

Visiting the islands in the Pilbara during the Total Solar Eclipse

The islands in the Pilbara have significant natural, cultural, and historical values, provide a refuge for conservation significant flora and fauna, including threatened species, and most are managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA). Many islands are important nesting areas for turtles and wedge-tailed shearwaters that may be active during the total solar eclipse (TSE), and measures must be taken to protect these species.

When is the total solar eclipse (TSE) period?

The total solar eclipse is occurring on April 20, at 11.27am (WST). DBCA is anticipating a greater than usual number of visitor numbers to the area during the TSE period (17 - 23 April) and has put measures in place to reduce potential impacts on the Pilbara Islands.

Can I visit the islands?

Day visits to most of the Pilbara islands are permitted during the TSE period, however, access should be avoided at some islands due to environmental, cultural and industry considerations. **Please do not visit Varanus, Barrow, Double, Boodie, Middle, (see map of northern islands on page 3) Doole, West Doole, Roberts, Whitmore, Whalebone, Burnside, Simpson, Tent, Rocky, Y, Eva (Victor), and Gndaroo islands** (see map of Exmouth Gulf islands on page 3).

For all other islands, please keep to the beach and avoid walking through vegetation. Shearwater rookeries occur on several islands, and burrows and fledglings are easily trampled.

Special protections will be in place for the shearwater rookeries on North Muiron, South Muiron and Serrurier (Long) Islands. When visiting these islands, please adhere to closed area signage and be aware that penalties apply if you enter these areas.

Turtles may still be nesting on the islands and hatchlings may be emerging during this time. Do not interfere with nesting turtles or hatchlings.

Can I camp on the Pilbara Islands nature reserves?

During the TSE period, limited camping is available at South Muiron Island and Serrurier (Long) Island and only to authorised persons. Applications can be made to the DBCA Exmouth District office on 9947 8000.

Overnight camping at all other island nature reserves is not permitted.

Can I camp at the Montebello Islands Conservation Park?

Camping is permitted on the shores of Hermite, Renewal, Crocus, Bluebell, Primrose, and North West Islands. Camping is restricted to 100 m inland of the high-water mark and for no longer than five consecutive nights.

Can I have a campfire?

Fires are not permitted due to the risk of burning flora and habitats on islands as well as the risk to fauna and other visitors. Prepare your food before you go or cook on your boat.

Can I camp on my boat near the islands?

While you may camp on your boat, some islands are important rookeries for wedge-tailed shearwaters and turtles.

To minimise disorientation of shearwater fledglings and turtle hatchlings, **a darkness zone where artificial light is not visible is encouraged within 1.5km of North West, eastern Trimouille, south-west Hermite, Ah Chong, Varanus, North East Regnard, Double, Barrow, Middle, Boodie, Round, Airlie, Thevenard, Bessieres, Serrurier (Long), Locker, North Muiron and South Muiron Islands** (see map on page 4).

If overnight anchoring within the darkness zone is unavoidable, please minimise artificial light by drawing curtains and turning off lights that aren't required for safety or navigational purposes (including underwater lights).

What safety considerations are there for visiting the islands?

Many of the islands are remote and isolated. Trips should only be undertaken by experienced boaters in well-prepared, suitably sized and equipped vessels in favourable weather conditions. Phone reception is limited and there may be long response times for emergency services.

Suitable anchorages are limited and may be in high demand during the TSE period; be prepared to use an alternative anchorage if there is no bare sand to anchor in or swing room is limited.

Spring equinox tides are occurring during the TSE period, and the waters around many of the islands are unsurveyed, so extra vigilance by boaters will be needed to ensure personal safety. All trips and particularly passages between reefs

and islands need to be carefully planned and considered. Tidal flows moving against wind and swell create extremely dangerous conditions. For more information, see page 8 of the *Islands in the Pilbara visitor guide*.

Are there public moorings at the islands?

There are no public moorings. Anchor in sand to protect fragile reef, sponge, algal, seagrass and mangrove habitats.

Are there any facilities on the on the islands?

There are no facilities on any of the islands.

