



An eco-friendly community-based magazine for the Tasmanian underwater and marine life enthusiast

Inside this somewhat aesthetically different to what's gone before edition of Marine Life

Events Calendar	Page 2
Striped Trumpeter tagging	2
Kids Beach Fun Day	2
Littoral Exhibition	3
Dear Redmap	4
Dredging up the Davenport	5
Le' Plover Lovers	6
The Beautiful Elephant Seal	6
Poets Corner	6
New Handfish Sighted!	7
Get into Diving Day	7
Meet Jean Michel Cousteau at an Ocean Futures Lecture	8
Dodgy Real Men Diver Stuff	8
Kent Group expedition	9
Rolli reckons he's found a new anemone	10
Amy's Squid Donuts	11
Fishing News Updates	11
Amy tells us why we should keep our mouths closed when swimming (this is gross)	12
Urchins Venture Further South	12
Bicheno Explained part 2	13
Support the Adelaide sinking	15
Yehaaar! It's Marine Strife	16
World Migratory Bird Day	17
Usual Pleas for contributions	18

Our Goal

To educate, inform, have fun and share our enjoyment of the marine world with like-minded people.

The Editorial Staff



Michael Jacques

The brains trust of the operation. Wanted in 3 states for Internet trading scam. Smooth talker. Would sell you a chewed up mouse mat and then lock you into a 5 year maintenance contract.



Emma Flukes

Currently taking a well deserved editorial break to concentrate on academic career. This largely involves posturing around in a houndstooth coat with leather elbows & smoking a pipe



Geoff Rollins

Our man in the deep north. Runs international drug syndicate from cover of local dive shop. Ask for a "special air fill". You won't be disappointed. Makes Mr Asia look like the tuck shop lady



Phil White

Our man in the North West provinces. Former Melbourne Truth & Picture Magazine journalist. Frequents change rooms with a hidden camera. Boldly goes where Jerry Springer wouldn't

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily the views of the editorial staff or associates of this publication. We make no promise that any of this will make sense.

marinelifetassie@gmail.com

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Remember folks. It's only eco friendly if you don't print it!

April Calendar

Littoral Exhibition -
8th April to 16 May

Ocean Futures with Jean Michael Cousteau
14th April

Around the clubs

TSDC

April dive calendar

10th to 11th Crayfish Pt Taroona night dive and PM BBQ
17th to 18th April Tasman Peninsula deep dive
18th April Kids Fun Day
25th April TSDC pool Session and Try a Dive

Coming up

TSDC SE Maria IS deep dive
Lake Illawarra w reck
Iron Pot night dive

ODP

April Dive Calendar

6th 7:30pm Damp Dive @ Newstead Hotel
10th or 11th - SOUTHERN CROSS REEF
(Weather dependent)
17th or 18th - SOUTHERN CROSS REEF
(alternate days in case of bad weather the weekend before)
24th BICHENO day trip

TSAC

April Dive Calendar

2nd to 5th Easter Dial-a-buddy Lynne Maher
8th Club Meeting
17th Nine pin pnt & BBQ Cathy Stringer <10m

Wildcare Activities

Bay of Fires - Binalong Bay Foreshore -

Removal of environmental weeds

Start Date: 02/05/2010 | End Date: 02/05/2010
Meeting point - Binalong Bay Playground Car Park

Schouten Island Gorse Gnashing Expedition

Start Date: 14/04/2010 | End Date: 21/05/2009
This working bee is now full.

Bay of Fires - Humbug Point Reserve

Removal of environmental weeds and clearing of the walking track between Dora Point camping area and Humbug Point

Start Date: 04/04/2010 | End Date: 04/04/2010

Coming up in May

World migratory Bird Day
8th to 9th

Striped Trumpeter

Striped trumpeter are being tagged and released around the coast of Tasmania for research.



TAGGED FISH

Tagged fish will have a **RED** external t-bar tag, located adjacent to the dorsal fin.



If you catch a tagged fish:

- Record the tag number, fish length (from tip of snout to fork in the tail), date of capture and location.
- Try to keep the fish frame for us to collect. It can be frozen.
- Contact TAFI as soon as possible on 62 277 254 with the recorded details.

Tel: 62 277 254



Kids Beach ~~Bum~~ Fun Day

Brought to you by the Tas Scuba Diving Club and Marine Life Magazine



Amy is gung ho for kids beach fun day and she is thinking sand castles, boat rides, lolly hunts, etc. We will focus on ages 7-12 although all are welcome, younger kids will need to be entirely supervised by parents.

According to Amy "boys can come too as long as they behave and play nice with the girls".

We are also encouraging uncles, aunts and extended family to come to give the parents a day off. If westerly weather is blowing we will meet at the same place and move to the east facing beach at Arm End, Opossum Bay. If it's raining we won't be offended if you cancel.

When: 18th April 10.00am to 1.00pm
Where: South Arm at the boat ramp end of the beach (southern end)
What to Bring: You will need to bring sun protection, lunch, a recreational item and a kids lifejacket if you have one.

RSVP; michael.Jacques@transend.com.au

I seem to have been only a boy playing on the sea-shore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.

Isaac Newton

Six contemporary artists take inspiration from marine works by Charles-Alexandre Lesueur, artist on the Baudin voyage to Australia (1800-1804)

LITTORAL

*8 April to 16 May 2010
Carnegie Gallery Hobart*

AADJE BRUCE

CHRIS DE ROSA

JULIE GOUGH

BEVERLEY SOUTH COTT

TONI WARBURTON

JUDY WATSON

CURATOR

VIVONNE THWAITES

WRITER

JEAN FORNASIERO

Exhibition Opening

April 8, 6-8pm

Speaker: Dr Gretta Peel

2009 Fulbright Scholar

Tasmanian Aquaculture & Fisheries

Institute, UTAS



Exhibition of Historic Maps

by Louis Freycinet, Maritime Museum

Curator: Peta Knott

Maritime Heritage Coordinator

TMAG & MMT

Talks

Judy Watson

Art Forum UTAS, April 9,

12.30-1.30pm

Jean Fornasiero & John West-Sooby

The Arts of Discovery:

The Baudin Voyage (1800-1804)

Royal Society Rooms, TMAG,

April 9, 3-5pm

Artist & Curator talks

Carnegie Gallery, April 10, 10-11am

Bookings: vivonne@adam.com.au

T 0414225846



The Carnegie Gallery
is a cultural initiative
of Hobart City Council
www.hobartcity.com.au



THE POWER INSTITUTE
FUNDING FOR ART & DESIGN STUDIES



This project has been assisted by the Australian Government
through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and
advisory body and by the Visual Arts and Crafts Strategy, an
initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments.

The Carnegie Gallery 16 Argyle Street, Hobart, Tasmania, T 03 6238 2100. Open 10.00am to 5.00pm, 7 days except Good Friday, Easter Sunday and Christmas Day. Entry is free.

Dear Redmap

I occasionally see warm climate or introduced invertebrates in the south, like 7 armed seastars, Giant barnacles and urchin barrens. Should I also report these to you?

Yes please! We are very interested in all types of marine critters that are unusual or observed outside of their normal range. We are waiting to hear about a grant application we have submitted that is to add an entire section on invertebrates to the website. This grant is also to produce a pocket-sized flip-file of plastic cards that have photos and details of species that we particularly interested in. Great for diving or throwing in the boat!!

