



# Nautilus Scuba Club Newsletter

January 2024

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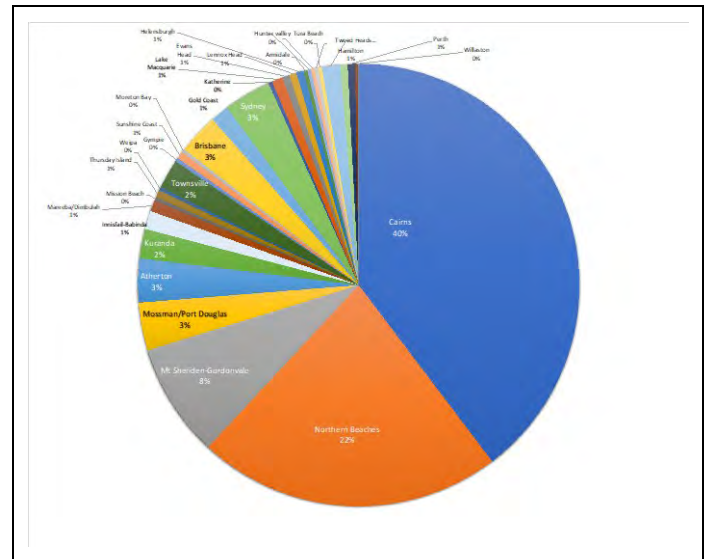
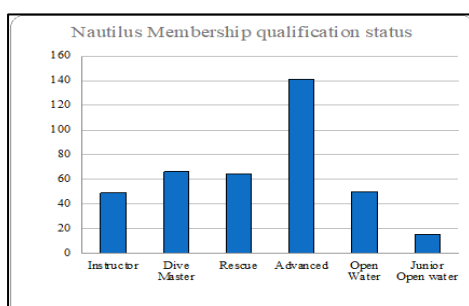
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We now propose to recommence producing the Newsletter to

Members are encouraged to provide me with dive experiences. Please send your news items to [editor@nautilus-scuba.net](mailto:editor@nautilus-scuba.net).

The entry rules have also been changed to allow new members to join before qualification as a Certified diver.



**Solo diving is a privilege, please respect the rules and return to the boat at the designated (agreed) time.**



## Trip Reports

**Yongala**, 21 October. 40 minutes to the wreck in RIB, calm seas, 30 m vis, slack water. Amazing fish life: Kingfish, snappers, sea snakes, bull sharks, oceanic black tip, eagle ray, marble ray, mauri wrasse and giant trevallies.



Photo: David George

**Fiji Beqa (link)**, 29 October to 3 November. Controlled bull shark dive with around 20 bull sharks, along with Tawney nurse sharks. Added highlight was a trip out to an offshore reef, Kacau leke leke with amazing fish life, including silky sharks, turtles and hard corals.

**Vanuatu**, Million Dollar Point and SS President Coolidge, 1st – 10th September 2023 (<https://www.nautilus-scuba.net/2023/09/vanuatu-2023-trip-report/>)



Dives between 31 and 47 metres; These included Cargo hold number 2, the medical store, Engine room and guided full penetration dives.

**Fiji Taveuni**, 21-28 October and 4-10 November. White and Rainbow Walls, around 20-30 m vis. Amazing soft corals and macro, but largely void of fish schools.



Photo: Richard Banks

## Forthcoming trips

### 2024

1) 20 January, Port Douglas, Calypso. Calypso reservations on 07 4099 6999 between 07:00am to 05:00pm.

Other monthly day trips from Cairns and Port Douglas to be circulated by email.

2) 29 – 31 March 2024: **Onboard Scubapro, Pro Dive, Cairns** – this 3-day trip over the Easter period that will offer 11 dives at Milln Reef and Flynn Reef (8 places still open – contact Joe for further info).

3) 23 – 29 May 2024: **Onboard MV Stella Maris, Tubbataha, Philippines** - diving with pelagics in the UNESCO World Heritage Site (one spot left on this trip, female share -

contact Danielle for more information or to book).

