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FEBRUARY 2022 NO. 317
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

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Story on page 16

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CARIBBEAN COMPASS

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

FEBRUARY 2022 • ISSUE 317



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NANCY MAGNINE

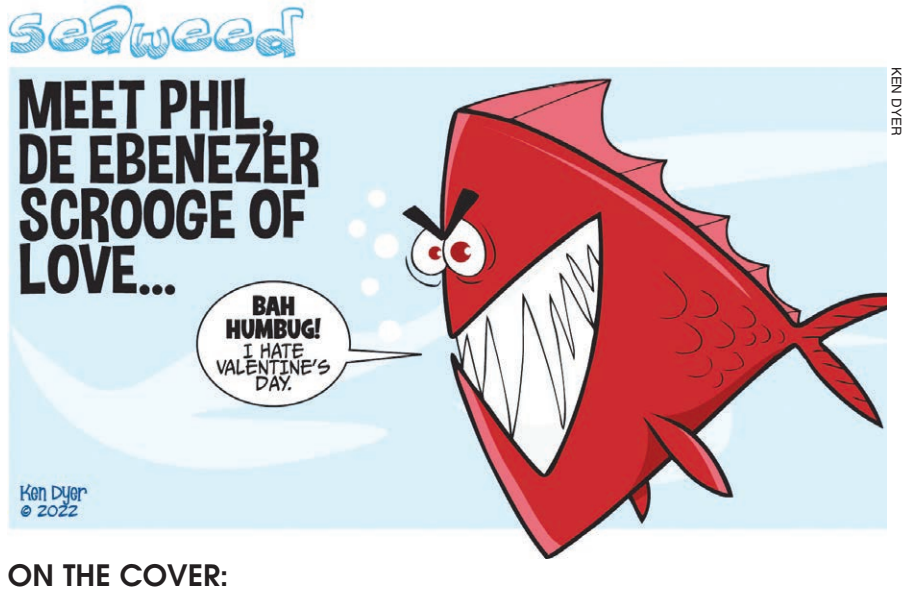
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KEN DYER

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



'*Compass* is the voice of the islands and the conscience of the cruisers. The presentation is a hook grabbing you, saying, "Read me or pay the price of ignorance.'"
— Readers' Survey respondent

CARIBBEAN COMPASS

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Info & Updates

New Free Publications

• The Coral Bay Yacht Club of St. John, USVI, has launched a new website that includes a *Coral Bay Cruising Guide*. The cruising guide is also available as a PDF. You will find the answers to many frequently asked questions such as where should I anchor, where can I tie up my dinghy, where can I buy ice, where should I drop trash, and which taxis service Coral Bay?



SANDI BOUDREAU

A free downloadable cruising guide to Coral Bay, St. John, USVI, is available online.

If you have any suggestions for edits or additions contact rgarvin@garvin.us or coralbayyachtclubstj@gmail.com.

See the Coral Bay Cruising Guide *at www.cbycstj.org/coral-bay-cruising-guide.*

• The new *2021/2022 Antigua and Barbuda Marine Association Directory* is now available free from ABMA members.

New in the directory this year are:

- Covid-19 Protocols for Antigua & Barbuda
- Covid-19 Testing Facilities
- Antigua and Barbuda Yacht Workers Association Listing
- Consulates and Embassies
- What's On in Antigua

Visit https://abma.ag for more information.

• Chris Doyle Publishing has announced a new *Yachting and Watersports Guide to Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique* for 2022.

This project is unique in the company's 40-year history: a stand-alone guide to yachting and watersports in Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. The advertiser-funded guide will be free to the public. It is designed to appeal to not only yachtspeople and charter guests, but to traditional tourists and other visitors as well.

Since the 20th edition of the *Cruising Guide to the Windward Islands* was published in 2020, the world of travel has changed significantly. While the reefs, beaches and anchorages of the Caribbean are still here, owing to the pandemic life ashore has become more complicated, and travel between island nations more cumbersome. Nevertheless, the yachting industry in many island nations continues to be an important part of the economy, and Chris Doyle Publishing recognizes that many sailors and charter guests will be opting to spend more time in the waters of individual nations.

Working with the Marine and Yachting Association of Grenada, over the coming months Chris Doyle Publishing will be producing an in-depth guide with all the useful charts and information on navigation, marinas, and services Chris's guide readers are used to, plus expanded sections on snorkeling and diving, environmental concerns, and giving back to the community.

The free *Yachting and Watersports Guide to Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique* will be available in November.

Contact doyleguides@gmail.com for more information.

New Rules

• Antigua

To be permitted entry into Antigua & Barbuda fully vaccinated arriving passengers can present the negative result of an RT-PCR test taken four days or fewer from date of arrival, or the negative result of an approved Rapid Antigen test taken four days or fewer from date of arrival. This is a change from the previous time frame of three days, and includes transiting passengers. Only tests using nasopharyngeal or oropharyngeal specimens/swabs are accepted. Home tests, self-administered tests and those using saliva samples are not accepted.

Fully vaccinated passengers entering Antigua & Barbuda who can present verifiable documentation that they have received both doses of a World Health Organization or Ministry of Health Wellness and the Environment (MOHWE) approved two-dose Covid-19 vaccine or one dose of a single dose Covid-19 vaccine, and have a RT-PCR or approved Rapid Antigen negative test result, will be allowed to stay at a bio-safe certified accommodation or yacht.

Visit https://visitantiguabarbuda.com/travel-advisory for details.

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• Barbados

As of January 7th, travelers will be permitted to enter Barbados either with a valid negative Rapid PCR Covid-19 test result, done 24 hours prior to arrival, or with a negative Standard RT-PCR Covid-19 test result, done within three days of arrival.

Accepted tests include those taken at an accredited or recognized laboratory by a health care provider via a nasopharyngeal or oropharyngeal sample (or both). LAMP tests, self-administered tests or home kits and tests using saliva samples will not be accepted.

Visit https://bit.ly/3nHRNSU for details.

• Colombia

All non-resident foreigners 18 years and older arriving in Colombia are required to provide either proof of a completed Covid-19 vaccination scheme or, if less than 14 days have elapsed or the vaccination scheme is not complete, a negative result from a PCR test taken no more than 72 hours before travel. Unvaccinated non-resident foreign travelers are not allowed to enter Colombia.

All arrivals are required to have completed the pre-arrival form at https://apps.migracioncolombia.gov.co/pre-registro/public/preregistro.jsf. Carry a printout of the form and also be ready to show the electronic version on your mobile device.

• USVI

Effective January 3rd, the window for taking Covid-19 tests for travel to the US Virgin Islands will be three days prior to commencement of travel to the Territory. This change applies to vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals, including those who were vaccinated in the USVI.

All domestic travelers five years of age or older, and all international travelers two years of age or older, and persons in transit to another destination, who enter the USVI by air or sea are required to use the USVI Travel Screening Portal and get cleared to travel to the USVI.

Domestic travel includes from the US mainland and other US Territories. Domestic travelers must submit a negative result from an antigen or nucleic acid amplification test (NAAT) (e.g., RT-PCR) Covid-19 test taken within three days of travel.

All international travelers (including those coming from the BVI) must submit a negative antigen or NAAT (e.g., RT-PCR) Covid-19 test result. Non-US citizens traveling for non-essential reasons (e.g., tourism) must be fully vaccinated and provide proof of vaccination status. Travelers aged two to 17 are exempt from the vaccine requirement.