I logged an entry but I thought I should give you more info in freeform notes, like 'will send photo later', should that be added to the site as an option when logging reports?

Yes, great idea, keep those coming! In a few weeks you should be able to add a caption to your photos so you can add extra detail like – this is one of a school of 30 yellowtail kingfish etc. The notes section you suggest is actually on our wish-list as a data entry box that says 'extra details for Redmap?'. This one will have to wait till we get some cash though as it also involves altering the template for the log a sighting page and changing the database that Redmap data feeds into. In the meantime, log your sighting and then email any extra information to: enquiries@redmap.org.au.

I sometimes get friends telling me things and even sending me photos. Should I log third hand reports if I let you know who originally saw them so we don't double-up. I also do dives where my buddy and I see the same thing, but they can be slow reporting it even if we agree who is doing it. If I log it how do I mark it to tell you to ignore Fred Blogg's report of the same day if they lodge one too?

You are welcome to log someone else's sighting if you are certain of the details and sure that they know what the species in question looks like (your mate from RLS sees a snapper – sure, log that one; your neighbour who fishes once a decade swears they saw a tiger shark while skinny dipping after a drinking half a slabhmm, maybe not). If you tell Redmap about someone else's sighting, or log something that you saw as part of a group – TELL THEM TOO!! That way we shouldn't get double-ups.

p.s. The SE is alive with EAC fish at the moment, will send in details of Sea Sweep, Herring Cale, Zebrafish, Ringed Pufferfish all seen in one spot on a short dive

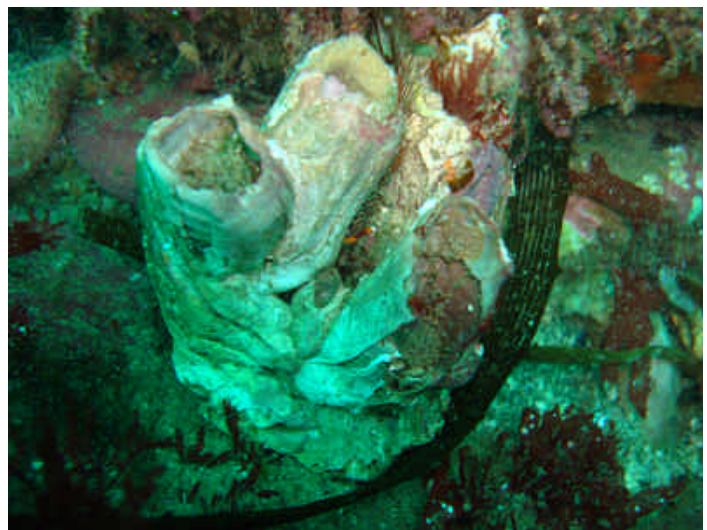
Thanks for all those! Good stuff and keep them coming. We need to find out more about the ringed puffer fish – have had a few logged lately!

We might chat to Scott Ling soon and see if he is interested in having urchin barrens in southern areas logged on Redmap. We are getting the site altered (late March) so that people can include captions on photos (which we will reserve the right to edit!) and in next version of upgrades adding a section to send extra info to Redmap (as you also suggested in your earlier email!). Anyway, if people were submitting photos of urchin barrens they could then give info on density/area etc.

We are finding quite a few scientists around the place interested in sightings of particular groups/species (turtles, sharks, nautilus) so it's great that we are getting 'extra' value out of the website.
Marine Life April 2010



Introduced 7 armed seastars having a go at a sea squirt, M. Jacques, Fosters Rk Feb 2010



The Giant Rock Barnacle, *balanus nigrescens*, is a visitor from warmer climes formerly rarely seen in Tassie has been progressively colonising down the East Coast, Fosters Rk 2/2010



And we haven't forgotten about these little darlings either. Keep those reports coming

<http://www.redmap.org.au/>

Dredging up a dredge - The search for the SS Davenport

By Greg Close and Michael Jacques



Before major dredging started, the port of Devonport didn't really exist. You could wade across the sandbar at low water and the entrance was narrow and dangerous. At that time Don Heads was a more popular port, but also shallow and exposed.

In 1890, the Dredge "Davenport" was bought by the Mersey Marine Board from the South Australian Government for £12000 pounds. The Davenport had been constructed in Adelaide in 1878. In June 1890, she arrived under tow from the paddle tug "Yatala" and started work on improving the port. The dredge made 6-7 trips a day with the S.S. "Agnew" following along as a tender. The Davenport made a considerable cut in the sandbar that once blocked the Mersey and in a very short time deepened the port to 12 feet. After a considerable effort the port was also widened to 300 feet wide. Besides the bar, the Davenport was also used to remove the sandbank from in front of the wharves at West Devonport to widen the turning Basin.

The dredge had been extremely important in the early years of developing the port, but in the 10 years after it was purchased, she had done her work and was now rarely in commission. The cost of maintenance became increasingly difficult to justify. Eventually her hull was getting thin in places and she needed £3000 spent on installing a new boiler. Instead the Marine Board put her up for sale.

She had been laid up for 4 years without finding a buyer. The Marine Board were then offered the very capable Melbourne dredge "G.Ward Cole" for £11000 pounds and it was an offer "too good to refuse". In February 1929, they gave up and sold the "Davenport" to the Salisbury Foundry for scrap. Even the newer dredge hopper "Agnew", a converted lighter, was now redundant and also laid up in reserve. (The "G.Ward Cole" is today the wreck exposed at low water near the breakwater, the "Agnew" remains are also occasionally uncovered under the cobble at East Devonport).

The Salisbury Foundry workers recovered a lot of brass and gunmetal from the wreck and sent 100 tons of scrap to Melbourne. A lot of the dredge's machinery was removed, but the bucket assembly was still in place. The bell from the "Davenport" was donated to the Anglican Church at Latrobe in August 1931.

The "Agnew" was to be used to tow her out to Wrights Island, but 1929 was a flood year (that year the Derby dam burst drowning many people and the Duck Reach power station was *Marine Life April 2010*

smashed). They had weeks of wind. According to the Advocate (Wednesday 17/7/1929 pp3), the dredge "Davenport" was sunk on the afternoon of 16 July 1929. She was towed out of port by the dredge hopper "Agnew" and taken 2 miles off the coast from Northdown Head, a mile beyond on the Port Sorell side of Wrights Island in 40 feet of water.

They used 40lb of gelignite in separate charges. The first blast causing her to heel over, the second charge to sink. The dredge sank within one minute and toppled over due to the 60 ton weight of the buckets which stood 20ft high and were 90ft in length.

I'd suggest search area is the blank white square. They said Northdown "Head", which is an inland hill in the direction of Northdown.

She will be flattened along the hull in all the 80 years of swells that have followed, but the large iron bucket support structure will be lying out on the cobble that is common there, so with an echo sounder you are looking for a 2 metre trace with fish hanging off it, as it will be the only high profile structure on the flats around it and will attract fish from all over.

The depth should be accurate. The marine board would have been panicking that it would be left in a spot that would interfere with shipping, so they would have been out with the sounding lead several times during the operation. Greg Close of Devonport has been conducting a search in the past couple of months and has dived on a few likely targets but



The Bucket Dredge Davenport (on the right) leaves Devonport to be scuttled



The likely search area for the Davenport. The large Island is actually Egg Island but is commonly referred to as Wrights

nothing resembling the Davenport has yet been discovered. Any assistance would be appreciated, especially from fishing boat owners who may have some local knowledge or have come across odd soundings in vicinity.

