

## Whitsunday Ngaro Sea Trail

*Follow in the footsteps of the Ngaro people, the traditional owners of the Whitsunday area, and undertake a journey through a region of unsurpassed natural beauty and rich cultural history. Blending seaways with a range of walks, the Whitsunday Ngaro Sea Trail will be truly unique.*



### What are Great Walks?

The Great Walks of Queensland is a State Government initiative to develop a series of extended walks. These will provide visitors with new and exciting ways to explore Queensland's natural areas as well as provide future economic and commercial opportunities for the regions.

After successfully building and opening six great walks from 2004-2007, the Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) is planning an additional four Great Walks that will highlight more of Queensland's most valuable natural assets — our parks and forests. Planning and construction commenced early in 2008 for the following walks:

- Carnarvon
- Conondale Range
- Cooloola
- Whitsunday Ngaro Sea Trail.

### The Whitsunday Ngaro Sea Trail

The Whitsunday islands and their surrounding waters have long been a centre for recreation and nature-based activities. Annually, more than 1.4 million people visit this region, making it one of the most popular tourist destinations in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. The Whitsunday Ngaro Sea Trail will add another facet to an already outstanding region, providing visitors with the opportunity to experience a remarkable journey over both land and sea.

### What to see

The Whitsunday Ngaro Sea Trail will highlight many iconic features that have made the area famous. Walk across pure white sands, sail over turquoise waters, see ancient rock art, rugged headlands, dry rainforest, rolling grasslands and experience the breathtaking views.

### The trail

Take in all of the Whitsunday Ngaro Sea Trail — travel from sea to summit with varying grades of difficulty and length across South Molle, Hook and Whitsunday islands, as well journeying its sea paths for a different and refreshing perspective.

The Whitsunday Ngaro Sea Trail can be accessed by private, charter or commercial boat. The area is also kayak friendly and within easy reach using hire vessels or bare boats. Commercial boats depart from Shute Harbour and Airlie Beach. Bare boats can be sourced at Hamilton Island, Shute Harbour or Airlie Beach. There are also numerous public boat ramps in the area.

### Ngaro cultural site, Hook Island

#### *170m one way*

Short and initially moderately steep, the track climbs the banks of Nara Inlet, to a rock shelter filled with Ngaro art motifs and extensive cultural deposits. The site has been upgraded with improved access, a new boardwalk, viewing area and interpretive displays.



## Whitsunday Cairn, Whitsunday Island

*Scrub Hen Beach to Whitsunday Cairn – 3km one way*

Steep and challenging, this track will be created for the Whitsunday Ngaro Sea Trail. Breathtaking views over Hook Island and beyond to Border Island are the reward for the more serious hiker.

## Tongue Point, Whitsunday Island

*Tongue Bay to Hill Inlet lookout*

*– 630m one way*

*Track junction to Lookout Beach*

*– 250m one way*

This moderate, winding track travels through woodland and dry rainforest communities to lookouts and beach. Visitors can walk uphill to take in the vistas over Hill Inlet – a highly significant area for the Ngaro people; the islands emerging from the surrounding

turquoise waters and the sweeping sands of Whitehaven Beach. An alternative is to walk over the ridge and along the cycad-lined boardwalk to the extensive white sands of Lookout Beach. Improved circuit access tracks to the lookouts and a possible circuit track to Lookout Beach will form this section of the Great Walk.

## Whitehaven Beach – Chance Bay, Whitsunday Island

*Solway circuit – 1.1km*

*Chance Bay – 2.5km one way*

From Whitehaven Beach, the Great Walk project is creating a short circuit track that climbs through impressive grasstrees, cycads and rock fern, with viewing opportunities over Solway Passage, Pentecost and Haslewood islands. The track then descends through coastal forest back to Whitehaven Beach. For those with more time, a branch track off the circuit will wind through some of the best of Whitsunday's forest and woodlands to Chance Bay.

This secluded bay on the southern side of Whitsunday Island is also a great anchorage option for boats during northerly winds.

## Whitsunday Peak, Whitsunday Island

*Whitsunday Peak track – 3km one way*

*Dugong-Sawmill track – 1.5km one way*

The Whitsunday Peak track will be one of the most challenging of the Whitsunday Ngaro Sea Trail. Reaching an elevation of 437m, this track offers spectacular views over the Whitsunday islands and surrounding mainland. Accessed from the

Sawmill Beach picnic area at Cid Harbour, the Great Walk project will define the Whitsunday Peak track and upgrade the Dugong-Sawmill track.

## Spion Kop and Mt Jeffreys, South Molle Island

*Sandy Bay to Spion Kop – 5.5km*

*extension to Mt Jeffreys – 1.5km*

Winding its way through open forest, grasslands, dry rainforest and stands of hoop pine, the track starts at the boaters' camp at Sandy Bay and traverses the length of South Molle Island. Culturally significant sites can be visited en route to Spion Kop, and once again spectacular views are a highlight from the higher elevations of the track. The Great Walk project has now upgraded these tracks, and its access tracks from Paddle Bay camp and South Molle Island resort, providing an extensive and accessible island track network of around 12km.

## Walkers' and boaters' camps

Walkers and boaters may access a number of camps if overnight island stays are required. Camps close to the proposed trail heads are Sandy Bay and Paddle Bay on South Molle Island, Dugong Beach, Whitehaven Beach and Peter Bay on Whitsunday Island and Curlew Beach on Hook Island. Camps have various facilities and are managed by DERM.

## Consultation

The Department of Environment and Resource Management have consulted community and stakeholders about the Great Walk. Community are being kept informed and involved throughout the project.

## When?

Construction commenced in April 2008. The project has been staged so that sections of the walk will be started and completed outside the wet season.

## For more information

Visit us online at [www.epa.qld.gov.au/greatwalks](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/greatwalks)

Phone 1300 130 372

Photography: Lisa Scott, DERM

### Disclaimer:

The materials presented in this fact sheet are distributed by the Department of Environment and Resource Management for information only. The project is at concept stage and the location of the final track and infrastructure depends on environmental and cultural heritage impact assessment.

