



International Scuba

Remember to visit our website!

www.internationalscuba.com

Upcoming Lake Weekends:

May 22-23

Jun 5 -6

June 19-20

Jul 3-4

Jul 17-18

Upcoming Trips:

May 16-21 Turks & Caicos

June 11-14 & 14-18 Cozumel

July 8-9 Flower Gardens

July 17-24 Cayman Brac

August 6-9 Cozumel

September Costa Rica

October Grenada

November Bonaire

And much much more!

Howdy everyone:

Happy Belated Mother's Day to all of you. I think the weather here was acceptable for your families to have showered you with goodies and a meal on the town.

We want to start off by congratulating **DARRELL GARDNER** on becoming an Open Water SCUBA Instructor. Darrell has been teaching at the shop for close to 3 years now and decided to take the plunge. He begins teaching this weekend and is looking forward to helping all of you further your diving. Darrell was amongst 4 other candidates who were equally successful (Josh Bischoff, Ron Kennedy, Mike Gibbens, Doug Wilson). Mike Rowe came into town to do the OWSI for Darrell then promptly ran away. I know he missed seeing some of you.

If you haven't been in the shop in a while we are once again making changes. I think we are about through though and I know the crew will be happy when I say officially we are done.

Finally, since it is the season to be wet, please make sure your gear has been serviced, you have gotten wet before you leave, and that your dive insurance is paid. These are all important parts of the diver checklist.

Have a great weekend and hope to see you soon.

- Patti Stewart
Patti@internationalscuba.com



The World of Divers Continues to Grow

The number of certified divers in the world continues to grow and International Scuba continues to contribute to that growth. We would like to congratulate and thank all those divers who completed their certification in April: **If you have hit a milestone please send me an email or call.**

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Open Water/Junior Open Water

Wendy Rider
Jennifer Wintz
John Vance
Scott Young
David Gunderson
Wendy Gunderson
Danielle Gagne
Chad Wootton
Jennifer Lobb
Ryan Corley
Tracy Corley

EFR

Dave Allen
Raymond Occipinti
Matt Occipinti

Enriched Air Diver

Tim Wagner
Rich Thomas
Greg Howard
Nick Howard

Oxygen Provider

Dave Allen

Peak Performance

Carmen Martinez
Lyn Zastrow
Mac Bain

Underwater Navigator

Simone Schreiner
TK Laux

Milestones

25 Dives

30 Dives

40 Dives

50 Dives

Your name here!

60 Dives

80 Dives

100 Dives

500 Dives

Backups, Safety and daydreaming

When I got to work the other day, I turned on my computer like I do every morning only to find that it no longer worked. After a few choice words and a few frantic phone calls, we got it working, but found I had to rebuild it and lost all the information on it. Fortunately I not only had backups of the critical data, but because of the nature of the work I do, I also have a second computer on my desk. It still caused quite a bit of downtime and certain things were lost forever, but it could have been much worse.

Since I had a bit of idle time while I was getting things back in order, my mind wandered to diving (imagine that). The two issues started to cross each other and I started to think about how much I rely on my dive computer when I go diving. It's great; I don't have to worry as much about where my maximum depth was, it tracks it for me. What time did we go down, how much time do I have left? Hey my computer has that too. If this wasn't enough, it even keeps track of my multi-level dives so I actually end up with longer bottom times instead of the square profile from the tables. It has also made me a bit lazy with all the areas it keeps track of. Sometimes (ok many times) I wait to log my dives until the end of the trip.

Now I started thinking about the times I've been on a trip when someone's battery went dead and they had no replacement, or they pushed it to the point that the computer lost all data. Or the times you have the diver who put his weight belt on the bench without watching, right on top of someone's gear. Not only is the computer now dead, but now what?

At the point that our computer goes dead we have a few choices.

- We can start diving using the tables. Ok, lets suppose you brought them and remember how to use them (admit it, it's been a while). Now then, what were the details of my last dives? Let's even assume you're more diligent than I am and logged the dives. How was that 90-foot dive for 45 minutes? Ok let's find the pressure group on the table. Hmmmm, According to the tables I can't do the dive. The multilevel ability of the computer is great, but it doesn't translate very well. Ok, maybe the tables weren't such a good idea.
- We can borrow or rent another. Wait, it doesn't have my previous dives either. Well I should be ok.... Let's see, is my DAN insurance paid. That project at work might suffer a bit if I take another week off because of a chamber ride. Maybe not such a good idea
- I'll just keep next to my buddy since we dove together anyway. Well I did duck down to see that lobster on the last dive. Oh yeah, my buddy was tired and didn't do the night dive with me last night. Let's see about that DAN insurance.... Maybe that's not a good idea either.
- I can follow the manufactures recommendation and stay out of the water for 24 hours. That's safe, but I am on a dive vacation not a beach vacation. Besides that's when the whale shark will show up. Not good, but a least safe.
- How about this, I brought a backup computer, and was diving with it. Now one of my computers is out, I get to go diving with the second. It has all my dive history in it so bingo, I'm safe, I don't have to quit diving for a day, and maybe I'll get to see the whale shark (ok still a bit of fantasy, but I can dream a little here)



Atmos ai



Let's talk about a couple rules when using a backup computer.

