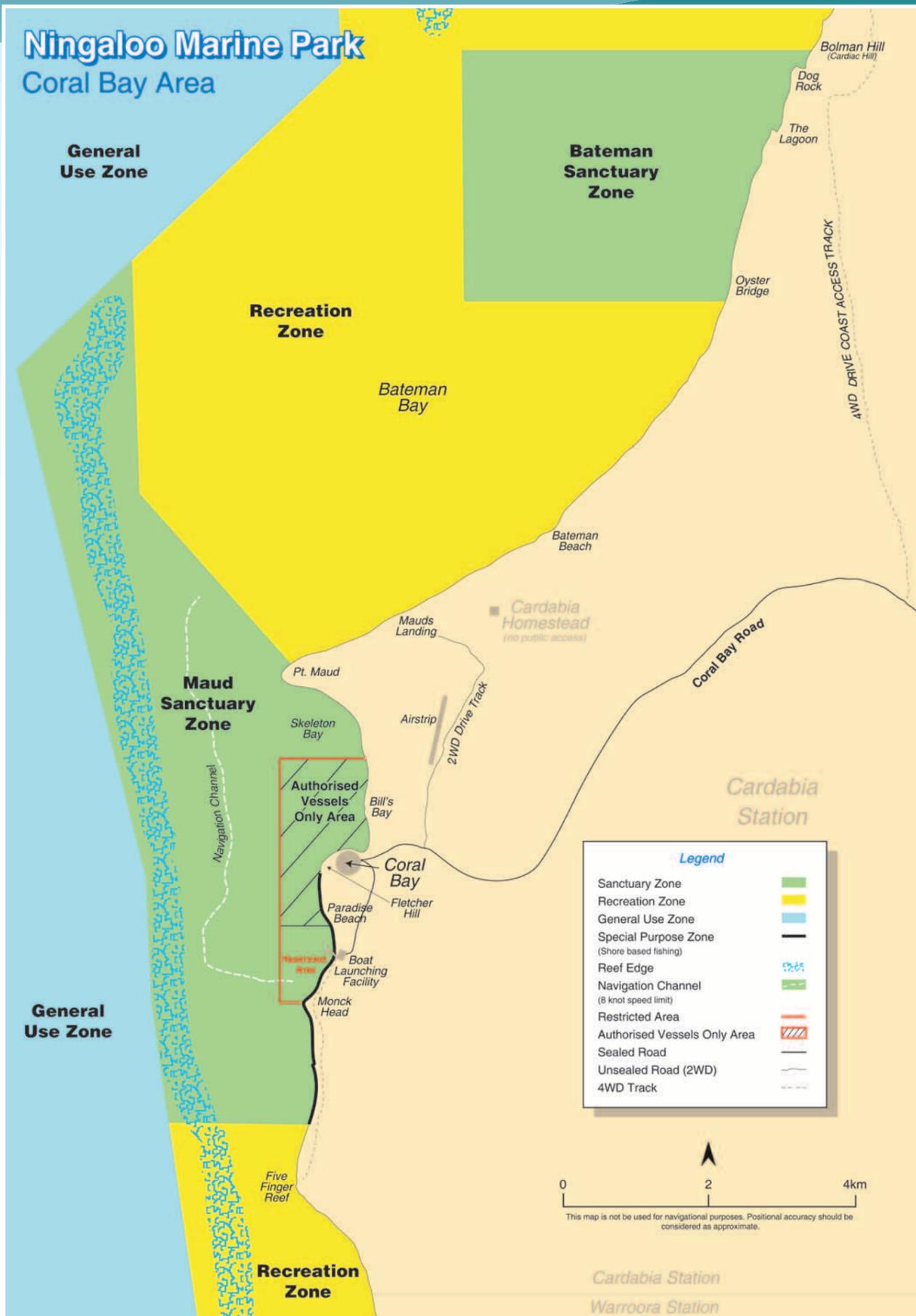


# Ningaloo Marine Park Coral Bay Area



## Ningaloo Marine Park Coral Bay Visitor Information

The coastal waters and beaches surrounding Coral Bay are within Ningaloo Marine Park. The information outlined here is designed to allow for the safe and sustainable use of this environment.

