
Jennifer Stock: You're listening to Ocean Currents, a podcast brought to you by NOAA's Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary. This radio program was originally broadcast on KWMR in Point Reyes Station, California. Thanks for listening!

(Musical Intro)

Jennifer Stock: Welcome to another edition of Ocean Currents, I'm your host Jennifer Stock, and I want to wish you all a happy New Year in 2014. This is the first show of the year and I'm looking forward to each month bringing more ocean topics to you on KWMR. On this show we talk with scientists, educators, explorers, policy makers, ocean enthusiasts, adventurers, and more, all uncovering and learning about the mysterious and vital part of our planet, the blue ocean.

I bring this show to you monthly from NOAA's Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, one of four National Marine Sanctuaries in California, all working to protect unique and biologically diverse ecosystems. Cordell Bank is just offshore of the KWMR listening radius, off the Marin Sonoma coast, and it is the topic of today's show today, which is really exciting. And just to acquaint folks for where this place is, it's an underwater island about 20 miles West of Point Reyes, just North of San Francisco. It's a rocky underwater mountain and it's at the edge of the continental shelf, so at one side it drops off to really deep water, which is one reason it's such an amazingly productive, biologically active area. Originally it was explored in the 1980's by a nonprofit exploration group called Cordell Expeditions. And their explorations led to the designation of this place as Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, which is one of part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Sanctuary program. A national treasure now, but still fairly inaccessible, not due to regulatory exclusions, but because it's far off shore and rather deep. But today we're going to be talking with a person that explored it; we're going to hear first hand from a diver's experience, just within the last few months diving on Cordell Bank.

Matt Vieta is a member of the non-profit Bay Area organization Bat Area Explorers. Matt recently headed up an expedition to the Cordell Bank with a few other highly skilled divers, and we'll talk all about it today when we return. So stay with us and we will be right back with Matt.

(Musical Interlude)

Jennifer Stock: And we're back. You're tuned to Ocean Currents and here with me on the telephone is Matt Vieta from the Underwater Explorer's Group. And Matt, you are live on the air now!

Matt Vieta: Hi, Jennifer. Thank you for inviting me on the show today.

Jennifer Stock: Thank you so much for starting off the New Year where we can talk about Cordell Bank. So first, let's just dive in here a little bit and talk about, what is this non-profit about? The Bay Area Underwater Explorers, give us a little bit of background about what you all do.

Matt Vieta: Sure. The Bay Area Underwater Explorers is a Global Underwater Explorers affiliate. I'd say that what we're most focused on is the conservation and exploration of the California coast. So we have a lot of very passionate divers, and we're not scientists or professional explorers by any means, we all have day jobs, but we all share a passion for the aquatic, and we all, I would say, are really trying to raise awareness of the marine life on the California coast.

Jennifer Stock: Wonderful. And the Global Underwater Explorers, is this a similar group, but on a global level, and this is a local chapter of it?

Matt Vieta: I guess you could say that. Global Underwater Explorers is an organization that was founded to promote conservation, education, and exploration of the underwater world. And I would say Global Underwater Explorers is mostly known for its educational and training efforts, but it really grew out of deep cave exploration efforts. So the education and the focus on exploration is very team driven. So the training is very standards based and the perspective is, I would say, very rigorous and team oriented.

Jennifer Stock: And this is really for training and education for divers, those that get involved with the organization, right?

Matt Vieta: This is correct, yes.

Jennifer Stock: Ok. And so, what type of training and expectations do you have for divers that want to become a member of the Bay Area Underwater Explorers?

Matt Vieta: So, to become a member of the Bay Area Underwater Explorers we require the basic level of the GUE training, and the first step of that training is called the GUE Fundamentals, and it's basically a introduction to the basic procedures and equipment configurations when you're working with more complex projects, or team activities, having standardized training and equipment configuration is important. And this training more or less makes sure that all of our members are on the same page from an underwater standpoint. And we don't have to worry about interacting differently because we have different configurations or because we communicate slightly differently. We then make sure that basically we're able to operate cohesively as a team.

