MCRP MEMBERS NEWSLETTER

Visit http://www.marinecare.org.au

Issue 63 December 2018

An MCRP Summers Day Triplet

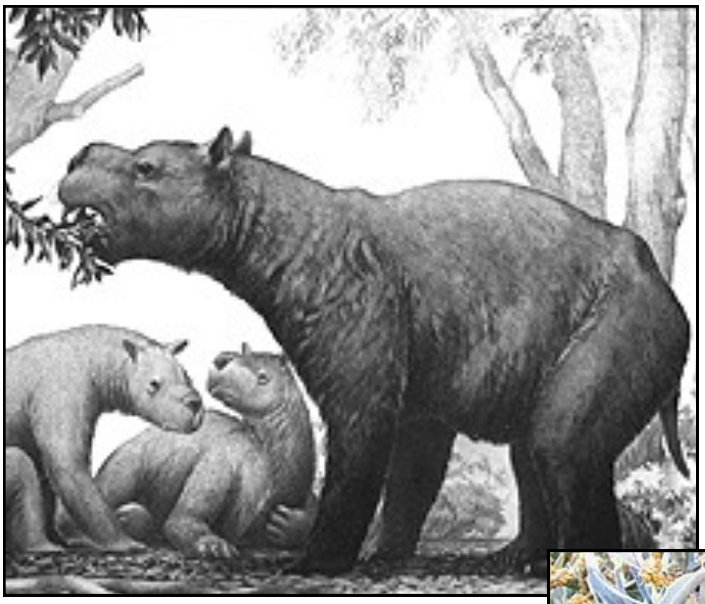
At 9 am we had 30 of us snorkel the Great Fish Count

Right. At 11 am, we had 40 of us for the beach cleanup

And at noon we had 40 attend our annual season beginning picnic in the Baguurk Weelam Gardens, [beside the Ricketts Point Tea House]. Gayle and Jinty turned on a banquet!

A great start to the season.

About Our Sanctuary

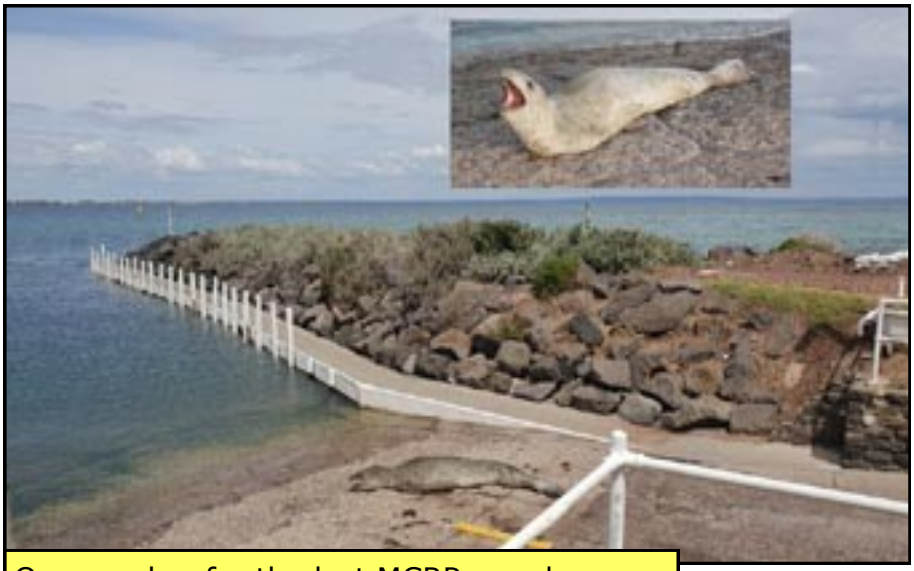


At the fossils expo in September last, one young enthusiast later went out and found part of the jawbone of the now extinct,megafauna the Diptropodon. They co –existed with Aborigines for at least 20 000 years and roamed our local foreshore! Another youngster left the expo midway to have a look along the beach north of the BYC and found himself an excellent sharks tooth.

The salt bush that abounds along our shoreline can be an indicator of the coming season. When its flowers are red it's a usual Victorian set of seasons but when yellow it means that the spring summer and autumn will be long and hot, and we will get plenty of diving in. Over September and October the red florets we began with, started to disappear, and yellow florets, as shown here are now dominating.

