

# Nature's Teamwork Creates Coral Reefs

Don't Break up a good team



Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service

# Code of Anchoring in Reef Environments

## C.A.R.E.



On your next reef trip, anchor in sand  
not in the coral gardens



# Everyone should **C.A.R.E.**

## **Inform race committees**

When having a race bound for reef environments, include a special ***ANCHOR IN SAND, NOT IN THE CORAL GARDENS*** notice in the pre-race briefing materials.

This is important as flocks of racing boats, all wishing to anchor in the same location, can quickly use all the sand areas. Late-comers often anchor in coral gardens and do considerable damage.

## **Boat charter agencies**

Brief all customers to anchor in sand, not in the coral. A copy of this leaflet should be posted in every charter boat. It won't help a charter business or the tourist industry to have coral gardens near the best anchorages damaged or destroyed.

## **Post this on the bulletin board**

Tack a copy of this brochure on the bulletin board of your yacht club where boaters are likely to see it. Show it to friends. Keep a copy aboard to loan to other boats.

## **Help other boaters**

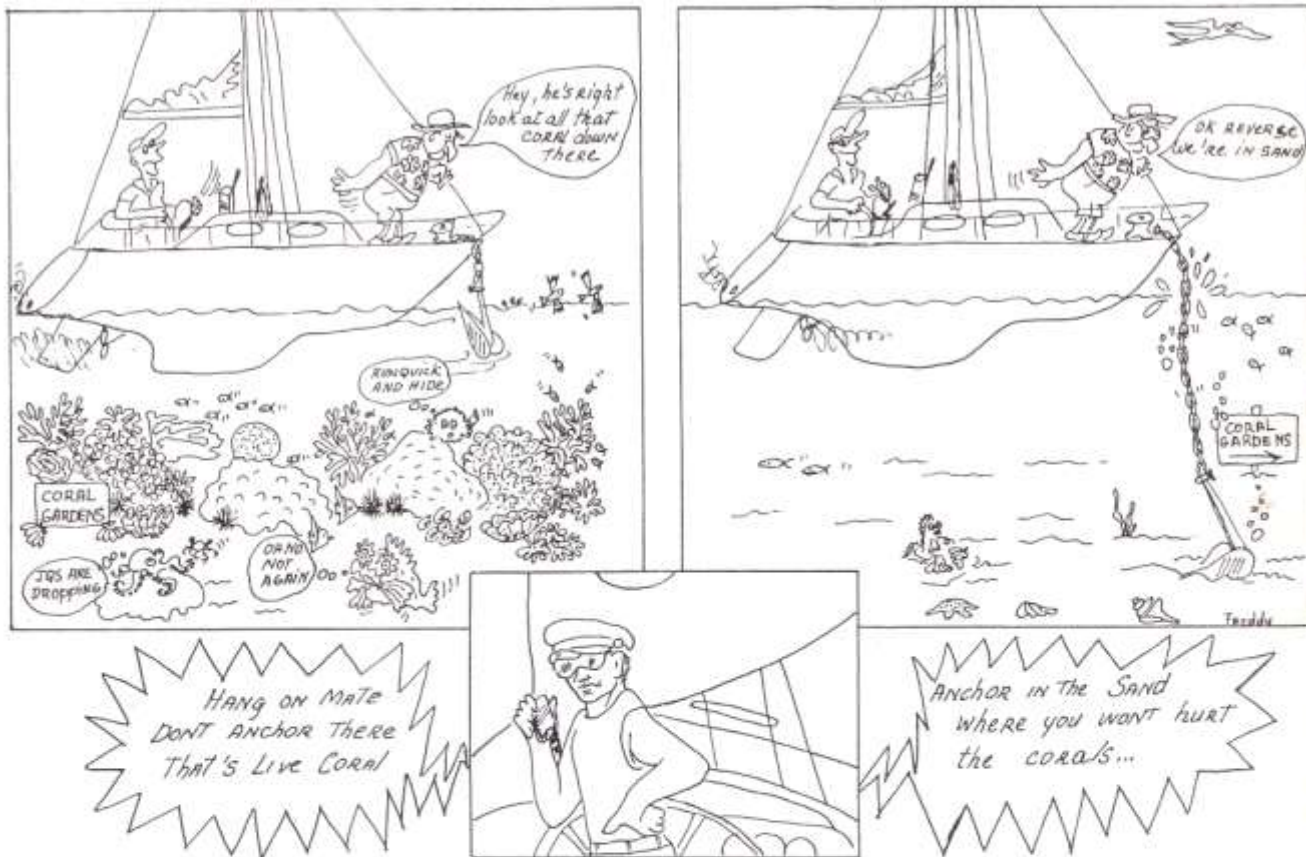
If you see another boat looking for a spot to anchor, help out. Give suggestions, like, "Hey, it's good over there in that sandy area" or, "Don't anchor over there, that's live coral."

