

Pacific Northwest Diver

Publication of the Pacific Northwest Underwater Photographic Society
May, 2013



Opalescent Squid by Robert Roy
Canon Powershot S 100 | 5 mm | 1/400th | f 7.1 | ISO 125

Pacific Northwest Diver

BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE & WEB SITE PROMOTING UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY, EDUCATION, & TRAVEL IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST | MAY, 2013

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Pacific Northwest Diver: In This Issue

The featured photographers for May are Robert Roy from Vancouver, BC, Victoria's Scott Stevenson shares images from Race Rocks, and Russ Ricketts, based in Wenatchee, describes river snorkeling. Rockfish Divers on Brentwood Bay outside of Victoria is May's featured operator. "From the Archives" contains a 1935 photo and write-up of eight intrepid high school students who made their own dive gear from salvaged material. All under the auspices of Los Angeles employees! In the news section there is information about how you can provide input on Puget Sound octopus hunting regulations, and Marine Life Sanctuaries Society's receipt of the Frank Sanford award.

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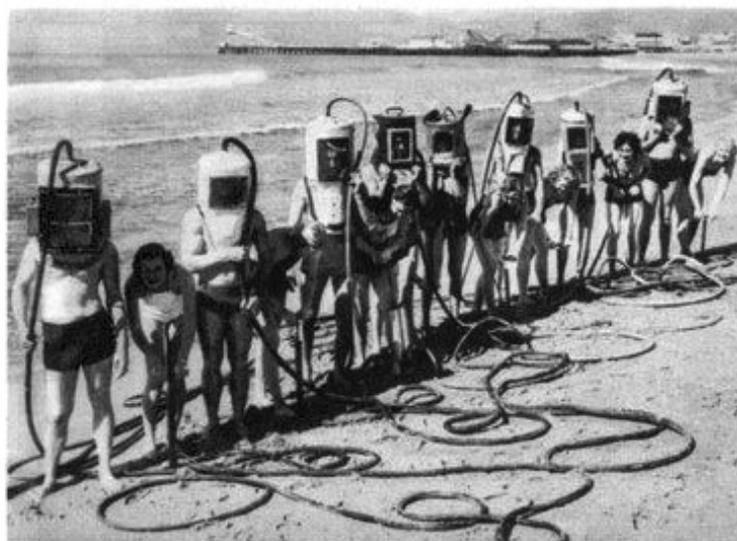
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From the Archives:
San Pedro Suicide Club: June, 1935

OK DIY'ers: don't try this at home. This is only for trained professionals. Wait a minute they are San Pedro High School students. And they are under the instruction of a Los Angeles playground staffer.

But I bet the equipment is first class. Oops, I forgot this took place in 1935 during the Great Depression. Cut up water heater tanks, garden hose, and bicycle pumps. No liability concerns for local government back in those days! How our gear and legal system have progressed!

"Suicide Club" Makes Own Diving Suits



San Pedro High School youths with diving suits made from odds and ends.

THE "Suicide Club" is an apt title for a group of eight Californian youths who, assisted by friends at the air pumps, indulge in small scale deep sea diving.

Under the direction of Jack Cheaney of the Los Angeles playground department, the amateur divers have equipped themselves with complete homemade outfits constructed from odds and ends. Sections of water heating tanks, fitted with windows, provide suitable helmets for the sub-surface workers. Ordinary garden hose is attached to bicycle pumps which furnish up to 20 pounds of air pressure.

Salvaging sunken craft, retrieving lost anchors and freeing fouled lines are the everyday jobs of this venturesome group.

Pacific Northwest Diver: Robert Roy

Robert Roy



Robert Roy & Daughter
e-Mail: robertproy@yahoo.ca

Robert is an avid naturalist with a keen interest in evolutionary biology and a fascination with the underwater realm. He says:

“Unfortunately, I haven’t yet figured out how to make money at as an underwater photographer/naturalist, so for now I am sticking to my day job as an Obstetrician-Gynecologist in the Vancouver, BC area.” Here is Robert’s story and shooting tips.

“I have always been fascinated with fish and underwater life, but I delayed getting certified in scuba diving because I am not a particularly good swimmer. However, I eventually became a fairly good snorkeler after a few trips to Hawaii.

I then tried a PADI “Discover Scuba” while on vacation at a resort in the Philippines five years ago, and I was hooked instantly! In short order, I then did my Open Water, Advanced Open Water, and Nitrox courses, all in the Philippines.

As I was learning tropical diving, I had only a vague awareness of Pacific Northwest diving. Several people told me that British Columbia was home to some of the best cold water diving in the world. Since I loved diving so much, and could not afford to spend all of my time in the tropics, I decided to take a local dry-suit course.

After a few setbacks, including a fairly serious ear injury, I eventually got the hang of dry-suit diving. I found that the learning curve for local cold-water diving was steep in the beginning. I had to learn it mostly on my own; as a “newbie”, it took me a while to connect with experienced local divers. Since I loved tropical diving so much, I persisted with cold-water diving, and after about 20-30 local dives, I eventually came to realize that the diving in British Columbia is just as good, or even better than tropical diving!

Once I was comfortable with dry suit diving, I decided to try my hand at underwater photography. I was enthralled with the beauty of the underwater realm, and I was hoping to perhaps capture some of that beauty and share it with my family and friends. I purchased my first underwater camera about 3 years ago. It was a SeaLife DC1000 with double strobes. Although I enjoyed taking pictures underwater, my initial pictures were not very good.

Early on in my diving career, on various dive trips, I still recall seeing more experienced photographers reviewing their photos on their lap tops, and I was awestruck at the exquisite color, detail, and beauty they were capturing digitally. I wanted to take pictures like that too!

My next step was a PADI underwater photography

course in the summer of 2011. Lee Newman, a well-known local underwater photographer, gave the course, and I owe him a lot of credit for opening the doors of underwater photography for me. The three most important things he taught me were: 1.) Shoot manual; 2.) Shoot manual; 3.) Shoot manual!

The technique he taught me goes something like this: put your fingers on the control dial of your camera, take a deep breath, close your eyes, and switch it to manual! Yes, you can do it! It’s easy!

