

# SDFSA Newsletter – December 2020



## SCUBA DIVERS FEDERATION OF SA, Inc.

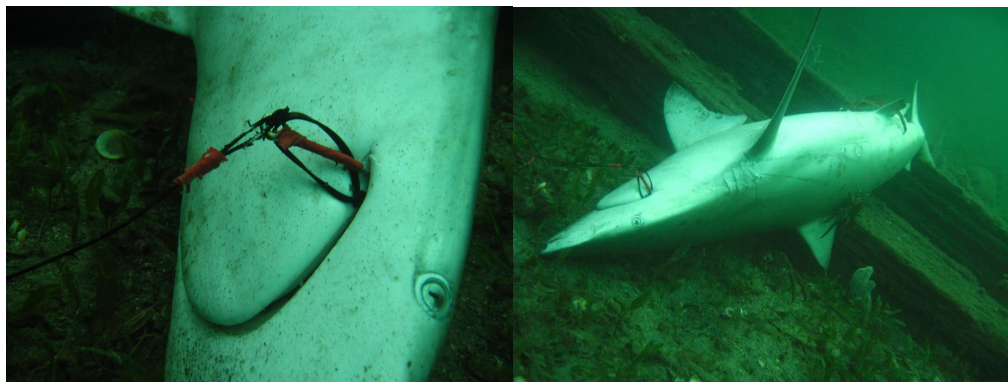
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Shark fishing at Edithburgh jetty. Photos courtesy of Michael James



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## OUR LEAD STORY: Using berley for shark fishing at Edithburgh jetty

Fishers have been seen berleying the waters at the Edithburgh jetty at night in order to catch sharks off the jetty. A diver reported to us that as he was gearing up, he observed the fishers throwing the berley in, even though they could see him about to enter the water. At the end of his dive he saw a 1.5m bronze whaler thrashing around with a line in his mouth. The next day another diver found the dead shark at the bottom of the jetty with the hook in his mouth. Many thanks to Mark Pedder for reporting the incident and to Michael James for the use of the photographs.

It is our understanding that berleying with fish remains to attract sharks is legal in certain SA marine water locations. Section 24 of Fisheries Management (General) Regulations 2017 under the Fisheries Management Act 2007 reads as follows:

### Berleying

(1) A person must not use any part of the body of an animal (other than a fish, worm or insect) as berley within 2 nautical miles of—

(a) the mainland of the State; or

(b) any island or reef that forms part of the State and is exposed at the low water mark, except in a rock lobster pot or other fish trap. Maximum penalty: \$2 500.

Expiation fee: \$210.

However, Edithburgh jetty has a unique situation in that there is a sea pool located not far from the jetty. Berley left off this jetty will still be attracting sharks long after the fishers have gone, potentially endangering the lives of young people swimming inside the pool and/or in the shallows, as well as other water users such as paddle boarders, kayakers, snorkellers and divers entering and exiting the waters around the jetty. The risk of harm to children and adults from sharks attracted by berley (and by the remains of the shark itself) is significant.

Furthermore, the Edithburgh jetty is one of the premier dive sites in the State, attracting hundreds of divers a year, including interstate and international visitors. The economic contribution to Edithburgh and the Yorke Peninsula Council (accommodation, meals, consumables, etc) – will be adversely affected in the event of a serious shark incident at the jetty.

The SDFSAs has contacted PIRSA about this incident. PIRSA staff have advised that we write to the Minister directly, which we are in the process of doing. We have also been in touch with Yorke Peninsula Council, who share concerns about safety at the Edithburgh jetty. Finally, we are contacting representatives of RECFISHSA to explore their openness to restrictions on shark fishing at Edithburgh.

Our position at this time is to focus on the situation at Edithburgh, given the multiple users of the jetty, both day and night, and the risk of adverse impacts on the local economy in the event of a shark attack there. SDFSAs is requesting that PIRSA consider imposing a restriction on the use of berley at the Edithburgh jetty, possibly even a ban on shark fishing at that jetty, together with clear and highly visible signage informing fishers of the restrictions.

## IMPORTANT NOTICES

### **SA SCUBA WEEK 2020-2021**

The SDFSA is talking with Adelaide dive shops and clubs about holding a modified SA Scuba Week this season, tentatively Sunday, 14 March, to be followed by Dive for Cancer at the end of that week. Dates and events to be confirmed in January.

### **SEASHELLS PRESENTATION and TOUR OF THE MARINE DISCOVERY CENTRE, 17 December.**

Peter Hunt will give a presentation on molluscs and their shells, what they mean to South Australians, and their role in our coastal ecology at the Marine Discovery Centre on Thursday 17th December at 2 pm, tickets \$10 each (via Eventbrite). Come along whether you're interested in the molluscs that build shell reefs, you're a beachcomber or citizen scientist, student or teacher. The presentation will have an emphasis on the Port Adelaide and local Adelaide coastal regions, why the molluscs are so important and unique, and how they are helping our environment and industries. Information is included about the local shell reef projects and why they have been established. Peter will describe many of the shells that regularly wash up on our beaches, their biodiversity and lifestyles. The 45-minute presentation will be followed by a tour of the Marine Discovery Centre.