### NINGALOO MARINE PARK

- Ningaloo Marine Park encompasses Australia's largest and most accessible fringing coral reef system. Many creatures are found in the marine park, including whale sharks (the world's largest fish), turtles, dugongs, dolphins, manta rays and humpback whales. The marine park has been divided into zones to protect the biodiversity of the natural environment, while allowing for recreational and commercial use.
- Please be aware: the beaches and foredunes along the Ningaloo coast are also within the marine park.
- Collecting of flora and fauna (including shells and corals) is not permitted anywhere in the marine park.**
- Please refer to the *Ningaloo Marine Park Sanctuary Zones & Muiron Islands Management Areas Zone Guide* for further information.

### SANCTUARY ZONES

- Sanctuary Zones are **'look but don't take'** zones and provide the highest level of protection. This means they provide fantastic opportunities for snorkellers and divers to view pristine areas of underwater habitat and marine wildlife. Sanctuary Zones are in place to protect representative areas of the varied marine park environments. These areas are protected from fishing and other extractive activities – **nothing living or non-living is to be taken from these zones**. This way they also help to provide a benchmark for evaluating the health of other areas in the marine park which are open to fishing.
- Sanctuary Zones comprise 34 per cent of Ningaloo Marine Park and provide opportunities for research, tourism and recreation. They also provide "insurance" against natural and human disturbances, which may occur in the future.
- Please see map overleaf for local Sanctuary Zone boundaries, and the *Ningaloo Marine Park Sanctuary Zones & Muiron Islands Management Areas Zone Guide* for further information.

### CORAL

- The fringing coral reef is what makes the Coral Bay area so special. Living coral is delicate, with only a thin veneer of living tissue covering the hard coral skeleton. Once damaged, coral often takes many years to grow back, so please help to preserve it by following these guidelines:
  - Do not stand on or break off pieces of coral.
  - Please be careful not to damage any type of coral or marine life while snorkelling or diving (watch where you put your fins!).
  - Remember, it is an offence to damage, interfere with or take coral from the marine park.
- Being a coastal fringing reef, Ningaloo Reef is more easily accessible than offshore coral reefs, such as the Great Barrier Reef, and is subject to increasing numbers of visitors each year. With these increased pressures come threats to marine life and the marine environment. We ask that you please respect the marine park rules. They help to ensure the reef is used in a sustainable way for future generations to enjoy!

### SWIMMING AND SNORKELLING

- Coral Bay has an Authorized Vessels Only Area to allow for safe, family friendly swimming and snorkelling (see map overleaf).
- There is good snorkelling just off the beach from Bills Bay and Paradise Beach. (For safety reasons, keep clear of boat traffic operating in the vicinity of the boating facility at the southern end of Paradise Beach. No swimming or snorkelling is permitted around this facility.)
- For the adventurous, there are a number of commercial boat charters available from Coral Bay, including snorkelling, diving and fishing trips, kayak and glass bottom boat tours, as well as manta ray and whale shark tours in season.



- For your safety, swimmers and snorkellers should follow basic guidelines, including:
  - \* Do not touch, damage or disturb any marine life.
  - \* Stay clear of moorings at all times.
  - \* Keep an eye out for vessels which may operate in the area.
  - \* Swim with a buddy, and let someone know where you are going and when you will return.
  - \* Do not swim or snorkel beyond your capabilities.

## FISHING

- There are good opportunities for beach fishing and boat fishing around Coral Bay. Please ensure you follow some basic rules and guidelines.
- Fishing is permitted in Recreation, General Use and Special Purpose Zones, in accordance with fishing regulations (see map overleaf for zone boundaries).
- The recreational fishing rules that apply throughout the Gascoyne Region also apply in Ningaloo Marine Park. The marine park has a number of additional rules which prohibit or restrict some fishing activities. Please make sure you have a copy of the *Gascoyne Recreational Fishing Guide* for general rules on bag limits, size limits and other rules, before wetting a line.
- No fishing is permitted in Sanctuary Zones, however shore based fishing (for fin-fish only) is permitted in some designated areas (eg. south from Fletcher Hill) – please refer to map overleaf for local Sanctuary Zone and shore based fishing boundaries. **Please be aware that the waters surrounding Coral Bay are within Maud Sanctuary Zone.**
- Spearfishing is not permitted in Sanctuary Zones, however this activity is permitted in other designated zones. You may NOT spear any species of tuskfish, wrasse, cod or coral trout anywhere in the marine park. You may not use compressed air (SCUBA or hookah) to fish in the marine park, including for rock lobster. Other fishing rules apply to spearfishing – please refer to the *Gascoyne Recreational Fishing Guide* for further information.
- Rock lobster fishing and net fishing – you must have a licence from the Department of Fisheries to undertake these activities. (Please refer to the *Recreational Net Fishing Guide* for specific rules on netting, and the brochure on *Fishing for Rock Lobster in W.A.* – available from the Department of Fisheries.)
- If cleaning your fish along the coast, bury the offal at least 300mm deep below the dunes. Please use common sense and bury well away from popular swimming and recreation areas. No cleaning or filleting of fish is permitted in the Restricted Area or the Authorised Vessels Only Area (see map overleaf).
- **Fish for the future, abide by fishing regulations and take only the fish that you are permitted. Avoid catching more than you need. Everyone needs to take personal responsibility for ensuring that fishing is undertaken within the guidelines, so it can also be enjoyed by future generations.**

