

# Sea Braggin'



November 2015

## St George Scuba Club Newsletter

**Thursday Night Dive 15 October 2015**

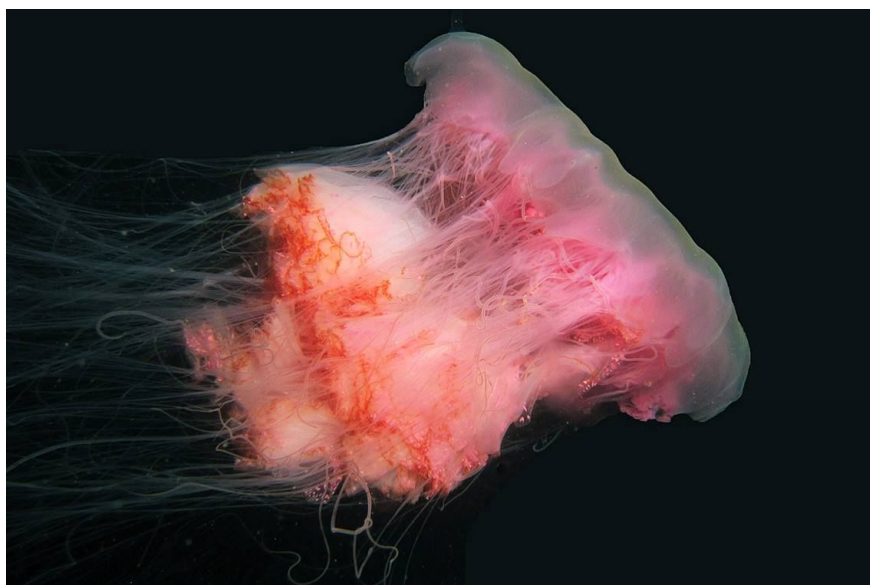
**Bare Island Deep Wall**

**By Maxine Hayden**

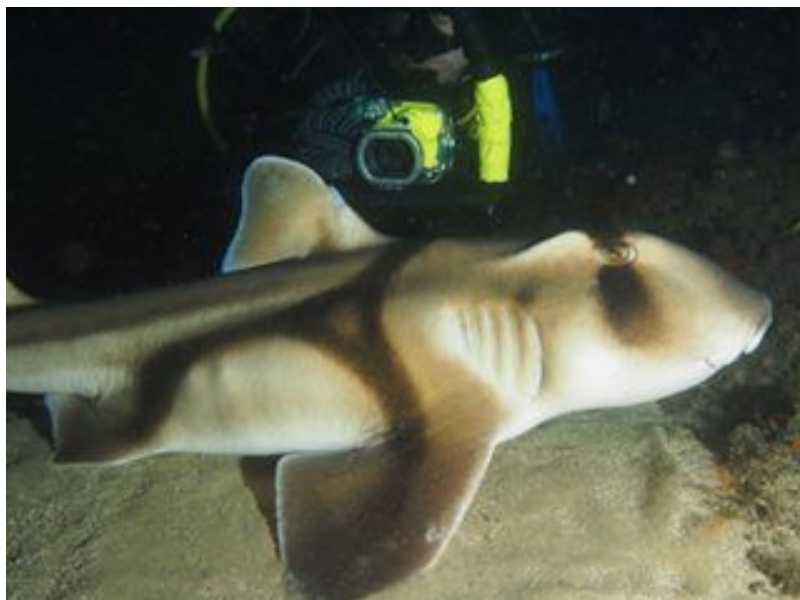
**Photos by Roger Lee , Gary Dunnett and Ron Walsh**

A warm but breezy night saw 6 members assemble for this dive; Ron, Keith, Gary, Mark, Roger and myself. Ken Ridley came to say hello as did Marcus Campbell. The night was not without incident. Gary was madly running around the carpark trying to borrow fins and a mask as he had forgotten his. That costs you a beer fine in the Desperate Divers, Gary!

We crossed the bridge and entered on the back west side. There was a bit of a surge and Gary dropped his torch on entry and I lost a pair of gloves. A quick search found nothing so we headed off towards the Deep Back Wall.







