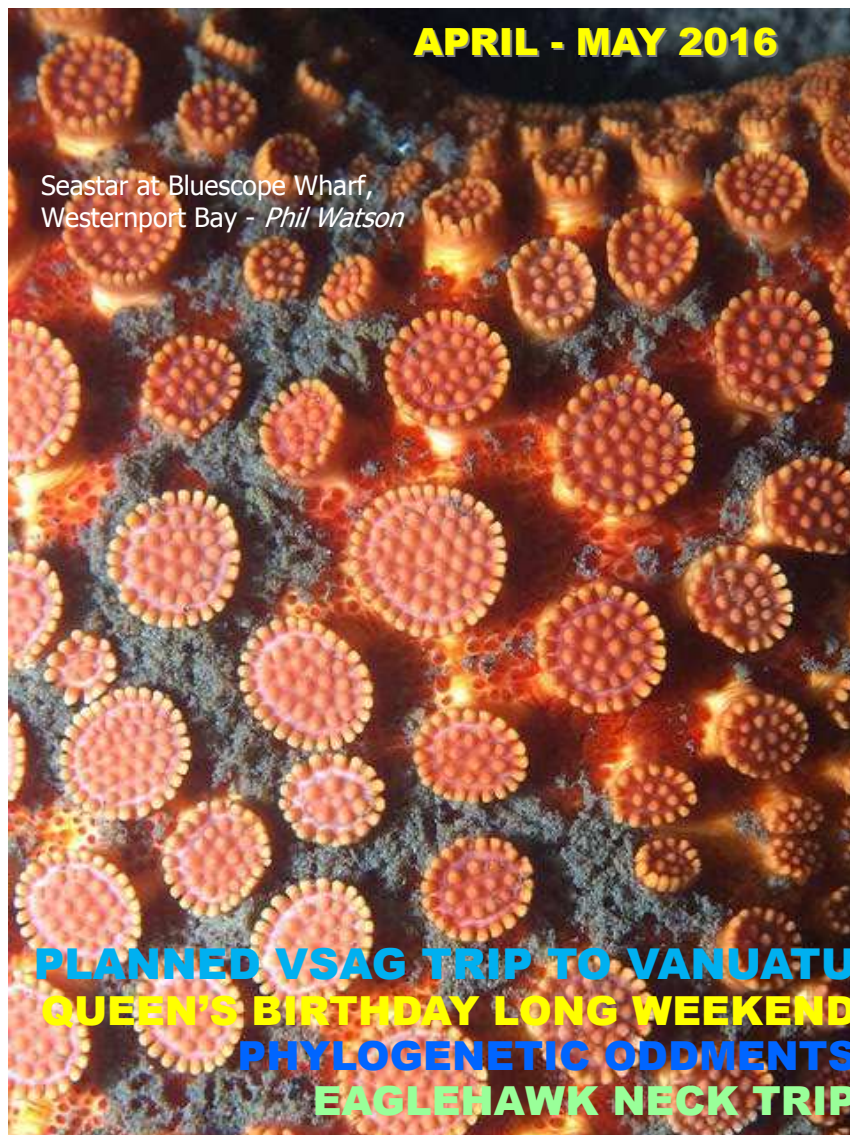




Fathoms



Postal Address:

VSAG, 139 Overport Rd, Frankston South VIC 3199

www.vsag.org.au

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY LONG WEEKEND

“Boarfish Lodge” Queenscliff 11th-13th June 2016



Alan and Mary Beckhurst are again making their famous “Boarfish Lodge” available for VSAG members over the QBLWE 11th-13th June 2016.

Situated just a few kms out of Queenscliff at 25 Ward Road, this large room has many great creature comforts:

- Log fire / 4 comfy bunks / One double bed / TV / DVD Player
- Shower / Kitchen / Fridge / Freezer etc.
- BBQ / Dive gear wash down and undercover drying area
- Parking for boats

10 Minutes to the Queenscliff launching ramp.

\$25 per head per night.





Fathoms

Est. 1954 Official Journal of the Victorian Sub-Aqua Group, Inc.

In this April - May 2016 issue...

Article	Author	Page
Queen's Birthday Long Weekend	John Lawler	2
Notices & Welcome to New members		4
VSAG Committee 2015–2016		5
Revised Safety Guidelines	VSAG Committee	6-8
VSAG Dive Equipment Box Update	VSAG Committee	8
New O2 Kits	Ian Scholey	9
Article : Safety Alert : Cylinder Valve	Peter Beaumont & WorkSafe	10-11
Proposed Dive Holiday - Espiritu Santo, Vanuatu	Benita McDonough	12-15
Article: Phylogenetic Oddments	Jan Watson	16-19
Photo Competition Winners & Runners-up	Ian Scholey	20-24
2015 Great Victorian Fish Count Results Website		25
New member Profile : Antony Platford	John Lawler	26
Diving the Web		28-29
Dive Snippets & Dive Reports:		
Shore Dive, Blairgowrie	Ian Scholey	30
North Wall & Pope's Eye	Ian Scholey	31
Rickett's Point	David Reinhard	32
Pope's Eye & Boarfish Reef	Bo Zhang	32
Yarra River	Sandy Webb & Phil Watson	33-36
Twin Bombies & Lonsdale Wall	Ian Scholey	36
Uralba & Phil's Reef	David Reinhard	37-38
Eaglehawk Neck, Tasmania	Ian Scholey	37-46
Cape Woolamai	John Mills	46-48
USAT Liberty, Bali	John Ashley	49
The Hurricane	Ian Scholey	49
VSAG Dive and Meeting Calendar	Peter Beaumont	50
Tidal Streams — April / May / June	Graham Ellis	51-53
Websites for Tidal Streams & Weather Conditions	Peter Beaumont	54
Safety Snippet : Tank Valve Dust Cap Warning	Peter Beaumont	55
Emergency Contact Information	VSAG Committee	56-57
Phil Watson's Photos		58-59
Member's Photos		60-61
Beneath the Surface with Charmaine Alford		62

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14 Sheoak Rd, Frankston South VIC 3199

NOTICES

VSAG Committee meets at 8 p.m. every 2nd Tuesday of the month
(except in January)

All Members Welcome

The Water Rat Hotel, 256 Moray St, South Melbourne VIC 3205

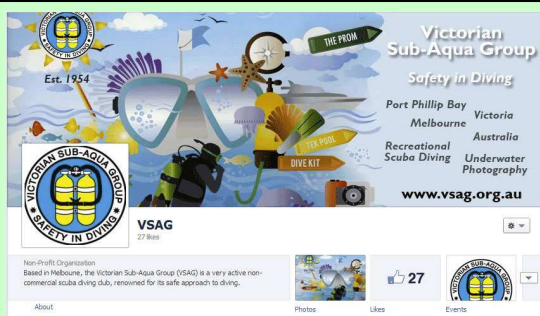


**VSAG Monthly meetings are at 8 p.m. on the
3rd TUESDAY of each month
at THE WATER RAT HOTEL
256 MORAY ST, SOUTH MELBOURNE**

All are welcome to join us for a meal at 7 p.m.
before the meeting.

VSAG on Facebook

Did you know VSAG now has a Facebook page? Check it out at <https://www.facebook.com/vsag.divers> and 'Like' us.



NEW VSAG MEMBERS

Please extend a very warm welcome to the following new VSAG Members:

- ◆ Carol Penfold
- ◆ Mark Jeffrey
- ◆ Andy Bell
- ◆ Yarra Di Martino

- ◆ Chris Demetrious
- ◆ Antony Platford
- ◆ Andrew Gyoper
- ◆ John Ashley
- ◆ Bert Parker



Your VSAG Committee 2015–2016

To email all VSAG committee members: committee@vsag.org.au

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Travel Co-ordinator

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General Committee Member

Christine Reynolds PO Box 596, Cranbourne VIC 3977
0402 214 136 nt08002001@yahoo.com.au

REVISED CLUB SAFETY GUIDELINES

The next in the series from the Committee regarding VSAG's revised safety procedures

DIVE CAPTAINS' DUTIES :

1. Plan dive — note weather conditions, currents, tides, distance to travel and any particular dangers.
2. Be available, between 6:00 and 7:00 p.m. the evening prior to the dive day, to take calls on the published contact number from divers scheduling / confirming / cancelling dives.
3. Ensure all new / guest divers have completed and signed a VSAG Request To Dive / Indemnity Form.
4. Dive buddies to be allocated by Dive Captain and boat complement agreed upon.
5. Ensure that new / guest divers are buddied with experienced divers.
6. New / guest divers will undergo a "check out" dive. The check dive shall be no deeper than 18 metres, unless the diver can show a level of certification and/or experience that qualifies them to dive deeper and a committee member approves a variation of the depth limit. A diver who can satisfy a committee member that he/she has current and appropriate experience and/or certification to enable he/she to dive to a deeper depth shall be permitted to do so by the Dive Captain.
7. Briefing before dive — outline of probable dive procedure and area by Dive Captain.
8. **Dive Captain is not responsible for checking out each diver's equipment.** This is a private dive club and you are expected to be responsible for yourself.
9. Check capacity of boats for particular day and conditions.
10. Where there are more divers than spaces in boats, the Dive Captain will allocate spaces, and advise accordingly. **VSAG is not a charter service, so it is not first in best dressed.** The Dive Captain will also consider what constitutes an acceptable crew e.g. boat licences, equipment used and experience levels.
11. Select alternative dive site if primary dive site is unsuitable.
12. If the diver is advised against the dive but still goes ahead, he/she shall be reported to the Committee by the Dive Captain / Boat Captain.

13. If divers intend continuing diving after the day's planned diving is finished, then they will notify the Dive Captain of their intentions.

14. Dive Captain to compile article for "Fathoms".

The Committee of VSAG has determined the following safety procedures that are to be adhered to by ALL Members on club dives.

1. The Dive Captain is to oversee all arrangements and safety procedures for the day's diving activities.
2. For each Club dive, the plan is to be announced and adhered to unless alteration is cleared by the Dive Captain.
3. When diving as a group of boats under one anchor, one or more boats should be manned to aid any calls of distress from divers and ensure the safety of the other boats.
4. The Club advocates that divers use the "buddy" system wherever possible.
5. When diving in and around the Rip, shipping movements should be determined by contacting Lonsdale Lighthouse by radio. Divers are to make note of the compass bearing required to swim away from the shipping channel towards shallower water before entering the water. **If shipping is to arrive in the dive area, NO DIVING is to be carried out in or near the shipping channels.**
6. When problems arise on the surface and divers are on a buoy line, they should be alerted by four (4) strong pulls on the buoy line by the surface crew. The person holding the buoy is to control the diving of his/her buddy and they should therefore surface on his/her instruction.
7. Wherever possible one dive boat on the day should carry a Club O2 kit.
8. All members of VSAG and guest divers are required to carry a DSMB deployable from depth and an Octopus Regulator when diving with the club.
9. New members should always be paired with experienced divers of the Club. This procedure should be carried out for a period after membership to ensure that the Committee is satisfied with their capabilities and that they are given every confidence in their own ability and the ability of other members. The

first dive is classified as a "check out" dive and is not to exceed 18 metres, unless the diver can show a level of certification and/or experience that qualifies them to dive deeper and a variation of the depth limit is approved by a committee member.

