# Water Column

AUGUST 2021 ISSUE 17

Western Australian Underwater Photographic Society's Bi-annual Underwater Journal

## Bunbury's Lena wreck

## South Australia's Seadragons

## Latest competitions

## Creature feature: Hard corals

## Wide angle macro toys

We sincerely thank all of the sponsors who have supported WAUPS over the years. Please remember these club sponsors when you are thinking of your next purchase.




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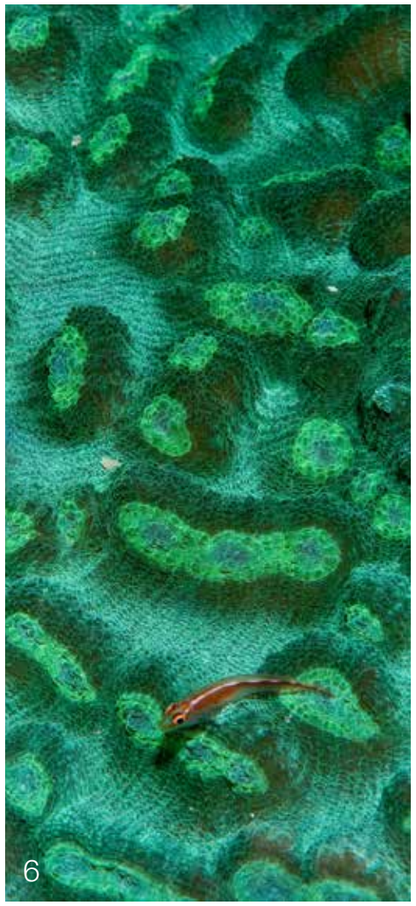


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Cover by Tammy Gibbs, WAUPS Image of the Year 2021


**Publishing credits:** Editor **Viv Matson-Larkin** Associate editors **Ross Gudgeon, Leanne Thompson**
Layout design **Tammy Gibbs** Printing **UniPrint**

# EDITOR'S BUBBLES

Howdy Members,

It certainly has been an incredibly challenging time due to the very unseasonal weather and pandemic lockdowns. The latter affecting some of our monthly meetings, so they were held online via Zoom. We just made it with a quorum at this year's AGM. Announcing the new committee, we welcomed aboard Matt Smith, and sincerely thanked Isla Cath who stepped down from the committee. Ross Gudgeon has taken on the President role with Amanda Blanksby as Vice President.

While two of our Life Members were away enjoying the warmer waters off Cocos Island another committee member joined that rank. Mary Gudgeon nominated Amanda Blanksby for Life Membership. You know that Hotel California song by the Eagles 'You can check out any time you like, but you can never leave' … welcome to the team Amanda. 🙂

Congratulations to Tammy Gibbs who won the Image of the Year Award, for the 3rd year in a row! That image on the front page of this issue will also appear in the e-news, on the website banner, Facebook and the membership card. Tammy was also the winner of the Open Portfolio competition. Is she not on a roll! Thank you to the Dive Tub for their ongoing sponsorship of that competition, and to Bluefish Photo for sponsoring Image of the Year.

The Wayne Storrie Underwater Humour Award joint winners this year were Mary and Ross Gudgeon. Thanks to sponsor Bill Meiklejohn of Willyabrup Dreaming Pottery, who has the most beautiful one-of-a-kind handcrafted marine themed ceramic creations.

While the 'Paint the Port' photographic exhibition was cancelled due to COVID lockdown, Mary Gudgeon beavered away in the background to find another venue to showcase that display. Requests went out for more images from club members, with Ross Gudgeon going into printer-overdrive to enlarge that collection of prints. With the new title of 'Under Cockburn Sound' that exhibition is up on the walls at the Shipwreck Museum till the 19th of September.

This year is flying by, with only five more competitions to go – the East versus West Shoot-out, the WAUPS Short Video competition, the Novice Portfolio, PIXELS, and the Golden Snapper Award. Do renew your WAUPS membership so you can continue to participate in these competitions, at the same time confirming your contact details are current as a requirement of our Constitution.

Looking for fresh ideas to invigorate everyone with their photography if you happen to know of anyone you think would be an interesting guest speaker, please let the committee know. We have had some very informative presentations during the year and appreciate the time and effort the guest speakers and club members have put in for our learning and entertainment.

Without our core group of helpers from the President down, editors, web manager, those who have mentored members, planned an excursion, given presentations, run workshops, organised the monthly dive and BBQ, taken the time to write an article, arranged external judges for our competitions, helped with the scoring and shortlisting of images for WAPF photography competitions, etc. WAUPS would simply not exist.

I'm know I am not the only one that is looking forward to a nice warm summer as the underwater conditions due to the long, wet, and windy winter has not been favourable for many of us. Please don't be shy, how about submitting an article for the next issue.

Keep blowin' bubbles

*Viv*

# PIXELS 2021

Congratulations to those members who have received a Gold award in the first half of 2021.


*Isla Cath*

*Ross Gudgeon*

*Hayley Fairbrother*

*Gary Browne*

CREATURE FEATURE by Sue Morrison

# HARD CORALS - Hexacorallia

**Reef builders.** The term ‘corals’ conjures up images of clear, warm tropical waters with sun-dappled reefs made up of colourful corals in all shapes and sizes. These corals are mainly the hard-, or reef-building corals. It is the limestone (calcium carbonate) skeletons of these corals that form spectacular coral reefs, the largest structures built by living animals. Successive generations of corals grow on top of the old ones, and so the reef increases in size. Some of the slower growing massive corals can be hundreds of years old. Such reefs generally only form when winter temperatures exceed 18 degrees celsius. They are estimated to cover around 285,000 km$^2$ globally with 92% (500-600 species) in the Indo-Pacific region (41% of this in the Pacific including Australia). The Raja Ampat region is the epicentre for species diversity, being the origin of marine evolution in the Tethys Sea.

