



# Fathoms

OCTOBER—NOVEMBER 2020

*Cover photo: Diver in  
Cenote - by Sherryn Amor*



**VSAG AGM & AWARDS EVENING  
AUGUST GUEST SPEAKER, DR LAURA WALTON, UK  
PHOTO OF THE YEAR 2020 COMPETITION  
SEA DRAGONS AND MORE.....**

Postal Address:  
VSAG, Inc., P.O. Box 596, Cranbourne Vic 3977

[www.vsag.org.au](http://www.vsag.org.au)



# Vsag Club Meetings Now on Zoom



Our next club meeting, is scheduled for :

**Tuesday, 20th October, 2020 at 8pm.**

Download the [zoom.us](https://zoom.us) app and click on join meeting. Enter meeting ID and password which will be emailed prior to meeting time.

Looking forward to seeing everyone!



# Fathoms

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

**In this October—November 2020 issue...**

<b>Article</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Page</b>
VSAG Annual General Meeting & Awards Evening		6-19
August Guest Speaker	Dr Laura Walton, UK	20
Skills Acquisition & Maintenance	Peter Mosse	21-26
Spectacular Reef	Graham Ellis	28-29
George Kermode, Expect the Unexpected!	Peter Mosse	30-31
Sea Dragons	Ian Scholey	32-33
Arthur's Dive Book Review #1	Arthur Kokkinos	36-37
August Photo Competition		38-42
Photo of the Year 2020 Competition		43-48
Spirit of Tasmania,		52-54
Lobster Tagging/Save the Rays	Victorian Fisheries	56
Safe Trx, Boat Ramps		57
Diary Dates		
Philippines 2021		57-60
VSAG Dive and Meeting Calendar	VSAG Committee	61-63
Tidal Streams	Graham Ellis	64-67
Emergency Contact Information		68-69

**Editorial Submissions:**

Christine Reynolds m: 0402 214 136 e: editor@vsag.org.au

VSAG, Inc., P.O. Box 596, Cranbourne Vic 3977

Copyright © 2015 by Victorian Sub Aqua Group, Inc. ACN 004 591 575. All rights reserved.

# NOTICES

VSAG Committee meets at 7 p.m. every 2nd Tuesday of the month  
(except in January)

**All Members Welcome**



**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/groups/vsag.divers/> and 'Like' us.



UECWA our sister club in Western Australia is pleased to offer reciprocal diving arrangements to VSAG members.

## Underwater Explorers Club of Western Australia

**Postal Address**  
PO Box 382, Mel-  
ville WA 6956

**Email:** [info@uecwa.com.au](mailto:info@uecwa.com.au)

**Meetings**  
Esplanade Hotel  
The Esplanade, Fremantle, WA  
**Boat**  
Port Coogee Marina  
Chieftain Esplanade, North Coogee, WA

We are delighted to announce that we have now established another relationship with an interstate club that will allow you to dive with them if you wish to and vice versa.

The club is the Tas Uni Dive Club. You can check them out at : [www.tudc.org.au](http://www.tudc.org.au)



# Your VSAG Committee 2019–2020

To email all VSAG committee members: [committee@vsag.org.au](mailto:committee@vsag.org.au)

**President  
& Safety Officer**

Matthijs Smith

0411 137 080

[president@vsag.org.au](mailto:president@vsag.org.au)

[matthijs.smith@me.com](mailto:matthijs.smith@me.com)

**Vice President**

Walter Medenbach

0408 899 881

[vicepresident@vsag.org](mailto:vicepresident@vsag.org)

**Secretary**

Sherryn Amor

0412 945 985

[secretary@vsag.org.au](mailto:secretary@vsag.org.au)

**Treasurer**

Angus Stuart-Adams

0418 309 985

[treasurer@vsag.org.au](mailto:treasurer@vsag.org.au)

[Angus352@gmail.com](mailto:Angus352@gmail.com)

**New Member Co-ordinator**

Jeremy Van Der Beek

0421 963 468 [jeremy.vanderbeek@eview.com.au](mailto:jeremy.vanderbeek@eview.com.au)

**Point Scorer/Club Awards**

Arthur Kokkinos

0404 073 342

[pointscorer@vsag.org.au](mailto:pointscorer@vsag.org.au)

[arthurkokkinos1718@gmail.com](mailto:arthurkokkinos1718@gmail.com)

**Fathoms Editor**

Christine Reynolds

0402 214 136

[editor@vsag.org.au](mailto:editor@vsag.org.au)

**Equipment Officer,  
Dive Co-Ordinator,  
& Photo Competition**

Brian Heatherich

[brian.heatherich@vsag.org.au](mailto:brian.heatherich@vsag.org.au)

**SDFV Representative**

Peter Galvin

0417 061 564

[galvo350@gmail.com](mailto:galvo350@gmail.com)

**General Committee:**

[i](#)



# VSAG Inc

## Annual General Meeting 2020

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

#### 2019-2020

The VSAG Inc Annual General Meeting was held on 15th September 2020 on Zoom, a first in the history of the club, and was well attended by members.

This has been something of an unusual year with our diving activities cut from March onwards. One silver lining though, has been the success of the zoom meetings. We have managed to attract a number of members and non-members who would not normally be able to attend and international presenters. We will most likely look at keeping zoom going, once we return to the Water Rat.



*Peter Galvin*  
*President of VSAG Inc.*

Surprisingly the restriction in diving activities didn't have a huge impact on the point scoring for Club person of the Year.

	2018/19	2019/2020	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Runner-Up	930	Christine Reynolds	1290
Runner-Up	1300	Peter Beaumont	2350
Clubman	3720	Ian Scholey	3650

A big thank you to the members who have kept us "diving engaged" by posting on Facebook.

We have a number of people retiring from the committee this year;

- Carole Penfold
- Mark Jeffery
- Graham Ellis (who retired earlier this year)
- Moi

Big thank you to everyone, there has been some serious input from the

committee, the effort involved in doing things like point scoring, photo comp etc. is quite significant.

While on thank you's a big thank you to Christine Reynolds for editing Fathoms, this really is a major effort and the quality of Fathoms is a real credit to Christine. And a big thank you to contributors to Fathoms.

The new committee will/has a number of new faces, new ideas and a lot of enthusiasm which is great to see.

- Peter Galvin. ❖

## TREASURER'S SUMMARY 2019-2020

### Introduction

This document explains the controls we have in place to ensure financial integrity and provides a summary of financial transactions for VSAG Inc. for 2019-2020. The "Annual Statement 2019-2020" shows all transactions for the year.

If you have further questions or wish to see further evidence please contact Peter Galvin.



### Financial Controls

#### Expenditure

All expenditure has been by electronic transfer from the savings account. This requires approval by two signatories to the account. All signatories have an electronic token

that provides a random number they must use to authorise the expenditure. The signatories are;

Peter Galvin

Ian Scholey (until early in 2020)

Matthijs Smith and Angus Stuart-Adams from September 2020

Two committee members, Walter Medenbach and Angus, will verify the records, this will be completed ASAP.

### **Income**

I provide all cash income with a receipt and then transfer the money from my account but with a reference to whoever has paid it. This saves me making trips to the bank to deposit cash and shows all transactions individually in the bank statement. There were no cheques received this year.

Awards and Admin	\$1,002.03
Club Clothing	\$642.45
Meeting Expenses (Wine, Finger food)	\$1,611.18
Insurance	\$1,367.98
Safety	\$1,713.17

Most income to VSAG is by electronic transfer and members are able to check their payments by reviewing the spreadsheet and/or the monthly bank statements.

### **Highlights**

- We have approximately 10 members who did not pay last year, who I expect will or have now paid.
- We had 7 members leave VSAG
- We had 1 new individual member join
- We had no new family members join.
- We had a cash “loss” of \$1,713.17 (\$5,274.41 last year) for the year, major expenditures were;
- On the 30th June we had financial assets of \$12,841.73 (\$14,729.89 last year).



.....

## Summary of 2019/2020 Transactions

	<b>Outgoing</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Transaction Details</b>	<b>Category</b>
Totals	-\$1,072.03	\$70.00	Admin	-\$1,002.03
Totals	-\$945.45	\$303.00		-\$642.45
Totals	-\$1,367.98	\$0.00	Club Insurance	-\$1,367.98
Totals	-\$167.30	\$0.00	Fathoms	-\$167.30
Totals	-\$1,611.18	\$0.00	Meeting Expenses	-\$1,611.18
Totals	\$0.00	\$3,845.00	Membership	\$3,845.00
Totals	\$0.00	\$1,100.00	Membership Family	\$1,100.00
Totals	-\$214.85	\$0.00	Miscellaneous	-\$214.85
Totals	-\$1,713.17	\$0.00	Safety	-\$1,713.17
<b>Totals</b>	<b>-\$7,091.96</b>	<b>\$5,318.00</b>		

- Peter Galvin. ❖

# VSAG Life Members

## LIFE MEMBERSHIP

It is my pleasure to introduce two club members, nominated for Life Membership.

Both members joined VSAG around the same time, 2012-2014 and quickly established themselves as strong club boat-owning members

Time rolling on, each member joined the Committee and filled different roles during their tenures, SDFV representative, secretary, travel coordinator, naming a few.

Eventually, each Member reached the level of President. Each in their respective roles, adding great value to the club with new directions, new diving locations, and a strong focus on safety!

The need to continue with accolades isn't really necessary, as the club Members are very much aware of the high level of contributions each made and for those contributions Members are extremely grateful.

On behalf of the Life Members, Committee and Members, and as a Life Member, it is my pleasure to announce that Life Membership is



*David Geekie*



*Ian Scholey*

awarded to David Geekie and Ian Scholey.

