



# International Scuba

August 2009

Volume 8, Issue 8

GETTING YOU THERE... STARTS HERE!

## Dog Days of Summer

Hey Divers,

You will begin to see a slight change in language over the coming months as English has many derivations and I will throw in a few words just to keep you on your toes.

We are all running around getting school clothes and supplies and getting ready for the fall. Don't forget we still have plenty of dive time left.

We will be co-hosting the Project AWARE Clean-up at Possum Kingdom on September 19th. Sign up now for cool t-shirts and such. We

will make a weekend out of it if you want. The clean up will begin at 10am on Saturday but come for the weekend and camp with us. Please contact [rich@internationalscuba.com](mailto:rich@internationalscuba.com) to pre-register or let us know via the Facebook listing of Cleanup Events. We had 40+ divers in the water in the spring and now that the water is warmer we expect even more. Remember you can bring non-divers as well since we need folks in kayaks to transport trash bags to the barge.

A special thanks to Rick Blake who has taken our website and emails to the next level. He is heading out to pur-

sue his love of theatre so you won't see him in the shops anymore. We hope to have him guest retail from time to time so he isn't going away.

Finally, congrats to Alistair as he graduated from Texas A&M this weekend as well as was commissioned as a 2nd Lt. in the Army. Gig'Em Aggies!

Dive lots,

Donna

## Specialty of the Month— Project AWARE

September 19<sup>th</sup> is National Clean up Day and International Scuba is going to do our part by organizing a huge fun filled day at Possum Kingdom Lake cleaning up the Hells Gate party cove. I hope everyone will join us for this Project AWARE event.

Most divers have heard of Project AWARE but there are many that have not and that's where the PADI Diving Society's Specialty of the Month is great incentive to learn. Society members get a free set of fish id flip notes to take with you on your next dive just for completing the Project AWARE specialty in September.

Let's start off with what AWARE stands for; Aquatic, World, Awareness, Responsibility and Education.

The purpose and mission for AWARE:

- 1) To cultivate interest in programs and initiatives within the dive community in preserving the aquatic environment and its resources.
- 2) To teach the world about the importance and responsibility preserving the aquatic environment.
- 3) To develop and disseminate educational materials, create public awareness, promote and organize industry efforts, provide direct financial support for worthwhile endeavors, create innovative projects,

build alliances and partnerships with other organization to strengthen common goals and commitment to the conservation of the aquatic environment.

The Project AWARE specialty is going to open your eyes to some of the threats to our Oceans, Reefs and Waterways. Everyone wants to protect the environment but only divers get to see the damages being done to our reefs. That's why we can bring our experiences as divers to the non-divers thru photo; video and discussions that can help educate people to make smart choices that help protect our environment.

One of the things I learned from Project AWARE that everyone can do to make a difference is making better choice in our seafood consumption. Some of the world's fish are being fished out of existence due to the high demand at market. As consumers we are the ones that create the demand for certain fish. We can all make a choice to order fish that can be managed thru fisheries and diversify our tastes so as not to put too much stress on one fish family at a time.

The mooring buoy project is another neat project that makes a great impact that all divers can see on a regular basis. With all the dive boats taking divers to the most beautiful reefs mooring buoys keep us from tearing the reefs apart with anchors that topple coral and scar the reefs.

Presentations to groups are a fun way to share our love of the under-

water world. If you have photos and stories to share there are groups hungry to hear your tales of exploration.

Do you have a friend or family member that doesn't dive yet but would like to be involved with your hobby? Project AWARE is a non-diving specialty that anyone can take and enjoy. In fact I challenge everyone to bring a friend to learn a bit about our underwater world.



## Class Schedules & Trips— at a glance:

### WEEKEND:

AUG 1-2 CSSP

AUG 8-9

AUG 15-16

AUG 22-23

AUG 28-29

SEP 5-6

SEP 12-13

### WHERE TO:

AUG 28-29 FLOWER GARDENS

SEP 11-13 FLOWER GARDENS—

CORAL SPAWN

SEPT 19-26 ST. LUCIA

SEPT 21-26 CALIFORNIA OUTER

ISLANDS LIVE ABOARD

FALL 2010—RED SEA

SPRING 2011—FIJI

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## Our World of Divers Continues to Grow

### Open Water (White Belt)

Phillip Vargo  
 Marissa Rodriguez  
 Jared Guigneaux  
 Adam Gaulding  
 Steve Jones  
 Jolie Laurence  
 Jim Hoffman  
 Kyle McQuarrie  
 Kyle Tee  
 Neelay Bhattacharya  
 Ivan Benavides  
 Ali Alibrahim  
 Andre Vorster  
 JoAnn Trammell  
 John Laurence  
 George Webster  
 Brian Krese  
 Nicole Perry  
 Todd Pryor  
 Melinda Rawlinson  
 Christina Vimont  
 Scott Kelley  
 Leigh-Anne Ladymon  
 Michael Vanbuskirk  
 Tammy Vanbuskirk  
 Nathan Speicher  
 Mary Speicher  
 Alex Walton  
 Dustin Bournes  
 Dawson Jones  
 Brittany Strong  
 Rebecca Apple  
 Meghan Pate  
 Aaron Pate  
 Madison Vanderheiden  
 Amy Vorster  
 Colton McKnight  
 Candice Myers

