

Spring 2024



# Turning THE TIDE

Supporter Newsletter

CREATURE FEATURE

## Southern Elephant Seal

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With Thanks to YOU







**Did you know?**

Southern elephant seals were named for the male's trunk-like snouts.

## Southern Elephant Seal

**The largest of all seals is the southern elephant seal.**

Elephant seals are easily recognisable, especially the males which have a trunk-like nose, used to amplify their loud roaring.

Southern elephant seals live in sub-Antarctic and Antarctic waters. **The two main populations found in Australian waters are at Heard and Macquarie Islands.** They breed on land but spend their winters in the frigid waters near the Antarctic pack ice.

**Southern elephant seals spend ninety percent of their lives at sea.** They come onshore for the breeding season from September to November, and return to sea for 10-14 weeks before the moult in January-March. They moult onshore for about four weeks before returning to sea until the next breeding season.

On land, they are big and cumbersome, but they are superb swimmers and divers. Their torpedo shape and unique physiology means they can dive to over 1,500 m and can stay submerged for up to 2 hours. **They are the deepest diving seals in the world.**

**The southern elephant seal was heavily hunted during the 19th century, primarily for oil.** The King Island population in Bass Strait was extinct by about 1805. Hunting continued until the mid-1960s. Southern elephant seals are now protected by an international convention and protected under Australian legislation as a threatened species.

**Today, climatic change is the greatest threat to the southern elephant seal.** The increase in sea surface temperature and habitat loss affects the seals' foraging behaviour and food availability.

### Facts & Figures

**COMMON NAME:** Southern Elephant Seals

**SCIENTIFIC NAME:** *Mirounga leonina*

**TYPE:** Mammals

**BODY SIZE:** Up to 4-5 metres

**WEIGHT:** Up to 3,500 kg

**LIFESPAN (IN WILD):** 20 to 22 years

**DIET:** Carnivore

**LOCATION:** Two main populations in Australian waters on Heard and Macquarie Islands

**CONSERVATION STATUS:** Vulnerable

**POPULATION TREND:** Stable



**Neil the Seal:** Neil was born on the Tasman Peninsula in 2020. Experts think his mother may have been disorientated when he was born a long way from the closest breeding colony on Macquarie Island in the Southern Ocean. His juvenile antics first gained fame in July 2022 after resting in Hobart for his month-long moulting period. Neil is popular on social media, but **for his safety, the public are asked to stay away.**

Neil is estimated at six or seven hundred kilos, but over the next two years, he's expected to grow to up to 5 metres in length and weigh as much as 3,500 kilogram.



📖 Critical time in determining the future of our oceans 📖

## Global Oceans

**AMCS championed Australia's magnificent marine life at two crucial back to back international gatherings of the ocean community.**

Thanks to you, AMCS was able to attend the UN Ocean Decade and the Our Ocean 2024 conferences. At this crucial time for the future of our oceans, these global meetings shone the international spotlight firmly on their plight.

Three years into the Ocean Decade, delegates discussed the progress delivered so far and drafted a clearer agenda for the challenges facing our oceans including restoring marine ecosystems, beating pollution and tackling ocean warming.

Our Oceans is filling gaps in ocean protection by providing a platform every year for decision-makers to announce big action for our big blue backyard. At this year's conference over \$11bn was committed.

During the next 12 months there will be further international negotiations among nations, stakeholders, marine industries and ocean advocates like ourselves heading towards the pivotal UN Oceans 2025 meeting.

It is through your ongoing support that AMCS is able to give a voice to our oceans on the international stage. Thank you to our ocean-loving community across Australia.

**Read CEO Darren's blogs from the conferences. The Ocean Decade is gathering momentum and Our Ocean continues to bringing attention to the plight of our oceans. [amcs.org.au/CEOblog](https://amcs.org.au/CEOblog)**

## Marine Heatwaves

**Did you know that heatwaves also occur in our oceans?**

It's normal for sea surface temperatures to fluctuate but marine heatwaves occur when ocean temperatures exceed their usual seasonal levels for an extended period of time.

These extreme warm water events can have severe effects on our oceans. Like underwater bushfires, they can cause mass coral bleaching and can devastate kelp forests and seagrass meadows.

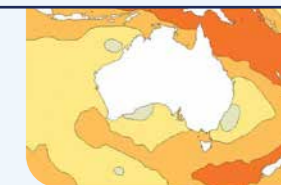
Climate change, fuelled by burning fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas, is driving longer, hotter and more frequent marine heatwaves.

We must give our oceans a fighting chance against further heat stress. Marine sanctuaries act like national parks in the ocean and increase the resilience and recovery of marine life to face threats like marine heatwaves.

Thank you to our ocean loving community for showing your support for increased marine sanctuary protection.

### 📖 Read More

Ocean temperatures impact marine life, coastal communities, the stability of polar ecosystems and weather events such as cyclones and floods. Read about marine [amcs.org.au/heatwave](https://amcs.org.au/heatwave)







Celebrating our precious oceans and wildlife...

# World Oceans Day

**On World Oceans Day, 8 June 2024, we celebrated our life-giving oceans by holding a Giving Day.**

You, our inspiring ocean-loving supporters, have blown us away with your donations and heartfelt words of encouragement! More than 2,000 of you wonderful, generous ocean-lovers gave to protect our oceans.

Your donations were doubled by our incredible Wavemaker matching donors. As a result, we eclipsed our target of \$800,000 to raise over \$1,134,500.

On behalf of everyone at AMCS, and especially on behalf of our oceans and incredible marine wildlife, Thank you! We are grateful for your support on World Oceans Day.

**Watch [amcs.org.au/WOD-TY](http://amcs.org.au/WOD-TY)**

## Wavemakers Gratitude Roll

**Special thanks to our Wavemakers who make the day possible.**

Our philanthropic Wavemakers pledged a gift to inspire fellow ocean-lovers to give knowing their donation and impact will be doubled. This year our Wavemakers included:

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| CHARLES WARMAN FOUNDATION | SARAH & SEBASTIAN NORMAN FAMILY FOUNDATION |
| RENEWABLE ENERGY CUP      | SUNNYSIDE FOUNDATION                       |
| DAVID LECKENBY ELDON BALL | MORRIS FAMILY FOUNDATION                   |
| MARILYN BALL              | QUEENSLAND GIVES FOUNDATION                |
| TWO MONKEYS FOUNDATION    | CROTHERS WALTON FOUNDATION                 |
| JMS FOUNDATION            | JARAMAS FOUNDATION                         |
| SANDCLOUD                 |  |

## Wavemakers In Action

**Eldon and Marilyn Ball are Wavemakers.**

In their second year as World Oceans Giving Day Wavemakers, distinguished scientists, Eldon and Marilyn Ball are making waves in marine protection.

With careers spanning diverse marine topics, Eldon focuses on corals, while Marilyn studies mangroves, the expertise of scientists such as Eldon and Marilyn forms the foundation of AMCS advocacy, earning trust across politics.

As avid supporters of environmental causes, they've witnessed the transformative impact of campaigns like ours.

