

Location of public moorings and no-anchoring area at Scawfell Island. Never anchor on the reef flat inshore of reef protection markers.

## No-anchoring areas

The Great Barrier Reef contains many well-developed fringing reefs that are particularly vulnerable to anchor damage. To protect these highly diverse coral communities, there are areas where anchoring is not allowed. Most no-anchoring areas are marked by reef protection markers; some are unmarked.

**Reef protection markers** are white, pyramid-shaped buoys with a blue label. An imaginary line joining the markers forms the boundary of the no-anchoring area.

Never anchor on the reef flat inshore of the buoys or inside the line of buoys. You can anchor directly on the beach provided there are no tidal restrictions. Please note that reef protection markers must not be used as a mooring.

(On the inside map, no-anchoring areas are called Reef Protection Areas (RPA) or Unmarked Reef Protection Areas (URPA)).

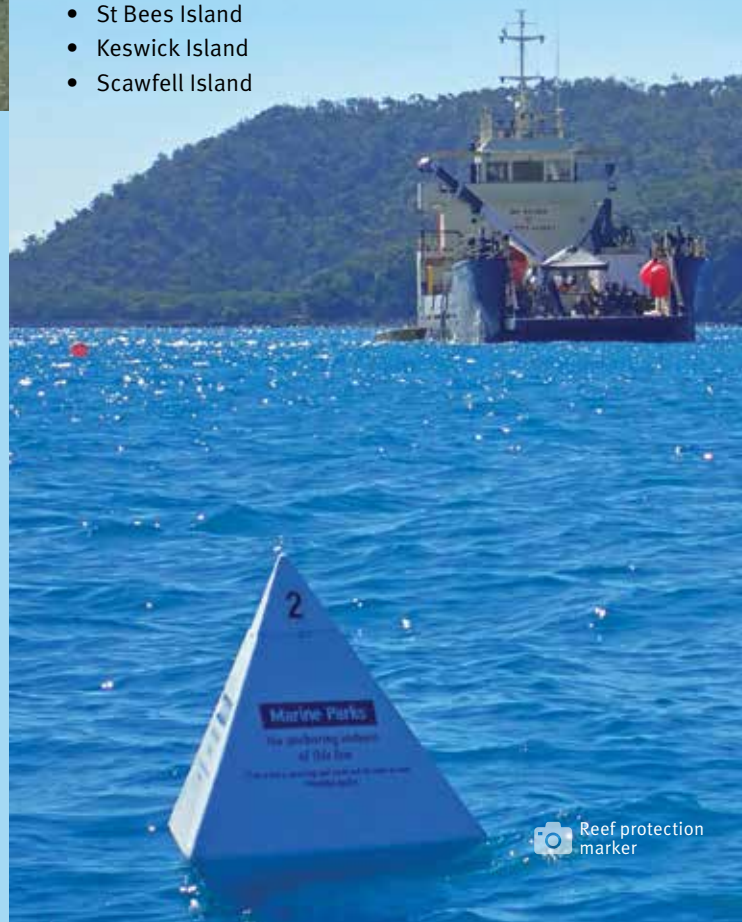
## Anchor with care outside reef protection markers

Please ensure you follow best environmental practices when anchoring.

- Carry enough chain, or chain and line, for the water depth.
- Anchor in sand or mud away from corals.
- Motor towards the anchor while retrieving it. If the anchor is stuck, motor the vessel above and slightly ahead of the anchor before retrieval.
- Anchor far enough outside the line of reef protection markers to ensure all parts of the anchor chain and rope remain outside the line of markers should the vessel swing.

No-anchoring areas in the Mackay area, marked with reef protection markers, are located at:

- St Bees Island
- Keswick Island
- Scawfell Island



## Reef under pressure

The Great Barrier Reef is an irreplaceable icon and one of the world's best managed marine areas. It offers visitors stunning vistas, both above and below the water, but it contains some very fragile environments which are under pressure from growing threats.

Combined, these threats weaken the resilience of the Reef and affect its ability to recover from serious disturbances, such as mass coral bleaching events, which are predicted to become increasingly frequent.

Dropping an anchor on coral can take seconds to damage or destroy it. Under ideal circumstances, it may take years for the coral to rebuild. In some cases, the coral may never return to its former glory.

By taking a little extra care when anchoring and using moorings, where available, you will help protect this diverse and remarkable natural wonder.





## How can you help to protect the Reef?

By minimising your impact in the marine park, you can help the Reef withstand the stress of accumulated threats, such as climate change.


While using public moorings and anchoring away from coral are two key actions, here are some more ways you can help **#LovetheReef**.

