

Victoria's Bays and Inlets

Our responsibility...

The last issue for the year takes a closer look at the bays and inlets right around our state. From Warratah Bay, to Western Port, the south west coast and even the Bass Strait Islands.

When visiting our bays and inlets over summer it is our responsibility to share the wonders of such places with our families, friends and everyone we see.

So...What are the wonders to be found in Victoria's bays and inlets? Read on.....

Elephant sharks, beauties or beasts.

Elephant sharks are amongst the strangest looking creatures in Victoria's bays and inlets.



These stunning silvery relatives of the shark family migrate into Victoria's Bays and inlets to lay their unusual small brown eggs. Laid on muddy or the sandy sea floor each egg takes about 8 months to hatch.

Once ready to hatch the baby leaves the center and heads down a special passage that lets it escape it's protective casing.



Found by many beach combers, these egg cases are perfectly camouflaged and are often dismissed as seaweed. Victoria's coast, and Western Port in particular, sees the Elephant Shark migrate from water over 1000m deep into

our shallow, warmer bays and inlets.

Normally living at great depths, they are very slow growing and take around 5 years before they even start to reproduce.



Once again, Victoria's marine environment reveals a stunning living treasure right on our doorstep.

Unknown dolphin strands at Sandy Point.

Members of the Warratah Bay SLSC recently reported a stranded dolphin and the species is yet to be identified and certainly not from here!



This exciting marine mystery is being tackled by a team of scientists from DRI, Melbourne Zoo and the Australian Antarctic division.

Stay tuned!!

Strange creatures wash up on our west coast.

The amazing creatures that live around our coast astound me on a daily basis. Only last month a young marine explorer, Kasey Perkins took these great pics of a Pigmy Sperm whale that washed up on the South West coast. Imagine the things out there we don't see!



A pigmy sperm whale washed up on the South West coast

During my recent holidays I had the pleasure of making my annual pilgrimage to King Island, located about 80km of the West coast of Victoria. The Island marine life is a strange mix of ocean travellers and local residents.

Talking to the local ranger Nigel Burgess, I discovered that the island had some strange marine visitors including leopard seals, turtles and even marlin.



A leopard seal on King Island

But the largest of them all was a 23 metre fin whale that washed up on the island's South East coast



Examination of the animal showed enormous bite marks of great white sharks along the whale's side.

Sure makes you feel small!!!

'i sea, i care' visits the South West coast

This term 12 schools from the South West Coast Action / Coastcare region were invited to their first ISIC workshop.

The day was hosted by Torquay College and focused on Victoria's unique marine life using awesome marine video, artifacts and even our 19m inflatable whale.



The 19m inflatable whale was a real highlight.

We then looked at what makes a great ambassador. Students workshoped their best marine experience and then presented it to the group in the most memorable way possible. We learnt that it's one thing to share information, it's another to get people to remember it.



Ambassadors practice delivering memorable presentations.

Over 40 ambassadors, parents and teachers made a great step forward in their thinking about the coast.

Stay tuned for more great workshops in 2009

'i sea, i care' 2009 registration!

I have sent a registration form for 2009 via email to all current schools. If you did not receive yours or it 'got lost' in the pile I will gladly send another. My contact details are 1300 130 949 or education@dolphinresearch.org.au

If you are leaving the school please make sure you pass on the ISIC information to a caring teacher or parent who can continue your great work.

If there are any other schools in the region or community groups who might be interested we would love to hear from them.

Thanks again for your amazing support this year and the fantastic relationships we have developed within the ISIC tribe. Feel free to contact me should you have any questions. I would also love to hear any feedback on the program from any members of your school community.

I look forward to receiving your ISIC form by fax on 59797150

Thank you to our 'i sea, i care' supporters

We are grateful to the ANZ Bank and Coast Action/Coastcare for their generous support.



Western Port term 4 workshop

Friday 21 November saw 70 ambassadors, parents and teachers ascend on Warranginie Park on the shores of Western Port. Also attending, were ambassadors for 2009 bursting with energy and enthusiasm.

The 2008 ambassadors started by passing on their knowledge to the new brigade. There were a few nerves but in no time everyone was talking.

A walk down to Jacks beach had us up close and personal with seagrass, mangroves and swan poo! The ambassadors learnt the significance of black swans in delivering nutrients from seagrass to other baby marine animals. For more info, ask your ambassadors!

With the help of local rangers, Julia and Gerard, we then scoured the bush for introduced plants and animals. The weeds were starting to seed and the Ambassadors cleared an area that would have taken the rangers weeks!



Ambassadors enjoy giving back to the coastal bushland

Introduced animals are also a major threat. We took a closer look at foxes and their poo! We were amazed to find that many marine animals such as snails and crabs are on it's menu.

The day ended with a BBQ lunch, photos, well wishes and ambassadors beaming with pride for their year's efforts.

Is ISIC really making a difference?

'i sea, i care' has been in full swing during 2008.

This year we had 67 schools across the state spreading the stories of Victoria's living marine treasures.

We ran 10 days of intensive marine workshops that involved around 500 young marine ambassadors, teachers and parents.

We developed, completed and analyzed the first coastal perceptions survey which had over 1400 participants. The results of this survey will be released next week.

2008 Ambassador comments:

"It has been another great year and I/we appreciate all the fantastic workshops/ learning opportunities you arrange for the children."

"Thanks for another great year, your enthusiasm and passion for your work is contagious, our students and our school have really enjoyed working with you."

"We just wanted to thank you for a great year this year. It has been a fantastic experience for all involved and you and your team from the dolphin research institute have conducted the program extremely well."

CONGRATULATIONS to all ambassadors, parents and teachers, we really are making a difference.

Have a great Christmas filled with all things marine!



Ben Camm
Education Director