

A simplified guide to support legal coral trade in the UK

It is our responsibility to help protect the environment and ensure we comply and support UK and EU governments local regulations. This guide was created with the view to clarify some common issues.

ARE MY CORAL LEGAL?

tropical
marine
centre 

 EcoMarines



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

If the paperwork is correct then is all ok?

Well, some species exist in various fisheries so they may be exported from one region but 3 actually originally collected from another.

Then how do I know if a coral is coming from an area the UK authorities have approved?

Origin of species Official Documentation

Export paper from Australia

Look at the back to check where it is coming from; this one came from Queensland!

Sample of UK import paper

Check box 8 where you will see the origin of the corals. It should match with the export permit

How do corals get to the UK?

The Joint Nature Conservation Committee [JNCC] provides advice to the UK government on the implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora [CITES].

All hard corals are protected under Annex II of CITES. This means that any coral coming into the UK will require an import license.

When considering a CITES import license, JNCC would typically evaluate the species being imported, the purpose of the import, and the legality and sustainability of the trade. They would also consider whether the import would have any significant impact on the conservation status of the species or its habitat, and whether there are any alternatives to the import that would be less harmful.

JNCC would then provide advice to the relevant authority responsible for issuing the CITES import license, which in the UK is the Animal and Plant Health Agency [APHA]. The APHA would consider JNCC's advice, as well as other factors such as the importer's compliance history, before making a decision on whether to issue the license.

It is important to respect and support our governments decision on any species resolution. There will be various reasons why a certain species may or may not be considered for import. These decisions are always constantly under review by a scientific authority as each individual circumstance changes.



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Australian Corals Factsheet

Australia has various geographical areas which export live Hard Corals. Each is managed by a different fishery.

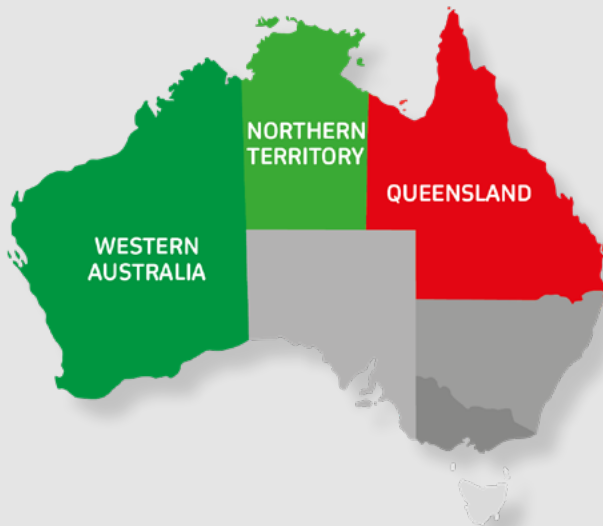
The UK restricts imports of some species from specific fisheries, meaning that a specific species is allowed from Western Australia as an example but would not be allowed from Queensland.

In fact, owing to the current UK import ban on most Queensland corals there is an unfortunate situation which some importers are taking advantage of.

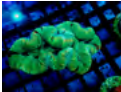
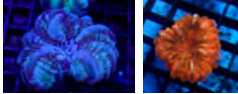
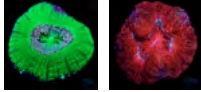
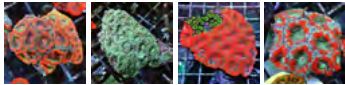

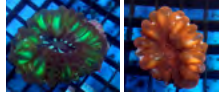

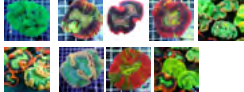
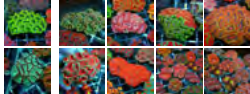
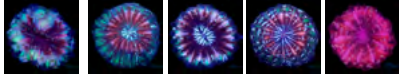
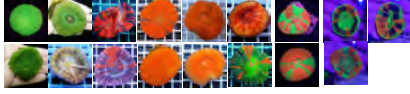
Queensland Corals are moved within Australia to export under either a Western Australia or Northern Territory permit and imported into the UK illegally.

This factsheet is designed to explain the endemic species within each area and allow for easy identification upon import.

Please note that the species names used reflect those that are currently present on permits and are not the most scientifically up to date.



