

Giidany Miirlarl -Special site

Muttonbird Island Nature Reserve

Location description and highlights

Muttonbird Island is situated at the entrance to Coffs Harbour and is connected to the marina carpark by a seawall. There is a walking track over the island which traverses a Wedge-tailed Shearwater rookery and ends at a whale-watching platform overlooking the Solitary Islands Marine Park. Views from the island north and south along the coast are spectacular.

About this program

The program provides the double experience of the sights, sounds and smells of a Wedge-tailed Shearwater rookery, plus an introduction to the Gumbaynggirr cultural significance of the island.

Objectives

Students will understand life cycle of Wedge-tailed Shearwaters and their dependence on the island habitat.
Students will appreciate the Gumbaynggirr view of the island's significance.
Students will learn of threats to the island ecosystem.
Students will wish to assist in the protection of the Reserve.

Program outline

- Toilets are available at the carpark and at Jetty Beach picnic area.
- Group meets at the new education and performance venue at the base of the island, a 500m walk from the carpark.
- Short introduction
- Divide into groups if appropriate.
- Older groups walk up the island track (1.2km return); younger ones may continue activities at the base.
- Walk back to carpark and bus for return to school.

Links to support material for schools

About Muttonbird Island Nature Reserve

- www.environment.nsw.gov.au/nationalparks/parkhome.aspx?id=N0457

Resource package - Muttonbird Island Nature Reserve

- Teacher Resource Kit: Rookery Roundabout, Parts 1-3
- Worksheet: North east NSW - Gumbaynggirr place names
- Aboriginal language database of bushtucker names and place names

What is a National Park?

- www.environment.nsw.gov.au/edresources/TeachersKitNationalpark.htm

Additional references

Program outline

Levels:

Stages 2-3

Key learning areas:

HSIE - Australia: You're standing in it
- Places: then, now and tomorrow
Science - Our Australia
- Environment matters

Key outcomes:

- Students explain why the Reserve has heritage value
- Students explain how various beliefs and practices influence the ways in which people interact with, change and value their environment
- Students explore changes that occur in environmental areas

Location:

Muttonbird Island Nature Reserve

Length:

Two and a half hours

Time of Day:

Morning or afternoon September to March

Design technique:

- Students observe and listen
- Students ask questions
- Students discuss threats to seabirds and native plants on the island
- Active learning games

Equipment used:

Badges for increase ceremony activity, Rookery Roundabout booklet, didjeridu, CD of bird calls

Additional equipment:

Nil

Teacher resources:

Resource package on DECCW website.

Student resources:

