



Park information

Public moorings and anchoring protecting coral in the northern Great Barrier Reef

The Great Barrier Reef and its spectacular island national parks are home to an abundant and diverse marine life, attracting thousands of visitors each year. The magnificent 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; and
- a chain or rope wrapping around coral and breaking pieces off.

Coral can be killed or damaged by anchoring. It may take many years for the coral to recover. Some coral never returns to its original condition.



Anchor chains damage coral

Public moorings and reef protection markers have been installed in a number of locations throughout the Great Barrier Reef to reduce anchor damage.

It is an offence to damage coral in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Public moorings

Public moorings are blue, double-cone shaped buoys with a colour-coded band. Five classes of moorings have been standardised throughout the marine park to cater for different vessel types and lengths.



Public mooring buoy - this illustrates a B class mooring

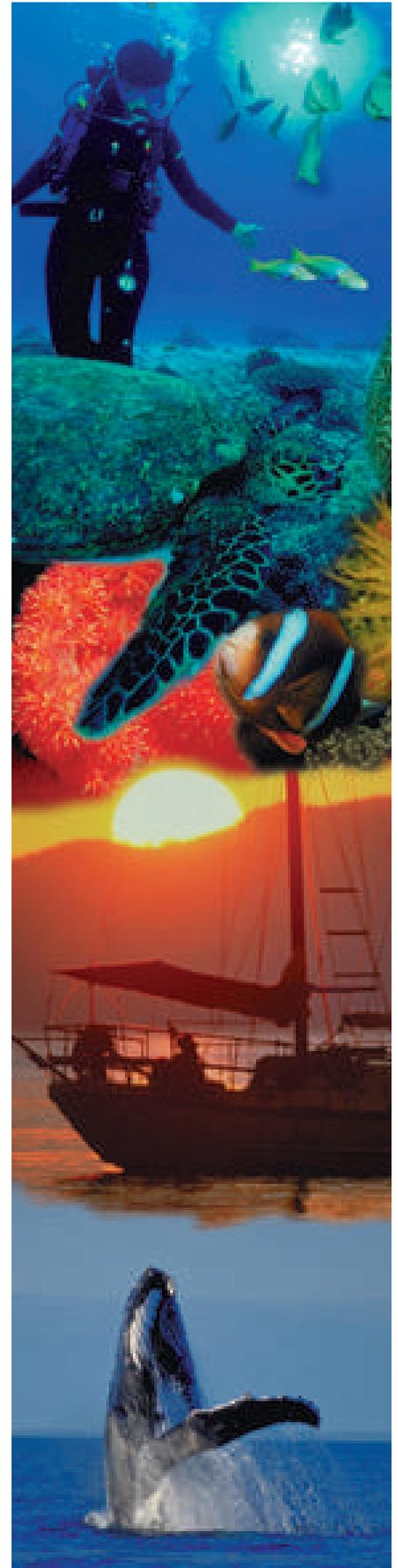
The mooring specifications and conditions of use are displayed on the colour-coded band and on the mooring tag attached to the pick-up line (see table). A large number of privately owned moorings also exist within the marine park. You should obtain the permission of the owner before using a privately owned mooring.

Colour-coded band & mooring tag:



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

Pick-up tag



Use of moorings

- All public moorings are available for overnight use.
- All public moorings have a time access limit on day use. This means that a vessel cannot occupy a mooring for longer than the time limit specified on the mooring tag between the hours of 7am and 5pm. Most moorings have a limit of either 2 or 4 hours. This has been introduced to ensure fair and equitable use of the moorings. If a vessel picks up a mooring on or after 3pm it may remain on the mooring overnight and is not required to vacate the mooring 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.
- Take care 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.



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

How to pick up a mooring

- Take note of the prevailing wind and tides, then 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 on approaching the mooring.
- Using a boat hook, retrieve the pick-up line.
- Observe the mooring tag attached to the pick-up line for information on the limits of use.
- Attach the pick-up eye to a cleat or strong point on the bow of the vessel. Do not attach another line to the pick-up line. This will increase the swing circle of the vessel and may lead to vessel or reef damage.

