

# **NZ Dolphin Underwater & Adventure Club**

## **Newsletter October 2023**

Club Meeting 7:00pm Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023

What's on : Kathrin Bolstad the 'Squid Lady'

**[www.dolphinunderwater.co.nz](http://www.dolphinunderwater.co.nz)**



**Club's Mail Address**  
14 Gails Drive  
Okura  
RD2 Albany



**Club Contacts Inside  
Website As Above**

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS: 2023/2024

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**Life Members** Barry Barnes, Margaret Howard, Peter Howard, Brian Horton, Reg Lawson, Roberto Tonei, Denis Adams, Trish Mahon-Adams, Dave Quinlan

**Honorary Members** Graham Thumah, Tony Enderby, Jenny Enderby, Eileen Slark.

**Cover Page Photo:- Mum protecting Bub in Nuie waters by Denis**

**11<sup>th</sup> October – Wed. – 7.00pm – Club Room – The Squid Lady – Kathrin Bolstad** – Northcote Road Ext'n

**15<sup>th</sup> October – Sun- 10:30am – Lake Pupuke & Quarry – Clean-up day – Dive, Kayak, Walk – BBQ**

**9<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> November – 10 days – P&O Cruise around NZ – Auckland and back to Auckland – Several Club Members are on this cruise if anyone else would like to join the trip please contact Margaret**

**Dive trips, NZ & Overseas** – Check out the dive shop's web sites, there is plenty available, but you do need to contact the shops in person to confirm costs & booking availabilities.

**Performance Dive NZ - Ph. 489 7782.** or <https://www.performancediver.co.nz/Dive+Trips++Events>

**Global Dive - Ph. 920 5200.** or <https://www.globaldive.net/page/trips> .

**Aucklandscubadive – Ph. 478 2814** or <https://www.aucklandscubadive.co.nz/dive-trips>

**Other events & suggestions please contact a committee member or organise it yourself & get the club to make up your numbers. i.e. – Dives, trips NZ & O'Seas, Events, Outings, Tramps, Dinners, Movies, etc.**

### Our Club's Trip Rules (Organiser's rules apply for overseas trips)

- A. Bookings allowed on all trips. *Two trips & club membership is a must.*
- B. **A deposit or full payment to be made at time of booking.**
- C. Full payment **MUST** be paid at least two weeks before departure date.
- D. Trip Organiser to handle trip & bookings, & Treasurer to handle finances. Cancellations due to weather will be refunded in full, or transferred to another trip.
- E. Members cancelling for any reason will lose full monies unless they find a replacement for their position on the trip.
- F. The trips Organiser will determine if there are enough people to run a trip & if not will notify cancellation two weeks prior to departure. **Non - financial members will be charged an extra \$10 on trips.**

**NB: All Memberships Now Due: Single – \$40 Family- \$50.00**

**For the club to continue we need paid up members see Margaret or Trish next meeting or do it online. Club's Internet bank account is 06 0122 0074227 00 & don't forget to put in your name**

**Club Membership also includes Affiliation to the New Zealand Underwater Association**



# Scuba Divers Share The Strangest Thing That Has Ever Happened To Them Underwater

By Landon Wexler Last Updated April 01, 2020



Going scuba diving is like visiting a whole different planet. Your body doesn't respond the same way as it does on land, you have to wear specialized equipment to survive, and there are numerous alien creatures and hard-to-identify objects roaming under the surface. It's no wonder that scuba divers have some frightening stories to tell—times that they found something odd or had strange encounters with undersea life. From having a dangerous leopard seal attempt to feed them to discovering inexplicable underwater ruins, no diver knows what strange thing might happen to them on their next aquatic adventure.

In this list, you will find stories posted by real divers who have come across something so strange and scary that they just had to get online and share it with the world. Don't forget to breathe!

## Training in the Macabre

My grandpa was in the Australian Navy during the Vietnam war. They were taught to shake the hand of deceased sailors when recovering the bodies to make them more comfortable and familiar with handling a body. On my grandpa's first recovery dive, he shook the hand of a deceased sailor and the arm came off the body. He had to keep his cool and bring the body up.



## Blocking Out The Bottom



Rescue diver in The Bahamas. I had to look for a missing diver down in a blue hole (the entrance is below sea-level).

After an hour or two of searching, I went back into the blue hole to see if there were any signs of him. I saw the glint of his watch and his arm sticking out near the bottom.

I start descending down to the bottom to recover the body. On the way down, I realized that the "bottom" was a school of sharks that must have been there for breeding. So many sharks that they blocked the view of the actual bottom.

