

Ravensbourne National Park Management Statement 2013

Park size:	687.51ha
Bioregion:	South Eastern Queensland
QPWS region:	South West
Local government estate/area:	Toowoomba and Somerset Regional Council
State electorate:	Nanango

Legislative framework

✓	<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>
✓	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth)</i>
✓	<i>Native Title Act 1993 (Cwlth)</i>
✓	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>

Plans and agreements

✓	Bonn Convention
✓	China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (CAMBA)
✓	Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (JAMBA)
✓	National recovery plan for the black-breasted button-quail <i>Turnix melanogaster</i>
✓	Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (ROKAMBA)
✓	South East Queensland Natural Resource Management Region Back on Track Actions for Biodiversity

Thematic strategies

✓	Fire Management Strategy
✓	Pest Management Strategy



Green-thighed frog *Litoria brevipalmata*. Photo: NPRSR.

Vision

Ravensbourne National Park will continue to preserve the best remaining example of rainforest that originally covered this section of the Great Dividing Range.

Conservation purpose

Ravensbourne National Park contains remnant closed forest, rainforest and tall open blackbutt *Eucalyptus pilularis* forest with rainforest understorey—which is representative of the vegetation communities found on the eastern escarpment of the Great Dividing Range.

These vegetation communities were previously more widespread in the region and the conservation of these communities and native animals that utilise them is the primary goal of management.

Protecting and presenting the park's values

Landscape

Ravensbourne National Park is located at the top of the Great Dividing Range in the upper catchment of the Brisbane River. The park conserves areas of natural forest that form part of a tract of unbroken forest extending along the eastern edge of the escarpment from south of Toowoomba to north of Deongwar State Forest to the north.

Land surrounding the park has been largely cleared for agriculture and grazing.

Deongwar State Forest, Lockyer National Park and Lockyer National Park (Recovery) are within 5km of the park. A further four protected areas exist within 10km.

Regional ecosystems

Nine regional ecosystems are represented in the park, two of which have a biodiversity status of endangered and two have of concern status (Table 1). Regional ecosystem 12.5.13 vine forest and *Araucaria cunninghamii* can suffer from degradation from weed infestations and is fire sensitive.

Native plants and animals

More than 170 native animal species have been recorded from Ravensbourne National Park, including six that are of conservation significance (Table 2). Of the 13 amphibians recorded on the park, the green-thighed frog *Litoria brevipalmata* is near threatened and the tusked frog *Adelotus brevis* is vulnerable.

The diversity of vegetation communities in Ravensbourne National Park provides habitat for over 112 bird species. Two of these species—the grey goshawk *Accipiter novaehollandiae* and sooty owl *Tyto tenebricosa tenebricosa*—are listed as near threatened, and the glossy black-cockatoo *Calyptorhynchus lathami* vulnerable (Table 2).

The black-breasted button-quail *Turnix melanogaster* has been recorded in the park. This species is listed as vulnerable under State and Commonwealth legislation, as well as being ranked as a critical priority species under the Back on Track species prioritisation framework (Table 2). Threats to the black-breasted button-quail include clearing of vegetation resulting in an increase in feral predator effects, as the bird is unable to disperse between patches of habitat.

The near threatened *Eucalyptus decolor* has been recorded on Ravensbourne National Park. This ironbark has a restricted distribution. Threatening processes include harvesting of the tree, habitat clearance and inappropriate fire regimes.

Aboriginal culture

The landscape is of intrinsic cultural value to Traditional Owners. Evidence of yam gathering has been recorded on the park. Local Aboriginal people and those travelling to the bunya feasts in the Bunya Mountains used the area extensively. Further surveys of Aboriginal cultural sites should be encouraged.

Shared-history culture

The degree of shared-history culture remains largely unknown in Ravensbourne National Park. During the 1860s, rainforest trees such as red cedar *Toona ciliata* were felled and cut locally by pit sawyers. Later other rainforest hardwood species such as black bean and rosewood were logged, as were eucalypt hardwoods. Timber was transported to several sawmills in the area.

