

☰ Abalone Stories 65

Monday, 10 August 2009 10:16 PM



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☰ Whale carcass warning to abalone fishers

Monday, 23 November 2009 11:12 AM

Whale carcass warning to abalone fishers

Posted Sat Nov 21, 2009 3:00pm AEDT

Updated Sat Nov 21, 2009 3:35pm AEDT



The beach at Iluka has been closed over fears a whale carcass will attract sharks. (Department of Fisheries)

- **Map:** [Iluka 6028](#)

Abalone fishers are being warned to stay away from one of Perth's northern beaches which has been closed because of a shark hazard.

A rotting whale carcass is lodged on a reef 50 metres offshore from Iluka, south of Burns Beach.

The carcass is believed to be that of a humpback whale.

The Fisheries Department plans to leave the carcass where it is, in the hope it will be dragged out to sea by the swell.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/21/2749588.htm>

☰ G2 wins Abalone Council and Diesel accounts in China and Japan

Monday, 23 November 2009 11:03 AM

G2 wins Abalone Council and Diesel accounts in China and Japan

by David Blecken 18-Nov-09, 12:09

| [G2](#) | [Diesel](#) | [Abalone Council Australia](#) | [Wunderman](#) | [BBDO](#) | [Grey](#) | [Marketing](#) |

BEIJING - The Abalone Council Australia has appointed G2 as its below-the-line agency in China, having called a pitch that also included Wunderman and BBDO-affiliated domestic agency Shunya.

Grey Group's G2 will take on all below-the-line responsibilities for the agency and build an overarching brand for the Australian abalone on sale in the China market, according to a statement from the agency.

A major task will be developing an educational campaign to alter consumer perceptions in favour of Australian abalone, which will be promoted as offering good value for money.

The statement noted that the majority of Chinese consumers were "unable to differentiate between dry and live abalone - the two types predominantly available.

In addition, the statement pointed to a common preference for Japanese and South African abalone, which are regarded as "superior" and worthy of premium pricing.


An initial campaign is expected to roll out in the first quarter of next year.

Separately, G2 Tokyo has been appointed as agency of record by Italian fashion brand Diesel in Japan, following a competitive pitch that also included Hakuhodo and two undisclosed agencies.

Representatives from the agency declined to comment on the form that subsequent work would take or the value of the account.

Last month, G2 picked up Chinese white goods manufacturer [Haier's digital business in the mainland](#).

www.media.asia/searcharticle/G2-wins-Abalone-Council-and-Diesel-acc...

 Live abalone destroyed in Yilan for having cancer-causing agents Tue, Monday, 23 November 2009 10:47 AM
Nov 17, 20

Live abalone destroyed in Yilan for having cancer-causing agents

Tue, Nov 17,
2009

The China
Post/Asia News
Network

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ILAN, Taiwan -- Yilan County authorities yesterday destroyed imported abalones contaminated with cancer-causing antibiotics.

Local officials destroyed 527 kilograms of toxic abalones left in Yong-chun Seafood Wholesale's inventory. However, the wholesaler, in Yilan's Toucheng, had imported a total of 1,080 kilograms from Hong Kong on Oct. 25 and has resold it to 16 businesses including distributors and retailers.

It will be hard to trace products distributed by the 16 businesses, but the names of those businesses have been forwarded to their local authorities for further investigation, Yilan health official said.

The imported products were slated for

incineration after inspectors found residue of two carcinogenic antibiotics, 27.1 ppb of Furazolidone and 77.8 ppb of Nitrofurazone. None of the Taiwan abalones tested returned positive results for the toxins.

Health authorities tested the seafood after an Apple Daily report on Nov. 10 stating that the media has found China-imported abalones being passed off as locally-grown Yilan abalones and being sold to local catering services and bargain restaurants.

Taiwan abalones are rich in brownish color and smaller in size; while China abalones are larger, more grayish and often have smaller crustaceans attached, health officials reminded the public to differentiate the products before making any purchases.

Facing losses of at least NT\$1 million (S\$43,000), the importer, surnamed Yu said that he is sorry toward the consumers, but the customs officers allowed the products to enter the borders without inspection.

Yu also faces a fine of NT\$60,000 (S\$2,580) to NT\$300,000 (S\$12,900) for violating food safety regulations.

news.asiaone.com/News/Latest+News/Asia/Story/A1Story20091117-180502...

☐ Abalone thieves feel long arm of the law

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:19 AM

Abalone thieves feel long arm of the law

11 Nov, 2009 09:10 AM

A MAN has been given a four month suspended jail sentence after being found with hundreds of abalone on the NSW far south coast, Industry & Investment NSW Special Operations Manager, Tony Andrews, said last week.

The 31-year-old man from Cronulla and a 22-year-old man from Bundeena, were apprehended at Aragunnu, a coastal camping location near Bermagui, in March 2007.

"Fisheries Officers from Industry & Investment (I&I) NSW's Statewide Operations and Investigations Group apprehended the men during a surveillance operation targeting abalone stealing on the NSW Far South Coast," Mr Andrews said.

"They were found to have 566 abalone. All of the abalone were seized and returned to the water alive.

"Dive equipment including SCUBA gear was also seized.

"The men were charged with possessing more than the bag limit, possessing prohibited size and illegally taken abalone, using SCUBA to take the abalone and failure to pay the fishing fee."

In addition to the four month suspended jail sentence, the 31 year old was fined \$2928 in fines and court costs at Sutherland Local Court last month.

The 22 year old was fined \$6219 in fines and court costs.

The possession limit in NSW is two per person in areas open to the taking of abalone. The minimum legal length for abalone is 11.7cm.

"Strategic patrols are being conducted along the NSW coastline netting abalone thieves on rocks, and organised operations are targeting illegal receivers and the blackmarket abalone trade particularly in Sydney."

Rewards are offered for information leading to a conviction of illegal abalone receivers and divers.

Information can be provided direct to the abalone compliance group on 6499 8000

www.naroomanewsonline.com.au/news/local/news/general/abalone-thieve...

☐ Abalone Outplanting Promising Article ID : 258 Audience :
DefaultVersion 1.00Published

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:11 AM

[Abalone Outplanting Promising](#)

Article ID : 258
Version 1.00

Audience : Default
Published Date: 2009/11/9 14:19:59
By AlberniPortal.ca Staff

Early planting of abalone larvae at sites in Barkley Sound close to the marine school is showing an increase in population.

"When we first started, you know, we were just feeling our way along. We weren't experts in any stretch of the imagine but we've developed some outplanting techniques and we're working on protocols," said project president John Richards. "I think the outplanting has got lots of promise. We're going to try to convince the people with the money - DFO, etcetera - to put more effort into the outplanting side of things and see if we can get some real hard evidence that it works," he said.

Three researchers and 3 grad students are working on the outplanting. They have to determine if the 5 million larvae released when they were competent to settle are the cause of the increase or the wild abalone had some impact on the numbers. Abalone are poised to re-listing from protected to endangered. The marine school is not sure if that will help the project, but it could especially if the science can show support in rebuilding the stocks. Japan does a lot of outplanting to support their fishery.

It takes 5 to 7 years to raise an abalone for market and the market price right now at \$35/lb. is too low for the Bamfield project to make a profit. They need to have sales to help with the incubation program. A restaurant in Toronto and one in Vancouver have been cooperative according to Richards, in helping with the paperwork associated with the federal regulations.

<http://www.alberniportal.ca/modules/AMS/article.php?storyid=258>

☐ Man in deep water for illegally taking sea life

Monday, 23 November 2009 10:02 AM

Man in deep water for illegally taking sea life

CHLOE JOHNSON

November 7, 2009

A greedy 40-year-old man was ordered to pay more than \$100,000 yesterday for illegally taking abalone and rock lobster from WA waters.

Kevin Huynh, of Maylands, pleaded guilty to a range of fisheries offences which were discovered during a Department of Fisheries operation called Acacia.

Huynh was fined \$83,094 for illegally dealing and possessing abalone and rock lobster.

He was fined a further \$15,000 for dealing in more than 80kg of abalone in June and July last year and fined another \$5000 for attempting to deal 250kg of abalone in 2008.

He was fined \$750 for the possession of rock lobster tails.

Mr Huynh had to forfeit his van which was used to carry the seafood. Fisheries officers also seized \$1500 cash from him when he was arrested.

The Department of Fisheries' Manager of Compliance and Regional Support John Looby said recreational and commercial fishers who adhered to the would welcome penalties.

"This outcome marks the completion of a very successful compliance operation, conducted by the Department of Fisheries," Mr Looby said.

"Operation Acacia has led to fines of more than \$200,000 being issued against seven people and two restaurant businesses.

"We know this has put a big dent in black market abalone operations in WA and we will continue to focus on this and other organised activity in lobster and other high value fish, in order to protect our fisheries in this state from illegal exploitation."

In August last year, Fisheries and Marine Officers and WA Police worked together on Operation Acacia for a series of searches and interviews at businesses and homes in Perth and regional towns.

Mr Looby said WA's commercial abalone fishery was always a potential target, because of the high demand and price for abalone on international markets

www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/man-in-deep-water-for-illegally-taking-s...

☐ Taiwanese temptations

Monday, 23 November 2009 9:40 AM

Taiwanese temptations

Savour Taiwanese specialities by award-winning Chef Yu Kuo-Chuan at Zhen Shan Mei restaurant.

There's more to Taiwan than meets the eye. Countless TV food shows have zoomed in on the island's vibrant street food scene but no mention is made of its more refined specialities.

Since Taiwanese cuisine is fast gaining popularity in the local food scene, the timing could not have been better for Zhen Shan Mei — Klang Valley's first fine-dining Taiwanese restaurant to make its début.



The circular dining room sports an orange and black colour scheme.

Zhen Shan Mei, which means "perfect" in Mandarin, is the brainchild of Sean Wong, the restaurateur behind Michelangelo's Italian kitchen. Ensnconced in the Mont Solaris enclave, the outlet has a circular dining area that sports an orange and black colour scheme.

Its contemporary interior accents — oversized earth-toned tubular lights, plush banquette seats and wooden lattice screens — aptly reflect the eatery's innovative approach.

For those who enjoy alfresco and do-it-yourself dining, tables in the patio are equipped with electric hobs and grill. In addition, three private dining rooms with karaoke are available for entertainment.

Presiding over the kitchen is Yu Kuo-Chuan, a master chef from Taiwan with 27 years of experience. Besides Penang, Chef Yu has also worked in China, Hong Kong and Japan.

The multiple-award winner even makes his own tidbits such as pickled winter melon and papaya, marinated lotus root slices and deep-fried peanuts with tiny sakura shrimp and sesame seeds to whet diners' appetites.

His signature speciality, Wok-fried Scrambled Egg with Shark's Fin, is memorable as it comes served on a paper-thin sheet of bitter melon. The vegetable's distinctly bittersweet nuance and crunchy texture lend a nice counterpoint to the rich, fluffy scrambled egg that has shark's fin, mushroom,

ham, carrot, onion and spring onion in it. The chef's salted egg yolk and passion fruit reduction also adds to the overall taste.



Australian abalone braised with mushroom and greens.

The Whole Australian Abalone Braised with Mushroom and Greens is totally different from the Hong Kong-style preparation we Malaysians are used to. Instead of the ubiquitous oyster sauce, the succulent shellfish is complemented by Chef Yu's own concoction and a gossamer-thin crisp made from bamboo charcoal bread flour.

According to the chef, he braises the abalone for about eight hours in a ham and bacon-based broth prior to serving. When asked to elaborate on his secret sauce, he coyly tells us that black bean oil and Taiwanese soya sauce form the basis of it but declines to elaborate any further.

For his speciality of Deep-fried Prawns Wrapped in Cheese Vermicelli and Served with Mango Dressing, Chef Yu explains that grated cheese is mixed into the strands of rice vermicelli that wrap the prawns.

"Cheese makes the vermicelli crispier when deep-fried. I've also coated the whole crustacean with minced prawn paste and chopped water chestnuts for greater textural contrast."

We can hardly wait to return to sample Chef Yu's other specialities such as Three Cup Chicken, Hefeng (Japanese) Stewed Matsuzaka Pork Shoulder and Boneless U.S. Short Ribs Cooked on Hot Stones and Served with Black Pepper Sauce.

For a refreshingly light dessert, try the Mango Rolled in Mochi (Glutinous Rice Wrap) Coated in Desiccated Coconut which has a thin layer of glutinous rice encasing thick, mango slices.



Mango Rolled in Mochi
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thestar.com.my/lifestyle/story.asp?...ifeliving/5044699&sec=lifeliving

Perth man fined over black market abalone

Monday, 23 November 2009 9:39 AM

Perth man fined over black market abalone

Posted Fri Nov 6, 2009 4:23pm AEDT
Updated Fri Nov 6, 2009 4:41pm AEDT



Huynh was fined more than \$100,000.

- **Map:** [Perth 6000](#)

A Perth man has been fined more than \$100,000 for buying black market abalone and selling it for a profit.

40-year-old Kevin Huynh admitted buying hundreds of kilos of abalone and lobster from a man in July and August last year.

He sold the shellfish to Chinese restaurants.

In the Perth Magistrates court today he was fined \$5,000 for four counts of contravening the Abalone Management Plan.

The Magistrate was also compelled to fine him another \$83,000 based on the weight of the abalone he received.

He was also ordered to forfeit the van he used to transport the abalone.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/06/2735672.htm>

North American law-enforcement agencies work together to fight illegal abalone t

Monday, 23 November 2009 9:30 AM

North American law-enforcement agencies work together to fight illegal abalone trade

By Larry Pynn, Vancouver Sun November 4, 2009

- [Story](#)
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Abalone this size, (150 mm long) held by federal fisheries officer Nicole Gallant, are unheard of anymore on the BC west coast. This shell is over 30 years old. It was harvested before the fishery was closed because of depleted stock.

