

ODYSSEY



CENCAL DIVE COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2024

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CENCAL 2024 YEAR

CenCal has a calendar year – January 1 to 31 December, so dues are now due \$15. That fee has not changed in more years than I can remember, and I've been a member since 1973. The Council financial picture is good, steady. Going to be able to increase the annual scholarship to \$2000 for 2024.

For full and up to date Scholarship information, see the CenCal website: cencal.org

Membership is steady but needs to improve and increase. All clubs struggled with COVID adversity. Regular meetings and events were cancelled; ceased meetings were slow to start up and recovery has been slow but now steady.

And, CenCal needs help. For example, there is no Skin Spear Director, and as result all activity has ceased. Anyone wanting to help out is more than welcome – just give a shout.

On the national underwater sport side, all nationals are set: hockey, rugby, a world cup in fin swimming and skin spear in Florida. World Championship scheduling is undergoing change; some sports have split usually by age group, and uw hockey is moving toward quadrennial events with biennial qualifiers.

Also, there is a NEW USOA national underwater photo competition which is described elsewhere here – with cash prizes.

Activities and concerns in the Cal Department of Fish & Wildlife are being followed – kelp, abalone. The CDFW Commission has regular meetings – the most diving relevant is the *Marine Resources Committee*. The only infinitesimal plus from COVID is virtual meetings. No longer have to travel to San Diego or Sacramento for meetings. Everyone knows about

the kelp and abalone disasters. Salmon is in deep (pun intended) trouble. The marine environment world wide has huge issues – plastics, climate change, heat, balloons 🤖

CenCal follows the Coastal Commission activities and meetings to insure, preserve access.

Any questions, concerns, ideas..... contact anytime

Carol Rose, secretary 650 224 8353 3mcircle@gmail.com

USOA VISUALS BEST OF 2023 UNDERWATER PHOTO CONTEST

The contest deadline has been Extended to February 29, 2024. Entries are open for entries in 5 categories with \$6000 in total cash prizes. Categories include the following:

- Pool Sports (confined water): Swimming, underwater hockey, underwater rugby, finswimming, and any sports played in confined water from an underwater perspective.
- Open Water Sports: Freediving, spearfishing, open water swimming, triathlon, aquathlon, and any other sports played in open water from an underwater perspective. -
- Underwater Portraiture: Any type of portrait taken underwater in confined or open water.
- Marine Life and Conservation: Wildlife and seascapes not including a human subject.
- Projects: Any series of 5-10 photos centered around a theme or story.

Entry is FREE for registered USOA members and \$45 for non members. A one year membership is included with the non member fee.

If you are a current (2024) USOA members – please contact usoavisuals@gmail.com for your entry code. Once you have your code, you may register:

<https://site.pictor.com/uso-best-of-2023>

If you are not a USOA member, you may register:

<https://www.underwater-society.org/page/4384471-usoa-registration>
then follow the preceding instructions.

For full contest rules:

<https://www.underwater-society.org/page/show/8223681-visual-committee>

Reach out to usoavisuals@gmail.com with any questions. *Evan Frost*, Director

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

California has 20 National Monuments with 2 more proposed. Under the *Antiquities Act*, the president designates lands for National Monuments.

THIRD WEEKEND IN SEPTEMBER EVERY YEAR! Coastal Cleanup

Over 39,813 volunteers participated in California Coastal Cleanup Day 2023. THANK YOU!

MORE ON KELP RESTORATION:

The California Department of Fish & Wildlife, in partnership with the California Ocean Protection Council (OPC), is developing a statewide, ecosystem-based, adaptive *Kelp Restoration and Management Plan* (KRMP) for giant kelp, *Macrocystis pyrifera*, and bull kelp, *Nereocystis luetkeana*. The KRMP will include a cohesive kelp management strategy [\(PDF\)](#) which consists of three core components:

1. a harvest management framework and other Fishery Management Plan (FMP) elements required by the [Marine Life Management Act \(MLMA\)](#),
2. an innovative framework for ecosystem-based management (EBM) of kelp forests
3. a Restoration Toolkit.

KRMP Development Process:

The **Community Working Group (CWG)** is an informal advisory body composed of California Native American tribes, stakeholders and interested members of the public to help inform the design and development of the KRMP. The goals of the Community Working Group are to advise on and inform the development of the core components of the KRMP.

