

SDFSFA Newsletter – September 2026

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SCUBA DIVERS FEDERATION OF SA, Inc.

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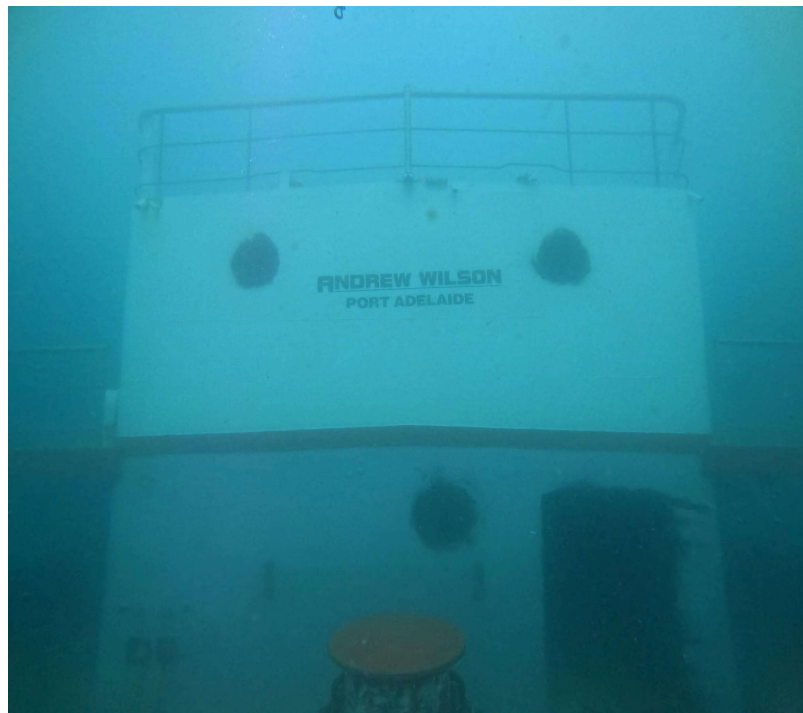
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/scubadivesa/>

SA Dive Sites Viz and Conditions:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/568109670769809>



SDFSFA Patron:
Dr. Richard Harris



THE MV ANDREW WILSON IS NOW OPEN FOR DIVING!
(See content below for GPS coordinates)

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South Australia's newest dive site has landed....

The MV Andrew Wilson has taken her final voyage, successfully sinking off the metropolitan coast in 20m of water, to become South Australia's newest artificial reef.

The 40-metre grab hopper dredger made history this week as the first vessel to be scuttled in South Australian waters in more than two decades.

SDFSAs has been proud to be a part of the project team to make this happen.

The vessel is located in approximately 20 metres of water at low tide.

Resting upright at a maximum depth of 20 metres, with a draught of 16 metres, the site is suitable for anyone with an entry-level scuba diving qualification. The vessel is situated approx. 6 kilometres west of Seacliff Reef, roughly midway between the West Beach and O'Sullivan's Beach boat ramps. This location was specifically chosen for its accessibility, ideal seabed conditions, close proximity to boat ramps, and safe distance from major shipping channels.

On Sunday 6th September the sinking of the iconic vessel followed a journey from Port Adelaide to its final location, where she was anchored overnight prior to the scuttling.

Valves were opened the following morning, Monday 7th September, to allow water to flood the hull. The vessel gradually sank over the period of approx. 2 hours, settling upright 20 metres below on the sandy ocean floor.

Teams have conducted a final safety inspection of the wreck and the wreck is now open for diving.
GPS coordinates are: 35° 01.4039327 S 138° 26.8532505 E

To give the artificial reef the best possible start, a 12-month ban on all recreational and commercial fishing within a 200-metre radius of the ship is now in effect.

The *MV Andrew Wilson* will offer an exciting underwater experience, with four different levels she has multiple compartments of varying depths, including the engine room, galley, and bridge.

The complex mission to scuttle the ship began several months ago when the vessel was donated to the State Government by Maritime Constructions.

