

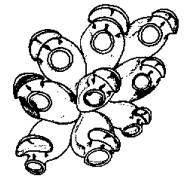


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### **Introduction**

The weather has improved a bit of late and there have been a couple of training and monitoring dives. There's also plenty of activity happening out of the water, with an enjoyable, well attended slide night in August and a identification workshop planned for October. Reef Watch is also planning to have a presence at the Great Southern Dive Expo to be held in November at Sunset Cove resort (Wirrina).



There is some news about both aspects of the *Feral or In Peril* program, with another pest *Caulerpa* species in SA waters, and planning has begun for the fourth Blue Groper expedition.

Note: if you currently receive this newsletter in the post and would prefer to receive it by email then let us know at [info@reefwatch.asn.au](mailto:info@reefwatch.asn.au). If you do not have access to the internet and need help obtaining any on-line reports or other information we refer to in this newsletter, call us on 8223 5155 and we'll mail you a hard copy.

## Identification Workshop

### Marine Mysteries



- featuring the classic ID parade of inbred invertebrates, alarming algae & fish felons

Hone your detective skills so you'll know a codium from an alien life form, not be seduced by the velvetfish in red, and whether to trust the tale of an Old Wife...

That is, KNOW YOUR PATCH!

Many of SA's leading marine biologists (the usual suspects plus a few new faces) will be there to assist you to solve the mysteries that you've encountered so far in your Reef Watch endeavours.

- Where?** SARDI Aquatic Sciences Laboratories,  
2 Hamra Ave, West Beach
- When?** Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> October  
10am-4pm
- What?** Gain identification skills through "hands on" experience in small groups with the teaching and guidance of the experts.  
Lunch and refreshments included.
- How much?** \$15 waged, \$7 unwaged
- RSVP?** Essential please, [info@reefwatch.asn.au](mailto:info@reefwatch.asn.au),  
8223 5155

## **Reef Watch Funding Report**

By Chris Ball, Coast and Marine Coordinator, Conservation Council of SA Inc.

### ***Reef Watch funded until September 2005***

The Conservation Council of SA has secured funding to continue the Reef Watch community monitoring program until the end of September 2005. Having this degree of certainty regarding our funding – as opposed to 3-6 months funding at a time, which we've had to deal with in the past – will enable Reef Watch to better plan and implement its activities.

Those activities will continue to include regular reef monitoring, training in monitoring methods and species identification, workshops and other events, a newsletter and the Reef Watch website.

The funding has been provided through the Interim Mt Lofty Ranges and Greater Adelaide Integrated Natural Resource Management Group as part of its recently released Investment Strategy. It is part of the current round of Natural Heritage Trust funding, which is now primarily being allocated at the regional level.



**Mount Lofty Ranges  
& Greater Adelaide  
INRM Group**

Of course, we still need to ensure that funding is secured for beyond Sep 05. The process to develop the next regional Investment Strategy is about to get underway, and we will be working hard to ensure that Reef Watch is funded through that Strategy. If successful, that would secure Reef Watch until 2008!!

## **Great Southern Dive Expo**

The Great Southern Dive Expo celebrates the unique diving experiences to be found in the waters of the Southern Fleurieu Peninsula region and in South Australia generally. Details are on the website [www.yacca.asn.au](http://www.yacca.asn.au). It will be held on the first weekend in November (5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>), and will feature a film night, a two-day speakers program which will include Mary-Anne Stacey, talking about her passion "Apnea Diving". For those of you who don't know Mary-Anne, she was a long-standing member of the Reef Watch steering committee and along with her boat has been a key factor in the success of our Marathon Dives. We are hoping to be able to soon announce that a key SA marine science identity will also be talking about Reef Health at the expo.



## **Reef Watch Slide Night Report**



(combined from two reports by Pamela Newland and Ali Bloomfield)

The Slide Night held at the Duke of York on the 19<sup>th</sup> August was another successful Reef Watch event. There was a good crowd of more than seventy enthusiastic Watchers, who entered into the spirit of the night by providing slides and images of favourite haunts and mysterious creatures, including fish, nudibranchs, crabs, reef vistas, algae and a rare seahorse or two – with the more mysterious being identified by ‘celebrity’ audience members.

Slides and images were contributed by David Muirhead, Thierry Laperousaz, Belinda Gunn, Kevin Smith, Lyndon Turner, Paul McDonald, Ali Bloomfield, Alastair Hirst, Philip Hall, Brendan Hennessey, Janet Scott and Stephen Merrett.

A popular segment was a presentation by Hugh Kirkman about a range of conservation issues in East Asia, including the general environmental degradation caused through erosion, sewage pollution, clearing of mangrove sites for agriculture, dynamite fishing, fragile dugong habitats.