Email exclosei@bigpond.com

For Plover Lovers



Hooded plovers have to contend with a lot of things. Things like high tides, and there are natural and introduced predators, like seagulls and ravens.

The hooded plover is vulnerable to disturbance. People, including dog owners, are warned of the risk to the birds' nests on the beach.

The birds themselves are very well camouflaged and so are the eggs and the chicks. The nest is just a scrape in the sand above the high water mark and most people probably wouldn't even notice it. But the problem is: if people are walking past, the birds notice the people, so they'll stay off the nest. If a nesting hooded plover is disturbed, its defence strategy is to draw the predator away from its nest. The problem with that strategy is people using the beach can unknowingly get too close to the nests, forcing the plovers to stay away for long periods of time.

If the adult birds are off the nest for too long that means that the eggs can cook in the sun. When the chicks hatch, they need to start feeding right away. If there are people and dogs on the beach right up close, then the chicks just freeze and that means they'll stay camouflaged, exposed to predators and they don't feed as much. As a consequence of these problems the Hooded Plover is under threat and its numbers are falling.

The biggest part of conservation is raising awareness about the hooded plover and its nesting habits. It's especially important that dog owners know to keep their pets away from plover nests. Even if the dog isn't attacking the birds it can still cause major problems. A lot of people say, "My dog's not interested in birds. It doesn't chase them, so what's the problem?" But what happens is that it's not really about the dog a lot of time, it's about the birds. They get a little bit worried that dog might be a threat to them or especially a threat to their eggs or to their chicks.

Hooded plovers are about from August through to February. Through the summer months, are nesting on the beach, and if people can avoid disturbing the nests, that really helps the survival of the chicks to make sure that these birds will be around in the future.

Source: Stateline South Australia,

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/video/2010/02/12/2818492.htm>

Enter the Elephant Seal...

I haven't got much information other than this beautiful creature came ashore at a small beach just along from our shack at Sunset Bay on Bruny Island, apparently she was quite a long distance from her usual territory. I informed the ranger who came to observe and kept monitoring her over the long weekend. She was about a ton in weight and 4.2 metres long. She appeared not all together in great shape; she was extremely exhausted and had some mucus forming around her trunk (nose) by day 2.

I knew it was an elephant seal but was uncertain of gender but turns out to be a male. To follow up, he lingered in our little bay for 5 days then swam further north to Great Bay for 2 days and then set off. He was certainly a long way from home and it took him several days to recover. I have many more photos on my camera if Michael is interested. I think perhaps though, the ones he has are probably the most spectacular.

We are setting off back to Bruny this morning and we never know what marvels await.

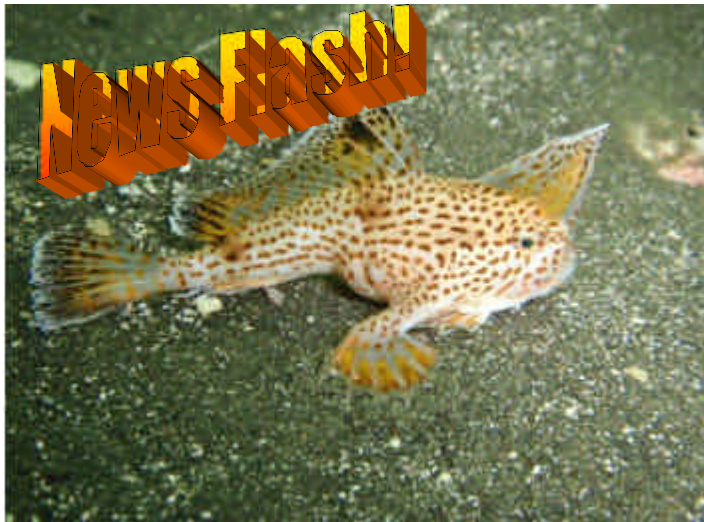
cheers
Jan Jarvis

Top stuff!, its an elephant seal, quite uncommon this far north. I'd be tired too, its 1500km from the nearest E.seal haulout at Macquarie Is.



Poets Corner

*In days of old
When divers got cold
And dry suits weren't' invented
The best latrine was neoprene
Especially if it was rented!*



New D'Entrecasteux Channel Sighting

Looks like another Spotted Handfish has been spotted out of the river, with this probably pregnant female being sighted near _____

This would seem to support Eric's _____ sighting, which was possibly a fish dispersing after the last breeding season from a breeding colony (or hopefully two) that has established in the nearby area. This sighting is happily inside the new MPA extension which arguably vindicates the decision to extend this park and close it for fishing



Get Into Diving Day
*With the Tasmanian Scuba Diving Club
 and Aqua Scuba Diving Services*

Diving Skills getting Rusty?
Like to learn how to dive?

Bicheno sponges, Photo John Smith

The Tasmanian SCUBA Diving Club is running a pool session for members, divers and other interested people at the Hobart Aquatic Centre dive pool for a couple of hours on the morning of **Sunday 25 April**

We have booked part of the pool for qualified divers to practice any skills that might be a bit rusty, such as mask clearing, buoyancy and weight adjustment, rescue tows or just getting used to the feel of it all again if it's been a while since you were last in the water. We will also be offering people who aren't yet qualified a chance to have a go at trying out scuba gear. This session will be run by a qualified instructor from Aqua Scuba Diving Services.

- When:** 25th April 2010
- Time:** 10.00AM – 12.00PM (2 hours)
- Cost:** skills brush up group (qualified divers) \$10
 Try a Dive (1 hr) \$25
- Bring:** Swimming gear for try-a-divers
 Own scuba gear (if you have it) and certification card for qualified divers

Contacts: Richard Mason; @iprimus.com.au or michael.jacques@transend.com.au
 or you can phone 0418 589 309

Spaces are limited so book early to avoid disappointment



Blue Sky Series presents:
Jean-Michel Cousteau & Dr Richard Murphy
Ocean Futures Society

Jean-Michel Cousteau is indisputably the world's most famous marine filmmaker. The son of ocean explorer Jacques Cousteau, Jean-Michel founded Ocean Futures Society in 1999 to continue his pioneering work.

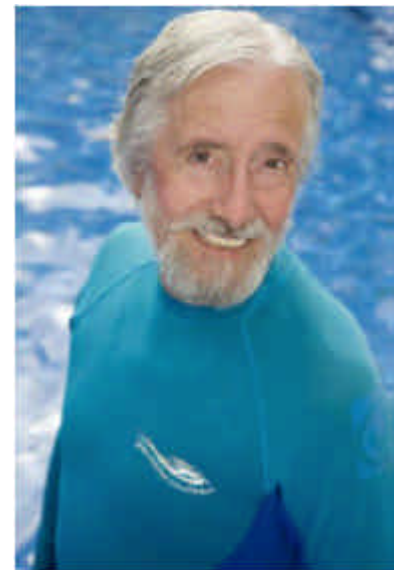
Dr Richard "Murph" Murphy is the chief scientist and ocean guru of Ocean Futures Society and has been renowned for his understanding of the ocean realm for 40 years. Join these two legendary explorers and educators as they discuss the effects of climate change on our marine environment.

