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Department of Biodiversity,  
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# Islands in the Pilbara



Visitor guide



Department of **Biodiversity,**  
**Conservation and Attractions**



Over 400 islands and islets lie off the Pilbara Coast, consisting of four main island groups, the Dampier Archipelago, Montebello Islands, Barrow Island, and the Pilbara inshore islands.

These remote islands have high conservation values as they are an important refuge for threatened and significant fauna, flora and habitats. They are free from many of the threats and disturbances on the mainland.

This guide provides information on accessing the islands, camping areas, activities and how to look after these important habitats.

Enjoy your visit to the Pilbara islands. Please remember the sensitive nature of these remote nature refuges and help us protect them into the future.



**Cover** The Muiron Islands. **This page** Middle Mary Anne Island.

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## Why are the islands so special?

The Pilbara islands are fragile habitats with high conservation values as they play an important role in the life cycle of many threatened and protected species. They support marine turtles, shorebirds, seabirds and the last remaining populations of some mammal species that are no longer found on the mainland.

### Turtles

Green, loggerhead, hawksbill and flatback turtles can be found in waters surrounding the islands year-round, where they forage for food, breed and rest. During breeding season turtles can be seen cruising the shallows near nesting beaches and may aggregate in large numbers. Female turtles will go ashore between dusk and dawn to lay their eggs. Turtles resting along the waterline should be observed from a distance, and visitors should follow the Turtle Watching Code of Conduct (pg 18).

### Shorebirds

The islands are a refuge for many species of migratory shorebirds. Birds like the critically endangered eastern curlew depart their breeding grounds in the northern hemisphere by August and fly to their feeding grounds of Australia's shorelines for the southern hemisphere summer. Adult shorebirds are in the Pilbara from August to May each year, while juveniles may remain year-round until strong enough to make the migration.



Hawksbill turtle, Rosemary Island.



Flatback turtle, Thevenard Island.



Great knot foraging, Simpson Island.

# Why are the islands so special?

Over 20 species of migratory shorebirds may be seen on the islands, including the critically endangered eastern curlew, curlew sandpiper, bar-tailed godwit and the great knot. These can be found foraging for invertebrates, and roosting on the intertidal flats, mangroves, sandy spits and beaches.

Resident shorebirds species live, feed and breed on the Pilbara islands all year round. These species include the sooty and pied oystercatchers, which inhabit the islands in internationally significant numbers, and the beach stone-curlew and red-capped plover.

## Nesting grounds

Seabirds, such as terns, shearwaters, cormorants, pelicans, ospreys and sea eagles can also be found throughout the Pilbara inshore islands. Many of these species nest over winter and into spring, but a number of species also nest over summer months. The table below summarises some of the species and their nesting periods. These species have a variety of nesting behaviours. For example, sea eagles or ospreys will make a solitary, large nest and rear young over a number of months from winter into spring, whilst other species such as terns and pelicans will form rookeries with hundreds, sometimes thousands, of birds gathered together for protection. Around one million wedge-tailed shearwaters visit the islands, returning to their very own burrows each year, to nest from November to April.



Bar-tailed godwit, Steamboat Island.



Pied oystercatcher chick.

### Nesting months for significant fauna using the Pilbara islands\*

SPECIES	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Green, loggerhead, flatback, hawksbill turtle												
Osprey												
White-bellied sea eagle												
Wedge-tailed shearwater												
Bridled tern												
Fairy tern												
Caspian tern												
Crested tern												
Pied oystercatcher												
Beach stone-curlew												

\*Shaded squares indicate nesting months, but many species are resident year-round.

# Why are the islands so special?



Barrow Island golden bandicoot.



Ta ta lizard, Little Rocky Island.



*Tephrosia*, Tent Island.

## Other significant fauna, flora and habitats

Islands play a valuable role in the protection of mammal, bird and reptile species that have disappeared from the mainland.

Barrow Island and the Montebello Islands provide refuge for some of the last remaining populations of burrowing bettong or boodie, Barrow Island golden bandicoot, spectacled hare-wallaby, Barrow Island euro, the black-flanked rock-wallaby, rufous hare-wallaby. The endangered northern quoll is found on the islands of the Dampier Archipelago.

In 2011, a population of the threatened Barrow Island golden bandicoot were released on Doole Island in the Exmouth Gulf to act as an insurance population, demonstrating the successful use of an island as a refuge for a threatened species conservation introduction.

Other threatened and protected fauna found on the islands include; north-west coastal *Ctenotus*, peregrine falcon, water rat, and short-tailed mouse.

The islands exhibit a unique and dynamic flora generally in better condition than mainland vegetation. There are five priority plant species and a Priority Ecological Community found on islands within the Pilbara inshore islands group.

Island communities including mangroves, algal mats and intertidal seagrasses are important primary producers within the Exmouth Gulf, providing important nursery habitat for fish and prawns.



Mangrove communities, Potter Island.

# Reducing human impacts on islands

Although the remoteness of the Pilbara islands provides a natural buffer for many of the pressures that are associated with the mainland, the following human impacts have been observed on many of the islands. These pressures can be harmful to threatened species, the health of island habitats and the visitor experience.

## Marine debris and discarded camping rubbish

Marine debris, including general rubbish, discarded fishing gear, ropes and floats, commercial marker buoys and other equipment, is harmful to wildlife as ingestion or entanglement can result in injury and death.

Discarded camping rubbish, including camping gear, cans, bottles and food packaging can endanger wildlife, as well as impact the aesthetic value of the remote island locations.

## Toilet waste

Inappropriate disposal of toilet waste including toilet paper can cause health and hygiene issues. Toilet wipes often take years to break down, and creates unpleasant and unsightly conditions for people visiting the islands.

## Introduced species

Black rats, house mice, cats, ants and other introduced fauna, including Asian house geckos, predate upon native species or compete with them for limited resources which can have a devastating effect on island fauna.