- 10. The Boat Captain is to take responsibility for his/her boat and to brief the divers on the on-board procedures to be adopted for the day's diving.**

11. It is desirable that all boats remain together in a group but in certain circumstances and conditions a Boat captain may seek the Dive Captain's clearance if early departure is necessary (i.e. need to go home early).

***Note: Definition of "Boat Captain/skipper" -**

The person responsible for / in control of the boat and becomes a deputy Dive Captain and is responsible for safety for that boat. ❖

VSAG Dive Equipment Box - Update

VSAG has a private transient equipment box located at:
The Scuba Doctor Shop, 1/49 Peninsula Avenue, Rye VIC 3941.

Equipment that is not in use by VSAG divers and boat owners can now be held in our black storage box.

It currently holds :

◆ 1 Oxygen Medical Tank	◆ 3 Ramp Passes
◆ 1 Oxygen Medical Kit	◆ 2 Scuba Tanks.
◆ 1 DAN First Aid Kit	
◆ 2 Oxy-Sok Oxygen Resuscitation Kits	

Please use this facility responsibly. ❖

New O2 Kits

Ian Scholey

The newly purchased O2 kits are now available for members' use. There are two new kits available. One is located at the Scuba Doctor and the other is at my home address in Frankston South.



These kits deliver a significant increase in capability over the old kits. Each kit comes with either a 10L or 11L O2 cylinder and both a demand and continuous flow regulator allowing two divers to receive O2 simultaneously. Each kit also contains an operating guide and a quick reference flow chart. If you are using these kits it is important that you make yourself familiar with these before departure.

The club now has several members who have been formally trained in the use of these kits. For information the following members have been trained

or are already qualified in their use:

Myself, David Geekie, Pam Dagley, David Flew, David Politakis, Tony Knott, Rob Kirk, Priya Cardinaletti, Carole Campisano, Tim Forster, Sandy Webb, Feng Qui, Steve Lamb, Ian Smith, Charmaine Alford, Benita McDonough, Christine Reynolds

If you are also qualified for O2 delivery and are not on the above list perhaps you could let me know via e-mail.

To book the kits please email me at ischoley@iinet.net.au to arrange.



I would also like to take this opportunity to remind you that the club has 4 cylinders available for member's use. There are two 12L cylinders at the Scuba Doctor and one 12L and one 10L cylinder at my address in Frankston South. **There is no charge for using these, you just have to return them filled.** Once again if you wish to book these please email at the address above. ❖

SAFETY ALERT - DIVE INDUSTRY WORKER CRITICALLY INJURED WHEN FILLING SCUBA CYLINDER

article provided by Peter Beaumont

An experienced service technician in the dive industry recently suffered life threatening facial injuries while filling a SCUBA (dive) cylinder. The purpose of this Safety Alert is to raise awareness of the risk of injury when working with high pressure gases and equipment.

In this case, a M25 x2 metric threaded valve was incorrectly fitted into an imperial threaded ¾" cylinder. The dive cylinder had been filled and as the fittings were about to be removed, the valve ejected at a very high speed from the cylinder still attached to the A clamp/yoke and fill whip. The thread of the valve had stripped and the valve and A clamp flew up and struck the worker in the face, causing critical injuries. The blast also caused extensive damage to the filling station, the associated pipework and the ceiling.

Enquiries have since revealed that across Western Australia this year, several imperial threaded dive cylinders have been identified as having the

incorrect metric threaded valves fitted to them. It appears that some of these valves have been brought in by overseas travellers or bought online from overseas suppliers or community websites, where the buyer is not aware of the thread difference.

Contributing factors

Metric threaded valves and imperial threaded valves are very similar in appearance.

The incorrect metric valve was fitted to a standard imperial dive cylinder.

The mismatch was not identified by the experienced service technician.

The service technician was leaning over the valve and the cylinder when removing the connections.

There was no means to restrain the dive cylinder, the cylinder valve and the fill whip during the filling process.

Action required

All staff must do vigilant checks of the type of valve thread and the type of cylinder thread prior to cylinder filling and prior to changing the valve.

Safe systems of work are in place for the filling of dive cylinders.

All relevant staff have received training on valve-cylinder mismatches and the consequences.

Businesses should consider not stocking different threaded valves.

If businesses do stock different types of valves, they must ensure the valves are clearly labelled and stored in different locations.

Staff changing valves and filling cylinders must not be distracted. Where practicable, fill stations and service areas are located in designated areas and have restricted access to minimise the potential for distraction.

Access to fill stations is restricted/isolated to minimise the risk of injury to bystanders.

Where practicable, dive cylinders, valves and fill whips are restrained (ie in a safety cage or containment unit) during the gas filling process.

Further information

Further information and guidance regarding recreational diving is available from:

[Recreational Diving, Recreational Technical Diving and Snorkelling Code of Practice 2011](#)

The Workplace Health and Safety Queensland Code of Practice provides occupational safety and health guidance in relation to recreational diving, recreational technical diving and snorkelling.

[Divesafe](#)

This WorkSafe Victoria publication provides occupational safety and health guidance in relation to recreational scuba diving and snorkelling. ❖

WorkSafe Alert - 22 Dec 2015

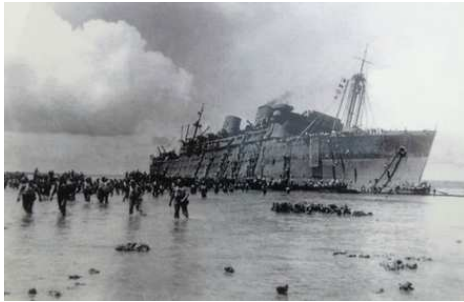
safety@commerce.wa.gov.au



VSAG SCUBA DIVING HOLIDAY

**Espiritu Santo, Vanuatu
16th-29th August 2016**

**Scuba Dive the SS President Coolidge,
Million Dollar Reef, local reefs, USS Tucker,
Tui Tawate and 2 plane wrecks.**



SS President Coolidge http://www.google.com.au/imgres?imgurl=https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/d/db/The_Beached_Transport_SS_President_Coolidge%25E2%2580%2594October_1942.jpg&imgrefurl=https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SS_President_Coolidge&h=768&w=1024&tbnid=aMqLYm4gUDPcsM:&tbnh=150&tbnw=200&docid=C_zP7RkxRP6Y3M&itq=1&usq=_kWNovc6QU1raPxQp6HhTbwSpAmw=

SS President Coolidge was a US luxury ocean liner that was completed in 1931. She was operated by Dollar Steamship Lines until 1938, and then by American President Lines until 1941. Length: 199 m. The wreck starts at approximately 20 metres and goes down to 70 metres. The luxury ocean liner was full of American troops during the Second World War when it hit a mine and sank. It is now one of the most amazing and accessible wrecks for divers.

During the Pacific Campaign of WWII over 100,000 allied troops and support staff were stationed on Santo and the time they spent there is still evident today. Other wrecks and remains from the war lie below the surface of the clear blue waters.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

How many VSAG divers may book on the trip?

8-10 divers and as many non-divers

When will I need to make a decision regarding booking on the trip?

Confirmation of numbers is due now and the deposit is due soon after.

How experienced do I need to be?

Deep Diving qualifications (<40 metres) or equivalent experience is recommended. The depths on the SS President Coolidge are from 20-60 metres.

What scuba gear will I need?

Hire gear is available. Some divers bring their own dive gear and hire tanks and weight belts. 3mm steamers all year round.

How many dives can you do on the Coolidge and other sites?

As there is so much to see on the Coolidge, divers do anything from a couple of dives to packages of ten or more - on the Coolidge alone. Other dive sites are very popular including Million Dollar Point.

How many dives can we do a day?

Due to the depths of the dives on the Coolidge, divers do no more than two dives per day. Stops are conservative; your dive guide will inform you what stops are required for your particular dive. If divers have a maximum depth that they are comfortable with that may be accommodated.

What is the water temperature?

Varies with the season, between 26 and 32 degrees C

What sort of climate does Vanuatu have?

The climate ranges from oceanic tropical to sub-tropical in south; November to April, hot and wet, with occasional hurricanes; temperature range 26 to 33 degrees Celsius and, average rainfall ranges from 225 centimetres in south to 387.5 centimetres in north.

What languages do the locals (Ni-Vanuatu) speak?

Bislama (a type of pigeon English), French and English.

Is there anything for the non-divers to do?

The scuba diving will be finished for the day by early afternoon leaving time to explore Aore Island or to take a ferry across to Santo to explore the tourist attractions. These include: **Millennium Cave, Blue Hole, Aore Island Plantation, Aore Island Cave to name a few.**

COST (Please note that these prices may be subject to change and do not include transfers)

Air Travel:

Air Vanuatu 10/05/2016 – 18/05/2016
\$935.00pp

Accommodation:

Aore Island Resort 10/05/2016 – 18/05/2016 \$1,268.00pp

(Continental breakfast included)

Scuba:

Aore Adventure Sports & Lodge \$895.00pp

(10 dive package 69000vt plus any hire gear needed)

TOTAL:

Divers - \$3,098.00pp

Non Divers - \$2,203.00pp

VSAG Contact:

Benita McDonough

Email: benita@mcdonough.name

Mobile: 0419 399 000

Please confirm your interest via email or mobile

Aore Island Resort

— ESPIRITU SANTO —

Accommodation:



Aore Island Resort is a boutique beachfront resort set on a private island only a 15 minute ferry ride from the main town of Luganville, Espiritu Santo. The resort is on a sandy beach with a backdrop of coconut palms and tropical rainforest. It has a unique Melanesian style restaurant offering terrace dining with views across the water to the distant mountains and town of Luganville. Enjoy a cocktail at sunset; dine on the famous Santo Beef or fresh Seafood and be entertained by local music. At night the lights reflect across the water creating a special ambiance.

The resort has 18 private well-appointed bungalows. There is a choice of Studio Beachfront Bungalows, ideal for couples, or spacious One Bedroom Beachfront and One Bedroom Gardenview Bungalows, perfect for families. The Beachfront Bungalows are on the water's edge - only a few steps across the sand to crystal blue water and amazing snorkelling.

Sitting on the balcony of your bungalow, relaxing and taking in the views is a pleasant way to pass a few hours, as is relaxing around the pool or enjoying a Melanesian massage.

For the active and adventurous, explore the island by kayaks or bike. Join a plantation walk, take a tour, or go fishing, trekking or caving.

From the Melanesian style architecture to the local string band and friendly staff, Aore Island Resort is more than a holiday it is a Vanuatu experience.



Scuba Diving:

There is no easier way to dive Santo than with Aore Adventure Sports & Lodge boat, "Full Boar", loading right out front of the beach house. We have a full wash and storage area for dive gear.

"Full Boar" is an 8m Stabicraft in survey for 12 and crew. We carry a remote area 1st aid and

Dan O2 kit as well as a defibrillator (the only dive operator in town with one). My Dive Master / guide is Alfred Niko, AKA Alfred #1, the most experienced dive guide in Santo with over 13500+ dives on the Coolidge. I personally supervise all the dives, so we can cater for any type of experience with dive groups and tailor dive plans to suit.



Alfred (dive master) can show your divers things on the wreck that only he knows about, giving them a very unique experience. We also dive all local reefs, USS Tucker, Tui Tawate and two plane wrecks, plus spots that no one else has access to.

Our private beach is perfect for snorkelling and swimming. It has a sandy bottom with coral bombies scattered around and has a gradual slope from around 6m down to approx. 50m. All our dive equipment including three compressors are top of the range, 12ltr aluminum tanks with din/k valves and high end reg sets with computers and bcd's if required for hire. (We have both ladies' and men's BCD's all with weight integration, safety marker buoys and whistles).



