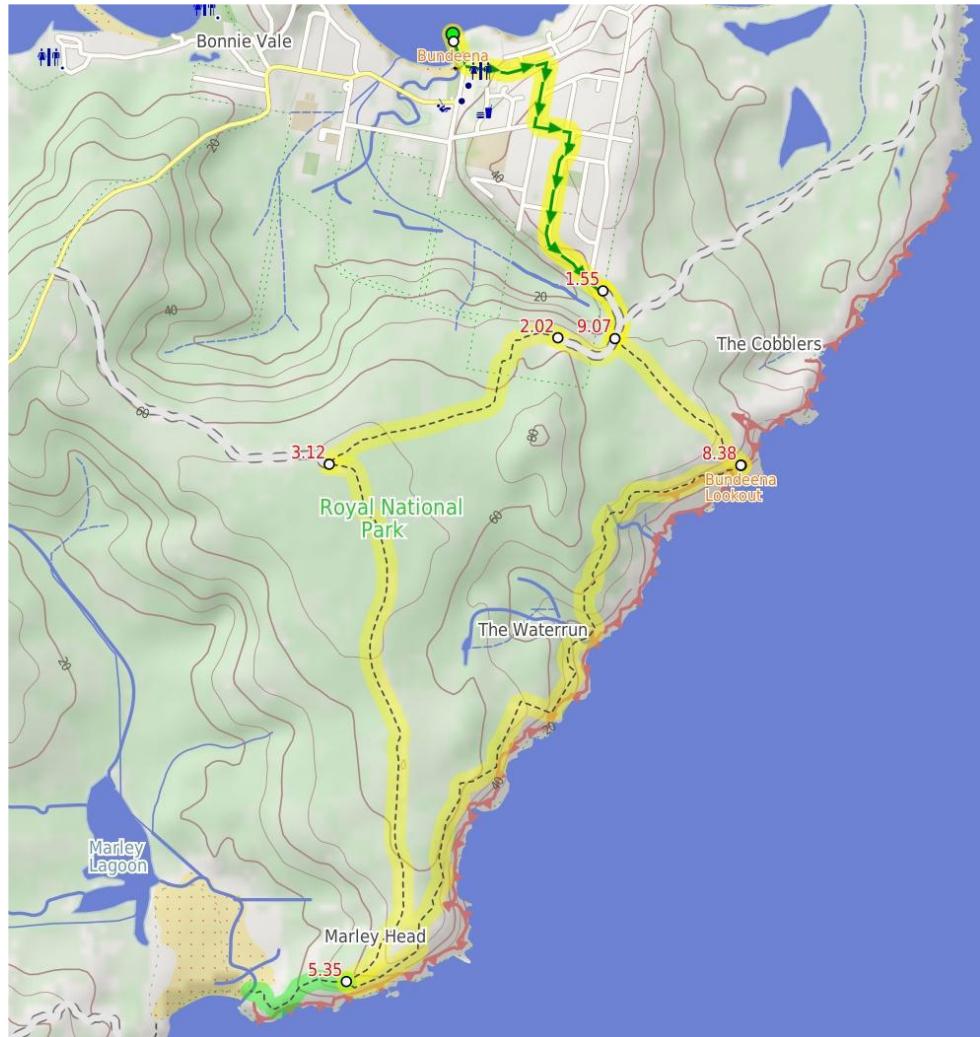


Monday 8th August 2022

Bundeena to Marley Head



For those who walked from the wharf, the return walk was 11km. For those who walked from Beachcomber Avenue, it was a mere 8km. Oh, and the consensus was to return back along the coast, forgoing what is now an ugly fire trail.

Distance: 8-11km

Ascent: 200m

Grade: 3

Now yesterday, while writing up my column for the latest NPA SSB newsletter (While the Billy Boils), I wrote:

Earlier this year I led a walk in Royal and naturally I stopped, noticed the small things, recorded them and marvelled at their beauty.



