



### **Invasive Oyster and Porcelain Crab Removal Working Bees 9-12**

At Working Bee #9 on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March, we collected **2,150 crabs and 86 kg of oysters**.

At Working Bee #10 on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March, we collected **1,500 crabs and 100 kg of oysters**.

Thank you everyone, your support and participation are appreciated.

We will have two more working bees in April, scheduled for 9.30am Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> and 9.30am Sunday 26<sup>th</sup>.

These working bees will be the final ones run and funded under the current IMAS grant.

You can join Wildcare at <https://wildcaretas.org.au/> (\$35.00 pa membership), and register for whichever of the events you can support at <https://wildcaretas.org.au/events>.

Elizabeth (Libby) Castle at UTas is coordinating the project. Libby would be pleased to provide further information and take expressions of interest from potential volunteers. Libby's contact details are: email ([elizabeth.castle@utas.edu.au](mailto:elizabeth.castle@utas.edu.au)) or by phone (0466 044 743).

### **Information for volunteers**

This is physical but not overly heavy work, the main demands being the need to work at ground level, walking on uneven/unstable surfaces, safe use of hammers and chisels (for oyster removal), exposure to the elements, and splash risks.

The organisers will provide

- Safety equipment; gloves, safety glasses, pads for kneeling, and sunscreen
- Tools; hammers and chisels
- Containers; buckets for the crabs, tubs for the oysters, off-site disposal

For your safety and comfort please have

- Solid, supportive footwear that you are willing to get a bit wet and muddy
- Sun hats and comfortable clothing, kneeling pads if you have them
- Plenty of water

Thanks again to our volunteers, Wildcare Lumeh Point members (now numbering 49 thanks to the Wildcare and IMAS promotions), and interested community supporters.



### What is next for the Live-bearing Sea Stars?

It has become obvious that the Pipeclay Lagoon live bearing sea star population has diminished considerably leading into, and over the course of this project. As we have proceeded, finding sea stars has become a rare event. It is to be hoped that IMAS will continue with some structured monitoring to gauge the impact of the removal of invasive pests, and the general health of the lagoon, on the sea star. I am sure we can offer to assist with any ongoing surveys.

If the feral pest removals prove effective in providing the live bearing sea stars with improved breeding conditions, it is incumbent on us to continue the process, implement ongoing monitoring, and engage in further projects to improve the lagoon environment.

### Pipeclay Lagoon

In December 2024 the Pipeclay Lagoon Oyster growers through the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) commissioned a study by Marine Solutions Pty Ltd into the factors that are causing the farmed oysters' growth to be stunted. I was invited to the initial meeting at which it was stated that the report would be available around February 2025. There has been no official communication since, but the report is with the FRDC and is available under Commons License\*.

IMAS have been engaged in studies of water quality, the recent increase in sea grass, and the stress on the live bearing sea star.

A critical issue is the future of oyster farming in Pipeclay Lagoon. Eight of the eleven leases expire on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2026. A local group is gathering information from relevant government and industrial interests to try and ascertain what is planned, and what responsibility exists for the removal of infrastructure and repair of the environment should leases be relinquished. I have offered them whatever support and collaboration Wildcare Lumeah Point can provide.

There are other organisations with various interests in the lagoon's health and utility.

It would be good to have a coordinated and properly designed and funded approach to resolving the issues affecting the lagoon. In the meantime, I hope we will continue to have your support and involvement in programs that arise out of these investigations.

Garry Hulme  
President Wildcare Lumeah Point

\* [https://www.frdc.com.au/project-search?search\\_api\\_fulltext=FRDC+Project+No+2023-176](https://www.frdc.com.au/project-search?search_api_fulltext=FRDC+Project+No+2023-176)