





Friends of Casuarina Coastal Reserve

The **Casuarina Coastal Reserve** is on Larrakia country. Larrakia traditional owners have cared for this land for millennia. Darriba Nungalinya, the Old Man Rock, a Larrakia sacred site, watches over the area.

Friends of Casuarina Coastal Reserve Inc. has prepared this map for public interest and information. We work to ensure that the natural values of the Reserve and the surrounding areas are recognised, protected, enhanced and cared for. For more information visit **www.fccr.org.au**

The Reserve now encompasses approximately 1,392 hectares of land, managed by **Parks and Wildlife** within the **Northern Territory (NT) Department of Tourism and Hospitality**. Over 1.4 million visits to the Reserve each year enjoy eight kilometres of sandy beaches and dunes, dramatic cliffs, and a variety of habitats, including seagrass meadows, mangrove forests, monsoon vine forest, monsoon rain forest, eucalypt woodlands, paperbark forest, and grassland. Eighty percent of the NT population lives within a 30-minute drive of the Reserve.

The Reserve is home to a wide range of plants, insects, reptiles, mammals and birds, including many endangered species. Seagrass meadows in the shallow waters off Casuarina Beach support many species of fish and crabs, six turtle species, and five dolphin species. Endangered animals including sawfish, dugong, and manta rays feed in the seagrass meadows and creeks, and nesting marine turtles, mainly flatbacks, nest on the beaches. The endangered Gouldian finch has visited the area in large numbers in recent years.

We are happy to report that the NT Government has declared that the Reserve is now a **National Park**.

The **Larrakia Land and Sea Rangers** undertake land and sea management, including weed control, shorebird surveys, marine animal surveys, water quality testing, wildlife rescue, and marine debris removal.

BirdLife Top End offers community activities centred around the conservation of birds and their habitats. Almost a third of all bird species ever seen in Australia – 269 species - have been seen in the Reserve. Volunteers working with BirdLife Top End monitor migratory shorebirds around the Darwin coastline. Up to ten thousand shorebirds use the beaches in this Reserve, roosting at high tide and feeding at low tide on 650 different species of mollusks, crustaceans and worms. The area supports more than 1% of the world's population of the vulnerable Great Knot, where they stop during their epic migration of over 20,000 km each year. The critically endangered Far Eastern Curlew can also be spotted on Lee Point and Sandy Creek beaches.

At the beginning and end of each wet season, **BirdLife Top End** organises community engagement events to welcome and farewell the migratory shorebirds for their journeys to and from the Northern Hemisphere.

Avian Influenza, or Bird Flu, is an infectious disease which has killed millions of wild birds around the world. Experts predict that it could arrive in Australia with the spring migration of shorebirds that use the beaches of Casuarina. Individual dead birds, or fewer than five sick or dead wild birds, on the beach should be reported (Emergency Hotline 1800 675 888) and remember to avoid them and keep dogs well away.

If you would like to discover, learn about and share in the wonders of the Top End's fauna, flora and natural environment, contact the **NT Field Naturalists Club**. They host monthly presentations at CDU and weekend field trips in the greater Darwin area - all are welcome.



Many **historic military sites** can be found in the Reserve, including WWII shoreline bunkers. The best preserved are the Sandy Creek Bunker and Watch Post. Two of the twelve Light Anti-Aircraft stations built in the area during the Indonesian 'Confrontation Period' in the 1960s can be seen on either side of Lee Point Road.

The **Creek-to-Creek Walk** offers shared walking and bike trails stretching from the Rapid Creek footbridge to Buffalo Creek.

The Reserve also includes 6 km of dedicated **Mountain Bike Trails** of different difficulty levels.

The internationally recognised **Shoal Bay Key Biodiversity Area** stretches from the beach east of Lee Point/Binybara across Shoal Bay to Tree Point on the way to Gunn Point. It is an area comprised of rich muddy and sandy areas, with mangroves lining the salt marsh and plains.

Dogs are allowed on Casuarina beach.

No dogs are allowed on the beach east of Binybara (from Lee Point to Buffalo Creek) in the Key Biodiversity Area.

In other areas, dogs must be held on a leash.

Any disturbance by dogs of migratory shorebirds compromises their ability to travel the vast distances back to their breeding grounds.

The **Casuarina Coastal Reserve Landcare Group (CCRLG)** works to revegetate two sites in the Reserve – the 'Beach block' and the 'Moth block'. Volunteers meet monthly and enjoy caring for the natural values by planting, watering, weeding and learning about the local bush.

At the 'Moth Block' area close to the Hospital, CCRLG plant and tend host plants for the enormous but endangered Atlas Moth.

In 2022, Parks and Wildlife and community volunteers planted over 600 Casuarina trees to replace a forest destroyed by wildfire. Arson is an ongoing threat to the natural values of the Reserve. Quick action can limit damage from uncontrolled fires, so visitors are encouraged to phone 000 if they see an unintended fire.

Park rangers and community members have worked hard to eradicate Gamba Grass from the Reserve. Members of the community control Gamba at sites they have 'adopted' in the Reserve. CCRLG can link you into the 'adopt a spot' program if you're interested.

Keep Top End Coasts Healthy works with the community, stakeholders and governments to safeguard the health of Top End coasts including the Reserve.

Supporting sustainable fishing, **OzFish's** Tangle Bin at Buffalo Creek collects used fishing gear. The gear is recycled into sunglasses and art (with Darwin artists!), closing the loop on fishing waste. Help a healthy fishery; use the bin!

The **Rapid Creek Landcare Group** works to revegetate and rehabilitate the bush along Rapid Creek from its catchment area, which includes the Darwin Airport down to Gurumbai, its mouth at Casuarina Beach.



Charles Darwin University has devoted an area of bush adjacent to the coastal Reserve, the 'CDU Casuarina campus Savanna block', where ecologists collect internationally significant scientific long-term data. The site, along with the CDU Indigenous dry rainforest Arboretum, are important native animal refuges and critical to the Reserve's long corridor of networked habitats.

Royal Darwin Hospital Campus Greening Volunteers have planted over 1,200 native trees and shrubs around the RDH adjacent to the Reserve. The project highlights the cultural significance of these species for the Larrakia people and provides restful shade and beauty for hospital patients, visitors, and staff. These plants help native animals, including birds, insects, and mammals, thrive and enhance local habitats throughout the Reserve.

The **Planning Action Network** is a volunteer community group working for better urban and rural planning in the Northern Territory including the CCR.

Friends of Lee Point work to save the natural beauty and biodiversity of Lee Point (Binybara) peninsula.

The **Environment Centre of the Northern Territory** works closely with communities to inspire, support and take action to protect the environment, and ensure a thriving nature and sustainable future.

To connect with us or our partners mentioned above, please use the QR code to visit our website for links and more information.



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