This includes:

- \* Aquariums featuring local South Australian marine creatures such as the Port Jackson Shark, Goby's, Big-Bellied Seahorses, Southern Fiddler Ray, Porcupine Fish, Murray River Turtle and more.
- \* Virtual Reality Headsets giving you the opportunity to explore under the sea without getting wet. Underwater virtual reality experiences include Australian Sea Lions, Leafy Seadragons, swimming under the Henley Beach Jetty, swimming with Turtles and also a close-up encounter with a Great White Shark.
- \* Kurna education Room (The Wodli) is an interactive room that highlights the relationship the Kurna people have with the Adelaide Plains and the coast.
- \* Interactive models featuring oceanography, climate change, marine debris, marine habitats, touchscreens, sustainable fishing, stormwater, and beachcombing.

### **NEW SHELLFISH REEF TO BE BUILT AT PORT NOARLUNGA**

A new shellfish reef will be built at Port Noarlunga using native Angasi oysters. The Federal Government's \$20m reef builder program is behind the project and construction is due to begin in September.

### **BASE TRAIL TO BE BUILT AT WITTON BLUFF**

The City of Onkaparinga Council has voted to begin work on building a base trail at Witton Bluff to connect Port Noarlunga beach with Christies beach. State funds have been secured for the project.

## SDFSA COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Committee wishes the best of the holiday season to all our members and the SA diving community at large. The next meeting of the SDFSA Committee will be 27 January 2021 at the Arab Steed Hotel, 7pm to 9pm.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO...

- Lukasz Halbryt for winning 1st prize in the Mad for Marine Life photo competition run by The Scuba Doctor, with his wonderful pic of a leafy seadragon at night.
- Rodney Fox on his 80th birthday recently.

- Eben Viljoen on being named downunderpix's Underwater Photographer of the Month for November.
- Wendy Van Duivenvoorde, Associate Professor in Maritime Archaeology at Flinders Uni for winning the 2020 CHASS (Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences) Research Supervision Excellence Award.
- Mike Hammer for winning a Museums and Galleries National Award for his work on the Rainbowfish Species Discovery Project. Mike is Curator of Fishes at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, and the convener of the Australian Society for Fish Biology's Threatened Fishes Committee.

## 2020 - 2021 EVENTS

### *South Australia*

**17 December 2020, 2pm:** Marine Discovery Centre presentation on seashells by Peter Hunt, together with a tour of the Centre facilities and a virtual reality experience.

**March 2021:** SA Scuba Week with Dive for Cancer. More details to come in January.

**17 May 2021, 6-10 pm:** The 2021 Underwater Tour, hosted by Underwater Australasia and Underwater Tour, is being held at the Star Theatre, Sir Donald Bradman Drive, Hilton. Presenters include Aaron Wong, Richard Smith and Janet Lanyon.

**20-24 September 2021:** World Fisheries Congress, to be held in Adelaide – <https://wfc2020.com.au/>.

### *Interstate/International*

MIDE 2020 - Malaysia International Dive Expo –4-6 December 2020 - [www.mide.com.my](http://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 18<sup>th</sup> 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

OZTek, the Advanced Diving Conference & Exhibition has combined with the OZDive Expo, Melbourne Conference & Exhibition Centre,. Visit <https://OZTek.com.au> and <https://OZDive.net.au> for more details.

## HISTORY STORY for the month

Steve Reynolds has completed and released his research paper titled "A Study of Port Adelaide's Anchors" at <http://mlssa.org.au/2020/11/23/a-study-of-port-adelaides-anchors/>. Steve thanks everyone for their assistance with his research.

## STEVE'S SCIENCE STORIES for the month

By Steve Reynolds

### Recent Expedition to Western KI Marine Parks

On 24<sup>th</sup> November, the Hon. Sussan Ley MP, Federal Minister for the Environment and the Hon. David Speirs MP, SA Minister for Environment and Water both released a joint media release on the "frontier of research with marine life discoveries".

According to the media release, "An exciting expedition off the remote western coast of Kangaroo Island in South Australia has captured unique video footage of marine life at depths of more than one hundred metres below sea level." Some footage from the video can be seen at <https://spaces.hightail.com/space/ysTBvGuFjl> (but it must be downloaded to view it).

