



IT'S

PARADISE

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### THE SARDINES BRING THE SIZZLE

For the next couple of days the South Coasters' and visitors' eyes will be scanning the beaches and social media to spot more sardine activity after the spectacular visit by the silvery fish on several South Coast beaches on 24 July, during the South Coast's Sardine Season.

From St Michaels on Sea to Margate, Ramsgate and Uvongo, sardines were netted by adrenaline-fuelled fishermen who scoured the waves to the delight of residents and tourists who followed them from beach to beach. Once word got around the public arrived with buckets and plastic bags to get their own catch dropped from the fishermen's nets, with some hoping to catch sardines for themselves. Others bought crates off the beach freshly filled with sardines, ready to use for bait or fry ups.

Even though there didn't seem to be the same frenzy among marine predators adding to the traditional spectacle, Cape Gannets were around to dip in for a snack or two at the beaches and pods of dolphins seemed to follow the shoal up the Coast, as spotted in Port Edward. A local businessman there reported seeing the flow of dolphins for approximately 10 minutes, with them swimming eight next to one another.

Some commercial fishermen netted up to 120 crates of fish, the same amount as caught off Scottburgh beach at the start of the sardines' appearance on the South Coast on 21 June. Even though the Sardine Run started more than a month ago, the KwaZulu-Natal Sharks Board expects the activity to continue for the next couple of days and, as a result, has lifted the shark nets on the entire South Coast from Scottburgh to Port Edward. Bathers are urged to check conditions with the lifeguards on the beaches they visit.

"Visitors are invited to book early for the chance to view this spectacular natural phenomenon up close during next year's Sardine Season, which generally coincides with the July school holidays" says Justin Mackrory, CEO of Ugu South Coast Tourism. But as Mackrory points out, the Sardine Run is a natural phenomenon and you cannot predict whether or exactly when it will turn up.



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Also known as the #GreatestShoal on Earth the Sardine Run can happen any time from May to August, when it's winter in the rest of South Africa. During this time, millions of sardines migrate from the colder Cape waters to the warmer waters of KwaZulu-Natal to breed. Forming a giant shoal up to 15km long, the Sardine Run can be seen by satellite. Predatory behavior is usually expected from whales, sharks, dolphins, Cape Gannets and game fish like mackerel and tuna.

Plenty seaside and sporting activities take place during Sardine Season to make sure the whole family enjoy the school holidays on the South Coast.

**For more information:**

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For more images on the sardines at St Michaels on Sea on 24 July (for online use), please follow us and see Ugu South Coast Tourism Facebook gallery at <https://www.facebook.com/infosouthcoast/>

**THANK YOU**

