

Visitor Information

Lake Broadwater Conservation Park



Lake Broadwater Conservation Park reserves the unique Lake Broadwater and its surrounding vegetation types found in the drier western Darling Downs. Lake Broadwater is the only naturally occurring water body of this type on the Darling Downs; the lake covers approximately 350 hectares and, when full, is up to 3 m deep. Periodically, it dries totally, sometimes for lengthy periods. The area bordering the lake is flat, with barely perceptible rises forming broad ridges. Generally, vegetation cover ranges from small patches of brigalow to fairly open treeless areas.

History & geology

In the early days of settlement, the lake was renowned for its large camps of Aboriginals. Occasional finds of artefacts in the district and the presence of bora rings are further evidence of traditional use of this area.

Teamsters and settlers travelling west from the Jondaryan rail terminus used the camping and watering reserve at the lake. When the railway was extended in 1868, it was routed via Dalby as Myall Creek offered permanent water and Lake Broadwater was dry at that time.

The surrounding land was part of St Ruth Station. Resumption of part of this large holding created Loudoun Station which purchased the Lake Broadwater reserve from the Queensland Government. The public then had no access to the lake.

About 1930, 15ha bordering the lake's western shore was purchased by the Lake Broadwater Association. This developed into a popular picnic and water ski venue. This area was given to Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service and a further 855ha was purchased by them and then gazetted as an environmental park in 1981 and as a conservation park in 1994.

The lake's formation remains a mystery although geomorphologists suggest that

it once formed part of the Condamine River flood plain. The catchment is now only the surrounding area and adjacent grazing properties.

Soil types differ throughout the park and range from heavy black soil to light loams over clays, interspersed with sand and gravel ridges. Dark alluvial soils deposited as silt make up the floodways.

Plants

The vegetation of the park is diverse and representative of communities of the drier inland regions.

Around the lake, there is a band of mature river red gums and blue gums. Another eucalypt that commonly occurs on the park is the Poplar Box, while Moreton Bay ash, bloodwoods and ironbarks are also found. Other tree species that occur include rough and smooth-barked apples (Angophoras), the tea-tree, cypress pine and bull-oak. During spring many shrubs including grevilleas, hakeas and leptospermums provide a colourful wildflower display. In all, a total of 450 species of plants have been identified, including tree orchids and the uncommon braid fern (*Platyzoma micorphyllum*). These vegetation communities once covered vast areas of the western Darling Downs, but have been reduced to small isolated pockets by man's agricultural and grazing activities.

Animals

About 240 species of birds have been recorded on the park; the number and variety is due primarily to the wide range of habitat types. When full, the lake is a valuable breeding ground for waterfowl and throughout the year attracts waterbirds including ducks, moorhens, grebes, cormorants, darters, herons, swans, stilts, jabirus and brologas.

Two small marsupials found in the park are the yellow-footed pouched mouse and the common marsupial mouse. Visitors are more likely to see the

eastern grey kangaroo, red necked wallaby, swamp wallaby, koala, brushed-tailed possum and echidna. Water rats are relatively common, and a number of species of bats occur.

Many reptiles have been noted in the park. Fifteen species of snakes have been recorded, including the extremely rare Dunmalls snake. The long-necked tortoise and broad-shelled river turtle and Murray turtles occur in the lake.

General Information

Lake Broadwater is situated approximately 30km south-west of Dalby and is accessible by sealed road. The turn-off from the Moonie Highway is 20km from Dalby.

The park caters for picnicking, boating and camping. A bush campground is located 2km north of the lake adjacent to the main access road. Toilets, a shelter shed, fire places, and tank water (limited amount) are provided. A recreation areas is situated on the lake shore with toilets, cold showers, boat ramp, fireplaces and campground.

A permit to camp is required, and can be obtained in advance from Wambo Shire Council, Dalby, or on site at the camp grounds. Camping fees apply. No site bookings are taken as camping is on a first come, first served basis.

Things to do

Boating and skiing are permitted on the main body of the lake only. Boating permits are required prior to launching and are available from E. Trent (adjacent to the lake with a sign out the front of his property) or Mrs I Laffy on 07 46638147. Boating on the lake is only permitted from 6am to sundown, all boats must be removed from the water by sundown. Regulations relating to boating and water skiing, as stated by the Harbours and Marine Act, are administered by the Lake Broadwater Association and the Darling Downs Water Ski Club.

The 'neck' area of the lake has been designated a waterfowl refuge.

No boats are permitted in this portion of the lake.

The park also caters for bird-watching, bushwalking and picnicking. Guided activities may be conducted by the Lake Broadwater Natural History Association by prior arrangement.

Lake Broadwater is an example of recreation and conservation working side by side.

You can help

Regulations are designed to help maintain the balance between recreation and conservation. By following them, you will contribute to the future protection and conservation of the park so it will continue to give enjoyment to you and to others.

Therefore we ask you to:

- *leave your pets at home; dogs, cats and other domestic animals are not permitted in conservation parks*
- refrain from interfering with the natural surroundings; do not remove living or dead plant material, nor interfere with native animals;
- be careful with fire; use fire-places provided;
- remove your rubbish or dispose of it in bins provided; and
- take care when boating and respect other lake users.

For further information please contact:

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The Lake Broadwater Conservation Park Trustees are:
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