

Journal PADI Project Aware – Dive Against Debris

I noticed when I was last at Millers Point that the rubbish blowing into the ocean has become out of hand and it made me enjoy being there less.

I realised that as a scuba diver I can take specialty courses through the PADI diving organisation and one of those specialties is Dive Against debris. They teach you how to make a difference in a location that you can adopt and look after, going into the future.

17 October

Today I started to prepare for my course. I have decided to do my presentation on cleaning Millers Point beach and ocean.

I went through the PADI material and stated to grasp what I will be learning next weekend and am rather excited about learning how I can help clean this area while gathering data for the PADI group.

23 October

I did my PADI Project Aware specialty today and learnt allot. It was not nearly as difficult as I had imagined as most of what you learn is actually just common sense I thought.

This is what they call a dry specialty, so I did not have to go in the water but had my instructor go through slides and discuss topics.

I learnt about the importance of buoyancy, being a role model, not taking shells etc, Not touching underwater life, removing waste, making more responsible food choices, how to take action, being an eco-tourist, shrinking my carbon footprint and how to give back.

6 November

We did our first beach clean-up today and I would never have expected it to be as bad as it was. In every direction the ground was littered in some form of plastic. We actually had to go to a place nearby where we could get gloves it was so bad. I can't believe how people can treat such a beautiful public area with such disrespect. Disrespect to not just its environment and the people visiting it, but the sea life too, as most of what we found would've ended up in the ocean. We cleaned for about 4 hours solid and got rid of most of it but we'll have to go back for the rest another time as the bags we brought were filled and we still had to go home to sort and log the data.

After sorting and weighing, we came to 39.9kg of waste.

14 November

We came back to clean up the rest of what we had to leave last time and unfortunately there had been some new litter, but it wasn't long before we cleaned that up too. There was much less than last time as the trash we collected on November 6th had probably been there for quite a long time and the environment being treated quite carelessly. It started to look a lot more pleasant and a beach I wouldn't come to just to clean but enjoy. While we were there a cape fur seal came up the slipway to greet us while we were taking a break and it made the day and the work we did feel a lot more worth it.

Today, after working, we could have a picnic and watch the seal catching and eating octopi in the bay. We collected 3.2kg of waste.

21 November

Just driving in we could see that everything looked 10x better than the last two times. We could see that the environment's cleanness had rubbed off on its visitors. There had been a lot less trash, and the biggest amount of trash we found was contained in a bag, making it easier for us to dispose of. It was a nice, easy visit as it only took about 45 minutes to clean, and we could get to having a picnic at the end to enjoy the view. We collected 1kg of waste.

4 December

We were planning to do a dive to attempt to clean whatever trash that had gotten into the ocean but unfortunately, due to such strong winds, we were unable to do one in time for the project. But we will still be doing one soon, as we will be adopting Miller's Point as our dive site, making it our responsibility to clean.

I really enjoyed this project and learnt a lot. It was surprisingly fun and satisfying to see the beach's transition to become a clean space in which people can actually enjoy and in which the animal life can enjoy too. I look forward to continuing to take care of Miller's Point and contributing to helping the environment and the sea life in it.