**Simple bodies.** Hard corals belong to the phylum ‘Cnidaria’ (pronounced ny-dare-ea) which also encompasses soft corals, anemones, zoanthids, hydroids and jellyfish. These animals all have a simple body plan with an out layer, an inner layer and jelly-like layer in between. The cup-shaped body has a mouth at the centre (which also serves as an anus!) and a ring of tentacles around the perimeter. There are two body forms based on this theme – a sedentary polyp (like a hard coral) and a free-swimming medusa (like a jellyfish). The medusa is an upside-down form of a polyp, but without any base for attachment. Unlike anemones and zoanthids, hard corals secrete a hard skeleton that protects their soft polyps.

*Top to bottom: Platygyra species; branched growth form, Acropora species; massive growth form, Porites species, parrotfish bite marks around perimeter*

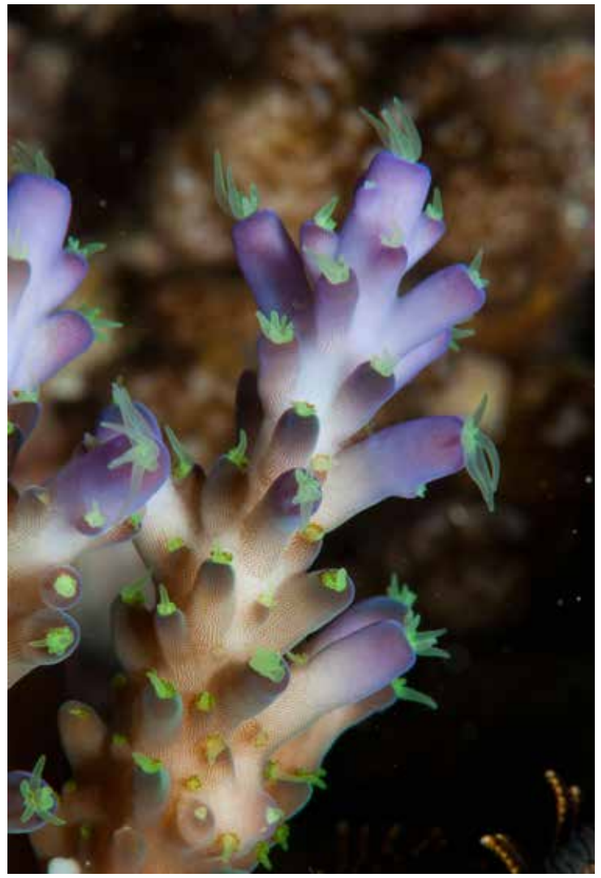


**Stingers.** The feature common to all these groups is the presence of stinging cells or nematocysts in the tentacles or body wall. Each nematocyst cell contains a coiled up harpoon-like structure, that is triggered by touch or certain chemicals. On release the harpoon shoots out and either sticks to the skin of the prey or penetrates the skin and injects venom. As the prey struggles more nematocysts are fired. The severity of stings ranges from no pain (just a sticky sensation as in most anemones) to immense pain that can even cause death (in the case of box jellyfish). True hard corals cannot sting humans but the coral-like fire-coral (a hydroid) can inflict pain.

**Class-work.** Study your tentacles! Hard corals belong to one of the four classes of Cnidaria, called Anthozoa. This class is in turn divided into the following four subclasses:

1. Hexacorallia – Hard corals, anemones, zoanthids. Tentacles in multiples of 6.
2. Octocorallia – Soft corals, gorgonians, sea whips, sea pens. Tentacles always 8 and feathery.
3. Antipatharia – Black corals. Polyps with simple, unbranched tentacles.
4. Ceriantharia – Tube anemones. Large, solitary polyps, 2 whorls of tentacles.

**Partnerships.** Most hard coral species have zooxanthellae (tiny, single-celled algae) living in their tissues, which gives them colour. The coral polyp gains food (organic carbon) that leaks out of the algae, and the algae gain nutrients and have a safe place to live. This relationship is mutually beneficial or symbiotic. The algae photosynthesize (obtain energy using sunlight), and this enables corals to grow faster in light than in shade. Consequently corals can grow rapidly enough to keep ahead of erosion by waves and borers. These are the reef-building or hermatypic corals, and most are colonial. Exceptions are the free-living mushroom corals (*Fungia* species).



*Top to bottom: Montipora species (whorl growth form); three species of Acropora (branched growth forms)*

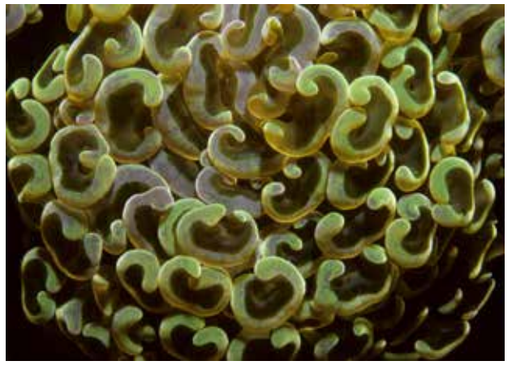
The corals lacking zooxanthellae are known as ahermatypic corals and do not form reefs. They can live at greater depths with less light than reef-builders. Many are small, solitary cave-dwellers, some such as *Dendrophyllia* and *Tubastrea* form small colonies, but these do not contribute to reef formation.

