

# Blue Swimmer

Newsletter of the Friends of Gulf St Vincent  
Pt Vincent Forum Issue – May 2005

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## Welcome to the Blue Swimmer

Welcome to a special edition of the Blue Swimmer as a bit of an addendum to the recent "Get to know your Gulf" forum held at Pt Vincent on the 9<sup>th</sup> of April. This edition has our regular features plus contains information on the speakers' topics, their contacts and any web site addresses you may have missed. There is also a general summation of the coast & marine issues brought up by attendees at the conclusion of the forum. It is also an opportunity to boast about the day's success and positive feedback we have received from those who attended. Some may regard this as bumptious but when it comes to volunteer groups flagging their own success pride is a virtue and by no means a sin. So well done to all involved!

Specific thanks must be extended to all our speakers, Val Day (DEH) and the Friends of Gulf St Vincent committee members (in particular Pat Harbison and Ian Kirkegaard) for their hard work in preparing & running the forum. And a special thankyou to the 60+ enthusiastic people who attended the day, which just goes to show that there are a band of people right around the gulf all striving for the same ideals and goals.

We hope you enjoyed the forum and gained something from it and for those who weren't able to make it to Pt Vincent stay tuned to learn about upcoming forums or events held by the Friends group and get involved in issues affecting the gulf, which we are all striving to protect.

In other arenas Friends of Gulf St Vincent have recently provided comment on a document being prepared by Jade Ballantine outlining codes and guidelines to reduce the environmental impact of recreational and fishing boats and their shore installations. Our secretary provided comments on sewage outfall from small crafts and appropriate precautionary principles to prevent black-water impacting upon aquaculture (especially filter feeders such as oysters).

The Friends of Gulf St Vincent, who operate under the Friends of Parks banner, were asked to attend the Friends of Parks AGM. Both our secretary and website coordinator attended and provided an overview of our aims and achievements thus far.

An interesting statistic raised at the AGM was that the 'hands on' work carried out in our parks by the various Friends of Park groups conservatively equates to 125 full time staff.

Just thought I would include this statistic to reiterate my previous point about volunteer groups having every right to flag their successes.

And on that note...

...be proud and enjoy ☺

## Port Vincent Forum: Get to know your Gulf

With bellies full of coffee and some wonderful local pastries and cakes the 60 enthusiastic attendees sat to hear about the history and marvels of Gulf St Vincent. Topics were wide ranging from Quenten Agius' speech of the Narungga people's creation stories to Val Day's marine planning work, which we are told is second to none and a huge progression towards protecting the gulf's natural resources.

It is hoped that a similar event will be held in the future so stay tuned to the Blue Swimmer for further updates & activities.

For those who were unable to attend the forum below are some of the issues raised by the speakers and their contact details.

Quenten Agius gave us a literally ringing welcome in the way of the Narungga people. He then shared some creation stories with us, linking trees on land with fish in the sea.

Pat Harbison reminded us how near we came to being something like 'Les amis du Golfe Joséphine', with her lively observations on the rivalry of the French and English explorers of these waters a little over 200 years ago. Her focus on Colonel Light's documentation of the practicalities of navigating this Gulf gave a natural lead in to Terry Arnott. Terry demonstrated how unsafe - or, in the days of sail, how unforgiving - the Gulf had been.

Terry's tally of at least 190 wrecks documented in the Gulf was a theme picked up by Bob Hawes for his talk on fishing. The 'glamour' wreck now probably is the heritage listed 'Zanoni', lost in 1867, officially rediscovered in 1983, at a known snapper 'hot spot'

Terry left us with a serious message on protecting wrecks for their historic value, but to enjoy them as well.

The fishing history of the Rooney family, then the Hawes family, in this area gave Bob Hawes some solidly documented catch history to remind the audience that fishing truly was much better those 50-some years back.

It also made Bob a (willing) target through the rest of the day for further questions and observations.

Bob's 'take home' message was - with all the technology available to us now, fish just have no place to hide. Everyone who goes fishing is part of the problem, and should be part of the solution.

