

# Mossy Point treasure hunt



## Activity checklist:

- ✓ Activity sheets
- ✓ Pencil
- ✓ Sun protection (hat, sunscreen and sunglasses)
- ✓ Container or bag to collect any plastic washed ashore

Mossy Point lies within the traditional Aboriginal Country of the Yuin people, whose boundaries stretch the length of the NSW south coast and continue west to the Great Dividing Range. The local Yuin are known as Walbanja. Aboriginal occupation of Mossy Point has been intense and consistent for thousands of years, as indicated by the size and depth of middens in the area.

In more recent times, the area now known as Mossy Point was called Connells Point, after the Connell family.

Mossy Point's Tomaga River and its estuary fall within the habitat protection zone of the Batemans Marine Park, where collection

of some species is prohibited. Marine parks help conserve our marine life for future generations, and they provide the perfect opportunity for the public to appreciate, understand and enjoy Eurobodalla's unique marine environment.

There is an anchor on the Mossy Point headland. The Scotia sank off Kiama in 1889 and its anchor brought to the Tomaga River in 1912 to aid navigation for Cook's Timber Mill – which was on the property nearest the boat ramp.

Between June and October look out to the horizon for signs of migrating humpback and southern right whales.

### Humpback whales



Humpback whales have a prominent dorsal fin and are characterised by a 'hump' back.

### Southern right whales



Southern right whales have no dorsal fin and move slowly close to shore.

*While the coastal and marine environments are beautiful, they can be dangerous. Take care while walking and remind children to be wary of slippery rocks or broken glass. Make sure they know how to recognise venomous creatures like bluebottles and blue-ringed octopuses.*

# Spot it at low tide! (tick the checkbox)

From the Mossy Point boat ramp, walk along the jetty for the chance to spot stingrays and southern octopus. Octopuses have eight arms that create an umbrella shape around its central rounded head. Each arm has two rows of suckers and is three to four times longer than its body. A southern octopus has two large eyes and can be many different colours – from red to pale grey. Both stingrays and octopuses were hunted and eaten by Aboriginal people. They used the sharp serrated barb from a stingray's tail as a point on their fishing spears.

At low tide, walk from the jetty over rocks and along the rock platform to the base of the headland. See if you can find shellfish like black nerites and australwinks along the way. Shellfish were a regular part of the local Aboriginal diet.



Draw a stingray or an octopus



Black nerites



Australwinks



Sooty oystercatcher



Draw an oystercatcher



Can you see any chubby, mostly black birds with bright red bills? These are oystercatchers and there are two species; the all-black sooty oystercatcher and the black-and-white pied oystercatcher. They make a distinct, loud 'hueep' sound if they are disturbed or fly off. Their favourite foods are oysters, limpets and mussels and you will most likely see them foraging along the shoreline or on the rock platform.

## Spot it at low tide (continued)

Another largely black bird is the great cormorant. They are excellent swimmers and catch food by making shallow underwater dives, lasting up to a minute. Cormorants are often seen perched with their wings splayed out to dry. This is because their plumage becomes saturated during the dive. Holding their wings out helps their feathers to dry and their body temperature to warm after the cold swim.

### Great cormorant



### Can you find this rockpool?



### How many different kinds of seaweed can you find in the rockpool?

Aboriginal people taught children to shelter from wind or heat in groves of casuarina, or she-oak, if they become lost. As you head back through the she-oak forest be sure to take a moment to sit quietly and listen.

### She-oak forest



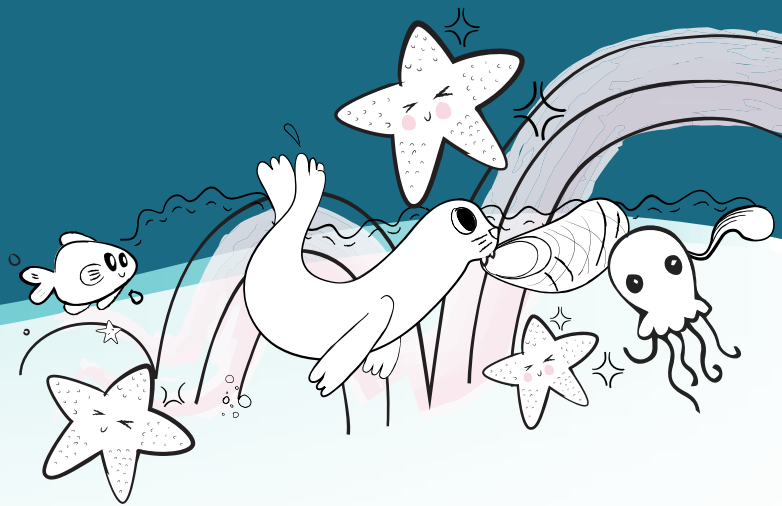
### What forest sounds can you hear?

### White-bellied sea eagle



White-bellied sea eagles live in the area. Scientists describe them as opportunistic carnivores.

As well as hunting fish, they will feed on turtles, seabirds, flying foxes and carrion. They will also harass smaller raptors like harriers and even seals to steal their prey.



There are so many interesting things to find. List or draw your favourites:






### How to be a citizen scientist

You can help save marine life by becoming a citizen scientist. Discarded plastic or fishing tackle can injure or kill marine life – we need to learn more about litter so we can stop it at the source and that’s where you can help. It’s easy to download Tangaroa Blue’s Australian Marine Debris Initiative App from [www.tangaroablue.org/resources/clean-up-data-collection/amdi-app](http://www.tangaroablue.org/resources/clean-up-data-collection/amdi-app) then record the type of any litter you find.

For more information or to get involved visit [www.esc.nsw.gov.au/living-in/environment/](http://www.esc.nsw.gov.au/living-in/environment/)

If you see illegal activity in the marine park, contact Batemans Marine Park office on 1800 043 536 or log it on the NSW Fisheries website [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/compliance/report-illegal-activity](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/compliance/report-illegal-activity)

This environmental treasure hunt was developed by Eurobodalla Council with assistance from Minga Aboriginal Cultural Services.