Port Jackson sharks were in abundance as it is breeding season. One even bumped into me in the dark. My buddy Keith was fortunate enough to see two mating on the sand but their romance ended abruptly as we lumbered through. Lion's Mane jellyfish were also active and we saw four of them during our dive. One had several glass fish within its short, thick tentacles as we swam by, trying to avoid its longer, finer strands suspending down towards us.

We headed west where an enormous school of balling catfish approached and almost engulfed us, swarming and writhing as one and trying to get closer to our lights. Keith spotted a juvenile Lionfish and we saw several Red Indian Fish along the reef. There were lots of Blue Serpents which all appeared to be curled up asleep in opposition to the many white skinny worms swimming and gyrating above the sand.

We observed a few Mourning Cuttlefish in full camouflage, a shy blue groper and the obligatory photo bombing wrasse. During the dive I also saw a beardie, frogfish, sergeant baker, banded seaperch and an octopus that Keith



managed to catch before it latched onto his arm. Our total dive time was 65 minutes and water temp ranged from 18-20 degrees. Maximum depth was 18m and viz was between 6-8m by torchlight. We

had pizza after at the new shop where three prawns were spotted on top of a large four seasons.

Thank you gentlemen for a lovely evening.





# Lembeh Strait and Bunaken Marine Park North Sulawesi Indonesia 5<sup>th</sup> September to 26<sup>th</sup> September 2015-10-13

## Part 2: Lembeh Strait Week 2

Edited by Paul Pacey

Photos by Chris Heath, Eddie Ivers, Paul Pacey, Dave Casburn



## Introduction

In September 2015 10 divers made the trip from Australia to Indonesia to dive Lembbeh Strait and Bunaken Island. This is part 2 of their story covering the second week at Lembbeh Strait.

### Day Seven: John McPherson reports...

Dive 1: Aer Bajo 2

Dive 2: Pantai Parigi 1

Dive 3: Jahir 1

Dive 4: Mandarin Fish

The day is off to a bad start as we've now been running without the Espresso machine for 3 days.

The water temp is only 24C for our first dive at Aer Bajo 2 which surprisingly had poor vis today. Saw some Nudibranch's, Robust Ghost Pipefishes. We spent most of the dive unsuccessfully looking for a Mimic Octopus.

On to Pantai Parigi for our next dive which is also on a black sandy slope. Saw various Nudibranch's, Scorpion fish, Yellow Gobies, Anemone fish, Flamboyant Cuttlefish and Porcelain Crabs.

The third dive at Jahir also showed up a Mantis Shrimp clutching a ball of eggs.

Paul - John wrote quite a bit more but I could not read it. He does work in health care after all.

Paul – this evening some of us also did a dive at the dive site called Bianca to see the Mandarin Fish. This was fantastic. You turn up near dusk and kneel on the sand in front of a staghorn coral reef. As you watch, the Mandarin Fish are courting as they swim through the coral maze. Once they decide to mate

they rise up from the coral towards the surface laying their eggs and fertilising them as they go. This is amazing to watch. At one stage one of our dive guides swam up to me and pointed out that I was almost leaning on a tiny Clown Anglerfish that had wandered over to watch the mandarin Fish show as well.







### Day Eight: John Prior reports...

Dive 1: Angels Window

Dive 2: Binuang

Dive 3: Tandu Rusa

Dive 4: Mandarin Fish Dive at Bianca

Weather was 22C to 24C, partly cloudy with wind gusts to 20 knots.

We set out east along the Strait heading for Angels Window which is near the entry to the Lembeh Strait. There is a point which has a pinnacle that rises to about 5M below the surface and under the pinnacle is a swim through cave which is lined with large Gorgonian Fans. Vis was over 10M.

For our second dive we headed to Binuang which is named after the nearby village. The dive site is another black sandy slope from 2 to 24 metres deep. The dive sites near the villages seem to have a bottom coated with a fine silt layer so you have to carefully watch your buoyancy. Abner had found a large Frogfish and was tempting it with a dead mackerel that he found somewhere. It was the first time I had seen a fish running along the bottom.

Paul - I witnessed this Frogfish baiting myself and it was totally hilarious to watch as the Frogfish actually "bounded" across the bottom to get to the bait.

The third dive was to Tandu Rusa (Staghorn Deer). Again a black sandy slope from 5M down to 20M. This was a particularly sad dive for me as I flooded my camera just before the dive started.

