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## Enviros Want Black Abalone Protected

By SONYA ANGELICA DIEHN

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SAN FRANCISCO (CN) - Environmentalists want habitat protected for a once-common abalone whose population has declined by 99 percent since the late 1970s. The black abalone, which once lived along the Pacific Coast from Oregon to Baja California, was harvested almost to extinction and faces additional threats of global warming and ocean acidification, the Center for Biological Diversity says.

Populations of the big, edible mollusk have also declined due to "withering syndrome" in warmer waters and is likely to devastate the abalone as sea temperatures rise, the group says.

Rising sea levels also threaten to obliterate the intertidal and subtidal pools where the abalone live, their lawsuit claims.

The abalone became an endangered species candidate in 1999 and was listed as endangered in 2009 after the center's 2006 petition.

The Commerce Department provided notice of a 1-year extension in declaring critical habitat for the mollusk after its January 2009 listing, but the year has gone by and the department still has nothing to show, the center says.

Without conservation, the species may become extinct within 30 years, the group says. It adds that species with critical habitat designations are twice as likely to recover.

Represented by Catherine Kilduff, the center seeks declaratory and injunctive relief for habitat designation

<http://www.courthousenews.com/2010/03/26/25905.htm>

## Wife's home detention concern causes delay

A wife's apparent opposition to home detention has forced the delay of sentencing for a black market paua poacher.

Soala Taavale, 44, was reluctant to accept an electronically monitored sentence that would allow him to serve his detention time at the family home.

Instead, he is looking for a flat where he can serve the time that's likely to be imposed after he pleaded guilty before his scheduled trial last month.

His defence counsel Paul McMenamain said he believed that Taavale's partner was "probably the driving force behind the decision" and he would have further discussions with his client about it.

In the Christchurch District Court today, Judge David Saunders told Taavale that he must get the issue, or a new address, sorted out quickly so that a home detention report could be completed before the new sentencing date on April 21.

He noted that home detention would mean one visit a week to the home by a corrections officer for the first four weeks of the sentence.

"You are trying to save your home and family from the intrusion of corrections," he said, reminding Taavale that finding another address would mean moving out and not being able to visit the family whenever he wished.

"It doesn't seem very realistic to me," said the judge.

Taavale was one of three men who pleaded guilty on February 1 to charges of taking and possessing excess or under-sized paua after fisheries officer caught groups of poachers operating at Sumner, near Christchurch, and at Te Oka Bay, on Banks Peninsula.

Sentencing was also delayed to April 21 for Emele Pouiva, 32, who also needs to provide a suitable home detention address.

But Judge Saunders did go ahead with the sentencing of Amoaisasae Vaasiligalo, 36, warning him that people caught poaching could expect stern sentences and sometimes loss of their liberty.

He imposed a four-month term of home detention and ordered Vaasiligalo to do 200 hours of community work.

Because of Vaasiligalo's health problems, he may be restricted to doing only light duties – probably placement at an agency rather than a work gang.

Seven people were caught as part of the black market paua poaching investigation which included interception of 12,000 text messages. All of them have now pleaded guilty. Orders have been made for the group to forfeit three vehicles and diving gear used in the poaching, which involved approaching Asian people to offer the shellfish for sale, and selling some to restaurants.

<http://courtnews.co.nz/story.php?id=2649>

Pair fined nearly \$5K each over abalone haul - ABC News (Australian Broadcasting Corporation)

Sunday, 28 March 2010 2:21 PM

## Pair fined nearly \$5K each over abalone haul

Posted Wed Mar 24, 2010 2:02pm AEDT

- [Map: Busselton 6280](#)

Two men charged with breaching regulations governing abalone fishing have appeared in the Busselton Magistrates Court.

Kim Tae Kwan, 47, and Sung Jin, 25, pleaded guilty to jointly taking 89 roe's abalone in excess of the bag limit while fishing near Dunsborough on Australia Day.

The men were fined almost \$5,000 each.

Fisheries' officer Kevin Johnson says he believes the penalty will act as a deterrent.

"The penalties were obviously quite substantial and it is going to send a fairly clear message to people that do break the abalone rules," he said.

"In recent months there have been a number of matters that have gone above that, but it is certainly up there as a fairly major penalty."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/03/24/2854889.htm>

Two men charged with breaching regulations governing abalone fishing have appeared in the Busselton Magistrates Court.

☐ QCI Observer - Poaching still threatens abalone

Sunday, 28 March 2010 1:42 PM

Poaching still threatens abalone [Previous](#) | [Next](#)

Abalone poaching ramps up around the Lunar New Year, putting the imperiled species further at risk, Heather Ramsay writes.

According to the Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Tatiana Lee, even though harvesting of northern abalone has been illegal since 1990, the population coast-wide has dropped 40 percent.

In some parts of the world, other species of abalone are legally harvested, but the international demand for the iconic seafood means the demand is always there for blackmarket abalone from BC.

"It's considered a delicacy in Asia and there is high demand for the product," she says. The Lunar New Year celebrations can extend into March and April, she says, so it's important to keep people's awareness about poaching high at this time of year.

Abalone is a marine snail, and its habitat runs from Mexico's Baja peninsula to Alaska. Individual animals can live up to 20 years. Poachers focus on mature individuals, usually in their reproductive prime, which has an impact on the population recovery. The population is in such peril that a team of scientists has reassessed the abalone's listing under the Species at Risk Act and will move the it from threatened to endangered.

"Poaching remains the most serious threat," she said. Breaking up illegal harvest rings is the top priority for DFO enforcement officers. Ms Lee says an international bust last year involved a trading ring that extended to Mexico.

In 2006, a DFO investigation led to the seizure of 11,000 pieces of Northern abalone from three poachers from Haida Gwaii.

DFO hopes the public will help in the recovery of the population. "We encourage people to phone the Observe, Record, Report Hotline," she said. The hotline, 1-800-465-4336 is open 24 hours and will take anonymous tips.

<http://www.qciobserver.com/Article.aspx?Id=4378>

☐ Poachers biggest threat to endangered abalone

Sunday, 28 March 2010 1:24 PM

## Poachers biggest threat to endangered abalone

### DFO asks for the public's help in watching for suspicious divers

By Judith Lavoie, Times Colonist March 20, 2010 [Comments \(6\)](#)

- [Story](#)
- [Photos \( 1 \)](#)



**A northern abalone, one of a threatened species under attack from poachers, disguises itself with fronds of seaweed.**

**Photograph by: Joanne Lessard, Department of Fisheries and Oceans., Times Colonist**

The wetsuited killers often hang out in rocky inlets or deserted beaches, where there are few witnesses, but the Department of Fisheries and Oceans is hoping eagle-eyed observers will help stop the destruction of a species.

B.C.'s northern abalone are in big trouble and the biggest threat to their survival is poachers.

This is the time of year when poachers typically ramp up their efforts, and although DFO's conservation and protection branch is always on the lookout, the public's help is needed, said Tatiana Lee, DFO recovery biologist.

"DFO can't do it alone, so we really want to encourage the public to get involved and report any suspicious activities," she said.

Some areas have Coast Watch programs, modeled on Neighborhood Watch, but individuals can help by reporting incidents such as people diving at unusual times, suspicious behaviour by vessels or mesh bags of shells on the beach.

"Abalone have beautiful ear-shaped shells with iridescent mother-of-pearl inside," Lee said.

Unfortunately, they're not only beautiful but tasty, and although there has been no legal harvest of northern abalone in B.C. since 1990, the population is continuing to disappear from coastal waters.

They have been listed as threatened under the Species At Risk Act since 2003 and are now in the process of being reassessed as endangered. Although it is illegal to kill, harm or possess northern abalone -- whole or shells, living or dead -- poachers continue to grab truckloads.

Farmed abalone and legally harvested species from Mexico complicate conviction efforts, but DFO hopes genetic testing will improve conviction rates.

Abalone population drops are staggering -- a 75 per cent reduction between 1978 and 1984 and almost 44 per cent between 1993 and 1997. A population estimate in 2001 put the total number of survivors at 420,000.

Distribution is along the Pacific coast from Alaska to Baja California in Mexico, but relatively dense populations are needed to allow them to breed as they release eggs and sperm into the water.

"We have been trying to help this poor little species recover ... but if it's too small a population it's difficult for the eggs and sperm to find each other," Lee said.

Making it more difficult for the abalone is their long lifespan, which is typically about 20 years but can be as long as 50 years, meaning they take years to reach sexual maturity, Lee said.

"They're a very long-lived marine snail and it takes time for the population to rebound," she said.

Another problem is that abalone are hemophiliacs, Lee said. "If they nick their flesh they are unable to coagulate. It makes them more vulnerable. They need all the help they can get."

The 1-800-465-4336 hotline for suspicious activities operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

jlavoie@tc.canwest.com

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[www.timescolonist.com/Poachers+biggest+threat+endangered+abalone/27...](http://www.timescolonist.com/Poachers+biggest+threat+endangered+abalone/27...)




The wetsuited killers often hang out in rocky inlets or deserted beaches, where there are few witnesses,

☑ Diver who took 600 paua plans fishing job - Local News - Hawke's Bay Today

Sunday, 28 March 2010 12:08 PM

## Diver who took 600 paua plans fishing job

17th March 2010

-  [Email Story](#)
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A man convicted of taking 61 times the legal limit of paua from Waipatiki Beach, near Napier, has obtained employment on a fishing boat, his lawyer says.

Jamie Fox, 31, and Daniel Bell 33, both of Napier appeared for sentencing yesterday in the Napier District Court, having pleaded guilty to a joint charge of illegal possession of paua.

The men took 611 paua, two-thirds of them undersized, on December 5 last year.

Fisheries staff said it was the biggest haul in recent memory.

The maximum penalty is a \$250,000 fine but a community work sentence can also be imposed.

Fox was sentenced to 250 hours of community work yesterday by Judge Geoff Rea.

