



# International Scuba

## Spring into the Dive Season

Remember to visit our website!

[www.internationalscuba.com](http://www.internationalscuba.com)

### Upcoming Lake Weekends:

Apr 9-10	Jun 4-5
Apr 23-24	Jun 18-19
May 7-8	Jul 1-2
May 21-22	Jul 15-16

### Upcoming Trips:

May 21-28 Belize  
May 21-22 Flower Gardens  
Jun 3-6 Cozumel  
Jun 4-11 Bonaire  
Jun 17-20 Cozumel  
Jun 18-25 Roatan

### Upcoming Classes:

Adv. OW 4/9, 4/23, 5/7, 5/14  
EFR 4/5, 5/3, 6/7, 7/5  
Rescue 4/21, 5/26  
Nitrox 4/19, 5/17, 6/21, 7/18  
DAN O2 4/12, 5/10, 6/13

Howdy everyone:

I wanted to take a second to thank all of you for bailing Suzanne and me out of the MDA jail. We were able to raise over \$2000 and couldn't have done it without you.

One of our commitments in 2005 and moving forward is to give back to the community and supporting local charities and fund raisers is just one of the ways.

I would like to focus on our Open House set for April 30th from 10 am – 4 pm. Here are some highlights:

- We will have a company here that does alterations and customization on wetsuits, so as you pull out your suit in preparation for the first trip of the season, find out if it shrunk or grew. I know Chris will be able to help you out.
- Several other manufacturers / vendors will also be present (Mares—try the new Volo Power or the new Abyss)
- Travel deals and discounts

- Equipment sales and demos,
- Specialty training,
- As usual the great food to keep you going throughout your shopping.

Here is a request: I have a question for you— what would you like to see?

We are always looking for ways to stay ahead of the game and take care of our customers and friends so watch for more changes to come.

See and dive with you soon,

- Patti Stewart

[Patti@Internationalscuba.com](mailto: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 certifications: **If you have hit a milestone please send me an email.**

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### Open Water/Junior Open Water

Kim Brister  
Michelle Ficklin  
Brian Fry

### Nat Geo Open Water

George Bahls

### Enriched Air

Paul Hayes

### Advanced Open Water

Paul Hayes

### EFR

Kathy McHale  
Jennifer Welch  
Jose Sobrinho  
Jerry Wellman  
Jonathan Watson

### DAN / PADI O2 Provider

Simon Warner  
Tony Cowles

### Photographer

Henry Sutton

### Divemaster

Dave Allen

### HMLI

Matthew Rodger

### DPV

Ryan Sterling  
Brian Cleveland  
Rich Thomas

### Milestones

25 Dives

30 Dives

40 Dives

50 Dives

60 Dives

80 Dives

100 Dives

500 Dives

## Are We Done Learning Yet?

I certainly hope not. I know that every time I dive I learn something new. It might be small, even seemingly unimportant, or it might be something potentially critical. The day I feel like I have learned it all is probably the day I stop diving. I still like taking classes and absorbing new information and getting a new perspective on things. Whenever I take a class I get rejuvenated and get ready to dive more.

That's actually one of the great things about this sport. There are so many ways to take it. If you are into photography, there are a vast amount of things to learn, see and do. How about a history buff? Wreck diving, and some of the technical diving may be great for you. Do you like adventure? Technical diving, Cave Diving, Dry Suit diving, and a slew of others may be what you are looking for. Do you like helping people? Emergency First Response, Rescue, Dan O2, Divemaster, or Instructor may be a good path for you.

When was the last time you were in the water? If it's been a while, you can take a scuba review. I have an even better idea, how about learning something new as well. Take a specialty course, the advanced open water, or the rescue course. You will get reac-

quainted with the water and at the same time get re-energized. What could be better? We have most classes starting very frequently. I'd like to plug some of the technical diving as well. There will be an Advanced Nitrox/Decompression procedures class starting in late May/early June. Keep an eye on the website for more details. For those of you who have some curiosity, but are not sure about the technical diving, this is a great class. It will help your general diving, get you introduced to new gear setups, talk more about safety issues and why we do some of the things we do. We call this class the open water of technical diving. For some people it will whet the appetite, for other it will satisfy their curiosity even if they go no further. In either case the class is well worth it.

So next time you say to yourself, there is no more to learn, take another look. I'll bet if you think about it there are a lot of areas you wished you knew more about.

Till next time, Happy Diving.

- Brian Divine

[Brian@internationalscuba.com](mailto:Brian@internationalscuba.com)

## More Adventure Needed?—Try a Cenote!

Are you actually getting tired of Cozumel even though there is never a bad dive? Ready for some adventure just as close to home but still in the same price range? Well, have we got fun for you.

Take a flight to Cancun, jump in a transfer bus or rental car and head south. You can stay in Playa Del Carmen or head further south and stay in Akumal.

