



Clarence

RIVER OF **ADVENTURE**
2011

sailing & cruising guide

YAMBA TO GRAFTON



www.myclarencevalley.com



100km of sailing, cruising and boating adventure and
100 islands to explore on the spectacular Clarence River.

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Welcome to the Clarence, an area of astonishing beauty with lush farmlands, rich rainforests and golden beaches.

One of the dominant features of the region is the mighty Clarence River, a river of adventure. With 100 chartered islands it is the second largest river in Australia with over 400km of pristine water from source to sea.

This guide will assist you to plan your adventure with suggested routes, points of interest and details of river infrastructure. It does not however, provide detailed navigation of the river and it is recommended that electronic **C Maps** or **Chart No. 222 of the Clarence River and Approaches** is obtained for accurate depths of the river system. Alternatively, the guide book **Cruising the NSW Coast 6th edition** by Alan Lucas contains some very useful information on depths and navigation of the Clarence.

Once used as a major trade route, the river is now used primarily for leisure. The

broad waters of the lower river are ideal for sailing, boating or fishing where the upper reaches and the many tributaries offer excellent canoeing, kayaking and fishing opportunities.

The river becomes a focal point for the many river based festivals that take place each year including, the Bridge to Bridge Ski Race, Head of the River Rowing Regatta, the Bridge to Breakers Sailing regatta, Dragon Boat races and Pro Wakeboard Championships to name a few. Please check NSW Maritime website www.maritime.nsw.gov.au or call **02 6646 1852** for restrictions during these times.

The sailing guide details facilities such as marinas, jetties, pontoons, boat ramps, fuel and the identification of hazards such as bridges and overhead cables.

For further information on activities, accommodation and events in the Clarence, call **02 6643 0800** or visit www.myclarencevalley.com.

getting to the clarence

by road

Recent upgrades to the Pacific Highway have significantly shortened the drive from Brisbane and the Gold Coast. Yamba is only four hours drive south from Brisbane and a bit over three from the Gold Coast. From the south at Port Macquarie, it is only four and half hours drive.

by air

Rex Airlines has direct flights to the Grafton Airport. Airports are also located at Coffs Harbour (50 minutes drive to Grafton) or Ballina (1 hour drive to Yamba).

about the clarence

logistical information

River descriptions and maps of boating routes with GPS coordinates, points of interest and towns with amenities are to be found in this guide.

The Clarence Tourism website www.myclarencevalley.com can provide further information on:

- Accommodation, hotels, restaurants and other amenities
- Regional suppliers who can provide full support and advice for your trip
- Boat and equipment hire

Yamba Marina has facilities for effluent disposal, fresh water and fuel. Details are available on the website www.yambamarina.com.au.

charts for the clarence

Corrected charts for the **Clarence River and Approaches (222)** can be purchased from Boat Books in either Brisbane (**07 3229 6427** or freecall **1800 773 458**) or Sydney (**02 9439 1133**). Non-corrected charts are available from Yamba Marina (**02 6646 9898**). C-Maps of the Clarence are also available from Jeppesen (**02 9808 6200**).

tides and adjustments

The tides for Yamba & Iluka are the same as for Sydney. Over-run continues for approximately 2 hours after high tide and 2½ after low tide.

High Tide

Maclean: 2¼ hrs
Brushgrove: 3¼ hrs
Ulmarra/Grafton: 4½ hrs

Low Tide

Maclean: 2¼ hrs
Ulmarra: 5 hrs
Grafton: 5¼ hrs.

campsites

Public campsites are not available on the Lower Clarence. Camp at one of the nominated caravan parks or seek permission to camp on private land. Rivers can rise unexpectedly; ensure you are camping well clear of the river.

environment

Sustainable environmental practices are strongly advocated by the Clarence community. Ensure you think carefully about your actions and minimise your footprint when visiting our Valley.

accommodation and food

There is quality accommodation to suit all styles and budgets, with luxury resorts, motels, caravan parks, B&B and self contained apartments, many with direct

water access and private jetties. Visit www.myclarencevalley.com for a full list of accommodation options.