Honorary Antarctic Ambassador and former Governor of Tasmania, Sir Guy Green will make some opening remarks and introduce the speakers.

As this is Mr Cousteau's only speaking engagement during his Tasmanian trip, it is expected to be an extremely popular event.

Please email climatechange@dpac.tas.gov.au or telephone 6270 5485 to confirm your attendance.

Free public lecture
Wednesday 14 April 2010
5.45 pm – 8.00 pm
Stanley Burbury Theatre, Hobart
University of Tasmania



Jean-Michel Cousteau Photo: © Carrie Vonderhaar, Ocean Futures Society

From the depths of the ocean come bold ideas for a better world.

"I believe a better understanding of how nature works can not only promote appreciation for the value of our natural heritage, but also help guide the next generation in living more sustainably on the planet."

Dr Richard Murphy, Chief Scientist, Ocean Futures Society

This event is hosted by the Tasmanian Climate Change Office in the Department of Premier and Cabinet in conjunction with the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts and is also supported by MARINOVA & The University of Tasmania

**Messages of Wisdom
from the 1960's**

Real Men dive in Zodiacs made out of old truck tyres, powered by old Chrysler outboards that require paddles to be at the ready at a moments notice.

Real Men don't dive in dry suits, even if they are made out of the inner tube from the same truck
Real Men put masks on the head and lose them regularly



Dive expedition to the Kent Group Jan 2010

By Phil White

The Kent Group of islands is situated roughly 50 K North West of Flinders Is and are one of the remnants of the land bridge that once linked Tasmania to the Mainland. A group of divers from the Hobart Tasmanian Scuba Dive Club and the Leven Scuba Club from the North West traveled to the group in January this year. The islands are increasingly popular with kayakers en route to Tasmania and for many years they have provided safe harbour for boats in adverse conditions. On occasion however, the opposite happens and there are a number of shipwrecks as testament to

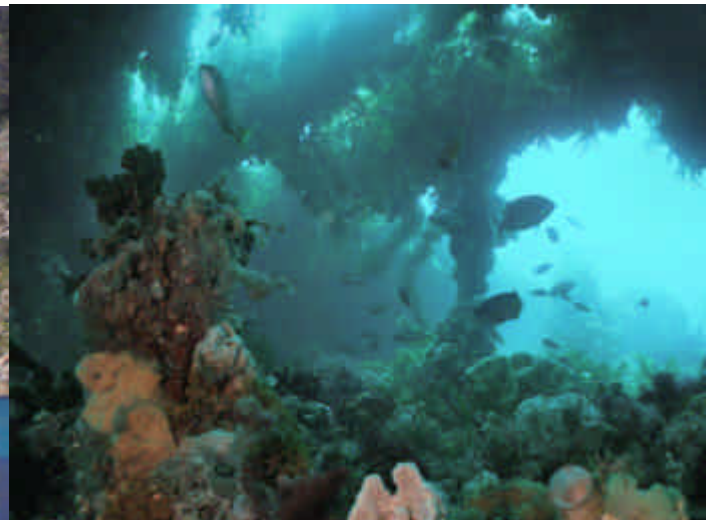
Our ride to the islands was with the Furneaux Explorer which we boarded at Bridport. For 9 visitors we had an awful lot of gear and the foredeck was soon piling up with assorted dive trip paraphernalia. In addition to 2 inflatable boats and a compressor we managed to wedge in over 50 dive tanks. Why so many? With a single tank fill taking ½ an hour it was necessary for each diver to have at least 4 tanks to enable 2 dives a day for the 5 days we planned to be there. We were camping as well and that meant there wasn't a lot of spare room on board. There was also a fridge and stove for the Deal Is caretakers.

Brian, our skipper was keen to get going and we slipped our moorings shortly before lunchtime on Friday 15th. The weather was perfect and the seas calm as we made our way towards

Flinders. It wasn't to last. Those of us sunning ourselves on the foredeck were inevitably driven under cover and out of the wind. There was some cargo in the form of veggies that had to be delivered to Whitemark, unfortunately the tide was out and we were sitting on the bottom quite some way out from the wharf. Cap'n Brian periodically gunned the engine and we ploughed our way forward and by midnight half the passengers were at the bow searching for the blacked out wharf with dive torches. Spuds and onions disembarked and we retreated off shore and set anchor for the night.

The next day was fine but we were greeted with a lumpy swell which worsened once we left the protection of the Furneaux group. The author soon discovered that ginger seasick pills don't perform as advertised. Early afternoon and we nosed our way into Murray Passage and calmer waters, to the relief of some. Our campsite was on Erith Is, the 2nd largest island of the group and without a pier we had to offload all our camping gear onto the zodiacs and run them up to the beach. A family of kayakers had snaffled the only building on the island, a shack situated on the northern end of the beach at west cove, so after numerous ferry trips, we trudged through the scrub trying to find campsites amongst the dunes. All the dive gear was left on the boat and our plan was to return to the Furneaux Explorer to kit up and run out to the dive sites on the inflatables.

The wise camper sets up camp first but we were there to dive and so before the afternoon light faded, a sizeable group set out to find the wreck of the Bulli. This iron collier sank in West Cove in 1879 after striking rocks leaving the group. It sits on a sandy bottom in 18 Metres and is one of the best preserved wrecks in the country. Missing its superstructure and the bow which was



Top: The Furneaux Explorer at anchor in West Cove .
Bottom: A basket star clings to an old piece of engine pipe

Top: Inside the Bulli, just forward of the boilers.
Bottom: A very big Centrostephanus Barren. .

accidentally torn off by the Navy, it nevertheless retains most of the hull and is easily accessible. Lacking a sounder on our inflatables we resorted to the time honored wreck finding method of towing snorkelers around. Bragging rights for rediscovering the Bulli went to the Leven Scuba Club. In the days that followed most of us were to become highly acquainted with this wreck.

The first dive of the expedition was therefore on the Bulli and it is sufficient to describe it once as some of us dived on it up to 5 times but at no time was it an uninteresting dive. Despite often atrocious weather conditions, visibility never got below 15M and at times was round the 20 - 25M mark. The wreck has a nice variety of invertebrate and algal growth. Where the wheelhouse was probably located there are stands of kelp and towards the boilers is a very pretty sponge garden. The stern is intact, as is the prop and rudder. The bow however, is a mess, with unrecognizable bits strewn about. Being a collier the cargo was coal and there's plenty of it scattered around the wreck. With anything of value long since stripped from the ship, a lump of coal makes a decent souvenir. We couldn't souvenir any lobsters due to the recent proclamation of no take zones for half of the group

and stove were delivered, rounded off the trip. Most of the divers were anticipating catching some lobster at Flinders on the return trip but this didn't eventuate. The weather and conditions were perfect coming back and exactly a week later we snuck back into Bridport

The highlight of the trip of course, was the Bulli and to be honest if it wasn't there we would have done a lot less diving due to the conditions. The underwater landscapes were very similar to the NW coast with large areas of boulders covered with kelp. In sheltered spots there was quite prolific invertebrate coverage. It was certainly a very different away trip than most and quite good value. For those prepared to be self sufficient and rough it a bit the reward was to explore the underwater vistas of a remote location that few divers get to visit.