Bell's sentencing was deferred after Judge Rea requested a probation report because of Bell failing to comply with community-based sentences.

Council Michael McAleer said Bell had found a job on a fishing boat.

The paua seizure came after a tipoff from a person at the beach who noticed two men diving.

Fisheries officers intercepted the men and a woman associate. They had one backpack containing 322 shelled paua and another with 289.

The total haul weighed 45.6kg.

The smallest paua was 19g, smaller than the size of a matchbox.

The maximum penalty is a \$250,000 fine.

Bell also has a record of shoplifting offences, including one on June 20 last year when he stole \$1055 of cosmetics from a Hastings pharmacy.

[www.hawkesbaytoday.co.nz/local/news/diver-who-took-600-paua-plans-f...](http://www.hawkesbaytoday.co.nz/local/news/diver-who-took-600-paua-plans-f...)

A man convicted of taking 61 times the legal limit of paua from Waipatiki Beach, near Napier, has

obtained employment on a fishing boat, his lawyer says. Jamie Fox, 31, and Daniel Bell 33, both of Napier appeared for sentencing yesterday in the Napier District Court, having pleaded guilty to ...

Mass fish deaths at Tathra. 16 Mar 2010. Rural Online. (Australian Broadcasting Corporation)

Sunday, 28 March 2010 12:03 PM

## Mass fish deaths at Tathra

By Keva Gocher from Tathra 2550

Tuesday, 16/03/2010

The bizarre sight of mass dead fish beachings turned a Sunday afternoon stroll turned into a strange outing for beachgoers on the far south coast of New South Wales on Sunday March 14.

I was amongst the many people puzzled by the mysterious sight of hundreds of large dead fish washing onto Tathra beach after 2pm that Autumn Sunday.



A few dead fish on a beach is part of nature's cycle, and adds to the interest of the a beach walk, but hundreds of dead fish cause concern.

The dead fish on Tathra Beach were 300mm long Australian salmon, all a uniform size and weighing around 2 kilograms.

Fish were washing onto the beach and being stranded in the receding tide, while other fish bobbed in the waves as currents and winds pushed the fish up onto the long sandy ocean beach.

### Dead and bitten fish were seen at several beaches

Monaro region fisherman Neil Murdoch did not expect anything but a pleasant day's fishing when he travelled to the south coast's Gillards Beach on Sunday.

He was surprised to find dozens of dead Australian salmon littering the small beach near Tathra.

Mr Murdoch says the fish were totally uniform in size and length, and unlike the intact fish along Tathra beach, the fish at Gillards Beach were bitten.

"They all had a big chunk taken out of their backs, about six inches ( 150 mm), and they all had their heads ripped off."

He says he feared shark activity in the nearby water and was concerned for the young children he saw swimming nearby.

Other knowledgeable fishers says the size of the bite, and the removal of the heads, indicates seals may have eaten the salmon soon after death, as the then dead fish floated in the ocean before being

beached.

### **Experts start to investigate unusual fish deaths on far south coast of NSW**

An inquiry has commenced into the mass fish kill in south coast waters south of Bermagui.

The NSW government fisheries authorities in the region are investigating.

Far south coast regional fishing inspector Matt Proctor says the main concentration of dead fish on Bega shire beaches occurred at Tathra Beach.

He estimated the long beach held approximately 2,000 Australian salmon, each weighing 2 kilograms.

Mr Proctor says it is too early in his investigations to draw any conclusions as to the cause of the death, however he has ruled out natural causes, including poor water quality after last months flooding rains.

"It is only one species that has been effected; that is Australian salmon.

"Even though it is distressing to see so many dead fish, but there is one little positive we can draw from it, that it is only one species and that would indicate to me that there is nothing wrong with the water because if there was, other fish world have been affected.

"It has me more thinking it is related to some incident."

### **South coast commercial fishing boat operators asked about mass fish kill**

Fisheries inspector Matt Proctor says he spoke on Monday March 15 with the Eden-based commercial fishing operator working in the south coast of NSW waters near Tathra last week.

"I have spoken to commercial fisherman (from Eden) who I know have been fishing the area in the preceding week.

"They have reported there was nothing untoward with their normal fishing operation.

"I don't like to speculate but there could have been some fishing that could have gone a little bit astray.

Matt Proctor says the fishing operators say the fish deaths are not related to their activity.

"They have been fishing this area for many years and in their view there was nothing that was noticeably wrong."

"They didn't dispose of any dead fish, or release any excess fish from their net, so I am thinking with the fish on the beach there could have been some escapees, or some fish that may have been stressed; but we have no firm evidence or proof to say that that is the case and it is a case we are investigating to see if there was some other fishing in the area."

### **Tathra beachgoers report unusual fishing activity**

Live Australian salmon were seen in larger than usual numbers at Tathra beach in the past week.

Beachwalking regular Nigel Wiggins of Bega observed the unusual sight of the fish 'running' at Tathra beach.

He says his group of walkers spent hours on Wednesday March 10 watching 'the water turn black' from the density of salmon in the water close to Tathra beach.

Mr Wiggins says his walking group observed the activity of a commercial fishing boat trying to catch the fish but unable to get close enough to net the fish in the waters 80-100 metres from shore.

He says they were able to locate the fish and fill their nets then motor north to other fishing grounds later that Wednesday.

Mr Wiggins wonders if there was a link between the dead fish on the beach on Sunday, and the bumper fishing catch he observed a few days earlier.

### **Beached dead fish are too rotten to be tested**

The state government's fisheries department's regional head is asking for community assistance in the investigations of mysterious mass fish deaths on south coast beaches.

Matt Proctor says community help is needed to complete his investigations in order to answer the mystery of why thousands dead salmon washed onto tathra beach last Sunday.

"It is too early to say due the (large) quantity of fish involved.

"It is very difficult considering the different forces that are at play in terms of time, the sea, the state of decomposition of the fish."

Matt Proctor says his organisations is not forensically testing the rotting fish.

"It is going to be very difficult to come up with a hard and fast answer to exactly what happened.

"There is nothing firm to link it to a commercial operation but there are a number of possibilities."

Matt Proctor, district fisheries inspector for the far south coast, can be contacted at the Eden office of NSW Industry and Investment's Fisheries department. Phone 02 6496 1377.

<http://www.abc.net.au/rural/content/2010/s2847343.htm>

Mass fish deaths at Tathra

Prison term for habitual abalone offender - Local News - News - General - Sunday, 28 March 2010 12:02 PM  
Narooma News

## Prison term for habitual abalone offender

17 Mar, 2010 11:39 AM

A HABITUAL abalone offender has been sentenced to two months in prison after being found guilty of possessing almost 200 times the legal limit of abalone poached from the Glasshouse Rocks area. The 33-year-old Batemans Bay man was pulled over by NSW Police on Glasshouse Rocks Road in November 2007 after information was provided to them by NSW Fisheries Officers.

"Police conducted a search of the stopped vehicle and found 396 shucked abalone meats, weighing 31.8 kilograms, concealed in the rear compartment of a vehicle," Primary Industries Minister Steve Whan said.

The abalone, diving gear and equipment were seized by Fisheries Officers.

"The offender who has an extensive history of fisheries related crimes, admitted possession of the 396 abalone meats, and was charged with possessing more than the daily bag limit of abalone, and possessing shucked abalone adjacent to waters."

The legal possession limit for abalone in NSW is two per person

Abalone can only be taken from waters open to abalone collection

Abalone cannot be shucked (removed from shell) in or adjacent to waters

The man faced Bateman's Bay Local Court last month and pled guilty to the charges.

The magistrate convicted and sentenced the repeat offender to two months imprisonment and a \$200 fine.

"This sentence clearly shows that Courts are prepared to send offenders to prison for committing serious fisheries crimes," Minister Whan said.

"Fisheries Officers from NSW Industry and Investment and NSW Police are committed to ensuring that persons undertaking these types of illegal activities are apprehended and brought before the Courts."

"The judiciary of NSW is very aware that these types of offences are damaging to the fisheries resource of NSW, and will act in the harshest manner to ensure the community understand the value of our fish."

To report illegal fishing activity, call the NSW Abalone Compliance Group on 6499 8000.





[www.naroomanewsonline.com.au/news/local/news/general/prison-term-fo...](http://www.naroomanewsonline.com.au/news/local/news/general/prison-term-fo...)

A HABITUAL abalone offender has been sentenced to two months in prison after being found guilty of possessing almost 200 times the legal limit of abalone poached from the Glasshouse Rocks area.

Abalone industry endorses harsh penalties - ABC News (Australian Broadcasting Corporation)

Monday, 22 March 2010 4:30 AM

## Abalone industry endorses harsh penalties

Posted Mon Mar 15, 2010 10:20am AEDT

- **Map:** [Narooma 2546](#)

The New South Wales South East abalone industry has welcomed a two-month sentence handed down to a man for abalone poaching.

The 33-year-old from Batemans Bay was found with almost 400 abalone, amounting to around 32kg of shellfish meat.

New South Wales Fisheries says the man has a history of fisheries-related offences.

Merimbula abalone diver, John Smythe, says it is good news, but the sentence should have been tougher.

"He's actually lucky that he's only got two months, because the new legislation that's gone through parliament late last year will actually mean that repeat offenders like this will be facing over 12 months in jail."

For more, go to the South East News blog at <http://bit.ly/dqL1SN>

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/03/15/2845753.htm>

The New South Wales South East abalone industry has welcomed a two-month sentence handed down to a man for abalone poaching.

