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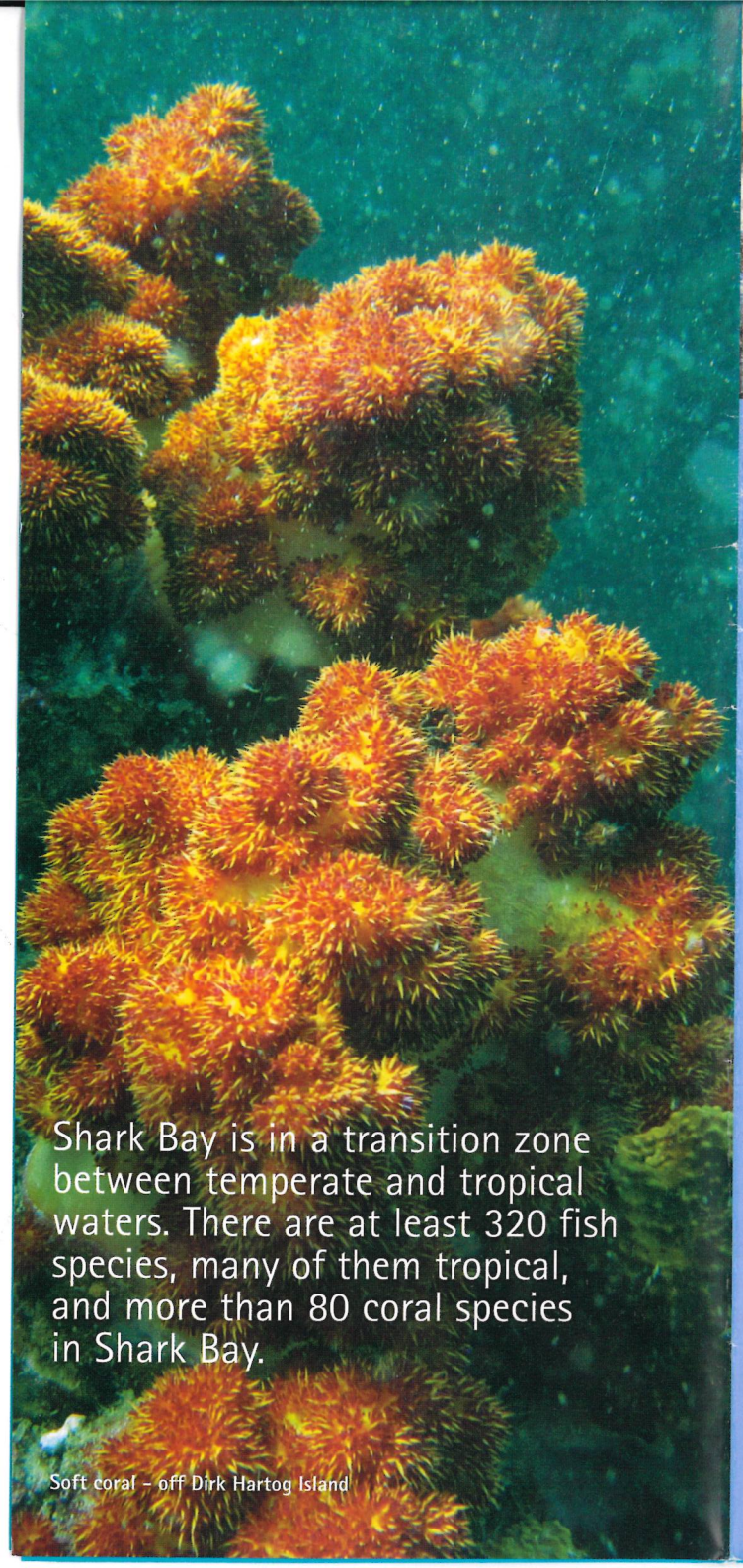

Shark Bay is in a transition zone between temperate and tropical waters. There are at least 320 fish species, many of them tropical, and more than 80 coral species in Shark Bay.

