

Woocoo National Park Management Statement 2013

Park size:	243ha
Bioregion:	South Eastern Queensland
QPWS region:	Sunshine and Fraser Coast
Local government estate/area:	Fraser Coast Regional Council
State electorate:	Maryborough

Legislative framework

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

Plans and agreements

✓	Japan–Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
---	--

Thematic strategies

✓	Level 2 Fire Management Strategy
✓	Level 2 Pest Management Strategy

Vision

Woocoo National Park will be managed to protect the native plant and animal species and the bat and flying-fox roosting and maternity sites from disturbance. The park will retain its natural setting and recreational pursuits will be low key and low impact. Cultural heritage values will be identified and protected.

Conservation purpose

Woocoo National Park is located along the western edge of the Stoney Range in the Mary River catchment and was previously forest reserve. It conserves areas of notophyll rainforest and eucalypt open forest both of which provide habitat for the grey-headed flying-fox *Pteropus poliocephalus*—vulnerable under the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC), the black flying fox *Pteropus alecto* and the little red flying fox *Pteropus scapulatus*. These species use the park as a roosting and maternity site. Prior to gazettal, the park contained the Woocoo–Stoney Range Scientific Area which was established under Forestry Regulation 1998.

Protecting and presenting the park's values

Landscape

The landscape consists primarily of hills and lowlands on granitic and other pre-Cainozoic igneous rocks. Woocoo National Park is located close to St Mary State Forest, Fairlies Knob National Park, Wongi National Park and Wongi State Forest, which collectively consolidate natural habitat in the area. In addition to protecting part of the Mary River catchment, the park provides habitat and maternity sites to numerous bat and flying fox species. It forms part of the boundary of a bioregional corridor buffer contributing to habitat continuity for these species. The landscape is recovering from past timber harvesting activities.

Regional ecosystems

There are two regional ecosystems of concern on the park (Table 1). Notophyll vine forest and Eucalyptus/Corymbia open forest to woodland cover most of the park with small cleared areas on both the eastern and western sides.

Native plants and animals

Preliminary plant and animal surveys have recorded over 75 species but more comprehensive surveys are necessary. Species of conservation significance are listed in Tables 2 and 3. The vulnerable *Macrozamia parcifolia* is the only threatened plant species currently recorded on the park. It has a Species Management Profile which outlines the threats to its conservation and protective management measures. It is only known from three protected areas and one State forest.

The park serves as a day and maternity camp for the grey-headed flying-fox *Pteropus poliocephalus*, the distribution of which reaches the highest latitude of any pteropodid in the world. Conservation of sites like these on Woocoo National Park is critical to the continued survival and welfare of this species. Several species of bats and flying foxes forage and feed on nectar and fruit from Australian native forest species in the surrounding landscape and nearby State forests. Species include the eastern long-eared bat *Nyctophilus bifax bifax* (vulnerable under the EPBC) and the little red flying fox *Pteropus scapulatus*.

There is evidence that these species have decreased in number over the past 70 years and are no longer present in areas they used to occupy, especially in inland areas.

Aboriginal culture

The park is covered by a native title claim (QC2013/003) on behalf of the Kabi Kabi First Nation people. The Maryborough Region holds high importance to Aboriginal people and there are many sites of Aboriginal cultural importance across the region. Site records in the surrounding region include Aboriginal burials, middens and canoe trees but none have been recorded for the park as it has never been formally surveyed.

Opportunities exist to improve relationships with local Traditional Owner groups and involve them in park management.

Shared-history culture

The region has had an intense association with the forestry industry since the 1860s when Maryborough was established as an industry centre. Prime examples of forestry activities can be found on nearby protected areas and state forests. It is not known what evidence of these activities, if any, exists on the park.

Tourism and visitor opportunities

Limited vehicle access restricts recreational use of the park. There are opportunities for non-vehicle based activities such as bushwalking. Visitors must be self-reliant as there are no facilities provided.