Jennifer Stock: And I bet that really increases the efficiency of working together underwater, but also for safety. It's such an important part of scuba diving.

Matt Vieta: It is, that's true. I think that safety and standardization really, as far as we're concerned, go hand in hand. And once you look at something like Cordell, where the dive plans and the amount of gear become significantly more complex, knowing that the people you're diving with have their equipment configured in a way that is interchangeable with yours, both increases the safety and...(cuts off)

Jennifer Stock: Hey Matt, your phone call is cutting out a little bit, could you repeat that last sentence?

Matt Vieta: Sure. I said especially if you're diving at a location like Cordell where the equipment and the dive plans can be significantly more complex. The standardization really allows you to feel safe within the team because you know exactly how your teammates equipment is configured as well as what their procedures would be within an emergency.

Jennifer Stock: Got it. Absolutely. So, in the Bay Area and Northern California, tell us a little about the science missions that you're working on within the group, and we'll go into the Cordell stuff in a little bit, but I'm curious, just some of the other science that you're all trying to help support.

Matt Vieta: Sure. Like I said, not of us are professional scientists per se, but we do spend a lot of time underwater. And what we really try to focus on from a conservation and science aspect is sharing

those observations both with scientists as well as the public. So one example of this is that we publish a field guide on our website, and this field guide had about 2000 visits in 2012, we have about 1500 photographs of local California marine life that are categorized by species, so that local divers, or really anyone that's interested in the California marine life can go to the website, look up the species, and see what they can actually find under the waters here. And I would say this has been one of our most visited efforts, which has been pretty exciting to see.

Jennifer Stock:

That's a really educational tool for educating divers about what they are seeing. Because I know that there's a big span of scuba divers that just want to go underwater but not necessarily see stuff, but there's people that really want to know what that stuff is and why is it unique and why is it important so I think that that's really wonderful tool that you're helping provide and kind of working with organizations to vet it. So, tell me; how did you guys get interested in Cordell Bank, it's kinda' out there- it's far off shore, it's not a lot known about diving it. So, I'm really interested to hear you guys story about how you got interested in Cordell Bank. And girls, I should say. There are girls that go on Cordell Bank too!

Matt Vieta:

Very true. I think that Cordell Bank is one of those area that, at least among us divers, and particularly technical divers, is almost mythical I would say. Like, all of us had heard about Cordell Bank for a long time and of course we had heard of Bob Schneider expedition, and the more recent expeditions by Noah, and trip out there by the Cocteau group. It's a deep location, it's very rarely visited, it has a reputation for an incredible biodiversity and density of life, which it very, very, very much so deserves, by the way. And it's something we had really been talking about for 10 years, and it's the logistics of getting to the location that have been preventing us from getting to the location, more so than the desire.

Jennifer Stock:

And you're a very interested, skilled group, so that tells me a lot cause you're a group that could handles a mission like this and it took you about 10 years to really plan for it. I hope that conveys to people how complex this place is. One of the things I worry about a lot as the educational coordinator for this place is that as people get intrigued by it's beauty and its relatively untouched status, that more people are going to go and see it, and I'm just hoping that a

lot of the people that may not be up for that challenge don't try to take it on. (Laughs)

Matt Vieta: It's certainly a very challenging dive. We're doing dives in the range of the Cordell dive almost every weekend I would say, off of the Monterey coast, the Monterey Carmel area. So we have a lot of cold, water deep diving experience as a group, and we have a large number of divers that are trained in that regard. But Cordell Bank I would say really raises the risks a lot with that type of diving, because it is 20 miles off shore, it's significantly more remote, and when you have the further off shore sites currents can become more unpredictable, weather conditions can become more unpredictable, and both the currents and weather can cause problems for the dive team, as well as with the surface support. I think that people can underestimate the amount of surface support that's required to do a dive the like the Cordell Bank. But to be integrated in with the boat and the dive team is really important for a site like that.

