



Orpheus Island Research Station
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Volunteer Information

Orpheus Island

Orpheus Island is located off the coast of Ingham in northern Queensland. It is a continental island and is part of the Palm Islands group. The island is 11km long and is approximately 1km wide and has sheltered bays and spectacular fringing reefs. Dry woodlands of Moreton Bay Ash, wattles, grasslands and rainforest cover the 1300 hectares.

The island was originally inhabited by the Manbarra People. The only inhabited area today is a small resort in Hazard Bay and the Orpheus Island Research Station in Pioneer Bay. The island is a terrestrial National Park and the Research Station is located within a 2.0 hectare site. The surrounding waters are designated marine park and are zoned a "Scientific Research Zone".

Orpheus Island Research Station (OIRS)

OIRS is a research facility of James Cook University. It commenced operation on 14 February 1978. Orpheus provides access to an unusually wide variety of Great Barrier Reef habitats. The area is largely undisturbed and the variety of habitats makes it a "hot spot" of biotic diversity. OIRS offers field and laboratory facilities to scientists, researchers, post graduates, under graduates and school students.

OIRS is actively seeking volunteers to assist with station duties throughout the year. Volunteers can stay at the research station free of charge (meals not included) for up to two weeks at a time in exchange for four hours volunteering a day. The minimum expected stay is 4 days. Placements are dependent on the operational schedule of the Station. Tasks include but are not limited to; weed eradication, cleaning duties and feral animal control (i.e. catching cane toads). All equipment for these tasks are supplied. Volunteers should be physically fit as most tasks involve manual labour.

Accommodation and Facilities

Accommodation is provided in a two storey, eight bedroom house (Havanna). Dormitory style rooms sleep 6 people. All bedding, including blankets and pillows are supplied. A separate communal and ablution block is next door. The kitchen is self-catering and equipped with basic kitchen facilities – fridge, freezer, microwave, stove, oven, barbeque etc. Volunteers are to provide and prepare their own meals. **There is no shop on the island and all supplies must be brought from the mainland. Please bring sufficient food supplies for the duration of your stay.** All cleaning supplies are provided with the expectation that all persons will leave the accommodation and communal facilities on departure in a clean and tidy condition.

Phone Coverage

Mobile phone coverage is operative, dependent on the network. There are a few black spots but most work on the beach.

Getting there

Volunteers will travel to Orpheus Island on vessels operated by the station which depart from Dungeness, which is located 125km north of Townsville and 235km south of Cairns (http://www.jcu.edu.au/oirs/trip/getting/JCUPRD1_060655.html). Volunteers are responsible for making their own way to Dungeness Road. Orpheus transfers take approximately 45 minutes. Access to the island is tidal dependent and all transfer times should be strictly adhered to. Boarding/disembarking OIRS vessels requires getting your feet wet. **Please wear your reef shoes for the transfer.**

Water Based Activities

Volunteers are unable to participate in diving activities, drive any of the OIRS boats or assist or conduct research activities. Volunteers planning to snorkel must sign a Snorkel Register Form and supply their own equipment. OIRS does have snorkel gear for hire. Volunteers are welcome to swim during station operating hours and volunteers should be mindful of the active and abundant marine life that is present in the area i.e. jellyfish, stonefish and stingrays. The **use of stinger suits is compulsory** during the stinger season of October to May and is recommended all year round. A limited supply of stinger suits is available for hire.

Entertainment

There are many things to see and do in the surrounding environment of the Station: explore the inter tidal reef flat and check out the clam garden, bushwalking, bird watching, view the native wildlife (bandicoots, bush turkeys, echidnas, green tree frogs, small harmless pythons) or just sit on the beach and relax and enjoy nature's beauty.

What to bring

- All grocery provisions. There are no stores on the island and all supplies must be brought from the mainland.
- Food storage containers, wraps and bags
- Clothes (no laundry facility is available)
- Personal water bottle
- Towel
- A stinger suit or wet suit must be worn for all aquatic activities.
- Booties or shoes capable of being worn in water
- Personal toiletries (including soap)
- Any special requirements such as prescription medication, contact lens supplies etc
- Hat & sunglasses
- An enthusiastic outlook

How to volunteer

Please complete all volunteer application and return to OIRS via email. Placements are limited. You will be contacted by the Station if your application is approved.

