

Rottnest Convoy

Saturday 14 March 2026



This guide has been prepared with the best of intentions to assist participants in the convoy. However, it is for general guidance only and should not be relied upon as a substitute for proper navigational planning, seamanship or individual decision-making.

All skippers are responsible for the safe operation of their own vessels, including assessing weather conditions, navigational hazards, and ensuring compliance with all maritime laws and safety regulations. The convoy organisers and the Yacht Club accept no liability for any loss, damage or incidents that may arise during the event.

Participants are strongly encouraged to carry appropriate safety equipment, monitor official marine weather forecasts and exercise sound judgment at all times.

Safe boating and we look forward to a great trip to Rottnest!

Rottneest Convoy Notes

Catherine Bay · Stark Bay · Narrow Neck · Marjorie Bay · Parakeet Bay

On the day	Comms	Route
8:00 am Meet downstairs on the river side of the Yacht Club (BBQ / grass area) for briefing 8:15 - 8:30 am Departure from the Club	Working channel: VHF 77 Chris Corbett 0400 400 336 John Whitley 0412 58 0412	Catherine Bay Stark Bay Narrow Neck Marjorie Bay Parakeet Bay raft-up, subject to conditions

With thanks to Vice Commodore John Whitley for preparing the foundation convoy notes that helped shape this guide.

Housekeeping

8:00 am - Meet downstairs on the river side of the Yacht Club (BBQ / grass area) for briefing

8:15 - 8:30 am - Departure from the Club

We will then head to Catherine Bay, Stark Bay, Narrow Neck and Marjorie Bay before working back toward Parakeet Bay for a raft-up, subject to weather and conditions.

Raft-up

Coming out of Marjorie Bay we plan to head back to Parakeet Bay for the raft-up, subject to weather, sea state and available room. Please have fenders ready, with springs fore and aft and suitable bow and stern lines prepared. We will aim to have a few boats begin proceedings first and then invite vessels in one by one as conditions allow. If you expect to depart earlier than others, please ask to come in later so you can remain on the outside of the raft-up and make departure easier.

Comms / key contacts

Chris Corbett - Rear Commodore - Power - 0400 400 336

John Whitley - Vice Commodore - 0412 58 0412

The working convoy channel for day-to-day communications between vessels will be marine VHF Channel 77.

VHF Channel 77

Members are welcome to come and go at their discretion, however if you are leaving the convoy, delayed, aborting or otherwise changing plans, please let the convoy lead know by radio, call or SMS.

It is good safe practice to sign on and off with Fremantle Sea Rescue. Details below:

Sea Rescue log on / log off

Fremantle Sea Rescue - the best way to log on is by marine radio or, alternatively, by phone.

Marine Radio

VHF – Channel 73 (or 16 – emergency)

27Mhz – Channel 90 (or 88 – emergency)

VHF CH 67 Supplementary distress, urgency and safety traffic

Perth only: local weather and navigation safety warnings at 0718 and 1918 hrs WST.

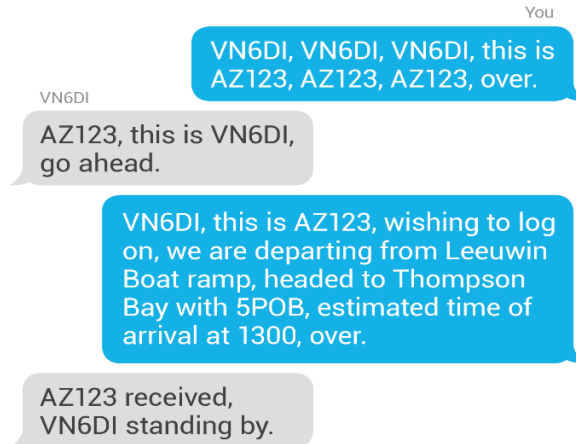
Severe weather warnings at 18 minutes past odd numbered hours.

Fremantle Sea Rescue Phone Number

Call: 1800 273 728

To log on with Fremantle, you'll need to tell them:

- Your boat registration number (eg. AZ123)
- Your FG number if you are a member with Fremantle Sea Rescue.
- Your point of departure – yacht club, ramp, mooring etc.
- Your precise destination – Longreach Bay, fishing between 2-4 miles North of West end etc.
- The number of people on board
- Your expected time of arrival for safe ports, or return time if heading back from a fishing or cruising trip.



Sea state planning

Your trip may not necessarily be in a straight line. Have a look at the Club Marine article below for some useful heavy weather handling guidance.

<https://www.clubmarine.com.au/exploreboating/articles/31-4-Heavy-weather-boat-handling>

Before boating, check the weather and sea conditions from where you are leaving right through to your intended destination. It is also worth checking the whole period you expect to be out so you can make informed decisions based on as much information as possible about the elements that may affect your trip, your comfort and your safety.

www.seabreeze.com.au

<https://wind.willyweather.com.au/wa/perth/perth.html>

PLEASE NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE ELEMENTS - RESPECT THEM.

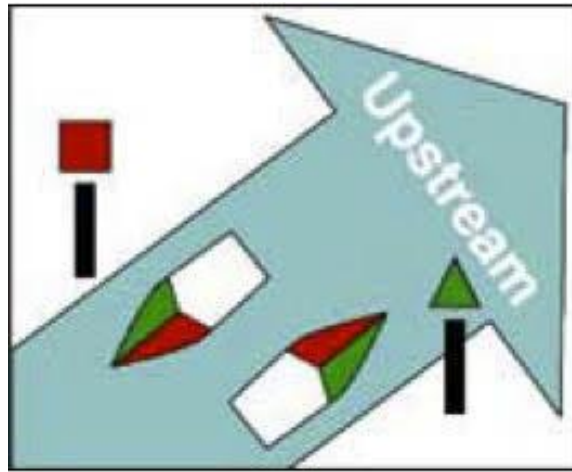
Marker refresher

When entering harbours or travelling upstream in a river, leave port hand marks on your port side and starboard hand marks on your starboard side.

When leaving harbours or travelling downstream, leave port hand marks on your starboard side and starboard hand marks on your port side.

Tip: one way to remember this is the saying 'there's some red port left in the bottle' when travelling upstream.

Lateral marks are not always placed in pairs where you simply pass between them. When you only see one marker, keep the upstream / downstream principle in mind.



Leads

Leads are:

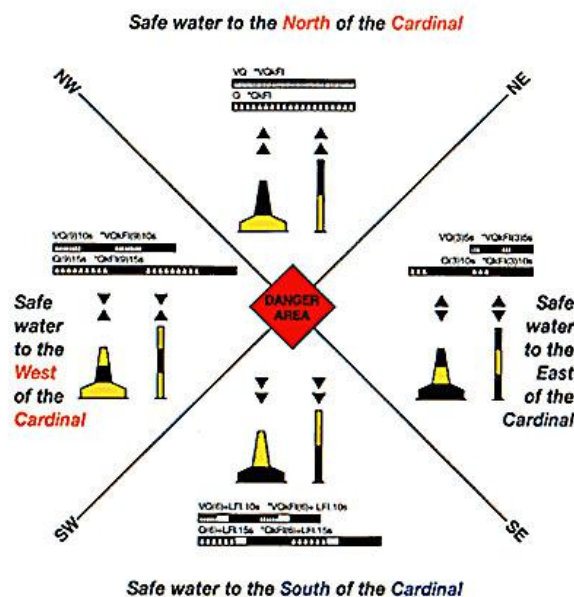
- A pair of navigation marks used to indicate a safe passage for vessels entering a shallow or dangerous channel.
- Separated by distance and elevation so that, when they are lined up vertically with one behind the other, they provide a bearing.
- Usually used to enter a harbour, anchorage or navigate a channel.
- Often used for approaches to anchorages around Rottnest instead of lateral marks.

Steer so the rear lead remains directly above the front lead.

