

Protecting coral

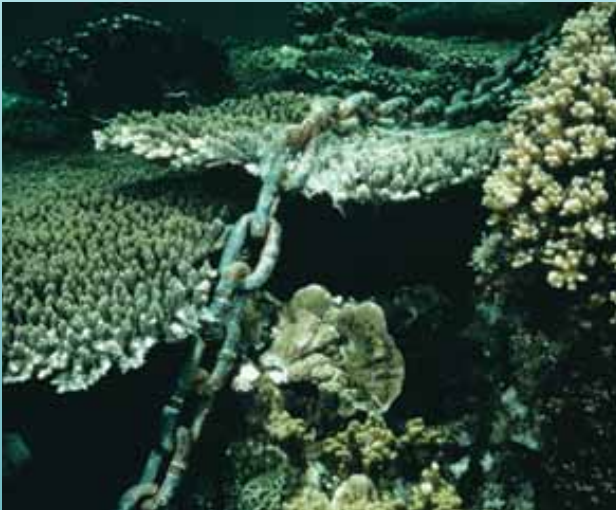
The Great Barrier Reef and its island national parks are home to abundant and diverse marine life, attracting thousands of visitors each year. Corals are among the most popular attractions, yet they are the most vulnerable.

Coral reefs can be damaged by:

- a vessel's anchor and chain dropping or dragging on coral
- a vessel grounding when the wind changes or the tide ebbs
- a chain or rope wrapping around coral and breaking pieces off.

It may take many years for coral to recover. Some coral never returns to its original condition.

It is an offence to damage coral in the Great Barrier Reef and Great Barrier Reef Coast marine parks.



Anchor chains damage coral.
Photograph courtesy of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

Further information

For Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) enquiries visit us online at www.derm.qld.gov.au or phone **13 74 68 (13 QGOV)**.

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

2-68 Flinders St, Townsville
PO Box 1379, Townsville QLD 4810
Phone: 1800 990 177
Email: info@gbrmpa.gov.au
Web: www.gbrmpa.gov.au



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Marine Park information

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service
Department of Environment and Resource Management

Public moorings and anchoring

Protecting coral in the northern Great Barrier Reef area



Australian Government
Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority

Toward 
Tomorrow's Queensland

 Queensland
Government

Tomorrow's Queensland: strong, green, smart, healthy and fair

Public moorings

Public moorings are blue, double-cone shaped buoys with a colour-coded band. The band indicates one of five classes of moorings found throughout the marine park that cater to different vessel types and lengths.

The mooring specifications and conditions of use are displayed on the colour-coded band and on the mooring tag attached to the pick-up line. A large number of privately-owned moorings also exist within the marine park. You should obtain the permission of the owner before using a privately-owned mooring.



Public mooring buoy — this illustrates a B class mooring.

Use of moorings

When using moorings be aware that:

- all public moorings are available for overnight use
- all public moorings have a time limit on day use. A vessel cannot occupy a mooring for longer than the time limit specified on the mooring tag, between the hours of 7 am and 5 pm. Most moorings have a two or four hour limit. This ensures fair and equitable use of the moorings. If a vessel picks up a mooring on or after 3 pm it may remain until 9 am the next day
- public moorings must not be used by more than one craft at a time (ancillary craft exempted), unless otherwise stated
- care should be taken to comply with all information displayed on the mooring tag
- it is an offence to remove, misuse, or engage in conduct that results in damage to a public mooring.



Moorings buoy, pick-up tag and pick-up line

Public moorings are generally located near drying reefs or shorelines. Care should be taken when approaching and leaving the buoys. Particular care should be taken in accessing the moorings in poor weather, reduced visibility or at night.

