

BUSHWALKING ON GREAT KEPPEL ISLAND

Great Keppel Island is the largest in the Keppel Group, spanning 1454 hectares and boasts 17 sandy beaches. The majority of these beaches are seldom visited and therefore are great destinations for avid bushwalkers. For ease of use, all of the below bush trails have been colour coded on the island map (overleaf).

BEFORE DEPARTING ON A WALK...

- Register with your accommodation
- Pack plenty of water, lunch and wear enclosed footwear
- Do not attempt to walk from beach to beach along the water's edge or cliff edges - this can be unsafe
- Avoid oyster rocks - oysters are very sharp

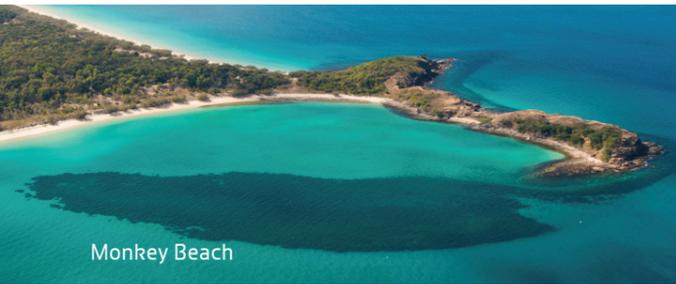
BE AWARE: These walks are all BUSH TRACKS and are subject to weather and erosion. Please take care.



1. THE LOOKOUT TRAIL

Duration: Approx 1 hour or 2.6km return
 Difficulty: Moderate. Steep in places

Start your walk on the bush track commencing on the left hand side of the bitumen road 70 metres behind the Watersports Hut. Follow the signs to the ridge top shelter where you will experience excellent views to the west.



2. MONKEY POINT (INC LONG BEACH)

Duration: Approx 2 hours
 Difficulty: Easy. Steep in places

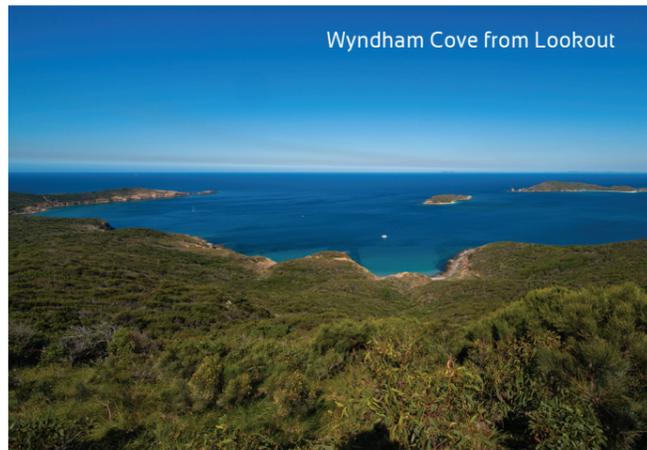
Walk to the southern end of Fisherman's Beach and follow the headland track over the hill. Avoid the shortcuts to the beaches, as they are steep and awkward. Take the trail decent to Monkey Beach or continue on to Long Beach. From the end of Long Beach you can make your way across to Monkey Beach. Here you will pass through a historic shell midden left by Aboriginal people. Monkey Beach is great for snorkelling and is well protected from the southeasterly winds.



3. LEEKE'S BEACH CIRCUIT

Duration: Approx 2 hours or 3.8km return
 Difficulty: Moderate. Steep in places

From the Watersports Hut hike towards the first lookout (see trail 1). 70 metres before the lookout you will see a gravel ridge trail on the left. Follow the trail leading you through beautiful bushland out to the beach (steep decent). When you arrive at Leeke's Beach you will feel like you have arrived on your own deserted island. This is one of the more spectacular and larger beaches on the island. Once at the beach you may choose to hike along to Leeke's Creek at the eastern end. To return to the Visitor Precinct, turn left past two rock outcrops. The first track to Putney Beach has a very steep start, but the trail is short. The second trail is easier but longer and leaves closer to the point. On low tide, you can also follow the rocks around the headland.



4. MOUNT WYNDHAM CIRCUIT

Duration: Approx 3.5 hour circuit
 Difficulty: Moderate. Steep in places

From the Watersports Hut hike towards the first lookout (see trail 1). Continue along the road for 320 metres to the junction of the ridge trail and descending road. Follow the ridge trail via two more lookouts down a short descent then up a big climb to the summit. From here you will have spectacular 360 degree views of the island and Wyndham Cove. Continue on down the eastern ridge trail to Clam Bay track, turn left and hike back to the old Homestead. From the Homestead return by the road to the lookout or via Leeke's Beach (see trail 3).



5. CLAM BAY TRAIL

Duration: Approx 4 hours or 10.6km return
 Difficulty: Moderate. Steep in places

From the Watersports Hut hike towards the first lookout (see trail 1). Continue on the road over the range into the central lowland. Follow the main road to the old Homestead (be cautious of geese). Follow the road over two cattle grids and at the second grid turn right immediately and follow the fence line trail to the east. When you reach the junction, take the left hand fork to Clam Bay. The trail finishes on a hill overlooking the beach. The descent is steep but the beach is stunning. Return the same way or via Mount Wyndham (see Trail 4) or via Leeke's Beach (see Trail 3). DO NOT attempt to follow the shoreline over the rocks, it is extremely dangerous.



