

Belize Barrier Reef

Belize Barrier Reef, coral reef that is second in size after the Great Barrier Reef of Australia and is the largest of its kind in the Northern and Western hemispheres. Extending for more than 180 miles (290 km) along the Caribbean coast of Belize, it maintains an offshore distance ranging from about 1,000 feet (300 metres) in the north to 25 miles (40 km) in the south, except at Rocky Point, where it meets the shoreline. The 370-square-mile (960-square-km) area is protected by the contiguous Bacalar Chico National Park and Marine Reserve (established 1996), Blue Hole Natural Monument (1996), Half Moon Caye Natural Monument (1982), Glover's Reef Marine Reserve (1993), South Water Caye Marine Reserve (1977), Laughing Bird Caye National Park (1991), and Sapodilla Marine Reserve (1996).



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