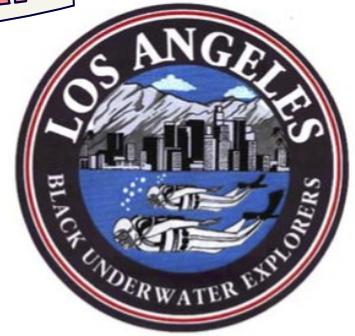


2011 NABS Club Of The Year

# LABUE NEWS

Los Angeles Black Underwater Explorers



## PHOTO OF THE MONTH

VOLUME 19, ISSUE 3

MARCH 2014



Photographer: DonCosta Seawell  
Camera: Nikon D200  
Location: Cozumel, April 2010  
Subject: French Angel Fish

### Inside this issue:

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## Member Appreciation

March is Member Appreciation Month. Join us on Tuesday, March 11<sup>th</sup> for our General Membership meeting and annual Member Appreciation festivities. We will be offering some tasty meeting refreshments and door prizes, along with LABUE updates and friendly member fellowship. Catch up with old friends and meet new members. If you have not yet renewed your 2014 LABUE membership, now is the time. Renewing members in attendance will be eligible for a prize drawing at the meeting and will receive \$10 in LABUE Bucks. In addition, members bringing one or more guests will be eligible for a special prize drawing. We look forward to seeing you all.

*Dedicated to Expanding the Knowledge and Enjoyment of Scuba Diving among African Americans*

## ATTACK OF THE KILLER TRIGGER FISH

BY RICHARD RICE

VOLUME 19, ISSUE 3

During my 43 years of SCUBA diving I have encountered many exotic and interesting marine creatures, from fearsome looking sharks, to curious sea lions, to venomous sea snakes. As divers, we soon come to realize that the last thing these amazing creatures are interested in is an encounter with the humans that sometimes invade their liquid space. Other than coral scrapes and stings, I have learned not to fear even the most vicious looking marine life and am usually not concerned with seemingly harmless reef fish. All of that changed a little on our warm water dive trip to Malaysia last September. As we headed back to the dive boat from another great dive on the beautiful reefs off of Sipidan Island, we explored a shallow reef covered with colorful coral and swarming with

countless reef fish. Soon I felt a tugging on my fins, which I initially ignored. The tugging persisted and I looked back at my fins and noticed a large Titan Triggerfish viciously attacking my bright yellow fins. It



seems we inadvertently wandered into the territory of a nesting Titan Triggerfish. She seemed to be focused only on me, ignoring the other LABUE divers around me. Titan Trig-

ger fish (*Balistoides viridescens*) are the largest of the triggerfish family, using their powerful beaks to feed on coral, sea urchins, mollusks, and crustaceans found in lagoons and reefs of the Indo-Pacific.

I quickly backed off, swimming backwards. The triggerfish continued relentlessly attacking my fins as I tried to evade. I determined that I needed to turn tail and flee from this five pound beast! I turned around and quickly tried to swim away. In an instant I felt excruciating pain in my right index finger. The triggerfish had chased me and bit my index finger. I immediately checked to see if the tip of my finger was still there since Titan Triggerfish have been known to bite off parts of fingers, toes, and ears of divers daring to invade their space.

*Continued on page 3*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY: RICHARD RICE



**LABUE will be celebrating March with our annual Member Appreciation General Meeting to be held on March 11<sup>th</sup> at the Natural History Museum.** Throughout the month of March, we try to re-connect with LABUE members past and present, and introduce LABUE to potential future members. *Member Appreciation* provides an opportunity for us to recognize and thank LABUE members for the essential role they have played

in making LABUE widely recognized as one of the top African-American SCUBA diving clubs in the country and 2011 NABS Club of the Year. **What part can you play in LABUE's future?** We need help on all of our standing committees and your participation is the best way for you to have a direct impact on the current and future direction and success of the club. A list of the LABUE Committees and Chairperson contact information is included in each *LABUE News* issue.

