

Rottnest island Wildlife

Warm waters come to life

How does the Island's marine environment differ from the coast of the mainland? Why do the waters feel warmer? This is all due to the Leeuwin Current.

Rottnest wildlife

Rottnest Island has a unique marine environment. This is mainly due to the presence of the Leeuwin Current.

The Leeuwin Current is a body of warm, tropical water which originates up around the Indonesian archipelago (group of islands) near the equator. The current flows down the Western Australian coastline bringing the larvae of corals and fish with it.

The current is strongest in winter, resulting in much warmer water around Rottnest compared to the mainland.



The Leeuwin Current allows many tropical animals, including corals, to live. Because of this current, Rottnest Island has many species of tropical corals and fish. In fact, over 135 species of tropical fish can be found in the Island's waters compared to 11 species found off the mainland.

There are around 25 different species of hard coral growing in Rottnest Island's waters, but the *pocillopora* (Cauliflower Coral) is the most abundant.

Did you know?

The difference in water temperature between the mainland of Fremantle and of Rottnest Island can be up to 4 degrees Celsius.