



Fraser Island Defenders Organisation

FIDO — The Watchdog of Fraser Island

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Aim: To ensure the wisest use of Fraser Island's natural resources

To Members of the International Mire Conservation Group: Re Visiting Fraser Island 26th 29th November 2013

On behalf of this organization I would like to invite ten members of the group to visit Fraser Island as an add-on trip to your Australian tour in December. It is an offer to allow anyone wants to extend their time in Australia to visit Fraser Island that has these geographically unusual and most interesting fens. We would provide all transport and accommodation guide and meals from Brisbane starting on the morning of Tuesday 26th November to and delivering to Brisbane airport on Friday afternoon 29th November in time to make flight connections to Sydney to join up with the main study tour of areas in southern Australia. We appreciate it is a busy time of the year and most members of the IMCG will not be able to participate. However, the Fraser Island side trip is only an optional extra in Australia for those who are interested and can afford the time.

Why Fraser Island? It was during a post Ramsar Conference tour in 1996 that members of the Peat study group identified the presence on this World Heritage sandmass of extensive areas of fens and peat bogs. It raised considerable excitement at the time and has added to the World Heritage values on Fraser Island. It has also generated a lot of scientific interest in the significance of these subtropical features on a pure sand base little above sea-level and has led to further studies by Queensland scientists.

What is FIDO: FIDO is a non-government conservation organization with a 42-year history working for the protection of Fraser Island. FIDO is an entirely voluntary organization with no paid staff that gives highest priority to the identification and protection of the natural values of Fraser Island. It was FIDO that led the campaigns to stop sandmining and logging on Fraser Island and see it ultimately inscribed on the World Heritage List.

Not Only FIDO: Although FIDO has issued this invitation it is widely supported by scientists and others who like FIDO would appreciate the input of the IMCG in improving our understanding of the special and mysterious peat features of Fraser Island and help enhance our appreciation. FIDO has had many offers to assist in providing this excursion for such a respected group. Everyone associated with Fraser Island management is keen to understand these fens which Richard Lindsay personally first recognized in a 1996 visit that he made to the island with me. Many people are keen to pick the brains of any peat specialist we can lure our way. We have the support of the QPWS

The proposed tour: Most of the fens are located in remote areas and the Fraser Island visit would involve camping but FIDO will provide all camping equipment including sleeping bags. FIDO has had decades of experience running camping safaris and other excursions on Fraser Island. Because of the logistics we can manage a maximum of 12 people. I would expect our support group would swell the numbers by about 8 to 10. That would mean a group of 20 to 22 and while we would

look mainly at some of the fens they would also get a chance to see some of the other special features of Fraser Island including the rainforest, perched dune lakes and coloured sands

Proposed Itinerary for IMCG Fraser Island Visit

Monday, 25th November

IMCG participants should arrive in Brisbane. However if group members choose an early flight to arrive at Brisbane Airport before 8.00 am on Tuesday 26th November they will be picked up there.

Tuesday 26th November

Guests staying overnight in Brisbane will be collected from the CBD at approximately 8.00 am. Group members who fly in will be collected at the Brisbane Airport at approximately 8.30 am. The group will travel in a small convoy of 4WDs north for four hours along the Bruce Highway stopping to have lunch in Maryborough which has a fascinating array of heritage houses before and driven north Depart Brisbane Catch 3.30 ferry from Mary River Head for Kingfisher Resort. Drive to Coomboo

Wednesday 27th November

Explore the Moon Point Fens and the fens along Bowarrady, Woralie and Coongul depending on the tide. Details and background papers for the fens will be E-mailed to those who register for this trip.

Thursday, 28th November

This would be a day for a scenic drive to explore some of the special features of this World Heritage island recognized for its outstanding natural beauty. We would explore the rainforest, Lake Allom one of the unique perched dune lakes on the islands, drive along the expansive ocean beach backed with cliffs of coloured sands, stopping at Eli Creek and returning to camp via the grand Yidney Scrub.

Friday 29th November

Break camp and catch the 10.30 am ferry from Kingfisher Resort. This would get us to the Brisbane Airport comfortably by 5.00 pm

Cost: FIDO proposes that it will cost the IMCG members who come as our guests nothing from the time they leave Brisbane until we drop them off at the Brisbane Airport. Besides there will be only a negligible chance to even see a retail outlet while they are on Fraser Island where we are going and for the most part they won't even see other people on the island except on the eastern beach.

Climate details: I should also point out that the temperatures on Fraser Island in November are normally quite benign and we are unlikely to go much if anything above 30C and that is moderated by a pleasant maritime breeze. FIDO based a survey group camp at Lake Coomboo during the last week of November in 2010 and is able to vouch for the surprisingly pleasant climate then. The camp will be adjacent to a fabulous freshwater lake to cool off in. It will be a change from the Northern winter.

To Register: Please Email John Sinclair to claim a place on this excursion: john@sinclair.org.au or thejohnsinclair@gmail.com

John Sinclair, FIDO Honorary Project Officer