



Seagrass-Watch E-Bulletin

14 August 2008

Seagrass-Watch's electronic news service, providing marine and coastal news of international and national interest. Abbreviated articles are presented with links to their source. Seagrass-Watch HQ recommends that readers exercise their own skill and care with respect to their use of the information in this bulletin and that readers carefully evaluate the accuracy, currency, completeness and relevance of the material in the bulletin for their purposes. Seagrass-Watch welcomes feedback on the bulletins, and you are free to distribute it amongst your own networks.

Happy Birthday Seagrass-Watch!

March 2008 marked Seagrass-Watch's 10th year. On behalf of Seagrass-Watch HQ we would like to say thank you for your support.

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Please note: links to sources were active on date of publication. Some sources remove links periodically.

NEWS

Batemans Marine Park welcomes survey results (Narooma, New South Wales, Australia)

13 August 2008, Narooma News

The manager of the Batemans Marine Park has welcomed the results of a survey which has shown good support for the marine park amongst visitors to Batemans Bay. Dr Brendan Kelaher said the survey was an indication the marine park was having a positive impact on tourism. He said there was the park had a vital role to play in attracting holidaymakers to the area.

“The survey conducted by the Nielsen Company on behalf of Eurobodalla Coast Tourism and Tourism Australia earlier this year, revealed 69 per cent of all visitors and 75 per cent of all first time visitors either fully supported, or saw some value in the Batemans Marine Park. Only two per cent of those people surveyed were against the park.

“We’re looking forward to beginning a monitoring program on the health of seagrass in many of the marine park estuaries over the summer months. “We’ve also recently completed the first of many underwater visual censuses of rocky reefs within the park and are busy analysing these results.” Mr Kelaher said he was constantly amazed at the high diversity of marine life within the park and said public awareness and support for the park would continue to grow.

Full story and source: <http://narooma.yourguide.com.au/news/local/news/general/batemans-marine-park-welcomes-survey-results/1243490.aspx>

Commissioners approve funding for seagrass study (Sanibel, FL, USA)

13 August 2008, Captiva Current

On Tuesday, Lee County Commissioners approved a \$10,000 grant to fund the Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation's (SCCF) seagrass and water quality study in a 15-mile stretch between Shell Point and just west of Franklin's Lock in the Caloosahatchee. Dr. Richard Bartleson, a research scientist in SCCF's marine laboratory, has been conducting seagrass research for the past 20 years.

"What we're trying to do is understand the influence of water quality on seagrass growth," Bartleson said, adding that the excess water being carried down the Caloosahatchee from Lake Okeechobee is adversely affecting seagrass growth. "We are starting by planting seagrasses in six locations, which we will periodically monitor," he added. "We hope the plants will spread from the planted areas by vegetative reproduction and seed dispersal."

According to Bartleson, widgeon grass — or *Ruppia maritima* — will be used in the study because it is a fast-growing, colonizing species and euryhaline, meaning that it can tolerate a wide salinity range. The project involves planting small plots of seagrass in caged bare areas, monitoring the plants and water quality, and using the data to calibrate a seagrass simulation model. The model, made up from a set of differential equations, can be used to predict seagrass responses to any potential water management changes or to show how water quality affected seagrass beds in the past.

Full story and source: <http://www.captivacurrent.com/news/articles.asp?articleID=3956>

The Ocean Foundation and Seagrass Recovery Come Together to Repair Seagrass Scars Along America's Coasts Repair (USA)

01 August 2008, MarketWatch

The Ocean Foundation and Seagrass Recovery today announced the launch of the Restore-A-Scar program aimed at restoring seagrass scars found off the coasts of Florida, New York, California and Washington. "We are honored to be selected by The Ocean Foundation as the service provider for the restoration of damaged seagrass meadows as part of this vital project -- the first of its kind," said Jeff Beggins, president and CEO of Seagrass Recovery. "Not only are seagrass meadows critically important to marine life and the overall health of our nation's coastlines, but play an important role in the battle against climate change. We are excited about giving Americans around the country the opportunity to help maintain and preserve this important part of our natural environment.

"The Restore-A-Scar program, www.RestoreAScar.org, uses individual and corporate donations to proactively restore sections of damaged seagrass beds. Donations made to the program are used to restore sections of propeller scars and boat groundings found in seagrass beds with donations being made in increments of \$10, providing restoration at \$10 per square foot.

"The Ocean Foundation is pleased to work alongside Seagrass Recovery as we repair seagrass beds so that marine life is able to continue to thrive and prosper," said Mark Spalding, president of The Ocean Foundation. To restore the seagrass scars, a highly successful and proprietary technology of Seagrass Recovery consisting of biodegradable sediment tubes will be placed inside the seagrass scar to halt expansion of the damage and allow seagrass to re-colonize in an estimated 18-24 months. It is important to note that one acre of seagrass typically sequesters over 7.84 metric tons of carbon per year, which equals the carbon dioxide emissions from an automobile traveling over 3,500 miles.

