



# New England Aquarium Dive Club, Inc.

www.neadc.org

Winter Newsletter 2010

## NEADC

### Monthly Meetings

#### Eat and Greet

Join us at 5:30pm for food and fun before each General Meeting at Jose McIntyre's on Milk St.

#### General Meeting Third Wednesday 6:30pm

#### NEAq Harborside Learning Lab

Come hear one of our fabulous guest speakers, find out where members have been diving and maybe even win a dive in the Giant Ocean Tank!

#### February General Meeting:

Lobster and crabbing regulations

Coming soon:  
Andy Martinez

Check out your E-News or  
www.neadc.org  
for more info!

#### Not getting our E-News?

Please make sure we have your email! Updates can be made right on our web site! Click on the button: "Update Your Profile"

## Grand Caymans...Thanks to the Boston Sea Rovers by Shawn Cormier

In November my wife and I departed for Grand Cayman. As the lucky winner of the door prize from the *2009 Boston Sea Rovers show*, we spent 5 days and four nights at the *Cobalt Coast Resort* on the Island of Grand Cayman. While my wife and I are both certified divers, this was our first stay at any type of dedicated dive resort.

As the palm trees swayed and beautiful turquoise water sparkled, we headed to our resort in a private European style bus. Driving on the "wrong" side of the road, I remembered that Grand Cayman was a British territory. We headed straight to Hell, a little town to the north with narrow, crowded roads. Finally, after beginning at 3:00am, we arrived at the resort around 2:00pm. We pulled up to the front door and Mr. Arie Barendrecht met us with an extremely warm and kind greeting. Our vacation had begun.

The resort was quiet, comfortable and welcoming with a pool, whirlpool and a dock to the ocean for unlimited shore diving. In our room, the view and smell of ocean, the rustle of the palm trees and the warmth of the day relieved all tension of travel. Excited to dive, I checked out the dive shop just steps away, then enjoyed some pina coladas and a nice, relaxing meal.

After breakfast I was anxious to see the fish, turtles and other animals. One of the best features Dive Tech uses is two boats: one for the newbie's and one for the more seasoned divers. With only 12 other divers and 3 staff, the mood was calm as everyone sized each other up. The first dive of the day was Orange Canyon, followed by Stingray City after lunch. We were excited to play with the famous stingrays. Currently, only the divemasters are allowed to feed them, but the stingrays still check everyone for food and give you quite a show munching on fingers, vacuuming hair and looking for gentle massages. We were the only group there, giving us an amazing, private show.



A friend at Stingray City

On the trip back to the dock we made new friends as everyone started sharing their experiences. We made plans for a shore dive on Fan Reef to see what the resort had to offer with plans for a later night dive. Our routine became: wake up, eat a buffet breakfast, pack gear, two boat dives, an afternoon dive and a night dive...All with the same results: beautiful warm water, gorgeous, pristine reefs loaded with fish, turtles and bubble breathers.

The above water night life was mostly about where to eat. The resort offered wonderful food, but we wanted to explore more of the island. Thanks to our new friends, we crammed into their tiny car. Driving on the "wrong" side of the road, we put our faith in our driver as he navigated the narrow "paths" to the Calypso Grill in West Bay. As we sat oceanside under the stars, we reflected on the wonderful experience we had while staying at the Cobalt Coast Resort and diving with the crew of Dive Tech.

The larger ocean life was elsewhere during our time of adventure to Grand Cayman, but Grand Cayman has some of the best diving I have ever encountered. At no other time have I enjoyed diving as much as I did here. With tanks at the water's edge and a pier to jump off any time, the island beckons you to explore the underwater world.

Thank you to *Boston Sea Rovers*, Cayman Island Department of Tourism, Cobalt Coast Dive Resort and Dive Tech for an amazing adventure to Grand Cayman! We can't wait to return!

## 2010 NEADC Officers

**President:** Rick Rosa  
president@neadc.org

**Vice President:** Uma Mirani  
vicepresident@neadc.org

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newsletter@neadc.org

### Dive Coordinators:

*Boat Dives:* Jim Carozza  
boatdive@neadc.org

*Shore Dives:* Dan Sprague  
shoredive@neadc.org

## *From your Vice President, Uma Mirani*

Greetings to all of our Dive Club members! The beginning of a new year always evokes a sense of hope that it will be a short winter, in anticipation of the spring and a new dive season. Not being a dry suit diver, I look forward to the warming of the Atlantic and the promise of jumping into the water to see what I've missed. During this break in diving your NEADC board members strive to plan for the upcoming season, with the goal of expanding and improving upon the previous year's activities. We have some great things lined up and hope to see all of you out there with us enjoying the diversity and beauty of our local New England waters! In 2010 we also plan to help the scientists at REEF to expand the information on the New England marine critters we all love, so get out there, get diving and record what you see!

