



## **DECEMBER NEWSLETTER (shorty version)**

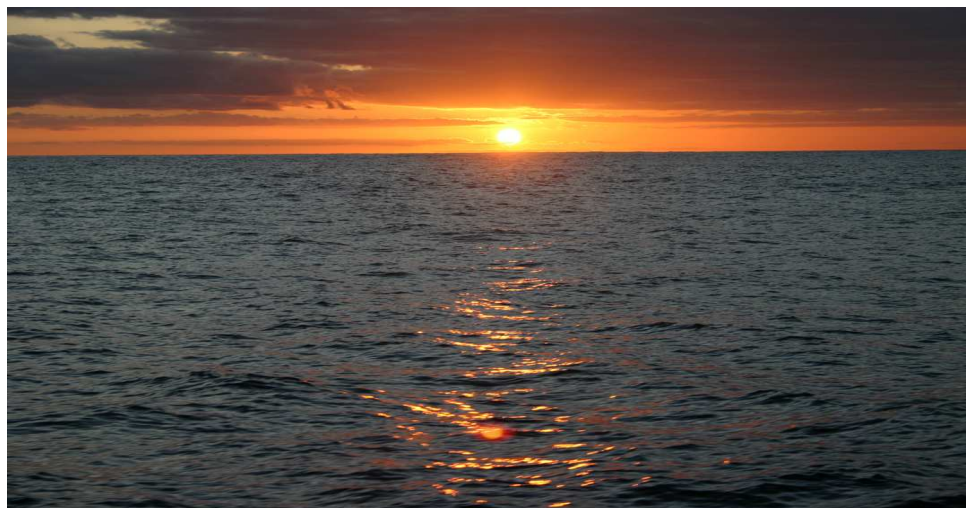
**Due to holiday travel and parties, all the events will have full articles and pictures in the January version. Some reminders for members are:**

**DUES are due in January, bring \$\$ to the meeting on Jan 23<sup>rd</sup>.**

**January meeting guest speaker will be talking about Sea Urchins, but details were unavailable as of press time. Again, look for them in the January letter.**

**ANA NUEVO trip is on January 11-12, see November article for details**

**KUDOS to Glenn and Peni for a wonderful Christmas Party. It was so generous of them to do all the decorating and preparation! Food was great and bountiful. Some went home with “prized” gifts that will never show up at another gift exchange, others are already re-wrapped. It was just too much fun!**



**Socorro Islands Sunrise**

## **TRIP REPORT from Craig Brookey**

### **A Lifelong Dream Comes True**

**On Nov. 24<sup>th</sup>, a group of Hearty Divers from the Sacramento area clubs left for the Sea of Cortez and the Socorro Islands. It was to become a "High Seas Adventure, which created a new group called the "Storm Divers." After a few days with the Whale Sharks and Sea Lions in the Sea of Cortez, we headed south to the three islands of the Socorro Island group. We motored for about 32 hours on smooth seas, and arrived at our first dive site, Roco Partida. (This stands for "Parted Rock") Several divers encountered White Tip sharks, Silver Tip Sharks, and Hammerheads. The Hammerheads were somewhat elusive. A Whale Shark also made a brief appearance.**

**On the second day in the afternoon, we encountered some pretty awesome weather in the form of a "white squall." It hit in a matter of a few minutes with thunder, lightning, and 60 knot winds. Divers were already in the water, so those of us who sat out the dive were busy filming and holding on to our "stuff." The crew of the Nautilus scrambled to retrieve all the divers with just about zero visibility due to the heavy rainfall. Everyone made it back without incident.**

**Next stop was 70 miles south at Socorro Island where we spent three days at numerous dive sights. We were treated to encounters with Moray Eels, Octopus, lots of huge Lobsters and many fish that are only found in the Socorro area including Sharks and Manta Rays.**

**Our final destination was San Benedicto Island some 40 miles off Socorro. The highlight of that island was a dive sight named "the Boiler" which is a volcanic mound that rises from 140' to just about 10' below the surface. This location is famous for encounters with the giant Mantas, and it did not disappoint. For three dives we were treated to at least 5 different Mantas that glided in and out of our bubbles and seemed to enjoy the interaction. What a thrill to see these gentle giants up close.**

**When you hear claims by dive operations that you will encounter Sea Lions, Sharks, Dolphins, Rays, Whale Sharks, Eels, Octopus, Lobsters all on one trip, one tends to be doubtful. WELL, NOT ON THIS ONE!!!! It was all there, and was a dream trip come true.**

**Craig (soft lips) Brookey**