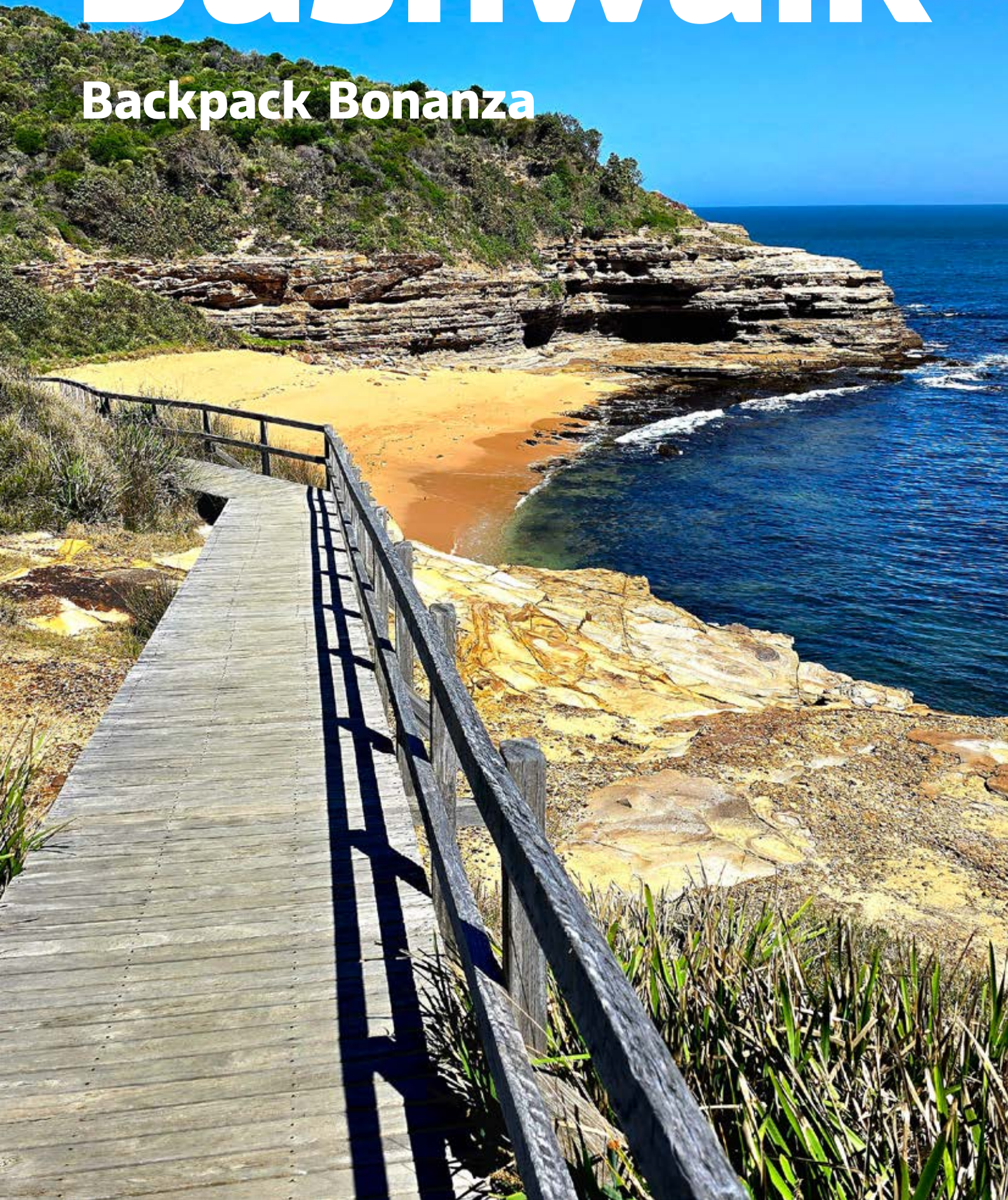


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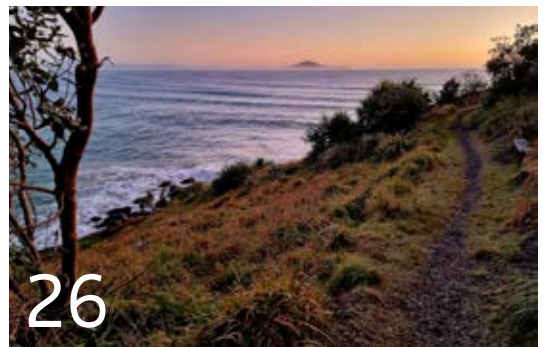
# Bushwalk

Backpack Bonanza



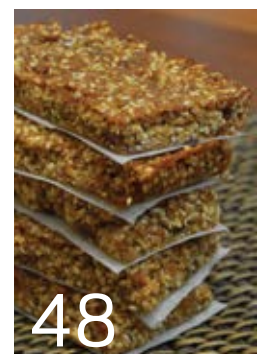
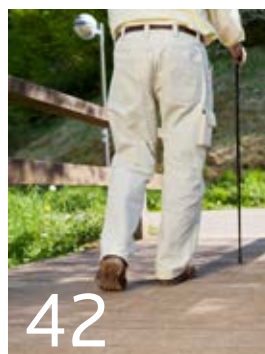
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**Always Was  
Always Will Be  
Aboriginal Land**

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians and Owners of this vast land on which we live and explore. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present and thank them for their stewardship of this great south land.



# Editor's Letter



Hi all,

I hope this magazine finds you well and enjoying the final stretch of winter walking.

In this edition, Helen takes us on a beautiful 750km, 50+ day pilgrimage along the Chemin Le Puy in France - a route filled with stunning views and charming villages. Closer to home, Greg continues the epic "Dreamtime to Eden" coast walk, guiding us from Terrigal to the Sydney Opera House - reminding us how long and beautiful the NSW coast really is. Ian takes us to Hat Head, NSW to wander the short but spectacular loop walk along the Korogoro Track. And Sonya as always returns with another delicious snack for your next walk - the yummiest sesame seed bars you will try.

Our photo comp winners are back with the sweeping ridges and coastal beauty. And to wrap up this edition we learn what causes our muscles to stiffen as we age - something many of us will relate to, with tips to help.

If you've got a story to share or photos from your recent walks, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to Eva with your ideas or contributions for future editions.

Happy walking and reading!

Matt :)

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Cover image  
The Bouddi Coastal Walk  
Greg Keaney



Bushwalk Magazine  
Edition 72  
August 2025  
An electronic magazine for  
[bushwalk.com](http://bushwalk.com)



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Please send any articles, suggestions or advertising enquires to Eva. We would love you to be part of the magazine and we are here to help.

## Declaration

The opinions stated in articles are those of the authors and not of those involved in the production of this edition. If you are worried about transparency or any editorial aspect please either write to me or raise the issue on [Bushwalk.com](http://Bushwalk.com). The bushwalking community is a small world and paths often cross. To improve transparency I thought it would be helpful to list my main associations within the outdoor community.

I operate [Bushwalk.com](http://Bushwalk.com), [Wildwalks.com](http://Wildwalks.com) and [Overlandtrack.com](http://Overlandtrack.com), a number of other smaller websites (and related apps) and have written several walking guide books, published by Woodslane. I contract to National Parks Association NSW and I am a member of the Walking Volunteers. I have had contracts with state and local government departments regarding bushwalking and related matters. I have also partnered with a large number of other organisations in environmental campaigns. Any commercial advertising or sponsorship will be clear in the magazine.

## Warning

Like all outdoor pursuits, the activities described in this publication may be dangerous. Undertaking them may result in loss, serious injury or death. The information in this publication is without any warranty on accuracy or completeness. There may be significant omissions and errors. People who are interested in walking in the areas concerned should make their own enquiries, and not rely fully on the information in this publication.

The publisher, editor, authors or any other entity or person will not be held responsible for any loss, injury, claim or liability of any kind resulting from people using information in this publication.

Please consider joining a walking club or undertaking formal training in other ways to ensure you are well prepared for any activities you are planning. Please report any errors or omissions to the editor or in the forum at [Bushwalk magazine](http://Bushwalk magazine).

