
Water Column

FEBRUARY 2021 ISSUE 16

Western Australian Underwater Photographic Society's Bi-annual Underwater Journal



**Sand Tracks and
Leighton Beach**

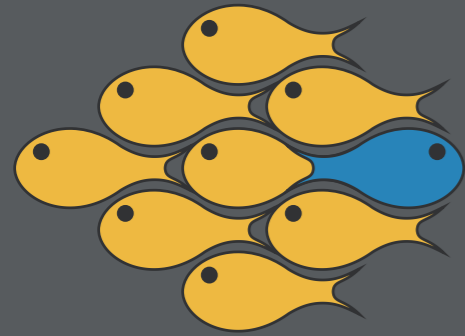
PrintWest results

Aboard the Falkor expedition

**Blennies and
threefins**

**Christmas
Island**

We sincerely thank all of the sponsors who have supported WAUPS over the years. Please remember these WAUPS sponsors when you are thinking of your next purchase.



Bluefish Photo

- Fine Art Printing
- Canvas & Block Mounted Prints
- Underwater Photography Courses

Ross & Mary Gudgeon

Phone: +61 412 862 305
 Email: info@bluefishphoto.com.au
 Web: www.bluefishphoto.com.au



DIVETUB

**U1/15 Coolibah Way
 BIBRA LAKE
 9418 7258**

**contact@divetub.com.au
www.divetub.com.au**

PERTH SCUBA

**Underwater Photo & Video Equipment
 Scuba Dive & Snorkeling Equipment
 Dive Courses - Beginner to Instructor**



WAUPS Members receive 10% discount on scuba diving equipment purchased at Perth Scuba on presentation of their current WAUPS member card.

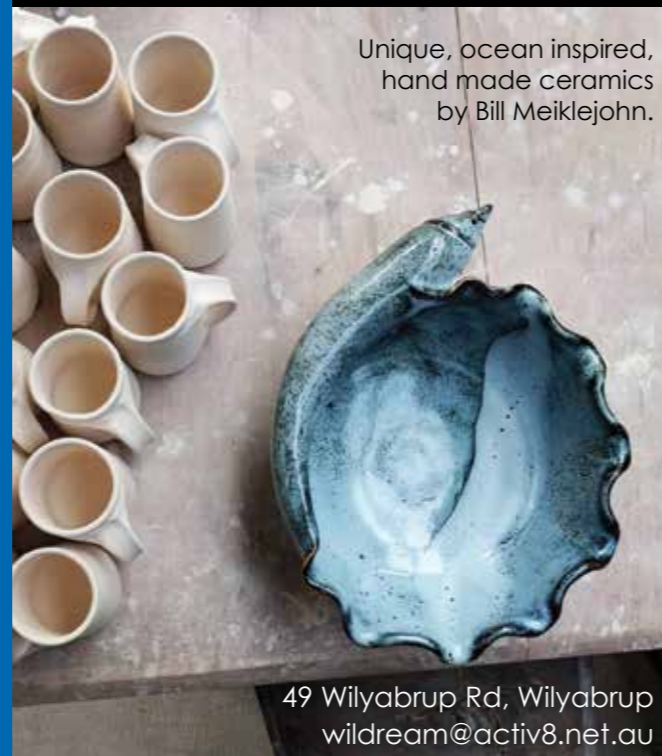


Professional advice and service on all of your underwater photo and video needs. Why go to the internet when you can build your system in store, work out everything you need and pay the same price in Perth? No waiting or freight costs!

We carry a huge range of Nauticam & Aquatica housings, ports, zoom gears and accessories, Sea & Sea strobes, housings & accessories, Inon strobes & accessories, Light & Motion Photo & Video lights, GoPro & the full GoPro accessory range and Ultralight Systems.

