

DIVE LOG

The Bimonthly Newsletter of the United Divers of New Hampshire

CLUB DIVERSITY

SAME DAY, TWO VERY DIFFERENT BODIES OF WATER



photo by Susan Thuillier



photo by Lea Nichols

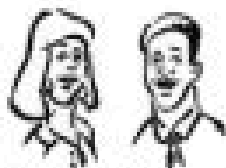
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CATCH THE WAVE

4th Annual Catch the Wave Party

A few years ago, members from 9 of the area dive clubs, including UDNH, the New England Aquarium Dive Club, among others, decided to create a loose network to bring together divers from the area. The first Catch the Wave party was a huge success, with over 150 participants swapping dive stories and having a good time. Door prizes, raffles, and silent auctions have rounded out the evenings. This year, an added prize is to be a dive package to Dominica.

Proceeds from the party have gone to area divers in need, Divers Alert Network, and programs for area youth.

This year's party will be held March 25, 2000 at the Wyndham Hotel, Waltham, MA. Cost is \$25 per person.

For details, contact Don Eva @603-672-5608, or Al Bozza @ 508-384-1377.

DIVE LOG

The Newsletter of the United Divers of New Hampshire

Editors: Gary Thuillier
Don Eva

Submissions

Editorial contributions may be e-mailed to
Diveknits@aol.com

Submissions can also be sent on paper or PC floppy to:

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Please include a brief byline and author contact information with your submission. Submission shall automatically constitute an expressed warranty by the contributor that the material is original and is in no way an infringement on the rights of others. While no compensation is paid for published submissions, a byline indicating the source of an article will always be provided. Authors grant *Dive Log* and United Divers of New Hampshire first print rights to the submission. *Dive Log* and its editors reserve the right to edit all materials as needed. The opinions stated in the articles in *Dive Log* are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the United Divers of New Hampshire or the editors of the *Dive Log*. For further information, please contact Gary Thuillier @ (603)487-3001

Subscriptions

Subscriptions to *Dive Log* are included in the UDNH membership fees. Non-members may subscribe to the newsletter for \$15/year. Subscription inquiries should be addressed to Gary Thuillier as well.

Advertising

Rates for a full year placement (6 bimonthly issues) range from \$75 to \$360, depending on placement size and location. For detailed information on advertising in *Dive Log*, contact Don Eva at (603) 672-5608 or dpeva@aol.com

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Website:

Newsletters and other current info are available at our website: <http://www.udnh.org>, graciously hosted by Jake & Linda Richter.

ON THE COVER /SAME DAY PART ONE

Ice On The Water

by Gary Thuillier

After a long wait we're finally able to get back to the thing we look forward to every year. No more baking in the hot sun, or getting sand in our gear from those nasty beach dives. Now is the time we can slide our way out onto the ice and drop down to that serene world where the sound of outboard motors is non-existent. Yeah, I'm sure you're buying this crap, but you've got to admit, ice diving is a lot of fun, whether you go in the water or just offer support.

There is a point around early November when most divers have put away their scuba gear and waxed up the skis or what have you, leaving only the hardest (or craziest) individuals to trek to the coast every weekend hoping the weather will cooperate and allow for a dive. Those of us who find that off-chance day are usually rewarded with the spectacular visibility found only when the water is just too cold for the algae. The same holds true when diving under the ice of a frozen lake, USUALLY!

This year, for our first ice dive of the season, I decided to lure the club members up to spot on Lake Winnisquam where I spent most of the Summers of my youth. On reaching our destination we proceeded to drag everything out and looked for a good place for the hole. Using my keen sense of direction (and the black topped spar buoy frozen into the ice) we found our spot and began shoveling the 8-10 inch snowcover. I fired up my old reliable chain saw and began making the cut when the unthinkable happened, and fortunately, for the first time since I'd been doing this with UDNH, someone else brought along their saw as a backup. Was this to be the end of my ice carving with this old machine? I had been using it for the last 9 years. Not a chance! After some choice words (and some staring fluid) we were back in business. Jim Wenzel was cutting one line with me on another occasionally breaking through to the water below. *Talk about a Rooster Tail! Sorry Jim!* (You really must pay attention to the direction of the cut)

