Determining what is ‘native’ vegetation under the *Vegetation Management Act 1999*

As part of managing vegetation on your property, you may need to determine whether a particular species is “native” and therefore regulated under the *Vegetation Management Act 1999 (VMA)*.

The Census of the Queensland Flora (the Census) is produced by the Queensland Herbarium and provides a published list of ‘native’ and ‘naturalised’ species in Queensland. This fact sheet will help you to use the Census to determine whether any species is considered native in a particular location, and therefore, whether it is regulated under the VMA.

How do I find out what species of plant it is?

In order to use the Census, the first thing you will need to know is the scientific name of the plant. If you do not know the common or scientific name of the plant, firstly contact your local government or natural resource management group for assistance with identification.

If identification is difficult, the Queensland Herbarium provides a free plant identification service to the public. Go to www.qld.gov.au and search ‘plant identification’. Fees may apply to commercial clients.

(Tip - if you know the common name of the plant (e.g., Umbrella tree), a search of the internet will usually provide the scientific name (e.g., *Heptapleurum actinophyllum).* However, care should be taken as scientific names may change over time e.g., the genus name for Umbrella tree changed in 2020 from *Schefflera to Heptapleurum* and some plants may have a variety of common names which can vary from region to region.)

What is meant by ‘native’, ‘non-native” and “naturalised’?

Native plants are those that are considered to have evolved in Queensland unaided by humans or have migrated to and persisted in Queensland without assistance from humans, from an area in which they are considered to be native. The Qld Flora Census will include native plants as either ‘**Native to Qld’** (which are considered native across all of Qld) or ‘**Native and Naturalised in Qld**’ (which are native in specified bioregions while being ‘non-native’ elsewhere.

Conversely, non-native plants are species that are wildlife introduced to Australia, or Queensland, by human intervention (excluding pre-European introductions) and which have

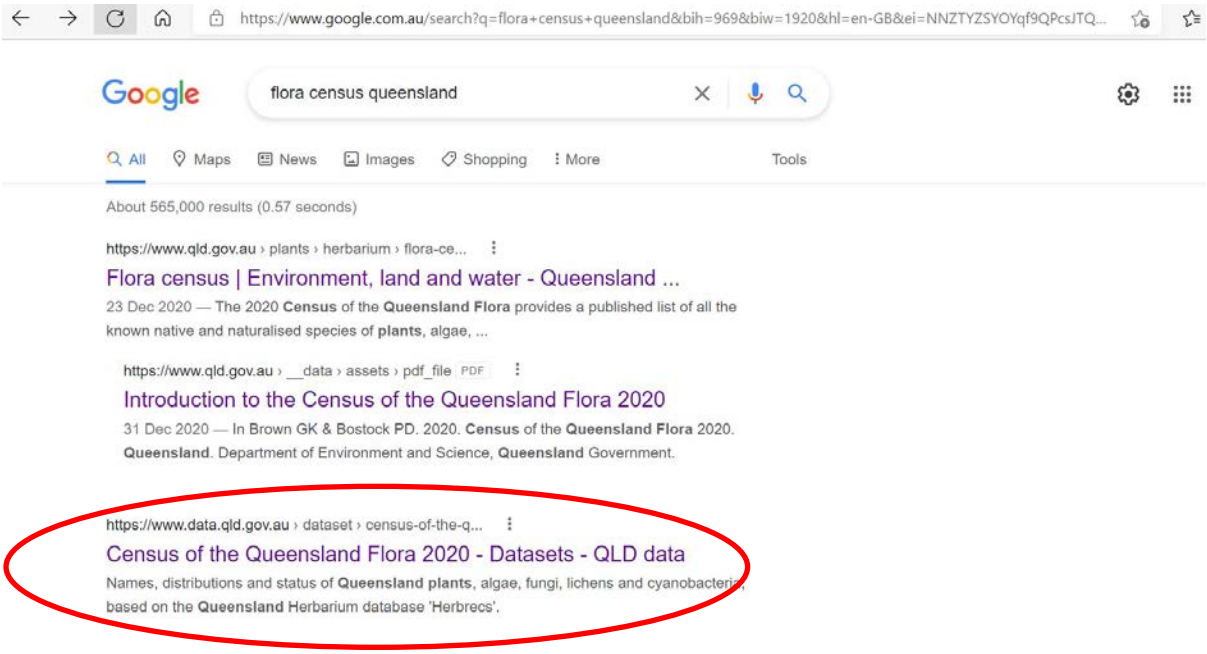
subsequently successfully established populations by reproducing without cultivation or other human intervention. The Qld Flora Census will include non-native species as either: - **Formerly naturalised**, **Doubtfully naturalised** or **Naturalised in Queensland.**