I descended into the darkness, grabbed his arm (couldn't stand to look at the body), and started ascending. The sharks followed and were circling both of us. I had to take a break halfway at around 65 feet as to not get the bends. Scared the poop out of me. He was struck by a passing boat

**No Reds, Just Black** Diving off of Pensacola, Florida... thousands of moon jellyfish. One stung me pretty bad on the arm. For non-divers, you don't see the color red the further down you go. So while the sting—which went all up and down my arm—turned red/pink all I could see was my arm turning black. It was so freaky. When we finished the dive the boat captain said he had been doing that job for 20 years and it was the worst sting he had ever seen and that I was extremely allergic.



## Psycho Partner

My partner lost his mind due to narcosis at 175 feet and a very heavy current. I had to lead him all the way through decompression while clinging to a rocky cliff face. All the while I was trying to figure out at what point I would have to let him go to save myself.

## Accidental Slam

A friend and I used to dive off Catalina Island, back in the mid-70s, to sift through the bottom for lost jewelry and stuff. The water was incredibly clear back then and made it easy to see the tiniest thing during the day, especially at noon. We were down one day and I was sifting through the sand when all of a sudden my vision went black and I was slammed hard to the floor, losing my mask and mouthpiece. I managed to find both, rolled onto my back to make it easier to clear my mask to see a pod of whales overhead. It was amazing that one them dispelled 10 feet of water with enough force that it was like a truck dropped on me. Careful not to get between any of them, we got to touch them as they swam by.

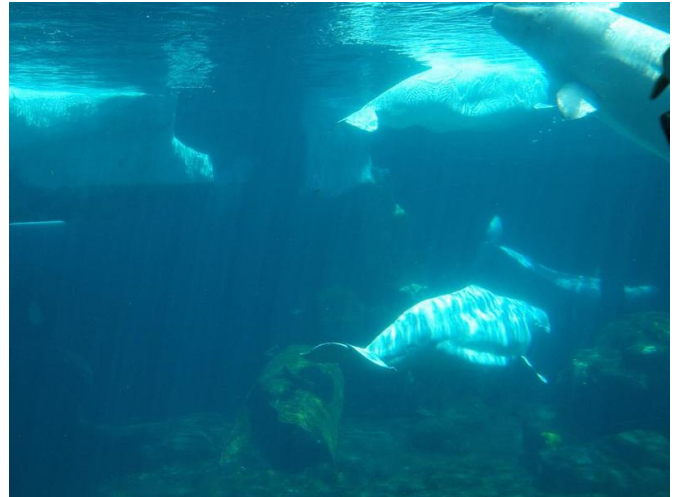
## Ooh, Shiny!



At the end of a dive on Little Cayman, I saw a large barracuda hovering a couple of meters below the dive boat. I pulled my dive knife, and he began swimming slowly toward me. Realizing it was shiny, I quickly sheathed it and he went back to the boat, to my great relief.

## Sea Lion Bullies

One time diving in Monterey I had a group of sea lions mess with me. They came to our area as we were very careful not to go near the seal rock jetty/breakwater. Three of them started swimming around me which I thought was cool, then they started bumping into me and smacking me with their flippers in the head and back. The dive master saw it and tried to intervene and then took off.





## Sand Gets Everywhere

Night dive in Bali. The water was pretty choppy and we hung around the sandy bottom for a while before ascending. When I got up, I inflated my BCD and took off my mask so I could float on the surface and look at the sky. Suddenly my BCD abruptly deflated and I started rapidly sinking down to the bottom, cause I was wearing extra weights. Kept pressing the inflate button and it simply refused to inflate. No mask, regulator out of my mouth, and pitch black darkness. I flailed around a bit for my secondary and managed to swim upwards enough (literally paddled for my life) for my buddy to grab me. Turns out a bunch of sand got in my BCD when we were underwater and choked it up, so it didn't inflate properly. It was horrible. I genuinely thought I was going to be pulled down and eventually drown before anyone could get to me.

