

Newsletter 2

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Education & Training

October 2006

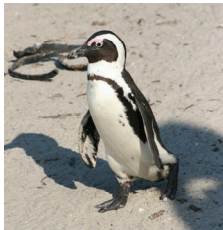
Whale & Dolphin Identification Course

The shark spotters attended a cetacean course presented by Irene Toerien at the Iziko Museum at the beginning of July. The main focus was on southern right whales which migrate to our shores from the Antarctic every winter to breed.

We also walked through the 'Shark World' exhibit at the museum—naturally the spotters had to pose in the Megalodon jaw (see photo)!



Boat trip on *Whale Rider*



The spotters were invited on an educational trip with boat based whale watching permit holder, Southern Ocean Tours on 11th July. Unfortunately it was still early in the southern right whale season and we didn't have any sightings that morning. It was fun being on the sea anyway and we were treated to pancakes once we returned to Simonstown. While in the area we drove to Boulders Beach to see the African penguin colony.

Seal Island

Chris & Monique Fallows invited Yvonne on a boat trip to Seal Island where they saw Byrde's, humpback and southern right whales, common dolphins and some awesome white sharks.

Shark Encounters

Over the last few months there have been several reports of interactions between white sharks and water users. In July a Fish Hoek life-saver's surf ski was bitten off Sunny Cove. A few days later lifesaver, Achmat Hassiem, lost his foot when a shark bit him during a training session at Sunrise Beach. The following week a shark bit a surfer's leash at Danger Beach, St James. Sharks were encountered by surfers in Noordhoek and Kommetjie. A white shark swam towards a diver at Millers Point during the first weekend of October. The diver shot the shark with his speargun and it swam off with the tip of the spear stuck in its snout.



Shark Research

The shark spotting assisted Alison Kock on several inshore shark tagging attempts by providing additional beach support at Fish Hoek, Muizenberg and Glencairn. On 28 Aug a 4.5—5m white shark was spotted in shallow water at Fish Hoek beach. Unfortunately the research team was not able to tag her. The beach was closed for most of the day as 3 sharks were observed close to the shore.

Shark Sightings

Sharks sightings have increased with the approach of summer. During the winter the white sharks are more active around Seal Island. During Sep the Muizenberg spotters recorded 13 sightings. Weekly updates will be available on the website Shark 'o Meter in the 'Contact' section. We've also created an online form for members of the public to record their shark sightings. Go to www.sharkspotters.org.za.

Finding a Balance publication



A report on white shark conservation and recreational safety has been produced by the City of Cape Town, WWF and DEAT. A specialist workshop was held in May 2006 in Cape Town and the report contains the scientific papers presented. Recommendations from the workshop were used to formulate the City's Draft White Shark and Coastal Recreational Policy and Strategy. The document can be downloaded from the website www.sharkspotters.org.za.

New Shark Spotters



New shark spotters have been employed at St James and Clovelly. Sharks have been seen at St James and Kalk Bay and the spotters have been able to alert surfers in these areas. Currently there are no sirens at the new locations, but spotters are making use of air horns.

On weekends and holidays lifeguards at Monwabisi, Mnandi and Blue Waters are employed as shark spotters.

New locations which will have spotters in the near future are Strand Surf Lifesaving Club, Kommetjie and Noordhoek. Scaffolding will be used as a temporary spotting tower at Kommetjie.

Tamryn Manzoni from the City of Cape Town and Andre Holland of the Nature Conservation Corporation are assisting with the expansion of the programme.

Sponsors & Donations

Ballistics and Sun Valley Pharmacy kindly donated 10 pairs of polarized sunglasses to the spotters.

Hazard Banako Cape repaired the siren at Muizenberg.

R2200 was received from the donation box at the Guinness Book of World Records attempt for the most surfers on a wave held at Muizenberg and organized by Kahuna Surfing Academy.

Surfing SA, Ross Lindsay, Comrie and Pick 'n Pay.

The Beach Lodge provides the Muizenberg spotters with a meeting area & morning coffee facilities.

Thanks for your support!



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