



**GUIDING**  
**UNDERWATER MARINE AND SHARK DIVING**

In March 2007, I assessed Johann Boshoff the Editor of the Divestyle magazine, Roland Mauz of African Dive adventures and Graeme Grant of Ocean Africa and will be complying with the SA Tourism Amendment Act. All had a three day course before the assessment

**SHARKPROJECT**

I have submitted for agenda approval to stop tiger shark feeding in the Aliwal Shoal MPA.

<b>Title</b>	<b>Tiger Shark Feeding in the Aliwal Shoal MPA</b>
<b>Description</b>	Tiger shark feeding has become an event that is now marketed worldwide, to come to Aliwal Shoal MPA in order to participate. The charge is R900 a head. Cheap for a shark aperitif!
<b>Strategic Nature</b>	Feeding wild animals or conditioning wild animals to humans by reward, always leads to a disaster. In this case bad news for the person eaten, bad news for tourism South Africa and KZN, bad news for a so called Aliwal Shoal MPA and <i>especially bad news for the shark</i> . What is also amazing is that feeding fish and sharks in an MPA was banned in the ASF management plan and currently there is zero compliance by KZN Wildlife or MCM, in this respect?
<b>Additional Detail</b>	<p><b>History:</b> Fish and shark feeding has been banned in Florida after a document called the Global Interactive Marine Experience Council, funded by PADI tried litigation against Florida Wildlife, in favour of shark feeding. The document was flawed as it still allowed hand, pole and spear feeding of white and black tip reef shark. Leading Shark Behavioural Scientists have contacted MCM advising them to stop shark feeding, especially tiger.</p> <p>One of the unique features of the tiger shark it that it does not have a set behaviour pattern; hence the protocol set at Walkers Kay for feeding sharks could not be applied.</p> <p><b>ISSUE:</b> Sharks have two Behaviour groupings: Normal: Normal interactive behaviour means that the shark's assessment process start outside the shark's outer kinosphere, which is for all sharks on ram respiration 10-metres. Hyped behaviour means that the shark's assessment process knows there is food and starts from the inner kinosphere, which could be one to two meters away.</p> <p><b>Understanding:</b> Sharks assessment is always progressive, hearing – kilometres, smell as far as a strong the current takes it, lateral line (Vibrations and pressure change) 100's of meters, sight 10's of meters, muscle flashing meters, electro aura scan a meter, touch and finally taste. Sharks can range and know direction from sound and lateral line and bounce a trace to source. Shark's can cross reference all senses and put a value to it. Normal behaviour, humans are not part of the food chain. Hyped behaviour is due to an attractant, bearing in mind a frightened diver is an attractant, and hyped assessment will be by sight, muscle flashing, electro aura scan touch and taste. Sharks understand body language and can go through a</p>

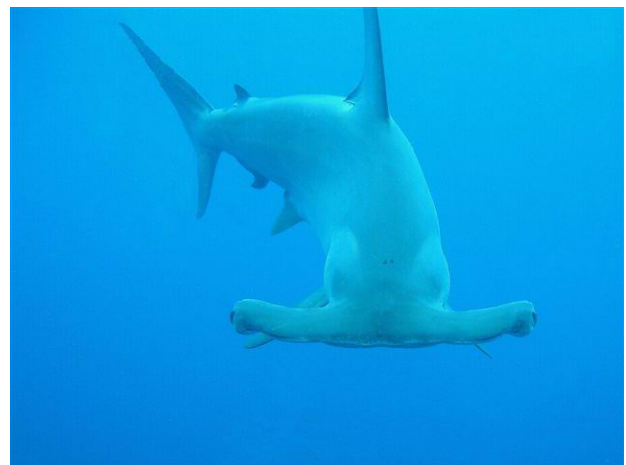
	spooking display to provoke reaction. If they get it they know they have potential prey. <b>Present Status:</b> Many divers have been bumped, even 3 times in a dive as the final touch before tasting. I have current video clips showing the final taste part of the evaluation applied to Divers fins, diver's compressed air cylinder, surface marker buoy reel, cameras and on two occasions the shark has grabbed the camera and towed at speed the operator. The taste only has to be on an arm or a leg and then the feed will be a well noted occasion worldwide in the press
<b>Recommendation</b>	Ban shark and fish feeding in all South African MPA's and anywhere in the SA EEZ.
<b>Time Frame</b>	10 Minutes
<b>Contact Person</b>	Andrew C. R. Cobb 031 916 4239 <andycobb@iafrica.com>

We have had a full days workshop on Tiger shark feeding in a MPA with all concerned, with Marine and Coastal Management. The workshop resulted in the following:

- ❑ No feeding
- ❑ No baiting
- ❑ Only the use of a bait drum permitted.
- ❑ MCM will only register 2 out of the 11 operators to attract sharks with a bait drum, but with a scientist aboard.

The bun fight starts as to who is selected.

In the meantime I have been assessing a baited dive with sharks out of the MPA, as there must be no connection between the divers and the bait. We had an incredible experience with hyped scalloped hammer head sharks and pictures by Roland Mauz.



**Quiet:**

I played representative rugby until I was an old man of 39-years. I was the second most capped for East Africa and later years for Kenya.

