

## Public moorings

Public moorings are installed at popular locations and have blue, cone-shaped buoys with a colour-coded band. This band tells you the class (vessel length), time limits and maximum wind strength limits that apply to the mooring. Mooring specifications and conditions of use are also displayed on the mooring tag attached to the pick-up line.

Many privately-owned moorings also exist within the marine parks. You should obtain the permission of the owner before using a privately-owned mooring.

## Use of moorings

When using moorings, please be aware of the following.

- 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 7am and 5pm. Moorings in the Whitsundays have a 2 hour limit. This ensures fair and equitable use. If a vessel picks up a mooring, on or after 3pm, it may remain until 9am 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.

## 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.

## How to drop a mooring

When dropping a mooring:

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



Public moorings are generally located near shallow reefs or shorelines. Care should be taken approaching and leaving buoys, particularly when mooring in poor weather, reduced visibility or at night.



Mooring buoy, pick-up tag and pick-up line.

Photo: © Queensland Government

(Top) pick-up tag; (above) mooring buoy and pick-up line.

Photos: © Queensland Government

## 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 or 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; Staghorn coral broken by anchor.

Photo: Chris Jones © GBRMPA

## Reef protection areas

The Great Barrier Reef contains many well-developed fringing reefs that are particularly vulnerable to anchor damage. To protect these highly diverse coral communities, there are reef protection areas where anchoring is not allowed. Most no-anchoring areas are marked by reef protection markers; some are unmarked.

**Reef protection markers** indicating no-anchoring areas are easily identified by their white, pyramid-shaped buoys with a blue label (joined with an imaginary line).

Never anchor on the reef flat inshore of the buoys. You can anchor directly on the beach provided there are no tidal restrictions. Please note that reef protection markers must not be used as a mooring.



Never anchor on the reef flat inshore of reef protection markers.

Photo: © Queensland Government



Reef protection marker.

Photo: © Queensland Government

## 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 all parts of the anchor chain and rope remain outside the line of markers should the vessel swing.

Marked reef protection areas (no-anchoring areas marked by reef protection markers) in the Whitsundays are located at:

- Baird Point
- Black Island
- Blue Pearl Bay
- Cairn Beach
- Cateran Bay
- Caves Cove
- Crayfish Beach
- Chalkies Beach
- Dumbell Island
- East Butterfly Bay
- False Nara Inlet
- Langford Island
- Luncheon Bay
- Maureens Cove
- North Stonehaven Bay
- Peter Bay
- Pinnacle Bay
- Saba Bay
- Sandy Bay
- South Stonehaven Bay
- Sunlovers Beach
- West Butterfly Bay.

## Further information

For Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) enquiries, please visit us online at [www.des.qld.gov.au](http://www.des.qld.gov.au)

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority  
2–68 Flinders St, Townsville  
PO Box 1379, Townsville Qld 4810  
Phone: (07) 4750 0700  
Email: [info@gbmpa.gov.au](mailto:info@gbmpa.gov.au)  
Web: [www.gbmpa.gov.au](http://www.gbmpa.gov.au)



Please report any misused or damaged moorings on 13 QGOV (13 74 68).



Photos: (this page and front cover) © Queensland Government

## Unmarked reef protection areas

Two no-anchoring areas in the Whitsundays—Bait Reef and Manta Ray Bay on Hook Island—are not marked by reef protection markers. The limits of these two no-anchoring areas are indicated on the maps below. GPS positions are provided as reference so you can ensure you anchor correctly outside the no-anchoring area boundaries or use the moorings within them.