How to drop a mooring

- Motor slowly towards the mooring to slacken the line slightly.
- Cast the pick-up line well clear of the vessel.
- Reverse away from the mooring buoy and lines.

Please note:

Public moorings are generally located near drying reefs or shorelines and extreme care should be exercised in approaching and departing public moorings. Public moorings should not be accessed at night or in conditions of low light or poor visibility.

Anchoring restrictions and reef protection markers

Reef protection markers

Some fragile reef areas are marked by white pyramid shaped buoys (joined by an imaginary line) with blue marine park labels – these are reef protection markers.



Reef protection marker

Anchoring is not allowed inshore of the line of buoys except when anchoring on adjacent beach areas. Reef protection markers must not be used to moor vessels but may be used as a descent line for diving. Further reef protection markers will be installed within the northern Great Barrier Reef.

Anchor with care outside reef protection markers

Please ensure you follow best environmental practices:

- Carry enough chain, or chain and line, for the 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 that all parts of the ground tackle (anchor chain and rope) will remain outside the line of markers if the vessel swings.

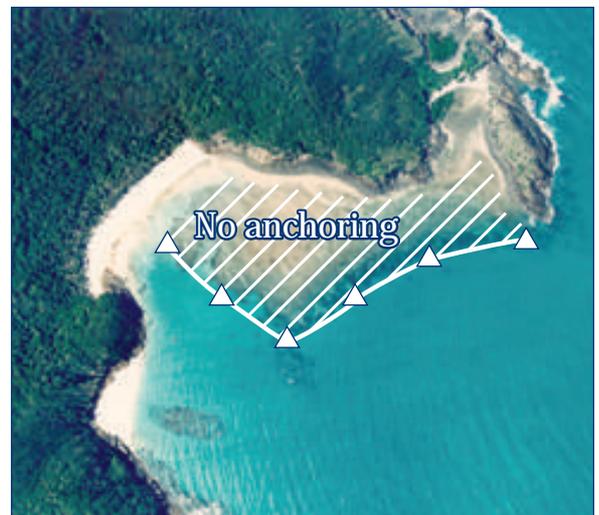
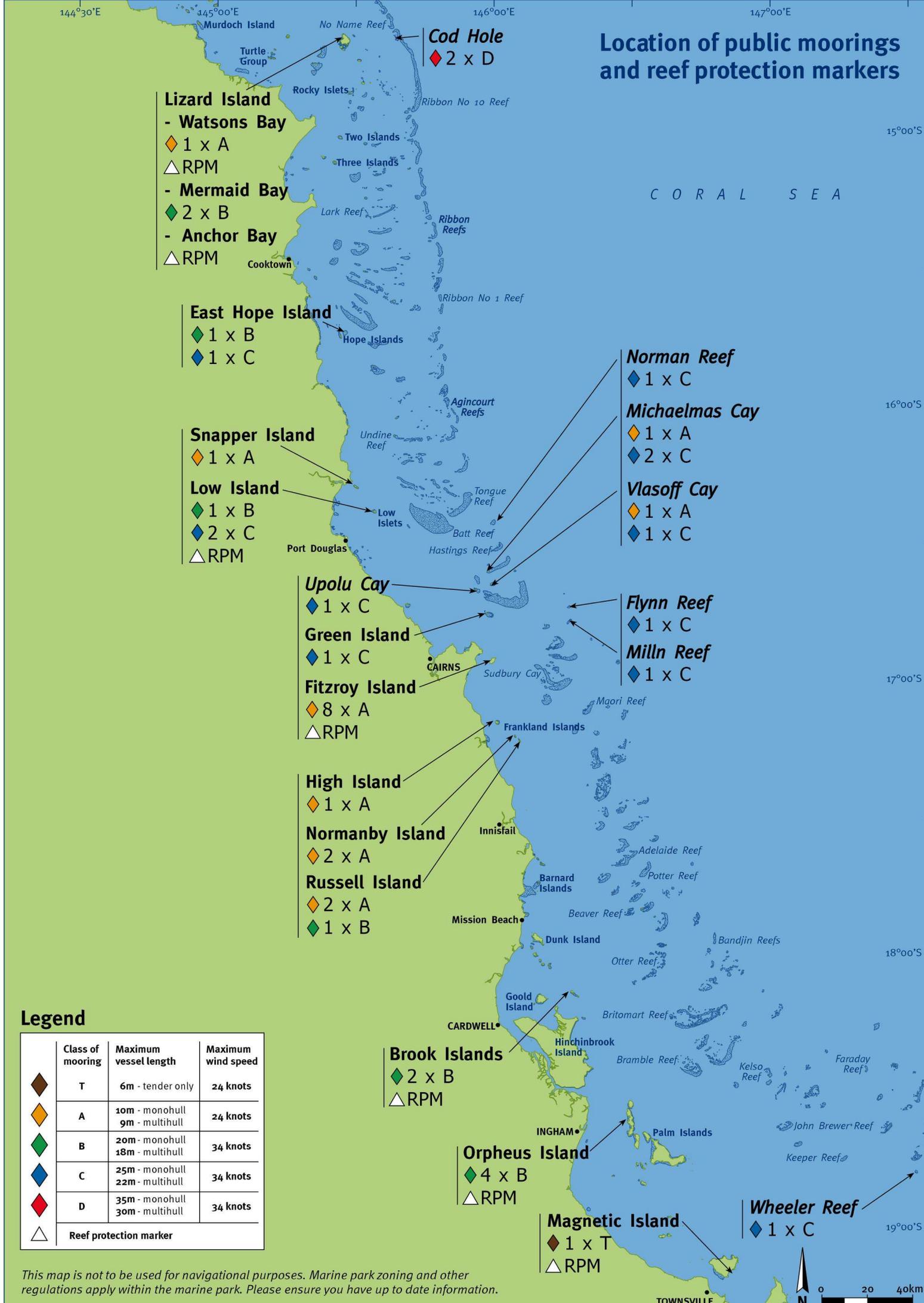


