

The Basin Track and Mackerel Track



3 hrs

Hard track



5.9 km Circuit

↑ 226m

This walk is a great way to see some popular areas in Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park. The walk from West Head Rd travels to The Basin campsite, and the ferry takes you over to Mackerel Beach. Before returning to West Head Rd, the walk also gives the option to head down to Currawong Beach. There is plenty to do at the beach, with swimming and picnic areas, and clearings for other games.



The Basin Track Aboriginal Engravings

The Basin Track Aboriginal Engravings, Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, is a large rock surface scattered with Aboriginal engravings. The engravings depict men, fish, hopping wallabies and a club. The engravings are marked with interpretive signs which outline where on the rocks the engravings are and how they were made.

The Basin Dam

The Basin Dam, Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, is a large pool of water dammed by a wall, well above The Basin's lagoon. The dam is reasonably deep, however it is used as a water supply. This is a nice spot to enjoy the views into the valley.

Beechwood Function and Convention Centre

Beechwood Function and Convention Centre, Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, is a historic building situated next to The Basin camping area. The cottage was built in 1882 by convicts, pirates and sailors living in the area at the time. The cottage is now a venue for hire, with space and equipment to cater for 60 people. [More info.](#)

The Basin campground

The Basin Campsite, Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, is a large grassed campsite overlooking Pittwater. The Basin is the only place you can camp in the National Park. However, it has capacity to sleep 400 people and many facilities to adequately cope. The Basin is accessible by has ferry and management trail, but there is no car access. There are numerous facilities such as drinking water, flush toilets, picnic tables, electric and wood barbecues, in addition to cold showers, an amenities block and a soft drink vending machine. There is a large lagoon for swimming, and some nice walks to explore.

Mackerel Beach

Mackerel Beach, also known as Great Mackerel Beach, is a 600m stretch of sand facing east over Pittwater. The beach is backed by a lagoon and a small community of houses. Mackerel Beach has a wharf with public ferry access. Mackerel Beach and its southern neighbour, Little Mackerel or Currawong Beach, were originally purchased for farming in 1823 by John Clarke. The land was then subdivided and more than a hundred houses were built, many of which still stand today.

Before You walk

Bushwalking is fun and a wonderful way to enjoy our natural places. Sometimes things go bad, with a bit of planning you can increase your chance of having an enjoyable and safer walk. Before setting off on your walk check

- 1) Weather Forecast ([BOM Metropolitan District](#))
- 2) Fire Dangers ([Greater Sydney Region, unknown](#))
- 3) Park Alerts ([Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park](#))
- 4) Research the walk to check your party has the skills, fitness and equipment required
- 5) Agree to stay as a group and not leave anyone to walk solo

Think before you TREK

The 'Think before you TREK' program developed by NSW Police & NPWS promotes the benefits of planning ahead for your bushwalking trip by using an easy to remember acronym:

- T** Take adequate supplies of food, water, navigation and first aid equipment.
- R** Register your planned route and tell friends and family when you expect to return.
- E** Emergency beacon (PLB's) should be carried on walks with significant gaps in mobile coverage (check terrain profile).
- K** Keep to your planned route and follow the map and walking trails.

