



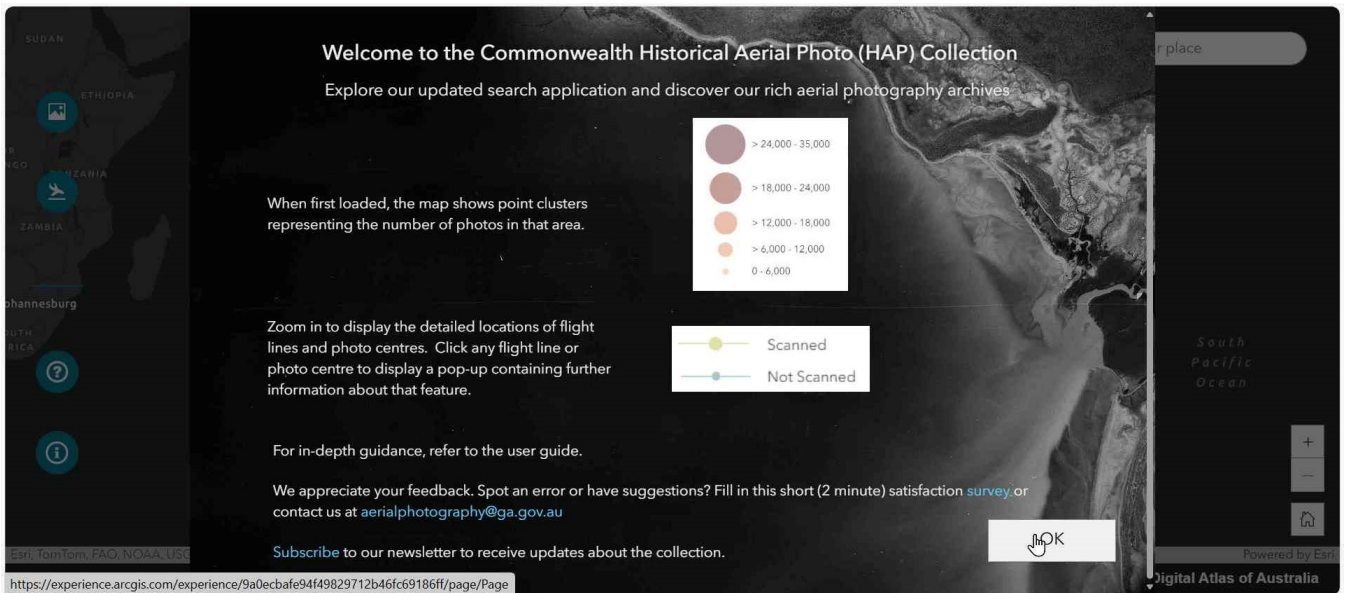
# Using the Geoscience Australia Imagery Portal to access historical aerial photos