Photograph by: Ian Smith, Vancouver Sun

Northern abalone can spend their entire lives within a pond-sized patch of B.C. coastline.

And that's where their problems begin.

The rarest and most expensive B.C. seafood is also easy pickings for unscrupulous poachers, who, with a little local knowledge and scuba gear, can decimate a patch of abalone in a matter of hours or days.

Since 1990, northern abalone in B.C. have been strictly off limits to harvesting or possessing, as Ottawa seeks to rebuild stocks. But that hasn't stopped criminals from continuing to target this gourmet seafood, its value seeming to increase as populations become ever more precarious.

As the Vancouver Sun learned during a lengthy probe of the illegal abalone trade, those criminal connections can extend throughout North America, and can include different species of wild and endangered abalone that are all valued as a delicacy, mainly in Asian communities at home and abroad.

Ottawa's most wide-ranging abalone-poaching investigation to date — dubbed Operation Awabi, after the Japanese word for abalone — began by chance during the inspection of a shipping container bound for China.

No one knew that one event would lead more than two years later to a series of ultimately successful abalone prosecutions that concluded only recently in California and B.C., and would send a strong message to those who would bought abalone on the black market for personal gain.

As federal fisheries officer Nicole Gallant begins the story, she recalls fielding that first call from Canada Border Services Agency on Jan. 26, 2007, at her downtown Vancouver office.

The container inspection had turned up mislabelled fish products — sea cucumbers passed off as less

valuable red snapper fillets and salmon collars — in an apparent attempt to avoid higher federal export tariffs.

"Sea cucumber is highly valued," confirms Gallant, officer in charge of a special investigation unit.

"They figured the product they had in there was about \$125,000, whereas red snapper fillets (would probably bring) \$25,000 to \$30,000."

The container held no abalone. But suspicious authorities felt justified in conducting an inspection of the two businesses involved in the mislabelling, Momoji Seafood Packaging & Exporting Ltd. and Solid State Enterprises Canada Ltd., both located in Richmond, B.C., but otherwise unconnected.

"We'd never heard before of these fish plants," Gallant said, yet another reason to inquire further.

A team of investigators and inspectors from Victoria and Ottawa first visited the Solid State warehouse on Feb. 6, 2007, where they discovered abalone in white waxed cardboard boxes labelled as a product of Mexico exported by Zenith Trading Corp., a Los Angeles-based seafood trading company.

In theory, perfectly legal.

In reality, authorities had their doubts. "The colour of it, the shape and size, it just didn't look right," Gallant confirmed. "It wasn't professionally processed."

Officers returned with a search warrant the next day. "The whole upper floor was chopsticks," Gallant recalled. "They were cooking crab within this business, with all the doors closed, on a small propane burner.

"It was interesting."

Despite appearances, clearly there was money to be made here. Manager Wun Tai Li had "five grand" in cash on her from selling abalone to a local restaurant, Gallant recalls.

Samples of the abalone were sent to the federal Pacific Biological Station in Nanaimo for DNA testing. Normally it's a six-week turnaround. These tests were fast-tracked in three days, reflecting the importance of the case.

Seven species of abalone are found on the west coast of North America — red, pink, black, green, white, northern and flat — some of which are legally harvested in certain jurisdictions, while others are fully protected.

Abalone farms produce limited product, mainly red abalone, although consumers pay a premium for wild stocks, just as wild salmon commands a higher price than farm-raised.

The DNA tests determined Solid State had four species of abalone — northern, white, pink, and green — two of which took the investigation to the next level.

Although it's legal to sell Mexican pink and green abalone, not so northern and white.

Northern, also known as pinto abalone in the U.S. for its pearly, iridescent inner shell, is found mainly off Alaska and B.C., with lesser populations as far south as Mexico's Baja coast. Both the meat and shell have been off-limits to harvesting and possession in B.C. since 1990, including to aboriginal people.

The species is rated endangered by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada, and threatened under the federal Species At Risk Act, which obliges Ottawa to protect and enhance populations.

White abalone, which lives off California and Mexico, has been declared endangered by the U.S. government in California since 2001, its numbers reduced by 99 per cent since the 1970s, based on surveys in the southern state.

Canadian authorities got on the phone to their counterparts in California.

They tipped them off about Zenith Trading Corp., then proceeded to inspect the second Richmond company, Momoji, at its warehouse on Feb. 21.

More abalone samples were sent to the Pacific Biological Station for genetic testing. The confirmation

of more northern — but not white — abalone led to a search warrant of the premises and seizure of product on March 2.

"It's a real easy way to say, 'Well, we're selling Mexican abalone,' " Gallant said of the tactics being used. "But in it is the illegal product. It's just a way for them to blend it in."

The investigation might have ended with charges against Solid State and Momoji under the Species At Risk Act. But authorities were still left wondering whether the northern abalone found in the boxes labelled product of Mexico actually originated there, or were substituted somewhere along the line.

To find out, Gallant and fisheries officer Art Demsky flew to California a month later to meet with law-enforcement officers with the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service and California Department of Fish and Game in San Diego and Los Angeles, and to participate in a search of the Zenith Trading plant and the home of its owner, Henry Chan.

They also learned that U.S. border officials, only weeks earlier, had seized green and pink abalone from a Mexican man associated with Zenith Trading.

"It was found on the engine block of the truck," Gallant says. "It was tied in two grocery bags. We were there in April and it was hot. You can imagine going across with something like that.

"That made us really think: They're smuggling it across the Mexican border and it's getting into Canada somehow. Now there's a huge health issue, right."

Gallant said the Mexican citizen claimed he was going to a baseball game and that the abalone was for personal consumption.

"It didn't make any sense; why would you do that?"

The Canadian officers' visit also involved an unlikely trip across the Tijuana border to visit the two processing plants on the Baja peninsula listed on the boxes of abalone found in Richmond.

No tequila and mariachi bands this time around.

On April Fool's Day, 2007, the two officers purposefully boarded a bus for a two-hour journey south to the port city of Ensenada.

"It wasn't that bad," Gallant recalls with a smile.

"It was a good bus, not a chicken bus. We were warned not to take a rental vehicle across, because they see U.S. plates and they rear-end you for insurance."

The Mexican government even provided a biologist to show the Canadian officers around.

"We didn't find one single northern abalone," Gallant continued. "The Mexican commercial fishery for abalone is very well run. They have to have proper licences, there's a lottery, a quota system — extremely well done." The visit resolved the fact that northern abalone found at Momoji and Solid State did not originate in Mexico, and that it had been put into the boxes somewhere along the line in hopes authorities wouldn't notice.

"How did the northern abalone get in those boxes?" Gallant continues to ask. "It had to happen somewhere else. We were able to prove it did not come from Mexico."

Gallant has still not answered that nagging question. But she has a pretty good idea.

Based on numerous convictions related to abalone poaching over the years, fisheries officers have come to learn that the illegal harvesting tends to be done by residents of coastal communities, both aboriginals and non-aboriginals, some with experience as commercial underwater harvesters.

"My gut feeling is (there are) fewer people involved, but the people who are involved are bigger and better," said Robert Martinolich, chief of enforcement operations for federal fisheries in B.C.

Officers figure illegal abalone is mainly destined for Vancouver's ethnic Chinese market, where a premium price is paid for wild, over-farmed abalone: \$35 to \$55 versus \$6 a pound wholesale. "The market is here, in Chinatown and the Asia restaurants," Gallant said. "The majority of the product is coming into Vancouver."

In the biggest abalone poaching case to date in B.C., three Haida harvested approximately 11,000 abalone over just two and a half days in the Port Edward area near Prince Rupert, B.C.

In April 2007, B.C. Supreme Court Justice Doug Halfyard sentenced ringleader Stanley McNeill, a member of the Pacific Urchin Harvesters Association, to 12 months' imprisonment to be served in the community, plus a \$20,000 fine and prohibition from scuba diving for five years. His 10.5-metre fishing vessel, the *Zombie Wolf*, was forfeited, along with his dive gear and Ford pickup truck.

McNeill's younger brother, Daniel, along with Randall Graff, who lived with the McNeills' sister, were each sentenced to four months in prison in the community, 80 hours of community work, and a \$10,000 fine, with restrictions on scuba diving for two years.

The case disheartened a First Nation that has been working hard on co-management of abalone — a traditional food item — with Ottawa for several years on Haida Gwaii, the Queen Charlotte Islands.

"It's pretty disappointing when something like this happens," confirmed Guujaaw, president of the Council of the Haida Nation. But he also argued one must not dismiss the fact that the federal government allowed commercial harvesters to decimate abalone stocks before enacting the 1990 ban.

"They come off as the great conservator, but they fished those things to near extinction," he said. "That's what wiped them out."

The 11,000 abalone poached in just this one case compares with an entire abalone population on the B.C. coast estimated at roughly 420,000.

Not surprisingly, plundered stocks remain critically imperilled on the B.C. coast.

Federal shellfish biologist Laurie Convey says abalone populations at dozens of select survey sites on the central coast have declined overall by 83 per cent from 1978 to 2006, and 81 per cent on the east side of the Queen Charlotte Islands from 1978 to 2007.

They're down by 40 per cent since the fishing closure in 1990.

"All evidence points to the illegal harvest," Convey said, noting there's been no evidence of disease causing the decline, and abalone live in remote areas unaffected by development. "Even small harvests can leave an area bare, because they depend on a critical density for reproduction."

Despite these declines, there are signs of juvenile abalone increasing by 29 per cent and 35 per cent, respectively, in the two regions since 1990.

"There is some hope, provided those animals are allowed to grow up," Convey said.

That's where the successful prosecution of the two Richmond companies, both handled by federal prosecutor Ramona Roberts, is helping to provide a deterrent message.

Momoji pleaded guilty in May 2009 and was fined \$35,000 by Judge Jane McKinnon for possessing an estimated 2,000 northern abalone. All but \$500 of the fine went to research and recovery of wild abalone stocks.

Momoji's Sandy Suet Fung Li had earlier been fined \$2,500 after pleading guilty to charges of operating a seafood processing plant without a licence, an investigation that involved the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

Solid State's Li, whose criminal record included a nine-month conditional sentence for her part in a marijuana-growing operation, pleaded guilty and was fined \$25,000 by Judge Ron Fratkin in August 2008. A total of 118 illegal northern abalone had been found in that case.

The false labelling of the sea cucumbers that touched off the investigation also yielded \$2,000 fines in each case.

For the two Richmond companies, Operation Awabi seems to have had an impact beyond the courtroom.

The Sun visited the Momoji warehouse and found the place locked, with all the appearances of having been shut down. The company is no longer in good standing with the B.C. registrar of companies.

As for Solid State, Li continues to share storefront space with friend Kimberly Liu, a certified general accountant and immigration consultant. Liu said Li is no longer in the seafood business, and instead focuses on restaurant supplies such as chopsticks.

Li works from home now, not a warehouse. Asked if Li could be interviewed, Liu said she has a poor grasp of the English language, although she can understand when people call to place an order.

"She understands that stuff," Liu insisted.

Operation Awabi didn't end with Momoji and Solid State.

Following up on the Canadian fisheries officers' tip, the National Marine Fisheries Service successfully prosecuted Zenith Trading owner Henry Chan.

Chan pleaded guilty to one count under the Lacey Act of shipping illegally purchased abalone and one count under the Endangered Species Act of shipping endangered white abalone to Canada.

On Sept. 17 this year, he was fined \$50,000 U.S. in San Diego Federal Court, \$10,000 of which went to the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Foundation for abalone research and education.

In an interview from her Los Angeles office, deputy special agent Martina Sagapolu said Chan had sold more than 10,000 kilograms of abalone to seafood businesses throughout California, Hong Kong and Canada, but had documentation for the legal purchase of only 725 kilograms.

The Mexican national who smuggled abalone to Chan only had his border-crossing card revoked.

"We didn't charge him," Sagapolu confirmed. "We went after the bigger fish."

Sagapolu gives Canada full credit for initiating the investigation.

As for Gallant, she's hopeful Operation Awabi has a lasting impact on the illicit trade in abalone.

Fisheries officers proved they can enter a business and, through DNA tests, determine illicit abalone on site, regardless of how someone might want to cover it up through false packaging, she said.

"We're getting the word out. They're very aware we're watching."

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www.montrealgazette.com/health/ABALONE+CRACKDOWN/2184073/story.html

Great white shark study

Monday, 23 November 2009 9:24 AM

Great white shark study

Peter Fimrite, Chronicle Staff Writer

Wednesday, November 4, 2009



A great white swims off the Farallon Islands, one of the Northern California spots where the sharks are found.

Photo: Courtesy Stanford University



This great white shark has the acoustic (left) and pop-up satellite tags.

Photo: Courtesy Scot Anderson

The ferocious great white sharks of Northern California spend their time devouring sea lions, traveling, mating and, occasionally, touring San Francisco Bay, but they never socialize with sharks from other regions, according to a Stanford University-led study released Tuesday.

The magnificent predators, which have for years struck fear in Bay Area surfers, abalone divers and swimmers, have been isolated from other white shark populations for so long that they are genetically unique to the world, the researchers concluded.

The scientists tracked the snaggly toothed predators between 2000 and 2008 from the Bay Area to San Diego, Hawaii and back as the sharks followed a route that was carried out with surprising precision and under a strict time frame.

