



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Fisheries**

# Point Quobba

*Fish Habitat  
Protection Area  
(FHPA)*



PUBLISHED NOVEMBER 2015

**BETTER  
FISHERIES**

**YOUR LICENCE FEES AT WORK**

# Contents

<b>Point Quobba FHPA .....</b>	<b>1</b>
What is a fish habitat protection area (FHPA)? .....	2
<b>Where is Point Quobba FHPA? .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Gascoyne Coast Bioregion .....	4
<b>About Point Quobba .....</b>	<b>6</b>
History.....	6
Community importance .....	7
Species to look for.....	8
<b>Protecting Point Quobba.....</b>	<b>10</b>
No commercial or recreational fishing, including spearfishing, in the restricted area .....	10
No collecting marine organisms in the restricted area .....	10
No jet ski-ing in the restricted area .....	10
Snorkelling and scuba-diving .....	11
Rubbish .....	11
<b>Fish for the future .....</b>	<b>12</b>
Further information .....	14



**Cover**  
Point Quobba

Photo: Tourism  
Western Australia

## Point Quobba FHPA

Point Quobba is about 75 kilometres north-west of Carnarvon in Western Australia. Adjoining the popular 'Blowholes' natural tourist attraction, it sits between two distinctive landscapes known as the 'Cliff Coast' and the 'Dune Coast'. Extending north of Point Quobba, the Cliff Coast is formed by spectacular rugged limestone cliffs, 10 metres high above the ocean in places. The Dune Coast, stretching south of Point Quobba into Shark Bay, is a narrow ridge with a series of vegetated dunes behind it.

Point Quobba's marine habitat is a transition zone between tropical and temperate climates and home to a highly diverse range of species. It is also a popular site for snorkelling and fishing. In calm conditions the Point Quobba Lagoon provides an excellent place for children to learn to swim and to gain an awareness of the marine environment.

To preserve this special area it is designated as a fish habitat protection area (FHPA).

Photo: Jane Korculanic



## What is a fish habitat protection area (FHPA)?

An FHPA is a location declared by the Minister for Fisheries as having special ecological and community significance, and so deserving special management to ensure its long-term sustainability.

The main aim is to preserve valuable fish and marine environments for the future use and enjoyment of everyone.

Special rules for fishing and other activities apply in most FHPAs.



