

## Library

---

**From:** Parks and Wildlife Service <no-reply@newsletters.dbca.wa.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 10 April 2024 3:45 PM  
**To:** Library  
**Subject:** Ngari Capes Newsletter - Autumn 2024

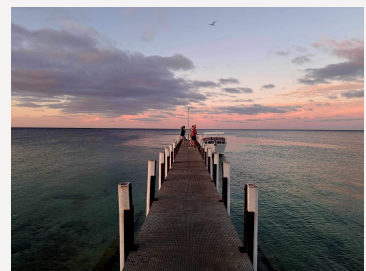


Issue 21 - Autumn 2024

## Welcome to the 21st issue of *Ngari Capes Marine Park News*

### In this issue:

- [Marine park update](#)
- [Monitoring the biodiversity of intertidal limestone reefs in the Ngari Capes](#)
- [Wish to report an incident on the water?](#)
- [Introducing senior marine ranger Josh Reagan](#)
- [Stranded dolphin rescued in Dunsborough](#)
- [Creature feature – a Hamelin Bay local, the smooth stingray](#)
- [Keeping connected and up to date](#)



**Image right:** Abbey Boat Ramp. Credit: Kev Johnson

## Marine park update

*By Parks and Wildlife Service, Blackwood*

Welcome to our latest edition of the Ngari Capes Marine Park newsletter.

Welcome to Salmon Season.

It's been a busy few weeks for the Ngari Capes Marine Park (NCMP) team, with activities focused on monitoring, compliance, and wildlife interaction education. Given the busy time of year, the marine team was fortunate enough to be bolstered with trainee rangers from two jointly managed Kimberley marine parks, Bardi Jawi and Mayala as part of our ranger exchange program. The rangers helped the marine team to complete compliance and education patrols both on the water and land.



Since the last newsletter, the team has welcomed two new members! Josh Reagan has joined the team in the newly established role of senior marine ranger. Making the transition from the Department of Transport (DoT) to DBCA, Josh has been working alongside the marine team for several years and has seamlessly integrated himself. We are very happy to have him onboard. You can read more about Josh and his background below.

We have also recently welcomed Tanika Shalders, who is acting in the role of research scientist for Ngari Capes. Tanika has hit the ground running in the last few weeks, completing a number of annual NCMP scientific monitoring projects. This includes intertidal monitoring, seagrass monitoring (transect diving), and finfish monitoring (Stereo BRUVs).

The team bid a heartfelt farewell to marine ranger David Lierich. David has been an integral part of the NCMP team for a number of years. His departure leaves a void that will be keenly felt by all who had the privilege of working alongside him. We wish him all the best in his future endeavours.



**Top right:** senior marine ranger Josh Reagan on DoT vessel. **Above left:** Mayala and Bardi Jawi Marine Park trainee rangers on vessel compliance patrol. **Above right:** Joint patrol with DPIRD officers in NCMP.

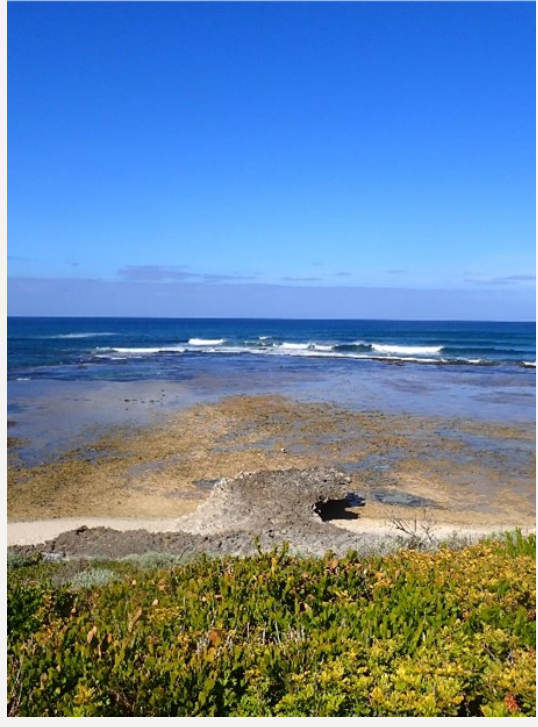
## Monitoring the biodiversity of intertidal limestone reefs in the Ngari Capes

*By Marine Science Program (MSP), Kensington*

At the very start of the year, DBCA researchers and regional staff teamed up with volunteers to survey intertidal reefs along the Ngari Capes Marine Park.

From bubble snails to living fossils, these diverse reefs harbour a huge diversity of life. Over 65 species have been recorded as part of this survey, and the resulting data will build on previous monitoring work, allowing to estimate changes in reef health.