Rule #1 - Take it with you. It doesn't do much good sitting in your dive bag in your room. Dive both computers.

Rule #2 - Reference both computers when you dive. Make your dive based on the most conservative of the two. The backup doesn't do much good if it has locked into gauge mode because you violated its decompression model.

Rule #3 - Take it with you. Ok it's a repeat of rule #1, but it's important.

Ok you ask, what's a good backup computer? If you remember a couple months ago, we introduced the Suunto Gecko. It's a Nitrox computer without any frills. That also means that the price is reasonable. If you want something more compact, you can look at the Mosquito or Stinger. They are basically the size of an oversized watch. Compact and easy.

Happy diving and blow lots of bubbles,

- Brian Divine

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Grenada

You may have thought all Caribbean diving was the same, but Grenada is unique. This is where the Atlantic ocean feeds into the Caribbean Sea, therefore, the nutrient filled water surrounds Grenada and is then dispersed amongst all of the other islands as it travels through the Caribbean sea. This causes everything around Grenada to be healthier, larger and more abundant.

All of the dives sites are an average 5 min. boat ride just off shore. The furthest site is 15 minutes. The largest wreck in the Caribbean is nicknamed the Titanic of the Caribbean. The Bianca C is a 600' luxury liner that sank in 1961 when there was an explosion in the boiler room. It landed on even keel at the bottom of the ocean and the foremast is still upright to begin your dive at 90' descending down to 120'. The bottom of the ship is at 150' and she is sinking in the sand and in on herself so eventually she will no longer be a safe dive. This is an opportunity that no diver should miss out on! Grenada has macro diving at its best with everything from A for arrow shrimp to Z for zoanths. A scientist recently counted over 70 species of coral at this one site that he was snorkeling at!



There is an abundance of sharks so they do not rely on shark feeding to attract them. The wreck of the San Juan has 50 nurse sharks that stay close by so the average seen diving there is 25.

The island has a rain forest filled with waterfalls and crater lakes. Nature lovers will appreciate the many trails for hiking and biking surrounded by lush flora and fauna and a plethora of wild life such as tropical birds and monkeys.

For history buffs, there are Forts from the 1700's - some even have cannons. A national museum tells you about Grenada's past. Carib's Leap is a steep cliff where the Carib Indians chose to exterminate their race rather than surrender to the French colonists in 1651. Shopping is comprised of a farmer's market for fresh spices at an in-

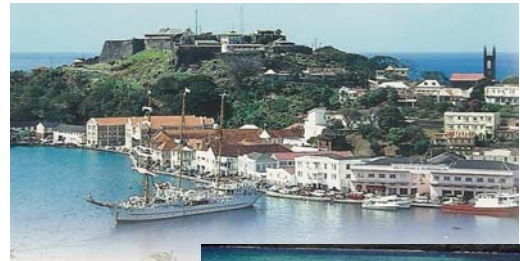
credible savings, boutiques and island arts & crafts such as locally made batiks.

The 120 sq mile island has 45 beaches and the only fast food chain is Kentucky Fried Chicken. The island has the conveniences of home, but is not commercialized. The hotel's restaurants serve family recipes and are delicious! Former British colony so everyone speaks English and they still drive on the left side of the road with round-a-bouts instead of traffic lights. The tap water comes from the rain forest so it is safe to drink and delicious!

There is no wild night life but tranquility abounds. Evening entertainment consists of steel bands, Jazz, Reggae and Blues. Recorded music is also played so feel free to bring your favorite CD that can be played for everyone's enjoyment.

- Tami Gardner

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Featured Product – Armor Gear Bags

Packing your gear these days can be hard. Did we pack everything, did we pack too much, did we remember.....? I keep a checklist at hand as I pack both my give gear and my clothes. Now with the airlines cracking down on number and weight of bags we can carry without extra charges, we have to pack very carefully.

Armor Bags have come out with a couple of new bags that are awesome and meet FAA guidelines. The #75 Travel set shown below will hold 2 sets of gear and has a removable backpack that is huge. Here are the specs:

- 1682D ballistic nylon
- Stainless steel & non-corrosive components
- PK Zippers
- Recessed locking extendable pull handle
- Interior & exterior fin pockets
- 70mm roller-blade wheels with stainless steel axles & non-corrosive bearings
- Integrated continuous webbing lift system
- Size: 30" long x 16" wide x 14" high
- Capacity: 12,000 cubic inches
- Complies with airline size regulations



The Rolling Duffel is the second bag we are featuring as it is great for a single diver to pack gear and clothes all in one bag.



