

Pelorus Island Dive Trip

This year Pelorus started on Friday night, with most people driving to Lucinda that afternoon. Paul, Amelia, Gary, Ray, Yvonne, Joe, Derrick, Amanda and I met at the Port Of Call Hotel for dinner and a few drinks. We are very grateful to Melissa for providing us with a comfortable bed, a shower and an early morning coffee. Saturday morning we met Steve, Jane, Ken, Rachael and Clive at Dungeness and loaded up the Remote Area dive boat. Ray, Yvonne and Gary headed over to the island in Ray's son's boat.

The weather was great and we reached the island in about 30 minutes. We unloaded, and deployed the "NQUEC Mansion" by mid morning. The first dive saw most people heading south along the shoreline. From the beach you could see a large corridor of sand covering a section of the reef. This is probably from heavy February rains flushing the creek. Visibility wasn't great, but there was evidence of coral growth since the club last visited, as some recognisable bombies had changed shape.



For our second dive Ray took a group to the northern end of the island to look for caves near a sand patch used by Remote Area Dive for training. The visibility was still average, but we found some good structure towards the end of the dive. We also saw a lion fish, a large sea anemone full of "nemo fish" and schools of black surgeon fish grazing on the sand.

Saturday night we elected not to do a night dive. Instead we enjoyed good meals, diving stories and a few drinks. On Sunday morning most people did a shore dive from our camp area, and Ray took a group to dive a feature seen on the sounder as a lump in between the two islands. The site proved to be a great dive, and was immediately named "Ray's Lump". Sunday afternoon Clive took a second group to Ray's Lump, but there was a strong surface current so we decided to move back to the

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By Simon Penprase

shore above the old oyster lease. We made our way to the camp site as a large group with assistance from the current.

Sunday afternoon Steve displayed his “hunter-gatherer” skills and caught some fish for sampling that night.

As darkness approached Ken, Amelia and I entered the water for a night dive. Ken took a sealed bag of spaghetti as a fish attractant, and we swam to the shallow edge of the reef. We didn't see the fish life we expected, even after releasing the food scraps. We did however find a large sleepy toad fish and a small lobster which was taken on a little excursion to meet the club, and then returned to the water.

Ken showed us some underwater mastery by reattaching a lost tank and opening a jammed catch bag all without the use of his feet. Quote from an unnamed source “he moves along the bottom like an underwater ferret!”.

Sunday night we further emptied our eskies, toasted marsh mellows, and kept warm using the “South-Australian-Camp-Chair-Heating-Method”.

Monday morning began with more fine weather, allowing Ray to take a group to “Ray's Lump”. This time we had little current and good visibility, making an excellent dive. On the seaward end of the site we found an unhappy cod displaying its teeth. Yvonne's group found a turtle, and we also saw a 3 or 13 foot **Great White!**...I mean, black tip reef shark.



After lunch we disassembled “Camp NQUEC” and waited to be picked up at around 3pm. Ray, Yvonne and Gary stayed on for one more night and returned the next day.

Once again Pelorus Island proved to be one of the clubs premier dive events. Well done to Yvonne for organising a great trip. Special thanks are extended to Ray and Melissa, for providing us with a boat at the island and a house for the first night. Without Ray and Melissa's efforts, this trip wouldn't have been the complete success that it was.