- Anonymously report suspected illegal fishing activity to 24-hour hotline: **1800 380 048** or **www.gbrmpa.gov.au/report-an-incident**
- Check your zoning maps, available free at **www.gbrmpa.gov.au**—know where you're going and what's allowed.
- Use a GPS and cross-check it with your zoning map.
- Avoid taking herbivorous fish like parrotfish, which remove seaweed and provide space for new corals to grow.
- Use and understand best snorkelling practices, such as not touching or standing on corals.
- Take all rubbish with you and put into bins on the shore.

# Public moorings and anchoring in the Great Barrier Reef

## Protecting coral in the Mackay area



 Use moorings when available to protect the reef.



Mooring buoy and pick-up line (above). Pick-up tag (right).



## How to pick up a mooring

When picking up a mooring:

- take note of the prevailing wind and tides. Approach the mooring buoy by motoring into the wind or tide (whichever is stronger)
- observe the colour-coded band on the buoy to ensure your vessel is within the size and wind strength limitations for the mooring
- take care to avoid running over the pick-up line when approaching the mooring
- use a boat hook to retrieve the pick-up line
- observe the mooring tag attached to the pick-up line for information on the limits of use
- attach the mooring eye to a cleat or strong point on the bow of the vessel.

## How to drop a mooring

When dropping a mooring:

- motor slowly towards the mooring to slacken the line slightly
- cast the mooring pick-up lines well clear of the vessel
- reverse away from the mooring buoy and line.

## Protecting coral

The Great Barrier Reef and its island national parks are home to abundant and diverse marine life, attracting thousands of visitors each year. Corals are among the most popular attractions, yet they are the most vulnerable.

Coral reefs can be damaged by:

- a vessel's anchor and chain dropping or dragging on coral
- a vessel grounding when the wind changes or the tide ebbs
- a chain or rope wrapping around coral or breaking pieces off.

It may take many years for coral to recover. Some coral never returns to its original condition.

**It is an offence to damage coral in the Great Barrier Reef and Great Barrier Reef Coast marine parks.**



Anchor chains damage coral—staghorn coral. Chris Jones © Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

## Further information

For Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) enquiries, please visit us online at [qld.gov.au/NationalParks](http://qld.gov.au/NationalParks)

This brochure is also available at [qld.gov.au/ParkBrochures](http://qld.gov.au/ParkBrochures)

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority  
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PO Box 1379, Townsville Qld 4810  
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Email: [info@gbmpa.gov.au](mailto:info@gbmpa.gov.au)  
Web: [gbmpa.gov.au](http://gbmpa.gov.au)



Please report any misused or damaged public moorings on 13 QGOV (13 74 68).



## Public moorings

Public moorings are installed at popular locations and have blue, cone-shaped buoys with a colour-coded band. This band tells you the class (vessel length) and maximum wind strength limits that apply to the mooring\*. Mooring specifications and conditions of use are also displayed on the mooring tag attached to the pick-up line.

Many privately-owned moorings also exist within the marine parks. You should obtain the permission of the owner before using a privately-owned mooring.

*\*Refer to the maps inside for a guide to mooring codes.*

## Use of moorings

When using public moorings, there are some key points to note.

- Public moorings in the Mackay area have a 24 hour time limit.
- Between 7am and 5pm, a vessel cannot occupy a mooring for longer than the time limit specified on the mooring tag. This ensures fair and equitable use.
- All public moorings are available for overnight use.
- Public moorings must not be used by more than one vessel at a time (tenders exempted), unless otherwise stated.
- Care should be taken to comply with all information displayed on the mooring buoy and tag.
- It is an offence to remove, misuse or engage in conduct that results in damage to a public mooring.

Public moorings are generally located near drying reefs or shorelines. Care should be taken approaching and leaving buoys, particularly when mooring in poor weather, reduced visibility or at night.



