

MAY



KIMBERLEY MARINE

RESEARCH STATION • CYGNET BAY

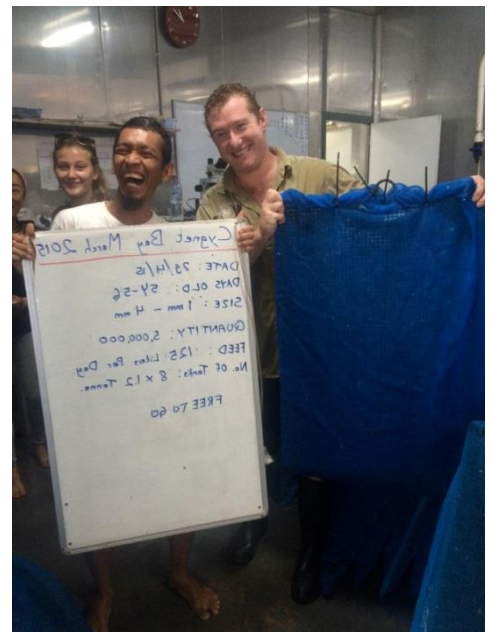
2015



Spat Deployment

It was an exciting day on April 29th, with 500,000 spat from 5 families being deployed onto the pearling lines in Cygnet Bay. On deployment day, the spat were 56 days old and ranged from 1 – 4mm in size. The spat were attached to rope on panels, which were then placed in a cage with a mesh bag around them to ensure they don't escape and can grow in the ocean with minimal predators. As much as we would have loved to continue looking after them, they became too demanding – requiring 152 Litres of algae per day, and we had to release them out into the ocean to fend for themselves.

The spat will now remain on these panels for 6 months after which time they will be pulled out of the water, cleaned and graded, with the largest, healthiest spat being selected to be transferred to 45 pocket panels. Over the next year and a half, the shell will regularly be pulled out of the water to be cleaned, and transferred to larger pocket panels when necessary. After approximately 2 years the shell will have reached the required size (>90mm) and will be ready for first operations.



Gary and Garata looking pretty stoked on deployment day



The team hard at work cable tying the panels into mesh bags ready for deployment



Sandra attaching the panels onto lines before deploying them into the pearl farm

Sunrise at Cygnet Bay

We were lucky enough to have Eddy from Sunrise visit the farm on Monday, 18th May as part of their "Lap of the Map" series. It was an early start for those involved, with the first live to air cross occurring at 4am.

The segment commenced with Eddy trying on some of our exquisite pearls, followed by James extracting a pearl before the team headed out onto the water for the weather. Shots of the surrounding islands, cleaning boat and waterfall reef were taken, and the importance of our giant tides were discussed. The team then proceeded back to land where they were given a taste of some pearl meat before watching James re-seed the shell. A very exciting morning at Cygnet Bay!



James Brown concentrating hard harvesting a pearl, with Eddy and the film crew keeping a close eye.



Sealegs and Atlanta VII out on the water ready for the weather cross

Camp Activities

There has been lots of activity around camp lately with the recent addition of a volleyball net. A few friendly competitions have been taking place, with the builders, tourism and Wwoofers needing a bit more training if they are going to be any match for the pearling team in the coming weeks.

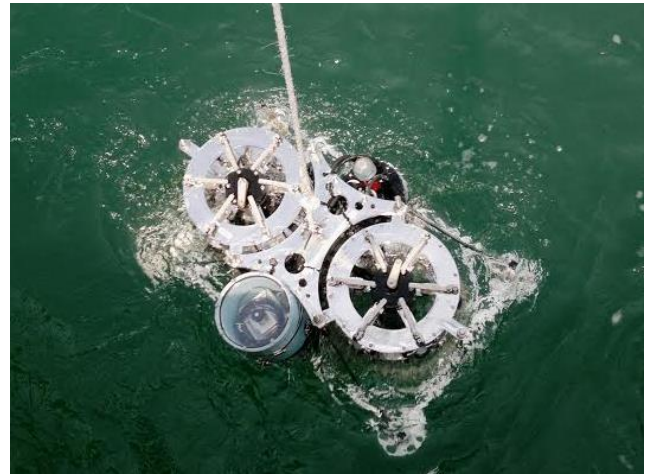


Research at KMRS

James McLaughlin, an experimental marine scientist with CSIRO's Oceans and Atmosphere Flagship, recently visited Cygnet Bay. He is investigating the community structure and carbon and nutrient dynamics of micro-algae, living on soft sediment habitats (mud flats and beaches) in Cygnet bay and surrounding areas (Ardyaloon, Sunday Island). Using benthic chambers (pictured) and collecting a suite of samples he is able to quantify the amount of Carbon utilised in these areas by micro-algae through photosynthesis. This work is part of the ongoing WAMSI benthic primary producers study that has been going since spring 2013 in collaboration with KMRS and the Bardi Jawi Rangers.



James and Bardi Jawi Ranger Chris Sampi



Benthic chamber being deployed



Juvenile *Lutjanus argentimaculatus*

Mike Travers and Sam Moyle from the Department of Fisheries visited this month, exploring the mangrove systems of the Dampier Peninsula in search for juvenile *Lutjanus argentimaculatus* (commonly known as Mangrove jack, Red Snapper, or Murrin). The research was part of WAMSI project 1.1.3 Ecological Connectivity, trying to make connections between the juveniles found in the inshore mangrove and freshwater systems, with the larger offshore Mangrove Jack in deeper water. From each location, samples of mangrove tree, crustaceans, plankton, and herbivores were kept in order to

identify the environmental 'signature'. This signature is unique to each location and allows specific matching of Mangrove Jack individuals with their previous locations in early stages of growth. The main locations sampled were Pender Bay, Ngamakoon, Hunters Creek and Strickland Bay.



Mike Travers and Sam Moyle happy to be out in the field

Photo of the Month

There has been some controlled burning happening around the farm recently to reduce the risk of bushfires this dry season. The burning targeted the understorey vegetation and surface litter, with the aim to keep damage to overstorey trees to a minimum.



Photo: Nikesh Jani



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