



New England Aquarium Dive Club, Inc.

www.neadc.org

Winter Newsletter 2011

NEADC Monthly Meetings

General Meetings
*Third Wednesday of
the month, 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

*Lionfish,
Savior of the Reef?*
Fred Riger

March

Special Member Event!
Behind the Scenes at the
New England Aquarium

April

Pelagic Magic
Wayne Sentman,
The Oceanic Society

*Before each General
Meeting, join us from
5:30 to 6:30pm for the
"Eat and Greet" at Jose
McIntyre's on Milk St.*

**Check out www.neadc.org
for more information!**

Not getting our E-News?

Please make sure we have
your email! Updates can be
made right on our web site!

Join us at Boston Sea Rovers in Danvers March 5th and 6th!

This year Boston Sea Rovers is in a new location, the Crowne Plaza Boston North in Danvers. This beautiful new location also offers **FREE Parking** and the *CoCo Key Water Resort* for great family options. Much of the Clinic this year will be similar to years past. Daytime seminars include fantastic presentations from around the underwater world including topics such as wreck diving, underwater photography and amazing marine wildlife. Additional programs include workshops on underwater photography, free diving and specialty programs for dive professionals.

This year the famous Evening Film Festival will be in the same hotel as the daytime programs. Some of the highlights include New England's own Bob Ballard, ocean explorer and discoverer of the Titanic, and Michael Pitts, of the acclaimed BBC TV series *Oceans*, *Blue Planet* and *Life*.

The exhibit hall will offer a wide range of booths from travel destinations to dive shops, dive gear and, of course, our own **New England Aquarium Dive Club** booth! Come by and visit us at the show. You can even volunteer to help us spread the word about the club! Check out the speakers, new gear, exotic places and maybe win a prize! The Boston Sea Rovers sponsors have also donated fabulous prizes for the raffles including *full sets of scuba gear* and much more.

New...

Introduce your Non-Diving Friends to Diving!

This year, the Boston Sea Rovers clinic also includes *Discover Scuba* in the hotel pool. This is a great chance for show attendees to try out SCUBA! Maybe you know someone who has been snorkeling and has thought about learning to dive. This is a great chance to try diving with help from some of our local dive shops.

Expanded Kids Day, Sunday, March 6th

Bring your kids to experience a touch tank from the New England Aquarium and meet the Penguin Lady, a real penguin rescuer. There will also be a special appearance by our very own Emmy award winning Jonathan Bird of the PBS TV show *Jonathan's Blue World*. Come meet Jonathan and check out new footage from some of his upcoming episodes.

See www.bostonsearovers.com for weekend details.

Tickets available online or at our February NEADC meeting.

Improve your Underwater Photography at Sea Rovers!

Check out Ethan Gordon's *Improving your Underwater Photography-Share and Learn Workshop*, Sunday, March 6th. A great chance to perfect your underwater photography. Pre-registration is required. Space is limited.

2011 NEADC Officers

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Shore Dives: Dan Sprague
shoredive@neadc.org

From your Membership Director, Shawn Cormier ***Membership has its privileges...***

This past year we had several special member events and look forward to hosting another "Behind the Scenes at the Aquarium" for the March meeting. There are some exciting speakers coming in the next few months, so don't forget to come to the monthly meetings! It is also a great chance win a dive in the New England Aquarium's Giant Ocean Tank. Doesn't playing with Myrtle the turtle and other tropical creatures in warm water sound great?

E-communications will keep you up on the latest club events. Not currently receiving the E-newsletter? Update your email address on our website, by clicking the "Update Your Profile" button. Don't forget to keep your membership current to receive updates! If you are an Aquarium member, but not a NEADC member yet, you can even add the Dive Club to your Aquarium membership at meetings!

We have a lot in store for 2011, so check in on our website, follow us on Facebook, or attend a meeting to find out more. Happy Diving to all!