Cardinal marks

A cardinal mark indicates where the safest water may be found and is best used together with a compass. It shows where the mariner can safely pass and may:

- indicate the deepest water in an area
- show the safest side to pass a danger
- draw attention to a feature in a channel such as a bend, junction or the end of a shoal.



Think of a clock face when remembering the lights on cardinal marks. Three flashes for east, six flashes for south and nine flashes for west.



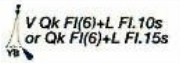
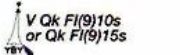
By day the colour scheme can be remembered by noting that the black segment is positioned where the cones point.

- North - the top mark points up and black segment is at the top
- East - the top marks point outward and there are black segments top and bottom
- South - the top mark points downward and the black segment is at the bottom
- West - the top marks point inward and the black segment is in the middle.

op marks

Black double cones, clearly separated.

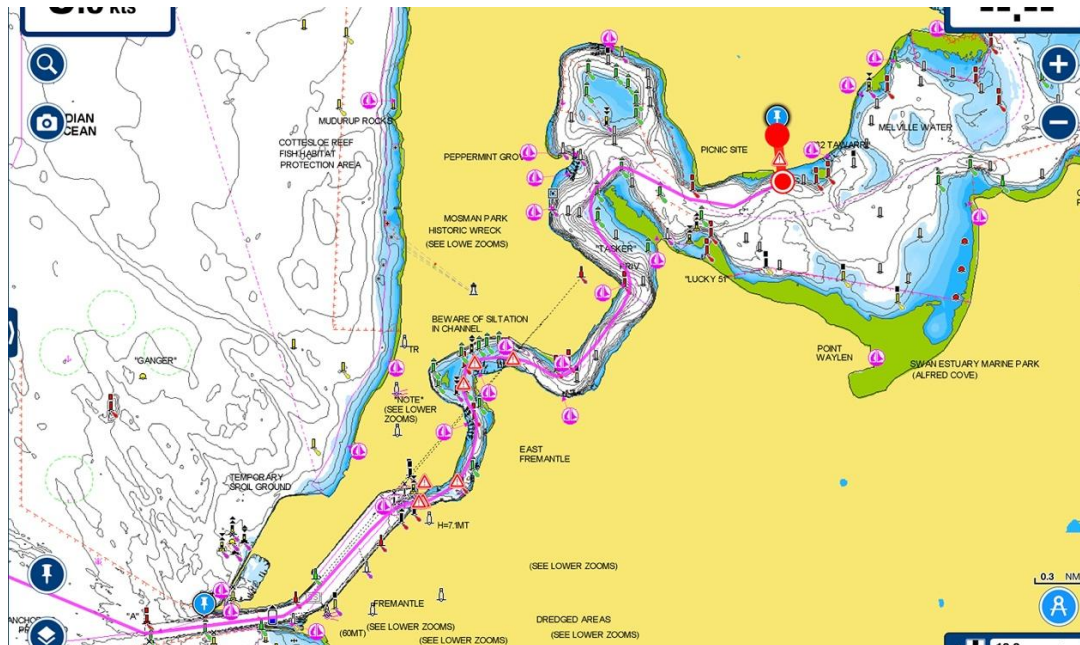
Colours - black and yellow horizontal bands with the position of the black band or bands relative to the respective cardinal points.

	North	Top mark points up, black band above yellow band.
	East	Top mark points outward, black bands above and below yellow band
	South	Top mark points down, black band below yellow band
	West	Top mark points inward, black band between yellow bands

Important disclaimer: These notes are provided as a general guide only to assist members with the convoy. They are not to be relied upon for navigation. Bearings, references, diagrams and comments are indicative only and may not reflect conditions on the day. Each skipper remains solely responsible for the safe operation and navigation of their vessel, including reference to official charts, notices, markers, prevailing weather and sea state, and their own onboard navigation equipment.

Departure from the Club and transit to Catherine Bay

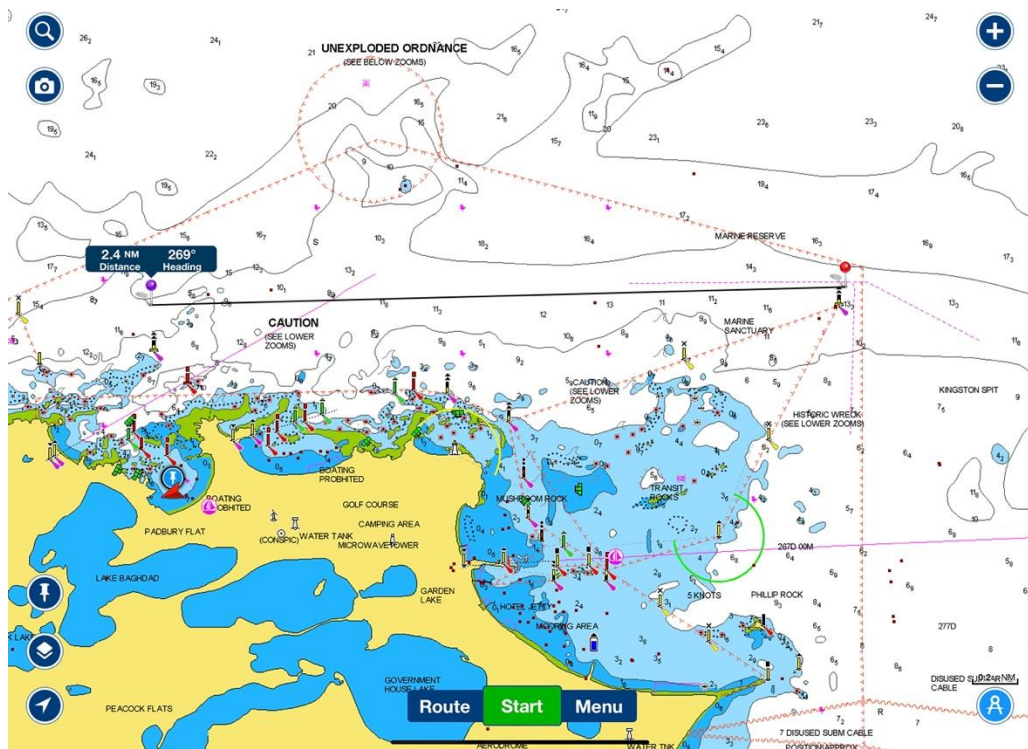
First stage of the trip we leave the Club no later than 8:30 am and head down the river to Fremantle Heads.



On exiting the harbour heads, wind and swell on the day will determine the exact line. Often we head between 290 and 300 degrees to the eastern side of Kingston Spit. In still conditions, roughly 299 degrees is typical.



Once past the markers at Kingston Spit, change direction toward Geordie before adjusting slightly again toward Catherine, heading approximately 269 degrees and travelling parallel to Geordie Bay toward the next stage.