- 4) 21 – 24 June 2024: **Onboard Ocean Quest**, Divers Den, Cairns – This will be our annual Minke Whale trip through the Ribbon Reefs for some great diving and the Minke Whale experience (14 Places open – contact Joe for further info).
- 5) 16 – 26 August 2024: **Bali Dive Safari** – this trip is over 11 days, 8 dive days, with up to 23 dives for the trip (2 spots left on this trip, divers or snorkellers - contact Danielle for more info or to book).
- 6) 12 – 18 September 2024: **Onboard Spirit of Freedom**, Cairns - This will be offered as a 3, 4 or 7-day trip so members can choose which part of the trip they would like to do (16 Places open – contact Joe for further info).
- 7) 31 October – 06 November 2024: **Onboard Spoilsport**, Mike Ball Expeditions, Cairns – This is a 7-day Coral Sea Safari trip through the ribbon reefs, Lizard Island and to the spectacular Osprey Reef (12 places still open – contact Joe for further info).

### 2025

- 8) May 2025: **Sipadan, Malaysia** – this trip is over 7 dive days with up to 20 dives for the trip (Danielle will supply a future email for this trip to members once all details are confirmed).
- 9) November 2025: **Onboard Spirit of Freedom**, Cairns – This is a special club booking (whole vessel) for a 7 night Far East Expedition to travel to the rarely visited Flinders Reef, Lihou Reef, Magdelaine Cay, Herald Cay and Holms Reef (Dates and prices will be released early 2024).

### Junior Club Trip

The Club proudly now has 15 Junior members, with a special day out for some, supported by their parents and Divers Den on 4 November. Special Junior trips are being organised by the Dive Coordinator, Joe Serré (divecoordinator@nautilus-scuba.net). Note

that all Junior members must have an allocated guardian, which we would hope to participate in the dive activities. If not, a dedicated dive instructor will be arranged.

A Junior dive is in the process of being organised for the Easter weekend. Details will be sent directly to parents and guardians shortly.



### Incident reporting

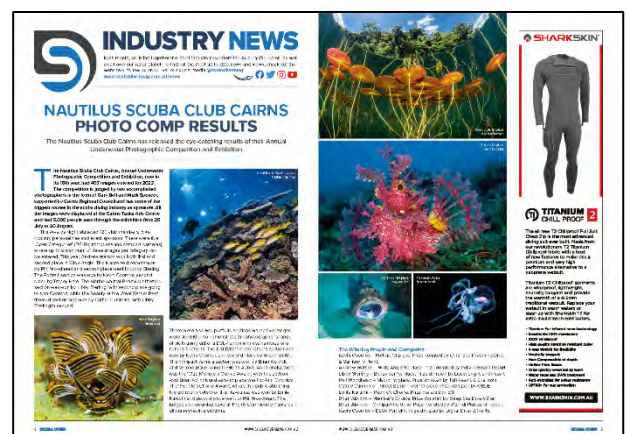
The Club Committee is reviewing its trip incident management Code of Conduct.

If approved, this will require updating the Constitution to cover conduct any incident occurring on club trips.

### 2024 Photo Competition

The 2024 Photo Competition is scheduled from 1 to 18 August at Tanks and Awards night August 10<sup>th</sup> 2024.

Details, including the different categories, will be posted out by email. There are likely to include new categories: e.g. GoPro, mobile phones, and Junior 😊

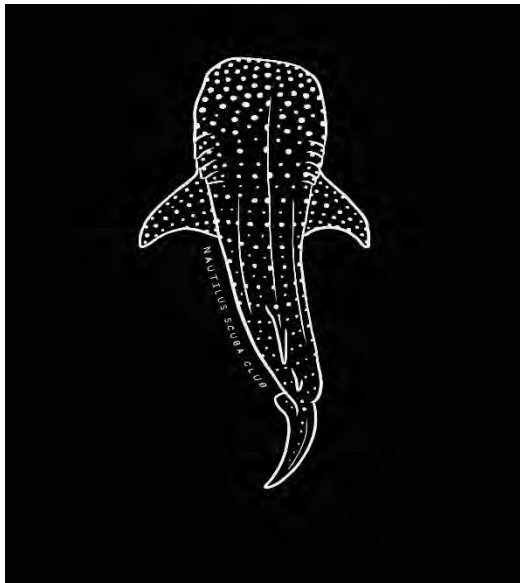


Just in case you missed them, have a look at the [2023 Photo Comp results](#)

