

Mackay coast and island national parks

Visitor guide

Sandy beaches, windswept headlands, shimmering turquoise seas—experience the tranquil beauty of Mackay's coast and islands.

Featuring on Mackay's coast

Cape Hillsborough National Park
Cape Palmerston National Park

...and nearby islands

Brampton Islands National Park
South Cumberland Islands National Park
Newry Islands National Park
Smith Islands National Park
Northumberland Islands National Park
Percy Isles National Park



Welcome

to Mackay coast and island national parks



Photo: GBRMPA

Rocky headlands line the coast at Cape Hillsborough.

On the mainland, Cape Palmerston and Cape Hillsborough national parks are unspoiled havens offering diverse landscapes to explore and experience. Both parks are rich in cultural heritage and home to a wide variety of plant and animal life.

The scenic continental islands of Brampton, Newry, South Cumberland, Smith, and Northumberland islands national parks and Percy Isles National Park were once mainland mountain ranges. Today they are a delight for boating enthusiasts.

Surrounded by sparkling turquoise waters, the islands provide many sheltered anchorages, and island opportunities ranging from remote to developed. Stretch your legs on short or longer walks on Newry and Brampton islands, or enjoy camping with facilities at Newry, Outer Newry and Carlisle islands.

Keen mariners looking for a remote national park experience will love sailing through the many islands in the Northumberland Islands and Percy Isles national parks.

Rocky headlands and bays of pearl-coloured beaches are the perfect backdrop for relaxed island camping. Snorkel on fringing coral reefs or take a walk and explore the islands—each has a story to tell.

Planning your trip

When to visit

The Mackay coast and islands have a pleasant year-round climate. Winters are mild (10–25 °C) while summers are warm to hot (22–32 °C). Expect heavy rain from December to March.

The Mackay coast and islands lie within the Queensland tropical storm (cyclone) zone. Cyclones commonly occur between December and March, but may develop outside these times.

Cape Hillsborough, Cape Palmerston, Newry Islands, Smith Islands, and South Cumberland Islands national parks are open 24 hours a day, year-round. However, closures may be enforced in extreme weather conditions.

Camping permits

If intending to camp, you will need to obtain a permit and pay a fee. School holidays are usually busy at more developed locations, so book your permit well in advance of these periods. For camping and group booking information, see the back page of this brochure.

Most campsites require you to be self-sufficient. Generators are prohibited and domestic animals are not permitted.



Photo: GBRMPA

Snorkelling is a great way to discover the world-famous Great Barrier Reef.

Walking

The Mackay coast and island national parks feature a number of walking opportunities for people of all fitness types. Before setting out on a walk, it is important to consider the relevant safety precautions.

Plan carefully and never walk alone—tell a responsible person of your plans and let them know when you return. Take a backpack with water, food and a first-aid kit.

Ensure you have enough daylight—light levels may fade rapidly before sunset, making it easy to get disorientated and lost.

Watch the weather—never bushwalk if a cyclone is imminent. Some walks may be dependant on tides, so be sure to check tide times where applicable.

Dress for comfort and safety—pack a raincoat in case the weather changes, and a warm jacket in winter. Wear strong shoes suitable for wet conditions.

For your safety

- **Be prepared for an extended stay.** Rough weather can occur unexpectedly. The cyclone season is typically from December to March but can be longer.
- **Know your limits.** Some areas of Cape Palmerston present significant four-wheel drive challenges, and should only be attempted by experienced drivers. Some areas in the Mackay islands may also present navigational challenges for inexperienced mariners.
- **Keep a close check on the weather forecast.** Call 1300 360 426 or see <www.bom.gov.au>
- **Beware of marine stingers.** Dangerous stingers may be present all year. Wear stinger suits when swimming or wading. Visit <www.marinestingers.com> for the latest safety advice.
- **Beware of estuarine crocodiles.** They inhabit mainland estuaries. Heed safety signs and never swim where crocodiles might be present. See <www.nprsr.qld.gov.au> for more safety information about crocodiles.
- **Protect yourself from the elements.** Remember to pack sunscreen, sunglasses, protective clothing and insect repellent.
- **Pack a first aid kit and know how to use it.** Ensure your kit includes vinegar, in case of box jellyfish stings.

Leave no trace

Cape Palmerston, Cape Hillsborough and most islands around Mackay are protected national parks, so please leave all plants and animals undisturbed. Follow these tips for a safe, enjoyable trip with minimal impact.



Ship it in, ship it out. There are no bins so please take all your rubbish with you when leaving a national park. You can help by collecting rubbish left by others.



Use a fuel stove. Camp fires are prohibited on all national park islands.



Above-ground fire containers. Only fires in containers are permitted at Cape Hillsborough and Cape Palmerston national parks.

Collecting firewood in parks is illegal. Wood provides homes for wildlife and nutrients for the soil. Bring only clean, milled timber for above-ground fires at Cape Hillsborough and Cape Palmerston.

No toilets? Bury human waste. Dig a hole at least 100 m away from campsites and watercourses, at least 15 cm deep and cover well. Sanitary items are non-compostable rubbish so please take these with you when you go.



Treat all water before drinking. Rainwater tanks may be empty in dry times, so bring sufficient water with you (at least five litres per person, per day).

