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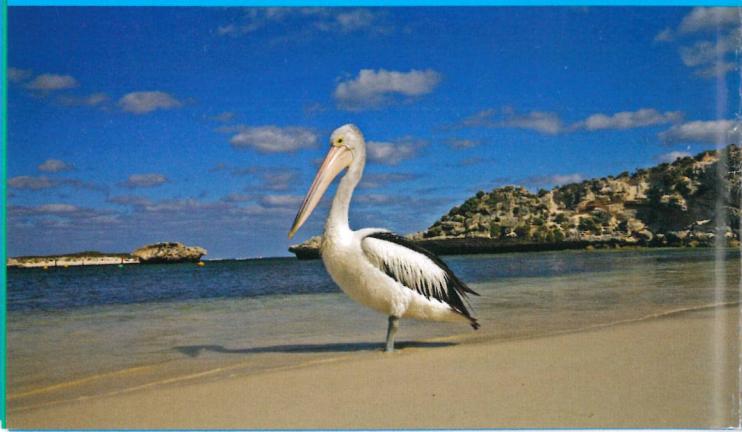
Shoalwater Islands Marine Park – seagrass, sealions and shipwrecks

Shoalwater Islands Marine Park and its adjacent island nature reserves host an exceptional diversity of marine plants and animals within easy reach of Rockingham.

Swimming, snorkelling, scuba diving, fishing, boating, surfing, kayaking, water skiing, kite surfing, wind surfing and paddle boarding are all enjoyed in the marine park.

The area is culturally important to local Aboriginal people who have a long history of connection to the land and sea. The Gnaarla Karla Booja people are the traditional custodians of Shoalwater Islands Marine Park.

The marine park is one of Perth's most important aquatic playgrounds. Its clean accessible beaches and clear shallow waters support marine life that can often only be viewed in more remote areas of Australia.



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Department of Parks and Wildlife
Department of Fisheries

Photos Michael Clitheroe, Ian Beattie, Rockingham Wild Encounters,
Barb Green and John Huisman/DPaW

Information current at February 2014

More information

Department of Parks and Wildlife

Swan Coastal District Office
5 Dundebar Road
Wanneroo WA 6065
Ph (08) 9303 7700
parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au
DPaW rangers are stationed on
Penguin Island and Point Peron.

Department of Fisheries

Rockingham Office
Ph (08) 9527 3699
fish.wa.gov.au

Department of Transport

Marine Safety Hotline:
1300 863 308
transport.wa.gov.au/imarine

Bureau of Meteorology

bom.gov.au/weather/wa/
forecasts
Weather call 1900 926 150

Rockingham Sea Rescue (VN6KC)

Ph (08) 9528 2222
Radio Frequencies:
27 MHz:
Ch 90 – Working and calling
frequency
Ch 88 – Emergency calling
Ch 86 – Alternate emergency
calling