There are no rubbish bins. Leave no trace. Keep the environment clean. Remove any rubbish you create or find and dispose of it properly when you return to the mainland.

There are no toilet facilities. Bring a chemical toilet. If there is no alternative, dig a hole deeper than 30 cm and refill it when you're finished. Do not use disposable toilet wipes as these do not biodegrade.

There are no fresh water sources. Visitors must be fully self-sufficient for water, food and fuel. Phone signal is limited.

How do I minimise my impact on the natural and cultural values of the islands?

- Prior to departure check your vessel, gear and clothing are free of soil, seeds, animals and insects. Do not take wood onto islands. **Follow the quarantine guidelines** on page 15 of *Islands in the Pilbara visitor guide*.
- Choose larger islands. Leave smaller islands for wildlife.
- Before going ashore observe wildlife activity such as shorebird and seabird nesting and roosting, approach islands slowly and plan your landing away from these areas.
- Move quietly and carefully when ashore, stick to the beach, avoid walking through vegetation, and keep your distance from wildlife.
- **Dogs and other pets are not permitted on island nature reserves.**
- Follow the Island Visitors' Code of Conduct on pages 15–17 of the *Islands in the Pilbara visitor guide*.
- Turtle hatchlings may be seen emerging on the islands. Please do not touch or interfere with hatchlings. For more information, see the *Turtle Watching Code of Conduct* (see page 8 of the *Islands in the Pilbara visitor guide*).

Can aircraft land on the islands?

Due to the significant visitor safety and environmental risks, aircraft landings are generally not permitted on island nature reserves and islands will only be accessible by vessel.

Commercial operations on the islands

Commercial operations are not permitted on DBCA-managed lands and waters without appropriate licences. This includes anyone operating a business or service for private benefit (profit) intending to take customers ashore on island nature reserves or conservation parks.

Responsible boating

For your safety and the protection of the environment, please practice responsible boating when visiting the Pilbara Islands:

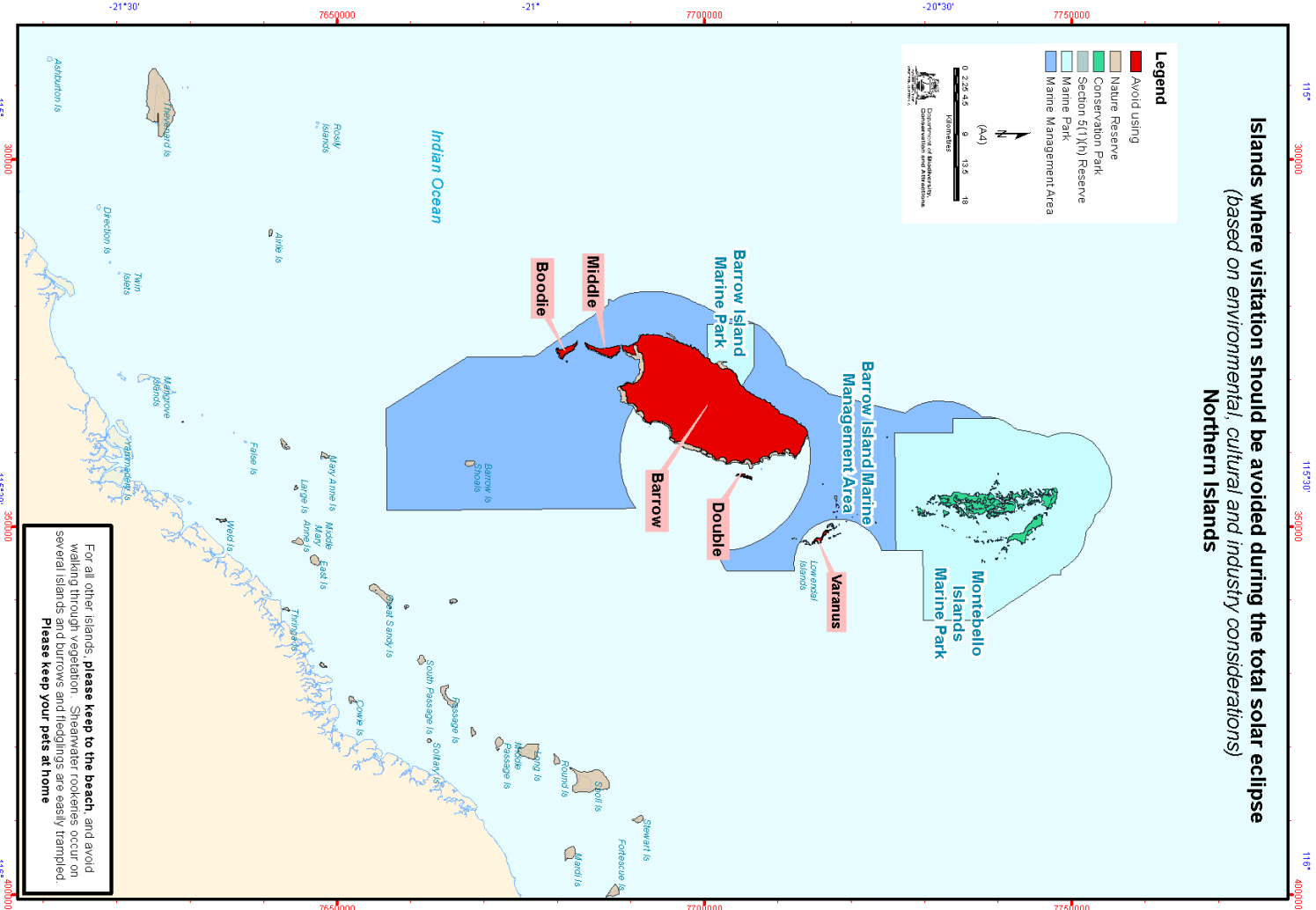
- Maintain watch for marine animals swimming, feeding, or resting at the surface and reduce vessel speed to avoid collision and disturbance.
- Do not approach within 30 m of a whale shark or 100 m of whales, killer whales, dolphins or dugongs. If to the front or rear of a whale, do not approach within 300 m.
- Anchor on sand, never coral or seagrass. Check that your anchor is not dragging.
- Do not discharge sewage in the Montebello Islands Marine Park, Barrow Island Marine Park, Muiron Islands Marine Management Area and Ningaloo Marine Park.
- Know your zones. Download the [Recfishwest app](#) for details on fishing rules and regulations.

For more information, please visit:

- The *Islands in the Pilbara visitor guide* exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au/pilbara-islands-visitor-guide
- Pilbara Islands Explore Parks WA page exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au/pilbara-islands
- Montebello Islands Explore Parks WA page exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au/montebello-islands
- Barrow Island Explore Parks WA page exploreparks.dbca.wa.gov.au/barrow-island

