

SDF News Sheet July 2006

A service to members of the SCUBA DIVERS FEDERATION OF SA

Working to develop the sport of Scuba diving in SA

PO Box 360, Goodwood SA 5034 info@sdfsa.net www.sdfsa.net

Our next meeting is being held upstairs at 247 Currie St, Adelaide at 8pm on Tuesday 8th August.

If you don't have the time to read through everything in this news sheet, take advantage of the following table of contents. Click on any item of interest to proceed straight to that section.

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2006-7 EXECUTIVE

The AGM is now over and our Executive Committee has been elected for 2006-7. The previous committee was re-elected with exactly the same positions, except for Christopher Deane who was unable to continue this year. A complete list of the committee and all other positions will be given in our next news sheet.

RAPID BAY JETTY UPDATE

A Government announcement regarding the future of the Rapid Bay jetty is expected to be made shortly.

INAUGURAL POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE 18-19/7

Dr Gillian Napier, Project Co-ordinator FRCCCE Postgraduate Research Conference, Flinders Research Centre for Coast & Catchment Environments, Faculty of Science & Engineering, Flinders University of South Australia has invited all our members who might be interested to the inaugural FRCCCE Postgraduate Research Conference to be held on 18th - 19th July 2006 in the South Lecture Theatre, Information Science & Technology building. There will be people talking about intertidal ecology, freshwater springs on beaches, seagrass meadows and a quite a range of other topics. This year the FRCCCE is introducing postgraduate students with their exciting research and they have invited the Flinders University Bioknowledge Group to join them, so there will be quite a diversity of topics. Professor Graeme Hugo from Adelaide University, a well-known international speaker, is presenting on the second day. If you would like any further information contact Gillian (Dr Gillian Napier), Project Co-ordinator FRCCCE Postgraduate Research Conference, Flinders Research Centre for Coast & Catchment Environments, Faculty of Science & Engineering, Flinders University of South Australia - Phone: (08) 8201 2193, Fax (08) 8201 5624, Email: gilliann@infoeng.flinders.edu.au .

40TH ANNIVERSARY

Whilst discussing Flinders University, it seems that the Uni is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year, having started in 1966 (The Flinders Medical Centre celebrates its 30th anniversary this year, having started in 1976).

DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE BILL

The State Government has now released a draft Climate Change and Greenhouse Emissions Reduction Bill for community consultation. Legislation on climate change will be introduced to Parliament later this year. If you would like to know more about the draft Bill, visit www.climatechange.sa.gov.au .

ADELAIDE BOAT SHOW

This year's Adelaide Boat Show is being held at the Adelaide Convention Centre from Thursday 20th to Sunday 23rd July. Apart from all of the usual displays of boats, fishing tackle, electronics, safety gear, etc..., there will be several James Bond items on display. So what's the big deal? Well these items include the Neptune submarine from "For Your Eyes Only", a Bath-O-Sub from "Diamonds Are Forever", and an underwater two sled from "Thunderball". Check them out.

LARGE CRAB GATHERING EVENT AT RAPID BAY

Divers recently reported the sighting of a huge gathering of spider crabs at Rapid Bay. They say that there must have been tens of thousands of crabs. More details about the sighting are included in our July SDFS Bulletin.

REEF WATCH NEWS

The latest issue of "Reef Watcher", Issue 9.2, June 2006, is excellent. An electronic copy was forwarded to our members at the beginning of the month. Some items from the newsletter may be reproduced in this news sheet to remind our members about certain issues or events. This "Reef Watcher" issue is particularly full of Marine Life Society references, what with photos by MLSSA members Chris Hall, David Muirhead and Kevin Smith, and comments about Steve Reynolds, Scoresby Shepherd (MLSSA Patron) and (one time member) Dennis Hutson. The reference about Steve Reynolds (under "Training Update") relates to the time that Steve was being shown how to carry out a quadrat study. The instructor laid the 1m-square quadrat down for Steve to work on. Steve duly found a small wobbegong shark camped in the corner of his quadrat. The well-hidden critter refused to budge whilst Steve spent ¼ hour carefully inspecting his quadrat area. Naturally, Steve had to record the stubborn shark as a fixed item taking up 1% of his quadrat area.

