



Sea Braggin'

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

- MAY 2011 - Edited by Ray Moulang -

Included in this issue are Dive Reports from ...

Michael McFadyen, Jo Edney, Paul Pacey and Ken Ridley

A BIG THANK YOU GOES TO THEM.

What's On – MAY – 2011 –

WHEN	WHAT AND WHERE	CONTACT	WHEN	WHAT AND WHERE	CONTACT
<u>SUNDAY</u> <u>1ST</u>	<u>BOAT DIVE</u> <u>BARRENS HUT</u>	<u>Natasha Naude</u> <u>0410 074 677</u>	WEDNESDAY 16th	CLUB MEETING 8 PM ROWERS CLUB	Jason Coombs 9345 4599
<u>SATURDAY</u> <u>7th</u>	<u>Deep Dive</u> <u>SS Tuggerah/ SS</u> <u>Undola</u>	<u>Michael</u> <u>McFadyen</u> <u>9545 5596</u>	SATURDAY 21ST	BOAT DIVE WATTAMOLLA	DAVE CASBURN 0405 186 184
<u>FRIDAY 13th to</u> <u>SUNDAY 15TH</u>	<u>WEEKEND TRIP</u> <u>SHEELHARBOUR</u>	<u>RAY MOULANG</u> <u>0403 437 974</u>	SATURDAY 28TH	BOAT DIVE K & M REEF FROM THE HOLE IN THE WALL AND PORT BOTANY	GARY PERKINS 9533 6869
			SUNDAY 29TH	BOAT DIVE BLUE FISH POINT FROM ROSE BAY	Peter Flockart 9371 0265

What's On - JUNE - 2011 -

WHEN	WHAT AND WHERE	CONTACT	WHEN	WHAT AND WHERE	CONTACT
<u>Saturday</u> <u>4 th</u>	<u>Special Night Dive</u> <u>Inscription Point</u>	<u>Gary Dunnett</u> <u>9542 6481</u>	Wed 15 th to 29th	Fiji Trip	Mike Scotland 0415 158 168
<u>Saturday</u> <u>4 th</u>	<u>SS Hilda</u> <u>Wreck Dive</u>	<u>Nancy Scoleri</u> <u>9533 6869</u>	Wednesday 15 th	Club Meeting Rowers Club 8pm	Jason Coombs 9345 4599
<u>Friday</u> <u>10th to 13th</u>	<u>Vacant at present</u> <u>Long Weekend</u>	-	Sunday 19th	Boat Dive Bypass Reef	Michael McFadyen 9545 5596
<u>Saturday</u> <u>11th</u>	<u>SS Kelloe</u> <u>Wreck Dive</u> <u>From Hole in the wall</u>	<u>Michael</u> <u>McFadyen</u> <u>9545 5596</u>	Sat 25 th to 2 nd July	North Haven Trip	Ray Moulang 0403 437 974
<u>Sunday</u> <u>12th</u>	<u>Boat Dive Wedding</u> <u>Cake Island and</u> <u>Sharks</u>	<u>Jason</u> <u>Coombs</u> <u>9345 4599</u>	Sunday 26th	Shore Dive Shark Point	Jason Coombs 9345 4599

Truk trip for 2011.

Some trip points to note:- The price does not include our Club discount (approx 10%) or our Free of Charge land base component for every 8th diver. The total discount cannot be determined until we finalized numbers.

- The prices are based on 95c US. The quoted price will not change unless there is a fluctuation of more than 2c either way. If the dollar goes through the roof, you can pay the balance in full to take advantage.
- The price does not include Sydney/Cairns/Sydney flights or accommodation in Cairns.

**ONLY TWO
SPOTS LEFT**

You need to organize this yourself (best to wait and watch for specials).

- We request that you take out a travel insurance policy that covers your diving activities.
- There is a 2 week option. • Truk is a third world country and as such you should adjust your expectations.
- The trip is not suitable for non divers. • The trip is suitable for experienced divers.

There is a maximum of 16 spots for this trip (8 are already pre-reserved), so please book on sooner rather than later to avoid disappointment. To book you must contact me to: 1. Check availability; and 2. To get a booking form which you will need to complete and send to Sharon at Dive Adventures with your deposit.

Please give me a call if you have any questions (particularly if you have not been to Truk before).

Kelly McFadyen

Nelson Bay Weekend, July 29 - 31

Two days spent with some of the best shore diving in NSW.
The three main dive sites here are spectacular.

Accommodation for the two nights, at the Soldiers' Point Holiday Park, will be about \$110 per person.

Arrive on Friday night, and then go for a shore dive in the morning on both Saturday and Sunday.

Take it easy for the rest of Saturday, and on Sunday have an easy drive home.





Contact Brian Byrnes if you are interested, and don't forget to give a \$50 deposit to Mark Ridsdale. brian.byrnes@pobox.com 04198 22243

Fiji trip plan June 18 to July 3

World's best Shark diving?.... Certainly in the top 3 after the Great Whites in South Africa, Tiger beach in the Caribbean. Last August I managed to see 5 different Tiger sharks including "Joyce" the 14 foot giant with the girth of a 44 gallon drum. I did not see "Scarface", the 18 foot giant who has been visiting over the last few years. Maybe next time.

World's best Soft coral diving. The photo opportunities for those "pretty diver shots" are limitless. Beqa became world famous for some of these stunning dives with more colour than you see on an LSD trip.

The plan for the trip is 15 nights including a week at the Pearl Pacific resort and a week at Lalati resort on Beqa Island and one night in transit. There is a backup plan! If there is a problem with booking Lalati (It is a very small boutique resort) we might go to Octopus resort up the Yasawas.

I intend to plan at least 24 boat dives (12 each week at 2 per day) and possibly some free shore dives at Lalati. The cost is about \$100 a day for dives. (\$1200 for diving)

This is an excellent trip. It is great value at slightly under \$3000 and very comfortable. I am taking my non diving but keen snorkelling wife.