One species has been separately categorised in the Census. *Cocus nucifera* (the coconut) is considered to include two taxonomic types. This species is categorised as native within the Cape York Peninsula bioregion. However, the 'domesticated' taxonomic type is considered as naturalised in the remaining bioregions. Coconut plants are therefore considered non-native under the VMA when found outside the Cape York Peninsula bioregion.

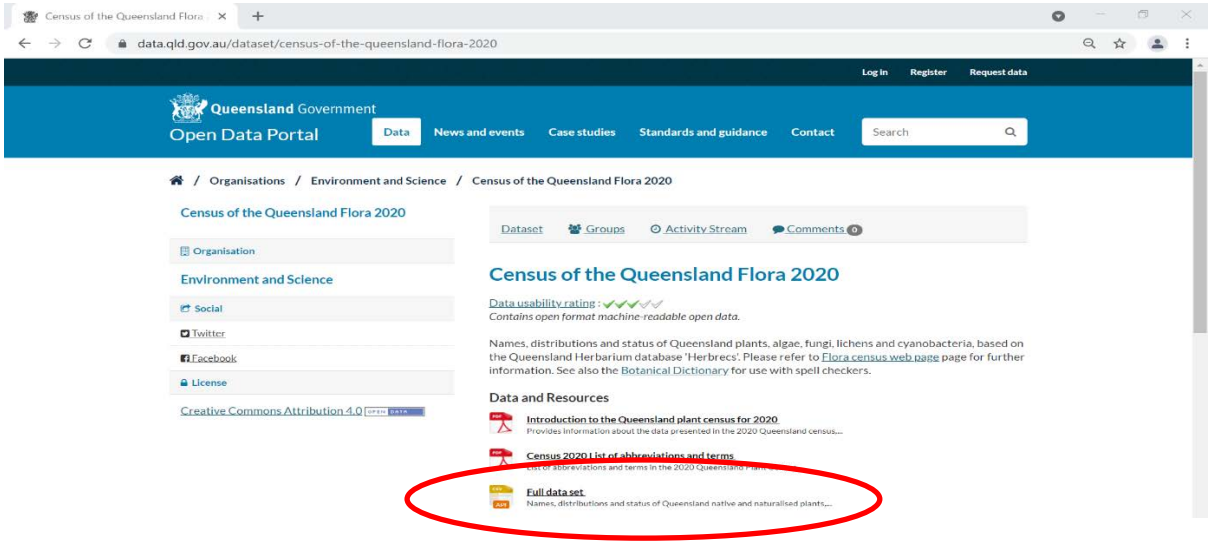
How do I know if a particular species in considered native under the *Vegetation Management Act*?

Step 1: Search the internet for 'flora census Queensland'.

Step 2: Select the most recent option from Open Data. (Tip - the Census of the Queensland Flora is updated each December) and open the database (screenshots are from the 2020 version)



Step 3: Select Full Data Set.