Note that the rules differ slightly for arrivals by sea or air.
Visit www.usviupdate.com for details.

Eight Bells

Catamaran design pioneer James Wharram died on December 14th, 2021, at age 93.

To offer boatbuilders and cruising sailors an alternative to mainstream monohulls, in the 1950s he began experimenting with twin-canoe multihulls based on traditional voyaging vessels that carried Polynesians all over the Pacific. His early designs were simple, low-tech and easy for an amateur builder to construct.

To prove that his designs were seaworthy, he and his two partners, Ruth and Jutta, sailed his home-built, wooden 23-foot, six-inch double-hulled canoe *Tangaroa* across the Atlantic from the Canary Islands to Trinidad in the winter of 1956-57. The crossing took five weeks.

There, with the help of American friends on the island and French sailing legend Bernard Moitessier, they built *Rongo*, a 38-foot cat, and sailed it to the US Virgin Islands, up to New York, and then back across the North Atlantic.

The adventure became famous with the publication of the book *Two Girls, Two Catamarans.* Wharram always had multiple female partners, but his life-long soulmates were Ruth Merseburger, Jutta Schultze-Rhonhof and Hanneke Boone, who survives James and still runs the Wharram design business.



James Wharram with Jutta Schultze-Rhonhof and Ruth Merseburger in 1955.

James Wharram's legacy lies in both his embrace of alternative lifestyles and his boat designs, many of which are sailing the Caribbean today.

See his designs and learn more about his life at www.wharram.com.

Trinidad Updates

J. Wynner reports: Approximately 800 yachts a year sailed into Chaguaramas, Trinidad, in the years before Trinidad & Tobago closed its borders in April 2020 due to the pandemic.

During the border closure, a mere ten yachts arrived. These, which came from Grenada, were allowed to enter under *force majeur* (temporary permission to stay because of a threat to their lives at sea elsewhere, in this case a hurricane threat) and were accommodated in Chacachacare under Coast Guard watch. Prior arrangements had been coordinated by the Yacht Services Association of Trinidad and Tobago (YSATT) and the T&T Coast Guard. After the hurricane threat ended, these yachts returned to Grenada.

During the border closure, YSATT lobbied government in an attempt to get the yachting sector reopened.

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A comprehensive document was put together by the association outlining safety procedures and protocols for yachts to come to Trinidad, and the Chief Medical Officer from the Ministry of Health approved it. Consultation was also held with the Ministry of Trade, the Ministry of Tourism and the Attorney General. Nevertheless, aside from the handful of yachts permitted in from Grenada under *force majeur*,



Jesse James hosted the SSCA's Trinidad Gam on January 1st.

yachts were not permitted to enter the country until all air and sea borders were opened in July 2021.

Since then, approximately 70 yachts have arrived in Chaguaramas. YSATT looks forward to more coming to spend hurricane season 2022.

Joan Conover adds: Pandemic or not, the international Seven Seas Cruising Association has maintained its Trinidad New Year's Day GAM tradition for 25 years. On January 1st, 2022, Jesse James hosted the SSCA's Trinidad GAM 2022, with the crews of 20 boats in attendance and 40 more boaters included via Zoom. It sounds like a lot of vessels are planning to head to Trinidad for major boat work!

Note: Trinidad welcomes cruisers. You must be fully vaccinated (children under 18 excepted), have a negative result from a PCR (not rapid) test taken no more than 72 hours prior to arrival, and apply for a TT Travel Pass from the government of Trinidad & Tobago prior to departing from your last port of call.

You must submit copies of your vaccination card, PCR test results, and Travel Pass by email to YSATT (info@ysatt.com), along with a float plan and Marine Declaration of Health, prior to departure from your last port of call.

Visit the YSATT website at www.ysatt.com and Jesse James's website at www.membersonlymaxitaxi.com for full details on the current protocols and procedures for entry into Trinidad & Tobago for yachts.

Does Your Trawler Want to Be in a Movie?

Following his award-winning film *Subnivean* and critically acclaimed film *Crookery*, filmmaker Jonathan Perry's upcoming production is set to film in the Caribbean. The production is in search of a fishing trawler owned by a resident of any Caribbean island on which to film multiple scenes.

The live-action film will be using the Caribbean waters to replicate poaching culture in the Andaman Sea. The motion picture is set for international theatrical release and will be filmed in May following all required pandemic safety measures. The production is seeking to rent a tired-looking but functional 20- to 30-foot trawler for approximately 15 days to use in the film.

The submission window closes February 15th and all submissions will be notified of their selection status.

Vessel information including a picture of the vessel and details can be emailed to press@muybridgefilms.com or texted to +1 (419) 967-5171.

Free SSCA Offshore Webinar

Join the Seven Seas Cruising Association for a free webinar for boaters who would like an idea of how to prepare their boat for offshore passages. Well-known marine engineer Peter S. Burch will be the key speaker. Burch does boat safety checks for offshore vessels at various rally events, such as the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC).

This webinar will focus on why and when to do a vessel check, who can assist with a safety check, and some items to consider for any near-shore or offshore voyage. If you are preparing for offshore experience as a skipper or crewmember and want to learn more about key issues, this webinar is for you.

The webinar format allows captains and crewmembers to review, with an expert, aspects they should consider before making ocean passages, such as rigging, safety equipment, offshore preparations, and more.

A checkup performed by experienced mariners, and then followed by the captain's corrective measures, can make a real difference for any voyage!

The free offshore webinar will be held on February 10th at 7:00PM Eastern time.

Register at www.ssca.org or at https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Compass* we welcome new advertisers Savvy Navvy on page 29, NavTechUSSA on page 37, and Bequia Pizza Hut in the Market Place section, pages 36 and 37. Good to have you with us!







BUSINESS BRIEFS

DYT Launches World's Largest Purpose-Built Semi-Sub

DYT Superyacht Transport has announced the delivery of its purpose-built semi-submersible vessel, *Yacht Servant.* The official delivery took place on January 4th at Yantai CIMC Raffles Shipyard on China's Shandong Peninsula. Three days later, the vessel embarked on her maiden voyage from Shanghai to Panama.



With a length overall of 213.70 metres, a 46-metre beam and a 4.6-metre draft, *Yacht Servant* provides virtually double the capacity of her predecessors. The IMO Tier-III compliant vessel is also 32 percent more fuel efficient, while her 6,380-square-metre deck space accommodates more vessels per crossing, including deep-draft sailing yachts.

Whereas the current vessels in DYT's semi-submersible fleet require operating water depths of around 14 metres, *Yacht Servant* only requires an operating water depth of nine metres using a unique float-on, float-off system that is widely considered to be the safest and most efficient in the world. *Yacht Servant's* new specialized deck located behind the bridge — built to accommodate tenders, containers and small race boats — also opens a new world of convenience and flexibility for owners.

On completion of her 2022 maiden voyage, *Yacht Servant* will return to China to transport cargo to Colombia during the yachting off-season, before arriving in the Caribbean in May to commence her sailing schedule between Florida, the Caribbean and the Mediterranean.

Vsit www.yacht-transport.com for more information.

Sevenstar Yacht Transport Sailings

Laurien Hoving reports: We are Sevenstar Yacht Transport and we would like to present you our Caribbean sailing schedules for the coming months. Together with our agent Douglas Yacht Services based in Le Marin, Martinique, we promise you that we will take good care of you throughout the shipping process from enquiry to booking and from loading to the final delivery of the yacht.

