



KELP KRAWLERS DIVE CLUB

January 2007

www.kelpkrawlers.org

Volume 23, Number 1

Video Presentation for January Club Meeting

Scott Boyd will be showing a 15 minute Video Slideshow from his trip to Akumal, Mexica at the January Dive Club Meeting. This includes video from Chan Hol and the Mayan Artifacts observed there. Additional cave diving photo galleries are posted at http://www.boydski.com/diving/trips/Cave_Diving/

Invasive Tunicate

by Amy Kertenbach

Kelp Krawlers have been exploring activities to host, which are both manageable for a club our size, and carry forward our mission statement: to protect the underwater world we cherish. Probably, those that have been diving at Sund Rock have witnessed the spread of the transparent tunicate. The tunicate is a non-native species that has the ability to colonize a large area and potentially push out native species. Personally,



disgusted by the aggressive growth of this tunicate at Sund Rock, I wanted to see if there was anything Kelp Krawlers could do to stop further invasion and focus our energies on a solution, while protecting the

very site we hold near and dear to our hearts, before the invasive tunicate establishes residence and threatens the biodiversity of this beautiful reserve.

On Oct 25, 2006, volunteer divers from REEF and NW Scuba Alliance, organized by Janna Nichols, completed the first removal effort to control the invasive transparent tunicate, Ciona Savignyi, colonization at Sund Rock. The first dive was to survey the extent of the problem, take photographs and video, and lay site boundaries. During the second dive, they were able to remove a significant amount of the transparent tunicate on the North Wall. As a result of their efforts, the volunteer divers became acutely aware that Ciona Savignyi **MUST** be controlled in the early stages before large colonies of the critters cover acres of sediment and substrate (a situation that has been observed in the Hood Canal around Union and Tahula). As with any invasive species, it is easier to control the critter when only a few tunicates are present and can be easily removed.

I ask Janna Nichols if REEF would be interested in supporting the Kelp Krawlers mission to continue this effort. Janna Nichols was thrilled with the possibility of our club managing the tunicate problem at Sund Rock, especially since our club members are; familiar with the site, live close by, and are conservation minded. Janna was truly ecstatic and eager to pass on her experience, and assistance.

What they learned:

The tool of choice was a pair of kitchen tongs. You need to grasp along the length of the tunicate and firmly pull where it's attached to the rock. It has a very good grip on the

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surface.

Plastic spatulas work well when the Ciona Savignyi is back in cracks and just need to be mutilated.

Contrary to its appearance, the tunicate is quite sturdy and does not disintegrate in your grasp.

Scraping the tunicate off the rock just releases tons of little blobs into the water column, which you then have to rush around gathering up. It was often easier to pick one individual at a time.

The entire day's bounty could easily fit into a small goody bag. The tunicate compresses to a fraction of its original size when disturbed and removed from the rock, and even more when out of water.

Removing Ciona Savignyi involves work at depths of 55 – 75 feet. Nitrox would have helped considerably with bottom time, as well as larger tanks. Going on a low tide for removal would also help with depth and bottom time.

Ciona Savignyi will reattach to another hard surface if removed, but not destroyed. One of the divers put a rock with nothing attached to it into his goody bag, by the time he was done with his dive the tunicates had attached themselves to that rock.

If you cannot collect the tunicate properly, make sure you mutilate it enough so it will not attach and grow elsewhere. It was recommended to cut a vertical slice through each siphon tube and down the middle if possible.

Large goody bags are useless and get in the way.

Use small sized mesh bags for collection.

One five gallon bucket with a lid is plenty large enough for the group collection spot.

Some of the divers were confusing Corella, a native tunicate, with Ciona – so it is important to point out the differences in our training of other divers.

A permit is needed to authorize the removal of Ciona Savignyi from the Sund Rock Reserve (Covered!!!-Amy J).

