

S'NAG-A-NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE COLUMBUS SEA NAGS HTTP://WWW.SEANAGS.COM

Sept. 2017

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General Meeting Minutes

Present: Steve Ranft, Glenn Mitchell, Laurel Sheppard, Dave Foley, Don Ellerbrock, John Guegold, Gerry Kubatska, Mag Ranft

Program – “St. Croix” – Presented by Dave Foley

50/50 Raffle winner

Dave Foley (winnings of \$10 donated back to club)

Member Raffle

Laurel Sheppard, Prize = Personal/Utility bag donated by **Donn Ellerbrock**

Gerry Kubatska, Prize = Book “Ship of Gold” donated by **Laurel Sheppard**

Steve Ranft, Prize Book “Life in the Sea” donated by **Laurel Sheppard**

Treasurer’s Report

\$5,875.16

Announcements

- 2016 Club membership dues are \$30.00, \$40 for husband/wife. 2016 Ohio Council dues are \$9.00.
- Please contact Laurel Sheppard and Dave Foley with any program ideas for 2017/2018.
- Please contact Ryan Jones and Steve Locsey with any activities and dive ideas for 2017/2018.
- Club logo patches and decals are available to new club members as a part of their

membership dues. Returning members can purchase extra decals/stickers at a cost of \$1.00 each—these are plastic/waterproof--and extra patches for \$2.00 each while they last.

Dues can be mailed to:

Glenn Mitchell
120 N. Warren Ave.
Columbus, OH 43204

5. Facebook: You can find the Club Facebook page by going to: <http://en-gb.facebook.com/pages/Columbus-Sea-Nags-SCUBA-Divers-/289276535926?v=wall>, thanks to Andy Dennis.

6. Twitter page!! Thanks to **Josh Carney**, the club now has a **Twitter page:** <@CbusSeaNags>. Check it out today!

Calendar of Upcoming Events

2017

September

7 General Meeting @ Planks, 8:00 PM Program: Great Lakes Acoustic Telemetry Observation System

21 Executive Meeting @ Planks, 7:00 PM

October

5 General Meeting @ Planks, 8:00 PM Program: Pennyroyal Eclipse Dive

19 Executive Meeting @ Planks, 7:00 PM

November

2 General Meeting @ Planks, 8:00 PM Program: Sea Hunt episode

16 Executive Meeting @ Planks, 7:00 PM

December

7 General Meeting @ Planks, 8:00 PM Program: TBD

21 Executive Meeting @ Planks, 7:00 PM

201

January

4 General Meeting @ Planks, 8 PM Program: TBD

18 Executive Meeting @ Planks, 7 PM

February

1 General Meeting @ Planks, 8 PM Program: TBD

15 Executive Meeting @ Planks, 7 PM

March

1 General Meeting @ Planks, 8 PM Program: TBD

15 Executive Meeting @ Planks, 7 PM

April

5 General Meeting @ Planks, 8 PM Program: TBD

19 Executive Meeting @ Planks, 7 PM

May

3 General Meeting @ Planks, 8 PM Program: TBD

17 Executive Meeting @ Planks, 7 PM

June

7 General Meeting @ Planks, 8 PM No program, social meeting

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21 Executive Meeting @ Planks, 7 PM
July
5 General Meeting @ Planks, 8 PM Program: TBD
19 Executive Meeting @ Planks, 7 PM
August
2 General Meeting @ Planks, 8 PM Program: TBD
16 Executive Meeting @ Planks, 7 PM

Monthly meeting programs subject to change without notice.

Executive Meeting Highlights

August 17 @ Planks, 7PM **Present:** Steve Ranft, Mag Ranft, Dave Foley, Glenn Mitchell, Donn Ellebrock

Penny Royal Club Dive the weekend of Oct. 20-22? **Shipwrecks & Scuba is Oct. 21.**
Possible club dive to Greenbo Lake State Park SCUBA Refuge next year

All members are welcome to attend Executive Meetings

Dive Reports

Please send dive reports to
<ColumbusSeaNagsNewsletter@gmail.com>

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Spasms

None reported

Oral Reports

None reported

Written Reports

Ireland's deepest coral reef discovered 1.6 km underwater

By Daniel Farrell., July 27, 2017



Ireland's deep water coral found 1.6km underwater (Credit Marine Institute)

Scientists carrying out research onboard the Irish Lights vessel Granuaile have discovered Ireland's deepest cold water reef. The coral species, *Solenosmilia variabilis*, was found at a depth of 1600m and was filmed using the Marine Institutes remotely operated vehicle Holland I.