Please confirm your booking with OIRS operation staff at least 1 week before arrival and 24 hours before vessel transfer time.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is internet access available? – Yes.

Do I need to take any special equipment? - No. All equipment is supplied for tasks including personal protective equipment (PPE)

Can I fish? - No. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority has designated the waters adjacent to the Station a 'Scientific Research Zone'. This is a no-take area. Fishing is forbidden.

Are there mosquitoes and sandflies? Yes! It is advised to cover up, wear repellent and bring your own medication (anti-histamines) if you are susceptible to a reaction.

Will I need insect repellent? - Most definitely. We provide Aeroguard at the station.

What should I wear for work? – Lightweight trousers, long sleeve shirt, hat, covered shoes.

Does it get cold there? – Yes. During the winter months bring something warm to wear.

Can I take alcoholic beverages? Yes! Alcohol is allowed at the Station however drinking is prohibited in certain areas (i.e. lab areas, dive shed etc) and alcohol must be consumed in moderation.

Should I take a towel? Yes! The Station does not supply towels.....only bed linen.

Can I drink the water? Fresh rainwater is available for drinking. Bring your own personal water bottle to carry around the Station whilst you work.

What if I suddenly become ill? All Staff are trained in First Aid. The Station has a Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) medical chest which holds a variety of medications and dressings for common injuries and ailments. Immediate evacuation from OIRS via a helicopter can be arranged through the RFDS for urgent medical situations.

Can I conduct or assist in Research Projects? No! Due to legal and insurance factors visitors involved in the Station Volunteer program are unable to assist or undertake any research activities.



VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

MOBILE

EMAIL

DATE OF BIRTH

Have You Volunteered with OIRS Before?

Yes/No

IF SO, WHEN?

Are you fit for manual labour?

Yes/No

Please indicate your 1st and 2nd preference for your visit as an OIRS station volunteer.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	ANYTIME
Preferred Start date													
Preferred Finish date													

Please describe any areas of experience that may be useful to OIRS.

Please list at least one referee and their contact details (JCU Staff, Employer ect) as well as their relationship to you.



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DECLARATION OF MEDICAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND SNORKEL WAIVER

Please complete and log this form in (<https://boatndive.jcu.edu.au/>) at least 10 days prior to your trip.

SECTION A- All visitors to Complete

Surname		Preferred Title	
First Name(s)		Date of Birth	
Phone		Email	

Have you in the past 12 months experienced any of the following conditions:

CONDITION (circle)		
Heart disease	YES	NO
High blood pressure	YES	NO
Low blood pressure	YES	NO
Asthma	YES	NO
Emphysema or any other chronic lung disease	YES	NO
Epilepsy	YES	NO
Fits or faints	YES	NO
Head injury or concussion	YES	NO
Diabetes (type_____)	YES	NO

Are you currently known to be pregnant? YES NO

SECTION B- Please complete this section if you intend to **SNORKEL** or **FREE-DIVE**

PROFICIENCY					
	Competent, 200m < 5min			Competent > 15hrs experience	
Swimming	YES	NO	Breath hold diving	YES	NO
FITNESS (circle)	Low		Average	Good	
Exercise H/R >70%MHR > 3times/week	0 – 90min total		90 – 180min total	>180min	

PLEASE READ THIS DOCUMENT CAREFULLY, AND ENSURE YOU HAVE MET ALL REQUIRED CRITERIA BEFORE SIGNING

I **hereby declare that I:**
(please enter name in full)

