



“Dive Log”

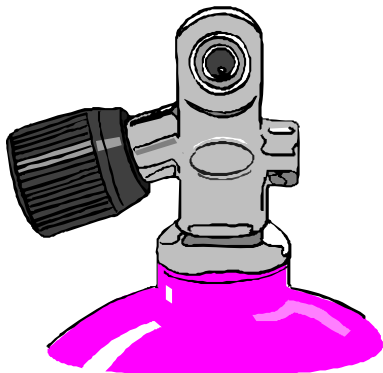
The monthly newsletter of the United Divers
of Central Massachusetts

May 2008

Vol VII Issue V

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Bonaire Update

By Jim McKnight

Easter Sunday was bright and sunny, but wind gusts made for a choppy sea and undignified entrance and exits for divers. We had decided to make our second visit to Bonaire at Easter time in order to join my cousin Peggy and her husband David. They were making their sixth trip to Bonaire and would be our guides for the week. Ordinarily, we would have selected a less popular time for our dive trip and I will avoid holidays like the plague in the future.

Diving Conditions

The windy conditions stirred up the sand and made the viz less than Bonaire's best. At times it was great, a hundred feet or more, but most of the time the water was milky with a lot of sand and maybe 50 ft. of good viz. The wind died down after a couple of days and the entrances and exits got a lot easier. Water temperature was in the upper 70's; I wore a 3 mil jumpsuit and hood, no problems there. There was an earthquake in St. Kitts just before we arrived. According to the dive resort staff, this event caused some unusual wave action which added to the particulate in the water.

Airports, Airlines and Baggage

Getting flights at a reasonable cost was the most challenging part of our trip. Direct flights to Bonaire were quoted in excess of \$1200 pp. from any northeast airport. Yet direct flights to Curacao were less than half that amount for a destination only a few miles away! So we added a day to our schedule and overnighed in Curacao on the way down. The Airport Hotel in Curacao, like many airport hotels, is simply a dump and should be avoided. However, most hotels in a resort area will not accept a one night reservation especially at a busy time of year, so we were stuck for one night in less than desirable accommodations. The highlight of our outgoing trip was the flight from Curacao to Bonaire on Divi Divi airlines. Named after the islands most prolific tree, little Divi Divi flies 8 passenger aircraft at an altitude of 2000 ft. I know the altitude because I could read the altimeter over the pilots shoulder. I also got some nice photographs from this low altitude. In the absence of any sort of baggage handling facility, the pilot was kind enough to help us with our bags to the terminal. Should you tip a pilot who helps you with your bags? I didn't, it seems a bit demeaning.

They say that if you die down south you have to go through Atlanta in order to get to heaven. I suggest that if you are not headed to heaven that your spirit will be routed through Miami International Airport.

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Accommodations

Belmar Oceanfront Apartments are run by Buddy Dive Resort and are located conveniently on the main road near the airport. The duplex condo was quite nice and the staff was helpful and friendly. My only real gripe was the lack of water pressure in the second floor shower. Water is an issue in Bonaire so try and get a ground floor unit. When I discovered that I left the base plate and handles of my Ikelite camera housing home and would not be able to take pictures; the manager of Buddy Dive Digital Photo Center, John Wall, was nice enough to lend me his own equipment. Thanks again John.

Dive Sites

We did the usual shore dives that many club members have experienced. I liked Oil Slick Leap in particular, it was our first time and making the jump from the rocks was exciting. I did notice a lot of coral damage around Oil Slick and a few other dives. This damage resulted from a hurricane a few years ago and really stands out. One "off the beaten path" dive site is Lac Bay located on the east side (the Wild Side) of the island. After driving to Cai on the east shore of Lac Bay, we planned to dive "the Bowl" a depression located in the middle of the mouth of the bay. As you observe the entrance to the bay from the shore you notice breakers to the left and the right, but not in the middle. The Bowl causes this phenomenon and also provides shelter for large pelagic fish such as tarpon, tuna, sharks, and rays. Viewing these large fish, not common at other dive sites in Bonaire, was the objective of our dive. After entering the water and swimming at a depth of about 20 ft. for maybe 10 minutes, I began to notice the current picking up and moving us along at an accelerating rate. In a couple of minutes, we were in trouble and heading for Venezuela! Forget the Bowl! It was time to do a 180 and head back against the now ripping current. I managed to grab a couple of large rocks and use them to claw my way back. Nancy was able to get some traction using her dive knife. It was touch and go for about 15 minutes, but we managed to crawl past the point where the current abated and we were able to get safely ashore. We all needed several cerveza Polars before being able to drive back to the resort. I was glad I had my regulator serviced at Andy's Sportshop before the trip; I was huffing and puffing in that current.