Avoid introducing pests. Before you leave home, ensure your gear is clean and free of seeds, soil, ants, insects, rodents or cane toads.



Leave pets at home. Pets are not permitted on national parks, and on beaches adjacent to national park islands.

Keep food away from wildlife. Accidental or intentional feeding can make animals sick or aggressive.



Keep to existing tracks. Help prevent erosion and damage to vegetation.

Leave everything as you find it. Everything, living or dead, is protected in national parks.

Photo: NPRSR



Enjoy the range of walking opportunities in Mackay's coast and island national parks.

Contents

Planning your trip	2-3
When to visit	
Camping permits	
Walking	
For your safety	
Leave no trace	
Exploring Great Barrier Reef Marine Parks	4
Map: Mackay's coast and island national parks	5
Cape Hillsborough National Park	6-7
More remote mainland national parks	7
Pioneer Peaks National Park	
Mount Martin National Park	
Mount Ossa National Park	
Reliance Creek National Park	
Cape Palmerston National Park	8
National park islands nearer Mackay	9-11
Newry Islands National Park	
Smith Islands National Park	
Brampton Islands National Park	
South Cumberland Islands National Park	
More remote island national parks	11
Northumberland Islands National Park	
Percy Isles National Park	
More great national parks	12
Further information and useful contacts	12
Legend: maps and symbols	12

Explore Great Barrier Reef **marine parks**

The waters bordering the Mackay coast and surrounding the islands are part of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park. This includes the intertidal zone and waters surrounding Cape Palmerston National Park and the Cape Creek system.

Go slow for those below—dugongs and turtles frequently surface. Ince Bay/Clairview and the Newry Group are designated dugong protection areas.



Zones surrounding the coast and islands provide a balanced approach to protecting the reef while allowing some recreation and commercial use.

Zoning maps provide detailed information about access, permitted activities and fishing restrictions. Obtain your zoning map from the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) offices in Mackay or Airlie Beach, or contact the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. Many bait and tackle shops also have maps available.

Fishing and collecting is not permitted in marine national park (green) zones, which are located throughout the area. Green zones include, but are not limited to, waters surrounding Acacia, Brampton and Scawfell islands and areas adjacent to Cape Hillsborough. Marine conservation park (yellow) zones place some restrictions on activities such as fishing. Yellow zones are common around national park islands so always refer to your zoning map for their locations and permitted activities.

Snorkel to see reef residents

Fringing coral reefs have formed around the islands over the past 500 years. Go snorkelling and discover many coral and fish species. Isolated seagrass patches occur in shallow water near islands and the coastal fringe—you may see the occasional dugong foraging for food.

Caring for reefs

Queensland's marine parks are great places to explore. If snorkelling or diving, please follow the guidelines below to ensure our reefs can be enjoyed for generations to come.

- **Avoid stepping on live coral.** They are easily damaged and will cause nasty cuts.
- **Be careful with your fins.** Careless kicking can damage coral.
- **Look but don't touch.** Avoid touching coral and marine animals—they can deliver painful stings.
- **Avoid stirring up sand and sediment.** Murky water stresses plants and animals.
- **Return overturned coral boulders to their original position.** Many animals and plants shelter on the undersides of boulders and will soon die if exposed.
- **Be aware of collecting restrictions.** Obtain marine park zoning maps for more information.
- **Spearfishing while using scuba gear is prohibited.**



Sharing our beaches with the birds

Beach stone-curlews are threatened in Australia and only an estimated 1050 birds remain. They are easily disturbed by people. Be aware of possible dune nesting sites and try to keep your distance from the birds. Where possible, walk below the high tide mark to avoid their inconspicuous ground nests.



