



sapphire coast
**marine
discovery**
centre

Sea Scenes

NEWSLETTER OF THE SAPPHIRE COAST MARINE DISCOVERY CENTRE

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Masterplan Launch a Great Success 2011

The new Architectural Masterplan was officially launched by Federal Member for Eden-Monaro, Dr Mike Kelly, AM, MP on Friday 10th June with a number of invited dignitaries attending. Community



members were also invited to join the celebration at the SCMD Centre.

The Masterplan, an Australian Government initiative under the TQUAL Grants program, is the result of over 12 months work by the Discovery Centre's staff, Board and a number of key volunteers.

Specialist interior plans for the Discovery Centre were put together by a team of professionals from Melbourne firms Convergence Design and Boyce Pizzey Strategic. The designers have extensive experience in marine-based visitor centres, such as the [Naturaliste Marine Discovery Centre](#) in Perth.

Gordon Beattie, SCMDC Director and Chair of the Working Group, said "this plan takes the Centre up several levels, with purpose built display areas, a new-look laboratory and a high tech theatrette which is sure to be a huge attraction for both children and adults alike".

The exterior plans, which seek to greatly improve the look of the tired Wharf Building, have been greeted with great excitement from those lucky enough to have a sneak preview. Local tourism bodies have long suggested that the wharf area is the key attraction in Eden and the look and ambience of the building and surrounds are improvements to be seen as a key initiative in increasing visitor numbers.



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Federal Member for Eden-Monaro, Dr Mike Kelly, AM, MP Gordon Beattie, SCMDC Director and Chair of the Working Group



Robyn Kesby and Liz Allen

Eva Horne and Lyn Scrymgeour

In her press release to the June 9 edition of the Magnet Newspaper, Jenny Robb talks of the remodelling of the interior of the center. *"The plan for the interior is fantastic. There will be new aquariums, displays of the timber heritage from the area, a beach touch table and touch pool. The main media gallery will feature retractable walls that images can be projected onto the surrounding seating area. We're also including a wet area with showers and changerooms so we can accommodate dive groups and tours."*

To hear more about the masterplans, [Click here to hear Jenny Robb's interview on ABC Radio with Ian Campbell](#)

Chair of the SCMDC Board Stan Soroka in discussion with Mayor Tony Allen

What's going on inside the centre?

We have a New *Touch Tank*

Thanks must again go to the tireless effort and enthusiasm of Alan Scrymgeour who helped the centre's brilliant and hard working Marine Technical Officer Sheree Epe, constructing the new Touch Tank! Tyrone Maher, our work experience student for the week also helped.

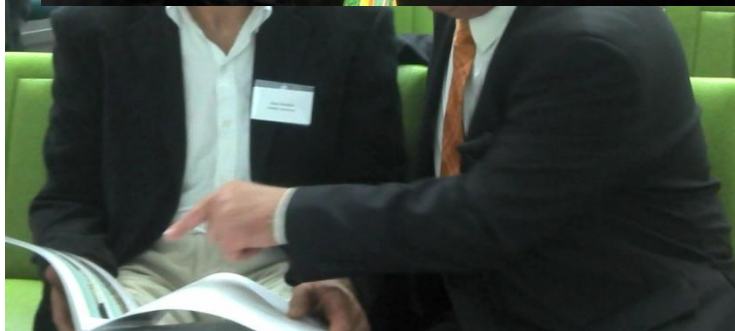
The new touch tank is a round structure composed of two halves of different water depths. While one half is deeper, the other side is higher and shallower enabling smaller children to touch the animals safely. The touch tank sits atop a wooden base enough room to sit or kneel down upon for that extra up-close and experience!



reach in and allowing personal

Currently the tank contains a host of little creatures commonly found on our rocky shores such as the familiar Waratah Anemone and seastars, black nerites and a range of other smaller molluscs and anemones.

Waratah Anemone



Alan, Sheree and visitors to the centre enjoy the new touch tank



The *New Roof* is Underway!

Some of you may have noticed the action going on above the centre lately? Yes, the wharf building is finally getting a new roof! A troupe of Rankin Builders trustie tradies with their tools, can be seen almost daily clambering above and heard banging away over our heads, working up a sweat and all still with big smiles! Thanks to Steve, Paul, Simon, Brad, Brendan and Zac (and anyone else I've forgotten to mention) for their hard work!

The new roof was made possible with a grant from NSW Government 2010 Community Building Partnership Program. The completion date is expected to be around the end of August.



Whales! Whales!! Whales!!!

You may have heard the siren from the Whale Museum, you may have seen an article on the news, you may have heard about it from people down the street, or, you may have even been lucky enough to have spotted them for yourself. Yes, the whales are here and they're heading north! Well, most of them....

With record numbers anticipated this season, people have already seen a whole lot of whale action, and they're not just humpbacks, and they're not only heading north. Around the 13th July, a Southern Right whale was seen at Pambula Beach, while others have reported seeing Orca's off Aslings Beach, (Eden), and Greencape Lighthouse around the same time. Fiona Mills, a local Eden lady who has worked and lived at Greencape, said of the orcas, "*They are around at the beginning and end of each season and have been consistent for the past 10 years plus! Special day if you see them!!! Love the sight of that huge dorsal fin!!*"

IF YOU SEE ORCA'S please let **Australian Orca Database** know:
Orca Database Hotline Number 0401 011 022
or visit our website at www.ozorcas.com and download a sightings datasheet.
You can also find us on Facebook under **Australian Orca Database**.