Bonaire Trends

While Bonaire is still the "Diver's Paradise" there are some disturbing trends. The Salt Pier, a very popular dive site and great for pictures, now requires a local divemaster and a \$25 fee. The Town Pier is similarly restricted and is often occupied by cruise ships. If Salt Pier can be restricted then why not other sites? Will divers have to pay more fees in the future? We noticed a number of large new homes recently built and under construction close to the water and some dive sites. Will access be limited in the future? Currency is another possible issue. A local hotel owner told us that Bonaire may join the Euro zone in 2009. Many European investors want to limit their currency risk by receiving their revenues in Euros and not dollars. A currency switch will put the risk on US based divers. In addition, the airport tax has gone up and is now \$34 pp. Finally crime, especially breaking into trucks, is on the rise. We noticed broken auto glass at most dive sites and our hotel staff warned us that broken glass was not covered by insurance. That means if you have camera equipment with you, but decide not to take it into the water due to surf conditions then you have to stay with the equipment while others dive or dive and take a chance on the equipment being stolen and the truck being damaged. Could it be that Bonaire's best diving days are behind it? I hope not, but the trends are not in the diver's favor.

Lobster Fest IV

Welcome to LobsterFest IV. The event will be held Saturday, August 2nd at Ken and Michelle's house at 30 Kimball Road, Carlisle. Unless the weather is a total washout, that's the date. Fortunately, we've always had good weather in early August. The plan is similar to last year. Tickets for LobsterFest are \$10 per person and will be on sale at the May meeting. There will be 40 tickets available. We've reserved 10 seats on the Cape Ann Diver II for our members. Charter rates are \$75 per person, and of course, you need to have a lobster license. Payment should be made to the club. The charter boat departs promptly at 8 AM from

Cape Ann Diver's new location at 7 Parker St. Gloucester, MA. We will conduct two lobster dives. Naturally, our members can also dive from their own boats, shore dive if they want, or not dive at all. We would like commitments on the charter boat by the May meeting or sooner if possible so that we can get more seats if necessary before it fills up. Last year, we ran short of seats. Please email me if you want a seat on the boat at kmostello@expertek.com. Since Cape Ann Divers requires payment upfront, we'd appreciate payment at the May meeting. For those on the charter boat, the party starts Ken and Michelle's house right after diving. For the others, please plan on a 1PM start. As in years past, there will be lots of food including Carolina style barbeque, hamburgers, hot dogs, corn, salads, Kimball's ice cream, and, of course, plenty of lobster. True to our Italian heritage, we feel compelled to do food to excess, and we're sure this year will be no exception. Per club policy, alcohol is BYOB. There will also be prizes, the usual gag gifts, and a 50-50. We look forward to seeing you all there.

Ken

Message From Our President

Hello One and All!

I know that I have been saying this for quite some time now, but dive season really is right around the corner! A few more of you have been out over the last couple of weeks, rumor has it. The water temperature is definitely warming up too. With the nice weather that we have been having the water temps should be rising steadily. As for me, the water has actually warmed up just enough for me to start thinking about getting wet. In just a couple weeks I should be starting up the Sunday dives just like last year. Sunday mornings at 8:00a.m. at the Burger King parking lot. I will make sure that it is posted on the website once I start. Just a reminder to all of you who have not been out either in the ocean or in the pool since last season, do not forget to check your gear before you head to the ocean. It is a good idea to set everything up and test everything out before you make the hour plus trek to Cape Ann or Rhode Island.

One final note, Captain Fran Marcoux of the charter boat the Daybreaker has recently sent out his summer schedule for diver charters. If you are not on his e-mail list and wish to receive information on his charters please e-mail him at franm52@aol.com.

Do not forget that Jonathan Bird will be joining us for the May meeting! Once again a guest speaker worth not missing!

Dive! Dive! Dive!

Christine

Seal Dive

We have chartered a seal dive for Friday, July 18th at 8:00AM, aboard the Cape Ann Diver (Big Boat). This will be a full day charter. We'll leave from the Cape Ann Docks at 8:00 AM and return at 5:00 PM. This will give us plenty of time for two leisurely dives with the seals at the Isle of Shoals. This has been an extremely popular dive in the past. If you've never had the pleasure of swimming with the seals, I can assure you that it is an experience you'll never forget.

I fully expect this dive to fill up very quickly. There are only 12 spots available. Only those who pay in full will be placed on the roster. Don't miss out!

