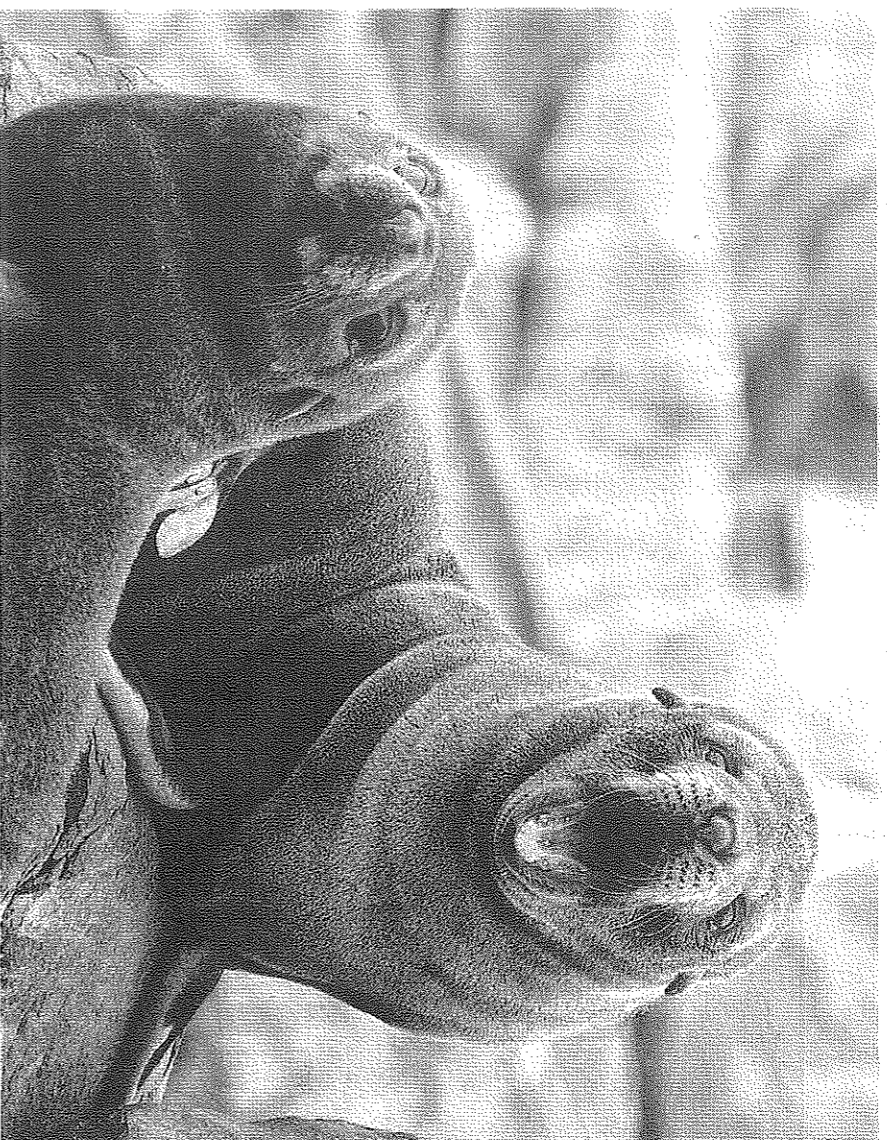


It's not a fur seal image problem but a matter of getting an abundant killer under control - Nicole Flint



BING overrun by killer seals that murder fairy penguins, bite the legs off live pelicans and the tails off fish, and terrorise humans sounds like a classic B-Grade horror movie.

If only it was a fictional tale of nature gone rogue like *Arachnophobia* or Alfred Hitchcock's classic thriller *The Birds*. Instead, it's the problem currently facing South Australian wildlife, fishermen and local communities, particularly around Kangaroo Island, the Lower Lakes and as far up river as Murray Bridge.

