

Barubbra 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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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

Barubbra Island Conservation Park is close to the regional town of Bundaberg. It is located at the mouth of the Burnett River, on the northern side of the river across from Burnett Heads. The park is very close to the mainland and Flying Fox Island, which are between 100 to 300 metres away. The island is only accessible by vessel.

While most of Barubbra Island is conservation park, there is a reserve managed by Bundaberg Regional Council at the northern end of the island. There are around 26 leases within the reserve, with buildings that range from simple fishing shacks to more established houses (*Courier-Mail* 2017). The reserve extends out along a mobile sand spit.

Mon Repos Conservation Park is six kilometres south-east of the park and the Mouth of Kolan River Conservation Park is 16 kilometres north-west. Great Sandy Marine Park lies just three kilometres to the north-west and south-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 Barubbra Island Conservation Park

Table 1. Overview of Barubbra Island Conservation Park

Park size	Barubbra Island Conservation Park	238 ha
Bioregion	South Eastern Queensland	
QPWS region	South East Queensland	
Local government area	Bundaberg Regional Council	
State electorate	Burnett	
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>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 Bailai, Gurang, Gooreng Gooreng, Taribelang Bunda People

A native title claim including the park and other areas between the Burnett River watershed north to the lower Fitzroy River and inland to the foothills of the Great Dividing Range was determined on 28 November 2017 (Tribunal Number QCD2017/010, Federal Court Number QUD6026/2001).

Native title is held by the Bailai, Gurang, Gooreng Gooreng, Taribelang Bunda People described in the determination, with the registered native title body corporate (RNTBC) being the First Nations Bailai, Gurang, Gooreng Gooreng, Taribelang Bunda People Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC.

The Port Curtis Coral Coast Protected Areas Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA, QI2017/014) was registered on 3 May 2018 and includes the park. The ILUA includes multiple protected areas covering around 2048 square kilometres.

3.2 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.

3.3 Other values

3.3.1 Habitat for significant species — shorebirds

Barubbra Island and the surrounding marine environment provide important habitat for local and migratory birds, including the critically endangered eastern curlew, endangered Western Alaskan bar-tailed godwit and vulnerable sharp-tailed sandpipers. Twenty-three native bird species have been recorded from the park — two are critically endangered, two are endangered, three are vulnerable and five have special least concern status. The island's beaches, mangroves, saltpans and intertidal flats are important for shorebird roosting and feeding. Thirteen of the 23 birds sighted in the park are migratory birds listed on international agreements.

3.4 Ecosystems and biodiversity

The park is part of the Burnett-Curtis Coastal Lowlands subregion of the South Eastern Queensland Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA) bioregion.

Intertidal (saltmarsh, saltflat, mangroves) natural wetland extends across most of the park (93 per cent), which is in the Lower Burnett River subcatchment of the Burnett catchment.

Most of the park is within a State Biodiversity Corridor. These corridors were identified to maintain and enhance ecological connectivity across the state.

3.4.1 Regional ecosystems

The park has four regional ecosystems, which all have no concern at present status. The Regional Ecosystem Description Database (REDD) fire management guideline for all of them is to not deliberately burn. All but one of them (12.1.3) represent less than 0.5 per cent of that regional ecosystem remaining in Queensland or within the protected area estate.

Mangrove shrubland to low closed forest on marine clay plains and estuaries (12.1.3) covers most of the park, extending across 211.12 hectares (93.08 per cent) — this is just 0.4 per cent of the regional ecosystem remaining in Queensland and 2.65 per cent of that within the protected area estate. While this regional ecosystem is known to provide potential habitat for threatened fauna species including the false water-rat *Xeromys myoides* in the southern part of the bioregion, this species has not been recorded from the park.

Foredune complex (12.2.14) covers 8.98 hectares (3.96 per cent) of the park.

Corymbia tessellaris +/- *Eucalyptus tereticornis*, *C. intermedia* and *Livistona decora* woodland on beach ridges in northern half of bioregion (12.2.11) covers 3.85 hectares (1.7 per cent) of the park. While this regional ecosystem is known to provide potential habitat for NCA listed species *Acacia attenuata*, *A. baueri* subsp. *baueri*, *Cycas megacarpa*, *Macrozamia lomandroides*, *Macrozamia pauli-guilielmi*, *Murraya crenulata* and *Myrsine serpicicola*, none of these species has been recorded from the park.