Public pontoons have been strategically installed to allow access to many waterfront villages and towns with cafes, museums, galleries. Private pontoons allow access to riverside pubs and restaurants.

boat hire

Boats are available for hire at Yamba and Iluka Marina with cruises and fishing charters available from Yamba Marina. Houseboats are available for hire from Brushgrove.

maps

NSW Maritime Clarence River Waterways Map.



yamba to maclean

1

Take some time to explore the popular town of Yamba, there are some excellent facilities on the river at the Marina (GPS 29deg,26.144min.S 153deg,20.888min.E). There is a small public wharf at the far end of Yamba Channel (GPS 29deg,25.994min.S 153deg,21.577min.E) which is suitable for shallow draft vessels and tenders. The jetty is available to set down and pick up passengers, but movements of the ferry need to be observed. The jetty is available adjacent to Ford Park which has a cycle way and picnic/bbq facilities.

Yamba Bay Park (GPS 29deg,26.028min.S 153deg,20.617min.E) has a small jetty and boat ramp with a fish cleaning area, picnic, bbq, toilet and boat wash down facilities which is suitable for tinnies and tenders and vessels with shallow draft and is a short walk to the picturesque village of Yamba which is a popular destination for tourists with some great beaches, boutique shopping with galleries and a lively cafe and restaurant scene.

Cruise out of Yamba Marina and across to the town of Iluka following the marked channel around Dart Island

and through the hole in Middle Wall, a deep but relatively narrow channel (GPS 29deg,25.514min.S 153deg,21.071min.E). You can enter the bay at the Marina via bottom hole (GPS 29deg,24.999min.S 153deg,21.093min.E) where there is a pontoon (GPS 29deg,24.777min.S 153deg,21.229min.E) close to the Sedgers Reef Hotel or at the northern end of the bay where you can anchor-off. The Charlie Ryan Park has BBQ, picnic facilities, toilets and play equipment (please note that this is an alcohol free zone). A short walking track along the bay leads back to the marina.

Leaving Iluka, cruise past Freeburn Island with Goodwood Island to your North. There is an excellent fishing area known as Brown's Rocks adjacent to Brown's Rocks Caravan Park. This wharf is strictly commercial and private vessels should not berth alongside or anchor in its vicinity.

Continue up to Harwood and under the bridge spanning the Pacific Highway (GPS 29deg,25.814min.S 153deg,14.444min.E) height and opening information are listed below. After the bridge is a public jetty where you can stop to explore near the Harwood Hotel, locally called the 'Harwood Hilton' (GPS 29deg,25.678min.S 153deg,14.358min.E). There is also a general store, Post Office & public phone.

Continue upriver to the Scottish heritage town of Maclean to explore the local cafes, galleries, pubs and museums. There is an overnight mooring available at Maclean marina (GPS 29deg,27.277min.S





Above: The Yamba Marina at dawn.

153deg,11.792min.E) with picnic, bbq power, drinking water and toilet facilities. Fuel can be carted from the Clarence River Fishermen's Co-Op where there is a small chandlery. In addition, there is a public wharf with a jetty (GPS 29deg,27.478min.S 153deg,11.745min.E) and a boat ramp that can be used to access the CBD.

start

Yamba Marina, Yamba Rd, Yamba. (GPS 29deg,26.144min.S 153deg,20.888min.E). 2wd suitable.

finish

Maclean Public Wharf, Wharf St, Maclean (GPS 29deg,27.478min.S 153deg,11.745min.E). 2wd suitable.

river distance

27km.

recommended craft

Any.

hazards

- River bar at Yamba and Iluka - navigate with care. Wearing life jackets is compulsory.
- Harwood Bridge - clearance above MHWS (Mean High Water Springs) is 8.5m closed and 36.5m open. Bridge is available for opening 7 days a week with 24 hours notice. However there will be days where the bridge will not be able to lift during peak times over public holidays. Ph (02) 6682 8388 to book bridge opening.
- McFarlane Bridge – Clearance 3.6m above MHWS.
- Brushgrove Bridge – Clearance 7.6m above MHWS.

