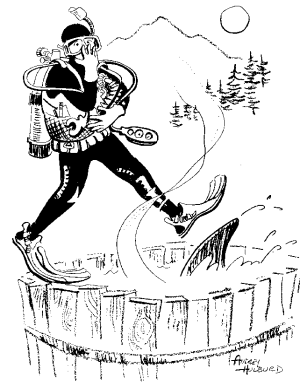


MARIN SCUBA CLUB NEWSLETTER

Volume 17 Number 8

August, 2009



Key to Abating Invasive Lionfish: "They Taste Like Chicken"

[compiled from various news sources]

Lionfish, native to the Indo-Pacific, are now showing up along the entire US East Coast from Florida through Massachusetts, east to Bermuda, south throughout the Bahamas and in Caribbean nations such as the Caymans, Turks and Caicos, Jamaica and Cuba in depths ranging from 2 to 500 feet.

First discovered off North Carolina in 2000, according to NOAA, they are believed to have been present off the east coast of Florida since the mid 1990s. Since lionfish are popular in the aquarium trade, the fish were most likely introduced to Atlantic waters by amateur aquarists no longer wishing to keep them.

The ravenous predators can reproduce at around one-year-old and can pump out approximately 30,000 eggs each month. They are relatively resistant to parasites, giving them greater advantage over native species, and they have few native predators. As divers know well, lionfish are equipped with venomous spines, which deter predators and can cause painful wounds in humans.

Operating virtually unchecked, lionfish are destroying local habitats, stripping once pristine dive sites of local marine life. Some dive centers are conducting "Lionfish Roundups" to net the invaders or kill them with pole spears.

Debby Boyce of Discovery Diving (Beaufort, NC) reports that after a recent roundup, volunteers helped collect the highly-invasive critters and then shipped quantities of the fish to chefs eager for new dishes. "When we got back to the dock," she says, "NOAA people set up an assembly line and collected the fish for research. They photographed, weighed & measured. Then we ate some . . . and the general consensus was they were sort of like trigger fish or black sea bass and yes some said they tasted like chicken." The remainder



continued on page 2

More Details on Catalina Trip

If you're going to Catalina October 18-21 (or considering signing up), here are some more details, thanks to Nathan Cobert. The ferry leaves from San Pedro at 8:00 AM and 12:30 PM. That website is www.CatalinaExpress.com. Nathan will research 10/18 flights arriving at the Long Beach airport by 11:00 AM to get to the harbor by no later than 12:00. He'll also provide information on arranging transportation from Long Beach to San Pedro.

Nathan will also coordinate room reservations at the Banning House as soon as our final rates are negotiated. If you have questions, contact him at ncobert@earthlink.net

The dive shop is West End Dive Center (formerly Two Harbors Dive and Rec Center). The contact for our trip is Hilary Boyce, and her email is hboyce@scico.com or call (310) 510-4232. The website is www.VisitTwoHarbors.com. Renting gear early is recommended as the lobster season will have started.

Abalone Campout Sept. 10-13

Join us for an informal weekend of camping and ab diving at Van Damme State Park the second weekend in September. While not an official MSC event, we've reserved four campsites (enough to accommodate eight cars) on the sunny meadow. One is reserved for Wednesday night to accommodate early birds.

The MSC will not be providing any food or drinks at this event, so plan to bring all your own supplies, as well as camping gear. Check the enclosed flyer and let Jane know if you're interested: jkclinton@comcast.net or 415-332-6196.

October Meeting Moved to 10/28

Instead of meeting on the third Wednesday, as usual, our October meeting is being postponed to the following week, 10/28. This change is due to the Catalina trip, 10/18-21.

So mark your calendar for October 28, same time (happy hour till 7:00 PM, socializing 7:00-7:30, meeting 7:30-9:15), same place (Flatiron, 2nd & B Sts., San Rafael). Our program will be presented by the Marine Mammal Center.

were boxed for shipment to chefs in Chicago and New York City. Debby Boyce told diverwire.com, "All chefs agreed the flesh was delicate with a sweet, clean flavor," similar to scorpion fish used often in Europe. The unique menu item proved popular with diners and all the chefs wanted to know when they could get more.

