



Moles Monitor

October 2016

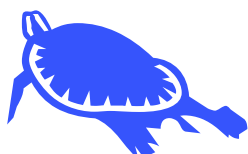
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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

October 21st - 28th Red Sea Trip (Chris Knight)
October 22nd - 23rd Dive 2016 Birmingham NEC
November 2nd - AGM
November 16th - River Diving Talk - Gordon Bell
November 30th - Knots Workshop - Keith
December 3rd - Dinner Dance - Chalk Lane Hotel
January 25th - Tides - Jon Gower
February - LIDS ExCel
May 6th- 7th - Weymouth Dive Trip - Carolynn
June 3rd-10th - Ireland Trip - Harry
Sept 9th - 10th - Weymouth Dive Trip - Chris Knight
Sept 25th - 29th (TBC) - D Day Trip - Matt Granger



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LUNDY ISLAND

(21st-26th May 2016)

Sharon



Dive Site 1 was The Robert, a small coaster lying on its starboard side at a depth of 28m. Still almost completely intact, the wreck went down in the 1970's & it's now a rusting structure covered with plumose anemones & soft corals. We saw a conger eel, crabs, tiny sand eels, lobsters and starfish, & although the visibility wasn't as good as we'd hoped for it was a very enjoyable dive.

Dive 2 was at Brazen Ward, a dive site about 50m offshore of 'Frenchman's Landing. We saw blue jellyfish, comb jellies and seals. Some people got a close encounter & some of us only got a passing glimpse of the adorable grey seals. Unfortunately after the dive Steve & Keith were a bit cold and wet as their dry suits weren't as dry as they should have been!

Our second days diving began and the sea was getting a bit choppy but we still had blue skies & sunshine so we weren't complaining.



Dive 3 was at Gannets Bay, lots of kelp and a few more seal encounters. This time it was Adam's turn to get wet but a neck seal repair later in the day sorted this out.

Dive 4 was Knoll Pins where we saw lots of lobsters, spider crabs, jewel anemones & fan corals. On his safety stop Del lost one of his BCD dumps but he managed to hold his stop and thanks to the ingenuity of the Moles, a sandwich bag & some cable ties it was soon back in working order for his next dive.

On diving day three we woke up to strong winds & big waves. Eventually Obsession II managed to moor alongside The Oldenburg & 7 intrepid moles went diving (the other 5 of us went for a walk and lunch in the pub). The boat headed out & once



around the corner on the west side of the island found calm seas.

Dive 5 was Gullies at Battery Point and **dive 6** was at Jenny's Cove where they had the best visibility of the week and more seals. Getting ashore after the dives proved to be an adventure as they had to row in on a small inflatable, this gave Sonja the opportunity to demonstrate her skill as a cox leaving Tristan to do all the paddling!

We woke for our last days diving & the wind was still strong so we put on our drysuits, negotiated the ladder on the pontoon & boarded the boat between waves! It was a bit lumpy going around the corner but not as bad as we'd expected.



LUNDY ISLAND

(21st-26th May 2016)

Sharon

Dive 7 was at Devil's Slide, this was a gentle drift dive with crabs, cuckoo wrasse & lots of anemones.

In-between dives at Jenny's Cove we had our lunch whilst birdwatching & though the binoculars we saw puffins nesting in the grass on the clifftop.

The puffins arrive in Lundy from mid-march and they nest in burrows underground where they lay a single egg. After the hatching the young puffins (pufflings) stay hidden underground in the nest until all the puffins leave Lundy in late July/August when they return to the north Atlantic where they spend their non-breeding season. Other birds we spotted whilst on Lundy were Peregrines, Fulmars, Guillemots, Oyster Catchers, Gannets & of course sea gulls.

Dive 8, our last dive was in Jenny's Cove and although the visibility wasn't as good as it had been the day before we still had an enjoyable dive.

Après Diving we entertained ourselves at the Marisco Tavern where we learnt that Sonja is a 'game bird', Adam is a 'peak too early kind of guy' and Soay is a sheep with a chocolate brown coat & white belly and that ratatouille isn't very popular!



A big thankyou goes to:



Del for organising a very enjoyable holiday.



Becky McDonald (the Lundy Warden) for air-fills, transportation etc.



