

Abattoir Swamp Environmental Park

Progress Report: 2021—2025

Prepared by: Friends of Abattoir Swamp



Introduction

Mareeba Shire Council (MSC) formalised a management agreement with the Mitchell River Watershed Management Group (MRWMG) 1 May 2021 for the management of the park for public interest.

Following the execution of the management agreement with MSC, MRWMG drafted Terms of Reference to form a subcommittee of local people who would be keen to maintain close involvement with the park and who have the expertise and passion to ensure that it is managed properly.

This group convened for the first time in June 2021 and have met for discussions and working sessions. The groups has become known as the "Friends of Abattoir Swamp". Carol Iles has served as volunteer Convenor for the Friends since its inception.

This document is a review of progress at the Abattoir Swamp Environmental Park, covering the period 2021-2025.



Carol Iles and Lloyd Nielsen (Friend of Abattoir Swamp)

Management of the Park

The Park is managed to suit both immediate needs (eg, repairs to the birdhide) as well as to advance longer-term goals (eg, design and provision of interpretive signage).

Two management documents have been produced that consider the wetland as a whole. These are:

- "Abattoir Swamp Site Description and Preliminary Report." June 1993. G. Barnes and M. Newton, and
- "Abattoir Swamp Master Plan: Remediation and Management Actions for Positive Ecosystem Functions," 2018. J. Brisbin and G. Kay.

These documents describe the history of the wetlands and consider a range of future outcomes for the wetland and surrounds. The 2018 document is structured to encourage ongoing updates and revisions the Park changes over time.

Agreed Principles

The 2018 Master Plan listed 5 Agreed Principles. These are:

- 1. The wetland is not intended to be a "pristine, natural environment", insulated from humans and their influences.
- 2. The wetland should provide habitat and amenity for as much biological life as possible, both in quantity and diversity, supporting endemic, native, and exotic species (within legal constraints).
- 3. The wetland should be a "collaborating partner" with the primary producers who neighbour it, both offering ecosystem services to, and benefiting from, the ongoing grazing and cane operations.
- 4. The facilities should be designed to encourage use of the Park as an observation and learning site for our community and visitors.
- 5. The Management Strategies in this Plan and in future works must seek to minimise ongoing maintenance while maximising the amenity of the Park.

These Principles are used by Friends of the Swamp to guide the activities and strategies undertaken at the Park.





Working and Planning meeting with Friends and Regional NRM stakeholders



Cleaning the Bird Hide



The Park is central to the prime birdwatching country centred on Julatten and the Mount Lewis range, stretching east to the Wet Tropics World Heritage area and connecting westward to a high conservation zone transitioning to the Gulf Savannas.

Reporting against the Principles

Here we present a summary of activities that have been undertaken since 2021, aligned with the 5 Principles.

Principle 1: Accessible and adaptable

The Park has been promoted as a public asset, and visitors are encouraged to experience the amenity of the facility. The Guest Book reveals a steady stream of both locals and visitors who come and comment on what they have seen and learned.

In terms of managing flora at the site, although native species are preferentially tended and protected wherever possible, there is no effort to eradicate non-native species where they are serving as habitat or feed that benefits the rest of the ecosystem.

The key ongoing issue is control/reduction of the Olive Hymenachne, which tends to crowd out all other vegetation in the swampy areas.

Principle 2: Maximise biological abundance

Since 2021, Friends volunteers have concentrated on planting bird attracting flora, removing weeds on the accessible land areas and maintaining pathways and facilities (picnic area and bird hide).

Water testing and a macro-invertebrate survey has been conducted once. The Friends are seeking volunteers interested in continuing this effort.



Field effort to record water quality and collect samples for biodiversity survey (macro-invertebrates)

Principle 3: Collaborating partnerships

The Friends have collaborated with graziers adjacent on the southern side, Matt Allen and Anne Gallagher.

Matt and Anne have a long-standing agistment practice whereby their cattle are allowed selective access to the wetland during the late dry when pasture feed is running low. Their cattle intensively graze on the invasive Olive Hymenachne, helping to provide some limited relief to the wetland areas.

Matt and Anne have been stalwart supporters of the Park. They have donated many hours of their own resources, equipment, and labour to maintaining the perimeter fences. Matt has also brought in his slasher to keep a walk open to the far eastern end of the Park.

On the northern side of the Park a change of land owner has resulted in the cane paddocks being converted into grazing land.



Competition amongst native veg and invasive exotics is a continual process.

Principle 4: Observation and learning

Under the leadership of Georgie Montague, the Friends applied for and obtained a grant from the Queensland Government Gambling Community Benefit Fund

for\$5,285.00 to erect six information signs depicting the history, bird, insect and reptile communities (Appendix 1).

