

JURIEN BAY DIVE TRIP 18th – 20th February 2011

**Well If you didn't come to Jurien Bay
you certainly missed out on a good time !!!**



experience is far from pleasant, and you might even forget to don your weight belt prior to entering the water.

A short 2hr drive up the new scenic Indian Ocean Drive brings you to Jurien Bay, our destination for the weekend. Around 20 of us arrived during the afternoon/early evening and soon tucked into a few quiet ones before setting off for a lovely meal at the Sandpiper Bar and Grill – an easy walk there, however a much longer walk back for those who had over-indulged. There was a good selection of delicious food, after which it was decided to play a game of pool, this ending up in a friendly (well, not really that friendly) squabble relating to the rules. Some of us (you know who) still need to learn the lesson i.e. if you have too much to drink the night before diving, the dive

We sat up for a while contemplating the weather for the weekend, which did not look too promising for Sunday, hence we decided to make the most of Saturday's diving. (There is of course one distinct advantage to not diving on the Sunday, this being no restriction on the consumption of alcohol on Saturday night.) There was a bit more socializing before we settled into our rooms for a hot night. As the APEX camp was not fully booked we were fortunate enough to all have our own rooms, comprising 4 bunks and a fan, with nice clean communal ablution blocks. Some however decided to upgrade and relax in a separate room with double bed AND air-conditioning. Ron and Chuck may have had an upgraded room, however snoring by one party kept the other awake most of the night! Mike and Deb also upgraded to a little luxury, however the snoring emanating from the next room kept them awake too!

On Saturday morning Kate and Deb joined Daz and his family, including his parents Mick and Pam from England, and went to explore Sandy Cape Recreational Park which has a great campsite and is famous for fishing and beautiful beaches. Daz thought it would be a good idea to do a spot of fishing; however this idea was quickly terminated when the dinghy sprung a leak and he and Zoe raced back to shore. They returned to camp where Daz and Mick commenced the consumption of beverages very early in the afternoon, resulting in an early night.

The meals provided were satisfying and there was always tea and coffee available in the dining room. There was a beautiful outdoor bbq area where we congregated on Saturday evening. Steve B is now the Club's 'Master Chef', having provided 'barbequed Italian sausage with special cheese on top' at Jurien and at Point Peron a few weeks prior, and was also responsible for cooking the crays provided by Ron and Chuck, who had dived from their own boat. Thanks to Ron and Chuck for the crays, and to Steve for the preparation and cooking thereof.

This beautiful area was the setting for the balmy evening's jokes, tricks, frivolity and entertainment which commenced when Ben decided to show young Zoe the trick of stacking coins on your elbow and then quickly grabbing them. He was however using bottle tops instead of coins which made the game far more difficult as the stacking became the task instead of the grabbing. Congratulations to Steve B who joined in and achieved the record of 13. Deb and I reached 9, then Deb continued for about 2 hours determined to equal or better Steve's record. She reached 10 – well done Deb! You have the ladies' record! Steve B was the object of one of Rob B's jokes, which resulted in him having the appearance of someone who did not make it to

the Gents in time. Hilarious! Oh just a hint – don't ever leave your drink on the table and go away as I did, returning to drink it whilst ignoring Ron's attempts to stop me until I recognized the foul taste in my mouth. Ron had thought the bottle was empty and had used it as an ashtray! Very unpleasant.

Despite several people having nana naps during the afternoon, most turned in early on Saturday night in anticipation of a good day's diving on Sunday. A few of us kicked on till 1am, wanting to make the most of the lovely evening. Besides, it was too hot to sleep.

Now to the diving! We were hosted by Garth, Penny and Mat of Jurien Bay Charter 'n Dive, who were great hosts, Mat providing plenty of light cheeky entertainment on Hot Tuna during our trips to and from the dive sites which were Seaward Ledge, Luke's Lair, Marty's Cave and The Caves. The vessel departed from the modern marina which was constructed in 1988. Hot Tuna is well set up for diving so we all managed to kit up in relative comfort. We were provided with lunch after our dives, having indulged in tasty snacks including freshly baked muffins between dives.



Steve B, Ben and Rob were always the first into the water, Steve keen to spear some fish before we all chased them away. He successfully speared a few beautiful baldchins, despite equipment failure (spear gun) on the first day. This was quickly rectified with the help of the Hot Tuna crew back at the dive shop. Mike was ecstatic at no longer being a 'crayfish virgin', very proudly returning to the vessel with 2 of them! Well done Mike. There were some very large crays hidden way back in deep crevices, peering at us, well aware that we couldn't reach them.

The dives comprised limestone reefs, corals, nudibranchs, colourful sponges, plenty of pretty fish life and large schools of buff bream circling us, probably just as curious of us as we were of them. The locations provided plenty of opportunity for Iain who was keen to photograph as much as possible. The water was a warm 26-27degrees, making for comfortable diving; however the visibility left a lot to be desired, especially on Sunday when the weather had deteriorated. The dives were all less than 20m deep which allowed us considerable bottom time.

The Caves, our last dive, was aptly named with plenty of caves and swim-throughs. The bad visibility was disappointing as it prevented us from enjoying the great scenery to its full extent. Despite the conditions Dave and I returned to the boat with 7 crays between us. Having been successful in my first ever attempt at crabbing at Point Peron a few weeks earlier I was again very pleased to be able to represent the ladies of the dive section with my 3 crays. Hopefully more ladies will join in next year as June and I were the only members of the fairer sex diving on this trip. Jurien Bay is close to the Pinnacles which is a major tourist attraction in WA. You can also see seals, sea lions, dolphins and whales. We were fortunate to be accompanied for a short while by a pod of dolphins frolicking in the water in front of the vessel.

We left Jurien Bay after Sunday's diving, tired but satisfied and happy. For June, Dave, Leslie, Colin and me it was our first experience diving at Jurien Bay and we thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience. Our thanks go to Steve Sullivan for the brilliant organization of this trip.

Bee Slabak