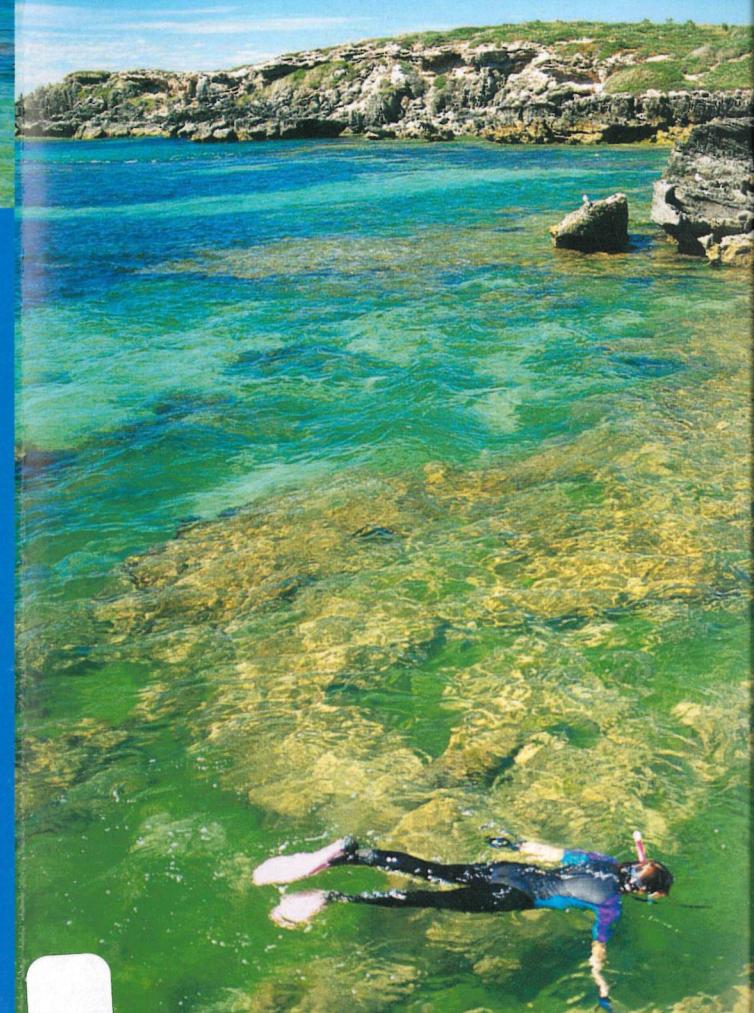
VHF:

Ch 73 – Working and calling
frequency
Ch 16 – Emergency calling

HF:

4125 KHz – Working and
emergency calling

Shoalwater Islands Marine Park



PAM03767

Recreation guide



Department of Parks and Wildlife
Department of Fisheries



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Enjoying the marine park

Shoalwater Islands Marine Park is one of three marine parks in the Perth metropolitan area. The Shoalwater Islands, Marmion and the Swan Estuary marine parks were established to help ensure biodiversity values are protected and conserved for all to enjoy, now and in the future.

Rocky limestone shores fringe the marine park at Cape Peron and rock platforms underlie many of the beaches throughout the marine park. The remains of a cone shell species found only in the south-west are cemented into the rocky shores. Limestone pinnacles are the only remaining evidence that a forest once stood at the cape.

The many jagged edged islands and rocky islets of the marine park provide important roosting and nesting areas for numerous bird species. Some of these birds migrate annually from the northern hemisphere, while others such as the regal pelican live here year round. Seabirds are constantly moving around the marine park. Look up and you can see pelicans riding thermal uplifts, cormorants flying in a 'V' formation, crested terns and gannets dive bombing from great heights to snatch small fish and bridled terns dancing on the wind around Penguin Island.

Cavernous reefs around the islands provide good snorkelling and diving, depending on daily weather. Popular sites include Cape Peron and The Sisters. The *Saxon Ranger* dive wreck in Warnbro Sound lies in 25 metres of water and a permit from the Rockingham Visitor Centre is needed to dive it. Recreational boating, swimming, and windsurfing are also popular. The west side of Penguin Island provides good surfing and there is a water ski area within Warnbro Sound.

The Australian sea lion is the rarest sea lion in the world and is only found in southern Australia. Sea lions can be seen basking on the shores of Penguin and Seal islands or swimming through the waters of the marine park as they hunt for prey and investigate their surroundings. Sea lions found near Perth are all males. Most of them vacate the area every 18 months to travel to breeding islands about 200 kilometres north of Perth.

The little penguin is the smallest of 17 penguin species and is the only one that nests along Australia's mainland coast. Penguin Island has the largest breeding colony on the west coast of Australia. These flightless seabirds are superbly adapted to the marine environment as their wings have evolved into flippers with which they use to propel themselves, 'flying' underwater. On land they stand upright, walking or waddling awkwardly.

