



MAY
2007

DOWN UNDER DIVE CLUB

SINCE 1984

May's DUDC Monthly Meeting is Wednesday, May 9th @ 7:30 p.m.



This month's speaker is Christina Conrath, Ph.D. Dr. Conrath is currently a post doc at the University of Florida working for the Florida Program for Shark Research. She obtained her MS and PhD at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science in Gloucester Virginia where she studied the population dynamics of smooth dogfish, and the habitat use of juvenile sandbar sharks in the Eastern Shore

of Virginia Nursery area. In her current position she is studying the behavior, habitat, and ecology of a variety of elasmobranch species.



The program will include the following topics: an introduction to elasmobranch fishes (sharks, skates, and rays), identifying common Florida elasmobranchs, the Florida Program for Shark Research current research and public outreach objectives, and a slightly more in depth look into FPSR behavioral ecology research.

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Time for DUDC's Annual Club Picnic!!!

Please mark your calendars and plan to join us for our annual member and guest dive club picnic. This year's event will be held on **Saturday, 05/12/07 from 10am to 4pm** at Howard E. Futch Memorial Park at Paradise Beach (2301 N. Hwy A1A – between the Melbourne and Eau Gallie Causeways, right on the ocean, just across from Ichabod's Bar & Restaurant). The club will provide hamburgers, hotdogs, beverages and lawn games. Please bring a side dish and join in the fun. We will have a sign up sheet for side dishes at the club meeting. Invite a friend and share an afternoon of sun, fun and great diving stories.

Visitors Welcome!!!

Our monthly meetings are held every month on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:30 pm at the

**Indian River Lagoon
House
3275 Dixie HWY. NE
Palm Bay, FL 32905**



DUDC Event & Activity Calendar

Event		Time	Member's Cost	Coordinator Phone # / E-mail	
DUDC Club Meeting Indian River Lagoon House		Wednesday, 5/9/2007 @ 7:30 p.m	Free	Bill Allen	info@downunderdiveclub.com
DUDC Club Picnic		Saturday, 5/12/2007 10-4	Free — please bring side dish	Rochelle Hood	rhood@downunderdiveclub.com
Jupiter Club Dive		Saturday, 5/19/2007 @ 9 am	\$50 pp + tanks	Michael Wheat	michael@downunderdiveclub.com
DUDC Board Meeting		Tuesday, 5/22/2007 @ 7 pm			info@downunderdiveclub.com
DUDC Club Meeting Indian River Lagoon House		Wednesday, 6/13/2007 @ 7:30 p.m	Free	Bill Allen	info@downunderdiveclub.com

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

President's Message – April 2007

Ah, the stories of the water approaching 80 degree's are already starting to appear. Now mind you, I sure have not found it. But it is good to know that I can hang up my 3/2 wetsuit in just a few short weeks. So if you have not done it yet – time to start dragging that gear out of the back of the closet and getting those tanks filled! We should be in for another EXCELLENT year underwater. Mature nature met her quota of cancelled dives for the year over the last few months!!!!

Don't forget about the club picnic on May 12th. We are meeting at the same park as last year (Futch Park) – just on the north end this time. Everyone had a great time last year and Bob and I didn't kill anyone with our cooking! Rochelle has been hard at work for over a month with preparations and brining her usual "flair" to the event. So make sure you can make it out this year. It will be a GREAT time!!!! So bring the family and come spend a day on the beach with friends.

Also keep your eye out for some VERY exciting announcements coming about some future speakers. Not to spill the beans yet, but the board has been hard at work trying to bring in some exciting speakers. Right now we are trying to coordinate their travel plans. We also have several local presenters in the works that I think will be very interesting.

Dale Purchase is also going to start a "Safety Seminar Series" starting at the May meeting. Each seminar will cover a broad range of safety topics. Some will take place at our general meetings, but we are also looking at having some take place on club dives (i.e., in water drills) and/or land based training/reviews. The rest of the board really appreciates Dale stepping up to the plate with this one. We have been trying to implement this for several years. I'm really looking forward to this opportunity and I think you will also!

As always, if you have and suggestions, request, or comments, please let one of us know. We are here to serve you!

See you down under!
 Michael Wheat
michael@downunderdiveclub.com

Blue Heron Bridge Dive — April 7th

Location: West Palm Beach, FL

Date: April 7, 2007

Charter: None

This is a report from our dive at the Blue Heron Bridge last Saturday, April 7th.. We had a good turn out, 7 divers. We were joined by two new dive buddies, Tina and Daniel.

Besides Tina and Daniel, Deveney, Jeri, Mike W., Brian and of course me, did the dive. High Tide was at 11:39am and we were in the water a little after 11am. It was a cold morning, high was about 75 and the water was about 70. Pretty chilly dive, but it is all good. We met and Bobbis' house and carpooled down. Bobbi wasn't able to go with us but being the champ she is she supported us by letting us meet and park her cars at her house.

