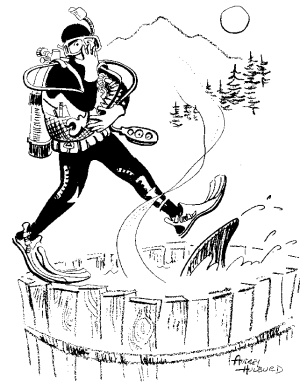


MARIN SCUBA CLUB NEWSLETTER

Volume 18 Number 1 January, 2010



Invasive Seaweed Threatens Channel Islands

A recreational scuba diver discovered an invasive species of Asian seaweed growing in the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary, according to the Ventura County Reporter. Scientists are asking for help from boaters to help halt its spread, and from other divers to continue searching for it.

Sargassum horneri grows thickly and can block out the light and take up space need by native species like giant kelp. UC Santa Barbara biologist Jack Engle says the plant had a foothold along the mainland coast, and surrounded Catalina Island, before it was discovered near Anacapa this year. "It can also reduce the flow of water in the areas near the bottom. It can increase the amount of sediment that could come in, and it basically could outcompete some of the native species," he added.

Engle says divers can help "by learning what it looks like and taking photographs and sending us GPS coordinates for sites where you find it." Boaters and fishing enthusiasts are also urged to keep the hulls of vessels clean to help prevent its spread, and to make sure it's not attached to mussels transported to the islands for use as bait.

It might be too late to stop the spread of this species since just one plant can produce up to a billion embryos, but researching its spread might help scientists prevent future plant invasions and develop plans for quick eradication.

Membership Coordinator Sought

Alberta Buller has regrettably resigned from the Board, leaving us in need of a Membership Coordinator who can help greet guests, follow up on membership renewal campaigns, and help develop new strategies to attract and retain members. Please contact any Board member listed on page 4 of this newsletter if you're willing to take over this important function.

The Board will greatly miss Alberta's energy and enthusiasm. She has done a great job of organizing the Membership function, which will smooth the way for her replacement.

Pacific Catch 22: Kosrae, Micronesia

By Gil Zeimer

Again, thanks to everyone at the Marin Scuba Club for warmly welcoming me, Katrina Adams of Kosrae Village Ecolodge and Dive Resort, plus Dianne Newton-Shaw and Barbara Irias of The Placemaking Group for my presentation in November.

Reflections on Kosrae. It's not easy to get to Kosrae. It took me two days from LA because of a stopover in Honolulu and crossing the International Date Line. But that's probably why it hasn't been discovered by the general public or hordes of underwater enthusiasts seeking the next new thing in a dive destination.



Many members of the Marin Scuba Club have traveled to the better-publicized islands of Micronesia like Yap, Chuuk and Palau, or have journeyed further to Australia's Great Barrier Reef, New Zealand's North Island, Indonesia, Thailand, or Fiji. But when I look at my screen saver shot of me underwater in Kosrae (above), it brings a smile to my face on a daily basis.

continued on page 2

A HoHoHo Holiday Party

Our annual holiday potluck was attended by some 40-odd members and guests (some odder than others, as is usually the case). Barbara Wambach opened up her beautiful Strawberry Point home, with its views of Richardson Bay, and even prepared a 24-pound turkey and other gourmet goodies for the occasion.

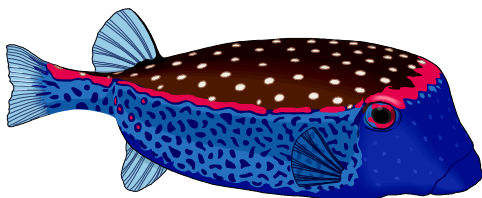
After a sumptuous buffet, we retired to the living room for a spirited gift exchange. Then we watched a presentation of images from the recent club trip to Two Harbors, Catalina. Thanks to Barbara and to everyone who made this such a special event.

Scuba Diving Safety

by Michael Mohawk

[Ed. Note: As we start the New Year, it's wise to review the basics of diving safety. This is the first in a two-part article. Next month, Michael will list the cardinal rules for safe diving]

The most common medical problems for divers are simple middle ear "squeezes." Pain is caused by the difference in pressure between the air spaces of your ears and mask and higher water pressure as you go deeper into the water. Squeezes that affect the inner ear or sinuses are less common.



Cuts, scrapes and other injuries to the arms and legs can be caused by contact with fish and other marine animals, certain species of coral and hazards such as exposed sharp metal on wrecks or fishing line.

More dangerous medical conditions include:

- **Inner ear barotrauma.** This condition may occur if you have trouble clearing (equalizing the pressure between the middle ear and the water-- sometimes called "popping your ears") during a dive. The result is severe dizziness and hearing loss.

- **Pulmonary barotrauma.** This condition is the result of improper breathing during the ascent to the surface or, occasionally, from diving with a respiratory tract infection. Symptoms include chest pain, shortness of breath and hoarseness.