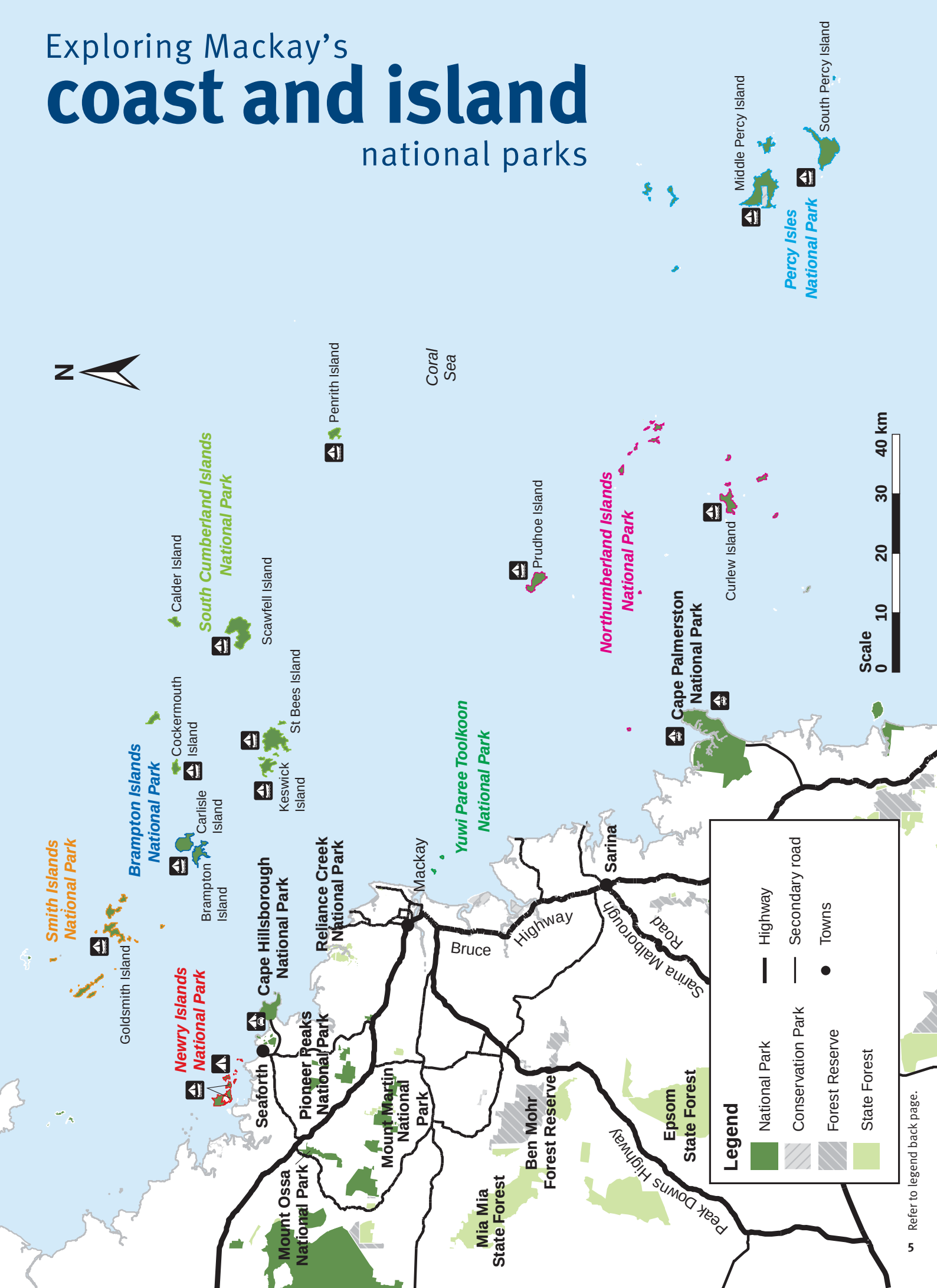
Seeing summer visitors—with care

The Mackay coast and islands' beaches are important rookeries for green marine turtles. Take care, especially during the summer nesting and hatching season (mid-October to late March). If disturbed, nesting turtles are likely to return to sea without laying their eggs. Lights can disorientate hatchlings. Please follow these guidelines.

- **Ensure lights are not visible from nesting areas.** Cook early, and shield camp and boat lights.
- **Use small torches only (3 volts or less).** Avoid using where possible. Always use a red filter on LED torches.
- **Never shine lights on turtles.** Turtles leaving the water, moving up the beach or digging nesting chambers are easily disturbed. Maintain a large distance from them and keep very quiet.
- **Approach and observe turtles quietly from behind.** Wait until after egg-laying begins—usually 10 minutes after they stop moving sand.
- **Take care when driving.** Watch for turtles when driving on the beach during nesting season, particularly at night when they cross the beach to nest in the fringing dunes.



Exploring Mackay's coast and island national parks

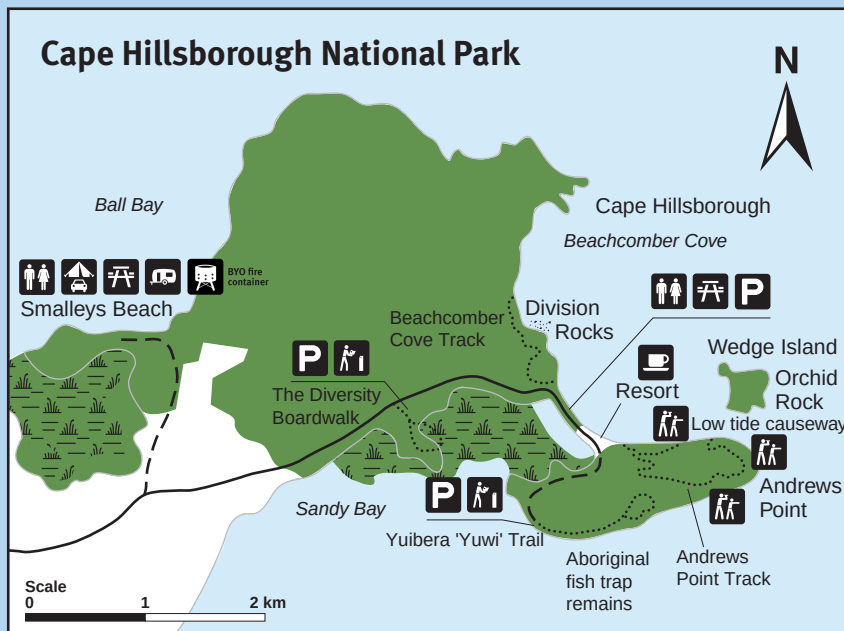


Cape Hillsborough National Park



Photo: John Augusteyn, NPWSR

Explore the rugged hillsides and broad, sandy beaches of this quiet coastal park.



Refer to legend back page.

