



SAILEE'S PARENTAL GUIDE TO FISHING THE WHITSUNDAYS

Little Fishos, Big Adventures & Plenty of Tight Lines!

Ahoy REEFIES families!

It's me, **Sailee** — your official REEFIES mascot, fishing fanatic and resident Whitsunday Sailfish! 🐟❤️

If there's one thing I know, it's that we live in a pretty special part of the world. The **Whitsundays are packed with amazing places to wet a line**, and you don't need a massive boat, expensive fishing gear or a secret fishing spot to have an awesome day.

Sometimes all you need is a rod, a little bait, a few snacks, a parent willing to untangle a few lines... and a kid who is keen to catch a fish!

And believe me, **the fish are out there!**

LET'S GO FISHING!

Fishing is about much more than catching fish.

It's about getting outside, exploring our beautiful coastline, learning something new and spending time together. For kids, fishing teaches patience, builds confidence and creates those awesome memories that stick around long after the fish has swum away.

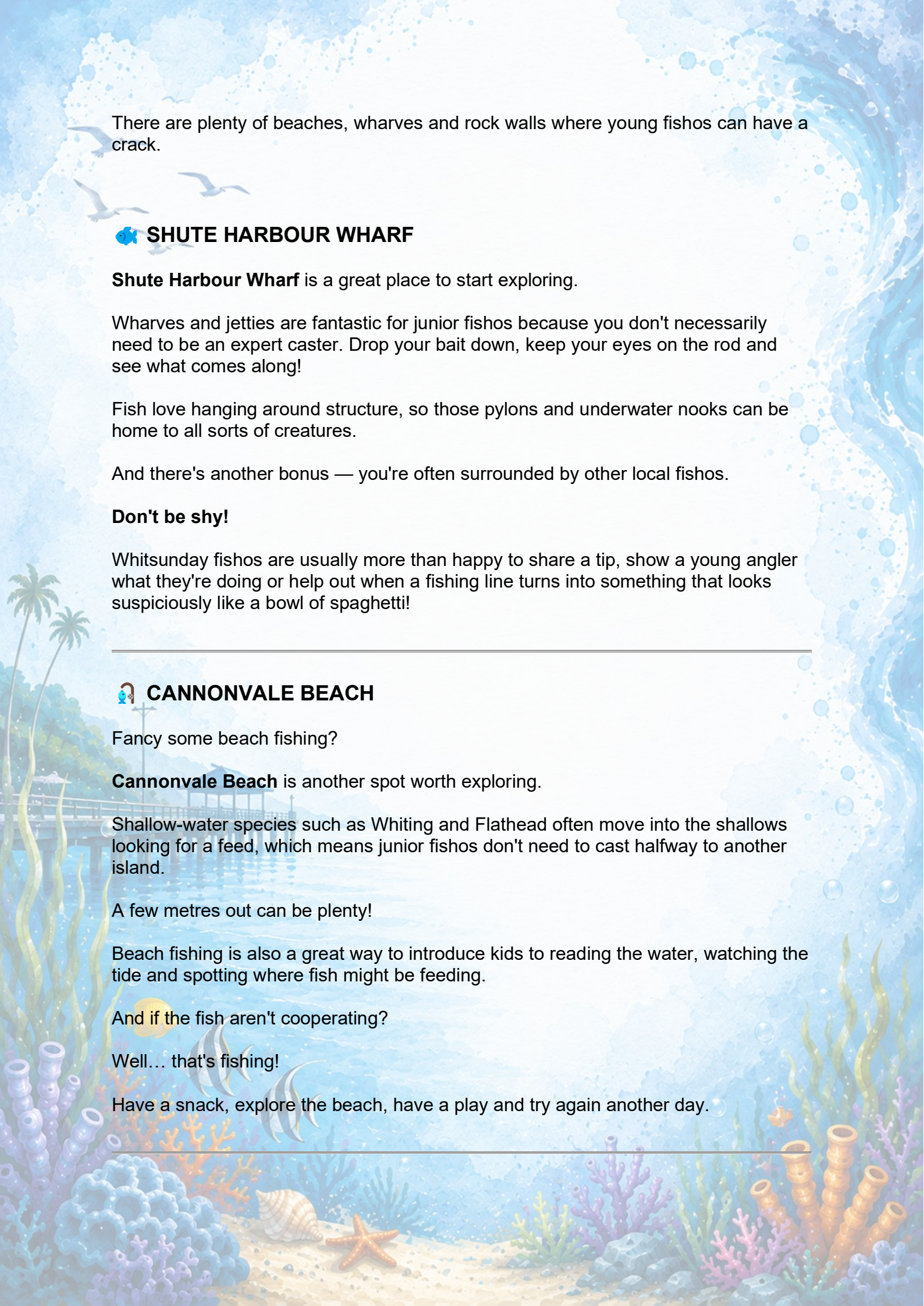
And let's be honest — there is nothing quite like seeing a kid's face when their rod bends and someone yells:

"YOU'RE ON!" 🎣

Whether it's your first-ever fish or your hundredth, every catch is an adventure.

🎣 WHERE SHOULD WE GO?

One of the best things about living in the Whitsundays is that you don't have to travel far to find somewhere to throw a line.



There are plenty of beaches, wharves and rock walls where young fishos can have a crack.

SHUTE HARBOUR WHARF

Shute Harbour Wharf is a great place to start exploring.

Wharves and jetties are fantastic for junior fishos because you don't necessarily need to be an expert caster. Drop your bait down, keep your eyes on the rod and see what comes along!

Fish love hanging around structure, so those pylons and underwater nooks can be home to all sorts of creatures.

And there's another bonus — you're often surrounded by other local fishos.

Don't be shy!

Whitsunday fishos are usually more than happy to share a tip, show a young angler what they're doing or help out when a fishing line turns into something that looks suspiciously like a bowl of spaghetti!

CANNONVALE BEACH

Fancy some beach fishing?

Cannonvale Beach is another spot worth exploring.

Shallow-water species such as Whiting and Flathead often move into the shallows looking for a feed, which means junior fishos don't need to cast halfway to another island.

A few metres out can be plenty!

Beach fishing is also a great way to introduce kids to reading the water, watching the tide and spotting where fish might be feeding.

And if the fish aren't cooperating?

Well... that's fishing!

Have a snack, explore the beach, have a play and try again another day.



NEW BEACH

New Beach is another local option for families wanting to get out and have a fish.

Remember, you don't need to catch a monster to have a successful fishing trip.

A Bream, Whiting, Flathead, Perch or even a tiny baitfish can be enough to put the biggest smile on a junior fisho's face.

In fact, I've seen plenty of young anglers start out chasing the biggest fish in the ocean and eventually become completely obsessed with catching **as many little fish as possible!**

That's okay with me.

They're learning, experimenting and becoming fishos along the way.

VMR ROCK WALL

Don't forget the **VMR Rock Wall!**

Rock walls and structure can be fantastic places to find fish, and you never quite know what might turn up.

One cast might produce a little Bream.

The next could bring something completely different.

That's one of my favourite things about fishing the Whitsundays:

You never really know what is going to grab your bait!

