



# DOWN UNDER DIVE CLUB

AUGUST

2008

SINCE 1984

**DUDC Monthly Meeting**  
**is Wednesday, August 13th @ 7:00 pm.**

## LITTLE CAYMAN

We may be back in the States, but we're still on Island time. Come and enjoy a presentation of the dive club's trip to Little Cayman.

As always there will be Great Company, Door Prizes, Tall Tales and refreshments.

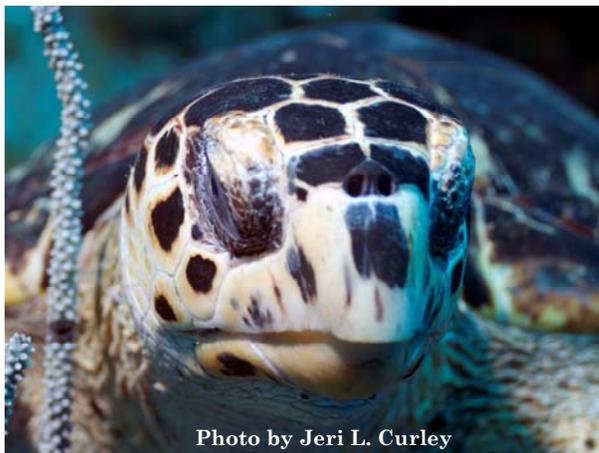


Photo by Jeri L. Curley

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### PLAN YOUR DIVE

- Buddy Up. Select a partner who will enhance your enjoyment and safety. A good buddy is someone whose skills, abilities and attitude are complementary with your own.
- Communication. Prior to your dive, make sure you're both on the same dive plan.
- Weathering it. When you get to your dive site, assess the physical situation. What are the tides like?
- Equipment Familiarization. After checking out your own equipment, take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with the placement and operation of your buddy's equipment.
- The Buddy Check. While suiting- and gearing up, conduct a pre-dive safety check on yourself and your buddy, and correct any problems you find.
- The What Ifs. Review what you and your buddy would do if, for example, you were separated underwater.
- If you were to run low on air or find you're completely out of air, do you dive close enough to your buddy that you could quickly solve your problem? You may want to dive with a pony bottle or Spare Air™. While you'll still need to signal your buddy, you'll be able to surface without assistance.
- You should also practice making emergency ascents and removing and replacing your equipment in the water.
- Stay together. The "same day / same ocean" philosophy does not constitute a buddy team.
- Always dive your plan. A few well-spent minutes topside prior to the dive will prepare you and your buddy for the rewards that come with a safe and enjoyable dive.

**DOOR PRIZE**  
**WINNERS:**

Craig Capion: Tickle Stick  
Marvin Mardock: License Plate  
Steve Leachman: Hat



# DUDC Event & Activity Calendar

Event	Time	Member's Cost	Coordinator Phone # / E-mail	
DUDC Club Meeting Indian River Lagoon House	Wednesday, 8/13/08 @ 7:00 p.m.	Free	Bill Allen	<a href="mailto:ballen@downunderdiveclub.com">ballen@downunderdiveclub.com</a>
DUDC Board Meeting **Meeting place TBD	Monday 8/25/08 @ 6 p.m.	Free		Contact any Board Member to Attend
First Saturday of the Month Dive with Little Deeper	Saturday, 9/6/08	\$63	Tom Croonquist	<a href="mailto:tjcroonquist@downunderdiveclub.com">tjcroonquist@downunderdiveclub.com</a>
Shark Tooth Dive Venice Beach	Saturday, 8/23/08	\$80 with Air Tanks Not including hotel accommodations	Rochelle Hood	<a href="mailto:rhood@downunderdiveclub.com">rhood@downunderdiveclub.com</a>
Spiegel Grove	9/20 to 9/21		Michael Wheat	<a href="mailto:Michael@downunderdiveclub.com">Michael@downunderdiveclub.com</a>

**Cancellation Policy for Club Sponsored Dives:** Deposits will be refunded with **2 weeks notice** of the scheduled event or with a paid replacement divers. Refunds of money paid after the 2 week cancellation period is subject to **board approval**. All requests for refunds after this period **MUST** be made in writing. Money and deposits are refunded when dives are cancelled by the Charter or DUDC.

