

# Fraser Island and Whale Watching

Dates:

Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> August to Sunday, 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2009

(9 days)

Cost: \$2,200

Style: Camping

Start and Finish: Brisbane

Fraser Island is to the sand masses of the world what the Great Barrier Reef is to the world's coral reefs. It features expansive beaches, majestic forests (including rainforest), magically clear lakes, spectacular variegated cliffs and diverse vegetation, all in sand. Its World Heritage status is based on its outstanding aesthetic qualities and its most impressive geomorphic features such as sandblows, which have been likened to glaciers. This safari coincides with the annual migration of humpback whales through Hervey Bay. Tour Maryborough to discover its heritage buildings with a vernacular architecture, unique to Queensland.

**Fraser Island:** Covering 184,000 hectares, Fraser Island stretches in length 123 kms and averages 14 kms in breadth. Dunes reach 240 metres in height. It has evolved over several episodes of fluctuations in the sea levels during the last 800,000 or more years into the most complex dune system in the world. Dune types range from parabolic and transverse dunes to parallel beach ridges and complex lake lunettes. This safari will attempt to traverse and interpret them all.

**Guide:** This will be the last GO BUSH tip for John Sinclair, the indefatigable campaigner for the protection of Fraser Island for 38 years. He knows Fraser Island better than any other person. He has written a number of books including *"Discovering Fraser Island and Cooloola"* and his autobiography *"Fighting for Fraser Island"*, with Peter Corris. He is keen to share his knowledge and show off its most impressive features. Discover the unique values of this great natural wonder of the world and share John's passion for it.

**Style:** This camping safari travels in a convoy of four 4WD Toyota Land Cruisers. While little walking is essential, there are good opportunities for both walking and swimming.

## Draft Itinerary

**Day 1; Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> August:** Depart Roma Street, Brisbane, at 7.30 am. Via Kin Kin and the Cooloola Way Travel to Fraser Island via Rainbow Beach then via Eurong to establish our camp in the rainforest. Camp: Central Station.

**Day 2; Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> August:** Visit some of the island's most iconic features—Lake McKenzie and walk along the magical Wanggoolba Creek in the morning, and follow the Southern Lakes Scenic Drive in the afternoon including Lakes Boomanjin and Birrabeen. Camp: Central Station.

**Day 3; Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> August:** Explore the "Valley of the Giants" where the world's largest *Syncarpias* and tallowwoods grow and the site of the Aboriginal mission (1897-1905) at Bogimbah Creek as well as the mangroves of Great Sandy Strait. Pass some of the Fraser the Fens on the way to the Western Beach. Camp: Arch Cliffs.

**Day 4; Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> August:** Bowarrady Walk: Either relax in camp while watching out for the whales which can be seen from the beach here or take a very pleasant 26 kilometre hike to Lake Bowarrady or part thereof. Camp: Arch Cliffs

**Day 5; Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> August:** Break camp and do a transect of the island's dune systems. Stop at Knifeblade Sandblow and Lake Allom, a magnificent perched lake set in the rainforest for lunch s short rainforest walk and a swim on the way to the eastern beach. Camp: Dundubara

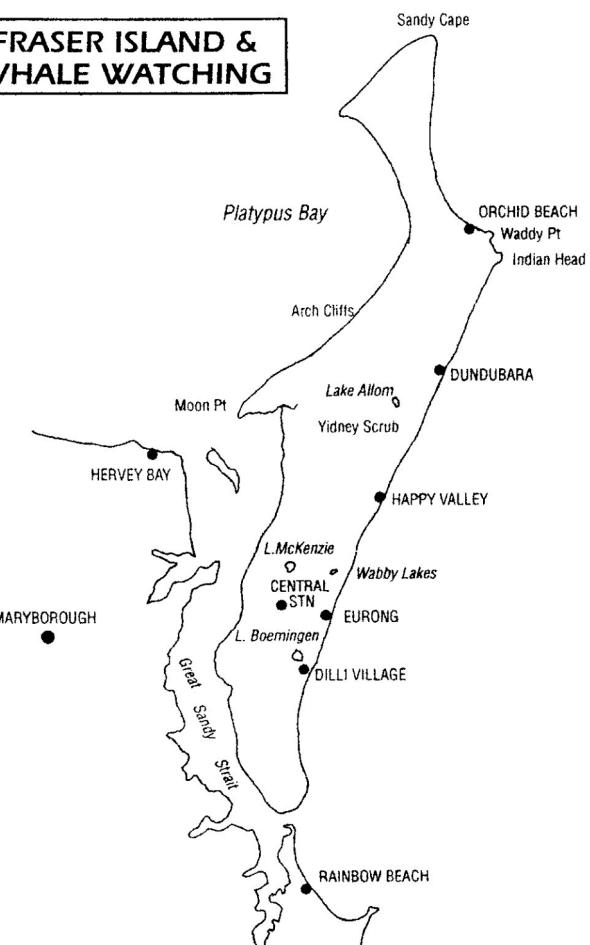
**Day 6; Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> August:** Top End Run to discover the wild grandeur of Sandy Cape, Breaksea Spit and Flinders Sandblow. Also visit Orchid Beach, Ocean Lake, a typical window lake and thee rugged rocky headlands. Indian Head, Middle Rocks and Waddy Point are the western extremities of an ancient volcano. Camp: Arch Cliffs.

**Day 7; Friday, 21<sup>st</sup> August:** Explore some features of the Ocean Beach including the coloured sands, the Maheno and Eli Creek prior to driving to Yidney Scrub and Lake Garawongera. Enjoy some interesting party entertainment after dinner. Camp: Arch Cliffs.

**Day 8; Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> August:** Travel south along the Ocean Beach to Rainbow Gorge then on to Wabby Lakes to take one of the most interesting walks on the island to appreciate sandblow dynamics then proceed up the beach to Eli Creek, and coloured sands. Accom: Hervey Bay Motel.

**Day 9; Sunday, 23<sup>rd</sup> August:** Take a morning cruise to Platypus Bay where playful humpback whales often play around the boat. Then back ashore we travel to Maryborough to view the vernacular architecture of Maryborough, John Sinclair's home town, which has the best assemblage of Queenslander houses. After lunch return to Brisbane via the Mary Valley. Arrive Brisbane about 6.30 pm.

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**NOTE:** This itinerary is a guide only. It has to be flexible and is subject to variation due to beach and weather conditions and any limitations imposed by Queensland Government managers.