

SDFSFA Newsletter – JULY 2020



SCUBA DIVERS FEDERATION OF SA, Inc.

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Photo: Courtesy of Glen Gitsham, 2020

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OUR LEAD STORY: CUTTLEFISH ALLIANCE LAUNCHED

In June, the Scuba Divers Federation of South Australia launched the Cuttlefish Alliance in an effort to bring together organisations and individuals concerned about the lifting of the temporary fishing restrictions on the Giant Cuttlefish.

We are pleased to announce that we now have an independent Advisory Committee that will prepare a position statement with recommendations to take to the Department of Primary Industries and Regions South Australia (PIRSA), based on science and the value of the Giant Cuttlefish migration to the tourism economy of Whyalla and South Australia.

The SDFSA notes that we need to recognise the reality of multiple stakeholders and users of the marine environment. But as our President, Andrew Hunter, noted in his letter to the editor of the Adelaide Sunday Mail, the substantial (and growing) economic benefit to the Whyalla region from this world-renowned event must also be considered. Numbers matter: hundreds of thousands of migrating cuttlefish attract tens of thousands of dollars from tourism. Reduce the impact of the spectacle and you reduce the level of tourism.

The Cuttlefish Alliance Advisory Committee will help us find a pathway to a good solution, which we will take to the Cuttlefish reference group that advises PIRSA, and to the Minister himself.

The Committee consists of:

- Carl Charter (or alternate), Experiencing Marine Sanctuaries
- Dr. Zoe Doubleday, cephalopod expert, University of South Australia
- Tony Bramley, Whyalla Diving Services
- Andrew Hunter, President, SDFSA.

Whyalla Council is supporting the Committee with the provision of tourism and other economic data that may be useful. Additional scientific experts will also be consulted as we proceed.

A Facebook page has been set up to gather and share information, petitions, and campaigns to encourage PIRSA to reconsider restrictions on fishing for Giant Cuttlefish, especially during the period of the aggregation and reproduction. So far we have reached over 16,000 people through Facebook. Concerns generally about the cuttlefish have led to stories on radio, TV and newspapers, including an interview with Andrew Hunter on CoastFM.

Two petitions are currently underway: an electronic petition that will be sent to the Minister responsible for PIRSA, MP Tim Whetstone, and a formal petition (with original signatures) to be tabled in the SA Parliament by MP Eddie Hughes. We ask everyone to consider supporting both petitions. The electronic petition (with over 5600 signatures at the time of writing) is at <https://www.change.org/p/minister-tim-whetstone-protect-whyalla-s-giant-cuttlefish-aggregation>.

A copy of the formal petition can be found in most dive shops in South Australia, and efforts will be made to expand access to the formal petition interstate.

We will make every effort track all initiatives on this matter. To stay informed, follow The Cuttlefish Alliance on Facebook, at <https://www.facebook.com/pg/cuttlefishalliance/>.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Proposed changes to Marine Parks

Changes are being proposed to the SA network of Marine Parks:

<https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/marineparks/About/sa-marine-parks-review>.

Stakeholders and the community are invited to provide feedback on proposed changes. To have your say, visit [YourSAy](https://yoursay.sa.gov.au/marine-parks-sa) (<https://yoursay.sa.gov.au/marine-parks-sa>) where you can complete an online survey.

You can also submit a written submission by email or post to:

SA Marine Parks Review

Department for Environment and Water

GPO Box 1047

Adelaide SA 5001

Feedback is welcome until 5pm Friday 10 July.

SDFSA COMMITTEE BUSINESS

22nd July: Mark this date in your calendar! It's time for the SDFSA Annual General Meeting. The meeting will be held at **7 pm**, University of Adelaide, The Braggs Building, Level 2 Seminar Room. In addition to the reports from the President, Treasurer and committee members, the election for the 2020-21 governing committee will held, so get your nomination forms in! A draft 5 year Strategic Plan will be tabled for review and adoption.

For more information (including map of the venue), committee nomination form and a copy of the draft strategic plan, go to: <https://sdfsa.net/notice-of-annual-general-meeting/>.

SDFSA MARQUEE PHOTOGRAPH COMPETITION UPDATE

Entries are now closed. To all of you who have submitted photos to our photo contest, many, many thanks! We now have dozens of fabulous images to consider. It will take us a couple of weeks to review and discuss with our marquee printer, but we will let everyone know the outcome as soon as we can. And again -- thanks so much for your participation.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Dr. Scoresby Shepherd AO on his retirement, for the final time, at the age of 85. COVID-19 kept him away from the SARDI/PIRSA offices for a while, but then hospitalization following a heart attack may have influenced Dr. Shepherd's decision to step down. We wish him good health for the coming years.

The Marine Life Society of SA on 40 years of continuous SDFSA membership. The Society was accepted as a member of the Federation (then Association) at the June 1980 meeting. As far as we can determine, this makes the MLSSA our current longest member club.

Gareth Morris for being awarded the downunderpix Underwater Photographer of the Month for June.

2020 - 2021 EVENTS

South Australia

SCIENCE ALIVE! November 2020. This year's Science Alive! Exhibition at the Adelaide Showgrounds may take place this November, dates TBC.

WORLD FISHERIES CONGRESS- Adelaide -- 20-24 September 2021 – <https://wfc2020.com.au/>.

