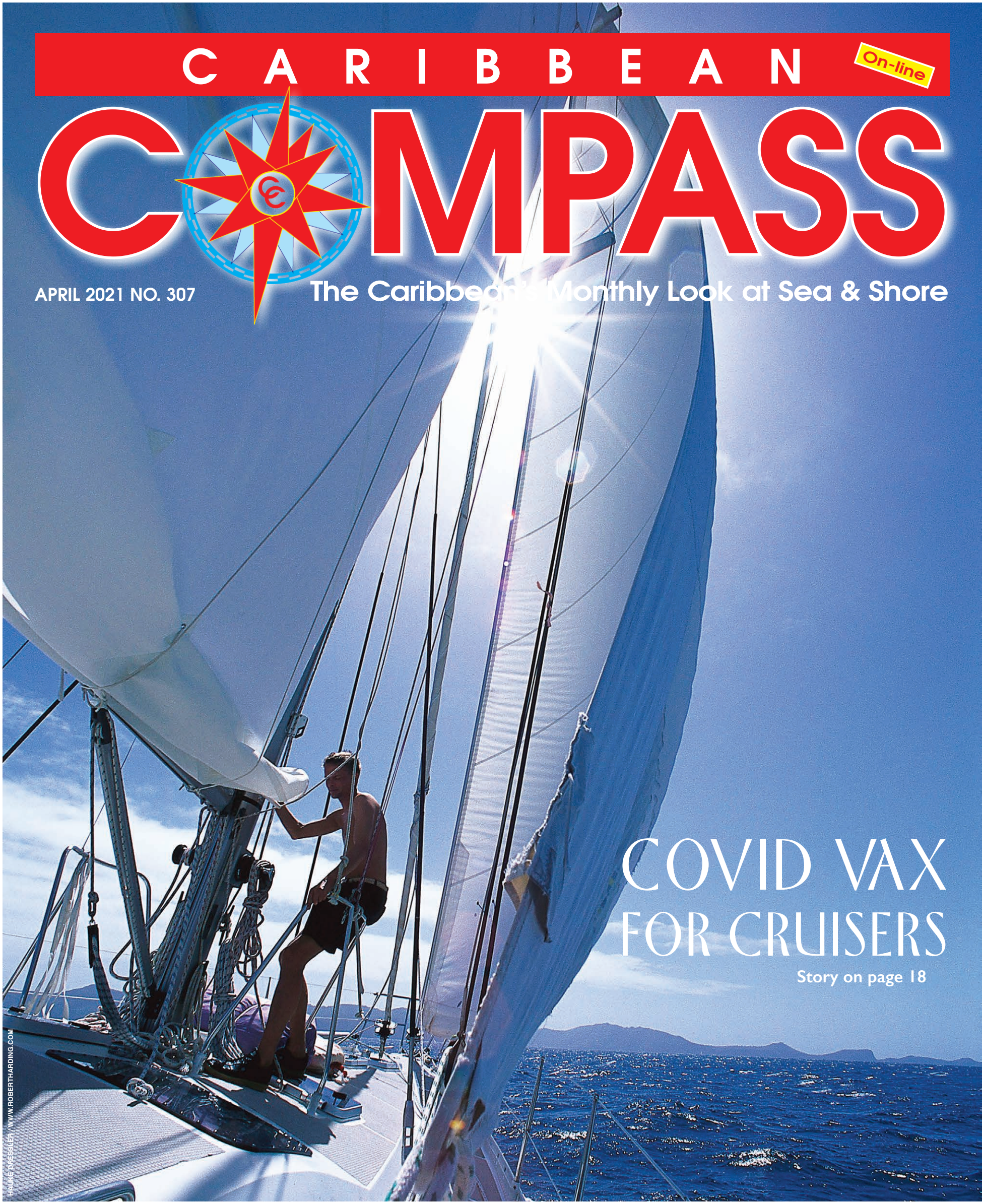
CARIBBEAN On-line
COMPASS
APRIL 2021 NO. 307
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore



COVID VAX FOR CRUISERS

Story on page 18

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PERMANENT PRICE REDUCTION

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In an effort to support the boating community during the continuing COVID crisis, **BUDGET MARINE** is proud to announce a **MAJOR UPDATE IN OUR PRICING POLICY.** We have decided to match our pricing to the rest of the world, and therefore bring you the best price to your doorstep.

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- Find all current specials in your location
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Sample prices as shown are current retail prices in our St. Maarten Location

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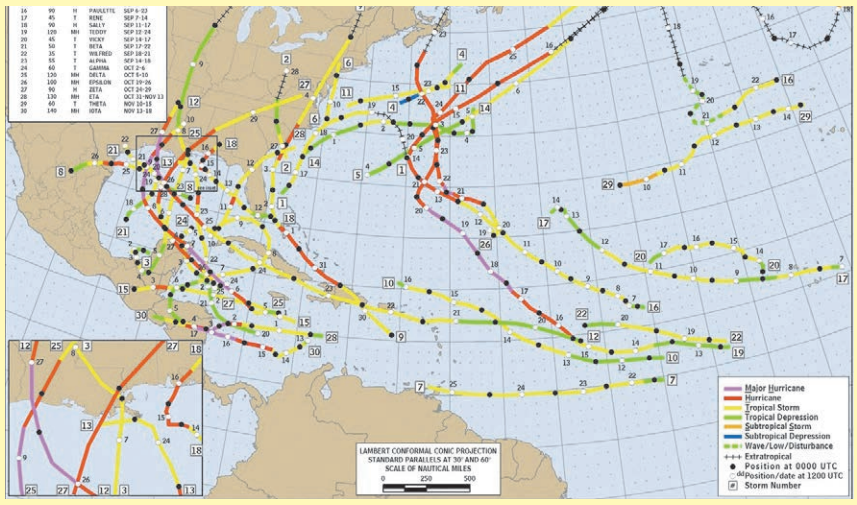
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CARIBBEAN COMPASS

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

APRIL 2021 • ISSUE 307



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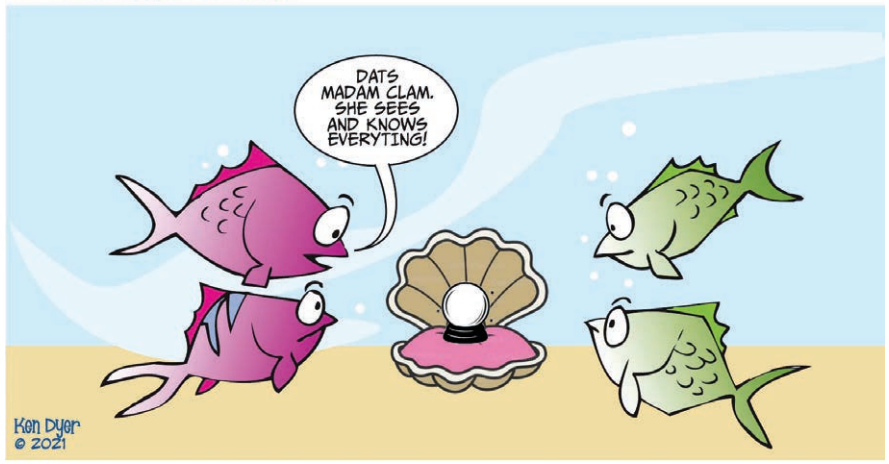
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Seaweed



KEN DYER

ON THE COVER:
Sailing in St. Vincent & the Grenadines — one of the Eastern Caribbean countries where visiting cruisers can now be vaccinated against Covid-19. Photo by Hauke Dressler/www.robertharding.com. See story on page 18.

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***COMPASS* COVERS THE CARIBBEAN!**
From Cuba to Trinidad, from Panama to Barbuda, we've got the news and views that sailors can use. We're the Caribbean's monthly look at sea and shore.



'Many thanks for the latest issue — it's amazing how full each edition is!'

— Caroline Kennedy, UK

CARIBBEAN COMPASS

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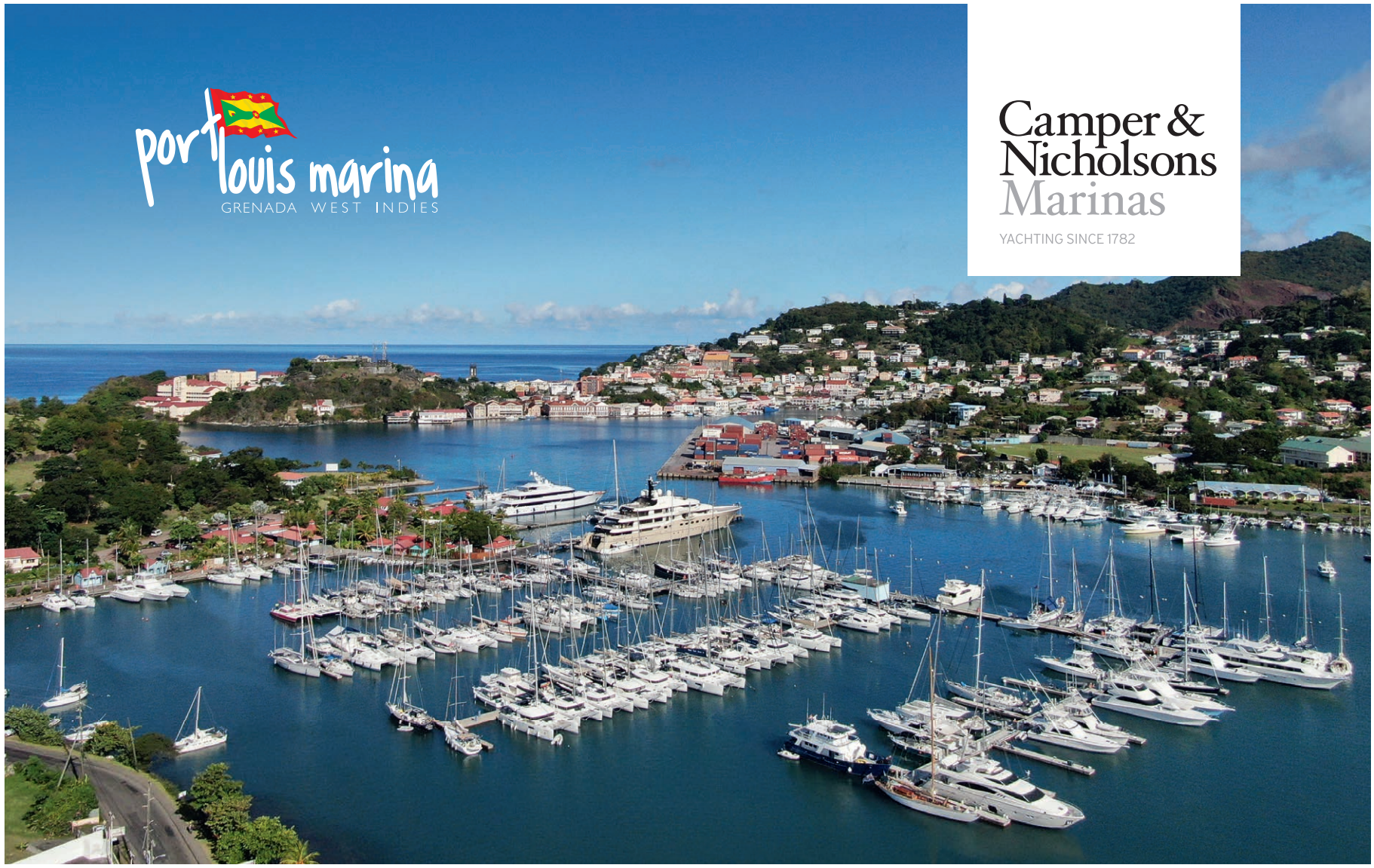
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60	$1.39	$1.25	$1.18	$0.64
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80	$1.74	$1.57	$1.48	$0.89
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For yachts above 100 feet LOA and for bookings of longer periods, please contact us for a personalised quote.				

TERMS & CONDITIONS

■ All rates are quoted in US Dollars and berthing fees are payable on arrival. ■ The rates are based on a vessel staying and paying for the berth for a consecutive number of days as indicated. ■ Catamarans charged at 1.5* the advertised rates. ■ A deposit of 10% of the value of the booking (Min US$100) is required to secure a berth. ■ Deposits are refundable up to 30 days prior to the booked arrival date. ■ All rates subject to change.

Info & Updates

For yachts sailing to Cuba



Commodore Escrich of the Hemingway International Yacht Club (HIYC) of Cuba reports: Because the epidemiological situation in Cuba is still complex due to the number of people infected with Covid-19 and the pandemic does not appear uniformly in the territories where our international marinas are located, the protocols that are applied to sailors from other countries who arrive on the island have been updated with a view to facilitating the stay of yachtsmen during their stopovers in these marinas or navigation along our coasts.

Sailors interested in including Cuba as a possible destination and those who for safety reasons wish to arrive in our country due to *force majeure* can contact HIYC to obtain updated information on the open marinas and the protocols that apply to them. We are also at your service to assist you in coordinating your navigation along the Cuban coasts with the objective making your journey as pleasant as possible.

Contact HIYC at yachtclub@cnih.mh.tur.cu or yachtclubcnih@gmail.com, or Facebook: Cnih de Cuba.

NHC weather forecast news

The US National Hurricane Center (NHC) will release routine tropical weather forecasts starting May 15th, 15 days earlier than the official start of Atlantic hurricane season. Why? Because 2020 was the sixth season in a row when a storm formed before June 1st. An NHC committee will decide if the start date for the season should be moved to May 15th.

The NHC is also now providing several new experimental weather forecast elements for mariners in the tropical North Atlantic, Caribbean Sea, Gulf of Mexico, and the tropical eastern North Pacific. The Tropical Analysis and Forecast Branch (TAFB) of the NHC continues to work toward improving services for bluewater mariners by introducing new experimental weather forecast elements via a Marine Graphical Composite Forecast map. While this is internet-based and not necessarily available to everyone offshore, it is designed to help any mariners who may have limited access to the internet in port, such as relatively low-bandwidth WiFi in remote areas.

The new experimental weather elements are available via the existing TAFB's Marine Graphical Composite Forecast maps for the Caribbean Sea and Tropical North Atlantic at www.nhc.noaa.gov/marine/forecast/enhanced_atlcfull.php

Visit www.nhc.noaa.gov/marine/forecast/info.php?large for more information.

New VHF net in St. Vincent

Blue Lagoon Hotel & Marina in St. Vincent started a new cruiser's VHF net on March 1st. Tune in every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 9:00AM for a notification on channel 16 followed by the net on channel 68.

CCA recognizes Salty Dawgs

Last spring, as the world was becoming paralyzed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Salty Dawg Sailing Association (www.saltydawgsailing.org) organized a Homeward Bound Flotilla to help 473 sailors aboard 184 vessels get from the Caribbean to the US East Coast. It was an extraordinary effort involving on-shore coordination, 24-hour emergency assistance teams standing by, weather routing, tracking and fast-paced thinking.

The Cruising Club of America (www.cruisingclub.org) has recognized this effort and awarded the Homeward Bound Flotilla Salty Dawg team its Special Recognition Award. This is an award that is given in select years to someone who has made an exceptional contribution to the sailing community. Congratulations!

CA awards Don Street honorary membership

The UK-based Cruising Association (www.theca.org.uk) has awarded honorary membership to Don Street. He has been an ordinary member of the CA for many years but in his 90s he has decided to give up cruising, although he sails his Dragon at home in Ireland.

—Continued on next page



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As a youngster in the US, Don was told by his family that he would never make money at sailing, but he ignored them and started working as a professional skipper in the 1950s, moving to the Caribbean and buying his engineless yawl, *Iolaire*. After numerous trips in many boats up and down the east coast of North America and across the Atlantic, Don wrote his first article for *Yachting* magazine in 1964. There followed a series of Caribbean guides, a transatlantic crossing guide, *The Ocean Sailing Yacht* volumes 1 and 2, the Imray-Iolaire charts of the Caribbean and Atlantic (many of which still make use of Don's research), and much more.

Don tells *Compass*, "The CA tells me I am the first person that has ever become an honorary member."

See Don's website at www.street-iolaire.com.

Thanks from Boatwatch

Glenn & Eddie Tuttle report: Boatwatch.org is well into its second year of serving as a conduit between the family and friends of overdue and missing boaters, and the many governmental agencies responsible for search and rescue operations throughout the world. A group of concerned people has stepped up to help look for the missing with their time and ideas.

It's an amazing group that includes friends and family of the missing, cruisers, ham radio operators, pilots, crew on commercial ships and fishing fleets, divers, tourists, port captains, marina managers, weather routers, cruisers, megayacht captains, missionaries, marine vendors, and news sources such as *Ocean Navigator* magazine, the Caribbean Safety and Security Net, Noonsite.com, and *Caribbean Compass*. Also helping are two Facebook groups: Boat Watch and Flotsam and Jetsam. Another big thank you to our partners listed with links on the home page of Boatwatch.org.

Thanks also go to Chris Parker of the Marine Weather Center (www.mwxc.com). Chris broadcasts lookouts for missing and overdue vessels on his regularly scheduled SSB radio voice nets (www.mwxc.com/marine_weather_services.php). A thank you too to Rescue Coordination Centers and Coast Guards worldwide for their efforts. Boatwatch.org has an excellent working relationship with many RCCs (see https://boatwatch.org/resources).

A key to our success has been our SSCA HF radio service, FCC call sign KPK, which operates daily at 1215 UTC on SSB frequency 8.104. We also acknowledge the daily Maritime Mobile Service Net, the Waterway Radio and Cruising Club amateur radio nets, the Cruiseheimers Net (SSB frequency 8.152 at 0830 EST), and Dick Giddings's (KNC) follow-up Doo Dah Net (SSB frequency 8.152 at 1700 EST), for allowing us to make announcements concerning missing and overdue vessels. A listing of these nets and others can be found at https://boatwatch.org/resources.

Visit https://boatwatch.org for more information.

Navigating the Covid Sea

• CUBA: At Marina Hemingway you will be tested on arrival (US$30 per person). Until the test is returned you will be quarantined on your boat. Once a negative result is received you can disembark but must remain within the marina. On the fifth day after arrival you will be given a second test. Once a negative result is received you will be free to leave the marina by land or sail to another Cuban port. If a member of the crew tests positive on arrival, they will be removed from the boat and placed in a government quarantine facility at their expense and must remain there until they test negative.

• PUERTO RICO: José Mendez of Marina Pescaderia reports: Entry to Puerto Rico is regulated by the US Customs and Border Protection. The office that regulates incoming cruisers is at the Aguadilla Airport (tel (787) 729-6840 or 529-6840). The easiest way for a proper entry is using the CBP Roam Application. You can download it on your smartphone for free and proceed with your entry upon arrival.

US citizens will be interviewed via a video call through the app after entering the requested info. Non-US citizens, aside from entering all the requested info on the app, need to physically see a CPG agent to get their passport stamped. Our marina, being an official Port of Entry, can serve as a meeting point for CBP personnel and incoming vessels.

If you are a non-US citizen, you need to have a valid B1/B2 Visa. ESTAs are not accepted if you are arriving on a private vessel. If you have questions call the CBP in advance.

Regarding Covid requirements, you must bring a 72-hour maximum negative test result. Otherwise, you will need to stay quarantined on your vessel or marina premises. Another option is to get tested upon arrival. A lab near our marina offers all available tests: rapid, molecular/PCR, and antigen. If you are interested in getting tested give us a call at (787) 717-3638.

Finally, make sure you wear your mask and keep social distance at all times. Beaches and anchorages are open. Most facilities, including restaurants and tourist attractions, are open to locals and visitors with precautionary protocols. Mechanics, technicians, supermarkets, and most (if not all) services for cruisers are fully operational.

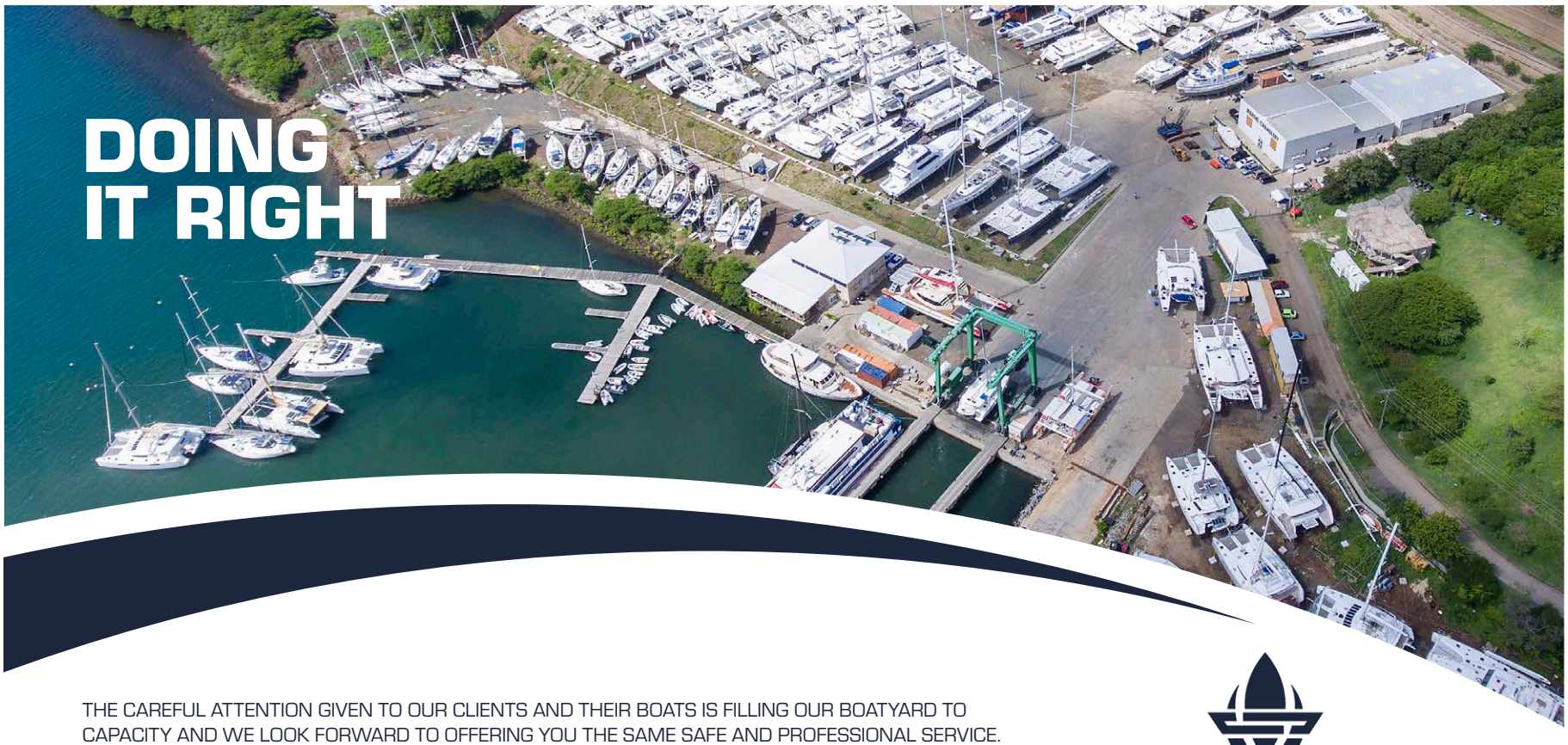
Phone (787) 717-3638 for more information.

• ANTIGUA: Visiting yachtspeople can now process Extension of Stay Applications at Seaport Units, initially starting at Nelson's Dockyard until all seaports are fully operational. Appointments must be booked prior to the expiration of an entry stamp and/or previous extension of stay by calling (268) 463-9410 or emailing neigel.emanuel@ab.gov.ag or nd26@outlook.com.

Documents required on the day of the appointment are Extension Form (available at the seaport or by email from ndharbour268@outlook.com), boat registration, inbound clearance, a copy of passport bio page (printing services available at Seaport Units), a letter from boatyard/marina if on dry dock and ticket if departing by air, and a valid cruising permit.