How to pick up a mooring

When picking up a mooring:

- take note of the prevailing wind and tides. Approach the mooring buoy by motoring into the wind or tide (whichever is stronger)
- observe the colour-coded band on the buoy to ensure your vessel is within the size and wind strength limitations for the mooring
- take care to avoid running over the pick-up line when approaching the mooring
- use a boat hook to retrieve the pick-up line
- observe the mooring tag attached to the pick-up line for information on the limits of use
- attach the mooring eye to a cleat or strong point on the bow of the vessel. No other lines should be used when mooring as this may increase the swing circle and lead to vessel or reef damage.



Pick-up tag

How to drop a mooring

When dropping a mooring:

- motor slowly towards the mooring to slacken the line slightly
- cast the mooring line and pick-up line well clear of the vessel
- reverse away from the mooring buoy and lines.

Reef protection markers

The northern Great Barrier Reef area contains many well-developed fringing reefs that support highly diverse coral communities.

To protect these reefs, no-anchoring areas can be found at the following locations:

- Low Island
- Fitzroy Island
- Watsons and Anchor bays, Lizard Island
- Cod Hole.



Reef protection marker

Reef protection markers have been installed to mark the no-anchoring area (with the exception of Cod Hole, where two public moorings are provided). The markers are easily identified by their white, pyramid-shaped buoys (joined with an imaginary line).

Never anchor inshore of the buoys, except when anchoring on the beach. Reef protection markers must not be used to moor vessels.

Anchor with care outside reef protection markers

Please ensure you follow best environmental practices when anchoring:

- carry enough chain, or chain and line, for the water depth
- anchor in sand or mud away from corals
- motor towards the anchor while retrieving it. If the anchor is stuck, motor the vessel above and slightly ahead of the anchor before retrieval
- anchor far enough outside the line of reef protection markers to ensure that all parts of the anchor chain and rope remain outside the line of markers should the vessel swing.

Welcome Bay, Fitzroy Island

Welcome Bay is a Conservation Park (Yellow) Zone and limited fishing applies.



Low Island

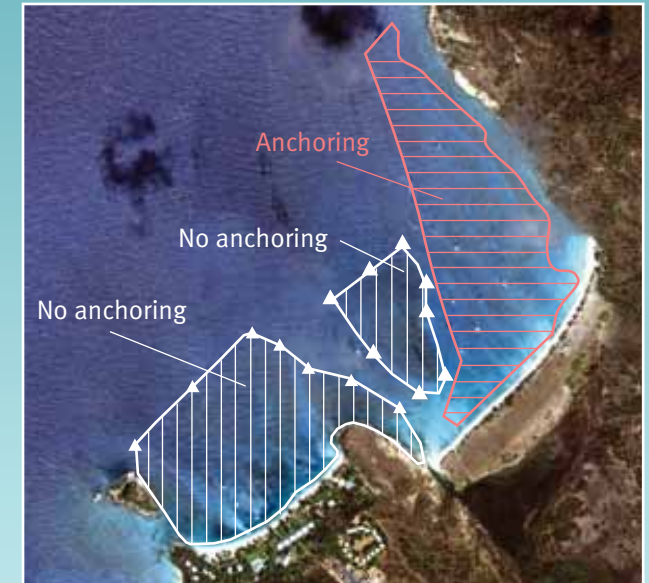
Low Island is a Marine National Park (Green) Zone and is a no-take area.