Thanks Bobbi.

We got to the park expecting a warm sunny day, along with about the other 30 divers that were there. It seems like the idea of getting wet ran through the dive community because the bridge was packed. But luckily a lot of people dove the hump back and we went to the flat relief bridge.

The viz was only about 30 feet, water was about 70 degrees. There was plenty of sea life but I don't think anyone saw any seahorses. The coral is doing great. I only started diving the bridge last year but I have noticed that the sunken sailboat is really getting covered with vibrant and healthy corals. It is looking great, it is even getting difficult to make out the outboard motor on the back of the sailboat. And it's not only the sailboat that is doing great, corals are growing everywhere. Plenty of fish, snook, grouper, tarpon and few Florida Lobster, along with all the fish and crustaceans that are normally there.

After the dive we did lunch at Applebee's and then headed home.

Another great day.

Hope to see you under the water soon and remember...

Work Sucks, I'm going diving.

Tom C.



Rough Seas – 4 to 6 INCHES!!!!

Location: Pompano, FL

Date: April 28, 2007

Charter: Parrot Island Charters

Author: Michael Wheat



A special thank you to everyone who made it out for our inaugural Pompano dive. It was a little longer drive than we are all used to, but we were rewarded with two wonderful dives. Thanks for making it such a special day - **Hank Green, Mike Walsh, Dale Purchase, George Tomek, Marty Munnich, Bob Jensen, Rich Halcomb, Tom Butler, Mike Stork, Rochelle Hood, David Slo-nim.**

After having to cancel our club dive last month (and several personal ones), I was anxious to see how the weather was going to cooperate for the weekend. Early in the week everything looked great, so it was just a matter of whether or not it would hold. Luckily it did and we were all treated to a near perfect day on the water. The seas were as flat as glass at times and it was a nice sunny day outside with very little overcast. I wish I could say the conditions UNDER water were as near perfect, but we got caught in current shift. Right in the middle of our first dive you could feel the slight north current start to shift south. That stirred things up a little bit. On the first dive we had about 40-50 foot of visibility and about 30 on the second dive.



Our initial plans for the day was to do the wreck of the “Tracy” on our first dive. She is the 4th wreck in a series of 5 that are called the “Jay Scutti Wreck Trek”. Well, once we got out to the location another dive boat has already beaten us to her. So we decided to head a little north and catch the 5th wreck called the “Mercy Jesus”. She is a small tug bug with lots of growth and a wide open hull. After giving the other charter boat time to finish up their dive, several of us made the swim over to the Tracy and still got to enjoy her. She is such a pretty wreck and has such a unique personality.



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For our second dive we did a drift dive called “Razzle Dazzle”. After breaking into groups and begging people to carry the dive flag (thanks Tom), we jumped in the water and proceeded to enjoy a nice long dive on this patch reef. This site really reminded me of “Paul’s Reef” out of West Palm, with just a less defined structure but many of the same juvenile fish pools. But it is the coral that really separated this site. I was amazed at the health of the marine environment. You can tell this area is not dove hard like West Palm Beach and Jupiter to a lesser extent. Max depth on this site was about 60 feet and you really spent most of you time in that 40-45 zone which really extends your bottom time.



For me the highlight of the day came right at the very end of the 2nd dive. We came upon a Hawksbill turtle that was laying in the sand munching on some coral. This guy was very friendly – allowing a few of us to get very close to him and take pictures. I would get him in the frame of the picture and he would look up to pose. After I took the picture, he would go back to munching down. It was like he knew the drill. It was one of those times that I wish I would go ahead and

splurge and get a better camera. This opportunity really deserved better!!!

After getting back to the dock and cleaning up we headed over to “Big Louie’s” for lunch. This is a nice little Italian restaurant that claims to have the best pizza in town. It was good, but I could have filled a glass with all the grease that was dripping off. As Dale said, it was a good thing that we ate this AFTER our dives or we would have had buoyancy problems all day :)



All together, it was a very successful outing and a successful experiment. For the last few years we have been diving primarily Jupiter and WPB. As I promised at the beginning of the year, we are looking to expand our diving area and this a MUST DO AGAIN. Matter of fact, I think I am going to try and slip something in for early June.

A quick comment about Parrot Island Charters. This was the second time I have dove with them and I was once again very happy with them. They are a very friendly group and they give divers plenty of bottom time. Matter of fact, after spending so much time with that Hawksbill Turtle, I ended up going over one hour bottom time on the second dive. Not by much, but I was expecting to be chastised once I got back on the boat. But they didn’t do that and I appreciated it.

See you down under!

Michael Wheat

michael@downunderdiveclub.com

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 7:30 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

Board of Directors

President :	Michael Wheat	mwheat@downunderdiveclub.com	727-1028
Vice President:	Rochelle Hood	rhood@downunderdiveclub.com	
Treasurer	Bob Carmichael	bcarmi-	
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