Diverse habitats are protected in this ruggedly scenic park, which includes rainforest, eucalypt forest, beaches, rocky headlands covered in hoop pines, and volcanic rock formations.

Lowland rainforest and vine forest grow along creeks, valleys and hillside gullies. Rocky hills and headlands support open eucalypt forest and a grassy understorey, while patches of low heath survive on exposed slopes. West of the main picnic area, a large mangrove community is an important breeding ground for marine animals.

Getting there

From Mackay, travel north on the Bruce Highway for 20 km and turn right into Seaforth Road. Travel a further 20 km and turn right into Cape Hillsborough Road. It is then 10 km to the main park entrance.

From Proserpine, take the Bruce Highway south and travel 79 km to Mount Ossa. Turn left into the partly unsealed Mount Ossa Road and travel 15 km towards Seaforth. Turn right into Seaforth Road then left into Cape Hillsborough Road. Drive another 10 km to the main park entrance. Please note, the Mount Ossa road is not suitable for caravans. Caravan owners travelling from the north should continue to the sealed Seaforth Road, 20 km north of Mackay.

Camping and accommodation

Basic camping is available at Smalleys Beach camping area, reached via a signposted gravel road off the Cape Hillsborough Road. This small camping area has picnic tables, toilets, town water and some sites suitable for caravans. The Smalleys Beach camping area permits fires in off-ground fire containers. You can also stay in commercial camping areas which offer cabin-style accommodation at Cape Hillsborough, or private accommodation at Seaforth. See Mackay Tourism for details.



Photo: NPRSR

Yuibera people —the first inhabitants

Before European settlement, the Yuibera people lived in this area and used its natural resources. Shellfish were collected from nearby mangroves and roasted over open fires, with the discarded shells piled into middens, which still dot the park today. Middens provide physical evidence of Aboriginal peoples' camp sites and long-term occupation. They tell stories of the types of food available and tools used over hundreds of years.

Other signs of Indigenous occupation of Cape Hillsborough include archaeological remains of a stone fish trap, stone fireplaces, pieces of ochre apparently brought from other areas, and artifacts such as stone axe heads. The spiritual connection of the Yuibera people continues today.

Captain James Cook named Cape Hillsborough, Cape Palmerston and Cape Conway as he sailed up the Queensland coast in 1770. Cape Hillsborough was named after the Earl of Hillsborough, a member of the English and Irish parliaments who also served as Secretary of State for the American colonies.

Go birdwatching and beach walking

Around the picnic area, you can quietly observe wildlife such as agile wallabies, orange-footed scrubfowl and Australian brush-turkeys. The park contains a wide variety of habitats and bird species, making birdwatching a rewarding activity. On the broad beaches, sand bubbler crabs leave intricate patterns at low tide, and many sea creatures shelter in tidal rock pools.

Orange-footed scrubfowl



Photo: John Augusteyn, NPRSR

Walking tracks

For all walks, wear insect repellent, a hat and sunscreen, and carry drinking water.

Diversity Boardwalk

1.2 km return (40 mins) Grade: Easy

This track meanders through melaleuca woodland, a mangrove community, open eucalypt forest and vine thicket. A trail with information signs highlights the importance of these diverse communities and the factors that shape them into what you see before you. The diversity boardwalk is wheelchair accessible for the first 300 m.

Beachcomber Cove Track

2.2 km return (1.5 hrs) Grade: Moderate

Starting from the northern end of the picnic area, this track passes through open eucalypt forest and remnant rainforest with hoop pines, ferns and vines. Striking rock formations are evidence of the area's volcanic past. On a falling tide, you can return to the picnic area along the beach. Remember this route is inaccessible at high tide.

Yuibera Trail



Photo: NPRSR

Andrews Point Track

5.2 km return along the track (2 hrs)

2.8 km return via beach (1.5 hrs)

Grade: Moderate to difficult

This track starts from the boat ramp at the southern end of the beach. Several lookouts offer spectacular views for those who climb the numerous steps at the beginning of this track. Cool, remnant rainforest opens to more exposed eucalypt forest along the top of the ridge. To return to the picnic area, you can walk along the beach at low tide. At low tide a causeway links the end of the track to Wedge Island. Only attempt this crossing on a falling tide—check tide times before you go.

Yuibera 'Yuwi' Trail

1.5 km return (40 mins) Grade: Easy

Walk or drive 1.1 km from the southern end of the picnic area to the start of the walk track circuit. From the car park, the track takes in sea views then follows the coast through open woodland before looping through the cool hidden pocket of rainforest that gives the valley its name. Learn about the Yuibera peoples' lives in this rich coastal home. The gravel road is unsuitable for buses or caravans. Two-wheel drive cars should proceed carefully, as moderate clearance is required to negotiate the terrain. Dirt humps in the road are best traversed on an angle.



Photo: Sue Olsson, NPRSR

Remote mainland national parks

A short distance inland from Cape Hillsborough are four remote national parks—Pioneer Peaks, Mount Martin, Mount Ossa and Reliance Creek. These parks have no facilities, though self-reliant visitors and experienced bushwalkers may choose to explore them.

These parks protect the area's natural values, featuring soaring mountain peaks, lowland rainforest and a remarkably diverse range of plant and animal life.