### Manta Ray Bay (Hook Island) unmarked reef protection area



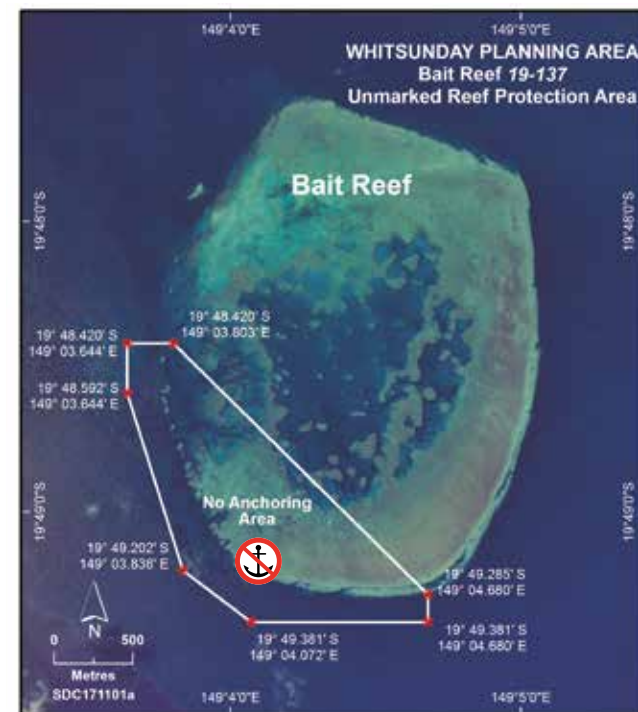
© GBRMPA

#### Boundary description

**Manta Ray Bay**—the area bounded by a line commencing at 20°03.558'S, 148°57.180'E then running progressively as described:

1. Easterly along the geodesic to the intersection of the Hook Island coastline at mean low water and the meridian 148°57.505'E (at or about 20°03.557'S, 148°57.6505'E).
2. South-westerly along the Hook Island coastline at mean low water to the intersection of the Hook Island coastline at mean low water and parallel 20°03.751'S (at or about 20°03.751'S, 148°57.181'E).
3. Northerly along the geodesic to the point of commencement.

### Bait Reef unmarked reef protection area

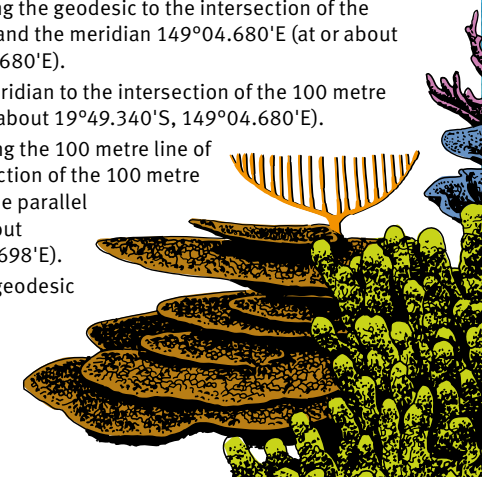


© GBRMPA

#### Boundary description

**Bait Reef**—the area bounded by a line commencing at the northernmost point of the northernmost coral in the series of flat-topped coral pinnacles known as 'the Stepping Stones' (at or about 19°48.420'S, 149°03.803'E) then running progressively as described:

1. South-easterly along the geodesic to the intersection of the reef edge of Bait Reef and the meridian 149°04.680'E (at or about 19°49.285'S, 149°04.680'E).
2. South along the meridian to the intersection of the 100 metre line of Bait Reef (at or about 19°49.340'S, 149°04.680'E).
3. North-westerly along the 100 metre line of Bait Reef to the intersection of the 100 metre line of Bait Reef and the parallel 19°48.420'S (at or about 19°48.420'S, 149°03.698'E).
4. Easterly along the geodesic to the point of commencement.



## Reef under pressure

The Great Barrier Reef is an irreplaceable icon and one of the world's best managed marine areas—overall, the system retains its outstanding universal value. It offers visitors stunning vistas, both above and below the water, but it contains some very fragile environments which are under pressure from growing threats.

Combined, these pressures weaken the resilience of the Reef and affect its ability to recover from serious disturbances, such as mass coral bleaching events, which are predicted to become increasingly frequent.