Additional documentation may be requested during the interview.

—*Continued on next page…*



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• MARTINIQUE: Entry is restricted to EU citizens who have proof of a compelling reason to visit such as yacht transport (Sevenstar & DYT) pick-up and drop-off, guest/crew transfers, shipyard repairs and haulouts. Stopovers can also be made for urgent maintenance or repair; for procedure for non-EU citizens contact www.douglasyachtservices.fr. Before any stopover, contact CROSS AG through a local representative, for example, the company providing work or a yacht agent.

• SVG: Quarantine time has been reduced for travelers arriving with evidence issued by a competent authority of being fully vaccinated (at least four weeks after the final dose) with a Covid-19 vaccine recognized by the Ministry of Health of St. Vincent & the Grenadines. With proof of vaccination, mandatory quarantine is seven days rather than 14 days.

You still must arrive with a negative PCR test done no more than 72 hours before arrival and must be retested on arrival in SVG. You must be retested on day five of quarantine.

SVG's Prime Minister Dr. The Hon. Ralph Gonsalves indicated that this was a cautious first step towards making travel into SVG easier for those who had been vaccinated, and that the situation would continue to be monitored by the health authorities.

All arriving yachts must request permission for entry in advance, by e-mail to svgarrivals@gmail.com. At least 24 hours before arrival send negative PCR test results, estimated time of arrival and last port clearance to svgarrivals@gmail.com. Also complete a pre–arrival form (https://stv.servicedx.com/travelform) for each passenger and send a copy of the email reply with the negative PCR test result to coronavirustaskforcesvg@gmail.com.

USVI to install 100 new yacht moorings

Carol Bareuther reports: The placement of 100 new helix-type moorings for yachts in bays throughout the US Virgin Islands received a green light from the territory's Senate on March 5th. Following testimony from Oriel Blake, Executive Director of the Virgin Islands Professional Charter Association (VIPCA) and JP Oriol, Commissioner of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) the senators voted 14-1 to approve installation of the moorings.

In 2017, the DPNR and VIPCA teamed up to pursue a US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant for the territory-wide installation of new moorings. The need for such moorings had been recognized years earlier, but funding, placement and maintenance logistics presented challenges. The two Category 5 hurricanes in 2017 created greater urgency as the storms severely damaged the territory's few existing moorings.

The Covid-19 pandemic has created an even greater need for moorings. Over the past year, more charter boats and cruisers have anchored in the territory's bays, as borders in some other islands have closed. Most noticeably, with the British Virgin Islands' seaports closed, USVI-based charter yachts that would typically include the BVI on their itinerary have focused on charters solely in the USVI, increasing vessel traffic significantly."In the past year, instead of the usual 200 to 300 vessels in the territory, we've had some 750 between territorial and the federal waters of the Virgin Islands National Park. This represents both recreational yachts and charter boats that have moved their businesses back to the territory," says Oriol.

One of the most significant benefits of vessels using moorings rather than anchoring is protection of the undersea environment. Fixed moorings can also manage indiscriminate anchoring that can create overcrowded bays. "Anchoring can not only break corals that may take a century to grow back, but the action of the anchor chain sweeping back and forth as the yacht moves in the wind creates a V-shaped area of destruction of soft corals like sea fans as well as seagrass, a mainstay of sea turtles. A helix-shaped mooring only disrupts a two-to-three-inch area on the seafloor. Plus, the line attached to the yacht is supported by a floating buoy, removing the lengthy and damaging anchor chain, thus preventing the damaging action seen in anchoring," says Steve Prosterman, Dive Safety Officer at the St. Thomas Campus of the University of the Virgin Islands.

A vibrant marine industry and the infrastructure that supports it, such as these moorings, can offer employment opportunities to Virgin Islanders directly via routine surveillance, management and regular maintenance of the moorings, as well as



JOAN CONOVER

indirectly via jobs in the local businesses that serve the charter yacht industry. "Moorings require regular maintenance (that) can be performed by a trained marine workforce," says Guilderoy Sprauve, producer of the USVI Stars and Stripes Poker Run.

Department of Corrections

The last paragraph of Jim Hutchinson's "Tropical Dotage" article in last month's *Compass* (see page 34 at https://www.caribbeancompass.com/online/march21compass_online.pdf) was inadvertently dropped. It ends with a sentiment that he very much wants to share, so here it is:

"Age kind of snuck up on me. Where I am spending what's left, however, in a friendly and welcoming part of the Caribbean, was a choice made many years ago. I can't think of any place I'd rather be."

Welcome aboard!

In this issue of *Compass* we welcome new advertisers Westerhall Estate Rum of Grenada, on page 30, and Pizza Hut of Bequia in the Market Place section. Good to have you with us!



BUSINESS BRIEFS

Antigua & Barbuda yachting open for business

The Antigua & Barbuda Marine Association (ABMA) reassures visiting yachtspeople that despite the cancellation of Antigua Sailing Week, the yachting industry in Antigua & Barbuda continues to be open for business.



CHRIS DOYLE

Our marinas and supporting marine service businesses remain open.

ABMA President Franklyn Braithwaite states, "Our marinas and supporting marine service businesses remain open. With our many anchorages around both islands it's possible to enjoy charters with enough space to socially distance. The refit business and sail-training operations, including RYA keelboat and dinghy courses, MCA, and STCW, all continue year round."

He adds, "Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, our industry has been able to operate very effectively due to the protocols put in place for businesses and visiting yachts."

Yachts looking for summer dock space, mooring, or haulout and storage have many options in Antigua. End-of-season shipping options will continue for those wishing to get to Europe or North America. Locally based insurance companies offer policies with coverage over the hurricane season.

The ABMA represents private sector organizations in the yachting industry and is dedicated to the responsible protection and enhancement of the marine industry and environment in Antigua & Barbuda.

Visit www.ABMA.ag for more information.

TMC offers virtual boat tours

Chrystal Young reports: Happy April, and no fooling! The Multihull Company, located in Secret Harbor, can take you on a virtual tour of any boat listed in



Take advantage of Chris Rundlett's extensive knowledge.

Grenada. Let Chris Rundlett, TMC broker in Grenada since 2013, walk you through the boat of your dreams. Take advantage of his extensive knowledge of a variety of boats and check out his YouTube channel www.youtube.com/channel/UCT3JItBjxjQ4UJo7RTxK56w or email chris@multihullcompany.com.

See ad on page 34 for more information.

Budget Marine: availability, quality and price

Budget Marine's founder/director Robbie Ferron reports: Marine equipment suppliers in the Caribbean are challenged by large global online suppliers who are able to maintain large and wide-ranging inventories and provide product information online that is highly accessible. Will they become the ultimate sourcing for marine products in the Caribbean?

Budget Marine believes that in-country supply has major advantages. As long as the information and pricing are managed in a manner that is close to that of the tech companies, local supply of marine equipment in our Eastern Caribbean territories will remain, contribute to the economies, and provide optimal service to boaters. When the benefits of successful technology are applied to in-region "brick and mortar" operations, the convenience and manageability will exceed any price advantages that exist. In some cases, it is even possible to offer cheaper prices than in metropolitan markets by purchasing directly from manufacturing countries.

In pursuing this goal, Budget Marine started a program to massively review its pricing, which will reduce 90 percent of the current list prices. As with online retailing, there will be fewer discounts and systematic pricing with fewer flyers.

The new website of Budget Marine already allows customers to see stock levels in each territory, with prices specific to these territories and in the local currency, as well as the stock on hand. No other marine equipment supplier in the Caribbean has ever offered this access to information.

Pricing is not everything. Range availability and quality are equally important. Budget Marine continues to explore new gear and introduce innovative products (and has seen significant breakthroughs). Merchandise in our industry is constantly changing through new technology and regulations, shifting fashions, and costs of production. Budget Marine is actively equipping itself to provide this globally competitive service by investing in the necessary software, hardware infrastructure, and training. The pandemic has not slowed this activity at all.

See ads on pages 2 and 18 for more information on Budget Marine.

Parts & Power's Perkins Certified Technician

Hassard Edwards of Parts & Power's Service Team recently became a Perkins Certified Technician. The Perkins certification process is an intensive three-part program consisting of over 50 modules. Hassard has worked diligently on this for the last two years and completed the certification process in December 2020.

Parts & Power Ltd, located in Tortola, BVI, was founded in 1973 and has been serving the marine and industrial needs of the Caribbean for more than 40 years. With over $1 million US dollars in inventory and agents throughout the islands, it is the



Hassard Edwards receives his Perkins Certified Technician certificate from Service Manager Karim Persaud.

largest supplier of diesel engines, diesel engine parts, Caribbean marine parts, and accessories in the Eastern Caribbean.

Parts & Power's staff originates from a variety of countries including St. Kitts, the US, the UK, Trinidad, Dominica, St. Vincent, Guyana, Canada, and the British Virgin Islands. Our diverse backgrounds give us a great depth of experience and helps with the needs of our customers. The common thread that unites us as a family is our keen interest in customer service and customer satisfaction.

Visit www.partsandpower.com for more information.

Clarkes Court in Grenada is hiring

Clarkes Court Boatyard & Marina in Grenada invites applications for the position of general manager.

Duties and responsibilities are to review and improve organizational effectiveness by developing processes, overseeing employees, establishing a highly motivated work environment, and creating innovative approaches for improvement; maintain budgets and optimize expenses; and prepare reports for the upper management.

Requirements include proven experience as a general manager or equivalent position, preferably in the shipyard industry; BSc/BA in Business Administration or relevant field (MSc/MA will be a plus); minimum five years of experience in a similar environment; strong verbal and written communication skills; and excellent organizational and leadership abilities.

Interested and suitable applicants must send their application to c.holmes@k-group.vc before April 31st.

See ad on page 6 for more information.

Sevenstar yacht shipping this month

Lorien Hoving reports: Where would you like to go? Sevenstar Yacht Transport is moving yachts around the world. Our ships aren't on lockdown, so we are ready when you are, safe and reliable.

—Continued on next page



A Sevenstar Yacht Transport ship arriving at Marina du Marin, Martinique.

—Continued from previous page

Caribbean to Europe departures leave the following locations between April 15th and April 30th: Trinidad, Martinique, Antigua and St. Thomas, bound for Southampton, UK, and Ijmuiden, Netherlands.

Sevenstar Yacht Transport is the world's leading provider of yacht shipping services on a lift-on, lift-off basis and has access to the Spliethoff Group's own fleet of 120 vessels. Our ships are designed especially for yacht transport and we believe in constantly enhancing our staff and tools to perfect skills and technologies.

Our global destinations provide access to the world's premier ports and cruising grounds. You can check the sailing schedules on our website, but we also offer customized itineraries. Multiple shipments from the Caribbean are available and our agent in Le Marin, Martinique, is more than happy to advise you.

Visit www.sevenstar-yacht-transport.com or contact our agent Douglas Yacht Services by email (marie-eugenie@douglasyachtservices.fr) or phone ((596) 696 25 08 56) for more information, and see ads on pages 5 and 17.

New Moorings base in USVI

In February, The Moorings began offering all-inclusive crewed yacht charters and bareboat charters of sailing and power catamarans from their new St. Thomas base at the Yacht Haven Grande Marina in Charlotte Amalie. Charter itineraries include destinations throughout the US Virgin Islands.

The marina at Yacht Haven Grande provides on-site Customs and Immigration services, tennis courts, a ROAM kiosk, WiFi, a crew lounge, private shower facilities, a lagoon-style swimming pool, beach volleyball, 24-hour security, professional staff, and shopping and dining options. There are multiple provisioning stores, including a small shop at the marina and several within close proximity. Laundry services are available as well. It's a ten-minute drive from Cyril E. King airport and no passport is required for US citizens.

Additional Moorings bases in the Caribbean are expected to relaunch this month.

Visit https://usviupdate.com for USVI entry requirements.

Visit www.moorings.com for more information about charter vacations.

Puerto del Rey Marina joins Speedy Dock

Nicole Quintero reports: Puerto del Rey is the first and only marina in Puerto Rico to join Speedy Dock, an application that provides boat owners and clients an efficient way to track their boats and schedule a launch request through mobile devices. The marina is adapting to current times and is constantly looking for ways to optimize services and take advantage of digital improvements, now more than ever due to the worldwide pandemic and health situation.



A free app facilitates launch requests at Puerto Rico's Marina del Rey.

Puerto del Rey's Chief Executive Officer, Carolina Corral, says, "We are always searching for new technologies that will allow us to improve the services that we provide to our customers. Upon evaluating different alternatives, we opted for a system that allows our clients to simplify launching by accelerating a launch request when arriving at the marina, without having to step foot in the office or call." Requests made through Speedy Dock are reflected immediately at the marina; with just the touch of a button, the client's boat will be scheduled to be splashed.

Speedy Dock will accelerate services in Puerto del Rey Marina and provide many benefits to its users. In addition to scheduling a boat movement without physically involving or calling the customer service office, this technology allows the marina to manage transaction history, welcome messages and geofencing, add photos, and report situations (if necessary).

Download the Speedy Dock application for free through Google Play or the Apple Store.

Visit http://puertodelrey.com for more information on Puerto del Rey Marina.

USVI Spring Yacht Show next month

Carol Bareuther reports: The US Virgin Islands Professional Charter Association's (VIPCA) first Spring Yacht Show, set for May 16th through 18th, will showcase new and veteran USVI-based crewed charter yachts to brokers in Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas. Working in partnership with the Virgin Islands Port Authority, 20 to 30 sailing multihulls, monohulls, and power yachts will tie stern-to along the waterfront, which has been recently renovated with new cleats and fendering. This location enables yacht brokers to easily step aboard while also being close enough to stroll into town. Charter yachts exhibiting will be cordoned off to the public, with security personnel on duty.

Commissioner of Tourism Joseph Boschulte says, "The marine industry is an important sector to our overall tourism product, which has grown significantly during the pandemic. We continue to promote and underscore the importance of the charter yacht segment and look forward to the Virgin Islands Spring Yacht Show in May."

"Vessels who may have missed the November yacht show hosted by VIPCA in Yacht Haven Grande now have the chance to shine before brokers at this more intimate mid-season event," says Oriel Blake, VIPCA Executive Director. May is typically when yachts start to get the next season's activity for their calendars, so the show is a great opportunity to give clients an up-to-date status of the yachts. This time of year also offers brokers a good idea of how the season is going for the crews and how well they are maintaining the yachts.

Charter yacht brokers are invited to register for the Spring Yacht Show in person or online. For those attending in person, accommodations are available at a reduced show rate at Bluebeard's Castle Resort, located within walking distance of the venue. On the waterfront, brokers can make use of a restroom and an



At the USVI Spring Show, 20 to 30 yachts will tie stern-to along the Charlotte Amalie waterfront, which has been recently renovated with new cleats and fendering.

air-conditioned business lounge. Registered brokers unable to attend in person can log in during show hours or afterwards to view yacht tours and crew interviews.

Visit https://vipca.org for more information.

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CARIBBEAN ECO-NEWS

Major step toward Blue Economy for five OECS states

As Toni Allen explained in a recent article at https://technewstt.com/blue-economy, Caribbean nations are still struggling to find their place in an increasingly global world. One in five Caribbean citizens remain below the poverty line, growth is almost three percent lower than the global average, and the region is the second most at risk from environmental hazards due to climate change.



CHRIS DOYLE

Anse Cochon. St. Lucia is one of the five OECS member states that have begun validating Coastal and Marine Spatial Plans.

The impact from Covid-19 has made progress more complex. Some business sectors have surged during the pandemic. These include e-commerce and online learning, as well as business and finance sites. But the Caribbean nations have not noticeably benefitted from these trends.

The challenges are significant but there is a solution. It lies in Caribbean nations nurturing a "Blue Economy." This could have an impact far beyond local governance and encourage international investors to boost direct investment. There are a number of definitions for the Blue Economy, but they all follow a key theme: the sustainable use of ocean resources to improve economic growth while protecting the oceans themselves.

In a step toward transitioning to a Blue Economy, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Kitts & Nevis, and St. Vincent & the Grenadines have begun the process of validating Coastal and Marine Spatial Plans (CMSP) prepared under the Caribbean Regional Oceanscape Project (CROP).

Transitioning from Small Island Developing States to Large Ocean States through sustainable use of ocean resources is a major goal of the OECS. To enable fulfillment of this goal, the development of Coastal and Marine Spatial Plans forms a major component of CROP (https://oecs.org/en/crop), which is currently being implemented by the OECS Commission on behalf of Member States.

A Validation Forum was held via the OECS Virtual Convention Centre on February 26th.

During the Validation Forum, Dillon Consulting presented summaries of the revised draft CMSPs for the five Member States, which were prepared from consultations with key stakeholders, building on existing work in coastal and marine planning. The Forum marked the culmination of a two-year process of stakeholder engagement. The presentation included Coastal Zoning Maps (models) depicting conservation, transportation, tourism and recreation, fishing, and industrial zones. The consultants also presented a range of Blue Economy projects for the Member States under the following areas: climate resilience, environmental protection, economic growth, good governance, and equitable development. Proposed projects include initiatives in aquaculture, mariculture, fisheries, renewable energy exploration, waterfront development, village tourism, coastal replanting, beach nourishment, and conversion of fish waste to fertilizer. Also proposed was the establishment of a maritime training facility, as well as a Blue Economy incubator and accelerator programme.

The validation of the draft CMSPs marks a critical stage in the region's transition to a Blue Economy. These plans define an enabling framework that sets the stage for blue growth investments and offer a 15-year timeframe to support the transition towards a Blue Economy through sustainable and equitable use of coastal and marine space, protecting coastal and marine ecosystems, and managing land-water interactions. Guided by an evidence-based Island Systems Management, the plans serve as national blue economy roadmaps with interventions and investments aimed at achieving mutually reinforcing outcomes of good governance, economic growth, equitable development, environmental protection, and climate resilience.

Visit https://pressroom.oecs.org/oecs-member-states-take-a-major-step-in-transitioning-to-a-blue-economy for more information.

Detecting invasive mammals on offshore Grenadine islands

Juliana Coffey reports: Throughout 2019-2020 Environmental Protection in the Caribbean (EPIC) has focused efforts to document the presence of invasive mammal species on offshore Grenadine islands. The uninhabited islands of the Grenadines are globally important for nesting seabirds and host regionally endemic and endangered reptile species, such as sea turtles — all of which are known to be especially vulnerable to invasive mammal species where they occur.

Invasive species, whether purposefully or accidentally introduced to areas beyond their native ranges, can become harmful to the local environment, oftentimes with negative consequences for local economies and even human health. Their role in extirpations and extinctions of native species is well documented worldwide.



KATE CHARLES

EPIC and Ocean Spirits Inc conducted land-based surveys focused on detecting rodents with baited tracking tunnels and trail cameras.

Introduction of non-native mammal species to the Caribbean region coincided with arrivals of human inhabitants. Domestic animals were often brought along as a source of nutrition and companionship, while others, such as rodents, were unintentionally introduced. One of the best-known invasive mammal species in the region is the mongoose, existing on many Caribbean islands, including mainland Grenada and St. Vincent. While mongooses were purposely introduced to control burgeoning rodent populations, they have been especially detrimental to native reptile and bird populations throughout the region, including the critically endangered Grenada Dove.

Introduced mammals known to exist on the uninhabited islands of the Grenadines consist of both grazing and predatory animals, including goats, sheep, cows, dogs, cats, rats, mice and opossum. While predatory animals can directly injure or kill native species, livestock can trample nests, cause disturbance and significantly reduce plant cover, contributing to erosion and smothering of adjacent coral reef and fisheries habitat.

Between 2019-2020, the Grenadines Seabird Guardians, a citizen scientist group, visited 37 offshore islands in Grenada and SVG, conducting land and boat-based observations of wildlife and documenting the presence of non-native mammals. The most frequently detected non-native mammals were feral goats, with populations confirmed on at least 16 of the islands visited. Other species observed included sheep, cats and dogs.

In December 2020, EPIC and Ocean Spirits Inc joined efforts to conduct land-based surveys focused on detecting rodents with baited tracking tunnels and trail cameras. These investigations targeted seven offshore islands in the Grenada Grenadines, with field support from Dr. Kenrith Carter (Grenada), Kendon James (Grenada), Vaughn Thomas (Carriacou), and Rene Isaacs (Carriacou). These surveys contributed to the current knowledgebase of rodents on at least eight uninhabited islands, with suspected presence at additional sites. Rats in particular are known for their strong swimming abilities between islands, and although they were not detected at some sites, the lack of detection is not proof of their absence.

Despite legislation prohibiting the release of domestic animals on Crown Land and in protected areas in Grenada and SVG, research has shown that they regularly occur in such areas with minimal to no intervention. Feral goat populations are prevalent in Wildlife Reserves and International Bird Areas, and occur on islands in the Tobago Cays Marine Park, the Sandy Island Oyster Bed Marine Protected Area, and in several proposed marine protected areas. While landholders may graze animals on privately owned islands outside of protected areas, their negative effects on flora and fauna at these sites remain uninvestigated and unregulated.

Efforts to remove or manage harmful invasive mammal species in other areas have proven to recover native biodiversity; however, without outreach and education on their negative effects, the likelihood of reintroductions to Grenadines islands is high. A working group of local stakeholders has been established to address the impacts of invasive mammals and other issues as part of the Grenadines Seabird Conservation Management Plan. With the support of communities and management agencies, reducing the negative impacts of invasive mammals is feasible.

Funding for this research was provided by the US Agency for International Development, US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife.

Visit www.epicislands.org for more information.

Tobago Cays staff trained in biophysical monitoring

The Biophysical Monitoring Training Course for staff at St. Vincent & the Grenadines' Tobago Cays Marine Park was completed in December 2020; six staff members are now certified and can conduct routine Biophysical Monitoring at the park. The Biophysical Monitoring Training Program will provide the park with the institutional capacity to determine the changes in abundance, size, species composition, and biomass of ecologically and economically important species.

Participants conducted in-water monitoring for seagrass and sea urchins at two of the permanent monitoring sites and monitored for Queen Conch at three of the permanent monitoring sites within the TCMP. The water quality training covered areas such as completing data sheets, labeling sample bottles, collecting water samples and collecting in-situ monitoring parameters (temperature, turbidity). Water quality analyses for parameters (dissolved oxygen, pH, nitrates, phosphates and coliform bacteria) were also done. Data entry and analysis: this component of the program was designed to allow for the development of monitoring reports that would follow all monitoring activities and help to facilitate the adaptive management process of the TCMP.

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This training course was funded by the St Vincent & the Grenadines Conservation Fund.



CHRIS DOYLE

The Tobago Cays Marine Park. Six staff members are now certified to conduct biophysical monitoring.

Visit www.tobagocays.org and facebook.com/tobagocaysmarinepark for more information.

Waste to Art contest winners announced

Lystra Culzac reports: Environmental Protection in the Caribbean and Science Initiative for Environmental Conservation and Education have announced the winners of their Waste to Art competition held under the theme "Amazing Seabirds: Our Birds, Our Islands, Our Future." The contest was held throughout St. Vincent & the Grenadines and Grenada in four categories: Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Tertiary Schools and Adults. This contest was an opportunity for students and the general public to bring attention to the threat of marine litter to wildlife and showcase their creativity and knowledge about seabirds. At the same time, they contributed to a cleaner and healthier environment by removing plastics and other waste material from beaches and seabird habitats.



Darell Lewis from Grenada received first prize in the Tertiary Schools category.

Twenty-six online entries were judged by a panel of environmentalists, media personnel and professional artists. Cash prizes will be awarded to the two top entries in each category.

First place in the Primary Schools category was awarded to Kyle Salhab and Zariel Thomas of Grenada, who used styrofoam, wire, and newspaper to depict a seashore environment. Second place went to Allen Lowmans of St. Vincent, who displayed a Red-Billed Tropicbird.

Secondary school winners were Annique Patterson of St. Vincent (first place) with the piece "DND" (Do Not Disturb), which demonstrates the danger to seabirds of eating plastic, and Janessa Durham of St. Vincent (second place), who depicted a Least Tern.