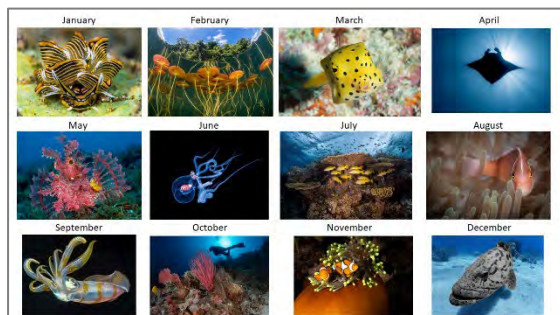
### Merchandise

A new year begins, and we are looking forward to bringing you some new and exciting merchandise.

First up will be our **new tee shirt design**. This year it is a Whale Shark. We hope to have some to show at the January meeting and an order form will be sent to all members.



There are 2024 Calendars still available at \$15 each, so it's not too late to get organised for the year ahead.



Our Merchandise website page will be updated shortly to reflect current stock and prices, in the meantime here is a list of some items for sale.

Camera/Sports Towel	\$16
Stubby Coolers	\$ 7
Log Books ( 1,2 & 5 dives pp )	\$10
Mineral Sunscreen	\$22
Mask De Fog	\$15
Beanies	\$15
Nemo 32GB USB	\$12

For purchases requested via email, a postage cost will be applied. Please check what that will be prior to submitting payment.

### Bank Account Details

Bank name: Bendigo Bank Account Name  
Account Name: Nautilus Scuba Club  
Account Number: 113625982  
BSB Number: 633 000

For those attending the monthly meeting.  
Don't forget the **Buy, Swap & Sell** table!

If you have anything you think could be useful to someone else please bring it along. Don't forget 2<sup>nd</sup> hand items can also advertised on the Club Facebook Page.

And last, but not least, a **request from the Merchandise team**.

Could everyone please give us time to set up the tables before wanting to purchase anything.

There is a lot to do and we need the time between 6.30 & 7pm to do this.

And also could I ask that people not use the merchandise table to place food & drinks on while we are doing this.

This would make our job much less stressful & would be very much appreciated.

Contact either of us on the email addresses below:

Sharyn: [merchanise@nautilus-scuba.net](mailto:merchanise@nautilus-scuba.net)

Josie: [josie.fraser@nautilus-scuba.net](mailto:josie.fraser@nautilus-scuba.net)

Thank you, and have a great year of diving.

Sharyn & Josie



### Membership poster

We have prepared a poster which we will ask the local dive shops and operators to post. This is in response to a realisation that there are potential members in FNQ that aren't aware of the Club's existence.



### Nautilus strategic planning review and member activity planning

In mid-November the Nautilus committee commenced a strategic planning program. This is to ensure we are meeting all members' needs, investing wisely and being progressive as a club.

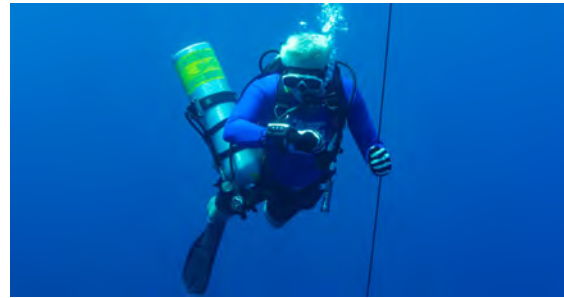
Examples strategic plans and frameworks from similar organisations

- The overall framework for our strategic plan
- The vision and strategic objectives for our club
- Key initiatives for each of the strategic objectives: diving, conservation, community/social and governance.