As soon as I made the switch to manual, the quality of my photographs improved tremendously. Once I was in full control of strobe power, shutter speed, aperture, and ISO, I could better understand what each of these did, and I started getting much better results.

I soon realized I had reached the limits of what my initial camera could achieve, and I was soon craving for a better set-up. After a bit of research, I purchased a Canon S100 just over a year ago. Although the Canon S100 is but a humble little compact, it is considered one of the better compact cameras for underwater use, and I have been very happy with it so far.

I also invested in a high-quality housing, in the form of the machined-aluminum RecSea. Although the RecSea housing is a bit pricey, it is rock-solid and I am confident that it will never flood. I kept my original Sea Life strobes, although one has recently died, so I replaced it with a Sea & Sea YS-02.

I also have a Sola 800 focus light, which I find invaluable in our local waters. It can serve triple duty as a focus light, video light, and general dive

Pacific Northwest Diver: Robert Roy

light. As an added bonus, the red “stealth” mode also works fairly well at sneaking up on skittish creatures scared off by bright focus lights!

Since taking the underwater photography course and getting my new camera, I have been very happy with the quality of pictures that I have been getting underwater. I enjoy sharing my pictures underwater with my family, friends and fellow dive buddies and underwater photographers.

I find that Facebook is a great medium for sharing photos, because it allows people to click “like” if they like a picture, and also to post comments if they wish. I find that the feedback I receive from sharing my photos on Facebook helps me improve as an underwater photographer.

The positive response to my photos has further invigorated my drive to get underwater and dive! After just over 5 years of diving, I now have 700 dives, most in our local cold waters. I also completed my dive-master course last year (despite my mediocre swimming abilities). I also hold an advanced Nitrox certification.

I have dived all over British Columbia, including the sites close to the city of Vancouver (where I live), as well as the Sunshine Coast and all around Vancouver Island.

I have also done some diving just south of the border in Washington State, such as Whidbey Island (Keystone) and Hood Canal, and I find the diving there is comparable to British Columbia. I have also dived extensively in the Philippines, and have also dived in Malaysia, Hawaii, Socorro Islands and various places in the Caribbean.

Looking back, I can say with confidence that British Columbia has undoubtedly some of the best diving and underwater photography in the world, cold-water or otherwise!

The diving in Hawaii and the Caribbean is certainly pleasant and easy, but for underwater photography, British Columbia is better. The diving around Port Hardy (i.e., Browning Pass), as well as around Telegraph Cove and Barkley Sound stand out as being particularly good. I have been lucky enough to get great photos from just about everywhere I have dived in B.C.

Certainly our local conditions present a bit more of a challenge, but for me, this is one of the attractions to local diving. Since our local diving is both world class and sparsely dived and photographed relative to tropical areas, we local underwater photographers have the very real possibility of getting a shot that perhaps nobody else has.

A few years ago, I photographed a red fin gunnel cleaning the mouth of a ling cod ([recently published](#)). At that time, I was still fumbling around in automatic mode with my old camera, but the opportunity to capture a behavior that no one else had ever photographed really motivated me to continue with underwater photography, despite the very modest and humble quality of my early efforts.

I particularly enjoy macro-photography; I haven’t really got the hang of wide-angle yet. Besides from our local diving, Anilao in the Philippines has astoundingly good macro-photography.

My advice for photographers who are just starting

out is to start by reading Martin Edge’s [The Underwater Photographer](#). My other tips are pretty simple and is consistent with what others have said:

- ➊ Become a good diver before taking a camera underwater. Take the time to master buoyancy and be very comfortable underwater before adding a camera to your kit.
- ➋ Shoot manual
- ➌ SLR is not absolutely necessary; you can get good results with the newer compact cameras. Make sure it has manual mode. Compact cameras have the advantage of not only being compact, but also being much more affordable. Invest in a good housing; the cheap plastic housings are meant for snorkeling or surfing and are not meant for the rigors of diving.
- ➍ External strobes are key to bringing out color in our local low-light conditions. It is very difficult, if not impossible, to get great shots in our local waters without at least one strobe.
- ➎ Shoot manual!
- ➏ Get out there and dive!

For those wishing to see more of my photos, and to share theirs also, and make comments, you can find me on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/robert.roy.374>

I also have several underwater videos and slide shows posted to YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/user/robertproy>.”





Opalescent Nudibranch by Robert Roy
Canon Powershot S 100 | 23 mm | 1/320th | f 7.1 | ISO 100



© Rob Roy

Candy Stripe Shrimp by Robert Roy
Canon Powershot S 100 | 8 mm | 1/80th | *f* 5.6 | ISO 400



© Rob Roy

Black & White Sea Flea (c. 1 cm) by Robert Roy
Canon Powershot S 100 | 22 mm | 1/250th | *f* 7.1 | ISO 160



Hooded Nudibranch Convention by Robert Roy
Canon Powershot S 100 | 7 mm | 1/100th | f 8 | ISO 400

