

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 enter the water during or 1-2 days after heavy rainfall, as water pollution may occur

Do not touch jellyfish and other wildlife

Never snorkel alone

Emergency Services: 999

NHS 24: 111

Chalmers Hospital: 01261 812567

Fraserburgh Hospital: 01346 513151

BDMLR Rescue Hotline: 01825 765546

Moray Firth Snorkel Trail

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- 1 Portknockie
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- 6 Cullykhan Bay

Blue Coast Surf & Paddle

Surf and Stand-Up-Paddleboarding (SUP) School based in Cullen offering wetsuit and snorkel equipment hire

bluecoastcullen.co.uk/hire

07450 403794

hello@bluecoastcullen.co.uk

Suds Surf School

Surf and Stand-Up-Paddleboarding (SUP) School based in Sandend offering wetsuit and snorkel equipment hire

surfschoolscotland.co.uk

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suds@surfschoolscotland.co.uk



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Snorkel Trail

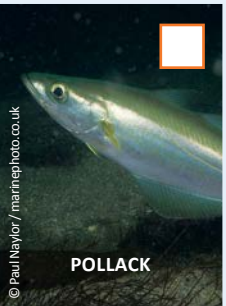


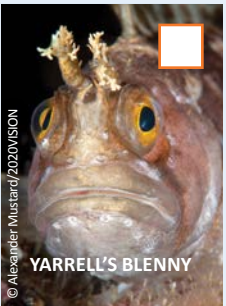










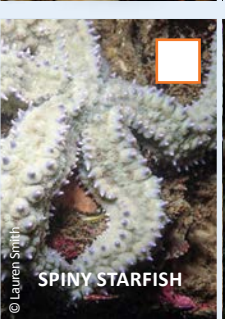






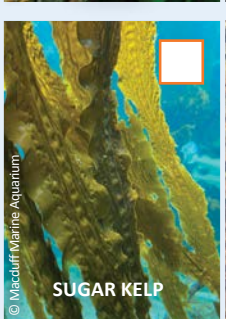




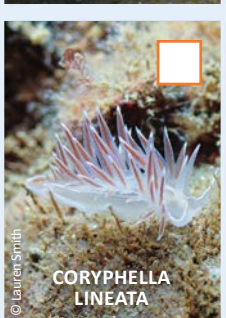

Moray Firth

In association with



Life under the waves

The Moray Firth coast supports diverse and thriving marine habitats. There are no guarantees as to what you might see whilst snorkelling (that's part of the fun!), but here are some common species to keep an eye out for:

Fish	 <p>POLLACK</p>	 <p>PLAICE</p>	 <p>LONG SPINED SEA SCORPION</p>	 <p>YARRELL'S BLENNY</p>	Jellyfish & Other Invertebrates	 <p>MOON JELLYFISH</p>	 <p>SEA GOOSEBERRY</p>	 <p>LESSER OCTOPUS</p>	 <p>DAHLIA ANEMONE</p>
Crustaceans	 <p>SHORE CRAB</p>	 <p>VELVET SWIMMING CRAB</p>	 <p>BROWN CRAB</p>	 <p>HERMIT CRAB</p>	Starfish and Urchins	 <p>COMMON SUNSTAR</p>	 <p>COMMON URCHIN</p>	 <p>SPINY STARFISH</p>	 <p>SMOOTH STARFISH</p>
Molluscs	 <p>BLUE-RAYED LIMPET</p>	 <p>GREY TOPSHELL</p>	 <p>PERIWINKLE</p>	 <p>DOG WHELK</p>	Plants and Algae	 <p>CUVIE KELP</p>	 <p>SUGAR KELP</p>	 <p>BLADDER WRACK</p>	 <p>THONG WEED</p>
Nudibranchs	 <p>ORANGE-CLUBBED SEA SLUG</p>	 <p>EUBRANCHUS TRICOLOUR</p>	 <p>CORYPHELLA LINEATA</p>	 <p>POLYCERA FAEROENSIS</p>	Also look out for...	<p>LESSER SPOTTED DOGFISH</p>	<p>POGGE</p>	<p>Remember the three Ts:</p> <p>No touching, taking or teasing of marine animals, plants or shells.</p>	<p>Share your snorkel experiences here!</p> 
					<p>JUVENILE MONKFISH</p>	<p>HARBOUR AND GREY SEAL</p>	<p>GANNET</p>		

