



GETTING YOU THERE... STARTS HERE!

Great State—Great Diving!

Hey Divers,

All of us know that we live in a great state. Some of us believe that we live in THE Great State! Unfortunately, a lot of divers don't know about the great diving in Texas. There is a lot of really great diving across our state. From the Piney Woods of East Texas to Balmorhea State Park, from Possum Kingdom to the Flower Gardens there is something for everyone. If you just dive your same tried and true places, you certainly have fun, but you're missing the experience and thrill of discovery. That's what

"Dive Around Texas" is about—discovering new and different diving.

Basically this is a program to get divers to branch out from their old haunts and discover (or rediscover) the other places to dive in our Great State. Not only do you get to dive new spots and meet new divers, you also get a chance to win some truly great prizes at the awards recognition day. Get with your dive buddies and come in to either location to get more information and sign up.

Looking for something for the kids to do this spring break? We still have a few spots in our Scuba Camp for

kids ages 10 and up. It is a week of fun and education for the kids, and you get a dive buddy for life out of it! What more could you ask for?

For the adventurous among you, think about going to Playa Del Carmen in April for Cavern and Cenote diving. You can get your Cavern Specialty certification on this trip. The best part about this trip is our very own Cave Diver, Rich will be leading it.

Come by and visit either shop and let's talk diving!

Anthony

Specialty of the Month— Digital Photo

Hi everyone,

I'm sure everyone has heard the phrase one picture is worth a thousand pictures. When it comes to underwater photography the saying has never been truer. No matter how eloquent the author I have yet to find words that match the wonder and beauty that resides below the surface of just about any body of water. When friends and acquaintances learn of my passion for scuba diving the first thing they say after asking if I have seen a shark is, "What's so interesting down there anyhow?". Like any diver I have lots of stories to share but that only prompts them to shake their heads and mumble he's crazy. If only I had a few pictures to show my poor non- diver friends.

Previously to take a good underwater photo you need several things to get good results.

1. Big investment in equipment
2. Extensive knowledge and experience with photography
3. More than a little luck

Well I have great news for anyone wanting to get into underwater photography. Things have changed Big Time!

With the improvement of the digital point and shoot cameras anyone can afford a set up that will pro-

duce pictures suitable for sharing with friends online or even to blow up, frame and hang proudly on your wall at home. There are several companies creating underwater digital combo packages that are practically dirt cheap. The choices include Ikelite/Nikon Coolpix combos; Sea & Sea has several setups along with Olympus and Intova. You can take advantage of features previously only available on expensive Single Lens reflex cameras. Control over parameters such as White Balance, F-stop, Aperture and ISO can make a big difference in how your photos turn out. The expense of film and developing are a thing of the past as well. With the push of a button you can share pictures all over the world for free.

It's now easier than ever to take a good photo with digital technology. With film photography divers were limited to 36 exposures per roll of film. With digital you can shoot as long as your batteries last or until you fill your memory card. With film you had to develop the film to see if you caught the fish head on or if it turned away at the last second. With digital we have access to instant review. If the shot didn't come out as expected we can now go adjust as needed and retake the shot.

To truly take advantage of all the improvements in underwater photography I recommend the PADI Digital Underwater Specialty. Even though

it's much easier to get a good picture, you will learn how to avoid the most common mistakes made by novice and experienced photographers alike. Your class will teach you about the S.E.A. method to Shoot, Examine and Adjust for the perfect picture. You will get a chance to learn and practice the best way to frame a picture, the ideal distance and angle and common settings. Many divers are amazed what they can do without a strobe. By utilizing white balance you can achieve a colorful picture that is truer to what you saw with your own eyes. Many times the built in flash will only cause "Back Scatter" which occurs when the flash illuminates the particles in the water and looks much like a snow storm. By using the white balance you can turn off the built in flash and the backscatter will disappear.

The PADI Digital Photography course is perfect if you are still shopping for a camera. I've found the thoughtful explanations on various camera types and features very helpful in determining what to look for in a camera. The techniques that are taught in the course are relevant to all cameras & housings.