Our *Member Appreciation* meeting also provides you with the opportunity to introduce others to LABUE by inviting them to learn about LABUE while socializing with other members at a fun meeting. The meeting will feature great refreshments as well as activities including games, raffles, and prizes. It will also be an excellent opportunity for you to renew your membership for 2014 and receive \$10.00 in "LABUE Bucks", good for credit towards any LABUE activity, dive vacation, or for LABUE merchandise. Bring a guest to join in the

fun and you will be eligible for a special door prize drawing.

**2014 is an election year for LABUE**, with LABUE Officer and LABUE Board of Directors positions to be determined next fall. If you are interested in determining the direction and future growth of LABUE, I invite you to seriously consider running for an officer or board position during next fall's elections. If you are interested in lending your labor, experience, or organizational skills to LABUE on any of our committees, your participation would be more than welcome. If you would like to recommend an activity or event that would benefit the community, our members, or help fulfill our 2014 mission, please share your ideas it with me or one of the Board members. We value your recommendations. Give me a call or send me an email ([labue@sbcglobal.net](mailto:labue@sbcglobal.net)) to share your ideas and thoughts on how to make LABUE a better dive club and to let me know how you can help us in these efforts.



**KILLER TRIGGERFISH**

*Continued from Page 2*

Relieved, I saw only bite marks and a little blood coming from my wound. The victorious triggerfish ceased her attack satisfied that she had successfully defended her domain. I safely swam back to the dive boat and nursed my wounds for the next few days with a little more respect for our small, but determined marine creatures. If you are an unfortunate victim of a triggerfish bite, it should not be treated lightly. Their bites can cause serious infection as they contain a natural poison called Ciguatoxin.



**Free Admission to Divers Day at the Aquarium of the Pacific -March 22<sup>nd</sup>**

If you have never visited the **Aquarium of the Pacific** in Long Beach, or would like to re-visit this wonderful aquarium, **Divers Day** is your chance to experience more than 50 exhibits containing over 11,000 animals. Learn all about recent advancements in diving at the *Aquarium of the Pacific's* thirteenth annual **Divers Day**. There will be educational presentations, live dive demonstrations, and more. The Aquarium will also host several organizations that are related to the sport and science of diving. The diving community is invited to find out about volunteer diving and other opportunities for involvement with dive-related organizations in Southern California.

All certified SCUBA divers showing their certification card and a photo ID will be admitted **free** on Saturday March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 9am-5pm. No reservations are needed. For more information on this event, contact the **Aquarium of the Pacific** at (562) 590-3100, ext. 0, or visit [www.aquariumofpacific.org/](http://www.aquariumofpacific.org/).

**Chamber Evening at the Aquarium of the Pacific**

**2014 will mark the 40th anniversary of the Catalina Hyperbaric Chamber's service to the Southern California Diving Communities.** During that time, over 1050 divers have been evaluated at the Chamber and over 680 have been treated. Each year LABUE helps support the Catalina Hyperbaric Chamber by participating in Chamber Evening, an event created to help raise the funds needed to operate this critical facility. The County of Los Angeles provides about half of the funding needed to properly operate and maintain the Chamber. The remaining funds must be raised from private sources such as this event. Last year, \$125,393 was raised from this event for the continued operation and improvement of your Catalina Hyperbaric Chamber!

This year, LABUE will again be sponsoring a table for this worthwhile event being held on Wednesday, May 7<sup>th</sup> at the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach. This exciting evening features a fully catered dinner as well as access to all of the aquarium's exhibits and attractions. Admission to the evening also includes 10 raffle tickets for an evening of door prize drawings. Thousands of dollars in valuable door prizes will be given away including regulators, dive computers, buoyancy compensators, cameras, wet suits, mask & fins, and other dive related gear. LABUE club members have been fortunate enough to travel and dive around the world and rely on the local chambers to be 'there and functioning' in the event it is needed. It is only fair that LABUE members be responsible by participating in support of 'our' local chamber.