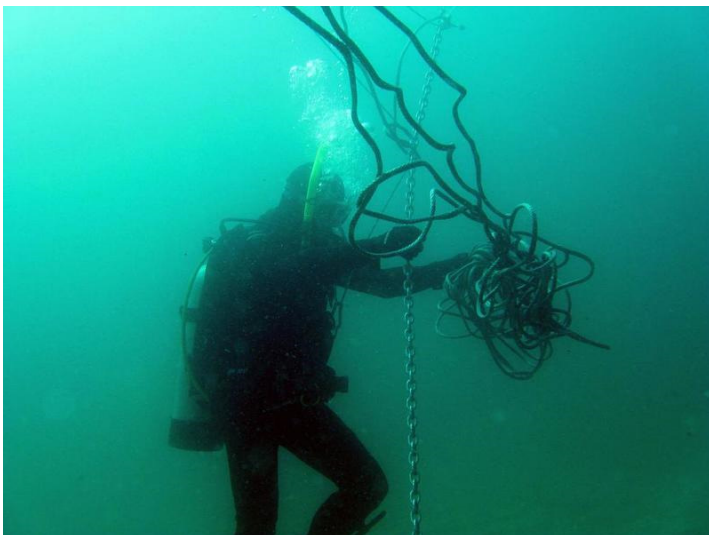


## A Terrifying Treat

Our dive master took my buddy and me through a short limestone cave in Cozumel, maybe twenty feet from end to end at about thirty feet depth. As I emerged from the other end, I looked to my right and saw the most gigantic moray eel I have seen anywhere, including tv, three feet from my face. His head was about fourteen inches tall, and he was just hanging out, breathing, not acting aggressively at all. The dive master knew what he was doing, as these animals are territorial and usually stay close to the same spot. This was a surprise treat he kept for divers he deemed experienced enough not to freak out.



## Tangled and Panicky



Diving in a super murky part of Lake Ontario, the group is surfacing after taking some bed samples, and my leg gets tangled in some old fishing nets that are latched onto a rock formation. There is near zero visibility, and all sorts of effort to free myself are going nowhere—I am totally ensnared. I go to pull my dive knife and fumble. Lose it for a split second before reacting and by some luck, managing to grab hold. Had it slipped away, I'm confident I'd have drowned. Pause for a minute, and mentally tell myself, "Slow down, be careful," before cutting free.

## Disappearing Sharks

Diving the Blue Hole in Belize. Most people feel inebriated the deeper they get, but I feel more anxious. The deeper we went, the more afraid I got... and then I saw the enormous sharks and had to strongly fight the urge to bolt directly to the surface. They're so far below you that they appear to fade in and out of the darkness. A dark pit of vanishing sharks is a huge nope in my book.



## Illegal Explosives



I was on a dive in the Philippines when we got hit by a shockwave from illegal dynamite fishing. It felt like someone hit me in the head with a sledgehammer and scared the heck out of me. The instructor said that it's happened a few times. Sound waves carry quite far underwater. He even spent a few weeks in a hospital with severe injuries after getting hit by one that was too close.

## Hungry Watchers

I used to be very into free diving (no oxygen tank) on the west coast of British Columbia. I trained myself over years to be able to hold my breath for over two minutes, which is plenty of time to see cool stuff. I used to take a paddle-board from the beaches to get to the more remote parts of the coastline. I'd been diving for about an hour, feeling like something was watching me. I decided to call it a day and get back on the board. Five minutes into my paddle back, I look behind me and see three adult sea lions following the paddle-board.



## An Unexpectedly Dangerous Mistake

On my honeymoon, I went diving with my wife. It was a big outfit, and lots of people were on the dive (with minimal "training" I might add). At the bottom of the site, I saw an octopus under some coral. So I grabbed my wife's hand and pulled her over to let her take a look. I floated there for a while, just enjoying the awesomeness of seeing another living creature going about its business



And then this familiar-looking woman swims up to me and gets her mask right next to my mask. One eyebrow is raised questioningly. Oh no! It's my *wife*! I look at the person whose hand I'm holding, and it's an adorably cute 17-year-old girl (I'd find out those details later) in a swimsuit very similar to my *wife*'s.

So... I played holdy-handy with a woman not my wife, on my honeymoon, and got caught at it. The look on my dear wife's face was the scariest thing I've ever seen underwater.

## Through The Regulator

I was on a 75-foot wreck dive with a group; it was our first dive of the day. Everything was going well, and we were coasting over the top of the wreck. All of a sudden, I got hit with a wave of nausea, almost like I was getting seasick underwater. I got the attention of the dive master, let him know I wasn't feeling well, but within a few seconds, I felt myself about to throw up. At the time, I didn't know what to do. We were 75 feet down, no way to safely make it to the surface, and I had no idea how to safely throw up under water. My reflex was to clear the way by taking my reg out of my mouth. I put it back in after the first round and





then saw the dive master signalling to me to keep it in and just throw up through the reg, letting it flow out the purge. I was oddly calm at the time, finished throwing up, safely ascended, and just floated at the surface until I felt better. It wasn't until the adrenaline rush died down that I realized just how bad things could have gotten if I had reflexively breathed in while my regulator was out. I felt very lucky that my body went into autopilot on the training I had, keeping a tough situation from turning to disaster.

