MARINE Life

Oct/November 2011

Issue 15

THE magazine for attractive and witty marine people

Conservation, Marine Photography, Local News, Coastcare, Kids Fun, Crazy Critters, Seabirds Maritime History and MORE!

Marine Life magazine

Our Goal

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

The Editorial Staff

Michael Jacques, Co-Editor , not in Borneo.

Emma Flukes, Co-editor, Mosquito plagued and looking for toilet paper of any kind.

Geoff Rollins, Adventures in a Newnham toilet resulted in the same shortages.

Phil White – well-endowed paper-wise, but known in Latrobe geriatric homes as 'DJ gangsta', 'what do all those buttons do?'

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

Cover Photo ; Macrocystis pyrifera kelp ; Emma Flukes

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Contact us:
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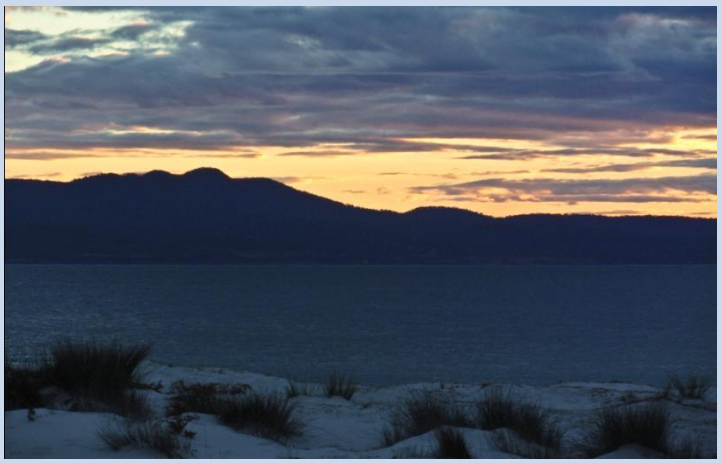
News

Science and Conservation Specials

Critters and Photos

Heritage and Coastal Features

Activities



NEWS

The Marine Life 'Network' - Recherche Bay Discovery
Tentative date: 27th November 2011

Apart from horsing around with the magazine we also sometimes do 'stuff' with our subscribers. This Spring we will also trial a coastal and underwater activities day at Recherche Bay. Recherche Bay is a cool place that's easy to quickly pass by. It has a rich human history and still hangs on to a heap of natural wonders. We will be revealing these hidden treasures with fun activities.

The activities for kids and the young at heart might include,

1. Fun dives and snorkels
2. Coastal walks
3. A search for the "Offley" and Maria Orr" wrecks
4. Geocaching Treasure Hunt out to Fisher Point and other historic sites around the bay
5. BBQ
6. A photography competition based on capturing features of the bay's history
7. Beach fun if you are up for it

We will have the usual pathetic prizes and the results of our explorations will make up new articles for the magazine. The purpose of all this is to have a hoot and not take it all too seriously, or take over your normal club or family time, so stop asking us about the hidden ulterior motive. As we keep saying, minimal hypnosis is involved.

We are still diving for Handfish research and we might also do one or two North and North-West marine study days this summer. We talked it up last year but ran out of time. Any takers? marinelifetassie@gmail.com

ACS meeting

The Australian Coastal Society. Tasmanian Chapter are busily setting up their structures and intend to add their ten cents worth to coastal management and conservation issues that crop up. As far as public events go they are planning a big show for Coastcare Week on 5th to 9th December including a high level public debate on climate change adaption. If you have an interest, why not contact their President Eric.Woehler@gmail.com.

Canal Estate Ban Sunk

An attempt to legislate against future canal estates has fallen over in the Legislative Council with only 4 councillors voting in favour of the ban. It seems like the fear that it would get in the way of East Coast marina developments may have been one of the factors.

Rethink on State Coastal Policy

This policy seems to have dropped into the 'too hard' basket, and may be resolved by legislation instead, which is apparently how it is manage interstate. We have to see how that plays out, and I would suggest you contact the ACS (or keep watching this space) if you want to keep up-to-date on developments.

Open Letter to Ministers of the Crown

from the editorial staff of Marine Life Magazine

Dear Minister,

A reinvigorated Marine Protected Areas Strategy for Tasmania
The on-line magazine "Marine Life" has a goal to "educate, inform, have fun and share our enjoyment of the marine world with like-minded people". We do not usual involve ourselves in direct political action, preferring instead to educate and raise awareness, and usually in a light-hearted manner. However, there is one issue which we believe must be given further active policy consideration.

While recognising the severe budgetary and political limitations that the government is currently experiencing, we feel that there is one issue that justifies the investment of further modest resources. It is the conservation of unique areas of Tasmania's largest wilderness, the marine environment.

Tasmania's oceans are generally looked upon as a fisheries resource and little or no attention is being given to it as a biodiversity, or tourism hotspot. Despite heavy levels of exploitation, we expect it to continue to be productive in the face of many mounting pressures, such as climate change and marine pest introductions.

Fisheries, and the preservation of marine wildlife, would benefit from setting aside a small proportion of the coastline within a system of reserves that are isolated from major disturbances. In effect, we need national parks in the ocean as well as on land, including the currently under-examined East and north coasts. It seems inexplicable that we have understood and acted upon the need to have national parks on land for almost a century, yet we still delay on the issue of marine parks.

We want every Tasmanian to have the opportunity to further debate these issues in an open, independent forum, a process that might allow the assessment of the remaining marine bioregions that do not have modern reserve systems. It is possible that a process could be found whereby this could be achieved using relatively modest resources.