Most popular species that exist in various regions in Australia

Territory	Image	Description
<p style="text-align: center; color: white; font-weight: bold;">NORTHERN TERRITORY</p>		<p><i>Trachyphyllia geoffroyi</i> Green, Fluoro Green, Green with Pink Rim</p>
		<p><i>Cynarina</i> Green [Red morph extremely rare]</p>
		<p>Croc Island <i>Scolymia</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center; color: white; font-weight: bold;">WESTERN AUSTRALIA</p>		<p><i>Acanthastrea</i> Red, Green, Smaller Polyps & No Rainbows</p>
		<p>Mini Button <i>Scolymia</i></p>
		<p><i>Cynarina</i> Green [Red morph extremely rare]</p>
		<p><i>Trachyphyllia geoffroyi</i> Green, Fluoro Green, Green with Pink Rim</p>
<p style="text-align: center; color: white; font-weight: bold;">QUEENSLAND</p>		<p><i>Trachyphyllia</i> Red Rim. Rainbow type, Bar Code & Greens</p>
		<p><i>Acanthastrea</i> Rainbow type, Multicolour, Large Polyps</p>
		<p><i>Cynarina</i> Red & Green [Red is found at 1 to 1000 Green]</p>
		<p>Large Fluoro <i>Scolymia australis</i></p>

Name	<i>Scolymia</i>
Exported as	<i>Scolymia sp. & Scolymia australis</i>
Export Permits available from	Queensland, Northern Territories Western Australia
UK Import restriction	Banned import to UK from Queensland

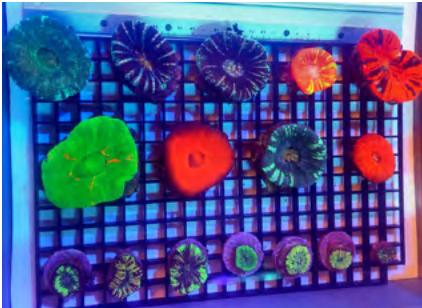


Figure A

Regional Comparisons

In figure A you can see *Scolymia* collected from Queensland in the top and middle row and on the bottom row "button" *Scolymia* collected from Western Australian.

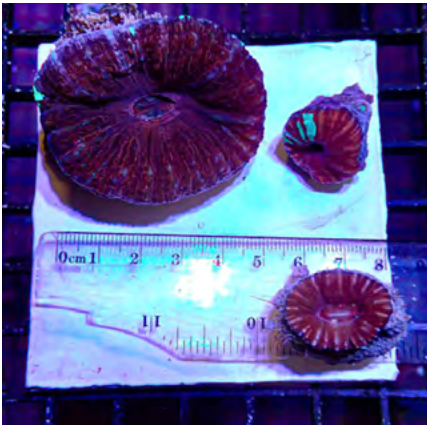


Figure B

Figure B shows a Northern Territory 'Croc Island' *Scolymia* on the left and two Western Australia 'Button *Scolymia*' to the right. The size difference and colouration between the locations is considerable.

Scolymia Queensland

Import to UK status: **NOT ALLOWED**

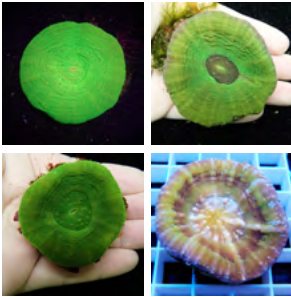
Scolymia sourced in Queensland are much larger, generally between 5-8cm.

Higher grades are predominantly vivid, fluorescent and solid in colour, whilst lower grade *Scolymia* can be solid pastel pink, green and oranges [classed as red on paperwork].

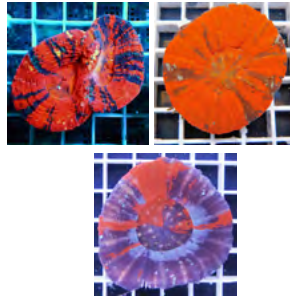
Vivid fluorescent orange, green and multicolours are most common and very popular.

These *Scolymia* are the most desirable and often exporters from other areas around Australia will import them from Queensland to add variety to their offerings due to their popularity. They should not export them under a license other than Queensland

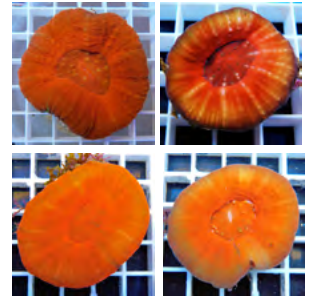
B Grade: Solid greens, majority greens, pastel green/yellow/pale pink



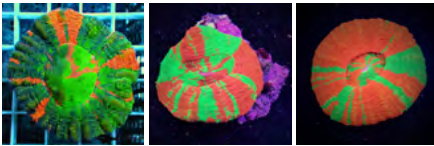
War Paint: Orange with purple/blue/white Stripes