San Diego divers assist marine biologist in abalone study

Sunday, 14 March 2010 4:48 PM

## San Diego divers assist marine biologist in abalone study

March 13, 4:34 PM - San Diego Scuba Diving Examiner - Michael Bear

[Previous](#)





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[New study shows marine protected areas \(MPAs\) are effective: Good news for San Diego too](#)  
[AAAS conference in San Diego confirms science behind Marine Life Protection Act](#)

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Saturday, three divers from San Diego, **Barbara Lloyd, Jim Kinane and Michael Bear** assisted **marine biologist Nancy Caruso** in collecting abalone specimens from **Little Corona Del Mar Beach**, with the aid of a **special collection permit issued by the California Dept. of Fish and Game** *authorizing such sample collecting for scientific purposes.*

The goal was to carefully remove selected abalone specimens, so that the feces could be sent to a lab to be tested for the presence of a bacteria associated with a condition known as '**Withering Foot Disease**,' and then, returned to where they were found.

According to **Wikipedia**, the condition was first described in 1986, and is caused by the bacterium "*Candidatus Xenohalotis californiensis*", which attacks the lining of the abalone's digestive tract, inhibiting the production of digestive enzymes. To prevent starvation, the abalone consumes its own body mass, causing its characteristic muscular "foot" to *wither and atrophy*. This impairs the abalone's ability to adhere to rocks, making it far more vulnerable to predation. Withered abalone not eaten by predators often starve.

Once a valuable fishery, abalone in Southern and Central California have been decimated by commercial and sport fishing, and more recently by this disease. Some populations of black abalone have declined nearly 99 percent since the disease was first observed in the Channel Islands off Santa Barbara.

**Source:** [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Withering\\_abalone\\_syndrome](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Withering_abalone_syndrome)

[www.examiner.com/x-38501-San-Diego-Scuba-Diving-Examiner~y2010m3d13...](http://www.examiner.com/x-38501-San-Diego-Scuba-Diving-Examiner~y2010m3d13...)

Saturday, three divers from San Diego, Barbara Lloyd, Jim Kinane and Michael Bear assisted marine biologist Nancy Caruso in collecting abalone specimens from Little Corona Del Mar Beach , with the aid of a special collection permit issued by the ...

☐ Jail for abalone thief - Local News - News - General - Bay Post/Moruya Examiner

Saturday, 13 March 2010 1:09 PM

## Jail for abalone thief

BY VERONICA APAP

12 Mar, 2010 10:14 AM

A south Coast man netted more than he bargained for when he was caught with almost 200 times the legal bag limit of abalone.

The habitual abalone offender was jailed for two months by a Batemans Bay Local Court magistrate last month.

Police stopped the man's car at Narooma in November 2007 after a tip-off from NSW Fisheries and found 396 shucked abalone. The haul, which weighed 31.8kg, had been concealed in a rear compartment of the vehicle.

NSW Fisheries officers seized the abalone and diving equipment found in the vehicle.

The 33-year-old Batemans Bay man had an extensive history of NSW Fisheries-related offences.

He admitted he was in possession of the abalone meat and was charged with possessing more than the daily bag limit of abalone and possessing shucked abalone adjacent to waters.

Primary Industries Minister Steve Whan said the legal limit for possession of abalone was two per person in NSW.

Abalone can only be taken from waters open to abalone collection and cannot be shucked in or near waterways.

The man faced Batemans Bay Local Court on February 22 and pleaded guilty to the charges.

He was sentenced to two months' jail and fined \$200.

"This sentence clearly shows that courts are prepared to send offenders to prison for committing serious fisheries crimes," Mr Whan said.

"Fisheries officers from NSW Industry and Investment and NSW Police are committed to ensuring that persons undertaking these types of illegal activities are apprehended and brought before the courts.

"The judiciary of NSW is very aware that these types of offences are damaging to the fisheries resource of NSW.

"We will act in the harshest manner to ensure the community understands the value of our fish.

"I commend the hard work of Industry and Investment NSW Fisheries officers for the apprehension of this man.

"He clearly has no respect for NSW abalone fisheries, which are under constant pressure from thieving."

To report illegal fishing activity phone 6499 8000.

[www.batemansbaypost.com.au/news/local/news/general/jail-for-abalone...](http://www.batemansbaypost.com.au/news/local/news/general/jail-for-abalone...)

A south Coast man netted more than he bargained for when he was caught with almost 200 times the legal bag limit of abalone.

Pair accused of abalone offences - ABC News (Australian Broadcasting Corporation)

Friday, 12 March 2010 12:02 PM

## Pair accused of abalone offences

Posted Thu Mar 11, 2010 1:02pm AEDT

- **Map:** [Busselton 6280](#)

Two men are due to face court in Busselton later this month charged with breaching abalone fishing laws.

The men were allegedly found on the Dunsborough coast on Australia Day in possession of 129 abalone, of which 42 were undersized.

The 47 year old and 25 year old have each been charged with jointly taking 89 abalone in excess of the bag limit and face a maximum fine of more than \$7,500 if found guilty.

The men are due to appear in the Busselton Magistrates Court on March 23.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/03/11/2842961.htm>

Two men are due to face court in Busselton later this month charged with breaching abalone fishing laws.

☐ Court slams abalone poacher - ABC News (Australian Broadcasting Corporation)

Friday, 12 March 2010 12:02 PM

## Court slams abalone poacher

Posted 6 hours 2 minutes ago

- **Map:** [Narooma 2546](#)

New South Wales Fisheries has welcomed the two-month jail sentence handed down to a man for abalone poaching on the New South Wales far south coast.

The 33-year-old from Batemans Bay was found at Narooma with almost 400 abalone, amounting to around 32kg of shellfish meat.

The department's operations manager, Tony Andrews, says the case proves there are systems in place to catch offenders.

Mr Andrews says he is pleased that the courts have recognised the severity of the crime.

"We've got a repeat offender here, with extensive history of fisheries-related crimes and it's identified that this is obviously a very serious abalone matter," he said.

"That's quite a substantial recognition by the judiciary that, how serious these matters are."

For more, go to the South East News blog at <http://bit.ly/dgL1SN>

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/03/12/2843629.htm>

New South Wales Fisheries has welcomed the two-month jail sentence handed down to a man for abalone poaching on the New South Wales far south coast.

☐ Paua offenders in court | Stuff.co.nz

Thursday, 11 March 2010 11:58 AM

## Paua offenders in court

Kaikoura Star

Last updated 09:44 10/03/2010

Fisheries officers had a busy day around Kaikoura last Wednesday with a total of eight infringements handed down for undersize paua and crayfish possession.

Officer Mark Green said since then the weather had slowed things down a bit.

"Overall the number of inspections are down but unfortunately the infringements are still there," he said.

Two cases were brought to the Kaikoura District Court on Friday regarding the taking of undersize and excess paua.

Sickness beneficiary John James McDonald, 49, of Christchurch, entered guilty pleas to charges of taking excess paua and taking undersize paua when he appeared on Friday.

McDonald had been gathering paua off the Kaikoura coast on December 8 when he was found to be in possession of 43 paua, of which all but one were undersize.

The legal daily limit is 10 and the minimum size is 125mm.

Judge Tony Couch told the court that the point needed to be made to the public generally that shellfish such as paua were a very vulnerable national treasure.

"If they are exploited in this way, it will not only be us who are deprived, but also those who come after us.

"We have an obligation to protect them."

He pointed out that it was often difficult to detect this sort of offending so when it was detected those people caught would become examples.

McDonald was fined \$1250 plus court costs of \$130 for taking excess paua, and a further \$500 for taking undersize.

Patrick Mark Maguire, a 63 year old builder from Christchurch, was charged with obstruction after an incident in Kaikoura on February 3 when he ignored the requests of a fisheries officer.

Maguire entered a guilty plea.

The court heard that the fisheries officer had been to inspect a catch when Maguire took two paua out of a bucket and went to return them to the sea.

The officer asked him to stop, however Maguire ignored the request and threw the paua back in the sea, telling the officer they would "sort it out in court".

Defence lawyer Gary Sawyer said the matter had escalated out of control and it had been entirely out of character.

Maguire's partner had refused to give her details to the officer and she had been placed under arrest.

Concerned he would be set up with having excess paua, he threw two back in the sea.

Judge Couch told him an offence had been committed, whether it was having undersize or excess paua.

"The job of fisheries officers is a difficult one and is very critical to the maintenance of fish stocks, especially shellfish," he said.

"They need, and are entitled to expect, the full co-operation of the public and you failed to give them that."

#### Ad Feedback

Judge Couch accepted, however, that the offending had been very much at the bottom end of a large scale, and convicted and fined Maguire \$350 plus court costs of \$130.

[www.stuff.co.nz/marlborough-express/news/kaikoura/3427626/Paua-offe...](http://www.stuff.co.nz/marlborough-express/news/kaikoura/3427626/Paua-offe...)

Fisheries officers had a busy day around Kaikoura last Wednesday with a total of eight infringements handed down for undersize paua and crayfish possession.

Scoop: It's pretty in pink and it doesn't stink!

Thursday, 11 March 2010 11:53 AM

## **It's pretty in pink and it doesn't stink!**

**Tuesday, 9 March 2010, 10:18 am**

**Press Release: NIWA**

**It's pretty in pink and it doesn't stink!**

NIWA scientists are in the pink! They're studying the deep candy pink or purple coralline algae, abundant around the New Zealand shoreline and throughout the world, which play a vital role in

marine ecosystems.

To the untrained eye, some of these species look identical to others. A splash or crust of pink along the NZ coastline, they can be found in almost all marine habitats where there is sunlight and something to attach to. Their habitat ranges from high intertidal pools through to subtidal waters. In fact, there are more than 30 known species that occur in New Zealand, and NIWA scientists estimate that there are at least a dozen more species they can recognise, which are either new to science, or new to New Zealand.

Initially it was thought that these red algae, which have calcium carbonate in their cell walls, were animals. "When you look at them and feel them, they are hard and you don't think algae, because they're more like a shell or a coral. That's why they are called coralline algae; algae that are like coral," says NIWA biodiversity scientist, Tracy Farr. It wasn't until the mid 1800s that their plant-like nature was established.

