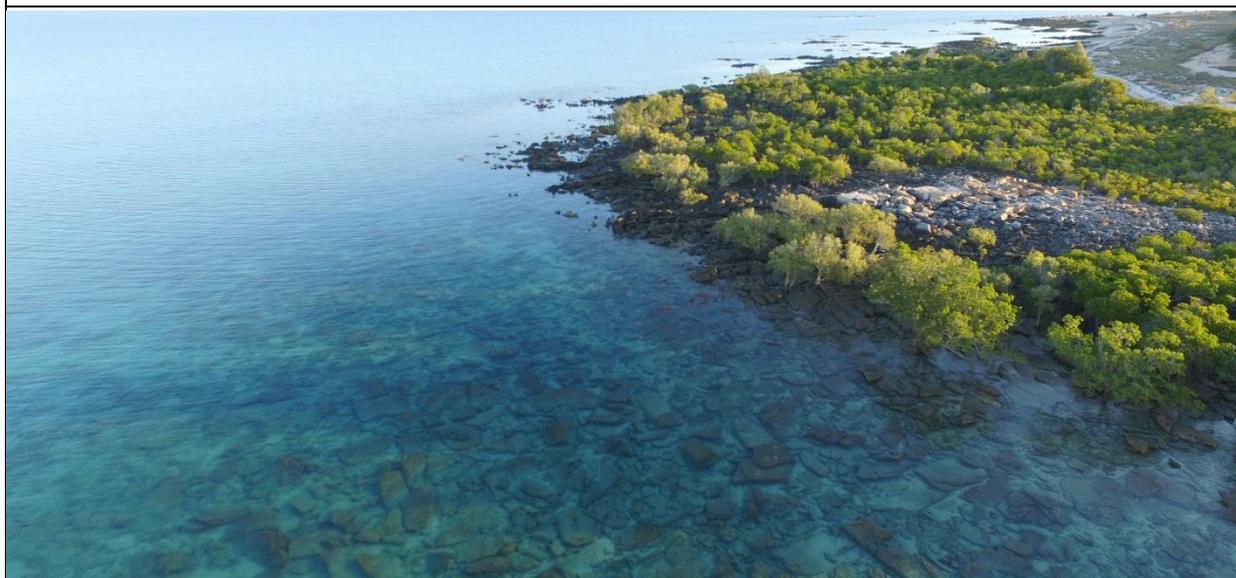




# KIMBERLEY MARINE

RESEARCH STATION • CYGNET BAY

## JULY - AUGUST 2017



### News from the Research Station

**VIP guests:** On Friday the 4<sup>th</sup> of August KMRS played host to some very impressive people; Rachel Cooke, the American Consulate General to Western Australia, who has an incredibly diverse career and is passionate about the future of marine science in Western Australia. And Alicia from Biosecurity within the Department of Agriculture, who trains indigenous rangers in northern Australia in identifying marine pests.

**New monitoring programs:** Two new and exciting monitoring programs are in the process of being developed; a plastic survey which aims to monitor whether small and large plastics are washing up on our pristine beaches, and an introduced species monitoring program which aims to investigate the biofouling communities settling on the oyster panels within the farm. We hope to be able to work with Alicia from Biosecurity to get this project rolling.



Hydrozoan slime growing on oyster panels



*Cliona dissimilis* on an oyster shell

**Bioeroding sponge:** Interns helped collect data for Christine Shoenburg (UWA) who is investigating the infestation rates of the bioeroding sponges *Cliona dissimilis* and *Pione velan* and its effect on the strength of the pearl oyster *Pinctada maxima* shell. Samples have been sent to Perth and we are awaiting the results.

## Other research from the interns

**Rock Oyster projects:** Interns and Masters students, Andy and Ash, left KMRS in early August after completing the fieldwork components of their theses.

Andy's rock oyster spat tiles have now been deployed in the intertidal zone. The tile materials were decided to be wood, plastic, foam and pearl shell. His project is now running its first trial after the tiles were left to biofoul for one month on oyster lines.



Andy with his recruitment tiles



Ash surveying the intertidal zone

With help of other interns, Ash was able to survey 200 quadrants across the rocky intertidal zone, collecting data to determine the patterns of distribution in the sessile communities across different shore heights. In addition to this, she set up semi-permanent experiment quadrats in the mid and upper shores to investigate the competition interactions between rock oysters and barnacles. The first month of monitoring these quadrants has occurred, and will continue with the help of interns until January.

**Coral Monitoring:** Once a month, on the lowest tide, our interns conduct routine monitoring of coral cover in the intertidal zones. They take photos of the corals along three transects, which are later analysed on the computer. Using the coral cover data the interns are able to determine if there is any significant change to the coral community. Soon, we hope to expand our coral recruitment project with coral frames lent to us by AIMS.



Trachyphyllia coral near the coral transects

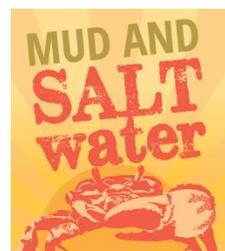
## Around the Farm



Whales rest next to the cleaning boat

**Whales are back!** Some lucky tour boats have been spotting humpback whales on their annual migration. These gentle giants cruise all the way up from Antarctica to mate and calf in the warmer tropical waters around Cape Leveque. The best time to see them is mid-August to mid-September, but they can sometimes be seen into October.

**Film Festival:** In August Cygnet Bay played host to a screening of the Mud and Salt Water Short Film Fest. The festival comprised of a series of short films showcasing the remarkable Roebuck Bay and Kimberley coastline. It was a great night under the stars, where locals, tourists and staff came together to admire and reflect on the beauty of the region, and appreciate how important it is to protect it so future generations may enjoy it too.



Mud and salt water film festival

### KMRS Interns Maddie and Courtney

We welcome Maddie Beaton and Courtney Brown!

Maddie joined Team Intern in early July. She graduated from Curtin University in 2016 with a Bachelor of Science in Coastal and Marine Science. She's had a passion for the ocean since she was a little tacker and is now looking forward to developing her knowledge and skills while working in the beautiful Kimberley area.



Intern Maddie on the dinghy



Intern Courtney after rock oyster monitoring

Courtney is our newest intern and another local Western Australian. She completed her Bachelor of Science at UWA with majors in Marine Biology and Zoology. She finished her Honours thesis last year studying the vision of Fiddler Crabs. She is really keen to learn some new field and lab techniques in a beautiful part of the world.

Farewell and good luck to our previous interns, Ash and Andy, as they return to Perth to complete their theses.

If being an intern at KMRS sounds like something you would love to do, email your resume and cover letter to [research@cygnetbaypearls.com.au](mailto:research@cygnetbaypearls.com.au)

## Photo of the Month



The rising sun reflecting off ripples in the intertidal. Photo by Ashleigh Haddon

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