



40 THINGS TO DO IN ENCOUNTER MARINE PARK

A park that covers ocean waters, reefs, islands, cliffs, estuaries, and jetties. Elusive leafy seadragons hide whilst colourful fish are aplenty. With hidden beaches and sheltered bays to be found, you'll encounter new textures, strange sights and a hundred different sounds.

Encounter Marine Park offers endless possibilities for families and groups to explore, discover and learn about the plants and animals that call this Marine Park home. The Park begins south of Adelaide spanning across the waters of the Fleurieu Peninsula and extending past the Murray Mouth to the Coorong coast. At its western boundary, the marine park includes all waters of Backstairs Passage and the eastern shores of Kangaroo Island. Within the Marine Park there are areas protected by Sanctuary Zones – areas of high conservation significance protecting plants and animals. Certain activities like fishing and collecting are not allowed.

For thousands of years the beaches and oceans have been culturally significant to the Kurna, Ngarrindjeri and Ramindjeri people as a source of food, travel, and Dreaming.

The Park is home to leafy seadragons, whales, dolphins, seals, sharks, cuttlefish, octopus, stingrays, little penguins, the world's largest breeding colony of Australian sea lions (Pages Island), hundreds of shorebirds including the endangered hooded plover and many different types of seagrasses, algae and other marine life forms. You can download a map from environment.sa.gov.au/marineparks/home

PARK PROFILE



Sanctuary Zone



Toilets



Wheelchair Access



Pram Access

Name: Encounter Marine Park

First established: 2009

Size: 3121 square kilometres

Location: South of Adelaide, between the Fleurieu Peninsula and Kangaroo Island, and around to Victor Harbor and the Coorong

Number of plants and animals: Numbers are still being counted in the park, but in SA's marine environment there are approx 6000 invertebrate species, 1200 plant species, 720 fish species, 33 marine species and 70 species of seabirds

Some endangered or rare species: Australian sea lions, southern right whales, and hooded plover.

AUTUMN



Autumn on the sea brings clearer waters and cooler sand.

It's a time for wondering and exploring where the sea meets the land.

WINTER



Winter sees the arrival of whales as they find a place to give birth.

Whilst the stormy shoreline has hundreds of natural treasures washed up by the surf.

- 1 Visit the Victor Harbor Whale Centre and learn about marine life, traditional owners, and whaling history (SZ) (MH) (R) (W)
 - 2 Visit Waitpinga Beach and watch the surfers and fishers on the beach (beach not suitable for swimming)
 - 3 Go kayaking on the Onkaparinga River and try to spot an Egret (a white bird with long neck) (SZ)
 - 4 Snorkel at Port Noarlunga Reef and spot the colourful fish such as the blue devil (SZ) (MH)
 - 5 Wander along Carrickalinga shoreline and see what have washed up with the tide
 - 6 Camp at Newland Head Conservation Park and spot the Southern Cross in the night sky
 - 7 Search for life on jetty pylons at Port Noarlunga (SZ) (MH)
 - 8 Cycle along the Encounter Bikeway from Victor to Goolwa and take in the views of Encounter Marine Park (SZ) (MH)
 - 9 Swim in the sheltered bay at Myponga Beach
 - 10 Visit the Coorong National Park and do some bird watching, beach exploring, and walking.
- 1 Spot some whales in Encounter Bay Sanctuary Zone at Bashams Beach (SZ) (R) (W)
 - 2 At low tide explore the rockpools at Aldinga and see how many dome-shaped Limpets you can find (round striped shells attached to rocks) (SZ)
 - 3 Wander along the Moana Beach shoreline and see what types of shells, sponges and seaweed you can find
 - 4 Be kind to the coast and pick up some litter that would otherwise end out at sea
 - 5 Rug up and wander around Granite Island Recreation Park to the sound of crashing waves and feel of sea spray on your face (MH) (R)
 - 6 Climb the Bluff, you might see southern right whales
 - 7 Explore the different sized rocks at Myponga Beach and keep an eye out for shorebirds
 - 8 Explore the sand dunes at Normanville (stick to the pathways)
 - 9 Visit the Victor Harbor Natural Resources Centre and collect some information about the Marine Park (R) (W)
 - 10 Explore the coast at Deep Creek Conservation Park and spot The Pages Sanctuary Zone.