These signs have been put into place and have been well received by locals and visitors who have gained a better appreciation of the wetland and what the area in general has to offer with regards to the wildlife and history. In addition, posters depicting more wildlife of the area have been placed in the bird hide along with visitor and wildlife sightings books.



Keith and Lindsay Fisher, Georgie Montague and Carol Iles

To further improve the information flow a dedicated Facebook page (Friends of Abattoir Swamp https://www.facebook.com/groups/994812734667471) has been set up for visitors to post images and share their experiences of visiting the swamp, this site now has 165 members (September 2025).

Lists of all species (Appendix 2) have been compiled by members of the "Friends of Abattoir Swamp" and where appropriate have been integrated with the two previous management plan species lists (July 1993 and 2018-2019).

A bird species brochure, listing 187 birds that could currently be seen at the swamp has been made available in the bird hide (Appendix 3). Over 230 species have been seen here historically, but habitat changes since records were first kept in the late 1990's have reduced the number of species that can utilise the wetland. Most of this

decline in bird diversity is due to the loss of open water bodies as a result of the invasive Olive Hymenachne.

A new sign directing to the bird hide was made by a local volunteer and repainting of existing signs was carried out. The group also collaborated with local bee experts in protecting native bees.

The importance of the wetland in the local region cannot be underestimated due to its accessibility, especially for the birdwatching tourists both Australian and international. Over the last 10+ years many previously important areas within the Mareeba Shire, which birdwatchers had access, to have been lost, eg. Mareeba Wetlands (private tours only), Mt. Carbine Dam (mining re-commenced), Lake Mitchell (change of tenure preventing access to dam). Most importantly, Mt. Lewis is no longer accessible since Cyclone Jasper damaged the road.



Cyclone Jasper brought intense flooding and the associated sand deposition along eastern boundary buried the fenceline. Mitchell River successfully secured recovery funding to contract neighbours Matt and Anne to repair the fence in 2025.

Principle 5: Minimise effort, maximise amenity

This Principle has been partially addressed in Principle 4 as maintenance has been minimised, partly to allow better plant regeneration and partly by necessity in view of the small number of volunteers and costs beyond the reach of this volunteer group.

Obviously, the Olive Hymenachne is the major problem, having proven difficult to solve by other organisations who have invested a lot of money trying to find a solution. A test program on the nearby Wetherby Station to control the hymenachne will be watched to see if there is any positive outcome from the treatment, which might be applicable toAbattoir Swamp.

Another problem is the state of the car park road which needs attention mainly due to potholes which hold water. This needs remedial work to fix, again beyond the scope of our volunteers.

We hope to be able to continue keeping the area accessible and tidy as it is a valuable resource for the Mareeba Shire attracting many visitors and has become a must-visit site for the many birdwatchers, (estimate 3000+ per year), who come to see some of the unique birds to be found here. Birds such as Lovely Fairy-wren are resident here and more easily seen here than other places.

We hope to continue to work with interested people and organisations such as local landholders, Mareeba Shire Council, Julatten and Molloy Association of Ratepayers and Residents, and Gulf Savannah NRM.



Maintaining open water at the wetland is very important for aquatic birds. Hymenachne constantly closes in the water surface and chokes off oxygen and sunlight needed for a healthy ecosystem.

Friends of Abattoir Swamp



Committee Members

- Convener Carol Iles
- Treasurer Andrew Iles
- Committee Members Keith and Lindsay Fisher, John Brisbin

We would like to thank the following people and organisations in paticular for their ongoing support:

- Angela Toppin Mareeba Shire Mayor
- Lenore Wyatt Deputy Mareeba Shire Mayor
- Nipper Brown Councillor and Julatten native
- JAMARR Julatten and Molloy Association of Ratepayers and Residents

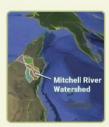
And all local residents and helping hands who have been involved in looking after Abattoir Swamp and have applied their expertise in service to the flora and fauna that make this such a special place.

Appendix 1. Interpretive Signs

welcome to Abattoir Swamp

Site Description

Abattoir Swamp's location of the ecotone between the Wet Tropics and the wet-dry Gulf Savanna country. The Swamp located at 450m and the catchment is about two square kilometers, extending SW to the Mount Lewis range. Water drains to the SE corner flowing into Bushy Creek and ultimately into the Mitchell River, Rainfall averages about 1300mm and, in extreme rainfall, Bushy Creek to the east can overflow into the swamp. The winter months are generally dry and the swamp usually dries out by late spring.