Without taking an actual head count my guess is over a dozen people took me up on the invitation to at least offer support for whoever had it in their mind to climb into that triangular hole. Five of us, were determined to get our *faces* wet (what do you expect, we're diving in drysuits), while Tom Tremblay was going to go all the way-until he realized he forgot his wetsuit at home. The site was at the Northern end of the lake in a little cove protected nicely from the wind. Getting there meant just a short slide down the hill out onto the ice and no more than a 50 yard walk to the spot. What laid beneath the ice was nothing so majestic as the 'Lady of the

Lake', our usual site, but a rather interesting granite formation dropping from a sand/silt bottom of 10 feet straight down to 45 feet. On the surface we cleared out a place for our tent and laid the ropes ready for the dive. Being the only person familiar with this place I went in first with Jim as my buddy. We quickly learned that the hole could have been in a better location, but also could have been much worse. As we dropped below the ice and turned in the direction I wanted to head, a huge boulder rose up from the bottom to within 2 feet of the mirror-like ceiling. Had I cut the hole there we never would have squeezed by. Passing by the rock with a bottom of about 10-12 feet, the crystal clear water was quickly silted with every stroke of our fins and as we proceeded over the ledge, the darkness increased immensely. This was not the well lit wreck dive commonly seen in Winnepesaukee, in fact, the glow from Jim's dive light disappeared if I got more than 10 feet from him. With not much to see at 40 feet I moved up nearer the ice and found my buddy closely watching some kind of juvenile fish who seemed to be guarding a neat little hole in the granite.

Back on the surface another team of divers were anxiously waiting their turn while the support team drank hot chocolate and explained to curious onlookers the reasoning behind this thing we do. As the Sun dipped behind the pines we wrapped up our dive, plugged the hole and packed our stuff back up the hill.

What a great day it turned out to be. This group effort involved in ice diving is, to me, the most enjoyable aspect of the whole adventure. Here we had a gathering of club members of which less than half had even planned on going in the water, and those who did went through all this work for a mere 20 minute dive. Would we do it again? You Bet! Feb.19 was slated for the Glen Ellis Falls dive but a major storm postponed it to the next day. Unfortunately everyone assumed it was simply cancelled and only Lea Nichols, Wayne Russel and Mike Griffin made the trip. The report was favorable, open water and a completely iced over waterfall but lots of snow to walk through. Of course, by the time you read this, we will have also done the annual 'Lady of the Lake' trip. Join us next season! You need only be a member of UDNH (and open water certified of course) and attend one of our *ice dive* seminars. Until then, stay out of the hot sun.

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INSTRUCTIONS

RENTALS

Bay Islands, Honduras ... An Excellent Dive Destination!

text and photos by Karen Marion

It all started at a dive club board meeting. I'd already planned a dive trip to the Cayman Islands in May, but was itching to dive sooner than that. Gary happened to mention a two-for-one special on the Bay Island Aggressor IV during January and February of this year to "break in" the "new" boat. I already knew about that boat from my web research, and had always wanted to dive in Roatan, so my hand shot up in the air, and I said, loudly, "Ok, who wants to go with me?" Kerry and Linda consulted, looked interested, and finally agreed. Kerry had been wanting to travel, Linda couldn't, so Kerry would be my dive buddy on the trip. We picked three weeks that would work for us. I called the Aggressor Fleet office the following morning and was promptly put on a waiting list for any of those three weeks. Two or three days later there was a cancellation and I signed us up for the week of February 5 to 12.

With only a month or so to plan, packing and finalizing of my new camera gear purchases happened swiftly. With much help and advice from Fred at Underwater Photo-Tech, I bought a Nikon N50, Sea & Sea housing, a YS60 strobe, a Nikkor 60mm macro lens, and 30 rolls of film. I was ready for anything, or so I thought. But before leaving I added a second N50 camera body, a 20mm wide angle lens, and a dome port to my supplies. Why not, I thought.

Kerry and Linda arrived at my house in the wee hours of a snowy morning, and the van arrived to take us to the airport at around 3:30 am. Yes, that's early. Linda waved us out of the driveway, as we began the first leg of the journey. The flights were relatively uneventful, though we saw five airports in one day. Each flight seemed to take off late and arrive early, and our luggage all arrived with us in Roatan. An Aggressor representative met us and helped us get our luggage into a taxi since we'd arrived a day early and needed to stay in a hotel for the first night. The Executive Inn is nothing to write home about. It's clean, and it had a restaurant, but that's about all it's got going for it. Nothing to do, no shops, no understanding that a visitor might want bottled water to drink. I was not impressed. Nevertheless, the price was right, and we spent some time the following day photographing the flowers and watching the birds.