Before deciding upon such weighty matters, we would first invite you to take the time to appreciate this wilderness on a more personal level. We have enclosed a brochure which explains Tasmania's unique environment, but we would be equally happy if you, or your family, just enjoy the pictures. We also propose to forward our magazine to your office. As with all our readers, we do not expect that it will always be widely read, but hope that you will select items of interest whenever the opportunity and desire takes you.

Yours Sincerely,
Michael Jacques
Marine Life Magazine

CRAYFISH REVIEW IS OUT – Worth the wait?

ABC NEWS SUMMARY

The Tasmanian Government's long-awaited rock lobster management plan has satisfied the lobster industry but recreational fishers are disappointed. The 10-year plan aims to combat falling rock lobster stocks and protect the lucrative industry.
The daily bag limit for east coast recreational fishers has been lowered from five to three. Boat limits have also been implemented, 15 for day trips and 30 for extended voyages.
A move to impose size limits, which would protect big lobsters to combat destructive sea urchins, has been dumped. The Primary Industries Minister Bryan Green says the decision was made in light of new research. "The size limit issue would not have the impact that was first thought," he said.
Mark Nikolai from the Recreational Fishing Association says the plan does not target the most overfished regions. "The key issue that needs to be addressed that the government has neglected to include in this round of rule changes is the lack of area management control particularly on the east coast of Tasmania.
The changes take effect at the start of the season in November.

To get a full copy of the changes see,
http://www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/inter.nsf/WebPages/LBUN-7WS26A?open

For Tarfish"s rec fishing response see www.tarfish.org

For Tas Conservation Trust"s full response see the last page of the latest newsletter "The Tasmanian Conservationist" September 2011 for Jon Bryan"s article. http://www.tct.org.au/

Commentary - My Take

by Mike Jacques [another rant]

The facts are that the cray stocks are in decline, especially in the critical East and South East fishery. This is accepted by all parties. Cray numbers should be an issue for gung-ho „anti-green" recreational fishers and conservation-minded people alike as crays, quite apart from being nice to eat, are a „keystone" predator. Basically they wander around the reef eating up anything, often things that shouldn"t be there like invasive long-spined urchins. When crays are removed, or drop dramatically in size, the reef changes and can even go into catastrophic collapse, like the inshore urchin barrens off St Helens.

The new rules were never likely to please everyone. There is a sector of the community who react violently to any restraint on their „freedom" to fish regardless of the broader consequences. Compromises made to try and appease them upset everyone else. This round wasn't the worse I've seen, but there was a certain halfhearted "sameness" to the way we approached it that reminded me of all the other half-hearted fisheries reforms of yesteryear.

Many fishermen are much more sensible than the rabid extremists, but there was still the usual unsightly bickering about who was causing all the trouble and why a certain group should have a bigger piece of the pie than another, otherwise known as "blame shifting". No-one admits that their catch contributes to the real problem - WE JUST TAKE TOO MANY CRAYS, especially in the accessible, sheltered and relatively shallow waters of the East and South-East Coasts.

The attempts to impose a maximum size limit failed, but we did get a modest restriction on recreational catch and possession limits and a tentative acceptance that the rules might have to be different for the extremely overfished East and South East Coasts, but it's kid stuff really.

When the process started we were spoon-fed a series of questions to try and limit what we could complain about, forcing me to scrawl long-hand that none of the big strategic issues were being dealt with.

The proposed changes are "chasing after" a declining stock, not leading the way to recovery. We are trying to limit a day's recreational catch to 3 when the stocks are already so low that the average diver or potter rarely catches over 2 per trip on the East Coast anyway. The number of extra crays that could be caught by new people entering the fishery is also not effectively capped.

We really needed a maximum size limit so there were more "bull" crays in the affected areas hoovering up invasive urchins, but there was no guarantee that the crays in the area would ever live long enough to get to that size (heaven forbid, we could have temporary closed areas near the main urchin barrens where there are currently few crays anyway – but that was a step too far it seems). Now the problem has been put back in the „too hard" basket until next time. Excuse me, is that ten years away, or twenty?

No-one wanted to talk about the North Coast which is virtually devoid of crays, due to low natural productivity and a long history of totally unsustainable fishing effort, too politically sensitive. We now have two sets of rules for the east and west, so we still have the enforcement problems, but we really needed 5 or 6 management areas to deal with cray stocks properly.

So I don't need to worry. I can safely leave it all to the fisheries management gurus. Apparently we have a near perfect fisheries regime. Whenever we have problems in the marine environment our pollies respond rapidly and objectively on all of the best science. They never squib on the big issues and never pander to narrow interest groups. That's odd, even the DPIPWE documents suggested we had the problem far from licked and would have to deal with some of the same unresolved issues again in the near future.

For my money, I'm reaching into my hip pocket for an insurance policy, because the fire brigade doesn't arrive until the outhouse is half burned down. I know where all the biodiversity hotspots are and I want them insured - by way of closed area marine parks!

What actually changes when you declare a Marine Park?

TAFI- IMAS has recently completed some research into changes taking place in our existing Marine Parks.

Earlier studies by Drs Graham Edgar and Neville Barrett showed a significant recovery of the reserves after fishing stopped. One example was that bastard trumpeter increased substantially in numbers within the Maria Island reserve but didn't increase outside the reserve. A similar result was found with rock lobster and abs also increased in size.

The big changes occurred in the big parks, in the little parks resident fish populations did not recover, assumedly because they more easily swam outside of the park and straight into nets set at the boundaries.

A later study investigated four Tasmanian marine reserves, but still mostly focused on the larger Maria Island Marine Reserve,

Crays and Abs

The size of crays continued to change within reserves, increasing from an average size of 90 mm in 1992 to 116 mm in 2001. The average size outside the reserve remained stable at about 83-86mm (basically the only legally sized crays left and capable of breeding were inside the reserve).

