

# **T**URNING **THE** **T**IDE

Spring 2014, Volume 15#2



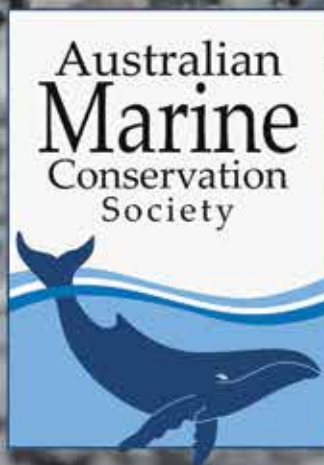
**New Sustainable  
Seafood Guide**

**Sharks in Strife**

**Fighting for the Reef**

**Saving our Sanctuaries**

**All Cetaceans Great and Small**





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From the **DIRECTOR**  
Darren Kindleysides

A few months ago I had the privilege of introducing multi-award winning underwater photography legend David Doubilet at the Australian premiere of his National Geographic showcase at the Sydney Opera House.

You may not recognise David's name, but I'd hazard a guess that you would recognise some of the iconic underwater images he has taken.

David has spent five decades under the surface, capturing some truly spectacular images. The Australian Marine Conservation Society turns 50 in 2015, so we've been out there saving Australia's marine life for about as long as David has been out there snapping it.

Our oceans are vast and unseen to many. Pictures can tell powerful and emotional stories and inspire and connect us, young and old, to the incredible beauty of the extraordinary world below.

And arguably, there's been no more important time to inspire people to care about and stand up for the oceans.

Almost as one our State and Federal governments have set about diluting and dismantling the environmental safety nets that have taken decades of hard work to build. Threatened species like sharks and turtles and special places like the Great Barrier Reef and Perth Canyon are being placed at risk by government decisions that place the short-term interests of a few above all our long term interests. Thankfully, people like you and I have been inspired to act.

Images can shock as well as inspire. A shark caught struggling on a drum line, a harpooned whale dragged up behind a factory vessel, a bucketful of sludge dumped into the Great Barrier Reef's waters, huge rafts of plastics awash on the high sea.

As a teenager, images of environmental catastrophes like the vast Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska or rampant rainforest felling in South America had a profound influence on me and my path in life. But, on reflection, they had less of an influence than an upbringing exposed to Attenborough and his succession of jaw-dropping wildlife documentaries.

Nothing engenders stewardship for the underwater creatures and places we'll rarely, if ever see, more than beautiful images of the simple yet sheer diversity and wonder of our marine life, images that bring alive the majesty and mystery of the oceans and bring home how much we risk losing.

Next year AMCS marks turning 50. Look out for our anniversary underwater photography competition celebrating Australia's marine life and the passion many of us share for what lies beneath.

The beautiful waters of the  
tropical Top End © Xanthe Rivett



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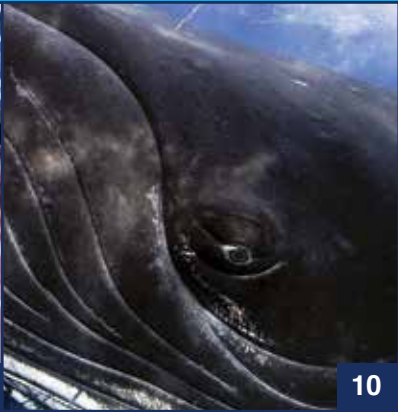
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From the **PRESIDENT** Craig McGovern

I am pleased to submit this report via satellite technology from the lagoon of Lady

Musgrave Island where my family is enjoying this southern outcrop of the Great Barrier Reef. As we snorkel and dive on its fringing reef, we only need to look to the horizon to see the passing parade of freighters plying our coast to appreciate the awkward balance that must be struck between conservation and development if these reefs are to be sustained and responsibly managed.

This lagoon is perhaps a fitting place to officially launch our latest edition of *Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide* (see p6) which is the premier guide for Australia. It's now available as an online Guide, app and as a hardcopy book.

The Guide has come a long way in the decade since our first edition was published. The technology and some of the assessments have changed for the better, but unfortunately some threats to our marine life remain the same. Sharks are

still one of the most threatened groups of species in the world and are still targeted for meat and their fins (see p7). AMCS is working to reduce the adverse impact humans are having on sharks caught for seafood or in 'shark control' programs.

Many thanks to those who generously chipped in to our Fight for the Reef appeal. These donations are crucial for us to counter the fortune spent and PR spin by "big business" trying to convince the community that the Reef needs to be industrialised so that they can profit. Whilst we can't match their advertising spending, your support enables us to ensure the correct messages are heard (see p8).

The campaign to save our marine sanctuaries in South Australia has finished with a close win (see p12). After a nail biting vote in the SA State Parliament, a bill to remove 12 of the sanctuaries zones was defeated by just one vote. Through public polling, community support and economic analysis, the campaign to save SA's marine sanctuaries could prove that

fishing and marine parks go hand in hand.

One person who doesn't need to be convinced of this is Adrian Meder (see p13). Adrian is a recreational fisher, fisheries scientist and marine conservationist who joined AMCS in early 2014. After experiencing declining local fish stocks throughout his childhood, and later living, working and studying in communities with protected marine waters, he well knows that conservation is a great friend to fishers and coastal communities.

