

# Point Hicks Marine National Park

## Awaiting Discovery

Although Point Hicks was the first part of the Australian mainland sighted by Captain James Cook in 1770, the area's underwater landscape is still largely awaiting discovery.

The reefs here are among Victoria's most interesting and beautiful, but were a deadly concern to early sailors who pressured the Government into constructing the lighthouse that still dominates the cliff tops. Fortunately today, these underwater crags can be admired for their stunning sea-life.

Diving around Whaleback Rock or Sensation Reef is a truly amazing experience. The water is often very clear, with sunlight glinting off schools of silver fish. As you drift down, you feel dwarfed by massive granite boulders. A forest of gently swaying brown seaweeds covers the seafloor.

But if you move the seaweed fronds aside, a remarkable mat of colourful sponges, sea-squirts, sea-moss and sea-fans of all shapes and sizes appear before you. Orange, red, purple, white and brown, the sponges intertwine in intricate and beautiful patterns.

Many other creatures are visible between the sponges, under rocks and poking out of the seaweed holdfasts. There are brightly coloured sea-stars, brittle stars, abalone, fan worms, large sea shells, hermit crabs and delicate nudibranchs (sea-slugs). Fish include schools of Butterfly Perch, Silver Sweep and Long-Finned Pike, with Banded Morwongs common amongst the deeper boulders.

Point Hicks represents Victoria's warmer eastern marine environment. Many animals occurring here will not survive in the cooler waters further west. One of these is the Black Sea-urchin that mows down the seaweeds near its shelter, creating an open environment of pink coralline algae-encrusted rocks.

As well as subtidal reefs, the environment around Point Hicks includes attractive intertidal rock platforms and offshore sands. The seafloor drops away rapidly from shore, descending to 90 metres depth - one of the deepest marine areas within Victoria.

Point Hicks Marine National Park 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.

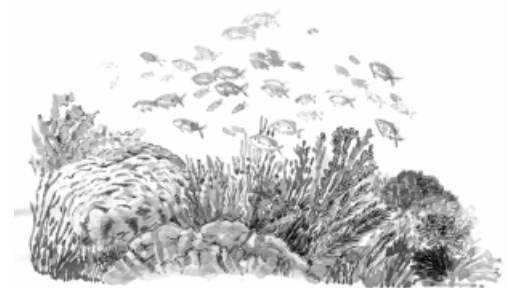
By keeping some of these marine areas in a natural state, free from potentially damaging human activities, we will protect these environments into the future.



**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)**



***Butterfly Perch over sponge garden***

## Enjoying Point Hicks Marine National Park

The clear waters off Point Hicks are ideal for snorkelling and diving, with a rich and colourful marine life and amazing diversity of fish. The park also contains the sites of two shipwrecks - the *SS Kerangie*, lost in 1879, and the *SS Saros*, which went down in 1937.

The Point Hicks Lighthouse Reserve and two camping areas, at the mouths of the Thurra and Mueller Rivers east of the park, also provide a focus for walking and sightseeing in the adjacent Croajinglong National Park.

Accommodation is available at the lighthouse and there is a Visitor Information Centre at Cann River. Information is also available at the Parks Victoria Office in Mallacoota.

**Point Hicks Marine National Park** Area: 4,000 ha

— Unsealed road  
 ■ Marine National Park  
 ■ National Park  
 ■ Waterbody

🏠 Lighthouse  
 ▲ Shore based boundary marker (Triangular Beacon)

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 KILOMETRES  
 Cartography by Spatial Vision 2002 M7364

