

# Corner Inlet Marine National Park

- A world class wetland

## The Prom's sheltered haven

Tucked into the north of Wilsons Promontory, Corner Inlet is the forgotten gem of the Victorian coast. Corner Inlet Marine National Park includes a small section of the waters of the inlet. On calm days the water develops a glassy sheen, disturbed only by the occasional penguin, diving cormorant, or pod of dolphins.

There are many reasons why the marine environment at Corner Inlet is special. It is the most easterly, and consequently the warmest, of Victoria's large bays. It boasts a complex network of mangroves, saltmarsh, mud banks, seagrass beds, rocky islands and deeper channels.

Four of Victoria's species of seagrasses form extensive beds here. Corner Inlet also supports huge numbers of migratory wader birds and healthy populations of seafloor animals and plants that are rare or absent elsewhere in Victoria.

Corner Inlet is the only place in Victoria where the Broad-leaved seagrass (*Posidonia australis*) forms large meadows. Growing up to a metre in length, this seagrass is one of the world's tallest. Seagrass beds are a crucial habitat as a nursery for many important recreational and commercial species, in stabilising the sediment, and in providing shelter and food for many other creatures. *Posidonia australis* is however one of the most vulnerable of our seagrasses. Once common right around Corner Inlet, large beds are now restricted to three mud banks towards the south.

Animals including a range of large crabs, multicoloured sea-stars, sea snails, tiny iridescent squid and many fish including pipefish, stingarees, flathead, whiting and flounder all live within the seagrass.



**Seagrass meadows**

## Protecting our marine environment

The waters off Australia's southern coast are very special and unique. Over 90% of the plants and animals living here are found nowhere else on earth.

The Victorian Government has created a system of 13 Marine National Parks and 11 smaller Marine Sanctuaries to ensure that representative samples of Victoria's diverse, distinctive and amazing marine environment are conserved for future generations.

These parks and sanctuaries now protect 5.3% of Victoria's coastal waters, safeguarding important marine habitats and species, and complementing our world-class national parks system on land.

By keeping some of these marine areas in a natural state, free from potentially damaging human activities, we will protect these environments into the future. Victorians will also benefit from the positive effects that this protection will have on recreation and tourism, community education and scientific research.

People are encouraged to visit Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries, but extractive or potentially damaging activities (e.g. fishing and mining) are prohibited within their boundaries in order to preserve marine biodiversity and maintain or enhance the condition of these areas.



## Personal safety

Always consult tide charts before going boating

When boating, always let someone know before you go, including an estimated time of arrival

Beware of sudden changes in weather, especially when boating on open water

Diving should only be undertaken by trained and experienced divers

Beware of strong currents and undertows when snorkelling or at the beach

Always remember to wear a hat, shirt and sunscreen

## Caring for the marine environment

Please help us care for our Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries by remembering these guidelines:

Discarded gear and rubbish can endanger birds and marine animals – please take your rubbish home

All plants and animals in the park are protected. Please do not disturb or remove any plants or animals.

Keep clear of bird nesting or roosting areas

Please take care when boating and observe speed restrictions. Power boats can cause damage to fragile mudflats and seagrass habitats

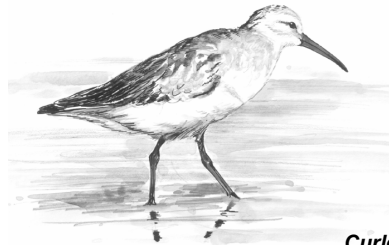
## Enjoying Corner Inlet Marine National Park

Corner Inlet Marine National Park is situated 200 kilometres south east of Melbourne. It can be accessed from boat launching facilities at Duck Point (Yanakie), Toora and Port Welshpool.

As well as protecting the marine environment, Corner Inlet Marine National Park offers an attractive range of recreational opportunities.

The sheltered inlet provides a pleasant setting, with its low landscapes of marshes framed by the spectacular backdrop of the granite peaks of Wilsons Promontory.

Sea kayaking across the water is a great way to explore the park. There are also excellent opportunities for boat based recreation, with a number of licensed tour operators offering a range of activities including sea kayaking and boat tours.



*Curlew Sandpiper*

Boat-based camping is available at Tin Mine Cove within Wilsons Promontory National Park. Situated within the wilderness zone, this site is one of the more remote camping areas of the Prom. Water can be scarce in the northern section of the Prom, and fires are not permitted. Bookings for this site must be made through the Tidal River Office on (03) 5680 9555

Although the waters of Corner Inlet appear to be quite sheltered, sudden changes in the weather do occur. Always check the weather forecast before you head out.

