

Kulaluk Heritage

Place Details

[Send Feedback](#)

Darwin Foreshores, Darwin, NT, Australia

Photographs:

☒ [View Photo Database Record](#)

☒ [View Photo Database Record](#)

☒ [View Photo Database Record](#)

List: Register of the National Estate

Class: Natural

Legal Status: [Registered](#) (14/05/1991)

Place ID: 16107

Place File No: 7/03/004/0035

Statement of Significance:

The Darwin Foreshore Area is important both for its natural features and cultural values. Regarding the natural features, the place demonstrates a significant variety of coastal landforms and ecosystems including dunes, cheniers, sandy beaches, tidal flats, coral sponge beds, rock platforms, cliffs, mangrove communities and a sea grass meadow. The coastal semideciduous vine thicket, behind Casurina Beach, is a floristically diverse remnant of a coastal vegetation that was once common in the Darwin area, and is a good example of this vegetation type. 160 species of sponges have been recorded at East Point Reef and Sponge Beds, which have a great diversity and biomass of sponges than has been observed on any other coral reef in north Western Australia. The reef has also a rich shrimp fauna with sixty three species so far being identified. It is likely that the reef off Lee Point has a similar diversity of sponges and shrimps to that off East Point. The closeness of East Point to Darwin, together with its easy accessibility and diversity of sponges and crustacean fauna, makes this reef an important research site. It is the type location of at least fourteen sponge and two shrimp species. In addition many of the 160 sponge species collected at East Point are yet to be described and several of these are likely to become type specimens. As East Point is one of the few places where an extensive study of crustacean fauna has occurred, in northern Australia, not surprising that ten of the crustaceans recorded there are at their known distribution limits. Rapid Creek is the most westerly known site of *AVICENNIA INTEGRATA*, a mangrove species that has a sporadic occurrence in the Northern Territory. Other mangroves with sporadic occurrences in the Northern Territory, that occur in the area, include *ACANTHUS ILLICIFOLIUS*, *SYCPHIPHORA*, *HYDROPHYLACEA*, and *CERIOPS TAGAL* var. *TAGEL*. The *DUGONG* (*DUGONG DUGONG*) listed as vulnerable by the (former) International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (now the World Conservation Union), feeds in the sea grass meadow off Casurina Beach. The area is also a reported habitat of the lewins rail (*RALLUS PECTORALIS*), which is a nationally uncommon species and is only known from one other location in the Northern Territory. *CRATEVA RELIGIOSA*, considered to be a nationally rare plant (3r), occurs at Bullocky Point. Cretaceous rock platforms in the area contain some of the few ichthyosaur fossils found in Australia outside the Queensland Artesian Basin. One specimen is complete enough to provide some overall structural and proportional details. The presence of five shrimps at East Point, that are found only in shallow Northern Territorial waters and the absence from well researched sites at Sumba, Roti and Timor, may be indicative of a marine Gondwanian element. The area contains cheniers rich in shell material, which are potential research sites for gaining an understanding of past sea levels and biological and geomorphological processes. The closeness of the area to Darwin together with the diversity of coastal landforms, and natural vegetation communities present make the area a well used site for interpretive and educational activities of local community groups, primary and secondary schools, and the Darwin University. Permanent vegetation sampling transects have been established on Rapid Creek, for fifteen years. Monitoring of these transects has yielded, and will continue to yield information on mangrove dynamics. Historically the East Point area with its elaborate defensive systems is significant for its associations with the important military presence in Darwin during World War Two. It was also one of the sites of the first armed international hostilities on Australian soil when Japanese forces attacked the site by air on 19 February 1942.

The Commission has determined that this place has Indigenous values of national estate significance. The Commission is currently consulting with relevant Indigenous communities about the amount of information to be placed on public record.

Official Values: Not Available

Description:

The Darwin Foreshore area stretches from Bullocky Point in the south to Buffalo Creek in the north, and makes a major contribution to the character of Darwin. The area contains relatively natural vegetation and beaches, and is scenically attractive. The area is valued by the Darwin community for recreational and educational use. The Darwin Foreshore demonstrates a diversity of coastal land forms and ecosystems in a series of overlapping units. These include cliffs, beaches and tidal flats, mangrove forests, salt marsh, seagrass meadows, coral reefs, melaleuca swamps and patches of monsoon vine thicket. Each unit is individually described below.

