

April 1975

FLOTSAM



F L O T S A M

AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY UNDERWATER CLUB NEWSLETTER

APRIL, 1975

***** Our cover was designed by Avril Watson.

***** Thanks to those of you who sent in cover designs, watch this space next issue --- we have decided to use more than one design, so you may win yourself a free trip yet.

An Amended list of S.L.A.V.E.S. on the Committee.

President:	Ron Vautier	phone 768 913
Secretary:	Richard Willan	phone POP 86711
Treasurer:	Malcolm Francis	phone 547 082
Zombies:	Tony Harrison.....Gear Officer	phone 370 681
	Gillian Peart..... Food & Social Organiser	
	John Catton.....Training	phone 687 064
	Paul Eaglen.....Trips	phone 466 316
	Richard Burton.....Scientific & Sports Rep.	phone 493 564
	Shirley Curmins.....Publicity Officer	phone 74 740 ext 9728

(N.B. Please refrain from accosting above personnel when and if you encounter them on your travels.)

FRESHERS WEEKEND AT LEIGH

Matheson's Bay and Goat Island saw an invasion of approx. twenty AUUC bodies on 15th and 16th March. The aim of this weekend dive was to initiate the Freshers in snorkel diving, and Saturday morning the experienced divers took groups of would-be snorkel divers out from Matheson's Bay, where visibility was very reasonable, and much progress was made. We lunched and loafed about for a while, after having expertly set up the campsite. Some of us returned to the sea at Goat Island in the afternoon; the tide was low at this stage and the water very clear.

It had been a thoroughly enjoyable day, the weather had stayed fine for us, no-one complained about the dinner (least of all the dog!) and as nothing nutty had happened up to then it was fair enough that most of us forgot to bring out own plates and utensils!

Six of our braver elements braved the elements and went for a night dive. This was the first night dive for two of them, and we understand it was a very worthwhile experience.

As the fire smouldered into the night, the rain began, the winds blew up - requiring some adjustment to the tents - by morning there was little point in remaining for Sunday diving as the water was murky and the sea swell was heavy. Apologies to those of you who may have turned up for Sunday snorkel diving and found no-one there!

***** WATCH THE NOTICE BOARD FOR NEWS OF ANOTHER DIVING TRIP COMING UP SOON.....

FISHING INFORMATION FOR AMATEUR OR PLEASURE FISHERMEN (NORTH ISLAND)

(For full particulars your attention is directed to regulations which are available at small cost from Government Bookshop at Auckland.)

FISH SIZES

The minimum lengths of fish that may be taken are set out below. Fish smaller than these must be returned immediately to the eater alive and unharmed.

Lemon sole, square flounder (or dab), and warehou	9"
Other flatfish, snapper, trevally, red cod, tarakihi	10"
Moki and mullet	11"
Blue Cod	12"
Butterfish	13"
Kingfish	16"

SHELLFISH

(a) Not more than the following number of shell fish of the species listed may be taken, brought ashore, conveyed, be on board or landed from any boat, or be in possession on any one day.

One person -

Paua	Scallops	Mussels	Tuatua	Pipis	Cockles
10	20	50	150	150	150

Five or more persons associated together -

Paua	Scallops	Mussels	Tuatua	Pipis	Cockles
50	100	250	750	750	750

(b) Scallops - Scallops must not be less than 4" across the greatest diameter of the shell and must not be opened below high water mark. Scallops may not be taken during the closed season, which extends from 1 March to 31 July each year.

(c) Oysters - Are protected and must not be interfered with in any way.

(d) Underwater breathing apparatus - No person may use underwater breathing apparatus while taking paua or mussels or have paua or mussels on board any boat or vehicle in or on which there is any underwater breathing apparatus. The term "underwater breathing apparatus" does not include snorkle.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information on fishing, including whitebaiting and lobster fishing may be obtained from the local Inspector of Fisheries, or on enquiry to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, P.O. Box 1254, Auckland.

INFORMATION FOR ROCK LOBSTER (CRAYFISH) FISHERMEN

(Copies of the Rock Lobster Fishing Regulations are available at small cost from Government Bookshop, Auckland.)

Throughout these notes the words "lobster" and "crayfish" have the same meaning.

1. LENGTH - Lobster tails are measured (a) In a middle straight line along the ventral (or belly) surface with the tail laid flat.



- (b) Measurement is from the after side of the first calcified bar, to the tip of the telson. The points of measurement are as illustrated left.

2. It is unlawful to sell any lobster taken by amateur, or pleasure, fishermen.

3. PROTECTED LOBSTERS - Certain classes of lobster are protected under the regulations and must be returned immediately to the water alive and unharmed. These are:

- (a) Female lobsters carrying external eggs, and all lobsters which are in the soft shell stage.
- (b) Packhorse lobsters (also known as packhorse or green crayfish) with tails less than $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length.
- (c) Spiny lobsters (also known as spiny or red crayfish) with tails less than 6 inches in length.

4. QUOTAS - The daily limit catch is:

- (a) Six lobsters per person, or
- (b) A total of thirty lobsters where five or more persons are associated together.

FURTHER INFORMATION can be obtained from your local Inspector of Fisheries, otherwise contact the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, P.O. Box 1254, Auckland.

***** A further reminder for those of you who squandered some of your ill-gotten gains on the AUUC fees - Receipts and membership cards can be collected from Room 145, Thomas Building (the room with the notice "Knock loudly, we are deep sleepers")!