Mooring buoy, pick-up tag and pick-up line.  
Nicole Hitchcock © Qld Govt

149°10'0"E

149°20'0"E

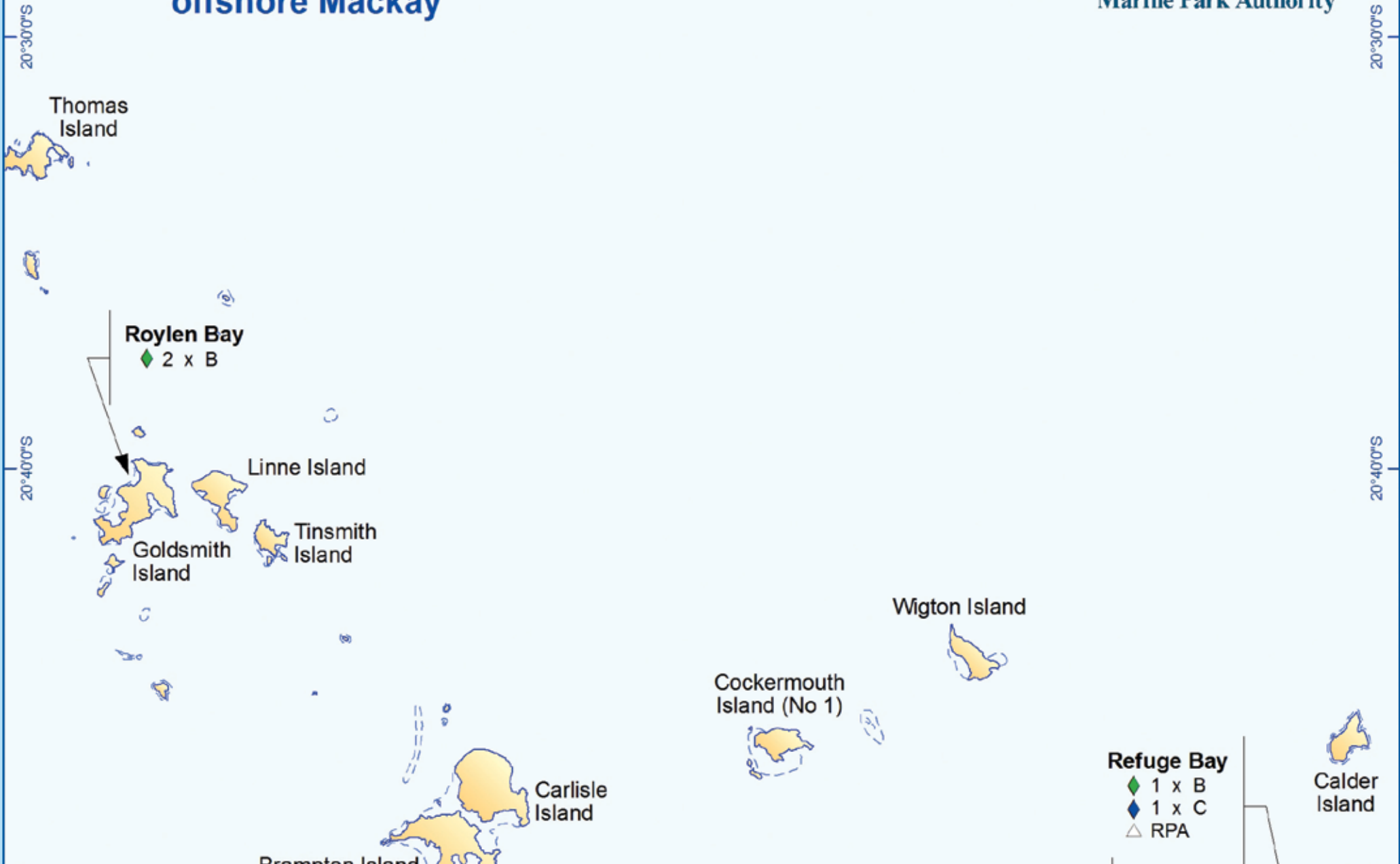
149°30'0"E

# Location of Public Moorings and Reef Protection Areas \* offshore Mackay



Australian Government

Great Barrier Reef  
Marine Park Authority



20°30'0"S

20°30'0"S

20°40'0"S

20°40'0"S

### Refuge Bay

- Green diamond: 1 x B
- Blue diamond: 1 x C
- White triangle: RPA

## Using public moorings

To protect fragile reefs in high-use areas, rules to prevent misuse of public moorings and reef protection markers are in place. While there have always been rules around the use of moorings, the rules have been updated to outline what is considered misuse of public moorings. This includes:

- exceeding time limits
- attaching more than one vessel to a public mooring
- rafting-up—attaching multiple vessels in a chain when one vessel is attached to the mooring
- altering the mooring
- not following the instructions on the mooring.

