

# *The Buoy Tender*

Marker Buoy Dive Club | Seattle, Washington  
OCTOBER 2012



Photo by Drew Collins.

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# President's Message

Settling down to write a Prez message while diving in Hawaii takes some discipline that I wasn't able to muster so I started this on the plane and finishing at home. We had an outstanding time with some exceptional diving. Not originally planned as a Club outing there were enough members there (Mark Wilson and spouse Connie, Gene Coronetz and Judi Brooks, Kelly Britz and Nancy Neuerberg) that it may as well have been. Our one BBQ dinner party we had was interrupted by a tsunami warning. I'll save those details for another day.

**Nominations:**

It's November and time to nominate for the Board. As always the entire panel is up for nominations. Some members are willing to go for a 2<sup>nd</sup> term. Positions vacant are:

Program Chair, Newsletter, Webmaster, Fund Raiser, Refreshments

I know most divers join the Club to dive. Taking part in business details is generally not on their fun agenda. It certainly was not for me either. But we are a Club, not a business, so that part

ends up falling to the membership. If you are willing to join in it certainly will be interesting, you'll likely get some personal growth out of it, you'll end up understanding a whole lot more about how a club runs which is pretty differently than a business in a lot of ways. An important component for me is giving back to the community at a level I can relate to, see, and affect. It's much more rewarding than the huge political systems that we are asked to deal with on a constant basis that seem so disorganized. Here's something you care about that you can do some direct good and provide immediate benefit for. There is a lot of satisfaction in that. We absolutely have one of the best running clubs in the NW. I've gotten feedback from traveling sales reps for dive products that visit a lot of clubs and we are a standout across the entire nation. It takes the talent and contribution from members to do that. Give some strong consideration to being part of it. And, we do have some fun doing it.



Manta primping for the Prez...

**Saving Seacrest GPO:**

I posted some specific links in the Yahoo Group about the recent GPO harvest that was done in Cove 2. It's long so I won't recreate them here. If you don't get the Yahoo messages routinely and want to know more I recommend you find that message and follow the links.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MarkerBuoys/message/28429>

One link I will post is for a petition toward this goal. Read it. If you are behind it I urge you to add your name. The people that will be making the actual changes need to see this is a large and directed community with a clear goal. That kind of weight makes a big difference.

<http://www.divenewsnetwork.com/index.php/newsevents/divingnews/dnnonlineexclusive/167-nwonlineexclusive/1184-save-the-gpo>

It has incited a firestorm of protest in the local community and hit local, national, and even international news. Our dive charter in Hawaii knew about it.

Out of the event there is a movement to protect the GPO in the Seacrest area. There may be branching out to change

the harvest regulation on a broader basis but this is still at the early discussion stage. By the time you read this there will have been one planning meeting of concerned members. From that a panel will be chosen to present to WDFW Special Meeting in Olympia on Thursday Nov 8 at 8:45am. Even if you have no intention of presenting (likely only 3-6 people will) a show of bodies clearly identifiable as divers adds weight to the event.

I plan on going and would like to hear from others that can do so.

Winter seems upon us. Patch those holes in your suit, check out your gear, and dive safely.

*Fritz*

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## COVER PHOTO

Photo taken by Drew Collins of our Club "Diving Maniac" Kimber Chard on his 12,091<sup>st</sup> dive (in 10 days!) at Possession Point State Park "Fingers"

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Next Marker Buoy Club Meeting; November 7, 2012 at 7:00 PM** @ the Sunset Hills Community Center... **Our featured presentation will be by Greg Jensen**, the leading authority and author on crabs and shrimp as well as expert on other species such as those pesky hard to identify sculpin will be our speaker. His talk will focus on local crabs and shrimp

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**You're invited**  
**Marker Buoy Dive Planning Party**  
**Sunday**  
(Veterans's Day weekend)  
**November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012, 4:00-8:00 pm**

**Hosts are Kimber Chard and Jill Grossman**

**Bring your tide logs and a pot luck item. We're planning dives to fill the calendar for the next few months and this is the place to be. Let's make this a great social event. (BYOB).**

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### November:

**The** month of wind and rain here in Clements, recently returned from whale Connick, who visited Taveuni, Fiji during ended on their trips with us, If only to of dive travel, and paint in our minds breezes to comfort us during chilly



the Pacific NW. I'd like to invite both Dan shark diving in La Paz, Mexico, and Jack October, to share the adventures experienced on their trips with us, If only to of dive travel, and paint in our minds the images of warm seas and balmy autumn nights!