The sharks lived in the deep ocean near Hawaii between January and July and in Northern California between August and December.

Surprisingly, the researchers found, the great beasts occasionally strayed from their Northern California feeding grounds for jaunts under the Golden Gate Bridge into San Francisco Bay, apparently in search of snacks.

The study, the largest and most detailed analysis of the great white sharks of North America, was published today in the scientific journal Proceedings of the Royal Society B.

"What we see on our acoustic monitoring devices is that the sharks stay pretty close to pinnipeds," said Barbara Block, a professor of Marine Sciences at Stanford's Hopkins Marine Station and a co-author of the paper. "It gives me more confidence knowing where the white sharks are going to be."

The study was conducted by scientists from Stanford, UC Davis, the Point Reyes Bird Observatory and the Pelagic Shark Research Foundation. The researchers used a decoy to lure the sharks to their boat, where they took tissue samples and used a dart attached to a pole to affix satellite and acoustic monitoring devices to 179 great whites along the coast.

Wide range of sharks

The sharks, tagged around the Farallon Islands, Año Nuevo Island, Point Reyes and Tomales Point, ranged from adolescent to fully grown sharks weighing 4,000 pounds. Acoustic listening receivers were placed at dozens of locations across the ocean floor at known shark hot spots. Whenever a tagged shark came within 850 feet of a receiver, a code for that particular shark would be transmitted.

The tags revealed that although they are loners, the sharks all follow pretty much the same route and hang out in the same places. After feasting in Northern California, they hit the waters around Hawaii and take a yearly respite in a mysteriously alluring mid-ocean spot that researchers are calling the "white shark cafe."

What they do in the shark cafe, which is halfway between the Baja Peninsula and the Hawaiian Islands, is a mystery, but sex is believed to play a part.

"What we know," said Salvador Jorgensen, a postdoctoral fellow at the Hopkins Marine Station who co-authored the study, "is that all of them leave the coast in the winter and all of them end up either in the cafe or offshore in Hawaii."

Jorgensen believes the pattern of migration has been so consistent over thousands of years that white sharks in the northeastern Pacific Ocean have become a genetically distinct species.

The DNA samples showed that local white sharks descended from a relatively small number of sharks in the South Pacific between Australia and New Zealand in the late Pleistocene era, some 200,000 years ago, but have not mixed with other populations since then.

Great white sharks, known scientifically as *Carcharodon carcharias*, can reach lengths of 20 feet and weigh 3 tons. They live worldwide in cool, coastal waters and have a well-developed sense of smell and eyesight. They have an innate ability to sense changes in water pressure and electrical pulses, which helps them find prey.

When in Northern California, they feed on seals and sea lions. The area they roam has been known for years as the red triangle, a scary-sounding name that many marine biologists shun because it seems to bolster the notion that great whites are killing machines like the beast in the movie "Jaws."

The scientists hope this study will shed more light on these fierce yet sophisticated hunters and their important role in the ecosystem. The fact that they are genetically isolated from other white sharks makes them all the more vulnerable, researchers said.

They visit the bay

Still, it can't be comforting for swimmers at Aquatic Park to know that the acoustic tags recorded five great whites inside the entrance to San Francisco Bay in 2007 and 2008. The researchers don't

know what the sharks did or how long they stayed, but it does suggest to swimmers that flopping around in the water between August and December might not be a good idea.

"Think about it like this: We've got this great big ocean and these are some of our best-known predators and yet we hardly knew anything about where they went or their movements until now," Block said. "This research can lead to decreased interactions with sharks and help us ensure their protection for future generations."

E-mail Peter Fimrite at pfimrite@sfnchronicle.com.

This article appeared on page **A - 1** of the San Francisco Chronicle

Read more: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2009/11/04/MN751AE8D7.DTL#ixzz0Xd6csnCD>

www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2009/11/04/MN751AE8D7.DTL

☐ Sharks circle whale carcass on northern beach

Monday, 23 November 2009 9:01 AM

Sharks circle whale carcass on northern beach

FRAN RIMROD

November 1, 2009

One two metre and another three metre shark are trying to get a bite off a whale carcass which had washed up onto Eglington Rock.

Todd A'Vard from the WA Department of Fisheries said swimmers and divers are urged to avoid the area.

"We are worried people might go diving there because it is abalone season," Mr A'Vard said.

Mr A'Vard said the whale was most likely an adult humpback whale which was sitting directly on the rocks so the sharks could not reach it.

He said he was unsure about the species of the two sharks.

Eglington Rock is about 8km north of the Mindarie Marina and 2km south of the Alkimos wreck.

www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/sharks-circle-whale-carcass-on-northern-...

☐ Abalone season opens

Monday, 23 November 2009 9:00 AM

Abalone season opens

Posted Sun Nov 1, 2009 1:00pm AEDT



WA's abalone season begins.

- **Map:** [Perth 6000](#)

The abalone season has opened across Perth's beaches.

Despite the best attempts by Fisheries officers, a keen crowd of recreational abalone fishers started the season five minutes early at Mettams Pool north of Trigg Beach.

Conditions were relatively calm despite an earlier forecast of strong winds and swells of up to three metres.

More than one hundred people turned for the first catch of abalone.

The season opens for one hour each Sunday morning, between 7 and 8 o'clock, for six weeks.

Tags: [environment](#), [lifestyle-and-leisure](#), [wa](#), [perth-6000](#)

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/01/2729878.htm>

☐ Abalone season warning

Monday, 23 November 2009 8:58 AM

Abalone season warning

Posted Sat Oct 31, 2009 3:32pm AEDT



Abalone fishers are warned to watch out for big swells in Perth tomorrow.

- **Map:** [Perth 6000](#)

The Department of Fisheries says it's not too late for people to register online to get their abalone licence before the season opens tomorrow.

About 5000 recreational abalone fishers are expected to brave big swells along Perth's coast for the first hour of the season.

Nathan Harrison from the Department of Fisheries says the season opens for one hour each Sunday morning for the next six weeks.

"We will have a large number of Fisheries officers out there on the beach making sure people do abide by the rules," he said.

"We certainly want to make sure people are aware of the rules and make sure they do treat the stocks with a sense of personal responsibility."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/10/31/2729564.htm>

☐ Large swells, strong winds to greet start of abalone season

Monday, 23 November 2009 8:52 AM

Large swells, strong winds to greet start of abalone season

STAFF REPORTER

October 30, 2009

Large swells and strong winds are threatening to spoil the opening of what is reportedly the shortest fishing season in the world.

Thousands of recreational abalone fishers are expected to be out this Sunday morning, for the start of the limited month-long season to collect abalone in the West Coast Zone.

With the ominous weekend weather forecast, the Department of Fisheries is asking recreational fishers to be mindful of difficult and potentially dangerous conditions.

The main fishing activity will occur at popular reefs along the Perth coast. The West Coast abalone zone extends from the Busselton Jetty to the Greenough River Mouth.

Principal Management Officer Nathan Harrison said the season would run for just one hour each Sunday, from 7am to 8am, for six Sundays, between November 1 and December 6.

"Our research indicates that abalone stocks are sustainable, but this is a popular fishery on the doorstep of a major city and we must limit access to it to ensure abalone stocks are not overfished," Mr Harrison said.

"Last season's catch was around 44 tonnes, which was the highest for eight years.

In addition to the seasonal limitations, a daily bag possession limit of 20 Roe's abalone applies per person, while the minimum legal length for Roe's abalone is 60mm.

Mr Harrison said that Fisheries and Marine Officers would again be patrolling fishing locations in the West Coast abalone zone throughout the season.

"Fishers who ignore the rules, which are designed to keep the fishery sustainable, should be aware that breaking fishing laws can be an expensive mistake for offenders," he said.

Last week, an abalone fisher was fined more than \$4,100 after being caught in possession of 60 abalone on the first day of last season.

Recreational fishers must have a valid licence to fish for abalone

www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/large-swells-strong-winds-to-greet-start...

☰ Rare B.C. abalone easy pickings for unscrupulous poachers

Monday, 23 November 2009 8:51 AM

Rare B.C. abalone easy pickings for unscrupulous poachers

By Larry Pynn, Vancouver Sun November 1, 2009 [Comments \(28\)](#)

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John Richards, president of the Bamfield Huu-ay-aht Community Abalone Project, shows northern abalone, an endangered species being farm raised for reintroduction to the wild.

Photograph by: Jodi Beaubier, Special to the Vancouver Sun

Northern abalone can spend their entire lives within a pond-sized patch of B.C. coastline.

And that is where their problems begin.

The rarest and most expensive B.C. seafood is also easy pickings for unscrupulous poachers, who, with a little local knowledge and scuba gear, can decimate a patch of abalone in a matter of hours or days.

Since 1990, northern abalone in B.C. have been strictly off-limits to harvest or possess as Ottawa seeks to rebuild stocks. But that hasn't stopped criminals from continuing to target this gourmet seafood, its value seeming to increase as populations become ever more precarious.

As The Vancouver Sun learned during a lengthy probe of the illegal abalone trade, those criminal connections can extend throughout North America and include different species of wild and endangered abalone that are all valued as a delicacy, mainly in Asian communities at home and abroad.

Ottawa's most wide-ranging abalone-poaching investigation to date — dubbed Operation Awabi, after the Japanese word for abalone — began by chance during the inspection of a shipping container bound for China.

No one knew that one event would lead more than two years later to a series of ultimately successful abalone prosecutions that concluded only recently in California and B.C., and send a strong message to those who would purchase abalone on the black market for personal gain.

As federal fisheries officer Nicole Gallant begins the story, she fielded that first call from Canada Border Services Agency on Jan. 26, 2007, at her downtown Vancouver office on Burrard Street.

The container inspection had turned up mislabelled fish products — sea cucumbers passed off as less-valuable red snapper fillets and salmon collars — in an apparent attempt to avoid higher federal

export tariffs.

"Sea cucumber is highly valued," confirms Gallant, officer in charge of a special investigation unit. "They figured the product they had in there was about \$125,000, whereas red snapper fillets [would probably bring] \$25,000 to \$30,000."

The container held no abalone. But suspicious authorities felt justified in conducting an inspection of the two businesses involved in the mislabelling, Momoji Seafood Packaging & Exporting Ltd. and Solid State Enterprises Canada Ltd., both located in Richmond but otherwise unconnected.

"We'd never heard before of these fish plants," Gallant said, yet another reason to enquire further.

A team of investigators and inspectors from Victoria and Ottawa first visited the Solid State warehouse on Vulcan Way on Feb. 6, 2007, where they discovered abalone in white waxed cardboard boxes labelled as a product of Mexico exported by Zenith Trading Corporation, a Los Angeles-based seafood trading company.

In theory, perfectly legal.

In reality, authorities had their doubts. "The colour of it, the shape and size, it just didn't look right," Gallant confirmed. "It wasn't professionally processed."

Officers returned with a search warrant the next day, on Feb. 7. "The whole upper floor was chopsticks," Gallant recalled. "They were cooking crab within this business with all the doors closed on a small propane burner.

"It was interesting."

Despite appearances, clearly there was money to be made here. Manager Wun Tai Li had "five grand" in cash on her from selling abalone to a local restaurant, Gallant recalls.

Samples of the abalone were sent to the federal Pacific Biological Station in Nanaimo for DNA testing. Normally it's a six-week turnaround. These tests were fast-tracked in three days, reflecting the importance of the case.

Seven species of abalone are found on the west coast of North America — red, pink, black, green, white, northern and flat — some of which are legally harvested in certain jurisdictions and others fully protected.

Abalone farms produce limited product, mainly red abalone, although consumers pay a premium for wild stocks just as wild salmon commands a higher price than farm-raised.

The DNA tests determined Solid State had four species of abalone — northern, white, pink, and green — two of which took the investigation to the next level.

Although it is legal to sell Mexican pink and green abalone, not so northern and white.

Northern, also known as pinto abalone in the U.S. for its pearly iridescent inner shell, is found mainly off Alaska and B.C., with lesser populations as far south as Mexico's Baja coast. Both the meat and shell have been off-limits to harvesting and possession in B.C. since 1990, including to aboriginal people.

The species is rated endangered by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada, and threatened under the federal Species At Risk Act, which obliges Ottawa to protect and enhance populations.

White abalone, which lives off California and Mexico, has been declared endangered by the U.S. government in California since 2001, its numbers reduced by 99 per cent since the 1970s, based on surveys in the southern state.

Canadian authorities got on the phone to their counterparts in California.

They tipped them off about Zenith Trading Corporation, then proceeded to inspect the second Richmond company, Momoji, at its Clarke Place warehouse on Feb. 21.

More abalone samples were sent to the Pacific Biological Station for genetic testing. The confirmation of more northern — but not white — abalone led to a search warrant of the premises and seizure of product on March 2.

"It's a real easy way to say, 'Well, we're selling Mexican abalone,'" Gallant said of the tactics being used. "But in it is the illegal product. It's just a way for them to blend it in."

The investigation might have ended with charges against Solid State and Momoji under the Species At Risk Act. But authorities were still left wondering whether the northern abalone found in the boxes labelled product of Mexico actually originated there or were substituted somewhere along the line.

To find out, Gallant and fisheries officer Art Demsky flew to California a month later to meet with law enforcement officers with the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service and California Department Fish and Game in San Diego and Los Angeles, and to participate in a search of the Zenith Trading plant and the home of its owner, Henry Chan.

They also learned that U.S. border officials only weeks earlier had seized green and pink abalone from a Mexican man associated with Zenith Trading.

"It was found on the engine block of the truck," Gallant says. "It was tied in two grocery bags. We were there in April and it was hot. You can imagine going across with something like that."

