Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation

MacKenzie 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.

June 2026

This resource information does not intent to affect, diminish or extinguish native title or associated rights.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this document may contain images or names of deceased persons in photographs and printed material that some people may find distressing.

Contents

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

MacKenzie Island Conservation Park is 35 kilometres southeast of the regional city of Rockhampton, at the mouth of the Fitzroy River. There are two sections to the park: MacKenzie Island in the Fitzroy River; and another section on the mainland, on the northern riverbank of the Fitzroy River around three kilometres from the island.

Port Alma is just south of the park on the southern side of the Fitzroy River delta. Port Alma is a one of 21 shipping ports along the Queensland coast. The main cargo handled at the port is class 1 explosives, ammonium nitrate, bulk tallow and military equipment for military exercises held regularly at Shoalwater Bay to the north (Queensland Government, Maritime Safety Queensland).

An esplanade runs around the island section of the park. The mainland section has two adjoining freehold properties, and the Fitzroy River runs along the southern boundary. Rundles Beach Road connects with the eastern side of the mainland section.

Flat Top Range Resources Reserve is just two kilometres east of the park. There are other protected areas in the broader landscape including Mount Archer National Park and State Forest 25 kilometres northwest of the park and Rundle Range National Park, State Forest and Resources Reserve 20 kilometres southeast. Curtis Island is just 15 kilometres east of the park.

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.

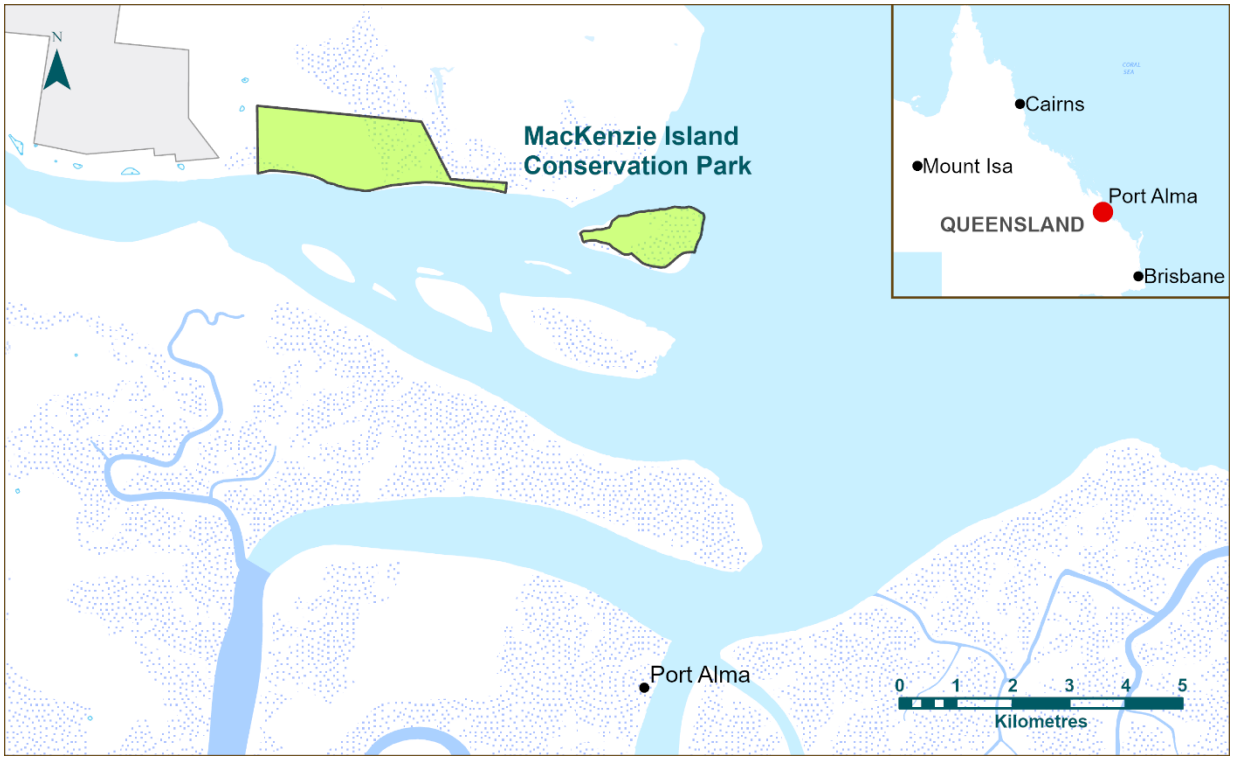

Figure 1. Locality of MacKenzie Island Conservation Park

Table 1. Overview of MacKenzie Island Conservation Park

Park size	MacKenzie Island Conservation Park	579 ha
Bioregion	Brigalow Belt North	
QPWS region	Central	
Local government area	Livingstone Shire	
State electorate	Keppel	
Relevant legislation	*Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003*	
	Biosecurity Act 2014	
	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth)	
	Native Title Act 1993 (Cwlth)	
	Nature Conservation Act 1992	
Plans and agreements	World Heritage Convention, Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage	
	Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia	
	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals	
	China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement	
	Japan Australia Migratory Bird Agreement	
	Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement	

3. Resource Information

3.1 Darumbal people

Two native title claims on behalf of the Darumbal people were registered on the 5 July 2000 and 23 February 1999, they were combined on 26 July 2012. The proceedings were then split on 27 March 2013 into Darumbal Part A and B.

