Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park

Victoria’s blue wilderness

Wilsons Promontory’s striking granite headlands, boulders and islands continue underwater, forming sheer walls, caves and pinnacles — a unique wilderness beneath the waves.

The Prom’s underwater wonders

Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park is the largest marine national park in Victoria, covering almost 16,000 hectares. It is a rare global example of adjoining marine and land parks with protected landscapes from the top of the mountains to the bottom of the sea.

Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park protects a diverse range of habitats including rocky reefs, sandy sea floors, kelp forests, sponge gardens, seagrass meadows and open sea. Its variety of marine life is impressive, including a wide range of reef and pelagic fish, invertebrates and marine mammals. Rays and harmless sharks cruise above the sandy seabed and giant Maori Octopuses venture out at night. Molluscs such as limpets and snails, anemones, brittlestars and seastars are also common in the intertidal reefs.

Some of Victoria’s most magnificent underwater seascapes are found in numerous dive sites around the Prom. Smooth-walled granite cliffs, boulders and caves harbor colourful ‘gardens’ of huge sponges, fan-shaped Gorgonian corals, sea-lace colonies, sea-tulips and sea whips. Brillantly coloured fish can be seen, including Red Velvetfish, Wrasse, Eastern Blue Groper, and schools of Berber, Magpie and Butterfly Perch.

There are over 45 shipwrecks in the waters surrounding Wilsons Promontory – a lasting record of our maritime history.

A number of offshore islands support colonies of Australian Fur Seals, as well as sea birds such as White-bellied Sea Eagles, Little Penguins, Short-Tailed Shearwaters, Fairy Prions and Pacific Gulls. Access to the islands is prohibited except for beach areas of Great Glennie and Rabbit Islands.

Exploring the coast

You don’t need to be on or under the water to enjoy the park’s diverse marine environment. There are many wonderful coastal settings for bird watching, rock pooling or just walking and relaxing on the beach with friends or family.

The threatened Hooded Plover nests in very exposed beach locations, including Wilsons Promontory. Please take care not to disturb the birds or step on their eggs by walking close to the water’s edge, especially between August and April.

Sea Country

Through their cultural traditions, Aboriginal people maintain their connections to their ancestral lands and waters. Parks Victoria recognises this connection and acknowledges the Boon Wurrung, Bunurong and Gunai Kurnai people, Traditional Owners of Yiruk Wamoon (Wilsons Promontory Marine and National Parks).

Protecting our marine environment

Over 90% of the plants and animals living in Victoria’s southern waters are found nowhere else in the world.

Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park is part of a system of 13 marine national parks and 11 marine sanctuaries in Victoria. By keeping these areas in a natural state we will protect this unique marine environment into the future.

For more information on Victoria’s marine national parks and marine sanctuaries, contact the Parks Victoria Information Centre on 13 1963 or visit www.parks.vic.gov.au

Help reduce marine pests

Marine pests are non-native animals that cause significant damage to the health of native marine ecosystems. Marine pests can wipe out native species by preying upon or out-competing them.

Visitors can help prevent the spread of marine pests. Upon entry and exit to any watercourse wash in fresh water and dry all boating, fishing, surfing and swimming equipment, wetsuits, swimwear, towels, footwear and water toys.

Report any suspected marine pests to the Department of Environment and Primary Industries on 13 6186. For more information on marine pests, visit www.depi.vic.gov.au
What can I do?

For the protection of the marine environment, a number of activities are prohibited within the boundaries of Victoria’s Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries. Rangers and Fisheries Officers regularly patrol these areas and enforce regulations.

Please be aware of the Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park boundaries, which start at the high water mark except where it borders the Marine Reserve surrounding the Glennie Group of Islands.

Access

The marine national park is accessed by land or via boat. The nearest launching points are in Tidal River (key and deposit required), Sandy Point or for larger vessels from Port Welshpool.

