



Sounding

Newsletter of the South Shore Neptunes

ANNOUNCEMENTS, ACTIVITIES, & REMINDERS

Calendar 2020

11/3 General Meeting 7PM
Zoom

11/10 Board Meeting 7PM
Zoom

11/17 Annette Spaulding
presentation on Connecticut
River Artifacts UPDATE Zoom

12/1 General Meeting 7PM
Zoom. Nominations for new
club officers

12/8 Board Meeting 7PM
Zoom. Nominations for new
club officers

12/15 ELECTIONS

2021

1/1 Sober Up Dive at
Pleasure Bay. Splash time TBA

1/5 General Meeting 7PM
Zoom

1/12 Board Meeting 7PM
Zoom

1/19 Evening Program TBA

• **Newsletter:** To help add interesting content to the newsletter during these unusual times, please send me (robisonr25@yahoo.com) any first hand accounts, stories, photos, or both about your exploits as a Neptune for potential publication. Photos or clippings enhance stories, so please include them if you can. Don't forget to provide contact info in case I have questions.

• **New Underwater Rugby hours:** Tuesday nites 8-9:30 PM at Westwood HS pool.

• **New Underwater Rugby Uniforms now available to order:**



Underwater Uniform

Prices: All these prices are for **pairs:** Speedos \$25; Boxers \$45; Water shirt \$45; Swimsuit \$65; Hats \$25; Wristbands \$5.

For more info, contact **Jay Theriault** immediately if interested at (617) 696-0270; or [<jtheriault@comcast.net>](mailto:jtheriault@comcast.net)

Club General and Board Meetings are now being held **on Zoom** until further notice. **See Club Facebook page** for pics and brief writeup. **Please note: All other Club activities and programs listed on the Calendar or not, which are in conflict with the stay-in-place quarantine, are also CANCELED until further notice.**

Don't forget to visit the club store at [<https://southshoreneptunes.noslowturtles.com/store/>](https://southshoreneptunes.noslowturtles.com/store/) for the latest in club swag.

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CLUB ANNUAL AWARD ENTRIES DUE NOVEMBER 30!

NOMINATIONS December 1 & 8

ELECTIONS December 15

DUES-\$35-ARE DUE BY ELECTION NIGHT!

New Date: The Boston Sea Rovers announced that their annual clinic will be held **October 2-3, 2021**, instead of in March of next year. See flyer at the end of the newsletter.

Evening Program: *Special thanks* to Annette Spaulding and her Artifacts of the Connecticut River video clips program, which is always informative, entertaining and well-presented.

NOVEMBER CLUB DIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Sunday, November 15. Pebble Beach. *Story and photos by Rob Robison*
I woke up early in the morning @5:30, organized and packed my dive gear in the car, and drove up to the Beverley Burger King Service Plaza to meet up with Peter Ninh. No one else joined us to dive Pebble Beach. Too bad because the beach was practically deserted, the sun was shining, the vis was a spectacular 25'-35,' the water temp was 49° - 50°, and the flora and fauna were lush and abundant.

Peter hauled us out to the dive site, using his TUSA DPV, a spot on the glacial till just in front of the big boulders framing the north side of the submerged rock island. It was the perfect spot to drop in. There were nudibranchs all over the rocks and boulders. The Irish Moss, Coral Weed, and Hook Weed vegetation appeared healthy and colorful.



When we submerged, I landed right on a boulder with a beautiful tiny *Flabellina verrucosa* in plain sight. In fact, these particular critters were having a field day covering nearly every rock and boulder we swam over the entire dive. As we moved along, Peter motioned me to take a picture of him. For some reason, I looked away for an instant and found myself staring face to face with a most unusually colored and camouflaged Shorthorn sculpin. Finding these particular fish seems to becoming habit on dives these days. I also saw some delightful clonal plumose



Clockwise from above: Sea Lettuce & Green Fleece; Shorthorn Sculpin; *Flabellina verrucosa*



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Happy Diving

From

JOHN & KATHY BLACKADAR



L-R: Rim-Backed Nudibranch; Single Stalk Clonal Plumose Anemone; Peter's lobsters

anemone, and a Rim-Back Nudibranch on the eastern side of the rock island formation. This type off nudibranch is much less common than the Flabellinas I see most of the time, and Peter found two very nice lobsters, one of which he gave to me.

