

MANAGEMENT OF BRISBANE'S NATURAL AREAS

Brisbane City Council manages more than 13,000 hectares of parkland including 7000 hectares of bushland and wetland reserves.

The major threats to our natural areas include weeds, fire, pest animals, unsustainable recreation such as off-track mountain biking, illegal dumping and vandalism. An ongoing program of management actions seeks to ensure these threats are controlled.

The primary weeds in Karawatha Forest are groundsel bush (*Baccharis halimifolia*), Easter cassia (*Senna pendula*) and ragweed (*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*).

Some sections of the forest may be closed on occasions for fire management purposes.

Take a trip to:

- Bayside Parklands
- Boondall Wetlands
- Brisbane Koala Bushlands
- Chermside Hills Reserves
- Mt Coot-tha Forest
- Tinchi Tamba Wetlands
- Toohey Forest.

Illaweena Lagoon



FOR YOUR SAFETY:

- wear a hat and sunscreen
- always carry water
- exercise caution when on the tracks and wear comfortable footwear
- take insect repellent.

HOW TO LOVE YOUR BUSHLAND:

- Please keep to the designated tracks.
- All plants and animals are protected - take photos only.
- Watch wildlife from a distance.
- Camping is not allowed.
- Fires are permitted in designated fireplaces only.
- Use of vehicles is restricted to defined public roads.
- Take your rubbish home with you.
- Check shoes and socks for seed or plant material to prevent the spread of weeds.
- Do not dump any waste in natural areas. Dumping increases the spread of weeds, potential spread of fire ants (*Solenopsis invicta*) and the risk of fire.
- Manage weeds in your own yard to reduce spread into bushland.
- Dogs disturb wildlife so it is best to leave them at home. Otherwise, ensure they are on a leash and that you clean up after them.



Growing a clean and green Brisbane as part of *Living in Brisbane 2010* - a vision for our city's future.

KARAWATHA FOREST track map



Green-thighed Frog (*Litoria brevipalmata*)

Brisbane City Council Information
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For more information visit www.brisbane.qld.gov.au or call (07) 3403 8888.



Dedicated to a better Brisbane

Track map

- Turtles popping their heads above the water.
- Waterdragons basking in the sun.
- Dusky moorhens feeding around the lagoons.
- Frogs calling in the summer months.
- Red-necked wallabies grazing on shrubs and grasses in the late afternoon.
- Koalas and their distinctive three-pronged scratches on grey gums.
- Sacred kingfishers nesting in termite nests high in the eucalypts.
- Gliders, possums, bats, parrots and owls.

Animals to see:

The size of this forest, and the variety of habitats it contains makes it a very important refuge for a diversity of wildlife, including a number of threatened or endangered species such as the greater glider, squirrel glider and rare frogs. The forest also supports red-necked wallabies, swamp grey kangaroos. Hollows in older eucalypts are nesting places for gliders, possums, bats, parrots and owls. The birdlife is the most visible in the forest; over 100 bird species have been found.



Ironbark Circuit

A WILDLIFE REFUGE

Karawatha Forest contains mainly open eucalypt forest with areas of heath, wetland and woodlands. Over 320 plant species have been identified in Karawatha. The Forest contains some of the last remaining wet heathlands and melaleuca wetlands in Brisbane. Bailey's stringybark and Flanchan's stringybark, which are rare in Brisbane, grow on the sandstone outcrops. The spectacular giant water lily *Nymphaea gigantea* is a feature of Karawatha's lagoons, and does not occur in many areas within the region.

A WEALTH OF PLANT LIFE

Karawatha Forest was protected by land purchases through the Bushland Preservation Levy and is one of Brisbane's major natural areas. The area to the south and west and some lands near Illaweena Street have also been acquired, ensuring that vital bushland links with Greenbank are maintained to preserve our significant flora and fauna. The forest's infertile soils and sandstone ridges were formed by continual cycles of mountain building and erosion over many millions of years. Some of the sandstone outcrops were laid down in the Triassic-Jurassic age, when dinosaurs, not wallabies, grazed here.