The total numbers of crays within the reserves have stabilised. After increasing more than threefold in the first five years of protection, there has been little change since. Outside the park there were roughly half as many crays.

The size of abalone within the Maria Is reserve has slowly increased while the abundance of abalone has declined by 50% inside the reserve. At the same time the abundances outside the park have remained relatively stable. Basically the abalone population changed from a large number of small fish, to a fewer number of large fish.

This study is just one of numerous international publications that show dramatic differences in the abundance and sizes of fished species when you declare a marine reserve and protect it from fishing pressure.

The Changing Oceans

One of the core benefits of a park is that it is the only place you can do long-term monitoring isolated from fishing effects, and this helps us to understand changes as a result of other threats like invasion by exotic species.

The recent studies indicated that the Tasmanian coast may be showing the effects of climate change. The warm east Australian current has always transported the larvae of a range of northern species southwards during the summer. In previous times these foreign visitors rarely survived the cold winter. With a CSIRO monitoring station recording an increase in average water temperatures off Maria Island of between 1 and 1.5 degrees over the past 30 years some of the vagrant species are spreading further south on a more permanent basis.

During the annual surveys there were increasing numbers of the warm-water loving long-spine urchin *Centrostephanus rodgersii*. Sea urchins can have an enormous impact on the environment by destructively overgrazing kelp and other seaweed and this can lead to enormous barren patches on the reef. The average numbers of long-spined urchins in the vicinity of Maria Island has increased five times during the period 1992 to 2001.

Inside the Maria Island reserve, the common urchin *Heliocidaris erythrogramma* is, for now, still the dominant large invertebrate. The good news is that inside reserves the urchin numbers are declining back to a more normal level. Urchin numbers have fallen by approximately 40% between 1992 and 2001. Outside the park the numbers fluctuated, but the decline has been minimal. The larger numbers and size of lobsters may explain why urchin numbers have been held back at the Maria Island reserve.

The introduced Japanese brown algae *Undaria pinnatifida* is also starting to take over some Tasmanian reefs. This Japanese algae was introduced in the 1980's by woodchip vessels discharging ballast waters at Triabunna. Since then has increased its range as far north as

Bicheno and as far south as Tinderbox. *Undaria* was found throughout the Maria Island reserve.

Undaria pinnatifida, disturbance species?

As the reserves reach a natural balance between predators and grazers, the native seaweed beds may have become more resistant to invasion. At Maria Island the abundance of *Undaria* appears to be stable. This suggests that this species can't compete with natural weeds under normal conditions. This changes if the native seaweed is disturbed. Individual *Undaria* plants are most common in areas around the reef fringe that have been recently damaged by storms. They also like areas changed by urchin overgrazing. In an urchin barren, *Undaria* can get to 100% cover. These studies inside marine reserves suggest that further urchin damage can be avoided by restraining cray fishing just enough to allow more large crays to survive in areas that are vulnerable to urchin damage.

Summary

Reserves work effectively in protecting some species from the effects of fishing at the local level. This has been very noticeable in species vulnerable to overfishing like crayfish, Wrasse and Bastard Trumpeter.

Reserves are also very useful for scientific research. We can use these parks as reference areas to check how things like climate change are affecting the oceans, without getting confused about what fishing might be adding to the equation. We can use this knowledge to test the ability of natural areas to withstand invasion and the importance of human disturbance on the remaining areas. This helps us to design a better fisheries management system along the rest of the coast.

It is my view that the declaration of further marine reserves should be supported, even by the most ardent fisherman. Reserves make fishing more viable in the long-term, as well as protecting the environment. In the long run, only a healthy ocean is capable of supporting recreational fishing in the long-term. The benefits are worth the small sacrifice in a few relatively small areas.

Plastic and Seabirds

Source; TMAG website

Marine Biologist Dr. Jennifer Lavers is leading a number of research projects that are investigating the impacts of marine debris on Australia's seabirds. Daily, more than eight million pieces of plastic enter our oceans. Seabirds eat the plastic after mistaking it for food floating on the ocean surface. Plastic contains toxic chemicals and it also collects further toxins while floating on the sea. Once eaten, the plastic can block or rupture a seabird's digestive tract and leak toxins into the bird's blood stream. The result is ulcers, liver damage, infertility, and in many cases, death.

Here in Tasmania, the Short-tailed Shearwater *P. tenuirostris* is one of the many magnificent marine species that suffer from eating plastics. A new project launched in 2011, and supported by the Tasmanian Museum, will investigate whether this bird species is also at risk from heavy metal contamination.

It doesn't matter whether your favourite view is across a boat deck, surfboard, kayak, wheelhouse or outhouse, if you would like that view to include an encounter with Tasmania's real majesty, it's marine life, then you need to hold of f on throwing overboard that plastic beer can d-ring or bait wrapper. We all make simple little decisions like this, that can make a big difference.

Seabird with a stomach full of discarded plastic material. Photo by Chris Jordan, taken in North Pacific.

Film Review – *End of the Line*

Recently I went to the "End of the Line" being shown at the Arts theatre in Hunter Street, hosted by Ocean Planet. I believe the AMC is also showing similar films in the north of the State at the Newnham campus from time to time.

They are cheap nights out usually costing about $5 and Ocean Planet have done a great job lining up the films and getting corporate sponsorship. The films generally have a conservation theme and this time it was overfishing.

The first thing that I noticed was that the usual suspects in the scientific and fisheries management area didn't attend. Either because they are too smart to go out on such a cold night, or they have seen it before. I know some people who hate this film, saying that it distorts the fisheries management picture and tars Australian fisheries management with the same brush as the collapsed northern fisheries. They also point out that fish stock don't react by going so readily to species extinction as is portrayed. Some view it is a polemic rather than a documentary.