Thanks to everyone who joined us in Sydney for An Afternoon by the Sea with Tim Winton (p18). Next year we will be hosting more events as we mark 50 years of saving the seas since the AMCS was founded by a visionary few who stood against the Government's proposed mining of the Reef. 50 years later our challenges are still coming so we thank those who have helped, supported and advocated for our mission and look forward to celebrating our 50th anniversary with you in 2015!

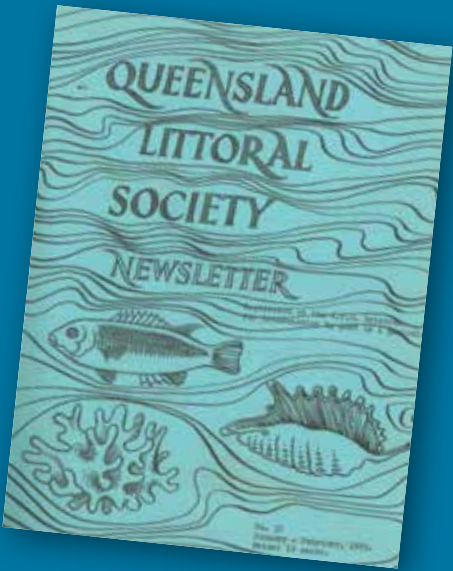


# OUT OF THE BLUE

News from around our shores

## We're almost 50!

The year 2015 will mark 50 years of AMCS fighting strategically and passionately for our oceans. And it all began a long way from the sea, with a small group of concerned citizens on a bushwalking trip to Carnarvon Gorge in central Queensland in 1965. These young marine scientists and students (including founding members Eddie Hegerl and Des O'Connell) were talking around the fire beneath the stars about declining fish stocks and coral mining in Queensland's Moreton Bay. They decided to form a group to do something about it – and the Queensland Littoral Society was born! Later we changed our name to the Australian Littoral Society to reflect our national outlook, and in the 1980s we became the Australian Marine Conservation Society. Stay tuned for more revelations and reflections on what we've achieved and where we're going in 2015.



Turning the Tide has come a long way! The old Queensland Littoral Society newsletter, a bargain at just ten cents.



### SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD GUIDE out now!

As promised, the updated, revised independent guide to choosing your seafood wisely is here! *Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide* is a tool for consumers seeking to tread lightly on our seas, and was developed in response to public concerns about overfishing, farming practices and their impacts on our ocean wildlife. It provides an insight into the sustainability of around 90 seafood species commonly found at our fishmongers, supermarkets and fish and chip shops. It also has important information about Australia's seafood industry, seafood and your health, seafood labelling and much more. This is the fourth edition of the Guide and goes into even greater detail at the individual species level. The assessments are based on a review of the latest research, data and information on individual species and fisheries.

It's available online, for mobiles (now in Android!) and in hard copy. Jump on the website, where you'll find links to the free App download, or call 1800 066 299 to order your copy today. [www.sustainableseafood.org.au](http://www.sustainableseafood.org.au)

# BLUE



Check us out on twitter for live updates & news: @AustMarConsSoc

Hammerhead shark

## SHARKS – CITES listings

At the World's Wildlife Conference held in March 2013, governments from around the world voted to list eight species of shark and all manta rays on Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). This means that the species are regulated to ensure that their trade and sale does not impact their survival. It also means that as of 14 September this year, three species of hammerhead that are regularly caught in Australian fisheries can only be exported with specific permits. Australia is signatory to the CITES convention, which means that we do not support the illegal trade in species that are at risk of extinction. It may be a challenge for Australia to meet these obligations as our exported shark meat doesn't usually contain species information.

## THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT attempts to wash its hands of environmental laws

The Australian Government's proposal to hand over their environmental approval powers to state governments will be disastrous for our national and international treasures, including World Heritage areas.

On 1 September 2014, environmental organisations and tourism industry representatives met in Canberra to try and persuade the Senate not to let the federal government devolve their environmental powers to the states.

AMCS staff and tourism operators spoke to senators and media about the threats to the Great Barrier Reef.

The bill was removed from the agenda, but it will surely be back. The Australian Government is determined to offload its responsibilities. And we are determined to fight this, and keep our national treasures in national hands.

## CLIMATE CHANGE altering the Reef

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) fifth assessment report has found that climate change impacts will profoundly alter the iconic Great Barrier Reef. The report confirmed that the already fragile Reef is set to decline as oceans warm and waters become more acidic. Under current rates of ocean warming and acidification, coral reef systems could be eliminated by mid- to late-century. This is terrible news for the Great Barrier Reef, which is already under severe stress from poor water quality and damaging port development.

The latest IPCC report ramps up the urgency for the Government to put in place a credible plan that will protect Australia's national icon.