Double boat dives always include morning tea and a gourmet lunch on board. We have a fridge/ freezer on board for all food and ice cold drinks.

"Full Boar" is also set up for game fishing, island cruises, sunset cruises and we also have a 6 man towable shark for some fun in the sun. Soon we will also offer para sailing which will be unique for Santo.

Transfers from the airport to us on the island are 3000vt per head.

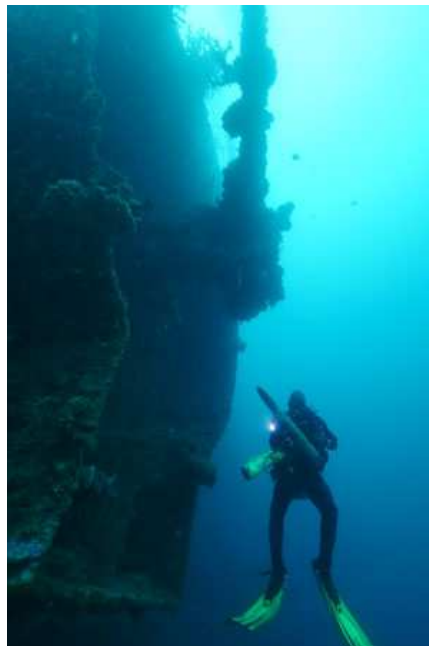
Double boat dives with tanks/weights/guide & gourmet morning tea/lunch provided is 15000vt per diver.

6 dive package 42000vt plus hire gear as needed.

10 dive package 69000vt plus any hire gear needed.

Hire gear as required 3000vt per double dive include a personal dive computer.

Dive light as required 1000vt per double dive. ❖



PHYLOGENETIC ODDMENTS : Flatworms, Brachiopods, Nemertean and Echiurans

by Jan Watson Continuing her series of articles on
Marine Biology for Divers

We occasionally see some of these beasts, but probably never recognise them for what they are.

FLATWORMS

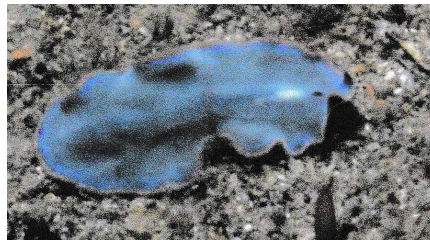
Flatworms (*Platyhelmintha*) sometimes resemble nudibranchs in size, shape and colour. But they belong to a more primitive group. While superficially resembling nudibranchs, they can easily be distinguished by being very flat and have neither a bunch of gills at the rear, nor rhinophores at the front. When moving, they glide rather than creep as do nudibranchs.

There are about 30,000 known species of flatworms worldwide. They have an unsegmented body, a head with sensory organs, a primitive gut but no gills as they obtain oxygen by diffusion from the water. The marine group, the *Polycladida* (known as *polyclads*) are those we see. They are carnivorous, eating soft corals, bryozoans, hydroids and molluscs.

About 25 *polyclad* species are known from Australia but there are probably

many more still unknown to science. Tropical flatworms are often brightly coloured and some can swim with a flowing motion. There are few Australian authorities on flatworms and one of them is John Chuk a local diver and photographer. Their habit of disintegrating when collected, makes them poor laboratory subjects.

If you open a mussel, sometimes a greyish-brown flatworm (*Notoplana australis*) will slide out.



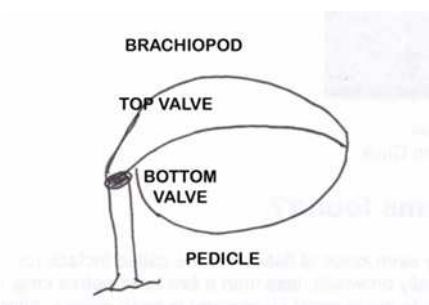
Another flatworm is *Pseudoceros lividus*. Some can be found in dives at Blairgowrie.

BRACHIOPODS

Brachiopods (“brachs”) are sometime colloquially known as “lamp shells” because of a supposed resemblance to

ancient Roman oil lamps. They superficially resemble but are not even closely related to bivalve molluscs as they have an entirely different anatomy. Brachiopods are a very ancient lineage and were the dominant inhabitants of Earth's Ordovician and Devonian seas (400 million years ago), long before molluscs evolved. There are thousands of fossil species that sometimes form vast fossil beds in ancient rocks. They are now a dying lineage with only about 400 living species known worldwide. They are usually refugees in deeper waters.

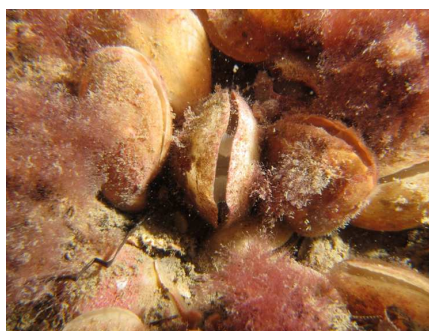
Brachiopods have two valves, the smaller on top, and a lower larger one that encloses the animal. The upper valve has a downward facing perforated end through which a tough stalk (pedicle) passes for attachment to the substrate. Inside the valves, lobed filaments (lophophores) circulate sea water to extract oxygen and food.



Brachiopods can vary in size from very small to about 10 cm across the shell and vary in colour from fawn to

red. *Waltonia* in the New Zealand fiords is a beautiful deep red (I didn't get a photo, the Nikonos flooded). Many ancient ones have complexly pleated shells, but modern ones are usually smooth shelled.

The species we are most likely to see is *Magellania flavescens* – but to see them you'll need to dive really deep in Bass Strait (not recommended) or in the North Arm of Western Port (poor visibility). In Western Port there are many beds of *M. flavescens*: near Rhyll, Eagle Rock, Stony Point and at the base of piles of Crib Point wharf. Being gregarious, they live in dense beds on the bottom, preferably in tidal currents. I once did a longevity study on *M. flavescens* in Western Port and found that individuals grow to 4-5 cm long at maturity and if not eaten by predatory gastropods, can live to a ripe old age of 5-6 years.



Magellania flavescens. A group of brachiopods at the base of pile, Crib Point wharf, Western Port, 9m.

Another brach study I was involved in during the 1970s was on a tiny species, *Magadina cumingi*, about fingernail size. I found it in mobile sand drifts, in strong currents at 40 m in Backstairs Passage, S.A. As a pedicle fixing the species permanently to the bottom would be of no use in sand drifts it adapted the pedicle into something like a pogostick, which it used to lever itself up to the surface of the drifts. This was a world first observation and published in "Nature". Unfortunately, as this was in the old film days, long before I could afford a 28 mm lens for the Nikonos, I never got a good macro photo of *M. cumingi*. If anyone ever photographs one, I would love a closeup!



Small brachiopod, *Magadina cumingi*, (centre), upper valve showing. My only photo, Backstairs Passage SA, 40 m.

So, if you see a brachiopod, treat it with the respect it deserves due to its ancient history.

NEMERTEANS

Another group of invertebrates we often see, but take little notice of (that includes me), are worms of the Phylum Nemertea. They are often called ribbon worms because of their unsegmented body. The worm has a long, soft slippery body and lives in a cryptic habitat hidden among other marine life. They range from a few millimetres to several centimetres in length and come in many colours and patterns, depending upon species. They have simple eyes and a large extensible tubular proboscis for feeding. They glide along and capture small prey including crustaceans, molluscs and polychaete worms. They usually curl up into knots when disturbed and break up when handled, each piece being able to regenerate into a new worm.



Nemertean, probably *Capallothris arenarius* Ricketts Point. (Phil Watson)

Until recently local nemerteans were poorly known scientifically but Audrey Falconer has taken up their study and described and photographed a large number of species previously unknown to science.



Baseodiscus sp. Tangled worm, Inverloch,

ECHIURA

Spoon worms (echiurians) are marine and have an unsegmented soft sac-like body. They live deeply buried in sediment and extend a long, tubular proboscis over the sediment surface to collect food. The proboscis is rapidly withdrawn when disturbed. There are two common local species, *Metabonellia haswelli* and *Ikeda sp.* (*sp.* means the species has not been scientifically described). Both live in shallow bay habitats of sheltered, silty sands.

Metabonellia haswelli is dull green and the inflated body is deeply buried in the sediment. The proboscis is moderately long with a bifurcated spoon-shaped end that extends along the sand to feed.



Metabonellia haswelli, body exposed from the sediment, Port Phillip.

(Mark Norman, Museum of Victoria)

Ikeda shares a similar habitat to *M. haswelli*. The proboscis is a narrow whitish ribbon with dark brownish-grey speckles that can extend to a metre long, along the sand. When touched it rapidly contracts back into the burrow. ❖



Ikeda sp. Proboscis extended from burrow, Sandridge Beach 3 m. (Sandy Webb)

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST
PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS**

WINNER - JANUARY



Ian Scholey - A Swimming Anemone at Blairgowrie



RUNNERS UP IN THE JANUARY PHOTO COMPETITION



2nd Place : Charmaine Alford - Clown Anemonefish



Equal 3rd place : Phil Watson - Juvenile Blue Devil
at Cottage by the Sea

RUNNERS UP IN THE JANUARY PHOTO COMPETITION



Equal 3rd : Ian Scholey - Senator Wrasse & Big-bellied Seahorse on
The Hurricane

As usual, the standard was high, so well done to all the other entrants.

All the photos entered can be viewed on the VSAG website:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/vsag.divers/>

It's great to see more members getting out there with their cameras
and entering the Photo Competition.



WINNER — FEBRUARY



Phil Watson - Squid at Williamstown



RUNNERS UP IN THE FEBRUARY PHOTO COMPETITION

2nd Place : Ian Scholey - Giant Cuttlefish on The Hurricane

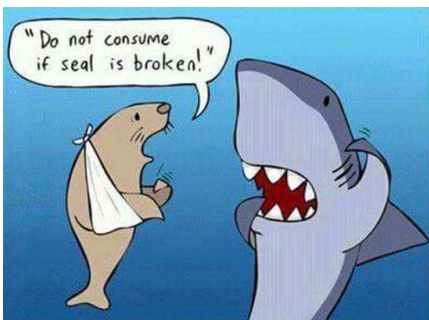


2015
GREAT VICTORIAN
Fish Count
By Tilly Reynolds and Caitlin Griffith

VICTORIAN NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION
the part of nature

As mentioned in the previous edition of Fathoms, the results of the 2015 Great Victorian Fish Count report is now available. It provides a snapshot of the unique marine life to be found in Victorian waters.

https://issuu.com/vnpa/docs/great_victorian_fish_count_2015?e=1929092%2F33552895



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*DAN Membership provides up to US\$150,000 Worldwide Emergency Evacuation Coverage. DAN Dive Injury Insurance is additional.

NEW MEMBER PROFILE

Antony Platford



Year joined VSAG: *2016*

How long have you been diving?
Since 1990

First diving experience:
I learnt to dive in Melbourne on the Mornington Peninsula with now long gone Peninsula Diving Instruction.

My log book reminds me of my first dive. It was Flinders Pier on the 19 August 1990. The log entry is brief; Poor Vis on a cold and windy day. 3 Metres for 30 mins.

I hope I can still manage to dive this winter without having to purchase a dry suit.