## Dive Calendar

Date & Time	Location & Contact Information	Notes
Nov 7, Wed 2012	<b>MB Club Meeting</b> <b>Sunset Hill Community Center 3003 NW 66<sup>th</sup> St</b>	<b>Everyone welcome</b>
Nov 8 Thurs	Seacrest- Cove 2, West Seattle. Sunset at 4:41pm. No current issues.	Night dive exp. 2 lights + marker
Nov 10 Sat	Skyline/Burrows Pass, Anacortes. Some current. 1.6F> 1:00pm>1.2E.	Advanced-long swim, no facilities
<b>Nov 11, Sun</b>	<b>Dive Planning Party</b> <b>Kimber Chard and Jill Grossman host.</b>	<b>All divers</b>
Nov 17 Sat	Day Island Wall, Tacoma. Higher current exploration - 3.0E> 2:30pm slack > 3.1F. <b>RSVP</b> for this dive.	Mod skill level No facilities Limited parking
Nov 24 Sat	Sund Rock, Hood Canal. No current. Meet at Hoodspott dive shop. BBQ?	All divers. Gate fee-\$16/diver
<b>Dec 5, Wed 2012</b>	<b>MB Club Meeting</b> <b>Sunset Hill Community Center 3003 NW 66<sup>th</sup> St</b>	<b>Everyone welcome</b>

## Dives & Travel

(JOIN FELLOW MARKER BUOY MEMBERS ON LOCAL & EXOTIC DIVE OUTINGS)

### April 29 – May 5, 2013: God's Pocket, Port Hardy

Trip cost is \$2,100, with Anacortes Diving. Several Marker Buoy's already signed up.

Travel to the far North end of Vancouver Island to Port Hardy. This is where Captain Bill will pick us up for the 10 mile boat ride through the wilds of Queen Charlotte Strait and take us to Hurst Island, where God's Pocket Resort is located.

God's Pocket Resort is the only resident here nestled in a quiet cove off of Christie Passage. The resort is about a 5 minute boat ride from the famous Browning Wall, the most requested dive site in the area. Other incredible dives in the area are Barry Islet, Dillon Rock, Hunt Rock and Nakwakto Rapids to name a few. Each area is rich in colorful marine life from Wolf eels, Octopus, huge Lingcod, Clown Shrimp, Purple Ringed Top Snails, Grunt Sculpins, Sea lions and more nudibranchs than you can name.



God's Pocket Resort

Contact: Dan Clements



Photography by our fellow club member, Steve Kalilimoku, just keeps getting better. Your Editor thinks he's captured the image of a quillback rockfish at Cove 2, but I am hard pressed to state that with 100% certainty due to the vivid yellow color of the face. However, the shading of the body at the first dorsal spine leads me to believe this ID to be correct. If you have another ID suggestion, Please submit it for publication in the next BT Ed.

## Marker Buoy All-Womens' Dives:

Joyce started organizing some all-women dives a few years ago. I remember going to my first one being really nervous. As a newish diver with little confidence, I had only been diving with my husband who had always been so much more comfortable in the water than I was. I depended on him so much, from helping me put my equipment together before the whole time. I was not dive without my husband was coming, so here I lot. Was I going to have the tank more than it on correctly the 1st to be annoyed waiting because I was such a to keep up with them to expect me to do any- with doing? What I patient ladies, who ment when they saw asking, who communi- entering the water and



check. They had all been where I was and understood my worries. They knew my limitations and did not ask me to guide them to the Honey Bear. After the dive, we all went out to lunch to warm up and share stories. It felt like such an accomplishment for me. For the first time, I had gone diving with a different buddy and everything had gone well. I became a regular at the womens' dives and they help me build my confidence. I practiced skills and had a fun time at the same time. We shared the same cold water diving issues: How do you keep warm in our waters? What's the deal with my dry suit neck seal always leaking? ... And I made friends.

My husband is still my main buddy, but thanks to the Marker Buoys all-women dives, I have become more independent and am a much better diver.

*Nathalie Curtis*

# Environmental Stewardship



## REEF STATION NEWS

REEF surveys are a great way to contribute to citizen science. The database that is being gathered with your input is being used by organizations all over the world to among other things track critter populations and health. Not to mention filling them out will help you be much more aware of what you are seeing. And that can only add to your enjoyment of the dive.

