

San Remo Back Beach

Site #1 on the Strzelecki Taxonomy Map

The San Remo Back Beach locality is at the end of Back Beach Road. Turn left into Back Beach Road approximately 6.7 kilometres west of the Anderson Roundabout on the Phillip Island Road.

San Remo Back Beach is geologically interesting. It is the most westerly exposure of the Early Cretaceous sedimentary rocks on the Bass Coast. When you walk down the steps to the small sandy beach, on your left as you are facing the water is the beginning of the Cretaceous rocks that have yielded fossils of animals and plants that lived in this area more than 120 million years ago. On your right, are the weathered remains of Early Tertiary volcanic rocks, basalt, that form columns. These rocks are very different from the sedimentary rocks to your left.

If you take a close look at the shore platform on your left, you will notice that the rock contains tiny white to clear quartz grains and larger pebbles. The coarse sediments that make up this rock originated from nearby Cape Woolamai millions of years ago. The coarse nature of the rock, and its cementing, makes it more resistant to erosion and consequently fewer bones become exposed over time.

A number of isolated fossil bones have been found at this locality since 1979, including a number of vertebrae (which form the backbone) and bones from the shoulder region belonging to the truly gigantic amphibian, *Koolasuchus cleelandi*, which lived in the cold mountain streams that flowed in this area millions of years ago.



photo - Lesley Kool