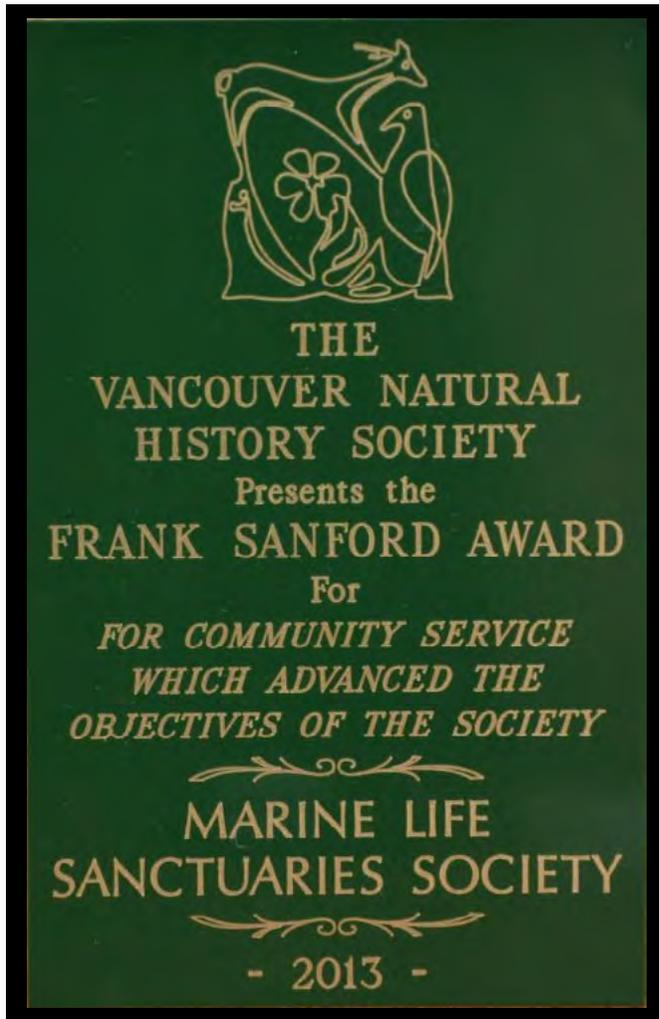


© Rob Roy

Hooded Nudibranch by Robert Roy
Canon Powershot S 100 | 12 mm | 1/200th | *f* n/a | ISO 100

Pacific Northwest Diver: News Corner

[Congratulations](#) [Marine Life Sanctuaries Society!](#)



On April 25 the [Marine Life Sanctuaries Society](#) recently won the Frank Sanford Award given annually by the Vancouver Natural History Society. This award is open to the general community, and is awarded to an individual or organization who best: promotes the enjoyment of nature; Fosters public interest and education in the appreciation and study of nature; Encourages the wise use and conservation of natural resources, Works for the complete protection of endangered species and ecosystems; Promotes access to, and maintenance of, natural areas in the vicinity of Vancouver. Congratulations!

[Puget Sound](#) [Giant Pacific Octopus Hunting Regulations](#)



Janna Nichols

On April 15 Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife approved a list of four options for managing Puget Sound's giant Pacific octopus population. This was in response to a young man killing a GPO at Cove 2.

- Option A: Status Quo - no changes to current regulations
- Option B: Marine Preserve – no recreational harvest of all species: Redondo Beach, Seacrest Park Coves 1, 2 and 3
- Option C: Marine Preserves – no recreational harvest of Giant Pacific Octopuses: Redondo Beach, Three Tree Point North, Seacrest Park Coves 1, 2 and 3, Les Davis, Alki Beach Junk Yard, Days Island Wall, Deception Pass
- Option D: Puget Sound closure to recreational harvest of Giant Pacific Octopuses.

You can find out more about the four options currently under consideration, and **post comments online**, at <http://www.wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations/octopus/> through May 31. The commission will consider taking action on new regulations governing the harvest of octopuses in Puget Sound later this year.

Pacific Northwest Diver: Operator- Rockfish Divers



- Alisa & Tyler Preston

Looking for a very comfortable dive operation and hotel in the Victoria, BC area? Consider Rockfish Divers and the Brentwood Bay Resort and Spa.

While Rockfish Divers has been in existence for many years, Alisa and Tyler Preston purchased the business from Elly Pendleton this past December. Both Alisa and Tyler worked for Elly prior to the purchase.

Rockfish Divers is unique in that it is the only dive shop in the Northwest where accommodations, dive shop, pool, classroom and dive boat all share a single location.

The Loup de Mer (Wolf Eel) dive boat is a custom built 30' aluminum vessel that is quiet, reliable and able to access remote dive sites easily. It provides a stable platform for gear-

ing up. The dive bench allows up to eight divers to comfortably store, don and remove their gear. The cabin is heated for comfortable surface intervals and has a marine head and carries all the standard safety equipment including emergency oxygen.

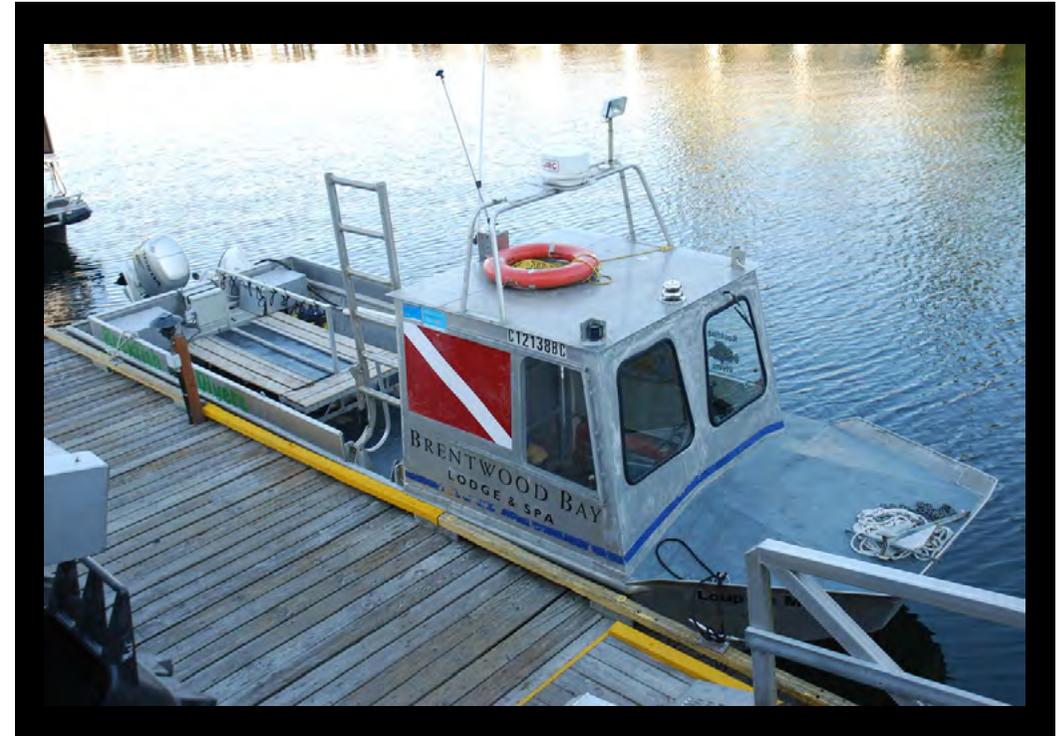
On site lodging is with Brentwood Bay Lodge, a few steps away from Rockfish Divers. The Lodge has two on-site restaurants: the Seagrille Restaurant and Brentwood Pub. There is also a hot tub and spa where massages are offered.