There are increasing reports of New Zealand fur seals tearing the legs off live pelicans that then have to be put down.

Seals have destroyed fairy penguin populations at Baudin Rocks in the South East, Granite Island near Victor Harbor, and on Kangaroo Island.

New Zealand fur seals are gnawing the tails off fish caught by fishermen, meaning they can't be sold.

They pose a threat to swimmers, kayakers and water skiers. A recent water-skiing competition was called off, and members of kayaking groups that include breast cancer sufferers, elderly and disabled people fear for their safety.

It's time something was done. According to the SA Research and Development Institute, the seal population, which currently numbers 100,000, is increasing by 5.5 per cent a year. In 1989-1990, around 5000 seal pups were born annually. Now the figures are 20,000. It's estimated they eat 400 tonnes of seafood a day.

You might wonder how the experts are reacting to the population explosion of these animals that inflict painful deaths on their fellow creatures, threaten fish and bird

stocks, jeopardise our highly regulated and world-class sustainable fishing industry, and put local communities at risk.

Their main reaction appears to be to claim that New Zealand fur seals have an image problem.

As recently reported by *The Advertiser*, several academic experts believe New Zealand fur seals need to be rebranded to improve their "public perception". It seems that they are not ferals from New Zealand, as commonly assumed, but native animals.

Congratulations South Australia, we are the proud parents of our very own home-grown killer seals.

Now that the seals have

been rebranded as "long-nosed fur seals", perhaps we can get on with dealing with the problem these animals pose that have nothing to do with country-of-origin labelling.

The problems are simple. The seals are harming wildlife and fishermen, stopping communities enjoying water activities and their numbers are out of control.

We have a responsibility to ensure that any animal reaching plague proportions is managed, either for their own welfare or that of other species.

We cull native animals so they don't starve to death. Wild cull rabbits, foxes and wild dogs because they are destructive pests.

The Member for Hammond, Adrian Pedderick, is arguing for the development of an overabundant species management plan for the long term, and a carefully controlled cull. Even Greens MLC Tammy Franks admits there's a problem, although she disagrees with a cull.

It's clear we need to act to protect our pelicans, our fairy penguins, our fishermen whose catches are being mauled and wasted, and our recreational water users like our swimmers, kayakers and water skiers.

This isn't a country-of-origin or a branding issue. It's a matter of getting an abundant killer under control.

SCOREGE:
The fur seals are out of control.

Movie message goes beyond fun romp



NATASHA STOTT DESPOJA

"**E**VOLVING from single-celled yellow organisms at the dawn of time, Minions live to serve, but find themselves working for a continual series of unsuccessful masters, from T. Rex to Napoleon. Without a master to grovel for, the Minions fall into a deep depression."

No, it is not a reference to Coalition backbench MPs, but the plot for the film *Minions*.

A fun romp, but not necessarily full of salutary life lessons. If you are after a school holiday movie that the children will enjoy, and one with a message that resonates with adults, try *Inside Out*. This computer-animated flick follows the life of 11-year-old

Riley, whose world turns upside-down when she moves to San Francisco.

We get an insight into Riley's emotions — seeing inside her mind — which are personified by the characters Joy, Sadness, Anger, Fear and Disgust. The take-home message is "you can't be happy all the time", according to my seven-year-old.

Mind you, Disgust was Cordelia's favourite character.

As lead voice actor Amy Poehler (Joy) explained: "It's OK to be sad, and it's OK to have feelings that aren't maybe the ones that you thought you were supposed to have or are what are expected of you."

The messaging is not too subtle. Once you remove Joy and Sadness from Riley's mind, the emotions left in "Headquarters" are Anger, Fear and Disgust. The movie is written and

directed by Pete Docter and is apparently based on his own childhood, which involved moving to a different country and experiencing childhood anxiety.

It is also influenced by his observation of his daughter's teenage experiences and per-

sonality changes. Increasingly, we are aware of the need to foster resilience in young people, the earlier the better. It is no coincidence that sadness is portrayed as a blue character.