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT LANDHOLDER GUIDE

6 May 2026

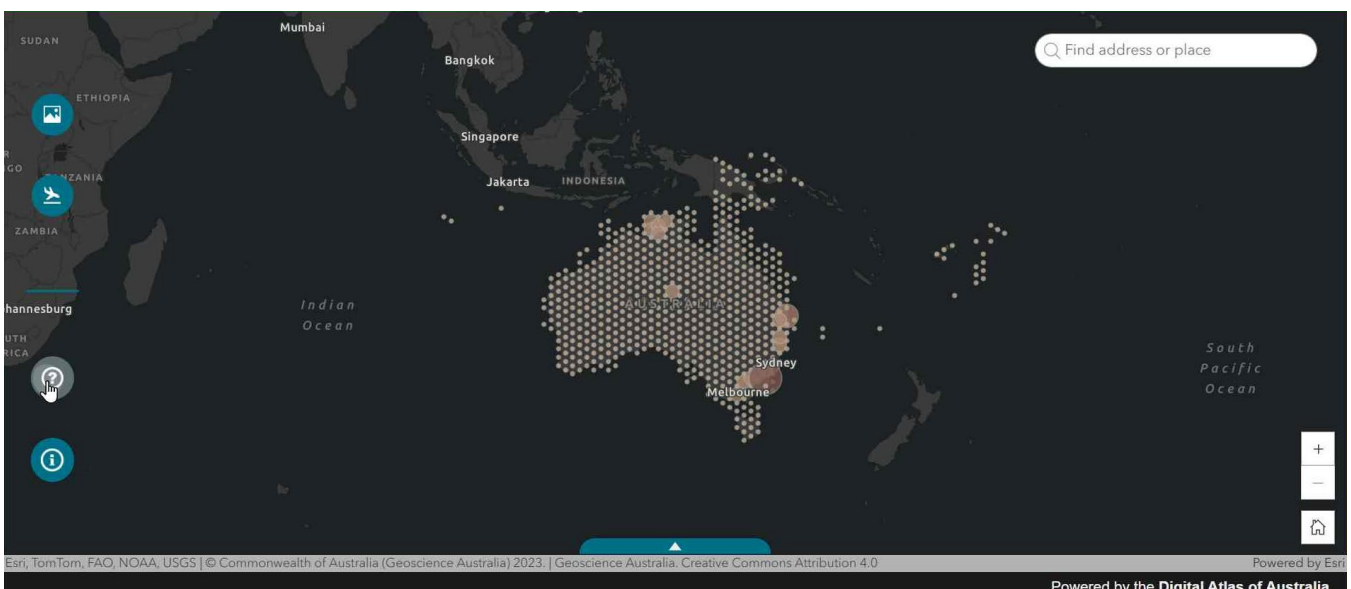
# 1. Open the portal

- Open your web browser and go to the [Australian Government Historical Aerial Photo Explorer](https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/9a0ecbaf94f49829712b46fc69186ff/page/Page) <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/9a0ecbaf94f49829712b46fc69186ff/page/Page>
- Read the front page information and click **OK** to begin.

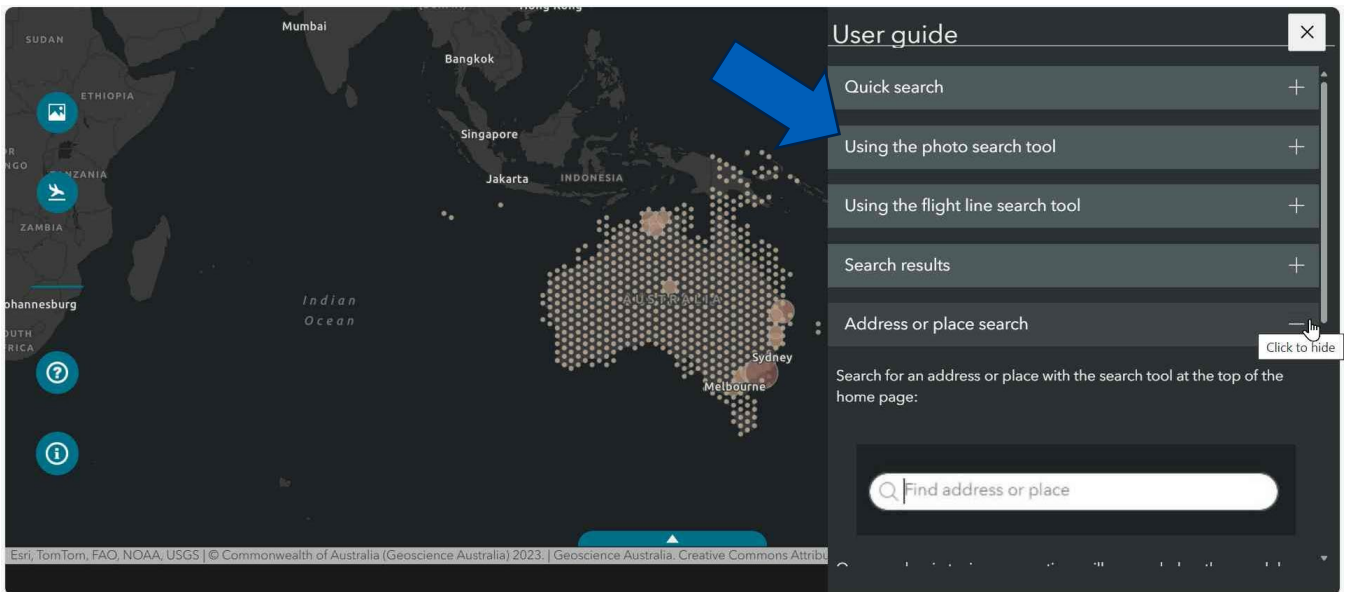


# 2. Open the inbuilt user guide

- Click on the help button, which is a question mark icon inside a blue circle on the left side of the screen.



- The user guide menu will open as a sidebar on the right side of the screen. It includes instructions for multiple ways to search and use the tool.