Soft coral – off Dirk Hartog Island

Stonefish are venemous and hard to see

More information

Department of Parks and Wildlife – Shark Bay District
Knight Terrace, Denham WA 6537
Phone (08) 9948 2226
Fax (08) 9948 2201
www.sharkbay.org
www.dpaw.wa.gov.au

Department of Fisheries – Denham District Office
Knight Terrace, Denham WA 6537
Phone (08) 9948 2250
Fax (08) 9948 1154
www.fish.wa.gov.au

Bureau of Meteorology
www.bom.gov.au/marine

Shark Bay Volunteer Marine Rescue
VHF 16, 27Mhz 88

GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Department of **Parks and Wildlife**
Department of **Fisheries**

SHARK BAY world heritage

Australian Government

FISHWATCH
ILLEGAL FISHING REPORTS
1800-815-507

Photos *Holley, Whitelaw, Reinhold, Vasyli*
Front cover – Fish community, Surf Point

Information current at June 2014

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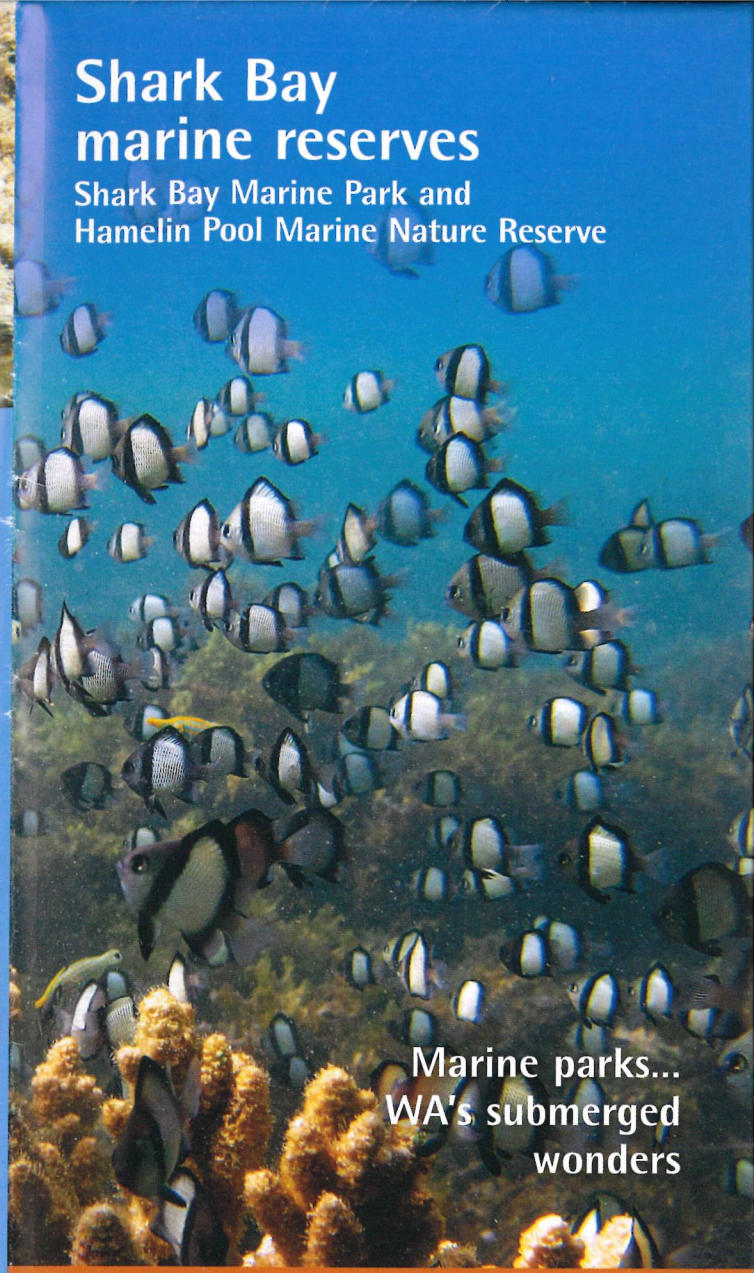
Shark Bay marine reserves

