

# NPF Survey February 2026

<b>Collection area:</b>	Weipa, Karumba, Mornington (east, north and west), Vanderlins and Groote Eylandt (north and south), Gulf of Carpentaria
<b>Dates of trawling:</b>	7 to 23 February 2026
<b>Vessels chartered:</b>	FV "Admiralty Pearl" and FV "Northern Pearl" (Raptis P/L)
<b>CSIRO staff:</b>	2 scientists per vessel
<b>Fishing gear used:</b>	Two by 12-fathom prawn trawl nets per vessel. Nets were fitted with TEDs but not BRDs

This survey was carried out as part of the AFMA/CSIRO-funded NPF research project: "Integrated fishery-independent data for the Northern Prawn Assessment: 2024-2027".

The main aim of the survey is:

- to provide a recruitment index and size data of the main commercial prawn species in the Gulf of Carpentaria as inputs to the stock assessment.

The Raptis vessels FV "Admiralty Pearl" and FV "Northern Pearl" were chartered to trawl pre-determined sites covering fishing grounds from Weipa to north of Groote Eylandt. A total of 304 trawls were completed between 7<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026. These trawls were particularly aimed at prawns and byproduct, and were situated on and inshore of the commercial trawl grounds. All trawls were made at night and were about 30 minutes in duration. The catches were standardized to a catch per hour trawled.

Four schools of banana prawns were encountered during the survey.

In addition to project-targeted prawn and byproduct data being recorded, other information was collected for synergistic scientific projects. This includes:

- ~50 surface tows for microplastic sampling and the simultaneous collection of a few benthic invertebrates (commercial prawns, Moreton Bay bugs) for future analysis of microplastic ingestion and health status.
- Opportunistic collection of *Penaeus monodon* swimming legs (pleopods) for storage in a bio archive for future fisheries genetics.

## CAUTION

The following figures show the catches of tiger, banana, endeavour and king prawns from each site sampled in the survey. Catches are presented as the number of prawns caught per hour trawled and, in separate figures, as the weight of prawns caught per hour.

There are also figures showing the size of prawns caught as count per pound. In these size figures, **the size and colour of each bubble refers only to the size of prawns and gives no indication of the actual catch at each site**. These figures need to be read with reference to the catch figures.

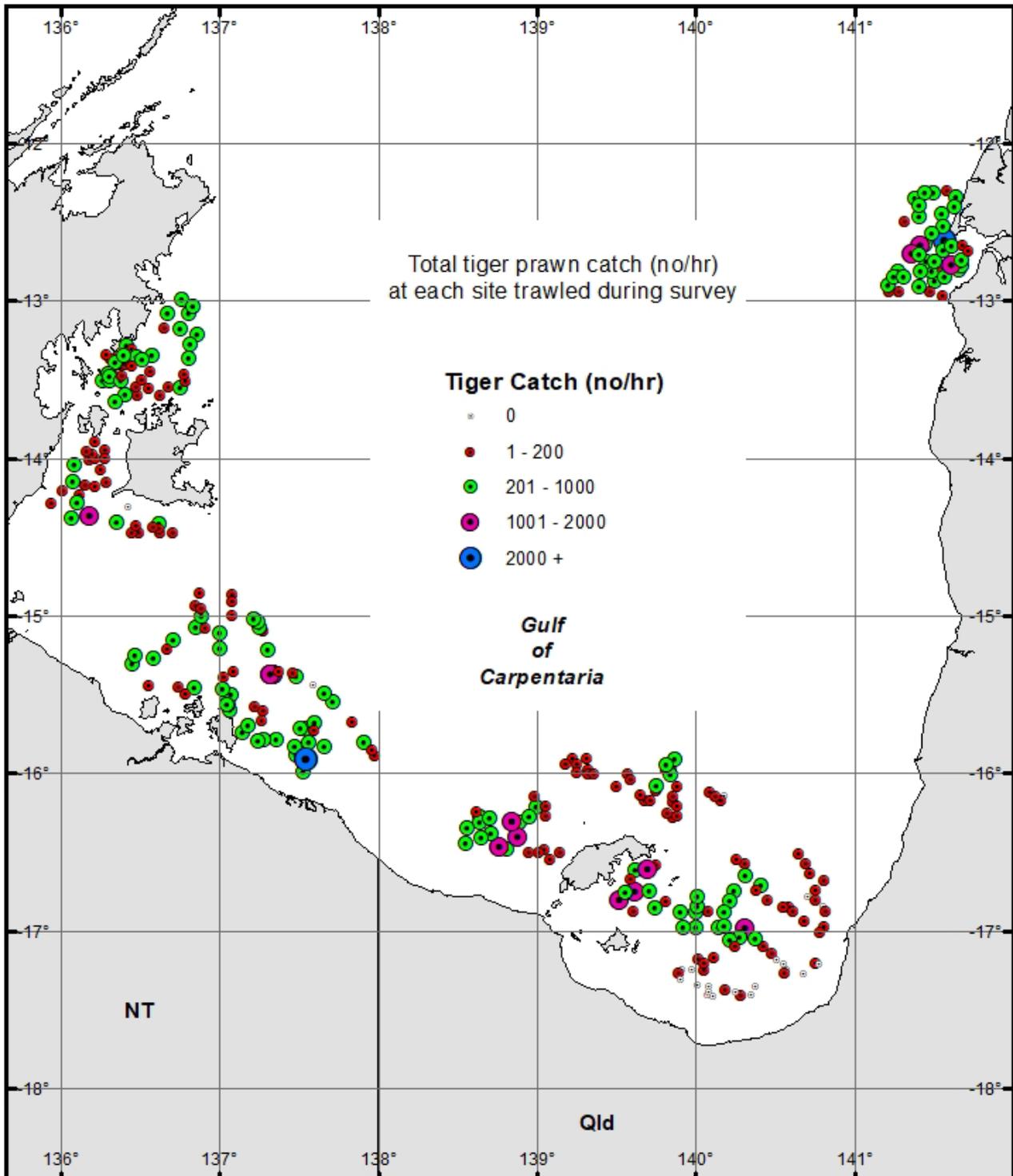
**NB** This is preliminary data only and further error checking is being conducted.



