CARIBBEAN On-line
COMPASS
APRIL 2022 NO. 319
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

'HEAVYWEIGHT!' RORC Caribbean 600

— Story on page 14

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CARIBBEAN COMPASS

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

APRIL 2022 • ISSUE 319



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'I Came to Win! — *Liquid* sweeps Heineken …15

Not Just a Pit Stop — After Caribbean, Azores …17



JOANNE HARRIS

Ultimate Utila — The island that has it all …18

The Sinking of *Rozinante* — Singlehander saved …20



DARELLE SNYMAN

Super-Smart — Meet the Caribbean octopuses …28



ON THE COVER:
From Volvo Open 70s like *L4 Trifork* (pictured) to the 37-foot contender *Taz*, the 2022 RORC Caribbean 600 attracted the most impressive fleet in the history of the race. Photo by Tim Wright. See story on page 14.

Info & Updates 5
Business Briefs 8
Eco-News 10
Regatta News 12
Destinations 17
Sailor's Hike 25
Meridian Passage 25
The Caribbean Sky 26
Meet Marine Life 28
Look Out For 29
Book Review 30
Readers' Forum 32
Calendar of Events 35
Carib. Market Place 36
Classified Ads 38
Advertisers Index 38

***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.



'If you're ever in the Caribbean, or want to feel like you're in the Caribbean, either pick up a copy of the Caribbean Compass or check out the online version.'

— Robert Lipkin

CARIBBEAN COMPASS

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Info & Updates

New Rules: Easing Up!

In light of the difficulties of procuring Covid-19 PCR test results within the required time window, several Caribbean countries have recently begun to allow entry with a negative rapid antigen test taken within 24 hours before arrival (or a negative PCR Covid-19 test done a few days before arrival). The result of a rapid antigen test is usually available within half an hour.

As Covid seems to be on the wane in the Eastern Caribbean, other island nations, including Antigua & Barbuda, Belize, Curaçao and Grenada, have eliminated pre-entry Covid-19 testing altogether.

Grenada has gone one step further and this month will eliminate the requirement for visitors to be vaccinated against Covid-19.

See details below by country.

• ANTIGUA

As of March 16th, Antigua & Barbuda has lifted the travel-testing requirement for fully vaccinated foreign visitors. Fully vaccinated arrivals are not required to present a negative result to be permitted entry. This includes transiting passengers.

Arriving non-nationals/non-residents age 18 and over are required to present verifiable documentation of full vaccination using a World Health Organization or Ministry of Health Wellness and the Environment approved two-dose Covid-19 vaccine or a single dose vaccine.

All arrivals must complete a Health Declaration Form and will be subject to screening and temperature checks by Port Health Authorities upon arrival. Fully vaccinated passengers showing symptoms of possible infection may be required to submit to a PCR test upon arrival at their own expense. Port Health officials will provide instructions on permissible activities while awaiting results.

Unvaccinated minors between the ages of five and 18 years old must present a negative PCR test of four days or fewer from date of testing.

Children below the age of five years do not require a PCR test.

All yachts entering the waters of Antigua & Barbuda should contact the Antigua Port Authority on VHF 16 at least six hours prior to arrival. Instructions will be given to guide you to a port of entry.

Visitors are required to observe all protocols during their stay and patronize only Covid-19 certified businesses. Although the mask mandate has been lifted, the wearing of masks in public spaces is actively encouraged and social distancing protocols should still be adhered to. All persons are encouraged to wear masks wherever there are gatherings of significant numbers of people, e.g. ports, supermarkets, bars and clubs.

See https://abma.ag/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Updated_Travel_Advisory_15_March_2022.pdf for details.

• BARBADOS

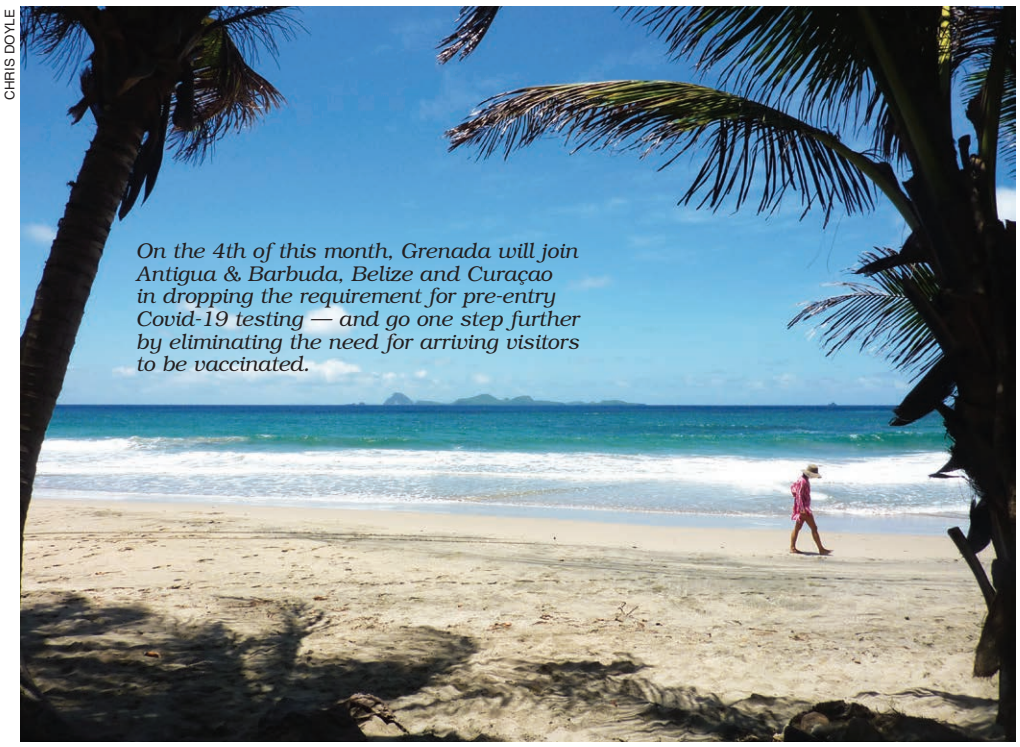
As of February 26th, for entry Barbados accepts a negative rapid antigen test taken within one day of arrival, or a negative RT-PCR Covid-19 test done within three days of arrival. Accepted rapid antigen tests include those taken at an accredited or recognized laboratory by a healthcare provider. Self-administered or home kit tests will not be accepted.

Effective January 30th, the period of mandatory quarantine for unvaccinated travelers has been reduced from five to three days, with a retest on day four to exit quarantine.

Visit https://issuu.com/visitbarbados/docs/btmi_travel_protocols_update_041021 for more information

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CHRIS DOYLE



On the 4th of this month, Grenada will join Antigua & Barbuda, Belize and Curaçao in dropping the requirement for pre-entry Covid-19 testing — and go one step further by eliminating the need for arriving visitors to be vaccinated.



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• BELIZE

Effective February 15th, all non-nationals and non-residents entering Belize for more than 24 hours will be required to purchase Belize travel insurance. It's highly recommended to purchase the travel insurance (US$18 for 21-day coverage) prior to arriving. Coverage can be renewed if you need to extend your stay. Belize travel insurance is available for purchase online at www.belizetravelinsurance.com.

Effective March 1st, fully vaccinated travelers no longer require a negative test but must show proof of vaccination for entry.

For unvaccinated travelers, mandatory Covid testing will be administered at land border points and seaports. No test result taken prior to arrival will be accepted.

Visit www.travelbelize.org/health-safety for more information.

• CURAÇAO

As of March 10th, all travelers are exempted from a Covid-19 test prior to entry.

Visit https://dicardcuracao.com/portal for other pre-entry requirements.

• DOMINICA

Fully vaccinated persons arriving with a valid antigen test taken within 48 hours before arrival, or a PCR test taken within 72 hours before arrival, will not be tested upon arrival. Health screening will take place to validate documents.

An agent is required for your check-in and Customs clearance process. Please contact your agent for more details or PAYS will assign an agent to you. Check-in occurs only between 9:00 and 11:00AM daily.

All travelers must complete a health questionnaire online before arrival at http://domcovid19.dominica.gov.dm, and upload negative test results.

Upon arrival in Dominica, fully vaccinated travelers will be medically cleared after documents have been validated. Unvaccinated travelers must take a rapid antigen test and proceed to a certified property for at least five days.

Additionally, the limitations previously placed on ferry operations regarding the number of passengers and number of calls per week have been lifted.

See https://dominicanewsonline.com/news/homepage/news/amendment-to-protocols-for-entry-into-the-commonwealth-of-dominica for details.

• GRENADA

Effective April 4th, the testing and vaccination requirement for arriving travelers will be discontinued. The mask mandate also will be discontinued.

On March 17th, Prime Minister Keith Mitchell declared, "In terms of the Covid-19 pandemic, we believe that we are at the beginning of the end of this two-year nightmare."

All yachts must still register with www.sailclear.com at least 24 hours prior to entry into Grenada and send an email to the port authorities with your arrival date and your ETA. If yachts do not register on SailClear, they will not be permitted entry.

• ST. LUCIA

Starting March 5th, fully vaccinated travelers and in-transit passengers aged five and over must have a negative rapid Covid-19 antigen test or a Rapid PCR test taken one day prior to entering St. Lucia. Travelers may also provide a negative RT-PCR COVID-19 test taken up to five days prior to arrival.

All unvaccinated travelers must present a negative PCR test taken up to five days prior to entering St. Lucia.

The pre-travel authorization document is no longer required, but all travelers must register their information and upload test results online prior to travel, at www.stlucia.org/covid-19. On completion, you will receive an automatic "ready to go" email.

A Health Screening form is required on arrival. It can be downloaded at www.stlucia.org.

Visit www.stlucia.org for more information.

• ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES

As of March 3rd, SVG is accepting negative results from rapid antigen tests for entry, providing entry is within 24 hours after testing. Home antigen tests will not be accepted.

All fully vaccinated arrivals from all countries (regardless of that country's previously assigned Risk Level) will now follow the same protocols on entry.

Fully vaccinated arrivals must arrive with a negative rapid antigen test result done no more than 24 hours before arrival, or with a negative PCR test result done no more than 72 hours/three days before arrival, and you will not be re-tested for Covid-19 on arrival unless otherwise determined by the Port Health Officer.

Fully vaccinated arrivals will not be subject to quarantine unless so determined by the Port Health Officer.

All travelers with a recent (i.e. ten days to two months) diagnosis of Covid-19 must be fully vaccinated having completed a vaccination regimen with one of the Covid-19 vaccines recognized by the SVG Ministry of Health. Travelers with a recent diagnosis of Covid-19 must apply to coronavirustaskforcesvg@gmail.com for an exemption to enter SVG with a positive RT-PCR result, must provide proof of the original positive PCR or rapid antigen result, and must arrive with a negative rapid antigen test result from an approved testing site/facility no older than 24 hours.

Protocols for unvaccinated arrivals remained unchanged.

For details on the procedure for arriving by yacht visit svgarrivals.com.

• OTHER COUNTRIES

See www.noonsite.com for other countries' requirements and for updates.

Salty Dawgs April Webinars

The Salty Dawg Sailing Association is offering a series of educational webinars for cruisers in April, to be held weekly. Topics range from spring weather patterns to liferaft selection for offshore passagemaking.

Contact info@saltydawgsailing.org for more information.

Three SSCA Webinars this Month

The Seven Seas Cruising Association offers three "best practices" webinars this month. All webinars are at 7:00PM EST. Register in advance at the links provided. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

• April 14th: "Best Practices: Provisioning and Cooking Offshore"

This webinar will focus on proven ideas, ways to stock with or without a freezer, and what to expect in some smaller island countries, plus some smart ideas for cooking offshore.

Register at https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_2vutLPqwQW-cLDuRLNCluQ

• April 21st: "Best Practices: SSB Radio"

If you are preparing for offshore experience and want to learn about SSB, learn how you can get your radio on the air, plus how to use a new-to-you system with a new-to-you older boat.

Register at https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ztIT61kLRTeQEX8pWnvrqQ

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• April 28th: "Best Practices: Offshore Communications - What Works"

New technology is everywhere, and changing daily. How to use a new-to-you system and stay connected, along with suggestions on apps like Iridium GO, Soleo/InReach, and OCENS email/Sailmail.



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April is a busy month for cruisers' webinars! Among them will be the SSCA's offering on SSB Radio Best Practices, on the 21st.

Register at https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_-R5u57dMQZ fhbTnZ0H_3w

Velas LatinoAmerica 2022

Velas LatinoAmerica 2022 is an international event bringing together tall ships from Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Uruguay. Organized by the Brazilian Navy, it started on February 13th, in Rio de Janeiro, and is taking a course through South America and the Caribbean. Up to ten ships are participating this year.

The idea for Velas LatinoAmerica was born in 2010 when, on the occasion of the celebration of the bicentenary of the first acts of independence in South America, the Chilean and Argentine navies decided to organize the first South American International Encounter of Tall Ships, as a way of highlighting these events. This initiative was welcomed by other Latin American nations, such as Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela, whose independence struggles also began in 1810.



Brazil's 78-metre sail-training ship Cisne Branco *(*White Swan*), built in 1999 by Damen Shipyard, carries a crew of 72. She'll be among the tall ships visiting the Caribbean in May and June.*

After transiting the Panama Canal the ships are scheduled to make port calls in Cartagena, Colombia, from May 19th to 26th; Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, from May 31 to June 4th; Curaçao from June 7th to 12th; and Veracruz, Mexico, June 23rd to 28th.

Visit https://tallshipsnetwork.com/events/velas-latinoamerica-2022 for more information.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Compass* we welcome Sammy's Boatyard of Antigua, and Bequia Universal, in the Market Place section on pages 36 and 37. Good to have you with us!



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BUSINESS BRIEFS

Lots of Good News from Trinidad!

Susan Reece reports: In Trinidad & Tobago this year we will begin implementing our Single Harmonized Form for Customs & Immigration. This will make the arrival and departure process to our country much smoother.

We are also happy to announce that our Ministry of Trade & Industry has officially kicked off a grant program for new investments and apprenticeships solely for the micro and small enterprises in the yacht services sector. This Grant Fund Facility has been created to assist with working capital needs such as business rent, utilities, raw material purchases, and purchase of machinery, equipment and tools. So, expect many years of continued excellence in repairs and maintenance ahead as we continue to train and provide world-class service.

At Peake Yacht Services we have recently opened a new grocery, the Seaside Trading Post, perfect for resupplying and provisioning before your onward journeys or simply enjoying a fresh coffee.

While your boat is undergoing repairs or if you are coming to store your vessel for the hurricane season we encourage you to take the time to explore our natural treasures in the nearby Tucker Valley. There are lots of bike trails, waterfalls and hiking trails, and bird watching and sea-bathing opportunities to be had just in the Chaguaramas Peninsula.

As we come out of the worst of the pandemic, we at Peake Yacht Services and the wider Trinbagonian community look forward to welcoming you to our shores.

For more information on Trinidad & Tobago see ad on page 6.

For more information on Peake Yacht Services see ad on page 16.

Propspeed Partners with Budget Marine-Caribbean

Propspeed, a leading innovator of underwater foul-release coatings, has announced it has partnered with Budget Marine to offer its full product line to boaters in the Caribbean. With an overriding commitment to its customers and large footprint in the Caribbean, Budget Marine is well known as a leading retailer and wholesaler of pleasure boat marine equipment in the region.



"We chose to partner with Budget Marine because of their great reputation for second-to-none customer support in the Caribbean, and their ability to supply the whole territory across multiple countries easily and reliably," said Chris Baird, CEO, Propspeed. "We understand that with a territory as spread out as the Caribbean, it's critical to be able to support all of our customers when needed. The combination of the Propspeed technical support team and the superior customer service from Budget Marine is a winning combination."

"Our staff focuses on supplying equipment and supplies that stand up to specific challenges that conditions in the Caribbean pose to boaters," said Jolyon Ferron, Product Manager, Budget Marine. "Our warm waters aren't only good for cruising, but also ideal for significant marine growth. Propspeed is the perfect solution for protecting underwater assets from growth and corrosion and it does so in an environmentally safe way."

Propspeed's ultra-slick topcoat is specially formulated to prevent marine growth from bonding to metal surfaces below the waterline. It is proven to increase boat efficiency, protect against corrosion, reduce drag, and save fuel and maintenance costs. It features an exceptionally strong chemical and mechanical bond between the metal substrate, the etching primer and the clear coat, ensuring that the Propspeed coating actually sticks to running gear and any other underwater metals, and performs season after season.

Propspeed products include Propspeed for running gear and any underwater metals, Foulfree for transducers, and Lightspeed for underwater lighting.

For more information on Propspeed or its industry-leading coatings, visit www.propspeed.com.

For more information about Budget Marine see ad on page 2.

Top Three Reasons to Dock at IGY Rodney Bay Marina

Dee Lundy-Charles reports: General Manager Sean Devaux of St. Lucia's IGY Rodney Bay Marina wants vessels to get cruising again this year and make Rodney Bay Marina the must-do destination on every Caribbean itinerary.

At the helm of IGY Rodney Bay Marina since November 2015, Sean has worked in the industry and at the location since 2008, first as Operations Manager of Seaspray Cruises, then as Operations Manager at IGY from 2012 until his position of General Manager.

St. Lucian by birth, it's not just brand pride that motivates Sean; he knows the industry from the inside out, which gives him a broader vision of what Rodney Bay Marina and his island can offer as post-lockdown cruising starts to build back in the Caribbean.

It was difficult to restrain Sean to highlighting just three reasons to visit Rodney Bay Marina, but here's the result:

• AMENITIES "Our onsite Customs and Immigration, high-speed fuel dock, chandlery, provisioning, laundry, transportation, tours and airport transfers mean it's easy to arrive, replenish, and plan your onward voyage. WiFi connectivity and other resort amenities make IGY Rodney Bay Marina a premium destination, whether for island-hopping trips, as the finish line for the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers, or for long-term berthing in the southern Caribbean with insurance coverage."

The marina boasts duty-free retail wines and spirits, and a small but upscale minimart. Several waterside cafés, bars and restaurants make it a popular place to meet, relax and share stories with locals and fellow cruisers. Live music and other events are presented throughout the year, following all social distancing guidelines.

• BOATYARD "We offer a full-service shipyard for repairs, maintenance, caretaking packages and long-term storage, supported by an insurance partner available to clients who leave their vessels in the summer months. IGY Boatyard also has contractors for many auxiliary services, like sail repair, upholstery and woodwork, mechanical, electronics and communications, and other mariners' requirements."

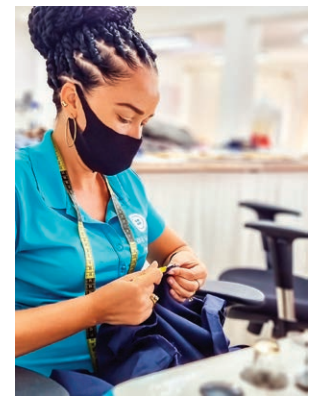
• THE TEAM "Our team works tirelessly to make sure all our guests receive service beyond their expectations, with a passion that can be felt in every interaction. They are the reason Rodney Bay Marina has made St. Lucia one of the most popular yachting destinations in the Caribbean. Our goal is to make every client feel like family. No request is too big — it's who we are and what makes us different, and we are good at it. It's all down to our amazing, dedicated team, so they need to be number one on every list, every time!

"IGY Rodney Bay Marina is also responsible for some innovative corporate social-responsibility initiatives, including the first solid waste management and recycling program introduced by a Caribbean marina. IGY's 'Inspire Giving Through You' has resulted in great collaborations between cruisers, IGY and the community in giving back to St. Lucia, which I urge everyone to take part in. The collaborations saw support to enriching two schools and a children's home, and environmental advocacy including beach clean-ups. We look forward to welcoming cruisers to Rodney Bay Marina to be part of our initiatives as they are reinstated post-Covid."

With rates reduced by up to 50 percent, and insurance coverage now available for storage within the marina or boatyard, IGY is ready to help cruisers reunite and make Rodney Bay Marina their home away from home, on the northwest tip of St. Lucia.

For more information contact rbm@igymarinas.com, visit www.facebook.com/RodneyBayMarina, or see ad on page 4.

Bequia Threadworks for Locally Handmade Fashions



Jessica Jaja reports: Based on the small island of Bequia in St. Vincent & the Grenadines, we are an ethical nonprofit fashion brand offering exquisite products handcrafted by our team of artisan seamstresses. Each one-of-a-kind purchase directly helps to spark economic transformation across our community.

Inspired by Caribbean *joie de vivre*, Bequia Threadworks offers a full range of clothing for men, women and children, as well as jewellery and other accessories such as baseball caps and tote bags! Our latest collection boasts a beautiful palette of pastel colours with styles ranging from casual to chic.

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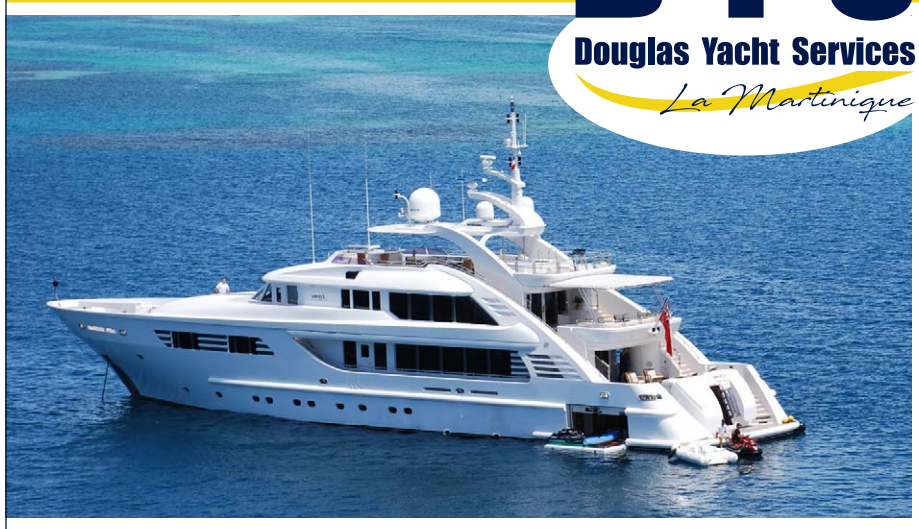
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—Continued from previous page

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For more information contact us at +1 (784) 526-6945 (call + WhatsApp) or info@bequiathreadworks.com, find us on Facebook and Instagram @ bequiathreadworks, and see ad on page 32.

New Premium Features Added for Noonsite Users

Sue Richards reports: For more than 20 years Noonsite.com has provided comprehensive worldwide country and port information to the global cruising community.

Now, for the first time, sailors worldwide can enjoy the benefits of offline access to Noonsite's unique global information, via the new premium features. We know that many of our worldwide users rely on Noonsite as a trusted source of information about the countries and ports they visit. Our users frequently ask if they can 'take Noonsite with them' as they cruise, often with no or limited internet access. Now, as part of our new premium features, users can download formatted Noonsite pages, just like a pilot book, to keep and use locally.

Noonsite's Country Formalities information is a valuable summary not available as easily or comprehensibly anywhere else on the web. This service saves hours of scouring official websites (if they exist) or using potentially unverified second-hand information, enabling a secure and confident entry into a new country by yacht.

All cruising destinations are covered with information on clearance formalities, visa requirements, charges, weather, and other key facts. Also featured are details of repair facilities as well as marine and shore services for every major cruising port.

The online pages of Noonsite continue to be available to users worldwide as a free-to-use service, just as they have been for over 20 years. However now, with the introduction of premium features, greater levels of Noonsite Membership are available offering improved access to the site including off-line "pack and go" pages.

Noonsite's 'fair-use' policy limits free members to up to three formalities page views per month, plenty for most people's requirements, and varying paid membership levels are now on offer for those who want greater access.

Over the 20 years of its operation, Noonsite has grown tremendously and is now significantly larger and more comprehensive than it was originally. To ensure that the site remains the trusted source of cruising information it is renowned for being, it takes a growing editorial team (the fact-checkers) and a development team, all of which need funds to continue their work.

