



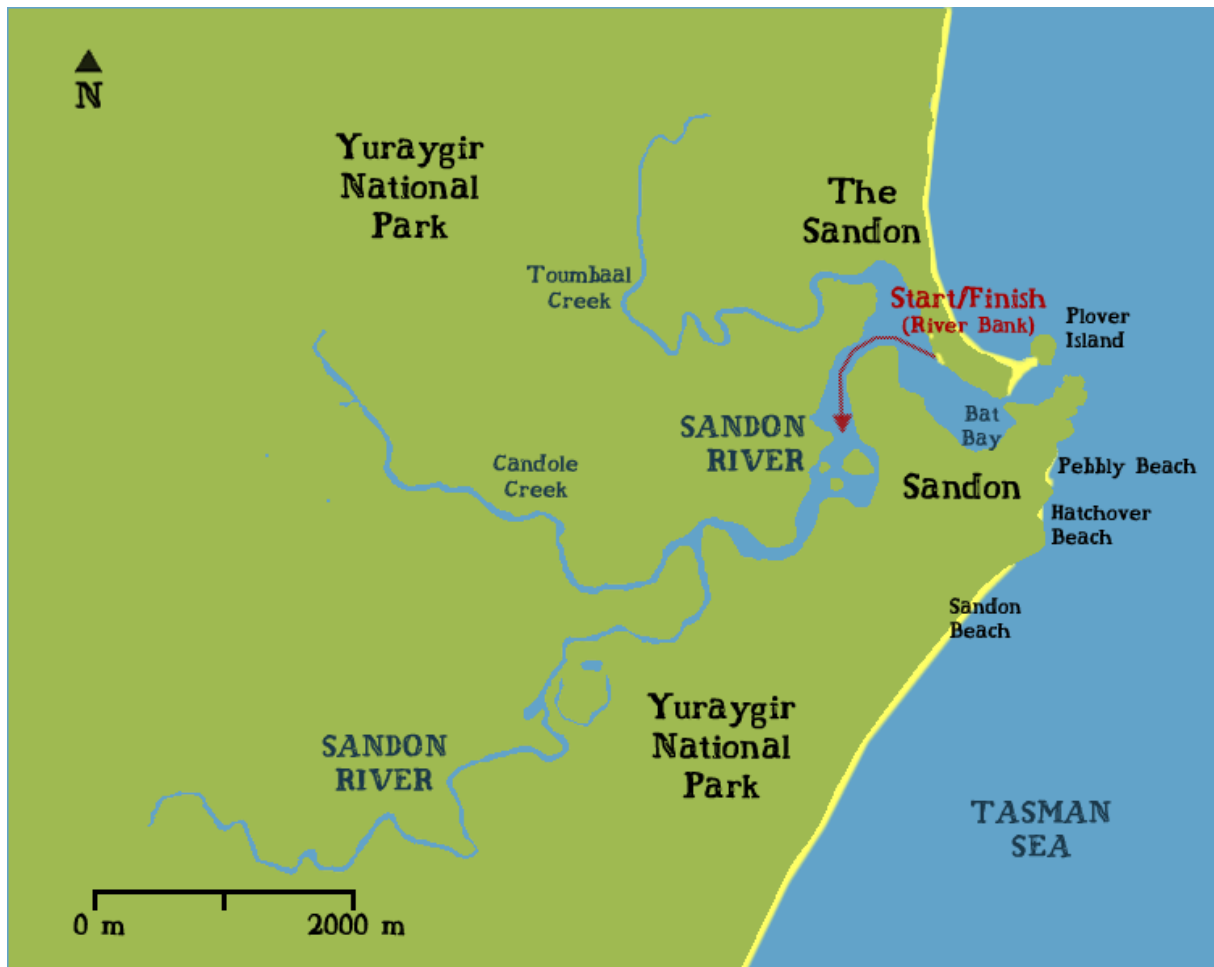
ESCAPOLOGY

Take yourself out there!

Sandon River

Glazed eyes and hushed almost reverential tones are common when people recount Sandon stories from their youth. The often full campground is a sure sign the secret is out, but this is still a well preserved stunningly beautiful spot.