I have been to Fiji twice in the last 14 months.
The magic Fiji that has always been famous is still there on the ground.

If you are interested in finding out more, please contact me on

mikescotland@optusnet.com.au

scubamagic@hotmail.com

0415 158 168

02 9521 7720

I would encourage you to do some research. Here are some dub dubs for you to look over.

<http://www.lalatifiji.com/home/> <http://www.thepearlsouthpacific.com/>

<http://www.beqalagoonresort.com/> <http://www.octopusresort.com/>

I also use a site called www.Beautifulpacific.com and go to "fiji" link and then "Outer islands" and "Beqa Lagoon". It has plenty of pictures for each resort.

I can't wait. Mike Scotland.

A weekend in Jervis Bay in August!

Friday 12 – Sunday 14 August Double boat dives Saturday and Sunday (including one dive with the seals)

Note this is not *just* a seal diving trip – only one dive will be with the seals, conditions permitting! The remainder will be boat dives to local dive sites.

We did this trip last year and it was just great! House is perfect for our group and Ulladulla dive did a good job (despite being unable to locate the Labyrinth/Whorehouse!!) Same plan as last year – same dive rates and same accommodation costs. Hopefully same dive conditions too, which were amazing.

Diving:

Ulladulla Dive Centre can cater for 12 divers <http://www.ulladulladive.com.au/crew/duckunder.html>

- ✂ Retail rates for double dives is \$100 (\$85 for 10 divers or more, plus one free of charge)
- ✂ Airfills for \$7
- ✂ No tanks provided – if you take one tank and they provide one it will be an added charge of \$10.00, or you can hire both tanks (or take 2 of your own!)

Accommodation:

I have booked the house, “Seahaven” <http://www.stayz.com.au/11509>

House comfortably sleeps 15 people, with 3 bathrooms and 3 toilets (main bathroom with large spa bath). There is a LUG for dive gear and a BBQ we can make use of. BYO linen! Total cost for 15 people for 2 nights is \$580 (plus \$250 refundable deposit). Dinner at Vincentia Golf Club (5 mins walk up the road) on Fri night, Club Curry night at home on Sat night.

Contact **Natasha** if you want to come along, and please remember to send Mark your deposit of \$50.

Email: natasha@bluecucumber.com **Phone:** 0410 074 677

All Full

Reserves list now

La Perouse Loop Road at Bare Island

The upgrade to the La Perouse Loop Road at Bare Island is due to start on the 18th April 2011 and will go through to November 2011. I have spoken to the project manager who advised that the work will start with the two new roundabouts one near the toilet block and the other down at the intersection near Frenchman's Bay.

At no time will the works close access to Bare Island however the works between the toilet block and the Bare Island access road will happen in June. It is likely there will be a longer walk at different times to dive the sites and that parking will be even harder to get than usual though it will be winter so should be quieter. Work will happen during the week only though Saturday is a catch up day so works will happen on an if required basis. Here is the announcement from Randwick Council.

http://www.randwick.nsw.gov.au/Your_Council/Whats_happening/News/8_million_La_Perouse_road_and_streetscape_upgrade/indexdl_8971.aspx

Here is the concept plan for the works though I believe there are some slight changes to this (e.g. it only shows one of the roundabouts):

http://www.randwick.nsw.gov.au/library/scripts/objectifyMedia.aspx?file=pdf/62/57.pdf&siteID=1&str_title=Loop Road concept plan1.pdf

Following on from this National Parks (who manage all of the off road areas) will be doing a masterplan for the toilet block and walkways to the museum etc. that may improve access to the water on the car park side of the bridge. Jason

***The planned trips to Merimbula and Kavieng are now full .
Paul Pacey.***

Dive the HMAS Brisbane in JULY – only 3 places left!

Arrive Wednesday 6 July – Depart Sunday 10 July (Max 13 divers/Min 6 divers)

Itinerary Arrive Wednesday 6 July evening.

Thursday 7 July double dive on the HMAS Brisbane on **Thursday afternoon**

Friday 8 July *Friday morning:* Double dive Sunshine Coast Reefs

Friday afternoon and night: Double dive HMAS Brisbane – the second being a night dive (min 6 people)

(Option) Can opt for a single night dive Friday night rather than double afternoon/night (min 6 people)

Saturday 9 July *Saturday morning:* Double dive HMAS Brisbane (no minimum)

Saturday afternoon: relax and enjoy a Club dinner!

Sunday 10 July Enjoy the day and fly home Sunday afternoon/evening

Accommodation: Mariner on the Pacific has 3 bedroom apartments with large balconies for \$250/night which sleep 6 people (<http://www.marineronthepacific.com.au/alexandra-headlands/accommodation.htm>)

Diving: Sunreef Dive Centre can cater for 13 divers, which would give us the boat to ourselves (<http://www.sunreef.com.au/local-trips.htm>)

- Double dives on reef or HMAS Brisbane will cost \$140
 - Double afternoon/night dive option on HMAS Brisbane is \$160 (or \$110 for single night dive)
 - 13th diver free of charge – as usual, this cost saving would be spread across all divers
 - Tanks and weights (and divemaster!) included
 - **Free nitrox** if we have more than 6 (certified) divers ☺
 - **Nitrox certification available during trip - \$399 including 2 HMAS Brisbane dives**
- Contact **Natasha** if you want to come along, and please remember to send Mark your deposit of \$50.

Email: natasha@bluecucumber.com **Phone:** 0410 074 677

Diving the HMAS Adelaide

On the 13th of April, the Ex HMAS Adelaide was scuttled at last! So let's go and dive this newest NSW dive site.

WHEN: October long Week-end, from Friday 30th of September to Monday 3rd of October.

DIVING: Double boat dives Saturday, Sunday and Monday (two days on the HMAS Adelaide and one day on Froggy Cave and surrounding reefs). An additional dive per day can be organised if enough interest.



