



# KELP KRAWLERS DIVE CLUB

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## Coral Die Off

by Steve Fornoff

My generation (baby boomers) may very well be the last generation of scuba divers to have ever seen a healthy coral reef. Those who know Carolyn and I, know that we love to dive and we love to travel to the Caribbean for the sole purpose of diving the magnificent coral reefs and see the huge array of colorful fish those islands have to offer.

It is very discouraging to say the least, to read articles and reports on the rapid die-off of the world's coral reefs. In every scientific study, the underlining cause is determined to be Global Warming. The ocean waters have increased a few degrees in temperature in recent years. This additional heat causes the symbiotic algae, food for the coral, to die and turn white. That puts the coral in critical condition; if coral remains bleached for more than a week, the chance of death soars according to NOAA scientists. Without the algae, the coral will die; without the coral the reef fish will also die-off.

In the Indian and Pacific Oceans the mortality rates have been in the 90 percent range over the past few years. The 2005 level of coral die-off is greater than the previous 20 years combined. In February NOAA reported 96% of lettuce coral, 93% of star coral, and 61% of the iconic brain coral in St. Croix, USVI has bleached.

The coral bleaching is but a symptom of a greater event, the widespread global environmental degradation; John Rollino, the chief scientist for the Bahamian Reef Survey and biochemistry professor M. James Crabbe of the University of Luton near London reports the evidence of global warming is overwhelming.

Other reports indicate global warming will cause the sea level around the world to rise 13 – 20 feet over the next hundred years. This would bring the oceans to levels not seen in nearly 130,000 years. Scientists are making these predictions based on models that simulate past, present and future climates and by analyzing records of previous temperature rises indicated in samples of ice and coral.

The ice melts in the Arctic, Greenland, and Antarctic ice sheets are rapidly accelerating. Ice sheets the size of Rhode Island have broken free in the Antarctic; these sheets have been in place for over 13,000 years. The world's ice and snow glaciers have accelerated movements on their trek to the sea and they are



receding on the mountain tops. There are scientific theories this added fresh water in the world's oceans will disrupt the ocean's 'conveyor belt' which circulates the world's ocean currents. When this happens, the stage will be set for another Ice Age.

What can we do as individuals to help? Be aware of how our actions leave a mark on our environment; conserve, recycle and stop pollution wherever possible. Be aware that your vote may have the biggest personal impact on changing the world.

Besides being aware of the environment around us, over the next 20 years I'm going to take as many dive trips to the Caribbean, Hawaii, and the South Pacific as possible. I only hope I'm not too late to witness the beauty and wonder of our underwater world. Suggest you consider doing the same!

**KEEP ON DIVING!!**

## Dive Reports

**Waterman's Wall**

by Scott Boyd

Waterman's Wall is one of those dive sites that I had read many glowing dive reports about

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and had always wanted to dive. Jon and Keith wrote, "This is definitely one of the best wall dives in Puget Sound. It is massive, well encrusted with marine life, and offers some striking structure. This site definitely makes my top 10 sites list for Puget Sound."

Parker wrote, "Waterman's Wall is probably one of the best kept secret dive sites in the central Puget Sound. Waterman's is a huge multi-level wall, featuring some incredible sponges and soft corals that most of the Puget Sound dive sites do not offer. The wall generally starts in around 40 fsw, and gradually continues down until 60 fsw. At this point, depending on where you are, the wall becomes vertical, and drops down to 180ish fsw. This site beats Sunrise Beach, and all the others, except for the Diamond Knot. Waterman's is absolutely spectacular, and I hope you get a chance to dive it! No wait, I hope I get more chances to dive the wall - you can stay home if you like."

So I had been looking forward to diving this site for a long time and when I received a call from the crew of Porthole Charters asking if I wanted to join them for a "crew dive" of Waterman's Wall, I gladly took the day off from work to meet the boat at the Manchester Ramp VERY early in the morning. The wind was up, but the sun was shining as we motored around Glover Point and stopped next to the Waterman Navigational Marker just West of Rich Passage. Junior and I geared up for a deep dive and splashed in to about 40' of water, swimming to the edge of the wall to begin our descent. Wow! The wall is very craggy, and is covered with encrusting algae, sponges and soft corals. There are hidden spots all over the wall that are full of all kinds of the critters that we love to see while diving.

There was almost no current due to the very low exchange that day. However, you could see from the large number of giant barnacles (which love high current), that this site experiences very high currents, which makes sense as it splits the current going into two separate basins. The bottom of the wall where we descended was about 170' deep, but the best parts of the wall are up in the 100-110' depth range. On the way back up the wall, we stopped at about 115' where we spotted the largest octopus I had ever seen. He had a huge den with two separate entrances. He was quite active and appeared to be trying to either catch or chase off the rockfish that would dart in one entrance while he was occupied with the fish on the other side. It was quite comical to watch him dart back and forth, from side to side, arms trying to snatch a rockfish. I bet we spent a good five minutes watching this character and laughing through our regulators before moving along.

