

# Australian Marine Conservation Society

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2009**



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# OVERVIEW

The oceans are the cradle of life on Earth, covering almost three quarters of our planet. But our oceans are in deep trouble from a litany of over-use and under-protection.

The Australian Marine Conservation Society (AMCS) is the voice for Australia's oceans and their wildlife. We are an independent charity, staffed by a committed team of professional and passionate scientists, educators and advocates who have defended Australia's oceans for over forty years. Our staff and volunteers work each day on behalf of the community to protect our ocean wildlife and their habitats and homes beneath the waves.

AMCS works strategically on the big issues concerning the sea. We strive to make our fisheries sustainable, combat overfishing, protect our oceans from pollution and unsustainable development and create marine national parks - sanctuaries in the sea where our wildlife is safe from harm.

As an incorporated association and a registered charity, AMCS is overseen by a National Board with eight representatives from business, industry, conservation, science and education. Multi award-winning author and much loved Australian, Tim Winton, is our national patron.

AMCS has been instrumental in protecting over 19 million hectares of ocean in marine national parks, from the Great Barrier Reef in the east to the west coast's Ningaloo Marine Park - summer locale of the glorious whale shark, the largest fish on the planet.

But with less than 5% of Australia's oceans protected, we have much to do. As climate change heats up and the pressure grows to exploit the Earth's diminishing resources, the race is on to protect more of our oceans in marine national parks, which provide the best chance of resilience against the coming changes.



Bottlenose Dolphins © Gary Bell/Oceanwideimages.com

"I joined the Australian Marine Conservation Society because they're the real deal. For 40 years they've been fighting for our seas and getting results: Ningaloo, Great Barrier Reef, new marine protected areas. If you're worried about overfishing, if you're angry about pollution and rapacious coastal development, if you're anxious about endangered species then why not add to the effort? Let's join together and get results."

Tim Winton,  
Australian Author, AMCS Patron

# President's HIGHLIGHTS

The year 2009 was another big one for AMCS, with the appointment of our new Director Darren Kindleysides. Darren brings over 15 years experience as an advocate for our oceans both in Australia and internationally. He was worked around the globe, protecting whales in the Antarctic, sea turtles in the South Pacific, fish in the North Sea and seabirds in the Atlantic. Darren took the reins from Kate Davey who, after a decade of service to AMCS and marine conservation, stood down along with her partner Craig Bohm. Kate and Craig departed to spend more time with their new-born daughter Tiliansa. They have since been travelling the country from coast to coast, and we thank them whole-heartedly for their dedication to AMCS, with best wishes for their future.

AMCS staff continue to work as tirelessly as ever on our core campaigns.

The appointment of new marine fisheries officer Ben Birt has allowed our key focus of shark conservation and sustainable fisheries to continue unabated.

Throughout 2009 AMCS continued our work to combat unsustainable shark fisheries around the country. Scientists are yet to identify a single sustainable shark fishery anywhere in the world. AMCS and our supporters made waves along the east coast, with major reforms secured in the biggest fishery on the east coast of Australia, cutting shark fisheries by one third of the overall catch. This came as a direct result of our hard work and literally means that around 25,000 sharks will be saved from fishing each year.

Despite overwhelming opposition from the ocean loving public, our Federal, State and Territory governments continue to permit targeted shark fisheries in Australia, including in our World Heritage Great Barrier Reef. Many of these fisheries service the shameful international trade in shark fin. We are making progress on this issue, and are working to secure a total shark fin export ban in Australia.

Our campaign to protect one of the last global havens for big sharks, tuna, billfish and other wildlife in the Coral Sea gained real momentum in 2009, with growing support for our vision to create the largest marine sanctuary on Earth. AMCS was overjoyed that the Coral Sea was granted Conservation Zone status in 2009 - the first significant step towards protecting this iconic and important area. We were also very pleased to employ our Coral Sea Community Campaigner Daisy Barham to take this globally important campaign to the streets. Following further efforts by AMCS and our supporters, 16% of Moreton Bay Marine Park is now fully protected, an increase from the grossly inadequate 1% previously in sanctuary zones.

Our work continued in the South West, where over 80% of marine species are found nowhere else on Earth. Despite such high endemism, less than 1% of our spectacular South West oceans are currently protected. AMCS worked throughout 2009 with a coalition of conservation groups to ensure this breathtaking part of Australia is protected in a network of large marine sanctuaries by the end of 2010.



AMCS President, Paul Saunders.  
photograph by Ingrid Neilson





During the year we also supported campaigns to set up marine parks in State and Territory waters. As a partner with Ocean Planet Tasmania, the push for marine sanctuaries in that state kick-started in 2009. We also made progress in South Australia with 40% of their state waters proclaimed in 19 new multiple use marine parks. The SA park system is yet to be fully zoned, and AMCS will be advocating for high levels of protection for the state's spectacular deep water sponge gardens, giant kelp forests and some of the largest temperate seagrass meadows in the world.

The year also brought shoots of progress for the north, with a Commonwealth marine parks system due to be announced in 2010. Our tropical waters are woefully under-protected. AMCS is striving to address this imbalance with partners in the Northern Territory. Our sea turtles and dugongs deserve no less than a Great Barrier Reef style Marine Park for our northern seas.

2009 will long be remembered in marine circles as the year of the biggest oil platform spill in Australia's history. Over ten long weeks the West Atlas drill rig spewed over 3000 tonnes of oil into the Timor Sea and locked in a legacy of environmental damage for this remote and once-pristine ocean to Australia's north west. AMCS continues to pressure our governments to improve regulations, monitoring and prevention of such disasters in the future.

With our ocean wildlife constantly under siege, AMCS continued to speak out against the unacceptable 'bycatch' from fishing nets and shark control programs that kill thousands of seals, dolphins, turtles and seabirds each year. We also maintained pressure on our Government to challenge the Japanese Government's continued Antarctic whaling program. Unbelievably, Japan still hunts almost 1000 minke and fin whales in the name of scientific research. Thankfully, due to heavy pressure from Australia, the whalers dropped their threat to catch Australia's humpback whales in the 2009 summer season.

In support of our campaigns, AMCS hosted a number of 'firsts' this year. Internationally renowned ocean explorer and marine conservationist, Dr Sylvia Earle, toured Australia in support of our Coral Sea campaign. Dr Earle's message is one of great urgency and hope, calling marine parks 'hope spots' that are essential to the future of life on Earth. Legendary free diver Mike Wells negotiated the 120m long underwater Fish Rock Cave on one breath, raising funds for AMCS and awareness of the continuing plight of grey nurse sharks off the NSW coast. In another first, AMCS ran a global online auction for the naming rights of a newly discovered species of deep sea anemone shrimp.