**ALL DIVES MUST BE PAID PRIOR TO THE DAY OF THE DIVE. NON-MEMBERS ADD \$5.**

*(This calendar is tentative and subject to change.)*

## Congratulations to the Following for Their Achievements & Mile Stones:

**Tom Croonquist** made his 200th dive in the Bahamas

**Jeri Curley** won the Macro Photo-Competition aboard the AquaCat

## Dive Bubba



Photo by Jeri L. Curley

# Bugs & the Water



Photo by Jeri L. Curley

I'm a big fan of Sex and the City and thought it might be fun to write a DUDC article in the style of Carrie Bradshaw. Each year I count the days for lobster mini-season and the regular season opener. I look forward to the thrill of the hunt, the excitement of being first to a lobster site and all the energy of seeing so many folks in the water enjoying the passion of scuba diving.



Photo by Jeri L. Curley

For me, I also use mini season as a milestone to remember some scuba basics. It's an annual reminder to get my gear serviced, my tanks VIP'd and to think of the safety skills I learned in my basic Open Water class. Why safety skills? Because each year during mini season, along with the thrill of boats hitting the dock at midnight and dive groups scouting their sites, also comes less favorable focus on our beloved sport. There is always a story about a diver getting lost at sea and

unfortunately someone being injured, or worse, from equipment failure or a medical emergency resulting from overexertion. The story behind the story is often that someone dug 10 year old gear out of the garage and jumped in the water without checking it out....that a diver with less than 10 dives under his/her weight belt jumps in the water and fights a current to get a bug and gets out of breathe or runs out of air from not watching his/her gauges.



With the great love for the sport, I got to thinking about my own skills. After several years of diving and lots of lobstering trips, I couldn't help but wonder....have I become comfortable or complacent? Next time I'm tempted to skip checking my tank pressure before unloading my tanks or jump in the water with a piece of equipment that is not fully functioning properly I will remind myself of the lobster season stories and the difference in the outcome between comfortable or complacent.

Dive Safe, Dive Often and Happy Bugging!!!

*Rochelle Hood*

President



Photo by Jeri L. Curley

## **TOMS' DIVE BLOG**

July 2008 and who did what?

After my return from Little Cayman and my preparation for the Bahamas I opted to skip diving on the Fourth of July but did start my diving off on the 5th. Many of us dove on our Nations Birthday and the reports I received were mixed about the day dives but I heard nothing except great things about the night dives on the Fourth. With the Holiday weekend, we didn't have enough confirmed divers to reserve our slots for our "Kick the Month off Right" dives on The Little Deeper. We had a lot (a heck of a lot) of "probably" going to make it but we thought it to be in the interest to release our slots in July but no worries because we are back in August.

Below is my blog for June 2008, I hope you enjoy, and as always remember...Work sucks, I'm going diving.

See ya,

Tom C.

\*\*\*\*\*

**When:** July 5, 2008

**Where:** Blue Heron Bridge

**What:** Shore Dive

**Charter:** N/A

**Who:** Sandy, Mike Walsh, Bobbi and Joe

**Weather Conditions:** Calm winds, sunny and warm with high at about 90 degrees.

**Seas:** Flat.

**Viz:** 60 feet

**Water Temp:** 86 degrees

**Scenario:** A relaxing morning doing a bridge dive

Saturday morning, pulling up to meet Bobbi and Mike Walsh at 7:30am, in West Melbourne. What a nice slow start to the morning already. As we all know, way to often, our trips to West Palm can start by pulling out of Melbourne at 5 in the morning. With High Tide predicted at 10:41am it gives us plenty of time to travel down. This looks like a promising day of relaxation. We arrive at BHB, meet our partner Sandy and we are off for a

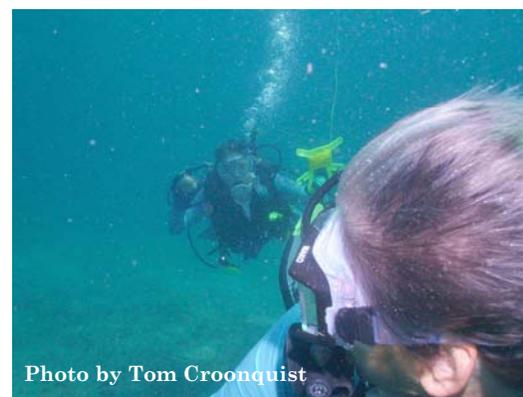


Photo by Tom Croonquist



Photo by Tom Croonquist

beautiful dive. This dive was fantastic and started off with the first 20 minutes of all four of us playing with a small octopus. We found this photogenic, 8 legged, and friendly octopus in 9 feet of water in the sand flats making a condo out of a cinder block. From here we were off to the bridge. This day proved to be tremendous in the fish life, Green and Spotted Morays, Schools of Chubs, Silverbacks, Barracuda, Snook and a two large Tarpon trolling the area. Snook are nothing new at the bridge but this was school of about 20, from juveniles to the biggest beast of breeders. Just the fish activity was enough to keep you well tuned in and that is not to mention all the friendly, and not so friendly, crustaceans on the bottom, in holes and free walking. What a great day at the bridge.