Continuing the natural *segué* from speaker to speaker - Bob Baldock kept to the subject of 'bottoms', including illustrations that caught the attention of the audience. Many of his quips will stay with the audience - 'the ugly can be interesting'. He then shifted to the 'top' of the system - the value of light. Which led to the first of Bob's 'take home' messages - dirty water kills seagrass. Seagrass goes easily and is difficult to bring back.

Bob also had a message about hard bottoms - they are the territory of important species, they need to be diverse, so try extra hard to minimise your personal impact on reefs and inshore rock ledges.

Which gave Simon Bryars his introduction for the rest of the coastal habitats - defined as areas less than 20 metres deep, and within 3 km of shore. Simon figuratively swam us through that zone. Several of the audience found it thought provoking that Simon's best illustrations came from the West Coast, where there has been less human impact so far.

Simon cautioned us to watch out for 'reclamation' and sewage outfalls.

If we swam out with Simon, we came ashore with Ben Pavy, who first exercised bodies - stand up and stretch - then minds, with his (humbling) quiz on identity of coastal plants. Ben certainly achieved audience participation, which boosted his 'take home' message that the resources to help coastal vegetation are with the volunteer groups.

Which gave us an inspired and invigorated group ready for lunch, and to observe the interesting weather we had been hearing through the latter part of the morning.

After lunch, Cherie Heyes took up Ben's theme of the value of community contributions. Cherie reminded the audience of the range of skills and experience that could be useful to Integrated Natural Resource Management, and illustrated that with examples from the 'Feral Trees' program, works at Thompson Beach and at Port Vincent.

Damian Moroney reminded us that we humans desire to be on the coast, temporarily or permanently, and have high expectations of that coast. Damian's quips include 'marine fun needs freshwater supply'.

Damian also mentioned a project to assess scenic values of the South Australian coastline to assist state and local government in better planning and management of the coast. A recent survey required the public to assess the value of coastal scenes.

All the preceding really led to Val Day's talk on 'Marine Planning'. Val delivered an impressively succinct overview of what a marine plan could be, and how it should be drawn up.

Important observations included 'a marine plan would integrate, but would not purport to control, day-to-day management of an area.'

With the benefit of initial work on the Spencer Gulf plan, Val demonstrated that a Gulf St Vincent Plan could be based on 4 levels of ecological rating. Significantly, the 4th 'level' was the 'poorly understood' category, which must be highly precautionary.

Grahame Byron's session was interactive. Significant observations from the question session at the end included 'where the Planning Act has 'shoulds', the National Parks Act is more directed to 'musts' and that it was a reasonable objective to manage currently degraded sites to recovery; the (unacceptable) alternative being to allow them to deteriorate further.

Again, the audience had been stimulated for its coffee break.

And we returned to the joint presentation (Bob Anderson, Michael Treanor) on the value of the Proof Range as a conservation area, which it has

been for 75 years, and still larger than the total of all other conservation areas in this Gulf.



The charismatic Bob Anderson talking about migratory birds. Photo courtesy of A Winkler.

Apart from such tempting questions for 'trivia' nights, Bob reminded us how much birds connect humans to their environment and that if we are careless with that environment, we will lose our shore birds.

Our final presenter, James Brook, spoke of 'Reefwatch' and its methods, which are intended to make volunteer observations scientifically valid. More than 200 divers have now completed the 'Reefwatch' training, so we have a promising supply of observers. The Pt Vincent primary school diving team were out with James the next school day, monitoring marine life on the rock wall of the marina.

James enlarged on the 'Feral or in Peril' subprograms, and the intertidal programs which 'Reefwatch' was developing, and which almost anyone could contribute to. Their website is [www.reefwatch.asn.au](http://www.reefwatch.asn.au)

In keeping with the recurring mention of community involvement, Pat Harbison used the 'Wrap up Session' to invite the audience to write out their expectations and observations on Gulf St Vincent. Just over half of our then audience were kind enough to do that. An overview of those comments appears separately.

The gem of the day was the visit to Port Vincent School Marine Centre, hosted by Marilyn Trotter. Your scribe does not have the talent to describe the centre properly - it is best enjoyed in person.