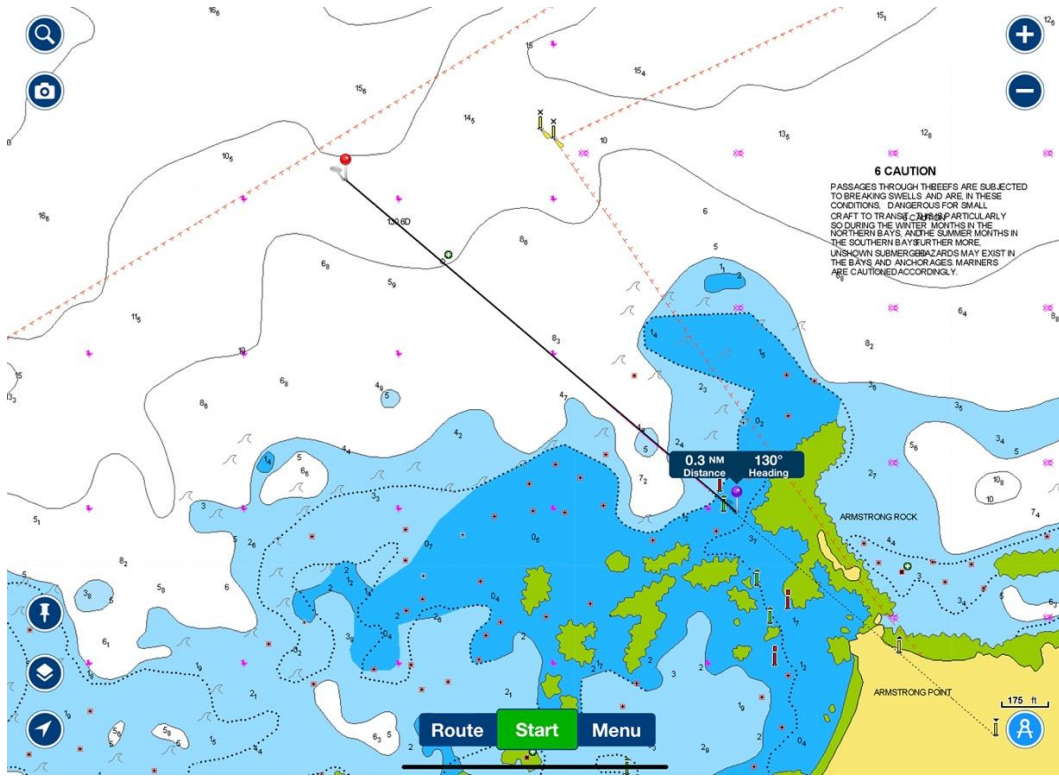


Then adjust slightly again as we make our way from Geordie toward Catherine Bay, heading about 254 degrees toward the Catherine Bay entry cardinal marker.

Tip: go past the spit post until you line up the triangle lead markers to the beach. Also look for the triangle guide markers at the base of the cliff and on the upper edge of the cliff. When the two points meet, they show you a clear line into the bay. Head approximately 130 degrees.

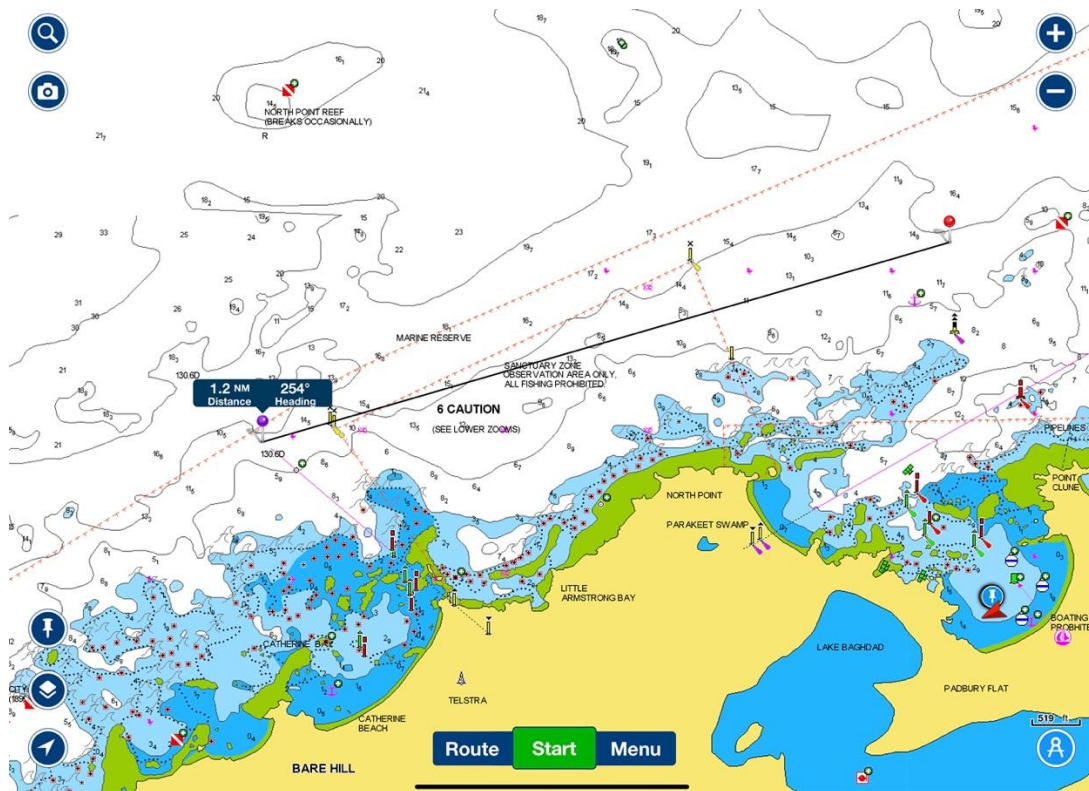


Head approximately 130 degrees.



Catherine Bay





After the marker we will be heading into Catherine Bay. Using the usual entering a bay / harbour rule, keep the red spit markers to port and the green markers to starboard, heading approximately 152 degrees. Then change direction to 226 degrees and make your way through the spit posts, keeping the red to port and the green to starboard.

Tip - watch for rocks to the left of the red post.

Exiting Catherine Bay

Exiting Catherine Bay - reverse the entry sequence. Head approximately 047 degrees.

Tip - switch your spit post colours around: red to starboard and green to port when exiting the bay.

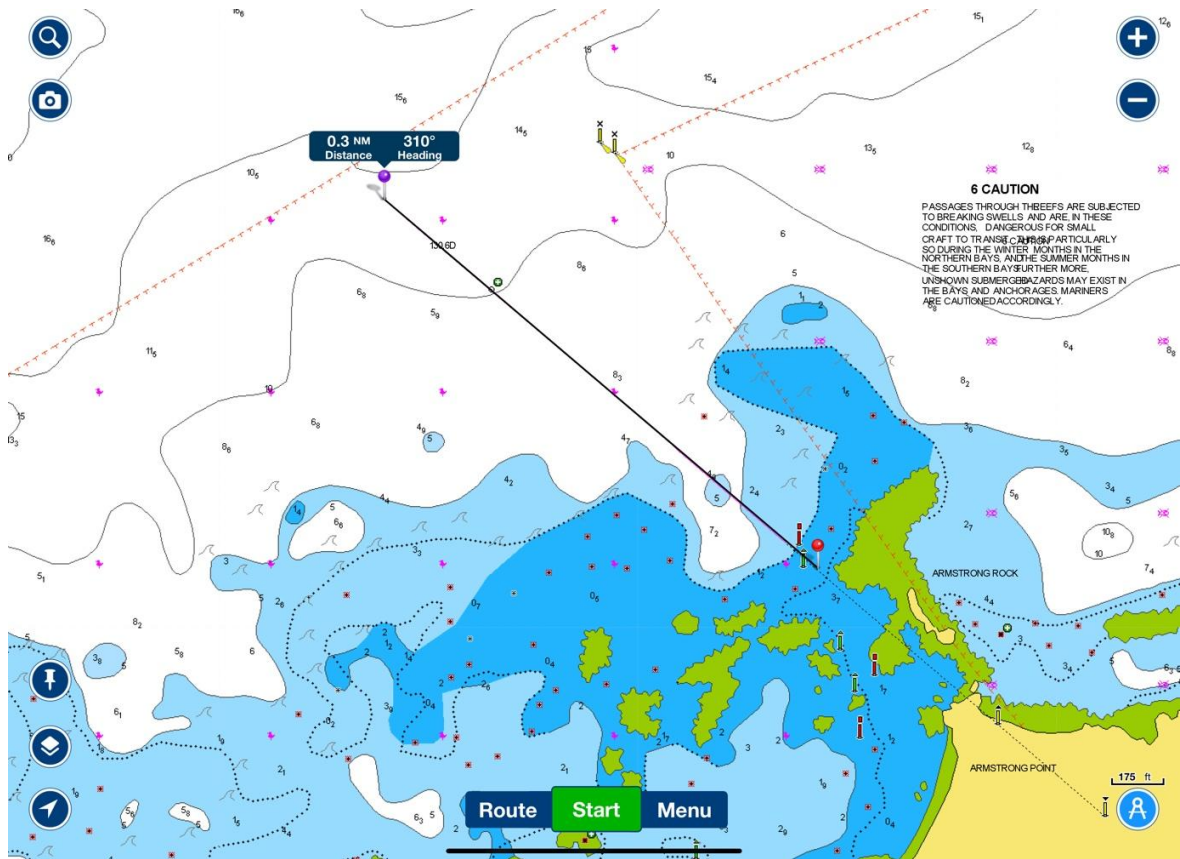


Then switch to 336 degrees to exit out toward the ocean.