A determination was made on Part A on 21 June 2016 (Tribunal Number QCD2016/006, Federal Court Number QUD6131/1998) which includes part of the park and other areas covering about 2598 square kilometres. Native title over part of the park is held by the Darumbal People described in the determination, with the registered native title body corporate (RNTBC) being the Darumbal People Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC.

An Indigenous Land Use Agreement (QI2016/036) over that part of the park where native title has been determined, and other protected areas was registered on 2 April 2016. The Darumbal People Protected Areas ILUA covers about 438 square kilometres in the vicinity of Rockhampton.

3.2 World Heritage

The island section of the park and part of the riverbank section are within the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area (GBRWHA) which was inscribed on the World Heritage List (ID 154) at the 5th session of the World Heritage Committee held in Sydney on 26-30 October 1981. The GBRWHA is large, covering 348,000 square kilometres from the top of Cape York in northeast Australia to just north of Bundaberg, and from the low water mark to beyond the continental shelf. It is the world's largest coral reef ecosystem and includes over 900 islands and cays. The GBRWHA has outstanding universal value, the diversity of species and habitats, and their interconnectivity, is what makes it one of the richest and most complex natural ecosystems on earth. (UNESCO, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority)

3.3 Key value information

3.3.1 Wetland habitat

Wetland habitat extends across almost half of the park and includes coastal melaleuca swamp and intertidal saltmarsh, saltflats and mangroves. The coastal melaleuca swamp has endangered biodiversity status and of the six protected areas in Queensland where it is present, this park has the second highest representation. The wetlands provide important habitat for a variety of species, including resident and migratory shorebirds. Thirty different bird species have been recorded from the park including 11 migratory species listed on international conventions. The park's wetlands are part of the broader Fitzroy River Delta Wetland which is listed in *A Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia*. Much of the wetland habitat is also within the Fitzroy River Fish Habitat Area and the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.

3.4 Other values

3.4.1 Dune habitat

The park's dunes include an of concern regional ecosystem that comprises tussock grasslands, coastal vines like goats foot and casuarina trees. There are two vegetation communities within this regional ecosystem that have low representation within Queensland's protected area estate. This is the only protected area where vegetation community 11.2.2a is present and while vegetation community 11.2.2b is present in one other protected area, this park has the higher representation at 94.49 per cent of that within the protected area estate. The 6.76 hectares of vegetation community 11.2.2b within the park is 7.29 per cent of that remaining in Queensland. The dunes also provide habitat for shorebirds.

3.5 Ecosystems and biodiversity

The park is part of the Marlborough Plains subregion of the Brigalow Belt North Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA) bioregion.

Parts of the northern section of the park along the riverbank are within a State Biodiversity Corridor and a Regional Biodiversity Corridor. These corridors were identified to maintain and enhance ecological connectivity across the State.

The park forms part of a moderately large tract of remnant vegetation along the coastline.

3.5.1 Regional ecosystems

The park has nine regional ecosystems, one with endangered biodiversity status, two of concern (Appendix B) and six with no concern at present status. Three of the regional ecosystems with no concern at present status (11.1.2, 11.12.4, 11.12.6) comprise over three quarters of the park (81.62 per cent).

There are three vegetation communities within the park that that have low representation within Queensland's protected area estate. This is the only protected area where vegetation communities 11.2.2a and 11.10.4b are present, they comprise 2.36 per cent and 0.72 per cent respectively of that vegetation community remaining in Queensland. Vegetation community 11.2.2b is present in two protected areas, however, this park has the higher representation at 94.49 per cent of that within the protected area estate and 7.29 per cent of that remaining in Queensland.

