

# MASWA Newsletter

(April 2001)

**ATTENTION:** This month's MASWA meeting is on Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> April. Check your calendar, because it could be the day you receive this!!!

## This Month's Meeting

The meeting is to be held at Grant Magill's house. Grant has had a few meetings at his house now, the last was in October, and every time, his tank has looked quite different from the previous viewing. It will be interesting to see what Grant is up to with his tank this time. Grant's address is **7 Begonia Place, Forrestfield**...it's right near the Forrestfield Forum Shopping Centre. The meeting will begin at **7.30pm**.

## Last Month's Meeting

Last month's meeting was held at Tony Fiorentino's house. Unfortunately I've left all my notes on Tony's tank at his house, but there was a big turnout. I think everyone was suitably impressed with his aquarium and the fishroom built on the back of the house to accommodate all the equipment that runs the tank.

### **Did you know?**

*Schedules 2 & 3 of the Fish Resources Management Regulations give the minimum size and maximum number allowed to be collected of all marine animals. Most species that we wish to collect for our aquariums are limited to a maximum per day of 40 per person. Tridacnid clams are limited to two litres per person per day! If in doubt, always check a current copy of the regulations. MASWA now has access to a copy of the act and regulations – see Nathan Cope if you are interested.*

## Discovery of a New Species - *Quobba coprocephalis*

By Nathan Cope

A few MASWA members went to Point Quobba over the Easter long weekend. The purpose of our trip was to collect coral specimens, live rock and maybe some fish and echinoderms, but in this regard we had only limited success. Our main problem was that we were seriously hindered by a pest species that inhabits the low level dunes of Point Quobba. This pest is a newly identified species of primitive primate that is so stupid compared to other members of the family that it had to be placed in its own genus; *Quobba*.

*Quobba coprocephalis* (the Northern Dung Brain), closely resemble humans, even wearing clothes - but it is at this point that any similarity ends. Although the majority of a Northern Dung Brain population appear to be around 60 years of age, it is thought that they are actually as young as 40. Their ignorance of the ageing effects of prolonged exposure to the sun, could easily explain this apparent age discrepancy (a similar species in North America is called the Redneck for this very reason). Even so, juvenile and young adult *Q. coprocephalis* are only occasionally seen – because Northern Dung Brains have such low IQ's, they have difficulty discerning the difference between food and the young of their own species.

Northern Dung Brains completely lack the ability to think logically but at first it seems that it is possible to communicate with them. Individuals are actually relatively harmless, but if an observer attempts to speak to one, it will immediately exercise a defence mechanism - the animal actually yells back at the observer. Initially this appears to be a form of language, but after a short length of time, it is obvious that the defence mechanism has shut down the majority of the animal's brain and the sentences are only the observer's words said in a different order or with made-up words mixed in. Several attempts at initiating a discussion with the animal also show that the attention span of a Northern Dung Brain is not long enough to be able to completely grasp the meaning of an entire sentence. Partway through speaking to one, it will usually interrupt with a defensive outburst such as "Which one of yuz got the marine biology thingy!?"

Despite their stupidity, *Q. coprocephalis* could be quite dangerous in large numbers. The defence mechanism warns other Northern Dung Brains that one of their members is scared, so a large number of the population turns out to help. The amassed group will then all yell at the observer, some of them getting quite emotional. Local people tell stories of Northern Dung Brains forming defensive masses, then assaulting people for invading their territory. These stories are yet to be confirmed, but the locals also say that groups of people are only ever attacked if they number far fewer than the amassed group

of Northern Dung Brains. A group of 10 to 15 people would probably be safe from assault but still have to endure the endless yelling of these mindless animals. Until these stories can be confirmed, we recommend avoiding Point Quobba from now on, or going there with a large group of people prepared to defend themselves.