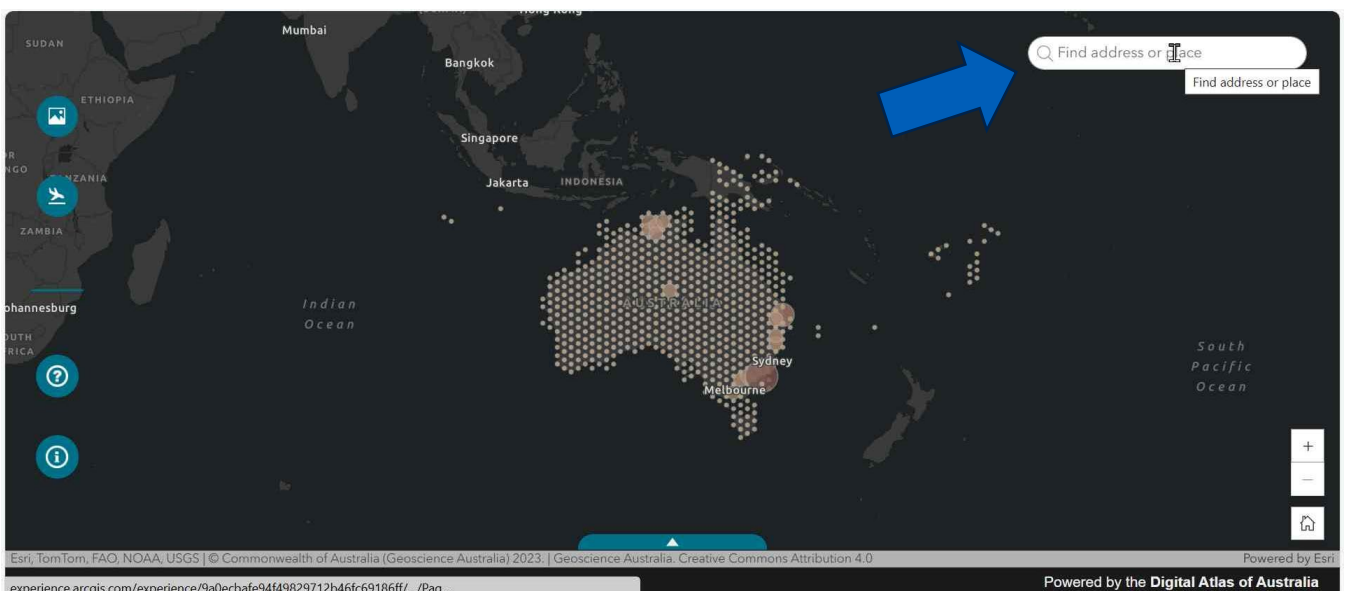


### 3. Search for an area

- Find the search field labelled **Find address or place**.  
Where to find the search field:
- If the user guide is open, click **Address or place search**.
- If the user guide is closed, look in the top right corner of the screen.
- Type a street address or place name (locality or station name) into the search field.

*Note: This portal does not yet enable searching by lot/plan numbers*

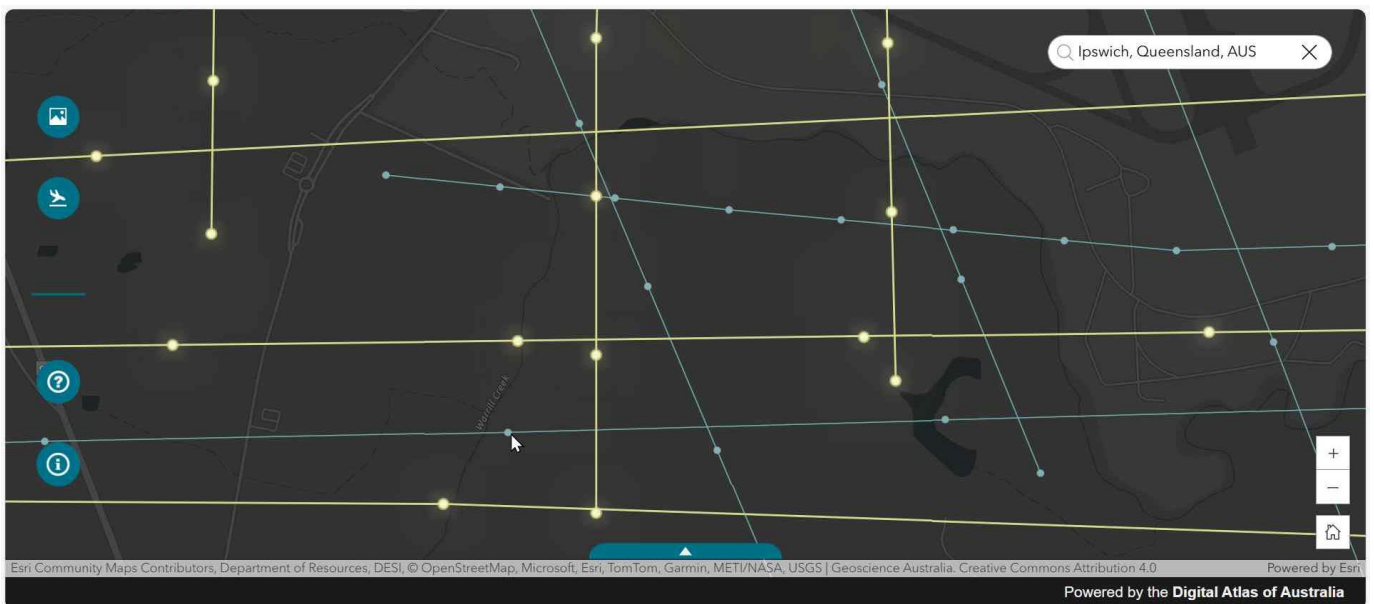
- Search results will appear as you type into the field. Choose a result from the list.



