



Welcome to the Bundaberg Botanic Gardens

Discover the tallest Heliconia in the world, explore the rare fruit orchard, wander through an ancient garden and enjoy the tranquillity of the Japanese and Chinese Gardens.

Nature's magnificent display of flowers, foliage and fruit change with the seasons to provide endless beauty for you to appreciate all year round.




Bromeliad Garden

Bromeliads, or 'broms' as they are affectionately known, have some of the most diverse patterns and colours of any plants in the world. Brom leaves grow in tight rosettes that channel water down to a central urn. This creates a miniature pond which supplies water to thirsty animals and provides a safe habitat for frogs, snails and insect larvae. Leaves that fall into the water help provide important nutrients to the plant. When they blossom, the centre of the brom blushes red and small flowers emerge. Look for the neogelia species which can be found at the base of a fig tree.

After flowering only once, most broms slowly perish while new broms or 'pups' feed off the nutrients until they can survive on their own. See if you can spot some pups at the base of flowering plants.

Broms also provide great homes for spiders. Can you find the **Christmas spiders** (*Austracantha minax*) with the striking black and white pattern on their backs? These harmless spiders create overlapping communal webs to catch unsuspecting flying insects.



Rare Fruit Orchard

In 2010, a partnership between the Hinkler Branch of Rare Fruit Australia Inc. and the Bundaberg Botanic Gardens saw the development of the Rare Fruit Orchard. View unusual and exotic fruits from tropical and sub-tropical areas of the world. The **giant lau lau** (*Eugenia megacarpa*) has giant glossy leaves and bright red fruits that taste like crispy apples. Look for these delicious fruits in December, January, February, March and April. The **miracle fruit tree** (*Synsepalum dulcificum*) originates from West Africa and produces berries that alter your taste buds. Everything you eat for the following two hours will taste sweet! The **peanut butter tree** (*Bunchosia glandulifera*) produces rich sweet fruit with the texture of peanut butter. Look for small yellow flowers in spring followed by dark red fruits.



Australian Rainforest

Enter this cool shady area and be surrounded by tropical and sub-tropical Australian rainforest species. These plants have evolved in isolation for over 50 million years and thrive in the humid, wet environment provided by overhead sprinklers.

Look for the native **Australian ginger** (*Alpinia caerulea*), a long stemmed understorey plant with dark green leaves. Visit in summer to enjoy the white flowers and stunning clusters of bright blue fruit. These edible fruits are tart while the roots and stems taste like ginger. Only ever eat native fruits if you are positive that they are safe to consume.


Search for water birds in the lake as you stroll across the timber bridge and seek out the remarkable **fan palm** (*Licuala ramsayi*). Found only in Queensland, the fan palm has spectacular light green segmented leaves. These form in clusters of around 10 to 12 leaves that rest on top of each other. Growing up to two metres in diameter, it can take up to 20 years for these palms to reach their full potential.



Palm Grove

Palms are native to almost every tropical region on the planet and can grow in the form of trees, shrubs and even woody vines. View spectacular specimens of **bismarck palms** (*Bismarckia nobilis*) from Western and Northern Madagascar. Look for their gigantic silvery grey leaf fronds arranged in a crown at the top of the plant. Each frond can grow to three metres across and has hard stiff blades that are split on the outer edges.

Dwarf date palms (*Phoenix roebelenii*) are native to South East Asia and you can find several of these in the Grove. These palms are slow growing and reach a height of around three metres. Named for its black fruits in the shape of dates, it has fine feathery palms and distinct bumpy scars from old fronds.



Wetlands

The gardens surround a series of lakes popular for wildlife spotting with abundant turtles, water dragons, eels and bird life. The **broad shelled turtle** (*Chelodina expansa*) has the longest neck of any turtle in the world, a stark contrast to the **krefft's turtle** (*Emydura macquarii krefftii*) which exhibits a short neck and yellow facial stripes that run from eye to ear. **Eastern water dragons** (*Physignathus lesueurii*) can be seen basking on rocks, logs and overhanging branches and **short finned eels** (*Anguilla australis*) can be viewed along the edges of the lakes.

