



Australian Government
Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority

Whitsundays Plan of Management UPDATE 2



The Whitsundays is one of the most spectacular areas in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park attracting the greatest concentration of visitors. To continue to protect this high-use area the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority updated the Whitsundays Plan of Management in August 2017, providing for additional protection to the Reef-wide zoning plan.

On 1 January 2018, three of these amendments to the Whitsundays Plan of Management 1998 (the Plan) will come into effect. They are the approved amendments relating to the definition of a year, significant bird sites and aircraft taxiing at Whitehaven Beach. These amendments were proposed in the public consultation held over March and April 2017, and were then approved by the Marine Park Authority Board as part of the broader amendments to the Plan.

From January 2018 copies of the Plan including all amendments may be obtained from www.gbrmpa.gov.au or from the following address:

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
2-68 Flinders Street
PO Box 1379
TOWNSVILLE QLD 4810

“ Make sure you have the latest copy of the Whitsundays Plan of Management (available early January 2018) ”

Definition of a year

This amendment will change the definition of a year to reflect a calendar year (i.e. from 1 January to 31 December). This will make it easier for tourism operators who are required to book to the Whitsunday Planning Area to plan and calculate the number of bookings made for a permitted vessel or aircraft in any one year. The definition of a year in the Whitsundays Plan of Management previously meant any period of 365 consecutive days.

Aircraft taxiing at Whitehaven Beach

A regular aircraft landing area is provided at Whitehaven Beach to allow seaplanes to land and take off daily. The amendment now permits seaplanes to taxi out of the regular aircraft landing area to the adjacent location (being the Whitehaven Beach, Whitsunday



Island Location) to transfer passengers only to and from South Whitehaven Beach on a daily basis. As a popular location, pilots must exercise caution to ensure the safety of the public and their passengers when operating in this area. These areas can be viewed on [Map 1 – Whitsundays Plan of Management – Detailed Overview](#) at the Marine Park Authority website.

Significant bird sites

There are 11 significant bird sites that provide refuge for native birds and internationally recognised migratory seabirds in the Whitsunday Planning Area.

The review of the Whitsundays Plan of Management identified that nesting at East Rock, Edwin Rock and Olden Rock was occurring for longer periods than when the Plan was introduced. To ensure the birds are protected, the restriction period has been extended at these sites by three months with vessel access not allowed from 1 October–31 March each year. Go-slow periods and aircraft restriction periods continue to apply for all other significant bird sites.

Additionally, the significant bird sites now have definitive spatial boundaries that are described in Schedule 6 of the Whitsundays Plan of Management. The restriction periods for each of the 11 significant bird sites is set out clearly in the table below for vessel and aircraft

“ All aircraft users are reminded they must remain above 1500 feet within 1000 metres of a significant bird site during restriction periods ”

operators. These boundaries can also be viewed on [Map 1 – Whitsundays Plan of Management – Detailed Overview](#) at the Marine Park Authority website.

Further information

For more information contact the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority on **(07) 4750 0700** or consultation@gbmpa.gov.au. To view the plan and associated materials visit www.gbmpa.gov.au.

SIGNIFICANT BIRD SITE	RESTRICTIONS	
	<u>Vessel</u> restriction within bird site	<u>Aircraft</u> restriction (no access below 1500 feet within 1000 metres of site)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armit Island (southern beach only) • Armit Islets (No 1) • Double Cone Island (western island only) • Grassy Island (southern beach only) • Shaw Island (beach east of Burning Point) • South Repulse Island (western beach only) 	6 knots: 1 October–31 March	1 October–31 March
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bird Island 	6 knots: All year	All year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Rock • Edwin Rock 	No access: 1 October–31 March 6 knots: 1 April–30 September	All year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eshelby Islands 	No Access: Zoning Plan limits access all year	All year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olden Rock (south of Olden Island) 	No access: 1 October–31 March	1 October–31 March