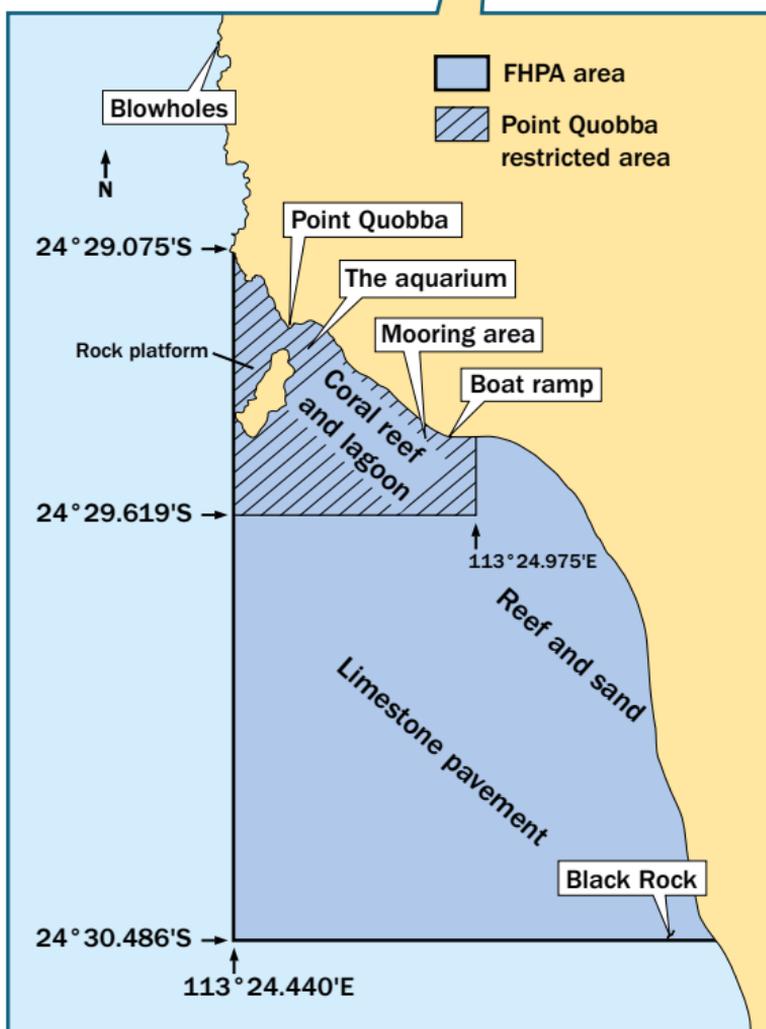
Photo: Jane Korcularic

*Damselfish feeding on Point Quobba reef.*

# Where is Point Quobba FHPA?

Point Quobba FHPA's most northern tip adjoins the Blowholes, next to Quobba Station.

The boundaries of the FHPA extend from the reef area just north of the lagoon and adjacent marine waters, south to, and including, Black Rock.



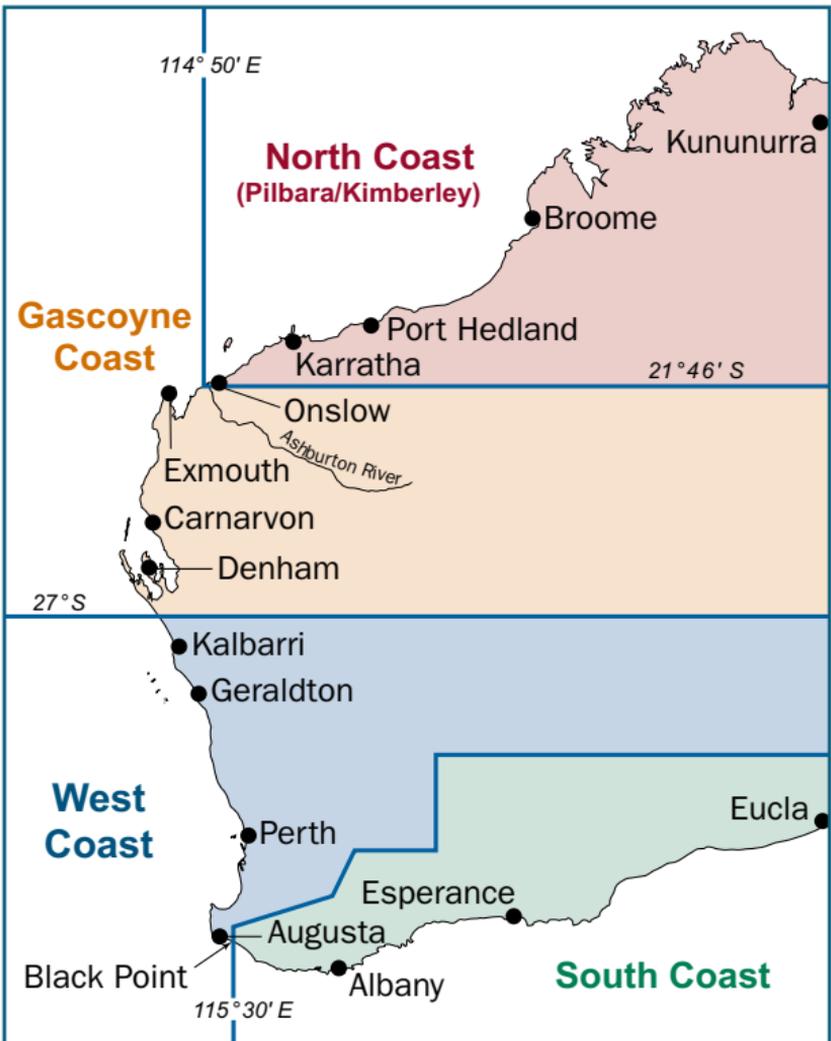
## Gascoyne Coast Bioregion

Point Quobba is part of the Gascoyne Coast Bioregion (see map below).

In this area, a mix of tropical and temperate marine conditions is reflected in the local fish species.

To the north, near Exmouth, tropical species such as emperors and mackerel dominate. Farther south, temperate species such as tailor and whiting occur.