Tickets to this year's Chamber Evening are \$95. As a special benefit for LABUE members, we are offering a \$20 discount to those purchasing tickets to this important event. Support the Catalina Hyperbaric Chamber!

Contact us at [labue@sbcglobal.net](mailto:labue@sbcglobal.net) to reserve your ticket.

**CHECK OUT THE LABUE STORE**



**Our hats and polo shirts are beautifully embroidered!**



**Makes a great gift!!**



**Above long and short sleeve t-shirts have the same front/back design layout!**

~\*~\*~

**Look great on the boat or beach with official LABUE apparel including T-shirts, Polo Shirts, and Baseball Caps.**

**T-shirts and Baseball Caps are in stock and are available in most sizes at \$20 each. Check out the LABUE Store at [www.labue.org](http://www.labue.org) to place your order, or you may purchase items at the monthly membership meeting.**

## MEMBER'S CORNER: Diving Catalina Island's Casino Point

BY DEBORA EWING

On Saturday, February 1<sup>st</sup>, Sharlene Johnson, Bob Simmons and I boarded the Catalina Express out of San Pedro to dive Casino Point. Bob and I wanted to make sure our gear was working well since it was just serviced and a group of us are going to the Maldives later this month. I also wanted to make sure that I could operate my new underwater camera in its housing as well. As luck would have it, the night before our planned dive was to take place it was very windy.



The boat ride over to the point was not rough so we thought the water at the point would be fine. Upon arriving at the point we observed that the ocean was very choppy and the sets were coming to shore regularly and with a lot of energy. Because we planned to enter the ocean at high tide, the winds were bringing the surf much higher on the stairs than usual. Sharlene woke up with an earache and was therefore beached. Being the trooper that we all know her to be she donned her wetsuit and booties anyway so that she could render any assistance that might be needed of her. Bob and I rented tanks and I also rented weights from the truck at Casino Point. Before getting suited up I organized my weights and made weight keepers out of the belt so that my weights would not move around during my dive and would not slide off the belt if the belt had to be removed in an emergency. I made a comment to Sharlene that "I don't like weight belts with these cheap plastic buckles because they come undone too easily".

Since the sets were constant, I treated this dive as though I was entering the ocean on a regular beach dive and waited for the lull

before making my entrance from the stairs. Sharlene followed me down the stairs so that she could hand me my camera but once I got in I told her to keep it because it was so busy on the surface. I figured that the visibility would be really bad and that it would be a lot of ocean surge. While waiting for Bob to enter the ocean my rented weight belt with

the cheap plastic buckle slipped off and I could see it below my feet. The ocean was choppy so I had to stay pretty much on top of the weight belt

so that I could direct Bob where to go to retrieve the belt because the low growing plants would cover the belt and then reveal the belt with the motion of the surf. Like a good buddy would, Bob did just that. Of course when your dive buddy retrieves your belt from the bottom of the ocean, he then hands it to you. There you are with 22 pounds of weight in a bunch on your chest. Now to do what I've taught countless OWI scuba students to do and that is to roll into the weight belt on the surface of the ocean. Of course when I'm teaching this maneuver it is in a swimming pool, not on the surface of a choppy ocean. In one attempt I was back into the belt but I kept checking the buckle continuously through my dive because now I don't trust the cheap plastic buckle on my rented weight belt.

Once Bob and I descended about 20 feet below the surface we both noticed how calm the ocean was. On the surface it was turbulent but at depth it was very peaceful. The water to our surprise was clear. I would put visibility between 40 and 50 feet and the water temperature at about 55° at 55 feet and 59° at the surface. There was no surge

underwater. We observed a couple of lobsters playing near their holes in the rocks and of course the usual characters like the garibaldi, kelp bass and sheep head fish. We also noticed a different type of kelp-like plant growing in the reserve. It was at this moment that I wished I had brought my new underwater camera in.

After our dive, the three of us ate lunch at the Blue Water Grill (used to be Armstrong's Restaurant) and then went to the ice cream shop next door for dessert. I do plan to go back to Casino Point and I will definitely bring my camera in.