PROPOSED PORT HUGHES GOLF RESORT

Sleepy Port Hughes on the Yorke Peninsula is about to move into the future. Greg Norman is behind a proposed \$250m golf resort there. The development includes 1650 homes, golf club, theme park, hotel and commercial centre. This could all affect the Port Hughes coastline but developers say that they will create more sand dunes and plant coastal flora there.

ACID SULPHATE THREAT

In June, the Federal Government launched a new CSIRO web-based mapping program to measure acid sulphate levels across Australia. This mapping led to the discovery of high levels of acid sulphate along the Port Noarlunga coastline and around the Onkaparinga River estuary. The occurrence of acid sulphate below the surface is said to be harmless until disturbed. Once that it comes in to contact with oxygen it turns into sulphuric acid, corroding infrastructure and making water toxic. The building of a marina at Port Noarlunga, for example, could make the water toxic and kill marine life. The Saltfleet Street bridge across the Onkaparinga River at Port Noarlunga is due for an upgrade and that is located in one of the highest risk areas.

POTENTIAL ACID SULPHATE SOILS AT MARINA SITE

Still on the topic of acid sulphate soils, scientist Dr Peter Wood believes that the fishing industry in Murat Bay will be directly under threat if the proposed development of the Ceduna Keys marina goes ahead. According to a report by the CSIRO, the mangroves in the area contain potential acid sulphate soils (PASS) which, once disturbed, can lead to major fish kills as well as major contamination of toxic metals in oyster flesh and other marine life. Further details are included in our July SDFSA Bulletin.

ENCOUNTER MARINE PARK

Declaration of the proposed Encounter Marine Park may not occur until 2007 because it cannot be declared until the proposed Marine Parks Act is in place. The DEH is aiming to release the draft Bill later this year for a period of public consultation, prior to introducing the final Bill into Parliament. More details about the proposed marine parks legislation are included in our July SDFSA Bulletin.

WILDERNESS SOCIETY PUSHES FOR DECLARATION OF MARINE PARKS

The Wilderness Society says that the declaration of marine parks has stalled whilst several aquaculture and mining projects have been approved. The Society says that the State Government has sacrificed sea life in favour of the needs of industry. They are particularly concerned about the advancement of industries on the west coast which is the site of some of the most pristine marine ecosystems in the world.

NEW FERRY TERMINAL PROPOSED FOR PENNESHAW

Following the opening of a new ferry terminal at Cape Jervis last December, SeaLink is now planning a new ferry terminal at Penneshaw on Kangaroo Island. It may take some 2-5 years to complete the project though.

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT BILL

Now that the period for public comment on the draft Fisheries Management Bill has closed, Rory McEwen, the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, is currently analysing all of the submissions received. He will consider whether there should be any further changes to the draft Bill, which is scheduled to be tabled in the spring session of Parliament this year.

2007 CALENDARS OF SA MARINE LIFE

The Marine Life Society's 2007 calendars are now available. The SA marine life calendars are still priced at \$10 each. They will be available at monthly meetings of the SDF. Enquiries may be made through our Secretary at info@sdfsa.net .

CLUB NEWS

Whilst on the topic of the Marine Life Society, both Dr Scoresby Shepherd and his photography sidekick, David Muirhead, are presenting a talk titled "Underwater imagery from the Investigator Group Scientific Expedition" at 7.30pm on Wednesday 19th July at the Conservation Centre, 120 Wakefield St, Adelaide.

COCKLES CONTAMINATED

The Section Bank area off Outer Harbor is now closed to the harvesting of all bivalve molluscs until 31st December 2006. This follows the recent detection of faecal bacteria beyond the safe threshold for human consumption in Mud cockles there.

WHYALLA CUTTLEFISH SEASON

The Whyalla cuttlefish season finishes next month. Phone the Whyalla VIC on 8645 7900 or 1800 088 589 or visit: - <http://www.whyllacuttlefish.com/cuttlefish/index.htm> , <http://www.whyllacuttlefish.com/cuttlefish/Cuttlefish%20A4%20brochure.pdf> or www.cuttlefishcapital.com.au to find out more.