See page 2 for continuation

Class Schedules & Trips— at a glance:

- WEEKEND:**
 MAR 21-22
 MAR 28-29 BLUE LAGOON
 APR 4-5 BLUE LAGOON
 APR 11-12 BLUE LAGOON
 APR 18-19
 APR 25-26
- WHERE TO:**
 APR PLAYA DEL CARMEN FOR CAVERN COURSE
 APR FLOWER GARDENS
 MAY 23-27 COZUMEL
 MAY 30-31 FLOWER GARDENS
 JUN 11-12 FLOWER GARDENS
 JUN 20-27 2-009—CAYMAN AGGRESSOR
 JUL 6-8 FLOWER GARDENS
 JUL 11-12 FLOWER GARDENS
 AUG 1-2 FLOWER GARDENS
 SEP 10-13 FLOWER GARDENS—CORAL SPAWN
 SEPT 19-26 ST. LUCIA
 OCT LITTLE CAYMAN
- FEB 19-26 2010—PALAU

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Our World of Divers Continues to Grow

Open Water (White Belt)

Eric Risner
Darren Tallman
Lindsay McFadden
Tom Travis
Jae Choi
Kermit Monzingo

Joe Bass
Eric Risner

Drift

Michael Pechloff
Teresa Pechloff
Randall Karkut
Joe Bass
Drift

National Geographic Open Water

Kermit Monzingo

Adventure Diver

Randall Karkut
Eric Risner

Advanced Open Water (Green Belt)

Armida Ruiz

Deep

Joe Bass

EFR

Enriched Air

Eric Risner
Amanda Brown
Annie Corlew
Sam Troutte

Boat

Randall Karkut
Michael Pechloff
Teresa Pechloff

Navigation

Night

Michael Pechloff
Teresa Pechloff
Joe Bass
Eric Risner

Peak Perf. Buoyancy

Kermit Monzingo

Project AWARE

Daniel Cho
Tom Baggett

Coral Reef Conservation

Daniel Cho

Search & Recovery

Wreck

Master Scuba Diver (Black Belt)

Joe Bass

Open Water Scuba Instructor

Sean Leonard
Sam Cormack

Nitrox Instructor

Sean Leonard
Sam Cormack

Digital Photo

Michael Pechloff
Teresa Pechloff
Randall Karkut

Dry Suit

Rick Troutte

Fish ID

Michael Pechloff
Teresa Pechloff
Joe Bass
Eric Risner

Multilevel Diver

Michael Pechloff
Teresa Pechloff

National Geographic

Eric Brown

Naturalist

Michael Pechloff
Teresa Pechloff

Digital Photo cont'd:

One of the biggest advantages of the digital camera over film is the ability to manipulate the photos afterwards with editing software such as Photoshop and other products. Pictures that previously might have been less than optimal can often times be tweaked a bit to create a wonderful picture. Sometime this software can be a bit daunting to use. You will learn and practice some of the basics to editing. These will include how to crop, adjusting the color and removing unwanted artifacts from your photos. One more helpful thing you'll pick up is workflow. Work flow is how you download, name your pictures, and work with them. And finally how to save them in a manner that is organized and logical. When dealing with multiple edits and similar pictures things can easily get out of hand if you don't have a system in place for workflow.

The PADI Digital Underwater Photographer course is perfect for those that want to try their hand at photography and also experienced photographers wanting to step up their game and shoot like the pros. Purchase the course during the Month of April and get the coveted PADI Digital Underwater Photographers Cap for free to all members of the PADI Diving Society.

Milestones—number of dives recognition

Don't forget to email us your milestones—remember you are working hard!

10 Dives

Michael Pechloff

20 Dives

100 Dives
150 Dives

25 Dives

200 Dives

50 Dives

Teresa Pechloff

250 Dives

300 Dives

350 Dives

400 Dives

500 Dives



Meet our Team— Jake and Aimee

Hi everyone!