## DIVER NEWS

### Lifetime Members

Quinal Johnson  
 Sonny Hill  
 Jay Morgan  
 Lori Morrish  
 Christopher Ricks



~~~~

Know of any member  
 Certification announcements?  
 Please notify Debora Ewing at  
[dewing@proskauer.com](mailto:dewing@proskauer.com)



## BOAT DIVING?

If you decide to sign up for a boat dive and you want a LABUE dive buddy, please contact DonCosta Seawell at 909-593-1877 or [doncosta1@msn.com](mailto:doncosta1@msn.com) with your trip details and he will convey that information to the club so that anyone who desires to join you will be aware.



## MARCH IS REACTIVATION MONTH

It's time for ALL of us divers to break out the exercise equipment that's been purchased and never used or put out of sight, out of mind, right? Well, WRONG! We need to whip ourselves back into shape for all of the spectacular diving to come this year. After the great cooking and new recipes from the Holidays, take out those weights, the new home gym machines you received for Christmas and make a life change for your health and diving. Toning up, and tuning up makes a great combination. Toning up your body and mind, to accomplish the things that you want to accomplish, and tuning up your SCUBA gear to keep it in safe operable condition by taking the time to regularly service your BD, Regulator, Dive Computer, and tank in for a professional annual inspection are essential. When it comes to safe diving practices, our health and diving skills are imperative for the enjoyment of diving. Also, don't forget to inspect your camera seals if you are an underwater photographer. Broken or cracked seals can not only flood your expensive camera, but ruin your dive trip.

Now, with that said, it's time to reactivate your 2014 LABUE Membership! We look forward to your participation in all of the activities sponsored by LABUE for your enjoyment and exploring marine life together in 2014. Here are the options for renewing your membership with LABUE. You can download the Membership Application form and return it with your membership dues check to LABUE via US mail or bring it to a monthly Membership Meeting held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at the Natural History Museum, or can pay via our website by PayPal. Additionally, when renewing your membership by April 1, 2014, you will receive \$10 in LABUE Bucks, which can be used towards LABUE merchandise, dive vacations, or any activities sponsored by LABUE.

If you received a 2014 *LABUE Membership Gift Certificate* from the 2013 LABUE Holiday Dinner, remember to forward it to us along with your updated Membership Application for your free 2014 membership dues.

Our 2014 annual dive vacation to Palau-Truk is still open. You can join us for the dive trip of a lifetime September 14<sup>th</sup> to September 28<sup>th</sup>. Let us know if you would like to join us at [labue@sbcglobal.net](mailto:labue@sbcglobal.net).

We appreciate your continued participation and support of LABUE.

*LABUE Membership Committee*



## ***LABUE Warm-Water Trip***

***To Palau and Truk Lagoon***

***September 14, 2014 through September 28, 2014***

Join LABUE for the dive vacation of a lifetime to the Micronesian islands of Palau and Truk Lagoon featuring the best wreck diving some of the most varied and dazzling marine life in the world.

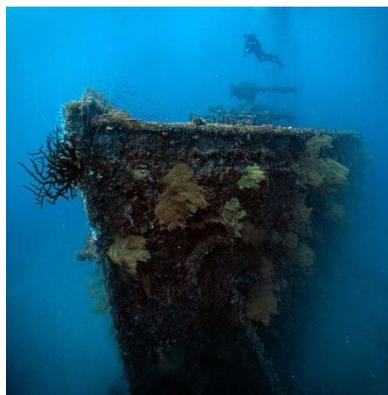
The base trip includes seven (7) days in Palau at the Paradise Hotel, diving, airport transfers, complimentary breakfast, and taxes. Dive permits, green fees, and departure fees are also included in the quoted prices. The base trip is open to divers and non-divers, with provision for single and double occupancy. *Participants may extend the Palau base trip if they wish.*

The optional trip for divers only includes four (4), five (5), or seven (7) days in Truk at the Blue Lagoon Resort, diving, transfers and taxes. Dive permits, and departure fees are also included in the quoted prices, with provision for single and double occupancy.

The Palau and Truk trips can be done individually, or they can be combined; first to Palau and then on to Truk for either four, five or seven days. For the base trip to Palau, a \$400 deposit is due by February 28, 2014; a \$600 payment is due by April 30, 2014; the balance is due by July 31, 2014. For the combined Palau-Truk trip, a \$500 deposit is due by February 28, 2014; a \$700 payment is due by March 31, 2014; a \$700 payment is due by May 31, 2014, and the balance is due by July 31, 2014..



Viewing Palau from the air



WWII wreck in Truk Lagoon



Sea creatures in one of the Palau sites

**Airfare is not included, but it is possible to get quotes for a group of 10 or more. Otherwise, each participant will have to arrange his/her airfare individually.**

**Contact:** The Los Angeles Black Underwater Explorers (LABUE) for more information at:  
P. O. Box 90069, Los Angeles, CA 90009 or [info@labue.org](mailto:info@labue.org)

## NEWSLETTER ADS

LABUE is offering newsletter ads for nominal prices. The price structure is as follows:

- \$15 for a quarter page ad (per month);
- \$20 for a half page ad (per month);
- \$30 for a full page ad (per month).

If you're interested in purchasing an ad, please contact Debora Ewing at (310) 284-4556.

## PHOTO OF THE MONTH



**Reminder:** Please e-mail your photos for the "Photo of the Month" contest. You just may see your photo on the cover of an upcoming edition of the LABUE News! Please e-mail photos for consideration to [dewing@proskauer.com](mailto:dewing@proskauer.com).

## UPCOMING EVENTS 2014

- March 11, 2014 -- LABUE General Membership Meeting - 7:00 PM
- March 22, 2014 -- Aquarium of the Pacific - Diver Day
- March 25, 2014 -- LABUE Board Meeting
- April 8, 2014 -- LABUE General Membership Meeting - 7:00 PM
- April 22, 2014 -- LABUE Board Meeting
- May 7, 2014 -- Chamber Evening - Aquarium of the Pacific
- September 14 - September 28, 2014 -- Club Trip to Palau and Truk Lagoon

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEES

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### President

Richard Rice  
(323) 299-3798

#### Vice President

Tina Houston  
(213) 359-2131

#### Treasurer

DonCosta Seawell  
(909) 593-1877

#### Secretary

Patricia Williams  
(619) 459-0944

#### Members at Large

Lamont Johnson  
(310) 387-8193

Steve Scruggs  
(310) 795-0851

Joe Windolph  
(818) 209-2504

### COMMITTEES

#### Membership

Tina Houston (Interim)  
(213) 359-2131

#### Ways & Means

Debora Ewing  
(310) 284-4556

#### Beach Dive

Joe Windolph  
(818) 209-2504

#### Boat Dive

DonCosta Seawell  
(909) 593-1877

#### Dive Events & Trip Planning

Tina Houston (Interim)  
(213) 359-2131

#### Dive Training & Safety

George Linares (Interim)

#### Internet Administrator

Francois Desamours  
(703) 463-6857

#### Website Editor

Steve Scruggs  
(310) 795-0851

#### Program Committee

Keenon Adamson

#### Technical Dive Committee

Open

#### Youth Committee

Joe Windolph  
(818) 209-2504

#### Newsletter Staff:

Richard Rice - Publisher  