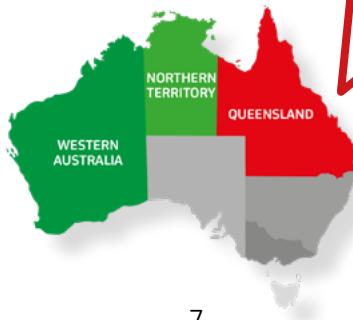
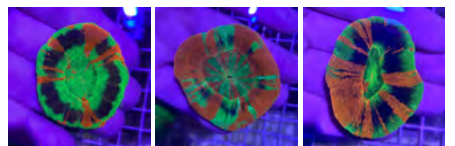
A Grade: Solid orange



Bleeding Apple: Green with orange stripes, orange with green stripes



Master Grade: Green/orange with black – sometimes pink, yellow also present



Banned to import from Queensland

Scolymia Northern territory

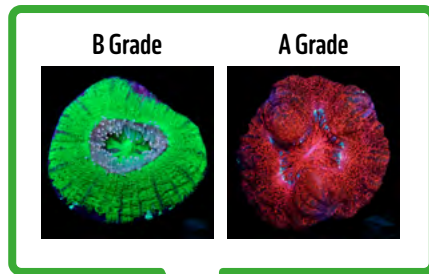
Import to UK status: **ALLOWED**

'Croc Island *Scolymia*' or 'Glo *Scolymia*' are only collected in one area within the Arafura Sea in North Australia.

They are a larger size than button *Scolymia* and tend to be around 5-8cm when shipped. B Grade Croc Island *Scolymia* are a bright green, that can have a black flecked quality to it. A Grades are the same but in a red in colour. The black flecked quality can make them look almost metallic/glittered.

These corals can be a single colour, or have some amount of sky blue/black striping. Master and ultra grades tend to be predominantly yellow with a mix of other colours thus giving it a 'rainbow' appearance.

Northern Territory *Scolymia* are slightly smaller and less vibrant [except for a master grade] than their Queensland counterpart, however Northern Territory *Scolymia* are larger than Western Australian *Scolymia*.



Scolymia Western Australia

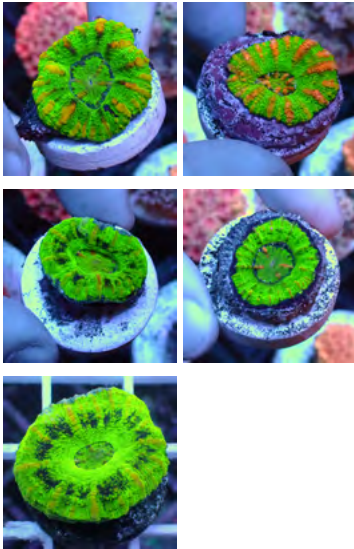
Import to UK status: **ALLOWED**

Also referred to as 'Button Scolymia' due to their much smaller size, these corals will be anywhere from 2-3cm.

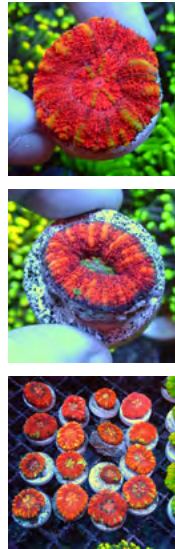
They may be shipped loose or mounted to a man made base. This morph is collected in the greatest numbers for export in Western Australia.

They are available in 'B Grade' which tends to be green, 'A Grade' which tends to be red and 'Ultra/Master' which can be a mix of colours which can include yellows/ yellow gold.

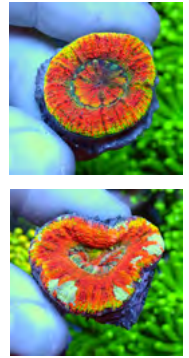
B Grade



A Grade



Master/Ultra Grade



Name	<i>Cynarina lacrymalis</i>
Exported as	<i>Cynarina sp. & Cynarina lacrymalis</i>
Export Permits available from	Queensland, Northern Territories Western Australia
UK import restriction	Banned import to UK from Queensland

Green *Cynarina lacrymalis* are fairly common and available throughout Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territories.

Red *Cynarina* on the other hand are extremely rare. In Western Australia it is reported that some seasons you will not find a single Red *Cynarina*. In the Northern Territories they are also incredibly rare and are never available in large numbers if at all.

Price will also be affected and when one is available conditions for sale are put in place by exporter forcing a large order to justify the export and not sale internally in local market.

Even wholesalers or large importers in UK will not be able at one point in time offer more than a couple of pieces as these are so rare from the only legal source [Australia].