This is an ideal base both for divers and non-diving companions. Also, when dives and accommodations are booked together, there is a 20% discount on rooms.

Rockfish dives anywhere in the Saanich Inlet, and weather permitting they also make trips to the HMCS McKenzie, the GB Church, Arbutus Island and Graham's Wall.

Divers can explore the dramatic walls of Willis, McCurdy or Christmas Points, play with the seals at Repulse Rock or marvel at the awesome cloud sponge colonies of Senanus Island.

Web: <http://www.rockfishdivers.com/>
e-Mail: info@rockfishdivers.com
Phone: 250.516.3483



30' Loup de Mer



Saanich Inlet Dive Sites

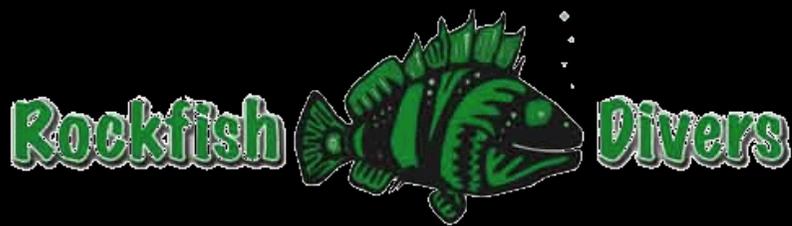
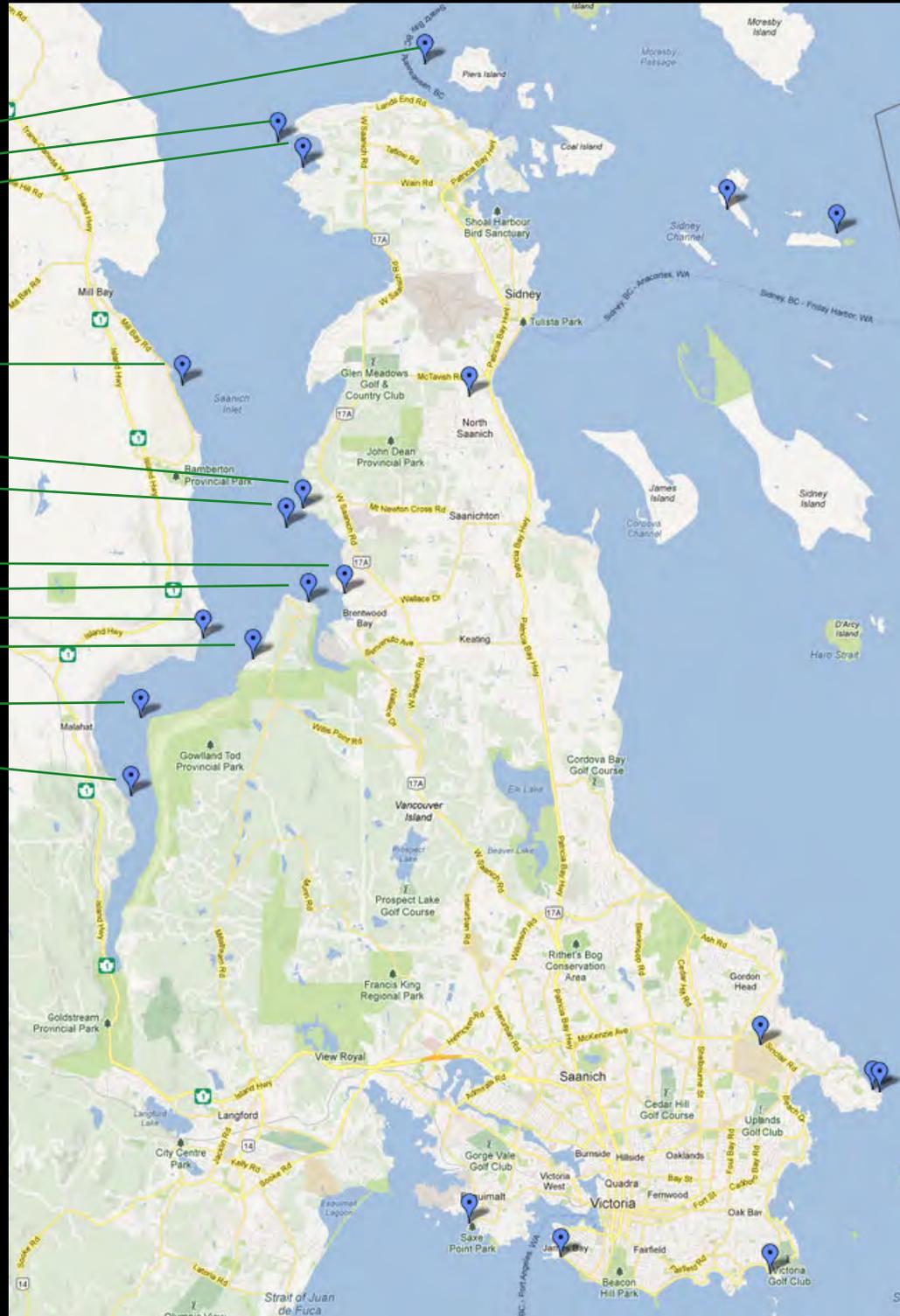
- Arbutus Island
- Wain Rock
- Deep Cove

- Tozier Rock

- Henderson Point
- Senanus Island

- Rockfish Divers
- Willis Point
- McCurdy Point
- McKenzie Byte

- White Lady
- Christmas Point







Sea Lion Playing with Divers

Pacific Northwest Diver: Scott Stevenson

Scott Stevenson



Scott Stevenson is a Victoria based Dive Master/Underwater Photographer. In 2006 Scott started Pacific Marine Imaging to showcase our local marine life and give divers and non-divers alike a resource to experience and appreciate the ocean. Here Scott describes on of his favorite dive locales.

