

# Waves 'n' caves

www.wavesncaves.com

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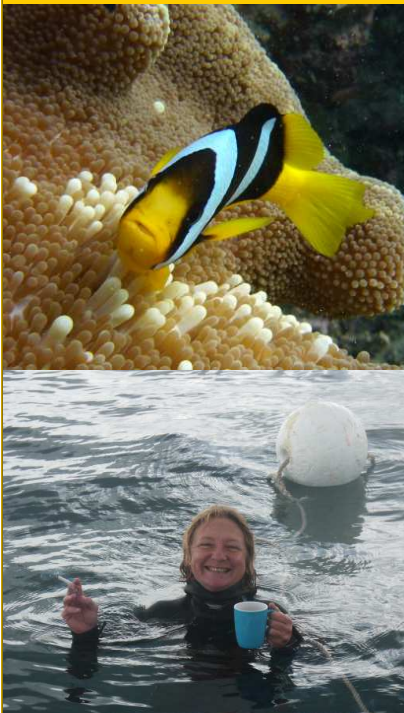
In this edition:

- Past & Upcoming Events
- Ewens Ponds—Updated Info
- Update on the Canberra.
- Mapping—divers wanted.
- Deadly Creates—the Scuba Diver!

**Above:** Small wreck at Vanuatu.

**Below:** Clown fish at Alan Powers "decompression stop", and Sue from Crest Diving relaxes during a surface break at Jervis Bay.

**Right:** Divers in wheelhouse on Emily.



## The latest in brief...

Well, you'll all be glad to hear that I've decided not to write the intro to the waves n caves newsletter at 40+m whilst narced any 😊 more!

This newsletter includes information on some dives that have taken part recently, updated information on the future of Ewens, a discovery of a great dive light (only available from the States, but we've ordered 17 so far!) as well as some tips that some divers may find handy.

There has been some action of late, including night diving at Ewens and the Lee breakwater in Portland, dives at Middle Island. Wrecks have been visited including the Loch Ard and Emily.

Caves, caverns and sinkholes still remain popular (especially with the weather the way it is), but a few days have opened themselves up to some good opportunities to hit the sea and see what it has to offer.

The Warrnambool Sub Aqua Club are holding their Annual General Meeting the 19th of August at the Shamrock Hotel in Dennington at 7:00pm.

It's time to grab a cuppa, sit back and relax and open up this edition of the Waves n Caves newsletter. ✍



## Ewens Ponds Changes—Update

We have been informed that after receiving and reviewing the submissions for the Ewens Ponds Closure, the Department of Environment and Heritage are now looking at a ***different proposal***.

This new proposal looks to introduce a permit system for divers, limiting the amount of divers that go through the ponds at any one time, and also completely banning swimming altogether.

There is also plans to modify or redesign a location where divers will launch from into deeper water to limit the impact.

The new plans have not yet been adopted by the minister yet and are still in a draft stage, so nothing is confirmed. ✍



## HMAS Canberra Update

It was originally believed that all relevant parties had signed off on the intended site, and if all went to plan we could be diving her now! However, the Department of Environment, Water and Heritage (DEWHA) have raised their expressions that they are not happy with the site. (DEWHA is the Commonwealth Department that has responsibility for the Sea Dumping Act and which must sign off before any permit to scuttle Canberra can be issued).

DEWHA did not make it clear on what their concerns are, and unfortunately due to lack of communication and action on their behalf, the sinking date has been pushed back.

The site is excellent, close enough to shore to clear shipping, clear sandy bottom at just under 30 metres depth, away from the 4 metre high reefs which partly surround the site, but close enough to enjoy some disruption of ground swells from the prevalent south-westers, and within the footprint of the existing dived wrecks.

The delay is frustrating, not only because DEWHA didn't give a clear reason as to why they have delayed the process, but now, instead of the ship been scuttled in March as was intended, it will be pushed back to late August, or September at the earliest (if we're lucky) and the end result being that the site is unlikely to start being dived regularly until summer 2009.

As usual, we will keep everyone posted as to the latest events with the HMAS Canberra. ✍

### STOP PRESS—Last minute update

It would appear as though the cogs are turning again, and a scuttling "target date" of Saturday, 12th September 2009 has been determined for the sinking of the EX-HMAS Canberra.