## Goosed A Shark

I was spearfishing under a pier and thought I saw a big flounder. I went down to get it but there was something off about it. Not wanting to shoot a ray by accident I took a few more dives to check it out and still couldn't put my finger on what was "wrong" with this "flounder". I made the decision to lift it up with my left hand and shoot it with my right once I see what it is. The outline looked like a flounder but when I started to lift it, it shook off some sand and grew an extra couple feet. I'm happy I didn't shoot the angel shark and even happier he didn't bite me for goosing him.



## An Eye In The Dark



I was on a night dive, which almost always have a creepy undertone to begin with. This time I was looking around shining the light and out of nowhere a big barracuda is eye level with me, maybe three feet away from my face, staying completely still. My heart dropped and we both just stared into each other's souls until I realized I should probably slowly move away.

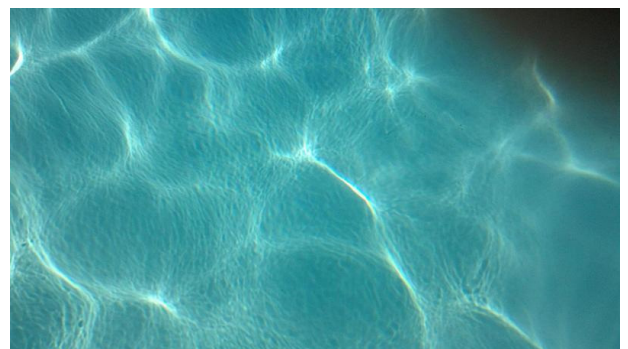


## Full Moon Fish Food

Full moon dive in October, Cabo San Lucas. A huge 10' Grouper came up out of the dark, took my fin, and tried to eat it off my foot! Freaked me out! My buddies enjoyed the show until he came after one of them... I don't do moonlit dives anymore.

## Physics Of Light And Water

I was around 13 years old on this diving trip. My parents are huge divers and we go diving in various locations around the world. It was the first dive of the day in Cozumel (which I may add has some of the best wildlife I have seen) and we were going relatively deep, 90ish feet or so. We go down, and I end up getting a gash on my arm from some coral. Nothing big, but I thought I was going to pass out as my blood looked green. What raced through my 13-year-old brain was that the coral I scratched myself on was toxic and that I would pass away 90 feet under water. I had a panic attack underwater and had to resurface while my parents helping me stay down so I wouldn't get bent. Turns out, red light waves cannot go that deep, and as I went up I noticed that my blood was starting to turn redder and redder. The dive master laughed and told me basic light physics.



## Training Terror



Oddly enough it happened in a training pool.

I was doing my Rescue Diver training and one of our little skill drills was a maskless buddy breathing lap around the pool. My buddy and I descended, got our first few breaths, and started going. However, when I didn't have the reg, another person descended on top of me and his tank clogged me in the head.

Obviously, I couldn't see and was not breathing from the regulator, so when I gasped in shock, I inhaled a bucket of water.

It was probably only a few seconds but it felt like ages of struggling to get out from under the guy, coughing and swallowing pool water while trying to get the air supply. The instructor saw what happened and thrust his secondary into my mouth so I could surface. I spent the next ten minutes throwing up pool water, but I eventually got back in and finished the training.

## Hunter Or Hunted?

Scariest was probably a buddy and I lobster diving at night in the keys. It was just him and me and there was this long, maybe 12-to-13-foot tall, rock ledge. He started on one end and I started on the other and we were working our way toward the middle. After about 20 minutes or so, we were probably 12 feet apart. Now, I remember it being pretty dark—in shallow water at least with the moon you can still kind of see ok, but you definitely still need a flashlight. There was very little moonlight this time, though. If you shined your light out you couldn't really see anything too far in front of you and the rest of the surrounding area was mostly sand with some small rocks.



Anyway, I had just looked up to check on him and kind of shined my light just over his shoulder and a 10-foot tiger shark just cruised past us about a foot off the wall... I never hugged a wall so hard in my life. The shark just cruised on off into the darkness and we never saw it again. I looked at my friend—he shrugged and went back to looking for lobster. I did too but I was looking over my shoulder every 10 seconds after that.

## Swimming Ingredients

I was on a dive tour in Isla Mujeres and as we were swimming away from the lighthouse we were engulfed by a school of huge barracuda. I tried to pantomime a biting motion with a shrug to the tour leader and he just gave a thumbs up, so we swam through them and they just parted for us to make way. I did go fishing the next day and caught a few and had some barracuda tacos and ceviche so I guess that's what they get for trying to intimidate us.



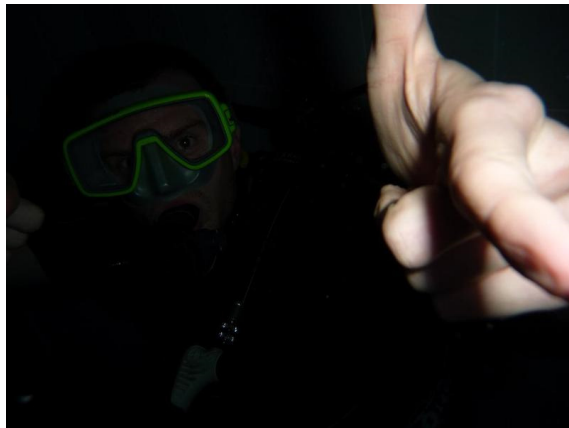


## Drifting Away

So it was my first night dive in Koh Tao. We were exploring the playground which is made up of sunken objects like toilets and climbing frames. At one point in the dive, we turn our lights off so we are floating around in the pitch black—it was very surreal with the glowing plankton and weird structures. Amazing.

Slowly, it starts to feel like we are going off course a bit. Now there is just sand, no underwater features or reefs, so we all decide to surface. Our dive master looks around and loudly says, “That’s not our boat, is it?!” He was pointing to a boat more than two miles out to sea. The water was pretty choppy and seeing our very experienced dive master sound increasingly worried was terrifying.

I reckon we were bobbing around for five minutes or so before we realized our boat was less than 100 meters away disguised by the lights from the island.



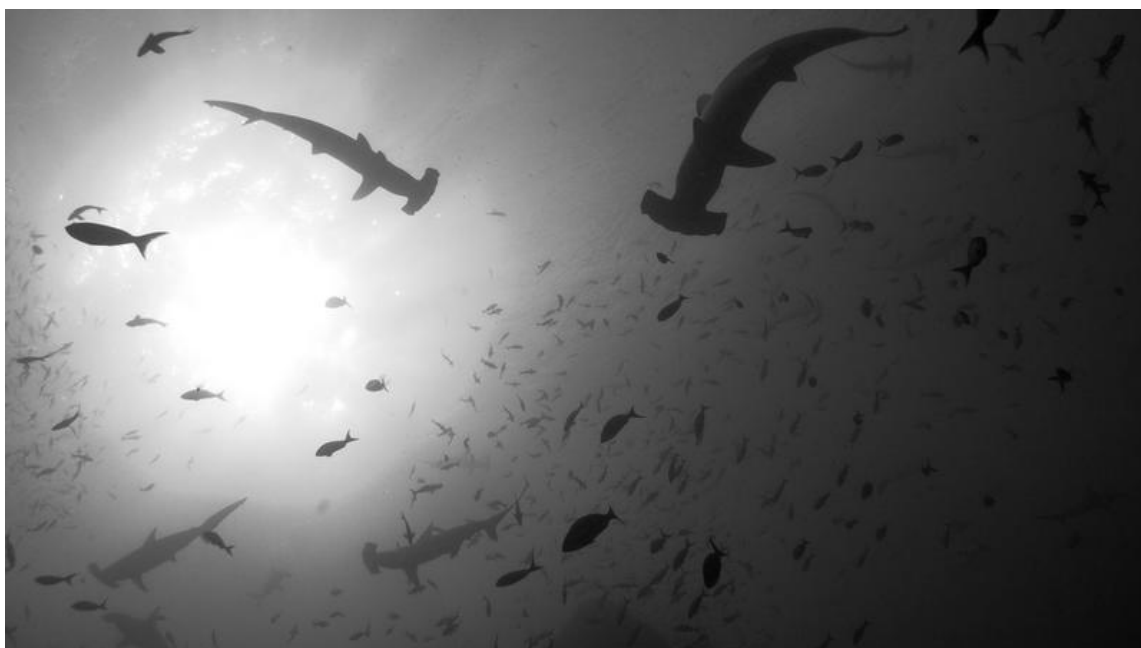
## Dry Under Water

About 50 feet under and 250 yards from shore, my throat got really dry from the canned air and I started coughing—violently. It was all I could do to keep my regulator in and not inhale water. One of the three times in my life I gave myself up as a goner and got lucky.



## Scarier Than Beyond Comprehension

Floating over a wall that’s deeper than you can comprehend and you start seeing shapes in the immense blackness—that’s pretty creepy, but worse was right after when I looked down at the group of hammerheads swimming along the same wall a couple hundred feet below me.



## A Crabby Experience



Five to ten minutes into the dive, we're greeted by a couple sea otters. We're right next to a jetty so I move closer to it and attempt to stay stationary so I can just sit and watch the otters.

My cousin has been right above me the whole time so when I feel a poke/pinch on my armpit I think it's just him or his flipper hitting me.

I turn to look and see that he's still above me. Adrenaline kicks in as the pinch has become stronger and I can't see what's touching me.

I spit out my regulator (the mouthpiece that provides oxygen) and tore my mask off in panic when the pinch started hurting.