Shark Bay Marine Park and Hamelin Pool Marine Nature Reserve



Marine parks... WA's submerged wonders

Recreation guide

GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Department of **Parks and Wildlife**
Department of **Fisheries**

SHARK BAY world heritage

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The marine reserves of Shark Bay are most famous for the dolphins that visit the beach at Monkey Mia and people come from all over the world to see them. It is also a popular fishing destination for Western Australian and international visitors, but there is much more to Shark Bay Marine Park and Hamelin Pool Marine Nature Reserve.

The many bays, inlets and islands in Shark Bay Marine Park support an abundance of turtles, dugongs, sea snakes and sharks. There are also communities of seagrasses, corals, sponges and other invertebrates, together with a mixture of tropical and temperate fish species.

Marine protected areas

Shark Bay's marine reserves are part of a network of marine protected areas along the coast of Western Australia. This network protects key areas and values including assets important to commercial and recreational fishers, such as schooling sites, nursery areas, spawning and breeding grounds, and culturally significant sites from Aboriginal sites to historic shipwrecks.

The marine reserve network also supports tourism activities like whale watching, dolphin viewing, scuba diving, snorkelling, kayaking, and boat tours. It provides opportunities for scientific research and education about marine conservation, marine ecology and marine park management.

World Heritage

Shark Bay Marine Park and Hamelin Pool Marine Nature Reserve lie within the Shark Bay World Heritage area, which is valued internationally for its rich and abundant marine life and spectacular scenery where the desert meets the sea.

Shark Bay is in a transition zone between temperate and tropical waters. There are at least 320 fish species, many of them tropical, and more than 80 coral species in Shark Bay.

Extensive seagrass meadows support over 10,000 dugongs and create environments that favour stromatolites, fragum cockles and a pink snapper unique to Shark Bay.

Also noted in the World Heritage values of Shark Bay is the huge number of humpback whales visiting the bay during their southward migration in spring.

Emus bathing in Monkey Mia

Extraordinary ecosystems

Covering over 4000 square kilometres, seagrass meadows are the foundation of Shark Bay marine ecosystems. They provide shelter and food for hundreds of species from molluscs and crustaceans to fish and sea snakes.

Seagrasses also create unusual salinity gradients by trapping sediment and building sills that restrict water flow. The work of seagrasses is so important that these processes are among the reasons Shark Bay is World Heritage listed.

Aboriginal connection

Shark Bay is the traditional country of three Aboriginal language groups: the Malgana, Nhanda and Yingkarta. The Malgana name for Shark Bay is Gutharraguda, meaning 'two bays'.

The area is important to local Aboriginal people who have a long history of connection to the land and sea. There are many Aboriginal sites along the shoreline, including over 80 shell middens which are mounds built up over hundreds of years.

Things to see and do

Marine wildlife viewing

Boating is popular in Shark Bay, although not the only way to see marine wildlife. Kayaking along the coastline is another way to enjoy the scenery and wildlife.

You can also view marine wildlife from lookouts at Eagle Bluff and Skipjack Point and the boardwalk at Hamelin Pool. Sea snakes, turtles, dugongs and fish are also seen from the jetties at Denham and Monkey Mia.

Green turtle

Fishing

Fishing is popular in Shark Bay Marine Park. However, fishing is not permitted in sanctuary zones or in Hamelin Pool Marine Nature Reserve. Not all types of fishing gear can be used in all marine park zones. See the map and recreation guide in this brochure for details.

Please also make sure you have the Department of Fisheries Recreational fishing guide and follow the rules for fishing in Western Australia.

Never discard bait, fish remains or other offal near the shore as this attracts predators like sharks. Never offer bait or fish to dolphins or sea birds as this can create dependency and have negative impacts on them.