In the Tertiary Schools category, Darell Lewis from Grenada received first prize for a portrayal of the endangered Black-Capped Petrel, followed by Hannah Francis and Nazara Cobb from Grenada who received second prize for their submission showing a Magnificent Frigatebird flying over a fishing boat.

The Adult category, for persons 18 years and older, was won by the duo Rowena King-Dasouza and Sheldon Dasouza of St. Vincent for the piece entitled "Life Cycle of the Magnificent Frigate Seabird". Second place in this category was copped by Glenroy Gaymes of St. Vincent who portrayed the island of Battowia, a globally recognized important bird area for seabirds.

EPIC and SCIENCE would like to thank all persons who participated in its contest for contributing to spreading awareness about marine litter and seabird conservation in these two island states.

Marine litter is a global threat to wildlife that is now found in even the most remote regions on the planet. In 2020, EPIC, SCIENCE, Ocean Spirits and other local partners conducted five clean-ups at offshore Grenadine islands, removing numerous bags of waste from seabird and sea turtle nesting habitat. Items collected consisted primarily of disposable household waste such as Styrofoam containers, plastic cutlery and plastic bottles, while flipflops and fishing gear were also common. We would like to remind everyone to be mindful of their waste disposal and to participate in clean-up initiatives where possible.

This competition was made possible with funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Cape Cod Bird Club, and donors to Environmental Protection in the Caribbean (EPIC).

Over 1.5 tons of trash removed from Little Cayman beaches

On March 13th and 14th, the Plastic Free Cayman team participated in a beach clean up in Little Cayman, where the environmental group partnered with The Little Cayman National Trust, the Central Caribbean Marine Institute, the Department of the Environment, Southern Cross Club, Little C Tours and Protect Our Future.



SERGE MELKI

Little Cayman's beaches are cleaner thanks to a volunteer effort.

The 30 volunteer event, which yielded more than 3,100 pounds (over 1.5 tons) of trash, took place at three sites: Charles Bright (830 pounds removed), Mary's Bay (1,700 pounds removed) and Owen Island (600 pounds removed).

Most of the debris collected was either plastic or microplastic based. Each year Plastic Free Cayman surveys the sister islands in an effort to track the amount of plastic pollution removed from various sites. This year the team indicated that the amount of trash found at each location was overwhelming.

"Mary's Bay could easily be mistaken for a small landfill," observed a volunteer.

PFC founder Claire Hughes continues to push for a national clean up campaign and plastic ban policy similar to those on other Caribbean islands.

"As people of such beautiful islands, we have to stop being a part of the problem and start being a part of solution. If we just make simple changes like using reusable bags when shopping or a bamboo toothbrush, we will stop being a part of the plastic epidemic," said Protect Our Future leader Dejea Lyons.

Read the full story at www.loopcayman.com/content/volunteers-remove-3100-lbs-plastic-little-cayman-beaches

Grenada looks at reducing yacht waste

The Grenada Tourism Authority reports: Grenada is taking steps to further protect its marine environment by working with the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) to develop a public-private sector partnership to reduce marine waste coming from pleasure vessels such as yachts.

The project, dubbed Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystem Management in the Caribbean for Small Island Developing States, will examine Grenada and Carriacou's current capacity and create research-based solutions to deal with waste in an eco-friendly manner.

Additionally, Grenada is set to implement a marine waste management policy with amendments to the existing legislation and the introduction of accompanying regulations. This policy is aimed at setting up a management system for marine waste management, including monitoring, funding, penalties and cost structures. Confident that this is a positive action to manage Grenada's fisheries sustainably, Permanent Secretary (Ag.) with responsibility for Fisheries and Co-operatives in the Ministry of Sports, Culture and the Arts, Fisheries & Co-operatives Michael Stephen stated, "Grenada is an International Maritime Organization (IMO) member and will comply with measures to improve the safety and security of international shipping and to prevent marine pollution from ships."

The Grenada Ports Authority (GPA) is the country's focal point for international maritime matters falling under the auspices of the IMO. General Manager Carlyle Felix affirmed, "The Grenada Ports Authority reiterates its support for the proposed policy and looks forward to a timely adoption of the IMO's Caribbean Small Commercial Vessels Code. We are convinced that its adoption will promote cleaner seas, which is one of the pillars of an ocean-based economy."

Speaking of these important steps in marine waste management, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Climate Resilience and the Environment Desiree Stephen said, "Grenada is a geo-tourism destination in which the marine environment is significant to the livelihoods of many Grenadians, for fishing, diving, tourism and recreation. Taking these important steps now will ensure that future generations will be able to reap economic and other benefits."

To support these and other activities in the local yachting sector including destination marketing is the newly formed Grenada Tourism Authority Subcommittee on Yachting. The members are Karen Stiell representing the Marine and Yachting Association of Grenada (MAYAG), Nicholas George representing sportfishing, Charlotte Fairhead representing Camper & Nicholson Port Louis Marina, and GTA Nautical Development Manager Nikoyan Roberts. The subcommittee is energised about further maximising Grenada's position as the gateway to the Grenadines and a globally recognised responsible yachting destination.



CHRIS DOYLE

The project aims to create research-based solutions to deal with vessel-based waste in an eco-friendly manner.

REGATTA NEWS

Antigua Classics 2021 Cancelled

The Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta committee reports: We were hoping that we could all go sailing, but unfortunately the Covid virus and the protocols have made this impossible.



CHRIS DOYLE

The Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta will be back next year.

The Chairman of the Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta Carlo Falcone and the committee have decided to cancel the 2021 ACYR. We hope that everything will go back to normal in 2022. For classic yachts already in Antigua, we are hoping to hold an informal sailing-only weekend at the end of April this year. More information on that will follow if it is viable.

Back in the '60s, classic yachts in English Harbour had begun chartering and the captains and crews challenged each other to a race down to Guadeloupe at the end of the charter season. From this informal race, Antigua Sailing Week was formed in 1967, and in those days all of the yachts were classic. However, over the next 24 years, the classic yachts were slowly outnumbered by the faster, sleeker modern racing yachts. A small number of classics still racing in 1987 found themselves grouped with cruising Class 3, which was less than ideal for these hard to manoeuvre full-keeled vessels. And so it came about that Captains Uli Pruesse and Kenny Coombs hosted a meeting with other classic skippers onboard the magnificent schooner *Aschanti of Saba* and, several rums later, the Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta was born.

The Regatta has evolved into what it is today with the help of a faithful and long-standing Committee, and some friends who have brought notoriety to the event. In 1991, Elizabeth Meyer brought her newly refitted *Endeavour* and Baron Edmond Rothschild brought his 6-metre *Spirit of St Kitts*. CSR became the first sponsor and inaugurated the Concours d'Elégance, which then gained worldwide publicity thanks to subsequent sponsor *Boat International Magazine*.

We look forward to welcoming you all back to the Classics from March 30th through April 4th, 2022.

Visit http://antiguaclassics.com for more information.

Antigua Sailing Week 2021 cancelled

The event's organizers join local government and the international community in working to limit and eradicate the Covid-19 spread by cancelling the 2021 edition of Antigua Sailing Week (ASW), including the Peters & May Round Antigua Race, scheduled to take place from April 24th through 30th.

This decision occurred after in-depth consideration of the obligations participants have to charter operations, hotels, villa rentals and shipping companies, and taking into account international travel restrictions and an inability to organize an impenetrable bubble for the safety of all participants, volunteers, and the wider community.



WWW.SAILINGWEEK.COM

Antigua Sailing Week looks forward to 2022!

As the anchor event of an uneventful Caribbean racing season, ASW aroused strong interest. "With entries still coming in, we were grappling with finding the right formula to accommodate those interests. But with the increased restrictions being put in place to manage the further spread of Covid-19, cancellation is the only possible outcome, even though it hurts our sailing soul. We are truly excited to get back to what we love — the business of yacht racing — next year," says ASW President and Commercial Director, Alison Sly-Adams.

The cancellation of ASW 2021 further compounds the financial blow to the non-profit entity that organizes this international event, as well as to the local community. Its staging usually results in a positive economic impact of EC$6 million (over US$2 million) each year.

Minister of Tourism and Investment Charles Fernandez said of the cancellation: "We are disappointed about cancelling the event for a second year. Not only is ASW important to us as an economy, but for many of us it is our favorite time of year, when we come together as a community with our visitors to celebrate the wonderful yachting season. This year, however, we are prioritizing managing the health care system and the vaccination program for the good of the community, which in the long term will allow us to welcome back our visitors safely. In fact, we have started planning for ASW 2022 and intend to make it bigger and better than ever."

Participants on the 2021 entry list can opt to have entry fees transferred to next year, when the event is scheduled for April 30th through May 6th. However, they must re-enter via the 2022 entry page at www.sailingweek.com/enter-2022.

Visit www.sailingweek.com for more information.

Salty Dawg East Coast Rally 2021

Salty Dawg East Coast Rally participants will gather in St. Thomas and St. John, US Virgin Islands, between April 26th and 30th for pre-passage events. The scheduled departure date is May 1st. The rally is an offshore passage to various ports on the US East Coast or Bermuda in company with other yachts. The fleet usually consists of 25 to 35 boats from different countries.

An array of fun, Covid-safe social events will occur in the USVI, as well as in Antigua, before departure. In addition to the dates already listed on the website, there will be a "Farewell Antigua" dinner at Boone Restaurant in English Harbour on April 23rd for anyone wishing to attend. It is expected that yachts will leave Antigua on the 24th or as the weather allows, bound for the USVI.

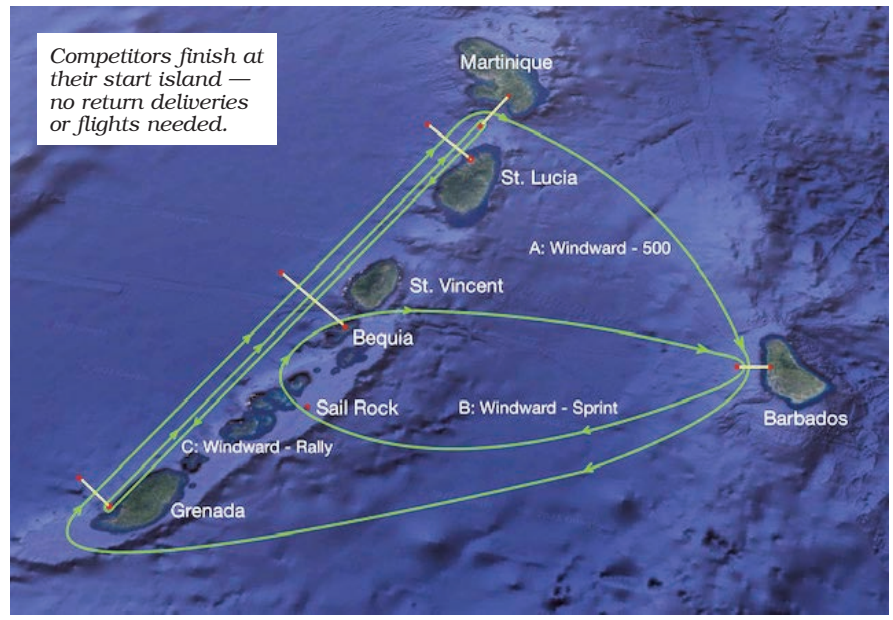
Rally perks include weather routing, position tracking, and an extensive level of coordination and support during the offshore passage. All Salty Dawg rallies and events are led by seasoned sailors who volunteer their time and knowledge to help cruisers realize their dreams. All sailing dates are at the captain's discretion, depending on weather and preparedness of the crew and vessel.

Visit www.saltydawgsailing.org for more information.

New Windward 500 offshore series

Steven Kern reports: The Caribbean Ocean Racing Club has announced the Windward 500 race series, an environmentally focused low-carbon-footprint sailing event set to start on May 17th. With an inspiration to achieve Sailors for the Sea Powered by Oceana's Clean Regatta status and attention to World Sailings' Offshore Racing Environmental Code, we invite you to join the race to resilience.

The pandemic has awakened the resilience of the OECS and Windward Islands yacht racing community. The Caribbean Ocean Racing Club has risen to the challenge by organizing and designing a race series that respects regional Covid-19 protocols, keeps the spirit of sportsmanship alive, and embraces purpose. We recognize that we live in the Blue Economy. Therefore, we must sustainably utilize our maritime assets, our ideal sailing grounds, safe harbors, and haul-out facilities. In support, competitors and followers of the race are called to raise the visibility, act, and champion relevant public and private sector, renewable energy, sustainability, and resilience projects.



Competitors finish at their start island — no return deliveries or flights needed.

We envision the race inspiring people to embrace, develop, engineer, procure and construct these vital projects so that we may achieve the nationally determined contributions to meet environmental goals set forth by the Paris Climate Accord. Competitors will lend their voices, stories, photos, and videos, in print, online, and in interviews, to the efforts that our Caribbean governments, businesses, and individuals are making.

In the spirit of the RORC Caribbean 600 in the Leeward Islands, this race offers the splendor of the Windward Islands to racers seeking a new challenge.

Competitors finish at their start island. Therefore there is no need for a return delivery of the boat or flights for crew after the event. The Windward Islands offer serious offshore double-handed racers ideal conditions to train for International double-handed events and the Olympics. Prizegiving will be on-line with suitable recognition for podium finishers and the initiatives that they advocated for. For those finishing their racing season after this race, the sheltered harbors, haulout facilities and yards of the Windward Islands are ready to secure yachts till the next sailing season.

The Windward-500, Course A, is a 500-nautical-mile race from Grenada, past St. Vincent & the Grenadines and St. Lucia and around Diamond Rock off Martinique, followed by a beat to windward to pass a waypoint off Sandy Lane on the west coast of Barbados and a run back down to Grenada.

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The Windward-Sprint, Course B, is a 300-nautical-mile race from Barbados, around Sail Rock and Bequia, and back to Barbados.

The Windward-Rally, Course C, offers novice double-handed teams, keen cruisers and charter fleet captains a safe but challenging 360-nautical-mile windward/leeward race on the leeward side of all the islands.

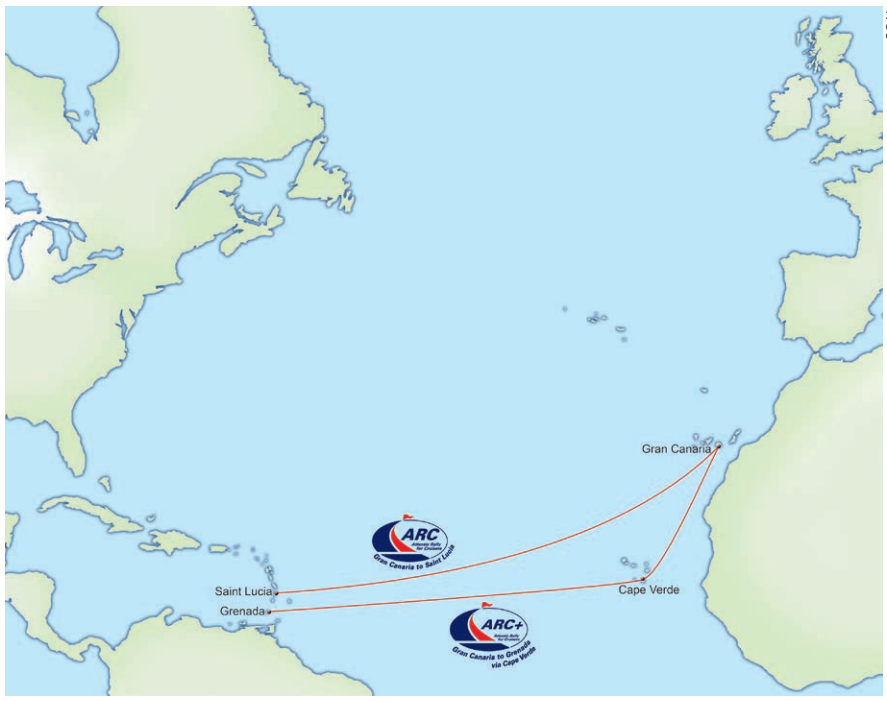
The new Windward Islands Offshore 500 Race Series starts on May 17th. Entries are now open and must be received by May 10th.

The NOR is available at https://yachtscoring.com. Visit www.facebook.com/caribbeanorc or contact skern@oneenergyisland.com for more information.

ARC+ rally 2021 to finish in Grenada

Sarah Collins reports: World Cruising Club has announced that Grenada will be the new destination for the ninth ARC+. Since its launch in 2013, the annual transatlantic route from Gran Canaria with a stopover at Mindelo Marina in Cape Verde has proved popular with cruisers sailing under the ARC banner, so much so that in recent years two Caribbean landfalls — in St. Lucia and St. Vincent — have been necessary to meet the demand of those wishing to sail via Cape Verde.

The traditional direct ARC route, which departs Las Palmas de Gran Canaria two weeks after the ARC+, will sail to Rodney Bay, St. Lucia, as usual.



WCC

The traditional ARC and new ARC January will sail non-stop from Las Palmas to Rodney Bay. The ARC+ will make a stop in Mindelo and then proceed to Port Louis Marina, Grenada.

From December 2021, boats on the ARC+ route will finish together at Camper and Nicholsons Port Louis Marina in Grenada, combining the fleet at the finish to add to the camaraderie after their Atlantic crossing.

The ARC+ destination change will ease pressure on facilities in St. Lucia, spread boats within the southern Caribbean, and overcome the need for ARC+ yachts to vacate berths at Rodney Bay Marina immediately after the rally prizegiving and pending arrival of the direct ARC fleet, making for a less rushed stopover. This change also accommodates an extra day in Cape Verde, a suggestion from previous participants.

Andrew Bishop of World Cruising Club says, "We are delighted to be working with the Grenada Tourism Authority and Camper and Nicholsons Port Louis Marina to give the ARC+ participants an exciting Caribbean arrival experience, and to bring the whole ARC+ fleet together at the finish for the first time."

Charlotte Fairhead, Marina Manager at Port Louis Marina says, "We are excited to be the host venue for this year's ARC+, a globally recognized sailing event. Our marina has recently undergone a renovation, adding 90 new berths ranging from 12 to 22 metres, which enables us to be a premium destination for international sailing events."

The fully-booked ARC+ 2021 consists of 100 yachts and is scheduled to set sail from Gran Canaria on November 7th, with the entire rally running for five weeks. A four- to six-day stopover in Mindelo, Cape Verde, is planned. From there the fleet re-starts, bound for Grenada, on November 19th. On the other side of the Atlantic, each boat will be met with a warm welcome and an ice-cold rum punch. The majority of the fleet will make landfall at Port Louis Marina from December 1st through 6th. The rally will conclude with the prizegiving ceremony on December 9th, 2021.

Visit www.cnmarinas.com/plm for more information on Port Louis Marina, or see ad on page 4.

Visit www.worldcruising.com/arc_plus for more information on the ARC+.

St. Lucia welcomes new 'ARC January' rally in 2022

Sarah Collins reports: World Cruising Club has announced an exciting new addition to their Atlantic crossing portfolio of rallies with the launch of ARC January, sailing from Las Palmas de Gran Canaria to Rodney Bay, St. Lucia, in 2022.

Responding to the enthusiasm of cruising sailors wishing to sail with the safety and social benefits of being part of the world-renowned Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC), this new route choice offers further capacity to the over-subscribed November departures. An extra 75 yachts (approximately 400 crew) now have the opportunity for a superb tradewind crossing in the new year.

ARC January will set sail on January 9th, 2022 and follow the classic route, direct from Gran Canaria to St. Lucia. Boats can expect a fast passage in well-established tradewinds, with less risk of calms during the crossing. The new rally will include all the activities, seminars, and social functions cruisers have come to expect from the ARC.

The office for ARC January will open in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria on December 30th, 2021, with participants enjoying New Year celebrations and making their preparations with a program of activities, including seminars and safety checks. Yachts will be fitted with a satellite tracker for friends, family, and fans to follow their progress on the 2,700 nautical mile passage to St. Lucia. The World Cruising Club team, together with the St. Lucia Tourism Authority and Events Company St. Lucia, anticipate arrivals at IGY Rodney Bay Marina from the end of January, with a warm welcome and ice-cold rum punch at the ready. The event will conclude with a prizegiving party on February 5th.

Entries for the new route are now open and filling. There will be no Racing Division,



WCC/CLARE PENGELLY

The scene in Las Palmas before an ARC start. The new ARC January offers further capacity to the over-subscribed November departures.

but a rally spirit of friendly competition with yachts provided a handicap and declaring their engine hours on arrival for results to be calculated.

Managing Director of World Cruising Club Andrew Bishop says, "We have received a great response since launching the option to sail with ARC January, with 20 percent of the available places taken up in the first 24 hours. Thanks to the continued support of our hosts in Gran Canaria and St. Lucia, we are looking forward to delivering a very special first edition in the spirit of the ARC, maintaining the unique atmosphere that has developed over the preceding 35 years."

ARC January is one of three transatlantic routes organized by World Cruising Club crossing the Atlantic from east to west in the winter of 2021/22, under the ARC banner. The ARC+, sailing via Cape Verde, and the ARC, which will celebrate its 36th edition in 2021, make up the other choices.

St. Lucia remains the home of the ARC in the Caribbean, with both direct routes finishing on the island. The ever-popular World ARC also starts and finishes there, with a fleet of 45 yachts expected to take off in early January 2022.

Visit www.worldcruising.com/arc_january for more information.

YOUTH SAILING NEWS

Three Antigua sailors heading to 2021 Opti Worlds

Antigua Yacht Club congratulates junior sailors Emily Gaillard, Alistair Knoblauch, and Patrick Greensmith, all aged 13, who will represent Antigua & Barbuda at the 2021 Optimist World Championship. The event will be hosted in Riva del Garda, Italy, from June 30th through July 10th. To be eligible for selection on the team, each sailor had to qualify based on his or her previous sailing performances and not be over the age of 15 years.

The Optimist dinghy is a one-person boat with the largest distribution of youth sailors around the globe. In 2019 Antigua Yacht Club and Nelson's Dockyard hosted the most successful Optimist World Championship on record, welcoming 269 youth sailors from 65 countries to the waters off English Harbour.

Unfortunately, due to the situation with Covid-19, the 2020 edition had to be cancelled by the International Optimist Dinghy Association (IODA), the governing authority for the world's Optimist sailing. The maximum risk mitigation protocols are anticipated to be in place for all sailing championships of the Optimist Class during 2021, following the success of the most recent Optimist European Championship, which was hosted in Slovenia in October 2020 as a safe, secure, and Covid-free event.

The three young Antiguan sailors on the 2021 Opti Worlds Team are excited to be recognized for their achievement and will focus on developing their sailing skills over the next few months. They will be accompanied to Italy by team leader Lorraine Gaillard as official chaperone and by their coach Karl James, MBE.

AYC would like to take this opportunity to thank Caribbean Alliance for coming on board as our sponsor.

Visit www.antiguayachtclub.com for more information.



IODA

The Optimist dinghy is a one-person boat with the largest distribution of youth sailors around the globe.



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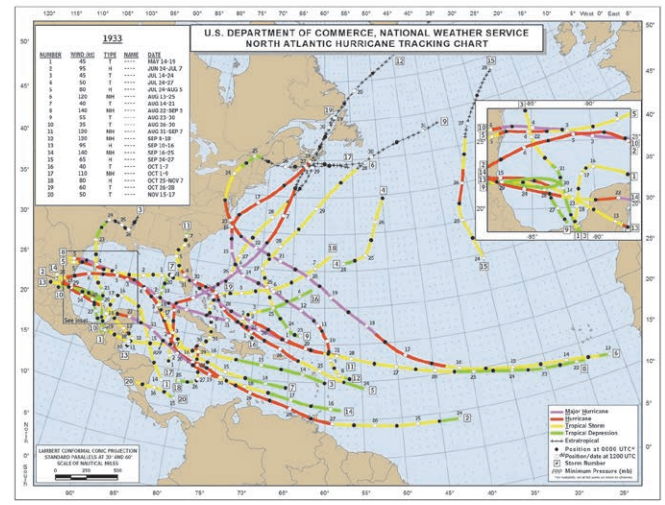
The start of last year's hurricane season saw many cruisers in the Caribbean in a quandary as to where to go. By April 2020, the pandemic's lockdowns and closed borders became ubiquitous in the islands. April is also the time of the year when many cruisers begin to make plans where to locate their boats and themselves for the hurricane season. The fact that 2020 was forecast to be a "very active" hurricane season only added to their concern.

