

the number of lesions and years of diving or number of decompression dives. "If indeed these areas of hyperintensity were caused by diving, one would expect that those individuals with the least exposure would have the fewest, and vice versa. It may be that the study demonstrated not that divers have an increased probability of getting hyperintense areas in the brain, but rather his nondivers have a lower probability."

Unlike DAN, I'm not sure I'm ready to explain it away by speculating that the nondivers in the study had an abnormally low incidence of brain damage (Maybe brain lesions make you want to become a diver?). Although I'm not giving up diving, I think this is an area in which we would all like more reassurance, and I hope Dr. Reul's findings will stimulate more studies.

J. Q.



HIT AND RUN. Basking sharks, docile plankton feeders that grow to 34 feet in length, are being threatened by jetskiers and power boat owners off the western coasts of Britain. Though the species is not endangered, the Marine Conservation Society is calling for greater protection for it after the discovery of two dead basking sharks. One shark's tail had been severed, presumably by a prop; the other had to be put to sleep because of similar wounds.

SHARKS STRIKE BACK. A couple of years ago we reported on an eight-foot barracuda that leapt from the water into a houseboat in Florida and seriously mauled a woman — truly a weird incident. Now a Fijian fisherman has died after a 12-foot shark leapt into his boat and attacked him while he was sleeping. Five men were sleeping in a 16-foot fishing boat anchored in open seas off Fiji's remote Yasawa group when the attack occurred. The shark tore off the right leg and hand of the villager, who died from loss of blood shortly after the other fishermen got him to the village hospital.

BE THE FIRST ON YOUR BLOCK. . . . Want to dive Vietnam? I don't have a lot of info on what the diving is like there. I *am* curious — but I think I'll wait awhile before using my budgeted scuba hours on a Vietnam trip. The live-aboard *Song Saigon*, a luxury replica of a Chinese junk (*In Depth*, Sept. '94), has moved its operation from the coastal city of Nha Trang to Ho Chi Minh City and reduced its diving operations. It seems that local officials had to approve the *Song Saigon's* cruising/diving itinerary, which they did, but they would unexpectedly change it before departure. Voiles Vietnam, the company operating the *Song Saigon*, said other problems, such as uncooperative local dive operators and continued dynamite fishing in the area, also contributed to the move.

HOT EARS FOR DIVERS. If you find yourself with ears that won't clear, try Samsonite's Earaid the night before diving. It's a reusable gel pack designed for the ear. Activate the internal metal disk and it supplies soothing heat to the ear. For \$16.95, it will either clear the blockage or simply warm your ear. (914-699-1400, ext. 223)

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