Dropping an anchor on coral can take seconds to damage or destroy it. Under ideal circumstances, it may take years for the coral to rebuild. In some cases, the coral may never return to its former glory.

By taking a little extra care when anchoring and using moorings, where available, you will help protect this diverse and remarkable natural wonder.

## How can you help to protect the Reef?

By minimising your impact in the marine parks, you can help the Reef become more resilient and better able to withstand the stress of accumulated pressures such as climate change.

While using public moorings and anchoring away from coral are two key actions, here are some more ways you can help to #LovetheReef.

- Anonymously report suspected illegal fishing activity to 24-hour hotline: **1800 380 048** or [www.gbrmpa.gov.au/report-an-incident](http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/report-an-incident)
- Know where you're going and what's allowed.
- Use a GPS and cross-check it with a free zoning map available at [www.gbrmpa.gov.au](http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au)
- Avoid taking herbivorous fish like parrotfish, which remove seaweed and provide space for new corals to grow.
- Use and understand best snorkelling practices, such as not touching or standing on corals.
- Take all rubbish with you and put into bins on the shore.


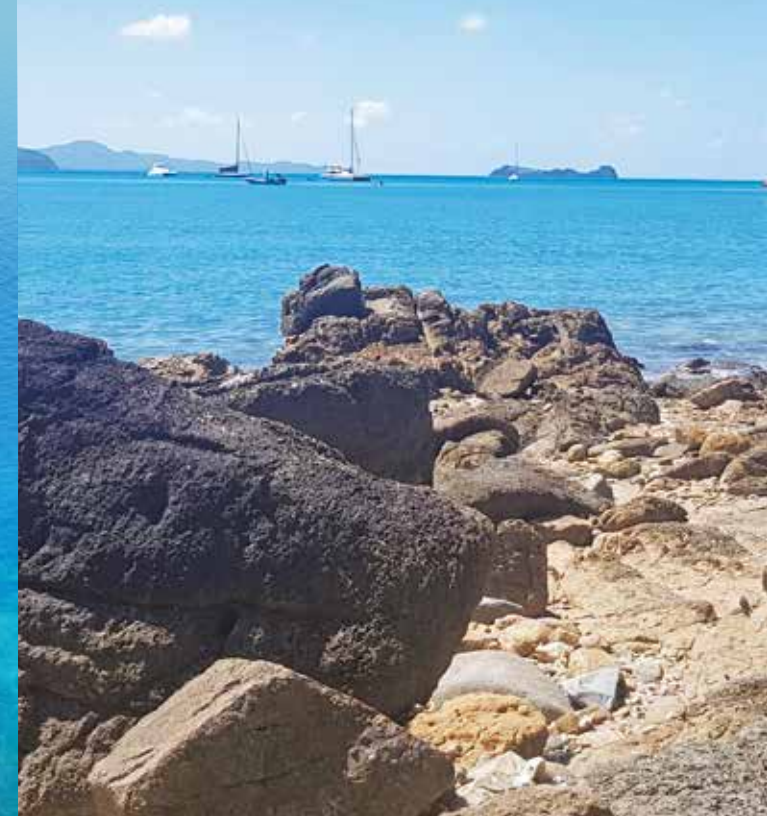
 Use moorings when available to protect the reef.

Photo: © Queensland Government

## Public moorings and anchoring in the Great Barrier Reef

### Protecting coral in the Whitsundays area



Australian Government

Great Barrier Reef  
Marine Park Authority




Queensland  
Government

## Public moorings and reef protection areas in the Whitsundays

The Whitsundays region is one of the most highly visited regions of the Great Barrier Reef. The Whitsundays Plan of Management is in place to provide additional protection to the Reef-wide zoning plan.

For further information visit [www.gbrmpa.gov.au](http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au)



 No-anchoring areas and public moorings help to protect fragile coral communities.