Tip - look back and, if the orange lead triangles line up, you are exiting correctly.



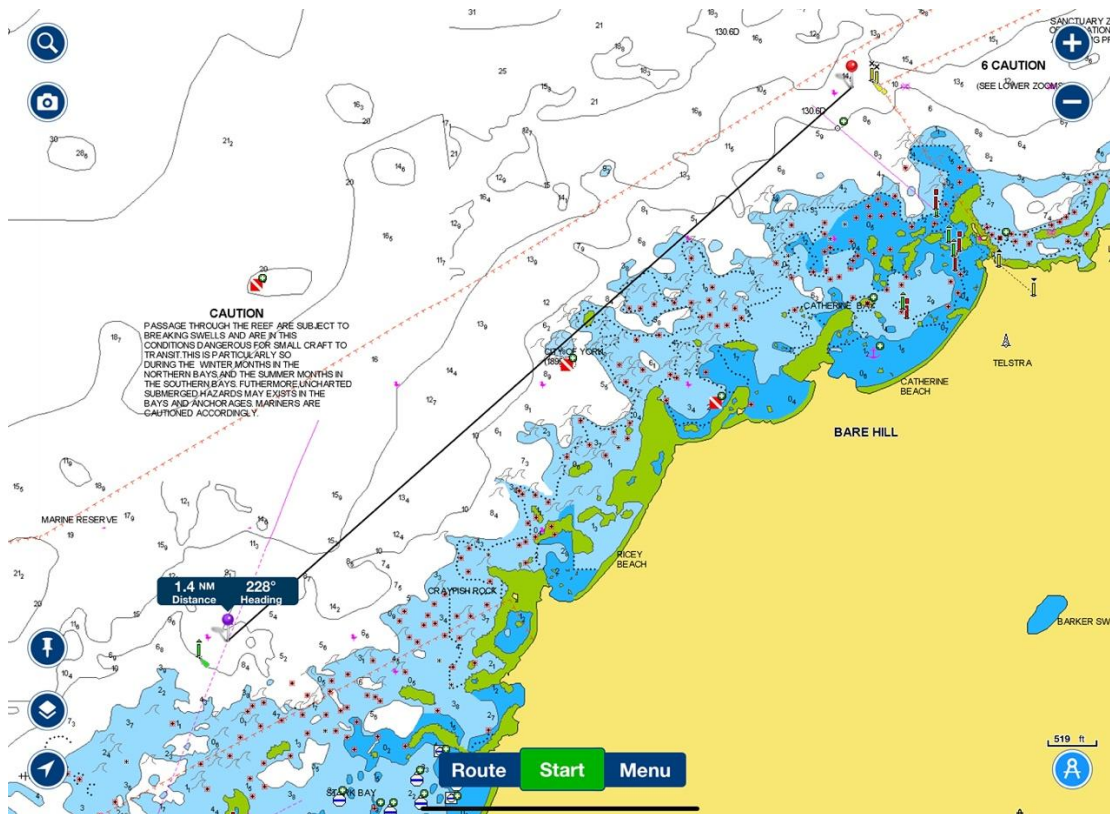
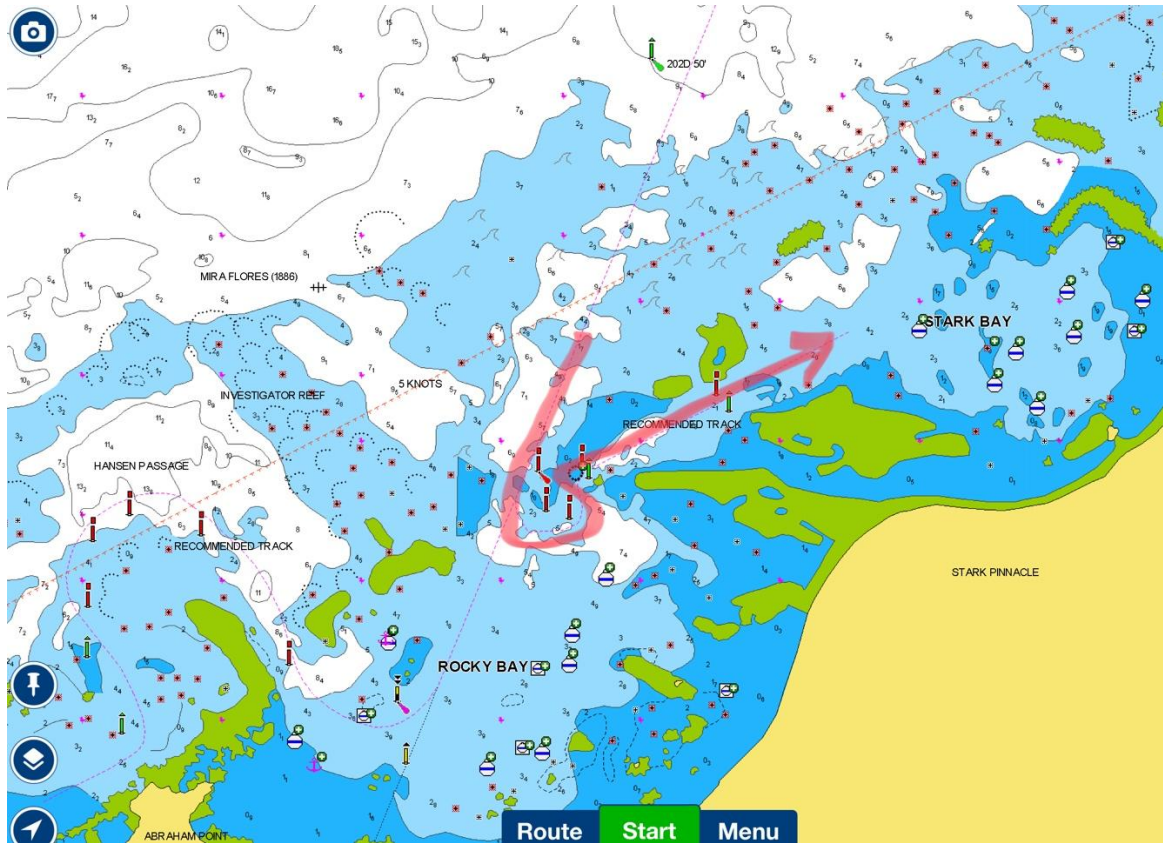
When exiting Catherine, head 310 degrees toward the floating spit post.



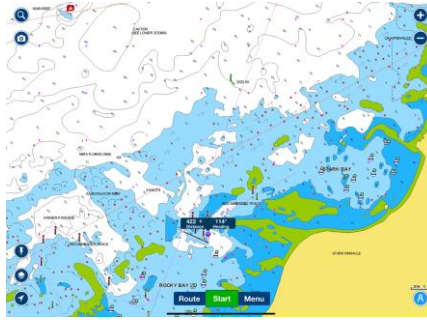
Once alongside the marker, alter to 228 degrees heading toward Stark Bay.