Jennifer Stock: How did the group prepare for the dive?

Matt Vieta: So, in terms of preparation our main goal in planning the dive at Cordell Bank was to keep the plan as simple as possible, and as close as possible to the type of diving that we normally do. I think that the complexity and problems are more likely to arise when you're doing something different. For us, our focus was to make sure that we picked a weather window and had conditions that would allow to boat to easily travel to Cordell Bank and easily track divers on Cordell Bank. And then once we could manage good conditions we more or less followed our standard procedures for diving that we would use on the Carmel area. We did have a couple of days where we did not get to dive because we were being so strict about the conditions that we would allow. So some place like Cordell where you're much further out you need a much narrower range of ocean conditions to be to dive there than to tolerate, for instance, diving in say the Monterey Carmel area.

Jennifer Stock: So you're putting a lot on the line there based of that need. And this is such a challenging area, I know that you picked a good time of year, in the Fall, October and that's typically a great time of year where we get some nice weather windows, but you can get some horrible weather windows, so you guys are really lucky, you

kind of nailed it. I understand there was a magic day that Cordell Expeditions or Bob Schneider might have told you about that always got good conditions at Cordell Bank, and what was that day?

Matt Vieta: Oh, I think that we were a week off from it, it was really close though it was about mid October, I can't recall the exact date. I wanted to say it was near the second week of October, and we started near the second to third week of October. And ironically we had actually considered moving the expedition earlier to late September, and it ended up being that if we had done that we would not have been able to dive, because there was not a single day that we would have been able to move the dive boat from Monterey to Bodega Bay within the September timeframe, because of weather conditions.

Jennifer Stock: Right. So that's actually another really good question. In order to carry out this whole mission you actually had to charter a dive boat all the way from Monterey up to Bodega Bay to do this. There are no other boats in Bodega Bay to support this?

Matt Vieta: I wouldn't say that Bodega Bay is normally a hot spot for technical diving. Particularly with the diving at Cordell it was particularly important to have both a boat and a crew that we were comfortable with, because in doing the deeper diving, having the boat crew be able to put you on the dive site, having them be able to pick you up and support the team appropriately, is really an integral part for the diving so we wanted to make sure that we had someone we were comfortable with and that was really part of the risk of the expedition, it was choosing that, having choosing the safer path, of choosing a boat and crew that we knew would work, at the risk of potentially not being able to dive due to weather.

Jennifer Stock: Got it. And you're using the word, "technical diving" a lot, can you explain a little bit what technical diving is compared to scuba-diving, what makes it technical?

Matt Vieta: Sure. Generally it applies to diving in conditions where you can not ascend directly to the surface. The easiest example of that would be, for instance, diving in a cave underwater. If you're in a cave and you have a problem you can't just come up because you have rock above you. In a deep dive like Cordell Bank you have a similar situation in that if you spend long enough at 200

feet for instance and then you ascend directly to the surface you be at serious risk of decompression sickness, or the bends. Because of this, in these situations, where ascending to the surface is not advisable or practical, you really need to have additional training and equipment and experience to be able to handle problems underwater, because you can't just ascend to the surface, you need to make sure you complete your decompression in the case of open water diving, or in the case of a cave that you be able to swim out.

Jennifer Stock: So, is there a different air mixture you might be using as opposed to regular compressed air on scuba, and did you use more than one tank?

Matt Vieta: For Cordell Bank we did use Helium based mixtures, and that's because as you dive deeper you become more susceptible to what's called Nitrogen Narcosis. And nitrogen narcosis, I guess the easiest way to describe it is that the deeper you go the more you feel like you've consumed some amount of alcohol.

Jennifer Stock: Yeah, I've experienced it before. So does the Helium mix reduce that, does it eliminate it?

Matt Vieta: It significantly reduces it. More or less you add enough helium to the mixture so that you maintain control over the extent of nitrogen narcosis you experience. So for the dive we did at Cordell Bank we used about 45% helium in our mixtures.