Our third charity art auction, Art for Sharks (and big marine parks) was yet another successful event, thanks to the hard work of Art for Sharks Coordinator, Kirsten Neilson and the generosity of a range of outstanding artists from around the country.

AMCS launched our new website mid year, which has a raft of new campaign information including for the first time a downloadable *Sustainable Seafood 3 Step Pocket Guide*. Our new online shop now boasts a range of quality merchandise, including our fantastic new marine wildlife card range, beautiful limited prints from Roger Swainston, t-shirts, diaries and more.



AMCS Ocean Activist supporters generated tens of thousands of emails and letters to government this year, demanding that our oceans be better managed. Together we really are making a difference. Governments listen when enough of us make a united call to ban targeted shark fisheries, end fishing orange roughy and install seal excluder devices so that over 1500 seals and sea lions aren't drowned each year in Australian fisheries. Our voice for the oceans turns into a roar when we all act together. Thank you for the difference you make.

As the climate heats up we race against time to protect more of our ocean wildlife in marine national parks, which offer our oceans, fisheries and wildlife an insurance policy against the coming impacts. Our future depends on healthy oceans, but they face more threats today than at any time in the past. However, together, with the support from our Sea Guardians, donors and business supporters and online Ocean Activists, we will get there.

Yours for the seas,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Saunders". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Paul Saunders  
President





# Campaign REPORT

AMCS works on behalf of the public to address the big issues at sea: reversing overfishing, securing more, bigger and better marine parks and recovering our threatened marine species. If we can leave our oceans in a healthy, vibrant condition, our ocean wildlife will have the best chance of resilience against an uncertain future of climate change and ocean acidification.

## OVERFISHING

**Sharks:** Sharks have been the ocean's dominant predator for millions of years. Yet in the last 50 years, their numbers have plummeted, largely as a result of overfishing. Marine scientists are yet to identify a single sustainable shark fishery anywhere in the world. Despite overwhelming opposition from the ocean-loving public, Australia's Federal, State and Territory governments continue to target our precious sharks for their fins, including in our World Heritage Great Barrier Reef. People are outraged when they discover that most of our shark fisheries service the shameful international trade in shark fin. AMCS is working to secure a ban on shark fin exports from Australia.



Finned juvenile hammerhead sharks

Throughout 2009 AMCS continued our efforts to combat unsustainable shark fisheries around the country. We made significant waves, with major reforms in one of the biggest fisheries on the east coast of Australia. As a direct result of our hard work, the overall catch of the Inshore Finfish Fishery was reduced by one third – meaning that around 25,000 sharks will be saved from fishing each year.

Australian sardines are now our highest volume fishery, with around 33,600 tonnes caught each year. The vast majority are fed to endangered southern bluefin tuna (*Thunnus maccoyii*) which are farmed in South Australian sea cages and exported to Japan.



We are making progress on this issue. Thousands of our supporters have now contacted the Queensland and Australian Governments to voice their concerns about the unsustainable shark fishing along the south and east coasts and in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

**Sustainable fisheries:** AMCS has continued to engage constructively with state and federal governments, providing technical advice aimed at improving the environmental performance of Australia's fisheries. While not all our recommendations were accepted in 2009, we were encouraged by further fishery reforms to protect Australian sea lions and commitments to reduce bycatch in the Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery. Some 2000 of our dedicated supporters helped ensure our recommendations were heard by sending letters of concern to the Australian Government.

**Sustainable Seafood:** Overfishing is one of the single greatest threats to our blue planet. There are simply too many boats taking too many fish throughout the world's oceans. Over three quarters of Earth's oceans are overfished or fished to their limit, and Australian fisheries aren't faring much better. Some common seafood species that are fished to or beyond their limit include orange roughy, eastern gemfish, swordfish, school shark, pink ling and the beleaguered yellowfin, bigeye and southern bluefin tunas. AMCS's Sustainable Seafood Program aims to educate the public about the threats of overfishing and poor aquaculture practices and helps create a better future for our fisheries and oceans.

As a direct response to public demand, AMCS developed a national guide in 2004 to help Australians choose their seafood wisely. Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide continues to be highly sought after from the hospitality industry, educational sector and responsible Australians. The guide continued to attract significant national media throughout 2009. We conservatively estimate that the sustainable seafood message has now reached over one million Australian households through media and distribution of the free Sustainable Seafood Three Step Pocket Guide which was made available online in mid 2009. The average monthly rate of downloads of the Pocket Guide is 1000/month since the launch of the new website.







## MARINE NATIONAL PARKS

Just like national parks on land, marine national parks help protect our ocean wildlife and their homes beneath the waves. Marine scientists recommend that at least 20-30% of each marine habitat should be fully protected in marine national parks to help ensure our oceans are healthy and productive.

Despite our oceans covering over 70% of our blue planet, currently less than one per cent of Earth's ocean is protected in marine national parks. This compares very poorly to the area afforded protection on land, which sits at around 12%. Australia's oceans, which cover the third largest marine jurisdiction on Earth, have less than 4% protected.

Marine national parks are essential to protect the ocean's rich diversity of life. They allow fish to spawn and grow and protect vulnerable marine species such as turtles, dolphins and dugongs and the habitats they depend on such as sea grasses, coral reefs and mangroves. Marine national parks also provide un-spoilt natural sites for people to visit, research and get a sense of what the world was like before the advent of industrialized fishing in the last fifty years.

We all stand to benefit from marine national parks which act as an insurance policy against climate change, pollution and overfishing, and help create a lasting legacy of healthy oceans for future generations.



After swimming the oceans of this earth for over 100 million years, all seven species of sea turtle are now threatened with extinction.

**Coral Sea:** Australia's ocean territory is the third largest in the world and the Coral Sea, east of the Great Barrier Reef, is one of the last global havens for our big sharks, tuna, billfish and other wildlife. The campaign to protect the crystal clear waters of the Coral Sea went into full swing in 2009. A Coral Sea Marine Park would create the biggest marine sanctuary on Earth and leave a global legacy into the future.

In May 2009, Environment Minister, Peter Garrett AM MP, declared a Conservation Zone over the Coral Sea, eastwards of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. This is an interim measure while the area undergoes a thorough assessment to determine the need for further protection. The Coral Sea Conservation Zone will be assessed as part of the East Bioregion in the Australian Government's Marine Bioregional Planning Process.