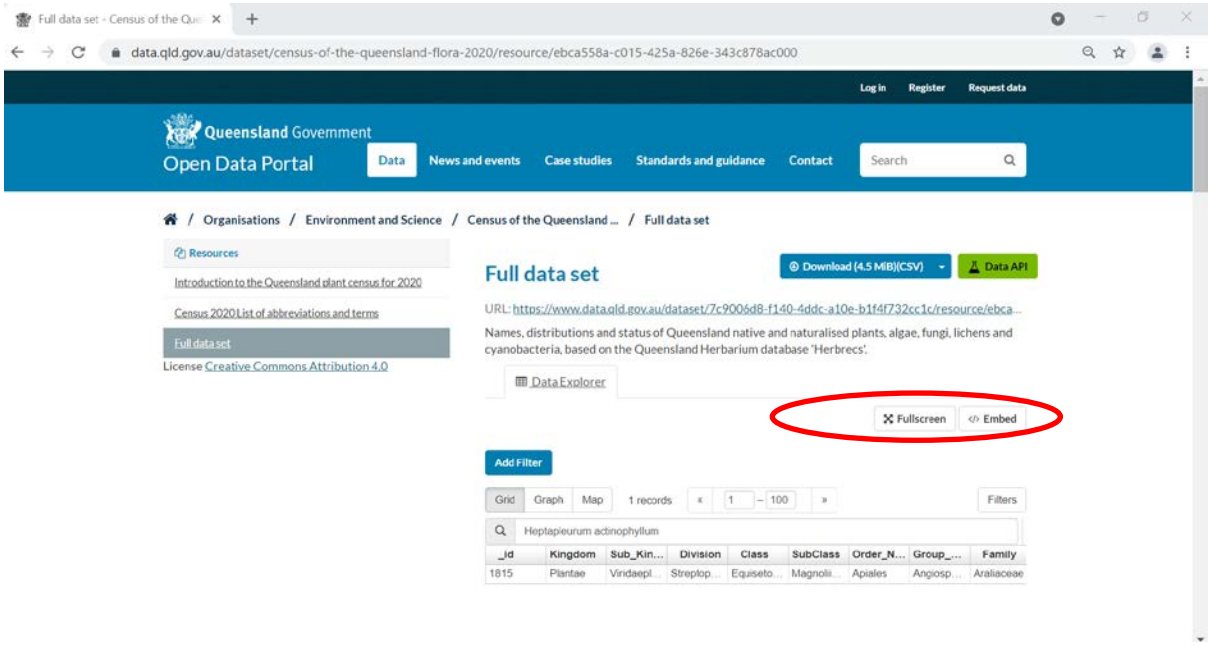


Step 4: You can either:

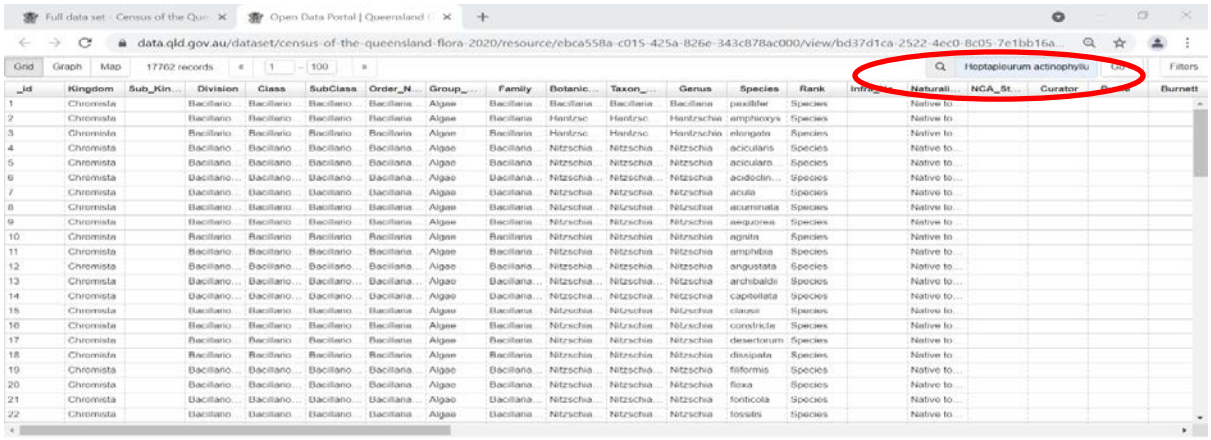
a) Download a copy of the database; or
b) Search the database without downloading a copy.