1. Shall abide by safe snorkeling practices and will observe the directions given by the Group coordinator and any other directions that may be given to me by the James Cook University’s Staff, provided I feel that it is safe to do so.
2. During the following dates to I wish to undertake snorkeling whilst at James Cook University’s Orpheus Island Research Station.
3. I am aware that while snorkeling and free-diving and at Orpheus Island Research Station that:
 - I understand that James Cook University **accepts no responsibility** for any incident involving the use of any water activity facilities, materials or equipment supplied.
 - I understand the risks inherent with snorkeling and free diving related injuries may require medical treatment. I expressly assume the risk of these injuries and any cost involved in recovery or treatment, none of which shall be the responsibility of James Cook University or its staff.
 - I am aware that snorkeling and free-diving are physically demanding activities and I understand the consequences of over exerting myself. I also understand that one shall be fit to snorkel and free-dive and shall not snorkel or free- dive whilst under the influence of alcohol or any other drug regarded as a contradiction to safe snorkeling. I understand that predisposing factors elevate risks for snorkeling and free- diving and some of the controls for some of the predisposing factors include but are not limited to: hydration, physical fitness, caffeine and alcohol consumption, physical ailments, etc.
 - I understand the risks inherent with compressed air and free diving and those diving and diving related injuries may require medical treatment. I expressly assume the risk of these injuries and any cost involved in recovery or treatment, none of which shall be the responsibility of James Cook University or its staff.
 - I also agree to release James Cook University and staff from any claim or lawsuit by me, my family, estate, heirs or assigns arising out of my involvement in these activities.
4. I hereby release James Cook University and its agents from any liability due to snorkeling activities, also and free-diving activities.
5. I understand that the terms herein are contractual, that the information given on this form is true and correct and that I have signed them of my own free act.

Signed **Date**.....

Witnessed By **Date**.....

Witness’ Name in Full.....



Orpheus Island Research Station

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT (INCLUDING INDEMNITY)

BETWEEN: James Cook University of Townsville in the State of Queensland (“JCU”)

AND: (“the Volunteer”)

RECITALS:

- A. JCU operates a volunteer program at its Orpheus Island Research Station whereby volunteers participate in the activities of the Station in exchange for accommodation and boat transfers to the island (the Program).
- B. JCU has agreed to engage the Volunteer to participate in the Program on the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

AGREEMENT:

1. Definitions

- a) “Engagement” means the relationship of voluntary co-operation or collaboration between JCU and the Volunteer created by the Volunteer’s participation in the Program and includes all activities in which the Volunteer is involved arising from that relationship.
- b) “Station” means the Orpheus Island Research Station.
- c) “Period” means the period of time commencing on _____ and terminating _____ on _____.
- d) “Program” means the work undertaken by the Volunteer during the Period of Engagement as set out in Schedule 1 and involves, each day, either (i) one continuous 4 hour period from 8am until 12pm midday or (ii) 2 x 2 hour periods, 1 in the morning and 1 in the afternoon, to be advised by the Station’s Site Supervisor prior to work commencing each day.

2. JCU engages the Volunteer to participate in the Program without salary, fee or monetary benefit whatsoever for the Period or such alternate period as may be agreed between the parties from time to time.

3. The Volunteer must comply with the requirements and directions of JCU in relation to the Program and the Engagement. The Volunteer acknowledges and agrees that he or she has a responsibility to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others and to cooperate with any health, safety or welfare requirements of JCU. This includes complying with all JCU policies and procedures which can be found <http://www.jcu.edu.au/policy/safety/index.htm> and as amended from time to time. The Volunteer agrees to not do anything to compromise their own safety or the safety of others and understands that there may be risks associated with providing particular voluntary services or participating in the Program. It is a duty of volunteers to notify their supervisor or other JCU employee of a situation that is, or may be, a health or safety concern for themselves or others.

4. JCU may terminate this Agreement at any time and for any reason whatsoever without compensation to the Volunteer and is not obliged to provide to the Volunteer a reason for the termination.

5. The Volunteer:

- (a) indemnifies JCU, its employees, and agents (collectively referred to as “the Indemnified”) from and against any loss, damage or expense (including legal costs) arising from any claim, action, suit, demand or proceeding that may be made or brought by any person against the Indemnified in consequence of or arising out of or incidental to the Engagement; and
- (b) releases and discharges the Indemnified from any such claim, action, suit, demand or proceeding

referred to in clause 5(a) which, but for these provisions, might be brought against or made upon the Indemnified, except to the extent that any action is brought or made due to a negligent or unlawful act or omission of JCU, its employees or agents.

6. The release and indemnity referred to in clause 5 will survive the expiration or termination of this Agreement.

Schedule 1

PERSONAL PARTICULARS

Full Name:

Date of Birth:Gender: Male/Female

Permanent Address:

.....

Telephone No:Mobile No:

Email:

Any pre-existing health conditions? Yes/No If Yes details:-

FullName of Next of kin.....

Relationship of Next of Kin

Contact Phone No.

Designated supervisor.....

Dated:

Signature (Volunteer)