

MARIN SCUBA CLUB NEWSLETTER

Volume 16 Number 3

March, 2009



Halfway to Catalina

We have about half the reservations we need to have the Banning House at the Isthmus of Catalina totally to ourselves for the period of October 18-21. If you'd like to join us at this Craftsman-style bed and breakfast with sweeping views from its hilltop perch above Two Harbors, make your reservations now, so we can begin firming up trip logistics.

Divers will enjoy three days of 2-tank diving on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, with extra diving in the afternoon also available. Non-divers can enjoy nature hikes, mountain bikes, ocean kayaks, snorkeling, fishing, strolling, or relaxing by the fireplace or in the Sun Room. You can even hop on a Hummer for a wild ride on the West End.

You can fly or drive down to meet the ferry to Catalina. Price is projected at \$700-\$800 per person including air fare, accommodations and breakfasts, the ferry to Catalina and diving on the West End Dive Center boat. A deposit of \$150 per person is required to make a reservation. Bring a check to the March 18 meeting or contact Nathan Cobert at ncobert@earthlink.net for more information.

Share Your Images

Program Chair Jeffrey Zankel is looking for short video or still presentations from members, to compile onto a DVD which can be used in case of a future program cancellation. If you've got a 3-5 minute snippet of videotape or still images you'd like to see included, e-mail them to Jeffrey at divedog@verizon.net, or bring them on CD or DVD to the March 18 meeting.

Abalone Oddities

by Larry Clinton

What does an ab diver do during the off-season? Well this one collects interesting news items and other tidbits about our favorite mollusk.

Rules and Regs

The Department of Fish and Game has a Q&A service to help Californians cope with some of its goofier regulations.

Here are some examples:

If you want to donate some abalone to a charity barbecue, it's okay, "as long as only a donation is requested of the patrons and not a specific charge placed on each meal... However, if

someone does not want to contribute... the host organization would need to allow the person to eat the donated sport-caught fish/game but they could still charge for everything else (side dishes, paper plates, utensils, cups and drinks, and place to sit and eat)." On the other hand, "donated fish cannot be claimed as a tax deduction because you cannot assign a value to sport-caught fish."

Here's one for Dave Buller and the other trophy ab divers. If you use an oversize gauge to select only trophy size abs, you still must carry a 7-inch gauge as well. The problem,

Don't Delay, Renew Today!

If there's a membership application and liability waiver enclosed with this newsletter, your 2009 dues are overdue. Please fill out both forms and return them with your check (\$42 for individuals, \$66 for couples at the same address). Couples should photocopy the 2-sided liability waiver and fill it out individually. As always, you must have a current completed waiver on file to participate in Club activities.

Bring your check and paperwork to the March 18 meeting, or mail them to the address on page 4. If we don't hear from you soon, we'll have to stop sending this newsletter.

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according to DFG, occurs when a diver detaches and brings an abalone to the surface, measures it with only an oversize gauge and then rejects it for being smaller than their personal target size even though the abalone may still be of the minimum legal size (7 inches or larger). This practice is considered "high-grading." According to Lt. Steve Riske, a 7-inch gauge should be in the immediate vicinity of where the diver surfaces (in hand, float tube or kayak) so that the abalone can be readily measured and if it turns out to be short, the diver can then return it to the same location where originally taken. The violation occurs when divers detach and then reject legal sized abalone because they are seeking only the oversized ones.



Five Northern California abalone divers are challenging the confiscation of their take by a Sonoma County sheriff's deputy, who cited them for trespassing on a Sea Ranch beach, then seized the abalone and gave it to firefighters. According to the Santa Rosa Press Democrat, Deputy Rich Zunino cited the men for trespassing on private land. He also noted that they had not tagged their abalone or filled out their fishing cards until they spotted him, but did not cite them for that infraction.

Sheriff's Capt. Dave Edmonds said that just because a deputy didn't issue a citation doesn't mean it was improper to confiscate the abalone: "If a person has trespassed and got ill-gotten gains as a result of the trespass, I think it would be appropriate to seize it."

Zunino reported that he "donated" the abalone to the department. "It is not an altogether uncommon practice," Edmonds said. "If abs are fresh enough to be returned to the

ocean, they will be. If not, we document them and give to nonprofits or fire departments or the Coast Guard."

An attorney for one of the divers questioned the propriety of making a gift of an item seized in connection with an alleged crime -- particularly a crime that wasn't charged.

"If the suspects are upset that they didn't get prosecuted for the ab violations, it is not too late for us to amend the criminal complaint to include those," Edmonds countered.

Pea-Brained Poachers

In November, Fish & Game wardens busted Hoa Van Phan, 45, and Ty Van Lieu, 54, for taking 66 abalone off Monterey County's Big Sur, an area completely closed to abalone harvest year round. Although they claimed they didn't understand the no take restrictions there, both men had multiple prior convictions for abalone and commercial fishing violations, according to Warden Patrick Foy.

