

AQUANEWS

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Orange Roughy Story by Lada Simek

Fish life in the middle and midwater of the ocean is relatively scarce. Sea mounts are a great exception. Even though the water may be deep by our standards, the seamounts tend to be prolific with all sorts of life. There are pink corals, five feet high that take centuries to get that size because with the absence of light and therefore with no zooxanthellae to help, they rely strictly on fishing. Trawling in deep water has the same effect as trawling would on a tropical coral reef. There is nothing left and the damage takes centuries to repair. Sea mounts resemble islands with sometimes unique forms of life.

The orange roughy was found on seamounts in the south Pacific, predominantly around New Zealand, at depths of 750 to 1200 meters. (That is as deep as 4000 feet!). Life at that depth is very slow. The water is extremely cold, there is little food and few predators. Consequently, this 50 centimeter fish can live for an extraordinary 100-150 years. Normally they hang around the seamount in midwater, but when disturbed by a camera or a trawl, they act like fish in tropical reefs- they head for the bottom to hide among the delicate, brittle corals. This makes them an excellent target for trawling.

Commercial fishing for them started in 1970 when the catch was around 55 million metric tons a year. Every supermarket in our county had them for sale by the year 2000, when the catch

went to around 80 million tons. Then something went wrong. The nets were coming up empty. It did not take much genius to figure out why. The orange roughy takes 30 years to reach sexual maturity.

Do we learn? Have you seen any Chilean sea bass in the store lately?

The pictures are grainy because they are copied photographs from: **The Silent Deep, The discovery, Ecology and Conservation of the Deep Sea**, by Tony Koslow, printed in 2007. It is an excellent book. Read it.

011- orange roughy. Many deep water creatures are red because in the deep they will appear black

009- an echogram of a seamount off Tasmania. The peak is about 2000 feet. This is **highly compressed** laterally, being actually about a mile and a half in diameter at the base with red showing the bottom and spawning fish in blue. The cluster right above the peak are cardinal fish and along the sides are orange roughy.

008- An estimated 20-30 tons of orange roughy being hauled up the stern ramp of a trawler off New Zealand.

(Photo on page 2)

AQUANEWS

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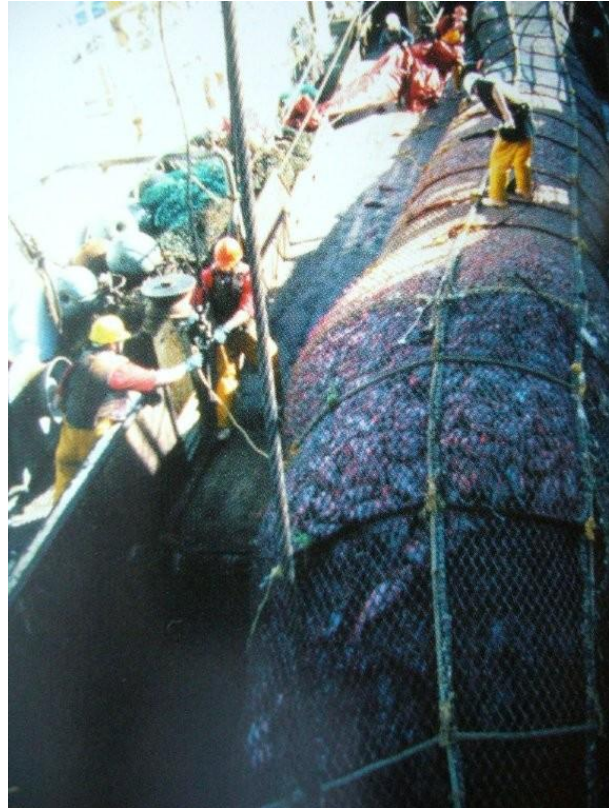
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Rockland Aquanauts Organization Inc. Mission Statement:

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.

Artificial Reef Program

From: NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife
Sent in by David Berger

Since 1984, the [Bureau of Marine Fisheries](#) has been involved in an intensive program of artificial reef construction and biological monitoring. The purpose is to create a network of artificial reefs in the ocean waters along the New Jersey coast to provide a hard substrate for fish, shellfish and crustaceans, fishing grounds for anglers, and underwater structures for scuba divers.

Artificial reefs are constructed by intentionally placing dense materials, such as old ships and barges, concrete and steel demolition debris and dredge rock on the sea floor within designated reef sites. At present, the division holds permits for [15 artificial reef sites](#) encompassing a total of 25 square miles of sea floor. The reefs are strategically located along the coast so that 1 site is within easy boat range of 12 New Jersey ocean inlets.

Within each reef site, which range in size from one-half to over four square miles, numerous "patch reefs" have been constructed. A patch reef is a one-half to 5-acre area where one barge load of material has been deployed. In total, over 1200 patch reefs have been constructed on the state's [15 reef sites](#) since the program began. Reefs are now being used extensively by anglers and divers who catch sea bass, blackfish, porgy and lobster.