This month it is a pleasure to turn the spotlight on Jake and Aimee Hunter. Some of our divers may recognize them from years ago when Aimee was working at International Scuba or maybe you dove with them down in the BVI while they were working with Mike Rowe at Sail Caribbean Divers. They have put a unique twist on things by moving from the island life back to the paradise also known as DFW. It's awesome to have two highly experienced instructors that have been there and done that. If you want to hear first hand what it's like to make a living as a PADI instructor on an island I'm sure that they will be only too happy to share stories around the campfire at the lake.

I was very excited to hear that Jake and Aimee were back in town and interested in working with International Scuba again. The first chance we had to sit down and talk we outlined some cool programs relating to children's programs and the shop. We have always been very kid friendly here at Intl. Scuba but Jake and Aimee bring a new level to our kids programs. Both are teachers during the day and are bringing a ton of energy to helping step our programs up a notch. They have worked with Mike Rowe to run the famous kids camps in the BVI and are ready to introduce scuba to the youth of DFW.

Welcome aboard!

Aimee Hunter— IDC Staff Instructor

How did you get started diving? I took my open water diving course as a credit at SFA



Number of years diving? Number of years as professional? How many dives? 17 years diving. 14 years professional. Around 1,000

What brought you to International Scuba? I was interested in working with reputable professionals in the industry. (plus I used to work there when Mike Rowe ran the shop)

Tell us something about yourself that your diving friends would be surprised to learn. When I became a dive instructor I was sure I wanted to work my way up through the PADI system becoming IE examiner and take PADI headquarters by storm. Once I discovered environmental issues I was sure I was going to take Kristen Vallete's job over Project AWARE... needless to say that was one fork in the road I didn't end up taking. :-)

If you could leave tomorrow to live in the islands where would it be? Dominica; for its beauty under as well as above the water!

What is your oddest diving experience? The ominous appearance of Caribbean Reef Sharks while descending into blue water off the Bahamian island of Eleuthra. The reef started at 90 feet and we were guaranteed "sharks" by a local friend. He took us out on a whaler and the four of us rolled off the side of the boat wondering what was in store. The memory of sharks swimming towards us curiously, checking us out, and swimming away skittishly again is a vivid image to this day. It was truly an adrenaline rush. The view from above the reef looking down at sharks slowly investigating what the reef had the offer was beautiful.

What is the one tip you would like to share with a new diver? Relax, taking in every moment to observe even the tiniest of sea creatures and make a point to try and see coral spawning in your dive travels. We may not have this opportunity in years to come. :-)

If you were to come back as a fish in your next life what kind of fish would you be? A spotted eagle ray! I can roll with a school or fly individually forever beholding grace, beauty and the ability to fascinate divers!

Jake Hunter—Open Water Scuba Instructor

How did you get started diving? I took scuba classes for elective P.E. credit at college



Number of years diving? Number of years as professional? How many dives? Eleven years as a diver. Nine years as a professional. About 1000 dives.

What brought you to International Scuba? I was trained by International Scuba staff during my IDC. I want to be a part of the best in the business.

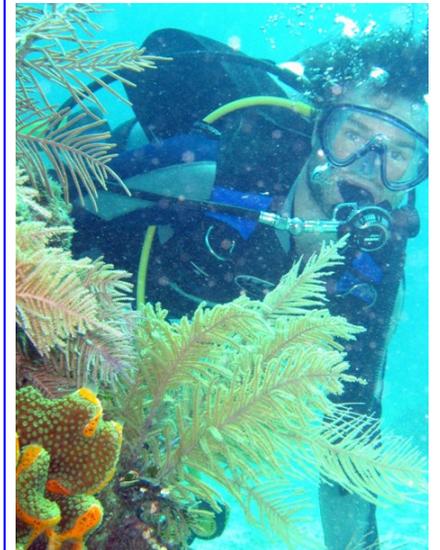
Tell us something about yourself that your diving friends would be surprised to learn. I had never seen, touched, or smelt the ocean until I was 18. After that I couldn't live without it.

If you could leave tomorrow to live in the islands where would it be? Dominica

What is your oddest diving experience? A midnight dive on the RMS Rhone on New Years Eve. It was marvelous to ring in the New Year under the sea without a care or a worry in the world.