Saltpan vegetation including grassland, herbland and sedgeland on marine clay plains (12.1.2) covers 0.21 hectares (0.09 per cent) of the park. While this regional ecosystem is known to provide potential habitat for threatened fauna species including the false water-rat *Xeromys myoides* in the southern part of the bioregion, this species has not been recorded from the park.

3.5 Species

3.5.1 Native animals

There are 23 native animal species recorded from the park — all are birds.

Twelve of the birds have conservation significance under the NCA, two are critically endangered, two are endangered, three are vulnerable and five are special least concern (Appendix B). These 12 birds and one other are migratory species listed on international agreements (Appendix C).

There are shorebird roost sites within a three kilometre radius of the park, one to the south between Barubbra Island and the Burnett River northern rockwall, and another to the north along the island's sandy spit. Artificial floating roosts have been installed by the Burnett Mary Regional Group as part of a trial to boost declining shorebird numbers. They have been installed in the lagoon area between the island and the Burnett River northern rockwall (ABC News 2024).

There are two locations at Barubbra Island (Barubbra Island and Barubbra Lagoon) where shorebird monitoring is undertaken by interest groups and private citizens. They are both outside the conservation park. The lagoon location is significant for sharp-tailed sandpipers, while the island location is significant for eastern curlew, Western Alaskan bar-tailed godwit and terek sandpiper (Queensland Government 2022).

The beaches on the seaward side of the island are mapped as a significant sea turtle nesting area.

3.5.2 Native plants

There are no plant species records for the park in the department's WildNet Database.

3.6 Recreational opportunities

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

3.7 Post-contact cultural heritage

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

3.8 Fire

The Regional Ecosystem Description Database (REDD) fire management guideline for the four regional ecosystems is not to burn. Planned burning is not required and there are no records of bushfires.

3.9 Pests

There are no pest species records for the park in the department's WildNet Database.

4. Bibliography

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5. Appendices

Appendix A. Policy and management commitments

Gazettal details

The park was originally gazetted as Barubbra Island Environmental Park on 1 February 1975 under the *Land Act 1962* and was managed under a trustee agreement by Gooburrum Shire Council.

It was gazetted as Barubbra Island Conservation Park under the NCA on 16 December 1994 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. Species of conservation significance

Scientific name	Common name	NC Act status	EPBC Act status
Birds			
<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	curlew sandpiper	Critically endangered	Critically endangered
<i>Numenius madagascariensis</i>	eastern curlew	Critically endangered	Critically endangered
<i>Limosa lapponica baueri</i>	Western Alaskan bar-tailed godwit	Endangered	Endangered
<i>Limosa limosa</i>	black-tailed godwit	Endangered	Endangered
<i>Calidris acuminata</i>	sharp-tailed sandpiper	Vulnerable	Vulnerable
<i>Calidris canutus</i>	red knot	Vulnerable	Vulnerable
<i>Calidris tenuirostris</i>	great knot	Vulnerable	Vulnerable
<i>Calidris ruficollis</i>	red-necked stint	Special least concern	
<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	Caspian tern	Special least concern	
<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	whimbrel	Special least concern	
<i>Pandion haliaetus cristatus</i>	eastern osprey	Special least concern	
<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>	crested tern	Special least concern	

Appendix C. Species listed in international agreements

Scientific name	Common name	CMS	JAMBA	ROKAMBA	CAMBA
<i>Calidris acuminata</i>	sharp-tailed sandpiper	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Calidris canutus</i>	red knot	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	curlew sandpiper	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Calidris ruficollis</i>	red-necked stint	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Calidris tenuirostris</i>	great knot	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>	white-bellied sea-eagle				✓
<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>	Caspian tern		✓		✓
<i>Limosa lapponica baueri</i>	Western Alaskan bar-tailed godwit	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Limosa limosa</i>	black-tailed godwit	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Numenius madagascariensis</i>	eastern curlew	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	whimbrel	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Pandion haliaetus cristatus</i>	eastern osprey	✓			
<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>	crested tern		✓		

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