Jennifer Stock: Wow, that's so interesting. Can you do multiple dives in a day if you use helium mix, or is it one dive and that's it?

Matt Vieta: For the expedition we were doing one dive a day, and that was primarily for logistics. First of all in the afternoon, the afternoon has less predictable conditions from a weather standpoint. And then secondly (muffled) multiple dives involves significantly more gear on the boat. There's nothing preventing multiple dives in a day from decompression standpoint, but you have to be a lot more careful when planning those sorts of dives. It wasn't something we decided was necessary for this expedition.

Jennifer Stock: Fantastic, thanks for explaining that. For folks tuning in you're listening to Ocean Currents and I'm Jennifer Stock. I'm talking with Matt Vieta from the Bay Area Underwater explorers group, a

local non-profit in the Bay Area. He's talking a little bit about a dive they did, diving at Cordell Bank this past fall. So you did all this planning, you got the technical gear, you got the team on the boat; what did it feel like the first day, you're heading out to get on Cordell Bank.

Matt Vieta: The first day was a little bit surreal, partly because about a year prior I had set an alarm on my phone to say, "Cordell." To remind me every morning that I needed to get on the planning of planning Cordell Bank and make sure it happened. And that first day of diving my alarm went off that morning and it said, "Cordell." And I thought to myself, "Wow! It's actually true this time! We're getting on the boat and going out to Cordell."

Jennifer Stock: That's so cool.

Matt Vieta: So we loaded the boat before sunrise and we had perfectly flat conditions, it was actually a beautiful morning heading out of Bodega bay on the boat, and we headed out to a location called Crane's Point for our first dive. And as we dropped into the water there was, I would say, a pretty strong surface current. We actually has some really odd currents on this dive. And I would say, compared to the rest of the days, maybe a little bit less visibility in the first thirty feet of water, and then after we dropped through that it just opened up to, maybe not crystal clear, but really, really great visibility...although dark, so you could almost, it was almost like a twilight under water, but you could see really far. The density and diversity of life on the Cordell and on the reef is really impressive, particularly compared to Monterey/Carmel area.

Jennifer Stock: And the rockfish, where did that start? 'Cus you get through the plankton layer, that 30 feet or so, and then are you just drifting through blue water at the point? I mean at what point do those rockfish really start?

Matt Vieta: I would say at this site we started to see them about 30-40 feet from the bottom, which would have been about 120 feet you would run into the large schools of rockfish.

Jennifer Stock: And what was that like I've heard people say it's like swimming through mosquito hoards.

Matt Vieta: Oh it was surreal. I've never been surrounded by so many fish in my life! (Laughs) In fact, there were some times that my buddy was five feet away from me and I could not see him because he was obscured by all the fish. You're just surrounded by the swirl of rockfish, which was really impressive, just the number of fishes was incredible.

Jennifer Stock: Wow, that's so cool. So were you just...I know for me, when I've had the chance to dive and just that first moment when you get to see the habitat that you've been waiting to see. I mean, what were you thinking, what did you feel like?

Matt Vieta: I was probably laughing underwater in my regulator

(They laugh together)

Jennifer Stock: You just couldn't believe it, huh?

Matt Vieta: I think that some of the days, where we just had perfectly blue clear water and were surrounded by thousands and thousands of fish, it's just, it's just...I don't even know if it's something you think about as much as just absorb it in, it's a, it's maybe a less cerebral and more visceral experience, if you know what I mean.

Jennifer Stock: Yeah, yeah, I know. When it takes over like that it kind of becomes this whole different thing. And how about the other crew were you all sort of nearby, were you all sort of together, did you all spread out a little bit? I know you travel together with one buddy, but did you kind of go in different directions?