Post party: The Brass Ring where Joe kept us all intrigued with his recounts of his recent trip to the Great Barrier Reef.

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**When:** July 12 through the 19, 2008

**Where:** Bahamian Exumas and Eleuthera Island Chains

**What:** Live aboard the Grand AquaCat

**Charter:** The AquaCat with Captain Ron and Crew

**Who:** 21 other divers and a 10 person crew

**Weather Conditions:** Overall Sunny and Warm with a torrential squall line thrown off of Hurricane Bertha.

**Seas:** Flat to 8 feet

**Viz:** 7 feet to 100 feet plus with most dive pushing 60 feet or better of viz.

**Water Temp:** 85 degrees on the average

**Scenario:** 26 dives, great accommodations, great food, great friends (new and old) and a lot of adventures.

What to say except WOW and Thanks. "Wow" what great time, story below.

"Thanks" to our very own Judy and Bill Shepherd for putting this trip together and thanks to Jeri for vouching for me and getting me invited on this trip. "Thanks" to Captain Ron and his crew for their hard work, especially through the storm. "Thanks" to all of the great friends (new and old) that made this trip a BLAST!

We started our adventure early Saturday morning flying out of Orlando into Nassau. We were at the "Green Parrot" Tiki Bar in "Hurricane Hole" Marina, located on Paradise Island, by early afternoon. Meeting up with Laurie and Sandy, we hiked over to the splendid and luxurious "Atlantis Resort". Traveling with the experienced and renowned traveler Jeri "Indiana Joanne" Curley, she led the small expedition through the maze of construction and demolition on Paradise Island arriving on the "Marina Walk". Cool place for the tourist, just like Downtown Disney but in the Bahamas "mon". After a late lunch at "Anthony's Bar and Grill" feasting on fresh conch and a local beverage call "Kalik" (hic) we were back at the "Green Parrot" meeting up with all of our other fellow travelers, Divers, snorkelers, Fishermen and (women) and Beach Bunnies from the American Virgin Islands, Washington State, South Carolina and good old Florida. We boarded the ship, settled in, unpacked, got acquainted, ate, drank and were briefed by the Captain and crew.

After a leisurely night, we were under power by 5am. I awoke to the rising sun, over blue and aqua colored water with no land in sight. After breakfast we were moored at Dog Rocks Wall and had our first of 26 dive briefings. In the water 9:19am, it was as simple as donning my gear, going down a flight of stairs and then a giant stride in the true Paradise of this world, the Deep Blue. With shallow reefs and walls reaching almost to China this area offers diving for everyone.

I could write volumes on each dive and never begin to describe the beauty of this trip, both above and under the water. I will settle by giving a listing of our dives below but I will say that if you ever get an chance to experience a trip like this don't think twice, take advantage of it.



Photo by Jeri L. Curley



Photo by Tom Croonquist

After the first day of diving, a fine dinner and our first night dive of the trip at Barracuda Shoals we settled in for some relaxation. Relaxing on the sun deck of the ship, watching the heat lightening giving us a show far off in the distance the night pushed on. As I sat and swapped stories with fellow divers more and more opted for bed. I found myself with a small but humorous crowd of 4 other divers a little after midnight, then bam. No wait that would be BAM, the storm hit. A squall line from hurricane Bertha comes

through. The squall had sustained 40mph winds, gust up to 70mph. The morning lines broke after midnight, sending the ship a drift, skipping across a reef, not breaching the hull, but as reported by Capt. Ron, doing hundreds of thousands of dollars of damage to ship. The Capt. had all passengers gather on the dive deck and put on our life jackets and get ready for a possible sinking while he and the crew battled seas up to 8 feet. We were kept on the deck until a little after 3am. The skiff, used for dive rescues was lost, but found washed ashore on the rocks of a small island on the last day by another boat. It was quit the experience as me and Jeri had some of the passengers singing "Michael Rowed the Boat Ashore" and "99 bottles of beer on the wall". What an adventure, battling a "no name" storm, tossing us around like a cork in a washing machine.



The storm had blown out the viz on the first dive of the next day (7 feet or so of viz), but everyone took it in stride. We all knowing you got to experience the bad to enjoy the good. The Capt. And crew did wonders over the next few days, finding us better viz dive and after dive, after dive.

