

SDFSA Newsletter – February 2026

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SCUBA DIVERS FEDERATION OF SA, Inc.

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SDFSA Patron:
Dr. Richard Harris



First Sea Wolves Dive Day for 2026

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ALGAL BLOOM NEWS

Successful Algal Bloom Grant application! We are delighted to announce that the SDFSA has received a small grant from the Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing under their Algal Bloom Support Program, which was established to assist clubs and associations “with essential costs and provide response and recovery support for club programs /events/activities impacted by algal bloom.” We will use this funding to provide more information on our website and through print and social media to guide divers on where to dive, what to expect, and what options might be available to assist with monitoring impacts and recovery.

Largs Bay Shellfish Reef Restoration: OzFish has announced an ambitious shellfish recycling and reef building project to restore lost native oysters along Adelaide’s coastline. The restoration of these reefs will contribute to the management of future algal blooms. According to their website, the Adelaide OzFish Chapter are “working to establish the ‘Adelaide Oysterworld’, a shell recycling site which is set to divert shellfish shells from landfill into new shellfish reefs.” You can get directly involved in this work by helping to clean and prepare shells, build Robust Oyster Baskets (ROBs), and participate in reef building events. Go to the website for more information:

<https://ozfish.org.au/projects/largs-bay-shellfish-reef-restoration-sa/>

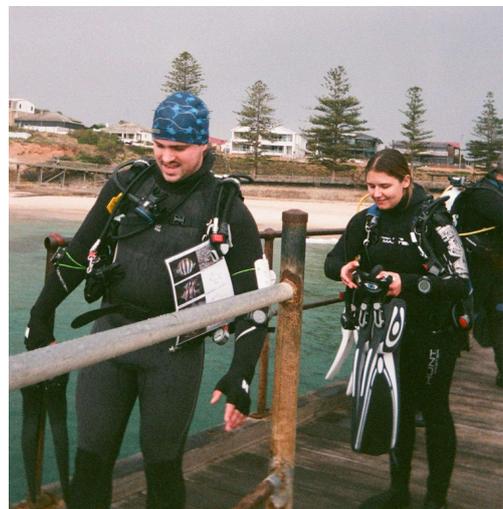
Algal bloom impacts have reached Point Turton.



Sad news – reports of marine mortalities along the Point Turton shoreline are now being shared through Facebook. Photo taken by Nanou Cabourdin and posted on Facebook 7 February 2026.

We encourage everyone visiting or living in the area to document impacted marine life with photos and upload to the iNaturalist SA Marine Mortality Events 2025-2026 observations at <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/sa-marine-mortality-events-2025-2026>.

Reef Rangers have started a monitoring program at Port Noarlunga. Reef Rangers is a new organisation founded in October 2025 as a monitoring project, with the initial focus on Port Noarlunga. In correspondence with SDFSA, they report that “Reef Rangers creates opportunities for people to connect with the marine world, learn directly from experts, and play an active role in supporting local conservation efforts. Whether you are ocean-curious or already a marine enthusiast, Reef Rangers is a welcoming space to learn, connect, and make a real difference for our marine environment... While we plan to expand to other dive locations in the future, we see value in focusing on one area for now to gather substantial data. Our main source of data comes from the visual documentation of pylons on the Port Noarlunga Jetty. “



“We have selected a number of pylons from the start of the first set of stairs, clearly marked with rope and tagged with Reef Rangers. On our monitoring dives, participants take photos and monitor the growth on each pylon, documenting any visible changes. This isn’t the only way people can help. We also provide slates for participants to record fish counts, focusing on all species currently at the jetty rather than just targeted ones. All the information collected during these dives is uploaded directly to our website in the submit data section. Regarding our calendar, we plan to run a Reef Ranger dive every month. We will update the calendar a few months in advance so everyone has plenty of time to book.” The next two dives are 15 February, 10am to 1pm and 15 March, 10am to 1pm. You can register for these dives at <https://www.thereefrangers.org/calendar>.

Underwater drones used to study Algal Blooms: Steve Reynolds reports on his blog about new research into the study of Algal blooms: “According to [Researchers Used Underwater Drones To Study Algal Blooms](#), researchers using underwater drones have identified the process behind the formation of algal blooms. They say that these “new findings could offer hope to teams seeking ways to address toxic algal blooms”. Steve’s blog and links to the research can be found at [Underwater Drones Used to Identify the Process Behind the Formation of Algal Blooms](#).

Other observations on the HAB can be found on Marine Life Society of SA’s blog, <https://mlssa.org.au/2026/01/22/algal-bloom-observations/>.