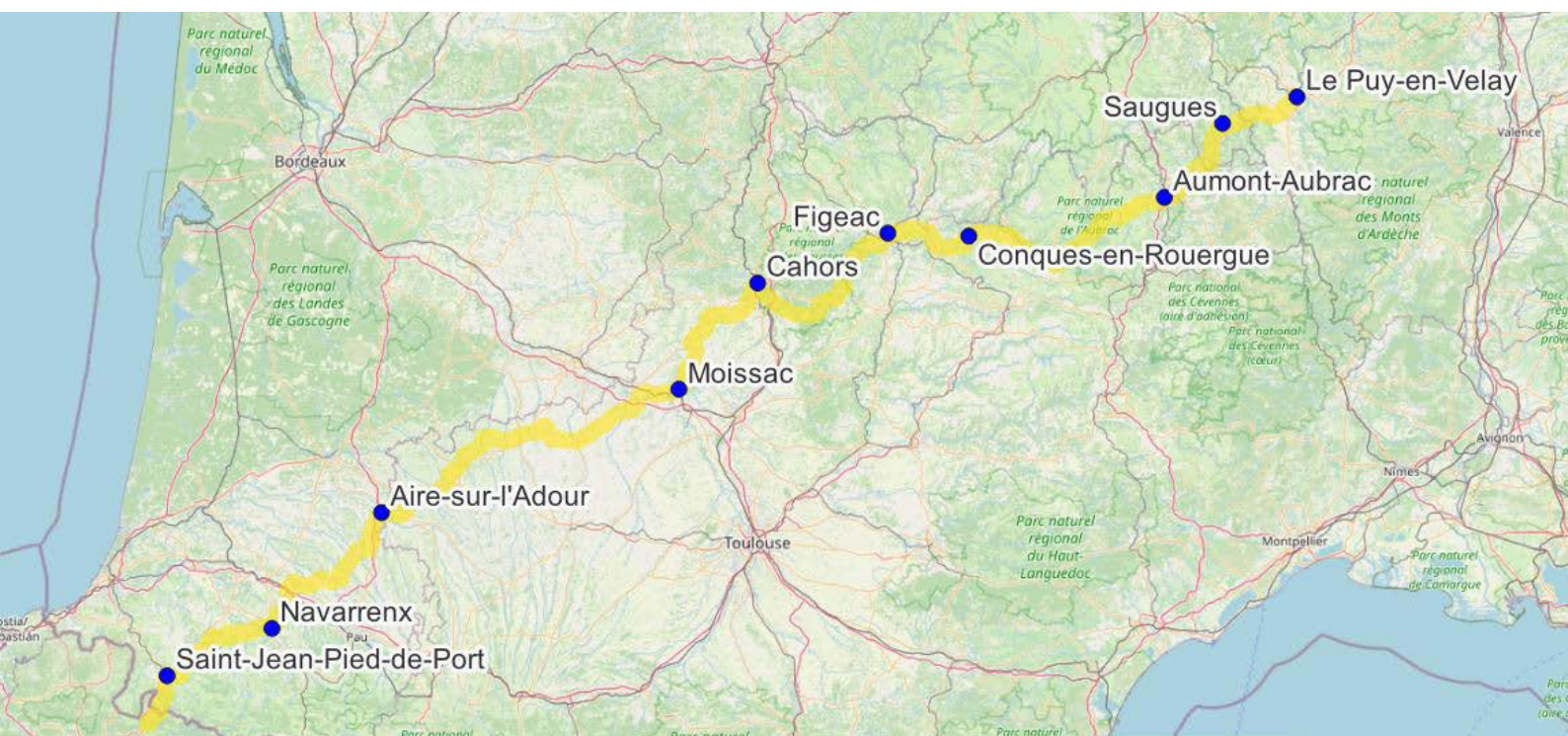
# Walking the Chemin Le Puy, France

Text and photos  
**Helen Wallis**

Hello and lovely to meet you all. My name is Helen Wallis, also known as [The Walking Traveller](#). I'm what some might call a senior hiker, and I've been hiking solo or with friends for many years — thousands and thousands of kilometres under my boots.



A wonderful Mural showing the history of Pilgrimages through the centuries at Le Puy en Velay with Helen in front



The Way of the Via Podiensis

I love long-distance walking, from 30 km day hikes to 1,000 km pilgrimages. My longest adventure so far has been the Via Francigena, from Canterbury, England, to Italy. I've walked many Camino routes across Spain, France, Portugal, as well as trails in England, Scotland, Japan, and here at home in Australia, especially along our beautiful coastal paths and in the Alpine region of Victoria. I'm particularly drawn to historic trails - I love walking in the footsteps of those who came before.

“

I love long-distance walking, from 30 km day hikes to 1,000 km pilgrimages.

Thank you for inviting me to share one of my most memorable long-distance walks: Le Chemin du Puy, also known as Via Podiensis and the GR65 - one of the oldest Camino routes in existence.

### **A trail steeped in pilgrim history**

The Chemin du Puy begins in the French town of Le Puy-en-Velay and stretches approximately 750 kilometres, finishing at

Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, the traditional gateway into Spain for pilgrims walking to Santiago de Compostela. You can also extend the route via variants such as the Célé Valley or Rocamadour, both of which I highly recommend if you have the time.

Many French hikers walk this trail in stages over several years, while others - like us - take it on in one continuous journey. Some even begin in Geneva, Switzerland, walking all the way to Santiago. It's truly a path for every kind of pilgrim.

### **The seed was planted**

I first heard about this Camino while sitting on a stool in a tapas bar at the end of my solo walk across Spain on the Camino Francés. I'd just completed 900 kilometres and was feeling proud - until the couple next to me casually mentioned they had walked from Le Puy-en-Velay. The seed was planted. Fast forward ten years, and there I was - walking through the beautiful open nave of the Le Puy Cathedral, ascending to the overlook where the trail begins.

Below me stretched the hills of the Auvergne. I took a deep breath, stepped onto the ancient grey stone steps - and began.



Looking back towards Le Puy en Velay

### Walking slowly, savouring every step

As a slow traveller (retirement has its perks!), I had no need to rush. I planned for one rest day a week, but that often turned into two or three - it's easy to lose yourself in the charm of France's most beautiful villages, some even UNESCO World Heritage listed.

We walked in September, and the trail was blissfully quiet. We met mainly French, Dutch, Canadian walkers - and a handful of fellow Aussies. The solitude, compared to the busier Camino routes, made this walk feel deeply personal and reflective. I would be walking the trail with my husband.

“

As a slow traveller (retirement has its perks!), I had no need to rush.



The beginning of my Journey standing at the stairs of the Cathedral



My husband Kevin and I leaving one of the beautiful accomodations we had



Meeting the locals out on their morning walk

### Accommodation and connection

We stayed in everything from gîtes, farm stays, B&Bs, to renovated churches and hotels - with prices ranging from €30 to €150. Some nights we had dorm beds, other nights private rooms. The variety was part of the adventure.



Even though we don't speak French fluently, we always felt welcomed and included.

Even though we don't speak French fluently, we always felt welcomed and included. Many hosts were deeply connected to the Camino tradition, and some clearly viewed their accommodation as a place of spiritual or community service.

A highlight? The food! We often opted for half or full board, and dinners were three courses - often with wine - and truly gourmet. Some hosts could open a Michelin-starred restaurant! The communal dinners offered a beautiful opportunity to share stories with fellow pilgrims.



One of our favourite places to stay in the tiny village of Arcambal



An amazing experience in the renovated Church at Aire-sue-l'Adour. We had this dorm room to ourselves



Mixing with people from Belgium, France, England and one Aussie lady



Our usually picnic lunch fare



Of course we had to try the Canard



Savouring a beautiful Blackberry Tart at Domaine du Sauvage

### Life on the trail

We averaged 16–20 km per day, giving us time to stop for photos, pastries, café breaks, and leisurely picnics in meadows. Some longer days (30+ km) we split into two parts.

“

We completed the walk in 53 days, including time in Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port at the end.

The Cicerone guidebook we used listed 28 main stages, with additional stages for the Célé Valley (5) and Rocamadour (6). We completed the walk in 53 days, including time in Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port at the end.

The terrain was varied - from paved roads to rocky paths, muddy sections, mountain tracks, and soft grassy slopes. Some



Views on this whole walk were amazing and varied

parts, especially on the Célé variant, were challenging but always manageable.

### A day in the life

Each morning began with a simple French breakfast: bread or croissant, jam, and coffee or tea. Many places had a basket system - you'd take your toiletries up to your room, leaving your backpack in the foyer to reduce the risk of bed bugs (yes, the Camino has protocols!).

We'd pick up lunch items - baguette, cheese, ham, tomatoes, avocado - and find a scenic spot to enjoy a picnic. We'd stop to explore churches, markets, and gardens in the villages we passed through.

Some unforgettable stops included Saugues, Saint-Côme-d'Olt, Estaing, Conques, Figeac, Cahors, Moissac, Condom, Cabrerets (with its amazing caves), and Saint-Cirq-Lapopie. Each village had its own beauty and character.



Rocamadour. This is on the variant and highly recommend coming here. Besides Lourdes this is the second most visited pilgrimage site in France.