Coralline algae are either jointed (geniculate) or not jointed (non-geniculate). The jointed species have branches, and can be quite fine, and their joints give them flexibility. They're often known as "coralline turf", and can form a dense carpet in intertidal and deeper waters. Non-jointed species – often called "encrusting", or "crustose" – are completely calcified. They may feel "warty" or "lumpy" to touch; some grow in complex and beautiful layered or folded forms, like a rose carved from chalk. But across all of these different growth forms, all of them are pink!

NIWA scientists begun studying them in 2002, armed with chisels and hammers, prising them off rocks. The scientists are currently focusing on one form of coralline algae, rhodoliths, literally "pink rocks," which roll around on the sea floor. "These algae play key roles in the lives of invertebrates, fishes, and other algae. They provide a three-dimensional structure which is a habitat for organisms, a place where things can hide, a hard substrate where seaweeds can attach," says Farr.

Some coralline algae produce chemicals which actively promote both settlement and early development of paua and other invertebrate larvae. Research overseas, and in New Zealand, indicates that some algae species are more attractive to paua than others. There is also some evidence that post-settlement survival may vary on different species or growth forms of corallines.

Crustose coralline algae are important to the construction and ecology of coral reefs, acting as the main cementing agent and providing strength for the reef. Research so far suggests that the calcium carbonate in the cell walls of the non-geniculate coralline algae species are a major store of carbon in the near-shore environment.

These coralline algae represent great biodiversity and the individual species are really important. "It's difficult to tell some of them apart, but when you look at their DNA sequences, they are very different. There are very clear differences, and when you have the clue of the DNA you can look for other differences and find them," says Farr.

The impact of ocean acidification on coralline algae is also the subject of current research. "We are measuring what happens when we grow coralline algae under more acidic conditions, to look at the impact on their growth rate, health and their structure," says Farr.

Farr has been studying coralline algae since 2001. She is a scientist in marine biodiversity and biosecurity group at NIWA.

The Ministry of Fisheries recognises the importance of coralline algae to the ecosystem, and has funded three research projects since 2001.

ENDS

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/SC1003/S00031.htm>

NIWA scientists are in the pink! They're studying the deep candy pink or purple coralline algae, abundant around the New Zealand shoreline and throughout the world, which play a vital role in marine ecosystems.

How to Sex an Abalone: A Sea Snail's Story - Food - The Atlantic

Thursday, 11 March 2010 11:52 AM

## How to Sex an Abalone: A Sea Snail's Story

Mar 9 2010, 9:05 AM ET



Ryan Bradley

*1. Pick up the abalone. This may require prying the abalone from its hold, and using a stainless steel putty knife is recommended.*

But let's back up for a minute, because maybe you're wondering, What is an abalone? Or, Isn't it a board game? And maybe, Why should I care about the sex of a board game you crazy person? To answer: It is both a sea snail and a board game. But you can't sauté the board game in butter or sell it for \$50 a pound in Japan. People don't form international smuggling rings or get themselves eaten by great white sharks over the board game. So we'll concern ourselves with the sex of the sea snail, which matters because the females are worth more. That's the simple answer. But the real reason behind sexing an abalone is more nuanced, and explaining how to do it in five easy steps will take up the rest of this article. The story begins at a farm.

The farm is on the California coast, about 20 minutes west of Santa Barbara on Highway 101, near some old ranches and strands of eucalyptus trees in a canyon called Dos Pueblos. It isn't much of a canyon—more of a sump, really—and there are turkey vultures circling above some cattle, and the hills are as green as County Kerry after last year's fires and last week's rain. Here, beneath a railroad viaduct near the shoreline, under five great black tarps spread across four acres, is the abalone farm. It's run by a man named Benjamin Beede. If you met him, you'd care about sexing abalones too.

Beede is an environmental biologist. How he came to farm abalone is indicative of the creature's unfortunate history. You see, abalone are delicious. For plenty of animals, this is problematic. For a slow moving sea-snail with not much in the way of a personality and a shell that makes a really nice soap dish, it's catastrophic.



Ryan Bradley

When Beede began researching "abs," as they're called, in the mid-1970s, he was working with a team of abalone divers and scientists to bring them back to the wild. The disappearance of the

species off the California coast, though terrible (particularly for the abalone), coincided with a serious economic boom in the most seafood hungry nation in the world: Japan. This is all to explain that although Beede is a really nice guy, from the outset he and plenty of others have had an interest in the species because there's money in it. It's always been that way.

*2. With the top of the abalone's shell in the palm of your hand, turn the abalone upside down. Do not be alarmed.*

The first abalone eaters were ancient. Shell piles (middens) from California's Channel Islands reveal evidence of abalone gobbling from more than 10,000 years ago. But abalone were so numerous, and people so scarce, that there wasn't much of a dilemma then. After the Spanish set up shop in Point Lobos, in Northern California, in 1769, they started an abalone cannery—and so began the abalone's long descent into obscurity.

By the late 19th century, abalone were being harvested in earnest: in 1879, 2,000 tons of abalone were removed from California waters, roughly 1,000 times more than the state now produces, farms included. They were taken for their meat, of course, but also cultured for their pearls, and their shells have an iridescent nacre still prized by jewelers and makers of fancy guitars. With the California shallows stripped bare, hard-hat divers ventured deeper, into the kelp forests. Callum Roberts, in his *The Unnatural History of the Sea*, writes that these divers, in their heavy suits and lead boots, tethered to boat by rope and air hose, "often collected five or six hundred abalones per person per day." In the kelp beds there were "piles five to twelve animals deep."

No longer. By the time diving for abalone for sport came along, in the mid-20th century, abalone hatcheries were irrevocably damaged. Recreational ab divers are too often blamed for the demise of California's abalone. Really, they just delivered the death blow.

*3. Stick the thumb of your free hand between the far side of the abalone's shell and its "foot." It's that black wiggly thing.*

We are not the only animals that find abalone so tasty. As plankton, they're gobbled up by any number of unimpressive predators—muscles, barnacles, and a many-tentacled worm-like creature called a *terribilis* that is the Kobayashi of abalone eating, and can take down 10,000 abalone larvae in an afternoon. Beede and his colleagues discovered the *terribilis*'s eating habits the hard way. After figuring out how to spawn abalone in a lab, they let hundreds of thousands of baby abs free in the wild ... and watched them get got by every predator on the food chain. At this point Beede and company reconsidered their tactics and took the fight back to tanks, where we're more in control of things.

*4. The upside-down abalone, in an attempt to right itself, will begin crawling toward your wrist. Do not freak out: It's a snail, so the worst it can do is slime you. Besides, you need to pay attention to the underside of the abalone's shell. Focus.*

Beede started farming abs in 1978. His operation today is radically different from back then. As he tells it, "We had these big rectangular tanks and the abalone wouldn't grow nearly as well." Now, the abalones are transferred from one tank to another based upon weight, size, and age. But that's not even the half of it. Beede pumps 2,500 gallons of seawater through his farm every minute. The intake is further out and deeper than it used to be, after an El Niño in 1997 when the temperatures rose and killed about 40 percent of his abs. There's also a UV system on the intake that kills 99.9 percent of all the microscopic marine life that comes in. Every few years he dries out his tanks and flushes them with fresh water.



Ryan Bradley

Beede does all this because of the sabellid worm, which was brought over through the abalone-trade from South Africa and decimated California's farms. In Australia, farmers were not so cautious and the worm got into the wild and wrecked havoc. Beede also keeps cats around to hunt the rats that would eat his abs. The black tarps cover his tanks not because abalones require shade, but because a few years back some crows discovered the place, told their friends, and Beede had himself a situation that would've inspired Hitchcock.

This is all to say that the abalone is sensitive. So attuned is it to environmental conditions, and so easily preyed upon, that it has become a bellwether—its very presence proof of a healthy marine environment. Even the bands on the abalone's shell bear evidence of water conditions, and the abundance of the algae and kelp it feeds upon. Abnormal abalone larvae are proof that something is amiss. All of which brings us back to the importance of sexing.

Beede sells some of his female abs to science, and the profit margins are 25 percent higher than if he were to sell them for meat. Scientists—working on aquariums, or coastlines, even in wetlands—are after the eggs, which are used to ensure water quality. So the species we ate to the brink of extinction, and decorated our necklaces and guitars with, is now getting farmed on land to help keep our seawater less toxic. I don't think the abalone had a choice in any of this, but it still seems awfully noble for a lowly sea snail.

As for the sexing:

*5. Look on the far end of the upturned shell: creamy white bands are sperm; dark bands prove it's female. Now put the abalone back in the water, where it belongs.*

[www.theatlantic.com/food/archive/2010/03/how-to-sex-an-abalone-a-se...](http://www.theatlantic.com/food/archive/2010/03/how-to-sex-an-abalone-a-se...)

The Atlantic covers breaking news, analysis, opinion around food and cuisine on the official site of the Atlantic Magazine.

News - Politics: Minister grilled over R82m tender

Thursday, 11 March 2010 11:50 AM

## Minister grilled over R82m tender

March 09 2010 at 11:28AM

**Get IOL on your mobile at [m.iol.co.za](http://m.iol.co.za)**

By Craig McKune

Environment Minister Buyelwa Sonjica has defended her department's awarding of a contract to a company - tasked with managing part of an R82-million "social relief plan" for abalone rights holders - without following an open tender process.

But DA MP Gareth Morgan, who posed parliamentary questions on the contract, says Sonjica's response "only serves to raise more questions".

The company, Anix Consulting, appears to have been appointed in a rush late last year after President Jacob Zuma and Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Minister Tina Joemat-Pettersson - under whom parts of Marine and Coastal Management (MCM) now reside - promised coastal communities the banned abalone fishery would be reopened this year.

Part of their promise was the social relief plan, including the distribution of R10m - by Anix - to abalone divers, crew and companies holding abalone quotas.

The abalone fishery has been closed since February 2008 when then environmental minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk promised abalone fishers a social relief package, which fishers say never materialised.