If you are interested in discussing this initiative please contact the club president Tim Roberts at president@ [nautilus-scuba.net](mailto:nautilus-scuba.net)

### Technical

Mark Earney (DiveTec)



I recently had the pleasure of participating in a discussion come presentation at the monthly meeting of the Nautilus Club.

One of my opening questions to the group of members present was, how many of you crack open your cylinder valve before fitting your regulator?

A mere handful indicated that they did, primarily older Dive Professionals and older experienced divers.

The reason for the question is quite simple, as a service technician and Instructor of many years I regularly see and hear the results of this not happening.

A past case was I serviced, in the same month, a fellow club member Scubapro MK25 1<sup>st</sup> stage three times due to mud wasps building nests in the inlet orifice of the cylinder valve, an expensive over-site for the customer.

You may say well I always dive from a charter vessel and they supply cylinders. Well. that doesn't ensure that there isn't something in the valve.

When the vessel is washed down at end of day the cylinders get a good rinse of fresh water, or should do, and water may enter that small orifice and if the valve is "not cracked" prior to filling the water ends up in the cylinder. Not really a big problem but it can accumulate causing damage, but that's another story for the future.

Now if you fit your reg to a cylinder without cracking the valve, where do you think that water goes? yep into your 1<sup>st</sup> stage where that droplet is forced under pressure and can cause premature wear to internal components causing them to fail.

**So do yourself a favour and “crack the valve” prior to fitting your reg.** It may be noisy. A complaint we hear from new dive crew but it’s your “life support” while you’re diving.

1st stage water ingress



Damaged HP Seat



Damaged HP Seat



1st stage water ingress



### Discounts

A list of discounts is available on request from the membership officer:  
[membership@nautilus-scuba.net](mailto:membership@nautilus-scuba.net).

The Club has also approached dive companies to have the discounts extended to novice members undertaking their OW training.

Divers Den

<https://www.diversden.com.au/dive-courses/>

Octopus Dive

<https://octopusdive.com.au/diving-courses-cairns/>

Pro Dive offer discounts.

Pro Dive currently has a special offer running for Nautilus Club Members which is the 25% off + \$100 off. (07) 4031 5255

### Local Marine Advisory Committee and Moorings

There are public moorings provided through the reef which anyone can use, but members of the public are NOT permitted to use private moorings, even if they are free. One of the main issues to be addressed in the next Plan of Management by the Reef Authority is how to properly communicate this with all reef users. In the meantime, we need to spread this message to dive boat-owning community. If there is felt to be a shortage of public moorings available, please communicate this either to our member on LMAC - Andy Ratter ([social@nautilus-scuba.net](mailto:social@nautilus-scuba.net) or directly to the Reef Authority (providing specifics of locations ideally) so that consideration can be giving to providing more.

the attached Document link in reference to Public Moorings on the GBR. If you intend to use your own vessel to dive from and wish to tie up to a public mooring then this document is very relevant.

[GBRMP-Library-Moorings](#)

### Forthcoming Newsletters

We would encourage members to participate in the newsletter by contributing

Some thoughts on contributions each quarter would be as follows:

- Photo
- Photo tip
- Dive skill tip (eg from an instructor)
- Joke of the (a simple cartoon)

## Lissenung Island Resort – PNG

Libby Sterling

November 2023 saw me spending 7 fabulous days at Lissenung Island resort (a private Island), **thank you to Dietmar and Ange for your photo competition sponsorship and ongoing support for our Club.**



I had the best time, loved the diving, the dive guides, the resort and the food was spectacular as well!

It's really a great package. I'd heard all the stories regarding delayed and cancelled flights and my flight from POM to Kavieng was slightly delayed due to the eruption of the volcano over in Kimbe Bay, however I made it on the night I was supposed to, just a few hours late.

I had a lovely cabin to myself, just 10 metres from the ocean. So nice to wake up to birds and the sounds of lapping of the sea.