A Short History of Abattoir Swamp

The name Abattoir Swamp reflects the recent history of this farming area as there was a slaughterhouse on the adjacent hill operating from the early 1950s for about 10 years. The area was grazed until 1989 when it was sold to the Mossman Central Mill who cleared the remaining trees around the swamp to plant sugar cane. A plan to fill in and level the swamp to plant sugar cane. A plan to fill in and level the swamp met local opposition, and the start of a World Heritage tree planting scheme led to the mill donating 9ha of the land to the Mareeba Shire Council (MSC) in 1991 for a public conservation reserve. In 1993, after developing a management plan, the Council foreds the hilding of a backgraft hild go are a start to the public conservation.

dowever, when the funding ceased, only limited maintenance occurred. Since that time the open bodies of water have been overtaken by introduced Olive Hymenachne grass (H. amplexicaults), which interbred with a native variety, and this has led to a rapid decline in waterbird diversity. In 2015 local volunteers obtained funds to re-build the soardwalk and also to reprofile some of the swamp to create more suitable habitat for waterbirds, but the aggressive hymenachne has since overgrown the pools.

A new management plan was developed in 2018, and in July 2021, MSC gave The Mitchell River Watershed Management Group responsibility for all maintenance of the reserve for an initial five years, for which a sub-group of volunteers called the Abattoir Swamp Management Group (ASMG) was formed. ASMG has weeded, planted trees, created paths and installed new signage for visitors, and is working on ways to reduce the impact of hymenachne and potentially improve water quality in the swamp. The Management Plan and a bird brochure can be downloaded from the files link on the Friends of Abattoir Swamp Facebook page, where you can also keep up to date with progress and wildlife observations.



Julatten History

Once home to indigenous peoples such as the Koko Muluridji, Western Yalanji and Djabugay, the area was traversed by prospectors in the 1870's, then opened up as a vital route to the goldfields of the Hodgkinson to the west. By the 1920s there were the beginnings of a small community called Bushy Creek. The vast forested area was slowly cleared and much of the land was used for dairy farming with a butter factory opening in 1924. A school was established that year and by 1926 a branch of the railway was completed from Mt Molloy. A station was built next to the butter factory and the name of the area was changed to Julatten (meaning a small creek). Timber and mining were an important part of the settlement as was growing of a range of crops. The northern area of Euluma was opened up in the 1930's and eventually in 1948 the range road was completed linking Julatten to the coast.





HONEYEATERS of Abattoir Swamp

Honeyeaters are some of the most obvious birds seen at Abattoir Swamp, with a remarkable 22 species probing into the flowers of nectar-bearing trees and shrubs. They range in size from the Scarlet Honeyeater, Australia's smallest, to the much larger Blue-faced Honeyeater and friarbirds.

The greatest diversity of species can be seen when the yellowish flowers emerge on the paperbark trees along the boardwalk. Other plants such as eucalypt trees, grevilleas and callistemons flower at different times of the year and between them provide a constant food source. Honeyeaters, like most birds, are opportunistic and will exploit other food sources such as fruit and insects, especially when breeding.