I am sure some of you are saying - ooh aren't those caves dark and don't you need special training.? The Answer is no! All you need is an adventurous bone in your body and a good guide. We had one of the guides who happened to be a colleague of mine. Oh, did I mention it would be great to have buoyancy control as well as a couple of lights. We'll talk more about that later.

First off, some of you may not know what a cenote is—so here goes.

The Yucatan Peninsula is a limestone platform which was created millions of years ago. Throughout various glacial periods, the ocean level has varied, and this platform found itself submerged by water. When the level of the ocean drops again, the caves begin forming. The rain falling on these formations dissolves through the rock and the carbonic acid from the soil and leaves in putrefaction. This carbonic acid mix carved the fragile rock, forming underground passages in which water would find its way back to the ocean. In this process stalactites and stalagmites were also formed.



Foto: Yibran Aragon

During the last glacial period, the oceans were 100 feet below their actual level. Around 18,000 years ago, the ice started melting and the ocean rose to the level we know now, flooding the passages and generating a wide underground river system like nowhere else on earth. For the mysterious Mayan civilization, who lived here between 300 and 900 AD, the Cenotes (Dzonot = Sacred Well), not only were a fresh water source, but also had an important role in its mythology:

They were windows to the "After World" and a key to their afterlife. Ceremonies and rituals were made to the "Underworld Gods". In some caverns, you can still find artifacts.

If you like above ground caves and caverns then you will enjoy the watery version. Believe it or not the air temperature in dry caves is similar to that of watery ones—75-77 degrees. I can't even begin to describing the visibility that was present. Imagine being suspended in full gear and cruise through Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico. That is how clear the water is. The usual concerns of divers are getting stuck or lost. There's absolutely no need to worry about this. The caverns are huge, you'll never be guided through a passage where two divers can't go through side by side, so you don't have to be afraid of getting stuck. You'll always have natural daylight, i.e. the exit, in sight and also follow a continuous line to the surface, so you don't have to be afraid of getting lost. The best part of being down there is if caverns aren't your thing there is also great low-current ocean diving.



Foto: Hidden Worlds

We did get to see some critters but they aren't the main attraction the formations and fossils are. Critters we saw: Cenote Molly, Salifin Molly, Tetra, catfish, and spotted gobys. I am sure there were more but I was glued to the formations.



Foto: Yibran Aragon

We are going to put a group trip together in the first part of November so stay tuned. Come to the Open House on April 30th to learn more!

See ya underground!

- Patti Stewart

[Patti@internationalscuba.com](mailto:Patti@internationalscuba.com)

## Featured Products—All Terrain Sun Block and Insect Repellants

What a concept!! Whether you are at the park, lake or in the islands does every mosquito know exactly where you are? If so, come see us! We are now carrying a new, all natural, product line from a company called All Terrain. Their tag line is “Natural Remedies for Outdoor Enthusiasts” and, being the Outdoor Enthusiasts we are, we thought we’d give them a try.

All Terrain Products include Terra Sport, Aqua Sport and Kid Sport (sweat and water proof) sunscreens with SPF’s of 15 & 30 and “Herbal Armor” SPF 15 sunscreen with insect repellent for children and adults. They also have “Remedy Rubs” for sore muscles, hands and feet, Aloe Gel for burns, bar soaps for skin, feet and major league GRIME.



Patti has had personal experience with the “Herbal Armor” insect repellent when she was in Roatan where the mosquitoes are ferocious! The insect repellants are 100% DEET free, using 6 essential oils recognized by the EPA as insect repellants. They have been clinically tested and proven effective at 100% for 2 hours and 95.8% effective for 3 hours. They are Sweat and water resistant, non-greasy and won’t damage for fade fabric or equipment. They have adult and kids products in convenient 2 and 4 oz pump spray bottles, a 4 oz lotion or a 4 oz lotion with SPF 15.



The Remedy Rubs naturally soothe and protect and have been proven effective under extreme conditions for sore muscles, joint stiffness and pain, aching feet and ankles, minor burns, dry/cracked skin and nourishing and soothing well-weathered skin. They use traditional healing ingredients for their therapeutic benefits.



The Grime and Skin Relief Bars are specially formulated to work hard for you. Even though they are all natural and biodegradable, these soaps are as tough as you are. Hand milled for long lasting effectiveness the can be taken anywhere and used anytime. Each bar comes with a re-sealable travel bag specifically for your travel needs.

- Grime Bar – great for heavy dirt, grime, grease, and grit. Has extra cleaning power with pumice to exfoliate and deeply cleanse and Hemp Seed oil helps skin retain moisture.
- Skin Relief Bar “Ditch The Itch”. The ultimate soap for easing irritated, itchy skin. It helps with the healing process from Poison Ivy, Oak, Sumac, dry, flaky skin, rashes and general skin discomforts.

So, to keep from getting sunburned and eaten up by those pesky mosquitoes, stop by the shop and pick up some of these cool “All Terrain” skin care products – “you’ll be glad you did”!!