They urge more supporters to become involved; *"Everyone can contribute to the cause in some way, financially, politically, or by actions in their daily lives, such as reducing the use of plastic."*



Professor Emeritus Dr. Marilyn Ball and Dr. Eldon Ball

Defending ocean habitats and species

You're protecting our spectacular marine-scapes ...

↳ Much of the marine life here is found nowhere else ↲



# Great Southern Reef

**The Great Southern Reef is home to an enormous diversity of wildlife, such as giant kelp forests, sea lions, blue groper, giant cuttlefish, rock lobsters, bluefin tuna, southern right whales and weedy sea dragons.**

Wrapping around Australia's southern coastline, from Brisbane to Perth, fringed by rocky reefs and kelp forests, the Great Southern Reef covers 71,000 square km.

**The Great Southern Reef is a masterpiece of abundant life and underwater beauty.**

The GSR is an interconnected system of temperate reefs spanning over 8,000 km around Australia's southern coastline, from Kalbarri in Western Australia to the NSW/ Queensland state border.

It is a global biodiversity hotspot with many species found nowhere else on the planet. From crabs, seadragons and starfish to our unique Australian sea lions and giant Australian cuttlefish.

The landscape is dominated by kelp forests, seaweed, seagrass meadows, oyster reefs, sponges and gorgonians (soft coral) reef habitats.



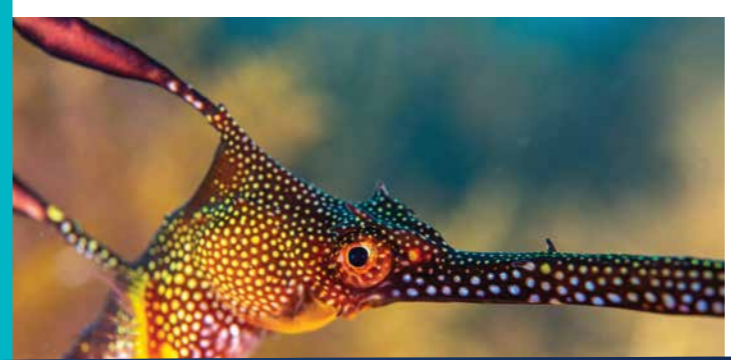
## Thank you

The 1000 kilometre stretch of the Great Southern Reef from WA's Bremer Bay to the South Australian border currently has no marine sanctuary protections!

We need to urge the government to increase marine sanctuary protection for crucial areas.

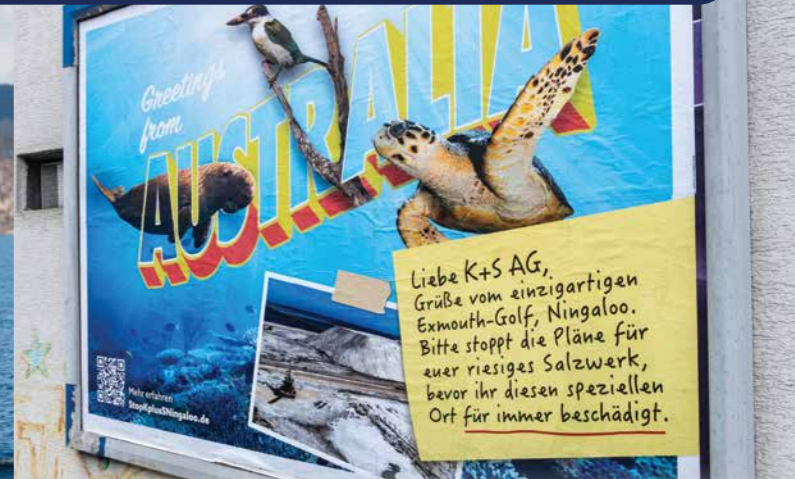
Creating a network of strong marine sanctuaries will help keep ocean life healthy, support sustainable fishing and preserve our treasured coastal lifestyle for future generations.

Thank you to 20,000+ ocean-lovers for signing the petition for strong marine sanctuaries, potentially creating Australia's next great marine park - the WA South Coast Marine Park.



Southern Right Whales in Esperance, Western Australia © Joshua Van Staden. INSET: Weedy Sea Dragon, Tasmania Australia © Imagine Earth Photography





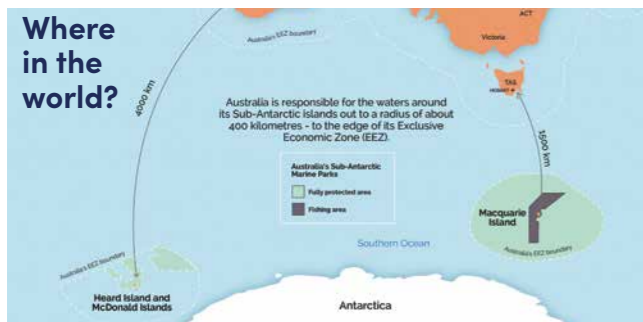
## Ice & Fire

**Uninhabited by humans, these dramatic outposts of ice and fire are home to unique plants and wildlife of global significance.**

Australia's little-known Heard and McDonald Islands are a collection of volcanoes and rocks soaring up out of the Southern Ocean, 4,000 km south-west of Western Australia and approximately 1,700 km from the Antarctic continent. They are Australia's only two active volcanoes.

They are home to over four million penguins from seven different species, tens of thousands of elephant seals and fur seals, banks of slow-growing corals, and two types of flying seabirds found nowhere else on the planet.

The Australian Government is currently reviewing the Heard and McDonald Islands Marine Park. This is a once-in-a-decade opportunity to preserve these wild Sub-Antarctic islands.



### Consultation Results Pending

Thank you to the thousands of supporters who made a submission to protect Heard and McDonald Islands. We await the consultation outcome. Previously we secured full protections around Macquarie Island - we hope for a similar result.

## Toondah Wetlands Reprieve

**A mega marina resort, threatening internationally significant wetlands near Brisbane with huge impacts on dugongs, dolphins and turtles, has been withdrawn.**

In April, we welcomed the federal environment minister's proposed decision to refuse the outrageously massive marina resort in Moreton Bay. As a result, the developer withdrew the application.

The development would have destroyed 40 hectares of mangrove and seagrasses in Ramsar wetlands in the Moreton Bay Marine Park, for 3,600 apartments, hotels, shops and a marina, wiping out feeding grounds for green turtles and dugongs.

Nurseries for fishes and other animals, mangrove and seagrass habitats are vital for healthy marine ecosystems. They are crucial carbon sinks that can store 2-4 times more carbon than tropical rainforests, making them important to help slow global warming. As we face the twin biodiversity and climate crises, we must protect these blue carbon habitats that also support species vulnerable to extinction.

### Thank You

Thank you to Redlands 2030 and the Toondah Alliance, the Australian Conservation Foundation, BirdLife Australia and the communities who campaigned for years to stop this mega-development in such crucial ecosystems. AMCS supported the Toondah Alliance.