Introduced plant species have become established on several Pilbara islands since European settlement. Some of the worst include cacti, buffel grass and kapok. Introduced plants pose a threat to island ecosystems through their capacity to spread rapidly, out-competing native species and in some cases forming monocultures. This means native plants are no longer available as a resource to native fauna which, if unable to adapt and rely on the weed species, will disappear as well.

## Campfires

Campfires can have a number of negative effects on island communities, including but not limited to the disturbance of turtle nesting and hatchlings, and seabird and shorebird cycles during important life stages. Escaped campfires can also have a dramatic effect on island ecology with the potential for a fire to destroy all habitat and vegetation. Burning or removal of driftwood from the island can also impact species and reduce available habitat. Wood brought from the mainland can also cause a quarantine risk.



Discarded netting, Potters Island.



Toilet waste, Serrurier Island.



# Accessing the islands

Boat trips to these remote and isolated islands are best planned for days when good weather conditions are forecast, on larger vessels that are able to handle open sea conditions, and after seeking local knowledge.

Island	Departure point	Approximate distance
Muiron Islands	Exmouth	32 km
Serrurier Island	Onslow	46 km
Sholl Island	Onslow	110 km
Montebello Islands	Dampier	120 km

Travel distance to the islands can vary from a few kilometres to over 100 km depending on the destination and chosen departure point. Many of the islands are surrounded by reef and access may be limited due to tidal and weather conditions.

Refer to the Department of Transport ([transport.wa.gov.au](http://transport.wa.gov.au)) for best safe boating practices, including taking adequate fuel, food and water, emergency life-saving equipment and registering your trip details with family, friends or Sea Search and Rescue prior to your departure to the islands. Consider limited phone reception and long response times for emergency services.

There are no moorings provided at the islands for public use. Be prepared to find a safe and suitable anchorage in a sandy area around the islands.

## Day visits to islands

Before going ashore on any island, observe wildlife activity such as roosting or nesting seabirds and shorebirds, turtle aggregations close to shore or turtle nesting activity on the beach. Approach the islands slowly and plan your landing away from these areas.

Small islands are best left undisturbed, particularly during nesting season.

Follow the Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attraction's (DBCAs) quarantine guidelines (pg 15) to minimise the risk of introducing an exotic species to the island.

## Staying overnight at the islands

Camping on your boat will minimise any disturbance to sensitive island populations.

Camping is only permitted on certain islands and may require a permit. When visiting the islands please follow the Island Visitors' Code of Conduct (pg 15).

### Camping is permitted on the following islands:

**Pilbara inshore islands:** South Muiron from April to October. Permit required. Camping is only permitted on designated beaches (refer to Map 1). For more information, contact the DBCA Parks and Wildlife Service, Exmouth Office (see back page for details).

# Accessing the islands

**Montebello Islands:** Bluebell, Crocus, Hermite, Primrose and Renewal Islands throughout the year, and North West Island from April to September (refer to Map 2). No permit required. For updates on camping arrangements at the Montebello Islands, please contact the DBCA Parks and Wildlife Service, Karratha Office (see back page for details).

**Dampier Archipelago:** Angel, Delambre, Dolphin, Enderby, East Lewis, Gidley, Malus, Rosemary and West Lewis Islands. Camping is only permitted on designated beaches on these islands up to 100 m inland of the high water mark and for no more than five consecutive nights. For more information contact the DBCA Parks and Wildlife Service, Karratha Office (see back page for details).

**Barrow Island and surrounding islands:** No camping permitted (Map 1).

## Accommodation and tours

**Tourist accommodation is available on the following islands:**

**Wilderness Island:** For more information visit [wildernessisland.holiday](http://wildernessisland.holiday).

**Mackerel Islands:** Thevenard Island and Direction Island. For more information visit [mackerelislands.com.au](http://mackerelislands.com.au).

Several day and live-aboard charter boats operate out of Exmouth, Karratha and Onslow. Please contact the local visitor centres for further information.

## Activities

The waters surrounding the islands provide for many recreational activities, including fishing, and diving. The Muirons, Montebellos Islands and Barrow Islands are surrounded by marine parks or marine management areas so please 'know your zones' before you drop a line (visit [exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au](http://exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au) and [fish.wa.gov.au](http://fish.wa.gov.au)).

Shore-based fishing, beach walks, picnics and wildlife viewing are also popular activities enjoyed by visitors to the Pilbara islands. Please follow the Island Visitors' Code of Conduct (pg 15) and enjoy your visit.

## Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA)

Do you want to fly your RPA (drone) for recreational purposes? This includes to obtain footage that you may post on social media, in personal or travel blogs, or even just pictures to send to family and friends. If so, please follow the five easy rules while using your RPA in Western Australia's national parks and other conservation reserves managed under the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984*. Visit [dbca.wa.gov.au/management/remotely-piloted-aircraft](http://dbca.wa.gov.au/management/remotely-piloted-aircraft).



Cormorants, Gndararo Island.



Sunday Island.

## Know your zones

Marine parks and marine management areas are zoned to protect natural features and aesthetic values while providing recreational and commercial use and enjoyment that do not compromise conservation values. As a visitor, it is your responsibility to be aware of what activities are permitted in each zone.

**Sanctuary zones, National Park Zones (Commonwealth waters) and Conservation Areas** ('no take' areas) provide the strongest form of protection for the marine environment. The public is encouraged to visit and enjoy sanctuary and national park zones and conservation areas, whether by diving, boating or simply exploring rock pools.

**Recreation zones or Recreational Use Zones (Commonwealth waters)** provide for conservation and recreation, including recreational fishing.

**General use zones or Multiple Use Zones (Commonwealth waters)** are managed to conserve natural resources while allowing sustainable commercial fishing, as well as petroleum exploration and production where they will not affect sensitive marine habitats. Most recreational activities can be undertaken in these zones, which form majority of most marine parks.

**Habitat Protection Zones (Commonwealth waters)** provide for conservation and sustainable uses as long as the seafloor or benthic habitat is not damaged.