Scientists from the Marine Institute and the National Parks and Wildlife Services were conducting surveys and gathering data for marine planning, habitat protection and measuring the effects of climate change.

The marine scientists travelled over 1000 nautical miles over three weeks along Ireland's Porcupine Bank and continental slope off the West coast of Ireland collecting HD video, sample cores and biological specimens along the shelf edge from 50 locations.

"Some of the reef ecosystems and habitats we discovered have never been seen before and discovering *S. variabilis* at depths greater than 1600 m helps us establish a better

Environmental News

understanding of the environmental conditions necessary for this species to thrive,” explains Chief Scientist David O’Sullivan, INFOMAR, at the Marine Institute.

“The deep-sea coral *S. variabilis* is widespread, normally seen at depths between 1000 to 1300 m on seamounts or rocky areas deep under the sea but only occasionally forms reefs. Its growth rate is very slow approximately one mm per year, so finding the reef structure, which is part of a fragile ecosystem thousands of years old, in deeper parts of the ocean is an important find for marine science.”

Source:

<http://coastmonkey.ie/ireland-deepest-coral-reef/>

Lakes Are Being A-Salted

By Asher Elbein August 9, 2017



New Hampshire’s Mirror Lake is one of thousands of lakes across North America facing the threat of salinization. Photo by Erin Paul Donovan/Alamy Stock Photo

During winter storms, snowplows rumble along the roads ringing New Hampshire’s Mirror Lake. A spray of salt whirls out from behind each truck—sodium chloride settles on the frozen asphalt and helps break up the ice. Road salt is great for combatting winter’s hazards, but it’s a tool with potentially devastating consequences. All that salt has to go somewhere, and the melting ice often carries it into the clear, placid waters of Mirror Lake.

In a new study, researchers show that across the United States and Canada, thousands of lakes—including the 0.5-square-kilometer Mirror Lake—are at risk of becoming dangerously saline. In their study cataloguing the salinity levels of 371 lakes across northeastern Canada and the United States, researchers found that 44 percent of the lakes are at risk of long-term salinization. Extrapolating their observations, they suspect that as many as 7,770 North American lakes could be similarly threatened.

If nothing changes, 12 percent of lakes will turn brackish by 2050 says Samantha Burke, a doctoral candidate at the University of Waterloo in Ontario who worked on the study.* In the same period, Burke and her colleagues expect 14 of the 371 studied lakes to hit salinity levels that exceed the threshold for aquatic life, a bar set by the US Environmental Protection Agency.

The concentration of salt in freshwater lakes typically sits anywhere from zero to 100 milligrams per liter. (Seawater, by comparison, is usually about 35 grams per liter.) But even slightly salty water—anything over 100 milligrams per liter—can have harsh effects on freshwater ecosystems. Salt water disrupts lake circulation, which in turn affects oxygen levels and aquatic life, says Sujay Kaushal, a geologist at the University of Maryland who was not involved in the study.

“If you go along roads where they salt, all the trees are brown,” Kaushal says. “All of the water in the tree moves toward the salt, drying out the plant.” The same thing often happens to organisms in fresh water. Cattails and other plants that grow on a lake’s edge don’t like salty water, Kaushal says. Neither do many native freshwater fish and amphibians, some of which suffer reproductive problems when exposed to high levels. Even eels and salmon, animals that spend different parts of their lives in salt or freshwater, don’t survive in fresh water that is overly salty.

Where freshwater species flourish, salt-tolerant species flourish. On the East Coast, the common reed has already encroached on certain lakes. Disease-bearing mosquitos such as the yellow fever mosquito, thrive in the brackish waters that kill off competing mosquitos and potential predators. Conditions become ripe for blue-green algae and cyanobacteria, which can fuel low-oxygen dead zones, choking the lake. The worst-case scenario is a lake where the surface is an algal mass, mosquitos swarm above the reeds, and the native food web has collapsed.

Lake salinization can directly affect human health, too. Where lakes and rivers are the source of a community's drinking water, excessive salt can corrode pipes and help toxic elements, such as lead and manganese, leach into the flow. This is a process that played out recently, with devastating effects, in Flint, Michigan.

Road salt is a major threat to freshwater lakes. Over the past 50 years, annual US sales of road salt have shot from 145,000 tonnes to around 18 million tonnes. But Burke says another major contributor is the prevalence of impermeable surfaces, such as roads and parking lots, that are within 500 meters of a lake. A little bit of development near a lake can make a big difference in salinity levels.