I tried spinning around but I was moving into an incoming wave and it felt like I was being held back as well. My cousin *jammed* his regulator into my mouth and turned me around again. I thought he was trying to hug me. He had his arms around me and then let go. He grabbed my regulator and his own and swapped them. Then he turned me around again. A giant spider crab was retreating into a crevice in the boulders behind me. My cousin said it had at least *two* claws on me when he saw me pull my mask off.

He told me he understood my panic but he never took me diving again and I've never been diving again.

## Shark Stylist

I was on a shark dive in Fiji, and we were all just crouched behind a reef, not in a cage or anything. A big bull shark swam directly over me, close enough that it parted my hair. Got the ol' heart beating a little faster.



## Mud Storm

My scariest moment came when I was getting my open water certification in the Missouri River in South Dakota.



Looking back, it really wasn't that bad, but being the inexperienced diver that I was at the time, it freaked me out. We were doing one of our last dives before getting certified. We were at about 40 feet and we ran into a mud storm under water. It was the weirdest thing. I don't know what stirred everything up that bad down there, but it went from 10-15 feet visibility to not being able to see your hand if you held it in front of your face. My instructor had everyone hold onto a line so if that happened you knew where everyone was and where to go to get out.



## Paddle Face

PADI Open Water Certification dive in a large lake in the midwest USA. The instructor mentioned that if we were lucky, we might see a paddlefish, but with 10-15 feet of visibility, it was unlikely. I had no idea what one of those looks like, and no one asked anything about them. Turns out they can be up to five feet long and have big gaping mouths and weird paddle shaped snouts. But we didn't know that. Down at 30-40 feet, about 10 minutes from finishing the dive, a paddlefish swam out of the murk and directly at my face, with its mouth wide open. I nearly shat myself. It went right around my head and we didn't see it again. I learned afterward that they're pretty harmless plankton feeders, but on my first dive in the water like that, it didn't seem that way.



## Storms and Stings



I was diving off the Florida Keys a short while after Hurricane Earl hit in 1998. It was the end of the dive and I was in the process of ascending so I was mostly looking down until something caught my peripheral vision. I looked up and there were HUNDREDS of moon jellyfish all around me. Apparently, the hurricane brought them in.

And yes, I got stung.

## Dark Current

End of a shore dive at night. Just two of us. No current when we went out; ripping current when we returned, so much so that we had to pull ourselves hand over hand along the guide rope running from the reef to the dock. If we'd been blown off it would have been a very difficult time finding a place to exit the water.



## A Ring Of Teeth



I went diving in the Gulf of Mexico. It's actually pretty shallow unless you're smack in the middle. Ascending back to the boat via the anchor line doing my stops at different intervals.

At 30ish feet from the surface, there is what looks like a school of fish forming a ring around the anchor line. They're all about two to three feet. Not too big.

At about 25 feet I start getting a better look: Barracuda.

There were 50-60 barracuda all forming a circle around the anchor line I was going up and they were all pointed down, looking at me.

Nothing happened. Apparently, they are very curious fish. Still scared the heck out of me. They did try to snatch a fish off my instructor's Q ring or whatever it is called (he was spearfishing) as he was climbing into the boat via the latter.

## Not A Friendly School

I went to the Blue Hole in Belize on my second dive ever. We went down to about 135 feet and I was pooping my pants. No narcosis, thank god. Another 50 feet below us was a school of huge bull sharks just circling around. The guide had told us not to worry, so I tried not to.



## Eaten And Eater

Diving for crayfish with my dad a few years back, I could just *feel* something watching me. It was creepy. I thought it might be Dad, but I could see him 20 meters or so away and not looking in my direction. I turned to look behind me... and there was a massive eagle ray about two feet from my face. Damn near had a heart attack, I thought it was a shark and I was about to be dinner.



I hit it with my catch bag and it bugged off but man did that scare the crawl out of me.

## Brown Waters

I went shark diving. We were told not to touch the cage and stay to the back of it, where it's facing the boat. Some woman was adjusting herself and touched the cage side that was facing the ocean. Three seconds after she moved her finger, a giant seven-meter Great White smashed into the cage and bit it, then left. Water was a bit brown afterward...





## Playfully Scary

I was free diving for abalone in Northern California and I felt a fin tap from behind, looked down to see a torpedo-shaped creature rapidly swimming by. Oh *no*. Then I looked up and saw a harbour seal staring at me from thirty feet away. As soon as we made eye contact, he submerged, got behind me, and did it again. He teased me for about ten minutes before getting bored.



