

CATCHMENT PROFILE

The Mary River Catchment is one of the most diverse catchments in Queensland. It covers 9595 km² from Maleny to Fraser Island and contains a population of over 100,000 people, some on the land but many in urban areas and rural subdivisions.

Economic activities in the Mary River Catchment range from dairying, beef, forestry, fishing, horticulture, mining, sugar, farm forestry, tourism, sand and gravel extraction, small industry and cottage arts and craft.

The Mary River is 320 km long and water quality varies from fresh through to saline in the estuarine areas where the river meets the Great Sandy Strait behind Fraser Island. In floods, the waters of the catchment make their way into the marine environment of Hervey Bay.

This complex catchment is subject to high intensity cyclonic rainfall on very steep slopes and is experiencing major changes in land use, increased competition for resources, and rapid population growth (being adjacent to the Sunshine Coast and Hervey Bay).

Growing community interest in addressing river and catchment problems in recent years has seen the formation of several resource management groups, landcare groups and a range of major congresses and seminars to discuss shared issues.

The Vision of the MRCCC is to achieve a sustainable and productive catchment. In achieving this Vision members hope to ensure that we will not be judged by what we take from the catchment, but by how we leave the catchment so that its capacity to support our future generations is enhanced.

CURRENT PROJECTS OF THE MRCCC

- Implementing the Mary River & tributaries Rehabilitation Plan – Mary Program of Rivercare
- Community Waterwatch in Maleny, Conondale, Kenilworth, Six Mile subcatchments, Amamoor, Gympie, Munna, Tiaro, Widgee, Wide Bay and Maryborough
- Living with threatened species in Maroochy, Noosa and Cooloola Shires – frog surveys and on-ground rehabilitation projects
- Re-establishing corridors for the Richmond Birdwing Butterfly
- Western Mary Catchment Grazing Landscapes Project
- Property Management Systems Initiative, Gympie FarmFLOW project
- Biopassage Project
- Lake Macdonald Cabomba Bio-control Project
- Water Conservation and Education
- The Noosa Festival of Water

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|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
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*Front cover photo of the endangered
Cascade Tree Frog by Eva Ford*



**Winners of the
2007
Qld Rivercare
Award**

FORMATION OF THE MRCCC

The MRCCC was formed in 1993 with the primary objective of being a representative body of community, industry and government interests involved in natural resource management in the Mary River Catchment.

OUR MISSION

To promote within the community, through sector interests, a common view of a sustainable and productive catchment.

ROLES

The MRCCC has identified the following key roles to guide development of actions:

1. Education and Awareness
2. Planning, particularly assisting local government
3. Assisting interest sectors to improve practices eg. Best Management Practices
4. Supporting Landcare
5. Consultation
6. Working with government

The MRCCC involves representatives from the following interest sectors:

- Grazing / beef
- Landcare
- Irrigation
- Dairying
- Horticulture
- Environment
- Sugar
- Forestry
- Education
- General Community
- Fishing
- Local Government
- Department of Primary Industries
- Department of Natural Resources
- Rural Women
- Special members
- Western Mary Catchments Community

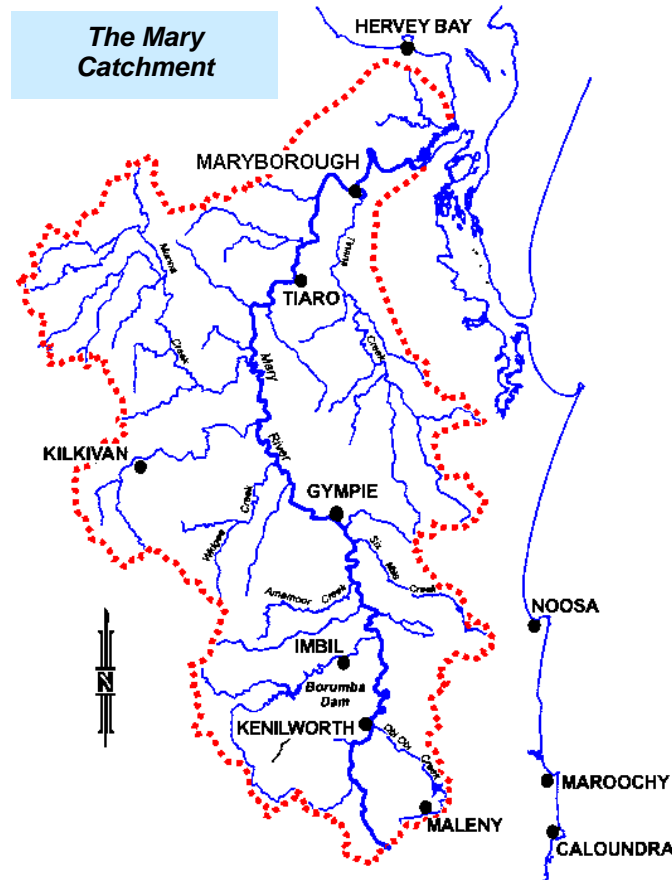


Photo by Debbie Seal

CARING FOR OUR CATCHMENT

Since 2002, the Mary River Catchment Committee has been implementing Queensland's first whole of catchment river rehabilitation plan, which prioritises rehabilitation effort based on conservation significance.

The Mary River & tributaries Rehabilitation Plan classifies the waterways of the catchment into reaches of similar characteristics and behaviour. Each of these reaches is then ranked according to their conservation significance. Each reach is then classified into 7 categories and areas with priority for attention identified.

On-ground works and management are targeting improvements to the habitat of endangered species such as the Mary River Cod and Mary River Turtle and riparian vegetation communities of conservation and strategic importance. Additionally, parts of the upper catchment are recognised as being important breeding habitats for many rare and threatened species of frogs such as the Gastric Brooding Frog, Cascade Tree Frog and the Giant Barred Frog.

The estuary of the Mary River is internationally recognised as a RAMSAR wetland, and a stop-over for many migratory species including the threatened dugong.

The Catchment Committee also coordinates community Waterwatch Groups throughout the Mary Catchment who regularly monitor water quality using a range of hand-held field equipment. Currently, over 70 volunteers are involved in monthly water monitoring at over 100 sites across the Mary and tributaries. Also, school groups across the catchment take part in Waterwatch and tree planting activities.