



March 2017

# Nautilus SCUBA Club Newsletter

Cairns QLD Australia

<http://www.nautilus-scuba.net>

**Dive Trips  
Club Meetings  
Guest Speakers  
Trip Reports**

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Editor: Phil Woodhead

## Local dive trips and get together information

\*Please note that the news letter does not publish prices on trips offered

March 2017						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		



For our March Trip we have provisionally reserved 12 places on Tusa 6 on Sunday 8th. Tusa does not reserve a spot until payment has been made in full. To pay and book, or for more information, call Tusa directly on 4047 9120. You will need to be at E Finger of Cairns Marina at 7:40 for an 8:00 departure. Remember to tell them you are a Nautilus member. Once you have booked, please let Mark know so he can keep track of who is going. [markearney54@gmail.com](mailto:markearney54@gmail.com) NB Tusa allows unguided diving, and they also have Nitrox tanks on board (subject to availability).

### Club meeting

Social get together at the new Greek restaurant Odessey Kitchen

## March Guest Speaker

The Solomon Islands is perhaps the most often overlooked dive destinations in the entire Indo-Pacific region. With a club live-aboard trip to the country scheduled for November, this month's guest speaker's presentation should be of great interest to members. Until recently Dave Mossy (Moss), was living and working in the Solomons for Solomon Islands Dive Expeditions, the company who operate Taka, the live-aboard vessel the club is diving from in November. Whether you're going on the trip or would like to learn more about one of the best all round diving destinations on the planet, then Mossy's presentation is not to be missed.

Wednesday's meeting will also feature a brief presentation from JCU Phd student Matthew Buttacavoli. Matthew will give members a brief overview of his research project and how the Nauti divers may be able to assist.

April 2017						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30



For our April Trip we have provisionally reserved 12 places on Tusa 6 on Sunday 9th. Tusa does not reserve a spot until payment has been made in full. To pay and book, or for more information, call Tusa directly on 4047 9120. You will need to be at E Finger of Cairns Marina at 7:40 for an 8:00 departure. Remember to tell them you are a Nautilus member. Once you have booked, please let Mark know so he can keep track of who is going. [markearney54@gmail.com](mailto:markearney54@gmail.com) NB Tusa allows unguided diving, and they also have Nitrox tanks on board (subject to availability).

### Club meeting

### Photoshop/Lightroom workshop

Special dives will be organised in addition to the regular monthly day trips, these could be with Reel Cray-Zee, Rumrunner, and could be day trips or weekend trips to the reef or the Yongala. Better watch your emails for future announcements.



# Our Photo Competition: competing is fun.

A letter from our club president Jannemieke

Cairns Scuba Club has a yearly photo competition. This competition has been running for around 10 years now. It has been a runaway success among the members and it has increased the profile of the club to the outside world considerably. Phil Woodhead has been the great organiser all this time.

The competition works very simply. Every member can participate. Do you have one or more under water shots you are really happy with, don't hesitate, go for it. Now you might be a bit intimidated by the very high quality of the winning photos of other years. I know I am. Are your shots good enough to compete? My answer is: if you are really happy with your shot, send it in. But as a beginner, how can I win a prize? Yes, you can. Unlike in sports, where there are just a few players at the top winning everything and a beginner will never stand a chance, you can just have that lucky shot. You can make that amazing picture, because 2 fishes and a shrimp happen to smile at you in your compact camera at the same time!

One of the fun things in competing in the photo comp is getting better at taking pictures. You will hone your skills for next year. Through the years I have seen many of our members improve their picture taking. As a competitor you get a nice print of your favourite shots and you get to show them to everybody on the competition night. And they will be in next year's Nautilus calendar. Taking pictures on your dives has a great spin off. First of all, you get nice pictures. But it also improves your diving skills, striving to a perfect buoyancy to take a picture of that small critter. And taking pictures makes you look out better and see more. You can't help to become a better underwater naturalist. Through photography you not only hone your skills as a underwater photographer. But you become an over all better diver.

What about Photoshop? Already in the earliest day of photography, photographers used some after processing to improve the raw results of their camera. This is called retouching. Now we have digital pictures and Photoshop, Lightroom and many other programs that do more or less the same. Every shot can improve with some [editing] after processing. Every year we organise a FREE Photoshop and Lightroom WORKSHOP where Phil teaches you the basics and also more advanced possibilities.

This years Photoshop/Lightroom workshop is on Wednesday 19 April from 7pm to 9pm.