Debora Ewing - Editor  
(310) 284-4556  
Sharlene Johnson - Production Manager  
Staff Writers -  
Steve Scruggs  
Dangil Jones

## Meetings

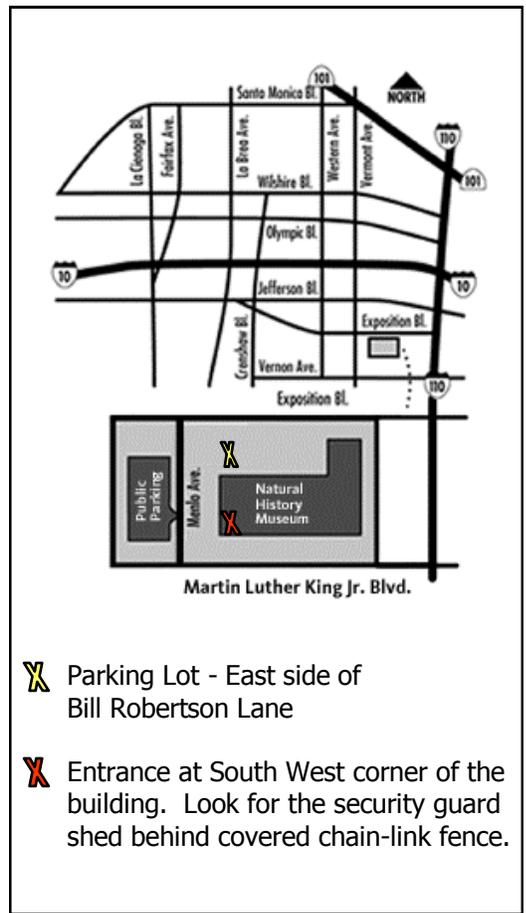
The LABUE meetings are held the second Tuesday of every Month at 7:00 PM in the Times Mirror Room at the Natural History Museum in Los Angeles.

## Directions

The Natural History Museum is located in Exposition Park, at 900 Exposition Boulevard between Vermont Avenue and Figueroa Street.

From the 110 (Harbor) Freeway, take the Martin Luther King Boulevard exit and head west towards Vermont Avenue. Turn right (north) on Menlo Avenue. Make a left into Exposition Park Lot 3.

Please visit the Museum website for more information at [www.nhm.org](http://www.nhm.org).



**X** Parking Lot - East side of Bill Robertson Lane

**X** Entrance at South West corner of the building. Look for the security guard shed behind covered chain-link fence.

## Contact Us:

PO Box 90069, Los Angeles, CA 90009

Phone/Fax: (323) 299-3798

Email: [info@labue.org](mailto:info@labue.org)

Web Site: [www.labue.org](http://www.labue.org)

**In consideration to the many LABUE members who are unable to download large files on their computer, we will be limiting the number of photographs included in our newsletter. To accommodate our many excellent photographers, we will begin posting additional photographs on the LABUE website for your viewing pleasure.**

P.O. BOX 90069, LOS ANGELES, CA 90009

(323) 299-3798 (Phone and Fax)

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

For the Year \_\_\_\_\_

### General Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Day Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Referred By: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Name and Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

### Certification Information:

Year First Certified: \_\_\_\_\_ No. of Dives: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Last Dive: \_\_\_\_\_ Warm Water  Beach  Boat

### Certification Agency(s):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Diving Preferences:**  Beach Dives  Boat Dives  Warm Water Dives

### Membership Category:

Amount: \$30.00  for Individual Membership  New  Renewal

\$45.00  for Family Membership  New  Renewal

\$300.00  for Lifetime Individual \$450.00  for Lifetime Family

Please make checks payable to: **“Los Angeles Black Underwater Explorers” or “LABUE”**

### WAIVER

I \_\_\_\_\_, hereby apply for membership in the Los Angeles Black Underwater Explorers (LABUE) and agree to abide by all club rules. I acknowledge that I will be voluntarily participating in LABUE events with full knowledge of the potential risks of scuba diving and diving related activities. In consideration of your acceptance of this application and my membership in LABUE, I agree to assume all risks of bodily injury, death or property damage, arising out of or in connection with my participation in LABUE activities. I also agree to release, indemnify and hold harmless LABUE and its members and officers from any and all liability arising out of or in connection with my participation in LABUE activities. I further agree that this release and indemnification is intended to be as broad and inclusive as is permitted by the laws of the State of California. I have carefully read this release and fully understand its contents. I sign this release of my own free will and with full knowledge of its significance.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_