

# Be a responsible snorkeller

## Before you go

**Check the conditions:** be aware of tides, water temperatures, currents and weather forecasts before you leave.

**Take a friend:** never snorkel alone and always tell people where you are going.

**Know who to contact:** find out where the nearest medical and/or coastguard facility is and note down who to contact in an emergency.

## At the beach

**Know your surroundings:** check what the weather and tides are doing, and identify a landmark for reference.

**Use the right equipment:** only use good quality and well-fitting equipment – mask, snorkel and fins.

**Wear the right protection:** a wetsuit will keep you warm and protect you against jellyfish stings. If it's sunny, remember to cream up!

## In the water

**Follow the Snorkeller's Code:**

Do not remove seaweed or animals from the rock or from their homes.

Take care not to kick sealife with fins or stand on delicate animals.

Observe animals where they live and don't take anything away with you.

## WARNING:

Do not snorkel in rough weather  
Do not touch jellyfish and other wildlife  
Never snorkel alone

Emergency Services:

999

Stornoway Coastguard:

01851 702013

Medical Centres:

Gairloch: 01445 712229

Ullapool: 01854 612015

Lochinver: 01571 844755

# North West Highlands Snorkel Trail

Wester Ross and Sutherland

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- 1 Bay of Clachtoll
- 2 Achmelvich Bay
- 3 Achnahaird Bay
- 4 Ardmair
- 5 Camusnagaul
- 6 Gruinard Bay
- 7 Mellon Charles
- 8 Big Sands Carn Dearg
- 9 An Dun

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# Dive in to Scotland's Living Seas!



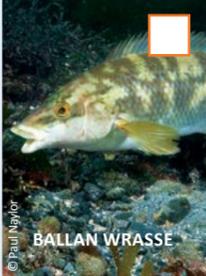
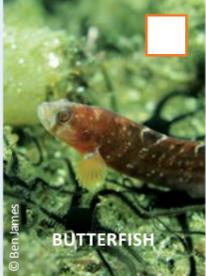
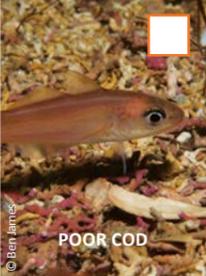
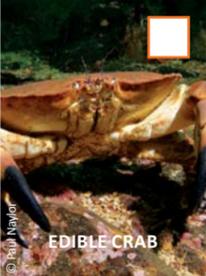
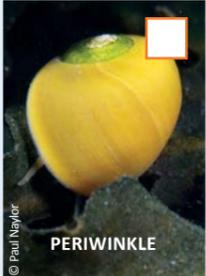
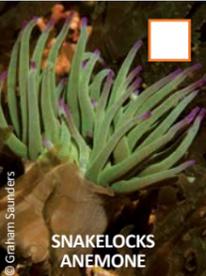
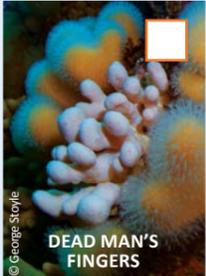
For further information, visit:  
scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/snorkeltrail

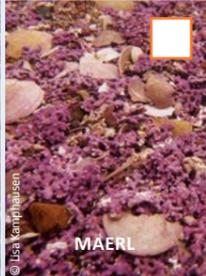
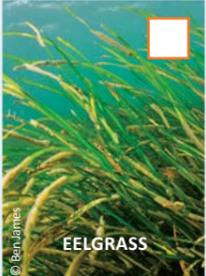
# Snorkel Trail

North West Highlands

## Life under the waves

Scotland's north west coast is home to a rich and diverse array of marine habitats and species. There are no guarantees what you might see on your snorkel trail (that's part of the fun!), but here are some common species to keep an eye out for:

Fish	 LESSER-SPOTTED DOGFISH	 BALLAN WRASSE	 BUTTERFISH	 POOR COD
	 SHORE CRAB	 VELVET SWIMMING CRAB	 HERMIT CRAB	 EDIBLE CRAB
	 TOPSHELL	 DOGWHELK	 PERIWINKLE	 LIMPET
	 SNAKELOCKS ANEMONE	 CUTTLEFISH	 DEAD MAN'S FINGERS	 SEA SQUIRT

Jellyfish	 LION'S MANE	 MOON	 BARREL	 STALKED					
	 COMMON STARFISH	 BRITTLESTAR	 SUNSTAR	 COMMON URCHIN					
	 KELP	 MAERL	 EELGRASS	 BLADDERWRACK					
	<p><b>Also look out for...</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>HARBOUR PORPOISE</td> <td>WHITE-TAILED EAGLE</td> <td>BASKING SHARK</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SEALS (COMMON AND GREY)</td> <td>MINKE WHALE</td> <td>MERMAID'S PURSE (SHARK OR RAY EGG CASE)</td> </tr> </table>				HARBOUR PORPOISE	WHITE-TAILED EAGLE	BASKING SHARK	SEALS (COMMON AND GREY)	MINKE WHALE
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Remember the three Ts:  
No touching, taking or teasing of marine animals, plants or shells.

What did you see on your snorkel?  
Send us your pictures on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram!