In response to a DA parliamentary question paper, Sonjica said: "(Anix) was appointed through a process akin to an emergency appointment in terms of the Supply Chain Management Guide."

She said the abalone relief payments to stakeholders were "classified as transfer payments in the Estimates of National Expenditure" so were exempt from "supply chain management prescripts".

But Morgan said: "The minister needs to justify why this appointment is anything like an emergency situation. The social relief plan for abalone rights holders affected by the closure of the fishery had been in discussion for 18 months prior to this.

"While transfer payments are common in government, such payments are normally made to other public entities. The minister needs to explain how this provision can be used to justify a substantial payment to a private company."

He also called on Sonjica to explain why a private business was needed in the first place rather than using in-house sources.

"Now, a private company will earn a management fee to do a project that could have been done by government."

According to the company's website, the Bellville-registered Anix Consulting - run by former SANParks employee Rhiyaan Cupido - has been around since 2001 and has been awarded numerous government contracts, mainly by the former Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, the new Department of Water and Environmental Affairs and others related to CapeNature and Robben Island Museum.

MCM officials previously refused to give the Cape Times a reason why this appointment was made without tendering.

Spokesman Zolile Nqayi said only that Anix was appointed "from a list of approved service providers in the Western Cape", after being "nominated" by abalone fishers.

The Cape Times asked Nqayi in December why Anix needed to be appointed at all, but he declined to comment.

The department has not since responded to queries on the matter.




[craig.mckune@inl.co.za](mailto:craig.mckune@inl.co.za)

[www.iol.co.za/index.php?...lick\\_id=6&art\\_id=vn20100309043010790C169656](http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?...lick_id=6&art_id=vn20100309043010790C169656)

Environment Minister Buyelwa Sonjica has defended her department's awarding of a contract to a company without following an open tender process.

## Poachers fined for taking 253 paua

by Sandra Conchie | 6th March 2010

-  [Email Story](#)
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Four greedy shellfish gatherers caught with excess amounts of undersized paua after gathering a Christmas feed at Maketu's Newdick Beach have received fines of over \$1000, and or community work.

Te Puke man John Stewart, 24, Jason Thompson, 35, of Kawerau, and Samuel Matthews, 28, and Herewini Tamihana, 21, both from Tokoroa, in Tauranga District Court yesterday pleaded guilty to one charge each of possessing more than three times the daily limit of paua and possessing undersize paua.

The court was told that at about 7.46pm on December 23, the four men and an alleged co-offender were nabbed with a total of 253 undersized paua, when the group were stopped at Ministry of Fisheries checkpoint as they were leaving Newdicks Beach.

Stewart and Tamihana were in one vehicle driven by Matthews, which contained a plastic drum and a catch bag containing 172 paua ranging in size from 66mm to 108mm - the minimum legal size is 125mm. In Thompson's vehicle was another two catch bags containing a further 81 paua, ranging in size from 68 mm to 108 mm.

Duty solicitor Nicholas Dutch said the men were unaware of the rules having gathered the paua for a family Christmas dinner function and had not realised they had gathered so much.

Neither of the four men had prior fisheries convictions.

Judge Thomas Ingram said the mens' claims that they did not know what the daily limit was or sizes "did not wash with him".

Advertisement

Matthews was fined \$1200 plus \$260 court costs and the vehicle not confiscated, while both Stewart and Thompson were fined \$1000 each plus \$260 court costs, plus Thompson's \$4000 Mitsubshi Pajero was permanently confiscated. Tamihana was sentenced to 100 hours community work.

[www.bayofplentytimes.co.nz/local/news/poachers-fined-for-taking-253...](http://www.bayofplentytimes.co.nz/local/news/poachers-fined-for-taking-253...)

Four greedy shellfish gatherers caught with excess amounts of undersized paua after gathering a Christmas feed at Maketu's Newdick Beach have received fines of over \$1000, and or community work. Te Puke man John Stewart, 24, Jason Thompson, 35, of Kawerau, and Samuel Matthews, 28, and Herewini Tamihana, 21, both ...

## New high-tech weapon in illegal fishing fight

SARAH CHENHALL

04 Mar, 2010 09:54 AM

THERE'S a new weapon in the fight against illegal fishing on the Far South Coast, with a high-

powered purpose built patrol vessel hitting the water at Eden last month.

The Twofold Bay was launched by NSW Primary Industries Minister Steve Whan along with supervising Fisheries officer for the South Coast Matthew Richardson and other Fisheries representatives.

"It will be used by Industry and Investment (I&I) NSW Fisheries Officers from the Far South Coast as well as the Abalone Operations Group, to target abalone theft and other illegal fishing activity during fisheries operations as well as routine inspections on the commercial fleet and recreational fishers at sea," Mr Whan said.

The boat is purposely designed for long range patrols of the coast, without the need for refuelling, allowing extended patrols to remote sections of coastline such as Cape Howe on the NSW/Victorian border.

The vessel, a 7.3 metre custom built NAIAD rigid hull inflatable has been specifically designed for fisheries compliance duties.

The design features a mid cab soft-top configuration with aluminium hull and a unique collar system for safe boarding of vessels.

The high-powered vessel is powered by twin 150hp four stroke outboards capable of speeds in excess of 50knots.

The boat is surveyed to withstand wind conditions of 20 knots and seas of two metres.

"Both our high visibility and covert operations send a clear message to all illegal fishers, that we're taking a tough stance when dealing with fisheries crime," Mr Whan said.

"The recent passing of the Fisheries Management Amendment Bill 2009 strengthens our capacity to target illegal fishing activity with habitual offenders facing double penalties".

Illegal fishing activity can be reported to local I&I NSW fisheries officers or by calling the Fisher's Watch hotline on 1800 043 536

[www.naroomanewsonline.com.au/news/local/news/general/new-hightech-w...](http://www.naroomanewsonline.com.au/news/local/news/general/new-hightech-w...)

THERE'S a new weapon in the fight against illegal fishing on the Far South Coast, with a high-powered purpose built patrol vessel hitting the water at Eden last month.

fishvictoria.com online forums - View topic - Father and son abalone thieves caught at Mordialloc

Thursday, 4 March 2010 9:10 PM

**Monday, March 1, 2010**

### **FATHER AND SON ABALONE THIEVES CAUGHT AT MORDIALLOC**

A father and his 11 year old son were apprehended by fishery officers for allegedly stealing abalone in the Mordialloc area on Friday, February 26.

The 33 year old Clayton South man was observed wearing a mask and snorkel 'duck diving' over a known abalone area.

After diving for about 1.5 hours, it is alleged the man handed a catchbag containing 238 shucked (shell removed) abalone to his son.

When the pair was apprehended, Fisheries Officers found the shucked abalone appeared to be grossly undersize.

Department of Primary Industries (DPI) Senior Fisheries Officer, Dane Robinson, said the catch limit was five, although the day of the alleged offence was closed to abalone collection.

"As the collection was so grossly over the catch limit and with most having not yet reached breeding age, it would take a long time for the area to recover," Mr Robinson said.

The man was arrested and taken to the Mordialloc Police Station. His family station wagon and diving equipment were seized.

He will be charged on summons.

People who suspect illegal fishing activity should call the DPI fisheries 24-hour offence reporting line 13 FISH (133 474).

[www.fishvictoria.com/member-forums/General-Fishing/39506?p=406062](http://www.fishvictoria.com/member-forums/General-Fishing/39506?p=406062)

From the Department of Primary Industries Monday, March 1, 2010 FATHER AND SON ABALONE THIEVES CAUGHT AT MORDIALLOC A father and his 11 year old son were apprehended by fishery officers for allegedly stealing abalone in the Mordialloc area on Fri

☐ Daily Dispatch Online

Saturday, 27 February 2010 11:24 AM

## Poachers arrested at Leaches Bay

**2010/02/26**

ABALONE poachers were arrested yesterday in Leaches Bay after police found R15 000-worth of abalone hidden in the engine compartment of their getaway vehicle.

Police spokesperson Captain Stephen Marais said three men had been arrested after port-of-entry police noticed them diving off the beach.

“Border police then blocked off their escape route, so when they tried to drive away their vehicle was stopped and searched.”

Marais said the vehicle and diving equipment had been confiscated and the three men arrested. — Taralyn Bro



**CAPTURED SPOILS:** Inspector Harry van Gerven, from the port-of-entry police, holds up a bag of perlemoen and diving gear which was recovered from two suspects. The estimated value of the perlemoen is R15 000. Picture: ALAN EASON

<http://www.dispatch.co.za/article.aspx?id=383495>

☐ New weapon in illegal fishing fight - Local News - News - General - Magnet

Saturday, 27 February 2010 8:19 AM

## New weapon in illegal fishing fight

BY SARAH CHENHALL

25 Feb, 2010 08:56 AM

There's a new weapon in the fight against illegal fishing on the NSW Far South Coast, with a high powered purpose built patrol vessel hitting the water at Quarantine Bay on Friday afternoon.

The Twofold Bay was launched by NSW Primary Industries Minister, Steve Whan along with supervising Fisheries officer for the South Coast Matthew Richardson, Fisheries officer Michael Kirwin and Fisheries investigator Nick Schroder of the Statewide Operations and Investigations Group.

The state-of-the-art Fisheries patrol vessel Twofold Bay is part of the NSW Government's ongoing crackdown on illegal fishing across the State.

"The capacity of fisheries officers to target high-risk offenders has stepped up a gear," Mr Whan said.

"It will be used by Industry and Investment (I&I) NSW Fisheries Officers from the Far South Coast as well as the Abalone Operations Group, to target abalone theft and other illegal fishing activity during fisheries operations as well as routine inspections on the commercial fleet and recreational fishers at sea.

Mr Whan said the boat is purposely designed for long range patrols of the coast, without the need for refuelling, allowing extended patrols to remote sections of coastline such as Cape Howe on the NSW/Victorian border.