# CSIRO Environment NPF Monitoring Survey – February 2026 Preliminary Results



Australian Government  
Australian Fisheries Management Authority

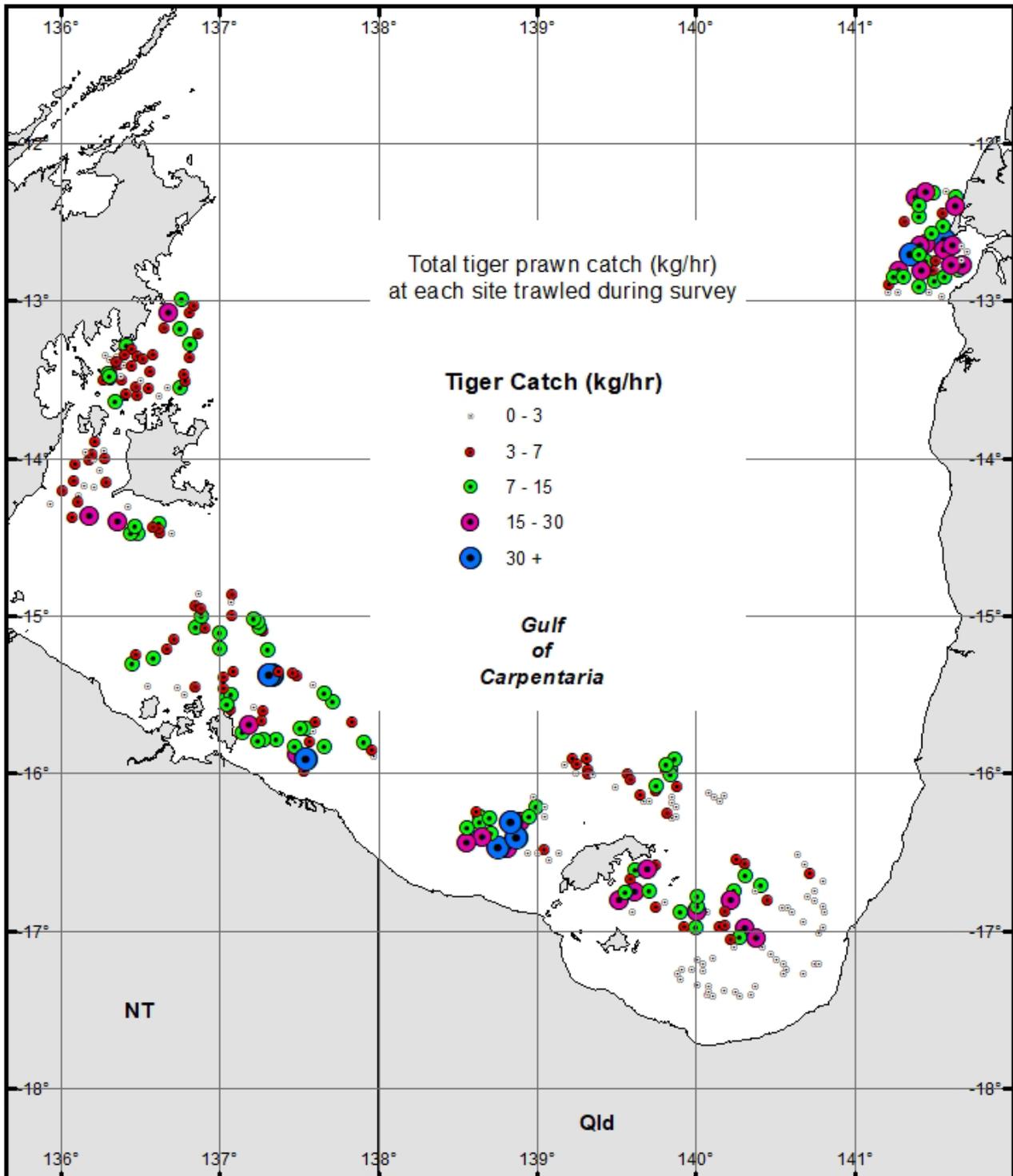




