

## **Weybourne Diving and Camping – August 2011**

The first weekend organised for Weybourne this year was called off due to unfavourable weather conditions. This trip organised by John Cook was a second attempt and we were hoping this time it would happen. The weather held and on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> we towed Buzo up to North Norfolk. After pitching up at our campsite we went down to Weybourne beach to see if there was a buoy on the wreck of the Rosalie and to John's relief there was a blue buoy seen. This meant he didn't have to swim out to tie a marker buoy on it as he's had to do in previous years. The sea appeared calm and the water was just slightly stirred up where the waves were breaking on the shore. Diving was scheduled for Saturday and Sunday and we were good to go.

### ***Accomodation***

We had booked a pitch at Breck Farm but unfortunately the others who wanted to camp there left it a bit late and were told the site was fully booked. We couldn't believe it as the site is enormous but we subsequently found out the local council had told the owners they had to run a smaller site. It appears the camping and caravanning site next door, Kelling Heath, had complained to the council they were losing customers. David and Lesley Parkinson stayed at the B&B Maltings Hotel nearby whilst Paul and Helen Mann chose the only campsite with one vacancy left which was a nudist camp. In all the club's history that is close to the top of the list if not *the* top for the most unusual accomodation any club member has had on a dive trip. I would certainly like to know if anyone can beat that.

Actually clothes are optional there and Paul compromised by emerging from the shower and walking to his tent with the towel covering only his front. In case you're wondering no I didn't see

his bare butt but just repeating what Helen told us. The first evening the six of us who were staying at Weybourne gathered at Breck Farm for a chilli, drinks and a chat.

### ***Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> August***

#### ***Diving***

We met up with Alan and Becky Beaumont, Steven Saice, Raj Mistry , David and Paul on the beach. The signs were good for diving as the sea was calm and water was very clear. Our first dive was a drift along the chalk gullies. Underwater the viz was 8-10m which was fantastic for spotting two small cuttlefish which I pointed out to Steve. He showed me a plaice and the gullies which were covered in seaweed and sponges were home to numerous squat lobsters. I counted seven scorpion fish and there was the odd Ballan wrasse and on the seabed were common starfish with a bloody henry amongst them. Decorator crabs are always fascinating with the stuff they carry about on their shells and legs not to mention the pugilistic pose of the lobsters when cornered. I think Steve was thrilled by it. I know I was.

Our second dive was on the Rosalie wreck and no matter how many times I've visited her she still remains one of the most lovely wrecks to dive due to her shallow depth allowing for more light penetration, plentiful marine life and longer dives. We saw a small school of silver-coloured fish which could be bass. It was Steve's first time exploring her and we did the tour coming across the prop shaft and twin boilers on the way. In the good viz it wasn't difficult to pick out small critters like nudibranchs.

On the surface the divers all agreed they had enjoyed their dives to the extent three wanted to do a third dive which was on the gullies.

John ferried them out but unfortunately the drift dive took Paul, Raj and David close to a line of lobster pot buoys which upset the local fisherman. To keep the peace John had to recall the divers after 20 minutes. It is best not to upset the locals and their interests so as to maintain a good relationship, something the club strives to achieve.

### ***The BBQ***

We decided to have a BBQ at our campsite as we didn't think it would be suitable to hold it at the nudist camp. Thoughts of sausage/chipolata shapes.....

Unfortunately Raj, Steve, Alan and Becky had to return home so that left the same three couples enjoying a wonderful BBQ.

Replete after the meal we sat around with the hot charcoal keeping us warm and a big citronella candle to keep bugs away.

### ***Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> August***

There were rain clouds on the horizon and the rain fell before we could launch Buzo. It was just a passing, if heavy, shower so it wasn't long before we were ready for diving. We were down to five divers and all went out on Buzo to re-visit the chalk gullies. The viz was so good John and I sitting in Buzo could see the seabed and the divers. It was another great dive and Raj said we should call the gullies 'Squat Lobster city' as they were just everywhere.

It was a short surface interval before we were off again to see the Rosalie. A scorpion fish in camouflage rested quietly on the wreckage surrounded by deadmans fingers. Underneath some rusting plates which had half fallen off the main wreck we found bib swimming about with the odd silver-coloured fish which I couldn't identify. I was delighted to see a couple of larger

creamy/white nudibranchs apart from the usual smaller purple ones. They are difficult to identify unless you have a photo of them. I hope either David, Raj or Steve may have taken a good photo or two. It was another cracking dive. Simon and Kat Keeble agreed as they had done a shore dive to the Rosalie at about the same time. They very kindly helped us to recover Buzo and I'm grateful to Kat for carrying mine and John's weightbelts up the steep shingle beach.

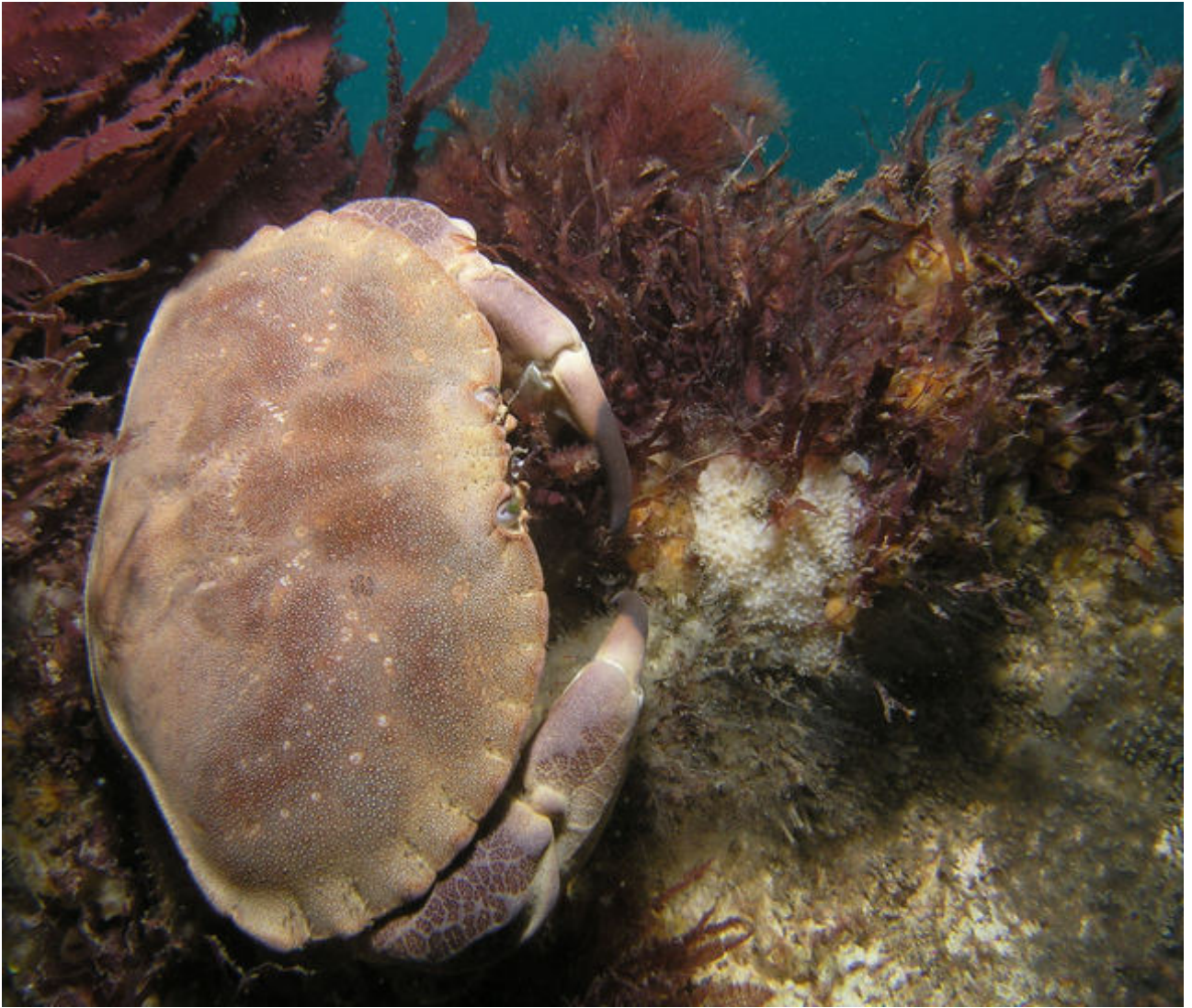
We were so fortunate with the weather and underwater viz. I would say this is North Norfolk diving at its best. If you were unable to come this year let's hope you can next year. We like to welcome more divers and their families whether members or non-members of the club to come join us at Weybourne as it's not only an enjoyable diving event but a sociable one too.

*By Frances Cook*

*Underwater photographs by David Parkinson*



*Plumose anemones on the Rosalie wreck*



*A magnificent looking edible crab – chalk gullies*



*Pugilistic pose of a lobster – chalk gullies*



*Squat lobster out in the open – chalk gullies*



*Squat lobster city – chalk gullies*



*Butterfish – chalk gullies*



*Taken from Buzo by David Parkinson – FrancEs underwater on the chalk gullies at around 8 metres depth. The underwater visibility was very good.*



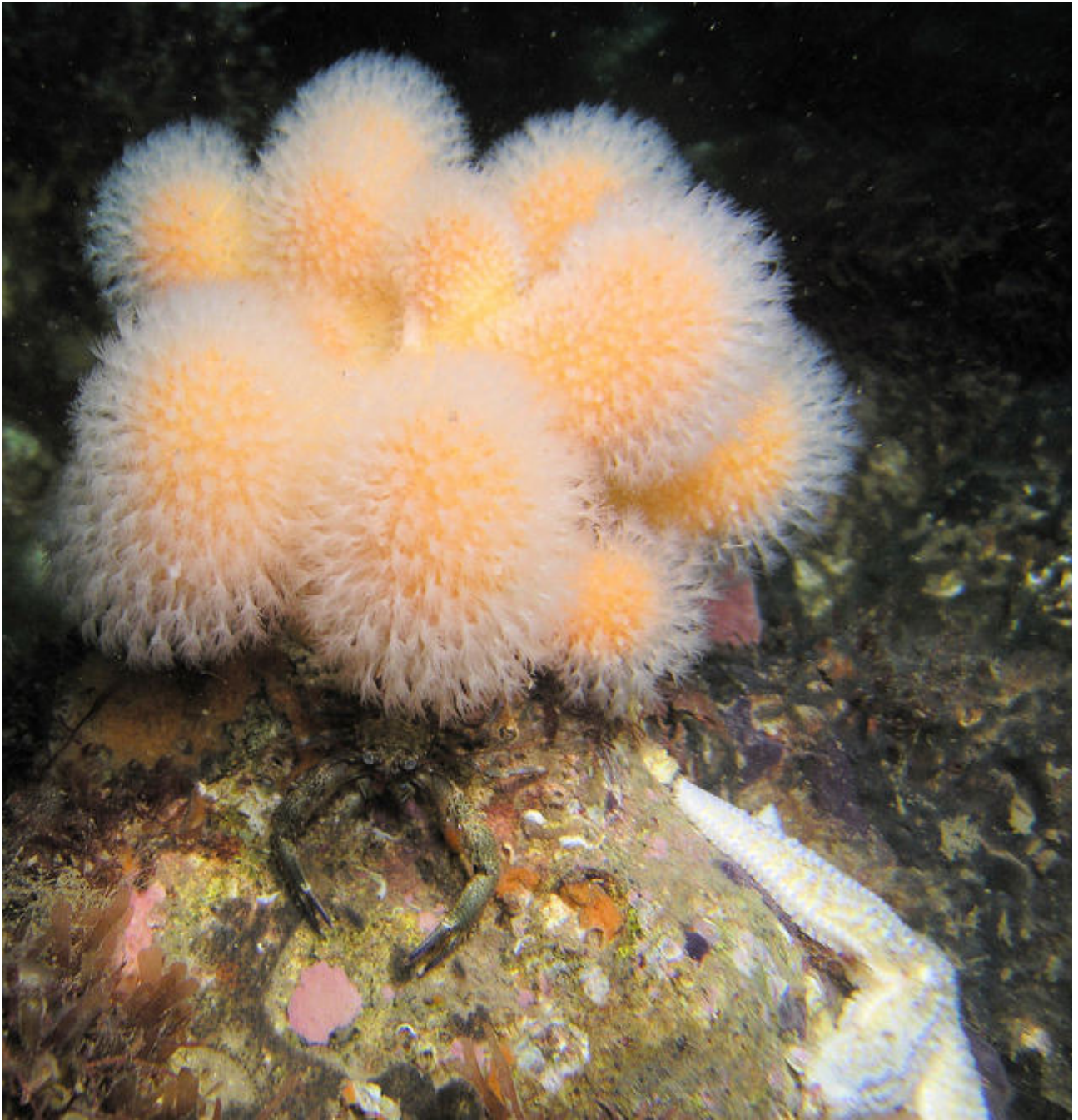
*Scorpion Fish hiding in seaweed – Rosalie wreck*



*A pretty anemone*



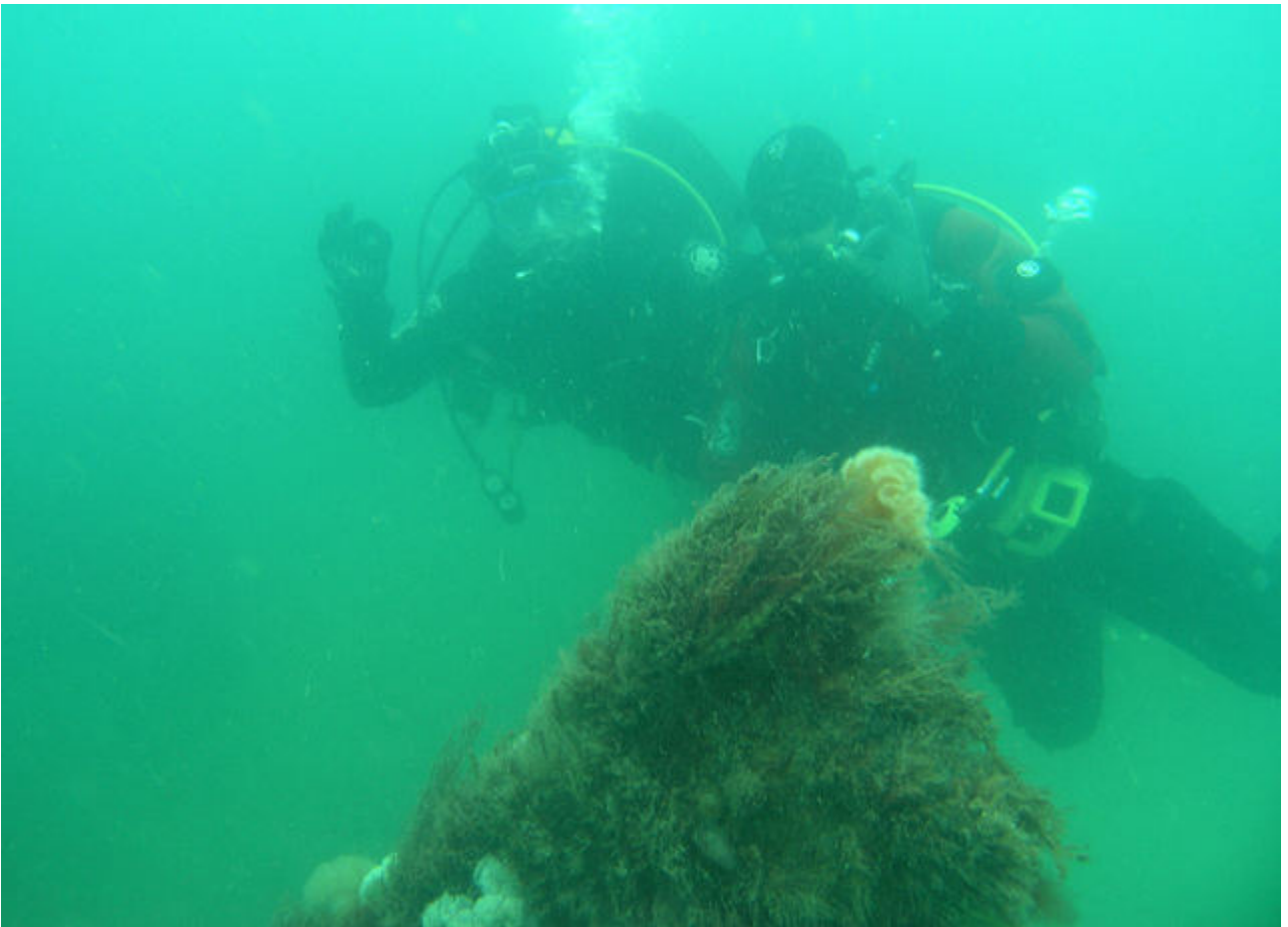
*Nudibranch on the Rosalie wreck*



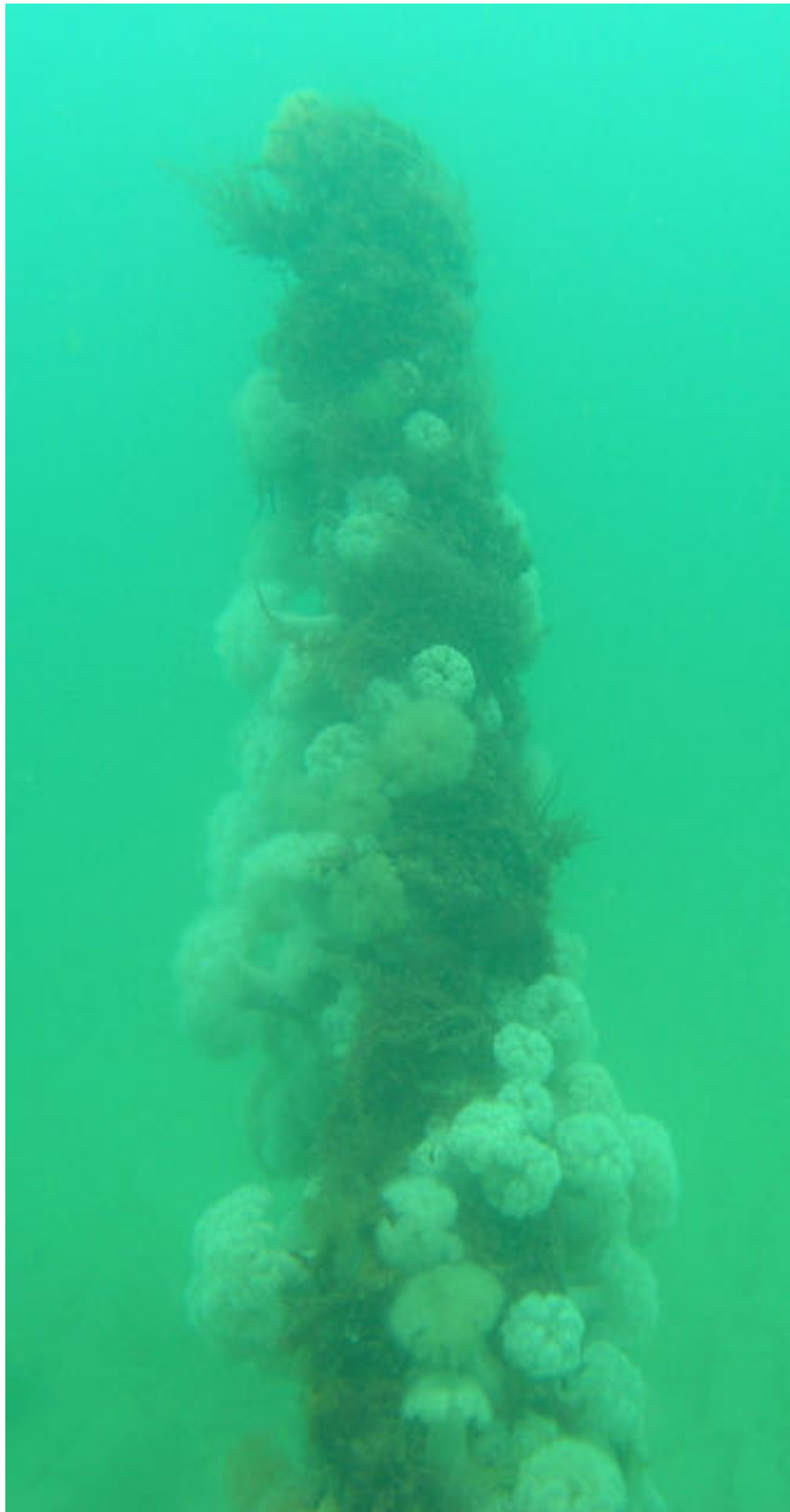
*Pom-poms of deadman's fingers above a squat lobster – chalk gullies*



*Scorpion spider crab – Rosalie wreck*



*Paul Mann and Raj Mistry on the Rosalie wreck*



*Part of the Rosalie wreck covered in plumose anemones and deadman's fingers*



*The divers – L to R  
Frances Cook, Steven Saice, Raj Mistry, Paul Mann,  
David Parkinson, Becky Beaumont and Alan Beaumont  
Buzo is in the background.  
Photo taken by John Cook*