**Special purpose zones** are managed for a specific use or issue, such as protection of habitat or nursery grounds, seasonal events such as whale watching, or a particular type of commercial fishing. Commercial and recreational activities may be allowed if compatible with the primary purpose of a special purpose zone.

Download brochures (including detailed zoning maps) on all of WA's marine parks at [exploreparks.dbcwa.gov.au](http://exploreparks.dbcwa.gov.au).

For more information on Australian Marine Parks (in Commonwealth waters) visit [parksaustralia.gov.au/marine](http://parksaustralia.gov.au/marine).

Information can also be accessed by downloading the free 'Explore Marine Parks WA' and 'Recfishwest' smartphone apps available through the App Store.



# The islands

## Pilbara inshore islands

Located between Exmouth Gulf and Cape Preston, the Pilbara inshore islands comprise of over 170 islands, islets and rocks, many of which are small (<20 hectares), have limited sandy beaches, and are surrounded by intertidal reef. Three islands including South Muiron, North Muiron and Sunday Island are part of the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Area.

Many are already protected as nature reserves under the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984*, with the primary purpose for the conservation of flora and fauna.

To help reduce the impacts to small islands it is recommended to only go ashore on the larger islands such as Thevenard, South Muiron, Serrurier or Sholl Islands. These islands offer more area for recreational access/landing away from sensitive sites. These larger islands provide a variety of sandy beaches, clear water and are away from mangrove communities and their biting midges (sandflies). Popular activities include beach picnics, nature appreciation and swimming.

Camping is permitted on South Muiron Island between April and October. To obtain a permit contact DBCA Parks and Wildlife Service, Exmouth Office (see back page for details).

For more information visit [exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au/park/pilbara-inshore-islands](http://exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au/park/pilbara-inshore-islands).



Wedge-tailed shearwater



Wedge-tailed shearwater burrows.

## Montebello Islands

The Montebello Islands is a remote, beautiful place to visit, boasting spectacular fishing, magnificent sunsets, private and pristine coves and an abundance of native wildlife unique to the North West.

The island group is located approximately 120 km west of Dampier, is about 18.5 km from north to south and comprises over 260 low-lying islands and islets. The islands are conservation park, and are surrounded by the Montebello Islands Marine Park, encompassing an area of over 53,000 hectares. The offshore nature of the Montebello Islands means navigation to the islands should only be undertaken by experienced boaters in well-prepared, suitably sized and equipped vessels in favourable weather conditions. The remoteness of the islands, combined with numerous shallow submerged reefs, strong ocean currents, high winds, often steep and rough seas and seasonal cyclones pose a high risk to visitors. Pre-planning is a necessity, and visitors must take adequate fuel, water, food and first aid supplies as no services or facilities are available.

There are no public moorings amongst the islands but there are many anchorages. The most frequently used anchorages are Main Beach (along the southwest side of Trimouille Island), Stephenson Channel at Hermite Island (which is well protected), west of Turtle Lagoon on Hermite Island, and Chartreuse Bay at Alpha Island. Care must be taken when navigating and anchoring as unsurveyed areas can get very shallow, with sandbars emerging at low tide; it is best to enter and exit on high tide.

Camping is permitted on the shores of Primrose, Bluebell, Crocus, Hermite and Renewal Islands throughout the year, and on North West Island from April to September (due to turtle nesting/hatching season from October to March). Camping should be restricted to 100 m inland of the high water mark, and for no longer than five consecutive nights. For up-to-date information on camping at the Montebello Islands please contact the DBCA Parks and Wildlife Service, Karratha Office (see back page for details).

Areas on Trimouille and Alpha Islands have low levels of radiation from nuclear testing conducted in the 1950s. Visitors should limit exposure to these affected areas to one hour per day, and not disturb soil or handle/remove relics.

The Montebello Islands Marine Park brochure provides maps and information including management zones and permitted activities. Download the brochure, the '10 things to know before you go' flyer, and view the information video and other material at the Explore Parks WA website - [exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au/park/montebello-islands](http://exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au/park/montebello-islands), or obtain copies from local DBCA Parks and Wildlife Service and Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) offices, and Pilbara-based visitor centres.





Barrow Island.

## Barrow and surrounding islands

Barrow Island is located south of the Montebello Islands and, at over 22,000 hectares, is Western Australia's second largest island. Barrow Island is also considered remote, located approximately 140 km west of Dampier, with Double Island to the east (within Barrow Island Port Area), and Middle and Boodie Islands to the south. The Barrow Island Port Area is operated by Chevron Australia and permission should be sought before entering port limits.



Golden bandicoot.

Barrow, Double, Middle and Boodie Islands are nature reserves of outstanding values and are among Australia's most important reserves for conservation. In 1910, Barrow Island was listed as a Class A Reserve for the purpose of 'conservation of flora and fauna', which is the highest level of protection afforded under State legislation. Many species now endangered on mainland Australia are still commonly found on these islands. Barrow Island is home to at least 24 terrestrial species that do not occur anywhere else, and is a significant nesting site for the protected flatback turtle.

Access to Barrow, Double, Middle and Boodie Islands is not encouraged due to numerous natural and man-made hazards, including the operation of an oilfield and the Gorgon Gas Project. Camping is not permitted on any of these islands.

The waters that surround Barrow Island are the Barrow Island Marine Park (4,100 hectare on the western side of Barrow Island) and Barrow Island Marine Management Area (114,500 hectares that includes most of the waters around Barrow Island and the waters around the Lowendal Islands). The entire Barrow Island Marine Park is a sanctuary zone, giving the park the highest percentage of 'no take areas' of any marine park in Western Australia.

Please refer to the Management Plan for the *Montebello/Barrow Islands Marine Conservation Reserves* (in the 'Downloads & Resources' tab) online at [exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au/park/barrow-island](http://exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au/park/barrow-island) for further information on permitted activities.