Favorite diving location in Melbourne: *The Wall*

Most memorable diving experience: *All dives on the President Coolidge, in Vanuatu .*

Most unusual or amusing diving experience:
Going for a shore dive on Cape Schanck. My dive buddy didn't fully explain the hike to get in and out. Nearly didn't make it back up the stairs to the car park.

Most valued piece of diving equipment:
I couldn't do without any of it ... LOL ... however I do love my old Poseidon reg and Scuba Pro fins.

Do you have a dive boat?
Still working on the boss.

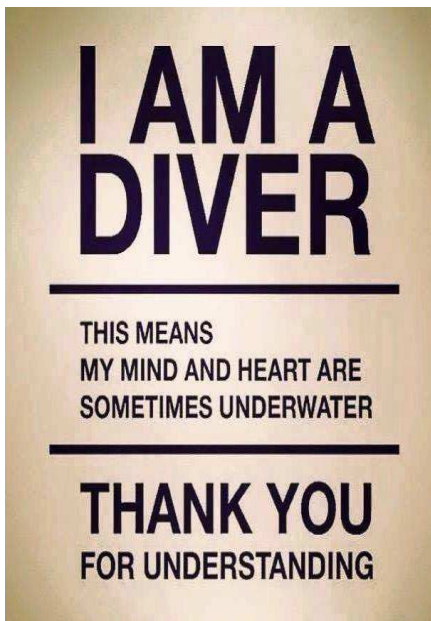
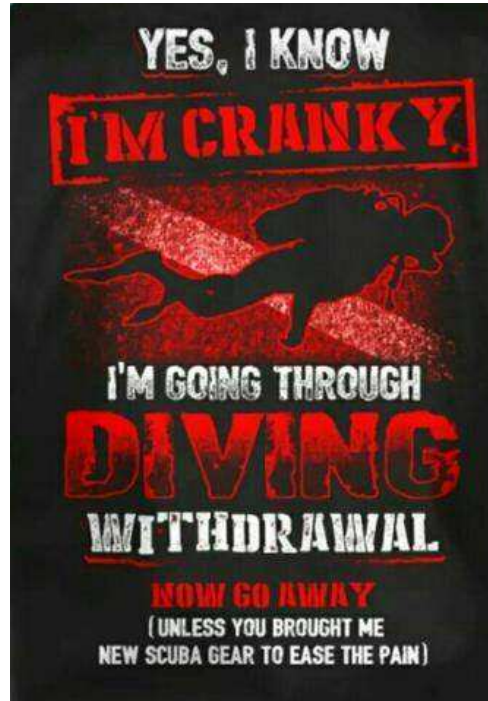
If you could dive anywhere in the world, where would you most like to dive?
Papua New Guinea and through the Banda Sea Indonesia.

Any diving words of wisdom?
Keep Calm, Breathe Easy.

Any other comments?
Thanks for welcoming me to the club.

It is fantastic to be part of a passionate group of divers who share a love of the ocean.

Compiled by John Lawler ❖



From UNILAD magazine :
 "Just found this seal in my bathroom"

Diving the Web

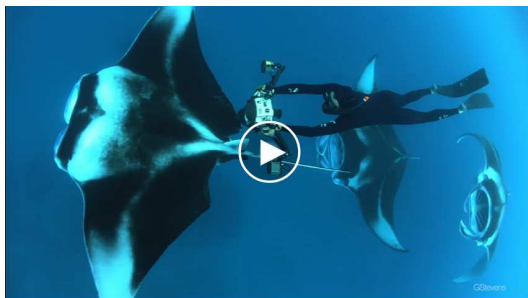
Lake Michigan Is So Clear Right Now Its Shipwrecks Are Visible From the Air

A Coast Guard patrol spotted the wrecks in shallow waters that are only clear after the lake's ice melts and before summer sediment swirls and algae blooms.



<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/sunken-ships-lake-michigan-are-visible-ghostly-blue-180955108/?no-ist>

Dive into an Ocean Photographer's World



Thomas Peschak, Conservation Photographer, strives to merge photojournalism and cutting edge science to create powerful media projects that tackle critical marine conservation issues.

https://www.ted.com/talks/thomas_peschak_dive_into_an_ocean_photographer_s_world



Ahmed Gabr breaks record for deepest SCUBA dive at more than 1,000 feet

Ahmed, a 41-year-old Egyptian, has broken the record for the deepest SCUBA dive, plunging an astonishing 332.35 m (1,090 ft 4.5 in) in the Red Sea off the coast of Dahab, Egypt.

Ahmed's amazing dive broke the previous mark of 318.25 m (1,044 ft) by South African Nuno Gomes in 2005, also off the coast of Dahab.

<http://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/news/2014/9/ahmed-gabr-breaks-record-for-deepest-scuba-dive-at-more-than-1000-feet-60537/>

500-year-old shipwreck tied to Vasco da Gama discovered off the coast of Oman



The 500-year-old wreckage of a Portuguese ship piloted by an uncle of famed explorer Vasco da Gama has been found off the coast of Oman, archaeologists said, a discovery that included the recovery of an extraordinarily rare coin.

<http://mashable.com/2016/03/15/shipwreck-tied-to-vasco-de-gama-discovered/#h1cJ3vuHYmqG>

Dive Reports & Snippets

Shore Dive, Blairgowrie

Sunday, 14th February 2016

Ian Scholey

A very late change of plans today saw Sea Eagle left at home and Peter Beaumont and I heading down to Blairgowrie for a 6.45am splash. I was a bit pessimistic about things at Blairgowrie after the works but I am relieved to report that things seem to be on the up already. Lots of Nudi's and a couple of Aglajidae (Headshield slugs) that I hadn't seen before. With my enthusiasm for Blairgowrie now reignited, look out for the return of the Friday night dive, soon. ❖



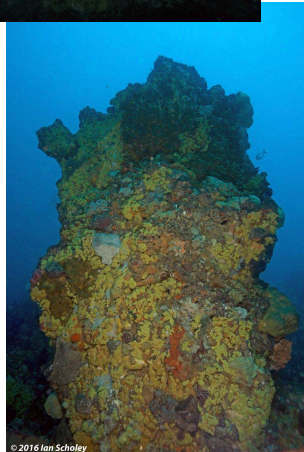
North Wall & Pope's Eye

Sunday, 21st February 2016

Ian Scholey

A busy day on the water in less than ideal conditions. Peter Beaumont and I headed out of The Heads early but conditions outside were not great so we turned around and headed for the Wall and slack water.

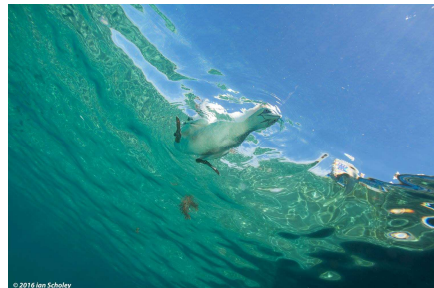
We had a good dive at North Wall Corner and then headed for the shelter of Pope's Eye for a second dive.



On board **Sea Eagle** were myself and Antony Platford, while on Toucans were Peter Beaumont and John Lawler.



We were joined at Pope's Eye by **Signature Two** with David Geekie, Michael Ngai and Sandy Webb on board and found **Barcrusher** with John and Deb Gladding, Greg Richards, Bettina Brill and Michael Kotsanas already there. As we headed home for the day the other two boats headed back to the wall for the PM slack. ❖



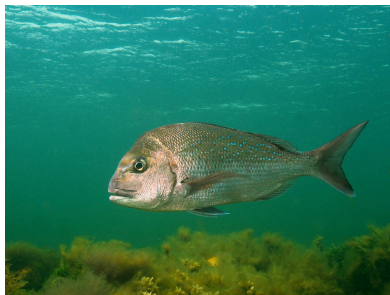
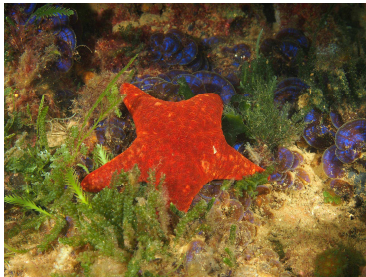
Rickett's Point

Tuesday, 23rd February 2016

David Reinhard

Rickett's was pretty good this morning. Plenty of fish around, especially Snapper and Zebra Fish.

I thought I would post this so that the VSAG members who boat dived Rickett's in very poor conditions a couple of weeks ago, can get an idea of how much better it can be on a good day. ❖



Pope's Eye & Boarfish Reef

Sunday, 28th February 2016

New Member - Bo Zhang

On the pleasant morning of Sunday, Feb 28th, John Lawler (DC), Benita McDonough, Monique Hammersley, Ian Smith and I headed to Pope's Eye and Boarfish Reef from Sorrento Boat Ramp.

JL checked me out, as I was new to VSAG, while diving at Pope's Eye. We were down to 10 metres deep and the current made me drift forward. A few fish welcomed us, like Bluedevil, Fairy Fish, Throat Wrasse, etc.

It was good fun watching them swimming close to us. The bottom time of this dive was 35 minutes. When we jumped back onto the boat, I was so glad to hear John telling me that I passed the test!

Thanks JL for providing the photo of the Fairy Fish! ❖



Yarra River : Westgate Punt Landing, Port Melbourne

Wednesday, 2nd March 2016

Background & photos by Sandy Webb



Dr Amy Rogers of the Urban Sustainability Unit of the City of Melbourne contacted us about getting divers interested in adding a marine element to the City's annual Bioblitz, for the first time. Her idea was to get photographs and identify as much marine life as possible to add to knowledge about



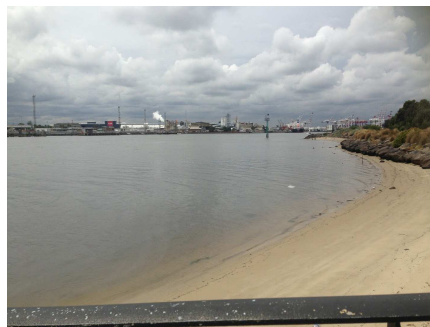
biodiversity in the City. These will ultimately be published on the Bower Bird web site.

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

Looking at the City of Melbourne boundaries it is pretty obvious that there are not a lot of interesting options for diving within them. There are the beaches and piers and groynes of Port Melbourne, but for me, after years of night dives in the Swan River, it was the Yarra River that beckoned.

There were sceptics... talk of Houdini who dived off Queen's bridge in 1909 and found a corpse, and of divers who have dived in black sludge under the Wharves, but I went exploring and found a couple of dive sites that looked really tempting (to me!).

The one we have dived so far is at the Punt landing under the Westgate Bridge, where there is a small sandy beach that gently slopes into the river. The Channel markers are about 20 metres out and the river is wide there, so the ships that pass, still seem a long way away.





Although there are no signs prohibiting anything, this site is within Port of Melbourne authority and there are strict regulations about 'aquatic activities' there. I discovered that the way to get approval was *not* to ask the "Yarra River Keeper" (no reply), or to phone the Community Liaison Officer for the Port ('no'). However I had also put in an earlier request to the Port online and this got a very positive phone call in reply. I was directed to a process that is very clearly set out on the Port of Melbourne web site for putting in an "Aquatic Event Advice" form and applying for an Occupational Diving Permit. We had to submit a map of the proposed dive site and carry out a risk assessment.