In August, along with our campaign partners (Pew Australia, Australian Conservation Foundation and Cairns and Far North Environment Centre), AMCS launched the campaign website [ProtectOurCoralSea.org.au](http://ProtectOurCoralSea.org.au), a television commercial, social networking sites, and other communications material featuring Barry the Humphead Wrasse, the campaign's official 'spokesfish'.

Late in 2009 AMCS hired a community campaigner to take the Coral Sea message to events and festivals throughout southeast Queensland. The community campaign immediately raised the profile of the Coral Sea Heritage Park and with it the number of e-petition signatures in support of the proposal; 4,500 signatures alone were gathered at Woodford Folk Festival, demonstrating significant support for the protection of the Coral Sea.

In December, our Coral Sea Campaigner joined an expedition to the region, witnessing first hand the beauty and diversity of the Coral Sea. The expedition confirmed the presence of a new breeding bird species for the Coral Sea, the New Caledonia Fairy Tern. With less than 200 breeding pairs in the world, the Coral Sea may be home to a significant proportion of the World's population of this species.

The Coral Sea campaign will continue through 2010 as government deadlines have been extended for the Marine Bioregional Planning Process.



Top: The Coral Sea is an important nesting place for at least 13 species of seabird, including the brown booby. Photo by Nicoal Temple.

Below: Barry the Humphead Wrasse is the official 'spokesfish' for the Coral Sea campaign.

**Ocean Explorer Dr Sylvia Earle supports the Coral Sea:** Fondly referred to as “Her Deepness”, Dr. Sylvia Earle visited Australia in 2009 in support of our Coral Sea campaign. Internationally renowned ocean explorer and marine conservationist, Dr Earle spoke at Customs House Brisbane. Her message was one of great urgency and hope.

Dr Earle articulates like no other the gravity of the plight facing our oceans and life on Earth, yet at the same time fills her audience with hope. She calls marine reserves “hope spots” that are essential to the future of life in our oceans and land. Over 300 people attended the event and were inspired and uplifted to hear this eloquent and passionate woman spread her wisdom on matters of the sea. AMCS feels privileged to have hosted such a wise and dedicated leader in our field.

*“Places like the Coral Sea are absolute treasures because they offer hope that we can get it right, but not if we continue to shred the integrity of these largely intact ecosystems. The ingredients are still there, but if we continue to take and pull out the crucial elements, then you can mourn the loss of the Coral Sea and I’d mourn the loss of hope in finding a place for ourselves in the natural systems of the world.”*

**Dr Sylvia Earle, Ocean Explorer, marine conservationist**

**Top End Sea Life:** Northern Australia (the Top End) is one of the last relatively healthy tropical marine environments left on the planet. The Top End’s marine environment is home to thousands of different species of wildlife including six of the world’s seven species of sea turtle. The Top End also hosts an incredible array of habitats including beautiful coral reefs and extensive seagrass meadows. The seas off northern Australia also have cultural significance to many Indigenous groups. With so much cultural and ecological value, it is astounding that less than 1% of this world class environment is protected.

During 2009 AMCS Darwin-based campaigner worked with the community to ramp up the pressure on the Northern Territory and Australian Governments to declare a network of marine protected areas. Most of the northern coast is Indigenous owned and AMCS supports the desires and aspirations of Indigenous people to look after sea country. Marine protected areas can be part of a conservation toolkit helping traditional owners look after their sea country.



Darren Kindleysides (AMCS Director), Prof. Ove Hoegh-Guldberg (Centre for Marine Studies, UQ), Sylvia Earle, and Nick Alford (CEO Brisbane Institute) at the Brisbane Institute, 4 August 2009.



Most of the Top End’s coast is Indigenous-owned and AMCS supports the desires and aspirations of Indigenous people to look after their Sea Country.



Together with Indigenous Protected Areas and better-funded Sea Ranger groups, marine protected areas can help save our sea turtles and other northern wildlife including dugongs, dolphins and sharks. Led by AMCS, the Top End Sea Life campaign is a partnership between The Wilderness Society and the Environment Centre of the Northern Territory, and aims to establish a network of protected areas throughout NT waters.

**Saving the South West:** AMCS is part of a coalition of environment groups (the Save Our Marine Life coalition), working to protect our big blue backyard in South West Australia. Our South West oceans are home to some of the most spectacular and vulnerable marine life on earth and are being assessed as part of the Australian Government's commitment to implementing marine parks around the country.

AMCS and our colleagues have reason to be optimistic about the outcome for the South West. In 2009 the Australian Government released a draft map of areas to be considered for possible protection. Potentially over half of the 1.3 million square kilometre stretch of ocean – from Kalbarrie in Western Australia to Kangaroo Island in South Australia – could be protected, including critical areas such as the Perth Canyons, one of only two known blue whale feeding areas in Australia.


The South West is globally significant for its outstanding marine wildlife. Less than 1% of the region from Kalbarrie to Eucla (near the South Australian border) is protected, yet around 90% of it is found nowhere else on Earth. The region contains critical habitat for the world's largest sea turtle, the leatherback turtle, which can dive up to a kilometer down below the sea surface. It is also the southern most location of major tropical coral reefs in the Indian Ocean. It truly is worthy of protection, but it is also under threat.

The South West is under threat from climate change and fishing impacts. Already the region is recognized for the 'vulnerable 5' group of overfished species, including the dhufish, the pink and red snappers, the breaksea cod and the baldchin grouper. If we are to protect our precious south west oceans, we need a comprehensive system of large marine national parks throughout the region.

Over 75% of West Australians recently polled that not enough of their oceans are protected. There is community support for this campaign. We just need the political will.



Leafy Sea dragons are endemic to south west waters © Tim Nicol



**Saving the Whale:** AMCS has had a long involvement in whale conservation, from pushing for the end of whaling in the 70's to protecting the Great Southern Ocean as a whale sanctuary in the 1990s. Despite a raft of successes for these beloved ocean leviathans, cetaceans probably face more threats today than ever before. Australia's seas are becoming an increasingly disorientating and hazardous place for our whales and dolphins.

Collisions with boats, entanglement in fishing gear and shark nets, pollution and marine debris all claim the lives of the marine mammals we share our seas with. Ocean noise from shipping, naval sonar and seabed oil and gas exploration have also made our oceans a confusing place for the creatures that rely heavily on sound for communication.

And though we thought we wound back the clock for commercial whaling, whales in the Southern Ocean have been increasingly targeted by Japan under the guise of scientific whaling.

