

Milestones for commercial and recreational fishing advocates

Graeme Sinclair's *Gone Fishin* was the first of what has become a raft of Kiwi-produced fishing shows.

Now sponsored by Bostik, and still missing an apostrophe, *Gone Fishin* is in its 25th season, with more than 600 episodes aired.

It is currently screening at 4.30pm on Sundays on TV3.

That is a remarkable feat in television production, a marine version of *Country Calendar*, and even more so when the production team is just Graeme and wife Sandee.

The fact he operates from a wheelchair, stricken by multiple sclerosis 20 years ago, makes it even more so.

The disease was a cruel blow for such an active man and put an end to deer stalking and diving. But not fishing.

And don't dare feel sorry for him.

His affable approach to life, even a restricted one, is that every day is a great day.

Sinclair took on an even bigger task with the launch of *Ocean Bounty* last year, 13 one-hour programmes on every aspect of the commercial fishing industry, from tooth fishing in the Ross Sea to flounder netting in the Firth of Thames. That ground breaking show has netted an average 100,000 viewers per episode.

A second series ran this year and he is now working on a third.

He reckons he will never run out of material.

Despite his positive profile and consistent inclusive message that we must all co-operate in a shared fishery, Sinclair gets his share of abuse from the cowardly, almost always anonymous haters that the internet encourages.

He has been accused of selling his "sole", proving the extreme fringe who would ban all commercial fishing are as ill-educated as they are antagonistic.

But the trolls are far outweighed by all those who love fishing and the sea, commercial and recreational, who do recognise we are all in it together and all need to strive for long-term sustainable fisheries.

Sinclair's achievements are given generous acknowledgement in the October issue of NZ Fishing News, the most popular recreational fishing magazine.

Its editor, Grant Dixon, is also celebrating a milestone - 25 years as editor overseeing 300 issues.

It may be the dream job, but publishing is hard, unrelenting yakka requiring great determination and discipline.

I have had the good fortune to go fishing with both Sinclair and Dixon on separate occasions - with a singular lack of success.

On a glorious spring day last year we set out from Stillwater on the Whangaparaoa peninsula in Sinclair's brightly painted 7-metre Surtees, Orange Roughy.

Despite all the whooping and hollering on Gone Fishin as more trophy fish are brought aboard and the stream of big snapper pix my Auckland mates delight in sending me, we caught just one snapper on a slow day where the highlight was getting up close with the Gulf's resident Bryde whales.

Similarly, years ago charter boat operator Pete Lamb took Dixon and me out into Cook Strait aboard the converted Australian long liner Daniel. The plan was to bomb up puka and bluenose big time in the deep, topped up with tarakihi and blue cod in closer.

The reality was unpleasant conditions prompted by a snotty 30 knot nor'wester and all we caught was numerous scarpies (sea perch) off Karori Light.

Dixon's young daughter Miah was also aboard, taking pix for the magazine.

She is now Fishing News deputy editor.

Sinclair's son James is also building on his father's legacy, taking an increasing role in Gone Fishin.

Both were nurtured with a respect and love for the marine environment.

Their dads can be proud of their legacies.



Grant Dixon and Graeme Sinclair.

Honing in on the footprint of trawling

About a quarter of the world's seafood comes from bottom trawling, but hard data on how much of a footprint trawling has is vague.

A [scientific paper](#) appearing in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* brought together 57 scientists from 22 countries with expertise in mapping fishing activity from satellite monitoring and fishing logbook data.

“Trawling has been a very controversial activity and its footprint has not been sufficiently quantified for so many regions at a sufficiently high resolution,” said lead author Richard Amoroso.

“When you don't quantify the impacts of trawling at a fine scale, you end up with an overestimation of the trawling footprint.”

The group quantified the footprint of trawling using high-resolution satellite vessel monitoring systems (VMS) and logbook data from 24 ocean regions.

The data was collected over a two year period from depths of up to 1000 metres and covered 7.8 million square kilometres of ocean.

Compared to studies using large 1000 km² grids, Amoroso et al used 1-3km² grids to provide more precise percentages.

Information on the gear used by fishing fleets was also collected, including the length and width of the nets. Knowing the span of the net improved estimates of areas affected by trawling.

Analyses found only 14 percent of the overall seafloor was trawled, whereas 86 percent was not.

Regional differences in trawling's footprint were significant. While only point four percent of South Chile's seafloor was trawled, 80.7 percent of the seafloor in the Adriatic Sea was trawled and 64.3 percent in West of Iberia.

