THE TRIDENT

VOL. 73
ISSUE 5

2024 Board Members

President
Richard Cunningham
562-274-6198
arealone@gmail.com

Ex-Presidio
Juan-Carlos Aguilar
310-569-3316
juanmilliondollars@yahoo.com

Vice President
Taylor Yates
714-747-6807
tayornyates714@gmail.com

Treasurer
Lauren Renteria
949-566-3044
laurenr@siainc.net

Tentative Manager
Jacob Seto
424-219-6937
xtrdae86x@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor
Craig Bond
818-730-5745
bondc007@yahoo.com

Recording Secretary
Chris Yates
714-642-8388
chrisryates@yahoo.com

Club Historian
Paul Byrd
949-500-1459
pbyrd@argosx.com

Conservation Liaison
Terry Maas
805-642-7856
tmaas@west.net

The Trident is the official newsletter of the Long Beach Neptunes, a non-profit organization. The Trident is published monthly and is provided free of charge to the members of the Long Beach Neptunes and associates.

The Long Beach Neptunes would like to thank the following members for their work in obtaining our 501(c)(7) non-profit organization status:

Chris Yates, Taylor Yates and Jacob Seto

FISH STANDINGS

CALIFORNIA

Calico Derby		Open
Calico Bass -	Jeff Benedict	7.0 lbs
White Seabass -		Open
Yellowtail -		Open
Halibut -	Byron Quinonez	33.0 lbs
Sheephead		Open
Bonito		Open
Barracuda		Open
Dorado		Open
Bluefin Tuna -		Open
Lobster	Dr Ivan Sanchez	7.3 lbs

OUT OF STATE/COUNTRY AWARDS

Yellowfin Tuna	Open
Reef Fish	Open
Pelagic, non-tuna -	Open
Kent McIntyre Award	Open
Perpetual Big Fish Trophy	Open

2024 CALENDAR

- **June 5, 2024 Monthly Meeting**
- **June 8, 2024 - 61st Bluewater Meet**
- **October 12, 2024 - Annual Fall Classic**

MONTHLY CLUB MEETING

May 1, 2024, 7:00PM

This month's club meeting will be held <u>IN PERSON</u>, at

Me-n-Ed's Pizzeria

4115 Paramount Blvd, Lakewood, CA 90712

SEEING DOUBLE!

Seeing Double

By Jacob Seto

It was your typical mid April day. It was Friday, the sun was shining, and I had my car packed and ready to go. There had been reports that the fish were moving in and as they say "The early bird gets the worm".

I received a call from my buddy Rick letting me know he was getting ready to leave. He had recently got lucky and wanted to go back to that same spot. I didn't care where we went, I was happy just getting some ocean therapy, getting a fish is just a bonus!

SEEING DOUBLE!

Seeing Double

By Jacob Seto *Cont'd*

I had a really good feeling. It was different than other good feelings. I could tell this one was different. I don't know how to explain it, but It was....different. Upon meeting up at the spot, we were greeted to some decent looking conditions from the top. Of course you never know how that will go until you are actually in the water. We rushed to dress out, since this was an evening dive. Even though the sun is up, the kelp forest tends to get darker sooner cutting your hunting time down by almost an hour, maybe more.

Entering the water, we were greeted with ideal conditions. The viz was an outstanding 25ft+ in the shallows and that didn't change in the deeper water. Rick and I both knew our game plan and we parted ways to begin our hunt. Immediately, that fishy feeling started to come over me. It wasn't a matter of IF I was going to see something, it was more like WHEN I was going to see something. Stalking the kelp, I was greeted by Calico's, Opal Eye, Garibaldi, and your occasional round ray. Occasionally I would get excited because a nice sized leopard shark would cruise by and play me for a fool.

As I floated on the surface with my head under the kelp, I took a drop. As I hit the bottom and relaxed, I scanned the kelp forest in all directions. I didn't see anything but the usual suspects. Making my way moving slow as molasses through the kelp I was greeted by 2 more big leopard sharks cruising the bottom. As I watched them, I decided I would try not to move around as much and maybe a fish would swim this same path that the sharks were taking.

Not more than a minute later I look over to my left and 8 feet away in mid water column sitting broadside to me I see a fish. Like their nickname, "The Ghost", this fish appeared out of nowhere. I slowly maneuvered my gun in the direction the fish was pointing. The fish started slowly moving away, I stayed calm and slowly tracked the moving fish briefly looking ahead for my opportunity to pull the trigger and potential kelp that would block my shot. Thankfully I had a big enough shooting window and pulled the trigger. I watched the shaft shoot forward and hit the fish in the shoulder.