The vessel, a 7.3 metre custom built NAIAD rigid hull inflatable has been specifically designed for fisheries compliance duties.

The design features a mid cab soft-top configuration with aluminium hull and a unique collar system for safe boarding of vessels.

The high-powered vessel is powered by twin 150 hp four stroke outboards capable of speeds in excess of 50 knots.

The boat is surveyed to withstand wind conditions of 20 knots and seas of two metres.

"We are committed to protecting the State's natural resources and there are more than 90 I&I NSW Fisheries Officers policing illegal fishing across NSW," Mr Whan said.

"Both our high visibility and covert operations send a clear message to all illegal fishers, that we're taking a tough stance when dealing with fisheries crime"

"The recent passing of the Fisheries Management Amendment Bill 2009 strengthens our capacity to target illegal fishing activity with habitual offenders facing double penalties".

Illegal fishing activity can be reported to local I&I NSW fisheries officers or by calling the Fisher's Watch hotline on 1800 043 536.

[www.edenmagnet.com.au/news/local/news/general/new-weapon-in-illegal...](http://www.edenmagnet.com.au/news/local/news/general/new-weapon-in-illegal...)

There's a new weapon in the fight against illegal fishing on the NSW Far South Coast, with a high powered purpose built patrol vessel hitting the water at Quarantine Bay on Friday afternoon.

Men caught in ab bust get more fines - Local News - News - General - Saturday, 27 February 2010 8:16 AM  
Port Lincoln Times

## Men caught in ab bust get more fines

SOPHIE WANDEL

25 Feb, 2010 12:30 AM

A MAN involved in the abalone bust two weeks ago has also been fined for committing offences in the Lincoln National Park.

The man has been fined for failing to pay entry into a national park and for carrying a weapon.

The Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH) said each offence carried a maximum penalty of \$180.

The man was one of five men who were caught at Cape Donnington recently by Fisheries officers for allegedly taking abalone to fund a drug trade.

The men were found to have more than 200 live abalone in their possession and after further investigation, police officers searched a house where they found another 250 frozen abalone.

Port Lincoln police also found and seized a large quantity of drugs in the house.

Investigations are continuing with the offenders expected to be summoned to appear in court at a later date

[www.portlincolntimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/men-caught-in-a...](http://www.portlincolntimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/men-caught-in-a...)

A MAN involved in the abalone bust two weeks ago has also been fined for committing offences in the Lincoln National Park. The man has been fined for failing to pay entry into a national par

☐ Dodgy food-monger is eating for two

Saturday, 27 February 2010 8:05 AM

## Dodgy food-monger is eating for two

**SUZANNE CARBONE AND LAWRENCE MONEY**

April 26, 2007

THERE was a time when Melbourne father of six **Hue Kha** was a very confused man. Kha thought he was his own long-dead brother, which is not a good look for a bloke who runs a restaurant (although it could explain a delay in meals out of the kitchen).

Yes, he was his own dead brother: at least, that's what Kha told the cops when they came knocking at his Northcote home and found a 440-kilogram pile of illegal abalone. Happily, Kha remembered who he was just in time to be charged (which saved a lot of extra paperwork) and realised that, as proprietor of the Win Ho Chinese diner in Sandringham, his pockets were deep enough to cover the \$25,000 fine imposed by the County Court beak for his indiscretions.

They were also deep enough to cover the \$100,000 the beak ordered he pay to avoid forfeiting one of his houses. Kha, 56, strolled happily out of court last week with a suspended 10-month sentence, then dug even deeper, shouting lunch at the West Lake diner in Chinatown for his wife, his faithful legal lap-dogs and the interpreter who helped translate court proceedings into bite-sized pieces. We hear the West Lake hoedown cost a small fortune (lawyers can be hungry critters) and — a nice touch of irony here — included a serve of (legitimate) abalone worth at least \$100.

Kha had been assisted in his bid for leniency (he pleaded guilty) by two character references: one from state Liberal MP **Murray Thompson** and the other from former Labor MP **Noel Pullen**. Sadly, neither shared the banquet.

[www.brisbanetimes.com.au/entertainment/dodgy-foodmonger-is-eating-f...](http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/entertainment/dodgy-foodmonger-is-eating-f...)

☐ Fight against abalone poaching ramps up - ABC News (Australian Broadcasting Corporation)

Monday, 22 February 2010 1:34 PM

## Fight against abalone poaching ramps up

Posted 7 hours 45 minutes ago

- **Map: Eden 2551**

The State Government is taking more measures to deal with the increasing problem of abalone poaching on the New South Wales far south coast.

A new \$160,000 boat has been launched at Eden, and will be housed on a trailer at the Department of Fisheries office.

The Minister for Primary Industries, Steve Whan, says poachers are harming the industry and must be stopped.

He says the boat will also be used for general fisheries enforcement work.

"Fisheries obviously do a lot of compliance work with recreational fishing," he said.

"They make sure people have their licences, and also do some work with commercial fishers.

"So it's important that they have the ability to move quickly up and down the coast."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/02/22/2826034.htm>

The State Government is taking more measures to deal with the increasing problem of abalone poaching on the New South Wales far south coast.

☐ Haenyo divers brave the dangers of the deep - thestar.com

Sunday, 21 February 2010 3:18 PM

## Haenyo divers brave the dangers of the deep

**For centuries, the haenyo divers of Jeju Island have braved the dangers of the deep in a daily struggle to support their families**

Published On Sat Feb 20 2010



Tourists crowd around aquariums for a peek at lunch, fresh seafood that was harvested earlier in the day, as a haenyo emerges from the water with her catch, a squid that will sell for 25,000 won (about \$25 Cdn).

HANNAH SUNG PHOTOS

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Hannah Sung Special to the Star

Seongsan, Korea—There's a feeding frenzy happening but it's on land, not in the water.

"Receive the money! Receive the money!" a woman in a wetsuit yells as she squats, decisively placing a glistening sea cucumber onto a wooden chopping block on the ground.

Brown, lumpy, exposed, it ejects a limp spray of water from one end for a brief moment before it is rendered into a neat row of round slices, the oozing coral and brown innards neatly whisked away with the flick of a large knife.

Another woman in a wetsuit receives a wad of cash, as the first woman vociferously suggested, taking it from a man waving bills in her general direction.

Tourists have crowded along a row of aquariums that hold sea creatures yanked from the ocean mere moments ago.

There's a raw lunch to be had. The eaters and about-to-be-eaten are having their introductions made by a knife-wielding team of rowdy Korean women in wetsuits.

These women, ages ranging from the mid-50s and up, free dive for seafood in the waters around Jeju Island, off the southern tip of the Korean peninsula.

Haenyo, as they are called, can dive up to 20 metres deep and hold their breath for up to two minutes, using small metallic tools to loosen sea creatures from the sea, then placing them in floating nets.

On this mid-winter afternoon we are at Seongsan, a volcanic isthmus that forms a naturally protected cove of shallow water on black rock.

These women divers have just given an early-afternoon demonstration of their livelihood.

A narrator with a microphone began with a welcome greeting as the haenyo stood on the black volcanic beach for a gathering cluster of winter holiday tourists.

We gazed curiously at these five aging women in wetsuits and weighted belts.

Once introduced, the haenyo began to sing a spirit-bolstering song, to ward off the doubts and dangers of a wintry sea.

Holding nets with drum-shaped styrofoam floats attached, the haenyo began singing in a plaintive, slow tempo.

They rocked to the beat of their dirge, marking time with the watermelon-size float each held with both hands, their call and response marked by the tremulous vibrato of traditional Korean song.

With each passing verse, their singing picked up speed, becoming downright raucous with Korean chutzpah.

A few whoops and cackles accentuated their singing, their salty, wrinkly expressions breaking into wry grins.

As the spirited lead haenyo was about to hurl herself into launching a new verse, the staid announcer grabbed the mic away, a not-so-discreet message: Less singing, more swimming.

At this, the ladies shuffled off towards the water's edge like a mischievous gang of girls who have been chastised by their team coach to go out and do what they do best.

To picture the aquatic movements of haenyo, one needs to dispel any images of sirens or mermaids or Darryl Hannah in *Splash*.

These women are foraging to give life to themselves, their families and their community, as did their predecessors for centuries.

It isn't about romantic notions of water nymphs and pretty, feminine swimming.

There's a job to do, and the haenyo lean into it with aplomb, gently lowering themselves into the water and kicking, frog-leg, away from the shore.

They are as comfortable farming the ocean floor as they are in a field on land.

Being image-conscious doesn't factor in to it.

After 15 minutes in the water, Oh Hyun Soo, 56, emerges with a squid.

The kids on the shore gasp and squeal.

After a brief, shy moment, but egged on by their parents, one by one the kids stand next to Oh, the moment, and the squid, captured on cellphone cameras.

"Hurry to get a photo, you have to hurry!" Oh calls out, splaying the squid mid-air for photo ops.

"This is 30,000 won," she says, which is the equivalent of about \$30.

"But because I caught this just for you, you can have it for 25,000!" Oh announces the price of her squid to all of us and no one in particular.

Which is how we come to find ourselves gathered around Oh and her colleagues, after the other haenyo emerge with varying hauls including kelp and abalone and sea cucumber, trading Korean cash for fresh, raw seafood with a side of red, hot pepper paste and a green bottle of soju, clear Korean liquor.

For centuries, or millennia, according to some historians, haenyo have been plucking their way of living from the sea, one fistful of food at a time. While haenyo have been known to work the coasts of mainland Korea and Japan, too, it originated in Jeju Island, with shamanic rituals specific to this ancient practice and an island culture rich with mythology.

Today, there are about 5,000 practising haenyo on Jeju Island, their numbers are dwindling. In the 1950s, there were approximately 30,000. The average age of a haenyo now hovers in the 50s, with some still diving well into their 80s. In the past, girls learned to dive starting at the age of 6 or 7. Today, there are only two known haenyo under the age of 30. To preserve the diving tradition, Jeju Island has begun treating haenyo as heroes.