Photos: (top) © Tourism and Events Qld; (left and above) © Queensland Government

## Using public moorings

To protect fragile reefs in high-use areas, rules are in place to help stop misuse of public moorings and reef protection markers. While there have always been rules around the use of moorings, the rules have been updated to outline what is considered misuse of public moorings. This includes:

- exceeding time limits
- attaching more than one vessel to a public mooring
- rafting-up—attaching multiple vessels in a chain when one vessel is attached to the mooring
- altering the mooring
- not following the instructions on the mooring.

These rules are to help make sure public moorings continue to be available for everyone's use. It's about playing fair while out on the water. Anyone found to be misusing a public mooring or public infrastructure may be issued with a penalty infringement notice.

Offences relating to the misuse of public moorings are outlined in Regulation 102 of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983.

## Instructions to vessel masters

1. Vessel masters are solely responsible for the safety of their vessel while using the public moorings.
2. A watch must be kept at all times while the vessel is on the mooring.
3. Be aware of changing weather and sea conditions and your proximity to obstacles including coral and other vessels and how these may be affected by mooring swing.
4. Refer to instructions specified or included on the tag or buoy.


## Disclaimer

The published positions (below) are correct to the best of the Queensland Government's knowledge at February 2018. 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 access. Care should be taken in accessing the moorings in poor weather, reduced visibility or at night.


# Public moorings


## Protecting the Reef

Colour code	Class	Max. vessel length		Max. wind speed
<b>BROWN</b>	T	6m (tender only)		24 knots
<b>YELLOW</b>	A	10m (monohull)	9m (multihull)	24 knots
<b>GREEN</b>	B	20m (monohull)	18m (multihull)	34 knots
<b>BLUE</b>	C	25m (monohull)	22m (multihull)	34 knots
<b>RED</b>	D	35m (monohull)	30m (multihull)	34 knots