Lionfish meat is also becoming the new culinary craze of Bahamian delicacies, according to the website bahamaislandsinfo.com. The Bahamas Department of Fisheries has recommended that fishermen "cash in on harvesting" lionfish as a local food source.

Maybe we've found the ultimate lionfish predator after all.

More Web Viewing Highlights

by Larry Clinton

This month, I've found a collection of both video and still presentations on the Web that capture some amazing aquatic experiences:

Photographer Brian Skerry relates an up-close underwater encounter with a submarine-sized Southern Right Whale at <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2008/10/right-whales/skerry-field-notes>. For a gallery of National Geo underwater photos, go to: <http://photography.nationalgeographic.com/photography/photogalleries/underwater/>.

Watch orcas in the Arctic coordinate an attack on a seal resting on an ice floe at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3xmqbNsRSk&feature=PlayList&p=7nhsNA_PUww.

A bottlenose dolphin leapt into a woman's boat, triggering one of the strangest marine mammal rescues in recent memory at Marco Island, FL. See photos at: www.marconews.com/news/2009/aug/04/dolphin-jumps-marco-womans-boat/.

Learn how stimulus money pays fishermen to snare lost nets at: www.cnn.com/2009/US/08/03/stimulus.nets/#cnnSTCVideo.

A diver recounts a close encounter with a Humboldt squid off La Jolla shortly after an offshore earthquake: www.lajollalight.com/news/258835-diver-recounts-close-encounter-with-squid-before-earthquake.

Gordon Scores Again

Even those who would never dream of swimming with tiger sharks were entranced by Gordon Robinson's images from the Bahamas at our July meeting. Gordon also shared the beauty of the area's deep reefs, in a very professionally-produced presentation.

See the Floating Homes for Free

by Larry Clinton

The Sausalito Floating Homes Tour is Saturday, September 26. There will be over 20 houseboats on tour on 5 different docks. Nearly 200 volunteers are needed, so if you'd like to work a 2.5-hour shift and then take the self-guided tour for free, please contact Joan Sheahan at 415-332-5523 or USC1953@aol.com.

The sooner you volunteer, the better chance you'll have to choose your shift: Setup (before 11: AM), 11-1:30, 1:30-4:00 or Cleanup (4:00-?) and/or the job you'd like to do:

- Carpet Taper
- Setup (early morning)
- Docents (inside open homes)
- Ramp Monitors
- Traffic Control
- Registration
- Bus Greeters

The tour supports the Floating Homes Association, Friends of the Marin City Library, and the Family Service Agency of Marin.

If you can't volunteer, but would like to have a close-up look at the unique floating homes community, advance tickets are \$35 each, and can be purchased through www.floatinghomes.org.

Party Plans

We're going to take a break from our Hallowe'en party this October. Many thanks to Dave Benoit, who hosted this event for the past several years.

We're planning our traditional holiday potluck for Saturday evening, December 12, however we need someone to host it. The Club provides drinks and entrees, and everyone brings something to share. In previous years attendance has averaged 36, so we need a fairly roomy home. If you're interested, please contact any Board member.

Whale Watching With a Purpose

Pacific Environment is offering daylong volunteer trips to the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary. Departing from Fort Mason, you can watch for whales and participate in the Vessel Watch spot sampling research project, listen to the sounds under the ocean and help monitor shipping traffic and its effects on marine life. Upcoming trips are scheduled for August 23, September 12 & 26, and October 10 & 25. To sign up or for more details, go to: <http://pacificenvironment.org/vesselwatch>.



BOTTOM TIMES

August 19 (Wed.): Board Meeting, 6:00, *Club Meeting*, 7:30. Amos Nachoum, Big Animal Adventures. Call Jeffrey (415-898-7752).

Sept. 2 (Wed.): *Newsletter deadline.* See below.