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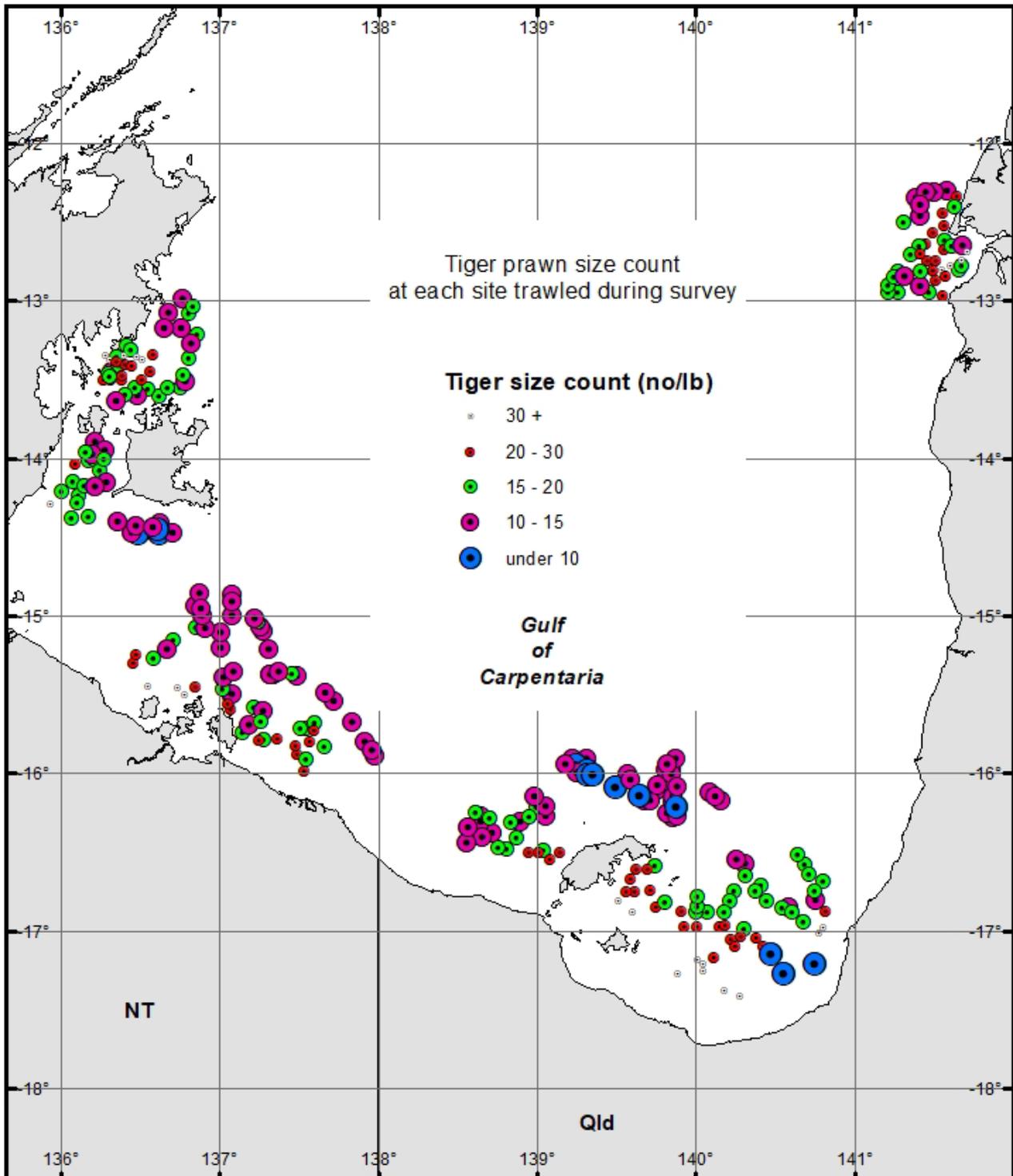




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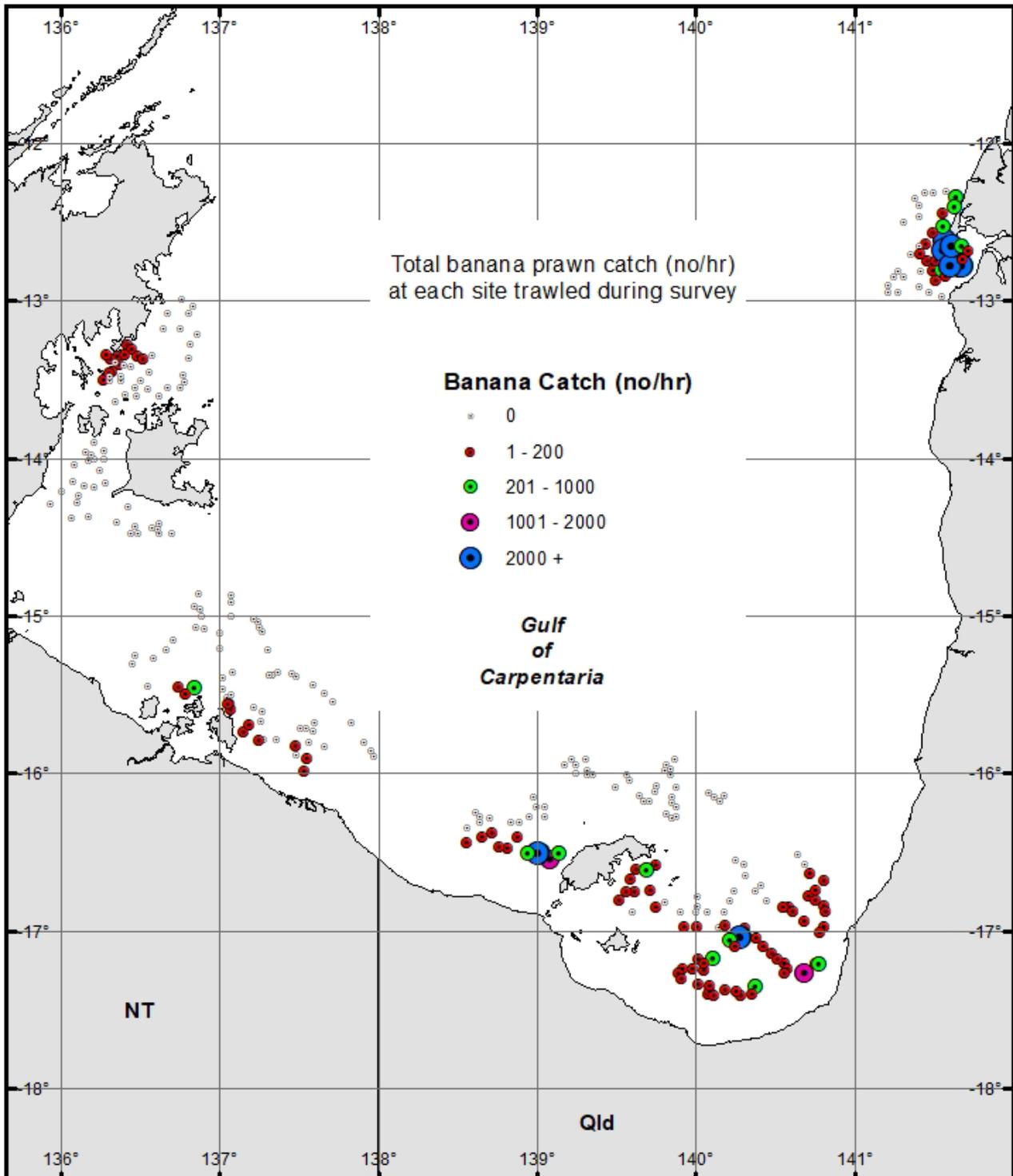