### Final thoughts

We had mostly fine weather, with only a day or two of rain, and a few hot days, which we handled with the help of hiking umbrellas (a fantastic investment!).

We used the *Cicerone guidebook Walking the Camino de Santiago: Via Podiensis* by Dave Whitson, along with pre-downloaded GPS maps — very helpful for tricky junctions.

I can't recommend this trail enough. Walk it slowly. Soak in the landscape, people, history, and food. For me, it was like stepping into a storybook - peaceful, enriching, and unforgettable.

Happy adventures, and thank you for reading one of my favourite journeys.



Arriving at the Porte Saint-Jacques after walking 780 kilometres



Checking in at the Pilgrims Office in Saint Jean Pied de Port



Receiving our last stamp in our Credentials



Helen Wallis is a senior hiker, also known as The Walking Traveller. She loves hiking, whether solo, with her husband or with friends. She shares her adventures on her blog called [The Walking Traveller](#) blog and you can follow her on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Youtube](#).

# Terrigal to Sydney Opera House Coast Walk

Text and photos  
**Greg Keaney**

"I have made a sculpture... you will never be finished with it ... together with the sun, the light and the clouds, it makes a living thing."  
Jørn Utzon (SOH architect)

Greg is walking from 'Dreamtime to Eden' along the length of the NSW coast. The first seven stages of the walk appear in earlier issues of this magazine (commencing in June 2024). In this article Greg recounts the 8th stage of the coast walk; 5 days and 113 km from Terrigal on the Central Coast to the Sydney Opera House.



Day 2: Long Reef



Day 1: Sunrise from the Skillion

I'm doing a 'thousand mile, thousand beaches' NSW coastal camino, aiming to walk almost every beach and headland of the magnificent fringe of this magnificent part of Australia. I do the walk in stages and this article recounts Stage 8 from Terrigal on the Central Coast to the Sydney Opera House. This stage completed the 'Northern Way' of my NSW coastal camino. Along with plenty of magnificent coastal sauntering, idyllic scenery and outstanding beaches and headlands there was the joy of completing the Northern Way and celebrating the journey that has brought me from Dreamtime, at the northern edge of NSW, all the way to Sydney's architectural celebration of itself, the Opera House – one of the world's most stunning edifices perfectly located on Bennelong Point in the spiritual heart of the city.

“

I'm doing a 'thousand mile, thousand beaches' NSW coastal camino, aiming to walk almost every beach and headland of the magnificent fringe of this magnificent part of Australia.

### Day 1: Terrigal to Palm Beach 23km, 10 hours

This was yet another outstanding day on the coastal camino. Started out from beautiful Terrigal and ended with a sensational ferry crossing of Broken Bay and the Hawkesbury River to end the day at Palm Beach. Palm Beach is technically an outer suburb of Sydney, but I still had a few days walking to get to the Opera House to complete this stage and my own little 'Northern Way'. Hooray!

Today combined two 'named' walks - the Five Lands Walk from Terrigal to MacMasters Beach, and then the Bouddi Coastal Walk



Day 1: Second Point MacMasters Beach

from MacMasters to Killcare Beach. So many gorgeous beaches and dramatic headlands in this part of the world. Close to Sydney but a completely distinct character, so different from the 'big smoke'.

Highlights? Well Maitland Bay is as fine an unspoilt National Park Beach as you can find anywhere. It has long been one of my favourite places in the world and we needed a long lunch and swim break to soak it all in properly. The walk from Maitland Bay to Putty Beach is almost impossibly scenic and is a high, high, high value 3km walk. Macmasters Beach always has a great feel to it while Copacabana Headland dominates this part of the coast.

I walked with an old school friend, Glenn, today - great company. Glenn had plenty of interesting insights from his many years of volunteer work as a lifesaver (one of Australia's most wonderful and iconic organisations) and his wide range of aquatic hobbies. Nothing like a good long walk with an old mate!



Day 1: Maitland Bay



Day 1: The Palm Beach Ferry pulling in to Wagstaffe Wharf



Day 1: Bouddi Point



Point Clare

A49

Erina



Terrigal

Tascott

Brisbane Water

Picketts Valley

North Avoca

Koolewong

Yattalunga

Kincumber

Avoca Lagoon

Saratoga Island Nature Reserve

Davistown

Kincumber South



Woy Woy

Rileys Island Nature Reserve

Empire Bay

Bensville

MacMasters Beach

Daleys Point

Cockle Bay Nature Reserve

Ettalong Beach

Booker Bay



Bouddi

Killcare

Little Box Head

Box Head

Broken Bay

Lion Island Nature Reserve

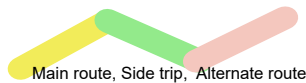
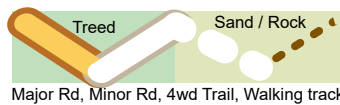


Palm Beach

Whale Beach

Clareville

Bilgola Plateau



Start

End



Toilet

Accessible



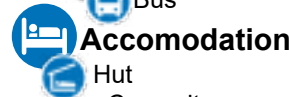
Parking

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Bus



Picnic Shelter

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Seat



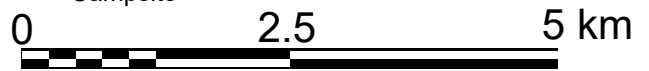
Accommodation

Hut  
Campsite



Shopping

Food



## Day 2: Palm Beach to Manly 33km, 12 hours

I started the day with a perfect Sydney sunrise over Palm Beach – the most northerly beach in Sydney – with the near full moon setting behind me over Pittwater. I noted the 'Summer Bay' Home and Away film crew there to get the same shots! Then it was the climb up Barrenjoey Headland for its spectacular views up and down the coast, and over the inland waterways of Broken Bay and Pittwater which extends its fingers for many kilometres on the inland side of the narrow peninsula. If you go early enough you can have this magnificent dreaming place all to yourself before the glitterati power walkers of Palmie begin the steep ascent to ritually atone for their capitalist sins.

From Palmie to Avalon the walk was a little disjointed, with some street walking around the headlands (mostly on pretty back roads), but once you are south of Avalon Beach this coast walk is almost uninterrupted beach and headland tracks all the way to Manly. Tens of kilometres of absolute bliss.

If you like your beaches and headlands and ocean and sand as much as I do, then this is an absolutely perfect urban coastal walk - as good as it gets. You can start and end pretty much anywhere along the way and have a brilliant low stress walk - 100% guaranteed! No need to provide full details for this section as you can just search for the 'Sydney Bicentennial Coast Walk (northern beaches)' to get tons of useful info and a great map of the route.

I would suggest a few less famous but IMHO must-see highlights: Careel and Barangelly Headlands (the highest on the northern beaches), Bongin Bongin Bay near Mona Vale, the two fantastic ways around from Warriewood Beach to the Blowhole and Turimetta Headland and Beach - either the track over the outstanding headland or around the rock platform at a lowish tide - and Long Reef, again both the headland and the sensational rock platform around to the main beach. But every beach and headland on this walk is breath-taking. I can't imagine how special it would be for a first-timer – I know that Sydney offers so many breathtaking



Day 2: Barrenjoey Headland



Day 2: Bangalley Head



Day 2: Avalon Beach and Headland



Day 2: Turimetta Beach



Day 2: Long Reef looking over Dee Why

walks which makes it hard for a visitor to pick and choose, but if you've come from far away and love beaches and shoreline then do try to make time to walk this amazing stretch of coastal perfection.

It was a hot (nearing 40°) day in Sydney in the early summer, but the sea breeze at the beach provided natural a/c. Indeed, at times I felt a little chilly – even though those further inland were sweltering! With a light daypack and trainers, along with easy access to drinking water at every beach along the way, I found it rather easy going, although I did remember to slather on a lot of sunscreen!

I 'bunny-hopped' the walk, catching the very frequent 199 bus (Manly to Palm Beach) back to my car twice during the day. I feel more 'pure' when I only walk throughout the day, but I did find that the breaks to get back to the car (and quite a few swims) made the walk feel a lot easier than it might have been in one long, hot march.

I'd like to list the beaches and headlands north to south on today's route - just to give those unfamiliar with this part of Sydney an idea of the almost unbelievable extent and variety of this magnificent stretch of coastline:

Barrenjoey (Baranjui), Palm Beach, Little Head, Whale Beach, Careel Headland, Bangalley Head, Avalon Head, Avalon Beach, North Bilgola Head, Bilgola Beach, South Bilgola Head, Newport Beach, Bungan Head, Bungan Beach, Mona Vale Head, Bongin Bongin Beach, Mona Vale Beach, Warriewood Beach, Turimetta Head, Turimetta Beach, Narrabeen Head, North Narrabeen Beach, South Narrabeen Beach, Collaroy Beach, Fishermans Beach, Long Reef Headland, Long Reef Beach, Dee Why Beach, Dee Why Headland, North Curl Curl Beach, South Curl Curl Beach, Freshwater Lookout, Freshwater Beach (Harbord), Queenscliff Headland, Queenscliff Beach, North Steyne Beach, Manly Beach. Incredible!