"Even one percent coverage [with] an impervious surface inside that buffer—like a highway—can have serious effects," Burke says.

It's hard to get road salt out of the environment, says Kathleen Weathers, an ecologist with the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies in Millbrook, New York, who participated in the research. Even salt banked in the soil eventually weathers and ends up in lakes decades later. As it stands, freshwater lakes are faced with an existential threat. If the concentration of salt in the environment continues to increase, it's a threat that will be difficult to curtail.

*Correction: The article originally said Samantha Burke led the research study. Burke was a collaborator on the project, which was led by Hilary Dugan at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Source:

<https://www.hakaimagazine.com/article-short/lakes-are-being-salted>

Gulf of Mexico dead zone is "largest" ever recorded in U.S.

By CBS News August 16, 2017



Underwater video from the dead zone

The largest dead zone ever recorded in the U.S. has appeared at the mouth of the Mississippi River.

According to scientists, it's primarily caused by fertilizer and sewage that wash off farmland in the river's watershed and eventually make their way to the sea, where they feed algae blooms and bacteria that suck all the oxygen out of the water.

Scientists announced this month the dead zone measures nearly 9,000 square miles – about the size of New Jersey, reports CBS News correspondent Jeff Glor.

Unusually heavy rains over the Midwest this spring flushed runoff and wastewater from farms down into the Gulf -- bad news for fishermen in Louisiana who produce more than 40 percent of the nation's

seafood.

Underwater video recorded Tuesday afternoon shows the transition from life to death as green fades to black. It becomes so dark, divers need flashlights to find their way around. The abyss stretches over an enormous portion of the Gulf.

"This is the largest one we've ever measured. And the northern Gulf of Mexico dead zone is the second largest human-caused dead zone in the ocean," said Nancy Rabalais, the nation's foremost expert on dead zones. She's been measuring oxygen levels in the Gulf since 1985.

"It's a feature that's large, it's not getting smaller, and attempts to manage the nutrients, nitrogen, particularly from the Mississippi River, are not having an effect on reducing the size," Rabalais said.

Dead zones happen when agricultural runoff sends nitrogen-rich fertilizer downstream into the sea. The fertilizer feeds harmful amounts of algae at the surface that eventually die and sink to the bottom. Bacteria feast on the dead algae, removing oxygen from the water. Fish, crabs, and shrimp are forced to leave – or suffocate and die.

"The solution lies upstream in the watershed with better agricultural management practices -- a switch to crops that have deeper roots and don't need as much fertilizer and are still just as profitable as corn," Rabalais said.

The water we watched them measure has less than half the oxygen needed to support normal fish life.

"When you're a scuba diver, you're used to having fish swimming all around you. From 30 to 60 feet, we won't see any fish – nothing," Rabalais said.

"These species of shrimp are not there like they used to be," said O'Neil Jhonsebin. He's been

fishing those waters for 40 years.

A study led by Duke University published this year found that dead zones in the Gulf of Mexico slow shrimp growth, resulting in higher market prices for larger shrimp.

Asked if she sees this issue getting better any time soon, Rabalais replied, "Boy, I wish it would. I really do wish it would."

The Environmental Protection Agency has set up a task force to try to shrink the size of the dead zone here in the Gulf.

By 2025, the agency hopes to reduce nutrient-rich runoff flowing down here by 20 percent.

Source:

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/gulf-of-mexico-largest-dead-zone-ever-measured-fertilizer/>

Log Book

In rare feat, divers descend 430 feet to reach freighter that sank in Lake Michigan in 1929

By Lexy Brodt, August 9, 2017



The Senator, a steel freighter that sank 88 years ago, looms into view more than 400 feet below the surface of Lake Michigan. John Janzen of Waunakee and John Scoles, of Farmington, Minnesota, were the first divers to reach the site last weekend.

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Descending more than 400 feet below the surface of Lake Michigan last weekend, in near-total darkness cut only by the lights on his cameras, John Janzen could just make out the outlines of his quarry.

The Senator, a 121-year-old steel freighter that sank off the coast of Port Washington in 1929, was so heavily encrusted with quagga mussels it appeared covered in fuzz.

Although the ship was discovered four years ago by sonar and explored by remotely operated underwater vessels, the perilous deep-water dive was the first time scuba divers had seen the wreck with their own eyes, a “monumental technical achievement” Janzen said.

“This (was) so far beyond what recreational divers experience ... it’s more like going up into space or something,” said Janzen, of Waunakee, who made two dives to the site with fellow diver John Scoles, of Farmington, Minnesota, on Saturday and Sunday. The depth limit for recreational scuba divers is typically around 130 feet.