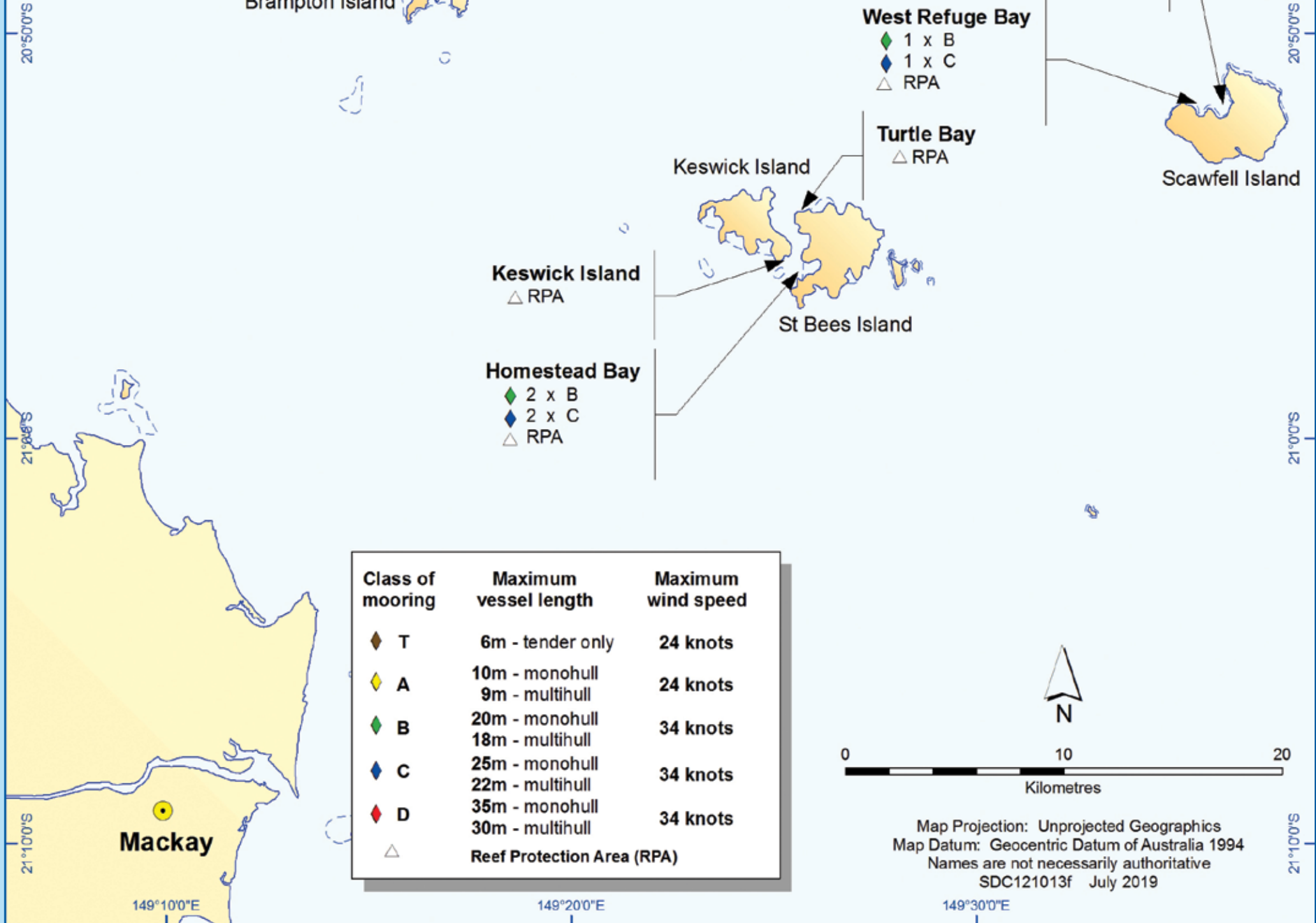
These rules are to help make sure public moorings continue to be available for everyone's use. It's about playing fair while out on the water. Anyone found to be misusing a public mooring or public infrastructure may be issued with a penalty infringement notice.

The appropriate use of public moorings is outlined in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 2019.

## Instructions to vessel masters

1. Vessel masters are solely responsible for the safety of their vessel while using the public moorings.
2. A watch must be kept at all times while the vessel is on the mooring.
3. Be aware of changing weather and sea conditions and your proximity to obstacles, including coral and other vessels, and how these may be affected by mooring swing.

LOCATION	Mooring class	Max. vessel length	Installed latitude GDA94 ddm	Installed longitude GDA94 ddm
Roylen Bay	B	20m	20° 40.322' S	149° 08.955' E
	B	20m	20° 40.162' S	149° 09.051' E
Refuge Bay	B	20m	20° 51.824' S	149° 36.013' E
	C	25m	20° 51.735' S	149° 36.104' E
West Refuge Bay	B	20m	20° 51.881' S	149° 35.588' E
	C	25m	20° 51.860' S	149° 35.536' E
Homestead Bay	B	20m	20° 55.939' S	149° 25.586' E
	B	20m	20° 55.889' S	149° 25.602' E
	C	25m	20° 55.834' S	149° 25.607' E
	C	25m	20° 55.777' S	149° 25.628' E



\* Reef Protection Areas and Unmarked Reef Protection Areas are no-anchoring areas



**Disclaimer:** The above published positions are correct to the best of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service knowledge at July 2019. No guarantee is given that the moorings are in the location shown in the table. Vessel skippers should verify the moorings position with their own GPS equipment prior to attempting to access the moorings. Particular care should be taken in accessing the moorings in poor weather, reduced visibility or at night.