**4/180 Bannister Rd Canning Vale WA
 08 9455 4448 info@perthscuba.com**

WILLYABRUP DREAMING POTTERY

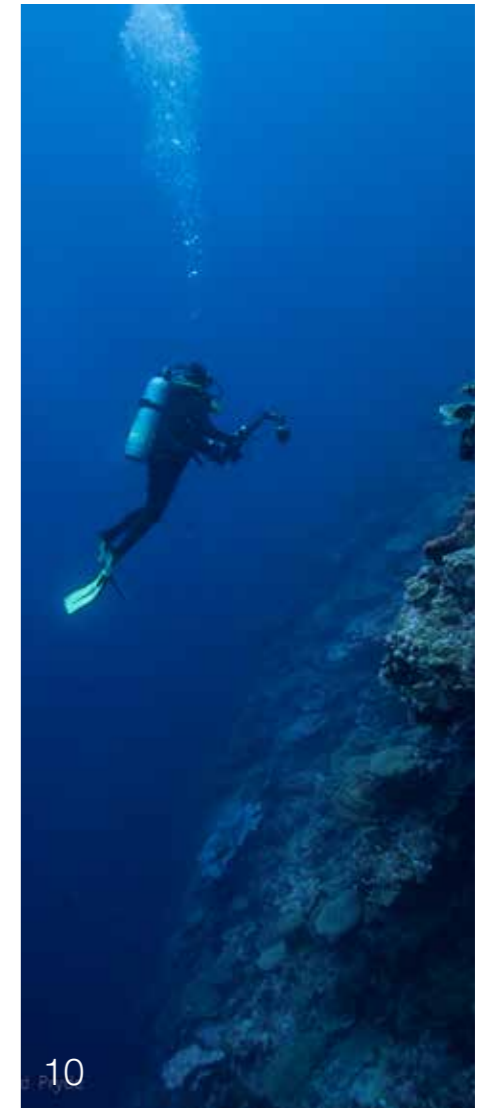


Unique, ocean inspired, hand made ceramics by Bill Meiklejohn.

49 Wilyabrup Rd, Wilyabrup
wildream@activ8.net.au

Water Column

FEBRUARY 2021 ISSUE 16



Contents

- | | |
|--|--|
| 4 Editorial by Viv Matson-Larkin | 14 WAPF 2020 PrintWest results |
| 5 PIXELS 2020 overall winner | 16 Falkor expedition by Angela Rossen |
| 6 Creature feature: Blennies and threespines | 20 Open and Novice Portfolio winners |
| 8 Local dive site: Sand Tracks and Leighton Beach | 21 The new WA Museum |
| 9 Spring weekend in Yallingup | 22 Technical article: Reflective light tubes |
| 10 Christmas Island trip report | 23 Parting shot Matt Smith |

Cover by Brad Pryde, taken using reflective light tubes

Publishing credits: Editor Viv Matson-Larkin Associate editors Mary Gudgeon, Ross Gudgeon
 Layout design Tammy Gibbs Printing UniPrint



Howdy Members,

Has not 2020 been such a topsy-turvy year, which most of us hoped would rapidly improve once we rolled into 2021. While we have a way to go yet for full-on dive destination travel plans interstate, let alone overseas, our hard border closures have at least allowed many to eventually safely vacation all over our state, and across to Christmas or the Cocos-Keeling Islands.

Most of you will be back at work by now, myself still recovering from the Christmas excesses - my hours of work sky-rocketed due to COVID so out the window went the time to exercise, and the chance to dive more, so I need quite a bit of help to zip up my wetsuit! Hopefully some of you got some new dive kit or photographic gear from Santa. One of my pressies was a Backscatter optical snoot & mini flash strobe. Once I get my head around how to use that properly I will write-up something on that.

In October, Ross and Mary Gudgeon volunteered on the WAUPS photography information desk for the 'We Love Diving Annual Open Day' held at Dolphin Scuba Welshpool. Late November, WAUPS wound up 2020 with the annual Christmas dive, this time at Ammo Jetty. A big thank to Ross and Mary for their assistance with both these events – catering for the after-dive Christmas feast, and their time at Dolphin Scuba.

On the WAPF competition side, WAUPS scored highly in PrintWest - Overall winners! Check out the images on pages 14-15. In the WAMM My Country competition, Bert de Wit won the People's Choice Award. Pat on the back to all the winners.

Congratulations also to the winners of our latest club competitions. The inaugural winner of the Short Video comp was Tammy Gibbs. Matt Smith was the Novice Portfolio winner. Ross Gudgeon was the overall winner of PIXELS 2020. The Golden Snapper Trophy was awarded to Jenny Ough. A huge thank you to the sponsors who graciously support all these competitions.

We are grateful to all our guest speakers and club members who put on our monthly presentations. Our sincere thanks to the external judges we use for all our competitions, your committee and other members behind the scenes who help where needed to ensure club meetings and outings run as smoothly as possible. Being able to view WAUPS meetings online was a huge bonus during the periods non-essential travel was in place.

Now it's truly summer and we're all diving locally where possible, do think about doing an article for your club magazine. Any outing, dive trip or picture for the Parting Shot section that would be of interest and gratefully accepted.

Keep blowin' bubbles

Viv



ABOVE: Bert de Wit with his winning People's Choice image in the WAMM My Country competition.

BELOW: Jenny Ough receives the Golden Snapper trophy from Amanda Blanksby.



PIXELS 2020

Congratulations to Ross Gudgeon, the overall winner of PIXELS 2020. In second place was Shannon Earnshaw, third was Leanne Thompson, fourth was Matt Smith and fifth was Mary Gudgeon. Well done to everyone who submitted images in 2020. We can't wait to see what you submit in 2021.