Research projects designed to investigate the biology and ecology of ocean reefs completed during the past year included the food habits of black sea bass and the colonization of reef structures by blue mussels, barnacles and other marine invertebrates. Such studies help assess the effectiveness of reef construction efforts in providing habitat for New Jersey's marine life.



Subway car artificial reef program discontinued

Kelly Burgess

A New Jersey program using subway cars to build artificial reefs has now been discontinued when it was discovered that the cars weren't holding up as expected.

According to an article in the Press of Atlantic City, the operation was originally suspended in February because the stainless steel cars were disintegrating after only seven months in the ocean.

Darlene Yuhas, a spokeswoman for the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, told the Press that a survey of the 48 cars submerged at the Atlantic City Reef revealed that only two of them remained intact and upright.

"All the evidence suggested they would be long-lasting. In fact, the EPA [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency] data was these cars should last 25 years," Yuhas said.

State officials want to find out why the cars are deteriorating at a faster rate than anticipated. Yuhas stressed that they pose no threat and still provide "some level of habitat," though not the quality that meets state standards.

Only 100 of the expected 600 decommissioned New York City subway cars had been deployed.

Artificial reefs are popular with scuba divers as well as recreational anglers.

Subway cars used previously, called Redbirds, have not shown the same problem. The Redbirds are made of steel rather than stainless steel and have been used on New Jersey reef projects since 2003.

DEP still has plans to sink other items to build up the reefs, including rocks, boats and prefabricated reef balls.

-- Sent in by David Berger



Photo: Subway cars on a barge prior to deployment. Credit: NJDEP Department of Fish and Wildlife

You Never Know By; Lada Simek

You know the kind I mean- those three inch blades that mount on the shoulder strap of your BC. The answer to the question is- you never know!

One- Several times I was on a dive boat and something needed to be cut. My little but SHARP knife was there. **You never know.**

Two- A diver was grabbed by the arm by a salt water crocodile in Indonesia and taken down. His buddy's help was useless, but when he stabbed the crock in the eye with his knife, the animal let go. **You never know.**

Three- In tropical waters, the chance of entanglement are small, but the fish line is there. On my last trip I removed over 500 feet of it and needed my knife to cut it free. This may make a good impression of US divers on the locals. Could you get tangled up with some line? **You never know.**

ENTANGLEMENT!

By Lada Simek

Those of you who attended last month's meeting saw my short presentation on the importance in carrying a sharp knife. A number of volunteers sharpened their knives with a file and found the time to cut a rope was halved. You must always be prepared for an entanglement because they can happen anywhere, as a fatality at Dutch Spring demonstrates. **To dive with a dull, untested knife is like knowingly driving a car with bad brakes!** This article describes a nasty situation with a funny ending.

In 1981 a mechanic lost an outboard motor in Milton harbor, Rye. The owner of Shongut marina, Tom Consolazio asked me to look for it. Usually these searches are useless, but this time the location was excellently described- 45 degrees from a fishing jetty and 50 feet out. I called a TSSC divemaster, Gary Matzkin, we borrowed a boat and went to look for it. It was a cold and drizzly day in November.

I managed to anchor the boat precisely over the spot described and we began suiting up, Gary was the first one ready. He grabbed an armful of rope to make a search pattern and jumped in the water. He came up cursing- the water was up to his chest! I soon joined him, standing in less than five feet of water. Thinking to see what the visibility was, I bent over at the waist. There was the motor, between my legs. Gary cursed again.

Now the adventure begins. From the fishing jetty extended hundreds of monofilament lines. We looked like Xmas trees decorated with a vast abundance of tinsel. It was virtually impossible to move. Gary took his knife and began slashing, while I removed my equipment first. **It took us more than a quarter of an hour to get back in the boat.**

By the time we motored the mile long harbor to Shongut marina we were pretty cold. Tom Consolazio brought us some Henessey brandy. I am not a brandy drinker, but I had never tasted anything so delicious in my life. The following day I bought a bottle for myself, found it pretty good but not nearly as the one that Tom gave us. I attributed it to being wet and cold, but I was wrong. Years later I found the reason. The bottle Tom gave us to drink was part of a case that he won for winning a race from Florida to the Bahamas. He had been giving them away, but it turns out they were a special brandy that sold for \$300 a bottle. No wonder it was good!

Surprise!



Photo of the month. Found randomly online



Approved Lake Dives 2009



Saturday June 13th 9:00 am Hessian Lake

Saturday August 8th 9:00 am Hessian Lake

Sunday Sept. 13th 10:00 am Hessian Lake

Saturday Sept. 26th 10:00 am Hessian Lake

Sunday Oct. 11th 10:00 am Hessian Lake

Saturday Oct. 24th 10:00 am Hessian Lake

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE

Rockland Aquanauts Organization
2009 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

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

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October 2009

Orange Roughy Story, Artificial Reef Program, Hessian Lake 2009 Schedule, Membership Dues

****There Will be NO October Meeting ****

Can Anyone Help Us Set Up Meetings?

Please contact info@rocklandaquanauts.org