Another ten feet along the wall and we found another mid-size octopus and then several wolf eels. The sponges and corals were bright, beautiful and healthy along the wall, as were the heart crabs and many other amazing critters. During our deco stops up on the shallow shelf, Tom Mumford would have been proud of me, as I admired (and tried to identify) the many types of seaweed and kelps that I spotted.

After a short surface interval, we motored over to Blake Rock for a nice, although rough, dive. The wind was up and the waves were getting up to about 4 feet, but we enjoyed the dive even if we did swim the wrong way. Oops! I did spot my first Rock Greenling, which is even brighter and prettier than the Kelp Greenlings that we have seen recently in the Tacoma area. All in all, the first dive was amazing, the second was wet, and it sure beat the heck out of going to work!



Disclaimer: Waterman's Wall is an advanced boat dive in a high current area. It should only be attempted during very small tidal exchanges with a live boat pickup. It is also very easy to get deep at this site, so I would not recommend diving this site without a redundant gas supply. Divers have died at this site before, and in one case the diver's empty "Spare Air" bottle was found sitting on the ledge at 60'. But that's not really a redundant gas supply, and is probably a discussion for another day.

GPS Coordinates:  
N 47° 35.15' W 122° 34.30'

### Orlando-

*by Steve Griffith*

Okay. Call me a wimp, or a wuss, or whatever. It was still fun.

Last week I followed my wife to a business meeting she was attending in Orlando, Florida. After performing the amazingly tough duty of hanging out at the pool drinking margaritas and watching bikinis walk by, and going to Margaritaville in Universal City to drink more margaritas, I finally got a break and we moved from her meeting hotel to Walt Disney World to start a short vacation.

After checking in, I gathered my mask and a swim suit and headed over to EPCOT center. A group of about 14 of us divers were met outside The Living Sea exhibit and taken in to begin a rather unique experience. A word of explanation: The Living Sea is a huge seawater aquarium. It holds millions of gallons of sea water that is home to coral reefs, sharks, rays, sea turtles, groupers, grunts, and any number of other species of

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tropical sea critters.

After a briefing, signing the usual release form, and forming buddy teams, we got into shorty wet suits and booties and moved to the top of the aquarium tank. There we geared up, and started our dive. We were initially lead around as a group to get familiar with our environment. This included going by the windows so that spectators could gawk at these strange people who think it's okay to dive with sharks (We were told that we'd be the hit of the show). We then went one at a time into and out of an underwater globe filled with air, so that we could take the regulator out of our mouths and wave at the camera. (One of their divemasters had the duty of videographer). Following that, we were released to continue on our own. After all, who can get lost in a fish tank?

The water was clear, the inhabitants seemed to tolerate us well, and the whole experience was unique. One thing I noticed right away: It was easy to establish and hold neutral buoyancy with only 10 pounds of weight and wearing a shorty. And the air consumption is lighter in warm water.

When the dive was over, we cleaned up and then went to their education center where we were given a certificate, T shirt, some snacks, and watched the DVD of the dive.

The whole experience was neat. The dive is a bit pricy considering, but 100% of the cost goes into the Disney Conservation Fund, so I considered it well spent.

If you're ever going to Orlando, and have the time, you should give this a shot. It's a little different, and well worth the time.

C Ya in the water.

### **Edmonds, Club Dive**

*by Scott Boyd*

On a blustery March morning, eight Kelp Krawlers made the long drive up to Edmonds Underwater Park to explore Washington's most popular dive site. We arrived plenty early, secured good parking spots and strolled up the street for a BIG breakfast at Claire's Pantry. After filling up our bellies, we waddled back down to the beach to brave the crashing surf.

The big waves made getting into and out of the water much more challenging than normal, but everyone quickly disappeared below the waves and swam out in search of the park's many features. The surge from the waves reminded several divers that BIG breakfasts are probably not a good idea, but everyone had a pleasant dive.

Most of the wrecks out by the Triumph have collapsed, the lings were huge as always, and we were just starting to head back in when I was thinking to myself, "I really haven't run into any crabby cabbies yet". Of course as soon as I thought that, a large cabezon came racing straight at me, veered off and slammed into my side. I swam a few quick kicks away (to get out of his

"space") and slowed down. The little bugger then snuck up behind me (where I couldn't see him) and hit me twice in the back of the legs! It startled me so bad, I nearly had to change my shorts, and I kicked rapidly to get away from my tormentor, which of course caused my calves to cramp up! Some dives are just better than others!

Divers were: **Scott and Janet Boyd, Mark Reece, Carolyn Thomas, Amy Kurtenbach, John Brown, Steve and Carolyn Fornoff.**



### **Day Island Wall-**

On a sunny Sunday morning in march, several Kelp Krawlers dove Day Island Wall the lazy way, from a boat! The cherub was in his usual spot guarding the north end of the wall, and the wolf eels and octopus greeted us from several dens scattered along the wall.

