

Mt Whitfield Conservation Park – Cairns

Mt Whitfield Conservation Park is a forested range surrounded by urban development, covering an area of 300ha and reaching an elevation of 365m. It is located adjacent to the Cairns Botanic Gardens in Edge Hill and is co-managed by the Cairns Botanic Gardens and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service.

The park has two well maintained walking tracks that traverse a mixture of rainforest, sclerophyll forest and tropical grasslands.

The Red Arrow track is a 1.3km circuit, which takes less than 1 hour to complete and offers fine views of Cairns and the Coral Sea, the Blue Arrow walk circuit is 5.4km long and can take 3-4 hours to negotiate, this walk also has several lookouts with great views.

Visitors have a chance to encounter a wide range of animals, birds and native insects as well as native rainforest plants. Agile wallabies can be seen in the early mornings or late afternoons in the open grasslands where they congregate in small family groups. The rainforest sections are home to paradise kingfishers, brush turkeys, orange footed scrub hens, and many other tropical birds. Visitors may see the bright blue fruits of the Blue (*Elaeocarpus grandis*) or Kuranda Quandong (*Elaeocarpus johnsonii*) which are favoured snacks for cassowaries, fruit bats and magnificent fruit pigeons.

Walkers are encouraged to wear sensible clothes and walking shoes or boots, carry water and food with them and to not begin the Blue Arrow walk after 2pm as there is a chance they may not be able to complete the track before dark. ●

