

# Coralines

MAGAZINE OF  
THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AQUARIUM



## Being an Aquarium Member brings good luck

**A**s you read in the last issue of *Coralines*, one lucky family was about to win a holiday to the Gold Coast just for joining or renewing their membership. The Edwards family of Bluewater was that lucky family. The prize was a holiday for four, flying Ansett Australia and staying at Sea World Nara Resort. A great prize and a great dilemma when you are a family of six - somehow they worked it out. We called the Edwards family on their return only to hear that they had a 'fabulous time'. They said the staff at Sea World Nara Resort could not have been friendlier or more helpful. What a great start to being a Member.

Many students, families and individuals have joined the

Membership Program for the first time in the last few months, so to you we'd like to say 'welcome'. Please make the most of your Membership



*Farewell...Finlay tries to board the plane with the Edwards family of Bluewater as they leave for the Gold Coast.*

by taking part in the Activities Program and just popping down to see what's new. If you have young children, make the most of our weekend and school holiday programs - the kids love them.

We have introduced a few new activities in the program this time and as events arise, we will contact you directly through the post with invitations to add to your social calendar. The Members' preview of The Blue Highway - our newest exhibit - was one such occasion. Members invited guests for the 'after work on Friday' do and were treated to a tour of the exhibit by those who dreamt up, designed and built it.

Being an Aquarium so reliant on community support, Members are a vital element of the Aquarium's success. Please let us know if we can make your experience with us better, in any possible way.



# Future bright for Aquarium - GBRMPA Chair

The newly appointed Chair of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, Dr Ian McPhail, views the Aquarium as the national centre for coral reef education and the recent \$700 000 Federal Government funding to the Aquarium provides a steady base for its continued operation. Dr McPhail, who was previously Director General of Education in South Australia, was appointed to a five-year term on 20 December 1994.

He replaced retiring chairman Professor Graeme Kelleher, who has since gone on to the World Conservation Union (IUCN) based in Switzerland. "Professor Kelleher did an outstanding job and the Authority was a great organisation to come and join," Dr McPhail said, "and one of the star turns of the Authority is the Aquarium. "It is considered to be the best example of an Aquarium of its type in the world. And it's more than a zoo - it's designed to be an accurate replication of a living reef system. "People are able to come here and observe a healthy reef system."

Dr McPhail said he saw the Aquarium offering education in its broadest sense to the public. The



GBRMPA Chair, Dr. Ian McPhail

Aquarium, he said, was not here just for the education of children, but also the whole community on the wider implications of its threats to the reef and therefore other delicate ecosystems.

"The development of the Aquarium was a tremendous monument to the drive and enthusiasm of the local community," Dr McPhail said. "It received an enormous amount of support from the public and local businesses.

"Our difficulty has been in that the number of visitors expected

has not been realised because Cairns captured the tourism market. We've been given a solid funding core and are able to continue at the present scale of operation.

"Aquariums are the only way many people will experience marine life so we're looking at a number of ways of providing information outside the Aquarium.

"I see the Aquarium as a national centre for coral reef education."



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*Coralines* - July 1995

# New Kids on the Block

## Have you seen Dominator?

One of the giants of the Reef has now become the giant of the Aquarium. Dominator, the Queensland grouper, has already become an Aquarium feature after being introduced to the predator exhibit in March. Dominator (because this giant fish literally scares the scales off its tank mates) is very much a local and lived in Ross Creek near the Aquarium for many years. Our aquarists were aware of Dominator's presence in the creek for some time because of its penchant for smashing crab pots and raiding their fishing tackle. Catching Dominator on the other hand, proved to be quite a task and required some special techniques.