Please note: Yamba and Iluka marinas provide the only direct access to fuel via pumps, portable containers are required for other locations.

fishing

There is excellent fishing available in the Clarence. Top spots include:

- Yamba Point
- Yamba Breakwall
- Middle Wall
- Moriarty's Wall
- Old ferry approach, Iluka
- Browns Rocks
- Gantry Wall
- Collis' Wall
- Freeburn Island

points of interest

Yamba

- Yamba Ford Park picnic and BBQ area, cycle way and Yamba Bay Park – Public Wharf
- Yamba Marina and Cafe
- Historical Flat and Hill walks around Yamba
- Pilot Hill and Lighthouse
- Yamba Storyhouse Museum
- Award winning cafes and restaurants

Iluka

- Iluka Bay picnic & BBQ area
- World Heritage listed Rainforest Walking Track
- Iluka Bluff lookout

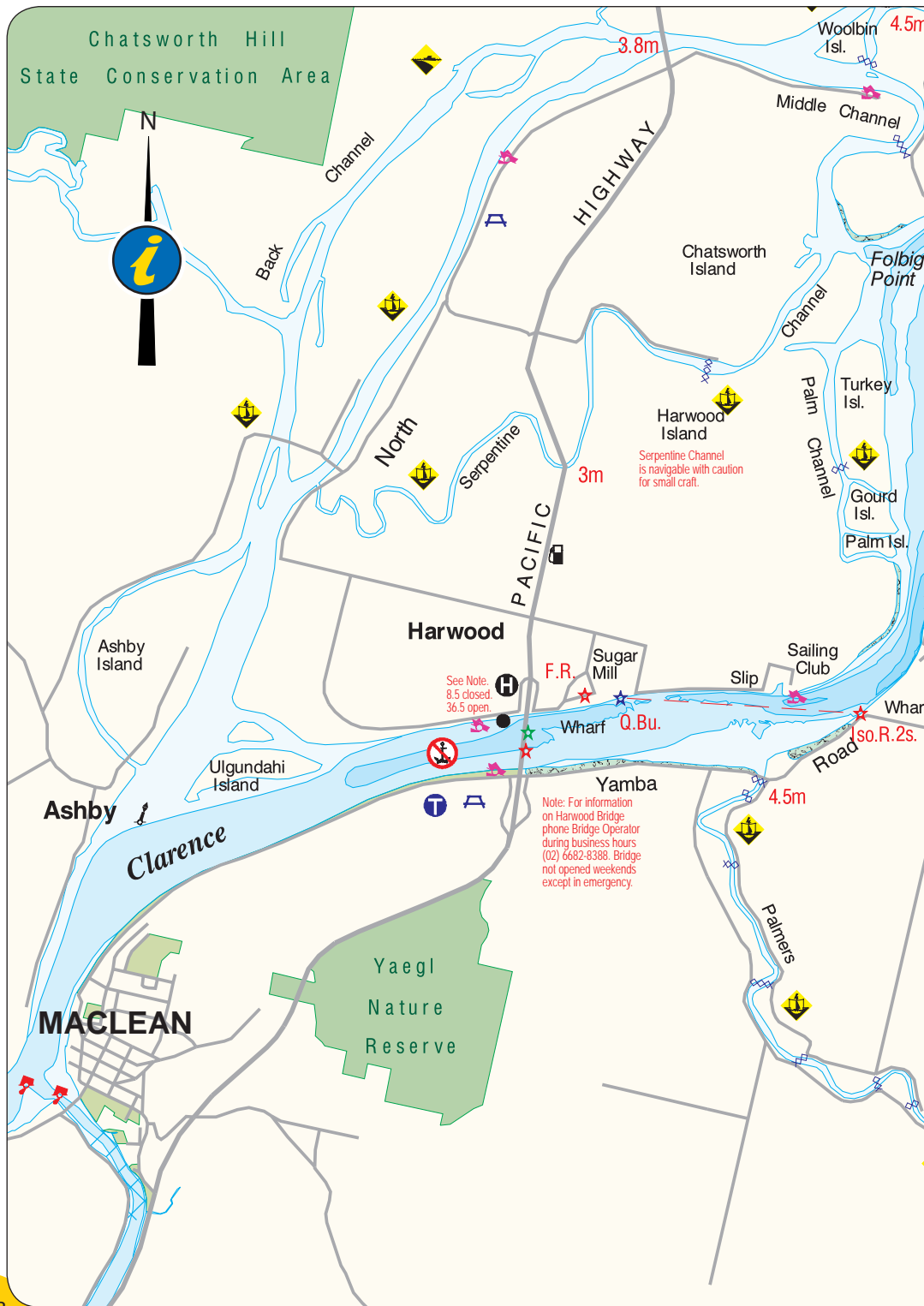
Maclean

- Scottish town of Maclean
- Bicentennial Museum and Stone Cottage
- 200 tartan decorated power poles

Below: The Clarence River near McFarlane Bridge, Maclean. © John Warrell











Above: View down southern arm of the river at Woodford Is.

Leaving Maclean, the Clarence divides forming the largest inland island in the southern hemisphere, Woodford Island.

The main channel is the northern arm heading south-westerly past The Broadwater and on to the village of Lawrence with a riverside pub and a general store for supplies. The Memorial Park at Lawrence (GPS 29deg,30.025min.S 153deg,06.084min.E) is well equipped with a public jetty, boat ramp, toilets, picnic, bbq and play equipment. Across the road from Rutland Street is a popular bird watching spot in the wetland area.

The Southern arm of the river at Maclean is narrow, but a generally deep channel suitable for low masted vessels and motor boats. There are fixed bridges at either end, the McFarlane Bridge has a clearance of 3.6m and the bridge at Brushgrove has a clearance of 7.6m, but there are also many low cables that span the river. There is a short stay pontoon at the Ferry Park Complex which has picnic areas, toilets,