So don't forget to fill out those REEF surveys. If you've never completed a survey or if you need a refresher on how to do one, here's an excellent webpage from Critter Watcher's that will give you everything you need to know. <http://www.pnwscuba.com/critterwatchers/quickstart.htm>

- Joyce Merkel

## REEF CRITTER OF THE MONTH

### Orange Social Ascidians

Metandrocarpa taylori and Metandrocarpa dura  
Member of the Urochordate Phylum

REEF monitors two species under the name of orange. Social ascidians - M. taylori and M. dura

**Description:** These colonial tunicates are found in contiguous groups or colonies ranging in size up to 12 inches in diameter. The tiny individuals in a group of M. dura are always connected by a thin tunic or sheet of tissue. M. dura individuals will be tightly packed together. M. taylori individuals may be less densely packed and may or may not be connected by a tunic.

As with all tunicates, each orange social ascidian has two siphons. Water is drawn in through one of the siphons, passed through the digestive system where any edible plankton are consumed, and then expelled, along with any wastes, through the other siphon. The siphons will appear as pairs of holes in the colonial mass (esp. for M. dura) and often the pairs of holes will appear in patterns. Some sponges may look like a colony of orange social ascidians. The holes in sponges do not occur in pairs or in patterns.

**Color:** Bright red or orange.

**Range:** British Columbia to southern California.

**Size:** Individuals grow to about ¼ in. tall and ¼ in diameter.

**Habitat:** Rock faces and other hard substrates in current areas.

**Depth:** Intertidal to about 66 ft.

**Behavior:** Found in current areas because the critter is a plankton feeder. Starts out life as a free swimming larvae with a notocord (precursor to a backbone). As they mature they find a hard place to settle on, attach themselves firmly to their new home, loose the notocord and live a happy sedentary life. The colony is formed by asexual reproduction or budding.

**Where to find them:** They are very tiny and the critters are easy to overlook. Keep an eye out for bright red or orange patches on rocks and explore these patches more closely to see if you have found one of these tunicates.

- Write-up contributed by Wes Nicholson of Critter Watchers



Spiny Headed Tunicate amid a colony of Orange Social Ascidiens

# Nudibranch Abundance

By Karin Fletcher

low are the results of my non-scientific survey of nudibranch abundance at a variety of dive sites in the Pacific Northwest ring November for the previous three years.

## Top Ten Nudibranchs for November (in order of abundance)

Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Acanthodoris nanaimoensis</i>	Nanaimo dorid
<i>Flabellina verrucosa</i>	Red gilled nudibranch
<i>Doto amyra</i>	Hammerhead doto
<i>Flabellina trilineata</i>	Three lined nudibranch
<i>Adalaria evincta</i>	Crowned dorid
<i>Dirona albolineata</i>	Alabaster nudibranch
<i>Cuthona divae</i>	Pink cuthona
<i>Dendronotus subramosus</i>	Stubby dendronotus
<i>Onchidoris bilamellata</i>	Barnacle eating dorid
<i>Acanthodoris hudsoni</i>	Hudson's dorid

## Nudibranch of the Month



**Name:** *Cuthona divae*

**Common Name:** Pink Cuthona

**Description:** Body is cream to pink. Simple rhinophores and oral tentacles (not tipped in white) are the same color as body. Cerata have brown to pink cores, are tipped in white and begin in front of the rhinophores. Resembles the hedgehog hydroid, *Hydractinia*.

**Size:** 18-34mm

**Range:** Vancouver Island, BC to Point Loma, CA

**Depth range:** 0-65 ft

**Food:** Hydroids - *Corymorpha*, *Hydractinia milleri*, *Hydractinia* sp.



## DIVING WITH MANTAS

By Judi Brooks

The manta rays (*manta birostris*), 12 in all, 'flew' in like B747's, swooping and barrel rolling within inches of the divers. The snorkelers hovering above us were experiencing similar exciting action. The dive shops place UK C-8 lights on the bottom of the reef and face them upward. They also have surfboards (for the snorkelers to hang onto) in which they have imbedded the same lights, directed downward. We divers point our lights aloft. All this bright light attracts plankton which is the manta's favorite food. Almost every night, the manta rays come to this dive site to feed. Most of the manta rays in Kona are resident rays that don't travel far (10-20 miles). The dive operators in Kona bring their guests to a dive site called "Garden Eel Cove" which is located north of Kona town and ironically is practically under the flight pattern of the airport.

