

Tidal River – Lilly Pilly Gully – Mt Bishop – Tidal Overlook – Squeaky Beach – Pillar Pt Option Circuit

Difficulty	Medium/Hard
Length	17.9 Km Option: Pillar Pt 700 m Each Way
Total Ascent	790 m Option: Pillar Pt 20 m Each Way
Gradient	7% - steady ascent of Mt Bishop, and return, then undulations
Path	Reasonable rocky path up Mt Bishop, excellent boardwalk at Lilly Pilly Gully Nature Walk, quality rocky path elsewhere, a main road to be crossed

Starting from Tidal River, at the footbridge, this walk includes the Lilly Pilly Gully Nature Walk, an ascent of Mt Bishop, the Tidal Overlook Track, with an optional side trip to Pillar Pt, before returning to Tidal River. With stunning views of Tidal River and the surrounding mountain ranges and beaches, there are so many photo opportunities that it is a challenge to keep moving. A sharp eye may even spot an eel in the mountain streams, as they flow through the Lilly Pilly Gully.

The first challenge is the steady climb up to the Lilly Pilly Gully carpark, on a well-formed track. Not too hard! You will notice evidence of environmental burns and land clearing, as the land managers strive to remove Coastal Tea Tree to allow local eucalypts to reclaim their traditional dominance. You must cross the main road to reach the Lilly Pilly Gully carpark – be careful!

From the carpark it is an easy stroll to the start of the Lilly Pilly Gully Nature Walk. This lush area of interlinking water courses and wetland vegetation is a delight. Start the Lilly Pilly Gully walk going anti-clockwise, taking the right-hand path from the carpark, and enjoy the walk for the next 4.2 Km. This track has quite a few information signs giving details about bushfires and how they affect the local ecosystem, types of local birds (eg. the Powerful Owl), fungi, types of trees, and many flowers. One of the signs lists 32 species of birds to look for, so, keep your eyes open!

The Nature Walk includes a wet-land area, with running water, seen from a boardwalk. There are more signs here, explaining about the lives of small tree climbing crustaceans, climbing fish, and the communities of plants and animals in this section of warm temperate rainforest. It would be easy to spend more than an hour here - it is a really beautiful and interesting place.

There you will find a track junction, with a track off on the right signposted 'Mt Bishop'. Take this track, and commence a long steady climb up another well-maintained track to Mt Bishop. The climb is not hard, but demands a good level of fitness. The 2.2 Km climb is eventually rewarded by stunning views from the summit.

The return down to the Lilly Pilly Gully Nature Walk is easy, and after a further 1.5 Km, you finish the Nature Walk at the Lilly Pilly Gully carpark.

Again, cross the main road (with care) and, after 200 m, at the track junction, take the Tidal Overlook Track. A few stone steps along the way lead you around a massive granite outcrop before reaching the main ridge. There is a chance to take in the views from the rock outcrop, before moving on to Lookout Point, where you get another opportunity to capture the views of Tidal River and beyond.

Continuing on, after a further 800 m, the track reaches a junction. Left takes you back to Tidal River, straight ahead to Pillar Pt, and right goes to Squeaky Beach. On this occasion, take the track to

Squeaky Beach. After another about 1 Km, you will reach Squeaky Beach. Walk to the Northern end of the beach, which is a good spot for morning tea! There are toilets nearby, in the Squeaky Beach carpark (300 m from the beach).

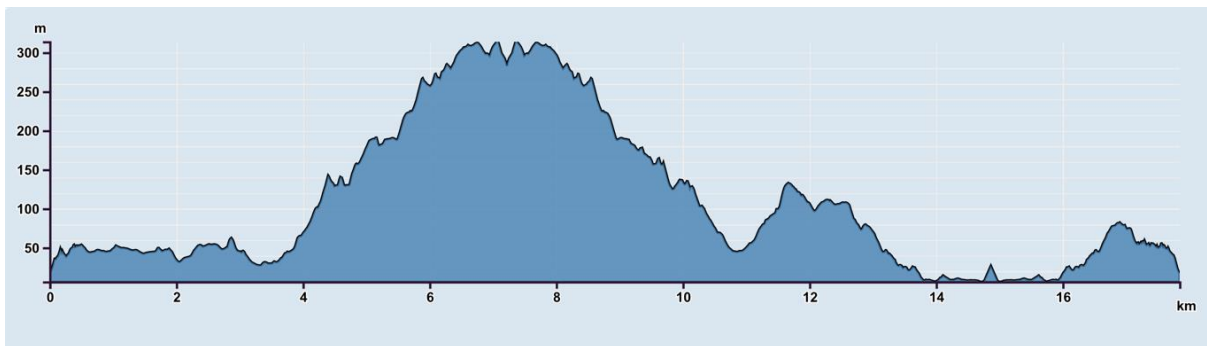
Enjoy the beach barefoot, hear the squeak made by the rounded grains of quartz sand, paddle in the cold waters of Bass Strait and admire the beautiful red lichen-coloured rocks at the Northern end of the beach. This is the Prom!

When you return to the track junction, you have the option of an easy walk to Pillar Point (720 m each way). There is a short section of rock scramble, before emerging onto a wide rock platform with views across the Tidal River inlet and rolling surf of Norman Beach, with Mt Oberon as a backdrop.

After the mandatory photo op, return 720 m to the track junction.

This time, take the track back towards Tidal River - about 1.2 Km, mostly downhill.

Walk 18 - Elevation Profile



Walk 18 – Tidal River – Lilly Pilly Gully – Mt Bishop – Tidal Overlook – Squeaky Beach – Pillar Pt Option Circuit