Terrigal Dive centre has 2 boats that can accommodate up to 7 divers each, so a maximum of 14 divers. Check <http://www.terrigaldive.com.au/index.html> for more details.

Their retail rates for double dives are \$130 for the HMAS Adelaide (includes a Government fee) and \$110 for reef diving. These prices do not include any discount and will be a bit less depending on how many divers we got.

ACCOMODATION: Work in progress, I am looking at cabins in various holiday parks. Will get more details when I know how many people are coming.

If you are interested, please contact Nancy at nancyscoleri@yahoo.com.au.

- Recent Club Happenings –

New Zealand Dive Trip by Michael McFadyen

Day 1

On 11 March 2011, Kelly and I flew to NZ with Michael Wright. We arrived at Auckland and met up with Greg Blackburne, Shelley Breuseker and Phil Goodman who were already there. We loaded up the two rental cars and headed off north. We detoured via the centre of Auckland to get some oxygen cylinders and sorb for Michael's rebreather and were then back on our way.

We stopped at the small town of Warkworth to get some urgent supplies (beer and wine mostly) and then continued towards the Bay of Islands. We were diving with Northland Dive and staying at their accommodation which is on an old dairy farm. All meals were included so we did not need to worry about that aspect of the holiday.

A hundred or so kilometres north of Auckland Greg got a flat tyre so we had to stop and replace it. Unfortunately, the spare was one of those space-savers, tiny. Driving behind him it looked like the wheel off a go kart (no, that is not correct, a go kart would have wider tyres!). This slowed us down a fair bit as the maximum speed is 80 km/h on these things and also the last 60 or so kilometres is very windy.

We arrived at Northland Dive after dark and settled in. The old milking shed has been turned into the accommodation. After a couple of well deserved drinks, we had an excellent meal.

We heard about the Japanese earthquake and tsunami and saw the start of the disaster unfold.

A warning was issued for the Bay of Islands for about 7 am the next morning.

Day 2

The owner of the operation, Julia, had already decided that the first day's diving was not going to start till the afternoon, so this was a good safe move.

About 3 pm we geared up and then headed off in the shop's bus for the short drive to the boat ramp.

We launched the boat across the beach (really easy) and then set off in the RIB (rigid inflatable boat) with two 135 hp 4 strokes for the wreck of HMNZS *Canterbury*.

The plan was to do a day dive and then have dinner on the beach and then do a night dive on it.

The wreck is in a totally protected bay and sitting upright. We had an interesting dive through the insides of the wreck.

As normal, Kelly and I went to the prop shafts first. It is a little deeper than ideal (about 37 metres) but you can still get a reasonable bottom time.

There is a lot of growth on it and heaps of fishlife.





After the dive we headed to a beach nearby where Julia cooked up some little boys and hamburgers.

It was great sitting on the beach and watching the sunset. By the way, the tsunami was still having a slight effect, with the tides acting very strangely.

Our second dive on the wreck was great.

There was a lot of fish around, with many eels and crayfish to be seen. We did a little bit of penetration, but spent most of the dive outside.

Day 3

The next day saw us off to dive the *Rainbow*

Warrior. This is quite a distance from the boat ramp and it took over one hour at 45 km/h to get there.

Luckily the seas were almost completely flat. The wreck is covered in kelp and is not all that big, but the chance to dive on a ship that was sunk by dastardly French frogmen in an unprecedented terrorist attack. There are lots of easy holds and cabins that can be entered and the maximum depth of 26 metres means you can spend a long time on the wreck.

As can be expected, Kelly and I went to the prop shaft (prop removed).



We easily explored all the wreck. There is also pretty good fishlife. If you are in the Bay of Islands and



only have a day to dive, I would not do this wreck over the chance to do a reef dive, but that is just my view.

After lunch on a nearby beach, we did a dive at True Love Reef. This was a great dive, with two pinnacles off a bommie.

The walls were sheer drops to over 35 metres and there was even a cave. The fishlife was also excellent.

Once back at the ramp, we headed off to Russell. This is the main town (I think) in the Bay of Islands. It is a picturesque town, with a great pub right on the waterfront. I have gone there back in 1983 so it was good to see that it does not appear to have changed at all. We had a few beers and Kelly, Phil and Michael got a feed of mussels.

We decided to take the short cut back to Northland Dive. We followed the map we had but soon figured out we were lost. The map was totally wrong. Getting dark, we figure we would take the long way back. Greg had other ideas, he took what he decided was the short cut. Surprise, we both arrived back at the same time, the short cut was 10 kilometres less but a dirt road and a lot windier.

Day 4

The next day we headed out to Cape Brett. Just off the cape is Piercy Island. This is the island that has the huge arch through it that is always used when advertising the Bay of Islands. We did one dive in Cathedral Cave



which is next to it (great) and a second back west of the cape at Big Eye Lair. This had a long tunnel and another cave.



After the dives, we packed up our things and headed south to Tutukaka. As stop at a supermarket for more drinks, meat for a barbecue and some breakfast items, we arrived at the Tutukaka Holiday Park where we had three cabins booked. Quite comfortable. We have beer or two and then walk to the marine to the Whangarei Anglers Club. We have dinner and drinks here.

Day 5

The next morning sees us at the Dive! Tutukaka shop. We are soon on board the boat. This is there second largest boat. The biggest was used to take out backpackers and divers only doing one day's diving.

We head off for the one hour journey to the Poor Knights Islands. They are located about 23 kilometres from Tutukaka. The seas are not quite calm, but reasonable. It is not too bad a trip out. Surprisingly, we do not put any gear together till we actually pull up at the dive location.

On the way, one of the instructors on board comes to check how much weight we need. When I tell him I need 8 kgs, he proceeds to tell me that I need to use 10 kgs. He knows I have done 3,100 plus dives, but insists I will need more weight. It takes a bit of convincing for him to go away. We also have an instructor who started out being a dive Nazi, but by the afternoon she is much better and the next day lets us do as we like.