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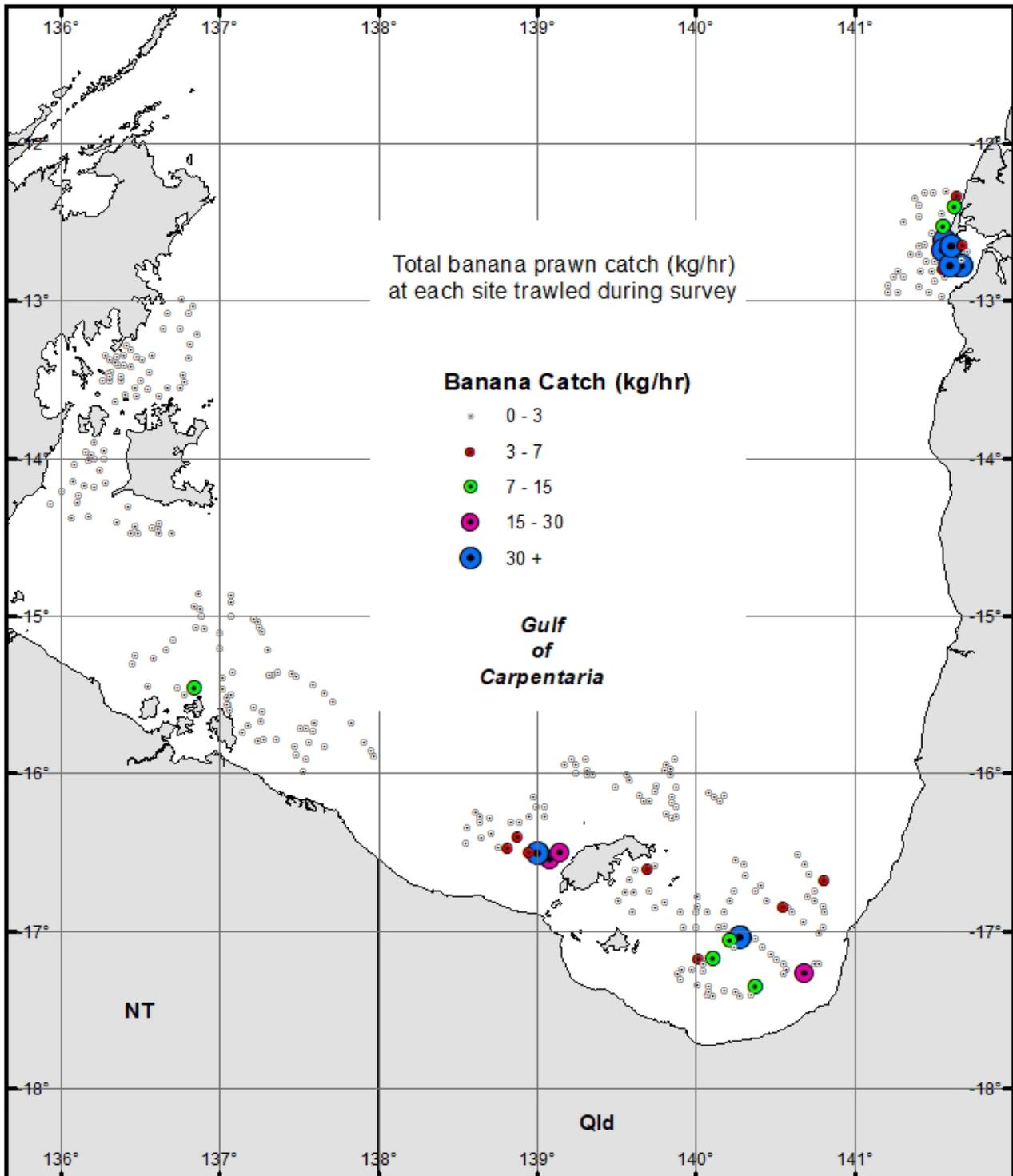