Visitor Information Centre, local arts and craft gallery and cafe on the river bank. The channel rejoins the main river after the bridge at Brushgrove.

Please note that there are no navigation leads in this channel.

Upstream from Lawrence is Sportsman's Creek, this water can be accessed by boats that can clear the bridge at 4.4 metres, but you must return to the main channel to continue.

Further up the river, Brushgrove offers another rustic hotel diversion with it's own jetty for use by patrons (overnight stays can be accommodated with permission) (GPS 29deg,34.074min.S 04deg,20.646min.E). At the southern end of Woodford Island, near Brushgrove, there are houseboats available for hire.

Continue up river to explore the historic river port town of Ulmarra with its galleries, antique, brick-a-brack shops, cafes and the local pub. Memorial Park at Ulmarra (GPS 29deg,37.854min.S 153deg,01.608min.E) is equipped with a jetty, boat ramp and is close to Bailey Park which has a swimming pool, picnic/bbq and toilet facilities. Please note that the ferry from Ulmarra to Southgate enters a small inlet on the Southgate side and cannot be seen.

start

Maclean Public Wharf, Wharf St, Maclean
2wd suitable (GPS 29deg,27.466min.S 153deg,11.733min.E).

finish

Ulmarra Public Wharf, Coldstream Rd, Ulmarra 2wd suitable (GPS 29deg,37.854min.S 153deg,01.608min.E)

river distance

29km.

recommended craft

Any on main channel.

Low masted boats only on the Southern Arm.

hazards

- Bluff Point and Southgate ferries (speed limit of 4 knots within 100m).
- Southern Arm fixed bridges: MacFarlane Bridge 3.6m and Brushgrove 7.6m.
- Nine pin Rocks at the entrance to the southern arm (exposed at low tide).

