

Mud Island Conservation Park

Resource Information

2026



Queensland
Government

This document is a compendium of park information and a supporting document for the associated management instrument (management plan or management statement). Management instruments are prepared under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* and include management direction for tenure which QPWS has management responsibility.

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May 2026

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1. Introduction

The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS), within the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (DETSI), applies a contemporary management process that is based on international best practice and targets management towards the most important features of each park: their key values.

The Values-Based Management Framework (VBMF) is an adaptive management cycle that incorporates planning, prioritising, doing, monitoring, evaluating and reporting into all areas of our business. This enables the agency to be more flexible and proactive and to improve management effectiveness over time.

This document is a compendium of park information and a supporting document for key values and level of service assessment reports or management plans and management statements. It contains background information about a park's purpose, values, resources and legal and administrative framework.

2. Park overview

Mud Island Conservation Park is offshore from the city of Brisbane in Moreton Bay, 13 kilometres north-east of the bayside suburb of Wynnum. The park is surrounded by Moreton Bay Marine Park and is only accessible by vessel. St Helena Island National Park is 3.5 kilometres south. The following figure and table (Figure 1, Table 1) provide an overview of information related to the park, including locality, legislative framework and applicable plans/agreements.

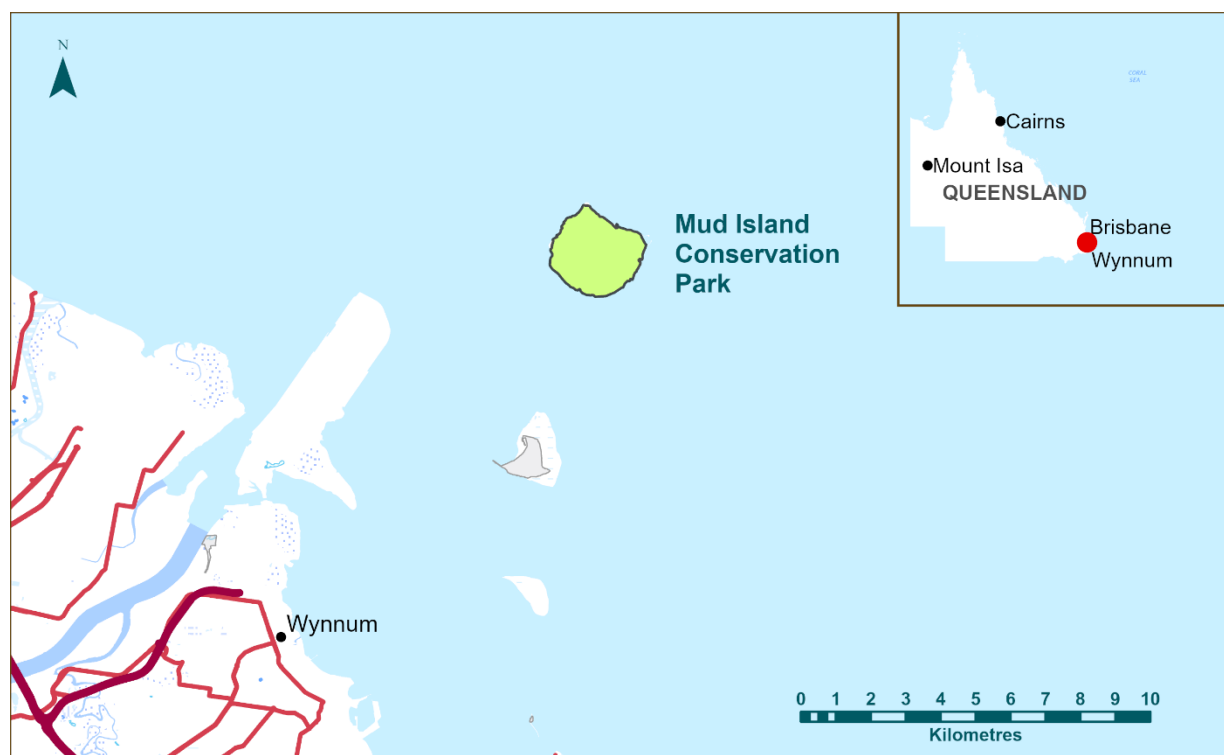


Figure 1. Locality of Mud Island Conservation Park

Table 1. Overview of Mud Island Conservation Park

Park size	Mud Island Conservation Park	450 ha
Bioregion	South Eastern Queensland	
QPWS region	Coastal and Islands	
Local government area	Brisbane City Council	
State electorate	Lytton	
Relevant legislation	<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>	
	<i>Biosecurity Act 2014</i>	
	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (Cwlth)	
	<i>Native Title Act 1993</i> (Cwlth)	
	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i> (NCA)	
Plans and agreements	<i>Ramsar Convention, Convention on Wetlands of International Importance</i>	
	<i>Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia</i>	
	<i>Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals</i>	
	<i>China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement</i>	
	<i>Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement</i>	
	<i>Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement</i>	

3. Resource information

3.1 First Nations people

There is an active native title claim that includes the park and other areas, which was registered on 12 May 2017 on behalf of the Quandamooka Coast Claim (Tribunal Number QC2017/004, Federal Court Number QUD126/2017).