Finally the time arrived to make our way to the Aggressor. It was raining, but warm and pleasant. Our taxi driver spoke very little English, and neither of us spoke much Spanish, but we managed to get across to him our destination, and with smiles all around, we arrived safely at the Aggressor's dock. A few words about the Aggressor are certainly in order. Until very recently, the Bay Islands were served by the Bay Island Aggressor III, a very nice looking dive yacht, very similar in appearance to the Cayman Aggressor. The "new" Bay Island Aggressor IV is a



Queen Angelfish

(continued on next page)



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replacement, and quite frankly, I can't figure out why. It's not an attractive boat. It looks like a ferry, and from what we could tell, it used to be one. It's got a shallow draft, can only do 10 knots, and has rusty patches ruining its appearance. The TV room is tiny, and half the passengers had to sit on the floor for presentations. The photo department only had MX-10 cameras for rent. The boutique was woefully understocked, and had very little to offer but t-shirts. Lest you think it was all bad, the crew was very friendly and helpful, the dive operation efficient, and the food plentiful. But don't ask about the broken sewage pump, the very loud compressors, people smoking on the middle deck, or the seasickness.

So, the boat was so-so. So was the weather. It rained much of the time, and some of the crossings were a bit rough. There was a fair amount of surge and current, making macro photography a challenge. And getting back to the boat ... can you say "race for it"? The boat tended to swing on a long mooring line and got going so fast that it became a matter of honor for me to chase it down. It was actually quite a lot of fun, but it might have been smarter to simply wait for it to return on its next swing. Somehow, despite the challenges of the diving, the sewage-smell-induced seasickness, the rain, the lack of sleep due to the loud generators, the fact that eleven of the other passengers lost their luggage ... somehow I still had a fabulous time. The diving was beautiful, and I got many photographs that I really like. My first queen triggerfish, my first gray angelfish, many different hamlets, lots of Pederson's cleaning shrimp, green moray eels at cleaning stations, soft corals tilting in the current, wrecks, and the ever-present yellowtailed snappers. We didn't see any of the big stuff. No turtles, no sharks, no manta rays. But what we did see was beautiful, plentiful, and healthy.

There were many photographers on the trip. There was one other woman with a housed system (an old, blue Tussy), lots of Nikonos systems, and three housed video cameras, not counting the video pro



Trumpetfish

aboard ship. The passengers were friendly, and we shared dive stories, photo tips, histories, and hopes for better weather. I dove mostly with Kerry, but also buddied a couple of times with other passengers, and once mostly with the photo pro while I modeled for some pictures. He gave each of us slides of ourselves diving, and I bought the video of the week. In addition to diving I enjoyed watching the birds in the area. When close to shore we often saw brown pelicans, the males in full breeding plumage. There were frigatebirds, turkey vultures (AKA Honduran Eagles), terns and even a little hummingbird. And one day there was a little, yellow butterfly on my BCD. The sun came out a few times, and Friday morning it finally came out to stay. Friday has to be one of the great highlights of the trip. Perfect weather, and an awesome dive site called "Valley of the Kings". We dove this one twice, as we did most morning sites, and it was well worth it. I even hurried to re-load my camera so I could shoot a second roll of film at that site. The mooring was in about 40 feet of water, and there was a wall nearby with a narrow chasm (the "Valley" of the name). There was a moray eel on the wall of the valley, as well as a beautiful French Angel, many tiny Pederson's cleaning shrimps, and much more. I stayed mostly near the top of the wall, as there was so much to photograph there and the light was good. With a sigh and a fond farewell, we exited the water of our last dive of the trip.