Acianthus fornicatus

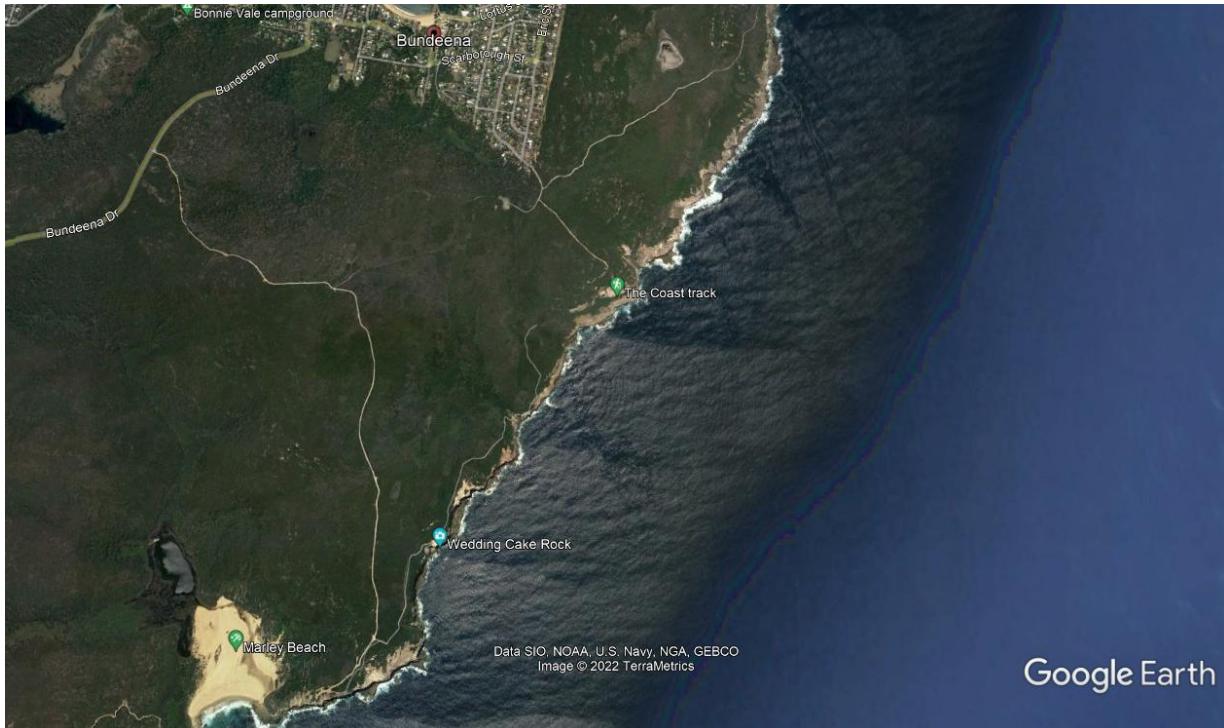
One such example was the tiny orchid above, commonly called a Pixie Cap (the genus is the Mosquito Orchid). They are easily overlooked and one of the Branch members asked me how I saw this. As she walked, she said, she fails to observe them. Cheekily, I said, walk slowly.

That got me thinking. In my youth I was never accused of walking slowly. Indeed, I was once described by another walker as a “greyhound”. And, yes, there is pleasure in speed, pleasure in knowing that the body can power up the steepest hill with full rucksack, pleasure in the (to be honest) competition with other walkers. There is also a certain pleasure in covering long distances over difficult terrain. Indeed, it can be an adrenalin hit. I look back on those days with a touch of nostalgia and wish that I could indeed cover the same distances with the same energy.

Another of my quips, when asked how I see wildlife, the animals, is that I walk quietly. Well, to be truthful, I have never been too silent and can talk with the best of them. The teacher in me wants to show others what I have found. But patient quiet walking, sometimes alone, is a magical way to be in the bush.

I added:

So don't worry if you are walking slowly. Walking can be pleasurable however you go. As Margaret Boyles writes, "It may sound too good to be true, but simply walking slowly and consciously is good for your health. Not only does it burn a surprising number of calories and decrease joint stress, but also it adds an element of meditation and mental well-being to our lives."¹



I thought of that this afternoon as we walked back. Those of us who meandered home saw quite a few whales breaching. Indeed, we stopped for quite some time. Several were even quite close to shore.

To me slow walking is returning to my childhood love of the little things around me: looking, listening, smelling, touching! Immersing myself in this glorious natural world. It does not take much effort to stop and hug a tree or to let my fingers run through the foliage of *Persoonia pinifolia* but it does wonders for my well-being, my sense of Being.

Mind you, when I returned today to pick up a camera I left in the car, adding an extra km to my tally, I returned to that greyhound of yesterday.

¹ <https://www.almanac.com/how-slow-walking-good-your-health>



And the party arrives!

But let us begin at the track head! And the highlight of the day, surely! That flock of 60+ Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos that did a flyover, right above our heads!

As we walked out to the Balconies some of us were distracted by the flowers, especially a delightful bush of *Leucopogon microphyllus*, in all its glory.



I did have the eyepiece and it was clearly visible to anyone why the genus is called Leucopogon. The genus name, Leucopogon is derived from ancient Greek words meaning "white" and "beard", referring to the petal tube.



Having then returned for my camera, who knows what wonders my party found. I didn't catch up again until we reached the Waterrun. Mind you, I did have a stop to chat with a man "about a dog"!