***** An Amendment to the AUUC Diving Regulations, as decided at the SGM held on 10 March:

8. All divers intending to dive to depths greater than 60 feet or attempting repetitive dives on SCUBA

***** Remember, unless you specifically asked for FLOTSAM to be mailed to you, you have to pick up your copy from the noticeboard. (You probably won't remember to do this until you've read this reminder, so you'd better go to the noticeboard right now and get your copy.!!)

- Did you get all that??!

NATURE NOTES

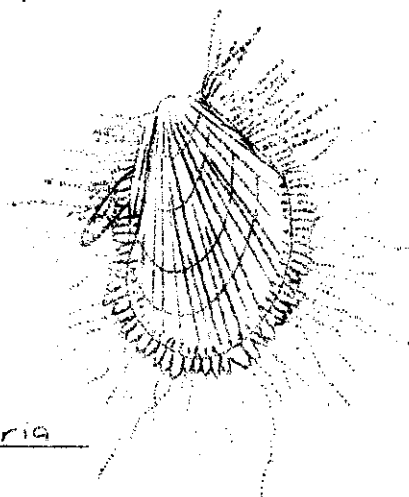
Two particularly interesting species of marine animals have been encountered on recent diving trips, here their appearance and habits are explained in some detail to enable newer divers to recognize and identify them.

1. Nest building file shell (Limaria orientalis)

This is a species of bivalve, closely related to scallops and fan shells. The delicate white shells can reach 3cm. long, they curve gracefully to one side, gaping open at either end of the hinge line. The outside of the two valves is ornamented with numerous fine raised lines, the interior is smooth. The live animal is a deep orange and when disturbed it extends numerous long sticky tentacles all round, some of these tentacles can be cast off to leave a sticky mat on the fingers of a would-be observer. It can swim for short distances using an inefficient clapping style like that of a scallop.

This species is normally found on the undersides of stones resting within a nest which it has constructed for itself. The agile foot secretes many fine threads which are attached to small pieces of shell and stone, incorporating the whole mass into a protective cylindrical nest, open at both ends to allow the passage of a water current, which the file shell filters for its food.

This very interesting file shell was first recorded in New Zealand a mere three years ago, having been introduced accidentally from Japan or South Australia. It is now not uncommon from the Bay of Islands to the Coromandel Peninsula, including many of the offshore islands. This species has been seen on recent AUUC dives at Tiritiri Island, the Noises and Leigh.



2. A photo-positive ragworm (Perinereis camiguinoides)

On the night dive off Goat Island, Leigh, no sooner had Ron and I reached the sandy bottom than we were surrounded by swarms of orange-pink wriggling worms attracted to the lights of our underwater torches, like moths around a flame. At times they were so numerous they obscured the beam completely.

Ragworms are one group of marine polychaete worms, which are normally not swimmers, but spend their lives creeping between the holdfasts of seaweeds, in cracks and under stones. This species reaches about 3cm. in length, it is normally pale yellow and brown banded across each segment.

Just with the tropical palolo worm, at certain seasons, the local ragworms become sexually mature, the posterior half of the body swells and becomes coloured with stored reproductive products. The normal locomotory organs are greatly enlarged into a series of paddles for swimming, the eyes are also enlarged and the animal becomes very sensitive to changes in light intensity. On a single night or over a series, all the members of this species swim upwards to perform a synchronous spawning ritual. Spawning often occurs with a predictable lunar periodicity. The light intensity of our torches must have been sufficient to trigger this swarming response.

R. C. Willan

POOR KNIGHTS TRIP

The 22nd and 23rd March saw large numbers of AUUC divers descending on the Tutukaka - Matapouri area, all eager for a good dive at the Poor Knights. For a large proportion of the divers, it was their first trip to the fabled Knights and all kept looking to the sky for fear of rain clouds and signs of wind. So many worried faces must have had some effect on the elements as the two days remained fine and calm, with water visibility ranging to 60 feet.

In all, some 33 divers boarded the faithful 'Matira' during the two days, and each disembarked promising themselves that it wouldn't be too long before they returned - \$5 or no \$5!

The Saturday divers went to Rikoriko Cave and Middle Arch, while the Sunday party dived at Landing Bay Pinnacle and Middle Arch. School fish were as prolific as always, and the leatherjackets and parrotfish performed their usual tasks of accompanying the divers on their tour of inspection. The odd nibble at mask, fingers or camera reminded the black-suited, awkward strangers that the conducted tour had to be paid for with a couple of broken sea-eggs which the fish would gladly eat out of the diver's hand.

The encrusting fauna was, as usual, bewildering enough to give a case of narcs at any depth and the occasional Fire-brick Starfish, Long-spined Diadema sea-urchin or pairs of Banded Coral Shrimps added to the list of animals most of the divers had not seen before.

Once again the skipper, Fred Coterill, proved that he is one of the best available and it was largely due to his knowledge of the Islands and weather conditions that the weekend was so successful.

Ken Grange.

***** May we remind you of the AUUC "library" contained in the Biological Sciences Library, Thomas Building.

They have about 60 books, and subscribe to two magazines -

DIVE v.1(1959/1960)-

SKINDIVER v.8(1959)-

***** A report on the Matai Bay trip and the Photo-Competition held at Wellington will appear in the next issue of FLOTSAM.

***** Would anyone like to buy a beautiful AUUC sticker, we have plenty for sale. They can be obtained from Malcolm Francis (who is feeling a bit 'stuck-up' about it all and would like to get rid of as many as possible)

ALL FOR NOW.....

P.S ---one awful error folks! At the top of page 3 under FISH SIZES, please read 'water' for 'eater' - er.. sorry about that..all other errors are not intended to bear any resemblance to any person living or dead..

Shirley.

Thankyou for your attention...****