Lissenung caters for both divers and snorkellers. We had glass-out sunny conditions most days. Water temperature was a toasty 29 to 30 degrees even at depth. Viz was variable depending on where we were, and tides etc. Apart from the House Reef and the plan wreck, viz was a solid 25+ metres.

I was most impressed with the size and health of the gorgonian fans and barrel sponges. Marine life was varied and very similar to what you'd see off Cairns.

Pretty much saw it all, schooling barracuda, giant trevally, grey reef sharks, white tip reef sharks, sweet lips, trigger fish (not mating season), clown trigger fish, mapped puffer fish, a myriad of the usual tropical fish

(butterfly fish, clown fish, spine cheek anemone fish, morish idols, ghost pipe fish gobies, lionfish etc).

All dives were guided, and both dive guides were fabulous and offered an informative briefing prior to the dive.



Spectacular gorgonian fans



Massive barrel sponges everywhere!

Most dives were a minimum of 60 minutes and some longer (80+ minutes) depending on where we were.

Two dives in the morning, then back to the resort for a cooked lunch every day (don't expect to lose weight while you are here) and an afternoon dive or snorkel on the house reef. Night dives are also on the menu (I choose not to).





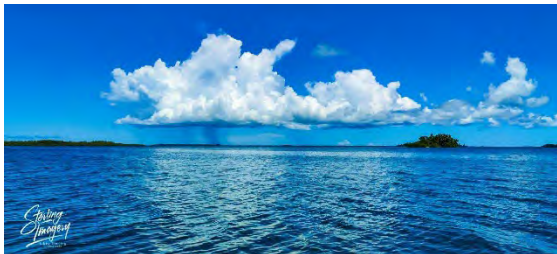


Fabulous and colourful gorgonian fans

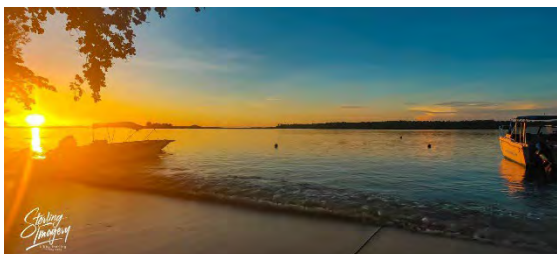
House Reef – a must do dive or snorkel, so much to see out on the sand as well as on the reef itself, all in under 10metres of water.



Gobies and their blind shrimp buddies everywhere



Lissenung Island off to the right in the distance.

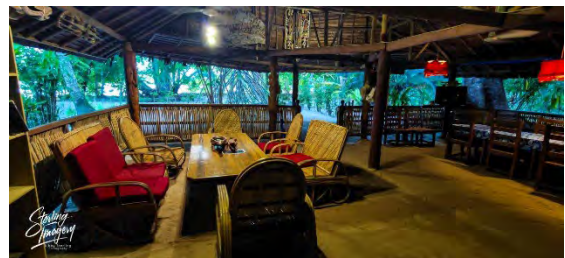


Stunning sunrises and sunsets

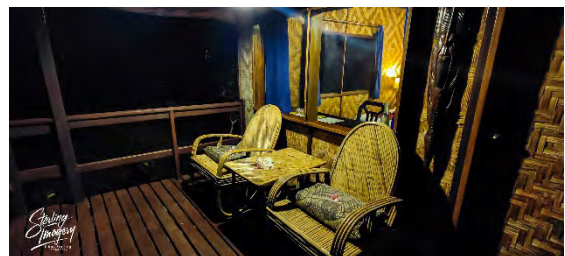


Glass-out conditions most days.

I highly recommend Lissenung Resort if you are looking for an exclusive, private island, back to nature experience, great and varied diving, fabulous food, and a super chilled atmosphere, then this is the destination for you.



The cabins are well appointed with a large camera desk under the window, plenty of power points, spacious bathroom, mozzie nets, ceiling fans and a lovely front deck where I spent a lot of free time.



Flights were easy – Cairns to Port Moresby (1 hr 20 mins) then an internal 2hr 15 min flight to Kavieng.

