

# ARCADIA NATURE WALK

Take a walk and settle into Island Time

## PLEASE LOOK, WATCH AND TREAD CAREFULLY.

Some of our birds are ground nesters. Pocket your litter, leave the wildlife be, and walk on designated paths.

### 1. Gabul Way & Geoffrey Bay Foreshore (West)

Wave action has built up a series of coarse-grained sand dunes that run back almost to the base of the hills. Large trees form a corridor of shade. Look for the Moreton Bay Ash (*Corymbia tessellaris*) with its lower trunk gloved in dark tessellated bark. Coast She-oaks (*Casuarina equisetifolia*) hug the shoreline and behind them Indian Almonds (*Terminalia catappa*) line the path.

Keep a look out for Red-tailed Black Cockatoos tearing apart the seeds from the Indian Almond trees, Plovers in pairs defending their young and overhead you may see a White-bellied Sea Eagle, Brahminy Kite, Wedge-tailed Eagle or Osprey. The graceful White Fig (*Ficus virens*) at the bus stop is a remnant tree and one of only a few deciduous native figs.

### 2. Geoffrey Bay Scrub (Rare Vine Thicket)

Step back in time and into an ecological community of remnant scrub. Thirty-nine native tree species have been recorded here. Its special status makes it a priority for rehabilitation and weed removal. Perhaps you will see a Blue Tiger (*Tirumala hamata*), a butterfly that once dominated the cool, shady understorey. The higher fertility and moisture here are due to the old marine clays under the swale it sits within, and the small creeks that meet here.

### 3. Entry to the National Park walking tracks

As you walk along Hayles Avenue keep a look out for Bush-stone Curlews, Sulphur-crested Cockatoos, Rainbow Lorikeets, Helmeted Friarbirds and Orange-footed Scrubfowl. Deep red earths along the higher points of Hayles Avenue are at least 100,000 years old.

If you're lucky you may see a Koala along Endeavour Road or along the National Park walking track. Arcadia is ringed by National Park. Three quarters of the island, or approximately 70%, is National Park. Much of the National Park comprises eucalyptus woodland and deciduous woodlands. Some of



For more information on regular weeding sessions, plants and animals, landscape and the Traditional Owners of Arcadia, visit: [arcadiacoastcare.com.au](http://arcadiacoastcare.com.au)



Geoffrey Bay



Rainbow Bee-eater



Rare Vine Thicket



White fig



Mimusops



Coast She-oaks



Ribbon Wood and Native Almond



Pandanas Alma Bay



Hoop Pine with osprey nest



Beach Hibiscus

the common species are Kapok, Burdekin Plum, Acacia, Poplar Gum, Grass Trees, Bloodwoods and Iron-barks to name but a few. Dense vine thickets sometimes line sheltered gullies.

#### 4. Bush Track

Take the bush track behind the houses and walk through to Armand Way. This track traverses the upper margin of the lowlands where runoff and accumulation of washed leaf litter has resulted in a well developed semi-deciduous woodland dominated by Northern Swamp Mahogany (*Lophostemon grandiflorus*) and a diverse lower tree storey including Mango Bark (*Canarium australianum*).

#### 5. Alma Creek and Alma Bay

Most of the island's creeks are ephemeral (wet season only) and are often tidal. Mangroves are regenerating on the northern side of Alma creek. The creek hosts a plethora of naturally occurring Paperbarks (*Melaleuca leucadendra*) in which Blue-winged Kookaburras have been seen nesting. Pandanus (*Pandanus tectorius*) and coastal grasses and herbs once graced the Alma Bay picnic area.

Now this beautiful bay mixes the old with the new and is shaded by Coast She-oaks, Coconut Palms and Callophyllums. The Osprey nest (in the big Hoop Pine opposite the newsagency) is a favourite for locals and visitors alike. Blue-spotted Rays frequent the shallow waters of the bay.

Inland from Alma Bay, along Hayles Avenue, and opposite the Stage Door Theatre is a single old Northern Swamp Mahogany a survivor if ever there was one.

The large Poinciana trees further along Hayles Avenue were planted by local island identity, Dr Ley, in the 1950s. While these are not Australian natives and some of the original trees have not survived, in summer they once formed a continuous canopy of orange along the avenue.

#### 6. Old Arcadia Jetty

Once a stopping off point for the ferries (until 2003), the jetty area is now frequented by Allied Rock Wallabies. Explore the granite headland and listen out for the sound of the Whistling Kites. Their nests can be found high in the Hoop Pines (*Araucaria cunninghamii*) lining the road. Locals have fond memories of this old island access point with its timber jetty (only remnants remain) and natural beauty.

Look around you at the massive granite boulders supporting colonies of Hoop Pines. Formed in the early Permian Period (286-258 million years ago), Magnetic Island Granite was once molten and buried deep below ground level. The current rugged land surface, which is a predominant feature of the island, is the product of millions of years of weathering that has exposed the granite body and removed the earlier formed rocks.

When you look at these features remember that this weathering process is ongoing. The sand dunes and creek flats have formed since the last ice age, over the last 6,000 years.

#### 7. Geoffrey Bay Foreshore (East)

This end of Geoffrey Bay is more sheltered, and the sand dunes are lower and finer grained than the western end. They have been eroded and reworked by Peterson Creek. The finer sands support native herbs and grasses, and the wetter soils mean that the trees are also different.

Here there are Mangroves, Beach Hibiscus (*Hibiscus tiliaceus*), Paperbarks, Cabbage Tree Palms (*Livistona decora*) and remnants of an avenue of Coconut Palms planted by early settlers. Sit on the seat under the single ancient Red Coondoo (*Mimusops elengi*) and contemplate its age. Some estimate it is hundreds of years old.

#### 8. Petersen Creek

In the wet season Petersen Creek roars into the bay and sculpts the sand. Young Mangroves are taking hold again on the sea-side of the road and Rainbow Bee-eaters can sometimes be seen catching insects on the wing. Twenty-one different types of mangroves have been identified on the island. The Eucalypt Mangrove (*Avicennia marina*), with its narrow pointed leaves, can be seen from the bridge at Petersen Creek.

#### 9. Geoffrey Bay Foreshore (Central)

On a windy day you can hear the sound of the wind through the Coast She-oaks. High tides and erosion take their toll on this tree that loves growing close to the shoreline. Did you know that each 'needle' is in fact a branchlet, the leaves barely visible as small teeth surrounding each node. Opposite the Bowls Club is the lovely Ribbon Wood tree (*Euroschinus falcatus*) and native almond Mueller's Damson (*Terminalia muelleri*). Many old specimens of the Ribbon-wood Tree can be found around the bay. At dusk you may see a Grey Heron fishing in the shallows and Black-tipped Shark Pups cruising the calm waters.

**For more information on significant trees go to: [arcadiacoastcare.com.au/plants-animals](http://arcadiacoastcare.com.au/plants-animals) and view *Some Significant Trees on Public Land at Arcadia (2018)*.**

#### Our trees appreciate love letters!

Do you have a favourite tree or location in Arcadia? Do you have comments for us? Visit [arcadiacoastcare.com.au](http://arcadiacoastcare.com.au) or email us at [arcadiacoastcare@gmail.com](mailto:arcadiacoastcare@gmail.com)

**"Be not afraid. The isle is full of noises,  
Sounds, and sweet airs that give delight  
and hurt not."**

*The Tempest* by William Shakespeare



[arcadiacoastcare.com.au](http://arcadiacoastcare.com.au)