

MARIN SCUBA CLUB NEWSLETTER

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Strangest Underwater Stories Of 2011

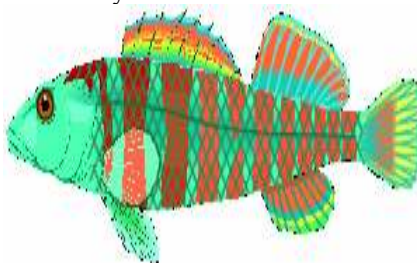
Underwatertimes.com News Service has selected last year's top 10 wildest, weirdest, and strangest stories from the underwater world. Here are quick recaps. Links to the full stories can be found at www.underwatertimes.com/news.php?article_id=37965081421.

Tiny Water Insect With 'Singing Penis' Is The Loudest Animal On Earth. Scientists from France and Scotland revealed that the tiny water boatman is the loudest animal on Earth relative to its body size. The insect makes the loud sound by rubbing its penis against its abdomen in hopes of attracting a mate.

House Burglar Kills Goldfish Because He "Didn't" Want To Leave Witnesses. A 16-year-old burglar poisoned three goldfish in a house he was robbing because he "didn't want to leave any witnesses." Police charged the boy with burglary and animal cruelty.

Precious Gems Found in Detroit Fish Tank. An old fish tank stored at a Detroit auction house was found to contain more than \$100,000 of faceted and uncut gems. The gems included two emeralds and a sapphire that could be more than 100 years old. No one knows why the gems were being stored in the tank or who might have owned them.

Naked Scientists Tries to Tame Beluga Whales in Freezing Arctic Waters. A female Russian diver shed all her clothes to dive with Beluga whales in the Arctic. When I ran a photo of this "experiment" some people insisted it was Photoshopped. See for yourself.



Free Dive Gear At Jan. 18 Meeting

Before and after our January meeting at the Flatiron, we'll be giving away miscellaneous dive gear that has been donated to the club, including men's and women's items for both cold water and tropical diving.

All gear is available AS IS. The Club makes no warranty as to condition or safety of any item. It's up to you to check it out or have it overhauled by professionals.

NO RETURNS. Take what you need or can give away. If it doesn't work out, dispose of it responsibly.

Gear will be available for inspection after 7 PM. Any remaining gear will also be available after the meeting.

Reef Life in Belize

Join us for a Jan. 18 slideshow presentation highlighting the Oceanic Society coral reef monitoring project. Naturalist Nicole Larson will discuss the biology and ecology of the second largest reef system in the world, Belize's Palancar reef. She will introduce us to the Belize reef community, and discuss next steps ocean lovers can do to help protect these critical marine habitats.

Nicole is a seasonal field biologist with the Oceanic Society, leading whale watch tours and trips to the Belize field station. She spent a winter at the Belize Field Station and looks forward to getting back to the reef soon.

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Chinese Magician Sparks Controversy with Goldfish Magic Trick. A Chinese magician was alleged to plant magnets inside of goldfish to perform a synchronized swimming trick. Fu Yangdong's magic trick was seen by hundreds of millions on a Chinese TV broadcast. trick.

Scientists Confirm One-eye Albino Cyclops Shark is Real. When pictures emerged earlier in the year of the strange one-eyed albino 'cyclops' shark landed by Mexican fisherman, speculation abounded that the shark was really a prop or the pictures had been manipulated. A Mexican biologist called the deformed shark "extremely rare."

Seals Swarm and Drown Swimming Dog. A couple walking their dog on a beach on Canada's Prince Edward Island were shocked to witness a group of seals swarm their dog after it had gone in for a swim. The seals kept the dog from coming ashore and after two hours of treading water, "Dipstick" the dog drowned.

Human Feet Wash Up Along B.C. Coast. Authorities in southwestern British Columbia are appealing to the public to help identify a severed foot that washed ashore in a lake. The foot is the ninth found in southwestern B.C. in the past four years. The latest foot is the first found in fresh water.

Philippines Authorities Sink Holy Icons To Protect Reefs. As a last ditch effort to protect coral reefs from fish bombers, local officials in northeastern Bohol decided to sink statues of the baby Jesus and Virgin Mary among the reefs. While conservation laws didn't stop the illegal fishermen, officials hope the sunken icons will deter the locals who are particularly devout.

Saudi Divers Find 'Magic' Items Underwater. Saudi divers participating in an underwater cleanup stumbled across 22 talismans and other magic items, which were promptly handed over to the religious police. The local "anti-magic committee" examined the items, found some still "active," determined they had been dumped there for "magic work," and neutralized and destroyed all the items.

The Underside of Cordell Banks

In November, Dan Howard, site superintendent for the nearby Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, took us below the surface to marvel at the incredible biodiversity of this seamount just 18 miles off Point Reyes.

Dan enthusiastically described explorations of the deeps by both manned and autonomous, pre-programmed underwater vehicles, and showed color photos and video of a recent research scuba dive. He also acknowledged some of the pioneer divers who first explored the area decades ago.



Happy Holiday Potluck

By Larry Clinton

Two dozen members and friends enjoyed another memorable free potluck at Barbara Wambach's home on December 10. We feasted on roast turkey and baked ham, supplemented by everyone's side dishes and desserts. Then we settled down to a mystery Santa session where everyone vied for the most desired gifts. Not a clunker in the bunch, as I recall.

In the photo above, Malia Dailey's ears perk up as she unveils her mystery gift.

Can't wait for this year's installment!



BOTTOM TIMES



Jan. 18 (Wed): *Club Meeting, 7:30.* First meeting of the new year. Nicole Larsen, Oceanic Society coral reef monitoring. \$3 for members, \$5 for non-members. Info at www.oceanicsociety.org.

Jan. 26, (Thurs.): *Jodi Frediani, Swimming with Humpback Whales on the Silver Bank: A Photographic Journey."* 7:00 PM at Bay Model Visitors Center. Sausalito. Free to the public. Info: www.acs-sfbay.org.

Feb. 1 (Wed.): *Newsletter deadline.* See below.

Feb. 15 (Wed.): *Club Meeting, 7:30.* Memories of Catalina by club photographers. \$3 for members, \$5 for non-members. Info at www.marincuba.org.

Mar. 8-11 (Thur.-Sun.): *San Francisco Ocean Film Festival, Pier 39.* Info at www.oceanfilmfest.org.

March 21(Wed.): *Club Meeting, 7:30.* Katie Stoyka, Reef & Rainforest, Images of Malaysia. \$3 for members, \$5 for non-members. Info at www.marincuba.org.

April 18 (Wed.): *Club Meeting, 7:30.* Videographer Mike Boom, "Around the World Underwater." \$3 for members, \$5 for non-members. Info at www.marincuba.org.

May 16 (Wed.): *Club Meeting, 7:30.* David McGuire, Sea Stewards, "Shark Sanctuaries and the State of Sharks." \$3 for members, \$5 for non-members. Info at <http://seastewards.org>.

June 7-10 (Thurs.-Sun.): *Spring Dive & Dine, Van Damme State Park.* More info to come.

We Need Your Help!

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

Website: E-mail photos with a caption and/or article and photo credits to John Lewis at vp@marincuba.org.

Newsletter: Deadline is usually the first Wednesday of the month - two weeks before each 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 or typed manuscript to the address below. MS Word - PC format is preferred, otherwise include a note as to what the format is.

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