I actually found that the filmakers focused quite openly on particularly badly managed fisheries in the northern hemisphere and I didn't take it that this meant the whole world fishery is managed by incompetents. The take home messages were to reward fishermen who manage well, by reading the label and buying local, better managed, fish products. A good message for all fishermen in the south I would have thought.

To ram this message home there were lots of close-ups of blood drenched hands, fish being hacked to death and turtles drowning in nets. Not a movie for kids so it turned out. If you don't get more involved than this simple emotional message, and totally switch all your brain cells into 'sleep mode', I suppose you could read into this that all fishermen are murderers and all fisheries management scientists are morons. I naively think people might end up being smarter than that at the end of the day.

I was amused to see some of the similarities with the local fisheries management regime, particularly the way quotas were politically manipulated at odds with the scientific stock assessments. There were other parts that cut a bit close to the bone for the comfort of the 'leave it to us to manage, she'll be right' brigade that operate in our neighbourhood.

I can also see why cutting fisheries quotas to accommodate marine parks would be a hard sell with some fishing groups that can be reluctant to accept even the existing quotas, but I don't think that invalidates the idea for my money.

If you want to be sent reminders about upcoming movies, sign up at www.oceanplanet.org.au.

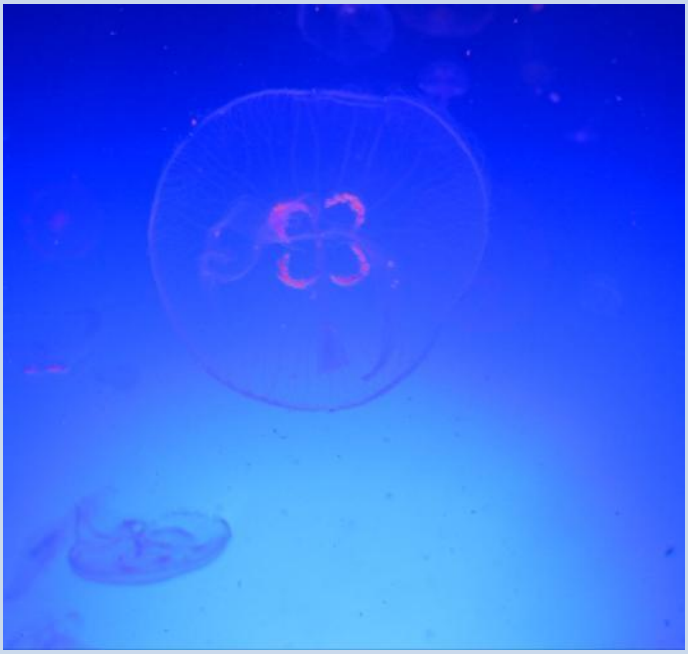
Serious Kids Stuff

By AMY (Age 10 & 3/4s)

The Perth Aquarium

We went to Western Australia and went to the aquarium at Hillary's Boat Harbour. It was really cool. They had fish from every part of the coast, the South West, the Shipwreck Coast, the Turquoise Coast and the tropics. We visited a lot of those places in the car. Michael did some snorkelling, but I went to the aquarium and got to see the fish life without getting wet. They even had crocodiles, and a Cold Rock ice cream shop nearby. I really like Lemon Sorbet with gummy bears mixed in.

It was so much fun I wanted to swim in the aquarium with the sharks. I wasn't scared, but I asked Michael to come with me (if they got hungry they could eat him first). In the end, it cost too much money and I didn't go. You can visit the shark aquarium through a big glass tunnel, just like Melbourne Aquarium, and it's great.



The best part was the shallow touch pool. I could pick up starfish and also touch the stingrays. One had skin like sandpaper, but the other one was slimy. They always wanted food, so they swam right up to your hand. I went back twice. Mum showed me the sea cucumbers, but I didn't want to touch them. They gross me out! Well they look like poo!

Amy's Serious Editorial [rant]

Why can't we have this sort of stuff in Tasmania. We don't even have a science museum like Perth's Scitech. Scitech had water saving facts made up like a pinball machine, lasers that make harp sounds, a murder mystery puzzle solved using science, and a robot that paints your picture, and lots of other cool stuff.

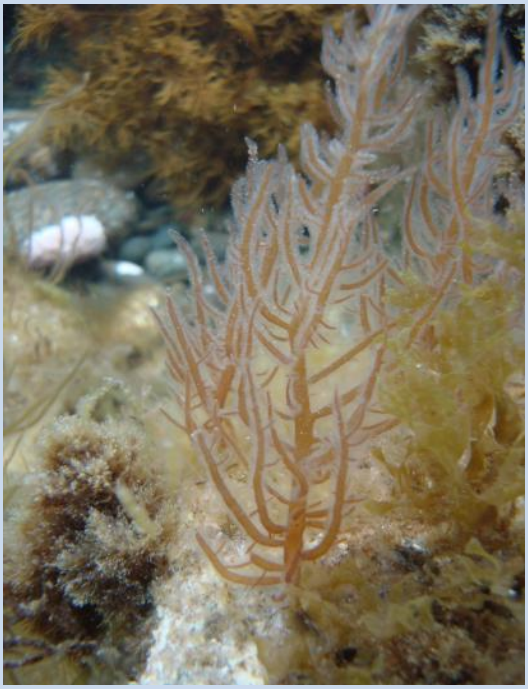
Everything in Tasmania is lame-ish. We have an aquarium at Bicheno but it doesn't have jellyfish or sharks. The mountain is nice when it's snowing, but everything else is lame. Even the beach looks nice, but it is too cold to go swimming. The shopping is no good either, you can't get white or blue leather anywhere!

