

# Surfside Beach treasure hunt



## Activity checklist:

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

Surfside Beach waterways sit within a Habitat Protection Zone of the Batemans Marine Park. Marine parks help conserve our state's marine life, while providing a great opportunity to improve public understanding and enjoyment of our unique marine environment.

From the bridge, look east and you can see Snapper Island and then further out at the entrance to the Bay, the Tollgate Islands. The Tollgate Islands were named by James Cook on his voyage along the east coast of Australia in 1770. Cook made contact with Aboriginal people in Batemans Bay on the Clyde River. The Tollgate Islands are key habitat for grey nurse sharks and both the Tollgates and Snapper Island are breeding areas for the threatened sooty oystercatcher.

Prior to the opening of the former Batemans Bay

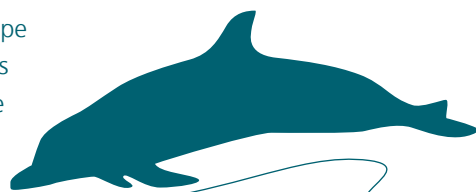
Bridge in November 1956, a ferry (punt) service took people across the river. It started in 1871 and the punt was later replaced by a steam ferry. The new bridge was completed in 2021.

Batemans Bay sits within the traditional Aboriginal country of the Yuin people whose boundaries stretch the length of the NSW south-east coast and west to the Great Dividing Range. The local Yuin are known as Walbanja. The Bhundoo (Clyde) River is a traditional travelling route and is abundant in natural resources and sustenance. Shellfish were a staple in the diet of the local Aboriginal people. Katungal and Guthaga mean coast dwellers or sea people.

A regular visitor to the Bay is the common bottlenose dolphin, which are grey and measure between 2m and 4m. They live in groups called pods that typically vary in number, from solitary dolphins to groups of over 100 or even more.

### Bottlenose dolphin

Each dolphin has a different dorsal fin with a unique shape and arrangement of notches and scars by which it can be identified.



They also have individual signature whistles.



*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.*

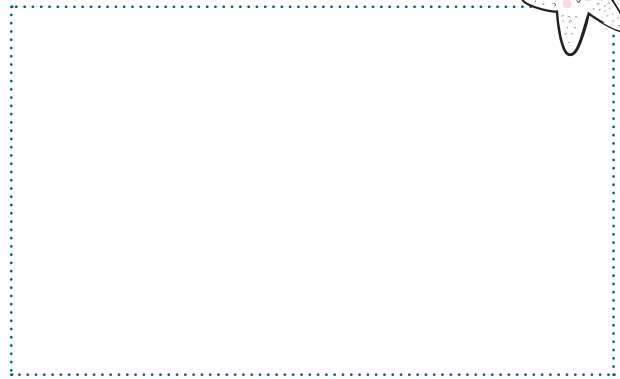
# Spot it at low tide! (tick the checkbox)

Start at the bridge and walk toward the rock groyne, east of the holiday park, and see if you can find some of these local species. The sooty oystercatcher forages along the shore. They make a distinct loud carrying 'hueep' in flight or when disturbed. Oysters, limpets and mussels are a favourite food of the sooty oystercatcher.

## Sooty oystercatcher



## Draw an oystercatcher



## Moon snails



## Moon snail eggs



Sand or moon snails are active hunters that plough their way through the sand just below the surface. When it comes in contact with a pipi or other bivalve (two-sided shell) the snail grasps it with its foot and produces an acid that helps soften the shell. Using its rasp-like tongue, it then drills into its prey, inserts its tube-like mouth into the hole, and devours it. If you hold an egg mass up to the sun you might see tiny eggs within.

## Port Jackson shark egg



In amongst the seaweed you might find a Port Jackson shark egg case. These are leathery brown and corkscrew shaped, about 20 cms long. The spiral shape helps secure the egg in crevices on the rocky sea bottom.



## Spot it at low tide (continued)

The Sydney cockle shell or bimbilla is creamy white, with about 28 deep, predominant ridges along the surface. The bimbilla is a traditional food of the local Aboriginal people, who use their feet to find the shell in shallow waters. Like all bivalves, the Sydney cockle or bimbilla is a "filter feeder", taking in the surrounding water and extracting small particles of food. It can filter 1.5 litres of water in an hour!

### Sydney cockle shell (bimbilla)



### Fingernail shell



Fingernail shells are rarely seen as they live in soft sand below the low tide mark. If you find a pair of shells you can see they gape at each end. In a living fingernail shell, a long, fleshy cylindrical foot protrudes from the lower (front) end. It uses this foot to dig very rapidly if it feels threatened. It can also come to the surface and use its foot to jump, flip or swim out of a predator's reach.

### White-bellied sea eagle

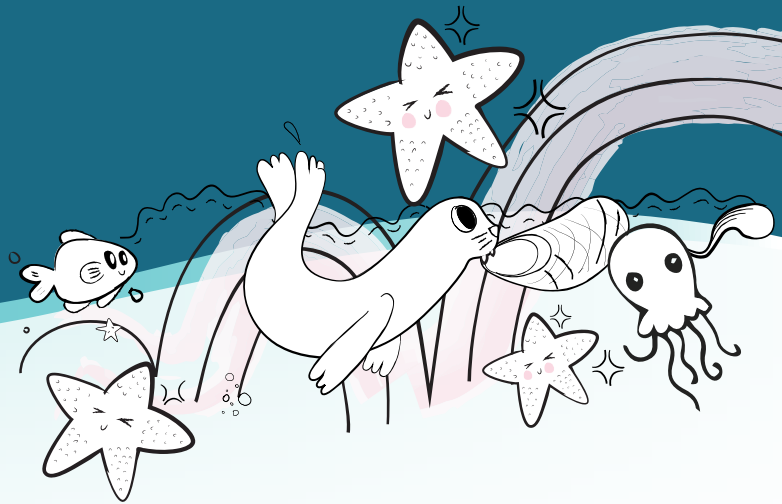



### List what you think they would eat


White-bellied sea eagles are 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.

### Draw the Batemans Bay Bridge





? 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.