To this end, Noonsite is now requiring frequent users to pay a very small monthly amount for greater access to the site and for the new premium features. All monthly payments go towards making Noonsite better and keeping Noonsite on the web.

Noonsite membership is available at three levels, from free to basic to premium.

The minimum membership subscription period is one month, and members can change subscription level at any time. Existing registered members will automatically be granted a free membership with the option to upgrade.

Visit www.noonsite.com/membership-account/membership-levels for more information.

Meet Yacht Agents Galapagos

Javier Plúa-Rizzo reports: Visiting the Galapagos Islands is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and you should not miss a single moment because of problems obtaining cruising permits or unexpected boating problems.



We are pleased to introduce our company, Yacht Agents Galapagos Co., providing high-end yachting services, supply and support to guests arriving in the Galapagos aboard their own adventurous yachts. Partner with Yacht Agents Galapagos Co. for an unforgettable and stress-free cruise. Our local agents provide a full range of marine services and are accustomed to working with a demanding international clientele.

Founded in 2020 to better serve the visitors who are attracted to this archipelago every cruising season, we continue to build on the stellar reputation we have earned in the sailing community. Our passion for preserving the beauty of these islands and sharing the amazing experiences that are only available here is striking!

As a member of the South Pacific Sailing Network, Cruising Station Host for the Seven Seas Cruising Association and Port Officer Representative of the Ocean Cruising Club, our mission is to ensure reliable yachting services, efficiency with clearance formalities and smooth entry into the Galapagos. We serve sailing vessels and yachts of any size.

We are your local source for information, smooth handling of cruising arrangements and high- quality yachting services. The process is easy!

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For more information visit www.yachtagentsgalapagos.com.

Virgin Atlantic Backs ASW for 2022

Antigua Sailing Week (ASW) has announced the return of Virgin Atlantic as the transatlantic airline sponsor of the 2022 event. The return to travel after the lengthy hiatus has presented a renewed interest in Caribbean destinations.

Virgin Atlantic's weekly schedule features flights from Heathrow into and out of VC Bird International Airport Antigua on Tuesdays, Thursday and Saturdays. This means there are perfectly timed flights for participants who want to race in the optional Peters & May Round Antigua Race on April 30th, and in Antigua Sailing Week starting May 1st. Spectators can arrive on Saturday in time for the opening festivities and leave a week later, also on Saturday, after the final prizegiving on May 6th.

ASW participants, family or friends wishing to travel to the event should email caribcorporates@fly.virgin.com to take advantage of the event specific offers which include discounted flights to/from Antigua via London Heathrow, group rates for bookings of ten adults or more, flexible tickets, dedicated support from Virgin Atlantic's team in the Caribbean.

Visit www.sailingweek.com for more information.

Martinique International Boat Show in May

Eric Vasse reports: After two years' postponement due to the pandemic, the second edition of the Martinique Boat Show will take place from May 19th through 22nd.

We want to make this show "the international boat show of the Caribbean," and for the first time the show will include marine professionals from other islands. Professionals from Grenada, Carriacou, St. Lucia, St. Martin and Guadeloupe have already responded, and more from other islands are expected.

All sectors of the sea-related trades are represented: infrastructure, marina and shipyard, technical and commercial trades, distributors of motorboats, engines and fishing equipment, sailmakers, shipchandlers and boat builders.



The tourism sector is also represented, with diving, sport fishing, excursion and boat rental companies, as well as tourist offices.

Lastly, we are organizing a concentration of pre-owned catamarans, which will be presented directly by their owners or by brokers. The boats are displayed ashore and afloat throughout the four-day boat show.

For both visitors and exhibitors, we have set up a service for travel, accommodation, car rental and any other service they need contact: martinique.boat.show@gmail.com.

Take advantage of the attending the boat show to visit our beautiful island, Martinique!

To participate as an exhibitor or for more information, contact martinique.boat.show@gmail.com.

For more information see ad below.



Caribbean ECO-News

Submersibles Discover New Caribbean Deep-Reef Fishes

The diversity of the deep-reef fishes of the Greater Caribbean region is at least one-third greater than had previously been realized, and it includes several new species.

A recent paper co-authored by researchers at the Smithsonian's Tropical Research Institute (STRI) and National Museum of Natural History (NMNH), the University of Washington, and the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras describes the important contribution of submersibles to increasing our knowledge about the diversity of deep-reef fishes in the Greater Caribbean. Scientists are often limited by the relatively shallow depths accessible via scuba diving. Small research submersibles allow for the exploration of much deeper waters.

In 2010, Smithsonian scientists initiated the Deep Reef Observation Project (DROP) to explore the ocean surrounding Curaçao, Bonaire, Dominica, Statia and Roatan using two privately owned small submersibles, *Curasub* and *Idabel*. These submersibles can dive to 300 and 900 metres, respectively, about two and six times deeper than a technical scuba dive, and they can stay at maximum depth for much longer.

A recent article in *Frontiers in Marine Science* reveals that, due to DROP research at Curacao, Statia and Roatan, the numbers of deep-reef fishes recorded increased about nine-fold and the total numbers of such fishes reported are two to four times greater than at three sites with little or no similar research effort: Alligator Reef in the Florida Keys, Bermuda and St. Croix.

"DROP research produced two important results: it showed that reef-fish faunas dominated by families of typical shallow-water reef fishes extend down to about 300 metres, and that the diversity of the deep-reef fish fauna of the Greater Caribbean biogeographic region is at least one third greater than had previously been realized," said D. Ross Robertson, STRI staff scientist.

"When DROP first started exploring Caribbean deep reefs using submersibles, we saw a lot of fish species we didn't recognize," said Carole Baldwin, chair of vertebrate zoology at the NMNH. "Now, after nearly a decade of submersible collecting at places like Curaçao, we can identify almost everything we see from the windows of the sub, much of which we collected, named, and described as new species."

Differences in deep-reef fishes discovered at different islands ultimately suggest that many parts of the Greater Caribbean likely harbor myriad deep-reef fishes waiting to be discovered, a process that could be accelerated by increasing the use of research submersibles, perhaps in combination with other less costly underwater exploration methods.

Since 2011, the DROP project has published 45 peer-reviewed papers that include descriptions of seven new genera and 35 new species of deep-reef fishes, mollusks, crustaceans and echinoderms, with another approximately ten fish species still to be named and described. DROP also discovered and described a new reef ocean zone, the rariphotic, which connects the mesophotic and deep sea.

Read the full story at https://phys.org/news/2022-03-decade-deep-reef-exploration-greater-caribbean.html.

New Shark Species Reported off Panama

The Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute reports that between 2010 and 2011, two research expeditions sponsored by the Spanish government exploring the biodiversity of benthic organisms (those living on the ocean floor) on Central America's coasts came across a new shark species.



The Small-Crested Angel Shark was discovered off the Caribbean coast of Panama.

The *Squatina mapama n. sp.*, collected off the Caribbean coast of Panama, became the first record of an Angel Shark from the Central American Caribbean. A new paper co-authored by STRI staff scientist, D. Ross Robertson, described and named it, also giving it the common name of Small-Crested Angel Shark, after one of its distinguishing characteristics, a short and narrow line of small scales.

Many Angel Shark species are considered endangered by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

Squatina are flat-bodied sharks resembling stingrays. Their genus most likely originated about 145 to 66 million years ago. *S. mapama* (named after the Spanish government fisheries organization) looks much like another species that lives in the same part of the Caribbean, and also occurs in Panama: *Squatina david*. However, genetic analyses helped to establish them as a separate species, and distinct from other New World Angel Sharks.

The Small-Crested Angel Shark is the fourth new species of *Squatina* identified in the Western Atlantic in the last decade, and although the total number of species in the genus has not been established with certainty, this study reveals the forensic value of genetic analyses for understanding the true biological diversity of a genus with various species that have very similar appearances.

Read the full story at qcostarica.com/squatina-mapama-new-species-from-panama.

Research Improves Shark Protection in Belize

As reported by Melissa Cristina Márquez at Forbes.com: For two decades, Demian Chapman, Director of Sharks & Rays Conservation Research at Mote Marine Laboratory, and University of Miami professor Elizabeth Babcock have spearheaded a project tracking shark populations at Glover's Reef, Belize. The southernmost of Belize's atolls and part of the Belize Barrier-Reef Reserve System, it is thought to be the richest marine environment in the Caribbean Sea.

Within Glover's Reef is a shallow lagoon with over 700 patch reefs, protected by a marine protected area (MPA). This research team has shown that even in protected areas, endangered sharks may still be vulnerable. Published in the *Marine Ecology Progress Series* journal, this is one of the first long-term monitoring studies of reef sharks within an MPA.

Led by Ph.D. candidate Katie Flowers from the FIU's Predator Ecology & Conservation lab, the group tracked the number of Caribbean reef sharks at Glover's Reef Atoll. Monitoring was focused on the no-take zone, where fishing is prohibited. Initial research conducted by FIU Research Assistant Professor in the Institute of Environment Mark Bond found Caribbean Reef Shark (*Carcharhinus perezi*) populations were doing well within the MPA from 2001 to 2013. Researchers could normally spot several Caribbean reef sharks at a time. But by 2018, they saw none on their underwater video footage. The team documented their population decline between 2009-2019. Flowers said it could be possible sharks were somewhere else in the MPA and didn't pass by the cameras. However, this trend is still cause for concern. Caribbean Reef Sharks are listed as endangered by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature Red List of Threatened Species, and research by FIU Ph.D. candidate Jessica Quinlan shows they are also one of the most fished shark species in Belize.

Well-designed MPAs are one conservation method that helps protect reef sharks, but their effectiveness depends on their enforcement. "Once a marine protected area is implemented, it isn't often monitored. Our findings are a call to action and stress the importance of monitoring population trends over time," said Flowers.

Sharks don't know where boundaries of MPAs begin and end, and the researchers believe fishing along the edge of the MPA could have contributed to the decline of Caribbean Reef Sharks. The scientists shared their data with Belize's National Shark Working Group — a team government officials, shark fisherfolk, non-governmental organizations, and scientists. The group made recommendations that led to new legislation prohibiting shark fishing two miles around Glover's Reef Atoll, Lighthouse Reef Atoll, and Turneffe Atoll.

The government in Belize plans to implement new management measures to further protect sharks. "We can only be successful in the effective conservation and management of our marine resources when policy and management benefit from sound science. The contribution from our partners at FIU, Mote Marine Laboratory and the University of Miami has been central to the declaration of the recent Shark MPAs, which along with other management measures has been embraced by fishers and managers as important for the long-term protection and viability of Belize's shark populations," said Beverly Wade, the policy and planning advisor for Belize's Ministry of the Blue Economy and Civil Aviation.

Read the full story at www.forbes.com/sites/melissacristinamarquez/2022/02/06/belize-extends-protection-for-sharks.

From Two to Team: The Story of EPIC

When biologists Natalia Collier and Adam Brown visited family in the Caribbean as college students in the late 1990s, they didn't imagine that they would devote their lives to protecting the natural heritage of the region. But that's exactly what they did when they started the non-profit organization called Environmental Protection in the Caribbean (EPIC). Today, EPIC has been around for more than 20 years, thanks to the hard work and dedication of hundreds of partners throughout the Caribbean and across the world.

Natalia was bothered by negative impacts to the natural places she grew up visiting. She and Adam found Caribbean residents were also alarmed about water pollution, litter, and unsustainable development. Sometimes there was a lack of scientific knowledge, funding, or people-power to make significant improvements.



When biologists Adam and Natalia visited family in the Caribbean in the 1990s, they didn't imagine that they would devote their lives to protecting the region's natural heritage.

In 2000 Natalia and Adam registered EPIC as a Florida-based non-profit with the mission of protecting the Caribbean environment through research and community-based actions. They attribute EPIC's success to a grassroots approach, which includes empowering local communities. The ongoing knowledge base and agility necessary to remain effective comes through the recruiting of local leaders who run and manage EPIC's programs. In addition, there is a focus and commitment to combining the tools of scientific research, education, advocacy, and community support to affect change. This grassroots approach has enabled people of all backgrounds to protect their natural heritage.

What started as a two-person operation has grown to a team of hardworking staff and volunteers, hailing from local and international communities. Much of the work is in partnership with on-island non-profit organizations. EPIC has worked on more than 20 Caribbean islands and started its first affiliate organization, the St. Maarten Foundation, in 2007.

EPIC engaged in extensive seabird research and published a breakthrough compendium of seabird data in the *Seabird Breeding Atlas of the Lesser Antilles*. This data was used for the designation of Important Bird Areas and led to an extensive conservation and management program in the transboundary Grenadines. EPIC is also known for its involvement in protecting one of the rarest seabirds, the endangered Black-Capped Petrel.

Now, EPIC has created a new logo and a new website at www.epicislands.org. The website project came together over the course of the last year and quickly become a storehouse for all the prior work. This effort was inspired by EPIC's Executive Director Tabitha Stadler, who has cultivated an EPIC vision of the Caribbean region as a global focal point for conservation. "I hope the EPIC story, website, and logo will serve as a catalyst for transforming environmental concern into action and bring global attention to the needs of the Caribbean," says Stadler.

Visit www.epicislands.org for more information.

Union Island Environmental Group Gets New Name

Katrina Coy reports: The Union Island Environmental Attackers (UIEA), formed in 1999 and legalized in 2008, came from the desire of a group of concerned local residents to combat environmental issues that stemmed mainly from pollution that adversely affected the population of Union Island, the southernmost island in the St. Vincent Grenadines.

Over the years, the UIEA grew to become the island's foremost implementer of environmental and socioeconomic sustainability projects. The initial goal of the group to attack the problem of rampant littering on the island has then been attained significantly, now the UIEA is focused on bringing the community together to drive the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and link them with long-term ecosystem and species conservation.

Since inception, the organization has accomplished much. The UIEA has conducted community sensitization campaigns to reduce the use of plastic bags and provided rainwater storage tanks for dozens of households to increase their resilience to drought. Over 486,000 gallons of water-storage capacity have been installed for residents on Union Island, Mayreau and Canouan; boreholes and standpipes have been renovated, and a 150,000-gallon concrete storage tank has been built for the community of Ashton.

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UIEA also undertakes near-daily community warden patrols in the forests of Chatham Bay, protecting endangered wildlife that is vulnerable to poaching on Union Island. It also routinely patrols beaches island-wide during the turtle-nesting season, protecting them to safely reproduce and return to the ocean.

In 2021, during a strategic review workshop under the CBF-funded Union Island Climate Change Adaptation Project, it was agreed by the UIEA team that a name change was in order, the rationale being that it must better reflect the evolution of the organization and be fit for purpose as it aligns with future endeavors for the decade ahead.

As such, the UIEA has been officially rebranded as the Union Island Environmental Alliance, thus retaining its original acronym. While suggesting a more inclusive and collaborative organization, this new moniker underpins our goal to grow the organization in numbers and reach further than ever before.

Contact (784) 526-7457 or president.uiea@gmail.com, and visit www.unionislandenvironmentalalliance.org for more information.

Conserving the Black-Capped Petrel

The endangered Black-Capped Petrel is a seabird so secretive that ten years ago, only one active nest had ever been located and monitored.



KATE SUTHERLAND

The endangered Diablotin or Black-Capped Petrel in flight.

Despite this tremendous gap in knowledge, the International Black-Capped Petrel Conservation Group created an action plan in 2012 to guide the conservation of this rare seabird. Now, after a decade of searches, studies, and management actions, producing tremendous advancements in our understanding of this species, partners have released a new guide to empower petrel conservationists. The "Conserving the Diablotin: Black-Capped Petrel Conservation Update and Action Plan" lays out nine strategies and actions most likely to combat the threats of predation and habitat loss.

The Black-Capped Petrel is the rarest nesting seabird in the Caribbean, with only an estimated 2,000 breeding pairs remaining worldwide. Conservationists have now located more than 100 nests on the island of Hispaniola, and found evidence of smaller populations possibly breeding on Dominica, Guadeloupe, and Cuba. Once common in the Caribbean, the species' population was decimated over the past two centuries by overhunting, the introduction of mammalian predators, and the destruction of its forested nesting habitat. Predation and habitat loss continue to threaten the species.

Community engagement, already begun at some petrel sites, is key to habitat preservation. Other strategies, including continued searches for the petrel, capacity building of local conservation organizations, restoration approaches, and advocacy for the species when at sea, are in place or in planning. Preventing petrel extinction requires that all of these strategies be complementary and employed together.

The core team that authored "Conserving the Diablotin" comes from organizations including BirdsCaribbean, Clemson University, Cornell University, Environmental Protection in the Caribbean, Grupo Jaragua, and American Bird Conservancy.

Visit the International Black-capped Petrel Conservation Group's Website: https://bit.ly/BCPE-WG for more information.

Visit https://bit.ly/BCPE-Action-Plan for a copy of the Action Plan.

Preparing Students for Marine Science Careers

For ten years in the Cayman Islands, the Central Caribbean Marine Institute (CCMI) has been running a programme that trains and prepares Caymanian students ages 16 to 20 for careers in marine science/conservation or the dive tourism/watersports industry.

The Young Environmentalist Leadership Course (YELC) takes a small cohort of participants through an intensive, hands-on experience over several months and across several islands each year, providing them with knowledge, dive training, soft skills, and field experience to help launch them to the next step as they complete school.

The support of YELC programme sponsors — Foster's, Cayman National, and Go Pro Diving — has provided more than 90 participants with scholarships that cover the dive training fees, flights to/from Little Cayman, accommodations at the Little Cayman Research Centre, and other costs associated with the experience.

During the first part of the programme, YELC participants complete their PADI dive training in Grand Cayman with Go Pro Diving. All students then attend a ten-day immersive, hands-on experience at the Little Cayman Research Centre. During that time, they work on field projects, take part in night dives, experience lionfish dissections, attend CV workshops and mock job interviews, assist with CCMI's ongoing research, learn about local environmental and conservation issues, and interact with professionals from a variety of companies and organizations in related fields.

Participants completing the course leave with tangible dive and emergency first-responder qualifications, as well as real-life, skills-based experience that not only helps guide them in the future but also provides excellent references for CVs and interviews with potential educators or employers. After nearly a decade, CCMI is seeing YELC alumni flow into professional roles in the dive tourism and environmental science fields in the Cayman Islands.

Visit www.reefresearch.org for more information.

Carriacou Eco-Block Project Continues

Richard Laflamme reports: In Carriacou, Paddy's Enterprises, Kevin Richards and the No-to-Single-Use (NSU) association have joined together to help stop non-recyclable glass and plastic pollution on the island. Richards plans to build a house by using Paddy's Enterprises' eco-blocks, which are made by including granulated glass and plastic provided by NSU.

The blocks are made using a recipe of one part cement, two parts sand, four parts gravel and two parts granulated glass or plastic. The hollow eco-blocks have been rated by the Grenada Bureau of Standards to Class A structural construction specification. The blocks can be re-used or recycled if the building is ever demolished.

The NSU is urging Carriacou to become the first



Richard Laflamme of No-to-Single-Use and Sean Roberts of Paddy's Enterprise with a construction block that incorporates granulated non-recyclable glass and plastic.

glass/plastic free island by 2025 by having every household and business, and the Grenada Solid Waste Management Authority and Environment Ministry, all joining forces to confine all non-recyclable glass and plastic in concrete. GSWMA, Environment Ministry and NSU are signing an agreement to confirm their commitment to stop plastic pollution, and Carriacou residents are encouraged to sort non-recyclable plastic and glass items and give them to NSU. NSU is currently collecting glass in big white bags distributed around the island and in many businesses. Bags of plastic could be left beside the white bags (not inside), and are collected once a week.

So far, there is a keen interest by locals and visitor to collect non-recyclable plastic and glass. The dream of sustainable Waste-to-Concrete and zero plastic pollution could come true.

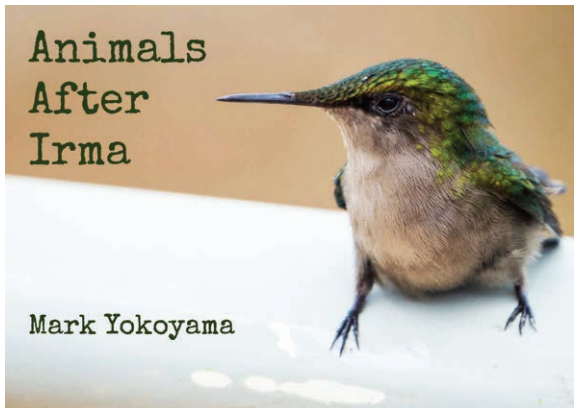
WhatsApp for more information: 1 (473) 456-3474.

New Book on Hurricane's Impact on St. Martin Wildlife

The Les Fruits de Mer association has published a new book, *Animals After Irma*. Its eight short essays reveal the ways that the hurricane impacted animals on St. Martin. It also explores how different species survived or even thrived in the aftermath. The book is full of vivid color photos of animals and their habitats after the storm.

"Hurricane Irma had a huge impact on St. Martin," said author Mark Yokoyama. "The effects it had on nature are important. We live on an island with few wild spaces remaining. We also have unique species found nowhere else in the world that depend on those spaces."

Animals After Irma, published in English and French, was produced with support from the Collectivité de Saint-Martin, the Agence nationale de la cohésion des territoires, and Delta Petroleum.



This book is available as a free download from http://lesfruitsdemer.com and for purchase at amazon.com.

St. Martin's *Le Journal Reserve Naturelle* Available

The most recent edition of *Le Journal Reserve Naturelle Nationale de Saint-Martin* (free, in French and English) is available now, with articles on "Turtle Washed Up On Shore: What To Do," "Nautical Pros Learn The Rules Of Whale Watching" and much more.

Read or download at reservenaturelle-saint-martin.com/journaux-pdf/2022/journal40.pdf

New Kids' Magazine in Dutch Caribbean

The Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance has released the first edition of *Bionews Kids,* a free printed and online nature magazine for children aged nine to 11 on the six Dutch Caribbean islands. It was designed based on increasing reading, sparking curiosity and educating kids about the extraordinary nature and its threats on their islands. The magazine supports the nature education programs of the protected area management organizations on Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, Statia and St. Maarten.

Bionews Kids offers content in English, Dutch, Papiamento, and Papiamentu. In the first issue, the main theme is the marine environment. Kids can read about coral reefs, tidepools and mangroves that are particularly specific to some of the islands. The magazine also includes activities such as coloring pages, a beach journal, and puzzles. Besides these activities, readers can begin grasping environmental words and use the photo ID of sea animals continuously.



Visit https://dcnanature.org/bionews-kids for the magazine online.

Free presentations: Sea Turtles of Bonaire

In Bonaire, every second and fourth Wednesday of the month at 8:00PM you can join a sea turtle presentation at the Yellow Submarine (Dive Friends Bonaire, Kaya Playa Lechi).

"Sea Turtles of Bonaire" is a free public presentation. Ask the volunteers and staff all you ever wanted to know about sea turtles — where do Bonaire's sea turtles live, what do they eat, how do they reproduce and how can you help protect this beautiful species?

Visit www.bonaireturtles.org or contact stcb@bonaireturtles.org for more information.

REGATTA NEWS

Russians Suspended from International Competition

As of March 1st, international sailboat racing's organizing body, World Sailing, suspended sailors and officials from Russia and Belarus as part of widespread sporting sanctions following worldwide condemnation of Russia's military aggression in Ukraine.

World Sailing (www.sailing.org), issued the following statement:

"World Sailing joined the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and global sports organizations in taking the decision to suspend participation of Russian and Belarusian athletes and officials in World Sailing-owned and sanctioned competitions and events until further notice.

"By implementing these measures, World Sailing is supporting a united and coordinated approach within the global sports movement. This decision is in line with the IOC Executive Board's recommendation, aimed at preserving the integrity of competitions and ensuring the safety of all participants, and has been unanimously agreed by the World Sailing Executive Board.

"We are now strongly urging our Member National Authorities, Class Associations, affiliated bodies, and all event organizers to implement the measure to suspend the participation of Russian or Belarusian athletes and officials in their respective events and competitions.

"Where this is not possible, due to short time frames, for organizational or legal reasons, World Sailing, in line with the IOC Executive Board recommendation, is advising event organizers do everything in their power to ensure that Russian or Belarusian athletes (be it as individuals or teams), and officials participate neutrally, without national symbols, colors, flags or anthems.

