



Snorkelling & Diving Fact Sheet



Location

Covering 18 Hectares, Heron Island lies on the Tropic of Capricorn (23° south of the equator), 72 kms NE off the coast from Gladstone, Queensland. 534kms north of Brisbane. 1,183kms south of Cairns.

Getting There

- Regular flights are available from all Australian capital cities to Gladstone.
- Australian Helicopters depart Gladstone Airport for Heron Island daily at scheduled times.
- A daily launch service departs Gladstone Marina for Heron Island once a day.



Marine Centre

We have a fully serviced Marine Centre located on the Island. The centre is open 7 days from 8.15am to 5.30pm for information, bookings and equipment hire for all dive, snorkel and boating activities.

Snorkelling

Snorkel Lessons

Complimentary snorkel lessons are conducted daily at 2pm in the swimming pool. No booking is required. You will require mask, snorkel and fins to participate, which are available for hire from the Marine Centre.

Beach Snorkelling

Being right on the reef means that you can snorkel off the beach. If you have not snorkelled before or would like to practice, try Shark Bay (named after the harmless Shovel Nose Ray) or from the Gantry just in front of the Pandanus Lounge. Snorkelling in the harbour is not advised due to boating traffic. Snorkel equipment is available for hire at the Marine Centre.

Reef Edge Snorkelling

With all your lessons and practice, you'll soon be ready to enjoy the experience of snorkelling on the reefs edge. Under the supervision of our dive staff you'll discover the fish, coral and turtles that live just metres below the surface. Snorkel boats depart from the jetty at 11am and 3pm daily (additional trips added in peak times). Minimum 2 snorkellers. Charges apply. Please book and re-confirm at the Marine Centre.

Novice snorkellers are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the snorkel lesson prior to this activity. A minimum age restriction of 8 years applies, whilst experience level required may vary due to weather and surface conditions.

Guide for Snorkelers

Whilst Heron Island offer a variety of snorkelling for the novice through to the very experienced, it is also important to highlight the following points to ensure an enjoyable and safe experience.

- Snorkelling and swimming is permitted off any beach however it is best three hours before and after high tide, from the Gantry and Shark Bay. Tide times are posted in the daily 'Heron Times' or displayed outside the Marine Centre.
- Watch your buoyancy so that you do not drag your fins on the coral and never stand on the coral.
- Do not snorkel or swim in the Harbour
- Do not snorkel or swim alone or out of sight of family and friends
- Do not snorkel out to the reef edge

Snorkelling is generally a safe activity; however exercise can aggravate certain medical conditions such as asthma and heart conditions. You should only participate in the activity with this understanding.

Diving

Dive Facts

Heron Island is a coral cay situated on the reef, so many of the dive and snorkel sites are a short 5-10 minute boat ride from the resort, allowing up to 3 dives per day. Pricing information on any of the following activities is available from our Marine Centre.

Why Dive Heron?

- Minimal time to dive sites (5-15 minutes)
- Shallow dives (18 metres maximum)
- Long bottom times can be obtained (up to 45 minutes)
- Buoyed dive sites
- Stable platform style boats with shaded canopies
- Dive Masters dive all dives
- Giant stride entries – exit via wide step ladders
- No carrying of tanks or weights at any time
- All dive sites located within a Marine National Park
- Highest quality dive equipment
- Three dives per day
- Night dives



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Climate and Water Temperature

Sub-tropical, average year round temperature of approximately 24°C (80°F)

Winter: 20-22°C (68-70°F)

Summer: 25-27°C (77-80°F)

* Full wetsuit is recommended between March and October:

Dive Requirements

A 'C' card must be presented upon check-in. Use of a BCD, timing device and/or computer, regulator (with pressure and depth gauge) and an alternate air source is mandatory. Dives cannot be pre-booked before arrival on the Island. Please visit the Marine Centre once on Heron Island and register for diving. When making your accommodation reservation, please advise if you intend to dive whilst on the Island.

Medical Conditions

Australian Scuba Diving Standards require that all certified divers are medically fit to dive. Certain medical conditions that may be accepted in other countries (i.e. USA and Canada), may exclude you from diving at Heron Island such as asthma, epilepsy, diabetes and high blood pressure or blood disorders of any kind. If you are taking any medication (with the exception of the contraceptive pill) you may also be excluded from diving at Heron Island. If you suffer from a medical condition or are taking medication, a fully completed medical AS 4005.1 is to be completed by a Queensland medical practitioner with knowledge of diving medicine. This is to be presented to the Heron Island Marine Centre before you will be able to participate in any form of diving activities.

A copy of the Medical Form and a list of accredited medical practitioners are available at www.spums.org.au

The dive team reserves the right to exclude divers from diving in line with safety and PADI regulations. If you have any medical concerns, please consult a dive accredited doctor.

Divers Travelling by Aircraft

Safety regulations on Heron Island require that guests travelling from the Island by helicopter and/or by fixed wing aircraft must not dive for a minimum of 24 hours prior to flying.

Equipment Hire Available

All equipment required for diving and snorkelling is available for hire at the Heron Island Marine Centre. Equipment available includes buoyancy compensators, regulators with computers, masks (including prescription masks), snorkels, wetsuits, fins and torches.

Environmental Management Charge

A \$2.50 environmental charge applies to all dives enjoyed on the Great Barrier Reef. This charge has been included into applicable activities on Heron Island.

Daytime Diving

Day dives are available on Heron and Wistari Reefs and include air, scuba tanks, weights and boat trip. Single dives are conducted at 9am, 11am and 3pm. Please refer to our 'Resort Charges' sheet for pricing information.

