

December 4th, 2009

[Squid Fishermen off the Malibu Coast](#)

“So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past.” –F. Scott Fitzgerald



Squid Boat

By: Gracee Arthur

I recently read a letter in the Malibu Surfside News in which a woman expressed concern about the increasing number of squid fishermen off the Malibu Coast and their early date of arrival this year. Her concerns centered on the impact on the squid population, damage to the food chain and damage caused to the ecosystem by the bright lights used to attract the squid.

The Editor's response from the NOAA Fisheries was "The demand for squid has increased making it the "most valuable fish in the state." California Marine Biologist and squid researcher Dale Sweetnam told the "News" that usually the squid prefer to spawn off the Channel Islands but for some reason, this year they prefer to be nearer to the Mainland. The biologist noted that the entire squid population is completely replaced annually and they spawn wherever the water temperature and conditions for spawning are optimum. He added



“the squid are very prolific when conditions are right”.

My first memory of the squid fishermen was in November of 1993 when I moved into a house on the Encinal Bluff's near El Pescador State Beach. The house looked over the dark waters and there was no need to pull down the window shades unless the moon was full. You can imagine my surprise when awakened in the middle of the night by the surreal, eerie, beautiful bright lights of the squid boats off shore. It was quite an awesome sight! I did not know who was out there in the dark waters or what they were after but I was mesmerized by the “elusive green lights”.

To read more about the squid boats go www.malibusurfsideneews.com “Squid Bring Fishing Fleet to Malibu” November 26, 2009.

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- **Gracee Arthur**