Shooting at an angle down on the fish the shaft went out the stomach and ripped some of the guts out. The fish immediately took off running and as I grabbed my float line I slowly applied pressure and hit the brakes on the fish, careful to keep from ripping out. I gave it some time and let the fish wrap up in the kelp and calm down. When I didn't feel anymore tugging, I followed my float line and sitting there wrapped up in the kelp was my fish. I swam down and brained the fish and released it from the kelp. I slowly made my way back in towards shore. Upon hitting the beach, I was greeted by Rick who I thought was still in the water. I sat up in the surf and handed him my gun. I sat there in the shallows admiring my personal best White Sea Bass. Rick let out a "Hell Yeah!!!" And when I turned around Rick was holding a fish that he had shot! I let out an affirming "Let's Goooooo, Double doubler!!!" We both caught our breath and high five each other! However, that excitement was short lived. Looking up where we had to go, we both knew we were about to get our ass's kicked with the hike ahead of us...but that's another story!

Costa Rica 2024 Exploratory Trip

By Terry Maas

Oscar our captain explained on the way out that this third day would be different. Instead of 40-50ft visibility, the water would be murky, caused by the mixing of bay water and blue water. Also, instead of hunting with spinner dolphin, Oscar's team found a small pod of spotted dolphin. He said there might be 8 dolphin with maybe 20 BIG tuna. "Dive now, they are at 30 feet," he yelled. Jumping over the side, I descended rapidly through murky water speckled with white snow-like plankton—the viz was at best 15 feet and the water was dark. At about 25-feet I watched two dark shapes pass below me—parts of fish. end-to-end.

I knew they were big tuna because I could make out their yellow dorsal finlets. I swung my gun in their direction as one more dark shape began to disappear into the gloom. Just like white seabass I thought as I aimed into the murk where I guessed the main body was. Luckily, the shot shattered the spine just 18" from the tail immobilizing the fish—a good looking 150-pounder we could only appreciate once we pulled it to the surface and could see end-to-end.

The first two days, we followed spinner dolphin schools located early in the morning. Oscar is the best tuna hunting skipper I've ever worked with. Instead of rushing full speed to the next bird/dolphin blow up, he idled through the area and patiently positioned us ahead of the spinner dolphins. Once he was confident of his location, he focused on the meter and would yell for us to jump and how deep to dive. We landed on fish 80% contrasting with others who at best was 40-50%. We managed some nice 30-40 pound fish and I was lucky to have a 70-pounder swim by and even more lucky, stoned it.

Costa Rica 2024 Exploratory Trip

By Terry Maas (cont'd)

Add a little bit of Since COVID caused our Panama fishing lode to close, the Diving for a Cause team looked for good blue water hunting alternatives. One of our Panama captains recommended the Osa Peninsula, just over the border in Costa Rica and Oscar. We met a local

doctor/surgeon who helped one of the team by sewing up an injured hand. She is delightful, speaks perfect English and best of all appreciated our efforts toward giving something back to the host community where we fish. She even spent the morning at the school where we presented the children books, soccer balls and fresh tuna we speared. Since the one meal provided by the school is the best, and sometimes only meal of the day, the fish was greatly appreciated.

Costa Rica has 4 months of high season December through March. We plan to return in November when wahoo and dorado are plentiful as well as the ever-present tuna. Oscar explained that since the government ended its bilateral arrangement with Asian fishing fleets,

the tuna have rebounded rapidly. Instead of a 2-hour ride over the ocean, we found tuna within an hour of the port. Why don't you visit the Diving for a Cause page for details and join us in November.

‘But Wait There’s More...