Blennies and Threesfins



Photos by Ross and Mary Gudgeon

Blenny (from the Greek blennos, meaning mucus, slime) is a common name for a type of small fish. They have a covering of mucus instead of scales. The term is ambiguous, having been applied to several families of marine, brackish, and some freshwater fish sharing similar morphology and behaviour. Six families are considered "true blennies", all grouped together under the order Blennioformes; its members are referred to as blenniiformids. About 151 genera and nearly 900 species have been described within the order with probably over 100 species found in Australian waters.

True blennies are widely distributed in coastal waters, often abundant and easily observed which has made them the subject for many studies of ecology and behaviour. Two of the families, the Blennidae (blennies) and the Tripterygiidae (threesfins) have global distributions. Both blennies and threesfins lack a swim bladder.

Blennies are superficially quite similar to members of the goby and dragonet families, as well as several other unrelated families whose members have occasionally been given the name "blenny". Many blennies demonstrate mimicry of other species, such as false cleaner fish. This mimicry allows the blenny to get up close to fish that would normally, a cleaner wrasse, clean them. The blenny then takes nips or larger bites out of the unsuspecting fish.

BLENNIES

Blennies are generally small fish with elongated bodies (some almost eel-like), and relatively large eyes and mouths. Their dorsal fins are often continuous and long; the pelvic fins typically have a single embedded spine and are short and slender, situated before the pectoral fins. The tail fin is rounded. The blunt heads of blennies often possess elaborate whisker-like structures called cirri.

FEEDING - As generally bottom-dwelling fish, blennies usually scrape



Top to bottom: Manyspot Blenny *Laiphognathus multimaculatus*, Leopard Blenny *Exallius brevis*, Palespotted Combtooth Blenny *Ecsenius yaeyamaensis*, Starry Blenny *Salarias ramosus*

algae off rocks and corals. A few feed midwater on zooplankton or small invertebrates. Some specialise in feeding on external parts of other fish, including scales, fin bits or mucus. As algae eaters, blennies are often sought after by the aquarium trade to assist in keeping the aquarium clean.

HABITAT - Blennies spend much of their time on or near the sea floor; many are reclusive and may burrow in sandy substrates or inhabit crevices in reefs, the lower stretches of rivers with empty bottles, or empty mollusc shells used as nesting sites. Usually, it is the male who guards the eggs. Some blennies, otherwise known as "rock-hoppers", leap from the water onto rocks in order to reach other pools.

VENOM - For protection, there is only one genus that is truly venomous and that is the fang blenny. These fish can inject venom from their mandibular, hollow fangs. They have venom that contains an opioid-like substance.

THREEFINS

While still being in the scientific order of Blennioformes, threesfins differ slightly from blennies with three dorsal fins and scales on the sides of their bodies. While blennies have a rounded head, threesfins have an elongated face. Threesfins are found in cold-temperate waters to tropical waters and offshore islands. Like blennies, they live on hard substrates, pylons, and intertidal pools. They are extremely difficult to photograph.

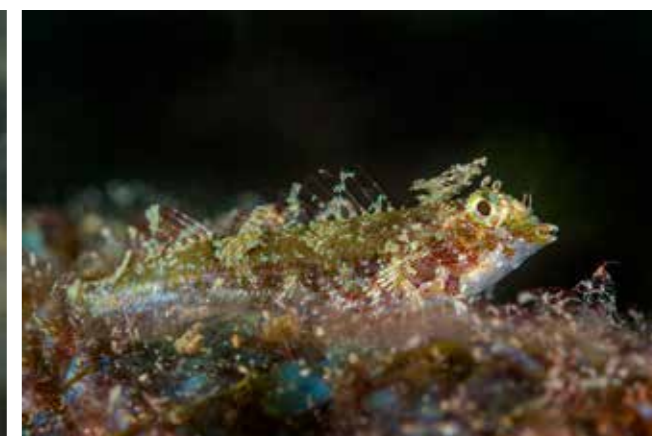
REFERENCES

1. Guide to sea fishes of Australia Rudie H Kuitert.
2. [en.wikipedia.org > wiki > Blennioformes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blennioformes)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank:

- Dr Glenn Moore, Curator of fishes, Department of Aquatic Zoology, Western Australian Museum for his kind assistance in identifying the blennies and threesfins; and
- Sue Morrison for her patience and assistance



Top to bottom: Blackthroated Threesfin *Helcogramma decurrens*, Blackhead Threesfin *Enneapterygius larsonae*, Striped Threesfin *Helcogramma striatum*, Scalyfin Threesfin *Norfolkia brachylepis*.

Left: Shorthead Sabretooth Blenny *Petroscirtes breviceps*:

Sand Tracks and Leighton Beach

by Leanne Thompson

Not that long ago, finding a weedy seadragon was cause for extreme excitement and the poor individual subjected to a large number of visitors (sorry Wilson). Since then however, we've found where they can be seen on almost every dive by keen and patient spotters. One such location is Point Peron and the other is Sand Tracks at Leighton Beach.