The selection of the preferred location followed a consultative process in which South Australian dive clubs, dive shops, industry professionals, and other dive-related organisations were invited to provide recommendations. The majority of respondents expressed a preference for a site within Adelaide metropolitan waters. All submissions were carefully reviewed and discussed. Recfish SA was also consulted and involved in the decision-making process and supportive of the selected location.

In reaching the decision, consideration was given to existing gaps in dive site locations, the desire to distribute the benefits of a new wreck broadly across the diving community, and local boating traffic patterns to avoid high-traffic inner metropolitan areas. The preferred depth has also been selected to accommodate divers of all experience levels. The site was surveyed by members of the SDFSAs who kindly donated their time to confirm it met the criteria established by the Government.

Before the vessel could be sunk, specialist crews meticulously stripped the ship of all hazardous materials, removed internal walls, and cut strategic access holes into the hull. Over 2,000 hours of labour have gone into preparing the vessel.

A deep clean was carried out in close consultation with the Environment Protection Authority and an independent specialist. Strict international guidelines were also met to ensure there were no negative impacts on the local marine environment.

Built in 1962, the MV Andrew Wilson has had a long history in South Australian waters. The vessel has undertaken local dredging works, supported previous artificial reef installations, and played a pivotal role in the salvage mission following the fatal Whyalla Airlines tragedy in May 2000, where eight people were killed when Whyalla Airlines Flight 904 crashed into Spencer Gulf.

Now her legacy continues beneath the surface, serving the state's marine environment for generations to come.

We wish to thank Maritime Construction and the State of South Australia for making this new dive site possible. And thanks too to the members of the SDFS working group who shepherded this project: Christopher Deane, Mark Tozer, Marc Berry, Dr Richard (Harry) Harris, Tony Leggatt and Helena Wescombe-Down.

The following photos of the scuttling were kindly supplied by Alan Charlton of Sea Wolves Dive Club.





And a few shots of its final resting place supplied by Mark Tozer:



Following the initial diving inspections by Maritime Constructors, SAPOL Water Operations Unit and the SDFSA undertook safety inspections on the site prior to its opening.

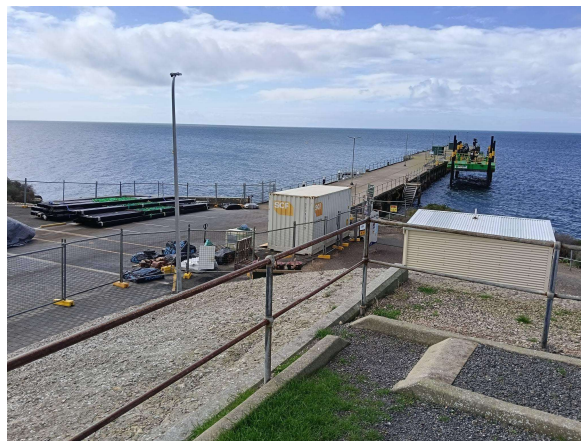


The SDFSA Dive Team - Left to right: Dr. Richard Harris, SDFSA Patron; Marc Berry, Sea Wolves; Mark Tozer; Helena Wescombe-Down, SDFSA President. Photo by Jenny Berry

Edithburgh Jetty closed for repairs until late 2027

Thanks to Neville Grovermann for this recent posting with his photos on SA Dive Sites Viz and Conditions about the work underway at Edithburgh Jetty:

"Travelled to Edithburgh couple weekends back, only to see builders mesh fencing closed off all fore shore jetty parking. Carpark up on North side of road fenced off. Plus any access along the coast walking is also blocked off. So any way onto the jetty is now barred. Govt & council are doing major structural repairs to posts and cross beams below the water line."



Splash Inn – Friday 16 October

The next SDFS SA Splash Inn will be held at the Rob Roy Hotel, Halifax Street Adelaide on **Friday 16 October** from 6.30pm onwards.