Humpback whale tail in Hervey Bay, Queensland, Australia @ wallaby

## Sandy Green Zones Begin

**Green zones increased by threefold to make up 12.8% of the Great Sandy Marine Park.**

The Great Sandy Marine Park, covering 6,000 km<sup>2</sup> including Hervey Bay, the Great Sandy Strait, Tin Can Inlet and surrounding K'gari (Fraser Island) World Heritage Area, has held exceptionally high natural and cultural value since its establishment in 2006.

Thanks to your submissions, the Queensland government has made significant steps towards restoring the health of the Great Sandy Marine Park with **new initiatives coming into effect in May.**

**This is wonderful news for the region's threatened species, such as dugongs, grey nurse sharks, Australian humpback dolphins and a variety of migratory shorebirds.**

Other improvements you have helped bring about include:

- Destructive commercial gillnet fishing will no longer be permitted in the Great Sandy Strait.
- Better protection for vulnerable habitats and associated biodiversity.
- New go-slow areas to improve protection for turtles and dugongs.
- New no-anchoring areas to reduce impacts on sensitive habitats.
- New provisions to reduce disturbance to migratory shorebirds.

This overdue win for the region's marine life will ensure that the Great Sandy Marine Park is a special place for generations to come.

## Greetings from Australia

**Protect Ningaloo takes fight to save Exmouth Gulf to saltwork's German HQ.**

German-based multinational, K+S, is planning a huge, 210 km<sup>2</sup> saltworks, threatening nationally listed wetlands and wildlife.

To get the attention of K+S executives, we put 'postcard' billboards all over Kassel, Germany, urging them reconsider the project because of the damage it would cause to this area of outstanding conservation value.

Exmouth Gulf is a vital part of the nearby Ningaloo Reef ecosystem, with UNESCO recommending Exmouth Gulf be considered for inclusion in the World Heritage-listed Ningaloo Coast.

**Thanks to ocean-lovers like you, more than 15,000 people have emailed the WA environment minister to oppose K+S's proposal. Another 14,000 people have emailed the federal environment minister calling for Exmouth Gulf to be granted National Heritage protection.**

### Industrial Saltworks

Read more about the giant saltworks proposal that threatens the remarkable eastern Exmouth Gulf environment. Visit [protectningaloo.org.au/saltworksthreat](http://protectningaloo.org.au/saltworksthreat)

Sea lion in kelp forest, Engelhardt's Nest





### Exclusive Footage

### Qld Acts On Emissions

### Reef Water Pollution Report

### FNQ Rally For Reef

**Thank you for your generous donations to our Emergency Reef Bleaching Mission in Summer.**

In the face of the marine heatwave and Reef bleaching crisis, our ocean-loving community stepped up to make our critical work possible. Thanks to you, our marine community, we were able to send Reef coral expert and marine biologist Dr Selina Ward out on the Reef with a photographer to capture the damage. Your support meant that Selina's expert response and emotional plea for help was heard around the world.

The trip and groundbreaking footage were featured in global media. You made sure that our Reef's suffering was headline news.

**Thank you for being the voice for Australia's marine life, and amplifying the truth from scientists.**

#### ▶ 'Worst I've seen'



Watch Dr Selina Ward's frontline account experience of the Reef bleaching - it was the worst bleaching she had seen in 30 years working on the reef. Visit [amcs.org.au/coral-bleaching](http://amcs.org.au/coral-bleaching)



**Queensland has legislated to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 2035.**

In April, the Queensland government set strong targets: 75% cut to greenhouse gas emissions and 80% renewable energy target by 2035. This places Queensland at the forefront of climate action, transitioning from a high per capita emitter to a global leader in pollution reduction. In more good news the Queensland opposition, Liberal National Party, has supported legislating the emissions reduction target too. Unfortunately, they did not support legislating renewable energy targets. With a state election in October, it is critical that there is also bipartisan support for this target, which is key to achieving emissions reductions in QLD.

**It's time for the Australian government to significantly raise its emissions reduction target.**

To protect the Great Barrier Reef and honour UNESCO commitments, a minimum 90% emissions reduction target by 2035 is essential to limit global warming to 1.5°C.

Climate change is the gravest threat to our oceans, bringing more frequent and more intense marine heatwaves.

The Great Barrier Reef recently endured its fifth mass coral bleaching in eight years, surpassing previous events in severity.

Urgent action is imperative in this decade to safeguard the future of the Great Barrier Reef.

Healthy Reef, Great Barrier Reef @ Tanya Murphy

River flanked by lush mangroves @ Ridham Supriyanto. INSET: Solitary mangrove low tide on sand flats at Yule Point, Far North Queensland @ Tania Stour

**Both Australian and Queensland governments are lagging in curbing water pollution and will miss the 2025 targets, significantly.**

A government report released on 30th May 2024 shows that major pollutants, like sediment and nitrogen from farming and tree clearing, continue to flow into rivers and streams that lead to the Reef, posing a threat to corals and seagrasses. Progress towards reducing sediment and nitrogen pollution by 2025 has been too slow, putting our fragile Reef ecosystems at risk. Without intensified efforts from our governments, safe levels of sediment pollution won't be reached until 2047, and nitrogen pollution not until the next century.

#### Wetlands Help

Wetlands are natural water filters, trapping sediments and removing nutrients. They protect our coasts from extreme weather, such as cyclones and floods, and store huge amounts of carbon, helping us battle climate change.

Send a message to the federal environment minister, highlighting how wetland restoration can cut pollution and boost the resilience of our Reef. [amcs.org.au/WetlandsAction](http://amcs.org.au/WetlandsAction)



**Far North Queenslanders gathered to support strong climate action to protect the Great Barrier Reef.**

AMCS and Divers for Climate hosted Reef and Climate Forums in Port Douglas and Cairns in March. Nearly 200 Queenslanders gathered to call for strong climate action for our Reef while it endured its fifth mass bleaching event in eight years.

The huge turnout of Cairns and Port Douglas locals showed that Far North Queenslanders are concerned about what's happening at the Reef, and want to see stronger climate action from our elected representatives.

**Thank you to our reef loving ocean community who showed up to speak up for our oceans.**



#### Volunteer

You can get involved in a variety of different ways - there's something for everyone. Email [volunteer@amcs.org.au](mailto:volunteer@amcs.org.au) for more information.

Stressed Reef, Great Barrier Reef @ Pablo Cogolles. INSET: Coral bleaching at Bur-ye Bur-ye Reef, March 2024. @ Daniel Healy

Reef and Climate Forums in Port Douglas (inset) and Cairns (above) @ AMCS and Divers for Climate





“Nature can't wait any longer”

### National EPA

The establishment of Australia's first national environment agency, **Environment Protection Australia (EPA)**, has been announced and **legislation has been introduced and is currently being debated in Parliament.**

The proposal to establish an EPA, with strong new powers and penalties to better protect nature and an environmental data division, Environment Information Australia, is welcome. Parliament must now ensure they are strong and free from political interference.

While these are important steps, we must make sure the government does not to delay further much needed reforms. Our coasts, oceans and wildlife urgently need the full package of legislation introduced this term, so a new EPA can uphold and enforce effective laws.

The urgency and need for reform is clear. Our oceans are facing greater threats than ever before and an extinction crisis.