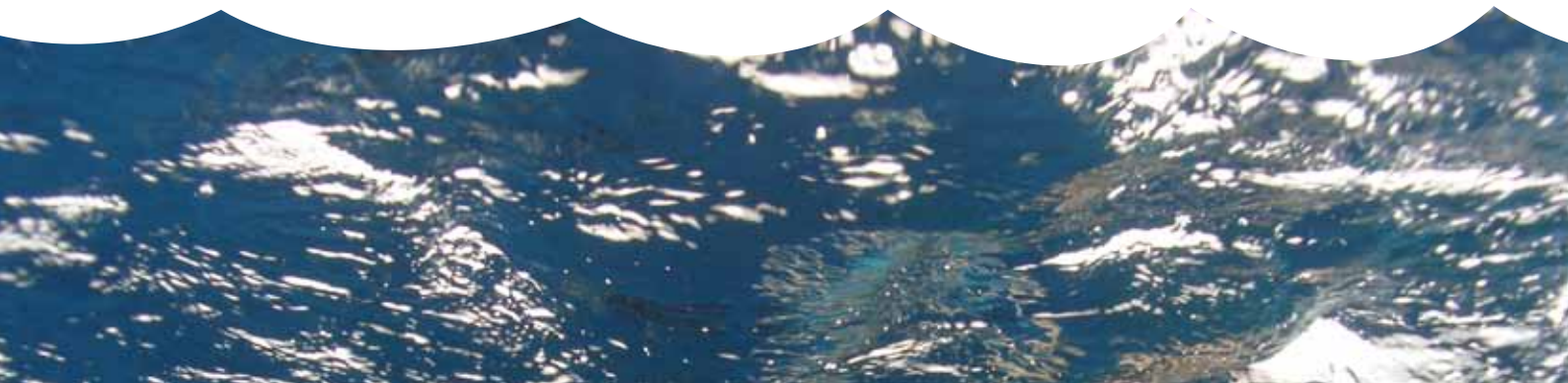
The International Whaling Commission has failed to resolve the deadlock that allows the heavily subsidised Japanese whaling fleet to head to Antarctic waters each summer killing several hundred whales in the name of scientific research.

In November 2009, Japan's whaling fleets headed south to target almost 1000 minke and fin whales. Following intense international opposition, including lobbying by AMCS, the Government of Japan suspended plans to hunt humpbacks, at least for this whaling season, but this is a temporary stay of execution and the threat remains for future years. These are the same humpbacks that support a multi-million dollar whale watching industry on both our east and west coasts.

AMCS remains vigilant on all areas of cetacean conservation.



In November 2009, Japan's whaling fleets headed south to target almost 1000 minke and fin whales photo courtesy of Greenpeace, Kate Davison.



**Climate Change:** Global climate change looms large as the biggest threat facing our oceans. As a result of the carbon emissions we have put into the atmosphere since the industrial revolution, our coral reefs are bleaching and our oceans are becoming more acidic.

AMCS was extremely disappointed in the global lack of progress on climate change in 2009. The demise of our beloved World Heritage Great Barrier Reef would actually be locked in by Australia's target to reduce our emissions by only 5% of 2000 levels by 2020. Australia's top reef and climate scientists maintain that the Great Barrier Reef has only a 50/50 chance of survival if global emissions are not cut by at least 25% by 2020.

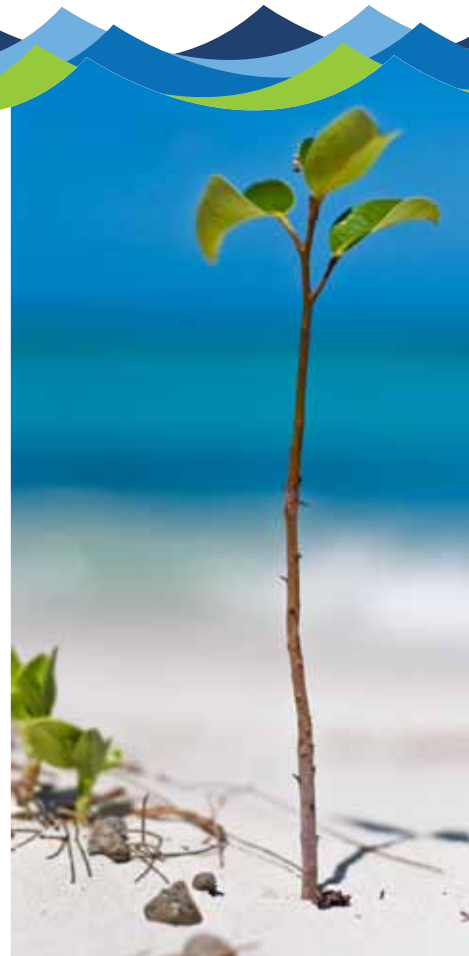
Urgent action is required to slow and ultimately reverse the trend of increasing CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere. The Earth's nations must urgently address this most significant of environmental, social and economic problems. The next 10 years may prove the most important in the next 10,000.

The failure of the Copenhagen Climate talks in late 2009 was deeply disappointing. Governments at home and overseas must respect the peer reviewed science and act to cut emissions to save our coral reefs from warmer sea temperatures and increased risk of coral bleaching. More than 100 nations have endorsed the goal of limiting average global warming to no more than 2°C above pre-industrial temperatures. Our beloved Great Barrier Reef would be under significant threat even with this scenario.

Our goal is to see Australia at the forefront of innovation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to reduce human impacts on our marine wildlife, such as fishing, mining and pollution, which directly reduce the ability of marine ecosystems to combat and recover from climate change impacts.

Our oceans, covering over 70% of our planet and containing 97% of life on Earth are critical in the fight against climate change. They are a critical natural carbon sink, capturing more carbon than even our forested lands. In particular, our vegetated marine and coastal habitats, such as our mangroves, sea grasses and salt marshes are some of the most intense carbon sinks on Earth, accounting for almost three quarters of the ocean's carbon dioxide absorbing capacity.

If the world's nations are serious about mitigating climate change, it is essential that we restore the health of our oceans and their ability to naturally soak up CO<sub>2</sub>. Just as we need healthy forests to sequester carbon dioxide, so too do we need healthy oceans.



Mangrove seedling by Tane Sinclair Taylor



# Marketing and FUNDRAISING

## ART FOR SHARKS 2009

Now in its third year, Art for Sharks is our major annual fundraiser. Over 40 pieces of fabulous art were donated to Art for Sharks (and Big Marine Parks) 2009 by talented artists from around the country who are passionate about protecting our ocean wildlife. The proceeds were channeled into supporting our Coral Sea marine park campaign, one of the world's last refuges for large migratory fish and other marine wildlife.