### National Geographic Open Water

Austin Murphy  
 Terry Johnson  
 Pat Murphy  
 Mervin Clermond  
 Jay Hardin

### Adventure Diver

John Porter  
 Wesley Scarborough  
 Camden Scarborough

### Advanced Open Water

Abigail Troutte  
 Michael Donohoo  
 Jeff Ogar  
 Kiersten Herrera  
 Andrew Webber  
 Susan Nichols  
 Chip Harding  
 Eric Risner  
 Laura Lake  
 Sandra Meyers  
 Nathalie White  
 Alistair Giles

### Rescue Diver

Daniel Cho

### Boat

Eric Brown  
 Abigail Troutte  
 Joe Munoz

### Deep

Eric Brown  
 Alistair Giles

### Digital Photography

Chip Harding

### DPV

John Clark  
 Chandler Clark

### Drift

Susan Nichols  
 Eric Brown

### EFR

Brad Sample  
 Jeff Ogar  
 Susan Nichols

### Enriched Air

John Laurence  
 Jeremy Ford  
 Katherine Ford  
 Marc Corbeil  
 Marlana Alsbrook  
 Ray Williams  
 Tim Corbeil  
 Dan Scarborough  
 Chip Harding

### Equipment

Chip Harding  
 Stephanie Porter

### Fish ID

Susan Nichols  
 Joe Munoz

### Search & Recovery

Susan Nichols  
 Mark Wet

### Night

Matthew Phillips

### Photographer & Video

Michael Pechloff  
 Teresa Pechloff  
 Susan Nichols  
 Tressa Marbach  
 Nathalie White

### Peak Perf. Buoyancy

Aaron Pate  
 Brian Kresse  
 Meghan Pate  
 Adam Gaulding  
 Jeremy Ford  
 Katherine Ford  
 Larry Yates  
 Chip Harding  
 Grayson Langley  
 JoAnn Trammell  
 Lonnie Trammell  
 Rachel Langley  
 Todd Pryor  
 Jeff Ogar  
 Andy Pate  
 Meshaelle Pate  
 Michael Vanbuskirk  
 Tammy Vanbuskirk  
 Nathan Speicher  
 Mary Speicher  
 Laura Lake

### Master Scuba Diver (Black Belt)

Daniel Cho  
 Sam Troutte

### Dive Master

Jimmie Garza  
 Dennis Sawyer  
 Reed Grogan

### EFR Instructor

Donna Jennings  
 Kirk Jones  
 Jennifer Long  
 Scott Harn  
 Dennis Maurer  
 Aaron Minto  
 Sharon Montoro

### Assistant Instructor

Scott Harn  
 Dennis Maurer

### Navigation Instructor

Scott Harn  
 Dennis Maurer

### Nitrox Instructor

Scott Harn  
 Dennis Maurer  
 Kirk Jones  
 John Devine  
 Donna Jennings  
 Chris Brock  
 Jason Goostree  
 Garrett Nelson



## Diving in Cornwall

OK, so I was wrong.

I was certified 33 years ago in Ontario, Canada. There wasn't much to scuba diving – cold water, brown fish, mucky bottoms – so you fantasized about ...well, you can imagine. So when home this July I wasn't too optimistic about the St Lawrence River near the Ontario-Quebec border. But I had to try.

The Internet listed one dive retailer around Cornwall (Ontario): Ron's Scuba Shop. He operates a dive boat for the local dive club, Seaway Divers. I joined as a "Wednesdays only" member for two Wednesday afternoon trips in the Seaway. (It was a great deal: membership was \$40 and each trip was \$10.)

The St. Lawrence Seaway was built in 1959 by flooding the St. Lawrence River basin to increase the depth for modern panamax-sized freighters. At Cornwall millions of gallons drain from the Great Lakes, compressing into a narrow channel that also decreases from 200+ feet to less than 60. In the swift current four hundred years of shipping history lies alongside ten towns abandoned in the rising waters.

The first Wednesday excursion dropped into 64-degree water on the south side of the ship channel. Immediately the outlines of a house emerged. We followed its front steps down to an old road's stones for fingerholds to crawl deeper. Finally at 60 ft we released our grip and drifted – no, began soaring – quickly north. In a few minutes we found an old ship's telegraph buried in the silt and zebra mussels. We left it upright, a sentinel for future trips. The current's force made our return for a shallow water recovery too difficult, so we ended the dive from deeper than we'd planned but out of the main part of the ship channel.

