

3 September August 2020

Our ref: P81619

Chief Executive Officer  
Douglas Shire Council  
PO Box 723  
Mossman Qld 4873

via email: [enquiries@douglas.qld.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@douglas.qld.gov.au)

Attention: Jenny Elphinstone

Dear Jenny

### Further Information – Nature Based Tourism

I am pleased to provide you with further information in relation to the application for Nature Based Tourism at Lot 5 RP738897 Nicole Drive, Cape Tribulation.

Attached is the information brochure that relates to the Rainforest walk on the property. The walk can be self guide or accompanied. The walk starts adjacent to the cabins and takes approximately one hour return. There are two stopping points on the walk with tables and chairs where people have been known to sit for 2 or 3 hours and have been rewarded with tree kangaroo and cassowary sightings.



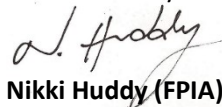
The nature based experience on the site also includes:

- a very good introduction to tropical fruit as the site contains individually labelled fruit trees and guests have the opportunity to pick their own seasonal fruit. The applicants provide suggestions for use of the fruit ranging from salads to cocktails.
- The site contains a seasonal gully that provides opportunities for low-key swimming / sitting in the creek and observing the different animals that use the water.

While not formally part of this application there are also opportunities to walk around the adjoining Lot 4 RP738897 to view more tropical fruit trees

If you require any further information, please call me.

Yours sincerely



**Nikki Huddy (FPIA) RPIA**  
Director



This land is part of the property and was included within the World Heritage area at the request of the original owners in 1988 because of its many rare species. This means it can never be cleared and will be preserved for future generations. Wildwood jungle walk starts in between Black Bean Cabin and Black Palm Cabin by crossing the creek and should take approximately 45 mins.

The Daintree rainforest is the oldest intact lowland tropical rainforest in the world. This tropical rainforest ecosystem is one of the most complex on earth, its plant diversity and structural complexity is unrivalled on the Australian continent and represents the origins of many of Australia's familiar flora.

The Aboriginal tribe inhabiting this land was known as the Kuku Yalanji, a rainforest tribe who were essentially hunters and gatherers and possessed an intimate knowledge of nature's cycles. Their deep knowledge of this land enabled them to live in symbiosis with it, with the forest providing all of their necessities: from food to medicines, tools and shelter. (You will find some of the Kuku Yalanji translations highlighted and the uses they had of specific plants).

They lived in the Daintree for thousands of years until the arrival of the Europeans, which determined the end of the Aboriginal society, as it was known. After being displaced in various communities around the area, they are now involved in some of the local tourism and with some of the management issues of the forest.

We would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land, the Kuku Yalanji, and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community. We would also like to pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

The palms you can see on both sides of the creek are Alexandra Palms KUNJARRI (Archontophoenix alexandrae ). Despite their slender trunks they can grow to more than 30m in height. The rings on the trunk indicate how many fronds the palm has propped

and does not represent the age of the tree in years, as commonly thought. The crown shaft were used by the Kuku Yalanji people as a source of food.

The palm that you may notice climbing other trees is a young Lawyer Cane or Wait-a-While YIBUI (Calamus spp. ) which is a species of climbing palm. With its copious, dagger-like spikes and fine yellow arching stems armed with hooks, it can ensnare and hold a passer by, hence its popular name. The spines protect the growing point which if damaged will kill the plant and also allows the palm to climb towards the top of the canopy towards the sunlight. All the different species of this vine were used by the Aboriginal people of this land for many different purposes such as baskets (bugul), axe handles, eel traps, tongs for cooking but most importantly to build shelters (wurrun) by using the thicker vines as the frame and then using the smaller ones to tie the framework together.

The small palms that grow in clumps is a Walking Stick Palm JALKUYAN (Linospadix minor ), a small palm with a prominent fishtail leaf, which grows small orange to red edible fruits. The Kuku Yalanji eat this fruit raw when ripe, and they say it tastes very good! The slender trunk is also used to make spears for the young men.

The big pods and seeds you can see on the ground are from the Black Bean tree BAWAY (Castanospermum australe ). This large rainforest tree grows up to 35m and produces a spray of orange/yellow flowers, which attracts a variety of Honeyeaters between September and December. Its seeds are toxic, but the Kuku Yalanji have a complicated method to make them edible, which only the women are entrusted to do. They first steam the beans in an earth oven, then grate them with a shell and subsequently place them in a dilly bag lined in leaves in flowing water to get rid of all the toxins; the final product is then used as rice.