Matt Vieta: I would say it depended on the site. There were some sites where for instance, on the last site we dived had a really defined pinnacle and had thousands and thousands of fish at the top and the area at the top was fairly small so for that location we more or less all stayed together. The first day we really split up at three teams and explored around a little bit more. We use dive propulsion vehicles underwater to both travel against the current, as well as to cover more ground. So as a group of divers we split off into different directions and then basically met up at the top of the pinnacle at the end of the dive.

Jennifer Stock: Oh wow, that's really interesting. Now we're going to be coming up on a half hour break here in just a little bit but one thing I should have mentioned earlier is you worked with our science staff at the Cordell National Marine Sanctuary Bank to prepare for this. Were there any specific science questions you were helping our science team with...that you were gathering information for?

Matt Vieta: The science team was particularly interested in hydrocoral on the site, as well s the yellow eye rockfish populations.

Jennifer Stock: So hydrocoral are like a stony coral that we have at Cordell Bank and there are different locations for it and it seems to be that there are specific areas for it, and then the yellow eye rockfish I believe there one of the species of rockfish that are considered overfished in CA. Does that sound about right?

Matt Vieta: That's correct. And one of the impressive things about Cordell Bank is the sheer number of yellow eye rockfish that we saw for instance compared to the Monterey/Carmel area.

Jennifer Stock: Adults or juveniles?

Matt Vieta: I would say that we saw a lot more juveniles at the Cordell Bank than we did adults. I was a little bit surprised by the lack of adult yellow eye rockfish compared to what I was expecting at Cordell Bank. But overall we saw a lot more juveniles and adults than you would see in Monterey/Carmel. For instance, I think I've maybe seen only one yellow eye rockfish in all the diving I've done in Monterey and Carmel; we saw several on every dive at Cordell Bank.

Jennifer Stock: I know Cordell Bank is considered a pretty important spot for the recruitment, or for young to be able to grow into adult fish for yellow eye rockfish, so that's really great information. But also on top of that science work, I know that that for me I was really excited about the opportunity for new imagery, because you were all bringing out some fancy cameras and video cameras. So that was another amazing new benefit to the Sanctuary is now we have this amazing new imagery that you shared with us that we're really excited to use.

We are going to take a short break here in just a little bit, do you mind staying here, Matt. Do you mind staying on the line just a little bit?

Matt Vieta: Certainly.

Jennifer Stock: Ok, I'll be right back with you. For folks tuning in, this is Ocean Currents, my name is Jennifer Stock and today we're taking with Matt Vieta from the Underwater Explorers Group in the Bay Area and Matt's talking about their recent dive trip to the Cordell Bank area in October, 2013, which is really amazing being that it's such a difficult place to dive. We'll be back in a little bit. This is Ocean Currents.

(Musical interlude)

Jennifer Stock: And here on Ocean Currents today I'm taking with Matt Vieta from the Underwater Explorers Group in the Bay Area and Matt's talking about their recent dive trip to the Cordell Bank, which is a phenomenally interesting area, but rather challenging. So Matt, welcome back, you're live on the air again. (Pause) Matt, you're live on the air.

Matt Vieta: Thank you.

Jennifer Stock: Sorry about that. So I wanted to go back to some of the observations underwater. You were mentioning a couple things that you noticed that were different at Cordell Bank compared to the Monterey-Carmel area. Have you dove, or have others in the group dove up on the north coast at all, on the Sonoma Mendocino Coast?

Matt Vieta: A little bit, but not very much. I would say that most of our diving has been in the Monterey-Carmel area.

Jennifer Stock: Yeah. I'm curious, just some other comparisons in terms of Cordell Bank and the other areas you've dove, Monterey, Carmel, I know there's a lot of pinnacles and mounts off of Monterey and Carmel. In what ways was it similar?

Matt Vieta: I would say underwater topography was pretty similar, we still saw a lot of pinnacles; we still saw a lot of sharp drop offs. They were a lot more pronounced at Cordell. A lot of the same invertebrate life on the surface covering the substrate. So for instance we saw a lot of these strawberry amenities, these bright pink amenities that tend to coat the surface. We saw roughly the same type of rockfish and other sorts of fish. But

the balance of those fish was very different. So fish, for instance, that were very common in Monterey were very uncommon in Cordell Bank, and vice versa.

