeological deposits/middens, art sites and rock engravings. A scientific excavation of a rock shelter on this site revealed the skeleton of an Aboriginal woman and a collection of stone tools.

Named after Lieutenant Henry Lidgbird Ball, Commander of the ship 'Supply' in the First Fleet of 1788, Balls Head was the original foreshore land included in the large Wollstonecraft Estate, which remained largely undeveloped at the beginning of the 20th century. In 1912 the Quarantine Depot was established in Berrys Bay to service the boats operating to and from the Quarantine Station at North Head.

There was some debate in the earlier part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as to the future use of the area for commercial and residential purposes versus public open space. Strong public protests resulted in it being declared a public parkland in 1926. Despite this win for the people of NSW, much of the vegetation on the headland

was cleared during this early development period and a variety of native and non-native tree species were planted on this site as the natural bushland slowly regenerated.

European industrial sites dating back to the 19th century were located north of the Quarantine Depot and these featured the original stone store (house), later the torpedo depot and still later ship repair yards and oil storage tanks. Some of these stone stores were used for shelter by homeless people during the Depression in the 1930s. Bush regeneration began on Balls Head in 1980 and the Bushcare group has been working regularly on the site since the early 1990s.

The engraving (right) has been called a 'whale' by archaeologists since 1843 and is known locally as 'whale rock'. Other archaeologists point out that it is more likely to be a shark due to the number of fins. Inside the 'whale' is another engraving. Some say it is a person, some say it's a dingo and others call it a koradji (Doctor or magic man) singing whales into the harbour. What do you see? We can imagine that we know what this engraving means, but in reality this engraving has its connection to Dreamtime and the Dreaming. At the start of the colony in Sydney, the loss of so many Aboriginal people through disease and conflict with early settlers meant that the dreaming story of this engraving was lost.



*Aboriginal engraving at Balls Head*

## **ACCESS**

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Follow Balls Head Drive from Bay Road off the Pacific Highway at North Sydney. One large car park on the headland is available for parking. Street parking on Balls Head Drive is also available.

A 5-10 minute walk from Waverton railway station, turn left and follow Bay Road, which leads into Balls Head Road and then into Balls Head Drive.

## OUTLOOK

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West to Gladesville, south to Sydney CBD, Balmain, Birchgrove, Goat Island and Mort Bay, east to Berrys Bay, McMahons Point and North Sydney.

## INTEREST SPOTS

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Several picnic areas, dedication plaques and historic flagpole footings. The flagpole was situated 300ft above sea level, marking the highest point west of the Harbour Bridge. In early settlement times it was used as a means of communication with Government House. Walk links to the Coal Loader parklands and Centre for Sustainability which contain a bushfood garden, Aboriginal engravings and many other points of interest. On the eastern side of the Waverton Peninsula sits Carradah Park. This ex-industrial site has been reinterpreted as a public parkland without forgetting its industrial heritage.