## BOATING

- Boat launching – a boat ramp is located near Monck Head, approx 1.5km south of Coral Bay. Please be aware that the boat ramp is within a Restricted Area which has a speed limit of 5 knots. The navigation passage heading west from Monck Head has a speed limit of 8 knots.

- If travelling north from the boating facility, follow the channel markers – for your own safety and for the protection of fragile coral gardens, **please do not cut across the shallow coral areas.**
- The waters directly off Paradise Beach and southern Bills Bay are designated primarily for swimming, snorkelling and other passive water activities. This area is restricted to Authorised Vessels Only (see map overleaf). **No power or sailing vessels (including wind surfers and kite surfers) are permitted in this area without lawful authority from DEC.**
- A Restricted Area has also been gazetted within Maud Sanctuary Zone (see map overleaf). Specific rules apply to boating within this Restricted Area:
  - \* 5 knot speed limit.
  - \* No anchoring or beach anchoring (except in an emergency).
  - \* No cleaning or filleting of fish – (please use fish cleaning facility in Coral Bay).
  - \* Written authority from DEC is required for vessels with drafts greater than 1.2 metres to access the Restricted Area.
- Please obtain a copy of the *Coral Bay Boating Guide*, available from the DEC Information Centre, which outlines the Restricted Area rules, including the location of boundaries. It also provides information on moorings and other marine park rules relating to boating in the Coral Bay area.
- Anchor only on sand, never on coral. Remember: damaging coral is an offence.
- Slow down when approaching corals, tilt motors in shallow areas, and avoid travelling across shallow coral areas which are subject to changing depths with the tides
- Keep a constant lookout for snorkellers and swimmers
- Divers are to display a dive flag, if diving from a boat. Vessels are reminded to slow down in the vicinity of divers and remain at least 50 metres clear of any other vessel displaying a dive flag.
- A water ski area has been designated (south of Monck Head) for this type of water sport. Please see the *Coral Bay Boating Guide* for the boundaries of this area.
- Always practice safe boating. Check tides and weather conditions, and log-on with Coral Bay Sea Rescue before launching. Ocean conditions can become hazardous quickly, especially near gaps in the reef. If in doubt, don't go out. Your safety is our concern but your responsibility.

## WALKING

- The beaches and shores around Coral Bay provide some excellent opportunities for walking, relaxing and observing wildlife. While beachcombing can be lots of fun, please remember that **collecting (including shells and corals) is not permitted anywhere in the marine park.**
- Walking along the coast – please help preserve this fragile coastal environment by keeping off the vegetation and staying on the main tracks only. Vegetation damage can leave dunes vulnerable to wind erosion.
- If walking over rocky inter-tidal areas, (e.g. from Bill's Bay to Skeleton Bay), please proceed carefully as these rocky areas can be very slippery and have sharp jagged surfaces.

