

BORROW PITS

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".

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.

The Borrow Pits hold water after many of the local creeks have dried up, and because of this, it is regularly used for bird watching. The surrounding vegetation in the upper catchment is dominated by savannah grassland and savannah woodlands. These vegetation communities are economically important to Townsville through grazing, however they are also important to rare and endangered animals such as the nationally endangered Black-throated Finch.

Location

Located in the Townsville suburb of Kelso, the Borrow Pits is now considered a local wildlife sanctuary. Entrance to the Borrow Pits is via Riverway Drive, just opposite Ross Park and the Ross River Dam entrance.



Lower locality of Kelso, with Ross River Dam in the bottom right of the frame. The boundary of Townsville City Council's Borrow Pits reserve is marked in yellow.