## Want to know more about your Gulf?

**Quenten Agius** - lives at Point Pearce, and operates Aboriginal Cultural Tours of Yorke Peninsula. He also represents The Narungga Dancers. He can be contacted on mobile 0429 367 121

**Pat Harbison** - Chair of the Friends of Gulf St Vincent - former environmental consultant, with research background in marine chemistry. Pat can be contacted by e-mail at [pharbison@ozemail.com.au](mailto:pharbison@ozemail.com.au) or 'phone 8522 4714

**Terry Arnott** - is in charge of the marine archaeology unit in Department for Environment and Heritage. Their website is <http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/heritage/maritime.html>

You can navigate from there to the shipwreck atlas - just follow the instructions. Otherwise, the general heritage inquiry number is 8124 4960. You can fax to 8124 4980 or e-mail [heritage@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:heritage@saugov.sa.gov.au)

**Bob Hawes** - has long experience of commercial and recreational fishing, and has been deeply involved in administration of recreational fishing in South Australia. Bob and Rosemary have a shack on Yorke Peninsula.

**Bob Baldock** - former high school, then TAFE, then UniSA lecturer, specialising in marine algae. More recently has been associate researcher with Prof. H Womersley at the State Herbarium. [robert.baldock@unisa.edu.au](mailto:robert.baldock@unisa.edu.au)

**Simon Bryars** - took his PhD in marine biology from Flinders University and is now attached to SARDI, where he is principally involved in the Adelaide Coastal Waters Study. Simon's e-mail is [Bryars.Simon@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:Bryars.Simon@saugov.sa.gov.au)

The fisheries habitats Simon displayed are at

[http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/pages/fisheries/environmental/fish\\_habitat\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/pages/fisheries/environmental/fish_habitat_handbook.pdf)

and other fisheries environmental issues are covered at

<http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/dhtml/ss/section.php?secID=1983&tempID=1>

<http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/epa/acws.html>

<http://www.clw.csiro.au/acws/>

**Ben Pavy** has worked on land management across Australia.

He also operates Yorke Peninsula Windbreaks through Pavy Saunders Associates. PO Box 62 Ardrossan SA 5571. phone 8837 3601 or 0418 802 636 or e-mail [ypw@netyp.com.au](mailto:ypw@netyp.com.au)

**Cherie Heyes** - with an honours degree in marine biology, has spent 2 years working with commercial fisheries. Currently, Cherie is coast and marine officer with the Northern and Yorke Integrated Natural Resource Management Committee, based at Kadina. Cherie's e-mail is [heyes.cherie@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:heyes.cherie@saugov.sa.gov.au)

**Damian Moroney** - sometime national parks ranger in Victoria, is currently attached to the Coast Protection Branch of DEH. The second instalment of the coastal development survey is asking the public to rate the scenic value along the coastline where development has been undertaken. The survey can be completed until 31<sup>st</sup> May using the website link below <http://www.coastalsurvey.net>

**Val Day** - was a senior scientist with SARDI for 10 years, researching giant cuttlefish, blue swimmer crabs and introduced pests. Currently she is working on marine planning in DEH. Val's e-mail is [Day.Val@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:Day.Val@saugov.sa.gov.au)

**Grahame Byron** - manages the Coast and Marine Conservation Branch of DEH. He has wide experience in other States of Australia, and overseas. The website for Coast and Marine is at <http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/coasts/index.html>

The general phone number is 8124 4900, fax is 8124 4920

**Bob Anderson** - has worked extensively in environmental audit. You can reach him by 'phone (business hours) 8301 1392 or by e-mail to [bob.anderson3@halliburton.com](mailto:bob.anderson3@halliburton.com)

**Michael Treanor** - is Regional Environmental Officer for the Defence Department. the enquiry number for environmental initiatives at the Proof and Experimental Establishment is 8259 6769

**James Brook** - Has been Project Officer for Reefwatch since late 2003. The website is <http://www.reefwatch.asn.au> and it is loaded with information.

## Your thoughts

With all this information at hand participants were asked to jot down notes about their concerns and the necessary management required to protect the attributes and resources of Gulf St Vincent.