Eagle ray



The Coral Sea © Steve Parish

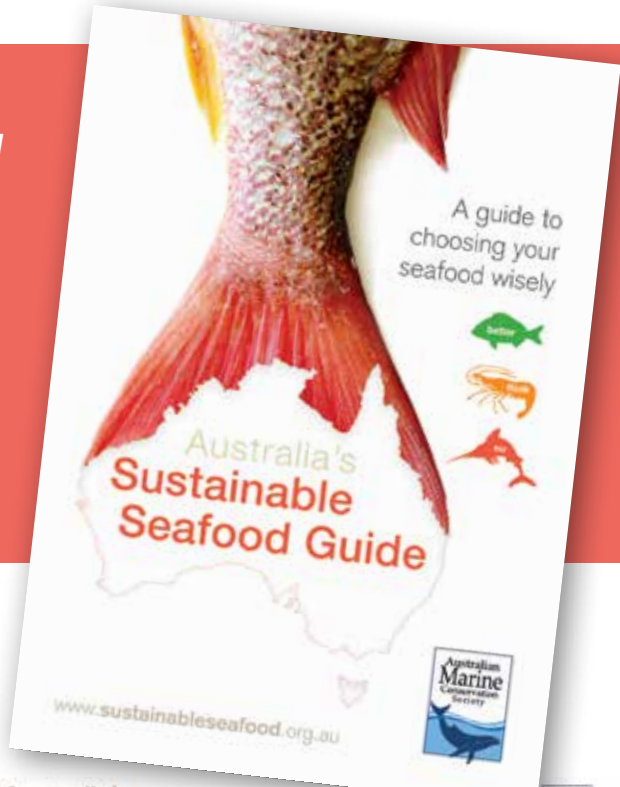


# CHOOSING YOUR SEAFOOD WISELY

with *Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide*

In 2004, the Australian Marine Conservation Society produced the first edition of *Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide*. At that time, the public had little information on how fisheries were managed. But Australians wanted to know what was happening out on the water and they wanted to spend their money on more sustainable options.

 by Tooni Mahto,  
Marine Campaigner



Fast forward to 2014, and in the last decade a growing number of Australians have been made aware of the impact fisheries have on our oceans. In particular, the impact on vulnerable marine life. If 2004 was the birth of the sustainable seafood revolution, 2014 is the year when the revolution becomes mainstream.

In July 2014, AMCS published a new, updated and more extensive version of the Guide to reflect increasing interest in all things fish. The seafood market has changed extensively over the past decade and the Guide has moved with the times over the various editions published. The 2014 Guide is truly a child of its time. It features an online regional search function for the sustainability of the seafood produced in your state or territory. It also contains detailed information on sustainability issues related to farmed species. Consumers can see how imported seafood compares to Australian produced species and generally delve deeper into how that fillet finds its way from fishery to feast.

Since leading the pack with the initial production of the Guide, AMCS has been working hard behind the scenes to improve the way in which Australian fisheries are managed. The Guide enables us to identify where the problem fisheries are, where the big issues remain and which jurisdictions have the most impact on marine habitat and ocean animals. But not only is the Guide valuable in helping us identify problem fisheries, it also gives us the continued credibility and public support we need to take our position to government and industry.

**It gives us the ability to influence positive change through identifying how the public connect and care about fisheries.**

By making better seafood choices today, we can keep plenty of fish in the sea for tomorrow. If you love your seafood but also love our oceans, then this is the Guide for you.

Visit [sustainableseafood.org.au](http://sustainableseafood.org.au) now.



Flashback: the 2006 Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide



by Tooni Mahto,  
Marine Campaigner

Going to the beach is as Australian as barbecues and backyard sports. A pastime shared by young and old, spending time in our blue backyard satisfies our souls and connects us with our island heritage.

## SHARKS in Strife

Sharks hold a special place in our consciousness as independent, wild, powerful and magnificent. They are also a vital component of healthy marine ecosystems.

But in Australia and around the world, sharks are also among the most threatened group of species, targeted for their meat and fins.

'Flake' is shark meat, sometimes caught from species considered threatened with extinction. Flake is caught from endangered school sharks off southern Australia and imported from countries with far worse fisheries management than our own.

**At the end of 2013, the Western Australian Government took the lethal step of putting baited drumlines along stretches of the WA coastline. The instigation of a culling program with zero independent scientific input and oversight brought widespread condemnation as a knee jerk political response.**

In September 2014, the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) of Western Australia rejected the shark cull after a public review. Federal Environment Minister Greg Hunt is now considering the EPA's report.

**This is great news for sharks. However the WA shark cull**

**is the tip of the iceberg. Two shark culls have been going on for decades along the eastern coastline. In New South Wales, nets have been in the water since 1937, and in Queensland, nets and drumlines since 1962. Neither program has provided any scientific evidence of a reduction in shark and human interactions, but has come at a massive environmental cost.**

Between 2001 and 2013, the Queensland program has killed 6,250 sharks, only 3% of which are not considered threatened. In a 17 year period in NSW, over 2,500 sharks were killed, along with 52 dolphins, 47 turtles and 6 whales.

AMCS is working to reduce the impact of human activities on sharks around the country. We have so far succeeded in saving thousands of sharks in the Great Barrier Reef by reducing the number that can be caught in fisheries. We have ensured finning regulations in Australia prevent the inhumane practice of live shark finning in all jurisdictions.

But to reach a point where sharks are free from threat is going to take a lot of work. Australians love sharks. We just need to convince our politicians to listen to the public and stop the archaic practice of killing our way out of a problem.



Tiger shark being shot as part of the WA cull © Sea Shepherd



*"Though its brilliant waters have been dulled and darkened here and there by unwise and greedy uses and human and industrial forms of pollution, the Great Barrier Reef is still the closest most people will come to Eden."*

Judith Wright

# Rising up for THE REEF

In July, I attended a conference at "Ninney Rise", where I was honoured to celebrate the success of the original campaign to "Save the Great Barrier Reef" with some of its veterans.

