

Here's to You, Steve..

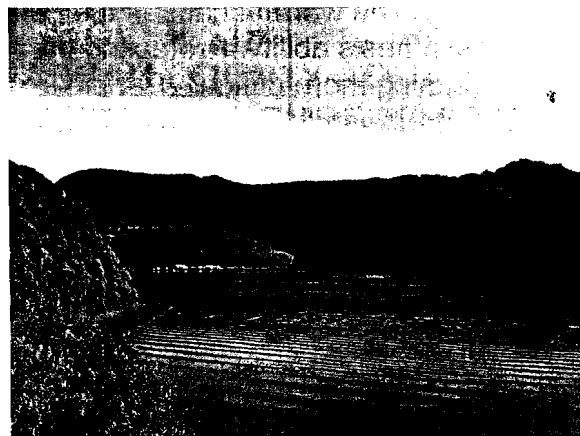
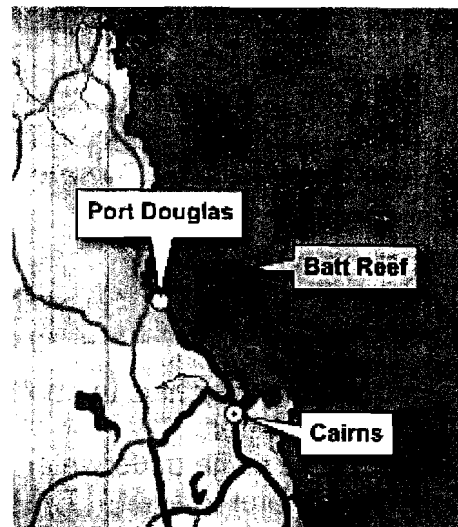
I don't think anyone has to explain who Steve Irwin was, and what he tried to do to encourage conservation and animal protection. I am surprised by those people who would ridicule him or say that he was more detrimental than the positive image he strove to represent. There have even been some who tried to say he caused his own death. Unfortunately, the freak accident was just that. First off, it is uncommon for a stingray to aggressively attack humans, and secondly, what exactly would be the odds of that barb penetrating his heart? He died doing the things he loved best. What more can anyone hope for?

Steve was diving at the Great Barrier Reef. Emily was there the week before Steve Irwin, and I just thought I would like to share some of the beauty of the area.

Emily was off the Whitsunday Islands, which is a great recreation area for Australia. They went to the zoo to see some of the local wildlife. This is about as close to seeing a platypus as they were able. They did get to see other animals such as wombats, kangaroos and wallabies. Some of the wildlife got a little closer than they would have liked. One morning as they were getting ready for breakfast, they had an unexpected visitor. But, enough of the wildlife, let's get to seeing some of the beautiful land-

scape in Australia.

They went hiking, they went out on glass bottom boats and semi-submersibles.



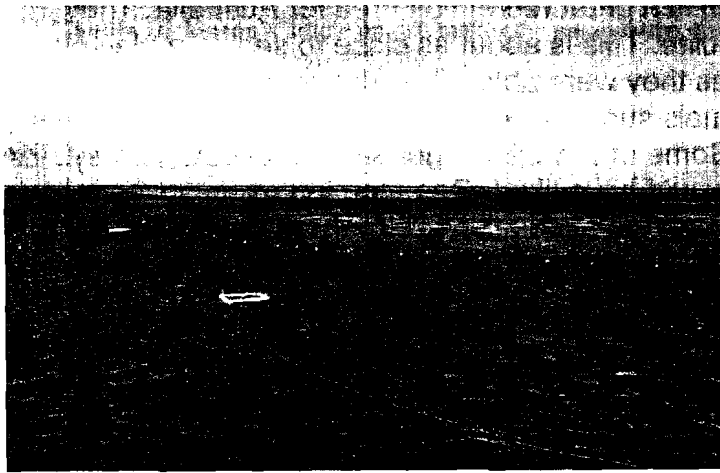


The difference in the weather from New Zealand to Australia was amazing. It is winter there right now and it doesn't get much over forty in New Zealand, but the weather was in the eighties in Australia. The Whitsunday Islands are beautiful, but seeing the photos in Black and white just can't do them justice. The boat was fantastic.



The photo on the right is the bottom level, where the boat is underwater.

They did take some underwater photos but mostly they took above water scenery. The left is the reef at low tide, and the right is a photo of the reef. The Great Barrier Reef actually is comprised of



about two thousand reefs and one reef might be home to over five hundred species of fish. 2005 proved to be the warmest year on record for the Great Barrier Reef, and many of the corals were damaged by this. The warmth causes the coral to lose its photosynthesis ability. Protecting the reef becomes increasingly more difficult. People like Steve Irwin work diligently to try and educate the entire world population of the need to protect our fragile ecosystem. Let's hope more people recognize that need!



Thanks Steve...

