

Nautilus SCUBA Club Newsletter

Cairns QLD Australia

September 2019

Editor: Phil Woodhead



Dive Trips
Club Meetings
Guest Speakers
Trip Reports



Local dive trips and get together information

September 2019						
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**Junior Eisteddfod Association at
67 Greenslopes Street, Edge Hill.
Starting with a Sausage sizzle at 7pm**

**For upcoming dive trip information keep
an eye on your emails or visit the Nautilus
website**



**Next club dive will be on Tusa Dive T6
departing from Cairns on Sunday 13th
October, please visit the website for more
information.**

Guest Speaker: Mike Ball Diving Expeditions

Special dives will be organised in addition to the regular monthly day trips and could be day trips or weekend trips to the reef or the Yongala. Better watch your emails for future announcements.

Walk the Reef

By Ben

So for a couple of months She (who must be obeyed) has been talking of taking her munchkin to the Walk the Reef at Kurramine Beach. After a few months of planning we arrived on the 30th of August for the lowest tide of the Year.

Speaking to the receptionist at the accommodation informed me that we needed to get to the boat ramp and in quick time. We hurriedly got our things together and headed to the Boat Ramp.

When we arrived at the boat ramp and saw a few people getting ready.

We all started to walk out to the reef.

Let me explain it is not a short walk and shoes or dive boots are a must with sun protection. As we were heading out she (who must be obeyed) was not (!!!) happy with our rushed preparation and went back to the Car.

Determined to take the munchkin out I braved the seas to make it to the reef.

When I was feeling a bit hot and bothered from the heat out came she (who must be obeyed) to rescue me with a hat and camera.

We looked around the tidal pools and decided to head back. There were tiny starfish, urchins and a couple of blennies to see on the way back.

The Munchkin was happy.

On the second day I decided wisely to follow she (who must be obeyed) instructions of preparing properly.

On the Saturday there was easily 200 people making the trek. We saw more starfish on the way in and a Bluebottle jellyfish making its merry way in the current.



On the way we saw Starfish.....



When we got to the reef we saw Large Worms every where



We also saw Giant Clams



There were hermit crabs and small snails hunting in the small tidal pools

Walk the Reef

By Ben

We were talking about maybe seeing a Nudibranch, but I was not holding out hope. When we got to the reef we saw more worms, larger crabs. Then we got lucky she (who must be obeyed) spotted two cleaner shrimp in a rock pool. We continued on looking at Sea Cucumbers heading towards the outer edge of the reef. Then Gold Dust. In a pool she (who must be obeyed) spotted a Nudibranch. Followed by the Munchkin spotting her very first Nudibranch. Then followed up by myself finding one. We were all very happy at finding Nudibranchs. We continued looking in pools as the tide turned and headed our way back with our eyes on the ground looking to see something good.



So in reflection if you have a family member or friend who cannot dive this is a great event where they can see what we see regularly. But it is a long walk out to the reef and requires sturdy shoes. But, you go no deeper than waist deep on the travel as long as you time it right. By the delinquent diver ■



A Doriprismatica atromarginata



Hermitted

By Sam Aird

Photography: Sam Aird and Andrew Watson

I love night dives. And, because I also have a thing for shells, night diving is particularly good to see the behaviours of various nocturnal molluscs. Hermit crabs aren't molluscs. They are decapods (crustaceans) that live in empty mollusc shells. Some can be quite vicious while others have more placid temperaments. Impatiently waiting for one of their friends to shed an old shell for example, will result in a fight to the death to take ownership of a new home.

Hermit crabs aren't born in shells but rather born free swimming and when big enough, park themselves into an 'empty hard hat' which offers camouflaged protection from predators and exposure to the elements. As they grow, they molt and either wait in vacancy chains to transition into someone else's shell or get fed up and battle it out.

'fight to the death or wait in a vacancy chain'



Coiling of a hermit crab (image ThoughtCo. 2019)

On our dives earlier this year in Anilao, Philippines, we saw some hermit crabs with anemones stuck to the tops of their shells. In these cases, a kind of symbiotic relationship exists between the hermit crab and the anemone, where the anemone stings anything or anyone that makes physical contact.

Hermit crabs can live in 'colonies of up to 100 animals' and sometimes sleep 'piled up on top of each other'. How awesome this would be to see on a dive! But of course, hermit crabs also inhabit terrestrial environments and is where we can and indeed, most frequently encounter them.

When you pick up a shell from the beach you can always tell if a shell has been 'hermitted' by the way the bottom edge looks. It is usually ground down with smooth edges showing where the shell has been consistently dragged across substrates - on rubbly seafloors, sandy beaches, or above-tide leafy environments. The inside spiral or 'columellar' of gastropod shells will also be hollowed out where the crab has made extra space for it to fit into.



Camouflaged hermit crab,
Anilao, Philippines 2019

Hermitted

By Sam Aird

Photography: Sam Aird and Andrew Watson



A non-hermitted gastropod shell with no damage (left), and hermitted shell (right) showing damage to the inner and bottom edges (image from Szabó 2012 in 'Terrestrial hermit crabs (Anomura: Coenobitidae) as taphonomic agents in circum-tropical coastal sites', Journal of Archaeological Science).



This hermit crab has purposely chipped away at the top edge of this shell to make room for its body!



There are over 1000 species of hermit crab. The crab pictured above has taken refuge in a turban shell which are common across the Great Barrier Reef.



Hermit crab in a muricid shell, Ribbon Reefs, Australia.



Hermit crabs are scavengers which eat both plants and other animals ... and hopefully not cameras!



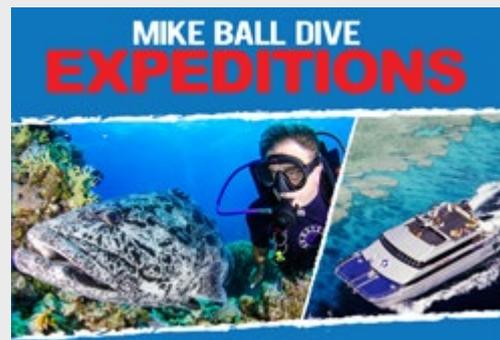
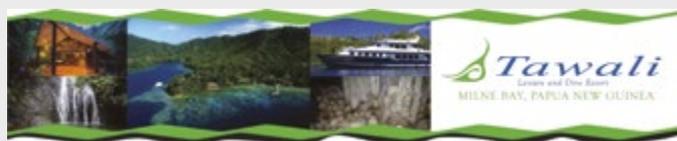
Hermit crab in a turban shell on land, Lady Elliot Island, Australia.

Links:

'Changing Shells' BBC clip and other interesting facts

<https://dipndive.com/blog/fun-facts-about-hermit-crabs.html>

Supporting the Nautilus Scuba Club



PARTING SHOT