CRAYFISH SEASON CLOSURE

The taking of Southern Rock Lobster in the southern zone is prohibited until 6am on 1st October. The taking of Southern Rock Lobster in the northern zone is prohibited until 6am on 1st November.

EXTENSION TO SOUTHERN ZONE ROCK LOBSTER SEASON

When the southern zone season reopens on 1st October, it will be extended to the end of next May. The one month extension has been added to the season to allow cray fishers to fish later when prices were often significantly higher. Catch limits will not be increased.

SDFSA BULLETIN

Attached along with this *SDF News Sheet* is a copy of the latest issue of our *SDFSA bulletin*. This is an electronic bulletin separate to our normal monthly *SDF News Sheet*. Future issues of the *SDFSA bulletin* will include lengthy articles about matters of interest to recreational divers. We welcome contributions from our readers.

CONTROLS TO LIMIT VICTORIAN ABALONE VIRUS

We reported in our June news sheet that an abalone virus had caused an abalone fishing closure in the western zone for Victoria. Strict quarantine measures have now been introduced to Victoria's south-west waters to stop the spread of the virus which causes ganglioneuritis. Further details are included in the July issue of our *SDFS* bulletin.

SEAWEED & ALGAE THREAT TO CORAL REEFS

John Pandolfi, Associate Professor of the Australian Research Council's Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies has warned that seaweed and algae could kill off all of the beautiful corals of the Great Barrier Reef within decades. He says that over-fishing, pollution and coastal development in the Caribbean wiped out herbivore populations, leading to a surge in seaweed and algae in the area. He says that the coral reefs in the Caribbean were damaged by the growth of seaweed and algae. He says that the damaged reefs are a "warning bell" for the Great Barrier Reef's corals.

FISH STUDY

The Australian Research Council's Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies is based at James Cook University, Queensland. A study by the Centre has been looking at damselfish on the GBR. The study found that the stress of being around too many other females causes pregnant fish to have smaller babies. The study proves that stress is an important factor in the health of fish populations.

QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES DIVING WEBSITE

Whilst discussing the GBR, the Queensland Government has launched a diving website that profiles 70 sites along the Queensland coast, including the Gold Coast. Sorry but we don't yet know the address for the site.

SHARK DISCOVERY

Scientists had, up to now, believed that hammerhead sharks gave birth to 20-40 pups at a time. That was until a pregnant hammerhead shark was caught (off Miami, US?) in May. The 576kg shark, a world record catch, was carrying 55 pups inside her. That's about double the average number of pups.

JELLYFISH THREAT

Irukandji jellyfish have caused hundreds of painful stings to swimmers near Broome, WA over the past five years. Two new species of irukandji jellyfish are being blamed for inflicting more stings than any other venomous Australian jellyfish. Irukandji grow to only 15mm in length but they can have tentacles 80cms long. *Carukia shinju* and *Malo maxima* are said to have inflicted 159 stings over the past five years. Victims of stings have required twice the average dose of morphine for relief of the pain. Three stinging incidents were nearly fatal.

TURTLE HALTS GAS PROJECT

Whilst on the topic of WA, the endangered Flatback Turtle is blocking the development of the \$11b Gorgon gas project on Barrow Island. The EPA rejected environmental approval for the project because of the risk to the rare and threatened turtle.

WORLD'S LARGEST PROTECTED MARINE AREA

On 15th June 2006, President George Bush announced the creation of the world's largest protected marine area - a 1,200mile-long chain of small Hawaiian islands (and surrounding

waters and reefs that are home to a spectacular array of sea life) as a national monument. Further details are included in the July issue of our *SDFSA bulletin*.

DEH COAST AND MARINE SEMINAR PROGRAM – 2006

This month's seminar is being held on Wednesday 26th July from 12.30-1.30pm, in the Coorong Boardroom at 1 Richmond Road, Keswick. Sue Gibbs from Macquarie University and Alison Wright (SA Museum/ Senior GIS Officer, Coast and Marine Conservation Branch) are speaking about an aerial dolphin survey in Spencer Gulf. For further information please contact Alison Wright, Department for Environment and Heritage on (08) 8124 4901 or via email at wright.alison@saugov.sa.gov.au. All interested persons are most welcome. A list of the remaining 2006 Department of Environment Coast and Marine Seminars is included in our July *SDFSA Bulletin*.

