

Ben's Bites!

It's been a great month for research and education at the Dolphin Research Institute!



I was lucky enough to be out driving the boat when we found Ariel's family. We were all so proud, especially with what they have been through. It's the closest I've come to feeling like a DAD.

Call to action

*Log onto our website and check out our **catchments episode of ISIC T.V.***

It's based around our recent workshop for ambassadors in the Melbourne region and takes a close look at our catchments and their impact on the marine environment.

It's hard to get to everyone around the state but this way everybody can share the messages of the day.

You might even like to show it to your whole class.

See you next time..

Ben

Dolphin Research Institute



Stop Press - 8th June

Humpback Whales have just been sighted at Port Phillip Heads! - Stay tuned.

New free DVD about Western Port and its catchments

I was at the launch recently of a great new DVD to help people understand Western Port's marine environment and the challenges it faces.

It contains fantastic underwater footage, messages about how to look after it and it's all narrated by John Clark (the funny guy from the '7:30 Report').

To get your free copy go to www.seagrass.com.au



Ariel's grand calf.

Out off Rosebud in Port Phillip our research team were jumping for joy.

Why?

The story goes like this...

1996 - A dolphin known to the research team as 'Ariel' was identified in 1996 due to the scars on her fin. She was named after Ariel in the 'little mermaid'

Around 1998 - Ariel gave birth to a calf. Dolphin calves stick like glue to their mums side for the first months of their lives. Wherever we saw Ariel we saw Ariel's calf.

2002 - As Ariel's calf grew she developed indentifying marks on her fin.

Unfortunately these scars where largely from her close encounter with a boat that nearly cost her her life!



Ariel's calf with boat scars that almost killed her

2009 - Then, in late May researchers identified Ariel, then Ariel's calf ... then up popped a tiny baby the size of a football.

This was Ariel's calfs', calf!

Ariel was a grandmother!!!!

We watched from a distance to make sure, but just like her mum the baby stuck like glue to 'Ariel's calf'. There was no mistaking that this was the third generation.

Future - This family of dolphins was almost lost in 2002 and still today they face enoumous challenges.

So when we think about what's at the end of the drains think of Ariel's family.

As ISIC Ambassadors we should be as proud as punch at the new arrival.

Like our own family they need our support and protection to help them along the way.



Ariel's Calf (rear), Nep (middle) and Ariel's grand calf

ISIC TV Episode 4 - Catchments

Episode 4 of 'i sea, i care' T.V is now on the web at

www.dolphinresearch.org.au



Waterwatch - Free sessions at school

Did you know that water bugs can tell us how healthy our waterways are?

Creatures such as snails, water beetles and dragonfly larvae that live in rivers and streams can be sensitive to pollution and may disappear if a waterway is polluted.



Damselfly nymph, a good sign of a healthy waterway

Waterways with good quality water have many different kinds of water bugs. Only some types of water bugs can live in less healthy waterways.



For more information on how to get your school involved check out their website below.

www.waterwatchmelbourne.org.au

Visitor from the North - May 2009

On the 26th of May at Silver-leaves Beach, Phillip Island an unusual visitor came ashore. A hawksbill turtle!

Now the fact that a sea turtle washed up in Victoria is not new, it happens maybe once or twice a year, however never before have we seen a hawksbill.

These small turtles usually live in the warmed waters of Northern Aus feeding on sea jellies and sea grasses. So how did it get here? It probably got caught at the back end of the East Australia Current (EAC). It found itself in colder waters where it's natural food was hard to find.

It became weak and washed up on the beach.

The Melbourne Aquarium took the animal in for rehabilitation however sadly they were unable to save it due to it's weak condition.



If you find an injured animal on the beach contact your local wildlife officer on 1300094535



Workshop round up. - Mordialloc Creek litter trap clean out

This term ISIC schools in the Melbourne region got together to investigate their catchments. Episode 4 of ISIC T.V provides a snapshot of the day and some activity ideas for any class studying the water cycle and our impact on the environment. To check it out go to www.dolphinresearch.org.au



Turbidity testing



A record - 92 ambassadors from 15 schools attended the day



Ambassadors watch and smell the litter trap clean out



Filming for ISIC T.V



Floating little traps



Dog poo and drains. YUK!



The end of a drain



Waterwatch - a great way to learn about our catchments