By Hobi Ladd

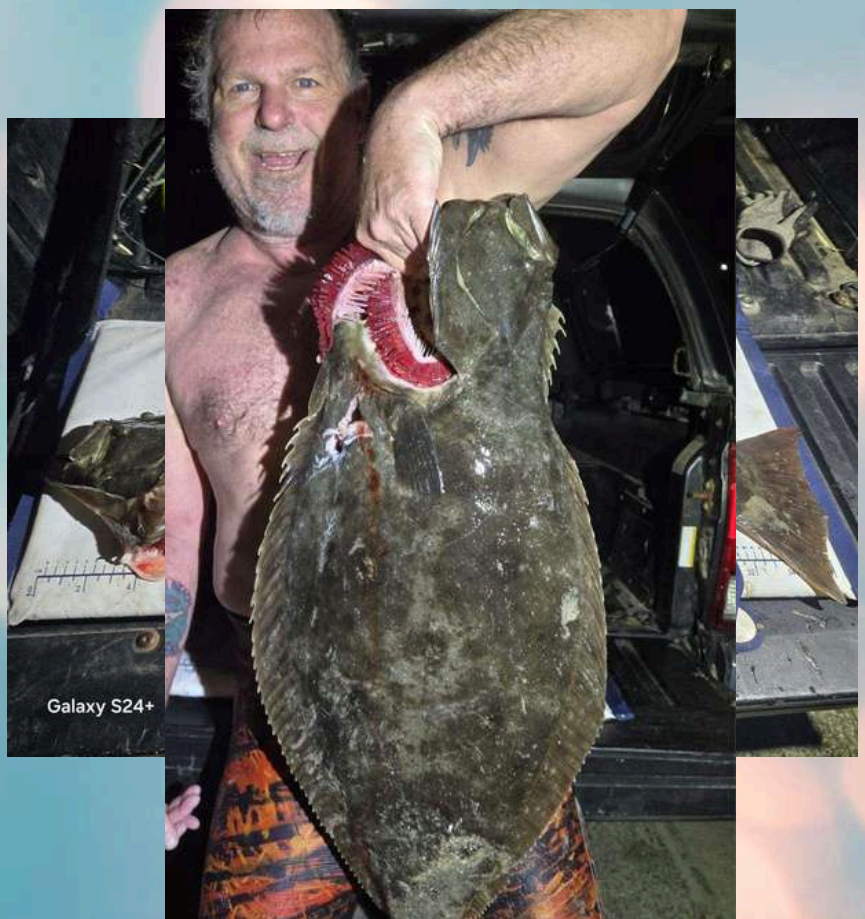
I decided to go out on a shore dive by myself. Conditions were pretty dirty, but it was a grunion run so I jumped in. Saw a few short halibut, but then I saw a good one. I shot it and got it onto my stringer, hanging off my float. It was around 27 or 28 inches. Swam a little farther and shot a 23 incher. I took it off the shaft and was swimming for my float to put it on my stringer, but the float kept moving away from me. When I finally got to it there was a huge leopard shark latched onto it. II grabbed the shark and tried to pull it off my fish, causing me to drop the fish I had just shot and losing it.

As I fought with the shark it wound up ripping off my first fish and swimming off into the murk! I was bummed out and wanted to leave but the grunion were covering the beach so I swam on. Seeing nothing but shorts I was beginning to think that was all she wrote but then I saw what I thought was a big halibut. I got excited and swam up for a look. Nothing but a big lump of sand. As I swam past the lump I stuck my spear into it in frustration, but instead of going through the sand it hit something solid and it didn't feel like a rock

‘But Wait There’s More...

By Hobi Ladd

I turned my head back and saw a big head had come out of the sand just in front of the shaft. With the shaft still on the fish I pulled the trigger and the fish went crazy, flying out of the sand. It was a total gut shot so I let go of the gun and floated on the surface till it layed back down. I swam to it, pulled the shaft all the way through, grabbed it and got a good grip on its gills on the first try, then swam for the beach. I had a tangled mess because I was so close that the shaft didn’t .



even make it all the way out of the gun! Got it on night the beach and saw it was a really solid one . Headed home with a nice fish that went 37 inches 17 lbs. I was glad I didn't quit after I lost the other fish like I almost did. Ended up a good

TRIPLE DIP AT YOUR OWN RISK

By Mike Marsh

You're probably wondering, what's up with this title Marsh? Read on and all will be revealed.

After several previous trip cancellations on Bill's 50-foot Viking due to bad weather, we were finally heading out of Huntington Harbor. There were 6 of us, Bill Perat,

Robert Strohbach, Steve Parkford, Del White, Parker Rusack, from Santa Barbara Free Divers. and myself. We all agreed to give PV a shot. The conditions were typical for this area with limited visibility. The 58-degree water temp. began biting through our 7 mm suits and after an hour or so of seeing zero, I suggested going to SBI. My choice to head to there was won by a slim vote margin of 1. This would prove to be a total flop with even colder water, spotty kelp, and no sightings. It's late afternoon now so we made the call to head to two harbors and devour Margaret's prepared chicken and potato dish. After a few glasses of vino and a handful of MJ's homemade chocolate chip cookies, we hit the sack.

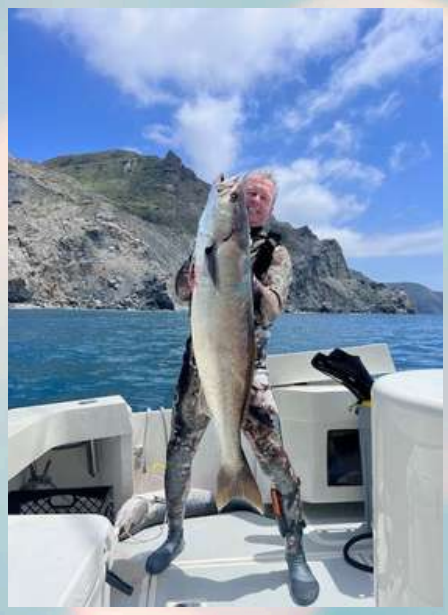
Now Saturday morning, we pulled anchor, headed East, and found a promising location. With two separate beds, this would make a good choice to split up the

TRIPLE DIP AT YOUR OWN RISK

By Mike Marsh (Cont'd)

5 divers. Del was injured, I know, what's new, from a self-inflicted snowmobile collision versus a tree stump. Del was unable to dive, so now was the second captain, which was a big plus enabling us to live the boat, be picked up, and dropped off quickly.

The water was still 58 degrees, but we had fair visibility. There were blacksmith, barracuda, calico, and bait in both beds. Parker landed his first fish of the trip, a 42-pound white sea bass. There were no other sightings. Del moved us west stopping at an area where there was spotty kelp. The next cove east of us was a few private boats fishing close to the shore. That's a good sign, so we anchored and headed to the shallows. Parker who was the youngster of the group at 27 was lying on the bottom at 25 feet pondering how cold he was and thinking about calling it, when he saw something to his right. It was a WSB only 18 inches from his face. At this close quarter and eyeball to eyeball with this fish, Parker gently pulled his gun backward. With no chance to aim, he pulled the trigger landing a headshot, and stoned it. He now had his second white onboard.



Steve was about 30 minutes into the hunt when he spied a WSB tail moving leisurely through the dusty bottom water 15 feet below. Steve anticipated its direction and moved to where it might be heading. Sure enough, the white crossed

TRIPLE DIP AT YOUR OWN RISK

By Mike Marsh (Cont'd)

below him. As it weaved through the sparse kelp stocks, Steve fired, and after clearing a slight entanglement, he had his first fish of the day at 20-plus pounds.

Around the same time that Steve was untangling his mess, two large shapes appeared about 15 feet below me. Crap, I hate surface shots so I exhaled descending on the pair. The WSB spooked at the same moment I shot and of course missed my target. Those on Whiskey Tango and the fishing boats in the next cove had no problem hearing the only . word that could describe my frustration. " F-------k". Not wanting to go back empty-handed, I reloaded and zig-zagged the area for a second chance at landing one. After cooling my jets, which took a half hour or so, and still in the general area, a different school of a half dozen whites passed through. The scenario was almost the same, except that I hit and landed a nice 30-pounder. Finally my first of this season.

Not long after, Bill was at the swim step with a big grin on his face. He also landed one. His fish was around 40 pounds. After shooting his fish, it headed into deeper waters, where it tangled at 40 feet. He had to work quickly because a 500-plus-pound seal donning a massive frontal lobe was antagonizing this

TRIPLE DIP AT YOUR OWN RISK

By Mike Marsh (Cont'd)

dive spot. I'll nickname him Gordo. Bill decided to leave his tangled gear and swim the WSB to the boat. The gear wasn't going anywhere.