"That made us really think: They're smuggling it across the Mexican border and it's getting into Canada somehow. Now there's a huge health issue, right."

Gallant said the Mexican citizen claimed he was going to a baseball game and that the abalone was for personal consumption. "It didn't make any sense. Why would you do that?"

The Canadian officers' visit also involved an unlikely trip across the Tijuana border to visit the two processing plants on the Baja peninsula listed on the boxes of abalone found in Richmond.

No tequila and mariachi bands this time around.

On April Fool's Day 2007, the two officers purposefully boarded a bus for a two-hour journey south to the port city of Ensenada.

"It wasn't that bad," Gallant recalls with a smile. "It was a good bus, not a chicken bus. We were warned not to take a rental vehicle across because they see U.S. plates and they rear-end you for insurance."

The Mexican government even provided a biologist to show the Canadian officers around.

"We didn't find one single northern abalone," Gallant continued. "The Mexican commercial fishery for abalone is very well run. They have to have proper licences, there's a lottery, a quota system — extremely well done."

The visit resolved the fact that northern abalone found at Momoji and Solid State did not originate in Mexico, and that it had been put into the boxes somewhere along the line in hopes authorities wouldn't notice.

"How did the northern abalone get in those boxes?" Gallant continues to ask. "It had to happen somewhere else. We were able to prove it did not come from Mexico."

Gallant has still not answered that nagging question. But she has a pretty good idea.

Based on numerous convictions related to abalone poaching over the years, fisheries officers have come to learn that the illegal harvesting tends to be done by residents of coastal communities, both aboriginals and non-aboriginals, some with experience as commercial underwater harvesters.

"My gut feeling is there's fewer people involved, but the people who are involved are bigger and better," said Robert Martinolich, chief of enforcement operations for federal fisheries in B.C.

Officers figure illegal abalone is mainly destined for Vancouver's ethnic Chinese market, where a premium price is paid for wild over farmed abalone: \$35 to \$55 versus \$6 a pound wholesale. "The market is here, in Chinatown and the Asia restaurants," Gallant said. "The majority of the product is coming into Vancouver."

In the biggest abalone poaching case to date in B.C., three Haida harvested approximately 11,000 abalone over just two and a half days in the Port Edward area near Prince Rupert.

In April 2007, B.C. Supreme Court Justice Doug Halfyard sentenced ringleader Stanley McNeill, a

member of the Pacific Urchin Harvesters Association, to 12 months imprisonment to be served in the community, plus a \$20,000 fine and prohibition from scuba-diving for five years. His 10.5-metre fishing vessel, the *Zombie Wolf*, was forfeited, along with his dive gear and Ford pickup truck.

McNeill's younger brother, Daniel, along with Randall Graff, who lived with the McNeills' sister, were each sentenced to four months in prison in the community, 80 hours of community work, and a \$10,000 fine, with restrictions on scuba diving for two years.

The case disheartened a first nation that has been working hard on co-management of abalone — a traditional food item — with Ottawa for several years on Haida Gwaii, the Queen Charlotte Islands.

"It's pretty disappointing when something like this happens," confirmed Guujaaw, president of the Council of the Haida Nation. But he also argued one must not dismiss the fact the federal government allowed commercial harvesters to decimate abalone stocks prior to enacting the 1990 ban.

"They come off as the great conservator, but they fished those things to near extinction," he said from his Skidegate office. "That's what wiped them out."

The 11,000 abalone poached in just this one case compares with an entire abalone population on the B.C. coast estimated at roughly 420,000.

Not surprisingly, plundered stocks remain critically imperilled on the B.C. coast.

Federal shellfish biologist Laurie Convey says abalone populations at dozens of select survey sites on the central coast have declined overall by 83 per cent from 1978 to 2006 and 81 per cent on the east side of the Queen Charlotte Islands from 1978 to 2007.

They're down by 40 per cent since the fishing closure in 1990.

"All evidence points to the illegal harvest," Convey said, noting there's been no evidence of disease causing the decline and that abalone live in remote areas unaffected by development. "Even small harvests can leave an area bare because they depend on a critical density for reproduction."

Despite these declines, there are signs of juvenile abalone increasing by 29 per cent and 35 per cent, respectively, in the two regions since 1990.

"There is some hope, provided those animals are allowed to grow up," Convey said.

That's where the successful prosecution of the two Richmond companies, both handled by federal prosecutor Ramona Roberts, is helping to provide a deterrent message.

Momoji pleaded guilty in May 2009 and was fined \$35,000 by Judge Jane McKinnon for possessing an estimated 2,000 northern abalone. All but \$500 of the fine went to research and recovery of wild abalone stocks.

Momoji's Sandy Suet Fung Li had earlier been fined \$2,500 after pleading guilty to charges of operating a seafood processing plant without a licence, an investigation that involved the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

Solid State's Li, whose criminal record included a nine-month conditional sentence for her part in a marijuana-growing operation, pleaded guilty and was fined \$25,000 by Judge Ron Fratkin in August 2008. A total of 118 illegal northern abalone had been found in that case.

The false labelling of the sea cucumbers that touched off the investigation also yielded \$2,000 fines in each case.

For the two Richmond companies, Operation Awabi seems to have had an impact beyond the courtroom.

The Sun visited the Momoji warehouse and found the place locked with all the appearances of having been shut down. The company is no longer in good standing with the B.C. registrar of companies.

As for Solid State, Li continues to share storefront space at Westminster Highway and No. 3 Road with friend Kimberly Liu, a certified general accountant and immigration consultant. Liu said Li is no longer in the seafood business and instead focuses on restaurant supplies such as chopsticks.

Li works from home now, not a warehouse. Asked if Li could be interviewed, Liu said she has a poor

grasp of the English language, although she can understand when people call to place a order.

"She understands that stuff," Liu insisted.

Operation Awabi didn't end with Momoji and Solid State.

Following up on the Canadian fisheries officers' tip, the National Marine Fisheries Service successfully prosecuted Zenith Trading owner Henry Chan.

Chan pleaded guilty to one count under the Lacey Act of shipping illegally purchased abalone and one count under the Endangered Species Act of shipping endangered white abalone to Canada.

On Sept. 17 this year, he was fined \$50,000 US in San Diego Federal Court, \$10,000 of which went to the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Foundation for abalone research and education.

In an interview from her Los Angeles office, deputy special agent Martina Sagapolu said Chan had sold more than 10,000 kilograms of abalone to seafood business throughout California, Hong Kong, and Canada, but had documentation for the legal purchase of only 725 kilograms.

The Mexican national who smuggled abalone to Chan only had his border-crossing card revoked.

"We didn't charge him," Sagapolu confirmed. "We went after the bigger fish."

Sagapolu gives Canada full credit for initiating the investigation. "It was great we were able to work together with Canada on something that was important to them. It just so happens they uncovered this other illegal activity taking place right here across the border."

As for Gallant, she is hopeful Operation Awabi has a lasting impact on the illicit trade in abalone.

Fisheries officers proved they can enter a business and through DNA tests determine illicit abalone on site regardless of how someone might want to cover it up through false packaging, she said.

"We're getting the word out. They're very aware we're watching."

lpynn@vancouver.sun.com

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www.vancouver.sun.com/health/Rare+abalone+easy+pickings+unscrupulous...

☐ Diver admits false abalone records

Friday, 30 October 2009 12:04 PM

Diver admits false abalone records

Posted Thu Oct 29, 2009 1:00pm AEDT

- **Map:** [Flinders Island 7255](#)

A Tasmanian abalone diver who conspired with other divers to create false details on catches has been given a six month suspended jail term.

Peter Joachim Kossman pleaded guilty to four charges relating to false records and statements between March 2000 and November 2002.

The Supreme Court in Hobart heard the 52 year old allowed other divers to fish areas around the Furneaux group of islands where he held exclusive rights.

Abalone worth \$630,000 was taken by those divers over the 20-month period, with Kossman falsifying the catches as his own.

In sentencing Justice Alan Blow took into account the fact Kossman's crimes had no impact on the sustainability of the abalone fishery.

But the judge said the offending was serious because it related to large quantities of abalone.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/10/29/2727575.htm>

☐ Sea urchins destroying abalone reefs

Friday, 30 October 2009 8:05 AM

Sea urchins destroying abalone reefs

Wednesday, 28/10/2009



Abalone populations on Australia's east coast are being threatened by an increase in sea urchins.

Sea urchins are overpopulating reefs, destroying the biodiversity by creating a barren area called white rock.

Geoff Ellis, from Victoria's Eastern Abalone Zone, says urchins have forced the closure of two reefs in East Gippsland.

"I don't want to put a dollar figure on it, because a dollar figure reflects what it's doing now," he says.

"The real concern we have is what they're going to be doing in the near future.

"If something's not done, it could be significant to an extent of almost devastation.

"It's becoming a greater problem, and it really an issue now that needs to be dealt with, with a sledge hammer."

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/news/content/200910/s2726128.htm>

☐ Paua poacher jailed after throwing rocks

Friday, 30 October 2009 5:50 AM

Paua poacher jailed after throwing rocks

By MICHAEL FOX - Stuff.co.nz
Last updated 16:53 27/10/2009

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A serial paua poacher who fled a fisheries officer before throwing rocks at him in Titahi Bay has been sentenced to a year in jail.

The Fisheries Ministry said that on October 15 last year, Tulo Tuala and an associate collected paua for several hours at an area just south of Titahi Bay.

"When a fishery officer intervened Mr Tuala ran away and was pursued by the fishery officer. The fishery officer got within reach of Mr Tuala, who started throwing large rocks at the fishery officer," the Ministry said in a statement.

"The fishery officer was not struck by the rocks thrown and Mr Tuala was able to escape, leaving behind a pack containing 303 paua."

The Ministry said that Mr Tuala was already a banned fisher as a result of previous paua offending, including over 30 related convictions.

Ministry regional manager Ross Thurston said he hoped the jail sentence would be a lesson to others.

"There is a limit of 10 paua per gatherer per day that can be taken so that there is enough paua for everyone to catch a decent feed today, tomorrow and in the future. In this case, Mr Tuala, who has amassed in excess of 30 fisheries convictions just arrogantly and blatantly ignored the warnings he had been given."

In addition to a 12 months jail sentence, Judge Tuohy imposed another three year fishing ban on Mr Tuala.

www.stuff.co.nz/national/crime/3003716/Paua-poacher-jailed-after-th...

Big penalties for recidivist commercial fisher

Friday, 30 October 2009 5:35 AM

Big penalties for recidivist commercial fisher

Friday, 23 October 2009, 2:58 pm

Press Release: Ministry of Fisheries

23 October 2009

Big penalties for recidivist commercial fisher

A Chatham Islands commercial fisher has received financial penalties totalling more than \$170,000 for illegal paua fishing.

Valentine Croon Junior, 36, took an estimated 1200 kilograms of paua with a commercial value of about \$39,000 using underwater breathing apparatus (UBA), which is not a permitted method.

The Chatham Islands businessman was observed by a Fishery Officer in 2007 removing scuba equipment from his fishing vessel Energizer. The scuba equipment was hidden in a small cave.

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His argument that "diving on air" should be permitted in what he saw as the unique Chatham Islands fishery was not accepted by the court. District Court Judge McKegg said that despite the different views on this - Croon claimed it promoted preservation and protection from shark attacks - the current law was that UBA was prohibited in the paua fishery.

This was the offender's fourth conviction for having UBA on a commercial vessel and his second for taking fish using UBA.

Judge McKegg took into account the premeditated nature of the offending and the need to set penalties at a level that made it "patently uneconomic" rather than a justified commercial risk in imposing these penalties:

A \$20,000 fine on the charge of possession of UBA aboard a commercial vessel

A \$65,000 fine on the charge of possession of paua taken with UBA

A \$3,350 fine on the charge of using a vessel when not the notified user

\$390 total court costs (\$130 per charge)

A \$10,000 redemption fee for the return of the vessel Nancy Kay II
 A \$20,000 redemption fee for the return of the offender's vehicle
 Permanent forfeiture of the Energizer valued at \$50,000
 Permanent forfeiture of scuba gear valued at \$4,000.

Croon was also banned from commercial fishing for three years.

Not permitting UBA was "an effort to protect the paua fishery in deeper water, beyond the reach of divers holding their breath," said Ministry of Fisheries Christchurch Field Operations Manager Peter Hyde. "In this way there will always be some paua left behind to maintain the breeding stock."

Ministry of Fisheries Chief Executive Wayne McNee said he was very disappointed that Croon had not changed his behaviour despite his previous convictions for similar offences. "I hope these penalties serve as a warning to others who might be similarly tempted, wherever they are fishing," Mr McNee said.

"I applaud the work of our staff following through on one of the actions in the Fisheries 2030 goal and action plan: 'Optimise the level of voluntary compliance with fisheries laws and standards and maintain an effective deterrence against illegal activity'," Wayne McNee concluded.

ends

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/BU0910/S00647.htm>

Abalone fishing days open

Friday, 30 October 2009 5:12 AM

Abalone fishing days open

20th October 2009 11:06:08 AM

HOBSONS Bay abalone divers should have their utensils ready as Fisheries Victoria has announced the 60 nominated open days for recreational take.

The 2009-2010 season for abalone take from central Victorian marine waters was announced last week and will include areas around Hobsons Bay.

Fisheries Victoria acting executive director Anthony Hurst said most of the open days would be held on weekends and public holidays between November and May next year, including 11 consecutive days over Christmas and four over Easter.

Mr Hurst reminded abalone fishers that the state-wide abalone bag-limit was five, of which no more than two could be greenlip.