Where did we go?

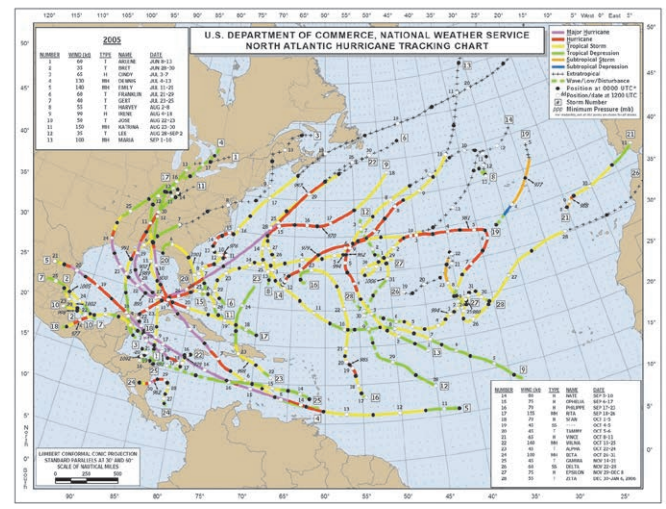
Since 2014 my wife, Maureen, and I had taken our boat to Trinidad during the hurricane season. It was a great opportunity to have boat work done expertly while being safely out of the hurricane belt. The added benefits included the enjoyment of the unique Trinidad culture and the ability to easily fly to New York to visit family and friends.

As borders were closing, we kept up our hope that Trinidad would follow what Grenada and several other islands had done, allowing cruisers to enter with Covid safe procedures and restrictions. Unfortunately for Trinidad, for us, and for many other boat owners, the country (as of this writing) still hasn't opened its borders.

Last year many cruisers made the decision to leave the Caribbean for the summer. The Salty Dawg Sailing Association attracted over 180 boats in their Homeward Bound Rally going back to the States. We decided to stay in the islands but needed to determine where.



Above: We chose to spend last summer in St. Lucia. Rodney Bay Marina is well protected and we felt very secure.



The first hurricane of the 1933 season hit Trinidad on June 27th.

Of the 28 named storms of the 2005 season, only two passed over the Lesser Antilles.

I asked myself "Where Will My Hurricane Be?" in July 2020 (*see page 18 at www.caribbeancompass.com/online/september20compass_online.pdf*) as the hurricane season got into high gear. The article reviewed the historic record of all Atlantic named storms over the last 30 years and where exactly their paths crossed the Eastern Caribbean islands. It helped us decide where to stay. We chose St. Lucia.

Where did the storms go?

This is an update on where the 2020 hurricanes actually were and how they fit in with the last 30 years.

The 2020 hurricane season was indeed "very active." It was a record season with 30 named storms — the most named storms ever! The previous records were in 1933, with 20 storms, and 2005, with 28. The average number of named storms for the Atlantic basin for the last 31 years was 14 to15 per season.

• 1933

The 20 named storms of 1933 included nine tropical storms, five hurricanes and six major hurricanes. Of these, two were tropical depressions as they crossed Dominica and Grenada, one a tropical storm crossing Antigua, and one a hurricane crossing Trinidad. Tracking was from May 14th to November 17th, 1933.

—Continued on next page

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• 2005

The 28 storms of the 2005 season began on June 8th and ended with a named storm tracked to January 6th, 2006 — a seven-month season. Remember, the official season is from June 1st to November 30th — six months — but storms don't follow this rule! As Don Street points out, there have been named storms in May, December and January.

In 2005 there were 13 tropical storms, eight hurricanes and seven major hurricanes. Only two storms crossed the islands, both over Grenada (one tropical storm and one hurricane).

• 2020

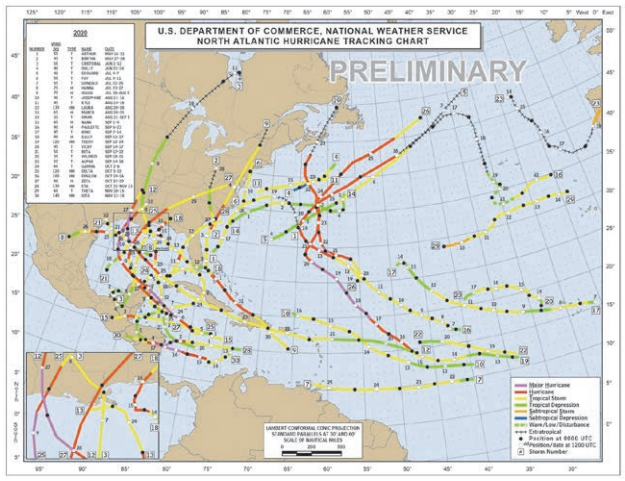
Last season saw 30 named storms: 17 tropical storms, eight hurricanes and five major hurricanes. They were tracked from May 16th to November 18th, 2020. During this time, as in 2005, only two tropical storms passed through the Eastern Caribbean island chain: one between Trinidad and Grenada, and one over Antigua. This was in line with average number of storms crossing the islands: two per year over the last 30 years.

It might be assumed the Eastern Caribbean area would be especially vulnerable to being hit by storms in an active season, as it lies on the border between the Tropical Atlantic and the Caribbean Sea. What we heard last May was that it would be an "above average" or a "very active season," but the Eastern Caribbean islands didn't seem to be any more active than "average." In the Lesser Antilles, the years 2017 (four storms), 2004 (five storms), and 1995 (four storms) were "very active," but those years were only slightly above the average yearly activity for all areas.

So where were all those other storms in the active 1933, 2005 and 2020 years? Not in the Eastern Caribbean islands!

Most of the 1933 and 2005 storms were in the western Caribbean and sub-tropical Atlantic and spread out in those areas. Storms entered northeastern Mexico and the US coast along the Gulf of Mexico.

The 2020 season had three main tracks: central Caribbean, subtropical Atlantic centered on Bermuda, and a minor branch on the East Coast of the US. Eight storms formed in the tropical Atlantic east of the islands but only two entered the Lesser Antilles. The others passed north of the islands into the sub-tropical Atlantic (north of 20° North). The peak timing was the third week of September — eight storms were tracked during that week.



Last season saw 30 named storms, but only two tropical storms passed through the Eastern Caribbean island chain.

Is there a correlation between how active a season is and where the storms go?

The US National Hurricane Center's yearly reports discuss the seasons in detail and the larger factors that determined individual tracks. These factors include troposphere conditions at the time of formation, sea surface temperatures here and in the Pacific, and other short- and long-term weather factors. All the influences of where and when individual storms form could never be predicted for a season. However, it might be interesting to study whether there is any correlation between an active season and where that activity is actually concentrated. If there is, maybe the place to be in an active season is in the Eastern Caribbean! That would have been a good choice in the very active seasons of 1933, 2005 and 2020.

A final note

The US National Hurricane Center issues a five-day tropical forecast that indicates possible development areas for storms within the next five days. That does not mean they don't look beyond five days or are myopic and caught flat-footed looking only at the next five days. For cruisers planning on longer voyages, many GRIB products like Windyty and private forecasters are available and will report projections up to ten days or more based on the same NOAA data the NHC uses.

Fortunately, the Lesser Antilles were spared the impact of a major hurricane last season. The pandemic was enough of a disruption! Apparently the "active season" resulted in more areas being vulnerable to a storm, but the Lesser Antilles did not experience an increase in named storms.

It should also be recognized that the effects of hurricanes extend much wider than the actual track across one island. "ROW" effects — Rain (flooding, landslides and erosion), Ocean (storm surge, swell and high seas), and Wind (damage to structures and powerlines, and flying debris) — can be widespread and across many islands.

As mentioned in the beginning, my wife and I spent the 2020 hurricane season aboard our boat in Rodney Bay, St. Lucia, both anchored in the bay and in a slip at the marina. This was our first season "inside the box" and so we kept an active hurricane eye on the horizon. The pandemic slowed us down as far as traveling around the island, but we enjoyed being "stuck" in paradise.

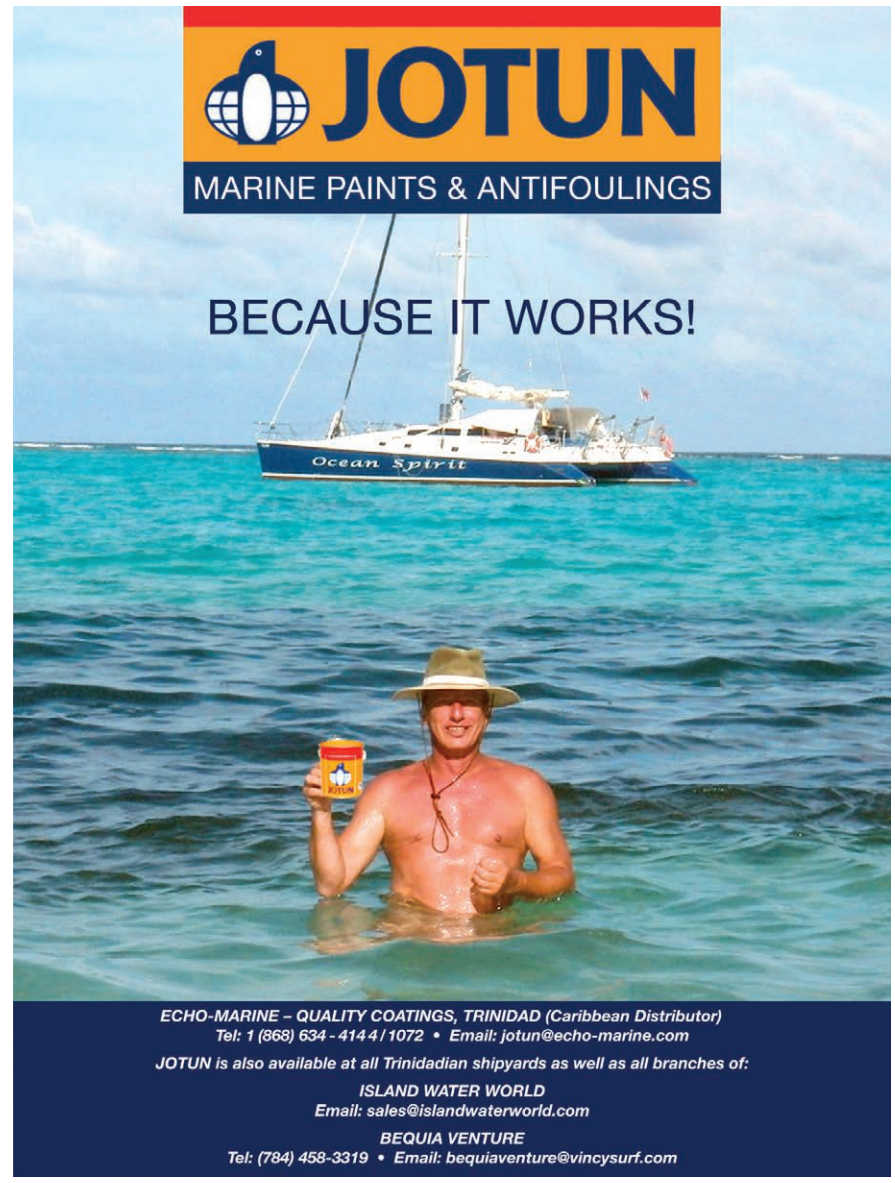
Overall, and reviewing the above, spending the hurricane season in the Lesser Antilles was not as daunting as was imagined. Rodney Bay Marina is well protected and we felt very secure. You can also have your boat hauled out and secured on the hard but we decided to stay in the water. This gave us the option of sailing south if a major hurricane threatened. All the weather forecasts were timely and accurate, so even if a quickly developing storm came along there would have been time to react. The limiting restrictions of the pandemic were more of a hindrance than the weather.

Locals and cruisers never gave us any hint that this was a dangerous time (despite the pandemic). Without the pandemic, sailing the Lesser Antilles during the hurricane season would not be out of the question. Fewer cruisers and calmer tradewinds are some of the advantages.

Were we lucky? Perhaps. Hurricanes are dangerous. But until long-range forecasts of where storms are more likely to form are available, the best advice remains: be alert and always be where hurricanes are not. Also, check out Don Street's website (www.street-iolaire.com) for great hurricane advice if one is heading your way.

Bill and Maureen Woodroffe sail aboard S/V Kalunamoo.
Visit their blog at http://Kalunamoo.com.





The Azores 2021: Lajes das Flores and Hurricane Lorenzo

by Linda Lane Thornton

Last year was odd in many ways — countries closed their borders, yachts were left stranded in places where no yacht wants to be as the hurricane season approaches, and 30 days at sea did not count as a sufficient period of quarantine. Officials simply did not know what they were dealing with, and decisions made in cities many miles away from marinas, and which were perfectly valid for air and road travel, simply did not take sea-time into account. The Azores — the iconic stopping place for yachts during the annual Caribbean to Europe migration — were no different. At one point some 70 yachts were at anchor in Horta on Faial waiting for someone to make a decision about Covid tests and whether crews would be allowed ashore.

José Azevedo and his team at Peter's Café-Sport in Horta came into their own, providing a variety of services to the anchored yachts: shopping, providing takeaway meals and drinks, visits to vets and doctors, to-ing and fro-ing and liaising with the authorities to try to release yachties from their enforced stay-on-board life. For these services Peter's Café-Sport was awarded the Ocean Cruising Club's Port Officer Award, unusual in that it was awarded to an organisation and not an individual, but it would have been difficult to assign the award to one individual when so many were involved.

Covid-19 was not the only problem in the Azores, though. In September 2019 the outer harbour wall in Lajes das Flores, often the first landfall on a west-to-east crossing of the Atlantic, was destroyed by the 13-metre waves generated by Hurricane Lorenzo. The peak of the storm passed over the island during the night with waves from the south-east quadrant that battered the outer wall, tossing the huge blocks around like a child's building bricks and sending waves crashing over the harbour area, destroying much in their path. All that was left of the port office building, which housed the marina manager's office, the ferry terminal and other offices, were the bolts that had held it to the floor. Containers were swept into the marina area, 13 local boats, most of them small fishing boats, were sunk and the devastation was awful to behold. The then President of the Azores, Vasco Cordeira, visited the island to see for himself the damage, and promised that it would be repaired.





Above: The harbour at Lajes das Flores, often the first landfall on a west-to-east Atlantic crossing, August 2019.

Below: The harbour at Lajes das Flores after Hurricane Lorenzo in September 2019.

Bottom right: The proposal for the new harbour.

The priority was to enable the supply ships to enter the port, the ships that bring food, gasoline and diesel, cooking gas and animal feed to the islanders. Armed forces were called upon to bring their diving skills to salvage operations, containers were moved from the shoreline, debris gathered and removed, leaving a blank canvas on which to draw a new port.

The new design was revealed in August — a strengthened outer wall together with an inner wall along which ships can berth — but little mention was made of the marina. This was always tiny and anything over about 12 metres had difficulty entering (not that some didn't try), so many boats chose to go to anchor instead. Those who have visited Lajes das Flores know that in heavy easterly or north-easterly swells the marina can become downright dangerous and the advice was: if you wouldn't dream of anchoring in the prevailing conditions, don't even think of trying to enter the marina!

As of this writing, some 15 months later, work is ongoing on rebuilding the port. The marina pontoons were destroyed and have not been replaced, and the main focus is on rebuilding the commercial part of the harbour. Work will soon begin on the structure of the inner wall, which will mean blasting operations and concrete mixing will be ongoing and the whole area will resemble a building site.

As a result of this, all non-resident vessels must contact the harbour authority in advance to enquire as to whether anchoring or docking will be permitted. The harbour monitors VHF channel 16, moving to 10 as the working channel, but the signal is weak and it may be difficult to establish contact. The telephone number is +351 292 593148 from 0800-1200 and 1300-1700 weekdays only. Email contact is marinaflores@portosdosacores.pt. At present entry at night is prohibited.

For those who really wish to visit Flores and its tiny neighbour, Corvo, there is a regular air service from Faial, the flight taking about 40 minutes. The island itself is a gem, from the rocky outcrop of Rocha dos Bordões to the waterfalls of Fajã Grande on the west coast, with some superb hiking, but for the time being it might be better to fly there than to risk being asked to leave.

For more information on other islands of the Azores, see Caribbean Compass *issues for April 2017 (page 24 at www.caribbeancompass.com/online/april17compass_online.pdf) and May 2017 (page 28 at www.caribbeancompass.com/online/may17compass_online.pdf).*

A Note on Horta, Azores

Duncan Sweet reports: All arrivals to Horta, Faial, by sea are currently under the following Covid regulations, which are subject to change without notice.

Upon approach at the harbor entrance contact "Horta Marina" on VHF Ch16 or 10 for arrival formalities and guidance on a position to anchor. All crew are obligated to have a PCR test done as soon as possible after arrival. If staying, you will be retested on the sixth and 12th days. Until the first test is returned negative everyone will be confined to the vessel in the anchorage with results now available within 12 to 24 hours of testing. All crew are then welcome ashore without restriction other than adhering to all WHO guidelines regarding masks, social distancing and hand hygiene. A marina berth will be made available as space allows. If the crew does not wish to take the PCR tests there will be a small quarantine area available for a limited time for provisions and fueling, but all crew will be confined to this quarantine area.



Mid Atlantic Yacht Services is able to do local provisioning for vessels at anchor or in the quarantine area as well as making urgently required repairs when you are alongside a marina berth.

For more information contact mays@mail.telepac.pt or +351 (292) 39-16-16 and see ad on page 36.

Boat Work Tips for Cruising 'Newbies'

by Diane Exler Rudnick

It's said that some things never change. A version of this article was first published in the June 2005 issue of Compass, *and if you're planning to have work done on your boat this summer the advice here is just as valid today as it was then.*

I was prompted to write this article when a cruiser new to the Caribbean arrived in the marina in Puerto La Cruz, Venezuela, and announced he was getting a large list of things done to the boat while he was gone. We were amazed. Had he been in the Caribbean long? No, he was new. How well did he know the contractor he was going to leave the boat with? He didn't.

Gather information

Since we have been full-time liveaboard cruisers in the Caribbean for almost five years, we have some advice and cruising tips we thought might help. The best advice is to do your homework thoroughly. Just as the three most important things in real estate are "location, location and location," the most important things for successful cruising — and that includes having work done on your boat — are "research, research and research."

The best way to get information when you arrive at a new port is to walk the docks or dinghy over to other boats, introduce yourself, invite people to your boat for happy hour and then ask questions. It's amazing how much information you will receive by just inviting cruisers over for cocktails. We have met some of our very good cruising friends and got lots of our cruising information this way — information that's usually unbiased and accurate. Get a notebook and record all the answers, as there will be a lot of them! I could have written my own cruising book by now with all the information I have accumulated.

When planning to have work done on your boat, research your destination, marina or boatyard. Research the local currency-exchange policy. Research available contractors before you commit any sum of money.

Know your contractor

Getting work done on your boat as a visitor in a foreign country is somewhat different from having it done in your home waters. At home, you probably used a contractor your boatyard recommended. If anything went wrong, the yard would step in. After all, customer loyalty is important in local markets and word about a bad experience certainly gets around the neighborhood. However, appreciation of customer loyalty may not be as prevalent in situations where many customers — i.e. visiting cruisers — are transients. So do your research and find out what recourse you, as a foreigner, will have if a contractor's work is not done to your satisfaction.

At home, wouldn't you call the local Better Business Bureau to make sure the contractor has insurance and good references before you hired them? Of course! Then you should do the same here. Ask the local marine trades association for information, and ask several cruisers and local boaters for recommendations before you choose a yard or contractor. Go see the work that was done on several boats and ask the owners about it. Word of mouth is the best advertising and the best workers are often independent for that reason.

> *'Go see the work that was done on several boats and ask the owners about it.'*

When you do choose a contractor, get a contract and put everything in writing. Put dates, supplies, and details in it: for example, if the work is not done by a certain date, no further payment will be owed.

Also, if work is not done to your satisfaction, do not count on it automatically being corrected the way you want it to be — your standards may be entirely different from the contractor's. Don't assume anything. Be very specific about what you want done, when and how.

Being there

I know other articles in the *Compass* have given this advice before but it apparently needs to be repeated. Five years ago, when we were new to the Caribbean, Ken on S/V *Great White Wonder* gave us the best advice we have ever gotten down here and we always follow it: "Don't go home and expect that all your boat work will be completed in your absence." It might not get done. And if it does, there is a chance it will not be to your satisfaction if you are not there to supervise. Unless you've worked with the yard, contractors and workers before, get great references, or hire a professional project manager, plan on watching all the work being done. If you don't, at the very least workers may be tempted to "lime" — at the worst, on-the-spot decisions may be made that you do not agree with.

Some boatowners buy materials themselves and give them out every day to be used under their own supervision. This way they know the materials used are the ones they chose, and that they are used they way they want them to be.

Also think about this: Would you allow unfamiliar workers to enter your house at home and do work in it while you aren't there? Of course not! Unless you know them well, do not allow workers down below without supervision. Unfortunately, petty theft does sometimes occur and if you have more than one unsupervised worker on your boat and items go missing, how will you know who took them?

Notes on money and time

Get a fixed price for the job, not an hourly rate. What incentive does the contractor have to finish a job quickly if he can rack up a per-hour cost?

Keep up-front payments to a minimum. The more you pay up front, the less financial incentive for the contractor to finish the work on a timely basis. Some contractors will ask for money up front to buy supplies. Consider buying the supplies yourself (as mentioned above) and paying the contractor for labor on a weekly basis.

"Caribbean time" is slower than US and European standards. When a Trinidadian says they will be with me "just now" I now know this does not mean immediately, as one might think — there is no time frame for this expression. The rest of the Caribbean also works on "Caribbean time," not the pace you might be used to back home. Get used to it — you are in the islands now, mon.

So, what happened to the work the new cruiser wanted done in his absence? Well, the work should have been completed in about four months, but after six months was not done and was substantially over budget. No fixed price was given per job; the work was paid for on an hourly basis without the cruiser being present, and many of the jobs became unexpectedly expensive. In addition, the owner was not satisfied with much of the work.

We hope this advice helps all you "newbies." Remember, whether cruising or having boat work done, the best advice is to do as much research as possible in advance. Hopefully this will make for a more enjoyable experience. We hope you enjoy your time here as much as we have, but remember to avoid the pitfalls!

Diane and Larry Rudnick cruised the Caribbean aboard S/V Destiny.





CAN CARIBBEAN CRUISERS GET THE COVID JAB?

Favorite cruising destinations throughout the Eastern Caribbean are rolling out Covid-19 vaccination programs. Visiting cruisers want to know, "Can we get jabbed, too?"

The answer is... maybe, at some times and in some places.

Fifteen Caribbean countries are due to receive just over 2.1 million doses of vaccines through the international COVAX program by May. These include Antigua & Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts & Nevis St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Surinam, and Trinidad & Tobago.

COVAX seeks to provide vaccines for at least 20 percent of the population of each participating country during 2021. In this first round of vaccine allocation, all COVAX participating countries will receive doses to vaccinate between 2.2 and 2.6 percent of their population. The exceptions are small-island developing states, which will receive an allocation of vaccines to cover between 16 and 20 percent of their population, due to the high logistical cost of delivering small quantities of vaccines.