In this example, we will search the database for the Umbrella Tree (*Heptapleurum actinophyllum*) without downloading a copy.

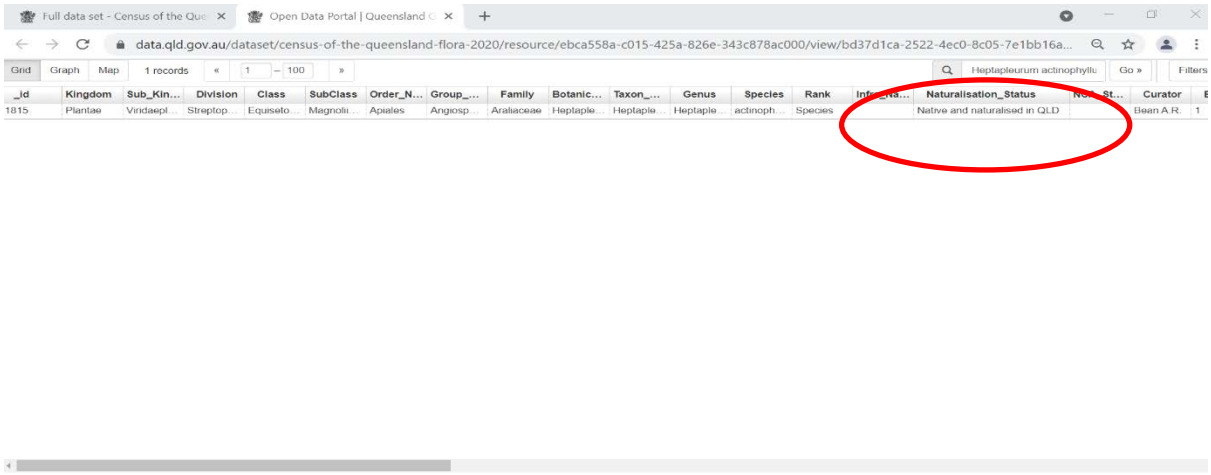
Step 5: Select the “Full screen” option.



Step 6: Enter into the highlighted search box the scientific name of the species that you are interested in and select “go”.



Step 7: Check the “naturalisation status” column.



Step 8: The following table provides guidance on the species “Naturalisation status” result and whether the species is regulated under the VMA.

Naturalisation Status Result	What does this mean? *	Is this species considered native under the VMA?
Native to QLD	Native plants are those that are considered to have evolved in Queensland unaided by humans or have migrated to and persisted in Queensland without assistance from humans,	Yes

Naturalised	Plants introduced to Aust or Qld by human intervention (excluding pre-European introductions) and which have successfully established populations by reproducing without cultivation or other human intervention	Considered non-native*. Non-native species are not regulated under the VMA.
Formerly naturalised	Species that were previously considered naturalised but are presumed to have disappeared from the landscape (not collected for more than 50 years).	Considered non-native*. Non-native species are not regulated under the VMA.
Doubtfully naturalised	Species that have populations that may be in the early stages of naturalisation and not yet established in the landscape, or their continued existence in the landscape may be doubtful.	Considered non-native*. Non-native species are not regulated under the VMA.
Native and Naturalised	These are Queensland plants that are native to part of Queensland but have become naturalised in a bioregion / pastoral district outside their native range. Appendix 1 of this Fact Sheet contains the list of 26 species that are considered "native and naturalised" in Queensland. These 26 species (or as updated over time) are considered a component species of regional ecosystems in specified bioregions of Queensland. However, through recent movement and cultivation by people, these species have been introduced to other parts of Queensland where they are not considered to be native and are in places may have become problematic weed species. For example, the Umbrella tree (*Heptapleurum actinophyllum*) is a native component species of regional ecosystems in the Wet Tropics Bioregion of northern Queensland, but due to introduction by humans, has become a common garden plant, and even an invasive pest of bushland areas, in south eastern Qld. Using this example, the Umbrella tree is regulated vegetation in the Cape York, Wet Tropics, Einasleigh, and Central Qld Coast bioregions. In all other bioregions in Queensland, the Umbrella tree is considered non-native and therefore not regulated under the VMA,	Appendix 1 of this Factsheet contains the current list of the 26 species that are considered "native and naturalised" in Queensland. These 26 species are considered a component species of regional ecosystems in some parts of Queensland. These species are therefore regulated under the VMA in the bioregions to which the species is native as is shown in Table 1. Beyond those bioregions specified a species will then be considered a non-native species are not regulated under the VMA.

