



# International Scuba

GETTING YOU THERE... STARTS HERE!

Volume 6, Issue 1

January 2006

## What's going on!

Howdy Divers,

Happy New Year to everyone. We hope you had as good a holiday season as we did. Our families were with us which is always fun. (for real).

We are ready to have fun in 2006. We ended 2005 with a blast. THANK YOU to all who participated in the Cozumel Relief. We raised over \$26,000 just that night alone. Divers taking care of divers - doesn't get any better than that.

We have a group heading to

Cozumel in February and still have plenty of seats left. The diving was spectacular over the holidays so don't let rumors and news scare you away. Call Travel for You today and book!!

Watch the website and emails and store for lots of new innovative changes for us this year. Our divers have given us so much over the past years, it is time to give back to them and the community.

Please note that we moved TEXAS in COZUMEL to June rather than October. We can say

fool me once...not a second time. We are a little hurricane-shy.

We hope to see all of you throughout the year on trips and training weekends. We have lots of cool courses on tap for you.

Remember, start looking towards the Black Belt of Diving—Master Scuba Diver if you haven't already achieved this credential.

~ Patti

## Our World of Divers Continue to Grow

### Junior Open Water & Open Water (White Belt)

Sheri Foley  
Jason Daza  
Mike Lindsey  
Jim Coody

### National Geographic

Randal Wilson

### Advanced Open Water

Michael Sorlie

### Dry Suit

Roger Alexander  
Jeff Rudolph  
Teresa Howard

### DPV

Randal Wilson

### Fish ID

Randal Wilson

### Emergency First

#### Response

Bill Wood

#### EFR Instructor

Bill Wood

#### Assistant Instructor

John Wadhams

#### IDC Staff Instructor

George Vincent

#### Videography Instructor

Jeff Davis

## Class Schedules & Trips— at a glance:

### WEEKEND:

JAN 28-29 NEW BRAUNFELS

FEB 25-26 NEW BRAUNFELS

MAR 11-12

MAR 25-26

### WHERE TO:

FEB—BELIZE

FEB COZUMEL

MAR BONAIRE, GALAPAGOS

MAR 18-19 FLOWER GARDENS

APR 14-17 COZUMEL

APR 22-29 BVI WITH DIVE BVI

MAY 13-14 FLOWER GARDENS

MAY 27-JUN 2 GRAND CAYMAN

JUN 16-23—TEXANS IN COZUMEL

LOTS MORE

OCT—WAKATOBI

FEB 2007—PAUUA OCEAN HUNTER

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# International Scuba

## Happy New Year Everyone!

I trust that everyone had a good time over the holidays. I know we did. We enjoyed being with family and friends. The holidays mean different things to different people. One of the things most of us have in common is that with the New Year, we think about what we want to do or change, hence the infamous New Year's resolution. Most of us use scuba diving as a form of relaxation. It certainly is a great activity for that. As part of all the things we want to accomplish over the next year, don't forget to include relaxation as part of it. One of the ways to accomplish that is to make it a part of your goals for the year. For scuba diving this can mean a number of things, all of which we would be happy to help with. In this month's article, I would like to list some of the things that you may want to do with diving over the next year or so.

Most of us use scuba diving as a form of relaxation. It certainly is a great activity for that.

- Take a trip. What a great way to get away from the grind of everyday living for a short time. It does wonders to recharge the batteries. We have a huge number of trips to choose from this year. With Spirit Airlines flying direct to San Juan, it opens up much more of the Caribbean at a reasonable price. None of the group trips fit? We can help you with your individual trips as well. Do you want something a bit more exotic, we have trips to Fiji in 2006 and Palau in early 2007.
- Learn something new.
  - If you are new to diving, try the Advanced Open Water course. It's a menu of different areas of

diving. You will do 5 dives, one deep dive, one navigation dive, and three others of your choice from items such as search and recovery, night, DPV, wreck, and many others.

- If you already have your Advanced Open water, how about trying Rescue. This is the first time that you start to look outside what you are doing and learn how to take care of someone else if needed. The most common response we hear after this course is 'Now I feel like a real diver'. It's a great course.
- How about trying for Master Scuba Diver. Its 5 specialties, Rescue diver, and 50 dives. We have a great special for this that reduces the price for the 5 specialties. Do the specialties at your own pace, pretty soon you will have the highest level of certification for a recreational diver.
- Want to push the limits. This is where technical diving comes in. We teach you how to safely do stage decompression stop diving both for longer dives and deeper dives. Now you can take that trip to Palau or Truk Lagoon and really see some spectacular wrecks. How about the deeper reefs in the Caribbean? You can see things that very few people have had the chance to see.