Pamela took note of certain practices which are ‘normal’ to this part of the world, but tend to be of moral concern to more western eyes – such as dead turtles being sold as tourist items, and sharks being killed simply for the fins to make soup. For Ali, the talk truly put conservation measures in Australia into perspective and showed how lucky we are to live in such a wealthy country where poverty and survival is not the reason for lack of better management.

Other interesting features of the night included a presentation of slides by Kevin Smith showing his monitoring of the marine reef environment adjacent to the Edithburgh Pool – the reef being a healthy habitat which seems to survive quite happily close in to an area of general public use. Philip Hall also gave an overview of the Marine Life Society of SA and its activities.

The audience was kept well fed and watered thanks to the Duke’s bar and catering, and amused by certain slides inserted by one presenter to see if everyone was paying attention! There were also various Reef Watch items and posters available for those who were interested. All in all a good night.

## **Feral or In Peril News**

If you don't yet have your "Feral or In Peril" slates, pick them up from your dive store or contact Reef Watch.

### *Another invasive Caulerpa*

Now that the worst of the *Caulerpa taxifolia* outbreak in West Lakes has been quashed, a new threat has arisen from *Caulerpa racemosa* var. *cylindracea*, which originates from WA, and was first found in the Port River estuary in 2001. It has now been confirmed that it is the same species that has expanded at an alarming rate in the Mediterranean Sea, rapidly overgrowing large patches of native flora.



This finding has implications for SA where surveys conducted by SARDI Aquatic Sciences indicate that the species has become a dominant component of the Port River system and dense infestations have been found elsewhere on the Adelaide metropolitan coast.

Unfortunately, this species looks rather like the native species *C. Geminata* shown on the "Feral or In Peril" slates for comparison with *C. taxifolia*. Sightings of *C. Geminata*/*C. racemosa* should be made only through the on-line database (not Fish Watch at this stage), but should include a note about the shape of the "buds" – whether they are club shaped (*C. racemosa*) or egg shaped (*C. geminata*).



### *Eradication of the North Pacific Sea Star in Victoria*

The North Pacific Sea Star was first discovered by locals of Anderson's Inlet, Inverloch, Victoria in 2003. For the following six months, the combined efforts of Melbourne and East Gippsland divers, boat owners and general volunteers saw 258 starfish being removed from the water.

As with any introduced pest, at this stage it's too early to gauge the success of the project, but clearly the population has been significantly reduced; further diver surveillance will be needed in early 2005 to give a more accurate picture.

The North Pacific Sea Star is one of the "red alert" feral species for SA – scientists talk about "when" it will arrive, rather than "if". A vigilant dive community may allow us to arrest its spread at an early stage, and save a lot of later cost and effort.



### *Blue Groper Survey Expedition to Port Lincoln*

Dr Scoresby Shepherd will be leading an expedition to Port Lincoln to survey reef fish populations, with a particular focus on the Western Blue Groper. The trip will be from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> of December, 2004. Divers and snorklers who would like to participate are invited to contact Reef Watch to express their interest. Training will be provided either before or during the trip. There are some funds for at least a partial reimbursement of travel costs.

*Seadragons* – see also the section on books and websites for fish below.

## **PADI Instructors and Divemasters sought**

Please show the advertisement below to any PADI Instructors who you think may be interested. In addition, the Reef Watch program welcomes the involvement of divemasters seeking experience with the program on a volunteer basis.

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Reef Watch ([www.reefwatch.asn.au](http://www.reefwatch.asn.au)), a project administered by the Conservation Council of SA, is seeking expressions of interest from PADI Instructors who wish to be considered for occasional short-term contract work that may arise on the program over the forthcoming year. Candidates will require a conservation ethos, a good knowledge of southern Australian marine life, and will ideally have some experience of biological surveys. Candidates are asked to respond briefly to each of the following criteria (we will seek further information if required):

### Essential:

- PADI OWSI with 25+ certifications, currently insured and "In Status"
- Able to provide an ABN for invoicing
- Conservation ethos
- Good knowledge of SA marine life



### Desirable:

- Experience in biological surveys

Please respond to [info@reefwatch.asn.au](mailto:info@reefwatch.asn.au) or in writing to Reef Watch, c/o Conservation Council of SA, 120 Wakefield St, Adelaide 5000, by Friday, 1st October. For further information contact James Brook by email or on 8223 5155.



*Sea Wisdom*

*If you need to swim against the tide  
Trust in life - enjoy the ride!*



## Want to get involved in Reef Watch?

For diving or snorkling activities, visit our website, follow the quick link to "next dive".