March: Departing Le Marin, Martinique, between March 5th and 25th, bound for Genoa, Italy, and Lorient, France

April: Departing Le Marin, Martinique; St. Thomas, USVI; and St. John's, Antigua, between April 5th and 25th, bound for Palma de Mallorca, Spain, and Genoa, Italy

Departing Le Marin, Martinique; St Thomas, USVI; and St John's, Antigua, between April 5th and 25th, bound for Southampton, UK; and IJmuiden, Netherlands

May: Departing St. Thomas, USVI, and St. John's, Antigua, between May 5th and 25th, bound for Palma de Mallorca, Spain and Genoa, Italy

Departing Le Marin, Martinique; St. Thomas, USVI, and St. John's, Antigua, between May 5th and 25th, bound for Southampton, UK, and IJmuiden, Netherlands

For details contact one of our helpful representatives via welcome@sevenstar-yacht-transport.com, see ad on page 7, and see ad for Douglas Yacht Services on page 14.

Peters & May Transport Supports Antigua Sailing Week

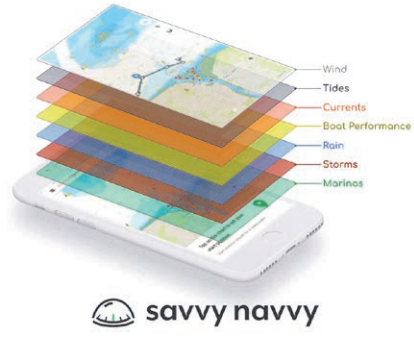
Craig Stanbury of Peters & May Global Yacht Transport says, "We are very much looking forward to Antigua Sailing 2022 and are extremely proud to have been associated with this regatta for so many years. The organising team works extremely hard putting it together and we appreciate what it offers to the sailing community.

"After Antigua Sailing Week ends (on May 6th)," adds Stanbury, "Peters & May will be offering a number of departures to various destinations, so we encourage everyone who is thinking about having their yacht shipped to speak with us and discuss their plans and requirements as early as possible."

Visit www.petersandmay.com for details.

savvy navvy Marks 2021 as Record Growth Year

Marine technology company savvy navvy marked a record year in 2021. Its navigation app for boaters smashed its global user growth target. It pioneered new technical innovations and established leading industry partnerships. Setting out to simplify boating technology, UK-based savvy navvy was launched four years ago. More than 43 million miles have been plotted by its hundreds of thousands users globally.



In the last quarter of 2021 savvy navvy doubled its revenue and exceeded its crowdfunding user growth campaign targets for the year. Constantly innovating its technology based on user feedback, savvy navvy launched dozens of new major app features, including the industry-first departure scheduler. In the near future a functionality enabling users to see 3D terrain along coastlines will go live, making a huge difference when navigating trickier waters.

"The past year has been our biggest yet and while some is certainly down to the big boom happening in boating at the moment, working directly with our end-users to hear their views has enabled us to make a better product that meets the market demand to simplify boating navigation," says Jelte Liebrand, CEO and founder.

Heading into its fifth year, savvy navvy promises more exciting developments for 2022, focusing on driving engagement, innovating and using technical advances such as integrating with onboard systems like AIS and NMEA2000.

For more information visit www.savvy-navvy.com and see ad on page 29.

K3 Aboard as Sponsor of STIR 2022

Carol Bareuther reports: Organizers of the 48th St. Thomas International Regatta (STIR) have announced the sponsorship of The K3 Company, a global manufacturer of premium outdoor gear and accessories, which specializes in waterproof gear and accessories. STIR, set for March 25th through 27th, is hosted by the St. Thomas Yacht Club in the US Virgin Islands.

A few of the products and prizes offered at STIR 2022 are the Stoic K3 Excursion Duffle Backpack, the versatile Poseidon 20-liter dry bag backpack, and the 15-liter K3 Icon Sport Dry bag. All K3 bags are catered towards sport, travel, and the adventurous sailing community.

For more information on The K3 Company visit www.thek3company.com, and visit https://stthomasinternationalregatta.com for more information on the St. Thomas International Regatta.

Caribbean ECO-News

Illegal Bird Trafficking in Cuba Escalates

Tahira Carter reports: BirdsCaribbean is concerned at the drastic increase in the capture and trafficking of wild birds in Cuba over the past two years, and is urging the Cuban Government to enforce laws put in place to curb the practice.

The economic strain brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic has spurred a return to the centuries-old tradition of trapping and selling birds as a way to make a living — and it has reached unprecedented levels, putting already declining populations of birds at risk. These birds are sold on social media platforms, in particular Facebook and WhatsApp.



HEMANT KISHAN

The colorful Painted Bunting is one of the most popular migratory songbirds captured by trappers for the bird trade.

The November issue of *Cuban Birder* includes a list of 36 Facebook groups that are openly selling wild birds. BirdsCaribbean recorded daily catches from images shared by trappers in just one of these groups (with 46,000 members). Our data showed that 3,270 birds from 28 different species were captured during the month of October 2021 alone.

BirdsCaribbean Executive Director, Dr. Lisa Sorenson, commented, "It is sobering and worrying that so many birds were removed from the wild in the space of one month. When you consider all the Facebook groups dedicated to the trafficking of birds, paired with sales made via alternative social networks, such as Whatsapp, the dire extent of the situation becomes clear — bird captures likely add up to tens of thousands of birds each season."

The ease of selling wild birds online provides an opportunity for residents to substantially boost their income. Many sales of captured birds are local, but international demand has also increased. The capture and sale of these birds has become a part of the international wildlife trade, which often has links to organized crime.

The Cuban archipelago is a critical area for migratory species, many of which are already in decline in their breeding territories in North America. Some use Cuba as a stopover to rest and refuel during their long migrations to countries in Central and South America; others spend many months wintering in Cuba. The tired, hungry birds arrive in large flocks on the coast, giving trappers the opportunity to catch thousands. Many birds die in the process.

Migratory birds account for approximately 70 percent of the bird population in Cuba, with some species spending at least half of each year on the island. The brightly colored Painted Bunting, Indigo Bunting and Rose-Breasted Grosbeak are among the most targeted birds for capture. Many targeted species are on the US Fish and Wildlife Service Birds of Conservation Concern 2020 List. Endemic bird species are also targeted by trappers.

The increase in trapping comes at a time when the survival of Caribbean birds is in jeopardy. Wild bird populations have been severely impacted by climate change and resulting extreme weather events, as well as habitat loss due to development.

BirdsCaribbean expresses its deep appreciation to dedicated Cuban ornithologists and conservationists who continue to work on this issue through education and outreach initiatives. It is vital to build on their valuable work through an expanded national environmental education campaign in schools, communities, and national media.

It is also vital to invest in alternative and sustainable ways for Cuban citizens to make a living, providing incentives to protect wildlife instead of destroying it. Community-based tourism, including bird and nature guides, as well as citizen science monitoring programs such as eBird, could be expanded. Cuba has reopened to tourism and its population is now approximately 87 percent vaccinated. As tourists return, community tourism including eco-tourism and nature guiding could be expanded as alternative livelihoods, catering to an increasingly environmentally conscious tourism market -- benefiting all involved.

Visit www.birdscaribbean.org for more information.

Cuban Scientists Complete Expedition to Study Coral Reefs

Obtaining accurate measurements of coral health is critical in a time of increasing impacts of human development and climate change.