To set the time for the dive, I created a spreadsheet of relevant shipping movements, Williamstown ferry times, times when parking near the dive site would be difficult, first and last light.....and I've got a new addiction to a phone App called Marine Traffic.

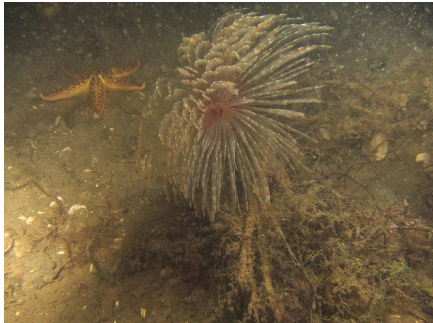
The approval we got was for the particular time I had requested, but required us to contact Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) immediately before



the dive to confirm this. We were required to complete our dive 30 minutes before the expected passing of any ship and not to dive in the shipping channel, which meant our dive on this occasion was to be limited to 30 minutes.



Not everyone finds this kind of novel experience tempting, but I am very grateful that Phil Watson did and was prepared to lead the dive on the day. It was definitely the kind of dive that could only be done as a strict buddy pair, given the very limited visibility. ❖



Asterias amurensis - the dreaded North Pacific Seastar & *Sabella spallanzani* - the introduced Fan Worm



And this is the sea squirt *Pyura stolonifera* that seems to thrive in such conditions

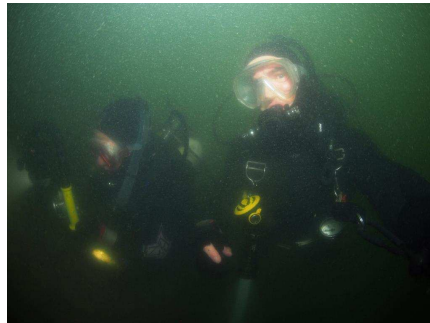
Dive report & photos by Phil Watson

Diving a low-visibility environment poses various risks. In order to mitigate these risks, divers need to adopt some of the disciplines of cave diving, in particular:

- Carry redundant lights
- Use a cave kick (horizontal finning) to avoid stirring up silt
- Practise accurate buoyancy
- Keep very close buddy contact

- Run a navigation line in some situations.

Sandy & I didn't need to run a line on this dive because navigation was easy



along the river bank. But we avoided stirring up silt by using a cave kick, carried multiple lights and kept in tight buddy contact. We were within arm's-length of each other at all times on the dive.



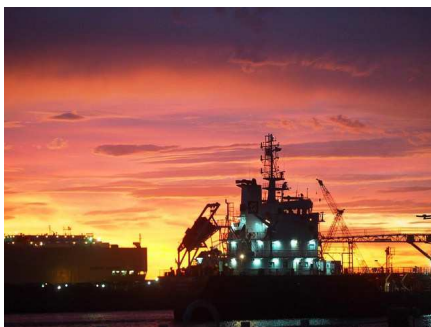
We agreed a 30-minute run time with the Port of Melbourne. We entered off the shore and initially worked our way down the bank to 8 metres. At this depth there was absolutely no ambient light and about 1m visibility. Water temp was 22 degrees. The bank wall dropped nearly vertically at this point,

suggesting that it goes much deeper. We then came back up to 5 metres and worked our way slowly along the bank, keeping it on our right shoulder.

The biota was very sparse and consisted mainly of fan-worms, sponges, small fish and some north Pacific sea stars. The water was completely still and there was absolutely no current. I imagine this is because we were diving on the high tide which would temporarily stop the river outflow. We slowly worked our way back to our entry point, surfaced after exactly 30 minutes and gave the port a call to let them know the dive was successfully completed.

Low-visibility dives are not for everyone. But they are a great way to exercise your dive skills. They test your navigation, buddy contact and buoyancy control. Following the success of this dive, we are keen to do more in the Yarra. Our photos will be posted onto the City of Melbourne's BioBlitz web site. ❖

[http://
participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/
bioblitz](http://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/bioblitz)



Twin Bommies & Lonsdale Wall

Sunday, 6th March 2016

Ian Scholey

A massive VSAG day with 5 boats out today!

On the water today were:

Barcrusher - David Politakis, myself, Feng Qui and Antony Platford.

ME3 - Graham Ellis, Brendan Mifsud, Herb Mackay and Chris Demetrious.

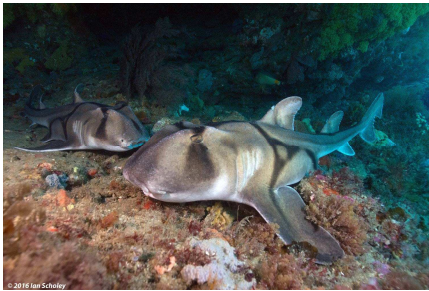
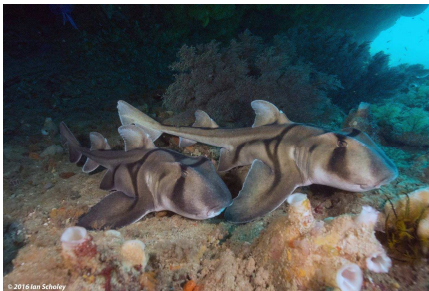
Carmine - Peter Campisano, Carole Campisano and Louise Campisano.

Real Torque - John and Deb Gladding, Benita McDonough, Greg Richards, Bo Zhang and Yarra Di Martino

Signature Two - David Geekie, Pamela Dagley, Michael Ngai and Mark Scoberg.



I dived Twin Bommies with new member Chris Demetrious and we struck it big with Port Jacksons, finding a ledge with a dozen sleeping sharks. ❖



Uralba & Phil's Reef

Tuesday, 8th March 2016

David Reinhard

Thanks to John Lawler for a very pleasant day on the Bay out of Beaumaris, along with Bert and Rachel.



Initially we headed out to the wreck of the Uralba where John and Rachel headed down for what turned out to be a rather brief dive. They surfaced after about 10 minutes reporting that the visibility was really bad and at 18m it was pretty dark.

Bert and I decided we could live without a dive like that so we all headed to Phil's Reef off Parkdale. Viz wasn't great, but it was acceptable and we had a very pleasant dive for around 90 minutes.



Fish life was very good with the resident Old Wives being present in large numbers and some big schools of pike also graced us with their presence. Plenty of rays, leather jackets, moonlighters, schools of hula fish, goat fish and some snapper were some of the species seen.



The photos are nothing great due to the poor visibility so are provided as evidence of the marine life rather than for their artistic merit (or lack thereof!). ❖

Eaglehawk Neck, Tasmania

Labour Day Long Weekend, 12-15th March 2016

Report by Ian Scholey with photos by Ian Scholey & Peter Beaumont

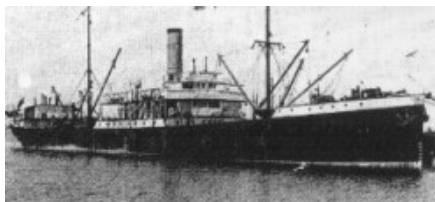
This Tassie trip shaped up to be a bit of a repeat of the August 15 trip last year with the same crew of myself, Peter and Judy Beaumont and David Geekie making the short hop across the water. This time we were joined by Pam Dagley and the expectations were of warmer conditions both above the water and below.

Peter and Judy took the Spirit of Tasmania across and started the trip early. They headed to Bicheno and Peter enjoyed a few dives there before heading down to Eaglehawk Dive Centre on Friday.



With work finally out of the way, I headed to the airport to meet up with David and Pam and we jumped on the evening Qantas flight to Hobart. We picked up a hire car and having learnt from our previous visit, headed to Coles to stock up on provisions before heading south to Eaglehawk Neck. We arrived at 10.30pm and found Peter still up and the kettle on.

The Dive Centre is just a quick walk from the Diver's Lodge and we headed over early on Saturday morning to fill in paperwork and get our gear sorted. The weather was excellent and as we were the only paying divers, we had the choice of where we wanted to head. In August the weather hadn't allowed a dive on the SS Nord but conditions today were excellent so we opted to take the longer boat ride and do that first.



The SS Nord was built in 1900 and at 1057 tons and 289 feet long she is a fair sized vessel. She was carrying a cargo of case oil when she struck a sunken pinnacle near Hippolyte Rock on November 8th 1915. Holed, she tried to run for Port Arthur but didn't

get very far, sinking in 42m of water near Cape Pillar on the tip of the Tasman Peninsula.

Skipper Mick lined up on the wreck using visual reference points and briefed us on the dive. We splashed in and headed together down the shot line. In 20-30m visibility we found the shot exactly where Mick said it would be in the centre of the wreck at mid-ships.

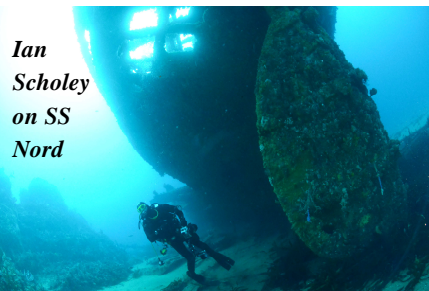
The wreck has largely collapsed now with the stern still standing proud from the seabed. Our plan was to head towards the stern and explore that area allowing ourselves to build up about 10 minutes of deco time so as to get a reasonable bottom time. Peter and I headed to the bottom while David and Pam hung a few metres above us and a little behind.



The wreck was loaded with fish. There were clouds of pink Butterfly Perch, schools of larger Trumpeters and Long-fin Pike together with a few



different types of Leatherjackets. Reaching the bow section, the rails were still visible and the prop can be seen together with the rudder, which still moves from side to side in the current. After photographing the prop and rudder, Peter and I headed back down the port side of the wreck with our lights turning the wreck a bright yellow as we lit the covering yellow Zoanthids.



Ian Scholey on SS Nord



David Geekie & Pam Dagley on SS Nord

Back at the shot line we slowly ascended stopping briefly to wait for David and Pam to start their ascent. Our total dive time was 31 minutes.



David & Pam dogleg on their deco stop after diving the SS Nord

It was just a short boat ride to our second dive site at Munroe Bite. During our surface interval we were saddened to hear from Mick that the Kelp had died back from our visit in August with unusually warm waters in Tassie

this summer. We were also told about a real problem with Sea Urchins, which are populating the area and stripping the reef back to bare rock in places.

*Peter Beaumont
descends into
Munroe Bite
Kelp Forest*

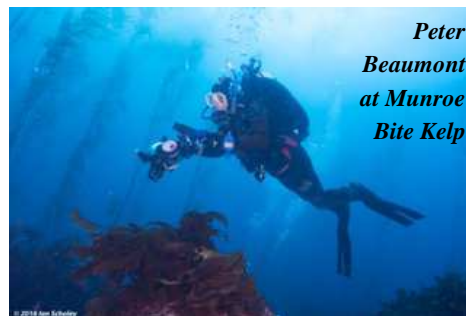


Warmed by the surface interval soup, we were soon over the side again and descending down amongst the Kelp. As per our last visit the vis was down a bit but that just adds to the eerie atmosphere created by the kelp.



Hitting the bottom, we surprised a large Stingray, who quickly swam off leaving us to start our dive. We wove in and out of the kelp forest exploring the frequent rock outcrops. We didn't see any evidence of the urchin damage and found the rocks covered in growth although the decline in the area of Kelp was noticeable.

*Peter
Beaumont
at Munroe
Bite Kelp*



The dive was an excellent one and with the bottom at 24m we were able to complete a 60-minute dive before popping our SMB's and heading back up into the sunshine. During our safety stop we were joined by a Seal who circled us several times.