- **Arterial gas embolism (AGE).** This is a type of barotrauma in which bubbles enter the blood stream and travel to the brain. Symptoms such as numbness or tingling of the skin, weakness, paralysis or loss of consciousness may occur. This is a serious diving injury.

- **Decompression sickness ("the bends").** This condition occurs during ascent and on the surface of the water. Nitrogen gas that is stored in body tissues and blood comes out of solution and forms bubbles in the blood. The bubbles can injure various body tissues and block blood vessels. The most common signs of severe decompression sickness are dysfunction of the spinal cord, brain and lungs.

Remember: If you should develop any of the symptoms on this list during or after a dive, seek medical care immediately.

Fortunately, serious medical problems are not common in recreational scuba divers. While there are millions of dives each year in the United States, only about 90 deaths are reported each year worldwide. In addition, fewer than 1,000 divers worldwide require recompression therapy to treat severe dive-related health problems.

Kosrae

continued on page 2

Better Diving Than The GBR. Though I was only on the island for five days and enjoyed only two days of diving among its 60 moored sites, it topped my trip to the GBR 17 years ago. By comparing my photos of that trip to this excursion to Kosrae's pristine reefs, I can say that I spotted more varieties of tropical fish — like parrotfish, angel fish, saddle wrasses, pearl wrasses, spotted trunkfish, butterfly fish, Moorish idols, and Clark's anemonefish — plus dozens of corals I'd never seen before, than I'd experienced in two decades of diving in the tropics.

The highlights of this trip were, in no specific order, uncommonly warm water — 87 degrees F, warm but not humid weather (also 87), the feeling of empowerment at being the only diver on the boat over several days, the only guest at the resort, the only person walking the resort's grounds, the only one in the pool, and the only person eating at the dining room at most meals.

Unplugging From Life And Enjoying It. Though both the Kosrae Village Ecolodge and the Kosrae Nautilus Resort offer Wi-Fi, I'm thrilled that I didn't bring my laptop and that my BlackBerry didn't work down there. We're all so tethered to our clients and projects that unplugging for five days paid me handsome rewards of tranquility, calm, and peace of mind.

When I wasn't diving, I was warmly entertained by the friendly Kosraeans. I hiked through dense rainforests. I trekked through cooling waterfalls. I took a canoe trip through Utwe-Walung Marine Park to view the mangrove forest. I strolled through the Aquaculture Giant Clam Farm to view giant indigenous blue clams. And I attended Sunday church services — something everyone should experience.

For more information, visit: <http://www.kosrae.fm/> or <http://www.zeimer.com/blog/kosrae>.

[Ed.: many thanks to Gil and the ladies from Kosrae who participated in his presentation.]

Irish Dive Joke

submitted by Spike O'Flertzheim

So Paddy asks Murphy: "Why do Scuba divers always fall backwards off their boats?"

To which Murphy replies: "You thick idiot - If they fell forwards they'd still be in the freakin' boat!"

Door Charge for Meetings

We appreciate the cooperation of everyone who chips in at our meetings to help towards the cost of renting the upstairs room at the Flatiron. However, because we are not collecting anywhere near what the restaurant is charging us, we're forced to make an adjustment, starting with the January meeting. The door charge is now \$3 for members and \$5 for non-members. Another good reason to join the Club!

BOTTOM TIMES

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

Jan. 20 (Wed.): Board Meeting, 6:00, *Club Meeting*, 7:30. John Lewis' images from Baja and Ric Miller: California Diving. Call Jeffrey (415- 898-7752).

Feb. 3 (Wed.): *Newsletter deadline*. See below.

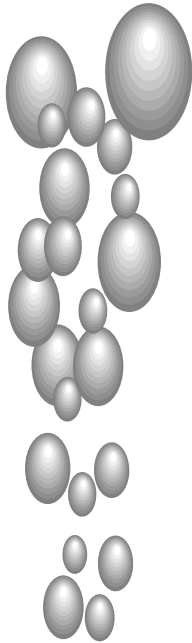
Feb. 3-7 (Wed.-Sun): *San Francisco Ocean Film Festival*. For details, go to www.oceanfilmfest.org.

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

Feb. 17 (Wed.): Board Meeting, 6:00, *Club Meeting*, 7:30. Program TBA. Call Jeffrey (415- 898-7752).

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

Mar. 17 (Wed.): Board Meeting, 6:00, *Club Meeting*, 7:30. St. Patrick's Day. Program TBA. Call Jeffrey (415- 898-7752).



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., January 20

Program:

John Lewis: Images from Baja
Ric Miller: California Diving

Happy Hour 6:00-7:00

Socializing: 7:00

Meeting: 7:30-9:15

**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) 927-1450

Membership Coordinator

Vacant

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