## 4. See flight paths over your chosen location

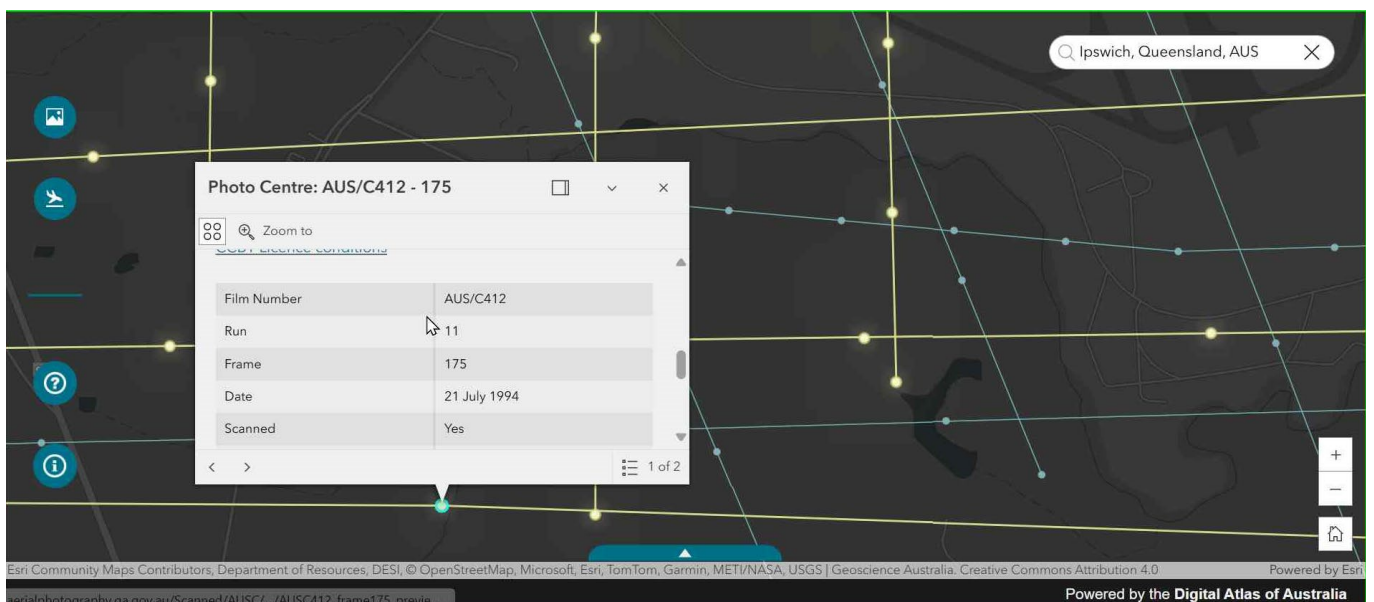
- After you choose a search result, the map view will zoom in to that location.
- You will see blue and yellow lines representing the flight paths taken for the aerial photography. The yellow points have been scanned and have available pictures, whereas the blue points have images that aren't yet available to view.

*Tip: If you don't see a flight path, try zooming out by using your mouse scroll button or clicking the minus button in the bottom right corner of the screen*