Here are the Details... Date: Friday, July 18th, Time: 8:00AM Departure You must be at the Cape Ann Diver's shop by 7:00 to sign waivers Returns: 5:00PM Certification: All certifications welcome

Cost: \$109.00. Checks should be made out to me, Al Boyarsky.

This will be a two tank dive. Typically we anchor at a 25' depth and the maximum expected depth should be around the 45' mark. Bottled water and some very tasty snacks will be provided. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Al Boyarsky Seal Dive Chairperson, Al@PipeWiz.com, 978-790-3102

May/June 2008

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
1	2	3	4	5 BOD Meeting Slatterys @6:30pm	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19 General Club Meeting @7pm	20	21 Dive of the Month

Upcoming Events

May 15- May General meeting @ Slatterys in Fitchburg. Meeting to start @ 7 pm. Guest speaker is Jonathan Bird who will be doing a presentation on the best dive destinations to find sharks.

May 17- Dive of the Month. TBA

June 19- June General meeting @ Slatterys in Fitchburg. Meeting to start @ 7 pm.

June 28- Boat dive with Boston Harbor Diving Services

July 3- Fireworks Dive w/Fran Fran Marcoux on the Day Breaker to the Poling.

July 6- Scuba Chicks Day. More info to come.

July 18- Seal Dive with Cape Ann Divers for more info see the article in this newsletter.

August 2- Lobster Fest IV see article in this newsletter for more info.

For any and all Calender updates please check out the club website www.uniteddivers.org

Birthdays!

May 20- Andrew Kadaras

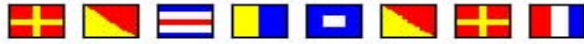
June 18- Jim McKnight



**50/50 raffle
winner for
April 08'**

Larry Dufour

ROCKPORT



Rockport 42°40'N 070°37'W

April/May Tide Chart

DATE	HIGH				LOW				Sun		Moon
	AM	hgt	PM	hgt	AM	hgt	PM	hgt	rise	set	qtr
18 Sun	11:11	8.5	11:15	9.4	4:53	0.4	4:57	1.3	5:17	8:02	
19 Mon	11:52	8.4	11:53	9.5	5:33	0.3	5:37	1.4	5:16	8:03	☀
20 Tue	-	-	12:31	8.4	6:12	0.3	6:16	1.5	5:15	8:04	
21 Wed	12:30	9.4	1:10	8.3	6:51	0.3	6:55	1.5	5:15	8:05	
22 Thu	1:09	9.4	1:49	8.2	7:30	0.4	7:35	1.6	5:14	8:06	
23 Fri	1:48	9.3	2:29	8.1	8:10	0.5	8:16	1.7	5:13	8:06	
24 Sat	2:30	9.2	3:11	8.1	8:51	0.7	9:00	1.8	5:12	8:07	
25 Sun	3:13	9.0	3:54	8.1	9:34	0.8	9:46	1.8	5:11	8:08	
26 Mon	3:59	8.9	4:40	8.2	10:20	0.8	10:36	1.8	5:11	8:09	
27 Tue	4:48	8.8	5:28	8.4	11:08	0.9	11:29	1.6	5:10	8:10	☾
28 Wed	5:41	8.7	6:18	8.7	11:58	0.8	-	-	5:10	8:11	
29 Thu	6:37	8.7	7:09	9.1	12:25	1.3	12:50	0.8	5:09	8:12	
30 Fri	7:34	8.8	8:01	9.7	1:22	0.8	1:43	0.6	5:08	8:13	
31 Sat	8:32	9.0	8:53	10.2	2:20	0.3	2:36	0.4	5:08	8:13	
1 Sun	9:29	9.2	9:46	10.7	3:16	-0.4	3:30	0.2	5:07	8:14	
2 Mon	10:26	9.3	10:39	11.1	4:11	-0.9	4:23	0.0	5:07	8:15	
3 Tue	11:22	9.5	11:33	11.3	5:06	-1.3	5:17	-0.1	5:07	8:16	☀
4 Wed	-	-	12:17	9.6	6:00	-1.6	6:10	-0.2	5:06	8:16	
5 Thu	12:27	11.3	1:12	9.6	6:53	-1.6	7:04	-0.1	5:06	8:17	
6 Fri	1:22	11.2	2:08	9.5	7:47	-1.4	7:59	0.0	5:05	8:18	
7 Sat	2:18	10.9	3:03	9.4	8:40	-1.1	8:55	0.3	5:05	8:18	
8 Sun	3:15	10.4	4:00	9.3	9:34	-0.6	9:53	0.6	5:05	8:19	
9 Mon	4:13	9.9	4:56	9.1	10:29	-0.1	10:52	0.9	5:05	8:19	
10 Tue	5:12	9.3	5:52	9.0	11:24	0.4	11:53	1.1	5:05	8:20	☾
11 Wed	6:12	8.8	6:47	9.0	-	-	12:19	0.9	5:04	8:21	
12 Thu	7:12	8.4	7:40	9.0	12:54	1.2	1:13	1.2	5:04	8:21	
13 Fri	8:11	8.2	8:31	9.0	1:54	1.1	2:06	1.5	5:04	8:21	
14 Sat	9:06	8.0	9:18	9.1	2:49	1.0	2:55	1.7	5:04	8:22	
15 Sun	9:57	8.0	10:03	9.1	3:40	0.9	3:42	1.7	5:04	8:22	
16 Mon	10:44	8.0	10:45	9.2	4:26	0.8	4:26	1.7	5:04	8:23	
17 Tue	11:27	8.0	11:27	9.3	5:08	0.6	5:08	1.7	5:04	8:23	
18 Wed	-	-	12:08	8.1	5:49	0.5	5:49	1.6	5:05	8:23	☀
19 Thu	12:07	9.4	12:48	8.1	6:28	0.5	6:30	1.6	5:05	8:24	
20 Fri	12:47	9.4	1:27	8.2	7:07	0.4	7:11	1.5	5:05	8:24	
21 Sat	1:26	9.4	2:06	8.3	7:46	0.4	7:53	1.4	5:05	8:24	