Appendix 2. Species Lists Yearly Bird Species Recorded 2022-2025

Total Confirmed Species	2022	2023	2024	2025		2022	2023	2024	202	;	2022	2023	2024	2025		2022	2023	2024	2025		2022	2023	2024	2025
Orange-footed (Scrubfowl) Megapode	LVLL	2020	2021	√	Black-necked Stork	LVLL	2020	<u>∠∪∠.</u>	/	Laughing Kookaburra	∠	√ /	<u> </u>	_	Striated Pardalote	/	√	✓ ·		Flyrobin (Flycatcher)	/	✓	1	✓
Brown Quail				1	Royal Spoonbill	V		1		Blue-winged Kookaburra	1	1	1	√	Fairy Gerygone	1		1	✓ Eastern Yellov		1	1	1	√
Magnie Goose	1	1	1		Straw-necked lbis	1	1	1	1	Nankeen Kestrel			1	1	White-throated Gerygone			1	✓ Pale-vellow R	əbin		1	1	1
Wandering Whistling-Duck	1		1		Australian White Ibis	1		1		Australian Hobby					Large-billed Gerygone	1	1	1	✓ Golden-heade	d Cisticola	1			1
Black Swan			1		Brolga			1		Brown Falcon		1			Large-billed Scrubwren	1	1	1	✓ Australian Rea	ed Warbler				1
Green Pygmy-goose	1				Black Bittern		1	1	1	Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo	1	1	1	1	Varied Sittella	1		1	✓ Tawny Grass	bird	1	1	1	1
Australian Wood Duck	1				Nankeen Night-Heron	1				Pale-headed Rosella					Australasian Figbird	1	1	1	✓ Fairy Martin		1	1		1
Hardhead	✓				Eastern Cattle Egret	1		1	1	Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	√	1	V	1	Olive-backed Oriole				✓ Tree Martin		V	✓	✓	✓
Pacific Black Duck	✓	1	√		White-necked Heron		1	1	1	Red-winged Parrot	1	1			Green (Yellow) Oriole	✓		1	✓ Welcome Swa	illow	V	<	V	✓
Grey Teal	✓		✓		Eastern Great Egret	1	1	✓	1	Rainbow Lorikeet	1	1	V	✓	Grey-headed (Grey) Whistler	1	✓	1	✓ Silvereye		1	✓	1	1
Australasian Grebe	✓		1		Plumed (Intermediate) Egret			1		Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	V		✓	1	Rufous Whistler		1		✓ Common Myna	i		✓		
White-headed Pigeon	✓			1	White-faced Heron			1		Double-eyed Fig-Parrot		1		1	Golden Whistler	1	1	1	✓ Metallic Starlin	g	1		1	1
Spotted Dove	1	1	√		Little Egret		1	1		Red-winged Parrot	1	1	✓	1	Little (Rufous) Shrikethrush	1	1		✓ Mistletoebird		1	1	1	1
Brown Cuckoo-Dove	✓	1	√	1	Little Pied Cormorant	1		1	1	Noisy Pitta				1	Bower's Shrikethrush - E	1		1	✓ Sahul Sunbird		1	1	1	1
Pacific Emerald Dove	1		√	1	Little Black Cormorant	1		1	1	Great Bowerbird	1		✓	1	Grey Shrikethrush				✓ Scaly-br (Nutr	neg) Mannikin				√
Crested Pigeon	1				Australasian Darter	1		1	1	Lovely Fairy-wren			✓	1	Eastern Whipbird	1	1		Chestnut-brea	sted Mannikin	1	1	1	1
Squatter Pigeon	✓				Bush Stone-curlew		1			Red-backed Fairy-wren	1	1	✓	1	Barred Cuckoo-shrike			1	Red-browed F	inch	1		1	1
Diamond Dove	✓				Banded Lapwing	1				Banded Honeyeater	1	1	✓		Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike		1	1	✓ Double-barred	Finch	1	1	1	1
Peaceful Dove	✓	1	√	√	Masked Lapwing	1		1	1	White-streaked Honeyeater	1				Sahul Cicadabird	1	1	1	✓					
Bar-shouldered Dove	✓	1	√	√	Comb-crested Jacana	1		1		White-cheeked Honeyeater	1	1	✓	1	White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike	1	1		✓					
Torresian Imperial-Pigeon	✓	1			Latham's Snipe					Brown Honeyeater	1	1	✓	1	White-winged Triller	1	1	1	✓					
Wompoo Fruit-Dove	✓				Black-shouldered Kite	1	1	✓	1	Blue-faced Honeyeater	✓		✓	1	Varied Triller				✓ Radjah Sheldu	ck – escapees?	V			
Superb Fruit-Dove	✓				Square-tailed Kite	✓	1	✓	1	White-throated Honeyeater	1	1	✓	✓	Pied Currawong		✓							
Topknot Pigeon	✓	✓	✓	✓	Pacific Baza	✓	1	✓	1	White-naped Honeyeater	1	1	✓	✓	Black Butcherbird				✓					
Tawny Frogmouth	✓	✓			Wedge-tailed Eagle	√		✓	1	Black-chinned Honeyeater	1	1	✓	✓	Pied Butcherbird	✓	✓	√	✓					
White-throated Needletail	✓				Little Eagle					Macleay's Honeyeater - E	1		✓	✓	White-breasted Woodswallow	✓	✓		✓					
Australian Swiftlet	✓	1	✓	1	Swamp Harrier		1		1	Little Friarbird		1	✓	✓	Yellow-breasted Boatbill	1	1	1	✓					
Pacific (Fork-tailed) Swift		1		1	Spotted Harrier			1		Hornbill Friarbird	1	1	✓		Northern Fantail	1	✓	1	✓					
Pheasant Coucal	✓	1	1	1	Grey Goshawk				1	Noisy Friarbird	1	1	✓		Willie Wagtail	1	✓	1	✓					
Eastern Koel	✓		1		Brown Goshawk	1	1	1	1	Dusky Honeyeater	1	1	✓	1	Australian Rufous Fantail	1	✓.	1	✓					
Channel-billed Cuckoo	✓		1	1	Collared Sparrowhawk		1			Scarlet Honeyeater	1	1	✓	1	Grey Fantail	1		1	✓					
Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo	✓				White-bellied Sea-Eagle		1	✓	1	Eastern Spinebill	1				Spangled Drongo	1	✓.	1	✓					
Shining Bronze-Cuckoo	✓	1		1	Whistling Kite	1		1	1	Brown-backed Honeyeater	1	1	✓	1	Leaden Flycatcher				✓					
Little Bronze-Cuckoo	✓	1	1	1	Brahminy Kite		1		1	Rufous-throated Honeyeater	1				Satin Flycatcher									
Fan-tailed Cuckoo		1	1	1	Black Kite	1		1	1	Yellow-spotted Honeyeater	1	1	✓.	1	Restless Flycatcher		✓.		✓					
Sahul Brush Cuckoo	✓	1	1	1	Rainbow Bee-eater	1	1	1	1	Lewin's Honeyeater	1	1	✓.	1	Pied Monarch - E	1			✓					
Buff-banded Rail	✓		√	1	Dollarbird	1		1	1	Cryptic Honeyeater - E	1	1	✓.	1	White-eared Monarch	1	✓.	1	✓					
Spotless Crake	✓	1	√	1	Little Kingfisher		1		1	Yellow Honeyeater	1	1	✓.	1	Spectacled Monarch	1	✓.	1	✓					
Pale-vented Bush-hen	✓	1	✓	1	Azure Kingfisher	1		✓	1	Bridled Honeyeater - E	1		1	1	Black-faced Monarch	1	1	1	✓					
White-browed Crake	✓	1	V	1	Forest Kingfisher	1	1	✓	1	Yellow-faced Honeyeater	1	1	1	1	Magpie-lark	1	✓	1	✓					
Dusky Moorhen	✓		V		Sacred Kingfisher	1	1	✓	1	Spotted Pardalote					Torresian Crow				✓					
Purple (Australasian) Swamphen	✓				Buff-br Paradise Kingfisher				1	Red-browed Pardalote	√				Victoria's Riflebird - E	✓	✓	1	✓					