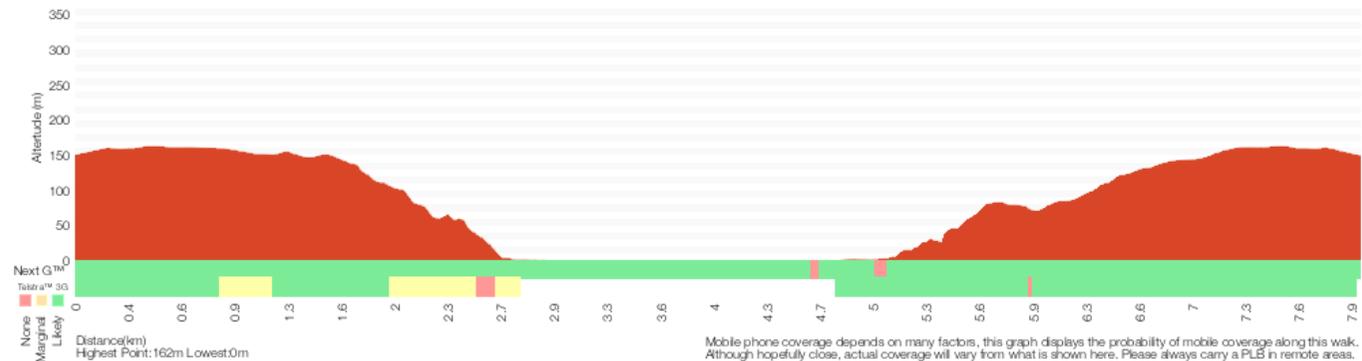
Topo Maps

The maps provided on wildwalks are helpful, but there are times where you may need maps covering a broader area. Maps that cover this walk include;

1:25 000 Map Series:91301N BROKEN BAY

1:40 000 Map Series:CMA Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park Tourist Map

1:100 000 Map Series:9130 SYDNEY



Grade

This walk has been graded using the AS 2156.1-2001. The overall grade of the walk is determined by the highest classification along the whole track.



Grade 4/6
Hard track

Length	5.9 km Circuit
Time	3 hrs
Quality of track	Rough track, where fallen trees and other obstacles are likely (4/6)
Signs	Minimal directional signs (4/6)
Experience Required	Some bushwalking experience recommended (3/6)
Weather	Weather generally has little impact on safety (1/6)
Infrastructure	Limited facilities, not all cliffs are fenced (3/6)

Are you ready to have fun?

Please ensure you and your group are well prepared and equipped for all possible hazards and delays. Check park closures, weather information and Fire Danger Rating before setting out. Optional side trips and alternate routes noted are not included in this walks overall grade, length or time estimate. Please allow extra time for resting and exploring areas of interest. The authors, staff and owners of wildwalks take care in preparing this information but will not accept responsibility for any inconvenience, loss or injury you may experience. Please take care, have fun - Happy Walking.

Getting there Traveling by car is the only practical way to get to Int. Basin Trk and West Head Rd (gps: -33.5901, 151.2822). Car: A park entry fee is required for driving into the park.

This is a circuit, so you will finish back at the start.

Find up to date and more information including; travel directions, weather, park closures and walker feedback at <http://wild.tl/tbtam>

0 | Int. Basin Trk and West Head Rd

(360 m 7 mins) From the car park, this walk follows the management trail around the green gate, keeping West Head Rd on the right. The walk continues along the trail, which tends to the left, and soon comes to a signposted intersection with the 'Aboriginal Engravings' track on the right.

0.36 | Alternate Route Int. Basin Trk and Aboriginal Engr

(110 m 2 mins) Turn right: From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Aboriginal Engravings' sign into the heath and away from the management trail. The track tends left, to a ramp after approximately 10m. The track follows the wooden edging over the rock surface, between the engravings, heading to the signposted intersection on the management trail again. Now Turn sharp left to rejoin the main walk .

0.36 | The Basin Track Aboriginal Engravings

The Basin Track Aboriginal Engravings, Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, is a large rock surface scattered with Aboriginal engravings. The engravings depict men, fish, hopping wallabies and a club. The engravings are marked with interpretive signs which outline where on the rocks the engravings are and how they were made.

0.36 | Int. Basin Trk and Aboriginal Engraving Trk Entry

(1.5 km 27 mins) Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads south up the hill (keeping the engravings on the right) to the next signposted intersection with the 'Aboriginal Engravings' track on the right.

Continue straight: From the intersection, the walk winds gently uphill along the management trail, keeping the engravings track initially on the right. The management trail then comes to the intersection with the signposted 'Mackerel service trail' on the left.

Continue straight: From the intersection, the walk follows the wide management trail up the hill, not following the 'Mackarel Service Trail' signs arrow. The track winds left up the hill and leads up to a high point on a hill with views of the sea. The track then undulates across a saddle and up another hill. The track then leads down the hill for a little while to the sign marked intersection on the right.

1.89 | Optional sidetrip to Dam

(870 m 18 mins) Turn right: From the intersection, this walk follows the flat, wide Euro track (un-signposted) that heads off the main management trail. The track winds along the hillside as it contours around the hill to the right. After passing a rocky platform, the track comes to the dam and a view into the valley. At the end of this side trip, retrace your steps back to the main walk then Turn right.

