Responsible Dolphin Watching

It is illegal to capture or harass any marine mammal in The Bahamas.

The deep scars on the back of this Abaco dolphin are from the blades of a boat propeller. Please follow the guidelines below to ensure that your dolphin-watching experience is fun and safe for everyone.

Help protect Abaco’s dolphins and whales

Respect their space and try to stay at least 100 yards away

Drive boats and jet skis at slow speed near dolphins and whales—idle or turn off your engine if safely possible

Please report sightings to The Bahamas Marine Mammal Research Organisation
info@bahamaswhales.org,
(242) 366-4155
VHF ch65 “Dolphin Research”

Please report stranded, injured, or dead marine mammals to:
The Bahamas Marine Mammal Stranding Network
1 (242) 544-5409

Contact Us:

For more information about our moorings system, fishing rules and regulations in The Bahamas, or volunteer opportunities for coastal clean-ups and coral reef monitoring please contact FRIENDS or visit our website at
www.friendsoftheenvironment.org.

Friends of the Environment
P.O. Box AB-20755
Marsh Harbour, Abaco
(242) 367-2721
info@friendsoftheenvironment.org

Bahamas National Trust Parks

In Abaco, The Pelican Cays Land and Sea Park, Black Sound Cay National Reserve, Walker’s Cay National Park, Fowl Cay National Park, Tilloo Cay Reserve and the Abaco National Park have been set aside for your enjoyment.

Nothing may be taken from the land or sea in The Bahamas National Trust Parks (including shells and coral fragments). No fishing, spearing, conching or shelling is allowed in these areas. You will be fined and/or your fishing equipment and vessel will be taken away.

Enjoy Abaco’s Marine Environment Responsibly!
Use moorings with care:
FRIENDS has placed moorings at North Guana, Fowl Cay, Mermaid and Sandy Cay Reefs. Only small boats (up to 25 feet) should tie up to these moorings. There is a danger of the moorings breaking if larger boats tie up. If you can’t attach to a buoy then anchor in sand or grass away from the reef. Tie your bow line to the pick-up line of the mooring buoy and let out enough rope to give a horizontal pulling on the mooring. Ultimately, you are responsible for your boat. It is always a good idea to dive the mooring and assess its condition.

Respect the Reefs:
Don’t touch, stand or walk on reefs. This is harmful to their health. Don’t pollute, but do pick up litter. Don’t discharge holding tanks or bilge water within 3 miles of land. Pump out available in Marsh Harbour, Boat Harbour & Treasure Cay. Call Louis Schneider: 367-2043, 577-6559. Don’t take corals, shells, sea stars or sea fans. Don’t buy out of season or under-size seafood. Support restaurants that don’t serve crawfish and Nassau grouper out of season. Report dumping or other illegal activities to the police (367-2560), and report poaching to the Bahamas National Trust Park Warden (367-6310).

HELP PROTECT OUR REEFS!

The following regulations apply to citizens, residents and visitors of The Bahamas:

When fishing it is important to remember that:
It is illegal to fish or collect any marine resource while using SCUBA Spear Guns and air compressors are prohibited (permits required for residents to use compressors) Spearfishing within 200 yards of any shoreline in the Family Islands is illegal (Abaco)

SCALE FISH
• The capture of bonefish by nets is prohibited
• Purchase or sale of bonefish is also prohibited
• No grouper or rockfish should be caught under three (3) pounds
• Nassau grouper closed season is December - February. Call FRIENDS for this year’s exact dates.

TURTLE
It is illegal to harvest, purchase or sell any species of turtle or any turtle by-product (e.g. shells, eggs) found within the Exclusive Economic Zone of The Bahamas.

STONE CRAB
Closed season is June 1—October 15. Harvest of female crabs, or whole crabs is prohibited. Claw length must be 4 inches to harvest.

SHARK FISHING & TRADE OF SHARK PRODUCTS IS PROHIBITED IN BAHAMIAN WATERS

CONCH
• Any conch collected must be mature with a fully-formed flared lip.
• Queen Conch is endangered in most countries except The Bahamas. Help us protect our local population!

CRAWFISH
• Closed Season is April 1—July 31
• Minimum size limit is 3 1/4 inches carapace length or 5 1/2 inches tail length. Size Matters!
• Possession of egg bearing females is prohibited, as is removing the eggs.

These additional regulations apply to visitors:

YOU MAY COLLECT NO MORE THAN:
Six (6) conch per vessel at any time
Ten (10) crawfish per vessel at any time
60 pounds or 20 scale fish
18 migratory fish total: any combination of kingfish, dolphin, tuna or wahoo. Others should be released alive.

WHEN FISHING:
Use Rod and Reel or “hand line” Permits are required for foreign vessels to sportfish
No more than 6 lines in the water, unless authorized.
Permits required for use of spears, fish traps, or nets (other than landing nets)