- A specific code of conduct applies to the shark aggregation area at Skeleton Bay – please see the DEC Information Centre for details.
- Please avoid disturbing the roosting sea-birds at Point Maud, if walking in this area.
- **Please do not throw rubbish on the beach. Take your rubbish with you or use bins provided. Littering is an offence and shows a lack of respect for the local environment, which you have come to enjoy.**

## FOUR WHEEL DRIVES

- All beaches in the marine park are closed to vehicles, apart from designated beaches only, which may be opened for vehicle access under certain conditions.
- Please observe all signs in relation to vehicle access areas. (Please note: the rules regarding vehicle access to beaches are currently under review. Further restrictions may be imposed in future, in an effort to provide improved safety for other beach users and to reduce environmental impacts from increasing numbers of visitors each year).
- Four wheel drives can be driven on Bateman Beach, however a seasonal closure occurs north from Maud Landing, to protect nesting sea turtles, from 15 October to 30 April each year.
- Four wheel drives may also be driven, with care, along the beach directly south of Five Fingers Reef.
- **Four wheel drives are not permitted on any beach within Maud Sanctuary Zone** – (without lawful authority from DEC).
- For your safety, and the protection of the environment, when driving around Coral Bay please observe the following conditions:
  - \* Please be aware of the hazards associated with driving on beaches, such as soft sand, washouts and drop-offs, as well as tides and waves. Some of the beaches around Coral Bay have very soft sand and, during high tides, waves can wash up to the vegetation line making these beaches impassable.
  - \* On soft sand your tyre pressure should be reduced to between 15 and 20 PSI. Lowered tyre pressures provide extra traction, help to provide a more comfortable ride, and also help to protect tracks for other users. Driving on soft sand is for experienced four wheel drivers only. Remember to re-inflate your tyres to the manufacturer's recommended pressure before travelling on hard surfaces.
  - \* Vehicle tracks present special hazards and risks. Stay on the main tracks to protect the vegetation. Passing or overtaking other vehicles can be dangerous. Be aware of blind corners and hill crests. Slow down and look out for other vehicles, including four-wheel motorbikes.
  - \* Visitors planning to drive the Ningaloo coast should be very cautious after sunset, when large numbers of kangaroos and other animals make driving hazardous. If driving at night is unavoidable, please look after your own safety and conserve wildlife by driving slowly and carefully at all times!
  - \* Whenever driving in remote areas, take necessary precautions such as carrying sufficient drinking water, vehicle spares, recovery equipment and communication equipment. Always advise someone of your trip details, including an estimated time of return.

## QUAD BIKES – (All Terrain Vehicles)

- Quad bike tours offer a great opportunity to experience the remote coastal areas around Coral Bay. These tours are conducted by commercial operators in accordance with environmental guidelines set by DEC.
- Please note that only registered quad bikes (recreational and commercial) are permitted on beaches along the Ningaloo Marine Park with lawful authority from DEC.
- Many of the tracks along the coast are on private leases (pastoral stations), unallocated Crown Land, or marine park tenure, and are not officially gazetted as off-road areas. Riders are responsible for their own safety, and must operate quad bikes with the approval of land managers, and consideration to the environment and the safety of others at all times.
- Riders are reminded there are certain lawful requirements regarding the registration and licensing of quad bikes and the areas in which they can be used. Please contact the Department of Planning and Infrastructure for further information.

## CAMPING/ACCOMMODATION

- There are two caravan parks in Coral Bay, which provide services and facilities for camping. There is a range of other accommodation, including chalets and a hotel/motel. Public telephones, fuel, food and other supplies are also available. There is no free camping in the Coral Bay area.
- Camping is not permitted on the beaches or dunes - there are no designated beach camping areas in or around Coral Bay.
- The nearest coastal camping areas to Coral Bay are:
  - \* To the south: Warroora Station (ph 9942 5920)
  - \* To the north: Bruboodjoo Point (on Cardabia Station – ph 9942 5935)
  - \* Further to the north: Ningaloo Station (ph 9942 5936)

Special rules apply at each of these camping areas. Contact the station office, homestead or on-site caretakers for further details

## DOGS

- Dogs are permitted on Paradise Beach only, and must be kept on a leash – dog owners must dispose of dog droppings properly. Dogs are not allowed on any other beaches of the marine park within the Coral Bay area.
- Please be aware that 1080 poison baits are used along some sections of the Ningaloo coast to control foxes – please contact DEC for further information.

## FIRES

- Fires are not permitted on the beaches or sand dunes in the Coral Bay area.

## WILDLIFE

- Feeding of fish and other wildlife is not permitted in the marine park (except by licenced commercial operators).



We hope you enjoy your visit to Coral Bay. Thank you for helping to protect Ningaloo Marine Park!  
For more information, please contact the Department of Environment and Conservation:  
Exmouth District Office – 9947 8000 / Milyering Visitor Centre – 9949 2808



... the many faces of Ningaloo