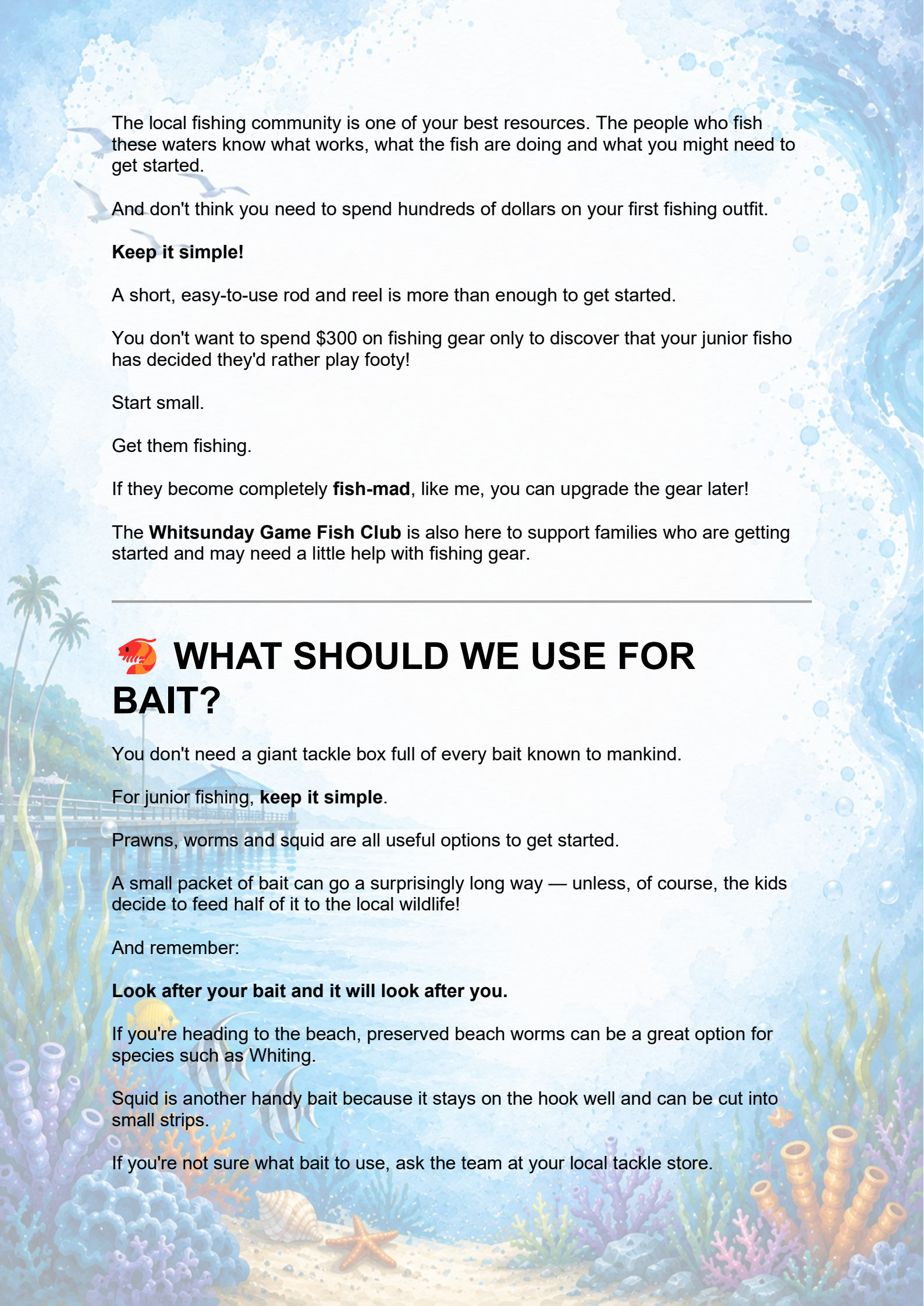


WHERE DO I GET MY GEAR?

Here's another great thing about being a young fisho in the Whitsundays — **you don't have to figure everything out yourself.**

If you're not sure what rod to buy, what bait to use, which hook to choose or how to tie a knot, head into a local fishing tackle store and ask!

A great place to start is **Tackle World Airlie Beach.**



The local fishing community is one of your best resources. The people who fish these waters know what works, what the fish are doing and what you might need to get started.

And don't think you need to spend hundreds of dollars on your first fishing outfit.

Keep it simple!

A short, easy-to-use rod and reel is more than enough to get started.

You don't want to spend \$300 on fishing gear only to discover that your junior fisho has decided they'd rather play footy!

Start small.

Get them fishing.

If they become completely **fish-mad**, like me, you can upgrade the gear later!

The **Whitsunday Game Fish Club** is also here to support families who are getting started and may need a little help with fishing gear.



