

Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs Lord Howe Marine Park (Commonwealth waters)

Visitor Safety Information

Visitors to Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs should be aware that an unexploded ordnance (UXO) was removed from Elizabeth Reef in September 2020 by the Royal Australian Navy.

A possible UXO has now been reported at Middleton Reef and it is possible for other UXO to be present and remain unseen at both reefs, submerged under sand or corals which may become exposed at a later date due to weather. While Parks Australia considers access to be safe for visitors if they do not enter the exclusion zone at Middleton Reef, visitors are cautioned that other UXOs may be present on the reefs.

What are UXO's?

An unexploded ordnance (UXO) is any sort of ammunition or explosive (military or otherwise) which has failed to explode as intended. It includes sea mines or shells used by the Navy, mortar bombs, mines, artillery shells or hand grenades used by the Army; bombs, rockets or missiles used by the Air Force; and many other types of ammunition and explosives including training munitions. It also includes marine marker flares, or parts thereof.

Military ammunition is designed to explode at the time it is used, but for a variety of reasons some of it fails to do so. **This does not mean they are not dangerous.**

If UXOs are disturbed, (e.g. touched, picked up, played with, kicked, thrown or burnt) they may explode without warning. Any item of UXO that is found must not be handled.










More information about UXO's is overleaf along with instructions for what to do if you find a UXO.



*The UXO found on Elizabeth Reef
(Photo credits Rex Byrne)*



The UXO resembled a rock

Type of UXO	Example Photos	
<p style="text-align: center;">Artillery Ammunition</p>	 Unexploded Projectile found QLD	  25 PR Shell found SE QLD
<p style="text-align: center;">Mortar Ammunition</p>	  81mm Mortar Inch Mortar High Explosive	 Unexploded 2 inch Mortar found Nth QLD
<p style="text-align: center;">Grenades</p>	 Unexploded Grenade found SE QLD Grenade No. 69	 Grenades Mk. II
<p style="text-align: center;">Aircraft Bombs</p>	 Practice Bombs	

What to do if you encounter a UXO?

1. If you find a suspicious item - **DO NOT TOUCH IT**. This includes making any attempt to move the item to a 'safe' location.



2. If safe to do so, take photographs of the object to assist with its identification.



3. Record the position of the object either by GPS or its location relative to an identifiable part in identifying the location. Photos of the location are also helpful.



4. At the earliest opportunity, inform Parks Australia on 1800 069 352 or marine.compliance@awe.gov.au and/or the Lord Howe Island Marine Parks Managers on Lord Howe Island on (02) 6563 2359 or lord.howe@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Remember DO NOT TOUCH IT!