- John Lawler. ❖

# VSAG AWARDS 2020

## LITERARY AWARD

**ARTHUR KOKKINOS**



Arthur wrote three excellent articles on diving around Cape Woolamai. Leading into each article were the divers attending. Each dive was expressed in great detail noting swell, water temperature, terrain, current and fish life ...photos made up the complete summary of the diving experiences. Truly great diving reading! Arthur has a great descriptive ability to “take us on his dives”

***CONGRATULATIONS, ARTHUR!***



# VSAG AWARDS 2020

## LITERARY AWARD

**IAN SCHOLEY**



Ian is noted for his many, very long dive articles, but this one is in the top order. Running for 2.5 Fathoms pages, we are taken for a tour of the Chatham Royal Navy Dockyard, located on the Medway River in Kent, just 35 miles from London. During the written tour, we learnt of HMS Cavalier, HMS Ocelot, Upnor Castle and HMS Victory. Moving further on, we read about submarines, engines, ward rooms, sailors' quarters and endless information on other places as the article closes down.

Completing the article is a host of brilliant (Scholey style) photos, which helps the reader better appreciate this historic naval museum.

***CONGRATULATIONS, IAN!***

# VSAG AWARDS 2020

## FATHOMS AWARD

Hi everyone

Fathoms was first published in 1958 and is the official journal of VSAG Inc., it holds a place in the State Library of Victoria and more importantly, it is an historical document, it contains the history of the VSAG club.

This year has been extraordinary, even with the effects of Covid-19 on dive activities, members have still been able to dig deep and keep Fathoms alive, with dive stories from near and far. We have seen some amazing holidays enjoyed by VSAG members world-wide, as well as local and interstate diving.

It is always challenging, to select one person over another for the Fathoms Award.

- Who has been the biggest contributor? or
- Who has contributed the best story? or
- The most stories? or
- The most photos?
- Who has been the most important contributor to Fathoms?

This year there have been many new contributors, who are making regular submissions and this is very much appreciated.

I would like to extend a huge thank you for contributions to Fathoms, to the following members:

Ian Scholey, Arthur Kokkinos, Brian Heatherich, Rowan Salger, Peter Beaumont, Matthijs Smith, John Lawler, Carol Penfold, Peter Campisano, Carole Campisano, Andrew McKernan, Herb Epstein, Hannah Smeeton, Mark Jeffrey, Tim Forster, Graham Ellis, David Flew, Denys Smerchanskyi, Sandy Webb, Peter Galvin, Sherryn Amor, Peter Mosse, Angus Stuart-Adams, John Goulding, Bobbi O'Riley, Bert Parker.

For this year, I have dug really deep, the Fathoms Award for 2019-2020 has been awarded to two members for their outstanding contributions, please read on.....

- *Christine Reynolds*

*Editor of Fathoms. ❖*







# VSAG AWARDS 2020

## PHOTOGRAPH OF THE YEAR. 2020

**DIVER IN CENOTE—BY SHERRYN AMOR**



***CONGRATULATIONS, SHERRYN!***

# **VSAG AWARDS 2020**

**VSAG, Inc.  
CLUB CHAMPION  
2nd RUNNER UP**

**CHRISTINE REYNOLDS**

**Point score 1,290**



***CONGRATULATIONS, CHRISTINE!***

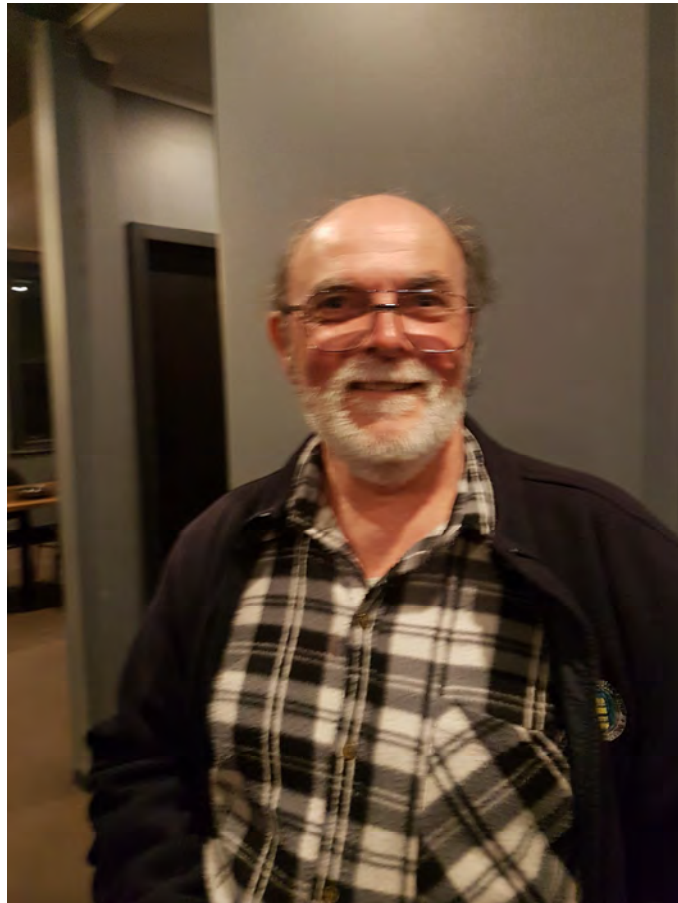


# VSAG AWARDS 2020

**VSAG, Inc.**  
**CLUB CHAMPION**  
**1st RUNNER UP**

**PETER BEAUMONT**

**Point score 2,350**



***CONGRATULATIONS, PETER!***

# VSAG AWARDS 2020

## VSAG, Inc. CLUB CHAMPION 2020

**IAN SCHOLEY**

**Point score 3,650**



***CONGRATULATIONS, IAN!***

# AUGUST GUEST SPEAKER

August  
General Meeting  
Guest Speaker

**DR LAURA  
WALTON, UK**

Tuesday, 18th August 2020, 8pm.

Dr Laura Walton from Scubapsyche in the UK ([www.scubapsyche.com](http://www.scubapsyche.com)) zoomed into our General Club Meeting on Tuesday 18th August 2020.

As we heard from Gareth last month, human, or non-technical, aspects of diving are finally getting more recognition as a critical element of diver training.

Dr Walton is an active scuba diver, who has brought together her training as a Clinical Psychologist, to develop specific tools and training programs for divers.

Dr Walton has developed programs to help divers who's progress is being limited or slowed by what is going on inside their heads, rather than what is happening to their bodies. These can include learning to deal with panic and anxiety, learning to relax to



improve air consumption (and the dive experience), dealing with trauma, understanding what is changing or driving your behaviours or the behaviours of others you are diving with...and of course dealing with not being able to dive during lockdown!

Below is a link to an online presentation Laura did with Gareth a couple of months ago discussing the documentary "If Only..." which brings some new dimension and perspectives to that sad and avoidable accident.

[https://  
scubapsyche.com/2020/06/17/if-  
only/❖](https://scubapsyche.com/2020/06/17/if-only/)

# Skills Acquisition and Maintenance

## Skills Acquisition and Maintenance

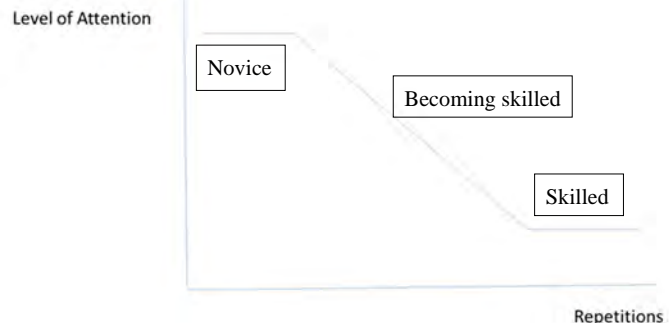
- by Peter Mosse.

At the end of Gareth Lock's presentation at a recent club Zoom meeting on "Human Factors in Diving", the following question was asked by a club member.

*From our clubs perspective, what practical things could we implement to make a tangible improvement to our safety in diving? Is it simply implementing debriefing as part of our culture?*

Gareth's presentation was interesting and well worth listening to, but perhaps missed an opportunity to provide some recommendations on what individual divers could do to minimise the risk of being involved in an incident.

Gareth presented a graph showing Level of Attention vs Repetition. He used this graph to explain why with repetition things become "automatic" and why people don't pay attention and don't think about things when they consider themselves "skilled" or "experienced".



So many divers regard themselves as "experienced" and therefore falsely think they know how to do "things". His comments and graph are undoubtedly correct. However, from this same graph comes one of the major solutions to prevent unfortunate incidents for divers with any degree of experience, but in particular those who consider themselves experienced. That is **repetition!** If we don't continue to repeat skills, then we will in fact slip back up the line which should necessitate more attention, but most do not repeat many of the skills associated with diving.

Gareth also made the point that if something happens that hasn't been encountered before, then we are in fact all novices and this increases the chance of an unfortunate outcome.



Conducting debriefs, while useful, is not the answer! An important part is skills acquisition, broadening of the skills set and **maintenance** of those skills. There is an old saying usually used when referring to muscles but it does apply here as well. *Use it or lose it*. Use those basic and emergency skills or lose familiarity with those skills and they won't be there when you need them.

How often do divers check themselves?

- When was the last time you changed to your spare regulator and breathed off it for an extended period? Could you find it? I carry out this check at every deco or safety stop.
- When was the last time you changed to your spare regulator *at depth* and breathed on it for an extended period, and during ascent? Is it set up for easy breathing or has it been detuned to prevent free flow? Is the hose a suitable length? Will the regulator provide the necessary flow rate when stress and being out of breath is added to the picture? I regularly swap regulators at depth.

- When is the last time you carried out a spare air drill with your buddy. My son and daughter know I can pull that stunt at any stage in a dive. And make sure you include buddy breathing. You may find your buddy's octopus regulator free flows because it has in fact been dragging in the sand and you might have to resort to buddy breathing.
- When was the last time you took your mask off and swum for some time with it off...and the colder the water the better?

The "If Only" video recommended by Gareth also raised a number of issues, many of which he covered, however there was one issue that to my mind was not adequately considered. The diver in question went from an absolute novice to "tech diver" in a very few years. Skills acquisition and experience takes time!

There are old divers and bold divers but there are very few old bold divers. Don't rush your advancement. Consolidate basic skills and entry level diving. You will get there. The dive sites will still be there. This has never been more important than these days, where diver training is so rushed.

So let's consider how the training environment has changed and how

that possibly relates to diving incidents.