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## *From your Membership Director, Charlie Benoit*

### *The Benefits of Membership*

A friend of mine recently asked me about joining the NEADC, more specifically about what you get for your membership in the club. I did not have to think long or hard on that, and started listing all the great discounts that you get at the NEAq, like 10% off at the Aquarium Café, The Gift Shop, plus discounted IMAX and Whale Watch tickets. There is even discounted parking in the garage. I also went on to tell him about the list of world-class speakers that the NEADC brings in for our monthly meetings, and our big annual events like the Great Annual Fish Count and the Tropical Fish Rescue.

I continued to ramble off all the great benefits like free, members-only events at the NEAq, behind-the-scenes tours, and the a myriad of shore diving and boat diving opportunities. Great dive trips to the four corners of the world! Meet new dive buddies! Make new friends! As I went on and on, my friend stopped me and told me honestly, the only reason he was interested in joining the NEADC was for the opportunity to dive in the Giant Ocean Tank (G.O.T.). I started laughing because in truth, that's exactly the reason why I joined the club almost a decade ago now!

Ironically, my friend attended his first meeting at the end of last year, and wouldn't you know it... he WON the monthly G.O.T. raffle, and dove in it this past month! (Look for his story on page 3)

# Mass Diving

247 W. Central St. Natick, MA 01760  
www.massdiving.com (508) 651-0698

MASS Diving is a PADI-5 Star Training Facility and Travel Center offering all levels of SCUBA instruction and the largest selection of SCUBA equipment in New England. Come by and check out our new **expanded** showroom or shop online! Early summer is also a great time to get your gear serviced! Join us this summer for our MASS Diving Programs. We offer guided shore dives, boat dives, and PADI Specialty Dives including Nitrox. See our website for details. Stop by and visit the only dive center in Metrowest!

Want to travel? Check out *group travel* on our website

**Fiji: May 6-15, 20 or 22, 2010**

**Maldives – September 14-28, 2010 (Whale sharks, mantas and more!)**

**Freeport, Bahamas: October 8-12, 2010**

**Grand Cayman: October 30-November 6, 2010**

**Maldives: March 11-25, 2011**

## *Safety first!*

Has it been a while since your gear has been serviced?

Don't forget to get your tanks, regulator and BC checked out on a regular basis **before** you get in the water.

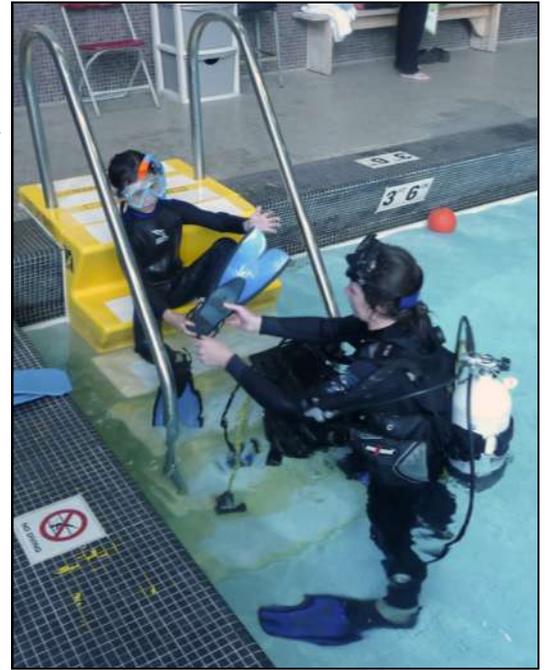
Your local dive shop can help make sure your gear is working properly.

## ***From your Secretary, Kat Apse***

### ***Kids can learn to dive too!***

**Scuba Rangers** is a Scuba Club and Educational Camp for kids between the ages of 8 and 12. At United Divers, Inc. in Somerville, MA, kids can try diving in a pool with real equipment and start exploring the underwater world. The program gives kids the knowledge and skills required to be a safe scuba diver, while encouraging them to have fun. And, that's not all! After you complete the *Scuba Ranger* program and receive a special certification card, there are several *Specialty Ranger* programs and events available to keep active. For more information, check out the official Scuba Rangers web site at [www.ScubaRangers.com](http://www.ScubaRangers.com) or [www.uniteddivers.com](http://www.uniteddivers.com).