Cape Palmerston National Park

Sandy beaches and windswept headlands
—a secluded sanctuary for coastal plants and animals.



Photo: John Augusteyn, NPSR

Covering 7200 hectares, Cape Palmerston National Park conserves one of the few remaining areas of undeveloped coastline between Bowen and St Lawrence in Central Queensland.

This park is significant for its extent and variety of lowland coastal vegetation. Rocky headlands, long sandy beaches and Cape Creek's extensive mangrove system provide plenty of places for you to explore. Mt Funnel is a dominant landscape feature rising to 344 m. Its distinctive cap is harder than the surrounding rock and has withstood millions of years of erosion.

The area provides opportunities for a range of nature-based recreation including camping, photography, walking, swimming, fishing, boating and birdwatching.

Getting there

Cape Palmerston is 115 km south-east of Mackay. Turn off the Bruce Highway at Ilbilbie and drive east towards Greenhill for 6.5 km to reach the park. Allow 45 minutes to reach the Cape Creek camping area from the park boundary. You need sand-driving experience and a four-wheel-drive vehicle to access the park.

Please drive responsibly.

- **Carry recovery gear and sufficient fuel.** Nearest fuel is at Ilbilbie.
- **Check tide times before you travel.** Beach driving is safest on a falling tide. Avoid travelling on the incoming tide.
- **If you choose to deflate your tyres, follow manufacturer specifications.** Lower tyre pressure for easier soft sand driving and to reduce track damage. Use caution when driving with deflated tyres.
- **Re-inflate tyres to drive on hard surfaces.** Pack a pressure gauge and pump.

During periods of heavy rain, tracks can become impassable. When travelling along the beach, be prepared for soft sand and extreme tides of up to six metres. Be aware that waders also use the beach.

Camping

Cape Palmerston National Park is very remote and access is by four-wheel-drive only. Beware of large tidal changes. Fuel stoves are recommended for cooking while in the national park. Camp fires are prohibited, but above-ground fire containers are permitted—bring your own container and clean, milled timber. Mobile phone coverage is poor, satellite phones or marine radios are recommended.

Cape Creek camping area

The Cape Creek camping area is located 45 minutes from the park boundary on a small peninsula bordered by a creek mouth and a beach. Sites are shaded, with easy access to water for fishing and boating. Cape Creek has picnic tables and pit toilets.

Windmill Bay camping area

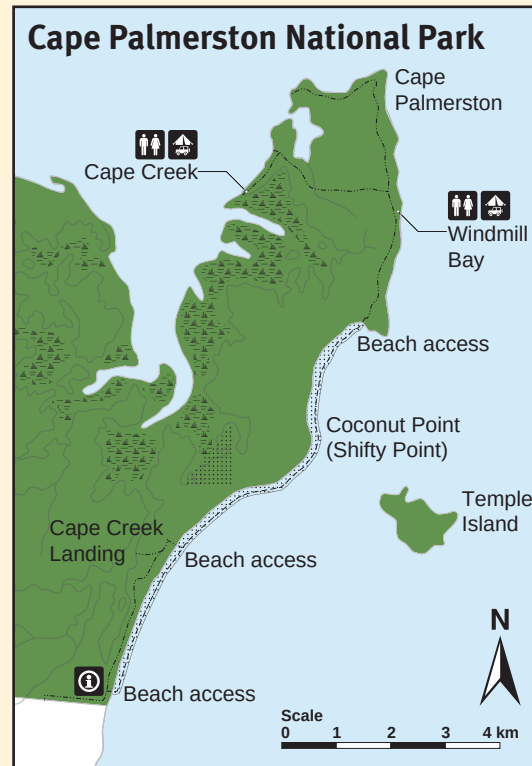
Located 12 km north of the park boundary, Windmill Bay camping area is shaded by she-oaks and fronts a 200 m sandy beach. Windmill Bay has picnic tables and pit toilets. Maximum of six campers allowed per site.

Bush camping

Camping on the fore dunes along the eastern coast of Cape Palmerston National Park is permitted, with a maximum of six campers allowed per site.

Middens rich in marine life

An archaeological survey of the park's coastal sections in 1992 found several shell middens (mounds), created by the area's Aboriginal inhabitants. Today, they are a reminder of the special connection Indigenous people have with this place. Take care not to disturb these sites. Before being gazetted as a national park, parts of the area were used for cattle grazing, fishing and oyster collecting. Little evidence of this history remains today.



Refer to legend back page.

Wildlife

Mangrove and saltpan communities within the park are important fish breeding areas. Mangroves also support other animals such as crabs, prawns, bats and migratory waders. The water mouse inhabits some of the park's mangrove communities. This vulnerable species builds nests of mud in the intertidal zone and hunts at night for small crustaceans.

Striking pied imperial-pigeons visit the park in late winter and spring. You might see small flocks feeding on fruit in the many native fig trees. This pigeon is found across northern Australia and New Guinea, but is near its southern limit at Cape Palmerston.

Go slow for those below when boating.

Cape Palmerston is as an important dugong protection area. Take care when driving on the beach as turtles nest in the area from mid October to late March. Read more about watching nesting turtles with care on page 4.