The evening was inspirational and uplifting, supported by truly generous and dedicated people who have taken us one step closer to leaving a lasting legacy for our over-fished and under-protected oceans.

Artworks included painting, photography and sculpture, and ranged in price from several hundred dollars to over \$10,000. In an ongoing tradition, many of Australia's top artists donated their work to the event, as well as emerging stars. Regular contributors include Ralph Wilson, Fiona McMonagle and Robert Brownhall. This year we were delighted to also receive works from Amanda Marburg, Kate Rohde, Tim McMonagle, Abbey McCulloch and Fergus Binns. Thanks to the Bleeding Heart Cafe and Gallery and our sponsors and volunteers for making the event such a success.



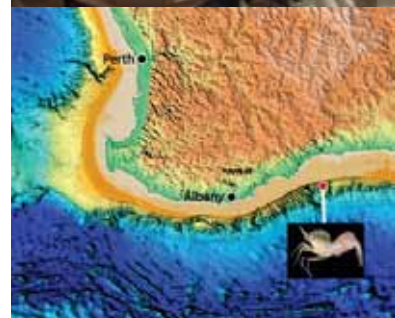
Top: Kim Toft and her painting and middle: Omar Ameer and friend .

## SHRIMP AUCTION

Congratulations to three time Olympian and ex NBA basketballer, Luc Longley, for winning our online auction to name a new species of anemone shrimp.

Luc is a treasured AMCS supporter and placed the winning bid to name the newly described shrimp species that was discovered by Anna McCallum on a 2005 CSIRO Voyage of Discovery Expedition. This small spotted shrimp was found about 400m below the surface in the deep seas near Albany in Western Australia. It was found in a highly biodiverse transition zone, where the continental shelf drops off into the deep dark sea.

As the winning bidder, Luc secured the naming rights to choose a unique species name for the Lebbeus shrimp, which is one of only three known



Winning bidder Luc Longley with his daughter and their exquisite illustration of the new shrimp species by Mali Moore. Luc won the bidding rights to name the new species.



shrimps of this genus that occurs in Australia. Luc dedicated the new name to his daughter, and the shrimp is now called *Lebbeus clarehannah*.

Luc's winning bid raised thousands of dollars to help fund the campaign to save our precious ocean wildlife in Australia's South West. Thank you again to Anna McCallum for her outstanding generosity and to acclaimed scientific artist Mali Moore for donating her beautiful illustration of the lovely deep sea shrimp.

*"It is an absolute pleasure to take part in the auction to help raise funds to protect our South West oceans. Discoveries like this new deep sea species remind us of how little we know about our oceans and how much we need to protect them".*

Luc Longley, winning bidder, three time Olympian and ex NBA Basketballer

## DIVING DEEP FOR OUR SEAS

In August 2009, a world-first free-diving challenge took place to raise precious funds for AMCS and our work to protect the oceans. Free-diving instructor and AMCS supporter, Mike Wells, successfully dived Fish Rock Cave in NSW, Australia's longest ocean cave, on a single breath. This extraordinary event was bold and exciting, and captured the imagination of media from around Australia and over the sea.

Mike's motivation was both personal and charitable. The dive has been an ambition of his for years and he also wanted to support our conservation work. AMCS has campaigned to protect places such as Fish Rock Cave in NSW, a critical habitat of this much loved and critically endangered grey nurse shark.





**A message from Mike:** *“Fish Rock Cave is Australia’s longest ocean cave and is also one of the largest natural aggregation sites for the endangered grey nurse shark. This site has been close to my heart for years, it is very easy to fall in love with these majestic animals.*

*To swim through the cave on a single breath will be spectacular, the cave is the habitat of hundreds of lobsters and other marine species who call this dark wondrous cave their home.*

*To interact through the cave in the most natural way possible will be nothing short of an amazing and privileged experience. Starting at the deepest side of the tunnel 26m deep, I will traverse through a pitch-black tunnel to the chimney packed with fish and crustaceans and wobbygong sharks, over the dogleg ridge and down to the 60m tunnel of darkness that is home to many green turtles.*

*The residing dizzying array of fish and life as you burst through to the light is an overwhelming sensation, another 30-40m to the fresh air at the shallow entrance to the cave at 10m deep.*

*The cave is also home the largest aggregation site of grey nurse shark in Australia, deservedly one of the greatest underwater experiences in the world. I am hoping to raise funds awareness and funds for the Australian Marine Conservation Society, an organisation that put heart and soul into helping our oceans and its inhabitants.”*

## **BERNARD FANNING STARS IN AMCS SEA GUARDIAN PROMOTION**



In early 2009 Bernard Fanning, Australia’s much-loved musician of Powderfinger fame, joined other Sea Guardians to promote our Sea Guardian program in support of our oceans. Bernard has been a Sea Guardian and public supporter for several years. In the short video he speaks of the inspiration that he gets from the sea and encourages people to get involved and join as a Sea Guardian.

Thank you Bernard!

## **FILM FUNDRAISERS**

During 2009 AMCS hosted the premiere screenings of several cutting edge films including *End of the Line* and *A Sea Change*. These films were screened in Brisbane and Melbourne and provided excellent opportunities to meet new and current supporters and raise the profile of our major campaigns including overfishing and ocean acidification. Thank you to all who attended.

Right: Still from *End of the Line*, showing tuna fishers in the Northern Hemisphere.





# AMCS CONSERVATION CHAMPIONS

During the year the Queensland Conservation Council celebrated their 40th anniversary. QCC is Queensland's umbrella conservation group, representing a network of environment groups and working on a diverse range of environmental issues. QCC was born in 1969 and was founded by a small group of committed conservationists, including AMCS founder and Director, Eddie Hegerl, who was the inaugural Chairman of QCC.

In July 2009 AMCS staff past and present joined our conservation colleagues to commemorate 40 years of conservation victories, such as the protection of the World Heritage Great Barrier Reef and the Wet Tropics Rainforests. AMCS founders and Honorary Life Members Di Tarte and Eddie Hegerl, and current staff members Craig Bohm and Ingrid Neilson were honoured through induction into the inaugural role of Queensland's Champions of Conservation for their decades of devotion to Queensland's marine (and terrestrial) environment. Queensland's Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, Kate Jones, MP presented the recipients with their awards. AMCS is very proud of our very own Conservation Champions.



AMCS Honorary Life Members Di Tarte and Eddie Hegerl were pivotal in the campaign to protect the Great Barrier Reef in a marine park and later a World Heritage Area.