**Images above:** Images by research scientist Dr Inês Leal (MSP): bubble snail *Hydatina physis* (top right), bubble snail *Micromelo undatus* (centre left), Gnarabup limestone platform (centre right), living fossil *Campanile symbolicum* (bottom left), DBCA volunteer monitoring on limestone platform at low tide (bottom right).

The accessibility of intertidal reefs often attracts a variety of recreational uses (e.g. collecting, fishing, reef-walking). This accessibility and relatively high use make these reefs among the most vulnerable habitats to human degradation.

These surveys are part of DBCA's statewide research and monitoring programs that assist in managing our marine parks and reserves and threatened marine fauna. Such work will help to ensure that WA's biologically diverse intertidal reefs will remain a source of wonder for generations to come.



**Above:** Image by Research Scientist Dr Inês Leal (MSP):spider crab *Huenia australis*

Community involvement through volunteering plays a huge role in the success of intertidal reef monitoring programs, and we thank all volunteers involved for helping us to manage and protect these reefs!

---

## Wish to report an incident on the water?

*By the Department of Transport*

DoT invites you to be our eyes on the water with 'Incident Reporting'. The [Deckee app](#) makes it easy with three simple steps.

- Open Deckee, hold your finger on the home screen, and drop a pin.
- Select the appropriate option from the menu
- Follow the prompts





## Introducing senior marine ranger Josh Reagan

*By Parks and Wildlife Service, Josh Reagan*

I grew up in the South West and spent many school holidays on or around the water in Geographe and Flinders Bay. After finishing high school, I moved to Perth to study a Bachelor of Science in Marine Science at Murdoch University. Then after graduating I travelled around Australia and settled for a while in Cairns to live and work on the Great Barrier Reef.

I later returned to Perth and worked with an environmental consultancy for eight years on a variety of marine monitoring programs across WA, predominantly in the field, for clients in the oil and gas industry. The projects I worked on took me to some remote areas of WA which I loved the opportunity to explore both on and under the water. I was lucky to be involved in turtle monitoring programs working on islands off the Kimberley coast and invasive pest surveys diving on the Exmouth Navy Pier.

In 2007 I began work on the Gorgon Project, living on a vessel based off Barrow Island working on the baseline marine monitoring program. I later travelled to Burra, South Australia for two months and completed my commercial diver training, continuing to work on the Gorgon Project as a scientific diver, where I monitored the effects during the dredging and post dredging on the coral health, water quality, and finfish populations in the surrounding waters.

In 2013 my wife and I moved to the South West for a lifestyle change and to start a family. I took a role with the Department of Transport working in Marine Safety where I gained considerable vessel experience in the local waters operating and maintaining a fleet of vessels. I worked alongside the Ngari Capes team on joint patrols and was always interested in the variety of work the team were involved in.

I've been at DBCA just over a month and am loving the role. Each day is different, offering new challenges and learning opportunities and the variety of work I've been involved in already has been fantastic. I've got two young daughters that I love to share my love of the outdoors with, especially the local marine environment of the Ngari Capes Marine Park. We live in a beautiful part of the world and to be able to work here and contribute to the conservation of the unique environment for future generations is exciting.



**Above:** Josh Reagan on a vessel patrol in Geographe Bay.

---

## Stranded dolphin rescued in Dunsborough

*By Parks and Wildlife Service, Blackwood*

Amidst the April school holidays, while conducting vessel patrols, marine rangers Glen and Eden were called out to respond to a stranded dolphin off Dunsborough Beach. Prompted by a concerned member of the public, who reported the stranded dolphin to Wildcare Helpline (9474 9055), the sub-adult bottlenose dolphin was located in knee-deep water. After an assessment from marine rangers and the Perth Zoo vet, the rescue team launched a coordinated effort involving various agencies, specialized equipment, and experienced individuals in refloating the dolphin.

The dolphin was re-floated and released back into deeper water. Thanks to the dedication of everyone involved, the dolphin was seen swimming away safely towards Eagle Bay. The marine team extends gratitude to the fellow departmental staff for their invaluable assistance: Amber Lines, Blake Nagy, Paul Brown, Tom Osborn, and John Edwards. As well as the support from Perth Zoo vets and Water Police Command.



**Above:** Dolphin in sling with rescue crew (clockwise from the top): Paul Brown, Amber Lines, Blake Nagy, Tom Osborn, Eden Harris. Credit: Glen Sutton.





**Above:** Dolphin partially stranded on Dunsborough beach credit: Eden Harris.

---

## **Creature feature – a Hamelin Bay local, the smooth stingray**

*By Parks and Wildlife Service, Blackwood*

The Ngari Capes Marine Park is home to the largest stingray in the world – the smooth stingray (*Dasyatis brevicaudata*). The largest specimen ever found weighed a whopping 350 kilograms and was 4.3 metres long and 2.1 metres wide. It is often mistaken for the black stingray (*Dasyatis thetidis*), which is found in waters north of Fremantle.

