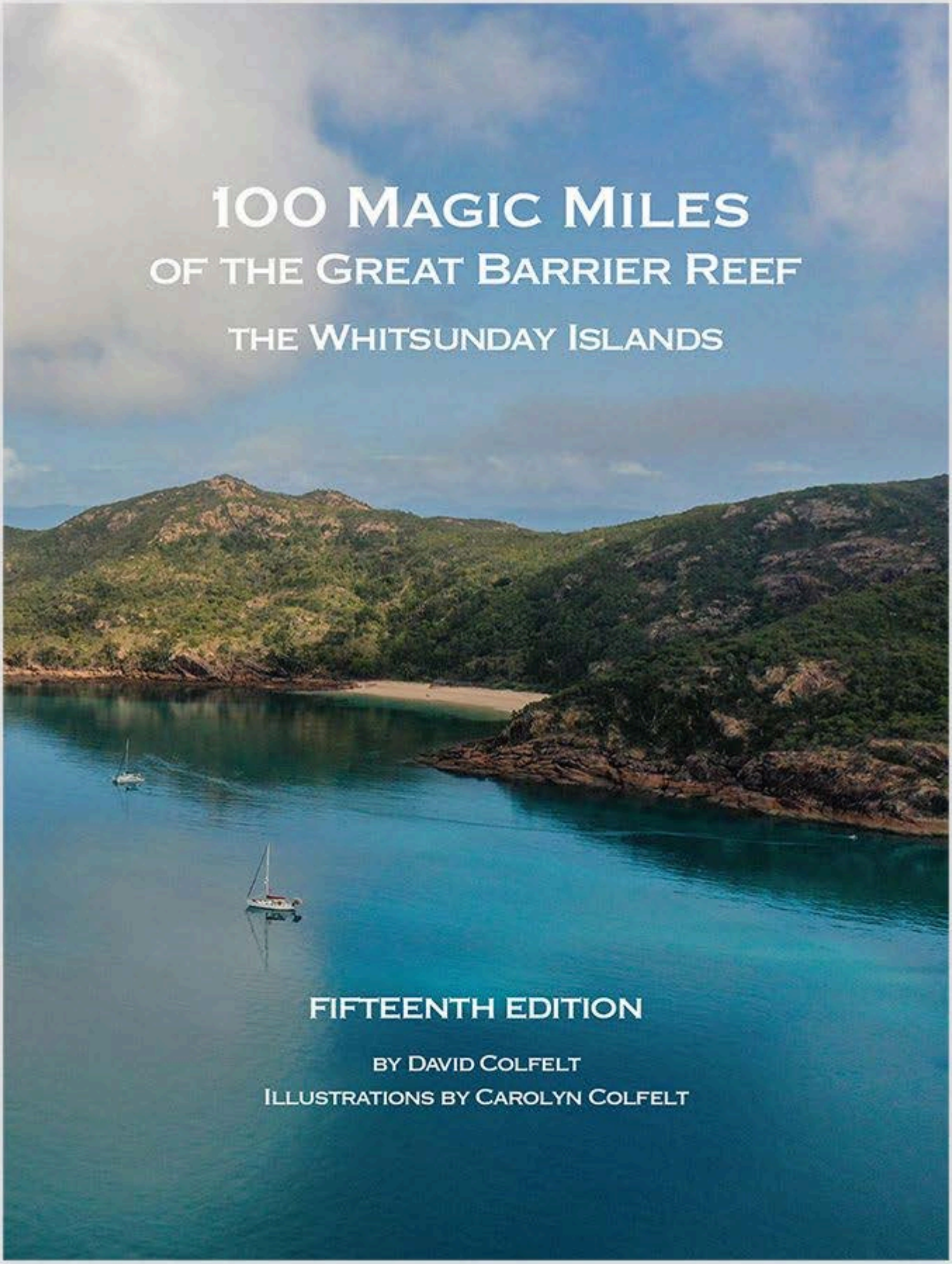


100 Magic Miles
of the Great Barrier Reef
the Whitsunday Islands

FIFTEENTH EDITION

BY DAVID COLFELT
ILLUSTRATIONS BY CAROLYN COLFELT

DES

David Colfelt

Public moorings have a blue beehive-shaped float with pennant and tag that gives information on conditions of use.

