

THE VALUES OF OUR WETLANDS

- Maintain “healthy” and sustainable river basins and facilitate water purification and the reduction of pollution
- Support for fisheries, grazing and agriculture
- Habitat for wildlife, especially waterfowl and other endangered animals and plants
- Provide opportunities for ecotourism and education

Jamaica is ranked 5th in islands of the world in plant endemism and also has a high level of animal endemism, meaning many of our plants and animals are found nowhere else in the world. Some of these plants and animals are found in these Ramsar sites, thus the need to protect these wetlands.

THREATS TO WETLANDS

- ⚡ Lighting fires for agricultural purposes
- ⚡ Introduction of species with the potential to invade/kill native species and change the ecological character
- ⚡ Wetland reclamation and removal for activities e.g. housing, roads, tourism
- ⚡ Illegal harvesting of timber
- ⚡ Removal of endemic species

WHAT WE CAN DO TO PROTECT WETLANDS

- 🌿 Manage drainage of wetlands for intensive cultivation/agriculture, urbanization and tourism development
- 🌿 Manage infrastructural development such as embankments, coastal protection and port facilities
- 🌿 Minimize pollution from industrial, mining and agricultural activities
- 🌿 Stop overfishing, over-exploitation of forest resources and wastage due to inefficient extraction and over-harvesting of flora and fauna
- 🌿 Reduce encroachment on areas inhabited by rare and endangered species

National Environment & Planning Agency
10 & 11 Caledonia Avenue, Kingston 5
Telephone: 754-7540
Fax: 754-7595/6
Email: pubed@nepa.gov.jm
Toll Free: 1-888-991-5005
Website: www.nepa.gov.jm



Create an Environment
for Clean Living.

July 2010

WETLANDS of JAMAICA

Ramsar Sites – Jamaica's Three Wetlands of International Importance



National Environment
and Planning Agency



THE BLACK RIVER LOWER MORASS RAMSAR SITE

- Has rare and endemic species, with populations which are of national or international significance, such as the West Indian Whistling Duck and the Thatch Palm;



- Covers 5,700 hectares and is located in the parish of St. Elizabeth;
- Was designated in 1997;

- Is valuable as an ecotourism site due to its aesthetic appeal and the diversity in wildlife such as birds and the American Crocodile; and



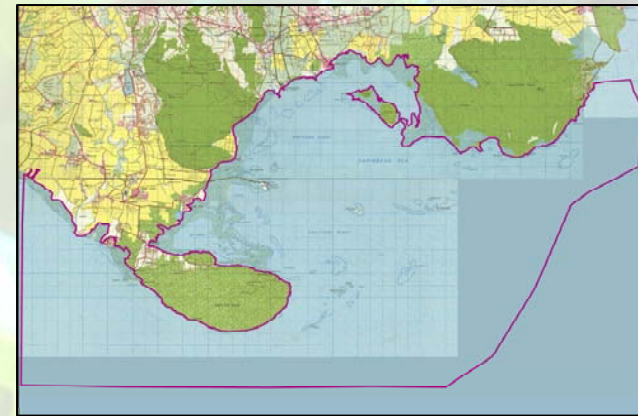
- Is impacted by the socioeconomic use of the river for agricultural and domestic purposes.

THE PALISADOES-PORT ROYAL RAMSAR SITE

- Covers 7,523 hectares and is located in the parish of Kingston;
- Consists of cays, shoals, mangrove lagoons, mangrove islands, coral reefs and seagrass beds;
- Was designated in 2005;
- Is historically significant and was declared a National Heritage Site in 1999 under the Jamaica National Heritage Trust Act;
- Is a habitat for animals on the IUCN list of endangered species e.g. West Indian Manatee, Green Turtle, Hawksbill Turtle, American Crocodile and Bottlenose Dolphin; and
- Has 26 recorded endemic species.



THE PORTLAND BIGHT WETLANDS & CAYS RAMSAR SITE



- Is found within the Portland Bight Protected Area located in the parishes of St. Catherine and Clarendon;
- Was designated in 2006;
- Covers 24,542 hectares and encompassing mangrove and herbaceous wetlands, beaches, coastal woodlands, rocky shores, island cays, coral reefs and seagrass beds;
- Supports more than 3,000 fisherfolk who harvest finfish, lobster, shrimp, oysters and Queen conch; and
- Is an important habitat for endangered species e.g. Hawksbill Turtle, West Indian Manatee, Bottlenose Dolphin, West Indian Whistling Duck and migratory ducks.

