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LET ME MAKE THIS PERFECTLY CLEAR...I THINK!

HOW DOES IT WORK? Where does it come from? Why do the OC Register, LA Times, Laguna Sea Sports and local BBS contributors get the local dive visibility all different? I still am waiting for two of the answers from Surf line and WEATHERCENTRAL.com who now do the work for the Times and Register. Since my article is late I will go with what I found out and my best bet which was a call to Gordon Boivin at Laguna Sea Sports this afternoon. So let's find out why I thought of this to begin with....

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

BY *Konrad Fry*



Today is Monday February 6, 2006. Here are the various dive reports:

Los Angeles Times:	Wave Height 3'-5',	Laguna Beach Vis: 8 – 10 feet	Fair
Orange County Register:	Wave Height 2-5	Laguna Beach Vis 15 -20 feet	Good
Laguna Sea Sports	Wave Height 1'	Laguna Beach Vis 20 feet	Great
Laguna Bch. Lifeguard	Wave Height 2 – 4'	Laguna Beach Vis 10 – 15	Green

What the heck is-a-going on here? We have a 12 foot difference in the visibility and a 3 foot variance in wave heights. How does this affect your decision to dive? I had to find out. I called the Los Angeles Times and spoke with Mark Phillip in the newsroom about the Times source of dive information for South Orange County. Mark was very nice and it turns out the innovator of publishing a dive report in the Times. He was certified 20 years ago and had a bad class where 2/3rd's of the students were kicked out by his by the book dive instructor. Mark asked his instructor how he could get better dive information and the instructor turned him on to the lifeguard reports from the various dive locations in Avalon, Malibu, Laguna Beach and La Jolla. Mark would call them directly the day before and the answers became the Los Angeles Times dive report. He called Scuba Luv on Catalina for their report. This has changed now and Mark is researching where their new weather syndicator (Weathercentral from the University of Wisconsin, yes Wisconsin) gets their data.

The Orange County Register's Gary Robbins told me that their information comes from Surf Line.com and he does not know where they get it. I have an email into the CEO of Surf Line and will let everyone know the answer I get for them and weathercentral.com.

So in order to get the real scoop, I decided to call Gord and find out the Laguna Sea Sports version of why things are soooooooo off base. Gordie said that the Laguna Beach Lifeguard is more interested in surfing so they paddle out on their boards and look down to see the bottom. Where the bottom disappears is the day's visibility. This must be Main Beach where the life guard HQ is located. Gordie said that they only list 15 feet because that is as far as they can see sitting on a surfboard. Also, they list the wave height where they do the report. The waves are different all over

Laguna, so they will vary in height from north to south depending on the swell direction. The bottom line is that the lifeguard is a fair gauge leaning pessimistically.

OK, we want the most accurate dive report close to the time we dive so there are no surprises. Gordie thinks that Surf Line and WeatherCentral use buoy models to predict the surf and visibility information. He has a better way. Laguna Sea Sports uses three methods for determining visibility and surf:

1. Gordie goes diving 1st thing in the morning and updates the website and phone report.
2. Some other diver comes in the store and updates the conditions (several times a day).
3. Gordie goes to the CRACK @ Shaws and looks down.

This seems to be the best information! It is real, day of dive, and accurate. If the website or phone message date do not change, that means the conditions have not changed, so don't discount the information.

I kind of felt this was that case. That is why I list Laguna Sea Sports Website first on my Marine / Surf / Diving Conditions page in <http://socdc.brinkster.net/Ocean.html> Use the other sources as a guide, but trust LSS for making it down to the beach. And when you do, tell Gordie thanks for getting the best dive report in Orange County.

Wait.... a response from the LA Times as I am typing this:

Mark, Here are the sources.....
Malibu LA County Life Guard
Laguna Beach Laguna Beach Marine Safety
La Hoya Cove San Diego Lifeguard Services
Catalina SCUBA-LUV Dive Shop
Ron Schwarz Operations Manager
Weather Central, Inc. 5725 Tokay Blvd. Madison, Wi. 53719

Looks like the Wisconsin folks have not been to La Jolla (Hence, La Hoya!). But it is the lifeguard information from the day before.

-Konrad Fry

February Activities

Wednesday, February 8th. Dive the USS Arizona with our speaker, Patrick Smith

Saturday, February 11th. Temecula Wine Crawl

Sat/Sun February 11th-12th Diver Weekend at Aquarium of the Pacific (Free with C-Card!)