When I was actively instructing, my business partner and I, two relatively new and enthusiastic Federation of Australian Underwater Instructors (FAUI), thought long and hard about training and how best to achieve the goal of producing a competent diver. We had no external agency telling us what to do. There were minimum requirements but we were free to go well above that and achieve the outcome in whatever way we felt appropriate. Part of our instructor training had included sessions by a prominent psychologist (the fact that his speciality was the psychology of sex was irrelevant), we learned about learning! We knew how Victorian diving schools were carrying out training at the time and felt it could be improved. We knew of the BSAC (British Sub Aqua Club) system, which conducted training in the club environment and was conducted over several months and had the reputation of being very thorough and turning out very competent divers. We borrowed in part from that concept.

Our standard basic diving course was run over three weeks, with two nights per week including both pool and theory sessions. That is, six full length theory sessions (1.5 to 2 hrs each) fully presented by an instructor, and six full length pool sessions of at

least 1.5 hours. All in water training was carried out in an unheated outdoor pool that required the wearing of two piece, 5mm wetsuits and weight belts. And we were well and truly chilled by the end of it!

Many divers learn to dive in warm locations, with warm water and a thin wetsuit and light weights. Those that become keen to pursue their new found sport (in the southern states at least) sooner or later need to consider thermal insulation; thick wetsuits, bulky dry suits and weights, lots of them. Most will just venture into the water and adapt. So what is wrong with this scenario? What is missing? **Repetition.** A diver needs to practice in a benign environment using thick suits and heavy weights.



*Learning the skills of diver rescue while being able to stand up prior to tackling it in deep water. Note the use of full diving gear with full wetsuits, hoods and weight belts.*

The pool we used for training had a very deep section because it used to have a diving tower at that end. Consequently, the first exposure to the deep end of the pool for the students was in a 1:1 ratio with an instructor.

At the end of each pool session, the students were required to snorkel between 250m and 500m wearing full SCUBA equipment. Yes, snorkelling with SCUBA is a skill that needs to be acquired and maintained!

At the completion of the practical training, there was a thorough skills assessment during the final pool session before the ocean weekend.

And at the end of each night, there was still time for a pizza with the students, further developing the relationship between student and instructor and just talking diving.

The reason for designing the course in this way was the recognition that acquisition of skills requires **repetition** and that repetition needs to be separated by time. Six mask clears in one session is no match for 6 mask clears a night for 6 independent sessions and then finally multiple times in open water. One or two goes at sharing air is no substitute for many sessions swimming around buddy and octopus breathing being constantly “hassled” by an instructor.

There was also lengthy written theory exam, not the standard multiple choice questions that characterise training now.

The ocean weekend was conducted over a full weekend from Friday night to late Sunday afternoon. The open water “check out” commenced with a long snorkel in full SCUBA out along Queenscliff jetty to the end, immediately followed by a ditch and retrieve. A ditch and retrieve is where all diving gear is removed and the diver places the regulator on the bottom, swims away, turns around and puts all the equipment back on. Many would criticise this as being too dangerous and perhaps they are correct, but this was very normal practice and demonstrated a degree of confidence in both the underwater environment, the equipment and the new diver’s abilities. Other skills that were assessed included a lengthy swim while buddy breathing and later octopus breathing with and without a mask.



*Buddy breathing. It’s a poor quality photograph but if you look closely you can see water in the students mask.*

. And after all that, a full rescue of the instructor by the student was required. There was no warning, the instructor just became non responsive.

The entire ocean checkout occurred with a ratio of one student to one instructor. And yes we did fail students!

On successful completion of the checkout, the students were required to complete 4 hours underwater dive time. This was actual bottom time and usually consisted of 3 boat dives and 2 shore dives, with at least one dive to a maximum depth of 18 m. We introduced an extra shore dive through a small shore break since, at the time, the dominance of charter boat diving hadn't yet occurred. On most ocean weekends, once the students had completed the required 4 hours, they were provided an additional dive with their buddy, without an instructor, to start the process of weaning them of any reliance on the instructor being present. Another very important skill.

It is important to note that once the ocean checkout was complete, the ocean dives focussed on acquiring the skills of *open water diving*, free from the concern that yet another skills test might be imposed on them. Skills were acquired in the pool. Ocean dives were for learning the skill of diving, not learning diving skills. This contrasts with many courses today where the skills training and

assessment are incorporated during the ocean dives. The individual skills need to be separated.

With the passage of time, new instructor agencies entered the scene with inflexible learning regimes. Either because of their business model, or training model or because of a perception that students didn't want long courses, we were forced to introduce the double weekend course which was run over two full weekends and two Friday evenings. In the early days, pool training was limited to a 1:4 ratio but the pool ratio was increased 1:6 but our ocean ratio stayed at 1:4. This wasn't about excellence in training but rather profit and the corporate model.

Next time you see an instructor with a group of students. Count how many students and ask yourself how they can possibly supervise them all at once underwater, even in near perfect conditions, let alone in swell and mediocre visibility. We regularly reduced our ratio to 1:2 in poor conditions and even that was challenging at times.

At the end of the course new divers were encouraged to dive. Any thoughts about Advanced Courses were met with the comment "Get out there and dive and then dive some more. Come back after you have done 50 or more dives in as many



different conditions and dive sites you can”.

We were running a business but diver competence was more important.

The point of this description of early training is not to imply divers who were trained back in the “old days” as something special, but to emphasise that in a course of this type, there was plenty of time for **repetition**. Once a trainee diver had combined mask and regulator clears multiple times a night over 6 nights they were very well practiced. Similarly for buddy breathing and ditch and retrieves. Each practiced over and over again with added hassling from us by continually removing or flooding masks and removing regulators. Key theory concepts were similarly covered over and over again with structured revision.

These days, a basic course can take as little as one long weekend. Theory is usually completed on line which has many inherent weaknesses and the quizzes are such that a relatively intelligent person, knowing nothing about diving, could pass. Then all practical skills and ocean diving are somehow all packed into one weekend of pool and ocean. A big ask. So, what is one of the major differences between then and now, lack of **repetition**?

In many ways, it is surprising there aren't more incidents. I feel confident there are many near misses that go unreported! And one thing we know for sure, is that there is a very high dropout rate of new divers. Could this be related to the fact that they just don't feel comfortable in the water?

So, how can you improve your chances of not being involved in an unpleasant or, in the worst case, fatal incident?

**PRACTICE.**

**REPEAT.**

**AND**

**PRACTICE AGAIN.**

# CAPE PATTERSON



21st September, 2020

I headed out looking for surf today, but it was dead calm so I paddled out for a quick 42 minutes off Cape Paterson. The reef is pretty nice to explore and although I had my camera, I didn't actually do much filming. Conditions were great even though the water was a chilly 13c.

- Rowan Salger. ❖



# SPECTACULAR REEF

## SPECTACULAR REEF

Whilst returning from the Lonsdale Drop Off late one afternoon, the echo sound, which had inadvertently been left on, took a dramatic plunge downwards from 20m to 40m and then right off the chart. It did not take long for us to realise that we had found another potentially good dive location, but due to the lateness and empty tanks, we took a rain check to come back and dive the location at a future date.

It was about two weeks later, when we slipped over the side at the end of the ebb, to drift over this new site. (A drift dive is quite often a good method of checking dive locations, as you can cover a large area in a very short time). We bottomed at 20 metres amongst sparse reef and drifted slowly deeper to 30 metres, with the reef and marine life becoming more prolific. A large dark 'shadow' to the right caught our attention and on inspection, turned out to be a vertical wall which we ascended. This took us back to our starting depth of 20 metres.

We followed the top of this ledge along with the current for about 100

metres or so, until it swung to the right. The current took us straight ahead and over the wall and we slowly glided down the drop to level off at a small ledge at 30 metres. The fish life there was prolific and of much greater size and number than the famous 'Drop Off'. There were many large silver trumpeter, Blue Devils, Leatherjackets, the Rosy Wrasse and inquisitive White Ear along with literally thousands of small bait fish, who turned as one, the sun reflecting from the scales in a rainbow of colours.

The ledge at 30 metres was only a narrow one and on the other side, dropped vertically into blackness. We could only guess at the depth of possibly 40 – 60 metres, as no bottom was in sight. Swimming over this ledge can make the diver feel apprehension or sheer exhilaration as there is no wall to be seen plummeting downward, as the ledge is significantly undercut, giving it the appearance of hanging. This is one of the only places in the Bay where this large undercutting occurs to such an extent. The Portsea Hole, Nepean Wall and the Drop Off each have these same features, but nowhere

near to the same extent as Spectacular Reef.

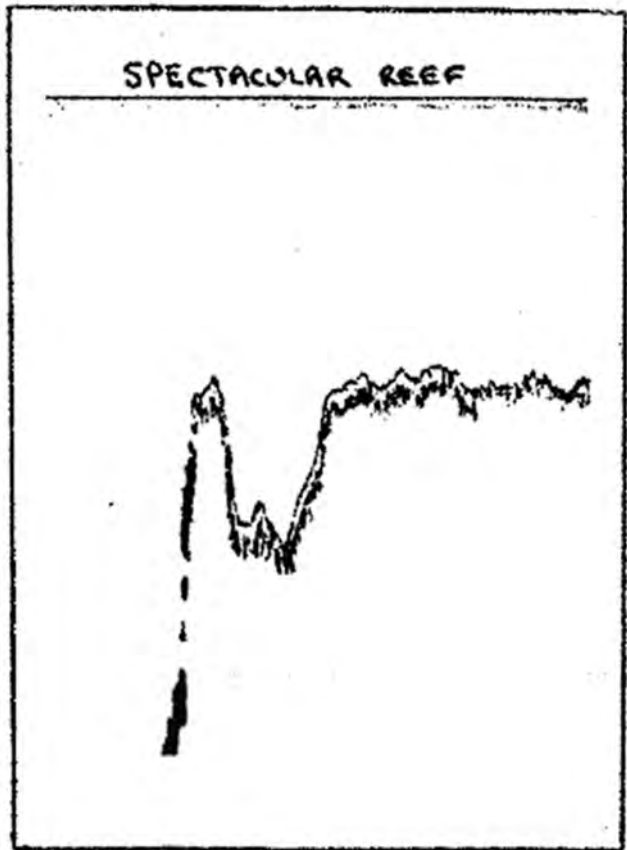
## SPECTACULAR REEF

Spectacular Reef is very aptly named, as the only way to describe it is 'spectacular'. The scenery, rock formations, the sheer drop-offs and the most abundant fish life in the Bay, make this, without doubt, the best dive in the Bay, and generally in the Melbourne area.