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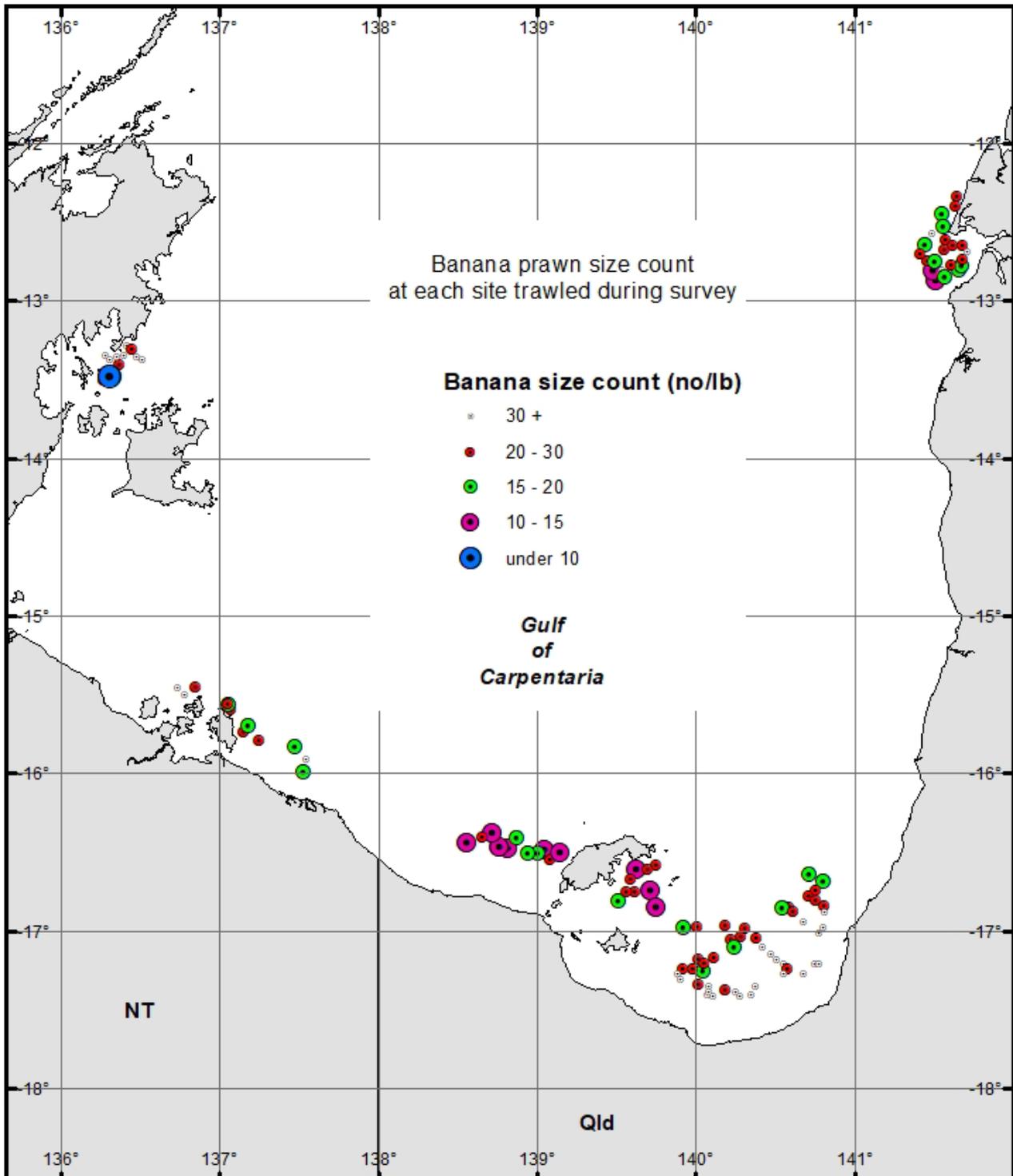




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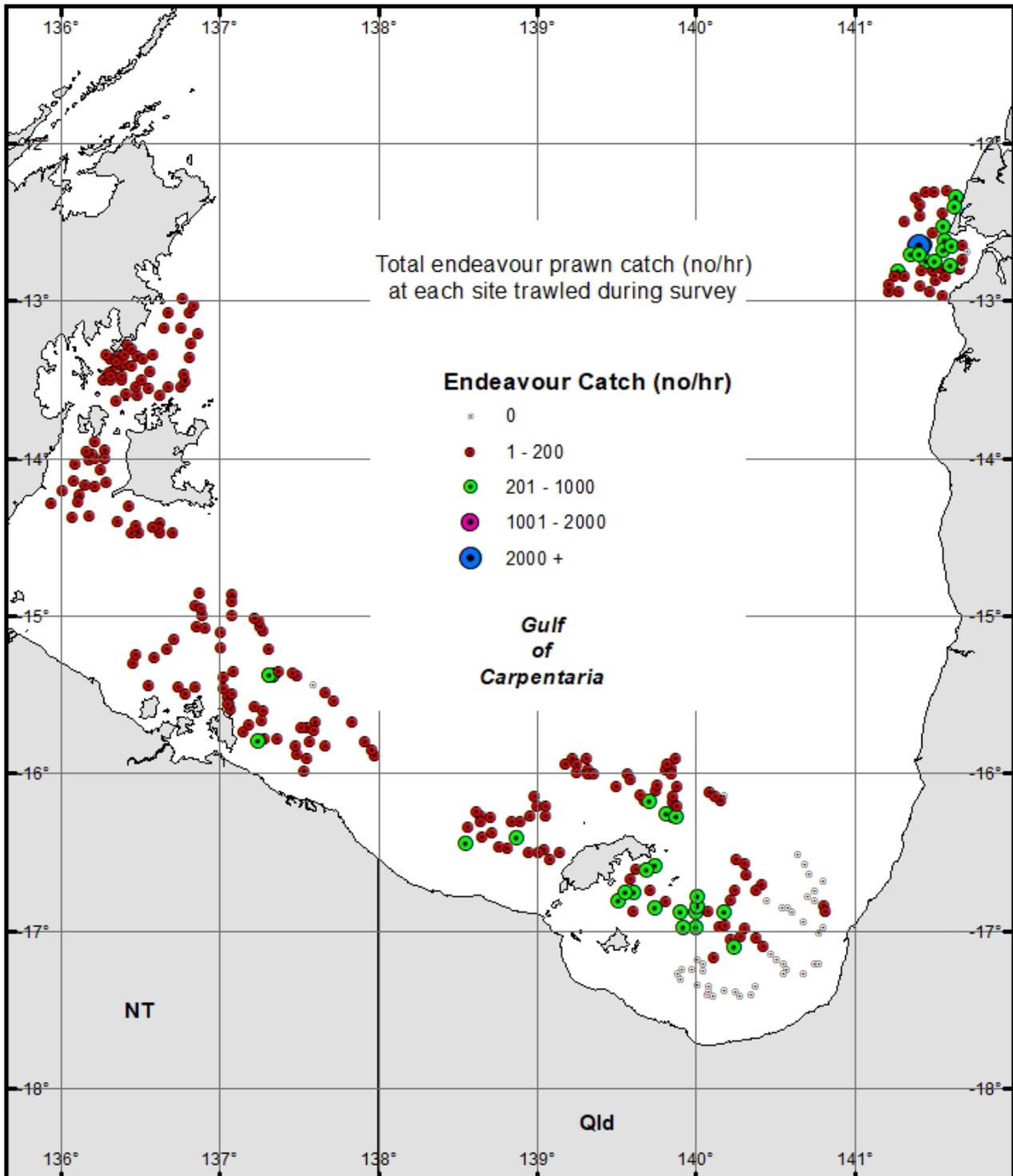