May's guest speaker

The guest speaker for May is Jonathan Bird of the Oceanic Research Group and his own educational show Jonathan Birds Blue World. He has done presentations for the club in the past. His previous presentations were on swimming with dolphins, and Galapagos. This year he will be doing a presentation on the best places in the world to see sharks. Jonathan is an excellent speaker, and his pictures and videos are phenomenal. This is definitely a do not miss. For more information on Jonathan go to

- www.oceanicresearch.org
- www.blueworldtv.com
- www.jonathanbird.net

He also has created an online chat site for underwater photography. To find out more about this go to www.uwphotochat.com

Meeting Time and Location

The United Divers meet once a month on the third Thursday of the month at Slatterys located at 106 Lunenburg Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420. There is ample parking provided in the rear of the building. The meeting will be taking place in the event room near the back right of the restaurant. The meeting will begin at 7pm with a social hour beginning at 6:30pm. If you should have an questions please feel free to contact any member of the Board of Directors.

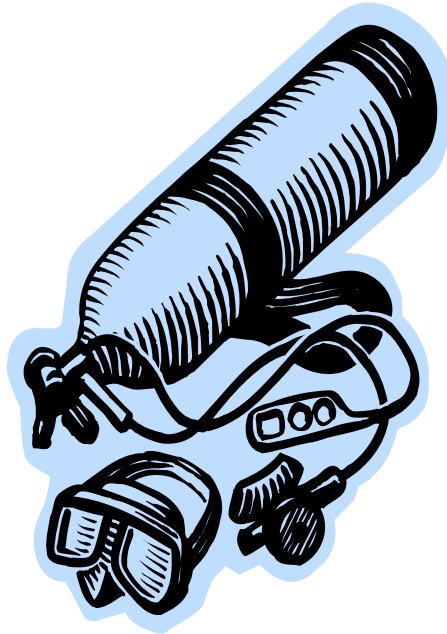


United Divers of Central Mass

Dive Log

United Divers of Central Massachusetts
P.O. Box 57
Fitchburg, MA 01420
www.uniteddivers.org

Email; For newsletter correspondence please contact Kris at secretary@uniteddivers.org



The Purpose of the United Divers of Central Massachusetts

The purpose of the United Divers of Central Massachusetts is to promote the sportsmanship and sport of SCUBA diving by stimulating our members to achieve the highest standards of safety and proficiency in Scuba diving. To promote friendship and wholesome social activity among its membership. To promote educational programs that will provide fundamental knowledge supported by actual hands on experience in a variety of areas including; safe diving practices, conservation of marine ecosystem, first aid and handling diving related emergencies, to organize group SCUBA diving trips, educational and social events that will allow our membership to accomplish all of the above.



United Divers of Central Massachusetts
P.O. Box 57
Fitchburg, MA 01420

Monthly Trivia

What is a Tween Deck

Answer in next months newsletter.

Last months answer.

What is a Spurling Pipe

located both port and starboard, the "anchor cable" runs through these pipes from the chain locker to the forecastle deck