# The islands

Dampier Archipelago. Photo – Rob Connell

## Dampier Archipelago

The Dampier Archipelago comprises 42 islands, islets and rocks within a 45 km radius of Dampier. Twenty-five of these islands are nature reserves managed by DBCA's Parks and Wildlife Service.

The Dampier Archipelago has exceptional natural beauty, high conservation value and outstanding heritage values. The spinifex-covered islands have dramatic piles of jumbled red rocks, mangrove stands and white sandy beaches. The Dampier Archipelago is the richest area of marine biodiversity known in Western Australia with coral reefs, sponge gardens, seagrass and more than 650 fish species. The islands are a wildlife haven for green, flatback and hawksbill turtles nesting on sandy beaches, Rothschild's rock-wallabies, northern quolls and native rats inhabiting rock piles; more than 100 bird species; and over 41 species of terrestrial reptile.

Together with the Burrup Peninsula, the islands (and surrounding waters) are home to one of the densest and most diverse collections of rock art in the world and other excellent examples of Aboriginal heritage, including shell middens, stone arrangements and artefact scatters. The outstanding cultural heritage values of the area are recognised through National Heritage listing and a World Heritage nomination is currently being prepared to have these values recognised at the highest international level. More information about the World Heritage nomination can be found at [dbca.wa.gov.au/parks-and-wildlife-service/world-heritage-areas/murujuga-world-heritage-nomination](http://dbca.wa.gov.au/parks-and-wildlife-service/world-heritage-areas/murujuga-world-heritage-nomination). The islands and surrounding waters also include historical shipwrecks and examples of European heritage, such as relics and structures from whaling, pearling and pastoral activities.

The islands have been zoned to provide a balance between conservation and recreation. Some areas have been set aside for day trips and camping, whereas others are sensitive shorebird, seabird and turtle nesting areas. Please respect these zones.

Camping is permitted (for up to five consecutive nights) on selected islands up to 100 m inland of the high water mark on beaches zoned for recreation. As with other nature reserves, no services or facilities are available. See the Island Visitors' Code of Conduct (see pg 15 and maps) for more information on when to access islands and where camping is permitted.

Turtles nest on many sandy beaches throughout the Dampier Archipelago. Rosemary and Delambre islands have very large turtle nesting populations that may be globally significant. It is imperative that turtle nesting is not impacted by visitors. If camping on a beach where turtles nest, please keep lighting to a minimum, follow the Turtle Watching Code of Conduct (pg 18) and do not interfere with the nesting process. Pets are not permitted on the Dampier Archipelago Island Reserves. Do not take pets to the islands as they could harm wildlife. Public are cautioned that 1080 poison baits are laid on several islands to control feral pests such as foxes and will kill dogs and cats if consumed.

The Dampier Archipelago Island Reserves brochure provides maps and information, including access, zoning and permitted activities. Copies can be obtained from local DBCA Parks and Wildlife Service and DPIRD offices, Pilbara-based visitor centres and online at [exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au/park/dampier-archipelago](http://exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au/park/dampier-archipelago) (in the 'Downloads & Resources' tab).



## Island Visitors' Code of Conduct

The islands provide a unique, remote area visitor experience. Follow the Island Visitors' Code of Conduct to conserve and protect these important island habitats for the benefit of threatened species, ensuring islands remain ecologically intact for the enjoyment of future generations.

### Quarantine

To minimise the risk of introducing exotic pests to island nature reserves please follow these quarantine guidelines:

- **Check your vessel is clean inside and out.** Make sure antifouling paint is renewed regularly. Inspect inside the hull, and all gear to ensure your boat is free of all soil, seeds, animals like mice, geckos and crickets, and insect nests before departing. Maintain rat and mouse poison on larger vessels (wax blocks are best for damp places), and replace regularly. Surface insecticide spray in dry areas of the vessel.
- **Check clothing, footwear and camping gear** are free of seeds, soil and invertebrates.
- **Do not take wood onto islands.** Campfires are not permitted on island reserves and wood may carry unknown pests and/or disease.
- **Check your food for pests and disease.** Cook on your boat where possible. Carry all food scraps including fruit and vegetables off the island and dispose of properly.
- **Report introduced fauna and weeds sightings to your nearest Parks and Wildlife Service office.** Photos and GPS points are welcome and very helpful. Report people who fail to adhere to island quarantine procedures (obtain boat registration and vessel name if possible). Marine pests should be reported to the FishWatch hotline on 1800 815 507.



Kapok, an introduced weed.



*Spinifex longifolius*, Victor Island.



# Island Visitors' Code of Conduct



*Corynotheca pungens.*



Aboriginal artefacts, Tent Island.



Juvenile white-bellied sea eagle.

## Minimise disturbance

- **Visit the larger islands.** Larger islands offer more areas for recreational activities and reduce impact on island communities. Leave small islands for wildlife.
- **Motor slowly on approach and when travelling around the islands** to avoid disturbance to fauna using the islands and prevent striking marine mammals or turtles in the water. Avoid areas where large numbers of seabirds or shorebirds are present.
- **Move quietly and slowly when ashore, stick to the low water mark, and keep your distance from wildlife.** You'll see more wildlife if you do, and minimise disturbance. Avoid trampling native vegetation and look out for shearwater nesting burrows. Burrows may be found in great numbers, are well camouflaged, deep, and may cause injury if stepped in.
- **Leave your pets at home.** Pets are not permitted on islands because they can disturb native species and compete for resources. Pets may also carry diseases onto the island.
- **Please do not feed wildlife.** Feeding or providing water to wildlife can cause unnatural feeding behaviour, ill health and dependence on artificial sources.
- **Adhere to island closure periods.** These are in place to protect threatened species from disturbance during nesting or breeding seasons.
- **Report animal aggregations.** If you see any special behaviour such as seabird and shorebird nests or large groups of animals, particularly birds or marine life while visiting the islands, please report them to your local DBCA Parks and Wildlife Service office.

