



The Borrow Pits, Kelso

Hole in the ground to wildlife wonderland

What is a Borrow Pit?

When the Ross River Dam was built in the 1970s, soil was taken from this 33ha site for the dam wall. The big holes left behind are now known as the "Borrow Pits".

How does a hole in the ground become an Ephemeral Freshwater Wetland?

During the wet season the pits fill with water and create an oasis for local and migratory animals. With good rainfall, water can remain for several years. Without rain the water dries up, leaving big holes in the ground. Because of this, the Borrow Pits are called semi-permanent wetlands – also known as *Ephemeral Freshwater Wetlands*.

What might you see in a wetland?

Wetlands can be a great place to see local wildlife, particularly birdlife. The Borrow Pits hold water after many of the local creeks have dried up, and because of this, is regularly used for bird watching.

Why are wetlands important?

Sites like the Borrow Pits are among the most productive ecosystems in the world! They help us and the environment by:

- Taking up nutrients and toxins that run off the land via creeks and rivers to the Great Barrier Reef. These pollutants include pet and livestock droppings, fertiliser and pesticides, toxic metals, rubbish and other harmful chemicals we use around our homes that end up in our waste water.
- Slowing down floodwaters, helping to stop creek banks from being washed away, and lessening flooding of our city and homes.
- Trapping sediment from floodwaters to prevent silt build-up in our creeks, rivers and Great Barrier Reef.
- Recharging or discharging water to or from underground creeks (aquifers).
- Providing important homes and refuges for many native animals and migratory birds.

As you journey down your eco-trail of adventure... look and listen. You may see the same animals along the entire trail. Why might different species be attracted to the various sites along the trail?

Who lives or visits the Borrow Pits?

Can you match each bird with its common name by drawing a line from the picture to the words? The sign in the main bird hide might be able to help....



- White-faced Heron
- Australian White Ibis
- Rainbow Bee-eater
- Black Swan
- Black-faced Woodswallow
- Black Kite



Photos Courtesy of Ian Boyd: White-faced Heron, Australian White Ibis, Black Swans, Black-faced Woodswallow and Black Kite.

The Borrow Pits Project is a Together Townsville Partnership with Powerlink Queensland