Boat launch facilities

Boat launch facilities are located throughout Shark Bay, including sealed boat ramps at Denham, Monkey Mia and Carnarvon. For other boat launch and beach access sites see the brochures for Francois Peron National Park, Dirk Hartog Island National Park and Edel Land National Park (proposed).

Camping and facilities

Parks and reserves adjacent to the Shark Bay Marine Park have visitor facilities and camp sites. For more information see the brochures for Monkey Mia Reserve, Francois Peron National Park, Dirk Hartog Island National Park and Edel Land National Park (proposed).

Visitor facilities are also provided at Shell Beach Conservation Park and Hamelin Pool Marine Nature Reserve. Bush camping is not permitted within these reserves, although there are commercial camping and accommodation facilities at Hamelin Pool.

Shark Bay Marine Park zones

Shark Bay Marine Park is zoned to enable multiple use – recreation, commercial and biodiversity conservation. The location and coordinates of these zones are shown on the map in this brochure alongside the recreation guide, which lists the activities permitted in each zone.

Sanctuary zones

Sanctuary zones are 'look but don't take' areas managed for nature conservation and appreciation. You may boat, swim and dive in sanctuary zones, but fishing is not permitted.

The Gudrun Wreck Sanctuary Zone is the largest wooden shipwreck found off Western Australia. The Gudrun sank at Shark Bay in 1901 carrying timber from Bunbury to England. It now lies in about six metres of water north of Cape Peron and is inhabited by a rich variety of marine life.

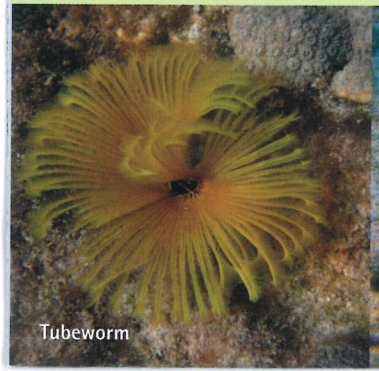
Other sanctuary zones are at Surf Point, Sandy Point, Mary Anne Island, Eighteen Mile, L'haridon Bight, Big Lagoon and Disappointment Reach.

Recreation zones

Recreation zones are for activities like fishing, diving and swimming. Commercial fishing and activities like aquaculture and pearling are not permitted in recreation zones.

Monkey Mia Recreation Zone has extra measures to protect the visiting dolphins. Motorised water sports, spearfishing, netting and crabbing are not permitted in the recreation zone. Also, no corals, shells, fish or other marine specimens may be collected (alive or dead). Line fishing is one exception and is permitted outside the dolphin experience area.

Little Lagoon and Dubaut Inlet are other recreation zones in Shark Bay.