Other Fauna Species Recorded: 2021-2025

Dragonfly Species	Moths				
Redtail Ceriagrion aeruginosum	Cotana serranotata				
Eastern Billabongfly Austroagrion watsoni	Enispa parva				
Red-tipped Shadefly Argiocnemis rubescens	Pingasa blanda				
Australian Emperor Anax papuensis	Glycythyma chrysorycta				
Red Swampdragon Agrionoptera insignis allogene	Anthela astata				
Black-headed Skimmer Crocothemis nigrifrons	Yellow Tussock Moth Euproctis lutea				
Fiery Skimmer Orthetrum villosovittatum	Magpie Moth Nyctemera secundiana				
Green Skimmer Orthetrum serapia	Looper Moth Comibaena mariae				
Palemouth Brachydiplax denticauda	Guava Moth Ophiusa disjungens				
Darkmouth Brachydiplax duivenbode i	Variegated Avatha Avatha discolor				
Scarlet Percher Diplacodes haematodes	Lapet Moth Porela cinerea				
Wandering Percher Diplacodes bipunctata	Pale Striated Hawk Moth Hippotion boerhaviae				
Chalky Percher Diplacodes trivialis	Cup Moth Doratifera Sp.				
Painted Grasshawk Neurothemis stigmatizans					
Pygmy Percher Nannodiplax rubra	Other Insects				
Red Arrow Rhodothemis lieftincki	Muscleman Tree Ant Podomyrma gastralis				
Common Glider <i>Tramea loewii</i>	Polyrhachis thusnelda				
Sapphire Flutterer Rhyothemis princeps	Owlfly sp.				
Graphic Flutterer Rhyothemis graphiptera	Rentz's Treerunner Mantis Ciulfina rentzi				
Australian Tiger Ictinogomphus australis	Crane Fly				
	Bugs				
Butterfly Species	Orange Paper Wasp				
Varied (Common) Eggfly Hypolimnas bolina	Crusader Bug Mictis profana				
Common Albatross Appias paulina	Green Jewel Bug Lampromicra senator				
Tawny Coster Acraea terpsicore	Shield bug Bromocoris souefi				
Clearwing Swallowtail Cressida cressida					
Ulysses Butterfly Papilio ulysses	Beetles				
Red-banded Jezebel <i>Delias mysis</i>	Leaf Beetle Phyllocharis cyanicornis				
Swamp Tiger Danaus affinis					
Small Green-banded Blue Psychonotis caelius	Spiders				
Common Crow Euploea core	Orb Weaver genus Neoscona				
Red-banded Jezabel <i>Delias mysis</i>	Northern Jewel Spider Gasteracantha fornicata				
	Stick Insects				
	Wuelfing's Stick Insect Acrophylla wuelfingi				