Volunteer Ciona Savignyi Removal Effort

Hood Canal - Sund Rock

Questions: Amy Kurtenbach, 360-866-8538

When:

Wednesday, January 27, 2006

Meet at Sund Rock at 9:30 am

The club will cover dive site fees and will serve lunch to our volunteers

What to bring (if you can):

- Pancake spatulas or putty knife, with cord attached so you won't drop it
 - Goody bag to put Ciona into
 - Bring two tanks and all dive gear
 - Buckets to dump all Ciona into
 - Recommended: Slate for communication and recording information
- Land and underwater cameras for before and after shots

Dive Plan:

- Depths will be about 40- 70 feet
 - Bottom time will be around 30-45 min for each dive.
- Each diver will be responsible for their own safety and monitoring their own gauges, and for safety stops and slow, safe ascents. Diving by computer is encouraged. The Kelp Krawlers O2 kit will be on site.
- Photographers: Photo surveys of the removal areas would be wonderful, as well as taking photos of 'before' and 'after'. Also, taking educational photos showing how little life is thriving around the tunicate colonies is desirable.
- Be aware and careful to not stir up too much silt. Slow movements to keep silt to a minimum. We'll all be working near each other.



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Monitoring:

The following information is needed to pass on to REEF (volunteers, or non-divers, are needed to collect the following information, and to manage the paperwork). Forms to simplify monitoring efforts will be provided at the dive:

- Estimate how many critters are covering the area
- Estimate size of individuals being removed.
- Record bottom time
- Record temperature
- Record depth found
- Tape measure to record how far apart colonies are? Record critters found nearby Ciona colonies, if any?

Dive Report: AL-IND-ESK-A-SEA

By Jeff Waugh

On Sunday, December 10th, 2006 a group of Technical Divers: Peter Miller, Cliff Cammert, Randy Hanson, Scott Boyd, Michael Horodyski and Jeff Waugh, along with Andy Burlingham assisting as support diver, boarded the "Dash", a 28' Almar Sounder operated by Porthole Charters, left the Port of Everett, WA. The group's destination was the wreck of the Al-Ind-Esk-A-Sea.

The weather was not looking favorable, but, showed mercy on us with overcast skies and mild swells. As the day progressed the winds picked up and were predicted to blow even harder later in the day.

We decided to split the group into two teams of three in order to not be on top of each other at the bottom of the descent line. The first team consisted of Randy Hanson, Scott Boyd and Jeff Waugh. At 9:30am we hit the water. The wreck lies in 240' of water on its starboard side. We headed down the line and found the

viz looked to be poor, but divable. Visibility is usually around 5'-15' on the "Al".

The wreck came into view at 190'. The down line appeared to just miss the wreck and lay off in the mud at 240'. Scott dropped down to check the hook and make sure it was free to be recovered later. I (Jeff) tied off a reel to the down line and ran the line over to the wreck and up over the keel to the railing. I tied off and we headed down the railing towards the bow. I didn't recognize this part of the wreck. I saw clearly into one of the holds. I could see a bulkhead door that invited further exploration. We continued down the railing and at the 12 minute mark Scott gave me the "turn" signal that he was heading back. He had planned a 20 minute dive. I confirmed "OK" and continued a little farther.

As soon as Scott turned, I noticed I was alone. No "3rd" light. Where was Randy? Had he disappeared in 240' of water? Had he turned back? Had the six gills got him? I turned the dive and started reeling in the guideline. I got back to my tie-off and continued back to the downline. I had expected to see the 2nd team by now so I tried moving the downline a little closer to the wreck so they could identify where they were a little easier. At 25 minutes I started my ascent. My first deep stop was at 170' followed by 55 minutes of decompression.

On the way up I passed the second team. We "OK"ed and they passed me on their way down. I was slightly deeper than Scott during deco, as he had the shorter bottom time. About 5 minutes later I saw lights emerging from the depths. It was the second team of Michael and Cliff. Apparently Peter had a problem with a sticky inflator valve and had to call his dive right off the bat. What had happened down there for Michael and Cliff to call their dive?

Andy, our support diver met us all at 120' checking on us and verifying we all had adequate gas supplies and there were no problems.

After surfacing we found out a few things. Randy had lost us upon hitting the bottom and ended up doing his own dive. Michael and Cliff hit the port side of the wreck

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DIVE SHOP NEWS:

Capital Divers

866-3684

www.capitaldivers.com

Nitrox, argon and hyper filtered air fills available.

