

Wets Happening

Issue 7
July 2006

The Official Newsletter of the Newport Aquarium Volunteer Dive Program

by Jen Wolfe

In this Issue

- Welcome New Divers
- New & Improved DiveCrew.org
- Weight Belts • Meet Larry Lobster
- Presenters Needed This Weekend
- Is There A Biologist In The House?
- Diver Jen's Surface Interval
- Reminders • Thanks

Welcome New Divers!

Volunteer Dive Roster now up to 145

There have been a lot of new names on the calendar and a lot of new faces in the water this year. Ed, Bruno and I would like to extend a big thank you to all of the new volunteers for joining us, as well as to all the veteran divers for training the new folks and welcoming them into the program.

The New & Improved DiveCrew.org

Check out all the new things your website has to offer

As of Friday, July 21, www.divecrew.org has a new face. In an effort to bring you a more interactive and informative website, Allen Miller and I have been busy making some exciting changes.

While still a work in progress, you can see new features such as a staff page, contact page, and education page. Please be patient as we get all files and links up and running. Keep checking back for new updates and additions!

Now Weight Just a Minute...

How to buy your own pocketed weight belt for Aquarium use

Many of you have now had a chance to try out the new, zipper-pocketed weight belts at the aquarium. The "Sinker" velcro weight pouches are no longer available, and these pocketed weight belts look to be the best substitute.

While there are a dozen or so belts available for use at the Aquarium, divers have the option to buy their own belt for Aquarium use only. Because your own belt would be used only a few times a month (instead of everyday like the ones at the aquarium), having divers supply their own belts seems to be a better use of resources. And of course, you'd always have a belt that fits without the guesswork.

If you wish to have your own weightbelt for use at the Aquarium, it must be specifically one of these belts, available at a great discount from Scuba Unlimited. These belts retail for \$22. Your price will be only \$15.

Please see the sizes below to determine which belt to buy. Don't forget to consider weight capacity in addition to belt size. For example, the medium-sized belt may fit you, but it only holds 20 pounds.

Medium: 30 inches - 47 inches; holds 20 pounds

Large: 36 inches - 51 inches; holds 24 pounds

X-Large: 41 inches - 55 inches; holds 28 pounds

To place your order, send me an email or call the dive office at 859.815.1461. Thank you!

Meet Larry Lobster

The mystery of the singing lobster continues...

A couple of months ago, I came into work on a Sunday morning to find a surprise in the dive office. There on my desk was a mounted, plastic lobster. With it was a "claw-written" letter addressed to me. The letter reads as follows:

"Dear Diver Jen,

A diver friend of mine told me you needed help at the Newport Aquarium so I would like to apply for a job.

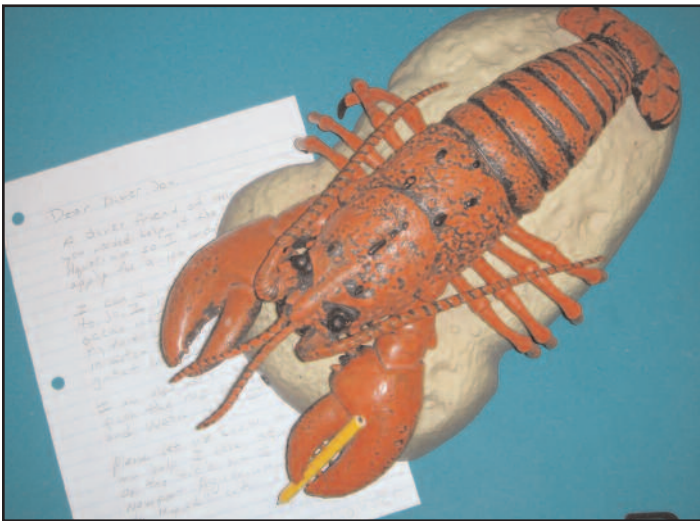
I can do whatever you need me to do. I know a lot about the ocean and I am a very good swimmer. My friend, Danny Deer who works in Gator Bayou, thinks I would do great in Coral Reef.



I am also very entertaining. Just push the red button by my nose and watch what I can do.

Please let me know if you need my help. I have several offers on the table, but I think the Newport Aquarium is best suited to my skill set.

Thank you, Larry Lobster”



So far no one has fessed up to leaving Larry Lobster, so the mystery of the singing lobster continues. But allow me to address the culprit: Larry continues to be an endless source of entertainment. Thank you!

Presenters Needed This Weekend

The Aquarium needs more good divers to step up to the mic

You’ve all seen my emails about needing presenters for the dive shows. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage all of you to consider giving dive presentations. Some of you have never done them, some of you used to do them years ago. It’s a lot of fun and it really isn’t difficult. All you need to do is tell us you’re interested, and we’ll begin your training.

First, we’ll train you on the comm mask. This can be done almost anytime you come down to dive,

and doesn’t take long. Next, you’ll get a copy of the script (soon to be available at divecrew.org) and practice - in the car, in the shower, in front of the dog, etc. Once you feel you’re ready to deliver an 8-10 minute presentation, we’ll sign you up for your first show.

Never seen a show? Check out some examples on video here at the Aquarium (also soon to be available at divecrew.org).