The island is known by the Quandamooka people as 'Bungumba', which means 'plenty of mud'.

3.2 Wetlands of international importance (Ramsar site)

The park is within the Moreton Bay Ramsar Area, which was declared on 22 October 1993 and is one of just five Ramsar sites in Queensland. The site meets all nine criteria to be designated as a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance and is notable for its large size, diversity of wetland habitats, connectivity between wetland types, and diverse plants and animals, including threatened species and ecological communities. The Ramsar site regularly supports more than 50,000 waterbirds, representing at least 43 species of shorebirds and 28 species of migratory shorebirds, including the critically endangered eastern curlew *Numenius madagascariensis*, which has been recorded from the park (Ramsar Information Sheet 2023).

The park is also part of the Moreton Bay wetlands, which is listed in the Directory of Important Wetlands (QLD134) and has 17 wetland types. This listing for Moreton Bay wetland is 300,177 hectares in size, notably larger than the Ramsar site at 120,639 hectares (Environmental Australia 2001).

The park is almost entirely (98.7 per cent) intertidal wetland (saltmarsh, saltflats, mangroves) natural.

3.3 Key value information

Based on an evaluation, the park's values do not reach the thresholds required to be considered a key value. The park, however, continues to contribute to the state's comprehensive and representative reserve system, providing protection for biodiversity, ecosystem services and connectivity within the landscape.

3.4 Ecosystems and biodiversity

The park is part of the Sunshine Coast – Gold Coast Lowlands subregion of the South Eastern Queensland Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA) bioregion.

3.4.1 Regional ecosystems

There are three regional ecosystems in the park.

Mangrove shrubland to low closed forest on marine clay plains and estuaries (12.1.3) has no concern at present biodiversity status and covers 353.7 hectares (83.5 per cent) of the park — this is less than one per cent of the regional ecosystem remaining in Queensland and 4.43 per cent of that within the protected area estate. While this regional ecosystem is known to provide suitable habitat for threatened fauna species including the false water-rat *Xeromys myoides* in the southern part of the bioregion, there are no records of this species from the park. The Regional Ecosystem Description Database (REDD) fire management guideline for this regional ecosystem is not to burn.

Saltplan vegetation including grassland, herbland and sedgeland on marine clay plains (12.1.2) has no concern at present biodiversity status and covers 64.7 hectares (15.3 per cent) of the park — this is less than one per cent of the regional ecosystem remaining in Queensland and 1.17 per cent of that within the protected area estate. While this regional ecosystem is known to provide suitable habitat for threatened fauna species including the false water-rat *Xeromys myoides* in the southern part of the

bioregion, there are no records of this species from the park. The REDD fire management guideline for this regional ecosystem is not to burn.

There is a small two-hectare area of *Corymbia intermedia* +/- *Lophostemon confertus* +/- *Banksia* spp. +/- *Callitris columellaris* open forest on beach ridges usually in southern half of the bioregion within the park (12.2.5, 0.5 per cent of the park). While this regional ecosystem has of concern biodiversity status, this small area represents less than 0.1 per cent of that remaining in Queensland or within the protected area estate. While this regional ecosystem is known to provide suitable habitat for koalas and provide potential habitat for plant species listed under the NCA, such as *Acacia attenuata*, *A. baueri* subsp. *baueri*, *Boronia rivularis*, *Durringtonia paludosa*, *Glycine argyrea*, *Macarthuria complanata*, *Maundia triglochinosoides*, *Persicaria elatior*, *Phaius australis*, there are no records of these species from the park. The REDD fire management guideline for this regional ecosystem is to not burn deliberately.

3.4.2 Marine protected area

The park is located within the habitat protection zone (HPZ11—Mud Island) of Moreton Bay Marine Park. The habitat protection zone extends across the island and out to the two-metre depth contour around the island. Beyond the habitat protection zone is general use zone.

The Mud Island Material Disposal Area (MDA01) is nearby. It is a designated area of the marine park that is used for permitted disposal of dredged material. Since 1862, the Port of Brisbane has undertaken dredging to create and maintain shipping channels, with dredged material placed either in the Mud Island Material Disposal Area or the Fisherman Island reclamation areas (Cohen A, Spooner D and Williams S 2019).

3.5 Species

There are 26 native bird, 22 native fungi and 67 native plant species recorded from the park.

3.5.1 Native animals

Six bird species of conservation significance have been recorded from the park — the critically endangered eastern curlew *Numenius madagascariensis*; endangered southern giant-petrel *Macronectes giganteus*; vulnerable grey plover *Pluvialis squatarola*; and special least concern little tern *Sternula albifrons*, crested tern *Thalasseus bergii* and grey-tailed tattler *Tringa brevipes* (Appendix C). These birds and another four species recorded from the park are migratory birds listed on international agreements (Appendix D).

