

## TRIP REPORT - SEA KAYAKING WEEKEND (16-18 MARCH)

Friday night saw 19 intrepid folk converge to our digs at Point Peron. This being my first event, I was hoping that all the arrangements would come off as planned. After grabbing the best bunk and stocking up the fridge, we all gathered around the table and feasted on an assortment of meats, salads, pastas and two delightful chillie con-carnes, followed by a new game called spoons... well that's another story. A proposed evening walk was shelved due to a strong sea breeze so we settled for a little "elbow bending".

As Saturday dawned the weather looked promising and while waiting for Rivergods to arrive, John Rees gave us a rundown on his brand new single sea kayak. Finally, Rivergods arrived in tow with nine double sea kayaks and for the next 45 minutes chaos prevailed, with stowing away gear, allocating life jackets etc and then lugging those heavy craft down to the beach. After a ritual blessing of the Indian Ocean we paddled off to Bird Island. Although only a short distance away, this allowed us to get the feel of our craft; even with the odd clank of paddles. Getting in close to the island we could clearly see the caves and the weathering effects of the never relenting sea on this limestone isle. A pod of dolphins swam with us for a short time as we approached the island.

With new found confidence we paddled onto Seal Island where, due to the sanctuary status, we were unable to land so we anchored in the shallows. Swimming and snorkelling followed and some brave soles swam thru' an under water channel to the "Cave of Doom". While a solitary bull seal lay metres away on his beach. Our only casualty happened when Godini and our guide Tom met while traversing to and from the underwater cave – Tom hit his head on the cave roof. Christina, the Brazillian bombshell, won the gold medal by swimming into the cave *without flippers*. Feeling refreshed, we headed south for our lunch at Penguin Island. On arrival the Rivergods crew produced a beautiful gourmet spread – plenty of cold meats, salads, drinks and fruit – all from the bulk-heads of our kayaks. While some chose to snooze, others had a guided tour of the island and visited the penguin display with it's 7 orphaned fairy penguins. The CALM guide gave an informative talk on the life of fairy penguins and showed real compassion for these lovely creatures. Finally it was time to up anchor and for a little excitement Tom, our guide, lashed five kayaks together side by side and we put up a sail. What followed was a terrific return trip with much chaos, squealing and laughter. Hitting terra firma again we felt elated but had to again trundle up the sand hills with our heavy craft. That evening there was a lot of laughs, a BBQ – Julie squealed when she found a grub in a cherry tomato – Godini ate the grub and the evening finished with a few drinks and another game of spoons.

Come Sunday following a latish breakfast, Bruce led an interesting walk around the old gun emplacements, which was followed by a swim. Later, nine of us enjoyed a lovely Italian lunch at a Rockingham café. The highlight for the afternoon for "Jammo" was while trying park the cruiser, a local yahoo called him

an old fat bastard. We all laughed had a few more drinks with our pasta and headed for home ending a very satisfying weekend.

**Alan Peters**