Seriously, we need to talk to the government and ask them what they are doing about tourist attractions in Tasmania. Why can't we have an aquarium or science museum. Seahorse World is only good for seeing seahorses. We need jellyfish, sharks and I'd also like to see crocodiles. I think we also need an amusement park for kids. We could do it all at the same time and have a roller coaster going right through a tunnel full of sharks...awesome!

Who cares about seaweed? Part IV

THE SHADY REDS

With over 4,000 species, most from marine habitats, the red algae are the biggest group of seaweeds. They are also the hardest to tell apart and can often only be identified under a microscope. They can also be the most delicate and beautiful of all the seaweeds.



Red algae come in a variety of shades of red due to additional red protein pigments in the fronds. The red colour is not uniform and some species are purple, mauve, orange or even yellow. This pigment reflects red light and absorbs blue light. Because blue light penetrates water to a greater depth than light of longer wavelengths (like red, orange, yellow), these pigments allow red algae to live at greater depths than most other algae. Red algae can occur down to 200 metres depth. They can also live in the shallows under the shade of bigger brown seaweeds, or in caves where light penetration is poor.

Red algae have a wide variety of forms, including encrusting, string-like, tube-like, filamentous and flat sheets.

Red algae should not be confused with "red tides" which are actually caused by single-celled algae (phytoplankton) some species of which can produce toxins that can kill fish or cause paralytic shellfish poisoning. (No marine macroalgae are known to be toxic or harmful to humans).

Encrusting coraline algae

Red algae are unusual among the algae because they can include in their cell walls calcium carbonate which gives the plants a hard 'skeleton'. This makes it resistant to wear from big seaweed fronds and wave-action. Red algae that grow this way are referred to as "coralline" algae, because they are hard, like corals.
They come in upright forms and some species are "crustose" meaning that they can grow in a thin crusty mat over rocks. In Tasmania they are an attractive pink-red colour

mostly. Coralline algae dominate the bare rock surfaces in shallow water where other plants can't survive the lashing they get in the swell from dominant canopy forming seaweeds like Bull kelp.

In some parts of the world, upright and crustose red algae can form massive reefs. In some Pacific atolls, red algae have contributed far more to reef structure than other organisms, even more than coral polyps. Geological cores taken on the Great Barrier Reef have shown that up to 70% of the marine sediments are made up of calcium carbonate deposits from the green algal genus Halimeda.

Red Algae pest - grateloupia turu turu
Photo per ABC website

In 2008 another Japanese seaweed pest was detected spreading along Tasmania's east coast, from Bicheno to the Tasman Peninsula. It is suspected the foreign red algae arrived via ballast water from international ships. The impact of this species is not very well understood but its known growth pattern and habitat preferences make it a potential threat to our native algal species.

Grateloupia turuturu *tends to occur in lower intertidal and shallow sub tidal areas to* depths of 2m in both sheltered and exposed locations. The species often spreads when spores are transported in ship ballast water or through hull fouling of ships and recreational vessels.

My Compact Fave Foto

Swansea, by Mike Jacques

Critter Files

Living With TOADIES

By Mike Jacques

Photos: Aust Museum

In a past life, on weekend trips to Bribie Island, I would walk out to the end of the jetty. Along the way, I would have to dodge the half-shriveled remains of Toadfish that had been cast aside on the jetty to die. I asked one of the fishermen why he was doing that and he said "ya can't eat 'em, and it just leaves more food for the other fish". They also stole baits. I suspect the reason why they were only catching toadies had little to do with lack of available food, and perhaps a lot to do with the huge fishing pressure at the jetty.

Toadies aren't aware that their role in life is to change themselves into something that can be eaten by humans, and instead go about minding their own business in estuaries and shallow foreshore areas. In these tough environments their tolerance for changing salinity allows them to do well. They also acquire enough toxins from their food to make a poison, tetradotoxin, and this allow them to thrive in predator infested areas like the Bribie Island jetty. They do all this with a face that only a mother could love.

There were a lot of Toadies about and you could hand feed schools of them along the shoreline with bits of bread. An unloved fish, getting attention from a stressed out 'concrete jungle' dweller. I must be an exception to the rule that humans don't like toadfish, but I checked on-line fishing forum and attitudes are changing,

"[I] once just threw them up on the beach to be left high and dry thinking they were a pest. I saw last year toadies eating a dead stingray I then realised that they are the oceans clean up crew and are an important part of the aquatic environment"

I also checked the on-line history sites and apparently every lad in Hobart once enjoyed catching toadies in the local rivulets with a piece of string and a bent pin. It was cheap fun, but all the locals threw them back, because they knew they were poisonous to eat. According to one 1877 theory, it was because the flesh had been spoiled by exposure to the moonlight (assumedly because they are always in shallow water).

Every now and again, either a kid or a migrant, would take one home for the cooking pot. Around 1835, newly arrived Mrs Bell and her 2 children died from eating toadfish that the boys had caught in Newtown Rivulet. The doctor tried a stomach pump but to no avail. If the toadie didn't kill them, then the treatment might have. The suggested remedy was to feed the patient arsenic.

In 1862, Mary Forster (assumedly the street in New Town is named after her), age 68, died from eating a toadfish.

As late as 1950, a boy of 11 died at Castle Forbes Bay, three hours after eating a fish he caught in Kermandie Creek. Apart from the fatalities there have also been many an ill diner who has recovered after a couple of horror-filled days of regurgitation.

Smooth Toadfish, *Tetractenos glaber*

The Smooth Toadfish grows to 15 cm in length and is endemic to Australia. It occurs from southern Queensland to Tasmania and as far west as the central coast of South Australia.