All of that, with a few more unnamed ones or ones I've left out, in a bit over 30 km of coastline. Sydney may have its share of 'sham, drudgery and broken dreams' but, my god, it can be a stunningly beautiful place at its best. Even though it's a city of 5.5 million people, it is still a paradise for walkers and those who love salt water, views and the beach.

“

I feel more 'pure' when I only walk throughout the day, but I did find that the breaks to get back to the car (and quite a few swims) made the walk feel a lot easier than it might have been in one long, hot march.

### Day 3: Manly - North Head - The Spit 20km, 7 hours

The two distinct parts of today's walk are both easily accessible from Manly Wharf - a superb 20-30 min ferry ride from the centre of Sydney. After the sizzling summer sunshine of the previous day, it was a grey, overcast day, much cooler and with gusty southerly winds of 30+ knots. Not ideal, but it certainly kept the crowds away!

North Head first: It was a delightful walk around from Manly to the cute and calm little west-facing Shelly Beach (as the zillionth one on the coast please can we rename all the 'Shellys' asap) and then up to magical Fairy Bower. An easy hiking trail from the coast side of the Bower led most of the way to dramatic North Head - the towering headland that marks the entrance to Sydney Harbour. The track has splendid views, a few hanging swamps, bandicoots, kookaburras and fairy penguins, alongside some interesting military history. Note to newbies that when you get to the big sandstone wall you need to look for the little 'hole' with a small gate and a 'no dogs' sign that provides the entry to the National Park, and the almost embarrassingly well-made track onwards to North Head.

The various lookouts at the top of the headland offer sweeping views down the harbour to the CBD, across to South Head, Middle Head and Middle Harbour as well as out to sea. Awe-inspiring indeed! It's about 3 km up to the lookout from Manly and then 5 km or so to return via the old Quarantine Station (which would have been an idyllic place to be quarantined, and one I wish they had reactivated during covid - folk would have been begging to be isolated there!)

Leaving the Q station there are a few small harbourside beaches (Store, Collins and Little Manly) before returning to Manly to then start the next famous section of the day's walk. The 10 km Manly-Spit Walk officially opened in 1988 and was a major influence in helping Sydneysiders to realise the outstanding opportunities we had for longish harbourside bushwalks. It now forms part of the 80km Manly to Bondi Walk, which traces the harbour foreshores between our two most famous beaches.

The walk is marvellous, particularly the National Park area beginning at Forty Baskets Beach on to Reef Beach (another perfect little National Park protected cove), up to Dobroyd Head and around Grotto Point to Clontarf Beach.



Day 3: Laugh, kookaburra laugh



Day 3: Shelly Headland

There is plenty of info online about this walk but one fantastic, suggested diversion from me - Crater Cove Huts! These surreal depression era stone and timber huts sit waterside of a steep semi-circular ravine. It's a deliberately 'hidden' place which, once you 'discover' it, makes you feel like a member of the bushwalking illuminati. Just a perfect place for a bit of contemplation and one that you will usually have all to yourself.

If you search online for 'Crater Cove Huts' one of the top hits will be a great article about their history and the bitter court battles that surrounded their handover to Sydney Harbour National Park in the 80s. The article also explains the rationale (and controversy) behind keeping the place virtually unknown.

So, without giving too much away, if you keep looking to your left (coming from Manly) you'll spot the track about 100m up from the Dobroyd Lower Lookout. The track is not maintained but it is not thaaaat steep or thaaaat difficult if you have an ounce of adventurous spirit. That's sufficient, no need for further information - if you are meant to get there you will find the way, perhaps even through the back of a magic wardrobe...



Day 3: Through the 'hole in the wall'

Washaway Beach is another little nook just off the main walk that gets minimal publicity but is another perfectly hidden Sydney beach. The entry into the beach is via some rope- assisted rock cut footholds, and once there you feel as though you are on a wild beach in the middle of nowhere - sandstone cliffs behind you and Sydney's three chief heads (North, South and Middle) your only companions most of the time - hard to believe you are only a few clicks away from the centre of the big smoke.



Day 3: Crater Cove huts



Day 3: 22. Dobroyd Head



**Start**  
End

**Toilet**  
Accessible

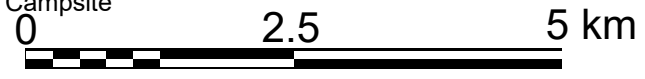


**P Parking**  
Train  
Ferry  
Bus

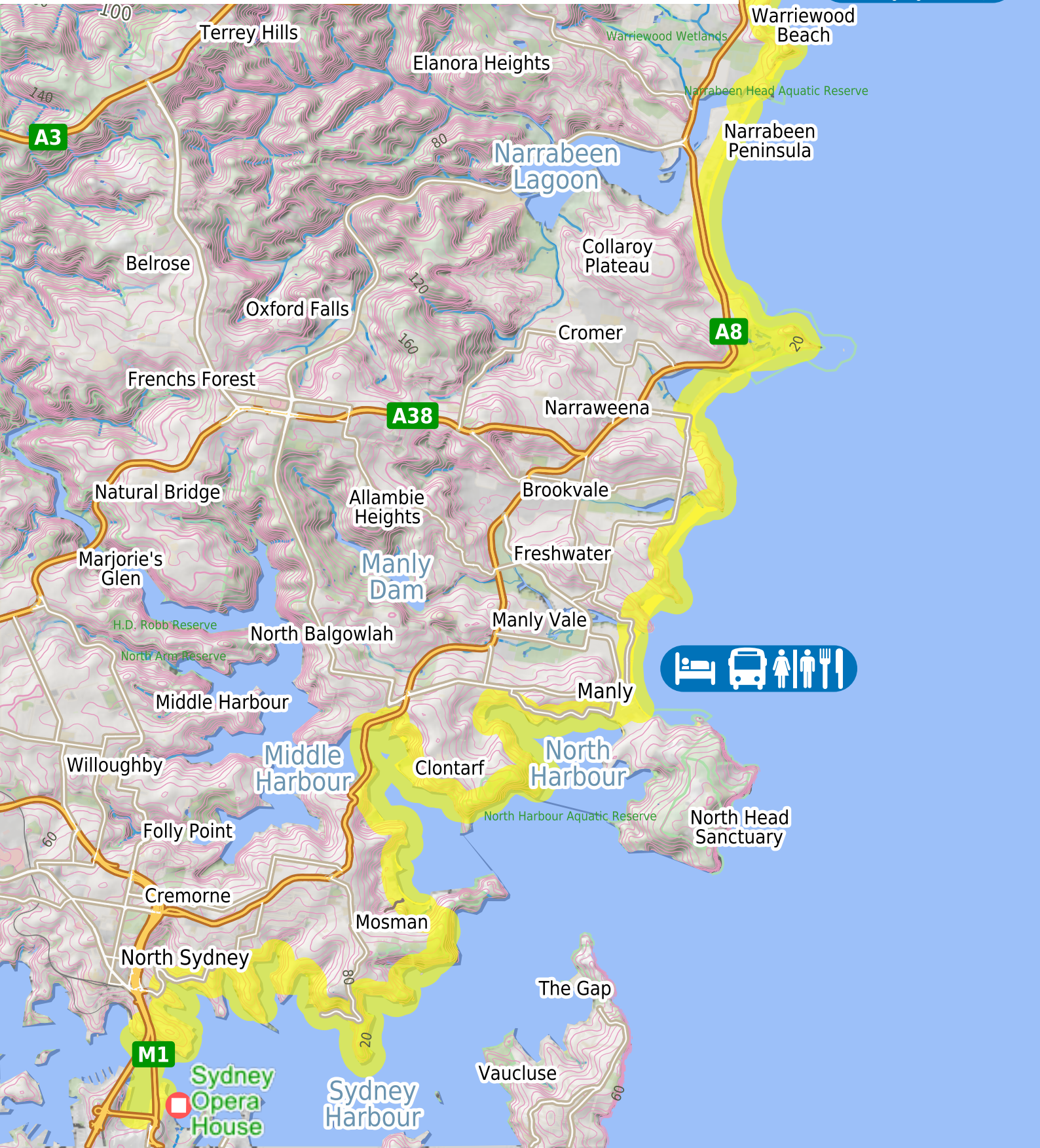
**Picnic Shelter**  
Table  
Seat

**Accommodation**  
Hut  
Campsite

**Shopping**  
Food



© Bushwalk.com &  
© OpenStreetMap contributors



Grotto Point Lighthouse and the nearby indigenous rock carvings are also a little off the main track, but well signposted and well worth the detour. The sheltered beaches on the western side of Grotto Point are wonderfully snug – Castle Rock was a fantastic place for a cool off swim. The day's weather wasn't particularly conducive to showcasing the remarkable views on these two amazing bushwalks but trust me, they're incredible!