"Both on and off the water, our sport is united by the values of equality, inclusion, respect and fairness. We are now asking our sailing family to come together as a sporting force for good by working with us at this incredibly difficult time."

The Royal Ocean Racing Club (RORC, www.rorc.org) also released a statement. "Royal Ocean Racing Club abhors the invasion of Ukraine and extends its wholehearted support to the Ukrainian nation.

"We endorse the positions taken by World Sailing, IOC, BOA, and the RYA. Therefore, until this situation is resolved RORC will not permit any yachts with identified connections with Russian and Belarusian nationals to participate in any of its events.

"We will continue to assess the situation and will take any appropriate actions in line with the international community and World Sailing."

BVI's 25th Annual Dark & Stormy

Peter Clatworthy reports: Founded in 1978 to promote sailing and sailboat racing, West End Yacht Club is one of only two yacht clubs in the British Virgin Islands.

The Club held its 25th Annual Dark & Stormy Regatta on the long weekend of March 5th through 7th in weather entirely befitting the name. While stormy enough to deter a few of the more cautious sailors, it was not too stormy for a fleet of ten — comprising hardened veterans and enthusiastic newcomers — to enjoy the challenging conditions.



Getting stormy. Third-place winner Wicked Winch *with two reefs in.*

The direct distance of each of two legs was about 30 miles. The first race left Trellis Bay, Tortola, at 10:00AM on Saturday with a course around the Dogs (and Doggie Bits) to Anegada. First to finish was the Corsair helmed by Chris Haycraft, in the impressive time of 2 hours, 21 minutes.

The lay day on Sunday enabled competitors to relax and enjoy the beauty of Anegada while supporting the local economy with visits to its renowned bars and restaurants.

Big seas again provided a challenge on Monday, but the sun shone, and all boats arrived safely back in Tortola for the prizegiving, hosted at the club's home at Omar's Fusion in Soper's Hole.

Using the PHRF handicap system, first place overall for the two races went to the aptly named *Flying Pig*, a 27-foot Corsair trimaran. Second prize went to *Foolish Pleasure*, a 36-foot Cape Dory driven by Marty Halpern. Marty established the race 25 years ago and is one WEYC's more mature sailors, and together with crewmate Robin Pinfold reflects a combined 160 years of experience.

Wicked Winch, a 30-foot Hunter, performed consistently to come in third place and *Moxie* was fourth — having sacrificed a leading position in the outbound leg in order to rescue its davits, dinghy and solar panels, endangered by the high seas.

Thanks to our primary sponsors Omar's Fusion, Jeremy's Kitchen, Anegada Reef Hotel and Digicel, complemented by contributions from other local businesses.

Grand Large Yachting World Odyssey 500

An international fleet of 23 boats has crossed a waypoint in its three-year voyage, sailing an estimated 4,700 nautical miles since their departure from Tenerife last November to pass through the Panama Canal into the Pacific Ocean on March 2nd and 3rd.

The boats are part of the Grand Large Yachting World Odyssey 500 — a rally organized to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the first round-the-world voyage by Ferdinand Magellan and Juan Sebastian Elcano. After crossing the Atlantic and spending the Christmas holidays in Barbados, they free-cruised the Eastern Caribbean including the Virgin Islands, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Antigua, St. Martin, Grenada, St. Lucia and St. Vincent & the Grenadines. In late January the fleet set out towards Panama Canal, stopping at Bonaire, Curaçao and Aruba; Santa Marta and Cartagena in Colombia; and the San Blas Islands, before gathering in Shelter Bay, Panama, on February 23rd.

The group secured "special lockage" to allow it to pass through the Canal's old locks, which run parallel to the new ones. Sailing boats typically have to wait up to three weeks to co-ordinate with larger cargo ships and then follow them through the Canal. Instead, the boats traveled in two groups of 11 and 12, sailing in four rows of three boats — side-tied in the largest raft the Panama Canal has ever managed. Each boat was equipped with four linehandlers, four 125-foot lines, one skipper and one Canal transit advisor. The group navigated the three sets of locks in two days, spending the night on a large industrial mooring in Gatun Lake.

"There was a bit of turbulence and constant adjustment in terms of speed and mobility for traffic management that made for good entertainment value. When we crossed into the Pacific Ocean it really felt like a rite of passage," said Canadian Richard Gauthier, who is sailing aboard *2 Canoes*, an Outremer 51, with his wife Ann.

Visit gly-world-odyssey.com for more information.

Youth Supported at Nevis Aquatic & Sailing Center

Mark Theron reports: The RS Feva Barbecue at the Nevis Aquatic & Sailing Center (NASC) on March 5th was a phenomenal success. NASC raised over EC$13,000 (nearly US$5,000) through the sale of food, drinks and branded merchandise, plus additional donations made by attendees throughout the afternoon. The Center now has the required balance to purchase a new RS Feva sailing boat needed in the Youth Sail Training Program.

Tropical Shipping presented a cheque for EC$6,792.25 to contribute to the RS Feva purchase. Judith Liburd, Country Manager of Tropical Shipping in Nevis, said that the company was thrilled to contribute to the purchase of the sailboat and thanked the Nevis Aquatic & Sailing Center for investing in today's youth in teaching them how to swim and sail. Liburd hopes that one day these youths can be seen on one of Tropical's vessels.

Individual young sailors explained how important it was to them, personally, to be part of the Youth Sail experience, to learn new skills, to be part of a team, and make new friends.

Youth Sail Classes take place every Sunday for the six-to-18-year age group. All abilities are welcome. The Youth Program is growing rapidly as young sailors progress from one class of boat to another. The RS Feva is critical to this development as an international class boat in global competition and a stage above the Optimist boat for beginners.

The Nevis Aquatic and Sailing Center strives to bring Nevisians closer to the sea and foster an appreciation and understanding of our marine landscape. The Center hosts programs and events to promote swimming, sailing, marine biology and marine conservation.

Visit www.nevisaquaticandsailingcenter.com for more information.

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ASW Launches Women on Water

On March 8th, International Women's Day, Antigua Sailing Week (ASW) announced the launch of Women on Water, an inclusive weekly activity to inspire women to get out sailing.

Over the last year ASW has worked with the National Sailing Academy and the Antigua & Barbuda Sailing Association on a fledgling Women's Mentorship Programme with the objective of gaining gender equality in the sport of sailing. Of the programme, ASW president Alison Sly-Adams, says, "For Year Two our focus is simply to introduce as many women as possible to grass-roots sailing in an enjoyable atmosphere. Dinghy sailing is fun, and lessons learned provide a solid foundation for moving onto other vessels. After that it's up to the individual. If they want to further develop their interest whether as recreation, sport or business, through their industry connections our mentors will be able to advise and help with that development."

Meeting at the National Sailing Academy on Saturday afternoons, women of different ages and mixed abilities, from experienced to newbies, will head onto the water in dinghies with one objective — to have fun. The experience will take place in the safety of Falmouth Harbour with a coach boat in attendance.

A success in Year One was Nerissa Allen, who signed up on the mentor programme with Elizabeth Jordan as her mentor. Elizabeth encouraged Nerissa to complete her Competent Crew Course and her STCW with Ondeck Antigua. As an aircraft engineer working for regional airline LIAT, Nerissa expressed an interest in learning about marine engines. She is now completing an internship at Ondeck.

Rana-Jamila Lewis, ASW Events and Marketing Manager says, "In the run-up to the first Antigua Sailing Week Women's Race Day, to be held on May 5th, organizers will be celebrating women already involved in sailing in Antigua & Barbuda therefore exposing the different opportunities within the sport." Women already hold key roles across the industry, and yet the grassroots programmes are still not balanced between male and female numbers.

For more information call or WhatsApp +1 (268) 780-1345 or email watersports@nationalsailingacademy.org.

***Hetairos* Sets Superyacht Round Antigua Record**

Hetairos set a new monohull race record for the Round Antigua Race in the 11th Superyacht Challenge Antigua, held March 8th through 13th. Although the famous course is familiar to racing yachts, this was the first time that a Round Antigua Race has been organized by the Superyacht Challenge.

The 218-foot Dykstra/Reichel Pugh ketch, skippered by Graham Newton, was the last to start in the pursuit race, completing the 46.8 nautical mile Round Antigua Course in an elapsed time of 3 hours, 46 minutes, 8 seconds. She beat the previous record, set in 2018 by the modified Volvo 70 *Warrior*, by 9 minutes and 30 seconds.

Hetairos was also the overall race winner after ORCsy time correction. The 121-foot Dyksra sloop *Action,* skippered by Josh Gilchrist, was second by less than five minutes after time correction. The 180-foot Dykstra ketch *Kamaxitha,* skippered by Tim Urwin, was third.

Hetairos's tactician, Cameron Appleton, commented, "We had a conservative sail plan for much of the race, a bit of asset preservation for this regatta and the next one to come. We were confident in our strategy that the record was on with a jib top and also upwind sail configuration. The plan was to sail clean and execute good maneuvers. The *Hetairos* team (of over 40 crew) produced excellent work and the boss did a great job driving."

The Round Antigua Race and Superyacht Challenge Series were held in strong winds for all but the last race of the regatta.

After four days of exciting racing, the 11th edition of the Superyacht Challenge Antigua concluded with the prizegiving held at the Admiral's Inn, Nelson's Dockyard. Class winners were the 112-foot Baltic *Nilaya*, with Filip Balcaen at the helm, in Corsairs Class; *Action* in the Buccaneers Class; and *Hetairos* in the Privateers Class.

Winners at the Superyacht Challenge Antigua receive barrels of rum, suitably filled. The Gosnell Trophy goes to the yacht that, in the opinion of the competitors and race committee, has competed in the spirit of the regatta, both afloat and ashore. The Gosnell Trophy went to the 140-foot German Frers ketch *Rebecca,* skippered by Rob Foxell.

Visit www.superyachtchallengeantigua.com for more information.

ON THE HORIZON

Next Month: ARC Europe 2022

ARC Europe is World Cruising Club's west-to-east transatlantic rally. More than just a trans-ocean delivery, ARC Europe is a convivial way to end a Caribbean season or start a European adventure.

The rally has two starts: from St. Maarten or from the US East Coast (with online support). The two fleets meet in Bermuda, then sail together to cruise the Azores before proceeding to Marina de Lagos in Portugal or sailing independently to northern Europe. There will be social activities in every port, plus tours ashore in the Azores.

As of early March, more than two dozen boats had already signed up to the 2022 rally, which is set to begin from both St. Maarten and the US East Coast on May 7th, and sail from Bermuda to the Azores on May 18th.

Visit www.worldcruising.com/arc_europe/arceuropeitinerary.aspx for more information.

SDSA's Homeward Bound 2022

The Salty Dawg Sailing Association's Homeward Bound Rally is scheduled to start from the USVI or the Bahamas on May 10th; the actual date the fleet leaves port is weather and captain dependent. While the official destination is Hampton, Virginia, captains are free to sail directly to the port of their choice.

In the USVI, boats can anchor at any harbor in St. John or St. Thomas. Covid-safe farewell events will be local, and planned by participating boats. Boats departing from the Bahamas will gather in Marsh Harbour prior to the start.



The SDSA's Homeward Bound Rally sails from the USVI or Bahamas to the US East Coast.

An arrival dinner in Hampton will be planned for those who choose that landfall. All cruisers are welcome at the event to greet the arriving ralliers.

Salty Dawg President Bob Osborn notes, "The rally includes weather routing by the Marine Weather Center, position tracking by PredictWind, and coordination and support by the SDSA support teams during the offshore passage."

Visit www.saltydawgsailing.org/rallies for more information.

Government Support for 2023 Multihull Challenge

The Fifth Annual Caribbean Multihull Challenge (CMC V) will be held February 3rd through 5th, 2023, with support from the St. Maarten Tourism Bureau.

"St. Maarten already has a reputation in the global sailing community and the CMC compliments this by attracting a different category and a rapidly growing community of multihull sailors. This is in line with the goal of the ministry to continue to support and develop the marine sector and tourism product," says Tourism Minister Roger Lawrence.

Director of Tourism May-Ling Chun adds, "We are pleased that another sailing event takes place in St. Maarten, as this is one of our niche market sectors we focus on to diversify the tourism industry and to increase the destination awareness and arrivals."

A special race from Simpson Bay, St. Maarten around Saba and back will occur during CMC V. Stephen Burzon, volunteer Director of Marketing for the CMC, says, "With the 2023 Around Saba Race added to the 60-Mile Sprint that was introduced this year, we are celebrating the concentration of multihulls in St. Maarten and fueling the desire of more and more owners to sail, race, and cruise in this gorgeous place."

Visit www.caribbeanmultihullchallenge.com for more information.



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2022 RORC CARIBBEAN 600

‘LIKE A HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING MATCH’

RICK TOMLINSON / RORC



Mighty monohulls Comanche *(007) and* Skorpios *at the start.*

THE 2022 RORC Caribbean 600 attracted 74 teams with 738 sailors from 32 different nations, setting a record for the most impressive fleet in the 14-year history of the race.

The “600” is the Caribbean region’s signature offshore event. The non-stop 600-mile race, organized by the Royal Ocean Racing Club, begins and ends just off English Harbour, Antigua, and takes a looping course around 11 different islands and cays, sailing north as far as St. Martin and south as far as Guadeloupe, taking in Barbuda, Nevis, St. Kitts, Saba and St. Barth’s.

This year’s race started on February 21st. Despite moderate tradewinds fading to a lighter breeze during the five days of this year’s race, Jason Carroll’s MOD70, *Argo*, set a new multihull race record in a nail-biting finish duel with Giovanni Soldini’s Multi 70, *Maserati*, which was fresh from taking line honors at the Grenada finish of the recent RORC Transatlantic Race. The ClubSwan 125 *Skorpios*, skippered by Fernando Echavarri, took Monohull Line Honours after a keen battle with the VPLP/Verdier 100 *Comanche*, skippered by Mitch Booth, which had just smashed the previous monohull record for the RORC Transat race by two days. Racing in IRC Zero class, Christopher Sheehan’s Pac52 *Warrior Won* was the overall winner, earning the RORC Caribbean 600 Trophy for the best corrected time under IRC.

Warrior Won’s tactician Richard Clarke, a four-time Olympian for Canada and a Volvo Ocean Race winner, says, “Tactically, the RORC Caribbean 600 rates as one of the hardest in the world. It is like a heavyweight boxing match: the lefts and the rights just keep coming at you and you wait for that knockout punch. At any moment you can park up — no lead is safe until the very end. There are so many islands to round and the tactics vary according to the time of day. Add fickle tradewinds and squally clouds into the mix, I equate this to going ten rounds in a boxing match.”

Chris ‘Lew’ Lewis, navigator on *Warrior Won*, commented, “We spent a lot of time preparing for this race, going through the tracks of some of the great navigators that have taken part. The *Warrior Won* team has instituted a two-and-a-half-year testing programme, so we know at every given angle and every given wind strength what the best sail combinations are, and after that it is all about execution. With an incredible crew, every time we needed to change sail it would magically appear.”

A new multihull race record

In the multihulls, *Argo* took Line Honours while setting a new Multihull Race Record of 29 hours, 38 minutes, 44 seconds. *Maserati* was just 2 minutes and 13 seconds behind, and who finished first was decided only in the final few miles of the race. Peter Cunningham’s MOD70, *PowerPlay,* led in the early part of the race but finished third.

“This race is always an emotional rollercoaster,” says Carroll. “I think we traded the lead with the other boats about five or six times and the last change was 20 minutes before the finish with *Maserati*. It was a boat-on-boat tacking duel. Before the awesome finish, the closest match racing we had was in the lee of Nevis and St. Kitts. We traded the lead two-sail reaching, doing 35 knots! At that pace, everything happens so fast and you have to plan in advance, but it is so exciting for sure.”

Approaching Redonda, *Maserati* was ahead by about three miles, but *Argo* closed the gap to about half a mile on the rounding and from Redonda to the finish was almost a one tack beat on port.

“We knew there was about a 30-degree header coming and we had a tacking duel with more tacks than we had done the whole race. *Maserati* tacked a little too close to us before they could build speed and we luffed them and pulled out the win. This win is one of the sweetest from how hard-fought it has been. This was an opportunity not just to sail fast but to flex your sailing skills. This is our favorite regatta of the year; it is very well run and we love coming to this one.”

After time correction, however, *Maserati* won the MOCRA Class and Gilles Lamire’s Multi50 *Groupe GCA-1001 Sourires* was third.

Monohull Line Honours and IRC Super Zero

To take Monohull Line Honours, *Skorpios’s* elapsed time was 1 day, 16 hours, 39 minutes, 51 seconds.

Comanche won IRC Super Zero after time correction. *Groovederci Racing - Sailing Poland*, sailed by Deneen Demourkas was runner-up. The Polish National Foundation’s Volvo 70, *I Love Poland*, skippered by Grzegorz Baranowski, was third.

Less than an hour separated *Skorpios* and *Comanche* with *Comanche* beating *Skorpios* on handicap.

Class40 Division

The winner of the nine-strong Class40 division went to the wire with a dramatic finish. Charles-Louis Mourruau’s *Guidi* had led for most of the race but stalled as the breeze faded with the finish line beckoning. *Finimmo* took the lead in the last few miles to win by just 61 seconds after racing for well over three days and nights. *Finimmo’s* co-skipper Gerald Veniard commented, “We had a good start, the first Class40 to Barbuda, but then *Guidi* came back and smashed us downwind. At St. Maarten we fought back but *Guidi* extended on the downwind leg to Guadeloupe. Our strategy at Guadeloupe did not work and when we were 20 miles behind we thought the race was lost. After Redonda, *Guidi* was offshore in no wind and we passed them to win. It was the icing on the cake, after a match race like that.”

IRC Two

Ross Applebey’s victory in IRC Two was his eighth class win as skipper in the 600 and the seventh for his Oyster 48, *Scarlet Oyster*. *Scarlet Oyster* had finished 2022’s RORC Transatlantic Race second to *Comanche* by just over an hour after IRC time correction. Global Yacht Racing’s First 47.7 *EH01*, skippered by Andy Middleton, was second and Richard Palmer’s JPK 1010, *Jangada,* was third.

Special awards

Special awards included the Mariella Trophy Challenge Trophy for best boat over 40 years old, which went to *Caccia Alla Volpe,* sailed by Rocco Falcone; Best Caribbean Boat went to Pamala Baldwin’s *Liquid*; the Bella Mente Trophy for the first yacht to finish that is manually powered without either variable or moveable ballast went to Shelter Island Transatlantic Partners’ *Prospector*; first monohull past St. Maarten, winning an FKG rum barrel, went to *Skorpios*; first multihull past St. Maarten, winning an FKG rum barrel, went to *Argo*; and the RORC Caribbean Series Trophy for best combined score in the RORC Transatlantic Race and RORC Caribbean 600 was awarded to *Comanche*.

The RORC Caribbean 600 is made possible by the continuing support of the government of Antigua & Barbuda, Sevenstar Yacht Transport, Rolex and the Antigua Yacht Club.

At the prizegiving on February 25th, the RORC Commodore took a special moment to applaud the race volunteers: “The Spirit of the RORC Caribbean 600 is represented by the wonderful volunteers that work 24 hours on shifts to finish the boats and to meet every sailor with a smile, cold Carib Beer, and cheers on the dock. Thank you, you have been amazing!”

The Ministry of Tourism and the Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Authority have signed on to host the RORC Caribbean 600 for another four years. The renewal of the agreement is in keeping with the Tourism Ministry’s and the Tourism Authority’s strategy, which calls for the development of the sailing and yachting sector as a means of economic development.

Visit https://caribbean600.rorc.org and http://caribbean600.rorc.org/News/rorc-caribbean-600-wraps-up-in-antigua.html for more information.

Full results are available at www.rorc.org/raceresults/2022.

ARTHUR DANIEL / RORC



Richard Clarke, tactician on overall winner Warrior Won. *“The lefts and the rights just keep coming at you, and you wait for that knockout punch.”*

RORC



"I CAME HERE TO WIN!"

After competing in this event five times in the past, Pamala Baldwin declared at the beginning of the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta 2022, "I came here to win!" And win she did.

Fresh from being named Best Caribbean Boat in the 2022 RORC Caribbean 600 (the third consecutive time for that honor), Baldwin's Antigua-based J/122, *Liquid*, came away from the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta 2022 with its third overall class win and, for the first time, the top honor of Best Performance Overall for the entire fleet.

The venerable St. Maarten Heineken Regatta was back with a bang after last year's pandemic-induced cancellation. Celebrating 42 years of serious fun for sailors hailing from more than 35 countries, the 2022 edition was held March 3rd through 6th. The fleet saw 97 boats racing in eight CSA classes, one bareboat class, three multihull classes and a relaxed "Island Time" class. In what was described as "big wind," with up to 35 knots on the last day, most classes got in four races while CSA 8 completed six.

Despite taking three third places in the four-race series, Baldwin's *Liquid*, skippered by Julian White, performed consistently over the four days, ending up in first place overall in the super-competitive CSA Class 7 by only one point. White, who turns 28 this month, has skippered *Liquid* for five years. Baldwin prides herself on providing a steppingstone for young sailors to professional racing, saying, "I am hellbent on promoting youth who wish to make a career in racing. This year we added to our crew a 16-year-old who races Lasers in Antigua." Baldwin also won the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta 2022's "Most Inspirational Yachtsman" trophy for representing women in sailing.

On Day One in CSA 7, the top three boats were Steve Rigby's British-flagged J/122, *El Ocaso*, *Liquid*, and Sam Talbot's US-flagged J/111, *Spike*.

White said, "We didn't get the best start to the race — in fact, we weren't really in the race for a vast majority of it. So it shows that over a long race like that, you just have to keep pushing and never give up. We came in right behind the other J/122, which was good fun, and we had *Spike* there as well. I think we just got them by six seconds corrected, which just goes to show how close the racing is."

On Day Two, the majority of the fleet tackled the Round the Island Race. The 30-nautical-mile course around St. Maarten is challenging and tactical with shifty, puffy winds on the long upwind leg across the top of the island. CSA 7 continued its close competition, with the first seven places determined by less than a minute between each place on corrected time. *Spike* and *Liquid* switched places, taking second and third respectively. Meanwhile, the St. Maarten-based Beneteau First 47.7 *Dauntless* and *El Ocaso* did a swap, with *Dauntless* taking first place today and 6th place yesterday while *El Ocaso* did the opposite. *Spike* and *Liquid* ended the day tied for first place overall in class.



TIM WRIGHT / WWW.PHOTOACTION.COM

Liquid *took first place overall in the super-competitive CSA Class 7 and Best Performance Overall.*

On Day Three, *Spike's* spinnaker burst on the fast reaching leg, which caused them to take fifth place and drop down to third place overall. Meanwhile, *Liquid* slid into first place in class by virtue of another third place. Nipping *Liquid* on the podium was *El Ocaso* in second.

On Day Four, CSA 7 saw the battle play out with wind over 30 knots at the start. Taking a third 3rd place in a row enabled *Liquid* to take a class win in the St. Maarten Heineken Regatta for a third time. Second and third places overall were tied on total points, taken by *Spike* and *Dauntless*, with Spike losing the tie-breaker. *El Ocaso* had a sixth place on the day and dropped to fourth overall in class.

Baldwin tells *Compass*, "*Liquid* SWEPT the Heineken — first in class, first overall for the regatta, and I won most inspirational yachtswoman of the year. It was epic!"

She added, as this issue went to press, "Aside from the pandemic cancellations last year, I believe we raced all the major Caribbean regattas for past five years." *Liquid* won the Caribbean Sailing Association's Traveller's Trophy in 2019 and 2020 for effort in traveling to "away" regattas and excellence in Caribbean racing events.

"Next week we head to the BVI Spring Regatta, followed by Les Voiles de St. Barths, and wrap up the season back home in Antigua for Sailing Week."

May the winning continue!

For full results across the fleet, visit www.yachtscoring.com.



LAURENS MOREL / WWW.SALTYCOLOURS.COM

"You just have to keep pushing and never give up."

