

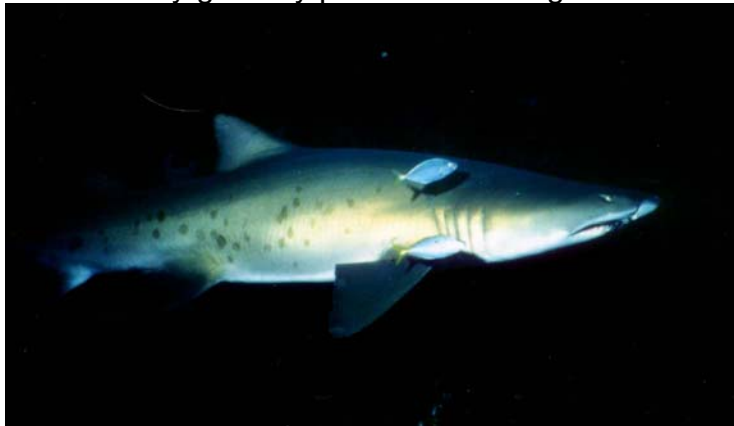
Newsletter – July 2005

NEW PAGE

Whilst at the BOOT in January on the Sharkproject stand in Dusseldorf Germany I met Mica a member and avid shark conservationist and had the offer to design my home page. After BOOT Mica got married to Joerg and off to Mauritius on honeymoon, so now it is Mr and Mrs J Eckermann. Mica's page concept really got me excited and I realised how dead my page had become. Along the route I needed a French, Spanish and German page translation of my new script. I have been very lucky with the support and friendship of 2004 clients, Christophe and Karine Boulineau as Karine did my French page. Julia Figa who was a magnet for sharks on one of our tours and became known as "bait ball" did my Spanish page. Mica has translated my German page. Jane and I sincerely thank you for all you have done for us and the friendship given. It just means you will have to come to SA again so we can show you our appreciation.

SHARK DIVING

Protea Banks: Once again shark diving has been great on Protea Banks. However the bull sharks have moved off and it is the spotted ragged tooth shark time (Raggy). The raggy are well seen at the Northern Pinnacle caves. Normally when they arrive they settle down after a week or so of seeing divers on the edge of the caves. However this year we have another operator who we know has been into the caves as the sharks have been chased out. The bubbles leaking through the sand- stone tell the story. The intruders are photographers who must get their shot and obviously get very poor dive briefings from their operators.



The sardines are coming through on their annual "Sardine Run" and the main sharks are accordingly following, hence the easily visible sharks are the raggies. The season has also started the annual humpback whale migration and minke whales have been seen. The albatrosses, petrels and cape gannets are back.

The tiger sharks are fed in a MPA and the operators are not being charged for breaking the MPA regulations. Most of the tiger sharks are tagged – why? The Sarah Baartman the Marine Coastal Management new patrol-vessel, stopped and checked the operator feeding sharks, skipper ticket and boat papers and they were not arrested for breaking MPA regulations. Unfortunately it is a disaster that will happen as the tiger sharks are being condition to divers by reward. So far the video evidence of touch and taste has been a diver's cylinder, diver's fins, camera and surface marker buoy reel. On one occasion the camera was grabbed and as it was attached to the owner he was towed with force for 10-metres as the tiger swam away with the camera before it let go.



We had with Roland Mauz an incredible two dives and a snorkel dive, behind the backline way past Ramsgate. We dived where the cape gannet were diving for sardines. We settled individually on the sea bed. I held my breath for as long as possible so that the bubbles did not chase the sardines away.



The way the silver mass would part endlessly and punctuated by large bronze whaler sharks, that were in hyped mode but at the same time very relaxed as they would give us frontal check outs from one metre and hyped lateral scans at two metres. A very long boat ride but had ideal conditions and only just enough petrol.

Aliwal Shoal:

In June 2004 the Aliwal Shoal was finally declared a Marine Protected Area. Still the Marine Coastal Management consultants have not come out with a fee structure and fee management plan

I ran a marine environmental course and did all the diving on Aliwal Shoal. We had one dive blown out but made up the lost dive on another day. The group were all friends from the Toti Social Divers Club and most had small digital cameras. Each dive was to search with the right skills for species diversity. This was made even more memorable, as over breakfast, after the dive or at lectures I was able to help identify what was not known but all could participate with the captured images.

Wildlife safaris:

We went to Tala and the drought is evident as the hippo dam was so low. The re introduced disease free buffalo remained illusive, but the horse riding to see the animals great.