The only downside to today's 36' deep, hour-long dive was stepping on my mask and breaking it, first time that's happened in 44 years of diving, while removing my dive gear and stowing it away. I have a backup, but the one I broke was my favorite. A steaming bowl of clam chowder and a cold Bud at Darcy's washed that disappointment away.

Back at the ranch, I cooked the lobster, then took a long nap, edited photos, and watched the second half of the Buccaneers-Panthers game, while Carol turned the lobster meat into lobster salad fill for lobster rolls, a yummy and fitting end to a great dive day. The Buccaneers' and Patriots' victories didn't hurt, either.

Saturday, November 14. Fort Wetherill. *Story and photos by Rob Robison*

Neptune **Rich Bowers** wanted to go diving today, and I had already planned to head to Ft Wetherill in Rhode Island. He was up for it, as was Neptune **Eric Cantor**, who only lives a half hour away from the site. We agreed to meet at the Fort at 9 AM. Eric and I were a bit early and Rich showed up on the dot. A stiff chill breeze was blowing off the water as we geared up, but the sunny mid-fall morning provided some offset.

Eric was already finning around in the water by the time Rich and I finished suiting up. As we waded in, some tech divers were exiting and warned us the vis was shot and not to even bother with the camera. Wrong! True, the vis is usually lousy

there, but I have learned my camera gear can take good shots even in low vis situations with some patience. Today wasn't no exception; the vis was



Clockwise:L-R: Rich and Eric, Dulse bouquet, Boring Sponge; Sea Nettle; Shorthorn Sculpin



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2-3,' expanding in the shallow areas to maybe 5 feet.

So, we soldiered on and made the dive. There were some interesting jellyfish, a nice Shorthorn Sculpin, a large Forbes starfish or two, and some colonies of Northern Star Coral, a Sea Nettle, and more to keep Eric, Rich, and me occupied during the 42-minute dive in 54° - 56° water. We reached a max depth of 28'. Hope you enjoy the photos included, which represent some of the better ones from the day's dive.

Friday - Sunday, November 6-8 were particularly gorgeous dive days for many club members, who eventually connected with each other at Darcy's Village Pub on Sunday afternoon for a great post-dive weekend get together eating, drinking and kibitzing. Our stories follow in succession.

Diving Graves Light. *Story by Doug Eaton; photos by Chuck Zarba.* Chuck Z and I chartered with Boston Scuba to Graves Light for two dives. Getting into the water, I couldn't believe the vis.—25 to 30 ft. The water temp was 49 degrees, and the air temp felt refreshing at 68°. We ended the dive after 60min. of chasing bugs, got back on board the boat, banded the lobsters, and geared up for the next dive.



While off gassing, we talked to 2 guys on board who were finishing their open water certification. I gave them a Neptunes information card. Then, I dropped back in for the

second dive and came upon Chuck, who was elbow deep with a lobster. I grabbed his fin and watched him jump, he was so startled. We finished the dive, climbed back on the boat, packed up our gear, and laughed about the dive. After docking the boat, we talked with everyone for a bit, then headed for Darcy's Pub to meet up with other Neptunes, who were diving elsewhere this day, for food and beers.



Loblolly Cove. *Story and photo by Rob Vice*

Dive Stats:10:21 a.m. Depth 39 ft.; Time 61 min; Temp 52°

Dive buddies:**Todd Alger, Ken Hayes.** I met Ken at the South Shore Neptunes parking lot on Quarry Street and Joyce Road, waiting for any other divers to show up. We sent messages the morning before to the GroupMe chat saying we would meet anyone wanting to head up (Call or text 617-804-5637 to get onto it or if you are looking for a dive buddy). Todd messaged he was maybe coming the night before and confirmed just before 8 a.m. on dive day that he would meet us at the Shaw's on Cape Ann.



We met up at the grocery store as planned and shuttled over to Loblolly Point. After looking at the rocks that were not the grippy

4

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yellow, but instead covered in the slippery black death, we decided to enter via the cove. With low tide, we were able to walk out to just about the exposed feature in the water before starting to swim out. We swam out just past the feature and dropped down. Todd was taking a heading to go around the point, Ken was planning on checking the boulders and doing the same, and I was planning on following Ken.

I got lost shortly into the dive, was unable to find Todd or Ken, and decided to follow the cables that used to power the South Light on Thatcher Island. I took this route hunting for lobsters and observing the bottom features. Visibility was well over 35 feet this day, again one of the best visibility days in New England waters in the 6+ years I've been diving. At about 30 feet and getting to the sand, the visibility dropped to about 10 feet.

