



Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park

Frequently Asked Questions



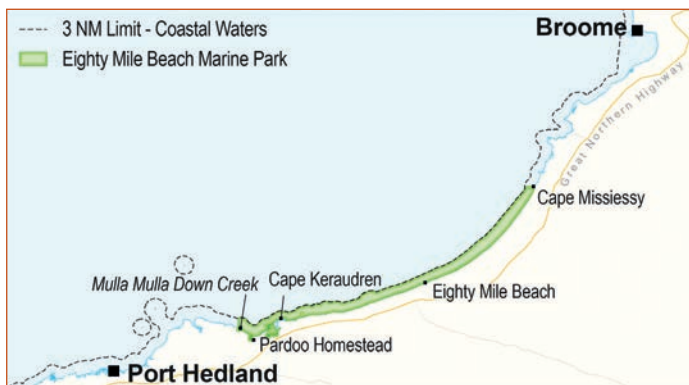
What is a marine park?

Marine parks are created to provide special care for special places. They protect important marine areas from development, pollution and the pressures of large numbers of people using the ocean and provide a place where reefs, seagrass meadows, kelp forests and other habitats can be preserved. We can ensure that future generations can still enjoy the fish, turtles, shorebirds and other marine animals that use these areas by looking after where they live.

Marine parks are monitored and researched over time so that scientists can develop a better understanding of the marine life within them. Marine parks usually attract a higher level of government funding than other areas to manage problems such as increased visitor numbers or overuse of a resource.

Where is the Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park?

This marine park covers almost 210,000 hectares of the remarkable and remote north-west coast of Western Australia. It extends for nearly 220 kilometres along the coast between Mulla Mulla Down Creek and Cape Missiessy and includes the popular recreational sites of Eighty Mile Beach, Pardoo and Cape Keraudren. It extends from the low water mark to three nautical miles out to sea at the limit of State waters.



Why is this marine park needed?

The establishment of Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park is a major step towards building a representative system of marine parks and reserves in Western Australia.

Eighty Mile Beach is one of the world's most important

feeding grounds for migratory shorebirds and waders and is listed under the Ramsar Convention, an international treaty that provides the framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. It also supports a significant nesting population of flatback turtles, which are endemic to northern Australia, and is rich in other marine life, including sawfish, dugongs, dolphins and millions of invertebrates that inhabit the sand and mud flats, seagrass meadows, coral reefs and mangroves.

Stories, songlines and sites are embedded within the Eighty Mile Beach and Cape Keraudren areas and remain a powerful spiritual force for the area's Traditional Owners, the Karajarri, Nyangumarta and Ngarla people. They maintain connections to their traditional coastal and sea country and use the area within and surrounding Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park for activities, including camping and fishing. The presence of shell middens and fish traps is evidence of the strong association between Aboriginal people in this region and its marine waters.

This coastline has impressive panoramic vistas and is popular for beach fishing, camping, four-wheel driving, beachcombing, wildlife viewing and enjoying remote seascapes. This multiple-use marine park will provide protection for a unique and spectacular part of the lower west Kimberley coastline, while providing for sustainable use and enjoyment of the area and the maintenance of Aboriginal culture and heritage.

Who is managing the marine park?

The Department of Parks and Wildlife in partnership with the area's Traditional Owners. Agreements between the Karajarri, Nyangumarta and Ngarla people and Parks and Wildlife have been signed to enable joint management over most of the park. This arrangement is expected to result in increased employment and training opportunities for Traditional Owners and communities, for example, through park ranger programs.

Is the marine park up and running yet?

Yes – the outer boundaries have been created to the low water mark and a management plan is in place, meaning that the marine park as a whole now exists. The inclusion of the intertidal area is subject to negotiations with Traditional Owners. Once an Indigenous Land Use

Agreement is in place with each of the Traditional Owner groups, the intertidal area can be incorporated and the zoning scheme established. Until this time there will be no changes to fishing rules in the marine park.

What are the types of zones?