A major influence in the distribution of species and their spawning success is the Leeuwin Current. This warm, tropical current flows south from Indonesia and down WA's coast.



While the current varies greatly from year to year, it strengthens in March to April, carrying free-floating larvae, and many tropical species, down the west coast.

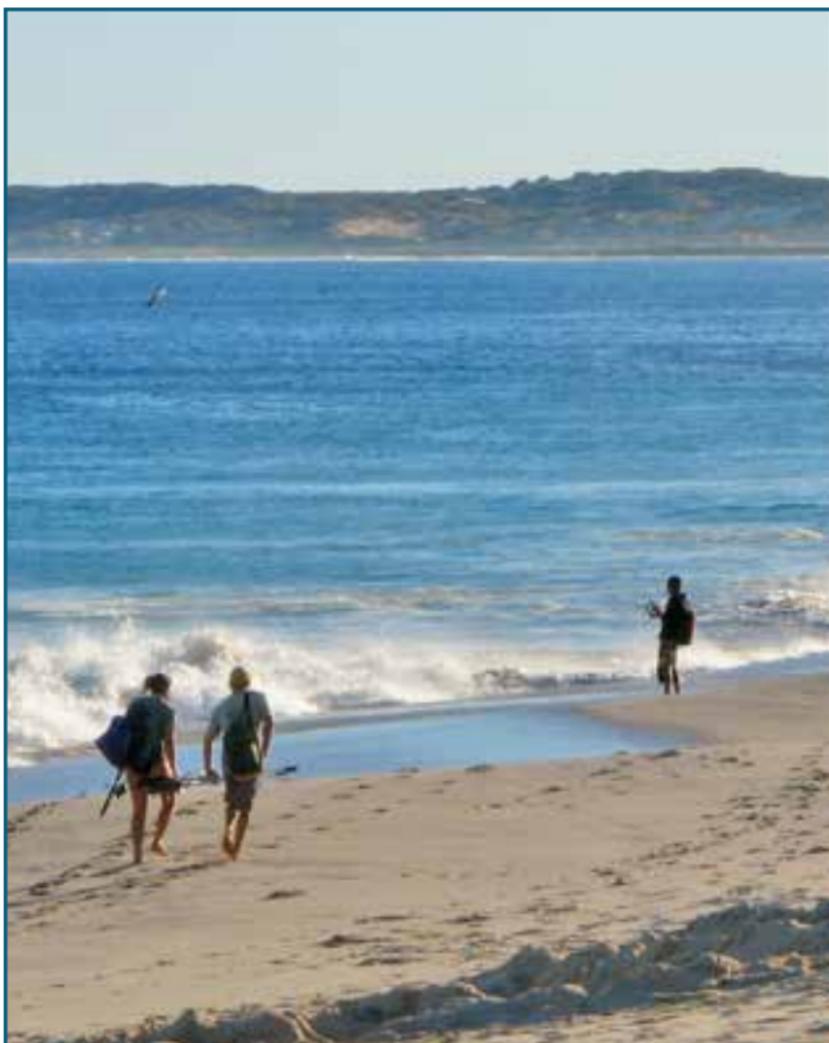
### ***Fishing rules***

For the general fishing rules for the bioregion, see the *Recreational Fishing Guide* on the Department of Fisheries website or pick up a copy at Department of Fisheries offices.

**[www.fish.wa.gov.au](http://www.fish.wa.gov.au)**

There are also special rules for the Point Quobba FHPA – see pages 10 – 11.

Photo: Andrew Cribb



# About Point Quobba

## History

The Point Quobba coral reef and lagoon were originally protected by a 400 m fishing closure made in 1987. This prohibited taking all fish and aquatic organisms except for oysters taken by hand.

Following public consultation, in 2004 Point Quobba was set aside to ensure the conservation of fish and the aquatic ecosystem in the vicinity of the reef.

In July 2009, new legislation gave protection to the entire coral reef and lagoon area (see the map on page 3 for details).

Photo: Craig Williams



## Community importance

The waters around Point Quobba are valued by local people because they are clear and largely protected from open ocean swell. It is an excellent place for swimming, snorkelling and shore-based fishing.

Aboriginal people have strong links with the area and Point Quobba lies within the traditional area of the Baiyungu people, who are members of the Gnulli group.