Bottlenose dolphins are common in Perth metropolitan waters. Their playful and intelligent nature makes them a favourite marine mammal for many. More than 60 dolphins have been recorded in Shoalwater Islands Marine Park, primarily spending their time rearing young, frolicking and hunting along the shoreline and in the offshore reef system.

The marine park has some of the healthiest seagrass meadows in the Perth metropolitan area, consisting of long lived species such as *Posidonia* spp. and *Amphibolis* spp. that take decades to recover if damaged. Seagrass meadows provide an important habitat and nursery area for a large number of marine species such as fish, rock lobsters, tiny worms, shellfish, sea stars and crustaceans. Fish, sharks and rays also seek camouflage, shelter and prey in the large brown seaweed beds of kelp and *Sargassum* that dominate the offshore reefs of the marine park.

Going to Penguin Island?

Ferry tours operate hourly from Mersey Point from mid-September to early June. You can see little penguins feeding and frolicking in the water at The Penguin Experience – Island Discovery Centre. Entry into the centre is included in the cost of the ferry ride or tour.

To help protect the nature of Penguin Island, people may only visit during the day. Visitors are asked to keep to beaches, boardwalks and designated walkways.

Penguin Island closes from early June to mid-September every year to protect the penguins from human disturbance during their breeding season.

For more information on Penguin Island and its inhabitants please pick up a Penguin Island brochure from the Rockingham Visitor Centre or the gift shop at Mersey Point.

Penguin Island access risk

People have drowned attempting to cross the sandbar to Penguin Island. Strong currents can occur in this area and water depth and conditions vary and change rapidly. Please do not risk your safety on the sandbar when you can keep your feet and belongings dry and take a safe, comfortable ferry ride to the island.



Fish for the future

Fishing is popular in Shoalwater Islands Marine Park and you are welcome to fish in appropriate marine park zones. Please look at the map in this brochure and its accompanying permitted uses table to see where you can catch a feed.

- Fishing is not permitted in sanctuary zones or the *Saxon Ranger* Dive Wreck Restricted Area and not all types of fishing gear can be used in all zones.
- Abalone can only be taken in the special purpose zone (wildlife conservation) and the general use zone, but only during the metropolitan abalone fishing season if you hold a current recreational fishing license endorsed for abalone.
- Spearfishing using scuba or hookah is not allowed in the marine park. Spearfishing by breath-hold only is permitted in the general use zone.
- Sea urchins and all molluscs (shellfish) with the exception of mussels, abalone (during the season), squid, cuttlefish and octopus are protected and cannot be taken in this marine park. They include turban shells, whelks, periwinkles and baler shells.

The Department of Fisheries legally enforces gear, bag, size and possession limits to ensure there will always be fish for the future in Shoalwater Islands Marine Park. Fishers should become familiar with these limits as well as the required fishing and boating licences.

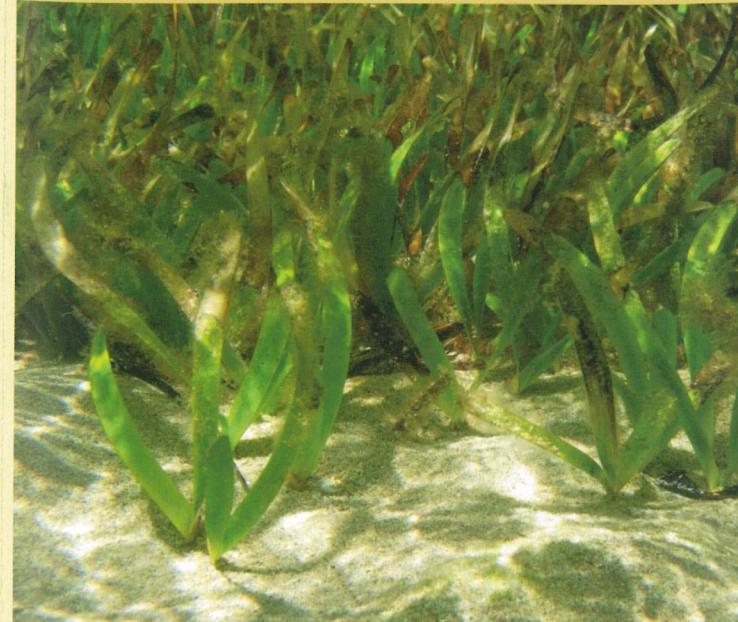
The Department of Parks and Wildlife and the Department of Fisheries work collaboratively on enforcement, education and other programs. For more information contact the numbers listed on the back of this brochure.