Toadie Masterchef

At last we have a cooking section, just in case too much evening TV programming wasn't enough!

Menu Choices for Toadfish

1. Toadfish with alcohol
   In NSW a 40-year-old man recently presented to a metropolitan teaching hospital. He stated that he had eaten 10 small toadfish eight hours earlier, together with drinking a significant quantity of alcohol. Following ingestion of the toadfish he had collapsed a number of times and felt tingling of his hands and feet and around his mouth. After uneventful overnight observation, he was discharged.

2. **Toadfish Soup- a treat for the whole family**
   Also in NSW, seven adults and two children ate a soup made from about 30 puffer fish, gutted with heads intact and boiled in fresh water. One child was completely asymptomatic, and the other had mild symptoms. Most of the seven adults presented to hospital with nausea, numbness, dizziness. Several patients had vomiting and one was experiencing respiratory distress. Most symptoms resolved over 48 hours.

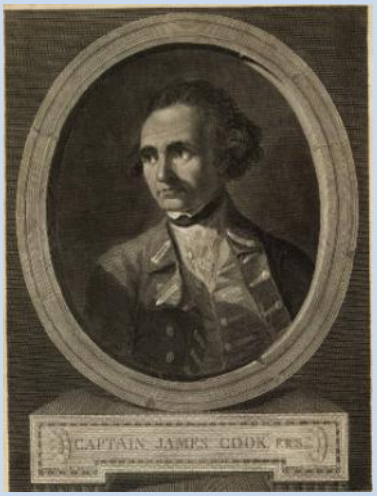
3. **Snacks for Dogs – and a treat for shorebirds!**
   Every year several dogs running on the beach without a leash have died from eating toadies and pufferfish that have been cast aside by fishermen. Leash your dog and walk on the wet sand only. It's good for the breeding seabirds who hate disturbance of their nesting sites, and also good for your dog.

A long way back to the car

Hesitant to share his story, I think I ought to brush aside modesty and let you know about an acquaintance's recent surfing experiences. One keen surfer entered the water at Goat Bluff during the July monster 8M seas. Instead of a quick ride in, he got a fast ride out to sea on a riptide. To give you some idea of the ferocity of the ocean on the day, he eventually reached land several hours later, many kilometres away at Cremorne. A long hike back to the car, with plenty of time to contemplate his good fortune.

Early Tassie Explorers - their marine observations

COOK, 1777.



The next visitor to Van Diemen's was Cook, on his third southern voyage with H.M.S. *Resolution* and *Discovery*. While he is a big figure in history, his Tasmanian stay was pretty unimportant. We have to include him, as he's the doyen of all Anglo-Saxon mythology, but he was sensible enough to actually be in a rush to be elsewhere.

Cook was born in Yorkshire, his father was a Scottish farm labourer. At 16, Cook was apprenticed as a shop boy. He hated it and went to Whitby to join a coal ship. He wasn't faking it, he really fell in love with the sea.

In 1755 Cook volunteered for Navy service in order to 'do his bit' during the Seven Years War. He showed his metal and helped take one French warship and sank another. There were lots of heroes taking ships, but Cook also had a brain. During his service he showed a talent for mapping and could even invent new navigational systems.

The Admiralty noticed, and in 1768 he left for Tahiti to observe the transit of Venus, mapped eastern Australia and also visited New Zealand. His maps and journeys made him a hero, something like a modern day astronaut. In 1772 he left on his 'second voyage' to search for the mythical "south land". When he found only empty ocean, the armchair critics assumed he must have been asleep at the wheel. He set off on his third voyage to go over every inch of the Southern Ocean and kill off the 'South Land' notion for good. He was also told to find the North-West Passage.

He made the South-west Cape of Tasmania on Jan. 24, 1777, and steered eastward along the shore. He anchored in Adventure Bay to get fodder for his penned-up cattle. Captain Cook's account of this stay agrees mostly with Furneaux's, but at this time of year he found an abundance of fish, and had frequent meetings with Aboriginal people.

William Bayly, astronomer on the *Discovery* wrote, *"In the morning I carried my tent observatory & instruments on shore & set all up, but was not able to get any observations it being cloudy all day, in the evening Capt Cook Sent for me & told me he had altered his mind relative to his stay, & ordered me to pack all up & carry the whole on board again, as he intend[ed] to sail for New Zealand in a day or two."*

Cook had a mission, and Adventure Bay was an area already explored by Furneaux. He went on to more interesting places and explored the

South Pacific exhaustively. He also proved the Bering Strait impassable.

The Hawaiians at first thought Cook was a God, but when his crew began to eat all their crops, they decided he might be some kind of devil. Cook was later killed in a skirmish with the Hawaiians.

BLIGH, 1788.

Constant wars kept the European powers away from Tasmania for another decade, until a small shoestring expedition was entrusted to one of Cook's talented protégés.

William Bligh was born in Cornwall to a modest family. He was signed him up to the Navy at the age of seven in order to give him a chance of bettering himself in one of the few careers available to a person of his lowly social stature. He started as a seaman. His intelligence and drive was noticed by Capt James Cook. Bligh was later made master of the "Resolution" and went on Cook's third and fatal voyage to the Pacific. He visited Adventure Bay with Cook in 1777.

In 1787, Bligh was selected as commander of the *Bounty*. He was ordered to go to Tahiti and obtain specimens of breadfruit wanted as a food crop for tropical slave colonies. He was unlucky, and also possibly carried the heavy weight of a 'chip on his shoulder' about his modest background.