Under the water there are unique opportunities for safe, boat based diving and snorkelling waiting to be discovered. The shallow seagrass meadows hide a rich diversity of marine life undisturbed by frequent diving.

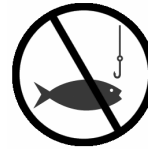
The seagrass meadows offer the underwater photographer many new and interesting subjects for macro-photography, many of which are not encountered elsewhere in Victoria.

Divers can expect to see a variety of large fish including Banjo Sharks, leatherjackets, flathead and Grass Whiting cruising the seagrass meadows. Closer inspection of the seagrass will reveal many cryptic species such as seahorses, pipefish, miniature squids and numerous crustaceans.

Small beds of sponges and seasquirts grow amongst the seagrass and larger invertebrates like seastars, crabs and octopuses can be encountered patrolling the meadows for prey.

## Restrictions

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.



No fishing, netting, spearing, taking or killing of marine life. All methods of fishing, from the shore or at sea, are prohibited



No taking or damaging of animals, plants and objects (artefacts)

There are strong penalties under the National Parks Act for fishing in Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries. These restrictions and penalties apply in most Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries from 16 November 2002.

NOTE: While Corner Inlet Marine National Park exists from November 2002, restrictions on fishing only apply after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004. All other restrictions however apply from November 2002.

Fishing is permitted within the surrounding Corner Inlet Marine and Coastal Park in accordance with Fisheries Regulations. For further information contact Parks Victoria on **13 1963**.

The Victorian Recreational Fishing Guide provides details on species catch and size limits and is available from DPI offices and fishing stores.

To report a fishing offence contact the Department of Primary Industries (DPI), Fisheries on **13 FISH (133 474)**.

Parks Victoria is responsible for the day-to-day management of Victoria's Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries.

If you would like further information about Victoria's Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries, contact the Parks Victoria Information Centre on **13 1963** or visit the Parks Victoria website at: **[www.parkweb.vic.gov.au](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au)**

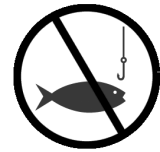
Parknotes on each of Victoria's Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries, including boundaries and permitted and prohibited activities, have been produced to assist visitors to these areas.

**Corner Inlet Marine National Park** Area: 1,550 ha

Highway/Sealed road  
Marine National Park  
National Park  
Marine & Coastal Park  
Marine Park  
Waterbody  
HWM High Water Mark

Boat access point  
In water boundary marker (Pile or Buoy)  
Shore-based boundary marker (Triangular Beacon)  
Information