## FLORA/FAUNA

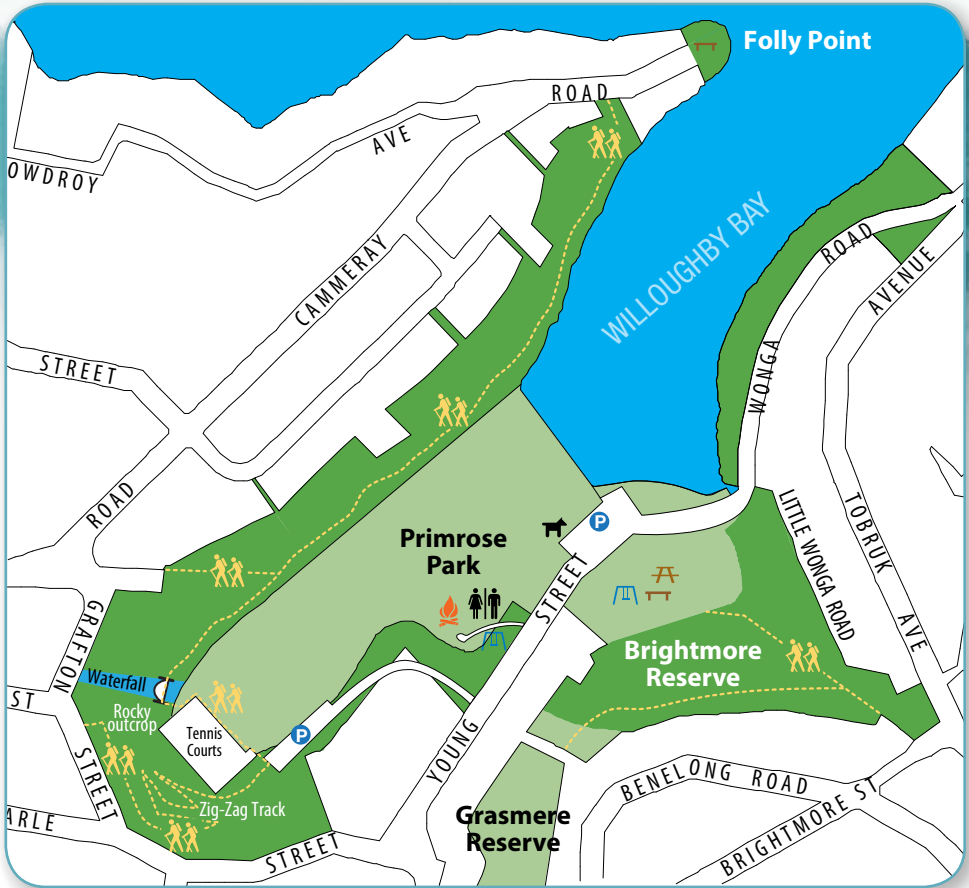
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Vegetation is predominately Angophora Foreshore Forest, with Sydney Red Gums dominating the canopy and an understorey of Grevilleas, Wattles, Banksias as well as shrubs and grasses. In sheltered gullies, species such as Cheese Trees, Sweet Pittosporum, Blueberry Ash, NSW Christmas Bush, Lillypillys, and Mock Olives flourish. Sandstone Foreshore Scrub takes hold on the steep sandstone slopes adjacent to the harbour on the south western side of the reserve, where you can hear the wind blow through the stands of She-Oaks. Open Kunzea scrub becomes dominant on the flat sandstone outcrops located on the western side of this headland.

Throughout the reserve there are Port Jackson Figs, filled on summer nights with Grey-headed Flying-fox eating the fleshy fruits.

Balls Head reserve is a refuge for native fauna, with Geckoes, Blue-tongue Lizards, Skinks, Common Eastern Froglets, Brushtail and Ringtail Possums, a colony of Large Bent-wing Microbats, and many species of birds living and visiting the area. Sea birds can be found on the rocks around the foreshore and Parrots, Lorikeets, Kookaburras, Butcher Birds, Scrub-wrens and Figbirds can be found in the trees and shrubs. Keep an eye and ear out for migrant Cuckoos and Koels in summer.

# Primrose Park, Cammeray



- LEGEND**
- Parkland
  - Bushland
  - Bush track
  - Toilets
  - Playground
  - Carpark
  - Dog bin
  - BBQ
  - Picnic table and seating
  - Bridge





*Primrose Park and Willoughby Bay, 1937  
Photo: Stanton Library*

## **GRADE/TIMING**

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An easy-grade 20-minute walk to Folly Point from the tennis courts. A further moderate 10-minute walk up a steep incline over rocky outcrops from the waterfall to Grafton Street and along the Zig-Zag track back to the tennis courts.

## **HISTORY**

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Primrose Park was originally occupied by the Cammeraygal Aboriginal people. This environment leading around from Folly Point would have provided a choice of rock shelters depending on the season, a south facing (summer season) or north facing (winter season) rock shelter would be chosen. Shell middens are found in this area. It would have provided easy canoe access to 'Warringah' (Middle Harbour) and beyond.