## 5. Choose a point over your searched area

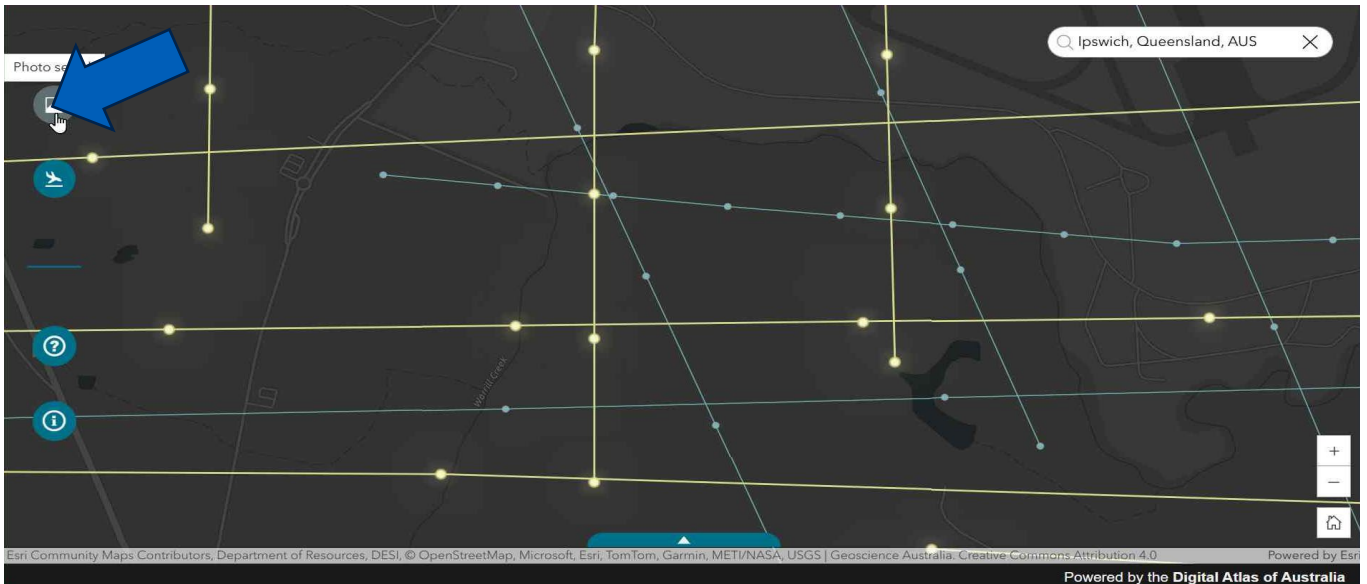
- Click on a yellow point to find out what imagery is available and to access the available imagery.



## 6. Search imagery by date and other filters

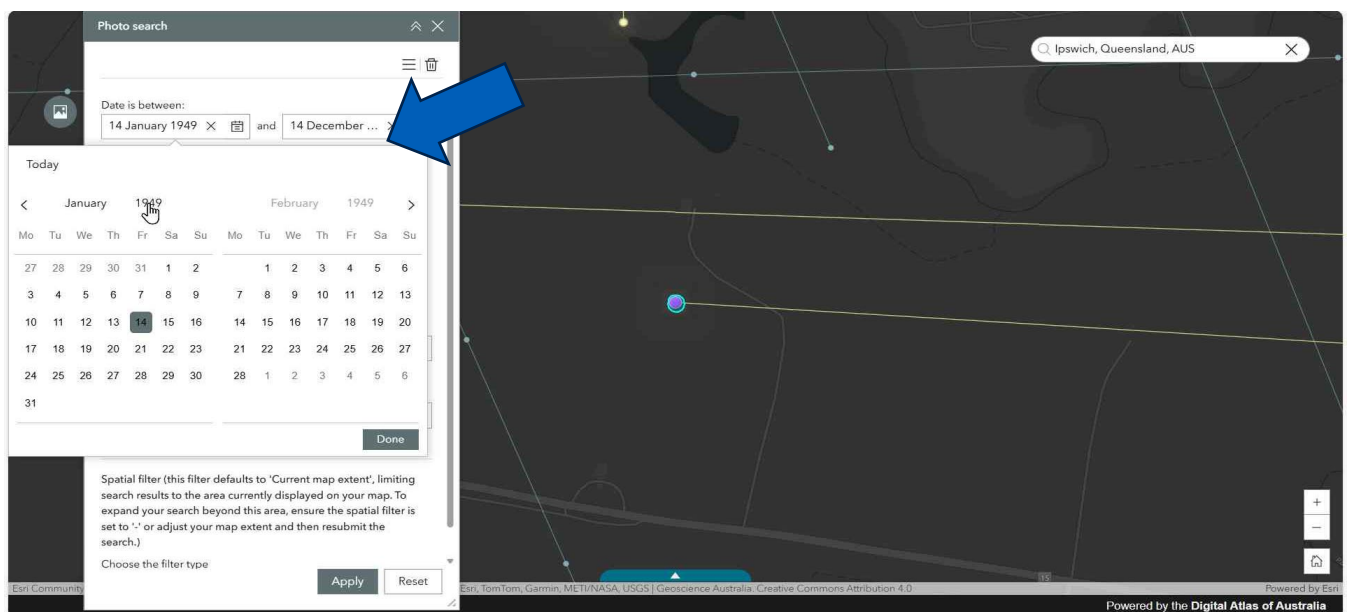


- Click on the photo search tool, which is a picture icon inside a blue circle on the left.



