

# THE REEF SEEKER



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April 1, 2026



## LOBSTER RULES CHANGE

The Department of Fish & Wildlife has announced a major rule change for the coming 2026-2027 season in terms of how you can capture lobsters. Although the season will begin as scheduled on Friday, October 2, at 6:00PM, the new regulations say that you can only legally take lobster during daylight hours. That means no more taking of lobsters at night when they are most active, generally out and about, and easier to catch. Because official sundown on October 2 is 6:36PM, that means on the first day you can legally take lobster, you'll have only 36 minutes to do so.

The reason for the change has nothing to do with the overall amount of lobsters being taken or anything like that. "We just think it's been too easy for people to grab them at night," says DF&W Director

Meghan Hertel. "They're out in the open, they're walking slowly, and it's almost like they're begging to be bagged."

Hertel also said that anecdotal stories about people grabbing a daily limit, especially on opening night, indicate the regs were too lenient. "If this was football, and on every play the team with the ball scored a touchdown, you'd make some changes to make it more interesting and challenging. That's all we're doing."

The 2025-2026 season just closed two weeks ago and although the new season doesn't begin for six months, technically this new restriction officially goes into effect today. However, it may not be too late to change things. If you want to share any comments with DF&W Commission, they can be reached in Sacramento directly at 916/653-4889 or via e-mail at [fgc@fgc.ca.gov](mailto:fgc@fgc.ca.gov).

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## ICE AGENTS WILL CHECK C-CARDS

The Trump administration has announced a crackdown on what they termed "uncertified scuba terrorists" and will be stationing ICE agents at major scuba trip departure points to verify certification. Acting ICE Director Todd M.

Lyons said, "We are working closely with the major certifying agencies and some smaller ones as well, to ferret out uncertified so-called divers who has been using the card of friends to illegally present themselves as qualified to dive."

When asked what the ramifications will be for anyone found to be an undocumented diver, Lyons, said, "Obviously, we'll confiscate their scuba gear as well as any other items they have in their possession. We'll need to detain them and, since we don't have enough jail capacity, we've obtained some out-of-commission recompression chambers and will hold them there until trial."

When asked if the agents assigned to this will also be certified/qualified divers, Lyons said, "Any idiot can determine if the alleged diver-in-question is legit. And we've got plenty of idiots recruited to ICE so staffing won't be a problem. They will have gone through a rigorous 30-minute training course to explain all of the physics, equipment, skills, dangers, and other details of scuba diving so they'll be as qualified as any other diver to spot the phonies."

Asked when this would all take effect, Lyons replied that the inspection and enforcement will begin today.



## **TRUMP ADDS HIS NAME TO CASINO POINT UNDERWATER PARK**

In his never-ending narcissistic desire to put his name on anything he can, Donald Trump has announced plans to add his name to the Casino Point Underwater Park, which will soon be renamed “The Donald Trump Big Beautiful Ocean Playground.” When asked why the change, while jetting down to Mar-A-Lago for a tax-payer-paid golf outing, Trump proclaimed, “No one knows more than me about how beautiful the ocean is. And you’ve got that great fish, wonderful golden fish, one of my favorites, the Garibaldi there, along with Kelp Bass. But they’re not so good, like your bad mayor, Karen Bass. And how about those Giant Sea Bass. Now THERE’S good eating!! I think we’re serving those at a White House dinner this month.”

Trump says there will be some improvements made to the park, which include installation of a golden handrail to replace the one on the existing steps. Trump said, “You know that I value the ocean so we must show what value it has by having a golden path down to it. And that handrail will provide it as well as it’ll look really nice. And you know how I value nice looks. I’m the best at knowing what looks

nice. And this will look incredibly nice, like nothing ever seen before. And it’s a great salute to that golden fish, the golden Garibaldi.”

When it was pointed out to him that the Garibaldi is actually orange, not gold, Trump said, “Well, so is my face most of the time so the connection still works.”

Work has already started on new signage.



## **WORK STARTS ON CATALINA TRANS-ISTHMUS CANAL**

Long a dream of many mariners, work has just begun on a canal that will go right through the Isthmus at Catalina and essentially provide a short-cut to the backside.

This will especially be a boon to dive boats (as well as fishing boats)

wanting to go to Farnsworth Banks on the backside. Normally, going around Catalina’s West End to get to Farnsworth adds about 19 miles to the journey. But the Isthmus itself is less than half a mile wide. And if you draw a straight line through the Isthmus from the normal waypoint to get to Farnsworth, it reduces that distance to about 8 miles. So while a full trip to Farnsworth is about 35 miles, the canal will reduce that trip to just 27 miles. That means the faster, smaller boat can reach Farnsworth is about two hours.

That all being said, the project will need to be paid for and that will come through canal tolls that will be charged. The project is being handled by the Metropolitan Water District so they’ve said that Metro cards, normally used on the Expo trains, will also be accepted at the toll plazas at each end of the canal. The one-way fee will be \$150/boat but with the savings in time and fuel (especially with fuel costs these days), that’s a bargain.

Work on the canal is on-going but it’s expected to be fully operational by summer. Be sure to ask you favorite dive boat if they plan to make use of it.

