

Victoria's Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries

-Alterations to Fishing

Changes to fishing resulting from the introduction of Victoria's Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries

Marine National Parks, and their smaller counterparts, Marine Sanctuaries, are protected areas of the sea, like National Parks on land. They safeguard a diverse range of marine plants, animals and habitats for the benefit of current and future generations of Victorians and the environment.

Victoria's system of 13 Marine National Parks and 11 Marine Sanctuaries protects an area of approximately 5.3% of the state's coastal waters.

The areas chosen for protection have been selected after extensive consultation with fishing groups, with areas considered extremely important for recreational and commercial fishing being largely excluded from the parks.

In the same way that our National Parks on land protect all forms of life and the environment, activities that involve the removal of animals or plants, including fishing, ARE NOT permitted within the boundaries of Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries.



Gorgonian Coral

Within the Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries a total ban will apply in relation to all methods of recreational and commercial shore or sea-based fishing including netting, spearing, line fishing, and the use of traps.

Penalties will apply to breaches of this protection. There are no penalties for having a fishing boat or fishing equipment within protected waters, provided it is not used within the protected area.

The 'no take' principle in Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries came into effect on 16 November 2002.

This applies in all Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries with the exception of five areas in which fishing will be allowed to continue until 2004. All existing fishing regulations in these areas will still apply during this period.

The Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuary where fishing is permitted until 1st April, 2004 are:

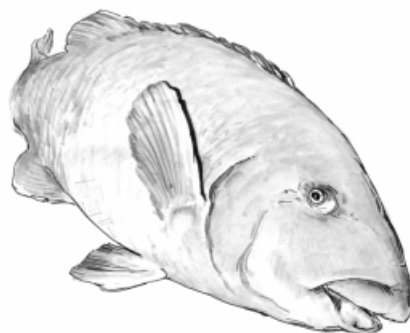
- Discovery Bay Marine National Park
- Twelve Apostles Marine National Park
- Corner Inlet Marine National Park
- Cape Howe Marine National Park
- Point Cooke Marine Sanctuary (except in the area of the former Point Cook Fisheries Reserve).



Parks Victoria Ranger

"Victoria's system of Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries provides total protection for their unique inhabitants, offering unlimited opportunities for us all to learn more about this stunning underwater world."

For more information call the Parks Victoria Information Centre on 13 1963 or visit our website at www.parkweb.vic.gov.au



Eastern Blue Groper

For further information

More information on Victoria's system of Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries can be found on the Parks Victoria website at www.parkweb.vic.gov.au or by calling the Parks Victoria Information Centre on **13 1963**

Information is also available at the Department of Natural Resources and Environment website: www.nre.vic.gov.au/coastsandmarine

To report a fishing offence contact NRE Fisheries on (03) 9483 4283

Please ask for the Duty Officer and give a short message and leave a contact number

How do I know when I'm inside a park or sanctuary?

Clear marking of boundaries is important in ensuring that visitors to Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries are able to comply with the legislation and regulations that apply in these areas.

Boundary identification will include:

- on-site signage and maps at key access points
- Park notes with maps
- Maps (with co-ordinates) and information available on the NRE and Parks Victoria websites
- use of in-water navigational aids
- triangular yellow shore markers that provide a line-of-sight for vessels.

Marine National Park and Marine Sanctuary boundaries will also be progressively incorporated into navigational charts and other publications.



Fishing on Jetty

The diversity and physical nature of the marine environment (particularly along the open coast) poses a significant impediment to implementing a consistent 'in water' marking system. GPS, a commonly used and accepted navigation tool for vessels, will allow accurate and easy identification of Marine National Park and Marine Sanctuary boundaries.

Co-ordinates information to update GPS units is available in Parks Victoria Parknotes on individual Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries, and on the Parks Victoria website at www.parkweb.vic.gov.au

So where can I fish?

In creating the Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries, the Government has attempted to exclude popular fishing areas from the parks or to ensure that there are easily accessible alternatives.

While commercial and recreational fishing is prohibited within Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries, most of Victoria's coastal waters are still accessible to licensed fishers provided that they comply with the conditions of their licences and the Fisheries Act and Regulations.

The *Victorian Fishing Atlas* on the NRE website at www.nre.vic.gov.au identifies over 320 great fishing spots along the Victorian Coast.

Only 15 of these fishing locations are sited within a Marine National Park or Marine Sanctuary, leaving almost 95% of identified fishing locations available to recreational anglers.

If you do find that your favourite fishing spot is now within a park or sanctuary, this website also identifies many great alternative fishing opportunities nearby.

No pier, jetty, breakwater or wharf is included in any Marine National Park or Marine Sanctuary. Many roads, boat ramps, piers, jetties, breakwaters and tracks near some of Victoria's best fishing areas have also been upgraded.

Benefits to fishing

While Victoria's new system of highly protected Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries has been established primarily to conserve Victoria's marine biodiversity, there are some positive benefits that will flow to fishers.

Experience in other parts of the world, particularly in New Zealand and in the USA, has clearly demonstrated that by reducing fishing pressure from both commercial and recreational fishing, one of the benefits is improved stocks of fish and crustaceans outside the parks. In many cases this was due to greater breeding success and improved survival of young animals.

By respecting the principles of the Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries, all fishers - as well as the environment - stand to benefit from their creation.