

PARADISE Dive Club

April 2005

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Volume 11, Issue 4



President's Log

by Ray Janik

I think I'm writing from one of the longest—if not *the* longest—stretches I haven't been diving since I got certified. It's amazing how fast a busy schedule and months of rain can keep you from getting the water. In lieu of diving, a few club members braved early morning drizzle and had a great short hike on the Hot Springs Trail in Montecito. If nothing else, the recent rains have the backcountry ready to bloom; trees and grass are abundantly green and wildflowers are starting to appear.

As the weather clears (fingers crossed, everyone) and spring (and daylight savings time) arrives, we can look forward to more time outside and, definitely, more and better diving. Lobster hunters among us will be looking to finish off their last dives of the season with full goody bags, and photographers are looking for the return of underwater visibility. As mentioned elsewhere, Ed Stetson has put together a trip to Catalina Island that should offer a good chance for those of us who've been stuck on dry land for awhile to ease back into the underwater world. If you're interested and haven't signed up yet, see the contact information on page 2.

Coming up this month we have scheduled a tour of the new Marine Science building at UCSB for April 16. The new building houses the university's marine research programs and sounds even cooler than their old space. We will also get to visit their touch tanks, so bring the kids for this one.

April 22 is Earth Day. I've volunteered for one sort of cleanup effort or another—usually on or in the water—for just about every one since I've been in Santa Barbara, and it's always been a good news/bad news feeling. The good news is that lots of people show up and pitch in. The bad news is that a lot more have trashed the area in the first place. In the last few years, the really good news is that the areas we've dived to do cleanup work have been remarkably free of trash. Traditionally, PDC marks the occasion by cleaning up the parking area at Tajiguas. We'll be there at 10:00 am. on Saturday, April 23, for an hour or two of doing our share to keep things tidy along the coast. We can even plan on rewarding ourselves with a dive afterward. If the weather's good, and you don't mind a little walk down to the beach, it's a great site.

And for a great long weekend in, on, and around the water, you can't beat our upcoming trip to Santa Cruz. We've booked a boat with Truth Aquatics and will be on the island from May 12-15. Those of you who have made the trip know that this is one of those places that most people only get to dream about having regular access to. If you haven't been before, you can look forward to spectacular hiking, kayaking, and diving that's all just a short walk away from one of the nicest campgrounds you can imagine. If you're just looking for a place to relax, come out, set up camp, and sit in front of your tent for a few days. I guarantee you'll come back feeling like you've had a month-long vacation. The recent rains mean the powers that be should allow fires for barbecues down at the beach. Hopefully we'll be able to press Mark Silva into firemaster duty for at least a couple of nights. We've also invited members of the Channel Islands Divers to join us, so this is a good chance to connect with fellow divers.

Join the club, enjoy the benefits

- ∂ Monthly meetings with entertainment
- ∂ Raffle prizes (who doesn't like prizes?)
- ∂ Great dive buddy pool
- ∂ Beach & boat dives, including weekly night dives
- ∂ Club BBQs & other activities
- ∂ Free airfills & gear discounts at local dive shops
- ∂ Right to proudly wear the official PDC t-shirt (because we do have the coolest logo)

Mark your calendars...