The Willoughby Falls area in the western gully was a favourite picnic spot in the early days of white settlement. This park was named after H L Primrose, a North Sydney Mayor from 1926 to 1932 and later NSW Minister for Health. The oval was once an estuarine bay and in 1899, was the site of North Sydney's first sewage treatment works that serviced North Sydney and parts of Willoughby and Mosman. The former engine house and compressor houses, tunnels and canals can still be seen today and the remaining buildings are the home of

the Primrose Park Art and Craft Centre as well as a range of sporting clubs. The sewerage works closed in the late 1920s and the area was dedicated as parkland in 1930.

Bush regeneration and Bushcare volunteers have been working in Primrose Park since the early 1990s.

## **ACCESS**

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Follow Young Street off Military Road at Neutral Bay to the end. There are two car parks.

Catch any of the buses that stop along Military Road from North Sydney or Wynyard and walk 10 minutes down Young Street.

## **OUTLOOK**

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East to Willoughby Bay, Middle Harbour and Seaforth.

## **FACILITIES**

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Children's bicycle track and playground area in Brightmore Reserve. Children's playground equipment in Primrose Park beside the ovals near electric BBQ and toilets.

## **INTEREST SPOTS**

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Willoughby Falls, Aboriginal rock art and the former Primrose Park Sewerage Works structure. Folly Point is a beautiful spot for a rest, covered in She-Oak trees and remnant Blackbutts overlooking a superb view of Middle Harbour. Barcroft Henry Boake was a writer and poet best known for his 'Out Where the Dead Men Lie'. Unable to find work in the depression of the 1890s, he hanged himself in 1892, aged 26 from a tree at Folly Point.



*Willoughby Falls  
Photo: J Quilty*

## **FLORA/FAUNA**

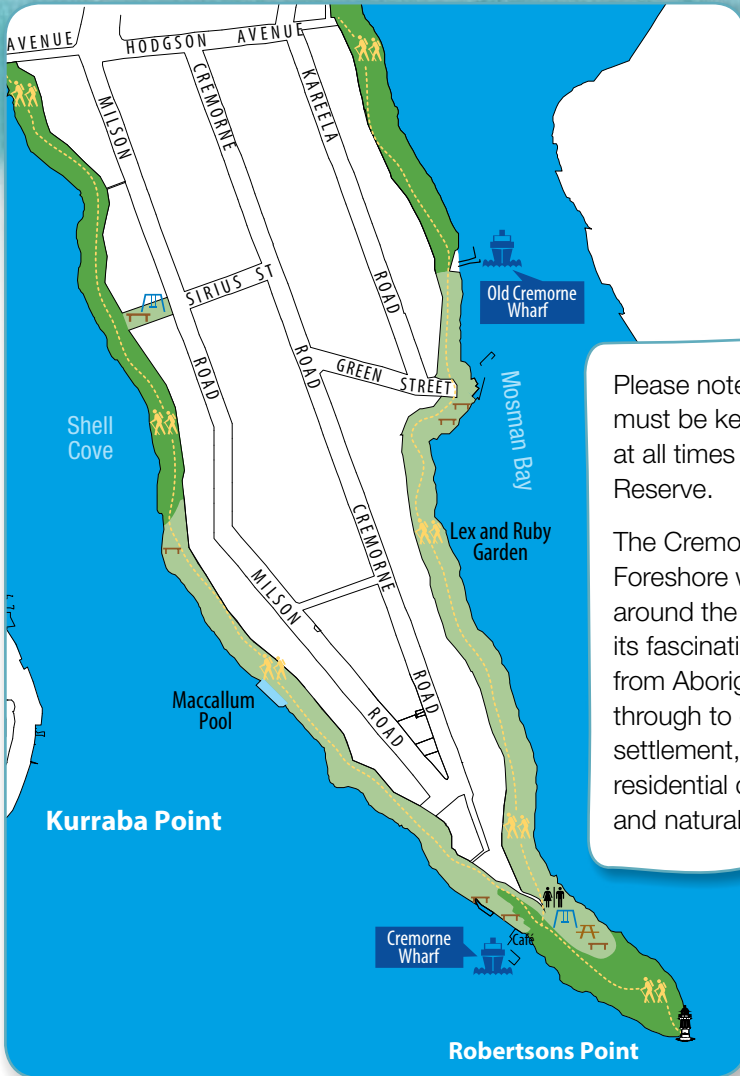
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The Blackbutt, Sydney Red Gum and She-Oak crown this open forest with an understorey of flowering shrubs and ferns. There are some beautiful stands of Tree Ferns along the walk and Black Wattle canopy around Willoughby Falls. Look for Eastern Water Dragons sunning themselves on the rocks surrounding the waterfall in the middle of the day.