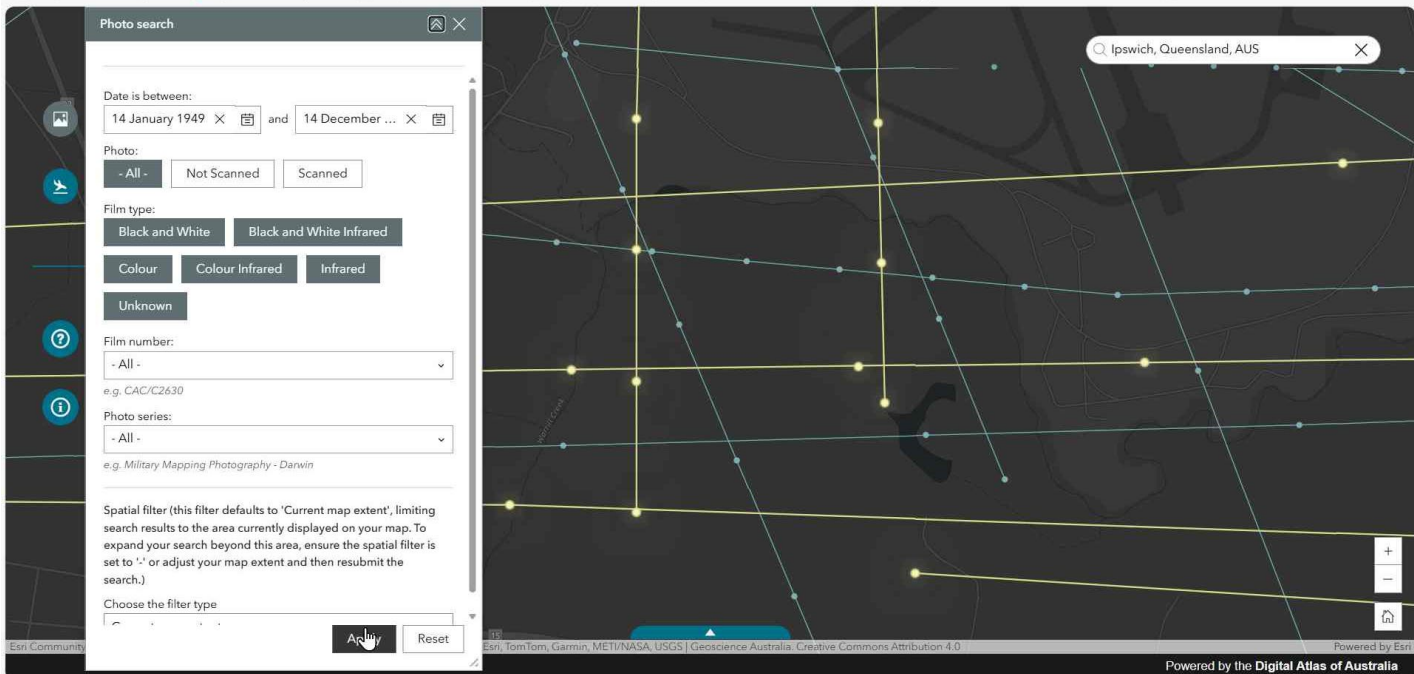
- To search by date, click on the date fields to enter a range of dates for your chosen location. A calendar will open as you click on each date field.
- Navigate through the days, months and years to enter the start and end dates you wish to search by (e.g. Jan. 1949 to Dec. 1959 for viewing the extent of a grassland).

*Note: The Queensland Herbarium recommends using 1950s-era imagery as evidence for defining grassland boundaries. This date aligns with the end of a prolonged drought and is regarded as a baseline for the minimal extent of wooded vegetation associated with grassland/woody grassland regional ecosystems. Imagery from the 1960s and onwards will suffice if 1950s photos are unavailable.*