ARTHUR DANIEL FOR RORC

Inset above: The Liquid *crew accepting the prize for Best Caribbean Boat at the recent RORC Caribbean 600. Baldwin (at center) prides herself on providing a steppingstone for young sailors to professional racing*

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The Azores:
Summering and Wintering!

by Duncan Sweet



DUNCAN SWEET

After many years of helping clients who stop in Horta while crossing the Atlantic from the Caribbean to Europe, a few things are clear.

Some yachts that cross towards Europe in May, June or even July (?!) may be a little behind schedule and are sorry they cannot spend more time exploring all the delights of the nine islands of the Azores. Yet the Azores should be considered a cruising destination in their own right.

If you are so inclined, I would like to propose you break your voyage in Horta, explore this amazing archipelago, and then consider overwintering aboard or leaving your yacht under our care while you get on with life back home. Then, the next spring you are only a week's sail from Lisbon or about 12 days from Gibraltar or Falmouth in the UK. The point is, you can continue cruising the Azores in the spring and also have a jump on the European cruising season just next door.



WWW.VISITAZORES.COM

Top: Horta is a gateway into Europe, with good flight connections from Lisbon and Boston.

Center: The seawall is famous for the artwork left by visiting yachts.

Below: Berths in Horta are in the middle of town and close to all essential services, entertainment and local culture.



WWW.VISITAZORES.COM

There are good facilities to leave a boat ashore here in the Azores. Terceira and the marina at Praia da Vitoria are best suited for this purpose. There is also hard standing in Sao Miguel, Santa Maria, and, to a limited degree, in Horta.

Many cruisers leave their boats in the water in Horta over the winter; there is good overwintering shelter here. Monthly or six-month rates (including water and 220v/50Hz electric) are available. Berths are in the middle of town and close to all essential services, entertainment and local culture. Horta is a gateway into Europe and in a variety of ways will be a change from the Caribbean.

Many Azoreans are connected to farming, agriculture and the stewardship of the land; fishing and a budding tourist trade. The Azores are clean, well kept and very welcoming to visitors. It's also very easy to feel safe here. The summer months provide a great cruising area that remains to be discovered in depth instead of simply used as a stop for food, fuel and water on the way to Europe.

We have good flight connections to Horta from Lisbon as well as frequent service from Boston to Sao Miguel and/or Terceira; all with Azores Airlines (www.azoresairlines.pt/en).

In any case, we look forward to seeing you in Horta and hope you have a safe, swift and uneventful crossing!

Duncan Sweet is the owner of Mid Atlantic Yacht Services (MAYS). MAYS will watch vessels overwintering in Horta and offers support for any work needed on board, no matter the scope or depth: engineering, electric/electronics, maintenance and cosmetics, on deck or aloft. MAYS operates 52 weeks a year. For more information see ad in the Market Place section, pages 36 and 37.

Visit www.noonsite.com/place/azores for current information on clearing into the Azores.



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ULTIMATE UTILA

by JoAnne and Bill Harris



Last year we hauled our big liveaboard trimaran, *Ultra*, on the railway at Abel's Boatyard in Rio Dulce, Guatemala, and spent 45 days making her beautiful again. Then we spent six months having fun at the amazing Nanajuana Marina. On December 21st, we experienced an easy checkout with the Servimar Agency in Livingston, Guatemala, and set sail for the beautiful island of Utila located in the Bay Islands of Honduras, about 110 nautical miles to the east. We had not been there in several years and were excited to return.

Utila is the smallest of the major Bay Islands, after Roatan and Guanaja. The population of a little over 4,000 is of African, Garifuna, English and Dutch descent. The island is 16 square miles (42 sq km) and sits on the edge of the stunning MesoAmerican Reef, second largest to the Great Barrier Reef. The main language is English, but Spanish can also be heard as well as their local island dialect. Legend says that the Welsh pirate Captain Henry Morgan's treasure is buried on the island.

The weather was fine as predicted for the first couple of hours of our passage, but it soon deteriorated and we had several squalls with strong winds and waves on the nose, and heaps of lightning that lasted for the next 20 hours. We are gun shy with lightning, since *Ultra* was struck in the wee hours of the morning while we were onboard in San Blas Islands, Panama, several years ago.

We arrived at Utila in early morning via the easy main harbor entrance and dropped the hook in sand. We were delighted to see our boat friends aboard *Aleshanee* and *SeaBorne* anchored nearby.

After resting up, we headed into town to do our check-in. We left our dinghy at the Bush's Fuel & Supermarket dinghy dock and were quickly greeted by Dennie Bush and his family. They are super-friendly and always welcome cruisers to leave their dinghies at there. After a chat, we walked down the road to the government building to see Immigration and the Port Captain. We arrived to a brilliant surprise: our long-time friend, Port Captain David, whom we had not seen in six months, was there. During the pandemic we had been locked down in French Cay, Roatan, where Port Captain David and his colleagues had been amazingly helpful and friendly to our "quaranteam": ourselves and Paul and Sabina of *S/V Chat-Eau*. We caught up with him and how he and his family were doing. We also enjoyed visiting with the friendly immigration officer, Luz.

After a great visit and check-in, it was time to explore Utila once again. We remembered how charming and beautiful it was on our last visit, and we were delighted to see it still was. With friendly people, gorgeous clear waters teeming with life, several beautiful beaches and forests, no cars, the Utila Chocolate Company, caves, and more, this island has so much beauty and fun to offer. Since supply boats arrive daily with fresh produce and more, the shops are always stocked. We again had a blast exploring by foot, bicycle, golf cart, and underwater.

Underwater Fun

We always had swimming with whale sharks on our bucket list. We knew it could be done in Isla Mujeres, Mexico, but also knew that there it might be with 50 other people. We always prefer smaller groups, especially when there is nature involved so as not to overwhelm the flora and fauna.

Whale sharks aren't whales; they are fish. These gentle giants, who feed on small shrimp, fish and plankton, can grow up to almost 40 feet (12 metres) long and live to be over a hundred years old.

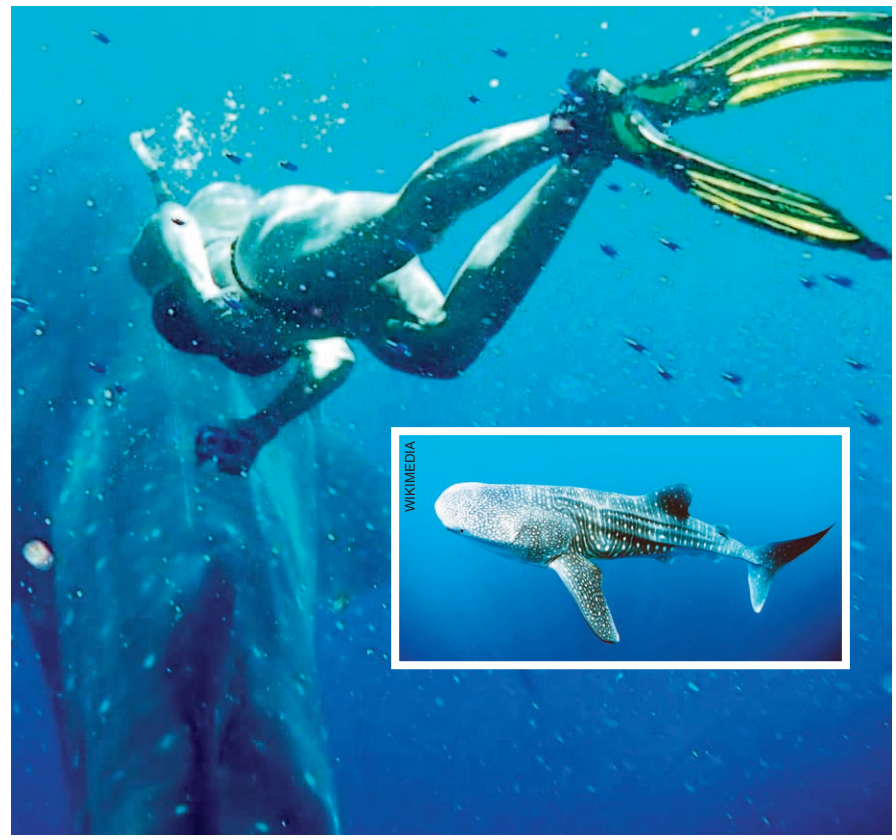
JoAnne contacted Rebecca at Utila Lodge, who then put her in touch with Junior Williams to organize a whale shark adventure. Junior said the weather was perfect for the following day and he was ready for us to join him the next morning. Promptly at 10:00AM on December 30th, 2021, Captain Junior of SunBliss Utila was beside *Ultra* in his *lancha, Sea Ya Later*, to pick us up. Divemaster Evans, a fellow Texan, was there to be our in-the-water guide. While we were looking for whale sharks, we discovered why Junior looked so familiar — he had run for mayor of Utila and there were posters of him all over! We also discovered that Junior is head of the Search and Rescue Operations in the Bay Islands and for ten years he was the Utila Police Chief.

On the north side of the island we began searching for the elusive whale sharks, looking for "boils" of tuna and groups of feeding birds, since there would likely be whale sharks feeding there, too. After an hour or so Junior spotted one. It was near the boat, and we were blessed to be the only ones there. The whale shark glided right up to the side of the boat and it was simply magical. We had looked forward to this moment for years.

We waited for the whale shark to pass and slipped into 2,000-plus feet of water to swim a safe distance around him as not to cause him stress. He just kept swimming and feeding and couldn't have cared less that we were there. After a wondrous time swimming with this whale shark, we got back into the *lancha* to explore more. Then to our surprise, we saw another boil of tuna, several birds feeding, and soon another school bus sized whale shark was beside us. Awesome! After he passed beside the boat, the two of us again slipped into the water to swim with him. It was gorgeous and simply stunning to watch such an enormous creature glide gracefully through the gin-clear water and dive up and down to feed on the fish surrounding us. Spectacular! (If you wish to see more, check our YouTube video at https://youtu.be/GyNmqVWRrmE.)



Clockwise from left:
A welcoming seaside spot to relax.
The authors cooling off in one of the island's freshwater caves.
Swimming with a whale shark.



The scuba diving and snorkeling in general around Utila are spectacular and there are so many sites around the island to explore. The reef is full of life and makes for an excellent underwater experience. If you wish to get Open Water certified, Underwater Vision Dive Center in Utila offers a three-day course with dormitory accommodations. They also offer more advanced courses.

Cruiser Island Fun

We organized a Christmas party for cruisers at Bando Beach's wonderful beach and pavilion — a fun event with ten other boats, complete with a cruisers' potluck, great conversation, and volleyball. In the evening, we all went to the Circle K Street Party hosted by Dennie Bush, Sr., with several cruisers and locals. It was great to all dance together and enjoy celebrating an island-style Christmas complete with ten gigantic booming speakers playing lively music. For New Year's Eve, we attended the Circle K Street Party once again, and it was packed with locals and several of us cruisers.

One day, along with *S/V SeaBorne*, we rented a six-passenger golf cart from Ronee Golf Cart Rental and drove all over the island. We explored and swam in freshwater caves, saw lots of beautiful beaches and did some off-roading. On our way back on Cemetery Road, we got a flat tire and had to be rescued by Ronee, Jr. After repairing the tire, we were on our way to explore some more. Due to the lost time that it took to repair the tire, Ronee, Jr. gave us an extra two hours the following day, so we had time to see the Utila Chocolate Company.

—Continued on next page

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With bicycles, we got great exercise riding from one end of the island to the other. Chepa Beach, the free public beach, has restaurants, but you can also take your own picnic there and spend the day.



The perfect potluck palapa at Bando Beach.

With a dinghy, there is lots of exploring to do back in the mangroves as well as along the coastline to visit the other cays.

We hope you visit Utila and enjoy all it has to offer. It is the ultimate, since it has something for everyone!

We also hope you take the time to visit all of the Bay Islands and enjoy what each has to offer — they are all very different. There is one of the most diverse populations of coral in the Caribbean around them. Located approximately 30 miles from the mainland, the Bay Islands consist of Roatan, Utila, Guanaja, three smaller islands, and nearly 60 tiny islets and cays. Be sure to explore the many anchorages, too. If you have any questions, we are happy to help you.

Bill and JoAnne Harris are the Seven Seas Cruising Association Cruising Hosts and the Ocean Cruising Club Port Officers for Honduras. They are in their 15th year of cruising full time aboard their homebuilt trimaran, Ultra. *They help families in need in the Bay Islands through ULTRA Community Projects and SSCA Clean Wake Projects. You can contact them at bjharrisultra@gmail.com.*

Services & Restaurants in Utila

Bodden Rentals and Mechanic Services: +50499829217
Bush's Dinghy Dock: Supermarket and fuel dock: WhatsApp +50489210045
Ocean Petroleum: Fuel and Propane: WhatsApp +50498674337
Ronnee's Golf Cart Rental: WhatsApp +50488100873
SunBliss Utila Tours: WhatsApp +50433431528
Utila Lodge: WhatsApp +5045081181

The town's not huge. Walk around and find:
ABC Bakery - homemade breads, cookies, cakes, pies, cinnamon rolls and more
Camelia's Bakery - fresh bread, croissants, bagels and more
Che Pancho - Argentinian grill
Captain Willis Bistro
Mango Tango Restaurant
Maria's Café - famous for *baleadas* (tortillas with beans and cheese) and *Pollo Chuco* (Dirty Chicken)
Mermaids Restaurant - café, pizzeria and mini-market
Neptune's Restaurant
Pizza Nut
Rosa's Bakery - bread, *empanadas*, cinnamon rolls
Trudy's Café at Underwater Vision - karaoke night, live music, pizza night, barbecue night, Asian food night, trivia night and more
There are also lots of amazing mini-markets and street foods available, too!



A stop for refreshments included "Life Preserver" beer.



THE SINKING OF S/Y ROZINANTE

by George Turner as told to Matthew Watters

On the afternoon of Tuesday December 28th, 2021, Dr. George Turner was on a single-handed passage from St. Lucia to Antigua in his 38-foot Kady Krogen sailing yacht, Rozinante, *when disaster struck. This is his account of how his ordeal unfolded.*

I sailed from New York harbor in 2010, stopped in St. Lucia for some repairs and got stuck. I landed a job as a professor at a medical school and since have been able to do exactly what I am trained to do, in the Caribbean. I fell in love with St. Lucia, married a Lucian, and am officially a resident. The school moved to Antigua, so *Rozinante* and I became regular commuters between the two islands. The plan was to eventually reside permanently in Rodney Bay, St. Lucia, and settle into the dream on the hook. The plan still exists. The details have changed dramatically.

I departed St. Lucia at noon on Monday December 26th. That night saw me slowly motoring (3.5 knots) up the west coast of Dominica. Twenty-hour trip till now, mostly very enjoyable. On December 27th I arrived Portsmouth, Dominica at 8:00AM. Dropped anchor in nine feet of water. Coffee and food and motor maintenance (add oil, ATF, antifreeze, check bilge, batteries, hoses). Prepared food (pasta, stew) for the remainder of the trip. Secured all lines and dinghy. Called St. Lucia for confirmation of this and next day's wind. Looked good. May have southwest to west today (eight to ten knots) turning east to northeast overnight, 12 to 14 knots. East-northeast 12 to 14 for December 28th, and 17-plus for December 29th, so time to go. One hour rest (noon to 1:00PM) but not real sleep, and then was so keyed up I started prepping to sail.



HONORÉ DAUMIER

Rozinante was the horse of Don Quixote de la Mancha. You are likely familiar with the story of this knight errant riding to misadventures to cure the world's evils (think tilting at windmills). Quixote was a retired scholar who went looney after immersing himself in all available literature about knight errant-hood. Armed with some rusty relics, he is depicted mounted on a swaybacked broken-down nag struggling to carry an ageing and delusional scholar to adventures.

By 2:00PM motored west and set 'Otto' the autopilot to east, and raised the main. First reef and well trimmed. Set lazy jacks and temporary topping lift for east wind and left, heading north. Thought of going on the east side of Guadeloupe to avoid the wind shadow on the west side. Another boat was about 1.5 mile ahead on same tack, so I used visual to set my course. Wind east-northeast at 12 to 15. Set staysail and full jib for close haul. Was making six-plus knots in calm sea. Extremely nice sail and I was hand steering. Looking at the charts I would make the center of the south side of Guadeloupe and have to tack back east along the south side of big island to get between Guadeloupe and Marie-Galante. May require a second tack on the east side Guadeloupe.

GEORGE TURNER



Rozinante, *a Kady Krogen 38 cutter, in Marigot Bay, St. Lucia. She was George Turner's first boat, and he lived aboard for 26 years.*

At about five miles southeast of Les Saintes I decided to abort that plan and head west and crawl up the coast overnight. Tacking would significantly lengthen the trip. Motoring would be slow but it was only 30 miles and by morning I would be in the channel to Antigua. Crossing about 35 miles. I had done this route before so knew what to expect.

Adjusted sails for a broad reach and enjoyed hand steering for the evening. It was clear I would not make it past Les Saintes and reach the southwest corner of Guadeloupe until after dark. At sunset, and level with Les Saintes, I turned over control to Otto and chuckled that I could cherry-pick the nice sailing (by hand) and let my 'crew' do the boring, dirty work. Otto was doing very well this trip. I anchored two-thirds of the way up the Guadeloupe coast that night and got a true sleep from 2:00AM until 9:00AM on December 28th.

As I continued, I was close hauled under reefed main and staysail until I approached the northwest corner of the island. Wind and waves did what they always do around an island on entering a channel: bent on the nose and forced a course adjustment to a more westerly direction than the target direction of north. All the boats coming south were set up for a broad reach, so I was confident that once a few miles off Guadeloupe the wind would be easterly with some north component and I would be able to adjust my aim towards Antigua.

I raised the full jib and was doing five to six knots in a one- to two-metre swell and chop. *Rozinante* was taking it on the forward starboard quarter, so I was fairly comfortable. There was a big sailboat two or three miles ahead on same course and I could see them continually adjust to a more northerly heading, so I knew the wind in front of me was likely more easterly than not. Indeed, within three miles I was pinching the course away from Montserrat and more towards Antigua.

For most of this trip the weather was so clear that when I left St. Lucia I could see Martinique to the north (and maybe a hint of Dominica) and the Pitons and St. Vincent to the south. Nice to see your destination. The day was squally with plenty of clouds, so I could see Montserrat from Guadeloupe, but not Antigua yet.

Antigua is nearly due north of Guadeloupe. By 11:00AM I left the Guadeloupe coast and was a bit more west than I wanted, but easily clearing Montserrat. Course was about 350 degrees, just short of north. Over the next two hours I was able to correct to 015 degrees.

I looked for my lead boat and saw him round up (a bit worrying), and then disappear into a squall. Indeed, everything north of me was a boiling grey front and coming right at me. I took the wheel from Otto and got hit head on. Had to fall off in the front and then hang on for some serious wind and waves. When under control, I was able to use the wind to ultimately head 020 degrees, moving at over seven knots (maybe eight on occasion). It was bouncy and at peak wind *Rozinante* was heeled way over, with the bow underwater. Maybe I should have tried to reduce the headsail earlier... too late now. After half an hour the wind lay back down and the clouds became scattered with sun.

⟶

I got my first look at Antigua and was headed right at it. Good feeling there. Once I was sure we were stable (although the sea state was now bigger and sloppy) I gave control back to Otto and trimmed the sails. About half an hour later I estimated I was 20 to 25 miles from Antigua, which would put me there any time from 6:00 to 8:00PM — about four or five more hours to go.

It would be dark but I had done this before and I would head for a big bay behind Five Mile Island, near Jolly Harbour (my destination), and anchor in about ten feet of water. This course was still on my chart plotter from my last transit. I planned to sleep overnight and check in with Customs in the morning.

A good plan. But as my Scottish grandparent's favorite poet, Robert Burns, stated in the poem 'To a Mouse':

The best laid schemes o' Mice an' Men
Gang aft agley.

My plan was about to go very wrong…

Rozinante and I were bouncing along at five and a half to six knots. The sea state was slowing us down but was fairly comfortable. Otto was in charge and I was standing on the starboard lazarette, balancing myself with a hand on the dodger. I was looking over the starboard bow to Antigua.

Suddenly a huge *bang!* and I was on the cockpit floor. The bow of the boat had moved off course to the west and I had a knot on the back of my head. No blood. Otto had lost course and sails were overpowered a bit. I took the wheel, put us on course, reactivated Otto, and checked the sail trim. Still getting my bearings, I heard a door banging below. I figured a latch had come undone and I opened companionway hatch.

Six inches of water were over the floorboards, above my ankles throughout the boat.

I put all bilge pumps to manual. Hailed VHF channel 16: 'Boat in distress and taking on water.'

I got an immediate reply asking for coordinates. Went to the GPS in the cockpit to find the power off. The 12-volt system with a standard male plug into a cigarette lighter-like holder had been problematic to get power connection for years. I fiddled with it for minutes, but no luck.

I went back below to find water up to my calves, stowage loose and floating all over. I could not inspect the V-berth for all the bottom paint and barrier coat provisions stowed in front of the lockers there.

Back on VHF with now a 'MAYDAY: Boat taking on lots of water.' I was asked again for coordinates and informed the caller that my GPS was out of service, but that by dead reckoning I was on a line between Antigua and Guadeloupe and was about level with the halfway point on Montserrat. I knew the engine would be underwater soon and the batteries likely already were.

I said, 'This boat is going to sink and I am going to launch the dinghy.' On my way back on deck I grabbed a bag with two passports, two vaccination cards and my wallet. I threw these into the dinghy and started to release lines. *Rozinante's* port side railing was very close to the water and not just from heeling due to full sails.

Releasing the dinghy while underway was not trivial, as when making a passage I secure the dinghy, a new inflatable, with six lines that pin it to the arch and davits to prevent it from moving. Releasing the first davit line started it violently swinging. The motion was so violent that I thought the dinghy would turn upside down before I got it in the water. That would not be good. I released other lines tied to dinghy's stern and it was now bouncing on the water. The yacht was very low in the water now, which was a help.

I released two other lines, leaving the bow line attached. *Rozinante* was so low in the water by that time that the dinghy's swinging had calmed down due to being in contact with the sea. I grabbed onto the arch and swung into the dinghy with not too much difficulty. Kind of a critical manoeuvre. However, there was one more line I could not release. I had to crawl up and stand on the dinghy's bow, holding onto the arch to see the problem, as I could not release it blind. A bimini line was trapping the last dinghy line. Got it loose and the dinghy (with me inside) and *Rozinante* separated.

It was a terrible feeling watching *Rozinante* sail away from me. I watched her sail away with full, well-trimmed sails. Heading straight toward Antigua. Had I made a huge mistake? Never leave your boat… My eyes were glued. The only thing wrong was that she was very low in the water. She was about a hundred yards away when she rounded up and put her bow in the water.

I watched her bow and deck disappear, the cockpit, and finally the arch and solar panel. I will never forget those images. Within four minutes of me getting in the dinghy she was gone. If the dinghy were still secured to the davits it would have gone under too. Those four minutes could have been lost anywhere.

I was pumped with adrenaline and numb with emotion. The dinghy was bobbing like a cork and taking on water alternately over the bow or side. I felt like I would get sick but convinced myself that any nutrients still in my stomach need to stay there. There was no food, and no water to wash the bile out of my mouth if I did vomit.

I looked down in the stern of the dinghy and realized the drain plug was on the yacht. I took off my shirt to stop (more like slow) the sea coming in. Now it was time to consider this nine-and-a-half-foot bobbing bathtub.

When I cast off from St. Lucia two of my dock lines went into the dinghy, in case I should need to tie up somewhere. They were stowed, securely coiled and one had a huge rubber snubber and big stainless eye. My dinghy painter (bow line) is always oversized, maybe half an inch diameter and 30 feet long. I tied the two dock lines onto the painter and lowered them over the bow. This had the effect I wanted and became a sea anchor of sorts. It brought the bow into the waves and wind, which really helped the ride. Only the most cantankerous of breaking waves sent spray my way. The lines may also have slowed down my drift, but likely not by much. The ride was so much better that I could sit on a side tube and scan the sea. On top of the biggest waves I could occasionally see something red floating about 50 yards away. After a couple of sightings I realized was a life vest that must have escaped from a cockpit lazarette. Very visible.