The first dive is at Landing Bay Pinnacle. This is a rock that comes to about five metres and drops to nearly 40 metres. It has some ridges running out from it. There is a lot of fishlife and it is quite spectacular. On virtually all the dives there are large snapper, kingfish and two spot demoiselles (like our one-spot pullers but with two spots). There are bullrays and eels (many sorts) as well.

After the dive we have lunch as the boat cruises around a bit. This happens every day. They take you into Riko Riko Cave, the largest sea cave in the world. The acoustics inside are amazing, you hear noises reverberate around and around for ages.

Our next dive is at Jans Tunnel. This is a long tunnel that leads into The Lost World. This consist of two largish caverns that are open to the sky. We surface in one and can see the jungle above. Very different. Back outside, we see a couple of good size bronze whaler sharks on the wall.

The seas are a bit calmer as we head home (as they are every day). Apart from the first day, Phil Kelly and I enjoy a beer or two on the trip. We get back to the marina about 4 pm or so most days. Most of us take our gear back to the holiday park to wash it and hang it up in the dive gear shed.

We have a barbecue tonight, a good feed organised by Shelley and Greg.

Day 6

The next day saw us doing our first dive at Middle Arch. This is a great spot. We see some more bronzies and have excellent visibility inside the arch and nearby bubble cave. At the end of the dive there were



thousands of small pink jellyfish. These gave a good sting. The snappers were eating them, first hitting them on the bell which caused them to retract their tentacles.

Next dive was at Crystal Cave. This is a long tunnel that leads into Scary Cave. This is so named as it has a lot of freshwater in it and this has brought a lot of dirt from above which makes a silty bottom.

We do not enter as there is a lot of kelp blocking access and we figure this will make it even more scary. We ended up the dive on the wall outside.



That night we went to the better of the two restaurants in Tutukaka, Snappa Rock. We end up having a biggish night, with entrée, main, dessert, beers and wine and then port (we bought a bottle!) to finish it off.

Day 7

The next day we were back out at the Poor Knights. The morning dive was the pick of the dive sites there. Northern Arch is such a brilliant dive, with 40 metre visibility, more sharks, huge numbers of fish in the arch (which runs from above the water to over 40 metres) and shear walls. There are more caves and gutters to explore as well. One of the best reef dives anywhere in the world.

Our second dive was at Riko Riko Cave. We ended up swimming right around it (it is 150 metres from front to back and about 90 metres wide). The remains of a sperm whale are located inside, with vertebra, ribs and jaws seen. Another great dive.

Dinner tonight was take away pizzas (it was Thursday of course) eaten in front of the cabins.

Day 8

Friday 18 March saw us diving the two scuttled wrecks near Tutukaka. The weather today was the worse



we had, overcast with a bit of rain now and then. The first wreck was HMNZS *Tui*, ex-USNS *Charles H. Davis*. The ship was originally used to spy on submarines by the US Naval Oceanographic Office before being given to NZ. It was then used for sea mapping an submarine finding research. This ship was scuttled on 20

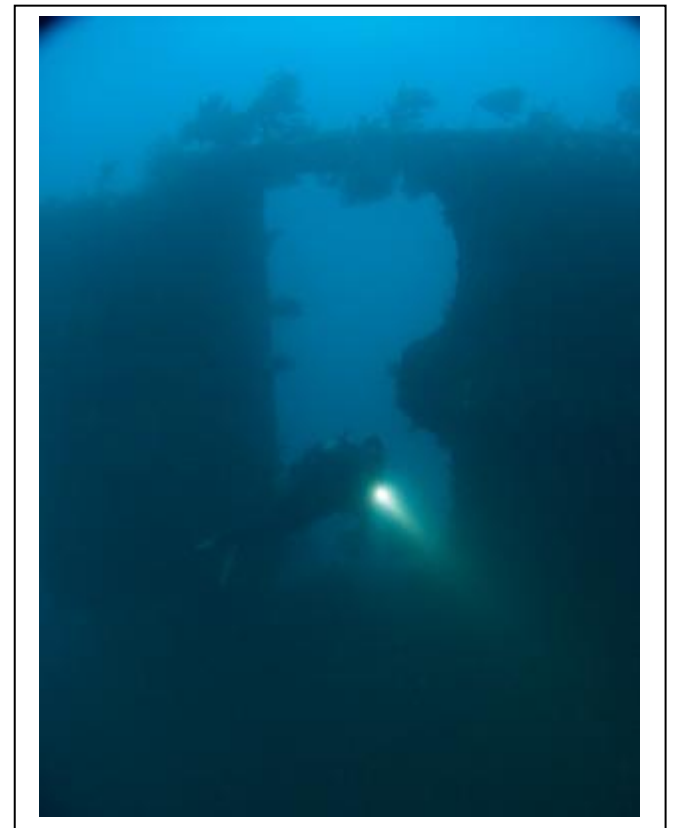
February 1999 just north of Tutukaka. It is not big, only 64 metres long.

The wreck is quite broken up as it was sunk on a rocky reef. It was a nice dive, although the great visibility of our previous dives was down to about 10 metres at the most.

After lunch back on shore, we went out again to dive HMNZS *Waikato*. This is a sistership to HMAS *Swan* (in WA) and the *Canterbury*. The 113 metre long frigate was scuttled on 18 November 2000 just south of Tutukaka. It is a lot shallower than the *Canterbury* at 28 metres (compared to 36) and as such you can spend a lot more time on it. There is a lot to see, including the gun turret which was left on the ship. There is also one prop (which of course Kelly and I went to) as well as toilets, a laundry press and more.

The bow section has broken off and is laying on its port side. There is not as good growth as the *Canterbury*, despite it having being underwater for twice as long. The fishlife pretty good. However, if I went back again I would not bother diving either wrecks, the dives at the Poor Knights are much better.