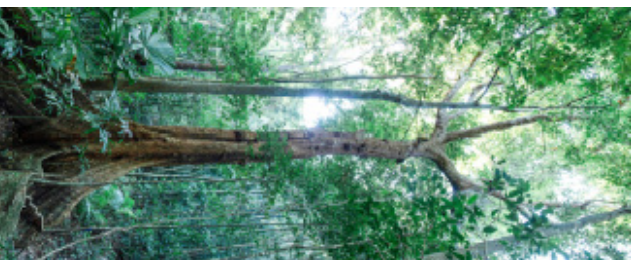
The rainforest is always changing. The shallow soil and surface nutrients do not encourage deep root structure, so trees are often uprooted completely rather than simply snapped off. The gaps created allow more sunlight to reach the forest floor and encourage a profusion of new growth.

The Fan Palm (*Licuala ramsayi*) is one of the world's most attractive palms, almost magical. They are slow growing and have strict requirements: a warm, shady position, with plenty of moisture. Swampy areas often become dominated by Fan Palm gallery forests, which shade out other light loving species. The Fan Palm would provide the Kuku Yalanji with an edible cabbage and the leaves could be used for wrapping food or as a roof for their shelters.

There are many creepers scrambling, creeping, twining and clawing their way up to the plants to get to the light. This type of rainforest is often called vine forest. Rainforest vines are brilliant at using other plants to climb towards the sunlight and secure themselves to the canopy. Indigenous hunters made good use of vines, as they did with climbing palms, making traps and loops to climb trees.

These incredible roots you can admire in front of you are called buttress roots, which are a common feature in tropical rainforest trees and in some mangroves. The reason for this special development is unclear, some say they provide strength and support from strong winds, however studies have shown that they fall as easily as those without. Another theory states that they enable greater uptake of nutrients from the litter cycle of the soil surface, but the most plausible theory is the one that states that the buttresses enable the tree to take more oxygen from the air when the soil is waterlogged for long periods during heavy rainfall. The Aboriginal people of the land used to carve these roots to make utensils and weapons, such as boomerangs, using the natural curve of the buttresses.

Rainforest trees are home to many varied Epiphyte species. Epiphytes are plants that survive without roots in the ground. Supported by host plants, they are able to trap nutrients and store their own water. In the tops of the trees you can see Basket Ferns, Northern Elkhorn Ferns and Bird's Nest Ferns. Some become so large they can no longer support their own weight and come down to the forest floor!



Fungi, these extraordinarily beautiful immensely variable, and sometimes bizarre plants which display such an intriguing array

of shapes, sizes and colours, are one of the most important agents in the recycling process. Some prey on dead plant material, while others attack living cells. So vigorous are some species, that when a living plant is wounded, spore will enter the wounded to attack healthy cells, often resulting in the early death of the plant or tree. The one you can see down to the left is a beautiful Bracket Fungi.

You may have seen several of these termite mounds along the track, but this one is special as it is a nest site for the spectacular Paradise Kingfisher, who visits every summer from New Guinea to produce its young inside these termite mounds. The Paradise Kingfisher is breeding migrant from New Guinea present from October-April. The birds all arrive at the same time, usually at night, and are ready to start breeding; they begin to establish their own territory, choose a nest site and seek a mate straight away. They have to dig a new tunnel each year as termites fill in the previous year's hole!

Have a look for a strangler fig starting to steal its place in the sun by killing a tree that was unlucky enough to have a bird leave the fig seed on one of its upper branches. The fig seed sends roots down to the ground, enabling it to take up nutrients from the soil. It then develops a maze of criss-cross roots, which grow and fuse together around the host tree's trunk. At the same time the crown of the fig enlarges, growing up and over the host tree, which eventually dies because of the competition, rather than by strangulation, like previously believed.

The palm with long feathery fronds is the Black Palm DUWAR (Normanbya normanbyi), one of the common palms in the Daintree. It is used by the Kuku Yalanji in many different ways; the buds and new shoots were eaten raw or cooked, the sheaths on the top of the palm were used by the women to make strong fibres for dilly bags and the wood was used to make spears as well as the nulla nulla, which is a hunting implement, and also to make clap sticks, a traditional musical instrument.

If you find some small bright blue round fruit this could be Blue Quandong JANBAL (*Eleocharpus* spp.), one of the most distinctive of the rainforest due to its blue metallic lustre. The Kuku Yalanji people eat the fruit raw when soft and ripe during the months of August and January. The Quandong is valued equally as a food and as a medicine in treating skin conditions and rheumatism. Made up of 25% protein and 70% complex oils, the Quandong kernels are also used to create powerful antibacterial and anti-inflammatory pastes. The brain-like nut is used to make different ornaments. It is also one of the favourite fruits of the Cassowary, who disperses its seeds in the rainforest; in fact about 100 species of plants and trees depend their survival on the Cassowary for the same reason.

