



International Scuba

Adventure anyone?

Howdy everyone:

We have lots to tell you about in this issue. First of all, we want to welcome Paul Gilmore, Rich Thomas, and Randy Gustafson to the Divemaster team. We as instructors are glad to have some assistants at the lake. If you don't know these guys, please stop by and introduce yourself or head to a lake weekend with us and watch them in action.

Next on the list of excitement is that little yellow rectangle beside my article. Most everyone knows that logo even without the words to support it. We've all been reading National Geographic magazines for years. At this time there are 5 different magazines touching readers of all ages. PADI has partnered with NG to bring us a National Geographic Open Water Diver Program. Their love for adventure and nature and our expertise in the world of diving make it a match made in heaven. We are pleased to announce that we are the first National Geographic Dive Center in Texas and look forward to expanding

our divers' horizons and hopefully sending someone on an expedition dive with the likes of Bob Ballard or Sylvia Earle. The Open Water program will include a full color spiral bound booklet and dvd in a handsome leatherette binder. The students will do 2 extra dives focusing on buoyancy and navigation. We are excited to offer this course in the next set of classes. Stay tuned to watch the adventure unfold.

Have a great weekend and hope to see you soon.

- Patti Stewart

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Remember to visit our website!

www.internationalscuba.com

Upcoming Lake Weekends:

Jul 17-18
Jul 31-1
Aug 14-15
Aug 28-29
Sept 11-12
Sept 25-26
Oct 9-10

Upcoming Trips:

July 17-24 Cayman Brac
August 6-9 Cozumel
August 13-16 Cozumel
September 4-11 Costa Rica
October 2-9 Grenada
November 20-27 Bonaire
January Cozumel Advanced!

And much much more!

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.**

Open Water/Junior Advanced

Open Water

Tim Carlock
Pam Davis
Troy Palmer
Laura Ellison
Leilani Heffler
Michael Heffler
Bill Lutz
Terrie Moniza
Malcolm McCoy
Justin Lindsey
Cody Green
Nancy Voith
Todd Coffman
Jill Green
Richard Guthrie
Elisabeth Cozzens
Sandi Krauland
Steve Krauland

Advanced

Bobby Connor
Quin Wimbish
Gayla Snell
Linda Purcell
Matt Castro
Rhonda Castro
Helen Le

O2 Provider

Roger Alexander

Enriched Air Diver

Dave Allen
Michael Leggett
Cindy Choate

Peak Performance

Gale Smith
Jeff Hallman
Paul Gilmore

Milestones

25 Dives

30 Dives

40 Dives

50 Dives

Erin Reynolds

60 Dives

85 Dives

Sherry Nolan

100 Dives

TK Laux

Simone Schreiner

500 Dives

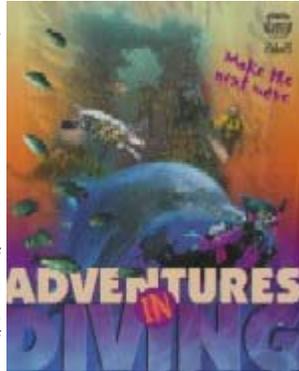
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Why Should I take Advanced Open Water?

That's a very good question. Hopefully I'll be able to answer it here. I'm going to break the answer down to a couple categories of divers, reasonably new open water divers, and experienced open water divers who have either not gotten any further education, or may have picked up a specialty or two.

First let's talk about what Advanced Open Water (AOW) is. It is a course that is 5 different types of dives. One of the dives must be navigation, one is deep (60-100 feet), and the other three are up to you. The choices include altitude, boat, drift, deep, dry suit, diver propulsion vehicle (DPV, or the scooter), multilevel, night, peak performance buoyancy, search and recovery, underwater naturalist, underwater Videographer, underwater photographer, fish id, wreck, and enriched air (nitrox). That's quite a list. Many can be done locally; most can be done on our standard trips. The good thing is you and your instructor work out which ones you are interested in and go from there. The academic work is mostly self study with a knowledge review that can be done before or after the dive. Most of the work will be at the dive site itself depending on the dives you would like to do.



Now that we know a bit about the course, let's talk about why you should take it. Let's start out with new open water divers. If you are very recently certified a common misunderstanding is that you need to get experience before you take the advanced open water course. This is not true. It is designed to work for



both the experienced and new diver. Part of the goal of the course is to give you more experience in the water under the supervision of a dive professional. You also get a little taste of various areas of diving.



You may find you really like night diving and want to move on to the specialty for it. The other good reason, its fun. Isn't that why we got into this in the first place?

Ok, now for all you who have been diving for quite a while. More of the dive sites are requiring that you either show massive proof of diving or have an AOW card. Some of the areas are the Speigal Grove, North Carolina wreck diving, some of the deeper reefs (Punta Sur in Cozumel for example) have many of the operators asking for an advanced certification as well as proof of logged dives. In addition to that I will add some of the things from above, you may have never used a lift bag, so search and recovery could be fun, maybe your buoyancy isn't quite where you want it (ever miss those safety stops, or hit the bottom on the way down?), what about the question 'what kind of fish was that?', oh yes, did I mention it was fun.

I hope I was able to answer some questions about the Advanced Open Water course. We offer it at all our open water weekends and every time we go on trips. If you don't have time to devote to both days on a weekend, it can be done over time with a dive here and there. Come talk to us about your schedule and we can make it fit.

Happy diving and blow lots of bubbles,

- Brian Divine
Brian@internationalscuba.com



Dive Insurance—to have or not to have? Part 2

Moral of the story. Be insured as divers for all underwater accidents. For the land side or even on-boat side, you should have trip insurance that includes trip interruption.