At **United Divers, Inc.** we spend 5 class sessions with the rangers as we dive through the different levels, practicing various skills and having fun along the way. The class sessions are spread out over the course of 2 months, allowing the kids to go over their manual, complete all the questions and games, and rest up for the next adventure! Each session consists of a classroom and pool portion. In the classroom we go over the manual, answer questions, and learn to fill out the logbook. In the pool we practice equipment assembly and underwater skills. Of course we also include fun by taking pictures of staged corals, swimming through tunnels, and playing with the underwater torpedo. United Divers, Inc also offers events for Scuba Ranger Club members throughout the year. Some events include Diving with Santa, the Sandwich Town Beach BBQ and Snorkel, and a trip to the New England Aquarium. In addition, we hope to include a mini lecture series for 2010. Questions? Email me at [secretary@neadc.org](mailto:secretary@neadc.org).



## ***UPCOMING EVENTS***

Stay tuned to NEADC.org and the E-News for exciting speakers and events in 2010.

### **Spring:**

White water rafting  
Whale watch

### **Save the dates:**

### **BIG summer events**

July 24, 2010

### **Great Annual Fish Count**

Stage Fort Park

August 29, 2010

### **Tropical Fish Rescue & BBQ**

Fort Wetherill, RI



## ***Another Reason to Join the New England Aquarium Dive Club*** By Anthony D. Ring

*(See [www.neadc.org](http://www.neadc.org) for a link to Anthony's photos)*

Ever wonder about the New England Aquarium's Dive Club but didn't know if you had the time to attend meetings or just how welcome you would be amongst all those "Old Timers?" I have to admit that I thought the very same thing. In fact, I'll admit that I joined the club last year and didn't attend one meeting. Then, about a month ago, I was talking to a member

who told me just how newcomers are made to feel welcome and some of the many benefits that come from membership. After talking with him for a bit, I decided to attend my first meeting in December 2009.

Upon arrival, I met a wonderful group of friendly people in a semi-social environment, all with the same passion for diving. I learned about some of the opportunities the Aquarium offers, the various local and travel dive trips that the club organizes, some of the charitable work that comes from member efforts and, of course, the coveted opportunity to dive in the New England Aquarium's Giant Ocean Tank (GOT).

While I know it was mere chance, on my first NEADC membership meeting, I entered the raffle to dive in the Great Ocean Tank. To my shock and awe, MY member card was pulled out of the hat! I walked out of that meeting with "bragging rights" amongst my family and dive-friends. I was going to get to dive in the Giant Ocean Tank!

As a new member, I have found that this is a great group of people. If you want to expand your recreational diving experiences, volunteer rescuing marine animals, help out at the Aquarium, or just have fun with some folks once a month while expanding your dive buddy circles, this club's for you. And, if you want a chance to dive the Great Tank with Myrtle the sea turtle as children and their parents "ooh" and "aah" at your amazing underwater exploits make sure to keep your membership current and come to the monthly meetings!

As for me, I won't deny walking out of the meeting with a bigger bounce in my step, knowing that I will be one of a relatively small group of divers who can say that they dove inside of the New England Aquarium's Great Ocean Tank. Boy, how cool is that!

**From your Dive Boat Coordinator, Jim Carozza**  
**Boat diving is fun!**

Along with the company and friends you meet, easy entry and exit, dive sites unreachable by shore, lobstering, scalloping, or visiting a great wreck, makes it a great way to dive.

Dive season is right around the corner. We hope to put a lot more boat trips on the schedule this season after a great 2009 including 4th of July, Boston Harbor trips, seal dives and more. Stay tuned to the E-News and Summer Newsletter as trips are added.

**Boat dive preliminary schedule:**

**Saba/St. Kitts:** March 6-13, 2010-2 spots left

**Dutch Springs, PA:** Summer weekend trip  
(dates in process)

**Isle of Shoals Seal dives**

Want to reserve a space or add a trip or location to the schedule? Contact [boatdive@neadc.org](mailto:boatdive@neadc.org). If you've never done a boat dive, you are missing some great diving! Hope to see you aboard this year! Dive safe & dive often!