#### Failed Laws

The EPA on its own will not enable the government to meet its commitment to zero new extinctions. **Nature can't wait any longer for the full package of reforms that give our wildlife the protection it needs.**

With species such as the Maugean skate and red handfish facing imminent extinction, it is clear that Australia's current national environment laws, the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act, are failing nature.

### Love it Save it

This is a once in a generation opportunity to significantly increase protection for our environment and wildlife.

Australia's environment laws are being rewritten for the first time in over 20 years. This is a critical opportunity to ensure nature is protected and restored, by replacing the existing outdated laws with stronger laws to improve monitoring and enforcement, and remove loopholes that allow for the ongoing destruction of nature.

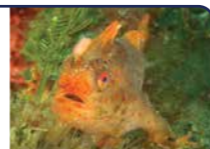
The 'if you love it, help save it' campaign launched late last year across the Places You Love (PYL) alliance of 70 organisations. In a coordinated effort AMCS, alongside other alliance members, is calling for strong new national environment laws.

We're urgently calling on the Australian government to deliver strong new national environment laws that:

- ♥ Enact strong National Environmental Standards that safeguard nature against further destruction.
- ♥ Properly fund habitat restoration and species recovery.
- ♥ Create an independent agency Environment Protection Australia (EPA) that will monitor and enforce these new laws.
- ♥ Close legal loopholes that favour big businesses over nature.

#### Sign the Petition

Sign the petition today at [amcs.org.au/StrongerNature](http://amcs.org.au/StrongerNature)



Handfish



### Endangered Turtles

**Leatherback turtles are the largest of all sea turtles.**

They occur in tropical and temperate Australian waters. Most leatherback turtles living in our waters migrate to breed in neighbouring Indonesia and Pacific Island countries.

In the last decade, populations of leatherback turtles have declined dramatically.

In some areas of the Pacific Ocean and South East Asia, formerly abundant rookeries (nesting sites) have almost disappeared. It is estimated that Pacific leatherback populations have declined 80–95% over the last 20 years.

Few leatherback hatchlings survive to adulthood (around one in a thousand) and those that do make it are at risk from human activities. These include being caught in fishing lines and nets, or being struck by boats. They are also susceptible to death from plastic marine debris mistaken for their favourite food: jellyfish. Ocean warming, more extreme weather and rising sea levels affects turtles' nesting grounds.

#### Facts & Figures

**COMMON NAME:** Leatherback Turtle  
**SCIENTIFIC NAME:** *Dermochelys coriacea*  
**TYPE:** Reptile  
**GROUP NAME:** Bale or Flotilla  
**DIET:** Carnivore  
**LIFESPAN:** 45 years  
**SIZE (ADULT):** 1.6m long  
**WEIGHT:** 500 kg  
**CONSERVATION STATUS:** Endangered (EPBC)



### Lend A Hand

**“No more business as usual” celebrates the love for our endangered Australian marine life.**

Artist Ronelle Reid, uses ink, oils and watercolours to create detailed artworks that explore the relationships between animals and their habitats. She says,

*“I find the ocean fascinating, it is a world in itself. The creatures that inhabit the ocean are mysterious and wonderful, colourful and strange. I am particularly drawn to cephalopods and if you believe in spirit animals I think an octopus could be mine!”*

Ronelle created two unique artworks, “No more business as usual” and “Lend a hand”, for AMCS to highlight our endangered and vulnerable marine species.

*“As a wildlife conservation artist, my work talks about the plight of wildlife in our world. My mission is to bring those stories into the homes of people all over the world and have them echo the stories to have them heard by new audiences.”*

#### Limited Edition

Celebrate Threatened Species Day with us on September 7th, 2024, with our exclusive ocean-themed shirt. Showcasing Ronelle's bespoke artwork, this shirt will help spread the 'If you love it, help save it' message. Visit [amcs.org.au/LendAHand](http://amcs.org.au/LendAHand)





Australia's endemic sharks and rays are among the most endangered in the world.



## Fantastical Sharks & Rays

### Meet The Artists

The Shark Champions team (AMCS and Humane Society International Australia) have teamed up with the Australian Museum to present the Fantastical Sharks & Rays Exhibition.

Australia's endemic sharks and rays are among the most endangered in the world. Some of these species are so rarely seen that we have limited knowledge of their biology and exactly what they look like.

Over 1,500 young Australians used the power of their imagination to create artworks to help save our threatened and endangered species.

Ten talented young artists were chosen to spark the creativity of ten of Australia's leading artists including Ken Done, Jennifer Turpin, Blak Douglas and Rosie Deacon. In September 2024, the remarkable works by the children and artists will take centre stage at an enchanting exhibition merging education, art, culture and science at the esteemed Australian Museum, situated on Gadigal land in Sydney.

Thank you to all the shark champions who entered the competition! You have helped to shine a spotlight on little-known and uniquely Australian species!

### Meet The Artists

Iconic Australian artists create from inspiring marine animals and imaginative young Australians..

Blak Douglas and Ken Done share with us what Fantastical Sharks & Rays means to them.

*"I've chosen to pay homage to the abundance of petroglyphs dotting the foreshores of the Warrane ('Sydney Harbour') and its environs. Imagine that the Cadigal, Birribirrigal, Cameraygal were still prevalent and culturally undisturbed today. If so, we may have bore witness to 'species specific' carvings such as this gem - the Eastern Angelshark."*



*"This is a unique project and one that I am immensely looking forward to participating in. If it helps to protect some of the world's endangered species, that would be a great achievement for us all."*



#### KEN DONE

Blak Douglas and Ken Done, are joined by Jonathan Zawada, Jennifer Turpin, Janet Laurence and others.

## And the winners are...

Over 1,500 young Australians have used the power of their imagination to create artworks to help save our threatened and endangered species. See some of the magical creations in the gallery at [sharkchampions.org.au/gallery](http://sharkchampions.org.au/gallery)



Southern/Eastern Fiddler Ray  
*Trygonorrhina fasciata*  
Artist: Leah, 11 years old



Whitefin swellshark  
*Cephaloscyllium albiginum*  
Artist: Inara, 4 years old



Greenback stingaree  
*Urolophus viridis*  
Artist: Arwen, 10 years old



Australian longnose skate  
*Dentiraja confusa*  
Artist: Eightrelle, 9 years old



Maugean skate  
*Zearaja maugeana*  
Artist: Illuka, 9 years old



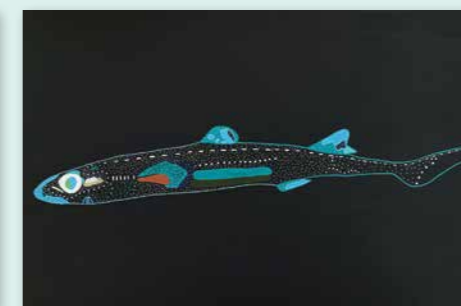
Yellowback stingaree  
*Urolophus sufflavus*  
Artist: Maya, 10 years old