**2026 SPECIAL INVITE - DON'T MISS OUT!!!**

**We have received special permission  
from NASA to view the touchdown  
of the Artemis II moon rocket  
from underwater on April 10.  
Call 310/652-4990 to get signed up.  
This is too good to be true!!**



## TSA BANS REGULATORS IN CARRY-ON BAGS

In a major change that will likely alter how you pack, the TSA announced today that scuba regulators will no longer be permitted in carry-on baggage due to free-flow issues, which they seem to consider to be small air explosions. When it was pointed out to them by a watchdog group that regulators can only free-flow when hooked up to a tank, so that what they're trying to prevent is impossible (since a regulator in your bag in the overhead bin isn't hooked up to anything), they said that their research showed differently.

DEMA (the Dive Equipment Marketing Association – overall advocate for the dive industry) backed this up by submitting some studies and other documentation, including scuba diving textbooks from basic open water classes, to explain that first of all, free-flow isn't an explosion but simply a rapid discharge of air, and secondly, that without being hooked up to a source of compressed air, free-flow was impossible.

TSA apparently referred this in-

## UPCOMING LOCAL DIVES & CLASSES

DAY	DATE	BOAT/SITE	PLANNED ACTIVITY	\$\$\$
Sat.	JApr. 4	Veterans Park	Navigation Made Easy	<b>25</b>
Wed.	8	Catalina Express	Avalon UW Park	<b>180</b>
Thu.	23	Veterans Park	••• Night Dive •••	<b>25</b>
Sat.	May 2	Veterans Park	Surf Entries Made Easy	<b>25</b>
Wed.	13	--- CLASS ---	--- TABLES & COMPUTERS ---	<b>25</b>
Thu.	21	Veterans Park	••• Night Dive •••	<b>25</b>
Wed.	27	Catalina Express	Avalon UW Park	<b>180</b>
Sat.	June 6	Veterans Park	Beach Diving Made Easy	<b>25</b>

formation to the House oversight Committee on Aviation. They held a hearing recently and ruled along party lines (the vote was 20-18) that airlines were exempt from the rules of physics and for good measure, tacked on two amendments to the finding, adding that the 2020 election was stolen and that Barack Obama wasn't born in Hawaii.

We called the TSA in Washington for comment but whoever answers their phone apparently hasn't been paid yet and called in sick so the phone just rang and rang and rang.



## AQUARIUM OF THE PACIFIC TO OFFER SHARK BITE EXPERIENCE

The Aquarium of the Pacific has announced plans to offer a new experience to their guests this week, called "Chomped!" where they can actually feel what it's like to be bitten by a shark. "Shark

bites are incredibly unusual," says a spokesperson, "and it's exactly for that reason that we want to give guests that experience."

The new experience will be happen in Shark Lagoon, which is also close to the Molina Animal Care Center so that if any of the Sharks suffer any medical (or dental) problems, they can easily be removed from the exhibit for prompt and thorough medical care.

Guests will have the choice of being bitten by Black Tip or Gray Reef sharks. The Aquarium had hoped to offer a Great White option as well, but couldn't get the necessary permits to make that happen. When asked about liability concerns, officials pointed out that all guests will sign a waiver as well as have their blood typed before they can be bitten. Additionally, gauze and tourniquets will be available for purchase before guests experience the actual bite.

Aquarium officials admit that this is a very unusual type of exhibit for them but they also pointed out that many people just don't get that excited any more simply viewing fish, and that this gives guests an opportunity to interact with oceanic animals in a way that no other sanly-run aquarium is able to offer, plus it's an adrenaline rush.

"Chomped!" is available to the public today starting at 9AM.



## **DIVE THE ROSE BOWL**

Still fearful of losing UCLA as their main tenant, the Rose Bowl has announced an alternate plan and a way for them to stay solvent. The plan is that they will seal off the tunnel entrances and then fill the Rose Bowl with water, enabling us to actually “dive” the Rose Bowl. Cost of this unique adventure will be \$100/diver and there’s even an option for non-divers to

observe what’s going on from one of the many suites that line the west side of the stadium.

Although the dive won’t take place until later this summer, you can register now on-line by clicking on the URL listed here to get to this special “Dive the Bowl” web site: [www.divetherosebowl.net](http://www.divetherosebowl.net). You’ll be asked to input some basic info like cert c-card and dive experience, and it will require a credit card to hold your spot. Also, you need to have an Advanced Diver rating or above.

As this is essentially a lease-event, we can’t sign you up directly. But we plan to be there and hope you will too. If you need more information, please call the Rose Bowl directly at 626/577-3100.

## **DID YOU NOTICE THE EXACT DATE ON THIS NEWSLETTER?**

If you’ve gotten this far and haven’t yet caught on, well, bless your heart (and let’s talk about some land I own in Florida on which I can offer you a sweet deal). The date says specifically “April 1” for the reason that it’s our annual and hopefully-much-anticipated April Fools newsletter. Except for the local class sked, not a word of this was true (but all the phone numbers are actually all legit). Hopefully you’ve enjoyed reading it as much as we enjoyed writing it. And if this was your first time seeing an April edition, be forewarned: We do this every year. Happy April Fools!!!!

# **PICTURE PAGE - New names for old friends**

*(All pix by Ken Kurtis © 2026)*



**Porn  
Starfish**



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**Botox-lip  
Puffer**



**Dolled-up  
Parrotfish**



**Poke-nose  
Pipefish**



**Sanity-questionable  
diver**