

Glover's Reef Marine Reserve

A SPAW listed protected area



Country: Belize

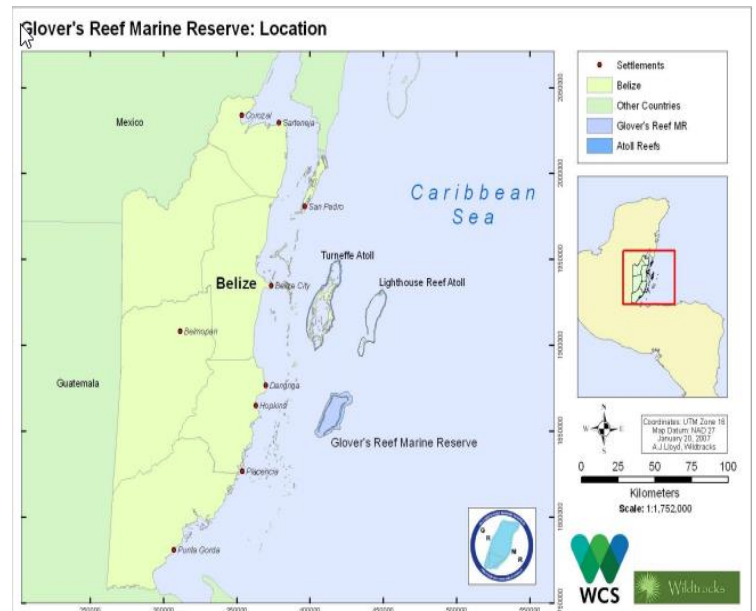
Management structure / authority: Fisheries Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries

Date of establishment: 1st January 1993

Date of listing under SPAW: 23 October 2012

Size: 350 sq. km

Marine surface: 200 sq. km



Context:

Glover's Reef Marine Reserve encompasses the southernmost of Belize's three offshore atolls, and is considered not only the best developed biologically, but also to possess the greatest diversity of reef types. It was established as a Marine Reserve in 1993 to provide protection for both the physical and biological resources of the area and is an important fishing ground for traditional conch and lobster fishermen.

In 1996, it was included as one of seven marine protected areas in Belize to be recognized for their global value as part of Belize's World Heritage Site.

The approximately 86,653-acre Glover's Reef Marine Reserve encompasses the marine area of the Atoll and currently designates five different management zones.

Main fauna populations and/or those of particular importance present (resident or migratory) in the area:

Mammals: Spotted, bottlenose and spinner dolphins.

Birds: 84 Species, including migratory ones. Glover's Reef is considered important as a migratory bird stopover refueling point every spring and fall (approximately 87% overlap of migratory species).

Reptiles: The herpetofauna of Glover's Reef Atoll is comprised of 7 reptile species. No amphibians have been recorded there.



Main ecosystems in the area:

Marine: Epipelagic zone including fore-reef (upper and lower reef slopes, including spur and grove topography), reef crest and reef flats, back reef (with patch reefs), seagrass and sparse algae /sand. Mesopelagic / bathypelagic zone which includes the deeper waters that surround the Atoll. Whilst little is known of the marine life that exists here.

Terrestrial: Those represented on the cayes are either tropical coastal vegetation on recent sediments (a continuum ranging from sand beaches with herbaceous beach vegetation to well-structured littoral forest) and mangroves.

Potential Threats:

Seven key threats to the biodiversity of Glover's Reef Atoll were identified, with an eighth, climate change identified as an over-arching threat. Classified by priority: illegal fishing and unsustainable fin-fish fishing, afterwards oil pollution, moreover agricultural runoff watersheds + sewage, direct physical damage to coral (poor anchoring practices poor tourism practices) and introduced species (lionfish), and eventually caye development / sewage and solid waste / dredging.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

Natural Resource Management and Protection

- Surveillance and enforcement
- zoning and boundaries
- fishery management
- Ecosystem and Species management
- Addressing specific threats

Research and Monitoring

- Monitoring
- Research
- Data Management and Dissemination of results

Community Development and Outreach

- Environmental Education
- Public Outreach and Information
- Alternative Livelihoods / Income Diversification
- Community Capacity building

Tourism and Recreation

- Visitor Safety and Protection
- Visitor Education and Interpretation

Management and Administration

- Planning
- General Management and Administration
- Financial Management
- Concession and Commercial Uses
- Partnership relations
- Information Technology

Infrastructure, Operations and Maintenance

- Docking Facilities
- Administration and Operational Infrastructure
- Tourism Infrastructure
- Fleet Operations and Management

Contact:

Website: www.fisheries.gov.bz

Email address:

The Glover's Reef Marine Reserve is part of the **SPAW protected areas managers network**.

For more information about it: <https://www.car-spaw-rac.org/?Protected-Areas>