Both the indigenous bush and weed areas provide habitat for an array of wildlife. There are extensive areas of weed including large areas of Lantana and Privet found in the reserve behind the houses, due to past disturbances and neglect. It is important to note that despite the dense stands of weed situated on Primrose Park's western slope edge, bird diversity in this section of the reserve is high. This is due to the protective weed thickets forming safe complex habitat. In the dense understorey White-browed Scrub-wrens and Superb Fairy-wrens can be seen. Keep an ear out for the chorus of bird species including: Eastern Whip Birds, Rosellas, Lorikeets, Butcher Birds, King Parrots and sea birds around the foreshore. Masked Plovers, Magpies and Crested Pigeons forage for food on the oval.

Kingfishers visit and migrate to the creek line. Up in the trees, the Boobook Owl and Tawny Frogmouths roost, and with sightings of a Powerful Owl sitting during the day clutching prey, you would be wise to keep one eye scanning the trees and one on the path.

# Cremorne Point Reserve, Cremorne Point



Please note, that dogs must be kept on a leash at all times in Cremorne Reserve.

The Cremorne Point Foreshore walk signage around the reserve reveals its fascinating history from Aboriginal times through to early European settlement, its unique residential development and natural environment.

- LEGEND**
- Parkland
  - Bush track
  - Playground
  - Historic lighthouse
  - Bushland
  - Toilets
  - Ferry terminal
  - Picnic table and seating



*Eastern side of Cremorne Point from Mosman Bay 1915  
Photo: Stanton Library*

## **GRADE/TIMING**

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A 40-minute easy-grade walk on paved paths. The walk continues to Mosman.

## **HISTORY**

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The Aboriginal name for Cremorne Point is 'Wulwarrajeung'. The Aboriginal history of the area is evidenced by numerous shell middens and rock engravings found here. The understorey here has been changed with more grass than bushland, reducing bush tucker presence. From here Aboriginal people could see south across the harbour to the new settlement at Farm Cove after the arrival of the British.

In 1823, 86 acres of land at Cremorne Point were granted to a Scottish watchmaker and later sold to Mr James Milson. Three years later, 22 acres were leased and turned into an amusement park called Cremorne Gardens, created after a similar pleasure garden in London. Activities such as band music, dancing on an outdoor stage, archery, quoits, shooting gallery, skittles, gymnastics and fireworks would take place in the gardens. Cremorne gets its name from these 'Gardens'.

The Cremorne Point Bushcare group was formed in 1993 and is supported by other bush regeneration works in the area.

## **ACCESS**

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Turn off Military Road at Cremorne into Murdoch Street which leads into Milson Road. Follow Milson Road to the end. Limited street parking is available.

Alternatively, the Mosman Ferry from Circular Quay goes to Cremorne Point, or catch the Cremorne Wharf bus, from Neutral Bay Junction.

The loop track can be started at three main entrance points: Bogota Avenue, above Cremorne Wharf or Lower Spofforth St / Bromley Ave.

## **OUTLOOK**

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West to Kurraba Point, Kirribilli and Shellcove Bay, south to Sydney City, Woolloomooloo and Fort Denison, east to Double Bay and Watsons Bay looking over Taronga Zoo.