SPLASH INN, Friday 20 February, Rob Roy, 6:30 - 9:00 PM

Tickets to our next Splash Inn Friday 20 February are now available on Eventbrite. It’s free! Come to hear Yvie Eglinton talk about “Rolling forward from tragedy into hope and purpose”. Yvie is a Marine Biologist and worked as a State Government Scientific Diver before her bike accident. She now has a special interest in adaptive diving, and serves as an Ambassador for and Director of Victor Foxtrot Romeo Limited, a registered charity that operates the Scuba Gym SA, providing scuba therapy for disabled, injured and able bodied veterans and members of the public, both adults and children. Book here <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/splash-inn-007-tickets-1982066630648>.

GLOBAL OCEAN TREATY TAKES EFFECT

The Global Ocean Treaty came into force in January 2026. It opens the door for new marine protected areas and sanctuaries across the high seas to respond to the challenges of overfishing and marine pollution. Central to the treaty is a commitment to protect 30% of the world’s oceans by 2030. Greenpeace reports that “This is one of the most important ocean protection agreements in history and it exists because millions of people around the world took action and demanded better protection for our blue planet.”

IMPORTANT NOTICES

RAPID BAY EXCLUSION ZONE. J.P. Davies-Morgante, SDFSA Committee Member has kindly provided us with a summary of the legislation and regulations related to the exclusion zone.

- 1.1 The exclusion zone around the old Rapid Bay Jetty, (prohibiting vessels, divers and swimmers from entering a specified area), has been lawfully imposed under the powers set out in the Act, namely s.11 and s.67.
- 1.2 The Minister, (or delegate), utilised emergency powers created by virtue of the Act, to make a direction prohibiting navigation and access to an area around the collapsed jetty, including for example, the Temporary Notice to Mariners No. 41 of 2025 which prohibits entry within 20 metres either side of the jetty and

closed the area to all persons and vessels, unless authorised by the Minister.

1.3 Any person entering the exclusion zone without the Minister's, (or Delegate's), express authority, commits an offence under the act and faces, upon conviction, a fine of up to \$10,000, including any person who enables, (for example a scuba Instructor or boat operator), aids, (for example a dive buddy or dive leader), or abets, (for example anyone that incites or encourages another or others), will also be guilty of an offence.

1.4 Importantly, any person who commits an offence of obstructing or hindering Police, State Government Officials or a delegate of the Minister may also commit a criminal offence, punishable by a fine, imprisonment or both.

1.5 Further information can be found at https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/_legislation/lz/c/a/harbors%20and%20navigation%20act%201993/current/1993.41.auth.pdf.

SDFSA COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The next meeting of the Committee is Wednesday, 25 February, 7pm at the Arab Steed upstairs meeting room.

CONGRATULATIONS and THANKS TO...

- The Soggy Wombats team for their ongoing photogrammetry work for the modelling of the Engelbrecht Cave system.
- All recipients of the annual international Peter Benchley Ocean Awards
- And a Farewell to Bob Croft, the "Father of American Freediving", who died recently, aged 91. Bob was a U.S. Navy diver, world-record holder, and educator. He played a defining role in the early development of freediving in the United States.

NEWS FROM SHOPS, CLUBS and the FRINGE

Successful Sea Wolves Dive Day #1: Some 34 Sea Wolves members and guests gathered at Myponga

Beach for a glorious day of diving and socialising for the first of the Sea Wolves Dive Days. Fifteen divers buddied up and explored the southern headland, and while only 7 metres at its deepest, it revealed a few interesting critters (one "stick insect looking critter" previously unseen), a significant school of salmon trout and some



nudibranch. Visibility ranged from about 4 metres near shore, to about 12 metres at the reef in the centre of the bay. The BBQ following the dive was also welcome and provided a great opportunity for a catch up, swap stories and have a few laughs. In all, a great day out.

The second dive day will be held on Sunday March 1st at the Southern Reef of Port Noarlunga. The plan is to meet in the Southern Car Park (not the car park adjacent to the SLSC) by 1030 for a 1100 dive. We walk down to the water and swim to the Southern tip of the reef, an area infrequently

dived. Return will be at about 1200, when we will have a sausage sizzle and time for a chat. All certified divers are welcome to join as we can join you with a buddy. If you are interested, please let us know through our Facebook page, email to secretary@seawolves.org.au or phone Peter Fulton on 04300 638 988.