Tubeworm

Bar-bellied sea snake

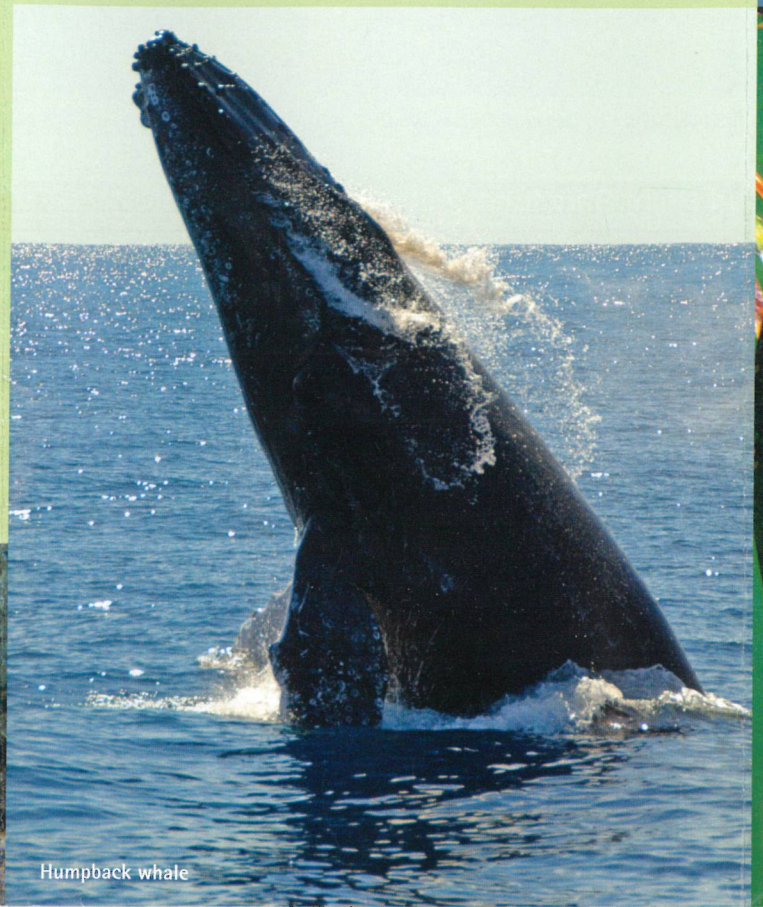
Special purpose zones

Special purpose zones are areas protected for their high priority conservation values. Only activities compatible with each special purpose are permitted in these zones. The special purpose zones are for:

- wildlife viewing and protection at Cape Peron
- seagrass protection at Wooramel
- dugong protection at Gladstone
- nursery protection at Big Lagoon
- habitat protection in the south of Henri Freycinet Harbour

General use zone

The general use zone is the largest and enables a wide range of commercial and recreational activities, including boating, swimming, diving, fishing, aquaculture and pearling.



Humpback whale

Dugong

Seagrass in Shark Bay

Stromatolites

Hamelin Pool Marine Nature Reserve

Hamelin Pool Marine Nature Reserve is a 'look but don't take' area managed solely for conserving internationally significant marine life.

The diversity of cyanobacteria and other microbes in Hamelin Pool rivals the biodiversity of rainforests. They grow in colonies forming microbial mats and microbialites, including stromatolites, which are known as living fossils.

These mats and structures are an important part of Shark Bay's World Heritage listing. They are also fragile and can take hundreds of years to recover if damaged.

Protect Hamelin Pool

- Use the boardwalk and walk trail at Hamelin Pool. Do not walk on the beach below the high tide mark.
- Boating, swimming, diving and snorkelling are not permitted over stromatolites or within 300 metres of the shore.
- Boat anchoring is not permitted over stromatolites throughout the reserve.
- Do not run boats ashore over marine mats or stromatolites.

Look after marine wildlife

- Dispose of all litter properly.
- Be especially careful with fishing line and plastics as birds and marine animals can die from eating plastics or becoming entangled in lines, nets and ropes.
- Slow down in your boat if you see turtles or dugongs. Avoid hitting these animals.
- Drive slowly and navigate within marked channels to avoid hitting marine animals.
- If a dolphin approaches you while fishing, please take your line out of the water.
- Do not take a boat within 100 metres of a dolphin or whale.
- Do not cross seagrass banks at low tide.
- Protect birds by not feeding them or leaving baited lines exposed.
- Current fishing regulations are available from the Department of Fisheries in Denham or www.fish.wa.gov.au.
- Observe fishing regulations and fish for a feed, not the freezer.
- Anchor in sand to protect fragile reef, sponge and seagrass communities.

Boat safely in Shark Bay Marine Park

- Plan your trip well and observe standard safety precautions.
- Always check the weather forecast before you leave.
- Boat according to your skills, experience and the conditions.
- While on the water keep an eye on the weather and the water at all times. Boats have been swamped and lives lost by unexpected waves.
- Carry the safety equipment relevant to your vessel and one life jacket for each person on board.
- Ensure your boat is in good working order and has extra fuel.
- Carry enough water, food supplies and sun protection for your trip.
- Let a responsible adult know about your trip.
- Keep at least 50 metres clear of dive flags.
- Avoid anchoring close to cliff edges.