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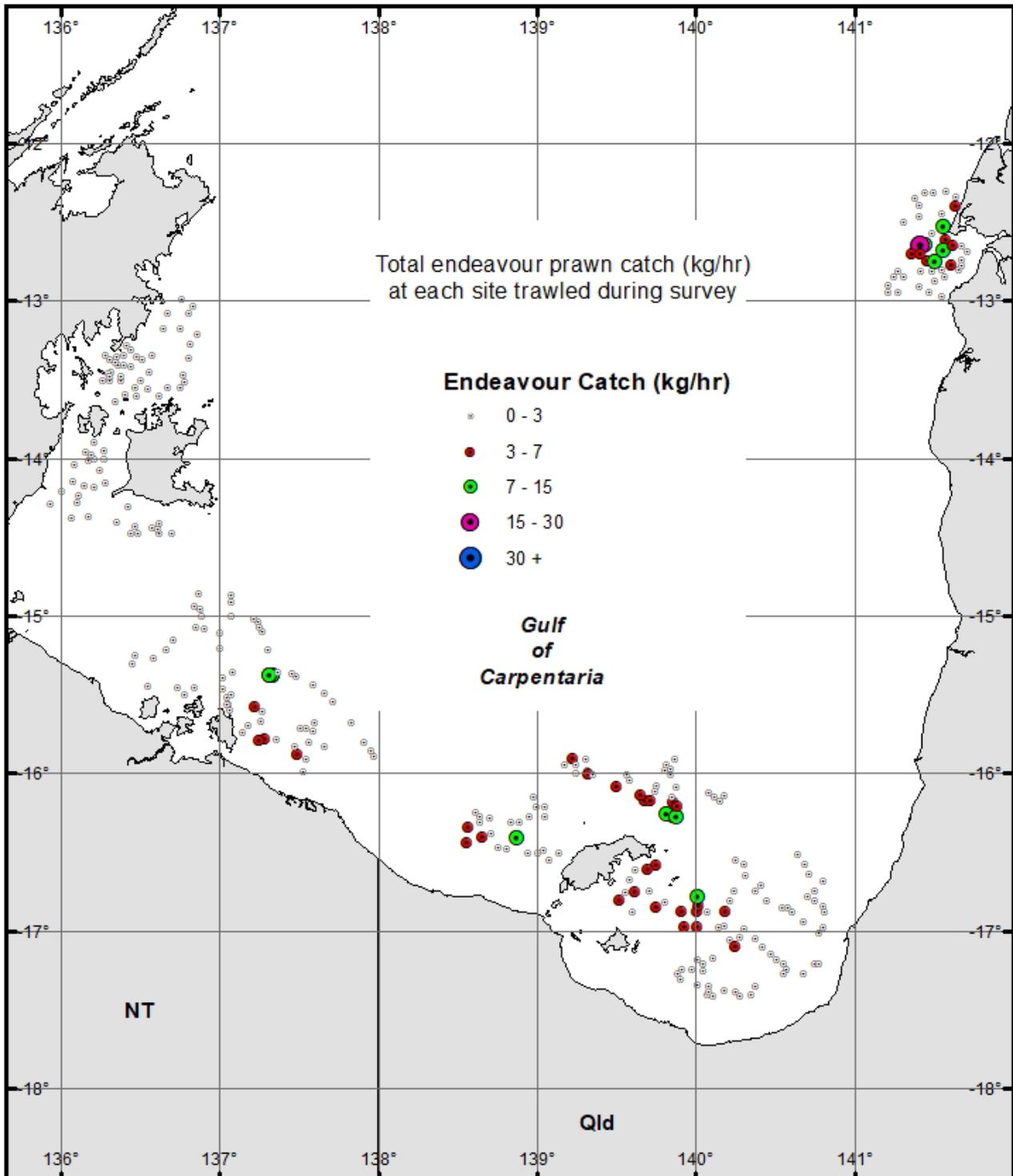




