



# BUSSELTON JETTY



A Sea of Discovery

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

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### **Winter Whales, Sharks and Storm Tours at the Busselton Jetty**

Do fish hide in a storm? Do they get scared? Do they cuddle together? Why do Whales travel in groups? Why do Sharks go into a trance? What are Sharks afraid of?

The Marine Science team at the Busselton Jetty has created a new Winter Tour in the Underwater Observatory, 8m under the ocean, featuring world class technology and last week 20 local hotels got to experience the Tour.

Jetty CEO Lisa Shreeve said the Tours will feature new augmented and virtual reality technology of Whales, Sharks and Cyclones so you think you are actually there.

“We have looked around the world at the amazing technology available in other attractions and local company INTR Studio has developed some very innovative interactive installations that will scare some people and excite others, including new marine mask social filters.”

“Our marine life is unique at the Jetty and because of the shelter and protection of the marine sanctuary 1.8km out to sea, the fish really do huddle up during storms, and they hide close to the windows which is great for visitor viewing.”

The Underwater Observatory is 1 of only 6 natural aquariums in the world and the only one open in Australia, where people are in the tank, and the marine life are in the wild watching you.

“In Winter we would normally have about 44% international tourists here, mostly from Singapore, Malaysia and China because they love the excitement of being out in a storm or seeing dark clouds come in over the ocean – lucky our Jetty train is waterproof!”

“So this Winter we have created a special tour for Aussies based on the questions our Tour Guides get asked about Whales, Sharks and Storms, plus some other marine biology fun facts, said Ms Shreeve.”

Over 300 species of marine life live under the Busselton Jetty with many creatures having anti-cancer, anti-fungal and anti-bacterial properties and currently being studied by Perth Universities working on Marine Pharmacology projects.

The Winter Tour will also feature an augmented reality experience of the new Australian Underwater Discovery Centre and Whales breaching appearing to jump out of the ocean in front of you.

Busselton Jetty Inc is the not-for-profit community group that operates the Train, Underwater Observatory and Jetty Museum with 25% of ticket sales going to ongoing maintenance and preservation of the 156-year-old longest Jetty in the southern hemisphere.



Prior to COVID, the Jetty welcomed 700,000 visitors per year, but since COVID has suffered a \$2.2m loss of revenue and only half of its visitation.

Ms Shreeve said the WA community had been a great support, as was Job Keeper, but this winter would look gloomy for staff and the Jetty if visitors stayed indoors.

“We hope by creating this new and exciting, dark and stormy, scary but safe winter tour, we will encourage people to come and experience life under the ocean and be educated but also entertained.”

To book online an Underwater Winter Whales, Sharks and Storm Tour visit [www.busseltonjetty.com.au](http://www.busseltonjetty.com.au)