Premium Rush: Race Rocks

One of the jewels in Vancouver Island's diving crown is the unique area located just off its south coast: Race Rocks. For over 130 years, Race Rocks Lighthouse has stood as a beacon in the entrance of the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Only eleven nautical miles from Victoria, it is a place of convergence.

Deep currents sweep the rocks and clash as they meet the inland waters of the Georgia Strait. Three and a half meter tides, and currents up to seven knots wash the cluster of islets with plankton-rich waters, delivering nourishment to one of the best known and most dramatic dive sites in North America.

Eco-tourists flock to Race Rocks to catch glimpses of the many sea birds, whales, and sea lions that frequent the area. Although the life above the waters' surface is renowned, diving this place brings an experience like no other.

The swirling turbid water that speeds by the area attracts a variety of marine creatures; the most anticipated of which is the arrival of the sea lions each year. Sea lions flock to Race Rocks by the hundreds, fattening up before they journey back to California and Mexico.

These hulkingly handsome creatures lumber around Race, turning it in to their own personal bachelor pad. They lounge about in their time-honoured way: tussling, grunting, and creating a suitably briny stink.

It isn't just Stellar Sea lions that take up residence at Race; hundreds of male Californians arrive, as well as the occasional Elephant Seal. On the B.C. coast, numbers peak for both Stellar and California Sea lions between January and March each year.

Most dives at Race start with a bang: descending through the kelp stocks, distracted by the lush colour of the carpeted bottom and then BANG! A silent brown torpedo flies by your head. They twist around at warp speed, blowing bubbles, barking and ogling at you in seeming amusement.

These amazingly playful sea lions can glide elegantly through the water like dancers in their premier show: spiraling and, twisting and turning with a flare for the dramatic as if utilizing scripted choreography. But in an instant these inquisitive creatures suddenly may stop dead in front of you as if they want you to toss a stick or give them a scratch, mimicking a playful pup at a local canine park.

Truly experiencing Race Rocks is about more than just a dive with the sea lions. Each of the islets provides divers with a breathtaking opportunity. Walls aglow with raspberry soft coral, sea stars, and patches of purple hydrocoral.

Rocky slopes give way to boulder piles coated in Plumose Anemones while territorial Kelp Greenlings dart about as the occasional Wolf eel pokes its head out from under a rock. Schools of Black and Yellowtail Rockfish hang in the water column, while in the shallows, hundreds of burgundy and silver-striped Brooding Anemones dot the bottom. Every place you look is beautiful and lush.

Luckily it is going to stay this way. Race Rocks is the first marine-protected area in Canada, and it's easy to see why it's worth diving here. Though all of British Columbia's diving meccas offer excellent underwater attractions, Race Rocks provides that all inclusive rush.

In a small place with Victoria so close by, the area stands at the forefront with all its things to see and do above and below the water's surface.



Race Rocks and Lighthouse by Scott Stevenson



Race Rocks Basket Star & Sea Lion by Scott Stevenson

PINNACLE SCUBA ADVENTURES

DIVING WITH

SEA LIONS AT RACE ROCKS



Pacific Northwest Diver: Russ Ricketts

Russ Ricketts



Russ Ricketts

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Growing up on a creek in Western Washington, I spent my childhood swimming and exploring and the creek was my second home. Spawning salmon provided much entertainment and education as I prowled the banks watching salmon fight, spawn and die. Bears, deer and beavers shared my trails along the waters and mergansers, herons and water ouzels fished for dinner. Fish are in my blood!

My buddy Matt invited me to snorkel with the Chinook salmon that spawn in the Wenatchee. Biologists like Matt snorkel rivers to count fish, take DNA samples and implant tracking tags. Extreme science, but the only way to bring back critical data to back up political rulings that preserve critical fish and habitat. These biologists have been snorkeling rivers for decades and few streams have not been explored in the name of science. Matt explained all of this as we waded into the green water.

Far from the endless green waters of salt water diving, snorkeling in rivers is a whole different game. Rapids and currents are extremely powerful. You have to really know how to swim and bulky underwater cameras are hardly suited to the ultra-dynamic river environment, but with the right preparations you'll bring home the shot.

Churning waters creates millions of bubbles and stirs sand up. Fish are spooky and do not tolerate visitors. My early videos provided blurry glimpses of black clad swimmers flying by in a torrent of bubbles. Efforts to film the salmon were mostly failures. Who can blame them? We looked like sea lions! There had to be a better way to film these reticent fish. If only there was a way to film fish without scaring them... I had to take myself out of the picture.

Free of the constraints (and frankly ignorant) of traditional underwater photography, my dad and I worked on methods of remote filming. We tried cameras on long poles, floating cameras, and various methods of weighting cameras down. All of these methods produced much better results. I was able to capture natural fish behavior in conditions usually unsuitable for such.

Realizing that a smaller, less intrusive camera is better, I bought a Gopro. These POV cameras are equally loved and hated by photographers. Small and rugged, the Gopro is designed to take abuse that would destroy an expensive DSLR housing. Fitting into a pouch on my weight belt, it carries well without compromising the ability to aggressively swim. Easily deployed and mountable in dozens of different configurations, this tiny camera does the job without complaint. The careful manipulation

of speed, F-stop and ISO were still mysteries to a one button cameraman, but the little camera brought back film worthy of National Geographic. When Nat Geo called, all the failed efforts to capture these endangered river leviathans finally paid off... I was on my way.

If you are reading this you know more about photography than I do, so I sadly will not be expounding on the merits of photography because I should really be taking a class from you! What I can talk about is exploring a diving pursuit that has no information, no magazines, no nothing. Your subject does not want to be filmed, lives in a 12 knot current and is gone half the year. You are starting out in a deficit situation. The only way to reliably find fish is to arm yourself with information and do your legwork to find good water to swim.

Snorkeling in a river sounds dangerous, because it is dangerous. There are unique objective hazards that demand respect. Let's talk river safety for a minute before we dive in. First, we're going to learn to observe what the river is doing, then we'll go swimming to get the hang of things, then we'll grab the cameras.

