



## Jurien Bay Marine Park

The Jurien Bay Marine Park, declared in August 2003, protects an important section of Western Australia's central west coast between Wedge Island and Green Head.

**Above** Parts of the new Jurien Bay Marine Park offer good shore dive or snorkel sites.  
*Photo – Sallyanne Cousans*

*Facing page*

**Top** Australian sea lions breed on several islands surrounded by the new marine park.  
**Above right** Soft coral (*Balanophyllia* sp.).  
*Photos – Ann Storrie*  
**Far right** Coastal heath, Jurien Bay.  
*Photo – Sallyanne Cousans*

As well as major sea lion and seabird breeding areas, the marine park contains typical biological communities, populated with a unique mix of temperate and tropical plants and animals, courtesy of the Leeuwin Current. Jurien's offshore areas are like a temperate version of Ningaloo Reef. Numerous colourful corals grow in the area (although they don't form reefs), and the extensive limestone reefs that contain breathtaking caves, grottos and overhangs are a diver's delight. These are covered with colourful sponges and sea squirts and surrounded by a diverse variety of fish and other marine life such as western rock lobsters. Extensive seagrass meadows provide shelter and nursery habitat for these and many other species.

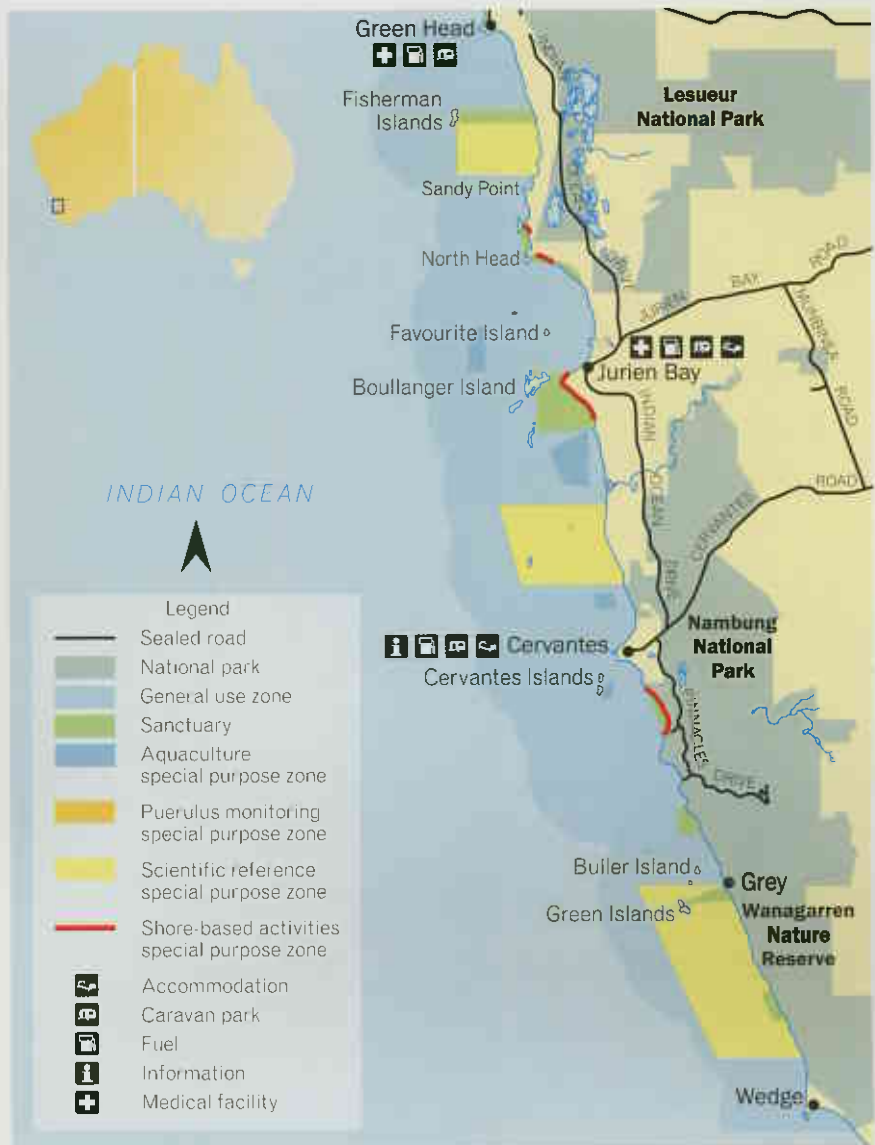
Biological surveys indicate that the park's marine plant and animal communities are very diverse and include a number of species found nowhere else, species that are at the limit of their geographical distribution and species that are new to science.

The marine park surrounds many magnificent and ecologically important islands.

### Current uses

Jurien Bay is popular for a wide range of recreational activities including scuba diving, snorkelling, swimming, fishing, boating and water sports such as windsurfing and surfing. Some excellent sites for diving and snorkelling in the park are described in the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) book *More Dive and Snorkel Sites in Western Australia*.

The Australian sea lion, the world's rarest species of sea lion, breeds on Buller and North Fisherman islands and uses other islands in the Jurien Bay region as 'haul-out' sites. Charters from Jurien, Green Head and Cervantes are available to take people out to see the large colonies of these attractive animals, and people can usually also see dolphins and whales (in season). Scuba diving charters are also available.



The Jurien Bay area supports excellent recreational fishing opportunities for a number of fish species, abalone and rock lobster.

### Park management

The effective management of the Jurien Bay Marine Park will depend on the support, cooperation and participation of local communities. Visitors to the park also need to acknowledge, understand and support the objectives of the park.

The day-to-day management of the park will be guided by a ten-year management plan that has been developed by a community-based committee. The plan uses a range of strategies, including the establishment of high protection sanctuary and special purpose (scientific reference) zones (see the above map) and associated zone markers, public education and participation activities, schools programs and research and monitoring studies. All of these programs are now well underway.

CALM staff are also working on

getting other aspects of the park up and running and a new marine park coordinator, the first of several dedicated marine park staff to be appointed, will start in early 2004. CALM will work closely with the Department of Fisheries in managing the park.

In the early years, the major emphasis in managing the park will be to establish the legal basis of the park, to ensure signage and zone markers are in place, to make sure the local community and visitors are well informed of the zoning and the rules and regulations, as well as providing opportunities for local schools to become involved. A marine park management advisory committee will be established to ensure ongoing community involvement in the management of the park.

### park facts

**Where is it?** 200 to 300 kilometres north of Perth by road.

**Total area** 82,376 hectares.

**What to do** Scuba diving, snorkelling, swimming, fishing, boating, windsurfing, surfing. Charters offer sea lion viewing, whale watching (in season) and scuba diving charters and have scuba equipment available for hire.

**Dive and snorkel sites** Jurien Town Beach (8 metres) makes a good night dive; while Dog's Hind Leg (10 metres) is a spectacular, moderate to hard boat dive in the middle of Jurien Bay.

**Must see sites** The back of Boullanger Island (1-6 metres) is a great spot for family groups to go snorkelling.

**Naming** Jurien Bay, from which the marine park derives its name, was named on 1 July, 1801 by the French expedition under Captain Baudin. The name honours Charles Marie, Vicomte Jurien, 1763-1836, a French naval administrator.

**Nearest CALM office** Moora District Office, Bashford Street, Jurien Bay. Phone (08) 9652 1911.





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