Public mooring buoy





Australian Government  
Great Barrier Reef  
Marine Park Authority



Queensland  
Government

www.gbrmpa.gov.au/visit-the-reef/moorings

148°50'0"E

149°0'0"E

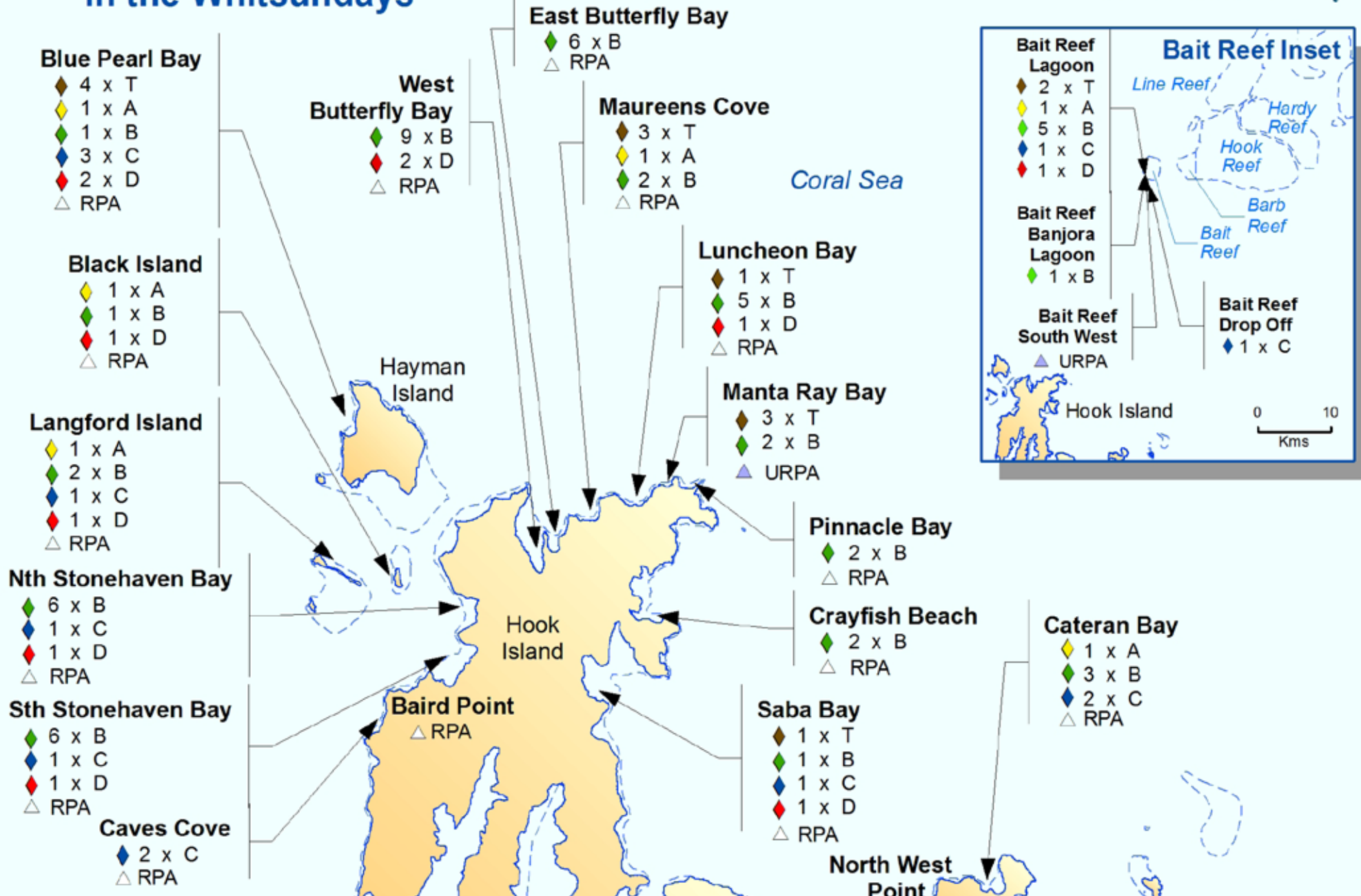
# Location of Public Moorings and Reef Protection Areas in the Whitsundays