	Amphibian Species
M	1arbled Frog <i>Limnodynastes convexiusculus</i>
Εâ	astern Dwarf Tree Frog <i>Litoria fallax</i>
D	ainty Tree Frog Litoria gracilenta
W	/hite-lipped Tree Frog <i>Litoria infrafranata</i>
M	1ontane Toadlet <i>Uperoleia altissima</i>
Ca	ane Toad* <i>Rhinella marina</i>
	Reptile Species
В	lack-throated Rainbow-skink Carlia rostralis
St	triped skink Ctenotus spp.
Co	ommon Tree snake <i>Dendrelaphis punctulata</i>
To	ortoise Elseya sp.
Τá	aipan Oxyuranus scutellatus
Ke	eelback <i>Tropidonophis mairii</i>
(S	crub) Amethystine Python Simalia kinghorni
В	rown Tree Snake <i>Boiga irregularis</i>
Ea	astern Water Dragon Physignathus lesseuri
Ea	astern Blue-tongue <i>Tiliqua scincoides</i>
La	ace Monitor <i>Varanus varius</i>
Fr	rill-necked Lizard <i>Chlamydosaurus kingii</i>
	Mammals
Α	gile Wallaby <i>Macropus agilis</i>
N	orthern Brown Bandicoot Isoodon macrourus
C+	triped Possum Dactylopsila trivirgarter





Plant species recorded

Trees	Swamp Mahogany Lophostemon sauveolens	Vine	Additional Plant Species Recorded in 1993
Northern Wattle Acacia crassicarpa	Broad-leaved Paperbark Melaleuca viridiflora	Aus. Native Duchman's Pipe Aristolochia thozetii	Knotweed Percicaria sp. (weed?)
Silky Wattle Acacia holoserica	Macaranga Macaranga involucrata	Pastel Flower Pseuderanthemum variabile	Water Lily Nymphaea sp. (extinct?)
Spike Wattle Acacia polystachya	Red Kamala Mallotus philippensis	Cockspur Thorn Maclura cochinchinensis	Water Snowflake Nymphoides indica (extinct?)
New Guinea Wattle Acacia aulacocarpa	Mango Mangifera superba	Lawyer vine Calamus radicalis	Yellow Snowflake Nymphoides icrenata (extinct?)
Red Ash Alphitonia excelsa	Paperbark Tea-tree Melaleuca quinquinervia		Nardoo (extinct?)
Sarsaparilla Alphitonia petrei	Leichardt Tree Nauclea orientalis	Ferns	Wandering Jew (weed)
Hank Milkwood Alstonia muelleriana	Bleeding Heart Omalanthus novo-guineensis	Swamp Shield-Fern Cyclosaurus interruptus	Caldesia Caldesia sp. (3 species occur in Australia)
Blush Walnut Bellschmedia obtusifolia	Pandanus Pandanus sp.	Climbing Maidenhair Lygodium microphyllum	Limnophila sp (5 species occur in Australia)
Fart Bush Brenya stipitata	Quinine Bush Pelatostigma pubescens		Blue Hyacinth Monochoria cyanea
Scrub Turpentine Canarium australasicum	Wild Pear Persoonia falcata		Ferny Azolla Azolia pinnata
Corky Bark Carallia brachiata	Cocky Apple Planchonia careya		
Rose She-oak Casuarina torulosa	Creek Premna Premna serratifolia		
Native Olive Chionanthus ramiflorus	Umbrella Tree Schleffera actinophylla	Lily	Additional Grasses & Sedges Recorded in 1993
Medicine Bush Coelospermum reticulatum	Brown Birch Scolopia braunii	Schelhammera multiflora	Sceria poaeformis
Northern Laurel Cryptocarya hypospodia	River Cherry Syzygium tierneyanum	Flax Lily dianella sp	Large Sedges Cyperus spp.
Glossy Tamarind Cryptocarya laevigata	Damson Terminalia sericocarpa		Small Sedges Cyperus spp.
Rusty laurel Cryptocarya mackinonniana	False Fig Timonius timon		Sedge Funbrislysis sp.
Brown laurel Cryptocarya triplinervis	Pandanus sp.	Orchids	Sedge Fuireana sp.
Blue Nun Delarbrea michieana	Native Gardenia Larsenaikia ochreata	Tea-Tree Orchid Dendrobium canaiculatum	Spikerush Eleocharis sp. (acuta?)
Bony Quandong Elaeocarpus arnhemicus			
Silver Quandong Elaeocarpus augustifolius	Grasses		
Poplar Gum Eucalyptus platyphylla	Kangaroo Grass Themeda triandra	Weeds	
Cadaga Eucalyptus trrelliana	Golden Beard Grass Chrysopogon fallax	Buddha Pea Aeschynomene indica*	Additional Trees Recorded in 1993
Broad-leaved Poplar Gum Eucalyptus platyphylla	Swamp Ricegrass Leersia hexandra*	Billy Goat Weed Ageratum houstonianum *	Hickory Wattle Acacia aulacocarpa sp. aff.
Ghost Gum Eucalyptus papuana	Black Speargrass Heteropogon contortus	Pea Vine Centrosema pubescens*	
Blue Gum Eucalyptus tereticornis	Para grass Brachiaria mutica*	Crowsfoot Eleusine indica	
Corkwood Euodia elleryana	Forest Bluegrass Bothriochloa bladhii	Lantana Lantana camara*	*Introduced Species
Pink Poplar Euroschinus falcata	Guinea Grass Panicum maximum*	Ischameum australe	
Cluster Fig Ficus congesta	Dallis Grass Paspalum dilatatum*	Primrose Ludwigia spp.	
Small-leaved Fig Ficus obliqua	Giant Rat's Tail Grass Sporobolus jacquemontii*	Giant Sensitive Weed Mimosa invisa*	
Sandpaper Fig Ficus opposita	Tully Koronivia Grass Urochloa humidicola	Common Sensitive Weed Mimosa pudica*	
Sandpaper Fig Ficus coronata	Molasses Grass Melinis minutiflora	Common (Australian) Sage Salvia plebeia*	
Banyan Ficus virens	Brunoniella acaulis subsp. acaulis (small herb)	Flannel Weed Sida cordifolia*	
Weeping Fig Ficus benjamina	Wombat Berry Eustrephus latifolius	Sida Retusa (Paddy's Lucern) Sida rhombifolia*	
Cheesetree Glochidion Haveyanum v. harveyanum	Bootlace bush Wikstroemia indica	Devils Fig Solanum torvum*	
Swamp Rice Grass Leersia hexandra*	Many Flowered Matrush Lomandra multiflora	Snakeweed Stachytarpheta cayennensis *	
Glossy Tamarind Guioa acutifolia	Cocky Apple Planchonia careya	Urena Burr (Caesar Weed) Urena lobata*	
Foambark Jagera pseudorhus	Tricoryne sp	Tobacco Weed (Elephant's Foot) Elephantopus mollis *	
Brown Bollywood Litsea leefeana	Lobelia leucotos		
Bollywood Litsea breviumbellata			