We meet on the last Tuesday of the month

Rusty's Pizza

NEW LOCATION—Goleta Rusty's

in the K-mart Center, 270 Storke Road

6:30 pm - social hour

7-8:30 pm - feeding frenzy, meeting,
raffle prizes, entertainment



Bulletin Board

- Reminder, now's the time to get your deposit paid if you want to join **Ed Stetson's trip to Catalina**, April 29-May 1. The \$195-\$215 fee includes round-trip boat transportation from Long Beach, 3 days/2 nights hotel, gear transportation on the island, and a BBQ at a private park on Saturday evening. To reserve your spot, call Patty Bryant at 684-6342 or Ed Stetson at 687-4771.
- Mark Silva says that **Channel Islands Divers** has invited any interested PDCers to join them for their April 14-17 diving and camping trip to **Jade Cove**. They will be camping out at the Plaskett Creek campground, about an hour north of San Simeon and across the highway from Jade Cove (\$18/night for campsites). There will be a potluck Saturday night. Contact CID's Ken Kollwitz at 486-1533 or dive@channelislandsdivers.org for details.
- Club members are also invited to join **Channel Islands Divers** for their May 1 trip on the *Conception* to dive the **SMI and Gosford wrecks** up near Gaviota. Cost is \$115 and includes food and air. Again, contact Ken Kollwitz at 486-1533 or dive@channelislandsdivers.org for info.
- **Scuba Show 2005** is May 21-22 at the Long Beach Convention Center. This annual event includes exhibits of new gear, lots of dive trip info and raffles, an underwater film festival, and dive seminars on a range of topics, including many on underwater photography. Admission is \$9/day, and a \$1 off coupon is available at www.saintbrendan.com/discount.html. Seminars cost extra—keep an eye out for the schedule in the upcoming issue of California Diving News, or on their website at www.saintbrendan.com.
- Curt Wiessner at **SB Aquatics** (967-4456 or crwiessner@earthlink.net) wants the club to know about two trips he's planning. The first is **June 18-25 to Cozumel**; the second will be sometime in September to **Bonaire**. The Cozumel trip is all-inclusive at the Reef Club, \$1599/double occ., incl. roundtrip airfare from LAX, all meals and drinks, and 5 two-tank a.m. boat dives. Please e-mail or call him asap if you're interested in either trip.

Paradise Dive Club Officers

President - Ray Janik	637-4486
Vice President - Dan Lindsay	964-5020
Secretary - Carl Gwinn	968-5694
Treasurer - Mark Silva	969-2014
Membership - Bruce King	452-7590
Newsletter - Stacey Janik	637-4487
Sgt at Arms - Steve Trainoff	571-1622
Entertainment - Mark Bursek	564-1923
Raffle - Ralph Goldsen	681-0400
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Historian - Cheryl Weakliem	967-2827

Sponsors:

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Aquatics	967-4456
Blue Water Hunter	564-6677
Truth Aquatics	962-1127

Visit our Web site at
<http://kelp.chem.ucsb.edu>

E-mail newsletter articles to
sjanik@gmail.com

Membership: \$30/year (May-April); \$25/year for renewing members. Includes monthly newsletter. A complimentary subscription will be provided to dive clubs that reciprocate with a subscription to their newsletter; contact the membership coordinator at kingbh@cox.net for details.

Earth Day Cleanup at Tajiguas—Sat., April 23

Friday, April 22, is Earth Day. To mark the occasion, PDC will be doing a beach clean-up at Tajiguas on Saturday, April 23. Those of you who've been out there with us before know that this is a beautiful area of our coast (and a great dive spot) that is, unfortunately, in constant need of lots of loving care. Without a doubt, there will be plenty of trash for everyone, so please bring your spouse, bring your kids, bring your friends and spend an hour or two doing a good deed for the earth.

Be sure to bring a pair of gloves (cotton gardening gloves work well and can be picked up at Longs for a buck or two). Sunscreen and long pants are recommended, as there's a lot of scratchy underbrush in this area. Tajiguas is 1.8 miles beyond Refugio; look for the freeway turnaround point 2.1 miles past Refugio, hang a u-turn, and go .3 miles to a large dirt parking area.



Can we beat last year's record of 730 lbs of trash?

Welcome to our new member!

Nick Martoreno

Manatee Encounter

article & photos by Steve Trainoff

Question: What do you do when you have been putting in crazy hours at work trying to finish a new product in time for a trade show in Florida?

Answer: Go diving, of course.

When I heard that I had to go to Orlando for a trade show, all I could think about was bringing my gear along and slipping away for a day of diving. The problem is that Orlando is in the middle of central Florida, and most people agree that the best diving is found in Southern Florida. My search started on the Internet looking for dive spots near Orlando. Central Florida is known for two types of diving: cave diving and manatee encounters. I was fortunate enough to run across “Birds Underwater” (www.birdsunderwater.com), a dive shop run by Bill “Bird” and Diane Oestreich located in Crystal River, which specializes in both.

I had to be at the trade show from Monday to Wednesday. Perfect. All I had to do was arrive a day early and bring a wetsuit in addition to my two dry (business) suits and I was in business (so to speak). I arrived on Saturday night, rented a car, and made the 2½-hour trek from Orlando to Crystal River, on the Gulf coast.