The Senator sank on a foggy Halloween morning in 1929, after it collided with the Marquette, an ore carrier, 20 miles off of Port Washington. The newly refurbished Senator, along with nine passengers and about 250 brand new Nash automobiles being transported from Milwaukee to Detroit, “rolled quickly over and sank before its crew had a chance to man the lifeboats,” according to an Associated Press report the next day.

The ship’s remaining 20 passengers were saved by a passing fishing tug and the damaged Marquette, which was dragged back to a port in Milwaukee.

The Senator is now a 400-foot-long mass beached at the bottom of the lake. Janzen said the ship appeared to have taken quite a beating — a large metal radio mast that was once vertical is now bent parallel to the boat, and previous surveys have

discovered a large gash in the stern from the collision. Cars not chained inside the ship’s hull have fallen from the boat, sliding into the sand, according to the Wisconsin Shipwrecks website.

The shipwreck was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2016, as a “rare example of a nineteenth-century vessel type that was vital to Wisconsin’s economy, the steel bulk freighter,” according to the Wisconsin Historical Society. The ship’s structure incorporates steel arches and a movable water ballast system — rare structural amenities. Its frigid surroundings, coupled with the complete absence of natural light, has made the structure one of Wisconsin’s best-preserved shipwrecks.

Paul Ehorn, a shipwreck hunter from Elgin, Illinois, who discovered the ship’s coordinates, drove the divers to the site both days. Loaded with cameras and extra air cylinders and wearing dry suits to combat the 42-degree water, the divers were able to reach the site in less than 15 minutes.

When they arrived, Janzen and Scoles had only enough time to check out the ship’s bow and the pilot house, about 15 minutes of exploration. The longer divers remain underwater, the longer they must spend decompressing, a slow and arduous process that allows dissolved gases built up in the body when diving under immense pressure to gradually be released. The total dive took a little over two hours.

In order to stay down longer at such low depths, Janzen and Scoles used a piece of technology called a close-circuit rebreather, a device that recycles the user’s breath for unused oxygen content. They also hung several traditional air cylinders on the line they used to hook to the shipwreck, for backup.

Despite the precautions, Janzen said, he was “nervous, apprehensive.”

“I used that (apprehension) to help me prepare, to help me focus and do things correctly,” he said.

Eager to return to the shipwreck, they plan to make the dive again in coming weeks.

Ehorn said the insurance company that owns the ship could attempt to collect the antique cars, though it would purely be a “labor of love” for vehicles that may not be worth much after almost a hundred years underwater. The vehicles are considered the “largest unmodified collection of early Wisconsin-built automobiles known to exist,” according to the Historical Society.
No reward without risk

Janzen, 48, said he and Scoles, 47, an industrial engineer, aren’t “macho thrill seekers” but “technical geeks” who pay attention to the risks, and plan closely for the process.

For Janzen, the thousands of dives he has done in the past have all led up to reaching the Senator — his deepest and most dangerous dive yet. Janzen is a chemist and an engineer, but he finds the job boring compared to diving, which forces him to make crucial decisions.

“I like to do things where my decision matters,” he said. “If I make a mistake, it could be fatal. It’s scary, but it also has a lot of meaning to me. There isn’t much reward without the risk.”

Both divers were motivated by the challenge of becoming pioneers.

“No one else had done it before,” Janzen said.

For now, the crew plans to continue scoping out the site — exploring the wreck and collecting high-quality footage of the ship.

After he found the shipwreck on June 21, 2003, Ehorn, 71, kept the exact coordinates mum. But he

had been talking with Janzen and Scoles for years about scoping out the site. Taking the dive was ultimately a matter of “biting the bullet,” Scoles said.

Ehorn, who has either discovered, or help discover about 13 shipwrecks, was finally able to see the pair’s footage on Tuesday night — the clearest shots he has seen of the wreckage over years of surveying the site.

“It’s a nice feeling — it was beautiful.”

[Editor’s note: This story has been updated to reflect a correction. The original version misstated the year the the Senator was discovered. Paul Ehorn found the wreck via sonar equipment on June 21, 2003.]

Source:

http://www.wiscnews.com/news/state-and-regional/article_f70cc106-69ac-5751-be8d-26676b12db50.html

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NEXT MEETING: 8:00 p.m., Plank's Café, Thurs., Oct. 5, 2017. Program: Pennyroyal Eclipse Dive by Steve Locsey

The Columbus Sea Nags

