

# MARIN SCUBA CLUB NEWSLETTER

Volume 24 Number 1

January, 2017

## **Abs Getting Scarcer**

Citing poor environmental conditions affecting red abalones, the California Fish and Game Commission has reduced the annual limit on the recreational fishery from 18 to 12 abs per diver. Additionally, the commission voted to close the season in April and November. Hopefully, our intrepid ab divers will get their limits during our June 9-11 Dive & Dine at Mendocino's Russian Gulch State Park.

## **Channel Islands Confidential: Under the Kelp Canopy**

Over the past four years, Mike Boom and his wife Lynn have joined renowned underwater filmmakers Howard and Michele Hall on a live-aboard dive boat for five days of diving in the Channel Islands out of Santa Barbara.

At our January 18 meeting, Mike will present a video recollection of those dives featuring gyrating sea lions, amorous sea hares, menacing giant sea bass, grumpy sarcastic fringeheads, scurrilous divers, an agitated octopus, an oddly friendly bat ray, and a literal cast of millions (if you count plankton).

## **Monitoring the Reefs**

"This is one of the swankier dive clubs I've been to." That's how Dan Abbot, Central California Regional Manager for Reef Check, greeted a capacity crowd at our November meeting.

Reef Check's volunteer citizen scientists study reef populations to aid in conservation management decisions and early detection of abnormal changes, such as the current decline or "slow, unsteady recoveries" of otters, abalone and rockfish in our waters. With this information, Reef Check seeks to build support for ocean conservation in California and in more than 90 countries and territories around the world.

Reef Check's data is available online for other researchers to access, along with information on how to volunteer: <http://reefcheck.org/california/overview>.

## **Octopuses Live Fast and Die Young -- Mostly**

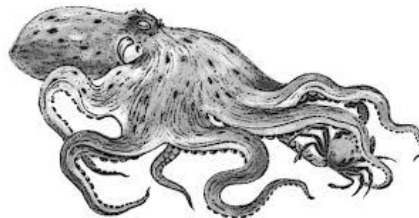
By Peter Godfrey-Smith

*Following are excerpts from a New York Times essay by a professor of philosophy at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, adapted from his forthcoming book: "Other Minds: The Octopus, the Sea, and the Deep Origins of Consciousness."*

Around 2008, while snorkeling and scuba diving in my free time, I began watching cephalopods, the group that includes octopuses, cuttlefish and squid. I followed them through the sea, and also began reading about them, and one of the first things I learned came as a shock: They have extremely short lives — just one or two years.

I was already puzzled by the evolution of large brains in cephalopods, and this discovery made the questions more acute. What is the point of building a complex brain like that if your life is over in a year or two? Why invest in a process of learning about the world if there is no time to put that information to use? An octopus's or cuttlefish's life is rich in experience, but it is incredibly compressed.

I think it is becoming clearer how octopuses and other cephalopods came to have their peculiarly poignant combination of features. Like their mollusk relatives, early cephalopods had protective outer shells, which they carried along as they prowled the oceans. Then, in some animals, the shells were abandoned. This had several interlocking effects. First, it gave rise to their unique, outlandish bodies — in the octopus, a body that can take on any shape at will. This created an opportunity for the evolution of finer behavioral control and large nervous systems. But the



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## Old Friends Gather at New Place For Holiday Potluck

The Club kicked off the holiday season in style with an early-December member potluck at Ralph Daniel's beautiful home in San Rafael. Tables were heaped with fabulous food, and the crowd of 40+ attendees enjoyed mixing and munching. Highlights included videos from members' dive trips, and a challenging trivia game MC'd by Arlene Rudy.

Let's do it again this year!

## Cyber Diving

By Larry Clinton

Here are a few more dive-related websites that caught my eye recently:

The World ShootOut organization has announced the winners of its annual Underwater Photography Global Championship. The accompanying photo, which was nominated but didn't win the grand prize, was my favorite. See the other nominees at: [http://www.worldshootout.org/?CategoryId=359&\\_\\_dbsRW=1&utm\\_source=InforuMail&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=FINALS+%26+BEST+PICTURE+OF+THE+YEAR+](http://www.worldshootout.org/?CategoryId=359&__dbsRW=1&utm_source=InforuMail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=FINALS+%26+BEST+PICTURE+OF+THE+YEAR+)

The sinking of the RMS Lusitania remains one of the greatest disasters of WWI. In 1938, a diver in a pressurized suit weighing 1000 pounds, made the first dive on the ship 305 feet (93 metres) below the surface. View black and white photos of this historic event at: <http://coastmonkey.ie/lusitania-discover>.

Beneath the surface of Japan's Tateyama Bay stands a shrine called a torii, sacred to the Shinto religion.

For more than two decades, a local diver named Hiroyuki Arakawa has been entrusted with overseeing the shrine and being a guide to others who wish to visit it. In that time, he's become well-acquainted with a friendly Asian sheepshead wrasse named Yoriko. Check out these photos of the incredible bond between man and fish at: <https://www.thedodo.com/diver-visits-fish-25-years-video-1695525718.html>.

These 12 underwater discoveries will make your jaw drop: <http://yourdailydish.com/galleries/amazing-things-found-sea/3>.

## Octopuses

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loss of the shell had another effect: It made the animals vulnerable to predators, especially fish.