In December, a team of marine biologists from the University of Havana's Center for Marine Research and Center for Coastal Ecosystems Research undertook a two-week expedition to Jardines de la Reina National Park, the largest marine protected area in the Caribbean, to establish a baseline of coral reef health in advance of major restoration efforts.

The expedition was originally planned for August, 2020, to coincide with the spawning event of elkhorn coral, but was postponed several times due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Corals are extremely susceptible to climate change, as disease outbreaks tend to thrive in warmer waters. Coral bleaching is directly attributable to warmer waters.

During the expedition, scientists assessed the health status of 29,000 corals. In addition, Noel Lopez, a world-renowned underwater photographer and diver for the Avalon-Azulmar Dive Center — which manages scuba tourism activities at Jardines de la Reina — took 5,000 photos and videos of corals and associated biodiversity. These will be critical in determining changes over time.

The baseline of coral reef health documented on this expedition will inform major restoration efforts in 2022 as part of a grant from the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF) Ecological based Adaptation Program. The CBF grant is critical in supporting multiyear efforts, such as this one, that involve sharing coral restoration lessons learned with Caribbean nations.

In Bayahibe, Dominican Republic, a major international workshop is planned for February 7th through 11th. This will bring together Cuban and Dominican coral scientists to chart a course forward in implementing large-scale, sexually fused coral enhancement. FUNDEMAR, the Dominican Foundation for Marine Studies, and SECORE International will host the workshop.

Repeat expeditions in Jardines de la Reina will take place soon after the workshop, and again in August. Biologists will collect coral spawn to fuse and use for replanting at Jardines de la Reina. Jardines de la Reina was recently named one of Marine Conservation Institute's Blue Parks, joining 20 prestigious marine parks around the world. The Blue Park designation effort is led by Wildlife Conservation Society, Environmental Defense, TOF, and a number of Cuban agencies.

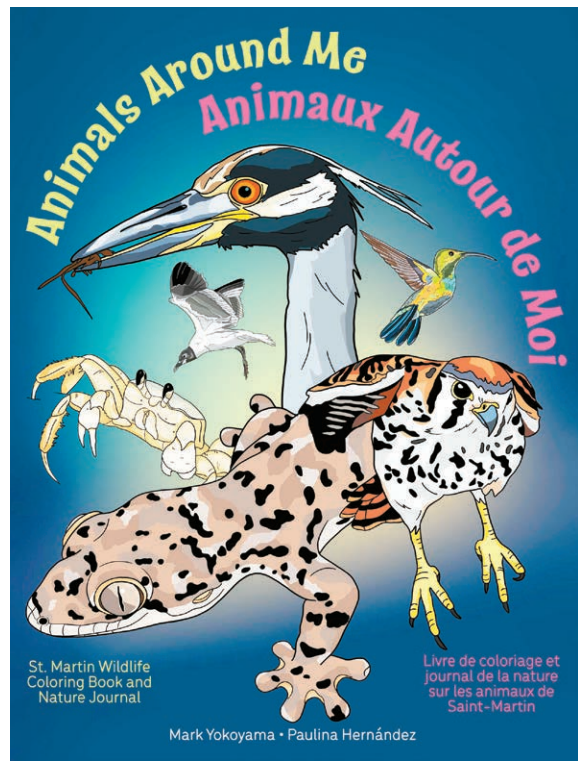
The Ocean Foundation and the University of Havana have collaborated since 1999 to study and protect marine habitats on both sides of the Florida Straits. Research expeditions such as this are not only making new discoveries, but also providing hands-on experience for Cuba's next generation of marine scientists.

Read the full story at oceanfdn.org/cuban-scientists-study-coral-reefs.

New Coloring Book Highlights Animals of St. Martin

The Les Fruits de Mer association has published a new bilingual (French and English) coloring book, *Animals Around Me*, which showcases 44 animals that live on St. Martin. The book is also a nature journal, where kids can record their own observations and make their own drawings of animals.

"It is never too early to learn about St. Martin's amazing wildlife," said author Mark Yokoyama. "Some of our most common animals are ones that live only here on this island, and nowhere else in the world. We made this book to share these incredible animals, and their stories, with younger kids."



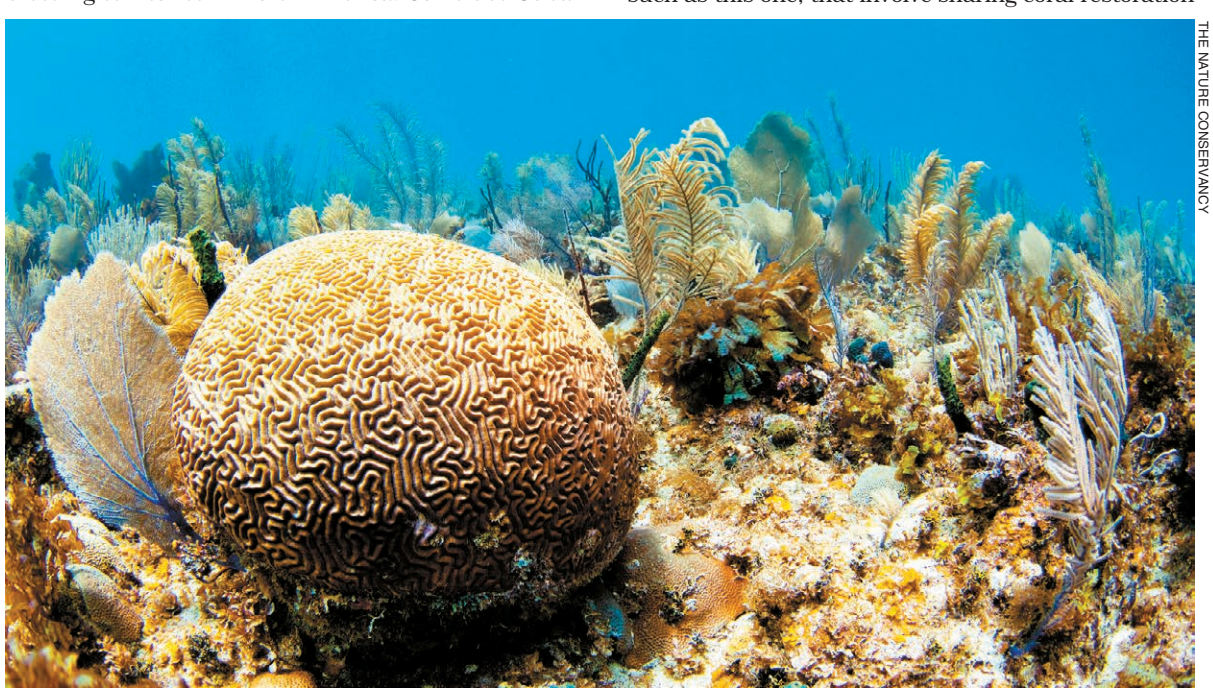
Animals Around Me *is a new coloring book and nature journal featuring St. Martin wildlife.*

The book spotlights birds, insects, reptiles and more. For each species, there is an illustrated coloring page with a short description of the animal. There's also a space to take notes on any sightings of the animal, and a place to do a drawing of it. There is also a visual guide on the back cover with color photos of each animal. These features encourage kids to observe these animals in the wild.

The book is available as a free download from http://lesfruitsdemer.com. It book is also available on amazon.com worldwide.