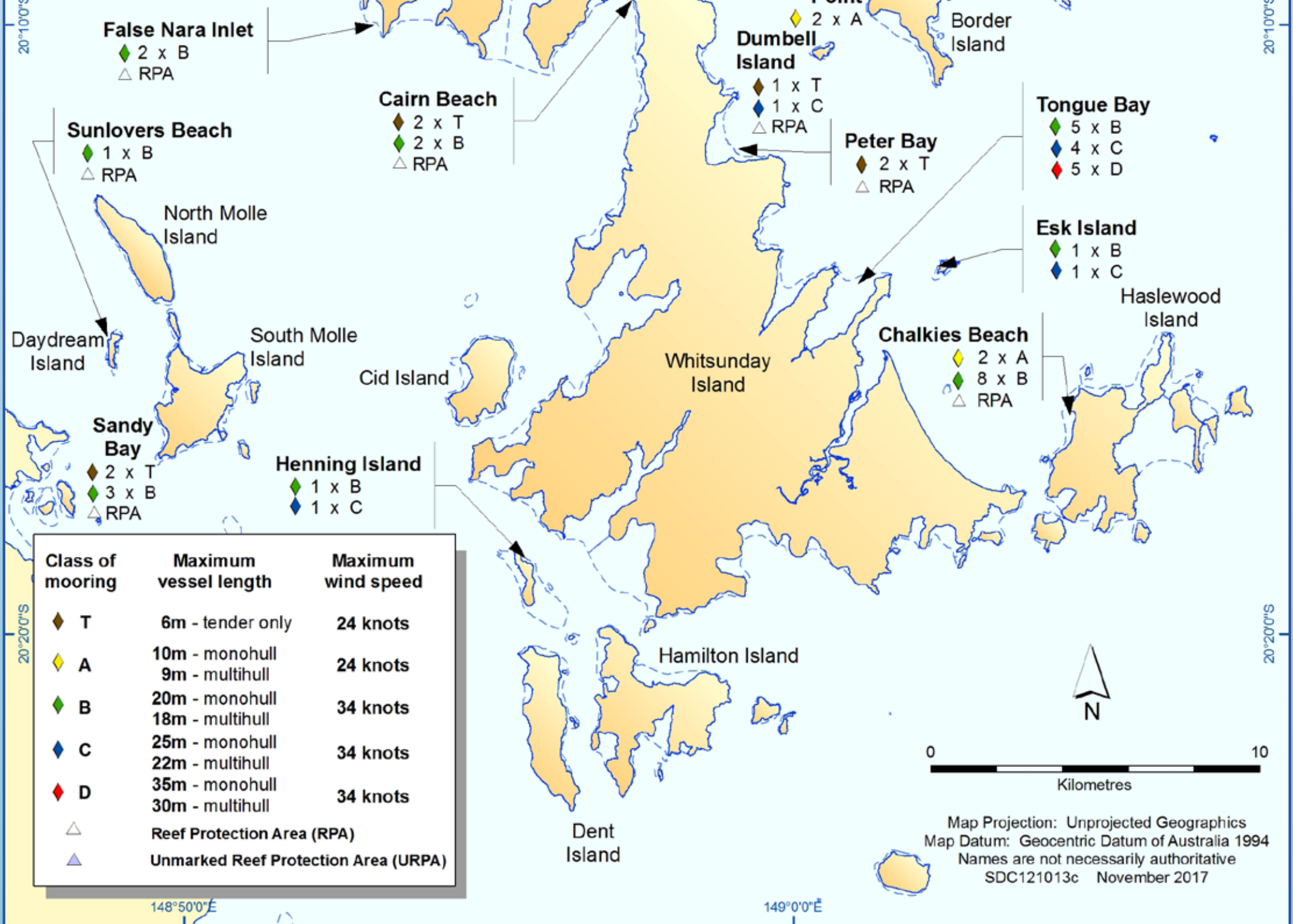
Australian Government  
Great Barrier Reef  
Marine Park Authority

20°0'0"S

20°0'0"S







**False Nara Inlet**

- ◆ 2 x B
- △ RPA

**Sunlovers Beach**

- ◆ 1 x B
- △ RPA

**Cairn Beach**

- ◆ 2 x T
- ◆ 2 x B
- △ RPA

**Dumbell Island**

- ◆ 2 x A
- ◆ 1 x T
- ◆ 1 x C
- △ RPA

**Border Island**

**Tongue Bay**

- ◆ 5 x B
- ◆ 4 x C
- ◆ 5 x D

**Peter Bay**

- ◆ 2 x T
- △ RPA

**Esk Island**

- ◆ 1 x B
- ◆ 1 x C

**Chalkies Beach**

- ◆ 2 x A
- ◆ 8 x B
- △ RPA

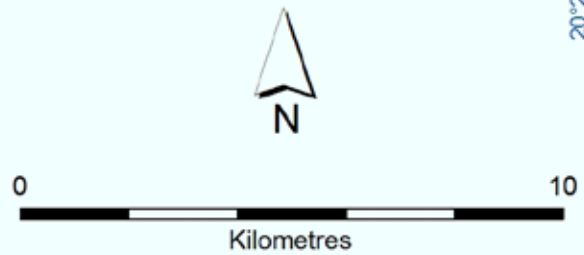
**Sandy Bay**

- ◆ 2 x T
- ◆ 3 x B
- △ RPA

**Henning Island**

- ◆ 1 x B
- ◆ 1 x C

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 Area (RPA)	
△	Unmarked Reef Protection Area (URPA)	



Map Projection: Unprojected Geographics  
 Map Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994  
 Names are not necessarily authoritative  
 SDC121013c November 2017