

ROTTNEST IS *fishing guide*



Effective from
May 2018

Rottnest Island, Western Australia's very own Island getaway is a popular family holiday destination and a fantastic place to 'wet a line'. Fishing is a favourite pastime for many visitors to Rottnest Island with opportunities for anglers of any skill level or experience. Shore based angling offers exciting fishing opportunities. Alternatively, if you have a boat, you can head offshore to fish from the deepwater reefs surrounding the Island.

Marine Sanctuary Zones

The Rottnest Island Marine Management Strategy (RIMMS) came into effect in July 2007. As part of this strategy, two existing sanctuary zones were expanded and three additional sanctuary zones created.

The sanctuary zones aim to protect representative samples of entire marine habitats at various Island locations. Their task is to protect functioning ecosystems for tourism, recreational activities, research and education. These habitats support a diverse array of marine plants and animals including seagrasses, algae, corals, molluscs, echinoderms, sponges and fishes.

A full map of Rottnest Island and the corresponding inserts of the Marine Sanctuary Zones are overleaf. The GPS points on the inserts are for the outermost seaward and shoreward points. Signs are in place on shore to assist shore anglers and in-water signs are placed seasonally at the offshore sanctuary zone boundaries.



1. West End Demersal Sanctuary Zone

This sanctuary zone encompasses the coastal waters from Radar Reef, Cape Vlamingh and Cathedral Rocks and is designed to protect the bottom dwelling or 'demersal' marine species. Shore based fishing by means of a rod and line or line held in the hand is permitted along the platform locally known as Radar Reef in this sanctuary zone. Trolling from vessels is permitted targeting pelagic species of fish. Taking of marine flora and fauna by all other means is prohibited. *See map 1 for GPS points.*

2. Kingston Reef Sanctuary Zone

This sanctuary zone is located offshore in Thomson Bay. The area has been expanded on the south-western boundary to incorporate more of the reef environment. Taking of any marine flora or fauna by any means is prohibited. *See map 2 for GPS points.*

3. Armstrong Bay Sanctuary Zone

This sanctuary zone encompasses the coastal waters from the eastern end of Catherine Bay to Parakeet Island. Shore based fishing is permitted by means of a rod and line or line held in the hand in certain areas which are sign posted. Taking of any marine flora and fauna by all other means is prohibited. *See map 3 for GPS points.*

4. Green Island Sanctuary Zone

This sanctuary zone is located between the western end of Salmon Bay and the eastern point of Strickland Bay. Taking of marine flora and fauna by all means is prohibited. *See map 4 for GPS points.*

5. Parker Point Sanctuary Zone

This sanctuary zone is located at Parker Point. The area has been expanded to include part of Salmon Bay. Taking of any marine flora or fauna by any means is prohibited. *See map 5 for GPS points.*

Fishing is prohibited in the following areas during daylight hours – the swimming areas of Little Parakeet Bay, The Basin and all other 'no-boating' areas of Rottnest Island.

For more information on 'no-boating' areas, please refer to the Rottnest Island Marine and Boating Guide available from the Visitor Centre or at www.rottnestisland.com

Key Fishing Rules

1. Recreational fishing is subject to size and possession limits, gear restrictions, seasonal closure and licensing by the Department of Fisheries WA. There are various fish species that are protected in the waters around Rottnest Island. For more information please refer to the Department of Fisheries WA Recreational Fishing Guide – West Coast Region, available from their website www.fish.wa.gov.au
2. Spear fishing is prohibited within some areas of the Rottnest Island Marine Reserve. Refer to map overleaf. Spear guns or gidgees carried aboard vessels must be dismantled and stowed safely on the vessel. Spear guns and gidgees are NOT permitted on Rottnest Island.
3. Rottnest Island Rangers and Fisheries WA officers regularly patrol the waters of the Rottnest Island Marine Reserve to ensure compliance. Shore based Fisheries WA officers also monitor recreational fishing activities. Substantial penalties apply for failure to adhere to these rules and regulations.