The Haenyo Museum opened to the public in 2006. It is devoted to their craft and their role in resisting Japanese occupation during the first half of the 20th century. Their hardy, far-flung missions, as far as Vladivostock, Russia, are well-documented. There is also a school for haenyo training, a 17-week course that is free to locals and foreigners.

Regardless of these efforts, the aging haenyo population is history in the making, as young local women now have a myriad of options in modern-day Korea.

Even on this mainly agrarian and sleepy island off the southern coast of the mainland, job options for women are wide enough that they generally don't include long diving excursions, breaking through the surface with prizes that garner only \$10 or \$20 or \$30 each.

But for the women who have been doing it for a lifetime, it is a way of life.

I ask Oh whether she has daughters. She does. They decided to not become haenyo.

I ask whether it was due to their mother's wishes.

Oh respectfully demurs and says they made their own choices in life. I change the topic by gesturing to the array of sea creatures in the tanks, items she plucked from the sea floor.

"What is your favourite food?" I ask.

"Vegetables," she promptly replies. And laughs.

*Hannah Sung is a Toronto-based freelance writer. Her trip was subsidized by Jeju Tourism.*

[www.thestar.com/travel/asiapacific/article/766953--haenyo-divers-br...](http://www.thestar.com/travel/asiapacific/article/766953--haenyo-divers-br...)

There's a feeding frenzy happening but it's on land, not in the water.

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Sunday, 21 February 2010 8:49 AM



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Abalone and drug bust - Local News - News - General - Port Lincoln Times

Sunday, 21 February 2010 7:46 AM

**Abalone and drug bust**

SOPHIE WANDEL

18 Feb, 2010 12:30 AM

ABALONE taken from local waters has been allegedly sold on the black market to fund a suspected illegal drug trade, according to Port Lincoln police Superintendent Brad Flaherty.

On Friday last week Fisheries officers and police uncovered an illegal abalone operation at Cape Donnington in the Lincoln National Park.

Fisheries busted five men allegedly involved in taking the abalone, which resulted in a Port Lincoln house being searched.

Police Superintendent Brad Flaherty said it appeared the illegal seafood was being sold in Adelaide and used to buy drugs which were being brought back to Lower Eyre Peninsula.

The bust came after Fisheries officers on board the Southern Ranger spotted divers in the water and upon investigation they were allegedly found to have more than 200 live abalone in their possession.

After interviewing the divers, officers searched the house where they found another 250 frozen abalone bagged and ready for sale, about half of which were undersize.

Police officers also found and seized a large quantity of drugs in the house.

"After a joint search of the premises, 30 suspected ecstasy tablets were found along with drug paraphernalia," Superintendent Flaherty said.

"One cannabis expiation notice was issued, and one person has been reported for the possession of ecstasy tablets.

"It looks like there was a significant operation going on and there is reasonable suspicion of links between drugs and illegal abalone catching."

Master onboard the Southern Ranger Les Parsons issued a warning to people who have considered abalone poaching.

"Abalone is a valuable species and is particularly sought after at this time of year, so our officers will be paying particular attention to known abalone fishing areas to ensure people are following the rules.

"Unlicensed poachers who take large numbers of abalone from the water with the intention of selling them illegally put the industry at considerable risk."

He said the penalties for taking and possessing abalone for a commercial purpose include four years' jail or \$250,000 fines.

Mr Parsons also gave credit to Port Lincoln police.

"Working closely with SAPOL also enables us to share our resources and provide very effective coverage."

Superintendent Flaherty agreed, saying the joint operations were ongoing and overlapping.

Investigations are continuing with the offenders expected to be summoned to appear in court at a later date.



HUGE BUST: PIRSA Fisheries Officer Kane Slater with more than 450 abalone seized in a bust last week which led to 30 suspected ecstasy tablets being seized from a Port Lincoln house and the uncovering of an alleged illegal drug trade involving five men.



[www.portlincolntimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/abalone-and-dru...](http://www.portlincolntimes.com.au/news/local/news/general/abalone-and-dru...)

ABALONE taken from local waters has been allegedly sold on the black market to fund a suspected illegal drug trade, according to Port Lincoln police Superintendent Brad Flaherty. On Friday I

☐ Radio New Zealand News : Stories : 2010 : 02 : 18 : Poaching hotline calls up this summer Sunday, 21 February 2010 7:46 AM

## Poaching hotline calls up this summer

Updated at 6:04am on 18 February 2010

**The Ministry of Fisheries says it's had an increase of 15% in the number of calls to a poaching hotline this summer compared to last year.**

Nearly 1600 calls have been made to the 0800 Poacher line since the ministry launched a campaign on 15 December.

After a tip-off in January, fisheries officers caught three men in South Taranaki with 701 paua between them - more than 23 times the daily limit.

<http://www.radionz.co.nz/news/stories/2010/02/18/1247f25b7d56>

☐ Authorities crack illegal seafood, drug operation - ABC News (Australian Broadcasting Corporation) Saturday, 20 February 2010 1:24 PM

## Authorities crack illegal seafood, drug operation

Posted Wed Feb 17, 2010 9:09am AEDT

- **Map:** [Port Lincoln 5606](#)

Fisheries officers and police have uncovered what they say is an illegal operation which was ferrying abalone and drugs to and from lower Eyre Peninsula.

Superintendent Brad Flaherty says it appears illegal seafood was being sent to Adelaide and the profits used to buy drugs which were taken back to Eyre Peninsula.

Fisheries found abalone was being taken illegally off Lincoln National Park.

He says a house at Port Lincoln was searched.

"Further abalone was found in the freezer, about 30 ecstasy tablets and some other drug-use paraphernalia was seized," he said.

Les Parsons from Primary Industries SA says a chance encounter triggered the investigation.

"As we were steaming past Cape Donnington, we observed some divers in the water," he said.

Offences can attract up to four years' jail and \$250,000 fines.

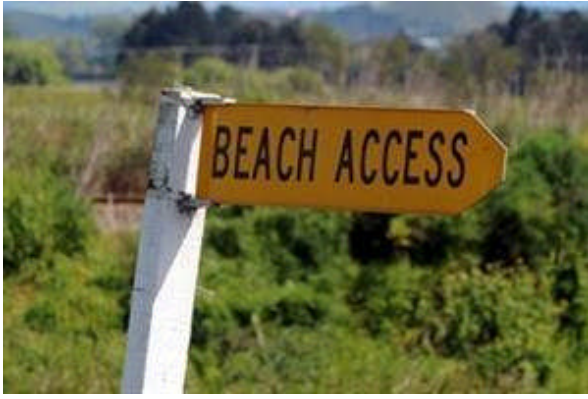
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/02/17/2821873.htm>

Fisheries officers and police have uncovered what they say is an illegal operation which was ferrying abalone and drugs to and from lower Eyre Peninsula.

☐ Fisheries officers shocked at extent of paua poaching - Story - National - 3 News Sunday, 14 February 2010 8:02 AM

## Fisheries officers shocked at extent of paua poaching

t, 13 Feb 2010 11:59a.m.



Gisborne-based businesses have been paying poachers to supply them with illegal paua and crayfish, often taken from a local marine reserve.

Ministry of Fisheries staff say they are shocked at the scale of the offending and concerned for the future of local stocks.

Earlier this week fisheries officers executed search warrants, after several weeks surveillance, preparation and planning to target businesses that buy illegal paua and crayfish.

"This is huge, serious offending -- it's at the upper end of the scale where the penalties are fines of up to \$250,000 and the seizure and forfeiture of any property used in the offending." ministry area manager Tom Teneti told the *Gisborne Herald*.

Property seized in "Operation Holster" included a Ford Explorer SUV along with large quantities of paua, ranging between five and 15 kilos.

"It may not sound like all that much, but when you see the tiny size of many of the individual paua, it becomes significant because of the huge numbers taken," Mr Teneti said.

"As long as businesses provide a demand people will continue to illegally strip the coast of marine life. I can't overstate how worrying that is for us."

During the surveillance period his staff had to watch as people took large quantities of very undersize paua and crayfish, and stripped regenerating life from Te Tapuwae o Rongokako Marine Reserve at Pouawa, 20km northeast of Gisborne.

Officers diving recreationally "have been shocked at the state of the marine reserve".

"The numbers are just not there that you would expect to see in a 10 year-old reserve. That must be a great concern for the tangata whenua who were the driver of the reserve, and for all the people of the region."

NZPA

[www.3news.co.nz/Fisheries-officers-shocked-at-extent-of-paua-poachi...](http://www.3news.co.nz/Fisheries-officers-shocked-at-extent-of-paua-poachi...)

Fisheries officers shocked at extent of paua poaching Gisborne-based businesses have been paying poachers to supply them with illegal paua and crayfish, often taken from a local marine reserve. gisborne, Breaking National News and online streaming news videos from TV3, New Zealand's continuous news desk

☐ Deadly abalone virus 'a real threat' to Melbourne waters

Sunday, 14 February 2010 7:45 AM

## Deadly abalone virus 'a real threat' to Melbourne waters

**PETER MUNRO**

February 14, 2010

VICTORIA'S lucrative abalone industry could be all but wiped out by the spread of a fatal virus, which threatens to decimate prized beds worth \$20 million around Melbourne.

Fisheries Victoria said it was likely stock in Port Phillip Bay and around the Mornington Peninsula would become infected, after hundreds of dead abalone were found at Cape Otway. Previously, infected abalone had been confined to areas further west. Now divers fear it is almost inevitable the virus will reach Melbourne and destroy the state's \$75 million wild abalone industry unless the state

government bans people from swimming and fishing in infected waters.

"If the disease hits Melbourne we could lose 90 per cent of production in nine months. People don't realise how quickly this could turn to shit," Vin Gannon, chief executive of the Victorian Abalone Divers Association, said.