Each site has their positives and negatives, Point Peron is shallower which allows some stunning sun beams to penetrate the water – but for those of us north of the river it's a long way to go and parking is limited. Sand Tracks however is significantly closer, and while I have yet to see those same sun beams since it's deeper, it does arguably have more individuals and more parking (you can use any of the parking lots along this beach).

As an inherently lazy person I don't subscribe to that whole surface swimming concept, so I drop down once I've cleared the surf zone. It's about only 200 metres out to start of the seagrass area, and I've found them within minutes of reaching this. My last dive there back in December I found 8 individuals in the 2 hour dive, and that was without looking that hard. About half of those I saw had eggs in various stages of development. For those with extra persistence, a leafy seadragon has also been spotted at Sand Tracks this summer.

Sand Tracks is a particular favourite of mine and I don't think I've ever not seen weedys there. However given the boat traffic I strongly recommend towing a dive flag with you.



by Amanda Blanksby

We decided to head back to Yallingup for our spring escape weekend in September 2020. Though we were small in numbers (Amanda, Leanne, Tammy, Yuri, Danny and Marion), we enjoyed getting out in the fresh air with our cameras, wandering round the bush in search of wildflowers and along the coastline watching waves crash over rocks. On the Saturday afternoon Ann Storrie invited us to a guided tour around her bush block. Heaps of orchids to be found and baby possums being hand reared, at her neighbour's house.

We had a BBQ at Ann's place and invited some of our south west members to join us; Sue and Peter Morrison, Wendy Hutchison and Chris Cunnold. Afterwards we headed out for a night walk in search of possums in the wild. Ann was very happy to discover one of her baby's 'Kimmy' that she had previously looked after and released on her block, had found a mate ♥. We also found some frogs, so they got the WAUPS paparazzi treatment... flash, flash, flash.

The Sunday morning weather forecast was not for the faint hearted with lots of rain and big waves rolling in. Was not suitable for photography so we all headed home, in pretty treacherous driving conditions with near zero visibility at times.

A big thanks to Ann for inviting us to explore her block, and enabling us to enjoy the nature contained within.



Christmas Island

by Gary Browne

20 - 27 October 2020

On the trip - Jenny Ough, Yuri Verbaan, Brad Pryde, Leanne Thompson, Marjon Phur and Gary Browne



Whale shark with diver taken at Barracuda Bay (Gary Browne) and Robber crab taken at Lilly Beach (Gary Browne)

After several days of packing and repacking bags and trying to stay under the 23kg limit on each bag, the day finally had arrived. Then at 7:24 that morning, a desperate message was sent to our group from Jenny; "Having a meltdown with the duffle bag, zip just gave up and need new bag". Luckily Leanne came to the rescue and was able to lend Jenny another bag.

We all met at the airport and joined the long queue to check-in for the Christmas Island flight. Each of us checked in two bags each, but were warned to identify a priority bag which would make the flight. Despite paying Virgin a fee of \$75 for a second bag, there was no guarantee it would be on our flight. And they didn't turn up until two days before we flew home – thanks Virgin. Most of us had no dive gear, except a mask, and had to hire wetsuits, BCDs, regs, etc so our first dive ended up being a 'real' check-out dive.

A well-used catch phrase for the trip was "It's in my other bag" whenever we discussed what hadn't turned up. Considering most of us had some food in the second bag, it was going to be interesting what condition the bags would arrive in.

Our apartment style accommodation at Cocos Padang Lodge was great and is conveniently located across the road from the Extra Divers dive shop and the local tavern. There's a Chinese restaurant, a bakery/ coffee shop and local general store close by too. Everything else - cafés, stores and restaurants - was in the main settlement up the hill, just check opening times as they vary a lot.

During the week we dived at several great locations with names like Perpendicular Wall, Full Frontal, The Morgue, Chicken Farm, Eidsvold Wreck, Thundercliff, Boat Cave, Coconut Point, Barracuda Bay, Lost Lake and Pet Shop. All diving was done from the well-appointed 10.5 metre aluminum dive boat called 'Nemo'.





While on the safety stop on our very first dive at Barracuda Bay, we had a whale shark cruise by quite close, it was an awesome way to start the trip.

Each morning we were at the jetty by 7:30am and returned back to the jetty by about 11:30am. We were ably guided by Dave Watchorn and Jo McGilvray from Extra Divers. Most of the diving was wide angle, mainly of fans on vertical drop offs and also opportunities like inquisitive batfish, trevally, barracuda, turtles and the occasional whale shark or manta ray appearing out of the blue.

Apart from the boat diving, a few people also did a couple of afternoon shore dives in Flying Fish Cove near the jetty. Lots of fish life and opportunities to practice over/under shots while you have time.