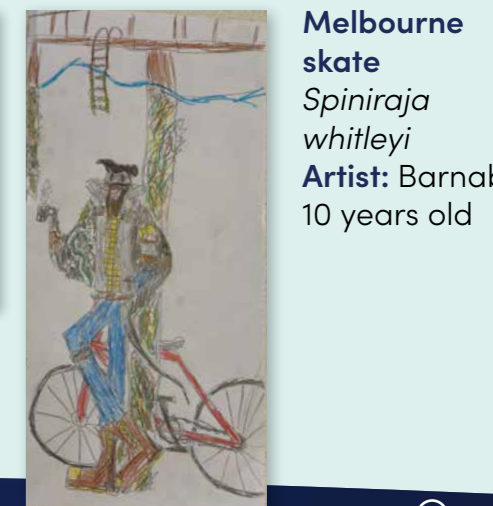
Greeneye spurdog  
*Squalus chloroculus*  
Artist: Oliver



Eastern angelshark  
*Squatina albigunctata*  
Artist: Gryff, 9 years old



Lined lantern shark  
*Etmopterus dislineatus*  
Artist: Zara, 13 years old



Melbourne skate  
*Spiniraja whitleyi*  
Artist: Barnaby, 10 years old

### Special Exhibition

Dive into the fantastical world of sharks and rays, in this special exhibition that shines a light on some of Australia's unique and most endangered species, opening 7th September 2024.

Fantastical Sharks & Rays opens 7th September at the Australian Museum, Sydney. Free General Admission. Visit [sharkchampions.org.au/fantastical-sharks-and-rays](http://sharkchampions.org.au/fantastical-sharks-and-rays)





### Blasting Threats

### Summer Against Seismic

**Together we're making waves against seismic blasting.**

Approval of two destructive offshore seismic blasting projects were stalled after AMCS supporters made an immense 36,000 submissions opposing the plans.

Despite these delays, the threats remain and we will be ready to challenge further proposals. The TGS/SLB - Schlumberger seismic blasting proposal included 45,000 km<sup>2</sup> of ocean - including Commonwealth marine parks and endangered blue whale feeding areas. Following our strong campaign, the proposed area was reduced to 31,500 km<sup>2</sup>, but it is still threatening the Zeehan Marine Park.

#### What is seismic blasting?

Seismic blasting is used by fossil fuel industry to survey below the ocean floor. Powerful air guns fire loud blasts of compressed air every 10 to 15 seconds, 24 hours a day. Sound waves louder than an atomic bomb, penetrate deep into the seabed and can be devastating to marine life.

Your continued support ensures we can keep fighting against offshore oil and gas expansion.

#### Abolish Seismic Blasting

We need an end to Special Prospecting Authority (SPA) seismic blasting permits to protect our marine life. The Australian Government can take action to abolish these quick, reckless and harmful seismic blasting permits. Take action and tell the government to stop seismic blasting at [amcs.org.au/StopSPA](https://amcs.org.au/StopSPA)

**Thank you to our Victorian supporters who made our summer against seismic a huge success.**

Thousands turned up to oppose seismic blasting between Victoria and Tasmania. There were rallies and community events across the state, including the record-breaking paddle out against seismic blasting in Torquay.

Similarly, St. Kilda Festival saw people introduced to Balee, the blue whale mascot. Balee made quite the splash and drew attention to the blue whale habitats that are among those under threat from seismic blasting proposals. A Melbourne-based volunteer Action Group is now also established. This provides a space for ocean lovers to connect and take action against future offshore oil and gas projects. The Group meets monthly and is open to all members of the community.

Thank you to supporters everywhere who have sent a strong message to Australia's politicians and the oil and gas industry - we don't want seismic blasting!



Balee the blue whale, St Kilda Festival 2024 in Melbourne @ AMCS  
Apollo Bay seismic blasting rally, 16 Jan 2024 @ OCEAN - Olwyn Coastal



### Global Plastics Treaty

### National Plastic Targets

**Plastics Campaign Manager, Cip Hamilton, attended the fourth round of negotiations for a legally binding Global Plastics Treaty.**

Plastic pollution is a global crisis for nature that urgently needs a global response.

Thanks to your support, AMCS advocated for our oceans at the fourth round of global plastics treaty negotiations, held in Ottawa, Canada in April 2024.

As negotiations progress, the need to push back against the growing presence of fossil fuel and chemical companies is becoming more urgent.

In good news - Australia recognises that the full lifecycle of plastics needs to be addressed to end plastic pollution.

Significant work is still required to finalise the treaty text. With your support, AMCS will continue to push for a strong treaty to end plastic pollution.



**Together we've sent a message that cannot be ignored - we need government action to reduce plastic pollution at the source.**

Over 20,000 ocean-loving Australians have put their names on our petition calling for a National Plastic Reduction Target.

The petition was handed to Federal Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek at our Coogee Beach clean-up in NSW on 14 June. Thank you to those supporters who joined us at Coogee Beach for this significant occasion, and to everyone across the country who signed the petition.

An estimated 145,000 tonnes of plastic enters the environment in Australia each year. Plastic packaging is one of the worst offenders - soft plastics, food packaging and beverage containers make up almost nearly 70% of all plastics found by Clean Up Australia volunteers. The message is clear - Australians want clean and thriving oceans, free from plastic pollution. That means cutting plastic packaging 20% by 2030.

#### Global Plastics Treaty

The global plastics treaty will be a legally binding agreement. It is a unique opportunity for urgent worldwide action to end plastic pollution. Read more about the Treaty, visit [amcs.org.au/INC4](https://amcs.org.au/INC4)



To help us reduce plastic at the source, sign up to become a Plastic Investigator for our supermarket packaging audit: [amcs.org.au/Investigate24](https://amcs.org.au/Investigate24)



Beach Clean, Sydney 2024 @ AMCS, INSET, Plastic Petition Handover 2024 with Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek @ AMCS





## GoodFish Anniversary

### AMCS Sustainable Seafood GoodFish Guide celebrates its 20th Anniversary.

Flashback to 20 years ago when Facebook and Gmail were launched, "Friends" aired its final episode, the summer Olympics were in Greece, and the AMCS Sustainable Seafood Guide was born!

The Guide was launched in 2004 as an easy to use resource for supporters who wanted to eat seafood that was sustainable and had a low impact on the environment.

Then and now:

- 👄 Starting with just over 30 seafood options the guide now has more than 240.
- 👄 The first app was developed in 2011 – a revamped version was re-launched in 2023.
- 👄 The program expanded with the launch of GoodFish work with restaurant chefs in 2019, now working with more than 100 chefs and business owners across the country.

The program continues to expand with a retail program launching this year partnering with mid-tier retailers around the country, making it easier for Australians to access environmentally sustainable seafood to cook at home.

### Happy 20th anniversary GoodFish!



GoodFish empowers consumers to make informed choices about seafood consumption and its impact on ocean ecosystems and wildlife. Visit [goodfish.org.au](http://goodfish.org.au)

## Ravishing Radish

### GoodFish partners Radish Events are food experts and waste warriors on a mission to combine sustainability with deliciousness.

Henri Turra created Radish Events to create high quality food experiences, with an ethical and sustainable approach to sourcing, cooking and service.

