



Marine Care Ricketts Point

NEWSLETTER

www.marinecare.org.au

Issue 77

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Folks

I hope you're all feeling very proud of yourselves as Victorians – what a long hard year and winter this has been, and such great sacrifices by so many people – but we've gone over 28 days 00!! I think Victoria should be given an Australia Day medal for all the sacrifices people have made!

So, finally we can emerge back into a somewhat normal existence. Some of us are doing it tentatively (it does feel strange not to wear a mask outside), others more exuberantly.

We have re-commenced our snorkelling season, with strict adherence to government guidelines, and have had a wonderful 3 out of 3 Saturdays in November where the weather and conditions have been kind. See some photos in this newsletter.

We also see how different organisations are taking different approaches to opening up. Bayside Council has kept the Seniors Centre closed, as it is a centre used by several groups. We don't know when they'll re-open, so we'll let you know what's happening and if we'll continue Zoom members speakers nights instead next year.

Coastcare have decided not to have their usual volunteers Summer by the Sea activities in January 2021. Instead, they'll have virtual events, which they will advertise on-line.

Beach Patrol Australia has just announced re-opening, but under conditions that go beyond the Government requirements, so we're looking at the implications of that and how we operate for our Beach Patrol 3193. So we won't be able to have a Beach clean this Saturday, 5 December. We normally don't clean in January either. However, we expect to be out and fully operating on Saturday 6 February, so be sure to mark that date in your diary.

We normally have our wonderful MCRP-Beach Patrol 3192 Christmas-end of year celebration on the first Saturday in December. However, we decided that given current restrictions, it is best to put it off until December 2021, when we hope to have a bigger and best-ever event.

I hope you all enjoy getting out of lockdown, have a wonderful Christmas and holiday period, and please keep abiding by the government's COVID requirements.

Stay safe, stay well.

Elizabeth Jensen

President

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MCRP protects and educates about the Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary at Beaumaris.

We formed in January 2003, two months after the Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary came into effect.

Our inaugural President, Bob Whiteway, OAM, was largely responsible for the Victorian Government declaring the area a marine sanctuary.

Incorporated Registered Charity A0043690H | ABN 58 898 180 989

Saturday 9 January 9am 2021 – Learn to snorkel or brush up your skills

Victorian National Parks Association have arranged for the very professional team at Dive2U to hold a special snorkel event for us at Ricketts Point, where people can learn to snorkel or brush up on their skills. Maximum 30 people allowed.

Dive2U provide snorkel gear, including masks, wetsuits, etc if you don't have one. In March 2020, they conducted a snorkel event with us, and feedback was fantastic, even from our quite experienced snorkelers. A very professional group, they adhere to strict COVID standards and cleaning.

This really is a great opportunity in the summer holidays not to be missed!

Look out for our separate email about this event, and get in quickly to book!

Sat 5 Dec, 10.30am - South Triangle Reef – Asian Shore Crabs

Victorian government agencies have discovered a first-ever infestation of this marine pest in Port Phillip Bay and at South Triangle Reef. The crab is intertidal, which means it hangs out around rock pools in rock shelves, like the South Triangle Reef at Ricketts Point.

They want selected community groups, including MCRP, to help them **survey** the extent of infestation – ie **photograph ONLY and record** location of any crabs we think are Asian Shore Crabs. **DO NOT** remove any crabs. Dr Richard E Stafford-Bell (DJPR) and Parks Vic will be at **South Triangle Reef, 10.30am on Saturday 5 December** to talk us through identification and procedures. This is an important citizen science service we can provide. Just turn up for the briefing, or for further information please contact Nicole nicole.zanoni@my.jcu.edu.au or Sharron sharron@drillit.com.au. **No need to be a snorkeller to participate – briefing will be on the shore front and rock shelf area!**

Snorkelling Season and the Great Victorian Fish Count

See on the next page some fabulous photos of the snorkel group, which started up officially again on 14 November and continues until 27 March. (Though many of our group snorkel all year round!)

So far we've had 3 out of 3 successful (ie weather conditions were safe for a good snorkel) Saturday snorkels at Teahouse Reef, McGregor Rock, and Table Rock - all different locations with different things to experience.

Let's hope the conditions remain kind to us, and we get many more snorkels in during the season.

We also have a fantastic group of snorkel leaders who keep us educated and safe. We adhere strictly to Government COVID requirements.

Gayle very ably organised and led our Great Victorian Fish Count at both Teahouse Reef and McGregor Rock, and Liz Prideaux did a magnificent job of helping record all the participants – All while social distancing and wearing face masks before entering the water! Quite a feat on the shoreline. Many thanks to them all and to our great team of snorkel leaders and members.

We've had about 26- 30+ people at each event.

Most of the photos were very generously taken and supplied by Sharron and her lovely husband Barry.



A participant studying his results from his Great Victorian Fish Count waterproof survey at McGregor Rock



Our younger members have really gotten into the swim this year!



Collating the data Great Victorian Fish Count data at McGregor Rock



Toni, one of our most knowledgeable and generous snorkel leaders, at McGregor Rock



Pre-snorkel briefing at McGregor Rock





Another of our long-time, experienced and very kind snorkel leaders, Mick, showing his amazing underwater skills at photography. These photos are at Ricketts Point on 14 November. The fish below is the beautiful, gentle Banjo shark.





Everybody helps each other out at our snorkels – experienced and inexperienced alike.



Teahouse Reef: Such beautiful sights to see under our Sanctuary – rock, coral formations and algae, as well as the marine life



Can you guess who this is?

It's one of our most knowledgeable members, Ivan, modestly undressing, and wearing his COVID facemask, after the Teahouse Reef snorkel on 14 November.

Marine Care Ricketts Point acknowledges the Boon wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the waters and lands around Ricketts Point. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.