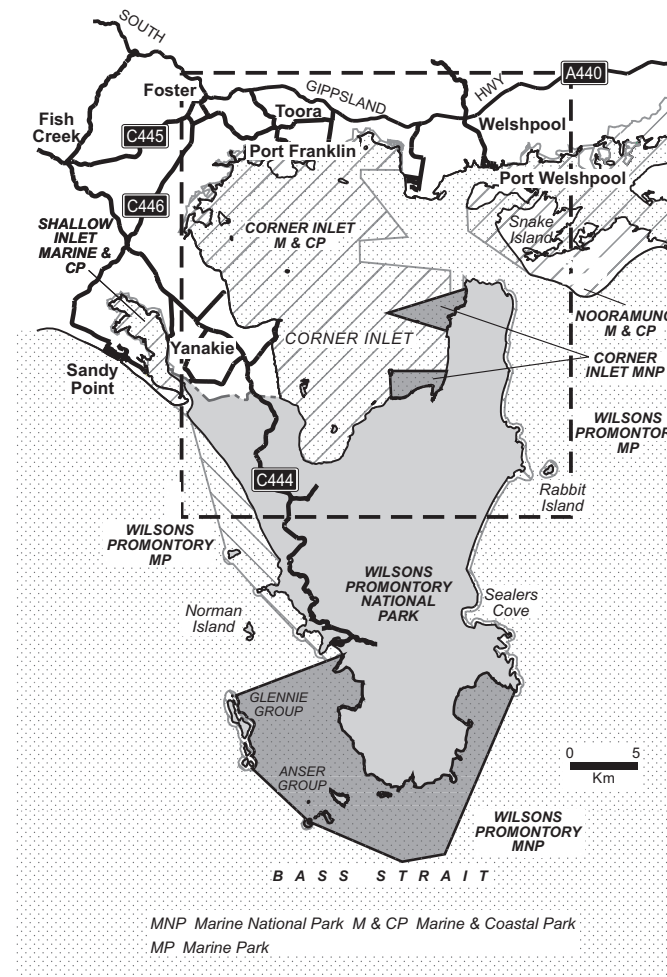
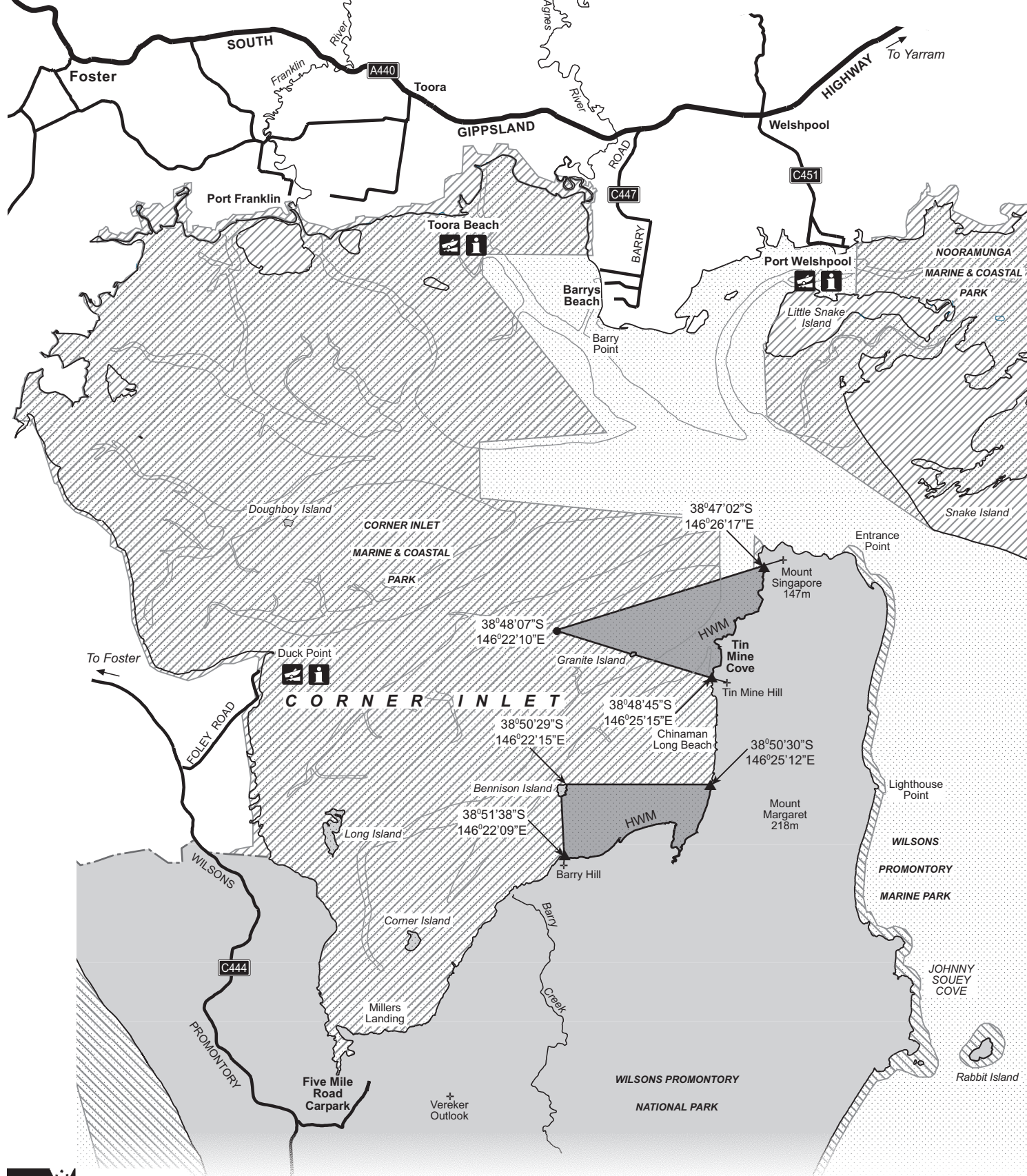
Latitude and Longitude values are based on WGS84



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## Nearby parks and reserves

### Wilson's Promontory National Park

One of Victoria's oldest and most-loved national parks, Wilsons Promontory National Park encompasses the entire triangle of land that forms the southernmost tip of mainland Australia. It features diverse ecosystems of open forest, rainforest and fern gullies, sweeping beaches and rocky headlands, framed by a backdrop of huge granite mountains.