** Brown GK & Bostock PD. Introduction to the Census of the Queensland Flora 2020. Queensland Department of Environment and Science, Queensland Government.*

To determine which bioregion your plant specimen site is located you may download a VM Property Report and Table 2 in Section 1.2 of the Report will indicate the bioregion.

So Can I Remove the Plant once it has been correctly identified?

The clearing of vegetation may be regulated by the Commonwealth, State or local government at any location. Whether a plant can be cleared, and how it can be cleared, depends on the particular circumstances at that location.

If you are uncertain as to whether a plant can be cleared, it is strongly recommended that you contact the VegHub on 135VEG (13 58 34), or by email (vegetation@resources.qld.gov.au). You may also need to seek advice from other agencies such as the Department of Environment and Science (DES), or your local government.

Need further information?

For further information on determining non-native species see the Introduction to the Census of the Queensland Flora document or contact the Queensland Herbarium by emailing Queensland.Herbarium@qld.gov.au or phoning (07) 3199 7699.

For further information on the Vegetation Management framework call 135VEG (13 58 34).

Appendix 1: Status of "Native and naturalised species in Queensland"

Species Name	Native to these Bioregions (under VMA)
Acacia colei	Gulf Plains, NW Highlands, Einasleigh, Mitchell Grass Downs, Desert Uplands, Brigalow Belt
Acacia conferta	Brigalow Belt, Central Qld Coast, SE Qld, New England Tableland
Acacia dietrichiana	Einasleigh, Gulf Plains, Desert Uplands, Brigalow Belt
Acacia elachantha	Gulf Plains, NW Highlands, Mitchell Grass Downs, Desert Upland, Brigalow Belt, Channel Country
Acacia fimbriata	Brigalow Belt, Central Qld Coast, SE Qld
Acacia hemsleyi	Cape York, Gulf Plains, NW Highlands, Desert Uplands, Mitchell Grass Downs, Brigalow Belt (North)
Acacia holosericea	All bioregions except SE Qld
Acacia macradenia	Brigalow Belt, Desert Uplands, Mitchell Grass Downs, Mulga Lands
Acacia mangium	Cape York, Wet Tropics
Acacia podalyriifolia	Wet Tropics, Einasleigh
Acacia spectabilis	Brigalow Belt, Mulga Lands
Albizia lebbeck	Cape York
Aleurites moluccanus	Cape York, Wet Tropics
Buckinghamia celsissima	Wet Tropics
Chionanthus ramiflorus	Cape York, Wet Tropics, Brigalow Belt, Einasleigh, Central Qld Coast
Corymbia torelliana	Wet Tropics
Dioscorea bulbifera	Cape York, Gulf Plains, Cape York, Central Qld Coast, Brigalow Belt
Diplazium dietrichianum	Wet Tropics
Epipremnum pinnatum	Cape York, Wet Tropics, Einasleigh, Central Qld Coast, Brigalow Belt
Grevillea banksii	Brigalow Belt, SE Qld
Heptapleurum actinophyllum	Cape York, Wet Tropics, Einasleigh, Central Qld Coast
Ipomoea aquatica	Cape York, Gulf Plains, Wet Tropics
Laportea interrupta	Cape York, Wet Tropics, Einasleigh Uplands
Millettia pinnata	Cape York, Gulf Plains, Wet Tropics, Einasleigh, Central Qld Coast, Brigalow Belt
Piper umbellatum	Wet Tropics, Central Qld Coast
Terminalia arenicola	Cape York, Wet Tropics, Brigalow Belt

Disclaimer: *Appendix 1 is derived from the 2020 'Census of Queensland Flora Survey'. Current Census data should be relied upon.*