Stark Bay





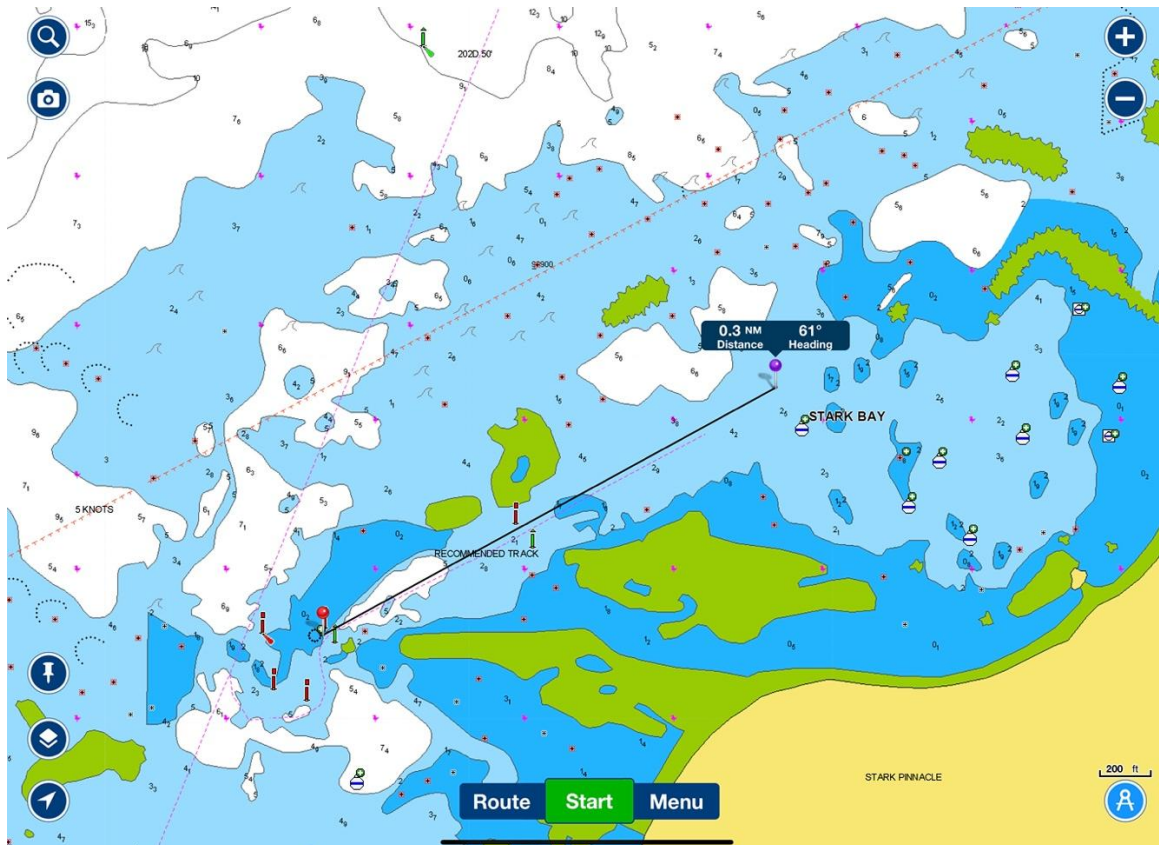
Look for the Stark Bay lead triangle markers and head 202 degrees as they line up.
 Keeping the spit posts to port on entry, head 114 degrees.



Then change again to 359 degrees, still keeping the red posts to port on entry.

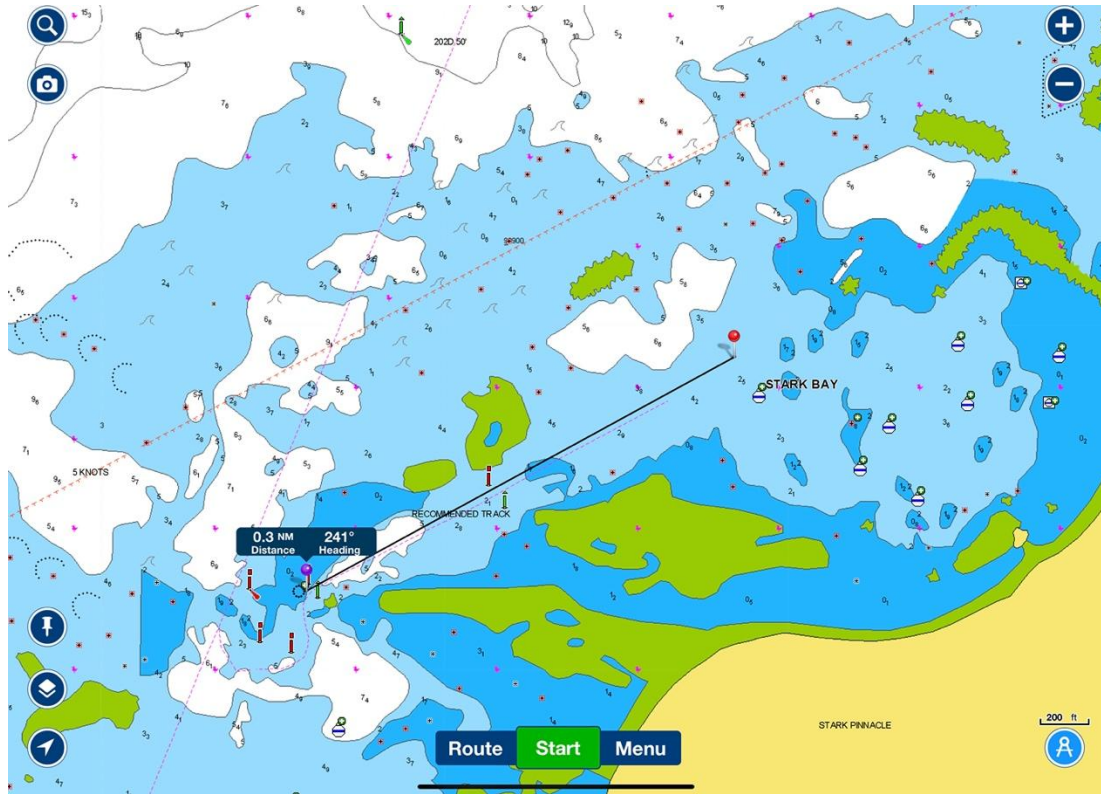


On approaching the last pair of spit posts, keep the green one to starboard and the red one to port and head 61 degrees.



Welcome to Stark Bay.

We then head to Rocky and Narrow Neck on the way to Marjorie, heading 241 degrees back to the spit posts, with red to starboard and green to port as we depart.



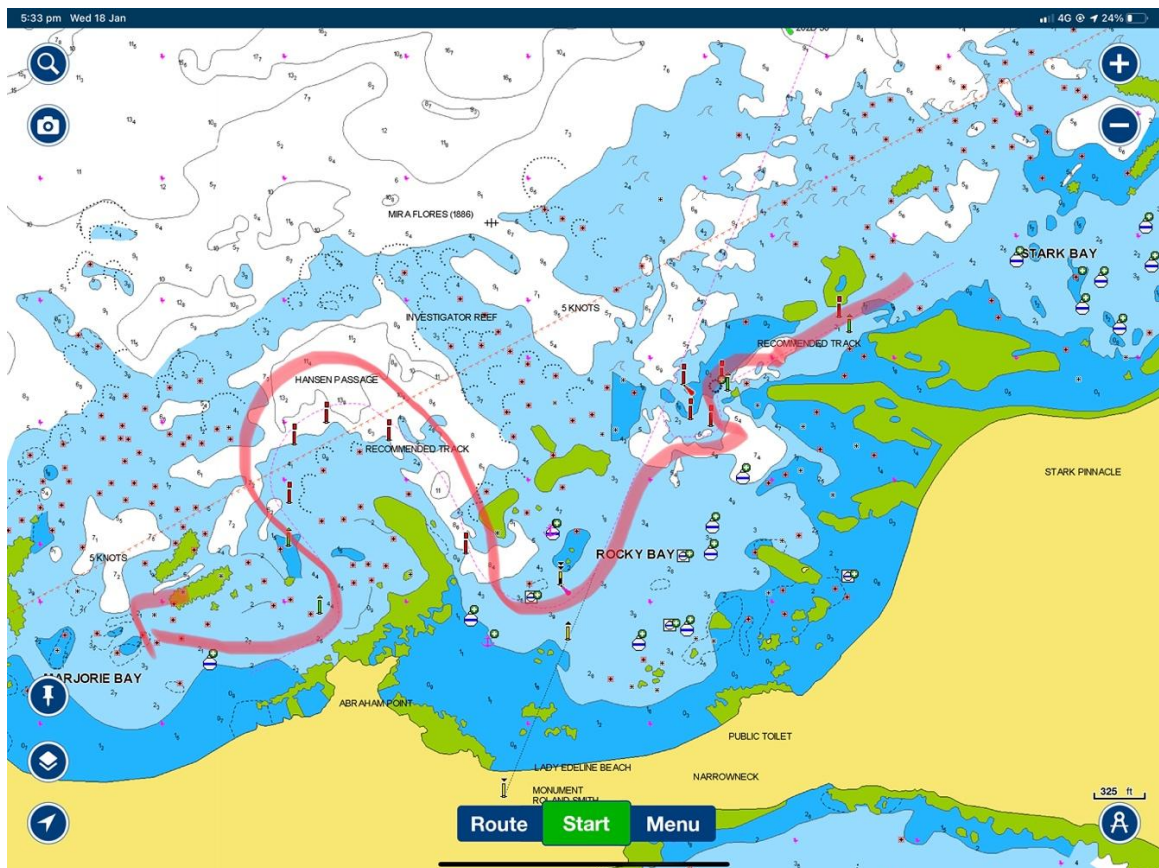
Change heading to 183 degrees and then 204 degrees, heading toward the beach.