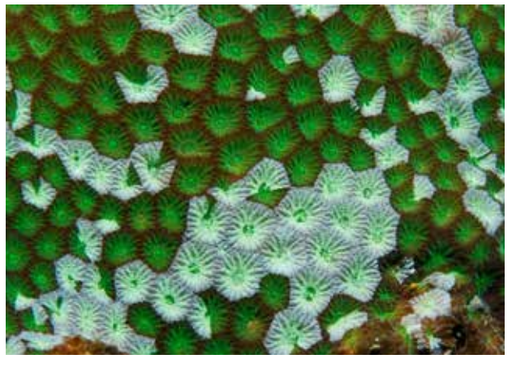
**Dinner time.** Reef-building corals derive up to 98% of their food from their live-in algae. The remaining food is from plankton trapped in their armed tentacles. Some plankton migrate up and down in the water column on a 24 hour cycle, and some only enter shallow waters at night. Other plankton are carried on water currents. Consequently coral polyps feed at varying times of the day and night, depending on when plankton are around. The non-reef building corals are completely carnivorous, trapping animals such as zooplankton, worms, crustaceans and small fishes.

**Reproduction.** Corals are capable of budding off coral polyps that settle and form a new colony asexually. However, sexual reproduction is more common in which spectacular mass coral spawnings occur. External fertilisation is achieved by the synchronised release of immense numbers of eggs and sperm over a few nights. This occurs in different seasons in different locations e.g. in Ningaloo Marine Park it occurs in early autumn, but on the Great Barrier Reef it occurs in late spring.

**Predators.** Not only do corals have to contend with natural erosion, but there are hoards of species that challenge coral growth. Other corals, sponges and algae compete with hard corals for space and sunlight - the faster growing species win out. Some worms, molluscs, urchins and sponges bore into coral colonies and make a safe home for themselves, protected by the hard coral skeleton. The infamous crown of thorns seastar, *Drupella cornus,* molluscs and parrotfishes eat the coral polyps. Parrotfishes even chomp into the skeleton too!

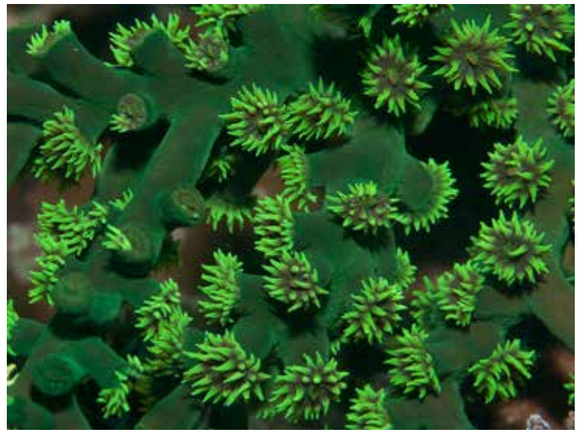
**Threats.** Increased temperatures due to climate change, pollutants (e.g. from storm water runoff and shipping), overexposure to sunlight during high temperatures, and prolonged exposure to air at extreme low tides can all cause major stress in corals. For example, an increase of one degree celsius over four weeks can result in coral bleaching. When this occurs, the symbiotic algae leave the corals' tissue, causing the coral to lose its major source of food, become very pale





*Top to bottom: Free-living, family Fungiidae; free-living, Heliofungia species; Euphyllia species, family Faviidae; family Pectiniidae*





or even white, and is more susceptible to disease. The coral dies of starvation or disease, then the tissues slough off, the skeleton becomes overgrown with macroalgae and will eventually erode away. Occasionally zooxanthellae can return to bleached coral and it survives, but this appears to be a very limited occurrence. US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reports that between 2014 and 2017 around 75% of the world's tropical coral reefs had heat stress sufficient to trigger bleaching.

Acidification of the ocean waters is another serious threat. It is estimated that 30-40% of carbon dioxide from human activity (mainly from burning fossil fuels) dissolves into oceans. This increases seawater acidity which reduces the ability of corals to build their calcium carbonate skeletons.

*Top to bottom: Non-reef building coral Dendrophyllia species; non-reef building coral Tubastrea micrantha; Galaxea species; Lobophyllia species; Physogyra species*

*Left: Non-reef building solitary coral Cynaria species*

# Bunbury's Lena wreck

by Jenny Ough

*Top to bottom: The prop in 2015; the prop in 2021; baitfish above the wreck*

The FV Lena was apprehended by the Australian Navy in 2002 for illegally fishing Patagonian Toothfish in Australia's Antarctic waters, approximately 2,200 nautical miles southwest of Perth. The chase began in the Antarctic and the Navy pursued her to South Africa and back before she eventually surrendered, near Heard Island. It became one of the longest sea chases in maritime history. She was then towed to Fremantle and the crew were charged.

The Bunbury Chamber of Commerce requested the vessel to sink it as a dive wreck when it learned the Australian Government planned to sink it in very deep water off the coast. After 11 months of preparation in Bunbury, overseen by Geoff Paynter and others (Geoff is a former WAUPS Committee member, who also worked on the 'wreck preparation' of the HMAS Swan, HMAS Perth and HMAS Hobart), the Lena was ready to start a new life.

She was scuttled on 19th December 2003 in 18m of water, three nautical miles off Bunbury. The Canadian explosives expert, Roy Gabriel, was involved again to set the charges to sink the ship. Roy has worked on all of WA's purpose sunk wrecks, including the Saxon Ranger.