Anemone - *Epiactis* sp.

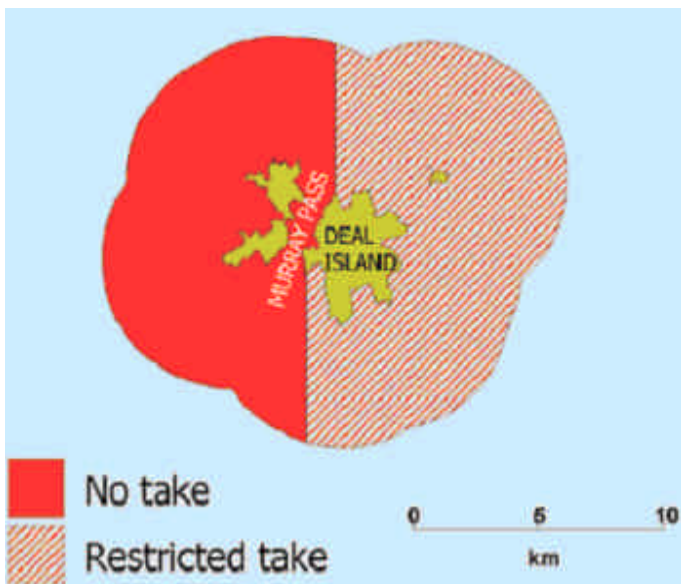
By Rolli

Whilst poking about taking photos during a Tamar River dive last year, I came across an unusual anemone that I hadn't previously seen (and haven't seen since) in about 20 metres of water. It seemed much brighter and vibrant in colour than all of its near neighbours, and quite eye catching.

Upon making it home and washing off the gear, I dug out Edgar's marine life bible (the 2008 one), but the nearest animal I could find was the *Epiactis thomsoni*, which curiously is said to only inhabit South Australia. The description almost perfectly matched my find, except that mine was quite a bit larger than the suggested maximum diameter of 30mm, and I definitely wasn't in South Australia.

I fired off an email to Graham Edgar who soon explained that people far more versed in these matters than I were still unsure as to how many species of the *Epiactis* exist in Southern Australia and that it is a poorly described species at present. As such, mine is likely an undescribed species of the *Epiactis*.

This was a great thrill for me, and reminded me of something Karen Gowlett-Holmes once said on ABC's Stateline. She said that it is still possible to easily find undescribed species on every dive; I found this amazing and almost inconceivable. But it's true – the ocean really is such an unexplored and amazing part of our planet. If we are still finding an abundance of undescribed species in the areas of human reach, imagine what lies below the reach of the open circuit and closed circuit rebreather divers!



The fine conditions did not last and day 3 saw increased south westerly wind and swells. Those who hadn't dived the Bulli did so and another group set off to explore a spot just to the north of West Cove. This was a drift dive along the shore with the bottom consisting of large boulders and extensive areas of kelp. Pelagic life was quite prolific with lots of Blue Throat Wrasse, Trumpeter and Leatherjackets. This site was dived again a few days later.

The conditions kept worsening and the morning of the 4th day had surfable waves coming up Murray Passage. We decided to up anchor and head across to Deal Is and take shelter in the northern bay. The inflatables were driven across separately, and for those on board it was exciting indeed. Safely ensconced in the cove, 2 separate dives in different locations were done. One of these dives revealed a massive urchin barren. There's no mistaking the impact of unchecked *Centrostephanus Rogersi* and quite depressing to see first hand, endless expanses of bare rock.

Our skipper decided to make an unplanned overnight stay at Deal Is and we returned to camp Erith the next morning. There were some more dives on the Bulli and an excursion to the north of Erith Is to explore for reported occurrences of plating coral was successful in its quest. The conditions were really quite bad with vicious squalls whipping through the cove sending sprays of water up to 50M in height. It was a constant struggle for some to keep their tents pegged down in the sand but fortunately nothing blew away.

Another dive on the other side of the passage, a night dive on the Bulli and a short trip to the museum on Deal Is while the fridge



- Amy's Underwater Information -

Know Your Squid

By Amy Dadson (age 8, Bellerive Primary School)

Amy has been studying the ocean at school and had the following to say,

"Did you know that squid have a brain shaped like a doughnut. To save space their brain has a hole in the middle so that their stomach can pass through the centre. So the food goes in, goes through their mind, then out the other end.

Here is a photo of one that Michael found for me,"



More from DPIW website

The two main species of squid taken in Tasmania are southern calamari and Gould's squid (previously known as arrow squid), along with several species of octopus. All these species are capable of rapid and numerous colour changes depending on an individual's mood and environment. Southern calamari (pictured) are very fast growing and can grow to over 2.1kg in weight and live for about 12 months.

Spawning occurs in shallow coastal waters around Tasmania from spring to summer. The finger-like egg capsules are laid by the females in masses of 50 to several hundred. On hatching, the juveniles swim to the surface and feed amongst the plankton layers.

Calamari and squid are voracious feeders eating krill, fish and other squid.

Gould's squid (arrow squid) are schooling squid inhabiting waters from 0 to 500m in depth. They can be readily distinguished from the southern calamari by the presence of two fins at the base of the tail that give the animal a characteristic arrow shape.

They are similar to calamari in rapid growth rates and feeding behaviour and they live for about 12 months. Spawning occurs throughout the year and the eggs are probably released as free-floating masses.

Fishing News Updates



If entering by air or by the Spirit of Tasmania, it is important to know that you are required to declare all vessels and fishing equipment for inspection by a Quarantine Officer. Any potentially contaminated gear will be confiscated and treated by Quarantine staff at your expense.

ALERT FOR THOSE TRAVELLING FROM NSW TO TAS - marine pest Colonial sea squirt (*Didemnum vexillum*) at Two Fold Bay in New South Wales

You may be aware of the suspected detection of the nationally-listed marine pest Colonial sea squirt (*Didemnum vexillum*) at Two Fold Bay in New South Wales. It is currently believed that the colonial sea squirt is not present in Tasmanian waters, however if it is introduced it is likely to have significant impacts on the marine environment and industries.

The Department of Primary Industries, Parks Water and Environment (DPIPWE) is undertaking a range of measures to prevent this marine pest entering into Tasmanian waters, but we also need your help. As such, we ask all persons bringing vessels, fishing and diving equipment into Tasmania from NSW to pay particular attention to ensuring that all gear and equipment that has been in the water has been thoroughly cleaned and dried.

For information on import requirements and good biosecurity practices please see: <http://www.dpiw.tas.gov.au/inter.nsf/WebPages/LBUN-7PR39N?open>

For more information on *Didemnum vexillum* and other marine pests that pose a significant biosecurity risk to Tasmania please see: <http://www.dpiw.tas.gov.au/inter.nsf/WebPages/LBUN-7T67HR?open>

Experts advise that the Colonial Sea Squirt is difficult to positively identify in the field. Anyone seeing something that looks like this species should make an accurate note of the location, with GPS if possible, and report the sighting to the DPIPWE marine pest hotline 0408 380 377. DPIPWE will then obtain samples and have them formally identified by a taxonomic expert.

For further information about this species, or any other marine pest please call Alastair Morton on 6233 7577.

We just can't get enough of Amy



More serious Kids Stuff!