I had to be at the dive shop at 6:15 a.m. EST, which means I had to get up at 2:00 a.m. PST (yikes!) to get ready. The manatee tours are strictly snorkeling, since the manatees typically spend most of their time in shallow water, and the bubbles from scuba scare them away. On this morning we take out two covered pontoon boats with 12 people each. We head to an area called Three Springs and within a couple minutes we spy our first manatees. In the Crystal River estuary are a series of no-entry zones so the manatees can get away from their human company if they wish. They are amazingly gentle and genuinely seem to seek us out. They are, for all the world, like big puppy dogs in the way they come up and check us out. Parasites make their skin itch and they gratefully appreciate getting scratched on the back and under the flippers. They roll over and ask for more. They spend a lot of their time foraging or sleeping to conserve energy in the cool water. They come up to the surface to breathe every three to five minutes.

Manatees are aquatic mammals weighing upwards of 1,000 pounds. Adults are around 10-12 feet long. They are completely herbivorous and eat about 10-15% of their body mass per day. They are slow moving, with small side flippers and a large paddle-like tail. They are listed as an endangered species, with an estimated 4,000 left in the waters off the United States. Most of them are found on the gulf coast of Florida, but they have been observed as far west as Texas, and as far north as North Carolina. The best manatee viewing season is the winter when the ocean temperature drops and the manatees seek out the relative warmth of the spring-fed rivers that are a constant 72°F year round.

The visibility in the river is not great until I swim over the spring eminence. The water boils up out of the sand and gives



credence to the name “Crystal River.” After a couple of hours, everyone on the dive boat is complaining about how “cold” the water is. Having done a trip out to the islands a couple weeks earlier at 55°F, the river seems positively topical to me. Of course, I was wearing my 7mm wetsuit with a hood, so I had an advantage.

Although Bill is dedicated to manatee conservation, his real passion is cave diving, including deep technical dives. The shop is filled with amazing photos of caves at 300+ ft. Not being a cave diver, I try an afternoon dive at King’s Cavern. A cavern dive is distinguished from a cave dive in that you are never out of sight of the entrance, so there isn’t the complication of getting lost. Both, however, are overhead environments. On this trip it is just a dive master, myself, and a buddy they paired me up with. This is my buddy’s first dive after getting certified. I think the dive is way too advanced for a newbie, but I figure that the dive master can keep an eye on him, and I can take care of myself. Fortunately he does fine.

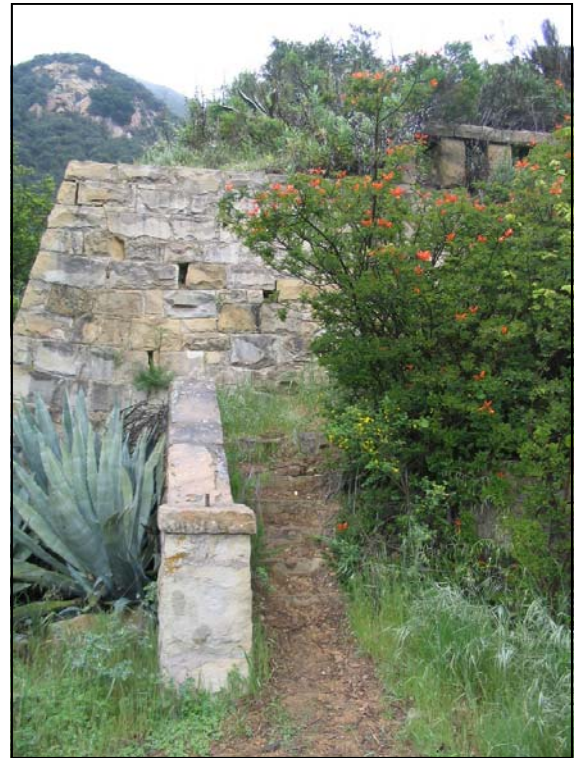
Outside the cavern the visibility is only about 5 feet. The cavern entrance is a 6-foot triangular hole in the limestone at about 20 feet. It opens up into a series of small rooms with several bailout points. The visibility inside would have been great, if it hadn’t been for the two dive teams inside already. Even so, like the Three Springs site, there is fresh limestone-filtered water emerging out of the floor. The limestone in the cavern is peppered with small fossils suggesting interesting macro images. However, photography in the cavern doesn’t fare too well since it is too dark for me to get an accurate focus lock, and it is constrained enough that I have problems getting the flash to light the subject and not the walls. On the way out, at the interface between the murky exterior river water and the spring-fed cavern is a huge school of small baitfish, making for a surreal exit.