I couldn't read some of John's writing after this point – I think he was crying as he contemplated the anguish of making the insurance claim for the camera – Paul.

The Frogfish at this dive site were very co-operative and would actually pose for photos (sigh).

Conclusion: Angels Window was the pick of the dives for the day as it had calm water protected from the strong wind. With a nice cave to swim through and nice corals and clouds of fish which you don't see much of on the sandy slope sites.







Central – they were everywhere you looked and, again, many of them I have not seen before even on dives at Lembbeh so far. Abner threw in the occasional Flatworm for good measure too. Then Eddie showed Abner how to find a Robust Ghost Pipefish. Abner fired back with a Wonderpus and then a Tiger Shrimp for good measure. I found a spark plug!

For the afternoon dive we hit Nudi Falls again. As soon as we dropped to the bottom we almost fell on top of two Morose Tambja Nudibranchs. Maybe this is why it's called "Nudi Falls"? (OK, Dad Joke, groan).



Half a dozen random Nudi's later Abner works his magic by finding a yellow Painted Anglerfish only 15mm long. Abner's eyesight is amazing. We were also finding heaps of stuff ourselves. Then Abner trumped us by finding a Clown Anglerfish which was huge (well, it was nearly 18mm long). Then Abner hit his straps by finding two Robust Ghost Pipefish together and later finding an Ornate Ghost Pipefish to cap off an amazing dive.

At 5:00pm Chris, Eddie and myself headed out onto the House Reef for a look around.

We were out for 90 minutes and all we found was two Nudibranch's, One Pipefish, some Filefish and a Bobtailed Squid. Over a Bintang we all agreed that, if we were dive guides, we'd soon starve to death.

### Day 11: Steve reports...

Dive 1: Coral Garden

Dive 2: Aer Bajo 1

Dive 3: Makawide Pier

Dive 4:

Our first dive to the Coral Garden is one of my favourite dives in Lembbeh. The soft corals in the shallows are spectacular and some have soft coral shrimp which are really hard to find as they are the exact same colour as the coral. There are also many fan corals and Pygmy Sea-horses were seen on 3 of the fans – some in deeper water and one around 10M. One of the highlights was getting a photo of a black Crocodile Fish with its mouth gaping open.



The second dive to Aer Bajo 1 was another long dive of at least 60 minutes for most people as most time was spent around the 20M depth. Ghost Pipefish, Hairy Scorpion Fish, Mantis Shrimp and Anglerfish were again seen.

The third dive to Makawide Pier was memorable for the small (70cm) Bamboo Shark we saw. It appeared to be having a nap and was not bothered by all the flashing. Also saw two white Ghost Pipefish, a small Clown Anglerfish, a Mototi Octopus, Glass Shrimp and two Ambon Scorpion Fish settled together on the sandy bottom.



#### **Day Twelve: Chris reports...**

Dive 1: California Dreaming

Dive 2: Batu Mera

Dive 3: Police Pier

Dive 4: Nudi Falls night dive

This is a dive in open water near the end of the strait. There was a reasonably strong current running at the point of the headland. The point was covered in yellow and orange soft corals. A couple of

Pom Pom Crabs were also found by the guides at the point.

The second dive was to the premier dive site called Batu Mera. We saw a solar powered Nudibranch and some people saw a Hairy Octopus. We searched for small crabs; Pom Pom Crabs were a specialty. The dive ended on a great reef.

The third dive was at Police Pier – let's dive in the rubbish tip! A great dive for two Frogfish and a banded Pipefish. I also saw my first Clown Anglerfish.

We also went on a night dive to Nudi Falls. This was a great dive done by eight of our team. Dave and John Prior succumbed to the stress of the day. Among other things we saw numerous different coloured Painted Anglerfish.

#### **Final Thoughts for Lembeh**

Well, as the song says, "all good things must end some day" and so it was on day 14 (Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> September) that we had to pack our bags and bid farewell to all our new friends that we'd made at NAD Lembeh.

A huge THANK YOU to our NAD dive guides: Tamrin, Marnes, Abner, Amba and Boa.