The other, smaller-diameter lines that secured the dinghy to the arch were also with the dinghy. There were two oars in the dinghy, useless for rowing. I tied them (in the middle) to one of the securing lines and attached that to the painter also. They floated perpendicular to the boat and may have added to the sea anchor.

Now the plug. The dinghy had a forward compartment and I remembered I had half a capped bleach bottle there to use as a water bailer. Maybe the cap would fit the drain hole. When I opened the compartment I saw a bottle of liquid body soap that I had stoppered with a wine-bottle cork. Wrapped in my shirt it was a perfect fit. There was also a life preserver and a gas tank. I put the preserver on but it was so warm I took it off again and attached it to a handrail on the dinghy. I grabbed a huge yellow sponge and dried out the water in dinghy's bottom. My shorts were wet but I could now sit in a dry dinghy and not get wetter. It was about 3:00PM or so, and the thought of a cold wet night was not a comfort.

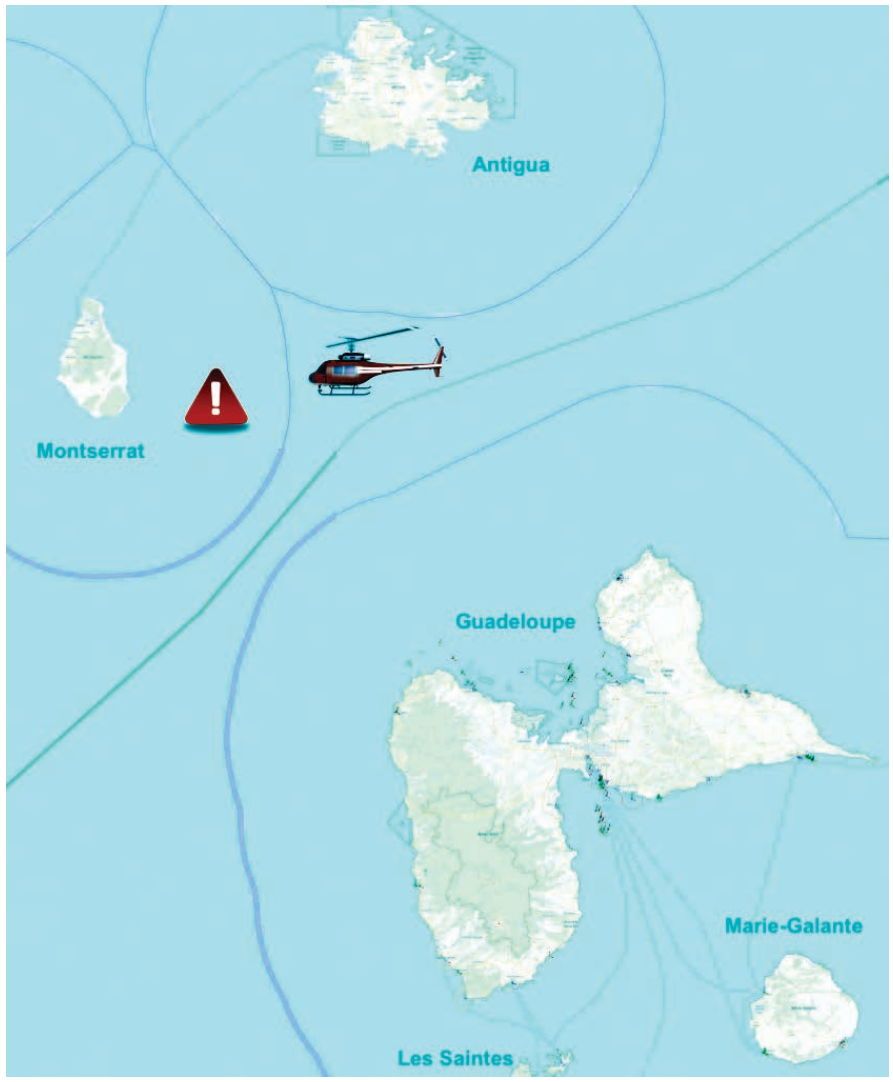
When I opened the compartment hatch the smell of gasoline was overwhelming and threatened to make me sick again. I was still bobbing like a cork. The gas tank was red — I recalled the red life preserver I had seen. The tank would also float, and I had no engine so no need for fuel. Under the tank was another line, very long and a quarter-inch in diameter. I poured the gas out of the tank, closed the fill, tied the line to the tank and over the bow it went. I now had a red marker floating 50 yards off the bow and figured it would increase my visible footprint.

Now for me. I was continually surveying the water and sky for help; I had seen three boats earlier in the day off Guadeloupe. The French Coast Guard had some idea of my location. To the south of me was another huge squall but thankfully it was blowing southwestward and away. If I got under one of those I would be invisible. The north and east were clear (for now). However, I was already a bit chilly. There were maybe two or three hours of light left. If I did not get help within that time, the search will be much more problematic the next day. I actually looked up and said, 'Keisha I may be joining you soon.' In an attempt to retain some body heat I decided to remove the chaps (canvas cover on the dinghy to protect from UV) to use as a wrap. The canvas was dark grey and when removed revealed a pristine white new dinghy. Removing the chaps had also dramatically improved my visibility. I figured out how to wear my new clothes and start my watch in earnest.

There was nothing else to do but wait. I spent some time sitting on a side tube looking at the horizon and eventually gave up and sat in a ball in the middle of the dinghy, tucked my head and occasionally monitored the horizon and sky. I hunkered down for a good bit and when I next lifted my eyes to the sky I spotted a speck.

The speck was real and moving east to west, directly to the middle of Montserrat. It was a helicopter and a long way off. It was following the exact course I hoped they would take from my dead reckoning position relayed earlier. They split the distance between Antigua and Guadeloupe in half and headed right for Montserrat. I had been drifting south and west and was near the south coast of Montserrat by then. I probably had ten miles to drift before I was out in the open Caribbean Sea. I grabbed the life preserver and swung it over my head.

The helicopter turned slowly south, eventually straight at me and started to descend. They had seen me and I was safe. I stayed in my ball and watched them approach and gave them a thumbs up as they passed overhead. They circled twice and I was hoping a boat was on the way to grab me and the dinghy. No.



'I had been drifting south and west and was near the south coast of Montserrat by then. I probably had ten miles to drift before I was out in the open Caribbean Sea.'

We have all seen this manoeuvre in some action film. They circled a third time and I saw a person standing outside the helicopter. As the chopper came to about a hundred yards from my stern, the person was lowered on a cable to the water. About 20 feet over the water he pointed at me and made a diving sign. When he hit the water and surfaced he repeated the signal. I grabbed my bag and went for a swim in the Atlantic. Been done before but not quite like this. He approached me, wrapped a belt around my waist, attached the cable and we signaled 'thumbs up.' As we approached the helicopter he pulled my head to his chest until I had my feet on a rail and someone attached a cable to the belt and hauled me in.

I sat on the edge of the chopper and started to tear up. I said 'merci' very quietly. It was the French Coast Guard's Guadeloupe Sea Rescue team. They got me into a canvas seat, still cabled in, and in broken English and French we established that I was not hurt and 'okay.' They gave me a bottle to drink, something that reminded me of Milk of Magnesia flavor (a memory blast from childhood). They insisted I drink it all, maybe to make sure my stomach was settled. I had never ridden in a helicopter before but cannot say much about it; I was not very interested in scenery.

My dinghy was now gone. I left the water after 26 years on *Rozinante,* well over a third of my life, with a pair of shorts, two passports, two vaccination cards and my wallet. Everything else is gone. I am safe and devastated and thankful. *Rozinante*, my companion… what to say? I am pretty raw at this time and not sure I want to go over this story again and again just now. I wrote this to get it down. In time we can share thoughts. For now I am alive and safe.

After a check-up at hospital and brief stay in Guadeloupe overnight, Dr. Turner was put on a flight to Antigua the next day, where he is slowly readjusting to life without his beloved Rozinante. *He can be contacted at turnerge@me.com.*

YACHTING HISTORY IN THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN

Part Three: The Dawn of the USVI Charter Trade

by Don Street

The folks who ran charter boats in the USVI in the 1950s and '60s were a different sort than those who do so today.

In the late 1940s, a Bahamian sailor and adventurer named Basil Symonette wandered down through the Bahamas and Puerto Rico in his 43-foot William Hand-designed gaff schooner, *Sea Saga*, and ended up in St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands. After chartering *Sea Saga* for a couple of years, he sold her and took over the running of the fledgling Yacht Haven marina in the early 1950s.

Yacht Haven

Yacht Haven marina — which through the years, by purchase, development, knocking apart and redeveloping a couple of times, developed into what is now the deluxe IGY Yacht Haven Grande — came about after the end of World War II. The West Indian Company, which had been formed in 1912 as a coal-bunkering operation supporting vessels that would travel through the Panama Canal, owned all the land north of its commercial dock in St. Thomas Harbor. In 1952 the company discontinued coal bunkering.

The company had a large barge that had reached the end of its life, which they sank about 100 yards north of the commercial dock. They built a wooden pier out to the barge. On top of the barge they constructed a dock containing an office and about a dozen storage lockers. They installed lines for petrol and diesel running from tanks ashore to pumps on the dock. They also ran a water line to the dock.

Ashore they built a small building to house a marine store, another building for a small bar and restaurant, plus a small building with a couple of toilets and showers.

Yachts had started trickling in from the East Cast of the States. West Coast boats cruised the Pacific coast of Central America, working their way south to the Panama Canal. To rebuild their cruising kitties, they often managed to find work with the corporation that ran the Panama Canal. Many became tired of Panama, slowly worked their way eastwards and ended up in St. Thomas.

All boats arriving were short of cash. The skippers discovered that they could make money chartering their boats, either by the day or for one- or two-week charters.

The day charter business

That is how two of the most successful early day charter boats — Pat and Leo Minor's *Tropic Bird* and Jack and Ruth Carstarphen's *Shellback* — arrived in St. Thomas. Both couples were founding members of the Seven Seas Cruising Association (SSCA). Their boats were almost sister ships, both 36-foot Block Island ketches with pinky sterns, making them 40 feet long overall with good deck space. One year, the Christmas winds came in with a vengeance and *Shellback* blew out her main. Obtaining a new mainsail in the '50s in the Virgin Islands was a four- to five-month project. But *Tropic Bird* had a spare mizzen, which she lent to *Shellback*. It was only slightly smaller than *Shellback's* reefed main, and the wind blew so hard all winter that it worked perfectly.

For drumming up day charters, it was a case of the skippers visiting the hotels, meeting guests and letting them know that they could have a nice day sail to a beach on St. John with lunch, beer and drinks thrown in — all for just ten dollars per person. This was possible because if the skipper brought an empty gallon jug to Reese's liquor store he could fill it up with St. Croix rum for 75 cents, and a case of 24 cans of Schaefer beer cost less than two dollars.

The VI Hilton had been built in 1950 on a hill overlooking St. Thomas. It was a large hotel built with the expectation that gambling would be allowed in St. Thomas, which never happened — quite. Entertainment at a small bar was provided by the calypsonian The Duke of Iron, famous for his version of the ribald classic "The Big Bamboo." People could not figure out how the owner could pay such a famous star on its proceeds. What they did not realize was that in a back room there was a nightly high-stakes poker game, and when his show was over The Duke of Iron would join it. The hotel owner was an excellent poker player and would relieve The Duke of the majority of his earnings, leaving him enough to get by on until the next night.

Among the hotel guests were many women who had come from the US mainland to obtain divorces in the St. Thomas court. It was a federal court, so their divorces could not be contested in any state court. However, they had to establish St. Thomas residency, which took six weeks. That, plus organizing a lawyer, scheduling a hearing, etcetera, often took months, so the women got bored and restless, presenting a great potential charter clientele.

Two good-looking young sailors, Rudy Thompson and Eric Winters, obtained the use of *Tropic Bird* when Pat and Leo Minor landed a job running a big powerboat.



ALL IMAGES COURTESY OF STEVE CRYTSER

Above; In 1955, raising a cannon from the harbor seabed at the old West Indian Company dock as crew of a yacht looks on. Note the sailboat hauled out on the dock behind the crane.

Below: A sail-training ship, possibly the Danmark, visiting St. Thomas Harbor. The hills behind Charlotte Amalie were remarkably undeveloped in the '50s and '60s.



In the early '50s steel bands were just arriving in the USVI, but bongo drums were still popular. Rudy and Eric would go to the VI Hilton, one would play the bongos and, as a crowd assembled, the other would do the sales pitch for a day sail. Lining up clients wasn't a problem.

As they sailed out of the harbor, once clear the harbor mouth, Rudy and Eric would shed their clothes and announce, "Everyone sails naked in the Caribbean!" often with the hoped-for results. Sometimes, sailing to windward with the boat well heeled over, one of them would take the spinnaker halyard, stand up on the bow pulpit, swing out over the water and land on the stern. Very spectacular, and the ladies enjoyed the show, but as Eric said, "Once in a while instead of landing on the deck you'd end up being wrapped around the mizzen rigging, which was very painful." They had one good season but then Pat and Leo's job on the motorboat ended, and Rudy and Eric eventually acquired wives, gave up chartering, and ended up working ashore.

The term charter business

Some boats started taking charters of one week, ten days, or occasionally two weeks. These charters were usually limited to the waters around St. Thomas and St. John. A two-week charter might sail south to St. Croix and back.

Most charters didn't venture farther east than The Baths on Virgin Gorda, as the standard chart was the US coast and geodetic survey 905, which covered only the area from the west end of St. Thomas to the west coast of Virgin Gorda and south to and including St. Croix. (See sidebar.)

Other than my *Iolaire*, none of the St. Thomas charter boat fleet was willing to fight across the Anegada Passage to St. Martin, St. Barth's and on to Antigua. In 1962 I deadheaded directly south to Grenada to pick up a three-week charter, sailing back north through the islands to St. Thomas.

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This convinced me that this was the best way to see all the islands in the Eastern Caribbean chain (see the December 2021 and January 2022 issues of *Compass* in the Back Issues Archive at www.caribbeancompass.com). Later, Ross Norgove with *White Squall II*, and Jim Squier with *Te Hongi* followed my lead, picked up charters in Grenada, then headed north through the islands.

The St. Thomas charter fleet was different from Nicholson's Antigua fleet, as the majority of boats were 50 feet or under. With very few exceptions they were owner operated until the late 1970s, when wealthy owners in the States would send down bigger boats with hired skippers. These boats were very much resented by the owner-operated boats. The owner-operated boats had to be self-supporting, but if the skippered boats lost money chartering the owner just deducted the loss from his income tax.

Some of the boats, though good sailors, were a bit long in the tooth. Some were schooners built in Maine or Nova Scotia in the 1930s, during the Depression, and iron fastened. *Gitana*, a 46-foot Nova Scotia schooner, was skippered by Hardy Wright — an unfortunate name as, although he was an excellent sailor, he was often referred to as "hardly right" or "hardly ever right." One day while washing dishes he inadvertently dumped some of the cutlery over the side with the wash water. When he dove to pick it up he decided to check *Gitana's* bottom to see whether it needed scrubbing before the Memorial Day weekend races from St. Thomas to St. Croix and return. He discovered to his horror that the iron ballast keel was about two inches below the wooden structural keel. Obviously the keel bolts were broken. He took three dock lines, looped them under the boat, tied the ends together and, using a Spanish windlass, tightened them up bar tight. He then sailed carefully to Beef Island. When *Gitana* was hauled she settled down on her keel so nicely that you never would've known that old keel bolts were broken.

Augie and Lynn Hollen chartered their 45-foot Maine-built Casey schooner. Early one season the engine died. They did not tell the charter brokers and continued to accept charters. Charter parties would arrive, be greeted, shown around the boat and gear stowed. When the time came to leave the dock and the engine wouldn't start, Augie would dive into the engine room and spend about half an hour. He then would emerge and say, "I can't figure out what's wrong, but we can get underway under sail. Once we are anchored this evening I will attack the engine and get it going."

They would sail off the dock and have a nice day sailing. Once anchored, awning rigged and charter party happily having sundowners in the cockpit, Augie would "work away" on the engine while Lynn cooked dinner and entertained the guests. Augie would "give up" by dinnertime, apologize for the nonworking engine, and say, "Oh, well. The boat sails so well we really don't need the engine." Lynn was a very beautiful gal with long red hair, a good sailor and a good cook. Augie, too, was an excellent sailor and a raconteur. They never had an unhappy charter, and never told the charter brokers that the engine didn't work.

Lynn went on to become a very successful charter broker. Augie settled in Coral Bay, St. John, built a 40-foot cowhorn schooner with a lug foresail that overlapped the mainsail. This sail had to be trimmed like a genoa on each tack. He persuaded several more sailors to build cowhorn schooners at Coral Bay, too.

A last *Sea Saga* story

Rudy Thompson, when he first arrived in St. Thomas and before his day charter days, took over skippering *Sea Saga* for Basil Symonette. Just before Carnival started one year Rudy booked a rather crazy charter. A couple had purchased a small guesthouse in Dominica, and wanted transportation for themselves, their grand piano and a big German Shepherd. As previously mentioned, St. Thomas charter boats seldom went east of Virgin Gorda, and *Sea Saga*, a gaff-rigged schooner, was not very good going to windward. But the only way to get the grand piano and the German Shepherd to Dominica was to charter a boat. Rudy was the only skipper willing to take on the charter, so he was able to negotiate a high charter fee, payable in cash before departure.

They took the legs off the piano, covered it with canvas and strapped it down on the cabin top. Rudy collected the cash, gave money to his crew and told him to stock the boat for the trip, and went off to enjoy Carnival.

Enjoy he did, never going to bed and arriving on *Sea Saga* at about 0700. They got underway, and once out of St. Thomas Harbor, Rudy brought *Sea Saga* hard on the wind and turned the helm over to the crew and charter party, who were moderately good sailors. He told them to just sail as close to the wind as possible and still keep the boat moving, and went below to sleep.

It had been a hell of a Carnival and Rudy slept for about 18 hours. He was woken up by the German Shepherd licking his face. He was pleased to discover that a norther had come in about the time they left St. Thomas. He saw St. Kitts to starboard, just a little forward of the beam and about ten miles to leeward. He eased sheets and headed directly for Dominica. They arrived in Dominica four days after leaving St. Thomas. He had booked the charter on the basis that it would take him ten days to island-hop to Dominica, and was a very happy skipper.

Meanwhile, Basil Symonette, who (according to a biography at www.wikitree.com/wiki/Symonette-24) had been popular among a fun-loving gay crowd in Miami after WWII, met a handsome man from Chicago while standing in line at the St. Thomas airport. The couple fell deeply in love and became life partners. Together they eventually built a beach bar and five-cottage resort on Virgin Gorda that expanded into the now-famous Bitter End Yacht Club.

Visit Don Street's website at www.street-iolaire.com for more stories and other information.

Eastern Caribbean Charts from the Fifties to Now

It was practically impossible to buy paper charts in the Eastern Caribbean in the 1950s, and of course electronic charts were unheard of. There were just the bare beginnings of yacht chandleries in St. Thomas and Antigua, and neither kept charts in stock.

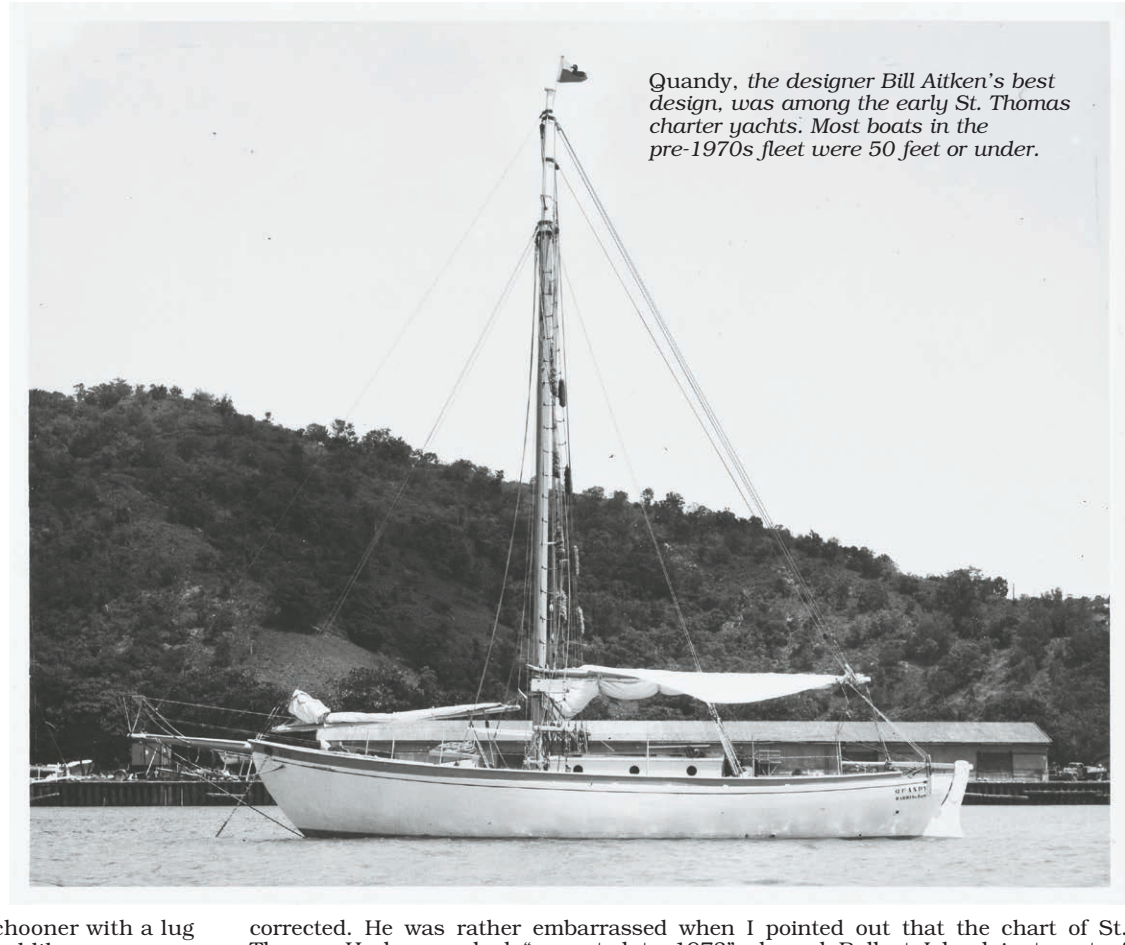
Chart 905 was available in St. Thomas, but to obtain other charts you had to send away to New York Nautical for US charts, or Kelvin Hughes or the British Admiralty for British Admiralty charts, and ask the price of the charts and also the cost of having them airmailed to you. A bank draft had then to be purchased and sent before the charts would be shipped. Airmail was not particularly fast, so from the time the first letter was sent to when the charts were actually in your hands was a month to six weeks, sometimes longer, or sometimes never when they got lost in the mail.

The US Virgin Islands were very well charted by the US Coast and Geodetic Survey in the 1920s and '30s after the territory was purchased from Denmark. The British Virgins were covered by a British chart based on surveys done in the 1850s, but never updated or corrected. The US DMA equivalent of the BVI chart was an exact copy of the British chart.

Using US charts to cover the island chain from St. Thomas to Grenada required 39 charts. All the charts from the BVI to Grenada were copies of the British Admiralty charts. The British Admiralty had corrected the charts of the major harbors but other than that they were completely uncorrected.

In 1975 I was on the British survey ship *Fox*, which was re-surveying parts of the Eastern Caribbean. The navigating officer was not particularly pleased when I went through his charts and pointed out errors that I had found that had not been corrected. He was rather embarrassed when I pointed out that the chart of St. Thomas Harbor marked "corrected to 1973" showed Ballast Island just east of Frenchtown. I pointed out that Ballast Island had been dredged out by the US Navy in about 1920, right after we purchased the Virgin Islands from the Danes!

In 1979 I signed a memorandum of agreement with the late Tom Wilson, head of the chartmakers Imray, to do yachting charts of the Eastern Caribbean. The charts were to correct all the errors I had found in the British Admiralty and US charts covering the area from St. Thomas to Grenada. The area from St. Thomas to Grenada is now covered by 20 up-to-date, accurate Imray Iolaire charts. They are so highly regarded that Navionics, C Map and many other electronic chart companies pay Imray a royalty to use the information from the Imray Iolaire charts.



