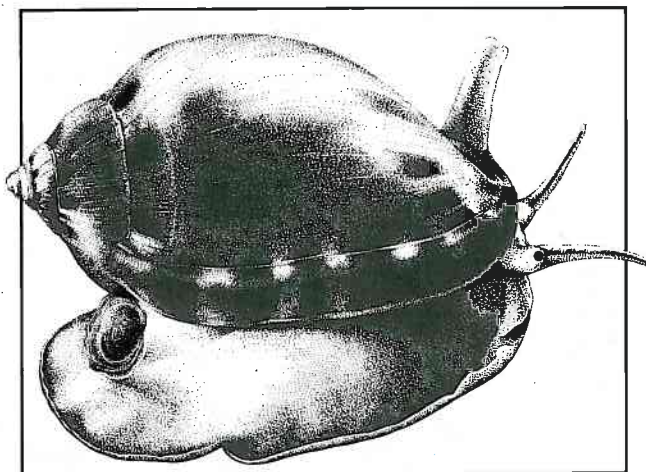


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Department of Biodiversity,  
Conservation and Attractions

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- Pelagic and reef fish abound on the outer reef slope so there should be no shortage of fish for food. Types you are encouraged to catch are: all cods (other than those mentioned above), trevallies, dolphinfish, snappers, sweet lips, barracudas, tunas, mackerels and sailfish.
- Catch enough fish for immediate consumption. Don't fill freezers to take home.
- Boat operators are requested to put in permanent moorings. Every time an anchor is dropped coral damage results and in popular anchorage spots this will cause progressive degradation with time.
- Boat bilges should not be pumped out while in the lagoons. Even small quantities of waste fuel add to the pressures on these outstanding habitats.
- All rubbish should be dumped outside the reefs into deep water. Keep all rubbish out of the lagoons. Don't bury it on a permanent sand cay as it is likely to be washed out into the lagoon at the next cyclone.
- The permanent sand cays are unvegetated and potentially very unstable. No permanent structures should be erected on them as this could cause erosion problems and they are likely to be swept away in storms.
- Do not disturb birds on the islands. Many are resting on their migration between Australia and Asia. Bedwell Island is one of only two known breeding places for the Red-tailed Tropic Bird in Western Australia and the other site is threatened.
- Any attempt to widen or deepen the passages into the atolls could change their drainage patterns with potentially disastrous de-stabilizing consequences on the ecosystems.

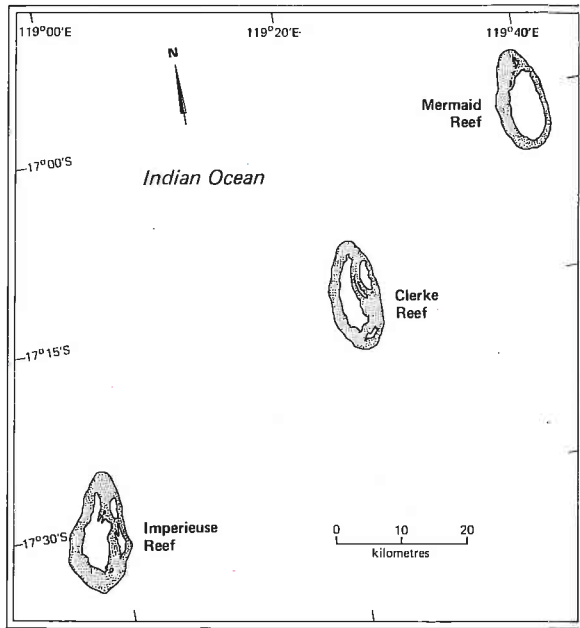


# Rowley Shoals

## a guide for visitors

Further information on the fauna of the Rowley Shoals is available from the Western Australian Museum, Perth.

Produced jointly by the Western Australian Museum, the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife and the Department of Conservation and Environment.



As a visitor to the Rowley Shoals you will be privileged to experience what have been described as the best geological examples of atolls on the Australian continental shelf.

They also abound in tropical marine animals, many of which do not occur along the coast of Western Australia. The atolls and their fauna are still in pristine condition with spectacular shells on the reef flats, the coral gardens almost untouched by anchor damage and large reef fish still plentiful, curious and fearless of divers. Sadly, situations like this are becoming progressively more difficult to find in Australia and elsewhere in the world because of excessive exploitation.

As the Rowley Shoals represent a unique and valuable natural asset to Western Australia that could be enjoyed for generations to come if used wisely now, their future is seen within a system of Western Australian marine parks for recreation and conservation. It is therefore most important that the habitats and all marine life, particularly all corals and molluscs on Rowley Shoals should receive full protection at this stage.

With this in mind the following guidelines are set out to help you keep the Rowley Shoals beautiful:

- Examine, photograph and enjoy the animal life; do not break or take, as it will never look as good dead in your home as it does alive on the reef.
- If you wish to take home shells or corals as souvenirs of your visit, collect dead specimens only, never living ones. Experience elsewhere has shown that large, spectacular and at present common molluscs such as tiger cowries, cones, giant clams and spider shells, which are slow growing, soon become depleted from reefs by collecting living animals. Nowhere else along the Western Australian coast can these shells still be found in the numbers that they can be seen at the Rowley Shoals.
- If you lift up coral slabs to look at animals beneath them such as crabs, shells and brittle stars, always replace the slab as you found it.
- The following fishes should not be speared and should be released if hooked: potato cod, coral trout, Queensland groper and Maori wrasse. Because they are fearless, these large creatures, which can live up to a great age, are always the first to disappear on exploited reefs.
- Don't catch or spear any reef fish within the lagoons. Most of these are territorial and depleting them makes diving less spectacular.