Radish Events is about enjoying good food and special moments with your favourite humans, whilst keeping their impact on the planet to a minimum.

Henri says *"we believe business is a force for good. This means we are committed to doing things differently, thinking creatively and finding more responsible ways to deliver deliciousness."*

This team of food experts are waste warriors on a mission to zero waste, currently offsetting 100% of their CO2 emissions. They are the first catering company in Australia to earn a BCorp certification – an official certification that a business is meeting high standards of verified performance, accountability, and transparency.

Zero-waste-driven chefs like Joseph (pictured) make bold, vibrant, wholesome dishes that people want to eat. Joseph says they *"respect the seasons, source the good stuff, use every part of it – no waste here! – and cook delicious food that people want to eat."*

GoodFish partners Radish Events created two special sustainable seafood dishes for our AMCS supporters. See page 17.

## Chargrilled Port Phillip Bay Snapper

### Ingredients:

2 fillets of Port Phillip Bay Snapper, skin on	3 cloves of garlic, thinly sliced
Extra virgin olive oil	1 lemon
2 tablespoons of brined capers, rinsed	1/3 cup white wine (dry)
	Salt and Pepper

### Method:

1. Pat the fish fillets dry with paper towels. Season both sides of the fillets generously with salt and pepper.
2. Heat a stainless steel skillet over medium heat for several minutes until evenly hot. Sprinkle a few drops of water into pan to test it is hot enough. If they form little beads that dance around before evaporating, it's ready! You can also use a cast iron pan – heat this up until very hot on medium heat.
3. Add enough olive oil to generously coat the bottom of the pan. Let it heat up until it shimmers but not smoking, less than a minute. Place the fish fillets in the skillet, skin-side down. Immediately press the fillets down gently with a spatula or fish weight, as they will naturally tend to contract. Let them cook undisturbed for about 3–4 minutes so the skin forms a crust and release naturally from the pan. After 3–4 minutes, gently shake the pan or use a spatula to see if the fish releases easily. If it does, flip the fillets carefully, cooking for 2–3 minutes on the other side, or until the fish is cooked through and flakes easily with a fork. Remove the fillets from the skillet and place them on a pre-warm plate. Tip: If the fish sticks when you try to flip it, give it more time; it will release naturally once it has formed a good crust.
4. Zest the lemon and set the zest aside.
5. In the same skillet, add another tablespoon of olive oil. Add the garlic and fry until light golden brown. This will go pretty quickly so keep an eye on it. Add the capers and cook for about 1–2 minutes, being careful not to burn the garlic – reduce the heat if needed.
6. Add the wine to the capers and the garlic. Be cautious as it may sizzle and steam. Stir to combine and scrape up any browned bits from the bottom of the pan. Allow to simmer and reduce by half, which should take about 2–3 minutes.
7. Squeeze the juice of the lemon into the skillet and simmer for another 1–2 minutes. Stir in the lemon zest and season with salt and pepper to taste – you might not need much salt because the capers are already salty. Remove from heat, test for acidity. Add more olive oil if too acidic, or more lemon juice if too rich.
8. Place the fish on serving plates, skin-side up to maintain the crispiness. Spoon the lemon-caper and white wine sauce over the fish fillets, ensuring an even distribution of capers and lemon zest. Enjoy!

## Zero Waste Fish Croquettes

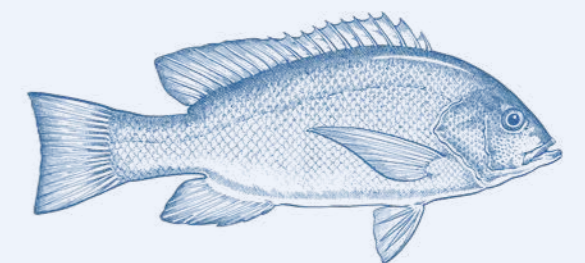
In a zero waste approach to fish, we use the fish loins for certain dishes, and every other bit of meat in the fish is used in this recipe. Bones are also used for stock.

### Ingredients:

300g picked fish meat (from heads, frames and belly), previously cooked	1/2 bunch Spring Onion, chopped
400g potatoes desiree, skin on and diced into large cubes	1 teaspoon paprika
1 bunch parsley, chopped	2 eggs
1 white onion, finely diced	Bread crumbs
	Frying oil
	Salt
	Pepper

### Method:

1. Cook the potatoes: place the diced potatoes in a pot of salted cold water and bring to a boil. Cook until the potatoes are fork tender, about 15 minutes. Drain and mash the potatoes until smooth. Set aside to cool.
2. Prepare the croquette mixture: in a large bowl, combine the mashed potatoes, flaked fish, chopped onion, beaten egg, chopped parsley and spring onion, salt, black pepper, paprika. Mix until all ingredients are well incorporated.
3. Shape the croquettes: with your hands, shape the mixture into small oval-shaped croquettes.
4. Crumb the croquettes: in one bowl, beat the remaining egg, and in another put the bread crumbs. Dip the croquettes first in the egg mixture, then in the bread crumbs. Crumb all of them before frying.
5. Fry the croquettes: Heat enough vegetable oil in a large pot to cover at least half of a croquette, over medium heat. Once the oil is hot, add the croquettes in batches, being careful not to overcrowd the pan. Fry for about 3–4 minutes on each side, or until golden brown and crispy. Remove the croquettes from the skillet and drain on paper towels.
6. We like to serve it with our house fermented chilli oil. It also goes well with aioli or just a lemon wedge! (makes 15–20 units)







### Orange Roughy Red Alert

Three years ago, we stopped the Australian Orange Roughy Fishery from getting certification to greenwash this endangered fish as a sustainable seafood choice.

Once again this fishery is trying to gain Marine Stewardship Council certification, using recently lowered standards that allow the fishing of endangered species.

The orange roughy, found on magnificent coral sea mounts in the deep ocean, can live for over 250 years. It is endangered and suffered from overfishing and subsequent collapse in the 1990s. This major Australian fishery isn't predicted to recover to truly sustainable target levels until after 2070.

This is the second time this fishery has sought certification from the MSC. It was our objection with WWF Australia pointing to their endangered species status that stopped the first certification from going ahead.

But MSC's rules have changed to allow official federal conservation status to be ignored, and decide for themselves whether a fishery's target is endangered or not. **This could make it harder to protect our orange roughy but we need to ensure that no one puts endangered species on our seafood shopping lists.**

#### FLASHBACK: Killer Gillnets Banned GBR

**Killer commercial gillnets were banned on the Great Barrier Reef last year.** The Queensland government announced their plans to phase out gillnets. **Our Reef will be entirely gillnet free in June 2027.**

### Double Net-Free Wins

Dual back-to-back gillnet bans are a win for our northern marine life.

Commercial gillnets are indiscriminate killers that entangle and drown a range of animals. These fishing nets can be up to 600m long.

The Gulf of Carpentaria's threatened sawfish, turtles and dugongs have won a much-needed reprieve following the Queensland government's implementation of five new net-free zones.

