

Cathedral Rocks – Information for visitors



The Rottneest Island Authority promotes the protection and conservation of the New Zealand fur seal to ensure the survival of these wild animals, please help us by following these simple rules.

1. Keep a safe distance at all times.

NEVER WALK BETWEEN A SEAL AND THE WATER; always leave the animal an escape route to the water. Seals should not be approached on land, as they will almost always rush to the water, causing great disturbance to the animals.

NEVER TRY TO TOUCH WILD SEALS.

DO NOT LEAVE UNSUPERVISED CHILDREN ANYWHERE NEAR SEALS.

2. Do not feed the seals; let them get their own food.

People who feed wild seals are endangering the seals and putting themselves and other people at risk.

Fed seals quickly lose fear of people. Some will beg for food, behave aggressively towards people to get food, and often become dangerously entangled in hooks, lures and fishing line.

On occasion, seals have seriously bitten divers, swimmers and other people, either to get food or perhaps because they see people as competing for food.

3. Swimming with fur seals can be dangerous.

Fur seals have inflicted serious injuries to swimmers who were trying to have a close look or imitate their behaviour.

If a fur seal approaches you closer than 10m in the water, swim slowly away and get out of the water.

Seal colonies are also popular haunts for great white sharks, and swimming in these waters can be dangerous.

4. Take your rubbish home with you.

Apart from polluting our beautiful coastline, rubbish and debris dropped at sea or on beaches can be dangerous to seals.

Each year seals die a terrible slow death from entanglement or ingestion of plastic and other rubbish.

5. Respect the animals and they will tolerate your presence.

It is very easy to photograph and enjoy fur seals in a safe manner, without disturbing them.

Don't try to get the animals to sit up or enter the water by making noises or throwing anything.

Enjoy the privilege of interacting with fur seals; if you do it in a responsible manner the opportunity will remain for future generations.