Diagram showing typical placement of reef protection markers



Location of public moorings and reef protection markers

- Lizard Island**
 - Watsons Bay
 ♦ 1 x A
 △ RPM
 - Mermaid Bay
 ♦ 2 x B
 - Anchor Bay
 △ RPM

- East Hope Island**
 ♦ 1 x B
 ♦ 1 x C

- Snapper Island**
 ♦ 1 x A
Low Island
 ♦ 1 x B
 ♦ 2 x C
 △ RPM

- Upolu Cay**
 ♦ 1 x C
Green Island
 ♦ 1 x C
Fitzroy Island
 ♦ 8 x A
 △ RPM

- High Island**
 ♦ 1 x A
Normanby Island
 ♦ 2 x A
Russell Island
 ♦ 2 x A
 ♦ 1 x B

- Brook Islands**
 ♦ 2 x B
 △ RPM

- Orpheus Island**
 ♦ 4 x B
 △ RPM

- Magnetic Island**
 ♦ 1 x T
 △ RPM

- Norman Reef**
 ♦ 1 x C

- Michaelmas Cay**
 ♦ 1 x A
 ♦ 2 x C

- Vlasoff Cay**
 ♦ 1 x A
 ♦ 1 x C

- Flynn Reef**
 ♦ 1 x C
Milln Reef
 ♦ 1 x C

- Wheeler Reef**
 ♦ 1 x C

Legend

Symbol	Class of mooring	Maximum vessel length	Maximum wind speed
◆ (Dark Brown)	T	6m - tender only	24 knots
◆ (Orange)	A	10m - monohull 9m - multihull	24 knots
◆ (Green)	B	20m - monohull 18m - multihull	34 knots
◆ (Blue)	C	25m - monohull 22m - multihull	34 knots
◆ (Red)	D	35m - monohull 30m - multihull	34 knots
△	Reef protection marker		

This map is not to be used for navigational purposes. Marine park zoning and other regulations apply within the marine park. Please ensure you have up to date information.