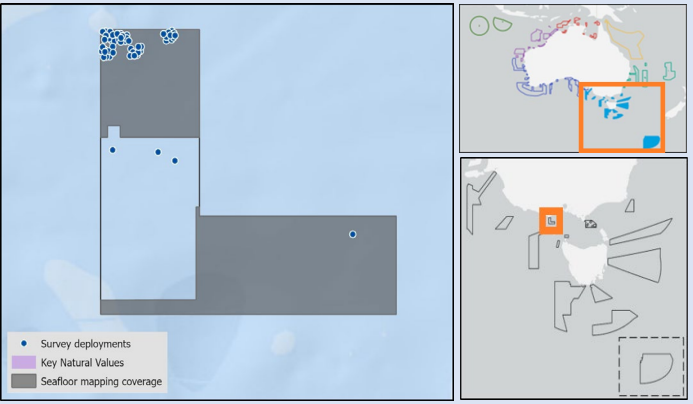
Apollo Marine Park state of knowledge

Australian Government
Parks Australia

Australian Marine Parks



Interactive Map and Report.

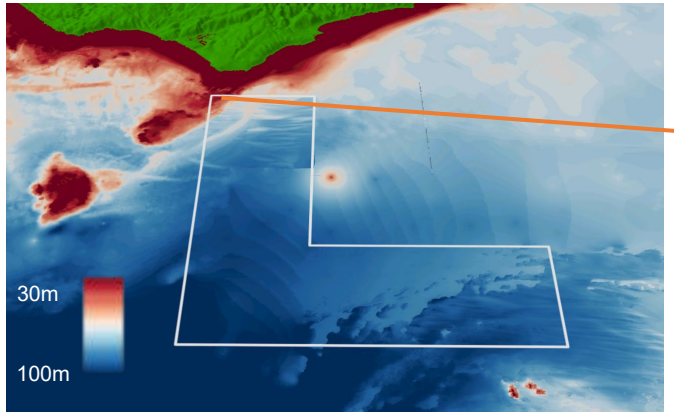
Apollo Marine Park contains sediment ecosystems, deep (mesophotic) reefs and a 5m high raised ridge feature, suspected to be deeper (rariphotic) reef habitat extending from the western park boundary to the northern park boundary[1]. The park covers representative areas of five bioregions.

Depth - 47m -101m

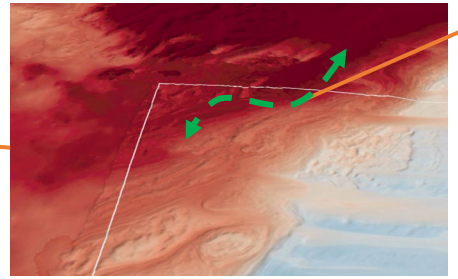
60% of seafloor mapped, most at medium to high resolution to support habitat mapping and biodiversity surveys.

Overall knowledge status

Apollo Marine Park has a **low to medium level of knowledge**. Fine-scale mapping includes high biodiversity areas of deep (mesophotic) reef ecosystems in the north west corner. This area has been a focus for fish community surveys, with data from 50 Baited Remote Underwater Video systems yet to be analysed. The south east section of the park has also been mapped with interpretation of seabed features yet to be undertaken.



Source; Geoscience Australia



Source; Geoscience Australia

Key knowledge gaps

- Deep (mesophotic and rariphotic) shelf reef benthic communities and demersal fish communities.
- Soft sediment benthic communities (epifauna and infauna) and contaminant levels (e.g. hydrocarbons, heavy metals).

Key activities

Commercial fishing
Recreational fishing
Shipping

Key pressures

Resource extraction
Climate change
Underwater noise

Known underwater cultural heritage[2]

The MV City of Rayville, an American motor ship, is located on the western side of the park in 82m of water. It was the first American vessel sunk during World War II, on the 8th of November 1940, after hitting a mine. The wreck was first surveyed in 2009 and resurveyed in 2019[1].

Southern Rock Lobster (Credit: Antonia Cooper)

Feature of interest

Prized Southern Rock Lobsters (*Jasus edwardsii*) are thought to migrate throughout the year between the highly productive state waters and Apollo Marine Park reef systems.

Other knowledge

A rich diversity of oceanic seabirds forage in these waters, including the endangered Shy Albatross (*Thalassarche cauta*).

MV City of Rayville. Credit: Dave Hurst

Further information:

1. Ierodiaconou et al. (2020) *Hydrographic Survey of Apollo Marine Park*. Final report to Parks Australia, Warrnambool,).
2. Protected under the Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018 (UCH) and included on the National and Commonwealth Heritage Lists under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act).

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