



KIMBERLEY MARINE

RESEARCH STATION • CYGNET BAY

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2017



Coral Pool. Photo: C.Crossman

News from Cygnet Bay

Exhibition: *Lustre: Pearling and Australia*

Cygnet Bay Pearls is the proud major industry sponsor of the *Lustre: Pearling and Australia* exhibition now open at the Australian Maritime Museum. Created in a partnership between the Western Australian Museum and Yawuru, the traditional owners of Broome; the exhibition focuses on the history of pearling in Australia and the people and places who shaped the industry. *Lustre: Pearling and Australia* also looks to the future and features stories on those adapting to changes in pearling. The Lustre exhibition runs from February 18th to August 13th 2017 at the Australian Maritime Museum in Sydney. Entry is free!



Rock Oyster Recruitment

KMRS interns have continued collecting data on interspecific competition and recruitment of rock oysters. In April, the interns will be deploying new settling substrates to determine the best type of surface for the rock oyster spat settlement in Cygnet Bay. The settlement project has now been running since March 2016, preliminary results indicate that spat recruitment is greatest in the middle shore zone.



Rock Oyster Settlement. Photo: C.Crossman

Phytoplankton Monitoring

Final preparations are being made in order to begin phytoplankton monitoring in March. The KMRS interns will be collecting data to increase our understanding of water quality within the area and expand knowledge on phytoplankton biodiversity. Please contact the KMRS team if you are interested in collaborating via email research@cygnetbaypearls.com.au

Coral Health Monitoring

Coral monitoring is ongoing, with KMRS interns beginning to analyse the data which has been collected over the past seven months. While reviewing the data for signs of recovery, KMRS interns will also be identifying species present at the study site and determining species richness. To further this research, individual coral bommies will be monitored to give us a greater idea of ecosystem health. Tiles deployed for rock oyster spat recruitment will also be analysed in the hope that they may give an indication to coral recruitment in the region.



Coral Garden. Photo: C.Crossman

Weather Observations

The Kimberley has experienced an above-average wet season so far, with some parts of the region recording record falls. Looking specifically at Cygnet Bay, January rainfall in 2016 was 38.0mm compared to this year's total of 271.2mm (January rainfall average: 238.9mm), February was also dramatically greater with a total of 286.8mm (February rainfall average: 195.7mm) in comparison to the February 2016 amount of just 4.7mm.

Other news from Cygnet Bay

Continuing Reef Research

Dr. Chris Cornwell and Dr. Steve Comeau from the University of Western Australia will be returning once again in late April this year to continue their work on water chemistry and calcification rates of corals and coralline algae at Waterfall Reef and other local coral communities. We look forward to their upcoming visit.

Staff news

Staff Christmas Break

The staff of Cygnet Bay Pearls and KMRS enjoyed their Christmas/New Year break. Team members took the opportunity over the break to catch up with family and friends, or travel to destinations such as Bali, or for one of the Skippers, visiting Perth city for the first time!

KMRS Interns

Update from Sam and Anna

Sam and Anna left us at the end of the season last year. Anna is now back in the U.S. working as a technician for the Global Change Research Wetland at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center in Maryland. Sam is now helping out at the Indian Ocean Marine Research Institute at UWA. KMRS thanks you both for the great job you did and wishes you all the best for the future.

Welcome Pippa Adamson and Careena Crossman

Pippa is a local Western Australian hailing from Bunbury, who completed her Coastal and Marine Science Honours degree in July 2016 at Curtin University. This is her first time in the Kimberley and is very excited about having new experiences and gaining new skills through the KMRS internship program.



Careena is also a local Western Australian who has recently completed a Graduate Certificate in Environmental Management. Her other qualifications include a Bachelor of Science in Marine Science and a Bachelor of Antarctic Studies with Honours. She is looking forward to diversifying her skill set through the KMRS internship and working in such a unique environment.



Photo of the month



Photo by C. Crossman

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Follow KMRS on Twitter (@KMRS2009) and Facebook (facebook.com/kmrs2009) for frequent updates on the research and happenings in and around Cygnet Bay.

Visit the KMRS website to join our mailing list (if you haven't already) at:

<http://www.kimberleymarineresearchstation.com.au/support.html>



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