



SEA BRAGGIN'

St George Scuba Club Newsletter

The Need for Speed

Natasha Naude

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THE NEED FOR SPEED

Phillip Island MotoGP and diving the Mornington Peninsula

On Thurs 25 October Digby and I got up at 2.30 am (after having gone to bed at 11.30pm) to drive down to Melbourne, pick up a caravan and drive to Phillip Island for the 2012 MotoGP and say farewell to King Casey Stoner (or as I call him, Casey Moaner, or Stacey Choker, depending on my mood) from the international motorbike racing circuit. It was a long drive but we eventually got there and met up with friends at the Circuit Highside Campgrounds, which was our home for the next 4 nights.

As usual, it was every season each day at the racing. Digby and I wandered around the complete circuit on Friday, watching the pre-qualifying warm-ups, support races, and special "hot laps" by ex-World Champion and Australian motorbike legend, Mick Doohan. Was awesome to see him on a bike again. Saturday qualifying was a wet and blustery affair – I had on thermal long johns, long pants and wet weather pants, gumboots, a thermal shirt, long sleeved shirt, jumper, windproof shell and goretex rain jacket, neck warmer and beanie... and was only just comfortable against the wind and sometimes rainy conditions. Tres glam. Jess came down to join us on the Saturday. Sunday – race day – was very eventful. After bitching and moaning about

the wind and rain all weekend, the sun came out – furiously – and we all got baked and fried for the day. See pic of Jess trying to stave off some of the sun!

It was Casey Stoner's final home race and the crowd were one-eyed patriotic Casey fans. Personally, while I think he is a fantastic rider, he is a bad loser who complains too much about his team, the conditions and other riders when things don't go his way. I have always been a Rossi fan, but there was no chance he would win this weekend. Instead I was barracking for Dani Pedrosa, coming second to Jorge Lorenzo in the world championship and capable of overtaking him for the championship if the result went his way. Sadly it was not





to be, with Dani stacking it on lap 2 of the main race, Casey Stoner winning, and Jorge taking the championship out. I cracked the sulks with Dani's fall and wanted to go home, but stayed to the bitter end, and enjoyed walking across the circuit when it was all over to soak in the atmosphere. Was a fun weekend!! Crazy campground antics and bonfires bigger than Vesuvius going off entertained us on Sunday night and on

Rosebud, on the

We stayed at a
Rye Pier



Monday Jess headed to the airport and home and we took our caravan off to Mornington Peninsula for a couple of days there.

commercial van site at Rosebud and Monday arvo took ourselves off to for a dive. It is about 500m to the end of the pier – about 2/3 of the way along is a platform and ladder – we did a giant stride entry and swam slowly under the pier, weaving in and out and cruising to end slowly.

The viz was OK – about 5m in some places, a little more at times.



Casey Stoner



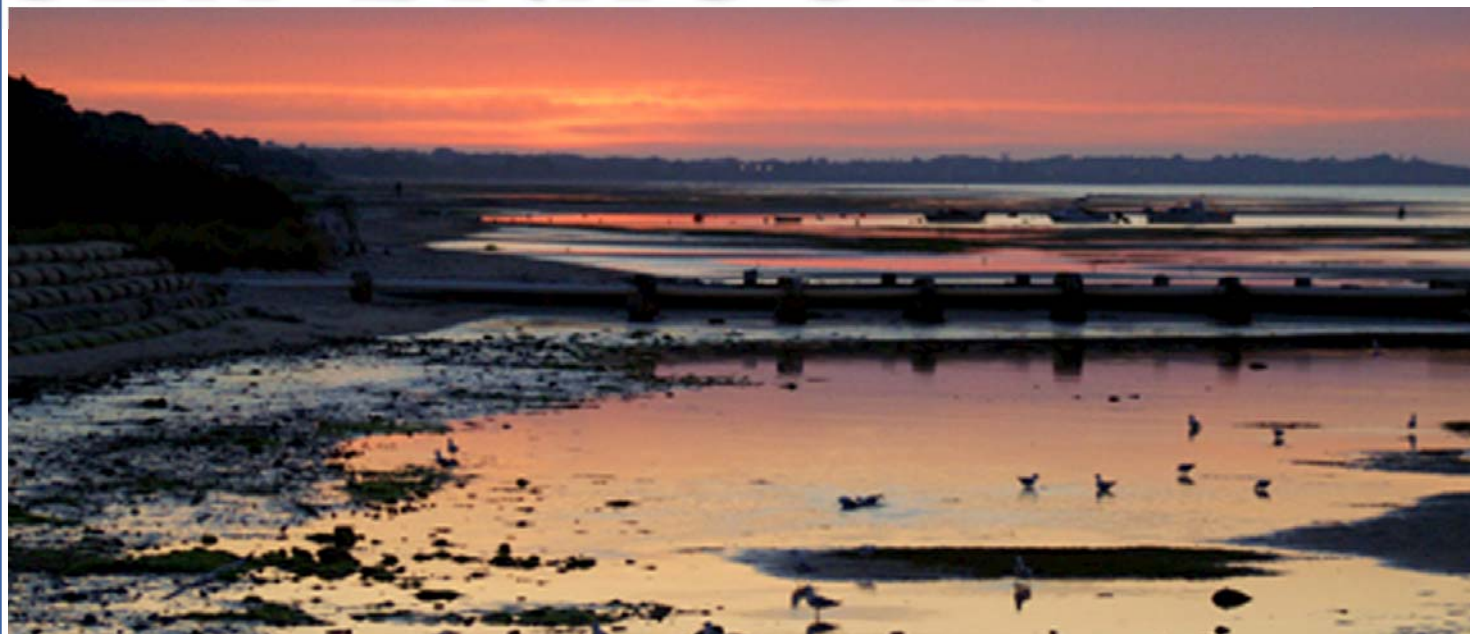
Future Husband (I mean, Valentino Rossi)

There was a bit of surge about so it made photographing the small stuff tricky. There were loads of quite large crabs on the pylons, small rays galore, fiddler rays, prolific sponge life and porcupine fish in large numbers. We saw some beautiful sea horses, much larger than what I have seen in Sydney, in pale yellow and cream colours.

Stunning. One took umbrage at our persistent presence and swam up and away from us, with its body and tail stretching to at least 20cm in length as it made its elegant

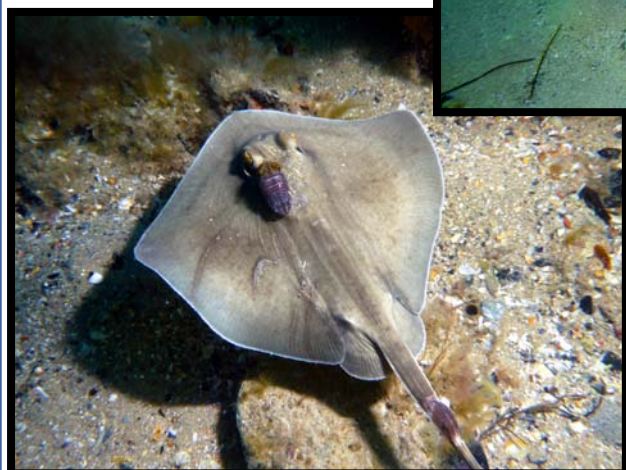
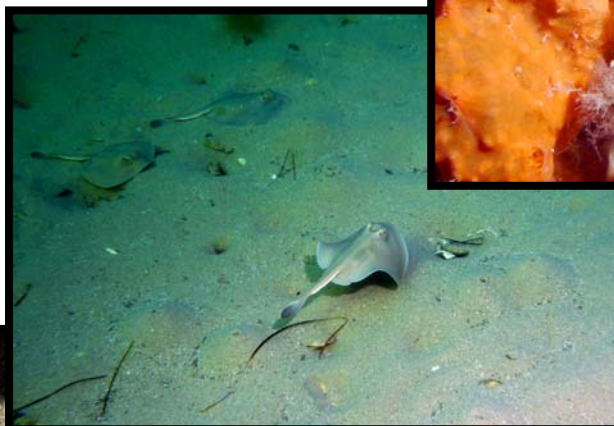
getaway. At the end the pier, where it turned right, we were entertained by a fairly large octopus, who left a broken old pylon to stretch over an old tyre, billowing out like parachute fabric and changing the texture and colour of his skin several times in an effort to lose us. Another interesting site was the parasites on top of some of the rays (see photo). These parasites were huge – not sure what they are so would be interested to hear from any members that can shed any light on them.

The highlight of this dive, however, was an enormous female bullray – the size of a queen sized doona, and with a thick, deep body – who was exhibiting some very strange and agitated behaviour. Instead of settling in one place, she shimmied into the sand, and then lurched towards us, then settled again and then lurched away a short distance. I had never seen a bullray act so out of sorts, and we kept back and under the pier out of her way as best we could, but she would occasionally swoosh past us and then reappear shortly after and repeat the process. After a while I saw her “land” on a small ray, which startled and took off



as she moved. Then she did the same thing again! Then I noticed how many uniformly small rays there were around the area – see photo of three in one shot. All about the size of small dinner plates. I then realised she was giving birth to live young – I later googled rays giving birth and saw footage of the same behaviour.

Unfortunately my camera was set for macro and I couldn't get any good shots of her, but took some of the babies. Very exciting! Made



the 13 degree water worth it.
Brrrrr!!!!

After stopping for some shots of the glorious sunset over Rosebud pier we went back to camp.

The next day we went to Portsea

Pier and did a dive there, walking up the pier and jumping in again part way along. Not the variety of critters we saw at Rye, but made up for in quantity of fantastic weedy seadragons, including 3 males in one clump of kelp all carrying masses of eggs, and a couple of very cute, spindly juveniles. There was nothing else of particular note really, but it was a lovely dive. We must have seen 7 different



dragons in 10 minutes. It seems a fabulously healthy place for them! They are very different in colour to their Sydney cousins – a lovely grey-green and yellow, with none of the bright red and orange colours I am more used to seeing at home dive sites. Stunning creatures. So nice to have them all to ourselves too!

The end of our trip was marred a little by a problem with our caravan canopy on the last morning as we tried to pack up to head off on the very long drive home. It was repaired by a mobile van dude at 1pm, then we headed to Melbs to drop it off and left Melbs at about 5pm to get home to Sydney. We stopped in Wodonga for a Thai restaurant meal simply so Digs could have a beer for his birthday! It was his most sober birthday since his



17th, so it wasn't really a festive day for him, but we made it home safely and had a wonderful trip, so it was worth it. We'll definitely be planning a Mornington dive trip at some stage in the future, so will keep you posted.

Natasha Naude





Timor Dive Trip Weekend

We will be diving with Dive Timor Lorosae (DTL).
Check out their website at: www.DiveTimor.com

We will be staying in the guesthouse, which is located alongside the dive shop right on the beachfront in Dili. Above the accommodation is the Castaway bar and restaurant. The complex has its own pool. It is located in Dili itself so it's a short walk to other restaurants, shops, markets, etc.

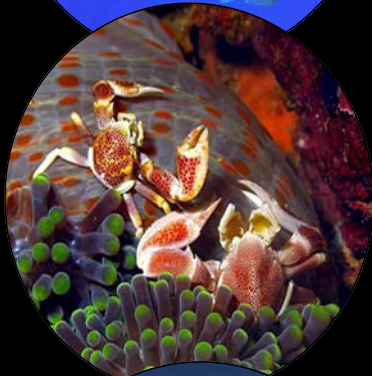
The four boat dives will be to Atauro Island - see the DTL website for details.

We have also arranged with DTL that we can have an optional third dive per day, which will be at Pertamina Pier. This is one of the best muck dives in East Timor. If we choose to do a third dive, the dive operator will supply a driver to take us to the Pertamina Pier (a 5 minute drive) and wait for us to do our dive before transporting us back to our accommodation. These additional dives are \$25 per diver.

The trip is limited to 8 divers and as at 13/11/2012 we have 4 spots available.

Contact Paul Pacey for more information or to book.

Contact Paul Pacey
Paul.Pacey@iinet.net.au or 0431-691173



EAST TIMOR

Ultimate Dive Expedition

19 - 31 August 2013

13 Days / 12 nights Ex Darwin

Diver from **\$2,090** per person

Price Includes: (Non Diver - \$995)

- Return flights ex. Darwin to Dili flying with Air North
- Return airport transfers in Dili
- 12 nights twin share bunk room air conditioned guest house accommodation at The Dive Guest House (shared kitchen and bathroom) - Dili, Sat TV, Internet Connection, swimming pool
- Breakfast daily at the Castaway Bar
- Half Day Dili city tour
- 22 Dives (6 shore local dives, 10 shore Dili surround dives and 4 boat dives and 2 complimentary night dives) Includes: tanks, weights, dive guide services, & transfers
- Australian Departure taxes (Value: \$240.00 - subject to change

Cost Does Not Include:

- Travel Insurance & Personal spending monies and Excess Luggage Surcharges
- East Timor Entry visa USD 30.00 (subject to change)
- East Timor departure tax USD10.00

Room Upgrade:

Upgrade to Twin Share (1 x Queen + 1 x Single) - additional \$92 per person for 12 night stay

Conditions Apply:

Prices are subject to change without notice due to fluctuations in exchange rates.

Booking Requirements:

To secure your place on this expedition, you will need to complete a booking form and return it together with a non refundable deposit amount of \$300.00 per person.

Booking Reference # S12695

Date : 06/11/12

FOR BOOKINGS AND MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT



Contact: Paul Pacey
Mobile: 0431 691 173

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PIZZA REEF

17 November 2012

On Saturday 17 November, Argonaut, Seajohn, Toucans and Yes Dear Too braved the shark infested waters to dive at Pizza Reef. Two boats pulled out (including the boat the organizer was on) as a precaution, with the whale carcass attracting decent sized sharks for a meal at Kurnell. Pre-dive all boats loaded at Yowie Bay, except one launched from Dolans. The talk was of course "Shark this, Shark that". Seajohn was the last to arrive at the site and with care we managed to miss picking in on a diver.

In an absent moment I added another fleece top under the dry suit and on getting in the water realized that I was the human equivalent of a fishing float.

My great captain quickly handed me a little extra lead and finally I descended feeling very bulky and not really able to bend my arms too far. I found a nice buddy pair with blue fins but rejected them as Robbie and J9 are into yellow like me. I found them patiently waiting at the anchor and off we set with a compass bearing.

Green murk obscured all the fish in the water (vis 7m) and had there been any sharks we had no hope in spotting them. We then made a triangle-ish turn back towards the boat, paying no attention to the compass bearing taken earlier. J9 found a lovely Red Indian Fish that I immediately started filming and of course Robbie continued off course. Secure in the knowledge we were truly lost, somewhere close to the boat we ascended a little and waved torches until we all reunited. As Robbie fiddled with a safety sausage, J9 again our great spotter found an anchor line with flasher marked PS (Phil Short). This meant we were about 100m away from Seajohn and with funny extra numbers appearing on my computer we chose that line to ascend. The Argonaut had proved popular with the musical boat divers – they set out with 4 and now had 6 onboard, as Steve Boyd had abandoned Yes Dear Too during his failed search for his dive buddy. Seajohn's second crew failed to get in the water after one reduced the rather poor vis even further and the boats retreated to morning tea at Jibbon. Thank you boat owners and of course Tricia for organizing the dive - sorry you could not come along.



Jessica McInnes

Started with six boats but only four ventured out – some say they were scared off by recent shark activity at Kurnell. I would think they would be well fed by the time we entered the water and I am sure they would prefer Whale meat over steel tanks.

Visibility at 5m and some rough seas took its toll on some divers, and a possible renaming of Phil's boat to "Wicket Keeper", named by John Beddie after a few divers were "caught behind" the current. Nothing spectacular was found and not many good photos taken due to the visibility of around 5m. A juvenile PJ and a seal buzzing divers on their safety stops were seen.

Yes Dear Too with Rudy, Mike and Wayne headed off for a second dive at Barren's Hut. Visibility was the same (about 5m) and a nice Short Tailed Ceratosoma was found.

Wayne Heming





St George Ladies' Weekend 2013

When: Friday 1 March to Sunday 3 March 2013

Where: Port Stephens

Diving: Halifax Park, Fly Point or The Pipeline

Accommodation: Shoal Bay Holiday Park

Cost: \$130-\$170 for the weekend, depending on numbers

The Shoal Bay Holiday Park is across the road from the beach and has 4-star Villas. We can check out as late as Monday morning at 10am.

Have a look at <http://www.beachsideholidays.com.au/shoalBay.phtml> for more information.



The location of our Saturday night, club-subsidised feast is yet to be determined – maybe a nice restaurant in Shoal Bay (walking distance).

All of our ladies' weekends have been great trips away, with good diving and lots of laughs. And, lots of great food, some drinks, a little shopping and lots of relaxing. You don't need to be a diver to attend any female partners of STG members are welcome to come along.

So, to book your spot kindly deposit \$50 the St George Club account (BSB 062028 Acc 00800455).



Happy diving,
Kelly

Contact Kelly on 0410 599 186 or
kelly@michaelmcfadyenscuba.info



BYPASS REEF

1st December 2012

Shelly, Greg and myself headed out of Port Botany to dive Bypass Reef and what a dive it was! 15m visibility, lots of PJ's and we also managed to find a sea horse.

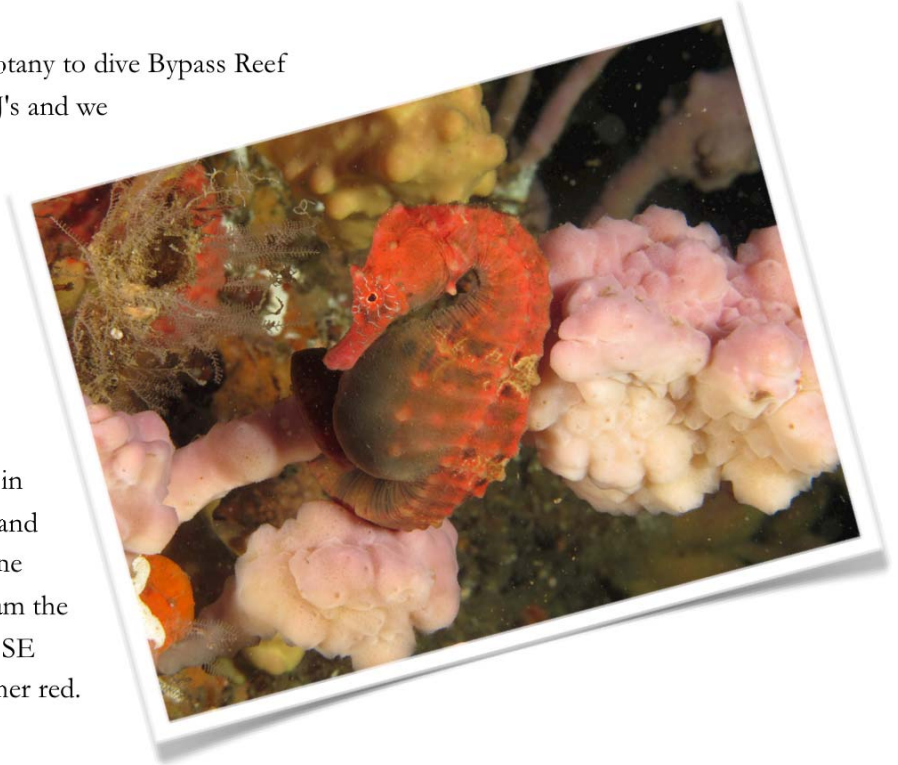
While descending we noticed a lot of small jellies in the water from about 5m to 20m but under 20m it cleared up. The anchor hooked in about 10m NE of the small caves. The water was cold down here at 14°, but the visibility was great at around 15m.

We swam towards the caves and the first thing we saw were about 20 PJ's lazing around in front of the cave. Greg had found a sea horse and while Shelly was looking she noticed a larger one just below. She grabbed my attention and I swam the few metres from the cave over to the rock in a SE direction. There it was, with a big belly and rather red. I snapped off a couple of shots.

What a great dive.

Wayne Heming

<http://dive.hemnet.com.au/>





You are warmly invited to the

St George Scuba Club 40th Anniversary Dinner



WHEN: Saturday 23rd February, 2013 from 600pm

WHERE: Georges River 16' Sailing Club, Sanoni Ave, Sandringham

COST: \$45 per person (includes a complementary Happy Hour drink and a 3-course meal)

Purchase tickets at www.stgeorgescubaclub.org.au/40yeardinnerbookingform.php

MEMBER PRIZE DRAW:

- ✚ Overseas Dive Trip (portion of trip for one person booked with a club group overseas trip, conditions apply) sponsored by Dive Adventures
- ✚ Mid-week Dive Package (conditions apply) sponsored by Wooli Dive Centre
- ✚ Double Boat Dive for two on HMAS Adelaide sponsored by Terrigal Dive Centre
- ✚ Weekend package for two (conditions apply) sponsored by Southwest Rocks Dive Centre

LUCKY DOOR PRIZES:

- ✚ Magazine subscriptions sponsored by Sport Diver / Dive Log
- ✚ Dive Equipment sponsored by Scuba Warehouse and Dive Imports

RAFFLE PRIZES:

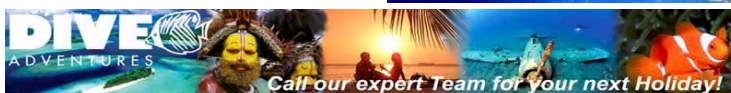
- ✚ **INCLUDES** Dinner for two at Georges River 16' Sailing Club, hampers, wine, gift packs, dive equipment and more

Special 40th anniversary merchandise will be available for purchase.

Keep an eye on www.stgeorgescubaclub.org.au

diveimports
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PALAU TRIP

October 2012

Well, this being my third trip I have led to Palau I was again looking forward to 11 days of diving in this beautiful place. For anyone who has never been to Palau it is one of those places you can keep coming back to, either because of the 50m+ visibility, the warm water, or the spectacular marine encounters that you will have. Where else can you dive reefs, wrecks and caves all in



© David Casburn '12

one day? We did over 24 dives on the trip, including my favourite, Ulong Channel. Other great dives - Saies Tunnel, Blue Holes and Blue Corner are just a few. You will see Mantas, anemones, corals, corals, and more corals, sharks and turtles. Did I mention turtles? I think the record was 8-10 on one dive.

Palau is now also the world's first shark sanctuary, so hopefully we will be seeing the sharks in great numbers in Palauan waters well into the future.

We had many humorous moments on the trip. On the third day everyone was eager to get going and start diving, and the dive guide asked: "has everyone got everything?". Everyone said yes and we departed. We did not get that far (luckily about 60m from the wharf) as

Grant came running down the floating pontoon, yelling out. It seems we were missing something – him!! One member (his wife, no less) did not even know he was missing!!! He was never late again, and was a great sport about it.

Some in the group thought they would only dive 6 days and that they would relax the rest, but they soon changed their minds and ended up buying more dive days, as the diving was really great and they did not want to miss out. Everyone had a great time and we were all sad to be leaving.

Dave Casburn

Ngerchong Inside

Depth 25m, Visibility 30m

Twelve divers full of excitement and enthusiasm arrived on Day 1 at the dive site Ngerchong Inside, ready for the checkout dive (following some initial gear problems - 3 of us had auto-inflating BCs and all 3 of the BCs had had a pre-holiday service!!!). The dive consists of a sloping wall that bottoms out to a white sandy bottom and a good assortment of marine life awaits us including a Yellow Leaf Fish, Anemonefish (Pink and Orange-fin), Titan Triggerfish, Butterflyfish (Saddled, Raccoon, and Long-Nosed), Scarlet



Tricia Henry

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Breasted Maori Wrasse and some beautiful Lettuce coral.

German Channel

Depth 25m, Visibility 30m

This dive is on a shallow channel where Mantas are frequently seen coming in to feed on plankton which is funnelled into the channel. No such luck for us re Mantas, but there was still plenty to see. There were a number of Grey Reef sharks and a couple of White Tipped sharks, whilst a few of us were thrilled to see a Tiger shark (3 metres or 5 metres depending on who you talked to!). A Barramundi Cod, Dog-Toothed Tuna, Napoleon Wrasse, Clown Triggerfish, schools of Jacks, Sweetlips and Emperor Angelfish were among the other marine life on this dive.

Dinner tonight was at Kramer's, a restaurant that is within walking distance of the hotel and which has an extensive menu. The most popular entree was definitely the Sashimi (and the blackened Sashimi), and I enjoyed the Grilled Tuna with Garlic and Butter sauce for a main course.



Of note was the lady serving us who had an incredible memory, being able to remember everyone's orders without writing them down.

A fantastic first day!!!

Tricia Henry

Blue Corner

This is the fourth day of diving here. We go to Blue Corner, travelling about 45 minutes at 30 knots on smooth water, dodging between the little islands. For those that have not been here, man oh man, what a site. You drop off the boat



at the reef edge and normally you put a hook into a dead bit of reef. The hook has a rope lead of about 1m long, which you let out and attach to you BC. You then inflate your BC a little and up in the current you float, hovering, and just amazed at all the small (and big!) fish life. At one time we had 14 sharks from left to



right. Small Grey Reef Sharks but very nice up close. We were surprised once as a Manta snuck up behind our line and quickly did a run through. With regard to the small fish, there would be thousands of 10cm dark blue trigger fish there. While there, a school of yellow stripy things came by, getting hassled by two Giant Trevally after a meal. All they do is chase a school and if one fish makes a wrong turn and the school goes the other way, then that's it, it gets eaten.

After this we had another great lunch on the island. Sushi or rolls - very nice.

Off to diving again, back for our second attempt to see the Mantas at German Chanel.

German Channel

We were all keen as usual, geared up and in we went. I jumped in and made my way to the bow rope and when I got there the lens fell off my camera housing, thus flooding my

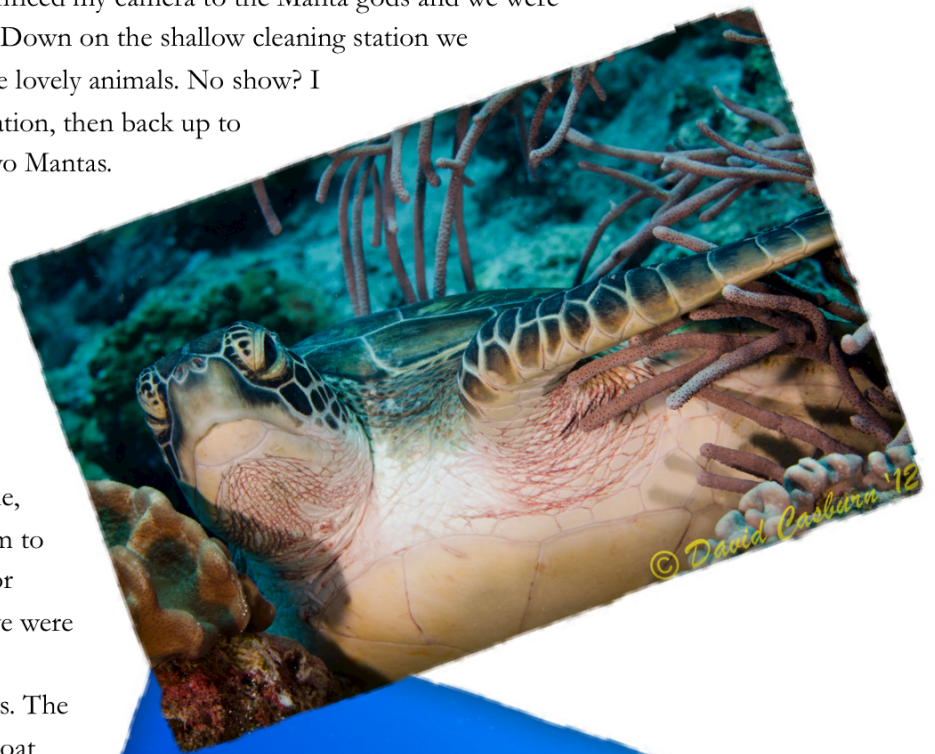
SEA BRAGGIN'

camera. I just took it back to the boat fuming that my camera was gone. Got back to the bow rope and those that saw my camera demise said I had just sacrificed my camera to the Manta gods and we were dead certain now to see them. Well it worked! Down on the shallow cleaning station we stopped for seemed like forever, awaiting these lovely animals. No show? I think we went down to the deeper cleaning station, then back up to the shallow one again, waited, then in came two Mantas.

One about 3mt across and another about 1 1/2mt. Fantastic but they didn't hang around. We may have scared them.

Another five minutes later it seemed, in came another big one about 3mt across. This was great as it swooped and swung around. It was doing tight turns between us, and it soared over us. It came really close to me, which was particularly great as it was my dream to see these underwater after looking for them for years. The same goes for Eda and Maxine - we were all manta virgins, but NOT NOW.

Today we were scheduled to do three dives. The third was Chandelier Caves. We attached the boat about 500m from our home base at Sam's Marina. It's in only about 7m. You enter via a hole in the rocks. You go in about 50m and rise up into the chamber, where you see all these stalactites and stalagmites. They look a lot like the Jenolan Cave or Wellington Caves. This is made more fantastic as you dive into it. After lots of talk and pictures, we head into the further three chambers. Each has their own special glint and sparkle. Mesmerising. It is also special as at the end of the dive in this last chamber we are told to turn off our torches and leave guided by the sunlight, which shows the entrance. A great finish to a great day. Man, didn't we have some stuff to talk about, back at Sam's with hot chips and a cold beer.



© David Casburn '12



© David Casburn '12

Ray Moulang



© David Casburn '12

Chandelier Cave

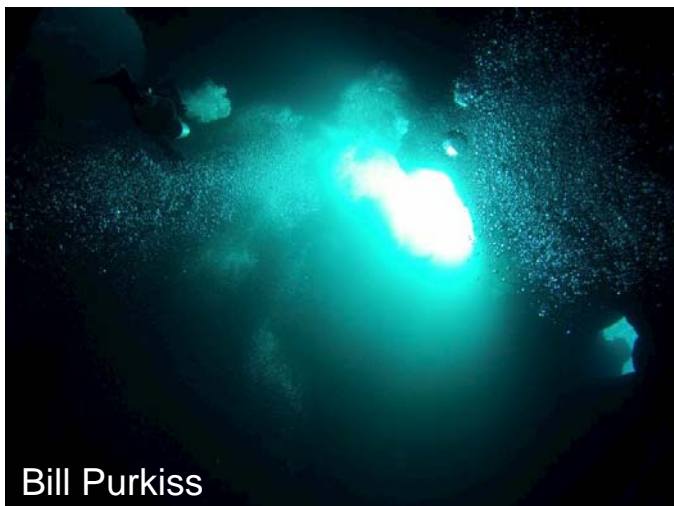
After the Blue Corner and German Channel dives we returned to Sam's Tours (as our lunch had been forgotten in the excitement) and had lunch. It was decided that this was the day to dive the Chandelier Caves, as they are only a very short boat ride away.

Chandelier Caves is a very unique dive, which gives divers a chance to experience the Rock Islands from the inside out without disturbing currents. It is a hole just a few

feet underwater inside the Malakal Harbor. We entered a cave that extended several hundred feet into a rock island. Four large air pockets (or chambers) allowed us to surface within each cave and check out the crystals that make up the hanging stalactites. There was a lot of chattering going on in each cave as we all surfaced, so I can't say there were any peaceful moments to be had. Also, mine was the fourth BC to play up in Palau and I spent most of the time trying not to drown in each cave. *[Trying not to drown seems to be a common feature there – ask Digby! (Ed)].*

The chambers were quite large, so no one became claustrophobic. There was a lot of natural light penetrating through most of the dive. This was a great dive with sightings of Mandarin fish, cuttlefish and crocodile fish at the exit.

For dinner that night most of us decided we would try the local coconut crab and

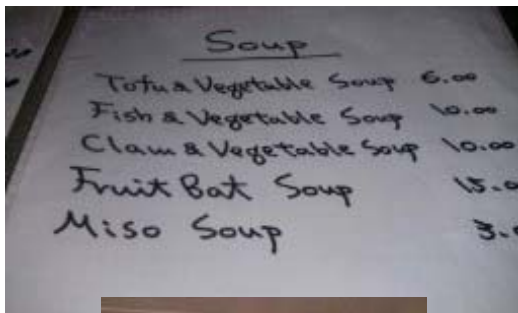


Bill Purkiss



SEA BRAGGIN'

4 course meal. It was quite a feast, with two people sharing one main meal!! It is the first time I have tried clam. I felt really bad the next day when we spotted a huge clam shell that had been completely gutted. Hope it wasn't what I ate the previous night (later confirmed by dive guide it was farmed clam). Fruit bat soup was also on the menu, but no



one was brave enough to give it a go. Debbie managed to get a huge breadfruit, which we all ate the next day (which tasted horrible!).

Eda DiCamillo

Teshio Maru

We set off at about 8:30am as usual and headed to Teshio Maru in the western lagoon of Palau. It's about 8 kms west of the Sam's Tours base. The ship is on her starboard side, facing southwest in approx 24 m of water. The port side is only 12m from the surface.

We entered the water approx 9am and we all had an hour's dive. I reached 21m to the sand. Visibility was good –

about 30m. The water was a balmy 29 degrees. It was a great small wreck with lots of swim throughs and coral and sponge life.

The Teshio Maru is a Japanese Army Cargo Ship. She (and several other ships) tried to escape Palau waters ahead of Operation DESECRATE ONE on March 30, 1944 when she was disabled. She was headed North to the Toachel Mlengui Passage when she was bombed. Although not directly hit, she was crippled. The ship drifted along the main channel until it was beached on the reef. After being beached for a number of years, the Teshio Maru slipped off the reef and sank parallel to the underwater coral slope, coming to rest on her starboard side. After the war, while the ship was still on the reef, she was salvaged.

Details

General Information: Type: Japanese Army Cargo Ship.
Length: 321.4 feet (98 meters).

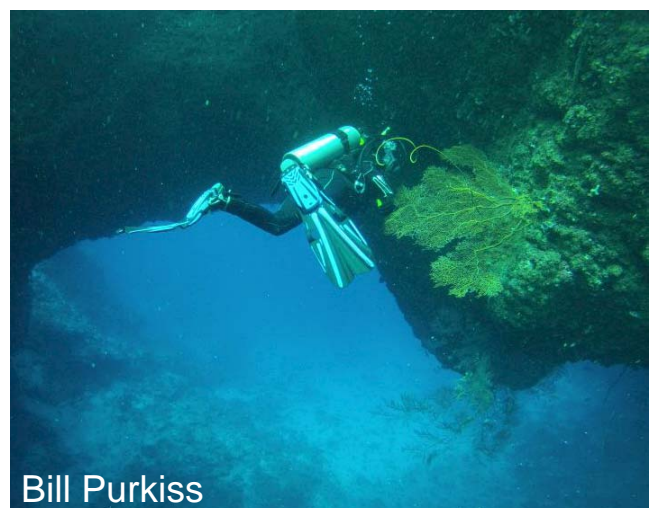
Beam: 44.9 feet (13.7 meters).

Tonnage: 2,820 tons.

Built: 1942 –1944, shipbuilder unknown.

Marine life: Staghorn corals, plate corals, whip corals, black corals cover the wreck. Barracuda, Jacks, Groupers, Fusiliers, Anthias and other reef fish abound in and around the structures of the Teshio Maru.

We had a lunch break at Ulong Island, which is the old site of 'Survivor Palau'.



Bill Purkiss

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Siaes Corner

Our second dive was at Siaes Corner, northwest of Ulong Island. Siaes Corner is a vertical drop that starts about 3m below the surface. Rebotel Reef is part of the western reef, which starts at Ulong Channel, runs to the north toward Siaes Tunnel and ends at Siaes Corner. The reef wall drops vertically 50m where it merges with a plateau of broken coral and sand, then slopes off hundreds of metres to the open ocean floor.

We entered the water at 12:30pm. This is a great reef dive. I dived to approx. 21m and was in the water for about an hour. Visibility was again very good – up to 40m.

General

Information: The western reef system of Palau runs unbroken from the West Channel to German Channel. The proper name for the reef where Siaes Corner is located is Rebotel Reef. There are many excellent dive sites along this extensive reef. Siaes Corner is not visited very often and makes a great drift dive when the tide is running.

Marine life: During the incoming tide, large schools of grey reef sharks, barracuda and jacks can be seen patrolling the edge of the reef. Pyramid Butterflyfish, Square Anthias, Moorish Idols, Sergeant Majors, and Yellowtail Fusiliers are found in abundance along the edge and top of the reef. Blueface, Regal, and Emperor Angelfish

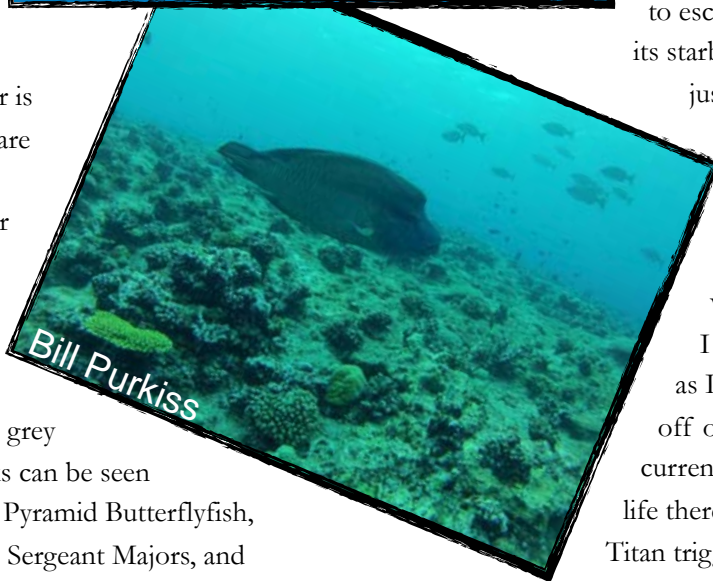
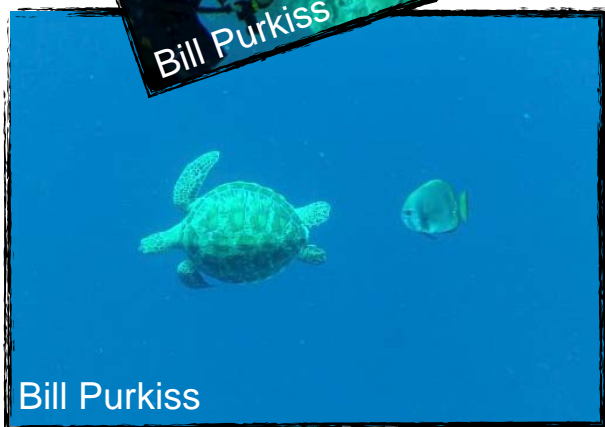
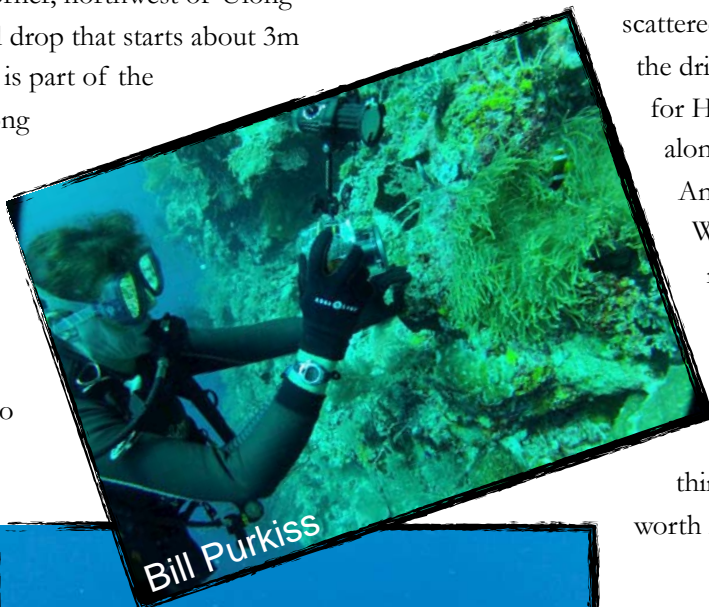
are generally seen along the wall. Clarki, and Blue Striped

Clownfish with their host anemones are scattered along the shallow reef. During the drift to the corner we kept an eye out for Hawksbill and Green turtles feeding along the top and edges of the reef.

Another great day of diving in Palau. We headed back to Sam's Tours ready for our usual afternoon beer and chips in the bar.

I'd like to thank Dave Casburn for organising another fantastic trip to Palau. If anyone is thinking of doing the trip – it's well worth it.

Philip Rose



Teshio Maru

It is the beginning of another glorious day.

The Teshio is a Japanese army cargo ship, lying at 25m. It is 100m long and was sunk on March 30, 1944 as it was trying to escape from an inner lagoon. It lies on its starboard side with a hole in the hull just between the two forward holds

caused by a torpedo. The two forward holds are empty but it is possible to swim through the torpedo hole to get to the hull, or vice versa.

I decided not to penetrate the ship as I had my 60mm macro on so I was off on a macro hunt. There was no current so it was an easy dive. The marine life there included red-breasted wrasse, Titan triggerfish, coral trout, box fish, nice sea fans and soft corals.



It was at the end of the dive I found a Lionfish – they are so photogenic with their flowing fins. It's that look they give you: "well would you like this side? Or maybe this is my best side?"

The wreck is heavily covered with black coral, soft coral colonies and large sea whips.

A nice dive!

Debbie Cook

The Big Drop-off

The sea conditions were slightly rougher than the preceding 9 dive days and produced the occasional bumpy ride but was still very tame compared with the usual local Sydney dive trips. By now the boarding, checking nitrox mix and organising gear was a well rehearsed ritual. The Big Drop-off was about an hour trip and located just at the eastern end of the German Chanel. The boat was lightened firstly by Deb and her new fascination, Nick the professional photographer, starting just before the Big Drop-off.

Wall dives don't seem to get much better than this one: enter a clear, deep blue ocean and then drift beside a spectacular wall comprising sea fans, soft corals, sponges, anemones and an abundant array of small reef species. The biggest problem was ensuring that you did not miss the passing parade out in the blue water such as sharks, turtles and their companion batfish. Towards the end of the dive the shallower plateau provided an amazing array of schools of fish, pyramid butterfly fish, sea cucumbers, Moorish idols, corals, large humphead napoleon wrasse and a large groper.

After this we had another lunch in paradise. Luckily we were early to the island and had it to ourselves for most of the time. Extra time was needed to ensure a good current was running at the next dive site.

Blue Holes

After swimming over the reef a 3m diameter shaft allowed entry to very large cavern, the floor being 40m, which contained other under-water exits. Several large gorgonias were on the walls of the cavern. At the back of the cavern was another entrance to a smaller cavern. It is marked with a rope and buoy and was the scene of a diving tragedy some years ago. After floating throughout the cavern and taking the usual variety of happy snaps revealing the entrances silhouetting the divers, we started the drift dive towards Blue Corner.

Visibility was once again excellent, 40-50m, allowing us to take in the full beauty and spectacular variety of fish, corals, sea whips, lettuce coral, green turtles, harlequin sweetlips, pipefish, big eye trevally, regal angelfish and pelagics along the wall. White tips and grey reef sharks were once again abundant near and at Blue Corner.

Bill Purkiss



© David Casburn '12



© David Casburn '12



Pacific Jewel “Live Aboard” Cruise and Dive Trip

Tuesday 9 July – Wednesday 18 July 2013

Cruise the Pacific and dive at each port!

The plan is for group of St George Scuba members to travel on the same Pacific cruise and to dive at all the ports along the way. With a minimum group of six divers we can pre-arrange the dive centres to pick us up directly from the wharf at each port, ensuring the maximum amount of dive time.

While in port, any non-diving partners will be able to arrange other activities either by themselves or together, making this trip ideal for members with non-diving partners!

As there is in effect no weight limit you can bring as much dive gear as you want, cameras and all. I have even taken my own lead on past trips (trim weights only)!

While many members may have dived in Vanuatu before, not many may have dived at Easo on Lifou. Lagoon Safaris is a boutique operation, in a pristine location, run from a shipping container by expat Annabelle. Lifou is part of the Loyalty Islands group: <http://www.lagoon-safaris.nc/>

With return airfares costing about the same as the whole trip it is a rare opportunity to sample diving at the Isle of Pines: <http://www.kunie-scuba.com>

In Port Vila, Vanuatu we may possibly dive with the new dive operator, Devil's Point Dive: <http://www.devilspointdive.com>

While on cruises I have scuba dived many times overseas and there is a lot to be said for it. No luggage limits; no need for non-diving days when travelling at sea level; personal fibreglass lined shower for washing and drying your gear. Also, you arrive where you dive (the Ocean) so direct transfer is possible and you get to sample multiple locations.

Finally, you have limited guilt over non-diving fellow travellers!!

Pricing and itinerary on next page...

Contact Marc Werner Mob: 0407239080





Pacific Jewel “Live Aboard” Cruise and Dive Trip

Tuesday 9 July – Wednesday 18 July 2013

Preliminary costing twin share

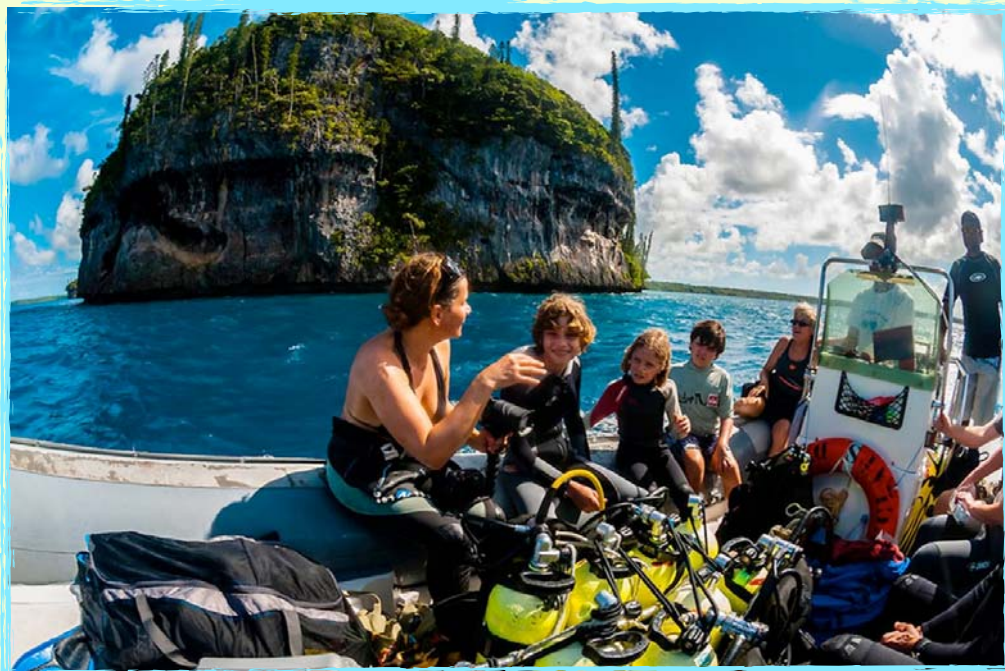
\$1200 non diver (cruise only twin share)

\$1550 diver (as above + 3 double boat dives) including tanks, weights and cruise ship transfers

Itinerary

Tuesday	09JUL2013	Depart Sydney 1600hrs	Australia		
		at sea			
Saturday	13JUL2013	Vila	Vanuatu	TBA	Double
Sunday	14JUL2013	Lifou	Loyalty Islands	Lagoon Safaris	Double
Monday	15JUL2013	Isle of Pines	New Caledonia	Kunie Scuba Center	Double
		at sea			
Wednesday	18JUL2013	Arrive Sydney 0700hrs	Australia		

Anyone with questions on this trip or diving while cruising contact Marc Werner.



Contact Marc Werner Mob: 0407239080



SEA BRAGGIN'

WHAT'S COMING UP?

WHEN	WHAT/ WHERE	CONTACT	WHEN	WHAT/ WHERE	CONTACT
Sun 9 Dec	Boat Dive Osborne Shoals	Shelley Brueseker shellsb@bigpond.net.au	Sat 15 Dec	Bare Island morning dive	Michael McFadyen michael@michaelmcfadyenscuba.info
Wed 19 Dec	Club Meeting Rowers on Cooks Club	Jason Coombs j.coombs@unsw.edu.au	Sun 23 Dec	Shore Dive The Monument (BBQ?)	Ken Ridley kenridley49@gmail.com
Mon 31 Dec	Shore Dive Shiprock	Ken Ridley kenridley49@gmail.com	Sat 6 Jan	Deep Dive SS Tuggerah/ Undola	Michael McFadyen michael@michaelmcfadyenscuba.info
Sat 12 Jan	Shore Dive Kurnell	Eddie Ivers eddie@iprimus.com.au	Sun 13 Jan	Boat Dive Five Islands	Natasha Naude natasha@bluecucumber.com

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