This PJ was one of many seen in the sanctuary by Kim Wright around 15th October. It had every appearance of robust health and swam about freely over our sea grass and algae beds in as good a condition as we have seen, since the sanctuary was declared in 2003

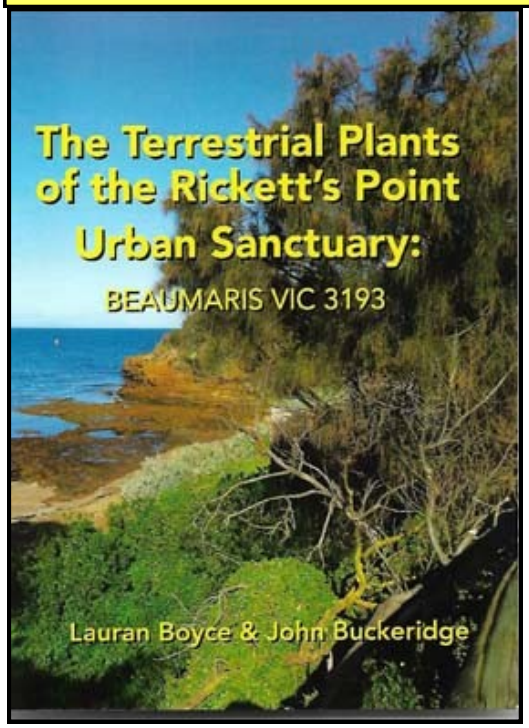
This and That

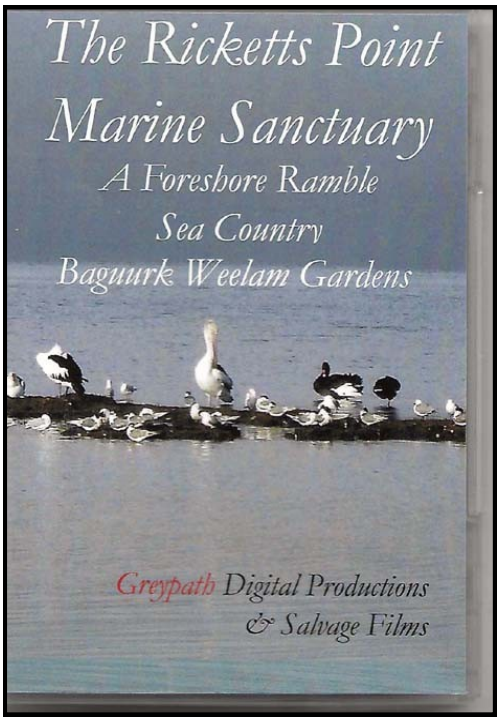


Once the word got out and TV arrived, we had a small crowd attend at the Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron to see this Leopard Seal, sunning itself on the boat ramp. It's 'wellbeing' still being assessed. Such sightings aren't rare, but are unusual. The composite image here from Ivan Leong and Murray Orr.

Our speaker for the last MCRP members meeting in October, was Michelle Mertens of Reefwatch, which are now part of the VNPA.

Michelle outlined the various Reefwatch programmes, most of which MCRP participate in. [Especially the oysters and mussel recovery programme]. The spat collection aspect for this programme uses Kim Wrights plate designs.





The fourth book in the Urban Sanctuary series will be available at the Beaumaris Book shop in the Concourse, before Christmas. (orders now being taken there). Also, they have a few remaining copies of the new marine sanctuary video shown here.

Eclectic

As many of you will know by now, MCRP members, Maddie and Clementine had a rare exchange with a PJ in early November. See below for the story

"We went to the usual spot where the PJs rest.

We found one male free swimming, one female resting in the open and three PJ's resting in a small cave/ overhang with a small ray.

The free swimming male was curious of us and we noticed a piece of white plastic about 4 inches long flowing from its front right gill slit. We snorkelled with it for a bit taking photos and then it went to join the other PJ's in the cave. I dived down and pulled him out. At first he was stressed but he did calm down enough for me to be able to carefully remove the plastic. He then continued to swim around us quite happily and was quite fond of my fins! We put the plastic in the bin after our snorkel. My guess is that the plastic came from a plastic bag but it was quite fine and tattered. My understanding is that the PJ had eaten it and could not quite exhale it from its gills. The plastic was quite shredded which is why I think it was eaten and crushed with its teeth/plates."

Click here for the video which gained very wide coverage

And, as a very nice postscript, the young shark stayed with the girls for some time after being freed, inspecting fins and circling them with interest.