In Western Australia, marine parks are 'multiple use' areas, meaning certain areas known as 'zones' can be used in different ways. Visitors must be aware of the zones and the activities permitted in each zone. Please act responsibly – the marine park is ours to enjoy and protect for future generations.

The zones for managing the various uses in this marine park are described below.

General use zones are managed to conserve natural values while allowing a wide range of activities where they do not impact on the values of the marine park (e.g. sustainable recreational and commercial fishing).

Recreation zones provide for conservation and recreation so commercial fishing, pearling, aquaculture and petroleum development are not allowed.

Special purpose zones are managed for a particular use or issue. For example, the special purpose zones (cultural heritage) in this marine park will be managed for the recognition and protection of sites of high cultural significance to the Traditional Owners.

Sanctuary zones are set aside for conservation, so all plants and animals are protected. Sanctuary zones are the only areas where all types of fishing is prohibited. These 'look but don't take' areas provide a place where marine plants and animals remain least affected by people and our activities. They also provide important

reference sites for scientists to assess and compare aspects of the marine environment.

Will fishing be allowed?

Yes, recreational fishing, a popular activity in the area, will be permitted in more than 75 per cent of the marine park.

However, there will be no changes to fishing or other recreational activities until the zoning scheme for the park is formalised. Once zoning occurs you will be able to continue to enjoy the marine park provided you are aware of the zones and their permitted uses.

Where will I be able to fish?

Recreational fishing will be permitted in the general use zone, recreation zone and special purpose zones (cultural heritage).

Restricted recreational fishing will be permitted in the special purpose zones (shore based-activities) where only shore-based fishing will be allowed and in the special purpose zone (mangrove protection) where only boat-based fishing will be allowed. Fishing is not permitted in sanctuary zones.

Recreational fishing rules will apply within the marine park. For more information on bag and boat limits and size restrictions, see the Department of Fisheries Statewide recreational fishing guide.

Do I need a licence to fish?

Yes, but only for certain types of fishing.

If you plan to fish from a boat powered by a motor, or if you use a boat to travel to your fishing destination, you will need a Recreational Fishing from Boat Licence (RFBL).

PERMITTED USE	General Use Zone	Special Purpose (cultural heritage) Zone	Special Purpose (shore-based activities) Zone	Special Purpose (mangrove protection) Zone	Recreation Zone	Sanctuary Zone
RECREATIONAL USE						
Boating (motorised and non-motorised) *	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Surface water sports *	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Shore-based recreational fishing *	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
Boat-based recreational fishing *	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗
Specimen shell collecting (dead or alive) *	✓	✓	✓*	✗	✓	✗
Coral and 'live' rock collecting *	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Snorkelling and diving	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wildlife viewing *	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vehicle access (car or motorbike) *	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
Boat launching	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
Access to mangrove areas by foot	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
OTHER USES						
Navigation aids	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Research *	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Anchoring (other than emergency anchoring) *	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

* Other permitted use provisions apply. For more details, see the marine park management plan at www.dpaw.wa.gov.au under 'Parks' and 'Management Plans'.

If you want to take any species of rock lobster, including tropical rock lobster, you will require a rock lobster licence. To use a throw (cast) net, you will need a net fishing licence.

Can I collect shells?

Shell collecting will be allowed in all zones except the special purpose zone (mangrove protection) and sanctuary zones.

Shells, both live and dead, are considered fish under the *Fish Resources Management Act 1994* and there are rules around taking them. To find out how many shells you can take and what size they need to be, see the daily bag and size limit table for 'other molluscs and invertebrate species' in the recreational fishing guide.

It is an offence to sell fish, including shells, unless it is collected with a commercial fishing licence.

Traditional Owners and Parks and Wildlife encourage visitors to leave shells on the beach for everyone to enjoy. Shells are habitats for important species, including the hermit crab, and are also culturally significant to Aboriginal people.



Photo: Department of Parks and Wildlife

Shells at sunset

Can I drive a vehicle and use a quad bike on the beach?