The area also attracts a large number of visitors, many of whom stay in Carnarvon, bringing economic benefit to the town.



## Species to look for

The Point Quobba FHPA provides relatively sheltered breeding and feeding habitat for more than 100 species including:

<b>Dart</b>	
<b>Golden trevally</b>	
<b>Mullet</b>	
<b>Parrotfish</b>	
<b>Damselfish</b>	
<b>Spangled emperor</b>	
<b>Tailor</b>	
<b>Whiting</b>	

<p><b>Yellowtail grunter</b></p>	
<p><b>Garfish</b></p>	
<p><b>Longtom</b></p>	
<p><b>Lionfish</b></p>	
<p><b>Wobbegong</b></p>	
<p><b>Rock lobster</b></p>	

Many of these species have been partially tamed from hand-feeding in the past, and can easily be observed from rocky platforms overhanging waters of a part of the lagoon known as ‘the aquarium’.

The reef and lagoon area also provide sheltered habitats for a wide variety of spectacular sedentary invertebrates including corals, sponges, anemones and shellfish. They can easily be viewed from limestone platforms during low tide or while snorkelling.

# Protecting Point Quobba

The aim of the FHPA is to conserve and protect the fish and habitats within the coral reef and lagoon system, and to raise awareness and appreciation of the marine environment.

Within the FHPA is a region that's easy to access and popular with fishers and snorkellers.

This has been designated a 'restricted area' to protect vulnerable habitats and fish species from human activity.

The following rules are in place to help you enjoy and look after this special place:

## No commercial or recreational fishing, including spearfishing, in the restricted area

- This excludes rock oysters, which may be taken by hand, and squid, which may be caught by using a jig without bait.
- Fishing is permitted elsewhere in the FHPA, subject to the general fishing rules for the Gascoyne Coast Bioregion.



## No collecting marine organisms in the restricted area

- This includes live and dead coral, live rock, crustaceans and shells.



## No jet ski-ing in the restricted area



## Snorkelling and scuba-diving

The Point Quobba FHPA is popular for snorkelling and scuba-diving, particularly in summer when the swell is low.



They are ideal ways to observe and appreciate the area's marine habitat. Both activities, pursued safely and responsibly, are encouraged within the FHPA.

## Rubbish

- Please take all your rubbish away with you and dispose of it appropriately.
- Take special care not to discard plastic bags – these can easily kill marine animals and birds.



Photo: Tourism Western Australia



## Fish for the future

Fisheries are managed in Western Australia with one main goal – *Fish for the future*. This means ensuring our fisheries are ecologically sustainable.

The Department of Fisheries takes an integrated management approach, taking into account the impact of fishing and other human activities on ecosystems.

This is underpinned by a scientific research and monitoring program to build our understanding of the biology, productivity, abundance and vulnerability of the different species.

Detailed information can be found in the *Status Reports of the Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of Western Australia* available from the Department of Fisheries website.

[www.fish.wa.gov.au](http://www.fish.wa.gov.au)



Photo: Lynda Bellchambers



## Further information

More details about Point Quobba FHPA are available in *Fisheries Management Paper No. 185: Plan of Management for the Point Quobba Fish Habitat Protection Area*, on the Department of Fisheries website.

For the most up-to-date information on fishing rules, contact your local Department of Fisheries office or visit the website at [www.fish.wa.gov.au](http://www.fish.wa.gov.au)

### Department of Fisheries

#### Head Office

3rd Floor, The Atrium,  
168 St Georges Terrace,  
Perth, WA 6000  
T: (08) 9482 7333  
F: (08) 9482 7389  
[customerservice@fish.wa.gov.au](mailto:customerservice@fish.wa.gov.au)  
ABN: 55 689 794 771

#### Carnarvon District Office

59 Olivia Terrace  
Carnarvon, WA 6701  
(08) 9941 1185

[www.fish.wa.gov.au](http://www.fish.wa.gov.au)



*Fish for the future*

### Recfishwest – representing your fishing future



Recfishwest is recognised by the State Government as the peak body for recreational fishing in WA. This organisation represents the voice of recreational fishers wherever decisions affecting our fisheries, or access to them, are made.

[www.recfishwest.org.au](http://www.recfishwest.org.au) (08) 9246 3366

Recycle – please return unwanted brochures or pass on to a friend.