## **INTEREST SPOTS**

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The Lex and Ruby Gardens, started in 1957 with the random planting of an Elephants Ear by Lex Graham, are protected by the National Trust.

Climb down to the lighthouse at Robertson Point. There are great places along the western side of the Point near Maccallum Pool for picnics.

## FLORA/FAUNA

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The reserve is narrow and includes lawn areas, planted trees, exotic gardens, bushland and degraded weed areas. At Robertsons Point, bushland thrives with a helping hand from Bushcare. In this open to closed scrub, the Sydney Red Gum crowns as the canopy, with an understorey of She-Oak, Coastal Banksia, Heath, pink flowered Crowea and Mat Rush. The Scribbly Gum and the Red Spider Flower are locally rare species. Around the reserve some of the Sydney Red Gums are dying due to the fungus, *Phytophthora* in the soil. A Council program was set up in 2001 to help protect and restore the remnant canopy. Sydney Red Gums are still being impacted around the point and recently planted *Angophoras* have failed to thrive. In order to reverse this eventual loss of canopy, the Bushland Management Team are planting different endemic tree species that are less susceptible to *Phytophthora*.

Many bird species, particularly the Pied Currawong and Magpies are common at Cremorne Point. Small wrens, Eastern Whipbirds and Brush Turkeys have also come back to the Point in recent years; listen for their calls as you walk and look for them in the thick understorey around the Point. Tawny Frogmouths nest annually in the area and the rare Powerful Owl has been sighted at Cremorne Point. Grey-headed Flying-foxes visit the area while travelling from their colony at Gordon to feed for the evening. Keep an eye and ear out for the Channel-billed Cuckoo and Common Koel that migrate from Papua New Guinea each year in summer to breed. Ringtail Possums are also common in the area. Fairy Penguins can be seen at times in Mosman Bay.



Australian Brush Turkey  
Photo: T. Quested



Australian Magpie  
Photo: Neil Fifer, 2003

# Plant Names Index

Black Wattle	<i>Callicoma serratifolia</i>
Coachwood	<i>Ceratopetalum apetalum</i>
Coastal Banksia	<i>Banksia integrifolia</i>
Correa	<i>Correa reflexa</i>
Crowea	<i>Crowea saligna</i>
False Sarsaparilla	<i>Hardenbergia violacea</i>
Flannel Flower	<i>Actinotus helianthi</i>
Forest Red Gum	<i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i>
Geebung	<i>Persoonia levis</i>
Grass Trees	<i>Xanthorrhoea arborea</i>
Grey Ironbark	<i>Eucalyptus paniculata</i>
Handsome Flat Pea	<i>Platylobium formosum</i>
Mat Rush	<i>Lomandra longifolia</i>
Mock Olive	<i>Notelaea longifolia</i>
NSW Christmas Bush	<i>Ceratopetalum gummiferum</i>
Prickly Moses	<i>Acacia ulicifolia</i>
Port Jackson Fig	<i>Ficus rubiginosa</i>
Red Bloodwood	<i>Corymbia gummifera</i>
Red Spider Flower	<i>Grevillea speciosa</i>
Sandfly Zieria	<i>Zieria smithii</i>
Scribbly Gum	<i>Eucalyptus haemastoma</i>
She-Oak	<i>Allocasurina littoralis</i>
Swamp She-Oak	<i>Casuarina glauca</i>
Sweet Pittosporum	<i>Pittosporum undulatum</i>
Sydney Peppermint	<i>Eucalyptus piperita</i>
Sydney Red Gum	<i>Angophora costata</i>
Tick Bush	<i>Kunzea ambigua</i>
Tree Broom-Heath	<i>Monotoca elliptica</i>
Warrigal Greens	<i>Tetragonia tetragonioides</i>
White Spider Flower	<i>Grevillea linearifolia</i>



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*Berry Island*



*White-browed Scrubwren*



*Long-nosed Bandicoot*  
(Photo courtesy of Northern Beaches Council)



*Red Ochre Hand Stencil*



*Bracket Fungus*  
Photo: Mike Young



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