As the vaccination programs began to roll out in the Eastern Caribbean in February there was often confusion about whether the programs were for citizens only or for all comers. Since then, despite official "citizens/residents only" statements in some countries, there have been instances of visiting cruisers being vaccinated there. Anecdotal reports indicate that this was sometimes because health workers did not realize that the cruisers were visitors, and other times because there were doses ready to be used that otherwise would have gone to waste. In other countries cruisers are simply welcome to be vaccinated.



VIRGIN ISLANDS CONSORTIUM / VICONSORTIUM.COM

Lining up for vaccination in St. Croix, USVI

Although uptake by citizens and residents in some places has been low in the early stages, keep in mind that most islands currently do not have enough vaccine on hand for all who live there, should they wish to be vaccinated. Also note that persons over 65, frontline workers and others may receive priority.

Assuming that many cruisers would like to get vaccinated but few would want to break the law (or worse, deprive local people of a dose) we will try to provide a snapshot of the current situation.

NOTE: *The information in this article was correct to the best of our knowledge as this issue of* Compass *went to press. But be aware that, even by the next day, the information below may have changed. When in doubt, just go to the nearest health clinic and ask.*

Yes, you can (probably)

• USVI: Oriel Blake, Executive Director of the VI Professional Charter Association, says, "Foreigners may be vaccinated, and several international crews have been." This is in line with the US federal administration's policy to vaccinate individuals regardless of nationality or citizenship. USVI Governor Albert Bryan says, "Whether you're here on vacation or you came illegally or you're a resident, once you get sick we only have one hospital and we're going to be the ones to have to take care of you, so our priority here is to make sure everybody gets inoculated."

Schedule vaccinations at (St. Thomas/St. John) https://covid19vaccines-stt.usvi.care or (St. Croix) https://covid19vaccines-stx.usvi.care.

• DOMINICA: Hubert Winston of the Dominica Yacht Services says, "Just show up at the Roseau Health Center from 0900 to1500 and register in person. It's that easy and fast." The government reports that it initially received enough doses of vaccines to inoculate over 50 percent of the population.

• MARTINIQUE: Thanks to a personal initiative organized by Patrick Mazzei in cooperation with a local pharmacist, vaccination will soon be possible in Le Marin for cruisers who are not registered with the French social protection system. Details are not settled as we go to press, but interested persons can register at vaccinmcn@gmail.com, giving their identity and contact email address. Registrants will be contacted for an appointment.

• BARBADOS: Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley has declared that it is government's desire to have more vaccines available in the country to facilitate more people, whether citizens or not, being vaccinated by early May.

Visit https://gisbarbados.gov.bb for updates.

• SVG: The office of the Chief Medical Officer in the Ministry of Health tells *Compass*, "Please be advised that we administer vaccinations to yachting visitors whose stay is more than two weeks. There is no fee; however, contributions are accepted." Bring your passport to show the length of your visitor's visa. According to the Minister of Tourism Hon. Carlos James, "It is imperative that a wider cross section of the population becomes vaccinated to enable us to return to some level of normalcy."

No, you can't (yet?)

• ST. MAARTEN: In February the government announced: "The Vaccination Management Team took notice of the issue which is circulating on social media of persons who presumably are not residing on the island trying to register to receive the Covid-19 vaccine... The Ministry of Public Health, Social Development & Labour wants to be clear that the Covid-19 vaccines are reserved for persons who reside on Sint Maarten for at least six months or have a Sint Maarten ID."

• GRENADA: There have been reports of visitors being vaccinated. However, Chief Medical Officer Shawn Charles wrote to an enquiring cruiser, "Grenada has received a limited number of vaccine doses that we are offering to certain priority groups only. You must be a citizen, permanent resident or CARICOM national and within one of the risk groups to qualify. If others in your situation were vaccinated it was in error."

He further explained to the Marine and Yachting Association of Grenada, "The Ministry of Health desires to make vaccines available to everyone in Grenada. However, we have only received a small number of doses of Covid-19 vaccines by donation from friendly governments. At this time we are prioritizing Grenadian nationals, citizens and CARICOM nationals. In the future when we are better able, all will be invited, including our cruisers."



THE BOATS OF SARTENEJA

by Edward Le Rouvre

The Sarteneja Easter Regatta is a very popular event in the north of Belize, gathering the fleet of traditional wooden fishing boats and bringing hundreds of visitors from the surrounding inland and coastal communities of the Corozal and Orange Walk Districts.



EDWARD LE ROUVRE (3)

Artisanal fishing is an important activity in the country, mainly with the lobster and conch exportation to the USA, supported by a network of national cooperatives (first established in 1953) and extensively regulated by different zone management entities and the Fisheries Department (the first Fishery Act dates back to 1948).

This artisanal fishing in traditional gunter-rigged wooden boats from Sarteneja, Chunox and Copper Bank villages of northern Belize is unique in Belize and the region. The Sarteneja Fishermen Association has membership of 140 fishermen. Sarteneja is the most important fishing community of Belize and is the only remaining boatbuilding village, with four shipwrights still active.

Ten months a year the traditional fishing sloops are mostly stationed in the iconic Haulover Creek in Belize City (next to the historic swing bridge on the Belize River). From there, each small sailing vessel with dugout canoes piled on deck, the icebox loaded with ice supplied by the cooperatives, and its ten fishermen (more or less, plus one cook and a stove) goes to its working zone for a fishing campaign of eight to ten days. They anchor all along the Barrier Reef and the three outside atolls, and the men free dive with only their mask, fins and hook, keeping their catch in their canoes before storing it in the vessel's icebox.

When the lobster season closes (formerly on February 15th; the closed season was changed to March 1st to June 30th this year) the fishing boats head back to where they were born and it's time for the traditional haulout on the waterfront for the yearly maintenance job.

The village is boiling with activity, the waterfront packed with wooden boats hauled out one next to the other, masts tangling. One freshly painted sloop is launched, pushed by the men, and another one takes its place with the same rollers and crowed pulling on the rope. *"¡Hallamos!"*

Shipwrights are in high demand; rot has no mercy and shipworms are not a legend. Two planks here, a few ribs over there, and this one goes for a new *esperjo* (transom) and will need a new *zapata* (keel shoe). All this teeming activity is cadenced by the hammer hitting the caulking iron on decks for new *estopa* (caulking).

The date of Easter affects the number of participants, and definitely the number of freshly painted boats on the pier ready to race. Who is going to finish in time? The days before the new shiny sets of sails float on the horizon, teams of crews are practicing. The public pier of Sarteneja is now the most active of Belize. Pickup trucks are bringing the sandbags for moveable ballast, and the special rigging and sails with long bamboo booms, the *botabajas*, that are significantly longer than the working spars, the booms reaching far behind the stern. For the most serious about the race, a set of Dacron sails replaces the cheaper polyester.

The first date of a regatta here appears to be 1956, when Sarteneja was a farmer's community with a fleet of cargo boats delivering produce to San Pedro (Ambergris Caye) and Belize City. A testimony of that time is the nickname for the Sartenejeños: *los Tomateros*. The shallow waters of the Chetumal Bay (on the border between Belize and Mexico) were also a major navigational and commercial hub for the Mayas, and then later for the wood loggers of early British Honduras and even for smugglers going to and from Mexico.

Alexandro Gongora, or "Tiger," like most Sartenejeños, was a fisherman most of his life. He was also administrator of the local former cooperative (closed in 1982). Now he is the postman of the village (and therefore he collects my monthly paper, *Le Monde diplomatique*, while I'm away on my boat for the season).

Alexandro knows many stories of the village, also because he was seriously engaged in politics with the People's United Party (PUP), one of two major political parties in Belize. He tells me, "Sarteneja Village's tradition before venturing into the fishing industry was agriculture.

—Continued on next page

Top: The starting line of the class with 24-foot keels.

Above: Boats at the pier, Easter 2019

Right: Master Shipwright Juan Guerrero of Sarteneja building Zayann.



ERIC MAILLET



'Los Gindoleros' (the crew on the trapezes) compensate for the boats' shallow draft and great sail area in a fresh breeze.

—Continued from previous page

The need to diversify for economic development was recognized by youths who saw that the agricultural sector was not in such a good position by then.

"Fishing started in the village around the years 1966 to 1970, with a massive turnout by the youths. The fishing industry kept them busy through the fishing season each year. But the off season brought the youths home just to idle and have their boats repaired and overhauled."

He continues, saying that the Sarteneja Easter Regatta (the way we know it now) was first started by a group of boatowners in the year 1969-1970. The first participants were Jacob Cantun, Enrique Salazar Senior, Raphael Rodriguez, Grimaldo Cobb, Amelio Munioz, and himself. The event came up to its peak in the 1970-1975 when more participants joined.

We use length-of-keel to describe a boat in Belize. The categories of participating boats were for under 18-foot keel, 20- to 22-foot keel, 22- to 24-foot keel, and over. The number of boats varied from 20 to 25 or more. The boatbuilders' participation was very little, taken over by their children who were boatowners.

To organize the regatta event, fishermen or boatowners were invited for a meeting at least two weeks before the regatta where they tendered their participation, and so the categories of boats were organized. Entrance fees varied according to the number of participants. The prizes were also discussed and approved by the boatowners so the organizers could seek donations. Rules governing the event were also discussed and finally approved by the majority participating.

Boatowners getting ready for the regatta usually tried to launch their boats a few days before so as to get their ballast in position and their crew in shape for the occasion.

—Continued on next page

Below: Crispin Cantun ('Crispo'), owner of two boats.

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ERIC MAILLET

Above: The Saturday before the regatta is a general practice day for the teams.

Below left: Every year the boat is sanded down and entirely repainted from the keel to the mast. Great attention is given to the name and boatowners contract artists for their preferred font and ornamental designs.

—Continued from previous page

I asked Tiger about the favorites. "*La Estrella*, a boat winner in the Baron Bliss event in the old capital Belize then came to Sarteneja to also be a favorite. The *Delma R* was another yearly winner. We had the *Virtue*, another boat from the city, the *Pinta* owned by Daniel Andrade, and *Soleidy*, another winner."

I then met another former fisherman who now works on his farm (*milpa* as we say in northern Belize). Cristino Mora, or "Russian," as a notorious United Democratic Party (UDP) militant always wears his red cap, and so he was when I embarked with my camera on the referee boat in 2009 for my first involvement in the Easter Regatta. Russian has been the Easter Regatta referee for many years. He remembered several more favorite boats: *Cecia*, *Ella*, and *Doris* of Evaristo Verde.



EDWARD LE ROUVRE

I could remember the winner of that year, *Ardeny*, skipped by Nelson Ortega and built by master shipwright Juan Guerrero. The boat unfortunately blew up in Haulover Creek from a butane explosion several years later, sinking in the Belize River. Fortunately the watchman didn't get injured by the massive explosion.

At the regatta meeting, participants draw lots for the starting line. The starting buoys are on angle to equalize the chances of winning.

In April the wind usually tends to be from east to southeast as a strong breeze, and can pick up in the afternoon sometimes with gusts up to 30 knots.

The markers are simple sticks in the shallow (ten to twelve feet) bottom with a piece of cloth attached, usually red (UDP) or blue (PUP) depending on the village council's party.

The race is captivating and the view from the pier is perfect. Spectators are able to see the boats very close together on different courses. Since the boats have no reefing system and the sails are big, when close-hauled the crew use trapezes or *gindola*. The sails were sewn by two men, Udal Munoz ("Parrot," a major master shipwright) and John Rivero ("John Crow"). They have unfortunately passed away recently.

The winner will bear a little flag showing its position in its category.

While the pier and the waterfront are buzzing with activity with boats from different communities, the Belize Coast Guard patrol and conservation NGOs, plus myriad private skiffs, famous Belizean bands get ready at the *parque* for the longest night of the year, with people dancing until daylight.

Due to the pandemic, the Sarteneja Easter Regatta wasn't held last year and won't run this year either. Hoping for 2022!

Note: For those interested in Belize tradition there is a very interesting, detailed article from the former magazine Maritime Life and Heritage *(unfortunately discontinued) written by Tom Zydler: "Sailing Craft of Belize." It is available at http://sustainableboat.bluegreenbelize.com/belize-maritime-heritage*

Visit Edward's website at http://bluegreenbelize.com

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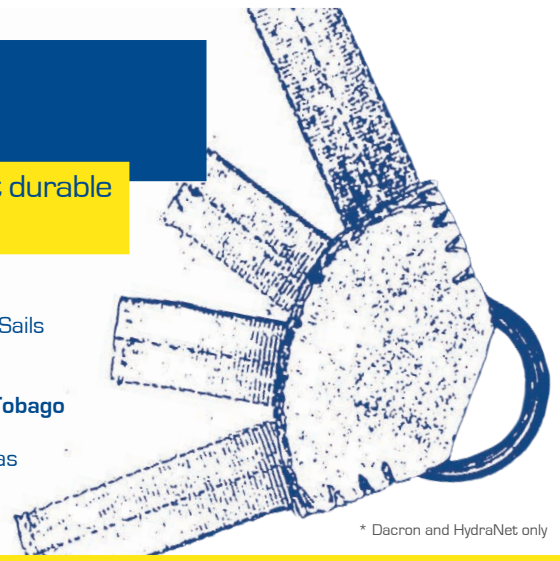
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Aildee — A Boat to Fall in Love With

by John Everton

Somehow out of all the boats I've lived on I loved *Aildee* the most.

After selling *Pole Star*, my first wooden boat (*see "Pole Star Days" on page 24 at www.caribbeancompass.com/online/july20compass_online.pdf*), I twice crossed



Nature took its course and we were blessed with two wonderful children — first Kylie.

the Atlantic on *Zephyrus*, a gaff-rigged 57-foot Brixham trawler ketch built all of teak for the owner of a fleet of Brixham trawler fishing vessels. It was my first experience in gaff rig. After sailing 16 days from Bermuda to the Azores, ten days from there to Gibraltar, several months cruising the Mediterranean, and then 63 days back to the southeastern coast of the US, I had gained plenty of gaff rig experience, and thoroughly enjoyed working with it. I liked nothing better than to haul on throat and peak halyards, and then sweat the last bits up.

After making landfall in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1976, and soaking up the pleasures of a city of true Southern hospitality for a couple of months, I got a job delivering a Scottish cutter from Miami to Charleston. My next sailing came on a 57-foot wooden yawl, *Minoru*, from Annapolis, Maryland, to St. Barts. After moving off the boat and camping out ashore for a while I knew the time was soon approaching when I would want my own boat again.

One day while hanging out at LouLou's Marine Store I saw a black and white photograph of *Askell* (originally named and then later re-named *Aildee)*, a French gaff-rigged cutter, 35 feet on deck, sailing along a river in France. She was for sale by the Monsangion brothers. Pierre, an architect, and Jacques, a submariner in the French Navy who went on to build the first marine railway in les Iles des Saintes, had sailed her across the Atlantic with their wives. It must have been tight on a small boat with no standing headroom, but they were all small people.

The boat was anchored bow and stern in Gustavia's inner harbour. Every time I walked around the harbour and saw the boat from different angles and every time I looked at her picture in LouLou's I fell in love more deeply.

At the time I was day chartering with a friend on his Tartan sloop and one day we had people from San Diego, California, on board. The Tartan's owner handed me the tiller after I hauled the anchor, and one



Ron was always compatible with everyone on board.

of the guests started talking to me. It was not particularly easy to understand Ron as he was slurring his words badly, not from drinking but from results of a car wreck that had left him in a coma for three months. He had suffered and miraculously survived several car and motorcycle accidents previously. He looked like an ex-Hells Angel with his black beard and long greasy tangled hair. In his life he had treated things roughly, including possessions, other people and his own body. But he had a resilient spirit and a dry, sardonic sense of humour.

I finally deciphered the gist of what he was saying. He wanted to fly me to San Diego and help him look for a boat to buy, which I could live on and teach him how to sail. His first time on a sailboat had already hooked him. My reply was, "There's a beautiful boat right here in the harbour for sale." And so it was arranged to go and see the little vessel. With our friend Timi Carstarphen, whose parents, Jack and Ruth, had owned the gaff ketch *Maverick* and for years chartered out of Charlotte Amalie Harbour in St. Thomas, we took *Askell* out for a test sail. It didn't take but a few minutes for us all to fall totally in love with her, Timi saying excitedly, "She's a little *Maverick*!"

When we came back ashore Ron called Pierre and told him he would be flying back to San Diego and returning in two weeks with the full asking price of US$22,000 in cash. Everyone was skeptical but they didn't know Ron and the hold that the boat had on



Roni and Iain on Aildee. *When he was a year old Roni began talking about how we needed a boat of our own.*

him already.

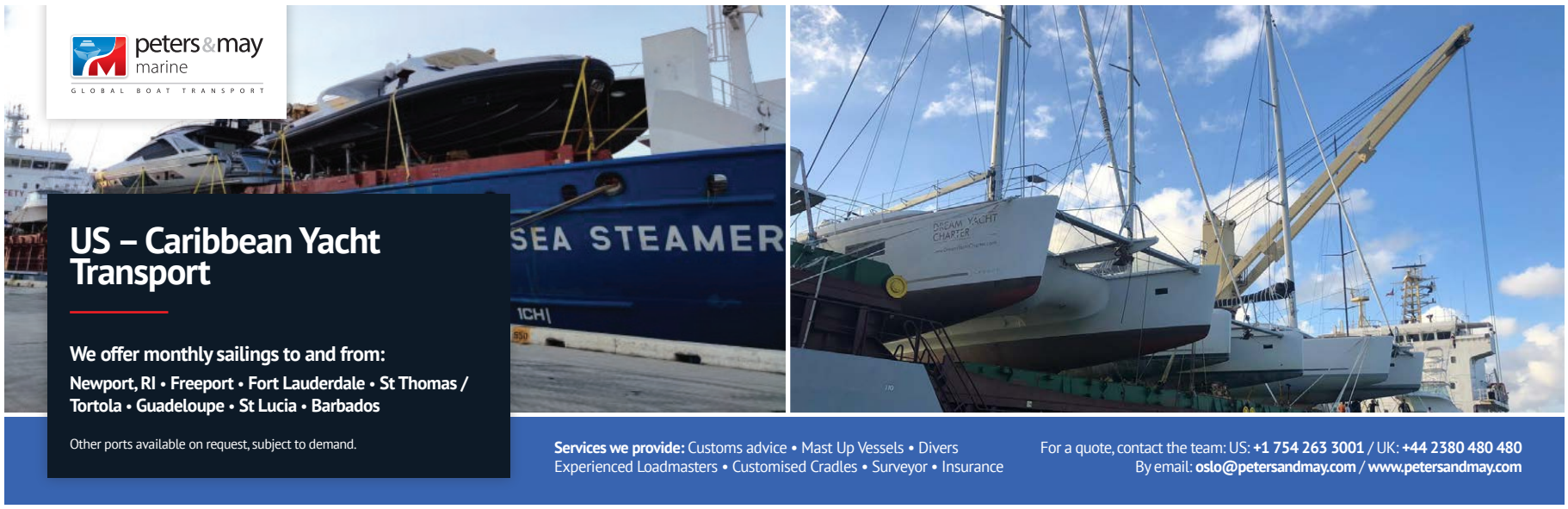
Sure enough, in two weeks Ron was back in St. Barts, cash in hand, and I was moving my bags aboard.

Aildee was built in 1953 for Louis DeMoyers, a former governor of French Indochina. He had the wood — Vietnamese teak, which is similar to iroko — shipped to a boatyard in Sartrouville, France, where she was built along the lines of a Brittany tuna fishing boat. After the hull was planked up, her bottom was copper sheathed. Instead of rigging her gaff, DeMoyers chose to rig her a Marconi cutter for ease of handling for himself and his wife, who were retired. After cruises to Portugal the DesMoyers sailed her to the Azores, where Louis unexpectedly died, the rumour being from an abundance of rich food and wine — as good a way to go as any.

This is where the Monsangions found her for sale, bought her, and sailed her back to France. There they re-rigged her as gaff, and then crossed the Atlantic to les Iles des Saintes then on to St. Barts. They had re-named her *Askell*, which means wing in Breton.

When they sold the boat they requested we change the name so we finally decided upon the original name, *Aildee*. It means North Star in Vietnamese, and also reflects the initials of the first owner: LD.

—Continued on next page



—*Continued from previous page*

Ron, although not a natural born sailor, derived great enjoyment from our sails together with or without crew and he was always compatible with everyone on board. He told me that in the States he was prone to random acts of violence but whenever he was aboard *Aildee* the anger was missing and he felt peaceful for the first time in his life. It was sometimes challenging sailing with Ron. Just helping him from the dinghy could be difficult (Ron once tore my buddy Lucky Luke's shoulder out when Luke tried to pull him from the dinghy up onto the quay). But once aboard — and tied in if necessary for a night watch — it was always rewarding and a pleasure to sail with Ron: seeing his enjoyment enhanced my own. Coming from two very different backgrounds we found a common ground and forged a strong bond through our love for *Aildee* and sailing, which gave us a mutual understanding and respect.



We took her out for a test sail. It didn't take but a few minutes for us all to fall totally in love.

After a time Ron began coming down to spend a few weeks at a time on the boat before returning to his enterprises in the States. He definitely recognized the therapeutic effect that living aboard and sailing had, relieving stresses that built up in his shoreside life.

By this time I had met Roni, who had sailed over from England on *Minoru*, the same wooden yawl I had sailed on from Annapolis previously. Before too long, with Ron's permission, we decided to sail *Aildee* to the States via Bermuda. Our stay in Bermuda was so delightful we never made it to the States. We had good friends there, whom we had met in St. Barts, and so it was I was hooked up with work for the summer. When hurricane season was over we sailed back south for the winter.

Nature took its course and we were blessed with two wonderful children, first Kylie and four years later Iain, both born in Tortola and moving aboard after a couple of nights. When the kids were young we spent a lot of time working and cruising the triangle between St. Barts, St. Maarten and Anguilla. I loved to anchor in Sandy Ground, Road Bay, becoming mesmerized by the sight of the gaff schooner *Warspite* and the gaff cutter *Finance C*.

When Iain was a year old Roni began talking about how we needed a bigger boat, a boat of our own, and so we began looking. Eventually we found *Gaucho*, a 1943, 50-foot double-ended ketch, which was to become our home for the next 34 years. In the meantime we still had the responsibility of looking after *Aildee* — two wooden boats!

It was time to meet with Ron, who had only been down twice in the past five years. We met him in Boston to negotiate a deal. The original agreement was a weekly salary and all materials, I doing the work or sub-contracting it. First the salary had stopped, and then credit at LouLou's Marine was no longer extended.

After spending a month in Simpson Bay Lagoon, St. Maarten, with *Gaucho* and *Aildee* rafted up, gradually moving our gear and us aboard *Gaucho*, I still felt obligated to help Ron care for *Aildee*. So for a time Roni and I would move *Gaucho*, and then I'd take the ferry back to help Ron sail *Aildee* to where we had *Gaucho* anchored.

Eventually this got old and Ron and I sailed *Aildee* to Coral Bay in St. John, USVI. At that time the boating population there was pretty much divided between Vietnam vets and old hippies — we figured Ron would fit right in. Which he did, until he got popped by the US Coast Guard for two joints found in his mate's shaving kit. (This was the '80s, the days of Zero Tolerance). After cutting his anchor lines the Coast Guard towed *Aildee* to their dock in St. Thomas and left her with the lazarette hatch off, which let in rainwater — luckily not enough to sink her, as it was the dry season.

Eventually the case was thrown out of court and Ron got his boat back, this time mooring her in the Frydenhoj Lagoon near the East End of St. Thomas where Timi Carstarphen lived. Re-entering the lagoon after a daysail they ran aground in the mud, resulting in shearing the bronze keelbolts and dropping the keel. Luckily the internal ballast kept the boat from capsizing and they were able to retrieve the keel the following day with an airbag and bolt it back on at the boatyard.

Aildee's next misadventure occurred when she was blown into the mangroves during Hurricane Hugo and sprung all her bulwark planks on one side. They stayed that way for the rest of her days, even after Ron finally bought wood to replace them. He kept delaying the job, intending to get it done in St. Vincent, where one of his crew had an uncle who was a carpenter.