Every year there are questions whether the rules of the photo comp should not be changed. For instance, in a way that newcomers have a better chance to win a prize.

Some members have just started to dive, others have many thousands of dives upon their sleeves. Also, some of our members enter the water with many thousands dollars of camera equipment with at least two flashlights, while others take a point and shoot camera. That is why there are 2 basic categories: SLR camera and Compact Camera. In both categories pictures are classified as Macro, Portrait or Wide Angle. Further there is an open category called Behaviour, which can be shot by any camera and can be macro, portrait or wide angle.

And by the way: the judging is not done by members (apart from the member's choice) but by a fiercely independent panel of judges who only see the pictures, anonymously numbered.

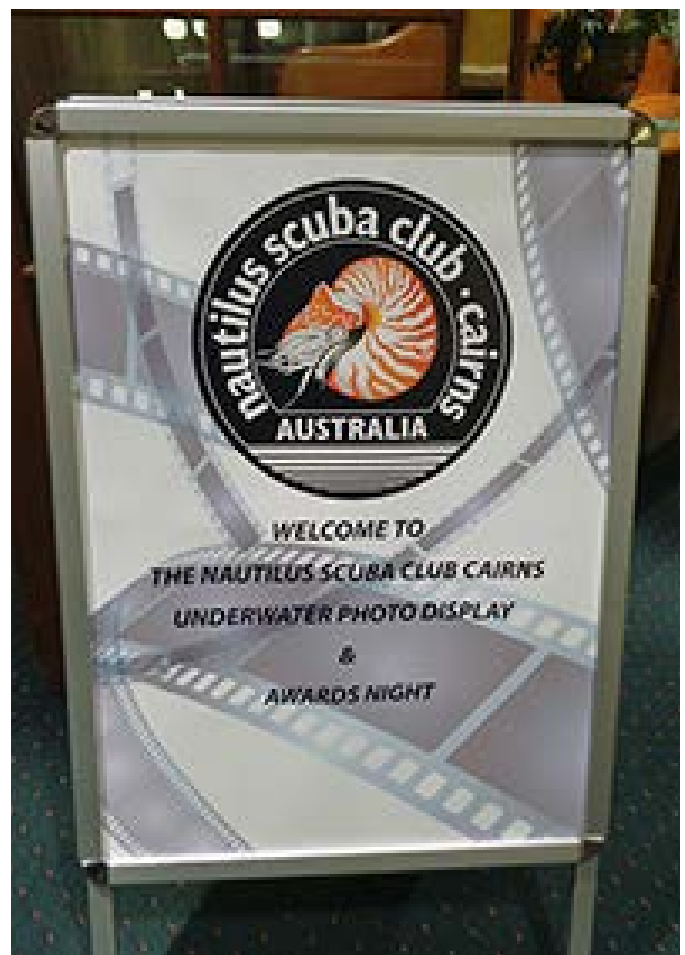
For this year, long story short: \$20 to compete with 1 to 12 pictures. Closing date 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017. Competition night on 28th of June @ 7pm – Nautilus SCUBA Club Underwater Photo Competition at the CAIRNS COLONIAL CLUB (in stead of our club meeting in June).

The competition forms have been send to you by email.

Happy shooting

Jannemieke

President Nautilus Scuba Club



# February Club Trip on board TUSA

By Sarah Luthy  
Images Libby Sterling

On Sunday morning we were greeted by another one of those glorious summer days in Cairns - blue skies, a light breeze and birds chirping. We had a good turnout of club members with quite a few new ones joining us on the Tusa boat including Sam, Megan and Emma.

In total there were 40 divers which included some intro divers. This made a very crowded dive deck but



the crew were very efficient at getting everyone into the water and things ran smoothly.

Our first 2 dives were at Fish Bowl on Hastings reef. Sharks and turtles were the highlights as well as batfish, stingrays and a small bump headed parrot fish. The water was a pleasant 29 degrees and sadly there was quite a bit of coral bleaching.

One anemone was completely white which although it looked quite pretty, it was sad to think of the fate of the poor clown fish hiding there.



The 3rd dive was at Breaking Patches on Michaelmas Reef. Again there was evidence of bleaching and dead coral. Visibility was only about 7m and we hoped to see something big appear from the haze but the biggest thing we saw was a small white tip reef shark. There was also a very lost looking remora. It swam around enthusiastically checking out all the divers - swimming around their legs, under their torsos and next to their tanks. It was obviously not shy! And so we returned back to Cairns eating chocolate cake after a lovely day out on the reef.