1.89 | The Basin Dam

The Basin Dam, Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, is a large pool of water dammed by a wall, well above The Basin's lagoon. The dam is reasonably deep, however it is used as a water supply. This is a nice spot to enjoy the views into the valley.

1.89 | Int. Basin Trk and Euro Trk

(780 m 18 mins) Veer left: From the intersection, this walk heads down the hill following the sign to 'The Basin .7km'. The walk winds sharply and steeply down a trail that becomes cement partway along. The walk continues down to the open grass of the large camping area.

2.67 | Beechwood Function and Convention Centre

Beechwood Function and Convention Centre, Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, is a historic building situated next to The Basin camping area. The cottage was built in 1882 by convicts, pirates and sailors living in the area at the time. The cottage is now a venue for hire, with space and equipment to cater for 60 people. [More info.](#)

2.67 | The Basin campground

The Basin Campsite, Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park, is a large grassed campsite overlooking Pittwater. The Basin is the only place you can camp in the National Park. However, it has capacity to sleep 400 people and many facilities to adequately cope. The Basin is accessible by has ferry and management trail, but there is no car access. There are numerous facilities such as drinking water, flush toilets, picnic tables, electric and wood barbecues, in addition to cold showers, an amenities block and a soft drink vending machine. There is a large lagoon for swimming, and some nice walks to explore.

2.67 | The Basin Campsite

(130 m 2 mins) Continue straight: From the start of the cement road, this walk heads through the campsite, leading past the large dumpster bins on the left. The track heads past the white poles to the wooden shelter near the water - the Basin Wharf.

2.81 | The Basin Wharf

(2.1 km 32 mins) Continue straight: From The Basin Wharf, this walk takes the ferry across Pittwater to Mackerel Beach Wharf. The Palm Beach Ferry service operates hourly from 9am to about 8pm - check their timetable for more info. The ferry starts from Palm Mackerel and goes via Bennett's, Bonnie Doon, The Basin, Currawong then Mackerel. PH: 9974 2411. (There is no EFTPOS on board, please carry cash) [More info.](#)

4.9 | Mackerel Beach

Mackerel Beach, also known as Great Mackerel Beach, is a 600m stretch of sand facing east over Pittwater. The beach is backed by a lagoon and a small community of houses. Mackerel Beach has a wharf with public ferry access. Mackerel Beach and its southern neighbour, Little Mackerel or Currawong Beach, were originally purchased for farming in 1823 by John Clarke. The land was then subdivided and more than a hundred houses were built, many of which still stand today.

4.9 | Mackerel Beach Wharf

(290 m 6 mins) Turn left : From the wharf, this walk heads south along the beach, keeping the water on the left, for approximately 300m to the gate just behind a boulder and timber stairs on the beach. (one of the last obvious staircases)

5.19 | Mackerel North Gate

(180 m 4 mins) Veer right: From the gate, this walk heads up the sandstone path through the line of houses. The footpath continues through and under

some houses for approximately 200m, contouring with the hillside to a gate which opens onto the bush.

5.37 | Optional sidetrip to Currawong Beach

(270 m 7 mins) Continue straight: From the gate, this walk heads down the headland away from the house. The track drops down some small rock slopes to continues down the hill side for approximately 200m to Currawong Beach. At the end of this side trip, retrace your steps back to the main walk then Turn left.

5.37 | Currawong Beach

Currawong Beach, Ku-ring-gai National Park, is a 400m stretch of sand looking east over Pittwater. The beach is situated between The Basin and Mackerel Beach. Currawong Beach has a wharf which allows for access via the water. Backing the beach is Currawong Beach Cottages and some steep hills. 'Little Mackerel Beach' was purchased in 1949 by the NSW Labour Council for their members. The resort was called Currawong, which is now the common name for the beach.

5.37 | Mackerel South Gate

(440 m 10 mins) Turn right: From the gate, this walk heads steeply up the hill. The track climbs up the hillside to the right of a large cube-like boulder (which, itself, makes a great viewpoint). The track then continues up the spur for approximately 50m, passing numerous large, green water tanks on the right of the track. Then the walk leads up the ridge through a ferny area to a clearing at the end of a service track, the intersection.