Underwater Sports

493-0322

www.underwatersports.com

The Olympia Shop is now pumping hyper filtered Air. Discounted air cards for Kelp Krawlers: 10 fills for \$25.

Hood Sport 'n Dive

(360) 877-6818

www.hoodspordndive.com

The shop has now moved to a new location in Hoodspord with convenient boat access. Stop by, say hello and fill up with some nitrox while you wait. Offering discounted access to the Sund Rock Marine Preserve for paid members.

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which is very flat and covered with thick silt which can appear to be the bottom. They thought this was the "bottom". The key was that they were only at 190'. The "real" bottom is at 240'. They were actually sitting right on the port side of the wreck and didn't know it. This goes to show just how big this wreck is, especially in crappy viz, so they saw nothing but silt and decided to call it.

Well, wreck diving can be great at times, and is definitely challenging when it is in the Pacific Northwest at 240'. We win some and we lose some. The important thing is that we are safe and everyone comes home.

Thanks to Capt. Mike and Andy for support and all the plankton and silt for messing up our day! :) (not really) we all had a great time and lots of laughs!



Dive on!

Additional information and photos/video can be found at <http://www.scret.org/AI/AI-Ind.htm>

Invasive Tunicate, *Ciona savignyi*

By Janna Nichols, Washington Scuba Alliance

Volunteer divers with Washington Scuba Alliance have been monitoring an ever-spreading patch of the invasive tunicate, *Ciona Savignyi*, at a popular dive site on Hood Canal since April of 2006. A few individuals of the unwanted invertebrate appeared first in cracks at Sund Rock

North Wall, and began spreading and thickening in population over the summer months. It's found on rocks and boulders 40 feet below the surface of the water and extends down to about 70 feet.

With the recent low dissolved oxygen event in mid-September, much of the fish and invertebrate life died below 20 feet under the water's surface. However, the large patches of the clear, cylindrical-shaped tunicate seem to be unaffected by the low dissolved oxygen and appear healthy and growing.

The invasive tunicate is taking over large expanses of South Hood Canal and was likely introduced by imported shellfish stock. Much attention and government funding has been spent in efforts to control another invasive tunicate, *Styela Clava* (found at Pleasant Harbor Marina on Hood Canal), but nothing has been done yet about *Ciona Savignyi*.

Volunteer divers are about to change that.

More information on three invasive tunicates found in Washington can be found here:

<http://www.wascuba.org/tunicates/index.htm>

<http://www.pnwscuba.com/critterwatchers/invasive.htm>

Annual New Years Day Dive

The New Years Day Dive and Potluck was again a great success. Both Kelp Krawlers and Aqua Naughts attended the annual event. It rained for most of the day, but happily it did not affect the visibility, which was estimated to be around 50'. Perhaps this is a lucky omen for our club and personal lives this year. Divers reported the water temperature at the surface to be 45 degrees, and at depth 50 degrees.

After the dive it was time to warm up and fill and the dive shop. When you pulled into the parking lot the aroma of food was irresistible. For the feast the club purchased chicken and joes from the Model T Restaurant. This accompanied the numerous steaming crockpots of warm delicious faire and plates of savory, sweet delicacies. Hoodsport n' Dive tidied up the shop, graciously set up tables for food and cleaned off the coveted work-bench. There was plenty of room at the new shop's location for food, divers, and lively conversation.

List of attendees: Jaime Mourt, Martin Zerbock, John Cipriano, Kelly Rossman, Rick and Diane Cooper, Steve Sutton, Micheal Fitz & Debbie Cowan, Scott & Janet Boyd, Steve Fornoff, Jamie Welsh, Jerry & Becky Ehrlich, Dave Miller, Mark Reece, and Amy Kurtenbach.

Calendar of Events

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|----------|--|
| Jan 16th | CLUB MEETING, 7 PM. Dirty Dave's Pizza. A speaker from REEF will be here to discuss the importance of controlling the invasive tunicate and removal techniques. |
| Jan 27th | First Kelp Krawler TUNICATE REMOVAL DAY, 9:30 am @ Sund Rock. |