The **Science Advisory Committee (SAC)** an independent body to provide scientific expertise on all aspects of the KRMP so the best available and most current science is directly integrated into the KRMP. The SAC is composed of experts in natural and social sciences, economics, and local and traditional knowledges, spanning a broad scope of disciplines and geographic areas.

Pathways for **Tribal Engagement**, throughout the development of the KRMP, include Tribal Roundtable Listening Sessions, government-to-government consultation, representation on the Community Working Group, and representation on the Science Advisory Committee. Additional pathways may be identified. California top priority is to provide California Native American tribes the opportunities.

KRMP Timeline: KRMP development process is anticipated over three to five years.

Schedule:

2022 Funding

2023 Establish Working Groups: Community, Science Advisory and Tribal Roundtable

2025 Begin Draft

2026 Finalize Draft, CEQA, Peer Review

2027 Begin Implementation



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INVASIVE MUDSNAILS AT LAKE SONOMA FISH HATCHERY. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife and partners have confirmed the presence of New Zealand mudsnails (NZMS) at Warm Springs Fish Hatchery near Lake Sonoma. The Hatchery operates production and release programs for Coho salmon (a federal and state-listed endangered species) and steelhead (federally listed threatened species).

Dense populations of NZMS can displace and out-compete native species; they may consume up to half of the food resources. Boaters, anglers and others who visit the Russian

River watershed are asked to decontaminate equipment and follow the “clean, drain and dry” directive with all equipment used in the river:

- If you wade, freeze waders and other gear overnight (at least six hours).
- After leaving the water, inspect waders, boots, float tubes, boats and trailers or any gear used in the water.
- Remove any visible snails with a stiff brush and follow with rinsing. If possible, freeze or completely dry out any wet gear.
- Never transport live fish or other aquatic plants/animals from one waterbody to another.

Additional information about stopping the spread of NZMS can be found on CDFW’s [California’s Invaders: New Zealand Mudsnaail](#) webpage.

SIX YEARS AFTER THE ‘BLOB’  The Blob, an extreme [marine heatwave](#) that rolled through the Pacific Ocean, consisted of abnormally warm temperatures blanketing the waters in the Channel Is. from 2014–2016. The Blob wreaked havoc on reef inhabitants, especially sessile invertebrates—filter feeders attached to the nearshore rocky reefs, such as anemones, tubeworms, and clams. Six years later, the number of these creatures has bounced back, but a closer look reveals the structure of these populations has changed—an indicator of the effects of global warming on coastal oceans.

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ABOUT AQUARIUM OF THE BAY Discover the beauty and diversity of Northern California aquatic life at *Aquarium of the Bay*. Located on the historic San Francisco waterfront at PIER 39, the Aquarium is home to more than 24,000 marine animal including sharks and rays, octopus, jellyfish, anchovies, river otters, and many more.

VOLUNTEERS are vital to the operation of all programs. Joining the team through marine volunteer opportunities makes a meaningful contribution - from helping educate the public to assisting with daily responsibilities, could not be done without volunteers.

VOLUNTEER BENEFITS. There are many perks with volunteering and the satisfaction of helping the mission to protect, conserve and inspire conservation of San Francisco Bay and its watershed from the Sierra to the Sea.

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS. There is a list of open opportunities for volunteering at Aquarium of the Bay. ALL volunteers are required to attend a volunteer orientation and commit to the role for a minimum of 6 months. For certain volunteer roles, there may also be physical and/or experience requirements. ALL ANIMAL CARE AND DIVE VOLUNTEER MUST BE 18 YEARS OLD. Feel free to reach out at volunteers@bayecotarium.org



SUNFLOWER STAR IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Reef Check's North Coast Regional Manager Ian Norton and Dive into *Science Program* Manager Morgan Murphy-Cannella spotted a critically endangered sunflower star

(*Pycnopodia helianthoides*) while conducting an MPA monitoring survey at Van Damme in Mendocino County, California on October 28th, 2023.

This is an exciting find and great news for the prospect of species recovery as sunflower star is considered locally extinct with their numbers decimated over the last decade by sea star wasting disease, contributing to the population explosion of purple urchin and the resulting loss of over 95% of bull kelp along the north coast of California. The sunflower star is an important keystone predator in the rocky reef ecosystems in Alaska and the west coast of North America and on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species since 2020.