Motor-sailing across the Anegada Passage with a novice crew, Ron had forgotten to set the running backstays (there were no standing backstays), and the top of the mast had sprung. In addition the jib halyard had jammed and after anchoring in Simpson Bay, St. Maarten, he ended up going to Kim Sha's bar, leaving the tattered remains of the blown-out jib still flying. After a couple of days of looking at it I finally went over, climbed the ratlines and cut it down.

Together with his mate, Tom, and a couple of Vincentian crew, they eventually made it to Bequia. After a while Ron and Tom started sailing back north but blew out the mainsail, so they turned back to Bequia and flew back to Texas, leaving *Aildee* in the charge of one of the Vincentian crew. By the time Roni and I arrived on *Gaucho, Aildee* was being used as a crash pad by some idlers whom the crewman had permitted to live on board. The writing was definitely on the wall when we saw her there for the last time, bulwark planks still flapping around. It was a dismal and heartbreaking sight.

That year we spent eight months in Venezuela where we saw a good deal of our friend Andy, a surveyor whom we had met in St. Maarten, cruising on his 34-foot Sparkman and Stephens yacht. He told me the sad story of *Aildee's* demise over several cold Polar beers while stoop-sitting at a beachside bar overlooking the fishing boats.

The crewman left in charge had taken *Aildee* up to his home village on the coast of St. Vincent during hurricane season and a tropical depression had put her on the rocks. When Ron heard the news he got hold of John Smith of *Mermaid of Carriacou*, as he had no way of contacting me in Venezuela — no cell phones in those days. John contacted Bernard "Mousie" Byer, who had been the engineer on William "Billy Bones" Pringle's classic 60-foot *Clover* and later became the head of Grenada's coast guard, to furnish a boat so they could see about salvage possibilities. What they found were just the bare bones of this once graceful yacht. *Aildee* had been stripped clean of any useful gear by the villagers. So there was no attempt at salvage and Ron lost the love of his life.

I felt as though a family member had died when Andy told me the story of *Aildee*; and I couldn't help feeling a sense of guilt. I had introduced Ron to the crewman who in turn had used poor judgment.

Eventually Andy finished the sad tale, we finished our last beers and returned to our boats. That turned out to be the last time I saw Andy. His boat was found sailing with the windvane set, no one aboard and no sign of looting or any disturbance. Andy was never found.

I never heard from Ron again, but I heard he had fallen into his old ways and become a permanent guest of the US penal system. Where he is or if he's even still alive is unknown to me. Ron — if you're out there somewhere please get in touch. I would like to take you sailing again and talk about old times.

I still miss *Aildee* these many years later and wish I could see her again. I still recall almost every sail I had in her as fun, not something that can be said for many boats. She was a thing of beauty of a type that only comes once in life.



One day while hanging out at LouLou's Marine Store I saw a black and white photograph of a French gaff-rigged cutter, 35 feet on deck...



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— Nancy Magnine



Island Poets

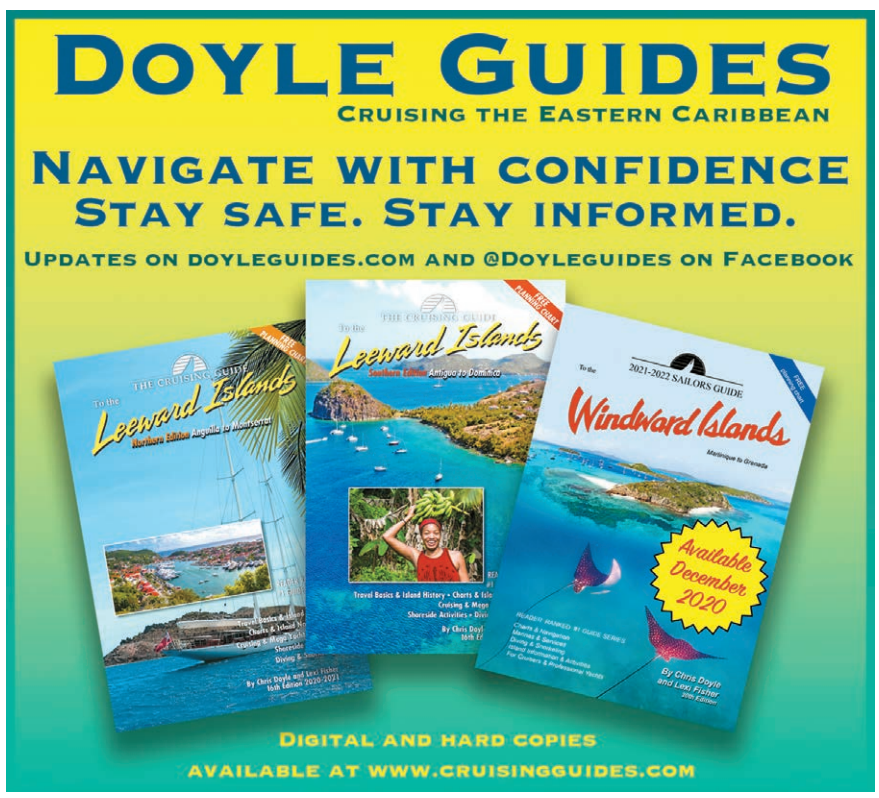


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BOOK REVIEW BY NICOLA CORNWELL

THE MERMAID OF BLACK CONCH

The Mermaid of Black Conch: A Love Story, *by Monique Roffey. ©2020, Peepal Tree Press Ltd. 320 pages. ISBN-10: 184523457X;ISBN-13: 978-1845234577*

This month, dear readers, I'm going to save you some time by cutting straight to the point: Buy and read this book. It's a fabulous work of fiction that I guarantee you will enjoy.

Right, off you go then…

Okay, those of you who want to know why? Here are some reasons.

The Mermaid of Black Conch uses an intriguing blend of a mythical concept and acutely observed Caribbean "realness" to create a situational proposition which tests and consequently reveals the attitudes and deep-rooted prejudices apparent in those who visit and live in the islands.



It's original and fresh, yet at the same time feels like an instant classic.

It's a bittersweet romance between a fisherman and a fishy woman written with poignancy and pathos, yet without any "cheese" whatsoever.

It won the UK's prestigious Costa Book of the Year Award for 2020. "It's a book that will take you to the furthest reaches of your imagination – we found it completely compelling," said Suzanna Lipscomb, the chair of the judging panel. *"The Mermaid of Black Conch* is an extraordinary, beautifully written book – full of mythic energy and unforgettable characters, including some tremendously transgressive women."

So, what's it about?

An old Rasta fisherman recalls a time in his past when his life was irrevocably changed:

Back to April 1976. On the fictional island of Black Conch, spliff-smoking David Baptiste sits in his pirogue waiting for a catch, singing to himself, and wonders in shock, *"Holy Mother of Holy God on earth,"* if it's his eyes or the weed when he first encounters Aycayia, a mermaid, formed by a curse put on a sweet voiced Taino girl by jealous wives centuries ago.

"He put one hand on his heart because it was leaping around inside his chest… He had seen her shoulders her breast and her long black hair like ropes, all sea mossy and jook up with anemone and conch shell."

Attracted initially by his music, curiosity becomes her undoing when dastardly American tourists unwittingly catch her in a fishing contest. While the victors get hammered in the local bar to celebrate, David rescues her, puts her in his bathtub with a box of Saxo table salt, and reckons that once she's recovered from the gaff-hook wounds he'll return her to the sea.

But the best laid plans of fish and men get scuppered when, physically and metaphorically, the scales fall off and she starts turning back into a woman, the woman she was many lifetimes ago.

"I woke up early and found her tail on the floor. Large and ragged and not smelling too good. I looked at her and she looked at me and I swear I saw that she was upset and maybe even miserable to lose it. She was shedding herself, or the part of herself that was fish. I put her fishtail in a black garbage bag and put the bag in the trashcan at the back of the house, wrap up well so the cats couldn't get at it."

As David slowly wins her trust, he contemplates the hitherto unthinkable scenario that a woman whose ancestors are all dead and for centuries only had a turtle as a friend may have to come to terms with living in today's Caribbean world. How's that gonna work out? For a start she has "fonny eyes," bad breath, and feet so big that only his old green Adidas sneakers fit.

Not unsurprisingly, keeping secret the fact you have a morphing mermaid in your small shack is not easy in a small island village. Into this tangled web enters a curious wide mix of characters who are all impacted in various ways by this aquatic outsider coming into their lives. Among them are a bi-racial deaf boy, a sexually rapacious lady neighbour, a corrupt copper looking for a quick buck, and a white land-owning woman who wears the guilt of her slave-owning forebears as an uneasy crown.

Monique Roffey is a Trinidadian-born British writer who is obviously still strongly connected to her Caribbean roots. Four of her six published books are based in the region. In this novel, not only is she able to capture the nuances of island life and language (David's recollections use an island patois), but her ability to synthesize deep hatreds and suspicions stemming from conflicting colonial pasts is masterfully handled. Through the two main female protagonists — Aycayia and the delightfully intriguing Miss Arcadia Rain — the prickly issues of patriarchy and whiteness are two recurring themes she doesn't shy away from.

This then is no sanitized Disney or Hollywood "Splash" mermaid story. There have long been folklore tales about mermaids in history and Monique Roffey starts with that idea but strips away the usual sentiment and with unflinching accuracy places it in a contemporary context with all its associated complications. She re-creates an old narrative on new terms.

"I think when you work with legend, you're pricking that nerve of the collective unconscious. But old stories, they are flawed, especially if they're starring women. They'll always be about female surrender, or teaching the woman a lesson, or something to do with controlling women," says Roffey. "The mermaid is cursed and exiled and denied her erotic rite of passage in the old story, so I got to change that, and give her a love story".

The Mermaid of Black Conch is published by small independent press Peepal Tree, which focuses on literature from the Caribbean, with Roffey turning to crowdfunding to raise money for a publicity campaign for the book in 2019. She was in her own words "flabbergasted" when she won the lauded Costa prize, set up (originally as the Whitbread Book Award, in 1971) to reward British writers who encouraged reading. "*It's a Caribbean novel. There are so many things about it that made me think, 'Oh, this book will live its life in the margins. It will live a quiet life.'*"


MARCUS BASTEL

Trinidadian-born Monique Roffey is an award-winning writer whose novels have been translated into five languages.

Personally I'm very glad this book came to the surface in such a visible way. It's a gem.

Available from online booksellers and www.peepaltreepress.com/books/mermaid-black-conch.

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The Sky from Mid-April to Mid-May

by Jim Ulik

Would you leave the safety of a harbor to sail around the world without GPS, sextant, compass, clock, or other navigational instruments? Only an hourglass would be available for timing a watch. Navigating using only nature has been done for centuries. Viking and Polynesian voyagers used the sun, stars and birds, as well as wind and waves, to find their routes. A basic example of finding direction by looking at the moon is diagramed on Image 1.

Professor Marvin Creamer saw this as more than just a challenge. He chose to use this technique during a few Atlantic crossings. He was confident that he could complete "a jolly romp" around the world. "I was considered to be crazy or stupid or just out of it," Professor Creamer said in an interview. "When I took off there were two people who believed I would come back." (He and his wife.) In 1982, Creamer left Cape May, New Jersey, on the US East Coast, in the cutter *Globe Star* without a GPS, sextant, compass, watch, or other navigational instruments. His 513-day circumnavigation would include a year on the sea, plus time in ports for repairs and provisioning.

It is almost an obligation to know the planet one lives on.
— Professor Marvin Creamer (1916 – 2020)

Saturday, April 17th

The waxing crescent Moon and Mars will make a close approach tonight. The pair will become visible in the western sky around 1830 hours as the Sun drops below the horizon. If you have a clear view of the horizon you may catch a five-minute glimpse of Venus. The Roman goddess of love and beauty begins to make her transition into an apparition in the evening sky. To the Greeks this was Aphrodite, the Daughter of Heaven and Sea.

Tuesday, April 20th

The Moon has reached its First Quarter phase. Leave your compass behind. Today's passage of the Moon can help identify two compass points. It will break the horizon this afternoon at 66 degrees true. At day's end it will set at 292 degrees true. (Astronomical tables are required to determine the Moon's precise direction in degrees as it rises or sets on any given day.) Approximate east and west direction can be deduced using Moon phase and movement. North and south directions can also be estimated throughout the day by extending the terminator or line between light and shadow as shown in Image 1. The best time for this method is when the Moon is high overhead. That occurs tonight at 1900 hours when the Moon transits the meridian.

Thursday, April 22nd

Named after the constellation Lyra, a meteor shower peaks overnight April 21st – 22nd. The Lyrids are one of the oldest recorded meteor showers, first mentioned in 2,700-year-old Chinese texts. Lyrids frequently leave glowing dust trains that are observable for several seconds as they streak through the Earth's atmosphere. The fireballs in the meteor shower are created by debris from comet Thatcher, which takes about 415 years to orbit around the Sun. The comet is expected to be visible from Earth again in 2276. The shower can produce up to 90 meteors per hour and is active April 14th through April 30th.

Friday, April 23rd

Four comets make a close approach to Earth overnight. One comet that was just discovered last year will be the brightest. The best time to search the sky for this comet, named C/2020 R4 (ATLAS), is after moonset. At 0400 hours it will be located about 55 degrees above the west-northwest horizon as shown in Image 2.

Saturday, April 24th

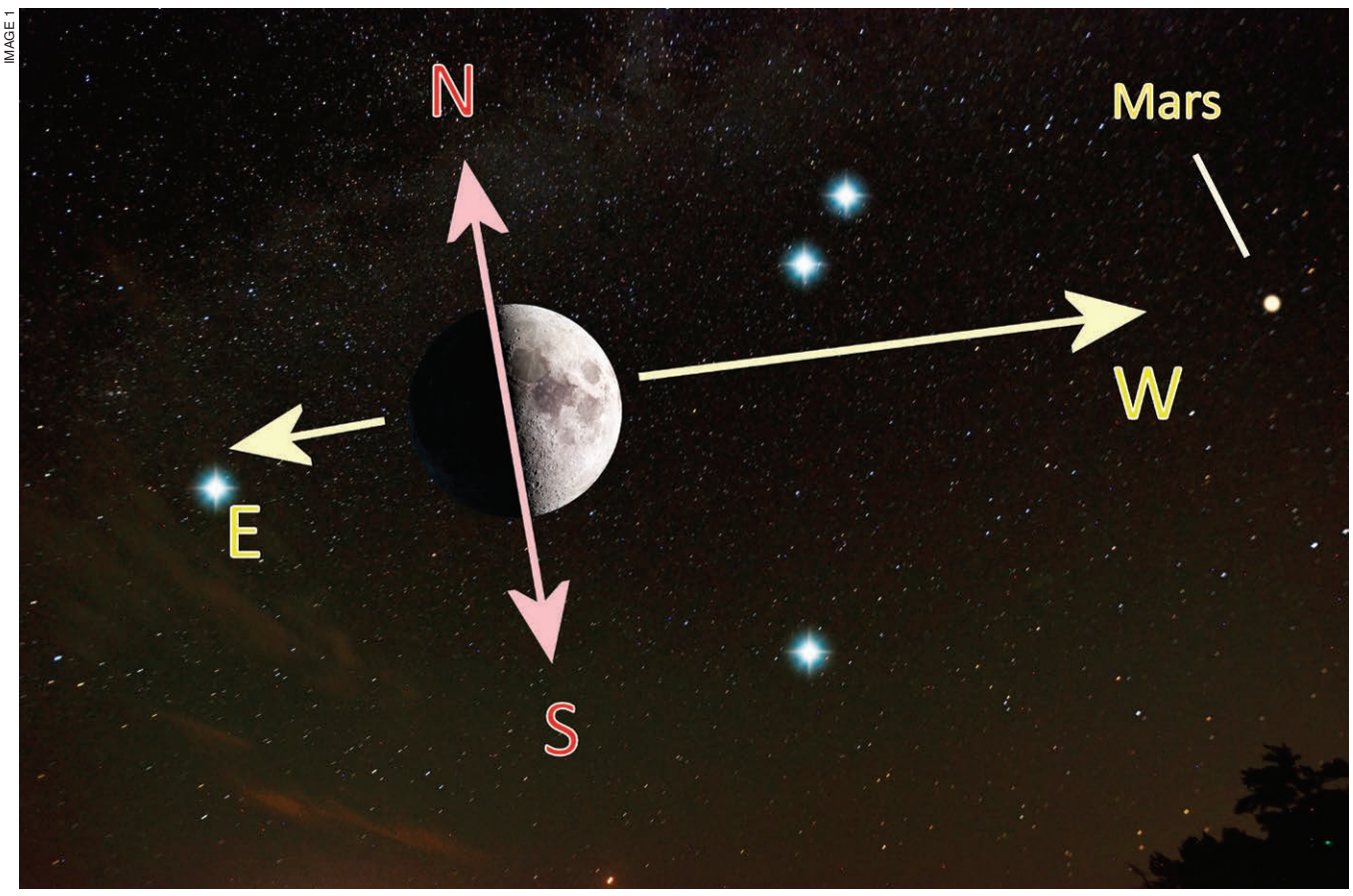
The Pi Puppid meteor shower peaks tonight. This variable shower can produce up to 40 meteors per hour. The Pi Puppid meteor shower will be active from April 15th through 28th. The meteors will be visible as they radiate out of the south-southwestern sky beginning at 1900 hours.

Monday, April 26th

The Moon has reached its full phase. This month's Full Moon will take place unusually close to the time of month when the Moon also makes its closest approach to the Earth. The Moon at perigee, coined the Supermoon, actually occurs tomorrow.

—Continued on next page

IMAGE 1



Using the First Quarter Moon on April 20th at 1900 hours to find your direction home.

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—*Continued from previous page*

This is also the first of three Supermoons for 2021. The Moon rises at 100 degrees true and will set tomorrow morning at 257 degrees true.

An asteroid will make a close approach to Earth this evening in the western sky. Apollo Asteroid 2019 HF4 will zip by at approximately 79,700 mph (128,000 km/h). Its next close approach will be on May 11th, 2023.

Monday, May 3rd

The Moon has reached Last or Third Quarter. After sunset it will become apparent that the Moon has made a close approach to Saturn. Both objects will reside in the constellation Capricornus.

A clear view of the west-northwest horizon will provide the opportunity to spot Venus quickly setting. For a few minutes longer Mercury can be seen setting alongside the Seven Sisters.

Tuesday, May 4th and Wednesday, May 5th

The Moon has shifted away from Saturn and moved closer to Jupiter. On May 5th Jupiter and the Moon will appear close to each other in the constellation Aquarius.

Thursday, May 6th

The Eta Aquariids will produce their peak rate of meteors in the predawn sky. Unfortunately there is also a close approach between the Moon, Saturn and Jupiter in the vicinity of the shower's source. Only the brightest meteors will be seen this morning. However the Aquariids are active through May 28th and the Moon will be out of the picture by May 10th. The Aquariids have a production rate of 40 to 85 meteors per hour.

Friday, May 7th

International Space Day is observed every first Friday in May since 1997. The day was created by Lockheed Martin Corporation to promote math, science, technology, and engineering education in young people. The hope is to inspire them to pursue careers in science, especially in space-related jobs. Pass it on.

Saturday, May 8th

The Eta Lyrid meteor shower will be active from May 3rd through May 14th. The strongest activity can be seen overnight radiating out of the northern sky. The meteors will streak out of an area near the constellation Lyra.

Tuesday, May 11th

Today marks the New Moon so there should be no surprise that the Sun and Moon are rising in close proximity to each other.

Wednesday, May 12th and Thursday, May 13th

In the low western sky tonight the sliver Moon will be located near Venus. The pair will be visible for less than an hour before they set. Following the pair down below the horizon is Mercury. On May 13th the Moon will join Mercury for the evening. Over the next few days Mars along with all its rovers and orbiters can be found slightly higher in Gemini.

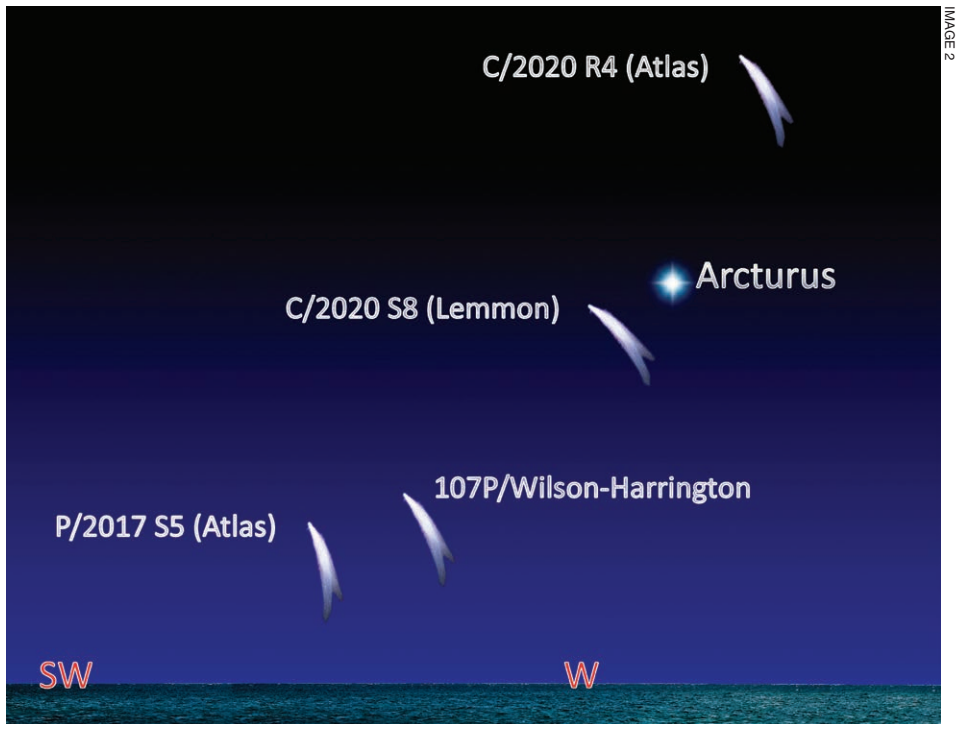


IMAGE 2



IMAGE 3 / US AIR FORCE

IMAGE 2
Binoculars are required to spot four comets in the west on April 23rd at 0400 hours.

IMAGE 3
An artist's rendering of a Wideband Global SATCOM satellite.

Saturday, May 15th

The Moon is currently halfway between New and First Quarter phase. This evening the Moon has hooked up with Mars on its daily progression east across the sky.

In the News

NASA and military technology developments filter down over time to benefit general populations. One such advancement being put into place is updated anti-jamming/hacking technology for satellite constellations that provide coverage to the Air Force's Space and Missile Systems. This upgrade will pinpoint and mitigate attempts to jam satellite signals. Good news for those who don't navigate by the stars.

**All times are given as Atlantic Standard Time (AST) unless otherwise noted. The times are based on a viewing position in Grenada and may vary by only a few minutes in different Caribbean locations.*

Jim Ulik sails on S/V Merengue.

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GROUPERS AND SEA BASS

by Darelle Snyman

Groupers and sea bass are a large tribe of fishes belonging to the family Serranidae, many of which are well-known food and sport fishes. Members of this family are known by a variety of unique names such as soapfish, hamlet, hind, coney, and graysby.

Serranidae fishes exhibit such diversity in form and habit that it is difficult to define them solely on external characteristics. All, however, have a continuous dorsal fin that consists of a forward spiny section and an aft soft-rayed section. These sections are usually joined but can be separated by a notch.

When it comes to size, these fishes range from the tiny to the colossal and include the largest bony fish in the world, the giant grouper (*Epinephelus lanceolatus*). This giant can measure up to 2.7 metres (9 feet) in length and weigh a whopping 400 kilos (880 pounds).

Groupers are the largest members of the bass family and play a key role in the reef ecosystem as top-level predators. It is their job to keep the numbers of prey species in check.