## Leave no trace

- **Remove any rubbish you find.**
- **Leave No Trace.** Take only photographs.



# Island Visitors' Code of Conduct



Gndaroo Island.



Seagrass, East Island.

- **Fires are not permitted on island reserves.** Out of control campfires pose a major risk to entire island communities. Prepare your food before you go, or cook on your boat.
- **No fauna or flora is to be removed from islands** (this includes dead wood, and shells) to conserve nature conservation values.
- **Artefacts are not to be collected from the islands.** These important records of our history are for everyone to appreciate. If you notice a significant find please take a photo and a GPS point if possible, and report it to DBCA's Parks and Wildlife Service.
- **Use the sea for bodily waste** or bring a chemical camping toilet. If there is no other alternative, dig a hole deeper than 30 cm and refill it when you're finished. Do not use disposable toilet wipes as these do not biodegrade; toilet paper is the preferred option.
- **Be prepared to have to anchor at the islands** as there are no public moorings available. Anchor in sand to protect fragile reef, sponge, algal, seagrass and mangrove communities.
- **Fish offal.** Please take your offal with you, or dispose of it in a fish bin on the mainland. For filleting at sea guidelines visit [fish.wa.gov.au](http://fish.wa.gov.au).

## Camping

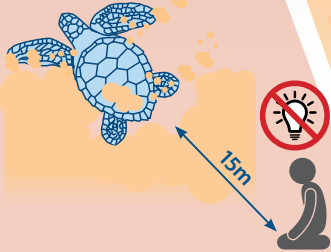
- **Camp on your boat** to minimise the disturbance to sensitive island populations. Minimise the use of bright lights at night as they may disorientate turtles and night feeding seabirds. If boat lights are too bright shearwaters may land on your boat rather than returning to their burrow to feed their hungry chick.
- **Camp only on islands where camping is permitted.** Refer to Staying overnight at the islands on page 8 for more information on where camping is allowed.
- **Leave the site clean.** The next camper should not see any signs of your visit.

# Turtle Watching Code of Conduct

2

## DIGGING BODY PIT

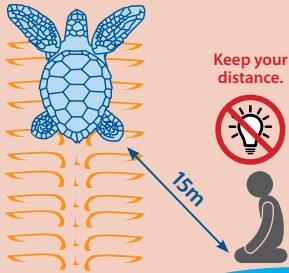
Lots of sand flicked into the air using front flippers only. Turtle may move and repeat this process until finding the correct spot. Estimated time 20-40mins



1

## EMERGING TURTLE

Crawls from ocean towards nesting area. Estimated time 5-20mins



3

## EXCAVATING EGG CHAMBER

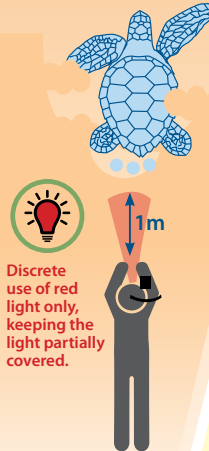
Sand stops being flicked as turtle scoops out egg chamber with rear flippers only. Rocking motion side to side. Estimated time 10-20mins



4

## LAYING EGGS

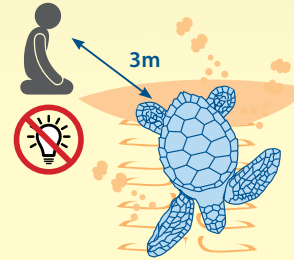
Turtle remains very still, with a gentle heaving motion. If her flippers are moving and sand is being flicked she is NOT laying. Estimated time 3-10mins



5

## COVERING NEST

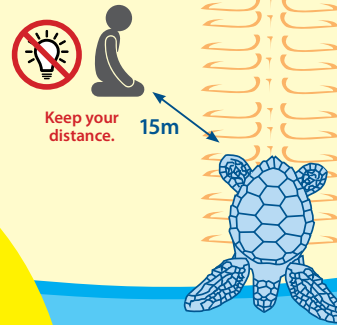
Turtle covers egg chamber with sand using rear flippers then gradually moves forward, camouflaging nest, flicking lots of sand into air. Estimated time 20-40mins



6

## RETURNING TURTLE

Crawls back from beach to ocean. May stop to rest at water's edge to restore energy. Estimated time 20-40mins



7

## EMERGING HATCHLINGS

Around 60 days after laying eggs.

Stay below the dunes to avoid trampling on nests and emerging hatchlings.



HIGH

MEDIUM

RISK OF DISTURBANCE

LOW

HIGH

**NO GLOW:** Nesting turtles and hatchlings are easily disturbed by lights, use the moon to light your way.

**MOVE SLOW:** To avoid disturbing turtles, walk along the water's edge.

**STAY LOW:** Out of sight of nesting turtles – sit, crouch or lie in the sand.

**LET THEM FLOW:** Let hatchlings make their own way to the ocean, they take an imprint of that beach so they can return to the same area when they are ready to mate and lay eggs. Try not to get between hatchlings and the water's edge.



No flash photography at any time



No dogs on turtle nesting beaches



Don't drive on turtle nesting beaches

Protecting island habitats is crucial for the survival of threatened species which rely on them



Save the app that could save your life



[emergencyplus.com.au](https://emergencyplus.com.au)

Download the free Emergency+ app before your visit. Use the app in an emergency to call for assistance. If there is no mobile phone coverage you **WILL NOT** be able to call **000** but the app will provide you with your GPS location.

Turtle tracks, Serrurier Island.

# More information



Beach stone-curlew.

**Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) Headquarters**

17 Dick Perry Avenue Kensington WA 6151

Ph: (08) 9219 9000

**DBCA Parks and Wildlife Service, Exmouth Office**

Ph: (08) 9947 8000

[exmouth@dbca.wa.gov.au](mailto:exmouth@dbca.wa.gov.au)

**DBCA Parks and Wildlife Service, Karratha Office**

Ph: (08) 9182 2000

[karratha.admin@dbca.wa.gov.au](mailto:karratha.admin@dbca.wa.gov.au)

**Report sick, injured or stranded marine animals (Wildcare Helpline)**

Ph: (08) 9474 9055

**Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) Fisheries Division**

Exmouth Office

Ph: (08) 9947 2755

Karratha Office

Ph: (08) 9144 4337

[dpiird.wa.gov.au](http://dpiird.wa.gov.au)

**FishWatch hotline, to report illegal fishing, aquatic pests and fish kill**

Ph: 1800 815 507

**Bureau of Meteorology**

Ph: 1900 926 150

[bom.gov.au/wa/forecasts](http://bom.gov.au/wa/forecasts)

Visit [exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au](http://exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au) for more information about the island groups specified within this guide as well as the development of a management plan for the Pilbara inshore islands nature reserves.

Information current at February 2023. This information is available in alternative formats on request.  
Photos – All photos are credited to DBCA unless otherwise specified.

# Islands in the Pilbara

MAP 1 Pilbara Inshore Islands

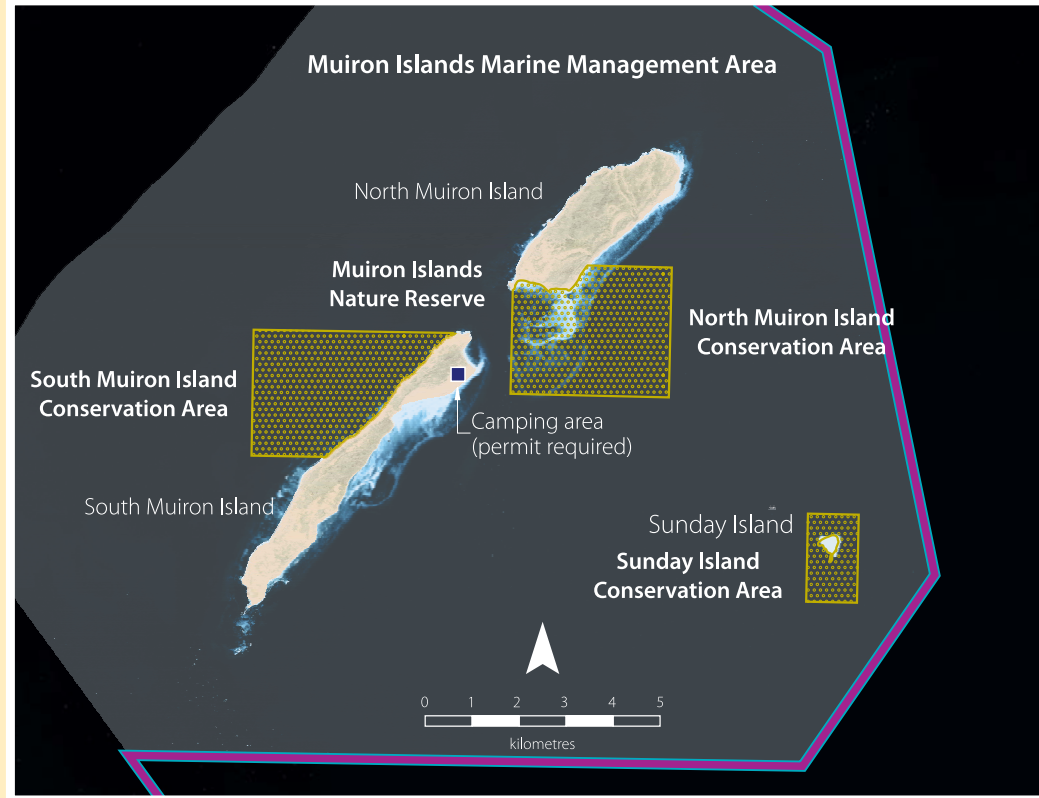
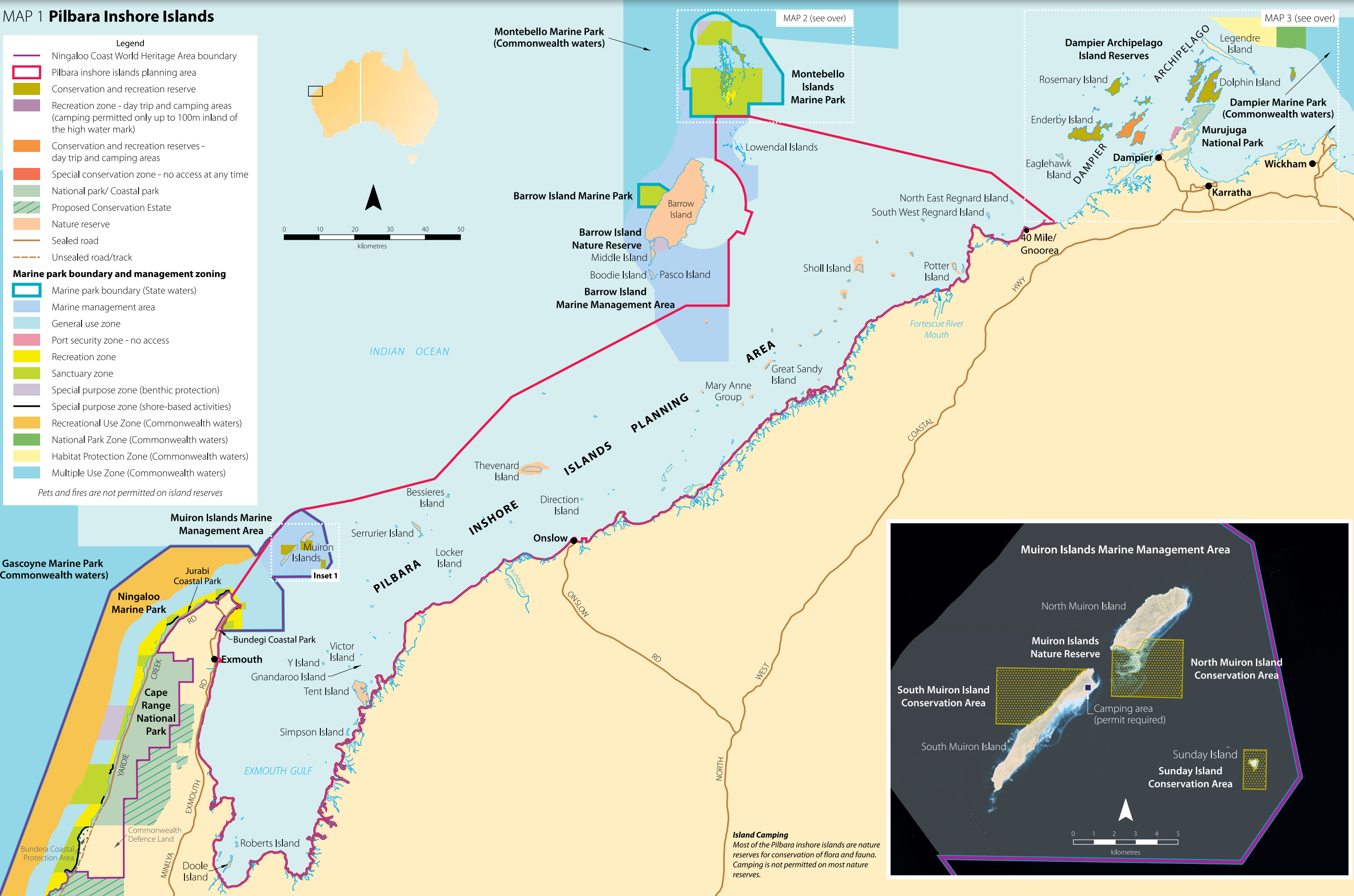
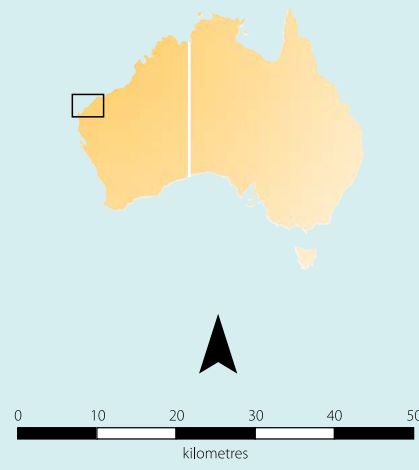
**Legend**

- Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Area boundary
- Pilbara inshore islands planning area
- Conservation and recreation reserve
- Recreation zone - day trip and camping areas (camping permitted only up to 100m inland of the high water mark)
- Conservation and recreation reserves - day trip and camping areas
- Special conservation zone - no access at any time
- National park/ Coastal park
- Proposed Conservation Estate
- Nature reserve
- Sealed road
- Unsealed road/track

**Marine park boundary and management zoning**

- Marine park boundary (State waters)
- Marine management area
- General use zone
- Port security zone - no access
- Recreation zone
- Sanctuary zone
- Special purpose zone (benthic protection)
- Special purpose zone (shore-based activities)
- Recreational Use Zone (Commonwealth waters)
- National Park Zone (Commonwealth waters)
- Habitat Protection Zone (Commonwealth waters)
- Multiple Use Zone (Commonwealth waters)

*Pets and fires are not permitted on island reserves*



**Island Camping**  
Most of the Pilbara inshore islands are nature reserves for conservation of flora and fauna. Camping is not permitted on most nature reserves.

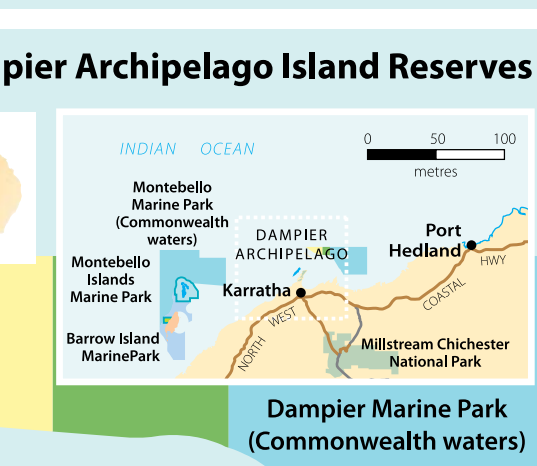