If you want to get involved as a volunteer in our committee, administration or development work, contact Reef Watch at the Conservation Council, 8223 5155, [info@reefwatch.asn.au](mailto:info@reefwatch.asn.au).

Again, thanks to Pamela Newland and Julia Murrie for a sustained volunteer effort, and to Janet Scott for her assistance with the website. Special thanks also to Pamela for her work on this newsletter. We will miss her when she goes to Oxford!

## Gin and Tonic musings...

...what is this thing with ships and boats dropping their anchors sweetie? I mean, darling, with all that experience on board, you'd think the crew would learn to be a little less clumsy with things...it's an appalling waste of good anchors...



## Websites, Books and Other Resources

Note that both the Reef Watch on-line quizzes have been improved and the MLSSA website photo index ([www.mlssa.asn.au](http://www.mlssa.asn.au)) has also been recently updated.

### Algae

The Seaweed Site: <http://seaweed.ucg.ie/defaultwednesday.html> - information on marine algal biology.



'Algaebase': <http://www.algaebase.org/> - **this is** a massive database of the world's marine algae with information on algae, including names and images.

SA Herbarium: Bob Baldock is developing herbarium sheets of SA algae along with identification notes, and has made them readily accessible to the public in the reception area of the Herbarium on Hackney Road (just north of the wine centre). Bob has also helped the DEH to produce a series of four illustrated cards providing information about marine algae.

## Fish



Australian Museum fish website:

<http://www.austmus.gov.au/fishes/fishfacts/> - a searchable database of fish, a key to help you identify fish families, and movies!

Syngnathids and Other Inshore Demersal Fish:

<http://www.bioteck.org/sp/index.htm> - Former South Australian Robert Browne (currently at Memphis Zoo and Aquarium) is the instigator of this website which makes accessible the phenomenal work he has done on Syngnathids (pipefish, seahorses and seadragons) in South Australia.

Robert advises that the web site is still being established and that not all pages are complete. Many sections are in the stage of correction or improvement. He would appreciate it if interested or involved parties could email comments and criticisms on the site prior to the first public version which will be uploaded in about three weeks –  
robbrowne@hotmail.com

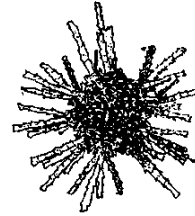
Here is a reproduction of part of another email published in a recent MLSSA journal:

I really miss the diving, the fish surveys, and discovering new species that I could have done in SA. Fortunately it seem that some others are continuing great work in surveying the inshore fish of SA. Their emails and the previous work show that things appear to be worse in terms of knowledge and conservation, and better in terms of potential than was first thought. Of gobies only, there have now been four novel species discovered just in the Pt River by Mike Hammer of Native Fish Australia (SA). Also there appear to be several others as reported by MLSSA members particularly Kevin Smith and others. These discoveries have to be considered in the light of only eight previous goby species in SA.

The new Gulf Pipefish *Stigmatopora nasospatulata* has not only been shown to be in limited inshore habitats, but also to be very distinct from other *Stigmatopora* species, perhaps even in its own genera. Also Kevin Smith who you know as a MLSSA member appears a nascent expert in pipefish and other inshore fish. He has already done much valuable work on *S.nasopatualta* and seems to have located other potentially new species. The marine conservation community is fortunate to have him onboard and he and his friends should be given every assistance in their quest.

## Invertebrates

SA Museum marine photographic website:  
<http://129.127.105.50:591/index.html>



The Marine Invertebrates section of the SA Museum has several thousand specimens that were photographed before being collected, and the ensuing database of images is now documented in the South Australian Museum Marine Photographic Index website.

Even if you don't know where to start to look for a particular animal in which you are interested, you can use the section which has representative pictures and common names of the major groups. If you want to have fun and explore further, use the 'do your own search' feature. There is also a 'Localities' feature where you use a map of South Australia to get lists of images from particular areas.

All in all, the site provides a valuable source of information for anyone interested in marine invertebrates, and provides a compact way of seeking information in specific areas eg. searching for just the animal group, or the location, or the habitat, depending on your sphere of interest.

*(Thierry Laperousaz, who is working on the web project, would like to inform that the site is 'under development' as we go to press. Apparently he has another 2000 more entries to do, which will enable the site to cover Tasmania, New Zealand, Victoria, and NSW, with South Australia being the main area represented. Updates will occur with collections and photographs.)*

***Marine Decapod Crustacea of Southern Australia, A Guide to Identification***, by Gary C B Poore, Senior Curator (Crustacea) Museum Victoria, CSIRO Publishing, 2004

This book is a comprehensive guide to the identification of 800 species of crustaceans from southern Australian marine waters. Liberally illustrated with more than 1000 line drawings, the details for each species include the authority, year of description, sometimes a common name, diagnosis, size, geographical distribution, and ecological and depth distribution.