We also owe a huge THANK YOU to the owners of NAD Resort, Simon and Zee, and to our Dive Manager Serge and Linda (who keeps the office running while we're out having fun). NAD is an exceptional dive resort in every way. It is owned by dive fanatics, managed by dive fanatics and staffed by dive fanatics. It's a truly great place to go and to be.

You know, the more I think about it, the Lembeh Strait IS probably the best muck diving area in the world, and I would be surprised to find anything better (but I'm going to keep looking).

NAD arranged to transfer us over to Manado Harbour where we were to be picked up by the staff from MC Dive Resort on Bunaken Island for the next stage of our dive adventure. More about the next part of our trip in the next newsletter.

Good Bye NAD.

BUT, we will definitely be returning...

The damage bill:

- One Espresso machine
- One boat window (large)
- One Sea & Sea strobe (successfully resuscitated)
- One Sony compact camera.
- One Canon G16 camera.
- One reef pointer (missing in action)

Many thanks to the whole team for helping write this trip report.

And for doing and/or saying something crazy every day – it would be boring if you didn't.





## Barrens Hut / Pizza Reef 10 October 2015

By Ron Walsh

Photos: Ray Moulang and Ron Walsh

The morning dawned nice and sunny with no wind. I had four boats for the club dive to Barrens Hut – Kraken, Griffitti, Yes Dear 2 and Katz with a total of 19 divers. I was on board Katz with Ken R, Bill R and Jasmine W.



We loaded at Yowie Bay and after an easy launch cruised out to Barrens Hut. The sea was nice and calm with only a small swell and there was minimal current. Yes Dear 2 and Griffitti were already anchored and starting to put divers in the water so we anchored carefully just to the north of them. Kraken arrived a short time later.

Bill and Jasmine dived first with Ken and me boat sitting. Soon it was our turn so in and down the anchor line, passing the other two at the safety stop. The anchor was located right at the south end of the slit – an excellent spot. Visibility was around the 15m mark.

While waiting for our turn to dive Ken mentioned that he had never dived the chimney – a tunnel swimthrough with a vertical exit at



the very back of the tunnel. So after we had rechecked the anchor we headed south along the wall, past the small cave with its resident bastard trumpeters and port jackson sharks to the chimney. I went first through the tunnel and out the chimney closely followed by Ken. In the back of the tunnel was a quite large wobblygong which we carefully passed.



We returned back past the anchor passing the red sea whip gardens and orange finger sponges to look for the donut nembrotha on the black ascidians but could not find any. We returned to the anchor via the slit – the trench still very much reminds me of the first Star Wars movie. After freeing the anchor we ascended, safety stop at 5m then exited.



Morning tea was held at Jibbon with 3 boats rafted up. Lots of dive chatter along with excellent food. Bill brought some pomergieyi which Ken had great fun simply trying to pronounce.

Katz then headed out to Pizza reef for a second dive meeting up with Yes Dear 2 who were just finishing their dive at the location. The NE breeze was just starting but conditions were still ideal.

Bill and Jasmine again went first but surfaced soon afterwards due to Jasmine having some difficulties so Ken and I kitted up and dived with Bill.



The anchor was located perfectly near the cave (thanks Wayne for the mark) so after getting our bearings we went anticlockwise around the reef. At the cave were the usual bastard trumpeter, a nice school of yellowtail and another of old wives.

Wayne had told us there was a nice eastern blue devilfish that was very happy to simply pose for photos so we

kept our eyes peeled for him. We found him but he was hiding under a ledge and wouldn't come out to play!