The smooth stingray has a grey-brown body featuring distinctive white freckle-like pores on either side of its head and across the base of its fins. Its short tail contains two venomous barbs of different size. As a defence strategy, the smooth stingray is able to curl its tail like a scorpion to display the barbs to predators.

The smooth stingray is perfectly adapted to cruising over long distances and foraging along the sea bed. Like the platypus and the shark, the smooth stingray has electrical sensors around its mouth (called ampullae of Lorenzini) which can detect the natural electrical fields of potential prey. Favourite foods include molluscs, crustaceans and the

occasional small fish. These are crushed with its powerful ventrally-placed mouth.

Even newborn rays are equipped with all the adaptations required for survival. Like most rays, smooth stingrays are viviparous. This means that the young are hatched in utero and embryos are nourished internally from the yolk and a fatty, milk-like substance produced by the mother. They are born live when they are around 36 centimetres in diameter in litters of up to 10. After birth, these 'mini adults' receive no parental care and must fend for themselves.



**Above:** Smooth Stingray (credit: Blair Ranford)

If you've ever visited Hamelin Bay near Augusta, where rays and skates are totally protected, you may have had the pleasure of viewing these gentle giants up close. More curious and playful than aggressive, smooth stingrays will enter the shallow waters to interact with swimmers and divers. This behaviour began in the 1950s when commercial fishers cleaned their fish and discarded the guts in the water. When cleaning tables were introduced, the stingrays came in even closer, scrounging for a meal. These days fishers are reminded to dispose of their offal appropriately as dumped fish offal can attract birds, sharks, and impact other beach users.

Did you know? Fish offal is great for the garden, so next time you're out fishing remember to take a container for the offal so you can use it to fertilise your garden.

Remember rays are wild animals and can be dangerous if provoked. Please look but don't touch and please do not feed the locals!

What's in a name?

Scientific names can often be a mouthful and *Dasyatis brevicaudata* is no exception. But what does it mean?

- *Dasyatis* – from the Greek words 'dasys' meaning rough or dense and 'atus' meaning tail.
- *Brevicaudata* – from the Latin words 'brevis' meaning short and 'cauda' meaning tail.

The smooth stingray is also referred to as the short-tailed stingray and the Noongar word for stingray is Bamba (bam-bar)

## Keeping connected and up to date

Understanding the designated zones and their respective activities is crucial for a safe and enjoyable visit to Ngari Capes Marine Park. Since April 2020, these zones have been in place to facilitate various recreational and commercial activities while prioritizing conservation efforts. Catering to fishers, scuba divers, snorkelers, surfers, and kayakers, the zones promote sustainability and establish sanctuary areas for undisturbed appreciation of the marine environment.

To stay informed and connected, utilise resources such as the Deckee app, Marine Parks app (available for Apple devices), and the FishCatch WA app, alongside engaging with Recfishwest for insights tailored to recreational fishing. These apps provide comprehensive information on marine park regulations, enhancing visitor experiences while promoting responsible enjoyment of Western Australia's coastal treasures.



### Marine Parks WA App (Apple only):

Discover Western Australia's diverse marine parks, including the Commonwealth's national marine parks, spanning Camden Sound to Walpole. This app provides comprehensive details on each park and 72 marine wildlife species. With a 'where am I?' feature, users can access zone-specific activity information, including fishing, offline.

Get the App: <https://apps.apple.com/au/app/marine-parks-wa/id1138213788>



### FishCatch WA app:

Recreational fishers in Western Australia, exploring the waters from Kalbarri to Augusta, are invited to utilize the innovative FishCatchWA™ tool to document their demersal scalefish catches voluntarily. Efficiently log your demersal catches and access valuable insights while actively contributing to scientific research. Seamlessly access the FishCatchWA™ tool through the ServiceWA app or download it now for immediate use.

App for Apple: <https://apps.apple.com/au/app/servicewa/id1599181775>

App for

Android: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=au.gov.wa.digital.service.mobile.servicewa.citizen&hl=en&gl=US>

### Recfishwest App:



Access all WA fishing rules, fish ID, GPS marine park info, and safety locations offline! High-quality illustrations and details on hundreds of species available on this free app. Stay updated on fishing seasons, bag limits, and easily identify catches with Recfishwest's three-step fish ID.