Kerryn Wood, the SCMDC's Operations Assistant recalls her recent encounters with humpbacks:

"I was one of the lucky ones when I spent an albeit crisp and overcast Sunday afternoon sitting up at Short Point rocks in Merimbula, rugged up against the chilly wind, binoculars at the ready, optimism on high, to see not one, but TWO pods of humpbacks heading north. The first pod, although quite a way out, was still close enough to see with the naked eye. We estimated at least five maybe six animals in the pod, including a much smaller whale which we were convinced was a calf. We watched them for at least half an hour as they steadily headed north.

Just as we thought we were done, a massive splash of white water to our right alerted us to the second pod. In much closer, the gathering crowd squealed with delight and awe as these humpbacks impressed us with numerous pec slaps, some tail extensions and one almighty crowd pleasing breach. Again we watched for over half an hour, the sun coming finally out as if to salute them farewell, as the huge leviathans of the sea cruised further north and eventually out of our sight."

Other recent local sightings include two humpback whales seen from Greencape heading south, and on Tuesday 26th, some Eden locals were lucky to see a whale slowly meandering its way into and around Twofold Bay in the early afternoon. A little further north and Gavin Swan, a member of [ORRCA](#) & [Marine Mammal Research](#) (and a regular visitor to the SCMDC's facebook page) has spotted several Southern Right Whales and Minkes around Jervis Bay.

At the time of going to press, this just in from Ros and Gordon Butt of the Cat Balou:

Sunday July 31, 2011

"Passengers who cruised aboard CAT BALOU today had an amazing morning sighting two Humpback whales and many Fur Seals on the Twofold Bay Cruise. Before departing the Eden wharf a couple of Australian Fur Seals were swimming around the vessel and half a dozen seen hauled out on the rocks at the end of the breakwall. With perfect conditions on the water quite a few more seals and patches of fish were seen as Cat Balou headed towards the heads of Twofold Bay.

Less than a mile outside the bay a whale was spotted so all passengers agreed we should try and find it. Although it appeared to be a quiet whale as we approached we were surprised to discover it was in fact two Humpbacks and the action began! Both whales breached simultaneously a couple of times as well as tail and pec slapping and some head lunges - what a display! After watching this energetic pair for half an hour they decided it was time to travel and they headed north."



If YOU see any whale activity, please feel free to call or email us here at the centre or you could post it on SCMDC's facebook site



Staff Updates



JEN'S IN AFRICA, KERRYIN'S BACK, & SHEREE'S OUT & ABOUT!

SCMDC's CEO **Jenny Robb**, is on leave and has finally embarked on her long awaited journey to Africa, with husband Arthur. Jen has been keeping us all in the loop with regular updates and incredible pictures of her travels on Facebook. Here's one of her updates:

"This morning we trekked into the Volcanoes National Park in Rwanda and were face to face with a huge silverback mountain gorilla and a mum feeding her 4 month old twins. One of the most amazing experiences I've ever ever had. And Rwandan people are the most friendly and happy in the entire world. We are very very lucky to have experienced seeing these amazing animals in their natural habitat."



Arthur, Jen and the Gorillas



Jen holds a 4 month old cheetah cub

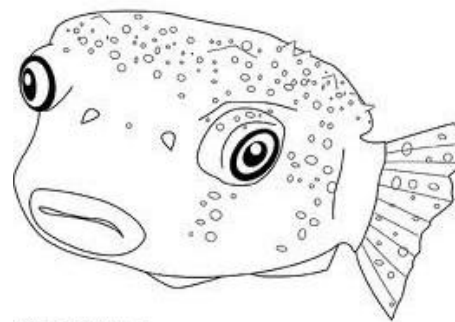
Busy as ever, Marine Technical Officer **Sheree Epe** has been out and about visiting various locations educating and inspiring the masses. This week has seen Sheree make three visits to a bunch of enthusiastic, energetic and not to mention vey cute Tathra preschool children where she delighted them with educational games such as “Marine Bingo” and showing them a variety of marine specimans.



ON Thursday, Sheree took 20 students from Pambula Primary School to Pambula Lake to meet with the oyster farmers and see how the oyster industry works. They took a tour around the lake to look at the oyster growing infrastructure and then observed the grading operations in the shed.

After a month off due to illness, Operations Assistant **Kerryn Wood** has returned to work! She is well and very happy to be back.

And finally, the new **SCMDC's Marine Teacher** has been appointed - stay tuned!!



Did you
know you
can



And tweet
us on
[Twitter](#)



VOLUNTEERS...volunteers...VOLUNTEERS...volunteers...VOLUNTEERS...

Volunteers are a special and integral part of any community based not-for-profit organisation, not least the SCMDC. Aware of the need for a well planned, organised and professionally trained, committed and energetic group of people, we will soon be conducting volunteer recruitment, orientation and training for new and existing volunteers.

**If you would like to join us & for further information, please contact
Kerryn Wood on 02 6496 1699 or email at kerryn.wood@sapphirecoastdiscovery.com.au**