6. THE LIGHTHOUSE, WRECK BEACH & BUTTERFISH BAY

Duration: Full Day Trail
 Difficulty: Moderate. Steep in places

From the Watersports Hut hike to the old Homestead (see trail 5) then continue along the road to a junction. From the junction you have two trail options...

Lighthouse Trail (15.4km return)- Follow right hand fork up a very steep and rocky trail to the ridge top. Turn right and follow a gentle ridge top trail and enjoy spectacular panoramas to the Light House (N.B. This is a light beacon, not a traditional "light house"). Return the same way.

Butterfish Bay Trail (13 km return) - Follow the steep trail to the ridge top, then turn left and hike down to a trail junction. Veer to the right and on to the next junction before taking a left fork to Butterfish Bay (the right fork takes you to Wreck Beach). Butterfish Bay is a small cove with rocky outcrops on either side and big sand hills behind it. The water is a beautiful aqua green colour and clear as glass on calm days. At Wreck Beach you may see dolphins, turtles and other marine life around the beach. When conditions are right, this is where you will find the surf. The trail between Butterfish Bay and Wreck Beach starts at the top of the big sandhill.

A HISTORY OF INTRIGUE & VIOLENCE

Aboriginal History & Culture

The traditional owners of the Keppel Islands are the Ganomi-Woppaburra people who are thought to have lived on Great Keppel Island for some 700 years and on North Keppel Island for approximately 5,000 years.

Evidence of Aboriginal inhabitation is visible through middens on the island. Middens are shell mounds built up over hundreds of years as a result of countless meals of shellfish. There is a well preserved midden at the western end of Long Beach. This midden can be viewed when undertaking Trail 2.

The Arrival of Europeans

Captain James Cook sailed into Keppel Bay in 1770 and named the bay and islands after his superior in England, Rear Admiral Augustus Keppel. There were subsequent visits by other exploratory parties, however, white use of Great Keppel Island began in 1866. Prominent Central Queensland squatter, Robert Ross, obtained leases over both Great Keppel and North Keppel Islands. Over the next year, Ross began to "prepare" the island as a cattle property by driving 84 indigenous people into a cave and murdering them. In 1882, Ross acquired secure tenure for Great Keppel Island through land dummieing, and grazed 4000 sheep on the island.

W. T. Wyndham became stockkeeper for Ross and declared himself the first European to live permanently on the island. Despite his association with Ross, who was justifiably feared by the Aborigines, Wyndham was able to establish a good relationship with the Keppel Islanders.

The Historic Leeke Homestead was constructed in 1922-24. The house was the home of Lizzie Leeke who lived on the island from 1922 until 1945. She originally moved to Great Keppel with her husband Michael O'Neill and they grazed sheep on the island from 1918 when they purchased the pastoral lease on the island. Michael died soon after in early 1923.

In 1924, she married Ralph Leeke, a young fisherman. Lizzie continued to run sheep and Ralph worked as a fisherman - they were considered an eccentric couple, not least because Lizzie was about 17 years older than Ralph. The shearing shed remained from previous lease-holders; however, a new site was chosen for the homestead.

In 1933 Ralph left the island and Lizzie was by herself to run the stock. Comments were often made of the physical and mental toughness of the woman to be able to not only survive on the island, but to also run the sheep successfully. Apart from shearing time when a shearer and wool classer would come to the island, the only help she had was from her two dogs. Lizzie sold the lease in 1945 and died on the mainland a few years later.

The island's first resort, Silver Sands, was established on the island in the late 1950's. (Source: QLD Government Heritage Register, and <http://placestories.com/story/143930>)

SLEEP, EAT & PLAY...

GKI has a variety of options to sleep, eat and play! For business locations, please refer to the map overleaf of the **Fisherman's Beach VISITOR PRECINCT**.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Great Keppel Island Hideaway (Accommodation) | 10 Freedom Fast Cats (Transfers & Cruises) |
| 2 - Great Keppel Island Hideaway Cafe & Bistro
- GKI Adventures (Kayak, Snorkel Tours & Hire)
- GKI Fishing Tours | 11 Sail Capricornia (Cruises Depart from mainland) |
| 3 Great Keppel Island Holiday Village (Accommodation) | 12 Fantastic Cruises (Cruises Depart from mainland) |
| 4 Island Pizza (Restaurant) | 13 Great Keppel Cruises (Cruises Depart from GKI) |
| 5 Great Keppel Island Beach House | 14 Keppel House Holiday House |
| 6 Rainbow Hut (Gift Shop) & Holiday House | 15 Beach Shack Holiday House |
| 7 Keppel Lodge (Accommodation) | 16 Keppel Cottage Holiday House |
| 8 Keppel Watersports (Tours & Hire) | 17 Svendsen Beach Retreat (Accommodation) |
| 9 Keppel Konnections (Transfers) | |

For more information on Great Keppel Island visit:

www.capricornholidays.com.au/greatkeppelisland