Take care when diving or snorkelling

- Only dive and snorkel on a slack tide.
- Stay alert for boat traffic.
- Display a dive flag when diving. Minimum flag size 750 by 600 millimetres.
- It is recommended that a dive flag is displayed when snorkelling more than 200 metres from the shore.
- Act responsibly when interacting with marine plants and animals.
- Make sure your diving gear is secured, not dangling, and be careful where you kick.
- Always leave someone onboard when diving or snorkelling from a boat.
- Many marine animals use venom or toxins for catching prey or defending themselves. Some can cause serious harm to people.
- Shipwrecks are protected and the removal of artefacts is prohibited. Please help preserve our maritime heritage by leaving wrecks undisturbed.

RECREATION GUIDE	HAMELIN POOL MARINE NATURE RESERVE [3]	SHARK BAY MARINE PARK			
ACTIVITIES		SANCTUARY ZONE	SPECIAL PURPOSE ZONE	RECREATION ZONE	GENERAL USE ZONE
Fishing from guided charter vessels [2]	✘	✘	Only at Freycinet SPZ and Wooramel SPZ	✘[2]	✔
Line fishing	✘	✘	✔	✔[7]	✔
Crabbing	✘	✘	✔	✘	✔
Rock lobster fishing	✘	✘	✔	✔	✔
Netting (Note: Department of Fisheries licence is required for the use of all nets)	✘	✘	See 5	✘	✔
Spearfishing - breath-hold only (No SCUBA or hookah) [8]	✘	✘	Only at Gladstone SPZ, Freycinet SPZ and Wooramel SPZ	✘	✔
Coral, shell and specimen collecting (alive and dead)	✘	✘	✘	✘	✘
Aquarium fish collecting	✘	✘	✘	✘	✘
Diving	✔[4]	✔	✔	✔[7]	✔
Snorkelling	✔[4]	✔	✔	✔[7]	✔
Motorised water sports	✘	✘	✘	✘	✔
Boating, yachts and non-motorised water sports [9]	✔[4]	✔	See 6	✔[7]	✔

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

2. Charter vessel fishing is not permitted in recreation zones.

3. Public access to view the stromatolites is only available via a boardwalk at the Hamelin Pool Telegraph Station.

4. Boating, anchoring, swimming, diving and snorkelling is not permitted over stromatolites or within 300 metres of the shore in the Hamelin Pool Marine Nature Reserve. Boats are not to be run ashore over marine algal mats or stromatolites in the reserve.

5. Set netting is permitted in Freycinet and Wooramel special purpose zones all year round. Set netting is permitted in Gladstone Special Purpose Zone only when these waters are open to boating (see inset 13 below for closed boating periods). Set netting is not permitted in Big Lagoon, Boorabuggatta or Cape Peron special purpose zones. Haul netting is permitted in all special purpose zones, but only in Gladstone Special Purpose Zone when these waters are open to boating.

6. Permitted in all special purpose zones, but only in Gladstone Special Purpose Zone when these waters are open to boating (see inset 13 below for closed boating periods).

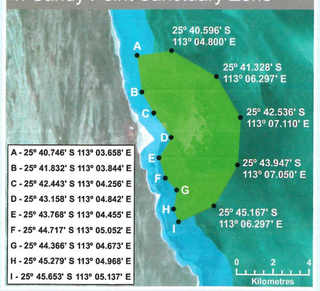
7. Except in Monkey Mia dolphin interaction area.

8. No spearfishing using SCUBA or hookah allowed in Hamelin Pool Marine Nature reserve or Shark Bay Marine Park.

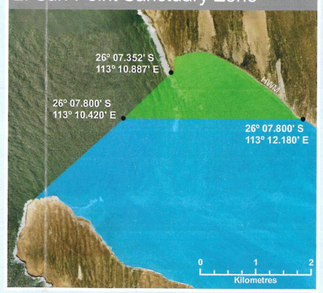
9. Contact Department of Transport for further boating details.

