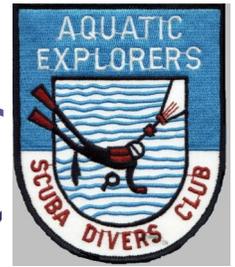


North Current



Monthly Newsletter of the Aquatic Explorers Scuba Club Inc.
P.O. Box 180, Connelly, NY 12417

January 2013

www.aquaticexplorers.org

Next Meeting

Club Meeting

January 7th @ 7:30

Club Meetings are held at the American Legion Post on Overlook Rd.

Board Meeting

January 28th @ 7:30 PM

Board Meetings are held at the American Legion Post on Overlook Rd.



Canoe Race Volunteers

It's that time of the year again, and we need people to volunteer for the annual canoe race. We'll need volunteers for all positions, as well as the cleanup before the race goes off.

Please contact Mike Rodriques with times and positions that you are available to work. Volunteer lists must be in place no later that Feb 28th 2013. Volunteers will not be accepted after that date.

Club Dives

We'd like to encourage more club based dives. The more things we do as a club, the better we will be as a club. Please keep checking in here and on the website in the future to see what dives we've scheduled as a group.

Upcoming Events

January 7th

Club Meeting

January 28th

Full Club Meeting

For updates and the full club event calendar visit the club web site at <http://www.aquaticexplorers.org/calendar.htm>

How to Avoid Shark Attacks:

- Never Leave Utah
- Roll in manure before diving. Sharks hate anything breaded
- Always dive with a buddy. On sharks approach, point to buddy
- Dive with a briefcase. Shark may mistake you for an attorney and leave you alone out of professional courtesy.



Diving without a knife? Think again!

A few weeks ago, I encountered something new to me underwater. It's a fishing line that apparently has gained some popularity among offshore fishermen. Made by Shimano, it is called PowerPro. Available in just the right color brown to make it nearly invisible in the water against the bottom or a shipwreck, this line is available in strengths up to 300# test. The stronger lines are, for all practical purposes, unbreakable, at least for any diver with a surname other than "Schwarzenegger."

This braided synthetic fiber line is much more flexible and clingy than the more familiar monofilament. If entangled in monofilament I have always been able to reverse course to disentangle myself. Not with this stuff. Much as a dress shirt will slide by things that snag a sweater, you can slide by monofilament but get entangled in this line very easily. Once caught, everything I did just added more points of entanglement.

On this particular dive I happened to have four cutting devices with me instead of my usual three. Never have I been so glad that I had at least one! This line cut easily with a knife or line cutter, and surgical shears (which might be needed for steel leader) aren't needed. This was not a close call, merely an inconvenience. But without something to cut that line with, escape would not have been assured.

Remember that a line a fisherman finds caught underwater will be cut at the surface, and usually at an angle. The cut line will waft down and drape itself across whatever is on the bottom at the pleasure of whatever current there is that day. Beware of swimming between things in an area where line can be draped, and know that there can easily be over 150' of line or more draped about for each fishing line that has been cut at the surface if you are 100' deep.

This particular kind of line is truly dangerous for a diver, and could be found anywhere fishermen fish. That includes most of the interesting things off the East coast, including things like shipwrecks, jetties, and rock formations.

If you dive without a knife, I urge you to get one. And not only to get one, but to wear it on every dive, and to practice--under water--getting it out and then back into its sheath often enough that it's automatic.

Your ideas are welcome!

If you have any ideas for dives, or activities that you'd like to see the club pursue, please contact any board member to discuss them. We are always looking for ways to present more activities or group dives for the club membership to enjoy. If you'd like to submit ideas for activities, you can do so via email to activities@aquaticexplorers.org.

Club Hours

We are also looking for people to send dive journals for trips taken for the web site. Dive journals help members learn about new dive locations and provide insights about where to stay, eat and dive. You can earn time toward your work hours for each dive journal you submit. Send your dive journals to Mike Rodriques at mrodriques@gmail.com.

Australia – Rich Partridge

I'm a warm water diver who tries to add a few dives onto my "tourist" vacations. In the June North Current newsletter I shared a few photos of my April Belize dives. Now, I'd like to share a few photos from an October Australian vacation that focused mainly on the typical tourist stops. When I got to tropical North Queensland, I left my non-diving friends at the beach and jumped on a 3-night live-aboard to sample the Great Barrier Reef.

Unlike Belize where its barrier reef is close to shore, the best Australian reef diving is too far from shore for a day trip. Yes, there are day excursions to the inner reefs on massive boats that take hundreds of snorkelers along with a few divers, but the actual outer Barrier Reef is at least a half day travel that can only be explored via live-aboard. The last few years of global financial crisis impacted the live-aboard operators, very few are still solvent. I used Mike Ball Diving (Cairns) and would recommend them (contact me for more details).

Mike Ball offers 3-day/4-day/7-day trips – but slipping away from my friends meant I could only fit in the 3-day package. I skipped one of the night dives but still did 11 dives (including one night dive). Many of the fish were similar to what I've seen in the Caribbean, but there were a few surprises. I've arm-wrestled octopus, but had never seen their cousin Cuttlefish. I was amazed with the rapid color changing of the multiple 18" Cuttlefish that I encountered. Similarly, I don't recall seeing a Unicorn Fish in the Northern Hemisphere. One dive spot had many very large Grouper, locally called "Potato Cod," that weighed 2x-3x more than I and were at least the size of a small adult. I saw turtles, green sea snakes, reef sharks, and many varieties of Scorpion Fish. (Their camouflage was so good that it is hard to find them in my photos.)



