



NEWSLETTER OF THE SAPPHIRE COAST MARINE DISCOVERY CENTRE

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Whale Festival Wrap Up

The 2011 Eden Whale Festival brought **thousands of visitors** to town and we think most of them took the chance to check out the Discovery Centre while they were here. Staff and Volunteers were kept busy all day on Saturday with plenty of interest in the various activities on offer.

First there was the ever-popular touch tank – it was so crowded we had to ask children to take turns. While they were being entertained (and educated!) there, many of the parents took time to watch some of the whale-watching footage from this region and all were absolutely astounded at what happens during the annual southern migration of humpbacks. And what a year for whales! Even the locals were impressed with the **huge number of humpbacks passing our shores** this year and performing some fantastic acrobatics on their way past.

Just to cap things off, Jillian and Sheree got together and gave a spectacular demonstration of how a whale ‘blows’ – this got all the kids squealing with delight and some just had to come back for the second demonstration later in the day.



(Above: Jillian demonstrating how a whale blows – in spectacular fashion!)

Just outside the door we had our good friends and partners from NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service telling people all about the whale activity along our coastline and showing them the new www.wildaboutwhales.com.au website and new phone apps so that people can call in an identification wherever they happen to be.

Despite the less than favourable weather, the Festival itself was a huge success and we are already planning what we might offer for next year’s big event.



(Left: Jillian gave a presentation on the different species of whales and dolphins we find on the Sapphire Coast and an overview of the humpback whale southern migration)

(Right: Jillian with a sperm whale jaw on loan from Alan Scrymgeour)



SCMDC @ Christmas

Board and Staff Members of SCMDC enjoyed a beautiful meal at Eden's newest dining sensation – Mystique – recently. A feature of the evening was the launch of our latest children's attraction – a huge helium-filled flying Nemo. Nemo will be a feature when we begin holding children's birthday parties in 2012. Here's a few snapshots of the night:



Above: Board Member Anne Felton with partner Keith Crook



Above: Arthur Robb with staff member Kerryn Wood



Above: last year's Trainee Jade Torr was back from university in time to join us. She is pictured with staff member Sheree Epe



Above: newest Board Member Amanda Stroud with fellow Director Diana Skipworth pictured with Nemo



(Above: new staff member Jillian Riethmuller was happy with the trinket in her Christmas bon bon. She now has a bigger mustache than her husband Mike!)



(Above: Nemo entertained everyone in the resaurant)



VOLUNTEER CHRISTMAS PICNIC

Operations Assistant / Volunteer Co-Ordinator Kerry Wood organised a lovely informal Christmas picnic for our Volunteers at Spencer Park in Merimbula and those who managed to make it were treated to lots of scrumptious Christmas fare and a beautiful (rare!) sunny day. Volunteers were awarded with Thank you Certificates and home-made Christmas goodies as a token of our thanks for their commitment and hard work throughout the year. **Check the next page for Sheree's yummy chocolate fudge recipe!**



Above: Kerry laying the table while Alan & Keith wait patiently



Above: Volunteers Denise Green and Anne Felton getting jolly



Above: Volunteers Anita and Neil Paget with their Certificates



Above: Volunteers Alan Scrymgeour and Angelika Erpic



Not everyone knows that our Board members are also Volunteers, giving their time and expertise on a regular basis to ensure the smooth operations of our Discovery Centre.

Some also take time to be Volunteer Guides – John Tanner on the Left, and Anne Felton on the Right, are two that give many hours of their time.

SCMDC wishes to thank all of their valuable Volunteers for their help. We couldn't do it without you!



Sheree's Chocolate Fudge Recipe

(for those who missed out on some at the Volunteer Christmas Picnic)

Ingredients

100g unsalted butter
1 x tin sweetened condensed milk
200g dark brown sugar
3 tablespoons golden syrup
170g dark chocolate, chopped

Method

Line a square tin with baking paper or foil

Put butter, condensed milk, brown sugar and golden syrup in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on medium-high (75% power) for 5 to 7 minutes. Stir every 2 minutes. Take bowl out of microwave and add chocolate. Stir until smooth, then beat until glossy. Put into tin, cover with baking paper and smooth down over fudge. Refrigerate for 1 hour or until firm. Cut into squares and serve – or eat!

Congratulations...and get well wishes!!

Our longest serving Volunteer – Marg Henry – has had a huge year this year. Firstly Marg has recently completed her Higher School Certificate – a great achievement for somebody just slightly over the usual leaving age. CONGRATULATIONS MARG! And last week Marg had a hip replacement! Get well Marg – you'll be sorely missed at the Centre these holidays but we look forward to seeing your happy smile again very soon.

2011 – the year that was....

2011 marked another year of achievements for the Sapphire Coast Marine Discovery Centre. Here's a few of the highlights:

- **January** – success with a Grant from the NSW Government Community Building Partnership which resulted in the replacement of our old asbestos **roof** with a lovely **new Colorbond one**.
- **January** - a very welcome impromptu visit from our esteemed **Patron, Ian Kiernan AO** – Founder and Chair of Clean Up Australia Day. Ian lobbied for some extra funds for us to finish off the roof.
- **February** – ceramic **whale and dolphin models** - made by Bega Valley Shire school students with the 2010 Year of Biodiversity Grant – were placed on display in the Discovery Centre.
- **February** – our **new Operations Assistant Kerryn Wood** was welcomed to the SCMDC team.
- **March** – the **Grow Your Own Oysters Program** – a joint initiative between Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority and SCMDC – commenced. Very well received by schools, students, and industry.
- **March** – our **3rd Annual Marine Science Forum** 'Food for Thought' was another fantastic success.
- **May** – the **Architectural Masterplan** funded through the Australian Government TQUAL Program was finalised and launched by The Hon Dr Mike Kelly MP, Member for Eden-Monaro to great acclaim. This was followed shortly after by a visit by Minister for Regional Affairs, the Hon Simon Crean, MP.
- **June** – a new **display of murex shells** was installed in the Centre thanks to Libby Hepburn, Alan Scrymgeour and Liz Allen.
- **July** – our new **Quality Assurance Manual** containing our Procedures and Policies was completed.
- **July** – our new **Constitution** was finalised and signed off by the Board of Directors.
- **September** – we welcomed our new **Marine Education Officer Jillian Riethmuller**
- **November** – our **new marine debris display** was installed, thanks to a Community Action Grant from the Australian Government Caring for our Country Program.

WHAT'S ON IN THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS?

In a word – **PLENTY!** SCMDC staff members have been letting their creative juices run wild and the result is a School Holiday Program stacked with fun – and educational – things to keep the kids entertained.

As well as the usual offerings of fish feeding, rocky shore rambles and snorkel tours there is a full calendar of exciting new activities for all ages:

SCHOOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

Workshop activities

Ocean in a bottle: Ever wondered what makes waves? Learn all about wave formation and make your very own ocean in a bottle!

Wed 21st December and Wed 11th January 11:30 am **Cost:** \$7 per person

Marine Fossil Fun: Make your very own marine fossil whilst learning about ancient marine creatures!

Thur 22nd December and Thur 12th January 11:30 am **Cost:** \$7 per person

Marine Mobiles: Create your very own hanging mobile featuring beautiful sea shells!

Fri 30th December and Fri 27th January 11:30 am **Cost:** \$7 per person

Marine Xmas decorations: Paint and decorate some lovely sea shells, throw on some glitter and a ribbon and you can hang it on your tree!

Fri 23rd December 11:30 am **Cost:** \$7 per person

Slimy Sand: Discover how sand behaves like slime and make your own bit of goo to take home!

Wed 28th December and Wed 25th January 11:30am **Cost:** \$7 per person

Deep Diver: Discover how sea creatures and even SCUBA divers sink and float in the ocean and make your very own diver! Bring your own 600ml bottle.

Thur 29th December 11:30 am **Cost:** \$7 per person

Sea shell Creations: Paint and decorate sea shells, driftwood and other interesting beach treasures!

Fri 13th January 11:30 am **Cost:** \$7 per person

Outdoor activities

Rocky Shore Rambles: Join a marine biologist exploring the amazing diversity of life found on our rock platforms.

Wed 4th January 12pm
Wed 18th January 11am

Thur 5th January 1pm
Thur 19th January 12pm

Fri 6th January 1:30pm
Fri 20th January 1:30pm

Any age

Adults \$8 Children \$4 Family \$20

1.5 hours

Min. 4 participants

Snorkelling tours: Discover our underwater world in a safe and fun environment along the beautiful Sapphire Coast. Our Instructors are fully accredited.

Bookings are essential. Book early as places are limited! To book, phone (02) 6496 1699 or email admin@sapphirecoastdiscovery.com.au

Ages 12+

Adults \$25 Children \$10 Family \$60

2 hours

Min. 4, max. 8 participants

4th Annual Marine Science Forum

Don't miss this!!

Planning is well underway for our 4th Annual Marine Science Forum, to be held over the weekend of **24th & 25th March 2012**. The title this time is “**Sea Connections**” and the line up of presenters is sure to entice many of you to come along and learn a little more about our amazing marine environment:

Dr Lisa Kirkendale (University of Wollongong - Nowra):

TOPIC: Understanding diversity of species and genetic connections

Dr Brendan Kelaher (NSW MPA – Narooma):

TOPIC: Management of marine environments - the human connection/impact on marine environment

Carole Durrusel (ANCORS, University of Wollongong):

TOPIC: Marine governance connection, connecting biodiversity of the high seas

Dr Moninya Roughan (UNSW Coastal Oceanography):

TOPIC: East Australian Current connectivity

Dr Chris Fulton (Research School of Biology, Australian National University):

TOPIC: Marine Protected Areas: do they work for fish and for people?

6th speaker to be confirmed soon!

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL GRANT APPLICATION

Many thanks to the Mumbulla Foundation for their ongoing support of the Discovery Centre. We were successful with another Grant of \$3,000 from Mumbulla this year and the funds will be used to train some of our Volunteers as Accredited Snorkeling Instructors. This is greatly needed as our Snorkel Tours continue to grow in popularity.



SCMDC ANNUAL PASSES

AVAILABLE FROM 1 January 2012

FEES:

Family (2adults + 2 children)	\$35
Extra child	\$5 each
Adult (16+)	\$15
Pensioners/students	\$10

WHAT DO YOU GET? Unlimited Entry for 12 months to the Discovery Centre + 10% off retail stock + Buy 1 coffee & get the 2nd coffee FREE from Great White Bite Cafe

CONTACT KERRY WOOD AT THE CENTRE TO PURCHASE YOUR PASS!

WEB CHECK

Check out these great web sites focusing on some serious issues threatening the marine environment

(hover your mouse over the link for instructions)

<http://www.twohandsproject.org/>

<http://www.projectaware.org/>



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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



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Proud supporter of the Sapphire Coast Marine Discovery Centre



**SCMDC Staff and Board Members wish all our volunteers
and supporters a very
MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY HEALTHY NEW YEAR**