Appendix 3: Visitors Brochure

BRIEF HISTORY OF ABATTOIR SWAMP

Agriculture started in Julatten around 1920 and to begin with it was mainly dairy cattle with a butter factory situated near the Bushy Creek crossing. The name Abattoir Swamp reflects the fact that the landowner had a butchery nearby from 1952 to the early 1960s.

By the late 1980's sugar cane had become the dominant crop and in 1989 Abattoir Swamp and the surrounding area was sold to Mossman Sugar Mill. There was a move to drain the wetlands for cane-growing, but local residents, in particular Maureen Clayton, agitated for the Swamp, by then a renowned bird refuge, to be saved.

In 1991 the Mill donated the area to Mareeba Shire Council to manage as a Conservation Reserve, and in 1992 responsibility for improvements was handed to Mareeba Shire Wet Tropics Tree Planting Unit. These included walkways, plantings, a boardwalk, birdhide, picnic shelter and car park.

Over the following two decades a South American pasture grass called Olive Hymenachne began to invade the open water of the swamp. After the boardwalk fell into disrepair Job Find (now TRACQs) replaced it with recycled plastic board in 2015/16. The local ratepayers group, JAMARR, then sourced a grant with help from Mitchell River Watershed Management Group (MRWMG) and in 2018, Council took on the excavation of some deeper waterholes. Unfortunately hymenachne had a resurgence and by 2021 no open water was visible.

In July 2021 the Mareeba Shire Council transferred management for 5 years to the Mitchel River Watershed Management Group. There is now a volunteer sub-group, the Abattoir Swamp Management Group, whose task is to maintain the reserve by taking on maintenance and education tasks.

More than 200 species of birds have been recorded here over the last thirty years. However, with the change of habitat many of the water birds are no longer seen, though the trees are still used by many species. Methods to control the hymenachne are being explored and these currently include grazing by cattle. The hope is to make the whole area of Abattoir Swamp once more a haven for a diverse range of wildlife.

The birdlist of 187 species has been compiled from Abattoir Swamp Management Group records plus Birdata and e-Bird records. This list does not include historical records of birds no longer expected to occur here anymore. Abattoir Swamp is located on the Mossman - Mount Molloy Road just south of the Hunter Creek bridge, Julatten, Atherton Tableland, Queensland.