- Wreck of the Moongi just downstream from Ashby dry dock.
- Rock Reef, north of Brushgrove.

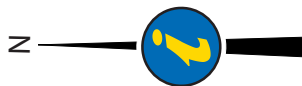
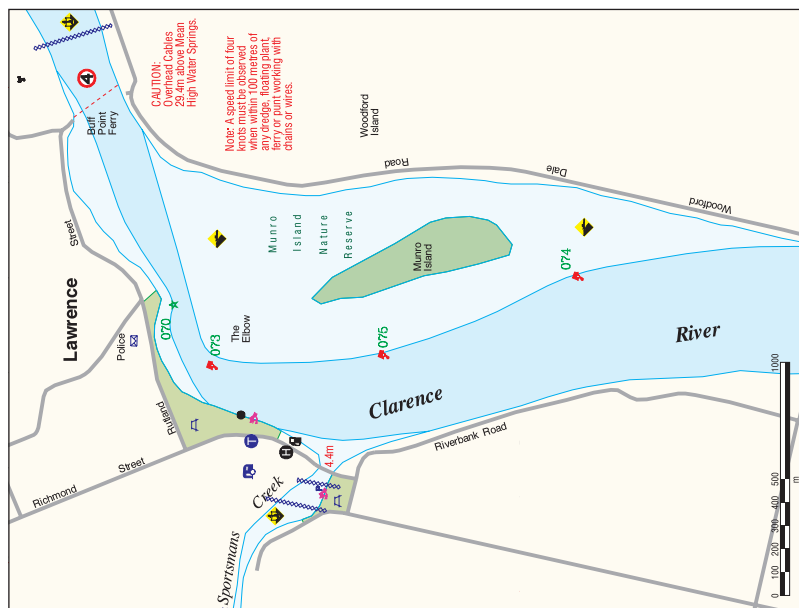
points of interest

- Maclean Ferry Park Complex
- Lawrence riverside pub - Public Wharf
- Lawrence Historical Museum
- Birdwatching at Lawrence wetland and Woodford Island
- Fishing at Lawrence & Ilarwill
- Brushgrove riverside Hotel – small jetty
- Ulmarra - Public Wharf to explore galleries, cafes & pub

Below: The river villages of Brushgrove & Cowper at Woodford Island © The Daily Examiner



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Lawrence

Creek

Sportsmans

MACLEAN

Ashby

The Broadwater

River

Clarence

HIGHWAY

Golf Course

Kings Island

Woodford Island

Ferry See Note A

See

4.1m

Am

Shore

Woodford



Note A: A speed limit of 4 knots must be observed when within 100 metres of any dredge, floating plant, ferry or punt working with chains and wires.

Lawrence Ferry operates 24 hours, 7 Days. Closed for maintenance 9-30am to 11am every Tuesday.

Ulmarra - Southgate Ferry operates limited times between 6am to 11pm. Closed for maintenance 6am to 8am every Sunday and 9-30am to 11-30am on the first Wednesday each month.

Note: Vandalism of navigation aids is illegal and dangerous and it could lead to serious accidents. Please report incidents of vandalism to the NSW Maritime Info Line on 13 12 56. A penalty applies for interference, damage or mooring against aids to navigation.



Above: River tranquility near Ulmarra © Terry Dwyer

points of interest

- Corcoran Park - BBQs and park - jetty after 9.3 km from Ulmarra
- Memorial Park
- Historic shopping precinct at South Grafton to explore shops, cafes, pubs - Public Wharf
- Stop at Grafton for shops and pubs - Prince St Wharf
- Susan Island bat colony and rainforest
- Wreck of the SS Induna, 200 metres upstream from Grafton Bridge, visible from both the bridge and river
- Seelands
- After 29.6 km you can pull over at Moleville Rocks Public Reserve to see some Aboriginal Grinding Groves or use the park BBQs - anchor off.