What is the one tip you would like to share with a new diver? Make time for the ocean in your life. Soon it may be too polluted or the reef may be gone. Seek out that adventure that diving brings to life and hold on tight because it is one awesome ride.

If you were to come back as a fish in your next life what kind of fish would you be? As a hammerhead shark, I want to know what it is like to navigate by using the earth's magnetic field.



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 team. That's part of why we dive.

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CD Corner — Dive Dive Dive!

Howdy Divers,

Wow, we have lots of different activities going on. We have the referral program, Dive around Texas, and the Project AWARE clean-up in April.

So many dive sites and so little time. I know many of us have had to cut back on spending so we need to find local things to do. Besides taking the family to the movies, to mini-golf or bowling, we could always go diving. Why not make a weekend of it and do some old fashioned camping or low-end motel staying.

The Dive Around Texas event is awesome. If you remember Aqualung did this almost 3 years ago which resulted in the Zero Gravity Dive Club. We dove like maniacs every Sunday and two of our divers won awesome Aqualung products. Now with so many vendors involved and 100 prizes at stake we have lots of diving to do. If local diving isn't your cup

of tea, then referring folks who aren't our customers could result in attending one of the Gulf's most awesome sites—Coral Spawning at the Flower Gardens.

We have 7 more Flower Gardens trips to choose from so hopefully one will fit your schedule and budget.

Paul is taking a group to Cozumel for Memorial Day, what a great way to end the school season.

We hope to see you soon—it may be time to get your gear in for service or just plain get wet in the warmth of either Carrollton or Garland's pool. Just call ahead.

Happy Diving!

~ Patti

www.divearoundtexas.com



Creature Feature — You Decide

Here Mola Mola, here Mola Mola! Wouldn't



you be blinking twice and shaking your head for a double

take if you laid eyes on this creature. Let me introduce you to the Ocean Sunfish - the fish head with a dorsal and anal fin. The Sunfish can be as tall as it is long - may reach the height of 10 feet and weigh up to 2,200 lbs as an adult. It is hardly a fish to overlook. Native to the tropical and temperate waters around the globe, they tend to be found in water warmer than 50 degrees. Though thermally recharging and staying 'green' by basking on it's side at surface, surprisingly enough studies have shown they are found mostly at deeper depths; as deep as 660 ft.

Sunfish live on a diet that mainly consists of various jellyfish. Crustaceans, squid, small fishes, fish larvae and eel grass are also on the tasty menu too, so you can only image the large quantity of food the Sunfish must con-

sume to maintain its size. Their teeth are fused into a beak-like structure which enables them to grind down harder organisms.

Sunfish are solitary creatures but can be spotted in pairs or even in groups while at cleaning stations. Sunfish have over 40 or so parasites that reside on their skin as well as internally. They solicit help from cleaner wrasse and fish found near floating kelp beds, reef fish and even by seagulls as they bask in the sun. Some say that Sunfish breach up to 10 feet out of the water in hopes of dislodging the pesky parasites. *Perhaps so, but what about just for to sake of pure enjoyment too?!?!*

Predators of the sunfish are sea lions, orcas, sharks and humans. Yup, even humans, as in some parts of the world sunfish is a delicacy such as Japan, the Korean Peninsula and Taiwan. Sale of sunfish is banned in Europe. Other dangers that threaten the sunfish are gillnets and floating trash such as plastic bags. Quite the resemblance of jellyfish, bags can choke, suffocate or fill its stomach to the extent that it starves.

Lifespan of a Sunfish in its natural habitat is unknown, but they can live up to about 10 years in captivity. Growth rate along with mating practices have not been proven, but it is known

that females can produce over 300 million eggs at a time being released into water.

So if you are lucky enough to see an Ocean Sunfish in the wild, enjoy the strange beauty of this docile creature. The site too many, is a rare one. And if you spot a dorsal fin at surface, before uttering shark, pay close attention to the movement of the fin. As Sunfish swim by the slow swaying movement of the dorsal and anal fins it may just be the Ocean Sunfish in surprise.

Next months headline is the...?

