

THE AUTHORITY:

- recommends areas of the Great Barrier Reef Region for declaration as marine park

- prepares zoning and management plans for these areas

- arranges and undertakes research and investigation relevant to the marine park

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SEASONAL CLOSURE: FAIRFAX ISLANDS AND HOSKYN ISLANDS REEFS

1st November 1981 to 1st March 1982

The islands within the Capricornia Section of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park form one of the three most important sea turtle nesting areas in the world. They also contain over 50% of the important seabird nesting sites of the whole Great Barrier Reef Region.

Because of the significance of this area in world terms for turtle and seabird breeding, special protection is needed during the breeding season. Wreck Island in particular is of such importance as a nesting site for the loggerhead turtle that the surrounding area is specially zoned as a Preservation Zone, where entry is restricted all year round to protect it from human intrusion. Provision has also been made in the Zoning Plan for the Capricornia Section for Seasonal Closure Areas. These are particular areas which need to be protected from human intrusion during the breeding season, to prevent disturbance to the nesting seabirds and turtles.

Fairfax Islands and Hoskyn Islands are regarded as being among the most important nesting areas in the Section for certain species of birds and turtles. They are also very vulnerable to the effects of human intrusion during the nesting season.

Fairfax Islands are one of the principal breeding areas in the Great Barrier Reef for the brown booby, and an important breeding ground for the wedge-tailed shearwater. They also have breeding colonies of reef herons, roseate terns, black-naped terns, crested terns, little terns, lesser-crested terns and white-capped noddy terns. Fairfax Islands are also an important nesting area in the Great Barrier Reef for green turtles.

Hoskyn Islands are one of the principal nesting areas for green turtles, as well as a nesting area for loggerhead turtles. They are also an important breeding area in the Great Barrier Reef for the brown booby, wedge-tailed shearwater and bridled tern, and also have a breeding colony of white-capped noddy terns.

The Authority, in consultation with the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Marine Parks Section of Queensland Department of Primary Industries, has decided that the areas surrounding Fairfax and Hoskyn Islands will be closed to visitors for a period of 4 months, from 1st November 1981 to 1st March 1982.

The experience and information gained during this Seasonal Closure period will be an important aid in the future management of the Marine Park.