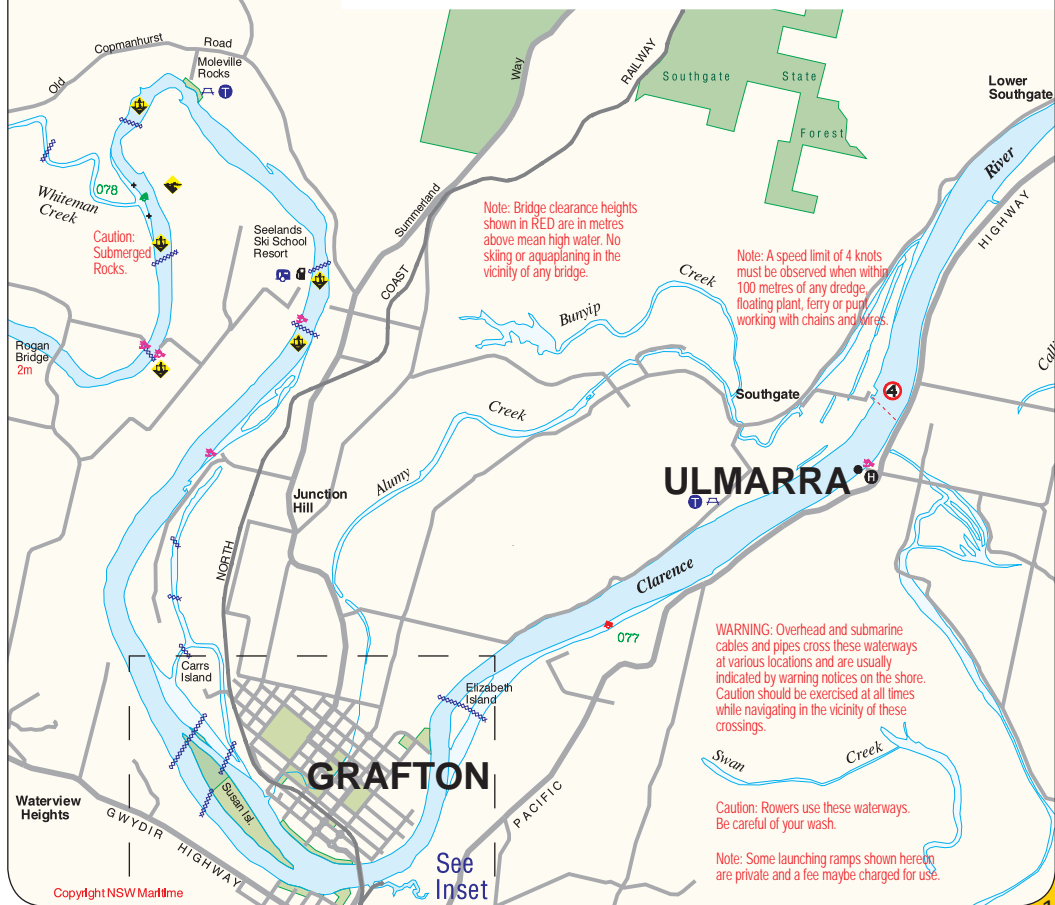
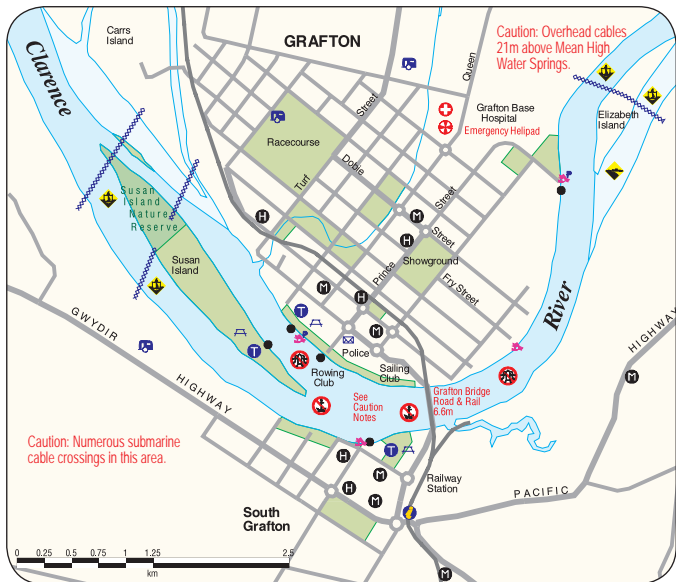
On approaching Elizabeth Island, the main channel heads south-westerly across a narrow, but deep channel. After rounding Elizabeth Island you will find Corcoran Park (GPS 29deg,40.552min.S 152deg,57.221min.E) which has a jetty and boat ramp, picnic/bbq facilities with power available (key required) and toilets. It is a very popular park and is an off-leash area for dogs.

