

# Dolphin SAVIOURS

**Rescuing injured wildlife is all in a day's work for the team at Tangalooma Island Resort's Marine Education and Conservation Centre.**

Dolphin dreaming: Jasmine Crittenden

Between fishing line, plastic bags and predators, daily life is hazardous for Australia's sea creatures. However, they can count on a helping hand at Moreton Island, which lies 58 kilometres north-east of Brisbane. There, the team at Tangalooma Island Resort's Marine Education and Conservation Centre is dedicated to caring for the local wildlife. During her 20 years as Dolphin Care Manager at the centre, Sue Hassard has overseen eight dolphin rescues and saved countless turtles and birds.

## SAVING NARI

One evening in February 2009, the dolphin Nari, a regular guest at the centre's nightly wild dolphin feeding program, swam in with three huge gashes across his head, the result of an encounter with a three-metre-long bull shark. "We didn't know if he would survive," Sue says. "We were all so anxious."

Sue lured him into the shallows and the rescue team carried him onto the beach where a vet from nearby Sea World could take a closer look.

"We decided, given his life-threatening injuries, that it would be in Nari's best interests for us to move him to the Sea World veterinary clinic and quarantine pool so that he could be operated on, given antibiotics and monitored," she says.

"We lifted him onto a stretcher and transported him by boat to Sea World, where he went into a concrete tank that's built for his type of injuries. He wasn't very happy about it, but these actions more than likely saved his life."

Over the following weeks Sue visited Nari regularly to have chats, feed him fish and check on his progress. A month and a half later he was ready to return to the wild.

"On the night we released him, hundreds of people lined up on the jetty to watch,"



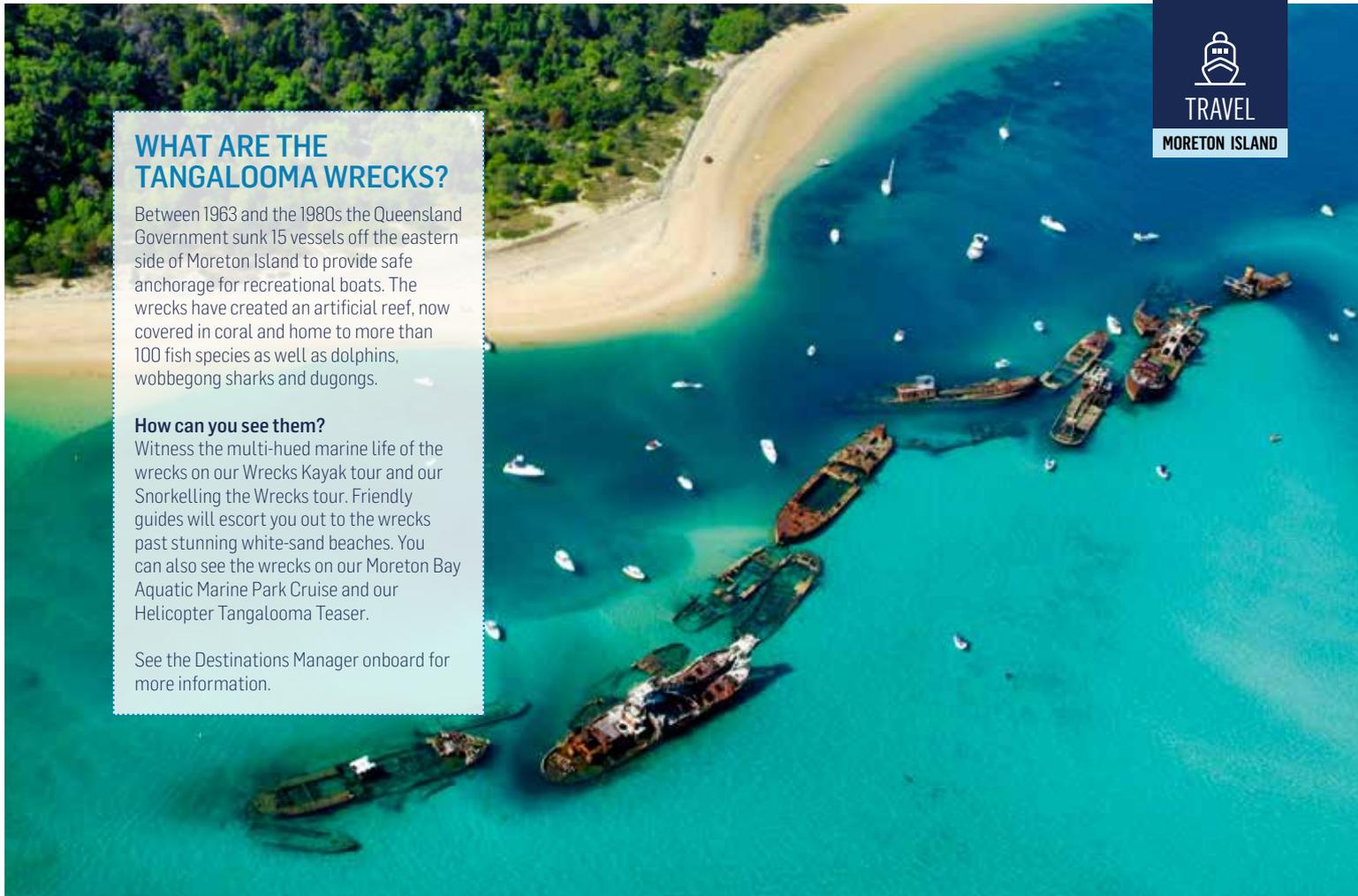
## WHAT ARE THE TANGALOOMA WRECKS?