### CONCEPTUAL DRAWING AND PROPOSED SITE DEPTHS FOR THE EX HMAS CANBERRA



## Dorcy Dive Light Review

By Lachlan Ellis

Well, after stumbling across this low cost, high output dive light I was a tad sceptical at first.....a 180 lumen dive light for less than \$100? It turns out I worried for no reason, these torches are amazing!

The manufacturer does not ship these outside of the USA, so getting a hold of them proved to be a little challenging. However the intrepid interweb scout Adam was able to find them sold under the name of the "Penetrator 180" from [www.piranhadivemfg.com](http://www.piranhadivemfg.com). I recommend you check it out, and here's why...

The specs of this dive light are as follows:

- Output: 180 Lumen
- Focus Type: 80% spot, 20% spread
- Batteries: 6 AAA
- Max Depth: 100m
- Case: Hard Anodised Aluminium
- Run Time: 8 Hours

And aside from the manufacturer specs, there are some interesting facts about this light it is worth mentioning.

The seal on the light appear suitable, consisting of 2 O-Rings and a firm fit of the 2 parts of the torch (It requires some pressure to get the thread started due to this).

Also the power supplied to the torch consists of 2 banks of 3 AAA batteries, so you can run the torch on only 3 batteries at the cost of reduced run time, so you don't get caught out at the dive site!

However the torch also has some downsides. The first of these is the somewhat flimsy lanyard that is supplied with the light, which I recommend be replaced fairly quickly, although this is a minor issue.

The second of these is the method to turn the light on, which is a twist of the head of the torch. As mentioned above, the seal on the head of the torch is quite firm, and so with gloves on this can be a bit tricky to operate. The torch would benefit from some sort of textured surface to facilitate easier operation, however using bicycle tubing as a makeshift solution has proven effective for those who experience difficulty with this.

The twist on head could also be a possible point of



flooding if you were to accidentally twist it off too far while underwater, so a little bit of care should be exercised.

Basically though, the flaws outlined above can be forgiven by the simple fact that this is a cheap dive light that puts out a phenomenal amount of light for its price, and as long as you are careful installing the batteries (the holder is a little flimsy) the external case is rugged enough to put up with anything you can throw at it.

Highly recommended! ✍️

**Photo shows example of 80% Beam 20% Splash light of Dorcy 180 on a wall.**



### Mapping—Divers Wanted

We are currently looking for divers to help complete a mapping project in Little Blue. Divers need to have a minimum sinkhole rating to be involved.

Mapping can be an enjoyable dive, and is a great way to learn more about the site you're diving in.

Can anyone interested please contact Adam.

**WARNING:**  
**Alfred Decompression Chamber N/A**

Divers should be aware that the Alfred decompression chamber in Melbourne is offline for all treatment.

Victorian Divers who are conducting dives during this time should be aware that due to the chamber not being available, there may be significant delay in treatment due to the need to transfer to an appropriate facility interstate.

Divers conducting decompression requiring dives or other high risk dives should consider the risks of such dives and potential consequences of such dives and should have adequate emergency oxygen available on-hand.

Divers requiring treatment should contact either the Alfred switch on 03 90762000 and ask to speak to the Hyperbaric registrar or call the DES line for advise. Divers with suspected DCI will in most cases be assessed at the Alfred ER and transferred as appropriate, although those diving that are within striking distance to Adelaide (such as diving the South West coast of Vic, or Mt Gambier regions) should consider Adelaide for hyperbaric treatment at this point in time. ✍

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**Need to hire dive gear?**

Do you need to hire some dive gear? Not sure where to go? Let us know, and we may be able to help.

We've had a few members find it hard to find dive gear of late.

There are plenty of people around with a spare set of this, or another set of that, that are happy and willing to hire out there gear.

If you're having some problems, contact Freddy or Adam and they should be able to give you some helpful suggestions, or point you in the right direction. ✍

**Trouble 'donning that wetsuit?**

Yes—some seem to find don'ing wetsuits much easier than others. We've seen a few interesting ideas that may help those wth this trouble:

Plastic Bag. Before putting on a wetsuit put a plastic shopping bag over your foot and let. Put the wetsuit on over that, and when done, pull the plastic back off your foot. Repeat with the other leg.