3.5.2 Native plants

Special least concern skeleton fork fern *Psilotum nudum* has been recorded from the park.

3.6 Recreational opportunities

The island is accessible only by vessel. As most of the island is intertidal mangroves and saltmarsh, visitors accessing the park are typically accessing the creeks and surrounding marine park for fishing.

There are no visitor facilities within the park and camping is not permitted.

3.7 Post-contact cultural heritage

3.7.1 Shipping

During the 1800s, Mud Island was used as an anchorage for ships unable to enter the shallow, sandy mouth of the Brisbane River. Some ship passengers did not survive the journey and were buried on Mud Island. The number of people buried on the island is unknown, with most burials undocumented,

including South Sea Islanders brought to Brisbane to work on sugar cane farms (ABC News 28 March 2018).

3.7.2 Oyster farming

In the 1900s, Mud Island was used for oyster farming. In 1997, the Queensland Shellfish Water Assurance Monitoring Program, administered by the then Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, surveyed and classified three major oyster growing areas of Morton Bay — Mud Island, Moreton Island and North Stradbroke Island. The Mud Island growing area was subsequently closed as it was considered unsuitable due to its proximity to the Luggage Point Water Reclamation Facility (DPIF Aquaculture policy 2003).

3.7.3 Mining

In 1932, Queensland Cement and Lime obtained a licence to extract coral from Mud Island to make cement. By 1981, it was estimated that 48 per cent of the reef flat had been removed. The dredging resulted in the shallow coral rubble reef flat around the island being replaced by deeper water with a muddy substrate. Rubble ridges also formed around the island, some of which resulted in mangrove dieback (Moreton Bay Foundation 2022).

3.8 Fire

The three regional ecosystems in the park do not need fire to be healthy. Planned burning is not required and there are no records of bushfires on the island.

3.9 Pests

There have been eight pest species recorded from the park, all are plants (Appendix D).

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5. Appendices

Appendix A. Legal, policy and management commitments

Gazettal details

The park was gazetted as Mud Island Conservation Park under the NCA on 15 December 2000 and again on 1 July 2016.

There was a short period during 2014 to 2016 when certain classes of protected area under the NCA were removed, including conservation parks. During this time, the park was a regional park under the NCA, until legislative amendments in 2016 removed the 'regional park' class of protected area and it was reinstated as a conservation park.

Management obligations

- Australian Ramsar management principles, Schedule 6 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2000*

Appendix B. Regional ecosystems of significance

Regional ecosystem	Description	Regional ecosystem class*	Biodiversity status**
12.2.5	<i>Corymbia intermedia</i> +/- <i>Lophostemon confertus</i> +/- <i>Banksia</i> spp. +/- <i>Callitris columellaris</i> open forest on beach ridges usually in southern half of bioregion	Least concern	Of concern

* Vegetation Management Regional Ecosystem Description Database (VM REDD)

** Queensland Herbarium, Regional Ecosystem Description Database (REDD)

Appendix C. Species of conservation significance

Scientific name	Common name	NC Act status	EPBC Act status
Plants			
<i>Psilotum nudum</i>	skeleton fork fern	Special least concern	
Animals			
<i>Numenius madagascariensis</i>	eastern curlew	Critically endangered	Critically endangered
<i>Macronektes giganteus</i>	southern giant-petrel	Endangered	Endangered
<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	grey plover	Vulnerable	Vulnerable
<i>Sternula albifrons</i>	little tern	Special least concern	Vulnerable
<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>	crested tern	Special least concern	
<i>Tringa brevipes</i>	grey-tailed tattler	Special least concern	

Appendix D. Species listed in international agreements

Scientific name	Common name	CMS	JAMBA	ROKAMBA	CAMBA
<i>Ardea alba modesta</i>	eastern great egret		✓		✓
<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>	white-bellied sea-eagle				✓
<i>Numenius madagascariensis</i>	eastern curlew	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Macronectes giganteus</i>	southern giant-petrel	✓			
<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	grey plover	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Rhipidura rufifrons</i>	rufous fantail	✓			
<i>Sternula albifrons</i>	little tern	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Thalasseus bengalensis</i>	lesser crested tern				✓
<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>	crested tern		✓		
<i>Tringa brevipes</i>	grey-tailed tattler	✓	✓	✓	✓

Notes:

This list includes local and migratory birds that regularly use the park for feeding, nesting and/or breeding. Species that may visit intermittently have not been included in this table.

CMS – Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

CAMBA – China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

JAMBA – Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

ROKAMBA – Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

Appendix E. Pests

Scientific name	Common name	Biosecurity Act 2014 status	Notes
Plants			
<i>Baccharis halimifolia</i>	groundsel bush	Category 3	
<i>Lantana camara</i>	lantana	Category 3	
<i>Opuntia stricta</i>	prickly pear	Category 3	
<i>Erigeron sumatrensis</i>			
<i>Passiflora suberosa</i>	Corky passion flower		
<i>Portulaca oleracea</i>	pigweed		
<i>Rivina humilis</i>			
<i>Sarcocornia quinqueflora</i>			