

Christmas Island National Park

Christmas Island is an oceanic island with a terraced karst limestone landscape largely covered with uniquely structured tropical rainforest vegetation. Christmas Island National Park covers 63% of the island and also protects a small but significant area of fringing coral reef. The park was proclaimed in 1980 (with two more stages proclaimed and incorporated by 1989), largely to protect habitat for the endangered seabird, the Abbott's booby (*Papasula abbotti*), and for:

- The preservation of the area in its natural condition
- The encouragement and regulation of the appropriate use, appreciation and enjoyment of the area by the public.

The park falls within the *Indian Ocean Tropical Islands* bioregion under Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia and the marine waters of the park fall within the *Christmas Island Province* marine bioregion.

International Listings

The park protects two Wetlands of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention, the Dales and Hosnies Springs, with the Dales meeting five and Hosnies Springs meeting three of the Ramsar Conventions listing criteria.

Christmas Island is also declared an Endemic Bird Area by Birdlife International.

1. Natural Values: The park contains internationally significant habitats and biodiversity.

- 1.1. The park supports and protects unique rainforest, wetland and subterranean cave ecosystems and associated endemic species.
- 1.2. The park protects most of the world's last remaining rainforest habitat for several EPBC listed threatened and/or endemic species, including 18 EPBC listed threatened species; endemic seabirds - Abbott's booby; Christmas Island Frigatebird and golden bosunbird, seven endemic forest birds and endemic plants.
- 1.3. The park protects internationally significant land crabs and their habitats, including tens of millions of endemic red crabs, endemic blue crabs and the largest population of the world's biggest land crab, the IUCN Red Listed robber crab.
- 1.4. The parks Ramsar listed Dales and Hosnies Springs are unique and rare wetland types that support several endangered, endemic or unique assemblages of species, including blue crabs and (at Hosnies Springs) a stand of relict mangroves.
- 1.5. The parks fringing coral reefs are largely intact and provide significant habitat for over 600 fish species, including internationally significant hybrid fish.

2. Cultural Values: The park contains evidence of the social and industrial development of the island and its people.

2.1. The park contains sites and relics that have heritage value or are of cultural significance to residents, including the Pink House Research Station and Chinese temples.

3. Recreation and Tourism Values: The park provides visitors opportunities to experience unique tropical rainforests, largely intact coral reefs and unique wildlife.

3.1. The park provides opportunities to experience sea and forest birds in their natural and unique rainforest habitats, including the endangered and endemic Abbott's booby and Christmas Island: goshawk, thrush and emerald dove.

3.2. The park provides unique opportunities to experience the world's most diverse and abundant range of land crab species including red crabs, particularly during their spectacular annual breeding migration, as well as robber crabs.

3.3. The park provides exceptional scuba diving experiences in warm clear tropical waters with largely intact coral reefs, wall dives/drop offs and an extensive variety of marine species including over 600 species of fishes, including a number of hybrid fish.