ANOTHER COAST AND MARINE SEMINAR PRESENTATION

A seminar on the National Cooperative Approach to Integrated Coastal Zone Management – Framework and Implementation Plan will be presented by Patricia von Baumgarten on Friday 15th September from 12.30-1.30pm in the Coorong Boardroom at 1 Richmond Road, Keswick. For further information please contact Alison Wright, Department for Environment and Heritage on (08) 8124 4901 or via email at wright.alison@saugov.sa.gov.au.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

ENVIRONMENT & HERITAGE INFORMATION EVENING

An information evening is being held at the Willunga Football Club at 7.15pm on Friday 21st July. Kym Richardson MP & Hon. Greg Hunt MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Environment and Heritage, are providing a briefing on the Federal Government's ongoing commitment to environment and heritage. The evening is free and Federal grants will be discussed. Both MPs will also be at the Willunga Markets and the Willunga Environment Centre for its official opening the next morning.

UNDERWATER PHOTO CHALLENGE

Malaysia's Layang Layang Island Resort is holding an underwater photo challenge from 25th to 31st July 2006. Details can be found on page 67 of the June issue of Dive Log. Visit www.layanglayang.com for more details.

SDFV

The Scuba Divers Federation of Victoria is holding its AGM in August.

AUSTRALASIAN AQUACULTURE CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW 2006

The Australasian Aquaculture Conference And Trade Show 2006 is being held Sunday 27th to 30th August 2006 at the Adelaide Convention Centre, SA. Contact the Australasian Aquaculture Conference Coordinator, Claudia Metti for more details on 8226 2269 or at metti.claudia@saugov.sa.gov.au, or visit <http://www.australian-aquacultureportal.com/austaqua/aa06.html>.

SARFAC

The South Australian Recreational Fishing Advisory Committee's AGM is being held on Tuesday 19th September.

PADI ASIA PACIFIC DIGITAL PHOTO SHOOT-OUT

A digital photo shoot-out is being held in Sydney in early November. Details were given on page 5 of the March Dive Log. More details will be published in the May issue of Dive Log.

2006 AN OCEAN ODYSSEY

This is a special dive promotion evening. It is being held at the Clancy Auditorium at the University of NSW on Friday 17th November. Presentations will be given by Bob Halstead,

Jean-Michel Cousteau, Dr Phil Nuytten, Ron & Valerie Taylor and Reg Lipson. Read pages 60-1 of the June Dive Log for further information.

2007 CORALWATCH WORKSHOP

The 4th Annual CoralWatch Focus on Corals workshop is being held at the Heron Island Research Station on the Great Barrier Reef from Friday 5th to Tuesday 9th January 2007. For more details visit www.coralwatch.org .

OZTeK'07

The OZTeK'07 Australasian Diving Conference & Exhibition is being held 17-18th March 2007 at the Australian Technology Park in Sydney. The OZTeK'07 web site at www.diveoztek.com.au provides news and updates on exhibitors, speakers, prizes, seminars, new products, photo competition, the famous gala dinner and all the events and action that will make OZTeK'07 the highlight of the 2007 Dive Calendar.

ADEX 2007

The next Asia Dive Expo is being held in Bangkok from 27th to 29th April 2007. Visit www.asiadiveexpo.com for more details.

The Scuba Divers Federation of SA is a member of the following: -

Recreation SA

Recreation SA's Adventure Activity Standards Working Committee for Snorkelling, Scuba and Aquatic Wildlife Tours

SARFAC (SA Recreational Fishing Advisory Council)

Fleurieu Reef Management Committee (Ex-HMAS *Hobart*)

TRAIL COMMITTEES - SA Trails Coordinating Committee (Office of Recreation & Sport) and Port Noarlunga Reef Underwater Trail South Australian Trails

The SDF's sponsors are: -

Baird Bay Charters & Ocean Eco Tours AND SA Tall Ships Inc.

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Contact the Federation's Secretary on info@sdfsa.net to be included on the mailing list for this electronic news sheet.

The SDF supports both Reef Watch & Dragonsearch

Disclaimer – The opinions expressed by authors of material in this news sheet are not necessarily those of the Federation.