

THINGS TO DO AROUND ORCHID BEACH



Waddy Point

Swimming: There are always good places for swimming in the shallow lagoons around Waddy. Mid to high tide is best.

Fishing around Waddy: If you drive down the track towards Waddy and on to the beach and then turn right you come to some "coffee rocks". This little hook in the beach is called "Connors Corner". The gutters in this area are good for tailor when in season and bream, whiting and flathead all year round. Generally pilchards will secure all fish apart from whiting and dart who prefer worms or pippies. Small 3 gang hooks with half a pilly works well. Fishing is always good off the point but expect to lose tackle. Note there is a "back track" to Waddy on the road to Indian Head if tide is too high to get around Connors Corner.



Waddy dunes

It is an easy walk to the top. There is a very steep drop off the northern end of the dune that kids love to slide down.



Waddy Back Track walk

On the back track to Waddy Point stop at the hairpin corner just before it goes down the hill to the beach. The track heads south up the hill. It's a 5 min walk to see this great view. Wear shoes.



South Waddy Beach and beyond

There is a driving track over the dune from Waddy Point to South Waddy Beach. The access to the beach is restricted for vehicles and this is one of the few places you can walk on the beach without passing traffic. It is an easy 15 min walk from here south to the end of the beach where there is little cove with a cave. Sometimes you can see bats living in the ceiling.

You can the walk south over the headland to the secluded "Nudey Beach" and then on from there to the Champagne Pools and further again to Indian Head. Take shoes if you plan on going to Champagne Pools as there is a small section of sharp rocks to negotiate. To Champagne Pools and back to South Waddy is about 2-3 hrs walk.



South of Orchid Beach

If the wind is from the NE to NW it is best to head south. South Waddy Beach and Indian Head and south from there will be sheltered. Lake Allom is just inland from Dundaburra and about 40 mins from Orchid. It has some spectacular rainforest, a pretty walking track around the lake and cute baby turtles.



Awinya Creek via Lake Allom

About 20mins drive south from Indian Head (find it on your map) is a turn off to Lake Allom. It's an interesting and pleasant scenic drive through rainforest to Lake Allom where you will see the cute tortoises and some enormous old trees. Continue west past Lake Allom to Awinya Creek via a few small lakes (about 30 mins). It's a varied and easy drive to this magical part of the west coast (surprisingly there are no sandflies or mossies here). Take care driving on the beach as there can be soft patches. About 1km drive up the beach north there is a small headland. This is a good spot for flathead on the first hour up from low tide. Swim with caution and keep an eye out for sharks on this part of the western beach.



North of Orchid Beach

If you turn left at the bottom of the drive way and on through the township you will find another road heading towards the beach that leads to the northern down ramp. About 3km north of the ramp, if you drive slowly you will find a walking track opening to a dune (only just visible from the beach). This is an easy walk and has great views back to Waddy. Walk up the dune heading northwest and you will eventually find a spectacular view to the north over Ocean Lake. Go back the way you came.



Ocean Lake

About 1-2 km north of dunes mentioned above you will find a sign posted driving track to Ocean Lake. This is best visited in the afternoon in a SE wind. There is a short 15 min walking track and a lookout. The water here is stained with tea tree but safe and invigorating to swim in.



Orange Creek

About 2K north of Ocean Lake is Orange Creek. It doesn't look much but once you stop and absorb it's a good quiet place to get off the "hiway" and relax on the grassy areas around the lagoon.

Ngala Rocks

North from Orange Creek about 5km takes you to Ngala Rocks. The track behind the rocks is the only way north and has a well earned reputation of being tricky to negotiate. Take great care as this track can get very soft if weather has been dry. It is advisable to wait and watch others before taking it on. Feel free to stop anyone who has come through and enquire about the conditions on the track as it varies from day to day...4WD drivers are usually keen to offer assistance. To get through in any condition tyres must let down be as low as possible (12-15psi). If you have a manual gearbox choose a gear (1st high range is OK) and don't change gear until you get to the other end. Keep the revs up very high and do not stop until you get through to the beach. The track is less than 1km long. Once through it is usually easy driving all the way to Sandy Cape.



Sandy Cape.

This is an unforgettable trip and well worth the effort getting through the Ngala Rocks track. From Orchid to the Cape takes about 40 mins. For a safe return trip, plan on getting back to Ngala at least 2 or 3 hrs before high tide. The beach conditions change dramatically from week to week and some spots north of Ngala may not be passable close to high tide.



Ngulumubura Blow

About 3 km past Ngala Rocks if you drive slowly and look carefully you will find a valley with glimpses of distinctly red sand. This is where you access Ngulumubura Blow. It is best to walk in from the beach. The size of this sand blow is deceiving and it takes about an hour to walk up to the top. It is an eerie and powerful place with petrified forests and dramatic sand formations.



Towards the Cape

It is worth stopping around 5 km south of the cape and walking over the frontal dune into the sheltered and often lunar like landscape. After rain there can be beautiful small shallow lakes. You may be the first white person ever to set foot here.



Sandy Cape....when you get there

Walking up the first steep dune you see is an effort but the view is amazing. Before reaching the lighthouse there are other dunes worth exploring that stretch for several kilometres to the south. The walk to the light house is quite steep in places and it is best to wear shoes. The lighthouse is now unattended but there is information displayed here about its history. Up and down takes about 1.5 hrs. At the beginning of the light house track there is another track heading west that takes you too some World War 2 bunkers and the graves of the first family living at the light house. Interesting...but not particularly exciting.



Wathumba Creek (watoomba)

It is best to visit the western side of the island in SE to E winds. The 16km Wathumba track is easy but mostly rough and bumpy and slow going. The trip takes about 40mins so don't be in a hurry and take the time to absorb the varied landscape and flora. On arrival do not attempt to drive through the water or on wet sand and only park above high tide mark. You can wade through the small creek and onto the south beach at most tides. Note the tide here is one hour later than at Waddy.



Soldier Crabs

At low tide it's worth a walk out into the creek to see millions of bright blue soldier crabs on the march. They bury themselves on your approach but if you stop you can study them closely.



Platypus Bay

For one hour either side of low tide you can safely walk across the main creek to Platypus Bay. This has to be one of the most pristine beaches on the planet with crystal clear water on snow white sand strewn with white shells. The sunsets over the water here are beautiful. Do not linger too long at Platypus Bay as the tide comes in very quickly. Be prepared for sandflies on the west side of the island, particularly in the summer months. On the first hour of incoming tide large flathead can be caught in Wathumba Creek.