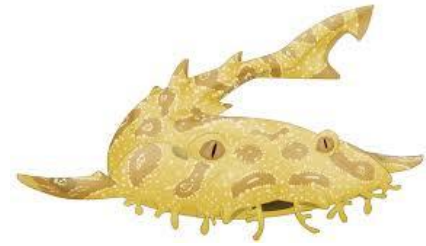


UNIDIVE'S WOBBEGOSSIP



Dec 2021 – Jan – Feb 2022

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan 9 – ExHMAS dives

Jan 29 – MEAM survey dives

Jan 30 – Flinders OW trip

Feb 5 – MEAM survey dives

Feb 12 – MEAM survey dives

Feb 19 – MEAM survey dives

Feb 26 – MEAM survey dives

Feb/Mar – Semester welcome
dive - date tbd

**Register for upcoming
events here:**

<https://www.unidive.org/events/>

THE LATEST

We've been back on the water! Despite COVID trying to curb many of our trips, we've already had a busy summer diving! We've welcomed many new members this past year and we hope you all are ready to shake off your covid dust and come join us too. Don't hesitate to step up with ideas for dive trips and start planning new adventures for the club – any members can organize trips! Thursday nights are great for brainstorming trips with others and finding dive buddies!

These last few months we successfully hosted a Refresher workshop for members wanting to brush up on some open water skills before diving again. Thank you, Chris and Delphine, for hopping in the water to do some training! Shout out to Trevor and Chris for also hosting a Boat handlers' workshop where they trained 10+ new boat handlers!!! This will be key to helping us get the Down Under out on the water for the club more! Make sure you say hi to the new boat handlers and work together to plan some trips so they can keep honing their skills.

In early 2022, the club hopes to complete some more MEAM surveys, some OW dives, and another refresher training workshop for those who missed out in November. We'll also be having a welcome dive at the beginning of the semester so stay tuned for that date!

Trip highlights!

Members had a great time on some trips in the last few months. Here's what they had to say.

MEAM survey trip – November 6, 2021

After a series of cancelled survey attempts due to both, COVID and weather, we finally set out to get survey #4 done! Given that conditions at Mudjimba Island looked mediocre, we decided to survey the outer Gneering. And not just any site, we went for Fairyland and Hanging Rock, arguably the top destinations on the reef. And wow, it was a great decision. Apparently, the vis at Mudjimba was a bleak 1-3m whereas we were greeted with blue water and 12-15m visibility and just a tad of swell. With Bruce as our primary boathandler and Ryan as our secondary, Phill as our savvy Reefcheck Team leader



*Survey divers completed surveys at the Inner & Outer Gneerings, Sunshine Coast.
(Photos: Cedric van den Berg)*

and an all-around fantastically upbeat and super skilled crew we managed to get all the data we needed while having a smooth, relaxed, and fun day out on the blue in stellar conditions. What a treat!! May we have many more! - Cedric



*Scenes from the boathandler workshop.
(Photos: Mikael Holmqvist)*

MEAM survey trip – November 20, 2021

Another great day out with some of our eager MEAM surveyors! The crew met up early at the usual spot in Mooloolaba and short after had the boat in the water headed out to the outer gneerings (Shellacey). The day was beautiful and there was a bit of swell on the way to the site, with our secondary boathandler Ryan taking the lead only to provide some thrill in a somewhat radical riding style. After a 15-20 minute boat ride, we got to the site and realized the minimum depth at high tide was 15 meters, making the dive for the purposes of the survey a no go. We had to quickly make a call on choosing another nearby site that had the appropriate conditions and that would be representative for our surveys. We decided to move to the inner gneerings, making sure we were not overlaying with the Reef Check site, where conditions were good, with 10-12 meters visibility and a very mild current. The team had two great dives and divers were granted with some amazing marine life such as a variety of nudibranchs, heaps of corals, lobsters, moray eels, colorful fish and many more. Some valuable data was collected on what is now the 10th transect completed by MEAM. Big shout out to everyone that is making this happen! Let's hope the conditions keep improving so we can carry on with

some outstanding citizen science! - Lucas

ExHMAS dive trip – January 9, 2022

Following a quick and easy COVID vaccination check on the preceding Thursday night, on Sunday 9th January morning a devout group of divers slowly awoke relatively late to make a pilgrimage to the ex-HMAS Brisbane in Mooloolaba.

With light traffic everyone arrived well ahead of time and completed the required digital paperwork - jumping through the hoops that COVID-19 has brought to all of us. The Unidivers then set-up their assorted gear on the dock in the sunshine before heading in for a last-minute coffee and snack. With the gurus of gas Mel, Donna and Mark still waiting to start their long dive (>95 minutes is long isn't it?), the fully caffeinated first wave of divers headed down to explore the outside the legendary ship.

After a stern to bow and bow to stern exploration of the outside the less frugal members of the team head up while Isabelle and Sarah remained below with guide to see how much recent weather had affected the home of Yellow Tail Kingfish, Trevally, Jewfish, Bat Fish and hordes of cuddly of Stone and Scorpion fish.

After a sweaty and humid surface interval, with everyone bringing out their best snack options (Oreos, chips, nuts, snakes and melting moments) the first wave of newbies returned for a penetration of the wreck, saying "Hi!" to the long divers on the way down. With surge flowing across the site everyone found out why buoyancy control is so important. Sinks, lino, and machinery were all noted, in particular by the camera toting Sarah and John who needed to be retrieved by the well-traveled guide Marco (Polo).

Reunited on the boat with the long divers, they reported hunting barracudas and trevallies, as well as courting rays over the bow of the ship and some "missing buddies" due to the vast amount of fish life inside the wreck. All in all, some fantastic diving!

After a quick wash down of gear, the crew headed to Hog's Breath Café just to find that COVID had rescheduled their opening. Not to be dissuaded from filling hungry bellies, a nice little Greek restaurant next door benefited from a horde of hungry divers. What a great day out. – John B.



"[divers] reported hunting barracudas and trevallies, as well as courting rays over the bow of the ship and some "missing buddies" due to the vast amount of fish life inside the wreck ..."



(Photos from the ExHMAS dive by Sara Waak)

MEMBER POLL: WHAT EVENTS SHOULD UNIDIVE HOST THIS SEMESTER?

Ready to start socializing again and not let COVID take away all our fun? What events would you like the club to try to plan this semester? Fill out this poll to share your ideas: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Q5HBLRC>

Results from our last newsletter poll are in! The most voted location to dive was a **Kirra shore dive**.

Members are always able to plan trips for the club. Shore dives are a great option because they're easy to organize and don't require the use of the boat or an available boat handler. We're so lucky we have so many great shore diving options in SEQ. So find a buddy, grab some tanks/ gear from the shed on a Thursday, and head down to Kirra!

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Newsletter suggestions?

Reach out to our social officer to share ideas for things you'd like to see appear in our newsletters or events the club should put on