Approximately 100 metres only of this reef has been explored and, to date, even though at least four other areas have been sounded in the near vicinity, including the other side. (The reef drops to sand at 60 metres and then eventually rises again, vertically, at the other extremity). This side is almost, but not quite, as spectacular as Spectacular Reef. When these areas have been dived fully, they will be documented.

Spectacular Reef is unfortunately in the middle of the shipping channel and can only be dived on from boats containing permits.

- By Graham Ellis. ❖



Max Depth 60 m    Vis. 5 - 30m.

Best diving 20-30m, typically 15m

Courtesy:

*Kitt, R., & Heard, B. (1983). DIVE VICTORIA, A Directory of Dive Locations In and Around Port Phillip Bay. Burwood: A Southern Cross Publication.*



# George Kermode

## *Expect the Unexpected*

**GEORGE KERMODE**

***EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED***

- by Peter Mosse.

There is an old saying, “expect the unexpected”. I first heard of it in the martial arts, but it can be applied to any number of human activities. I learned early that it could also be applied to digital photography.

Having mastered photography with slide film and a Nikonos II and then a Nikonos V, when the Nik V finally reached its end point due to flooding, I decided I needed to try digital. I tried two digital cameras in housings with a similar result, flooding!

I persisted and bought a better quality housing and camera.

The one thing about digital cameras is all the options. In the old days a strobe had a guide number, you had a light meter and you set the aperture, distance and shutter speed and away you went. Shots were strictly limited to the number of film frames available, usually 24 or 36. Now... there is virtually no limit.

The forecast for the weekend looked good, calm seas, low swell and light wind. The George Kermode beckoned. It had been a while and the old girl had almost certainly undergone further damage since our last dive.

And it delivered, clear water and some “new” shots thanks to the ever decaying and peeling steel structures.

Lots of photographs.

I was quite excited to review the photos. I had a quick look in the boat but on the small screen in the sun it wasn't clear but something looked a little strange.

With digital photography you can quickly download to a computer and review the slides at a good size. In the “old days” you “rushed” the film to the chemist the next day and waited one or two weeks for the slides to return. Out to the car, unpack them and take a quick look by holding each slide up to the light. Bad slides were immediately culled by throwing them over my shoulder into the back seat. Possible keeps

and good shots were kept for later closer scrutiny in a slide viewer or projector.

Imagine my surprise when I got the camera back home, down loaded the photos and had a good look. Somehow I had selected an effects setting I didn't even know I had. The following photos from the George Kermode show my pictures. The photographers amongst you can imagine my surprise and disappointment.

I actually quite like them BUT I would prefer the originals. I could then later edit and add effects if I wanted.

Guess what, at least on my camera, you can't go back and regenerate the original image!!! Seems a crazy shortfall in this digitalised over optioned world.❖



# Sea Dragons

I have received the below comm's from Chrissy Tustison, who I met last year with Kade Mills. This project builds on the work already completed around the country and here in Vic by Kade. and takes Dragon research national. It would be great for all the photographers in the club to get behind this project.

- *Ian Scholey.*

Dear Seadragon Supporters,

Hope that this message finds you safe and healthy during these strange times!

We are writing to invite you to participate in a new community-driven research project called SeadragonSearch! Our project collects photographs of seadragons taken by anyone who wishes to send them for analysis, and uses artificial intelligence tools to assist matching photographs of individual seadragons. We plan to use this data to track seadragons through time and space over the next 10 years across all the Australian states where they occur, to improve conservation and management actions.

SeadragonSearch is being co-led by the Western Australian Museum in Perth and Scripps Institution of Oceanography in California, and has

connected and partnered with locally-based projects and people across southern Australia, including Dragon Quest in Victoria, Dragon Search South Australia, and the Dragons of Sydney Citizen Science Project in New South Wales. Through this national network of partners, we hope to share photographic data, exchange seadragon research updates, and collaborate in improving conservation outcomes for all seadragon populations.

We hope that you'll join us and let your community know about this project! We are attaching a small poster as a PDF, and will be sending magnets to interested dive shops and organizations. Anyone who is interested in participating can find lots of information on our website: [www.seadragonsearch.org](http://www.seadragonsearch.org), and also join us on social media through Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Photos can be shared through the website or by contacting us directly at [admin@seadragonsearch.org](mailto:admin@seadragonsearch.org).

Please reach out with any questions, or just to chat seadragons and marine conservation. Thank you very much for taking a moment to learn about our work, and we hope to connect and collaborate with you going forward!

Best wishes, ❖



SeadragonSearch  
www.seadragonsearch.org

# YOU CAN HELP TO PROTECT SEADRAGONS

© Michaël Roelens

**SeadragonSearch uses artificial intelligence tools to analyze photos and generate data needed for seadragon conservation**

- ✓ Take photos of wild, captive, or beach-washed seadragons
- ✓ Share your photos through our website: [seadragonsearch.org](http://seadragonsearch.org)
- ✓ Join our community to stay up-to-date on seadragon news

We collaborate with a range of institutions, dive clubs and seadragon supporters, including:



**WAM** WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM



VICTORIAN NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION



UTS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY

UC San Diego





# SEA URCHINS

## SEA URCHINS

Hungry anyone....

The tide is turning for an environmental pest destroying the underwater ecology off Australia's eastern coast. During the COVID-19 lockdown, Australians have developed a taste for the long-spined sea urchin, a native species whose numbers have exploded in the warming coastal waters.

They eat everything turning thriving reefs into barren moonscapes.

Conditions this season have been exceptional, making sea urchins particularly plump. Beneath their spines and thin, bone-like shell are lobes of roe with a similar texture and salty tang to an oyster.

It has been reported that Hugh Allen, executive chef of Melbourne's Vue de Monde, rates Australian urchins highly and says the best way to prepare them is to carefully cut them open, remove the roe, brine it overnight, then serve raw with a dressing. At Vue de Monde, he serves the luxurious delicacies with native bunya nut cream topped with black caviar.



## BUNYA NUT CREAM

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 tablespoon grape seed oil
- 250 g (9 oz) raw bunya nuts
- 1 white onion
- 2 garlic cloves
- 400 ml (14 fl oz) full-fat cow's milk
- 1 teaspoon salt

### METHOD

Heat the oil in a pan. Add the bunya nuts, onion and garlic and sauté until soft. Add the milk and salt, cover the pan and steep for 30 minutes off the heat. Pour into a blender and purée until smooth. Pass through a fine mesh sieve and chill until cold.

<https://austsuperfoods.com.au/product/bunya-nut-meal> ❖

# Arthur's Dive Book Review #1

## DIVE BOOK REVIEW #1

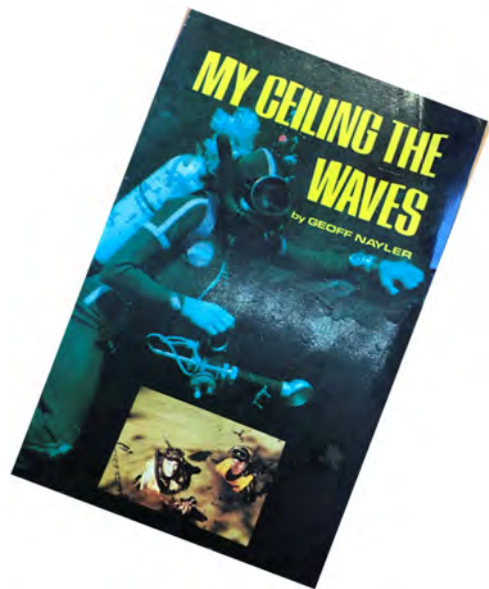
*By Arthur Kokkinos.*

During this COVID-19 Pandemic, restrictions were put in place stopping us from enjoying the world's best leisure activity, some call it a sport but I call it, Passion.

SCUBA diving gives me the 7 passions in a supercharged hit. Unity, wisdom, creativity, love, power, joy and peace.

Unfortunately, almost all of us are not diving. We are locked down and only anticipating the day when we can all hit the water and explore what lies beneath the surface. For me, the next best thing is reading diving magazines or books. This is where I can take myself into a diving experience, using the theatre of my mind. Over the years I have collected many diving and ocean related books. All of them fascinating to read. I would like to share my thoughts and review some of my diving books. Over the next few editions of Fathoms, I will introduce one book at a time and hopefully, get you all acquainted with my books.

For my first book review, I have chosen a book close to my heart and one which I have read 3 times. This book gave me my first insight into SCUBA diving and started my journey into this amazing underwater world.



'MY CEILING THE WAVES', was written by Geoff Naylor and first published in 1975. The book is an autobiographical account of Geoff Naylor's life and takes you back to the early days of SCUBA diving. My thirst for SCUBA diving started back in 1979, when I purchased this book from the souvenir shop in Apollo Bay. After reading this book for the first time, I felt like I was struck by a

bolt of lightning. I wanted to experience what I had just read. I was baited and I got hooked. From that day forward, all I wanted to do was dive, night and day. The many stories within the book give you a true account of what it was like diving in the early days of SCUBA.

I would consider Geoff Naylor a pioneer of SCUBA diving in Australia. He dedicated his whole life to the sport and never showed any signs of fear when discovering new dive locations. The book manages to excite you and delivers a true picture of those early days of SCUBA diving. Geoff and his close diving buddies encountered and overcame many obstacles, such as equipment failure and malfunctions, equipment modifications, equipment safety improvements, training procedures and dive planning. The book covers the many dive trips he took on a small boat he built himself. Some of the dive locations were almost impossible to get to, but that never stopped him. The challenges and many mishaps they got into, will make you shake your head in disbelief and laugh at the same time. Geoff shares his experiences and the many adventures he took, being one of the first to dive the many caves in S.A. Unfortunately, back then a number of divers that Geoff knew lost their lives diving these caves. Geoff pioneered a safe cave diving

qualification standard and slowly introduced its concept. He trained many people in proper SCUBA diving techniques and was the founding member of the Geelong skin diving club. This book had everything I wanted to know about diving. It captures every experience and creates an urge to keep reading and to never put the book down.