On one afternoon we all jumped in the rented Toyota RAV4s and went out for a look at Lilly and Ethel Beach in the pouring rain. It looked like the rain had induced the red crabs to start their annual migration - they were everywhere! Also out on the move were the much larger Robber (Coconut) Crabs. And let's not forget the mosquitoes, out in the back roads they became a real nuisance.

On a few evenings we went out as a group and had meals at the local tavern and the Chinese restaurants. The food was terrific and enjoyable nights out sharing the experiences of the days diving.

It was a wonderful opportunity to get away from the COVID-induced restrictions and enjoy the company of other divers in an awesome environment. Also thanks to Lisa Preston from Indian Ocean Experiences on a very well-organised trip and assistance while on the island when a few issues, like the missing baggage or 'leaking' hire car, needed looking into.



TOP TO BOTTOM: Lilly Beach (Gary Browne), Manta at Boat Cave dive site (Marjon Phur), Dartfish at Full Frontal dive site (Gary Browne).



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
 Hard corals (Brad Pryde),
 Batfish (Brad Pryde),
 Whaleshark and batfish (Marjon Phur),
 Soft corals (Brad Pryde),
 Long-nosed butterflyfish at Flying Fish Cove (Marjon Phur),
 Batfish and diver at Perpendicular Wall (Gary Browne).



WAPF 2020 PrintWest competition

An amazing result for our club in this competition with WAUPS taking out first place in the colour category, second place in the mono category and the title of overall winner! The awards were presented at the WAPF annual convention in Pemberton.

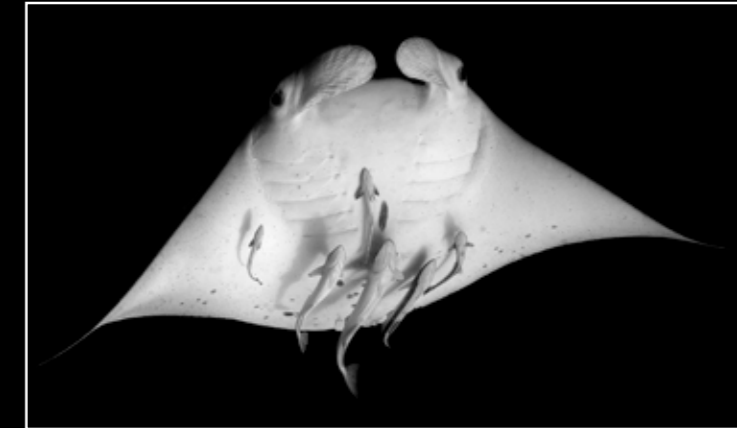
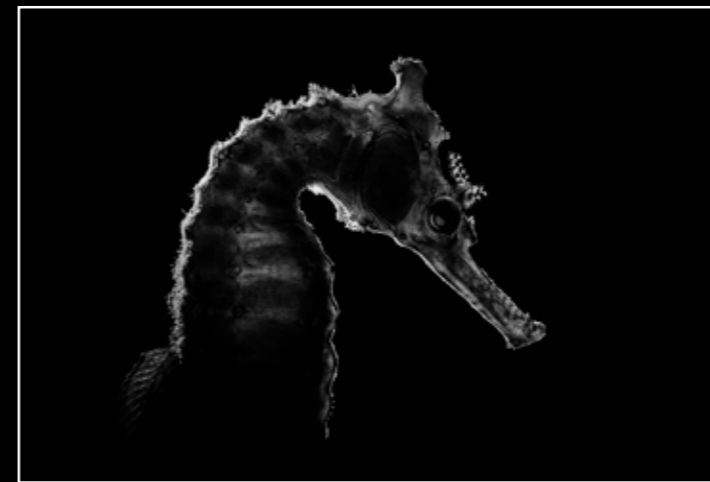
Nine of our 30 club entries were chosen for the print round and inclusion in the exhibition, only the top 100 images are chosen for printing from more than 600 images submitted from 25 clubs across the state.

Well done to those who represented the club in this comp, every image contributed to our club's win - Amanda Blanksby, Brad Pryde, Isla Cath, Janet O'Brien, Jenny Ough, Leanne Thompson, Mary Gudgeon, Matt Smith, Ross Gudgeon, Tammy Gibbs. Congratulations to Amanda who won first place in the colour category with her stunning whale mum and calf image. Enjoy our nine finalist images.



ABOVE: WAUPS club members at the Pemberton event accept the overall prize from Ben from Team Digital (left) and Michael from Nikon (right).

LEFT TO RIGHT Amanda Blanksby, Leanne Thompson.



Tammy Gibbs

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Ross Gudgeon, Tammy Gibbs, Matt Smith, Matt Smith, Tammy Gibbs, Amanda Blanksby, Amanda Blanksby.