By Cherry Muddle,  
Great Barrier Reef  
Community  
Campaigner



In 1960 a visionary artist, John Büss, built the property "Ninney Rise" in Mission Beach. When nearby Ellison Reef was threatened with limestone mining, he led the campaign to protect it, alongside one of Australia's greatest poets, Judith Wright, scientists, and conservation groups including AMCS (back then the fledgling Queensland Littoral Society).

**The involvement of AMCS in those early days was vital. The campaign led to a ban on mining in the Great Barrier Reef, declaration of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and World Heritage Site listing.**

In July 2014 the Queensland Government officially handed Ninney Rise over to the Friends of Ninney Rise. AMCS Honorary Life Member Margaret Thorsborne AO and veteran coral scientist, Dr Charlie Veron attended the event, which attracted leading scientists, artists, writers, traditional owners, conservationists and academics.

The following day I felt honoured to snorkel Ellison Reef with Charlie Veron.

Ellison Reef is alive and healthy thanks to a committed group of incredible people who fought passionately to save it.

But the battle continues. With the new focus being the threat of port expansions, dredging and dumping at Abbot Point has taken centre stage. In the Whitsundays AMCS has been able to support local tourism operators and the Whitsunday Residents Against Dumping (WRAD) which is now 700 members strong. They are actively involved in the campaign urging Australia's big four banks not to invest in Abbot Point.

**We like to think that each generation learns from the mistakes of the past. Few people now would support the proposal to mine limestone at Ellison Reef or drill for oil in the Reef's waters. Forty five years on, there are plans to dredge a further 100 million tonnes in the Reef's waters. Like those passionate conservationists before us, we will keep fighting for the Reef.**

© Troy Mayne, Oceanic Imagery



By Felicity Wishart,  
Great Barrier Reef  
Campaign Manager



Whitsunday Reef Festival 2014. Whitsunday Residents Against Dumping (WRAD) and AMCS won the best not for profit float.



## DREDGING & DUMPING controversy grows

**Plans to dredge and dump millions of tonnes of seafloor for expanded ports along the Reef have become an issue our politicians can no longer ignore.**

The five-yearly state of the Reef 2014 "Outlook" Report released in August was sober reading. It describes the Reef as in 'poor' condition and deteriorating. Among the many threats including land run-off and climate change, the report highlights the growing uncertainty about the effects of sea dumping of dredge spoil and considers it a 'high risk' to the Reef.

In September the Senate tabled the report of their inquiry into the management of the Great Barrier Reef. The report called for a moratorium on any further dredge spoil dumping approvals in the Reef, consideration of a ban on dumping, tougher application of existing environmental laws, and a strong plan of action to ensure the health of the Reef into the future.

**The multi-party committee largely reached consensus although the Greens were calling for a ban on dredging and dumping in the Reef's waters while the LNP was promoting the handover of environmental approvals to the states.**

The introduction of a bill into the Senate by Greens' Senator Larissa Waters to ban sea dumping in the Reef's world heritage area the following day was somewhat overshadowed by statements by Queensland Premier Campbell Newman that all future management of dredging spoil should be onshore disposal. Then this from Queensland

Deputy Premier Seeney: *We believe dumping at sea is environmentally the worst option.*

**We have been urging the state and federal governments to reduce dredging and ban dumping in the Reef's World Heritage waters.**

What we have achieved so far is a tactical retreat from the Newman government. Recognising that legal action could disallow sea dumping or at least delay a decision, the Queensland Government is now proposing a major on-shore dumping plan adjacent to the nationally significant Caley Valley wetlands. It's great news that we have a promise that sea dumping of 3 million cubic metres of spoil won't occur. But details of the onshore option remain sketchy and we have serious concerns that this plan will cause new environmental problems.

**Nonetheless it's thanks to you, our members and supporters, that positive changes are rippling through the Reef campaign. With passionate hearts and clear heads we will continue to pressure the state and federal Environment Ministers to introduce laws which minimise dredging and ban dumping in the Reef's World Heritage area.**



Stay updated on the campaign at [fightforthereef.org.au](http://fightforthereef.org.au)



# ALL CETACEANS great and small

The International Whaling Commission (IWC) is the international body set up to oversee the conservation of whale stocks and the regulation of whaling. It meets every two years in what has become a deeply divided forum split between pro-whaling and anti-whaling countries. The 65th meeting of the International Whaling Commission was held in Slovenia from 15-18th September 2014.

I was there to represent AMCS and the whales.



This was the first meeting of the Commission since the landmark ruling of the International Court of Justice that Japan's so-called 'scientific whaling' program in the Antarctic was illegal. Not surprisingly, the meeting proved to be a showdown over the future of so-called 'scientific whaling'. The governments of Australia and New Zealand were robust in their opposition to further 'scientific' whaling, however the Government of Japan was defiant, proposing a brand new program of lethal 'research' whaling in Antarctica set to commence in late 2015.

**After several days of heated negotiations, the IWC passed the crucial Resolution on the International Court of Justice ruling that Japan's 'scientific whaling' program in the Antarctic breached international law.**

The Resolution was proposed by New Zealand and supported strongly by Australia. It translates the Court's judgement into IWC practices and so places limits on the ability of countries to unilaterally set quotas for lethal research whaling in the future.