#### **Day 4: The Spit to Bradleys Head 14km, 5 hours**

Today's walk was a wonderful stroll around the Mosman foreshores, starting in Middle Harbour then crossing magnificent Middle Head (Gubbah Gubbah) to the main harbour and finally around Bradleys Head. I grew up in Mosman, (as did my dad), back in the day when normal people could still afford to live there. So today was a nostalgic walk for me on the penultimate day of my Northern Way. 'A Kingdom by the Sea' is the title of a delightful book by Nancy Phelan about childhood there back in my time and I loved a re-read before the walk.



At Middle Head you are in a location that I put near the top of my list of places that take your breath away - not just for Sydney or Australia, but the entire world.

It was a vastly different feel from much of my coast walking with familiar suburbs nearby, but it was a truly fine saunter nonetheless. Starting from The Spit it was a short hop to pretty Chinamans Beach (named after the Chinese market gardens that existed for many years here). Next the perfect twin beaches of Edwards and Balmoral, separated by exquisite Rocky Point Island. These were my local beaches as a boy and they always thrill me with their 'beachly' perfection, especially on a beautiful summer morning.

From Balmoral there's a bit of a climb up to Middle Head (the stairs begin at the back of Balmoral Oval) - but you simply must detour



Day 3: Middle Harbour near Castle Rock

from the Bondi-Manly route to take in Middle Head in all its majesty. At Middle Head you are



Day 4: Rocky Point Island Bridge at Balmoral Beach



Day 3: Middle Head

in a location that I put near the top of my list of places that take your breath away - not just for Sydney or Australia, but the entire world. Sensational views, interesting Indigenous

and non-Indigenous history, arts complexes, fascinating buildings and fortifications, a couple of perfect little harbour beaches, formidable cliffscapes and a magnificent, magnificent sandstone headland that, to top it all off, you usually have completely to yourself.

It has changed a lot since I was a kid when we could roam the aging military ruins at will (they can only be visited on an NP tour now) but a lot of care has been put into maintenance, refurbishment and track development so my childhood foraging and bush-bashing is no longer required.

Perhaps one day, hopefully long hence, there'll be some scattered ashes and a little bronze plaque at the edge of the headland reading 'In memory of GK who loved this place with his heart and soul!' I'd be perfectly and absolutely and completely serene and content to rest forever in this gorgeous, gorgeous place!

But this beautiful urban walk was not over. Next it was down to Cobblers Beach (appropriately clothing optional), and simply perfect for a swim today. Returning from Inner Middle Head I followed the sensational cliffside track to the 1801 fort (built to ward off a possible US invasion - plus ça change) and then the well-built track up to Georges Head Lookout and down to pristine Clifton Gardens - another fine harbourside beach for a swim or a picnic.



Day 4: Cobblers Beach



Day 4: Sydney Harbour National Park



Day 4: Ambrose's lair (Mission Impossible 2) near Bradleys Head

And then the final lovely stretch to Bradleys Head, Athol Hall and Athol (Zoo) Wharf. The old wharf next to Bradley's Head hosted the villain's lair in Mission Impossible 2 for those who like their movie trivia. This part of the Manly-Bondi route is an easy bushwalk, with nature on one side and iconic views to the city, Bridge and Opera House on the other. Just outstanding!

The walk then ended with a magical Sydney Harbour ferry trip across the shimmering water - a perfect end to a perfect day.

### **Day 5: Bradleys Head to the Opera House 13km, 5 hours**

Today was the final day of the 'Northern Way' of my coastal camino. Followed the official Manly-Bondi Walk route starting from the Zoo wharf, along the little bush track around the small headland to Curlew Camp. In this idyllic setting some of Australia's greatest 19th century painters, such as Arthur Streeton and Tom Roberts, stayed for lengthy periods. Some of their most famous paintings were created here, and it's easy to understand how inspirational this little cove and headland could be.

Then it was around the pretty foreshores of Mosman Bay to Cremorne - a gem of a short, easy, picturesque harbourside walk in Sydney.



Day 4: Bradleys Head track



Day 5: The Manly to Bondi walk – a delightful 80km around Sydney Harbour



Day 5: Mosman – Cremorne harbourside walk

Bushland and the sparkling harbour on one side and beautiful manicured gardens and federation houses on the other. Just lovely.

A little diversion to Cremorne Lighthouse then a rest stop for a swim at delightful MacCallum harbourside pool. Next it was a bit of road and park walking to Neutral Bay (as this was where 'neutral shipping' would berth back in the day) followed by the old submarine base (Wirra Birra Park) and 'Jacaranda Street' near Milson Park.

Onwards round Kirribilli Point, past the Sydney residences of the Governor General and the Prime Minister. Kirribilli means 'a great spot to fish' and was the prime fishing spot for the Cammeraygal before European settlement. In the mid-90s when I lived nearby, I remember a bloke reeling in (and then releasing) a 1.5m juvenile bull shark while we white-collar types in suits and ties got drenched waiting for the old Hegarty's ferry to arrive at Beulah St wharf. Exciting times as a Sydney Harbour commuter!

The crossing of the Sydney Harbour Bridge began from Milsons Point. I hope the statute of limitations will protect me as I now admit that I was a veteran Bridge climber back in the day when it was a teenage dare, rather than an expensive tourist attraction. I saw many a dawn break from the top of the Bridge after a late night of youthful enjoyment - and became a bit of an underground (overwater) tour guide for any and all who wanted to scale the 'coathanger'... I like to think that these escapades fully enhanced my ongoing love for our 'Emerald City'.

I was a little emotional (in an older Aussie bloke kind of way) as I walked across the Sydney Harbour Bridge, feeling this part of the walk drawing to a close. Down the magnificent bridge stairs and their majestic Moruya granite to the Rocks. Around Circular Quay on a perfect summer afternoon and then... it was all over... our ever-amazing Opera House concluded the Northern Way. Psychologically it formed the halfway point of my camino, although in actual reality it would be more like 60%.

The Opera House seems to me to encapsulate so many things about Sydney: its soaring



Day 5: Cremorne Point Lighthouse



Day 5: MacCallum Pool at Cremorne Point



Day 5: Kirribilli, Mary Booth Reserve



Day 5: Kirribilli, Mary Booth Reserve

magnificence, its location twixt sun and sky and sea, its funding by gambling, its grubby politics and treatment of genius, its shabby compromises and so on... but ultimately its sheer transcendent glory – there is nothing to do or say any more but to simply admire this wonderful, almost other worldly creation; it radiates the same contemplative majesty and instils the same awe as that with which medieval peasants might have viewed the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela on their devotional pilgrimages.

And to top all off I enjoyed a superb summer afternoon to evening celebration with family and friends as a truly excellent denouement. Blessed.

### Conclusion

So, that was it for the Northern Way. A coastal journey of nearly 1000 km all up that has had, and continues to have, a profound impact on me, in the way of all good pilgrimages.

In some ways I have been surprised how easy it had all been. Thanks in no small part to the incredible geology of the NSW coast, as well as the luck and the foresight of the heroes who fought to keep all our beaches and almost all of our coastline in public hands.

Additionally, the superb national parks and their rangers, the helpful tourist offices, the local beachside facilities, the council workers up and down the coast, the kindness of so many strangers along the way, supportive

friends, my untiring support crew, and, of course, my beautiful wife, kids and clan who have had to gently listen to my constant raving about each day and stage of this sensational journey.

The Northern Way had been one of the most amazing experiences of my life so far - and had given me the chance to deeply reflect on my many, many undeserved blessings. I hope to pay it forward by inspiring more folks to walk this incredible coastal pilgrims' path - so beautiful, so accessible and just ready and waiting for all.

Walking the NSW coast may not give you everything you ever want in life, but then again it just might!

I would be starting on the Southern Way from Sydney to Eden and beyond in the new year - so there was still plenty more to plan, experience and get excited about in the year ahead.



Day 5: The end of the Northern Way but still a long way to go!



Greg grew up in Sydney but lived for many years in SE Asia. He has now returned home to Sydney and loves exploring Australia's magnificent bushwalks, parks, coasts, and waterways. When he's not bushwalking or mountain bike-riding, he works in education for Deloitte Australia and Ecctis UK.