First of all, take all of that gear off. Even the most modest river current can be nearly impossible to swim against. Keeping your kit streamlined means that you have less stuff to get caught on a tree branch, in between boulders or snagged on 20 lb. test fishing line

Pick a nice calm section of water. Carefully observe the downstream hazards. Observing the rate of flow gives the swimmer an idea of where the current picks up to an unsafe speed. Take a moment to

Pacific Northwest Diver: Washington

scout for downed trees or rocks just under the surface. Water will always flow around rocks and trees, but getting sucked under one is an obvious danger. Start small, and get the hang of swimming upstream, floating down through small wave trains and catching the eddy behind boulders. Taking the time to first understand river hydrology will allow you to stay safe and find more fish.

Upon selecting a spot to swim, start out by going upstream first for an underwater scout of the area. Rather than kicking with your fins, use your hands to pull yourself upstream to the top of the pool. Use the calm water next to the shore, moving from rock to rock. Swim slowly, no sudden movements. Keep your eyes peeled for fish.

Eddies behind boulders allow salmon and trout to hang out and snatch insects as they flow past. Fish will also hunker down near the bottom as well, nestled in and amongst the rocks, darting up to gobble a quick snack and then back down again. So what makes for fishy water? A nice riffle or rapid that provides a steady supply of oxygenated water and food, a pool below for fish to rest, structure to hide out and a tail out above the next rapid for the fish to hang in at the end of the pool.

The river has to be low enough to be safe and clear enough to swim. The rivers in the PNW usually drop to safe swimming levels in August- October. Fall floods will eventually arrive, bringing steelhead into the rivers followed by a second low water season during mid-winter months. Smaller tributary streams drop and clear up first. The higher up the river valleys, the better the water quality. Ask around, or better yet, hit the road and get your boots dirty hiking your local streams.

Learn what species are in your local river and familiarize yourself with the subtle differences in color, shape and markings. One source is to Google (your river) + 'snorkeling' or 'snorkel survey' or the species you are after- ie: 'Skagit Chinook Snorkel Survey'. Talk to your local fisheries biologists or game warden.

OK, we've done our research, found suitable water, and it's the right time of year. All we have to do is film a fish that does not like to be approached. How do you film them? Small fish are curious, and will swim right up to you, but mature salmon will have none of that stuff.

My best footage comes from remote cameras. I have built a custom sandbag to mount my cameras on. The sandbag has a Velcro opening to allow me to fill the bag up on site. I carry it along with me on swim missions and coupled with the Gopro, deploys quickly if I find a good location. Salmon and trout want to be in the most favorable spots in the river and will generally return to where you spooked them within a couple minutes.

The key is my success in capturing natural fish behavior is to place the camera in the last place you saw the fish and quickly exit the water. This allows the fish to return to its normal routines as soon as possible. This method of filming puts less stress on fish and I feel is the most effective method of capturing footage of mature salmon and steelhead.

Other successful techniques I've explored include using a 16' painter's pole with a moulded tripod mount on the end. An alternative (and more natural) alternative pole cam is to find a stout tree branch and thread a mount on the end. These fish can be

thrown off by the slightest flash of metal, color or shape, so don't scoff at the branch! The results may surprise you.

In river snorkeling there are no rules, no crowds, no hype. A mask, snorkel and fins are all you need to get out and explore your local rivers!

Special Considerations:

- ❶ Harassing or 'taking' fish is a crime punishable by fines or jail time. Please use discretion when filming these creatures in what is the final chapter of their life.
- ❷ You are going to encounter fishermen in your travels. Don't swim through a drift that is being fished. Not only is it rude, it can lead to confrontations, a call to the local game warden or an ass kicking.

Resources:

- ❶ [Vimeo River Snorkeling Channel](#)
- ❶ [YouTube River Snorkeling](#)
- ❸ [River Snorkeling Facebook Community](#)
- ❹ [Professor Paddle](#)
- ❺ [Washington River Maps And Fishing Guide](#)
- ❻ [Liprippers' Washington River Fishing Guide](#)

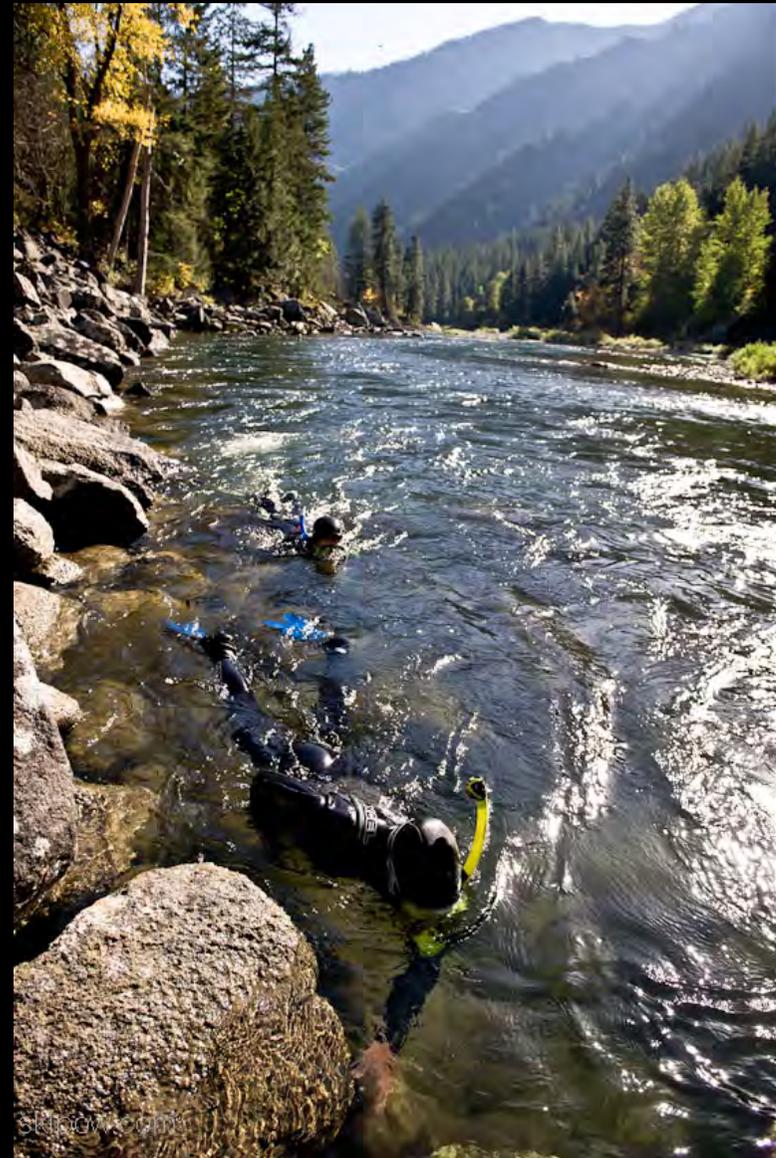




River Snorkeling with Russ Ricketts & Matt Collins | Shane Wilder/ Icicle TV



Russ taking the plunge with his GoPro



Snorkeling the Wenatchee River | Shane Wilder/ Icicle TV
Russ Ricketts & Matt Collins



