

Reef Watcher

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IT'S DIVING TIME AGAIN

A new season is upon us and its time to dust off the dive and snorkelling gear and hit the water. This summer is set to be a huge one for Reef Watch with a full schedule of monitoring and training dives, information sessions, workshops, and a new project called "Feral or in Peril". Read on!

Firstly I'd like to introduce myself. My name is Chris Ball, and I started as the new Reef Watch co-ordinator on 18 September. I come to the position from the community services sector, where I worked as a community worker over many years. I'm also doing volunteer work with the Conservation Council on marine and coastal issues, and studying towards a Master of Environmental Studies at Adelaide Uni.

I'm employed 2 days a week, generally spread over Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. I'm going to try to make sure I'm in the office each Tuesday and Wednesday morning so that people will hopefully be able to contact me fairly easily. By all means try me at other times but I'll be out and about a fair bit and may be difficult to catch. If you leave me a message I'll get back to you as soon as I can.

I look forward to meeting lots of you over the coming months and working with you on this vitally important program.

MONITORING DIVES

In order to gather useful data it's necessary to monitor a reef at least once each season. So in the interests of making sure the data we get is as useful as possible, we're going to be initially focussing on four reefs this year. The reefs we've decided on are Port Noarlunga, Second Valley, Moana and Hallett Cove. As we get more people involved in regular monitoring we hope to be able to add more reefs to the list. See the attached flyer for dive dates and locations for the next three months. Please help us by copying and displaying the flyer at your shop, office, Uni, school, etc., etc.

INFORMATION AND TRAINING SESSIONS

We're going to be holding regular information and training sessions over the summer. These sessions will provide some background information on Reef Watch – what we're trying to achieve, what we've done in the past, what we're planning for the future, etc. We can also come to your club, school, or whatever to provide this information for your members. Give me a call if you're interested.

The training sessions will also provide an introduction to the monitoring techniques Reef Watch uses and some of the common fish, invertebrates and algae that you're likely to come across.

MONITORING DIVE TRAINING

The next step in the training process is a practical training session, usually held the weekend after the introduction and theory sessions. At these sessions trainees are shown the finer points of monitoring as it actually happens in the water.

INVERTEBRATE AND ALGAL WORKSHOPS

Earlier in the year Reef Watch held two very popular and highly successful workshops which introduced participants to many of our local invertebrates and algae. If you were one of the unfortunate ones who missed out, don't panic. We'll be holding both workshops again, early in the new year. Details of when, where, what and how much will be available on the Reef Watch website as soon as we've confirmed the venue.

FERAL OR IN PERIL

South Australian temperate marine species are of significant economic and recreational value but many of these species are under threat from human and naturally induced impacts. Many species are believed to have become vulnerable, threatened or endangered due to these impacts and thus it is important to determine the status of these species and develop appropriate management responses.

Coastal development, industrial pollution, destructive fishing methods and the introduction of pest species into South Australian waters are having significant impacts on marine habitats.

Thus the long term prognosis for numerous species needs to be assessed. Key-stone species are important in the maintenance of the community structure. It is also important to establish the impact of these threats, in particular the threat of introduced marine pests, and determine a source of action as quickly as possible.

This project will aim to address these issues by collecting data for a number of threatened temperate marine species in SA, and by collating information on the abundance and distribution of species within SA waters. This information will be provided to management agencies to determine appropriate management responses. Due to the potentially aggressive and harmful nature of introduced species on the native marine environment, we will also be looking for a number of invasive species and collating and assessing the data on these species to assist with management responses.

The project will involve designing and producing an identification slate and a sighting form, and providing training in their use. A brochure describing feral and in peril species will also be produced to help increase general community awareness and involvement in the issue. Please contact Chris at Reef Watch on 8223 5155 or at info@reefwatch.asn.au for further information.

REGIONAL REEF WATCH

Over the next year or so we are hoping to set up regional or local Reef Watch groups which, with the support of the Reef Watch co-ordinator and Steering Committee, can take on the role of organising training, monitoring dives, and other events in their area.

Hallett Cove Reef Watch

At the start of this year, in co-operation with Marion Council, Reef Watch ran an information session at Marion Council and a monitoring training workshop at Hallett Cove. We are now in the process of working out what roles the group will take on, and how Reef Watch can best support the group in those roles. For more information or to get involved contact Chris at Reef Watch.

Onkaparinga Reef Watch

In June this year Reef Watch was successful in obtaining a grant from Onkaparinga Council to establish a Reef Watch group in their area. We are therefore looking for people from that area who are interested in being involved in getting this up and running. If that's you, please contact Chris at Reef Watch.

THE REEF WATCH WEBSITE - www.reefwatch.asn.au

The Reef Watch website is well on the way to completion thanks to lots of hard work by Squid and other members of the Steering Committee. Check it out.

MARATHON DIVE

Once again the hugely successful Noarlunga Marathon Dive will be held

this summer. It will be held during Sea Week in March 2002 (Mon 11th to Sun 17th). Stay tuned for the details.

MLSSA CALENDARS

The Marine Life Society of South Australia's magnificent 2002 calendar is now available at the bargain price of only \$10 . Why not treat yourself to one, or buy heaps for friends and relatives as Christmas presents? They can be purchased at the Conservation Council at 120 Wakefield St, Adelaide or by contacting Philip Hall, President of MLSSA on 8270 4463.

MAILING LIST UPDATE

We are updating our mailing list for Reef Watcher. If you would like to continue to receive Reef Watcher please let us know, and if so, the best way to provide it to you.

You can choose to receive it:

- Via our website – current and past Reef Watchers are available on the Reef Watch website at www.reefwatch.asn.au
- By email – please provide your e-dress
- By post - As you no doubt realise, sending out newsletters and information through the mail is time consuming, costly and environmentally unfriendly. While we realise that it is necessary in some cases, we are **VERY** keen to avoid it wherever possible.