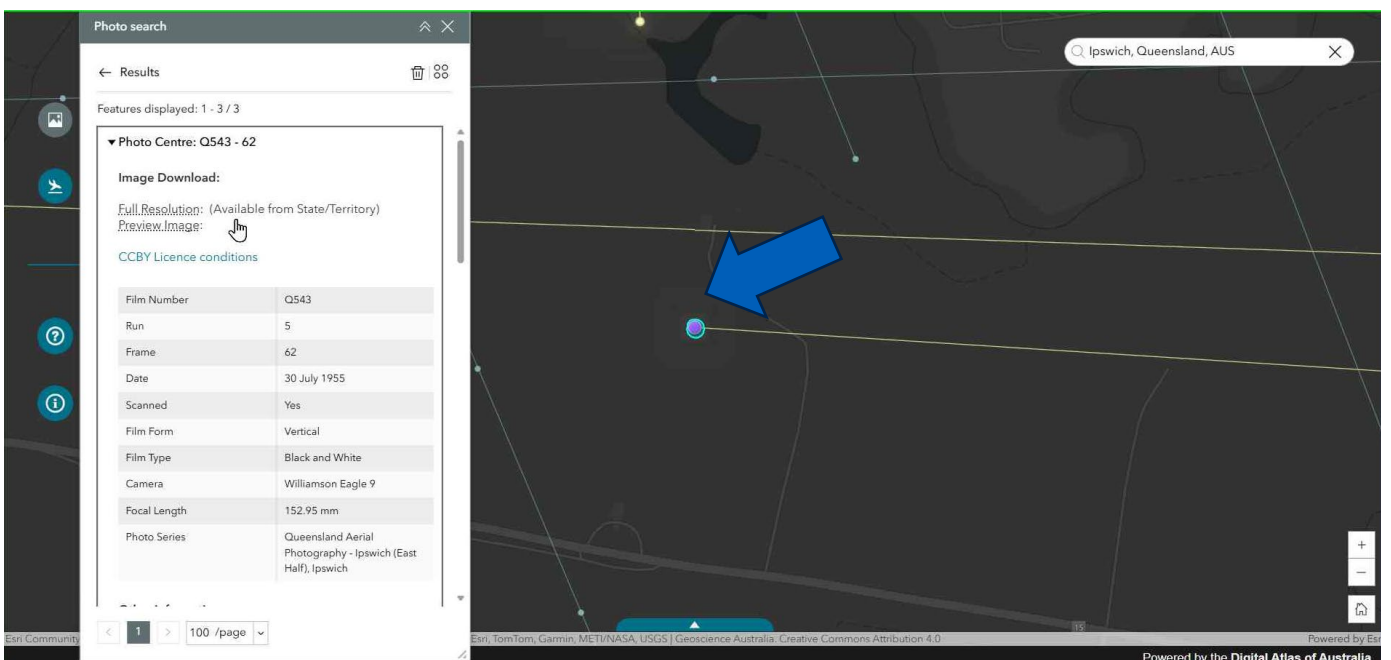


- Change any other filters you might want like then click **Apply**.

*Tip: Use the **Scanned** filter to only show imagery that is currently available digitally (**Not Scanned** refers to images that are not available as a digital image; they're only available in their original film format).*

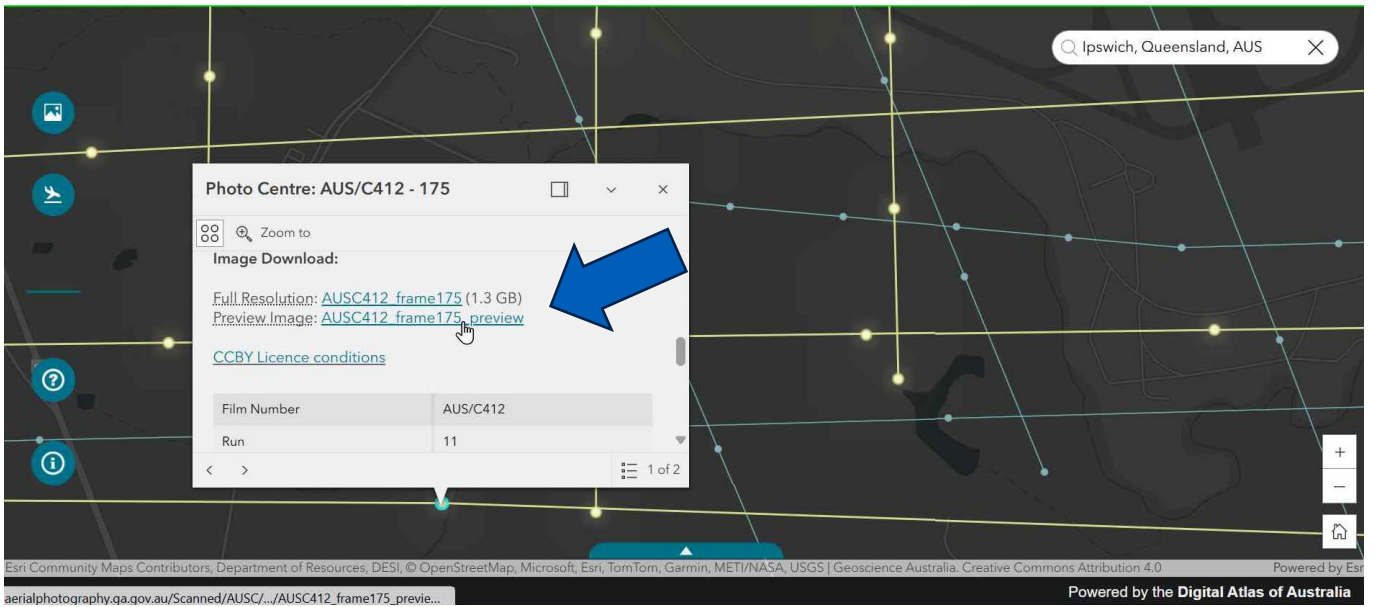


- You will see a list of images taken that match your search, including the date range. If you click on one of the listed results, the main map will recentre to show you the photo point it refers to and it will be circled in blue.



