

## Glossy-Black Cockatoos

You will probably hear a Glossy-black before you see one. If they are feeding in the casuarinas (*Allocasuarina verticillata*) found all along the walking trail you will hear them chewing on the cones as they shred them to extract the seeds. The shredded cones, known as 'chewings' are a whitish colour when recent, turning to bright orange as they age. Often the birds can be heard & seen wheeling from tree to tree & there is nothing more breathtaking than a glimpse of their magnificent red tail feathers. (Females have irregular yellow patches on their head, crest and or neck with red tail feathers edged in yellow & usually barred black. The tail of the male has clear red panels whilst those of immature birds is similar to the female.) This bird is endangered & within SA is only found on KI. A rescue project which has been in

operation for a number of years has resulted in a steady increase of the population. The 'River Flock' now numbers over 30 birds & if lucky

enough to see them, please don't get too close; put their welfare ahead of yours & quietly enjoy this beautiful bird in its natural environment.



## Other Birds

This bush abounds with noisy old galahs, chattering magpies, squawking ravens, (there are no crows on KI.) currawongs & wattlebirds. There are many species of honeyeaters: White-eared, White-naped, Crescent, New Holland & Eastern Spinebill. Watch out for Thornbills, Red-Browed Firetails, White-browed Scrub Wrens & Beautiful Firetails. Look for the bright blue plumage of the male Superb Blue Wren, the magnificent red breast of the Scarlet Robin & the golden yellow of the elusive male Golden Whistler. You will be captivated by the calls of the Fan-tailed & Horsefields Bronze-Cuckoos & the constant beep of the Pardalote.



Golden Whistler

Striated Pardalote

## 6. Return to River

If the tide isn't too high, wander back along the beach. Look overhead, you may spy an Osprey, White Bellied Sea Eagle or a Wedge-tailed Eagle. Off shore swans, pelicans, White-Faced Herons, Common Greenshanks, Australian White Ibis and Pied Oystercatchers can often be seen.

The wooden posts jutting out of the sea are oyster leases; there are usually cormorants, terns & gulls sitting on them. Often you can see or hear dolphins or an eagle ray splashing about amongst them. Succulent oysters fatten below them. Filter feeders, they only survive in a clean, pristine environment. This lease, is one of only two farms in SA with the ability to use deep water to grow oysters. These delicious plump, salty oysters are available from KI Lodge's restaurant.



On reaching the shelter (near the start sign) walk to its left and you will see two pieces of art work by a local artist. These paintings show what lies below the water and the shorebirds who live in this area. A Fisherman's Jetty was once located on this point. Before setting off back along the beach to KI Lodge, enjoy the picturesque view of the wharf & town.

The succulent ground plant growing in and on the water's edge here is 'sampphires.' Pick a little and have a nibble. This bush tucker can be eaten in a salad or as a vegetable if lightly boiled.

## 7. Quick Tips

Ask at reception to borrow our bird and plant books so you can identify them. As this is a walk through natural vegetation be aware that snakes are a possibility.

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# Beach, Birds & Bush

## KI Lodge Walking Trail

Wander along the beach and through the bush to the ruins of a fish cannery built in the late 1890's. Return at your own pace along the beach.

This leisurely walk takes an hour or two. Take your time, sit quietly & watch for birds, hunt for orchids, or just soak up the peace & tranquillity.

With a bit of luck, you'll see one or more of The River's flock of Glossy Black Cockatoos.



# 1. Trail Start

This walk begins at the terracotta coloured gate posts at the entrance to Kangaroo Island Lodge where you need to turn left and follow the footpath north. Walk parallel with the road for approximately 300 metres where the bitumen road curves left. Across the road on the right you will see a parking area and a start sign, 'Birds, Beach & Bush.' After reading this sign continue north along the dirt road.

On the way you will notice some old machinery in the paddock to your left. The one labelled 'Stump Jump Plough' was invented in South Australia in the late 19th century. Farmers cutting down mallee trees so they could cultivate the land found ploughing extremely difficult as large roots were left in the ground. This machine grubbed them out, solving the problem.

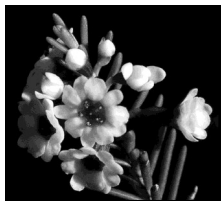
Walk until the road ends and you will see a sign which says, 'Fish Cannery Walking Trail.' Follow the track from here.

# 2. Coastal Woodland

As you begin your walk, note the trees on your right, they are Narrow Leafed Mallees. (*Eucalypts cneorifolia*) Pick a leaf, hold it up to the light & you'll see tiny white oil cells. Crush the leaf to release the eucalyptus oil which is extracted from this tree.

