



OCTOBER
2006

DOWN UNDER DIVE CLUB

SINCE 1984

October's DUDC Monthly Meeting is Wednesday, October 11th @ 7:30 p.m.

Join us for an evening of camaraderie and dive stories. There will be drinks and snacks available. The fun starts at 7:30 p.m. See you there.

Dive Quiz by AL:

Quiz:

Most diver injuries caused by aquatic animals happen because

- A. the animal thinks you are food.
- B. the animal is aggressive.
- C. the animal is protecting itself from you.
- D. you did not feed the animal.

Answer on page 6

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

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Board of Directors

President :	Michael Wheat
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Safety Officer:	Al Audet
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Newsletter Editor:	Debi Buck
Webmaster:	Shannon Anderson
Concession Master:	Tom Butler



DUDC Event & Activity Calendar

Event		Time	Member's Cost	Coordinator Phone # / E-mail	
DUDC Club Meeting Indian River Lagoon House		Wednesday, 10/11/2006 @ 7:30 p.m	Free	Bill Allen	info@downunderdiveclub.com
Jupiter 2 tank Night Dive Jupiter Dive Center	Average depths 70-90 ft	Saturday, 10/21/2006 @ 6pm	Contact Michael Wheat for details	Michael 727-1028	Mwheat@downunderdiveclub.com
DUDC Club Meeting Indian River Lagoon House		Wednesday, 11/8/2006 @ 7:30 p.m	Free	Bill Allen	info@downunderdiveclub.com
Jupiter 2 tank Dive Jupiter Dive Center	Average depths 70-90 ft	Saturday, 11/18/2006 @ 9am	Contact Michael Wheat for details	Michael 727-1028	Mwheat@downunderdiveclub.com
DUDC Club Meeting Indian River Lagoon House & Annual Christmas Party		Wednesday, 12/13/2006 @ 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.)



Keys Trip – September 2006 Bob Carmichael

Preparations for this annual event began early this year when Pres Michael set up the date and started spreading the word about this favorite trip. Because we would be diving some deep wrecks, he established some criteria for those planning on making the trip; advanced open water divers, nitrox and computers were required.

Ten club members plus myself signed up for the 23-24 Sep trip. They were Rick Holcomb, Marty Munnich, Hank Green, Jeri Curley, Tom Butler, Dale Purchase, Keith Caldwell, Tuyet Minz, Hillary Aeschlinan, and Larry Berry. Tom Croonquist and Bobbi Bojorski also joined us for part of the trip! The basic trip included two dives on the Spiegel Groove on Saturday afternoon, lodging Saturday night and two dives Sunday morning, one on the Dwayne and the other on a reef! Due to requests we sat up Friday night lodging and a Saturday morning trip with two reef dives.

After Pres Michael had to cancel his participation he asked me to take over the trip. Accordingly, I felt it imperative that I go down and personally insure all preparations were in order. Accordingly, I left a week plus in advance and checked on the preparations. All in the Keys were anxiously awaiting our arrival. Hank and Carolyn Green came down on Thursday to check out accommodations and Tom Croonquist and Bobbi Bojorski also arrived early to insure accommodations were up to DUDC standards! To insure the diving was going to be up to standards Tom Butler and Dale Purchase arrived Friday morning they plus myself and Tom Croonquist and Bobbi did a Friday afternoon dive with Key Dive in Islamorada.

We dove Davis reef and Davy Crockett reef in foreboding weather at the beginning. Winds were strong and seas were building, but by the end of the second dive seas and winds were calming and things were looking better for the weekend!

The next morning we had bright skies and calm seas for our diving day! All Club members except Hilary, who was still in route, did the morning dive on two shallow reefs not far outside Tavernier Creek. Visibility was 40 feet plus, fish were abundant, and current was nil. Otherwise, it was a great dive, a warm-up for great things to come. We started off by spotting a nice size sting ray that was waiting on the bottom directly under the boat. After he insured we were all in safely, he took off to check on another boatload of divers!



After a quick return to the docks of Conch Republic Divers, lunch and tank exchange we headed out for the main event – double dives on the Spiegel Groove. After a 45 minute plus trip out in moderate to calm seas we arrived and moored on the buoy at the bow of the Spiegel! Current was ripping, but visibility appeared to be good. During the descent we learned how a flag in the wind feels as we were stretched out on the buoy line by the strong current. Because of the current, none of our avid Club photographers dared take their camera on this or the subsequent dive on the Spiegel! After a challenging descent we all arrived safely on the bow of the Spiegel and found reduced, but still noticeable, current. Fortunately, the current was coming from the tail of the sunken ship so the superstructure gave us some immediately relief and we explored the forward part of the ship. The guidelines originally installed are now useable since the ship was righted last year by a hurricane and certainly were useful. After an enjoyable dive we ascended again in the strong current and enjoyed a surface interval while we discussed the adventure we had just enjoyed.