Yes, in most instances you will still be able to drive along Eighty Mile Beach as long as your off-road vehicle or quad bike is registered or licensed and riders are wearing helmets. Vehicles cannot be driven in the special purpose zone (mangrove protection) and sanctuary zones. Please do not drive in the dune system as you may harm plants and animals and the nesting sites of important bird and reptile species. The dune system is a fragile environment and driving in this area may also cause erosion.

What can I do in a sanctuary zone?

Extractive activities including fishing or collecting shells, sponges and corals will not be permitted in a sanctuary zone. However, you will still be able to enjoy boating, wildlife viewing and nature appreciation. Travelling through a sanctuary zone with fish on board will be allowed, provided the fish were caught outside the sanctuary zone. Fishing gear such as rods, handlines, drop nets or throw nets must be securely stowed (in the boat or in rod holders; no part of any fishing gear may be in the water) and cannot contain fish. Spear guns must be unloaded and stowed away.

What is the special purpose zone (mangrove protection) for?

Mangrove communities provide important habitat and refuge for a variety of fish, sharks, rays, invertebrates and birds. These in turn support socio-economic values, such as recreational fishing and wildlife viewing.

The primary purpose of this zone is to provide improved protection for mangroves and saltmarsh and species that may inhabit these areas, while still allowing for compatible recreational uses.

Activities permitted in this zone will include nature appreciation, boat-based recreational fishing and boat-based charter fishing. No other commercial activities will be permitted.

Recreational activities that have an impact on mangrove communities, such as four-wheel driving, boat launching and access to the mangrove areas by foot, will not be permitted as they are not considered compatible with the conservation purpose of the zone.

What should I do if I see a turtle on the beach?

Viewing turtles is a popular activity, but take care not to disturb the turtles or their nests. We encourage people to witness the amazing nesting event while following the Turtle Watchers Code of Conduct, available on the Parks and Wildlife website, to enhance the chances of a rewarding experience.

Follow this simple guide – part of the Code of Conduct – to view a turtle nesting:

- Move slow – avoid excess or sudden movement, crouch down to observe.
- No glow – avoid using lights and flash photography.
- Stay low – keep out of a turtle's line of sight.

Keep your distance and do not touch the turtles – if you get covered in sand, you are too close.



Photo: Department of Parks and Wildlife

Flatback turtle returning to the ocean

Will commercial fishing be permitted?

A number of commercial fisheries are now authorised to operate in the marine park, although most do not regularly use the area.

All commercial fishing will continue to be permitted within the general use zone and the special purpose zones

(cultural heritage). The commercial collection of specimen shells, marine aquarium fish and land hermit crabs will also be permitted in the special purpose zones (shore-based activities) but fishing must be shore-based only.

Commercial fishing will not be permitted in the sanctuary zones, recreation zone and special purpose zone (mangrove protection).

Recreational and commercial fisheries will continue to be managed by the Department of Fisheries under an ecosystem-based fisheries management framework.

Will customary hunting and fishing be allowed?

Yes, but customary fishing must take place in an area of the park where the person has a connection recognised by Traditional Owners of that area. It is for customary law to decide which individuals have customary fishing rights in a particular area. Where these qualifications are not met, an Aboriginal person can still go fishing, but must fish under recreational fishing rules and not customary fishing rules.

Customary fishing means fishing by an Aboriginal person that is in accordance with the Aboriginal customary law and tradition of the area being fished and for the purpose of satisfying personal, domestic, ceremonial, educational or non-commercial communal needs.

Customary hunting of animals other than fish, including dugong and sea turtle, is allowed by Traditional Owners and is an important cultural activity. Hunting should

only be conducted by recognised Traditional Owners, or where Traditional Owners have provided consent to another Aboriginal person or group.