WHAT SHOULD WE USE FOR BAIT?

You don't need a giant tackle box full of every bait known to mankind.

For junior fishing, **keep it simple**.

Prawns, worms and squid are all useful options to get started.

A small packet of bait can go a surprisingly long way — unless, of course, the kids decide to feed half of it to the local wildlife!

And remember:

Look after your bait and it will look after you.

If you're heading to the beach, preserved beach worms can be a great option for species such as Whiting.

Squid is another handy bait because it stays on the hook well and can be cut into small strips.

If you're not sure what bait to use, ask the team at your local tackle store.



YOU DON'T NEED A MILLION RODS!

Parents, I'm going to let you in on a little secret.

You're probably not going to get much fishing done.

Sorry!

When you take the kids fishing, your job usually becomes:

- Baiting hooks
- Untangling lines
- Fixing reels
- Finding lost tackle
- Removing fish
- Taking photos
- Providing snacks
- Finding drinks
- And occasionally saying, "DON'T CAST THERE!"

So keep the number of rods manageable.

One rod per child is plenty, and if you've got several kids, they can take turns.

The fewer rods you take, the fewer tangles you have to solve.

And believe me...

That's a good thing!



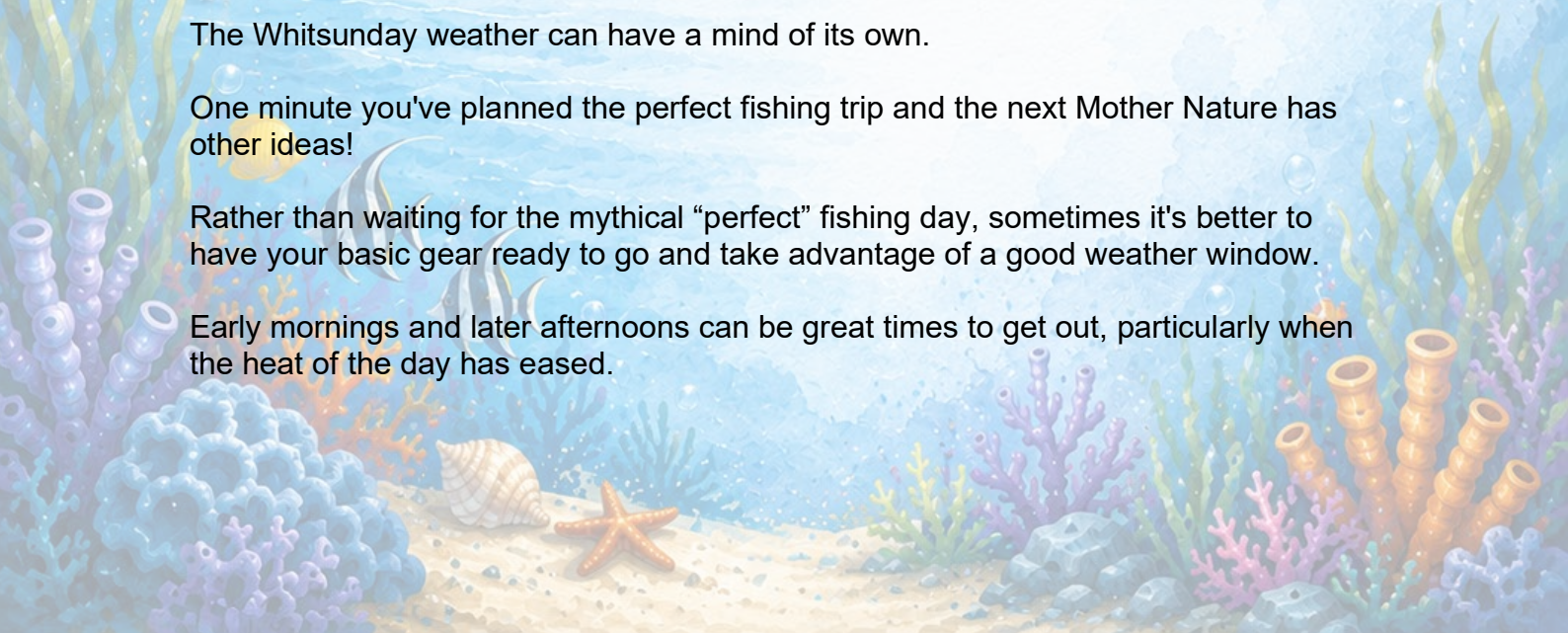
WHEN SHOULD WE GO?