That put a premium on the evolution of octopus wiles and camouflage. But there are only so many times those tricks will save the animal. Octopuses can't expect to survive long. As a result, octopuses have ended up with their unusual combination: a large brain and a short life.

This view is supported by the recent discovery of an exception to the usual octopus pattern, an exception that illuminates the rule. The octopuses I've been talking about tend to live in shallow water. But in 2014 researchers at the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute released some remarkable images of a deep-sea octopus they had watched with remote-controlled submarines. This one octopus brooded its eggs for over four years. Even allowing for the fact that everything tends to happen slowly at these depths, that's a very long time. The total life span of this octopus might have been as long



*Photo by Eduardo Acevedo from Spain*

as 16 years.

Predation risks should be much less severe for this species than they are for shallower-water octopuses with shorter life spans. And the images taken by the Monterey researchers contain a strong clue that this is so: They show an octopus sitting out in the open with its eggs for years on end. It did not find itself a den. This suggests that this species has less to fear from predators than other octopuses do. As a result, evolution has tuned the life span of this species differently.

Putting these things together, we can see how many features of the octopus could have stemmed from the abandoning of the shell all those years ago. This move set octopuses on a path of mobility, dexterity and nervous complexity, and it also led to a live-fast-die-young lifestyle, an existence always exposed to the predators around them.

If octopuses could somehow gain the upper hand against those predators, their natural life spans should increase, though it's hard to see them making it to our 115 years — and when one contemplates the thought of a century-old octopus, perhaps that's just as well.

# BOTTOM TIMES

**Jan. 18 (Wed.):** Videographer Mike Boom, “*Channel Islands, a Forest Tale.*” Club Meeting, 7:30. Saylor’s Restaurant, Sausalito. \$5 for non-members.

**Jan. 28– Feb. 4, 2017 (Sat.-Sat.):** *Club trip to Bonaire.* Contact Bryan Eckert, [activities2@marinclub.org](mailto:activities2@marinclub.org), for details.

**Jan. 31 (Tues.):** *Dirk Rosen: Unlocking the Mysteries of the Channel Islands’ Deep.* 7:00 – 9:00 P.M. Bay Model Visitor Center, Sausalito. Info at <https://acs-sfbay.org/events>.

**Feb. 1 (Wed.):** Next newsletter deadline. Submissions to [click@dipsymusic.com](mailto:click@dipsymusic.com)

**Feb. 11-12 (Sat.-Sun.):** *Bay Area Travel & Adventure Show*, Santa Clara Convention Center. Details: <https://travelshow.com/shows/san-francisco-bay-area>.

**Feb. 15 (Wed.):** *Ted Lee, Diving Alaska.* Club Meeting, 7:30. Saylor’s Restaurant, Sausalito. \$5 for non-members.

**Mar. 9-12 (Thurs.-Sun.):** *San Francisco International Ocean Film Festival*, Cowell Theater, Fort Mason Center. Details at <http://oceanfilmfest.org>.

**Apr. 22 (Sat.):** *Earth Day.* Details at <http://www.calendar-365.com/holidays/earth-day.html>.

**May 6-7 (Sat.-Sun.):** *Scuba Show 2017.* The Long Beach Convention Center. Details: <http://scubashow.com>.

**June 9-11 (Fri.-Sun.):** *Spring Dive & Dine*, group campsite at Russian Gulch State Park, Mendocino. Contact Barbara Wambach for details: [activities@marinclub.org](mailto:activities@marinclub.org).

## 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@marinclub.org](mailto:vp@marinclub.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](mailto: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](mailto:click@dipsymusic.com) or mail CDs, photos or hard copy to Larry Clinton, 29 Gate 6-1/2, Sausalito, CA 94965.

**Marin Scuba Club promotes safe diving. Remember to plan your dive based on the conditions, be aware of your skills and equipment and stay with your buddy.**

**Marin Scuba Club**  
**29 Gate 6-1/2**  
**Sausalito, CA 94965**



***Next Meeting:***  
**Jan. 18 (Wed.):**  
**Videographer**  
**Mike Boom,**  
***“Channel Islands,***  
***a Forest Tale.”***

**LOCATION:**  
**Saylor’s Restaurant**  
**2009 Bridgeway**  
**(between Olive &**  
**Spring Sts.), Sausalito**

**MARIN SCUBA CLUB**

**The Club meets the**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday**  
**of each month**  
**(except December)**

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Nathan Cobert [president@marinscuba.org](mailto:president@marinscuba.org)

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Arlene Rudy [secretary@marinscuba.org](mailto:secretary@marinscuba.org)

**Membership Coordinator**

Julie Finley [membership@marinscuba.org](mailto:membership@marinscuba.org)

**Newsletter Editor/Publicity**

Larry Clinton [newsletter@marinscuba.org](mailto:newsletter@marinscuba.org)

**Activities Coordinators**

Barbara Wambach [activities@marinscuba.org](mailto:activities@marinscuba.org)  
Bryan Eckert [activities2@marinscuba.org](mailto:activities2@marinscuba.org)

**Program Coordinators**

Virginia Bria [program@marinscuba.org](mailto:program@marinscuba.org)  
Carol Epstein [program2@marinscuba.org](mailto:program2@marinscuba.org)

**Immediate Past President**

Elliott Zalta [ez@marinscuba.org](mailto:ez@marinscuba.org)