Conservation Champions, from top to below: Di Tarte undertaking littoral zone surveys in the mid 70s, Eddie Hegerl was AMCS Director for several decades until the late 1990s, Craig Bohm worked extensively on fisheries and marine park campaigns during his tenure at AMCS (pictured with daughter Tiliانا), Ingrid Neilson has worked on forest and marine conservation for over 20 years.



# MELBOURNE WORKING GROUP

The year 2009 was a busy one for the AMCS Melbourne Working Group, raising public support for our national campaigns through various community events and activities.

The group of dedicated volunteers advocated for the sustainable use of our oceans at the Sustainable Living Festival. Our volunteer staff also presented a seminar promoting *Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide* in conjunction with Hilary McNevin author of *A Guide to Fish*, which promotes recipes based on advice from the Guide.

Throughout the year members also raised community awareness about our campaigns to protect the Coral Sea and South West in large marine national parks. We promoted these campaigns on the 'Out of the Blue' program on 3CR community radio. The working group also attended several Farmers Markets with Hilary McNevin to promote sustainable seafood choices and sell copies of *Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide*.

The Working Group held a fundraising screening of the movie *A Sea Change* in July to raise community awareness about the effects of climate change on our oceans. Proceeds will support our work to protect marine wildlife in Victoria.

The Melbourne crew also celebrated World Oceans Day by sponsoring the World Oceans Day quiz on Radio Marinara, made several submissions on key initiatives, wrote letters to the editor and gave media and radio interviews.

Several Melbourne supporters also attended a Climate Action Network Australia workshop to raise awareness about the effects of climate change on our oceans.

Giant kelp (*Macrocystis pyrifera*) occurs in dense beds along the inshore subtidal reefs of south-east South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania.



# SUPPORTERS

## BUSINESS SUPPORTERS

Our Business Supporters Program encourages like-minded Australian businesses to invest directly in our conservation work. The Program has three tiers of sponsorship – Platinum, Gold and Silver and has continued its sustained growth during 2009, with one new platinum supporter and two new silver supporters coming aboard.

### 2009 Platinum Supporters:

Swiss Time Australia  
Ripple Effect Oceanwear

### 2009 Gold Supporters:

Business on Blue

### 2009 Silver Supporters:

Calypso Reef Charters  
Tabata Australia  
Diversion Dive Travel  
Remora Technologies  
Ocean Dynamic Charters  
La Table Restaurant and Café  
Northshark  
New Age Communications

### 2009 Honorary Supporters:

Sport Diving Magazine  
GMagazine  
Berwicks Office Technology



Pod of dolphins © Aengus Moran



Australian sea lion © Aengus Moran.



# Financial REVIEW

It is my pleasure to report on another successful financial year for the Australian Marine Conservation Society in 2009.

The Society fared well in what was a difficult year for all not for profit organisations as a result of the Global Financial Crisis. We maintained our fundraising income, growing two key streams over the year. The income from public donations through regular giving, responses to our fundraising appeals and one-off major donations grew by 21% over the year – a remarkable performance given that donations to many non-profits shrunk as a result of the financial climate in 2009. Income from sales of AMCS merchandise grew by 67% over the same period.

Our solid financial performance has allowed us to maintain our base of campaigns and administrative staff, ensuring we continue to deliver on conservation outcomes. We continue to plan for and see substantial growth in our Sea Guardian program – our regular monthly giving program. This grew by 45% in 2009 providing a strong and secure financial platform for our operations.

The government (Environment Australia) concluded its major grant for the Marine and Coastal Community Network in 2008, reflected in a substantial decrease in project income and expenditure item for 2009. MCCN was auspiced by AMCS, but not part of our core activities hence the conclusion of this project has not affected AMCS core business or campaigns.

The Society's Board, staff, volunteers and supporters are to be commended for their passion and commitment to AMCS. They have and continue to provide the foundation and inspiration for the Society's continued successes working to protect our oceans; a track record that now spans over four decades.

Darren Kindleysides  
Director





# Sheridan Spowart

B. Com., C.A. Reg. Tax Agent

## **AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF AUSTRALIAN MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC**

### **Scope**

I have audited the financial statements of the Australian Marine Conservation Society Inc. The Association's committee is responsible for the presentation of the accounts and the information contained herein. I have conducted an independent audit of the accounts in order to express an opinion on them to the members of the Australian Marine Conservation Society Inc.

The audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the accounts are free of material misstatement. Procedures included examination on a test basis of evidence supporting the accounts and other disclosures in the accounts and the evaluation of accounting policies.

These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether in all material respects the accounts are presented fairly in accordance with the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 so as to present a view which is consistent with my understanding of the Association's financial position and the results of its operations.

### **Qualification**

As is common for organizations of this type, it is not practicable for the Association to maintain an effective system of internal control over donations, subscriptions and other fund raising activities until their initial entry in the accounting records. Accordingly, the audit in relation to fundraising was limited to amounts recorded.

### **Qualified Audit Opinion**

In my opinion, subject to the effects on the financial statements of the matter referred to in the qualification above, the financial statements of the Australian Marine Conservation Society Inc. are properly drawn up:

- (a) so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Association as at 31 December 2009 and of the income and expenditure of the Association for the year ended on that date.
- (b) in accordance with the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1981.

Dated this ninth day of March, 2010



SHERIDAN SPOWART  
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT

38 Huet Street  
WAVELL HEIGHTS QLD 4012  
Phone 07 32669354 Fax 07 32669384  
Email sailbreak @bigpond.com

**AUSTRALIAN MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC**  
**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER, 2009**

Page 1

		2009	2008
<b>PROJECTS AND GRANTS</b>			
Grants - Environment Australia	Note G	0	600000
Grants - GNGO		15000	15000
Grants - GVEHO		17500	9000
Projects - Conservation		195776	115369
Gross Project and Grant Income		<u>228276</u>	<u>739369</u>
Total Project Expenses	Note H	<u>190938</u>	<u>632736</u>
<b>NET PROJECTS AND GRANTS</b>		<b><u>37338</u></b>	<b><u>106633</u></b>
<b>FUNDRAISING</b>			
Bequests		0	20000
Business Partners/Supporters		7806	25794
Donations		228941	189396
Events		34128	68710
Membership Fees		9633	9493
Merchandise		45285	27222
Gross Fundraising		<u>325793</u>	<u>340615</u>
Less Fundraising Expenses	Note I	<u>87786</u>	<u>75795</u>
<b>NET FUNDRAISING</b>		<b><u>238007</u></b>	<b><u>264820</u></b>
<b>OTHER INCOME</b>			
Interest Received		<u>8205</u>	<u>23363</u>
<b>TOTAL DIRECT INCOME</b>		<b><u>283549</u></b>	<b><u>394816</u></b>
<b>LESS OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	Note J	<b><u>302798</u></b>	<b><u>410630</u></b>
<b>NET SURPLUS/(LOSS) FOR YEAR</b>		<b><u>-19249</u></b>	<b><u>-15814</u></b>