- How about working with other divers. That is where the dive master or instructor programs come in. Learn why we do certain things, how to teach divers, lead divers on tour, etc. Patti loves this subject. Come in and talk to her.

- Are you tired of renting equipment? We can create a package for you that you will be happy with. With our layaway program, it makes it much easier to come up with the funds. We also encourage you to get in the pool with different BCD's and regulators so you can see which one you really want and how it feels in the water. After all you won't be doing much diving on the showroom floor.

You may have other goals in mind as well. Maybe you want to do more local diving, find a dive buddy, whatever. Come on in and talk to us. I'll bet we can help you out with suggestions or a path that suits you so you can be where you want with your diving.

Happy New Year everyone and happy diving,

Brian

## Milestones—number of dives recognition

10 Dives

25 Dives

50 Dives

75 Dives

Denise McNally

100 Dives

150 Dives

200 Dives

250 Dives

300 Dives

350 Dives

400 Dives

500 Dives

600 Dives

700 Dives

800 Dives

## Cozumel Update—First Hand

It's winter in Cozumel.... The fish are bustling around, and a light dusting of snow tops the reefs. Well, it's a dusting of sand... not snow. But the reefs are bouncing back quickly from the 2005 hurricane season.

Over the holidays, I had a great opportunity to get a first-hand view of Cozumel, the damage caused by Hurricane Wilma, and the rebuilding taking place. The landscape has definitely changed. As I drove around the island, it was very apparent Wilma made a visit. Several familiar landmarks and beach-side restaurants are no longer there. When we arrived, the beach front of Hotel Cozumel was nothing more than hard rock, and the pier. But by the end of our stay, the beach side was covered in sand and lined with lounge chairs and the concrete for the gazebo pier was about to be re-poured! And this is consistent with the progress being made all over the island.

But as a diver, I was more concerned about the conditions of the reefs and the marine life. Let me start by saying I was pleasantly surprised! The reefs are recovering greatly! In fact, Paradise Reef was probably our favorite shallow dive, as it was full of color and fish life, with a light dusting of sand over parts of the reef. And as for the deeper reefs, the same could be said. My favorite – Palancar Bricks/Columbia Pinnacles – was just as awesome as always. In fact, several of the swim throughs have opened up, exposing 3-4 feet of coral that had been buried for hundreds of years!!!

And for the marine life.... Out of



24 dives over nine days, we saw Spotted Eagle Rays on nearly 20 dives. And on many of the dives, we saw four or more! The fishies are abundant, as well, including nudibranch and a tiny pipefish no more than an inch and a half in length! (Amazing how these tiny critters survived!) There were several turtles, nurse sharks on a couple dives, and even a dolphin making a distant pass off of Paradise Reef during one of our afternoon dives! The only little guys I missed were the seahorses.

The most common question on our minds—how much damage did the reefs incur? It's easy to paint a perfect picture and say you won't even notice. To be honest, if you're a first-time visitor, you may not really notice the effects of Wilma on the reefs outside of some broken finger coral laying around and a little scattered debris from land sitting off the sides of shallow reefs. As for the frequent visitor, you'll see a few changes to familiar reefs, mainly fewer fan coral and enlarged or new swim-throughs.

The C-53 wreck has changed a bit, too. It now sits about 50 meters closer to land, with a maximum depth around 65 feet. The bow has some metal stripped off, and there's a large crack running vertically through the center of the ship.

It certainly looks more like a true wreck now. And speaking of wrecks—Wilma uncovered a huge anchor and some piles of bricks from a brick boat that sank many years ago!

We took some great video and pictures of the reefs, and I'll have an edited DVD at the shop in a week. Stop by and take a look!

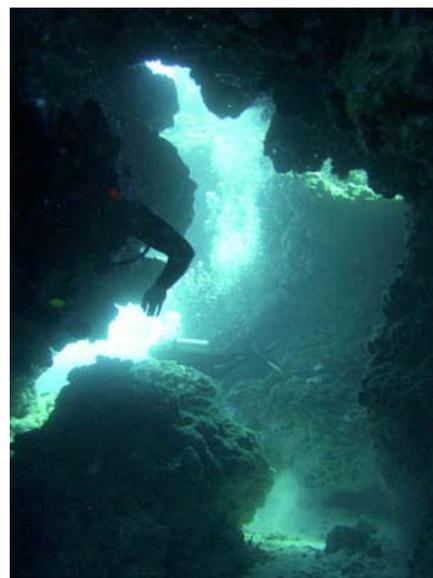
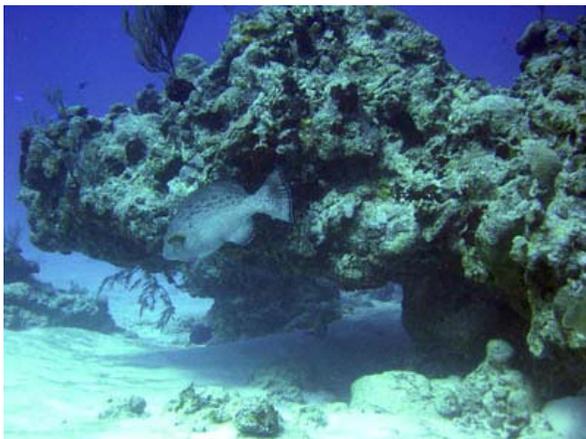
And if you're thinking of a Cozumel get-a-way, now is a perfect time to go down. Many of the hotels are open, with more re-opening in the next month. Sure, there are visible signs of Wilma's visit—both on land and under water, but there's plenty to see and do. The favorite downtown dining spots and shops are all open. And the road around the island has been rebuilt, for an afternoon or evening drive to the other side.