Facebook:- Friends of Abattoir Swamp Email:- as-convenor@mitchell-river.com.au



Northern Fantail



https://www.birdlifeng.org/



Abattoir Swamp Bird List

Abattoir Swamp Management Group





Brochure printed by KPBL August 2025

Abattoir Swamp Bird List

Orange-footed (Scrubfowl) Megapode Brown Quail Magpie Goose

Wandering Whistling-Duck

Black Swan

Green Pygmy-goose Australian Wood Duck Radjah Shelduck

Hardhead

Pacific Black Duck

Grey Teal

Australasian Grebe White-headed Pigeon

Spotted Dove

Brown Cuckoo-Dove Pacific Emerald Dove

Crested Pigeon Squatter Pigeon Diamond Dove

Peaceful Dove Bar-shouldered Dove

Torresian Imperial-Pigeon Wompoo Fruit-Dove Superb Fruit-Dove

Topknot Pigeon
Tawny Frogmouth

White-throated Needletail

Australian Swiftlet

Pacific (Fork-tailed) Swift

Pheasant Coucal Eastern Koel

Channel-billed Cuckoo Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo Shining Bronze-Cuckoo Little Bronze-Cuckoo Fan-tailed Cuckoo

Sahul Brush Cuckoo

Buff-banded Rai

Spotless Crake
Pale-vented Bush-hen
White-browed Crake
Dusky Moorhen

Purple (Australasian) Swamphen

Black-necked Stork Royal Spoonbill Straw-necked Ibis Australian White Ibis

Brolga Black Bittern

Nankeen Night-Heron Eastern Cattle Egret White-necked Heron Eastern Great Egret

Plumed (Intermediate) Egret

White-faced Heron

Little Egret

Little Pied Cormorant
Little Black Cormorant
Australasian Darter
Bush Stone-curlew
Banded Lapwing
Masked Lapwing
Comb-crested Jacana

Latham's Snipe Black-shouldered Kite

Square-tailed Kite Pacific Baza

Wedge-tailed Eagle

Little Eagle Swamp Harrier Spotted Harrier Grey Goshawk Brown Goshawk Collared Sparrowhawk

White-bellied Sea-Eagle Whistling Kite Brahminy Kite Black Kite

Rainbow Bee-eater

Dollarbird Little Kingfisher Azure Kingfisher Forest Kingfisher Sacred Kingfisher

Buff-br Paradise Kingfisher Laughing Kookaburra

Blue-winged Kookaburra Nankeen Kestrel

Australian Hobby Brown Falcon

Red-tailed Black-Cockatoo Pale-headed Rosella Sulphur-crested Cockatoo

Red-winged Parrot Rainbow Lorikeet Scaly-breasted Lorikeet Double-eyed Fig-Parrot

Red-winged Parrot Noisy Pitta

Great Bowerbird Lovely Fairy-wren Red-backed Fairy-wren Banded Honeyeater

White-streaked Honeyeater White-cheeked Honeyeater

Brown Honeyeater
Blue-faced Honeyeater
White-throated Honeyeater
White-paped Honeyeater

White-naped Honeyeater Black-chinned Honeyeater Macleav's Honeyeater - E

Little Friarbird Hornbill Friarbird Noisy Friarbird Dusky Honeyeater Scarlet Honeyeater Eastern Spinebill

Brown-backed Honeyeater Rufous-throated Honeyeater Yellow-spotted Honeyeater

Lewin's Honeyeater Cryptic Honeyeater - E

Yellow Honeyeater Bridled Honeyeater - E

Yellow-faced Honeyeater Spotted Pardalote

Red-browed Pardalote Striated Pardalote Fairy Gerygone

White-throated Gerygone Large-billed Gerygone

Large-billed Scrubwren

Varied Sittella Australasian Figbird Olive-backed Oriole

Green (Yellow) Oriole Grey-headed (Grey) Whistler

Rufous Whistler Golden Whistler

Little (Rufous) Shrikethrush Bower's Shrikethrush - E

Grey Shrikethrush Eastern Whipbird Barred Cuckoo-shrike

Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike Sahul Cicadabird

Sahul Cicadabird

White-bellied Cuckoo-shrike White-winged Triller

Varied Triller
Pied Currawong
Black Butcherbird
Pied Butcherbird

White-breasted Woodswallow Yellow-breasted Boatbill

Northern Fantail

Willie Wagtail

Australian Rufous Fantail

Grey Fantail

Spangled Drongo Leaden Flycatcher

Satin Flycatcher

Restless Flycatcher

Pied Monarch - E White-eared Monarch

Spectacled Monarch

Black-faced Monarch Magpie-lark

Torresian Crow

Victoria's Riflebird - E

Lemon-bellied Flyrobin (Flycatcher)

Eastern Yellow Robin Pale-yellow Robin

Golden-headed Cisticola

Australian Reed Warbler Tawny Grassbird

Fairy Martin
Tree Martin

Welcome Swallow

Silvereye Common Myna Metallic Starling

Mistletoebird Sahul Sunbird

Scaly-breasted (Nutmeg) Mannikin Chestnut-breasted Mannikin

Red-browed Finch Double-barred Finch

187 Species

E = Wet Tropic Endemic