

Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary

A coastal haven in the suburbs

Just off Beaumaris in Melbourne's southeastern suburbs, sloping cliffs of sandstone jut out into the lapping waters of Port Phillip Bay. At the water's edge the rock has been worn down into a series of platforms, sea caves, and offshore reefs, creating a delightful and varied marine environment that is easily accessible to many Melbournians. Ricketts Point is also a popular destination for schools and interpretation programs.

It is the variety of habitats that makes Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary so interesting. Near the shore the rocks are covered in red and green algae that shelter a myriad of small marine creatures, including tiny brittle stars, bristle worms, and small crustaceans such as sandhoppers and crabs. Waves refract between the rocks, creating small sandy coves. The soft seafloor is covered in patches of green seagrass or bunches of seaweed attached to small rocks.

Further offshore rock bommies are carpeted in green Caulerpa, or tall brown Sargassum seaweed, which hides numerous animals amongst its stiff dissected leaves. The offshore rocks and ledges attract fish too, including schools of Southern Hulafish, and occasional wrasse and Victorian Scalyfin. Cryptic weedfish and shrimp can be found amongst the algae.

The Marine Sanctuary regularly also hosts pods of Bottlenose Dolphins swimming through the area, the occasional lone Fairy Penguin, and even Humpback Whales have been observed.

Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary is part of a system of 13 Marine National Parks and 11 smaller Marine Sanctuaries created in November 2002 by the Victorian Government 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.

Enjoying Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary

The area is deservedly popular for snorkelling and diving, especially exploring the walls along the shoreline and the rubble at the edge of the reef for a wide variety of invertebrate life.

Bird watching at Ricketts Point is also a rewarding pastime, as many seabirds gather to roost on the rocks at low tide or to scavenge along the shoreline. Please keep dogs under control at all times to avoid disturbing roosting seabirds.

With great opportunities for safe swimming and delightful rock pool rambles along the shore, Ricketts Point is an ideal place for families to enjoy and learn more about our fascinating and diverse marine environment.

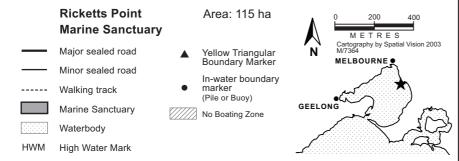


If you look very closely you may see a Blueringed Octopus hiding under stones. But remember, do not touch. The normally shy creature will flash tiny rings in electric-blue if disturbed too much. This is a warning to take seriously, as its poisonous bite is very dangerous.

Ricketts Point also features in paintings by a number of Australia's famous early artists such as Tom Roberts and Fred McCubbin. Information on the paintings is available at sites adjacent to the sanctuary (the Tom Roberts painting *The Sunny South* was actually painted at Ricketts Point.







Latitude and Longitude values are based on WGS84. GPS users note that co-ordinates for boundaries are given in the format degrees:minutes:seconds. Alternate formats are available on Parkweb, by calling 13 1963 or from Parks Victoria Offices.

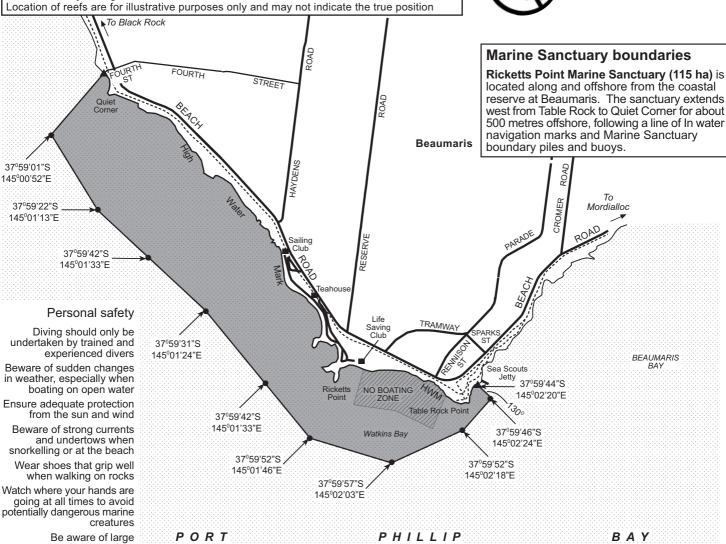


No fishing, netting, taking or killing of marine life. All methods of fishing, from the shore or at sea, are prohibited.

No spear fishing.



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



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.

Dogs are not permitted off-leash on the rock platforms or low tide exposed areas of the Marine . Sanctuary at any time.

There are strong penalties under the National Parks Act for fishing or interfering with marine life in Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries These restrictions and penalties apply in Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary from 16 November 2002.

You may carry fin-fish on board your boat within park boundaries if you caught the fish outside the parks, and you may also carry (but not use) a fishing rod or a spear gun.

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

To report a fishing offence call the Department of Primary Industries on 13 FISH (133 474).

Parks Victoria is responsible for the day-to-day management of Victoria's Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries. For further information contact the Parks Victoria Information Centre on **13 1963** or visit the Parks Victoria website at: 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.

Caring for the marine environment Discarded gear and rubbish

unexpected waves when walking on shore, especially

Stay away from cliff edges,

on rock platforms

sea caves and bases

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

Always replace any organisms or rocks you may have disturbed

Keep clear of bird nesting or roosting areas

Learn more about Victoria's marine animals and plants

