

The Explorers Club

Northern California Chapter

January 2005

Chair: Stephen E. Smith
925 934-1051
nauticos@oceanearth.org
Vice-Chair: Lee Langan
415 567-8089
lee@langan.net
Treasurer: Anders Jepsen
925 254-3079
ajviking@aol.com
Webmaster: Mike Diggles
Newsletter: Lee Langan
Roster: Sue Estey

Web site: <http://www.diggles.com/ec/>

San Francisco January 28, 2005 Duane Silverstein

ISLAND EXPEDITIONS Saving the Environment with Win-Win Projects

Until the tsunami on the Indian Ocean, the very thought of islands conjured up images of romance and tranquility. While it is true that on many of the world's islands one might find swaying palm trees, lagoons teeming with marine life or waves gently lapping on a sandy beach, the

importance of islands goes far beyond their striking beauty. Islands are the Earth's great repositories of biological diversity. But island ecosystems and cultures are threatened as never before. In the last four hundred years the majority of the world's plant and animal extinctions have taken place on islands. Biologist Dr. Peter J. Bryant

has called the unprecedented rate of species extinctions on islands "one of the swiftest and most profound biological catastrophes in the history of the earth."

Chapter fellow Duane Silverstein is one of the world's leading island explorers, having visited 87 islands, some as the first westerner to visit many island villages. Duane is executive director of Seacology, the world's premier nonprofit organization with the sole focus of preserving the environments and cultures of islands throughout the globe. Too often islanders are asked to make great sacrifices to preserve the environment, but even though

many are financially indigent, they are given nothing in return for doing so. Seacology has come up with a creative, cost-effective approach to this problem. It offers island villagers a tangible benefit such as a needed school, community center or water delivery system in exchange for establishing a marine or forest reserve. In developing islands such as Fiji, for example, Seacology has built many kindergartens for the relatively small amount of \$15,000. Not only is a needed school built, but a forest or marine reserve is also created. In its brief history Seacology has preserved over 1,700,000 acres of marine and forest reserves through these win-

continued on page 2

NEW LOCATION

Date Friday, 28 January 2005
Place: Dolphin Club, Aquatic Park,
502 Jefferson St, San Francisco
Time: 8:30 pm, lecture
(visit SFOFF Reception before)
Cost: Free, but please reserve
SFOFF Reception is \$50

Reach Steve at
nauticos@oceanearth.org
or 925 934-1051

Reservation Form on page 5
Please reserve promptly!

This will be a different format than familiar meetings.

You are invited to the San Francisco Ocean Film Reception from 6:00-8:00 p.m., before our talk.
(The charge is \$50, see the article on page 4.)
You may, of course, have dinner elsewhere.
The talk is scheduled at 8:30 p.m., promptly.
The venue is the Dolphin Club
(a venerable San Francisco institution.)
Our meeting is free and is open to anyone. Invite your friends!



Seacology

Seacology

Continued from page 1

win projects.

Duane will talk about Seacology's unique, cost-effective projects, showing slides from his trips to exotic and remote island locations and discussing island expeditions planned in the coming year.

For almost 20 years prior to heading Seacology, Duane was the executive director of the Goldman Fund, one of California's largest philanthropic foundations. He also headed the Goldman Environmental Prize, which has been dubbed the "Nobel Prize of the Environment" by National Geographic and news media throughout the world. Duane's work has been covered in newspapers and periodicals as diverse as *TIME Magazine*, *The Bangkok Post* and *Scuba Diving Magazine*. Articles he has written have appeared in *Asian Geographic*, *Fathoms* and many other newspapers and magazines. Duane was previously a comedy writer for one of the nation's leading comedians, so please join us on January 28 for what should be a fascinating discussion.

To learn more about his organization, visit:

www.seacology.org



Duane Silverstein visiting with Huli Wigsmen (above)
Duane snorkling among fam coral (page 1)

Taking Wild Digital Photos Jonathan Chester San Francisco

Jonathan Chester has taken wonderful photographs all over the world, especially in out-of-the-way places. He showed a lot of them this evening in a fast-paced presentation of what digital photography can do for the explorer and outdoors adventurer. He also showed examples of the work of other photographers who go to extremes. There were many 'oohs' and 'aahs', well deserved.

Jonathan was an early convert to digital media. After hauling about several Pelican cases filled with cameras, lenses, film and accessories for years—and waiting until his return for hopeful results—he succumbed a decade ago when he purchased an \$18,000 6-megapixel camera. It took 12 seconds to download each image. BUT, he got excellent results and immediate satisfaction—and a series of projects that called upon him to upload condensed versions of his photographs via satellite to his sponsors. Over a series of

'virtual' tours he became very knowledgeable about the entire process of taking digital pictures and transferring them from isolated places. Sponsors, or those involved, could follow the progress of an expedition in near real time.

A 3-mp camera is now available from many notable camera manufacturers for \$300 or thereabout. Prosumer 6-8mp cameras are well under \$1000. The pros now can take up-to-16mp, available for one to a few thousand dollars. Even with all the accessories one might desire (memory, tripods, cases, lenses) the cost is less than the film alternative. And, the results are exceptional. Digital photography is here and now.

In the course of showing excellent pictures (electronically, of course, using his laptop and the Club's projector), he spoke to the benefits of this new technology. Perhaps most important: you know what you get. You can make exposure changes frame by frame, if needbe (come into the igloo from the blinding snow!) You can duplicate the storage media in the field and maintain a backup capability (always have two copies before you erase the camera's memory!) The whole range of equipment is much more compact; smaller lenses, no film. You can traverse security with greater ease (no film to be exposed.) These alone are compelling reasons to take up the new technology. The primary reason for more pixels—in response to a query, "What camera should I buy?"—is to gain flexibility in cropping. Beyond 3 or 4mp (which are good for 8 by 10 prints), 6 or 8mp will allow one to select portions of the picture to use. Post-capture software is remarkable in its capability, and the 'electronic darkroom' has become a joy to many who gave up chemical processing as too restrictive

Jonathan Chester with Chair Steve Smith (right) and Vice Chair Lee Langan (left)



Seacology

MARVIO DIERICKX