

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 rocks 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

Tweeddale Medical Practice: 01397 709800 (Fort William)

For further information, visit:  
[scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/snorkeltrail](http://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/snorkeltrail)

Lochaber Snorkel Trail

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The Lochaber Snorkel Trail joins a growing list of snorkel trails in Scotland launched as part of the Scottish Wildlife Trust's Living Seas programme, supported by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.



[scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk](http://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk)

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Dive in to Scotland's Living Seas!



Snorkel Trail  
Lochaber

In association with the University of the Highlands and Islands

Life under the waves

The waters off Scotland's west coast are home to a rich marine environment just waiting to be explored. There are no guarantees what you might see on your snorkel (that's part of the fun!), but here are some common species to keep an eye out for:

Fish

LESSER-SPOTTED DOGFISH

BALLAN WRASSE

SANDEELS

POLLACK

Jellyfish

WARNING: PAINFUL STING  
LION'S MANE

MOON

BARREL

STALKED

Crustaceans

SHORE CRAB

VELVET SWIMMING CRAB

HERMIT CRAB

EDIBLE CRAB

Starfish and urchins

COMMON STARFISH

BRITTLESTAR

SUNSTAR

COMMON URCHIN

Snails

TOPSHELL

DOGWHELK

PERIWINKLE

LIMPET

Plants and algae

KELP

MAERL

EELGRASS

BLADDER WRACK

Other invertebrates

SNAKELOCKS ANEMONE

BEADLET ANEMONE

BREADCRUMB SPONGE

CUTTLEFISH

Also look out for...

HARBOUR PORPOISE

SEALS (HARBOUR AND GREY)

WHITE-TAILED EAGLE

MINKE WHALE

BASKING SHARK

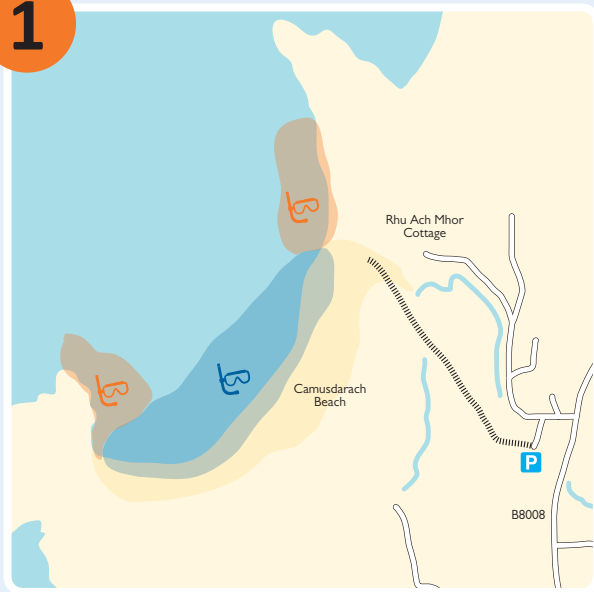
MERMAID'S PURSE (SHARK OR RAY EGG CASE)

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



### Camusdarach Beach

**P** MAP: Landranger 40, NM661918  
**NEAREST VILLAGE:** Mallaig

**A** This beautiful white sand beach provides stunning views of the Cuillins on Skye, as well as several other islands. The short walk from the car park brings you to the north end of the bay, and beginners can easily learn directly off the beach. More experienced snorkellers can explore the rocky outcrops where juvenile fish and crabs take shelter amongst the kelp.

3



### Ardnastang

**P** MAP: Landranger 40, NM799611  
**NEAREST VILLAGE:** Sunart

**C** Beginner snorkellers can take to the water straight off the beach, whilst the rocky headland to the south east is suitable for those with more experience. The beach itself hosts a number of species – if you dig into the sand and gravel you may well unearth a number of critters such as lugworms and small crabs.

5



### Loch Linnhe Picnic Area

**P** MAP: Landranger 41, NM719844  
**NEAREST VILLAGE:** Corran

**A** Around seven miles south of Fort William, this picnic area offers parking, picnic benches and free camping. The beach to the south side is suitable for beginners and the headland area to the west will allow advanced snorkellers to explore the deeper habitat and environment. A great place for families and groups.

2



### Loch Nan Uamh – Prince's Cairn

**P** MAP: Landranger 40, NM719844  
**NEAREST VILLAGE:** Arasaig

**P** Said to be the site where Bonnie Prince Charlie left Scotland, this advanced site involves a slight scramble through trees and bushes to the shore. Here, the rocky kelp grounds are home to many species of fish and shellfish, and seals watch from the nearby island. Parking is in a shoreside layby just to the west of the site on the main road to Mallaig.

4



### Lochaline

**P** MAP: Landranger 49, NM675443  
**NEAREST VILLAGE:** Lochaline

**C** A quiet beach offering a beginner area just off the sand. More advanced snorkellers can follow the edge of the rocky reef, which is submerged at high water and exposed at low water, to explore the seaweed habitat where a host of other species can be found. Parking is in an off-road gravel car park and there is a nearby café at the ferry terminal.

6



### Bishop's Bay

**P** MAP: Landranger 41, NN056600  
**NEAREST VILLAGE:** Ballachulish

**P** Just north of Ballachulish Bridge, park near the old jetty and walk through the woods to a great beach inside of moorings where you can explore the beach and headland. Avoid any boats that are approaching or leaving moorings and enjoy this sheltered bay with its multitude of life.

## About Lochaber

Lochaber incorporates several regions, each with its own unique and beautiful character.

This mountainous and coastal area offers residents and visitors a huge variety of activities and cultural experiences, which has led to it being dubbed 'the Outdoor Capital of the UK'. From dramatic volcanic landscapes and white sandy beaches to colourful coastal villages, small islands and turquoise seas, it is one of the finest locations for marine and coastal tourism in Scotland.

The biodiversity in Lochaber's coastal waters is internationally recognised, nationally protected and locally loved. In 2019, the first ever Mission Blue Hope Spot in mainland UK was declared along Scotland's Argyll coast and islands.



## The University of the Highlands and Islands

Comprising 13 colleges and research institutions across the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) boasts centres of excellence and world-class thinking that are pushing the boundaries of academic and applied knowledge in many areas.

The Lochaber Snorkel Trail has been developed in partnership with the School of Adventure Studies at UHI's West Highland College, and the Centre for Recreation and Tourism. It has been part-funded by CAPITEN (Atlantic Cluster for Technological and Economic Innovation in the Nautical Sector) which is a European collaborative project that brings together 16 partners from Scotland, Ireland, France, Portugal and Spain.

CAPITEN is supported by the INTERREG Atlantic Area regional development programme and aims to promote the tourism economy and a sustainable approach in the nautical industry, as well as create jobs in the various sectors of the industry.



**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.**

### Key

- A** Wild Camping
- P** Parking
- T** Toilets
- S** Shop
- C** Hospitality

- B** Beginner
- A** Advanced

The information contained within this leaflet was correct at the time of publishing (March 2021). For further details, please visit [scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/snorkeltrail](http://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/snorkeltrail)