



Hope Islands National Park and Marine Park

East and West Hope Islands are located 37km south-east of Cooktown and north-east of Cedar Bay (Mangkalba). Low lying shingle and sand cays, with an average height of only nine metres, the Hope Islands are examples of the different ways that cays can be formed.

The islands were gazetted as national park in 1939 and the waters and reefs surrounding the islands are protected as part of the Cairns Section of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

West Hope — a shingle cay

Shingle cays develop from piles of loose shingle (coral debris) thrown on to the windward side of the reef during storms. The shingle builds up into ridges and "cementing" forms rampart rocks which serve to stabilise the new cay. Because the coarse sediments of shingle cays cannot retain fresh water, "salt-tolerant" mangroves are often the predominant vegetation type.

On West Hope Island, a shingle cay, mangroves are found on the northern and western sections of the cay, with sea purslane on the south-eastern rampart. The eastern side is dominated by red coondoo and native chinese lantern, draped with nickernut.

Nickernut pod
(*Caesalpinia bonduc*)

East Hope — a sand cay

Currents and waves can deposit fine reef sediments on the leeward side of a reef. Fresh water is retained in the finer (sandy) sediments of the cay, allowing colonising vegetation to survive, stabilising the cay. As seeds are carried to the cay by wind and currents as well as in bird and bat droppings, there is a steady progression towards a climax community.

East Hope Island, a typical sand cay, is dominated by beach almond and the red coondoo in the centre, with sea trumpet, silverbush and nickernut around the edges. On the foreshore, colonising plants include goat's foot and coastal jack bean. Many vines can be seen in this area, including native moon flower.

Bird life

Several species of birds breed on the islands and, with a colony of pied imperial-pigeons numbering in the thousands, the islands are among the most important bird nesting sites in the Cairns Section of the marine park.

Seabirds include osprey, white-bellied sea-eagle, sooty oystercatcher, crested tern, pied oystercatcher, whimbrel, sooty tern, beach stone-curlew, wandering tattler, brown booby and greater frigatebird.

Woodland birds on the islands include bar-shouldered dove, sacred kingfisher, varied honeyeater, buff-banded rail, pied imperial-pigeon, figbird and forest kingfisher.

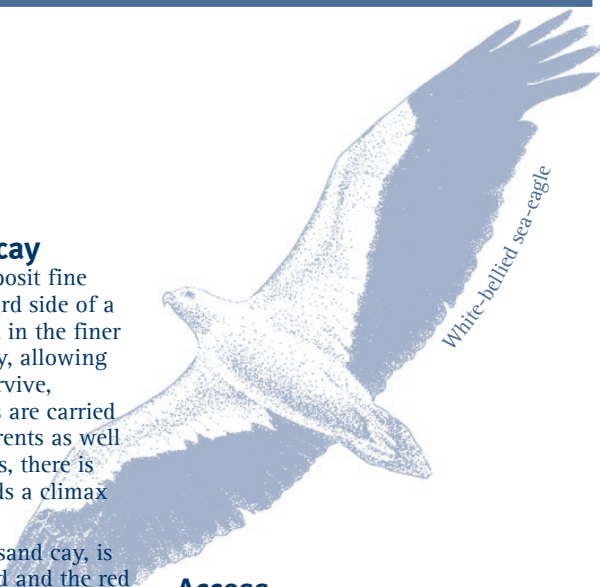
Sea country

The islands are part of the sea country of the Kuku Yalanji Aboriginal people who use the area for hunting, fishing and collecting. Today many of the people traditionally associated with the Hope Islands live at Wujal Wujal Aboriginal community on the Bloomfield River.

Islands of hope

1770 — Captain Cook, aboard the *Endeavour*, struck the reef that now bears the same name. Later he wrote, "... we passed close without two small low islands ... I have named them Hope Islands, because we were always in hope of being able to reach these islands."

1871 — the *Black Dog* (a two masted schooner) sank off the Hope Islands, en route from Sydney to Sweers Island.
1875 — another wooden schooner, the *Analista*, sank off Hope Islands reef.



White-bellied sea-eagle

Access

Both islands are popular anchorages, especially with fishing charters and yachts.

Access to West Hope Island is not permitted from 1 September to 31 March — the bird nesting season. Fresh water is not available on either of the islands.

Things to do

Snorkelling

The reef off Hope Islands supports a variety of coral, invertebrate and fish species. Safe snorkelling is subject to tides, currents and wind direction. There are often strong currents around the Hope Islands. The best location for snorkelling is on the leeward margin of the East Hope Island reef.



For your safety:

- Be aware of current direction and tide times.
- Protect yourself from the sun.
- Avoid touching coral or other animals as some are capable of causing injury.
- Box jellyfish, irukandji and other marine stingers may be present in the waters around the Hope Islands from October to May. During this time it is not advisable to swim. Wear protective clothing if you must enter the water.

Camping

Camping is only permitted on East Hope Island where there are three campsites, picnic tables and a toilet. The maximum number of people per site is four and the maximum length of stay is seven nights. Camping permits must be obtained in advance from the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service.

For the latest information on camping please check the website at www.epa.qld.gov.au.

Caring for the Hope Islands

Regulations are designed to help care for national parks.

On the island, please:

- Camp only in the sites provided – camping permits are required.
- Avoid bird nesting areas and stay clear of roosting birds.
- Do not remove vegetation for firewood or clearing for campsites.
- Use only the access tracks provided.
- Do not bring pets or firearms into the national park as they disturb native wildlife and are prohibited.
- Take out everything that you bring on to the island – take your rubbish home.
- Do not attempt to feed birds, fish or other wildlife.
- Ensure that you do not bring seeds ashore and leave them behind – weeds damage native vegetation.
- Avoid the use of soap and detergent.
- Use the toilet facilities provided to avoid the spread of bacteria.