Bullocky Point:

The cliffs at Bullocky Point display an easily interpreted unconformity between two types of sedimentary rocks and is a valuable educational resource. Vestey's beach lies to the north of Bullocky Point and has a semi developed nature. Rock reefs lie just off the shore. The area is a focus of water sports such as sailing, water skiing and windsurfing.

East Point:

East Point is a popular open space recreation and conservation area. Despite the presence of several landscaped picnic areas, a horse riding school and a military museum very little of East Point has been developed. Some of the natural vegetation has been disturbed in the past. Since its declaration as a reserve the Conservation Commission has implemented several revegetation and management projects. East Point contains an area of open woodland as well as a remnant monsoon forest and mangrove forests. Wild populations of wallaby, bandicoot and jungle fowl are present. 251 plant species have been recorded from East Point. Just off East Point is a marine reserve that contains a fringing coral reef, developed on a laterite rock platform, and which is approximately 1.5 square kilometres. The reef is subjected to prolonged exposure during spring low tide and high levels of turbidity during high tides. Adjoining the marine reserve is a large area of subtidal sponge and gorgonian beds. Being easily accessible and in close proximity to Darwin the reef has been a collection site for a number of marine organisms, including 160 species of sponge and sixty three shrimp species. A number of mil-

installations, consisting of 9 inch and 4 inch gun emplacements, observation bunkers, command posts, communications towers, entrenchments, stores and associated facilities were established on East Point during World War Two, occupying a strategic position at the east head of Darwin Harbour. A number of small 4 inch proving guns were placed by 1941. Cruciform mounted guns were placed by late 1941. The 92 inch gun turrets were completed by 1945. The gun turret has been used for theatrical performances since 1983. The fortifications and 2ha of surrounding land were separately listed in the Register of the National Estate in 1980. The reserve forms a particularly valuable educational resource because of its accessibility and proximity to the museum and schools, and because of the variety and quality of natural habitats present.

Ludmilla Creek and tidal flats:

Ludmilla Creek and its associated tidal flats demonstrate a diversity of mangrove plants within a highly productive ecosystem. Four species of mangroves are present in the Ludmilla Creek area. The dominant species include *AVICENNIA MARINA*, *RHIZOPHORUS STYLOSA*, *CERIOPS TAGAL* and *BRUGUIERA EXARISTATA*. In some places salt flats on saline grey clays fringe the mangroves. The salt flats are dominated by *ARTHROCNEMUM LEIOTACHYUM* and *Salicornia* species.

The Kalaluk area demonstrates a diversity of plant species and communities. 203 species of flora were observed during one dry season survey of which only half are common to the East Point area. The eastern side of Kalaluk exhibits open woodland communities. The better drained areas are dominated by *EUCALYPTUS PAPUANA* / *E. POLYCARPA* / *PANDANUS SPIRALIS* associations, whereas the areas inundated during the wet are dominated by a *MELALEUCA* / *PANDANUS* association. Freshwater sedgeland adjoins the melaleuca woodland. *CYPERUS SCARIOSUS* is the dominant sedge. Melaleuca species present include *MELALEUCA DEALBATA*, *M. LEUCAEODENDRON* and *M. VIRIDIFOLIA*. The beach ridge system to the west includes areas of dune and patches of monsoon forest.

Nightcliff Beach:

The northern section of Nightcliff Beach contains several incomplete ichthyosaur fossils that occur in the deeply weathered shaly siltstone, that outcrops in the area and which is capped by reddish sandstone.

Rapid Creek:

Rapid Creek forms a natural boundary between Nightcliff and Casuarina Beaches, and an attractive green belt between Nightcliff and Casuarina suburban areas. Mangrove communities dominated by *AVICENNIA MARINA*, *Lumnitzera racemosa*, *Aegialitis annulata* and *CERIOPS TAGAL*, fringe Rapid Creek.

Casuarina Beach/Dripline Caves Reserve:

The reserve is best known for its extensive unspoiled sandy beaches, shallow cliffs and dunes which form a popular recreation area. The coastal reserve contains a small monsoon rainforest, while a seagrass meadow occurs in the shallow water off Casuarina Beach. Cretaceous siltstone reefs within the tidal zone contain further ichthyosaur fossils and well preserved fragments of fossilised wood. The area contains several World War Two artillery observation posts, which provide a graphic reminder of the area's wartime involvement.

