

# MOLES MONITOR



APRIL 2020



# MVSAC – APRIL 2020

Welcome to our 2<sup>nd</sup> newsletter during the lockdown, we hope you are well & coping with the restrictions imposed on us by Covid 19.

As there is little club news to report we have put together a few things which we hope will interest you (please send us your ideas/ articles & we will put them in the next edition)

## ***An Article from Mike Bailey (Part 1)***

I thought you might be interested to hear about my dive trip to Socorro, then to the cenotes in Cancun. If you can't go diving, you can at least read about it!

I went with a group of 18, organised by the Surrey Dive Centre. We flew from LHR to Mexico City and from there to Playa del Cabro.

A check dive there was followed by a 36-hour boat ride to our first dive in the Socorro region at San Benedicto. This is a rocky outcrop in the Pacific, part of the 'ring of fire' which includes the Galapagos Islands.



Diving was challenging, with strong currents and surge in places, but we saw mantas, mobulas, several species of sharks (We saw hammerheads, white and silver tip reef sharks, Galapagos sharks, a guitar shark), barracudas, yellow fin tuna and bottlenose dolphins. As these sites are pretty remote and divers are therefore fairly uncommon, the pelagics were unafraid of us and so close encounters were the norm.

We spent two days at three different locations (San Benedicto, Roco Partita and Socorro) all with a slightly different mixture of animals - almost all the dives had sharks or mantas.

We also saw humpback whales, though only from the boat.

The dive boat was the Nautilus explorer, with 24 divers and about a dozen staff. The staff were all very friendly and helpful, food was good and the whole trip was well organised. We did 4 dives most days - no night dives but one-night snorkeling session with Silky sharks.

I will write about the cenotes in the next edition.



2 more pictures from Mike's recent trip

## FISH OF THE WEEK

### THE RED GURNARD

A brightly coloured & easily recognizable fish, one of three gurnard species found in UK seas.

**Scientific Name:** *Chelidonichthys cuculus*

**Usual Size:** Up to 50cm

**Identification:** They have long bodies and a large head with a steep forehead and big eyes. Their colouring is distinctive bright red mottled with pink. They have one fin along the spine which is used for swimming, the lowest three spines of the pectoral fin are separated and used to probe the seabed for hidden prey – these look a bit like legs and can give the impression that they are 'walking'.



**Habitat:** As bottom-dwelling fish they are to be found on gravelly, sandy or rocky seabeds around the UK

**Food:** Small fish, crustaceans and other invertebrates, they especially love crabs, shrimps and worms.

**Fact:** Collectively gurnards are known as sea robins

## RECEIPE OF THE WEEK

### Peach & Poppy Seed Muffins

- 2 medium eggs
- 120g caster sugar
- 200g peeled & finely grated sweet potato
- 100g white rice flour
- 100g ground almonds
- 1 tbsp. poppy seeds
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp bicarbonate soda
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 3 small peaches cut into 1/2cm cubes (you can use tinned ones if fresh ones aren't available)

Preheat oven 180c.

Whisk egg & sugar for 3 mins with wooden spoon then beat in all other ingredients except peach cubes.

Fold in peach cubes.

Put mixture into muffin tin or cases (makes 9)

Bake for 30 mins

## FREE INTRO TO SCUBA COURSE

In addition to the Free Inactive Diver Course which 18 of you have applied for (I still have some free codes available) I also have some free codes for the on-line SDI SCUBA Discovery Course, here is a link to that course <https://www.tdisdi.com/sdi/get-certified/scuba-discovery-program/>

This is an ideal course for anyone considering taking up diving in the future so if you have any bored adults or children in your household why not get them to do the course just email me for a FREE code, they do not have to be an MVSAC member these codes are open to anyone interested in SCUBA diving

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**8<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> May - Diving in Weymouth on Tango - Cancelled**

**25<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> July – Jon’s Club Trip to Devon**

**22<sup>nd</sup> August - Annual Club BBQ (If you have any ideas / games for this event please let us know, you may have bits & pieces in your shed you could put to good use as Eddie has in the past)**

**5<sup>th</sup>- 6<sup>th</sup> September - Diving in Weymouth on Tango**

**Date TBA -Treasure Hunt**

**23<sup>rd</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> October – Maldives**

**4<sup>th</sup> November – AGM December**

**5<sup>th</sup> December – Dinner Dance**

## STAY SAFE EVERYONE