Recreational activities Is it allowed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Allowed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature observation and sight seeing</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snorkelling and scuba diving</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surfing, windsurfing, sailing, sea kayaking</td>
<td>Yes¹</td>
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<tr>
<td>Filming and photography</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jet skiing</td>
<td>No</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Education and research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Allowed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational excursions</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific research (permit required)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Recreational fishing and harvesting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Allowed</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All forms of fishing – line, spear, netting, traps and shellfish collection (including abalone and rock lobster)</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bait collection</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catch and release fishing</td>
<td>No</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Commercial fishing and aquaculture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Allowed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abalone and rock lobster fishing</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netting, line fishing and trapping</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine aquaculture</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other uses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Allowed</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Licensed tour operators (permit required)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial filming and photography (permit required)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removal or disturbance of plants/animals</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removal or disturbance of shipwreck artefacts</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dredging and soil dispersal</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities that disturb the seafloor</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste and ballast discharge</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Restrictions apply. Contact the Tidal River Visitor Centre on (03) 5680 9555 for up-to-date information.

Restrictions

You may carry fin-fish on board your boat within marine national park boundaries if you caught the fish outside the park, and you may also carry (but not use) a fishing rod. Spear guns are not permitted within any of Victoria’s marine protected areas, either in a boat or elsewhere.

You may also have abalone or rock lobster and associated equipment (securely stowed) on board the boat provided you are travelling straight through the park by the shortest practicable route.

There are strong penalties under the National Parks Act for fishing in marine national parks and marine sanctuaries. To report a fishing offence call the Department of Environment and Primary Industries on 13 FISH (13 3474).

Caring for the marine environment

- The intertidal zone in Victoria is protected – inside and outside marine protected areas.
- Bottles and other glass vessels are not permitted on beaches within marine protected areas.
- Discarded equipment and rubbish harms birds and marine animals – take your rubbish home.
- Look and don’t touch when snorkelling and diving, so future generations can do the same.
- Always replace any organisms or rocks you may have disturbed.
- Shipwrecks and artefacts are protected by law.
- If boating, anchor away from fragile areas such as seagrass meadows and reefs.
- Keep boat noise and wake low in sensitive areas along the shore and near islands to avoid disturbing wildlife.
- Avoid spilling and never pump petrol, oil or other pollutants on land or in the water.
- Maintain safe distances around marine mammals. For more information, visit www.depi.vic.gov.au.

Personal safety

- Call 000 for Police, Fire or Ambulance Services.
- For park related emergencies only (fire, accident/injury, injured wildlife, significant campground disturbance or critical maintenance issues), visitors can contact the Duty Ranger (24 hours) on 1300 247 594.
- Mobile phone coverage cannot be relied upon in the marine environment. Carry a registered distress beacon for safer boating.
- Check the marine weather report. Beware of sudden changes in weather, especially when boating on open water. Practice safe boating, and follow all signs and markers correctly.
- Wear shoes that grip well when walking on rock platforms. Stay away from cliff edges and bases and beware of large unexpected waves when walking on shore and on rock platforms.
- Never put your hands where you cannot see your fingertips (under seaweed or rocks) to avoid potentially dangerous creatures.
- Be aware of strong currents and undertows when swimming and snorkelling.
- Diving in these waters should only be undertaken by experienced and qualified divers.

Healthy Parks Healthy People

For further information

Parks Victoria
Information Centre
Call 13 1963
or visit our website www.parks.vic.gov.au

Tidal River Visitor Centre
(03) 5680 9555
7 days, 8.30am – 4pm EST
8.30am - 4.30pm EDST

Nearby Marine Parks & Reserves

Wilsons Promontory Marine Park
The coast and nearby waters east and west of the Prom are designated as Marine Park. Fishing is permitted within the marine park, subject to fishers conforming to the Fisheries Act, Diving, wildlife viewing and beach walking are also popular activities.

Corner Inlet Marine National Park
With the granite peaks of the Prom as a dramatic backdrop, this park protects a variety of sheltered habitats, including intertidal mudflats, channels and seagrass meadows. Refer to Corner Inlet Marine National Park – Park Note.

Corner Inlet and Nooramunga Marine & Coastal Parks
Protected from the pounding surf of Bass Strait by barrier islands; an intricate network of shallow marine waters, isolated granite islands, intertidal mudflats and over 40 sand barrier islands. Refer to Corner Inlet and Nooramunga Marine and Coastal Parks – Park Note.

Shallow Inlet Marine & Coastal Park
Nestled between Waratah Bay and the majestic peaks of Wilsons Promontory, the park offers a secluded and peaceful setting for a range of water based activities.