Melaleuca spp. and/or *Eucalyptus tereticornis* and/or *Corymbia tessellaris* woodland with a ground stratum of salt tolerant grasses and sedges, usually in a narrow zone adjoining tidal ecosystems (8.1.5) has endangered biodiversity status and covers 9.59 hectares (1.98 per cent) of the park. While this is less than one per cent of this regional ecosystem remaining in Queensland, it is 29.51 per cent of that within the protected area estate. This endangered regional ecosystem has low representation within the protected area estate, it is only found in six protected areas, and this park has the second highest representation. While this regional ecosystem is known to provide potential habitat for: vulnerable false water rat *Xeromys myoides*; locally rare swamp rat *Rattus lutreolus* and pale field rat *R. tunneyi*; locally uncommon plant species *Ceratopteris thalictroides;* plant species *Eleocharis* spp. which have a very restricted habitat range; and plant species which are poorly known from the Central Queensland Coast including *Bacopa monnieri* and *Nymphoides exiliflora* — none of these species have been recorded from the park. The Regional Ecosystem Description Database (REDD) fire management guideline for this regional ecosystem is that while the ecosystem is expected to be fire tolerant, fires are unlikely due to low natural fuel accumulation; if fires were to occur, they may damage nesting trees.

Microphyll vine forest ("beach scrub") on sandy beach ridges and dune swales (11.2.3) has of concern biodiversity status and covers 9.90 hectares (2.05 per cent) of the park — this is 0.41 per cent of the regional ecosystem remaining in Queensland and 2.8 per cent of that within the protected area estate. While this regional ecosystem is known to provide potential habitat for *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (NCA) listed plant species *Xylosma ovata* — it has not been recorded from the park. The REDD fire management guideline for this regional ecosystem is that it requires protection from fire.

Complex of *Ipomoea pes-caprae* subsp. *brasiliensis* and *Spinifex sericeus* and *Casuarina equisetifolia* low woodland and herbland on fore dunes (11.2.2) has of concern biodiversity status and covers 7.66 hectares (1.59 per cent) of the park — this is 0.29 per cent of the regional ecosystem remaining in Queensland and 1.27 per cent of that within the protected area estate. While this regional ecosystem is known to provide important sea turtle nesting habitat in some localities — this coastline has not been mapped as having sea turtle nesting. The REDD fire management guideline for this regional ecosystem is to avoid intentional burning. As mentioned above, there are two vegetation communities (11.2.2a, b) within this regional ecosystem that have low representation within the protected area estate.

All six of the remaining regional ecosystems in the park have no concern at present status and respectively comprise less than 0.5 per cent of that regional ecosystem remaining in Queensland and less than 1.5 percent of that within the protected area estate.

Samphire forbland on marine clay plains (11.1.2) covers 197.12 hectares (40.78 per cent) of the park. While this regional ecosystem is known to provide potential estuarine wetland habitat and habitat for the Capricorn yellow chat *Epthianura crocea macgregrori* — it has not been recorded from the park. The REDD fire management guideline for this regional ecosystem is not to target it for burning except if needing to control pest plants such as rubbervine.

Sporobolus virginicus grassland on marine clay plains (11.1.1) and mangrove low open forest and/or woodland on marine clay plains (11.1.4) cover 26.25 hectares (5.44 per cent) of the park. Both provide estuarine wetland habitat and should not be burnt, except for control of pest plants like rubbervine in the grasslands in regional ecosystem 11.1.1.

Semi-evergreen vine thicket and microphyll vine forest on igneous rocks (11.12.4) covers 78.96 hectares (16.34 per cent) of the park. While this regional ecosystem is known to provide potential habitat for NCA listed species *Backhousia oligantha*, *Brachychiton guymeri*, *Corchorus hygrophilus*, *Cossinia australiana*, *Croton magneticus*, *Graptophyllum excelsum*, *Hernandia bivalvis*, *Macropteranthes leiocaulis*, *Sannantha brachypoda*, and *Solanum sporadotrichum* — none of these species have been recorded from the park. The REDD fire management guideline for this regional ecosystem is to provide protection from fire.

Corymbia citriodora open forest on igneous rocks (granite) (11.12.6) covers 118.45 hectares (24.5 per cent) of the park. While this regional ecosystem is known to provide potential habitat for NCA listed species *Acacia tingoorensis*, *Callicarpa thozetii*, *Capparis humistrata, Cycas megacarpa*, *Cycas ophiolitica*, *Zieria actites* — none of these species have been recorded from the park. The REDD fire management guideline for this regional ecosystem is late wet to early dry season burns when there is good soil moisture, a 6-15 year interval, and burning less than 30 per cent in any year.

Eucalyptus decorticans, *Lysicarpus angustifolius* +/- *Eucalyptus* spp., *Corymbia* spp., *Acacia* spp. woodland on coarse-grained sedimentary rocks (11.10.4) covers 14.31 hectares (2.96 per cent) of the park. While this regional ecosystem is known to provide potential habitat for threatened plant species including *Acacia islana*, *Bertya calycina*, *Calytrix islensis* and *Eucalyptus beaniana* and the near threatened plant species *A. pubicosta* and *Eucalyptus curtisii* — none of these species have been recorded from the park. The REDD fire management guideline for this regional ecosystem is that it would be difficult to burn given the lack of ground fuel; fires in surrounding country should be done when there is good soil moisture. As mentioned earlier there is one vegetation community (11.10.4b) within this regional ecosystem that is not found in any other protected area in Queensland.

