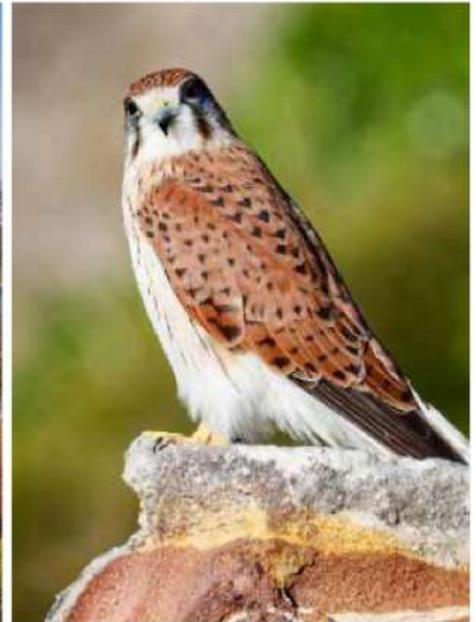




Beaches' apex Bangalley Head, 116m above sea level



A fine kestrel perch

Secret Spaces Hidden Places

The peninsula's top spot (literally)

To reach the highest point on the Northern Beaches peninsula, head to Bangalley Head.

Part of the Bicentennial Coast Walk, this section, reaching 116 metres above sea level, serves up vast lookouts on a 2-kilometre out and back track through well-marked but bushy surroundings of the history-rich headland.

As you enter from the southern end, the rocky cliff edge, painted with mixed brown hues, stretches far beneath and beyond. A small Australian Kestrel sits perched on the high rocks near the edge, not phased by visitors, next to an unofficial path winding its way to the ocean's edge for daring fishermen.

In the first section of the trail, a few fortunate houses sit to the left of the trail, with balconies allowing them to enjoy the view. But as the self-guided trail continues, grass soon becomes a marked dirt path, heading into the dense bush surroundings, winding up long steps to the top. Along the way,

large boulders act as lookout points, as fellow walkers stop for water, picnics or a chance to revel in the atmosphere.

About three quarters of the way through the walk, at dizzying heights, is the awe-inspiring Careel Headland Reserve look-out, which appears on Google but remains unmarked on the route. As the highest vantage point on the Northern Beaches, it offers unbeatable glimpses towards Barrenjoey Head and Avalon.

The area is also rich in history - as a heritage listed Guringai homeland to a lookout post during WWII. Even the geological history spans the Jurassic era, when according to Pittwater Council, volcanic material forced its way up through overlying sedimentary rock.

The final descent back to the car, on a clear day, gives you sweeping views along the south of the peninsula, starting with Whale Beach and extending towards the city; a reminder of just how

dramatic the scenery is along the coastline.

Did you know...

Now blocked off due to the instability of the rock due to the cliffs above it, there is a cave at the base of Bangalley Head. It was once owned by a man named Joseph Therry, due to a land grant, who according to local sources, was planning to conduct church services in the cave.

How to get there

Start at the southern end, on Marine Parade at North Avalon Road, so you're walking up the stairs on the first section and down on your return. There is lots of street parking available around the entrance or you can hop off the bus at Pittwater and walk to the start.

Have a great spot you think should be featured?
Email us at mail@thetawnyfrogmouth.com.au

Words: **Rebecca Burton**