Two weeks later the water had warmed to 68 degrees. This time we entered the north side of ship channel (the Canadian side). We began at 30 ft and followed the bottom to 45 ft where we drifted along a small wall and soon slammed into a large wooden hull (maybe 80 ft long) facing into the current. This unmarked wreck had an unusual feature: a centerboard housing (with centerboard still in it) over four feet high and fifteen ft long! Off its stern a large concrete anchor with heavy steel chain led us to a sunken seaway buoy resembling a lost torpedo (probably casualties of the pack ice that closes the Seaway each winter). A few minutes of drifting on the same course brought us to a second concrete anchor, steel chain and seaway buoy. (Obviously a hard spot for navigation aid maintenance.) Along the way huge bass (easily over two feet long) and sturgeon (over five feet) accompanied us. With an hour gone and our air low, we surfaced a mile from our entry point and awaited pick-up at the edge of the ship channel.

Back on board an upper deck grill disgorged

huge hamburger patties enveloped by fresh-baked buns to a steady stream of club members entering and leaving the water. In this part of the world, as divers drift they collect the interesting stuff left from years of activity and then offer it to the group's evaluation. The day's prize was a blown glass champagne magnum, probably from the 1920's. (I wonder how they should have rated our telegraph discovery?)

The diving was challenging, but not too much. The food was great and plentiful. The people were enthusiastic and competent. Even the sun was warm. It's not the kind of diving up here I remembered. It's much better!

Tim Ralston



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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## GETTING YOU THERE... STARTS HERE!

### CD Corner — My How Time Flies

Howdy Divers,

Can you believe we are about to celebrate our first year in Garland. Rich and company have done an amazing job. We are sad to see Rick Blake leave but alas only from the retail side of things. He is too amazing on the web and marketing side to let him go that easily.

Tracy Thomas is joining the team in Garland—please give her a big hello. She is currently finishing her Dive Master and will next summer advance yet again.

It seems like yesterday we were prepping for the merger and now I am looking at the calendar and wow—a year.

We have undergone some changes as you no doubt have in your personal lives. We all adapt to change and move forward. Just de-

pends on how well or how quick you are willing to jump. I hope we have done right by all of you.

We hope everyone is surviving the summer heat and having some fun.

As you have noticed, I have kept the Dive Around Texas on this page as a promo for getting out and going diving. The program ends next month but there is still time to win a piece of the pie. Let's go diving.

We are diving in Possum Kingdom on September 19th for another clean up—please join us and let's see if we can beat the number of divers in the water from April.



### Creature Feature — Whale Shark



Whale Shark = a shark as large as a whale that shares a similar filter feeder eating mode.

In the Vietnamese religion the whale shark is a deity called "Ca Ong" = translates as "Sir Fish". In other parts of the world the whale shark is called "domino" for its patterns of spots, "many stars", and "stars in the back". In Kenya it is called "papa Shilling" as it is believed that God threw shillings upon the shark which are now its spots.

These gentle giant of the deep blue can be found in the tropical and warm oceans. This species is believed to have originated about 60 million years ago. The first documented spotting was in 1828 in South Africa.

The Whale Shark is the largest living fish species that can grow as long as 40 feet and weigh up to 15 tons. The slow moving filter feeding Whale Shark is definitely one of the most majestic of all creatures. Average speed is about 3 mph

With a mouth that can be as wide as 4.9 feet and contain about 300 to 350 rows of tiny teeth it is amazing to think that not one row plays apart in feeding. Their appetite consists of phytoplankton, macro-algae, plankton, krill, Christmas Island crab larvae and small squid or vertebrates. The shark feeds by sucking in a mouthful of water, closes mouth while filtering out the water through gills. The gill raker captures the food and it is swallowed. It has 5 pairs of large gills. The body is mostly grey with a white belly, with 2 dorsal fins and 2 pectoral fins. Their skin is marked with a checkerboard of pale yellow spots and strips. Each shark can be accounted for by these

unique spots as they are like a fingerprint to the human. WOW...and the skin can be as thick as 4 inches!

Little is known about the reproduction but based on one study with the capture of a female back in 1996 where she was pregnant with 300 pups, knowledge was acquired. The egg remains in the body and the females give birth to live young which are about 15.7 to 23.6 inches long. Sexual maturity is reached around 30 years and the life span is estimated to be over 100 years.

Whale Sharks are one of the many species that I hoped to see out in the ocean. There is so much more to be shared about them. If you are lucky to see one congrats! Those who went to the Flower Gardens trip last month were very lucky indeed. Keep your eyes out for this gentle giant just beware of the tail.

Happy Diving - J