Conditioner. There are those who use a diluted (1-2 or 1-4 mix) of conditioner and water to 'treat' the inside of the wetsuit as a lubricant before donning.

Dive Skins: An undergarment such as a dive skin can help assist slide the wetsuit on much easier. It can also add a little extra warmth.

Inside Out: Try turning your wetsuit inside out and 'rolling' it on. ✍

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**The Commitment Award.**

***This editions commitment award goes to Ryan:***

While we watched onwards from the warmth and dryness of our car, through the front windshield with the wipers going on—Ryan checks out the Vis at Rocklands Resovioir. Unfortunately not good enough for diving.



## Man escapes fire with SCUBA.

A man in Phoenix, USA is lucky to be alive after a fire went through his multi-million dollar home.

After getting caught with smoke, the man, 'Michael Marin' used his scuba gear to breathe clean air and then used a collapsible safety ladder to climb out of the window of his 2nd story bedroom.

Dorian Jackson, a Phoenix fire Department captain said "In all my years, this is the first time I've seen somebody use scuba diving equipment to get out of a fire.

Marin was later taken to Hospital to be treated for smoke inhalation. ✍



## Warrnambool Sub Aqua Club

*The Warrnambool sub aqua club plan dives for most weekends, which have a wide range in the skill levels involved, so there's something for everyone!*

*They include shore dives, boat dives, wreck dives, cray dives, cavern / sinkhole dives and cave dives.*

*The Warrnambool sub aqua newsletters are on our website, and dates are listed on our main page, as well as our calendar.*

*They're a bunch of friendly divers, and more than happy for you to join them for a dive. They also have their own dive boat, which can get you out to fascinating locations such as the Loch Ard wreck, Emily Wreck, Thunder point, etc.*

*Why not catch up with them and go for a dive?*

*If you decide to travel, please send an email to the mailing list to let others know as there may be other interested people who would come with you. ✍*

## Did you know...

The current deepest scuba dive (on open circuit mixed gas) was 318.25m, by Nuno Gomes.

Hal Watts has set his records in the Guinness book with the deepest scuba dive **on air** was to 158m in 1999, with aPPO2 level of around 3.5 and most likely narced to the equivalent of almost 17 martinis.

And, just recently, the world record set by us Australians for 'Extreme underwater Ironing' was taken away from us by a British team of divers where 86 pressed their garments in Gloucestershire. The effort raised more than £6,000 for charity!

## The Under Water Channel (Online TV)

There is an online website called 'The under water channel', which hosts a variety of online TV programs. (Broadband connection is needed to view)

Babelgum have now changed their software, and use regular flash streaming to view the programmes! A good broadband connection is still obviously necessary.

Many of the programmes run for approx 40 minutes and content appears to be excellent.

The Channel is free to watch (except for the downloads depending on the plan you have with your ISP) and designed to appeal to a global audience of divers and 'armchair' divers - those who have yet to take the plunge!

The channel including stories of interest relating to free diving, wreck diving, cave diving, snorkeling, dolphin watching – and even nudibranch spotting!

Also, available are stories on Whales, Dolphins, Great White Sharks, Manta Rays, Wrecks and other dive destinations stories are also available..

For those who are interested, the site can be found at <http://www.theunderwaterchannel.tv/> ✍



## Past Events

### May 23rd / 24th

The plan was to visit Mt Gambier and do a night dive in Ewens, and then some dry caving in Snake Hill and Morgans cave the following day.

However this weekend the weather decided to turn one-eight and be a pearler for the sea, so caving was aborted, and divers headed over to Warrnambool to sneak a dive in between the islands at Middle Island. For a few, this was the first descent sea dive they've ever experienced. Finally—maybe things are turning for the better.

### May 30th / 31st

There were a few dives conducted in Mt Gambier which included Gouldens, Allendale, Pines, Englebrechts East and Fossils. Kilsby's was also dived (a last min decision Friday evening), Saturday morning with a few from Queensland prior to them continuing with their cave course. The weather was magnificent this weekend.