Earlier last fall, five poachers led wardens on a high speed chase down Highway 1 in Sonoma County, while pitching abalone out the window of their vehicle. A warden recognized scuba diver Charles Lester Miller IV of Santa Rosa 20, from a recent poaching arrest, and searched the beach after Miller and a companion left, locating a hidden sack of abs. Just after midnight, Miller reappeared with four associates in two vehicles. After much evasive action, the group finally stopped to recover their stash. The warden followed them and saw an abalone ejected from the window of the vehicle as the driver sped down Highway 1. Next a heavy duffel bag was pitched from the window, then a backpack, then another backpack. When they finally stopped, the poachers were arrested. Wardens recovered 31 abalone from the roadside.

It's All About the Reefs

Brian Huse, Executive Director of the Coral Reef Association (CORAL) gave an eye-opening presentation on the state of the world's reefs at our February meeting. CORAL provides education, tools, and inspiration to help local communities become passionate environmental stewards for the reefs. They help develop managed marine protected areas and sustainable businesses to benefit both reefs and people.

Our generation holds the future of coral reefs in its hands. If we fail to act now, coral reefs and the communities and cultures that depend on them may be lost forever. If you care about coral reefs and want to make a difference, go to www.coral.org to see how you can help



"Psychedelica."

Fabulous Jumping Frogfish of Ambon Island

A funky, psychedelic fish that bounces on the ocean floor like a rubber ball has been classified as a new species, a scientific journal reported. The frogfish — which has a swirl of tan and peach zebra stripes that extend from its aqua eyes to its tail— was initially discovered by scuba diving instructors working for a tour operator a year ago in shallow waters off Ambon Island in eastern Indonesia. Its bizarre color scheme inspired the name: "Psychedelica." The fish uses water jets and an off-centered tail to bounce erratically off the ocean floor, a journal reported this month. DNA tests have confirmed that it is, indeed, a heretofore undiscovered species.

BOTTOM TIMES

Mar. 18 (Wed.): Board Meeting, 6:00, *Club Meeting*, 7:30. Clark Miller and Virginia Bria, “Reefs in a Different Light” with a special tribute to the Humpback Whales of Tonga. Call Jeffrey (415- 898-7752).

Apr. 1 (Wed.): *Newsletter deadline.* E-mail submissions to click@dipsymusic.com.

Apr. 15 (Wed.): Board Meeting, 6:00, *Club Meeting*, 7:30. James Moskito, Great White Shark Adventures, shark diving in the Farallons, Guadalupe, Cocos and Galapagos. Call Jeffrey (415- 898-7752).

April 17-18 (Fri.-Sat.): *First Annual Bay Area Dive Show*, San Jose Convention Center. For information, check www.divechronicles.com/Bay.

May 9: (Sat.): *Cypress Sea boat dive* (3 Dives), Monterey. Call Pierre at SF Reef Divers (415-285-6293).

May 16 (Wed.): Spring Potluck at Garry and Barbara Sebring’s home, San Rafael. Call Barbara (415) 499-0799.

May 20 (Wed.): Board Meeting, 6:00, *Club Meeting*, 7:30. Jennifer Stock, Cordell Bank National Marin Sanctuary. Call Jeffrey (415- 898-7752).

May 30-31 (Sat.-Sun.): *SCUBA Show and film festival*, Long Beach Convention Center. Contact 310-792-2333 or www.scubashow.com for details.

June 11-14 (Thurs.-Sun.): *Spring Dive & Dine*, Van Damme State Park, Mendocino. Call Jane (415-332-6196).

June 13: (Sat.): *Cypress Sea boat dive* (3 Dives), Monterey. Call Pierre at SF Reef Divers (415-285-6293).

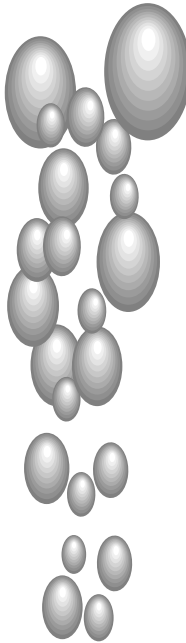
June 17 (Wed.): Board Meeting, 6:00, *Club Meeting*, 7:30. Ken Howard, From Manatees to Mantas and More. Call Jeffrey (415- 898-7752).

July 11 (Sat.): *Cypress Sea boat dive* (3 Dives), Monterey. Call Pierre at SF Reef Divers (415-285-6293).

August 9-11 (Sun.-Tues.): *Peace Liveaboard* to Southern Channel Islands. Individual berths available. Contact Pierre at sfreefdiver@comcast.net

Sept.10-13 (Thurs.-Sun.): *Abalone campout*, Van Damme State Park, Mendocino. Call Jane (415-332-6196).

Oct. 18-21 (Sun.-Wed.): *Dive Trip to Catalina Isthmus*, Banning House, Two Harbors. Call Nathan (415) 479-1777.



Marin Scuba Club
PO Box 3408
San Rafael, CA 94912



Next Meeting

Wed., Mar. 18

Program:

Clark Miller and Virginia Bria
“Reefs in a Different Light”
plus a tribute to
the Humpback Whales of Tonga

Happy Hour 6:00-7:00
Socializing: 7:00
Meeting: 7:30-9:15

Seafood Peddler,
100 Yacht Club Dr.
San Rafael
(Look for tall boat sign
off East Francisco)

MARIN SCUBA CLUB NEWSLETTER

The Club meets the
3rd Wednesday of each month
(except December)

Marin Scuba Club

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