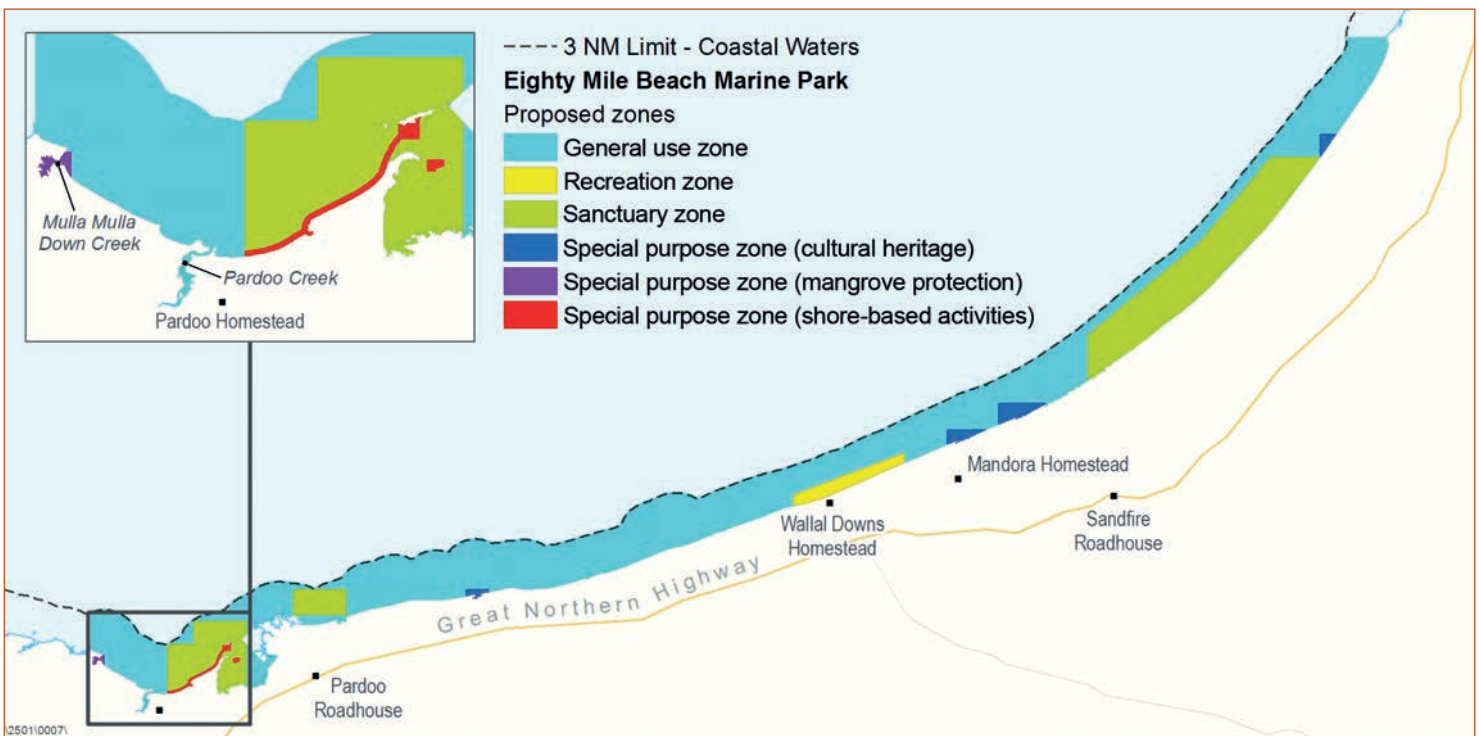


Traditional Owners fishing

How will I know where the zones are?

You can find the geographical coordinates for each zone in the marine park management plan on the Parks and Wildlife website. The coordinates will also be available from the Parks and Wildlife and Department of Fisheries websites, from the Broome offices of both departments, on signs in the marine park and in marine park brochures, which will be distributed extensively in the region and made available at popular visitor sites.

It is the responsibility of users of the marine park to find out what the rules are, and where they can and can't fish. Please make sure you 'know your zones' before you head out.



Further information

For more information regarding fishing in the marine park:

Department of Fisheries
 Port of Pearls House, 401 Port Drive
 Broome WA 6725
 (08) 9193 8600
www.fish.wa.gov.au

For more information regarding management of the marine park or wildlife in WA:

Department of Parks and Wildlife
 111 Herbert Street
 Broome WA 6725
 (08) 9195 5500
www.dpaw.wa.gov.au