**AUSTRALIAN MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC  
BALANCE SHEET  
AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 2009**

Page 2

	2009	2008
MEMBERS' FUNDS		
Balance at Beginning of Year	161449	177263
Net Surplus	-19249	-15814
<b>MEMBERS' FUNDS 31 December, 2009</b>	<b><u>142200</u></b>	<b><u>161449</u></b>
Represented by:		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash on Hand	300	300
Cash at Bank		
Suncorp A/C No 161442159	100	100
Suncorp A/C No 162442191	173141	148920
Suncorp A/C No 052166909	24081	42021
Suncorp A/C No 161920537	34496	104819
Suncorp A/C No 070575011	12538	
Debtors	15856	32729
Stock on Hand	9961	13769
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	<u>270475</u>	<u>342658</u>
FIXED ASSETS		
OFFICE EQUIPMENT -at cost	34319	34319
Less Accumulated Depreciation	28777	25422
TOTAL FIXED ASSETS	<u>5542</u>	<u>8897</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>276017</u>	<u>351555</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors	21171	25546
GST Payable	-1732	874
PAYG Tax Payable	4878	7397
Provision for Long Service Leave	12077	33480
Prepaid Income	97423	122809
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>133817</u>	<u>190106</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b><u>142200</u></b>	<b><u>161449</u></b>

**STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES**

**A) BASIS OF ACCOUNTING**

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost accounting principles and therefore do not take into account changing money values, the current value of non-monetary assets except where specifically stated. The following is a summary of the significant accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the accounts.

**B) INCORPORATED ASSOCIATION**

The Australian Marine Conservation Society Inc. is an association incorporated under the Association Incorporations Act 1981. The benefits of incorporation of a non-profit organization are similar to those enjoyed by a proprietary company. That is: the liability of members and the management committee is limited. The association does not have a share capital.

**C) DEPRECIATION**

Assets are depreciated on the diminishing rate method so as to write off the cost of each asset during its estimated life.

**D) INVENTORIES**

Trading stock such as products for resale is bought to account as an asset. Profits are bought to account at the time of receipt of monies from the sale of products.

**E) PREPAID INCOME**

This amount represents grant money received but unspent as at the end of the year. Because it is difficult to assess the stage of completion for any grant, the income and expenses for each grant are bought to account in the year in which the grant is finalized.

**F) BOARD MEMBERS**

The board members listed below were appointed at the Annual General Meeting of the Society on 18 March 2008. All board members remained on the board for the duration of the year. During the year ended 31 December, 2009 the board met 10 times. No remuneration was paid to any board member during the year ended 31 December 2009.

<u>Position</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Name</u>
President	Paul Saunders	General	Richard Leck
Secretary	Mary-Ann Pattison	General	Margaret Harlow
Treasurer	Michaela Mitchell	General	Angeline Tew
General	Patti Zenonos	General	Sue Crowe

**G) MARINE AND COASTAL COMMUNITY NETWORK**

Grants from Environment Australia to the Marine and Coastal Community Network (MCCN) ceased on 30 June 2008 and all staff working on this project were terminated. Over the past 10 years, there has been an internal strategy to decrease the Society's reliance on the MCCN grant and instead attract funds from direct donations, smaller grants and businesses. This strategy has been successful and now means that the Society is no longer heavily reliant on one source and instead has spread its income across a range of sources.

**AUSTRALIAN MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC  
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER, 2009**

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	2009	2008
H) PROJECT EXPENSES		
Coordinators and Project Officers	81115	335522
Postage Printing & Stationery	10582	71007
Project Expenses	80870	66514
Publications	2293	67008
Superannuation Contributions	11518	20131
Telephone, Fax and Internet	2289	45474
Travel & Conference Expenses	2272	27080
TOTAL PROJECT EXPENSES	<u><b>190938</b></u>	<u><b>632736</b></u>
I) FUNDRAISING EXPENSES		
Business Partners/Supporters	259	503
Events	2701	18625
Merchandise	27557	7689
Other	168	2836
Wages	57101	46143
TOTAL FUNDRAISING EXPENSES	<u><b>87786</b></u>	<u><b>75796</b></u>
J) OPERATING EXPENSES		
EMPLOYEE RELATED EXPENSES		
Superannuation Contributions	23662	22189
Travelling & Conference Expenses	2250	10288
Wages	193168	286088
Workcover	401	3449
TOTAL EMPLOYEE RELATED	<u><b>219481</b></u>	<u><b>322014</b></u>
OCCUPANCY EXPENSES		
Depreciation	Note C 3355	4533
Electricity	1019	907
Rent	24360	20961
Repairs & Maintenance	1617	2901
TOTAL OCCUPANCY	<u><b>30351</b></u>	<u><b>29302</b></u>
OFFICE OVERHEADS		
Audit Fee	1136	2150
Bank Charges & Interest	3689	3705
Board Expenses	4610	
Computer Costs	1564	5565
Insurance	4730	5744
Magazine Expenses	4745	9756
Postage Printing & Stationery	11024	12833
Subscriptions	3580	4022
Telephone, Fax and Internet	16925	13858
Sundry Expenses	961	1681
TOTAL OFFICE	<u><b>52966</b></u>	<u><b>59314</b></u>
TOTAL OPERATING OVERHEADS	<u><b>302798</b></u>	<u><b>410630</b></u>



# Board and PATRON



## OUR PATRON

### Tim Winton

Tim Winton first became involved in our work as the Vice President of the Society's Western Australian branch. Tim is a beloved Australian author who has won the Miles Franklin Award four times and twice been short-listed for the Booker Prize.

Tim's work has achieved the rare distinction of being both critically admired and loved by readers in Australia and across the seas. He has been declared a Living Treasure by the National Trust and more recently was made an 'Australia Post Australian Legend' for his outstanding contribution to the social and cultural life of the nation.

Tim Winton's commitment to the environment is well known and was further highlighted in 2002 when he donated his \$25,000 prize money from the WA Premier's Award to the Save Ningaloo Reef Campaign in Western Australia. This campaign was another great success for the Society, thanks in no small part to our Patron, of whom we are very proud.