In European seas, trawling affected 28.5 percent of the Irish Sea, 36 percent of the Western Baltic Sea and 50 percent of the Tyrrhenian Sea.

In Australian and New Zealand waters, less than 10 percent of the seafloor was trawled. The Aleutian Islands, East Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska also came under that figure.

Regions with smaller trawling footprints met higher levels of sustainability.

"For those regions where bottom-trawling footprints were less than 10 percent of the seafloor area, fishing rates on bottom-dwelling fish stocks almost always met international sustainability benchmarks," explained co-author Simon Jennings. Footprints exceeding 20 percent rarely met those standards.

The study acknowledged that areas with less trawling activity, such as Southeast Asia, were not included, simply because detailed fishing data was not available.

However, the authors are confident the analysis offers a more comprehensive look at worldwide trawling activity and makes reasonably good estimates of trawling's impact, even in places without fine-scale spatial data.

Drones to seek out our marine mammals

Drones fitted with thermal imaging cameras could be the next step for seeking out and protecting Māui's and Hector's dolphins in New Zealand.

Led by Martin Stanley from Ocean Life Survey, a study has successfully demonstrated that aerial thermal detection can identify marine mammals from both manned and unmanned drones.

The drones work by capturing live thermal images, GPS positions and HD video footage of marine mammals and transmits the information to an operator. Any nearby body heat is detected and mapped.

Designed to be used on both land and vessels, the drone delivers aerial surveys during the day and at night. Real-time information on marine mammal positioning is expected to help reduce the risk of bycatch as vessels will be aware of locations to avoid.

It's also a safer, more effective way of surveying marine mammals, says Stanley.

Traditional boat or aerial surveys have limited access to dolphin habitats or are restricted

by coastal conditions and weather. The drone system provides greater site access and has the capability to conduct nocturnal surveys regardless of conditions.

“They will allow researchers to learn more about marine mammal presence, movements and behaviour at night. This, in turn, will improve existing understanding of marine mammal nocturnal movements, and allow better protection and management measures to be adopted.”

Costing \$5000 NZD and producing significantly less CO2 and noise, the technology is affordable, greener and causes less disruption to targeted species compared to standard survey methods.

The technology hopes to expand knowledge of marine mammal behaviour and their movements and improve protection and management measures of marine species.

The next step will be engaging with New Zealand’s marine industry, the Department of Conservation and the Ministry for Primary Industries to commission protection trials and undertake nocturnal surveys.



Photo credit: Alexander Kolomietz

Gulf Opportunities Showcase

With Expo 2020 Dubai coming soon, there’s never been a better time to explore business opportunities and make your mark in the region.

NZ Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) is hosting a series of events in Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington and Christchurch from the 23-26 October 2018. NZTE's Gulf Opportunities Showcase provides the chance to hear from market experts and exporters operating in the Gulf and will cover opportunities across four sectors: food and beverage, specialized manufacturing, agriculture and technology as well as the 2020 Expo.

The showcase will illustrate how companies can leverage Expo 2020 and will highlight key trends and business opportunities across the six markets within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) – including Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar.

Event [registration](#) and info can be [found here](#).

News

Cawthron Institute celebrated the official opening of its new Finfish Research Centre located at the Cawthron Aquaculture Park near Nelson this week. The new facility boasts systems and capacity unique in New Zealand and will provide a world-class centre for finfish research. The centre will deliver commercially relevant science to improve stock management, breeding, and husbandry and will support the development of the aquaculture industry. A salmon research programme is already underway in the new facility.

A proposed maritime education centre of Aotearoa aims to honour iwi guardianship of the ocean, and educate young people on its importance. The concept for the estimated \$20 million Te Matau Marine Education Centre was announced in Nelson on Thursday. Peter Dawson, who has been the project's key driver, said the centre would showcase the region's rich maritime history. Nelson is home to one of the country's largest fishing fleets and the story of Māori guardianship of the sea had never been properly told either. "We've been trying to resolve what's best for the centre, and for Nelson itself, as we also want to showcase Nelson's marine science base, including the work of the Cawthron, Plant and Food, the Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology (fishing and maritime school) and Niwa," said Dawson. It's hoped the centre will attract more visitors to the Nelson region.

Coral reefs in the Pacific are likely to become weedy, unattractive and inhabited by the few fish species that can adapt to warmer seas, marine scientists say. Released by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the report said coral reefs would decline by 70 to 90 percent if temperatures increased by 1.5°C and that an increase of 2° C would mean the loss of nearly all reefs. Stuart Kininmonth of the University of the South Pacific said we can expect all sorts of changes in fish populations too, including marine life that's not as resilient or diverse.

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