Reading the opening preface and the poem about TRUK at the end of the book, both written by Geoff Naylor, best describes what this book is all about.



*The boat that Geoff NAYLOR built and used on many divetrips*







*Some treasure from a dive.*

I love this book and I urge you to hunt it down and give it a read.

My book review rating 10/10

Until next time,

- *Arthur KOKKINOS.* ❖

An advertisement for DAN Asia Pacific. The background is a blue underwater scene with several divers. The text is overlaid on the image. At the top, it says 'Home: Covered' and 'Car: Covered', each followed by a checked box icon. Below that, in large yellow letters, is 'Are You?'. At the bottom, there is the DAN logo (a red square with a white cross and the word 'DAN' in red) and 'ASIA • PACIFIC Divers Alert Network' in blue and red. Below the logo, it asks 'Can You Afford Not to be a DAN Member?' in yellow. Underneath, it says 'DAN Membership Costs Less than AUD\$6\* per month' and 'Be Prepared. Join the Experts in Dive Accident Management.' followed by the website 'www.danasiapacific.org'. At the very bottom, in small text, it says '\*DAN Membership provides up to US\$150,000 Worldwide Emergency Evacuation Coverage. DAN Dive Injury Insurance is additional.'



# CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS

## First - August 2020



First Place - Reflecting on Lockdown - by Stuart Cousins

# CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS

## Second - August 2020



Second Place - More Williamstown Gold - by Sandy Webb

# CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS

## Third - August 2020

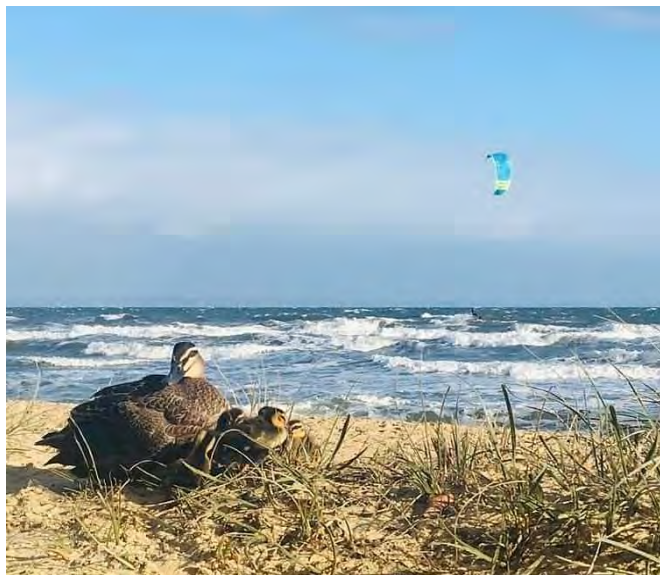


Third Place - Half Moon Bay - by Carole Campisano



## AUGUST 2020 PHOTO COMPETITION

We had some lucky members still able to access a beach during COVID-19 lockdown. First was Stuart Cousins with Reflecting on Lockdown. Second was Sandy Webb with More Williamstown Gold and third was Carole Campisano with Half Moon Bay. Congratulations to all. Thank you to everyone who contributed❖



*Mother duck and ducklings,  
Mentone Beach  
- by Carole Campisano*



*Surf's up, Blairgowrie  
- by Hannah Smeeton*



*Kite Flying, Coast Guard style  
- by Stuart Cousins*



AUGUST 2020 PHOTO COMPETITION



*Exercise, Blairgowrie  
- by Hannah Smeeton*



*The Day's Haul no licence required,  
no need to clip the tail, add sauce,  
eat - by Tim Forster*



*New Friend, Dougie Dingo mate  
- by Tim Forster*



**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST  
PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS**

**1st—Photo of the Year 2020**



First Place - Diver in Cenote - by Sherryn Amor



**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST  
PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS**

**2nd - Photo of the Year 2020**



Second Place - Soft Coral Condos - by Brian Heatherich

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LATEST  
PHOTO COMPETITION WINNERS**

**3rd - Photo of the Year 2020**



Third Place - Great white, Neptune Islands - by Tim Forster



## PHOTO OF THE YEAR 2020 PHOTO COMPETITION

It was tough competition for the Photo of the Year for 2020. First place went to Sherryn Amor for her photo, Diver in Cenote. Second was Brian Heatherich and Third place went to Tim Forster for his Great White, Neptune Islands. Congratulations to all and thank you to everyone who contributed. ❖



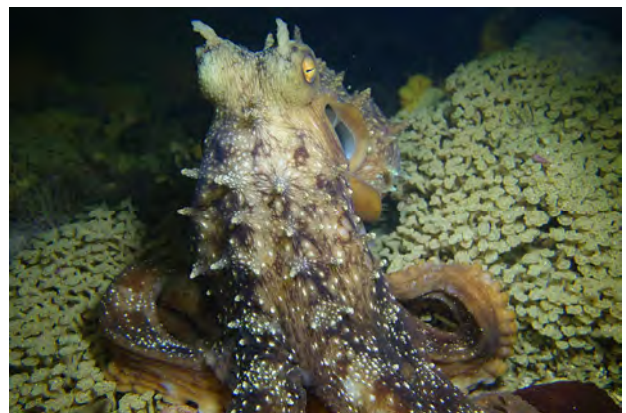
*Camp, Bastion Point, Mallacoota  
- by Carole Campisano*



*Short headed Sea horse  
- by Ian Scholey*



*Happy Crab, Rye -  
by Matthijs Smith*



*Octopus' Garden, San Remo  
- by Peter Mosse*

PHOTO OF THE YEAR 2020 PHOTO COMPETITION



*Easy Rider Spider, Elsa's Reef  
- by Matthijs Smith*



*Blue Devil, Lonsdale Wall  
- by Ian Scholey*



*Fiddler Ray, Williamstown  
- by Phil Watson*



*Moray Eel, Dumaguete Philippines  
- by Ian Scholey*



PHOTO OF THE YEAR 2020 PHOTO COMPETITION



*Big Softie - by Rowan Salger*



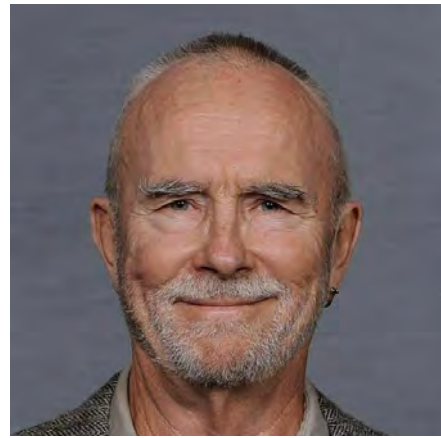
*Whale Shark, Cebu, Philippines - by Christine Reynolds*



# SOUTH AFRICA

10th August, 2020

Diving Long Beach with my new 5mm thermal suit and 18kg of lead - no need for weight lifting at a gym - just go diving - great sightings caught on camera - a cormorant grabbing a klipvis - and an orange-spotted toadfish at the limit of its southern range.



Another treat off Long Beach - the False Bay butterfly fish.

- Robert Koch. ❖





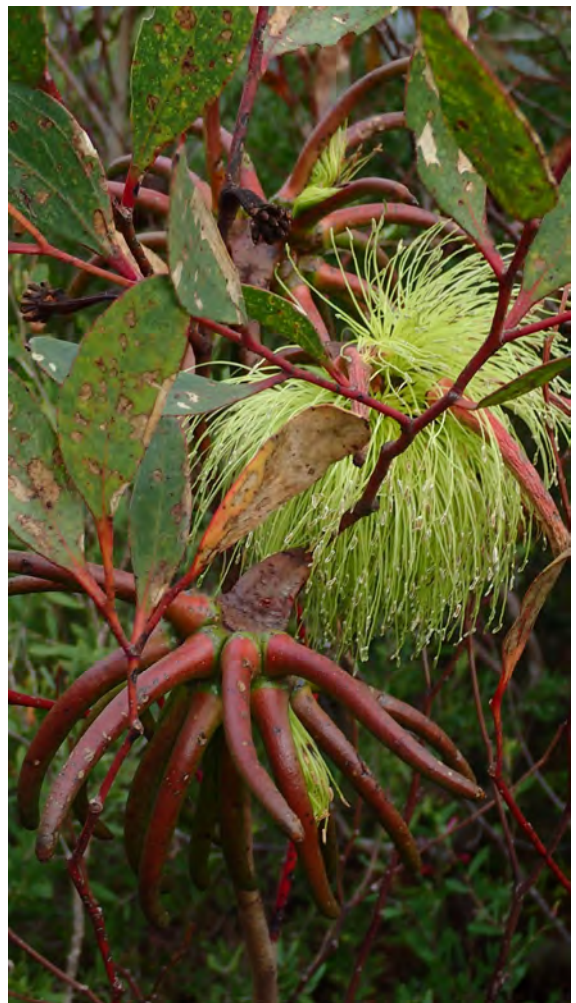
16th September, 2020

Diving again hooray: Eye of an octopus peering from behind his seashell barricade. Large bluefoot whelk on the prowl. Shiny silver hottentot, a green-eyed crab, and an orange super-klipvis posing for the camera.

