

2 LAKE BARRINE

1-2 HOURS LOOP



The Lake Barrine trail is an easy 5km walking loop around the crystal clear Lake Barrine. It passes through beautiful rainforest, and offers the chance to encounter a range of the Tablelands' amazing fauna.

The trail is unpaved in sections, but is generally good with relatively gentle slopes and easy to follow. There are two lookout platforms with views over the Lake. There is also a short loop section (600m) which is steeper and has some uneven surfaces if you don't have the time to do the full Lake Barrine Trail.

The recommend direction is from the Lake Barrine Teahouse, passing the Twin Kauri trees and travelling clockwise around the lake.

LANDSCAPE

Lake Barrine is a maar - a volcanic crater formed by two massive explosions from super-heating of groundwater. This vent now forms the catchment of the lake and the water depth is 65m. Radiocarbon dating of sediments within the lake suggests it formed some 17,000 years ago. Toohey Creek drains Lake Barrine, which means the water level of the lake remains fairly constant throughout the year, except during periods of severe inundation. The water from Toohey Creek feeds into the headwaters of the Mulgrave River.

VEGETATION

Dense rainforest surrounds Lake Barrine, supported by the rich basalt soils and high rainfall. The canopy of the forest is closed, so little sunlight reaches the forest floor. Consequently, there are relatively few plants making up the understorey.

A pair of towering Bull Kauri Pine trees *Agathis microstachya* reach high above the forest canopy. At over 45m tall and more than 6m in girth, Bull Kauris are the largest of Australia's 38 pine species. Bull Kauris are restricted to a small geographic range on the Atherton Tablelands between elevations of 600 and 1,000m, in areas of high rainfall and deep loam to clay soils. While difficult to age because they do not have consistent concentric growth rings like other trees, they are estimated to be between 200 and 400 years old and still growing.

The forest also hosts several large Fig Trees *Ficus species* along the trail. Some of these trees start life as a seed dropped high in the sunlit canopy. After germinating, the roots grow downwards, gradually becoming thicker and interwoven. In time the fig grows over its host tree, which eventually rots away. Look for examples along the trail where figs and their hosts are locked in various stages of this struggle for survival.

FAUNA

The Lake Barrine Circuit Trail is one of the best places on the Tablelands to see Musky Rat-kangaroos *Hypsiprymnodon moschatus*. This amazing marsupial has been living in the rainforests of Australia for millions of years, and is the only surviving member of the genus related to modern kangaroos. They are one of only two diurnal (day-active) marsupials in Australia. Look for them collecting fruit in the leaf litter, or crossing the trail. If you come across a tree dropping large amounts of fruit on the trail, its worth standing quietly for a few minutes and seeing if a Musky Rat Kangaroo or some other frugivore will emerge.

You may also be lucky enough to see several bird species endemic to the Wet Tropics along this trail. One of the most obvious is the Grey-headed Robin *Heteromyias cinereifrons*. Often seen hopping along the forest floor and perching on low limbs. Grey-headed Robins pounce on their insect prey in the leaf litter. The repeated short whistle call is characteristic of the Wet Tropics rainforest at this altitude.

Listen for the harsh hiss and raspy flight of Victoria's Riflebirds *Ptiloris victoriae*. This striking bird is one of three species of Bird-of-Paradise found in Australia. Mature males are shiny black, with a green metallic chest and underparts, while females and immature birds are light brown with streaked chests and wings. Victoria's Riflebirds are often heard nosily searching for insects under bark and amongst epiphytes.

Keep a sharp lookout on tree trunks for Boyd's Forest Dragons *Hypsilurus boydii*. Although up to 45cm long and quite colourful, these lizards are surprisingly well camouflaged. Boyd's Forest Dragons rarely bask in the sun like other reptiles, instead allowing their body temperature to match the surrounding air temperature.