Speed limits

Speed restrictions for all vessels apply in designated sensitive areas. A 12 knot speed limit applies to all motorized vessels in the Seal Island Sanctuary Zone and Shoalwater Bay Special Purpose Zone (wildlife conservation). An 8 knot speed limit applies to all vessels in the *Saxon Ranger* Dive Wreck Restricted Area as well as no anchoring or passing over the wreck. No motorised vessels are allowed in a zone around Becher Point to protect a white bait aggregation area. For more information contact the Department of Transport on the number listed on the back of this brochure.

Weather or not

The weather and sea conditions in the Rockingham area can change suddenly as a result of strong summer breezes and winter storms. Consider your safety and check the forecast before heading offshore to explore the marine park.



Marine parks and reserves – established for all to enjoy!

Western Australia's marine parks encompass some of the world's most remarkable ecosystems and marine wildlife. Many of the State's marine plants and animals are found nowhere else in the world.

Marine parks protect the full range of marine plants and animals, such as massive whale sharks, humpback whales, threatened sea turtle species, Australian sea lions, the Australian snubfin dolphin, leafy seadragons and little penguins, as well as coral reef systems, seagrasses, mangroves, sponge gardens and other marine habitats.

Marine parks cater for a wide range of recreational activities such as swimming, snorkelling, beach walking, scuba diving, fishing and watersports. They also provide for whale watching, swimming with whale sharks, glass bottomed boats and cruises and other nature-based tourism activities and for commercial fishing, aquaculture and pearl mining.

WA's marine parks are among the State's most important tourism attractions, drawing international and Australian tourists.



Know your zones

Shoalwater Islands Marine Park is zoned to help ensure the biodiversity values of the marine park are conserved and protected, while providing managed opportunities for recreational use and enjoyment. There are three sanctuary zones, two special purpose zones and a large general use zone in the park. The location and coordinates of each zone are displayed on the map in this brochure, along with the activities permitted in each zone type.

Sanctuary zones are 'look but don't take' areas and provide the highest level of protection for marine habitat and wildlife. Sanctuary zones are managed for nature conservation and allow non-extractive activities such as boating, swimming, scuba diving, snorkelling and nature appreciation. Fishing is not permitted in sanctuary zones.

Special purpose zones are areas where a priority purpose has been designated. In Shoalwater Islands Marine Park the special purpose zones provide a high level of protection for wildlife conservation in Shoalwater Bay encompassing the island nature reserves, and for scientific reference over the Murray Reef south of The Sisters rock formation. Only activities that are compatible with the purpose of the zones are permitted.

The **general use zone** of the marine park is the largest zone and enables a wide range of commercial and recreational activities to occur such as boating, swimming, scuba diving, snorkelling, fishing and aquaculture.