- Robert Koch. ❖



*Interesting South African vegetation.*

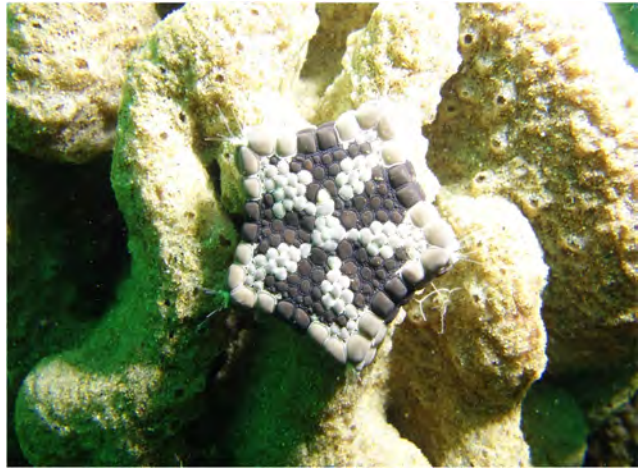
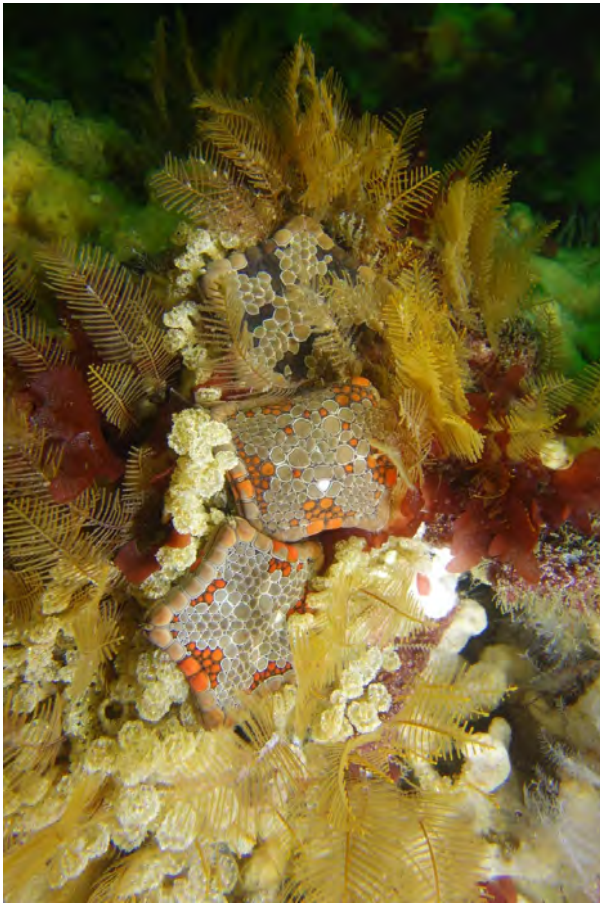




# Biscuit Stars

Variation in biscuit star colour and pattern on a single dive near San Remo Jetty

- Peter Mosse. ❖





# SPIRIT OF TASMANIA



Spirit of Tasmania I and II were built in 1998 by Kvaerner Masa-Yards in Turku, Finland.

The ships weigh a staggering 28,000 tonnes and measure in at 194.3 metres. To put things into perspective, that's 20 metres longer than the inside of the MCG!

## Ship facts

**OWNER:** Tt-Line Company Pty Ltd

**BUILDER:** Kvaerner Masa-Yards  
Finland

**YEAR BUILT:** 1998

**SHIP TYPE:** Ro/Ro Passenger V/L  
Class American Bureau Of Shipping  
First Tt-Line Commercial Sailing 1  
Sept 2002

Overall length 294.33m

Gross Tonnage 29,338

Dead weight 5,651t

Engines 4x Sulzer V16 Twin  
Turbo=charged diesels, 10,560kw  
each

Twin Variable Pitch Propellers via  
reduction gearboxes 510/147 rpm

## Capacity

121 Recliners

Licensed to carry 1400 passengers  
and 500 vehicles

222 Total Cabins

59 Twin bed porthole cabins

72 Four bed porthole cabins

81 Twin bed/Four bed inside Cabins

2 wheelchair accessible cabins

8 Deluxe Cabins

### **Speed, time and distance**

Average speed in knots 27

Crossing Time 9-11 hours

Distance from Melbourne to Devonport 429km (232 Nautical miles)

### **800 APPROXIMATE SAILINGS PER YEAR**

**1,400 PASSENGERS CAN BE CARRIED ON EACH SHIP**

**500 VEHICLES CAN BE ACCOMMODATED**

### **Main engines**

- 2 rudders: semi-balanced, electric hydraulic power
  - Engine speed: 510 revolutions per minute
  - Engines are under 100% load for each crossing on double crossings
  - At sea, power is generated from 2 shaft generators attached to the main engines, which operate at 1200 revolutions per minute
  - In port, power is generated from 3 diesel generators, it takes approx 1500 kilowatts (electrical generation) to run the lights, computers, etc.
- Stabilisers and thrusters

### **Stabilisers & thrusters**

- Stabilisers: 2 retractable fins, Blohm and Voss, 8m long, 60cm wide, just forward of midship

- Thrusters: 2 bow and 1 stern thruster with controllable pitch propellers

### **Fuel**

- Residual diesel fuel is used at approximately 7000 litres per hour
- Total fuel capacity: 1222m (1,222,000 litres)
- Bunker once a week for single sailings each day; twice a week for double sailings.

### **Life Saving and navigation equipment**

- 2 marine evacuation systems
- 2266 adult life jackets and 140 child life jackets
- 18 life buoys
- 4 motor lifeboats (combined capacity of 600 people; 150 in each)
- 28 life rafts (combined capacity of 1310 people)
- 1 motor rescue boat (6 people)
- 1 work boat (4 people)
- Each vessel is capable of carrying 1400 passengers and 110 crew members. There is sufficient life-saving equipment on board for 1910 people

- Each vessel is equipped with the most up-to-date communications equipment including satellite transponders.

### **Dimensions**

- Distance from bridge wing to bow: 32.52m
- Distance from bridge wing to stern: 161.81m
- Height of bridge wing above waterline: 22.50m
- Height of mast top above waterline: 38.82m
- Height of funnel top above waterline: 37.20m
- Draft: 6.55m

### **History**

- Originally called Superfast III (Spirit II) and Superfast IV (Spirit I)
- Original ports for Spirit II: Bari (Italy) and Patras & Igoumenitsa (Greece)
- Original ports for Spirit I: Ancona (Italy) and Patras (Greece) Other

### **Other**

- Fresh water capacity: 570 tonnes

### **History**

Let's journey back to where it all began... 1985, a year of big hair, ripped jeans and neon clothing. Bob Hawke was PM. Melbourne celebrated its 150th

year. *Neighbours* debuted on network television... And TT-Line, the operator of Spirit of Tasmania, was born.

### **Abel Tasman**

On 1 July 1985, TT-Line began operating passenger and vehicle transport across Bass Strait on the German-built Abel Tasman until 1993, when she was replaced by the much larger "original" Spirit of Tasmania.

### **Devil on the high seas**

In 1997, the Devil Cat, a Tasmanian-built catamaran took just six hours to travel from George Town in Tasmania's north to Station Pier in Port Melbourne. The vessel operated during the peak season in conjunction with the original Spirit of Tasmania until 2002.

### **Spirit of Tasmania I & II.**

In March 2002, TT-Line purchased two vessels from Superfast Ferries, sailing between Italy and Greece as Superfast III & IV. The ships were painted, overhauled and renamed Spirit of Tasmania I & II, replacing the original Spirit of Tasmania.

On 1 September, 2002 they sailed maiden voyages across Bass Strait.

In 2015, the vessels underwent a major refurbishment, sporting fresh, modern interiors and stylish new facilities. ❖



# Close Encounters of the Whale type



# Rock Lobster Tagging Program

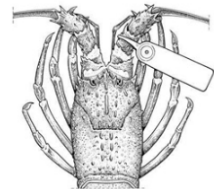
Tagging of recreationally caught rock lobsters commenced on 1 July 2017

Tags are free and can be ordered online or collected from selected Victorian Government Offices.

<http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/fisheries/recreational-fishing/tagging-of-recreationally-caught-rock-lobsters>

To Create an account, Order/Report/Transfer tags please visit:

<https://lobstertag.agriculture.vic.gov.au>



## Save the Rays

### REPORT ILLEGAL FISHING ACTIVITY

<https://vfa.vic.gov.au/recreational-fishing/ray-protection-fishing-rules>

You can report illegal fishing activity to 13 3474.

### Ray protection fishing rules



We are making changes to ray, skate and guitarfish fishing rules.

These new rules commence on **Tuesday 7 November 2017**.

The new rules:

1. Prohibit the take or possession of sting rays, skates or guitarfish greater than 1.5 metres in width;
2. Reduce the combined daily bag limit for rays, skates and guitarfish from 5 to 1, which are smaller than 1.5 metres in width;
3. Prohibit the take of these species within 400m of any pier, jetty, wharf or breakwater;
4. Require these species to be landed whole so they can be measured by Fisheries Officers.



An education and awareness program will be conducted to educate fishers about these new rules.

## SafeTrx

Coastguard have an excellent app that allows you to register your boat trip with them and allows them to track you, using the GPS in your phone.

How it works:

You register your trip, together with your latest return time. If you go an hour past this, without notifying

them, the wheels are set in motion to find you. Firstly, they will try and ring you or your nominated contacts and then, go from there.

Great tool for extra safety. Details can be found on the coastguard website:

[www.coastguard.com.au/SafeTrx](http://www.coastguard.com.au/SafeTrx)

## BOAT RAMPS

Better Boating Victoria has been working with boating asset managers to remove all fees and make it cheaper and easier for all people to get out on the water.

To find a free boat ramp please visit this link

<https://betterboating.vic.gov.au/>

## DIARY DATES

Philippines & Palau—22/05/2021—06/06/2021





The destination for next year’s club overseas trip is Dumaguete in the Philippines. This will be a great trip to bring the family along, as there is plenty for them to do while we are out diving.

If anyone is interested please contact me for a booking form at:  
[President@vsag.org.au](mailto:President@vsag.org.au)

While we are in the Philippines, it seems silly not to take the opportunity to extend the trip in Palau. Koror is just a 2 hour flight from Manila and has some of the best diving anywhere.