The Resolution doesn't stop so-called 'scientific whaling' but it does make it harder. Where no scrutiny was required before, it introduces a requirement for the IWC to review future 'scientific' whaling proposals

against a series of tests, including compliance with the ICJ's ruling.

**This is a big win for whales.**

If the IWC had failed to act on the ICJ's judgement it would have, by default, green-lighted Japan's return to southern ocean whaling and undermined its own credibility.

There had been attempts to water down the Resolution but in the end it was passed by a majority vote, with Japan and its pro-whaling allies in the IWC not able to garner enough support to vote it down.

It's important to remember that the International Whaling Commission is not just about whaling.

**Behind the controversy and out of the limelight the IWC does excellent work on whale conservation. It needs to – cetaceans are arguably more threatened today than at any time in the recent past with escalating ship strikes (vessel collisions with whales and dolphins), rising noise pollution of the ocean, marine debris, bycatch in fisheries and pollution some of the main threats. Action to address several of these issues was one focus of the 65th IWC meeting.**



By Darren Kindleysides, AMCS Director

**Finally, a win for the 'small' cetaceans.**

Much of the IWC's time is spent on matters relating to the so-called 'great' whales (bigger whales like minke, humpbacks and fin whales). A positive achievement of the latest IWC meeting was the support for the conservation of small cetaceans (dolphins and small whales).

In particular the two most threatened cetacean species in the world – New Zealand's Maui's Dolphin and Mexico's Vaquita. Both species have populations fewer than 100 individuals. Both species are on the precipice of extinction as a result of fisheries bycatch. Whilst the New Zealand and Mexican governments are acting, more needs to be done if extinction for these species is to be prevented.

AMCS joined with 14 other NGOs and several IWC governments in contributing to a 'small cetaceans fund' to provide much needed resources for on the ground conservation work for threatened dolphin species. I'm proud that AMCS is able to be part of this much needed initiative and I'm proud that AMCS was able to attend this critical IWC meeting.





by Fiona Maxwell,  
Marine Campaigner



**In November 2012, the Premier of South Australia Jay Weatherill and Minister for Environment Paul Caica announced a network of 19 new marine parks for South Australia. This historic announcement resulted in 2.6 million square kilometres - 44% of the state's waters - to be managed as marine parks.**

# SAVED!

## South Australian Marine Parks

Of this, approximately 6% of these waters are fully protected in marine sanctuary zones, leaving 94% open to fishing. It was a long process to create the marine parks, involving decades of research and community consultation.

On 1 October 2014 these marine parks were due to come into effect. Feeding and breeding areas for species like the Leafy Sea Dragon and Australian Sea Lion were to finally receive long overdue protection. Breathtaking experiences like diving in the sparkling waters around Nuyts Archipelago — Jonathon Swift's inspiration for Gulliver's Travels mythical isles of Lilliput — were to be protected forever in marine sanctuaries.

**But at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour South Australian Opposition wanted to scrap these sanctuaries. They introduced a bill to remove 12 of the most important sanctuary zones - ripping the heart out of the network.**

The bill passed the SA Upper House and went to the Lower House. The fate of the marine sanctuaries lay with just two Independents, Martin Hamilton-Smith MP and Geoff Brock MP.

Dedicated conservationist and AMCS Life Member Valerie Taylor AM stepped up to defend South Australia's network of marine sanctuaries, staging a protest outside Parliament House. The bill was strongly opposed by divers, and the SA community who supported marine sanctuaries. Polling conducted in September 2014 showed that 3 out of 4 South Australians support marine sanctuaries.

An economic report into marine parks showed that tourism is a major contributor to employment in those regional economies that contain marine parks, being estimated to directly and indirectly support 9,943 full-time equivalent jobs.

**Following a nail biting vote, the bill to remove our marine sanctuaries was rejected by just one vote. Many thanks to everyone who was involved in the campaign to save SA's sanctuaries, the Labor Government and Independent MP Geoff Brock who was the deciding vote.**

South Australia's marine parks came into effect on 1 October 2014.

Marine parks around the world are proven to stimulate tourist growth and their waters can also provide world-class fishing opportunities. South Australia's new marine parks network will do the same.

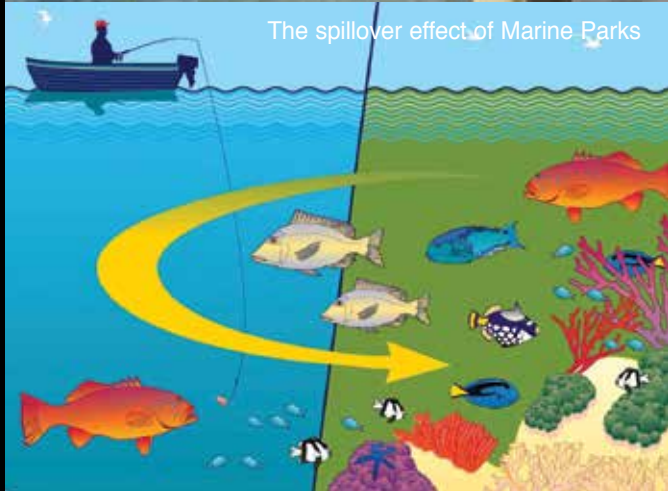


# Fishing for CONSERVATION

By Adrian Meder,  
AMCS Recreational Fishing  
and Conservation Campaigner



**I work with the Australian Marine Conservation Society because I love fishing and everything else about the marine environment. I've learned that almost every issue of importance to marine conservationists is of equal importance to the recreational fishing community and that even on issues where we purportedly disagree, we have far more in common than perhaps many might realise. Our work to combat unsustainable coastal development (such as the Fight for the Reef campaign), advocating for more sustainable commercial fisheries (Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide) and reducing plastic pollution are just a few examples of good news for fishos. Marine sanctuaries might take a little bit more work...**