Last month Amy talked about a 'sea louse', or Isopod that swam up fishes internals to feed on them. We couldn't find a picture of what it looked like but instead found one that likes to eat the tongues out of fish.



Tongue Eating Louse or Isopod

The Tongue-eating louse (*Cymothoa exigua*) has been known about for a long time. It is not a louse but a rare parasitic Isopod crustacean.

This weird isopod creeps in through the fish's gills and attaches itself to the base of the tongue. The parasite sucks blood from the tongue, and the tongue slowly withers away (it does not really 'eat' the tongue). When only the muscular stump of the tongue is left the parasite attaches itself and from then on behaves like a normal tongue.

Once attached and behaving like a normal tongue (it is about the same size and shape as the fish's tongue was) the parasite will have cut off the blood supply it formerly fed on, so it begins to eat mucus, and maybe scraps of food that enter the fish's mouth. The fish does not seem to be unhealthy, and it continues to behave normally and grow. Only looking in the mouth reveals the bizarre 'passenger'. Over 4,500 other species of Isopod inhabit the sea, and another 500 or so live in fresh water. Only around 700 species (all in their own Sub Order Epicaridea) are parasitic.

BBC NEWS

Marine Life April 2010

Luckily the Giant Isopod (*Bathynomus giganteus*) – see image below – is not a parasite. It snuffles along harmlessly on the Atlantic seabed.

Read more at Suite101: Isopod Parasite Eats Fish Tongue: Causes Little Harm but Replaces Organ http://zoology.suite101.com/article.cfm/isopod_parasite_eats_fish_tongue#ixzz0iPusJRN



Centrostephanus Rogersii Marching towards Antarctica

The Tasmanian SCUBA Diving Club dived Pedra Branca recently. Our diving was concentrated on the NE quarter of the Island in depths between 10-40m, on the NE face in a depths between 15-20m a few centrostephanus urchins were seen occasionally dotted along the wall, One cluster of 4 was observed. We are not sure if the centro urchin has been recorded that far south. No sign of any urchin damage was observed.

James Parkinson





by Mike Jacques, Photos John Smith

The second dive needs to be a shallower option so we head along the island to the shallow reef around Bird Rock. This rock is popular with newer divers but is still an excellent dive. The Rock is a giant monolith that dominates the southern end of Governor Island. Underneath this rock the constant wave action has hollowed out a spectacular cavern known as “The Ballroom”. This is usually packed with a vast array of fish and lots of big Southern Rock Lobster (or crays as they are known locally). Once a common sight it is now getting difficult to see big crays on the East Coast due to a combination of overfishing and poor breeding events in recent years. It is possible that these poor breeding cycles are climate change related. The latest modelling shows that the range of the Southern Rock Lobster will contract towards the south east as the planet warms. Even now the East Coast is so overfished that Marine Protected Areas like Bicheno’s Governor Island are really the only places left where divers can see lots of large crayfish, and they are all doing what they do normally without any fear of divers.



Another feature of every dive in the Marine Park is the large numbers of Banded Morwong, and Bicheno is virtually the ‘Banded Morwong capital of Tasmania’. A relatively common Tasmanian fish, on the Eastern side of Governor Island they are twice as dense as in surrounding areas, and this was the case even before the park was declared. This is possibly because of the abundance of the rocky crevices they like to shelter in. These fish can live up to 80 years, and if set up in a good area rarely move from the same crevice during their whole life. Say hello to one now and you can probably go back to the same hole and say goodbye to the same fish when you retire from diving. These



Marine Life April 2010

“grandfathers of the sea” are vulnerable to recreational netting and trapping for the live export trade. Fortunately, here they can drift around “The Ballroom” without fear and they will often approach divers inquisitively.

Back at the boat ramp it’s the usual story of sunburn, salty hair and tiredness. John is keen to pack away the boat and dry his gear ready for his favourite dive in the morning. No it isn’t a 30 metre dive to a deep reef, but a shallow shore dive in the shelter of Waub’s Bay. The rest of the family turns up and Alison and Amy have been spending the day at the nearby Douglas-Apsley National Park where there is a beautiful freshwater bathing pool. The minerals in the nearby rocks give the cool waters a sapphire like colour. The dry eucalypt forest is also home to chattering birds and relatively tame wildlife. They have spent the rest of the day at the local wildlife park, feeding emus that are so greedy they can swallow a lolly bag whole.

It’s the height of the Tasmanian summer so it won’t be dark until 9pm. Plenty of time to wander the town’s shops and galleries with the long-suffering partner. Maybe after 6pm we can have a meal at the fancy French restaurant in town just to soften the blow of a return to dive widowhood the next day.

The wander home can be just as much fun as the meal. We pass along the Esplanade towards our accommodation and hear the call of penguins in the nearby coastal heath. They hoot like a croaky donkey, although there are many variations on the theme as each penguin must identify their chicks from a unique call if they are to find their way back to the nest and feed the hungry youngsters. The males may also call out to each other as a reminder to stay off the others ‘patch’. Perhaps they just enjoy a good hoot. After all, ever heard of a penguin answering a survey about their feelings on the subject? Despite the gloom and doom about the future of mainland penguin colonies they seem to be slowly bouncing back. Penguins are getting so common in Bicheno they are occasionally seen wandering through the town and even hanging around the local bottle shop. Aggressive dogs can easily kill them, but the locals seem to be watching out for them and their numbers are on the mend. Tours of nearby penguin rookeries are very popular with visitors.



Under the lights of the boat ramp we can also see a cloud of insects, and shortly afterwards a flock of bats that have adapted to the free and regular food offered by his set of lights. It is a great way to observe these secretive, nocturnal creatures as they wheel around after big juicy moths and a delight for the younger members of the family.

Next morning the pink dawn light is glowing off the orange granite. The beach is nearly deserted and only a few fishermen are getting ready to put to sea. The dive today is an easy shore dive, John’s favourite, so there is no rush to get started. Amy and Alison will be heading off later to go to the nearby sheltered beach, but for now we have some spare time.

A brisk morning walk brings us to the top of Whaler’s Lookout offering excellent views up and down the coast. It was from here in the 1820s to 1840s that gangs of whalers, mostly convicts or ex-convicts,

shinned up the trees to spot whales as they moved up and down the coast. There are still iron spikes in one tree that they used as an aid for climbing. Every June/July the whales, mostly Southern Right and Humpback Whales, move north to go to their breeding grounds. The Humpbacks go as far as Queensland, while the Southern Rights prefer a shorter voyage to a sheltered bay in Victoria or South Australia. Here they can give birth and avoid the packs of Killer Whales that normally patrol the Southern Ocean. In Spring they return down the coast after the Antarctic pack ice has again melted and they can feed on rich shoals of krill.



Whaling was Tasmania's first real industry and employed teams of men operating from the shore in open whaleboats. They harpooned the whales and dragged them back into the shelter of Waub's Bay for boiling down. The tourist beach where children now paddle was once awash with the red stain of blood and the foul stench of rotting carcasses and burning whale fat. By the late 1840s the whale stocks had been decimated. In the 1900s, using steam whaling ships, they even ventured into the Antarctic Circle to finish the job. It was only in the 1980s, after the cessation of all commercial whaling, that whale numbers slowly climbed until now their passing is a fairly regular event at Bicheno.