Contacts: Dept of Parks and Wildlife (Denham) - (08) 9948 2226 Dept of Fisheries (Denham) - (08) 9948 1210 Dept of Transport (Carnarvon) - (08) 9941 6800

1. Sandy Point Sanctuary Zone

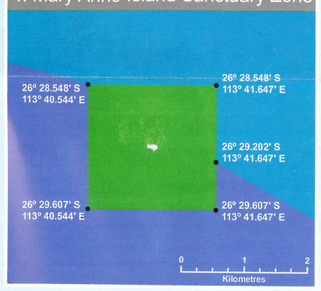


2. Surf Point Sanctuary Zone

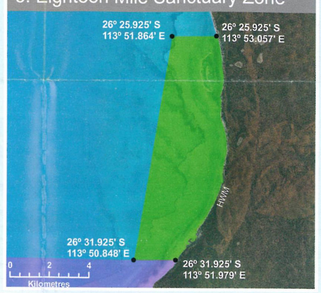


3. Boorabuggatta & Freycinet Special Purpose Zone

4. Mary Anne Island Sanctuary Zone

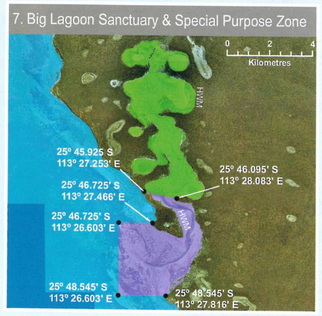


5. Eighteen Mile Sanctuary Zone

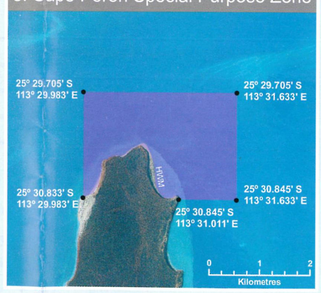


6. Little Lagoon Recreation Zone

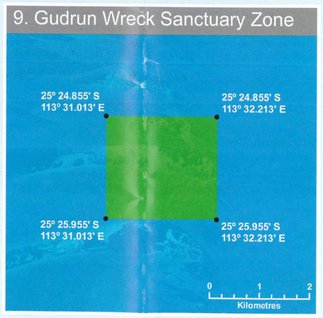
7. Big Lagoon Sanctuary & Special Purpose Zone