Free Lesser Antilles Marine Mammals Poster

Speaking of great free resources, you can download a free printable poster of all the marine mammals of the Lesser Antilles at www.car-spaw-rac.org/IMG/pdf/plaquette_cetaces_agoa.pdf



THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

Left: The baseline of coral reef health documented on this Cuban expedition will inform major restoration efforts.



This paradise is worth defending.

The Nature Conservancy works throughout the Caribbean to protect the ocean, coasts and coral reefs on which we all depend. We need your support to create a bright, resilient future for nature and communities.

Help us preserve the way of life that makes the Caribbean islands so unique.

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REGATTA NEWS

Salty Dawg Rally Hosts 82 Boats

The Salty Dawg Sailing Association's 2021 fall rally to Antigua or the Abacos departed from Hampton, Virginia, in late October. The fleet comprised 82 cruising boats (60 percent monohulls and 40 percent multihulls) and some 300 skippers and crew.

SDSA President Hank George noted, "The rally had mostly good weather for both the Antigua and Bahamas contingents. With weather and routing support from Chris Parker of the Marine Weather Center and with shoreside support from the SDSA rally management team, skippers were able to choose the safest routes and rely upon constant tracking and communications."

Antigua Port Officer Bob Osborn was honored with Antigua's Faithful and Meritorious Service Medal – Gold award. Antigua & Barbuda's Governor General Sir Rodney Williams noted that for the past five years the rally has made a significant contribution to the local yachting industry and the economy.

Visit www.saltydawgsailing.org for more information.

***Team Island Water World* Tops Course de L'Alliance**

Eleven teams battled for top honors in St. Maarten in the 18th annual Course de L'Alliance sponsored by FKG Marine Rigging on the weekend of December 4th, 2021. With two bullets and a total of six points over three races in the CSA Racing class, Frits Bus's Melges 24, *Team Island Water World*, was overall winner. *FKG*, another Melges 24, and *Dauntless*, a Beneteau First 47.7, offered stiff competition and ended up in second and third place respectively.



In the Multihull class *Team Catamaran Guru Brokers* took the win over *Quality Time*. Robbie Ferron sailed his Nonsuch 33, *Bunglebird,* to first place in the CSA Cruising Class. The event included three races for the CSA Racing Class and two races each for the Cruising and Multihull classes, divided over the two days.

Visit www.smyc.com/coursedelalliance for more information.

NARC Rally via Bermuda

The 21st North American Rally to the Caribbean (NARC) saw a fleet of 21 sailboats — 17 starting from Newport, Rhode Island, and four starting from the Chesapeake Bay — departing on October 31st, 2021, and reaching Bermuda with only two days of light air on the passage. In Bermuda, however, the fleet waited out a gale and left a day later than scheduled on NARC's final leg from Bermuda to St. Maarten. (A few NARC boats did not plan to make landfall in St. Maarten: three sailed to the Virgin Islands, and one sailed to Martinique.)

"This was the first year that I had to use fuel jugs sailing from Newport to Bermuda, as we had over two days of motoring," said NARC organizer Hank Schmitt. "That small inconvenience was balanced nicely, however, with a good reaching breeze for most of the second leg. Overall, it was an easy year."

The 22nd NARC will depart from Newport on October 29th (or the best weather window after that). Schmitt says, "It's only for experienced skippers or owners who listen to advice from the professionals and have seaworthy boats, as we do not want to talk anyone into going offshore who may not be ready."

Schmitt is also the CEO of Offshore Passage Opportunities (a crew network service) and participates in each year's rally, skippering the St. Maarten-based Swan 48 *Avocation* as part of the OPO Swan Program. Sailors who do not have a ride and wish to participate can sign aboard a Swan in the OPO Offshore Swan Program to become a full working crew in the rally, sailing with a professional captain. OPO members get information about how to crew for free with NARC Rally skippers who need experienced crew to help safely make the passage south.

Visit www.sailopo.com/NARC_Rally_NARC_Rally_Overview.aspx for more information.

St. Lucia and BVI Sailors Shine in Junior PanAms

Congratulations to young sailors Clemente Seguel (Chile), Juan Pablo Cardozo (Argentina) and Luc Chevrier (St. Lucia), who took the top three places respectively in a fleet of 14 sailors sailing the ILCA7 (Laser) in the 2021 Junior PanAm Games. Thad Lettsome of the BVI finished in sixth place. At 19, Lettsome was one of the youngest sailors in the fleet and finished second in the under-21 category.

The Games took place in November 2021 in Cali, Colombia. For athletes aged 17 to 22, the junior games provide a pathway for athletes transitioning from junior to elite competition in 39 sports.

New Around St. Martin Kitefoil Record

Margot Mesnard reports: After two days racing in Orient Bay, St. Martin, and around Tintamarre island, December 12th saw the last race of the Caribbean Foiling Championships 2021 — the famous around the island race.

With strong winds and possible showers forecast, Sacha Daunar, an experienced racing judge for the French sailing federation of Guadeloupe, said weather conditions were fine to compete and departure was set at 10:00AM, with wings leaving first, kitefoil leisure and windfoil second, and kitefoil professionals last.

Although the wingfoilers were doing a "half around the island" course, leaving

WILL HOGAN



from Orient Bay, heading south to Philipsburg, and then to Long Bay, Théo Demanez dedided to completely circumnavigate the island by wingfoil. Being the first and only one to do it, he set the record at 2 hours and 53 minutes.

In the kitefoil leisure category, all riders went around the island in less than two hours, with Félix Bellais completing the tour in 1 hour and 28 minutes.

In the professional category, the race was intense and riders were close together, with four riders beating the previous record of 1 hour and 29 minutes, established three years ago. The winner, Julien Quentel, completed the lap around the island in 1 hour and 12 minutes. Tiger Tyson arrived second, 1 minute and 30 seconds later.

Priority was given to ensuring safety for all riders. Safety boats were posted in several locations around the island. All riders were geolocated in real time with a SIM card provided by Dauphin Telecom. Two riders had to be rescued by the safety boats due to gear issue and fatigue, but no incidents were reported.

Contact sas@caribbeanfoiling.com for more information.

Viking Explorers En Route to Grenada

Twenty boats and 71 crew departed Marina Las Palmas in the Canary Islands bound for Port Louis Marina in Grenada with the fifth edition of the Viking Explorers rally on January 6th. That day featured strong tradewinds. A few of the fleet decided to leave a day later.

Crews from Australia, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Italy, Belgium, France, New Zealand, Sweden, the Netherlands, Poland and Germany sailed boats ranging from nine to 17 metres. Participants had the choice of two routes, the direct route of 2,800 miles, or one with a partway stop in Mindelo, Cape Verde.

—*Continued on next page*

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Ten rally boats are participating in the GOES Project for environmental research, by taking plankton samples. Dr. Howard Dryden aboard *S/Y Copepod* is leading the group. He says: "What we are doing with the citizen science project could be hugely important, it may end up being one of the most intensive and extensive surveys of micro-plastic undertaken."



The 2023 edition of the Viking Explorers already has 20 entries and is filling up fast. *Visit www.vikingexplorersrally.com for more information.*

Inaugural ARC January Underway!

For the first time, Gran Canaria bid farewell to an ARC fleet in the New Year as ARC January 2022 set sail from Las Palmas on January 9th. The new route has brought together an eclectic fleet of yachts and crews from 30 nations to embark on a 2,700-nautical-mile tradewind sail to St. Lucia.