DID YOU KNOW?

Hooded plovers are small beach-nesting birds, with a distinctive black hood (head) and throat with a red ring around their eyes. Their nests are difficult to see, as they are only scrapes in the ground between the high tide line and the sand dunes – so be careful where you walk!

SPRING



Spring brings warmer days as migratory birds start to arrive.

Male leafy seadragons carry their eggs finding the perfect place to hide.

- 1 Find a place along the Aldinga/Sellicks coastline that has a view across the ocean and have a family picnic (SZ) (M) (R)
- 2 Explore the rock pools at Second Valley (M)
- 3 Go swimming in Port Noarlunga Reef with friends (SZ) (M)
- 4 Camp at Rapid Bay and watch the night sky to see if you can spot a shooting star
- 5 Explore little caves at Rapid Bay and keep an eye out for different shorebirds
- 6 Spot the pink flowering pigface in Port Noarlunga dunes – a plant used by traditional owners along the coast (SZ) (M)
- 7 Go snorkelling at Second Valley and spot the rare leafy seadragon (M)
- 8 Go squid fishing or spotting off Port Noarlunga jetty and keep an eye out for schools of fish (SZ) (M) (R) (R)
- 9 Go bird watching on the Onkaparinga River Sanctuary Zone and try to spot a white-faced heron (a grey bird with a long neck) (SZ)
- 10 Explore Sellicks Beach and search for tiny fossils in the rocks.

SUMMER



Summer in the Park is hot and dry, with the water the best place to escape the heat.

It's the perfect time to surf, snorkel or find cockles with your feet.

- 1 Explore Port Noarlunga Reef, by snorkeling or using goggles to spot the marine life beneath the surface (SZ) (M)
- 2 Paddle along the shoreline or boogieboard in the waves at Bashams Beach (SZ)
- 3 Learn to surf or take a surfing lesson at Middleton Beach (M)
- 4 Stroll around Granite Island Recreation Park and take notice of the different colours and patterns of the granite and keep an eye out for the cormorants drying their wings on the rocks (M) (R) (R)
- 5 Build a sand creation at Sellicks Beach
- 6 Spend a day at Horseshoe Bay and be sure to get an ice-cream or some fish and chips (SZ) (M) (R) (R)
- 7 Go cockling at Goolwa Beach (twist your feet in the sand and you will feel them coming up!) (M)
- 8 Examine the lichen on the rocks at Horseshoe Bay (SZ)
- 9 Examine the details of sand, and natural treasure using a magnifying glass or by reversing your binoculars
- 10 Walk along Rapid Bay jetty and spot the artwork and take in the views. (R)

DID YOU KNOW?

The rare leafy seadragon is good at avoiding predators. They appear as floating seaweed and have sharp spines for protection. They are a unique species where the male carries the eggs. Once hatched the young sea dragons need to fend for themselves. The leafy seadragon is South Australia's marine emblem.

L: Hooded plovers (JT)
R: Egret (JT)



L: Sea sponge (JT)
R: Blue devil (CC)



L: Leafy sea dragon (CC)
R: Pigface (JT)



L: Cormorant (JT)
R: Cockles (JT)



LOOKING AFTER ENCOUNTER MARINE PARK

- 1 Keep wildlife wild: We must never feed wildlife as it can be unhealthy for them and can impact their natural behaviour.
- 2 Leave things as you found them: If you look under any rocks be careful not to squash anything and put them back as you found them.
- 3 Care for wildlife: Protect wildlife by not removing living things from the ocean/sand or storing them in any containers as they may dry out and die.
- 4 Leave nothing but footprints: Always take your rubbish with you or even better pack a litter-free lunch.

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This resource is part of the Park of the Month, an intuitive run in partnership between Nature Play SA and the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources. Photos by Jason Tyndall (JT) and Carl Charter (CC). Writings by Jason Tyndall, Nature Play SA.