After deciding there was nothing really interesting following a rock pile through the sand, I surfaced with about 2000psi to see I was pretty far from shore and my feet were starting to get cold. I decided I would bee line back to shore and surface again to look for Todd and Ken. I finally saw Todd on my swim back into the cove. We were wondering where Ken was because he took a route that had him covering the mouth of the cove.

When we finally made it back to the parking lot, we saw Ken walking over the rocks that were previously treacherous, but given the tide was now coming in must have been easier. We were all pretty chilled from the long dive and decided not to make another dive. We caught three lobsters in total. Then we packed up and headed to Darcy's.



Counterclockwise: *Flabellina verrucosa* dancing; still life; Shorthorn Sculpin



Diving Old Garden Beach. Story by **Rob Robison**; photos by Rob and **Peter Ninh**

Sunday morning , Nov. 8, I met up with Peter Ninh, **Rob Christian**, and **Mike Vaughan** at the Beverley Burger King Service Plaza on the way to Rockport's Old Garden Beach. The weather was stunningly beautiful as was the water. Peter and Rob C suited up first and headed off to the point where it drops down to 60,' using Peter's scooter. They wanted to look for sea scallops. Rob C found 3, while Peter landed a lobster.

I suited up before Mike and waded into the water to cool off while waiting for him to finish gearing up. Dry suits are extremely hot until one gets in the water. Mike had a leaky pressure gauge hose, so he and I stayed closer to shore in the 25-27' depth range where we found some nudibranchs, a beautiful Shorthorn Sculpin, a lone Forbes starfish, a very small school of pollock, and assorted crabs, clams, mussels, stalked anemone, and flora, among other things. Our dive lasted 60 minutes with about 25-30' vis minimum, and the water temp @50°, just like Friday night down in Plymouth.



Afterwards, I stopped by Darcy's for a late lunch on the way home and ran into Neptunes buddies, Doug Eaton, Chuck Zarba, Rob Vice, **Jay Theriault**, Todd Alger, and Ken Hayes. We drank some brewskies, while chowing down, and debriefed our various dives. Some dove off a Boston Harbor charter boat near the Graves Light. Others dove Rockport's Loblolly Cove (See previous article above). Then, it was time to head home. What a wonderful way to end the dive day!



Saturday, November 7. Canoe Beach (Nahant). *Story & photos by Rob Vice.* Dive stats: 10:14 a.m. Depth: 25 ft.; Dive time: 67 min; Temp 52°F; *Divers: Dive buddy: Todd Alger*



On arriving at Nahant, the road was closed to the Police Station where we go first to request parking/diving access to Canoe Beach. We took a detour, but still could not get there. Fortunately, Todd was able to talk with a police officer working the detail and got us cleared to go. Beautiful flat calm day with air temps reaching into the 70's. Visibility was a crystal clear to 25 feet with the ability to see your flag waving on the surface. I could still see Todd's silhouette about 30 feet away.

We entered the water close to low tide and surface swam to the exposed chimney area. Todd was armed with his GoPro and I was focused on finding things for him to see. We saw a couple lobsters tucked in some of the holes around the chimneys. Inside the cave, I saw a ghost trap; it looks like you could always swim all the way through the chimneys if the trap wasn't in the way. Although, it did look like a tight fit.

On coming out, I went looking for Todd, tropics style, looking for his bubbles. I found him deep inside a hole on the other side of the chimneys and I could see his bubbles coming up through the rocks. I decided to swim over and see if I could look down and see him. I was not able to see him directly, but I could see a lobster fighting with his bubbles. Unfortunately, I missed when I reached down to grab the lobster. After the chimneys we went out into the boulders and found a ghost trap. Todd checked it out and moved on, I looked inside and thought I saw a lobster. It was actually a sea raven about the size of a football. I freed it and had Todd try and take some video of it. Towards the middle to end of the dive we caught a couple lobsters.

Second Dive at Canoe Beach, Nahant. 12:50 p.m.; 29 ft.; 54 min; 52°F

This dive, we were looking for the features between Canoe Beach and 40 Steps. We started at the same chimneys and crossed over to the point between the two dive sites. We saw a few more lobsters and just took in the sight of a school of pollock. The visibility was not as good as near the chimneys, but it was still beyond 15-20 ft. until pushing around the point.