The guest speakers this month are:

Dean Spraakman, a local Adelaide based freelance Underwater Cinematographer specialising in natural history and documentaries. Dean will be presenting on the following topics:

- A. Filming the Spotted Handfish sequence for Our Oceans, the unique specialised equipment used and challenges that were confronted.
- B. The making of A Dragon Story. How I filmed the Leafy Sea Dragons behaviours and captured a newborn Leafy Sea Dragon seconds after birth. How the story came together, the challenges along the way and the mysteries that remain.

Peter Lesty, is an avid local diver and software developer by trade. He will be presenting:

DiveDB - a free online resource for Scuba Divers in SA. With over 1000 sites listed, and 1500 recorded dives it continues to grow. He will talk about some of the newer experimental features of DiveDB (deco planner & meteye map overlay) and some of the future plans for it.

Attendance at Splash Inn is free but you must register via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/splash-inn-010-underwater-cinematographer-dean-spraakman-peter-lesty-tickets-2000371629392?aff=oddtcreator>

Sea Wolves Swap Meet 29 September 6:30pm

It's that time of year! Sea Wolves are once again holding their scuba gear swap meet. Need to upgrade some gear? Have some gear you no longer use? Sell something, buy something, meet friends, have some laughs. FREE ENTRY. FREE TO SELL. FREE TO BUY. FREE TO SWAP. Maybe stay for the meeting and find out a bit about the Club. Date: Tuesday September 29th, 2026 Time: Opens 6:30pm and closes at 8:00pm before our Club meeting Address: 10 Bayford Rise, Morphett Vale SA 5162 Enquiries: Peter Fulton, 0430 638 988 or secretary@seawolves.org.au

FREE SAUSAGE SIZZLE. BAR WILL BE OPEN.

Important Notices

The Ardrossan Jetty has reopened following recent repair works.

There is currently a seasonal closure in Ewens Ponds to allow the regeneration of the aquatic vegetation. This closure occurs for 3 months each year from 1st September until 1st December. Bookings resume in December, ready for the summer season

Piccaninnie Ponds are closed to the public for water-based activities until further notice. It is best that you check the current situation before making any plans to visit the ponds.

SDFS Committee Business

The next meeting of the Committee is Wednesday 23 September, 7pm at the Arab Steed upstairs meeting room.

Congratulations and Thanks to...

- OzFish Unlimited for cleaning up our marine & freshwater waterways such as the Patawalonga, Dry Creek and Outer Harbor during September.
- [Baleen Filters Pty Ltd](#) who are aiming to halt "the Untreated Sewage Discharges Into Our Sanctuaries" in what they call "Zero-Cost Engineering Action"
- Linden Wolbert, Liz Parkinson, Margery Spielman, Ingrid Visser and Marni Zabarsky on being inducted into the 2026 class of the Women Divers Hall of Fame.

According to Deeperblue.com, Linden Wolbert is a professional mermaid, Liz Parkinson is a stuntwoman and marine conservationist, Educator, Margery Spielman is a conservationist and marine artist, Orca Research Trust founder Ingrid Visser is a world-renowned cetologist, and Marni Zabarsky is a pioneering saturation diver. The induction ceremony will take place at the NOGI Gala Awards Banquet in conjunction with the 2026 DEMA Show on November 4 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

News from Shops and Clubs

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

Marine Life Society of SA

Rubab Nazar is presenting re. seadragons on behalf of MLSSA at the U3A South Coast special event on marine life of the Great Southern Reef on Thursday 24th September. It is being held at the Church of Christ Hall in Seaview Rd at Victor Harbor, 9.45am -3pm. There will be a focus on seadragons (Weedy and Leafy), snapper and sustainable fishery management, with a case study on snapper fishery in SA.

Some photos of the 50th Anniversary celebration of MLSSA on 20th June at the Rodney Fox and Mark Tozer's Museum and Research Centre can be seen at <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1KXuNPYKLy/>.

The Society's next meeting is being held at 7pm on Wednesday 16th September at the Port Environment Centre, 27 North Parade, Port Adelaide.

Club activities spotted on Facebook recently:

Sea Wolves <https://www.facebook.com/SeaWolvesDiveClubSA> . Andrew Burnell was a guest speaker at one of the club's recent meetings.

BSAC Adelaide <https://www.facebook.com/BSACAdelaide> . The club recently held a treasure hunt.

Underwater Explorers Club of SA <https://www.facebook.com/uecofsa> . The UEC recently did a trip to Lady Elliot Island – see <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/19Fo6VZuRH/>

Steve's Science Reading

By Steve Reynolds, SDFSA member 0001 and Inaugural Life Member

FRIENDS OF PORT RIVER CONCERN AT GOVERNMENT'S INTENT TO DECLARE OSBORNE STATE DEVELOPMENT AREA

Friends of Port River are opposing the proposed boundaries in the State Government's plans to declare the Osborne State Development Area (SDA). They also have started a [petition](#) for Dry Creek Salt Fields Restoration. The Friends have both a [Facebook](#) page and a [YouTube channel](#).

NEWS FROM THE FRIENDS OF PARKS AND NATURE

According to the Friends of Parks and Nature Weekly Update - 26 August, "Preparations to build shellfish reefs across South Australia's coastline have reached another significant milestone with new proposed reef locations identified on Yorke Peninsula. The Rebuilding South Australia's Lost Shellfish Reefs Program is investing \$2.6 million to restore 26 community shellfish reefs across Yorke Peninsula, Eyre Peninsula, Kangaroo Island and metropolitan Adelaide.

Further details can be found at <https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/news-hub/news/articles/2026/08/new-sites-proposed-for-shellfish-reef-restorations-to-rebuild-lost-habitat/>

Also, "The Metropolitan Adelaide and Northern Coastal Action Plan (MANCAP) Review updates priorities for Adelaide's metropolitan and northern coast, building on more than 15 years of collaborative conservation efforts. Developed with DEW, councils and stakeholders, it identifies key

achievements, ongoing challenges and future priorities to help protect and enhance the region's coastal and marine environments. Access the MANCAP Review to explore the strategic direction, priorities, achievements and recommended actions for coastal conservation across the region.

Further details can be found at <https://www.greenadelaide.sa.gov.au/discover/learn-about-our-coasts-and-seas/metropolitan-adelaide-and-northern-coastal-action-plan> .

You can sign up to the Friends of Parks and Nature weekly newsletter at <https://confirmsubscription.com/h/r/FEAF4E4336DC2D2E2540EF23F30FEDED> .

For Your Calendar: Forthcoming Events

South Australia

Friday 11 September, 5:30 pm onwards. **Adelaide University Scuba Club:** Rodney Fox Museum Night. \$20 at the door, no RSVP needed.

24th September 10am - 2pm: **U3A South Coast** event on Marine life of the Great Southern Reef at the Church of Christ Hall in Seaview Rd at Victor Harbor. There will be a focus on seadragons and sustainable fishery management, with a case study on either the snapper or the tuna fishery in SA. Rubab Nazar is presenting re. seadragons on behalf of MLSSA. Bookings are essential to attend the event. Bookings via website: www.biodiversityvictor.org.au/events , <https://tinyurl.com/cyyvxu6n>

25th September - October 11 th : **The Nature Festival** <https://www.naturefestival.org.au> . This year's theme is Seed. The Nature Festival is a collaborative movement of more than 200 community groups and organisations. We exist to celebrate our unique love for nature in South Australia.

29 September: **Sea Wolves Swap Meet**. Opens 6:30 pm. Address: 10 Bayford Rise, Morphett Vale SA 5162 Enquiries: Peter Fulton, 0430 638 988 or secretary@seawolves.org.au

Friday 16 October. **Splash Inn with Sea Dragon films**. Rob Roy Hotel. Free: Registration on Eventbrite coming in September.

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

Interstate/International

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

4 November: 2026 DEMA Show in New Orleans, Louisiana.

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.

Email: info@sdfs.net

Join us for free! <https://sdfs.net/membership-categories/>

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