Non-remnant vegetation covers 21.16 hectares (4.38 per cent) of the park.

3.5.2 Wetlands

The park is partly within the Fitzroy River Delta wetland, which is listed in *A Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia* (QLD012). The Fitzroy River Delta wetland covers 70,254 hectares and includes eight different wetland types.

Intertidal (saltmarsh, saltflats, mangroves) (natural) wetland covers 230 hectares of the park (47.6 per cent). There is also a 10 hectare area of palustrine (natural) wetland that covers two per cent of the park.

The island section of the park is in the Coral Sea catchment while the mainland section is within the Waterpark Creek catchment. Barramundi Creek runs through the mainland section of the park.

The island section of the park and a small area of the mainland section are within the Fitzroy River Fish Habitat Area (FHA-072).

3.6 Species

3.6.1 Native animals

There are 30 native animal species recorded from the park, they are all birds.

Eight birds of conservation significance have been recorded, one is critically endangered, one is endangered, two are vulnerable and four are special least concern (Appendix C). Eleven of the 30 birds are migratory species listed on international agreements (Appendix D).

There are four locations in the Fitzroy River Delta where shorebird monitoring is undertaken annually, MacKenzie Island is one of them. The island is a significant monitoring site for critically endangered eastern curlew *Numenius madagascariensis*, endangered lesser sand plover *Charadrius mongolus* and endangered Western Alaskan bar-tailed godwit *Limosa lapponica baueri* (Queensland Government, 2022).

3.6.2 Native plants

There are no plant species records for the park in the Department's Wildnet Database.

3.7 Recreational opportunities

People in the park are typically fishing in the creeks or the Fitzroy River.

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

3.8 Post-contact cultural heritage

There are no known post-contact cultural heritage sites within the park.

3.9 Fire

Most of the regional ecosystems in the park require protection from fire.

There is one regional ecosystem within the park that requires fire to be healthy (11.12.6), it covers almost a quarter of the park.

There are limited fire records for the park, the most recent record is a bushfire on the island in 2004.

3.10 Pests

There are two pest species records for the park in the Department’s Wildnet Database — goats and European cattle (Appendix E).

4. Bibliography

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5. Appendices

Appendix A. Policy and management commitments

Gazettal details

The park was originally gazetted MacKenzie Island Conservation Park under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (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.

Appendix B. Regional ecosystems of significance

Regional ecosystem	Description	Regional ecosystem class*	Biodiversity status**
8.1.5	*Melaleuca* spp. and/or *Eucalyptus tereticornis* and/or *Corymbia tessellaris* woodland with a ground stratum of salt tolerant grasses and sedges, usually in a narrow zone adjoining tidal ecosystems	Of concern	Endangered
11.2.3	Microphyll vine forest ("beach scrub") on sandy beach ridges and dune swales	Of concern	Of concern
11.2.2	Complex of *Ipomoea pes-caprae* subsp. *brasiliensis* and *Spinifex sericeus* and *Casuarina equisetifolia* low woodland and herbland on fore dunes	Of 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
Animals			
Numenius madagascariensis	eastern curlew	Critically endangered	Critically endangered
Limosa lapponica baueri	Western Alaskan bar-tailed godwit	Endangered	Endangered
Pluvialis squatarola	grey plover	Vulnerable	Vulnerable
Xenus cinereus	terek sandpiper	Vulnerable	Vulnerable
Gelochelidon nilotica	gull-billed tern	Special least concern	
Hydroprogne caspia	Caspian tern	Special least concern	
Numenius phaeopus	whimbrel	Special least concern	
Thalasseus bergii	crested tern	Special least concern	

Appendix D. Species listed in international agreements

Scientific name	Common name	CMS	JAMBA	ROKAMBA	CAMBA
Ardea alba modesta	eastern great egret		✓		✓
Egretta sacra	eastern reef egret				✓
Gelochelidon nilotica	gull-billed tern				✓
Haliaeetus leucogaster	white-bellied sea-eagle				✓
Hydroprogne caspia	Caspian tern		✓		✓
Limosa lapponica baueri	Western Alaskan bar-tailed godwit	✓	✓	✓	✓
Numenius madagascariensis	eastern curlew	✓	✓	✓	✓
Numenius phaeopus	whimbrel	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pluvialis squatarola	grey plover	✓	✓	✓	✓
Thalasseus bergii	crested tern		✓		
Xenus cinereus	terek sandpiper	✓	✓	✓	✓

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
Animals			
Bos taurus	European cattle		
Capra hircus	goat		