Lee Point to Buffalo Creek:

Casuarina Beach extends to Lee Point and thence to Buffalo Creek. Lee Point features areas of dunes, extensive tidal flats and woodlands similar to that of the Kalaluk area. The brockdam water snake (*CERENUS RHYNCHOPS*), is found in the area. A coral reef with a sponge fauna occurs to the south of Lee Point.

Significant Indigenous values are known to exist in this area. The Commission is currently consulting with relevant Indigenous communities about the amount of information to be placed on public record.

History: Not Available

Condition and Integrity:

Much of the East Darwin Foreshore Area is in a good condition. East Point and Casuarina Beach are reserves. Weeds are a serious problem in a few areas, such as the Kalaluk-East Point area, with *MIMOSA PIGRA*, *LEUCEANA LEUCOCEPHALA* (coffee bush), *LANTANA CAMARA* and *DELONIX REGIA* being the most common weeds. Drainage from urban areas and the construction of drainage channels has also adversely affected the area, particularly in the Ludmilla Creek area. Aboriginal sites damaged by the construction of drains and roadworks include the Fresh Water Snake Dreaming site and the Kalalak Spring. Other Aboriginal sites have suffered some disturbance include the Gunabibi ground. The beaches also suffer some degradation from their heavy recreational use, including trampling of beach vegetation and deposition of litter. Off road vehicles have had a marked effect on the integrity of vegetation south of Lee Point. The coral reef off East Point has been a major collecting locality for aquarium hobbyists and over collecting occurred until 1984 when the area was proclaimed a reserve.

Location:

About 3,000ha of foreshore, tidal flats, reefs and seabed between Bullocky Point and the mouth of Buffalo Creek, comprising the area enclosed by a line commencing at the south-west corner of Lot 5229, Town of Darwin, then northerly via the western boundary of Lot 5217 to the northern boundary of the latter, then westerly via the alignment of the northern boundary of Lot 5217 to the High Water Mark (HWM), then northerly via HWM to the alignment of that part of the southern boundary of Lot 1785 nearest its south corner, then easterly via that alignment and the southern boundary of that lot to George Crescent, then easterly via the northern side of that street to the western corner of 39 George Crescent, then north-easterly via the north-western boundaries of that property and 3504 and the northern and eastern boundaries of the latter to the northern boundary of Lot 3730, then easterly via that boundary alignment to the western boundary of Lot 3729, then generally easterly via the boundaries of that lot, so that it is excluded, and the southern boundary of Lot 4997 to the western corner of Lot 5172, then easterly via the northern boundaries of that lot to Dick War Drive, then northerly via the western side of that road to the southern boundary of Lot 5182, then easterly via that boundary to Namarluk Drive, then northerly via the western side of that road and the eastern boundary of Lot 5182 to Fitzner Drive, then due north the northern side of that road, then easterly and northerly via the northern side of Fitzner Drive and the eastern boundary of Lot 5182 to Totem Road, then westerly via the southern side of that road and its alignment to the western side of Dick Ward Drive, then northerly via that boundary and the eastern boundary of Lot 8630, Town of Nightcliff, to the southern boundary of Lot 4544, then northerly the alignment of the western boundary of Lot 4543 to the northern boundary of Lot 4544, then westerly via that boundary to the eastern boundary of Lot 8630, then northerly via that boundary and its alignment to the south-east corner of Lot 8638, then northerly and southerly via the boundaries of that lot to its south-west corner, then westerly via the southern boundary of Lots 1858, 6189 and 6190 to Progress Drive, then due west to the cliffline on the seaward side of that road, then generally northerly via the top of that cliffline and that on the seaward side of Casuarina Drive and the seaward boundaries of Lots 8693, 8694, 8695, 8696 and 8657 to the mouth of Rapid Creek, then easterly and southerly via the left bank of that creek and the eastern boundaries of Lot 8696 to Casuarina Drive,

southerly via the eastern side of that road and Rapid Creek Road, but deviating to exclude Lots 1819 and 2620, to Trower Road, then easterly via the northern side of that road to Lakeside Drive, then northerly via the western side of that road to the southern boundary of Lot 8640, then northerly via the southern and western boundaries of that lot to the southern boundary of Lot 8702, then westerly via the southern boundaries of Lots 8702, 6246 and 8689 to HWM, then southerly via HWM to Rapid Creek, then westerly via the right bank of that creek to its mouth, then northerly via HWM to the alignment of that part of the southern boundary of Lot 4873 nearest its south-west corner, then easterly via that alignment to that corner, then north-easterly via the western and northern boundaries of that lot to Lee Point Road, then northerly via the western side of that road to the alignment of the northern boundary of Lot 9018 nearest the intersection of that alignment and the northern boundary of Lot 9018 to Buffalo Creek Road, then easterly via the northern side of that road the mouth of Buffalo Creek, then via straight lines from the latter point and through the following AMG points: 5073-Darwin 075360, 056369, 016345, 968270 and 968257, then directly to the commencement point.