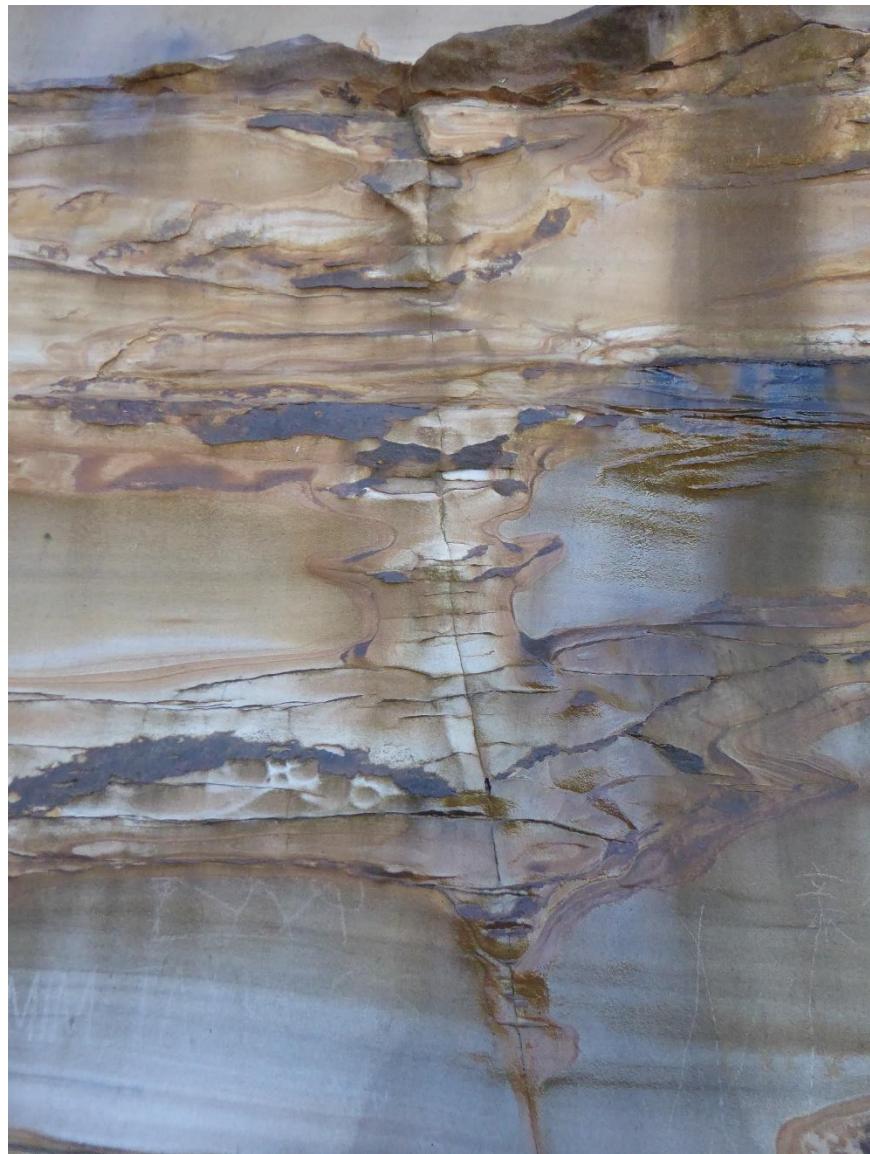
But here they were, the party, about to descend to a delightful spot for morning tea.





Looking out to sea for whales.







A little further along we were reminded to be safe!