Our skipper Stuart (Obsession II) for good driving, parking & conservation/marine info.



And to Adam for cooking a delicious chilli!

Lundy Fact File

Getting There/Diving:
www.lundydiving.co.uk
Air Fills:
warden@lundyisland.co.uk
Accommodation
www.lundyisland.co.uk
When to go

Obsession II
Andrew Bengay 01271 866325/07971 1462024
4-15 litres @ £6.59 (10% discount when pre-booked)
Becky McDonald
Milcombe House (12)
www.landmarktrust.org.uk
Mid-April to October





Photography in Swanage

Mike Naylor



On the weekend of 25th June saw nine enthusiastic Moles attended an Underwater Photography Course arranged by the Marine Conservation Society after a lot of legwork by Sonja on our behalf. Excepting the writer, all had travelled down early on Saturday morning in order to grab a parking place on the pier; unfortunately only 2 cars succeeded as the pier was full by 07.15! After meeting at the outdoor cafe we proceeded to the wrong venue as there are at least two museums in Swanage; maybe we should have stuck to the instructions instead of relying on Google Maps.

The course was held in a classroom conveniently located above the cafe on the pier and was given by Paul Naylor, the renowned Marine Biologist and photographer who is best known to most of us for his excellent publications on British marine life, and assisted by Gerry from the MCS whom we had met before on a previous marine life course. The course was built around Paul's huge catalogue of stunning photographs – all taken in the seas surrounding the British Isles – which he used not only to demonstrate both the functional and creative sides of photography but also to illustrate the huge variety of marine life around our shores which we can quite easily overlook. Over the many years that Paul has been diving and snorkelling he has developed an almost symbiotic relationship with his subjects, particularly his own group of blennies in Devon where he lives. This enthusiasm for his subject was very

infectious and helped all of us to stay awake (some only just) during the morning session.

Paul demonstrated what superb possibilities there are in British waters for photography giving numerous tips on not only what makes a good photograph (sometimes surprisingly) but how to get yourself into a good situation to be able to take them. He emphasised the recurring themes of:-

- Respecting your subjects and the environment
- Making time for the photography
- Knowing your camera
- Minimising the distance to the subject
- Visualising the end result and planning for it



Unsurprisingly, Paul is an enthusiast for shallow water diving as this not only offers the most subjects and the best light but also allows the diver to spend far more time underwater in a less demanding diving situation. Paul's safety procedure on some of his dives is "Stand up!" Nevertheless he emphasised that complacency still had to be avoided as no dive is risk free.

A brief lunch in the busy little town of Swanage allowed us to watch the rowing races that were being held in the bay whilst we ate our pasties and dodged the showers although some of us were tempted by the culinary delights of the local Wimpey!

The afternoon was set aside for a dive under the pier with its rich diversity of life in a useful 3-4 metres of water.



Photography in Swanage

Mike Naylor

Everyone was looking forward to getting in there and putting into practice what we had learnt in the classroom. Andy had problems with his camera so amused himself by placing various items such as lost sunglasses and rocks in the fishing creels that were being lowered into the water by the kids on the pier. Sonja cheated by employing “spotter” Tristan, and Matt spent most of his dive in the vertical mode finning madly or hanging on to the pier superstructure to stop himself surfacing.

After at least one hour of diving we returned to the classroom for a brief review of our photos which were taken with a wide range of cameras, from Stefan’s i-phone in an underwater housing to Dave’s complete with fish eye lens and powerful video light/torch. Paul’s analysis of our photographs was constructive, informative and very diplomatic in some cases.

Saturday night saw everyone down on the front with the regulation fish and chips followed by liquid refreshments. Two of us retired early to the campsite whilst the rest retired later to the charms of the Youth Hostel.

Sunday morning was spent further reviewing the photographs taken but mainly looking at the basics of photography and the equipment with some good tips on processing and maintenance. Once again Paul went through his principles of diving for photography and how to get the best from what may not normally be thought of as a good opportunity.

An excellent weekend with many thanks to Paul for sharing his knowledge and insights which helped us to realise what great opportunities there are in Britain to see a huge variety of marine life. I suspect that more than one of us will now be looking at camera upgrades.