Fri/Sat/Sun February 24/25/26 Avalon Harbor Cleanup

Dive Saturdays @ 11 AM with Konrad email konradfry@earthlink.net to get on the email list of where to go. Different site every week.

Upcoming Events

Friday – Sunday, February 24-26th Avalon Harbor Cleanup Weekend. All SOCDC members are welcome to come by on Saturday afternoon for our condo get-together after the cleanup dive. Please contact Bill Thornton for more details: h2othornton@yahoo.com

Wednesday, May 3rd Chamber Day

August 3rd - 12th Fiji @ Beqa Resort The new lower price is only \$2,400!

Fiji Trip, August 3rd-12th



Beqa Lagoon Resort in Fiji

NEW LOWER PRICES!

Trip includes:

- Round trip airfare LAX – Fiji
- Transfers to/from Beqa Lagoon Resort
- Accommodations (2 people per bure)
- 5 days of 2 tank boat dives
- Unlimited shore diving
- Ocean kayaks for use
- Three gourmet meals daily

\$2276 – diver plus \$124 airline fuel surcharge (total of \$2400)

\$2076 – non-diver plus \$124 airline fuel surcharge (total of \$2200)

Now accepting \$500 deposit (\$250 non-refundable)

Contact: Scott Raish at salr@cox.net for further information



SCUBA SCUTTLEBUTT:

Love in the Sea

By Debbie Karimoto

C RITTER CORNER: Reproduction in the Sea

Since February is a month for romance I want to feature some unique characteristics to a pairing a few of us observed on a recent dive trip.

In mid-January, fellow SOCDC members Dale Davis, Rick Colman, Kevin Lee and I ventured up to Santa Barbara to board the CONCEPTION for a trip to the Northern Channel Islands. After an evening sampling a few of the local breweries and a jazz club (ask Rick about habaneras beer!) we popped in our ear plugs and attempted to sleep aboard the spacious and immaculately clean but noisy boat.

We'd hoped to make it to San Miguel and Santa Rosa Islands but finally ended up at Santa Cruz instead. The captain spent quite some time looking for a safe harbor for our first dive. Happily, it was a great choice! We all found wonderful photo subjects and it began a great day of diving.

Kevin Lee spotted some noble dorid nudibranchs (*Peltdoris nobilis*) near the end of the last Santa Cruz dive and I was able to get one decent photo of them. We began to wonder if they may be an example of "protandry" in nudibranchs, when one in the mating pair is much less mature than the

other. A form of pedophilia, you ask?? Well, possibly! Let me first explain protandry as it is used in nudibranch behavior and then we'll speculate.

I found more detailed info in my "Nudibranch Behavior" book by Dave Behrens but the following by Bill Rudman is online and gives a good intro: "...many opisthobranch exhibit what we call protandry, a developmental process in which the male reproductive system in these hermaphrodite animals develops much more quickly than the female system. We assume that in matings such as this, the sperm being passed to the smaller partner will be stored in a sperm sac until the animal's female system matures. This is a useful adaptation for animals which meet only by chance."

<http://www.seaslugforum.net/showall.cfm?base=hypsbull3>



According to Dave Behrens, it is not thought by opisthobranch experts that dorids – a suborder of nudibranchs - practice protandry so I suppose we can assume that

the examples I show here are more akin to pedophilia. Yikes! He also once said that dorids mate in a way that may bring a grin to your face. They place themselves next to each other in a "69" position so that the reproductive organs on their sides can meet. Another important element to observe: all nudibranch genitalia are on the right side of each organism. There's so much to consider!



Kevin Lee's image of Indo-Pacific nudibranchs mating (*Berthella martensi*) could be an example of protandry.

Here is another example of nudibranch romance. Love is not only in the air but in the seawater as well! You can see the pair of Hopkin's rose nudibranchs (*Okenia rosacea*) and the coil of eggs that is laid on the bryozoan patch on which Hopkin's rose 'branches feed.



Konrad thought I was going to tell you about another aspect of nudibranch reproduction. Let's just say that nudibranchs often find themselves in very surgy conditions which make it difficult to "hang on" during mating; therefore, some species have specialized physiology that involve "spikes" but no whips or chains as far as I know!