The best place to anchor before the Grafton Bridge for tall masted vessels is at Girl Guide Place (GPS 29deg,41.757min.S 152deg,56.676min.E) where there is a jetty, boat ramp and a small park. From here you can easily explore the city of Grafton.

The river takes a broad bend around Grafton and passes under the historic Grafton Bridge (GPS 29deg,41.810min.S 152deg,56.526min.E) which now has a fixed span of 6.6 metres. Grafton, the first city on the north coast was established in 1837 and proclaimed a city in 1859. Its majestic streets, historic buildings, regional gallery and vibrant shopping precinct are worth exploring, especially during the annual Jacaranda festival when the city is carpeted in purple blooms.

When passing the bridge it is possible to see the wreck of the Induna, built in 1891 in Aberdeen (GPS 29deg,42.003min.S 152deg,56.416min.E). This vessel was used as a rail ferry before it sank at mooring in 1932. The Induna's prior claim to fame is that on one of it's voyages it carried Sir Winston Churchill from South Africa to England during the Boer War.

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South Grafton, located on the eastern riverbank, has small marina (GPS 29deg,42.031min.S 152deg,56.122min.E) and provides access to alfresco dining and a laid back shopping experience.

Memorial Park on the northern side of Grafton has a wharf/jetty suitable for large water vessels and is equipped with picnic facilities, toilets, power, drinking water and also has a cycle and walking track.

Susan Island Nature Reserve has a large bat colony and remnant of rainforest and is worth exploring. It is home to thousands of flying foxes that roost on the island to raise their young and feed in nearby forests during summer. The island has a small wharf and is accessible only by boat. There is a short walking track through the reserve on the western end of the island which takes you through the

lowland rainforest remnant and beneath the bat colony. Look out for the wreck on the northern side of the island where parts of the boiler are visible, it is thought that the wreck is of a cream boat the Ibis (GPS 29deg,40.719min.S 152deg,54.770min.E).

The broad, open waters around Seelands are popular with water skiers. Rogan's Bridge (GPS 29deg,37.237min.S 152deg,53.091min.E) is a low-level bridge of approximately 2 metres depending on river heights that provides a barrier to further river exploration and can be anchored off.

start

Ulmarra Public Wharf, Coldstream Rd, Ulmarra (GPS 29deg,37.854min.S 153deg,01.608.E) 2wd suitable.



Above: The Grafton Bridge spanning the Clarence © John Warrell

finish

Rogans Bridge, Rogans Bridge Rd, Seelands. (GPS 29deg,37.237min.S, 152deg,53.091min.E) (anchor off) 2wd suitable.

river distance

37 km.

recommended craft

Any craft up to the Grafton Bridge (6.6 metres). Tall masted vessels should moor up prior to the bridge.

hazards

- Shoals around Swan Creek's flood gate.
- Grafton Bridge (6.6m).

maps

NSW Maritime Clarence River Waterways Map.

Below: Susan Island, Grafton © John Warrell



rogans bridge to yamba

4

Larger vessels and those with tall masts should return to Yamba via the main channel or use their tenders to explore the many channels in the area.

For small vessels with a draft of less than 1 metre, there is an opportunity to leave the main river to navigate the North Arm just past Ashby, although there are no navigation aids. The river divides again at Warregah Island, Back Channel to the west of the island is extremely shallow and should be avoided.