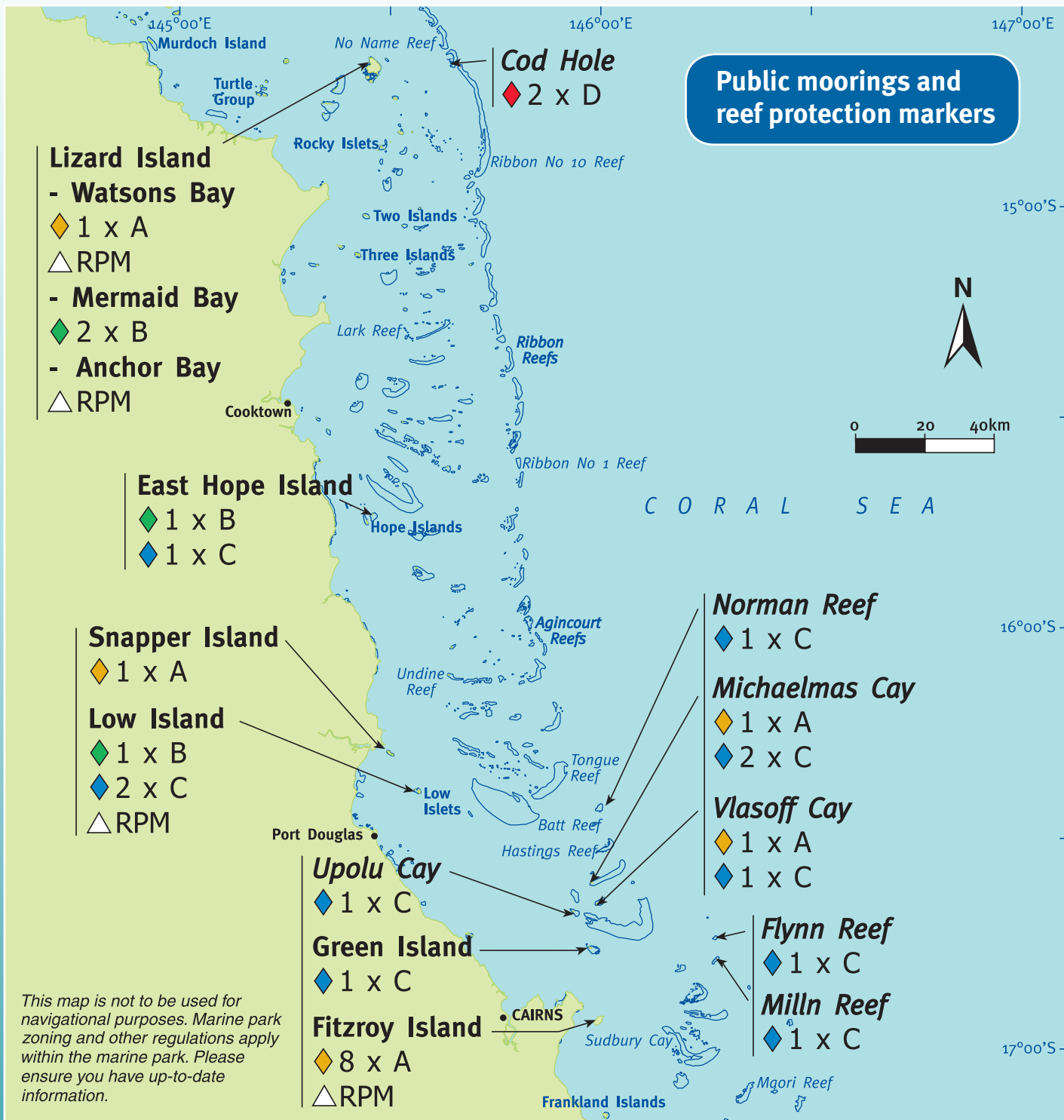
Lizard Island

Lizard island has preferred anchorage areas and no-anchoring areas.

Anchor and Watsons bays are within the Scientific Research Zone (Green with orange border) and are no-take areas.



Disclaimer: The above published positions are correct to the best of the Department of Environment and Resource Management's knowledge at December 2010. However, no guarantee is given that the moorings are in the location shown. Vessel skippers should verify the mooring positions with their own GPS equipment prior to attempting to access them. Particular care should be taken in accessing the moorings in poor weather, reduced visibility or at night.



Legend

Class of mooring	Maximum vessel length	Maximum wind speed
T	6m - tender only	24 knots
A	10m - monohull 9m - multihull	24 knots
B	20m - monohull 18m - multihull	34 knots
C	25m - monohull 22m - multihull	34 knots
D	35m - monohull 30m - multihull	34 knots
△	Reef protection marker (RPM)	