- Suzanne

[Suzanne@internationalscuba.com](mailto:Suzanne@internationalscuba.com)

## Featured Products—Aqua Maraca (Let’s Make some Noise)

You are on an awesome dive and suddenly see a Spotted Eagle Ray off in the distance and it is swimming right at you... Your dive buddy, who has the camera, is totally focused on getting a perfect picture of some tiny little creature hidden in the coral head... How do you get their attention!!! Do you bang on your tank? Will that get his/her attention? Probably not – everyone “bangs” on their tank and it’s usually something you’ve already seen.

To help with this “problem” we just brought in a new noise making product called “Aqua Maracas” that has a distinctive Maraca sound which is truly different from the aluminum shaker sticks and the banging on a tank.

The Aqua Maraca is small hard plastic tube, with rattle balls inside that give it that distinctive maraca sound. It is about 4 inches in length and comes with a lanyard so you can strap it around your wrist or easily store it in your BCD pocket where it will be easily accessible when you need it. As we all know, color coordination is very important and the Aqua Maraca comes in a variety of colors – Neon Yellow, Black, Red, Purple, Blue, and a Red/White version.

If you’ve had that problem of needing to get your buddy’s attention but didn’t have the capability, come see us and we’ll get you set up with the new Aqua Maraca! Your buddy will appreciate it!!





2540 Marsh Lane, Suite 128  
Carrollton, TX 75006  
Phone: 972-416-8400  
Email: [info@internationalscuba.com](mailto:info@internationalscuba.com)

*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*

## CD Corner — Do One Thing

*Howdy Divers,*

*I thought I would write about something that is very important to all of us but isn't necessarily wrapped around one particular course. Protecting our environment both on the land and in the water should be near and dear to all of our hearts. You can take Project Aware or Reef Conservation if you want to learn more. Enough promoting con-ed.*

*A while back I ran across an article that focuses on "Do One Thing" for the marine environment so we can save the world one diver at a time. We hear constantly what bad things the population is doing to the world's waterways. Between oil tankers leaking, over fishing, invasive species, and climate changes, our water doesn't stand a prayer.*

*I hope to point out several ways you can have a positive impact on the marine environment. I would love for you to choose at least one of these suggestions and "DO IT".*

- Don't Feed the animals
- Take only photographs and leave only bubbles
- Shop for sustainable seafood
- Join a cleanup
- If you hunt or collect for food or try please obey the laws and consider your impact
- Give reefs a checkup
- Support marine protected areas
- Reduce, reuse, recycle
- Break the oil addiction
- Boat responsibility

- Give a pep talk to a local school or organization
- Don't crowd dive sites
- Keep your hands off
- Replant native plants and mangroves
- Educate your fellow divers
- Watch your wastewater
- Choose nontoxic household products
- Don't use Styrofoam
- Work to bring mooring buoys to any dive sites you patronize
- Watch that anchor
- Do your homework
- Buy a specialty license plate supporting oceans
- Learn a new species each time you dive
- Leave marine life where it belongs, avoid buying souvenirs made of coral, turtles, and other marine life

*Okay, I have listed lots of things you can do to help our environment. Surely you can find one thing that will be easy to do on your next dive trip be it in a local lake/quarry or some exotic destination. The next time you are under water getting that 45 minutes of bottom time, you'll have the satisfaction of knowing you've given something back.*

*Hope to see you soon,*

*- Patti Stewart  
[Patti@internationalscuba.com](mailto:Patti@internationalscuba.com)*

## Creature Feature — Cave Blind Fish

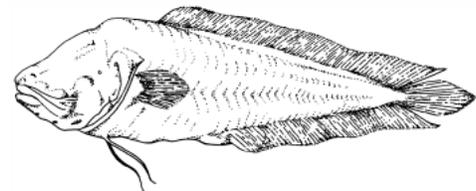
**Common Names:** Sak kay which is Mayan for White fish. They are on the endangered species list, so don't kick them while cruising along your cenote tour.

**Identification:** Total absence of eyes. Appearing white with pink posterior margins. Compressed and naked head with large, well developed sensory cavities and papillae. Longitudinal splits at the mouth edges, nose opening adjacent to superior lip. Scaled body. Long dorsal and anal fins not continuous with caudal. Males have claspers. Typically only 2" long.

**Abundance:** As top predator in the anchiline community it is likely that the population is small. In freshwater, habitats are also small with only a few specimens observed in each cenote. Not widely distributed, recorded in only 16% of the caves.

**Habitat and Ecology:** Lives in freshwater aquifers in temperature ranges of 22-27 degree Celsius (75 degrees Fahrenheit). Various crustaceans are the main food supply. They are very independent starting at birth. There are 2-11 young depending on the female's size.

**Threats:** The main threat is from water pollution, principally faecal coliforms and excess nitrates.



Funny to see even though we get to see albino catfish in Terrell.