

# Bendidee National Park and Bendidee State Forest Management Statement 2013

Park size:	Bendidee National Park 923ha Bendidee State Forest 4,617ha
Bioregion:	Southern Brigalow Belt
QPWS region:	South West
Local government estate/area:	Goondiwindi Regional Council
State electorate:	Southern Downs



Brigalow scaly-foot *Paradelma orientalis*. Photo: DSITIA.

## Legislative framework

✓	<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>
✓	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwlth)</i>
✓	<i>Forestry Act 1959</i>
✓	<i>Native Title Act 1993 (Cwlth)</i>
✓	<i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i>

## Plans and agreements

✓	China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
✓	Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
✓	Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
✓	Recovery plan for the bull oak jewel butterfly <i>Hypochrysops piceatus</i>

## Thematic strategies

✓	Fire Management Strategy
✓	Pest Management Strategy

## Vision

Bendidee National Park and Bendidee State Forest will continue to conserve natural values, including remnant brigalow-belah communities and a variety of wildlife of the Southern Brigalow Belt bioregion.

## Conservation purpose

Bendidee National Park was originally gazetted to conserve a remnant of brigalow–belah plant communities, which have been extensively cleared elsewhere in the region.

Bendidee State Forest, situated immediately adjacent to the park's northern boundary, is a source of cypress pine timber. It contains bulloak *Allocasuarina luehmanni* which is a major habitat for the endangered bulloak jewel butterfly *Hypochrysops piceatus*.

## Protecting and presenting the park's values

### Landscape

Bendidee National Park and Bendidee State Forest lie in the Border Rivers Basin. Adjacent properties in the catchment have been cleared for agriculture and grazing.

Heavy clay soil covers most of the protected areas which crack and form depressions known as 'gilgais' that hold water following rain. Brigalow–belah forest grows on the heavier soil with Cypress pine *Callitris columellaris* and poplar box forest *Eucalyptus populnea* growing on lighter soils.

The diversity of plant communities provides a valuable refuge for sedentary wildlife and a sanctuary for transient species which occur seasonally in the region.

### Regional ecosystems

The national park and state forest contain a number of plant communities that represent those which were formerly more widespread in the region and are of high conservation value. Five regional ecosystems are conserved in the park and state forest. Two regional ecosystems are endangered: 11.4.3 shrubby open forest that includes *Acacia harpophylla* and *Casuarina cristata* and 11.4.10 open forest containing *Eucalyptus populnea*, *E. pilligaensis*, *Acacia harpophylla* and *Casuarina cristata* (Table 1).

### Native plants and animals

Bendidee National Park and Bendidee State Forest contains over 150 species of mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles, seven of which are of conservation significance (Table 2). Of the 30 amphibians and reptiles recorded, three are considered conservation significant: the near threatened rough collared frog *Cyclorana verrucosa*, vulnerable brigalow scaly-foot *Paradelma orientalis* and the endangered grey snake *Hemiaspis damelii*. The little pied bat *Chalinolobus picatus* has recently been recorded on the park. It is listed as near threatened under state legislation and is threatened by habitat disturbance.

The State forest area is of considerable interest to entomologists with over 89 invertebrates recorded on the parks. In particular the presence of the endangered bulloak jewel butterfly is of significance. This butterfly is reliant on the bulloak tree and a mutualistic attendant ant *Anonychomyrma* sp. for survival. Inappropriate fire regimes have been identified as a potential threat to the bulloak jewel butterfly due to possible impacts on mature bulloak trees and the attendant ant.

The vulnerable glossy black-cockatoo *Calyptorhynchus lathami* is highly dependent on *Casuarina* and *Allocasuarina* species for food, including bulloak in the Bendidee area. Inappropriate fire regimes have been identified as a threat to glossy black-cockatoos through loss of bulloak forest.

Bendidee National Park is of value to biologists and ecologists as it contains a significant area of intact brigalow communities. The endangered grass *Homopholis belsonii* has been recorded on the park it is threatened by clearing and inappropriate grazing regimes.

### Aboriginal culture

The landscape is of intrinsic cultural value to Traditional Owners. The extent of occupation and the degree of its cultural significance remains largely unknown.

### Shared-history culture

The degree of shared-history culture remains largely unknown in Bendidee National Park and Bendidee State Forest.

### Tourism and visitor opportunities

Self-sufficient day visitors can enjoy nature-based activities including walking, bird watching and nature appreciation. Remote camping is available in Bendidee National Park and adjacent Bendidee State Forest.

## Education and science

Bendidee National Park and Bendidee State Forest provides a relatively undisturbed benchmark environment from which to assess the degree of change in surrounding agricultural lands.

## Partnerships

Cooperative activities with neighbours and lessees in regards to pest management control and fire management continues.

Partnerships with state and local government agencies and other stakeholder's needs to be encouraged to ensure the values of the protected area and state forest are managed appropriately.

## Other key issues and responses

### Pest management

Pest plant species recorded on the park include tree pear *Opuntia tomentosa* which is a declared class 2 pest plant in Queensland and bathurst burr *Xanthium spinosum*. These species appear to occur in relatively low numbers and do not appear to present a serious management issue. Harrisia cactus has been identified on the western boundary of the park. Infestations should be monitored to minimise their spread.

Feral pigs, rabbits and foxes have been recorded in the protected areas. Feral pigs are relatively common in the district and numbers in Bendidee National Park and Bendidee State Forest fluctuate with seasonal conditions.

### Fire management

The incidence of fire on the protected areas has been low.

Prescribed burns have not been conducted in recent times, but boundary fire breaks are regularly maintained to prevent the ingress of uncontrolled wildfires. A statement of fire management intent exists for Bendidee National Park and Bendidee State Forest. Specific fire management is required to maintain core cypress areas for timber production in the State forest. Any burning in the northern section of the State forest will need to take into account the requirements of bullock jewel butterfly to maintain appropriate ground habitat.

### Commercial use

Sections of Bendidee State Forest are used commercially through cattle grazing, bee keeping and timber harvesting. The management of these sections is in line with the codes of practice for these activities.

## Management directions

Desired outcomes	Actions and guidelines
<p><b>Native plants</b></p> <p>Vegetation communities, including brigalow–belah are conserved and habitat diversity maintained.</p>	A1. Establish or review key monitoring objectives for plant species and communities of conservation significance.
<p><b>Native animals</b></p> <p>Knowledge of native animal species distribution and habitat requirements are increased and used for future management decisions.</p>	<p>A2. Establish or review key monitoring objectives for the bullock jewel butterfly and other species of conservation significance.</p> <p>A3. Investigate the theory that light grazing is beneficial to the bullock jewel butterfly.</p>
<p><b>Aboriginal culture</b></p> <p>Aboriginal cultural values of the protected area and state forest are identified and protected.</p>	A4. Encourage and support Traditional Owners in conducting a comprehensive cultural heritage survey including recording sites, stories, language names and cultural heritage places.
<p><b>Tourism and visitor opportunities</b></p> <p>Sustainable low key nature based recreational opportunities encourage visitors to appreciate the parks natural environment.</p>	A5. Provide access for self-reliant campers or day visitors in a completely natural setting.
<p><b>Partnerships</b></p> <p>Neighbours and interested parties are aware of, and help achieve the desired management outcomes for the park.</p>	A6. Continue to liaise with park neighbours about cooperative arrangements for park management issues, including fire and pest management.
<p><b>Commercial use</b></p> <p>Sustainable use of the state forest for timber production and grazing</p>	A7. Manage and monitor grazing levels for the bullock jewel butterfly and other species of conservation significance.

## Tables – Conservation values management

Table 1: Endangered regional ecosystems

Regional ecosystem number	Description	Biodiversity status
11.4.3	<i>Acacia harpophylla</i> and/or <i>Casuarina cristata</i> shrubby open forest on Cainozoic clay plains	Endangered
11.4.10	<i>Eucalyptus populnea</i> or <i>E. pilligaensis</i> , <i>Acacia harpophylla</i> , <i>Casuarina cristata</i> open forest to woodland on margins of Cainozoic clay plains	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>Homopholis belsonii</i>	-	Endangered	Vulnerable	Low
<b>Animals</b>				
<i>Calyptorhynchus lathami</i>	glossy black-cockatoo	Vulnerable	-	-
<i>Chalinolobus picatus</i>	little pied bat	Near threatened	-	Medium
<i>Cyclorana verrucosa</i>	rough collared frog	Near threatened	-	Low
<i>Hemiaspis damelii</i>	grey snake	Endangered	-	Medium
<i>Hypochrypsops piceata</i>	bulloak jewel	Endangered	-	High
<i>Paradelma orientalis</i>	brigalow scaly-foot	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Medium

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

Scientific name	Common name	Bonn	CAMBA	JAMBA	ROKAMBA
<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>	white-throated needletail	-	✓	✓	✓
<i>Merops ornatus</i>	rainbow bee-eater	-	-	✓	-

Bonn – Bonn Convention

CAMBA – China–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

JAMBA – Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement

ROKAMBA – Republic of Korea–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement