



Northern California Rainbow Divers (NCRD)

# Buddy Line

September 2009

## Channel Islands Live-aboard, September 17th—19th, only \$435!

*by Ralph Wolf*

Rainbow Divers is headed to the Northern Channel Islands, and offering you a break from the September back-to-work blahs! I got a chance to check out the Truth in May, and had a great time. We spent two days at San Miguel Island, where we saw ling cod, sheephead and garibaldi, of course. We also glimpsed large and healthy abalone in the marine park. I danced with sea lions and saw my first and second ever wolf eels on the same dive! I can't wait to go back...

Captain Graham, our favorite Channel Islands captain, has moved back from New Zealand and is now the full time captain of the Truth. He knows how to find the best available diving in any weather, so I asked him to recommend the best time to visit. The short answer: late September. School has started, but lobster season hasn't, the days are long

enough, the fog tends to stay away and the mild summer seas are still pretty reliable. All in all, it's a great time to add a dozen or more dives to your log book.

We negotiated a terrific charter price of just \$435/person. We'll board on the evening of the 16<sup>th</sup>, so this price includes 3 nights lodging on the boat, 8 meals, and air fills. We'll do 12 to 14 dives, including one or two night dives. The trip offers a great chance to hone your skills, rack up a lot of experience in a short time, finally master that underwater camera, or just relax and do nothing but eat, sleep and dive. Water temps were 50 to 54 degrees in May, and September is supposed to be even warmer.

Tell your boss, you only need two days off. (If you call in sick, remember the sunscreen!) You too can enjoy a dozen dives in the cool waters off these exquisite

islands. Pinnacles covered with hydrocorals and anemones, nudibranchs new-to-you, garibaldi (the State fish, after all!) with their lovely blue spots on their glowing orange juvenile bodies, horn sharks sleeping under ledges, lobsters dancing the cha-cha, moray eels, bat rays, night dives, day dives, shallow dives, beginner dives, early morning dives.... Whew! I'm out of breath listing all the great stuff that you can see on this trip!

We'll start out by heading for San Miguel Island to dive Wychoff's Ledge, Tyler Bight and Wilson Rock. If the weather cooperates, we just might stay there; otherwise, we'll start making our way back by way of Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz, and maybe Anacapa Islands.

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## President's Corner

by Peg Stone

The annual summer barbeque offered, as usual, a great turn out, great food, and some truly terrific bargains on scuba gear. This year the Rainbow Divers gathered in the East Bay to enjoy some sunshine and friendship and a lot of dive chat. The barbeque and the annual December holiday party offer two great get togethers for our members.

The club offers a number of other benefits as well: for cold water divers, the discounts on the regular dive trips on Monterey dive boats more than cover the modest annual membership fee. The local dive planners, this year the hard working team of Ralph and Olivia, also put together some great shore dives. All you have to do is show up! And finding regular and reliable dive buddies is a great plus as well.

For warm water divers, we offer some great prices on trips to the farther reaches of the oceanic world. The trip to the Maldives, organized by Joe Trapasso and David Zippin, sold out in about five weeks. Once again, using our club members' experiences, the Rainbow Divers bargained hard for some great prices and shared the discounts with our members. The trip to Egypt, run by Sharon Ponder, sold out quickly as well,

and Sharon has been enticing all the participants with weekly emails on the wonders of the Red Sea, the sail down the Nile, and the pyramids. The club has also worked with club members to offer trips not directly sponsored by Rainbow Divers, such as the adventurous trip to Indonesia offered by Lisa Malachowski in March of 2010. The variety and price of these trips can't be beat.

Along with the trips, there is the Buddy Line, sharing tips, photos, and trip suggestions, and the e-list, where divers find connections to dive shops and boats all over the world from other members, hook up with buddies, and keep abreast of the latest in local and international oceanic conservation information.

In the end, though, the greatest gift of the club is the members: thoughtful, friendly, safety-oriented divers, sharing their skills in diving, travel, and photography, and some of the best dive and travel buddies you'll ever find. Let's just say that I've had male room mates on "straight" trips as well as Rainbow diver trips – and the jokes about it were MUCH better on the Rainbow diver trip! It makes all the difference in the world!



