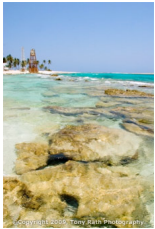


**Located at on the southeast corner of Lighthouse Reef Atoll, the easternmost of Belize's three atolls, Half Moon Caye National Monument was the first nature reserve to be established under the National Parks System Act of 1981.**



Managed by the Belize Audubon Society, this 44 acre island reserve is a nesting ground for the red-footed booby and a great campsite or picnic location between dives off the nearby atolls. The waters surrounding Half Moon Caye have abundant marine life with the Blue Hole just minutes away.

### **Notable Features**

- Snorkelers can access beautiful coral patches from the western beach of Half Moon Caye.
- The Red Footed Booby birds that reside on the island are one of only two colonies in the Caribbean and nest from mid-December with juveniles appearing around March.
- Over 98 species of birds, most of them migrant, have been recorded here, including the Magnificent Frigate, Ospreys, Mangrove Warblers and White Crowned Pigeons.
- Half Moon Caye is also an important site for reptile conservation, supporting a small population of the endemic Belize Atoll Gecko.
- Another natural highlight of this island is the annual arrival of the Loggerhead and Hawksbill turtles which come ashore to lay their eggs.
- The waters around Half Moon Caye protect the healthiest grouper aggregation in Belize. The Nassau grouper was once the second most commonly caught fish in Belize and has declined due to unsustainable fishing practices. However, with strict laws and seasonal fishing allowed, the Nassau grouper has seen a healthy growth in their population.

### **Visitor Experience**

The hour and a half boat ride is well worth the trip to this reserve. There is a warden and reservations for camping can be made with the Belize Audubon Society.