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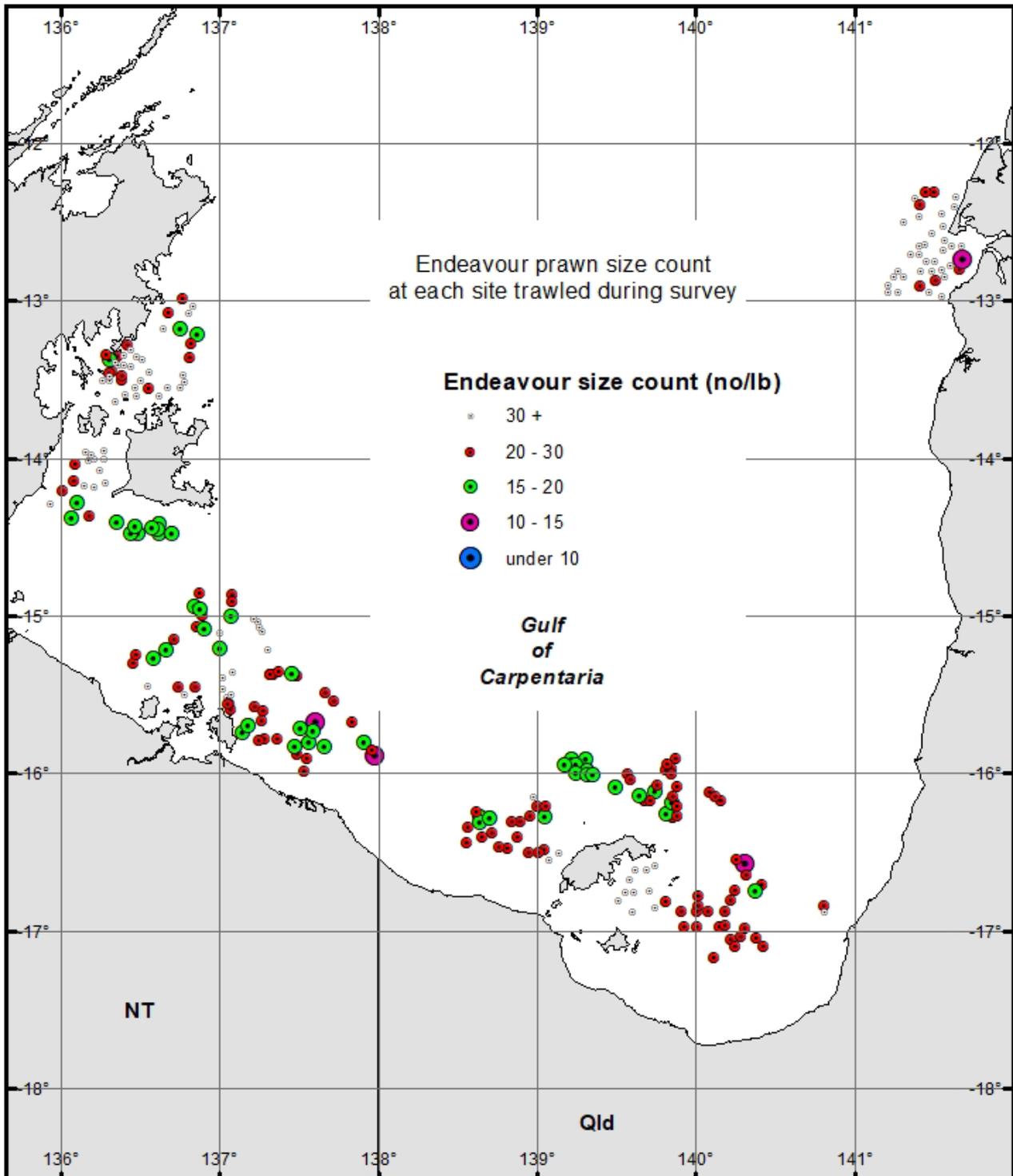




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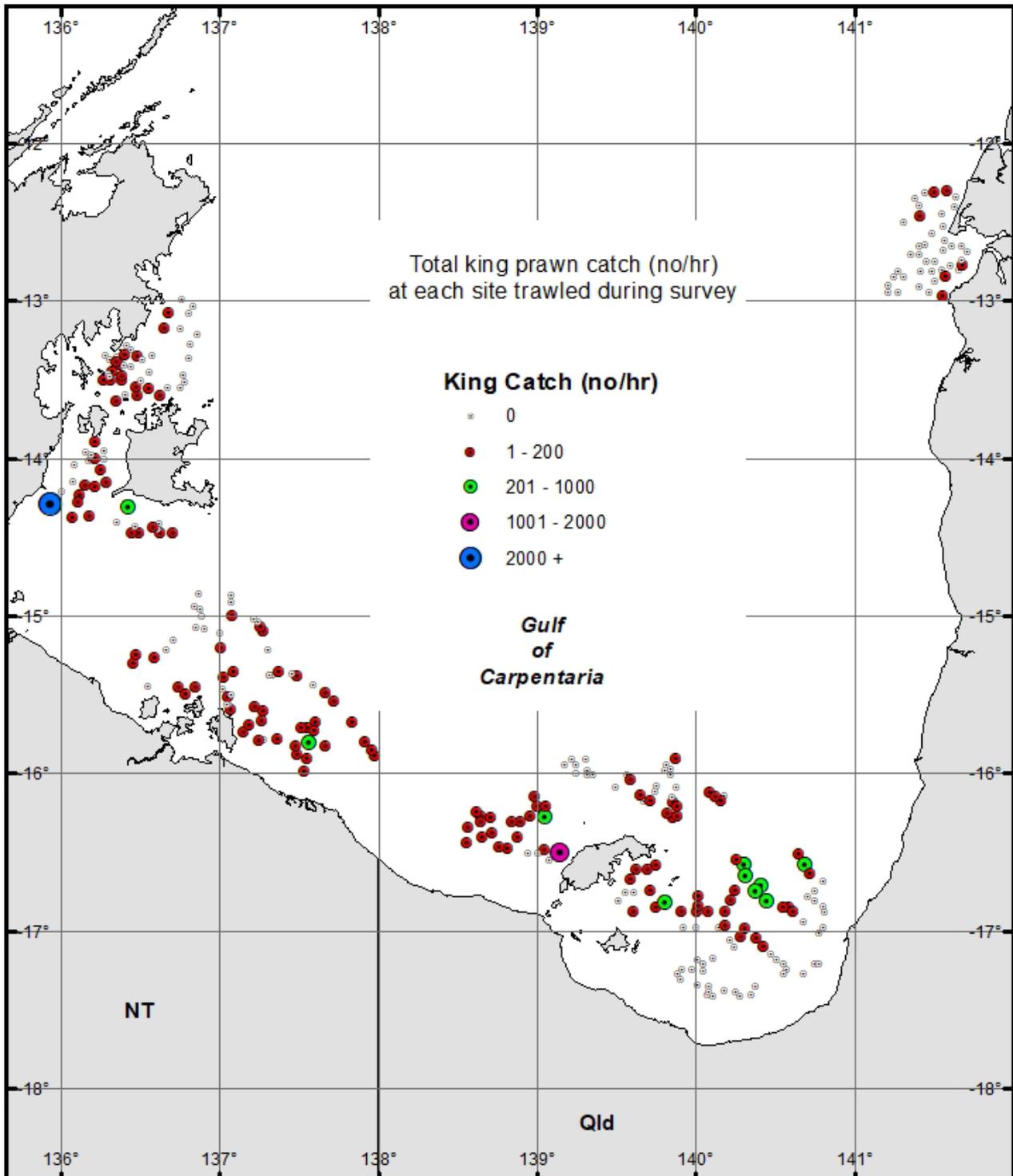




