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.

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 or other groups visiting Discovery Bay Marine National Park or nearby Discovery Bay Coastal Park 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)

Protected network
Discovery Bay Marine National Park 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.

Pests can arrive in new areas in a variety of ways, and preventing their spread 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 136186. For more information on marine pests, visit www.dse.vic.gov.au/marinepests

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

Discovery Bay Marine National Park

Discovery Bay Marine National Park protects over 2770 ha of high wave energy ocean near Portland.

The park contains important habitat such as basalt and calcarcine reefs, boulder fields and deep water. It is an important feeding ground for many types of whales, sharks and other marine creatures due to high levels of nutrients occurring in the area. Fierce winds buffet the remains of a massive volcano that formed the dramatic coastline around the edge of this wild and untouched park.

Coastal walking
A section of the Great South West Walk traverses the coastline along the Discovery Bay Coastal Park. The walk boasts many viewing platforms and lookout views across the marine national park. See www.greatsouthwestwalk.com for more information about the full walk and to register your trip.

Snorkelling and diving
The park is generally unsuitable for snorkelling and diving as conditions can be rough.

Boating
Please be sure to check conditions before setting out and adhere to the state’s boating regulations. For information on safe boating procedures, visit www.transportsafety.vic.gov.au

Bird watching
Oceanic seabirds often seen in this area include Australasian Gannets, Pacific Gull, Common Diving Petrels and Wandering Albatrosses. 15 conservation listed birds have been recorded in or in the immediate surrounds of the park.

Caring for Country
Through their cultural traditions, Aboriginal people maintain their connection to their ancestral lands and waters. Parks Victoria recognizes this connection and acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Communities of these areas. Aboriginal tradition indicates that the marine national park is part of Gunditjmara Country. Middens dated at up to 11 008BP have survived along the cliffs tops at Cape Du Couedic.

How to get there
Discovery Bay Marine National Park is approximately 19 km west of Portland and 380 km west of Melbourne. The main access to the marine national park shore is via a short walk from Whites Beach or Blacks Beach. Boat access is from the beach at Bridgewater Bay or Portland Harbour boat ramp.
**Discover**

The sandy seafloor of Discovery Bay has a variety of marine life, including rock pools, intertidal zones, and coral reefs. Most of these animals are small crustaceans known as amphipods. The sandy areas of the marine national park are home to a large variety of marine creatures. Some samples of the sediment in the park found over 188 microscopic organisms in a square. The sandy seafloor of Discovery Bay has a variety of marine life, including rock pools, intertidal zones, and coral reefs. Most of these animals are small crustaceans known as amphipods.

**Surface of the Water**

Boulder fields

The base of these underwater cliffs is surrounded by massive basalt boulder fields lying on top of calcareous limestone reef. The park extends 200m beneath the seabed.

**Victorian waters.**

Between Whites Beach and Cape Duquesne the park boundary commences 500 m from the coastline. Discovery Bay MNPs the Discovery Bay Coastal Park and includes the area between high and low water marks that were formerly part of the Coastal Park. The park extends 200m beneath the seabed.

**Deep water**

The average depth increases gently away from the shoreline to a maximum depth of 75m in the south west area of the park. In the deep water in the west of the park, sponge gardens thrive. Sponges can be found on most reefs throughout the park. Sponges are unique filter feeding animals, and come in a wide variety of colours, shapes and sizes.

**Basalt**

The base of these underwater cliffs is surrounded by massive basalt boulder fields lying on top of calcareous limestone reef.

**Rockpools**

Whites Beach has a small intertidal area for exploration. Common species of seaweed on the intertidal reefs include Neptune’s beardlace, Sea Lettuce and a range of microalgae and red algae. Barnacles, sea anemones, sea urchins and crabs all live in and around the rockpools. The beach is generally unsafe for swimming, with strong tides and high energy waves crashing onto the rocks.

**Seal colonies**

Australian and New Zealand Fur Seals can often be seen swimming or resting on the rocks from the viewing platforms at the tip of Cape Bridgewater. The seals live and breed here year-round in two distinct colonies. A 1.5 kilometre section of the Great South West Walk starts at the carpark at Fishermans Cove and follows the cliffs to the lookout.

**Cape Bridgewater**

Fisherman Cove

Seal Colony/Viewing Platform

Sandy seafloor

Descartes Bay has a sandy seafloor. The sandy areas of the marine national park are home to a large variety of marine creatures. Some samples of the sediment in the park found over 188 microscopic organisms in a square. Most of these animals are small crustaceans known as amphipods.