Time to meet John down at the Breakwater while the "girls" go for a beach walk. We pass by the grave of Waubdebar, the Tasmanian Aboriginal woman who gave her name to the bay. In the early 1800s the convict sealers regularly stole women from the local Aboriginal people. The settlers that followed also decimated the local game and drove tribes from their traditional hunting grounds. This in turn caused reprisal raids and sparked a seven year war that ended in the annihilation of the tribal Tasmanian Aboriginal people. Waubdebar does not appear to have suffered the usual rape and abuse at the hands of her sealer husband. When his boat overturned in heavy seas a mile offshore she swam out and rescued both him and his crewmate. Apparently, after her death the residents of Bicheno raised the funds to erect this headstone and honour the deed. However, there is a deeper story here that we may never know. A heroic deed is usually, like fame, quickly forgotten, but her friendships in the town obviously endured and transcended that one event. In a time when a penny could buy a days food the residents raised enough from their meagre earnings to erect this fine headstone. Its about friendship, love and respect, not a tale of rape, murder and hatred.

The Breakwater and Split Rock

John and I have entered the water near the Waub's Bay breakwater and kick our way through the shallow weed until we are liberated and floating free again. The directions are simple, weed on the right sand on the left. We follow the reef edge East snapping away at anything that takes our fancy. I can see clouds of mysid shrimps hugging the bottom as they try to filter particles from the water. These mysids are trying to be inconspicuous as nearly every reef animal loves to munch on them. They are favourite food for seadragons, which can be seen on nearly every dive to Split Rock. Hard to see, but John has an experienced eye.

From a distance Seadragons are virtually the same colour as the weed, but up close our eyes adjust to see the rich red, purple, white and yellow blaze of colours that mark its sides. No fish has such an intricate make-up routine and no two fish have the same dots and markings, so a person with patience and a good memory can actually tell individuals apart. The males carry the eggs around and give birth to the young, something of a novelty in the animal world. John is in his element as this is a site he knows well, his favourite. He always sees dragons on every dive and reckons that, rather than Banded Morwongs, Bicheno is the "Seadragon capital of the world".

The Breakwater area is an easy and convenient dive to do and there is something new to see on nearly every dive. We get to the Split Rock, a tiny feature but packed with an amazing variety of fish. Leatherjackets, Banded Morwong, the usual Purple Wrasse and a dozen other species. No crays or size abs though as we are outside the park this time. Its summer and the Mackerel are passing through, extending their mouthparts to suck in food particles that have been stirred up into the water column. We can also see quite a few interesting species of invertebrates on the rocks. If that's not enough, then inshore from the Rock there are a few carved swim-throughs for a bit of geological novelty. We could surface over the rocks here in a very calm sea, but its easier and safer to leave enough air for the trip back to the breakwater. There is usually also something else to see on the trip back.





We are old guys, so the warm sun is a blessing as we straighten out our gear back at the car park, and start to feel human again. There is still time to collect Alison and Amy from the local Sunday market and have a final walk along the beach and rocks. This time we go down to the foreshore to see if the Blowhole is making much of the modest swell. The Blowhole is a two minute tourist novelty for most camper-van holidaymakers, but nothing expresses the raw energy of the sea as well as this feature.

The animals trying to exploit these foreshore areas have to adapt to the desert like conditions when the tide recedes, and then hang on for dear life as soon as the tide returns and tries to scour away at the smooth rounded boulders on which they live.

This dry desert of unyielding hot and salty rock is a place colonised by only the hardest. One of the most primitive forms of all life, red lichen, can thrive here in the dry and salty splash zone. Its bright red colour adds to the riot of hot energy given off by the rocks themselves, but they don't like being trampled, so the frequency of human boots has changed the colour of the rocks in some of the more well-travelled areas.

Exotic foreshore plants and weed-like wracks and pigfaces can store water in their thick stems to avoid being dried out by the punishing sun. The natives plants are usually interspersed with increasing amounts of exotic weeds, including Sea Spurge. Normal in the Northern Hemisphere it has got a foothold in the south as well, probably transported across the Equator by humans.

Further down in the intertidal zone the animals and plants need to have the security of a specialised holdfast to grip onto the rocks as the swell hammers way during the rising tide. Molluscs dominate in the bare areas as they have their own armoured home that they can fill with cooling water and carry around. They are really mostly just a giant shelled muscular foot, one that can grip tightly to any surface in a hurry. These hardy molluscs are epitomised by the many species of Chitons and Limpets that proliferate in an area were few other shells can compete. The Barnacle is another weird animal with a complex internal structure. It welds itself onto the rocks and then exploits the excessive water movement to provide it with a passing feast of food particles. Most of the local barnacle species are small, but as the water

has been warming a species of Giant Barnacle is slowly colonising the East Coast from New South Wales.

When the tide recedes vast mats of leathery Bull Kelp (*Durvillea Potatorum*) are exposed and hang limply under the unfamiliar strain of gravity. These giant fronds seem like they might be ripped off in a heavy storm, but the specialised holdfast is fused onto the rocks and can take vast amounts of breaking strain. The fronds are also thick and very leathery to avoid being torn and worn away in the incessant swell. Their tough fronds exploit the wave energy by lashing and rubbing away at any competition that might try to colonise the surf zone.

Its only when a rock provides shelter from the swell, that we find calm pools. These are refuges for everything that has to guard itself and wait for the return of the tide. For now the bare rocks represent a hot blasted desert that they could not survive. Here Amy can have heaps of fun poking the anemones, playing with Hermit Crabs and counting all the colourful starfish.

Going Home

Its been market day, so only a few hours before there was almost a crush of people in the main street. Tourists were trying out the novel pies in the local bakery and agonising over which glazed dishes to buy in the local gallery. As Sunday wears on the day-trippers head home. They have to get back to Hobart or Launceston before tea time. The wind has died as the sun begins to fade and the shop owners are weary of the long hours and find excuses to close up and enjoy the last of the sun for themselves. Soon the place is deserted. It's once again taken over by the locals who have finally got their little fishing village all to themselves.

Soon the roads will be empty of cars, so there is no rush to get back if you don't need to gnaw on your mutton at exactly 5pm. In this silence it is time to travel down to the Gulch. Now you will hear only she-oaks in the faint breeze and the disgruntled squawks of birds disagreeing over a roosting spot. As the sun drops behind the local hills the granite once again lights up pink with the dying rays. Then its time to go home!