Pied imperial-pigeon

Mackay's national park islands

The Mackay coastline is dotted with an array of scenic islands. Aboriginal people paddled canoes from the mainland to the Mackay and nearby islands, their whereabouts governed by the availability of food and resources. Traditional uses of land in the Mackay islands included regular burning for access across inland interiors, hunting of mammals, reptiles and birds, and customs such as cleansing of the land.

Discover diverse plant and animal communities, from open forests, grasslands and closed forests to lowland swamps. You can see all these communities on the hilly islands of Brampton and Carlisle, and on many other islands. The islands' animals reflect the diverse vegetation and landscapes particular to each island. Walk on long sandy beaches, and snorkel to discover underwater wonders. Each of these islands has an amazing story to tell

Getting there

The national park islands off Mackay's coast are within the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. A comfortable cruise from the coast, the islands are popular with day visitors and campers. Of the more developed islands from Mackay, Brampton and Carlisle islands are situated 32 km north of Mackay, while the Newry islands are very close to the mainland—just 5 km from the Victor Creek boat ramp near Seaforth. You must arrange your own transport. Boat ramps to launch private vessels are located at Seaforth, Mackay Marina, Sarina Inlet and Airlie Beach.

Sleeping under the stars

The islands provide a range of camping opportunities including sites with limited facilities and bush camp areas with no facilities. Camper numbers are limited to ensure a quality experience for all visitors. Some grounds accommodate multiple group bookings while others allow for a single group booking only. You must be self sufficient and bring all supplies with you from the mainland.

Newry Islands National Park



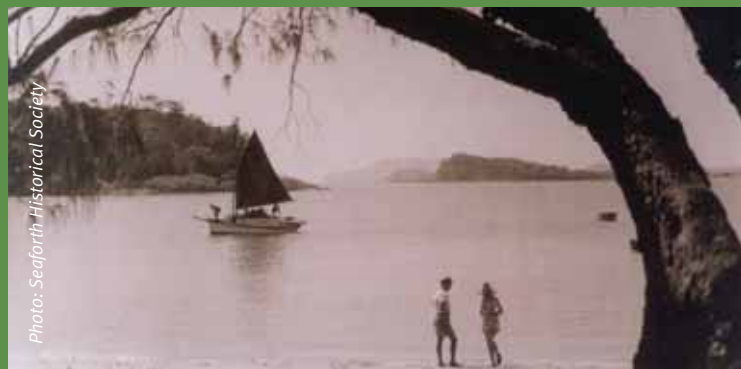
Lying just 5 km from the coast at Seaforth, the Newry group is protected from prevailing south-easterly winds, with many safe anchorages. The islands' close proximity to the mainland make them an appealing destination for campers and day-trippers alike, although the shallow waters may present some navigational challenges.

The national park protects eight islands. Newry, Rabbit and Outer Newry islands have facilities for campers and day visitors while the remainder have none.

A marine conservation park (yellow) zone encompasses the Newry group, while a marine national park (green) zone centres on Acacia, Mausoleum and Rocky islands. Fishing restrictions apply in these zones. Ensure you obtain and consult your zoning map before fishing around Newry Islands National Park.

The Newry group have also been designated a dugong protection area—go slow for those below.

View from Newry Island's beach in the late 1930s.



Newry Island

Since the early 1920s, Newry Island was home to one of the earliest resorts in the greater Whitsunday area. Although the resort closed in 2001, its links to famous 1940s swimmer and vaudeville star Annette Kellerman persist. Newry's relics offer insight into the resort culture of times gone by.

Newry Island remains a popular spot for campers. Up to 36 people can camp here at one time. A great way to experience the island is by taking one of the scenic walks.

Island Circuit—2.8 km return (allow 1.5 hrs). Grade: Moderate

Stroll through open eucalypt forest and dry rainforest as this track loops across Newry Island. A lookout along the way offers spectacular views of nearby islands and the mainland.

The Resort Trail—300 m one way (allow 40 mins). Grade: Easy

Wander through the resort remains on a self-guided walk and drift back to a bygone era.

Rabbit Island

Situated on the island's south-eastern point and surrounded by she-oaks, Tug's Point offers a pleasant site for day visitors and campers. Picnic tables add comfort to this scenic spot. Tug's Point is restricted to 12 campers at one time.

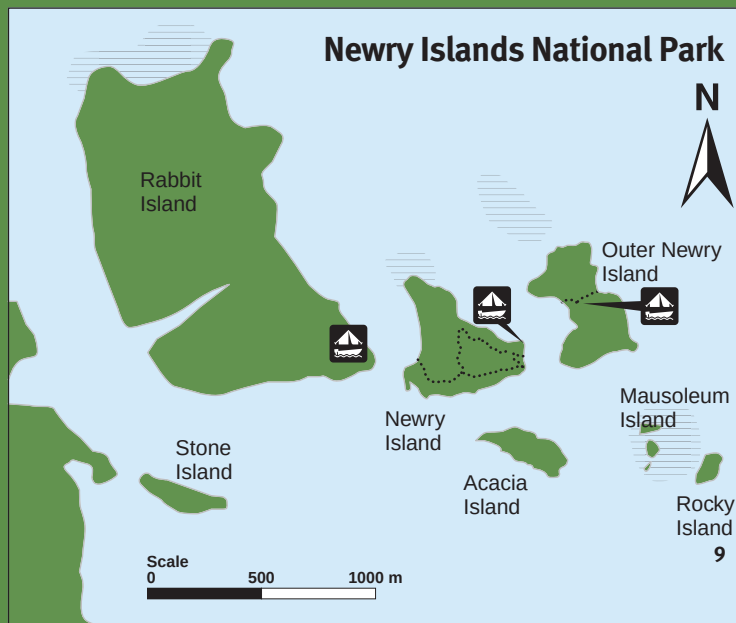
Outer Newry Island

A walking track leads from the rocky beach to this secluded site overlooking the passage between Outer Newry and Newry islands. A small hut, toilet and a picnic table are the only facilities here. Only six people can camp here at one time.

