



Friday update



Captain's Blog

February 10, 2017

Great white shark fears being ignored

No one has been bitten yet this summer by a great white shark on Stewart Island.

But a family group got a mighty fright in January when one of the fierce predators circled their boat and then attacked their dinghy.

Locals are convinced two commercial shark cage dive operators are altering great white behaviour by throwing baits in the water and luring the big sharks to their boats.

Roy and Melinda Barnsdale along with friends Buzz and Helen Jaine and their three small children were on their way home from fishing in their vessel Sea Rover when they had their unwelcome encounter.

They were fishing off Ackers Point when the seabirds flew off and a three-metre great white appeared. Three gulls perched on the inflatable dinghy attached to the Sea Rover attracted the shark's attention and it gave the dinghy a bunt after circling from various directions. The shark then rolled and bit into the dinghy, puncturing it on one side.

"We heard the air hiss out and thought we'd better get ashore," Roy said.

"It was not a full-sized bite, more like a yawn, but it still needed two sizeable patches."

In the Media



King Salmon announces Picton expansion, new product plans

(February 6) New Zealand King Salmon will create 30 jobs in Picton by moving its primary processing plant, it announced early this week.

The plant will be relocated from Nelson without incurring any job losses. Chief executive Grant Rosewarne said the site move would occur regardless of whether the six farm relocations in the Marlborough Sounds took place.

The biggest producer and exporter of king salmon was also due to hire another 150 staff after establishing three new farms in high-flow areas in the Sounds.

[Read more](#)

Kaikoura harbour will not be fixed until mid-year

Radio New Zealand (8 February) The Government has said it will take until the middle of the year to finish restoring the



The bite marks from the great white shark which attacked the inflatable dinghy off Ackers Point.

That is the fourth encounter he has had with a great white in the past three years.

He has been coming to the family bach at Butterfields Beach for all his 61 years and said there was no doubt the shark patterns were changing.

“You don’t want to get to the point where someone’s crunched,” he said. “I used to scuba dive in the area but, by hell, I wouldn’t dare now.”

That latest example of aggressive behaviour is extremely worrying to paua industry leader Storm Stanley, who believes the great whites are becoming bolder and that it is only a matter of time before there is a serious injury or fatality.

“I lived on the island for 10 years from the late 80s and never heard of a single instance of white shark aggression towards small boats in that time,” he said.

“My view is that shark cage tourism is definitely resulting in increasingly aggressive behaviour in the local great white shark population.

“Those promoting this activity will look pretty shabby when the inevitable tragedy happens.”

Great whites, which migrate to the island over the summer months, are now protected under the Wildlife Act.

The concern of those opposed to the shark cage operations just 6km from the main township of Oban is that no one is looking out for the human population.

The Paua Industry Council has taken High Court action under health and safety legislation to try and stop the shark cage diving but Justice Clarke is still to issue her finding.

In the meantime the Department of Conservation has granted licence renewals to the two operators – Bluff-

Kaikoura harbour.

They are spending \$5 million to repair and upgrade infrastructure, whilst deepening the marine channel.

The harbour was damaged after last year's earthquake, leaving businesses with only four hours a day to access it.

Civil Defense Minister Gerry Brownlee said it was important work, with tourism and fishing generating \$150 million a year for the local economy.

[Read more](#)

"You can't afford to have a short term view"

Radio New Zealand (8 February) Paua divers in Kaikoura support extending a shellfish and seaweed harvesting ban. The current ban will finish on February 20, with MPI proposing its extension through to November 20, a full year since last year's devastating earthquake.

Jason Ruiwai, a paua diver of 20 years in Kaikoura and chairman of PauMAC3, said overnight they lost large sections of recruitment stocks.

If the ban was lifted it would mean depleting the adult population and stop the replenishment of the juvenile stocks, he said.

[Read more](#)

Russia raises seafood concerns

Radio New Zealand (8 February) Russia's agriculture watchdog has announced a restriction on beef and beef offal exports.

The watchdog, called Rosselkhozadzor, said it identified a substance called ractopamine, which is an additive found in pork, but is banned in sheep and beef.

It was also considering banning seafood after it found traces of mercury in some products, the organisation added.

A Seafood New Zealand spokesperson said Russia is an important export market worth \$16 million in 2015.

[Read more](#)

Finance company accused of dodgy behaviour

General Equity, a New Zealand registered finance company, has been implicated in some dodgy dealings with Echopack, a

based Shark Dive NZ Ltd and Shark Experience Ltd – for the period December 24, 2016 to August 31, 2017.

That was after the two companies thumbed their noses at DOC and resumed business in October without permits.

“The only change of any note to previous permits was to ask the cagers to install video cameras so that if DOC needed, they could ask to see footage to check any activity complied with the permit conditions – which they don’t enforce anyway,” Stanley said.

“We also note that YouTube footage is no longer being posted by tourists who have gone caging. We can only assume that is because the cagers have prohibited it to avoid being continually exposed as breaching their permit conditions by, amongst other things, letting the great whites take fish baits.

“This was exposed by our own secret shopper filming last year, which DOC failed to act on.”

The number of great whites that have been identified at Stewart Island is 120 plus, individually recognisable from their colour patterns.

Shark cage diving is lucrative, with tourists paying around \$600 each to see the sharks up close.

The operators, supported by the tourism industry, continue to insist their activities are having no impact on great white shark behaviour and are no risk to humans.



The aggressive great white that attacked a dinghy.

Canadian seafood exporter.

A report from the Vietnam Association of Seafood Exporters and Producers has said Echopack exported seafood from various Vietnamese companies and after receiving the goods, used its finance company General Equity to deny them payment.

General Equity "deliberately avoided payment" and Echopack "intended to deceive Vietnamese export enterprises," the report said.

This was done by creating a contract stipulation that said if the signature on the letter of credit did not match that on the bill of lading, they could forgo payment for the goods.

Steven Henson, director of trade services at General Equity said, in an email to Seafood New Zealand, there was a discrepancy between the documents and that a notice was issued.

"Due to the discrepancy General Equity is not liable to make any payment," Henson said.

It was now a commercial matter between buyer and seller, he added.

General Equity has been implicated in similar matters before, with the Financial Markets Authority saying companies should "exercise extreme caution" when dealing with them.

"General Equity has engaged in conduct and has made statements that are misleading and deceptive in connection with its status as a financial markets participant," a FMA report said.

The majority of General Equity's business takes place in overseas markets, giving them limited scope under New Zealand laws, they added.

[Read the Vietnamese report](#)

[Read the FMA warning](#)

Steve Sumner remembered

Steve Sumner was a notably hard man on the football field but he was known as a gentleman in the seafood industry.

The All Whites legend, famed for scoring New Zealand's first World Cup goal (against Scotland in 1982), died this week of prostate cancer, aged 61.

He was also a long-standing seafood trader who ran an export business, Seafood Network Ltd, out of Christchurch.

"You could always do business with Steve on his word alone," according to another industry stalwart, Vaughan Wilkinson. "And he was just a thoroughly likeable guy. He will be sadly missed."