

VISITOR INFORMATION

Exuma Cays Land & Sea Park

The Exuma Cays Land & Sea Park was established in 1958, becoming the first land and sea national park in the world. In the late 1980s the park was declared a “no-take” zone for the purpose of marine resource replenishment. As such, the Exuma Park has become a renowned conservation success story. Yachtsmen are asked to respect the park bylaws that govern visitation. The sketch (overleaf) locates great sites to visit on Shroud Cay. Before you start your dinghy and snorkeling adventure we ask that you read the guidelines below as following these will enrich your experience, ensure your safety and protect the marine environment.

Be a Good Steward—Respect our Environment

- Look but don't touch! Coral reefs can be thousands of years old, built by very slow-growing micro organisms. Please use caution when near reefs and please do not damage corals!
- Many of the reefs around Hawksbill Cay are very shallow, especially at low tide. These locations are included in this guide so visitors of all ages can enjoy their beauty. But it is critical that corals are not touched. Do not damage reefs with your outboard motor or anchor, do not kick corals with your fins while swimming, and please do not stand on coral heads.
- Park authorities have placed dinghy moorings at many of the locations on the sketch. Please use these moorings to avoid damaging the reefs with your anchor. It is OK for several dinghies to share the same mooring. If a dinghy mooring is not available, please anchor in the sand.
- Bleaching and green algae can be seen on many corals that are not constantly cleaned by tidal currents. Coral bleaching and algae growth are related to the warmer waters caused by global warming.

- Respect Bahamian fishing regulations and help preserve marine resources for future generations.

Snorkel Safely—Respect Tides and Currents

- Our most colorful reefs are cleaned twice a day by strong tidal currents. Snorkeling these reefs is safest with minimal current at either low or high tide.
- Display a dive flag and keep one person in your dinghy to rescue anyone who gets caught in the current.
- Inexperienced snorkelers may wish to swim with some type of flotation or use a glass bottom bucket from your dinghy to view underwater marine life.
- Use waterproof charts (available at the Ranger Station) to help navigate and take a working portable marine radio with you. Please call the Exuma Park on channel 16 if you encounter any problems.
- You will see a wide variety of marine life on the reefs: coral, tropical fish, conch, lobster, sting rays, barracuda and the occasional shark. Underwater cameras and waterproof guides are available at the Highbourne Store.

Take only photos. Leave only bubbles.
Thank you for protecting the natural resources of The Bahamas.

HIGHBOURNE CAY

Shroud Cay dinghy destinations and snorkel sites

Shroud Cay is located in the Exuma Park. It is an archipelago of cays and rocks surrounding a shallow tidal mangrove salina which serves as a nursery for conch, crawfish (lobster), sea turtles, birds and many varieties of fish. The tidal creeks to the north and south of Shroud are very shallow and must be explored only on a rising tide to avoid being stranded in your dinghy. Please be respectful and do not disturb the sea, bird, and plant life in this sanctuary.

1 Sanctuary Creek Motorized dinghies are permitted to explore this northern estuary at **idle speed only to avoid damaging this delicate marine nursery**. The creek has shifting channels with numerous shallow sand bars and is only passable near high tide. Classic movie fans will identify with the "African Queen".

2 Driftwood Beach This beautiful beach at the eastern end of Sanctuary Creek has a sandbar stretching across the entrance that prohibits further exploration of the eastern shore by dinghy.

3 Camp Driftwood Built during the 1960's by a sailor living on his boat just inside the creek, the camp was used by drug agents in the 1980's to spy on aircraft flying from Norman's Cay.

4 Angelfish Hideaways Scattered coral heads west of the creek entrance offer convenient snorkel sites after a journey to Driftwood Beach.

5 Neptune's Oasis (24.32.55N 76.48.20W) Visible coral reef to the west of the cay is home to a wide variety of marine life.

6 Shelter Shores Coral heads along the shore near the yacht moorings offer refuge for marine life.

7 Southern Estuaries These southern creeks are **best explored by kayak as only non-motorized** vessels are permitted to enter these pristine shallow estuaries that all dead-end in the mangroves.

8 South Shroud Sandbars At low tide you can walk over many of the soft sand bars stretching across the south end of the cay towards Hawksbill Cay.