If anyone is interested please contact me for a booking form at:  
[President@vsag.org.au](mailto:President@vsag.org.au)







# VICTORIAN SUB AQUA GROUP

## DUMAGUETE- THE PHILIPPINES

 **8**  
DAYS

 **7**  
NIGHTS

 **< 12**  
DIVES

Join the Victorian Sub Aqua group on this memorable trip to the Philippines, with the option to extend further and dive Palau too! Diving in Dumaguete can take place on either the magnificent Marine Sanctuary of Apo Island or the amazing Dauin Coastline. Find walls densely covered with hard and soft corals, schooling fish, turtles and crystal clear waters. In contrast, the Dauin coastline is home to exquisitely rare macro critters. Spot wonderpus, hairy frogfish, mandarin fish performing their mating dances at dusk and the extremely rare clown frogfish.

### FLY

#### PHILIPPINE AIRLINES & CEBU PACIFIC

Return Flights Melbourne to Dumaguete via Manila  
All airline taxes & fuel surcharges

### STAY & DIVE

#### ATLANTIS DUMAGUETE RESORT

7 nights standard room twin share  
Breakfast daily  
Return airport transfers  
10 dives per person  
Apo island day trip including 2 dives pp  
Oslob whale shark snorkel day trip  
Tanks, weights, airfills

**22—29/05/2021**

### UPGRADE OPTION

Eat Sleep Dive package  
Includes all meals  
Unlimited diving  
Free nitrox  
Add \$900pp



### CONTACT VSAG FOR MORE INFORMATION

[ischoley@iinet.net.au](mailto:ischoley@iinet.net.au) | 0439 310 646 | [vsag.org.au](http://vsag.org.au)

### ALLWAYS DIVE EXPEDITIONS

[res@allwaysdive.com.au](mailto:res@allwaysdive.com.au) | 03 95316818 | [allwaysdive.com.au](http://allwaysdive.com.au)

Lic # 32311





# VICTORIAN SUB AQUA GROUP

## PALAU EXTENSION



8

DAYS



7

NIGHTS



9

DIVES

Following on from diving Dumaguete in the Philippines, come along with Victorian Sub Aqua Group to dive Palau! This destination offers some of the most diverse waters in the world. Its marine ecosystems include barrier and fringing reefs, lagoons, sea grass beds, marine lakes and mangrove forests. Palau's waters boast some of the world's best reefs and concentrations of the most spectacular marine life in the world. Inquisitive sharks, friendly dolphins, manta rays, tuna and barracuda - all are prolific in the rich Palau waters and every dive holds something new and breathtaking. There are dive sites to suit all levels of experience with the two best sites being "Blue Corner" and "Blue Holes". These pristine habitats support some of the world's richest populations of marine life. With over 1,500 species of fish, pelagics, corals and a number of WWII wrecks, Palau should be on every diver's bucket list.

### FLY

#### PHILIPPINE AIRLINES

Return Flights Manila to Koror  
All airline taxes & fuel surcharges

### STAY & DIVE

#### PALAU CENTRAL, KOROR

7 nights standard room twin share  
Breakfast daily  
Return airport transfers

#### SAM'S TOURS PALAU

8 dives per diver inc Tanks, weights and airfills  
Third residual air dive Chandelier Cave  
Jellyfish Lake snorkel stop  
Unlimited diving on Sam's macro wall  
FREE Sam's water bottle  
FREE nitrox for certified divers  
Excludes :  
Dive permits including Jellyfish Lake \$100USD paid locally



30/05/2021—  
06/06/2021

### CONTACT VSAG FOR MORE INFORMATION

[ischoley@iinet.net.au](mailto:ischoley@iinet.net.au) | 0439 310 646 | [vsag.org.au](http://vsag.org.au)

### ALLWAYS DIVE EXPEDITIONS

[res@allwaysdive.com.au](mailto:res@allwaysdive.com.au) | 03 95316818 | [allwaysdive.com.au](http://allwaysdive.com.au)

Lic # 32311



# VSAG Dive and Meeting Calendar

## Diving with VSAG:

Each week the nominated Dive Captain will issue an email on or close to the Wednesday advising if there are any boats available and, if known, where the locations.

If you are interested in booking on one of the boats for a dive weekend, you should Email the Dive Captain ASAP after receiving the notification email with the following information:

Full Name;

Mobile Number;

Emergency Contact Information;

Preferred boarding location (if different locations are offered e.g. Sorrento/Queenscliff)

Date/Details of last dive; and

Gear configuration.

Available boat owners will be confirmed by email prior to the weekend.

Dive site(s) and dive day will be determined by the DC in consultation with the Boat Owners, depending on the forecasted conditions.

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

The boat owner and /or one of the divers will prepare and forward a Fathoms Dive Report to: [editor@vsag.org.au](mailto:editor@vsag.org.au)

**You must confirm your intention to dive with the Dive Captain and the boat owner by 6:00pm the day prior to the dive.**

**Failure to confirm your intention to dive may result in the boat owner allocating your spot on the boat to a confirmed diver and placing your spot on the “standby diver list”.**

## Additional Information:

**Tidal Stream Information for Port Phillip Bay Heads is location here:**

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

**Rates in RED are the maximum forecast outgoing (ebb) tidal rate.**

**Rates in BLUE are the maximum forecast incoming (flood) tidal rate**

## Definitions

**TBA – To Be Advised**

**TBC – To Be Confirmed**

See VSAG Dive and Meeting Calendar 01.01.2020 – 31.12.2020. Please note that the calendar is subject to change when circumstances require. – VSAG Committee.

Date	Day	Event	Dive Captain
04-01-20	05-01-20	Sat-Sun	David Geekie
11-01-20	12-01-20	Sat-Sun	Ian Scholey
07-01-20	Tuesday	Committee Meeting	
18-01-20	19-01-20	Sat-Sun	Graham Ellis Walter Medenbach
21-01-20	Tuesday	General Meeting	
25-01-20	26-01-20	Sat-Sun	Andrew McKernan
27-01-20	Monday	Australia Day	
01-02-20	02-02-20	Sat-Sun	David Politakis
08-02-20	09-02-20	Sat-Sun	Carol Penfold Walter Medenbach
11-02-20	Tuesday	Committee Meeting	
15-02-20	16-02-20	Sat-Sun	John Lawler
18-02-20	Tuesday	General Meeting	Hannah Smeeton
22-02-20	23-02-20	Sat-Sun	Carol Penfold
29-02-20	01-03-20	Sat-Sun	Andrew McKernan
07-03-20	08-03-20	Sat-Sun	David Geekie
10-02-20	Tuesday	Committee Meeting	
14-03-20	15-03-20	Sat-Sun	Ian Scholey Peter Galvin
17-03-20	Tuesday	General Meeting	
21-03-20	22-03-20	Sat-Sun	Graham Ellis
28-03-20	29-03-20	Sat-Sun	David Politakis
04-04-20	05-04-20	Sat-Sun	John Lawler
11-04-20	12-04-20	Sat-Sun	Michael Ngai
14-02-20	Tuesday	Committee Meeting	
18-04-20	19-04-20	Sat-Sun	Andrew McKernan
21-04-20	Tuesday	General Meeting	
25-04-20	26-04-20	Sat-Sun	David Geekie Walter Medenbach
02-05-20	03-05-20	Sat-Sun	Ian Scholey
09-05-20	10-05-20	Sat-Sun	Graham Ellis
12-05-20	Tuesday	Committee Meeting	
16-05-20	17-05-19	Sat-Sun	David Politakis
19-05-20	Tuesday	General Meeting	
23-05-20	24-05-20	Sat-Sun	Dive Club Event N/A TBC
30-05-20	31-05-20	Sat-Sun	Hannah Smeeton
06-06-20	07-06-20	Sat-Sun	Michael Ngai
09-06-20	Tuesday	Committee Meeting	
13-06-20	14-06-20	Sat-Sun	Graham Ellis
16-06-20	Tuesday	General Meeting	
20-06-20	21-06-20	Sat-Sun	John Lawler Walter Medenbach

Date	Day	Event	Dive Captain
27-06-20	28-06-19	Sat-Sun	Michael Ngai
04-07-20	05-07-20	Sat-Sun	Ian Scholey
11-07-20	12-07-20	Sat-Sun	Red boats Carol Penfold
14-07-20		Tuesday	Committee Meeting
18-07-20	19-07-20	Sat-Sun	David Politakis
21-07-20		Tuesday	General Meeting
25-07-20	26-07-20	Sat-Sun	Carol Penfold
01-08-20	02-08-20	Sat-Sun	Graham Ellis
08-08-20	09-08-20	Sat-Sun	Red boats Carol Penfold Walter Medenbach
11-08-20		Tuesday	Committee Meeting
15-08-20	16-08-20	Sat-Sun	Michael Ngai
18-08-20		Tuesday	General Meeting Hannah Smeeton
22-08-20	23-08-20	Sat-Sun	Dive Club Event TBC
05-09-20	06-09-20	Sat-Sun	Red boats Ian Scholey Carol Penfold
08-09-20		Tuesday	Committee Meeting
12-09-20	13-09-20	Sat-Sun	Graham Ellis
15-09-20			General Meeting
19-09-20	20-09-20	Sat-Sun	Red boats Carol Penfold Walter Medenbach
26-09-20	27-09-20	Sat-Sun	Michael Ngai
03-10-20	04-10-20	Sat-Sun	David Politakis
10-10-20	11-10-20	Sat-Sun	Carol Penfold
13-10-20			Committee Meeting
17-10-20	18-10-20	Sat-Sun	Ian Scholey
20-10-20			General Meeting
24-10-20	25-10-20	Sat-Sun	Graham Ellis
31-10-20	01-11-20	Sat-Sun	John Lawler
03-11-20			Melbourne Cup
07-11-20	08-11-20	Sat-Sun	David Geekie Carol Penfold
10-11-20			Committee Meeting
14-11-20	15-11-20	Sat-Sun	Hannah Smeeton
17-11-20			General Meeting
21-11-20	22-11-20	Sat-Sun	Dive Club Event N/A TBC
28-11-20	29-11-20	Sat-Sun	David Politakis
05-12-20	06-12-20	Sat-Sun	Ian Scholey
08-12-20			Proposed Christmas Party
12-12-20	13-12-20	Sat-Sun	Graham Ellis
19-12-20	20-12-20	Sat-Sun	Red boats John Lawler Walter Medenbach
26-12-20	30-12-20		TBA



# 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>

## 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 :

◆ 2 Oxy-Sok Oxygen Resuscitation Kits

◆ 1 Oxygen Medical Tank                      Better Boating Victoria

◆ 1 Oxygen Medical Kit                      To find a free boat ramp please  
visit this link:

◆ 1 DAN First Aid Kit

◆ 2 Scuba Tanks.