Kim Royce from Octopus Garden Dive Charters has a 36-foot aluminium charter boat which can comfortably carry 10 passengers and 2 crew. Kim has four decades of boating and diving experience and is good with camera gear. The wreck is about 30 minutes from the port. Kim provides a light lunch and snacks.

The 18m depth makes it accessible for all Open Water divers, unlike the more advanced dive wrecks of the HMAS Swan, HMAS Perth and Key Biscayne.

The Lena has transformed from a long line fishing boat into a fantastic artificial reef. It has hard and soft corals, large schools of baitfish, numerous other species of fish, nudibranchs and even a turtle!!

The 55m long wreck is sitting upright, and still has its propeller, engine and generators in situ. It has large, open internal spaces which make it a very easy dive, with holes cut in the side of the hull to facilitate entry and exit.

Amanda, Brad, Geoff, Janet, Leanne, Pat, Tammy, Yuri and I dived it in February this year – it's an awesome dive site – it's easily navigable, has loads of life, and you have plenty of time in just 18 metres. Do yourself a favour – go dive The Lena! I have included some images taken in 2015, as a comparison to the latest images taken in 2021

*The conveyor belt intact in 2015 (left); missing conveyor belt in 2021 (below); a flathead in 2021 (right)*

*Right: The bow in 2021; a piece of the wreck in 2021*

*Left: The bridge in 2015; the hull in 2015*

# Travelaide

## A weekend escape dragon-hunting in the Fleurieu Peninsula

by Yuri Verbaan

**An hour and half south from Adelaide lies the Fleurieu Peninsula, home of the Rapid Bay jetty. This jetty is known mostly for its resident Leafy seadragons, but there is so much more to see.**

**I've dived the jetty various times over the past few years and like all of us not being able to travel, I was super stoked when QANTAS announced cheap flights to Adelaide, knowing this could be an opportunity to visit one of my most favourite dive spots again.**

*Yuri Verbaan*



I quickly reached out to a couple of friends who were also keen as hell! So together with Tammy and Amanda we did the numbers, checked availability, sorted out tank hire and a rental car and locked this in.

After nearly having to cancel the trip due to another COVID lockdown in both Adelaide and Perth, we had the all clear! Our trio of travellers ventured off on a Friday morning for a long weekend of diving in SA.

### A bit of history

The Rapid Bay jetty actually consists of two jetties right next to each other, the old jetty and a new jetty. The old jetty was built in 1940 for export of product from the limestone and dolomite mine located nearby and is 488 metres long (running north-south), with a 200-metre long section at the end (running east-west), forming a 'T'. This jetty has not been in operation since the 90's, and was closed for public access late 2004 due to safety reasons. As the jetty was, and still is, one of the top 10 dives in Australia, a group of people (Friends of the Rapid Bay Jetty) and other stakeholders lobbied for the preservation of the old jetty, with success. In 2006, the South Australia Government announced the build of a new 240 metre jetty alongside of the old jetty. This new jetty was opened to the public in 2009 for fishing and diving.

### Diving the site

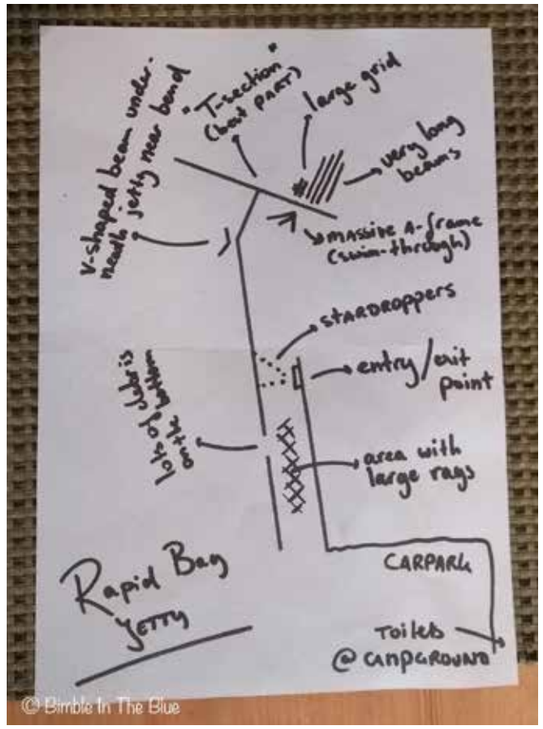
Getting to the dive site is a short but very scenic drive from either Second Valley (where we stayed) or Cape Jervis. There is plenty of parking at the beginning of the jetty. While there is a caravan park nearby that has toilets, there are no other facilities available at the jetty, so bring everything you need for the day.

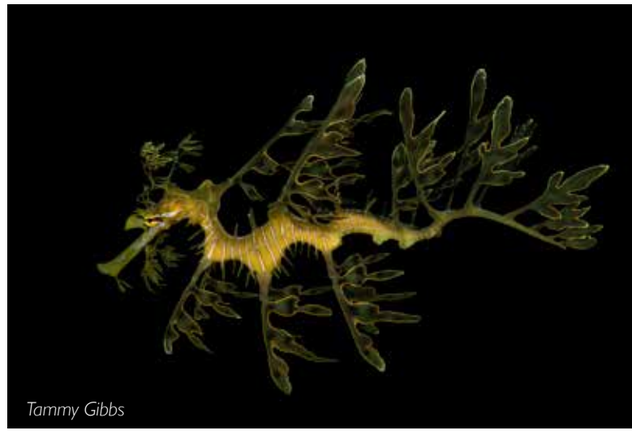
While the old jetty looks much like a larger model of the CBH Grain Terminal, the new jetty that is used to access the water is more like the Busselton Jetty with a nice platform and easy stairs that are located towards the end. This makes getting in and out of the water a breeze.