Ravensbourne National Park was declared in 1922 for its scenic, recreational and conservation purposes. A 1ha special lease was granted in 1924 to establish a picnic area and lookout, and a community dance hall and tennis court once stood in what is now known as Cedar Block day-use area. Further surveys should be encouraged. Significant sites and events should be recorded.

Tourism and visitor opportunities

The park offers visitors a variety of nature-based activities including walking, bird watching and nature appreciation. Walking tracks of varying difficulty range in distance from 500m to 6.2km return.

Panoramic views over the range towards Brisbane, the Scenic Rim and the Lockyer Valley greet the visitor near the Cedar Block day-use area. Picnic tables, wood barbecues, water, pit toilets and shelter sheds are provided at the park's two day-use areas. Interpretive signs and the short self-guided walk, assists visitor use and understanding of the park and its values.

Ravensbourne is only 32km from Toowoomba and is a popular destination for free and independent travellers as well as families. Camping is not allowed on this national park as this activity is provided at a number of locations within 10km of the park.

Education and science

Ravensbourne National Park and adjacent lands have been used by students studying wildlife ecology from the University of Southern Queensland.

In the past, research has also been conducted on the population of eastern horseshoe-bats *Rhinolophus megaphyllus* that inhabit a narrow cave towards the southern boundary of the park. This maternity site is one of the largest known in South East Queensland.

Partnerships

Partnerships with neighbours, state and local government agencies and other stakeholder's needs to be encouraged to ensure the values of the protected area are managed appropriately and the visitor opportunities are considered in the context of other nearby areas such as the Toowoomba Regional Council run water storages, and nearby Deongwar State Forest.

Other key issues and responses

Pest management

Lantana *Lantana camara* has been identified as the most significant pest plant threatening Ravensbourne National Park. It is a weed of national significance and requires control measures to be implemented. Other pest plant species include privet *Ligustrum* sp., groundsel *Baccharis halimifolia*, cat's claw creeper *Macfadyena unguis-cati* and white moth vine *Araujia sericifera*. Madeira vine *Anredera cordifolia* has been found along the main road adjacent to the park.

These pest plants have the potential to cause serious problems in the higher rainfall sections of the park and may require considerable expenditure and labour to control in the future. Monitoring is necessary to have a good understanding of where these species are spreading and evaluate the effectiveness of any control measures.

Feral pigs *Sus scrofa*, red foxes *Vulpes vulpes* and red deer *Cervus elaphus* have been recorded on the park. Impacts from feral animals are currently minor, but in the case of feral pigs, their numbers vary depending on seasonal conditions. When possible any pest control work should be carried out in a coordinated way with adjoining landholders and managers.

Fire management

Ravensbourne National Park contains a mixture of vegetation communities some of which are fire sensitive, including regional ecosystem 12.5.13 vine forest and others which require some degree of fire for regeneration.

Fire is needed to maintain eucalypt communities on the lower slopes of the park. Ravensbourne National Park is at risk of being devastated by wildfire in many areas of the park during extreme seasons. The invasion of lantana into the understorey of the eucalypt forests is threatening to change fire regimes and the structural integrity of this forest.