The smallest yacht was *Freeway of Penpol*, a Freedom 35 returning to an ARC start line 30 years after its Atlantic crossing with ARC 1992, and the largest was the Oyster 745 *Kalia*, one of the newest boats in the fleet (launched in 2021). The start on the 9th included ten catamarans and a Cruising Division of 28 yachts. Six more yachts remained in Las Palmas Marina completing final fixes or awaiting parts and crew and hoped to join the rest of the fleet shortly.

Ahead of the start, a series of online seminars, individual safety checks, and assistance with local information from the World Cruising Club team supported skippers' preparations.



J MITCHELL

The inaugural ARC January fleet getting underway at Las Palmas.

The majority of boats were expected to take 18 to 21 days to make Atlantic crossing and arrive in Rodney Bay Marina at the end of January. *Visit www.worldcruising.com for more information.*

RORC Transat Arrives in Grenada

As this issue of *Compass* went to press, the MOD70 *Maserati*, skippered by Giovanni Soldini, crossed the finish line in Grenada on January 15th to take line honors in the RORC Transatlantic Race. Her corrected time was 6 days, 18 hours, 51 minutes and 41 seconds.

Three of these 70-foot trimarans — *Maserati, PowerPlay* and *Argo* — had a downwind match race for the last 500 miles of the crossing, hitting speeds of over 30 knots and sometimes being within sight of each other. *PowerPlay* arrived second, less than an hour behind *Maserati.*

Although *Maserati* was the only one of the three with foils, one foil was damaged



ARTHUR DANIEL

Maserati *took line honors in the RORC Transat.*

early in the race and her win came down to a decision to round Barbados to the north, some 150 miles from the finish. Soldini explains: "We decided to sail to the northwest and for sure it was a good idea. We crossed behind *PowerPlay* and *Argo*, but stayed in good wind which shifted right, allowing us to stay at maximum speed and come down to the rhumb line."

Visit https://rorctransatlantic.rorc.org for more information.

ON THE HORIZON

Three Diam 24s to Race in CMC IV

The St. Maarten Yacht Club will host the fourth annual Caribbean Multihull Challenge from February 4th through 6th. The event is open to all multihull sailors on racing catamarans and trimarans, chartered cats, and cruising multihulls.

The coming CMC IV will feature a new class. Three Diam 24 trimarans were shipped from France in a container, and with an assembly time of less than two hours each, the local owners and crew made quick work of getting them ready to practice.

The CMC race committee, headed by Race Officer Rien Korteknie, will create special courses for these boats. With their shoal (1.6 metre) draft they can race close to shore, providing eye candy for beach goers. Korteknie and his committee will also throw in challenging distance courses, giving these skippers the chance to blast through offshore waves under their 37-square-metre gennakers.

The SMYC has forecast that CMC IV will equal or beat the record number of entries seen in 2020.

Visit www.CaribbeanMultihullChallenge.com for more information.

Coming Up: Bocas del Toro "Fungatta"

Ray Jason reports: The Third Annual Bocas del Toro Regatta, organized by Bocas Marina, will take place on February 19th. This event will feature monohull and multihull divisions and will combine serious racing with energetic partying. Actually, the awards banquet might surpass the racing itself, since this is traditionally a "fungatta."

There are always great prizes donated by local businesses and the entrance fee is easy on the wallet. The regatta takes place in what many consider "the undiscovered Caribbean" — Bocas del Toro, Panama.

Visit www.bocasmarina.com for more information.

St. Thomas International Regatta Next Month

Carol Bareuther reports: The St. Thomas International Regatta (STIR), set for March 25th through 27th, is hosted by the St. Thomas Yacht Club in the US Virgin Islands.

Nearly 20 yachts were already registered as of mid-December, a number higher than pre-Covid. This includes vessels from 24 to 65 feet, in CSA Spinnaker, CSA Non-Spinnaker, and One-Design classes, with crews hailing from the Caribbean, the USA and Europe.

"We are looking forward to the tradewind breeze and some swell to get her going," says Johnny Mordaunt, who has entered *Tschuss*, a Fast 40 originally built for the F40 class sailed in the Solent, in the CSA Spinnaker Racing Class.

—*Continued on next page*



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Other entries in this class include the USA's Jim Madden's Swan 601, *Stark Raving Mad VII*; Antigua-based Ondeck's Farr 65 race charter, *Spirit of Juno*; Puerto Rico's Jaime Torres' Melges 32, *Smile and Wave*; the USVI's Peter Corr's Summit 40, *Blitz*; and the USA's Donald Nicholson's J/121, *Apollo*.

The one-design IC24 class alone can have up to nearly 20 boats on the start line. A limited number IC24s are available for charter.

Visit www.stthomasinternationalregatta.com for more information.

Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta

The 2022 edition of "the Classics" will see three days of racing, reduced from four in previous years. Race days will be April 1st, 2nd and 3rd, with the prizegiving held on the last evening. Registration day will be March 30th with the single-handed race and Concours d'Elegance on the 31st.

The Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta is the premier classic sailing event of the Caribbean, attracting a large number of classics every year from all around the world. In its 33rd edition this year, the event enjoys a wonderful variety of competitors including traditional craft from the islands; vintage, classic and historic ketches, sloops, schooners and yawls; Tall Ships; more recently built Spirit of Tradition yachts; Dragons; and a pre-1976-designed class.

Contact info@antiguaclassics.com if you are interested in taking part.

Grand Return for Antigua Sailing Week

Louay Habib reports: Five months before the April 30th start of Antigua Sailing Week, over 60 boats were already on the scratch sheet. Sailors from around the world are relishing a grand return to action at the Caribbean's oldest premier yacht regatta. Early entries for the numerous CSA Racing Classes include the Volvo 70 *Green Dragon* with a crew from CYC Seattle. High Performance displacement boats include Adrian Lee's Irish Swan 60 *Lee Overlay Partners*, OnDeck's Antiguan Farr 65 *Spirit of Juno*, and the potent new British Swan 58 *Omii*, skippered by Shahid Hamid.



ANTIGUA SAILING WEEK

Antigua Sailing Week expects a grand return to action.

ASW Racing Manager Jaime Torres says, "The main criteria for racing class splits are performance and planing ability; length is a secondary parameter to speed. The race management team is looking at class splits based on boat type, rather than overall length. This will create classes that will have really exciting boat-on-boat racing. While it is nearly impossible to create a class split that satisfies all racers, our most important aim is to create classes filled with boats of similar sail plans and planing ability, and within a tight rating band."

CSA Racing has the prospect of three Fast 40s doing battle: Jeremy Thorp's *Phan*, James Neville's *INO XXX*, and *Tschuss*, skippered by Johnny Mordaunt with a New York YC team. An international set of well-sailed J Boats will be in the combat zone, including Chris Body's *El Ocaso*, Peter Lewis' *Whistler*, Pamala Baldwin's *Liquid*, and Andrew McIrvine with a RORC team racing *Wings*. Also set to feature is proven winner *Pata Negra*, raced by Jonathon Pudney with a team from the Itchenor SC. Peter Corr will be representing the St. Thomas YC with his impeccable King 40, *Blitz*.

Antigua Sailing Week has skippers who have raced at the regatta for decades. Local heroes to add to the mix will include Sir Hugh Bailey's *Rebel*, Bernie Evan Wong's *Taz*, Sir Richard Matthews' ST37 *Holding Pattern*, Geoffrey Pidduck's *High Tide*, and Sandy Mair's *Cricket*.