I saw a lot of the world playing rugby and had great mates and some unique experiences. We were made Freeman of Houston and at the Houston space centre were able to talk to the astronaut in orbit in Sky Lab One., how ever there was a penalty. I wore out my knees. November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2006, I had a 100% knee replacement on both knees. Once out of hospital Jane would take me to sets of stairs which I would go up and down using crutches in the morning and again in the afternoon. In a week I got rid of the crutches, but had a walking stick for emergencies. I was driving and back into the gym in 3-weeks, diving again in

February and running Underwater Marine and shark Diving Guide courses at the beginning of March and a two week tour with 2-dives a day, without evening thinking of my knees. The ladies tell me I have a nice walk and I am now taller than my beloved wife Jane and able to exert male dominance once again! Jane is delighted I am land mobile again as I can join her and not sit it out at flea markets or when we went to Didima in the Berg to check it out for my eldest daughter's wedding in October 2007, I was able to go walking.

My quiet time has been well used as I have finished my book and I have had it read and just finishing off corrections before sending to the Editor. The book will be published in German and English, on my road to the secret life of the spotted ragged-toothed shark.

## **May Away**

April the 28<sup>th</sup> we fly to England for my nephew's wedding, onto Canada, where I give a talk for 10-days back to England for a few days and onto Bahrain to spend a few days with our eldest daughter Vanessa and her fiancé' Barend. We will be in touch with a lap top and the internet. We are back into South Africa on May the 31<sup>st</sup>.

## **A LOW LOW & Gale Force Winds**



We had at the equinox and a low low off shore together with heavy winds. The combination created 12-meter waves off Richards Bay and 9-meter waves on the south coast of KZN. This is our local sea pool. The pool is away from the sea, as it is perched on top of some rocks and the landward side, was washed away to be an island detached from the shore.

The heavy seas scoured all the beaches and removed all the sand from the areas on the reef that are normally sandy. Fortunately no real accountable damage. However the scouring exposed a dead whales rib bones, which I have at home in fresh water to leach out years of ingrained salt.

## The London BSAC Club SA Tour Shark Diving



I have just finished a two week tour with the London BSAC club and we had some great shark dives, with scalloped hammer head, bull sharks, black tip sharks, one whale shark, 2-meter black tail shark and leopard shark. Our best encounters were on the pinnacles in southern Mozambique and at castle with black tip sharks at Castle reef off Scotburg. All the pictures were kindly supplied and taken by Sandra Thomas on tour.



We had a great variety of sharks, fish and marine animals. The climax of the tour was staying at O Lar Do Ouro Guest House where we were all spoilt by hospitality and cuisine, added to that diving with sharks.



## **Underwater Marine and Shark Diving Guides 11/06 to 17/06/2007**

**June the 11<sup>th</sup> Monday 2007**, for three days is an underwater marine and shark diving course and the next three days to being assessed as an underwater marine and shark diving, finishing on **Sunday the 17<sup>th</sup> 2007**. The whole week is long hours a very intensive. The statutory level one site guide at level one has by SAQA been raised to level 4.

**The whole process starts with registering with my Provider R400.** The registration form can be sent digitally. Once registered and I have your student number, I will send via Email, the student work book and assignment. The assignment is a major project and needs time to research and complete. For underwater Marine and shark diving guides the statutory level one site guide has been pushed up to level four by SAQA. Time is also needed to collect all your Records of Prior learning and submit certified copies, together with:

- ❑ Certified copy of your I/D or legitimacy of being in SA.
- ❑ If you want a language option to your guide recognition, a verified copy of a letter endorsing compliance from the appropriate Embassy.
- ❑ Maybe you are already a level one site guide still requires the assignment to be completed and you will be assessed at level four.
- ❑ The course and assessment is an intensive week with long hours. To have done your assignment, in which logbook is you daily diary entry of events and changes before hand. Further include an accident (imaginary) in your assignment, do your diary entry and write the accident report. It saves time which you do not have in the week. Completing your assignment will be a distinct advantage to complete your assessment
- ❑ Four passport size photos.
- ❑ Certified copy of your education levels.
- ❑ Certified copy of your in date Dive Master or Instructor status.
- ❑ Certified copy of your PDP if you are a driver guide.
- ❑ Certified copy of your Public indemnity insurance.
- ❑ Certified copy of your in date 1<sup>st</sup> aid and CPR.

Once assessed the papers are passed onto my Provider for *Moderation*. After moderation you will be notified and able to register as a temporary guide with you local Tourism Board at R240 registration fee. In the meantime your moderated papers are sent to THETA for verification. Once Verified you will have full guide status.

I am not marketing the fact that I am a Trainer and Assessor for Underwater Marine and or Shark Diving Guides but by reading this and complying with SA law will save you a R10000 fine if you operate a dive resort or dive charter boat business in SA. My Provider is AQN see [www.aqn.co.za](http://www.aqn.co.za) for details and verification.

## **SHARK College**

### **Shark College**



I have combined my Advanced Shark Course, Shark Diving Guide knowledge to run as Shark College Courses.

The presentation is using Power Point and inclusive of video clips on behaviour.

## **OTHER COURSES – NAUI & SSI.**

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.



I still do a **Shark Diving Course** as before on Aliwal Shoal during the Raggy season. We do require a minimum of 4 persons to run these courses.

**Andrew and Jane Cobb.**  
April 2007