According to a tweet on Twitter, "Smashed out day 1 of our expedition to Western KI Marine Parks. Today we reached depths of 120m, the deepest BRUVS\* deployed in South Australia yet!" (Note that BRUVS are Baited Remote Underwater Video Stations, not 'Baited Underwater Remote Video Systems' (or BURVS) as suggested in the report.)

Also, according to another tweet, "Dive into the deep blue way out west of Kangaroo Island for a tour of the "world between worlds", where scientists are studying unique life in SA's marine park sanctuary zones." This tweet led to an Advertiser report at [Western KI Sanctuary Zone marine life captured on camera using BURVS | The Advertiser \(adelaidenow.com.au\)](http://www.adelaidenow.com.au), but that can only be seen by subscribers. The same report was in The Advertiser for 24<sup>th</sup> November.

The online newspaper report includes 36 seconds of underwater video footage showing fish feeding around the BRUVS. It shows lots of Chinaman leather jackets, a gurnard perch and a knife jaw (all deep-water species). Chinaman leatherjackets, *Nelusetta ayraudi*, are sometimes called ocean leatherjackets (or just ocean jackets).

According to the newspaper report, "A voyage of discovery..... has captured unique vision of deep-sea marine life in the Western Kangaroo Island Sanctuary Zone. The six-day voyage earlier this month was part of state and Commonwealth marine parks monitoring including fisheries compliance."

It goes on to say that the scientists are yet to complete their analysis. Jamie Hicks, a marine ecologist for the Department for Environment and Water, said the research focus was the transitional marine environment at depths of 40m to 150m ..... "in between the shallow well-lit part of the ocean and the deeper, darker parts of the ocean, called the middle light zone".

According to Danny Brock, the marine science team leader, the expedition targeted an area where an Australian Marine Park national park zone abuts a state marine sanctuary zone in SA. "The aim of

the expedition was to gather baseline biodiversity information on fish assemblages and habitats using baited underwater remote video systems (sic) and we were very successful in our endeavours, although there is still more than 50 hours of footage to undergo analysis,” Mr Brock said.

The SA Environment and Water Minister, David Speirs said the trip was the first in SA to use the hi-tech recording equipment such depths. “These two marine parks off western Kangaroo Island were of particular interest as they are important areas of deep water upwelling and support a range of marine life,” he said.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regions compliance vessel FPV *Southern Ranger* was used for the expedition. Several fish species were recorded, including swallowtails and spurdog sharks, plus sponges and soft corals.

According to the media release, Danny Brock said “DEW is the state leader in the use of BRUVS, with more than 1000 deployments across South Australia in the past decade as part of the existing South Australian Marine Park Monitoring Program across 19 state-managed marine parks.” “Western Kangaroo Island Marine Park is one of 58 Australian Marine Parks managed by Parks Australia that help protect Australia’s offshore marine habitats and species and support the long-term sustainability of our marine industries.”

Jason Mundy, Assistant Secretary for the Marine Parks Branch at Parks Australia, said “Voyages into Australian Marine Parks remained a key part of Parks Australia’s marine science program, helping to better understand and protect Australia’s offshore marine environment. By working in partnership to undertake research in these exposed marine environments and by harnessing the skills and resources of each agency, we are achieving greater outcomes.”

### **Proposed Antarctic Marine Parks**

The Antarctic explorer and environmental scientist Tim Jarvis says that 2020 marks the 200th anniversary since the first sighting of Antarctica. He says that he has been working with the Federal Environment Minister, Sussan Ley to help create a big new marine park in the East Antarctic. Tim said that the Antarctic Treaty nations around the world met to discuss the proposal for this marine park and two others. The three marine park proposals were the East Antarctic, the Weddell Sea and the Antarctic Peninsula marine parks.

COVID-19 restrictions meant that the meeting had to be shorter and also take place by video-conference. Tim says that, because of that, it was not possible to consider the marine park proposals properly. He says that the marine parks did not get over the line this year, although there were some promising steps forward.

Tim says that the proposed network of marine parks across the Southern Ocean are “home to some of our most special marine life and one of the fastest warming regions on Earth”. He says, “In a show of solidarity, many of the nations signed a pledge declaring the urgent need to create the network of marine parks across the Southern Ocean. Excitingly, Norway and Uruguay joined forces with Australia, France and the EU as new co-sponsors of the East Antarctic marine park. And Australia continued to demonstrate our strong leadership on Antarctic protection by becoming a co-sponsor for the Antarctic's Weddell Sea marine park.

“Support continues to build and its now just a matter of time until these urgently-needed Antarctic marine parks become a reality. Australia's leadership will be essential to drive the diplomatic push needed over the next year to secure the full backing of the 26 Antarctic nations.”

## ABOUT THE SDFSFA...

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

### **JOIN US FOR FREE:**

**<https://sdfsfa.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 SDFSFA!

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

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### *Disclaimer*

*The opinions expressed by authors of material in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Federation*