SCUBA SCUTTLEBUTT:

Don't forget that THIS WEEKEND, both February 11th and 12th, is the Aquarium of the Pacific Diver Weekend! You can get detailed info at:

http://www.aquariumofpacific.org/NEWS_EVENTS/02_06/diversweekend.htm.

This is always such a great social event as well as a cool way to learn more about our local marine species and so many other aspects of diving. The special presentations in the auditorium are a real treat and included in the price of admission (FREE!)

Debbie Karimoto

<http://OCdiving.com>

This Month's Speaker

The topic for the evening will be the **USS Arizona**, and the UW survey work Patrick Smith participated in with the National Park Service on the Arizona this last June.



Background on Patrick B. Smith

- California native
- Certified diver since 1961
- NAUI instructor since 1979
- Commercial diver
- BA in History, UCLA
- MA in Public History / Historic Preservation, California State College, Dominguez Hills
- Co-author of Shipwrecks of Southern California, Menasha Ridge Press, 1990
- Published papers with the Society for Historical Archaeology and the Society for California Archaeology
- Board of directors, Los Angeles Maritime Museum Research Society
- Board of directors, Coastal Maritime Archaeology Resources-CMAR
- Articles in such publications as California Diving News, Skin Diver Magazine, Pacific Diver, Underwater USA, Los Angeles Times Magazine, Sub Aqua Journal
- Consultant to NOAA, US Army Corps of Engineers, National Park Service, and the State of California.
- Numerous presentations to students from elementary to university level, as well as historical societies, dive and other groups.



Ask Dr. Debbie...

Toxic and Venomous Marine Injuries: What you need to know...

By Debra A. Hill, MD

WE ALL WANT to avoid contact with toxic and venomous marine life. Most of the time good buoyancy control and avoiding active touching of marine life is all it takes but there are those unforeseen times when accidents do happen. The questions are: which organisms are of greatest concern and what do we do when we are the victim of a sting or puncture from a venomous animal?

Individual variations can cause a more severe reaction to a toxin or venom. Even the seemingly most benign sting from a sea anemone could result in anaphylactic shock in someone who is allergic to that venom or toxin.

- Avoid contact with anything known to be a stinging organism
- If you have been stung, minimize further stinging and spread of the venom or toxin
- **Most importantly, seek immediate emergency medical attention if you develop body rash or trouble breathing as this may be an indicator of an anaphylactic allergic reaction which can be deadly in a very short time.**
- Many serious toxins can also cause muscle paralysis not only manifested by weakness, but also by trouble

breathing and cardiac arrest.

First Aid for Stings from Anemones, Fire Coral, Stinging Hydroids, and Jellyfish:

These organisms all fall into the phylum of Coelenterates (aka Cnidaria) which are known to have stinging nematocysts of two different types. One type sticks to its prey by a coiled spring or sticky mucous and the other is like a needle penetrating its prey. The toxicity of the venoms of these organisms varies widely from the deadly Portuguese man of war and box jellyfish to the less dangerous sea anemone.

- The key here is immediate flooding of the sting with household vinegar to keep not-yet discharged nematocysts from firing. This is not meant to reduce pain, but to prevent further stings.
- Be sure to pluck off any vinegar-soaked tentacles with tweezers or any implement—not with your bare hands.
- Ice packs are best for pain.
- **If shortness of breath, weakness, muscle cramps, chest pain, palpitations, nausea, blurred vision, or headache occurs seek immediate emergency medical attention.**

There is controversy regarding use of alcohol or urine as some studies have indicated that use

of these substances actually worsened the discharge of the nematocysts which may depend on variations in organisms around the world.

In our local waters, we may be more likely to suffer from stings from hydroids that grow on mooring lines. As we grasp the line during our safety stops we may then carry these stinging hydroids on our gloves. A word of caution: carefully remove your gloves when back on the boat before removing your mask or wiping the mucous from your nose to avoid potential hydroid stings.

First Aid for Cone Snail Stings:



Photo contributed by Mark Rosenstein
<http://markrosenstein.com>

The key here is recognizing the cone snail and not touching it.

The cone snail has a proboscis, or tubular appendage, with a venomous barb on the end of it that can suddenly extend out of the shell to kill its prey. If you do happen to get a sting from a cone snail the risk is significant. Not all cone snail stings are fatal but there are many types of cone snails.



