

**5 BIRUBI BEACH**

Birubi Beach is a flat beach that is conducive to walking. It lies at the northern end of Newcastle Bight and a downside is that it sometimes is very busy because of the associated tourist activities. Large numbers of Silver Gulls and Crested Terns roost on the rocks, while at low tide Sooty Oystercatchers forage around the tidal pools, sometimes in the company of an Eastern Reef Egret. A solitary Wandering Tattler joined them in 2008. Pied Oystercatchers, Double-banded Plovers, Sanderlings, Red-capped Plovers, Curlew Sandpipers, Gull-billed, Caspian and Little Terns have all been recorded here. Also, Ospreys, Brahminy Kites, Sea-Eagles and Whistling Kites are frequently seen. Walk or drive to nearby Birubi Point for more views of rock platform birds.



Brahminy Kite

**6 GAN GAN LOOKOUT**

This lookout (above), accessed from Lily Hill Rd off Nelson Bay Rd, is worth a visit just for the extensive views it offers of the Bay and coast. As a bonus, you can find bush birds such as White-cheeked Honeyeaters along the path from the car-park to the viewing area.

**There are no facilities.**

Factfile Figbird (*Sphecotheres vieilloti*)

The Australasian Figbird has a total length of up to 29cm. They are gregarious and commonly encountered in city parks, orchards and gardens, that have leafy trees and berry-producing plants. Females are drab-coloured, being dull brownish above, and white below with strong dark streaking.

**7 TANILBA BAY**

Shorebirds and waterbirds regularly feed along Tanilba Bay at low tide. Car parks, picnic tables and toilets are available, and there is public access to the shoreline, which can be followed to Sunrise Point, also known as "Bird Rocks", a popular roost for many species of waterbirds. "Tilligerry Habitat", accessed off Peace Parade at the eastern end of Tanilba Bay, has several walking trails, where bush birds such as Rufous Whistler (summer), Eastern Yellow Robin, Superb and Variegated Fairy-wren, White-cheeked, Blue-faced and Striped Honeyeaters can be found. Maps and information for the Habitat can be obtained from the Gallery Workshop. At the western end of the bay, historic Tanilba House, built in 1831, has a Museum and Tea Room which opens on Sundays from 10:30 am – 3:30 pm.

**8 LEMON TREE PASSAGE**

A 3km walking track follows the Tilligerry Creek shoreline from Gibber Point (access via Daniel Crescent) to Lemon Tree Passage (Cook Parade east). Access, with parking, is available at several points. The trees and shrubs along the walk are a haven for cuckoos, doves, lorikeets and passerines; at low tide, herons, cormorants, Bar-tailed Godwits and Grey-tailed Tattlers forage in the intertidal zone, while Sea-Eagles, Ospreys and Kites fly overhead. Brahminy Kites are regularly seen in this area. From the west side of Lemon Tree Passage, a 1km walk with good vantage points for observing godwits, herons, cormorants, oystercatchers and raptors, follows the shoreline through a park to Rookes Point, Mallabula. **Lemon Tree Passage offers restaurants, toilets and picnic facilities.**



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HBOC meets at 7:00pm on the second Wednesday of each month (except January) at the Hunter Wetlands Centre, off the roundabout at Sandgate Rd, Shortland. Also, monthly outings on first Tuesday and third Sunday of each month – check our website for details.

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# Southern Port Stephens Birding Route

**HUNTER REGION**  
**Port Stephens**

Southern Port Stephens Boat Harbour  
sooty oystercatcher  
superb fairy  
eastern reef  
go HBOC  
yellow faced albatross

**Hunter Bird Observers Club**  
Affiliated with BirdLife Australia

# Southern Port Stephens Birding Route

This map is not to scale  
and is for illustrative  
purposes only



## 1 SALAMANDER BAY/SOLDIERS POINT

More than 100 species have been recorded in the vicinity of the sports ground, the two drainage ponds, their connecting channel and the surrounding natural bush. Entry is via the sports ground / recycling facility, about 400m along Soldiers Point Rd from the Port Stephens Drive roundabout. There are six parking bays available outside the entrance to the sports ground. An abandoned road (now a fire trail) can be accessed from the main parking area or across from the recycling centre; it provides easy walking past the eastern side of the ponds. Waterbirds are regularly present including Nankeen Night Herons, Royal Spoonbills, egrets and cormorants, along with doves, cuckoos, lorikeets and kingfishers. A variety of passerines inhabit the



adjacent bushland and the area is patrolled by the full range of regional raptors. **There are no facilities.**

## 2 SUNSET BEACH/DOWARDEE ISLAND

Continue along Soldiers Point Rd to Sunset Beach at Soldiers Point. Parking is available at Pearson Park off Elk St (via Cromarty Rd) and at the boat ramp, located at the base of Leonard Everitt Park, off Mitchell St. Look for the resident pair of Beach Stone-curlews (they move about in the area and can be hard to find). Pelicans, cormorants, gulls and terns are plentiful, as are Ospreys, Sea-Eagles and Whistling Kites. There usually are good views of loafing and feeding Pied Oystercatchers, Eastern Curlews and Bar-tailed Godwits on Dowardee Island and the smaller islands to the north. **There are picnic facilities adjacent to both parking areas, and toilets are located at Pearson Park and near the Ridgeway Avenue tennis courts.**



## 3 SHOAL BAY/FINGAL BAY

There is an easy, paved walk to Tomaree Head from the parking lot at the end of Shoal Bay Road. Little Penguins have been spotted here, and a Peregrine Falcon lives on a ledge high on the headland. Terns, gulls and cormorants often fish between Tomaree and Yaccaba headlands. Shearwaters, gannets and the occasional Arctic or Pomarine Jaeger sometimes follow returning fishing boats into the bay.

From Barrie Park, on Marine Drive, Fingal Bay, there are great views across Fingal Bay to the north, and out to sea from the south. It is an excellent spot for whale-watching and bird-watching. A recently upgraded walking track leads south from Barrie Park along the cliff edge. The views are wonderful, and birds shelter in the lee of the windswept scrub, the cliffs and the offshore rocks. There are many other walking tracks through Tomaree National Park including a coastal walk between Tomaree Head and Fingal Bay. **Toilets and picnic facilities are available at Shoal Bay and Fingal Bay.**

## 4 BOAT HARBOUR

The cliffs between Barrie Park and Birubi Beach offer several car-accessible coastal viewing points from which to observe sea birds. From Nelson Bay Rd turn onto Gan Gan Rd and follow the sign posts for direction to the various beaches, **all of which have facilities**. Explore the local side-roads at each locality and you will find pull-in areas with good coastal view-points. Wedge-tailed Shearwaters are present offshore from September to March, and large flocks of migrating Short-tailed Shearwaters pass by during August-October. In winter, you might spy an albatross (Yellow-nosed and Black-browed/White-capped Albatross are the most common) coming close to shore. Gulls, terns and gannets are always present, and a scan of the rocks will usually turn up cormorants, Sooty Oystercatchers, and if you are lucky, the resident Eastern Reef Egret. Check the coastal heath for Superb and Variegated Fairy-wrens and White-cheeked Honeyeaters. Yellow-tailed Black-Cockatoos and the larger nectar feeding birds are common when the Coastal Banksias flower and then seed. A variety of raptors also hunt in the Boat Harbour area.