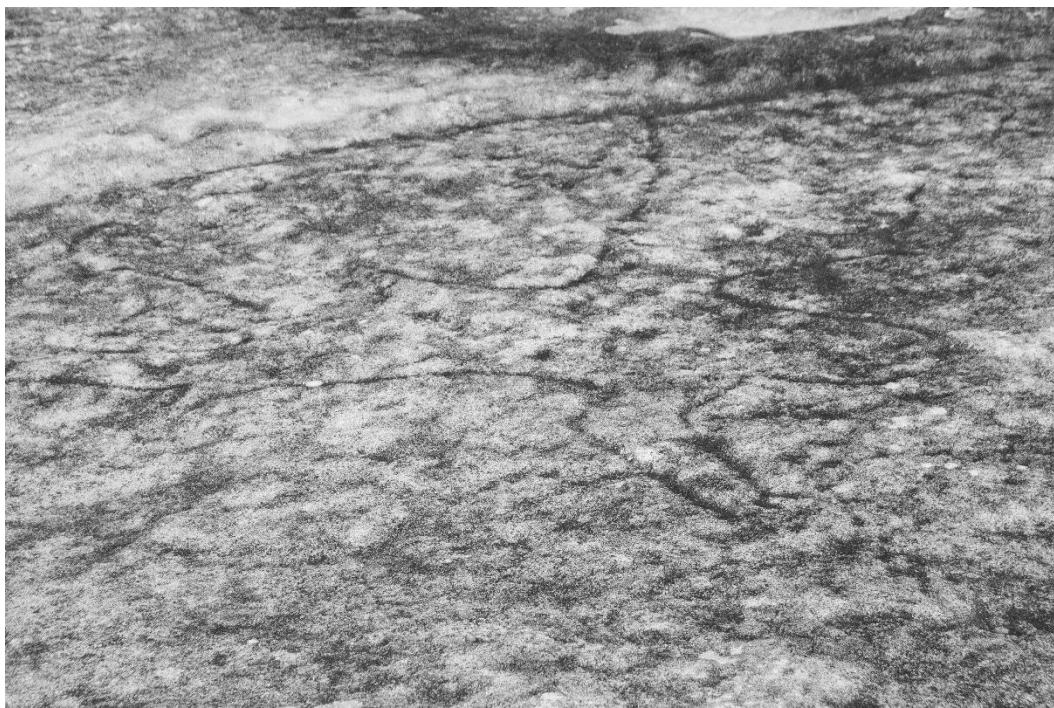
Safely enclosed



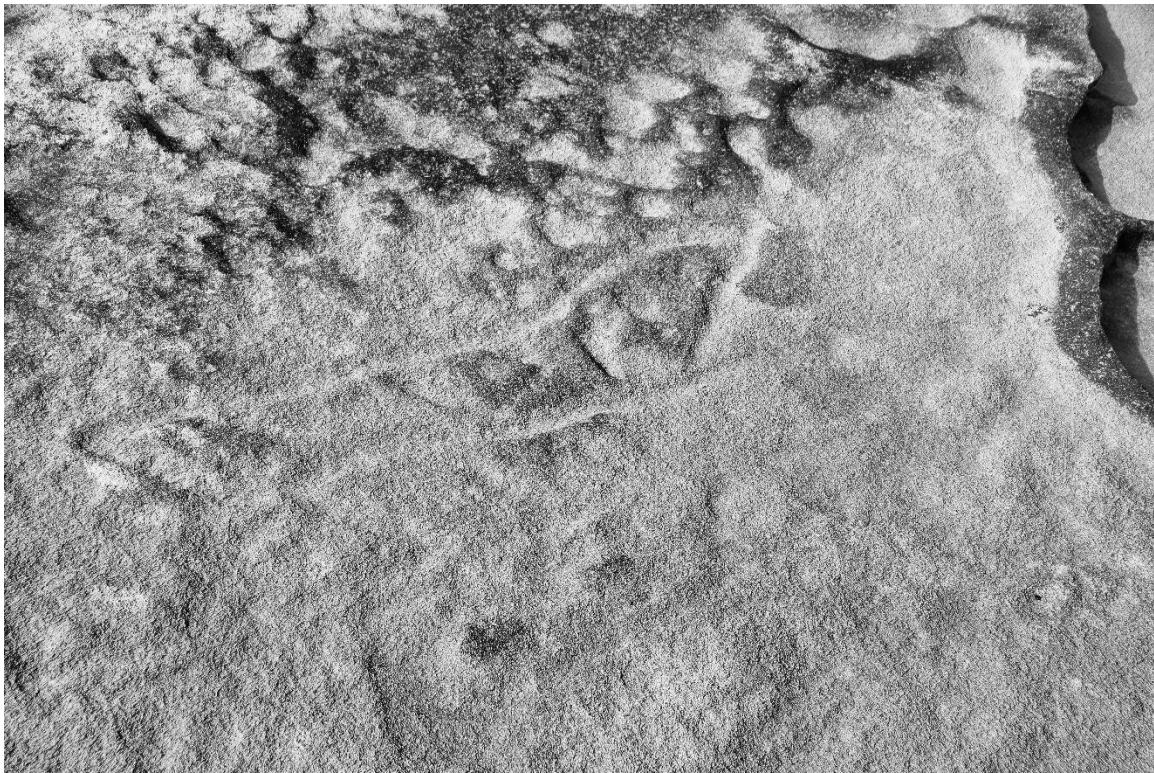
And so, we arrived at a windy Marley Head where we explored the Aboriginal engravings and lunched!



I spy the lunch spot from last week!



The images come out better in monochrome!







Carpobrotus glaucescens or Pigface



Exploring the rocky areas



And finding some interesting “rock art”





And with that, we headed home!