A 2 hour time limit applies to their use between 0700 and 1700 hours.

Some of these moorings are also available for commercial tourism operators for a 1 hour limit with a skipper on board at all times. Refer to the tag on the mooring for usage rules.

Never attach the stern (back) of your vessel to public moorings. Doing so risks damaging the mooring line with your propeller, and you could face fines for tying up backwards.

Scan the QR code to watch a video on using moorings.

DES

Across the Whitsundays, **tender moorings** are being updated with a smaller float featuring a handle at the top, as shown above. These are designated for vessels under 6 meters in length, although some (T/P class) may be used by commercial vessels up to 12 meters during the day. Since not all tender moorings share this design, always check the tag and never use a mooring that isn't rated for your vessel size.

Public moorings

To reduce coral damage and to maintain access for reef appreciation activities, public moorings have been installed at a number of sites around the islands. Public moorings have blue, beehive-shaped floats with a colour-coded band indicating the size of vessel that may occupy the mooring (see table below), and an engraved tag attached to the mooring pennant explains other conditions of use (e.g. wind conditions and other instructions, such as 'vessel masters are responsible for safety of their vessel while on the mooring; vessels not to be left unattended; shortening of the rope is not permitted'). Mooring sites have been carefully placed, in some cases in close proximity to reefs. It is therefore imperative that the mooring pennant **not be lengthened in any way**, for example, by reeving another line through the loop (other than the shortest possible length if the bulky mooring line won't fit under the bow cleat). Moorings may be occupied for a maximum two (and in some cases four) hours during the day (between 0700 and 1700 hours) in order to ensure fair and equitable use. A vessel legally occupying a mooring at 1700 hours may remain overnight until 0900 hours the next morning. Using a mooring if one is available is much easier than anchoring, and it is better for the Marine Park.

Band Colour	Class	Vessel length limit monohull	Vessel length limit multihull	Wind Speed Limit
	T / P	6m (private) or 12m (commercial tourism)		24 knots
	T	6m (private tender only)		24 knots
	A	10m	9m	24 knots
	B	20m	18m	34 knots
	C	25m	22m	34 knots
	D	35m	30m	34 knots

In consideration of others, as a general rule, try to occupy a mooring of appropriate rating for your vessel if one is available (e.g. if you have a 20-metre monohull, pick up a 'B' class mooring (green band) rather than occupying a 'C' class mooring (blue band, suitable for vessels up to 25 metres) because to do the latter may deprive a larger boat of a mooring. It is an offence to occupy a mooring contrary to the conditions displayed on the tag (for example, if your vessel's length exceeds that shown on the tag), and fines may apply.

Other moorings

There are other moorings, sometimes referred to as 'service moorings', throughout the area, usually associated with resorts or other privately owned facilities. These have varying types of floats. Use of these moorings is the same in the Whitsundays as anywhere in Australia (i.e. they are private property and the owner has a right to object to unauthorised use). On the other hand, if the rightful occupant isn't on the mooring, there may be no problem using it. Never leave a yacht unattended on such a mooring.