The spillover effect of Marine Parks

I've loved fishing ever since I was a wee lad in New Zealand. There probably weren't many options, growing up on a small island, other than to spend as much time as possible in and on the water, and I wouldn't have had it any other way! Like most keen fishos, my love of fishing led me to an inescapable fondness for fish.

While studying marine biology at university I was privileged to live, work, learn and fish in a community that had a no-take marine reserve in its waters since the 1970s. It quickly became clear that the local fishing community were among its most ardent supporters. That's because that particular fishing community developed their opinions about marine sanctuaries from real experience of fishing around protected areas.

Despite claims that the sky will fall in if we expand our marine sanctuary

networks (such as Australia's offshore Commonwealth waters and our inshore state waters of NSW and SA) hundreds of thousands of us have fished around them for years.

**There is now overwhelming evidence (in peer-reviewed scientific studies, government surveys and political polling) that a clear majority of Australian fishers support our existing sanctuaries, in much the same way 'environmentalists' do.**

It's not surprising, when we can read in fishing magazines how great the fishing is even in our most highly protected marine parks like Ningaloo reef, where the region was recently described as:

**"...a veritable wonderland of fishing opportunities" or the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, described on a fishing TV show like this: "the quality of the fishing just keeps surprising us. There's green zones, there's all that sort of stuff out here that protect this area, and it's going to be good for a long time."**

**If marine sanctuaries actually impeded recreational fishing we'd have scientific evidence of that by now, given that we've had relatively good fisheries management, and relatively good marine sanctuaries, right around our coast for a long time now. Makes you wonder why there is any argument on this at all.**

© Grant Hobson





Sweetlips © Troy Mayne, Oceanic Imagery



Sea Turtle © Aengus Moran



# Send an S.O.S to save OUR SANCTUARIES

**In 2012, we made history.**

**Australia created the world's largest network of marine sanctuaries. This backed up Australia's proud story of ocean protection, a history book written by both sides of politics. AMCS supporters, tourism groups, mums and dads and kids and communities took part in a powerful positive campaign to create much needed sanctuaries for our sea life. We wrote tens of thousands of letters, made thousands of phone calls, held rallies, ran workshops, spoke as one, and made history for our seas.**

But now every single sanctuary we secured is at risk of being cut back or erased completely.

**The Australian Government has announced a review into these protected areas. This is an expensive and unnecessary waste of time and money. It will essentially duplicate a process that was started under the Howard government, has involved hundreds of meetings and consultations and over 750,000 public submissions (95% were in favour of increased protection).**

The government's review casts a long shadow of doubt over the protection of special places in Australia's oceans, like the Coral Sea, the Perth Canyon and the tropical seas of the Top End.

**It ignores science, community support, consultation and over a decade of bipartisan support for marine sanctuaries.**

We can turn this around. We did it before and we can do it again. We just need to fight to save our sanctuaries.

Please contact your MP and Federal Environment Minister Greg Hunt and tell them to listen to science and public opinion and save our sanctuaries.

Visit [marineconservation.org.au](http://marineconservation.org.au) to send your S.O.S today



*"Unless we are willing to encourage our children to reconnect with and appreciate the natural world, we can't expect them to help protect and care for it"*  
David Suzuki 2010

© Queensland Museum, Gary Cranitch.



# Our Earth, Our Oceans & YOU



By Gowie-Paul Robinson,  
AMCS Community  
Engagement Manager

**As part of the Australian Marine Conservation Society's commitment to a sustainable future and the importance of education in achieving this goal, we recently launched our education program 'Our Earth, Our Oceans, and You'.**

"Our Earth, Our Oceans and You" is a presentation offered to primary and secondary schools that seeks to engage students with the wonders of the marine world and heighten their appreciation for our seas.

**The 45 – 60 minute show is an entertaining and informative blend of interactive presenter/ student discussion, multimedia, and live acoustic message-related songs.**

Schools also have the option of expanding the presentation into a half/full day school 'Environment and Sustainability Day' at which project partners, Greening Australia (on-site tree planting) and the Australian Youth Climate Coalition, also empower students with ways in which we can achieve sustainability.

With 'sustainability' now a cross-curriculum priority and also one of the key messages of the presentation, it is highly relevant to students' required learning.

To book 'Our Earth, Our Oceans, and You' for 2014-15 or to find out more, please contact Gowie at [amcs@amcs.org.au](mailto:amcs@amcs.org.au) or on (07) 3846 6777.