A general summation of these notes are documented below.

The most prominent issue flagged by the audience was that of development, with 26 comments relating to issues with the Development Act, including assessment of sites, general urban planning and the performance of local government.

Twenty-one comments related to the dissemination of information such as the need

for education, awareness raising and specific issues such as appropriate interpretive signage along the coast.

Vegetation management was also high up on the list of priorities with 18 comments relating to the management or restoration of vegetation, both on land and at sea.

Management of rainwater and wastewater also rated high with at least 17 comments promoting better utilisation of wastewater (eg increasing use of 'Ecoloo's') and minimising the impact of land-based activities upon the coast via run-off.

This information will assist with marine planning and will also benefit the Friends of Gulf St Vincent enabling us to address the issues that concern the community.



Attendees at the 'Get to know you Gulf' forum. Photo courtesy of A. Winkler

## Josephine's Journal: upcoming events around the Gulf

For more information about Friends of Gulf St Vincent please contact our secretary Ian ([ianrk@iprimus.com.au](mailto:ianrk@iprimus.com.au)) or contact Nick ([nick.crouch@tv.tafe.sa.edu.au](mailto:nick.crouch@tv.tafe.sa.edu.au)) to become a member for of FoGStV for a very small annual fee of \$5. To add your event or workday to Josephine's Journal, contribute an article or snippets of information to our newsletter contact Mel (0418 802 816, [rees.melanie2@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:rees.melanie2@saugov.sa.gov.au)).

### Future events:

| When   | What                                   | Further Details   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>May</b>   |  |   |
| 21 <sup>st</sup>                                       | Semaphore Park Coastcare workday       | Contact Alicia Clutterham 8408 1208   |
| 22 <sup>nd</sup>                                       | Tennyson Dunes workday                 | Contact Alicia Clutterham 8408 1208   |
| <b>June</b>  |  |   |
| 5 <sup>th</sup>  | World Environment Day – "Green Cities" | <a href="http://www.unep.org/wed/2005/english/About_WED_2005/">http://www.unep.org/wed/2005/english/About_WED_2005/</a>                   |
| 5 <sup>th</sup>  | Friends of Patawalonga Creek workday   | <a href="http://users.chariot.net.au/~littoral/pat-ck/fopc/">http://users.chariot.net.au/~littoral/pat-ck/fopc/</a>                       |
| 5 <sup>th</sup>  | Henley & Grange Dune Care workday      | Contact Alicia Clutterham 8408 1208   |
| 18 <sup>th</sup>                                       | Semaphore Park Coastcare workday       | Contact Alicia Clutterham 8408 1208   |
| 19 <sup>th</sup>                                       | Tennyson Dunes Group workday           | Contact Alicia Clutterham 8408 1208   |
| <b>July</b>  |  |   |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup>  | Friends of Patawalonga Creek workday   | <a href="http://users.chariot.net.au/~littoral/pat-ck/fopc/">http://users.chariot.net.au/~littoral/pat-ck/fopc/</a>                       |
| 29 <sup>th</sup>                                       | Schools Tree Day                       | <a href="http://www.planetark.com/campaignspage.cfm/newsid/3/story.htm">http://www.planetark.com/campaignspage.cfm/newsid/3/story.htm</a> |
| 31 <sup>st</sup>                                       | National Tree Day                      | <a href="http://www.planetark.com/campaignspage.cfm/newsid/3/story.htm">http://www.planetark.com/campaignspage.cfm/newsid/3/story.htm</a> |
| <b>August</b>  |  |   |
| 7 <sup>th</sup>  | Friends of Patawalonga Creek workday   | <a href="http://users.chariot.net.au/~littoral/pat-ck/fopc/">http://users.chariot.net.au/~littoral/pat-ck/fopc/</a>                       |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> , 27 <sup>th</sup> & 28 <sup>th</sup> | Friends of Parks Forum – Victor Harbor | <a href="http://www.communitywebs.org/FriendsofParks/FORUMS.htm">http://www.communitywebs.org/FriendsofParks/FORUMS.htm</a>               |

*Friends  
of Gulf St Vincent*