## Rising Reef

A few hundred yards offshore in the middle of the night, I was on my back heading out to where I believed an underwater reef was located for finding lobsters. I was hit from underneath by something HARD that lifted me completely out of the water. The hidden reef was apparently just under the surface of the water (I could not see it) and the swell dropped. California diving.



## Scaring The Squid



I was 16 and making a night dive with my dad. My dad has made over 2000 dives so really experienced, I wasn't. My dad also made a lot of his own equipment and made this super bright diving light, which he also used to take photographs underwater. During the dive, we saw two squids swimming and we approached them. Then all of a sudden, they swam into me and it all went black for a second. I almost pooped myself because I didn't know what had happened and I really couldn't see anything. Then it all cleared up again. Turns out, the bright light from my father probably blinded them, and that's why they swam into me, which made them release their ink.

## Goliath Line Swallower

I was spearfishing and had a stringer of fish. On one of my dives, I felt a hard tug and turned just in time to see a goliath grouper inhaling my entire stringer which was tied to my belt. This experience was only made worse by the fact that I was free-diving and about 40 feet down.



## There's A Snake In My Face



Coming up from a dive in Indonesia I didn't realize a sea snake was coming up for air at the same time until I surfaced. Everyone on the boat just started yelling SNAKE. I kept my distance and it went back down, but it freaked me out how close it was. If they hadn't have warned me I might have run into it. I did a second dive and saw the bugger again—he kept following me for a bit and that freaked me out.

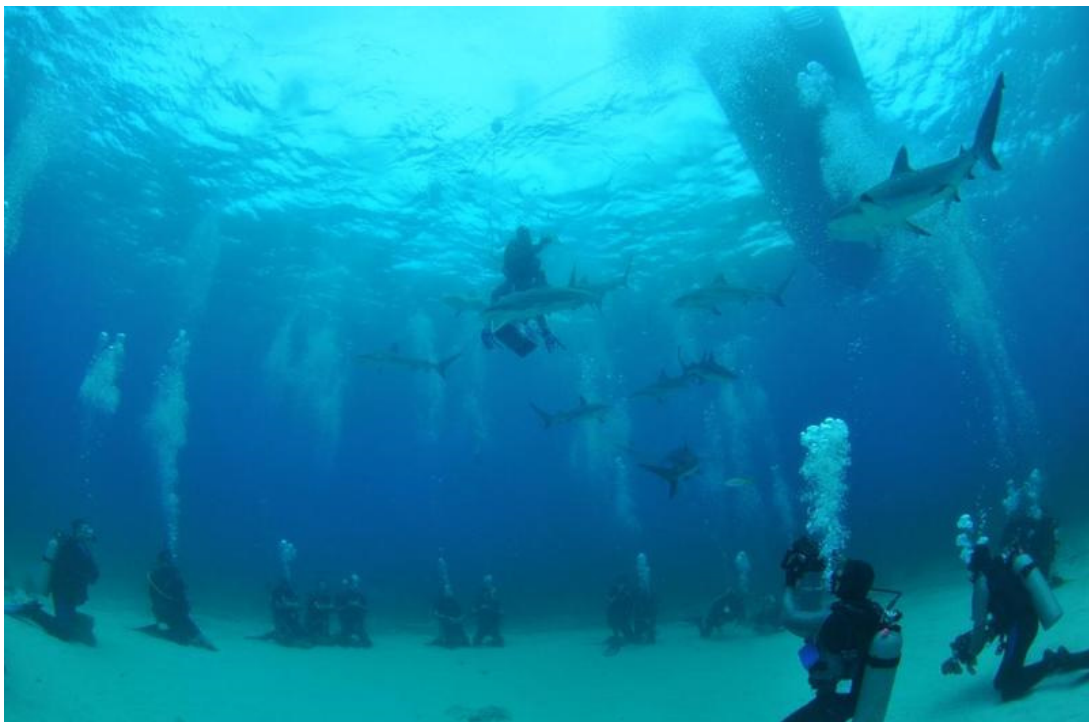
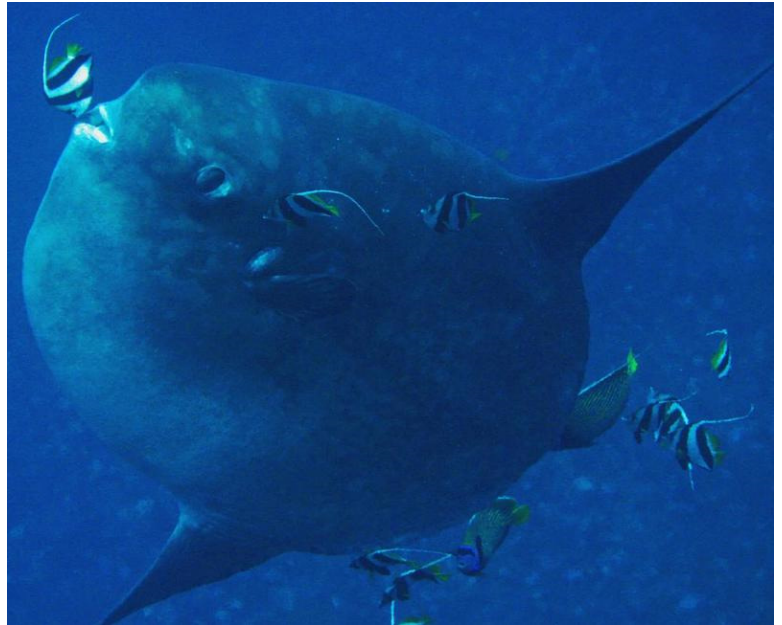
## Huge And Odd