**Testimonial:**

The students from Cleveland District High were privileged to recently experience 'Our Earth, Our Oceans, and You!' We were enthralled by Gowie-Paul Robinson's endearing songs that echoed his deep knowledge of, and concern for,

our marine environment, whilst the visual imagery, photography, and production were exceptional. Gowie-Paul related well with the students and through his creative and personal delivery, the pertinent message was clear as students gained a deeper understanding of the marine environment, the concerns facing

it, and the responsibilities we share. As a Visual Arts class, we were inspired to take the message forward, expressing what we learnt through our own artworks. I highly recommend this presentation to any audience.

Mel Thomson, Visual Arts Teacher  
Cleveland District High School



Gayle Johnson was a member and volunteer of AMCS since our early days as the Queensland Littoral Society. She was a scientist, teacher, advocate, ornithologist and a proud Sea Guardian. Gayle lived as a committed and active conservationist who believed in a humane and civil society. She was loving, generous, tolerant, eccentric, and had a joyous flare for the dramatic.

# VALE

by Ingrid Neilson,  
AMCS Communications  
Manager



## Dr Gayle Patricia Johnson 25.08.1938 to 25.12.2013

Gayle had an enduring love for poetry and music, and her taste in both was as wide as the sky. She loved nothing more than to watch the full moon rise in the company of loved ones, waxing lyrical, glass of wine in hand. Despite her modest finances, she was philanthropic to her core. She gave her money and her time, and volunteered months, perhaps years of her life to various environmental charities, including AMCS. Gayle was deeply concerned about climate change and had an utter contempt for the 'philistines and barbarians' whose pursuit of profits made them disregard science and cause harm to our natural world.

She was also my mum. My sister, KP and I miss her dearly, but are so proud to have been her daughters. We found this sonnet among mum's journals after her death, transcribed by hand in her cursive script. It distinctly reflects her philosophy and way in which she lived her life. Written at the turn of the 19th Century, it is more poignant than ever today.

**The world is too much with us; late and soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers.  
Little we see in nature that is ours;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon;  
This sea that bares her bosom to the moon;  
The winds that will be howling at all hours,  
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers,  
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;  
It moves us not. – Great God! I'd rather be  
A pagan suckled in a creed outworn;  
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;  
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;  
Or hear old Triton below his wreathed horn.**

William Wordsworth (1770-1850)



Gayle Johnson with her daughters  
Ingrid and KP at Art for Sharks 2007

### Creature FEATURE



## SHY ALBATROSS *Thalassarche cauta*

With a wingspan of up to two and a half metres, the shy albatross is endemic to Australia's territory, breeding exclusively on three of Tasmania's offshore islands. These graceful albatross soar high above the horizon and have an effortless flight resemblant of the Wandering Albatross. Both parents incubate a single egg in alternate shifts, and tend

the chicks until they fledge at 4 ½ months of age. Shy Albatross feed mostly on pelagic schooling Jack Mackerel and redbait, which brings them into direct contact with the commercial fishing industry. These majestic birds are one of the most frequently killed albatross species by longline and trawl fisheries, and are also threatened by fishing operations off South Africa and in the high seas. They are listed as Vulnerable under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999).

Images taken in November 2012 on a pelagic birding trip by Wes Tolhurst. After seeing plenty of diverse birdlife, these two albatrosses stayed soaring around the boat for some time and at one point alighted at the back of the boat. An unforgettable experience in Tasmania. © Wes Tolhurst

# Blue Planet SEA GUARDIANS

**Scott Thompson and Donna Burton are two Blue Planet Sea Guardians and donors who have supported AMCS for many years. Although none of the staff have ever met them, we speak so regularly on the phone that they feel like 'one of the family'. They have witnessed our highs and lows, seen AMCS staff come and go, but have always supported our vision and drive to protect Australia's oceans. We recently interviewed them to find out more about this wonderful couple.**

**Scott and Donna, you live in Canberra, which is at least a few hours from the sea. What is it about the ocean that draws you to being Sea Guardians?**

There is something universally appealing, and even therapeutic, about the motion of the waves, the sound, the smell, and the many and varied creatures that the oceans and beaches sustain. A number of organisations advocate for the seas, but for us AMCS is at the crest of the wave.

**What do you regard as the biggest conservation challenges beneath the waves?**

The vastness of the oceans seems to have made humans complacent about how they treat them - pollution, overfishing, unsuitable coastal

developments, and degradation of coral reefs are all bad enough on their own, but with the burgeoning impacts of climate change, we all need to act now.

**You both went to Japan recently and conducted an impromptu beach clean. Can you tell us a bit about that?**

While on Shikoku, we caught a train to a remote beach in the south east. There was a Buddhist temple in the hills, numerous eagles circled overhead, and the countryside was wooded, mountainous and beautiful. The beach itself was long and white, but by Australian standards there was a large amount of rubbish on the beach, and vegetable matter and desiccated plastic in the water - possibly from the 2011 tsunami. So we didn't spend much time in the water, deciding to move as much



Bournda Beach, Scott and Donna's favourite beach spot. Image by Donna Burton

rubbish as we could from the beach to above the high water mark - this took several hours. Amongst the rubbish were plastic and polystyrene boxes, so we had something to actively collect rubbish, and piled it up in front of the amenities block. We noticed a couple of council employees and a Buddhist pilgrim watching us curiously from a distance. We hope they felt motivated to help keep the beach clean.

**What's your favourite marine animal?**

For Donna it is the Australian fur seal –seals are so awkward on land yet so graceful and playful in the water that they show how anyone can be perceived differently in diverse environments. For Scott, it would be all and any of the cephalopods, they are so intelligent and fascinating, with so many shapes and sizes.