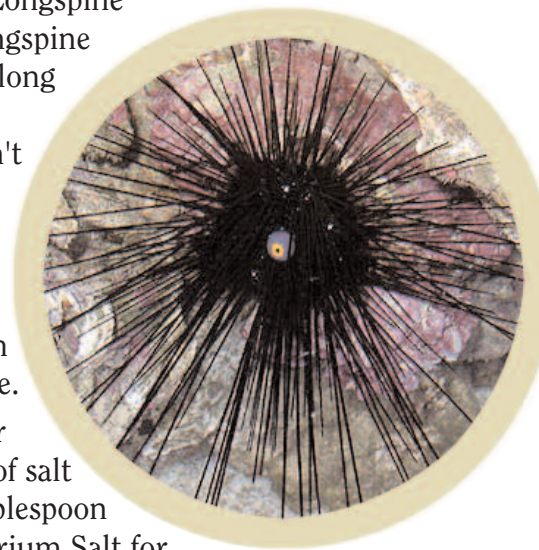
Is There a Biologist In The House?

Expert advice from the experts

Many of us have home aquariums. Whether you have a 5-gallon desktop Eclipse or a 500-gallon reef aquarium, expert advice is always a valued resource. In talking with the biologists day to day, I hear many helpful suggestions that I’d like to share with you.

Jen Ortlepp’s Home Aquarium Helpers

For algae control in saltwater aquariums with aggressive, snail-scarfing fish (puffers, rabbitfish, lionfish, eels), use Longspine black urchins. Longspine black urchins have long enough spines that most fish either can't get to the body to eat them, or loose interest before they can nip enough spines short enough to make them edible.



Many freshwater fish like a little bit of salt in their water (1 tablespoon of Freshwater Aquarium Salt for every 5 gallons). It lowers osmotic potential so their body doesn't have to work so hard to pump out excess water that is absorbed naturally through the gills, and also increases kidney function.

Along those same lines, mollies, especially black mollies, are a heavy brackish water fish and do MUCH better in full saltwater than in fresh. That's why people tend to have so many disease problems with them (because they keep them in straight freshwater). Many other fish also aren't 'true' freshwater fish, such as glass fish (the ones that have been tattooed are called painted glass fish) and glass cats come to mind. Also, guppies that aren't raised in this area need salt in their water because the water around here is much harder than what they were bred in. This goes back to the whole osmoregulation thing.

Speaking of "painted fish," if the name of a fish says 'painted,' it generally means that they were tattooed. The duration of the tattoo varies based on the color of the ink and the type of the fish. The exception to this is the Painted parrot cichlid; these are raised in a dye solution to give them a greater range of color than they have naturally. This is also done to some tetras, loaches and botias. These don't always have a specific word in their name, you just have to look for strange colors and colors that are too uniform than an animal would have naturally. Any pet store you patronize should be able to tell you if the coloring is natural or artificial.



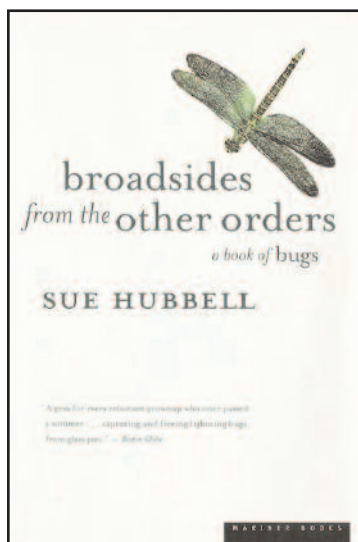
the color of the ink and the type of the fish. The exception to this is the Painted parrot cichlid; these are raised in a dye solution to

Diver Jen's Surface Interval

Check out Sue Hubbell's *Book of Bugs* and fall in love with not-so-creepy crawlies

Writer Sue Hubbell skillfully combines beautiful narrative with the science of entomology in her enchanting and educational book about the most plentiful form of animal life on our planet.

Journey with her as she shares stories about butterfly collecting in the mountains of Wyoming and a ladybug harvest in the Sierra Nevadas. You'll also gain knowledge about your



own backyard bugs from her charming tails of daddy longlegs and dragonflies, and dispels myths about "killer bees."

So curl up with some friendly bed bugs and prepare to be enlightened and entertained!

Reminders

Parking and picnic

Remember to mind where you park when coming to the Aquarium. Parking services is really cracking down - ticketing and towing. We can only park in the first two and a half rows (away from the river) of the lot. Fortunately, if you're stuck with parking at a meter, they're cheap. If the lot is completely full, we can still park in the Riverside Ford Lot (on the Northwest corner of 4th & Columbia).

Please remember to properly display your red parking pass on your rearview mirror. You must also have a Newport Aquarium sticker affixed to your parking pass, which you can pick up next time you're in. We don't want to see anyone get towed.

The Aquarium staff picnic is Sunday, August 6th at 6:30pm at Bellevue Vets. Don't forget to RSVP to Jenny Yee-Greber before August 1st. It's always a great time - I hope to see you all there!

Thank You

Your Dive Leaders really appreciate all your hard work and dedication

Diver Ed, Bruno and I would like to extend our deepest thanks for all the time, talent, and effort all of you continue to donate to the Aquarium. Being the reserved professionals that they are, Ed and Bruno are able to maintain their composure, whereas I tend to get a little too excited. Thank you all!! 🚩