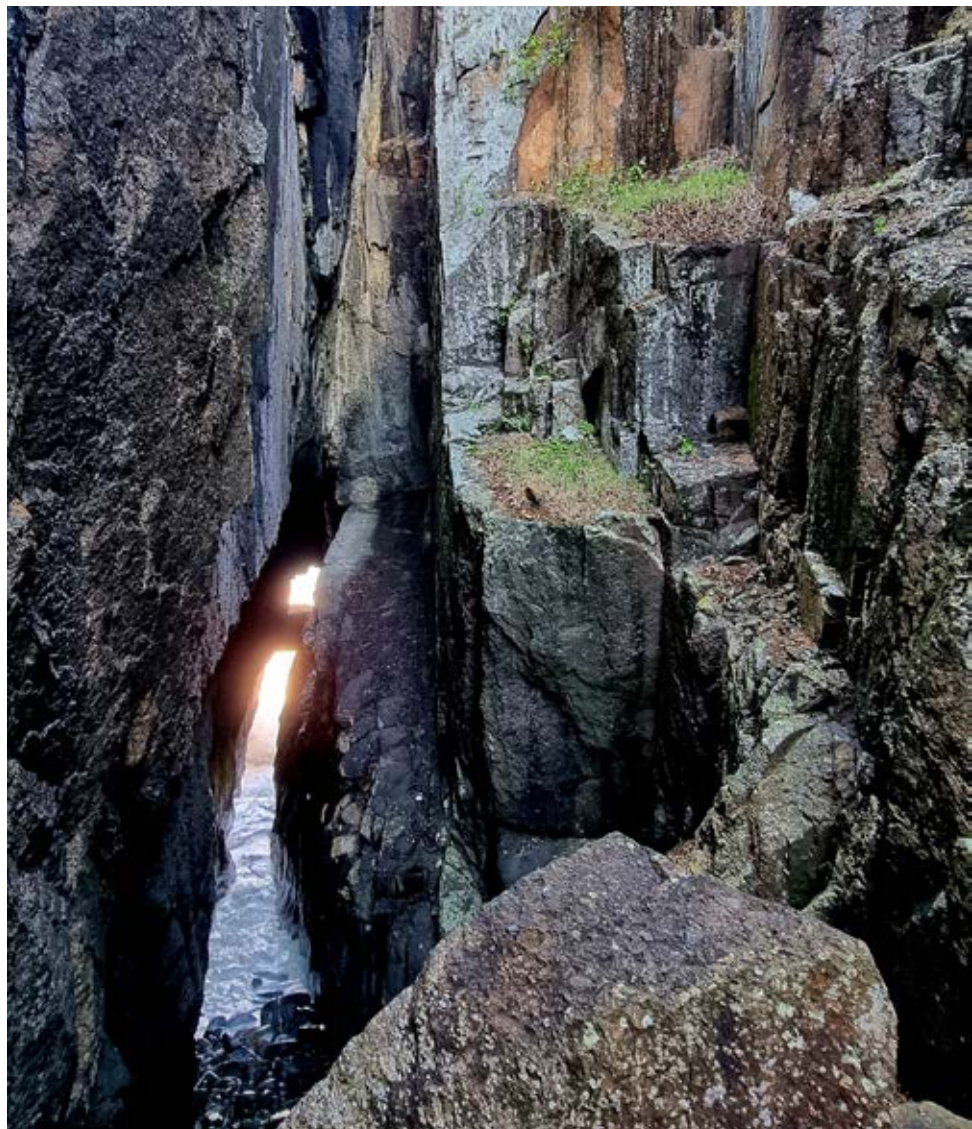
More detailed information on each day of his walk, pics and future posts are all available on Facebook - either on his [personal page](#) or in the FB groups [Hiking in Australia and New Zealand](#), [Take a hike NSW](#) and [Hiking and exploring NSW](#).

# Korogoro Track Hat Head

Text and photos  
**Ian Smith**

---

A bench seat came into view. I so wanted to sit down but the seat was wet. To heck with it, a couple of quick wipes of the hand across the plank and I was comfortable at last, even if my slightly soggy trousers weren't.



Korogoro Track, Hat Head



Korogoro Track, Hat Head

To the south the seas raged. An offshore low was the force behind the relentless ocean pounding the coastline below Connors Track, the next route along the coastline that I wouldn't be taking today. No indeed, four hours so far on the mere 3.2 kms Korogoro Track, a feature of Hat Head. Yes, I know I normally take a long time because there have to be photos, right? However, this walk is very scenic and I deliberately came out to shoot the swell with the morning sun behind it. It didn't disappoint. However, at times you had to get down off the cliffs and clamber over large rocks if you wanted to get a better angle. I think the clambering had finally gotten to me.

I'd started out with malice aforethought, so to speak, though no malice was involved here.

“

However, this walk is very scenic and I deliberately came out to shoot the swell with the morning sun behind it. It didn't disappoint.

Before dawn I'd shuffled across the walking bridge from Hat Head Caravan Park. I had to wait until after 5 a.m. though, because numerous are the signs saying camping between midnight at 5 a.m. are a no-no. So, around 5.45, wrapped in T-shirt, jumper and parka, I moved across and turned left into the vegetation. Stumpy but prolific, it houses many bird species though, I suspect most are here for the coastal banksia which thrives. However, with only the pre-dawn light to guide me, you had to keep your eyes focused on the narrow trail for fear of stumbling.

Initially it follows the river mouth on your left though that's a fair way below the trail route. As you break out into the exposed areas the ocean comes into view and the wind becomes more apparent. Glad I rugged up.

Views to Smoky Cape Lighthouse can be had but it's so far away you can't actually make out the lighthouse and the rise that it rests on looks like an island from here. The swell lines up all across the bay; there's a majesty about it. It might have started a thousand plus kilometres away but now it's here, ready to dash itself upon an already battered shore.



Hat Head National Park

	Treed
	Sand / Rock
Major Rd, Minor Rd, 4wd Trail, Walking track	
	Main route, Side trip, Alternate route
	Cliff line
	Major Contour lines
	Minor Contour lines
	20m Contour Interval
	Lake, Ocean, River, Waterfall, Creek

 **Start**  
 **End**

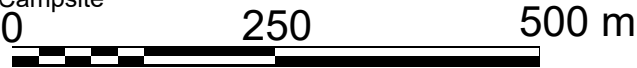
 **Parking**  
 Train  
 Ferry  
 Bus

 **Accommodation**  
 Hut  
 Campsite

 **Toilet**  
 Accessible

 **Picnic Shelter**  
 Table  
 Seat

 **Shopping**  
 Food



On the way back up I pick up a discarded broken hiking stick. It helps a treat getting up the slope and others later on; so much so that I'm considering getting a pair.

I'm back to following the main trail and it's decidedly uphill and irregular. Energy is sapping as I climb but I'm so euphoric with the scenery that I don't notice until later. Another mob of roos scatter adjacent to the cliffs edge, seemingly unafraid of the abyss nearby.

It levels out after a while and I'm in some bush once more, though it's battered and twisted by the ever present sea breezes but the vegetation survives. One suspects springtime would bring more than a few wildflowers but, apart from a few tiny species, it's only the banksia that offers colour relief.

Just as a small island comes into view the bog starts. Saturated by the recent rains and with nowhere to go, this level stretch would normally be a blessing but has turned into a mini quagmire. Ever grateful that I've yet again worn my waterproof work boots, a.k.a. hiking shoes, not even my socks get wet. The first hikers I've come across all day pass by and they're from the Sunshine Coast and are waxing lyrical about what's to be seen here. Had I but known, I could have told them that the best was to come.

There's a lawn-like grassy slope that takes you down to the island, that's only separated from the mainland by a few metres, but I only go halfway just to get some shots. Ten minutes later I come across three fishermen and that's exactly where they're heading. It certainly looked like it had possibilities and they confirm that view.

Then, at last, the seat. By now I'm a bit ragged but I figure the bridge can't be that far ahead. Problem is, I can't be bothered getting up to move again. Far away a pair of white bellied sea eagles ride the winds, ever majestic in the way they cruise the unseen air, ever watchful with their binocular vision over the white water that extends way beyond the headlands.

Time can pass by easily at a place such as this but the cool wind only allows a brief sojourn as it creeps beneath your once warm clothing. I rise and wander on past three crosses, no doubt commemorating fishermen who favoured this site before their deaths but are remembered by comrades and family.

It adds a sad tinge to what has been an exceptional outing, though how I managed to use up over four hours on a 3.2 kilometre trail will remain a mystery to no-one except me.



Korogoro Track, Hat Head



Korogoro Track, Hat Head

I walk on until there's a sign that the trail deteriorates from here on and is not maintained. It changes immediately. Ruts, rocks and tree roots appear and there's a sign suggesting that only serious bushwalkers should continue. I wondered just how bad it could be.