WAPF Convention in Pemberton

Each year, the WAPF runs an annual convention weekend, hosted by a different WAPF-affiliated club. This year we headed south to Pemberton for a wonderful weekend of photography, workshops, food and a lot of fun! Hosted by the Southern Forests Photography Club, we were warmly welcomed to the area with a range of photographic activities including wildflowers, portraiture, landscapes, astro, wildlife and more. The event included workshops, guest speakers and tagalong tours to give us learning opportunities and a flavour for the local area. We highly recommend these weekends to get out and try something different, 2021 will be hosted in Northam.



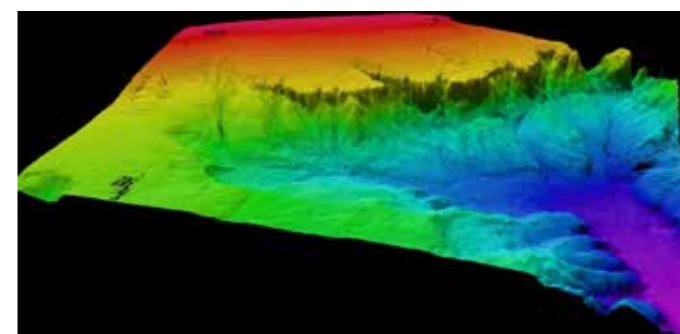
Documenting and communicating a scientific voyage of discovery

by Angela Rossen

On 4th January 2020 I received an invitation to be the Expedition Artist with the Schmidt Ocean Institute on board the research vessel The Falkor for the Great Australian Deep Sea Coral and Canyon Research Tour. The chance to work alongside a diverse group of scientists and the possibility of finding yet to be discovered species was tantalising. The scientific team comprised a range of disciplines from the West Australian Museum, the faculties of Science and Engineering at the University of Western Australia and the Italian contingent from the Institutes of Marine and Polar Sciences in Bologna.

We departed from Albany on Jan 24th for the 34-day expedition to undertake the first remotely operated vehicle based deep sea exploration of the South West sea canyons. Some of the scientific team had been involved with the 2015 mapping and sampling of the Perth Canyon but the Leeuwin and Bremer Canyons had never been documented, imaged or sampled. Comparable deep sea remotely operated vehicle (ROV) technology is unavailable to Australian researchers so this was a true voyage of discovery and gift of an adventure to some of the most remote, most unexplored parts of our biosphere. My work is usually with the near-shore marine environment, so it was strange to be on the water, but not in it. It was a time of learning, of working with others, of long hours and of comradery that grows from being side by side in exciting times.

Angela photographing mollusc shells.



Top to bottom: Expedition map; canyon map; control room; whale skull.

The ship was equipped with the technology to host discussion with school students in classrooms throughout the world in real time. My role was to observe and record the work of the scientists and deliver outreach to schools through the Ship to Shore schools program joined by members of the tech communication, engineering and scientific teams in those sessions. My work is in science communication and it is great getting kids together with scientists as they always ask surprising and thoughtful questions.

The ROV was capable of descending to 4500 metres collecting specimens, as well as beaming up video footage. With each descent we were held spellbound as the engineers in the control room negotiated the sheer cliff-walls of the canyons below, as well as the fallen boulders and sandy flats of the mysterious depths. Rocking on the waves above, we gathered around the flickering screens viewing footage of deep ocean animals interrupted for a moment in time by the noise and light of the ROV. We watched with bated breath as the ROV's robotic arm reached out to pluck slender corals, stem sponges, stone cup corals and ancient rocks to gently load into safe compartments. When a specimen slipped from the robotic hand and tumbled into the darkness, there was not one of us who did not gasp as it fell away. It reminded me of the moon landing all those years ago when we gathered spellbound around the television at our primary school. Aboard the Falkor we watched, completely in the moment, willing the success of each manoeuvre.

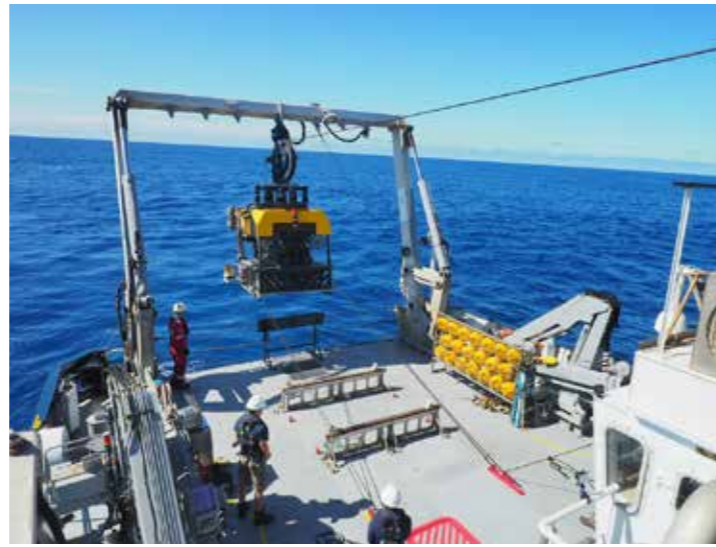
Moving footage of strange and marvellous fish, with fins trailing like medieval flags swam by the bright intruder. Cadmium-red squid and bright mauve fish with large heads, whose bodies tail off to a point, drifted languidly by. A pointed-nose angler fish swam through the light, seemingly upside down – but that is its way! Everything is different at these great depths, familiar but different.