Outer Newry Island walking Track—400 m one way (allow 10 mins). Grade: Easy

Cross Outer Newry Island from the inshore landing to the rocky eastern shore.

Refer to legend back page.



Smith Islands

National Park



Protecting 16 islands, Smith Islands National Park is 50 km due north of Mackay. The main access is by private vessel launched from Seaforth, although it is also possible to access the park from either Mackay or Airlie Beach. Goldsmith is the largest island in the group and has limited facilities.

Goldsmith Island

Located 30 km north-east of Seaforth, Goldsmith Island features low, open woodland of brush box and wattle with a grasstree understorey. On the north-western side, two bays—Roylen and Minne Hall Bay—offer sheltered anchorage for small craft.

Roylen Bay also offers a medium-sized camp ground which can accommodate up to 12 people.



Photo: NPRSR

Brampton Islands

National Park



Rocky headlands dotted with hoop pines, open grasslands, woodlands, sheltered bays and long sandy beaches make this park one of the most scenic off the Queensland coast. About 32 km north of Mackay, this park protects Brampton and Carlisle islands. While there is public access to this island, there is no public access to the Brampton Island resort and supplies are unavailable.

Brampton Island

Explore Brampton Island with a relaxed stroll to a nearby beach, or an invigorating hike up Brampton Peak. Visitors should note that the island circuit track and tracks to Dinghy and Oak bays are closed indefinitely.

Brampton Peak—6.6 km return from the jetty (allow 3 hrs). Grade: Moderate to challenging

The walk from the jetty to Brampton Peak is steep in places, but you will be rewarded with splendid views of the mainland and Carlisle Island's steep forested slopes. Enjoy the surroundings and catch your breath at one of the bench seats along the way.

Western Bay—5.2 km return from the jetty (allow 2 hrs). Grade: Moderate

A great place for a swim or a lunchtime stop, this picnic area has a shelter shed with a toilet. Appreciate a picturesque view of the mainland from here.

Carlisle Island Crossing—1 km return from Brampton Island (allow 40 mins). Grade: Easy
Carlisle Island is a quiet escape. On a calm day at low tide you can wade across the channel from Brampton Island to explore Carlisle Island's beaches. Be prepared to get a little wet and ensure you leave enough time to return on the low tide. Relax at the camping area and see Brampton Peak from a different perspective.



Refer to legend back page.

Carlisle Island

Thick eucalypt forests dominate the landscape on this rugged, mountainous island, while rainforest thrives in sheltered gullies. Steep slopes plummet to the sea from Skiddaw Peak (389 m), thought to be the remnant magma plug of a volcano from which the island was formed. Neil's campground is on the island's south-western edge, where up to 12 people are permitted to camp at any one time.

Pockets of Queensland blue gums support small populations of koalas on Newry, Brampton and St Bees islands. Some islands are home to lace monitors and sand goannas. There is plenty of birdlife for you to discover.



Photo: John Augusteyn, NPRSR

Lace monitor



Photo: John Olds, NPWSR

South Cumberland Islands National Park



Nine islands are protected in this national park, about 60 km north-east of Mackay. Rocky, rugged, hoop pine-dominated headlands stand out from the open eucalypt woodland and extensive grasslands of the wind-exposed slopes.

Captain Cook named the Cumberland Group after the Duke of Cumberland, brother of King George III. Settlement and grazing began on St Bees around the early 1900s. Settlers introduced several plants and animals, including sisal hemp for rope making and chinchilla rabbits for fur.

No anchoring areas protect two vulnerable reefs in this park. The white pyramid buoys off Keswick Island's southern point and off St Bees' northern point are reef protection markers. Never anchor inshore of the buoy line or attach your vessel to the markers.



Photo NPWSR

Scawfell Island

Granite cliffs line the coast of Scawfell Island, the largest national park island in the South Cumberland group. Large areas of rainforest perch on steep mountain slopes and a wide sheltered bay faces north with all tidal access. A camping area at Refuge Bay can accommodate up to 12 campers at any one time.

Cockermouth Island

This hilly island is mainly open grassland. Large tidal lagoons occur on the island's western side where low tide exposes an ancient Pleistocene reef. A medium-sized camping area with no facilities is located on the island's south-western bay. Up to 12 people are permitted to camp there at any one time.

St Bees Island

This steep and rugged island is mostly national park except for a small private lease at Homestead Bay. The island also supports a small, introduced koala population. Turtle Beach, at the northern end of the island, is suitable for camping and can accommodate up to 24 campers at one time. No facilities are provided.