Quandy, *the designer Bill Aitken's best design, was among the early St. Thomas charter yachts. Most boats in the pre-1970s fleet were 50 feet or under.*

ALL IMAGES COURTESY OF STEVE CRYTSER



Iolaire *in 1959. At the time, other charter yachts based in St. Thomas were reluctant to sail beyond the US Virgins.*



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CARRIACOU'S CHAPEAU CARRE

by Chris Doyle

If you look around you while anchored in Tyrrel Bay, Carriacou, you will see the very pretty hill line to the north above the mangroves, now broken by a big new Italian house perched on top. Look to the east and you will see Chapeau Carre, the tallest hill visible from the Tyrrel Bay. Standing 290 metres above sea level, it is second highest hill on Carriacou. (The highest hill — High North — is only a metre higher, so if you really want to feel you have been as high as you can get on Carriacou, carry a small step ladder with you or see the Sailor's Hike in last month's *Compass*.)

Hiking Chapeau Carre is a lovely walk, but it can be hot, so early morning is best both for coolness and for the light for the view over Tyrrel Bay.



CHRIS DOYLE (2)

Above: At the top you get a panoramic view of Tyrrel Bay and beyond.

Below: Walk up through the field, making friends with any cows in the path.



It takes about two to three hours round trip from the Tyrrel Bay Marina dock. There is an unmarked path of sorts, which is steep towards the top. It can be slippery on mud when wet and on leaves when dry.

From the Tyrrel Bay Marina dock, walk to the road at the main south exit, turn left, then take the next right down a good straight road with several houses on either side. Take the first left-hand turn. This road bends around and climbs slowly into the hills. It starts off paved and turns to dirt. For the most part you have a view on your left and a hill on your right. The road follows upwards around this hill.

Continue till you come to a small junction straight ahead where the dirt road divides in two. If you stand at this junction and look at the left-hand road, you will see a gap in the hedge into a field almost opposite where you are standing. (Longhand version: turn left at the junction, walk a couple of feet and turn right through the gap in the hedge.)

Enter into the field and now the adventure begins. Walk up through the field, making friends with any cows in the path, until you see a small trail on your left that goes into a dense thicket with a small pond (usually dry). It is not far along the trail so you will quickly find it if you have the right trail. In the shade it is cool. Walk round the west side of the pond and follow the trail going uphill. You will come into a field where you head uphill and bear left when there is a gap in the bush. This will bring you to a ridge.

A fairly well marked trail on this ridge leads to the east. You follow this a short way till you come to a somewhat open area which is a little north of the ridge line. Here you need to turn right and head uphill till you find yourself on the proper ridge path above. Turn left on the trail and follow this ridge all the way to the top of the hill. There is no trail crew; you may have to scramble or find your way round fallen trees.

The path is mainly in the woods, which gives shade, except for one clearing where you begin to get a good view.

You emerge out of the trees at the very top of the hill. The view of Tyrrel Bay is outstanding. The whole bay is laid out before you in miniature like a brightly colored children's book painting. You also get great views of Sandy Island, Union, Hillsborough, over the southern islands to Grenada, and to the east.

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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

APRIL - MAY 2022

Crossing the channels between Caribbean islands with a favorable tide will make your passage faster and more comfortable. The table below, courtesy Don Street, author of Street's Guides and compiler of Imray-Iolaire charts, which shows the time of the meridian passage (or zenith) of the moon for this AND next month, will help you calculate the tides.

Water, Don explains, generally tries to run toward the moon. The tide starts running to the east soon after moonrise, continues to run east until about an hour after the moon reaches its zenith (see TIME below) and then runs 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; i.e. the tide floods from west to east. Times given are local.

Note: the maximum tide is 3 or 4 days after the new and full moons.

For more information, see "Tides and Currents" on the back of all Imray Iolaire charts. Fair tides!

April					
DATE	TIME	21	0404	11	2028
1	1220	22	0507	12	2114
2	1304	23	0608	13	2201
3	1348	24	0705	14	2251
4	1434	25	0758	15	2346
5	1521	26	0846	16	2445
6	1609	27	0942	17	0045 FULL MOON
7	1659	28	1016	18	0149
8	1750	29	1059	19	0254
9	1841	30	1143	20	0359
10	1931	**May**		21	0459
11	2019	1	1228	22	0554
12	2106	2	1314	23	0605
13	2152	3	1402	24	0741
14	2238	4	1452	25	0816
15	2325	5	1543	26	0858
16	2414	6	1633	27	0941
17	0014 FULL MOON	7	1723	28	1025
18	0106	8	1811	29	1110
19	0201	9	1858	30	1157
20	0301	10	1943	31	1247

The Sky from Mid-April to Mid-May

BY JIM ULIK

Spock: Fascinating. This atmosphere is remarkably similar to your twentieth century. Moderately industrialized pollution, containing substantial amounts of carbon monoxide, and partially consumed hydrocarbons.
Dr. McCoy: The word was smog.
— Star Trek, Bread and Circuses (1968)

Are we alone in the universe? One way to check for life is to analyze the atmospheres of almost 5,000 exoplanets discovered to date. Do atmospheres of the exoplanets (planets that orbit stars outside the solar system) contain oxygen, methane or water? Are there signs of pollutants similar to those generated on Earth? The study of those atmospheres can help us to further understand the future of Earth's atmosphere.

The total lunar eclipse in January 2019 provided an opportunity to demonstrate the process of analyzing atmosphere during Earth's transit across the Sun. The instrument used was the NASA/ESA Hubble telescope. The Hubble is too sensitive to face the Earth's atmosphere directly while the Earth is backlit by the Sun. The composition of the gasses encompassing Earth was ascertained through spectrum readings. Hubble recorded data from the reflected light off the lunar surface during the eclipse. Watch for the lunar eclipse on May 15th.

Saturday, April 16th

Five planets line up in the eastern sky before sunrise. Saturn, Mars, Venus, Neptune and Jupiter can be found riding along the Sun's ecliptic. Saturn is the first planet to rise, before 0300 hours. Jupiter will follow, rising in another hour. There is also a conjunction between Jupiter and Neptune. Jupiter, named after the Roman king of gods, will dominate the sky near the Roman god of the sea, Neptune.

Looking west this morning around 0500 the Moon is approaching its full phase. The Full Moon will appear as the Sun sets this evening just in time for any party celebrating this monthly event. Left or south of the Moon is Spica, the 16th brightest star in the night sky. Actually Spica is at least a two-star system. However, there could be at least four making up that bright blue point of light in the constellation Virgo.

Friday, April 22nd

The last time comet C/1861 G1 Thatcher crossed Earth's orbit was May 11th and 12th, 1861. With an orbital period of about 416 years it won't pass near Earth again until about 2276, plus or minus five years. Earth's annual pass through this debris field occurs every April 16th through 25th. The peak shower event tonight occurs after 2300. The number of meteors radiating out of the northeast sky could total 90 per hour. Shooting stars will radiate out of the constellation Hercules near the star Vega.

Saturday, April 23rd

This morning the Moon will join the lineup of five planets in the eastern sky. The only change over the last eight days has Neptune halfway between Jupiter and Venus. The Moon reaches third quarter this afternoon.

Sunday, April 24th

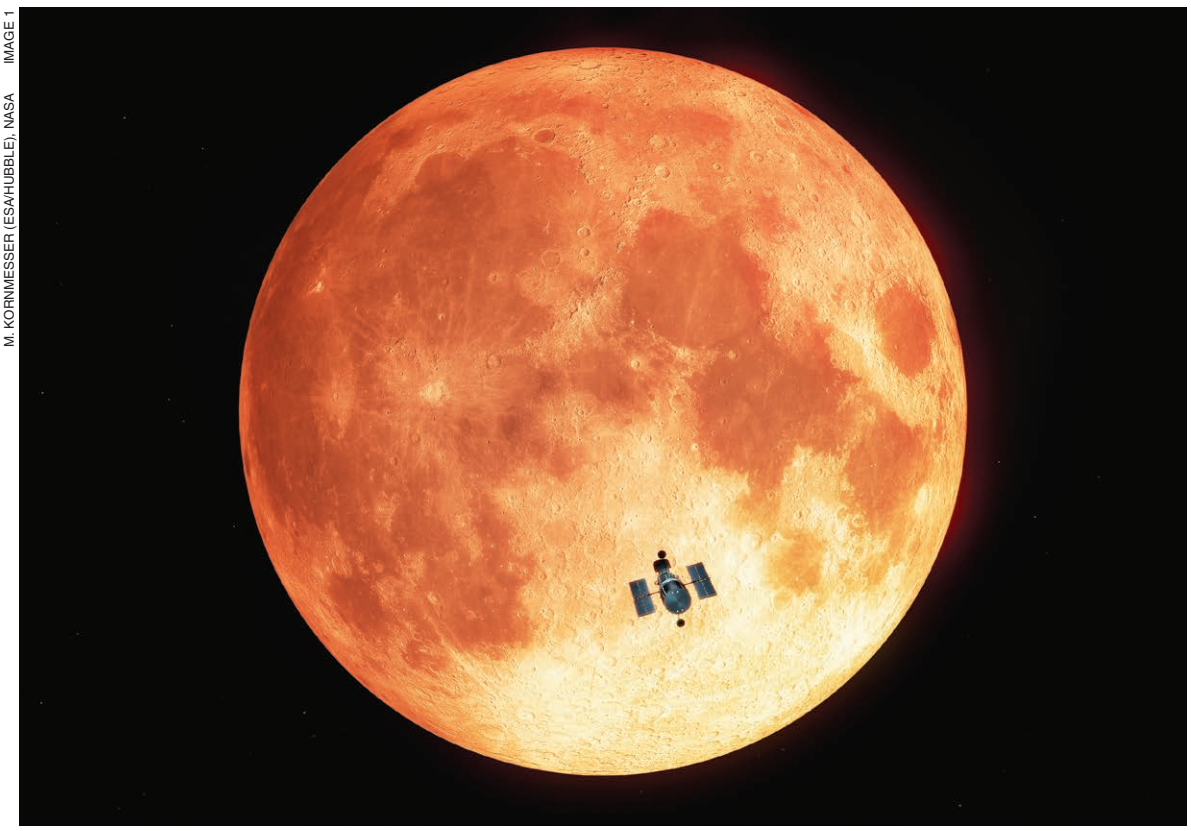
Keep an eye out in the southern sky after sunset. The pi Puppid meteor shower peaks tonight. This shower can produce up to 40 meteors per hour, but only a limited number may be visible above 10 degrees north.

In the western sky at dusk Mercury can be seen below the Seven Sisters. Somewhat higher is the double star Aldebaran. If you have a clear view of the horizon and a pair of binoculars you might be able to spot comet C/2021 O3 after it made its closest approach to the Sun. In five days C/2021 O3 will intersect Mercury's orbit. Mercury will reach that point on May 6th.

Sunday, April 24th through Wednesday, April 27th

Over the next five days the Moon will gradually shift towards the east. The Moon makes a close approach to Saturn on April 24th. On April 25th it will split the difference between Saturn and Mars. One day later the Moon will be between Mars and Venus. A lunar triad will occur on April 27th. The Moon will be in close proximity to Venus and Jupiter. Of course this all is visible in the eastern sky before dawn.

M. KORNMESSER (ESA/HUBBLE), NASA IMAGE 1



Hubble telescope reading the composition of Earth's atmosphere during a lunar eclipse.

Thursday, April 28th

The alpha Scorpiids meteor shower peaks tonight. Meteors will radiate out of the sky near Antares in the constellation Scorpius. While Antares rises after 2000 the best time to look for shooting stars is after 2200 when the star is high above the horizon. This shower is active April 20th through May 19th.

—Continued on next page

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—*Continued from previous page*

Friday, April 29th

Mercury reaches its greatest eastern elongation or separation from the Sun. This is the best time to view Mercury since it will be at its highest point above the horizon in the evening sky. The bright star above or east-southeast of Mercury is Aldebaran. Halfway between these two objects asteroid 2017 UK52 passes close to Earth. This is the closest approach of a known asteroid this period.

Saturday, April 30th

The bright object in the east this morning before dawn is the union of Jupiter and Venus. The two planets will remain very close through May 1st. In the following days, Jupiter will gradually rise higher in the sky while Venus shifts its position towards the north.

The partial solar eclipse that takes place today cannot be seen in the Caribbean. It will only be visible from South America south of Bolivia into Antarctica.

Monday, May 2nd

A sliver Moon and Mercury have taken up position between Aldebaran and Pleiades. They all can be found low in the western sky after sunset.

Friday, May 6th

Earth is now passing through the remnants of comet 1P/Halley. Most of the meteors impacting Earth's atmosphere can be seen early before sunrise. The number of meteors from the eta Aquariids shower can range from 40 to 85 per hour. They will appear to come from the line of planets in the eastern sky.

A stream of meteors will radiate out of the eastern sky this evening from the constellation Libra. This constellation is located west of Scorpius. These meteors are part of the May Librids. The number of meteors from this shower is variable from year to year. It is possible to catch a glimpse of a few shooting stars from May 1st through May 9th.

The Moon makes a close approach to Pollux in the evening sky. The red giant star Pollux is actually part of a multiple star system. Pollux is the bright object located north of the crescent Moon.

Monday, May 9th

The Moon's gradual eastern progression places it near Regulus tonight. The Moon is one day past first quarter and bright, but you may still be able to pick out Regulus. The "Heart of the Lion" star is located south of the Moon.

Friday, May 13th

The Moon entered Virgo on May 11th. On its four-day passage through this constellation it will make a close approach to Spica. That connection occurs tonight. The blue giant star, shining over 12,000 times brighter than the Sun, is positioned south of the Moon.

Sunday, May 15th

The Earth will block direct sunlight from reaching the Moon tonight. The Earth's shadow will begin to slide over the Moon around 2130 this evening. Or, more accurately, the Moon moves into Earth's shadow. In two hours totality begins. The total lunar eclipse will last for about one hour and 20 minutes. The only light reaching the Moon is refracted through Earth's atmosphere. Shorter blue wavelengths are scattered away by Earth's atmosphere. Longer red wavelengths of light pass through. That is why lunar eclipses appear red and sunsets are red/orange.

** 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.

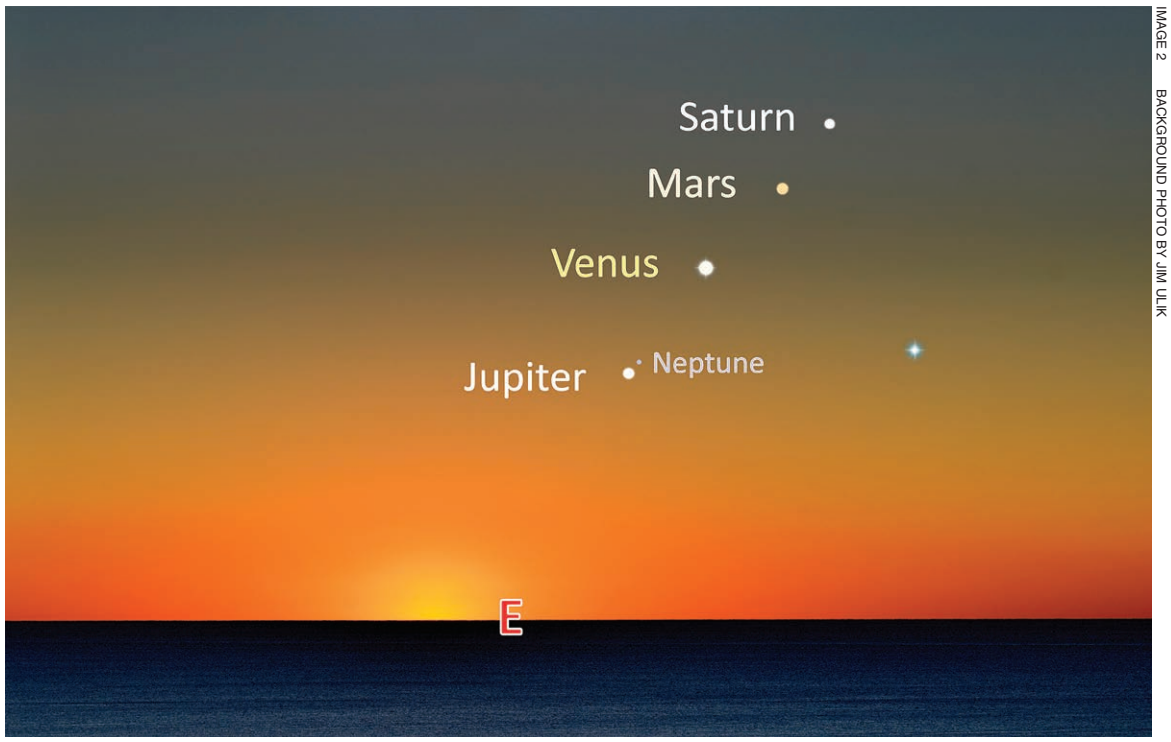


IMAGE 2 BACKGROUND PHOTO BY JIM ULIK

Above: *Lineup of the planets on April 16th at 0520.*

Below: Planetarium view of the Moon, planets and meteor showers at 0500 on April 23rd.

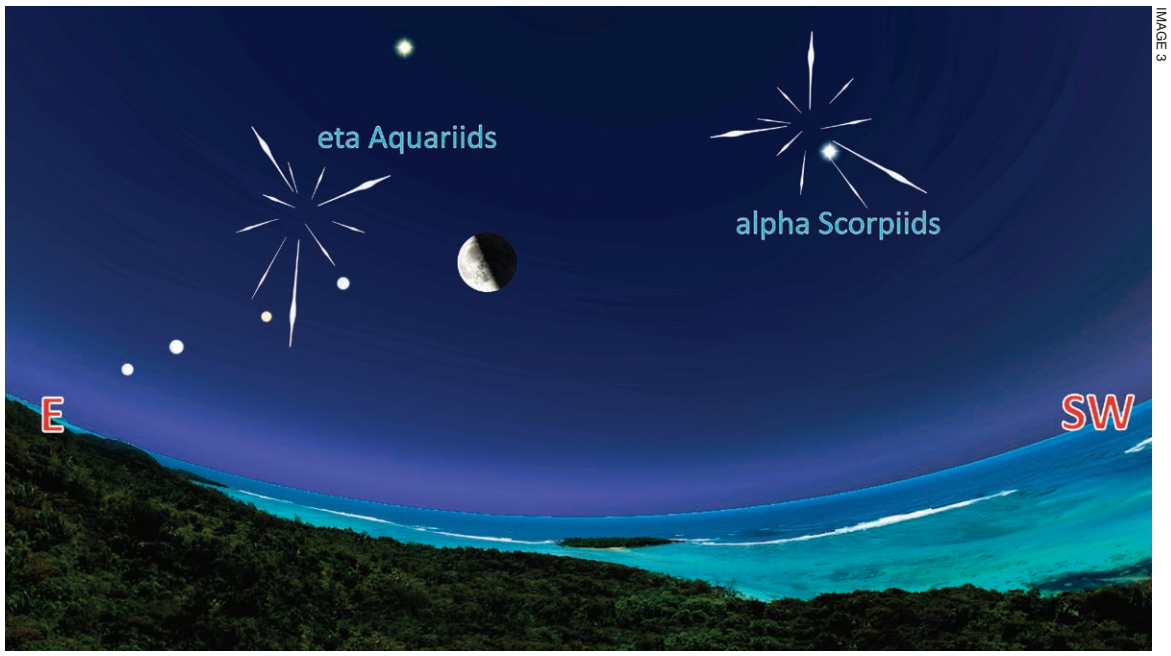


IMAGE 3

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Meet the Smartest Invertebrates on the Reef: THE OCTOPUSES

by Darelle Snyman

These quirky cephalopods are some of the most intriguing and bizarre creatures you will encounter in the underwater world. They have become part of folklore, being the inspiration for many a sea monster through history, from the fearsome Kraken to the Caribbean Lusca.

The Lusca is a sea monster said to live around the blue holes near Andros, an island in the Bahamas. Even the Greek philosopher Aristotle was intrigued by these creatures, though his opinion was less than flattering. In his *History of Animals*, written in 350 BC, he wrote: "The octopus is a stupid creature, for it will approach a man's hand if it be lowered in the water, but it is neat and thrifty in its habits."

It is impossible not to be fascinated by these soft-bodied creatures that have three hearts, are shown to be super-clever, and have blue blood pumping through their bodies. If these charismatic animals have not yet cast their spell on you, then you will definitely be enthralled once you have watched the acclaimed documentary "My Octopus Teacher" on Netflix.

The eight arms that give octopuses their name are among their most amazing features. The majority of their neurons, approximately two-thirds, reside in their arms and not their head. As a result, each of these amazing appendages can touch, taste, and manipulate objects independently, clearly making octopuses the kings of multitasking. While some arms are busy taking apart a tasty shellfish, another can explore a cave for more tasty tidbits.

All octopuses have venom that they inject by means of special salivary papillae to immobilize their prey. This venom is generally not harmful to humans; the only exception is the venom of Australia's tiny Blue-Ringed Octopus.

Octopuses are masters of camouflage, renowned for their ability to go through a kaleidoscope of split-second color and texture changes, allowing them to hide in plain sight. Some octopuses can change their appearance a thousand times over the course of a day. This ability does not always aid in distinguishing between the different octopus species.

There are more than 300 known species of octopus and they are found in every ocean. The following three species are the ones you are mostly likely to encounter in the Caribbean.

The Common Octopus

First up is the Common Octopus (*Octopus vulgaris*), and there is definitely nothing ordinary about this octopus. Its uninspiring name relates to the fact that it is the most wide-ranging octopus species in the ocean.

The Common Octopus, unlike many of its kin, is often active during the day and there are two features to look out for to identify this engaging creature. The Common Octopus has no ring around its eyes and the suckers that cover its eight arms have a dark edge around them.

The extremely clever Common Octopus loves to keep its home hidden and often protects it with a variety of objects such as shells, stones and even cans and glass bottles. I had a fun interaction with one of these little critters recently in the shallows in Isla Mujeres, Mexico. I discovered its den by accident when I surprised it, causing it to make a mad dash for its home. When I dove down I found it had moved a tin can in front of the den's entrance. I proceeded to move the can away to take a closer look. Since I was snorkeling, I went up for air. When I dove down again I saw that the little upstart moved the can back to cover the entrance once more. How special is that!

There are numerous stories detailing the amazing antics of these super-smart creatures. One such tale is about a rabble-rouser called Otto who caused quite the commotion at Germany's Sea Star Aquarium. The aquarium suddenly started experiencing electrical failures during the night, and even though the electricity was restored, the problem persisted. Puzzled staff started to stay overnight to identify the root of problem. It was soon discovered that Otto was the culprit, causing the aquarium's whole electrical system to short out every night by spraying the 2,000-watt overhead spotlight with jets of water.

Another headache for aquarium staff is to keep these critters contained. Their soft bodies allow them to go through impossibly small openings and fit perfectly into the smallest of nooks and crannies, making them expert escape artists.

The Common Octopus needs to be extra vigilant as it goes about its daily business, considering the array of predators that want to feed on it. This poor creature is hunted by sharks, moray eels, seals, sperm whales and birds. Luckily, like its kin, it has an arsenal of strategies to escape or defend itself. Two of these adaptations have been mentioned already: its amazing abilities to hide in plain sight and to squeeze its soft body into the smallest cracks and crevices imaginable.

When these fail to produce the necessary results it will expel jets of water from its mantle to make a quick escape. In this getaway process it might also release a cloud of black ink. This ink cloud not only obscures its escape but also harms its enemies when sprayed into their eyes. This potent defense concoction contains a compound called tyrosinase that causes a blinding irritation while also disrupting the attacker's sense of smell and taste.

The Caribbean Reef Octopus

The Common Octopus shares the reef habitat with its rather bulky relative, the Caribbean Reef Octopus (*Octopus briareus*). The two species are often mistaken for one another and their ability to undergo mesmerizing color changes does muddy the waters when it comes to identification. The best way to tell them apart is to look at the eyes. The Caribbean Reef Octopus has a distinctive ring around each eye.