The Sanctuary

The sanctuary will face increasing pressure as population increases and it's 'values' become more widely known. This image was taken in mid November in front of the Tea House, and shows a non Bayside school group, enjoying themselves. Fortunately the Tea House Reef was well submerged at the time. While everyone is welcome to enjoy what the sanctuary offers, it is a healthy reminder of just one of the many factors that we will have to manage in the near future..

Below here the happy team at **MCRP's recent Activity Leaders Course**.

Left Toni and Ivan. Intrepid all season Snorkelers.

Right Ray, leading an adult group along the foreshore.

DDA & More

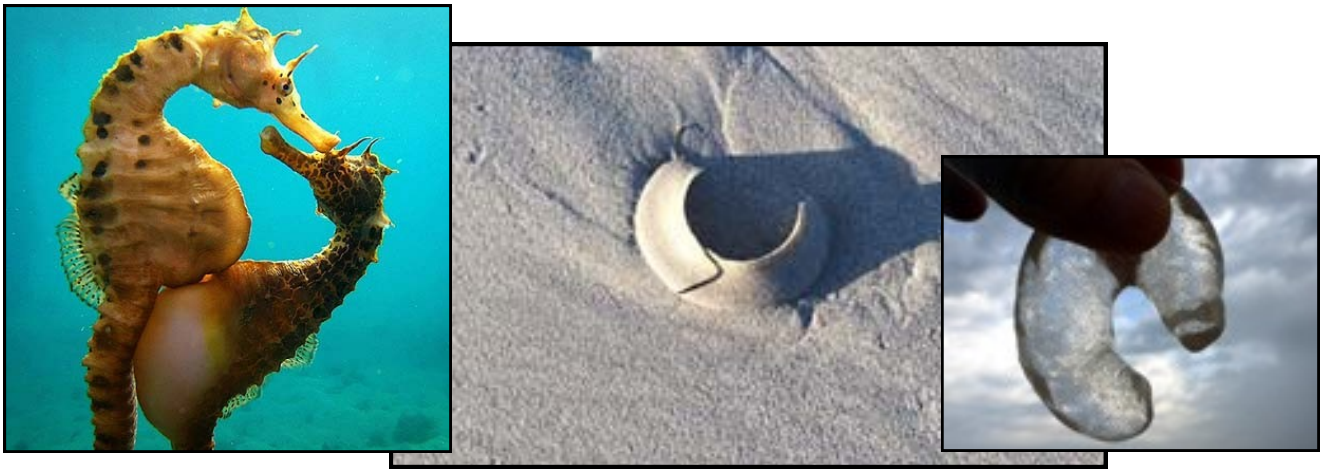
The Disabled Divers Association held their AGM on Sunday the 18th November. Here they are showing off their new safety T shirts. Red for the Activity Leader, Orange for volunteer helpers and Green for the 'clients'.

Last year at Ricketts Point, the Association provided 9 client snorkelling experience events, being two Summer by the Sea events, 1 pool introductory session ,and 6 in-water snorkelling events . 19 clients in total with some attending multiple events.

MCRP members routinely assist DDA with its snorkelling programmes.

Our congratulations to the DDA on a fine effort. Contact DDA for more information

DDA have aspirations to create a world centre for disabled diving



Above a photo of mating sea horses from Jules Casey . Such sea horses are sparse but routinely sighted locally, once ones gets their 'eye in". **Above** the sand collar of *Polinices didyama* intersected by our locally common *Polinices conicum's* egg case (Moon Snail)

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For more about MCRP. Go to www.mcrp.org.au

EDITORS NOTE

Many groups make up our Bayside marine volunteering cadre. While MCRP is by far the largest, we will try and provide a regular comment or two, in future editions, as to what the others are about as well.

This mailer is put together mostly as things happen. As such, and without any support, errors creep in. The editor is thick skinned when readers 'kindly' point out the odd typo and more, and welcomes comment.

ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF VOLUNTEERING

Across all sectors, Victoria's 1.5 million volunteers contribute millions of hours of unpaid work each year to their communities. The economic contribution was projected to be worth around $23 billion to Victoria in 2011, and this is set to reach $42 billion by 2021, if the current rate of growth remains unchanged.

Source: Ministerial Council for Volunteers, Volunteers in Victoria: Trends, challenges and opportunities, State Government of Victoria, June 2017, p. 34.

Below left, a Rainbow Lorikeet pair. Such is a routinely beautiful sight along the our foreshore, especially in the Tea House gardens (Also known by a few locals, as the *Baguurk Weelam Gardens.* Being so named in honour of the many thousands of years of secret women's business held here).

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…. Next issue no 64, likely due February 2019