

# Letters to the Editor

## Bearded ghouls and scientific meetings

Dear Editor,

With respect to Dr Harris' article in the December issue,<sup>1</sup> the pain from the bearded ghouls' sting appeared to be resistant to the use of hot water. I was wondering how hot the water was? My clinical experience with stings from similar fish (scorpion fish and stonefish) indicates that the temperature of the water is crucial – warm water produces no relief but hot water produces initial relief but the pain reappears as the temperature of the water decreases. However, I am the first to admit that our knowledge of the action of these venoms is only 'the tip of the iceberg' and perhaps some venoms are resistant to first-aid hot-water treatment.

I was interested in the use of a sural nerve block for pain relief. I have used this nerve block for pain relief in these injuries with great success. However, I have had to combine it with a tibial nerve block for full relief in what appears to be the area involved in the photograph; the medial side of the foot is supplied by both the sural and medial plantar (a branch of the tibial nerve) nerves, but it is a poor photograph.

Where Dr Harris' thoughts<sup>2</sup> on the SPUMS AGM are concerned, I agree with the Editor's reply. I note Dr Harris' opinion is based on attendance at one meeting (in 'statistical terms' expressed as  $n = 1$ ). The SPUMS Committee is trying to improve the ASM but we do need participation from members to submit presentations and attend. Perhaps we can look forward to seeing and hearing from Dr Harris at future ASMs. Past onshore meetings have not been successful but this will be tested again in the future.

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## References

- 1 Harris R. A fishy tale from Port Vila (with a sting in the tail). *SPUMS J.* 2005; 35: 225.
- 2 Harris R. Time to change the Annual Scientific Meetings (ASMs). *SPUMS J.* 2005; 35: 227.

## Key words

Envenomation, marine animals, medical society, meetings, letters (to the Editor)

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## Maintenance of Professional Standards (MOPS)

Dear Editor,

The following MOPS points have just been approved by the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists:

The "Introductory Course in Diving and Hyperbaric Medicine" presently held at Prince of Wales Hospital, Sydney has been approved under Code 161, Category 4 (Learning Project) for 100 CME points. The approval number for this activity is 02116 and is ongoing.

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Letters (to the Editor), meetings, MOPS