It distinguishes itself further from its relative in having arms that often differ in length and thickness. Its mostly mottled red-brown color gives it a marbled appearance. What makes it a standout is its ability to rapidly switch from an iridescent blue-green color to white and then back to its original coloration.

You are most likely to encounter this shy, reclusive octopus at night when it comes out to prowl the bottom, hunting for food. When feeding it becomes a fearsome foe that spreads its webbed arms like a huge net, engulfing entire coral heads. The prey trapped within this net has very little chance of escape. The Caribbean Reef Octopus uses its powerful beak and radula to tear its prey apart.

Its favorite meal of all is the Caribbean Spiny Lobster, which obviously does not love being eaten by this eight-armed foe. It has been discovered that the Spiny Lobster has developed an interesting method to escape the octopus's strong, sucker-bearing arms. It makes a rasping or buzzing sound called stridulation to deter a hungry octopus. A study showed that when lobsters stridulated upon capture they escaped every time, while those that remained silent were caught and eaten 40 percent of the time. It is clear that octopuses do not like noisy food!



Above: Octopuses, like this Common Octopus, are masters of camouflage. Some can change their appearance a thousand times over the course of a day.

Below: The Caribbean Reef Octopus has arms that often differ in length and thickness.



These special creatures seem to be the perfect test subjects for a wide variety of studies. Breeding studies have shown that the solitary nature of Caribbean Reef Octopuses might actually be a necessary survival strategy. It has been discovered that when they are reared in close quarters with their own kind they develop certain diseases. One such study has shown them to develop fatal ulcers when reared together, but not when reared alone. They actually like their time alone so much that if another octopus dares to disturb them in their lair, it runs the risk of being killed and eaten.

Caribbean Reef Octopuses might be solitary, but they are not attached to their dens. They move often during their lives, which seldom last past the ten- to 12-month mark. Sadly, mating signals that the life of an octopus has come full circle and they die soon afterwards. The male initiates mating by wrapping around the female and attaches a sperm packet to the female using a modified third right arm called a hectocotylus. The male dies shortly after mating, but the female will continue to live until the eggs hatch. During this time the female stops eating and focuses all her attention on the protection of her eggs.

—Continued on next page

LOOK OUT FOR...

The Surprising Shy Plant

by Lynn Kaak

Every month in the Caribbean there's something special to look out for.

While *Mimosa pudica* may act shy, it has no problem growing and being seen. Known around the world by various monikers, such as Shame Plant, Shy Plant, Sensitive Plant, Touch Me Not and Sleepy Plant, they all refer to this plant's reaction to being touched — which is to fold up its leaves. It will also do this when it is dark, thus the Sleepy Plant name. The Latin "pudica" means "shy, bashful or shrinking."



Shy Plant is native to the tropical Americas, but has spread around the world and covers most hospitable areas from the subtropics to the Equator. It has a strong aversion to cold, and flourishes in full sunlight. It isn't overly picky about soil type, as long as it is well draining and in the sun. It can be found as a creeping ground cover in a boatyard, or out in the more open pasture areas throughout the islands.

The plant has little pink or pale purple flowers that present as a fuzzy ball, perched on a little stalk slightly elevated above the leaves. They aren't large, with a diameter of eight to ten millimetres (about half an inch). If you get close you will notice that the little petals have red tips that change to something more purple farther down. You may need your reading glasses for that. A small fruiting body, which appears as a cluster of a couple of small pods one to two centimetres (less than an inch) in size, will develop from the pollinated flowers.



Creeping among the grass, the Shy Plant shows off its tiny fern-like leaves — until disturbed, when the leaves quickly fold inward and nearly disappear.

The compound leaves look a lot like tiny fern leaves, with ten to 26 leaflets branching out in pairs along the *pinna*, which is basically a stalk. Where they take an unusual evolutionary turn is having the ability to quickly close and fold up if touched, or if there is a strong breeze. A few minutes later they will open up again, as if nothing has happened. Theories abound as to why the plant has developed this ability, with one being to make it look less appetizing to grazing animals, as it won't look as succulent, although this writer theorizes that island goats and sheep aren't that discriminatory in their dining requirements.

The plant is a low ground cover, attaining a height of an unimpressive five to eight centimetres (two to three inches). What it lacks in stature, it makes up for in usefulness. As a member of the pea and legume family, it has ability to help fix and increase nitrogen levels in the soil. Studies in Asia and India have also shown that this plant can absorb toxins, such as metals, in the soil, and thus help biorehabilitate soil to a less toxic level. As it tends to grow in eroded and torn-up soil, it also helps to protect the soul from further erosion, even as it makes it more fertile for other plants.

From a medicinal perspective, it is also useful. It has been shown to help neutralize the venom of the cobra, and is reported to have strong antibiotic, antifungal and antiviral properties, making it effective for wound care. It has been used in traditional medicine for ulcers, piles, diarrhea and depression.

This is a plant we have all noticed many times, and have usually ignored. This little one is definitely one to look out for!

—Continued from previous page
...Get to know your Carribbean Marine Life

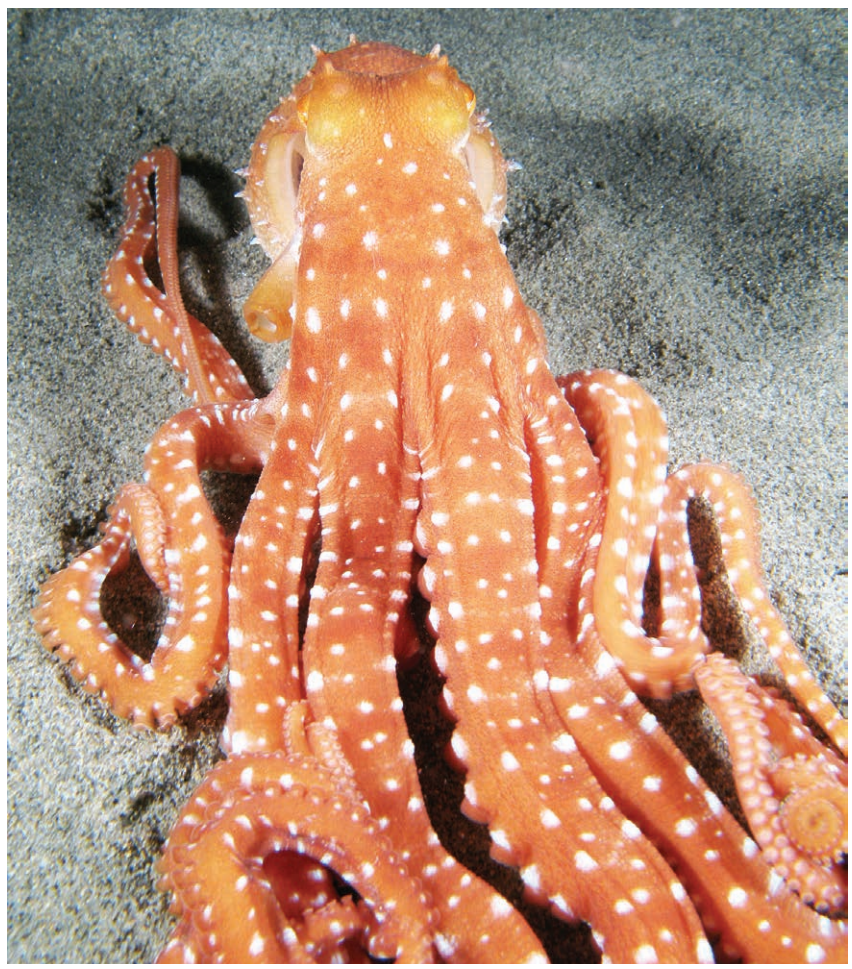
The Atlantic White-Spotted Octopus

Last but not least is the Atlantic White-Spotted Octopus (*Callistoctopus macropus*), also known as the Grass Octopus because of its habitat preference to seagrass beds. Other favorite habitats include sand and rubble areas. Its reddish body, with its distinctive white blotches, makes it stand out from its relatives. The red becomes more intense, giving it a more threatening appearance when it wants to be left alone.

Its first pair of arms is noticeably longer than the remaining three pairs and is connected by a less elaborate web than that found in the Caribbean Reef Octopus.

The feeding method of this nighttime predator is to move from one clump of branching coral to another, probing with its arms among the branches for the small fish and invertebrates that hide there. Studies have found that fish such as groupers associate with this octopus when it is feeding, pouncing on small organisms that scatter when the octopus starts probing around. Unfortunately I have not encountered this beautiful creature so it pains me to say that I had to rely on a stock photo for this article.

I hope you enjoyed the glimpse I gave you into lives of these marvelous creatures that play such a crucial role in the functioning of coral reefs. They help to keep the number of grazing animals in check. A harmonious balance between predator and prey makes for a healthy reef ecosystem.



A reddish body with distinctive white blotches makes the Atlantic White-Spotted Octopus stand out.

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BOOK REVIEW BY NICOLA CORNWELL

A Welcome Escape Starring the BVI

Spanish Pieces of Eight, *by Rick Glaze, ©2021. 280 pages. ISBN paperback: 978-1-7372951-6-7. ISBN digital: 978-1-7372951-5-0*

There's no doubt that, as sailors, two of the things we cherish most are freedom and independence. To that end, the curse of the coronavirus has been a brutal impingement on what most of us consider to be our inalienable rights. Then, just as the heavy curtain of curtailment appeared to be lifting just a little, another attack comes on freedom. This time on the sovereignty of a country, perpetrated so brazenly, it's breathtaking. Enough to make you lose your faith in humanity. I'm not gonna lie, Dear Readers, it got me pretty down.



So, with somewhat shameful tactical avoidance foremost in my intentions, I headed off in the floaty boaty, with just the basics (good coffee and rum), to a small island where I could disconnect and fully escape from reality for a few days. On my data-deficient iPad I took a downloaded copy of Rick Glaze's latest offering, *Spanish Pieces of Eight*, and settled down to take my mind off things for a while. Turns out I picked the perfect book to do so.

Spanish Pieces of Eight — even the title tells you're going to be transported far away from the grimness of today. Pirates. Treasure. Shivering of timbers and all that. They say to err is human to argh is pirate! So off we go. The scene is set with a suitable amount of comfortable predictability with the first words of the prologue:

"All those gold and silver coins would be in a bank safe deposit box if Richard hadn't died Friday morning. He finally agreed to abandon this treasure hunt trick and dig up his sunken fortune. When I reached the hospice at noon Friday with the trust amendment for his signature, they were wheeling him out under a sheet."

So says the mysterious voice on the telephone to Bill Price, the long-time lawyer to avid sailor and tech whiz gazillionaire Richard Dennison.

Treasure established, next up it's time to meet those who will be searching for it, as the beleaguered Bill Price presents the will to the offspring of our recently expired protagonist:

"He began reading, 'Dear children. In this trust you will find the first clue leading to other clues that will take you to a treasure of extreme interest. As in our previous games, the precise nature of the treasure will only be revealed when found. I always thought about this game as the crowning jewel of our family adventures. Love, Dad.'"

Unsurprisingly, Jimmy (the feckless and reckless one), Maureen (the rather dull one), Zach (the responsible, serious one) and Alice (the kinda weird hippie one) are all rather nonplussed. It seems they'd much prefer to just have the cash and get on with their respective lives than gallivant around on a wild goose chase set by dear old dad.

Of course, after much wailing and gnashing of teeth, the kids realize there's no way around it: if they want the dosh, they have to go digging. But where?

Author Rick Glaze published his first work of fiction in 2009, but the keen kayaker, sailor and former financial columnist for Silicon Valley publications sticks close to what he knows from his own life for inspiration. In this instance it is his passion for sailing and his superbly detailed knowledge of the British Virgin Islands. The first clue in the treasure hunt sends the recalcitrant Dennison posse there.

Meanwhile back in California, Bill Price is uncovering more secrets from his erstwhile boss. Turns out that, as well as other myriad accomplishments, Richard Dennison was quite the scribe:

"The day Richard died, a nurse handed it to him at the hospice because there was a note with his name stuck on the front. She said he was holding it when he died. A spiral-bound notebook titled 'My Private Diary, Richard Dennison' was inside. He stared at the blue, near perfect cursive as he flipped through the pages. The haphazard, quick, on-the-go entries common in a diary were not there. This reminded him of memoirs or handwritten autobiographies he'd seen. With a slight curiosity he began reading."

And so begins the intertwined structure of the book. One part Richard Dennison chronicling his adventurous life from the grave via Bill's night-time reading sessions, and the other, the account of his hapless spawn swimming around in a sea of nonsensical clues designed to test their mettle and explore the connection to his past via the fiendish treasure hunt. While somewhat formulaic, it's a tried and tested literary device of parallel stories that works well enough for this purpose.

The story (stories?) fairly bomb along, flitting between one and another in rapid succession, making this a quick and easy to read page-turner book. What there isn't, however, is any real character development. These are all pretty one-dimensional types who rarely stray from initial casting. The interplay between them sets up some interesting situations and, while there are occasional hints of something more, for me Glaze doesn't go far enough in terms of really exploring family dynamics in any significant deep or meaningful way. Subtlety and nuances are mostly missing in this regard.

As far as the personalities are concerned, the hero, without a shadow of doubt, remains Richard himself. A man with a seemingly easy ability to make pots of money while regularly escaping the tech rat race with bros on boats sailing to far flung places, whose only weakness appears to be an insatiable effect on any member of the opposite sex registering room temperature with a pulse:

"Her eyes trained on me like a hawk staring at its kill. But a bird of prey never filled out a bikini top the way this petite, fair-haired dock-buddy did."

In terms of writing, the real stars for me are the British Virgin Islands themselves. Lovingly and lavishly described, there's no doubt Rick Glaze (and his alter-ego Richard Dennison) has a real affection for these small gems of the Caribbean. Anyone who has been there will recognize them intimately. Anyone who hasn't will likely want to go.

In short, I would struggle to describe *Spanish Pieces of Eight* as a groundbreaking literary masterpiece, but as an escapist jaunt in troubled times, it certainly did the trick for me.

Authentic Caribbean Ways with Fish

Fish: healthy, delicious, versatile and traditional, it's the protein dish of choice across the Caribbean, served any time of the day.

Escoveitched Fish goes back to colonial times. It is similar to ceviche, except that the fish is fried and then pickled — a way of preserving foods in the days before refrigeration. Now it's popular breakfast or brunch treat.

Fish Broth is also popular at breakfast, and has a reputation as a powerful hangover cure and aphrodisiac.

Note: When a traditional Caribbean recipe says "fry," it means fry. This is no time for any namby-pamby sautéing. It doesn't mean, however, that the fish should be overcooked or dry, just sealed and perhaps a bit crisp on the outside.

Grenadian chef Desmond Thomas has shared the following time-tested local recipes with us, which we know you will enjoy!

Escoveitched Fish

3 pounds fish, sliced in half-inch thick slices (recommended: kingfish, snapper, jack, dorado or marlin)
juice of 2 or 3 limes or lemons
4 teaspoons black pepper and 4 teaspoons salt, combined
1/2 cup oil for frying
2 cups cane or malt vinegar (white or brown)
2 large onions, sliced thinly
1/2 Scotch Bonnet pepper, cut in strips, or 1/2 teaspoon dried Tabasco pepper
1 teaspoon pimento seeds or whole allspice
1/2 teaspoon whole black peppercorns

Wash fish thoroughly in water to which the juice of limes or lemons has been added. Dry thoroughly. When absolutely dry, coat the fish on both sides with the combined salt and black pepper and set aside on paper towels.

Heat oil in a frying pan and fry fish on both sides until nice and crisp. Set fish aside in a deep Pyrex dish or other non-reactive bowl.

In a saucepan, combine vinegar, sliced onion, pepper, pimento seeds (or whole allspice) and whole black peppercorns and bring to a boil. Simmer until onions are tender. Remove from fire and cool. Pour over fish and leave to steep overnight.

Fish Chowder Caribbean

1 pound fish fillets (fresh or frozen)
3 slices bacon, diced
2 tablespoons butter
1/3 cup chopped onion
1/3 cup chopped sweet pepper
2 cups diced potatoes
3 cups boiling water
1 green hot pepper, whole
2 teaspoons salt
pinch of sugar
1/4 cup cubed pumpkin
1/4 cup rum
dash of Angostura Bitters
2/3 cup evaporated milk
Chopped parsley to garnish

You can use all one type of fish for this chowder, or a variety. Cut fillets into chunks about an inch and a half square.

In a deep saucepan, sauté bacon until crisp, and then add butter, onion, sweet pepper, potatoes, water, whole pepper, salt and sugar. Cover and boil gently for 10 minutes, until potatoes are almost tender.

Add fish, pumpkin, rum and bitters. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes more. Remove the whole hot pepper. Add evaporated milk and reheat but do not allow to boil. Garnish with chopped parsley. Serve hot.

Yields 6 to 7 Cups.

Fish Broth

1 small onion
1 medium-sized tomato
1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 bay leaf
1 sprig fresh thyme
2 tablespoons butter
1 medium-sized red fish (snapper), cleaned and sliced
4 cups water
salt to taste
1 lime
2 tablespoons Angostura Bitters

Chop onion and tomato, combine with grated ginger, crushed garlic, bay leaf and thyme, and fry lightly in butter, avoiding browning.

Add fish pieces, water and salt to taste. Heat to boiling, lower heat and simmer for 30 minutes. Remove bay leaf.

Add lime and bitters. Adjust seasoning with salt and pepper if necessary. Serve hot.

Calypso Fish

1 pound fish fillets
herbs and/or spices of your choice
2 teaspoons minced garlic
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 cup coconut milk powder
1 egg
1 cup crushed cornflakes
1 cup crushed pineapple (canned or fresh), thoroughly drained
Oil for frying

Wash fish fillets, pat dry, and season with herbs and/or spices, black pepper and garlic. Set aside.

In a medium bowl, mix coconut milk powder with egg. Set aside. With fingers, combine crushed cornflakes and drained crushed pineapple in another medium bowl.

Dip fish fillets into coconut powder mixture and then coat with crumb-and-pineapple mixture. Fry coated fillets for about three minutes on each side depending on thickness, or until golden brown. Drain on paper towel and serve immediately.

Yield 4 servings.

Poached Fish with Orange Sauce

4 fish fillets (fresh or frozen)
1 medium cucumber
1 teaspoon finely shredded orange peel
1 cup orange juice
1 medium carrot, shredded
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1 tablespoon water

Thaw fish if frozen. Rinse fish and dry with paper towels. Measure thickness of fish. Set aside.

Chop enough of the cucumber to equal 1/2 cup. Slice the remainder. Set aside.

In an ungreased 10-inch skillet, stir together orange peel, juice, carrot and salt. Bring the mixture to a boil, reduce heat.

Add fish fillets. Cover and simmer for 4 to 6 minutes per half-inch thickness of fish or until the fish flakes easily when teased with a fork.

Place sliced cucumber on a platter. Use a slotted spatula to transfer fish to platter atop cucumber slices. Cover with foil to keep warm.

For the sauce, in a small bowl, stir together the cornstarch and water. Stir into the mixture in the skillet. Cook and stir until the mixture is thickened and bubbly. Cook and stir for 2 minutes more. Stir in the chopped cucumber. Spoon the sauce over fish.

Classic Creole Fish

6 tablespoons oil, divided
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 hot green pepper, seeded and finely chopped
1 3/4 Cups chopped tomatoes
2 bay leaves
1 tablespoon crushed allspice
Juice of 2 limes
1 tablespoon hot pepper sauce
Salt to taste
1 tablespoon brown sugar
2 tablespoons Angostura Bitters
4 small red snappers
2 tablespoons seasoned flour

For the sauce, heat half the oil in a frying pan. Add garlic and hot green pepper and cook for 2 minutes, then add the tomatoes, bay leaves, allspice, lime juice, hot pepper sauce and salt. Cover and cook gently for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Coat the fish in seasoned flour. Heat the remaining oil in a large frying pan and fry the fish on both sides until just cooked through. Serve the fish with the sauce.

These recipes first appeared in the April 2016 issue of Caribbean Compass.







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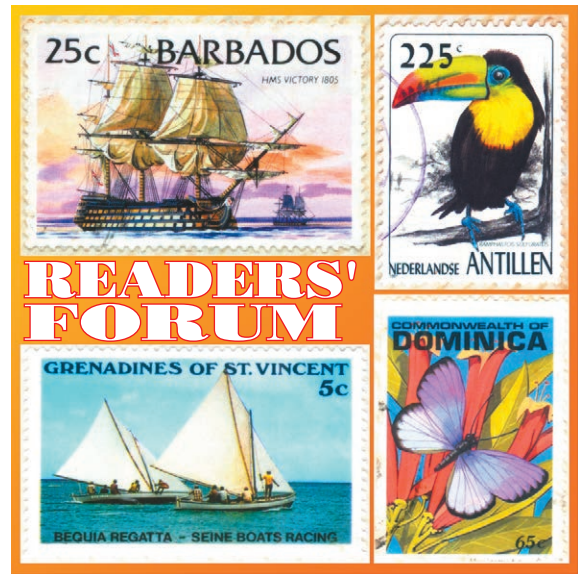
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WHEN IT WAS LIVELY

Dear *Compass*,

I see there is an article mentioning the Hillsborough jetty in the March issue (see page 9 at www.caribbeancompass.com/online/march22compass_online.pdf). I've attached a painting of the jetty I did in the 1990s. The small lighter was from the *Lady Grace*, owned by Paddy's Enterprises.

Bill Cameron



In the 1990s, the jetty at Hillsborough, Carriacou, was a lively place. In last month's Compass, *Chris Doyle suggested that it could be revived.*

WHAT HAPPENED TO BOB PEEL?

Dear *Compass*,

A recent freak accident, in which solo sailor Dr. George Turner was making a passage from Guadeloupe to Antigua in his yacht *Rozinante* when he hit something that sank his yacht in minutes, has revived memories of the mystery surrounding the loss of Capt. Robert Peel and his yacht *Kalayaan*, two years ago.

Read Dr. Turner's account of his accident (on page 20 in this issue of *Compass*), and you will see that he was lucky enough to have had time to make several VHF calls and abandon ship to his dinghy, before watching his vessel sink, mere minutes after evacuating. The force of impact when *Rozinante* struck something unseen in the water knocked him over as he stood in the cockpit. He struck his head, but was not seriously injured. He was then able to alert the French coastguard via channel 16, and although unable to produce a GPS position (his navigation electronics failed), his dead reckoning position was accurate enough for a helicopter search to locate and rescue him within hours of the sinking (which happened during daylight hours).

I am grateful to have been able to read his firsthand account, because it has helped with understanding what could possibly have befallen Bob Peel, when his yacht's EPIRB was activated about 15 miles west of Carriacou, on the night of March 18th-19th, 2020.

It always bothered me that with the *Kalayaan* emergency there were zero reports of VHF calls, flares, fire, or anything else. Only this mysterious EPIRB alert. Given the information gleaned from the more recent accident, I can now surmise that Bob was unfortunate enough to have suffered a collision of some kind, most probably with a heavy object in the water, which knocked him unconscious. Hence no alerts, other than the EPIRB, which activated itself on submersion in the water. The vessel must have sunk, and the EPIRB floated free. This scenario fits with the facts as we have them. Nothing was ever found: no wreckage, no raft, no body. The EPIRB was tracked, but not recovered either.

The different outcomes in these two marine accidents illustrate how fine the line is between success and failure. The survivor had luck on his side: daylight hours, time to call, and a helicopter available to search for and rescue him. *Kalayaan's* emergency, however, happened at night; the skipper was evidently incapacitated in some way, and the only search vessel deployed seems to have been a cruise ship that was asked to visit the scene of the EPIRB activation.

The other major difference is that in one case the survivor gets to tell his tale, whereas in the other we have no account of the series of events that took place leading up to and immediately after the accident. This means we are left with very little idea of what actually happened. It also means we have very little information about how the search and rescue was handled. I have struggled to find out what action was taken and who was coordinating the SAR response. It took over a year to get confirmation that the cruise ship *Seadream 1* was searching for the victim when it steamed to the accident site that night. I am still unclear as to whether or not there was any aerial search for wreckage or survivors the following day during daylight hours, after the initial search by the ship ended.