On the right, off North Arm, is the shallow but scenic Serpentine Channel. The North Arm continues around Goodwood Island and rejoins the main channel near Freeburn Island before returning to Yamba or Iluka.

Smaller tinnies could leave the main channel at Freeburn Island for the Romiaka Channel around Thorny Island and Romiaka Island into the Micalo Channel to the shallow Lake Wooloweyah. Or alternatively smaller motor boats can leave the main channel at Freeburn Island for Oyster Channel. The Oyster Channel Bridge clearing is 3.7 metres and the water is shallow and care should be taken.

start

Rogans Bridge, Rogans Bridge Rd, Seelands. (GPS 29deg,37.237min.S, 152deg,53.091min.E) 2wd (anchor off).

finish

Yamba Marina, Yamba Rd, Yamba. (GPS 29deg,26.144min.S, 153deg,20.888min.E) 2wd suitable.

river distance

93 km plus (dependant on route chosen).

recommended craft

Main channel - Any.

Southern Arm detour, The Broadwater and Lake Wooloweyah - small motor boats, low masted vessels with shallow draft.

hazards

- Grafton Bridge (6.6 metres).
- Narrow and shallow Serpentine channel.
- Pacific Hwy Bridge over North Arm (3.6 metres).
- Wharf St Bridge over North Arm (4.5 metres).
- Yamba Road Bridge over Oyster Channel (3.7 metres).

points of interest

- Fishing in Oyster Channel
- The Broadwater
- Lake Wooloweyah
- Eagle nesting on power poles opposite Ilarwill

5

the broadwater

From the Clarence River a couple of kilometres upstream of Maclean, you can enter the large enclosed lagoon of The Broadwater which consists largely of shallow water with a deeper, unmarked channel towards the eastern bank that would be accessible to smaller yachts and tinnies or with local knowledge of the channel. Not far from the entrance is the hulk of an old sugar cane barge.

start and finish

Channel leading into Broadwater from Clarence or Maclean Public Wharf, Wharf St, Maclean. 2wd suitable.

river distance

As desired.

recommended craft

Smaller boats and Trailer Sailors with local knowledge.

hazards

- Shallow water.
- Unmarked channel.

Below: An old sugar cane barge hull in The Broadwater. © John Warrell



For small motor boats and tinnies, picturesque Lake Wooloweyah can be accessed by Oyster Channel or via Palmers Channel, water depths are reasonable in this channel, but care should be taken as there are low power cables and Oyster Channel Bridge (3.7m). Bordered by Yuraygir National Park this tranquil lake is very shallow, but is a great spot for fishing. There are no navigation markings and care should be taken. There are also two boat ramps to launch craft from Carrs Drive, Yamba or Lakes Boulevard, Wooloweyah.

start and finish

Lake Wooloweyah Boatramp, Lake Wooloweyah Rd, Wooloweyah. 2wd suitable.

river distance

As desired.

recommended craft

Small motor boats and vessels with shallow draft.

hazards

- Shallow water, wind and waves.
- Unmarked channels.
- Oyster Channel Bridge (3.7m).

Below: The broad, calm waters of the beautiful Lake Wooloweyah.



The Sailing and Cruising Guide is an initiative of the **Clarence River Way Project**, a partnership between Clarence Valley Council, NSW Dept of Lands and Clarence River Tourism with TQUAL funding support by the Australian government bringing together 3 levels of government, industry and the community in collaboration to foster growth of sustainable river based tourism and position the Clarence as one of the nation's great river experiences.

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Maps in this guide supplied courtesy of NSW Maritime from their ***Boating Map for Clarence, Wooli Wooli and Sandon Rivers, Map 2B.***

www.maritime.nsw.gov.au

GPS Coordinates

Special thanks to Luke Tucker - NSW Maritime for his assistance with GPS mapping.





for more information

www.myclarencevalley.com

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