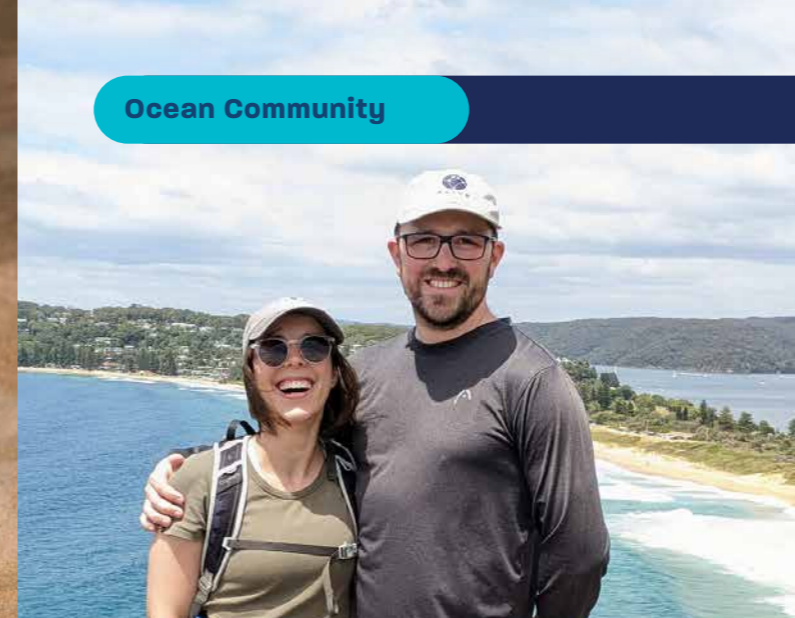
The net-free zones include coastal waters from the top of Cape York down to Weipa, and around Mornington Island through to the Northern Territory border.

AMCS is proud to have supported First Nations representatives from Kowanyama to travel to Brisbane and advocate for the needs of their sea country and their community.

These net-free zones will provide a vital safehaven for some of the world's last remaining viable populations of sawfish and hawksbill and green turtles that migrate between the Great Barrier Reef and the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Next door in the Northern Territory, we worked with the Territory community to secure bipartisan support for the phasing out of gillnets in the NT commercial barramundi fishery by 2028.

Both of these incredible victories happened because of the support of ocean lovers like you. Thank you.



### Make it o-fish-ial

Congratulations to Charlotte and Robin who were married on 13 April!

Instead of wedding gifts, Charlotte and Robin marked this momentous occasion by collecting donations to protect our oceans. They have raised a staggering \$3,440! We send our deepest thanks and well wishes to Charlotte and Robin.

Charlotte is an ecologist and Robin grew up sailing. The two met in early 2021, connecting through a mutual love of the outdoors. Soon after, they began snorkelling and scuba diving, where they now spend as much time as they can.

*"For us, protecting the oceans by supporting AMCS is supporting a core foundation of our relationship, and ensuring others will enjoy weird little fish and big silly fish for many generations."*

Because of supporters like Charlotte and Robin, we can continue critical work to protect our oceans for generations to come.



Charlotte and Robin

#### Community Fundraising

Thank you to our ocean-loving community. If you would like to raise funds to protect our oceans visit [amcs.org.au/fundraising-ideas](https://amcs.org.au/fundraising-ideas) or email [supporter@amcs.org.au](mailto:supporter@amcs.org.au) [amcs.org.au/fundraising-ideas](https://amcs.org.au/fundraising-ideas)

### Great Ocean Walk

Thank you to our ocean-loving team, who are taking on the Great Ocean Walk 100KM Challenge.

Participants are making their preparations for the trek of a lifetime.

Together with AMCS Oil and Gas Campaigner, Dr. Kim Riskas, the team will spend seven days traversing some of Australia's most dramatic scenery. From sheer limestone cliffs to deserted beaches and mountain ash forests.

With every step of the 105 km journey from Apollo Bay to the landmark Twelve Apostles, participants are raising vital funds to protect the very same coastlines they walk.

Anne shares with us some of her thoughts ahead of the trip. "I'm really looking forward to breathing salty air again! I'm also looking forward to meeting and sharing the journey with like-minded people who are positive about the potential for us to act to protect the oceans from the threats they are facing."

We send our deepest thanks and best wishes to the group who set off on 13 October.

#### Support Our Challengers

Show your support for our ocean-lovers as they embark on the 100KM challenge and raise critical funds for our precious marine environments. Visit [amcs.org.au/GOWTeam](https://amcs.org.au/GOWTeam)



Great Ocean Walk, Twelve Apostles @ superjoseph





### Meet Ralph

**Brisbane-born artist Ralph Wilson comes from five generations of ocean lovers.**

Ralph has supported AMCS, and its forerunner the Littoral Society, for decades. Of his love of the sea, Ralph writes *"...after most of a lifetime spent on or near the water, the obsession has only deepened and the sea and the sky continue to cast their spell with a power that will tolerate nothing less than my undiluted attention... I can't imagine my future without the sea and attempting to make some sort of record of its wonders."*

Ralph wants his memory and his spirit to side there, and because it means so much for him, he wants to make sure it is still there for generations.

As an Ocean Legacy member, Ralph has included AMCS in his Will. He wants the relationship between people and the wild places to stay. He says, *"It's not a case of why should you leave a bequest, it's more the case of, why wouldn't you?"*

#### Leave an Ocean Legacy



How would you like to be remembered? For your sense of adventure? Your love of the ocean? Your determination to make a difference? What would be the one thing you would like to pass on to the next generation? By giving a gift in your Will, you will hand on a wilder, safer, more diverse and beautiful ocean planet for future generations. Visit [amcs.org.au/bequest](http://amcs.org.au/bequest) or email [bequests@amcs.org.au](mailto:bequests@amcs.org.au)



### Cat's Fish Tale

**Cat's been an AMCS Sea Guardian for about 13 years.**

Dr Cat Dorey is a passionate nature lover with over 20 years of experience in environmental and social justice advocacy and activism. She's been campaigning for healthy oceans since 2003.

She says *"I feel a very strong connection to nature, especially all the weird and wonderful ocean critters! I get a lot of joy floating in the water with my snorkel, mask and fins, searching for octopuses, seahorses and other elusive species."*

Cat was also a staff member at AMCS for 3 years, where she led our Marine Parks team and then our Fair Catch campaign for strong import rules to keep unsustainable and unethical seafood out of Australia.

*"I'm proud to be an AMCS supporter. I've seen first hand the passion, expertise and integrity of AMCS and I know the oceans are in good hands."*

#### Become a Sea Guardian today!



Thanks to the amazing support of our amazing Sea Guardians like Dr Cat Dorey, we can continue to defend our iconic reefs, beautiful oceans and the precious marine life that depend on them. You too can become an advocate and guardian for our oceans as an AMCS Sea Guardian with an affordable monthly gift. Visit [amcs.org.au/SeaGuardians](http://amcs.org.au/SeaGuardians)

Cat Dorey

## Underwater Magic

**Marelux has generously partnered with AMCS by supporting marine conservation with stunning high quality ocean imagery.**



Underwater photographer, Jun Ouyang (pictured), established Marelux to address the unique challenges of underwater photography. Committed to providing state-of-the-art camera housings, Marelux enables photographers to capture the breathtaking wonders of the underwater realm with unparalleled precision and quality.