Night Diving

Night dives are conducted on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays – weather and numbers permitting. Divers must have completed a minimum of 20 dives and logged a previous night dive. You will need to be assessed by the dive team before diving at night.

Private Charters

Private Charters are available from Heron Island to offer the greatest flexibility for dive enthusiasts. Some other charters available include Fishing and Sunset Cruise.

Discover Scuba Diving

As the name suggests, this course is for beginners who want to try diving without committing to the full course. 'Discover' courses include equipment hire, classroom and pool sessions and one supervised dive with a qualified instructor. Course participation is subject to the completion of a medical questionnaire prior to diving. Follow up dives are scheduled subject to availability.

Referral Dive Courses*

Take all your theory and pool session at home and complete the certification dives at Heron Island. The course runs over 2 days. Please ensure to bring with you a referral statement and an Australian Medical Certificate (AS4005.1) signed by a specialist dive practitioner.

*PADI Referral Dive courses must be pre-booked prior to arrival at the Resort.

Refreshers

If you have not dived in the last 12 months, refresher courses are mandatory in the Resort pool before your first dive on the Island (complimentary).



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Dive Sites

Fifth Point

Discovered recently this is the farthest site from the harbour offering pristine coral and action packed diving. 6-20 metres.

Second Point

Offering a diverse range of smaller fish, Second Point is nestled in a wide sweeping bay with crystal clear water. 10-12 metres.

First Point

Scattered coral bommies with overhangs, teeming with life, pelagics, turtles, rays and sharks. 5-14 metres.

Walt's Bommie

Relatively flat sandy bottom surrounding a series of scattered bommies. This site attracts Green and Loggerhead Turtles, Black and White Tip Reef Sharks and cradles a wealth of colourful Nudibranchs. 14 metres.

Libby's Lair

Honeycomb caves and swim throughs, jam-packed with larger coral reef fish species. 8-18 metres.

Tenements 2

This horseshoe shaped shelf drops straight down to 22 metres and is draped with schools of black tipped fusilliter drummer 13-22 metres.

Tenements 1

Magnificent dive with many gullies, swim throughs and grottoes. Special mention to the huge blue-footed anemone and the 30 clown fish that live with it. 7-20 metres.

Coral Cascades

Stand-alone or combined with a drift dive along the spectacular coral wall to Tenements 1. This is a favourite. 5-18 metres.

North Bommie

A huge bommie that doubles as a cleaning station for some of our larger critters. Majestic manta rays and white tipped Reef Sharks frequent here. 10-20 metres.

Blue Pools

Crystal clear waters fill this little bay in the coral. A great place to start or end a drift dive east or west. 6-8 metres.

Hole in the Wall

Large bommie split into 3 pieces. Swim through and along the reef edge. Large Maori Wras, Moray, Sharks and Mantas are all regulars. 9-18 metres.

Gorgonia Hole

Gorgonia and fan corals abound on the spectacular reef edge. Discover Mantas, Reef Sharks and Turtles. 7-16 metres.

Junction

Rediscovered only recently, the corals here are splendid. Morays, Turtles and Crayfish abound. 7-16 metres.

Pam's Point

Mind blowing Manta Ray dive (seasonal). Resident Queensland Blue Groper. 8-16 metres.

The Bommie

One of the most photographed dive sites in the country. Resident marine life is fantastic including schooling Jacks, Barracuda, Strawberry Hussars plus Moray Eels, Sharks, Eagle Rays and Mantas. This series of bommies is located 2 minutes from the Harbour. 5-20 metres.

Pam's Point to the Bommie

Drifting from Pam's Point to Heron Bommie is spectacular – just let go and watch the kaleidoscope of colour go by. 5-20 metres.

Three Rocks

A special little sandy bay cut into the reef edge. From 7 metres, it drops straight down Wistari Wall to around 20 metres.

Wistari 1 & 2

The neighbouring Wistari Reef is located only 5 minutes from Heron Island. These two sites are along the reef wall with magnificent corals of rainbow hues and an amazing array of Nudibranch. 5-20 metres.

Coral Gardens

Lies just outside Heron Harbour. Beautiful sloping banks of Staghorn and Branching corals. 8-16 metres.

Staghorn Banks

Nearby to Coral Gardens this is an exquisite bank of vividly coloured staghorn coral. Many colonies of brilliantly hues coral fish create a myriad of colour. 12 metres.

Lost Mooring

Boasts a wonderful kaleidoscope of schooling bait fish, Painted Crays, Nudibranchs and Wobbygong Sharks. Elaborate coral formations showcase the diversity of this site. 10 metres.

The Cliffs

An adventurous dive, offering a fantastic wall and gently sloping bottom down to 30 plus metres – a veritable Garden of Eden. 13-30 plus metres.

Canyons

So named due to the number of ravines cut into the reef edge. These cuttings are home to an amazing variety of creatures, including turtles. 6-16 metres.

Harry's Bommie

This coral outcrop is huge, usually filled by schools of Batfish and spotted Sweetlip. Regularly visited by White Tip Reef Sharks. 5-16 metres.

Southpark

A huge bommie with an amazing biodiversity of Turtles, Rays and big fish. 8-16 metres.

Twin Peaks

Two large coral bommies give this site its name and the teaming life is no less surprising than the TV show. A mega dive site. 8-10 metres.

Coral Grotto

Affectionately known as the Turtle Grotto. You can see turtles everywhere. Asleep, swimming, feeding or just being Turtles. 8-18 metres.

Plate Ledge

So called because of the number of plate or tabletop corals in the area – an impressive site. 8-16 metres.