Boating and fishing

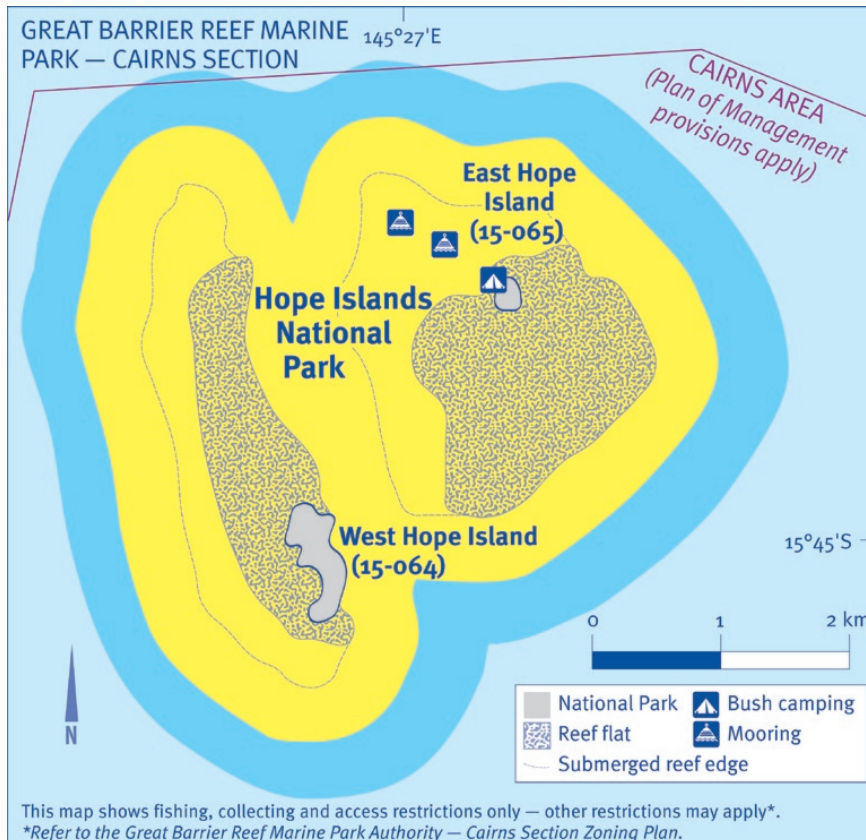
The waters surrounding the Hope Islands are Conservation Park (yellow) Zone. This permits limited recreational fishing while allowing for visitors' appreciation and enjoyment. Maximum one hook/lure per line and two lines/rods per person are permitted in this zone. Spearfishing is allowed in the Hope Islands area. Please note that spearguns are not allowed on the islands (firearms are prohibited in the national park). Bait collection is allowed and any oysters gathered must be consumed immediately on site.

Public moorings are present in a number of locations throughout the Great Barrier Reef to reduce coral damage from anchors. These are blue, double-cone shaped buoys with a colour-coded band. 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.

Two public moorings are provided off East Hope Island (see map). One is a C class mooring with a blue pick-up tag and blue band on the buoy. Monohulls up to a maximum length of 25m and multihulls up to a maximum length of 22m can use C class moorings. The second mooring is B class and has a green coloured pick-up tag and green band on the buoy. Monohulls up to a maximum length of 20m and multihulls up to a maximum length of 18m can use B class moorings.

In the marine park, please:

- Anchor only on sand – corals are fragile and easily damaged.
- Avoid touching, kicking or standing on living coral when snorkelling or wading ashore.
- Take only enough fish for a feed – remember bag and size limits apply.
- Disposal of garbage in the marine park is prohibited (with the exception that sewage holding tanks can be discharged more than 500m from the reef edge).



CAIRNS ACTIVITIES (see Zoning Plan for details)

	General Use Zone	Habitat Protection Zone	Conservation Park Zone
Aircraft	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bait netting and gathering	Yes	Yes*	Yes
Collecting	Permit	Permit	No
Limited Collecting ¹	Yes	Yes	No
Commercial netting	Yes	Yes*	No
Crabbing	Yes	Yes*	Limit ²
Diving, boating, anchoring and photography	Yes	Yes	Yes
Line fishing	Yes	Yes*	Limit ³
Oyster gathering	Yes	Yes*	Limit ⁴
Spearfishing (snorkel only)	Yes	Yes*	Restricted Sites ⁵
Trawling	Yes	No	No
Trolling (for pelagic species)	Yes	Yes*	Yes ⁶

Emergencies: Access to all zones is allowed in emergencies.

1. Generally, taking of not more than 5 of any unprotected species in a 28 day period (not including coral).
2. No more than 4 catch devices per person.
3. Maximum of 2 lines/rods per person, and 1 hook/lure per line.
4. Taking oysters for immediate consumption on site.
5. Spearfishing may be undertaken in the Conservation Park Zone at Hope Islands.
6. Bait netting for Pelagic species only.

Permits are required for most other activities. This includes research, educational programs, tourist operations, placement of moorings or other structures, anchoring or mooring for an extended period, waste discharge and most commercial activities.

For clarification of any points or further information contact the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service or Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol.

Be 'croc-wise'

Be aware that estuarine crocodiles may be encountered in waters surrounding continental islands and cays in north Queensland.

For your safety please follow these guidelines:

- Stay alert at all times. If you see a crocodile stay well away.
- Never provoke or interfere with crocodiles, even small ones.
- Don't dangle your arms or legs over the sides of boats. If you fall out of a boat, get out of the water quickly.
- Be more aware of crocodiles during the breeding season, September to April.

Visit us online at www.epa.qld.gov.au
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For further information

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