The skull of a beaked whale festooned by mussels and scaled polychaete worms was brought up for close inspection. Hidden within the labyrinth of the bone were minute molluscs and many varieties of delicate worms whose secrets can only be gleaned under magnification. These skeletons create a micro environment in this deep dark wilderness that is hospitable to many molluscs, echinoderms, annelid and polychaete worms and myriad other tiny invertebrates. Samples of rock with elegant fossils caught forever within the history of time were also carefully brought to the surface along with shell grit from the sea floor. The shell grit indicating which creatures that grow calcium carbonate shells had colonised the area in the past and in present times. Of particular interest were the foraminifera, single celled animals that lay down delicate elegant shells. Their shells and the shells of the stone and colonial corals capture a record of the ambient conditions in which they were alive. It was estimated that some of these collected corals could be as much as 40,000 years old. From this information scientists can make predictions about climate change and the effect of acidification in the ocean.

From the moment SuBastian the ROV docked after each dive everyone was completely occupied with recovery, cataloguing, labelling, and photographing the wonders retrieved. For the Bremer Canyon I photographed all specimens brought up. It was often difficult to capture clear images of living specimens in vessels as the ship was pitching quite wildly most of the time and the wet lab was very brightly lit and so full of reflecting surfaces. With space at a premium and due to the number of specimens there was always a rush to photograph before each was dissected, dried out, then stored. I improvised a cardboard box painted black inside so as to photograph subjects in water in controlled light conditions. The scientific priority was not careful photography of specimens because of limited space and time but all the same I was able to take some photographs that will be useful to my scientific colleagues in future publications and for teaching.

My painting studio in the dry lab placed me amongst the technical and engineering team. It was fascinating to watch the engineers work cooperatively to solve glitches as they came up. Their attitude is that a problem or breakdown is a welcome challenge. They work until the matter is fixed, which can be all day, through the night – and beyond if need be. The

Top to bottom: remotely operated vehicle SuBastian; stalk sponge with spider crab; Angela painting a sponge garden



ROV operations are central to the scientific objectives of this mission, but so too was the collation, cataloguing, storing and sharing of data generated by the scientific teams. It was inspirational listening to these technological geniuses solving complex issues with their patient and methodical collaborative labour.

This research trip wove together the mapping of the deep ocean canyons as well as the stories of the foraminifera that settle on the rocky ledges and sandy floors and cup corals. It included sampling for stable and radioisotopes in the water column, the crustaceans and worms living in this deep silent dark place and animal forests of soft corals with associated invertebrate communities. Plus the large eyed fish and rock corals whose very lineaments tell the story of water composition and temperature over great timescales, and the rocks, whose story can be read by those who understand their language.

The carefully labelled and packaged specimens will lead to scientific understanding gained on this historic trip that will take years to unravel. I have returned to my studio with my journal, sketches, paintings, and photographs where my work is still ongoing. It was an amazing trip and continues a time of great learning that I will share through workshops with children in schools throughout Western Australia. I look forward to that.

Right: corals collected from the deep. Below: shell fossil in rock, deep sea fish, living stone coral



2020 Open Portfolio winner *Mary Gudgeon*



2020 Open Novice winner *Matt Smith*



WA Museum Boola Bardip

by Viv Matson-Larkin | Images by Lindsay Preece

A must-see is the spectacular new WA Museum known as Boola Bardip — meaning “many stories” in the Noongar language. Harriet, Lindsay and I were lucky to score ballot tickets to view the incredible exhibitions during the nine-day opening celebration period in November.

With a large Western Australian theme, the displays certainly highlight the history and beautiful landscapes and environment in our state - above and below the water. Otto the iconic blue whale is back in all its glory hanging in the refurbished Hackett Hall. The space under Otto, and a few other areas is even available for events, including weddings.

The newly renovated site is massive, so either arrive early so you have most of the day to get around, or plan for more than one visit to check out everything. Do take comfortable walking shoes. A little tip - take the lift to the top floor and work your way down 😊.