"An interim minimum legal size of 13cm for blacklip abalone remains in place from the mouth of the Hopkins River to the South Australian border to assist the rebuilding of stocks affected by the abalone disease," he said.

Free pocket cards outlining the open days will be available from early November. For details on nominated days visit www.dpi.vic.gov.au and follow the recreational fishing link. The 60 nominated days include 21, 22, 28, 29 November, 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20 December. From 24 December – 3 January, 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24, 26, 30, 31 January.

13, 14, 20, 21, 27, 28 February, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 20, 21, 27, 28 March, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 17, 18, 24, 25, 26 April, 1, 2 May.

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/story/81395>

New rules make life easier for paua farmers

Friday, 30 October 2009 5:09 AM

New rules make life easier for paua farmers

By MICHAEL FORBES - The Southland Times

Last updated 05:00 19/10/2009

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Paua farmers can get special permits to take the small amounts of breeding stock they need from the ocean themselves, under new government rules.

But the Paua Industry Council warns that could result in a lack of species diversity, which may cause deformities and diseases strong enough to wipe out fish stocks.

Fisheries Minister Phil Heatley approved the issuing of special permits to paua farmers, which exempt them from a minimum quota (ACE) holding for paua.

The change came into effect on October 1. The minimum amount of paua quota a commercial fisher can hold in the PAU5A catchment around Southland is one tonne, which far exceeds the 40kg or so required by farmers.

As a result, farmers had to get breeding paua from commercial sources, such as paua divers and quota holders.

"That worked well where farmers had good working relationships with local paua divers, but some, such as Southern Marine Farms (in Bluff), appeared to be having difficulty," Mr Heatley said.

David Corbin, of Southern Marine Farms, said the old law was holding it back. "We only need about 200 animals but no quota holder wants to sell us 40kg of paua, they want to sell four tonnes of it."

The law change could increase the hatchery's production from 1.2 million to 2 million paua per year, he said.

But Paua Industry Council chief executive Jeremy Cooper said allowing farmers to repeatedly breed from stock in their own waters would generate a lot of inbred paua leading to deformities, a lack of genetic fitness and the development of diseases.

He believed a centralised supply of brood stock (breeding paua) and spat (juvenile paua), which could be certified and tagged before being sent out to farms, was a better way to go.

But Mr Corbin dismissed these concerns and said genetic diversity would be maintained under the new law, as the paua in southern waters was already a mix of abalone from other areas.

"When paua spawn, the larvae swim for anything up to 15 days before settling. Who knows where they end up after 15 days?"

Paua farmers need to contact the Fisheries Ministry office in Nelson to apply for a special permit.

michael.forbes@stl.co.nz

www.stuff.co.nz/southland-times/business/2976599/New-rules-make-lif...

Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment

Friday, 30 October 2009 5:07 AM



Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment

Monday, 19 October 2009

Tasmania

Explore the possibilities

Elephant Rock Research Area Boundary Extension

The Elephant Rock Research Area off St Helens, where control of the long-spined sea urchin by rock lobster predation is being trialled by Tasmanian Aquaculture and Fisheries Institute scientists, is to have its boundaries extended from November 1st.

As with the established area, the extended area will also be closed to commercial and recreational fishing by diving and the use of rock lobster pots or rings for up to three years.

However, recreational fishing for scalefish by rod and line is permitted and the use of setlines and gillnets is permitted outside the Shark Refuge area.

The boundary extension will reduce the inadvertent capture of the large research rock lobsters, which initial trial results show are preying on the destructive introduced long-spined sea urchin (*Centrostephanus rodgersii*).

The urchins overgraze on seaweeds and algae on rocky reef areas, which are a key habitat for abalone and rock lobster as well as a nursery area for many scalefish species.

The Elephant Rock Research Area was declared in April 2008 as part of a research project attempting to control long-spined sea urchin numbers in an urchin-affected area around Elephant Rock.

To test how effective rock lobster are at preying on the urchins in wild conditions, researchers increased the population of large rock lobsters there.

Observations so far indicate a small downward trend in urchin numbers. The research also indicates that the released lobsters are ranging toward the extremities of the current designated research area while foraging for food.

Some regrowth of seaweed and algae on the barrens created by the urchins has also been noted.

The large rock lobster released into the research area are specially marked with two separate holes of at least 5mm in diameter in the tail fan and two lines of blue and/or yellow coloured dye in the muscle tissue on the underside of the rock lobster's tail. A new blue T-bar tag under the tail has the words: "TAFI RESEARCH ILLEGAL TO TAKE".

As well as the fishing restrictions within the research area, it is an offence to be in possession of these marked research rock lobster, which must be immediately released if taken in State waters.

For more information about the research area, please contact the Wild Fisheries Management Branch, DPIPW on (03) 6233 7042 (03) 6233 7042 or visit www.fishing.tas.gov.au

<http://www.media.tas.gov.au/release.php?id=28155>

Adventure tourism reaches new depths

Friday, 30 October 2009 4:59 AM

Adventure tourism reaches new depths

[Home](#) » [News](#) » [Dunedin](#)

By [Mark Price](#) on Mon, 12 Oct 2009

[Your Town: Dunedin](#) | [News: Dunedin](#)

Tourists could be diving with great white sharks in Foveaux Strait this summer if a code of conduct can be agreed between operators and other parties.

A meeting in Invercargill last month between the Department of Conservation, two shark-diving operators and a paua divers' representative, was considered by all parties to have been constructive.

One of the operators, Sawyers Bay fisherman Peter Scott, has built an alloy cage which he suspends over the back of his fishing boat near the Muttonbird Islands north of Halfmoon Bay township.

So far, only he and a few camera operators have ventured into the underwater cage for a close-up experience with the great whites that frequent the area.

Click photo to enlarge

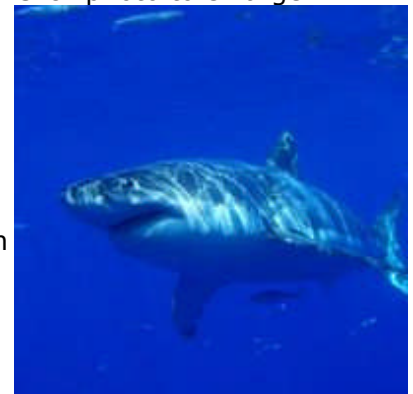


Photo supplied.

But he wants to broaden the venture to include tourists and the public.

Southern Islands area manager for the Department of Conservation Andy Roberts told the Otago Daily Times he hoped a permitting system and a code of conduct could be agreed so a "framework" was "up and running by next year".

In June last year, paua divers expressed fears a tourist operation would attract more sharks, change their behaviour and endanger divers' lives.

Paua representative John Hildebrand said shark diving was "a whole new ball game" but the meeting was "not acrimonious".

"Everybody voiced their opinion and, for me, it felt like there were no major problems at all, providing we work through the finer [details]."

The divers wanted controls on who could carry out the shark diving and controls on how they operated - particularly how operators would attract sharks to their underwater cages.

"We don't want to get bitten. Our biggest concern is that there could be a change in behavioural patterns."

White sharks turn up in greatest numbers in Foveaux Strait from February until April although it was believed to be "quite a small population".

Diving with white sharks was a big industry in South Africa, Mexico and South Australia.

Mr Scott is just back from the island of Guadelupe, off the Pacific coast of Mexico, where tourists each pay \$4000 to go underwater to see the sharks

www.odt.co.nz/your-town/dunedin/77700/adventure-tourism-reaches-new...

☒ Paua of Babel' trial set for February

Friday, 30 October 2009 4:58 AM

'Paua of Babel' trial set for February

Lawyers have been told to consider whether two weeks is a realistic time for a paua poaching trial in which Chinese and Samoan interpreters will be needed at the same time.

The trial involving five Samoan-speaking defendants was set today for February 1, before a judge-alone in the Christchurch District Court.

Two Chinese-speaking witnesses will give evidence of buying black market paua, on the first day of the hearing.

Questions asked in English will need to be translated into Chinese, and the answers translated into English and then into Samoan for the defendants.

"Counsel need to think very carefully about whether two weeks is realistic," said Judge Michael Crosbie. "I am sure it has been done this way before, but perhaps not down here."

He is arranging for a meeting beforehand between the five defence counsel and the trial judge, to ensure that all arrangements are in place.

Grant Fletcher appears as prosecutor for the Ministry of Fisheries.

The accused are pleading not guilty to charges of taking excess paua, taking undersized paua, and possessing paua with intent to obtain a benefit.

<http://courtnews.co.nz/story.php?id=2260>

☒ 630,000 abalone conspiracy

Friday, 30 October 2009 4:37 AM

\$630,000 abalone conspiracy

NICK CLARK

October 06, 2009 07:40am

A DIVER received abalone worth \$630,254 after he allowed other divers to fish for his quota, a court has heard.

Peter Joachim Kossmann, 52, of Blackhills Rd, Rowella, pleaded guilty to four counts of conspiracy to commit a crime between 2000 and November 2002.

Crown prosecutor Daryl Coates said Kossmann had eight abalone units for fishing near Flinders Island, known as the "Furieux units", which permitted the holder to catch the abalone.

However, Kossmann had allowed other divers to catch his quota and falsely filled in dive docket for the Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment saying he had caught them.

"He obviously knew what he was doing was the wrong thing to do," Mr Coates said.

He applied for a pecuniary penalty of \$336,140 under the Crime Confiscation of Profits Act.

The court heard that Kossmann was almost certain to lose his fishing licence.

Mr Coates said Kossmann had been warned in 1992 that the units were not transferable and in 1995 that it was illegal to harvest quota not consigned to the diver.

The court heard that three other abalone divers had been sentenced over the conspiracy.

All had lost their licences.

Mr Coates said Kossmann had at times been present at landing to receive abalone.

The divers were paid between \$4.50 and \$8.25 a kilogram.

One count covered 5.15 tonnes of abalone worth \$237,766 for which a diver was paid \$27,330.

A second count comprised 3.94 tonnes worth \$176,457 for which a diver was paid \$23,385.

In total Kossmann signed 32 false dive docket relating to 14.35 tonnes of abalone worth \$630,254. He paid seven commercial licenced abalone divers.

Mr Coates said the abalone resource had not been threatened by Kossmann's conduct.

"However, my submission is that his conduct threatens the entire regulatory system which is based on divers filling out dive docket accurately," he said.

Phillip Dunn, for Mr Kossmann, said that the eight units Kossmann would forfeit would be worth \$2.4 million.

"Because of a misunderstanding of the difference between taking and catching, his loss will be greater than \$3 million," he said.

Mr Dunn said that Kossmann had been under financial pressure at the time of the offences.

He had also recently had an award of \$3 million against him in favour of Tasmanian Seafoods owner Alan Hansen.

Justice Alan Blow will sentence Kossmann on October 28, but said he "did not need to bring his toothbrush".

www.themercury.com.au/article/2009/10/06/101615_scalesofjustice.html

☐ Abalone conspiracy guilty

Friday, 30 October 2009 4:36 AM

Abalone conspiracy guilty

Posted October 5, 2009 12:30:00

- [Map: Rowella 7270](#)

A 52 year old northern Tasmanian man has pleaded guilty to three counts of conspiracy for allowing other abalone divers to catch some of his restricted fishing units.

Peter Joachim Kossmann of Rowella allowed other abalone divers to fish in eight of his diving units

around the Furneaux Group islands between 2000 and 2002, despite knowing only he could fish in those places.

The Criminal Court in Launceston heard that Kossman falsified diver docket, saying he had caught 14 tonnes of abalone in the 20 month period, but they had been caught by other divers on his behalf.

The court was told the abalone was worth \$630,000.

Kossman will be sentenced later this month.

www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/10/05/2704944.htm?site=northtas

☐ New Minimum Legal Size For Paua In Taranaki

Friday, 30 October 2009 4:24 AM

New Minimum Legal Size For Paua In Taranaki

Wednesday, 30 September 2009, 2:11 pm
Press Release: Ministry of Fisheries

30 September 2009

New Minimum Legal Size For Paua In Taranaki From Tomorrow

The Ministry of Fisheries is reminding paua divers that a new minimum legal size of 85mm in shell length comes into effect tomorrow (1 October 2009) for the Taranaki region.

Taranaki paua are naturally small or 'stunted' and never reach the minimum legal size of 125mm for paua across the rest of New Zealand, maturing and breeding at a much smaller size.

The new size will be a trial basis for the next five years and will mean recreational fishers can gather paua at the new minimum legal size of 85mm in shell length from between the Awakino and Wanganui rivers. This includes most paua beds within the Taranaki region.

A trial period is necessary as the measures have never been applied before in New Zealand's paua fisheries.

A daily bag limit of 10 paua per fisher per day will apply.

"The current information we have indicates there is a sustainable paua fishery in Taranaki but the paua are naturally small" said Ministry of Fisheries Inshore Fishery Manager Leigh Mitchell.

"We need Taranaki paua fishers to play their part and follow the rules so there will be paua to catch in years to come" she said.

Ms Mitchell also reminded people intending to catch paua under the new minimum legal size that there is now a limit on how many paua they can accumulate. This limit is 20 individual paua (2 daily bag limits) or 2.5 kgs of shucked paua meat. Paua divers can still only take 10 paua per person per day; the accumulation limit applies to storing the paua they have gathered, for example in their home freezer.

"Improving access to fisheries while respecting environmental limits is the type of management the Ministry of Fisheries is pursuing as part of Fisheries 2030, the Government's 20 year goal and action plan for the fisheries sector" Ms Mitchell said.