WAITING FOR THE RAIN



KINGS OF THE NORTH FORK



Pacific Northwest Diver: Travel Corner 2013 (And One in 2014)



MONTEREY/PT LOBOS KELP FOREST | May 26 - 31, 2013 | Trip estimate \$700

Join the annual trip south to dive the kelp forests in Pt Lobos and Monterey. This year we are planning a meet-up and boat dive with the Northern California Underwater Photographic Society. Costs include Pt Lobos fees, lodging, one day of boat diving. Remainder of dives will be shore based.

Objectives: Harbor seals, sea otter, sea lion, rock fish, macro subjects.



BARKLEY SOUND SHARK WEEK | AUGUST, 2013 | TRIP ESTIMATE \$900 US

This will be the third year for Shark Week at Rendezvous Lodge on Barkley Sound. Four days of diving, 2-3 dives per day. Dr. Chris Harvey Clark will return as the shark biologist. Price includes transportation to and from Port Alberni, meals, lodging, and air fills. An excellent video describing Shark Week may be viewed by following [this link](#).

Objectives: Six gill sharks, rays, rock fish, nudibranchs, giant Pacific octopus, humpback whales.



ADAMS RIVER, BC SOCKEYE SALMON RUN | October, 2 - 6, 2013 | Trip estimate \$1,000

This coming Fall will see several hundred thousand sockeye salmon return to the world famous Adams River. This is an exploratory trip in anticipation of the dominant 2014 run, where several million salmon return. The plan is for three days of 2 tank boat diving with Copper Island Diving, including lunch, with afternoon salmon photography/observation in streams. Price includes lodging at the Quaaout Lodge, does not include transportation to Chase, BC.

Objectives: Sockeye salmon, other salmon species.



LA PAZ WHALE SHARKS, SEA LIONS, & MARINE LIFE | October 19 - 26, 2013 | Trip estimate is \$1,100

We head back to La Paz, Baja California to snorkel with whale sharks, dive with sea lion, and check out eel, bleenies, jaw fish, and the other marine life the area has to offer. Lodging will be with Posada Luna Sol, diving with Club Cortez, and whale shark outings with Mar y Aventuras. Price includes lodging, park permits, 2 tank dives on SCUBA days, lunch on diving days, and snorkeling with whale sharks to 1:00 PM on whale shark days. Does not include transportation to La Paz.

Objectives: Whale sharks, sea lion, bleenies, eel, jaw fish.



GREY WHALE MOMS & BABIES | February/March, 2014 | Trip estimate is \$1,500

For the past three years we have spent time on Baja's west coast viewing mother and baby grey whales before they migrate north. Viewing will be from boats, but we have applied for permits from the Mexican government to snorkel with the whales as part of an article on their migration. This would be a seven day trip, and would include room, lodging, and transportation round trip from La Paz.

Objectives: Grey whales, mothers "nursing" babies.

Pacific Northwest Diver: Sensor Contamination & Cleaning

So here is the issue. After a great two weeks of underwater photography in Anilo, Philippines, I sent a photo to Marli to help with identification. In her reply, she noticed the filament imperfection in the upper right corner (circled), and indicated she had a similar issue, only the flaw was in the center of the frame.

Who is Impacted?

If you shoot a camera that has removable lenses, your sensors need regular cleaning. This means DSLR, and the newer mirrorless “DSLR’s” require regular maintenance. While Point and Shoot cameras rarely require sensor cleaning, this may be necessary if they are dropped or bumped too hard.

What Gets on Sensors?

All types of material can wind up on the surface of your sensor. When you change lenses, dust and dirt in the air can find its way into the camera. If people use Q-tips to clean O-ring channels on their underwater housings, these can float through the air. I think this is what appears in the crynoid shrimp photo.

Some of the most difficult spots to clean up are the 30,000 to 40,000 skin cells per hour that each of us shed. These small particles contain oils that may require a special solution to clean-up.

How Can I Minimize a Dirty Sensor?

Most DSLR’s and Mirrorless Interchangeable-Lens Cameras (MILC) have an option for cleaning sensors each time the camera is turned on and off. The



sensor vibrates at ultrasonic speed and shake contaminates from the surface. But even with regular self cleaning, sensors still need a full cleaning.

How Can I Tell if My Sensor is Dirty?

The easiest ways to tell if your sensor is dirty is to: 1.) Purchase a sensor loupe and physically examine the sensor; or 2.) Take a picture of the clear sky or a clean white sheet of paper. Set your ISO to its lowest normal range (Cannon: ISO 100, Nikon: ISO 200). Use an *f* stop of 22 with a lens in the 70-100 mm range.

If you go with option two, open the photo in your editor and desaturate it. In Photoshop this is Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Levels (Figure 1, opposite). Play with narrowing the histogram peak to bring out any spots on the sensor. Then turn the photo into a black and white for more contrast (Fig-

ure 2). Finally, zoom in on the image to see if there are any small specks on the sensor (Figure 3). If you have large or small spots, time to clean it!

How Do I Clean My Sensor?

Now that you find yourself with a dirty sensor, how do you remedy the situation? Depending on your location and comfort with cleaning electronics, there are several options.

First, if you are in town and not in a DIY mood, you can take it to your local camera store and have it professionally cleaned for under \$50.

