Wave Break Island was created in 1985 as part of the Gold Coast Seaway construction (see The Gold Coast Seaway information sheet). It was included in this project to protect the western foreshore of the Broadwater from waves that might penetrate the new, permanently stabilised entrance.

**Construction**

Wave Break Island was evident as one of the Broadwater’s tidal shoals or sandbanks before the ‘dredging and training’ works associated with the Gold Coast Seaway were undertaken; but was elevated using a share of 4.5 million cubic metres of sand that was dredged as part of these works. This sand was also used to close the old entrance of the Nerang River to the North, and build the western arm of Marine Stadium, or ‘Bum’s Bay’. The northern and southern ends of the island were bordered with rock walls to prevent erosion and to stabilise the sand that had been placed.

**Revegetation**

Following the sand placement to build Wave Break Island, revegetation activities were undertaken by the State Government. Bare sand areas were planted with a cover crop and then mulched with straw to prevent wind erosion. Native ground cover, shrubs and trees were then planted into this cover crop, and fertilised. Key species used in the revegetation include:

- Spinifex grass (Spinifex sericus)
- Goat’s foot (Ipomoea pescaprae)
- Beach vigna (Vigna marina)
- Horsetail sheoak (Casuarina equisetifolia)
- Coastal banksia (Banksia integrifolia)
- Coastal wattle (Acacia sophorae)

By June 1986 over 10,000 shrub and tree seedings had been planted. This vegetation has been left alone to establish in its natural form. The species planted in the 1980s are still the predominant species you can find on the island today.
Recreation at Wave Break Island
Wave Break Island experiences high patronage by the boating community of the Gold Coast. It features two designated boat anchorages, one on the northern end and one in the southwestern corner. The sandbanks on the western side of the island are used for bait collection and there is a canyon off the northeastern corner that is ideal for beginner snorkelling and diving. The Island remains undeveloped, and is recognised as a visual asset for the Gold Coast community.

Seagrass near Wave Break Island
Substantial areas of seagrass are established in shallow waters surrounding Wave Break Island. These seagrass pastures support a myriad of sea life, including the seagrass wrasse (Figure 1). Dominant species of seagrass include Dugong Grass (Halophila ovalis) and Spiny Dugong Grass (Halophila spinulosa). To find out more about seagrass, please see Seagrass of the Gold Coast information sheet.

Management
Wave Break Island is crown land that was originally managed by the Gold Coast Waterway Authority, which was disbanded in 1991. The Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR) is the current trustee for Wave Break Island as well as the Gold Coast Seaway and Doug Jennings Park at the end of The Spit. Gold Coast City Council provides cleaning services as a contractor for both the park and the island, collaborates on the control of Telegraph Weed and is also working with DTMR to better integrate the management of sand resources in channels and on foreshores.

Did you know?
There is a relatively large population of Stick Pipefish around Wave Break Island. This species feeds on zooplankton, which is abundant in the seagrass beds at Wave Break. The Stick Pipefish’s head sits at a slight angle to the body and features a long snout. This marine critter can be yellow, brown, red or black; up to 40cm in length and live as far as 40m beneath the surface.