Lord Howe Island Marine Park News

The adventurous courtesy mooring buoy from the Solitary Islands Marine Park

After being installed at South Solitary Island in 2019, a marine park courtesy mooring buoy has competed an unexpected voyage, recently washing up on Lord Howe Island, hundreds of kilometres from where its journey began.

Its journey is a reminder of the network of marine parks that stretches along the NSW coast and the natural forces that connect them.

Courtesy moorings help support sustainable boating and protect marine environments by providing a secure alternative to anchoring. When used instead of anchors, they can help protect sensitive marine habitats and the marine life they support from anchor damage.

By using courtesy moorings where they are available, boaters can help protect the underwater environments that make our marine parks such special places.



Have your say on the future of Yellowtail Kingfish management

A draft NSW Yellowtail Kingfish Harvest Strategy is open for public consultation informed by a new 2026 stock assessment.

Lord Howe Island fishing activities are currently excluded from the Harvest Strategy. The draft Strategy notes that Yellowtail Kingfish around Lord Howe Island are likely to form an independent and self-recruiting portion of the eastern stock.

Harvest strategies are a best-practice way to manage fisheries. They provide a clear plan for balancing environmental, economic, social and Aboriginal cultural interests while helping to keep fish stocks healthy for future generations.

The latest integrated stock assessment estimated that the NSW component of the Eastern Australia Yellowtail Kingfish stock was approximately 5.5% of unfished biomass at the start of 2025. The Harvest Strategy sets clear goals to rebuild the NSW stock to staged targets.

Public consultation is open until 18 October 2026. Further information can be found at

https://www.dpird.nsw.gov.au/fishing/harvest-strategies/yellowtail-kingfish.

Lord Howe Island Marine Park Reminder

With the 2026/2027 season upon us, visitors and residents are reminded of key marine park rules

Sanctuary Zones

- Sanctuary Zones (and National Park Zones in the Lord Howe Marine Park - Commonwealth waters) are "look but don't take" areas, where all animals, plants and habitat (whether alive or not) are protected

General Activities

- **Fires on beaches are prohibited**, please use designated BBQ areas
- **Only approved fish feeding pellets** should be used to feed fish in designated fish feeding areas
- **Imported seafood**, such as oysters, must not be introduced into the marine park
- **Anchoring** is not permitted within some areas of the marine park, depending on vessel size

Fishing

- **Bag and size limits** apply to all species caught while fishing in the marine park
- Ensure you are aware of **bag and possession limits**, noting that a maximum daily bag limit of 20 applies to any fish or invertebrates not specifically listed in the NSW fishing rules
- Retaining **undersize fish is prohibited**
- **Threatened species**, such as Black Rockcod, should be released immediately with the least possible harm if caught
- There is **no export of fish from the island**
- **Fishing gear must be securely stowed** while transiting through sanctuary zones
- **Spearfishing, snares and traps are prohibited**
- Lobster, crays and crabs can only be collected by hand (on snorkel) and are subject to size and bag limits
- Offal from cleaning of fish that have been caught OUTSIDE the lagoon must NOT be discarded within the lagoon
- Offal from cleaning of fish that have been caught INSIDE the lagoon should be discarded thoughtfully. Discarding fish waste at the jetty and boat ramp can attract sharks. The waste management facility can take fish waste.
- NSW DPIRD have a **FishSmart app** that can be downloaded for free and provides offline access to maps of NSW Marine Park Zones, bag & size limits, fishing gear rules and local tides etc

Breaches of rules and regulations can result in **penalties ranging from $75 on-the-spot fines to maximum penalties of up to $110,000**. There are also provisions for the confiscation of fish and fishing gear.

For further information about the Lord Howe Island Marine Park call into the office and grab a copy of the **Lord Howe Island Marine Park User Guide**, or phone (02) 6563 2359 if you have any questions.

The Lord Howe Marine Park (Commonwealth waters) including Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs is managed by Parks Australia in collaboration with NSW DPIRD. Visitors to the reefs should be aware that permits are required to recreationally fish at Elizabeth Reef and an Exclusion Zone has been established at Middleton Reef around the location of an unexploded ordnance. **More information is available on the FishSmart app or** the Parks Australia website: www.parksaustralia.gov.au/lordhowe.

For more information, please contact DPIRD's Lord Howe Island Marine Park staff on 6563 2359