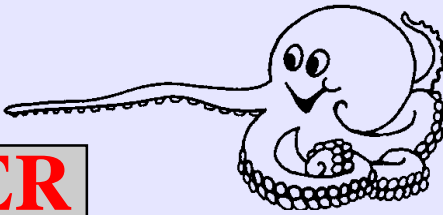


# THE REEF SEEKER



REEF SEEKERS DIVE CO.  
P.O. Box 11634  
Beverly Hills, Ca. 90213  
PH - (310)652-4990  
www.reefseekers.com  
e-mail: reefseekrs@aol.com

October - 2007



## LOBSTERS BEWARE

Run little lobsters, run!!!!

As you may already be aware, lobster season officially opened this weekend at 12:01AM Saturday morning. We've heard mixed reports about success and failure in the crustacean quest but the best news we heard was that we didn't ended up with anyone in the Chamber over the weekend (at least, not as of this writing Sunday late evening).

It's a good time to remind you that you need to be wary of succumbing to "bug fever". Simply put, this is when desire to go home with a lobster overcomes attentiveness to the details of the dive. Usually, this results in the bug-crazed diver either running out of air, or not paying attention to depth/time limits and putting themselves into a deco situation from which they can't escape without a trip to the Chamber. Needless to say, no matter how much you may love lobster, they're not worth your life or

the possibility of compromising your health and physician well-being.

So this is our annual reminder to dive safely and smart. There's no sense in catching a lobster if you're not going to be around to enjoy it.



## UNDERWATER SCAVENGER HUNT

I have long referred to diving as the greatest scavenger hunt in the world. You never know what you're going to find and if you go back to the same spot thirty minutes later, thing will be different.

Part of the uncertainty as to what adds to the excitement for many divers. Even though I'm not a game-taker, there's that "thrill of the hunt" if I'm trying to find Scythe Butterfly fish or Giant Black Sea Bass or maybe an elusive Zebra Goby. (And I guess I do "hunt" with my camera.)

But if you're ever wondering what should be an objective on a dive,

make a scavenger list of your own. Try to find a certain number of creatures or some specific species or something like that. Not only will it increase your knowledge of species ID (where fish or inverts) but it will also add a new dimension to your diving.



## THERE BE WHALES!!!

We're still getting a pretty spectacular show in the Catalina Channel from the Blue Whales who have been visiting this summer. In case you didn't know, they're the largest animals ever to have lived on Earth, larger than even the biggest of the dinosaurs. Just last Wednesday (9/26) on the way back from Catalina, the *Magician* got a good ten-minute display from two large Blues who blew and sprayed and finally showed their flukes as they dove deep. Really impressive.

So keep your eyes peeled and your cameras ready on trips over to Catalina and back. You never know what might be ready to show itself.

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

|        |                            |        |                            |
|--------|----------------------------|--------|----------------------------|
| Oct. 4 | Fish I.D.                  | Nov. 1 | Fish I.D.                  |
| 10     | <b>Night Diving</b>        | 8      | <b>Photo Workshop</b>      |
| 13     | <b>Beach Diving/Navig.</b> | 10     | <b>Beach Diving/Navig.</b> |
| 18     | Tables & Computers         | 14     | <b>Night Diving</b>        |
| 20     | CPR/Oxygen/1st Aid         | 17     | CPR/Oxygen/1st Aid         |
| 25     | PADI Digital Diver         | 29     | Sea Signs                  |

### ZERO TOLERANCE FOR POACHING

With the announcement of lobster season comes our reminder about a unique Reef Seekers policy: Zero Tolerance for Poaching. It's quite simple. If you're on one of our trips and you violate game regulations, you'll leave us no choice from to call 888-DFG-CALTIP and you can explain why "I didn't know" is a viable defense. Follow the rules and this won't be a problem you'll face. But the time to turn a blind eye to this is long past.

Even though lobster season's been open for less than 48 hours as of this writing, we've already heard tales of people going into the water before midnight to load up, people taking more than seven lobsters, and people taking lobsters from others after they've caught their own limit. All of these activities are illegal.