MELBOURNE

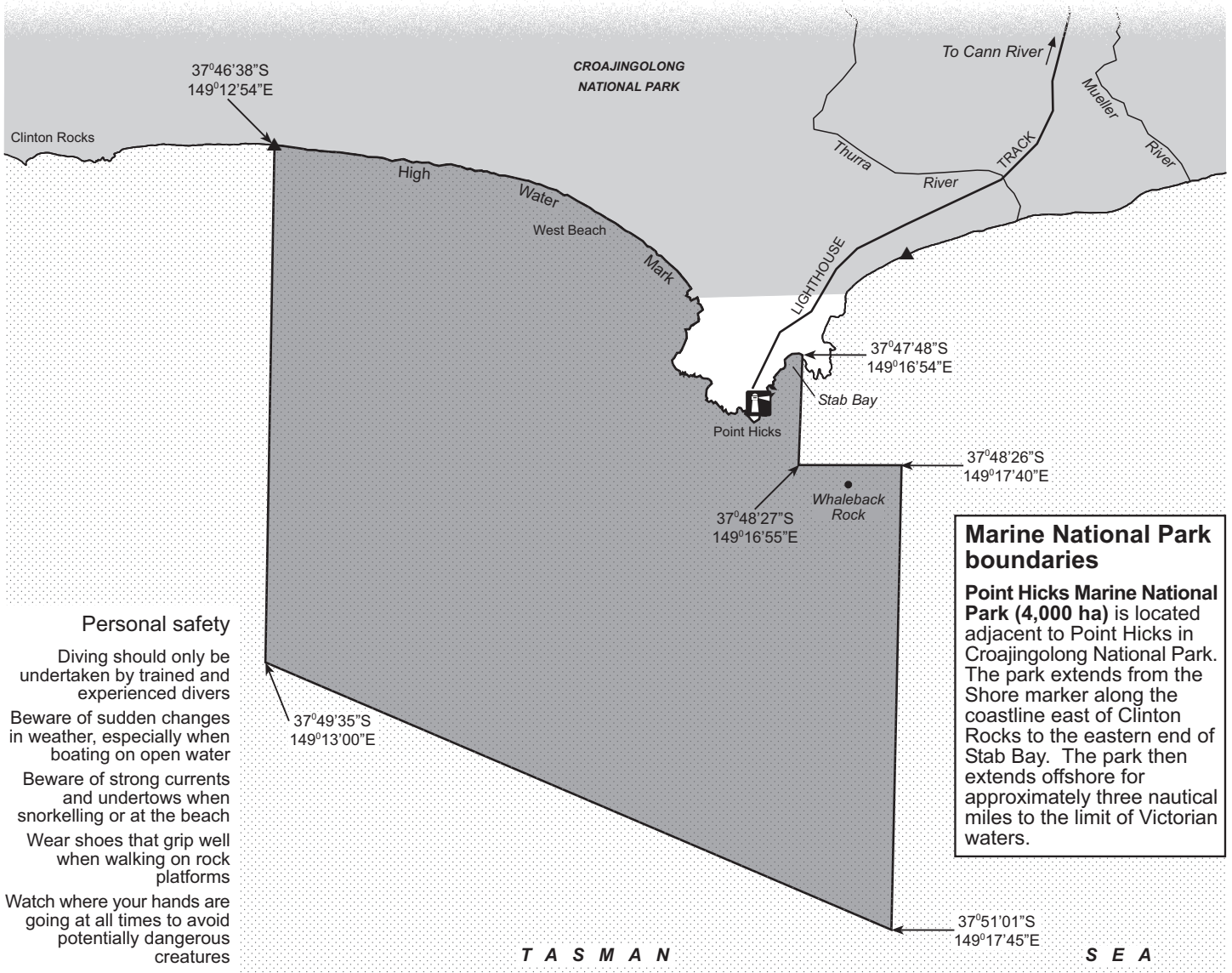
Latitude and Longitude values are based on WGS84



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)



**Marine National Park boundaries**

**Point Hicks Marine National Park (4,000 ha)** is located adjacent to Point Hicks in Croajingolong National Park. The park extends from the Shore marker along the coastline east of Clinton Rocks to the eastern end of Stab Bay. The park then extends offshore for approximately three nautical miles to the limit of Victorian waters.

**Personal safety**

- Diving should only be undertaken by trained and experienced divers
- Beware of sudden changes in weather, especially when boating on open water
- Beware of strong currents and undertows when snorkelling or at the beach
- Wear shoes that grip well when walking on rock platforms
- Watch where your hands are going at all times to avoid potentially dangerous creatures
- Be aware of large unexpected waves when walking on shore, especially on rock platforms
- Stay away from cliff edges and bases

**Caring for the marine environment**

- Discarded gear and rubbish 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
- Keep clear of resting seals

**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 Point Hicks Marine National Park 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.