Tim plays an active role in most of our campaigns including sustainable seafood, whaling and marine national parks.

## OUR BOARD

### President - Paul Saunders

Paul Saunders is a registered psychologist and Director of LNC consulting which is a successful niche consulting company specializing in strategy, business planning and change management. Paul's interest in marine conservation stems from his love of sailing, surfing and swimming.

### Secretary - Patty Zenonos

Patty Zenonos has been a member for many years and this is her second time on the Board as Secretary. For the last few years Patty worked on the staff at Head Office as Office Manager and Memberships Officer. Patty left to pursue her teaching career and joined the Board to continue her formal association with the Society.

### Treasurer - Michela Mitchell

Michela Mitchell joined the Melbourne Branch of the Australian Marine Conservation Society in 1998 and has been our noble Treasurer for the last three years. Michela is studying her Masters in Sea Anemone Taxonomy, reviewing Sea Anemones found in Port Phillip Bay in Victoria. Michela dreams of becoming a Museum Curator.



### **General Member - Sue Crowe**

Sue Crowe is the Director of TUSA Australia, one of the original dive equipment manufacturers. Sue Crowe, a journalist and editor by trade, was managing editor of Scuba Diver Australasia magazine for eight years, before leaving in 2002 to start her own marketing and editorial business.

Sue is also a diving instructor and has made many excellent contacts in the dive industry for the Society. A member for many years and previously a Committee Member of the Society's Sydney Branch, Sue has been long been involved in marine conservation from her base in Sydney, NSW.

### **General Member - Mary-Ann Pattison**

Mary-Ann Pattison is a long term member of the Society and has been a formal member of the Board for many years. Mary-Ann is an environmental educator for Education Queensland and is based at the Nudgee Beach Environment Centre. Mary-Ann brings a strong corporate knowledge of our history to the Board and is well connected with many of our longer-term members and supporters across South-east Queensland.

### **General Member - Richard Leck**

Richard Leck is WWF-Australia's Marine and Coastal Policy Officer. Rick joined the Board in 2004 and brings an excellent knowledge of conservation politics to the Board. Rick works closely with our campaign staff on a daily basis on a range of conservation initiatives. Rick is also a keen diver, sports-lover and tri-athlete.

AMCS 2009 staff and board (Clockwise from back left): Craig Bohm, Ingrid Neilson, Darren Kindleysides, Paul Saunders, Angeline Tew, Richard Leck, Mary-Ann Pattison, Margaret Harlow, Patty Zenonos, Kate Davey, Tara Janssen, Michela Mitchell, Jacki Boyce, Dave Graham.





### **General Member - Angeline Tew**

Angeline is a very active member of our Melbourne Branch and has been a member of the Society for several years. Angeline is a committed conservationist and avid diver with an excellent knowledge of marine planning issues. Angeline joined the Board in 2005 and brings an important regional perspective to the Board's deliberations.

### **General Member - Margaret Harlow**

Margaret Harlow joined the Board in 2009, and began her involvement with the Society as a volunteer while completing an Environmental Science degree. Marg then became National Assistant for the Marine & Coastal Community Network (MCCN), a government funded project hosted by AMCS. Marg is currently General Manager of the Lifecraft Group which includes charity researchers Givewell, providing a comprehensive research service for informed giving.





# Thanks and **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

With special thanks to the individuals and businesses who supported AMCS throughout 2009. Your generosity has made a huge difference to our work to protect our ocean wildlife.

## MAJOR SUPPORTERS

Tim Winton (our perfect patron), Denise Fitch, Bruce and Sue Shepherd, Dan Mathews, Pam and Ray Ison, John and Julie Glennon, Jenny Darling, John Rorke, Scott Thompson, Donna Burton, Rodger Livsey, Margaret Robertson, Luc Longley, Marilyn Smith and Soon Young.

Sincere thanks to all of our donors who contributed to our campaigns throughout the year. Your financial support makes all the difference.

## GRANTS AND PHILANTHROPIC TRUSTS

Trust Company Philanthropic Services

Australian Ethical Investments

The Mullum Trust

Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, Australian Government

Environment Protection Department, Queensland Government

Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment, Northern Territory Government

## WONDERFUL VOLUNTEERS

AMCS relies heavily on the extensive and enduring support from our volunteer network around Australia. Our tireless volunteers are ever-present to lend critical support for our campaigns, information stalls, fundraising events and administration needs. The following names are listed to highlight individuals who went above and beyond throughout 2009, but the list is by no means conclusive.

Dave and Jan Graham, Sue Behan, Denise Toogood, Omar Ameer, Mary-Ann Stewart, Anna McCallum, Jessica Pink, Jaime Kruusma, Vicki Thomson, Dan Cullinan, Fiona Maxwell and Tania Kenyon.



Crested terns are Australia's second largest tern and are found throughout the mainland and Tasmania. They are often seen plunging into the water to catch small pelagic fish on which they feed.



Art auction volunteers, including the talented and charismatic auctioneer Jonathan Blocksidge, the generous and talented artists who donated their work, the wonderfully generous supporters who purchased the artworks, the artful Sam Charlton for your pro bono photography and the warm and wonderful volunteers at art auction (Anna Shera, James Walcroft, Kylie Armstrong, Denise Toogood, Ellie Barnes, Melanie, Ananda Mahoney, Dan Cullinan... thank you!).

## **BUSINESS PARTNERS**

Tusa Australia for merchandise support

Envirosax for percentage sales of eco bags

Billabong Australia for merchandise support

Sea World for donation support

Customer Community web design for web support

Alltype Printing and Go Boating Magazine for printing services

Propeller Graphic Design and Marketing for graphic design services

Jacstar Design for graphic design services and support

Marine Themes photography for exquisite photographic support

Powderfinger and Secret Service Management for merchandise support

## **INDIVIDUALS**

Aengus Moran for your beautiful photographs that you are always willing to lend. Dave Hannan, Lucy Trippett and Pete Simon for your exquisite still and moving footage of the sea. Colin Carr for raising funds for our precious oceans through your charity bicycle ride. AMCS members, Ocean Activists, donors and sensational Sea Guardians!

## **AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST**

AMCS Board for all your pro bono advice, direction, support and expertise.

AMCS staff, for your hard work throughout the year and continued commitment to our seas.

Kate Davey (past Director) and Craig Bohm (past Campaigns Manager), for devoting the last ten years to AMCS. We wish you well in your adventures around our beautiful blue coastline.