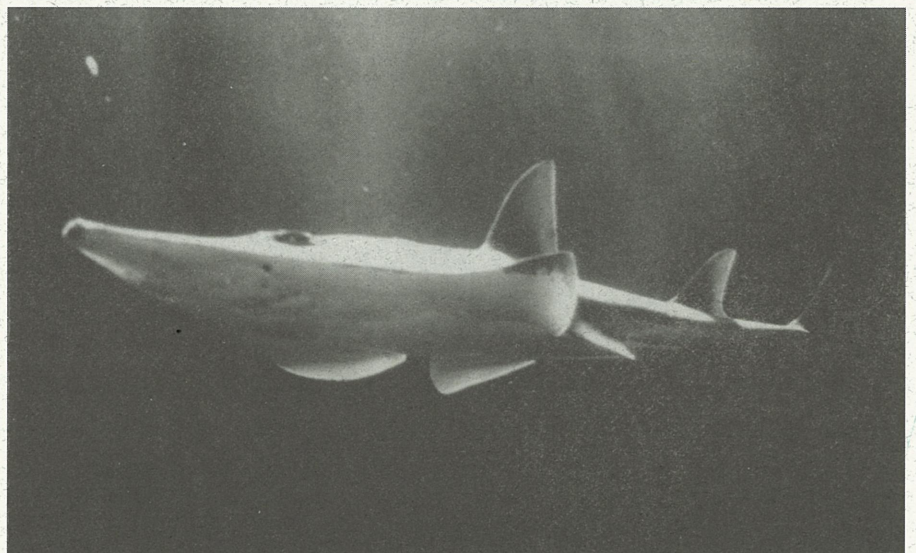


Since its inclusion, Dominator has helped the Aquarium educate visitors on the importance of large species in the reef environment and how they fit into a healthy and ecologically sustainable ecosystem.

The Queensland grouper can grow up to three metres in length and weigh a massive 400 kilograms. Dominator weighs in at approximately 150 kilograms and measures 1.8 metres in length. Fortunately this giant fish is not expected to grow much larger because it is already fully mature.

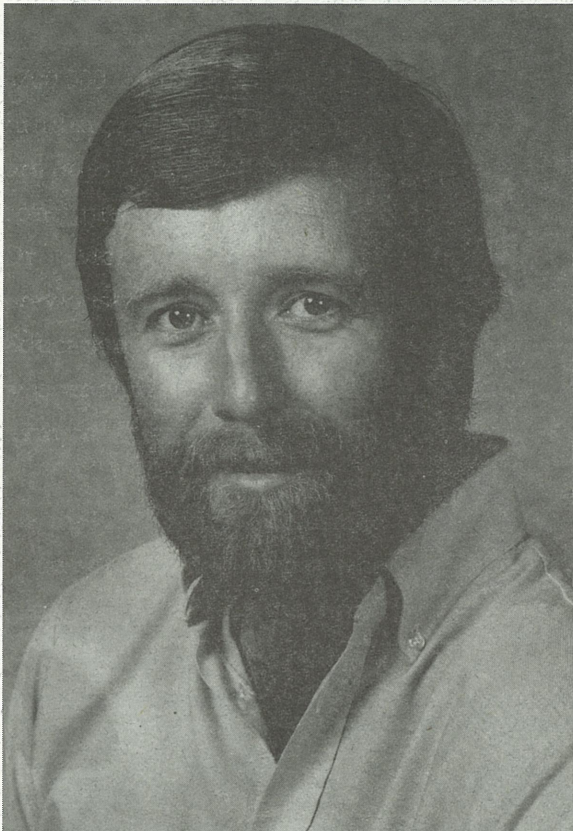
## Is it a shark or a ray?

Another recent acquisition for the predator exhibit is the appropriately named shovel-nosed ray. This beautiful specimen has the head of a ray and the body of a shark and actually belongs to the ray family. Rays and sharks are closely related - the main biological difference between the two is the location of the gills. On a shark the gills are always to the side, while on a ray they are underneath the body.



*It's all in the gills. Deciding if this unusual creature is a shark or a ray is easy when you know how.*

# MUSEUM SCHOLARSHIP FOR AQUARIUM DIRECTOR



*Aquarium Director, Martin Jones*



Aquarium Director Martin Jones has become one of a select few around the world to be offered a J. Paul Getty Trust scholarship to attend the Museum Management Institute at the University of California, Berkeley, in the United States.

The one-month course is designed to train students in the better management of museums and art galleries.

Entry to the course is very competitive and about half of those who apply are accepted. Only those with the strongest records of professional accomplishment, managerial responsibility and leadership potential are accepted.

Martin, who leaves late this month for San Francisco, said the benefits of the course were greater than simply learning how to better manage the Aquarium.

The course will also teach students how to foster strong links with the community, how to fundraise and how to make sure the government is getting value for its money.

He said because of the course, the Aquarium would be able to forge stronger links with other similar organisations and learn from their experiences.

"We're charged with looking after the world's greatest living treasure," Martin said. "That gives us a more difficult and onerous responsibility.

"This scholarship will give us a world-wide link of contacts and we will have a much wider access to expertise.

