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Monkey Mia

Dolphin experience



Visitor guide



Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions



Welcome to Monkey Mia

Monkey Mia is world-renowned for close encounters with wild Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins.

Dolphin experiences depend entirely on if and when the dolphins visit the beach between 7.45am and 12 noon. The best time to arrive is 7.45am, although the experience is less crowded if the dolphins return later in the morning.

Up to five female dolphins from two families are offered small amounts of fish up to three times during the morning. Dolphins are only fed under strict supervision of Parks and Wildlife Service officers. The small feed amounts ensure the dolphins continue to behave and hunt naturally and teach their young hunting and social skills.

Although rare, there are days when the dolphins do not visit the beach.

Visit the booking office for more information about things to do during your stay at Monkey Mia.

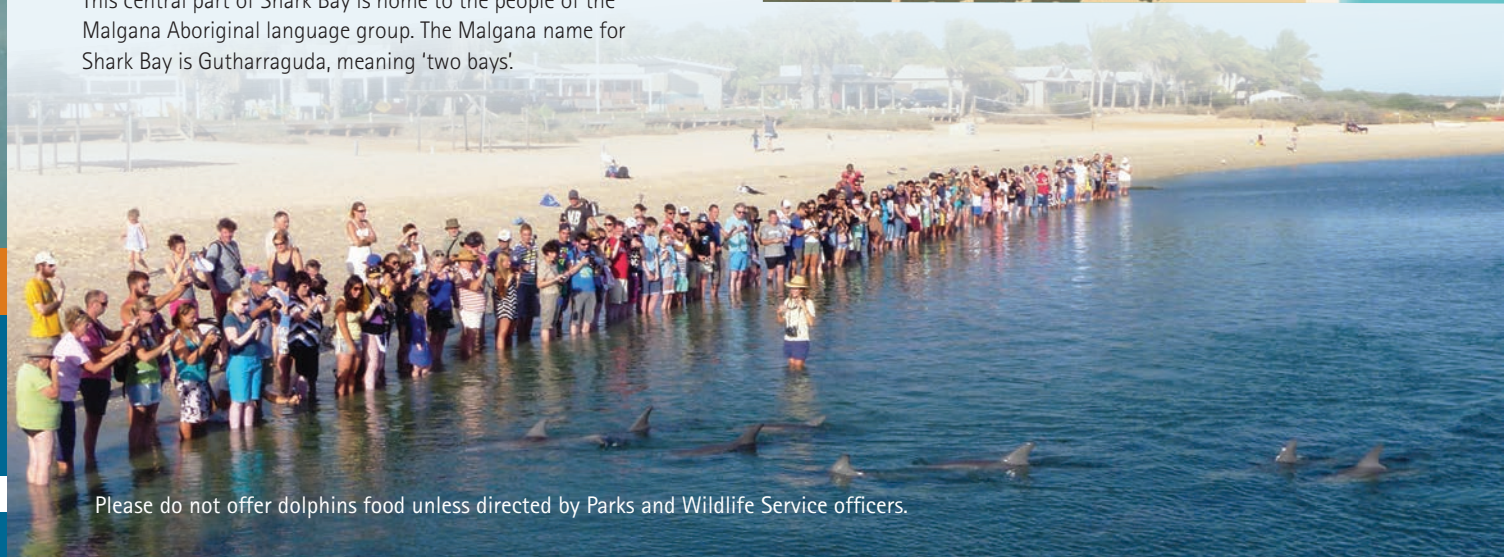
World Heritage

At Monkey Mia you can see spectacular landscapes, habitats and animals that make Shark Bay a World Heritage area.

Rusty red sand dunes – quartz with a coating of iron oxide – contrast with white sandy beaches and the turquoise bay.

Scattered over the red sand dunes are acacias and other low shrubs sheltering a diversity of wildlife, including threatened native species.

This central part of Shark Bay is home to the people of the Malgana Aboriginal language group. The Malgana name for Shark Bay is Gutharraguda, meaning 'two bays'.



Please do not offer dolphins food unless directed by Parks and Wildlife Service officers.

New calf protocols

Special care is taken within the first eight weeks of a new calf's arrival. During this time staff do their best to minimise the amount of time a mother spends in the shallows where she cannot feed her calf.

Also, young calves may react to any movement and, if startled, may flee from their mother and be vulnerable to beaching or shark attack.

- Whenever a mother and calf are visiting the beach, please stay out of the water.
- If a mother and calf approach you while you are swimming, please leave the water as quietly as possible. If a dolphin is close to you please remain still.
- Always follow the directions of Parks and Wildlife Service officers.


Please ask staff questions – we are happy to talk with you.

Please help look after the dolphins

With so many people visiting the bay to see the dolphins it is especially important that we look after the dolphins and their home. Parks and Wildlife Service officers at Monkey Mia strictly supervise the dolphin experience for the animals' welfare and appreciate your help looking after the dolphins.

- Please follow the instructions given by Parks and Wildlife Service officers and volunteers.
- Feeding is restricted to keep dolphins wild. Only feed dolphins when invited to do so by Parks and Wildlife Service officers and their volunteer assistants.
-  Please do not touch dolphins – for their well-being and your safety.
- If you are in the water, try to keep at least 30m away from any dolphins so as not to interfere with their natural behaviour.
- If a dolphin approaches you in the water, watch it and remain still; do not pursue the dolphin.
- If a dolphin approaches you while fishing, please remove your line.
- Do not try to attract dolphin attention by splashing the water – the dolphins may take this as a sign of aggression.
- Lotions and creams can irritate dolphin skin and eyes. Do not wear sunscreen in the water at the dolphin experience area.
- Children should be supervised by adults at all times.
- Pets are not allowed in the dolphin experience area and must be on leads when in the reserve.

Look after yourself at Monkey Mia

- Protect yourself from the sun.
- Ensure you drink enough water to avoid dehydration, particularly along the walk trail.
- Always swim, dive or snorkel with at least one other person.
- When in the water be aware of boats and potentially dangerous marine life, including sharks.
- Be aware of stonefish and stingrays when wading in the water (wear reef sandals).
- Leave the water if a dolphin seems stressed – signs include tail slapping, head jerks, loud popping noises and open mouth with bared teeth.
- For your safety, leave the water if dolphins are fishing in the shallows.
-  Do not approach or feed pelicans, emus or other wildlife.

Become a volunteer

Ask a Parks and Wildlife Service officer about volunteering at Monkey Mia or email monkeymiavolunteers@westnet.com.au

Visitor fees

Visitor fees apply to all people visiting Monkey Mia, including resort guests. Fees help cover the costs of managing the dolphin experience and maintaining facilities. Park passes do not apply to Monkey Mia Conservation Park.

More information

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
Parks and Wildlife Service – Shark Bay District
63 Knight Terrace, Denham WA 6537
(08) 9948 2226

Parks and Wildlife Service – Monkey Mia Dolphin Experience
(08) 9948 1366
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sharkbay.org
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This document is available in alternative formats on request.

Photos: DBCA and Emily Ward



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