

# Congo Point treasure hunt



## Activity checklist:

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

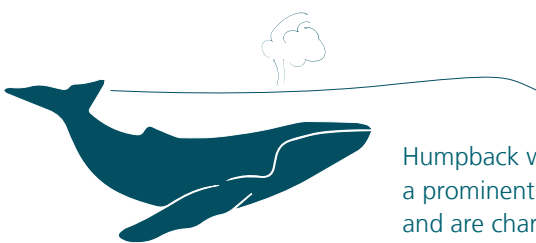
Congo Point sits within the traditional Aboriginal country of the Yuin people, whose boundaries stretch the length of the NSW south coast and continue west to the Great Dividing Range. The local Yuin are known as Brinja Yuin. Congo was their home for thousands of years, as evidenced by the abundance of midden sites, silcrete quarries, ochre outcrops and knapping sites.

Congo's beaches and Congo Creek lie within a habitat protection zone of the

Batemans Marine Park. Marine parks provide a great opportunity to improve public understanding and enjoyment of the unique marine environment while helping conserve marine life for present and future generations.

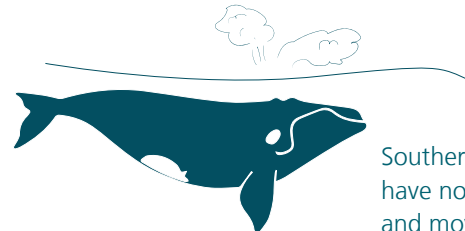
If you're visiting Congo between June and October be sure to keep your eye out to sea. You may be lucky enough to see passing humpback and southern right whales – they can sometimes come quite close to shore.

### 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)

2.

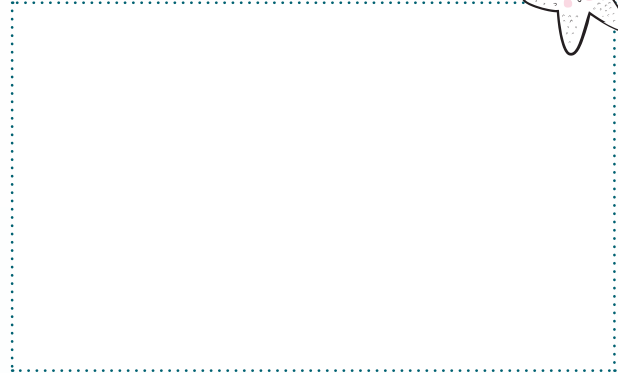
Walk along the southern edge of Congo Creek and out to the rock platform. On the rock platform you will notice oysters and other shellfish in and around the rock pools. All shellfish were and remain a part of the local Aboriginal people's diet. Oysters and limpets are also a favourite food of the sooty oystercatcher. The shells you find washed up on the beach used to have an animal living in them. Look in the pools on the rock platform to see living creatures in their shells. Limpets cling tightly to rocks, grazing on tiny algae as they move along when the tide is high.

### Sooty oystercatcher



The sooty oystercatcher is listed as vulnerable under the New South Wales Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995.

### Draw an oystercatcher



### Mulberry whelk



Mulberry whelks are carnivorous and can drill holes in the shells of prey. First it releases an acid from a gland in its foot to soften the shell. Then it makes a hole with its rasp-like tongue, called a radula. Once the hole has been made, the whelk protrudes its tube-like mouth in the hole and uses its radula to tear off the soft tissue of its prey.

### Limpet



While walking, you might find dead short-tailed shearwaters – also known as muttonbirds – washed up on the rocks. Usually the birds have died from exhaustion after flying an incredible 30,000 kilometres to our region from the Arctic in the northern hemisphere.

Fortunately many muttonbirds do survive and build nests and lay eggs. These eggs were harvested by Aboriginal people, but only one egg from each nest was taken to ensure ongoing food for future generations.

# Spot it at low tide (continued)

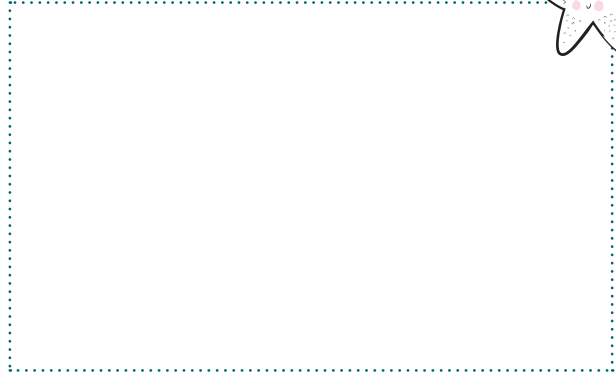
Zebra top shells feed by licking (rasping) microscopic plants from rocks with their tongues, which have a cartilage base and are covered with lots of tiny, backward-curving teeth. As the teeth wear out new ones grow forward from the back.

Very observant enviro-hunters might find a rose-petal bubble shell, *Hydatina physis*. Look for them on intertidal platforms or on the estuary sediment. Rose-petal bubble shells are hermaphrodites – each animal is both male and female. They lay their eggs in white-fluted ribbons like the one shown below.

## Zebra top shells



## Draw a zebra top shell



## Rose-petal bubble shell



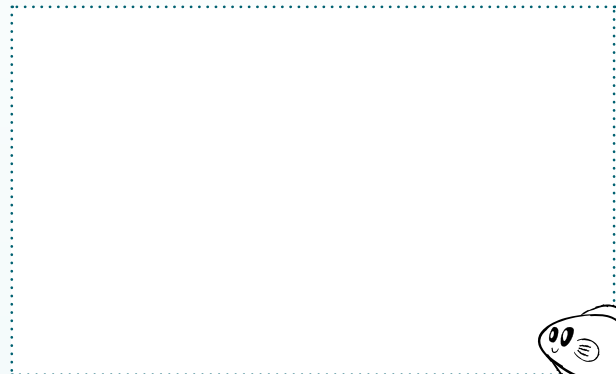
## White-fluted ribbons



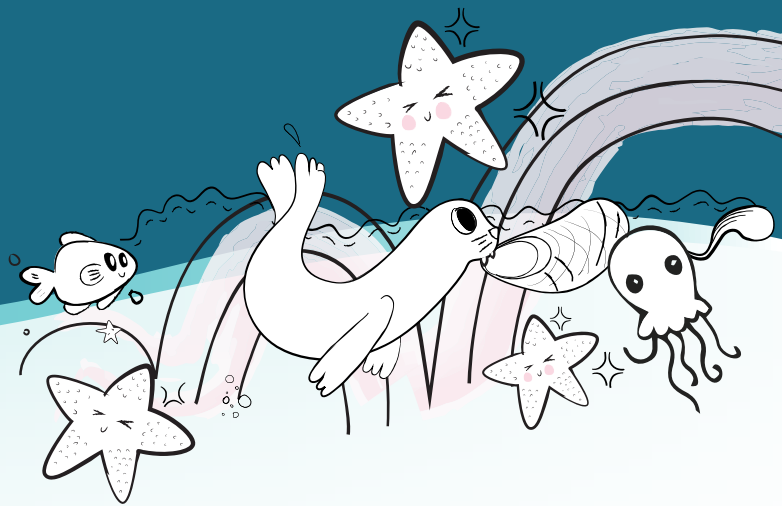
## Neptune's necklace



## Draw some Neptune's necklace



Seaweeds provide vital habitat for many sea creatures. Many are eaten by herbivorous animals like abalone, turban snails and sea urchins. This picture is of Neptune's necklace, which has separate male and female plants that release sperm and eggs into the ocean to reproduce.



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.