<https://betterboating.vic.gov.au/>

## Tidal Streams at the Heads — October 2020

**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.

**Times have been adjusted for Daylight Savings**

September			October			
<b>MON 28</b>	<b>TUE 29</b>	<b>WED 30</b>	<b>THU 1</b>	<b>FRI 2</b>	<b>SAT 3</b>	<b>SUN 4</b>
<i>4:54</i>	<i>6:01</i>	<i>0:18</i>	1:42	2:51	3:47	5:31
11:47	12:54	<i>7:18</i>	<i>8:29</i>	<i>9:27</i>	<i>10:13</i>	<i>11:53</i>
<i>17:20</i>	<i>18:54</i>	13:58	14:50	15:30	16:02	17:30
22:54		<i>20:15</i>	<i>21:11</i>	<i>21:55</i>	<i>22:31</i>	
<b>MON 5</b>	<b>TUE 6</b>	<b>WED 7</b>	<b>THU 8</b>	<b>FRI 9</b>	<b>SAT 10</b>	<b>SUN 11</b>
<i>0:03</i>	<i>0:34</i>	<i>1:04</i>	<i>1:35</i>	<i>2:06</i>	<i>2:40</i>	<i>3:17</i>
6:10	6:45	7:19	7:54	8:30	9:09	9:53
<i>12:27</i>	<i>12:58</i>	<i>13:28</i>	<i>13:58</i>	<i>14:28</i>	<i>14:58</i>	<i>15:31</i>
17:55	18:20	18:47	19:15	19:45	20:17	20:52
<b>MON 12</b>	<b>TUE 13</b>	<b>WED 14</b>	<b>THU 15</b>	<b>FRI 16</b>	<b>SAT 17</b>	<b>SUN 18</b>
<i>3:57</i>	<i>4:45</i>	<i>5:46</i>	0:09	1:44	3:10	4:22
10:41	11:37	12:40	<i>7:04</i>	<i>8:29</i>	<i>9:45</i>	<i>10:46</i>
<i>16:11</i>	<i>17:05</i>	<i>18:25</i>	13:43	14:40	15:30	16:14
21:36	22:40		<i>19:56</i>	<i>21:09</i>	<i>22:09</i>	<i>23:02</i>
<b>MON 19</b>	<b>TUE 20</b>	<b>WED 21</b>	<b>THU 22</b>	<b>FRI 23</b>	<b>SAT 24</b>	<b>SUN 25</b>
5:23	6:16	<i>0:39</i>	<i>1:25</i>	<i>2:10</i>	<i>2:54</i>	<i>3:39</i>
<i>11:39</i>	<i>12:27</i>	7:07	7:55	8:42	9:29	10:15
16:56	17:38	<i>13:11</i>	<i>13:54</i>	<i>14:36</i>	<i>15:19</i>	<i>16:06</i>
<i>23:52</i>		18:21	19:04	19:50	20:39	21:33
<b>October</b>						<b>Nov</b>
<b>MON 26</b>	<b>TUE 27</b>	<b>WED 28</b>	<b>THU 29</b>	<b>FRI 30</b>	<b>SAT 31</b>	<b>SUN 1</b>
<i>4:24</i>	<i>5:15</i>	<i>6:18</i>	1:20	2:43	3:49	4:40
11:05	11:59	12:58	<i>7:38</i>	<i>8:59</i>	<i>10:03</i>	<i>10:52</i>
<i>17:00</i>	<i>18:09</i>	<i>19:30</i>	13:57	14:49	15:32	16:07
22:35	23:52		<i>20:40</i>	<i>21:33</i>	<i>22:15</i>	<i>22:51</i>

## Tidal Streams at the Heads — November 2020

**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.

**Times have been adjusted for Daylight Savings**

October						Nov
<i>MON 26</i>	<i>TUE 27</i>	<i>WED 28</i>	<i>THU 29</i>	<i>FRI 30</i>	<i>SAT 31</i>	<i>SUN 1</i>
<i>4:24</i>	<i>5:15</i>	<i>6:18</i>	<i>1:20</i>	<i>2:43</i>	<i>3:49</i>	<i>4:40</i>
<i>11:05</i>	<i>11:59</i>	<i>12:58</i>	<i>7:38</i>	<i>8:59</i>	<i>10:03</i>	<i>10:52</i>
<i>17:00</i>	<i>18:09</i>	<i>19:30</i>	<i>13:57</i>	<i>14:49</i>	<i>15:32</i>	<i>16:07</i>
<i>22:35</i>	<i>23:52</i>		<i>20:40</i>	<i>21:33</i>	<i>22:15</i>	<i>22:51</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>5:21</i>	<i>5:57</i>	<i>6:30</i>	<i>0:30</i>	<i>1:02</i>	<i>1:36</i>	<i>2:10</i>
<i>11:33</i>	<i>12:08</i>	<i>12:41</i>	<i>7:03</i>	<i>7:37</i>	<i>8:12</i>	<i>8:49</i>
<i>16:38</i>	<i>17:09</i>	<i>17:40</i>	<i>13:12</i>	<i>13:43</i>	<i>14:15</i>	<i>14:47</i>
<i>23:25</i>	<i>23:58</i>		<i>18:12</i>	<i>18:45</i>	<i>19:18</i>	<i>19:54</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>2:47</i>	<i>3:28</i>	<i>4:14</i>	<i>5:11</i>	<i>0:14</i>	<i>1:48</i>	<i>3:11</i>
<i>9:27</i>	<i>10:09</i>	<i>10:54</i>	<i>11:45</i>	<i>6:25</i>	<i>7:54</i>	<i>9:17</i>
<i>15:22</i>	<i>16:05</i>	<i>17:01</i>	<i>18:12</i>	<i>12:41</i>	<i>13:38</i>	<i>14:34</i>
<i>20:36</i>	<i>21:30</i>	<i>22:44</i>		<i>19:30</i>	<i>20:40</i>	<i>21:41</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>4:20</i>	<i>5:18</i>	<i>6:09</i>	<i>0:15</i>	<i>1:02</i>	<i>1:46</i>	<i>2:29</i>
<i>10:26</i>	<i>11:22</i>	<i>12:11</i>	<i>6:56</i>	<i>7:40</i>	<i>8:24</i>	<i>9:05</i>
<i>15:27</i>	<i>16:17</i>	<i>17:06</i>	<i>12:58</i>	<i>13:42</i>	<i>14:26</i>	<i>15:11</i>
<i>22:35</i>	<i>23:26</i>		<i>17:55</i>	<i>18:44</i>	<i>19:34</i>	<i>20:27</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>3:11</i>	<i>3:52</i>	<i>4:36</i>	<i>5:29</i>	<i>1:05</i>	<i>2:25</i>	<i>3:31</i>
<i>9:45</i>	<i>10:26</i>	<i>11:09</i>	<i>11:53</i>	<i>6:39</i>	<i>8:08</i>	<i>9:25</i>
<i>15:58</i>	<i>16:49</i>	<i>17:47</i>	<i>18:50</i>	<i>12:41</i>	<i>13:30</i>	<i>14:18</i>
<i>21:22</i>	<i>22:25</i>	<i>23:40</i>		<i>19:51</i>	<i>20:44</i>	<i>21:29</i>



## Tidal Streams at the Heads — December 2020

**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.

**Times have been adjusted for Daylight Savings**

Nov	December					
<b>MON 30</b>	<b>TUE 1</b>	<b>WED 2</b>	<b>THU 3</b>	<b>FRI 4</b>	<b>SAT 5</b>	<b>SUN 6</b>
4:23	5:04	5:40	6:16	0:02	0:38	1:15
10:23	11:08	11:48	12:24	6:50	7:24	7:58
15:03	15:45	16:27	17:06	12:58	13:31	14:04
22:10	22:48	23:26		17:45	18:23	19:03
<b>MON 7</b>	<b>TUE 8</b>	<b>WED 9</b>	<b>THU 10</b>	<b>FRI 11</b>	<b>SAT 12</b>	<b>SUN 13</b>
1:52	2:29	3:10	3:55	4:46	0:16	1:44
8:32	9:06	9:41	10:17	10:59	5:51	7:14
14:40	15:19	16:04	16:56	17:58	11:47	12:43
19:45	20:35	21:36	22:50		19:05	20:11
<b>MON 14</b>	<b>TUE 15</b>	<b>WED 16</b>	<b>THU 17</b>	<b>FRI 18</b>	<b>SAT 19</b>	<b>SUN 20</b>
3:05	4:12	5:09	5:58	6:43	0:44	1:28
8:45	10:01	11:04	11:57	12:46	7:25	8:04
13:44	14:47	15:47	16:45	17:40	13:32	14:17
21:14	22:12	23:06	23:56		18:33	19:25
<b>MON 21</b>	<b>TUE 22</b>	<b>WED 23</b>	<b>THU 24</b>	<b>FRI 25</b>	<b>SAT 26</b>	<b>SUN 27</b>
2:09	2:47	3:23	4:01	4:43	0:26	1:42
8:40	9:15	9:47	10:19	10:52	5:35	6:47
15:01	15:44	16:27	17:13	18:01	11:28	12:10
20:17	21:10	22:08	23:13		18:53	19:46
<b>December</b>				<b>January 2021</b>		
<b>MON 28</b>	<b>TUE 29</b>	<b>WED 30</b>	<b>THU 31</b>	<b>FRI 1</b>	<b>SAT 2</b>	<b>SUN 3</b>
2:53	3:53	4:41	5:23	6:01	6:36	0:22
8:19	9:39	10:37	11:24	12:04	12:41	7:09
13:00	13:57	14:54	15:48	16:38	17:25	13:17
20:38	21:27	22:14	22:58	23:41		18:11

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





*Cover photo - Soft Coral Condos - by Brian Heatherich*