The last night at sea we had The Captains Dinner and party, which was great food and fun. The next night in port, the last night on the ship, was the cocktail party then dinner in town. Dinner and fun and a lot more fun later in the night, as several of us found the crew hanging out at the Green Parrot we spent several hours living the life of a sailor back in port for one night.



Having to be off the boat by 9am some friends had early flights and some took later flights to enjoy the town. Sandy and I ventured into Nassau, going to dive store, walking across the bridge peering down onto Potters Point at the commercial fishing boats and their harvest of fish and conch. We made it to the local flea market and then spent the rest of the morning people watching in the Marina Walk of Atlantis. At noon-thirty we shuffled over the Green Parrot with me thinking of the evening spent before living the life of a sailor in port for the night. Lucky for me, it was in the Bahamas, "mon", better than Vegas or even Venice or Little Cayman... "). At the

Green Parrot we found Jeri, Kevin, Jan and Alex watching the crew of the boat stock provisions and prep for the next round of guests. The crew, working diligently never broke stride, from squall lines, to sunny skies, from walls reaching to China to the top of the Sun Deck, from great food to provisions for the ship, this is a class act.

Although I never actually found the cheeseburger it was paradise.

Here is the list of dives, straight from my dive log (hope I got all the names correct).



**July 13, 2008**

Dog Rocks Wall,  
 Dog Rocks Wall, Double Dip  
 Madison Ave.  
 Barracuda Shoals  
 Barracuda Shoals – Night Dive, Double Dip

**July 14, 2008**

Jewfish Wall  
 Pillar Wall  
 Austin Smith – Wreck Dive,  
 Bahamian Coastguard vessel  
 Cracked Coral Head  
 Parrot Fish Reef – Night Dive

**July 15, 2008**

Wall City  
 Amberjack Reef (tons of Grouper and oh yeah SHARKS)  
 Coral Cut – Drift Dive (like no other)  
 Amberjack Reef – Shark Feeding (oh yeah SHARKS)  
 Amberjack Reef – Night Dive

**July 16, 2008**

Hole in the Wall – Bahamian Style - (Sandy's 150<sup>th</sup> Dive)  
 The Monolith  
 Cave Rock  
 Jake's Hole  
 Jake's Hole – Night Dive,

**July 17, 2008**

Cut Through City  
 Split Coral Head  
 Black Tip Wall  
 The Washing Machine – Drift Dive (appropriately named and CRAZY)

**July 18, 2008**

Blue Hole  
 Periwinkle Reef



Photo by Tom Croonquist

Thanks Judy, Bill and Jeri and all my other friends who made this a trip in paradise.

Post party: WHAT? Didn't need one. Did need a few days of recovery...

**END OF TOMS' DIVE BLOG**

Hope you enjoyed



Photo by Tom Croonquist

# About the Down Under Dive Club

The Down Under Dive Club is located in Melbourne on the sunny east central coast of Florida. Formed in 1984 by a group of enthusiastic divers, DUDC currently has about 100 members. Our mission is to promote safe, organized dive events, provide a social setting comfortable to everyone, and encourage environmental responsibility among the diving community. Our past dives have covered the Atlantic ocean, from Georgia to Bonaire. We organize all types of dives: drift dives, wreck dives, shore dives, live-aboards, spring dives, and even shark dives! Our members include a diverse group of divers. There are men, women and kids, ages from 11 to 65+ with all certification levels from new Open Water divers to Instructors.

Meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at 7:00 PM at the Indian River Lagoon House, Located just south of University Blvd. on US1 in Melbourne. Door prizes are awarded each month and we book a fascinating assortment of guest speakers. We invite everyone interested in SCUBA diving to stop by for some stimulating conversation, meet our group, and have some fun! If you have any questions, you can E-mail us at [info@downunderdiveclub.com](mailto:info@downunderdiveclub.com)

## Board of Directors

<b>President :</b>	Rochelle Hood	rhood@downunderdiveclub.com
<b>Vice President:</b>	John Dockendorf	jdockendorf@downunderdiveclub.com
<b>Treasurer</b>	Bob Carmichael	bcarmichael@downunderdiveclub.com
<b>Secretary:</b>	Jeri L. Curley	jcurley@downunderdiveclub.com
<b>Membership:</b>	Bill Allen	ballen@downunderdiveclub.com
<b>Safety Officer:</b>	Dale Purchase	dpurchase@downunderdiveclub.com
<b>Dive Coordinator:</b>	Tom Croonquist	tjcroonquist@downunderdiveclub.com