Seven teams are already entered for the Sportboat Class, including three 1720s from Antigua and four Melges 24s from Antigua, St. Barts and St. Maarten. "The Sportsboat Class is open to all types of planing boats around 26 to 28 feet. Although racing under CSA we are considering offering prizes for classes with three or more boats that meet one-design criteria," says Torres. The plan is to start the Sportsboat Class from the same committee boat as the cruising classes. The cruising boats will typically set off on long courses, leaving plenty of time and space to run multiple short, sharp races for the Sportboats.

CSA Club Class is designed to be like the early days, when Antigua Sailing Week was popular with cruising boats. "Club Class is designed with a format that is affordable, inviting, and non-aggressive," confirmed Torres. "Club Class boats use the easy and inexpensive CSA Simplified Rating and are scored using the Variable Handicap, so your rating changes every day according to your prior performance. This gives every team a better opportunity to taste the sweetness of a podium finish. Typically, the Club Class races on scenic coastal courses and has more reaching legs designed for laid-back sailing."

Over 20 Bareboat teams have already entered for ASW with teams expected from Brazil, Germany, Ireland, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the US. Three CSA Bareboat classes are planned. Torres says, "No other Caribbean regatta has as many bareboats racing in their own classes against people from all over the world. It creates an awesome mix of people and sailing skills. As several of the classes are composed of identical boats, the effort to get just a fraction of a knot faster is all down to the team that sails the best.

"Our goal is to give each class a regatta that feels like it is their own," concludes Torres. "We are really focusing on catering for racing that suits different types of boats. The style of racing will differ across the wide spectrum of classes. We would also love to run a Double-Handed class and I am hoping that teams racing Class40s and others will come forward."

Racing action starts on April 30th with the Peters & May Round Antigua Race, a stand-alone race that is the perfect warm-up for Antigua Sailing Week. The main event will run from May 1st through 6th, with a lay day on the 4th.

Visit www.sailingweek.com for more information.

International Optimist Regatta Set for June

Carol Bareuther reports: Registration opened last month for the 29th annual International Optimist Regatta (IOR), the TOTE Maritime Clinic, and the TOTE Team Race.

The TOTE Clinic takes place June 13th through 15th, followed by the TOTE Team Race, June 16th, and the IOR June 17th through 19th. For nearly three decades, this weeklong event has been recognized throughout the Caribbean for providing a great skill-sharpening ground for top sailors and an excellent entry-level platform for juniors new to the sport.

The 2022 IOR can accept only a maximum of 125 sailors, so register early at www.regattanetwork.com/event/23549.

Sailors can compete in Advanced Red (ages 13-15), Blue (ages 11-12), White (ages 10 and under) or Beginner Green fleets.

Trophies will be awarded to the top five finishers in the Red, Blue, and White classes and top three overall as well as the top place female. Participation awards will be awarded to all Green fleet sailors. Additional awards include the Peter Ives' Perpetual Trophy (superb sailor/individual) and the Chuck Fuller Sportsmanship Perpetual Trophy.

The IOR is sponsored by the US Virgin Islands Department of Tourism, TOTE Maritime, and the K3 Company.

For more information visit stthomasyachtclub.org/sailing/regattas/international-optimist-regatta or www.regattanetwork.com/event/23549.

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Polygala *stood by the distressed* Charlotte Jane, *but already had a crowd — a reality TV show crew — aboard.*

A Challenging Crossing — and We're Here!

by Sally Erdle

"We've gone through the trials of the pandemic, the challenging winds and seas of an ocean crossing — and now we're here!" Scotsman Jon Moss, who sailed the Malö 42 *Misty Mhor* with his partner Fiona McLean, his brother-in-law Alistair and friend Dugald, told *Compass*, "For much of the crossing it was quite rolly, relentless. The sea state was moderate to rough and our stern was slewing down the waves — we hit 12 knots surfing. But our older hull shape is stable and we made it in 18 days, second in our class!"



SALLY ERDLE

Misty Mhor: "We made a daily inspection of stores and ate accordingly." Wilson the Watermelon made it all the way to St. Lucia.

Nearly 900 sailors from 29 different countries arrived in Rodney Bay Marina, St. Lucia, in December 2021 in the 36th edition of the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers, organized by World Cruising Club (WCC).

The 147 boats on the entry list ranged from the Maestro 35 *Annina* at 10.75 metres (35 feet) to *Helena*, a 38-metre (125-foot) schooner. The average length of the monohulls was 15.70 metres (51½ feet) and the average length of the multihulls was not far behind, at 14.60 metres (48 feet).

Of those 147 boats, 141 set sail from the Canary Islands on November 21st. WCC's Communications Director Jeremy Wyatt tells *Compass*, "A lot of the dropouts were brand-new boats. Causes included pushed-back delivery dates, supply chain issues, and the fact that some owners from the US and Australia couldn't get to the Canaries in time to prepare their boats." Some of these planned to join the new ARC January rally, which departed the Canaries bound for St. Lucia on January 9th.

Twelve of the entries were built in 2020 and ten (two monohulls and eight multihulls) in 2021, just months before the start. While the median age of the monohulls in the fleet was 14 years, the median age of the multihulls was only two years.

One benefit of the ARC starting from the Canary Islands is that the crews of new boats gain experience on the shakedown sail to get there, getting to know the boat and any areas of concern before undertaking the ocean crossing. In addition, the ARC's list of safety equipment is a major benefit when commissioning a new boat for long-distance sailing.

Experienced ARC sailor John Simpson on the British Discovery 55 *Casamara* says, "All the prepping of the safety equipment, the advice from World Cruising Club, and the rally requirements are invaluable, even if, like us, you have sailed several rallies before and done thousands of miles." New Zealander Simon Pollard of the Oyster 56 *Dragonfly* agrees. "Being part of the ARC forced us to have the highest level of safety gear aboard, and not cut corners."

We happen to be here

Simon, his wife Amandine Monsaingeon, and their children Tama (age 13), Luca (12), Naomi (10), and Lee (4), hadn't originally expected to end up in St. Lucia at all. They had entered the ARC+, which leaves the Canaries two weeks earlier and makes landfall in Grenada (see last month's *Compass*). Unfortunately, the discovery of serious issues with *Dragonfly's* carbon fibre mast prevented them from being ready for the ARC+, but after repairs were made they were able to make the ARC start. Simon tells *Compass* that the WCC did everything they could to help get *Dragonfly* ready for the ARC start, and other ARC crews were helpful with lending tools, a hand or advice. Amandine says, "I never heard of anyone who regretted sailing in the ARC."

Both Simon and Amandine had worked on superyachts in the Med and were passionate about boats. But they settled New Zealand and developed careers, and their family grew. Then, as Amandine explains, "We first had the idea in 2018 that, since we both love sailing, what better adventure but to lead a family expedition? Then 2019 was a dark year for many people around us. It cemented the fact that we wanted to simply have a good time with our children. The global events of 2020 precipitated us into action. There would never be a better time — we wanted to go before our oldest became uninterested. Between July and December 2020, we sold up, quit jobs and school, and flew to Spain for a first encounter with the boat of our dreams."

—*Continued on next page*



SALLY ERDLE

"We sold up, quit jobs and school, and flew to Spain for a first encounter with the boat of our dreams."