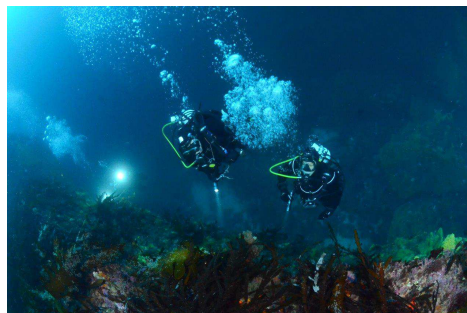
Back on board the boat, we headed back to the boat ramp to change over our tanks, before heading for our third dive site. Peter decided to sit this one out, so it was just David, Pam and I for this one. This time we headed north to a spot we had dived before called Deep Glen Wall. This site is tucked in under large cliffs and consists of a growth covered wall heading down to the seabed at 35m.

I love this dive site as it is the home of large schools of fish and we immediately sank down into an absolutely massive school of pink Butterfly Perch. We were engulfed by fish that streamed down the wall like a waterfall. Completely gob-smacked by the experience we hung by the wall for some considerable time taking it all in before following a sloping shelf down into deeper water. Every inch of the wall was covered in growth as we continued to descend. Reaching the seabed at 28.5m we were again engulfed by fish but this time it was the much larger Trumpeters that wove around us.

Enjoying the dive, I once again allowed myself to slip into deco and after letting David know how long I had to clear, I hung at 5m while one by one the others cleared their time and headed back to the boat. With a dive time of 80 minutes and my deco cleared, I headed back to the boat very happy after three sensational dives.

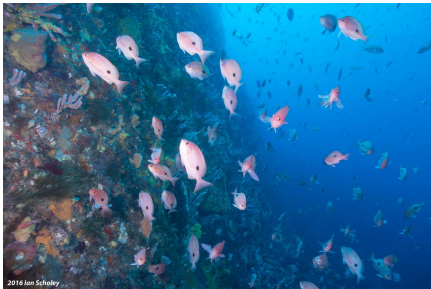
With the public holiday boosting the tourist numbers, we struggled to get a table at the local hotel for our evening meal, so instead headed 15 minutes back towards Hobart to the Dunalley Hotel. We had a good meal and in my case, a beer or two before heading back to the Dive Centre for an early night. Back at the accommodation we found a few new arrivals with three French tourists moving into the bunkhouse with us. We hurriedly cleared our scattered gear from their bunks before turning in, tired but happy.

We woke to a light drizzle on Sunday morning but the wind had eased a little and we expected the swell to be down a touch on the previous day.



*David Geekie, Pam Dagley & Ian Scholey
(with focus light) at The Sisters*

Our plan for day two was to head to an exposed group of pinnacles called The Sisters, which Mick promised us, was a fantastic dive site. Today a French diver who lacked a bit of experience joined us on the boat together with a couple of French Dive Masters working at the Dive Centre. The Sisters is a deep site so he would stay on the boat while we dived before Mick moved to a shallow site for him to dive while we did our surface interval.



An excellent briefing from Mick acquainted us with the dive site and we were soon heading down another wall to a sloping seabed starting at 30m and heading down to 50m. As we descended in fantastic vis down the wall we were again surrounded by schools

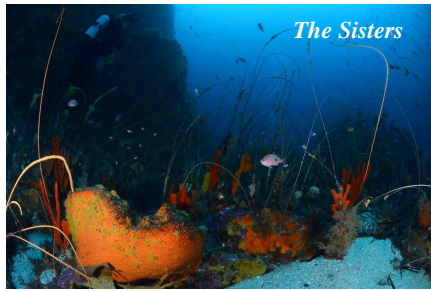


of Butterfly Perch. Reaching the seabed we found it absolutely covered in colourful growth and loads of Sea Whip coral. As we stopped to take photographs the fish seemed to head for us and we were constantly surrounded.



This dive site took my breath away. It is truly a magical dive and is temperate water diving at its very best. I will be back there for sure as soon as I can.

Our 35-minute dive with a maximum depth of 38m was just not long enough.



For our second dive we opted to go back to Deep Glen Wall so that Peter could get a dive in there after missing out yesterday. This time we dived it slightly differently, heading down to the bottom of the wall at 34m before heading out amongst the scattered rocks that made up the reef. Once again we had a fantastic dive. During the safety stop, a huge ball of baitfish surrounded us, which helped pass the time very nicely.

Peter and I had planned to get a third dive in today and head back up the road to the River Derwent in search of a Speckled Handfish. This fish is only found in Tassie and is on most photographer's bucket list. However, with an hour's drive each way ahead of us, we pulled the pin and decided to save that for another visit. Peter did eventually do the dive later in the week and found the fish, so at least we now know where to find them.



Instead of the dive, David, Pam and I headed off to site-see in the local area. We stopped at Tasman Arch and Devil's Kitchen before finishing up at Fortescue Bay for a walk. We certainly earned our supper with an hour's climb up the hill towards the cliffs. According to David's fitbit, we knocked off 72 flights of stairs with that one. Slightly exhausted, we headed off to the Lufra Hotel where we had an excellent meal.

Day three started with an early morning walk for David and I. We started by torchlight and then watched the sun come up from the lookout over Pirates Bay before turning around and heading back for breakfast.

We had arranged an early start for the last day's diving and were hoping to dive the caves in Waterfall Bay. The weather gods were kind and an offshore wind flattened the swell enough for us to dive the caves.

First stop was Cathedral Cave. Cathedral Cave is the largest sea cave system in Australia. It consists of a mas-



sive entrance that extends back into smaller caverns with narrow tunnels and cross passages. We dropped down to the entrance cave floor at 21m and followed the first tunnel on the right hand side that emerges into another chamber called Skull Cave. As you enter the cave it is easy to see how it got this name as it has two entrances to the sea that make the cave look like a skull with blue eye sockets.



The walls of the cave system are covered in growth and large schools of fish swim in the cave entrances. Inside we found many Crayfish. These were completely unconcerned by our presence and most were just sitting out in the open, usually in twos and threes.

Some of the tunnels are quite narrow but with Mick's excellent briefing we found it easy to navigate our way around the cave system. Our dive time was 58 minutes and our maximum depth was 21m.



For our final dive of the trip we opted for a couple more shallow caves. We were dropped in the mouth of Dog Leg Cave and explored this system before following the cliff face along for 50m or so to a second cave called Horseshoe Cave. In the mouth of Horseshoe Cave we found a large ray that didn't seem to know quite what to

make of us. With it's little escort of fish swimming close to its nose, it circled around trying to decide which way to escape. Eventually it headed up over a large boulder and out into the blue. We slowly explored the caves before heading back to the surface after 51 minutes. Our maximum depth was 16m.



Crayfish in Cathedral Cave

Our diving done and our weekend heading to a close, we washed down our gear and packed up for the final time. David, Pam and I headed up to Hobart while Peter and Judy remained behind. With a 6am flight on Tuesday morning we had booked an airport hotel to avoid a ridiculously early start. We arrived in Hobart mid afternoon so took the opportunity to go into the city and explore a little. We wandered around the dock area before grabbing a meal in the Salamander area.

Once again Tassie had provided an excellent short trip. The diving is just

fantastic and Mick and Karen at Eaglehawk Dive Centre are great hosts and run an excellent operation. We are already planning a return same time next year so get that date in your diary, you won't regret it. ❖

Cape Woolamai

Sunday, 13th March 2016

John Mills

Not having had the chance to launch "Waverider" due to work and family commitments we decided it would be good to launch for a day over the long weekend.

Peter Campo was launching on the Saturday from Sorrento. The weather looked OK so I e-mailed him to indicate that we would tag along. I worked in Brisbane for the week and got back to Melbourne on Friday night. This was no problem as all I had to do was get up early, set up the tanks, hook up the boat and go.

I was up bright and early and started setting up the kits. My main regs were getting serviced so I was using the trusty back up set; I had changed the gauges and computer over from the

set that was being serviced. As I was putting the set together I realised that my BC inflator hose was with the other set. I couldn't find a spare so I let Peter know that we were pulling the pin. I went to the local dive shop later that morning and got a replacement hose. Now the back-up kit was complete.

There were plenty of crews going out on Sunday so I did some ringing around. Robyn was at Inverloch - he was having problems with the transom on his boat so he was out. Peter C was doing a scallop dive and Peter Galvin was launching from Newport to dive the Cape. We went with this option as I thought it may be nice to try and bag a cray.

I was up early for the second day and got the boat hooked up and we set off for Phillip Island. About 15 minutes down the road Priya realised she had forgotten her wetsuit. As it was too late to turn around she resigned herself to being the skipper for the day.

We arrived at the ramp, met Peter Galvin and worked out our options. I could've dived off his boat and Priya stay ashore. I was keen to take "Waverider" out as I hadn't launched for a month or so. Priya was happy to skipper. It was decided that I'd board Peter's boat and dive with him on the Hookah. Having never really dived on

Hookah I was keen to try.

We joined the queue to launch as the ramp was quite busy. The tide was really low (This was why Peter didn't launch at Inverloch as the bar would've been shallow). The boat ramp was very slippery so I gingerly walked down to guide Priya with the backing. I didn't say anything about the ramp conditions as she generally doesn't get out of the truck. As I unhitched the boat and was about to climb aboard, Priya had got out for some reason and slipped on the ramp and hurt her wrist when she fell. She said she was OK and would still be able to drive the boat. I completed the launch and Priya took the truck back to fight for one of the few parking spaces left.

I pulled up alongside Peter's boat to wait. Another boat was about to go around us. Peter indicated that I might need to fend him off to help him go around. Then I heard him accelerate and he ran into the back fender. I am so glad my boat is a RIB as the inflatable section absorbed most of the impact. There didn't appear to be any damage except for the bracket that holds the EPIRB on my safety cell. Peter retrieved my EPIRB and I got the details of the bloke that hit me.

Peter headed for the Cape and I waited for Priya. She came aboard and

even though her wrist was sore, she indicated that she would be OK for the day. She said that things tend to happen in threes. Two had already happened with her leaving her wetsuit behind and slipping on the ramp. "I wonder what else will happen" she mused. I said "it already has" and described the collision drama. She was dumfounded. Parking the truck was a drama as she had to fight the ramp sharks off for the last spot.

We headed out to the Cape and found Peter. He'd just dropped his first group in so we hung around and I eventually boarded his boat for the dive. We retrieved the divers and started gearing up. Priya came over the radio and wanted advice on how to pair the blue tooth speaker to her I-Pod. I said she'd have to wait as I was gearing up and I didn't really want the audience on the radio channel to endure a description of how to do this. Talk about a "first world" problem.

I jumped in with Peter and we dropped down to do some hunting. Unfortunately it was slim pickings. Peter managed to bag one but I saw nothing. Had some fun down in the Canyons as it was a little surgy and did some underwater surfing. We surfaced after an hour or so - it was great having surface supplied air as there was no need to worry about low air.

I got back on "Waverider" and then had some lunch and surface interval. I also managed to pair the I-Pod to the speaker. It was decided that the wind and swell had picked up and that we would move around to the back of the Cape where it was a little more sheltered.

We linked up with "Barcrusher" on the way back. He had a diver that was looking for a buddy so I went in with a tank and buddied up with him. Again there were no critters to be found so I returned empty handed. "Barcrusher" left for home and we waited for the crew on "Stroker" to finish up, and then left for the ramp together.