From your Program Director, Al Bozza

Last year was great for club activities from skiing, rafting and whale watching to the three main events for the club, the Great Annual Fish Count (GAFC) in July, Tropical Fish Rescue in August and the Bay State Council treasure hunt/multi club picnic in September. This year promises to be better than ever. We will once again be skiing in Feb, watching whales in April, and white water rafting in May. We will also be adding some family and social events to our calendar. Watch for events to be added to our web site and in the email blasts. See page 8 and our website for the dates of our three main events as well.

New for 2011...In the past, we have done several trips to Florida for fossilized shark teeth. This year we will be running a trip to the Carolina's in search of the really big ones.

In response to several requests we will also be doing a Dominica trip in January 2012. Stay tuned...Thanks to all who have supported our events!

Mass Diving

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

Visit us at *Boston Sea Rovers!*

Visit our booth in the Exhibit Hall

Introduce your non-diving friends to diving with us at *Discover Scuba* on Saturday. Call us for more info.

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! Winter 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. Want to travel? See **group travel** on our website!

Roatan, Honduras: April 16-23, 2011
Freeport, Bahamas: October 7-11, 2011
Grand Cayman: November 12-19, 2011

Cozumel: February 4-11, 2012
Phillipines: March 3-17, 2012
Fiji: May 3-May 19, 2012

Stop by and visit the only dive center in Metrowest!

February Speaker Preview...

Lionfish Savior of the Reef?

Fred Riger

Fred will be talking about the effects lionfish have had on the reefs of the Bahamas since they have spread across and colonized Atlantic waters. His talk revolves around 20+ years of daily diving around Grand Bahama and 15,000+ dives documenting, experimenting and trying to find interventions to promote coral health and protect a small area of reef. He presents a case that there is a relationship between the sudden positive change in reef conditions and the introduction of the lionfish.



Photo by Joy Marzolf

Fred began scuba diving in the early 1980s. Over the past three decades, Fred has logged over 15,000 scuba dives, excluding time spent in the ocean without a scuba tank on his back. It is a rare 24 hour period that doesn't find him underwater for 2 or 3 dives. You could also say that he has well over 10,000 hours underwater. Currently, Fred is a full-time scuba instructor for Grand Bahama Scuba. He is an Instructor Trainer which is the highest level of scuba certification.

Prior to his scuba diving career, Fred spent an extended period of time in college focusing on several science disciplines, and science is a passion he continues to this day. In scuba, Fred uses his interest in science to learn about the life and issues surrounding coral reefs, shark conservation and the protection of fisheries resources.

Fred is also an avid conservationist, donating his time to several projects. He is currently president of the Grand Bahama Dive Association. He is also married to Melinda, a published underwater photographer.

From your Webmaster, Steve Whitford

The *New England Aquarium Dive Club* website is constantly evolving to keep pace with new technologies. Let us know if you'd like to see anything new on the website.

For this upcoming dive season, the plan is to have better integration with Twitter and Facebook on the main site. If you don't already "Like" us on Facebook, you're missing out! We are looking into having an android or I-phone app. If anyone is handy programming them, let us know!

We've been posting quick blurbs that may not be quite right for the main NEADC homepage, along with general news and events. Follow the links on the website to our pages. As always, keep checking the website, Facebook, and Linked-in pages for the latest in club news.

From your NEADC Shore Dive Coordinator, Dan Sprague

A new year is here, and with it will come a new dive season, so why not try leading a dive the year! 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 pick a date, time and meet-up location and be the contact person. 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 diverse 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 us know if you plan on leading more this year. I will also be leading as many dives myself as my schedule will allow.

Our NEADC shore dives will also be a good opportunity to 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. So 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 with the info, and I'll make sure it gets up to the web.

From your Dive Boat Coordinator, Tom Bergendahl

I am looking forward to the upcoming season and hoping that we can coordinate lots of great dives this year. Last year's dives included a trip to Graves Light on the 4th of July for an afternoon and night dive and a trip to dive and see seals off the Isles of Shoals.



