

# **Daarrba National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land)**

**Management Statement**

2013

*The Department of Environment, Science and Innovation acknowledges Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land. We recognise their connection to land, sea and community, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.*

*The department is committed to respecting, protecting, and promoting human rights, and our obligations under the Human Rights Act 2019.*

*This management statement does not intend to affect, diminish, or extinguish native title or associated rights.*

The Queensland Government supports and encourages the dissemination and exchange of its information. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.



Under this licence you are free, without having to seek our permission, to use this publication in accordance with the licence terms. You must keep intact the copyright notice and attribute the State of Queensland as the source of the publication.

For more information on this licence, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

#### **Disclaimer**

All due diligence and care has been taken in the preparation of this document based on the information in the 2013 management statement. The department holds no responsibility for any errors or omissions within this document. Any decisions made by other parties based on this document are solely the responsibility of those parties.

The Daarrba National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land) Management Statement 2013 has been extended in 2024 in line with the Queensland *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (s120G). Minor amendments have been made, most notably the renaming of the area from Mount Webb National Park to Daarrba National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land) on 29 November 2013. There has been no change to the statement's original management intent and direction.

If you need to access this document in a language other than English, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 131 450 and ask them to telephone Library Services on +61 7 3170 5470.

This publication can be made available in an alternative format (e.g. large print or audiotape) on request for people with vision impairment; phone +61 7 3170 5470 or email [library@des.qld.gov.au](mailto:library@des.qld.gov.au).

Park size:	415.3ha
Bioregion:	Cape York Peninsula
QPWS region:	Northern
Local government estate/area:	Cook Shire
State electorate:	Cook

### Legislative framework

✓	<i>Aboriginal Land Act 1991</i>
✓	<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>
✓	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth)</i>
✓	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>

### Plans and agreements

✓	Bonn Convention
✓	China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
✓	Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
✓	Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

## Vision

Daarrba National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land) is managed to conserve the endangered and of concern regional ecosystems, with a particular emphasis on maintaining the integrity of its vine forests.

## Conservation purpose

Originally part of Starcke Pastoral Holding, the original 220ha of Daarrba National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land) was gazetted as Mount Webb National Park in 1973. In 1995, the park was extended to better protect its semi-deciduous mesophyll/notophyll vine forests from clearing. In 2013 the park was extended and renamed Daarrba National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land).

## Protecting and presenting the park's values

### Landscape

Daarrba National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land) features a low hill rising to an altitude of 127m, and its foot slopes. Volcanic soils within the park and in surrounding areas are very fertile.

Located within the Jeannie River catchment, the Morgan River forms part of the park's southern boundary.

The existing house site offers uninterrupted views towards the Cape Flattery silica dunes.

Cattle and horse grazing occurs on properties surrounding Daarrba National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land). A gazetted road reserve adjoins the eastern boundary, and an oil palm plantation is situated to the south of the park.

### Regional ecosystems

Seven regional ecosystems are mapped within Daarrba National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land), including one 'endangered' community. Four of concern communities (Table 1) are conserved in the park. The remaining two vegetation communities are not of concern at present.

Most of the park (approximately 80 per cent) is covered by closed vine forest. Semi-deciduous notophyll/microphyll vine forest is restricted to Mount Webb and closed semi-deciduous mesophyll vine forest occurs on loamy alluvia and foot slopes. Vine forests appear healthy, with no significant or visible edge effects evident.

Northern and western sections of the park are dominated by eucalypt woodland, which is heavily infested with sicklepod *Senna obtusifolia*.

### Native plants and animals

Daarrba National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land) is currently known to protect two species of state conservation significance (Table 2)—Malay apple *Syzygium malaccense* and the skink, *Lygisaurus tanneri*. Five birds recorded from the park are listed in international agreements (Table 3).

Within Australia, Malay apple is restricted to north-east Queensland. It is conserved in only a few protected areas, and grows within the vine forests. The species management profile for Malay apple identifies habitat disturbance by cattle as a threatening process.

*Lygisaurus tanneri* is subject to disturbance, and threatened by feral pigs *Sus scrofa*, feral cats *Felis catus*, cane toads *Rhinella marina* and clearing. Park staff have never surveyed for this species and little is known about its ecology.

Further survey work and field collections are needed to develop extensive species lists for the park.

### Aboriginal culture

Currently no formalised management arrangements have been established with the relevant Traditional Owners for Daarrba National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land). No current native title applications exist over Daarrba National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land).

Subject to successful negotiation with Traditional Owners, the park is identified for future transfer to Aboriginal ownership under the *Aboriginal Land Act 1991*. A joint management regime will be established under the framework provided by the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* for the Cape York Peninsula Region.

It is unknown whether any sites of Aboriginal material culture exist on Daarrba National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land).

## Shared-history culture

The only known relic of European pastoral heritage remaining on Daarrba National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land) is an old dwelling. This building is in a state of disrepair and cattle are currently using the building to shelter. While removal of the dwelling will improve the site's aesthetics, the associated soil disturbance will favour weed growth, and potentially lead to erosion of the hill slope.