Interstate/International

NATIONAL SCIENCE WEEK 2020: 15th–23rd August 2020

National Science Week 2020 will be conducted as an online science festival. National Science Week is an annual festival of science that takes place in August each year. The school theme for this year's National Science Week is "Deep Blue: innovation for the future of our oceans". Visit www.scienceweek.net.au for more details.

MIDE 2020 - Malaysia International Dive Expo –4-6 December 2020 - www.mide.com.my .

6th International Eco Summit Conference - Gold Coast, Queensland – 14-18 June 2021.

Australian Marine Sciences Association 2021 will be held in Sydney with the theme - 'Marine Science in the Anthropocene'. Dates TBC. <https://amsa2020.amsa.asn.au/>.

New Zealand Marine Sciences Society will be held separately, dates and venue TBD.

ICRS 2021 – International Coral Reef Symposium 18th to 23rd July 2021

The 14th ICRS is being held in Bremen, Northern Germany the primary international conference on coral reef science, conservation and management, bringing together leading scientists, early career researchers, conservationists, ocean experts, policy makers, managers and the public. Visit <https://icrs2021.de/> for more details.

OZTEK CONFERENCE & OZDIVE EXPO 21 11-12th September 2021

Next year's OZTek, the Advanced Diving Conference & Exhibition, will now be combined with the OZDive Expo, Melbourne Conference & Exhibition Centre,. Visit <https://OZTek.com.au> and <https://OZDive.net.au> for more details.

AIDE 2020 - Australia International Dive Expo - CANCELLED - www.australiadiveexpo.com .

STEVE'S SCIENCE STORY for the month

By Steve Reynolds

The number of Nectria seastar species has now been reduced by one.

There were previously six species of the seastar but one of them has now been eliminated. According to the web page found at <https://reeflifesurvey.com/breaking-nectria-cases-decrease/>, confusion over the identification of two similar sea stars has now been resolved courtesy of Reef Life Survey (RLS) volunteer Andrew Green.

Scientists are now listing five species of Nectria seastars as follows: -

Nectria ocellata, *N. macrobrachia*, *N. saoria*, *N. wilsoni* and *N. pedicelligera*. The multi-spined sea star, *Nectria multispina* has been eliminated from the list.

Scientists previously had difficulty distinguishing *N. multispina* from *N. pedicelligera*. When Graham Edgar was revising the section on Nectria for his updating of "Australian Marine Life" to a 3rd edition, his contact advised:

"*Nectria pedicelligera* is collected more frequently than *N. multispina*.... The two species don't show any clear difference based on the data I have access to (e.g. no clear demarcation by depth etc.), but there's still a lot we don't know about these species. The distinguishing characters might easily be some kind of phenotypic variability related to predators, wave activity or something else."

Green notes that "Edgar went with *N. pedicelligera*... and so has RLS. Meaning that if you submit survey records of *N. multispina*, the RLS system will 'port' the data to *N. pedicelligera*. But he also cautions that "Some well-respected authorities (including the World Registry of Marine Species -- WoRMS) currently recognise both species. (But) New evidence could still arise confirming that *N. multispina* does in fact exist alongside *N. pedicelligera*!"

Photos of *Nectria pedicelligera* can be found at https://www.inaturalist.org/taxa/418059-Nectria-pedicelligera/browse_photos?place_id=6744.

For common names of Nectria sea star species, iNaturalist shows at list at <https://www.inaturalist.org/taxa/207985-Nectria> as follows: -

Nectria macrobrachia - Large-plated Sea Star

Nectria ocellata - Spotted Sea Star

Nectria saoria - Saori's Sea Star

Nectria pedicelligera – (no common name)

Nectria multispina – (no common name) – Possibly should actually be *Nectria pedicelligera*

Nectria wilsoni – (no common name)

The late Neville Coleman applied the following common



Update on Reef Life Survey's work:

RLS has postponed their Lap of Australia (and the majority of their field-based activities) until 2021. Before COVID-19 interrupted their Lap of Australia field plans, RLS managed to complete 705 surveys across 231 Australian sites. Further details can be found at <https://reeflifesurvey.com/lap-of-aus-tracking/>.

names for Nectria species: -
N. ocellata - Ocellate sea star
N. wilsoni - Wilson's sea star
N. macrobranchia - Large-armed sea star
N. saoria - Saori sea star

There is still no known name for *Nectria pedicelligera*, so we need to either stick to the scientific names or come up with a common name like Neville Coleman would. Does anyone know pedicelligera means?

ABOUT THE SDFSA...

SDFSA is a non-profit, incorporated membership association dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of our unique underwater world.

JOIN US FOR FREE:

<https://sdfsa.net/membership-categories/>

The more members we have, the stronger our influence. We serve as a peak body representing the interests of South Australian recreational scuba divers and the related sports of freediving and snorkelling, including the provision of information to government and the general public.

Together we can have real impact on the issues affecting the South Australian diving community.

If you wish to be added to the mailing list for this Newsletter, join the SDFSA!

You can also read about the Federation's work in monthly issues of DiveLog Australasia, Scubadiver ANZ and on our website at <https://sdfsa.net>. Stay up to date with the latest news through our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/scubadivesa/>.

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