What happened to Phil and Wendy was unfortunate and all of us in the industry assumed lots about our dive insurance. PADI and DAN have very similar policies so go with the one that suits your individual needs best.

We did research into the PADI insurance with hypothetical accidents and the outcome was exactly as DAN.

Have a great time diving, and be careful out there!

"Fender" Phil and Wendy Fox

Cruisin'

Cruising..... A Great way to see 2 or 3 FANTASTIC dive destinations very economically!!!! NO KIDDING Cruising is a great way to travel for divers and non-divers alike. Everything you need or want is right there on your floating hotel. They are fun, easy, the food is great. Let's do a little comparing. This is what we did before we choose to dive/cruise. Personally I was not sure about the floating hotel thing...I loved it after the second day.

Advantages:

1. No Flying save on air fare
2. The boat moves you don't
3. See 3 to 4 different dive destinations
4. Great food any time you want it usually 4 to 10 different places to eat
5. Nightly entertainment
6. Casinos on board
7. Full- Spa and salon services
8. Transportation at each dock easy to get to dive shops
9. Great service
10. Great value
11. Plenty to do on the ship day or night.

Disadvantages:

1. Drive 4-5 hours to get on ship
2. Does not include drinks
3. Rooms are small
4. Have to handle gear everyday
5. Does not include shore excursions such as diving.

You can make your own list and think of all the reasons it will or will not work for you. Here are a couple of suggestions on cruises that would be good dive destinations.

Norwegian out of Houston ports of call are Cozumel, Roatan, Belize and Cancun. Average price for an outside cabin with taxes and port charges is \$950pp and inside cabin is about \$750 the price depends

on the time of year you travel and the availability of the ship.

Royal Caribbean out of Galveston...ports of call are Grand Cayman, Key West Florida and Cozumel. Average price for an outside cabin with taxes and port charges is \$1200pp
An inside cabin is \$990. The balcony is about \$1500pp

Princess out of Galveston...Ports of call are Costa Maya, Grand Cayman, Belize and Cozumel. The average price for an outside cabin with taxes and port charges is \$1200pp
An inside cabin is about \$990 and the balcony is about \$1500pp

Carnival out of Galveston on the Elation...Ports of call are Yucatan, Cozumel, Belize The average price for an outside cabin is about \$800 and inside cabin is about \$675 and the balcony is \$1100.

Come give cruising a try. We have several groups already put together and would love to have you join us or this is a great way to travel individually too. Cruising is very relaxing and laid back. There is no reason to be in a hurry unless you spend too long on shore. Don't miss the boat!!! Come join the fun!!!

- Tami Gardner
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Your fearless
travel coordinator

Featured Product – Lights

Light up your night dive!

Now that the water has warmed up and the travel season is well underway, night diving has become a frequent request. It is with that in mind that this month's DIVE GEAR SPOTLIGHT shines on Dive Lights and other night dive lighting needs.

Obviously, first and foremost you need a BRIGHT, WATERPROOF Primary light for night diving, and yes you still need a back up light. Fortunately, these Primary lights no longer have to be the "big honkin", behemoth 5 pound lights" of the past. The new Xenon and Halogen bulbs coupled with long lasting AA & AAA batteries have enabled manufactures to produce small, lightweight, high intensity dive lights for use as your primary source. Not to worry though... the light cannon/pistol grip dive lights are still readily available for those of you who prefer the security of a large dive light.

Another highly recommended night dive accessory is light attached to your tank for group or diver "type" identification. Until recently, chemical clyme sticks have traditionally been the most commonly used product for this purpose. Today, in an effort to protect the environment and our precious underwater world, many divers are now opting to use battery powered "cylume like" lights (Lazer-Stiks™) that are reusable for numerous dives. They come in a variety of colors like red, green, yellow/gold and blue and are available in a "constant on" or "flashing"

Please stop by to see our complete selection of high quality primary and secondary/back-up lights from Ikelite, Pelican and Underwater Kinetics (UK) as well as our colorful line of Lazer-Stiks™ for your upcoming night diving needs.



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

Creature Feature – Feather Star

How many of you have seen this little creature and thought it was some sort of underwater fern? Well, the Feather Star is actually a marine animal that belongs to the Phylum Echinodermata (Ee-KINE-oh-DER-ma-tah) meaning “spiny skin”, in the CLASS Crinoidea (cry-noy-DEE-uh) meaning “a lily”. So, if we remove the scientific jargon, the Feather Star is a spiny skinned lily!

Feather Stars are the most ancient of the echinoderms as they have changed little and are sometimes known as “living fossils”.



All critters belonging to this phylum have a hard internal skeleton and five body sections of equal size arranged around a central axis.

The Feather Star has a small pentagon shaped body with five arms that fork one or more times providing them with ten or more long arms in multiples of five. Short appendages on both sides of each arm give them their “feathery” appearance. Most have hundreds of podia (small feet) that work in unison to capture food or move around. Their arms are very “Velcro” like, adhering to anything they come in contact with, but tend to break easily. Fortunately for the Feather Star, broken arms regenerate themselves so they are no worse for wear.

Feather Stars are typically found anchored in small, narrow crevices in the coral with only their feathery arms being visible to divers. However, some will position themselves high atop other reef structures and coral heads. So, the next time you are diving, look for these little guys tucked away amongst the cracks and crevices of the beautiful coral reefs you are exploring, they are worth looking for.

- Suzanne
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