Because of the current we considered making the second dive on a reef out of the current! After due deliberation

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eration, the decision was to stick to the schedule and do a second dive on the Spiegel. Capt Gary had re-located the Republic VII to a buoy amidships on the port side! After the same current plagued descent we had plenty of cover from the current on the ship. We explored the "well" for the landing craft and bridge across the well; we explored the superstructure in front of the well. We went through the briefing room with Snoopy, the ships mascot, painted on the floor. Thoughtfully, there was a brush secured to the floor so you could brush debris off the emblem to better view it.

I particularly enjoyed going thru a machine shop that Dale took me to. It had several drill presses of different sizes, some metal lathes, some band saws, and a number of other machine tools. It was probably about 40 by 40 feet and right off the well deck. I am sure there is a much larger and complex machine shop deeper in the bowels of the ship!! I would like to see it!

Finally, the dive day was over and we reluctantly returned to the Conch Republic dock and immediately started talking about the next day's dive.

Thank to Tom Croonquist and Hank Green and others we had a nice cookout at the Ocean Point condos where most of the Club members were staying. An evening of fellowship, good food and good drinks (in moderation) proved to be a perfect end to a great day of diving! We all retired early, eagerly looking forward to the next day's dive activity!

The following morning we all gathered again at the Conch Republic dock, excited about the continuing good weather and calm seas. After loading up the Aquatic Diver, our transportation to the dive sites, we enjoyed the beautiful weather on the ride out to the Dwayne, a Coast Guard cutter scuttled in 1989 as an artificial reef! Again the current was strong, not quite as bad as the previous day, but still strong! Keith was one of the first divers on the ship and watched a large Goliath Grouper head for cover in the innards of the ship! Barracuda hung around in the open sea above the ship. The ship was covered with growth and made a great dive.



The second, and last, dive was on French reef. It is always loaded with fish and this was no exception. The French Grunt and Bluestriped Grunts were especially prevalent on this dive! We saw a couple of conchs appearing to have sex! We thought we had figured out how they reproduced, but our resident Marine Biologist, Jeri, corrected us. They were doing something much more mundane; one had killed the other and was dining on it!

Well that was the end of our annual trek to paradise. With long faces we all packed our gear and slowly prepared for departure. However, I must start preparations for next year's trip so I placed service to the Club above my personal interest and have remained here in the Keys to insure preparations are done in a timely manner. I may be back in time for

the November meeting, maybe not!

President's Message

WARM WATER! It is that time of year that we should really be appreciating diving in 80+ degree water, as there is only a little more time to enjoy it. Come November, the water will start to chill into the 70's. While 10 degree's doesn't sound that much, it is the difference between having to wear heavier wet suites and diving in skins. So make sure you get out there over the next two months and enjoy the wonderful sea conditions we have been having.

The board continues to be very active as we continue to evaluate all of our current processes and procedures. Over the last month, we performed a full communications review to determine what information we need to distribute and what channels are available to us. The results were very enlightening and many good ideas come out of it. Each board member has taken a communication channel (i.e., newsletter, web site, email, print media, local advertising, voice, etc.) and are looking at ways to close any existing gaps and opportunities to improve

See you down under,
Michael



Underwater Photography

During a recent trip to Blue Heron Bridge, I saw the best and the worst in photographer behavior. I saw divers who were courteous and took great care to not disturb the marine life. I also saw divers who only cared about their perfect shot, and had total disregard to marine life, coral, and other photographers. This month, I'll go over some of the behaviors I noticed.

Probably the most frustrating scene was watching a photographer molest a sea horse. The photographer had removed the sea horse from its perch, and was trying to manipulate it into a position for the perfect shot. Needless to say, the sea horse was not on its normal perch this week where it had been spotted for several weeks before.

We also saw photographers trying to take pictures while other rude photographers were trying to squeeze in to take their own shot. I see this scenario all too often. Stay clear and down current of the photographer taking the pictures. Waiting up current does nothing but stir up silt and ruins the photographer's picture.

Finally, it's imperative that you maintain your buoyancy while taking your pictures. All too frequently, I'll see a photographer's fins break off a piece of coral (i.e. sea fans) that has been growing for years. So, if you're not laying in sand, then watch what you're laying down on or maintain your buoyancy.

All too often, the thrill of getting the perfect picture will cause divers to forget about their surroundings and other divers. The photographer is not the only person in the water, and that photographer will not be the last. So, take only pictures, leave only bubbles, and don't destroy everything in your wake.

A. Audet

Answer to Dive Quiz:

Answer: C



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