

NUMBER 2

APRIL 2009

IN THIS ISSUE

- *Activity program*
- *Snorkel survey program—time to get involved!*
- *Recent activities*
- *Dive group*
- *Pelican rescue workshop*

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, May 21

FROM THE PRESIDENT.....

I meant to get this started in the last issue (our first 'new look' newsletter - thanks heaps, Mel W!), but time got away.... I'll keep it brief, but this time I want to:

- thank our hard-working exec team, for their patience and continuing, considerable effort. It is always fun working with you guys; and
- say a little more about strategies for NCMG for the future.

We have a meeting planned for 21 May (see below); and two key issues we want to address can be described as 'where are we going / where do we want to be?' (planning for the future); and planning for succession. We seem to be going through another growth spurt at the moment (which is great), with over 150 members, not counting those who are tardy renewing (come on guys, we want you to hang in there!), which would bring us to around 200. Pretty good from a low point of about 9 in 2007.

But what next? What business are we in - the entertainment business? (Just kidding, but sometimes it feels like it!) Do we continue on as we are? Do we want to take on the world? Or something in between?

Anything is possible, with the right people to drive it; and therein lies a problem. It is not appropriate, or fair, or even sensible, for the same people to run an organisation, year in year out. Bill & I have talked about this, and we would be very happy if others took over our roles sooner rather than later. We would still be available to help of course, but we are both very active with the Reef Life Survey Program, which takes up much of our time, and keeps us away and out there diving. Without prejudicing what other exec. members would like to do, NCMG needs at least some new blood on the exec - soon.

In fact, we are currently running with one vacant position.... So this is a plea for members to start thinking seriously about helping run NCMG - it's not that long until the AGM, when all exec. positions are declared vacant. The job can be as demanding as you like; but as a minimum requires you to contribute ideas and suggestions, and help with organising and running our day to day activities. We have meetings roughly every month, and it's good if you can attend most... Otherwise, the business is mostly done via email.

And for the strategic thinkers among you (I know you are out there) - come along to our strategy meeting, and help us shape a plan for NCMG's medium and longer term future.

Take care, and I hope to see you at an NCMG activity soon!

Andrew Green, President

AUTUMN ACTIVITY PROGRAM

The following is our program for the coming months. Please note that this supersedes our previous program.

Sun 26 April (ANZAC weekend)- Snorkel with Seals, Montague Island



Unfortunately we had to cancel our trip on 5 April because of the biggish swell. As a result, Bill is looking to reschedule to 26 April - IF there are sufficient numbers. As usual, we would depart the Narooma Wharf at 9.30am returning around 1.30pm.

Cost is \$77 for adults and \$55 per child 15 years and under. If you are interested, please contact us **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**. Full details about the trip will be provided to participants.

One of the participants in our snorkel outing at Montague Island on 29 March.

Sat 2 May—Sun 3 May - Camp, snorkel, dive and rock shelf walk, Bawley Point

Bawley Point is a popular dive, snorkelling and beach location with a rich marine life. We see this weekend as offering something for everyone and you can be as active or inactive as you wish. Members are welcome to come just for a day on the Saturday or the Sunday or to stay for the weekend. For those who wish, camping is available at the nearby Kioloa Beach Holiday Park and some of us, at least, will arrive on the Friday afternoon and stay two nights. We will look at having picnics and barbecues to ensure everyone has a good time.

We plan to take advantage of this trip to carry out the next cycle of our snorkelling surveys, and have in mind to go up to Bannister's Point at Mollymook on the Saturday morning, to start with a snorkel survey and optional dive. We would then come back to Bawley for an afternoon snorkel and dive and maybe a night dive as well. Scuba divers can get air fills or hire tanks from nearby Ulladulla. These activities will provide an opportunity for members to talk about what they have seen and to learn more about the marine life in our coastal waters.

If you are interested in taking part in the snorkel surveys or want to know more about them, please contact us.

The website for Kioloa Beach Holiday Park is www.kioloabeach.com and their phone number is (02) 4457 1072. The date of the camp (Fri 1 May to Sun 3 May) is in their winter season. Prices for sites are for 2 adults and 2 children - there is a charge for extra adults/children and only one car is allowed per site. Unpowered sites are \$13 per night and powered sites are \$16. Various grades of cabins are also available. People intending to come to the camp should make their own booking directly with the Park managers.

If you are planning to come or want more information, please contact us.



Sun 31 May—Canoeing in Tomaga River

For a different look at the marine environment, we are organising a canoe/kayak excursion on the Tomaga River. We will leave Mossy Point boat ramp at 10.30am and paddle upstream with the incoming tide (makes it a lot easier). The trip to the Goldfields Caravan Park will take about 90 minutes.

Canoes can be hired from Damien of Fluid Adventures for \$35 per person providing there are between 4 and 8 people (\$40 each if less than 4). Please contact us AS SOON AS POSSIBLE if you want to hire a canoe - first come first served.