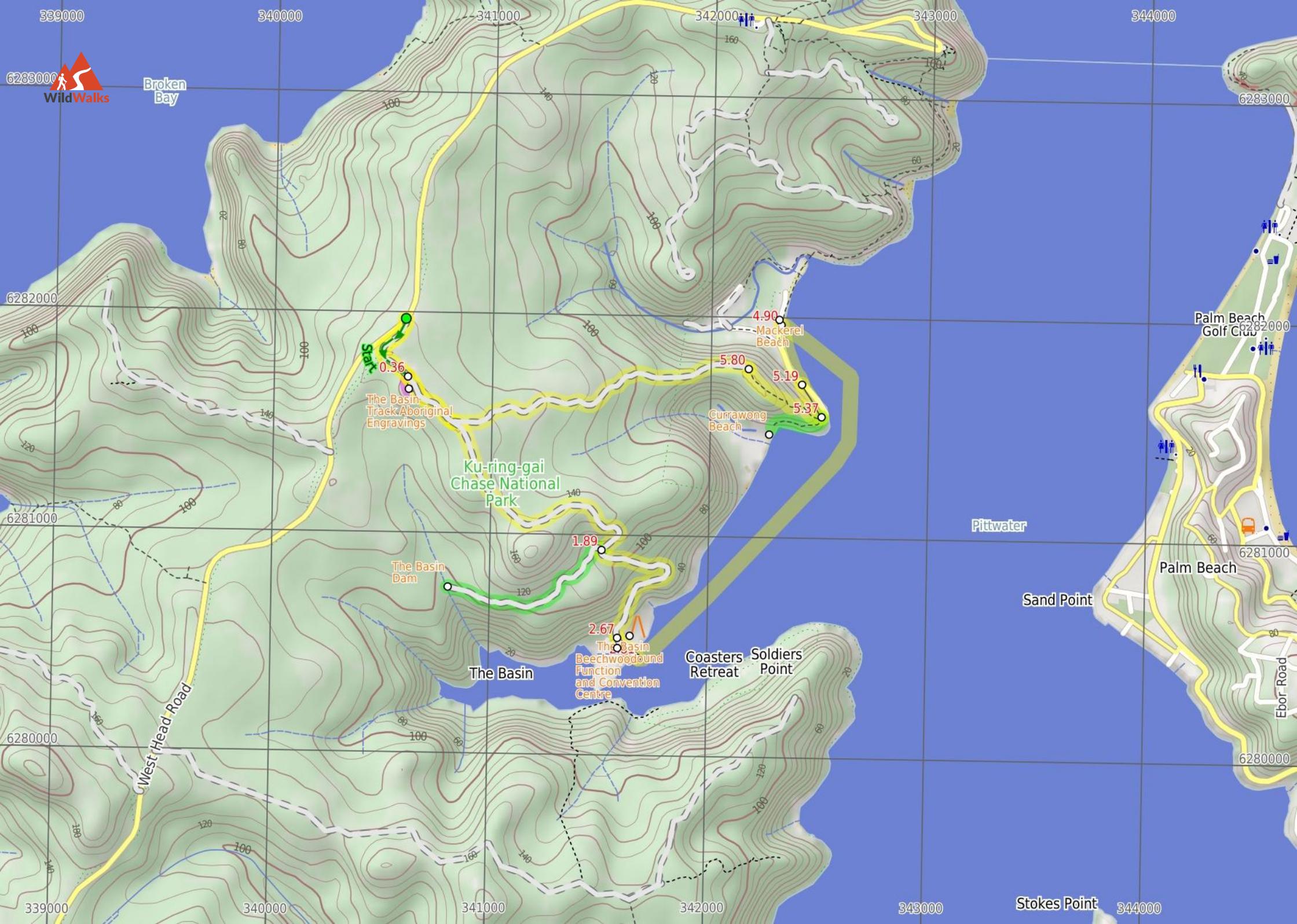
5.8 | Mackerel Trk Clearing

(2.1 km 40 mins) Veer left: From the clearing with views of Mackerel Beach, this walk heads away from the views of the water, down into a saddle to rise up the widening ridge. The track meanders up the wide ridge for a while before meeting a signposted intersection.