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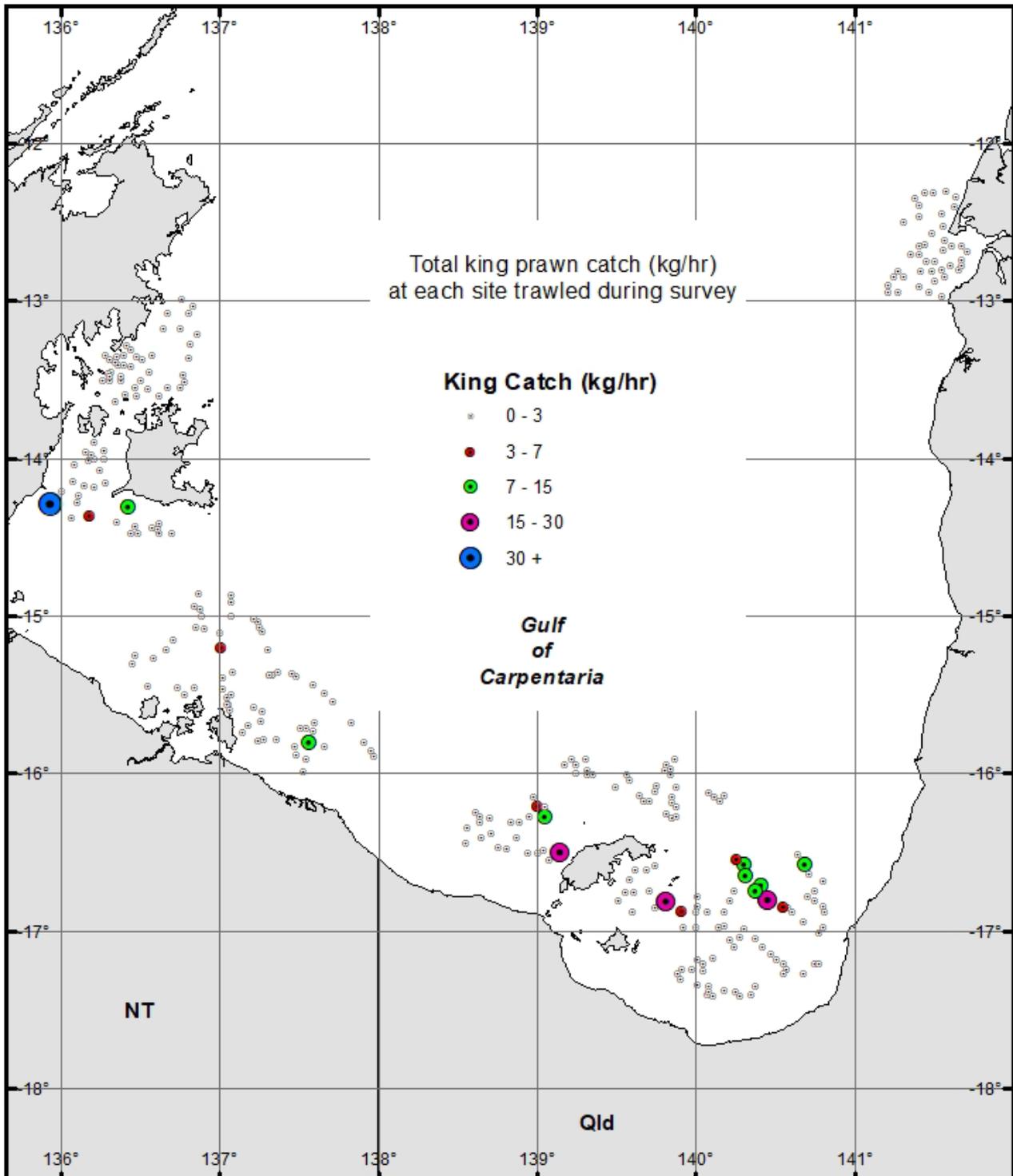




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