The ability to take paua at the smaller size of 85mm shell length is restricted to the Taranaki Amateur Paua Fishery Area. It is illegal to take or possess paua below the Minimum Legal Size of 125mm in shell length outside this area.

A map of the Taranaki Amateur Paua Fishery Area is available on the Ministry of Fisheries website.
 Background

A scientific study conducted by the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA) on the Taranaki paua fishery has shown that Taranaki paua are naturally small.

This means they generally only reach a maximum size of about 90-100mm shell length rather than the national Minimum Legal Size of 125mm.

While stunted paua populations also occur in many other areas in the country, it is not well understood why they form in some areas and not in others. However, it is believed that it is a combination of genetic and environmental factors that cause some paua not to grow to a large size.

Small paua are abundant throughout the Taranaki region and can be harvested with relative ease (particularly during extremely low 'king tides' that occur every 1-2 months).

The Ministry of Fisheries plans to commission a further study on the Taranaki paua fishery in 4-5 years time to evaluate the impacts of recreational fishing.

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PO0909/S00346.htm>

☐ New fishing rules come into effect on 1 October

Friday, 30 October 2009 4:22 AM

New fishing rules come into effect on 1 October

Wednesday, 30 September 2009, 2:14 pm

Press Release: Ministry of Fisheries

Media release from the Ministry of Fisheries for immediate use

30 September 2009

New fishing rules come into effect on 1 October

Two sets of national fishing regulations come into effect on 1 October, the Ministry of Fisheries has announced. The new rules relate to paua and rock lobster (crayfish).

In relation to paua, the "accumulation defence" – claiming that large numbers of the shellfish in your freezer are the result of many previous days fishing – no longer applies.

The Fisheries (Amateur Fishing) Regulations 1986 have been changed for every area (except Fiordland) to restrict the amount of paua a person can have in their possession on any day. This is done by setting an accumulation limit of 20 paua, which is twice the daily bag limit, or the equivalent meat weight of paua (2.5 kilograms). Maori customary rights are not affected by this change – however, customary fishers should always remember to carry their authorisations.

"The accumulation limit will help further with compliance activity at the points of storage, transport and export," said Andrew Coleman, Ministry of Fisheries Deputy Chief Executive Field Operations.

"We will work with Customs New Zealand to restrict the personal export of paua to the 20 paua or 2.5-kilogram meat weight accumulation limit in order to stop the export of illegally caught paua."

Paua fishers are advised to carefully label their catch to make sure they meet the new rule, noting particularly the date of catch on bags and other containers.

Turning to rock lobster, recreational fishers can now use hand-operated lassoes to gather crayfish in all New Zealand waters.

Also known as cray loops, this method is likely to be less damaging than some currently permitted methods (including hand gathering) and will also improve recreational divers' ability to catch rock lobster safely.

Spring loaded lassoes are banned, however. "This type of lasso can damage lobsters and reduce their chances of surviving on release," said Andrew Coleman.

"This change helps divers catch lobsters while minimising the risk of damage in the process. It also makes the rules about lassoes much clearer and easier to enforce."

Hand-operated lassoes are a species-specific target method that is unlikely to affect other marine life or the environment.

Daily bag limits of six lobsters per fisher per day are in place to control overall catch in the amateur sector.

"These new rules will help the Ministry implement one of the actions in the recently released Fisheries 2030 goal and plan of action," Andrew Coleman concluded. "We are aiming to optimise the level of voluntary compliance with fisheries laws and standards, and to maintain an effective

deterrence against illegal activity.”

If members of the public see any activity they think is suspicious, including large accumulations of paua or crayfish being caught in unusual ways, they should call 0800 4 POACHER (0800 476224 0800 476224).

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PO0909/S00347.htm>

Home / October 10th, 2009; Vol.176 #8 / Feature Enter the Virosphere As evidence

Saturday, 26 September 2009 7:11 PM

Home / [October 10th, 2009; Vol.176 #8](#) / Feature Enter the Virosphere

As evidence of the influence of viruses escalates, appreciation of these master manipulators grows
By [Rachel Ehrenberg](#)

[October 10th, 2009; Vol.176 #8](#) (p. 22)

Text Size



[Enlarge](#)

[BLOOM AND BUST](#)[View larger version](#) | Viruses prey on

marine floaters known as coccolithophores, which are characterized by their calcium carbonate plates. Two such victims, *Gephyrocapsa oceanica* (left) and *Emiliana huxleyi* are notable for their "blooms" (satellite image, above), population bursts that change the color of the seas and influence global temperatures by increasing the amount of light reflected off the planet. Killed by viruses, the victims' cells fall apart, releasing nutrients and sequestering carbon in the oceans. From left: Photo by Neon JA, colored by Richard Bartz/Wikimedia Commons; NASA

If he were starring in a campy horror flick, Tim Rowbotham might have gasped and whispered, "It's alive!" As a microbiologist with Britain's Public Health Laboratory Service, he had isolated an unknown microorganism from an amoeba growing in a water tower in Bradford, England. Rowbotham baptized the entity "Bradford coccus." He added his new specimen to the collection of bacteria that live within amoebas and continued the search for the cause of a pneumonia outbreak plaguing the citizens of Bradford.

But Rowbotham hadn't discovered a bacterium. He had actually found a gigantic virus—one so large and possessing such a peculiar mixture of traits that it is challenging the very notion of what it means to be alive.

Viruses have long been regarded as nonliving entities. They don't have the machinery to make new viruses, nor do they have a discernible metabolism (you won't hear a virus declare "as I live and breathe," and not just because they don't have mouths). Viruses are typically thought to barely have genetic material to call their own, characterized instead as ghostly gene-thieves who prey upon and steal from real organisms. But as scientists shine the spotlight on the shadow economy of the virus world, a new vision of viruses is emerging. Rather than furtive thieves, viruses are more like commodities dealers, playing a major role in transferring genes from one organism to another. The acquisition of new genes may dramatically alter the lifestyle of the organism that gets the goods, allowing it to invade a new environment, for example, or fight off predators.

Viruses also may keep genes they've procured, and even bundle these assets together, as appears to be the case with several photosynthesis genes recently found in marine viruses. These finds hint at the vast viral

contribution to the ocean's gross national product and viruses' significance in global energy production.

"Viruses are major drivers of nutrient and energy cycles on the planet," says marine virologist Curtis Suttle of the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada.

This increased appreciation of the viral influence on cellular life today is reviving debate about the role viruses may have played in the planet's primordial days, scientists say. Viruses may even be at the root of the cellular tree of life, participating in the evolution of the eukaryotic nucleus.

"Viruses are and have been a main force in the evolution of life on the planet," says Jean-Michel Claverie of the Mediterranean Institute of Microbiology in Marseille, France. "They remain a leading force in the cellular world."

Of course, part of that force is virus as bad guy. From the common cold to influenza to Ebola, viruses have long been recognized as agents of illness and death. Viruses infect all domains of life—from plants and animals to protists and bacteria. In fact, viruses lurk behind many ailments blamed on bacteria. For example, the bacterium that causes diphtheria does so only when it carries a virus.

Scientists have long been well acquainted with the nefarious activities of these viruses of doom, but now a more productive view of death by virus is emerging. Viruses don't just kill plants and animals—they kill the organisms at the bottom of the food chain, deaths that have dramatic implications. "If you take viruses out of seawater, counterintuitively, things stop growing," Suttle says. In death, victims of viruses release nutrients. "Their killing feeds the world."



[Enlarge](#)

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Viruses also may have introduced a DNA-repair gene into the octocorals, which include the organ-pipe coral and sea fans. Clues to this transaction come from relatives of one of the most spectacular viruses known today—the supersized beastie from the water tower in England. Now known as mimivirus, it's more than 4,000 times the mass of the common cold virus. After its discovery, analyses of DNA from ocean samples revealed an abundance of mimivirus relatives. That search also led to the discovery of a version of *MutS*, a DNA-repair gene known from bacteria but never before seen in viruses.

So far, mimivirus's marine relatives all seem to have this version of *MutS*. An octocoral ancestor may have acquired the gene from a marine mimivirus, sometime after the octocoral lineage split from that of the true corals, Claverie and colleagues reported in July in the *Journal of Invertebrate Pathology*.

In addition to acting as gene brokers, viruses appear to keep some of what they've garnered for themselves. Seven genes, part of a set needed for photosynthesis, were recently found in the genomes of viruses that infect marine cyanobacteria. These genes encode directions for making photosystem I, a protein complex that nabs electrons from proteins upstream in the photosynthesis chain. In a cyanobacterium, these genes are separated by good-sized chunks of DNA. But in viruses, the genes appear to have been packaged into a cassette, with two of the bacterial genes fused into one, scientists from the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology and other institutions reported online August 26 in *Nature*.

Because the genes are separated in the cyanobacterium but next to each other in the viral DNA, they probably represent multiple acquisitions, says Matthew Sullivan of the University of Arizona in Tucson. And the viral version of photosystem I might be able to nab more electrons than the algae version, and thus photosynthesize more efficiently.

"The virus definitely seems to have its own agenda," says Shannon Williamson, director of environmental virology at the J. Craig Venter Institute in San Diego. Examples of coordinated gene collection by viruses are increasing, she notes. "It's much more common than we anticipated, and we're starting to see there really is no restriction on the types of genes they can acquire."

As sampling of the oceans continues, similar instances of gene wheeling and dealing will probably emerge. The hunt for the viral photosystem I genes began with the scientists combing the database of DNA collected in the Global Ocean Sampling Expedition, which has so far done extensive collecting in waters from French Polynesia to Antarctica. The 2009–2010 expedition, now underway, includes visits to the Mediterranean and Black seas. Since these bodies of water are relatively isolated, they may harbor especially odd viruses.

Sullivan is part of a second virus-seeking mission, dubbed project OViD (ocean virus diversity), which began a three-year seafaring trip on September 4 to study the planet's ocean ecosystems.

Scientists are pretty jazzed about these explorations of ocean microbial diversity. Yet viruses may be even more prevalent in soils than in the sea, Williamson says. She is working on a project to compare the diversity of viruses in agricultural and nonfarmed land. "Pretty much anywhere you look you are going to find viruses," she says.

That includes freshwater locales, such as the water tower where mimivirus was discovered in 1992. It took a decade for scientists to realize that "Bradford coccus" wasn't a bacterium, says Didier Raoult of CNRS in Marseille. Raoult had no luck trying to digest the critter's cell wall and decided to image the thing with a scanning electron microscope. To his surprise, the "bacterium" looked like an iridovirus—icosahedral

viruses that infect some insects, fish and frogs. But it was enormous.

Viruses aren't supposed to be visible under a light microscope; they are typically far too small. But mimivirus ("mimi" for mimicking microbe) isn't just big for a virus, it's bigger than some bacteria. Analyses of its DNA, cataloged in 2004, revealed that it also has more genetic material than some bacteria and certainly more than any other previously seen virus. The mimivirus genome contains genes for more than 900 proteins. (In contrast, T4—which, pre-mimi, was considered a large virus—has about 77 genes.) Some of the mimivirus genes appear to be involved in processes thought to be conducted only by cellular creatures—the virus's hosts—such as translating messenger RNA into proteins. All in all, mimivirus seriously unsettled the world of virus research.

"I think the discovery really messed up the heads of a lot of people," says Eugene Koonin of the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Md.

Mimivirus has proved startling on another front: It's big enough that other viruses infect it. In September 2008 in *Nature*, scientists including Raoult and Koonin reported a new strain of mimivirus. Dubbed mamavirus, it is slightly larger than mimi and was also isolated from an amoeba. The mamavirus was infected with a smaller virus that the scientists called Sputnik. There was some speculation that Sputnik might just be coinfecting the amoeba, but a new analysis by Claverie and Chantal Abergel, to appear in the *Annual Review of Genetics*, reports that Sputnik is truly infecting mamavirus and cares little about the larger amoeba universe.

Putting viruses in their place

Discoveries of such bacteria-dwarfing viruses have revived an old debate about what it means to be alive and

where viruses fit in the big evolutionary picture. More than 80 percent of mimi's genes have no resemblance to cellular genes, suggesting that it isn't an errant gene thief gone wild. This is true of much of the viral genetic material out there, Suttle says. "It's like discovering unknown life-forms."

No one gene is found in all viruses, but a small pool of genes, dubbed "hallmark genes" by Koonin, are found in many viruses. Because viruses infect all kinds of life and can be made of all forms of genetic material (DNA or RNA, either single- or double-stranded), Koonin argues that viruses may have predated cellular life. A sort of "previrus being" perhaps formed in the nooks of a hydrothermal vent, he speculates. Some scientists have even argued that viruses were involved in the origin of the nucleus. A fundamental split in the tree of life divides organisms with a nucleus—their DNA is sequestered from the cell's cytoplasm in a protective membrane—from organisms without a nucleus. Eukaryotes, which include yeast, plants and people, have nuclei. Creatures without nuclei comprise a messy mixture of microorganisms, such as bacteria—and viruses, if they are included in the tree of life at all.

"Fundamentally, what is a nucleus?" asks Claverie. "Its goal in the cell is to replicate its own DNA using machinery outside of itself, in the cytoplasm. That's what a virus does."

Data don't really support the nucleus-as-virus notion, says evolutionary biologist Anthony Poole of Stockholm University in Sweden. Studies suggest that the nucleus emerged from a cell folding into itself. But Poole still finds the virus idea interesting.

"Speculation in this field is quite important," he says. "It can be nonsense, but it can lead to new ideas you can test and then we can progress a little bit."