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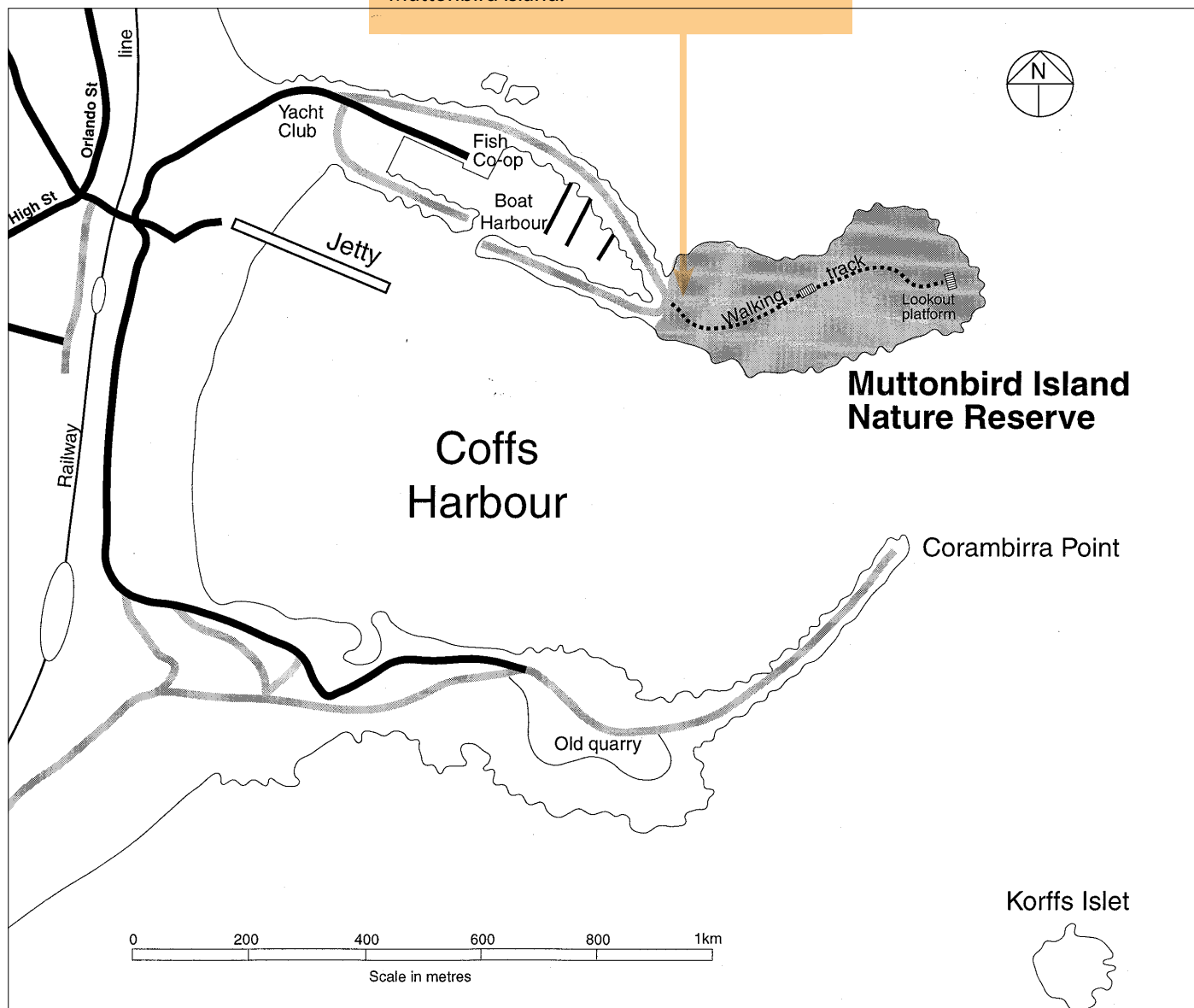
Muttonbird Island Nature Reserve

Location map

Meet at base of Muttonbird Island

In Coffs Harbour, turn off the Pacific Highway at Orlando Street, or via Albany Street to Harbour Drive (High Street). At Jetty Village turn across the railway to reach the Marina carpark.

Walk along the seawall to the new education and performance venue at the base of Muttonbird Island.



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Level of difficulty

Medium

Paved pathway with some steep sections - not suitable for wheelchairs

What to bring and wear

Sunhat, walking shoes, water

Lunch if planning to lunch at the Jetty picnic area

First Aid kit

Facilities available

Outdoor environmental education, cultural heritage and performance venue
(outdoor meeting space)

Toilets at marina carpark and at Jetty Beach Picnic Area

Maintained walking track

Interpretive signage

Supervision

Discovery Rangers will guide and encourage students as they carry out their field studies. It is the responsibility of the school to provide sufficient numbers of adult supervisors as required by the NSW Department of Education and Training. Students should be accompanied by their class teacher, who will be expected to assist in keeping the students on focus.

Student behaviour

Please note that permission has been given for the Aboriginal Discovery Ranger to use bush foods as an educational tool. Students and other members of the general public are not permitted to pick or remove any plant material from the Nature Reserve. For their own safety, students should be instructed to stay with the group at all times. It is vital to the safety of the seabirds that students stay on the track at all times while walking through the rookery area. They must not jump or climb on either the vegetation or any structures in the park.