General note about moorings

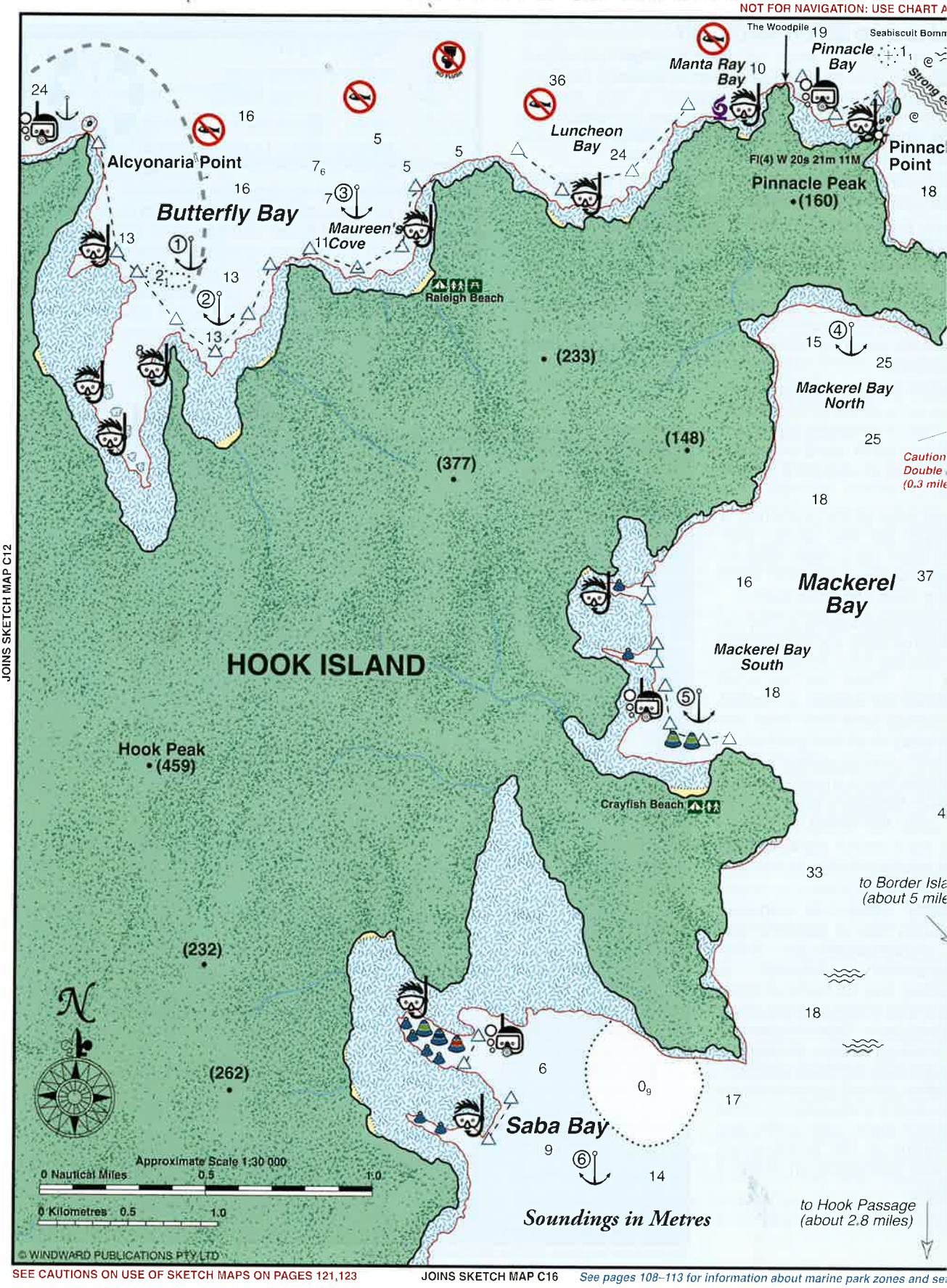
A table showing the placement of public moorings is found on page 125, and the sketch maps also show individual mooring locations. Moorings can be subject to misadventures, from propellors to storms, and are subject to periodic maintence; thus, from time to time they may not be in place as shown in this book.