The role of viruses in the history of life—and whether viruses should be considered alive—was debated in a flurry of correspondence in the August *Nature Reviews Microbiology*. (Scientists including Koonin, Claverie and Raoult weighed in.) While the philosophical "life" question will probably remain unanswered, Raoult says, research clearly shows that viruses are a vital force, no matter how they are labeled. "Words are just to communicate," he says. "They don't reveal the truth."

[www.sciencenews.org/view/feature/id/47695/title/Enter the Virosphere](http://www.sciencenews.org/view/feature/id/47695/title/Enter_the_Virosphere)

Leadership role for Woolford

Friday, 25 September 2009 7:59 PM

Leadership role for Woolford

BONNIE PUCKRIDGE

16/09/2009 11:30:00 PM



FRESH IDEAS: Jonas Woolford is hoping to put the skills he has been learning in the Australian Rural Leadership Program to good use after being inducted as president of the South Australian Abalone Industry Association on Friday.

LOCAL man Jonas Woolford was inducted as president of the South Australian Abalone Industry Association last Friday and he hopes to use the skills he is gaining in the Australian Rural Leadership Program to help the industry.

Mr Woolford is one of the 33 participants of the program and has participated in two sessions with four more sessions to follow.

Leadership and communication are two skills Mr Woolford was able to improve through the first session of trekking through the Kimberley with a group of other participants.

The leadership program's second session was media training, and this will be put to good use in

representing the association and asking the right questions to benefit the industry as a whole.

Mr Woolford said he hoped to bring some fresh ideas to the table as president and he was looking forward to working with all those involved in the industry, including government, community leaders and growers.

The program aims to allow participants to help increase the sustainability, competitiveness and profit in their primary industry and increase the sustainability for rural and regional communities.

www.portlincolntimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/leadership-role...

☐ Crackdown: Police and Customs security raid Chinese shops in Durban. Friday, 25 September 2009 7:29 PM



Crackdown: Police and Customs security raid Chinese shops in Durban. *Photo: Jacques Naude, The Mercury*

- **Gallery: Police raid Chinese shops**

Seafood ring bust in raid

September 22 2009 at 09:00AM

By Nompumelelo Magwaza

From a shop front advertising clothing, shoes and handbags, a group of Chinese nationals allegedly operated an international poaching syndicate, smuggling seafood delicacies from Durban to Asian countries.

The syndicate was bust and three Chinese men were arrested during a raid by officials in central Durban yesterday.

More than 200kg of abalone, a protected species, and two tons of other seafood delicacies were seized during the raid on a complex by police officers and officials of the Home Affairs Department, the Customs and Excise Department, National Ports Authority and Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife.

This was the second major bust in Durban in two weeks, after R600-million worth of hashish and heroin was seized on Tuesday last week.

Three British citizens and three South Africans were arrested in Durban, and a fourth person was arrested in London in connection with the haul.

Ezemvelo marine prosecution officer Wayne Evans said the abalone and other

seafood - with an estimated street value of R600 000 - had been found in a freezer in one of the stores in the complex.

Evans said investigations showed that the shop owners had no invoices for the seafood.

"Such illegal possession of abalone is likely to be linked to an international poaching syndicate that operates between South Africa and Asian countries."

Evans said he believed that the delicacies were bound for shipment out of the country, and added that this was not the first such raid in the province.

"Early this year, a man was arrested at his farm in Stanger for the illegal possession of abalone."

He said abalone could cost R800 to R1 000/kg on the black market.

"These delicacies are usually smuggled while frozen, and they are more expensive if they are bought in that state."

A senior scientist from the Oceanographic Research Institute, Bruce Mann, said abalone was found in the Eastern Cape and Western Cape coastal areas because it preferred a cool environment.

He said the molluscs were found only in South Africa, Australia and California.

"This species is mostly used as a delicacy by people in Asian countries such as Taiwan, China and Japan. They are considered a treat because they are scarce."

Mann said the South African government had banned the fishing of abalone because it was being exploited.

"The fishing of abalone became illegal a few years ago because many people were fishing illegally and did not give it a chance to grow. Although the species lives for a long time, it also takes time to mature, making it easy to overfish."

"In South Africa there are only nine farms which are allowed to grow abalone, and they are all situated in Cape Town. Abalone is not found in KwaZulu-Natal, and one can assume that these were ready to be shipped out of the country."

Customs spokesman Sebalwenathi Mfabe said that police had searched the building for much of yesterday, and were likely to resume the raid today.

He said their investigations had been prompted by contraventions of the refugee status of some of the people trading in the building.

"The operation was endorsed by the government and all the agencies involved. At the moment we are still going through boxes and some rooms in the building."

Mfabe said the Chinese nationals arrested were being detained by home affairs officials.

This article was originally published on page 1 of [The Mercury](#) on

September 22, 2009

www.iol.co.za/index.php?...ick_id=15&art_id=vn20090922055725453C543850

☐ Ethanol, or E10 – it will never be 'mates' with boats

Thursday, 24 September 2009 2:39 PM

Ethanol, or E10 – it will never be 'mates' with boats



'Outboard Motor repairs can be expensive'

It's marketed through Australian Brazilian, European, US service stations as E10, signifying the pump will dispense gasoline with 10 percent ethanol added.

Many 'good things' are claimed for this additive – many it believe burns cleaner, substantially reduces carbon monoxide emissions and green house gases.

Sounds good, right? Wrong! Not if you're boat owner.

Personally, I have found the subject rather confusing and have been fortunate in having some 'gold plated' assistance in delving into

the ethanol situation in the form of Gary Fooks.

Gary Fooks is chairman of the Eco-Friendly Fishing Association and a man who has been a consultant to government authorities, boating industry associations and even boat builders.

Despite the fact that has been issuing warnings for some time, Fooks was astounded when he visited the Melbourne Boat Show three months ago and discovered many boat manufacturers remained blissfully unaware of the problems posed by ethanol.

'I spoke with several manufacturers while I was in Melbourne and the vast majority were simply unaware of the problem or failed to recognise any seriousness with it,' he explained, and added 'I feel the main issue is that people are assuming it's an outboard problem.

'But it's actually a hull problem. Most modern outboards can cope with E10, yet very few fuel systems are ready.

'Manufacturers in the automotive industry have reacted somewhat faster and plastics and rubbers with the durability to withstand ethanol's corrosive effects on fuel tanks, hoses, and seals have been developed.

'Sadly, boat manufacturers have been much slower to react and for that reason there are many boats in use today that will succumb to



Modern fuel tanks withstand ethanol corrosion, but they can't solve the phase separation. -

'We've been placing this message on all our boats now, probably for the past four-years or so,' Greg Haines said.

So what exactly is the ethanol problem?

Is your engine going to fail, explode, seize? Nothing like that, ethanol introduces its own problems for boat owners.

We've mentioned earlier the 'good side' of ethanol, so let's take a look at its bad side

Gary Fooks lists what he terms 'three crucial characteristics' associated with ethanol that boat owners should be aware of.

Basically, these three major problems are; it can totally dissolve fibreglass or corrode an aluminium fuel tank, it can 'eat' fuel lines and dissolved elements pass through the best filters into an engine causing fatal damage.

Next it has a very poor shelf life compared to regular petrol.

And third, the ethanol can separate compromising the fuel mixture and releasing a dose of 100% ethanol into fuel systems and engines that can only cope with a 10% dose.

Firstly, it must be remembered that ethanol, although produced from grains such as corn and sugarcane, is actually a strong solvent.

So any old fuel stains and crud in fuel tanks will be dissolved. It's nice that it will clean the tank, but the residue either blocks fuel filters, or passes through the filter and damages engines.

The shelf life area is alone a major problem for boaters; let's face it, few recreational boats are used on a daily basis.

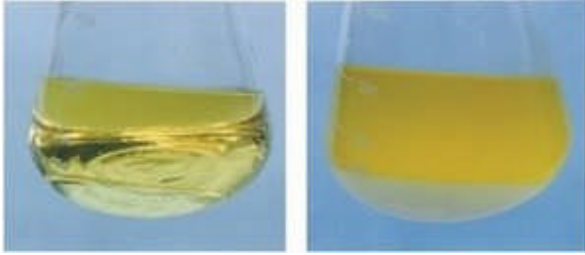
If there's a spell of inclement weather, for instance, a boat may sit unused for

malfunctions that can be attributed to ethanol, be it disintegrating fuel tanks to destroyed fuel lines. 'It's these dissolved elements that get into engines and destroy outboards' he added.

One Queensland boat manufacturer is anything but unaware – Greg Haines, of the Haines Marine Group, says all boats produced by the company, Signature, Traveller, Ensign, Seafarer, Walker Bay and Correct Craft, all carry a sticker prominently placed.

It reads – WARNING The use of fuel containing ethanol may cause damage to your fuel system and/or engine.

weeks.



Phase Separation in Gasoline -

During that time the ethanol evaporates away quickest, leaving 'sour' low octane fuel behind.

We know that stale fuel can spell all sorts of gumming and engine problems.

The trouble is that the shelf life of E10 is only two weeks!!! Shorter in hot weather or the boat is in the sun all day.

Idle time, especially when there is humidity about will also cause what is known as 'phase separation' ethanol separates, sinking to the bottom of the tank. There is absolutely no way in can be avoided or re-mixed.

So what is 'phase separation'?

Like brake fluid, ethanol is 'hygroscopic', which means it absorbs or attracts moisture. If it absorbs any water, even that from the air, 'phase separation' occurs when the ethanol separates from the gasoline.

The gasoline floats to the top of the tank, the ethanol sinks to the bottom.

When this layer of ethanol builds up to more than a few mm, the fuel pickup tube inside the tank will deliver a dose of near 100% ethanol to hoses, filters and engines that are only rated to handle 10%.

Once phase separation has occurred there is no way to remix the ethanol and gasoline.

This leaves the boat owner with only one option – the fuel tank must be completely drained.

Disposing of the fuel then presents a new problem.

No problems have been revealed with clean, fresh E10 and engines; all outboard manufacturers and distributors state most engines are designed to operate efficiently with 10 percent ethanol added to standard unleaded fuel. (check with your manufacturer for specific advice)

Next week, in part two of this important feature, we'll take a look at the alternatives and discuss some of the problems in more detail.

by Bob Wonders 5:21 PM Wed 23 Sep 2009

<http://www.powerboat-world.com/index.cfm?Nid=61595>

From: Ingleton, Tim

Wednesday, 23 September 2009 6:30 PM

From: Ingleton, Tim

Sent: Tuesday, 8 September 2009 1:10 p.m.

Subject: New paua rules for the Chatham Islands

Press Release from the Ministry of Fisheries for immediate use



8 September 2009

New paua rules for the Chatham Islands

The way commercial paua divers report their catch in the Chatham Islands will change on 1 October this year. Ministry of Fisheries Inshore Fishery Manager for the Chatham Islands Rose Grindley has announced today.

Currently paua divers have to land and report their catch using 'greenweight' which is the weight of the whole paua, still in its shell. From 1 October paua catch will be landed and reported as 'meat weight' which is the weight of the paua meat after it has been shucked.

Paua in some parts of the Chathams have a shell that is heavily 'fouled' with encrusting organisms. This makes it heavier than normal paua would be and commercial fishers recover less of the valuable paua meat from their catch entitlements in areas with encrusted paua.

"This means many fishers target their fishing into areas where the paua are not heavily encrusted to maximise the amount of paua meat they get from their catch" said Ms Grindley.

"This concentrates commercial fishing into certain areas while others are left untouched. This could lead to a situation of 'localised depletion'" she said.

The change to meat weight reporting will give fishers an incentive to spread their fishing into areas they would previously avoid because of the encrusted paua found there.

"This will help to avoid localised depletion and help the Chatham's paua industry and the Ministry of Fisheries to better manage the Chatham Island's paua stocks" Ms Grindley said.

The information gathered through catch reporting is used to monitor catch levels in the fishery and the health of the Chatham's paua stocks as well as to monitor paua fishers' catch against their Annual Catch Entitlement.

The Total Allowable Commercial catch for Chatham Islands paua is 326.543 tonnes. This catch was worth almost \$23 million in export earnings last fishing year (1 October to 30 September).

ENDS

For more information please contact

Rose Grindley

Inshore Fisheries Manager

03 474 2689

Tim Ingleton

Senior Communications Adviser

Phone 04 819 4236

Mobile 021 822 588

Clipboard Capture

www.standard.net.au/news/local/news/general/divers-earn-award-for-f...

ABALONE divers have been recognised with a state award for their efforts in handling a virus outbreak which devastated the industry.

☒ Divers earn award for fight against abalone virus - Local News - News - General - The Warrnambool Standard

Saturday, 19 September 2009 10:35 AM

Divers earn award for fight against abalone virus

BY PETER COLLINS

19/09/2009 4:00:00 AM



High price paid: Victorian Abalone Divers' Association executive officer Vin Gannon. 070215JW20
Picture: JEMMA WALLACE

ABALONE divers have been recognised with a state award for their efforts in handling a virus outbreak which devastated the industry.

Ganglioneuritis (AVG) was first reported in 2005 and has since spread as far as Cape Bridgewater and Aire River, causing some of the state's most productive coastline to be closed for harvesting.

Portland's Vin Gannon, executive officer of the Victorian Abalone Divers' Association, said the seafood industry environmental award came after considerable work to manage the area's recovery.

``We haven't had an active virus sighting for some months now," he said.

``We are cautiously optimistic it is under control and are awaiting better weather conditions to send research divers down for an update.

``Divers are still urged to wash their gear when changing location and to report any new disease outbreak or illegal harvesting."

The divers' association was instrumental in developing a bio-security system as well as raising community awareness to help stop the spread.

With most of the coast closed off the industry is only a shadow of what it was before 2005.

