



Newsletter No 1

May/June/July 2009

Welcome to Bicheno Dive Centre's first official newsletter. We plan to send the newsletter out on a quarterly basis to past and prospective customers, providing up to date information on one of Tasmania's premium diving locations. The newsletter will contain a selection of above and below water images, including where possible visiting divers interacting with some of Bicheno's friendly marine creatures.

We've gleaned email addresses for the newsletter from the Diver Information forms that you filled out prior to diving with us, but if you'd prefer to be removed from the list, or have the newsletter be sent to a different address, then



let us know by return mail. Please feel free to share the newsletter with any diving friends who might be interested in learning a little about Bicheno and perhaps diving with us in the future, or indeed send us their email address and we'll be happy to add it to our list. Newsletters will be restricted to less than 500KB to keep downloads to a minimum.

Dive news

From May onwards we'll be running a **night dive each month** in the Governor Island Marine Reserve, the first one being held a few weeks ago. All dives are carefully planned with a shot line and cyalumes pre-positioned onsite so divers are aware of their exact location throughout the dive. Imagine enjoying the night-time splendour of The Canyon,

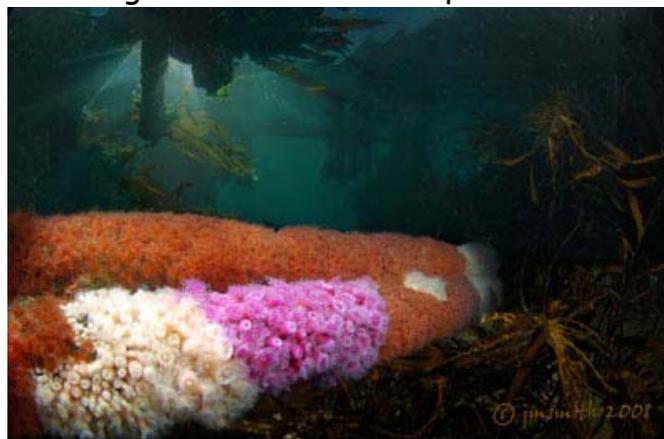


Golden Bommies and Easter Rock, all at the 30 metre mark, plus The Steps adorned with those huge orange finger sponges and attendant basket stars feeding in the gentle nocturnal currents. There's also plenty of big crays out and about in the park at

night with some of the bigger ones approaching the size of a pet dog, and all completely fearless of divers. Half an hour's bottom time flies by then it's up The Chimney, a safety stop on the shot line, back aboard the cat and a five minute run to the boat ramp. Only another ten and it's into a hot shower, a barbeque and a cold beer...that's how we enjoy Saturday nights here in Bicheno, so why not come and join us for next month's night dive? Phone or email Bruce for details.

In addition to superb offshore sites Bicheno also boasts some wonderful **shore dives**. 'The Rock', just a short swim from the breakwater is readily accessible and probably the most popular. The large fissure through it is adorned with a profusion of bright yellow zoanths, and it provides safe haven for a school of long-snout boarfish, friendly banded morwong and the ever inquisitive blue-throated wrasse. Other

shore dives, lesser known but equally fascinating are Blue Waters, Rice Pebble Beach, and the old coal-loader jetty at The Gulch. The jetty dive in particular is an underwater photographer's dream, with masses of jewel anemones



forming a kaleidoscope of colour as beams of sunlight stream down through the old weather-beaten planks.

With winter fast approaching we'll begin to see Bicheno's water temperatures gradually fall to around 11 degrees centigrade. Despite the colder temps Tassie divers eagerly anticipate their winter diving, when Antarctic currents push northwards bringing the **30 to 40 metre**



visibility that Bicheno is renowned for. The right gear, a close-fitting 7 mm wetsuit (available for hire at the dive shop), or better still, a good quality drysuit (also available), is more than enough to ward off the winter chill. But apart from crystal clear

water the real benefit of winter diving in Bicheno is the proximity of dive sites - around 30 spectacular dives all within a few minutes of the boat ramp, then just another five back to the shop and a warm shower - no long boat rides with accompanying wind chill here! And just on the subject of quality drysuits, the new **Tusa and Paragon Mark III drysuits** have been released and are now available at the Bicheno Dive Centre. Phone Bruce if you'd like to take one for a test dive, and to make sure that we have your specific size in stock.

But if you hanker for a little warmer diving over winter why not get aboard the **Solomon Islands trip** Bruce is organising for late August? \$2550 plus taxes gets you nine days away with 12 dives included, ex-Brisbane. The trip is filling quickly with only four places left so please get in early and phone Bruce for details.

Over the next three months a number of **continuing diver education courses** are being run at the Dive Centre - Stress and Rescue, Deep Diver, Nitrox, Advanced Nitrox, Dive Control Specialist, and XTR- Deco. So if you're looking to advance or hone your diving skills, book now as places are filling fast. Again, phone or email Bruce for details.

Local news

Humpbacks, southern rights and pilot whales are often spotted migrating close along Bicheno's shoreline. Around Christmas our little village was provided a special treat when two humpbacks, a mother and calf, entered Waub's Bay and frolicked for a couple of hours



just 100 metres offshore. No doubt the mother was teaching her offspring the tricks of the trade, rolling on her back and slapping the water with her flippers, tail slapping, and best of all, some spectacular breaches - much to the delight of the assembled crowd of primary school kids, locals and tourists. Scores of digital shutters clicked fast



and furious throughout the show and particularly when the two performed this spectacular double breach. Large **pods of dolphins** are also often sighted off Bicheno, and smaller groups will break off and enter the bay to investigate any divers who might be lucky enough to be diving around The Rock

at the time. **Fur seals** are another frequent visitor, sunning themselves on rocks surrounding our Bird Rock dive site, and occasionally joining divers in the water for an inquisitive look.



That's the news for this issue. We look forward to seeing you in the near future and sharing with you the fabulous underwater world and wonderful sights that Bicheno has to offer.

Safe diving,
Bruce Priestley

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