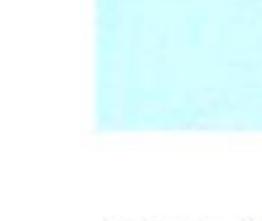
Caring for the marine park

- To protect important roosting and nesting areas for seabirds, you may not land on nature reserves, which include the islands and rock outcrops.
- Penguin Island Conservation Park is open for day visits. Please keep to pathways, boardwalks or sandy beaches to protect bird nests and penguin burrows and avoid disturbing young birds not yet ready to fly.
- Always take litter home with you—remember that plastics and fishing line can harm and potentially kill marine wildlife.
- Go slow for those below. Keep an eye out for Australian sea lions, little penguins and bottlenose dolphins, which spend much of their time in the top two metres of water but are often difficult to see.
- Please do not feed dolphins, sea lions or other wildlife. Feeding changes their behaviour from hunters to beggars and increases their vulnerability to boat strikes, disease and entanglements in fishing gear. Help keep our marine wildlife healthy, safe and wild.
- Sea lions are wild and unpredictable. They have been known to bite, so you are not permitted to land on Seal Island and you should keep clear of them on Penguin Island. If a sea lion approaches you in the water, swim away or leave the water to ensure both your safety and the welfare of the sea lion.
- Quickly and carefully return undersize and unwanted fish to the water. Use wet hands or a wet cloth when handling fish and avoid placing them on hot dry surfaces.
- Anchor in sand to protect the fragile reef, seagrass and seaweed communities, these can take decades to grow.
- Keep off reefs where possible—reef walking can physically damage intertidal reef communities.
- Please admire the caves that fringe the beach from a distance as they are rock fall risk areas.
- If you find a stranded, sick or injured dolphin, sea lion, little penguin, whale, turtle or seabird please call DPaW's 24-hour Wildcare Helpline on 9474 9055.



Legend

Shoalwater Islands Marine Park

-  Shoalwater Islands Marine Park boundary
-  Sanctuary Zone
-  Special Purpose Zone
-  General Use Zone

DPaW Managed Lands

-  Nature Reserve
-  Conservation Park
-  Boat ramp



DPaW Department of Parks and Wildlife

SHOALWATER ISLANDS MARINE PARK

RECREATION GUIDE	ACTIVITIES	SANCTUARY ZONE	SPECIAL PURPOSE ZONE		GENERAL USE ZONE
			WILDLIFE CONSERVATION	SCIENTIFIC REFERENCE	
	Line fishing ²	×	✓	✗	✓
	Crabbing ²	×	✓	✗	✓
	Rock lobster fishing ³	×	✓	✓	✓
	Abalone fishing ³	×	✓	✗	✓
	Octopus potting ²	×	✓	✗	✓
	Haul and throw netting ⁴	×	✗	✗	✓ ⁴
	Set netting ⁴	×	✗	✗	✗
	Spearfishing - breath-hold only (No SCUBA or hookah) ⁵	×	✗	✗	✓
	Coral, shell and specimen collecting (alive and dead)	×	✗	✗	✗
	Aquarium fish collecting	×	✗	✗	✗
	Diving, snorkelling, swimming	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Water skiing	×	✗	✗	✓ ⁶
	Jet skiing	✓ ⁷	✓ ⁷	✓	✓
	Windsurfing, kite surfing	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Boating, yachting and non-motorised water sports	✓ ⁷	✓ ⁷	✓	✓
	Wildlife interaction ⁸	✓	✓	✓	✓

1. This table is for recreational activities only. For information on permissible commercial activities contact the numbers below.

2. Department of Fisheries licence is required for fishing from boats and seasonal closures apply for some species. For further details contact Department of Fisheries.

3. Department of Fisheries licence is required and seasonal closures apply. For further details contact Department of Fisheries.

4. Department of Fisheries licence is required for the use of all nets. Netting is only permitted in certain areas. For further details contact the Department of Fisheries.

5. No spearfishing using SCUBA or hookah allowed in Shoalwater Islands Marine Park.

6. Water skiing permitted only within the gazetted water ski area. See the Department of Transport Rockingham Boating Guide for further details.

7. A 12 knot speed limit applies to motorised vessels. See the Department of Transport Rockingham Boating Guide for further details.

8. Subject to the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 and Wildlife Conservation Act 1950.

Contacts:

Department of Parks and Wildlife (Swan Coastal District) - (08) 9303 7700

Department of Fisheries (Rockingham District Office) - (08) 9527 3699

Department of Transport (Marine Safety Hotline) - 1300 863 308

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