## 7. Preview and download the image

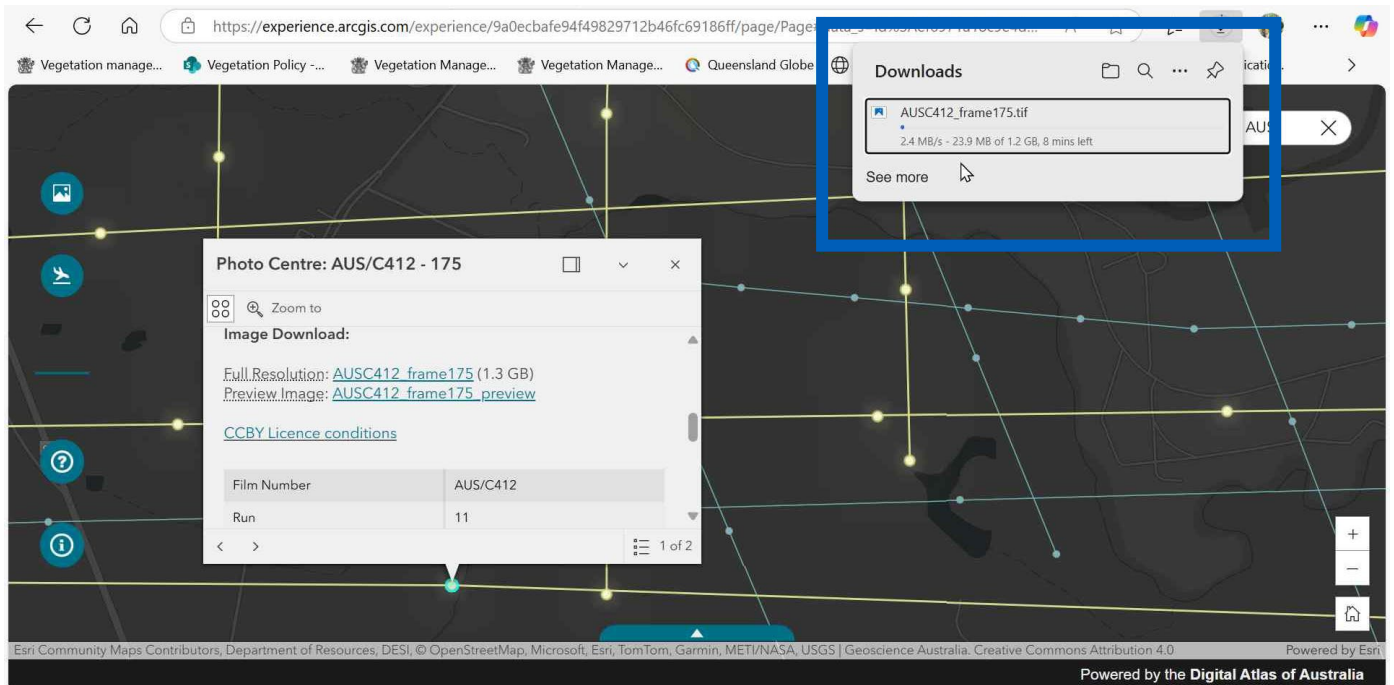
- Click on the link next to **Preview Image**. This allows you to check if you've found a suitable image.



- The preview will open in your browser and can be zoomed in and out; however, once you close this tab, the image will not be saved unless you download the full-resolution image.



- Once you've found the right image, click on the link next to **Full Resolution** to download it at the highest quality.
- You should see the image downloading in a pop-up box in the top right corner of the screen.
- After the download is finished, you can open the image directly from here or you can save it somewhere else.



## General information

- A lot of historical aerial imagery has been added retrospectively through mass scanning of film; however, some images have not yet been scanned or may not be able to be scanned. There may be options to request certain images. Check the information of the photo point you want.
- Since many images are scanned from old film; there is unfortunately no guarantee that the imagery shown will be of a high quality or available for every photo point.

## Contact

For further information or for general queries about the portal, contact Geoscience Australia:

- Email: [aerialphotography@ga.gov.au](mailto:aerialphotography@ga.gov.au)
- Online: <https://www.ga.gov.au/contact-us>

For further information about vegetation management, contact the Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development:

- Email: [vegetation@nrmmrrd.qld.gov.au](mailto:vegetation@nrmmrrd.qld.gov.au)
- Phone: 135 VEG (13 58 34)