IT'S NOT JUST FLORIDA AND THE CARIBBEAN Invasive lionfish have migrated through the Suez Canal from the Red Sea and are causing familiar problems of breeding profusely and eating all the other fry of endemic species in the Eastern Mediterranean. Fishermen and scuba divers off the southern coast of Turkey, an area forever popular with European tourists, report sighting growing numbers of these unwelcome intruders with waters warming thanks to the climate crisis.

CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Big news for California coasts! Cal Academy has taken the first step toward helping save sunflower stars from extinction, and it involves precisely timed spawns, careful monitoring, and co-parenting across the state. Learn more about Cal Academy work with *Aquarium of the Pacific* and *Birch Aquarium* at Scripps to reintroduce this stunning sea star to kelp forests: bit.ly/3NOFqS4 #ThrivingCalifornia #AZASAFE

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CALENDAR: January 2024

Jan 1	<i>New Year's Holiday</i>
Jan 15	<i>Milking Jr Holiday</i>
Jan 31	<i>CenCal BOD – 5th Wed</i>

February

Feb 2	Groundhog Day
Feb 11	Superbowl – GO NINERS!
Feb 12	<i>Indigenous Peoples Day</i>
Feb 14	Valentine's Day
Feb 14-15	CDFW Meeting - Sacramento
Feb 19	<i>Presidents Day Holiday</i>
Feb 24-25	UW Hockey Tournament Love, MSU

March

March 9-10	Orange Cnty Cup, UW Hockey, LA
March 10	Daylight Savings Starts
Mar 14	CDFW - <i>Marine Resources Committee</i> – San Clemente
Mar 16	Sea Rovers Dive Show Boston
March 17	St Patrick's Day
March 19	First Day Spring

Mar 24-24 **Beneath the Sea Dive Show** New Jersey

Mar 27 CenCal BOD Meeting

March 31 Easter Sunday

April

April 6-7 UW Hockey Gainesville FL

April 12-14 **Finswimming World Cup** Florida

Nationals UW Rugby Florida

Apr 17-18 CDFW Meeting – San Jose

April 22 Passover at sunset

May

May 4 May the 4th Be With You

May 5 Cinco de Mayo

May 12 Mother's Day

May 15 CDFW Teleconference

May 27 *Memorial Day Holiday*

May 29 CenCal BOD -5th Wed

June

June 1-2 **Scuba Show** LA

June 8 International Oceans Day

June 14 Flag Day

June 16 Father's Day

June 19 Juneteenth

June 20 First Day Summer

June 21-23 **USOA UW Hockey Nationals, Denver**

June 19-20 CDFW Meeting – Mammoth Lakes

July

July 4 *Independence Day*

July 16-27 **UW Hockey Age Worlds** Kuala Lumpur Malaysia

July 17-18 **Skin Spear Nationals** Florida - **TENTATIVE**

July 18 CDFW - *Marine Resources Committee* – Santa Rosa

July 31 CenCal BOD – 5th Wed

August

Aug 1 Olympics Paris!!

Aug 14-15 CDFW Meeting – Fortuna

September

Sept 11 Patriots Day

Sept 2 *Labor Day Holiday*

Sept 21 **Beach Clean Up Day**

Sept 22 First Day Fall

Sept 25 CenCal BOD

October

Oct 3 Rosh Hashanah

Oct 6 **USOA Annual Meeting**

Oct 9-10 CDFW Meeting - Sacramento

Oct 12 Yom Kippur
Oct 14 *Indigenous Day*
Oct 31 Halloween
Oct 31 Diwali

November

Nov 3 Daylight Savings Ends
Nov 5 Election Day
Nov 7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance
Nov 7 CDFW *Marine Resources Committee* - Sacramento
Nov 11 *Veterans Day Holiday*
Nov 19-22 **DEMA Show Las Vegas**
Nov 28 *Thanksgiving Day Holiday*

December

Dec 4 CenCal BOD – November Meeting
Dec 7 Pearl Harbor Day
Dec 11-12 CDFW Meeting – San Diego
Dec 21 Winter Solstice/First Day of Winter
Dec 25 Christmas Day Holiday
Dec 26 Hanukkah
Dec 26 Kwanzaa