Looking for NEADC logo gear or tank stickers? Items are available at monthly meetings and photos will soon be posted on the website.

Contact [boatdive@neadc.org](mailto:boatdive@neadc.org) with any questions or requests.

**For Sale: As New!**

**Ikelite video housing & Sony HD camcorder**  
(plus accessories) \$1200 OBO  
Contact Steve at 617-833-5833

- \* Ikelite 6038.94 underwater housing
- \* Sony HDR-SR12 HD Handycam (also takes 10mp stills)
- \* W-20 Ikelite wide angle lens
- \* Two Ikelite light correcting red filters for use with or without the wide angle lens.

Less than one year old. Used only 5x with excellent results.

This is the top of the line camcorder and housing for professional level above or underwater video and shoots both video and stills. Shoot your favorite marine creatures, your friends surfing, boating or rafting.



Housing info:  
[www.ikelite.com/web\\_two/sony\\_hdr\\_sr11.html](http://www.ikelite.com/web_two/sony_hdr_sr11.html)



**Midway Atoll Sea Turtle Conservation**  
*with the Oceanic Society*  
**April 19-26**

Help scientists learn more about turtles!

Assist researchers George Balazs, a senior sea turtle biologist for the NOAA Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center, and Marc Rice Director, HPA/NOAA Cooperative Sea Turtle Research Program.

Learn about green sea turtles and assist the researchers as they assess the current status of green turtles at Midway and formulate strategies for future study.

For more information visit:

[www.oceanicsociety.org/resexp\\_midwayturtles](http://www.oceanicsociety.org/resexp_midwayturtles)

**BOSTON HARBOR**  
**DIVING COMPANY**

**SPECIAL OFFER TO**  
**NEADC MEMBERS:**  
**Receive \$10.00 off charters**

Includes group and individually booked trips. The first person to book a trip will choose the dive sites for the day. Charters run Friday-Monday during the summer. Typical departure is about 10am with a 4pm return, unless otherwise noted.

For scheduled group trips and more information please visit our website.

[www.bostondiving.com](http://www.bostondiving.com)  
Winthrop, MA 02152

***From your NEADC Shore Dive Coordinator,  
Dan Sprague***

The new dive season coming, why not try leading a dive!

What is involved in leading a dive? Maybe there is a dive site that you've always wanted to try or a favorite site that you would like to share with your fellow divers. Leading a dive doesn't mean you have to know the dive site well or be an expert diver, you just organize the date, time and meet-up. You can always get site recommendations!

Sometimes the fun of diving is helping other divers improve their skills and sometimes it's so you can learn a few tricks from them. Our club has the distinction of having a very diversified group of divers with many different skill levels. Maybe you'd like to lead a dive just so you can get one of our famous "Dive Leader" T-shirts! Who knows, you might find a great regular dive buddy!

If you've lead a New Member Dive in the past, let me know if you plan on leading more this year, I'll be leading as many of the others as my schedule will allow.

**NEW for 2010: Fish Count Dives!**

Brush up on your fish ID, play scientist for a dive and help us count fish for REEF!

In addition to the Great Annual Fish Count, we will run "Fish Count" dives through the dive season.

Come add dive dates to the Shore Dive Calendar each month at the Eat & Greet (before the General Meeting) as well as during each General Meeting. We will post the info on the website as soon as possible. As always, you can contact me at [shoredive@neadc.org](mailto:shoredive@neadc.org) with the info, and I'll make sure it gets up to the web.

*Stay Tuned...dates for the annual **Fall Bahamas trip** will be on the website by the end of February*

**Diving Fort Lauderdale** by *Tim Antonellis*

This was my first dive trip to Florida. I typically dive in tropical climates on vacation or in cold New England waters. Even for November, the weather was just amazing. It never got below 80 degrees on land the entire trip. It was easy to spot the locals when it rained and the temperature dipped into the frigid mid 70's. They were the ones cowering under their towels and rubbing their arms like you would see a true New Englander do at temps below freezing.

The first dive was to Tenneco Towers, a site with a history of questionable dive conditions. I had called the guys at Sea Experience and specifically asked for this site a few months before I got down there so the captain kept his word to go. From the decent down to the 30 minutes of bottom time, maxing out at 120 feet, there was almost no noticeable current. The schools of fish were everywhere and coral growth along this sunken oil rig was just truly breath taking. Even at the bottom, it felt like we were more no more than 40 feet from the surface.

