



KIMBERLEY MARINE

RESEARCH STATION • CYGNET BAY

MARCH – APRIL 2018



News from Cygnet Bay

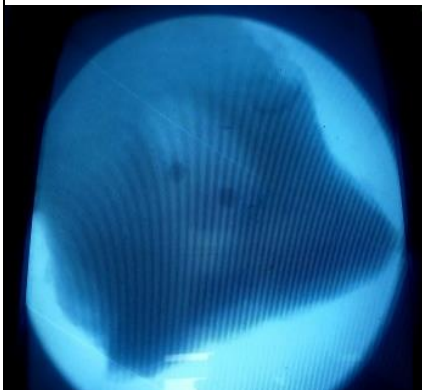
Spat delivery for an exciting new project!

In recent years **Juvenile Pacific Oyster Mortality Syndrome (JPOMS)** has plagued the Pearling Industry causing over >90% mortality rates within days of initial detection, with juvenile oysters most susceptible. Cygnet Bay Pearls, Ellies Pearling Pty Ltd and James Cook University have come together to instigate a selective breeding program in the hopes of providing the required knowledge to initiate a breeding program to target resistance.



Algae Lab

In anticipation of our spat delivery, the Algae Lab is now up and running. The aim of this laboratory is to produce an algae food source for the spat that will be delivered. KMRS interns are in the process of cultivating a batch large enough to sustain these spat whilst they remain in the hatchery.



X-Ray

April has been a busy month here at Cygnet Bay with the pearling crew and interns kept busy x-raying our oysters. Oysters are x-rayed in order to check for the presence or absence of pearls. Oysters found without a pearl are re-seeded with nuclei in three months in the hope that they will eventually produce the lustrous pearls Cygnet Bay Pearl Farm is known for.

Research at KMRS

Coral Monitoring Program

Our ongoing coral monitoring program that produces baseline data which helps to monitor the health of the corals in the area, has had a change in methodology. This new methodology allows for more standardized replicates to be taken each month, which in turn provides more accurate data to analyse the monthly and yearly changes occurring within the coral in Cygnet Bay. This, combined with a new training exercise for identifying corals, will be of huge benefit to interns in the future.



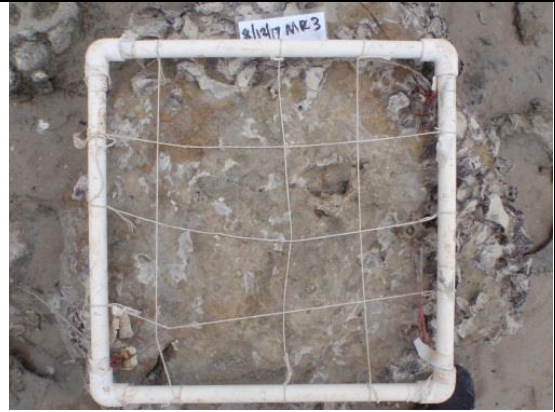
Australian Coral Reef Society Conference



The 2018 Australian Coral Reef Society Conference is being held at Ningaloo Centre, Exmouth on the 15th-17th of May. As well as the numerous talks, presentations and workshops, KMRS Research officer, Liam Rawlins and Managing Director James Brown will be attending, feel free to approach them for a chat or pick up a pamphlet about the ongoing research at KMRS.

Rock Oyster Project

Our rock oyster recruitment and competition project that has been successfully running for over two years now is almost at its conclusion. We have successfully reached the aims set out at the beginning of this project which included exploring the relationships between numbers of barnacles/limpets and the number of *Saccostrea spp* (edible rock oysters), and monitoring the temporal variation in recruitment of the *Saccostrea spp* in Cygnet Bay. Therefore interns are now devising new projects that will be starting in the coming months.



Around the Farm

Tourist season



April marked the beginning of tourism season here at Cygnet Bay with tours, accommodation and the re-

opening of our restaurant. Now that the wet season has officially ended, staff have been lucky enough to get to explore more of the Kimberley region, and unsurprisingly have not been disappointed in what they've found.



Staff News

A warm welcome to our two new interns!

Danielle Hodgkinson

Danielle began her internship at KMRS in early April, and has been loving her time here at Cygnet Bay so far. Danielle completed a BSc in Biology and Conservation at Murdoch University in Perth, and finished a Marine Science Honours degree last year studying the age and growth of the small-tooth flounder. Danielle hopes to publish her work later this year.



New interns Courtney (left) and Danielle (right)

Courtney Davies

Our newest intern Courtney joined the team at the start of May. She completed a Bachelor of Science majoring in Marine Science and Ecology at the University of Queensland in 2017 and has always had a passion for all things marine. Courtney is looking forward to learning all about the Kimberley Coast and improving her scientific skills whilst soaking up the beauty that is this part of the world.

Photo of the Month



Bowmouth Guitarfish (*Rhina ancylostoma*) known as the shark ray or mud skate seen in Cygnet Bay this April. This species is assessed as near-threatened in Australian waters by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). An interesting fact is that the bowmouth guitarfish has been called “the panda of the aquatic world” due to its rarity and the many conservational challenges it faces. Photo credit to James Brown

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