

Annual toxic algae outbreak is spreading

FLIP PRIOR

A TOXIC blue-green algae dreaded by environmentalists and fishermen, known as lyngba, has made its annual arrival around the roots of mangroves fringing the sparkling, turquoise waters of Roebuck Bay in Broome.

A Broome Shire ranger reported the outbreak in December after he spotted what appeared to be a 1.5km long oil slick about 700m off popular swimming spot Town Beach.

After investigations, Broome Port Authority staff found it was

the seasonal onset of the bloom, which spreads rapidly, choking the life out of seagrass and killing a critical food source for turtles, fish and dugong.

Department of Environment and Conservation Yawuru rangers carried out a shoreline inspection after spotting thick clumps of the algae washed up on the beach near the port.

The rangers are assisting a University of WA study into the bay's hydrology and nutrients flowing into it, monitoring outbreaks during the wet season and collecting data on how they spread.

Despite the heat, they had to wear thick gloves and protective clothing to poke around in the algae, as it is highly toxic as well as unsightly and causes nasty rashes, nausea and respiratory illness if it touches the skin.

"It's pretty bad," ranger Luke Puertollano said. "It's probably the worst I've ever seen it since I've been involved in the lyngba project ... it's sort of like dark hair, like what you pull out of bathroom and kitchen drains."

The DEC has warned that the outbreak appears to be heading towards Dampier Creek.

WHAT'S ON THE HORIZON

HORIZON POWER

SAFETY

Are you ready for cyclones this season?

It's the time of year to be prepared for cyclones again. Trees and vegetation touching powerlines are one of the main causes of power interruptions. Please help us to avoid these interruptions by ensuring that you use a professional tree trimmer to trim trees on your property to at least three metres away from powerlines.



PARTNERSHIPS

2012 Horizon Power Broome Sports Awards

The Horizon Power Broome Sports Awards 2012 was a huge success. Congratulations to all of the winners including Horizon Power Sports Star of the Year - Mick Johnson.

WORKS

Broome updates

Works continue on unmetered supplies in Broome North, to facilitate the growth of Broome's newest estate. Lighting projects in Anne Street and Frederick Street are also being finalised. A major upgrade in Fallon Road Fitzroy Crossing has facilitated the new childcare facility. Pole reinforcement has been completed on poles across the salt marsh in Derby through both the site of the Bunguran Worker's Camp and the Prawns Farm.

REBATES AND SUBSIDIES

Are you eligible for a rebate?

If you hold a current concession card and/or pensioner's