So once there, gear up at the car, and walk out to the end of the jetty. As this is a bit of a walk, you could decide to walk out with tanks first before kitting up and walking out with the rest of your gear.

Once in the water, it's a short swim to the old jetty. This has been made easy with star pickets placed every five metres or so, helping you to not only find your way to the old jetty, but also find your way back at the end of the dive.

Maximum depth is about 11 metres, hence plenty of dive time. We dived the jetty on both Saturday and Sunday, doing two dives each day. Between dives we left our gear at the end of the jetty, walked back to the car with the empty tanks and had a break. Then walked back out with the second full tank.



*Tammy Gibbs*

*Amanda Blanksby*

While the new jetty has some growth on the pylons, and there is heaps of seagrass surrounding it, the old jetty is the main dive attraction. It is a beautiful dive site, with many old pylons, overgrown with soft corals and sponges, with massive schools of fish. With a section located near the T-junction named 'the aquarium' doing its name true honour. Lots of structure, sunrays coming through the old top, schools of fish… its just breath-taking!

Dragons, dragons and more dragons. Within the first five minutes of our first dive, we found the first Leafy seadragon. (Funny enough, this was exactly the same location where I found a dragon a few years ago. I wonder if it's the same one?) We didn't only see this one single dragon. Over the four dives that weekend we found at least 12 individual dragons. Each of the dragons seemed to be in roughly the same area making it easy to find them again.

The best time to dive Rapid Bay is between November and May, with the water temperature being a balmy 17-21ºc. While I have dived there with my 7mm wetsuit, this time all of us had our dry-suits, which I certainly can recommend.

## How to get there

We flew with QANTAS as they had the better times to fly to and from Adelaide (and we scored the Wander out Yonder special deals!). With the flight only being two and a half hours to Adelaide, an early flight allows plenty of time in Adelaide to pick up a rental car. I would recommend hiring the biggest car you can find, given all the dive gear, tanks etc. For us that meant renting a dual cab ute, which turned out to be a smart choice.

Rapid Bay is about an hour and half drive from Adelaide, and as such we decided to stay in Second Valley, 10 minutes from Rapid Bay. Second Valley Caravan Park has various size cabins for rent for very reasonable prices. It also has plenty of space to wash gear after a day of diving. Alternatively, you could stay in Adelaide and drive to Rapid Bay each day.

While the caravan park has a little shop serving you the usual coffees, snacks and drinks, it's a good idea to pick up groceries on the way to Second Valley. Normanville is the nearest village with a store and is a good 20 minute drive.

There are no real dining options in Second Valley, but again Normanville and Cape Jervis have several pubs and restaurants.

While I've never dived at Second Valley, we were told the dive from the jetty is very good as well. At the time we were there, the ladder on the jetty was damaged by storms, but I have heard repairs are in progress.


Tammy Gibbs

If up early, it's well worth to go and view the sunrise over the Second Valley bay. We were 'told' by a local to do this, and it was definitely worthwhile doing.

I hear you thinking, what about tanks and weights? This is the cool thing - Second Valley Air Fills and Tank Hire are your best friend for a trip like this. Peter and Ilona started this company a few years ago and have plenty of tanks and weights available. Peter (above with the diving crew) also lent us a big tub to wash our gear, and promised us he would invest in some trolleys to allow you to wheel your tanks to the end of the jetty. (Another reason to get a decent size car!). Just call ahead to reserve tanks and weights. Rent two tanks per person per day, return them in the evening, and pick up full tanks in the morning. Easy!

## Degassing

As we planned to fly back Monday evening, we had all morning to pack up and leisurely make our way back to Adelaide. We decided to take the scenic route, having a look at the breathtaking peninsula, visiting a few wineries, and stretching our legs at a short but steep nature trail. Combine this with a few coffee and cake stops, it's a great way to spend the day before driving to the airport and flying back to Perth early evening.

## Parting thoughts

While I have dived Rapid Bay before, and I always knew I would come back, arriving back in Perth we asked ourselves the question - When are we going again? With many more dive sites in South Australia are we just going for a long weekend or will we go for a week?

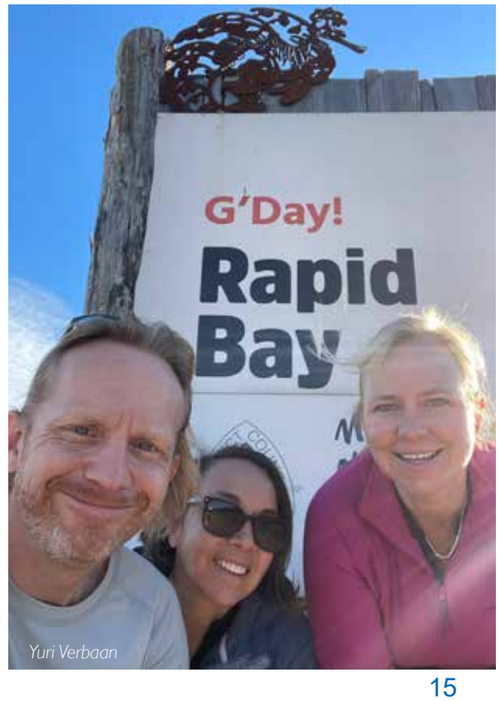
This gives an indication how good the weekend was! It's nearby and especially in these times when international travel is not an option, a great way to explore just that little further than diving in WA. Our diving trio is eager to get back and we're already thinking about the next trip.