Our next dive was at Nurse Shark Reef. What was supposed to be a drift dive, turned into work when the water wasn't helping you move along the reef. But, like they say, "a bad day diving is better than a good day anywhere else." There were large coral formations with beautiful angel and parrotfish, the lizardfish were skittish, but the swarms of snappers and jacks swam around like you were just another piece of coral in their way. It was a shallow, but amazing dive of only 20 feet, but lots of bottom time. Some of my dive buddies tried some lobstering, but didn't come home with any keepers. My only regret was that Nurse Shark Reef did not live up to its name and provide us with any shark sightings...But there is always next time!

**South Shore Divers**  
[www.southshoredivers.com](http://www.southshoredivers.com)

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## ***Celebrating New Year's in Cozumel***

*by Hunter Baker and Bernard Gilmore*

Two days after Christmas we headed south to Cozumel for a week of drift diving with Aldora Divers. We learned of Aldora through Undercurrent. They did not have a single bad review, and past customer raved about the long dives with the larger tanks provided by Aldora.

We stayed at the all-inclusive Wyndham resort on the west coast of the island. Second in size only to the Great Barrier Reef, the reefs off the coast of Cozumel extend from the northeast tip of the Yucatán peninsula down to Honduras.

Our typical dive day started when we were picked up at our resort around 8 am. We were almost always paired with divers of the same experience, and most days there were six or fewer divers in our group. The first dive of the morning was a deeper dive at one of the southern dive sites. These sites, such as Colombia, Colombia Deep, Cathedral and Devil's Throat, showcased Cozumel's well known large coral formations and swim-throughs. At Colombia Deep, we saw one of the largest eagle rays and the smallest nudibranchs we had ever seen. The deeper dives had fewer fish than the shallower dives, but on every dive we saw beautiful, large French, queen and grey angelfish.



*Splendid toadfish*

Our afternoon dive sites, typically 60-80 feet deep, included Palancar Gardens, Cedral, San Francisco, and Paso del Cedral. These were drift dives where we saw lots of life, arrow crabs, butterflyfish, angelfish, flamingo tongue, stingrays, scrawled filefish, barracuda, hawksbill turtles, scorpionfish, spiny lobster, parrotfish, blue tang, black durgon, and the list goes on and on. On two of our dives we saw a splendid toadfish, which is endemic to Cozumel. One of the advantages of diving with Aldora was the steel 120s they use for all the dives. The larger tanks allowed us to stay underwater for almost an hour even on some of our deeper dives, and the shallower dives always lasted over an hour with our dive at Palancar Gardens lasting 81 minutes. Divers can choose air or Nitrox; we did air on our deep first dives and shifted to Nitrox on our second dive of the day.

During a night dive at San Francisco we saw lots of marine life including two octopi and some very large crabs and lobsters. Aldora also arranged a dive with Dive Mexico (located in Playa del Carmen) for us at one of the cenotes on the mainland. We were the only two people on the dive to the Dos Ojos (Two Eyes) cenote. It was the first time either of us had been diving in caverns, and it was well worth hauling our gear all the way over to the mainland. The divemaster was a certified cave diver, and the passageways through the cenote are marked with a rope so it eased our concerns about diving with no air above us and in the dark. The water in the cenote is a constant 77 °F and is crystal clear. There is not a lot of life, but we did surface at one point during the dive and came up in the middle of a bat cave where sleeping bats were hanging from the ceiling. Cenote diving is well worth trying if you have never done it. If you have ever toured a cavern, imagine gliding through it with your dive light guiding your way. It is other worldly.



*Visiting a cenote*

Apart from the diving, I would recommend not to stay at an all-inclusive resort because you will miss out on the many good, inexpensive restaurants on the island. One of our favorites, almost directly across from the ferry pier in San Miguel, is Pepe's Grill. Pepe's is great for steak and seafood, but the highlight of the meal is the flaming desserts like bananas foster. Another great place with traditional Mexican cuisine is Casa Mission. Not only are the fajitas and margaritas great, but the setting in an old mission surrounded by gardens is beautiful. Our third trip to Cozumel was filled with great diving as usual and Cozumel, being an island, seems isolated from any problems plaguing the mainland.