### June 6th / 7th

A coupe of divers from Horsham decided to team up with some Warrnambool Sub Aqua club members to see what the sea had to offer. Things didn't start off well...

After putting the boat in the water the engine wouldn't start. After a number of attempts Lachlan, Parko and Adam decided that a shore dive would be a better way to go, while Doug opted to work on the boat. We decided to dive the breakwater but upon getting ready the sea was looking a bit washy there to be getting in at high tide. (We had probably been in our gear for 60-90 mins at this stage without getting wet).

We decided to go to Middle Island instead and made our way down to the carpark. Upon gearing up Parko's dive computer wouldn't sync with the wireless transmitter meaning he had no SPG.

Never fear—Adam had a spare reg with a SPG that he opted to pull of and change over. It just meant de-gearing again so he could get the key from inside his drysuit, just to find we didn't have the right tools to get the wireless transmitter out of the Reg. (And the reg only had 1 HP port).

Not to be outdone it was decided to fix the SPG back to the spare reg, and give Parko the spare reg to use instead of his own. But—then we struck problems with the Reg being a DIN, and the Tank

being K-Only. Lastly we got a spare tank to go diving. A lot of effort was put into the shore dive at Middle island—but it was worth the wait.

The sea was great between the islands. Vis quite good for the area, and some caves and swim-throughs were found as well as some very large crays.

That night Linda, Lachlan and Adam dove the Lee Breakwater for a night dive. A cuttlefish greeted us on decent, and then a number of cute critters were observed including a cute Dumpling Squid.



(Above picture of a dumpling squid (*Euprymna tasmanica*) kindly provided with permission by James Peake)

Dumpling Squids grow up to around 5-7cm in length—and are just dang cute).

Gary attempted another deep wreck dive this weekend on his rebreather that went pair-shaped after being dropped on the wrong side of the shot line in current. Hopefully next time it will be 3rd time lucky!

### July 4th / 5th

Another weekend for cave diving. This weekend some divers from Horsham and Warrnambool teamed up together to visit the mount.

The first dive of the day was at Pines cave—always a good trusty dive site that's easy to access.

The second dive wasn't quite as trusty. Englebrechts East can be quite a nice dive site at times, and it was decided that we should visit this dive site and get through to the large air chamber that is accessible only by diving through flooded passageways.

Water levels have risen over the last month at some dive sites at the mount—this was not one of

them. The bottom 'steps' were roughly 70cm out of the water, meaning a trip through the silt would have to be taken to get into the water.

The silt monster was more hungry today than others. First it devoured Adam's leg—right up past the knee and half way up the thigh. After some careful maneuvering the leg was recovered.

However, the silt was not fulfilled, and took Parko's fin too. After some time the fin was recovered. Unfortunately at this stage the whole entrance was a silt out.

We decided to wait 10 mins for the silt to settle before continuing. After 10 mins it was clear the silt wasn't going to settle fast, so the lead diver descended into the inky site to do the secondary tie off.

Interesting.... They teach you how to exit caves in a silt out on dive courses, but not how to go into them.

After a few minutes the secondary tie off was done, however Adam could not be sure whether he was going in the right direction. He felt the floor, and then felt the roof. Narrow—we must be in the low flatliner—surely the vis would clear up shortly.

This was not to be the case. The silt was making it's way down into the sump—and the site was not finished yet. Ross had one of his 3 torches go out, and the vis wasn't getting any better.

After about 30 mins in the water (including the bobbing up at the surface waiting for silt to clear on 2 separate occasions) the dive was called.

Englebrechts had won.... That day! We hope to return soon for round two...

### **July 17th / 18th—Emily & Warrnambool**

This weekend was all happening. Organising 18 divers is no easy task for one weekend, but anything is possible.

Saturday was to see a number of Horsham and Warrnambool divers hit Portland with two dive boats to see the Emily wreck. The conditions were perfect for a dive—after you descended to more than 5m that is. Vis was great—no swell (below) and a great dive was had by all.

However, on the surface the northerlies had other ideas. A mask and torch was lost to Davy Jones's Locker **Getting back on the boat also proved both challenging and entertaining. Quells were also put to the test this day.**

On the return trip the Warrnambool Sub Aqua club boat was put through the test too, showing that motorbikes aren't the only things that can be stood on their rear end.