No one ever thinks of themselves as poachers. But the definition of poaching is simply that you take game that is either (1) out-of-season, (2) over catch limits, (3) under-sized, (4) not legal to be taken (like Garibaldi), (5) taking game for others, (6) and other violations of the regulations.

Probably one of the most-violated rules deals with measuring lob-

sters. You're required to measure them right away and, if under-sized, put them back exactly where you got them from. You're allowed to bring a lobster to the surface for purposes of measuring. (This is meant to be an aid to those who free-dive for them.) But you cannot bring them back to the boat to measure. The second you set foot back on the boat with an under-sized lobster, you're poaching.

And you can't just toss the under-sized bug back overboard. You must take it down and place it back in a safe spot, assuming you can't find exactly where you got it from.

The reason is that a lobster falling from the surface is very vulnerable to predation on the way down and many of them won't arrive back at the bottom alive. (And yes, we're well aware that commercial fisherman can toss their shorts from

their traps overboard.)

There's no reason that this policy has to be "unique" to us other than that others are not willing to be as stringent. We realize it can be uncomfortable to turn people in for this. But . . . if everyone would adopt a similar attitude towards enforcing the rules, we could actually start to stem some of the illegal game-taking. If people felt there was a real consequence to not taking game properly, there would be an attitudinal shift.

And the reality is that since we started this policy about three years ago, we've not had to turn in a single person. And, as many of you know who have been on our trips, even though we're not known as a big game-taking shop, we really do check everything that comes back on board and we really will place that call if necessary. Fortunately, we haven't been put in that position yet and truly hope we are never forced to do that.

So if you're coming on our boats to take game (and specifically lobsters) have at it. But just make sure you know what you're doing. I think the best thought I heard came from a post from Chris Grossman on the [diver.net/bbs](http://diver.net/bbs). Chris, said, "If it looks short, it is." Wise words.

## DIVING VACATIONS

**October 7-15 • Sea of Cortez  
(20th Anniversary trip)**

**January, 2008 - Australia**

**March, 2008 - Cayman ???**



## OCTOBER BOATS

If you want to go diving with us in October, you need to give us a call.

We've got the *Cee Ray* on Saturday, October 6, going to Catalina with the first stop planned for Italian Gardens where we'll look for Giant Black Sea Bass. Then it'll be on to other sites to round out the day, plus we'll feed you too. Right now this boat is wide open so it's a great opportunity to enjoy the fabulous conditions and abundant sea life that's at Catalina right now.

Our next trip after that will be Sunday, October 21, on the *Great Escape* to San Clemente. This trip - at least on paper - is already full. (Those of you who signed up already will get billed and receive a receipt sometime this week.) However, we'll take a waiting list as there's frequently someone who can't go at the last minute and if we have a waiting list, we're happy to sell the spot and issue a refund.

On our recent trip to the Oil Rigs, we had four cancellations 24 hours before the trip. Because we were to fill the spots, those folks got refunds and folks who otherwise wouldn't have been able to dive with us got to go on a great trip. Win-win all the way around. It's a little bit more work for us, but that's what (we hope) makes Reef Seekers special to you. We're always willing to go the extra mile to maximize your diving experience.

Anyhow, if you'd like to join in on the fun, give us a call at 310/652-4990 and let's get you wet!!!

## UPCOMING BOAT DIVES

|     |         |                     |                            |           |
|-----|---------|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------|
| Sat | Oct. 6  | <i>Cee Ray</i>      | Catalina (Italian Gardens) | \$120/130 |
| Sun | 21      | <i>Great Escape</i> | San Clemente (frontside)   | 145/155   |
| Sat | Nov. 3  | <i>Great Escape</i> | Santa Barbara Island       | 145/155   |
| Sat | 17      | <i>Magician</i>     | Catalina (West End)        | 120/130   |
| Sun | Dec. 2  | <i>Great Escape</i> | Santa Barbara Island       | 145/155   |
| Sat | 15      | <i>Great Escape</i> | San Clemente (Pyramid)     | 145/155   |
| Sat | Jan. 12 | <i>Great Escape</i> | Santa Barbara Island       | 150/160   |
| Sun | 27      | <i>Great Escape</i> | San Clemente (frontside)   | 150/160   |

Prices are listed as 14-day advanced purchase/regular. Food/air included all trips. All diving to be done on compressed air only - no nitrox. Fuel surcharge may apply.