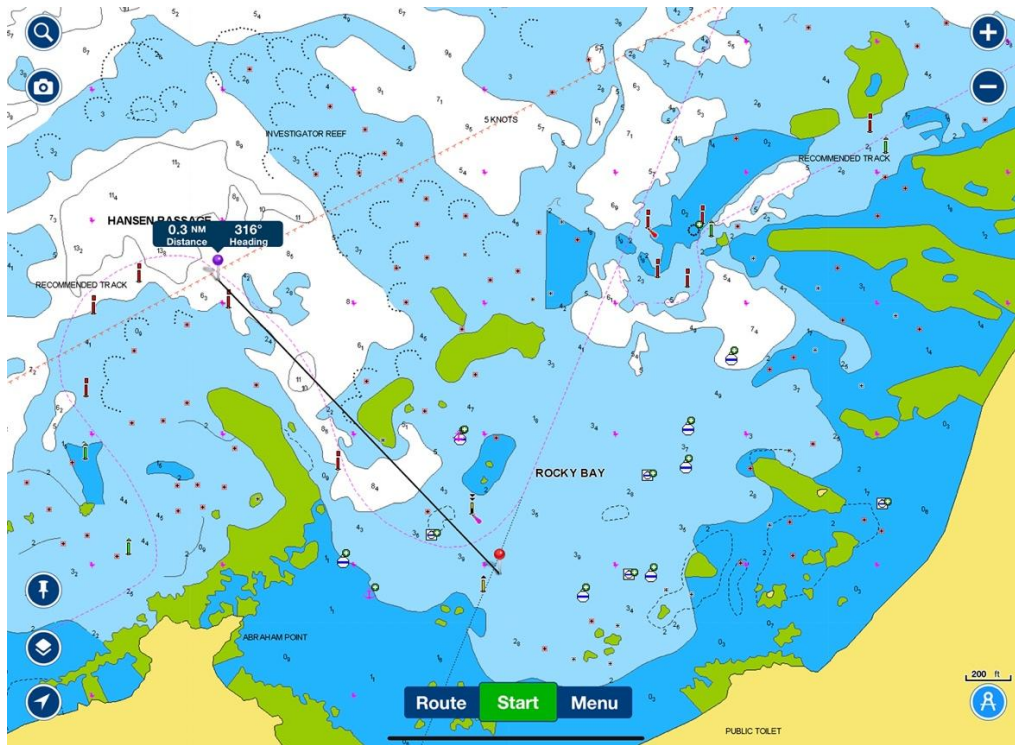


Rocky Bay and Narrow Neck transit

Next we are heading to Marjorie Bay - see Stark to Marjorie Bay overview below.

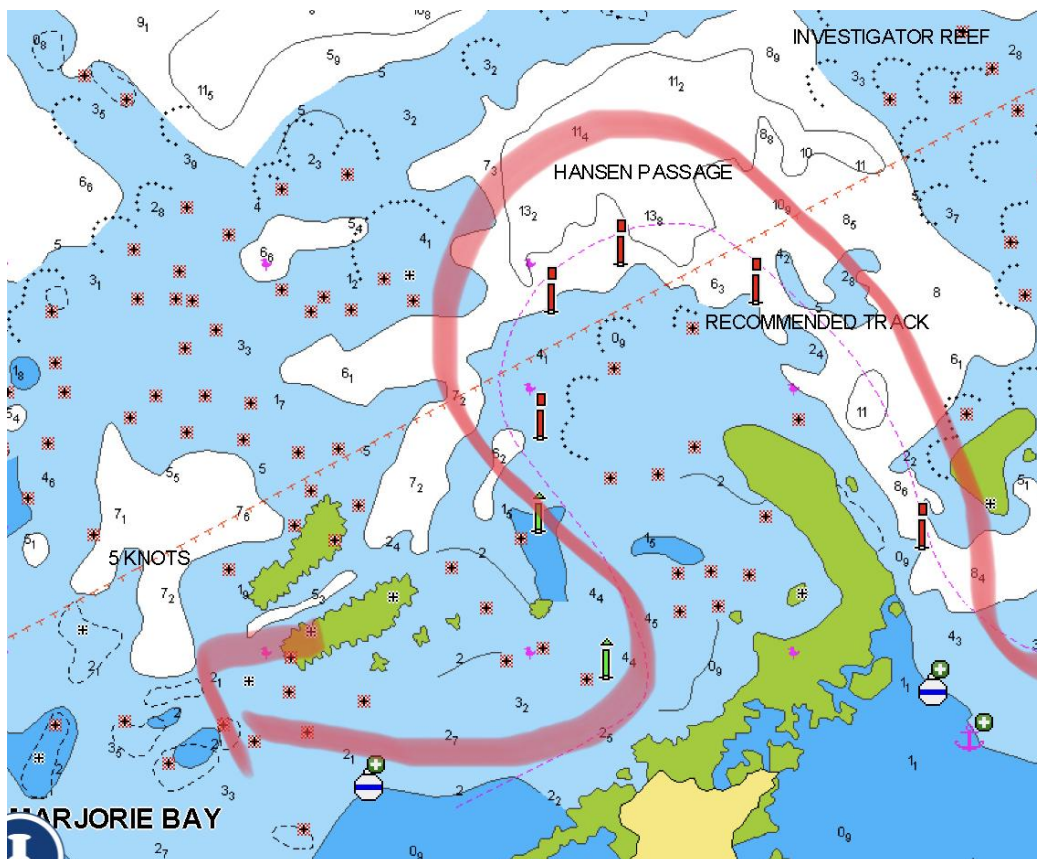


From Rocky Bay head 316 degrees toward the red spit posts, keeping the red spit posts to port.



Follow them all the way around with the red spit posts to port.

Once around the red spit posts, you will see two green spit posts. Keep both green spit posts to starboard as you continue in.