Wander across timber boardwalks extending across the waterways, for ample opportunities to observe purple swamp hens, dusky moorhens, pacific black ducks, darters, cormorants and pelicans.



Chinese Garden

The Nanning Gardens were a gift from the City of Nanning in 2008 to mark the tenth anniversary of the sister city relationship with Bundaberg. Known as the "Green City" due to its many parks, Nanning is located in Southern China with similar climatic conditions to Bundaberg.

The gardens highlight the friendship, goodwill and co-operation shown through the exchange program, representing the region through authentic designs produced by craftsmen and engineers in Nanning.



Walk through the moon gate and become absorbed in Chinese culture and natural beauty afforded by the surrounding cycads, bamboo and tiger grass.



Prehistoric Garden

Giant reptiles and dinosaurs roamed the earth 252 to 66 million years ago during the Mesozoic era at a time when flowering plants, birds, mammals and marine invertebrates evolved. Wander past cycads and **bunya pines** (*Araucaria bidwillii*) that herbivorous dinosaurs would have fed on. View **rough tree ferns** (*Cyathea australis*), the tallest of all ferns which can be identified by the tubercles and hair like scales on its trunk. Look for the **crocodile fern** (*Microsorium musifolium*) with its wrinkly leaves and dark green veins resembling the skin of a crocodile.

As you pass by the railway station, look up to see the **ylang ylang** (*Cananga odorata*) growing nearby. This tropical tree native to South East Asia is known for its scent which is extracted from the star shaped green-yellow flowers.



Bamboo

Bamboo is the fastest growing plant on the planet, growing 90 cm in 24 hours under ideal conditions. It is impractical to identify plant species by their flowers as many types only bloom between 60 and 130 years. Instead botanists look at the spacing, length, angle, shape and colour of the nodes (white rings) and culms (the sections between the white rings). Bamboo has a number of notable qualities including the ability to produce more oxygen and absorb more carbon dioxide than other plants, helping to stabilise the planet's atmosphere. Stronger than steel, bamboo can be used to replace wood for many traditional building uses, while the antibacterial properties make it a great option for wound dressings.



Friendship Grove

Every year visitors from Australia and around the world are welcomed to the region by the Bundaberg Friendship Force Club to discover culture, history, and local industries. A tree dedication is held in honour of these visitors with a tree planted alongside a commemorative plaque to remember the visit.

Wander through the grove and discover the many countries who have shared in the flavour of our region.

Look for the **Isis tamarind** (*Alectryon ramiflorus*) which is native to the Bundaberg Region and one of the rarest trees in the world.



Woodworkers Guild

Before the introduction of sugarcane, Bundaberg was built upon logging and milling timber. The town's first sawmill was built on the north bank of the Burnett River in 1868 and closed in 1903.

The trees planted here signify the importance of timber to the establishment of the city of Bundaberg and feature wood used by the Woodworkers Guild of Bundaberg.

The bunya pine is commonly used in furniture making, the hoop pine in general construction and silky oak to make musical instruments. From September to January, look for the stunning orange blooms on the **leichhardt pine** (*Nauclea orientalis*).



Wallum Walk

The Wallum Walk is dedicated to Jim Randall for his steadfast commitment to horticulture in the Bundaberg Region.

Amble along sandy paths that wind through distinct vegetation of swampy heathland. Look for the **bracken ferns** (*Pteridium esculentum*) with stiff fronds that are smooth on top with fine hairs on the underside and observe the proximity of neighbouring plants. This remarkable fern releases toxins in to the soil to stop plants from growing around them.

Wallum plants are generally fire tolerant, often growing in areas of high fire activity. Many banksia species have lignotubers which allow the plant to recover after a fire while bracken ferns regenerate rapidly due to an extensive underground root system.

Coastal development is now threatening the natural environment of wallum vegetation.