### Northern California Rainbow Divers, Inc.

#### BOARD MEMBERS

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*Secretary*, Sharon Ponder  
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*Board Member-At-Large*, Mike Miller

*Board Member-At-Large*, Ralph Wolf

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#### TRIP LEADERS

Sharon Ponder, *Red Sea/Egypt—2009*

Lisa Malachowsky, *Kararu—2010*

<http://www.rainbowdivers.org>

#### CLUB POLICIES

Board meetings are held once a month and are open to any member in good standing. If interested in attending, please contact any of the Board members listed above for location.

Membership dues are \$35/year, \$55/year for domestic partners at the same address and \$20/year for a newsletter-only subscription to addresses >150 miles from the SF Bay area.

Advertising is available for \$8/month to club members for a business card-size ad, or for \$10/month for non-club members. If you are interested in advertising, please contact the editor. NCRD does not warrant, recommend or guarantee the products or services contained in advertisements in this newsletter.

Unless otherwise noted, all monies paid for club-sponsored events are non-refundable.

## NCRD is Going to the Maldives!

by Joe Trapasso & David Zippin

Have you ever been diving in a world-class destination from a live-aboard that had a Jacuzzi with a bar? Or an on-board massage therapist? Or with expert dive masters that each have over 12,000 dives in that location? Or in luxurious rooms which all have en-suite bathrooms? Well, 20 lucky divers can!

NCRD is sponsoring an amazing dive trip to the Maldives, May 3-12, 2010. You will have 9 days of incredible diving in warm waters with exotic small creatures and large pelagic.

The Maldives are home to over 1,000 fish species, including spotted eagle rays, Napoleon wrasse, giant manta rays, and several species of sharks. We will dive in prime whale shark season. We will have 3-4 dives per day in

visibility between 65 and 135 feet and water temperatures of 80-82 degrees. All diving will be done from a 35-foot Dhoani, maximizing space on the main boat for guests.

The boat is the MV Orion, a new 130-foot luxury cruiser. The cost for the trip is only \$2,395 for members. Although this trip is sold out, you can sign up for the waiting list. For more information see [www.rainbowdivers.org](http://www.rainbowdivers.org), or contact Joe Trapasso and David Zippin at

[Maldives@rainbowdivers.org](mailto:Maldives@rainbowdivers.org)



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**To join us, mark your calendar, make a check out to NCRD and mail it to 204 Primrose Place, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523. Do it today!** If you want to share the ride down, let us know and we'll try to match you up. Olivia

Aqui and I are organizing the trip. If you have any questions email [diveplanner@rainbowdivers.org](mailto:diveplanner@rainbowdivers.org), or give us a call. Ralph is at 650-804-8301 and Olivia is 925-330-7188.

Divers of all experience levels are welcome, but if you haven't

been diving in cold water recently, we recommend doing a couple of shore dives in Monterey well before the boat trip, so you can make sure everything works and fits as it should. Call us if you need a buddy! We're happy to help.





## NCRD Barbeque Blast!

by Peg Stone

About 50 Rainbow Divers luxuriated in East Bay sun and great eats at the annual NCRD summer BBQ & Swap Meet on July 26th.



Hosted by Feney Matthews and Robin Baker in Berkley, we talked dive talk and dug into some great eats. Divers new and experienced snapped up some fabulous scuba equipment bargains from the “swap meet” and some of us enjoyed closets and garages without all that clutter of unused and replaced equipment!!

Thanks to Robin and Feney for the wonderful setting and great hosting. It was great to see every-



one. Keep on the look out for notices of this year’s holiday bash. We should have a day and location in the early fall!

## NCRD’s Pride Booth—San Francisco

by Mike Miller

This year’s San Francisco Pride was certainly memorable for me. Aside from being the first time in years that I’d gone to the festival on Sunday, it was the first time organizing the booth!

We had a fantastic turnout of volunteers (see Special Thanks) and an absolutely amazing day in the Civic Center. We started the day setting up at 8 a.m. and by 11 a.m. the crowds really started to arrive.

