

posed and played with anyone that would play with them or had a camera. Also saw lots of torpedo rays. We found a super alternative to this shop, Surface Time, which met all of our needs including safety and comfort. For the same price, they took no more than 6 divers on their larger boat. We booked a smaller boat and they took just the 2 of us (husband and me) to do some local dive spots. On our way out to the dive sites, we were able to troll and catch fish. Our boat captain made lunch with our fresh catch while we were doing our first dive. After completing our 1 hour surface interval, we trolled to a new site and completed our 2nd dive of the day as happy divers. The boats only had a salt-water rinse bucket — no table for setup since they used the only table for food.

tank day, diving Red Rock Quarry, Bird Rock and Toqua Springs. Since my previous dive trip was to Vancouver Island, with water a good 10 degrees colder, Catalina seemed toasty! The kelp forest and all her denizens were enchanting. At the end of the day, I surfaced to a full moon over the water just behind the dive boat. The next few days I shore dived Casino Point with Catalina Divers Supply. This was an easy and relaxing series of dives; you just walk down the steps and you're in. If the tide is out when you come back, be prepared for an ungainly slither over the rocks at the foot of the steps. Lots of Garibaldi, sheepshead and other lovelies among the kelp towers. I met up with the same dive buddies for these dives; it would not have been difficult to find others to dive with as a single diver.

UNITED STATES

California

Catalina Scuba Luv, August 2004, Fiona Rattray, Elora, Ont. Experience: 101-250 dives. Vis: 40 to 50 Feet. Water: 59 F., calm, choppy, no currents. I dived with Catalina Scuba Luv on the King Neptune. I arrived with my own drysuit and equipment but no dive buddy. The good people at Scuba Luv set me up with a father-son team who had dived Catalina plenty of times and acted as good tour guides. The rest of the diving group were EMTs getting their Open Water Certification for work. Between the well-maintained boat, clear dive briefings, helpful crew, the herd of EMTs and my dive buddies I've never felt safer on a dive boat! We did a three-

EASTERN PACIFIC LIVE-ABOARDS

CANADA

British Columbia

Nautilus Explorer, August 2005, Douglas Banik, Redding, CT. Experience: 51-100 dives. Vis: 30 to 60 Feet. Water: 45 to 50 F, calm, currents. The Nautilus Explorer is a brilliantly designed dive boat. It consists of two boats really: a 116' motor yacht with cabins for up to 24 divers; large salon with HDTV for viewing digital photos, videos; large, uncrowded dining room that seats 24 comfortably. Not ultra luxury, but "ship shape and Bristol." The second boat is