Todd headed in as he was getting cold and had only a partial fill in his tank. I continued around following the ledge towards 40 Steps. I popped up about mid-way between the points from the 40

Steps Beach and saw a couple fishing off the rocks. I headed towards deeper water and took a heading back to the beach. Every time I come back in at Canoe Beach, I always come in towards the wall that separates Canoe and 40 Steps, when I wish I would land mid-beach or the other side where it is closer to the exit. Either way, we had a really great and warm November dive day.

Friday, November 6. Plymouth Long Beach Night Dive. *Story & photos by Rob Robison*



Rob Vice & Todd Alger



Clockwise: Brian Smith, Longwrist Hermit crab, Acadia Hermit crab, Rock crab

My Friday ended by making a twilight cum night dive with dive buddy, Brian Smith, down at Plymouth Long Beach. After two weeks of offshore hurricane-generated onshore winds that have roiled NE waters, the weather had turned for the better, thanks to having generated warming calming southwest winds, which flattened the seas and cleared the vis.

While suiting up in the fading sunlight, we had a delightful conversation with a guy who was the former parts manager for Boch Toyota, Mike Clark, at one time the second largest Toyota dealership in the whole world. He's a former diver who established a FaceBook Page and dive club called New England Divers, where I post some of my articles and photos. Nice guy.



We waded into the water and strapped on our fins. I took a snapshot of Brian just before we submerged, then began our dive, just as the daylight all but disappeared. We glided down uneventfully over the sand, past the narrow rock rubble trough, and onto the glacial till that salt-and-peppers the sandy underwater terrain eastward for untold hundreds of yards. The 50° water, sporting

a clear 20'-25' of vis, was full of interesting Hermit crabs, rock crabs—one was a monster—rock weed, and shrimps.

Case in point: Toward the end of the dive, I found some tiny sand and Mysid shrimps to photograph. Just before surfacing, I saw something pink lying on the bottom and approached to inspect. A small shrimp was nibbling on what looked to be a piece of clam. As I began to photograph it,



I notice a hook embedded in the clam bait, spotted the leader, and found a small lead weight attached as well. Having found leader, hooks, and such before underwater near the beach, I thought it must have separated or broken from the fishing line. So I picked it up with the intention of bringing it back to shore and pitching it so no one or thing could get hurt. Suddenly, it began to move and snagged my gloved finger. Realizing it was attached to the pole of an active fisherman, I worked to be sure I could disentangle before the fisherman jerked the line, which would have caused me a world of hurt!



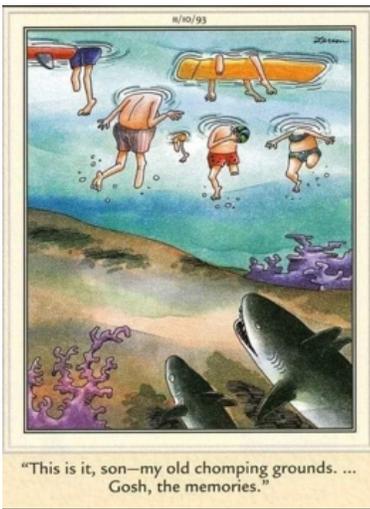
L-R: Mysid shrimp; Clam bait with Sand shrimp

After the dive and having stowed our gear, I walked over to the car that seemed to be carrying the fisherman and spoke with



the couple through their open window. They had seen our lights shining from underwater and didn't understand what was happening. They had even seen our dive flag and didn't know what it was, either. I told them, "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea." Obviously, the frightful Disneyfied Nautilus of Jules Verne's imagination had returned.

Finally, Brian and I repaired to The Lobster Hut in Plymouth Harbor for plates of shrimp and scallops, plus a little wine and beer, to rehash the marvelous dive and our time together. He and I make a pretty good dive team. We both like to take our time and see what there is to see, and we stick together and look out for each other. It's times like these with friends or loved ones that are worth treasuring. I know I do.



PARTING SHOT & THOUGHTS

Happy Thanksgiving!

Sources: 1993 Larson Cartoon, courtesy Paul Tosi, Divers of MassBay FB Page, Nov. 15, 2020.

Cooked Lobster, courtesy Peter Ninh, from Old Garden Beach, Nov. 8, 2020.



GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

The Boston Sea Rovers are moving to the FALL!
Join us October 2nd/3rd 2021



That's right, you read it correctly, the Boston Sea Rovers has moved to fall dates for the foreseeable future!

CLUB INFORMATION

Club Hotline: Call or text 617-804-5637. Let's Go Diving!

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