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|-----------------------|--|
| WATERWAY | Sandon River |
| REGION | Northern Rivers |
| DISTANCE | Up to 25 km return |
| ESTIMATED TIME | Up to 5 hours approx |
| START/FINISH | Riverbank Sandon Road THE SANDON |
| PARKING | Roadside parking bay |
| TOILETS | Sandon River campground |
| CONDITIONS | Tidal estuary, some open areas exposed to wind |
| OTHER PADDLES | <u>Corindi River</u> <u>Esk River</u> |



A street map & directions to Sandon Road, The Sandon can be downloaded from www.maps.google.com.au.

www.escapology.com.au



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Step By Step



To get to Sandon River, take the Maclean turnoff from the Pacific Highway (at Ferry Park) and follow the signs to Brooms Head. Just before reaching Brooms Head, take the "unsealed but ok for 2WD" Sandon Road turn off and continue until the river appears on your right. There are a few parking bays a short distance from the water where the boats can be unloaded. For directions from your place we recommend entering the details provided under our map in www.maps.google.com.au.

Keep an eye out for the local flock of emus on the drive in. It is a treat to see this iconic Australian bird so close to the coast. Not so rare but just as iconic are the kangaroos and wallabies that regularly graze by the roadside.

Once afloat, cross to the other side of the river and head right. To the left, you may see some small cottages. These belong to the village of Sandon, which is on the southern side of the river and only accessible by boat or 4WD up the beach from Minnie Water.

Sandon River takes a predominantly south-west course for about 12km and that is the path we suggest you follow today. Although Toumbaal and Candole Creeks, on the northern side of the river (see map), are sizeable tributaries that are worth exploring if you are able to stay for more than just a day.

After the car is out of sight you will start to understand exactly what people find so alluring about Sandon River. Sea eagles soaring above and occasionally diving down to pick up fish straying too close to the surface of the water. Stingrays gracefully gliding through sandy shallows. Black swans foraging for food in expansive seagrass meadows. Thousands of soldier crabs marching across the sand. Ancient looking mangrove forests lining the shore. This is nature as it should be.



From this point there are only two things you need to know with respect to navigation. Firstly, after about 1.5km you will come across a small group of mangrove covered islands. The channel is to the right of these but if the tide is high then you may be able to make it around the left, a favourite haunt of the local swans. Secondly, another 2 km on you will come to a fork in the waterway. The river goes left. To the right is Candole Creek. Apart from that, you can just kick back and enjoy the serenity.



The beauty of the Sandon River can no doubt be attributed to the joint presence of the Yuraygir National Park and the Solitary Islands Marine Park. Yuraygir contains "the longest stretch of undeveloped coastline in NSW". Prior to European settlement, the Yaegl and Gumbaingirr Aboriginal people lived here in numbers taking advantage of plentiful natural resources. Luckily the new arrivals did not find the area suitable for agriculture and left it

relatively untouched. The National Park now ensures it will stay that way. The Solitary Islands Marine Park was created in 1998 by the Marine Parks Authority NSW who have the responsibility of "conserving the diversity of marine life and ensuring that marine resources are carefully managed for the use and enjoyment of people today and in the future".

After your paddle, consider going for a walk on the beautiful beach near the Sandon River Campground and taking a look at Plover Island. It's a great place for a bit of snorkelling - rich in colourful corals, molluscs, and other aquatic life. You might even see a dolphin or two!

Ballina RECREATION-MART
 Corner of Kerr & Fox Streets
 Ballina NSW 2478
 (02) 6681 4000
www.ballinarecreationmart.com

Need Stuff?

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|---------------------------------|---|----------------------|---------------|---|-------------------------|--|
| PADDLE GEAR & ADVICE | Grafton Paddle Sports 20 Bessie Street South Grafton (02) 6642 4780 | ACCOMMODATION | BUDGET | Brooms Head Caravan Park 1 Ocean Road Brooms Head (02) 6646 7144 | SOMEWHERE TO EAT | The Snacky Ocean Road Brooms Head (02) 6646 7222 |
| PUB/HOTEL | Brooms Head Bowling Club Ocean Road Brooms Head (02) 6646 7118 | | FLASH | Toumbaal Plains House Inside Yuraygir National Park For bookings call: (02) 9417 6881 | | Pacific Star Chinese Brooms Head Bowling Club Ocean Road Brooms Head (02) 6646 7228 |