It is around this time that the title of this story, Triple Dip At Your Own Risk evolved. Robert brought his scaler so that the catch could be scaled and then gutted on the swim step before placing them in the ice box. Also to ensure that the fish doesn't slide overboard while processing it, a line with a rigid metal fish stringer was attached to the stern cleat and through the fish's gills. Ok, that should work. No fish could go overboard with that fine-tuned and well-thought setup. After scaling and gutting the fish it was rinsed by dipping it over the side usually once maybe twice and then into the cooler it goes. Parker and Robert were ready to process Parker's second WSB with the technique that I just described. Several fish had already been dealt with in this manner. What was unknown to the pair on the swim step was that Gordo was lurking in the shadows below the swim step waiting for these two dips to give the white a final and fatal dip. As the story goes, Parker was content with the first and even second dip. ROBERT wanted to make sure that this fish was immaculately cleared of all internal bits and pieces, so he performed the highly risky triple dip maneuver. However, Gordo was on to his game, and before you could say "bulbous head" Gordo had a mouthful of white seabass at the swim step, Parker's WSB. The two grab the stringer and line playing tug of war with the 500-pounder. The stringer opened and the battle was over with two dejected divers on the swim set holding an empty stringer and Gordo swimming off into the sunset with Parke's 41-pounder sideways in his mouth. Robert geared up quickly to chase down the freeloader and retake the fish to no avail. This would not be the last of our sneaky companion, Robert would meet up again with Gordo. They had kind of a thing going on.

Steve was not at all satisfied with his 20-pounder and jumped back in for another go hoping to upsize. The commotion on the swim step had settled down with Robert receiving full credit for the mishap. The

TRIPLE DIP AT YOUR OWN RISK

By Mike Marsh (Cont'd)

jabbing was relentless, but Robert handled it well, probably because it wasn't his fish. By this time Steve was back with the largest fish of the trip at 57 pounds. His story goes like this. Steve got in but the current changed and the visibility declined causing him to dive more to find the ghost fish. While on a dive around 5 feet from the bottom, Steve eyeballed 2 maybe 3 WSB bodies moving parallel with him. He had his backup Wong 55" which was easy to swing and proceeded to center punch one. Knowing he had a solid shot, Steve grabbed hard on the float line and at about 10 feet down, began an underwater tow for maybe 75 feet. Steve short-lined the fish which was a good thing as it did not zig-zag as much entangling on only one kelp stalk. Ten minutes later, the white was dispatched. Aware of the aggressive seal .in the area, he made a beeline back to the boat. Steve had the unique honor of taking both the smallest and largest WSBG on board.

The fish count at this point was Bill, and myself with one each, Steve with two, Parker one Gordo one, and Robert with a negative one. due to the triple dip affair. Those of you who have ever dove with Robert, know of his competitiveness, and is not one to give up without giving it his all. Earlier in the day at this spot, he had several fish sightings mainly in pairs. About 20 minutes had passed after first getting in when from the surface he spotted two whites below him. The best shot would be the smaller of the pair, but instead, he decided to chase down the 50-pounder. Both fish escaped Robert's spear.

Robert continued diving now resting on the rock, and kelp formations at 20 feet. The croaking was intense. He noticed two huge fish swimming towards the dirty water. Hoping to take the perfect shot, but they both disappeared as fast as they appeared. At this point, he's probably wondering how many chances a guy gets. Well, he gets a few more that's how many.

Two more large fish appear within 6 to 8 feet away and he takes the shot. The reel was peeling off the line, Robert was elated, but then the line slacked. Making his way to the shooting line, he could see his shaft but that was it. No fish on. He had been in the 57-degree water for some time. Getting cold, he made a disappointing trip back to the boat and was super elated to see that we had more fish onboard.

TRIPLE DIP AT YOUR OWN RISK

By Mike Marsh (Cont'd)

Del prompted Robert to get back in after all it was the witching hour. After diving for 90 minutes without a single sighting, Robert decided to swim back to the boat and warm up. On the way back in, he saw a rock cropping that extended up to 20 feet. " Ok, one last dive". The moment he came over the top of the reef, a nice WSB was swimming in front of him. The shoot hit the fish mid-body and was peeling off fast so deployed his Riffe float, which we noticed from the aft deck.

Robert continued to swim towards the fish, but as he got closer, it seemed to pull even harder. Finally seeing the fish, he realized that Gordo was back for another handout. Gordo bit the fish in the head so Robert pulled as hard as he could. The seal released the fish to take a breath as Robert continued to pull the fish close to him and bear-hugged the white. This seal was pissed showing its teeth and blowing bubbles as Robert made his way to the swim step. Looks like Robert got the last laugh after all.

We were all pretty tired after today and dropped anchor for the night. With a multi-day permit on board, we hoped that tomorrow be as good. However, this would not be the case. Our honey hole had shut off, along with several spots on the front side. Nobody was complaining after all everyone landed a white or two. I even shot a nice calico. Truly a trip to remember.

Juan Aguilar would like to remind the members that, should you need to weigh your fish in or around the Two Harbors area, he has a certified scale. Call him at 310-569-3316

Another of your intrepid board members would like to remind you that you have but 30 days to submit your form for the Fish Standings.

