

A place with white flowers

by Christian Edger-Odgers

Brilliant blue sky, fresh air, chirping birds and dappled sunlight. Strolling along the well maintained boardwalk in just a T-shirt and shorts, I had to remind myself this is what winter is like in **Tanilba Bay, NSW**. The boardwalk passes through the **Tilligerry Habitat**, where the beach is one side and an array of native trees, grasses and shrubs on the other. I cannot express how much I enjoyed the 30 minute, easy walk. Saying that it refreshed my soul sounds a bit too hippie-like for the person that I am, but it certainly made me determined to return again and when I departed, it took me a while to realise I had left all my stresses behind in the habitat area.

We have been holidaying in the Port Stephens area for over 30 years and yet I realised there were places I had never been to see. One of them was **Tanilba Bay**. I have seen the signs to Tanilba at the Saltash roundabout, and often thought we should go there. I guess the main reason is that you have to make a definite decision to drive around 35-40 mins to get there as it is not on the way to somewhere else. But, just do it! No more excuses!

What I had not realised before is that this is one of the best places to see Koalas in the wild. If you are going there with kids, there is an activity and bird spotting sheet you can print out to get them more absorbed as well as inspiring them to search for the possum boxes. They are available from the Tilligerry Habitat website.

Leave your stresses behind at Tanilba Boardwalk





The kitchen flows to the dining area, lounge, and balcony... beach and sea!

While in the area, it is well worth driving the loop road to see the impressive **Tanilba House**, built in 1837 by Lieutenant William Caswell. Actually, it was built for him by convicts! We could not go in because we had not planned our visit in advance. Apparently, it is open on Wednesdays and weekends, so we now have yet another reason to return. Tanilba translates from the Aboriginal language to mean *place of white flowers*.

I recommend arriving mid-morning. Either take your own picnic lunch, as there are beautiful spots to stop and enjoy the vistas or drive on a little further to the adjoining town, **Lemon Tree Passage**. Follow the road right to the end and you will arrive at **The Poyer's** restaurant at the marina. What a delightful place, standing right over the water. Oh, and the food is quite something, as is the presentation. Just be aware it is closed on Mondays and Tuesdays and the prices are reflective of the quality, presentation, and location. There are other alternatives close by to suit every budget.



A quality experience at The Poyer's

“ Be sure to book well in advance, or you will miss out. ”

If you happen to be in the area on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday, nip around to 7/44 Cook Parade to sample tipples such as **Hibiscus Vodka** or **Pink Gin** at the **Lemon Tree Passage Craft Distillery**.



Local tipples

After that, it will be time to return to **Tidemark**, the third building from the end of the housing on Shoal Bay Road, NSW, and at the start of the **Tomaree National Park**.

All the main living areas are on the first floor to take advantage of the exceptional views. The second and third bedrooms miraculously fill up when the rest of the family hear we have booked 'our' holiday home. Excitingly, the **Tomaree Coastal Walk** is due to be completed in 2023, adding yet another dimension to our holidays.

By the way, Anna, those new king-single beds received a big tick of approval from a lanky family gate crasher. **API**

Check out the facilities and book your API holiday online at www.apilifestyle.com.au or call us on 1300 653 322.

Image credit: Image courtesy of The Poyer's