**Do you hold hope for the future of Australia's oceans?**

The capacity of the natural world to regenerate itself is remarkable, if only we could recognise the need for serious change and reduce the impact of our lives on the oceans. With initiatives like the sustainable seafood guide the AMCS is at the vanguard, one has to be optimistic.

### AMCS Business Supporters

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# Devotion to our OCEANS

As a non-profit charity with minimal government support, AMCS relies almost entirely on the financial support from passionate people across Australia. You put wind in our sails and funds in the kitty to power the campaigns for our precious oceans. Here's a taste of some of the highlights from the high seas this year.

## An afternoon by the SEA

Thanks to everyone who joined us at the Bronte Surf Club in Sydney for An Afternoon by the Sea with Tim Winton.

Our beloved Patron Tim Winton addressed the crowd of ocean lovers and spoke to the importance of protecting our oceans for future generations. Tim spoke in his captivating way about how precious our oceans are, and how important it is that we speak up in their defence. We were also joined by New South Wales Environment Minister The Hon Rob Stokes MP, and Local Member The Hon Bruce Notley-Smith MP. It was refreshing to hear the Minister's views about how highly he holds marine protection. We implored him to fight hard in its defence in his capacity as its greatest defender in the NSW Government, who are threatening to wind back marine sanctuaries along the coast, at the behest of the Shooters and Fishers Party.



AMCS Patron Tim Winton enthralled the audience



Tim Winton with AMCS staff



Two of our many amazing volunteers Colette Reynolds and Fiona McCuaig



Tim Winton addressed the crowd



The lucky winners of the nipper board raffle prize



AMCS volunteer Karen Johnson ran the 10km



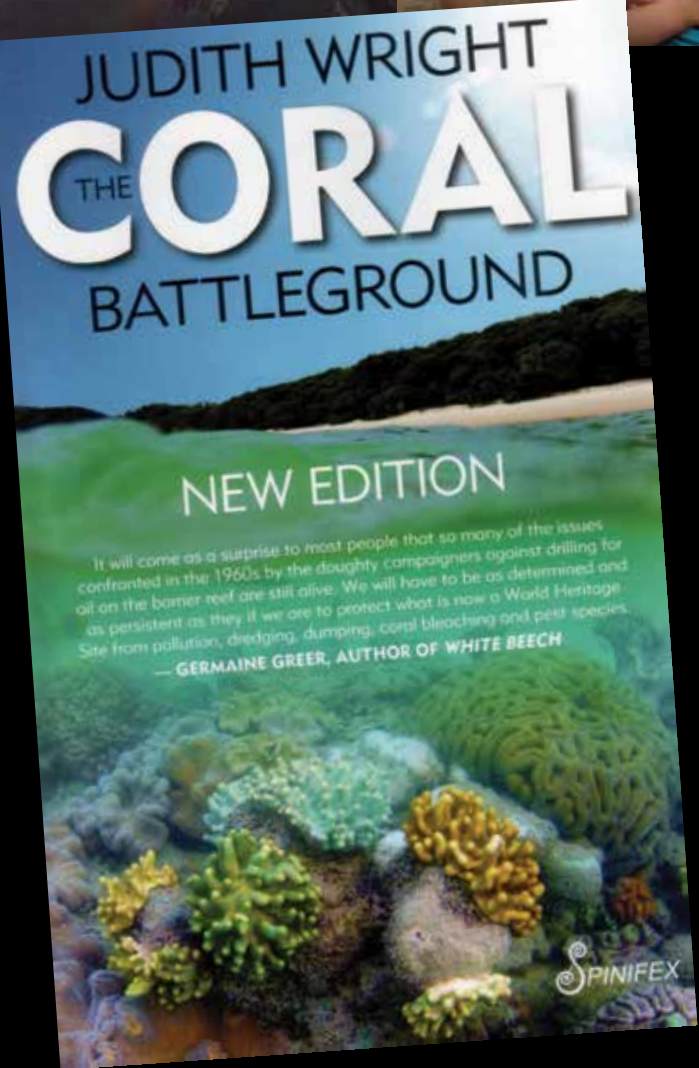
AMCS Director Darren Kindleysides and daughter Kate completed the 5km run. Kate wants to run the 10km next year!



AMCS Office Coordinator Renee Weidenhofer who ran the 10km

## HELL'S ANGELFISH in the Bridge to Brisbane

AMCS staff and volunteers participated in the Bridge to Brisbane on 7 September 2014. They raised over \$1400. Thanks to everyone who ran (or walked) for the Reef!



## CORAL BATTLEGROUND by Judith Wright

In the late 1960s the Great Barrier Reef was threatened with limestone mining and oil drilling. A small group of dedicated conservationists battled to save the Ellison Reef from coral-limestone mining and the Swain Reefs from oil exploration.

In 2014, the Reef is again facing threats from mining, government and corporate interests. Once again a battle looms to protect this unique world-heritage environment from vested interests that only seek commercial gain. So it is timely that *The Coral Battleground* is available in a new edition as an essential handbook for the next generation of environmental activists.

Buy your copy now by visiting our online shop at [marineconservation.org.au](http://marineconservation.org.au)





save it

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Sea Guardian today.

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