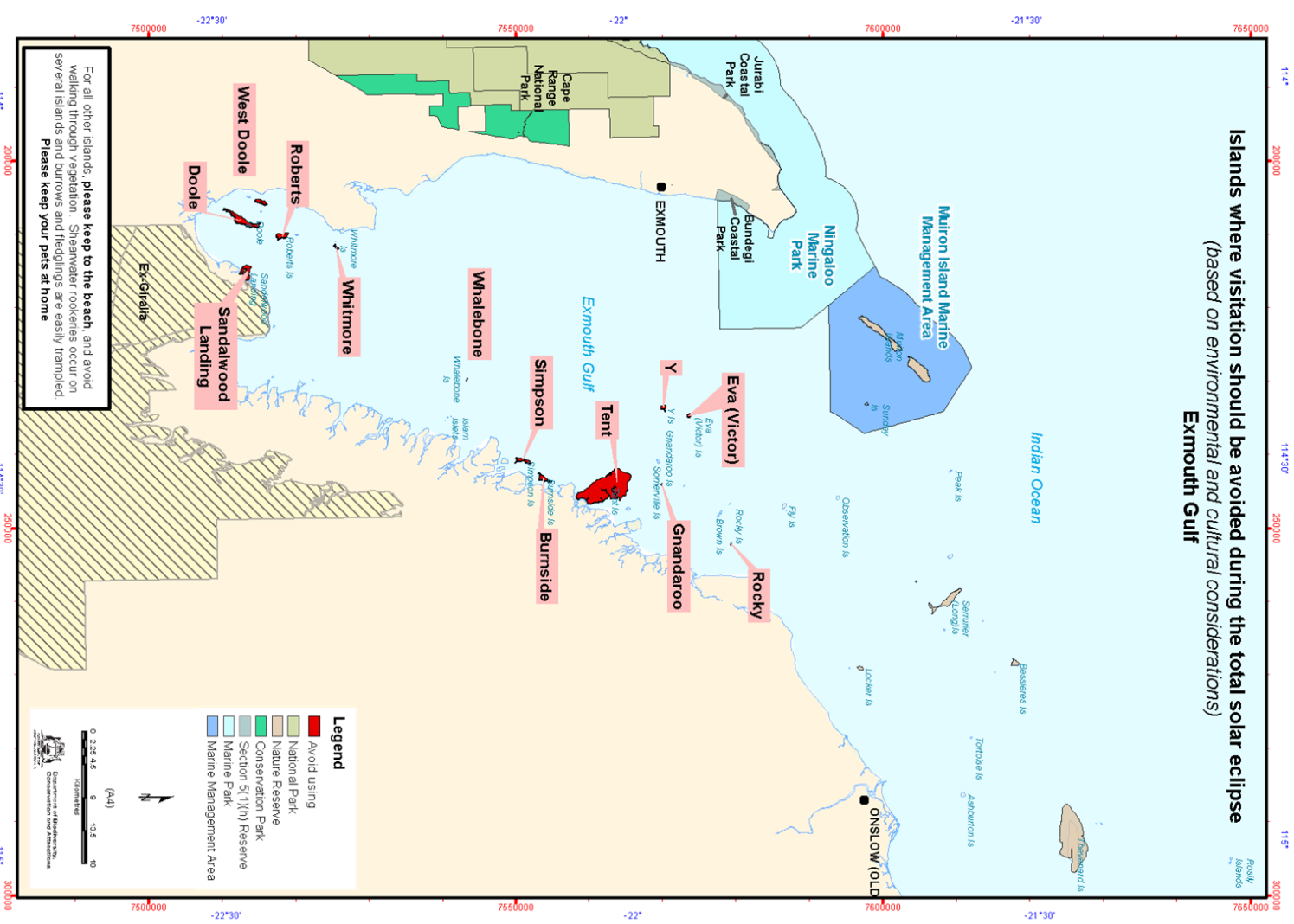
DBCA will be undertaking aerial and vessel patrols to monitor camping and visitation to the islands during the total solar eclipse period.

Islands where visitation should be avoided during the total solar eclipse (based on environmental, cultural and industry considerations) Northern Islands



For all other islands, please keep to the beach, and avoid walking through vegetation. Shearwater rookeries occur on several islands and burrows and fledglings are easily trampled. Please keep your pets at home

Islands where visitation should be avoided during the total solar eclipse (based on environmental and cultural considerations) Exmouth Gulf



For all other islands, please keep to the beach, and avoid walking through vegetation. Shearwater rookeries occur on several islands and burrows and fledglings are easily trampled. Please keep your pets at home


Major island rookeries where artificial light controls are recommended for overnight anchoring


Legend

- Islands where 1.5 kilometre darkness zone should be maintained for overnight anchoring
- Nature Reserve
- Conservation Park
- Section 5(1)(h) Reserve
- Marine Park
- Marine Management Area



To minimise disorientation of wedge-tailed shearwater fledglings and marine turtle hatchlings that may be present during the eclipse period, a darkness zone should be maintained within 1.5km of the island rookeries indicated on the map. If overnight anchoring within the darkness zone is unavoidable, please implement artificial light controls such as drawing curtains and minimising lights that aren't required for safety or navigational purposes (including underwater lights).


 0 4.5 9 18 27 36
 Kilometres


 Department of Biodiversity,
 Conservation and Attractions