Support the Scuttling of Ex HMAS Adelaide

On 27 March, the former frigate HMAS Adelaide was to be scuttled on the New South Wales Central Coast for an artificial reef. After years of careful planning and meeting all the legal and environmental requirements, the sinking was delayed, perhaps indefinitely by the actions of a small group of protesters who are using outlandish claims of toxic leaks and beach erosion to bolster their claims. Many business have lost thousands of dollars and the future of further surplus ship reefs around the nation looks bleak if the actions of this group are ultimately successful.

emails of support to the Hon Tony Kelly NSW MLC planning@lpma.nsw.gov.au

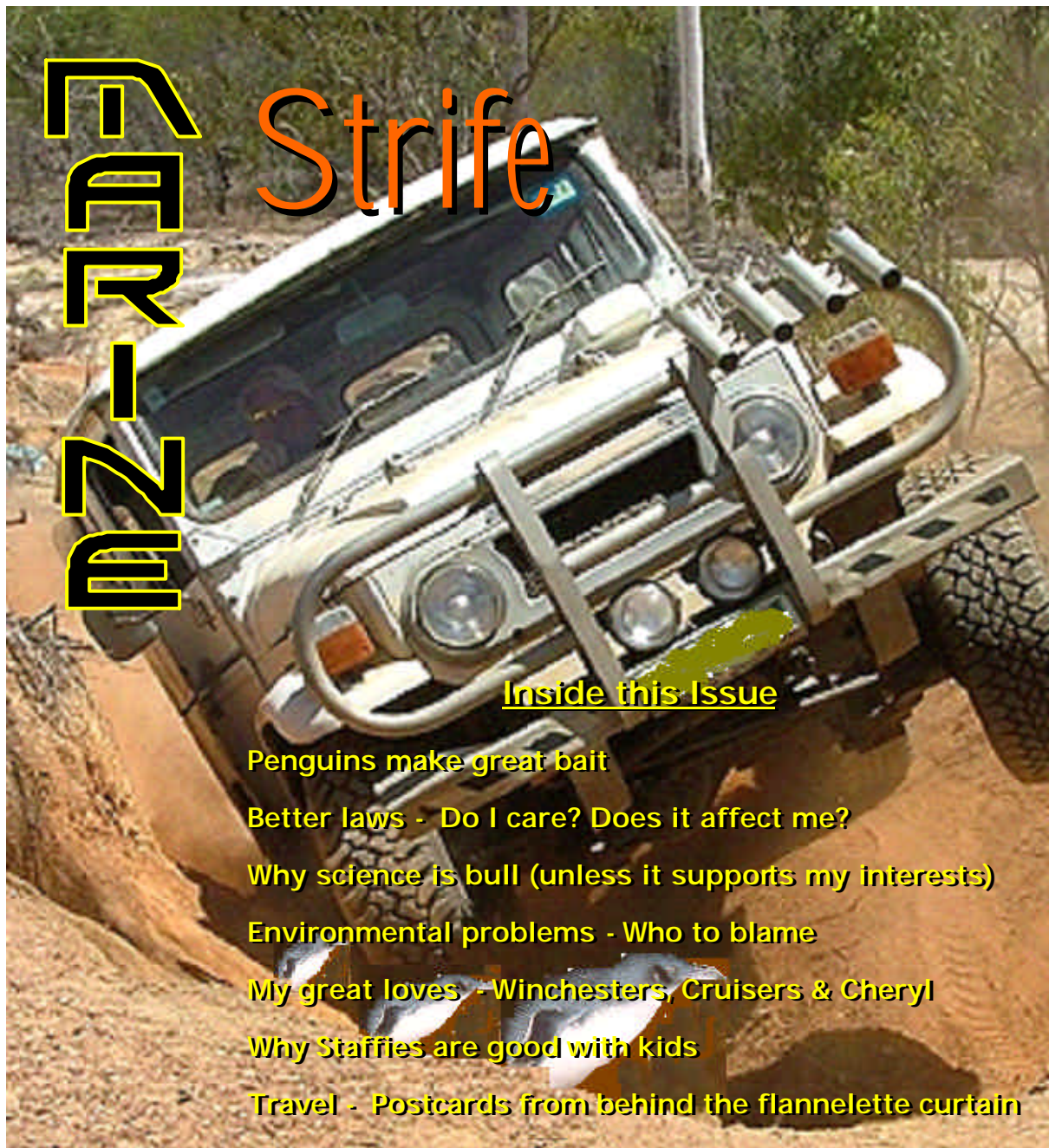
Also Central Coast artificial Reef Project: <http://www.ccarp.net/contact.html>

An online petition is available at: http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/yes_to_scuttling_the_ex-hmas-adelaide/

Marine Strife Magazine

A serious suggestion has been made that we could increase our circulation by appealing to a broader group of enthusiasts, and not be such a puritanical group of spoil sports.

We have thought this through and perhaps we could meet that need with the following revised format. Instead, we could just ask you again to CIRCULATE THIS MAGAZINE to your friends and send us any helpful suggestions as to who else might be interested in reading the current version.



MAGAZINE **Strife**

Inside this Issue

- Penguins make great bait
- Better laws - Do I care? Does it affect me?
- Why science is bull (unless it supports my interests)
- Environmental problems - Who to blame
- My great loves - Winchesters, Cruisers & Cheryl
- Why Staffies are good with kids
- Travel - Postcards from behind the flannelette curtain

A free rootin', shootin' and crayin' mag for the marine hunting enthusiast.



This two-day awareness raising campaign will take place globally for the fifth consecutive year from **8-9 May 2010**.

World Migratory Bird Day (**WMBD**) aims to inspire people to take action for the conservation of migratory birds and to organize events and programmes, which help draw attention to migratory birds around a central theme each year.

This year's theme is **"Save migratory birds in crisis – every species counts!"** It is closely linked to the International Year of Biodiversity (**IYB**) declared by the United Nations for 2010.

Migratory birds in crisis

A staggering 1,227, or 12.4% of the total 9,865 bird species in the world are currently classified as globally threatened and 192 of these are considered Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List of threatened species.

An estimated 19% of all known birds and about 30 of the 192 Critically Endangered bird species are considered to be migratory and undertake regular cyclical movements between their breeding and non-breeding areas.

Some prominent examples of "migratory birds in crisis" being the Slender-billed Curlew (*Numenius tenuirostris*), the Northern Bald Ibis (*Geronticus eremita*), the Sociable Lapwing (*Vanellus gregarius*), the Waved Albatross (*Phoebastria irrorata*) and the Orange-bellied Parrot (*Neophema chrysogaster*) – all of which are migratory and listed as Critically Endangered.

Migratory birds rely on several different habitats to survive – often across several continents. They need areas to breed, rest, feed and to raise their young. The conservation of migratory birds depends to a large extent on the conservation of their habitats, thereby simultaneously benefiting other species.

Yet species are disappearing at an unprecedented rate because of human activities, amongst other threats, and these losses are irreversible. In fact, the current rate of extinction is a thousand times faster than the natural one. For birds, the natural rate of extinction is one bird per century, but in the last thirty years alone, 21 bird species have become extinct. Without immediate action, many of the "migratory birds in crisis" will no longer exist in ten year's time.

For more information please visit: www.worldmigratorybirdday.org

And finally ...

How to help us get the message out .

We are asking people and organisations to help circulate the newsletter. Please **ACTIVELY** distribute Marine Life amongst your interest group, friends and colleagues so we can get the message out there, or give us email contacts (after asking your people for any objections to release of email contacts) so that we can distribute it for you.

How to make a contribution

This involves sending us an article by email, preferably not too long and with a photo or two. Sorry, no money, its all a love job and just for the glory. We'll use your contribution for the purpose for which it was given, for non-commercial uses and with attribution.

Contact Us; marinelifetassie@gmail.com

We are trying to appeal to all non-mainstream marine activities in, on, under, or near the ocean like, surfriders, beachcombers, shellcollectors, coastcare, fishcare, canoe and kayak, sea bird and marine mammal enthusiasts, marine scientists, maritime history buffs, sustainable fishers, scuba divers and snorkelers, et al. So send us your news and photos and give these scuba divers a run for their money. If it gets wet and salty at least twice a day we want to know about it.