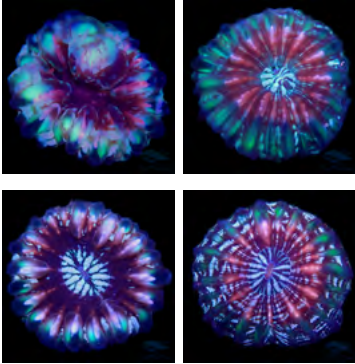
Green *Cynarina* are most often found in Queensland but again they are an extremely rare coral. Even within Queensland, there are places where they are completely absent, while in other places they could be found in very small numbers.

Large numbers of Red *Cynarina lacrymalis* on a single import is a sign of illegal activity if imported under an Australian permit or re-export permit. Red *Cynarina lacrymalis* are most commonly found in large numbers from Indonesia or other countries where they are banned for import into the UK. Re-Export permits from a secondary country should raise concerns if stating origin from Australia as this is very unlikely to be possible

Cynarina lacrymalis Queensland

Import to UK status: **NOT ALLOWED**

Most common green form of *Cynarina lacrymalis*, found throughout Queensland, Northern Territories and Western Australia.



Extremely rare and sought after red form of *Cynarina lacrymalis*. Next to never found in Northern Territories & Western Australia.

Extremely low numbers found in Queensland.



**Banned to import
from Queensland**

Name	<i>Trachyphyllia geoffroyi</i>
Exported as	<i>Trachyphyllia geoffroyi</i>
Export Permits available from	Queensland Northern Territories Western Australia
UK import restriction	Banned import to UK from Queensland

Whilst *Trachyphyllia* are available throughout Australia the highly prized multicoloured and red morphs are found within a very tight area within Queensland. Both Northern and Western Australian ONLY have dull and fluorescent green morphs with very little other colour present.

Documentation will classify *Trachyphyllia* with red colouration as a higher grade 'red rim' or 'master grade' depending on the quality of colour.

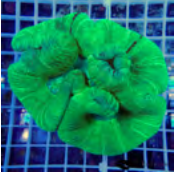
It is only these red types that are at risk of exploitation as the demand for green *Trachyphyllia* is relatively low.

This type of red folded *Trachyphyllia* is exported to the rest of the world from Indonesia but as our imports from this location are banned, Australia is the only opportunity of sourcing such a coral making it high risk ,whilst being banned from Queensland.

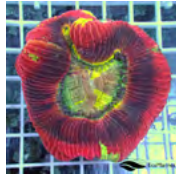
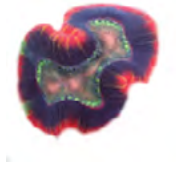
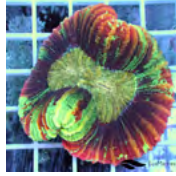
Trachyphyllia geoffroyi Queensland

Import to UK status: **NOT ALLOWED**

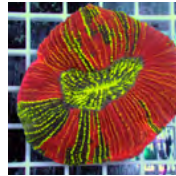
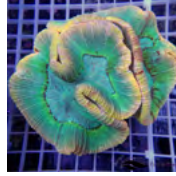
B Grade



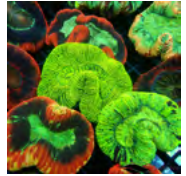
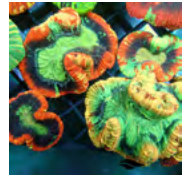
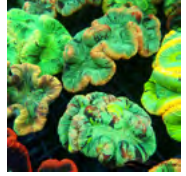
A Grade: Red Rim



Master Grade



Mixed Queensland
Trachyphyllia
geoffroyi examples



**Banned to import
from Queensland**

Name	<i>Acanthastrea</i>
Exported as	<i>Acanthastrea sp. & Acanthastrea lordhowensis</i>
Export Permits available from	Queensland, Northern Territories Western Australia
UK import restriction	Banned import to UK from Queensland

The *Acanthastrea sp.* Permit encompasses a variety of species but for the sake of this fact sheet *Acanthastrea lordhowensis* is most at risk for exploitation.

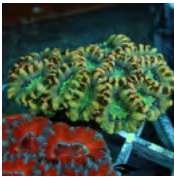
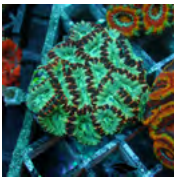
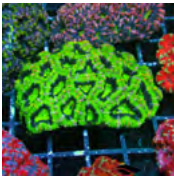
There are other species such as *Acanthastrea bowerbanki* and these are currently allowed to import from Queensland into UK.