Talks:

David Rattray historian and motivational speaker gave a talk at the Durban Country Club on Jan Smuts. Jan Smuts's elder brother died and the impoverished parents of Jan Smuts could only afford to send one child to school and at the age of 12 Jan Smuts went to school. In an incredibly short time he

passed all his exams and got a scholarship to university, where he got all the top academic awards. One category he wanted to pass required Greek, which he learnt in a week and passed. Jan Smuts was a powerful force to bring peace between the English and Afrikaner. The German Commander of German East Africa General Von Lettow-Vorbeck was unbeaten in the 1st World War and as an outspoken voice against Hitler, was destitute as an old man and it was Jan Smuts who came to the rescue and looked after him in his old age. Jan Smuts was a personal house guest of the British Royal family and took part in writing the now UN Charter. An amazing South African.

Dr. Nick King the Director of the Endangered Wildlife Trust, gave a talk on the 6th Extinction. Our planet is currently undergoing the so-called “Sixth Extinction” of species, a catastrophic loss of biodiversity only equalled by such cataclysmic events in the geographical past as giant meteorite strikes. The big difference is that this sixth major extinction is entirely human-induced – a burgeoning human population, habitat destruction, over-exploitation and consumption of resources and human induced climate change are all contributing to rapidly increasing loss of species, with potentially disastrous consequences.

The rate of species extinction is faster than species evolution. Human induced climate change is cutting out the rain forests and global warming and so on. Reality is that the snows and ice on Mount Kilimanjaro will have vanished in 15-years which means no water for the rivers taking water to the Serengeti. In 70-years there will only be two places in the world where there remains a coral reef. The rate at which sharks, the ocean regulators, are killed will see the demise of the ocean and this could kick in within the next 10 to 12-years.

I give a talk at “Thursday Thoughts” at Sea World in the uShaka Marine Theme Park on August the 4th on Shark the Animal.

Guiding

Certificated Courses or as a step for assessment as an Underwater Marine & or Shark Diving Guide:

- **Shark Diving**
- **Advanced Shark Diving**
- **Marine Environmental**

THETA/SAQA National Qualifications Assessment to qualify you as an:

- ***Underwater Marine & or Shark Diving Guide***
- ***Assessment Provision through AQNcc***

**ASSESSMENT PREPARATION for:
Unit Std. TG38 Underwater Marine Guide and or Shark
Diving Guide &**

Statutory Unit Std. TG01: “Create a Guided Experience for Customers”

Those who apply to be assessed, knowing they have the generic knowledge for an underwater marine guiding and or shark diving guiding will need to:

- Register via Andy Cobb Eco Diving for National Qualifications assessment, as an underwater marine guide or shark diving guide.
- Provide a fully annotated Portfolio of Evidence to be used for recognition of prior learning (RPL)
- Supply a completed assignment for Unit Standard TG01.
- Sit the appropriate generic exam and pass with 80%.

This sets two paths:

1. Pass generic exam with over 80% and continue on to the practical assessment. Being an adult educational-programme, coaching is permitted to achieve the final 100% pass mark.
2. An initial mark of less than 80% will require the learner to undergo training leading to a full assessment. Training can be done with any trainer of your choice.

1. TRAINING PREPARATION for ASSESSMENT Unit Std. TG38 Underwater Marine Guide and or Shark Diving Guide”

Those who apply to be an underwater marine guide and or shark diving guiding will need to:

- Register via Andy Cobb Eco Diving with AQN the Provider, as an underwater marine guide or shark diving guide.
- Provide a fully accredited and verified record of prior learning (RPL)
- Supply a completed plan for a “Guided Experience for Customers”, as per Unit Standards TG01.

TRAINING

Options;

- Complete the requirements for a “Guided Experience for Customers”, as per Unit Standards TG01.
- Underwater marine guiding Unit Std. TG38.
 1. 6-hours lectures with power point
 2. 3-dives for practical assessment.
 3. Simulated exercises
 4. Role Plays.
 5. Sign codes of conduct

- 6. Familiarise with images for assessment
- Shark dive guiding unit Std. TG38.
 1. 6-hours lectures with power point
 2. 3-dives for practical assessment.
 3. Simulated exercises
 4. Role Plays
 5. Sign codes of conduct
 6. Familiarise with images for assessment
- Sit the appropriate generic exam and pass with 100%.

ASSESSMENT

1. Pass the final exam will require 100%. Being an adult programme coaching is permitted.
2. Fail the exam will require to a repeat till 100% achieved
3. Practical assessment where "not yet competent" will need to be repeat until "competent".

