



## The Wet Tropics World Heritage Area

The Wet Tropics in Queensland were declared a World Heritage Area in December 1988. Only a few sites worldwide meet all four criteria for World Heritage listing.

The Wet Tropics region extends from Cooktown to Townsville and covers almost 900,000 hectares. It stretches along 450 kms of the north Queensland coast.

### What makes the Wet Tropics region so special?

It's represented on The Global 200 list, a collection of the Earth's 200 most outstanding, important, and diverse habitats. These rainforests provide an unparalleled living record of the ecological and evolutionary processes that shaped the flora and fauna of Australia over the past 415 million years.

- *It contains the oldest continually surviving tropical rainforest on earth.*
- *One of the world's biodiversity hotspots, 12 of the 19 ancient flowering plant families in the world are found here.*
- *On average there are 120 different species of tree in just one hectare.*
- *If you take six hectares of Wet Tropics rainforest it has more tree species than the whole of continental North America and continental Europe.*
- *Large areas of this rainforest are still privately owned and unprotected, especially lowland tropical rainforest.*

### What can you find there?

Although now representing less than one tenth of one per cent of the Australian continent the Wet Tropics region contains:

- *65% of Australia's fern species*
- *21% of Australia's cycads*
- *30% of Australia's orchids*
- *36% of Australia's mammal species*

- *40% of Australia's bird species*
- *29% of Australia's frog species & about*
- *60% of Australia's butterfly species.*

Many of these species are rare threatened or endangered and are endemic to north Queensland, that is, they are found nowhere else.

## **The Daintree - Our Mega Diverse Rainforest**

The Daintree National Park represents less than 30,000 hectares of the Wet Tropics 900,000 hectares.

The Daintree region is:

- *one of our nation's most significant environmental locations over 140 million years of growth has resulted in this magnificent resource,*
- *one of Australia's last extensive stands of lowland rainforest,*
- *where rainforest meets reef, a rare opportunity to experience two World Heritage Areas at once, the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and the Great Barrier Reef.*