

# ***BEACHES OF THE TASMANIAN COAST & ISLANDS***

*A guide to their nature, characteristics, surf and safety*

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School of Geosciences  
University of Sydney  
Sydney NSW 2006



**SYDNEY UNIVERSITY PRESS**

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**Coastal Studies Unit**

School of Geosciences F09

University of Sydney

Sydney NSW 2006

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**Surf Life Saving Australia Ltd**

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Bondi Beach NSW 2026

Short, Andrew D

*Beaches of the Tasmanian Coast and Islands*

A guide to their nature, characteristics, surf and safety

1-920898-12-3

Published March 2006

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1-920898-15-8

Published by:

Sydney University Press

University of Sydney

www.sup.usyd.edu.au

Printed by:

University of Sydney Publishing Service

University of Sydney

Copies of all books in this series may be purchased online from Sydney University Press at:

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Tasmanian beach database:

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 Cover photographs: West Sandy Point, North Coast.  
 Cover design: Jacqui Owen and David Sams

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To Professor J L (Jack) Davies, who from Tasmania discovered the Australian coast and inspired a generation of coastal geomorphologists

## *Preface*

This is the sixth and penultimate book in a series on the beaches of the Australian coast. They have all been produced by the Australian Beach Safety and Management Program (ABSMP), a collaborative project of the Coastal Studies Unit (CSU) University of Sydney and Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA). The project has compiled a database on everyone of Australia 10 685 mainland beaches, together with 833 beaches on 30 inhabited islands. Descriptions of all these beaches are contained in the books.

The coast of Tasmanian ranges from readily accessible to virtually inaccessible in the southwest, resulting in a range of technique to obtain data on the states 1269 mainland beaches, as well as the 348 beaches of the five major islands (Maria, Bruny, Robbins-Walker, King and Flinders). Field investigations for this project commenced in 1990 when I spent a month inspecting the coast accompanied by my family. This was followed up with a second equally long investigation in 1996.

Oblique aerial photographs of the beaches were first taken of much of the coast in 1978, with a comprehensive flight to take digital image s on the entire mainland coast and all islands, except King, in 2003. Dr Werner Hennecke took part is this fight and many of his images are used in this book.

In compiling a book of this magnitude there will be errors and omissions, particularly with regard to the names of beaches, many of which have no official name, and many local factors. If you notice any errors or wish to comments on any aspects of the book please communicate them to the author at the Coastal Studies Unit, University of Sydney, Sydney NSW 2006, phone (02) 9351 3625, fax (02) 9351 3644, email: A.Short@geosci.usyd.edu.au or via Surf Life Saving Tasmania (03) 6272 7788 or Surf Life Saving Australia (02) 9130 7370. In this way we an update the beach database and ensure that future editions are more up to date and correct.

Andrew D Short  
Narrabeen Beach, November 2005

## ***Acknowledgments***

The author has undertaken several trips to Tasmania the more recent involved directly in the project that resulted this book.

First of all, my wife and family accompanied me in the 1990 and 1996 field trips to Tasmania, always providing field assistance.

Dr Werner Hennecke who accompanied me on the 2003 aerial photography field has kindly permitted me to use many of his images from that flight. These are labelled in the book accordingly, all other images are by the author.

My former colleague Professor J L (Jack) Davies kindly donated his collection of vertical black and white vertical aerial photographs, which proven an invaluable resource in identifying the location and nature of all the beaches.

The project has received the financial support of the Australia Research Council through an ARC Grant (1990-92), ARC Collaborative Research Grant (1996-1998) and ARC SPIRT Grant (1999-2001), and through contract work for the Defence Science and Technology Organisation.

The project has been supported by Surf Life Saving Australia since its inception with CEO Greg Nance providing his full support and encouragement, while Katherine McLeod kept the database in order. The beach figures were expertly drafted by Cathi Greve and all other figures by Peter Johnson.

At Surf Life Saving Tasmania, initially Ken Knight and in more recent years Tony Van den Enden provided every assistance with local information.

At the University of Sydney **Publishing** Service thanks to Jacqui Owen and David Sams who designed the cover and to Josh Fry for tremendous assistance in getting the book ready for publication; while at the Sydney University Press Ross Coleman, Creagh Cole and Susan Murray-Smith all assisted in the production and marketing of this book.

Finally, as the entire beach database was compiled and the book was written at my home office, I thank my wife Julia, and children Ben, Pip and Bonnie for putting up with its intrusion into our home life, as well as accompanying me to most parts of the Tasmanian coast.

## Abstract

This book is about the entire Tasmanian coast, together with the coast of Maria, Bruny, Robbins-Walker, King and Flinders islands.

It begins with three chapters that provide a background to the physical nature and evolution of the Tasmanian coast and its beach systems. Chapter 1 covers the geological evolution of the coast and the role climate, wave, tides and wind in shaping the present coast and beaches. Chapter 2 presents in more detail the sixteen types of beach systems that occur around the Tasmanian coast, while chapter 3 discusses the types of beach hazards along the coast and the role of Surf Life Saving Tasmania in mitigating these hazards. Finally the long chapter 4 presents a description of every one of the 1269 mainland beaches, as well as 348 beaches on Maria, Bruny, Robbins-Walker, King and Flinders islands. The description of each beach covers its name, location, physical characteristics, access and facilities, with specific comments on its surf zone character and physical hazards, as well as its suitability for swimming, surfing and fishing. Based on the physical characteristics each beach is rated in terms of the level of beach hazards from the least hazardous rated 1 (safest) to the most hazardous 10 (least safe). The book contains 367 original figures which include 314 photographs, which illustrate all beach types, as well as beach maps and photographs of all beaches patrolled by surf lifesavers and many other popular beaches.

Keywords: beaches, surf zone, rip currents, beach hazards, beach safety, Tasmania

### **Australian Beach Safety and Management Program (ABSMP)**

Awards

#### **NSW Department of Sport, Recreation and Racing**

*Water Safety Award – Research 1989*

*Water Safety Award – Research 1991*

#### **Surf Life Saving Australia**

Innovation Award 1993

#### **International Life Saving**

Commemorative Medal 1994

#### **New Zealand Coastal Survey**

In 1997 Surf Life Saving New Zealand adopted and modified the ABSMP in order to compile a similar database on New Zealand beaches.

#### **Great Britain Beach Hazard Assessment**

In 2002 the Royal National Lifeboat Institute adopted and modified the ABSMP in order to compile a similar database on the beaches of Great Britain.

#### **Hawaiian Ocean Safety**

In 2003 the Hawaiian Lifeguard Association adopted ABSMP as the basis for their Ocean Safety survey and hazard assessment of all Hawaiian beaches.

#### **Handbook on Drowning: Prevention Rescue Treatment, 2006**

This handbook was product of the World Congress on Drowning held in Amsterdam in 2002. The handbook endorses the ABSMP approach to assessing beach hazards as the international standard.



*The author surveys a beach on a remote section of the Northern Territory coast. The height of the fishing platform is an indication of the high tide range along the northern Australian coast.*