



# KELP KRAWLERS DIVE CLUB

September 2010

[www.kelpkrawlers.org](http://www.kelpkrawlers.org)

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## PREZ SEZ

By Dave Miller

## Octopus Hole Lives up to it's name...



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Kelp Krawler dues:  
\$15 single or  
\$25 for a family  
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As most local divers know, Octopus Hole is no more than a wide spot in the road just north of Hoodsport and Sund Rock. To the south of the sparse parking area is a small point. At this point, at a depth of 25 to 50 feet is a wall known for years to be the home of many Giant Pacific Octopus (GPO). My early experiences at this location were less than overwhelming, as I rarely spotted our club mascot in these fabled crevices. Numerous day excursions and a couple of night dives only led me to the belief that this site was not aptly named. As time went on, I lost interest in Octopus Hole and moved on to more dynamic locations, such as Sund Rock and Flagpole point. Consequently, it has been at least three years since I have gone diving at "The Hole".

On a rainy Sunday I threw my gear in the truck and headed up to revisit the legendary lair of the GPO. Accompanying me were John, Dorothy, Mark and Carolyn. We came equipped for one dive since our experience has been that you can "see it all" in one dive. Fortunately, the rain abated, giving us an opportunity to suit up without takin' on water before gettin' in the water. Once in the drink, it appeared that the coast was clear. Though it was windy, with significant surf, the visibility was excellent. Probably thirty feet.

We reached the wall after about a ten minute journey. On the way, I noticed several giant nudibranches and exceptionally large "spot shrimp". I also found two octos before even reaching the wall. Once there, another large "kelp krawler" was in the first crevice I peered into. Twenty feet farther down, was the home of another. By this time, Mark and Carolyn were flashing for my attention in the direction I had just come from. As I approached, they pointed their finger and lights at the nearby wall. As I came closer in search of what they were pointing at, I still couldn't make it out. Then, glancing to my left, about a foot-and-a-half from my face, was an octo sitting out on the cliff face... blending in with the rock. I was startled and pulled back quickly. I must have startled him, as well, since he started crawling back towards his den!

Our intention was to do one long dive, not really knowing what 'long' would be... since our memories of this spot were less than... well... memorable. We certainly got more than we bargained for today! As we explored the wall and the boulder fields around it, we encountered many occupied dens. At one point, we veered east to check out the deeper depths. Not finding anything interesting in the dark, we turned at 93 ft and headed back to the wall. In the end, I am sure I saw at least twelve GPOs, including three in one den alone. We also encountered wolfies, small red octos, grunt sculpin, and considerably more sea urchins than I am used to seeing in Hood Canal.

My dive ended after 61 minutes, and I didn't even reach the end of the wall. Mark and Carolyn hauled up the rear with a bottom time of 82 minutes! To quote Mark; "If you had told me that I could do an 80 minute dive at Octopus Hole, I'd have said you were crazy!" Well, now I can say that YOU would be crazy NOT to check it out. It is an easy dive with everything you would want to see above 70 ft. There is a slightly rocky trail down, but very doable. We will definitely be heading back there soon!

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## **GEAR ABBEY**

**By Mark Reece**

**Gear Abbey,**

I've been diving in some pretty dark places lately so I decided to take a flash light with me. The light I bought at the dollar store was advertised as being water proof. But my experience with dollar store items is that their advertising sometimes overstates the quality of the product. I decided to add some protection and put the light in a zip lock bag to keep it dry. I'm not exactly sure when the bag leaked, but it did, and the light only worked for a very short time. Once again I've been stung by inaccurate advertising. The zip-lock bag leaked and the light wasn't water proof after all. What can I do? I tried one of those zip-lock bags with the double and triple zippers and the light still quit. I tried doubling up the bag and it still leaked. Please help me Gear Abbey. I don't want to waste any more money on flash-lights and zip-lock bags.

Signed, "I am In the Dark Dennis".

Dear "In the Dark Dennis",

I can see your problem from here, even in the dark. The pressures we experience while diving are too great for equipment not designed specifically for scuba. Save your pennies, turn the desk light on, and I will try to enlighten you.

As with all scuba equipment purchases, you need to determine how you are going to use the light. Is it for night time, limited visibility dives, daytime, or is it for signaling purposes only. The depths that you dive and the length of time you will be on the dive play a role in your decision, also.

### **Here are the basics.**

*Halogen lights vs LED lights.* Halogen, or Xenon lights are like the common light bulb with a glass bulb and a filament inside. They are fragile and hard knocks will damage the light bulb... and they are not cheap to replace, even though the original cost of the light itself is less expensive than an LED.

LED lights are very durable and are not subject to breakage with rough treatment. LED lights typically give off a whiter light than Halogen lights and the batteries will last 3 to 4 times longer typically, as well. LED lights are more expensive originally, but you will quickly make up the cost in battery savings and light bulbs, if you break one.



### **Rechargeable vs disposable batteries**

Again it depends on the usage. If you dive frequently and use the light often, then it is well worth your while to purchase rechargeable batteries. The cost is more effective and you don't have to worry about batteries ending up in the land fill or disposing of them properly.

### **Power and effectiveness**

You can realistically dive with Cyalume light sticks. These are the ones that you bend and break the interior container and they chemically glow. They will give you better light than your flashlight in a zip-lock bag, but still aren't very bright. However, most people use these as tank markers and not for primary illumination.

You can buy lights that take AA batteries or up to 8 C-cell batteries. These are typically called pocket lights because they can be stored in a BC or other pocket. Prices range from \$30 to \$250. They come in Halogen and LED bulbs. These will eventually make great back up lights because LIGHT ENVY usually sets in about this time.



Pistol grip lights are larger and usually hold D-cell batteries so you will have more power and brighter lights that will last longer. You can usually buy rechargeable packs for this quality of light as well. They usually have a lanyard of some type to hang from your wrist in case you let go of the pistol grip. Prices range from about \$200 to \$400 or more. They will come in both Metal Halide, LED and Halogen light bulbs.



The next step up is usually for the serious diver, and these are called Canister or 'Can lights' for short. These come with many different wattages of power, and most are rechargeable. These have a separate canister for the batteries you strap to your belt and a chord that goes to a light head that you hold in your hand. They are easy to use and keep both hands relatively free. They range from about 6 watts of power to 18 watts and more. They make a dark cave light up like the sun is shining. These lights are in the SERIOUS diver category as they can cost \$1000 and up.

I suggest you pick the light that fits your diving style and budget. The pocket lights work great for the recreational day time diver wanting to look into nooks and crannies, and for signaling. However for technical diving or if you dive a lot in limited viz or night time conditions, and like the extra convenience of keeping both hands free while diving, then the Can lights will probably work better for you.

Be careful in your purchase as you might cause, or even experience, the very Serious condition of LIGHT ENVY. Remember not to feel bad if somebody else's light is bigger than yours and you experience a case of LIGHT ENVY. It isn't a pleasant feeling, but it will pass. You know what they say about people with BIGGER lights don't you? They are just trying to make up for ...something ... Keep diving "In the Dark Dennis" or put some Dive lights in your next dive to see what you've been missing. Sincerely, Gear Abbey

Gear Abbey...

*Mark Reece*



### Our Trip "South of the Border"

**Or: Tales of the Mexican King Crab**

**By: Kim Stenek**

I started our trip to Mexico with 84 dives under my belt (well, not really because I have an integrated weight system in my BCD, but you get my drift!) I boarded the plane back to Washington with 92 dives and a whole lot more confidence!

My husband, Tim, our friends, Rand, Tim and Deb and I spent two weeks in the Yucatan Peninsula diving between Akumal and Cozumel...talk about an adventure! One thing I can say, they sure grow 'em big in Mexico!

My first experience with this was one of our first dives in Akumal, an ecological resort where our friends were staying. We were in about 40 feet when Maurice, our guide, started banging on his tank signaling that he'd found something cool to share with us. I wasn't sure that I wanted to waste my camera battery on a picture



of a rock. As I zoomed in I noticed that the “rock” had four feet. Zooming in tighter, it finally dawned on me that I was looking at the most gigantic turtle that I have ever seen in my whole entire life! What an amazing sight; just tucked into an underwater cave! We moved on far too quickly so as not to disturb his slumber.

The next “aha” moment came in the form of an enormous bright green moray eel, just out for a stroll on a summer day. Now, I have read that eels only flash their pearly whites because they are plagued with poor eyesight and are just hoping that something tasty flies by. I didn’t want to test that theory, if you know what I mean, so I snapped a few “Kodak moments” and again we floated away.



Our last dive in Cozumel was at a place called Chankanaab. We stayed around 30-35 feet the whole dive which meant more air time for all! This is where

we saw the mother, or perhaps father, of all crabs! As Tim’s dim light crept into the dark ominous cave (make a mental note, buy more batteries) I couldn’t shake the feeling that I had been dropped into sci-fi flick where the mad scientist went too far, creating a monster! This crab was mind blowing!



After the dive, Tim ran back to ask what kind of rare crab it was, the guide told us it was a King Crab. We all walked away puzzled. What was a King Crab doing in Mexico? Our illustrious dive club president may have hit the nail on the head when he jokingly teased that maybe he, too, was on vacation! Well, if that’s true, Mr. Mexican King Crab, I hope your vacation was a memorable and meaningful as ours!





The 29th Annual West Coast Oyster Shucking Championship and Washington State Seafood Festival October 2nd and 3rd, 2010.

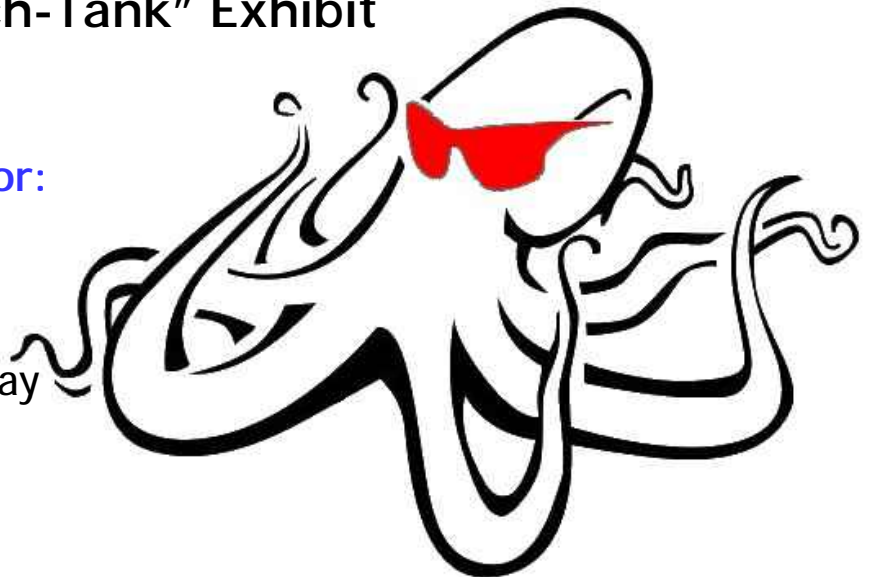
Mason County Fairgrounds - Shelton, Washington. Shelton Skookum Rotary Club Foundation OysterFest is held annually on the first full weekend in October. The gates are open to the public from 10am to 6pm on Saturday and 10am to 5pm on Sunday.

<p><b>Speed &amp; half-shell shucking contests</b></p> <p><b>Seafood Cook-Off</b></p> <p><b>Art &amp; Photography Contests</b></p>	<p>WEST COAST OYSTER SHUCKING</p>  <p>CHAMPIONSHIP AND WASHINGTON STATE SEAFOOD FESTIVAL</p>	<p><b>Wine-tasting!</b></p> <p><b>Microbreweries!</b></p> <p><b>Seafood Delicacies!</b></p>
<p><b>Cost : \$5.00</b></p> <p><b>Children under 6: Free</b></p> <p><b>Free Parking!</b></p>		<p><b>Free Exhibits!</b></p> <p><b>Free Entertainment!</b></p> <p><b>Come Hungry and Have fun!</b></p>

Admission is **FREE** for Kelp Krawlers who volunteer to help with the "Touch-Tank" Exhibit

**Volunteers are needed for:**

- Critter Gathering Dive
- Set-up
- Aquanuts food vending
- Monitor / Supervise Display
- Tear-down / Clean-up



Sign-up to volunteer at the Sept. Club Meeting or send an E-mail to: [welsh426@yahoo.com](mailto:welsh426@yahoo.com)

## **Always follow that Octopus**

**By: Scott Boyd**

KVI Tower is one of the most pleasant dive sites that we visit in Puget Sound. It never fails to please and is Janet's favorite dive site. We've made at least a dozen dives on the artificial reef which is just South of Point Heyer in Tramp Harbor. The hard structure there was put in place as rockfish habitat by the Dept of Fisheries and has become an outstanding Dive Site.

We have always enjoyed the wide variety of wild life that we observe at KVI, with dozens of delightful Ratfish, schools of rockfish and dozens of nudibranchs. What had always eluded me, was the location of a small wreck at this expansive dive site. Several divers that I know had spotted the wreck, but whenever I tried to find it, I always came up empty handed. The large piles of concrete structure that make up the fish habitat were very effective at hiding the location of the wreck, even from high-frequency side scan sonar.

On a recent visit to the site with the Boyd's and Reece's, we enjoyed one amazing dive, with a fair amount of current. The highlight of the first dive were a very brave Ratfish that swam right up to me, and parked right under my chest for several minutes. He was just inches away (as if seeking protection) and moved wherever I decided to swim. However, we hadn't seen any Octopus on the first dive, so that became the goal of dive number two.

On the second dive, the sun had come out and was streaming down through the relatively clear waters from directly overhead. The current had completely stopped and we slowly drifted down the steep slope, in search of an Octopus or two. It didn't take long to locate a small one, holed up under a rock. The midden of broken crab shells easily gave him away.

As we descended deeper, while veering North from our usual path, I spotted something that didn't look quite right in a sandy patch of the bottom. As I approached, I realized it was a huge octopus, sitting boldly out in the open. The Octopus then noticed our approach and began to "flow" down the slope towards deeper water. I followed him for quite a while, wondering where he would go. He eventually flowed over the top of an octagonal concrete pole structure and then down to the bottom and through a hole into

the bow of a fiberglass wreck that I had been seeking for many a year.

I laughed into my regulator and swam around the wreck to admire her lines. Then I swam inside to have a visit with my new friend, Mr. Octopus. He was sitting in the forward part of the 26' Cabin Cruiser and was obviously quite surprised to see me again. He raised up, changed colors a few times and then flowed up into the gunwale of the boat. There, he was obviously quite comfortable, allowing me to drift within inches of him and I admired him for quite some time.

Eventually, bottom time hit our planned turn, so we said goodbye to the wreck that had eluded me for so long. I thanked my new friend and carefully navigated back to the boat, so that I could find the wreck location again. As I sat at my safety stop, the moral of the story became clear, if in doubt, just follow the Octopus, he knows!



Janet Boyd and "Rat Fish"

Photos by: Scott Boyd





**The Mayan Temples of Tulum**

## LOCAL DIVE SHOP INFORMATION

Capital Divers 866-3684

[www.capitaldivers.com](http://www.capitaldivers.com)

The shop is located at 1621 Harrison Ave W, Olympia, WA, right across the street from Shure Kleen Car Wash. Nitrox, argon and hyper filtered air fills available.

Hood Sport 'n Dive 877-6818

[www.hoodportndive.com](http://www.hoodportndive.com)

The shop is located at 24080 N. Hwy 101, next to the public docks in Hoodspport. The shop is now open 7 days a week with extended hours, call or go on our web site for new hours. Stop by and fill up with Nitrox & Argon while you wait. And we offer discounted access to Sund Rock for paid KK members.

Underwater Sports 493-0322

[www.underwatersports.com](http://www.underwatersports.com)

We are in Olympia just past the Bike Tech store and next to Hot Yoga. Our address is 1943 4th Ave E. Please stop in to visit, and for your equipment, class, and air needs. All air fills are hyper-filtered. Air-card and Nitrox-card discounts are available for current Kelp Krawlers members. Please call or visit our web site for shop hours.

## Calendar of Events

September 21, 201 CLUB MEETING: 7 PM, Dirty Dave's Pizza - SPEAKER: **Alan Pleus**, Dept of Fish & Wildlife  
 September 21, 201 CLUB DIVE - Jorsted Creek. Hood Canal - Contact Steve Sutton  
 October 2-3, 2010 OYSTERFEST - Mason Cty Fairgrounds - Shelton Volunteer at September meeting (see page 5)  
 October 19, 2010 CLUB MEETING: 7 PM, Dirty Dave's Pizza - SPEAKER: **Jim Trask**, WA Scuba Alliance

Check the club web-site [www.kelpkrawlers.org](http://www.kelpkrawlers.org) for upcoming activities and dives.