Veer right: From the intersection, the walk heads downhill along the wide basin management trail, to the signposted intersection with a track on the left, which heads to the 'Aboriginal Engravings'.

Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads north down the hill (keeping the engravings on the left) to the next signposted intersection with the 'Aboriginal Engravings' track on the left.

Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads down the slight hill away from the 'Aboriginal Engravings' (initially with the engravings on the left). (If you pass a second 'Aboriginal Engravings' sign you have gone the wrong way). The track tends right then heads around a gate, just before coming to the Basin Track car park on West Head Road.



Broken Bay

Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park

The Basin

Coasters Soldiers Retreat Point

Pittwater

Sand Point

Palm Beach

Stokes Point

West Head Road

The Basin Track Aboriginal Engravings

The Basin Dam

The Basin Beechwood Function and Convention Centre

Mackerel Beach

Currawong Beach

Palm Beach Golf Club

Ebor Road

Summary navigation sheet for the The Basin Track and Mackerel Track



km	From	Up/Dwn	Length	Initial directions (Use full tracknotes and maps for more detail)
0.00	Int. Basin Trk and West Head Rd -33.5901,151.2822 (GR Broken Bay, 406820)	13 -3	360 m 7 mins	From the car park, this walk follows the management trail around the green gate, keeping West Head Rd on the right.
0.36	Int. Basin Trk and Aboriginal Engraving Trk Entry -33.5925,151.2823 (GR Broken Bay, 406817)	3 -1	110 m 2 mins	Alternate Route Int. Basin Trk and Aboriginal Engraving Trk Entry. Turn right: From the intersection, this walk follows the 'Aboriginal Engravings' sign into the heath and away from the management trail.
0.36	Int. Basin Trk and Aboriginal Engraving Trk Entry -33.5925,151.2823 (GR Broken Bay, 406817)	14 -62	1.5 km 27 mins	Continue straight: From the intersection, this walk heads south up the hill (keeping the engravings on the right) to the next signposted intersection with the 'Aboriginal Engravings' track on the right.
1.89	Int. Basin Trk and Euro Trk -33.5996,151.2919 (GR Broken Bay, 415809)	25 -42	870 m 18 mins	Optional sidetrip to Dam. Turn right: From the intersection, this walk follows the flat, wide Euro track (un-signposted) that heads off the main management trail.
1.89	Int. Basin Trk and Euro Trk -33.5996,151.2919 (GR Broken Bay, 415809)	8 -115	780 m 18 mins	Veer left: From the intersection, this walk heads down the hill following the sign to 'The Basin .7km'.
2.67	The Basin Campsite -33.6032,151.2926 (GR Broken Bay, 416805)	0 -3	130 m 2 mins	Continue straight: From the start of the cement road, this walk heads through the campsite, leading past the large dumpster bins on the left.
2.81	The Basin Wharf -33.604,151.2936 (GR Broken Bay, 417804)	2 0	2.1 km 32 mins	Continue straight: From The Basin Wharf, this walk takes the ferry across Pittwater to Mackerel Beach Wharf.
4.90	Mackerel Beach Wharf -33.5904,151.3007 (GR Broken Bay, 423820)	17 -3	290 m 6 mins	Turn left : From the wharf, this walk heads south along the beach, keeping the water on the left, for approximately 300m to the gate just behind a boulder and timber stairs on the beach.
5.19	Mackerel North Gate -33.5928,151.3018 (GR Broken Bay, 424817)	18 -5	180 m 4 mins	Veer right: From the gate, this walk heads up the sandstone path through the line of houses.
5.37	Mackerel South Gate -33.5942,151.3027 (GR Broken Bay, 425816)	17 -26	270 m 7 mins	Optional sidetrip to Currawong Beach. Continue straight: From the gate, this walk heads down the headland away from the house.
5.37	Mackerel South Gate -33.5942,151.3027 (GR Broken Bay, 425816)	59 -4	440 m 10 mins	Turn right: From the gate, this walk heads steeply up the hill.
5.80	Mackerel Trk Clearing -33.5922,151.2991 (GR Broken Bay, 422818)	97 -27	2.1 km 40 mins	Veer left: From the clearing with views of Mackerel Beach, this walk heads away from the views of the water, down into a saddle to rise up the widening ridge.