The contents cover classification notes, prawns, selected shrimp, lobster, and crab varieties, bugs, scampi and crayfish. There are keys to assist with identification.

*(With special thanks to Sue Murray-Jones, DEH, for the above information)*

***Australia's Spectacular Cowries: a Review and Field Study of Two Endemic Genera: Zoila and Umbilia***, by Barry Wilson and Peter Clarkson. Odyssey Publishing, 2004. 396 pp. 378 colour plates (many full-page); 22 colour maps.

If you enjoy a good cypraeid detective story with unwritten diving adventures hidden between the lines, then you'll enjoy this monograph on two cowry genera - *Zoila* and *Umbilia* - by Barry Wilson (well-known scientist and writer) and Peter Clarkson (underwater naturalist and photographer). Having long provided fascination and intrigue to both collectors and scientists, these two cowries extend around most of the Australian coast. Material for the book came from dives, trawl fishers and collectors, and covers taxonomic history, evolution inferences, habitat and distribution

In all, 8 species of *Zoila* and 3 species of *Umbilia* are recognised out of the more than 100 names that have been assigned to species and varieties in the past. The latter genus, *Umbilia*, receives less attention, because for over much of its geographic range it is restricted to the Australian continental shelf edge at 100-200 m depth. Yet, remarkably, the authors found the habitat of two species on muddy bottom at diving depths in South Australia and Tasmania.

*(With special thanks to Scoresby Shepherd, South Australian Research and Development Institute S.A. for the above information )*

## **Farewells**

August saw the departure of Alastair Hirst to Tasmania. Alastair has been one of the more active steering committee members both in and out of the water. Alastair, we are missing you already but good luck!

October will see the departure of Pamela Newland to Oxford where she will be on sabbatical to take up a senior fellowship in poetry and newsletter writing. Pamela has been instrumental in progressing Reef Watch this year through her work producing *Feral or In Peril* slates, preparing hundreds of images for the web-based tutorials and quizzes, editing the newsletters, as well as countless other tasks.

### **Did you know...**

the Blue swimmer crab (*Portunus pelagicus*) travels to the Mediterranean on a regular basis via the Suez Canal? Aaah...the romance of the golden age of travel through the Canal, how divine...nice to know it still happens...

## Pamela's Sea stories...

(From Irene and Bert, Cornwall)

'e never was on the dull tame shore,  
But 'e loved the great sea more and more.  
Until one day it SUCKED him in,  
An' 'e never be 'eard of, or seen agin.

.....

But I 'ears 'e 'as mermaids who fulfil 'is wishes,  
An' 'e swims thru' the caves with ENORMOUS fissures  
*(writers' note: the fissures refer to the caves, not 'e)*  
An' on warm summer nights when the seamist is curled,  
'is kin fills 'im in on the ways of the world -  
'cause 'e's seen to come up to the end of the jetty  
to talk politics 'n jams, weevils 'n trams,  
'n other such stuff with 'is dear ol' Aunt Betty.

*(With apologies to Bryan Waller Procter)*

**(Note from Pamela:** well, what a different tale to start this segment! Hey, but when I got hit by that bottle when swimming, what's a girl to do but read the message it contains (once I came around that is!). Probably best if you send your stories by email (shudder) or romantic felucca (sigh), as it's going to cost heaps to return-mail the bottle back to Cornwall (in this instance) at the sender's request.

**Special note:** if you **are** sending bottles, please include return postage, or better still, attach bottle with string so you can pull it back again when I signal with a tug from my end that I have the contents – thank you in anticipation.)

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### ❖ **With all these notices and reports, here are some tips for dealing with difficult people at boring meetings**

When there's nothing left to say to those who need saying to...  
To difficult males: ...'you scabby-faced stoat'  
To tiresome women: ...'you common scullion, stand aside'



(with thanks to Dr Who for these classics and to Pamela for thinking we'd want to hear about them)

Reef Watch currently receives most of its funding from the Mount Lofty Ranges & Greater Adelaide Integrated Natural Resource Management Group (MLRINRM)



Mount Lofty Ranges & Greater Adelaide INRM Group

A number of other organisations have provided some funding or in-kind support, including:

DEH



PADI Project Aware



PIRSA



SARDI



City of Onkaparinga



Dolphin Diving



Underwater Sports



The Reef Watch website is [www.reefwatch.asn.au](http://www.reefwatch.asn.au)

If undeliverable return to:

Reef Watch  
Conservation Council of SA Inc.  
120 Wakefield St  
Adelaide 5000



Conservation Council  
of South Australia Inc

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