Coastal Hazards

The coastal area is fragile. Beware of unstable rock slopes, cliffs and overhangs. Stay well back from cliff edges and do not enter caves or walk under overhangs. Please exercise caution in natural environments.

Fishing From Shore

The numerous rock platforms, headlands and beautiful beaches of Rottnest Island offer excellent year-round fishing opportunities for every angler – from the novice to the experienced. One of the great advantages of fishing on an island is that you can always find a shoreline sheltered from the wind.

On Rottnest Island, many fishing spots are only a short bike ride from Thomson Bay and Geordie Bay. Jetties in these bays also offer good fishing opportunities. For the more adventurous, take a bike ride out to Radar Reef or Ricey Beach and try your luck at catching some target fish species.

The most common fish caught from shore is herring but there are plenty of other table fish on offer. Often a mixed bag can include skippy, tailor, tarwhine (silver bream), gardies and even the odd flathead or flounder off the bottom. Western Australian salmon can be caught in large numbers during April and May. For the more experienced angler, mulloway and yellowtail king fish offer a challenge all year round. The popular King George whiting as well as its smaller cousins the yellow-finned and sand whiting are often found in protected sand patches.



Boat Fishing

Boat fishing around Rottnest Island can be very rewarding. Some of Western Australia's best known species of fish including dhufish, breaksea cod, pink snapper and samson fish inhabit the rocky reef areas. These reef fish are most often found in the moderately deep waters surrounding Rottnest Island. During spring and summer, however, some individuals move into shallower waters and are occasionally caught from shore.

Just a few kilometres off the West End of Rottnest Island, the continental shelf drops away rapidly to great depths and it is in this area that apex predators can be found.

Offshore anglers target pelagic species such as billfish and various species of shark. Various marine interest groups have sponsored the installation of a series of Fish Aggregating Devices (FAD's) in this area. These devices are very successful at attracting world class sport fish such as yellowtail kingfish, dolphin fish (mahi-mahi) and mackerel.

For more information about boating around Rottnest Island, please refer to the Rottnest Island Marine and Boating Guide available from the Visitor Centre or www.rottnestisland.com



Sustainable Fishing Practices

1. Always remember to take your rubbish and discarded fishing tackle home with you. Hooks, line, bait bags and other rubbish can endanger wildlife and other visitors.
2. Take only what you need and adhere to all daily bag and size limits.
3. Return all undersize and unwanted fish to the water quickly and carefully.
4. If you intend to keep a fish, ensure to remove the hook quickly and kill it humanely.
5. Report any suspected illegal fishing incidents to the Rottnest Island Rangers on: 0419 951 635 or Fish Watch: 1800 815 507
6. Catch and release practices that use fish-friendly techniques assist in maintaining healthy fish populations. Using these techniques allows recreational fishing to be enjoyed by visitors whilst ensuring minimal harm to the fish. This will help the fish to survive the experience and safely return to the breeding stock. For more information, please refer to the 'Catch Care' guide available from their website www.fish.wa.gov.au
7. When cleaning your catch, ensure all waste (including scales, guts and frames) is wrapped in paper and disposed of responsibly. Please refrain from throwing fish waste into the ocean, particularly in popular swimming and boating areas.



Fishing Supplies and Further Information

Fishing tackle can be purchased from Rottnest General Store and Geordie Bay Store. These two outlets stock a range of tackle for fishing around Rottnest Island. Pre-made rigs are also available for all target species. Staff at the Visitor Centre can provide information on fishing, boating and marine activities, and directions of how to get to popular fishing spots. Bikes can be hired from Rottnest Island Pedal & Flipper. You can also catch the Island Explorer to go fishing but please be mindful of other passengers whilst carrying your fishing rods.

It is a good idea to take plenty of drinking water with you, check the local weather forecast (www.bom.gov.au or www.rottnestisland.com) and always let someone know where you are going.

Enjoy your fishing experience within the Rottnest Island Marine Reserve.