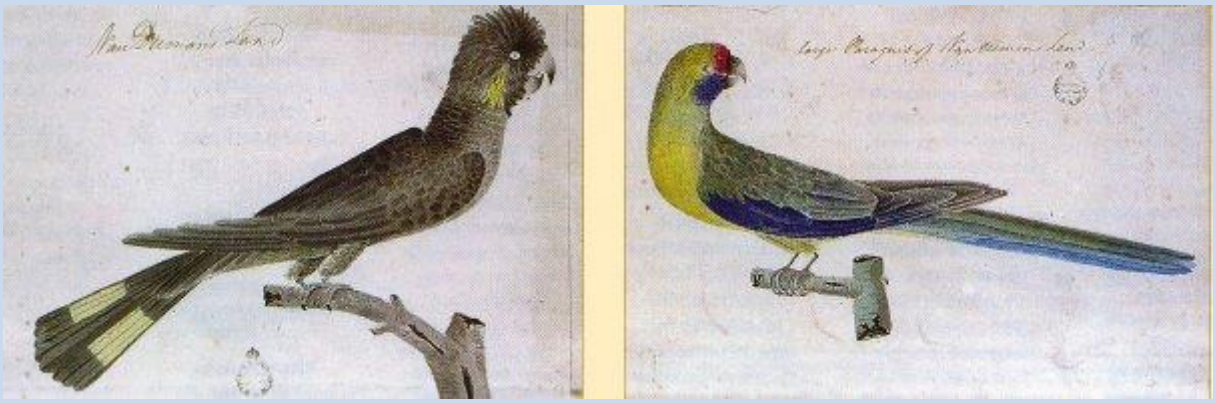
Observations at Adventure Bay

In 1788, Bligh sailed into Adventure Bay aboard the "H.M.S. Bounty" and dropped anchor. He needed fresh water supplies and wood for the ship's fires and knew he could find them in Tasmania. Fletcher Christian was in charge of the shore party and he took the opportunity to add to the ship's natural collections with his gun. He shot a number of birds. A pod of whales cavorting in the bay escaped a similar fate only because the ship's armoury did not include any "proper harpoons for them."

The "Bounty" had a nursery of fruit trees that Bligh had acquired at the Cape of Good Hope. He *"chose what we thought the safest situations, and planted three fine young Apple-Trees in a growing State, nine Vines, six Plantains, a number of Orange and Lemon seed, Cherry stones, Plum stones, Peach, Apricot & Pumpkins, also two sorts of Indian Corn, and Apple and Pear pips"* in order *"to do good the most in our power to the Natives or those who may come after us."*

It was a fortnight before he saw sign of Aboriginal people and this was only in the distance through his telescope. Eventually he set out in the ship's longboat to where several fires had been seen. It was not long before a group of about twenty men and women emerged from the bush making "a prodigious chattering of speech." Owing to a heavy surf it was not possible to land and he was restricted to throwing presents tied up in paper to them. Nevertheless from a distance of twenty metres he was able to observe them in some detail. "*They were certainly woolly headed*", he noted, *"as much as even a Negroe was. Their teeth appeared remarkably white - They run very nimble over the rocks. They talked to us sitting on their heels with their knees close in to their armpits. They have a quick eye, as they caught small nails and beads I threw at them with some cleverness"*.

Bligh found fresh clean water in a gully that was dry on his previous visit with Cook.



Two birds from the sketch book of William Bligh

The Bounty sailed from Adventure Bay September 4th.1788, headed for Tahiti to take delivery of breadfruit plants.

Bligh the Tyrant

Historians haven't been able to find much evidence that Bligh was more severe than any other RN commander of the time, perhaps less so. He was more a victim of his circumstances. After delays on the voyage he was forced to wait 5 months at Tahiti for the breadfruit to mature ready for shipment. In the relaxed environment of Tahiti discipline broke down and Bligh had little but his own will to help keep control. He was only a Lieutenant in rank, his crew was small, he was the only career RN officer onboard, and he had no armed marine detachment to help keep order.

Fletcher Christian had access to the weapons store and 18 of the crew joined him in a mutiny. The majority of the crew supported Bligh, but they didn't have the stomach for a fight against armed men. Bligh, with 14 of the 18 most loyal crewmen, was forced into a 23 foot ship's boat. They were abandoned to certain death, but Bligh was a skilled and determined seaman. The castaways travelled 3,618 nautical miles (6,701 km) to Timor in 47 days. Whatever else is said of Bligh in the popular media, his captaincy during this dangerous journey in an open boat remains one of history's most epic sea journeys.

The mutineers who stayed at Tahiti were caught by H.M.S. Pandora which was later wrecked on the Great Barrier Reef. Ten made it to England and three of these hanged. The rest of the mutineers escaped to Pitcairn Island.

Bligh was exonerated by the Admiralty. To set the record straight, he was given the job of going back to collect more breadfruit. He was to carry out his second mission with success. On the way Captain William Bligh put into Adventure Bay with the *Providence* and *Assistant* in 1792; for wood and water.

Bligh's second Tasmania visit

Bligh was disappointed to find that, of the fruit trees he had planted on his previous visit, only one apple tree had survived. It had not grown at all but was still in a healthy state and he had hopes that it would eventually produce fruit. His lack of success as a gardener did not stop him from planting nine oak trees as well as sowing more fruit stones and some fir seed. A cock and two hens were released into the bush in the hope that "they would breed and get wild".