Keswick Island

Adjacent to St Bees Island, Keswick Island permits camping at two locations—Singapore Bay and Victor Bay. Singapore Bay permits 12 campers, Victor Bay permits six at one time. No facilities are provided. Marine park zoning restrictions regulate certain activities in the waters surrounding Keswick Island, so be sure to consult your zoning map.

Penrith Island

This island is one of the most remote in the South Cumberland group. Penrith Island can accommodate up to 12 campers at one time although no facilities are provided.

Looking for a more remote island park experience?

Northumberland Islands National Park

The Northumberland Islands National Park comprises several individual islands south-east of Mackay. Captain Cook, during his historic voyage in 1770, named the Northumberland islands after the first Duke of Northumberland, James Percy.

Camping is permitted at Curlew and Prudhoe islands. There are no facilities.

Percy Isles National Park and Middle Percy Conservation Park



The Percy Isles lie south-east of Mackay and have for decades been a much-loved spot for yachting enthusiasts.

Historical records indicate the most remote location Aboriginal people on the east coast were sighted was on Middle Percy Island in 1855—with records of people swimming the astonishing 27 nautical mile journey from Shoalwater Bay to the Percy isles in groups supported by makeshift log rafts.

North East Percy and South Percy islands were gazetted as national parks over 70 years ago, placing them among the oldest national parks in Queensland.

Matthew Flinders visited Middle Percy Island, the largest island in the Percy group, in 1802 and described it as, 'One of the prettiest places imaginable'.

Middle Percy is steeped in history with hundreds of mementos on West Bay from boats decorating an historic A-frame constructed in the late 1970s. A homestead has existed on the island since 1887, and remains a popular attraction for visitors today.

A conservation park on Middle Percy Island allows for some historical uses to continue. Bush camping and private accommodation on the island are managed by the lessee of the conservation park. While other domestic animals are not permitted, dogs on a leash are permitted on the walking tracks only on the Middle Percy Island Conservation Park, but not in the rest of this island which is part of the Percy Isles National Park.

For more information regarding accommodation on Middle Percy Island, visit www.percyisland.com.au.

On South Percy Island, up to 12 people are permitted to camp at Northwest Beach. There are no facilities.

For further information

Visit us online at <www.nprsr.qld.gov.au> or phone 13 QGOV (13 74 68).

Camping bookings (including group bookings)

- Online at <www.qld.gov.au/camping>
- Or by phone 13 QGOV (13 74 68). Mobile phone charges may apply.

QPWS Mackay

30 Tennyson Street
PO Box 623
Mackay QLD 4740

Before you visit, check current conditions:

- Search for 'Park alerts' on <www.nprsr.qld.gov.au>
- Weather forecasts at the Bureau of Meteorology website <www.bom.gov.au>
- Road conditions at Department of Transport and Main Roads <<http://131940.qld.gov.au>>

Know your marine zones

For marine zoning information, visit the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority website <www.gbrmpa.gov.au> or phone 1800 990 177.

Report an injured animal

To report injured, sick, or orphaned wildlife, phone RSPCA Queensland on 1300 ANIMAL (1300 264 625).

For tourist information

Mackay Visitor Information Centre
320 Nebo Road
Mackay QLD 4741
Phone: (07) 4944 5888 or 1300 130 001
Fax: (07) 4952 2034

Front cover photo: John Augusteyn, NPRSR.
Front cover inset photo: NPRSR.
© State of Queensland
Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service,
Department of National Parks,
Recreation, Sport and Racing.
BP1995 June 2012.
Printed on eco-friendly paper to save energy
and resources.

Visit more great national parks a little further afield



Mackay Highlands

Eungella National Park
Credition State Forest
Homevale National Park
Mia Mia State Forest

Whitsunday area national parks

Just some of the island national parks
Whitsunday Islands National Park
Molle Islands National Park
Gloucester Islands National Park
Whitsunday Ngaro Sea Trail
Enjoy walking in the mainland parks
Conway National Park
Whitsunday Great Walk in Conway
Dryander National Park



Rockhampton and Capricorn Coast parks and forests

Some of the highlights:

Mount Archer National Park
and State forest
Mount Etna Caves National Park
Capricorn Coast National Park
Keppel Bay Islands Park

Byfield area parks and forests

Byfield State Forest
Byfield National Park
Byfield Conservation Park
Corio Bay



In an emergency call Triple Zero 000

- If there is difficulty connecting from a mobile, try 112
- If deaf, or speech or hearing impaired, call 106 using a text phone
- Non-urgent medical transport, phone 13 12 33
- Stay with the injured person— keep them calm and protect them from the elements.

Legend

National Park	Waterways	Camping – boat access	Parking area
Conservation Park	Wetland	Suitable for caravans or camper trailers	Boat ramp
Forest Reserve	Beach	Camp fires permitted in raised container	Anchoring permitted
State Forest	Shallow water	Information	Refreshments
Highway	Toilets	Fishing	Beware crocodiles
Secondary road	Picnic area	Self-guiding walk	Beware marine stingers (jellyfish)
Towns	Sheltered picnic table	Viewpoint	No rubbish bins
Sealed road	Wheelchair access	Lookout	Camp fires prohibited
Unsealed road	Easy or short walks	Vehicle access	No water provided
4WD road	Hiking	4WD access	No domestic animals
Alternate beach route	Camping		
Walking track	Camping – 4WD access		