Yuri Verbaan


Yuri Verbaan


Amanda Blanksby


Yuri Verbaan



Yuri Verbaan

# Dancing with sealions

by Tammy Gibbs

Around two and a half hours drive north of Perth is the coastal town of Jurien Bay. Known for its lobster fishing industry, Jurien is also a guaranteed spot for Australian sealions. Limestone reefs shelter the islands where the sealions hang out and after a quick boat ride, you are dancing underwater with these incredibly friendly, playful and curious pinnipeds.

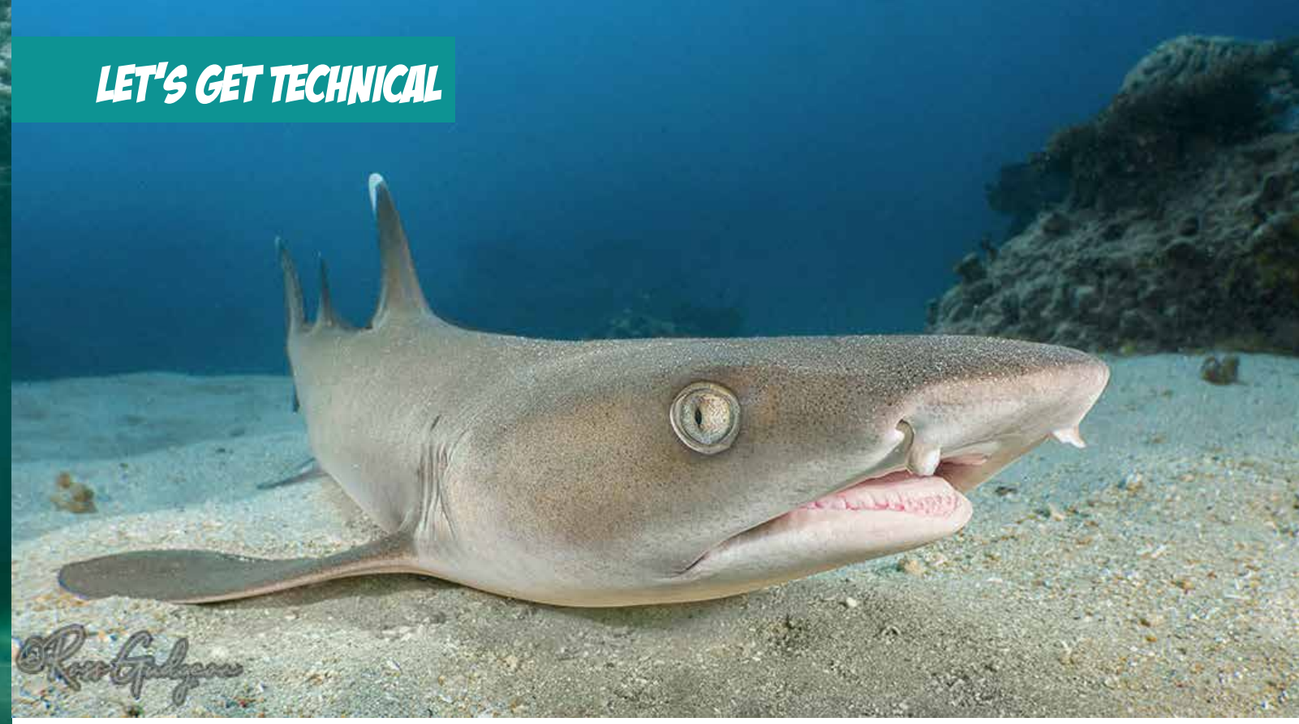
Found only in Australian waters, the Australian sealion is endangered and protected and there is estimated to be only 6,500 left in the wild. Pulling up to the small islands off Jurien, the sealions look like brown rocks as they laze on the sandy beach. We slip into the water and it's not long before they are waddling along the beach to the water to say hello. Then the fun begins - the more you duck dive and swim, the more playful they get! They are super cheeky, sneaking up behind you, whizzing past, staring at you with their puppy dog eyes, leaping out of the water and performing all sorts of underwater ballet. After a couple of hours of swimming with them, while hauling your camera, you are well and truly ready for a big lunch and a nanna nap!

We went out with Turquoise Safaris who run two trips per day out the islands (7am and 9:30am). They provide all gear if needed plus a hot drink and snacks. For photography, take everything off your camera including strobes to make it as streamlined as possible. It is very shallow with a white sandy bottom so shooting natural light works fine. The light changes a lot as you move around with the sealions so try setting your F stop with a fast shutter speed and shoot auto-ISO.

Why not head north for this amazing experience and perhaps make a weekend of it and drop by the Pinnacles or sand dunes too.







# NAUTICAM EMWL

by Ross Gudgeon

The aspect of underwater photography I enjoy most is getting up close and personal with marine life. As a result, the types of underwater photography I enjoy most are:

- Macro and Super Macro; and
- Close Focus Wide Angle (CFWA)/ Wide Angle Macro (WAM)

When setting my rig up for a dive I was always limited to preparing it for one of these options. I longed for a solution that would allow me to do both these types of photography on one dive. When the Nauticam Extended Macro Wide Lens (EMWL) was announced I became extremely interested in it as it appeared to be the solution I was looking for as the advertising proclaimed:

"The EMWL allows you to shoot macro, wide angle and combine the styles to create images we only dreamed about previously!"