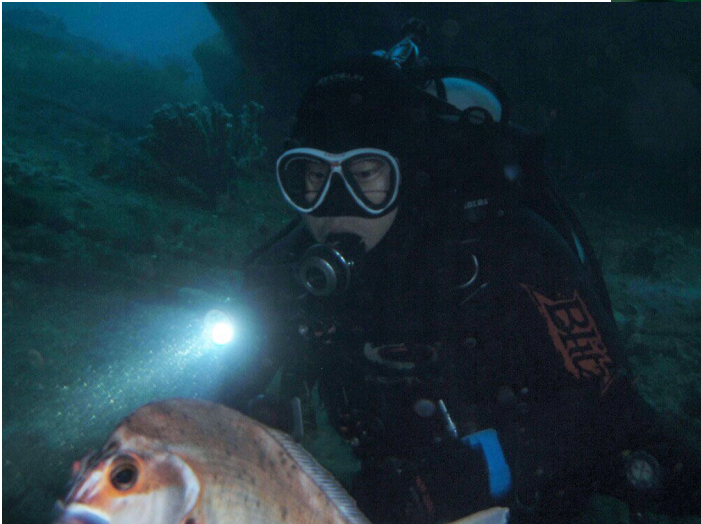
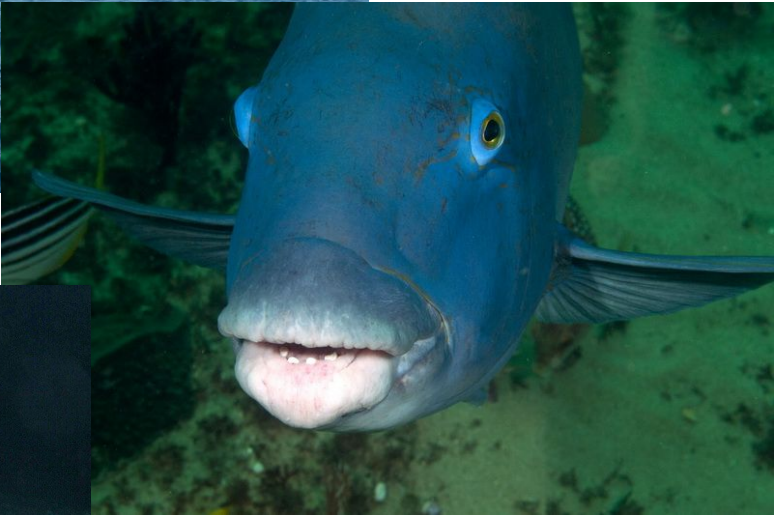
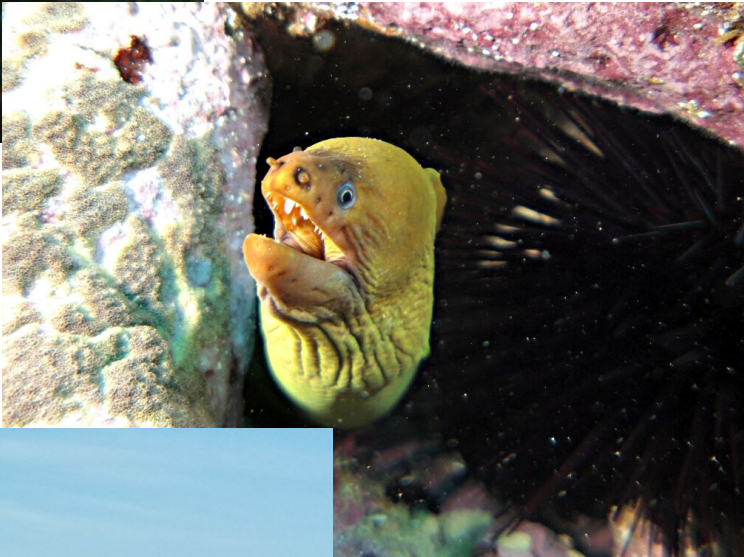
All too soon no deco times were up so we freed the anchor and ascended for our safety stop before climbing back on the boat.

As Bill is in the process of obtaining his boat licence Ken allowed him to drive the boat to obtain additional experience and allowed Ken to sit back and watch the scenery go past.

An excellent diving day with ideal conditions and great company. Thanks to the boat owners for providing the boats.











## **St George Christmas Party**

### **Kamay Botany Bay National Park**

### **6 December 2015**

The annual, famous (for its food and good company) Xmas party is coming up on Sunday 6 December 2015. This year Eda and Debbie Cook will be organising.

The Xmas party will again be held at Kamay Botany Bay National Park at Kurnell.

Diving will take place between 8 – 9 am. This will be at either Inscription Point, The Steps or the Leap depending on weather conditions. There will be a breakfast of bacon & eggs for the divers and early morning helpers. Then later a delicious lunch.

There will be lots of prizes to be won via raffle tickets ie. Hams, wines, etc. There will also be a special raffle draw for the members of the club who have given their time freely and generously in organising dives/barbeques/or really anything at all (including xmas parties, haha) to make the club as successful as it is, the prize being a 12L steel tank.