REFLECTIVE LIGHT TUBES

by Brad Pryde

When you've dived the local dive sites a lot, you start to see the same creatures out and about, and some people start to get bored with this. For myself, it's an opportunity to try new techniques and maybe put some fun back into the dive. I've used snoots and other lighting sources/techniques to get different results, and am always willing to take on a new challenge. This latest one like many, came after a dive while talking to buddies and discussing what was new. Yuri had a hand held tube he was using, and Gary by the next week had made the first prototype to front mount - and the fun had begun, version-1 was born.

There were very few online references and just a few images to go from to attempt to make one. Basically it's just a tube mounted on the front of your port like a wet lens. So everything from polished pipe, chrome tube and many other tubes or pipes sourced from Bunnings and others were trialled, this latest version is from a reticulation fitting. It's still a work in progress, but at a point now where I'm starting to get results I'm happy with.

To get the reflection/swirl effect, the tube bore diameter needs to be about 50% of the screen when looking through your lens onto a subject. You need some area to get the twisted reflection to bounce off and capture on screen. I've played with the 14-42EZ zoom lens and the 30mm Macro lens, and I'm using a 4/3rd's camera, so a 60mm would be an equivalent on a SLR. You don't want the subject too far away for the light to reflect back from. But again experiment, you might find a solution that works for you with what you have.

Next is finding subjects to take images of, can be anything really. But a bit like macro photography, the small slow and colourful nudi's are great to practice on. Do not try moving subjects first unless you like getting visually sea-sick and deleting images. Getting close and placing light onto the

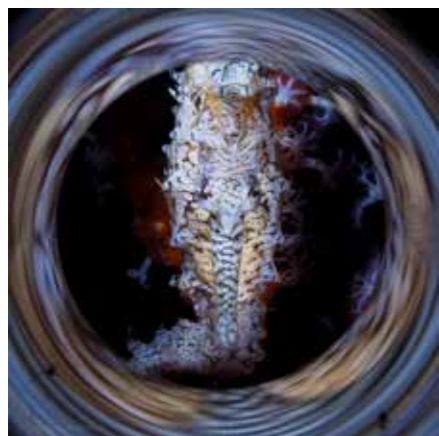


subject helps to get a reflection back up the tube. I use snoots to locate the light source closer to the subject, but it is all trial and error, so use what you have.

There are no rules with this, you can use high F stops, fast shutter and a ton of light or low F stops, minimum lighting and slow shutter speeds; this works great on feather duster worms to get a waving motion effect.

My only hint would be to watch what develops on your viewfinder as you approach the subject. The reflection/swirl effect will start to occur naturally when you get close enough. Take a test shot and check your lighting, it's the classic 'shoot and review'. The idea here is to just experiment and see what results are achievable. Changing the angle to subject, or re-positioning lighting can also significantly change the type of image that occurs.

Admittedly this might not be for everyone, and the initial results might put you off; like the first time you tried using a snoot. So just go out there and experiment. Try to take as many shots as you can of multiple subjects. You'll start to look at many things underwater very differently. You can create some interesting images, so try and be creative. It's like I first noted; it's just a bit of fun to switch up a typical dive, and you might be surprised with the results you get.



PARTING SHOT



Playful Australian Sealions by Matt Smith

Mid November 2020 I was booked in for a snorkel trip with Turquoise Safari's to see the sealions in Jurien Bay. The weather and sea conditions on the day were not looking very favourable. Overcast and windy, with a three-metre swell, the boat ride out to Fisherman Islands was very bumpy. It was a pleasant surprise to find on arrival that the snorkel area was very well protected. Then the sun came out – a huge plus, especially for those taking natural light shots. Not long after that, five to six sealions came out to play. For the next hour and an half we chased them around, trying to get photos. Unfortunately, they are not very good models always running off or somersaulting out of range just as you press that shutter button!

Canon 800D, 10mm wide angle lens (10-22 Canon Lens), Ikelite Housing F8, 1/200 sec, ISO 100, 2x Ikelite DS160 Strobes








WESTERN AUSTRALIAN UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

waupsnews@gmail.com

The Western Australian Underwater Photographic Society (WAUPS) is a non-profit organisation, which was established in January 1984.

The aims of the Society are:

-  To promote an improvement of underwater photography amongst its members.
-  To promote underwater photography in the community.
-  To encourage an understanding and preservation of the marine environment.
-  To promote an exchange of skills and ideas from within the society and from external bodies.
-  To have fun and enjoy socialising, diving and photography.

WAUPS holds monthly meetings which include guest presenters on a range of photography and diving topics along with a digital show-and-tell of images from members.

We hold regular competitions including an annual day dive shootout, annual open and novice portfolios and image of the year competition, and a range of trips and social events during the year including monthly photo dives.

WAUPS members also get membership to the WA Photographic Federation and can participate in their events and trips.

Anyone interested in underwater photography is welcome any time including all levels of experience.

**WAUPS meetings are conducted at 7:30pm
on the FOURTH TUESDAY of every month.**



Find us on Facebook

www.waups.org.au