Full story and source: <http://www.marketwatch.com/news/story/ocean-foundation-seagrass-recovery-come/story.aspx?guid=%7BB58A3259-43D6-413C-8C4D-551558CB9CCF%7D&dist=hppr>

Helping to bring out secrets of seagrass (Sarasota, FL, USA)

29 July 2008, Sarasota Herald-Tribune

SARASOTA COUNTY - Twice a year, Amanda Dominguez slips flippers on her feet, straps goggles on her face and floats every single bay in Sarasota in search of seagrass. It is a lot of work to map out the county's seagrass beds by swimming, so Dominguez, an environmental specialist for Sarasota County Water Resources, could use a little help. From Lemon Bay to Sarasota Bay, anyone with a boat can volunteer time to peer into the water and record what they see.

In preparation for the mapping, Dominguez splashed into Blackburn Bay, north of Venice, one day last week. While she swam around the county boat, Jon Perry, the environmental specialist who started the project two years ago, recorded GPS points, water clarity data, and Dominguez's assessment. Beds of manatee grass blanketed the area, she reported.

The data is used to supplement aerial seagrass maps generated every other year by the Southwest Florida Water Management District, nicknamed Swiftmud. The aerial maps show seagrass locations, but they cannot show what kind of grass is growing or if the grasses are smothered by algae. Also, floating seaweed and oyster beds have been mistaken for sea grass in the aerial maps. The county data helps correct such inaccuracies.

Seagrass monitoring by citizens and county staff has been going on since 2006, when county scientists wanted to find a way to add more information to the Swiftmud maps. Perry suggested the in-water surveys. Surveys take place

during the winter, to match up with Swiftmud's aerial mapping, and in the summer, when grass is growing at its peak. Volunteers last winter recorded sea grass data at 350 points, rivaling county workers' data collection.

Full story and source :

http://www.heraldtribune.com/article/20080729/ARTICLE/807290348/2055&title=Helping_to_bring_out_secrets_of_sea_grass

CONFERENCES

International Seagrass Biology Workshop 8 (ISBW8)

Sunday 31 August – Friday 5 September 2008, Vancouver Island, Canada.

Proposed program: http://isbw.seagrassonline.org/program_proposal.html

The meeting will be held at the spectacular Bamfield Marine Sciences Center on Vancouver Island. The meeting is being timed to make the best opportunity for conducting a field trip during low tides to see the *Phyllospadix* meadows.

Sessions include:

- Epiphytes: an important component of seagrass communities
- Seagrass restoration
- Seagrass reproduction and genetics
- Living in shallow marine ecosystems: Seagrass interactions with light and hydrodynamics
- Seagrass Monitoring
- Ecological modeling—flow, fauna and landscapes
- Nutrients
- Seagrasses of the globe
- Plant–animal interactions

Workshops include:

- Management
- Regional web pages
- Recruitment/dispersal models for seagrasses
- Global integration
- Plant–animal interactions

For more information, visit <http://isbw.seagrassonline.org/>

Queensland Coastal Conference 2009: Waves of Change

Tuesday 12 – Friday 15 May 2009, Gold Coast, QLD

Abstract Submission Deadline: Wednesday 3 September 2008

The Queensland Coastal Conference 2009 'Waves of Change' will assist the coastal management sector to work towards coastal sustainability in Queensland. If you are passionate about Queensland's coastline and want to make a difference by sharing your experiences and knowledge with a broad range of delegates then we encourage you to submit an abstract for an oral, poster or workshop presentation.

The Review Panel will consider papers that address the following coastal themes:

- Planning, Policy and Politics
- Relationships – People and Communities
- Coast and Marine Assets
- In Action not Inaction

Don't miss out, the deadline is fast approaching!! Allocations will be reviewed when abstracts have been received. If you are interested in presenting at the conference please go to <http://www.iceaustralia.com/qldcoast09/call.html>

For more information visit: www.iceaustralia.com/qldcoast09/, or email qldcoast09@iceaustralia.com

GALLERY

Cyrene Reef and Pulau Semakau (Singapore): 03 – 04 August 2008

<http://www.seagrasswatch.org/gallery.html>

Sunrise and the Team is back on the shores, this time at Cyrene Reefs! Siti explained how monitoring is done. She also explained how monitoring helps us better understand the cycles in seagrass growth, and indirectly also understand the general health of the shores.

Mission Beach (Qld, Australia): 30 - 31 July 2008 <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/gallery.html>

FROM HQ

Frequently Asked Questions <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/faq.html>

Seagrass-Watch News Issue 33 <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/newsletters.html>

Seagrass-Watch Shop <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/shop.html>

Virtual Herbarium <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/herbarium.html>

Giveaways <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/shop.html#GIVE1>

- Seagrasses of Australia
- Phytoplankton Guide
- Bookmarks
- Stickers
- Seagrass-Watch Newsletter 28, 30, 31, 32, 33 (hardcopy)

Future sampling dates <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/sampling.html>

Handy Seagrass Links <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/links.html>

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Seagrass-Watch E- Bulletin is compiled by Len McKenzie & Rudi Yoshida.