



SEA BRAGGIN'

St George Scuba Club Newsletter

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2012 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As we approach our 40th Anniversary in February 2013, the club has never been in better shape in terms of members, activities and our finances, which are all at record levels. We are now the biggest independent dive club in NSW – and quite possibly in Australia.

We set a new record of 174 members in 2012 - up by 9 on last year, which was the previous record. We now have members in other states and countries including Victoria, Queensland, India and the US. I would especially like to mention one member – Janine Gregson - who is currently serving Australia in Afghanistan. (Postscript – happily, Janine has now returned home, safe and sound!)

This year we have a couple big milestones amongst our longest serving - and Life Members – of the Club. Geoff Sanders, who is our longest member, clocks up 35 years this year. Les Catterson has been a member for 30 years. In addition to being long-term members of the club, Geoff and Les have each made significant contributions over many years, including both serving in different positions on the club committee. What great contributions.

During the year we have what would have to be an unprecedented 14 trips organised, including interstate to Queensland, and overseas to Fiji, Bali and Palau. Trips around NSW include two trips each to Woolli, Shellharbour and Jervis Bay, as well as trips to Port Stephens, South West Rocks, Montague Island and Stockton Beach.

2012 snapshots Carol's Memorial Plaque



Deco Chamber Visit



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In addition to diving, we had also had a trip to the new deco chamber at POWH, the Blue on Tour film night, the anniversary dinner, Christmas in July, and the unveiling of the plaque at Bare Island for Carol Martin.

Earlier in the year works were completed at Shiprock, providing a major improvement in access. No more sliding in the mud and swinging on the rope! The work was made possible by a gift from the late Jeanie Sinclair, who lived next to the reserve. Jeanie left a bequest of land and \$100,000 in her will. Very generous!

During the year we have also had a proposal from the Commonwealth for a huge new marine reserve. Among other areas it would increase protection at dive destinations including Osprey Reef and the Cod Grounds. This is not yet law so I urge you to lobby the Commonwealth Government to let them know how important it is.

I would like to thank the committee members - our Vice-President Peter Flockart, our Assistant Secretary//Treasurer David Casburn, and our Webmaster Michael McFadyen, who have all put their hands up for another year.

After 4 years our Treasurer Mark Ridsdale has stood down. When he started 4 years ago we had less than 100 members. Today the club has grown beyond any of our expectations. This means that activities, trips deposits and cheques have all increased, generating a huge task for the treasurer. Mark shouldered this additional responsibility diligently and without complaint. He also negotiated no fee arrangements with the bank, which have saved the club money. Thank you, Mark.

A special mention to Ray Moulang, who has decided not to put his hand up for Newsletter Editor again. Having done the newsletter myself I know how much work it is. Thank you, Ray.

Eddie Ivers, who has been our steady scribe for the time I have been president, keeping us honest with his minute taking, has decided not to run again as Secretary. Thank you, Eddie.

I would like to welcome our new committee members - Digby Naude as Secretary, Kelly McFadyen as Treasurer, and Natasha Naude as Newsletter Editor. It's great to have a couple of female members putting their hands up to better balance the gender mix. Our diving activities continue to be supported by the generosity of the boat owners. As we hit a membership record we also have what I believe to be a record of nine boats. A special thank you to: Michael McFadyen, Dave Casburn, Ian Gowan, John Beddie, Ray Moulang, Wayne Heming, Peter Beaumont, Bruce Harrison and Phil Short.

The efforts of our boat owners really underscores what is great about the club. Not only do we have lots of members, we have lots of members who contribute and get involved. Ultimately the club's value is the sum of all members' voluntary efforts. I would like to thank everyone who has contributed during the year to making the club the great success it is.

Remember to keep safe and enjoy your diving.

Jason Coombs, President

Club Events 2012



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GREAT SYDNEY DIVING

25th August 2012

On Saturday 25 August Eddie, Heinz, Rudy and myself headed out from Port Botany. Our first stop was M & K Reef.

Conditions were looking great, we could see over 10m down the anchor rope. M & K Reef was named after Michael and Kelly McFadyen and you can read about it on Michael's web page:

http://www.michaelmcfadyenscuba.info/viewpage.php?page_id=703

With visibility around 15m we spotted a giant Bull Ray, which wasn't impressed with our presence and left the scene quickly. At the end of the dive we spotted a juvenile Zebra Lionfish.

Our second dive of the day was at Tupia Point. Here we found a Moray Eel, Weedy Sea Dragon and a number of PJ's, and another giant Bull Ray. Visibility was still around 15m.

The wind had picked up a little and both Heinz and Eddie were feeling the cold and decided to sit out the third dive at the Whale Watch Platform. Visibility was still around 15m and here the water temperature in some spots was down to 13 degrees (not like the nice 17-18 degrees at M & K Reef, and Tupia Point). Rudy and myself did the normal dive here, heading south to the caves where we found yet another giant Bull Ray and some PJ's. Then we headed north around the point and back to the anchor.

Conditions were almost perfect and it just goes to show you that Sydney can put on some great diving.

Photos of these dives can be found at:

http://dive.hemnet.com.au/images/2012/25th_aug_2012.htm

Wayne Heming

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

Wayne's photos



Eddie Ivers and Port Jackson



Juvenile Zebra Lionfish

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Wayne's photos (Continued)



Bull Ray

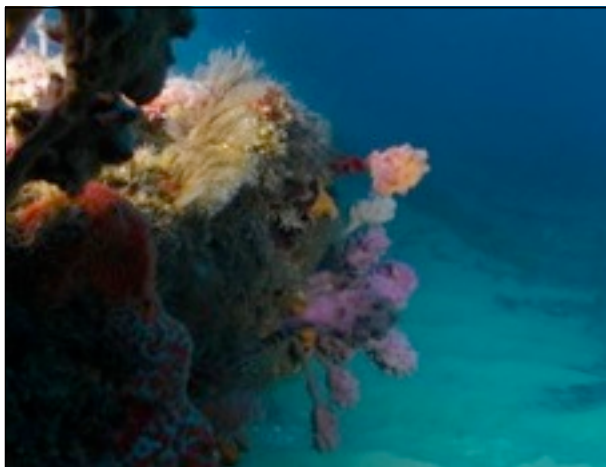


Scorpionfish

PIZZA REEF

22nd August 2012

Divers: Les Caterson, Michael McFadyen, Ian Hittman, John Delezio, Phil Goodman and Paul Pacey



It was a beautiful morning on Wednesday 22nd August and we all boarded Le Scat for a dive at Pizza Reef. The sky was overcast and a light breeze was blowing over a calm sea – perfect!

When we anchored the visibility looked excellent but we were later to find that it was a bit murky on the way down but once on the bottom the vis was excellent at about 15 metres. The water was unusually warm on top (maybe 18C?) but it was somewhat cooler on the bottom at 15C according to Michael's computer.

Not only was the vis good but it was a "fish soup" day. There was a huge school of Sea Pike with Yellowtail darting in amongst them. More interesting was a few groups of large Tasmanian Trumpeter's with some extremely well fed Blue Morwong hanging around as well.

We had anchored a short distance south east of the cave and as we passed the cave I was looking for a Devil Fish but no such luck today. Michael later reported there was one near the cave but not in the cave itself.

When it came time to leave the anchor had other ideas and decided that it wanted to stay at Pizza Reef. Phil volunteered to go down and untangle it. Phil had earlier let on that this was his first dive for 58 days – unheard of for Phil to be out of the water for so long (he'd been swanning around Europe). So we just figured he just wanted to spend some more time in his beloved underwater world.

A quick run back to Dark Bay to have morning tea with Carol and then back to the boat ramp. Thanks for a great day out guys.

Paul Pacey

Photos: John Delezio

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It's out there again - Let's do it!

The great Swansea
Dive and Drive is on
again

NOW TO NEW DATE
Sat 24/Sun 25 November
2012

Come along and have some fun in
the dunes.

Dive the bridge with dive time to
be confirmed
(will be approx. 8:30am hit the
water - 6:09am Fort Denison with
1 hour Daylight savings).

Limited spaces for non-four
wheel drivers but divers.

Email back to me if you want to
come along and I will add you to
the growing numbers.

Camp overnight!

Contact Ray at rayscases@aol.com



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FIJI

August 2012

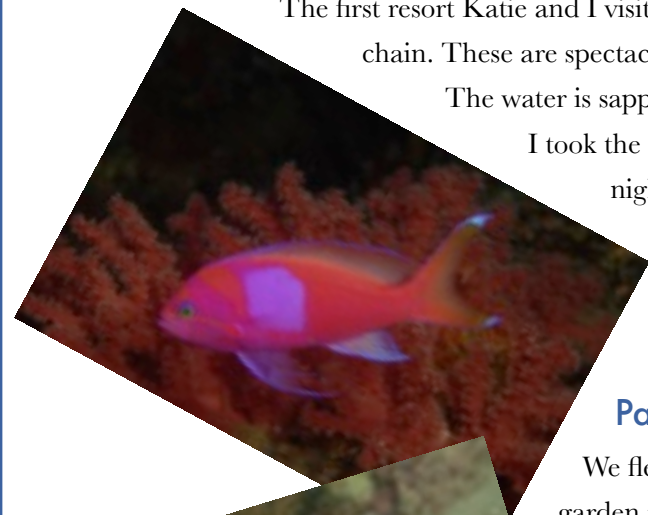
The first resort Katie and I visited was Octopus Resort in the North West of Fiji in the Yasawa Island chain. These are spectacular volcanic islands with white sandy beaches fringed with rainforest. The water is sapphire blue and the coral reefs are healthy.

I took the dive package for the week and ended up with 15 dives, including 2 night dives.

I dived with Kuki, who is one of the most experienced Fijian dive instructors. He found us all sorts of great things to photograph, including lots of unusual nudibranchs, shrimps and sea spiders.

Paradise Taveuni

We flew to Taveuni and stayed for 10 days at Paradise resort. This is a garden resort with the most beautiful grounds and flowers. It faces west. Each evening, the ritual sunset watching coincided with happy hour. I ended up doing 23 dives here on the White Wall on Rainbow reef, and at Vuna Reef on the south tip of Taveuni. Rainbow Reef has numerous excellent dives



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and the claim that it is the best diving in Fiji is well founded.

The home reef had been one of the best home reefs in any resort in Fiji but has been smashed by crown of thorns sea stars. However, this is still a good dive. The fish here are tame and will feed on yesterday's bread. I spent 110 minutes photographing little reef fish such as Golden Angelfish and Butterfly Fish. They have a resident Blue Ribbon Eel as well, a few minutes from your Bure.

Rainbow reef has shark dives, Wall dives, and some amazing coral bommies like Jerry's Jelly. This is a coral head covered in all colours of soft corals. Lots of world travelled divers rave about these sites and they are



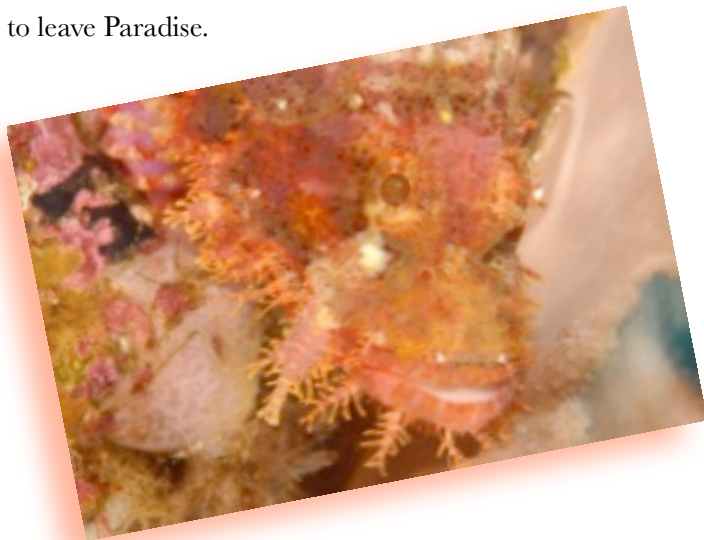
certainly wonderful dives.
Vuna Reef is wall diving. We saw a family of six Grey Reef sharks and two



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Hawksbill Turtles, as well as Humpback whales.

Paradise is an excellent resort. The Fijian staff are all great. Seppo is the groundsman but he doubles as an amazing Master of Ceremonies and he is also in the band. Seppo organised all the entertainment and got us all dancing and drinking kava. It was sad to leave Paradise.



Voli Voli Resort

Voli Voli is my favourite resort in Fiji. It is on the main island, Viti Levu, on the North side. Voli Voli has access to the Vatu I Ra passage, 20 nautical miles to the East, and has many excellent reefs to the west. You could dive Voli Voli for a month and not do the same dive twice.

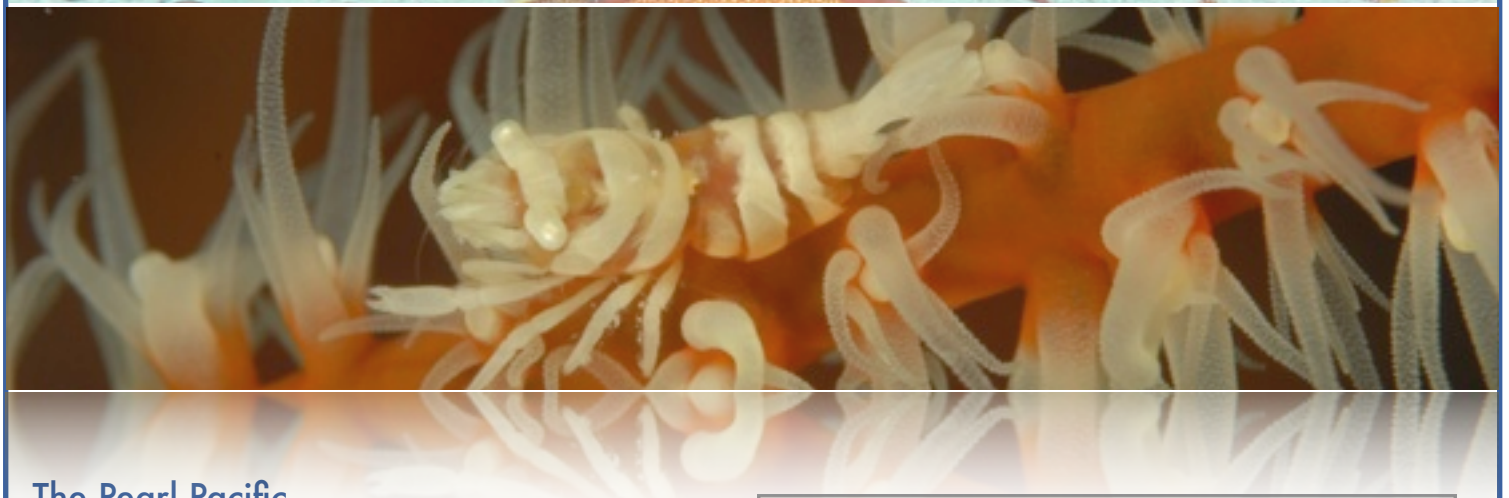
The Vatu or Bligh Passage is world famous for the amazing colourful reefs, the adrenalin charged drift dives and the pelagic fish. Some of the reefs are so full of life that photography is a little overwhelming. I think a video is the perfect way to capture the colour and fish life.

During our two week stay here, I did 27 dives. The highlights included several types of shrimp, two types of Ghost Pipe Fish, Stonefish, Bump Headed Parrotfish, Sharks, Sea Snakes and schools of Trevally. I missed the Hammerhead sightings.

Voli Voli has very comfortable, luxurious accommodation and is one of the cheaper resorts in Fiji. You actually get good value for money.



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The Pearl Pacific

Our last six days were at the Pearl at Beqa Lagoon on the South side. We dived the Bull Sharks and some of the famous reef dives there. There is a resident Stonefish at this site, which we managed to get out in the open. The reef fish ganged up on it and seemed to be dive-bombing it. They were harassing the Stonefish very aggressively. My guess was that the Stonefish had probably eaten plenty of the Damselfish family over the previous few weeks and they were getting revenge.

On Scissors Reef, I managed to get a good shot of the Three Spot Golden Angelfish. The next day, we found a large Mantis Shrimp in a burrow. Up in the shallows, the dive guide



showed us a golden Leafy Scorpionfish.

Our Fiji sojourn had come to an end. Forty days of sun, diving and having numerous happy hours and sunsets. We had plenty of magic moments and I did plenty of great dives, 73 in all. What a way to go!

Mike Scotland



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JERVIS BAY PART 1

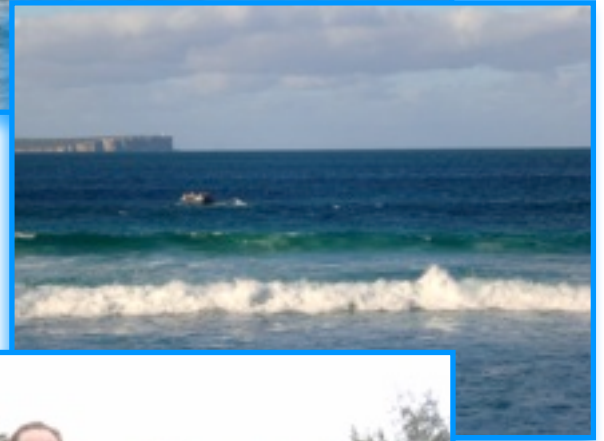
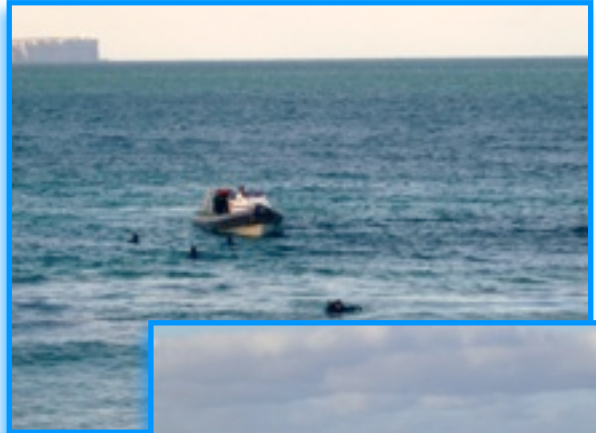
20-22 July 2012

Divers: Caroline Corcoran, James Dean, Greg Blackburne, Shelley Breuseker, Maxine Hayden, Digby Naude, Natasha Naude, Bram Harris, Mat Peeling, Nancy Scoleri, Gary Perkins, Kelly McFadyen, Michael McFadyen

Support crew: Kelli Dean

On the weekend of 21st and 22nd of July a group of 14 members of the St George Scuba Club descended on Jervis Bay for two days of diving and camaraderie. After arriving at various times we met up in the loungeroom, where the focus was on Sven, the Swedish masseur, who performed his own version of agony/ecstasy on anyone daring enough to sit within his reach. This was made even more entertaining according to how much alcohol you had consumed. We decided to retire early in anticipation of the days' diving ahead.

On Saturday we awoke to overcast skies and, with reports of huge swells in Sydney, we didn't expect the best of conditions here either. Our fears were realized when we arrived at Murrays Beach to meet the boat. Waves were breaking along the beach



and even a few dolphins about 100m away were being swamped by the swell. The boat arrived and trying to swim our gear out and load proved to be very difficult and, at times, dangerous. Nancy and Kelly couldn't wait any longer and both logged a dive before we even boarded!

We headed to the northern end of Bowen Island as getting outside the bay was clearly not possible. We did a drift dive and at 26m we had about 10m viz and 14-15 degree water. Large boulders up high gave way to a sandy bottom, where we encountered Weedy Sea Dragons, large numbers of Port Jacksons, Boarfish, Gorgonian corals and the usual Mosaic Stars, a Grouper, and divers sporting photographic accessories. After a



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surface interval on shore our second dive was a drift from the same spot into The Nursery and we saw pretty much the same as the first dive. After an adventurous relay of ferrying gear back to shore under rough conditions we headed back to the house to rinse off. Leading the way in their shiny new vessel was Tash and Digs in their truckster named the Black Pearl. James had trouble equalising on the first dive and had to bail, struggled into a second dive (during which he managed to flood his camera), so decided to quit while he was behind and head back to Sydney with his wife, Kelli.

That night we celebrated no loss of life with an awesome curry night. Brownie points and a big thank you go to Shelley for the fish curry, Gary for the butter chicken, Tash for the potato curry and salad, and

Michael for the yellow beef curry. Dinner conversation centred around Hobbits and who had eaten lunch with Gollum, various waxing techniques(!), and what to do with a regulator filled with sand (thanks for the tips, Kelly). Then we adjourned to the loungeroom for more fun with Sven, while Michael updated us with scores from the Rabbitohs game. **GO THE BUNNIES!!!!** After several hours of bragging and bullsh*t it was lights out and chargers on for round two.

The next morning was cold and wet as we headed off to board the boat from a jetty this time. A Mexican Wave performed by all on board was the only swell we saw until we reached the entrance to the Bay, where waves were crashing on the rocks off Bowen Island. We stayed within the Bay again and dived North Bowen



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Island for a second day. We quickly descended to get away from the surge but the viz had dropped to 5m, improving to 8m in parts. However, our efforts were rewarded with sightings of Seahorses and Sea Spiders (nice spotting, Kelly!), two Green Moray Eels, more Weedies and again many adult Port Jackson sharks crowded sardine-like into every nook and cranny. The trip ashore for morning tea was cold, windy and miserable, but hot soup quickly warmed our spirits.

Back at the house we devoured a lunch of hamburgers before cleaning up and breaking camp to head home.

May I extend a huge thank you to Natasha for organizing such a great weekend, which we all enjoyed despite the weather (Ed: with the possible exception being James, whose weekend was a bit crap).

Maxine Hayden

Photos: Bram Harris & Caroline Corcoran



The sun finally came out and lit up the water surrounding our anchored boat, making it look like we were on a deserted tropical island. We then sped back to Bowen for our fourth dive in the same spot (there were no other options given the conditions) and several of our divers were met by a curious seal. I spent most of my dive fending off a vain Blue Grouper from bombing all my photos.

JERVIS BAY PART 2

17-19 July 2012

Divers: Caroline Corcoran, James Dean, Peter Flockart, Greg Blackburne, Shelley Breuseker, Mark Ridsdale, Vera MacGregor, Ray Moulang, Dyllan Montford-Sinclair, Mike Scotland, Andy Moulang

Support crew: Natasha, Digby, Talese

Heading out of Sydney on Friday the weather was all over the place but dominated by a chilly W/NW. I beat the traffic and grabbed some Berry donuts on the way down and arrived in Jervis Bay around 3pm to find Ray and Dyllan sacked out on the couch watching the fabulous movie "Speed 2" (on videotape no less!). Ray and Dyllan had planned to dive Kiama on the way down but scrubbed it due to rough entry point.



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Gradually the crew started to arrive and we all went up the road to the golf club for a Chinese banquet and once again failed to win a meat tray. This was made all the more galling by the table next to us winning five. Natasha became quite aggressive and vocal in her dismay and we had to leave. Dinner was followed with some football viewing and an early night for most.

Unfortunately Natasha and Digby were scrubbed by illness so we only had 11 divers on Saturday and Sunday.

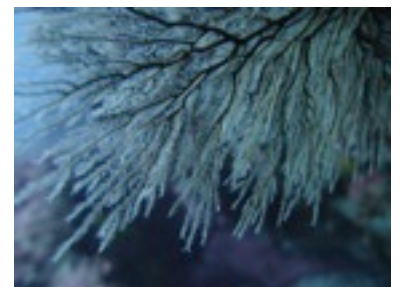
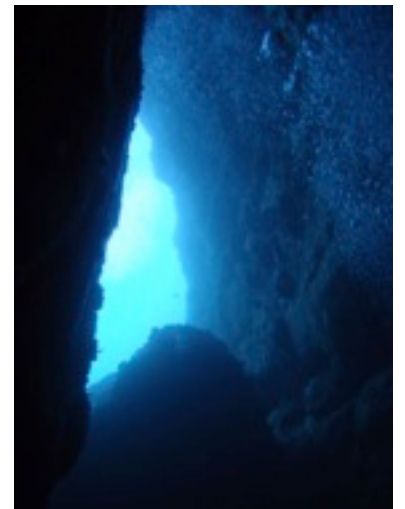
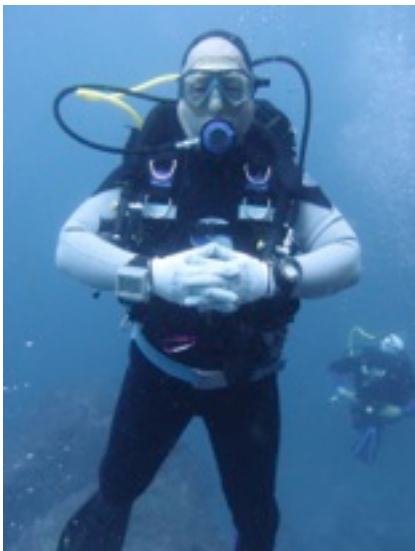
We kicked off with an easy start at the Huskisson boat ramp where Steve from "Ulladulla Dive" had the boat

(an open top RHIB) ready to load. After a short trip down the river we flew across the bay, with the wind roaring behind us.

The wind by this time had created a westerly swell in the bay but had also completely flattened the water sheltered by the cliffs, so we went around Point Perpendicular and headed North, where after short debate we took advantage of the complete lack of swell and dove "Smugglers Cave" or maybe amphitheatre (there is some debate as to which it was).

Smugglers Cave/ Amphitheatre

We anchored in 20m just out from the cliff edge and descended into 15m+ visibility. The cave entrance is huge and curves to the left around to the outside again, where you can then follow a 25m deep wall back round to the start. Inside, heading back under the cliff, the cave continues back quite a way and up a series of steps. Not much life in the cave itself, but it is a gorgeous dive around the cave and on the cliff sides outside it.



After everyone was back on board we headed up to Drum and Drumsticks and had a quick lunch and toilet break in a small sheltered bay.

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Drum and Drumsticks

We anchored on the north side of the Island in 10m of water, about 20m out from around 30 seals up on the cliffs and with at least 20+ already in the water.

Visibility was down to maybe 12m (boohoo) but the seals were fantastic and very playful. Some groups explored another cave and another group went searching for a wreck but Caroline and I spent nearly 50 minutes just playing with the seals.

Also of note were 2 Eastern Blue Devils under ledges on the sides of the cave mouth.

After these two great dives everyone was buzzing and the cliff shelter meant we got back to Point Perpendicular in no time, just to turn straight into the blowing Westerly and the 3-4ft chop it had whipped up. Slow going across the bay (45 minutes) but the sun was out when we got back and everyone grabbed some lunch and shuffled back to the house.

For dinner a mexican feast was prepared under Natasha's masterful direction including tacos, burritos, nachos and fantastic salsa and dips. The quality and amount of food satisfied everybody so much that we

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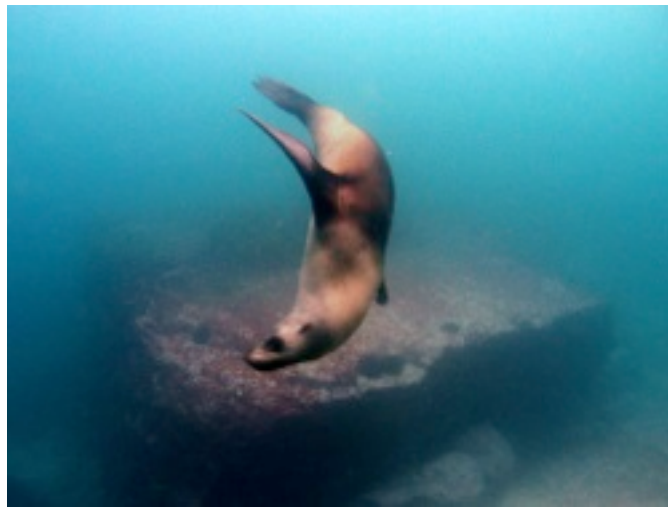
let New Zealand win the Rugby, as a thanks to Natasha (ha ha – Ed. Postscript – you even let us beat you 22:0 in the following match!).

On Sunday morning we loaded up again at the boat ramp and headed back out across the bay, where a southerly swell was building. The decision was made to head out via the channel south of Bowen Island and south to Spider Cave.

Spider Cave

This is a small bay with a tall ravine cutting into the back of it. Visibility was around 10-15m but cloudy in spots and there were a lot of jellyfish in the first 5m. The cliff face extended underwater making a great long wall to follow. The ravine was open to the sky in places with large boulders trapped at different heights, making some marvelous scenery.

Once back on board the swell had lifted a bit so we headed back inside the Bay where we were dropped off at a small beach for morning tea and prepped for the second dive.



North Bowen Island Drift

The North side of Bowen Island (between Jarvis Bay heads) was quite sheltered so we were dropped off quite a way around to the ocean side and drifted back to the sheltered side inside the bay. We spotted huge amounts of schooling fish and quite a few Port Jacksons and a

few Blue Groupers (not very friendly) and a juvenile weedy sea dragon.

When all divers were back on board we made a quick trip across the bay (20 minutes this time) and back to house for a Mexican leftovers lunch and a tidy up.

Water temperature hovered between 13-14 degrees over the weekend but luckily we could get out of the wind and we had sunshine quite often.

Thanks to everyone for a fantastic weekend and another huge shout out to Natasha for organising and for the fantastic food.

James Dean

Photos: James Dean & Caroline Corcoran



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WHAT'S COMING UP?

WHEN	WHAT/ WHERE	CONTACT	WHEN	WHAT/ WHERE	CONTACT
Fri 7 Sept - Sun 16 Sept	Bali Live Aboard	Jason Coombs j.coombs@unsw.edu.au	Sat 8 Sept	Boat dive Barrens Hut	Gary Perkins perkinsdive@gmail.com
Sat 15 Sept - Sat 22 Sept	Bali Additional week	Jason Coombs j.coombs@unsw.edu.au	Sat 15 Sept	Special Night Dive Kurnell	Gary Dunnett garydunnett@examail.com.com
Wed 19 Sept	Club Meeting Rowers on Cooks Club	David Casburn (in Jason's absence) dcasburn@iinet.net.au	Sat 6 Oct - Sun 7 Oct	ODEX Dive Expo Homebush	N/A
Sun 7 Oct	Deep dive SS Kelloe	Michael McFadyen michael@michaelfadycubascuba.info	Sun 7 Oct	Shore dive The Leap	Eddie Ivers eddieivers@iprimus.com.au

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Feedback on newsletter format appreciated.