

Tram Chim National Park

Written by Administrator

Friday, 15 January 2010 04:51 - Last Updated Saturday, 03 April 2010 16:20



Tram Chim National Park supports one of the last remnants of the Plain of Reeds wetland ecosystem, which previously covered some 700,000 ha of Dong Thap, Long An and Tien Giang provinces. The national park is located 19 km to the east of the [Mekong River](#)

, at an elevation of about 1 m. The topography of the national park is flat, and slopes slightly to the east. In the past, several natural streams and rivers flowed from west to east, distributing water from the Mekong River to the Plain of Reeds. Now these



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Alternative site name(s)

Dong Thap Muoi, Tram Chim Tam Nong

Province(s)

Dong Thap

Area

7,588 ha

Coordinates

10o40' – 10o47'N, 105o26' – 105o36'E

Distance(s)

From [Ho Chi Minh City](#)

Eco-tours

Bird watching.

Topography and hydrology

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, at an elevation of about 1 m. The topography of the national park is flat, and slopes slightly to the east. In the past, several natural streams and rivers flowed from west to east, distributing water from the Mekong River to the Plain of Reeds. Now these streams and rivers have been replaced by a system of canals, some of which flow through the national park.

Prior to canalization, the Plain of Reeds was seasonally flooded with standing water for continuous periods of up to seven months per year. Since canalization, floodwaters drain more rapidly, and the national park is flooded for less than six months per year. Water levels in the canals begin to rise in June, at the beginning of the rainy season. Between September and December, the national park is inundated to a depth of 2 to 4 m, with a peak in October.

Since the mid-1980s, 53 km of dykes fitted with sluices have been constructed around the national park, with the aim of impounding floodwater for longer, and reducing the lowering of the water table during the dry season. The national park is fragmented by canals into five management zones; the water level of each can be managed separately

Biodiversity values

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The vegetation of **Tram Chim National Park** comprises a mixture of seasonally inundated grassland, regenerating *Melaleuca* forest and open swamp. *Melaleuca* is distributed throughout the national park, both in plantations and in scattered patches in areas of grassland or open swamp. There are five widespread grassland communities at

Tram Chim

, of which the community dominated by *Eleocharis dulcis* and wild rice *Oryza rufipogon* is of the highest conservation significance. Tram Chim is one of the few places in the Plain of Reeds where this community is likely to survive to any extent, and, therefore, one of the most important sites for the conservation of wild rice in

[Vietnam](#)

. The other grassland communities are dominated by *Eleocharis ochrostachys*, *Panicum repens*, *Ischaemum rugosum* and *Vossia cuspidata*. Another vegetation type found at

Tram Chim

is lotus swamp, which is dominated by lotus *Nelumbo nucifera*, along with *Nymphaea nouchali*, *N. pubescens* and *N. tetragona*.

The site supports significant numbers of waterbirds, particularly during the winter months. Of particular importance is the non-breeding population of the eastern subspecies of Sarus Crane *Grus antigone sharpii*, which regularly spends the dry season at the national park. Between 1989 and 1999, the maximum dry-season count of Sarus Cranes at **Tram Chim** ranged from 187 to 814 individuals, with a mean of 496.

In addition to Sarus Crane, the globally endangered Bengal Florican *Houbaropsis bengalensis* has also been recorded at **Tram Chim National Park**. The status of this secretive grassland specialist at

Tram Chim

is not fully known but it is likely that birds vacate the area during periods of substantial inundation in the late wet season. Local people believe that the species breeds at the site, and claim to have found both eggs and young of the species but this has yet to be confirmed. A number of other globally threatened and near-threatened bird species regularly occur at

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, including Oriental Darter *Anhinga melanogaster*, Lesser Adjutant *Leptoptilos javanicus*, Painted Stork *Mycteria leucocephala* and Asian Golden Weaver *Ploceus hypoxanthus*.

Other wetland bird species of note recorded at **Tram Chim** include Cotton Pygmy Goose *Nettapus coromandelianus*, Greater Painted-snipe *Rostratula benghalensis* and Pheasant-tailed Jacana *Hydrophasianus chirurgus*. Because of its importance for globally threatened and congregatory bird species,

Tram

Chim

qualifies as an Important Bird Area.

Other documented values

Tram Chim National Park stores water during times of flood and releases it only slowly as floodwaters recede. In so-doing, the site helps to mitigate the negative effects of flooding on surrounding agricultural lands and agricultural communities.

Tram

Chim National Park

is one of the best developed and most well known sites for ecotourism in the

[Mekong Delta](#)

. The national park already has basic tourist facilities, and previously received many visitors.