Bibliography:

- BAYLISS P. (1986). FACTORS AFFECTING AERIAL SURVEYS OF MARINE FAUNA, AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO A CENSUS OF DUGONGS IN THE COASTAL WATERS OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY. AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE RESEARCH 13, 27- 37.
- BLAKERS M., DAVIES S.J.J.F. AND REILLY P.N. (1984). THE ATLAS OF AUSTRALIAN BIRDS. MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY PRESS.
- BRIGGS J.D. AND LEIGH J.H. (1988). RARE OR THREATENED AUSTRALIAN PLANTS. ANPWS SPECIAL PUBLICATION 14.
- BRITISH MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY. (1884) REPORT ON THE ZOOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS MADE IN THE INDO-PACIFIC OCEAN DURING THE VOYAGE OF H.M.S. "ALERT" 1881- 1882. 630p PLUS plates.
- BRUCE, S. (1987) THE SHRIMP FAUNA OF A SMALL TROPICAL REEF, THE EAST POINT FISH RESERVE, DARWIN. IN HANLEY ET AL (eds) p 226- 245.
- COOPER, D. (1985) SUBMISSION TO THE DARWIN CITY COUNCIL ON MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES FOR EAST POINT RESERVE. UNPUBLISHED REPORT. ABORIGINAL SACRED SITE AUTHORITY.
- DEVESON, T. (1983) LAND USE FIELD STUDY OF KULALUK AREA. UNPUBLISHED REPORT. ABORIGINAL SACRED SITE AUTHORITY.
- GUINEA, M. (1987) RAPID CREEK MANGROVE REGENERATION, THIRTEEN YEARS ONWARDS. IN LARSON ET AL (eds) p 208- 213.
- HANLEY, R. (1987) INVERTEBRATE FAUNA OF MARINE HABITATS IN DARWIN HARBOUR. IN LARSON ET AL (eds) p 135- 154.
- HOOPER, J. (1987). STRUCTURAL FEATURES OF THE BENTHIC COMMUNITY OF EAST POINT REEF FISH RESERVE. A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN OCEANIC, NEARSHORE AND INSHORE REEFS OF NORTHWEST AUSTRALIA. IN LARSON ET AL (eds) p 214- 225
- LARSON, H.K., MICHIE, M.G. AND HANLEY, J.R. (eds.) (1987) PROCEEDINGS OF A WORKSHOP ON RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT HELD IN DARWIN HARBOUR. AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, NORTH AUSTRALIA RESEARCH UNIT. MANGROVE MONOGRAPH NO. 4.
- MICHIE, M. (1987) SEDIMENTS, SEDIMENTARY ENVIRONMENTS AND PALAEOENVIRONMENTS IN PORT DARWIN. IN LARSON ET AL (eds). p 32- 41.
- MURRAY, P. (1985) ICHTHYOSAURS FROM CRETACEOUS MULLAMAN BEDS NEAR DARWIN N.T., OCCASIONAL PAPERS OF THE N.T. MUSEUM OF ARTS AND SCIENCES. 2(1): 39- 55.
- SLATER, P. (1978) RARE AND VANISHING AUSTRALIAN BIRDS. RIGBY: ADELAIDE
- WIGHTMAN G.M. (1989). MANGROVES OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY. NORTHERN TERRITORY BOTANICAL BULLETIN NO. 7. CCNT.
- YGOA, R. (1986) THE EFFECTS OF THE DARWIN REGIONAL STRUCTURE PLAN ON THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT. A REPORT PREPARED FOR THE AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE COMMISSION.

Richardson, Norma, 1977. Archaeological Site Survey and Documentation - Darwin. NEGP Report

Report Produced: Sun Aug 8 11:12:26 2010