

About seagrass

Seagrasses are the only marine flowering plant. There are approximately 60 seagrass species (possibly 72) globally that belong to four major groups. Seagrasses are not seaweeds. Seaweed is the common name for algae.

Seagrass live in sheltered coastal waters, undergo pollination while submerged and complete their entire life cycle underwater. They grow much like land grasses, with extensive below ground rhizomes or runners. Plants form small patches that develop into large continuous meadows. These meadows may consist of one or many species, sometimes up to 12 species present within one location.

Help seagrass

There are many ways you can help: don't litter; be aware when applying fertilizers and pesticides, as excess amounts can wash down gutters and drain into the ocean; when boating, slow down and avoid shallow areas; support marine conservation initiatives; learn about these special marine habitats and volunteer to monitor their health by joining Seagrass-Watch.

Seagrass-Watch: Global Seagrass Observing Network monitoring efforts are vital to assist with tracking global patterns in seagrass health, and assess the human impacts which have the potential to destroy or degrade these coastal ecosystems and decrease their yield of natural resources.

To protect valuable seagrass meadows, everyone must work together.

Seagrasses in Yuku Baja Muliku Sea Country

Importance

Seagrass is one of the most productive natural ecosystems globally. Seagrasses are as important as forests in storing carbon (on an areal basis) and can store carbon 35 times faster than rainforests.

Seagrass occupy less than 0.2% of the world's oceans, but are responsible for more than 10% of all carbon in ocean sediments annually.

Seagrasses improve water quality by acting as nutrient sinks, buffering/filtering nutrient/chemical inputs to the marine environment. They also stabilise marine sediment and help avert erosion.

Seagrasses provide food and shelter for many organisms including Sea turtles and dugongs.

Contact

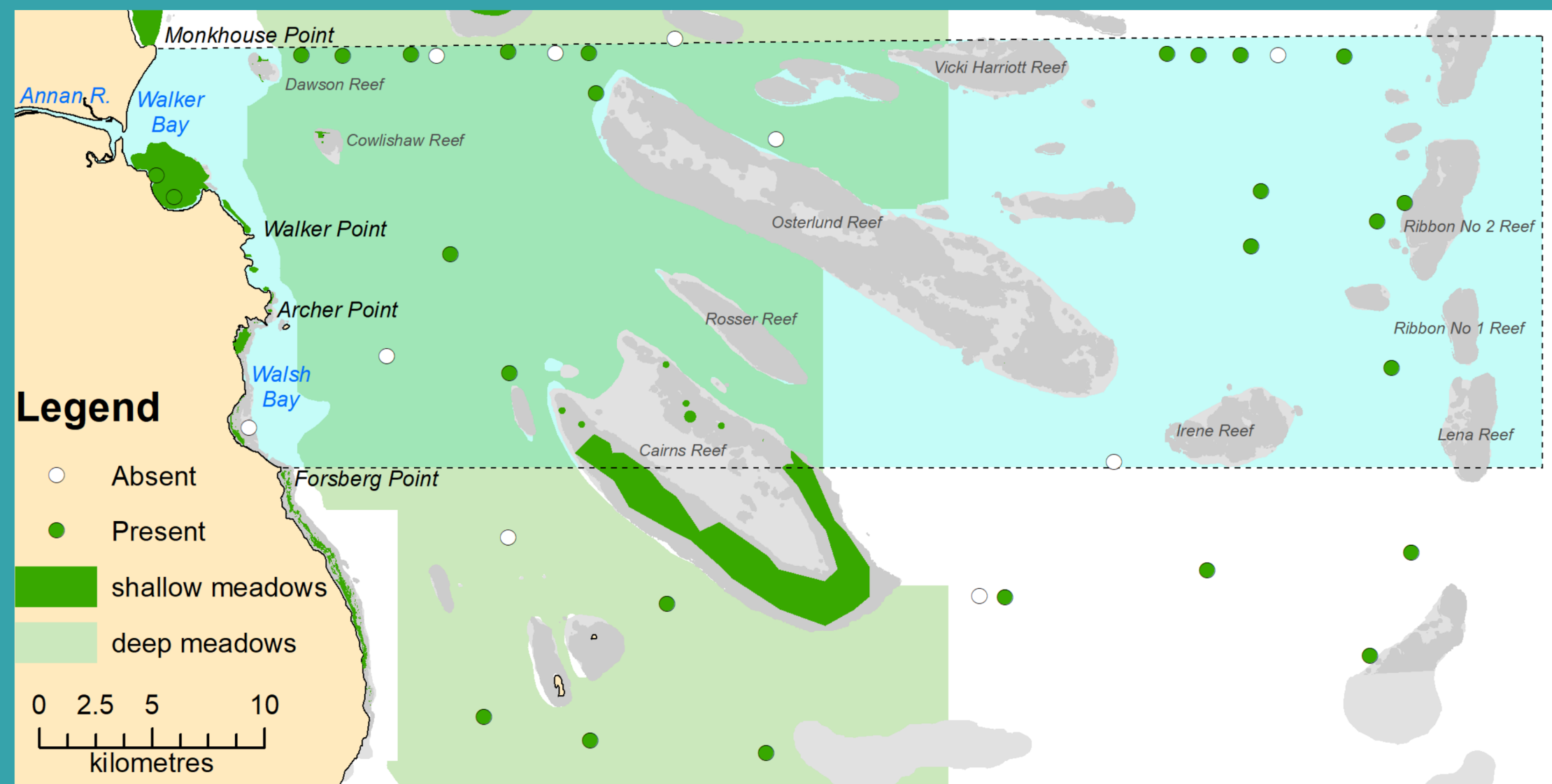
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Local eyes. Global wise





Yuku Baja Muliku

The Yuku Baja Muliku people are the traditional custodians and owners of the land and sea country surrounding Archer Point on the eastern coast of Cape York Peninsula.

The land borders the Wet Tropics rainforests and the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, and includes the lower Annan River.

The sea country covers 1,088 km² and extends from Monkhouse Point in the north to Forsberg Point in the south (including Walsh and Walker Bays), and east to just past the Ribbon Reefs

Sea Country

Fifteen species of seagrass are reported in the water of the Great Barrier Reef and twelve species are reported to occur within Yuku Baja Muliku sea country: *Cymodocea serrulata*, *Cymodocea rotundata*, *Enhalus acoroides*, *Halodule uninervis*, *Halophila capricorni*, *Halophila decipiens*, *Halophila ovalis*, *Halophila spinulosa*, *Halophila tricostata*, *Syringodium isoetifolium*, *Thalassia hemprichii* and *Zostera muelleri*.

The highest species diversity of seagrass in the Yuku Baja Muliku sea country is found on the fringing reef immediately south of Archer Point and in the waters of Walker Bay.

Most seagrass species in the region are classified as colonising or opportunistic, capable of rapid recovery from losses due to fast asexual growth rates and capacity for generating large seed banks

Only seagrass of the genus *Halophila* are found in waters deeper than 15m .

No seagrass species are listed as Endangered, Vulnerable, Near Threatened or Data Deficient under the IUCN Red

McKenzie, L.J & Yoshida, R.L. (2023). Seagrass-Watch: Proceedings of a workshop for monitoring seagrass in Yuku Baja Muliku Sea Country, Yuku Baja Muliku Ranger Base, Archer Point, Queensland, 11-15 September 2023 (Seagrass-Watch HQ, Clifton Beach), 46pp