

BRANDON SCUBA CLUB

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I hope everyone is able to get out and do some diving this summer

I would like to thank David Ford for the pictures on this page from his Hawaii dive trip as well as the article on diving in Hawaii he supplied for this newsletter.

Dive safe,
Ed Burrige



Presidents Message

Another dive season has passed!! Fortunately with me being on the divemaster course I was able to put on the wetsuit numerous times this summer, as well as learn a great deal along the way. The second annual crack the safe dive went off safely and was enjoyed by those who were able to make it out. At the last meeting, we set dates for the Christmas party, crack the safe dive and a fall "melon dive" next September. You will find these dates in this newsletter, and every newsletter between now and the events so spread the word!! For those of you who weren't at the last meeting as well, due to my work taking me elsewhere I have decided to resign as President of the Brandon Scuba Club. I am turning over the reins to a very capable acting President, Don Sutherland as well as a great team on the executive as I chase dreams down south. To those on the executive during my duration as president, many thanks. I couldn't have done it without you. And thank you to the members of the club for making it a memorable year. Take advantage of these fine events and hope to see you all out in the future!

Regards

Ryan M Bartlette

Scuba Diving at Kona, Hawaii

Scuba diving along the Kona Coast of the Big Island is all about night dives with the manta rays. Or maybe it's the easy-access shore diving. Or maybe it's the calm ocean, great underwater visibility, and bright healthy coral. Whichever. Because they're all true!

Jack's Diving Lockers was our choice of dive shop in Kona because of testimonials from other Manitoba divers. These recommendations may have been because one of Jack's staff was originally from Winnipeg, or because one of the deck hands on the dive boat Na Pali Kai had gone to school in Portage la Prairie. Or maybe it was because the staff were friendly as all get out, the shop was well organized, and the boats left on time. Well, it certainly wasn't because of low prices: a two tank morning boat dive costs US\$125, a two tank evening/night boat dive costs US\$145, and a three tank advanced boat dive can set you back US\$225. However, an overwhelming sense of security and the infectious feeling of camaraderie made the cost easier to accept.

Jack's underwater photographers are exceptional, and either Jeff or Keller can produce a top quality video built around your day of diving with them. For US\$100, Jeff Leicher produced a CD with 15 minutes of footage from our two morning dives, but then he added in another 40 minutes of stock footage from our own personal wish lists (e.g. rays, dolphins, whales, turtles). For another US\$100, Keller Laros produced a CD with 30 minutes of footage from our late afternoon dive (with a school of goatfish sleeping on the sand) and our night dive with the two manta rays, but then he added in another 20 minutes of stock footage from his previous dives with the critters. Both CDs are professionally produced and eminently viewable. Funny? Yes. Scary? Sure. Just makes us realize why we enjoy scuba diving so much!

On every dive we kept hoping to see a turkeyfish (the Hawaiian equivalent of a lionfish), but had to settle for pilot whales, spinner dolphins, spotted eagle rays, manta rays, yellowmargin moray eels, whitemouth moray eels, yellowmouth moray eels, and the distant shadow of a shark. For those who are more comfortable looking at beautifully coloured fish (that are either shorter or smaller than you!), there was the Potter=s angelfish, spotted boxfish (male and female), Whitley=s boxfish (male and female), milletseed butterflyfish, threadfin butterflyfish, saddleback butterflyfish, schools of racoon butterflyfish swimming high above the reefs, bluestripe butterflyfish, lined butterflyfish, multiband butterflyfish, ornate butterflyfish, fourspot butterflyfish, teardrop butterflyfish, common longnose butterflyfish, and the (totally black!) rare longnose butterflyfish, chocolate dip chromis, blackfin chromis, Hawaiian dascyllus, bright-eye damselfish, blue-eye damselfish, Pacific gregory, scrawled filefish, barred filefish, a school of Hawaiian flagtail, peacock grouper, blackside hawkfish, clearfin lizardfish, bullet parrotfish, spotted puffer, longspine porcupinefish, leaf scorpionfish, Achilles tang, orangespine unicornfish, Moorish idol, yellow tang, and the Hawaiian state fish - humuhumu-nukunuku-a-pua a (viz. lagoon triggerfish). Throw in a huge patch of garden eels at 50 feet of depth, and you've got a good start towards an unforgettable vacation.