- 1680 Denier ballistic nylon
- Stainless steel zippers
- Non-corrosive components
- Heavy duty protected rolling system
- Locking extendable pull handle
- Interior fin pockets
- Integrated continuous webbing lift system
- Size: 35" x 16" x 14"

If you are in need of a gear bag because yours has seen better days or you are new and haven't invested in a bag, please stop by and take a look. We are excited about the new look and usefulness of the bags.

Happy Diving!

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Please visit our website. We do our best to keep it up to date. Let us know what you think about the site and the newsletter. An important part of our success has been the friendships developed among customers and staff. That's part of why

Travel 2—Belize trip report

Rick, Chris, Tony and I arrived at Ambergris Caye, Belize at approximately 4:00 PM on Easter Sunday for the first annual “guys only” trip. It all started with an uneventful, on-time American Airlines flight 2193 to Belize City, Belize, followed by about a 20 minute flight to San Pedro on a single engine, 12 seat aircraft operated by Maya Air.

After checking into the hotel and unpacking, we headed for the dive shop where we signed liability releases, received the dive schedule, and met our Dive Master, Eric. The Sunbreeze hotel is very conveniently located across the street from the airport and on the beach. The rooms were spacious and the beds comfortable. The open-air restaurant is located seaside and has a wide variety of reasonably priced selections.

Aqua Dives is located directly on the Sunbreeze property and offers morning dives at 9:00 and 11:00 AM along with afternoon dives at 2:00 and 4:00 PM. They arrange daily trips to Lighthouse Atoll (The Blue Hole) and Turneffe with a minimum of seven passengers.

On Monday morning we did our first 2-tank boat dive followed by lunch, a relaxing nap, dinner and drinks. Maybe it was drinks and then dinner? With a cold front moving in, Eric advised that the best diving at the Blue Hole might be the following day, so Tuesday morning at 6:00 AM we left for Lighthouse Atoll. After a short stop at Caulker Caye, to pick up another diver, we were off to “The Blue Hole”!



The Blue Hole is 410 ft deep and 1,000 feet in diameter and should be considered a “must do dive” if you have the opportunity. The outer

Dive number 2 on Lighthouse Atoll was at Half-moon Caye Wall where we also went ashore and had lunch and did a land excursion to see the Red Footed Booby Birds. This relaxing break was followed by a 3rd dive at Long Caye.

The next 2 dives, “all too short”, days were filled with 6 more dives of sea turtles, nurse sharks, lobster and some awesome swim-thrus to places like Cypress Tunnel, Cypress Gardens and Victoria Gardens. I guess my ultimate experience was getting to actually hold a nurse shark. Stay tuned, more on nurse sharks later!

Ambergris Caye is very unique. Most of the streets are covered with sand and the majority of people drive modified golf carts. Many of the local restaurants have dirt floors including Elvi’s Kitchen where we spent our final evening enjoying the local cuisine. The following day, while waiting for the plane off the island, we agreed that next year we want to continue the tradition. Stop by the shop and place your reservation for the second annual “guys only” trip.

- John Williams
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Creature Feature — Nurse Sharks

Ginglymostoma cirratum (Nurse Shark)!

The Nurse shark is one of the most popular sharks in the world and can be found in the Atlantic and eastern Pacific, in coastal tropical and sub-tropical waters. They are very common in south Florida and the Keys.

Mating generally occurs in the summer months with the female sharks giving birth late in the year to broods typically of 30-40 sharks. At birth the Nurse shark is 11-12 inches in length and grows at rates of about 5 inches and 5 lbs per year. The average length and weight of the larger female Nurse shark is 7.5 to 9 feet and up to 270 lbs.



Don't try this at home—
 trained professionals only

Nurse sharks can be identified by two spineless, rounded dorsal fins with the first fin much larger than the second. They are mainly a nocturnal creature that rest during the day on sandy bottoms or in caves in shallow waters. They lie very close together, sometimes creating a pile of up to 40. Ginglymostoma cirratum swim effortlessly along the bottom mainly feeding at night on stingrays, mollusks, crustaceans and occasionally algae and corals.

Although mainly a non-aggressive animal, with no overlap between their teeth, they will normally swim away when approached. Nurse sharks have relatively small mouths and do not enjoy the flavors of their victims since they merely crush them. On occasion, if disturbed, the Nurse shark may bite with a powerful vice-like grip capable of inflicting serious injury.

- John Williams
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