The plants along this trail grow in ancient Cambrian Sandstone which is about 550 million years old. Mallee is the dominant tree, look at how far its roots extend in search of water. These trees have adapted to their environment by means of a lignotuber (a bulb like organ) which stores energy, assisting survival in drought & from which they resprout after bushfires. Other trees in the area include sugar gums & casuarinas. During winter & spring Rock Ferns appear amongst the moss.

Prolific along the trail is Guinea-flower, a low twiggy shrub with small bright yellow flowers. *Thryptomene*, a chest high shrub with sprays of white flowers is also common.



Thryptomene

Greenhood



*Peranthis alata*

In some areas you'll see that the moss & soil has been dug up, indicating an echidna has been busy.

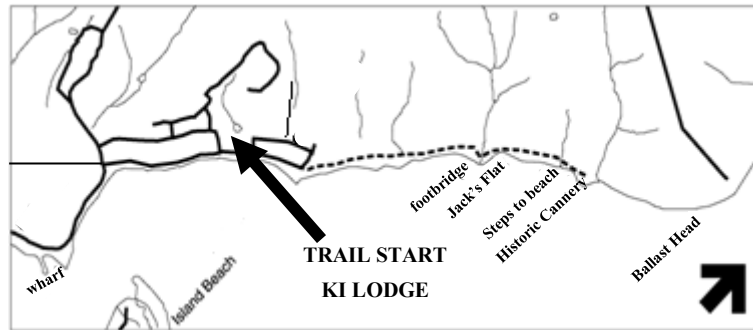
When Europeans first arrived in Australia, our moss was new to them & they didn't realise it held the soil together. Its destruction by rabbits & other introduced animals resulted in severe erosion on the mainland. KI however, was spared, due to the absence of rabbits.

# 3. Jack's Flat

The flat area on the other side of the wooden bridge is a great spot to stop & bird watch or to hunt for ground orchids. Although most prolific during spring, some do flower in winter & early summer. Ground orchids are small & can be difficult to find; look out for clusters of small leaves. As tempting as it might be, please don't pick them as this causes some species to die. Common orchids along the trail are Gnat, Mosquito, Bulldog, Corybas, Rabbit Ears, Greenhoods, Mayfly & Pink & Blue Fairies. Prickly acacias grow prolifically here & look pretty during spring with their masses of yellow flowers. Although horribly prickly they make ideal nesting spots for small birds, particularly the Superb Fairy-wren.

According to local folklore, Jack's Flat was named after a local who cleared the area for a house for himself & his fiancée. The house was never built because he died unexpectedly.

Continue along the path past Jack's Flat & eventually you will reach a set of wooden steps leading to the beach. Walk straight ahead & look for the 'Fish Cannery' sign. Follow the blue markers around the site.



AMERICAN RIVER

# 4. Historic Fish Cannery

These ruins, listed on the State Heritage Register are one of only a few examples of 19th century industry remaining on KI. Little is known about the cannery which operated for about two years in the 1890's.

The first of the dugouts can be found nestled against the hill side, the one sunk into the bank may have been a cool room. They possibly had a roof of thatched Ti tree.

Walking north, an old well & several piles of old stones remain almost hidden. Near the beach the largest of the ruins can easily be found and at low tide the clearing amongst the rocks where the boats unloaded their catch, is still visible.

The cannery employed several small cutters to catch the fish. Other men, prepared & canned the fish which was boiled in tins in shallow cast iron pans & then shipped off to Adelaide. There was no way of keeping the fish during glut periods, so the operation was not successful & only lasted a short time.

When the cannery was busy the fishermen had to scale & clean their own fish. On one particular night Harry Bates in the 'Lily May' caught half a ton of snapper. He was paid £2!



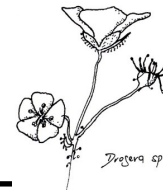
The Lily May

# 5. Ballast Head

Our trail ends at the cannery. Further north is Ballast Head, a difficult climb amongst rocks. Originally named Cap des Kangaroos in 1803 by Nicholas Baudin, sealers later called it Bellows Head because of the noise the winter winds made around it. It eventually became known as Ballast Head because small boats took on ballast there. A mini gold rush began in the area after gold bearing ore, thought to have been collected from Ballast Head was found in a fishing boat.

Until 1992 Ballast Head was a deep sea port & shipping terminal for gypsum mined on the island. The first shipment from what was then a very modern loading facility took place on the 12th November 1960 & the last on the 12th July 1992. (Shortly after, the wharf was dismantled.)

Sundew



*Drosera* sp.

Correa



*Correa pulchra*