Education and science

Education and research opportunities centre on the park's high scientific value as a bat and flying fox roosting and maternity site.

It is not known what the purpose of the scientific area was or what research was carried out on the area prior to gazettal as national park. Declarations of these areas were often made for purposes of protecting beauty spots, preserving genetic integrity, seed collection and trial plantings. The park is now managed under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* and the scientific area declaration has lapsed.

Partnerships

Regular liaison is maintained with neighbours and others with shared interests in fire management and habitat and wildlife conservation.

Other key issues and responses

Pest management

Pest plants include lantana *Lantana camara*, cat's claw creeper *Macfadyena unguis-cati*, nightshade species *Solanum* spp, and *Cassia*. Control methods used are chemical spraying, manual extraction and the use of biological control agents.

Cats *Felis catus*, pigs *Sus scrofa*, foxes *Vulpes vulpes* and wild dogs *Canis lupus familiaris* frequent the park without causing major impacts at this time. The park is covered by the level 2 pest management strategy for the St Mary aggregation.

The land surrounding the park is used for cattle grazing and fence failures lead to cattle entering the park.

Fire management

The level 2 fire management strategy for the St Mary aggregation covers the park and identifies the need for low intensity burning on woodland edges to reduce impact of wildfire on fire sensitive communities.

Fire should be excluded from bat roosting and maternity sites to conserve habitat.

References

Halford, D (1995). *Macrozamia parcifolia*, in Species Management Manual. Department of Natural Resources, Brisbane.

Management directions

Desired outcomes	Actions and guidelines
<p>Landscape</p> <p>The national park's natural state and current landscape setting is maintained.</p> <p>Habitat extent and diversity is maintained and opportunities for habitat extension identified.</p>	<p>A1. Continue to provide infrastructure consistent with the use of non-motorised forms of transport and low impact recreational opportunities.</p> <p>A2. Monitor vegetation condition for impacts from access, pest plants and encroachment from species which might alter vegetation structure.</p> <p>A3. Promote use of voluntary conservation agreements with neighbours.</p>
<p>Native plants and animals</p> <p>Grey-headed flying-fox communities are protected and maternity sites undisturbed.</p> <p>Information on plants and animals is comprehensive and current.</p>	<p>A4. Manage the maternity sites with the following intent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid unnecessary disturbance • exclude fire • monitor pest and visitor impacts • investigate need for restricted access declaration • support research into management of roosting and maternity sites. <p>A5. Undertake further plant and animal surveys to improve species information and inform park management programs.</p>
<p>Aboriginal culture</p> <p>Aboriginal cultural values of the park are identified and protected.</p>	<p>A6. Encourage Traditional Owners to identify and document values, sites, artefacts and places of cultural heritage significance so that management strategies and decisions relating to fire regimes, access and track maintenance minimise potential threats to these values.</p>
<p>Pest management</p> <p>Cattle and other stock do not enter the park.</p>	<p>A7. Maintain and upgrade fencing where necessary around the perimeter of the park.</p>
<p>Fire management</p> <p>Fire management practises conserve biodiversity values while protecting life and property.</p>	<p>A8. Undertake actions outlined in the fire management strategy for the St Mary aggregation including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no prescribed fire from October to March, during years when macrozamia cones are present on mature plants.

Tables – Conservation values management

Table 1: Of concern regional ecosystems

Regional ecosystem number	Description	Biodiversity status
12.3.11	<i>Eucalyptus siderophloia</i> , <i>E. tereticornis</i> , <i>Corymbia intermedia</i> open forest on alluvial plains usually near coast	Of concern
12.9-10.7	<i>Eucalyptus crebra</i> woodland on sedimentary 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>Macrozamia parcifolia</i>	-	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Critical
Animals				
<i>Pteropus poliocephalus</i>	grey-headed flying-fox	Least concern	Vulnerable	Critical

Table 3: Species listed in international agreements

Scientific name	Common name	Bonn	JAMBA	CAMBA	ROKAMBA
<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