Scuba Diving at Hilo, Hawaii

Whereas: the prevailing trade winds that blow across the Hawaiian Islands come from the northeast, and
whereas: Hilo is located on the east coast of the Big Island of Hawaii, with a harbour that opens towards the northeast;
therefore: the area's weather is characterized by steady winds, frequent squall clouds, and high rainfall.

This weather was ideal for the growth of sugarcane, and - for the several decades that sugar was refined and shipped from Hilo - the cellulose waste from the cane was unceremoniously dumped into Hilo harbour. Therefore, when winter storms sweep across the Pacific Ocean, this rotting biomass of cane-waste gets churned up, fills the coastal water with particles / strands / etc., which in turn turns the water quite murky and fouls the beaches.

Although there are some small dive shops that sell scuba equipment and fill air tanks, a Lobo del Maré (Seawolf, in Spanish) is the primary diving company for the tourist hotels in Hilo. This is a family operation, with various younger members being the divemasters, boat captains, and administrative staff. The father (now retired) began diving operations in the Sea of Cortez, Mexico, moved north to Alaska for a few years near Anchorage, then several branches of the family tree moved to the Big Island several years ago and set up shop in Hilo. Prices (2007) are US\$70 for a single tank dive and US\$100 for a two tank trip, however, the same boat also takes snorkellers for US\$45.

The dive plan for a mixed group is to exit the Hilo harbour breakwater, cruise to a beach park located 3 - 4 kilometres eastward, then drop both snorkellers and divers off in the middle of a set of sharp lava pinnacles surrounded by 20 - 30 feet of water.

Snorkellers will find this experience quite exciting, because they can decide whether to:

- float safely away from the lava, but where they can hardly see the ocean bottom (remember the murky comment?), or
- swim in shallow water near the pinnacles, but avoid being smashed into the lava by surge and wave action.

Scuba divers get the best deal, because they can drop down to the ocean bottom, and just swim in the surge while enjoying numerous green turtles and interesting fish life. A thin layer of live coral covers much of the underwater lava formations, but broken coral is strewn about the ocean floor - the unfortunate result from several millennia of storms / tsunami / cyclones along this particular coastline.

We spotted 6 - 10 green turtles sleeping in lava tubes/undercuts of the pinnacles, the usual groups of parrotfish / snapper / goatfish / wrasse / etc., plus our logbooks note bandit angelfish, spotted boxfish, oval chromis (juvenile), bright-eye damselfish, yellowmargin moray, curious wormfish, stocky/marbled hawkfish, Hawaiian lizardfish, crowned toby, goldrim surgeonfish, white-cheeked surgeonfish, rockmover wrasse (juvenile and adult).

UPCOMING BRANDON SCUBA CLUB EVENTS

At the last BSC meeting, upcoming events and BSC dives had been planned for the next year. This way everyone can mark them on their calendar and plan on attending. More information will be coming in future newsletters.

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| September 30, 2007 | Take Dive Buoys out for the season
Glen Beag dive site
12:00 noon |
| November 2, 2007 | Hawaiian Luau Social (MUC)
5 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Canad Inns, Polo Park, Winnipeg
Info: |
| November 24, 2007 | Brandon Scuba Club X-mas Party
Waggle Springs Fish & Game Club
Shilo area
Further information will be coming
Plan on attending. Loads of Fun!!! |
| May 18, 2008 | Put Dive Buoys in for the season
Glen Beag |
| July 12, 2008 | Crack the Safe Dive
Glen Beag |
| August 9 & 10, 2008 | Dauphin Dolphin Spearfishing Competition
A weekend for of fun!! |
| September 27, 2008 | Melon Dive |

NOTE: If you received a notice that your membership dues are up, please forward payment to Troy Elliott to ensure you keep getting BSC updates. Membership fees have stayed the same \$20./individual; \$25./family. Only difference now is that a family member who is over the age of 18 is now considered an adult and will be responsible for their own membership. Any functions that they wish to attend, if not a current member, they will be considered a guest. This was raised upon at a BSC meeting earlier this year.