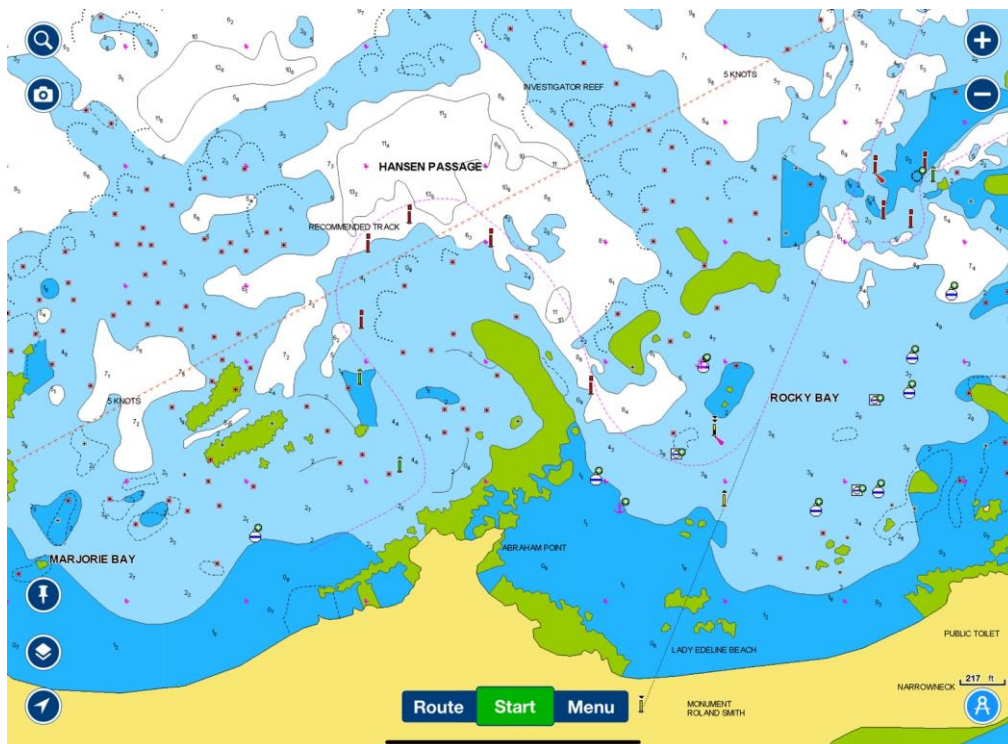
Welcome to Marjorie Bay.

Homeward and Parakeet Bay

That is the convoy route through the bays for the day.

For those going straight home, we will head north of the transit back toward Kingston Spit to show the safe way around before turning for Fremantle.

Reverse what we have just done - this time keep the green spit posts to port and the red spit posts to starboard back toward Rocky Bay.

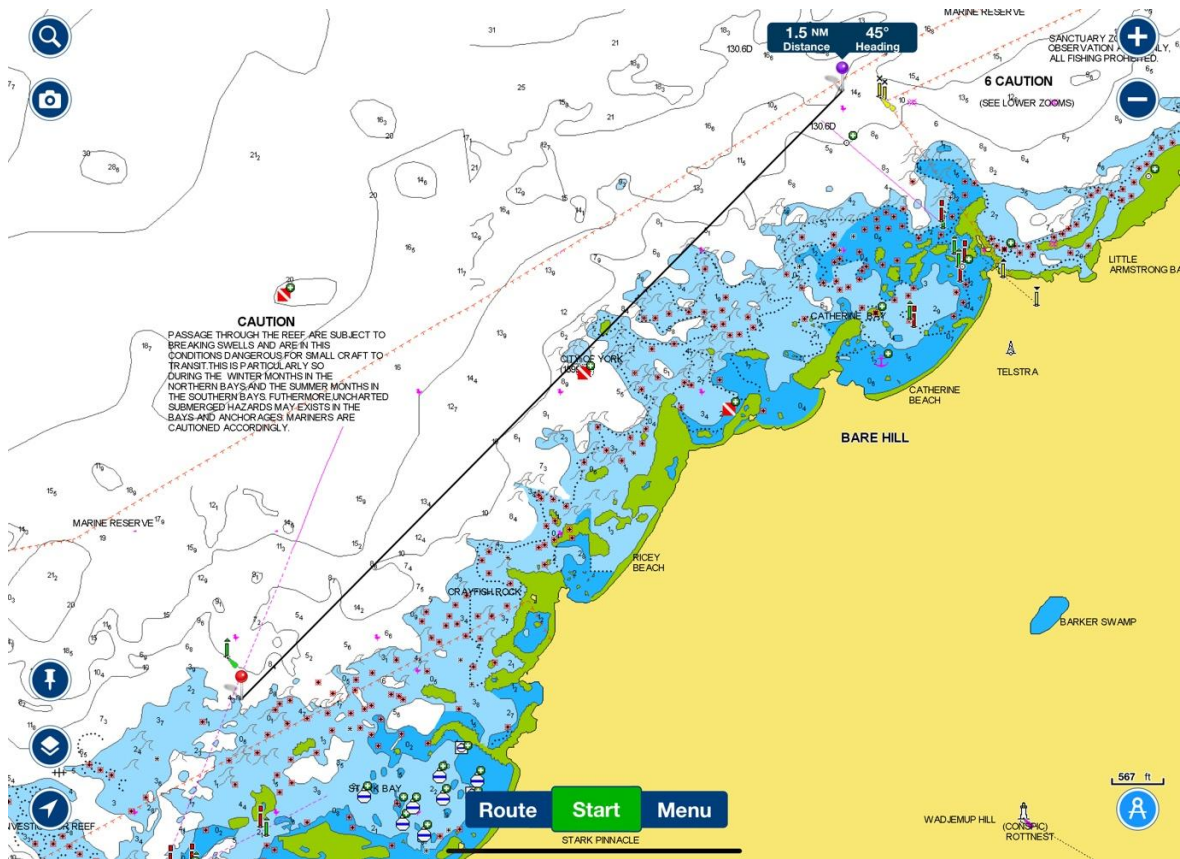


From Rocky Bay head straight out past the red spit posts, keeping them to starboard as you exit to sea.

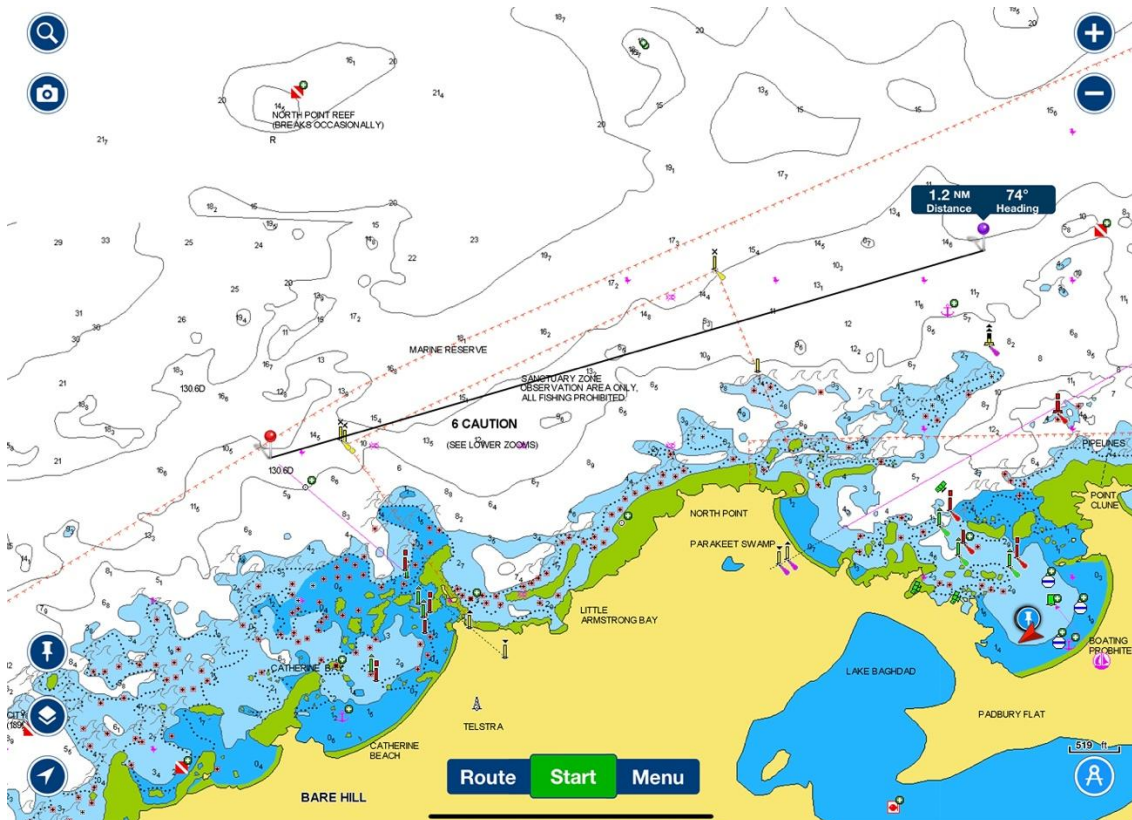
Tip: be aware of the marker shown near Rocky Bay with the double arrow down. It is there to remind you to stay to the safe side of that mark before turning out and heading about 22 degrees until you are back to open water (see the image on the next page).