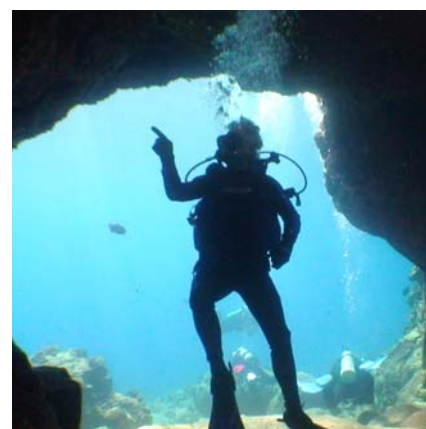


Judi Brooks photo

We were in Kona to celebrate my niece's 16<sup>th</sup> birthday and when asked what she wanted to do, a night dive with the mantas was tops on her list. Being a new diver (she had only gotten certified 15 months previously and had not been in the water since) she was beside herself with excitement and a little apprehensive about her first night dive. But her fears quickly dissipated as the mantas, one after another, zoomed in over her head giving her the thrill of a life time. All the divers sit or kneel around the "campfire" in 35 feet of water. You would think that it would be very chaotic, but it is instead very organized. My niece was mesmerized by the unbelievable spectacle.

The manta's wings, maybe 6-10 feet across, flicked near her head, it's two extended cephalic flaps scooping up clouds of plankton into its' giant maw. What a special birthday treat for my niece-watching 12 mantas gliding out of the darkness and performing their graceful antics in front of her; WOW!!

Even though the manta dive is usually the highlight of any diver's vacation in Kona, there are many other great dive sites. Our other favorite was "Suck 'Em Up!" and "The Aquarium" (which can be dived as one dive or two). Many of Kona's dive sites consist of unusual lava formations and the sea life is diverse and abundant. This dive didn't disappoint. Along the shore are a series of caves with nice shafts of light filtering through "skylights" in the ceilings. One cave has a swim thru that "flushes" you thru with the surge. In another cave, we saw a huge turtle tucked tight inside. Three 6 foot long white tip reef sharks swam out of another. Among healthy coral-covered giant boulders, schools of raccoon-faced and pyramid butterfly fish fluttered in the slight surge. This site was prolific with sea life: leaf scorpion fish, moray eels, peacock flounders, pelagic puffers, trumpet fish & spotted harlequin shrimp just to name a few of the inhabitants of the aquarium. Blue striped snappers (Ta'ape) hide out under



UW Rock star- you'll NEVER guess who!



the arches of some of the formations and part around the divers as they enter. During our 6 dives of the week, we also saw small "Day" octopus, yellow margin eels, frogfish, pennant butterfly fish, filefish, squirrelfish, spotted boxfish and the very rare Whitley's boxfish and so many more of the unique species endemic to Hawaii.

We dived with the excellent Kona Diving Company. Stable roomy comfortable catamaran boat with a maximum of 12 divers; one dive master to every 4 or 5 divers; plentiful snacks (juices, soft drinks, hot cocoa, water, hot soup, sandwiches, trail mix) hot showers & good briefings were the many amenities. And, oh!; did I mention the fresh home baked brownies!?! We will dive with them again.



As experienced divers, we appreciated not being “babysat”. The guides were there to point out different critters that we would never have found otherwise. As a new diver, my niece benefitted from our dive master’s attention.

We also enjoyed sharing a splendid dive day with our MBDC friends Fritz & Joyce Merkel, Kelly Britz & Nancy Neuerberg & Mark & Connie Wilson...

ALOHA UNTIL WE DIVE AGAIN.



### What Can Almost Surpass a Manta Dive?

*Joyce Merkel*



Our group of 3 (Kelly, Fritz, and I) dove with Kona Divers and did their 2 dive Manta dive. I can't say enough about the Kona Diver's operation. I'd highly recommend them to any of you considering going diving on the Big Island. They did everything right. Always there when you needed them, yet didn't over control dives. Still their Dive Master would help you find anything you might be interested in; treated you like you were the only one on the boat. We dove with them 3 days during our stay.

Now about our Manta dive. Our DM, Luke, had already been told about our group of 3 and had made special plans based on our likes and our abilities. We were the only ones in his group. The others on the boat were divided between two other DM's. The first dive

was a dusk dive to tour the area and find unusual critters. That we did, though the result was not as planned. As we were descending on a field of garden eels, I looked up and saw 3 bottlenose dolphins pass by at the surface just at the edge of our visibility. I thought how cool and figured we'd just had a special sighting of bottlenose. We'd been told they almost never interact with divers here on Kona. So, we headed on down the reef to look for an unusual anthia at around 100 ft. On our way the dolphins returned and to our astonishment came and played within feet of us!!! We spent at least 10 minutes with them until we all began to go into deco. It was hard getting photos because the light was dimming due to sunset and the dolphins were kicking up sand as they played.