Photo contributed by Debbie Karimoto

- **The best thing to do is abort the dive.**
- Once out of the water hold the bite site below the core of the body and apply a pressure bandage over the bite as tight as you would wrap a sprained ankle to slow the spread of the venom, but make sure fingers stay pink and warm indicating adequate circulation.
- Seek immediate emergency medical care.
- Cone snail venom can cause numbness and tingling that may extend from the sting up to the

mouth and lips and be accompanied by muscle weakness and even paralysis. Trouble with speech and swallowing typically occurs prior to paralysis. Vision becomes blurred due to paralysis of the eye muscles and shallow, rapid breathing occurs as the venom impacts the respiratory muscles which can proceed to unconsciousness and cardiac failure.

So, don't risk it, don't touch shells!

Did you know?

An added bit of info regarding cone snails that may seem ironic:

Recent research at the University of Melbourne indicates that there is a component in the venom of the cone snail called ACV1 that may be useful as a non-addictive pain killer for those suffering from neuropathic pain from diabetes or those with chronic pain associated with cancer, AIDS, and arthritis. In

rat tests it has even been found to accelerate wound healing where nerve damage has occurred.

Don't take this to mean that you should go out and try to harvest cone snails to use them for pain control. It is a specific component of the venom that has been shown to be useful in this way.

All ocean wounds carry the risk of tetanus. Be sure to update your tetanus booster shot about every 5 years. If you aren't sure when your last tetanus shot was, see your doctor about getting a tetanus booster shot.

Next month I will cover marine injuries from venomous fish and a few other marine animal injuries. If you have a marine animal injury or diving accident that you would like me to comment on, please email it to me and I will be happy to include it in future articles.

Knowing what to avoid and what to do in case of an accident can make all the difference!

Happy and Safe Diving!

All the best,

Debra A. Hill, MD

First Aid items to add to your dive kit:

- **Household white vinegar and 4x4 inch gauze pads to use with vinegar application to the sting.**
- **Rigid object like a credit card to scrape off tentacles.**
- **Ace bandage wrap for pressure dressing (If not available, use any piece of cloth. A T-shirt will do.)**

Wholly Matrimony at the next meeting

Yes folks, we are having a special occasion at this next club meeting. It's an occasion of a special nature that a few of you seem to partake in monthly. You are all invited to this special occasion when two join to become one happy family or, shall I say, join into the SOCDC family. That's right, it's a marriage within our club and many of you will be able to join in for the festivities... First and foremost, you must not bring gifts as the RAFFLE DIRECTOR will supply them all. Then just come early for dinner and a gathering before the event takes place. Mingle with others as you gaze and fondle one of the lucky partners. So who is this special couple?

First, a break for this month's raffle list:

Fogcutter Dive Knife
500 count - 11.5 gram Casino Poker Chip Set
Mesh Back-pak and it is PINK for the ladies
Deluxe Xtra Large Sleeping Bag (great for Overnight Dive trips)
Dive Sandals
7" Portable DVD Player
Scuba Tool
Invertebrate ID Book
... and a few other surprises donated to the club by members!

Oh, and that special couple is Ms. B Ticket and she will be joining Mr. Lincoln, Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Grant and, if real lucky, Mr Franklin. One or more of them may be the lucky one that gets to go home with the gifts as the RAFFLE DIRECTOR will choose up a mate for all her suitors.... She's already rejected Mr Washington. Thanks in advance..... and no, I wasn't drinking when I wrote this article.... I'm saving it for Wednesday during the EVENT!

We have a great speaker this month and you'll want to get there early for a good seat. May you all have clear and safe dives.....

Don Spencer

Please give your support to all of the people who support us...the dive shops, Fuddruckers and all of our diving friends....

Meeting is Feb. 8th 6:30 at...



**Come join us Wednesday Night
for Good Food and Good Friends!**

Please give your support to all of the people who support us...the dive shops, Fuddruckers and all of our diving friends....



A Very Special Dive Trip...

UPCOMING DIVE TRIP TO FARNSWORTH!!

We need to start filling up the Easter Sunday, April 16th Sundiver trip to Farnsworth Banks. \$110 members and \$120 non-members. This includes food and air. Contact **Wendy Taylor** to reserve your spot at the *NEW SOCDC dive boat* email address: socdcdivboat@hotmail.com