Tip - look back and, if the orange lead triangles line up, you are exiting correctly.

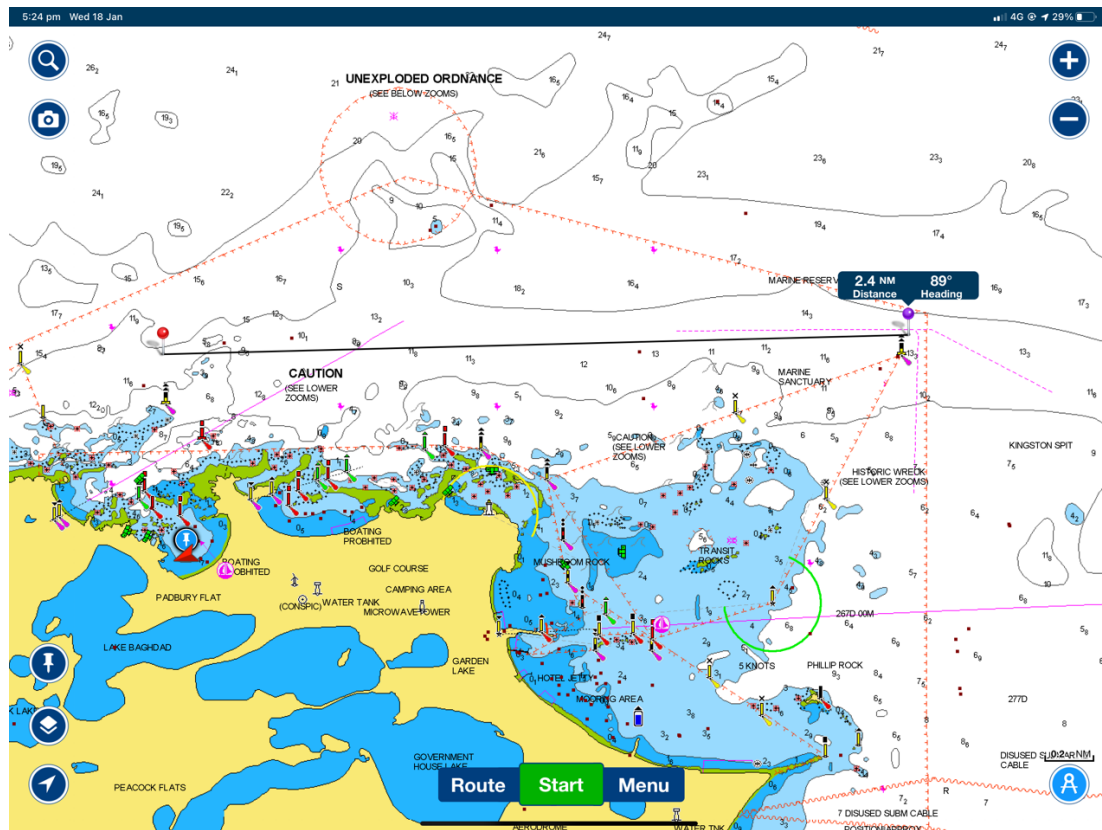
Then adjust course to 45 degrees toward Catherine again on the way past Geordie toward Kingston Spit. Directional changes at each stage are shown in the following images.



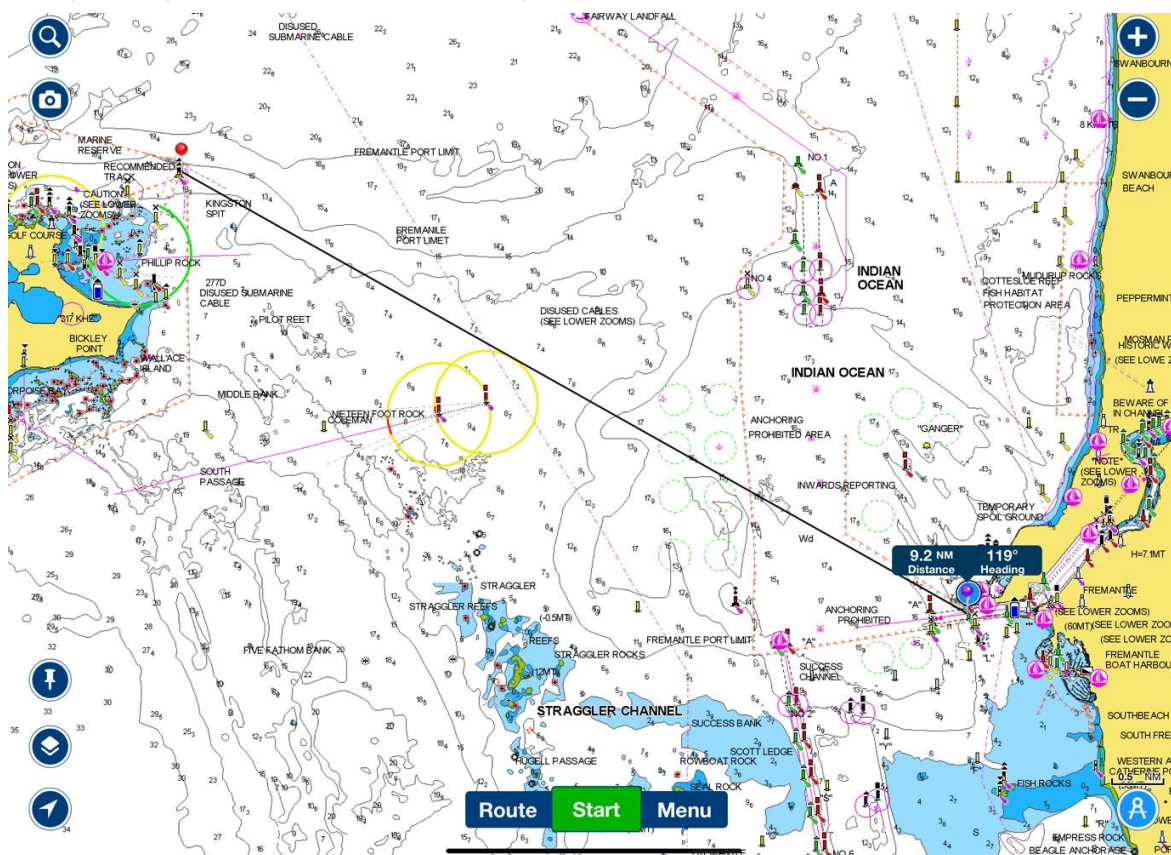
When parallel to Catherine, adjust direction slightly to 74 degrees.



When parallel to Geordie, adjust direction slightly to 89 degrees toward Kingston Spit post.



Upon turning at Kingston Spit post, head 119 degrees toward Fremantle Heads.



As you get closer, a useful broad visual reference is the Marine Museum roofline. You want to be slightly to the right of it, and you can also use the harbour cranes as a visual point, staying right of those as you head home.

Last reminder: when entering any harbour, port or bay keep the red markers to port and the green markers to starboard. When exiting, reverse that logic.

Welcome home.