HISTORY & ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE



Illaweena Lagoon near Illaweena Picnic Area

WHERE IS KARAWATHA FOREST?
Karawatha Forest is located 18 kilometres south of Brisbane's CBD. Access the Acacia Picnic Area from Acacia Road, Karawatha and the Illaweena Picnic Area via Illaweena Street, Drewvale. For public transport information visit www.translink.com.au or phone 13 12 30. Limited parking is available.

Karawatha Forest is approximately 900 hectares of bushland on the southern edge of Brisbane City. It contains a variety of habitats from freshwater lagoons and sandstone ridges, to dry eucalypt forests and wet heaths. Such a diversity of habitats is unique in an increasingly urban area. It is one of the largest areas of remnant bushland in the city.

KARAWATHA FOREST

SPECIAL FEATURES

Acacia Picnic Area

The shelters and tables of this picnic area are surrounded by open eucalypt forests. It is the gateway to the walking track network.

Illaweena Picnic Area

This is a quiet, tranquil spot to enjoy a meal beside the Illaweena Lagoon. A bridge and a trail leave from opposite ends of the picnic area leading you to the network of trails.

Poet's Rock

Amble up the sandstone ridges through open woodlands to Poet's Rock, a scenic outlook over the forest, and take in the view.

Lagoons and wetlands

Scrubby Creek rises in Karawatha's sandstone ridges and flows east into a string of lush lily-filled lagoons. Sedges, rushes and melaleucas line the lagoons, which fill after heavy rain.

Frog Hollow Wet Heathland Area

A small wallum heath that is seasonally inundated. Contains the greatest diversity of plants recorded in the forest.

THINGS TO DO:

- Enjoy a picnic or BBQ at the picnic areas.
- Walk along the self-guiding trail leaving from Acacia Picnic Area.
- Try birdwatching.
- Take a walk on a hot summer evening after rain and listen for frogs.

POPULAR TRACKS

Rocks Circuit 2.5km (1 hour)

This trail highlights the varying vegetation found within the forest. Sandstone ridges with woodland vegetation turn to tall open forest with a heath understory. Small casuarina thickets on the slopes of the creeks become the seasonal restaurants for the glossy black cockatoo. Scribbly gum trees also dominate the forest with their unusual squiggles and ghostly white trunks.

Grade: Moderate, contains steps

Suited to: Bushwalking
Habitat: Woodland, open forest, heathland understory

Must: Admire the view from the Rocks lookout

Ironbank Circuit 1.2km (20 minutes)

This short circuit allows visitors a quick overview of vegetation contained within the forest including casuarinas, tall open forest and riparian forests.

Grade: Easy

Suited to: Bushwalking, disabled, wheelchair assisted, prams

Habitat: Tall open forest with heath understory
Must: Follow the self-guided trail

Melaleuca Circuit 1km (30 minutes)

Located on the northern end of the Illaweena lagoons, this trail lends itself to exploring a variety of habitats including freshwater lagoons, open woodland forests, and large scribbly gums along the lagoon edge. A variety of native birdlife can be observed.

Grade: Easy

Suited to: Bushwalking, environmental interest groups, families

Habitat: Freshwater lagoons, open woodland forest
Must: Take photos of birdlife from the boardwalk

Wild May Trail 1.2km (30 minutes)

Leaving from the Illaweena Picnic Area, this lovely track meanders along the lagoon system that once extended from Acacia Ridge to the Logan River. Melaleuca wetlands provide habitat for a variety of native fauna along the edge of the lagoon. The Wild May Trail is named after *Leptospermum polygalifolium* that is common along this trail. Many of the smaller birds can be found nesting in these bushes. Turtles, fish, frogs and the occasional suspected sighting of platypus keep young children entertained.

Grade: Easy

Suited to: Bushwalking

Habitat: Freshwater wetlands, wallum heath
Must: Enjoy a BBQ next to the main lagoon

Wallum Trail 2km (1 hour)

The trail traverses through the heart of Karawatha Forest. Explore the subcoastal wet heath, marvelling at the paperbarks and broad-leaved banksia that are distinctive of heathland areas. The environmental characteristics of the wet heath ecosystem have led to the development of a unique assembly of plant and animal inhabitants.

Grade: Easy

Suited to: Bushwalking, birdwatching, frog lovers
Habitat: Subcoastal wet heath

Must: Listen for the different callings of 23 frog species found in the forest



KARAWATHA FOREST
Track map