If anyone can point me to an accident report for that incident, I would very grateful. If anyone has any other pertinent information pertaining to the loss of *S/Y Kalayaan* and Captain Bob Peel, please email me at ancestry2006@gmail.com.

Kind regards,
Matthew Watters

EXTEND CHARTER SEASON BY 8 WEEKS

Dear *Compass*,

Until about 2005, NOAA and marine insurance companies stated hurricane season was June through October, but they have extended the official hurricane season from the beginning of June to the end of November, because of the number of November hurricanes in the last 30 years. NOAA counts all hurricanes in the North Atlantic Ocean, the East Coast of the US, the Bahamas, the Western Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico and the Eastern Caribbean.

But from 1851 through 2020, only two June hurricanes have affected the Eastern Caribbean, and the best two months of the year to cruise the Eastern Caribbean are June and first half of July. During this period it usually blows a steady ten to 12 knots, very seldom less, and never more except in short squalls. In contrast, in the winter it blows like stink, then drops off to light airs then blows like stink again.

This June and early July period is particularly good cruising time in the Spanish, US and British Virgin islands. All of these island groups have beautiful white sand beaches on their north coasts. But the anchorages off these beaches cannot be used during the normal charter season, December through April, due to the possibility of a northerly groundswell. Ground swells begin late October and end mid-April. Thus late May, June and first half of July is the perfect charter season for the Spanish US and BVI, as well as the rest of the Eastern Caribbean.

Charter brokers and bareboat companies should be advertising this delightful part of the year. If they get the word across, they are basically extending their charter season by eight weeks, increasing the chances having a profitable season.

Don Street
Glandore, Ireland

BACK ISSUES OF COMPASS

Hello *Compass*,

Several years ago now, when we starting on our circumnavigation, we spent some time in the Caribbean and enjoyed *Caribbean Compass* very much!

I regularly follow your news, wherever we are, and hope to come back in your part of the world some day.

I am trying to trace an answer you published to a letter I sent in October or November of 2015, called "Birds in Distress."

I can't see a link on your website to back issues.

Can you help please?

Thanks a lot.

PP

Hi PP,

Good to hear from you!

The back issue archive is here: www.caribbeancompass.com/backissues.html.

It's a great free resource for everyone, with all articles going back to 2007.

CC

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FS

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Send your letters to sally@caribbeancompass.com



Letter of the Month

THOUGHTS ON EMERGENCY STEERING

Dear *Compass*,

I read with interest the article about the 2021 Atlantic Rally for Cruisers in the February issue of *Compass*. Yet again, being in a rally and having boats nearby to help when serious problems arise was proven to be valuable.

The crew transfer from *Charlotte Jane* to *Magic Dragon* was superbly done. I'd like to suggest one procedure for future reference that could ease getting crew out of a liferaft and onto the deck of a yacht — slacking or disconnecting the lifelines so the crew being rescued don't have to climb or be lifted over. Shortly after I purchased *Iolaire*, I removed the turnbuckles that tensioned the lifelines and replaced them with six turns of light nylon flag halyard heaved really tight and secured with a rolling hitch. This could easily be undone in an emergency, much faster than unscrewing a turnbuckle. (Slacking lifelines also facilitates getting a dinghy on deck.)

Charlotte Jane was abandoned (albeit later recovered) due to catastophic steering failure. Over the last 40 years I would guess about 30 transtalantic boats had the steering fail, or a spade rudder broke off or dropped out, and crew decided it was impossible to continue and abandoned ship. They were picked up by a fellow rally contestant or by a diverted ship.

The abandoned boats, if they didn't sink or get recovered, drifted across the Atlantic with no crew, sometimes never to be found, other times to be wrecked on the windward side of islands. One year, amazingly, three were picked up undamaged by fishermen and towed into Road Harbour, Anguilla.

Depending on the boat's design, the sea conditions, and the risk of imminent danger to the crew (as was *Charlotte Jane's* case), loss of steering or loss of a rudder need not always be regarded as a cause to abandon ship.

On many boats the emergency tiller, if provided, is inadequate. It is essential that the boat be taken out in heavy weather and the emergency tiller given a really good test on all points of sail.

In the early 1960s I delivered a 40-foot sloop that had hydraulic steering. The rudderhead was forward of the steering stand. If the hydraulic steering packed up, you could remove a deck plate and fit a four-foot emergency tiller. Partway through the voyage the hydraulic steering stopped working so we installed the emergency tiller, but it broke off where it joined the pipe welded onto the socket that fit on the rudderhead. I discovered that the biggest socket wrench in the set aboard fit on the rudderhead. Luckily the handle was longer than usual — about 18 inches. It was too short to give enough leverage to control the rudder, but there was a hole in the end of the handle. I lashed a Becket block to the handle, rigged a three-part tackle, led the line to a cockpit winch and we were under control.

Any emergency tiller on boats 40 feet or over that is shorter than six feet is inadequate. On another delivery, again with hydraulic steering and a similar emergency tiller set-up, I took one look at the length of the tiller provided and realized something would have to be done. It was a piece of pipe only three feet long. I had Tim Carr working with me as carpenter, preparing the boat for sea. He took an eight-foot piece of iroko (a tough and durable wood), rounded off 18 inches of the end so it fit firmly inside the pipe, then made the rest suitable as a tiller. And yes, during that crossing we needed to use it.

If there is a single helm aft of the rudderhead, it's usually no problem to install an emergency tiller. However, if the rudderhead is aft of the helm problems must be solved. If the boat has a long stern with space aft of the rudderhead, an emergency tiller can be fitted facing aft with the helmsman sitting or standing aft of the rudderhead. On many modern boats this is not possible: the rudderhead is too close to the stern. This requires a T-shaped emergency tiller, arms on the T as long as possible, and the length governed by the beam of the boat at the rudderhead. Being T-shaped, two crewmembers, one on each side in heavy weather (and in light weather, if the boat is well trimmed, one person), may be able to handle the boat.

In the 1953 Fastnet race, a long-keeled boat with an attached rudder discovered that the rudder blade had fallen off. The crew lashed the spinnaker pole across the boat approximately amidships, with blocks at each end. Through the blocks they ran lines port and starboard aft to lines to a drogue streamed astern. Pulling on the starboard line swung the boat to starboard, pulling on the port line swung the boat to port. They got back to port safely.

During another race, the rudder dropped out of a beamy IOR boat. They streamed a drogue on two lines led through blocks attached to the rail amidships, thence to winches. The boat was so beamy they did not have to use the spinnaker pole. They reset the spinnaker and the main and continued racing.

The sea state, however, will sometimes not permit steering with a drogue, as was the case with *Charlotte Jane*. (On the topic of sea state, a thought on the accident in ARC 2021 when the main boom preventer failed and the boat gybed, killing the helmsman. When running downwind in heavy weather and confused seas, taking down the main and running on a headsail sheeted through the end of the spinnaker pole would be a safer way to go.)

All of the methods above will work, but should be tested before a boat goes offshore. Boats taking part in the ARC, depending from where they have departed, will have sailed between 800 and 2,000 miles before Las Palmas. This gives plenty of time to test emergency steering and/or steering by towing a drogue. If the emergency steering does not work it can be reengineered in Las Palmas to make it work.

One final bit of advice to boats that have lost their spade rudder, have arrived off a port, and are offered a tow. While being towed, keep a drogue attached with double lines. If the tow boat tries to convince you to use a drogue on a single line, refuse. When towing a rudderless short keel boat on a single line to even a large drogue, the boat will swing back and forth 30 to 40 degrees. A small drogue on double lines is the way to go.

Bon voyage,
Don Street
Glandore, Ireland

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TO ME, ONE DAY

by Ailsa Burn-Murdoch

Remember this.

You're sitting on the comfort seat on the port side bench of *Mirounga's* cockpit. It's 0937 on 21 January 2022. You're sailing from Anegada to Cane Garden Bay, the wind on your port quarter. *Mirounga* is claiming 6.3 knots in 17-knot gusts.

You're reclining, with your eyes closed. Your left hand rests on fibreglass, its smooth surface textured slightly with sea spray, its temperature neutral.

There's a ridge, which channels rainwater away from the cockpit and houses the bimini strut. Your fingers lay loosely across it, so you can grip should *Mirounga* lurch unexpectedly. Your right hand sits on the seat, smothered in your own soft flesh.

Your right knee is bent, and your foot rests on the Sunbrella cockpit cushion, soft foam beneath your heel. Your left leg crosses over your right, and your hips tip you towards the left, to security.

You can feel the sun down the left side of your body. A breeze whispers across your skin, you feel it most around your feet and ankles, which are in shade. You might be aware of your hair tickling your face, a stray hair catching your lip. It's tied up, but some always escapes. The white cotton coverup you bought at the Red Cross in St. Barth for €3 ruffles in the breeze.

Very rarely, you may feel the lightest drops of sea spray on your skin.

The temperature is perfect. Sun and breeze in equilibrium to create that sweet spot between being too warm and too cold. A chance to enjoy the heat without sweat, to enjoy the breeze without goosebumps. It soothes you, and all of the aches in your body are forgotten.

Your home moves you, carries you, cradles you, propelled only by the wind. You feel *Mirounga* ride the swell, rocking you almost in gentle circles sometimes, side to side other times. It's soothing and comfortable. The light slaps of water on the underside of the boat that happen from time to time aren't jarring.



The sound of the waves you pass through is most prevalent. It's loud enough today that you can't hear the faint mechanical sounds of the rudder adjusting.

Occasionally the sail flutters or creaks, or you hear the rush of wind across the canvas. There might be a beep from Colin adjusting the course on the autopilot, or a groan from lines as he adjusts the sails. The VHF might crackle.

These sounds are all home to you.

You don't talk. You don't need to.

You taste apple, the tangy green one you ate half an hour ago before throwing the core overboard, the honey in your SPF lip balm.

You smell, only very lightly, the sea, and the scent of your own sun-warmed skin.

You're enjoying the sun like a cat, basking. When you open your eyes you see the golden hairs on your tanned legs, the stretch marks you've grown to love, the white sole of your heel.

To the side, the sun shines on the water with the outline of Virgin Gorda in the distance. Indigo valleys and white-capped peaks appear in the undulating water. The stainless steel of your vessel glints, and the rigging casts lines of shadow across your skin. The sky is a beautiful blue broken by whispers and puffs of cloud.

Your brain quiets, for a minute. You're not thinking about anchoring, or passage planning for the journey south. You're not wondering when or where you'll see your friends. The prospect of applying for a job, or buying a house, the thoughts that kept you awake last night, cease to worry you.

You find that rare moment where all your mind contains is the present, just you, exactly where you are, right now.

Colin sits at the helm, watching the horizon, keeping your course. Taking you to the next place you'll set your anchor.

Your skipper. Your partner. Your anchor.

This isn't what life will always look like, but it's what life looks like today.

Remember this.

Remember that you got to do this.

THE 50 WAYS CHALLENGE

In Jim Hutchinson's article "50 Ways" in May 2021 issue of *Compass* (see page 22 at www.caribbeancompass.com/online/may21compass_online.pdf), Hutch reckoned there must be 50 ways to get ashore from a boat. Are there?

We asked *Compass* readers to send photos of different ways to get ashore — inflatable with outboard, rowing dinghy, sailing dinghy, kayak, paddleboard, windsurfer, noodles, fins — or something else entirely? *Compass* readers have accepted the challenge, and we've received more than 30 so far.

These are the latest entries.

If we succeed in getting 50 different ways, all of your photos will appear in a full-page montage in a future issue of *Compass*. It might even be suitable for framing!

Set your phone or camera to the largest image setting, snap your getting-ashore vehicle of choice, and send the picture(s) to sally@caribbeancompass.com.

DAWN CORBETT





Right: I saw you were looking for this kind of picture. Hope you can use it, I thought it was super cute! I found it in my 2014 folder!
— Dawn Corbett, S/V *Cat Tales*

Left: Ahoy Compass*! Here's a nice little sailing/rowing dinghy, a two-piece pram of pleasant shape, very well built and equipped. It sails under a Walker Bay rig. The water jugs illustrate a sailing dinghy's utility. My strange little sailing canoe lies alongside of her, flanked by an inflatable in "pajamas."*
— Hutch, Carriacou

KRIS STEYN



Molly is a pothound that loves to leap off the fast moving dinghy and swim at about 2.5 knots... every day.
— Kris Steyn, Woburn Bay, Grenada

HANS HART



This photo sent by Canadian reader Hans Hart shows technology that should definitely be transferable to the Caribbean!

CALENDAR

APRIL

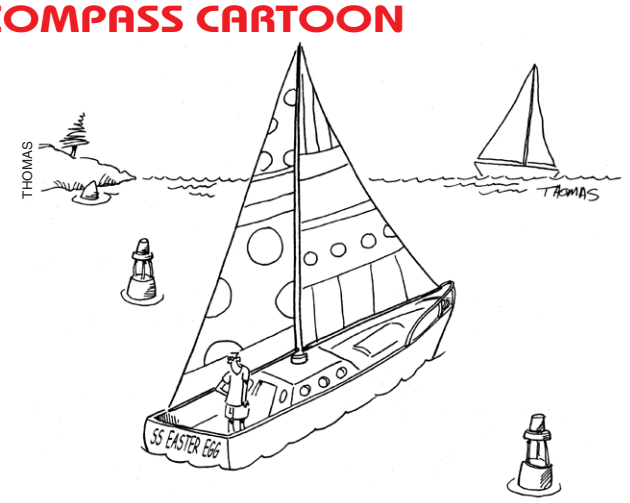
1 - 3 Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta. www.antiguaclassics.com
2 Cruiser's Safety & Security Seminar, Island Water World, St. Maarten
2 – 1 May St. Thomas Carnival, USVI. usvifestivals@usvitourism.vi
15 Public holiday in many places (Good Friday)
15 – 17 St. Croix International Regatta. www.stcroixyc.com
16 FULL MOON
17 Easter Sunday
17 – 23 Les Voiles de St Barth. www.lesvoilesdestbarthrichardmille.com
18 Public holiday in many places (Easter Monday), and in Puerto Rico (Birthday of José de Diego)
18 Antigua & Barbuda International Kite Festival. www.facebook.com/CPKites
18 – 19 Buccoo Goat, Donkey & Crab Races in Tobago
21 – 25 (TBC) Tobago Jazz Experience). Tel 1 (868) 639-2284
21 – 26 (TBC) Jamaica Carnival
21 – 30 St. Thomas, USVI, Carnival
22 Earth Day
23 Governor's Cup Race, BVI. www.royalbviyc.org
23 Cruiser's Atlantic Crossing Seminar, Island Water World, St. Maarten
24 – 28 Oyster Regatta, Antigua. https://oysteryachts.com/events/antigua-regatta-2022
26 - 27 St. Maarten Multiclass Regatta. www.smyc.com
27 Public holiday in St. Maarten (King's Day)
28 Public holiday in Barbados (National Heroes' Day)
29 Public holiday in St. Maarten (Carnival)
30 Public holiday in Bonaire (Rincon Day)
30 Peters & May Round Antigua Race. www.antiguayachtclub.com
30 – 6 May Antigua Sailing Week. www.antiguayachtclub.com
30 – 8 May Cayman Islands Carnival (Batabano). www.explorecayman.com
TBA Conch Republic Cup Regatta, Florida to Cuba. http://conchrepubliccup.org
TBA Girl Pat Race (Trinidad to Grenada). www.ttsailing.org/girl-pat-race

MAY

1 Public holiday in many places (Labour Day)
1 – 10 (TBC) St. Lucia Jazz Festival. www.stlucia.org
2 Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago (Eid ul-Fitr, end of Ramadan), and St. Maarten (Labor Day)
2 – 3 St. Maarten Carnival. www.facebook.com/sxmcarnival
5 Antigua Sailing Week Women's Race Day. www.antiguayachtclub.com
5 Point Fortin Borough Day, Point Fortin, Trinidad
7 Start of ARC Europe rally from Tortola to Portugal via Bermuda. www.worldcruising.com/arc_europe
7 Start of ARC USA rally from Tortola to Virginia or Florida. www.worldcruising.com/arc_usa
10 Start of Salty Dawg Spring Rally to the US from Virgin Gorda, BVI. www.saltydawgsailing.org
12 - 22 St. Barts Theater Festival. www.saintbarth-tourisme.com
13 – 14 BVI Spring Charter Show. www.crewedyachtsbvi.com/charter-yacht-shows
13 – 15 BVI Dinghy Championships, Tortola. www.royalbviyc.org
13 – 15 St. Thomas Yacht Club Invitational Regatta. stthomasyachtclub.org
14 - 15 (TBC) Anguilla Regatta. www.smyc.com
16 FULL MOON
16 Public holiday in the Cayman Islands (Discovery Day)
16 - 20 Windward 500 Races. skern@oneenergyisland.com
19 - 22 Martinique Boat Show. www.martinique-boat-show.fr
26 Public holiday in Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao and St. Maarten (Ascension Day)
28 – 29 Foxy's Wooden Boat Regatta, Jost Van Dyke, BVI. www.westendyachtclubbvi.com
28 – 1 June Barbuda Carnival 'Caribana'
30 Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago (Indian Arrival Day), Puerto Rico (Memorial Day) and Anguilla (Anguilla Day)

All information was correct to the best of our knowledgeat the time this issue of *Compass* went to press. But plans change rapidly these days, so 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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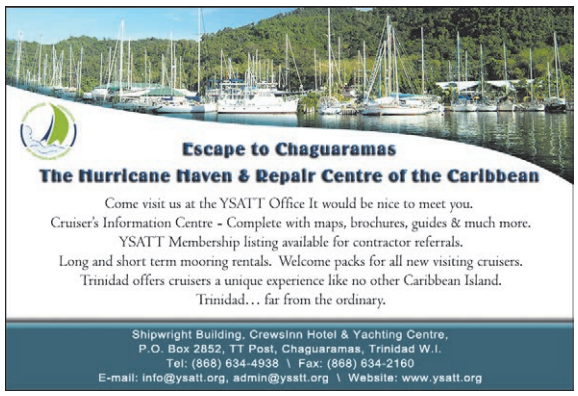
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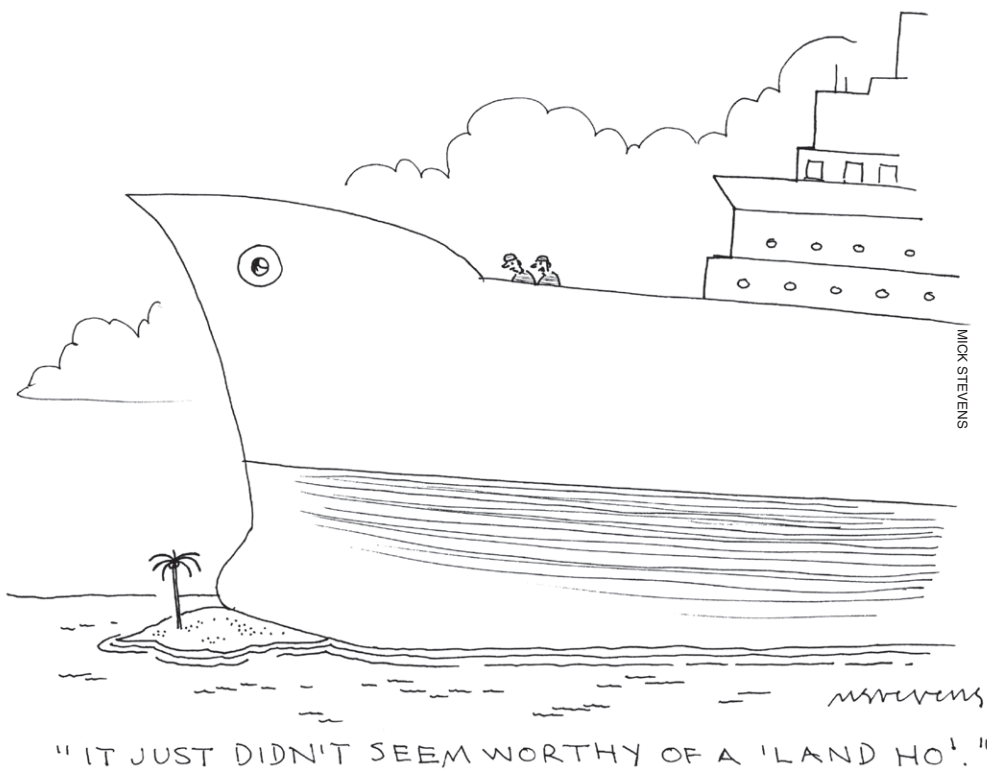
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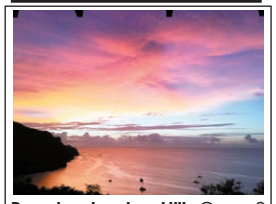
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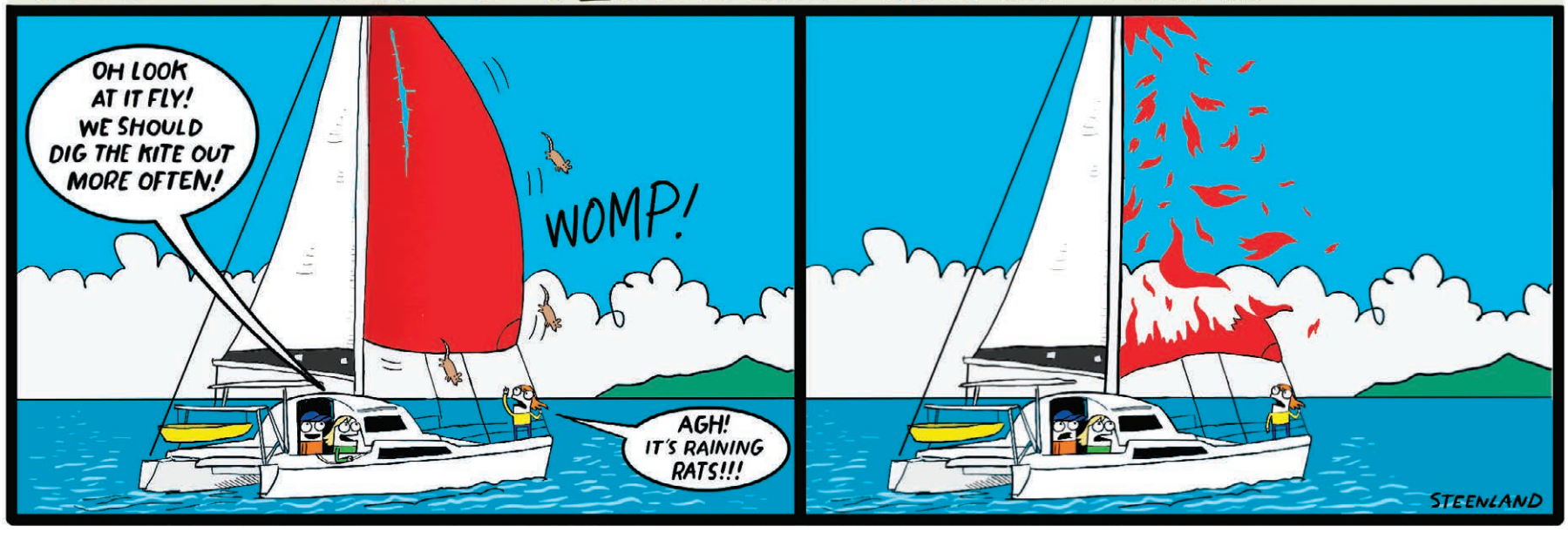
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THE COCONUT TELEGRAPH BY SARAH STEENLAND



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Boat Paint & Stuff	St. Maarten	26	Grenada Marine	Grenada	17	Martinique Boat Show	Martinique	9	St. Kitts Marine Surveying	St. Kitts	33
Budget Marine	St. Maarten	2	Grenadines Sails	SVG	27	McIntyre Bros	Grenada	33	The Nature Conservancy	C/W	24
Budget Marine St. Kitts	St. Kitts	MP	Happy Kite	SVG	MP	Mid Atlantic Yacht Services	Azores	MP	Tobago Cays	SVG	MP
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