If you are out in the field and discover spots on your images, there are a number of products from very simple to quite sophisticated. On the less complicated end of the scale, my local camera store, outfitted me with Promaster’s CMOS/CCD Sensor Cleaning Kit. Very easy to use, compact, and no cleaning solution.

One the more complex end of the scale are the tools that the professional shops use. The [Arctic Butterfly Brush](#) is a well thought of brush product, and the [Visible Dust EZ Sensor Cleaning Kit](#) with swabs and cleaner for more difficult spots. There are also sensor loupes, essentially modified magnifying glasses, which can be used to spot contaminants on sensor surfaces.

Next time you have a clear blue sky, take a photo and run it through the desaturation routine. Even if you have your camera set to self-clean, you may be amazed at that shows up!



Promaster CMOS/CCD Sensor Cleaning Tool

Figure 1:
Sky shot with slight
desaturation.

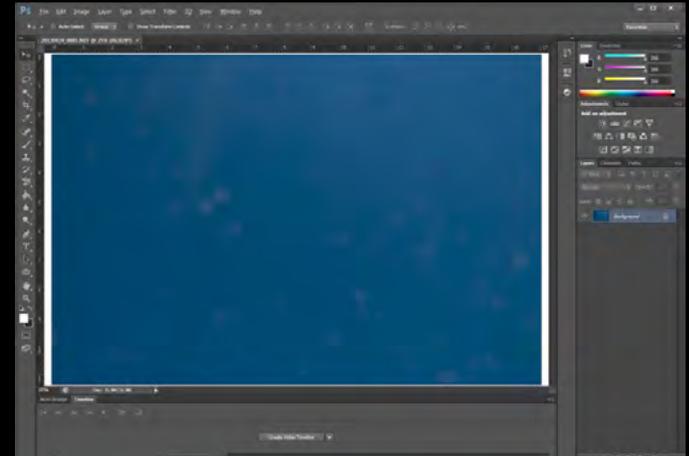


Figure 2:
Black & white with
more desaturation.

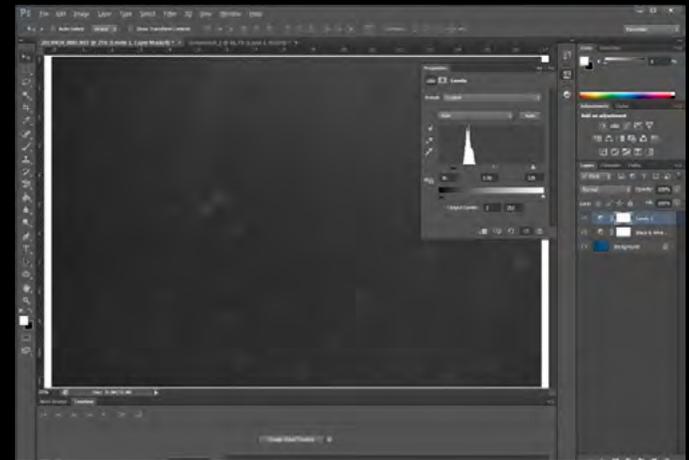
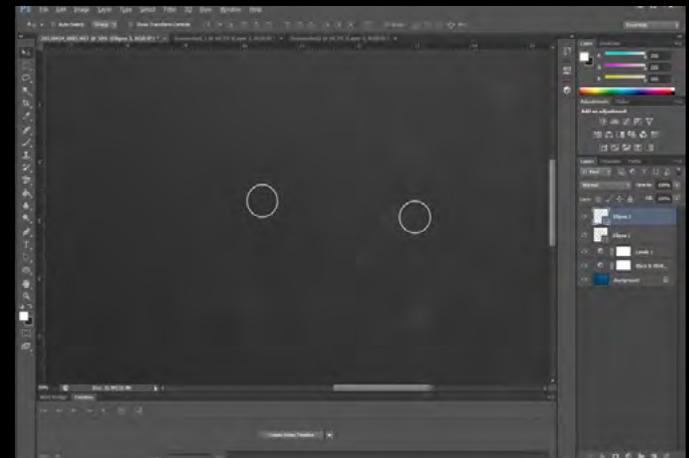


Figure 3:
50% zoom showing
small spots.



Pacific Northwest Diver: Our Team

The Pacific Northwest is a large, diverse region with diverse interests in underwater photography and videography. In order to make it easier for you to submit information about photographers, dive clubs, and operators/resorts in your area we have key contacts for British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon. Since we are all volunteering our time and efforts, we also hope to spread the work-load so we will all have ample time for diving and photography!

Below are our contacts, please either get in touch with one of the regional contacts listed below, or contact editor [Dan Clements](#) directly.

British Columbia: Marli Wakeling



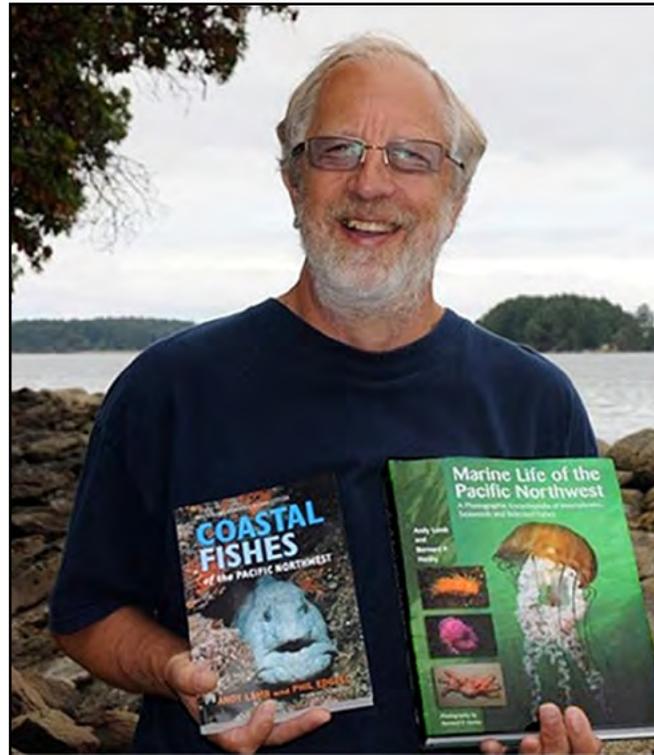
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