



*Tegoora Rock, centre, Bald Rock, distant image copyright Ross Alford*

The **Townsville Town Common Conservation Park** is an area of swamp, salt mudflats, and low hills that lie north of the city. From Castle Hill in the city, it is just under 10 kilometres distance to those hills, the Many Peaks Range, and because their highest peak, Mt Marlow, is only 213 metres in elevation, the hills can look small, dull, and uninspiring.

However, the wetlands under the hills are an amazing place, with some interesting rock formations framing the pools of water. There is road access to walking tracks at the southern and northern ends of the range.



*right: Freshwater Lagoon Road view of Bald Rock area  
below right: track sign  
below: road to Bald Rock carpark (images: Hj Preuss)*





A walking track from Pallarenda north to Bald Rock runs along the top of these hills, climbing through patches of coastal vine scrub, and eucalypt forest to open grassland on the ridge tops. A lower track skirts the wetlands, passing Tegoora rock on its way north.

*above: Pandanus and The Common wetlands,  
photo by Ross Alford*

These wetlands are seasonal, the roads may be closed during the summer rainy season, and the track may be under water, or overgrown, lost in heavy grass growth.

*below: track conditions to Shelley Beach,  
photos by Hj Preuss*





A walking track from Bald Rock runs north along the edge of the saltflats and the low hills of the Many Peaks Range to Shelley Beach. Out to sea, Magnetic Island is close by, the Palm Group of islands is to the north, and Hinchinbrook Island can be seen on the northern horizon.

*above: saltflats and The Common,  
photo by Ross Alford*

Sea kayakers can launch at the Marlow Street boat ramp at Pallarenda, with a six kilometre paddle around the coastline to where the walking track comes out onto Shelley Beach.

*below: Shelley Beach, Magnetic Is., and Many  
Peaks Range, photo by Hj Preuss*





The Bohle River empties into Cleveland Bay just north of Point Cape Marlowe, and it is possible to launch a kayak at the Stoney Creek boat ramp, Marina Drive, in the Townsville suburb of Bushland Beach. From there it is under a kilometre downstream to the Bohle River, and 2.5 kilometres downriver to the bay.

Maybe it is the thought of the saltwater crocodiles that are occasionally sighted, but kayakers paddling to Cape Marlowe seem to prefer to launch at the boat ramp at the northern end of Pallarenda Beach.

There are extensive sand flats that can extend for half a kilometre from the beach line at low tide, take care not to get beached until the rising tide.

photos: Hj Preuss



*looking to Castle Hill  
photo by HJ Preuss*

Hot, steep, rock hopping required, with a track hard to follow, the walk from the Pallarenda end to Mt Marlowe can be made easier with a car shuttle the other end at Bald Rock carpark. Be prepared for a heavily grassed track, depending on the recent weather.

below: vine scrub rainforest, southern end of the Mt Marlowe walk, and, the view north from Mt Marlowe.

Images: Tanya Cornish





Bohle River

Marina Dr

Stoney Creek  
boat ramp

Point Cape Marlow

Shelley Beach

Mt Marlow  
213m

Many Peaks Range

● radar dome

Bald Rock  
carpark

Tegoora  
Rock

Marlow Street  
boat ramp

Cape  
Pallarenda  
Road

Freshwater  
Lagoon road

Rowes Bay  
Golf Club

Many Peaks Range and Townsville Common  
..... walking trail  
Bald Rock to Pallarenda 7.5 km one way  
Bald Rock to Shelley Beach 5.0 km one way

# The Townsville Town Common Conservation Park

*Ross Alford*

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*Looking to Many Peaks  
image: Hj Preuss*