We had handouts with information about the club, our local and long-distance dives, photos from previous trips, and wildly popular



stickers to hand out. When topless women are walking around using your sticker as “pasties”, you know they’re a hit!

The great weather made for a HUGE turnout on Sunday, with tens of thousands of men, women, and children packing the Civic Center. Business at our booth was brisk throughout the day, and we had over 150 people sign up to get more information about the club!

After a busy, fun, exhausting, entertaining and rewarding day, we finally packed up the booth at 7:15 p.m. and headed home.



## Special Thanks!

Goes out to our booth volunteers, without whom we could NEVER have pulled this off.

- ◆ Lee Martin
- ◆ Lisa Malachowsky
- ◆ Bev Crair
- ◆ Olivia Aqui
- ◆ Erica Klett
- ◆ Lauren Wilson
- ◆ Christophe Beraud
- ◆ Robert Raso
- ◆ Kelly Thiemann
- ◆ Laura O’Heir

## And you thought Monterey was cold! by Mike Miller

Over the July 18th weekend, nine hardy Rainbow divers (and one intrepid non-diving husband) spent a weekend altitude diving up at **Lake Tahoe**. Massive crowds on Saturday meant half the group dived in the lake (after much searching for a convenient place to put in...) and everyone dived together in Donner lake on Sunday. Lake Tahoe welcomes all divers seeking a cooling and relaxing dive experience. Cari Pouchnik, an instructor and club member, offered a PADI class in Altitude Diving.

We were able to stay at a newly constructed house in South Lake Tahoe, which proved to be spacious and well appointed. Larry Chow led a fine group of cooks and we scarfed down some fine meals after our chilly dips in the pristine lake.



The lake does not offer the wealth of underwater life and seascape that Monterey treats us to regularly. In fact, its famous blue color comes from emptiness: clean clear empty and pristine.



One of the more interesting aspects of the diving is the marked presence of thermoclines in the lakes – at about 45 feet, the temperature rapidly drops from about 60 degrees down to an extremely chilly 47!



Most of the group are now certified for Altitude diving!

On Sunday, after the dives in Donner Lake, we sighed and packed up our equipment, stuffed our tired and satisfied selves back

into our cars, and joined the summer caravan of visitors back to the Bay Area. Full of nitrogen from our high altitude diving, full of great food, and full of memories of another great dive weekend!



## 2009 / 2010 Calendar of Upcoming Events, Local Diving & Dive Trips

### Events

Watch for email regarding NCRDs Holiday party—date and location coming soon!

Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute (MBARI) Open House, Saturday, September 12, 12—5 p.m. go to <http://www.mbari.org/about/openhouse.html>

California Academy of Sciences! Aquarium Dive Volunteers needed. For more information, go to: <http://www.calacademy.org>

### Local Diving

July 26th, NCRD Annual BBQ & Swap Meet

August 22nd, Big Sur Boat trip

August 23rd, shore dive, South Monastery

September 16th—19th, live-aboard, Channel Islands, go to website for more info!

September 19th – 26th, Diving For Life (DFL) at Captain Don's, Bonaire

The Northern California Underwater Photographic Society (NCUPS) Announces its 45th Annual International Underwater Photographic Competition. Entries will be accepted beginning August 1, 2009 with all entries due by October 9, 2009. Go to the NCUPS website at: <http://www.ncups.org> for rules, regulations and entry forms.

### Far Away Dive Trips

September 19-26, 2009

**Diving For Life.** Captain Don's Habitat, Bonaire, Dutch Caribbean

October 1-17, 2009

**Red Sea/Egypt.** Live-aboard and land tour—SOLD OUT—wait list only

March 10-22nd, 2010

**Kararu**, Indonesia. Liveaboard, send in your deposit now to hold your spot!

May 3-12, 2010

Maldives, Indian Ocean, South Asia. Live-aboard, wait list

**NOTE:** Events and dive trips may have changed since this printing—please see latest details at [www.rainbowdivers.org](http://www.rainbowdivers.org) and click on **Calendar**



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