Full assessment final cost R1500

Statutory Unit Std. TGOI to “Create a Guided Experience for Customers

This is a major assignment and it is expected that you will put a lot of effort into it. Rushed work not properly researched will not be accepted and the information is to be delivered in a neat easily readable manner that has been well thought out and presented in logical format.

For this assignment you are to research your designated Guiding environment. That is, the area within which you will travel with your clients. If you are unsure of any of this please ask your trainer to discuss and guide you on this projects scope.

This assignment may be presented in any format you wish. The assignment should relate to one trip planned by you, and any work presented should be something that you could use for your own company. Don't do planning you would never use. Use this as a possible real trip you could market for your company.

- The assignment must include the following:
- Describe the trip, geological formations if applicable, vegetation types, access restrictions.
- Provide maps that you have produced of the area/trip and its surrounds detailing points of interest.
- Identify the type of person who would use the trip. (Client profile).
- Identify sites that may be of interest to visitors that are easily accessed on foot or in the visitor's own car in the immediate area. (Half to one hour drive

limit) Describe alternative venues or attractions to compensate for closures or cancellations of your guided operation. Describe supplementary attractions to enhance your guided itinerary.

- Conduct research into aspects of local history and culture that are especially significant integrating these into the wider historical context where relevant. What can you tell clients about the history or first explorers in this area?
- Detail appropriate behavior based on protocol at the site & personal security advice in the areas visited.
- Draw up a detailed itinerary for your activity for a tour lasting one full day, or multi day should you prefer.
- Describe how you will find out your clients needs and limitations before running this activity. Show the actual means you will use. (Questions, forms etc)
- Produce some sort of advert for your activity chosen above. This must be of good quality and suitable for public use.
- Detail the administration required for this activity.
 1. Indemnities
 2. application forms
 3. feedback forms
 4. Kit lists for the individual and group
- Present examples of these with your assignment. They must be good quality and suitable for actual use.
- Include a brief on the weather that can be generally expected on the trip and include the predicted weather for the trip. (You choose simulated dates for the trip)
- Detail any catering arrangements, including menu, quantities etc.
- Detail any other technical support needed such as drivers, cooks etc if applicable
- Cost this activity detailing
 1. The cost to the client
 2. The various costs to yourself
 3. The profit you will make
- Detail the Health and Safety requirements for this activity.

This process leads to a qualification. Once assessed and deemed competent, the originals of all documents of assessment and fully annotated RPL's will be moderated by AQNcc and if competent will be forwarded to THETA for verification.



The Sharkproject this year is "Stop Sales" and more can be gleaned from www.sharkproject.co.za.

SHARK COURSES



- **Sharkschool:** The course is on PowerPoint and format with input from Dr. Erich Ritter and covers shark the animal and behaviour with excellent photo's and film clips. Plus the endangerment of shark its consequences and how to get involved with the Sharkproject.

Dates: Protea Check dates available.
Aliwal 11/9-17/9

- **Advanced Shark Certificated Diving Course:** (NAUI and SSI) covers shark behaviour, shark attack, shark conservation and the understanding why the oceans are threatened with the demise of Shark the Regulator. Further an understanding of shark the animal to enjoy them mid water. The course diving is done on the Protea Banks and divers need to be qualified for 30-metre depths. This course is essential for any would be "Shark Diving Guides" for generic knowledge. Part of the assessment of a Shark Diving Guide is a summative assessment on shark generic knowledge accrued from my Shark Diving course and Advanced Shark Diving course.

Dates: Sept 5-7 Nov 25-27

- **Shark Diving Certificated Course:** (NAUI and SSI) covers the myth fears phobias about sharks, the biology of sharks and specific knowledge of the spotted ragged toothed shark. The diving is done on Aliwal Shoal and a shark dissection is included providing an embryo is available from the Natal Sharks Board.

Dates: Weekends mid July – end Nov

OTHER COURSES

I also run ***Wreck Diving Courses*** with a section on marine archaeology as I worked four seasons on excavating a Portuguese War ship that sunk in the 1600's off Mombasa Island.

Marine Environmental courses. As a marine diving guide you will be assessed on your generic knowledge of the marine habitat and its flag ship species and for those intending to a Marine Diving Guide for safe, sustainable and informative interactions with marine flora and fauna this course will be a core factor. We do require a minimum of 4 persons to run these courses.

Andrew and Jane Cobb.

July 2005