A relatively early finish to the diving meant we could go for a drive and explore the region a little. Kelly, Michael, Phil and I went north to what we thought was a town, only to discover that the only thing there apart from houses was a general store. It was raining a bit now, so we could not do any of the short walks we had planned to do. The beaches were quite stunning, it would have been even better if it was fine.



We went back to the town just before Tutukaka and found a nice little club where we had a drink. The weather by now was bit worse so we headed back to the cabins.

Tonight was had dinner at the local resort (hotel).

A nice meal, with some bonuses due to Friday night specials.

Day 9

The next morning was our last day's diving. We headed back out to the Knights with a different skipper to the last few days. The first dive was at Annas Reef. This is to the east of Northern Arch, close enough that Kelly and I decided to swim over there for most of our dive. Annas Reef is not as good a dive as the other dives we have done, there were much better spots that I dived back in 1992 that we could have done.

The second dive was at Trevors Rock. This was a bommie that breached the surface and had some boulders running out deeper. There was also an arch and cave in very shallow water. Again, not as good a dive as the past eight dives out here.

That night we went to dinner at the anglers' club again. After dinner here, and some people having desserts, we stopped back at Snappa Rock where some unnamed people proceeded to have a second dessert!

Well, the diving part of the trip was now over. It was a bit depressing to know that the brilliant eight days of diving was finished. Visibility on the Poor Knights averaged 25 metres, with water temperature of 21-22°C. Air temperature was around 25°C and most days it was sunny.

Day 10

On Sunday 20 March we headed back to Auckland. Kelly and I dropped Michael off in the city where he was spending the night before flying home on Monday. Greg, Shelley and Phil stayed on in NZ for another week to visit relatives. Kelly and I drove to Rotarua. We stayed here for two nights, visiting the thermal pool areas and relaxing in general.

The total cost of the trip, with 10 nights, 16 dives, some meals and car rental, was under A\$1300. Even with airfares and other costs, we only spent about \$2,000. The current excellent exchange rate makes things in NZ pretty cheap.

This was an excellent holiday, with some of the best reef diving I have done anywhere in the Pacific.

I would encourage members to dive both these places.

Many thanks to Shelley for organising the dive trip. Everything went perfect and it was an enjoyable trip.

For more information on the dives, see the Overseas page on my web site, www.michaelmcfadyenscuba.info.

The blue-ringed octopus

First you will feel nauseous. Your vision becomes hazy. Within seconds you are blind. You lose your sense of touch. You cannot speak or swallow. Three minutes later you are paralyzed and unable to breath.

You knew that the blue-ringed octopus is extremely poisonous but how were you to know that this was one when its tiny parrot-like beak bit through your wetsuit. The last thing the victim sees are the blue rings – visible only when it is about to attack.

The blue-ringed octopus is the size of a golf ball but its poison is powerful enough to kill an adult human in minutes. There's no known antidote. The only treatment is hours of heart massage and artificial respiration until the poison has worked its way out of your system.



The poison is not injected but is contained in the octopus's saliva, which comes from two glands each as big as its brain.



Poison from the one is used on its main prey, crabs, and is relatively harmless to humans. Poison from the other gland serves as defense against predators. **The blue-ringed octopus either secretes the poison in the vicinity of its prey,** waits until it is immobile and then devours it, or it jumps out and envelops the prey in its 8 tentacles and bites it.



There are two species of blue-ringed octopus: the *Hapalochlaena lunulata*, which is the larger and grows up to 20cm (8 in) across its stretched tentacles.

The other, the *Hapalochlaena maculosa*, is small and more common, weighing a mere 28 grams (1 oz). They are found in the shallow coral and rock pools of Australia. And they're rather cute, being brown or yellow in color. But don't pick one up – by the time you see the electric-blue rings, it's too late!

- the blue rings are visible only when it is about to attack
Brown or yellow in its natural state
- you won't see the blue rings until it is too late.

Look, but don't touch!

NSW Wreck Spotters

Last newsletter I wrote about the Introduction to Maritime Archaeology training that Graeme and I did back in February. Related to this training is our recent involvement with the NSW Wreck Spotters Program and is something that may interest club members.

The NSW Wreck Spotters program has been running for more than 10 years and was recently relaunched. The aim of the program is to involve the community in the management of shipwrecks by enlisting people who can assist by providing the NSW Heritage Branch of the Department of Planning with first-hand advice on local discoveries and the condition of known wrecks. The role of Wreck Spotters is to assist the NSW Heritage Branch to detect and report newly discovered wrecks, document known historic shipwrecks and to 'spot' and report on changes to known wrecks.

The Heritage Branch is looking for more people to be involved in the program and are inviting people with an interest in the preservation of historic shipwrecks and underwater cultural heritage to join this volunteer program. If you are interested in joining the Wreck Spotters Program, contact Heritage Branch Maritime Archaeologist, Sarah Ward on 02 9873 8533 or via email: sarah.ward@planning.nsw.gov.au for more information.

Jo Edney

Diving into Archaeology

with the Office of Environment & Heritage

As part of **National Archaeology Week** (15-22 May 2011) ***Diving into Archaeology***, will be an entertaining evening designed to help you ‘dive into archaeology’ and explore the shipwrecked depths of human history.

Director Heritage Branch **Petula Samios** will welcome you to an evening hosted by the Office of Environment & Heritage, featuring talks by:

- **Martin Gibbs**, Senior Lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Sydney. Martin will talk about his recent work on the 16th century failed Spanish colonisations of the Solomon Islands by the ‘lost’ 1595 ship *Santa Isabel*.
- **Damien Siviero**, renowned photographer and Deep Wreck Diver, will talk of the search for, and discovery of, MV *Fairwind* in 90m of water off Seal Rocks in the State’s north.
- **Robyn Veal**, an Environmental Archaeologist and Rome Fellow at the British School at Rome, will answer one of the questions you’ve always asked yourself: ‘Why is Environmental Archaeology Sexy?’