Jennifer Stock: How about evidence of human impact, did you notice anything out at Cordell Bank that was obvious from human impact?

Matt Vieta: Well I would say that there are two direct pieces of evidence. One is that there are these interesting circular holes that are drilled in certain locations at Cordell bank, that I think have been observed in the past. There's a hypothesis that they made be from an older naval installation, so we did see a couple of those. Other than those, we saw one piece of fishing gear on the bank, and then indirectly, and this was interesting to us, we saw far fewer big fish than we were expecting, particularly compared the Monterey-Carmel area where you may see some large vermilion snappers or other large rock fish, and we did not see those at Cordell, which was surprising to us, and pretty interesting.

Jennifer Stock: Yeah, maybe at those shallow depths they're not quite there. I know that they've seen some larger fish at the deeper depths on some of the other monitoring trips, so that's an interesting observation.

The holes! I know some research going into that again, I know Bob Schneider got very excited about this and did a lot of work. And I believe there's thought it was some sort of listening station back in the '60s or '50s, and I think he has quite an interesting story, talking about his research on that. And I know we have a local here, George Clyde, who's on the Cordell Bank Sanctuary Advising Council, that's delving deeper into the topic, so we'll have more about that, hopefully in the coming year.

But compared to coastal locations, like Monterey or Carmel, that are used a lot by people, I thinking it must have been so different to see an area that's relatively untouched by humans in terms of impact.

Matt Vieta: I'd say what stood out to us most was the density of fish in comparison to Monterey and Carmel. In Monterey and Carmel I would say that we very rarely see truly large schools of rock fish, and the rock fish we see there are usually blue rock fish, whereas on every dive we did at Cordell we saw huge schools

of rock fish, they were all Widow rock fish, which was interesting to us because we really don't generally see in Monterey or Carmel, but there were thousands and thousands everywhere on all of the dives as Cordell.

Jennifer Stock: Now you went to three different sites within the Cordell Bank region, and this one was Cranes Point, and what were the other and were they different from each other?

Matt Vieta: I would say they were fairly different. The first site was Cranes Point, which is a... I would say a pinnacle that's a little bit more squat than the other locations, and that has a wall on one edge, and the conditions there were significantly different there than the other two in the sense that we had a little bit less visibility, there was a surface layer that we didn't have at the other sites, and this is probably just day-to-day variation, but we also had significant surface currents at the first site that we did not have at the other two locations.

Jennifer Stock: So when you have a surface current, does that effect how you descend down?

Matt Vieta: It effects both how you descend as well as how you ascend in some sense. With a surface current in a layer we use the dive propulsion vehicles to basically get through the surface current and stay on the site. You can think about this sort of like a torpedo with a handle on it that pulls the diver along, to fight against the current, because when you're wearing all the gear you would need to use for a deeper dive, it's significantly more difficult to kick against current.

Jennifer Stock: Right.

Matt Vieta: So, I would say that that's one impact, and the other is that we do what you would call, "drift decompression." So once we've done our dive on the bottom portion, the diver sends up a, I guess you can think of it as a, we call it a "Surface Marker Buoy." So this is basically a floating bag that the diver sends up on a line to let the boat know where the dive team is underwater. And on this particular site, when I sent up the surface marker buoy, the surface current was strong enough, and with the layer on the surface, that it basically pulled me along like a dog pulling on a leash...

Jennifer Stock: Wow

Matt Vieta: So I shot this up and was holding onto it and then my dive buddy was needing to kick to keep up with me as this surface marker is being pulled along by the surface current that we didn't have underneath, so more or less we were getting zipped along underwater being pulled by this marker buoy, which was pretty amusing. (muffled laughter)

Jennifer Stock: That's...quite an experience. It's a whole 'nother adventure there dealing with that current (laughs). Um, let's see, so do you think you'd like to go back to Cordell Bank?