The Nassau Grouper

A boldly striped Nassau Grouper (*Epinephelus striatus*) was a special find during a trip to Glover's Reef in Belize. (Unfortunately this iconic Caribbean fish kept hiding from me so the photo I eventually got is not the greatest.) The Nassau Grouper's bold body bars and large black saddle spot at the base of its tail distinguish this sad-looking fish from its other grouper relatives. When viewed from the front you will notice a tuning-fork-shaped marking on the top of its head.

This ambush predator is not a very finicky eater; the size of its mouths determines the size of its prey, which it swallows whole. Not all fish end up as prey, though — groupers are regular visitors to wrasse cleaning stations, even allowing these tiny cleaner fish to enter their mouths to remove parasites.

Nassau Groupers are listed as critically endangered according to the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature). The spawning behavior of these once-common fish has made them a vulnerable target for unsustainable fishing. During spawning they migrate to predictable locations where they aggregate in huge numbers at predictable times, usually just after full moons from December through to March. Historically, thousands of Nassau groupers have been caught during this vulnerable stage, often before they reproduced, causing the decimation of not only the current generation but also the next. Degradation of coastal habitats and the fact that they are slow breeders have further compounded their decline. Extensive conservation strategies have been put in place to turn the tide on the decline of this beleaguered species and involve actions such as size limits, closed seasons and protection of known spawning grounds.

The Red Hind

A relative of the Nassau grouper that also forms spawning aggregations according to lunar cycles is the Red Hind (*Epinephelus guttatus*) or Lucky Grouper. These aggregations last for up to two weeks and make this species also vulnerable to exploitation.

Red Hinds, like all grouper species, mature as females first and then change into males. During spawning females tend to stay close to the sea floor while the males patrol their territory, which includes a harem of one to five females.

With a name like Red Hind you would expect this species to be red. Instead, individuals make life difficult for those who want to identify them by varying greatly in color. Some are reddish in color, as the name indicates, but many are either pinkish to greenish-grey.

On approach these spotty characters will move away, but only for a short distance. Then curiosity takes over and they will turn around and watch you intently from a safe distance. As ambush predators you will often find them hiding in holes waiting to pounce on their unsuspecting prey that ranges from fish to squid, crabs and shrimp. Like other groupers, they create a powerful suction force when opening their mouths to swallow their prey whole.

The Red Hind can be confused with its close relative the Rock Hind (*Epinephelus adscensionis*), which is also covered in distinctive reddish spots. The dorsal, anal and ventral fins of Red Hinds, however, have a broad black margin edged in white and they do not have a dark saddle splotch at the base of their tail like Rock Hinds.

The Coney

Another speckled grouper species that can be annoyingly tricky to identify is the Coney (*Cephalopholis fulva*). This reef dweller showcases itself in three color phases: a common red phase, a vivid yellow phase, and a bicolor phase where the upper body is dark and the lower body pale. During the red phase its body is covered with striking blue and black spots and it can easily be confused with its relative the Red Hind. I have only encountered the Coney in its bicolored phase, peeking out at me from the safety of a crevice. It is believed that the change into the bicolored phase is in response to excitement and can happen in a matter of seconds.

Coneys can be identified by the presence of two small spots at the base of the tail and on the lower jaw, regardless of the color phase. They emerge at night to feed on a variety of small fish and crustaceans. Spawning also occurs over a few days and the fiercely territorial males guard harems of females.

The Harlequin Bass

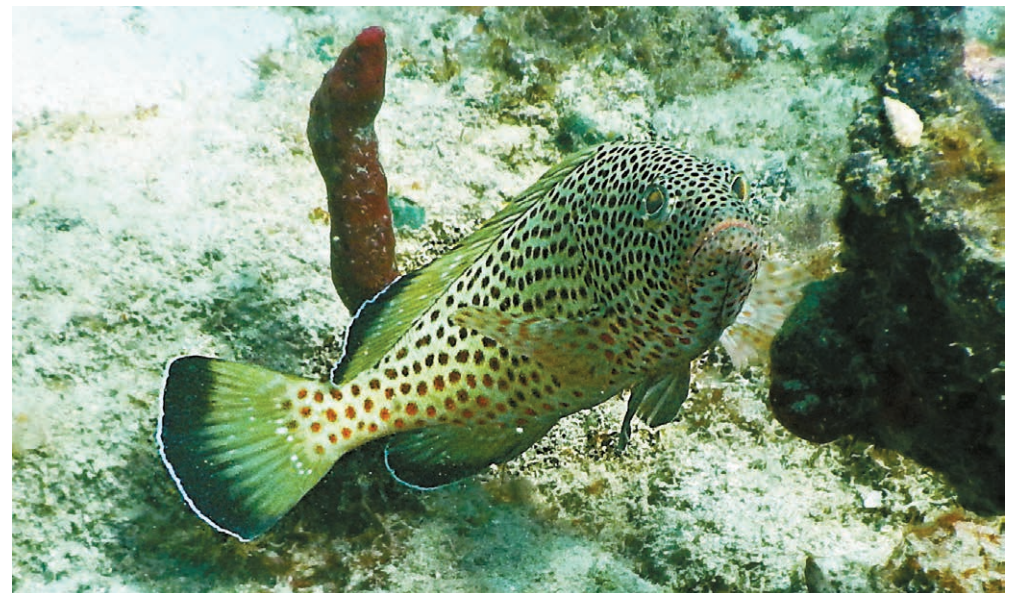
A commonly encountered little bass is the uniquely mottled Harlequin Bass (*Serranus tigrinus*) with its beautiful spotty tail. Its appearance and agility is reminiscent of the historical court jester from which it gets its name.

These active fish are likely to be found in the rocks and scattered coral of reefs, where they hunt singly or in pairs for crustaceans. They are easy to identify with their long, pointed snout and distinctive black and white mottling on the dorsal side while the ventral side exhibits vivid yellow and black mottling.

—Continued on next page



The size of a Nassau Grouper's mouth determines the size of its prey, which it swallows whole.



A Red Hind will turn around and watch you intently from a safe distance.



I have only encountered the Coney in its bicolored phase, peeking out at me from the safety of a crevice.



The Harlequin Bass's appearance and agility is reminiscent of a court jester. rom the safety of a crevice.

IN PURSUIT OF THE BLACK-WHISKERED VIREO

Our resident Black-Whiskered Vireo is a master of elusiveness. Oh, make no mistake — he sings loud and clear and makes no secret that he is near — but cryptic plumage and a preference for the dense tree canopy makes this five-inch-long urchin somewhat difficult to see. I have rushed to catch sight of him on several occasions and stood directly under his perch as the little bird belted out his song absurdly high up in the canopy. My eyes searched intently among the foliage, yet the slippery fellow always managed to skillfully conceal himself from me with absurd ease.

The Black-Whiskered Vireo *(Vireo altiloquus)* is well camouflaged in somber olive-green mantle, grey-brown cap and whitish underparts with hints of lemon yellow here and there. Its eyes are reddish, with a dark eyeline and pale eyebrow stripe. Its name arises from narrow, lateral throat stripes just below the malar region that resemble a moustache. The word vireo derives from Old Latin, meaning "to be green," referring to the species' olive-green mantle. Sexes are similar and plumage remains similar throughout the year, but immature birds are paler than the adults and have buffier underparts.

This little songbird breeds throughout the Caribbean Basin as far north as the hardwood forests of southern Florida and as far south as the ABC islands, Grenada, Barbados and possibly Trinidad. Although southern populations are sedentary, birds from the northern Caribbean migrate south for the winter to the Lesser Antilles and South America, down to northern Peru and the Brazilian Amazon.

Although new DNA evidence places Vireos as relatives of crows, the Black-Whiskered Vireo resembles and is closely related to the Red-Eye, Yellow-Green, Noronha and Yucatan Vireos, with the five species sometimes classified together to form one superspecies. There are six subspecies of Black-Whiskered Vireo distributed throughout its range, with slight variations in song, plumage, bill and body size.

The Black-Whiskered Vireo can be found from sea level to high altitude habitat, favouring lowland forest, mangrove forest, limestone hardwood forest and mountain forest. The bird is arboreal and a resident of the higher canopy, rarely coming down to the subcanopy or understory. Black-Whiskered Vireo eats both insects and fruit. Depending on the time of year and habitat, up to 58 percent of its diet may be made up of fruits, particularly berries. Primarily a foliage-gleaner, it plucks its prey from perched positions directly from the foliage, bark, twigs and branches. Less frequently, it will also sally-glean by plucking prey off foliage while in flight, quickly returning back to the perch, and sally-hover by hovering over the targeted area.

Like all male Black-Whiskered Vireos, our resident "Whiskers" is a solitary canopy singer, singing from 15-metre heights or above. The bird sings relentlessly throughout the day, from sunrise to sunset, particularly during the breeding season when it chooses the tallest tree overlooking a deeply wooded valley below to belt out his emphatic song. The song is a loud, repetitive whistle that sounds very much like *twit-twit-twit-sweet-john-twit!* and *john-sweet!* These and several other variations have given rise to a collection of colourful local names including Sweet John, John Phillips, Julian Chivi, Whip-Tom-Kelly and John-to-Whit.

The song is frequently used to advertise territory, with males often engaging in counter-singing for long periods of the day. During the breeding season our Whiskers emits an incessant, loud *twit-twit* contact call that sounds desperate and excited all at once. Other Black-Whiskered Vireo calls include a scolding *mew,* a shrill scream of anger when startled, a *chuck-chuck* when worried and a low growl when angry. Males will often change singing style in the presence of females and chicks, either singing more softly, shortening the song, or pausing the song altogether. Females do not sing, but they do produce contact calls, *mews, chuck-chucks,* squeaks and chatter calls. Songs vary between subspecies, differing in complexity and emphasis.

Black-Whiskered Vireos are solitary breeders that nest between March and July. Pairs are socially monogamous, but females occasionally do copulate with other males. As a result, the males practice frequent mate-guarding during the fertile period. Courtship is a seductive affair with courtship feeding and amorous chases. Afterwards, the female follows the singing male on a tour of his territory, with stops at all the potential nest sites. Eventually she chooses her favourite spot and begins constructing a nest.

The female alone builds the nest, including collecting building materials. Nest building begins by attaching spider silk to the fork of a tree or shrub, followed by a layer of interwoven twigs. By day four, the industrious little bird has created a thin-walled cup. She will then add bark, dried grass, leaves, other plant material and more spider silk, until the walls are thick and strong. Finally, she will furnish the interior by sitting in the cup and lining it with fine grasses and whatever soft furnishings she can find. These Black-Whiskered artisans are ingenious creatures when it comes to nest building: one female in Florida built a nest using carpet fibers and duck feathers and suspended it between twigs with nylon fishing line!

Once the nest is completed the female will spend a few days resting before laying two or three eggs, which she alone incubates and shades from direct sunlight. The male does not incubate and instead guards the nest from a high perch located about 25 metres away. Both birds defend the nest from intruders, especially the Shiny Cowbird — a brood parasite that lays eggs in other birds' nests, relying on them to incubate and raise the cowbird chicks. Black-Whiskered Vireos suffer high levels of cowbird parasitism and as a result are fairly aggressive towards anything that reminds them of the latter. Black-Whiskered Vireos tackle intruders by erecting head-feathers, drooping wings, spreading tails, scolding and chasing.



BELA BROWN

The Black-Whiskered Vireo is well camouflaged in somber olive-green mantle, grey-brown cap and whitish underparts with hints of lemon yellow here and there.

The male takes territory maintenance seriously and sings persistently from prominent perches throughout the day, occasionally engaging in chases, fights and aggressive displays. Territorial disputes with neighboring rivals may involve up to four individuals (two males and their mates). The birds usually prance about the tree, eyeing each other, posturing, the males singing at full volume, the females mewing and chattering. This may escalate into a full-blown spat, with birds savagely beating at each other with their wings in midair and attempting to peck one another. The hostilities usually end with the termination of the breeding season.

Curiously, although always close-by, males rarely visit the nest during the incubation period. However, once hatching takes place, these same males take over feeding their blind and naked offspring with gusto, while the females baby-sit. As the chicks grow and demand more food, both parents assume feeding duties, but eventually females take over the feeding almost entirely, as males once again spend more time on their singing posts.

Indeed, Black-Whiskered Vireos may not be the most colourful or friendly creatures, but they more than compensate with their tireless singing. These lone creatures of the high canopy, impenetrable mangroves and curtained forests are like feathery, musical phantoms of the Caribbean landscape that we hear often but seldom see. In my pursuit of our resident Whiskers I have very occasionally caught brief glimpses of him flying between trees — a little dark shape moving in a straight line with short wingbeats. I do wonder if this little canopy bird with a big moustache knows how much I want to catch a glimpse of him?



—Continued from previous page *...Groupers & Sea Bass*

The Hamlets

The hamlets are another unique group of fishes within the sea bass family and closely related to the groupers. These tiny hunters prefer their own company and stay close to the reef, ferreting out shrimps and other crustaceans that hide in the coral.

While I was exploring the reefs of Belize, Barred Hamlets (*Hypoplectrus puella*) became a common sight. They can be recognized by the striking blue lines and spots on their faces, their distinctive wide, mid-body bar, and a dark bar under the eyes. They are a little bit easier to photograph as they will tolerate close approach and often turn sideways to give you a profile view.

These large-eyed fish have unique mating habits. They mate every day at dusk, rising in the water column and cupping around each other to spawn. This ritual is made unique by the fact that hamlets are simultaneous hermaphrodites — the fish is both male and female and during each mating rise they will trade gender roles.

Hamlets prefer to breed with color varieties similar to their own but have the ability to breed with other hamlet species on the reef, thus giving rise to confusing hybrids.

Next time you explore a Caribbean coral take it slow and keep an eye out for these solitary reef dwellers.

The Barred Hamlet is easy to photograph; it will tolerate close approach and often turn sideways to give you a profile view.

LOOK OUT FOR…

Annatto, More than Decorative

by Lynn Kaak

As you travel through the Caribbean, every month there's something special to look out for.

LYNN KAAK



Renowned for its usefulness as a flavoring and coloring agent, as well as its attractiveness as a garden ornamental, *Bixa orellana* is a New World addition to the flora of the tropical and sub-tropical regions of the world. It is indigenous to Central America and the northern regions of South America. "Bixa" is a nod to the Taino name for the plant; Orellana was an explorer. The common names of annatto, achiote, arnatto and roucou (in Creole-speaking places) are derivatives of names used by different areas' native peoples. The nickname Lipstick Tree comes from a dye derived from the seed pulp and used as a cosmetic. While formerly used mainly as a dye for cosmetics and some textiles, it is now commercially valued as a food dye, often found in such things as cheese and ice cream, as it is nontoxic.

Long before the Europeans stumbled upon this tree and propagated it around the world, the various components of the tree were found to have a multitude of uses. According to traditional uses, the roots may be made into a drink that is used for managing diabetes, infections and venereal disease. The bark can be used for concoctions, poultices and drinks for a variety of ailments. As a tea or a poultice, the leaves can treat everything from snakebite to worms in children. The seeds and their pericarp have been used to treat fever, as a wound cleaner, and for "women's problems."

LEONARDO RÉ-JORGE



Top left: The most recognizable feature of the tree is the fuzzy or spiky-looking seedpods.

Bottom left: Open fruit of Bixa orellana, *showing the seeds from which achiote is extracted.*

Right: The flowers look like little roses.



STUDIO LAB 1

Made with annatto seeds, and flavored with herbs and spices such as cumin, pepper, coriander, oregano, cloves and garlic, achiote paste is a popular coloring and flavoring in Central American, Mexican, and Caribbean cuisines. It can be used as a sauce, marinade, or rub for meat, chicken, and fish.

The trees grow from manageable shrubs of three metres (ten feet) up to a more impressive ten metres (35 feet). The heart-shaped leaves get to a length of 20 centimetres (eight inches).

The five-centimetre-wide (two-inch) wide flowers grow in clumps at the ends of the branches. Pink, white or a shade of red, they look like little roses. The flowers seem to be one of the few parts of the tree that a practical use hasn't been found for.

The most recognizable feature of the tree is the fuzzy or spiky-looking seedpods. Usually a bright red, the pods are about four centimetres in diameter (a little under two inches) and can hold 30 to 45 cone-shaped seeds. The seeds are surrounded by a waxy blood-red covering, the source of the valued dye.

Annotto loves to be in full sunlight, and isn't averse to getting a good soaking. It does not do well in windy places. It can be found all around the Caribbean Basin, and is grown ornamentally as far north as Florida. There are plantations of them for the industrial uses of the dye in South American and Asia, but here they are generally found in gardens and occasionally in the wild.

Achiote Paste
From www.bonappetit.com/recipe/achiote-paste
Makes half a Cup. Can be made one month ahead.

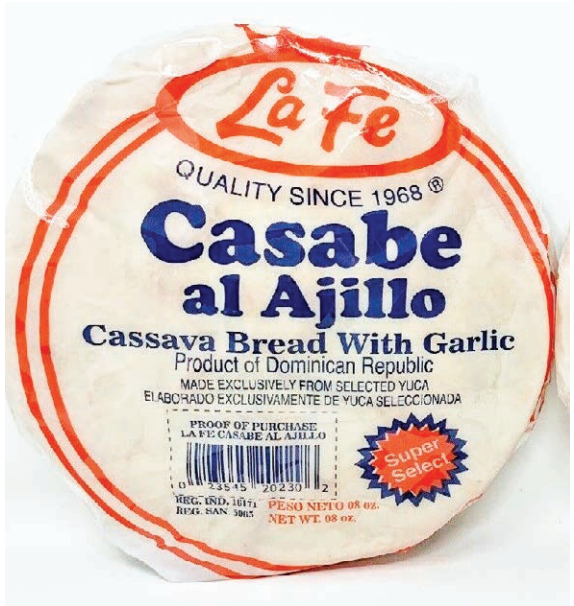
3 whole cloves
1 bay leaf
1/4 Cup annatto seeds
2 teaspoons coriander seeds
2 teaspoons cumin seeds
2 teaspoons dried Mexican or Italian oregano
1 teaspoon black peppercorns
1 teaspoon kosher salt
4 garlic cloves
1/4 Cup distilled white vinegar
1 teaspoon finely grated lime zest
1 teaspoon finely grated orange zest

Blend cloves, bay leaf, annatto seeds, coriander seeds, cumin seeds, oregano, peppercorns, and salt in a blender on low speed, increasing to high, until finely ground.

Add garlic, vinegar, lime zest, and orange zest and continue blending until a coarse paste forms. Transfer to a small airtight container and chill.







Today, we can purchase packaged cassava flatbread in shops and markets. It's a handy and long-lasting galley item.

LOTSA CASSAVA!

by JoAnne & Bill Harris


CHIDINMA0025

Preparing cassava for use involves peeling off the brown outer skin and then washing away the dirt before boiling or grating.

We have been cruising full time for more than 13 years now. We've encountered all sorts of new food adventures and enjoyed experimenting by making heaps of local recipes from local ingredients throughout our global travels. Cassava is one of them.

All about cassava

Tapioca pudding is one of Bill's favorites from his days as a child living in Southern California. We learned this fave was derived from the starch extracted from the cassava root.

Cassava (*Manihot esculenta*) is a perennial woody shrub with an edible starchy root that is often made into flour. The root, or tuber, is about eight inches long and has a brown, fibrous skin and snowy white or yellowish interior flesh. It grows in tropical and subtropical areas of the world. Resistant to drought, diseases, and pests, and tolerant of poor soils, it is a major source of carbohydrates in tropical areas. Cassava is a fat-free and gluten-free, and higher in fiber and potassium than potatoes.

Other names for cassava are manioc, mandioca, casaba, and tapioca. In Latin America it's often known as *yuca*, pronounced yoo-kuh, not to be confused with the yucca, the spiky ornamental plant that you probably had in your first flat.

The plant is native to Central and South America and its root is commonly incorporated into a variety of Latin American dishes. It is also a popular staple in Africa, Southeast Asia and throughout the Caribbean. In the Eastern Caribbean it is most commonly eaten boiled as a starchy vegetable, or grated and then roasted to make a crunchy flour called "farine," or ground into flour used in breads and desserts.

Important note

Cassava must be properly prepared before eating; it cannot be eaten raw. All parts of the plant contain cyanogenic glycosides. This can result in fatal cyanide poisoning if the leaves are not boiled and the tubers are not properly detoxified by peeling, pounding, soaking, cooking, grating and wringing, and/or drying before being consumed. However, acute cassava-associated cyanide poisoning outbreaks are extremely rare.

Ask market vendors if their cassava is "sweet" or "bitter" (bitter has more cyanogenic glycosides), and ask them for safe preparation tips.

First taste of cassava

We always are great sports at trying new foods at the places we visit. The first time we ever tasted cassava bread — a crispy cracker-like flatbread — was on the island of Dominica during our first island tour with our local friend, Martin Carriere of *Providence*. He took us on a great adventure all around the island and to the most intriguing part — the Carib community. We purchased two enormous cassava breads hot off of the griddle. They were dry, but delicious since they had been infused with grated coconut. Cassava bread is a traditional bread originally made by the Arawak peoples from South America and the Caribbean. It predates European contact by several centuries.

We have also tried another type of cassava bread, a delicious Brazilian loaf made by our Brazilian friends Peter, Elena and Arthur aboard S/V *Pura Vida* during fun times anchored beside them in the atolls of Belize. (See recipe below.)

Funny cassava story

Several years ago we sailed into Ile-à-Vache, Haiti, where we stayed for two weeks to wait for a weather window. We toured the island with a group of charming children who were our guides. To pay for their school uniforms and tuition, they wished to help us polish our trimaran, *Ultra*, until she was sparkling. We served lunch to them every day they worked. The first day we did not have much in the galley to quickly offer them. We had been to the African Market the day before, and we had purchased a large fresh cassava flatbread. JoAnne spread peanut butter on it and served it up. The children were hungry and the impromptu meal quickly disappeared. Soon JoAnne heard coughing and the children saying in unison, "Eau, eau, s'il vu plait!" Note to self, cassava bread can be thick and dry and serving this with peanut butter increases these traits exponentially. Several glasses of water coming right up.

Here are some yummy recipes we've learned since that will go down a lot better!

Cassava Fritters

1 pound yuca root
2 green onions, chopped
salt to taste
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon cooking oil (for oiling hands)
2 Tablespoons oil for cooking (coconut oil preferred)
1 Cup diced onion
Chopped fresh cilantro
Lime wedges
Salsa or pepper sauce

Peel the yuca and cut into two-inch slices. Cover with water and boil about 20 to 30 minutes until soft. (When raw the flesh is white, but when cooked it turns yellow and is slightly translucent, and a little sweet and chewy.) Drain, mash and mix with green onion, salt and pepper. Remove any hard fibrous bits. Shape into four or five patties with oiled hands. Set aside.

Heat oil in a small pan and add diced onion. Cover and cook over medium heat three or four minutes until softened. Fry patties until golden brown. Remove and drain on a paper towel. Garnish with fresh cilantro and lime wedges. Serve with spicy hot sauce.



Native to the tropical New World, cassava has long been a staple. Here Taíno women are depicted preparing cassava bread in 1565: grating yuca roots into paste, shaping the bread, and cooking it on a fire-heated burén.

***Ultra's* Yuca Cake**

4 Cups mashed cooked yuca
2 Cups sugar
2 1/2 Cups coconut milk
1/4 Cup coconut oil
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 1/2 teaspoons grated nutmeg
4 Tablespoons vanilla
1 teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Peel and chop yuca. Boil until tender, drain, and remove all fibrous bits. Blend yuca in a food processor until smooth or hand mash.

Add sugar, coconut milk, coconut oil, cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla, and salt.

Pour into greased pan and bake for 1 1/2 to 2 hours.

Please note: The yuca cake will have a yummy pudding-like texture you will love.

