

The Coral Sea

— an Australian Marine Park

remote, rare and remarkable

"The Coral Sea is one of the most extraordinary places on our planet. Protected as an Australian Marine Park, we're working to make sure it stays that way."

James Findlay, Director of National Parks

Image: © Mike Ball Dive Expeditions
Photographer: Howard Wormsley

The Coral Sea Marine Park is a vast blue wilderness of dramatic underwater seascapes, extraordinary creatures and complex ecosystems.

At just under a million square kilometres it's one of the world's biggest marine protected areas — three times larger than the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Did you know?



989,842 km²

At 989,842 km², the Coral Sea Marine Park covers almost twice the area of Spain.



56 cays and islets

It protects 56 cays and islets and 34 coral reefs.

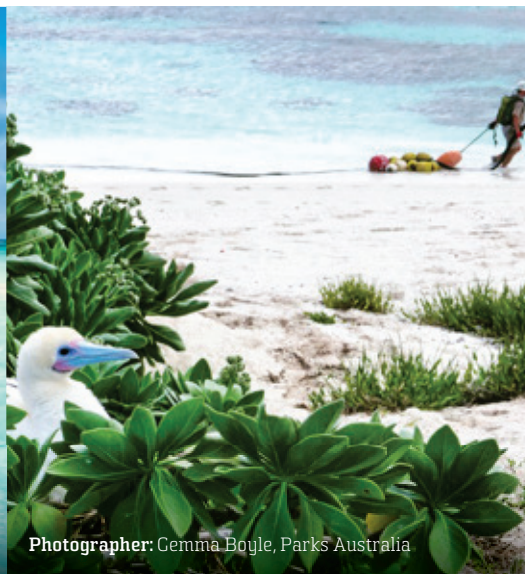


341 species

It's an important refuge for 341 species that are internationally recognised for their conservation significance.



Photographer: Gary Cranitch, Queensland Museum



Photographer: Gemina Boyle, Parks Australia



Photographer: Matt Guest

Pristine and visually spectacular

home to extraordinary creatures

What makes the Coral Sea Marine Park so special?

The Coral Sea Marine Park is one of the world's most pristine and visually spectacular oceanic areas, hosting raucous seabird colonies on isolated coral cays amid crystal-clear waters.

It's also home to an amazing array of other creatures, including:

- six of the world's seven sea turtle species
- sharks, barracuda and the only known spawning group of black marlin in the Pacific Ocean
- humpback whales
- unique coral communities, quite distinct from those of the Great Barrier Reef.



Part of a national system

Australian Marine Parks surround our continent — from the tropical waters of the Coral Sea to Ningaloo in the west, Norfolk Island in the east and the sub-Antarctic Southern Ocean waters around Macquarie Island.

Of the nearly 9 million km² of waters around Australia, almost 3 million km² are protected in Australian Marine Parks.

People and technology

With a range of scientific and compliance partners Parks Australia uses a variety of cutting-edge technology including acoustic sensors, deep-sea floats, baited cameras, autonomous underwater vehicles, and remote-sensing satellites.

This technology helps us monitor how our parks are being used. It also helps us better understand what lives in our marine parks, and why.

Discovery and protection

As well as helping people to experience and enjoy the natural environment, managing a marine park involves ongoing research and exploration, responding to environmental challenges — and looking after these special places through plain old cleaning up.

In June 2016 a team of staff and volunteers from Parks Australia, CSIRO and environmental groups collected over 2 tonnes of rubbish during a 12-day voyage in the Coral Sea Marine Park — everything from plastic bottles and fishing nets to a toy piano and a bar fridge. Scientists on the voyage also recorded over 120 species of plants, insects and marine creatures there for the first time, including some species new to science.

Explore it for yourself

Whether you want to dive, fish, snorkel or just have an unforgettable wilderness experience, the best way to visit the Coral Sea Marine Park is by charter boat. These trips set off year round from Cairns, Port Douglas, Mackay and sometimes Townsville.



Photographer: Gary Cranitch, Queensland Museum



Photographer: Matt Cuest



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Learn more

About the Coral Sea Marine Park: parksaustralia.gov.au/coralsea

About Australian Marine Parks management: parksaustralia.gov.au/marine/management

About the Coral Sea Clean-up and Biodiscovery Voyage:

bushblitz.org.au/coral-sea-clean-bio-discovery-voyage About visiting the Coral Sea: tropicalnorthqueensland.org.au

The Coral Sea Marine Park is managed by Parks Australia.



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