Afterwards we motored back to the dock, ate lunch, and eight of us met a van for an island tour of Roatan. Cameras and binoculars in hand, we stopped for scenic photos, bought postcards and t-shirts in town, visited an iguana farm, shot photos of two above-water shipwrecks, and finally, stopped to view the sunset on our way back to the boat. After a quick change of clothes we all then headed into the French quarter for dinner at a local restaurant. The food there was quite good, though near the end several of the passengers and the Captain lit up cigars. The rest of us fled for our lives out into the fresh air. Afterwards much packing ensued, as most of the passengers had to leave to catch their flights by 6:30 the following morning. Kerry and I had one more day on the islands, and arranged for a local guide to find us a place better than the Executive Inn, and to help us arrange a dolphin encounter. We ended up on the west end of Roatan in a place called Coconut Palm Cabins, which was much nicer than the inn, and near the water, shops, and restaurants. That afternoon we went to Anthony's Key Resort for a dolphin encounter, and best of luck, a cancellation on the half-hour dolphin swim meant we got to spend 45 minutes with these magnificent animals. There were eight of us, split into two groups. First we got an introduction to "our" dolphin, Annie. She performed for us some jumps, a tail walk, and let us rub her belly. We got to hug her, and we all got kisses from her. She seemed to like the guys, sticking her tongue out for them. Then the eight of us donned mask, fins and snorkel, for a half hour swim in a large enclosure with ten dolphins. There were young as well as adult animals, and it was great fun. Several of them came over and let me touch them, but mostly they played around while we watched.

(continued on next page)

US Divers

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(continued from previous page)

With another sigh, for another ending, it was back to the west end for dinner and final packing. Our ride was scheduled for 5:30 the following morning to take us to the airport, and sleep was much needed.

Our flights home were uneventful until we arrived in Logan Airport, tired and ready to get home. We watched as luggage came and went on the carousel, and finally had to admit that neither of ours was among them. Kerry watched the carousels in case they arrived, while I started the paperwork to try to track them down. Each of us had most of our camera gear, and all our film and souvenirs in hand, but it was still distressing to think of thousands of dollars of dive gear lost in the ether. It seems that our flight was so full that some of the luggage had been left behind, but the woman couldn't figure out from the computer where it actually was. We'd last seen it in Houston where we went through customs. We missed our 10:30 van. We missed our 11:00 van. 10 minutes to go until the 11:30 van and we decided to bail, hoping against hope that it would arrive safely and the airline deliver it the following day. I, by this time, couldn't think straight for lack of sleep, but fortunately Kerry was still alert. He heard arrival information for another flight in from Dallas, and we decided for one last try at getting our luggage. We quick-stepped to carousel D, and within moments I saw my bag! Whew! A minute or two later another black dive bag that turned out to be Kerry's. Now the race was on, since it was after 11:30. The long and the short of it is that the van arrived minutes after we got outside, so we were finally on the last leg of the journey home.

This was a journey on which a lot went wrong, but somehow everything went right. I had an excellent time, and have names and addresses of a few people from the trip that I may contact again when next I travel ... people that I'd enjoy meeting, and diving with, again.



The Bay Islands of Honduras are gorgeous! The diving is fairly typical Caribbean diving, but unlike Bonaire, Aruba, and many others, Roatan and the other Bay Islands are lush, tropical, hilly islands full of beauty above ground as well as below the water. The next time I might stay at Anthony's Key Resort, where the dolphins were. The place was extraordinarily beautiful, and a classier act than the boat we were on. I would consider the Aggressor again, though would prefer it if they replaced it once again, with a more powerful, and more beautiful yacht, more in keeping with their reputation. I shall definitely return.

Happy diving,
Karen

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Same Day part 2

While we were enjoying a leisurely ICE-DIVE in New Hampshire, a couple of fellow UDNH members were in cave country working on their upcoming film presentation, "Favorite Cave Dives in Northern Florida".

Lea Nichols and Mike Griffin made the trip down to Lake City where they based their photographic journey. Here is a preview of the wonders you can see at Boston Sea Rovers on March 5th or later at Beneath The Sea in New Jersey.

Cover photo is Mike served up on a fresh bed of 'Water Lettuce' at the "Catfish Hotel", Manatee Springs State Park.

Lea Nichols exploring the Orange Grove Sink



Cow Springs



Little River



continued on next page...

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Madison Blue

Thanks Don

Our February 7th meeting was turned over to Don Stevens of *ATLANTIC AQUASPORT* for an open discussion on dive training techniques. As expected, we ran into overtime but all walked away with some new insight on sport diving.

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NITROX is no longer COMING, it's HERE!!

