

# NEWSLETTER

No.1 July 2007

## SEADRAGON FOUNDATION INC.

[www.seadragonfoundation.com](http://www.seadragonfoundation.com)



Welcome to our First Newsletter and thank you for joining

## Seadragon Foundation Inc (SFD)

We hope you will enjoy the experience of supporting the sustainable management of the Leafy Seadragon through a new type of environmental organisation. The SFI is an organisation being tailored for the conservation challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

We are giving a presentation at Yankalilla in July to establish their working group.

“A lavishly illustrated talk on the Leafy Sea Dragon and other fish by Dr Robert Browne, marine conservationist, and an opportunity to meet others involved in Leafy issues will be held on

Sunday July 15th at 3.00 PM at Eunice and Frits van Emden, 22 Panorama Crescent, Normanville. Families will be especially welcome.

Please RSVP Frits at 8558 3931 or [bethart@iinet.net.au](mailto:bethart@iinet.net.au)

**These include increased potential for the conservation of the Leafy Seadragon by:**

- 1) Increasing public knowledge and perception of the Leafy Seadragon;
- 2) Engaging people from all ages and social groups in Leafy Seadragon conservation;
- 3) Make the Leafy Seadragon a part of communication age.



*A pair of harlequin dragonets. The male displays in the foreground while the impressed female watches.*

## **Genesis of the Seadragon Foundation Incorporated**

The Inshore Fish Group had been studying inshore fish since 2002. Yankalilla District Community has a natural affinity for Seadragons and have held a Seadragon Festival since 2005.

The area is a diving hotspot for the Leafy Seadragon and of major conservation significance. A wave of southward moving reef die-offs directly threatens the habitat of the Leafy Seadragon. This with increased ecotourism means more direct care must be directed toward the Leafy Seadragon. The Yankalilla District Community wants to maintain or increase Seadragon populations.

We decided to merge both the Inshore Fish Group and Yankalilla District Community had common interests in Leafy Seadragon conservation.

## **Merging of founders of the SFI**

We established a set of rules that means we could be much more proactive about the sustainable management of the Leafy Seadragon. We also made the structure of the Seadragon Foundation very friendly to all people in the community irrespective of age, sex, religion or political persuasion.

We have rules to encourage electronic meeting and voting. This use of technology still has difficulties so we will conduct the smaller committee meetings that way, then as we learn we will extend electronic meetings to Members.

The SFI has the highest credential as an association. The rules provide for the highest levels of ethical standards and accountability. The rules were presented three times to Environment Australia, to comply with tax exempt environmental association requirements, and the rules fully complied with these requirements by including all suggested changes.



*The Western Australian Seahorse Hippocampus subelongatus. Image by Kevin Smith.*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>What the SFI has done</u></b></p> <p>The sustainable management of the Leafy Seadragon covers a pretty wide scope, from public relations and publicity, to stopping wasted storm water polluting the Gulf St Vincent, including watershed needs, to scientific studies.</p> <p>We decided to establish the Seadragon Foundation as a facility, and let each particular interest grow in its own right. For instance the Inshore Fish Group and the Yankalilla group are now working groups within the Seadragon Foundation. There is a strong possibility of a Kangaroo Island group and a freshwater group forming. The Seadragon Foundation will offer support to all the sound projects we can that follow our "Objectives and purposes" in the rules on the web site.</p> <p>We follow the maxims independence, transparency and accountability. We are going to be independent and form our own path to the future. We are incorporated as a Foundation and have set up a Public Trust Fund and a Public Fund Committee. Our Treasurer Frits van Emden heads this committee with the Public Fund deposited with Bank SA at Yankalilla.</p>	<p>In light of working closely with Yankalilla, and Kangaroo Island being key environment for the Leafy Seadragon, we have decided to make these two regions our immediate focus. We have already established the ties to eventually establish a working group on KI.</p> <p>Karen Whitford is our Web producer, and secretary.</p> <p>The Inshore Fish Group already had a web facility <a href="http://www.ifg.bioteck.org">www.ifg.bioteck.org</a> developed by Karen. We have registered the domain name <a href="http://www.seadragonfoundation.org">www.seadragonfoundation.org</a> and this site will be our primary SFI site. However, the Inshore Fish Group will remain a working group and maintain their own site. We also will operate in concert with the <a href="http://www.bioteck.org">www.bioteck.org</a> conservation site, which has about 50 visits per. day. The Inshore Fish Group site had 105 visits a day in June 2007. The SFI sites has gone from 0-3 visits a day and it will be interesting to watch it grow.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p><i>A close of the head of a Rhino pipefish (Histiogamphelus cristus). Pipefish are close relatives of the seadragons.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Branding of the SFI</u></b></p> <p>We have adopted a professional approach to branding. One of our founding members Nive Canvese is an award winning graphic artist and has offered to help create logos for the SFI. We have worked through the sketches and Nive is now in the final stages of creation and production. We will have a logo for small objects such as business cards and a more complete corporate logo. The branding is coming along brilliantly.</p> <p>We have decided to give our character for branding a name. We called her after a character 'Sufi' that thinks "the way to god is through the heart". We are refining Sufi's character at the moment.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>The SFI's immediate needs</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Work on web site:</i></p> <p>To increase traffic to the SFI site we will add more sections and perform some web site optimization. We are creating a section for member's articles, so any substantial articles will be welcome.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Recruit members:</i></p> <p>We need 50 members to become a tax exempt not-for-profit to receive tax deductible donations or gifts. Where less than half way there. So recruit.</p>

***SFI Management Panel***

Secretary (Karen Whitford),

Treasurer (Fruits van Emden),

Environmental education (Tony Bartram)

President (Robert Browne

We are waiting on a decision from a freshwater expert.

We have positions for two more committee members. A Marketing, IT, Law, design/art background would be good.

So things are really moving along. Thank you all for your support.

A wavy seadragon salute.

Robert Browne

Seadragon Foundation Inc.