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

Sept. 16 (Wed.): Board Meeting, 6:00, *Club Meeting*, 7:30. James Martin, Islands of the Bay. Call Jeffrey (415- 898-7752).

October 10 (Sat.): *Cypress Sea boat dive* (3 Dives), Monterey. Call Pierre at SF Reef Divers (415-285-6293).

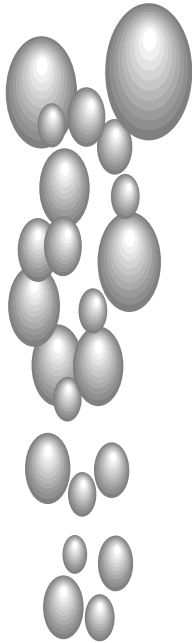
Oct. 18-21 (Sun.-Wed.): *Dive Trip to Catalina Isthmus*, Banning House, Two Harbors. See enclosed flyer. Call Nathan (415-479-1777).

Oct. 28 (Fourth Wed.): Board Meeting, 6:00, *Club Meeting*, 7:30. Marine Mammal Center. Call Jeffrey (415- 898-7752).

Nov. 14 (Sat.): *Cypress Sea boat dive* (3 Dives), Monterey. Call Pierre at SF Reef Divers (415-285-6293).

Nov. 18 (Wed.): Board Meeting, 6:00, *Club Meeting*, 7:30. Program TBA. Call Jeffrey (415- 898-7752).

Dec. 12 (Sat.): *Holiday Potluck.* Location TBA. Call Nathan (415-479-1777).



We Need Your Help!

We need articles, recipes, short notes, pictures, SCUBA funnies or whatever for future newsletters and for our website.

Website: E-mail photos with a caption and/or article and photo credits to John Brenneis (webmeister@marinscuba.org). If you do not have access to a scanner, mail photos along with captions and photo credits with a self-addressed stamped envelope if you want the photos back. Ric's address is 1 Issaquah Dock, Sausalito, CA 94965.

Newsletter: Deadline is usually the first Wednesday of the month - two weeks before the meeting.

Send materials for future articles in one of the following ways. Note that these are listed in priority order.

1. E-mail text to Larry at click@dipsymusic.com. It's best to just send the material in the body of the e-mail and not as an attachment.
2. Send a CD to the address below. MS Word - PC format is preferred, otherwise include a note as to what the format is.
3. Fax typed manuscripts to 415-339-1361.

Pictures and Graphics - E-mail JPEG files to click@dipsymusic.com or mail CDs or hard copy to Larry Clinton, 29 Gate 6-1/2, Sausalito, CA 94965.

Marin Scuba Club
78 Edward Ave.
San Rafael, CA 94903



Next Meeting

Wed., August 19

Program:
Amos Nachoum
Big Animal Adventures

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

New location:

The Flatiron, 724 B St,
San Rafael

MARIN SCUBA
CLUB
NEWSLETTER

The Club meets the
3rd Wednesday of each month
(except Oct. & December, 2009)

Marin Scuba Club
Board of Directors
www.marinscuba.org

President

Nathan Cobert *ncobert@earthlink.net* (415) 479-1777

Vice President

Patrick Ritter *patrickritter@comcast.net* (415) 381-3345

Treasurer

Barbara Sebring *gandbsebring@msn.com* (415) 499-0799

Secretary

Arlene Rudy *arudy24@aol.com* (415) 927-2672

Membership Coordinator

Alberta Brown Buller *absea711@yahoo.com* (415) 453-9556

Newsletter Editor

Larry Clinton *click@dipsymusic.com* (415) 332-6196

Activities Coordinator

Jane Clinton *jkclinton@comcast.net* (415) 332-6196

Program Coordinator

Jeffrey Zankel *divedog@verizon.net* (415) 898-7752

Webmaster

John Brenneis *webmeister@marinscuba.org* (415) 407-3161

Immediate Past President

Elliott Zalta *driftinez@comcast.net* (415) 461-6644
