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September 2012 Field Day.

The September 2012 field day was spread far and wide with places fished from east of Esperance to locals fishing the Cervantes / Hill river area. Mixed catches resulted from these locations.

The Safari Trip. A team of four SCAC fisherpersons, Victor and Slavka Schilo, Geoff Raftis, George Holman and a friend of George's, Derry Barber, a former SCAC member, participated in the safari field day event. They headed down to Esperance, with wives accompanying some, for a week of fishing, sightseeing and exploring of potential fishing spots.

The Safari Field day fishing time was from 12 noon Wednesday 19 September to 12 noon Thursday. Fish captures and different species were a bit light on, but salmon did make an appearance. Slavka lead the charge and started catching salmon close to the 2 kg mark, and with a bag of 4 salmon she managed to give expert guidance to her husband Victor who captured 3 of the same size. Slavka also captured a great little King George whiting.

George Holman also found a school of Salmon, where this school harbored some bigger fish. George landed a good fish of 3.79 kg (gilled and gutted) or about 4.5 kg as landed. George also found a few skipper, herring, and King George Whiting.

Geoff Raftis tried some local beaches but they were devoid of salmon and most other species with only a large wrasse as a reward for his efforts.

Given this was Esperance, and based on past history, not only was attendance down, but fish captures were far less than expectations.



Slavka and salmon, heaviest 1.5 kg



Geoff Raftis and 0.97 kg wrasse



George Holman with 3.79 kg salmon

Local Field Day. This was held from midday Saturday 15 September and Sunday with the weigh-in at noon at George Holman's house. Pat McKeown and John Crompton fished Seabird. Fish were pretty scarce, the wind on Saturday afternoon was strong with some weed about. John came away empty handed, but Pat managed to capture three good tailor.

Peet Wessels), Martin Wearmouth, Shayne Wignell and his daughter Sarah, and Peter Osborne, headed to the Cervantes/Hill river area. Sandra Wessels signed on but decided to stay in Perth for a social obligation. I had a scout around Friday night at the sand point south of Jurien and Saturday morning which gave pretty lean results. Despite water looking good, Friday night I managed to hook a very small tailor on a small herring hook, and that was it.

Peet Wessels, a bit further around the point, did not get a touch. I researched Green Head Saturday morning, as previously I had caught very, very large Herring (to 0.475 kg) in the past, but not only no large herring but no herring at all. We all met at the Cervantes / Hill River car park at noon and headed to our usual haunts. Peet went to a beach south, while the rest of us headed to the mouth of the Hill River. We found it all weeded up so came back to a parking area adjacent to the track where the beach did not have very much weed.

We carried our gear down to the beach and set up our rods. By this time the wind had really strengthened. Hence fishing was hard work.

Sarah had a well balanced rod and terminal gear and started catching fish. By late afternoon she had five different species – herring, tailor, pike, whiting, and flathead. Yep, Sarah out fished her father again. Shane had some pike, skippy and a flathead.

Late afternoon the wind did drop and while ideal tailor water, only a couple came in.



Sarah and a couple of good long finned pike

However late afternoon, Martin landed a skippy, some pike and a tailor then a really good flathead of over 0.6 kg as landed. Martin had a good feed of fish which he topped up with a few more tailor the following morning, giving six tailor for the weekend.

Peet came and saw us late. His expectation of good fishing at his spot based on past experience was not met. As he had no luck he decided call it a day and returned to Perth. I got a few pike and herring, a tailor and whiting in the late afternoon. I had accommodation booked in Jurien so shortly after dark I headed back to a comfortable bed. Before sleeping I tried the spot at the sand point just south of Jurien, also went back there first thing in the morning.

I managed a couple more tailor and herring, flathead, a small wrasse, another whiting and a skippy. One of the tailor was one of my best for a while at 1.22 kg gilled and gutted which would have been 1.5+ kg as landed.



If only we could catch tailor like this (54cm) on all field days.

All in all, not one of the better field days, but we can still retain expectation of excellent catches for future field days at these locations.

Field Day Officer, Peter Osborne

Catch results and points for September Field Day

Angler	Weight	Species	Fish	Points
George Holman	11.45 kg	4	11	204.5
Peter Osborne	4.87 kg	7	18	138.7
Martin Wearmouth	4.72 kg	6	22	127.2
Slavka Schilo	4.91 kg	2	5	119.1
Victor Schilo	3.46 kg	1	3	94.6
Sarah Wignell	2.94 kg	5	12	89.4
Shane Wignell	1.23 kg	3	4	62.3
Geoff Raftis	0.97 kg	1	1	59.7
Pat McKeown	2.04 kg	1	3	50.4
John Crompton				20
Peet Wessels				20
Sandra Wessels				20
Mark Hansen				10
Wendy Hansen				10

Points include Field day and September General meeting points. Species weighed at the Perth based Field day were tailor, Australian herring, skipjack trevally, flathead, whiting (other), wrasse and long finned pike. Species caught on the Esperance Safari field day were skipjack trevally, wrasse, Australian herring, Australian salmon and King George whiting.