There's not a lot to shoot until I reach the outer parts of the headland. Here it gets decidedly interesting. I come across a steep slippery path leading to a rocky beach called Wards Cove. The waves, backlit by the emerging sun, are like a magnet, so down I go. It will be just under an hour before I clamber up again, the mystic swell having held me in its grasp as it pounded, sprayed and rose again to an almost metronomic rhythm, shooting foam a hundred different directions as it met the bastion of rocks before it. The crash and roar is a tune I dance



Korogoro Track, Hat Head

to and the photographic possibilities are so numerous as the sun's rays stray across previously dark headlands.

As I clamber back up more angles present themselves and the sun exposes ever more cliff. It's special to have the place all to yourself and I move further out to the extremity of the main headland, utilizing unmade tracks where people have gone before, upsetting the resident roos when I come over the hill and surprise them. The ruggedness is even more apparent now as I gaze down the vertiginous slopes before heading west momentarily and seeing the first of the fishermen for the day arrive on the rock shelf well below my viewpoint.

Now I swing south, following another path until suddenly, on my left, is the cave I'd been told about, though it's not the sort of cave you're no doubt imagining. No, it's more your cleft in the rocks at the base of a cliff and quite dramatic. There's a clay based path down and it looks decidedly slippery but the chance is taken and I'm rewarded



Korogoro Track, Hat Head

with a unique landscape where the cliff has been breached and a narrow gap leads to the sea beyond, though that's not a path I'll take today as the big sets smash through the opening.



Korogoro Track, Hat Head

# Photo Gallery

Photos  
**Bushwalk.com** photographers



Check this and  
other entries at  
[Bushwalk.com](https://www.bushwalk.com)  
Photo competitions



Late afternoon Mt McKay  
Donktec

# Landscapes

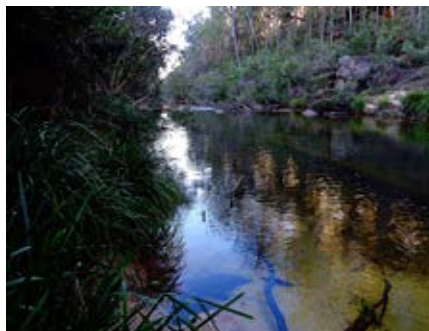
## August 2024

Winner  
Range Edges  
Eggs

The Flinders Ranges in South Australia consist of a number of ranges over a large distance running North-South. The Heysen Range consists of jagged peaks in the Middle Flinders area. We had great weather for an overnight stay on Iralbo Peak in the Heysen Range. This is looking north towards Mt Falkland in the morning.



Glowing Cathedral  
North-north-west



Straight up  
Johnw

# Non-landscapes

## August 2024

Winner  
Carrington Falls  
Eggs

I generally get to visit the Cairns area once or twice a year and try to pick out various new places to explore. The Carrington Falls are in the Atherton Tablelands and are reached via an old railway line track that runs directly underneath them.



*Caladenia catenata*  
**Johnw**

# Tasmania

## August 2024

Winner  
Acropalypse  
**North-north-west**

One of those peaks that tends to give more than expected, especially weatherwise; Didn't go all the way up this time, but it's fun to explore a bit more of the plateau.



# Other States

## August 2024

Winner  
Heysen Range morning  
**Eggs**

We had this early morning view south towards a distant Wilpena Pound from Iralbo Peak in the Heysen Range in the middle Flinders Ranges in South Australia.



My river  
**Johnw**

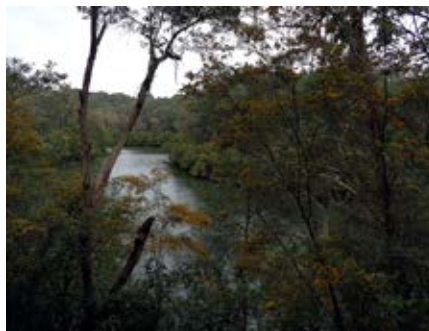
# Landscapes

## September 2024

Winner  
Wallagoot Gap  
Joe J



Don't look like that much  
snow from below  
**North-north-west**



Riperia  
**Johnw**

# Non-landscapes

## September 2024

Winner  
Lace Monitor  
Joe J



Curlicues  
North-north-west



We can't see you  
Johnw

# Tasmania

## September 2024

Winner

Better visibility than usual

**North-north-west**

Rufus-Shadow Lake is an easy circuit even in ordinary weather - and it frequently goes ordinary when I do it, regardless of starting conditions.



# Other States

# September 2024

Winner  
Boulder Bay near Tathra  
**Joe J**



Swamp corridor  
**Johnw**

# Why Do Our Muscles Stiffen As We Age?

Text  
**Andrew Lavender**

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Why do our muscles get stiffer as we get older? At the age of 65, I'm immensely grateful I can maintain an active lifestyle including bushwalking and cycling. But when starting after a period of rest I feel quite stiff and awkward. This wasn't a problem a couple of decades ago. Now I watch the flexibility of my young grandsons with awe. What changes in our muscles to cause this stiffness as we age? – Peter, 65





Many older people find they're not able to move as freely as they did when they were younger. They describe their movements as feeling stiff or restricted. In particular, feeling stiff when getting out of bed first thing in the morning or after sitting for a long period. The feeling does eventually ease with movement as the muscles "warm up", but it can be troublesome. There are a few reasons this happens.

As we age, bones, joints and muscles tend to become weak. Movements feeling stiff is often our perception of the increased effort required to perform daily tasks.

“

Pilgrimage allows you to take time out from your life.

Many older people have [ageing-associated conditions](#) that can contribute to muscle stiffness. These include osteoarthritis (breaking down of the cartilage in joints), osteomalacia (a softening of the bones due to

a lack of vitamin D), osteoporosis (where bone mass is reduced causing bones to become brittle), rheumatoid arthritis, inflammation of the joints, and muscle weakness due to

“

Pilgrimage allows you to take time out from your life. Authenticity and simplicity are [valued](#) and will show you that you actually need very little.

sarcopenia (the natural loss of muscle mass and strength).

Blood flow may also play a part. As we age, our arteries [become stiffer and less flexible](#), meaning blood can easily pool, particularly in the feet.

When we get up after sitting or lying down for a long period of time, the stiffness may be due to a lack of the lubricating fluid in the joints. Once we move around for a while and warm up, more of the lubricating fluid,

called synovial fluid, is moved into the joint, so the joint surfaces have less resistance to movement and can move more freely.

Normal healthy ageing results in a [loss of joint cartilage](#), particularly of the knee. This cartilage provides a smooth articulating surface between bones at the joint that wears down, becoming thinner and providing less cushioning between the articulating surfaces. This may account for stiffness felt during movement.



Normal healthy ageing results in a [loss of joint cartilage](#), particularly of the knee.

Another contributing factor is the change in ligaments, tendons and muscles that are relatively relaxed and flexible when we are young. These lose that flexibility with ageing and disuse. In fact, many of the age-related changes in muscles, bones and joints are [the result of disuse](#).

### **Move it or lose it**

As we get older, we tend to become less physically active. While that's understandable and reasonable, reducing the amount we exercise too much or stopping exercise altogether can exacerbate these age-related changes. Muscles need to be stimulated by physical activity in order to maintain strength and mass.

Bones also need stimulation through loading to keep their density. Joints too need stimulation from movement to keep that feeling of stiffness to a minimum. And

aside from our muscles and joints, the heart, lungs and circulatory system also need to be stimulated by exercise to maintain their ability to function optimally.

While there are many factors that contribute to this common feeling of restricted movement or stiffness, the most important action we can take is to move more. This can be achieved through a number of measures.

Becoming involved with a formal exercise or sports club is a great way to ensure you continue to exercise regularly. Teaming up with a friend to meet for exercise which could include aerobic activities such as running, swimming or walking is another good way to make sure you get some exercise.

Resistance training is also important for muscles and bones. Moving the limbs through the entire range of motion of the joints is important for maintaining the ability to move freely and keep the muscles, tendons and ligaments healthy.



Unbroken digital interaction with family and friends at home will thwart some of the goals of your journey.

There's a lot of truth to the old adage "move it or lose it": if we don't keep moving, we lose our ability to do so. Exercise can be fun and finding something enjoyable will help you to stick to it. The social interactions that come with exercising, particularly in groups or clubs, is an added advantage which also has mental health benefits.

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### **Andrew Lavender**

Lecturer, School of Physiotherapy and Exercise Science, Curtin University

This article first appeared in [The Conversation](#) on 30 August 2018.