That afternoon a few from the morning dive met up with a group from Horsham to dive Middle Island. Conditions were near perfect for a dive here. Some kelp is growing near the outer side between the islands, and a cave and a few swim holes were also found.

The following day conditions changed and a few took to Pea Soup to shelter & play. Divers were seen without their masks and without their BC's as new ways to scuba dive were being experimented with.

### **August 1st / 2nd**

The Mount was visited again this weekend with dives in Pines and Pic's. Pines was beautiful (as always). Pics was very dirty (greeny) in the first pond, but the chasm and cathedral were quite clear and enjoyable.

### **Upcoming Dives ...**

#### **August 15th-16th—Warrnambool/Portland**

Weather permitting—talk about another trip to the Emily is in the air. More information will be on the mailing list as it becomes available.

#### **August 29th—September 9th—Vanuatu**

A group of 8 are hitting the Coolidge in what is sure to be a pleasant dive experience for all...

### **HMAS Canberra**

The date of the sinking has been put back, but once she's scuttled and settled we're sure to be looking to dive this wreck while it's still in it's sterile condition.

### **Want to Go Diving?**

At these days there have been expressions of interest to dive the Lochard and Emily wrecks, Middle Island (Warrnambool), a drift dive and wall dive at Queenscliffe, including the submarine wrecks.

Weather being what it has been of late has made it difficult to plan dives on set dates (as has been done in the past), so the above dives will be done at short notice when the weather and sea present

good conditions.

If you're interested, please make sure you're signed up to the Waves n Caves mailing list to get an email when it's good to go.

### Vanuatu & Fiji

There has been some whispers mentioned about the possibility of visiting Fiji or Vanuatu next year for a dive. At this stage there are early talks with many factors to consider including the weather (for the farmers) and the economic financial status. If you're interested in going though, let us know and we'll work at getting all interested parties connected.

Unplanned diving events happen almost on a fortnightly basis which is why we don't have a whole lot of dives listed here, with trips all over the coast and inland at caves! (Even overseas trips are sometimes arranged at very short notice!) These trips, normally decided within a week or two of the dive are communicated between divers on the waves n caves mailing list.

If you are not on the mailing list, then you are most likely not in the know of the majority of the dives that take place!

If you would like to be on the mailing list, send an email to [help@wavesncaves.com](mailto:help@wavesncaves.com) requesting to be added. The mailing list allows all involved to be able to send emails to the list members about any intended dives. "







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### Buoyweather Account

Due to the activity with sea dives this winter season it has been decided to keep the Buoyweather account active all this year.

The same username and password as before.

Please contact Adam if you need login details. "

Monday 8/3	Tuesday 8/4	Wednesday 8/5
<b>Morning</b>  Windy conditions with choppy seas. Small craft advisory. Small short period wind waves. Winds: WSW 17 to 24 knots Seas: WSW 3 feet at 3 sec.	<b>Morning</b>  Light and variable winds with smooth seas. Small short period wind waves. Winds: NW 4 to 5 knots Seas: S 1 feet at 9 sec.	<b>Morning</b>  Light and variable winds with smooth seas. Small short period wind waves. Winds: WSW 2 to 2 knots Seas: SE 1 feet at 8 sec.
<b>Afternoon</b>  Breezy whitecapping conditions with moderate choppy seas. Small short period wind waves. Winds: WSW 12 to 17 knots Seas: WSW 3 feet at 4 sec.	<b>Afternoon</b>  Light and variable winds with smooth seas. Small short period wind waves. Winds: E 4 to 6 knots Seas: S 1 feet at 9 sec.	<b>Afternoon</b>  Light winds with a slight chop. Small short period wind waves. Winds: ENE 8 to 11 knots Seas: E 1 feet at 10 sec.

### Deadly Creatures—The Scuba Diver

Not quite what you'd expect to see from our deadly creature column, but the scuba diver may be the cause of more deaths for our sport than all other animals combined—so we thought we might take this column to look at the top causes of scuba diving deaths, as the scuba diver can be deadly to both himself, and other divers.