Sportsperson of the Year winners for September 2012

Best scale fish	George Holman	Australian Salmon	3.79 kg
Best bag of scale fish	George Holman	Mixed Bag	11.45 kg

Field day section winners for September 2012

Best scale fish	Peter Osborne	Tailor	1.22 kg
Best bag of scale fish	George Holman	Mixed Bag	11.45 kg

Field Day top scores for 2012/13

Total scores up to and including September Field day and General meeting. Competition Rules section 2.4.5 specifies only the best 11 months out of 12 will count at the end of the competition year. The winners will be announced at the Presentation of Trophies in June 2013, and adjusted scores will be published after that.

Name	Points	Rank	Name	Points	Rank	Name	Points	Rank
Peter Osborne	945.2	1	Pat McKeown	181.8	11	Shane Wignell	62.3	21
Peet Wessels	691.4	2	Martin Wearmouth	178.3	12	Geoff Raftis	59.7	22
Sandra Wessels	505	3	Theo Van Niekerk	177.6	13	Beverley Grigo	40	23
George Holman	495.7	4	John Crompton	137	14	Raymond Walker	40	24
Francis Ford	251.8	5	Francis Gaudin	115.7	15	Chris Stickells	34.5	25
Ian Taggart	242.3	6	Morgan Keet	109.5	16	Christian Wearmouth	22.2	26
Mark Hansen	230.2	7	Josh Gorringe	99	17	Thomas Wearmouth	21	27
Slavka Schilo	229.4	8	Sarah Wignell	89.4	18	Allan Jones	20	28
Greg Keet	220.5	9	Wendy Hansen	86.2	19			
Victor Schilo	188.2	10	Justin Rose	65.1	20			

Field Day sections 2012/13

Up to and including September 2012 Field Day.

1A	Best scale fish (1st six months)	Peet Wessels	Mulloway	7.8 kg	June
1B	Best scale fish (2nd six months)				
2	Most meritorious fish	To be awarded by Committee			
3	Best Shark (4.5kg min)				
4	Best Mulloway (2.0kg min)	Peet Wessels	Mulloway	7.8 kg	June
5	Best Tailor (1.0kg min)	Peter Osborne	Tailor	1.22 kg	Sep
6	Best Salmon (3kg min)	George Holman	Salmon	3.79 kg	Sep
7	Best Skipjack Trevally (0.5 kg min)	Peet Wessels	Skipjack Trevally	1.42 kg	Aug
8	Best Mackerel (2kg Min)				
9	Best scale fish (other than above)	Sandra Wessels	Yellowtail Kingfish	4.72 kg	Aug
10	Best bag of scale fish	Peter Osborne	Mixed Bag	15.04 kg	Aug
11	Best bag of Mulloway (2 fish Min)				
12	Best bag of Tailor (2 fish Min)	Theo Van Niekerk	Tailor	2.8 kg	May
13	Best fish on S/H rod 4kg b/s line (max)				
14	Best fish caught on fly rod	Francis Gaudin	Wrasse	0.54 kg	May

Esperance Safari September 2012 Experience

As soon as Slavka and I heard about the annual Esperance Safari, we booked our accommodation and looked forward to enjoying the experience. Preparation for the trip started and as usual the task of reducing the amount of “very essential” items was our major issue.

Having packed the BMW X5, complete with my custom rear carrier tray, we set off at 6am on Sunday 16 September. The drive down was uneventful and we arrived at 2pm. After booking into the motel I phoned George and we agreed to meet up with George, Derry, Geoff and wives for a cappuccino, where George expounded about the magic coastal scenery. George and Derry related of how at Bandy Creek, they saw a local park within a few metres of the water, threw in a line and within minutes pull out two 35cm plus King George Whiting. This sounded like my type of fishing. Esperance was sounding great.

We agreed to give the Tanker Jetty a try for herring. I had read that the jetty was producing a great variety and was the spot for squid, skippy and herring. We caught up with George and tried every option to catch at least one herring, but nothing. There was a strong wind blowing from the west and we were the only ones on the jetty, obviously the locals knew more than we did. At this stage I’m thinking that Esperance is overrated as a great fishing spot.

Monday morning saw us at Bandy Creek casting into the wind waiting for the big King George Whiting. After 2 hours, nothing, not even a bite. George caught a good size King George which he later released. We voted to give up and try again another day.

Monday afternoon saw us travelling west along the coast, stopping at every likely great fishing spot. This was a very educational experience, as Slavka and I finally understood what reading the beach was about.



"Roughing it" at Bandy Creek

The wind was blowing something short of gale force and we decided to try our hand at Fourth Beach. George picked out two areas which had a little reef and very large holes. We chose the easier of the two, baited up and away we went. After about an hour of throwing out good mulies, I started to reflect back on why I stopped fishing some 30 years ago "there are no fish in the ocean". No bites, even George and Derry were wondering where the fish were.

Then Slavka landed a small fish. Unsure as to what it was, she walked over to ask George. "Yellow Eye Mullet" was his reply. Slavka put the fish into a bucket and then decided that she should get some water. Taking the bucket complete with the fish, off she went. As she was trying to catch the right wave, in came an unexpected big one taking the bucket complete with the fish out of her grip. I must say I have not seen her as flustered as she tried to retrieve the bucket. Eventually the bucket was rescued but the seagull had picked up the fish and flew towards the beach. You can imagine the frustration of losing a "species fish". As luck would have it I managed to find THE FISH on the beach where the seagull had dropped it. So at least Slavka was happy.

The wind was picking up I was complaining of the cold only to be told "you should make sure that you have the right clothes on". Apart from Slavka's fish no one was having any luck and by about 8pm we decided to pack up. Having lugged all our essential gear up the hill I went back down to check on George and Derry only to be greeted with "have a look in the bucket". The bucket contained a very nice Skippy and George decided to stay on.

Tuesday. Slavka and I went back to Bandy Creek for a few hours only to finish up with the same result as the previous day – NOTHING. George suggested that we look for a good field day location. "Let's have a look east towards Cape Le Grande and see what it's like".

Off we went, following George's Nissan. Bitumen turned to gravel, then I started to get concerned when George got out and engaged the front wheel 4WD locks. The X5 is not a true 4WD. It's an all-wheel drive and I've never taken it off road so was unsure if we could follow the Nissan. George turned off to Dunn Rock and after leaving the gravel we encountered limestone tracks, sand and bottle brush bushes which all wanted to scratch the hell out of the X5. Finally we ended up at the beach and after looking at the water decided that this was not the ideal place.



Where to now?

"Alexander is only another 60 or so kilometres let's check it out" says George. So to Alexander we go. More gravel, more limestone, more sand and finally the beach. By this stage I was having a ball. The BMW was performing far better than I had ever expected so onto the beach it went. Although it was about 5.30pm we agreed to have a go. By the time we rigged up and were set to fish it was dark and trying to safely find a way through the reef was proving to be difficult. Slavka and I soon gave up but George and Derry continued on. Soon after Derry came back to the vehicles and we waited for George to return. After what seemed to be hours, we saw a light slowly coming towards us. It was George returning empty handed.

Being unsure of the way out I followed George off the beach and onto a track, then another and another. It's funny how everything looks different in the dark. Finally we found our way back to the main road and proceeded home. I was a little hesitant to have a look at the BMW but when I did I found it covered up to the windows with red mud. It was caked around the wheel arches and running board. Both sides were scratched, it looked like a 4WD. We found a 24 hour car wash and removed most of the mud before it set. At this stage I thought even if

I don't catch a fish I have had a great experience driving on tracks, sand and beach that I did not think the X5 would handle.

Wednesday: Field Day. We agreed that Fourth Beach would be the most productive area and had lines in the water by 12.30pm. Slavka fished with George and I tried a spot some 100 metres east. After about an hour I walked up to where Slavka was fishing just in time to see her land a nice size Salmon.

George had caught a Skippy and Salmon and I had not had a bite. With this Slavka started to tell me how it's done. "you have to make sure you set the hook and keep pressure on the line." Great..... I went back to MY spot and continued throwing bait out without any result. Now 4 hours have passed, my back is killing me, I'm sure that the fish gods have decided that I will be a conservationist and leave the fish for others to catch.

I finally pack up and proceed down to where Slavka and George are fishing just as George hooks on and so does Slavka. Both land big Salmon. George yells "get your line in the water" which I do and bang I'm on. Finally a fish. I land the Salmon and then another two.

In the meantime Slavka has her fourth and now playing another. Being the good wife she says "I've got my four, do you want to land this one?" No, was my reply. I was not going to accept charity from her. Slavka landed the Salmon which appeared to be the biggest one that she had caught and decided to release it. The run was over, we stayed until 8pm, packed up after making three trips up the hill. As George was going to continue, I climbed down to check on him only to find that he had landed a huge 3.5kilo Salmon.

Thursday morning we caught up with George at Bandy Creek and fished for King George Whiting. Fishing was slow and by 10.30am George ended up with two, Slavka with one and I got my usual none.

Looking back on our first safari, I can say that even though my wife caught more fish than I, we enjoyed the experience. We saw some amazing scenery, learnt a lot about reading the beach and fishing and most importantly enjoyed terrific company.



Victor and Salmon

Victor Schilo