We retrieved the boat without incident and met up at the Bakery for coffee.

We checked Priya's wrist at the hospital once I'd washed and put the boat away. The good news was that nothing was broken. It is a lot better a week later.

All up, it was good to get the boat out for the day.

Having our own boat helped with flexibility as it enabled us to find out the various options from the club, even though there was a problem on the Saturday, and we could link up with them and dive safely. ❖

USAT Liberty, Bali

Tuesday, 15th March 2016

John Ashley



Dived this amazing wreck today. The USAT Liberty torpedoed in 1942 by a Japanese submarine in the Lombok Strait. What once was a tragedy is now a boom for the people of Bali. Thanks to photographer for use of his photos. ❖



The Hurricane

Sunday, 20th March 2016

Ian Scholey

Just my boat out today. It appears that the Grand Prix trumps diving. With Antony Platford on board, we headed down to Capel Sound for a double dive on the wreck of The Hurricane. As a confessed slug-lover I was well pleased to find this one on the second dive. I think that this is a yellow specimen of *Verco's Verconia* which is usually pink. If anyone can confirm this that would be great. ❖



VSAG Dive and Meeting Calendar

By Peter Beaumont, Dive Calendar Coordinator, VSAG

Activity Details

Dive Coordinator (DC) nominated below.

Dive site determined by DC and advised by email based on forecast conditions.

Boat Captains for the dive will be confirmed by email prior to the weekend.

Dive day can swap between Sat and Sun depending on conditions!

Dive Coordinator is responsible for organising a dive report after their weekend.

Dive sites adjusted on the day to suit divers and conditions.

Book in for a dive day ASAP after receiving notification via email. Please provide the Dive Captain with your full name, mobile phone number and e-mail address.

You are required to call the Dive Captain between 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. the evening prior to the dive day to confirm that you will still be coming on the dive.

Apr 2/3	Boat DC David Geekie 0419 300 686
Apr 9/10	Boat DC Peter Beaumont 0403 410 725
Apr 9/10	Boat DC Peter Beaumont 0403 410 725
Apr 16/17	Boat DC David Flew 0418 446 530
Apr 19	General Meeting, The Water Rat Hotel, 8.00 pm
Apr 23/24/25	Boat DC Benita McDonough 0419 399 000
Apr 30/1	Boat DC Peter Galvin 0417 061 564
May 7/8	Boat DC John Lawler 0414 922 916
May 14/15	Boat DC Ian Scholey 0439 310 646
May 17	General Meeting, The Water Rat Hotel, 8.00 pm
May 21/22	Shore DC Walter Medenbach 0408 899 881 Boat DC Graham Ellis 0403 070 920
May 28/29	Boat DC Michael Ngai 0414 894 684
June 4/5	Boat DC Ross Walker 0417 376 192

Tidal Streams at the Heads — April 2016

RED italic times are slack water with EBB about to start (Flood Slack)
which are the best diving conditions near the Heads. **BLUE** are Ebb Slack.

March				April		
<i>MON 28</i>	<i>TUE 29</i>	<i>WED 30</i>	<i>THU 31</i>	<i>FRI 1</i>	<i>SAT 2</i>	<i>SUN 3</i>
1:05	1:36	2:06	2:37	3:10	3:45	3:26
<i>6:33</i>	<i>7:01</i>	<i>7:31</i>	<i>8:03</i>	<i>8:37</i>	<i>9:14</i>	<i>8:58</i>
13:20	13:51	14:22	14:55	15:29	16:07	15:52
<i>19:27</i>	<i>20:02</i>	<i>20:38</i>	<i>21:16</i>	<i>21:57</i>	<i>23:42</i>	<i>22:34</i>
<i>MON 4</i>	<i>TUE 5</i>	<i>WED 6</i>	<i>THU 7</i>	<i>FRI 8</i>	<i>SAT 9</i>	<i>SUN 10</i>
4:19	5:31	<i>0:37</i>	1:38	2:33	3:22	4:08
<i>9:56</i>	<i>11:14</i>	6:57	8:13	9:17	10:13	11:04
16:48	18:00	<i>12:44</i>	14:11	15:23	16:25	17:20
<i>23:34</i>		19:24	20:41	21:46	22:42	23:32
<i>MON 11</i>	<i>TUE 12</i>	<i>WED 13</i>	<i>THU 14</i>	<i>FRI 15</i>	<i>SAT 16</i>	<i>SUN 17</i>
<i>4:52</i>	0:19	1:05	1:49	2:34	3:21	4:14
11:53	<i>5:37</i>	<i>6:23</i>	<i>7:10</i>	<i>8:00</i>	<i>8:52</i>	<i>9:51</i>
<i>18:11</i>	12:40	13:25	14:09	14:52	15:35	16:23
	<i>18:59</i>	<i>19:46</i>	<i>20:32</i>	<i>21:19</i>	<i>22:08</i>	<i>23:01</i>
<i>MON 18</i>	<i>TUE 19</i>	<i>WED 20</i>	<i>THU 21</i>	<i>FRI 22</i>	<i>SAT 23</i>	<i>SUN 24</i>
5:18	6:31	<i>0:58</i>	1:52	2:39	3:17	3:50
<i>11:00</i>	<i>12:20</i>	7:40	8:37	9:23	10:02	10:38
17:22	18:36	<i>13:41</i>	14:49	15:42	16:25	17:03
<i>23:59</i>		19:55	21:00	21:51	22:33	23:09
April						May
<i>MON 25</i>	<i>TUE 26</i>	<i>WED 27</i>	<i>THU 28</i>	<i>FRI 29</i>	<i>SAT 30</i>	<i>SUN 1</i>
<i>4:22</i>	<i>4:53</i>	0:15	0:48	1:21	1:55	2:32
11:11	11:44	<i>5:26</i>	6:00	6:35	7:13	7:56
<i>17:38</i>	<i>18:11</i>	12:16	12:49	13:23	13:58	14:36
<i>23:43</i>		<i>18:45</i>	<i>19:19</i>	<i>19:55</i>	<i>20:33</i>	<i>21:13</i>

Tidal Streams at the Heads — May 2016

RED italic times are slack water with EBB about to start (Flood Slack)
which are the best diving conditions near the Heads. **BLUE** are Ebb Slack.

April						May
<i>MON 25</i>	<i>TUE 26</i>	<i>WED 27</i>	<i>THU 28</i>	<i>FRI 29</i>	<i>SAT 30</i>	<i>SUN 1</i>
<i>4:22</i>	<i>4:53</i>	<i>0:15</i>	<i>0:48</i>	<i>1:21</i>	<i>1:55</i>	<i>2:32</i>
<i>11:11</i>	<i>11:44</i>	<i>5:26</i>	<i>6:00</i>	<i>6:35</i>	<i>7:13</i>	<i>7:56</i>
<i>17:38</i>	<i>18:11</i>	<i>12:16</i>	<i>12:49</i>	<i>13:23</i>	<i>13:58</i>	<i>14:36</i>
<i>23:43</i>	<i>0:00</i>	<i>18:45</i>	<i>19:19</i>	<i>19:55</i>	<i>20:33</i>	<i>21:13</i>
<i>MON 2</i>	<i>TUE 3</i>	<i>WED 4</i>	<i>THU 5</i>	<i>FRI 6</i>	<i>SAT 7</i>	<i>SUN 8</i>
<i>3:15</i>	<i>4:08</i>	<i>5:15</i>	<i>6:29</i>	<i>0:43</i>	<i>1:42</i>	<i>2:37</i>
<i>8:47</i>	<i>9:52</i>	<i>11:12</i>	<i>12:40</i>	<i>7:41</i>	<i>8:45</i>	<i>9:44</i>
<i>15:20</i>	<i>16:13</i>	<i>17:22</i>	<i>18:46</i>	<i>14:05</i>	<i>15:18</i>	<i>16:18</i>
<i>21:57</i>	<i>22:47</i>	<i>23:44</i>		<i>20:09</i>	<i>21:20</i>	<i>22:20</i>
<i>MON 9</i>	<i>TUE 10</i>	<i>WED 11</i>	<i>THU 12</i>	<i>FRI 13</i>	<i>SAT 14</i>	<i>SUN 15</i>
<i>3:30</i>	<i>4:21</i>	<i>0:02</i>	<i>0:50</i>	<i>1:36</i>	<i>2:23</i>	<i>3:10</i>
<i>10:37</i>	<i>11:27</i>	<i>5:12</i>	<i>6:02</i>	<i>6:54</i>	<i>7:47</i>	<i>8:42</i>
<i>17:10</i>	<i>17:59</i>	<i>12:15</i>	<i>13:00</i>	<i>13:42</i>	<i>14:23</i>	<i>15:03</i>
<i>23:13</i>		<i>18:45</i>	<i>19:28</i>	<i>20:11</i>	<i>20:52</i>	<i>21:34</i>
<i>MON 16</i>	<i>TUE 17</i>	<i>WED 18</i>	<i>THU 19</i>	<i>FRI 20</i>	<i>SAT 21</i>	<i>SUN 22</i>
<i>3:59</i>	<i>4:54</i>	<i>5:54</i>	<i>6:54</i>	<i>0:43</i>	<i>1:31</i>	<i>2:16</i>
<i>9:41</i>	<i>10:48</i>	<i>12:03</i>	<i>13:20</i>	<i>7:49</i>	<i>8:36</i>	<i>9:19</i>
<i>15:46</i>	<i>16:37</i>	<i>17:43</i>	<i>19:04</i>	<i>14:27</i>	<i>15:22</i>	<i>16:06</i>
<i>22:18</i>	<i>23:04</i>	<i>23:53</i>		<i>20:19</i>	<i>21:17</i>	<i>22:03</i>
<i>MON 23</i>	<i>TUE 24</i>	<i>WED 25</i>	<i>THU 26</i>	<i>FRI 27</i>	<i>SAT 28</i>	<i>SUN 29</i>
<i>2:58</i>	<i>3:38</i>	<i>4:16</i>	<i>4:55</i>	<i>0:30</i>	<i>1:06</i>	<i>1:42</i>
<i>9:58</i>	<i>10:35</i>	<i>11:12</i>	<i>11:47</i>	<i>5:34</i>	<i>6:15</i>	<i>6:59</i>
<i>16:44</i>	<i>17:20</i>	<i>17:54</i>	<i>18:28</i>	<i>12:22</i>	<i>12:58</i>	<i>13:35</i>
<i>22:43</i>	<i>23:20</i>	<i>23:55</i>		<i>19:02</i>	<i>19:35</i>	<i>20:10</i>

Tidal Streams at the Heads — June 2016

RED italic times are slack water with EBB about to start (Flood Slack)
which are the best diving conditions near the Heads. **BLUE** are Ebb Slack.