Bligh's curiosity led him to explore a small lake [lagoon] at the back of the beach in one of the ship's boats. Although its water was brackish it was plentifully stocked with fish, particularly bream, "of which we caught seven in a few minutes with hook and line." The lake also supported a large variety of birds including wild ducks, pelicans, black swans and herons. One crewman shot a cockatoo which Bligh described in some detail: "the plumage was brown tinged with black & olive, on each side of the head a yellow spot. Six of the long tail feathers were yellow speckled with black, about 3 inches in the middle, so that when they flew it formed a circular yellow mark." Gannets were also a favourite of Bligh's but for a different reason - *"Roasted with its skin off (it) is preferable to any of the others, & is remarkably free of any fishy taste."*

A member of Bligh's crew, sketched an aboriginal hut

The Rum Rebellion

Bligh went on to distinguished service including important aid he gave to Nelson during the Battle of Copenhagen, forwarding Nelson's signal to continue the fight in defiance of his superior's orders to disengage. The British achieved total victory as a result of Nelson's order.

In 1805 he was made Governor of NSW with orders to put a stop to discipline breaches by the NSW Corps (also known as the Rum Corps). If he had a flaw, Bligh was dogmatic and inclined to be insulting to those who were challenging his authority. He threatened the fortunes of corrupt Army officers and then insulted them to boot. In 1808, they deposed him and he sailed to Hobart to win support to retake NSW. Instead he was virtually imprisoned on his ship. He departed for England in 1810 to attend the trial of the rebel ringleader.

In order to discourage other potential rebels, Bligh was not blamed or criticised. He received a backdated promotion to Rear Admiral, but he was never given another command. He died a few years later.

Strangely, his descendants appear to have preferred to emigrate to Australia through the centuries and they now include the current Premier of Queensland, Anna Bligh.

MEMENTOS – Odd marine life sightings

Mercury 12/3/1951

"HUGE TURTLE LANDED AT KING ISLAND

A King Island fisherman found a huge sea turtle tangled in the buoy line of one of his crayfish pots on Saturday.

King Island residents estimated it weighed about a ton and measured about 6ft. long by 4ft. wide.

The fisherman (Mr. S. Darley) found the turtle caught by the neck and front flippers. He took the line aboard his boat, Pattinna, and towed the turtle to Currie Harbour where residents used a motor truck to pull it on to the beach. Fishermen killed the turtle and cut it up for crayfish bait.

The turtle is the biggest King Island residents remember. A turtle caught off New Years Island several years ago was not as big."

Icons of Marine Conservation – Take III

Did we all get our initiation into marine matters by getting wet as adults, or by reading the comments of smart alec's pushing marine magazines. Of course not, popular culture has been instrumental in exposing people to a marine world they do not otherwise see.

Skippy goes Troppo- "Barrier Reef"

In the first twenty years of Australian television, three marine related series were made:- Adventures Of The Seaspray, The Rovers and Barrier Reef. The third of these, Barrier Reef, was packaged by the makers of "Skippy" and tried to flog the same Aussie formula.

Production commenced at Hayman Island in 1969, shortly after the moon landings. Expectations about 'exploring brave new frontiers in science' were high. It was the first series in the world to feature extensive colour underwater filming on location. It was reported at the time to be the most expensive series ever produced in Australia.

The real 'star' of Barrier Reef was the majestic barquentine 'New Endeavour', a 135 feet long genuine Danish windjammer that the producers restored for the film. The series was about a supposed research team, who never have to struggle for funding or fill out paperwork. Instead they loll about all day looking glamorous before taking off on an unlikely underwater adventure. Cousteau's crew had their trademark red caps, but this crew wore lycra in a criminal way.

Like a lot of these early series they try to outdo their underwater TV rivals with more gizmos. They had flashy diving helmets and streamlined tanks and a neat underwater sub. They also had a fibreglass shark ready for impossible fight scenes, with a diver's knife always winning the day.

The dialogue was stunted machismo and the girls just had to answer the radiophone and clean the toilet between bouts of skimpy bikini wearing. They did deal with issues of conservation and the 'Crown of Thorns' starfish threat was mentioned often during the series. The days filming usually ended with some sort of reef conservation message.

Barrier Reef was sold to over fifty countries, including Britain where it was screened by the BBC. The producers spent too much money on it and the show went broke after 39 episodes.

WHAT'S ON in October - November 2011

WOULD you like to advertise an event with a marine flavour, or advertise a web address? Let us know! So far only the scuba divers send me stuff.

Scuba diving clubs online calendars

TUDC – http://www.tudc.org.au/diving/dive_calendar.php
TSDC – http://www.tsdc.org.au
Contact us for TSAC, Ocean Plus and Leven upcoming events.

Coastal Walks

http://www.hobartwalkingclub.org.au/html/fwdwlks.html

Sea and Shorebird Sightings

See http://www.eremaea.com/BirdlineRecentSightings.aspx?Birdline=3

Surfrider events

May to December 2011: Roving "Surf Competition and Beach Clean" up initiative with Launceston University Surf Team (LUST). 7 competitions, 7 beach cleanups. Where ever there is good surf!

Other projects in the planning stage include Flinders Island Marine Debris initiative (with local fisherman) and grant applications (underway) for a compost toilet and facilities at Tamo Shanter Bay in Northern Tasmania.

If you are interested in participating, have a project you would like to "own" or get help with, or if you simply want further details on the initiatives above, please contact Peter Whish-Wilson on pwhish-w@bigpond.net.au OR 0410 754 728, or Julia Durack on julia.durack@gmail.com

We're on Facebook!

As part of a 'where are we all going with this?' discussion, we have decided to 'do' social media. Please go to Facebook and 'like' our "Marine Life Magazine" page. Emma and Geoff are monitoring the page and will post tidbits of info and respond to your requests.

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, it's 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*

Back Issues

We have been gathering together a lot of information and stories since November 2009, so if you are new and interested, please log on our back issues page which has been generously hosted by the Tasmanian University Dive Club,
http://www.tudc.org.au/news/marinelife.php