“Well, this is actually quite nice. There are rays of sun coming down, and there's the fish and—OH MY GOD WHAT IS THAT IT'S HUGE!!!”

“Oh, a sunfish. Cool.”

## Bad Way To Catch A Shark

I did one of those shark diving experiences in the Bahamas where you sit on the bottom of the open ocean with a group of other divers in a semi-circle and a man in a chain metal suit feeds sharks dead fish and stuff. No cage. Well, you're instructed not to move and to keep your hands close to your body so a shark doesn't mistake it for food. For some reason, my air line from my tank on my back to my regulator was exceptionally long and stuck way above my head in a big loop. One of the sharks somehow managed to get stuck in it or something because I felt my line being pulled hard and felt this large animal struggling on my back. I bit down on my regulator as hard as I could with the fear of it being ripped out of my mouth and not being able to retrieve it. Luckily after 10 terrifying seconds, the shark got unstuck. I thought for sure I was about either have my head bit open or have my line ripped out of my mouth.





## Unseen Flipper

We were in a river in a city around Savannah, Georgia. We were looking for a sidearm that was thrown in to avoid detection. The water was zero visibility even though it was only seven to eight feet, and we were basically using our hands and feet to scour the area. After about 45 minutes and a lot of boredom, something big swam past me. It never touched me, but it pushed the water around me enough to flip me head over heels. (Imagine being underwater and pushing your hand past your face as fast as you can and feeling the water rush by.) I felt four tugs on the tending line, telling me to surface, so I immediately tugged the line that was attached to my partner four times and started to ascend. When I got to the surface, the guys on the boat started screaming at me to get out of the water.

A giant gator was seen entering the water and swimming in our direction. Even the local guy was a healthy shade of green. Ten years later, I still think about the alligator I never saw.



## So Many Tears



We were in Egypt for a week-long holiday, doing three dives a day on average. On the very last day, we're about 30 meters deep in a coral formation. To get out of the formation, you had to go through a tunnel that went down to a clearing. I'm slightly claustrophobic, so I already wasn't completely relaxed, and my ears were clogged up from all the diving we did so equalizing didn't go as smoothly as I wanted to. Halfway through the tunnel, I couldn't clear anymore. My ears really started to hurt, a really sharp, stinging pain. And I started to panic. I couldn't go back up because there were divers behind me, but I still had to go down several meters before I was out.

I don't think I've ever swam so fast to get out of that tunnel. My buddy had to help me surface because I was crying so hard. That was the day I decided that caves and wrecks will never be my thing underwater.

As an aside, having to clear your mask because your tears are filling it up is a really weird sensation.

## Hopefully Friendly Lions

I was snorkeling in La Jolla Cove near San Diego. This place is crowded with scuba divers, snorkelers, and kayakers. It also has sea lions. Lots and lots of sea lions. I saw them all on the rocks away from the people, so I naturally assumed they would keep their distance from all the people in the water. I got separated from my dive buddy (always a bad idea) and started exploring the coastal caves by myself. Since I was looking down into the water, I did not realize the rocks above me were covered with momma sea lions and their pups. I was in a part of the cave that was maybe five feet wide and eight feet deep when I see a sea lion swim right below me, literally two feet or less from me.

Since I was in a shallow cave, it seemed to come out of nowhere. I swam along and tried to get away from the sea lion rookery, only to encounter eight to ten more sea lions. Not another human in sight. These things are huge—like, seven feet long and 700 pounds. With big teeth. Like lions of the sea. Apparently, I was not the first snorkeler they have encountered, so they swam very close to me, but otherwise left me unharmed.





**Practice being safe & staying safe for you & your buddies & we will see you all at the club meeting**

**The MAF regulations vary in particular when it comes to your catch size/limits & locations.**

**Especially in the Hauraki Gulf area, things have changed.**

**Please familiarise yourself with them**