Jun says, *"Marelux boasts a raft of ocean-loving underwater photographers, global ambassadors and influencers. I'm proud these brilliant photographers are donating their imagery to support marine conservation."*

We thank Jun and his team, and we look forward to sharing spectacular images with you, such as Vanessa Mignon's breathtaking shot of a four metre young humpback whale in mid breach (above).

#### Amazing Oceans

Bring our incredible oceans into your home and office with the 2025 Amazing Oceans Calendar! This gorgeous calendar will be in stock in October while stocks last! Pre-order your copy today, visit [amcs.org.au/calendar](http://amcs.org.au/calendar)



Humpback whale, Tonga, 2023 © Vanessa Mignon (Taken under supervision and licensed)

### Meet Vanessa

Marelux Marine Conservation liaison officer and long-time AMCS contributor, Vanessa Mignon, is an award winning wildlife photographer based in Australia.



*"The reason I moved to Australia is because I fell in love with its incredible wildlife, both on land and under the surface. Sadly our oceans face so many challenges: seismic blasting, plastic pollution, climate change, shark culling. I feel strongly about supporting AMCS in their constant work to highlight the risks, educate, provide solutions and help ensure that our oceans are protected"*

Vanessa was awarded the 2015 IFAW Animal Action Award – Marine photographer of the year in recognition for her work and efforts to promote conservation.

#### Snap into Action

Do you have marine themed photography, video or art you would like to donate to support marine conservation? Become an AMCS Artist Ambassador.

If you would like to contribute your marine photographs to help AMCS communicate the wonder of our oceans and what we are striving to protect – please contact: [photos@amcs.org.au](mailto:photos@amcs.org.au)





## Sunnyside Up!

### The Sunnyside Foundation is making GoodFish fintastic.

The Sunnyside Foundation trustees want thriving oceans with larger, healthier fish populations, reduced bycatch of threatened species, and reduced impacts from harmful fishing practices.

Foundation Director, Lisa Ring, says, "Fish stocks are declining and other species are suffering as a result. To preserve them, Australians should know where their seafood is coming from and be encouraged to make educated choices. The GoodFish Program stood out to us as it drives improvements in our fisheries, helping eliminate harmful fishing practices, and encouraging world's best practice."

Lisa adds, "Ongoing support for organisations and programs like GoodFish will go a long way to ensuring future generations can continue to enjoy our vast array of amazing marine life, whether it be out on the water or in our world-famous restaurants."

Our GoodFish team is grateful for the Foundation's ongoing and enthusiastic support. (read more about GoodFish on page 15).

### Make Waves

If you are a funder who is interested in making a significant impact by supporting AMCS' work and would like receive more information, please contact [philanthropy@amcs.org.au](mailto:philanthropy@amcs.org.au)

## An Ironclad Commitment

### Ironclad's reclaimed ghost net knives are saving our seas.

In 2019, Joe Carter, Kate Slavin and Levi Slavin founded Ironclad Co. Their aim was to create kitchenware to last

for generations, and reduce millions of Teflon pans being sent to landfill every year, leaching harmful chemicals into our soil.

This year, Ironclad launched Ghost Knives, incorporating handles made from reclaimed ghost nets salvaged from the sea. Every knife sold will pull a further 1kg of nets out of the waters, with a percentage of each sale donated to AMCS in the process.

Ironclad aren't just supporting AMCS to tick a box - last month they joined a swelling team of businesses advocating for stronger federal environmental protection laws, supporting the Places You Love campaign to sign the Business Open Letter for Nature.

We look forward to some exciting collaborations with Ironclad and others in the next year.



Ironclad Founders Levi Slavin, Joe Carter and Kate Slavin @ Ironclad.com  
 INSERT: Ghost Knife - Boning Knife @ Ironclad.com

Deb on Great Barrier Reef, 2024.

## Take the Plunge

### Diveplanit Travel dive into marine conservation.

AMCS Business Supporter Diveplanit was founded with the objective to inspire more people to explore and fall in love with the world underwater, discover its vulnerabilities and learn what they can do to help protect it.

Diveplanit's Deborah Dickson-Smith says, "The Great Barrier Reef was my first love, as beautiful now as it was 30 years ago. And I'm still in love, but there are now far fewer big fish, and more threats.

That's why I encourage everyone to take their own plunge underwater, and to get behind the AMCS Campaigns, particularly those raising awareness about shark culling, shark nets and the shark fin trade."

**We'd like to thank Diveplanit for their unwavering support over the years, and in particular this year for donating a dive-based trip to Papua New Guinea to help us recruit more ocean-lovers to support marine conservation.**

money, they demonstrate that businesses can simultaneously flourish and nourish healthy oceans. Want to become an AMCS business ally? Visit [amcs.org.au/CorporatePartner](http://amcs.org.au/CorporatePartner)

## A Scuba-Dooper Time!

### Go into the draw to win a 7-Night Dive Holiday for two at Walindi Plantation Resort - including flights.

To show our gratitude for your support, we're giving away the dive trip of a lifetime to Papua New Guinea - one of the world's leading dive destinations.

This incredible holiday to paradise for two, worth \$8,340 AUD, includes:

- Return economy airfares with Air Niugini from Brisbane/Cairns to Hoskins, Kimbe Bay
- 7 nights accommodation in a Bungalow at Walindi Plantation Resort
- 3 gourmet meals daily
- 5 days diving
- Return airport transfers.

The winners will be drawn on Monday 2 September 2024.

**Thank you kindly to Diveplanit, Air Niugini and Walindi Plantation Resort for donating this fin-tastic prize to support and nurture our AMCS ocean-loving community.**

### Enter To Win!

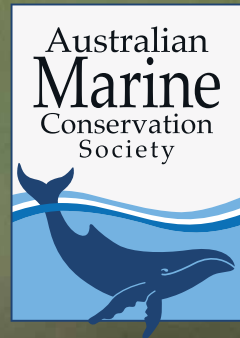
Subscribe to our e-news to enter! Don't wait - competition closes 31 August 2024. Subject to Terms and Conditions. Visit [amcs.org.au/Diveln](http://amcs.org.au/Diveln)



Nathan and Lisa from Sunnyside

Walindi-snorkelling, Walindi Resort, © Franco Banfi.





Closeup of an adult male Southern Elephant Seal, Macquarie Island, Australia © Agami Photo Agency

# Thank you for your support

The Australian Marine Conservation Society is the voice for Australia's ocean wildlife. We have defended Australia's oceans since 1965. Thank you for helping to make Australia's coasts and oceans healthy and thriving for future generations.

- Stay in touch** @australianmarine @AustMarConsSoc @marineconservation.au
- Contact Us** 07 3846 6777 marineconservation.org.au
- amcs@amcs.org.au PO Box 5815 West End QLD 4101

*The Australian Marine Conservation Society acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of this land and sea country, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge that this land and sea was and always will be Aboriginal land and sea.*



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