He says the government has not done enough to stop the spread of the highly virulent ganglioneuritis, which attacks the abalone's nervous system.

Angry abalone divers and licence-holders have hired law firm Maurice Blackburn to sue the government for alleged negligence over the initial outbreak of the virus on aquaculture farms in the state's west in December 2005, which has led to the devastation of up to 90 per cent of abalone stocks, across 300 kilometres of coastline. Victoria's wild abalone industry, the second-largest in the world behind Tasmania, has more than halved in value since the disease was detected.

Further cuts to the catch quota are likely to be imposed on Friday due to the Cape Otway discovery late last year.

Sorrento diver Jamie Espie said the continued spread east of the virus would force many people out of the industry. His stake in a small abalone licence had already fallen in value from \$350,000 to about \$75,000, he said. "It's really a great industry and I have loved being part of it. But it's slow torture."

Associate professor Robert Day, a specialist in abalone ecology at the University of Melbourne, said affected areas could take 15 years to recover. The virus, which is not harmful to humans, is spread largely by fishermen moving bait from affected areas or divers carrying infected organic matter on their equipment.

Fisheries Victoria, within the Department of Primary Industries, is advising divers to wash vessels, equipment and hands, and remove all marine organic matter from their gear.

Executive director Anthony Hurst said extra officers had been placed around Apollo Bay to assist fishers and divers. But there was "a real threat" the virus could strike Port Phillip Bay and the Mornington Peninsula, he said. "There's no evidence to suggest it can be stopped at this point."

[www.theage.com.au/national/deadly-abalone-virus-a-real-threat-to-me...](http://www.theage.com.au/national/deadly-abalone-virus-a-real-threat-to-me...)

☐ \$5m boat seized after fishing scam | Stuff.co.nz

Saturday, 13 February 2010 4:54 AM

## \$5m boat seized after fishing scam

By CHARLIE GATES - The Press  
Last updated 05:00 12/02/2010  
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A Ukrainian crew that illegally caught more than \$1 million worth of fish from New Zealand waters have had their \$5m vessel seized, along with \$400,000 worth of catch.

The Lyttelton-based fishing vessel Kapitan Rusak was seized after captain Ruslan Karnaukhov and factory manager Borys Samysko pleaded guilty in the Christchurch District Court yesterday to three charges of making false and misleading statements on fishing returns.

The two claimed that fish caught in one quota area were caught in another – an activity known in the fishing industry as "trucking". The crew misreported their fishing catch in September 2007 and October 2008.

The Ministry of Fisheries, acting on a tipoff from other fishing ventures in the area, investigated the crew's fishing returns and found they could not have caught the fish where they claimed.

Ministry field operations manager Peter Hyde told The Press that satellite tracking of the ship helped stop the scam.

"The scam is they catch the fish in one area where it is quite good fishing, but they don't have quota for, and then you steam the boat into an area where the fishing is quite difficult and claim you caught it there," he said. "Because the ship is being tracked by satellite, we could see they were not in an area where you could catch that much fish."

Hyde said quota scams could put fishing operations in jeopardy.

He thanked the fishing boats that reported the offending to the ministry and gave evidence in court. "Without their support, I doubt we could have taken the prosecution."

The fate of the seized fish and vessel will be decided by a District Court judge when sentencing is set on April 16.

Seized assets are often returned to the owner once a redemption fee set by the judge has been paid. These fees can be hundreds of thousands of dollars.

[www.stuff.co.nz/national/crime/3318722/5m-boat-seized-after-fishing...](http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/crime/3318722/5m-boat-seized-after-fishing...)

A Ukrainian crew that illegally caught more than \$1 million worth of fish from New Zealand waters have had their \$5m vessel seized, along with \$400,000 worth of catch.

☐ Coastal hide and seek in serious business - Local News - News - General - The Warrnambool Standard

Saturday, 13 February 2010 4:49 AM

## Coastal hide and seek in serious business

EVERARD HIMMELREICH  
12 Feb, 2010 04:00 AM



Fisheries officer Paul Millar checks whether abalone harvested by a licensed operator are of legal size.

AS a fisheries officer on Victoria's south west coast, Paul Millar is all too familiar with bull ants and jumping jack thorns.

As part of his job, Mr Millar spends time concealed in coastal scrub doing surveillance work on possible abalone thieves.

That can involve sitting still in the bush for long hours - so finding a bull ant and jumping jack-free hideout is critical.

There are also more serious dangers.

Mr Millar has had his two front teeth knocked out when a thief lashed out during one arrest and one of his colleagues has suffered a broken nose and other facial injuries after being discovered by

thieves during a surveillance operation.

To catch the thieves, Mr Millar has to work the same hours they do, so late night and early morning shifts are part of the job.

"Most illegal abalone activity is from the shore on this coast under the cover of darkness. If they could do it between 8am-4pm, it would be good," he joked.

In one arrest near Port Fairy, officers had to conceal themselves for 12 hours before the thieves arrived, so as to be in place before the gang's regular lookout went on watch.

Officers arrested the lookout and Mr Millar dived into where the thieves were stealing abalone off reefs.

He came up behind one diver and took a flash photo underwater of him taking abalone.

Mr Millar said the thief failed to see him and ? apparently thinking the flash was lightning ? continued stealing the sought-after shellfish.

It was not until another photo flash as he ascended with a bag full of illegal abalone that the thief realised he was in trouble.

The site of surveillance operations is sometimes determined by information from the public received on the fisheries' offence reporting phone line, 133474, or 13 FISH . In other cases, it's the officers' knowledge of prime theft sites and suitable weather conditions.

Mr Millar said the days when abalone thieves wore camouflage clothing and carried radios, which immediately raised suspicion if sighted, were gone.

The thieves were now more devious but people acting suspiciously was still the trigger for most reports by the public to the 13 FISH phone line.

In one intercept near Gellibrand in the Otways, officers found more than 100 abalone stuffed around the waistbands of two people.

"Both looked like they had pot bellies," Mr Millar said.

Finding hidden compartments in vehicles where abalone were concealed was another skill officers had acquired.

Mr Millar said running vehicles on LPG and using the empty petrol tank to store abalone was a common ploy.

He said while most of the buyers of abalone were Asian, because their cultures held the meat in high esteem, his experience was that many of the major abalone thieves were from Anglo-Saxon backgrounds.

He calls them thieves rather than poachers because they were undeserving of any "Robin Hood" mystique, he said.

Some south-west coastal communities accepted abalone theft and knew which people were involved, the thieves' arguing they were only doing what abalone licence holders did but without paying tax to the government.

"It's important to debunk these myths," Mr Millar said.

"These people will put at risk the sustainability of the abalone resource."

Only southern Australia and New Zealand continue to have commercial abalone fisheries. Over-fishing has destroyed those elsewhere in the world, driven by the high prices paid for abalone in Asia.

Mr Millar said abalone, a marine snail, did not elicit the same sort of public support for its preservation as an animal such as the black rhino.

However, its sustainable harvest supported many livelihoods and generated significant export revenue for Victoria.

He said the strengthening of penalties for abalone theft last decade had helped reduce the incidence

of large-scale, organised theft but its prevalence was often related to the economic climate.

Mr Millar said the rugged south-west coast had itself helped protect the resource, with many abalone habitats inaccessible to the general public.

However, it also gave determined thieves the isolation they needed to steal abalone undetected.

[www.standard.net.au/news/local/news/general/coastal-hide-and-seek-i...](http://www.standard.net.au/news/local/news/general/coastal-hide-and-seek-i...)

AS a fisheries officer on Victoria's south west coast, Paul Millar is all too familiar with bull ants and jumping jack thorns.

☐ Abalone growers back 'virus' farms - Local News - News - General - The Warrnambool Standard Friday, 12 February 2010 11:15 AM

## Abalone growers back 'virus' farms

ALEX SINNOTT

12 Feb, 2010 04:00 AM

BESIEGED abalone farms have received backing from the Australian Abalone Growers Association (AAGA) after a class action was proposed to seek to recover damages caused by a lethal ocean virus.

Melbourne-based law firm Maurice Blackburn has sought expressions of interest in pursuing a case against two farms which allegedly took inadequate precautions to stop the spread and containment of the disease.

AAGA executive officer Justin Fromm said the organisation supported the claim made by the industry that all farms responded within the conditions of their aquaculture licences during the time of the 2006 herpes-like virus outbreak.

"The reports in the local Victorian media were the first we have heard of any actual legal action," Mr Fromm said.

"Before this it has all been rumour. The farms have said to us that they have not received anything from the lawyers ."

Mr Fromm said processing and aquaculture industries had implemented better biosecurity protocols since the abalone viral ganglineuritis outbreak which was first discovered in December 2005.

The virus obliterated abalone stocks along a 200-kilometre section of the south-west coast from Cape Bridgewater near Portland to Aire River at Princetown.

"Nobody, not the divers, farmers, Government or scientists, had ever recorded the presence of AVG in Australia before the outbreak," Mr Fromm said.

"Everybody was battling an abnormal, unpredictable and unknown disease event and nobody could have predicted what would happen.

"The farms did everything they were able to with the information they had before them".

Mr Fromm said the Victorian abalone aquaculture industry had initiated an independent third-party audited biosecurity program and his organisation was working with other governments to have it adopted nationwide.

A Maurice Blackburn spokeswoman said the litigation was only a proposal.

"We have not yet launched a class action. We haven't served anything on the Abalone Growers Association," the spokeswoman said.

Abalone licence-holders and divers are expected to claim losses including decreased abalone sales, a cut in profits and devaluation of abalone licences.

[www.standard.net.au/news/local/news/general/abalone-growers-back-vi...](http://www.standard.net.au/news/local/news/general/abalone-growers-back-vi...)

BESIEGED abalone farms have received backing from the Australian Abalone Growers Association (AAGA) after a class action was proposed to seek to recover damages caused by a lethal ocean virus.

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Thursday, 16 July 2009 12:00 AM

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