

Tallebudgera Creek - Gold Coast

Tallebudgera Creek rises on the eastern side of the Springbrook Plateau behind the Gold Coast, just below the Best Of All Lookout, and runs 30 kilometres to the sea, entering the ocean on the southern side of Burleigh Heads.

The photograph to the right is of Tallebudgera Creek meeting the sea, with Burleigh Heads National Park on the northern shore.

Below, the Gold Coast Highway crosses Tallebudgera Creek just upstream from the sea. At the steep escarpment in the background, is Best Of All Lookout at Springbrook, the source of Tallebudgera Creek.



On a calm day with little wind, the area from the Gold Coast Highway down to the mouth can be a pleasant paddle. However it is often a different story when stronger south east winds are blowing. At higher tides, breaking waves travel up the creek. The bar at the mouth can be dangerous at any stage of the tide. On an outgoing tide the water runs very swiftly to sea particularly on spring tides.

The bar regularly has dumping breakers, even in a small swell, right across the whole bar with conditions worsening on outgoing and lower parts of the tide. Ensure you have considered weather, tide and swell forecasts and only paddle out through the bar with local knowledge of current sandbanks. The waves that reform after the bar can be fun and safe on any swell on the last half of an incoming tide. They provide long rides on small waves and are excellent for learning to surf. These waves are protected from summer nor-easterly sea breezes by the headland and it can be a very pleasant spot. Keep well away from the rocks on the Burleigh Headland side.

This is a dangerous creek mouth. For passage into the ocean, Currumbin Creek to the south is safer and watched over by VMR. (A number of sea kayak fishers use Currumbin Creek to fish Palm Beach Reef, a popular fishing spot within a couple of kilometres of the nearby beach.)

From where the Gold Coast Highway bridge crosses the creek, there is a marine environment of sand flats and mangroves for the next 2.8 kilometres upstream to the Pacific Motorway bridge. The natural vegetation on the creek banks is in conservation and environmental parks. If canoeing upstream from the Gold Coast Highway bridge, without a map, stay close to the northern bank for the first one kilometre to avoid two canal estate entrances on the southern bank. This will keep you out of the way of the many water ski craft that frequent this stretch on weekends and during holiday time. The ski area is quite small and a 6 knot limit applies to all other parts of the waterway.

*inset: launch point on the southern side of the Pacific Motorway bridge. The road is, easily enough, Tallebudgera Drive
below: Burleigh Heads, downstream from a footbridge over the creek, at the Pacific Motorway. Thanks to A. Morgan for the local info.*



From the Pacific Motorway bridge it is another 6.6 kilometres to the end of the tidal creek, at the Tallebudgera Connection Road, and the Scott Logan Lane pedestrian bridge, just upstream.

In that section, is Schuster Park in Heather Street, 1.5 kilometres upstream from the Pacific Motorway bridge.. Next to the creek is known as Narrowneck, as the creek travels in a two kilometres wide loop, with a narrow isthmus of land, at the neck, separating the two bodies of water.

right: Schuster Park and Narrowneck

below: Tallebudgera Connection Road, and the creek at low tide. There is a small access road on the eastern upstream side of the bridge.





above: upstream from Tallebudgera Connection Road footbridge



image top right: Syndicate Road park

Six and a half kilometres upstream from the Scott Logan Lane pedestrian bridge is a park next to the freshwater Tallebudgera Creek in Syndicate Road. The flood debris in the trees more than 4 metres above the creek shows the raging torrent that can flood this valley. Obviously after heavy rain there is the possibility of a kayak paddle (for the experienced) from Syndicate Road Park, downstream, once the initial high runoff has dropped to safer levels.