## **Help the corals**

If someone has already anchored in the coral, drop by and nicely explain coral is a living creature and very delicate. Anchors and anchor chains really do a lot of harm. Most boaters respond well, weigh anchor and relocate.

## **Spread the word**

Talk about C.A.R.E. on the radio. When you invite friends to anchor near you, add comments like, "The coral gardens are beautiful here, be sure to anchor in the sand so they don't get damaged" or "You'll have to anchor deep because the shallow water is full of live corals." Others will hear your comments on the radio and think about their own anchoring habits.



## Be safe, anchor with **C.A.R.E.**

**Experienced boaters always plan to arrive in a new anchorage before 3 p.m.**, when the sun is high and coral patches are easier to see. Polaroid sunglasses make the reefs and sand areas much more visible.

**Modern anchors are designed for soft bottoms.** Anchoring in coral is a bad idea from the standpoint of your vessel's safety. The holding power of anchors is measured when they are set in sand or mud.

**Coral in calm anchorages is often brittle and easily fouls anchors.** Coral along exposed coastlines can be hard as concrete and an anchor trapped in a hole is sometimes impossible to retrieve. Inexperienced boaters who anchor in coral might find themselves adrift in a blow or unable to move quickly when they need to.

## Restricted anchorages

Some coral reef areas are restricted and unauthorized boats may not enter or anchor. Violations may result in hefty fines. Be sure to inquire with the proper authority before entering into a new area.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage provide zoning maps and important information about boating in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Write to them at the addresses listed on the last panel.

Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs, Coringa-Herald and Lihou Reefs in the Coral Sea, Ashmore and Mermaid Reefs in Northwest Australia are National Nature Reserves. Visitors require permits before entering these reserves. Write to the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service for permits and information about the parks.

Many Pacific Island nations have coral reef areas where anchoring or entry is restricted. On arrival, check with the Visitors Bureau to get the latest information.



## **This leaflet was sponsored by the:**

### **Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage**

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### **Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority**

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### **Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service**

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### **Department of Conservation and Land Management, WA**

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## Code of Anchoring in Reef Environments **C. A. R. E.**

*Do your part.*

*Save coral reefs from careless destruction.*

**Coral** reefs are one of nature's grandest examples of teamwork. Thousands of species of marine life work together to build the largest living structures in the world. Many of these beautiful communities represent millions of years of continuous growth. Around the world, coral reefs are endangered. Over fishing, reef bashing, shell collecting, dynamite fishing, bleach and pesticide poisoning, siltation, agricultural chemical run-off, sewage contamination, and crown-of-thorns starfish epidemics are all contributors to this unhappy state of affairs. The reefs have plenty of trouble already, so help them out,

*anchor in sand, not in the coral.*

**Anchors** and anchor chains wreck fragile coral environments. If you took the family to visit a botanical gardens, you would not park your car in the flower beds. Living coral gardens are as delicate as flower beds and take hundreds of years to grow. Be sure not to park your anchor in the coral gardens.

**Remember**, coral is a living organism. Coral has a thin, delicate tissue covering the outer portion of the hard skeleton. Branching corals get smashed by anchors and anchor chains. More massive corals get turned over, abraded or broken. Even careless divers and snorkelers injure corals by just standing on them. Coral colonies, often hundreds of years old, can die from infection if injured repeatedly.

**Each** anchor makes a difference. Looking at a seascape of coral reefs it's hard to imagine how one anchor could do much damage. But good places to anchor are few and far between and there are many anchors. Experienced divers who visit the reefs over a period of years see the harm. Anchor and chain damage destroys much faster than coral builds.

*Join with boaters who love the sea.  
Show your seamanship; anchor with C.A.R.E.*



DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION  
AND LAND MANAGEMENT

## Be prepared to anchor with **C.A.R.E.**

*Look before you drop the hook*

### **Carry the right gear**

Carry enough chain or line to anchor in 30 metres. A good windlass is essential for larger boats.

A recording depth sounder will help find sand areas in which to anchor when there are no sandy areas in shallow water.

### **Anchor in sand**

Don't anchor in the living coral gardens. Most lagoon and back-reef areas have sandy areas to park your boat. If there are no shallow water sandy areas, anchor deeper. Anchorages are generally free of coral in depths over 30 metres (100 feet).

### **Reconnoitre before dropping the anchor**

Always arrive with plenty of daylight so you can locate a safe anchoring place. In shallow water you can usually see sandy areas. Be sure your anchor is in the sand and the chain in the clear. Chain in coral can cause as much damage as anchors.

If you can't see the bottom, and don't have a good depth sounder, lower the anchor down until it just touches the bottom and feel the anchor line as the boat drifts. If it "grumbles" it is in coral. Lift it clear of the bottom, drift a little, and try again. When the anchor is in mud or sand there is no grumble of the anchor chain.

### **Ease out the anchor if it gets into coral**

If the chain grumbles, take the hint. Motor up over the anchor, lift out of the coral and move. Anchoring in the coral all day or all night keeps on doing damage as the boat drags the chain back and forth through the coral.

**GREENPEACE**

