

AQUANEWS

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Lost Divers Fight Dragon Before Rescue

AOL Wire Services

JAKARTA, Indonesia (June 7) - All five Europeans who went missing while scuba diving in treacherous waters off eastern Indonesia were found alive Saturday on a remote island, police and family members said. The divers reportedly battled a komodo dragon on the island.

Oby Lewanmeru, AP

Five divers were rescued Saturday after surviving 36 hours floating treacherous waters and wandering an island off Indonesia, where they reportedly fought a deadly komodo dragon. Here, they arrive at Flores island after their rescue.

The divers - three from Britain and one each from France and Sweden - were rescued following a massive sea search in the area where they were last seen Thursday plunging into the water from their wooden boat, said Lt. Col. Buce Helo, a local police chief.

He said the five had drifted more than 12 hours before arriving at Rinca island about 20 miles away from their dive site. They didn't know the island was a reserve for aggressive monitor lizards, the largest in the world, that often feast in packs and can kill beasts as large as buffalo.

Laurent Pinel, 31, said the group had to fight off one dragon with rocks. They spent two nights there before being found by rescuers on Saturday.

Rescuers took them by motorboat to Labuhan Bajo, a city on the western tip of nearby Flores island, said Pariman, chief of the local port authority.

The five were rushed to a local hospital.

Pariman, who goes by only one name, described their condition as weak but healthy.

"They are alive and are now on their way to get medical assistance," Ernest Leandowski, the husband of one of the British divers, Kathleen Mitchinson, told the British news agency Press Association. "That is all I can say at this stage, as I have not yet spoken to my wife."

The diving trip took place off of Tatawa island, near the Komodo National Park, which is home to the world's largest lizards, the Komodo dragons. The area is famous for its rich marine diversity but also for its treacherous and unpredictable seas.

Recommended only for experienced divers, it is in a place where the Indian and Pacific Oceans meet, creating currents that converge and separate. Whirlpools and eddies can pull divers downwards.

(Continued on page 2 and 3)

AQUANEWS

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ROCKLAND AQUANAUTS ORGANIZATION. WRITTEN CONTRIBUTIONS & PHOTOGRAPHS ARE ALWAYS WELCOMED & ENCOURAGED. SUBMIT MATERIALS FOR PUBLICATION BY THE 19TH OF THE MONTH

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"They have been floating out there for two days," Dave Allin, the relieved father of Charlotte Allin, also of Britain, told Press Association. "We are still waiting for news of how they are."

The three other divers were identified as James Manning of Britain, Elena Neralairen of Sweden, and Lauren Pinel of France.



Rockland Aquanauts Organization Inc. Mission Statement:

To provide, promote, and advance environmental protection, care, and voluntary clean-up of waterways by any and all lawful means; to promote the importance and care in every manner possible by environmental awareness and otherwise; to purchase, print, publish, and circulate literature to promote the importance and care of the waterways and the work of the Corporation. To perform all acts the Corporation may deem appropriate or advisable in such operation; to establish, provide, and voluntary clean-up waterways, to encourage, support and subsidize the cleaning and protection from pollution.

Chinese Divers Saved After 40 Hours at Sea

While diving the Banshee Channel in southern Taiwan, Saturday, April 26, eight divers were reported missing when the boat skipper couldn't locate them and returned to port. The six men and two women divers were being carried by a current opposite their intended direction and so they surfaced twenty minutes after they began the dive, but were too far away to alert the boat. A hunt was launched but after 30 hours at sea with no rescue, the divers separated into two groups, one to swim to land while the other would wait it out. Ding Bo-Ling, a 32-year-old dive instructor, swam ten hours until he hit shore Sunday night, nearly 50 miles from the original dive site. With Ding's help, rescuers at dawn found five divers clicking their underwater cameras' flashes to get attention and later found the remaining two

When Is a Passport Full?

Eldon Okazaki from Sunnyvale, CA has this important tip: Make sure you have plenty of empty passport pages before your next international dive trip. While en route to an Indonesian liveaboard last fall, Okazaki was stopped at the Manado airport because he was told his passport was full, even though the last two pages were empty. "The customs officer said when you get to the last four pages, it is considered full. I had to pay a 'fee' to get through." Okazaki was lucky. We've had reports from other divers who were refused entry into a country because their passport was "full."

Man Dies While "Helmet Diving" in Grand Cayman :

Timothy Mowry of Traverse City, Michigan died while doing what's known as a helmet dive in George Town's Royal Water Port on May 26. Helmet diving lets people with no diving certification or swimming ability walk the ocean floor at shallow depths after being lowered on a line from the boat, literally wearing a helmet with a breathing apparatus, and supervised by dive crew. Despite good weather and water conditions, Mowry, 68, got into trouble while on an underwater trek with Sea Trek Cayman Islands. Boat crew said he was unconscious when pulled from the water, and never revived despite CPR.

Approved Hessian Lake Dives 2008

Saturday June 7th 9:00 am

Sunday July 13th 9:00 am

Saturday August 9th 9:00 am

Sunday Sept. 7th 10:00 am

Saturday Sept. 27th 10:00 am

Sunday Oct. 12th 10:00 am

Saturday Oct. 25th 10:00 am

BBQ Help Needed

We have BBQs after every Hessian Lake dive, but next year, we don't want the chef tasks to fall on the same people all the time, so we are asking for your help. If you plan on coming to the Hessian Lake dives, please consider offering to set up, cook, or break down the BBQ gear.

Setting up might mean you set up before diving, get out of the water first, or forego diving that day. **Cooking** means you cook for everyone who shows up, not just yourself & your friends.

Breaking down the BBQ gear means you stay until everyone has eaten and the grill is cool enough to put into your car to store until the next dive.

You don't have to be a Board Member to help. Everyone can pitch in. Any expenses, like buying food, are reimbursable. So please look at the dive dates and let us know when you can help out.

Thank you

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE

Rockland Aquanauts Organization
2008 Dues

I guess it is that time of the year again, Membership Dues are due. Last year all our members received much more than they gave out to the Organization. As usual you will be receiving a tax donation for the first \$25.00. All members who attended the Annual Dinner not only received money off their own dinner but they also received money off their guests dinner. Everyone whom attended also received prizes, some worth many times the cost of their Dues. Don't forget the Annual Picnic as well as all the BBQ lunch's after the Lake Dives.

So please send in your \$42 dues early to;

Rockland Aquanauts Organization
c/o
Paul Galeazzi Jr.
4 Greensward Drive.
Valley Cottage New York 10989

Major Reef Cleanups : 2008 is International Year of the Reef and to celebrate, four Maui dive shops and 42 volunteer divers and snorkelers retrieved more than three miles of tangled fishing line and 600 pounds of lead weights, hooks and steel leaders near McGregor Point in just one day. On May 10, armed with wire cutters and burlap bags, the divers did two 50-minute dives and combed an area of 200 square feet, collecting everything from glass bottles to cell phones. Meanwhile, a major reef cleanup in Florida is not going so quickly. The infamous artificial reef of two million scrap tires that broke free near Broward County will cost the state \$3.4 million to clean up. Army and Navy divers are retrieving 2,600 tires a day but at that rate, clearing the main tire field will still take 17 years to complete.

Don't Forget to Visit EmbroidMe for your Rockland Aquanauts Apparel

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June 2008

Lost Divers Found, Major Reef Cleanup, Hessian Lake 2008 Schedule, Membership Dues

****June Meeting To Be Announced****