The Lissenung bus picks you up and takes you down to the boat for a stunning 20-minute transfer over to Lissenung. Mine was quite the adventure, as it was at night with thunder

and lightning (luckily not much rain to go with it). It really was quite magical.

Check it out here: [Lissenung Island Resort](#)

Shout out to Sandy and Ian (Resort relief managers) who were an absolute delight to spend the week with. Thank you for making me feel so welcome!



## Walindi Plantation Resort

### Libby Sterling

The great PNG adventure continued, with a 40 min flight from Kavieng to Hoskins to embark on another 10 days at the wonderful Walindi Plantation Resort! An hour from the airport the Resort is nestled on the shores of Kimbe Bay.

Arrived at the resort, grabbed my dive gear and jumped straight on the boat with my trusty GoPro (my back-up camera), no time to get the big rig out. I joined some other divers and was allocated my own dive guide – talk about spoilt!

Epic diving in Kimbe Bay, with blue warm water and some fabulous 40+ metre visibility. Loved diving on the sea mounts.

I had the most amazing barracuda experience of my life at Bradfords, honestly, I've never seen anything like it. It was like my own personal barracuda performance.



The colours and marine life variety within Kimbe Bay is quite phenomenal. They had a major bleaching event a couple of years ago, but I saw very little evidence on the dives I did (24 dives).



Anemone fish everywhere, wonderful to see and my images just don't do the coral and seascape justice. I mostly had my own dive guide or when I was with the other divers, there was plenty of leeway and time to take photos and not feel rushed or crowded.

Standard bottom time was 60+ minutes with a couple of fabulous 90-minute dives.



Again, some spectacular and very healthy gorgonian fans, plenty of fish life both large and small. We had a hammerhead at Otto's both times I dived it (no photo unfortunately as it was too deep for my wide-angle lens).



You'll find something for everyone at Kimbe Bay including the wreck of an intact zero that is well worth a look!



Some of the Cairns crew came over and joined in on the fun for my second week there which was great!



Our attempt at a group photo, took a bit of organising & a lot of laughter & bubbles.



One of my favourite dives (and I am keen to spend the day there, was at a small Island. The dive site was (we think) Tuari, muck dive – shallow-ish 10m and was a hot bed of marine life, the guides were on finding critters for us all. Just ask Deb McLennan who had watch the pygmy octopus while the guide swam around to find us all, so we didn't miss it.



I could easily spend a day there and not get bored.



Nudibranch and eggs - fascinating



Nudibranchs everywhere





Did someone say Dolphins?



One of the big highlights on the last day was the dolphin swim. They put nets beside the boat (on either side), you clamber in, hang on while you are towed through the water while the dolphins play in and around you. The stuff dreams are made of!

The accommodation and facilities at Walindi are very comfortable, I had a plantation house room (in a block of 4), they also have standalone bungalows that looked very, very nice! They really cater for underwater photographers with a dedicated camera room down at the wharf, plenty of power points and a great camera tub for washing after the dive.

The rooms were well appointed as well with a desk, charging station, fridge and the magic washing basket (I didn't realise until the end of my trip). You leave your washing in the basket, and it magically gets done and delivered back to your room folded (for free)! Now that's service.



The same happens with your dive gear, the boat crew do it all, you just have to check everything is in your tub.



Multiple dive boats to take you into the Bay



Anyway again, I highly recommend Walindi, the service, the facilities the staff, and food were all 100 percent. Can't wait to go back!



PNG ice cream will spoil you for ice cream forever, I've returned to Cairns addicted to it. Luckily you can't buy it here!

Have a look at the Walindi Plantation Resort website here: [Walindi Plantation Resort](https://www.walindiplantationresort.com/) and start planning.



PS. They tell stories of orca's hunting in the bay as well, photographic proof in the well stocked library.

**Thank you to Cheyne and Cecilie for sponsoring the Cairns Nautilus Photo Competition year after year, a truly fabulous prize.**

The resort is not just about diving either, bird watching is popular or they also offer a variety of land tours.