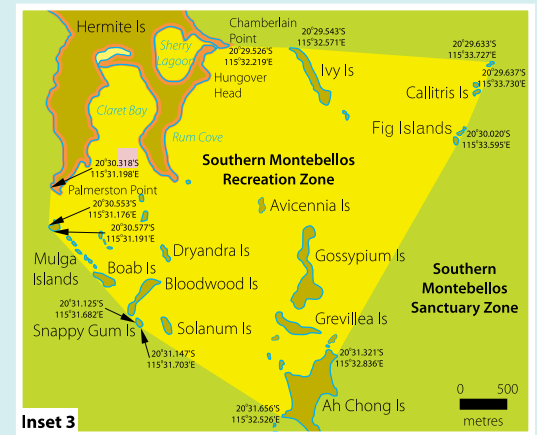
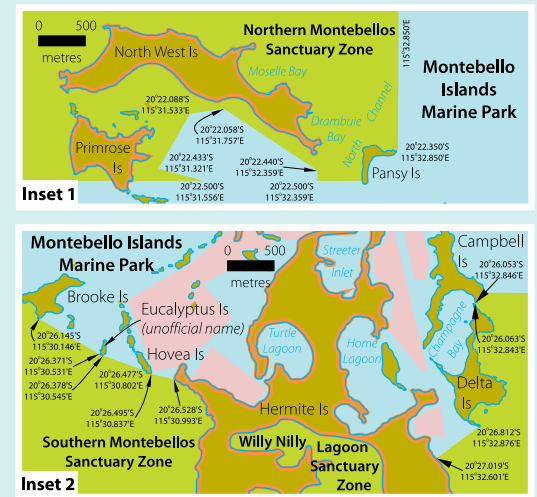
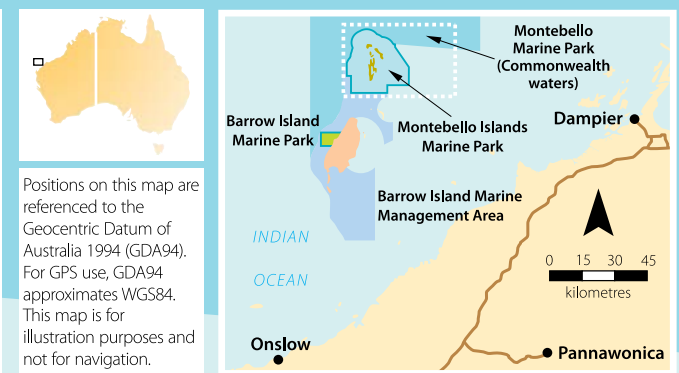
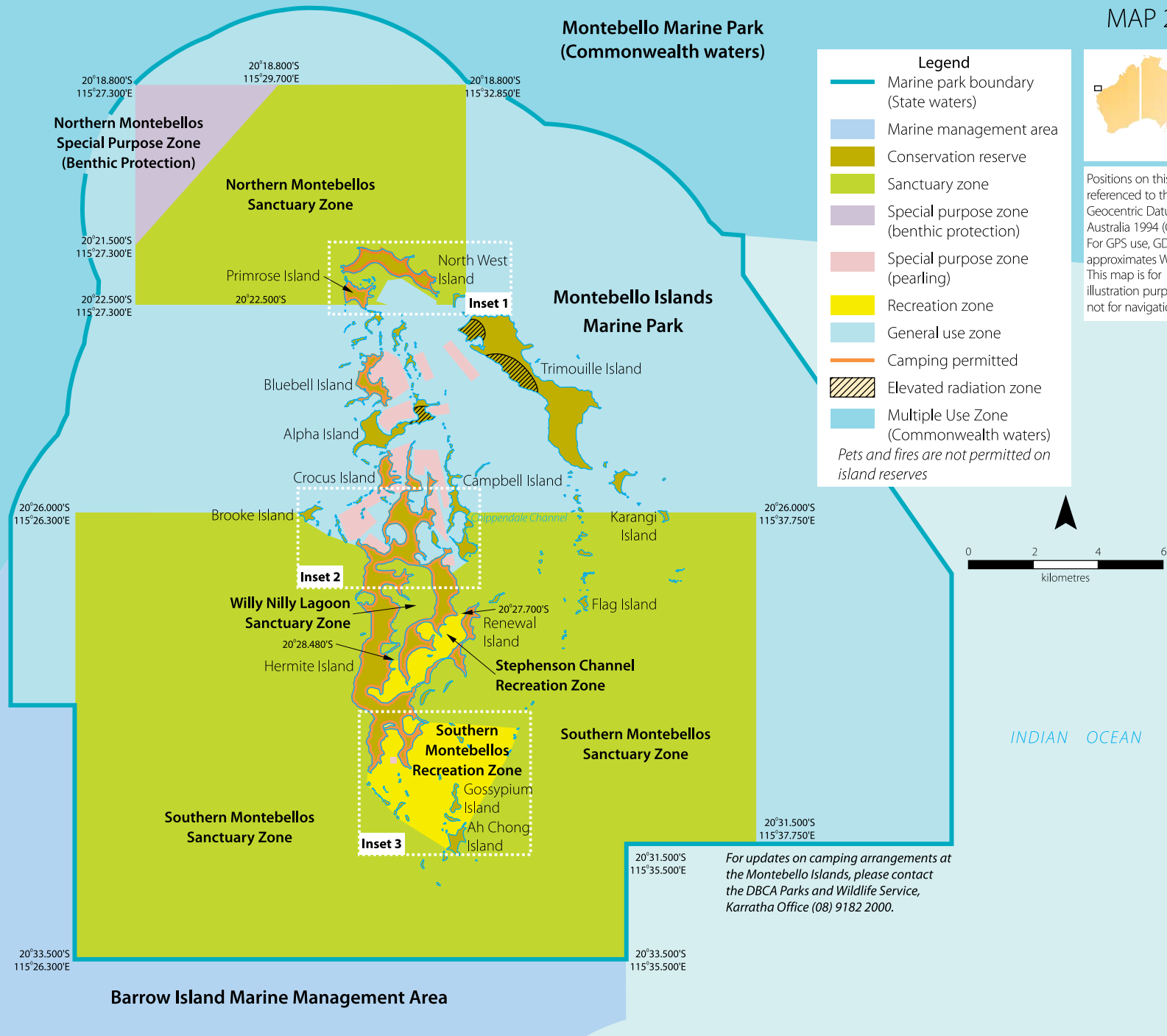
# Islands in the Pilbara



Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions



## MAP 2 Montebello Islands Marine Park



- Access zoning for island reserves**
- Sealed road
  - Unsealed road
  - Special conservation zone - no access at any time
  - Conservation zone - day access only
  - Recreation zone - day trip and camping areas (camping permitted only up to 100m inland of the high-water mark)
  - Conservation and recreation reserves - day trip and camping areas
- Pets and fires are not permitted on island reserves*

- Legend**
- Fishing restrictions - contact Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
  - National Heritage Listed area
  - Port security zones - no access
  - Launching ramps
  - Minor unsealed launching ramps
  - Mooring area - navigate with caution
  - CAUTION - The Dampier Archipelago has a 5-metre tidal range
  - National Park Zone (Commonwealth waters)
  - Habitat Protection Zone (Commonwealth waters)
  - Multiple Use Zone (Commonwealth waters)

## MAP 3 Dampier Archipelago Island Reserves