Matt Vieta: I would love to go back to Cordell Bank. (Laughing together) I would say there're a number of logistical challenges that we'd like to improve on when we go back, but I don't think there's a question in any of our minds that we would like to do it.

Jennifer Stock: Yeah, that's great. And what would you tell other divers that would like to dive Cordell Bank based on your experiences now?

Matt Vieta: I'd say it's a very challenging site. Both from a logistics of boat and gas planning, to get everything you need onto the location, but more importantly from a diving standpoint. The site is deep, the currents can be unpredictable, the water is cold, and it's fairly far offshore. So I would advise anyone thinking about going to Cordell Bank to really make sure they're well prepared for those types of conditions.

Jennifer Stock: Mm-hmm. So based on everything you've learned and you've experienced, what do you think should know about a place like this, or what do you think other people should know about Cordell Bank?

Matt Vieta: I would say that the big take away for us is just the sheer density of life. I think it's difficult to appreciate why some place like Cordell Bank is important to the public, because it's not a location that many people can directly observe. And we hope that we can give people some insight into it from the photos and video we provided, but having first hand knowledge of it, I would really like to impress on people just the sheer amount of life on this location, and the diversity of life that's present on this location. Really. Stunning.

Jennifer Stock: That's great. So, I want to thank you because you've made my job a little easier, 'cus I know that you all are talking with your friends and family about this amazing place, and you've helped make it a new story too, for what makes this place so interesting and so important to keep our eyes on as a hope spot for the future. We're at a really challenging time now with ocean conservation and global warming and many other challenges, and I get really inspired by the photos that come back to us about Cordell Bank with the amount of fish and the diversity of life, it just provides a lot of hope for the future, and hoping to sustain these populations as much as possible. So I want to thank you for helping to make that possible.

Is there a website that you'd like to direct listeners to, so they could see some of your images. I know you have some video clips up there too.

Matt Vieta: Certainly. So our organizations website is www.baue.org, and that the Bay Area Underwater Explorers website. And we have our Cordell photos under the Galleries, and the Projects.

Jennifer Stock: Yeah, I found it really easy online, really nicely done. Well Matt, any other last words you'd like to share about your group and diving at Cordell Bank or other places before we sign off?

Matt Vieta: I would say that diving at Cordell Bank was certainly a privilege and I'd especially like to thank the Cordell bank National Marine Sanctuary and Dan and Caitlyn who helped us out a lot in terms of giving us information on past projects as well as helping this year be successful for us. It's just a really incredibly site. I'd just like to leave everyone with that.

Jennifer Stock: That you so much, I will definitely pass that on, and I really appreciate you calling in, I know you're traveling right now, and I really appreciate you calling in to share your stories on the show and look forward to being in touch with you in the future. So, thanks again.

Matt Vieta: Ok, thank you Jennifer.

Jennifer Stock: All right, take care Matt.

(Matt Vieta hangs up)

Jennifer Stock:

For folks listening this is Ocean Currents and we've just been talking with Matt Vieta, a diver with the Bay Area Underwater Explorers group, a group of divers that took on quite a challenge last year in diving Cordell Bank, a really difficult place and it's so nice to hear people that get excited about this beautiful, amazing biodiversity. And I encourage you to check out their site, that's www.baue.org to see the photos from that expedition, but some of their other expeditions too, there are some really great photographers and videographers, to just see what some of the habitats are like in California here, and how beautiful they are.

I will sign off for now, you've been listening to Ocean Currents, my name's Jennifer stock, and you've been listening to KWMR and we'll talk to you next month. Take care!

(Exit music)

Jennifer Stock:

Thank you for listening to Ocean Currents. This show is brought to you by NOAA's Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, on West Marin community radio, KWMR. Views expressed by guests on this program may or may not be that of the national Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and are meant to be educational in nature. To learn more about Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary go to www.cordellbank.noaa.gov

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