One thing that I have learned from aviation is that there is rarely one issue that causes an incident, but rather—there are a number of contributing factors that lead up to the incident or accident. In most cases these issues are caused by humans, and reducing one or more of these causes would probably have avoided the accidents that occur in the majority of cases.

It would appear as though it is the same with diving. According to one of DAN's annual reports, they concluded that there are four main common factors that **contribute** to dive fatalities.

The good news is that all four factors are preventable. We will briefly look at the four main factors brought up by DAN's report:

#### Equipment Problems

According to DAN, equipment problems seem to be the **least** contributing factor to the deaths. Where equipment problems did contribute to the death of a diver the causes were as follows:

- 7.5% BC Issues
- 6.0% Regulator Issues
- 5.0% Weighing Issues

Masks, Fins, Drysuits and Computer issues were also involved, but in less than 3% of deaths. It is important to note that while the equipment may have played a part in these deaths, it does not mean that the equipment failure **caused** the deaths. It is more likely that it was the divers response to the equipment failure than the equipment failure itself...

#### Poor Diver Health

Heart disease, respiratory problems, dehydration, pre-existing injuries, high blood pressure, and lack of fitness can affect a divers safety.

It's interesting to note that the biggest common contributing factor cited in 74% of fatalities involved divers with a body mass index in the overweight or obese categories. Approximately 15% of the fatalities also included high blood pressure or heart disease. This does not mean that poor health was the



primary cause, but that it can be one of the main contributing factors.

### **Diving Procedures**

DAN's report shows that errors in the divers procedures are common in the accidents they reviewed. This included skill limitations, ear equalization problems, buoyancy control problems, rapid ascents and neglected decompression stops.

*However, most critical were divers that failed to monitor their gas supply which related in low on air, and out of air incidents.*

It is interesting to note that in 26% of reported fatalities, an emergency ascent was a factor leading to the actual death. However, there were often additional diver errors that lead to requiring the emergency ascent. These included:

- 14% - Insufficient gas supply.
- 10% - Rough conditions beyond the divers capabilities.
- 9% - Health problems
- 9% - Entrapment and Entanglement
- 8% - Equipment Problems.

### **Environmental Issues**

In open water, the conditions that one dives in can change rapidly and can trap one that is unprepared. A diver needs to know their limits and be prepared to say no, or call the dive.

In addition to this it was also interesting to see that divers who were new to diving to the 25m+ range were often surprised by the impact of narcosis, or how rapidly they go through their gas supply.

As you can see with the above four issues—in most cases they overlap, and most of the causes are

also preventable.

In addition to this, it is also critical for divers to avoid the following:

### **Complacency**


After getting a number of dives under our belt, it is quite easy to become complacent with our gear and environment, especially if we have not been involved with a dive incident. The danger here is the longer we go without experiencing an incident - the greater we risk being complacent with diving, which can lead to carelessness and other contributing factors that could combine themselves to cause a nasty situation.

### **Overconfidence**

Along with complacency divers can get themselves or their buddies in trouble by being overconfident. Being confident is a great asset when diving—but if one is over confident it can have the reverse effect.

A divers confidence can be taken away from a diver within an instance, and if they are unprepared or in an environment beyond their experience and skill level it can rapidly lead to mistakes, panic and serious problems.

Divers should never dive beyond their skill level and capabilities. Things will often go right if they do—and this can lead to even more overconfidence, and going further beyond their skill level and training. A spiral that normally ends when the diver hits a problem, and then he is way out of his depth.

In addition to being a risk to themselves, an overconfident diver also adds risk to their buddies or the group they are diving with. 

## **Looking for Accommodation in Mt. Gambier?**

Whether you're chasing it for a night, a weekend or a week, this spacious 3 bedroom house with good size living areas and fully furnished, located in Wimmera Street Mt Gambier may be what you're looking for.

It includes an outdoor entertainment area at the back with facilities for diving gear to be hung up on. Perfect for scuba divers visiting the Mt Gambier region, whether to dive in caves or the nearby sea.

It also makes an excellent place to stay while doing your CDAA course! Prices start at \$20 / head / night.

For bookings, contact Kelvyn or Paula Ball

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