After the dive, I head back to Orlando and do my tradeshow duty. My poor roommate has to deal with my dive gear drying in the shower, but that is another story...

See more images from this trip at <http://homepage.mac.com/gbeckert>



*Scenes from the March 13 club hike to the Montecito Hot Springs—
photos on the left by Dan Lindsay, photos below by Stacey Janik*



6th Annual Santa Cruz Campout, May 12–15

Spring is here, and that means our 6th annual Santa Cruz Island camping trip is fast approaching. Truth Aquatics will be taking us over to the island on Thursday, May 12, and they will pick us up and take us back to Santa Barbara Harbor on Sunday, May 15. Cost of the trip is \$80. The club will be picking up the cost of the campsites.

The camping is primitive; pit toilets are located in the campground and close to the beach. Water is available. You will need to bring all your own food—the club does not provide. We are hoping to be able to have beach bonfires at night; this is dependent on when fire season is declared, but considering how wet this season has been, our chances are looking pretty good. Fires are not permitted in the campground, and we are not allowed to bring wood onto the island—charcoal or pressed logs only.

All your gear must be packed in (and out). There are no stores on the island and there is no trash service. The campground is about half a mile from the beach, with a mild uphill climb. Some wheelbarrows are available at the dock site, and a few people bring their own wagons—especially handy if you're planning to tote scuba tanks.

Bring your hiking boots, a good windbreaker, plenty of sunscreen, and of course all your water toys. There are lots of places to explore, in and on the water and on land. Scorpion Harbor and the surrounding area present wonderful opportunities for diving, snorkeling, kayaking, whale watching, hiking, or just hanging out. May on the island can be very windy, and temps can range from quite chilly at night to high-80s during the day; plan accordingly.

We have reserved 15 spots on the boat. The first 15 people to pay up get to go; we can probably accommodate more people, but we need to know as soon as possible. If you make different arrangements to get to the island but want to camp with us for a night or two, please let us know so that we can reserve more campsites.

We will have a sign-up sheet at the next general meeting, and we encourage you to pay for your spots at that time. If you want to go on the trip and can't make it to the meeting, please call Mark Silva at 969-2014 to make arrangements for payment.

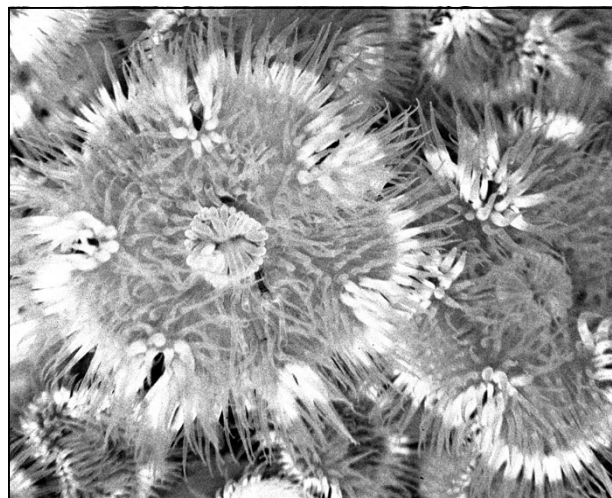
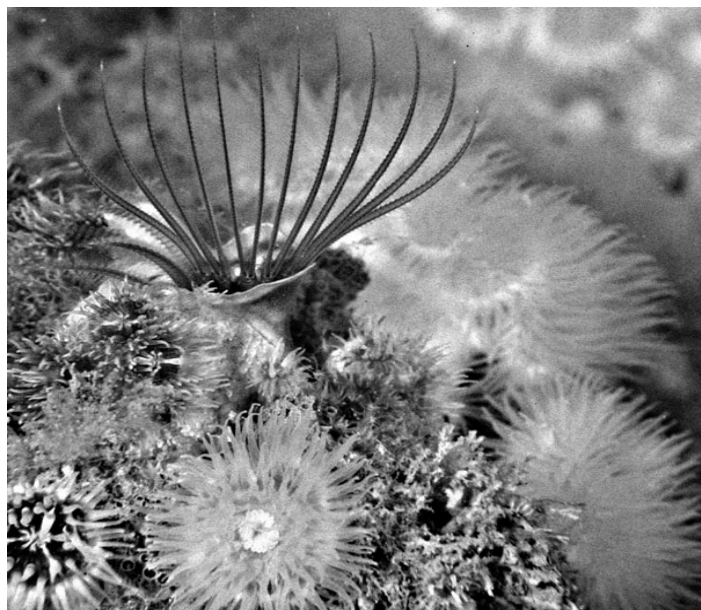