Acanthastrea Queensland

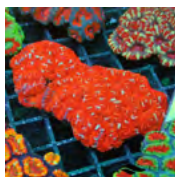
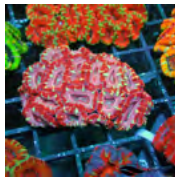
Import to UK status: **NOT ALLOWED**

Colonies collected from Queensland have large [sometimes 20mm] polyps that are fleshy and have rich, vibrant colours. Queensland is famed for their rainbow *Acanthastrea lordhowensis* and it is this type that are at huge risk for smuggling under a Western Australia or Northern Territories permit.

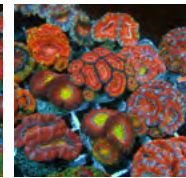
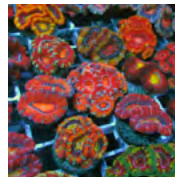
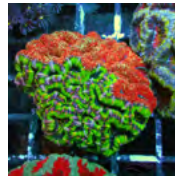
B Grade



A Grade: Red Rim



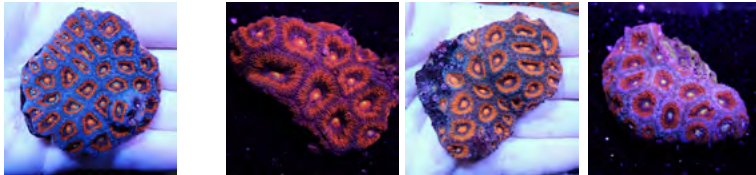
Rainbow/Ultra Grade



Acanthastrea lordhowensis Western Australia

Import to UK status: **ALLOWED**

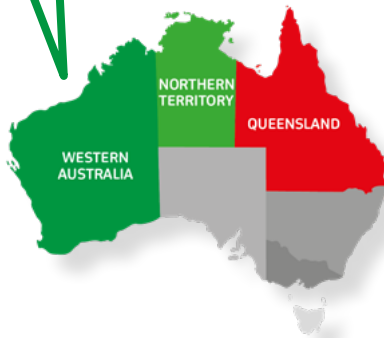
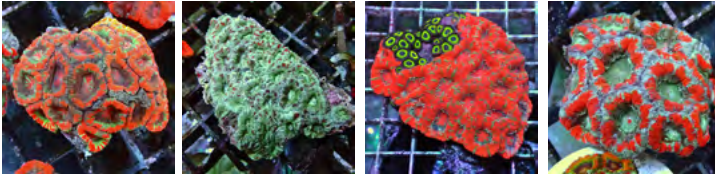
Acanthastrea colonies that are exported from the Northern Territories have much smaller polyps than both Western Australia and Queensland. They do not have a big variety of colour such as is found in Queensland and colours generally are more muted.



Acanthastrea lordhowensis Northern territory

Import to UK status: **ALLOWED**

Acanthastrea colonies that are exported from this region will be either predominantly red, green or a mix of red and green. There is very little variation available, and polyps are around 1cm and not particularly fleshy. On occasion other colours are found but those type of pieces would be in very small numbers in comparison to the morphs pictured below.



What is wildlife crime?

People buying, selling, harming or disturbing wild animals or plants that are protected by law.

Examples include:

- Smuggling protected species and their parts (such as tortoises, rhino horn, ivory and caviar)
- Illegally trading in endangered species
- Poisoning of animals, such as birds of prey
- Disturbing or killing wild birds; or taking their eggs
- Poaching of game, venison and fish
- Disturbing, injuring or killing bats, and damaging or obstructing their roosts
- Taking protected plants from the countryside

Contact numbers for reporting wildlife crime

For all non-emergency calls in England and Wales, call 101 and you will be put in touch with the local police. Many police forces have special wildlife crime officers. Their contact details may be shown on the force website and you can ask to speak to them.

My Wildlife Crime Officer is:

.....

Tel:

To read more about wildlife crime go to:

www.nwcu.police.uk

To remain anonymous:

Call Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**.

To report smuggling:

Call the Customs hotline on **0800 59 5000**.

CITES www.cites.org

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is an international agreement between governments. Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten the survival of the species.

Trading or moving endangered animals or plants listed under CITE:

wildlife.licensing@apha.gov.uk

0300 020 0301

PAW

The Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime (PAW) brings together the Police, the Border Force, and representatives of Government Departments and voluntary bodies, with an interest in combating wildlife crime.

For more information about PAW and their partners go to:

www.defra.gov.uk/paw



Scan the QR code to view/download the UK government publication:

[Wildlife crime and how to report it](#)



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