

PORT NOARLUNGA REEF AQUATIC RESERVE

The Port Noarlunga Reef Aquatic Reserve was established in 1971 to conserve and protect the plants and animals associated with the reef from exploitation and for the conservation of the estuarine habitat of the lower Onkaparinga River. This reserve has marine habitats ranging from an exposed prominent rocky reef through to muddy samphire flats. The Onkaparinga Estuary provides an ideal nursery for fish and a feeding site for wading birds.

Permitted Activities

Boating, diving, swimming, walking on the reef, line fishing (except in the area within 25 metres of the reef or within 50 metres of the end of the jetty) and the use of hand nets in the estuary for taking shrimps for bait are all allowed activities.

Prohibited Activities

Bait digging, spearfishing, line fishing within 25 metres of the reef or within 50 metres of the end of the jetty, collecting or removing any other marine organisms are prohibited activities.

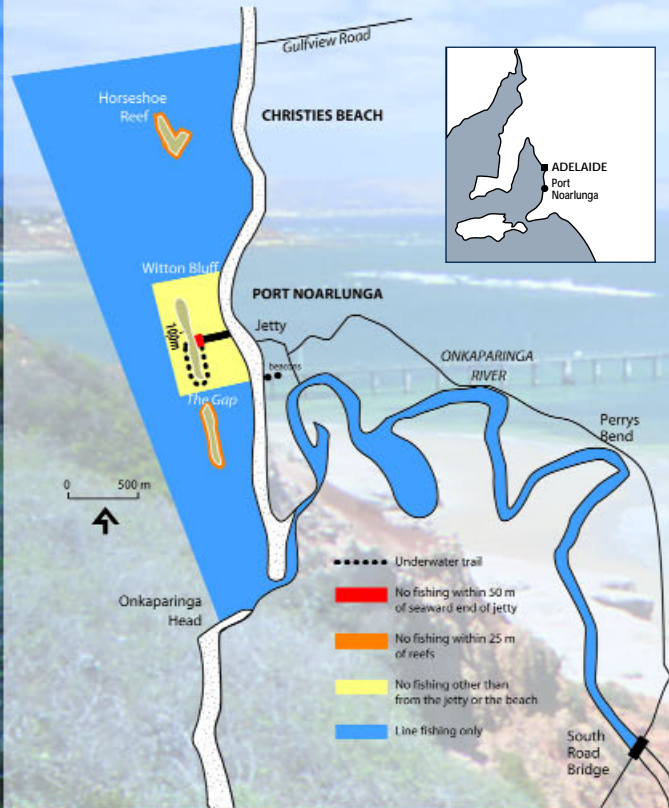
Further Information

For general information on South Australian aquatic reserves and trails view the following websites:

- www.pir.sa.gov.au
- www.sardi.sa.gov.au/pages/aquatics/about/edu_portnoarlunga.htm
- www.southaustraliantrails.com
- www.dive.southaustralia.com



PORT NOARLUNGA REEF AQUATIC RESERVE



FISHWATCH

Call **1800 065 522** **24** Hours

• fishing regulations • reporting fishing offences



Port Noarlunga Reef
Underwater Trail

PORT NOARLUNGA REEF UNDERWATER TRAIL

Protecting our underwater heritage



Port Noarlunga Reef Underwater Trail

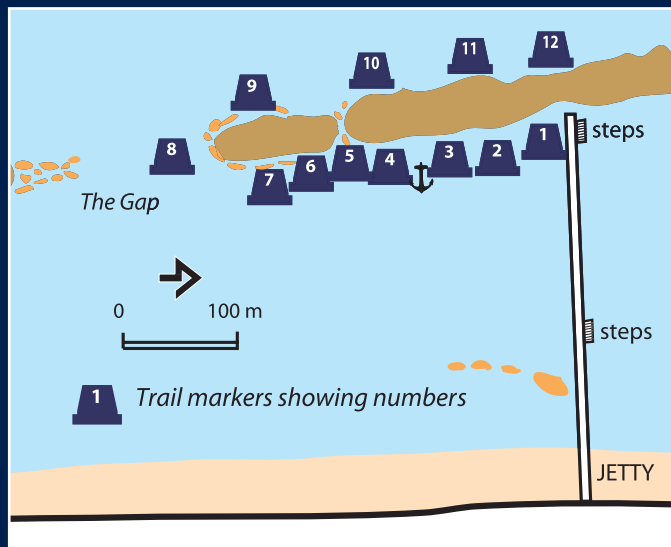
This trail is part of the Port Noarlunga Reef Aquatic Reserve and was established in 1994 to increase understanding and enjoyment of the marine environment. Port Noarlunga Reef Aquatic Reserve is South Australia's most intensively used and best known aquatic reserve, with more than 170 000 visitors each year involved in a wide range of aquatic activities. This unique area is home to more than 200 species of marine plants and animals, and more than 50 species of fish.

Port Noarlunga Reef provides an easy access point for scuba divers and snorkellers to view and experience a temperate reef system. It is also a focus for scuba diving training in South Australia and over a thousand divers visit the reef each summer.

The reef system is actually two reefs composed of consolidated gravelly-sand. Over 6 000 years ago, before the sea rose to its present level, the Onkaparinga River flowed via a gorge straight out to sea. This gorge is now the area south of the jetty that separates the two reefs known as *The Gap*. Over thousands of years, longshore transportation of sand has gradually moved the river mouth inshore and southward to its present location.

The Reef is also an important part of the Mullawirraburka Pingyallingyalla (Creation) Dreaming story. It is told that Mullawirraburka stood on the cliff between Christies Beach and Port Noarlunga, threw his spear into the water south of the bluff to bring fish closer to the beach for his people to catch. As he did, the top part of the spear broke. The spear became a reef with one part longer than the other and attracted and provided a habitat for fish. Mullawirraburka's people never went without seafood in the summer again.

The Port Noarlunga Reef is a fragile ecosystem. All components of it are important and need protection from human impact. The removal of any plant, animal or shell (dead or alive) is prohibited from within the Aquatic Reserve. Even an empty shell can become the home of a hermit crab or small marine creature.



USING THE TRAIL

The trail is marked by a series of twelve plaques attached to large concrete blocks. It starts next to the seaward end of the jetty, travels south along the inside of the reef, through *The Gap*, and then north along the outside of the reef back to the jetty.

Each plaque along the 800 metre long trail explains various aspects of a temperate reef ecosystem, the physical processes that make the reef work, and the groups of marine plants and animals that inhabit the reef.



It is recommended that divers take their time, swim at a leisurely pace and take in the diverse range of species that make up reef life. As you make your way along the trail, swim carefully to avoid damaging plants and disturbing the animal life. Remember, touching or picking up animals or plants can cause them undue stress and damage. If you don't swim the entire length of the trail during one dive, you can come back and complete it another time.

Anyone following the trail, either by scuba diving or snorkelling, is advised to carefully plan their visit, consider the prevailing weather conditions, their level of experience and training, and any other relevant safety factors or warnings issued at the time by local authorities. Care should also be taken when ascending or descending the steps from the jetty to the reef. The shoreward side of the reef is protected and ideal for less experienced scuba divers and snorkellers.

In the event of an accident, telephone Emergency Services on 000 or 112 on mobile phone. No responsibility is taken for the safety of any person using the trail - use it at your own risk.