## 2008 LOCAL TRIPS

We're working with the various boat owners in putting together our 2008 local SoCal boat sked. It looks like - once again - we'll be one of the few stores offering trips to the outer islands of Santa Barbara and San Clemente. The pattern we're going to try to hold to is a boat every other week as that's been working out well lately. We'll do our best to get a mix of Saturdays and Sundays as well as do our best insure that there's a good mix of Santa Barbara, San Clemente, Catalina, Oil Rig, Farnsworth, and other destinations.

Keep an eye out for the sked (no later than December 1 and perhaps even as early as November 1) and if you have any requests, now's the time to make them.

## 2008 FOREIGN VACATIONS

At the same time, we're trying to put together our schedule of vacation trips for next year. What we're tentatively looking at now is:

January - Australia  
 March - Cayman  
 April - Socorro

June - Yap  
 July - Bonaire  
 August- Indonesia  
 October - Baja  
 December - Belize

Baja is 100% definite, Yap is 90% definite, Indonesia is 90% definite, Australia is 75% definite (based on getting a minimum of 6 people to commit to the trip), and the rest I'm still juggling with.

But let me know what catches your fancy and fits your pocketbook and let' see if we can get you to some fabulous place with us in 2008 to enjoy one of those spectacular Reef Seekers vacations.

## CATALINA FISH

The fish life at Catalina has been amazing in the last few weeks. Most impressive are the large schools of Jack Mackerel and Chub Mackerel that have settled in. this, in turn, has lured in some predators like Barracuda. Dale Sheckler and I had a fantastic experience last week when we were literally engulfed by a massive school of jacks, who swirled around us for a good 10-15 minutes while dale and I snapped away, totally engrossed and in awe of the spectacle.



## **NAUI ADV CLASS**

The NAUI Advanced class that was going to happen in September got pushed back to October (for a variety of reasons). This is a great way to get a little more instructor-supervised training whether you're a new diver or have some severance under your weight belt. The class will be taught by Ken Kurtis.

Among the areas covered will be deep buoyancy control, navigation, night diving, deep diving (100'), search-and-recovery, and light sal-

vage. We'll also talk about diving planning, differences between computers and tables (and differences between PADI & NAUI tables), some fish ID, and maybe even some rescue.

The plan to is to have a class meeting/chat (calling it a "lecture" would be too formal prior to the diving, which will take place on October 20 & 21. The 20th will be beach dives at Redondo, including a night dive, and then we'll go to the *Great Escape* for the 10/21 dive to San Clemente, where we'll finish up.

It's going to be a fun class to both teach and take and if you're interested, regardless of your current certification or agency, call us at 310/652-4990 to see if there's still space available.



## **BAJA-BOUND**

As you read this, 16 divers are getting ready for our 20th annual trip to the Sea of Cortez with our friends at Baja Expeditions. We're looking forward to the adventure and plan to return with great pictures and stories. We got an e-mail from them today and last week, water temps were in the low-to-mid 80s and they had a baby Whale Shark come visit them at El Bajo. We hope we'll have the same luck.

BTW, our business phone (310/652-4990) will be covered while I'm down in Mexico so if you need anything, just call.

# **PICTURE PAGE - Catalina, 9/26/07**

(All pix by Ken Kurtis © 2007)



**A mess 'o fish  
at Crane Point**



P.O. Box 11634  
Beverly Hills, CA 90213

[WWW.REEFSEEKERS.COM](http://WWW.REEFSEEKERS.COM)



**Swarming  
Jack Mackerel**



**Close-up view  
(note spot on gill cover)**



**Dale Sheckler  
shooting the school**



**Chub Mackerel  
mixed into the school**