For park related emergencies only (fire, accident/injury, injured wildlife, significant campground disturbance or critical maintenance issues), visitors can contact the Duty Ranger (24 hours) on 1300 247 594.

Mobile phone coverage cannot be relied upon in the marine environment. Carry a registered distress beacon for safer boating.

Check the marine weather report. Beware of sudden changes in weather, especially when boating on open water. Practice safe boating, and follow all signs and markers correctly.

Wear shoes that grip well when walking on rock platforms. Stay away from cliff edges and bases and beware of large unexpected waves when walking on shore and on rock platforms.

Never put your hands where you cannot see your fingertips (under seaweed or rocks) to avoid potentially dangerous creatures.

Be aware of strong currents and undertows when swimming and snorkelling.

Diving in these waters should only be undertaken by experienced and qualified divers.

Healthy Parks Healthy People

Visiting a park can improve your health, mind, body and soul. So, with over four million hectares of parkland available to Victorians, why not escape to a park today!
On calm days there are opportunities for shore-based snorkelling along the northern and southern flanks of Norman Bay, the southern flank of Picnic Bay and at Refuge Cove.

In the right conditions there are numerous excellent diving opportunities from easily accessible shallow reefs to deep sub tidal reefs, sea grass beds, vertical granite walls, large boulders with swim throughs, caves, soft sediment and extensive pelagic zones. Popular dive sites for experienced and qualified divers are found around the Glennie Group of Islands, Aner Group of Islands, South East Point, Waterloo Bay, Bare Back Cove and Horn Point. Some commercial operators provide access by boat to the more remote dive locations.

The wreck was not salvaged and is a fascinating deep water (50 m) dive site for experienced and qualified divers only.

Cleft Rock
This stunning formation rises 113 m out of the sea. Its granite dome and deep caves carved into its southern flank gave rise to the nickname “Skull Rock”.

Kanowna Island
Motorised and non-motorised vessels including sea kayaks are prohibited from within 200 m of Kanowna Is. from November to January (inclusive) and within 100 m of the island at other times of the year.

Kanowna Island is and Anderson Islets support a large breeding population of Australian Fur Seals and a small number of New Zealand Fur Seals. Seals may also be found on Norman Is. These species were once more widely distributed around the Prom and are still recovering from near local extinction as a result of the sealing industry of the 1800s.

Cleft Island
Cleft Island is a popular Spotter Dolphin site. It is easily accessible by boat from outside 1.8 nautical miles.

Seal colony
Kanowna Is. and Anderson Islets support a large breeding population of Australian Fur Seals and a small number of New Zealand Fur Seals. Seals may also be found on Norman Is. These species were once more widely distributed around the Prom and are still recovering from near local extinction as a result of the sealing industry of the 1800s.

On the move
A number of threatened transient marine fauna have been recorded in the area including the Southern Right Whale and Leatherback Turtle. Other marine mammals recorded in the area include the Humpback Whale, Andrews’s Beaked Whale, Pilot Whale, Sperm Whale, Goose-beaked Whale, Common Dolphin and Bottlenose Dolphin. Maintain safe distances around marine mammals.

Mapping the sea floor
Parks Victoria and Deakin University are working together to map the entire sea floor of Wilsons Promontory Marine National Park using multi-beam sonar mapping technology. The data gathered will inform future research, monitoring and emergency response planning. It will also help to track environmental change and areas vulnerable to particular threats, and identify areas that are suitable for recreational activities.

So far, discoveries include:
- A 30 metre high underwater sand dune
- An underwater sand spit more than 2 km long
- Hills around 80 to 90 metres deep
- A number of channels on the ocean floor which may have been waterways when the park was part of the land bridge that joined the mainland to Tasmania during the last ice age, around 10,000 years ago.

Onshore boundary marker
Offshore boundary marker

Water depth

Access to all islands in Wilsons Promontory Marine Protected Areas is prohibited. Access is permitted to beach areas only of Great Glennie and Rabbit Islands.

No fishing
No walking
No motorised and non-motorised vessels including sea kayaks are prohibited from within 200 m of Kanowna Is. from November to January.

For mobile App search for Avenza PDF Maps

www.parks.vic.gov.au

Cartography by Parks Victoria April 2014

Disclaimer: Parks Victoria does not guarantee that this data is without flaw of any kind and therefore assumes no liability in connection with the use of this data.