At the north end of the wall, we headed off into the boulder field and spotted all kinds of interesting critters, including a very bright orange Umbrella Crab along with several juvenile war-bonnets and gunnels. We had a very pleasant dive, and surfaced after our safety stop to find Rick's Naknek approaching to pick us up. We all had a good laugh when we explained that we weren't part of his group, and he offered to take us back in for only, "half price!:"

### **March Meeting Notes**

The deadline for the Logo Contest was extended until April 30th. Only 3 logo drawings have been received so far.

We have 24 divers signed up for electronic delivery of the Newsletter. This is saving the dive club more than \$250/year, which has showed up already in Ingrid's treasurer's report. Thanks to all the club members that have volunteered. If you

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wish to receive the electronic version of the newsletter (with color pictures, arriving in your email about 5 days ahead of the printed version), please let Scott Boyd know.



**Dr. Tom Mumford** (aka *Kapn Kelp*) wowed the dive club with a fascinating presentation on the over 600 kinds of seaweed found in our area. He discussed the Three major types of seaweed, Red, Green and Brown, giving examples of each type and showed photos of the various types, including the encrusting Corallinales algae that we commonly see (and I always thought was a sponge). This calcified type of algae makes up the bulk of most coral reefs in the world.

Tom also discussed the intriguing life-cycle of kelp and how the population cycles with the boom and bust of urchins (which are eaten by otters and urchin harvesters). Other interesting tidbits from his presentation included the “fluorescent orange” seaweed that we sometimes encounter in Hood Canal, are actually a “stressed” plant, and may be the result of the low dissolved oxygen in the environment.

Rick Cooper talked about his awesome trip to Manta Resort on Glover’s Reef in Belize, and Bonnie Smith gave a brief overview

of her trip to the Seychelles and recommended Ed Robinson’s in Maui.

Wayne will be in Florida during the Wooden Boat Festival on May 13,14, so Steve is looking for volunteers familiar with the touch tank setup to take charge of the Touch Tanks in May. Please contact Steve Fornoff if you’d like to volunteer for the Touch Tanks in May.

Meeting Attendees: **Alan, Ingrid and Teale Niles, Amy Kurtenbach, John Brown, Mark Reece, Carolyn Thomas, Jamie Welsh, Steve and Carolyn Fornoff, Steve Griffith, Don Noviello, Wayne Campbell, Rick Cooper, Laura Schleyer, Bonnie Smith, Mike Scholl, Richard Penny, Steve Sutton, Scott and Janet Boyd.**

### Upcoming dive trips:

**Pac Adventures, April 16th**, contact Steve Fornoff.

**Cozumel, May 25-31**, contact Steve or Carolyn Fornoff.

**Neah Bay**, Porthole Charters, **Aug 18-20** and **Sept 22-24**, contact Underwater Sports.

**Sulawesi trip, January 10-23, 2007**, contact Bonnie Smith

### **Underwater Photo Contest**

Photographers, be sure to submit your best images from the Pacific Northwest to the **Kelp Krawlers Photo contest**. Selected images will be published in **Northwest Dive News** magazine and **Cash Prizes** are being awarded.

Get the details at <http://www.kelpkrawlers.org/Contest/>

**Special Thanks** to all of the Kelp Krawlers that **contributed to the Newsletter** this month. The dive reports and Trip reports are most appreciated! **Keep them coming!**

Photographers, send me your photos with your dive reports!

## Calendar of Events

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>April 16th:</b>  | <b>Club Dive, Pacific Adventures</b> , contact Steve Fornoff.                                      |
| <b>April 18th:</b>  | <b>Club Meeting</b> , 7:00 PM, many members arrive early to eat and socialize before the meetings. |
| <b>April 21st:</b>  | <b>Club Dive, Sekiu Jetty</b> . Contact Alan Niles.  |
| <b>April 25-29:</b> | <b>Channel Islands Dive Trip</b> with Optiquatics. Full. Contact Amy Kurtenbach.                   |
| <b>April 30th:</b>  | <b>New dive club Logo entries are due</b> . Contact Amy Kurtenbach.                                |
| <b>May 12-14th:</b> | <b>Wooden Boat Festival</b> , Touch Tanks.   |
| <b>May 13th:</b>    | <b>Treasure Hunt</b> . Northwest Dive News. Owen Beach, Tacoma                                     |
| <b>May 16th:</b>    | <b>Club Meeting</b> , 7:00 PM, <b>David Behrens</b> , Nudibranch Behavior and Photography          |
| <b>May 26 - 31:</b> | <b>Cozumel Dive Trip</b> , Blue Diamond Dive Tours, contact Steve or Carolyn Fornoff               |
| <b>June 20th:</b>   | <b>Club Meeting</b> , 7:00 PM  |
| <b>June 25 - 2:</b> | <b>Palau Dive Trip</b> , Palau Aggressor II, Capital Divers, contact Craig Brown                   |
| <b>Aug 18-20:</b>   | <b>Neah Bay Dive Trip</b> , Porthole Charters, contact Justin at Underwater Sports                 |