

PLEASE HELP
US PROTECT
OUR BEAUTIFUL
ISLAND & REEF BY
FOLLOWING
THESE ECO
GUIDELINES

Marine Encounters

Lady Elliot Island is a major hotspot for marine megafauna including manta rays, migrating humpback whales, reef sharks and turtles due to the Island's close proximity to the continental shelf.

While it is amazing to see these animals in their natural habitat, it is important not to disturb them as they are often undertaking behaviours essential to their survival including: courting and mating; feeding, giving birth; and raising their young.



LADY ELLIOT ISLAND AND THE SURROUNDING REEF IS HIGHLY PROTECTED AS A NO TAKE/GREEN ZONE MARINE NATIONAL PARK.

This high level of protection creates a sanctuary for our marine life. However please respect the marine park Look - No Take/Touch law. It is NOT permitted to take, touch or interfere with any marine species.

To ensure your safety and the wellbeing of the marine life we ask you follow these simple guidelines when encountering large marine life in the water.

ENTERING THE WATER

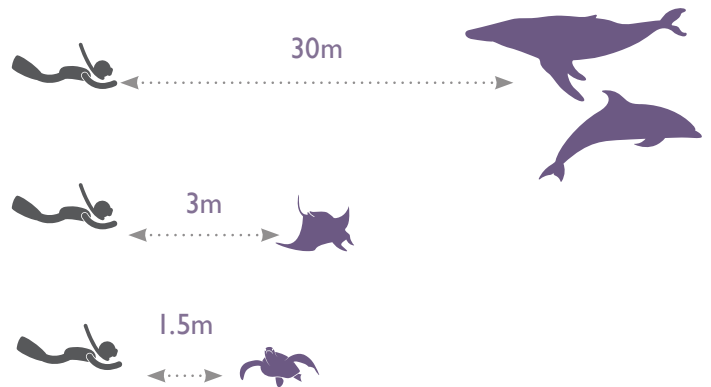
ENTER THE WATER QUIETLY & CALMLY

- Keep your fins below the water's surface when swimming. Splashing and noise can scare marine life away.



KEEP YOUR DISTANCE

- Once you enter the water or if your encounter marine life during your dive or snorkel, **you are required under the 'Australian National Guidelines for Whale and Dolphin Watching' and 'Best Practice for Manta Ray and Turtle Encounters'** to keep your distance greater than:



- If a whale or dolphin approaches you while you are in the water, move slowly to avoid startling the animal and do not touch or swim towards it.
- Always move in a parallel direction to a whale and never approach from the rear or head on or cause them to change direction. **Do not approach or disturb mothers and calves.**

LET MARINE LIFE BE

BE KIND, RESPECT & HELP US PROTECT OUR MARINE LIFE



- Only approach marine life from the side, giving them a clear path ahead.
- Do not chase, corner or disturb marine life, interfere with their natural behaviour or cause them to change direction.
- Do not touch or hold on to marine life.
- Avoid making sudden noises or splashing.
- If a marine mammal shows signs of disturbance (e.g. acting in an aggressive manner), move away slowly and quietly.

LADY ELLIOT ISLAND ECO GUIDELINES



SCUBA DIVING

WITH MANTA RAYS

Chances are if you are diving with a manta ray, you will be encountering them on a cleaning station. These are important sites for manta rays.

- Remain at the side of the cleaning station. **Do NOT swim into the main cleaning area.**



- **Be careful not to damage the reef beneath you.**
- When a manta ray swims towards you, do NOT block their path as they swim overhead. **Stay low and where you are.**

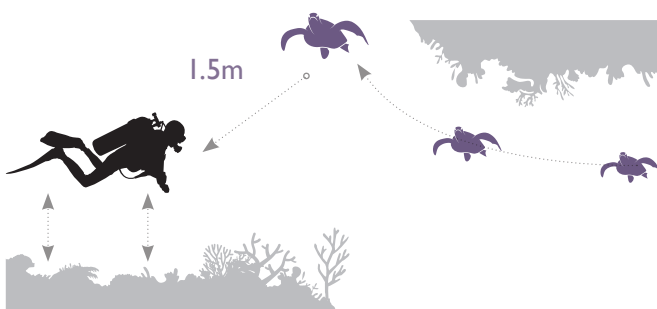


SCUBA DIVING

WITH TURTLES

Turtles can be very inquisitive so please keep these guidelines in mind when diving around turtle hot spots.

- **Pay attention.** When encountering a turtle while diving, observe them closely to see what they are doing. Do NOT disturb a resting turtle. Always keep a distance of 1.5 metres.
- **Be still.** If a turtle is swimming towards you, keep still and avoid sudden movements.
- **Give them space.** When encountering turtles resting in caves or under overhangs, be careful to give them enough room so they can surface to breathe.



TAKE CARE

WITH SNORKEL / DIVE EQUIPMENT AND CAMERAS



- Take care to not damage, stand on, kick or hurt marine life including the living and fragile coral.
- Please be extra cautious with your fins and equipment such as dive gear to not damage coral or marine life
- When taking photos – keep your distance and do not interfere with or touch marine life.

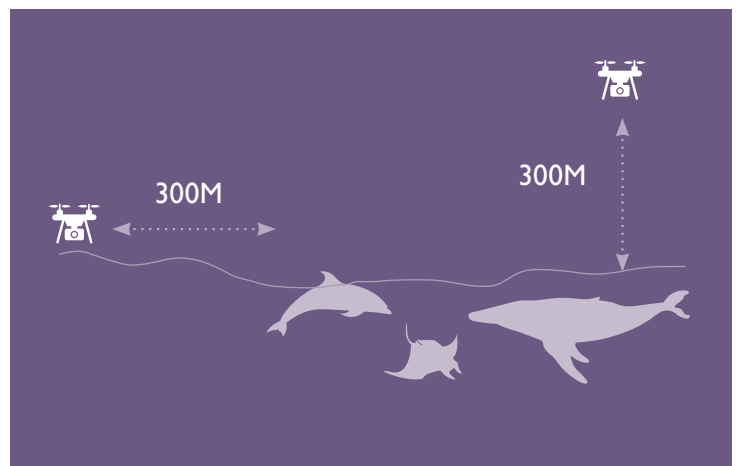
USE OF DRONES

The Australian National Guidelines for Whale and Dolphin Watching explains all aircraft, including drones, may cause a disruption to marine life due to their speed, noise, shadow or downdraft.

The guidelines state “drones” are considered to be ‘aircraft’. This means people operating drones near whales and dolphins must abide by the following requirements.

The drone must not:

- Fly lower than 300 metres (1000 feet) and within a 300-metre radius of a whale or dolphin
- Approach the whale or dolphin from head on
- Land on the water within 300 metres of a whale or dolphin



If you observe another snorkeller, diver acting carelessly, remind them to be an underwater steward. If you do not feel comfortable speaking to the snorkeller/diver about their actions, please inform one of our friendly Activities or Dive Team.