Hopefully we will get out to those sites and others. I will continue to offer my "Intro" to kayak diving to club members who would like to try it. It is a great way to do some offshore diving at sites like Marblehead Rock, Children's Island and others. Please check the club's dive calendar as the season gets closer. I will most likely begin in the April to May time period.

Please suggest sites and/or trips if you don't see it on the schedule. See you at Sea Rovers March 5 & 6!

April Speaker Preview...

Pelagic Magic

Wayne Sentman, the Oceanic Society

It was dark, and for a brief moment I almost wanted to get back in the boat. All of a sudden something green and silver floated directly in front of my mask, and I watched it expanded in size from 2 inches to about 10. Calming down, I saw that all around me were these amazing gelatinous creatures, glowing, pulsating, and swirling around me, like a Dr. Seuss imagined planktonic snowstorm.



That was my introduction to the Pelagic Magic black water dive tour offered in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii. This is an unparalleled sensory experience not to be missed. As the sun sets you are taken out about 3 miles offshore. Once there, a drift anchor is deployed and in the pitch black open ocean the divers get ready and descend to about 40 feet. You are tethered to a line on the boat and each diver has a powerful dive light. Once you stop crying for your mommy and settle down, it is truly one of the most fascinating and calming experiences you can imagine. I probably saw 100 creatures and had absolutely no idea what they were, other than really cool. Despite the amazingly thorough dive briefing, I realized I would be doing really well simply to identify 15% of what I saw. I managed to last about 65 minutes before my air was down to 200 psi and I finally pulled myself away from the middle of the psychedelic light show.



My experience was pretty typical, but on some nights blue sharks come out of the blackness, or larval swordfish appear, translucent in front of you.

To learn more about this dive come to the April NEADC meeting to see highlights from past trips and talk more about this amazing experience. If you cannot wait that long or are headed to Hawaii check out the website at: www.jacksdivinglocker.com/charters2/PelagicMagic.htm

Come see Wayne speak at Boston Sea Rovers and learn more about him at <http://naturefinder.blogspot.com/>

Trip Report: Adventures on an Oil Rig: Diving Sipadan and Borneo by Frank Delargy

During this trip to Malaysian Borneo we explored both above and below. We stayed at 3 places in the rainforest, Tabin Wildlife Reserve, Sukau Forest Lodge and Sepilok Rainforest Lodge. There was much to see including orangutans at the 3 places mentioned above plus near the Gomantong Caves. While diving we stayed at SeaVentures, a converted oil rig that was parked about a 1/2 kilometer off the island of Mabul.

SeaVentures was a good base for diving. Since there were very few people when we were there, we were able to go to Sipadan any day that we wished. We could have gone every day, but we choose to go to Mabul and Kapalai on one of the days. Although I had seen reports of little current, there was often quite a current under the rig. Current, combined with the 60 foot depth, my propensity to use a lot of air and the lack of larger tanks all made the dives under the rig a bit too short (for me). There was plenty of life under the rig, but if I were to go back to Sipadan, I would choose somewhere on Mabul where I could do 20-30 feet shore dives, even if it would cost me the opportunity to dive Sipadan every day.

Some of the highlights of diving at Sipadan and Mabul were the large schools of barracuda, bumphead parrotfish, anemonefish, mandarin fish and turtles everywhere. A wonderful diversity of creatures.

The diving at Mabul (the island near the SeaVentures Rig) was great although the visibility was poor, especially compared to Sipadan. Although the diving under the rig was good, there were some drawbacks. The bottom is 60 feet and there was often quite a bit of current. We often had to



wait several times for the tide to change before going in. Even then, the current on the top could be pretty strong and with the poor viz, you could get turned around and come up on the wrong side of the rig.

We upgraded to the VIP suite, about 4 times the size of the regular rooms. It was worth it as I needed the room for my computer and photo gear. Wireless was hit or miss, mostly miss, in our room on the 4th floor. This is an oil rig and although converted, it still feels like an oil rig, even if you are in the captains quarters. The food on the rig was OK, not great. Just be prepared for noodles and hot dogs for breakfast. and a menu that is heavily weighted towards Chinese and Malaysian cuisine.

