

MOLES MONITOR



MAY 2020



MVSAC – MAY 2020

Welcome to our 3rd newsletter during the lockdown, we hope you are well & coping with the restrictions imposed on us by Covid 19.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Simon & Jodie, Aly and Sharon & Steve for putting on quizzes for the club on our regular Virtual Club nights on Zoom. If you have not joined in one of our Virtual Club nights yet give it a try it is always nice to catch up and see how everyone is doing in these strange times.

An Article from Mike Bailey (Part 2)

As a follow on from our trip to Socorro, a small group of us went on to dive in the ceynotes in Cancun. I have wanted to dive there since seeing a photo in Marin Edge's book on underwater photography.

For those of you who don't know about the ceynotes, they are a series of underground rivers through the Mexican jungle. What makes them special is the openings to the jungle itself via sinkholes formed by erosion of the limestone by CO₂ in the rain. This creates shafts of light, with views of the jungle from the cavern system.



They are freshwater, with visibility up to 100 metres, and an interface with saltwater forming haloclines which create a shimmering layer.

The ceynotes we dived were El Pit, Jardin d'Eden, Taj Ha and Nicté Ha, each with its own character. It is compulsory to have a certified guide (and ours was an experienced cave diver, with trim and bouncy control to rival Carolyn's)

Each ceynote has a line already laid to follow, and from a diving point of view are classified as caverns rather than caves as there is periodic access to the surface. Most are fairly wide, with room for two divers to pass easily, but Nicté Ha was quite tight (see photo).

The ceynotes were of mystical or religious significance to the Mayan civilisation, who viewed them as the gateway to the underworld.

Diving in the ceynotes certainly lived up to my expectations, and whilst my pictures do not rival Martin Edge's, I was quite pleased with them.



2 more pictures from Mike's recent trip

FISH OF THE WEEK

10 FACTS ABOUT CUTTLEFISH

1) There are over 120 distinct species of cuttlefish.

2) Cuttlefish can manually control their buoyancy. *To do so, these cuttlefish alter their internal buoyancy through the use of something called a cuttlebone, which isn't a bone but a porous internal shell. By adjusting levels of gas in the forward chamber and the level of water in the rear chamber of the cuttlebone—which isn't a particularly fast process—the cuttlefish can modulate its buoyancy and control where in the water column it will rest.*



- 3) Baby cuttlefish and small adults use their arms to walk along the ocean floor.
- 4) They can change to be almost any colour—even though they're colour blind.
- 5) They also mimic the shape and texture of objects around them to better hide.
- 6) Cuttlefish can see behind them.
- 7) Females can store multiple sperm packets, then select one for fertilizing.
- 8) Males will "cross dress" for access to a female. Males will disguise themselves fully as female, mimicking their muted tones, in order to sneak past larger males standing guard over a female after they've mated with her. To do so, the cross-dressing male not only changes his coloration, he will also hide his tell-tale fourth pair of arms (females only have three) and position himself to appear as if he's carrying eggs.

A 2005

study showed that this deception works—almost half the time, the cross-dressing male gets the girl.



- 9) Cuttlefish use decoys as defense. When they're threatened, cuttlefish, like most cephalopods, will release a cloud of ink to hide themselves from the would-be predator. But if simple smoke and mirrors won't cut it, the cuttlefish can mix its ink with mucus to create a smaller, denser cloud roughly in the same size and shape as its own body—or a decoy cuttlefish. These so-called pseudomorphs serve to distract and confuse the attacker while the cuttlefish scoots away.
- 10) Cuttlefish hunt using hypnosis. Although they typically use their colour-changing abilities to blend in to avoid getting eaten, when cuttlefish go on the offensive, they turn their bodies into pulsating light and colour shows in an attempt to hypnotize potential prey.

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

Jen's Blooming Brilliant Brownies

Ingredients

200 g quality dark chocolate (70%)
250 g unsalted butter
80 g quality cocoa powder
65 g plain flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
360 g caster sugar
4 large free-range eggs



Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/gas 4. Line a 24cm square baking tin with greaseproof paper.

Snap the chocolate into a large bowl, add the butter and place over a pan of simmering water, until melted, stirring regularly.

Sift the cocoa powder and flour into a separate bowl, add the baking powder and sugar, then mix together.

Add the dry ingredients to the chocolate and stir together well. Beat the eggs, then mix in until you have a silky consistency.

Pour the brownie mix into the baking tin, and place in the oven for around 25 minutes. You don't want to overcook them so, unlike cakes, you don't want a skewer to come out clean – the brownies should be slightly springy on the outside but still gooey in the middle.

Allow to cool in the tray, then carefully transfer to a large chopping board and cut into chunky squares.

Delicious served with a dollop of crème fraiche or yoghurt mixed with some orange zest.

Note from Jen:

They freeze really well, eat hot for a dessert or cold as a brownie.

I use a hot knife to cut them when they have cooked (in the fridge for an hour too makes them really neat and easy to cut)

FREE INTRO TO SCUBA COURSE & IN-ACTIVE DIVER COURSES

If you have taken a code for either of the above Free courses please log on and start the course ASAP. If you are experiencing any problems getting started please contact Steve at spavey@spuce.co.uk.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

25th – 31st July – Jon's Club Trip to Devon (Fingers Crossed)

22nd 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)

5th- 6th September - Diving in Weymouth on Tango

Date TBA -Treasure Hunt

23rd – 31st October – Maldives

4th November – AGM December

5th December – Dinner Dance

If you have any pictures, articles or recipe's you would like to share please email Steve @ spavey@spruce.co.uk

STAY SAFE EVERYONE