Between 1963 and the 1980s the Queensland Government sunk 15 vessels off the eastern side of Moreton Island to provide safe anchorage for recreational boats. The wrecks have created an artificial reef, now covered in coral and home to more than 100 fish species as well as dolphins, wobbegong sharks and dugongs.

### How can you see them?

Witness the multi-hued marine life of the wrecks on our Wrecks Kayak tour and our Snorkelling the Wrecks tour. Friendly guides will escort you out to the wrecks past stunning white-sand beaches. You can also see the wrecks on our Moreton Bay Aquatic Marine Park Cruise and our Helicopter Tangalooma Teaser.

See the Destinations Manager onboard for more information.



she says. "Everyone had heard about Nari as he'd been on the news and the radio. We let him into the water and he was so relieved to be back with his family. We were ecstatic!"

### HELPING SILHOUETTE

In January 2016, the dolphin Silhouette, who'd been visiting Tangalooma for 11 years, turned up with her six-month-old calf — and three metres of fishing line hanging out of her mouth.

"When we saw her we panicked," Sue says. "We thought, 'the hook's internal and we can't perform a rescue without a vet,' and he was away."

Over the phone, the vet advised Sue to take action without him because if the line were to wrap around a pylon or anchor, Silhouette would drown.

Two major obstacles stood in the way, however. An entangled dolphin is a flight risk; and a dolphin calf separated from its

mother can die of stress. The solution? One member of Sue's team distracted the calf while the rest concentrated on Silhouette. First they cut away some of the fishing line. Then they coaxed her towards the shore.

"We brought her up onto the beach, where we dislodged the hook from her throat. When we put her back into the water, she swam straight over to her calf, calmed down immediately and started feeding. That's how you know a dolphin isn't stressed anymore, when it feeds."

### TURTLE TROUBLES

Tangalooma's rescue crew also takes care turtles and birds, including cormorants, pelicans and whistling kites. Like dolphins, these creatures often find themselves caught up in fishing gear. ▶

TANGALOOMA'S RESCUE CREW ALSO TAKES CARE OF TURTLES AND BIRDS, INCLUDING CORMORANTS, PELICANS AND WHISTLING KITES.



TRAVEL

MORETON ISLAND



## WANT EVEN MORE EXCITEMENT?



### WILD DOLPHIN FEEDING

One of Moreton Island's biggest drawcards is its unique wild dolphin feeding program. Available only on our Wild Dolphin Discovery shore tour, this is one of life's rare opportunities to get in the water and witness wild dolphins up close.



### ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES

From tobogganing down one of the world's highest sand dunes and parasailing high above the water to quad-biking along forest trails and snorkelling over the island's famous shipwrecks — if it's adventure you want you will find it here.



### CAPE MORETON CHOPPER FLIGHT

Fly along the eastern coastline to Cape Moreton

Light, Queensland's oldest lighthouse, and enjoy breathtaking views of the island, its marine species and the resort.



For turtles, ingesting plastic, especially bags, is a common problem. "The plastic forms a gas pocket in their stomach and they're unable to dive for food," says Sue. "They become emaciated and float on the surface of the water. If we find them like that we take them to the centre where they spend a night in our dedicated 'turtle tub' before going to Sea World or Australia Zoo for treatment," Sue says.

"I remember one day a few years ago someone saw a buoy moving in the bay. We went out there, picked it up and found a loggerhead turtle entangled in a crab pot. Luckily we were able to remove the rope from around his neck and get him back into the water again."

Guests at Tangalooma Island Resort can learn more about the work of the centre by joining a tour and taking part in the feeding programs. School groups around Australia can also join up with the Tangalooma Eco Marines on the web. [🔗](#)