- **Wayne Johnson**, Archaeologist at the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority will present 'From Sydney Cove to Circular Quay: Dockyards & other Maritime Infrastructure in Colonial Sydney.'

Your MC for the event will be Office of Environment & Heritage Maritime Archaeologist, Sarah Ward.

Where: Office of Environment & Heritage, Department of Premier and Cabinet, 3 Marist Place, Parramatta NSW 2150.

When: Wednesday 18 May, 6.00pm – 8:30pm.

Cost: ***FREE***. Drinks, nibbles and a shipwreck poster included.

Contact: Bookings are essential. Please contact Sarah Ward, Office of Environment & Heritage, Department of Premier and Cabinet, on 02 9873 8533 or via email: sarah.ward@planning.nsw.gov.au.

For more information about Shipwrecks and Maritime Heritage in NSW, visit:
<http://maritime.heritage.nsw.gov.au/public/welcome.cfm>

Please see attached information also.

Merimbula / Eden Dive Trip

Friday April 1st – Sunday April 3rd 2011-05-01

Dive Team: Bram Harris, Chris Heath, Eddie Ivers, Graham Poole, Ian Roffey, John Conolly, Mikhail Kulikov, Nick Ridis, Paul Pacey, Paul Watkinson, Peter Flockart, Ron Walsh, Simon Hoad, Stuart Sharpless.

Special Guest: Inna Kulikov

Our trip to Merimbula was held from Friday 1st April (yes, “that special day”) until Sunday 3rd April. We had 13 club divers attending plus Chris Heath who is a friend of Ron’s.

On the Thursday before the weekend a couple of people rang me to ask if the trip was still going as the weather forecast was not good for South Coast waters. But Michael Standen from Merimbula Divers assured me that it was still looking good down there. In fact, Michael said the harder the westerly winds blew the better it would get – he was NOT wrong!

As Eddie and I were driving through Bega it was impossible to ignore the destruction from the previous weeks’ floods – even the goals posts were washed off the town soccer fields. The river was as brown as and we both wondered what the viz was going to be like after all that crud had washed into the ocean. We needn’t have worried though as the viz turned out to be excellent.

Michael Standen runs an excellent dive operation and everything (Air/Nitrox fills and accommodation) was ready for us when we arrived on Friday afternoon.

Dinner on Friday night was a group booking at the Merimbula RSL where, on Michael's advice, I had booked a table. Lucky that I booked as the place was nearly full. I didn't hear a single complaint about the food (mine was delicious) and the service was excellent.

Now, about the diving...



The Dive Team - Chris Heath 1

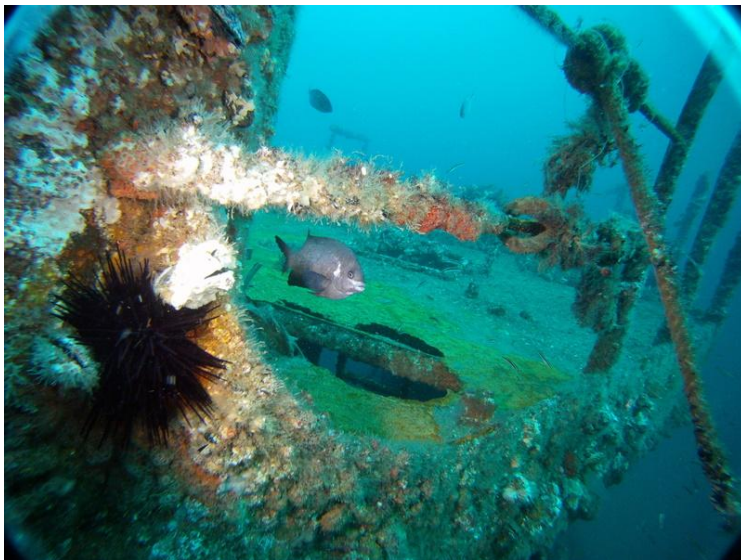
The main theme of the diving for the weekend was to be the scuttled tugs which are actually located at Eden which is about 20 minutes drive south of Merimbula. On Saturday morning we left Merimbula at the civilised hour 8:00am for the pleasant drive to Eden Wharf. We had no sooner assembled our rigs when Scotty (the skipper) and Daniel (DM) turned up on the "Rocket Ship". The Rocket is a 10.6 metre long rigid inflatable boat with two (yes, TWO) 300HP Suzy 4-stroke outboards poking out the back. I think that this was the fastest that I have ever travelled on water – including a few jet boat trips in NZ!

The first dive was to the famous Tasman Hauler tug wreck. The sea was as flat as and a slight westerly wind was going to keep it that way. A quick (VERY quick) 10 minute run to the wreck saw us attached to the mooring line. After a dive briefing by Scotty and Daniel we all hit the water. This is easy to do as everyone can just do a backward roll off the side. The first thing we noticed was that the water was warm with negligible current. The best thing was that the viz approaching the wreck was over 15 metres!

The mooring is attached to the superstructure and, after descending, Eddie, Simon and myself (the TLA's – the Three Lost Amigo's) headed for the stern.



Chris finds a propeller - Ron Walsh 1



Check out the viz - Nick Ridis

The wreck sits almost upright on a sandy bottom at 30 metres with the propeller and its thrust housing easily accessible.

The propeller is huge and it's easy to swim right through between the propeller blades and the thrust housing.

Evidently, the whole propeller and it's thrust housing was able to be rotated to steer the ship thus there is no rudder as one would normally find.

As I swam through the propeller I was attacked by a quite few camera flashes – thanks guys.

The TLA's next head up onto the deck to inspect the towing equipment which is really serious stuff (engineering wise anyways). The hull and equipment up at this level are covered in encrusting sponges and are very colourful. You must have a torch to really appreciate just how pretty it is.

