

# Beware Reef Marine Sanctuary

## An underwater wonder

Beware Reef is a diver's paradise. An isolated rock covered in life of every conceivable shape and colour, it rises abruptly out of the sandy Gippsland seafloor. The tip of the reef rises above the surface, a favourite resting-place for passing Australian Fur Seals.

Around the edge is a thick rim of Bull Kelp fronds, guarding the treasure below. Where there is enough light, the upper reef is covered in a dense canopy of brown seaweeds, interspersed with bright green meadows of furry green and red seaweeds.

On one side of the reef lie the remains of an old shipwreck. On another is a pink garden of encrusting coralline algae, kept free of large kelps by the voracious appetite of the Black Sea-urchin, hiding during the day under ledges. At night large Maori Octopuses lurk amongst the kelp stalks.

Lower down the reef steep walls plunge into the depths. These are covered with filter-feeding animals, such as large finger sponges, brilliant red sea-fans, sea tulips, long sinuous sea-whips and carpets of orange anemones. Pink and blue brittle stars stick their spiny arms out of every crevice. Green, orange and white feather stars are abundant between the rocks with their tentacles extended into the water to capture passing plankton.

Fish are abundant. Trumpeters appear suddenly from the deep, while Long-snouted Boarfish, wrasses, Morwongs and Sea Sweep patrol the rocks. Port Jackson Sharks and wobbegongs can be seen resting in sandy hollows.

Beware Reef Marine Sanctuary is part of a system of 13 Marine National Parks and 11 smaller Marine Sanctuaries created 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.



*Shipwreck diving*

## Enjoying Beware Reef Marine Sanctuary

The striking underwater landscapes at Beware Reef make it a popular location for recreational divers. The sanctuary also contains the remains of numerous shipwrecks, including the *Ridge Park* (1878), the *Albert San* (1915) and the *SS Auckland*, a steamship wrecked on the reef in 1871.

Divers may encounter the Long-snouted Boarfish, a beautiful and distinctive yet shy creature that can be seen guarding small territories in the crevices and cracks around the reef. Feeding on worms and crustaceans on the deeper sections of the reef, it grows to around 50 centimetres and is at its most stunning with fins fully extended.

There are boat-launching facilities at nearby Cape Conran. An "emergency" boat retrieval channel is available on the East Cape beach.









**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](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au)**

**Beware Reef Marine Sanctuary** Area: 220 ha

 Sealed road  
 Unsealed road  
 Marine Sanctuary  
 Coastal Park  
 Waterbody

 Boat access point

 N  
 0 0.5 1  
 KILOMETRES  
 Cartography by Spatial Vision 2002 M7364



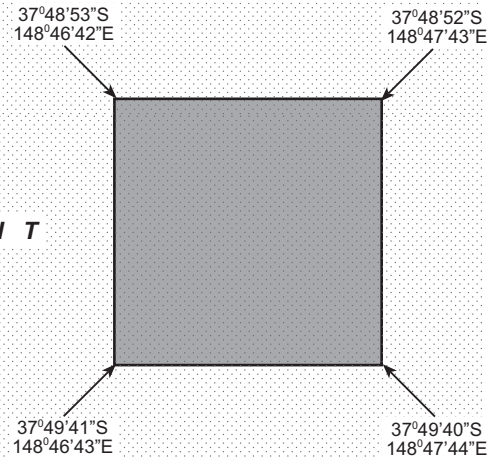
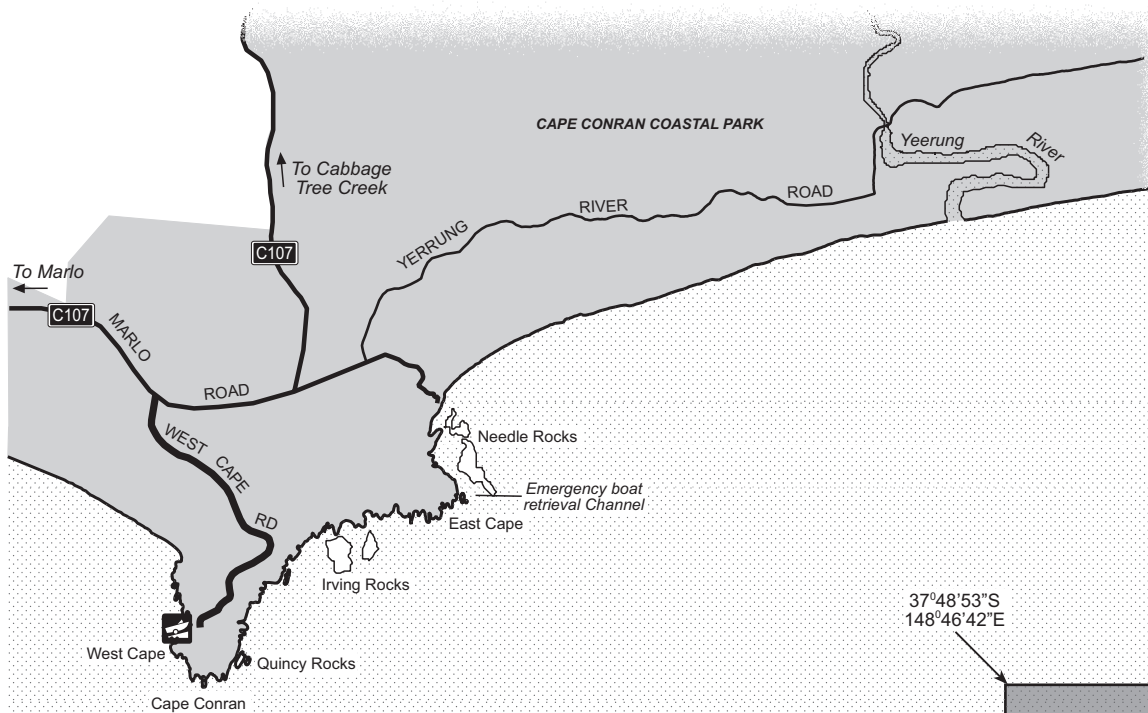
Latitude and Longitude values are based on WGS84



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



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



B A S S S T R A I T

**Marine Sanctuary boundaries**  
**Beware Reef Marine Sanctuary (220 ha)** is located 5 km southeast of Cape Conran and extends for 1.5 km square area surrounding Beware Reef.

**Personal safety**

- Diving should only be undertaken by trained and experienced divers
- Beware of sudden changes in weather, especially when boating on open water, and allow sufficient time for boat retrieval
- Watch where your hands are going at all times to avoid potentially dangerous creatures
- Ensure adequate protection from the sun and wind

**Caring for the marine environment**

- Take all rubbish home with you – plastic and other waste can kill bird and marine life
- Always replace any organisms or rocks you may have disturbed
- Practise minimal impact diving and snorkelling techniques
- Historic shipwrecks are heritage listed and must not be disturbed
- Anchor only in clear sand and avoid sensitive reef areas
- Landings on the reef platform are not permitted

**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.
- There are strong penalties under the National Parks Act for fishing in Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries. These restrictions and penalties apply in Beware Reef 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 contact NRE Fisheries on (03) 9483 4283. Please ask for the Duty Officer and give a short message and leave a contact number.
- 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](http://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.