***Pura Vida* Pao de Yuca (Yuca Bread)**

1 Cup boiled, drained, and mashed yuca
3 1/2 Cups white flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon sugar
4 Tablespoons olive oil
2 1/2 teaspoons dry bread yeast
1 3/4 Cups warm water

In a deep bowl place ingredients one by one and mix them together. Gradually add the warm water while kneading the dough. It will not form a ball like other bread dough. It will be wet — you will know the correct consistency when it does not stick to your palm when you gently press it.



Our friends aboard S/V Pura Vida *taught us how to make this Brazilian cassava loaf.*

Let stand covered with a cloth in a greased bowl in a warm place until doubled in size. Place in a greased loaf pan. Bake at 375°F for 45 minutes.

Enjoy!



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Read in Next Month's *Compass*:

Meandering in Eastern Puerto Rico

RVs Catch on with Cruisers

Leo Goolden, from the Caribbean to *Tally Ho*

Pick up a print copy or read it online at
www.caribbeancompass.com
— don't miss it!



CAN THE *MERMAID* COME HOME?

Dear *Caribbean Compass*,

Congratulations to Gilly Gobinet for her great painting of the Carriacou sloop *Genesis* for the cover of the March issue.


JERRY JOHNSON

It would be a significant accomplishment if the UNESCO Heritage Project, to celebrate the boatbuilding tradition of Carriacou and Petite Martinique, would consider the financing of the return of another Carriacou sloop, the *Mermaid of Carriacou*, from La Ceiba, Honduras (see photo) to Carriacou, where she could be rebuilt in the land of her birth by Windward shipwrights. As a symbol, *Mermaid* is more than justified to receive a grant to that end. Let's hope!

Speedy John
S/Y Second Star

GET FACTS, NOT RUMORS

Dear *Compass* Readers,

Over the past months, cruisers in the Caribbean have heard many rumors on social media regarding Covid quarantine issues. Again and again, we continue to find whispers on Facebook of repeated erroneous information.

When this happens, an informal team of cruisers from several devoted cruising organizations assists Noonsite.com to track down and either verify or defuse any rumors we feel have real impact on cruisers. Many times the real facts do not match up to the stories and their revised repetitions on social media. Many of us are updating to www.noonsite.com, where we feel the most accurate information is being posted.

The latest was in the Eastern Caribbean: "a sad story of a situation." It took about 20 people and many emails reaching down in to communities off the beaten path to determine the "ground truth." Some in the ground-truthing groups this time included the Seven Seas Cruising Association (www.ssca.org), the Ocean Cruising Club (https://oceancruisingclub.org/), World Cruising Club (www.worldcruising.com), Offshore Passage Opportunities (www.sailopo.com) and others. We are all volunteers for you and we all have a network of contacts we reach out to.

This is not a simple time for going on passages or cruising — there is still Covid. All passage making cruisers need to accurately research the ports and countries they intend to visit and understand situation/rules. Social media contains some good information, some incomplete information — and way too many rumors, half-truths, misinterpretations and exaggerations. To be sure of the facts, contact "on the ground people" such as SSCA cruising hosts, port captains and local marine trades organizations.

Hats off to Noonsite.com for an ongoing and difficult effort as they attempt to clarify and obtain the best information for us all to use.

Joan Conover
S/V Growltiger

RENOVATION IN TRINIDAD

Dear *Compass* Readers,

We re-launched my Frers 43, *Jaguar*, on March 11th and I attach a few photos showing what a terrific job has been done by the workmen at Power Boats, and Allen Dowden and Jonas Romell in particular.



Last night people were looking at the yacht in Crews Inn Marina and they commented that it looks brand new.

Best wishes,
Peter Morris
Port of Spain, Trinidad

LIVING VICARIOUSLY THROUGH *COMPASS*

Dear *Compass*,

This is the view out my front door currently, three hours' drive north of Toronto, in the bush. But I miss the boat (on the hard in Antigua currently) and all my friends and the cruising life in the southern Caribbean.

Living vicariously though *Compass*!



Tayce Wakefield
Canada

ADD ME TO THE LIST!

Dear *Compass*,

Please can you add my email address to the monthly mailing list? I really enjoy the *Caribbean Compass* and would like to read it online every month.

Thank you very much.

Terry McCann
S/V Libertad

Dear Terry,

You are now on the list! And we'd like to remind all readers that you can join the monthly mailing list to receive a notice when each new issue is available free online by sending an email to sally@caribbeancompass.com — it's as easy at that!

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Dear Compass Readers,

We want to hear from YOU!

Be sure to include your name, and your boat name or shoreside location.

We do not publish individual consumer complaints.

We do not publish anonymous letters, but your name may be withheld from print if you wish.

Letters may be edited for length, clarity and fair play.

Send your letters to sally@caribbeancompass.com

CRASH LANDINGS:

When All Seems Lost, Aim for the Cheapest Boat

by Don Street

If you have not seen the details of why the megayacht GO *demolished St. Maarten Yacht Club's dinghy dock in February, visit www.thedailyherald.sx/islands/captain-of-go-opens-up-on-mega-yacht-s-unexplained-malfunction. Captain Simon Johnson told the* Daily Herald, *"I'm proud that we walked away from a crash landing…"*

Sailing my 1905 vintage, 46-foot, heavy displacement, engineless yawl *Iolaire* alongside a dock was great — when it worked out perfectly. Ideally I would sail *Iolaire* close to the dock and toss a midship spring line to someone on the dock who secured the end of the spring line to a dock cleat. *Iolaire's* crew would surge the spring line, bringing *Iolaire* neatly alongside. Bow, stern, and forward spring lines would be quickly rigged and sails furled.

But it did not always happen as described. One time the cleat to which the spring line was attached came flying out of the dock. Other times there was no one on the dock, so a crewmember would try to break the world's record for the standing broad jump while taking the spring line ashore.

When things did not work out perfectly my wife Trish got upset. I pointed out to her that taking a heavy displacement engineless yawl alongside a dock is like a biplane pilot landing his plane: any landing you could walk away from was a good one. Any time we sailed *Iolaire* alongside a dock and things went wrong, if we did no damage to *Iolaire* or any other boat, it may not have looked good, but was a satisfactory landing.

One day in the mid-1980s, coming alongside the outer end of Crabb's Marina pier in Antigua, it was not a good landing, but we were saved by Mick "Short Fuse" Jarrald and a few friends.

Mick is a superb shipwright who can also do excellent joiner and inlay work. He left school at 14 in the early 1950s and did a full seven-year apprenticeship at Camper and Nicholsons.

I first met Mick in 1975 in Grenada when we were getting *Iolaire* ready to do her double transatlantic. Mick

'I looked at all the boats alongside the dock. Most were very expensive looking…'

showed up in his dinghy. He said he had heard we were doing a transatlantic and if we had any carpentry work that needed doing — he was Camper and Nicholson trained shipwright, ready and willing to help. He did numerous bits and pieces.

From '75 to '87, every time *Iolaire* hauled out Mick was called in to do the necessary repairs, some minor, some very extensive, to keep the old girl going. In '87 *Lily Maid* departed for the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Periodically I would receive scrawled handwritten faxes saying, "Guv, when are we going to do a really proper rebuild on *Iolaire*?"

For several years I had been buying Trinidad teak and stockpiling it in Puerto la Cruz, Venezuela. Then, in 1993, my father died and I came into a bit of money. Late that year, out of the blue, came one of Mick's faxes regarding rebuilding *Iolaire*. I replied, "I have the funds and the materials now." I did not know that Mick was in Madagascar; I hadn't heard from him for well over a year. I never would have thought of asking him to sail from Madagascar to the Caribbean to do the rebuild.

I received a fax a day later. "No problem, Guv. *Lily Maid* and crew are on their way!"

One evening in the middle of *Iolaire's* subsequent rebuild, I asked Mick why he happened to come alongside *Iolaire* in Grenada and offer his services all those years ago.

He said, "About a month before, I had watched *Iolaire* sail into English Harbour, roll up the headsails, round up head to wind by the paymaster's office, and drop the main. Once way was lost, the anchor was dropped. By backing the mizzen port and starboard, *Iolaire* backed down in between two boats, tossed stern lines ashore and all was well. I decided I wanted to meet the skipper, but one thing led to another and before had a chance to visit you had departed.

"When *Lily Maid* arrived in Grenada, I saw *Iolaire*, rowed over, and offered my services."

A lifetime friendship began.

So, back to Crabb's Marina. Once *Iolaire* was secured and sails furled, Mick and I headed for the bar for a few beers and a sailors' gam. We had not seen each other for a couple of months.

A man came up to us and started sounding off, stating that I should not be allowed to sail the engineless *Iolaire* as I was endangering other people's boats. I tried to quiet him down and get rid of him as I could see Mick — whose nickname was well earned — was getting upset. I knew if I did not get rid of my tormentor we were going to have a fistfight on our hands.

The tormenter was particularly galling, as previously I had seen him make a complete balls-up of his own landing, despite having an engine and a bow thruster. He ended up screaming at his wife, who could not toss a line ashore as she obviously had never been taught how to properly throw one. I finally got rid of him.

After he left Mick said, "Hell, I am careful with *Lily Maid* and I have an engine, yet last month I tore 13 feet of bulwarks and stanchions out of *Thamille*!" And Mick told the story.

"I was bringing *Lily Maid* into the fuel dock in Fort de France, Martinique. I was going slow, but *Lily Maid* is similar to *Iolaire* — a heavy displacement British cutter of 63 feet. She has plenty of momentum that can do a lot of damage, even at one knot. I put her in reverse, revved up the engine and got some very expensive noises out of my gearbox and no stern wash!

"I looked at all the boats alongside the dock. Most were very expensive looking, but then I spotted the old *Thamille*. I figured she was the cheapest boat to repair, so I aimed at her.

"Despite going very slow, *Lily Maid* peeled off a huge swathe of her bulwarks and wooden bulwark stanchions. Needless to say the owner went ape! I explained that I was a highly competent shipwright, and I had the tools, the fastenings, and the wood on board to repair his bulwarks. He had a charter party arriving Sunday afternoon and would have to depart on charter Monday morning.

"This was Thursday noon. I assured him *Thamille* would be ready to go Monday morning."

I said, "But *Thamille* was so rotten, how did you find solid wood to which to attach the new bulwarks?" Mick replied, "I had to rebuild practically half the port side but I got the job done and she went out on charter on time."

And we had a few more beers.

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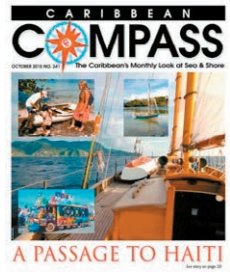
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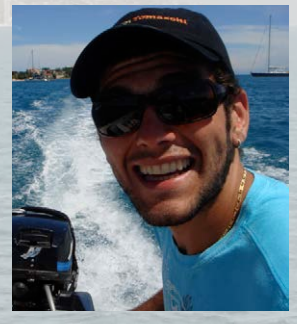
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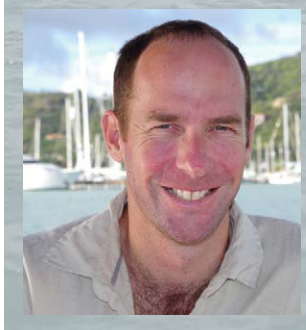
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Featured Caribbean Listings



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2014 Balance 451
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1997 Voyage 500
$365,000



2015 ALIBI 54
$750,000



2015 Lagoon 560 S2
$1,250,000



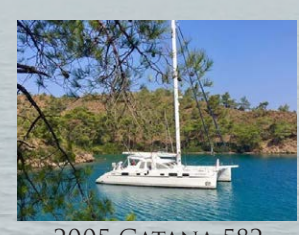
2008 Catana 90
$2,500,000



1994 Privilege 65
$750,000



2011 Privilege 615
$999,000



2005 Catana 582
$1,290,000



2014 FP Lipari 41
$345,000



2006 Lagoon 570
$615,000



2003 Catana 522
$619,000

SOME RECENTLY SOLD BOATS



2011 Catana 65



2019 FP Saona 47



2009 Catana 50



2014 FP Helia 44



2011 Privilege 615



2014 LAGOON 450



2005 Lagoon 440



2006 Sunreef 62

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CALENDAR

APRIL

2 Public holiday in many places (Good Friday)
3 – 4 North Sound Easter Regatta. www.royalbviyc.org
3 – 5 Triskell Cup Regatta, Guadeloupe. www.triskellcup.fr
4 Easter Sunday
5 Public holiday in many places (Easter Monday)
10 – 11 St. Maarten Multiclass Regatta. www.smyc.com
16 Public holiday in Puerto Rico (Birthday of José de Diego)
16 St. Croix International Regatta. www.stcroixyc.com
21 Governor's Cup Race, BVI. www.royalbviyc.org
22 Earth Day
26 FULL MOON
24 – 29 (TBC) St. Barth Cinema Festival
28 Public holiday in Barbados (National Heroes' Day)
30 Public holiday in Bonaire (Rincon Day)
TBA Conch Republic Cup Regatta, Florida to Cuba. http://conchrepubliccup.org



STEVE JOST

MAY

1 Public holiday in many places (Labour Day)
1 Salty Dawg East Coast Rally departs USVI for US East Coast. www.saltydawgsailing.org
2 Booby Island Regatta, St. Kitts. www.skyachtclub.com
3 Atlantic Back Rally departs Guadeloupe for Azores. www.facebook.com/AtlanticBackCruising
5 Point Fortin Borough Day, Point Fortin, Trinidad
7 – 12 (TBC) Grenada Chocolate Festival. www.grenadachocolatefest.com
8 Start of ARC Europe rally from Caribbean to Portugal via Bermuda. www.worldcruising.com/arc_europe
8 Start of ARC USA rally from Caribbean to Virginia or Florida. www.worldcruising.com/arc_usa
10 – 19 (TBC) St. Lucia Jazz Festival. www.stlucia.org/en/experiences
12 – 15 (TBC) ANR Regatta, Trinidad. www.facebook.com/anrsailingregatta
13 Public holiday in Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao (Ascension Day) and in Trinidad & Tobago (Eid ul-Fitr, end of Ramadan)
13 – 15 (TBC) Combat de Coques regatta, Martinique. www.clubnautiquedumarin.com
14 - 16 St. Thomas Yacht Club Invitational. www.facebook.com/STYCSailingCenter
14 – 16 BVI Dinghy Championships, Tortola. www.royalbviyc.org
14 – 22 (TBC) St. Barth Theatre Festival
17 Public holiday in the Cayman Islands (Discovery Day)
19 – 27 (TBC) Guyana Carnival. www.guyanacarnival592.com
22 – 23 Foxy's Wooden Boat Regatta, Jost Van Dyke, BVI. westendyachtclubbvi.com
23 (TBC) Petite Martinique Whitsuntide Regatta. www.puregrenada.com
24 Public holiday in some places (Whit Monday)
26 FULL MOON
29 (TBC) Barbuda Carnival, 'Caribana'
30 Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago (Indian Arrival Day)
31 Public holiday in Puerto Rico (Memorial Day) and Anguilla (Anguilla Day)
TBA Anguilla Regatta. anguilla-regatta.com
TBA Budget Marine Challenge, Curaçao. www.facebook.com/CuracaoYachtingAssociation

All information was correct to the best of our knowledge at the time this issue of *Compass* went to press. But plans change rapidly these days, so please contact event organizers directly for confirmation. If you would like a nautical or tourism event listed FREE in our monthly calendar, please send the name and date(s) of the event and the name and contact information of the organizing body to sally@caribbeancompass.com

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MAIN PARTICULARS:

LENGTH OVERALL	29.38 M 96' .4"
LBP:	27.43 M 90' .0"
BREADTH:	5.79 M 19' .0"
DEPTH:	2.44 M 8' .05"
DRAFT:	3.6 M 12' .0"

TONNAGE (TONS)

DWCC	95
GROSS TONS	99.9
NETS TONS	63.4

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STAB	320
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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

APRIL - MAY 2021

Crossing the channels between Eastern Caribbean islands, an ebb tide carries you off to leeward and a strong flood tide creates lumpy seas, so crossing with a favorable tide is faster and more comfortable. The table below, courtesy Don Street (www.street-iolaire.com), showing the local time of the meridian passage (or zenith) of the moon for this and next month, will help you calculate the tides.

Water generally tries to run toward the moon. The flood tide starts running eastward soon after moonrise, continues to run east until about an hour after the moon reaches its zenith (see TIME below) and then ebbs westward. From just after the moon's setting to just after its nadir, the tide runs eastward; and from just after its nadir to soon after its rising, the tide runs westward.

The first hour after moonrise, the westerly current is barely negated. The second hour the flood tide is stronger, the third and fourth hour it's strongest, then it eases off in the fifth and sixth hours. The maximum tide is three or four days after the new and full moons.

April					
DATE	TIME	21	1936	11	1230
1	0306	22	2028	12	1316
2	0405	23	2118	13	1405
3	0505	24	2209	14	1455
4	0605	25	2300	15	1547
5	0705	26	2354	16	1639
6	0757	27	0000 FULL MOON	17	1730
7	0848	28	0050	18	1820
8	0935	29	0140	19	1909
9	1019	30	0251	20	1957
10	1101	**May**		21	2046
11	1142	1	0354	22	2137
12	1223	2	0455	23	2231
13	1305	3	0552	24	2329
14	1342	4	0645	25	0030
15	1432	5	0733	26	0030 FULL MOON
16	1519	6	0818	27	0135
17	1609	7	0947	28	0239
18	1700	8	1022	29	0340
19	1752	9	1102	30	0437
20	1845	10	1144	31	0528

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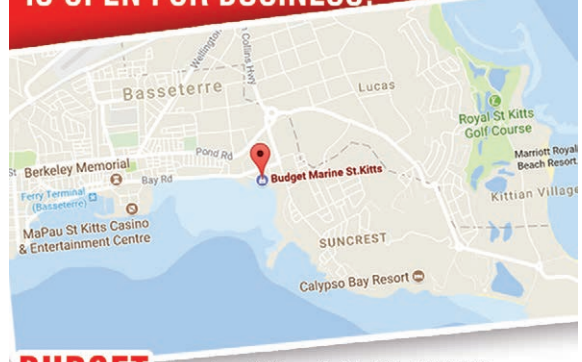
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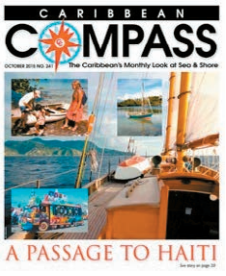
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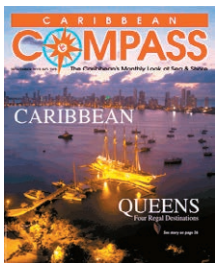
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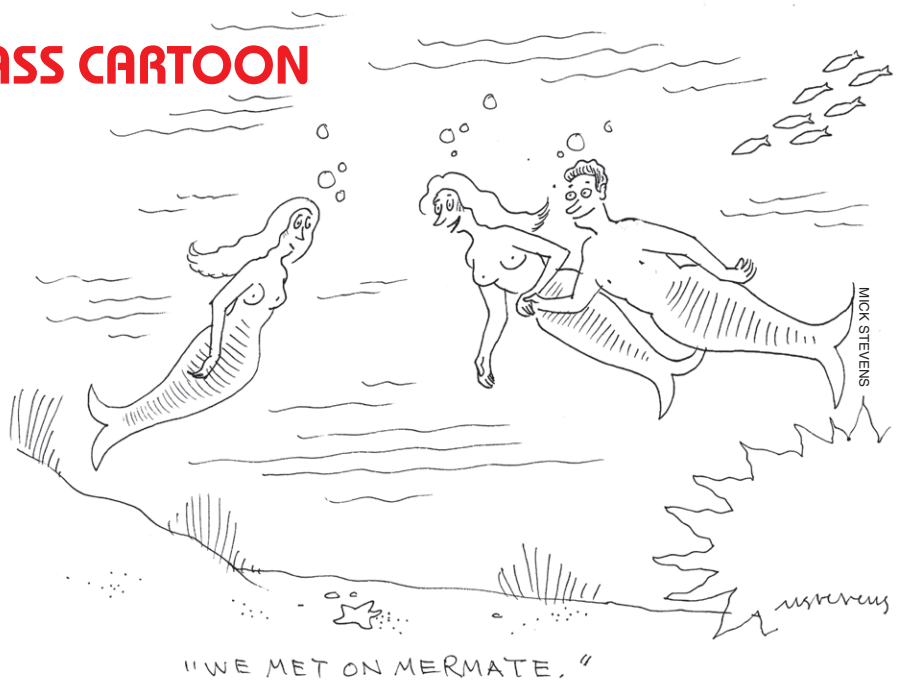








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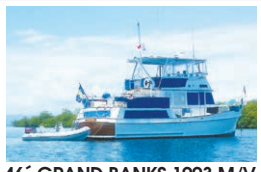


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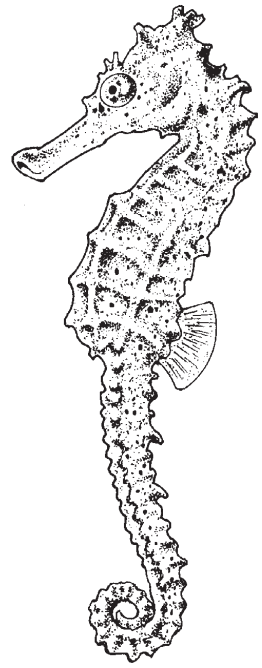
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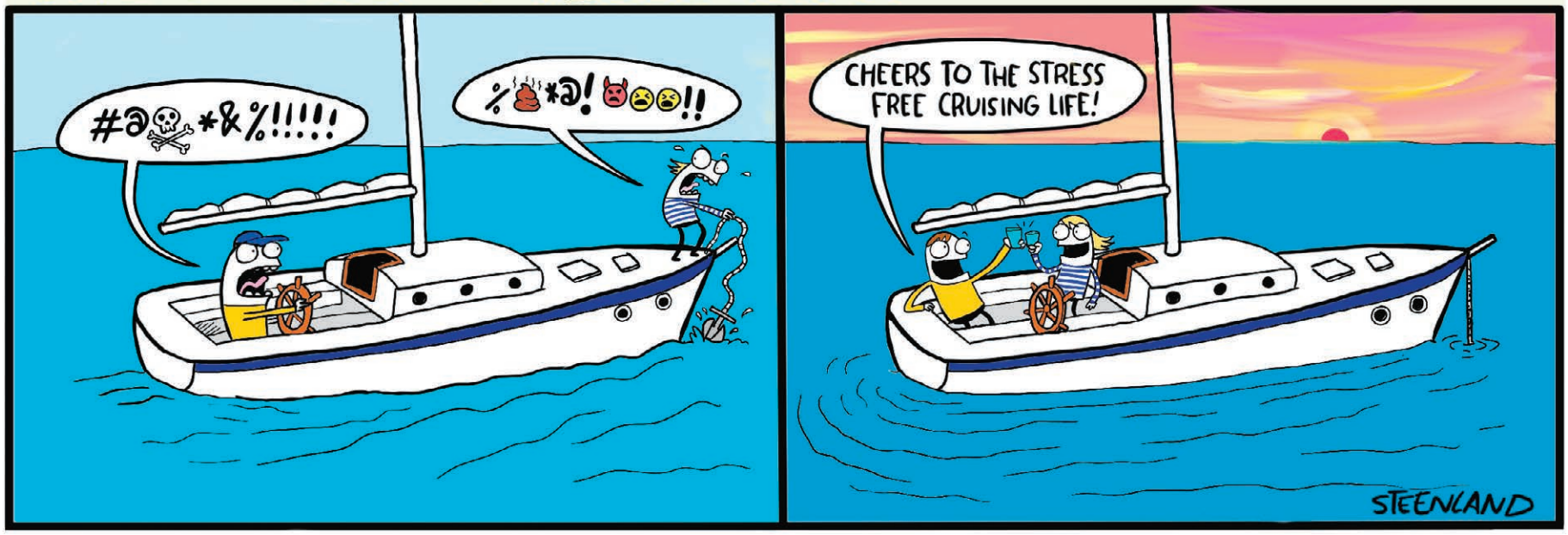


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