

AQUARIUM DIVING: BIRCH AQUARIUM at SCRIPPS

I was a volunteer diver at the Birch Aquarium at Scripps, having started with them in the first wave of volunteer divers on July 27th, 1993, and ending on November 23rd, 2004. With 255 aquarium dives, I had my fill. Volunteer divers dive in the large kelp tank scrubbing algae off the acrylic window, vacuuming up debris, and feeding fish & anemones. Most of my dives were in the kelp tank and a few were in the warm water shark tanks, scrubbing off that pesky algae.



Here I'm feeding fish, which is always fun. It's also fun to wave at children, make faces at them, and mimic the movement of their hands around their faces.



Here I am gently handling a moray eel, that came to visit while feeding. They can entwine themselves around you and your gear while scouting for food. They are gentle animals, and not frightening. I like to hand feed them small chunks of fish; you have to keep your fingers out of the way though, and their small sharp teeth can snag momentarily on your neoprene-covered fingers.



Here I'm on the Birch Aquarium roof suited up and about to enter the water.



Looking up at a black sea bass at the Birch Aquarium at Scripps (my photo). These fellows open their mouths and quickly inhale their food in one big gulp. If you are holding onto a mackerel, your hand can end up inside their mouth, as it did for me..... the fish let my hand go.



Getting in the water for my very last dive there, with Cindy Taylor



Apres last dive, with Cindy Taylor and Richard Harden.