App for Apple: <https://apps.apple.com/au/app/recfishwest/id1103630115>

App for

Android: [https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.redi.rfw.production&hl=en\\_AU&gl=US&pli=1](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.redi.rfw.production&hl=en_AU&gl=US&pli=1)



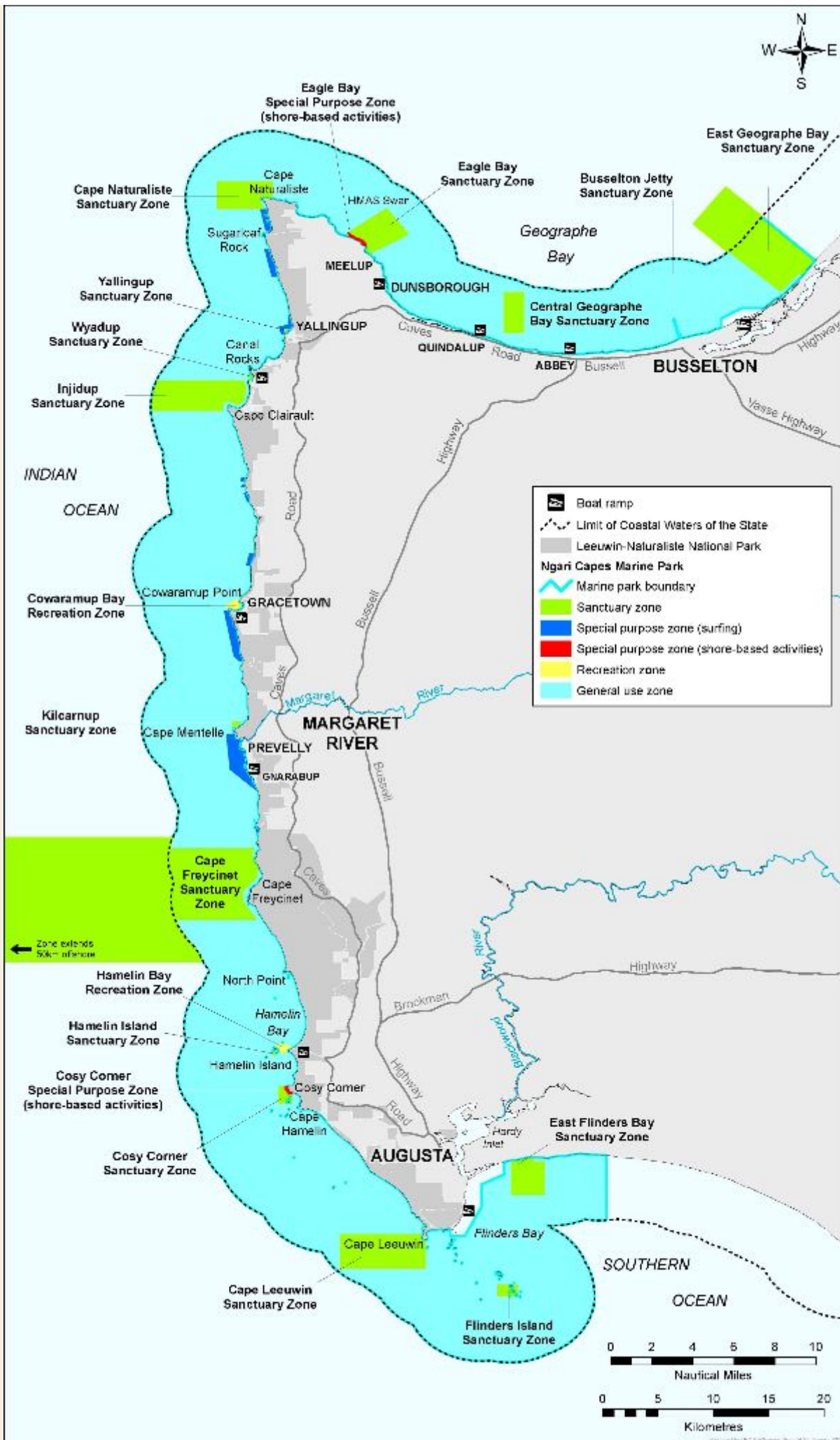
### **Deckee Boating App:**

DECKEE is a comprehensive boating assistant with features like on-water location sharing, automated logbooks, marine weather, safety alerts, and more, ensuring confident navigation for users. It offers automatic on-water detection, global member visibility, risk forecasting, activity logging, local knowledge heatmaps, interactive chart info, and worldwide vessel tracking, catering to both novice and experienced boaters.


App for Apple: <https://apps.apple.com/au/app/deckee-boating/id1402262696>




App for Android:

[https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.deckee.app&hl=en\\_AU&gl=US](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.deckee.app&hl=en_AU&gl=US)



**Above:** Map of Ngari Capes Marine Park showing zones plus national park zones in adjacent Australian marine parks.



*Copyright © 2024 Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, All rights reserved.*  
You are receiving this email because you opted in at our website, or signed up via a form.

**Our mailing address is:**  
Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions  
Locked Bag 104  
Bentley Delivery Centre  
Perth, WA 6983  
Australia

[Add us to your address book](#)

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).