The Ocean Hates You! at the Adelaide Fringe Festival **February 17 – March 1, 7:15pm nightly**, at **The Howling Owl**. Forrest Shaw, a former marine and environmental biologist turned stand-up comedian blends real marine science (pollution, overfishing, climate change, sharks, dolphins, manatees, etc.) with stand-up comedy. It's not a lecture and it's not a documentary — it's for people who care about the ocean, know things are bad, and still want to laugh without pretending everything's fine. Tickets & details here:

<https://adelaidefringe.com.au/fringetix/forrest-shaw-usa-the-ocean-hates-you-af2026>

STEVE'S SCIENCE READING

By Steve Reynolds, SDFSA member 0001 and Inaugural Life Member

The following are Marine Life Society of South Australia blogs by Steve Reynolds and other MLSSA members.

[Moonlighters and Old Wives Seen Cleaning Magpie Perch, Sweep](#), (etc..) (Plus the follow-up [Today's Dive at Second Valley](#))

[The Creeks and the Samphire Discovery Trail at Middle Beach](#)

[Today's Dive at Second Valley](#)

[Eastern Cleaner Clingfish, *Cochleoceps orientalis*, Sightings on Australia's East Coast](#)

[Cleaner Rockpool Shrimps Cleaning a Dusky Morwong](#)

[Toxic Waters Part 1 - Australia's great rivers and the chemicals that threaten the fabric of life.](#)

FOR YOUR CALENDAR: FORTHCOMING EVENTS

South Australia

Open to 28 Feb: **Great Southern Reef Foundation photo competition for South Australia**

<https://greatsouthernreef.com/reef-resilience-photo-art-showcase> .

17 February to 1 March: **The Ocean Hates You!** at the Adelaide Fringe Festival **7:15pm nightly**, at **The Howling Owl**, blending real marine science with stand-up comedy.

<https://adelaidefringe.com.au/fringetix/forrest-shaw-usa-the-ocean-hates-you-af2026>

20 February (Friday): **Splash Inn! organised by the SDFSA**, with Yvie Eglinton on adaptive diving, Rob Roy Hotel, 6:30 - 9:00 PM. Free. Book here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/splash-inn-007-tickets-1982066630648>

1 March 2026 (Sunday), 10:00 am: **Sea Wolves Dive Day** – Meet in the Southern Car Park (not the car park adjacent to the SLSC) by 1030 for a 1100 dive. Contact Peter Fulton on 0430 638 988, or email secretary@seawolves.org.au .

Sunday 1st March 2026: **Clean Up Australia Day**. Visit <https://register.cleanup.org.au/> to register for a clean-up.

14 March 2026 (Saturday), 7:00pm – 10:00pm: **Ocean Film Festival Australia**. The Capri Theatre, 141 Goodwood Rd, Goodwood, Adelaide.

24 March 2026, Port Noarlunga Arts Centre. **Reef Resilience Photo & Art Showcase** opening event.

1st to 31st May: The **2026 History Festival** is being presented by the [History Trust of South Australia](#).

20th June: **MLSSA's 50th anniversary celebration**, 1-5pm at Rodney Fox and Mark Tozer's Museum and Research Centre at 107 Henley Beach Road, Mile End. Past & present members are welcome to attend. There will be food and a licensed bar. Please RSVP to info@mlssa.org.au your intentions to attend.

27 June 2026 7:00-10:00pm: **Ocean Film Festival**. Victa Cinema, 37-41 Ocean St, Victor Harbor.

19 – 22 October 2026: **The Society for Ecological Restoration Australasia's** SERA 2026 Conference: Hilton Hotel, Adelaide

Interstate/International

Open to 3 May 2026: Ocean Photographer of the Year, at the Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney.

<https://sea.us3.list->

[manage.com/track/click?u=068dd7e7a243d9d1c1d267220&id=60eacbcd9e&e=3e0893bfed](https://sea.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=068dd7e7a243d9d1c1d267220&id=60eacbcd9e&e=3e0893bfed)

20 to 27th June 2026: Mike Scotland from Dive Log Australasia is working on the resurrection of the Heron Island Dive Festival from 20 to 27th June 2026. June is Manta Ray season and the beginning of Whale season. Arrangements are well underway for a week of diving and free diving, expert talks daily on all aspects of diving, as well as a social event or two. More than half of the speaker slots have already been filled. Topics include U/W video and Tech diving.

15th–23rd August: National Science Week (Australia's annual celebration of science, technology, engineering, and maths (STEM).)

19th-23rd October: The Australasian Coastal Restoration Network's ACRN 2026 Symposium: Thursday 22 October - Friday 23 October | Venue TBC.

ABOUT THE SDFS...

The Scuba Divers Federation of South Australia is a non-profit, incorporated membership association dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of our unique underwater world. You can join us for free: <https://sdfs.net/membership-categories/>.

SCUBA DIVERS FEDERATION OF SA Inc.

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