



## Guidelines for SCUBA Diving and Snorkelling in Ewens Ponds

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Guidelines for SCUBA diving and snorkelling in Ewens Ponds have been developed to protect the ponds from damage, reduce the impact on the aquatic environment and maintain the amazing water clarity. Safety is also emphasised because of the peculiarities of diving in fresh water that is constantly cold and the large numbers of divers who use the area.

### 1. SCUBA Divers.

- ❖ All SCUBA divers should carry evidence of SCUBA diving experience. SCUBA certificates from recognised training agencies, dive log books and CDAA cave diving category certificates will be accepted as evidence of SCUBA experience.
- ❖ SCUBA divers in Ewens Ponds must wear a buoyancy compensator at all times. They are essential for buoyancy control, prevent crash landings on the floor of the ponds and keep divers off the bottom when finning around.

### 2. Diving suits and weight belts

1. Diving in fresh water requires approximately half the weight required for diving in the sea. Please ensure your weight belt is adjusted to fresh water diving. Snorkellers need not wear a weight belt at all.
2. To dive in Ewens Ponds you are required to wear a warm, well insulated diving suit. Diving in cold water (15 – 16c) is uncomfortable for short periods and dangerous for long periods.

### 3. Diving behaviour

These guidelines have been developed to avoid damage and disturbance to plants and animals and to retain the amazing water clarity for all divers to enjoy.

- ❖ Before entering the water please ensure all equipment is properly adjusted and comfortable.
- ❖ Entering and exiting the water should only occur at the landings in pond one and three.
- ❖ Enter the ponds as carefully as possible to avoid disturbing the bottom or damaging the plants.
- ❖ Please explore from a respectable distance. Plants should not be touched or disturbed by your wash because the surface of each of the larger plants supports its own delicate algae and animal community.
- ❖ Try to swim at a height above the bottom that does not disturb the silt or vegetation.
- ❖ The plants and bottom of the channels are equally as delicate as those in the ponds even though the current is swift. Swim with the current, do not stand up or hold onto vegetation. To leave the third pond use the landing.
- ❖ To cleanly exit the third pond approach the landing one at a time, the remainder of the group floating in open water as each person leaves.
- ❖ Whenever possible look over your path and if there are clouds of silt or holes in the vegetation adjust your diving behaviour to make least impact.

4. Prohibited equipment: Compressors and hookahs are not allowed in the ponds.
5. Dyes and other substances: These are not allowed to be released in the ponds whether for photography or any other purpose. They are also illegal under the Fisheries Act, 1982.
6. Cave Diving: Divers are not to explore or dive in caves, cracks or crevices in the ponds.
7. Dive training and testing: Diver training and testing is not permitted in the ponds.

