

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 current and undertows when snorkelling or at the beach

Watch where your hands are going at all times to avoid potentially dangerous creatures

These reefs are an important resting habitat for Australian Fur Seals

Australian Fur Seals can be aggressive. Do not approach these animals

There are no surf lifesaving patrols in Marine National Parks and Sanctuaries.

Parks Victoria recommended that swimming be contained within flagged areas patrolled by surf life saving clubs.

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 turned over

The reefs are an important resting habitat for Australian fur seals. Do not approach these animals.

The intertidal zone in Victoria is protected – both inside and outside marine national parks and sanctuaries. Visit www.depi.vic.gov.au for more information.

To report a fishing offence call **13FISH** (133 437)

Enhance your visit by exploring with a licensed tour operator. Visit www.parks.vic.gov.au for a list of operators who run activities in this park.

Victoria's unique coastline

The southern coastline of Australia has been isolated for millions of years from other continents due to ocean currents. This has resulted in our marine life evolving in many different ways. Ninety percent (90%) of all marine life here is found nowhere else. Home to over 12,000 species of plants and animals, it is considered one of the most biodiverse and unique marine ecosystems in the world. For this reason, this significant marine environment is protected for the future.



Coralline Algae

Protected network

Marengo Reefs Marine Sanctuary is part of a system of 13 marine national parks and 11 marine sanctuaries in Victoria. By keeping these areas in a natural state we will protect this unique marine environment into the future.

The establishment of marine protected areas was based on scientific research. It followed ten years of community and industry consultation. An ongoing research and monitoring program forms part of Parks Victoria's management of these areas.

Victoria was the first jurisdiction in the world to create an entire system of fully protected marine national parks at the same time.

Parks Victoria is responsible for the day-to-day management of Victoria's marine national parks and marine sanctuaries.

Marine pests

Marine pests are non-native plants or animals that can have a detrimental impact on native marine ecosystems. They are a significant threat to the health of the marine environment. Marine pests can wipe out native species by preying upon or out-competing them.

Apollo Bay Harbour contains a marine pest, *Undaria pinnatifida*. Also known as Japanese Kelp, this golden brown seaweed is a threat to the health of the marine sanctuary

Preventing the spread of this seaweed is one way visitors can help protect the marine environment. Park users should wash down all equipment and dry it thoroughly before changing locations to minimise the risk of spreading these pests.

Please report any suspected marine pests to the Department of Environment and Primary Industries on 136 186. For more information on marine pests, visit www.depi.vic.gov.au/marinepests

Education and research

The network of marine national parks and sanctuaries provides excellent sites for research and education opportunities. All research must be approved before commencing. Schools, researchers and other groups visiting Marengo Reefs Marine Sanctuary need to register their visit with local rangers on **13 1963**.

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.

Rangers and Fisheries Officers regularly patrol these areas and enforce regulations.



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)

You are not permitted to carry a spear gun while snorkelling or scuba diving in Marengo Reefs Marine Sanctuary.

You may carry fin-fish on board your boat within park boundaries if you caught the fish outside the park, and you may also carry (but not use) a fishing rod. Spear guns are not permitted within any of Victoria's marine protected areas, either in a boat or elsewhere.

You may also have abalone or rock lobster and associated equipment (securely stowed) on board the boat provided you are travelling straight through the park by the shortest practicable route.

There are strong penalties under the National Parks Act for fishing in marine national parks and marine sanctuaries. Parks Victoria and Fisheries Victoria are serious about compliance. Offenders will be caught.

To report a fishing offence call the Department of Environment and Primary Industries on **13FISH** (133474).



Dog Whelk *Dicathais orbita*, carnivorous marine snail

If you would like further information on marine national parks and sanctuaries, contact the Parks Victoria Information Centre on **13 1963** or visit the Parks Victoria website at: www.parks.vic.gov.au

Marengo Reefs Marine Sanctuary



Marengo Reefs Marine Sanctuary is Victoria's smallest marine sanctuary. Near Apollo Bay on the

Great Ocean Road, the 12.5 hectare area is 150 metres offshore and includes an important haul out site for Australian Fur Seals. To protect the important marine life found here, Marengo was declared a sanctuary in 2002.



Australian Fur Seals



Kayaking and canoeing

Local licensed tour operators regularly run sea kayaking and seal watching tours that allow visitors to view the seals on the outer reef without disturbing them.



Snorkelling and diving

This sanctuary is an excellent site for both scuba diving and snorkelling. Closer to shore is a great site for beginner snorkelers if conditions are calm. Further out can be more challenging due to ocean swell and strong currents.



Bird watching

Thirteen conservation listed shorebirds have been sighted in or near the sanctuary, including Pacific Gulls, Black-faced Cormorants and White-fronted Terns. Other birds you will commonly see include Crested Terns, Sooty Oystercatchers, and if lucky Pied Oystercatchers.

Caring for Country

Through their cultural traditions, Aboriginal people maintain their connection to their ancestral lands and waters. Parks Victoria recognises this connection and acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Communities of these areas.

How to get there

Marengo is approximately 220 km south-west of Melbourne and 2.5 km south-west of Apollo Bay. The sanctuary lies approximately 80m offshore from Hayley Point, Marengo. It can be accessed by boat from Apollo Bay Harbour. It can also be accessed by kayak, snorkelling or swimming from Marengo Beach.

Enjoying the park

Take in views of the Marengo Reefs as you explore the Great Ocean Walk and the beach overlooking the sanctuary. When conditions are calm, visitors can swim, snorkel, scuba dive or kayak out to the reef. Visitors are encouraged to explore the inner reef; however access to the outer reef is restricted.

The reef system

Most of the sanctuary is less than 15m deep. Both the inner and outer reefs are steep sided. The eastern shore of the outer reef has overhangs and ledges, providing habitat for many marine creatures. The reefs were formed as offshore islands slowly eroded down.

Australian Fur Seals

Australian Fur Seals stop in at the reef year-round and can be often seen diving into the water or resting on the rocks. They eat a variety of fish, squid and octopus and can dive to depths of 200m. The outer reef is a site of state significance with a special protection area to limit disturbance to seals. Be aware the seals can be aggressive and sometimes bite.

Please keep a safe distance from the seals and remember access is restricted on the outer reef to help protect the seals. No anchoring, landing or launching of boats within 20m of the outer reef is permitted. You must keep at least 30m away from seals, whether you are on land or in the water. Visit www.depi.vic.gov.au for more information on the laws protecting seals.

Spineless creatures

Marengo is known not only for seals, but also for its invertebrate population living on the reef. Over 108 intertidal animals have been recorded in the sanctuary including warrener snails, predatory whelks and colourful seastars.

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

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park notes



Marengo Reefs Marine Sanctuary