Bring your families – this is all free!!



# Dive Club Calendar

## November 2015

Date	Description	Location	Organiser
1 November	Shore dive/BBQ	Bass Point	Jason Coombes
7 November	Shore dive/BBQ	Oak Park	Nance Scoleri
8 November	Boat dive	Pizza Reef	Tricia Henry
8-14 November	Live aboard on Kalinda	Yongala & GBR	Mike Scotland
10 November	Calendar Planning Night	Rowers on Cook	Natasha Naude
14 November	Deep dive	The Tuggerah	Peter Flockart
15 November	Boat dive/BBQ	Frenchmans Bay	Natasha Naude
18 November	Club Meeting	Rowers on Cook	Natasha Naude
21 November	Boat dive	Whale Watch Platform	Shelley Brueseker
22 November	Deep dive	TBD	Gary Perkins
28 November	Boat dive	Wedding Cake Isle/The Sharks	Bill Rowland
28 November	Shore dive	The Leap	Ron Walsh

## December 2015

Date	Description	Location	Organiser
6 December	Christmas Party	Botany Bay National Park	Eda DiCamillo/Deb Cook
12 December	Boat Dive	Bypass Reef	Shelly Brueseker
16 December	Club Meeting	Rowers on Cook	Natasha Naude
19 December	Boat Dive	Marys Reef	Phil Short

Thursday Night Dives – every week – email sent out early in the week advising location and time

Regular Shore Dives – advice is via email or facebook

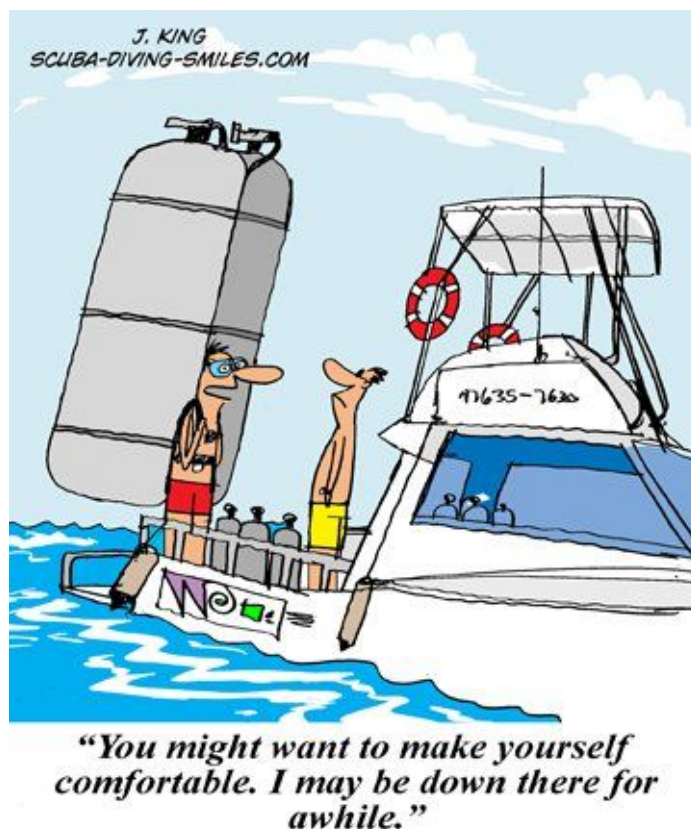


**Don't forget.....****Club Planning Night - Tuesday 10 November 2015 at Rowers on Cook, Arncliffe**

The Club planning night for 2016 is next Tuesday 10 November, commencing 7.30pm at Rowers on Cook. Coffee and cake will be provided so please RSVP this week so we can order sufficient platters for the evening and ensure the room set up is arranged.

If you can't make it on the night but want to put something on the calendar, let one of us know. Boat dive, shore dive, BBQ, weekend away, trip away, restaurant night - anything you like (trivia? karaoke? guest speaker or visit to place of interest?)

There will be a great lucky door prize on the night for those of you who come along and contribute - but you'll have to come along to find out what that is.



## Your Committee

President	Natasha Naude	<a href="mailto:President@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au">President@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au</a>	0410 074 677
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