We then duck down through a large hatchway into the engine room. The engine room is large, open and easy too explore. The first thing I wanted to look at was the gearbox and mechanism to drive and rotate the propeller thruster unit. I was disappointed to find that it's just a fairly small metal box. However the eight cylinder diesel engine driving it is quite impressive in size. You won't see an engine this size on the options list at your Toyota dealer! I realise at this stage that I'm solo diving again...

The cabling and pipework in the engine room are covered in Jewel Anenomes and they come in a variety of colours which is pretty neat. From the front of the engine room you go up a stairway through a hatch to a deck below the bridge. Here there are a number of rooms and the usual toilet. There are many more Jewel Anenomes here and it seems that they thrive on the electrical cables hanging from the roof. These Anenomes alone make the Tasman Hauler a fantastic dive.

Beautiful Jewel Anenomes - Peter Flockart



The next thing was to head forward to inspect the accommodation area which is accessible through a hatch in the foredeck. Unfortunately, by the time I arrived, the Mud Monsters had been through so I didn't bother descending the stairway to gloom. I next headed out over the bow to look back towards the wreck. What a fantastic sight it was and the viz seemed to be improving as well.



Chris cruising the hull - Ron Walsh

Returning to the wreck I cruised up to the upper level of the bridge and cruised around admiring the beautiful display of Jewel Anemones that get more impressive as you explore higher levels in the wreck.

Here they cover the ceiling and everything hanging off the ceiling too – an amazing sight.

Once we are all back on board we have a quick trip back to the wharf (at about mach-3) where we have a caffeine/cake/muffin hit and discuss how good life really is.

The second dive is to the Henry Bolte which is not a dead politician but another scuttled tug which is located a mere 200 metres south of the Tasman Hauler.

The mooring line had been broken off during the previous weeks storms but Scotty and Daniel dropped a shot line a few metres from the wreck which was close enough for us to easily find the wreck when we descended.

The viz was not quite as good as the first dive but, being about 12 metres, we were not going to complain. This wreck is sitting on a rocky reef and this seems to have contributed to the hull fracturing and splitting the hull in half just behind the bridge. However, this makes access to the innards of the wreck extremely easy.

Compared to the Tasman Hauler this wreck is nowhere as interesting in terms of marine growth and did not seem to be attracting as much fish life either. Ironically, the reef which seems to have caused so much damage to the wreck is quite a nice colourful dive in its own right. The reef extends quite a way from the wreck and is well worth exploring. Having said that, if you like poking around amongst broken wreckage, then you will really enjoy this wreck dive. On this wreck, the transmission gearbox is broken open and the huge gearwheels and shafts are exposed to view.



Big Belly Seahorse - Ron Walsh

Saturday evening saw us enjoying our traditional club BBQ. Thanks to John Conolly for providing salad and to Peter Flockart for doing an excellent job with the filet steak and Cevapcici on the BBQ.

Over dinner we discussed the plan for Sunday. The original plan as to dive one tug (people's choice) then dive a site called "Jacko's Cave" which is not far from the tugs.

Well, of course, getting agreement on which tug to dive was like trying to herd cats.

Luckily, Michael said that they could we could drop divers on both tugs and run a "shuttle service" to pick everybody up – you gotta love dive operators like these guys!

Since we had fewer divers for the Bolte, Scotty dropped these guys off first before heading over to the Hauler to get rid of the rest of the dive team.

I dived the Hauler and the viz today was even better than Saturday – woohoo!

The view looking towards the stern of the wreck was sensational. I spent most of my dive looking for the torch that I lost the day before.

Someone else found it and eventually returned it to its rightful owner. It had fallen from the wheelhouse right down into the engine room.



The second dive today was to Jacko's Cave. The TLA team decided to head west along the wall and to allow the Mud Monsters to play in the cave first then we would attack the cave later when the dust had settled. The viz was awesome and the reef here is very pretty.

Basket Stars on Gorgonian - Peter Flockart

Even without the cave this is a great dive site with extensive sponge gardens, gorgonians, basket starts, etc. When we were back to the cave I figured that the TLA;s would have it all to ourselves – WRONG. It was like Town Hall station during peak hour.

Nonetheless, the cave is large and beautifully decorated with a garden of small gorgonians at the entrance.



Very Fishy - Nick Ridis

The cave is wide but not very high and extends a considerable distance. There were quite a few slipper crays on the roof and I saw one live cowrie shell and a sea spider – very tidy indeed. Paul Watkinson spotted a large painted crayfish.

A few of us were into deco time by the time we reluctantly left the cave but you can amuse yourself on deco by exploring the reef above to cave until it's time to climb back on the rocketship.

Michael, Scotty and Daniel run a great operation, the on-site accommodation is good and the boat is an experience in itself. We'll be back!

Many thanks to Chris Heath, Ron Walsh, Peter Flockart and Nick Ridis for the (many) excellent photo's that they sent me for this article.

Paul Pacey



Ex HMAS Adelaide Impending Sinking







Shore Dive Wrap

3/4/2011...The Leap.. Gary D, Josh, Jeff and YT..spot on timing...up the east wall, turn and drift to the steps, perfect tide and conditions, saw some weedies, baby cuttle fish, nudies and usual marine critters, soft corals etc.

Then The Steps left and saw, big cuttlefish, lots of weedies (Most excellent, I LOVE TO SEE WEEDIES, they are one of my most Fav Mc's) and nudies.

6/4/2011..Jeff and YT...Yena to the Steps. Great dive too bad we got separated at the bottom of the Yena incline, solo dives are always exciting. Got to work on BC. (Buddy co-ordination)

9/4/2011..Bass Point.. Club Calendar dive.....The gutter and ????. great turnout, 15 divers, (SGSC members and guests) did the gutter and it was so good we did it again. Saw giant bullray at the entry pointy, big cuttlefish, Eastern Blue devil fish/es , wobby and other Mc's.