A Whale in January

article & photos by Carl Gwinn

Dave Burroughs and I rolled off the swim step of the *Truth* and finned to Platform Holly. Once submerged in the washing machine, we found milky water, gradually clearing to 10-foot visibility at depth, allowing views of a rich school of halfmoons and abundant metridium anemones on the platform legs. The search for better visibility took me to 80 feet, and Dave to below 120. I gradually ascended, noting species on my REEF fish count form.

The 15 other divers on the boat were members of an LA dive club. The *Truth* had left Santa Barbara harbor promptly at 6 that morning, and then made a quick u-turn 10 minutes later to pick up a tardy diver, brandishing his cell phone on the dock at Sea Landing. Back on the *Truth* after the first dive, this hapless fellow stood amidst his disassembled gear. He explained that he was having trouble with a new BC.



After two dives on the platform and a third on Naples Reef, the *Truth* headed back toward Santa Barbara, past the gas seeps off Coal Oil Point. Between boat and shore I spotted the rolling back of a gray whale, heading south. At Goleta Pier, the *Truth* stopped for a last dive, only slightly further out than a beach diver would usually go. A crew member described his previous job, videoing the outflow pipeline from the Goleta sewer plant, and pointed out the circle of lobster traps that marks the pipeline's end. I dived into one of the bunks below deck.

Shouting on deck interrupted my snooze. I stumbled upstairs to learn that a gray whale had surfaced less than 20 feet from the boat, and then dived directly onto the bubbles from one of the buddy pairs. After a few minutes the pair surfaced and described the encounter. One was the diver with the cell phone and the malfunctioning BC. "I saw everything getting dark, and when I looked up it was like a wall coming down onto me. I didn't even think to use my camera, although all I could have gotten was a shot of its eye, looking into mine."

What lessons were learned? Perhaps every diver has something to teach any other diver. And, if you don't jump in, you definitely won't do the dive!



Our club was contacted by Reef Check, an ocean conservation organization, about the recent launch of their citizens' ocean monitoring initiative along California's Central Coast. The Reef Check California program will train volunteer teams of local divers, fishermen, surfers, and scientists to survey marine life on underwater rocky reefs and to develop an accurate picture of the health of California's nearshore marine environment from Santa Barbara to Monterey. The new Reef Check California program seeks to bring together existing groups and to standardize volunteer efforts so that changes in ecological health can be tracked from year to year. For more info, contact Chris Knight, Director of Training for Reef Check, at 310-230-2371 or chrisknight@reefcheck.org, or visit their website at www.reefcheck.org.

Tour of UCSB's Marine Science Institute, April 16, 2pm

Join us for a behind-the-scenes tour of the new home for UCSB's Marine Science Institute on Saturday, April 16, at 2 p.m.

This is a great event for the kids, who will enjoy the touch tanks and other interactive marine exhibits. The new building features a seawater pump, wet labs, and more—not to mention a fantastic view of the Channel Islands!

April 2005

Don't forget...
MONTHLY MEETINGS
March 29 and April 26
 Rusty's Pizza in Goleta

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16 Marine Science tour, 2pm
17	18	19	20	21	22	23 Earth Day cleanup @Tajiguas, 10am
24	25	26 PARADISE DIVE CLUB	27	28	29	30

Night Dives

Upcoming Events

- Marine Science tour at UCSB, 4/16, 2pm
- Earth Day cleanup at Tajiguas, 4/23, 10am
- Catalina trip, 4/29-5/1
- Santa Cruz campout, 5/12-15

Get on Board!

- Sun. 4/3, on *Peace*, 7am depart., \$100. Call Anacapa Dive Center, 963-8917.
- Sun. 4/10, on *Truth*, 6am depart., \$100. Call Anacapa, 963-8917.
- Sun. 4/17, on *Spectre*, 7am depart., \$79. Call Aquatics, 967-4456.
- Sat. 4/23, on *Peace*, 7am depart., \$100. Call Anacapa, 963-8917.

Wednesday night dives: To find out where the group is diving or to be added to the night dive e-mail list, contact Dan Lindsay at edgy01@aol.com or 964-5020.



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