"We will be able to improve our exhibits and how we run the Aquarium. It will also give as a gauge on how we're going. Hopefully, we're equal to, if not exceeding, the standard in the rest of the world."

Martin said the Aquarium would be the only Aquarium represented at the institute this year. "The people running the course will be the best in their fields," Martin said. "A significant component of the course will also help us deal with volunteer organisations. They are an important part of all similar facilities around the world."





# ACTIVITIES

## PROGRAM

JULY - NOVEMBER 1995

### \*THEATRETTE PRESENTATION ON THE GREAT BARRIER REEF:

This show is a fantastic introduction to reef life. Take 15 minutes to acquaint yourself with the complexities of a coral reef ecosystem.

**Time:** 9.30 am, then hourly from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm

**Cost:** Free with Aquarium admission



### \*DIVER TALKBACK SHOW:

Talk to the divers while they are underwater in the Coral Reef Exhibit. Amazing stories with your questions answered from the deep.

**Time:** 10.30 am daily

**Cost:** Free with Aquarium admission



### \*DISCOVERY TOUR:

Take a tour of discovery through the Aquarium with experienced reef interpreters. Unravel the mysteries of the reef and the secrets of keeping a living reef on land.

**Time:** 10.30 am daily

**Cost:** Free with Aquarium admission



### \*TURTLE FEEDING:

Come on up to the Contact Zone and learn how these beautiful baby turtles are hatched and reared.

**Time:** 12.20 pm daily

**Cost:** Free with Aquarium admission

### \*SHARK FEEDING:

It's always an exciting time when the predators are being fed. Sharks, trevally, cod and the huge grouper vie for food. A shark talk often precedes the feed.

**Time:** Sunday, Tuesday & Thursday 3.30 pm

**Cost:** Free with Aquarium admission



### \*KIDS' CORNER:

A special place for the young and the young-at-heart and every month we have a different theme. There is no age limit to having fun.

**Time:** Saturday & Sunday 11.00 am to midday; and 2.00 pm - 3.00 pm

**Cost:** Free with Aquarium admission



### \*ANIMAL FEEDING TOUR:

Join the aquarists as they handfeed a variety of marine creatures such as the deep sea nautilus, crayfish and sea snakes. Our routine varies so please phone to check the program.

**Time:** 3.20 pm week one Tuesday & Saturday;  
3.20 pm week two Wednesday & Sunday. Call 81 8886 for confirmation of program

**Cost:** Free with Aquarium admission



*\*The Aquarium reserves the right to cancel programs or change times. To confirm daily events, please telephone the Aquarium on (077) 81 8886, Monday to Friday and (077) 81 8891, weekends only.*

## UNDERWATER DREAMERS

*An aquarium sleepout just for kids*

Kids, have you ever wanted to sleep with the sharks or curl up with a coral? Then join us and all of your favourite fishy friends for a night of arts, crafts and games. Watch day creatures go to sleep as nocturnal animals come out to play. Bring your torch and a sleeping bag and we will provide a light supper before bed.

**KIDS ONLY! NO PARENTS ALLOWED!**

|              |                   |             |      |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------|------|
| <b>Ages:</b> | 6-12 years        |             |      |
| <b>Date:</b> | Friday 25 August  |             |      |
| <b>Time:</b> | 7.00 pm - 8.00 am |             |      |
| <b>Cost:</b> | Members           | Non-members |      |
|              | 1st child         | \$24        | \$30 |
|              | 2nd child         | \$20        | \$25 |
|              | 3rd child         | \$18        | \$23 |

**Bookings close:** Friday 18 August

**Minimum:** 20

**Maximum :** 30

## BEHIND-THE-SCENES TOUR

*Free tour for members only (must be over 8)*

The Aquarium is a closed ecosystem. How do we make it work? Water quality is vitally important: learn how we control it. All those exhibits! Who builds them? The turf farm and the quarantine room are normally out-of-bounds, but not on a behind-the-scenes tour. All are welcome but only children over eight can participate and they must be with an adult.

**Date:** Sunday 6 August

**Time:** 3.00 pm- 4.00 pm

**Cost:** Free (Members only)

**Bookings close** Friday 28 July

**Minimum:** 15

**Maximum :** 20

## TAILOR-MADE NIGHT TOURS

*A great way to raise funds*

Who (or what) roams the galleries after dark? Become a biological peeping Tom and discover the unique nocturnal behaviour of some of your favourite Aquarium residents. Your chance to see the night cruisers of the reef. A great idea as a fund-raising event for your sports or social club.

**Date:** Whenever you like (as long as someone else hasn't booked us first)

**Time:** 7.30 pm - 9.30 pm

**Cost:** Contact Aquarium Office for prices

**Minimum:** 25

**Maximum:** 100

For more information and to arrange bookings please phone Lee Langley on 81 8886.

## MEET THE STARS OF OCEAN GIRL

To meet the stars of 'Ocean Girl', call us on 81 8886. This is your chance to be backstage. We'll show one of the episodes of 'Ocean Girl' in the Aquarium Theatre. There'll be popcorn and cold drinks as well. Mark your diary now. Due to top secret schedules by Westbridge Productions, we can't confirm a date yet.

**Date:** Week of 28 August, date to be confirmed

**Time:** 4.00 pm

**Cost:** Free for Members. Your friends can come too. Your Membership will allow them a 20% discount on Aquarium entry.

**Bookings:** Phone to register, quote Membership number and contact phone number

**GREAT BARRIER REEF  
AQUARIUM**



# HOT TROPICS

7, 8 AND 9 SEPTEMBER



Experience a night of magic when the Aquarium becomes the setting for the performers of Dance North and the sculptures of acclaimed artist, Robyn Gordon. This will be a stunning interpretation of reef life. Feel the magic and energy of dance against a beautifully lit coral reef aquarium. The evening will be exclusive to Aquarium Members and Friends of Dance North and numbers are strictly limited. We will send your invitation soon but do mark your calendar now - 7, 8 and 9 September .



# OCEAN GIRL RETURNS

**N**eri the ocean girl lives a life most of us can only dream of - swimming as care-free as the fish in a beautiful underwater world.

Now you can meet the stars of Channel 10's popular series 'Ocean Girl' - Neri, Jason and Brett (Mazena Godecki, David Hoflin and Jeffrey Walker) - when they come to Townsville to film the third series of this great show.

Much of the two previous series were filmed at the Great Barrier Reef Aquarium and cast and crew will be arriving later this year to do it all over again.

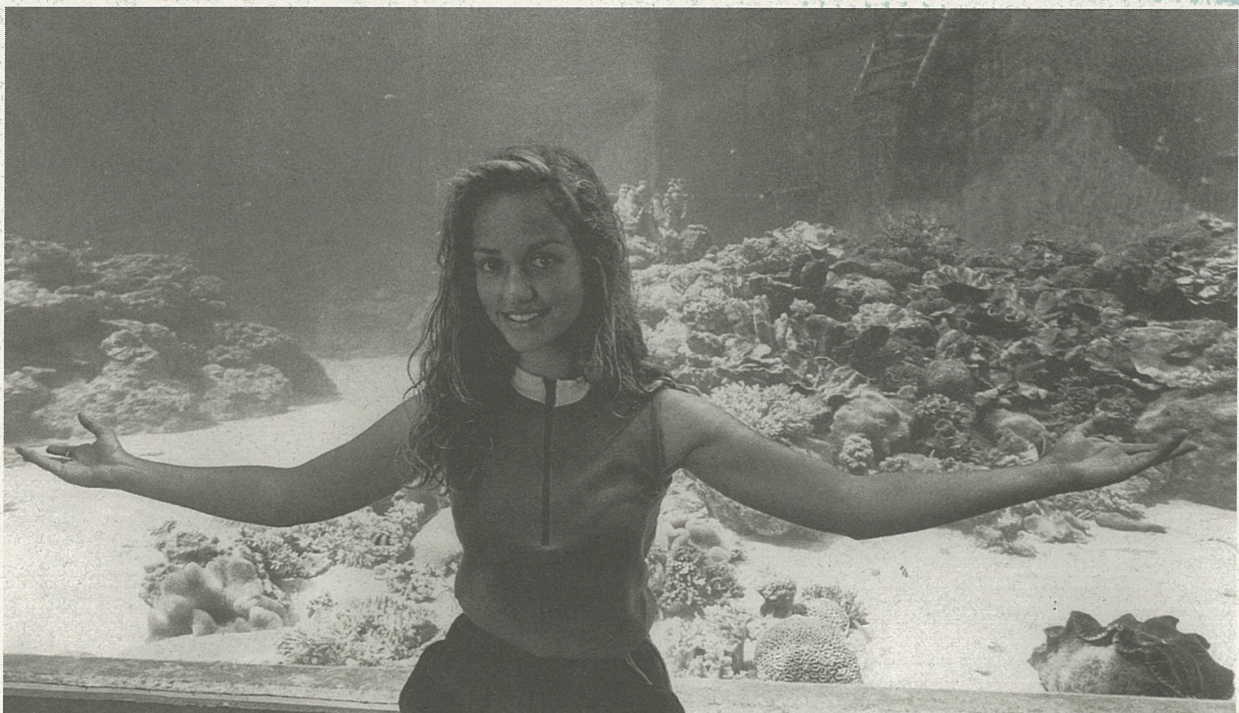
'Ocean Girl' is the story of Neri, a mysterious girl who can breathe underwater. The show has proven very popular in the 4.30 pm time slot in the past two years.

The show's producers, Westbridge Productions, were so impressed with the Aquarium on the last two occasions, they decided to come back for the third time. More than 70 cast and crew will be using the Aquarium during the shoot, mainly during the mornings so visitors are not disturbed.

Scenes are filmed in the famous underwater tunnel and in front of the massive viewing windows to give the impression Neri is living in a vast city under the sea.

Why not come and meet Neri and the other stars at the Aquarium one afternoon after school.

Film schedules are top secret at this stage and we can not confirm a date yet. If you are interested, call Tracey on 81 8886 and register. When we have a date, we'll get back to you.



*Ocean Girl star 16 year old Mazena Godecki at the Great Barrier Reef Aquarium*

*Photo courtesy of Townsville Bulletin*



# A WORLD OF DISCOVERY

Modifications to the Quicksilver Discovery Room are now complete and are already being enjoyed by both students and teachers. This area is now very much a hands-on place. Visitors build models of reefs and coral and experiment with the effects of wave action.

Have you ever wondered how fish are propelled through water? Construct a model of a fish and time it as it travels through the tank so you can measure the effects of streamlining. A model submarine helps explain the principles of buoyancy.

Water quality is one of the most important issues facing the Great Barrier Reef today. Come on up to the Discovery Room and experiment with oil spill clean-up methods or the reactions to nutrient pollution.

What happens when you dive to 50 metres? Very few people have the opportunity to dive to such depths, but we have dive masks with special colour filters which show how light changes as you dive to depths of 10, 30 or 50 metres underwater. As Members, you have access to this room as often as you like!

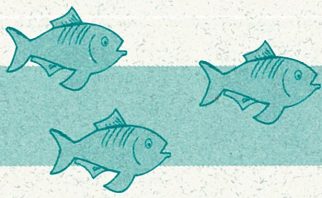


*Rose coloured glasses...teachers discover just how dark it is at 50 metres under the water.*

## Another great reason to be a Member

Magnetic Island Ferries have joined in the spirit of Aquarium Membership by offering a 20% discount on all full price tickets to Members. To receive this benefit you must show your Membership Card when you buy your ticket. The discount is for the exclusive use of Members only.

**MAGNETIC ISLAND**  
**FERRIES**



# FESTIVAL OF THE SEA

What a week it was. Non-stop activities as the Aquarium celebrated the Festival of the Sea from 26 March through to 2 April.

More than ninety Aquarium Members took advantage of a very generous offer from Pure Pleasure Cruises for a trip to Kelso Reef on board the luxury *Wavepiercer 2001* at a special member's price of \$66. Renowned underwater photographer and naturalist Neville Coleman came along and conducted a reef snorkelling trail. He also chatted to Members throughout the day about his dream job and aspects of the reef. The weather was magnificent, the reef superb and the friendly atmosphere of so many Members enjoying themselves made it a great day out.

The Festival of the Sea program had something for everyone. Our first open night to the public was a success and Members were able to attend most of the events free of charge. Neville Coleman was the guest speaker at the annual volunteer breakfast. He was extremely inspirational and

topped off one of the highlights in the volunteers' social calendar.

The major event was the Under the Sea Dinner. This was an excellent fund-raiser and it was great to have the support of so many businesses. Special thanks must go to Paula Wagner and her staff from *Dans la Cuisine* who donated their time and expertise for the preparation and serving of dinner.



*The Water Queen smiles again, plankton help save the oceans of the world during the Pop-up-Plankton show.*

The Festival of the Sea was made possible thanks to a generous sponsorship from the Townsville Travelodge. The Travelodge was one of the Aquarium's foundation sponsors and it is great to have their ongoing support.



## A whale size thankyou to the Under the Sea Dinner sponsors

### Dinner:

Dans la Cuisine  
Doug Ede's Marquee & Party Hire  
North Queensland Fruit & Vegetable Suppliers  
Carlton & United Breweries (Queensland) Ltd  
Coca-Cola  
The Crown Tavern

### Auction:

Pure Pleasure Cruises  
Reef Magic  
Parasail Magnetic  
Richard Lane  
Castaways Beachfront Resort  
Raging Thunder  
Townsville 5 Cinema Centre  
Pacific International  
Loloma Jewellers  
Tradewinds Esplanade

Major's Classics  
Cairns Hilton  
Gavin Ryan  
Matson Plaza Cairns  
North Queensland Cowboys  
Holiday Inn Cairns  
Sweethearts Adult Shop  
Cairns Colonial Club  
Townsville Suns  
Sheraton Breakwater Casino  
Townsville Bulletin

# BOOK YOUR CHRISTMAS FUNCTION NOW

Groove with the gorgonians, party with the polyps, dine with the damsels or have a few cocktails with the crinoids. Whatever your special requirements may be, we can dream up the details of the most unique event you're likely to experience.

When you have the exclusive use of the Aquarium for a breakfast meeting, a gala dinner, a wedding, Christmas drinks, a product launch, a conference registration

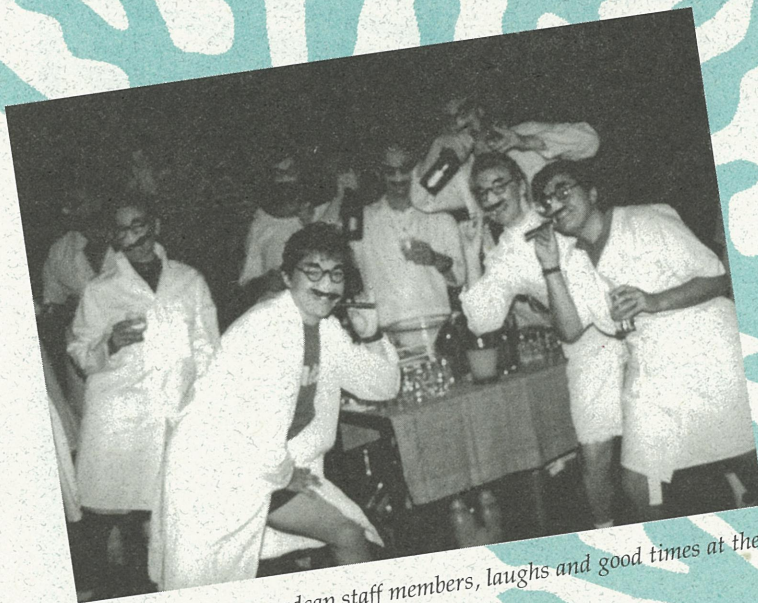
evening (the list goes on) there is no other place which will impress your guests more.

We've done this for others hundreds of times - organised the finest detail, from decor to dance floor, menu to music - and our Functions Coordinator can do it for you. Dates around Christmas are starting to fill already.

Call 81 8886 and ask Lee Langley for details.



*More tea sir? Guide supervisor Susan Hutchinson becomes a waitress for the volunteers breakfast*



*Marx Brothers, or madcap staff members, laughs and good times at the volunteers breakfast*



*Keeping up with the news, a junior member checks out the latest Aquarium events*

**GREAT BARRIER REEF  
AQUARIUM**



# HITCH A RIDE ON

# the BLUE HIGHWAY



What's the speed limit on the Blue Highway? That depends on whether you're a dugong, a turtle or a shark and they're just some of the animals you'll learn about after hitching a ride on the newest exhibit at the Aquarium.

The Blue Highway is an exhibit about life in the open waters of the Great Barrier Reef. The Reef is not one continuous mass of reefs, as you know, but a system of reefs, and in some places the reefs are widely scattered. Between the reefs and the shore is the Great Barrier Reef Lagoon which in some places is 70 metres deep. The lagoon provides a channel for ships and water movement along the mainland side of the Reef.

The area is not an empty body of water. These waters are rich in life and important for seasonal migration for animals like whales, feeding grounds for dugong and pelagic fish, thoroughfares from one reef to another for animals and plants in their planktonic or juvenile phase and breeding grounds for turtles.

So check out the roadside signs, the travel brochures and videos, and hire the sports car of your dreams. The Blue Highway is open for travel.