The issue of resilience is something of which many organisations, such as the national depression and anxiety initiative beyondblue, are actively conscious.

beyondblue's school-based programs KidsMatter and

MindMatters are designed to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children, reduce mental health problems, and provide greater support for children, and their families, who are experiencing mental health difficulties.

Sometimes we all need a lit-

Increasingly, we are aware of the need to foster resilience in young people

tle more resilience to cope with sadness. As I put this column to bed, my dear friend Alastair Lucas died. He was my travel companion, friend, supporter, mentor and mate. A philanthropist extraordinaire, he was passionate about helping disadvantaged communities the world over. He will be missed by so many.

NATASHA STOTT DESPOJA IS A FORMER DEPUTY CHAIR OF BEYONDBLUE.

THE LAST WORD

WITH MARTY SMITH



MOUTHING OFF

(1) Fortune cookie message: "You will read this and say 'Geez! I could come up with better fortunes than that!'" (2) Old-timer: Old pyromaniacs never die, they just lose their spark. (3) Newspaper headline: "Kiss your asteroid goodbye!" - In the *New York Post* in 1998 when a meteor missed Earth. (4) In the *Twitter* sphere: "So many useless new gadgets coming out every day. Is it too much to ask for a simple set of sturdy nail clippers with reliable Wi-Fi?" - US television host and comedian Conan O'Brien. (5) I am not making this up: Dan Janssen, of Maryland, has lived on nothing but cheese pizza for the past 25 years.

INSIGHT

"My body is an outlaw - it's wanted all over town." - T-shirt message.

QUOTE, UNQUOTE

"When you are down and out something always turns up - and it is usually the noses of your friends." - US actor, director, producer and screenwriter Orson Welles.

KEEPING COUNT

7098 - Megan Rio was 7098th walker to finish the City-Bay Fun Run on September 16, 2012.

JUST A THOUGHT

Advice is what you ask for when you already know the answer and wish you didn't.

REMEMBER WHEN

Today is July 7, Chocolate Day and the 188th day of the year. There are 177 days remaining until the end of the year. On this day:

1928: The Chillicothe Baking Company in Missouri sold the first wrapped package of sliced bread in history.

1930: The family of (Sherlock Holmes creator) Sir Arthur Conan Doyle expressed the belief he would communicate with them from the spirit world, as he had promised.

1950: American country singer-songwriter Johnny Cash enlisted with the US Air Force.

1959: The stage comedy *Aurite Mame*, starring US actor Shirl Conway, opened at the Theatre Royal in Hindley St. city.

1961: The women's auxiliary of the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association held a dinner dance at the South Australian Hotel, North Teo. city.

1972: Radio station 5AD listed Toxi, by US singer-songwriter-guitarist Harry Chapin, as Adelaide's No 1 hit single.

1990: The Three Tenors - Jose Carreras, Placido Domingo and Luciano Pavarotti - performed at the Baths of Caracalla in Rome.

2002: Leyton Hewitt won the men's singles final at Wimbledon.

2009: In SA Business Journal in *The Advertiser*, law firm Finlaysons congratulated the following Adelaide staff on promotions and appointments: Amanda Seaton (Counsel - Energy), Carlee Smyth (Associate), Zoe Kelogeralis (Associate), Sam Jennings (Associate), Nicola Brice (Special Counsel), Andrew Williams (Partner), Alice Hoban (Associate), Tony Wright (Senior Associate), Andrew Dyda (Senior Associate), Cindy Ting (Special Counsel) and Lizzie Bermingham (Associate).

2014: From the front page of *The Advertiser*: "Adelaide City councillors have had about \$6000 in parking fines waived because the tickets were issued while the local representatives were on 'council business'." www.itsawithoutend.com

TODAY'S THOUGHT

But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you.

Bible for Today