Management directions

Desired outcomes	Actions and guidelines
<p>Native plants</p> <p>Rainforest and eucalyptus communities are conserved and habitat diversity maintained.</p>	<p>A1. Establish or review key monitoring objectives for plant species and communities of conservation significance. A particular focus will be on monitoring programs for recruitment of the near threatened <i>Eucalyptus decolor</i> and for the endangered regional ecosystems 12.5.13 and 12.5.6.</p>
<p>Native animals</p> <p>Knowledge of native animal species distribution and habitat requirements are increased and used for future management decisions.</p>	<p>A2. Encourage tertiary institutions and special interest groups to undertake surveys and scientific studies of the area.</p> <p>A3. Establish or review key monitoring objectives for species of conservation significance. A particular focus will be on monitoring programs on the distribution of the tusked frog and green thighed frog, the habitat requirements for the glossy black cockatoo and the number and distribution of black-breasted button-quail.</p>
<p>Cultural heritage</p> <p>Aboriginal and shared cultural values of the protected area are identified and protected.</p>	<p>A4. Encourage and support Traditional Owners in conducting a comprehensive cultural heritage survey of the park including recording stories, language names and cultural heritage places.</p> <p>A5. Encourage and support conducting a shared heritage survey of the park and recording recent history park history.</p>
<p>Fire management</p> <p>Fire is managed to protect natural and biodiversity values of the national park.</p>	<p>A6. Implement appropriate fire regimes (including fire exclusion) to balance rainforest encroachment into eucalyptus forest.</p> <p>A7. Conduct appropriate prescribed burns on sites where <i>E. decolor</i> occur to reduce the risk of fire damage to seedlings and saplings.</p> <p>A8. Implement and review the fire management strategy.</p>
<p>Pest management</p> <p>An effective pest control program is developed and implemented to minimise the impacts on the natural ecosystems.</p>	<p>A9. Implement and review the pest management strategy.</p>
<p>Partnerships</p> <p>Neighbours and interested parties are aware of, and help achieve, the desired management outcomes for the park.</p>	<p>A10. Liaise with park neighbours and interested parties about cooperative arrangements for park management issues, including fire, pest management, visitor management and boundary fences.</p>
<p>Tourism and visitor opportunities</p> <p>Opportunity will exist for people to experience and enjoy nature based recreation.</p>	<p>A11. A visitor management strategy is to be developed for visitor use of the park.</p> <p>A12. Continue to provide day use facilities at two locations with a network of walking tracks to facilitate access to sections of the park.</p> <p>A13. Provide information about the park and its values in Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service publications, web pages and in on-site interpretive signs.</p>

Tables – Conservation values management

Table 1: Endangered and of concern regional ecosystems

Regional ecosystem number	Description	Biodiversity status
12.5.6	<i>Eucalyptus siderophloia</i> , <i>E. propinqua</i> , <i>E. microcorys</i> and/or <i>E. pilularis</i> open forest on remnant Tertiary surfaces. Usually deep red soils.	Endangered
12.5.13	Microphyll to notophyll vine forest +/- <i>Araucaria cunninghamii</i> on remnant Tertiary surfaces.	Endangered
12.8.8	<i>Eucalyptus saligna</i> or <i>E. grandis</i> tall open forest on Cainozoic igneous rocks.	Of concern
12.12.3	Open forest complex with <i>Corymbia citriodora</i> , <i>Eucalyptus siderophloia</i> or <i>E. crebra</i> or <i>E. decolor</i> , <i>E. major</i> and/or <i>E. longirostrata</i> , <i>E. acmenoides</i> or <i>E. portuensis</i> on Mesozoic to Proterozoic igneous rocks.	Of concern

Table 2: Species of conservation significance

Scientific name	Common name	Nature Conservation Act 1992 status	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 status	Back on Track status
Plants				
<i>Eucalyptus decolor</i>	-	Near threatened	-	Low
Animals				
<i>Accipiter novaehollandiae</i>	grey goshawk	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Adelotus brevis</i>	tusked frog	Vulnerable	-	Medium
<i>Calyptorhynchus lathami</i>	glossy black-cockatoo	Vulnerable	-	High
<i>Litoria brevipalmata</i>	green thighed frog	Near threatened	-	Medium
<i>Ninox strenua</i>	powerful owl	Vulnerable	-	Medium
<i>Turnix melanogaster</i>	black-breasted button-quail	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Critical
<i>Tyto tenebricosa tenebricosa</i>	sooty owl	Near threatened	-	Low

Table 3: Species listed in international agreements

Scientific name	Common name	Bonn	CAMBA	JAMBA	ROKAMBA
<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>	white-throated needle-tail	-	✓	✓	✓
<i>Coracina tenuirostris</i>	cicadabird	-	-	✓	-
<i>Merops ornatus</i>	rainbow bee-eater	-	-	✓	-

Scientific name	Common name	Bonn	CAMBA	JAMBA	ROKAMBA
<i>Monarcha melanopsis</i>	black-faced monarch	✓	-	-	-
<i>Symposiarchus trivirgatus</i>	spectacled monarch	✓	-	-	-
<i>Rhipidura rufifrons</i>	rufous fantail	✓	-	-	-

Bonn – Bonn Convention

CAMBA – China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

JAMBA – Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

ROKAMBA – Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement