



# Sea Braggin'

## St George scuba club newsletter March 2015



Photo of Pygmy Pipe Horse by Mike Scotland

A big thankyou to members for sending in articles and or photos:

Les Caterson, Wayne Heming, Carole Harris, Michael McFadyen, Mike Scotland (Editor), Roger Lee, Ida DiCamillo.

# Diving in April

Date	Event	Contact
3 -7 th April	Montague Island	Roger Lee
4- 7 th April	Easter boat dives	Kelly McFadyen
Sat 11 th April	boat dive	Tricia Henry
15 th April	Club Meeting	Natasha Naude
Sat 19 th April	Deep dive	Gary Perkins
Sat 25 th April	Anzac day shore, Bare Is	Natasha Naude
Sun 26 th April	Solitary Islands week	Deb Cooke
Sun 26 April	Sea Tulip Reef	Phil Short
2 May	Dee Why Deep Dive	Jane Scarsbrook
Thursdays	night diving	Michael McFadyen

Note: lots of other diving happening. Please look up dive calendar.

Note: If you want to post a dive, the official channel for communication is by email. Most people send both an email and a Facebook notification. (Please remember that some people do not use Facebook.)

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# A GREAT WHITE EXPERIENCE

BY LES CATERSON (2004)

Have you ever wondered how you would react if a white pointer shark suddenly confronted you?

Ever since I took up diving in 1953 I have pondered this thought. Would I panic and head straight for the surface? Would I be so frightened that I wouldn't be able to move or would I just have a heart attack and die?

I am now able to answer that question and I am happy to say that I not only survived but that I managed to remain remarkably calm under the circumstances.

The story starts on the long weekend in October when I was diving with the St. George Scuba Club. After four days of great diving, my wife Elly and myself, instead of returning directly to Sydney, travelled around doing the tourist thing for a couple of days and then booked ourselves into a dive lodge for an overnight stop.

The next day the shop had a boat heading out for a double dive and I booked myself on.

After a short boat ride, we pulled up onto a mooring and started to gear up. A second boat was nearby and they were going to dive the same area.

On our boat, besides the captain and myself, were one experienced dive master and three Norwegians with limited experience. The divemaster was giving his usual spiel such as "Have you ever dived with sharks before? No? Well around here we see lots of Grey Nurse sharks. Don't be alarmed. They won't hurt you."

While he was talking to them, I finished getting ready, jumped in and headed for the bottom of the mooring where I said I would wait.

The water was a bit dirty with only about eight meter viz, which was a bit disappointing. There was a large school of black drummer milling about, obviously waiting for the divemaster with his bag of food.

I looked past the mooring rope and about six or seven meters away I could see a shark.

"Wow, a Grey Nurse already, I think I will swim over and have a look"

He must have thought the same thing because suddenly we are only about two or three meters apart. That is when my mind clicked into gear and I realized that this was not a Grey Nurse shark, but a White Pointer.

He suddenly took a right hand turn and swam around to my left. I turned with him and I was able to see a full side on view of him “ up close and personal. ”

He was about three meters long and swimming slowly. I kept turning to keep him in sight when suddenly; another diver facing me blocked my view. One of the Norwegian girls had dropped down behind me when I wasn't looking. I gave her the sign for shark but she either didn't understand or she probably thought that I had seen a Grey Nurse; anyway she didn't turn around to look. I grabbed her and pulled her out of the way just in time to see that the shark had turned to have another look at us. Suddenly it did a U-turn and vanished. That was the last I saw of it.

I looked to the mooring and saw that all the divers were down, the divemaster being the last. I went up to him and gave the shark sign. I then realized that he was about to feed the black drummer. I made urgent signs not to open the bag of food, grabbed one of the girl's slates and wrote the word “WHITE” on it. He obviously got the message because he indicated to everyone to stay low and close to the wall.

We sort of crept around for about five minutes before returning to the mooring line for a fairly quick ascent, with no safety stop.

The divemaster's first words to me were “ Boy, you certainly know how to stuff up a good dive, don't you! ”

I then realized that I was the only diver to see this shark. “They probably don't believe me”. How embarrassing!

Just then there was a shout from the other boat. Two divers had entered and exited the water in very quick fashion. They had been chased out by “a Bloody four meter White Pointer “

Thank goodness someone else had seen it. I breathed a sigh of relief.

I think these two divers splashing into the water could explain why the shark lost interest in us and took off to see what all the surface noise was about.

On reflection it was an exhilarating experience. I am still amazed at how calm I was at the time. I guess that blood pressure pill that I take must be working, but I must admit that I'm still on a “ high ” about it.

There is one thing! If you think that you may not be able to recognize a “White” from another type of shark, think again. I can assure you that you will know, not only by its looks but also by the way it moves.

I'm sure, also, that I heard music in the background as well, so listen out.

(Maybe that was in my imagination.)

I thought the divemaster handled the situation very professionally. Just imagine having the responsibility for a group of divers at a time like that. He certainly runs a good operation, although he told Elly not to bring me back again.

Too bad:

As Arny says " I'll be back. "

## LOW PRESSURE INFLATOR O RING INSERTER (LOPIORI)

Firstly find a piece of tubing. I used some of the blue pipe that connects water filters. It is 1/4" or 6.5mm diameter. You will also need a piece of 1/4" (6.5mm) diameter dowel/wood And a pair of tweezers/long lose pliers.

Cut a piece 5mm in length.

After removing the old O ring and cleaning the inside of the hose. Insert the blue tube in the hose so the hole of the tube is over the Schrader valve. Squeeze the O ring in half and push inside the hose. Use the dowel and push the O ring down until it pops into place. Remove the blue tube with a pair of tweezers.

All up it should take you around 30 seconds to insert the O ring.

Photo in Wayne's web site.

Wayne Hemings

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



## DIVING IN THE PHILIPPINES

text and photos by Carole Harris



Philippines is part of the Indo-Pacific region, known as the Coral Triangle, and there numerous species are still being discovered. Puerto Galera is an 8 hour flight and several hours by van/boat transfer away, consists of several bays; Sabang, Small La Laguna and Big La Laguna with numerous dive shops/resorts to suit every budget. Our favourite is Atlantis Dive Resort <http://www.atlantishotel.com> who have great dive packages.

Blue Ring Octopus above and Flambuoyant Cuttlefish below and all photos in this article by Carole Harris







PG has more than 30 dive sites ranging from 6m-50m+, but the average dive site is around 25m. There are beautiful coral reefs, small wreckages and muck diving. Dive sites take 2-15 mins boat ride from the resort to the closest/furthest dive site. Some resorts offer day trips to Verde Island, Anilao and Chicken Feather Island.



A beautiful *Phyllodesmium* above and a *Hypselodoris* photo below by Carole Harris



What can you expect to see; ANYTHING and EVERYTHING, if you are lucky! Mimic octopus, wonderpus, blue-ring octopus, flamboyant cuttlefish, stargazer, ornate ghostpipefish, mandarin fish, frogfish (anglerfish), Ambon scorpionfish, seahorses, clownfish, scorpion leaf fish, candy coral crabs, orangutang crabs, zebra crabs, harlequin shrimps, turtles, the occasional shark, blue spotted rays, eagle rays, mantas and nudibranchs galore. There are tame schools of batfish on Sabang Wrecks and the Alma Jane who love having their photo taken, and the hairy goby who doesn't !



Hairy Goby photo by Carole Harris.

*Note from the editor. These are very hard to photograph and are less than half an inch long. Those people coming up to the Great Barrier Reef this year will see many of them in the fine lace corals on our trip.*

Apree-dives there's an option for a relaxing massage and/or a beer or two. There are many eateries in the bays, but recommend you try Capt'n Greggs, the view, good food and gin juice is great!

Getting there: Qantas, Philippine Airlines & Cebu Pacific have direct flights.



Ecto-parasite Harlequin shrimp on a Blue Linkia Sea Star.



Two Tryon's Risbeckia sand bulldozing sea slugs.

Best fishes/Carole





Mandarin Fish mating above. Beautiful shot of a Stargazer here by Carole Harris.







More great photos from Peurto Galera by Carole Harris

## BOAT DIVE TO TRUK LAGOON 23/02/2015 TO 7/03/2015

Text and photos by Mike Scotland

I was fortunate to go on board the Truk Siren for ten days of diving in Truk Lagoon and two days at Blue Lagoon. It was twenty-five years since I was last there. I managed thirty-six dives and enjoyed the trip immensely. Getting there! On the plus side, I got to Truk in sixteen hours. The return trip took about 51 hours. Don't you just love airport lounges.



My buddy on the Sankisan Maru is Niall the Operations manager from the Truk Siren. He had dived in Truk on live aboards for many years.



Some of the Wrecks are deteriorating badly. I suggest that you should get over there sooner rather than later. My guess is that quite a few of the wrecks will turn into rusty pancakes over the next twenty-five years. They will collapse and become unsafe to dive.

Anyone who saw that ABC special on Truk Lagoon last year should know that the journalist who made it was stretching the point, probably so he could spend more time there and dive while being paid. He spun a lot of doom and gloom. The story had more bull in it than a whole paddock full of cows!

I did a couple of deep penetration dives. The engine room of the Fujikawa Maru was full of amazing machinery and engines. However, I weigh up the pleasure of going into a potential death trap versus the gains to be had. My dive buddy did the deepest possible penetration of several wrecks. Two was more than enough for me. I am cautious when it comes to getting inside rust buckets. Some of the metal superstructure on the Fujikawa is looking quite unstable and large chunks of metal are flaking off in sheets half a metre square. These days your bubbles dislodge a lot of flakey rust and make the visibility deteriorate rapidly, after just a few breaths.



Photo of the telegraph, Nippo Maru with Operations manager from the Siren posing for me.

The Shinkoko, Fujikawa and the Sankisan Maru are my favorites because of the coral colour as well as the World War artifacts.



Truk is the perfect dive site for Nitrox. The extra bottom time is quite significant on many of the deeper wrecks and dramatically increases your discovery of the wrecks. There were a few divers there who carted their rebreathers over there. One English guy said he had to dismantle it at two immigration points to prove that it was not a bomb. It took him a day to rebuild it back to perfect before he could dive.

The Truk Siren is luxurious and has a great deal going for it. You do three to four dives a day. After diving, beer is free and the food is also very good.

When you consider the standard of hotel accommodation on the mainland, the Truk Siren is sheer luxury. My land based hotel has all the mod cons including a water jug and a dunny .. that was it! No Tea, coffee, fridge, tele or anything else. It did have four walls and a roof.



photos by Mike Scotland. This is the railing from the Hoki, the wreck with the Bulldozers, trucks and road building gear.

#### [WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS](#)

A special welcome to our dive club and to all other new members who have joined recently.

Zhicheng Deng

Sarah Morris

Julian Armstrong

Aidan Slevin

## GREAT BARRIER REEF / YONGALA TRIP MIKE SCOTLAND

I am organising another Great Barrier Reef Trip this year. The dates are Nov 8 to 14. It is time to pay a deposit of \$150. The boat is booked for six days of diving with up to 22 dives.

Diving on the Great Barrier Reef is one of the greatest adventures to be had on the planet. All divers should do it once a year. This trip is possibly the best value diving you will do. For under \$200 a day, you get four dives, food and accommodation and transport as well as great company.

I have 11 expressions of interest already. There are sixteen places. If you want to go, get a deposit to Caroline asap via internet banking. As usual, first in with the deposit gets priority. Let me know when you have paid on [mikescotland@bigpond.com](mailto:mikescotland@bigpond.com). Please send a CC to Caroline as well on [treasurer@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au](mailto:treasurer@stgeorgescubaclub.org.au) or her private email.



## WHAT YOUR EDITOR HAS BEEN UP TO IN MARCH 2015.

I have a story out in Sport Diving in Australia on diving in Lembah Straights, Sulawesi.

and one in Depth magazine on "Adventure diving in New Guinea." [www.depthmagazine.net](http://www.depthmagazine.net)

Finally, I have a story out in March Dive Log on Weedy Sea Dragons and Pipe Fish.

## Dive Numbers for Michael McFadyen

Total: 3741

Boat: 2331

Shore: 1409

Wrecks: 710

Reef: 3001

Planes: 26

Night: 447

Sydney: 2411

Bare Island: 430

SS Tuggerah: 123

Furtherest north: Norway fiords

Furtherest south: Near bottom of Tasmania

Deeper than 30 m: 905

With Kelly: 868

## SYDNEY DIVE CLEAN UP KURNELL

By Roger Lee

Thank you very much to all for your participation at the Sydney Dive Clean Up on Sunday, 1st March at Kurnell Botany Bay.

We had a big group of over 35 people joined by various clubs:-  
Abyss Dive Shop (<https://www.abyss.com.au/>)  
St. George Scuba (<http://www.stgeorgescubaclub.org.au/>)  
DOUTS (<http://douts.org/>)

This is first time we do a combined clean up event. It is such a great success !!!  
Lots of rubbish collected under water: broken surf boards, plastics and empty bottle.

Thank you to our sponsors - Accenture MDs for the food and drink, Abyss Dive Shop for free air fill and our food preparation volunteers, lovely salad :)  
We hope everyone had a good time and see you all again in our next activity.

## SEA JOHN GOES TO JERVIS BAY

Text and photos by Mike Scotland

We dived at Jervis Bay for four days during this week. We had two southerly changes which wiped out Sunday and Friday. We managed eight dives . Conditions were quite good but a



bit unsettled due to the southerlies. Present were JohnBeddie, Paul Pacey, Mike Scotland, Greb B and Shelley Breuseker.



John Beddie in the Arch above and a male Maori Wrasse below. By Mike Scotland



Octopus in her lair in a defensive pose.



#### ANNIVERSARY DINNER - SATURDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2015

34 St George Scuba Club members descended on Bamiyan Restaurant for an Afghani feast at Five Dock. I was most impressed at the number of “Shire residence” that were willing to cross that bridge!! I received numerous comments that the 3 entree 3 mains plus desert banquet was delicious and quite a few said they would return to the restaurant again to sample further delicacies in the future.

Thank you SGSC for supplying the wine and thank you all for coming and making it a great night.

Eda



# Your Committee

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## GUIDELINES FOR SENDING IN ARTICLES AND PHOTOS

Please send photographs as separate jpg files, (not png) rather than inserted into the article.

Convert them to about 120 to 200 kB.

Please type the story into Word rather than in your email. Email text is impossible to reformat. I do not have the time to retype your article.

Please rename with your name them from something complex such as 1G96O31P2Rf7photosO97S64S1%U#6^&#6X\$@ to something simple like "marys seaslug.jpg".

It will save me a lot of time, reformatting files, finding your photos and resizing photos etc.

Please run the spell check over your article.

Thanks.

Editor.