May		June				
MON 30	TUE 31	WED 1	THU 2	FRI 3	SAT 4	SUN 5
2:22	3:07	3:59	4:59	6:06	7:14	0:58
7:48	8:45	9:52	11:10	12:35	13:57	8:18
14:14	14:58	15:49	16:53	18:11	19:37	15:07
20:46	21:25	22:09	23:00	23:57		20:54
MON 6	TUE 7	WED 8	THU 9	FRI 10	SAT 11	SUN 12
2:00	2:59	3:57	4:53	0:35	1:22	2:06
9:18	10:13	11:04	11:52	5:47	6:40	7:33
16:06	16:57	17:43	18:26	12:36	13:17	13:55
21:59	22:55	23:47		19:06	19:45	20:21
MON 13	TUE 14	WED 15	THU 16	FRI 17	SAT 18	SUN 19
2:50	3:34	4:20	5:10	6:03	6:56	0:22
8:26	9:21	10:22	11:29	12:41	13:51	7:48
14:32	15:10	15:54	16:47	17:57	19:19	14:51
20:58	21:33	22:10	22:49	23:33		20:31
MON 20	TUE 21	WED 22	THU 23	FRI 24	SAT 25	SUN 26
1:15	2:07	2:58	3:45	4:31	0:12	0:50
8:36	9:22	10:04	10:45	11:24	5:17	6:03
15:39	16:21	16:58	17:33	18:07	12:03	12:41
21:27	22:13	22:55	23:34		18:40	19:12
June				July		
MON 27	TUE 28	WED 29	THU 30	FRI 1	SAT 2	SUN 3
1:29	2:11	2:57	3:47	4:43	5:45	6:50
6:53	7:46	8:45	9:51	11:05	12:25	13:43
13:20	14:01	14:44	15:32	16:30	17:42	19:08
19:45	20:19	20:56	21:37	22:25	23:22	0:00

Websites for Tidal Streams & Weather Conditions

Peter Beaumont

Tidal Stream information for Port Phillip Bay Heads is located here:

<http://www.bom.gov.au/australia/tides#!/vic-the-rip>

Port Phillip Bay winds and temperature information is located here:

<http://www.baywx.com.au/>

Tide information for Cape Woolamai is located here:

<http://tides.willyweather.com.au/vic/gippsland/cape-woolamai.html>



From Sir David Attenborough ...

His initiation into scuba diving is indelibly printed on his mind. "You suddenly realise you can move in any direction. You're not harnessed by gravity any more. You're free. It's bliss. An extraordinary experience, like going into space.

"There's no equivalent anywhere else in the natural world of such splendour: all of these things moving through an architecture of coral. You never know what you're going to see when you turn the corner.

"It's far more obviously exciting and visually thrilling than, say, the tropical rainforest, which is the nearest biological parallel. In the rainforest they're all hiding, so you have to be quite a good naturalist to really see what splendours are there. But on the reef they're all on display. It's like the Christmas windows at Harrods."

Article supplied by John Lawler

The life jacket worn by -- Titanic survivor -- Laura Mabel Francatelli, 1912.



From [The Vintage News](#) website

Safety Snippet

Peter Beaumont

Tank Valve Dust Cap Warning

Peter received these emails from some friends from his old Dive Club in Sydney

“Once the tanks were filled a din dust cap was inserted into the tank and the tank was lifted onto Geoff’s shoulder for easy transportation to the car. At this point he accidentally twisted the valve turning the tank on and the plastic din cap blasted and lacerated deeply into Geoff’s hand. Geoff is lucky he only lacerated his hand and not sustained injury to his face, neck or eardrum. He is a bit shaken but ok, however, will not be in the water for a few months!!

I am a fan of din dust caps and use them on all of my tanks as do lots of other club members - Geoff has requested I send this email to remind all club members about carefully handling .”

“If you want to use a dust cap for din tank, only a metal one that can withstand tank pressure should be used.

There are some with a little valve that allows the pressure to be released if

accidentally opened or there are ones with a hexnut-like head, but you have to carry the right wrench to open it.

One day I saved a friend's dive by having it in my toolbox.” ❖

Examples :



Emergency Contact Information

Anywhere on water in Victoria Ch 16 or 88 should be your first choice using Mayday or Pan Pan

VHF Channel 16
27 MHz AM Channel 88

Note: VSAG uses VHF CH 73 and 27 MHz CH 96 for routine communications. Check you are using the correct emergency channel.

VSAG Nautilus will be tuned to Ch 73 (Green button for routine comms) and Ch 16 (Red Button for distress comms)

Speak slowly and clearly

<p>Mayday Call – for grave & imminent danger requiring immediate assistance</p>	<p>Urgency Call – when the danger is not grave or imminent</p>
<p>Distress Call:</p> <p>Mayday, Mayday, Mayday</p> <p>This is: <u>“Boat call sign x3”</u> (Boat owners insert your call sign)</p>	<p>Urgency Call:</p> <p>Pan Pan, Pan Pan, Pan Pan</p> <p>All Ships, All Ships, All Ships (or the emergency service you want to contact)</p> <p>This is: <u>“Boat call sign x3”</u> (Boat owners insert your call sign)</p>
<p>Distress message after contact made:</p> <p>Mayday</p> <p>“2 DIVE 4”</p> <p>Give position-(see GPS for coordinates), nature of the problem, number on board plus any other relevant information</p> <p>Over</p> <p>Follow advice given by the emergency agency – DO NOT “Sign off” until told so by agency.</p>	<p>Urgency message after contact made:</p> <p>Pan Pan</p> <p>“2 DIVE 4”</p> <p>Give position-(see GPS for coordinates), nature of the problem, number on board plus any other relevant information</p> <p>Over</p> <p>Follow advice given by the emergency agency – DO NOT “Sign off” until told so by agency.</p>

All passengers on a boat should be familiar with the use of marine radio(s) in case of emergency.

Emergency Contact Information

Telephone contacts

Police – Ambulance – Fire : 000

Water Police no longer use the 1800 088 200 number

The new 24/7 No is : 03 9399 7500

DAN International Emergency Hotline: +1-919-684-9111 (from mobile)
0011 1 919684 9111 (from landline)

State Emergency Service (VIC): **132 500 (new number)**

Alfred Hospital Hyperbaric Unit: 03 9076 2269

Alfred Hospital switchboard: 03 9076 2000

Mornington Peninsula Area

Diving Emergency Service: 1800 088 200

Dr. John Roth:

Mornington Medical Group 03 5975 2633

Rosebud Hospital:

1527 Nepean Hwy, Rosebud 03 5986 0666

Frankston Hospital:

Hastings Road, Frankston 03 9784 7777

The Bays Hospital:

Main Street, Mornington 03 5975 2009

Southern Peninsula Rescue: (Sorrento) 0417 038 944

Mornington Bay Rescue Service: 0419 233 999

*Coast Guard (Queenscliff) 03 5258 2222

*Coast Guard (Hastings) 03 5979 3322

*Coast Guard (Safety Beach) 03 5981 4443

***Coast Guard is not always manned & operates mainly during daylight hrs**

Diving Doctors:

Dr Pamela Dagley (Eltham) 03 9439 2222 (VSAG member)

Dr Vanessa Haller (Carrum Downs) 03 9782 6666

Dr Adrian Murrie (Sorrento) 03 5984 4322

Dr Guy Williams (Rosebud) 03 5981 1555

Dr John Roth (Mornington) 03 5975 2633

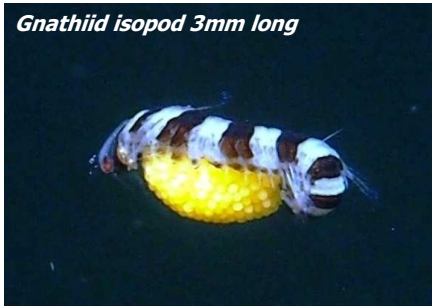
PHIL WATSON'S PHOTOS



A few Nudies & macro shots from the "Blairgowrie of the North" - Williamstown



Pipefish



Gnathiid isopod 3mm long



Gnathiid isopod & diver's fingertip



2.5m female Wobbegong, Torquay



Cowfish at Bluescope Wharf, Westernport Bay



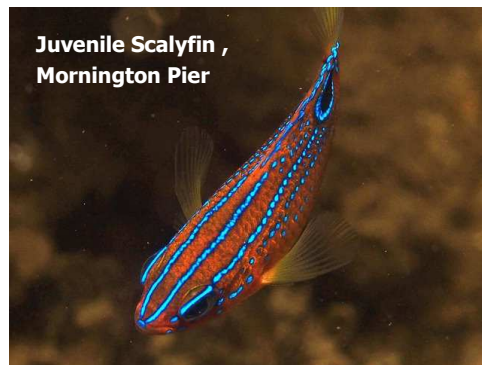
Hydroid, Altona



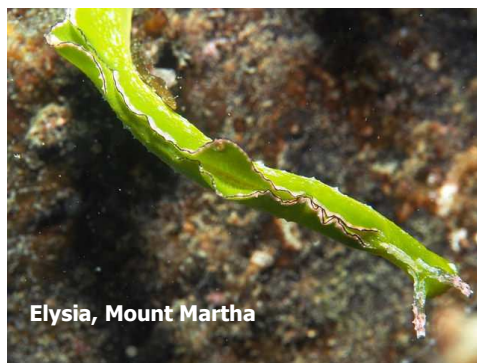
Ascidians at Bluescope Wharf, Westernport Bay



Ceratosoma breviaudatum, Port Henry



Juvenile Scalyfin , Mornington Pier

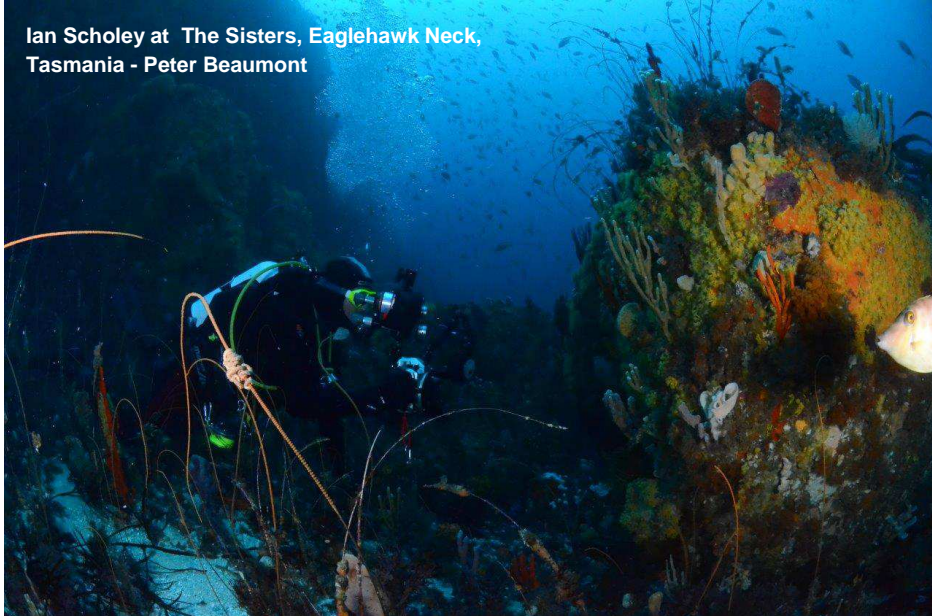


Elysia, Mount Martha



Barnacle, Mount Martha

Ian Scholey at The Sisters, Eaglehawk Neck,
Tasmania - Peter Beaumont



David Geekie & Pam Dagley at Cathedral Cave at
Eaglehawk Neck, Tasmania - Peter Beaumont





Big-bellied Seahorse - Herb Mackay



David Geekie & Pam Dagley at The Sisters, Eaglehawk Neck, Tasmania - Peter Beaumont

Beneath the Surface with Charmaine Alford

Starfish, off Lonsdale Back Beach



Nudie Nursery!! The smallest one is only a few millimetres in length! Blairgowrie Dusk Dive