### Wilson's Promontory Marine National Park

This Marine National Park features spectacular underwater scenery with granite cliffs plunging below the surface and deep reefs covered in abundant sponges and fish species, as well as islands that support colonies of penguins, seabirds and seals. It contains some of Victoria's most outstanding dive sites.

### Nooramunga & Corner Inlet Marine & Coastal Parks

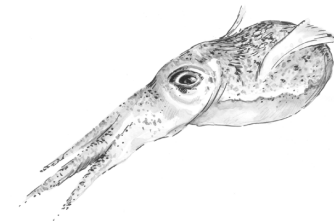
Protected from the pounding surf of Bass Strait by barrier islands, the quiet waters of Nooramunga & Corner Inlet Marine & Coastal Parks create an intricate network of shallow marine waters, isolated granite islands, intertidal mudflats and a complex of over 40 sand barrier islands. There is excellent fishing from the surf beaches of the barrier islands or by boat within the sheltered waters of the inlet, and walking tracks ranging from short strolls to overnight hikes.

### Marine National Park boundaries

**Corner Inlet Marine National Park (1,550 ha)** is made up of two separate portions located on the south eastern coast of the inlet adjoining Wilsons Promontory National Park. Granite Island borders the boundary of the northern triangular portion of the park and Bennison Island borders the boundary of the southern portion of the park.

## What you might see

### Southern Dumpling Squid *Euprymna tasmanica*



A spectacular but rarely seen inhabitant of the park is the shy, tiny, Southern Dumpling Squid. Rotund, big eyed, and iridescent, they are night feeders, burying themselves in the sand during the day. These squid have evolved an unusual symbiotic relationship with light-producing bacteria. As juveniles, Southern

Dumpling Squid catch the bacteria and nurture them inside special body cavities. As the squid grows, the bacteria produce light in return for the squid providing food (sugar).

It is a mutually beneficial relationship because at night the squid is able to control the amount of bacterial light that it emits from its underbelly to match the starlight or moonlight that shimmers through the water above. This form of camouflage is called counter illumination and enables the squid to avoid predators like flathead when moving over the seagrass.

### Spotted Pipefish *Stigmatopora argus*

Growing to 26 centimetres in length, the Spotted Pipefish is a master of disguise amongst seagrass, as its slender body, green colouration and slow movement combine to provide cover to the animal from both predator or prey. Spotted Pipefish are ambush predators, patiently waiting for tiny shrimp and other microscopic animals to move a little too close before they quickly suck them into their tube-like mouths.

The species exhibits role reversal of the sexes. It is the female Spotted Pipefish who courts the male, her colours intensifying during the breeding season when she is competing for mates. The selected male gets to carry the eggs in an enclosed brood pouch on the underside of his tail. The species is only found in southern Australian waters.

Activity	What can I do?	
	Corner Inlet MNP	Corner Inlet & Nooramunga M&CP
<b>Recreational activities</b>		
• nature observation and sightseeing	yes	yes
• snorkelling and scuba diving	yes	yes
• swimming, surfing	yes	yes
• windsurfing, sailing, boating	yes(1)	yes(1)
• filming and photography	yes	yes
<b>Recreational fishing and harvesting</b>		
• all forms of fishing - line, spear, netting, traps	no(2)	yes(3)
• shellfish collection, including abalone and rock lobster collection	no(2)	yes
• bait collection	no	yes
• catch and release fishing	no(2)	yes
<b>Commercial fishing and marine aquaculture</b>		
• abalone fishing	no(2)	yes
• rock lobster fishing	no(2)	yes
• netting, line fishing and trapping	no(2)	yes
• marine aquaculture	no	no
<b>Education and research</b>		
• educational excursions	yes	yes
• scientific research	yes(4)	yes(4)
<b>Other uses</b>		
• licensed tour operators	yes(4)	yes(4)
• filming and photography (commercial)	yes(4)	yes(4)
• removal or disturbance of plants or animals	no	no

- 1 Restrictions may apply to high-speed boating or the use of personal watercraft where there is a conflict with natural values or other users
- 2 After April 2004
- 3 Flounder spearing is not permitted within Corner Inlet Marine & Coastal Park
- 4 Subject to permit