For years now we have been hearing debates on the pros and cons of diving with NITROX or *enriched air* gas. Having heard nothing derogatory from those I know using it I figure it's time to give this magic exiler a try for myself. As members of the *United Divers of New Hampshire* we now have the oppurtunity to take the course at a discounted cost of \$95.00 at *Ocean Scuba*. This is a 3 1/2 hour class to be completed in one night at their shop at 136 East Hollis St.in Nashua, NH. This is an excellent deal for the course and also a great incentive to join UDNH. The regular price is \$135.00 so if you consider the \$30.00 cost of an individual membership, it's money in your pocket. There is no pool or open water work involved in the course, only a preliminary stop at the dive shop to pick up text materials prior to the class session. For more information call them at (603) 881-5511



Club Meetings

Meetings are held the first and third Mondays of each month, January through November. We encourage potential members to attend a meeting or two to experience our club before joining. The meetings are held at the YMCA on 30 Mechanic St. (off of Elm Street) in Manchester. The meetings start at 7:00 PM. Each meeting consists of a short business portion followed by a variety of presentations and discussions. Immediately following the club has an hour of pool time for swimming, trying out gear, and the occasional game of underwater hockey. Members and guests often meet afterwards at a local restaurant for food and drink.

Extreme Weather

Meetings will be held if the YMCA is open. You can call them at 603-623-3558. Check close to the meeting time as the front desk often has no advance warning of early closures.

Membership

Annual dues for membership for 2000 in the United Divers of New Hampshire are \$30/individual or \$45/family. Dues are not prorated for members who join later in the year. To join, please contact Don Eva at 603-672-5608

Get in the Swim

After every meeting, the YMCA pool is open to our dive club for an hour of fun and fitness.

Don't wait for the ice to thaw before trying out that new equipment, the pool is the perfect place. Check out the club calendar for special presentations in the pool like dive knife use or trying out a dry suit. So bring a suit and a towel to every meeting and get into the swim.

United Divers of New Hampshire Contact Information - 2000

President	Gary Thuillier	603-487-3001
Vice President	Kerry Hurd	603-672-8325
Treasurer	Jim Mayo	603-895-4090
Secretary	Don Eva	603-672-5608
Dive Coordinator	Tom Tremblay	603-625-8459

Meeting schedule: (winter hours) 7:00-8:45pm - meeting & presentation , 8:45-9:30- pool time, 9:30-9:45- Hot Tub!

Meetings and Events

March 4&5, 2000 Boston Sea Rovers Clinic.

March 6, 2000 Meeting

March 20, 2000 Meeting

Jean Stefanik's "Crossword Challenge" Study and bring your "Marine Life of the North Atlantic" books (Jean has extras for the evening)

March 25, 2000 4th Annual Catch the Wave multiclub Party. Contact Don Eva @ 603-672-5608 for details.

April 3, 2000 Meeting

Wendy Lull will speak on Odiorne Point Marine life Center

Boston Sea Rovers

The 46th Annual International Clinic

March 4&5, 2000

Don't miss this years show. There are sure to be many great new products for the new millenium on display as well as two days of informative and very enjoyable presentations by some of the worlds top speakers not to mention our own Lea Nichols and Mike Griffin with thier show on cave diving in Northern Florida.

For details or to help out at the UDNH booth call Gary @ (603) 487-3001 or www.searovers.com



Internet connection - a new place in the *DiveLog* for businesses with websights.

With the growing trend of web advertising and the fact that this newsletter can be seen online it makes good sense to put your connection here. Call Gary Thuillier for pricing details.

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Oceanic DataMax Pro air integrated computer \$300.00 call Gary @ (603)487-3001

TIDES

The following abbreviated tide tables are for High Tides only, based on Portsmouth Harbor. This guide is a quick reference only and should not be used for dives requiring exact times for slack tide. More detailed information is available at maineharbors.com.

SATURDAY		SUNDAY	
MARCH			
4	9:50 AM	5	10:28 AM
11	2:42 PM	12	3:40 PM
18	9:29 AM	19	10:21 AM
25	2:51 pm	26	3:41 PM
APRIL			
1	8:56 AM	2	10:40 AM
8	3:01 PM	9	3:56 PM
15	9:47 AM	16	10:43 AM
22	3:02 PM	23	3:44 PM

Weather

Current marine weather for New England can be accessed on the world wide web at NWS.FSU.EDU/BUOY/

DIVE LOG

United Divers of New Hampshire
P.O. Box 4176
Manchester, NH 03108-4176

Forward and Address Correction Requested

DIVE LOG

Dive Log is the bi-monthly newsletter of the United Divers of New Hampshire, an organization dedicated to educating divers and expanding the knowledge of diving in the State of New Hampshire and New England.

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Ice On The Water
Florida Cave diving
Bay Islands