Important Aboriginal Cultural Note

Muttonbird Island is a 'special place' and many stories exist. Some of these stories are concerned with gender restrictions. Aboriginal people should consult with their families before going on the island.

Photo permissions

Photos of your group may be taken during this activity for use in National Parks and Wildlife Service promotional products. Please advise any objections.



Excursion planner



Wedge-tailed Shearwater burrow

National Park code of behaviour

- All features in the park are protected and nothing may be damaged or removed
- Stay on the walking tracks
- Light fires only in the fireplaces provided
- No pets are allowed
- Respect the rights of others and keep noise to a minimum
- Please take all litter home

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Safety information

This document provides background information to assist teachers in their risk management planning for excursions. Please make your own risk assessment based on the information provided. Information is current as at January 2010. Contact the Discovery Coordinator if more information is required.

Activity: Discovery Ranger guided walk on paved path from base of island (end of breakwall) to viewing platform at east end of island. Return distance 1200m, vertical rise about 30m.

Potential risks	Suggested control strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Biting insects such as bees, wasps and mosquitoes. . Pre-existing medical conditions . Interactions with other visitors. . Students lost or separated from group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Students to wear suitable walking shoes (no thongs or sandals) and long clothing. . Discovery Rangers to provide safety talk identifying hazards and emphasising care and respect for each other and the public. . First aid kits to be carried by group leaders. . Ensure students are closely supervised by teachers/carers, walk in an orderly manner (no running), remain on the track and keep together as group. . Discovery Rangers to brief teachers/carers on route and procedure for waiting at all stops. . Students susceptible to asthma to carry personal ventolin inhaler. Slow group down on steep section. . Students at risk of anaphylactic shock to have access to own EpiPen according to individual health plan. . High risk students to be identified and monitored by teachers/carers. . Teachers conduct regular head counts.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Severe weather conditions. Strong winds and storms causing falling vegetation, hail or lightning strikes. . Exposure to sun, rain or cold conditions. . Atmospheric conditions such as dust or smoke. . Risk of bushfires in the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Head teacher to contact Area Office for advice if severe weather or very high fire danger is predicted. . Students should wear warm clothes and raincoats (no umbrellas) or sunhats and long sleeves/pants depending on forecast. . Postpone or shorten excursion if severe weather warning issued and high likelihood of storm impact in local area. . Postpone excursion in periods of very high dust or smoke pollution. . Postpone excursion in periods of very high to catastrophic fire danger.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Ankle injury from stepping into breeding burrows of wedge-tailed shearwaters. . Variations in track surfaces (trip hazards). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Students to remain on paved track at all times to protect burrows and students. . Hazards on track to be identified to whole group when encountered.

Safety information

Location:

Muttonbird Island Nature Reserve
Marina breakwall
Coffs Harbour Jetty NSW 2450

Staff Accreditation:

All Discovery Rangers have current Senior First Aid accreditation and carry first aid kits.
All Discovery Rangers have been screened for child-related employment and have completed a Prohibited Employment Declaration

Access:

Suitable for all age groups and moderate fitness levels (steep sections).
Wheelchair access to base of island only.

Emergencies:

Staff are trained to deal with emergency situations and emergency procedures are in place.
The emergency evacuation area is located at the end of the sea wall at the base of the island.
Discovery Rangers have been instructed to call an ambulance whenever there is any doubt as to the continued well-being of a student or other visitor.
Ongoing supervision of students following first aid treatment will be the responsibility of the visiting school.

Contact details:

Site Management
NPWS North Coast Region
Coffs Coast Area
Marina Drive (PO Box J200)
Coffs Harbour Jetty NSW 2450
Ph: (02) 6652 0900
Fax: (02) 6651 9525

Education Program

National Parks Discovery for schools
Discovery Coordinator
Dorrigo Rainforest Centre
Dorrigo NSW 2453
Ph: (02) 6657 2309
Mob: 0428 247 297
Fax: (02) 6657 2145
email: North.CoastRegionDiscovery@environment.nsw.gov.au
In an emergency call 000
NPWS after hours duty officer 02 6642 3620