Lake Barrine Trail



Female Cairns Birdwing Butterfly



Boyd's Forest Dragon



Lake Barrine



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Indicative Trail Location

- Main Track: - - - - -
- Alternative Route: - - - - -

TRAIL INFORMATION

The trail is described in a clockwise direction from the Teahouse.

- A. Trailhead.
- B. 80m – Twins Kauris.
- C. 380m – Rainforest Walk junction. Stay on the main trail. The Rainforest loop is a shorter trail (600m) that leads up to the Lake Barrine access road and back to the carpark – an alternative trail if you do not have time for the full loop trail.
- D. 550m – bridge over Toohey Creek. This is the only outlet from Lake Barrine, and flows when the Lake is full. Platypus can sometimes be seen foraging in the running creek from this bridge, especially in the early morning or late afternoon.

- E. 1km – fig tree on the right of the trail is a good example of a Strangler Fig which has killed its host and continuing to grow. The roots are almost joined about the hollow centre where the host-tree has rotted away.
- F. 2.4km – viewing platform over the lake. Look for Sawshelled turtles and Eastern Water Dragons sunning themselves on the logs of the Lake foreshore.
- G. 3.2km – large fig tree, with its root system spanning and bridging the trail.
- A. 5.0km – car park and historic Lake Barrine Teahouse.

BEST TIME TO GO

Enjoy the Lake Barrine Circuit Trail any time of the year.

TIPS & SAFETY

- ▼ Check the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service webpage (parks.des.qld.gov.au) for park alerts, and management and safety information.
- ▼ Reduce the spread of weeds and fungal diseases by cleaning mud and seeds from your equipment (shoes and backpacks) before you head off.
- ▼ Take care and walk to the conditions and your abilities.

GETTING THERE

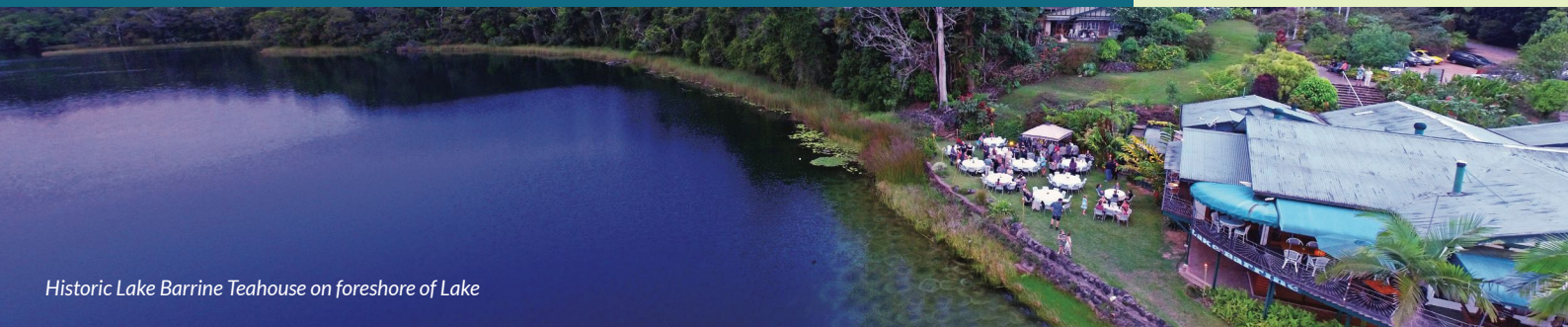
From Yungaburra, take the Gillies Range Road towards the Gilles Range and Gordonvale. After 9km, turn right at the sign into Lake Barrine, Crater Lakes National Park.



Macleay's honeyeater

If you liked this trail, you might also like these other 10 Top Tableland Trails:

- #1. Peterson Creek. A family-friendly walk near Yungaburra and a great place to see Platypus.
- #7. Mount Baldy and Mt Yabi Trail. Just outside of Atherton, this trail takes you to the summits of Mount Baldy and Yabi Mountain. The rewards are sweeping views over Atherton and the rich agricultural lands beyond.



Historic Lake Barrine Teahouse on foreshore of Lake