The dive setup (equipment, etc) was really efficient, although it took me a while to get the hang of where to get a clean towel. Although the description on the web implies a complete computer/photo room setup, I had a hard time finding US compatible outlets to use, even though it was far from full of divers. Converters and adapters are essential.

The diving was a lot of fun. If I were to go back to Sipadan, personally I would probably stay on Mabul so that I could take advantage of the shallower shore diving. I am sure I would have been underwater a lot longer there. All in all I recommend SeaVentures and Sipadan as a destination. If you want to maximize your trips to Sipadan, I do recommend SeaVentures.

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www.southshoredivers.com

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March Meeting: *Members Night Behind the Scenes at the Aquarium*

Last year, we offered a unique chance for members to visit the aquarium at night for a behind the scenes tour. After great feedback, we decided to do it again!

What does Myrtle do at night? Do fish sleep? Get a chance to see what some of the Aquarists do and hear stories from "beyond the tank."

Due to limited space, **this night does require pre-registration.** Please RSVP to membership@neadc.org if you will be attending.

Need to renew your membership to attend? You can renew at the February meeting or online at www.neadc.org.

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- Dive Club



**Burlington, MA
781-272-5164**

Save the dates! Join us for our BIG Summer events!



*Winning a trip to Bonaire at the GAFC
by Joy Marzolf*

Saturday, July 31st

10th Great Annual Fish Count

Picnic, prizes and lots of fun! Help us help REEF! Ours is the largest fish count in North America! Dives are planned at several shore locations around Cape Ann with lunch and the raffle at Stage Fort Park, Gloucester.



*Diving and Seining with the Kids at the Tropical Fish Rescue
by Joy Marzolf*



Saturday, August 27th

Tropical Fish Rescue and BBQ, Fort Wetherill, Jamestown, RI

A great event for family and friends. All are welcome! Touch tank for the kids, seining and much more!

More information to come! Stay tuned to monthly meetings and your E news.

New England Aquarium Dive Club Membership Form

To join or renew, visit us online at 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

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

Thank you to those members who have volunteered to help at our previous events!

We are looking for volunteers to assist with the booth at Sea Rover in March. If you are interested, please contact membership@neadc.org.

Think BLUE!

Whenever you can...Reduce, Re-use and Recycle!

Recycle plastic when possible...

When not recycled, plastic can end up in our oceans. All sorts of plastic items from bottles to plastic bags can be hazardous to wildlife. Over time, plastic can degrade and enter the food chain which can affect wildlife as well as humans. Animals such as birds, whale and basking sharks and even clams can accidentally ingest plastic with their normal food. When we recycle, we help to save our oceans.

Watch for Shark Fin Soup if you are going out for Asian food!

Check your local Asian restaurant menu BEFORE ordering. Surprisingly, even restaurants here in Massachusetts are serving shark fin soup! Let them know their customers want them *shark fin free!*

Help us save sharks and let your dollars do the talking as you do the walking!

Spread the word! Small steps by many can lead to big changes!

NEADC Winter Calendar 2011

Check www.neadc.org for the latest updates

February

- 16 **Monthly Meeting:**
Lionfish, Saviors of the Reef? Fred Riger

March

- 4-6 **Boston Sea Rovers Workshops**
5-6 **Boston Sea Rovers Daytime Seminars**
5 **Boston Sea Rovers Film Festival**
16 **Monthly Meeting:**
Members Event:
Behind the Scenes at the NEAq

April

- 20 **Monthly Meeting:**
Pelagic Magic: Wayne Sentman
(See page 4 for a preview)
30 **Whale Watch**

May

- 15 **White Water Rafting**
18 **Monthly Meeting**

June

- 15 **Monthly Meeting**

Save the Dates

Saturday, July 31
Great Annual Fish Count

Saturday, August 27
Tropical Fish Rescue and BBQ

Sunday, September 25
Bay State Council Treasure Hunt