

Punchbowl Locality

Site #4 on the Strzelecki Taxonomy Map

The turnoff to Punchbowl is approximately three kilometres west of the Anderson Roundabout on the Phillip Island Tourist Road.

The Punchbowl Locality is at the western end of the George Bass Coastal Walk. The walk is seven kilometres in length and terminates at Shelly Beach near Kilcunda. This walk takes approximately two hours one way, offering panoramic coastal views from a narrow winding path along cliff tops rising high above the pounding surf of Bass Strait.

The Punchbowl fossil locality is also famous for being the site of discovery of the first temnospondyl amphibian lower jaw found in 1978. It is the most dangerous of all the fossil localities along the Bass Coast, and only the most experienced prospectors have visited this locality in the past. Not only is the rocky shore platform narrow and rugged, but the access from the car park at the end of Punchbowl road is steep and treacherous. Recently, Parks Victoria has closed the access to the shore platform and the Dinosaur Dreaming researchers have no plans to return there in the near future.

The toothless jaw fragment of a temnospondyl amphibian was found by Tim Flannery in 1978. It was the first evidence of this ancient group of animals in the Early Cretaceous rocks of the Bass Coast and defied identification for years until more temnospondyl bones and jaws were discovered in the 1990s.



photo - Lesley Kool