I was hooked and began to research the EMWL in depth to find out more about what it was. In Nauticam's own words:

"The EMWL was built to work with several popular macro lenses and is optimized for both stills and video. It is a wet mount design so the lens can be attached and removed underwater. This increases the versatility of the entire system and other accessories like SMC and CMC macro converters can also be used. It is a modular design with three individual pieces that make up the EMWL, the Focusing Unit, the Relay Module and the Objective Lens. Nauticam has made components optimized to work with different camera manufacturers and their macro lenses, as well as choices for three unique perspectives."

I was fortunate enough to be offered a test dive with the EMWL by Scubapix Nauticam Australia and was hooked from the first dive when I got a shot of an octopus that I could never have taken with any other lens. It was a small octopus about 300mm up an old piece of 100mm square duct at Robb's Jetty. Any other lens would have blocked the opening of the hole and not allowed any light from my strobes to get to the subject. I was able to put the EMWL inside the hole with the end almost touching the octopus and still get the whole octopus in frame. The small diameter of the EMWL allowed me to position both strobes so that they could shine past the end of EMWL to illuminate the octopus. The moment I got back into our boat after the dive I texted Scubapix "Sold!".

The EMWL comes in three pieces:

- The objective lens on the front end
- Relay unit which inverts the image from the objective lens (which is upside down) and extends the distance between the objective lens and the camera; and
- Focussing unit (which must be matched to your macro lens)

There are three choices options for the objective lens with 60°, 100° and 130° fields of view. I chose to go with the 100° objective lens as it was:

- The smallest and least likely to spook small critters when you get close to them (and you can get REMARKABLY close with it and still fill the frame with a small subject); and
- The most versatile, hitting the sweet spot between the other two options

Noting that the EMWL:

- Must be used in front of a macro lens
- Is a wet lens that can be removed underwater; and
- has field of view roughly equal to that of 17mm lens on a full frame camera with the 100° objective lens

It is possible to do all the types of photography I enjoy most (and more) on the one dive:

- CFWA or WAM with the EMWL on
- Macro with the EMWL off and add a close-up lens to shoot Super Macro; and
- Shoot conventional Wide Angle for large marine life like sharks and turtles

I have now done many dives with it locally in Cockburn Sound and on our recent trip to Exmouth and not only is it my favourite lens to dive with it is also the most fun I have had underwater with a camera.

For more information on the EMWL I recommend reading this Blog post on the Nauticam web site www.nauticam.com/blogs/news/emwl-explained



# IMAGES TAKEN WITH THE NAUTICAM EMWL

by Ross Gudgeon

# Winners are Grinners

by Viv Matson-Larkin

On the photography side there's many competitions that WAUPS members have entered. In 1986, founding WAUPS member Patrick Baker won first place in the Dusk to Dawn section of the Wildlife Photographer of the Year Photography Competition.

Another popular competition back then was the South Pacific Divers Australasian Underwater Photographer of the Year Competition. Many WAUPS members were winners in the Novice section over the years. In 1998, WAUPS hit the jackpot, taking out the top two prizes. Club President Peter Nicholas won the Open section, and the Vice President Glen Cowans won the Novice section.

Since, there's been many competitions over quite a few years in which many WAUPS members have had success.

Of note most recently, we have been very successful in the WAPF PrintWest Competition. Last year, our club was the overall winner. This year, we are giving it another shot with eighty submissions by our members shortlisted to 30 images from 11 members through to digital judging. Ten of those images from seven photographers have now made it through to the print judging round.

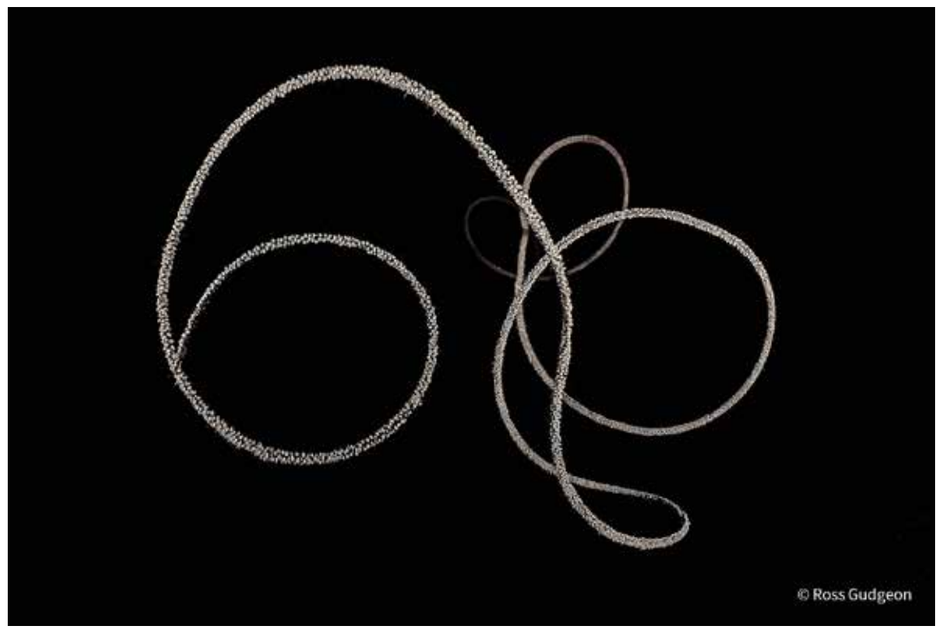
Not being a diver, all of Lindsay Preece's images are land-based or upon the water. An image of his was entered in a Kalgan Stampede rodeo shirt competition. Looking for an image of a female competitor in action to put on the back of their 2021 shirt, the company did a great Photoshop job on the original.