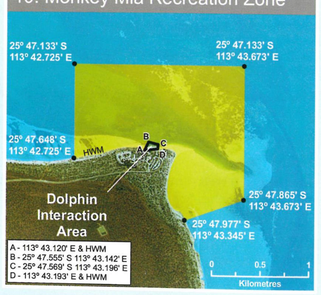
8. Cape Peron Special Purpose Zone



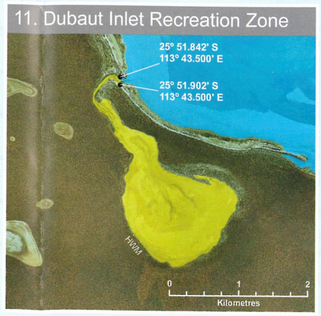
9. Gudrun Wreck Sanctuary Zone

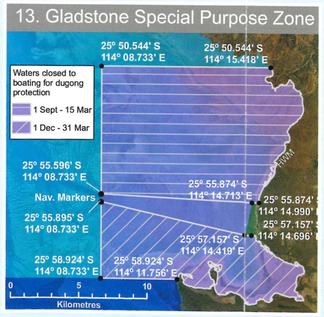
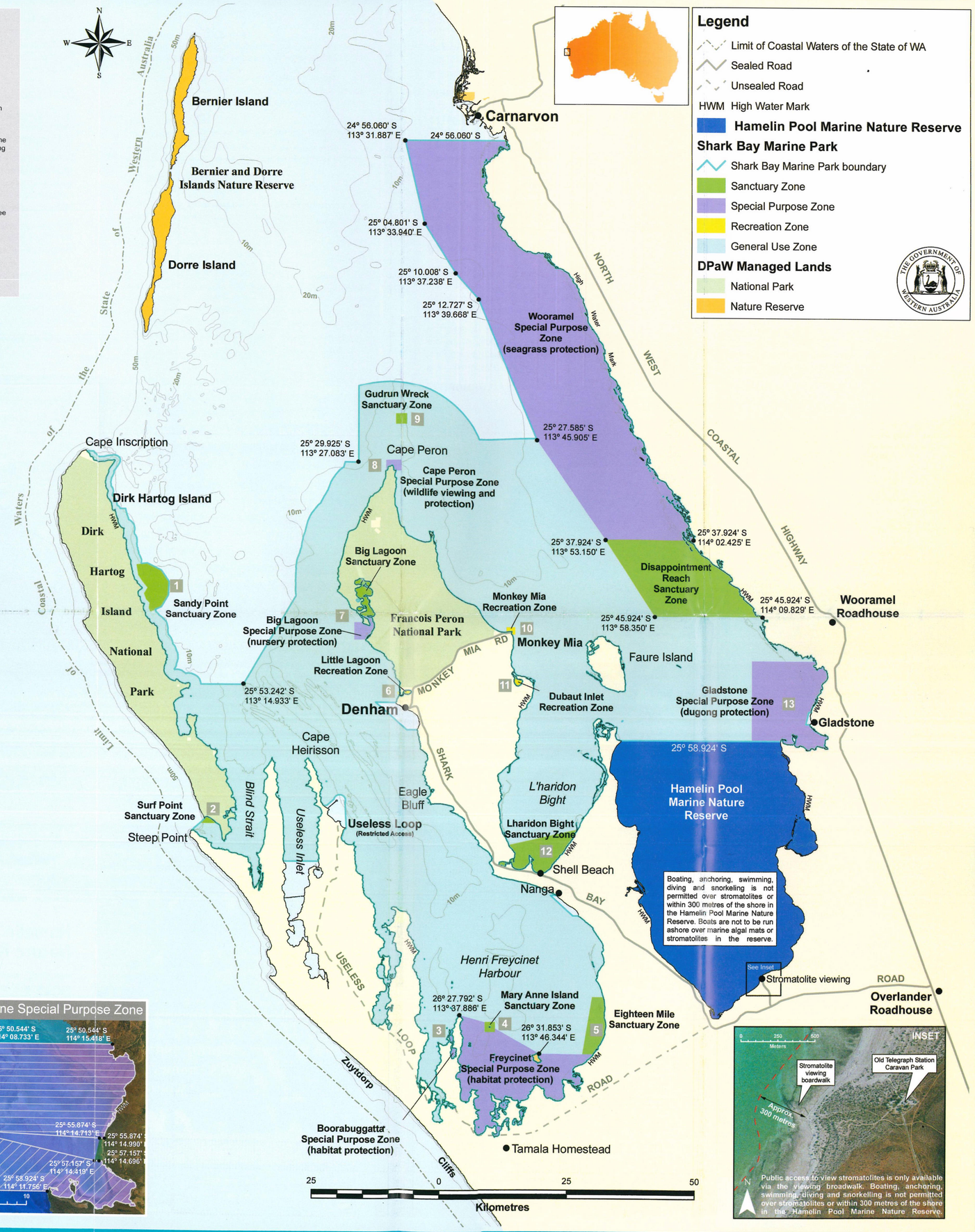


10. Monkey Mia Recreation Zone



11. Dubaut Inlet Recreation Zone



12. Lharidon Bight Sanctuary Zone

13. Gladstone Special Purpose Zone