Last week I was lucky enough to take a trip out on True Blue, Kevin and Ann Coombs' great little dive boat, on which they've been intrepidly exploring the reef for many a year. On this trip we headed out to the wreck of the Al Monti, a sunken trawler that Kevin had been the first to find and dive some years ago after a hot tip from a fishing buddy.



So come Sunday morning I found myself heading down to the Deeral boat ramp through the early morning mists to meet up with Kev, Shey and Phil for our own little private day out. As we buzzed down the river on the way out past the Frankland Islands I found myself wondering how, after close to 15 years in Cairns, I'd never got round to checking out this idyllic little patch of paradise only 45 minutes away.

Once out into the ocean Kev gunned the 300hp Mercury outboard and made short shrift of the passage over to the wreck, leaving all the other bustling

fishing boats in our wake as we headed off into the Green Zone.

The wreck sits all on its own on the sand at 38 meters, and is only a handful of metres high, so it's not your average reef fun-dive. Reaching it, on a slightly murky day like today, means a long descent into the empty gloom down the anchor-line, and having already had my own regs pack in that morning due to a dud computer battery, I was left to reflect on the relative wisdom of using my wife's little-used ex-rental set, which asthmatically creaked and groaned their way down the line with every breath; about time for an upgrade, I mentally noted, must pop into Tusa sometime soon, assuming, of course, I actually make it back to the surface!

These thoughts were quickly dispelled as my eyes adjusted and the Al Monti came startlingly into view. It's obviously been down a fair while



as every surface is almost entirely encrusted, surrounded by teeming shoals of baitfish which in turn entice in the big guys, and the whole wreck patrolled by large numbers of circling trout and cod, with a couple of leopard sharks and a wobbegong close-by to further spice up the day. Many of the spars or the boat appeared to be twitching, and closer inspection revealed a hoard of little shrimps hiding out in every crevice.

The wreck's not that big, but there's so much to take in, a





# TRUE BLUE



challenge as the depth keeps your bottom time all too brief, and before long you're back hanging on the rope off-gassing, the boat frustratingly just out of view through the gloom, leaving passing jellyfish as the sole entertainment, as well as the surprising number of little fish who actually call the rope home... some people will live anywhere!

Back on the surface Kevin has the boat really well set up, with extra descent lines, a drop tank of nitrox and even a floating inner-tube to dump your camera in before you take off your fins, which I thought a great idea. Luckily the sun was out, the sea was calm, and after a coffee and a snack it was quickly time to get back in and do it all again. On a



site this enticing, compact and full of life it's all-too tempting to exceed your bottom-time, and I had to almost tear myself away up the rope at dives end to resist taking just one or two more shots.

All in all it was a great way to spend the day. Many thanks to Kevin for asking me along... hopefully I'll have the chance to get down there again one day and take those last few hundred snaps I had to leave behind!



# Creature Feature By Alex Bulanov



**Featuring the biting fangblennies of the genus *Plagiotremus*.  
Bluestriped Fangblenny (*Plagiotremus rhinorhynchus*)  
Piano Fangblenny (*Plagiotremus tapeinosoma*)**

These two are common on reefs around Cairns.

They swim with undulating motion like little snakes or eels.

They feed by aggressively attacking passing fish and biting off bits of scales and mucus from their bodies.

They routinely attack divers but these attacks generally go unnoticed as they are harmless.

These fish are no more than 10 cm in size.

Imagine if they were a bit bigger than that! :)



**Cheers,  
Alex The Reef Fish Geek.**



# THINGS YOU MAY OR MAY NOT NEED TO KNOW

The Nautilus Scuba Club 2017 Calendar  
now available to order at the club  
meetings



There is a Coral Sea trip to Holmes Reef planned for May, if you have never dived in the Coral Sea and experienced 30 metre visibility then now is your chance.

The Minke Whale trip is fast approaching, if you thinking of joining the trip don't leave it too late as it is filling fast



## Supporting the Nautilus Scuba Club



**DIGITAL DIVER**  
- take only pictures, leave only bubbles -



**CALYPSO**  
snorkel and dive



**TUSA**  
Dive

**PRO DIVE**  
CAIRNS





## PARTING SHOT



Paddle-flap Scorpionfish - *Rhinopias eschmeyeri*