IALA Maritime Buoyage System 'A'

Queensland employs the IALA (International Association of Lighthouse Authorities) 'A' buoyage system – navigation buoys, beacons and marks

HOOK ISLAND NORTH & EAST C14/1

NOT FOR NAVIGATION: USE CHART A



JOINS SKETCH MAP C12

SEE CAUTIONS ON USE OF SKETCH MAPS ON PAGES 121,123

JOINS SKETCH MAP C16

See pages 108–113 for information about marine park zones and se

JULY 1995 APPROXIMATE SCALE 1:13 000

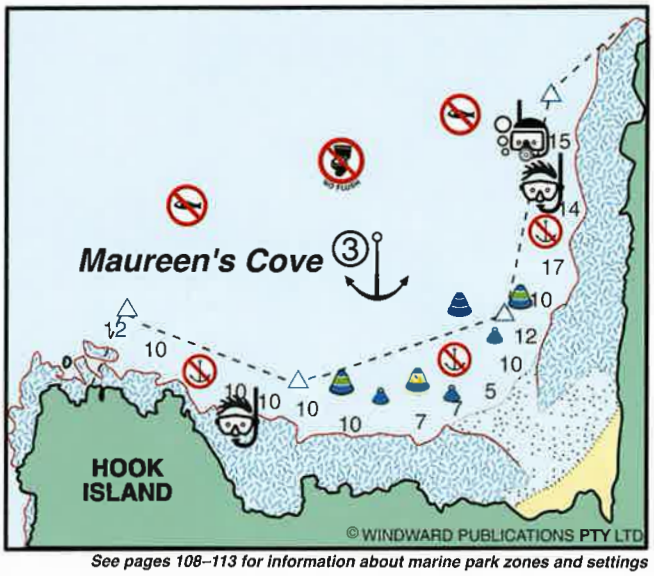
Aerial photograph reproduced with permission of the Department of Environment and Resource Management

EAST BUTTERFLY BAY (C14/15)

Anchorage No. 2 is less restricted and may be less crowded for those who prefer a bit of relative isolation. However, it is subject to quite strong 'bullets'. Reef protection markers have been installed; do not anchor inshore of an imaginary straight line between the buoys. The reef and sand beach here (in the top of the 'underdeveloped wing') make for fascinating exploring. Watch out for stingrays when walking in shallow water on the sand flats (shuffle your feet). The point which separates this anchorage from No.1 has nice flat elevated rocks for sunbaking.

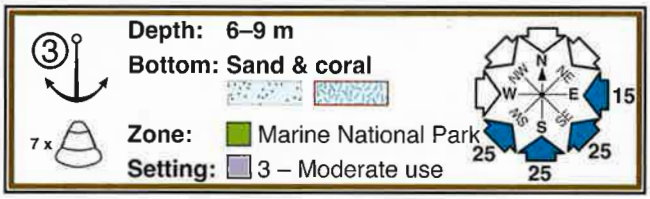
MAUREEN'S COVE

NOT FOR NAVIGATION



See pages 108–113 for information about marine park zones and settings

MAUREEN'S COVE (C14/15)



Maureen's Cove was damaged by Cyclone Debbie in 2017 but still offers snorkel and dive opportunities on the eastern reef. Reef protection buoys have been installed here; no anchoring inshore of the buoys. There are several moorings; their use is preferable to anchoring. This anchorage has a steep shingle beach; footwear is advisable.

LUNCHEON BAY

NOT FOR NAVIGATION

See pages 108–113 for information about marine park zones and settings

LUNCHEON BAY (C14/15)

Luncheon Bay is not good for anchoring, being fairly deep and subject to swift currents. Several public moorings for various size yachts have been installed to facilitate reef appreciation. The bay suffered damage to much of its shallow coral in Cyclone Debbie, but at depths >6 metres the coral still affords good diving. Occasionally you will see wild goats on the rocks above the bay. Nil discharge zone.

BEST SNORKELLING & DIVING IN THE WHITSUNDAY

Snorkelling: Previously excellent shallow coral, current status unknown.

Langford Island – Langford Reef North (C12)

Visibility: 2–10 metres | **Diving depth:** 3–15 metres
Bottom: Scattered small coral bommies on sandy bottom, gradually sloping from shore to 15 metres. Bel metres mostly coral rubble and silty sand.