6 Mount Perry Road, Bundaberg North

Opening hours

7 days a week

5.30am - 6.45pm September to April

6.30am - 6pm May to August

Bundaberg Botanic Gardens is a Bundaberg Regional Council initiative



Figtree Chapel

The Figtree Chapel is a shady spot to sit and listen to the tranquil sounds of water and is also a popular wedding ceremony location. Two amazing plants can be found here including the **Fraser Island vine** (*Tecomanthe hillii*) which is native to Fraser Island. The vine flowers from late winter to late spring showcasing clusters of beautiful pink flowers with white throats. You can view this vine between the white lectern and the exterior wall of the Bundaberg and District Historical Museum. Search for a woody climbing stem with evergreen leaves growing on a golden penda.

Nearby is the world's largest heliconia species the **giant red** (*Heliconia bihai* x *Caribaea criswickii*) which can grow up to five metres high. The strikingly colourful flowers are actually specialised leaves known as bracts. Giant red has beautiful bright red bracts with green tips that grow upright to around 90cm.




Fern Garden

Ferns in this garden enjoy daily misting of water to replicate the moist environments in which they thrive. The larger trees help provide protection from extreme heat and cold. Look for the **birds nest ferns** (*Asplenium nidus*) at ground level as identified by their large wavy fronds with a slight curve at the tip. The birds nest appearance at the middle of this fern gives away the origin of its name. This central area gathers fallen leaves which break down and provide nutrients to the plant.

Search for the **large staghorn fern**, (*Platycerium superbum*) growing off a tree. These amazing ferns are epiphytes or 'air plants' that have evolved to survive on trees without the need for soil. Their fronds resemble the shape of horns and can grow up to two metres.

Native to the Philippines, the stunning **jade vine** (*Strongylodon macrobotrys*) is not to be missed with its spectacular dangling clusters of turquoise claw shaped flowers. You can find this stunning vine at the back of the fern garden (railway line side) as identified by a name plaque at the base of the plant.



Sclerophyll Woodland

Experience the typical Australian bush in the dry Sclerophyll Woodland (open forest) area. Sclerophyll comes from the Greek word 'skleros' for hard and 'phyllon' for leaf, symbolic of the many plant species with thick leathery leaves and waxy coatings within this area. These features help the plants to conserve water and provides greater resistance to drought conditions and wildfire. This vegetation community comprises mainly of tall trees such as eucalypts growing close together with acacias.

The hollows found in the older eucalyptus trees provide shelter, roosting and breeding sites for many animals including possums, bats, lizards, snakes and birds.




Japanese Garden

The Japanese Gardens were built in celebration of the Sister City relationship with the City of Settsu in Japan.

Settsu forms part of the extensive prefecture of Osaka, Japan's second biggest city. The elegant and distinctive design of this garden promotes peaceful contemplation through the combination of rock, water, plants and traditional ornaments.

The garden embodies Japanese landscaping design with formal flowing hedges, tiered ponds and steps, a friendship pavilion, torii gate and stone carved lantern. Azaleas line the pathways with stunning shows of pinks and purples alongside **Japanese cycads** (*Cycas revoluta*).

Look for the **liquid amber** (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) with its star shaped leaves that turn spectacular shades of orange and red during autumn, providing a Japanese maple feel in a sub-tropical climate.




Hinkler Garden

Circular designs and symmetrical garden beds make this area a favourite for photographs.

Walk under the eye catching **sandpaper vine**, (*Petrea volubilis*) which originates from Central and South America and produces masses of stunning purple flowers. Take a closer look to appreciate the true deep purple flower within the mass of star shaped calyces. The delicate flowers make a stark contrast to the rough, stiff green leaves with the texture of sandpaper.


Enjoy the cottage garden feel to this area which incorporates a variety of flowers such as roses, camellia's and topiarised plants.





Bundaberg Botanic Gardens

Map and information





Tourist attractions

1. Bundaberg & District Historical Museum
2. Figtree Chapel
3. Café 1928
4. Hinkler House
5. Hinkler Hall of Aviation
6. Railway Station
7. Fairymead House
8. Rotunda
9. Friendship pavilion
10. Nature themed playground
11. Hinkler memorial



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More information

- Bundaberg Botanic Gardens entry is free
- Dogs are welcome but please keep on a leash
- Please do not remove any plants
- The Wildlife Island is an animal refuge with no public access
- Thank you for not feeding bread to the birds, it causes illness and it has no nutritional value

We hope you enjoy our beautiful gardens