``We had the best quality and were world leaders in sustainability," Mr Gannon said.

``It's very marginal now. Market prices are only a quarter of what they were and abalone licences have fallen by about 75 per cent.

``Divers, deckhands and factory workers have left the industry and we face a severe shortage of deckhands."

Mr Gannon said the western zone now only had six regular divers, compared with 14 in the boom days, while the central zone numbers had dropped from 34 to 25.

Only Discovery Bay, Lady Julia Percy Island, Julia Banks near The Craggs and Discovery Bay are open for abalone harvesting in the western zone.

The region's abalone harvest has fallen from 280 tonnes a year to about 40.

www.themercury.com.au/article/2009/09/18/97955_scalesofjustice.html

Poor boat load checking MARINE and Safety Tasmania did not actively enforce load limits on abalone boats, a coronial inquest heard yesterday.

☒ Poor boat load checking Scales of Justice - The Mercury - The Voice of Tasmania

Friday, 18 September 2009 1:57 PM

Poor boat load checking

NICK CLARK

September 18, 2009 02:00am

MARINE and Safety Tasmania did not actively enforce load limits on abalone boats, a coronial inquest heard yesterday.

Workplace Standards Tasmania inspector Lawrence Jovich said he had investigated the death of deckhand David Colson on October 8, 2007.

Mr Jovich told Coroner Steve Carey that there were stricter load limits on recreational fishermen than commercial fishermen.

The inquest has previously heard that the vessel Too Easy owned by abalone diver Tony Burton was carrying 744kg of abalone on the day it sank -- compared with the 235kg limit it was later assigned.

Mr Jovich said police did not look at load limits but rather the carrying of safety equipment.

MAST manager of vessel standards and survey Gwynne Alway said MAST had no load limits in place at the time.

He said MAST did not have people available to inspect vessels but relied on police to do surveillance work.

The inquest heard in June that the vessel had no life jackets or VHF radio on board and that an EPIRB (emergency beacon) was never found by police.

Mr Colson died of hypothermia but Mr Burton was found by police on Perkins Island.

<http://www.gisborneherald.co.nz/article/?id=13950>

☐ Some paua does end up in dumpsters » The Gisborne Herald |
Gisborne's latest News, Sport, Family Notices, Photos and Events

Friday, 18 September 2009 7:31 AM

Some paua does end up in dumpsters

After seeing confiscations of massive amountsts of paua from refrigerations around the nation, can you please inform us just to what the inspectors of Coast Watch and others do with all this "black gold".

I am certain it does NOT go into the dumpsters!

Heneriata

Footnote:

Fisheries staff say that some of the paua actually does end up in dumpsters, months after it is seized.

When Fisheries officers seize undersized paua or crayfish, they release back to the sea any that are still alive.

This is done after photographing and recording the details.

They freeze that which is already dead or maimed . . . for later use as evidence.

In some instances, cases can take months to reach trial.

When the trial process has been completed, the evidence is dumped.

The officers are legally required to dispose of it, and this is carried out, even if it was not already overhanded and freezer-burned.

www.capetimes.co.za/?...onId=308&fArticleId=vn20090916041057789C502937

Cape Town's English morning newspaper, with South African and world news, sport and lifestyle

coverage. Has a strong weekly lifestyle section Top of the Times.

☐ Cape Times

Friday, 18 September 2009 7:25 AM

Abalone poaching: crisis point reached

16 September 2009, 07:17

By Craig McKune

Battling to make headway against abalone poaching, the Department of Environmental Affairs says it has reached a crisis point - it has failed and it needs help.

A dearth of resources means sections of coast are not monitored, and department staff cannot cope as they come up against sophisticated poachers complicit with gangs and drug lords.

This is according to the department's director-general Nosipho Ngcaba, who says she has asked for abalone poaching to be listed as a priority crime.

But the police, the National Prosecuting Authority, the SA Revenue Service and the Department of Justice have yet to agree to this.

Ngcaba said that Environmental Affairs Minister Buyelwa Sonjica had met Justice Minister Jeff Radebe to ask for the highly successful "green" courts to be revived.

The specialised courts ran only for a few years, but saw an 80 percent conviction rate.

Ngcaba appeared yesterday before Parliament's standing committee on public accounts (Scopa), which examined the findings of an auditor-general report on the department's handling of abalone that had been confiscated.

The report presented a shambolic picture of Marine and Coastal Management, which falls under the Department of Environmental Affairs and is financed through the Marine Living Resources Fund - in part through the sale of confiscated abalone.

The report found Marine and Coastal Management had no official policy on how to deal with confiscated abalone and had been sitting on an unfinished draft since 2007.

The Department of Environmental Affairs had failed to monitor the progress of court cases dealing with abalone poaching and did not know what to do with the abalone samples kept aside for court cases. About R1.1 million worth of abalone was being held for this purpose.

Thirty-five percent of confiscated abalone was not linked to confiscation and case numbers. This could complicate monitoring and the following up of court cases.

The delayed awarding of tenders for the processing of abalone and its monitoring meant confiscated abalone could not be processed and had to be stockpiled in 2006, leading to "severe" cash shortages for Marine and Coastal Management.

The service provider awarded the monitoring tender increased its price by R748 132 and payments to the service providers had far exceeded budgeted amounts.

Scopa chair Themba Godi said such losses would have to be incurred by the state,

but whoever was responsible would need to be held to account.

SA Abalone Industry Association spokesman Scott Russell said: "These types of hearings should not be happening at all.

"The department should not be earning R50m in a year (2007/08) from confiscated abalone. Instead they should be protecting the resource and the abalone should stay in the water."

This article was originally published on page 3 of The Cape Times on September 16, 2009

www.iol.co.za/index.php?...ick_id=13&art_id=vn20090916041057789C502937

Battling to make headway against abalone poaching, the Department of Environmental Affairs says it has failed and it needs help.

News - South Africa: Abalone poaching: crisis point reached

Friday, 18 September 2009 6:45 AM

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September 16 2009 at 07:17AM

By Craig McKune

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[Continues Below ↓](#)

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- **This article was originally published on page 3 of Cape Times on September 16, 2009**

www.theage.com.au/national/landmark-foi-cases-to-bring-new-era-of-s...

☐ Landmark FOI cases to bring new era of scrutiny

Sunday, 13 September 2009 7:42 PM

Landmark FOI cases to bring new era of scrutiny

MELISSA FYFE

September 13, 2009

THE Brumby Government will be forced to open itself up to greater scrutiny after the Opposition won two landmark freedom of information cases last week.

The two judgments are central to how information is accessed within Government departments. FOI officers have often refused a request if a person cannot identify the document they want.

But the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal has agreed with the Opposition that when requested a department should provide a complete list of the documents on its computer filing system.

The applicant can then request the document they want under a separate FOI request.

Victoria Police, responding to the first application, said this constituted a "fishing request".

But VCAT deputy president Anne Coghlan disagreed, saying she was satisfied a request for the names of documents in computer filing systems was a valid request. In her second decision on a similar theme, Ms Coghlan said the Opposition was allowed to ask a department to search its

computer files for documents containing a certain word.

The Department of Human Services had rejected this application because it said the Opposition was not asking for a document. The department also said it was inappropriate for the Opposition to tell it how to find documents.

But again, Ms Coghlan disagreed. She said this argument was a "distraction".

Government spokeswoman Sofia Dedes told *The Sunday Age* the Brumby Government was considering the cases and was yet to decide whether to appeal, and the Government remained proud of its FOI achievements.

But Opposition Leader Ted Baillieu said the Government had been throwing resources at these cases to maintain secrecy: "This is an arrogant government that has shown contempt for basic standards of transparency and accountability, and the courts are now demanding that this must end."

<http://www.weekendpost.co.za/article.aspx?id=467967>

☰ The Weekend Post Online

Sunday, 13 September 2009 7:25 PM

Police swoop nets 232

2009/09/07

Rochelle de Kock HERALD REPORTER decockr@avusa.co.za



CLEAN SWEEP... Police confiscated a number of knives, firearms and drugs in Operation Thunderstorm at the weekend. Sergeant Corne van Wyk (left) and Constable Jonathan Dobson were part of the clampdown in Gelvandale. Picture: MIKE HOLMES.

IN a major swoop by Nelson Mandela Bay police at the weekend, more than 200 suspects were arrested in 25 operations across the city.

Police undertook random searches and staged roadblocks, confiscating five firearms, perlemoen, 46 bags of dagga and other drugs, 49 knives, a kilogram of copper and a TV set.

Police spokesman Inspector Alwyn Labans said last night there was visible policing throughout Mandela Bay, resulting in only a few serious crimes reported at the weekend.

"The various operations are going to be an ongoing process because we want the people of Port Elizabeth to feel safe and make the city crime-free. A total of 232 arrests were made.

"We are a 2010 host city and we know it's impossible to say the city will be crime-free, but we'll try our best," said Labans.

The weekend's activities included Operation Thunderstorm, which saw police clamping down heavily on the Gelvandale-Shauderville area.

In Gelvandale 33 suspects were arrested, eight stolen cars were recovered and drugs and illegal firearms worth thousands of rands were confiscated.

Operation Thunderstorm, which started on Friday saw police officers searching houses, vehicles and hundreds of people on foot, in a clampdown to reduce crime in the troubled area, renowned for its gang violence.

"On Friday, we arrested six people for various crimes including drunk driving. We recovered six stolen vehicles, dagga, Mandrax, nine knives and a firearm. We stopped 82 vehicles and searched 16 houses.

"On Saturday we made 26 arrests for possession of drugs, stolen vehicles, assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm and drunk driving.

"We searched 265 people on foot, 16 houses and 13 vehicles, and we stopped 52 vehicles in a roadblock."

www.ausfoodnews.com.au/2009/09/07/victorian-seafood-industry-celebr...

Minister Responsible for Fisheries in Victoria, Joe Helper, has commended the top shelf of Victoria's seafood crop as the state's seafood industry celebrated

Victorian seafood industry celebrates night of nights | Australian Food News Sunday, 13 September 2009 7:23 PM

Victorian seafood industry celebrates night of nights

- September 7, 2009
- James Ferre

Minister Responsible for Fisheries in Victoria, Joe Helper, has commended the top shelf of Victoria's seafood crop as the state's seafood industry celebrated its annual award night last week. Attending the Victorian Seafood Industry Awards at Port Melbourne, Mr Helper said the industry deserved high praise for its environmental awareness, innovation and commitment to sustainability.

"Many Victorians enjoy eating seafood and it is important we have a sustainable and profitable seafood industry in this state to provide fresh seafood to the Victorian community," Mr Helper said. "Victoria supports diverse commercial fisheries from abalone, rock lobster, scallops and eels, to King George whiting, snapper, flathead, bream, calamari and garfish."

"Fresh fish is an important source of omega-three fats, known to assist in reducing the risk of heart disease."

Mr Helper added that the industry was a major source of employment in the state.

"Commercial fishing is also an important source of regional employment in places as far east as Mallacoota and far west as Portland, with more than \$120 million worth of fresh seafood landed in Victorian ports," he noted. "The Brumby Labor Government is proud to be a major sponsor of these awards."

Award winners:

- Seafood Business Award - She Sells Seafood, Castlemaine;
- Seafood Restaurant Award - Fishermen's Pier, Geelong;
- Seafood Training Award - Rural Training Initiatives for the National Seafood Industry Leadership Program and 3M's;
- Seafood Industry Producer Award - Victorian Fisheries Association into Resource Management;
- Seafood Industry Promotion Award - Cliff Rossack for the Queenscliff Seafood Feast;
- Environment Award - Victorian Abalone Divers Association for work on the Abalone Viral Ganglioneuritis;
- Research and Development Award - Victorian Abalone Industry for improved spatial management of the Victorian abalone industry; and
- Seafood Industry Icon Award - Lakes Entrance Fishermen's Co-operative Ltd

<http://www.media.tas.gov.au/release.php?id=27741>

Public Input Wanted For Abalone Fishery Plan - David Llewellyn, MP - Sunday, 13 September 2009 7:01 PM
Tasmanian Government Media Releases

David Llewellyn, MP
Minister for Primary Industries and Water

Wednesday, 2 September 2009

Public Input Wanted For Abalone Fishery Plan

The new draft management plan for the abalone fishery has just been released and the public is invited to comment. The plan sets the rules for commercial and recreational fishing for abalone in Tasmania. The closing date for submissions is October 31 this year.

The Minister for Primary Industries and Water, David Llewellyn, said the proposed new plan reflected an increased awareness of the need to ensure the bio-security of Tasmania's living marine resources.

"That's why the draft plan formalises present temporary restrictions on take and possession of abalone in areas of northern Bass Strait," Mr Llewellyn said.

"The threat posed by abalone viral ganglioneuritis to Tasmanian wild abalone still exists in Victoria, and the Government is proposing that existing maritime buffers be brought into the longer-term framework of the abalone rules."

The same precautionary approach is proposed for the present temporary ban on the use of abalone offal as fishing bait.

"Some aspects of marine bio-security weren't as well understood when the last management plan was drawn up," Mr Llewellyn said.

"We know more now and this is reflected in the draft rules."

Changes are also proposed regarding commercial over-catch, reporting procedures and collection of brood stock.

A cost-benefit analysis has been done of the draft management plan and is also available to assist comment.

The documents, as well as details about how to make submissions, are available on the Department's website www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au or by telephoning 6233 3512.

☐ Fax. (03) 8660 2755 Mob. (0418) 292 004
fishing@searead.net www.searead.net

Thursday, 16 July 2009 12:00 AM



SeaRead P/L

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