

Wednesday 5 July 2023

## How's this for a 'fluke'?

The lucky patrons and crew on board a manta ray experience with Coral Bay Eco Tours were paid a very special visit by a gentle giant this week.

On Monday morning, the group was out in the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Ningaloo (Nynggulu) Marine Park when an inquisitive humpback whale swam under their boat, barely making a ripple in clear waters around four metres deep.

On board photographer Will Nolan shared in the excitement of patrons, after seeing the video shot by his colleague and marine biologist Billy Curran.

"The team were searching the sand flats of Coral Bay, looking for marine life encounters for the guests to enjoy and this whale approached them," Will said.

Will said it's been one of their best starts to the humpback whale season, with lucky visitors swimming nearby with the magnificent mammals.

"There have been hundreds of sightings each day in Coral Bay.

"In our three days of running humpback whale swim tours, we have swam with more than 60 whales from our boat Thunder," he said.

Humpback whale season runs until December.

**END**

### Videos:

**URL:** <https://ftp.tourism.wa.gov.au/files/4/gbhgvn3brugg/>

**File name:** HumpbackWhaleVideo.zip

**Credits:** Humpback whale encounter from boat: @billycurran\_  
Humpback whale swim overlay: @willnolanphoto

**Expiry date:** Wednesday, 19 July

*The file will automatically be deleted after this date*

### Talent:

If you would like to speak to the relevant tourism operator or photographer, please contact Tourism WA.

**Background:**

An estimated 40,000 humpback whales annually migrate along Western Australia's coastline from May to December, and the World Heritage-listed Ningaloo Marine Park is the only place in Western Australia where people have the opportunity to swim with these gentle giants.

Small group tours run from Coral Bay and Exmouth, with guests entering the water with up to 7 people at a time.

The start of Ningaloo's humpback whale season coincides with the latter half of the whale shark season, meaning guests may be lucky enough to swim with both megafauna on a single tour, and the year-round manta rays.

For further information, visit [Western Australia](#)

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