In this year's Australian Geographic Nature Photographer of the Year competition Ross Gudgeon, Mary Gudgeon, Pam Osborn and Tammy Gibbs have all been named as finalists. The winners will be announced on the 26th of August. Various club member names have appeared in the finalist and winners list of this competition for quite a few years now.



*Above: Lindsay Preece's winning image and the final shirt design, Tammy Gibbs's AGNPOTY finalist image*


*AGNPOTY finalist images from Pam Osborn, Mary Gudgeon and Ross Gudgeon*

## How I took this shot

# THE ENGINE ROOM OF THE LENA WRECK

**by Amanda Blanksby**

The Lena wreck lies just off the coast of Bunbury and was sunk with the main engine and generators left in place. This is a great location to try a different form of photography where you switch your strobes off. Yes strange to do at around 15m deep, but by turning the ISO button up high and selecting a small aperture you start to capture the natural light that streams into the engine room area, to expose the shot.

It is also down to the make, model and type of camera you are using as to how much detail can be captured on your sensor. The first image was taken back in December 2014 using the Olympus OMD EM5 Mark 1 and a Panasonic 8mm fisheye lens. The exposure settings are 1/160th, F3.5 and ISO 1000 (see image right). This is a four thirds camera with a sensor size of 17.3mm x 13mm. I did try to draw more detail out of the shadows, with further processing of the image but it was not possible.

Fast forward to 2020 and I am now diving with a full frame mirrorless camera – Sony A7RIII. Here we have a sensor size of 36mm x 24mm. I decided to try out a similar shot, again with a fisheye lens (Sigma 15mm with an MC 11 converter) and image settings 1/125, F3.2, and ISO 10,000. Significantly higher ISO this time. The outcome is more detail in the shadows which can be 'pulled out' when post-processing, enabling the image to be framed more through the doorway (see image below left). The image looks good in colour but it is not easy to reproduce the right blue and minimise the 'green' look so converting to black and white really provides more pop (see image below right). I have also processed the black and white image in Topaz DeNoise AI which reduces noise and grain in the image.

So the lesson here – don't be afraid to switch off those strobes in certain circumstances especially when you have some strong natural light streaming into an image. Gain an understanding of your camera and at what ISO the image becomes grainy, remember to reduce the F-stop to further increase the amount of light your sensor can capture and have a play in Lightroom with a raw image to draw out the detail in the shadows.



# PARTING SHOT

## Trailing nudis by Viv Matson-Larkin

In March, I was planning a dive trip up to Coral Bay. I saw on the ABC that there was to be a Coffs Coast Sea Slug Census. On Facebook I saw that Exmouth was going to join in the sea slug fest so I decided to organise a nudi hunt from Coral Bay.

Getting in touch with Vikki Hoff, based at the Ningaloo Reef Dive Shop in Coral Bay, I managed to convince her to nudi hunt there instead of driving to Exmouth as she originally planned due to not having her own boat.

So, on the 5-8th of March the inaugural North-Western WA Sea Slug Census (Exmouth, Coral Bay and Port Hedland) began. We ended up with five divers and had some great, long dives in the shallows north and south of the townsite. South at Eel Bommie. Then north at the Blue Maze, Asho's Gap, Quinn's Bommie, both ends of the main Porites area, and Yellow Bommie.

Overall, when us 'westies' tallied up the numbers and species of sea slug spotted we ended up with a total of 83 species from photos taken over a four day period. Once the eastern states nudi gurus verified our survey results, they said many of the nudis we spotted belonged to popular families but some are still undescribed.

"The amazing diversity revealed supports recent scientific papers documenting new species from the region as well as the overlap in appearance (mimicry) of many of the *Chromodoris* species."

Knowing that, there are probably lots more new species out there that we may never see because we don't still know the location of all the nudi hot-spots, I look forward to next year's nudi hunt.

To ramp things up even more we plan to organise some nudi hunts in local areas off Perth. So nudi-lovers heads-up, next year's Sea Slug Census time, we need all you citizen scientists to get out and about taking as many pics as you can, noting down how many you see, etc.

My image was one of three images chosen as the most interesting in the chromodorid species.

Olympus TG6 camera, Olympus PT-059 housing, internal strobe, F2.8, 1/400 sec

# WESTERN AUSTRALIAN UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

waupsnews@gmail.com

The Western Australian Underwater Photographic Society (WAUPS) is a non-profit organisation, which was established in January 1984.
The aims of the Society are:

- To promote an improvement of underwater photography amongst its members.
- To promote underwater photography in the community.
- To encourage an understanding and preservation of the marine environment.
- To promote an exchange of skills and ideas from within the society and from external bodies.
- To have fun and enjoy socialising, diving and photography.

WAUPS holds monthly meetings which include guest presenters on a range of photography and diving topics along with a digital show-and-tell of images from members.

We hold regular competitions including an annual day dive shootout, annual open and novice portfolios and image of the year competition, and a range of trips and social events during the year including monthly photo dives.

WAUPS members also get membership to the WA Photographic Federation and can participate in their events and trips.

Anyone interested in underwater photography is welcome any time including all levels of experience.

**WAUPS meetings are conducted at 7:30pm on the FOURTH TUESDAY of every month.**

**Find us on Facebook**

# www.waups.org.au