We finally dragged ourselves away from them feeling completely elated. Then near the top of the reef a manta ray

came and circled within inches of our heads until we had to leave her. When I lifted myself on the boat, I was feeling like it was the dive of my life. I might not even need to do the official Manta dive. But of course we all did. Our boat put people in last which meant we also got out last and had the 3 Mantas that showed up for our dive to ourselves. It was as they say magical. What a night of diving!!!



**While** we are all contemplating tropical diving now, Let us not forget the fabulous diving available here in the Pacific NW. Club member Drew Collins & esteemed UW photographer Scott Lundy teamed up for a Neah Bay dive adventure during mid October, featuring an exciting encounter with Stellar Sea lions. See Scott's website @ [www.raptureofthedeep.net/sealions](http://www.raptureofthedeep.net/sealions) for the images. See Drew's images @ [drew@ photographyunderwater.net](mailto:drew@photographyunderwater.net)

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## Classified

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### ACCOMMODATIONS

**La Paz BCS Condo** @ Costa Baja; On the marina where the "mui excelente" Dive Charter FUN BAJA is located. View Website: <http://vrbo.com/143122> or

**MAUI CONDO:** Great for divers. Ground floor, 1/4 mi. from B&B Scuba in Kihei. Centrally located to dive sites. Ref: <http://vrbo.com/123327>.

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## Instructor Members

GREG WILSON – NAUI, [www.eastsidediving.com](http://www.eastsidediving.com)  
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Randy Williams - TDI/SDI Open Water -  
Advanced Mixed-Gas Instructor  
NAUI Technical Instructor  
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## About Marker Buoys

[The Marker Buoy Dive Club](#) of Seattle meets 7:00 PM, the first Wednesday of each month at the [Sunset Hills Community Center](#) in Ballard. The Marker Buoy Dive Club is one of the most active dive clubs in the Pacific Northwest. Membership level is around 150. Our members include some that are new to diving or to the Seattle area. Many have over 1000 dives in their log.

In addition to hosting many dives each month, monthly meetings are held at the Sunset Community Center in Ballard. Monthly meetings give members an opportunity to give reports on club dives of the previous month, information on upcoming dives, and occasionally slide and video presentations of dives. A guest speaker related to scuba diving, the marine environment, or something of interest to divers is featured every month. Club-sponsored activities include over 100 dives each year, dive planning parties, an annual picnic at Woodland Park, and an annual banquet.

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### GENERAL CLUB POLICIES

#### CLUB ROSTER

The Marker Buoy Club Roster lists each member's name, address, phone numbers and email address. The purpose of the list is for diving - to find a buddy for a spontaneous dive, to drum up interest in your forthcoming sponsored dive, or let people know if there has been a change in dive plan. No commercial use is permitted. If you have information to change on the roster contact Joyce Merkel.

#### DIVER'S ED

The club will reimburse members \$15 for successful completion of advanced certification courses that increases the member's competency and safety. Limit of 3 reimbursements per club member per calendar year. Courses that qualify are advanced diver, rescue diver, dive master, instructor, nitrox, DAN O2 Provider, and initial First Aid & CPR (non-renewal). Reimbursement for other courses subject to board approval. Just show proof of course completion to Mark Wilson, Treasurer, for your reimbursement.

#### WEIGHT BELT REPLACEMENT POLICY

The club will reimburse any member who ditches weights in what they consider an emergency during any dive, anywhere. The reimbursement is for replacement cost of all items ditched and not recovered, up to a maximum of \$150.

#### SPONSOR A DIVE, EARN AN AIR CARD

Dive hosts receive an Air Card good at local dive shops when 6 Marker Buoy members participate on the dive. The Club Oxygen Kit counts as a buddy as long as one member of the party is O2 trained. Limit of 1 Air Card per club member per calendar month. The club has two O2 kits - currently with Fritz & Joyce Merkel and Gene Coronetz.

#### YAHOO GROUPS MARKER BUOYS

Join our members only on-line web group! Find a last-minute dive buddy, ride, or directions to a dive, trip reports, as well as our roster and newsletters:

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### MARKER BUOY 2012 BOARD

President: Fritz Merkel

Vice President: Brian Nyenhuis

Secretary: Joyce Merkel

Treasurer: Mark Wilson

Programs: Doug Miller

Newsletter: Gene Coronetz

Webmaster: Karin Fletcher

Fundraiser: Nathalie Curtis

Refreshments: Catherine Knowlson