A very popular day-trip destination for sailors, snorkellers and divers. Best diving is found on north-western end beach, where current is strongest at midtide. Scattered bommies offer an interesting maze to explore. Some shal walls at the eastern end of the island. The majority of fish life is small but abundant. Expect to encounter tidal currents at all times except slack water. Reasonable protection from all but the strongest wind condition.

Snorkelling: Just offshore along the beach; best towards the island.

Underwater sculpture: *Turtle Dream*, a 6.5m steel hawksbill turtle by artist Col Henry, is located at 20°5.00 148°52.900'E. *Anthozoa*, a 6m sculpture reimagining the tiny coral polyp by Jessa Lloyd in collaboration w Ngaro artist Nicky Bidju Pryor, is located at 20°5.006'S, 148°52.918'E.

Hook Island – Alcyonaria Point (C14/15)

Visibility: 3–15 metres | **Diving depth:** 3–18 metres
Bottom: Good coral cover with patches of coral rubble and silty sand.

Excellent coral and fish life, particularly along the shallow ledge that runs along the point to Flat Rock. Plate cor dominate the shallow water. Ledge drops vertically with wall penetrated by numerous gullies and small caves. Ma colourful soft corals at 10 metres, hence the site name (Alcyonaria being a type of coral). Large wrasse, cod and sweetlip found at depth. Current can be a problem, particularly at midtide. Anchorage is difficult due to drop-of Exposed to northerlies and strong south-easterlies.

Snorkelling: Good corals at ledge, prone to strong current.

Hook Island – Butterfly Bay (C14/15)

Visibility: 2–10 metres | **Diving depth:** 5–12 metres
Bottom: Coral cover with large patches of coral rubble and silty sand.

This popular bareboat anchorage offers coral outcrops with shallow walls. Many small, colourful fish. Best of the bommies is found deep in the centre of the bay, though difficult to locate at high tide. Tidal currents can be a problem as one moves away from the bay edge towards the centre.

Snorkelling: Best along the western reef ledge deep into the bay.

Hook Island – Mackerel Bay (C14/15)

Visibility: 2–10 metres | **Diving depth:** 2–12 metres
Bottom: Good coral cover in shallow water, dropping off to scattered bommies at 7–12 metres.

A dive better at some times than others depending upon visibility. This is a popular dive site during northerlies v most of the more popular sites are untenable. A relatively shallow dive through a maze of coral bommies, which shallow canyons, ledges and swim-throughs. Fish life is medium in size and quite good. Exposed to southerly win

Snorkelling: Visibility adversely affected by the tide. Best during neap tides.

Hook Island – Manta Ray Bay (C14/15)

Visibility: 3–15 metres | **Diving depth:** 3–15 metres
Bottom: Scattered coral bommies with sandy bottom. Below 15 metres mainly silty sand and coral rubble

Hundreds of small damselfishes and other marine life make this a top island dive. The fish of Manta Ray Bay inc some not-so-small Maori wrasses. The terrain is diverse with scattered bommies starting at 10–12 metres and reac up to within 2 metres of the surface, though extensive cyclone damage is evident to corals less than 7 metres dep Manta rays are common in the winter months, May– September. Excellent protection from all winds except the northerlies.

Snorkelling: Good for seeing marine life.

Underwater sculpture: *Migration of the Mantas*, a 6m installation of manta ray sculptures by Brian Robinso collaboration with traditional owner Nicky Bidju Pryor, is located at 20°3.663'S, 148°57.361'E.
Manta Ray, a 4m aluminium sculpture by local Adriaan Vanderlugt in collaboration with traditional owne Arthur Gabey, is located at 20°3.658'S, 148°57.358'E.

Hook Island – Maureen's Cove (C14/15)

Visibility. 3–15 metres **Diving depth:** 3–15 metres
Bottom: Large coral bommies and sandy bottom at back of cove.
At the back of the cove off the western side of the beach is a series of bommies starting at 12–15 metres and ris within 3 metres of the surface parallel to the shoreline. Gullies and shallow caves make for an interesting dive. medium-sized fish life.
Snorkelling: Extensive cyclone damage is evident on the eastern and south-eastern reefs.