The Whitsunday weather can have a mind of its own.

One minute you've planned the perfect fishing trip and the next Mother Nature has other ideas!

Rather than waiting for the mythical "perfect" fishing day, sometimes it's better to have your basic gear ready to go and take advantage of a good weather window.

Early mornings and later afternoons can be great times to get out, particularly when the heat of the day has eased.



Cloudy days can also be fantastic for junior fishos when shade is limited.

Just remember the essentials:

Hat. Sunscreen. Water. Snacks.

Lots of snacks.



WHAT WILL WE CATCH?

This is the really exciting bit!

The Whitsundays can produce a fantastic variety of fish, from small baitfish and Bream through to Whiting, Flathead, Trevally and plenty of other species.

And that's the magic of fishing.

You can never be completely sure what is going to be on the other end of your line.

The most important thing for a junior fisho isn't how big the fish is.

It's the **experience**.

The first bite.

The first hook-up.

The first fish.

The first photo.

And the first time they proudly tell everyone:

"I CAUGHT IT!"



SAILEE'S JUNIOR FISHO CHECKLIST

Before you head out, make sure you've got:



A simple rod and reel



Some bait

- 
- 🪝 Small hooks suitable for the fish you're targeting
 - 📏 A ruler or tape measure
 - 🎣 A few spare rigs
 - 🔧 Long-nose pliers for safe hook removal
 - 🧊 A small esky for bait
 - 🧺 A towel
 - 💧 Plenty of water
 - 🍎 Snacks
 - 🧴 Sunscreen
 - 🧢 A hat
 - 📷 A camera for those all-important fish photos
 - 😎 And most importantly... **PATIENT PARENTS!**

You're going to need them.

⚠️ FISH SAFE, REEFIES!

The Whitsundays is an amazing place, but we need to respect the environment and stay safe.

Always supervise children around the water and be aware of changing weather and conditions.

Keep an eye out for marine stingers, especially during the warmer months, and remember that crocodiles and other wildlife can be present around waterways.

Be **Crocwise**, watch where you're walking and fishing, use appropriate sun protection and keep a safe distance from the water's edge where necessary.

And remember — fishing is much more fun when everyone gets home safely.

💙 LOOK AFTER OUR WHITSUNDAY FISHING SPOTS

We are incredibly lucky to have places like **Shute Harbour, Cannonvale Beach, New Beach and the VMR Rock Wall** right here on our doorstep.

Let's keep them special.



Take your rubbish home, look after the environment, respect other anglers and treat our fish and marine life with care.

We're not just catching fish.

We're helping create the next generation of Whitsunday fishos.



COME AND JOIN THE REEFIES!

If your kids love fishing, adventure and getting out on the water, come and join us at **REEFIES — the junior fishing program of the Whitsunday Game Fish Club.**

REEFIES is all about getting kids involved, learning new skills, making friends and having a whole lot of fun along the way.

You don't have to be an expert.

You don't need a fancy boat.

You don't need the biggest fishing gear.

You just need to be keen to give it a go!

There are plenty of fish waiting to be caught around our beautiful Whitsunday coastline.

So grab a rod, grab some bait, grab the kids and let's go fishing!

And if you see me out there...

Give me a wave! 🙌🐟

I might even give you a **Sailee-approved thumbs up!**

🎣 **Tight Lines, REEFIES!**

Sailee♥️

*Official REEFIES Mascot
Whitsunday Game Fish Club*

Remember: The best fishing trip isn't always the one where you catch the biggest fish...**It's the one where you make the biggest memories!** ❤️