### **Did you know?**

*Section 171 of the Fish Resources Management Act deals with interference with lawful fishing activities. Essentially, this section of the act says that anyone who hinders or prevents you from engaging in any activity where you are reasonably and legally expected to be able to take aquatic organisms is breaking the law. That person is liable to penalty of up to \$5000 and 6 months in jail. Getting a Fisheries officer to actually arrest somebody for breaching this law is another matter, though!*

## **Di-Com Oceanlink**

### **By Grant Magill**

On my recent trip to Sydney I went to see an aquarium that Rob Fowler had told me about. The aquarium was owned by one of Rob's friends Hanif Ibrahim, who runs an aquarium rental business called Di-Com Oceanlink. Hanif's aquarium was 2300 litres in volume and lit by both actinic fluoros and 13,000K German metal halides (Hanif can supply these 13,000K bulbs if you are interested). One of the metal halides was 250 W while the other was 400 W. Both bulbs used reflectors designed on a computer.

Hanif's aquarium was a little different to what we are used to seeing as it had no sand on the bottom of the tank. The inlet and outlet pipes for the aquarium were actually laid in the concrete floor of the house when it was being built. The pipes go from the tank through to the garage where all the other aquarium-related equipment, such as a chiller and counter current protein skimmer are kept. The pumps that send the water from the garage to the main tank circulate 30,000 litres an hour! The skimmer Hanif used on this tank was about 1.5m high and used wooden air diffusers to create the bubbles. The water is circulated through the skimmer via a separate pump. With the calcium reactor (also around 1.5m tall) and chiller, Hanif hopes to achieve a constant temperature level and stable water quality (eg, dKh, pH) so that the corals can grow without the stress of adapting to constantly fluctuating conditions.

The tank had a variety of fish such as tangs, Bicolour Blennies and Banggai Cardinals There was also a range of soft corals (such as a 2 year old *Alcyonium sp.* which grows like a weed), hard corals (eg., plating *Acropora sp.* and pink *Goniopora sp.*) and a red anemone.

Hanif can be contacted as follows:

**Telephone:** 0418 100 452  
**Facsimile:** (02) 9586 4421  
**Email:** [hanif@dicomooceanlink.com.au](mailto:hanif@dicomooceanlink.com.au)  
**Website:** [www.dicomooceanlink.com.au](http://www.dicomooceanlink.com.au)  
**Address:** PO Box 337, MORTDALE NSW 2223

### **Upcoming Meetings**

**April 25<sup>th</sup>:** Grant Magill  
7 Begonia Place  
Forrestfield  
May 30<sup>th</sup>: Frank Krause  
June 27<sup>th</sup>: David Bloch  
July 25<sup>th</sup>: Wayne Mothershaw  
August 29<sup>th</sup>: Darren Collins

### **MASWA's World Wide Web address**

The website is temporarily offline.

### **Newsletter and General Inquiries**

to Nathan Cope E-mail address: [copen@one.net.au](mailto:copen@one.net.au)  
or phone on (08) 9367 9251 a/h or 0416 09 2000 b/h

### **Membership and Treasury Inquiries**

to David Bloch E-mail address:  
[aguattech@opera.iinet.net.au](mailto:aguattech@opera.iinet.net.au)  
or phone on (08) 9375 2438 a/h

### **MASWA Membership**

Currently MASWA requests an annual \$22 donation from adult members, \$11 from Junior members. This covers the cost of newsletters, drinks, nibbles and other costs associated with the society. Members will receive information sheets and discounts on some products.

### **Friends in Common**

Jan Anderson, Lissa Beaufond, David Bloch, Darren & Raqual Collins, Nathan Cope, Andy Dolphin, Tony Fiorentino, Paul Groves, Sid Harrison, Robert Harwood, Frank & Ben Krause, David Lee, Grant Magill, Phil & Caron Melvin, Wayne Mothershaw, John Ryan, Phil Searle, Ronald Tan, Paul Tayler, Greg Weryk.

If you've paid your money and your name is not on this list, tell David! Members on the web should check they are on the web site members list.

*If there is anything you would like to know more about or anything you would like to add to the newsletter, call or send comments to the current editor, Nathan Cope. Remember, this is your newsletter.*

### **DISCLAIMER**

The Marine Aquarists Society of WA is a name that we, as a group of friends with like interests have applied to ourselves for the purpose of information exchange. No one person, nor the group as a whole, can be held responsible for liabilities, injuries or other that may result either directly or indirectly as a result of our gatherings or the information exchange therein. The same applies to the information contained in this newsletter.