1

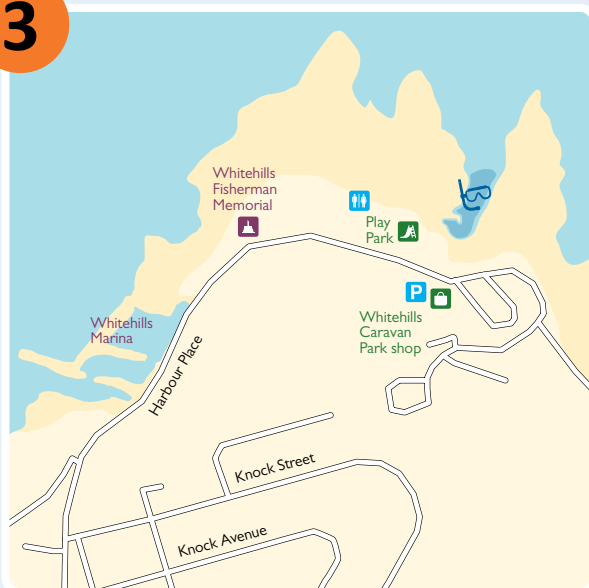


Portknockie, Buckie

P **MAP:** OS Explorer 361, NJ490687
NEAREST VILLAGE: Portknockie (0 miles)

An iconic location overlooking Bow Fiddle Rock, access to the sites are via grassy paths and pebbled beaches. To reach the Whale's Mou rock archway, head East along the cliff path until reaching a steep staircase down to the water entry point. We advise snorkellers avoid the channel under the rock formation, due to potential stronger currents and risk of injury/disturbance due to creel pots that can sometimes be found there.

3



Black Pots, Whitehills

P **MAP:** OS Explorer 361, NJ659658
NEAREST VILLAGE: Whitehills (0 miles)

A family-friendly site with easy access to water via a sheltered man-made inlet with a small sandy beach, all within a short distance from car parking. Enjoy lovely patches of kelp dotted about the sandy seabed. This can be a popular site for seals to haul out, remember to always keep your distance from marine mammals.

5



Needle's Eye / Tarlair Swimming Pools

P **MAP:** OS Explorer 361, NJ718646
NEAREST VILLAGE: Macduff (0 miles)

A scenic pebble beach with fascinating geology, there is easy access and entry to the water. A good site for beginners to explore with a mixture of rocks, sand and some kelp. Be cautious of metal piles which are present from old pool infrastructure.

2



Portsoy Pool, Banff

P **MAP:** OS Explorer 361, NJ583664
NEAREST VILLAGE: Portsoy (1 mile)

Although the pool is no longer accessible, this interesting site offers a mix of sandy and pebbled beach with lots of rocky outcroppings to investigate. Look out for juvenile cod, saithe and pollack along with dab and scorpion fish. The Portsoy harbour is nearby so remain close to shore and keep an eye out for boat traffic.

4



High Shore Beach, Macduff

P **MAP:** OS Explorer 361, NJ709647
NEAREST VILLAGE: Macduff (0 miles)

This is a pebble beach local to Macduff Marine Aquarium offering a great range of tide pools to explore. While snorkelling in the lovely kelp gullies, look out for octopus - the aquarium occasionally releases them here! Access the site from the aquarium car park; walk behind the sea wall and down to the rocky shore. Accessible toilets and gift shop available within the aquarium.

6



Cullykhan Bay, Fraserburgh

P **MAP:** OS Explorer 361, NJ837661
NEAREST VILLAGE: Pennan (1 mile)

A beautiful sandy beach with easy access to the water. The downhill path between the car park and bay is quite steep, with a boardwalk that has occasional steps. Spot sand eels and plaice hiding in plain sight on the sandy seafloor!

Moray Firth

Immerse yourself in the magnificent Moray Firth's marine environment, for an unforgettable ocean adventure.

From soft sandbanks to rugged rocky shores, the Moray Firth region has 800 km of captivating coastline to explore. Connect with life below the waves while also taking in the rich cultural heritage of the coastal communities here.



The award-winning Macduff Marine Aquarium offers a great starting point to your snorkel adventure. Promoting awareness, enjoyment and stewardship of the Moray Firth marine environment, the aquarium showcases hundreds of marine species you might encounter while snorkelling.

The East Grampian Coastal Partnership represents individuals and groups who have an interest in maintaining and improving the sustainability and wellbeing of the coastline. Get involved in Turning the Plastic Tide, a project raising awareness of, and taking action to combat, the harmful impacts of marine litter.



Get in touch with
 Macduff Marine Aquarium
macduff-aquarium.org.uk

T 01261 455775

E macduff.aquarium@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

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yt [@macduffmarineaquarium](https://www.youtube.com/macduffmarineaquarium)

Get in touch with
 East Grampian Coastal Partnership

egcp.scot

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yt [@egcp7437](https://www.youtube.com/egcp7437)

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



Toilets



Harbour



Cafe



Parking



Shop



Steps



Bus Stop



Beginner



Advanced

The information contained within this leaflet was correct at the time of publishing (May 2023). For further details, please visit scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/snorkeltrail