Flatties on the Flattie

By Byron Quinonez

Following the frenzy, Paul and I had a set a plan to pursue game fish: Day 1, hunt the local grounds for the elusive ghosts that were making an appearance; Day 2, make a run out and chase some early season yellows. With an incoming full moon, we had a solid plan and solid condition ahead. What more can a local spearfisherman want?

But alas, the sea gods chose not to cooperate. Choosing instead to mess with our plans, they threw an epic south swell into our plans! We should have gone to the wedge instead! We knew all south/east facing spots would be washed out, and we only had a 2 day window. Grrr!

Flatties on the Flattie

By Byron Quinonez (Cont'd)

After running all day and no game fish in sight, we thought the lunar cycle would give us a chance for the flatties. At least this would give me a chance to try out my new halibut killer! A 36" Ren Spears special, with a spearmaster reel and mako side-mounted night light! Talk about over-engineered, the shaft even has a rest tab! Ha!

As soon as I jumped in, right under the boat was a nice keeper! I pulled the trigger, but must have shot from the wrong angle- she tore off. As I moved in, it was pure heaven. Halibut stacked up in the shallows! I looked over to see Paul with a limit full of stringers on his belt. This would be an epic dive!

As I slowly moved along the shallows, I saw one of the biggest halibut I've ever seen, laying out in the open! I wanted to get a good angle, so I slowly moved in front and pulled the trigger- BAM! To secure the fish, I pushed the shaft through into the sand, then held the shaft at both ends. This baby wasn't going anywhere! I wish I had a better story, but it was a nice stone shot. From here on out, the thing barely moved, until I got him to the boat!

It was another fun dive on the Flattie! A cooler with a Kook Limit for 2! The fish went 18.5 lbs, but I look forward to upgrading on my next trip.

Dive safe, fellow Neptunes!

LONG BEACH NEPTUNES

The Long Beach Neptunes are proudly supported by the following entities

ATOMIC AQUATICS

NEPTONIC SYSTEMS

MORIFISH ENTERPRISES

ARGOS XTREME GEAR

MUTINY DIVE CO

HERRANEN SPEARGUNS

PFI PERFORMANCE FREEDIVING INTERNATIONAL
FREEDIVER TRAINING WITH LANCE LEE DAVIS
Extreme Spearfishing

KOAH SPEARFISHING CO.

SPEARFISH PALAPAS VENTANA BAJA, MEXICO

SPEAR AMERICA

MAKO SPEARGUNS

JBL

SALTY CREW
FIND REFUGE IN THE SEA

DARYL WONG SPEARGUNS

O.M.E.R. BREATHLESS EMOTIONS

Anza Knives
Don Groh
Sales & Marketing
(619) 561-2445
www.anzaknives.com

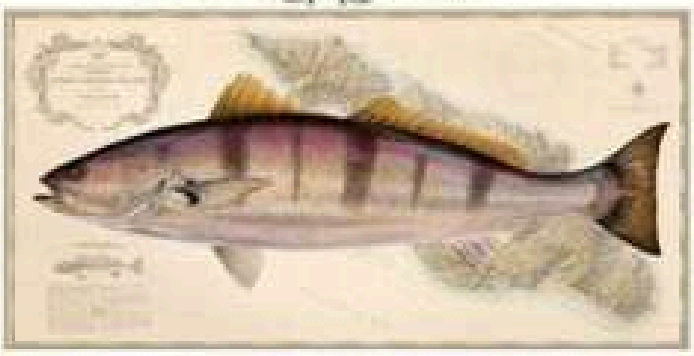
PALAPAS VENTANA

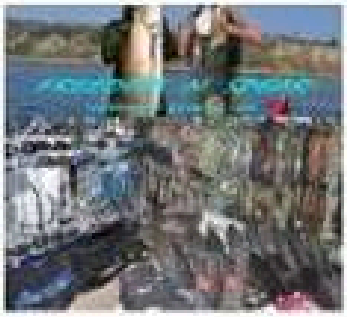
STUDIO ABACHAR

abachar

YAZBECK

WE'VE GOT YOU UNDER OUR SKIN





PELAGIC

High Performance Offshore Gear

GA.KU

PACIFIC WILDERNESS

UNDERWATER HUNTER

HATCH

www.hatchcustomsusa.com

BEACH CITIES SCUBA

DIVING FOR A CAUSE™

IFFE