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# In the News

## **New walk in ACT**

The [River Descent Track](#) joins 10 kilometres of existing trails from Canberrans to the Murrumbidgee River and takes you to the new [Jahli's Lookout](#).

## **Bushwalkers rescued in Kosciuszko NP**

Two bushwalkers were [rescued](#) by the NSW Police Force and the NSW SES as they got caught in strong winds and heavy snowfall on Kosciuszko Walking Trail.

## **NT Parks' safety reminder after a rescue**

A 62-year-old hiker was [rescued from the Larapinta Trail](#) after falling ill, the second rescue on the trail in a week. NT Parks is reminding all hikers to be well-prepared, carry a personal locator beacon (PLB), and be aware of their own physical limitations.

## **Land acquired for Georges River Koala National Park**

The NSW government has acquired nearly 1,000 hectares of land to establish the [Georges River Koala NP](#), which will protect the state's only chlamydia-free koala colony. Environmentalists are pleased but argue it should have been created sooner and on a larger scale.

## **The ACT government promised to rebuild, huts in Namadgi National Park**

Five years after two heritage huts in Namadgi NP were destroyed by the Black Summer bushfires, they have yet to be rebuilt, despite promises from the ACT government. [Bushwalking and heritage advocates are](#)

[frustrated](#), particularly since similar huts in the neighboring Kosciuszko NP in NSW have already been restored.

## **Rare pookila mouse rediscovered in Western NSW as species fights for survival**

A rare native rodent, the [pookila](#), has been [rediscovered](#) in Goobang NP after a 28-year absence. This discovery offers hope for the survival of this vulnerable species.

## **Critically endangered corroboree frogs released**

In a major conservation effort, 544 critically endangered [northern corroboree frogs](#) have [been released](#) into Brindabella NP. This release is part of a long-term project to save the species from extinction.

## **Ice Age artefacts in Dargan Shelter**

Deep inside the cave in upper Blue Mountains, the scientist have uncovered [Ice Age artefacts](#), dating back as far as 20,000 years.

## **Victorian government rules out Great Forest National Park**

The Victorian government has decided [against the creation of the Great Forest NP](#). The proposed park would have protected large areas of forest in the Central Highlands.

## **Litchfield National Park to be expanded**

The Northern Territory government has purchased the [30,000-hectare](#) Silkwood pastoral lease to expand Litchfield NP. This is the park's largest expansion in 25 years.

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# Sesame Seed Bars

Text  
**Sonya Muhlsimmer**

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I was walking in the supermarket the other day and I saw some sesame seed snaps. Curious as I am I looked at the ingredients to compare to how I make mine. The bought snaps are pretty simple with only sesame seed, glucose and sugar. I must say when I have had them before I do find them somewhat bland. My recipe consists of sesame seeds, golden sugar, brown sugar, oatmeal, coconuts and dried fruit. There is a big difference there, mine are tastier. The downside to my recipe is that it is not as hard as the bought ones, so they would not travel as well in the pack in comparison.



Sonya abseiling into the abyss of Koombanda Canyon. Blue Mountains NSW.

However, in saying this, I took these when I hiked the Western Arthur Ranges in Tasmania a few years back and they travelled well enough then, you just have to pack them right. That was a gruelling hike, but well worth it. The sesame seed bars were a real hit, everybody loved them.

The energy level is good with a whopping 694 kJ per serving slice of 40 grams. The serving size has 22.5 grams of carbs, 10 grams of protein and 14.7 grams of fat. That is a well-rounded high energy and super good for you snack for the trails.

While I am on the nutritional talk, let's talk about the sesame seed. As I mentioned before there is a bit of fat in them, but this is the good fat such as polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fat. They do contain a little saturated fat, but not much.

They are high in magnesium, which is great for our body's recovery after a long hard hike, calcium, zinc, iron and B vitamins. Ok, that is enough of the nutritional talk, do yourself and the environment a favour and get into the kitchen and start making them. I promise they are really easy to make. Your taste buds will have a treat, everyone will thank you for bringing them along and you will save a lot of food miles, over 15,000 km as the bought ones are made in Poland. Wow, that is a long way for food to travel.

### Method

Preheat a fan forced oven to 160 C. using baking paper line a 28 x 18 cm baking tray. In a pot heat the golden syrup, brown sugar and butter until the sugar is dissolved, stirring constantly. Take the pot off the heat and add the sesame seeds, oatmeal, coconut and figs, stir to combine. Pour over the lined tray and use using a spoon smooth out the mix, place the pan in the oven and cook for 15 mins. Leave to cool in the tin for about 10 mins then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

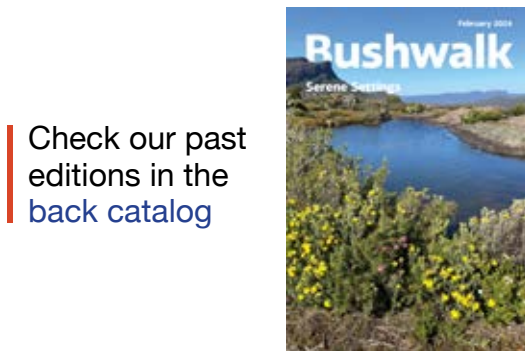
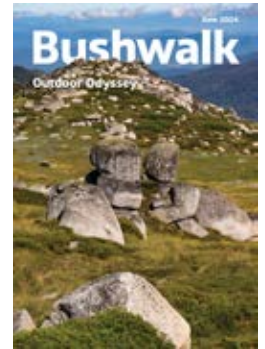
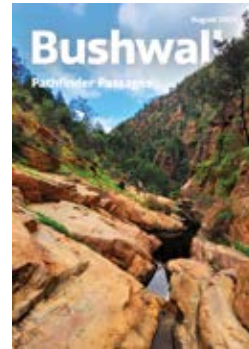
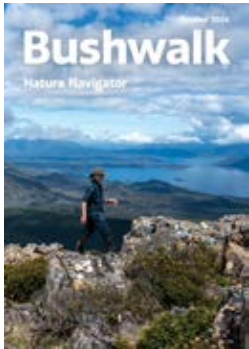
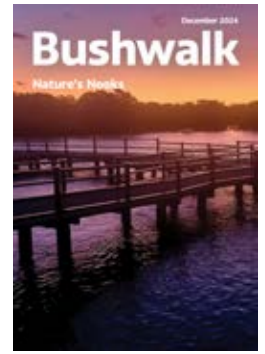
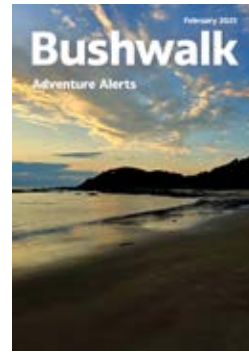
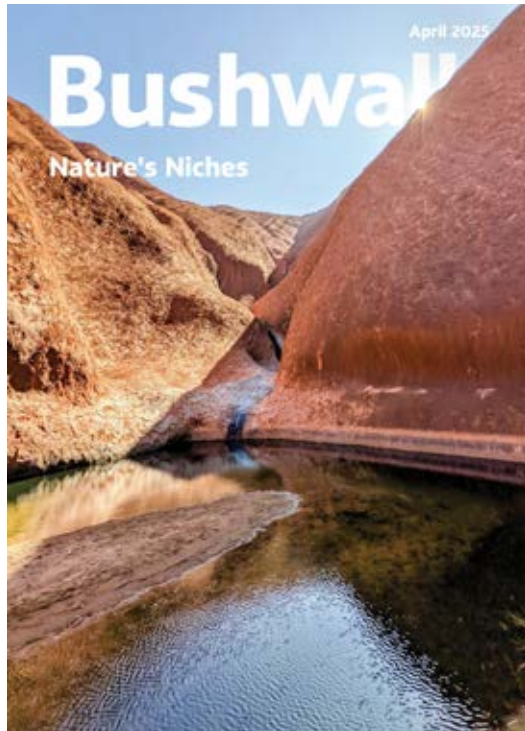
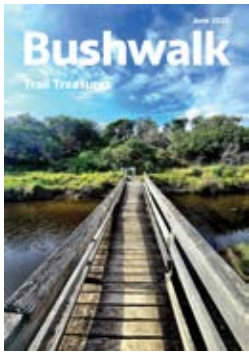


Cut them in half lengthways, then into about 4 cm long.

**Hint:** Wrap them in greaseproof paper so they don't stick together and store them in a container or snap lock bag. If you have a vacuum sealer, you can use that to store the bars in too.

### Ingredients

Golden syrup	½ cup	158 grams
Brown Sugar	¾ cup	105 grams
Butter		40grams
Sesame seeds	1 cup	140 grams
Oatmeal	1/2cup	52 grams
Desiccated coconut	½ cup	40 grams
Dried figs	2 each	24 grams



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