# **Burlington SCUBA**

A full service dive shop offering:

- Snorkeling Lessons
- Open Water Dive Lessons
- Specialty Classes
- Equipment Sales
- Equipment Repair
- Air Refills
- Full Equipment Rental Department
- Dive Travel
- Dive Club



*Burlington, MA  
781-272-5164*

## ***New England Aquarium Dive Club Membership Form***

*To join or renew, visit us online at [www.neadc.org](http://www.neadc.org) or fill out & send in the form below*

Type of Membership:	New _____	Renewal _____	
Has your address changed since last renewal?	No _____	Yes _____	previous town _____

New England Aquarium Membership Categories: Choose One:

(Membership in the Dive Club requires current membership in the New England Aquarium)				Free Admission	IMAX Passes
___ Associate	\$75.00	+ \$15 (Dive Club Membership)	= \$90.00	(Member + 1 guest)	NA
___ Patron	\$125.00	+ \$15 (Dive Club Membership)	= \$140.00	(Member + 3 guests)	2 passes
___ Ambassador	\$175.00	+ \$15 (Dive Club Membership)	= \$190.00	(Member + 5 guests)	4 passes
___ Ocean Explorer	\$250.00	+ \$15 (Dive Club Membership)	= \$265.00	(Member + 7 guests)	6 passes

For additional membership benefits and levels see [www.neaq.org](http://www.neaq.org)

Name _____	Phone _____
Address _____	*E-mail _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____	

*\*Email address is required for monthly NEADC e-Newsletters and event updates.  
Contact information will be used for Aquarium and Dive Club purposes only.*

Total Amount Enclosed \$\_\_\_\_\_ (Dive Club dues plus Aquarium membership)

**Please make your check payable to "New England Aquarium" or charge to:**

MC / V / DISC / AMEX Account # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Membership Department, New England Aquarium, Central Wharf, Boston MA 02110

### **Boston Scuba Show**

Date: Feb 27, 2010, 10am to 3pm

Place: Holiday Inn and Resort, Marlboro MA  
Jct of Route 495 and 20, free parking.

Tickets: \$15 each. Show phone 978-525-3432

Featuring: *Jonathan Bird in Antarctica*

Plus:

- \* Fred Calhoun: Doing Scuba Right
- \* Dallas Edmiston: Lake Erie Wreck Hunting
- \* Fred and Chris: Folly Cove: The Movie
- \* Dave Clancy: The Monitor Revisited
- \* Debra Greenhalgh: Debra's Eyes

### **The 2010 Boston Sea Rovers Show is SOLD OUT**

If you have tickets, we are planning a pre-event dinner.  
Stay tuned to your E News for details.

### ***United Divers Inc.***

59 Washington Street, Somerville, MA. 02143  
[www.uniteddivers.com](http://www.uniteddivers.com) 617-666-0410

Celebrating over 35 years serving New England's diving community. As an SSI Platinum Facility, we are proud to offer:

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Tailoring & Alterations	Rental Equipment
Dive Training Library	Training Classroom
Experienced Staff	Safety Centered Environment
Changing Rooms	Dive Media Center

## NEADC Pre-Season Calendar 2010

*Check [www.neadc.org](http://www.neadc.org) for dive details and the latest updates on shore\* and boat dive calendars*

### *February*

- 17 *Monthly Meeting:  
Recreational Lobster and Crabbing Guide*
- 27 **Boston Scuba Show**

### *March*

- 6 **Sea Rovers/Sea Rovers Dinner**
- 17 *Monthly Meeting*
- 26-28 **Beneath the Sea (NJ)**

### *April*

- White Water rafting*
- 21 *Monthly Meeting: Andy Martinez*

### *May*

- Whale Watch: NEAq Voyager III*
- 19 *Monthly Meeting*

### *June* **BIG Summer Newsletter mailing**

- 16 *Monthly Meeting*

### *July*

- 21 *Monthly Meeting*
- 23-25 **Lobsterpalooza IV**
- 24 **Great Annual Fish Count, Stage Fort Park**

### *August*

- 18 *Monthly Meeting*
- 29 **Tropical Fish Rescue: Fort Wetherill, RI**

***Boat and \*Shore Dives: See the E-News and NEADC.org for the latest schedule and updates***

***\* Be sure to contact the shore dive leader at least 2 days prior to the dive***

***\*New Member Dives:***

**First Saturday during the dive season after the General Meeting**

**(see the shore dive schedule at [www.NEADC.org](http://www.NEADC.org) for details)**