A MOST EXCELLENT DAY. Bbq afterwards./ Special thanks to Deb C for her efforts towards the barbie, and to Ron W for organising the day and enlisting my help when more pressing matters stopped him from attending. I am always glad to help.

19/4/2011 Oak Park Left and right (2 Dives), Maxine, Simon, Fiona and YT. good conditions. Saw monster bullray, wobby and shrimp. Usual MC's.

21/4/2011...The Leap. Eddie I & YT..good conditions. 10 – 15m viz, great current assist, usual MC's and ML (Marine life))

24/4/2011....Bare island, Eddie I, YT and John D (Non member), great conditions, viz 5 15m, MY navigation was a bit off, but we All got out of the water okay.

A special mention to Dave Casburn and John (I assume John Prior) for turning up at Lilli Pilli on Sunday (1/5/2011) . even though they didn't dive after Dave's viz assessment of 10cm) I think it was Andy Warhol who said, everybody has their 15 minutes of fame, Dave had you dived for 15 minutes in 10cm viz (You would have been there, so you could have told the story) you could have achieved everlasting fame, and your story could would have been recounted (With suitable embellishments) around campfires and bars where diving exploits of SGSC members were retold. But you missed out; you just get a special mention in the April, 2011 SDW.

Enough of my ramblings

Get in the water and get wet

Live long and dive well

Ken Ridley

Appearing for the first time in the shore dive wrap.

The amazing

The stunning

The predatory

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(A member of the Nudibranchs family.) (or a slug.....but very pretty)

- Able to eat and kill blue bottles
- Able to assimilate and store for their own use, the blue bottles sting
- Stunning camouflage

And this is just what we mere mortals know about them.

Found lurking in a pool at Bass Point on our Saturday Shore dive by guests Jason and Kelly.

Be afraid, very afraid

GLAUCUS ATLANTICUS A BEAUTY AT EATING THOSE MARINE STINGERS

Feb 3rd, 2010

by Dr Ruth Young.

Glaucus atlanticus as you might find them washed up on the beach

Along the Australian beaches of Queensland and Northern New South Wales, northerly winds often bring with them blue bottles or Portugese man o' war jelly fish. The blue bottle (*Physalia physalis*) is one of nature's small jellyfish (Siphonophora) with a powerful sting. Sometimes known as a marine stinger it can

inflict a nasty sting when its tentacles wrap around the tender skin of your torso or thigh. But the blue bottles have other things on their cnardarian minds...there is a *predator* out there and a beautiful one at that.

Glaucus atlanticus is a **nudibranch**, it's a sea slug and it's hunting blue bottles. Although reasonably common, they're not recognised that often, probably because people are busy avoiding those stinging blue bottles.

Glaucus is pelagic and floats in the same ocean currents as the blue bottles. It swims upside down almost clinging to the surface of the water like it is moving across the ceiling of the ocean



– searching for blue bottles. You can see from the picture that the appendages (or arms) split into many ‘horns’ or *cerata*. These cerata do several things, one is to get oxygen from the water, they’re the equivalent of gills. A second function is to store the useful parts of their victims!

Glaucus atlanticus showing cerata

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/aoyan/> / CC BY-SA 2.0

When *Glaucus* catches and eats a blue bottle it doesn’t just digest it completely. It breaks it down and keeps the blue bottle’s stinging cells, the *nematocysts*. Somehow, *Glaucus* aggregates the stinging cells into a cyst called a ‘*cnidosac*’ storing them in the tips of its cerata where it uses them for its own defence. That’s like eating stinging nettles and then growing the stings out of your head so that the next person to rub your hair gets a sore hand! *Freaky stuff.*

Glaucus also has different colour patterns on its top and bottom sides. This gets confusing because these guys swim upside down. The bottom side has the beautiful blues and silver patterns you see in the picture. This is the side that birds would see because *Glaucus* swims upside down.



The silver and blue patterns help it to blend into the glistening surface of the sea. The topside of *Glaucus*, which would be seen by the fish below, is a light blue/grey so that it blends into the colour of the sky, which is what the fish would see. This is great *countershading* to avoid being eaten themselves.

The stinging blue bottle <http://www.flickr.com/photos/babbagecabbage/> / CC BY-SA 2.0

So next time you're walking along the beach dodging the blue bottles washed up by the northerly winds. Keep an eye out for these other amazing little animals: the little silvery nudibranchs, *Glaucus*.

Let me know if you've seen them or have some great pics, *they'd make a great tattoo*.

+++++

I am working on getting a weekly and monthly shore dive wrap out to the members.

THIS IS NOT A COMPETITION FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS.

It is a bit of a forum to generate interest in shore diving and to show members some of the absolutely stunning things that can be seen on our shore dives.

It relies on members submitting their photos.

I will try to get a fair representation of photos submitted out to the general membership.

Just let me say that I don't pretend to be any sort of gun photographer or photographic judge. Don't be offended if all your pics don't get included in "The SDW" (Perhaps I could do a supplementary and comprehensive list of pics for interested members.

SUNDAY 3/4/11 The Leap and Steps left. Gary D, Jeff, Josh and Yt , 15 viz, perfect conditions saw balling catfish, black anglerfish, weedies.

Saturday The Gutter Bass point. 13 Divers and guests turned up for a great days diving. Saw, The Bullray, E>Blue devil fish, big cuttlefish nudies and other marine critters. Viz 5 – 15 and 22 degree water. Also guests Jason and Kelly found the critter of the weekend lurking in a pool on the shore, the astonishing **Glaucus atlanticus** and wait theres more and, and and **BABY**.



Live long and dive well.

Ken Ridley

For Sale.

1 x DS 125 Strobe & Battery Pack

Includes Charger (Plugs for multiple countries)

Arm for Ikelite Housing

2 x TTL cables

Diffuser

In good condition

Asking price \$500

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Please send items for the Newsletter to me *as you do them during the month.*