And don't forget our Carnival Trip (Mardi Gras) to Cozumel – February 24-27, or *Texas in Cozumel* week, June 16-23. The reefs are good, and the fishies and critters are all around!



**"IT'S WINTER  
IN COZUMEL...  
A LIGHT  
DUSTING OF  
SNOW TOPS  
THE REEFS."**

~Jeff



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 we dive.

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Getting You There... Starts Here!

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## CD Corner — Having Fun

2006 has hit with a bang—of course not fireworks during our burn ban but loud and clear nonetheless. Folks are calling and coming in wanting training and travel of all sorts.

We usually use the winter months to remodel and get some of the “to do” list items off our plates. Jeff and I are having much more fun chatting with new divers and watching eyes light up when signing up for courses.

I am on my way to New Braunfels this weekend for an Instructor Exam and to do some Open Water Diver training. In case you don't know much about the Comal river, I can sum it up easily—warm year round. While we had a blast on Polar Bear Dive Day (New Years), the water was 52 degrees and the air temp was in the 70's. Down south we get 72-74 degree water year round. We get to drift dive and play on the river. We hope to get a group to head to Aquarena Springs for the Scientific Diver course later this year. Stay tuned!

Our recreational training group has cho-

sen the Comal for the winter diving for warmth and fun. Feel free to join us down there and get some diving in when no one expects us to.

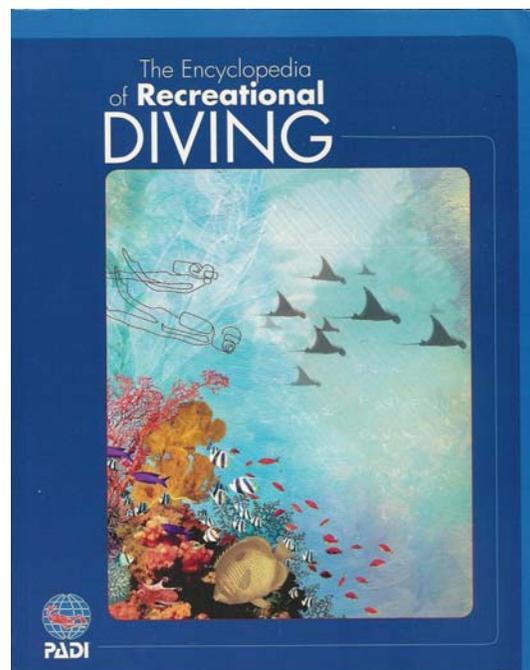
We have some awesome Flower Gardens trips planned. March is schooling Hammerheads, May/June is whale sharks, and August is coral spawning. Hope to see some of you on these trips.

Finally, I would like to introduce the new Encyclopedia of Recreational Diving. A must for all divers most specifically Rescue and above. If you are interested in equipment, the chapter on this is fantastic. The environment chapter covers lots of underwater naturalist and Project AWARE material. For those of us who struggle with physics and physiology they have helped us out with brightly colored illustrations and language we can actually understand.

If you haven't gotten yours today—come while we still have them in stock. They tend to go quickly.

Come dive with us soon.

~ Patti



## Creature Feature — Trumpet Fish



The next time your out diving, take some time to look for these fishies. They are great at hiding in plain sight!

The Trumpet Fish inhabit coral reefs in the Caribbean, Florida, Bahamas, and the Gulf of Mexico. Yet if you're not paying close attention, you could easily miss them. They often drift in a vertical position, head down, paralleling or resting on stalks of sea rods or coral.

Proficient at color change, the trumpet fish adapt to the surroundings. Their most common phase is brown to reddish brown, but they often take on a blue-gray, bright yellow, or any shade between to blend in to the

surroundings.

The trumpet fish also have pale lines, small black spots scattered over their body, and a black streak on the upper jaw. They range in size from 12 to 30 inches.

~ Jeff