1

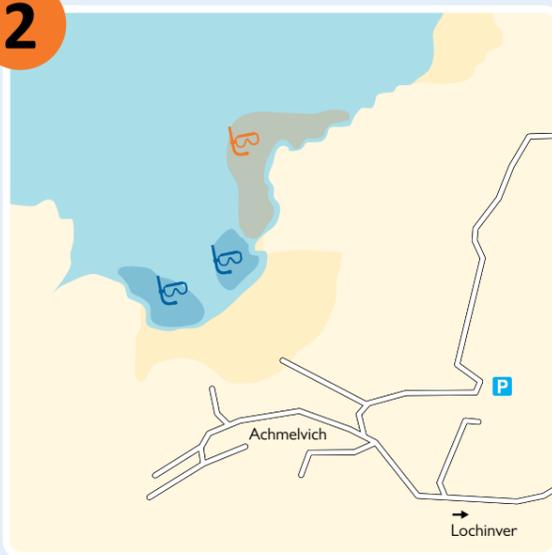


### Bay of Clachtoll

**MAP:** OS Landranger 15, NC040270  
**NEAREST VILLAGE:** Lochinver (6 miles)

**P** A beautiful beach with rocky outcrops and lots of marine life. The headlands provide the bay with some shelter so in calm conditions this can be a good spot for beginners. Watch out for seabirds and marine mammals from the beach and once in the water, look for juvenile fish and shellfish amongst the kelp.

2



### Achmelvich Bay

**MAP:** OS Landranger 15, NC056249  
**NEAREST VILLAGE:** Lochinver (4 miles)

**P** A stunning sandy beach with rocky outcrops on both sides, providing lots of habitat to explore whilst snorkelling. A perfect beginner location, this site has plenty of fish, shellfish and kelp beds.  
**A** The headland to the north leads to another, more secluded beach.

3



### Achnahaird Bay

**P** **MAP:** OS Landranger 15, NC019139  
**NEAREST VILLAGE:** Achiltibuie (4 miles)

**P** A largely sheltered bay which is flanked by rocky outcrops. Underwater, kelp beds provide cover for juvenile fish such as pollock and coley. Be aware of tides as the gently sloping beach means that it recedes a long way which can lead to big walks in and/or back.

4

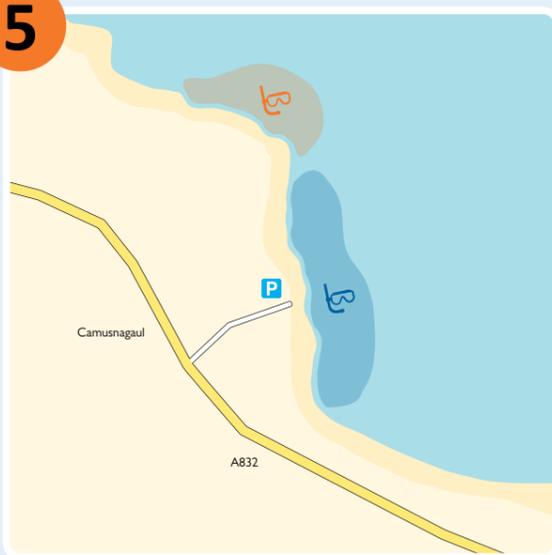


### Ardmair

**MAP:** OS Landranger 19, NH108982  
**NEAREST VILLAGE:** Ullapool (3.5 miles)

**P** With views across to Isle Martin, this rocky beach offers something for everyone. The northern kelp-covered headland provides shelter for juvenile fish, while the south is a good place to find crabs and urchins. A shallow gradient makes the area directly out from the beach good for beginners. Keep an eye out for seals, seabirds and porpoise in the bay.

5



### Camusnagaul

**P** **MAP:** OS Landranger 19, NH067892  
**NEAREST VILLAGE:** Camusnagaul (0 miles)

A cleared shore leads out to a sandy bottomed area with rocky coastline to the west. Kelp and numerous rock pools provide perfect habitat for juvenile fish and crabs. Access is from the croft field via a gate to the beach. Please watch for livestock in the field and boats using the beach.

6



### Gruinard Bay

**P** **MAP:** OS Landranger 19, NG950905  
**NEAREST VILLAGE:** Laide (4 miles)

The headland at the north end of this picturesque beach offers great low tide exploration. Where the sand turns to rocky shore, seagrass and kelp provide shelter for numerous fish, shellfish and other marine life. Rare and fragile maerl can also be seen here. Be aware that the small northern headland becomes cut off at high tide.

7



### Mellon Charles

**P** **MAP:** OS Landranger 19, NG845910  
**NEAREST VILLAGE:** Mellon Charles (0 miles)

**P** A sheltered beach once owned and used by the Ministry of Defence. The old WW2 pier is a fantastic place to explore - urchins, anemones and wrasse can be seen beneath the waves and in the summer, look out for arctic terns. Kelp along the rocky shoreline also provides habitat for juvenile fish.

8



### Big Sand Carn Dearg

**P** **MAP:** OS Landranger 19, NG760777  
**NEAREST VILLAGE:** Gairloch (3 miles)

**P** The headland south of Big Sand has a nice sandy beach and is a great area for beginners. Further offshore, a reef with kelp forests, colourful rock dwellers and lots of fish is excellent for the more advanced snorkeller (100m swim required at low tide). Best explored when seas are calm.

9



### An Dun

**P** **MAP:** OS Landranger 19, NG80375  
**NEAREST VILLAGE:** Gairloch (1 mile)

**P** The An Dun headland offers a sheltered lagoon at low tide where juvenile fish and other small marine creatures congregate. The advanced trail on the outer side of the headland offers kelp forests, fish and shellfish (requires scramble over slippery boulders). The headland can be reached via a path from the Gairloch Golf Course car park.

#### Key

**A** Camping  
**P** Parking

**T** Toilets  
**S** Shop

**C** Café  
**SA** Single Track Access

**B** Beginner

**A** Advanced

Snorkelling can be dangerous and these self-guided trails are used entirely at your own risk. It is your responsibility to check the conditions present on the day and assess whether it is safe to snorkel.