## Tourism and visitor opportunities

Daarrba National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land) offers few tourism or visitor opportunities. Camping is not provided for on the park.

Visitors need to traverse dense infestations of sicklepod to access the Cape Flattery viewing site. Pest plant infestations have reduced the aesthetic amenity of the park.

## Education and science

The conservation significant species within the park may be of educational and research interest.

## Partnerships

Where possible, fire and pest management activities are coordinated with park neighbours.

## Other key issues and responses

### Pest management

#### Pest plants

*Hyptis Hyptis suaveolens*, and sicklepod up to 2m in height, grows in dense infestations within the cleared area around the house site and along the access road. There is no evidence that these species are spreading into the vine forest. It is assumed that the density of the sicklepod infestations prevents fire impact to the vine forests.

Eucalypt woodlands in the western section of the park are infested with dense stands of sicklepod. Consequently park staff rarely access this area.

Snake weed *Stachytarpheta* sp. and lantana *Lantana camara* are scattered amongst the hyptis and sicklepod infestations. Lantana extends approximately 10m into the edge of the vine thickets.

Park staff spray pest plants at the house site and along the adjacent road reserve. They have discontinued spraying other areas that are not easily accessed, due to the risk of spreading more pest plants than they can control.

#### Pest animals

Cattle *Bos* sp. and horses *Equus caballus* are regularly observed within the park, predominantly around the house site and in other cleared areas on the eastern and northern edges of the park. They shelter in the old dwelling and in the vine forests, and are vectors for pest plant dispersal. The boundary fence is currently damaged, and gates are not in place.

Pig wallows and rooted up areas are evident in the vine forests and along the roads. Cats *Felis catus* are likely to occur on the park given its close proximity to surrounding residences. Given the park's proximity to neighbouring properties, baiting and shooting are not suitable pest control measures.

#### Fire management

A late season, high intensity fire entered the park in 2009, impacting the northern, eastern and southern edges of the park. Vegetation appears to be recovering well. However, staff are unsure of the fire's impact on the vine forests.

Hot fires are required to reduce sicklepod infestations.

## Management directions

Desired outcomes	Actions and guidelines
<p><b>Native plants and animals</b></p> <p>The health and diversity of plant and animal communities on the park is being maintained.</p>	<p>Implement fire regimes that will maintain the current health and diversity of plant and animal communities, with an emphasis on eucalypt woodlands and semi-deciduous mesophyll/notophyll vine forests.</p> <p>Continue to focus pest plant management around the dwelling and along the adjacent gazetted road reserve to reduce the rate of pest plant spread within the park.</p> <p>Explore biological control options and regeneration measures for the park.</p> <p>Exclude stock from the park by installing effective boundary fences.</p>
<p><b>Aboriginal culture</b></p> <p>Traditional Owners are involved in park management.</p>	<p>Establish and implement a formal joint management regime with Traditional Owners under the statutory framework provided by the <i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i> and the <i>Aboriginal Land Act 1991</i> for the Cape York Peninsula Region.</p>
<p><b>Tourism and visitor opportunities</b></p> <p>Presentation values of Daarrba National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land) are enhanced.</p>	<p>Emphasise the risk of pest plant spread in all written material relating to the park and encourage visitors to observe pest plant hygiene practices.</p>

## Tables – Conservation values management

**Table 1: Endangered and of concern regional ecosystems**

Regional ecosystem number	Description	Biodiversity status
3.3.2a	Semi-deciduous mesophyll/notophyll vine forest. Occurs on alluvia.	Of concern
3.3.2b	Semi-deciduous mesophyll/notophyll vine forest. Occurs on floodplains.	Of concern
3.8.2a	Semi-deciduous notophyll/microphyll vine forest. Occurs on basalt rises.	Of concern
3.8.2b	Semi-deciduous notophyll/microphyll vine forest. Occurs on exposed metamorphic and granitic slopes.	Of concern
3.8.3a	Molloy box <i>Eucalyptus leptophleba</i> + Moreton Bay ash <i>Corymbia tessellaris</i> + Clarkson's bloodwood <i>C. clarksoniana</i> woodland on basalt flows.	Endangered

**Table 2: Species of conservation significance**

Scientific name	Common name	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i> status	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> status	Back on Track status
<b>Plants</b>				
<i>Syzygium malaccense</i>	Malay apple	Near threatened	-	Malay apple
<b>Animals</b>				
<i>Lygisaurus tanneri</i>	-	Vulnerable	-	-

**Table 3: Species listed in international agreements**

Scientific name	Common name	BONN	CAMBA	JAMBA	ROKAMBA
<i>Coracina tenuirostris</i>	<i>cicadabird</i>	-	-	✓	-
<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>	white-throated needletail	-	✓	✓	✓
<i>Monarcha frater</i>	black-winged monarch	✓	-	-	-
<i>Rhipidura rufifrons</i>	rufous fantail	✓	-	-	-
<i>Symposiachrus trivirgatus</i>	spectacled monarch	✓	-	-	-

BONN – Bonn Convention

CAMBA – China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

JAMBA – Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

ROKAMBA – Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement