

# Basilisk Range National Park Management Statement 2013

Park size:	2,210ha
Bioregion:	Wet Tropics
QPWS region:	Northern
Local government estate/area:	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
State electorate:	Hinchinbrook



Spectacled flying-fox *Pteropus conspicillatus*. Photo: NPRSR.

## 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 Agreement
✓	China - Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
✓	Draft recovery plan for the spotted-tail quoll (northern sub-species) <i>Dasyurus maculatus gracilis</i> 2011
✓	Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
✓	National recovery plan for the southern cassowary <i>Casuarius casuarius johnsonii</i> 2007
✓	National recovery plan for the spectacled flying-fox <i>Pteropus conspicillatus</i>
✓	Recovery Plan for the endangered cave-dwelling bats, <i>Rhinolophus philippinensis</i> , <i>Hipposideros semoni</i> and <i>Taphozous troughtoni</i> 2001–2005
✓	Recovery plan for the stream-dwelling rainforest frogs of the Wet Tropics biogeographic region of north-east Queensland 2000–2004

## Vision

Basilisk Range National Park is gradually returned to a viable remnant of mesophyll vine forest and essential habitat for the southern cassowary.

## Conservation purpose

Basilisk Range National Park is a coastal lowland foothill feature located north-west of the township of Silkwood. It was dedicated as national park in November 2010 to protect important conservation values, particularly essential southern cassowary habitat.

The area was transferred to national park during the Wet Tropics Forest Transfer Program 2005.

## Protecting and presenting the park's values

### Landscape

The Basilisk Range is primarily Devonian contact metamorphic rock with an area of Ordovician granite on its coastal side. The range rises to an elevation of 394m at Mount Warrubullen.

Basilisk Range National Park is a scenic, natural elevated landscape surrounded by developed agricultural land—predominantly sugar cane, papaya and banana farms.

The park is within the Johnstone River catchment. Liverpool and Meuanbah creeks run along the park's southern and western boundaries. Both are quite large, flood prone rivers.

Basilisk Range National Park is isolated from other protected areas and has been subject to timber harvesting.

Presently, there is no visitor infrastructure (private or public) in the park.

### Regional ecosystems

Six regional ecosystems are conserved on the park. Four have significant biodiversity status covering almost 25 per cent of the park (Table 1).

Vine forest on wet lowlands, foothills and uplands (RE 7.11.1) dominate close to 75 per cent of the park. One endangered shrubland regional ecosystem (RE 7.11.36) with casuarina and grass trees is only found on Basilisk Range. It is distinguished from other similar ecosystems by its occurrence on serpentinite foothills.

The area has been subject to significant impact from fires. Photography from 1960s depicts the eastern slopes as stunted, low open vegetation and grassland.

### Native plants and animals

The upgrade of the Powerlink line from Tully to Innisfail required a comprehensive survey of natural values across a corridor on the park boundary. The report identifies sites in the Basilisk Range area as habitat outliers which may contribute to the values of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (WTWHA)—particularly the two vegetated tributaries of Bombeeta Creek which link the Basilisk Range to the adjacent WTWHA within Wooroonooran National Park (Natural Solutions Environmental Consultants 2006).

Near threatened stream-dwelling frogs (primarily the common mist frog *Litoria rheocola* and Australian lacelid *Nyctimystes dayi*) were identified within most of the permanent streams present on the Basilisk Range during the assessment.

The near threatened ox tongue fern *Antrophyum plantagineum* occurs on the park.

Endangered species may include the northern quoll *Dasyurus hallucatus* and the greater large-eared horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus philippinensis* (large form).

The endangered southern cassowary *Casuarius casuarius johnsonii* (southern population) has been observed and the area is listed as essential habitat. Post-Tropical Cyclone Yasi cassowary feeding stations have been established in the park.

Bird species listed in international agreements include the rufous fantail *Rhipidura rufifrons*, satin flycatcher *Myiagra cyanoleuca*, spectacled monarch *Monarcha trivirgatus*, black-faced monarch *Monarcha melanopsis*, rainbow bee-eater *Merops ornatus* and the white-bellied sea-eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster* (Table 3).

A spectacled flying-fox *Pteropus conspicillatus* colony is located nearby and it is likely they feed in the park. The vulnerable Macleay's fig-parrot *Cyclopsitta diophthalma macleayana* has also been observed on nearby properties and is likely to occur in the park (Table 2).

The park's vegetation is predominantly mesophyll vine forest; however it also contains Corymbia and Eucalyptus open-forest and shrubland with grass trees and she-oaks. All sclerophyll habitats are possible habitat for mahogany gliders and northern quoll.

## Aboriginal culture

The Mamu people have a registered native title claim (QC01/015) that includes the park.

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) has limited knowledge of the Aboriginal cultural significance of the park.

## Tourism and visitor opportunities

Visitor use of Basilisk Range National Park is currently low. No tourism or visitor facilities are provided.

## Partnerships

Traditional Owners are involved in cooperative park management.

## Other key issues and responses

### Pest management

No pests are currently recorded for the park. However, Siam weed *Chromolaena odorata* and other Class 1 weeds occur in the general area.

An approved pest management strategy is yet to be developed.

### Fire management

Fire management is critical in sclerophyll habitats to avoid potential vegetation thickening as a result of fire exclusion.

An approved fire strategy is yet to be developed for the park.

## References

Natural Solutions Environmental Consultants 2006. Powerlink Queensland Final Report Tully to Innisfail Report on the Findings of Targeted Surveys for NES Matters June, 2006 – Appendix B Specialist Flora and Fauna Reports.

## Management directions

Desired outcomes	Actions and guidelines
<p><b>Aboriginal culture</b></p> <p>Traditional Owners are involved in cooperative park management.</p>	<p>A1. Support the involvement of the Traditional Owners in park management.</p>
<p><b>Pest management</b></p> <p>Threats posed by pest plants and animals are identified and managed.</p>	<p>A2. Develop and implement a pest management strategy in consultation with adjoining landholders and other relevant parties.</p> <p>A3. Create a comprehensive list of species.</p> <p>A4. Survey the park for Siam weed and other declared pest species known to occur in the local area.</p>
<p><b>Fire management</b></p> <p>Fire management protects species diversity, life, property and infrastructure.</p>	<p>A5. Develop and implement a fire strategy in consultation with adjoining landholders and other relevant interested parties to protect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the <i>Corymbia intermedia</i> and eucalyptus open-forest and woodlands that are dependent on appropriate fire management regimes</li> <li>• the sclerophyll canopy component of the eucalyptus and corymbia open-forest on lowlands and foothills on metamorphics that requires fire for regeneration, to prevent rainforest encroachment</li> <li>• the endangered regional ecosystem with grass trees and casuarinas historically maintained by regular cane farm burns intruding into the protected area.</li> </ul>

## Tables – Conservation values management

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

Regional ecosystem number	Description	Biodiversity status
7.3.10	Simple-complex mesophyll to notophyll vine forest, on moderately to poorly-drained alluvial plains, of moderate fertility.	Endangered
7.11.18	<i>Corymbia intermedia</i> and/or <i>C. tessellaris</i> +/- <i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i> open-forest to woodland (or vine forest with these species as emergents) on coastal metamorphic headlands and foothills.	Of concern
7.11.24	Closed vineland of wind-disturbed vine forest of metamorphic slopes, often steep and exposed.	Of concern
7.11.36	<i>Allocasuarina littoralis</i> , <i>Corymbia intermedia</i> , <i>Lophostemon suaveolens</i> , <i>Xanthorrhoea johnsonii</i> shrubland on serpentinite foothills, with deep red soils.	Endangered

**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
<b>Plants</b>				
<i>Antrophyum plantagineum</i>	ox tongue fern	Near threatened		Low
<b>Animals</b>				
<i>Casuaris casuarius johnsonii</i> (southern population)	southern cassowary*	Endangered	Endangered	Critical
<i>Cyclopsitta diophthalma macleayana</i>	Macleay's fig-parrot*	Vulnerable		Low
<i>Pteropus conspicillatus</i>	spectacled flying fox*	Least concern	Vulnerable	High

\* These species are not recorded on Wildnet for the park, they have been observed or are likely to be present.

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

Scientific name	Common name	BONN	JAMBA	ROKAMBA	CAMBA
<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>	white-bellied sea-eagle				✓
<i>Merops ornatus</i>	rainbow bee-eater		✓		
<i>Monarcha melanopsis</i>	black-faced monarch	✓			
<i>Myiagra cyanoleuca</i>	satin flycatcher	✓			
<i>Rhipidura rufifrons</i>	rufous fantail	✓			
<i>Symposiarchus 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