People with their own canoes/kayaks can also join the paddle, Damien will act as guide but will not take responsibility for those with their own craft. We can work out vehicle shuffles for people to pick up their canoes instead of paddling back. If you plan to join us on this trip, please contact us.

Sat 6 June—Fishes of the South Coast—Photo presentation

This will be held at Broulee Primary School. Arrive from 6.00 for a 7.00 pm start. BYO food and drinks.

This will be a fun opportunity to learn about some of our more common fish species - what they look like and fascinating snippets about their behaviour. These are the characters you are likely to see when snorkelling or pottering about but have never been able to put a label to. It will also be an opportunity to talk about the role of marine protected areas on fish populations and on the marine environment generally. We will send a reminder closer to the time, but if you plan to come, please contact us.

Coming Activities

1. Sun 21 June—Coffee and beach walk, Kianga.

We will meet at Anton's cafe in Kianga at 10.00 for a coffee before heading off for a beach walk at Kianga. The low tide will be 0.4 m at 12/20 pm. Further details to be advised.

2. Sat 4 July—Underwater photography workshop.

Venue and details to be advised.

3. Sun 19 July—Coast walk, Meringo.

We will meet at the National Park at 10.00 am, walk to Meringo, then back along the beach. We will have a picnic lunch. Further details to be advised.

Contact NCMG about any of our exciting activities:

info@ncmg.org.au or

(02) 4473 5304

www.ncmg.org.au



Snorkelers at Broulee (above)

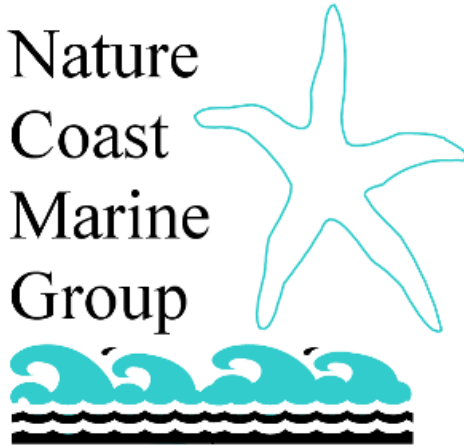
Sea hare (left)

NATURE COAST MARINE GROUP

Phone: (02) 4473 5304

E-mail: info@ncmg.org.au

www.ncmg.org.au



Barbara Barker showing how it is done. Actually the pelican is quite a docile animal once you've managed to get your arms around it.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

TIME TO RENEW?

Welcome to our newest members—there have been about fifteen since our last newsletter.

It's coming up to the end of financial year, and there are some people who paid for 07/08 and 08/09 membership who have not renewed.

If this is you, please contact the Treasurer to update your membership.

What's News

DIVE GROUP

The Dive Group is planning to head out to Montague Island on Saturday 18 April in search of some of the less frequently seen creatures in our area. Hopefully we will be able to report sightings and provide some photos in our next newsletter.

WORD OF MOUTH

We are always keen to welcome new members. If you have friends of family whom you think might be interested in joining, please pass this newsletter on to them.

PELICAN RESCUE WORKSHOP

Barbara and Bill Barker attended a workshop at Narooma on 21 March on how to deal with injured seabirds, mainly pelicans. The workshop was run by Australian Seabirds Rescue, a licensed wildlife rescue and care organisation. What stood out from the workshop was the sheer scale of the problem. It appears that in any group of pelicans, you can almost guarantee that some of them will have hook injuries or fishing line entanglements. Pelicans are vulnerable because they are large and bold and because they are commonly fed scraps from fish cleaning tables. Some of the injuries and stories were horrific. The vast majority of injuries to pelicans result from active fishing, i.e. not just entanglement with discarded gear. The problem is such that ASR workers don't just wait for a call about an injured seabird, they actively monitor aggregations of birds to find those with problems. People at the workshop were given an overview of how to rescue and rehabilitate pelicans and other seabirds, including some field work where we were shown how to catch a pelican.

If you see a pelican or other shore bird in trouble with a hook injury or entanglement, you should call ASR on 0431 282 238 (it's a good idea to program the number into your phone). There are trained rescuers in Tuross who can come out and deal with the problem. For more information check out the ASR website www.seabirdrescue.org.

YOUR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The 6-person Executive has charge of the running of the Group in between Annual General Meetings.

- President is Andrew Green
- Vice-President is Jenny Edwards
- Secretary is Bill Barker
- Treasurer is Melanie White
- Webmaster is Jock Howe
- Science Adviser is Dr Mel Coleman.



The mollusc, Turbo torquatus, on the brown seaweed, Ecklonia radiata (pic taken at Bogola Head south of Narooma). Both of these species are targets for our snorkel surveys. Notice how a pink encrusting alga has attached itself to the shell of the mollusc. A hard surface is heaven for many marine species trying to find a home.