

SDFSFA Newsletter – April 2026

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SCUBA DIVERS FEDERATION OF SA, Inc.

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SDFSFA Patron:
Dr. Richard Harris



*Mock up of Emma Hack's Leafy Seadragon Coastal Artwork Installation
being held Sunday 3 May – Port Willunga Beach*

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SDFSa ONLINE at <https://sdfsa.net>

SDFSa received a small grant through the Office of Recreation and Sport Algal Bloom Support program to promote diving and snorkelling in the aftermath of the 2025-26 harmful algal bloom. We have used a portion of the grant to update our website, including a new front end promoting diving in South Australia, a new section on the algal bloom, a revamped diving directory and related resources. Take a look to learn more about what your Federation is doing to support the South Australian diving community. And if you look closely at the top menu bar, you will see a new link to "Merch"! More on this in the May Newsletter, but check it out now for a range of excellent T-shirts with designs by Lukasz Halbryt. Many thanks to SDFSa committee members Rob Blackburn and Lukasz for their work setting up our new Merchandise.

Carl Charter and EMS

We would like to thank Carl Charter for his dedication to Experiencing Marine Sanctuaries as co-founder and CEO for the past 10 years. In recognition of his contribution to public education and South Australia's marine environment, the SDFSa awarded Carl its Sea Star award in 2025. Carl has now decided to step away from the position to focus on family, health and other projects. The Board of EMS is working on next steps for EMS in order to build on Carl's legacy and ensure that the important work of the organisation continues.

PIRSA's Report a Shark System Upgrade

PIRSA has upgraded and strengthened its Report a Shark system. According to https://pir.sa.gov.au/news/quarterly_catch/more-timely-shark-sightings, "Water users are encouraged to check out the updated report a shark sighting page, recently refreshed by the Department of Primary Industries and Regions. The webpage has been upgraded so that shark sighting reports are now published live, providing timely information to support public awareness and safety. Sightings listed on the page are based on reports submitted by members of the public. In the interest of transparency and community safety, all reported sightings are immediately posted. Records are reviewed by PIRSA and may later be updated to remove duplicate reports or amend information found to be inaccurate. This improvement makes it easier for beachgoers, fishers and boaters to stay informed about recent shark activity in their area. If you see a shark, report it promptly to help keep everyone informed."

Leafy Seadragon Coastal Artwork Installation rescheduled 3 May

Emma Hack is leading the newest coastal artwork installation at Port Willunga: <https://www.emmahackgallery.com/products/leafy-seadragon-installation>. According to [Leafy Seadragon Installation](#), 888 adults will gather at Port Willunga beach Sunday 3 May 10am to 2pm to form the shape of South Australia's marine emblem, a leafy sea dragon, in a large-scale community artwork. The large-scale artwork for 'ocean hope' will be captured for broadcast around the world. "What to wear - Participants (aged 18+) will be asked to choose one of the colours from the artist's website but can be as creative with their costume or relaxed as they wish. Think ball gowns, active wear, opp shop with friends, paint your outfit, even paint yourself (no nudity please). All arms and legs should be covered, creating a unified yet diverse human artwork. The installation will be photographed from above and at ground level. Keen to be part of this amazing experience? Register and find out more at [Leafy Seadragon Installation](#). With thanks to the Great Southern Reef Foundation, Music for the Sea and the City of Onkaparinga for their support.

IMPORTANT NOTICES

Whyalla's cuttlefish aggregation will soon return. Read about it in the April issue of Digital Dive Log Australasia <https://user-80925338.cld.bz/Dive-Log-Australasia-417-April-2026>.

SDFSA COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The next meeting of the Committee is Wednesday, 22nd April 7pm at the Arab Steed upstairs meeting room.

CONGRATULATIONS and THANKS TO...

- Yorke Peninsula towns such as Minlaton and Wool Bay celebrating their 150th anniversaries this year.
- Carl Charter for his successful run at the Fringe with his “Cuttlefish, Colour and Camouflage – Immersive Worlds” show, visited by the Governor herself.
- Steve Reynolds on being a guest of ABC Radio 891 on 13th April 2026. The host, Caroline Winter, interviewed Steve about the old Glenelg jetty and the aquarium on the jetty. They particularly wanted to focus on the 11th April 1948 storm that destroyed the aquarium due to the 78th anniversary of the storm over the past weekend. The interview can be heard at the 44-minute mark at <https://www.abc.net.au/listen/programs/adelaide-mornings/mornings/106545402>.
- Rodney Fox on his contribution to the interview. He rang in to the station to talk about the topic of the jetty aquarium. His interview can be heard from the 1.45-minute mark.
- The City of Marion for their support in responding to the impact of the algal bloom. According to their Green Thymes newsletter, they have organised a workshop to provide “Support and resilience during the algal bloom”. This was a free, “evidence-based emotional resilience session to learn simple and practical strategies to cope with stress and build emotional resilience.” The training was designed to provide “coping strategies for stress and distress and the confidence to support others.” The event being held on Thursday 16th April at the Hackham Community Centre has sold out.
- Tasmania’s Integrated Marine Observing System on having reached 20 years of delivering trusted ocean data: “For two decades, IMOS has delivered national-scale observations of Australia’s coastal and open oceans through a coordinated network of Facilities. Together, these Facilities have built an enduring capability, providing open, high-quality marine and climate data that support First Nations communities, research, government and industry.” See <https://imos.org.au/> and their [March newsletter](#) for more details

NEWS FROM SHOPS AND CLUBS

If you would like your club or shop news reported here, or your events listed, email us at info@sdfs.net.

BSAC Adelaide held their Scuba Play Fest: A Community Social Dive & Underwater Games at Port Noarlunga jetty on Saturday 11th April from 9 am to 1 pm.

Sea Wolves Dive Club recently returned from a road trip to NSW where they spent four days diving which included diving with Grey Nurse Sharks and seals. The club also did their annual anniversary dive on the Sea Wolf. . They say that it's still in good shape and they did a clean-up of the MV Sea Wolf sign on the wreck during the dive. The vessel was scuttled by them in 2002, making this year the 24th anniversary of its sinking. They say that they will make a bigger deal of it next year for the vessel's 25th anniversary. The club's Annual General Meeting is being held on Tuesday 19th May at 8.30pm following the General Meeting at 8pm.

Marine Life Society of South Australia held its AGM at the home of Patron Wolfgang Zeidler, 9 Desaumarez (de Saumarez) St, Kensington Park at 7pm on Wed 15th April.

One of MLSSA's Facebook followers has been finding hardnose skate egg casings along the beaches from Goolwa to Bashams beach and then uploading photos and data to iNaturalist. They would like to learn how to tell the difference between Hardnose skate and Thornback skate eggs to better identify what they find. They would also like to find more general background information on what types of skates live in these areas (the beaches from Goolwa to Bashams beach). After the area being hit so hard with the Toxic Algal Bloom of 2025, they are hopeful that the egg casings that they are finding which are in good condition might suggest that the species is doing OK. In the month of March up to the last week, they had found over 40 skate eggs on those beaches. Visit [Study of Shark & Ray Eggcases](#) and [Update on the Egg Casings of Elephant Sharks, Sharks, Stingrays and Skates](#) for more details.

STEVE'S SCIENCE READING

[Update on Microbialites](#)

[First Aid for Non-Tropical Jellyfish Stings – A Practical Australian Guide to Managing Jellyfish Stings Outside Tropical Regions](#)

[Two Different Dragonet Sightings of Interest Lately](#)

[My Recent Snorkels at Haycock Point & Dunny Block Reef](#)

[Study of Shark & Ray Eggcases](#)

[Update on the Egg Casings of Elephant Sharks, Sharks, Stingrays and Skates](#)

[The Behaviour of Southern Eagle Rays and Other Eagle Rays](#)

Many New Fish Species discovered by the Australian Museum. ABC TV's 7.30 Report program on Thursday 2nd April discussed the discovery of many new fish species during deep water fish collecting in the Coral Sea by the Australian Museum. It can be viewed at the 26-minute mark at <https://iview.abc.net.au/video/NC2601H052S00>. Two days later, it was reported in The Advertiser that marine taxonomists have identified more than 110 new fish and invertebrate species from the Coral Sea. It is suggested that this number could rise to more than 200 as more cryptic species are identified. Taxonomists from the CSIRO and The Nippon Foundation-Nekton Ocean Census identified specimens collected late last year by scientists aboard the CSIRO's RV Investigator. These specimens were found up to 3000m deep in the Coral Sea Marine Park. The marine park comprises nearly 1m sq km. A series of workshops were later held around Australia, during which 4 new species were discovered.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR: FORTHCOMING EVENTS

South Australia

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

3rd May: **Leafy Seadragon Installation**, Port Willunga, 10 am to 2pm. Register at <https://www.emmahackgallery.com/products/leafy-seadragon-installation>

Tuesday 19th May: The **Annual General Meeting for the Sea Wolves Dive Club** is being held at 8.30pm (General Meeting at 8pm).

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 with 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. Further info [here](#)

5-7th June 2026: [Malaysia International Dive Expo](#).

20 to 27th June 2026: **Heron Island Dive Festival**, organised by Mike Scotland, Dive Log. Expert speakers include: Max Gleeson talking on shipwrecks, Lyndi from Scuba Gym - Adaptive Diving, Syed Abd Rahman - Dive Heart Malaysia, David Mullins on Nudibranchs, Mike Scotland on Sharks, Dive Log on Tropical fish at Heron Is., Elliot Peters on the state of the Reef. Further details regarding the Festival and its speakers are available in the [April issue of Digital Dive Log Australasia](#). To book for the Heron Island Dive Festival, contact the event manager, Kaitlin at Heron Island Resort at events@heronisland.com or phone 07 49729055. (June is Manta Ray season and the beginning of Whale season.)

30 June - 2 July **Australian Coastal and Oceans Modelling and Observations (ACOMO)** workshop. Hobart, Tasmania

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

30 Aug to 3 Sept. **Australian Marine Sciences Association**. Canberra, ACT. Further information [here](#). [More info](#)

5-6th September: [Sydney Go Diving Show](#)

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/>.

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