And what of the 15 kilometres of creek above the Syndicate Road Park? Well, this is a very beautiful waterway, and there are a couple of small roadside parks you can visit for a swim, and explore the road up into the valley. The end of the road is private property, but the trip in, through cattle country, with Mt Cougal approaching on the southern side of the road, is a sweet ride.

image below: Pacific Motorway, and upstream, the Narrownneck in Schuster Park, Heather Street



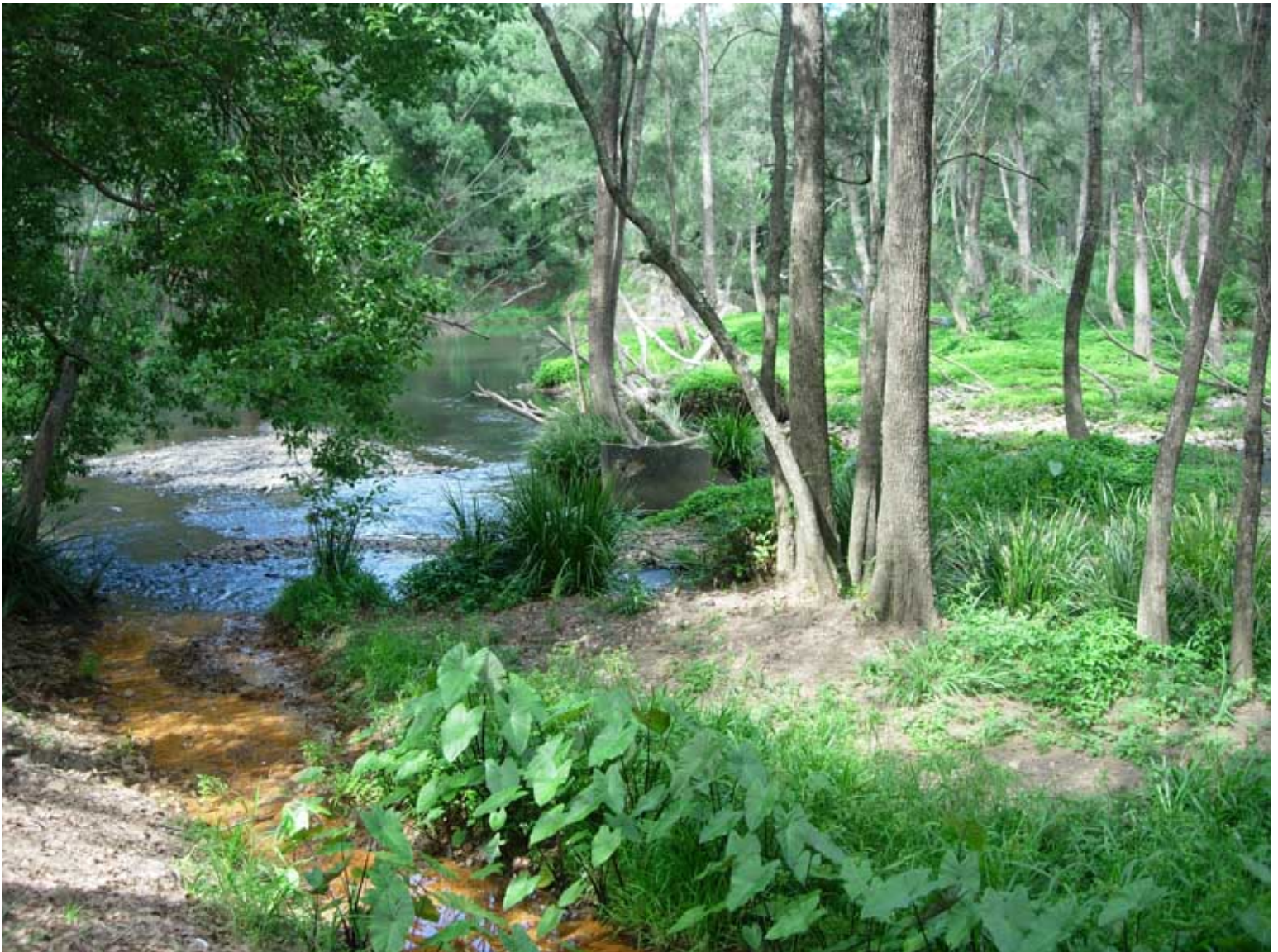


Image left: Tallebudgera Dam

The occasional barbed wire fence across the creek, and its low levels at other than heavy rain flooding, mean the white water kayaker will not find a run here. About 10 kilometres by creek down from the start is Tallebudgera Dam, a small body of water backed up for half a kilometre behind the concrete wall.

There is no entry to swimmers or sightseers, but who else remembers water sliding down the mossy spillway wall, in years gone by?

Image below: Syndicate Road Park





Tallebudgera Creek and Mt Cougal