SALLY ERDLE

Left to right: Noa, John, Laura and Susan on Casamara. *"The girls have been fantastic."*

—*Continued from previous page*

Having successfully crossed the Atlantic, with Tama standing watches along with his parents, the family now has a three- to five-year sailing plan to return to New Zealand. And then? "We will be quite transformed," says Amandine. "The closeness we've developed with our children is just incredible. Nothing is more precious than this."

Laura Hampton also sailed in the ARC somewhat by happenstance. John and Susan Simpson on *Casamara* did the 2011 ARC aboard their previous boat, and when planning for this edition they initially thought they'd take another couple aboard. Several were interviewed before they chose young Belgian Noa Goovaerts and her boyfriend. "We had loads of options," John says, "but we really liked them. There was a shared ethos." When it turned out the boyfriend was unable to go, Noa suggested her Northern Irish friend Laura Hampton as a replacement. Laura, who is still at university, says, "I started sailing on Optis at age ten, then on tall ships. I love sailing on whatever boat I can, and it was a goal to do an ocean crossing." Noa and Laura received a scholarship from the Ocean Cruising Club to support young people learning about ocean sailing, and John and Susan committed to passing on their ocean sailing knowledge. John says, "The girls have been fantastic, a pleasure to have aboard."

In St. Lucia, *Compass* asked the *Casamara* crew, "What next?" As John and Sue said they'd be doing an Atlantic circuit, plan to do the 2022 ARC+, and are hoping for the World ARC in 2023, and Noa shared plans to join another boat and sail in the Oyster World Rally, Laura, who was headed straight back to university, looked wistful.

We got here together

Every ARC is different. In this edition the weather had a strong impact on routing, crew fatigue, and boat gear. After the calms and variable light airs of the first week, confused seas kicked up by an unusual cut-off low pressure system to the north of the Azores sent swells south to encounter this season's strong and persistent northeast trades.



TIM WRIGHT

Magic Dragon *arriving at midnight with* Charlotte Jane's *crew aboard.*



SALLY ERDLE

Peter, Jane, Vera and Rod on Magic Dragon.

Winds and waves were contributing factors that led to the abandonment of the Hanse 588 *Charlotte Jane III*, which suffered a catastrophic steering failure 1,500 nautical miles out from St. Lucia. With swells of four metres or more and winds reported as Force 8 gusting to Force 9, the boat was sailing at seven or eight knots when the crew felt an impact and lost steering immediately. While repairs were attempted the crew tried to steer the boat using a drogue and bridle, but this was ineffective in the confused seas. With waves striking the disabled boat from both the beam and the stern, those aboard were being thrown around and risked being injured. The decision was made to abandon ship. Fellow ARC yachts *Magic Dragon of Dart*, an Oyster 55, *JK Sail*, a Bavaria C57, and *Polygala*, a Beneteau Oceanis 51, *were* on station to assist. The five crewmembers from *Charlotte Jane III* transferred over to *Magic Dragon*.

In Rodney Bay, *Compass* caught up with the crew of *Magic Dragon*: Rod and Jane Halling, Rod's daughter Lizzie (26), their children Dorothy, (9) and twins Peter and Vera (4), and crewmember Craig.

Rod tells *Compass*, "Lizzie was on the six-to-nine morning watch. She heard a conversation on VHF indicating the *Charlotte Jane* was having an issue with their rudder. When Jane came on watch she heard the Mayday. We were about eight miles away. *Polygala* was already standing by *Charlotte Jane,* but 12 people — two sailing crew, four camera crew and six celebrities as part of a Belgian reality TV show — were on the 15-metre boat. The other boat might have taken two or three from *Charlotte Jane,* but we knew the crew probably would want to stay together. Jane said we could take all five, even though we only had 450 litres of water and our watermaker was broken.

"We were about an hour away. When we got there in the morning we circled *Charlotte Jane* to have a look and discuss. She had an 80-metre drogue out; the drogue was at a 30-degree angle off the stern. *Charlotte Jane* was beam to the wave train, rolling a lot — we could see the underside of both sides in the rolls. Plus there were two cross-swells, southeast and west of north, making quite horrid peaks. It was hard steering even with a rudder. They'd had a terrible night.

"*Charlotte Jane* has two wheels, operated through two gearboxes and connected to one rudder. Both gearboxes were torn off their mounts, six big bolts on each sheered, and everything inside them was shattered as if by a bomb. The stainless bar that connects the gearboxes was bent. Paul, the owner of *Charlotte Jane*, is very experienced and very handy, and had all the spares. He tried for more than 12 hours to make repairs, to no avail.

Jane takes up the story: "*Magic Dragon* did a circle to see how close we could get, but there was no way we could transfer crew boat-to-boat. I asked Paul to launch his liferaft, get everyone aboard, cut it loose and drift away from their boat.

"It took them eight or nine good pulls to deploy the raft and we were starting to wonder what plan B would be. Then it inflated. *Charlotte Jane* has high freeboard and was going way up and down. The crew all had their lifejackets on and were working up courage to abandon ship. Finally the first one dove headfirst into the raft. We all cheered, and hearing the cheers encouraged the others. They all got in, cut the raft loose and drifted back. We looped around to get them. *Magic Dragon* was going up and down so much that we decided to take them aboard on the windward side so we wouldn't crush them. We threw them a line, pulled them in, and got them over the lifelines by any means possible. *JK Sail* and *Polygala* stood by until they got the okay.

"We gave our new crew tea and pasta, and they called their families to say they were okay."

The crew transfer happened exactly in the middle of the crossing. To accommodate 12 people instead of seven, sleeping arrangements on *Magic Dragon* were reorganized and meals were bulked out. The *Charlotte Jane* crew shared watches and helped with the kids, and Paul even got the watermaker working. "They were really a great bunch, each with a different skill and all with a good attitude," Rod says.

Magic Dragon arrived at Rodney Bay Marina nine days after the rescue, at around midnight, to find over a hundred ARC participants cheering on the dock. "It was amazing to be welcomed by so many people, including the *Charlotte Jane* crews' family," Jane says. Subsequently, *Charlotte Jane III*, tracked via the on-board YB tracker, was recovered.

"The best part"

Every ARC arrival pulling into the marina was greeted with horn blasts from other participants, welcomed on the dock with rum punch and other goodies by members of the St. Lucia Tourism Authority, and whisked through a health check and Customs and Immigration. After weeks of challenging weather at sea, being surrounded by friends, shops, bars and restaurants, a fresh produce market and exciting local entertainment was overwhelming. Jon Moss probably speaks for many others when he says, "The best part was arriving," and Marina Manager Sean Devaux says, "The energy from the participants was contagious."

The Covid-safe prizegiving on the docks, with a big catamaran as the stage and sailors ensconced in their cockpits with party supplies provided by WCC, was a fitting celebration.

Each year, the Spirit of the ARC award is given to the crew or crewmember who, through their extraordinary actions, have demonstrated the spirit of what the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers is all about — safer and enjoyable longer distance cruising, in the company of others. The crew of *Magic Dragon of Dart* received the award for 2021, recognizing their selfless support of *Charlotte Jane III.*

Thanks to WCC and the St. Lucia Tourism Authority for making first-hand coverage of the arrival of ARC 2021 possible. The full list of winners and more information are available at www.worldcruising.com/arc.

ONE BOAT THAT DIDN'T ARRIVE

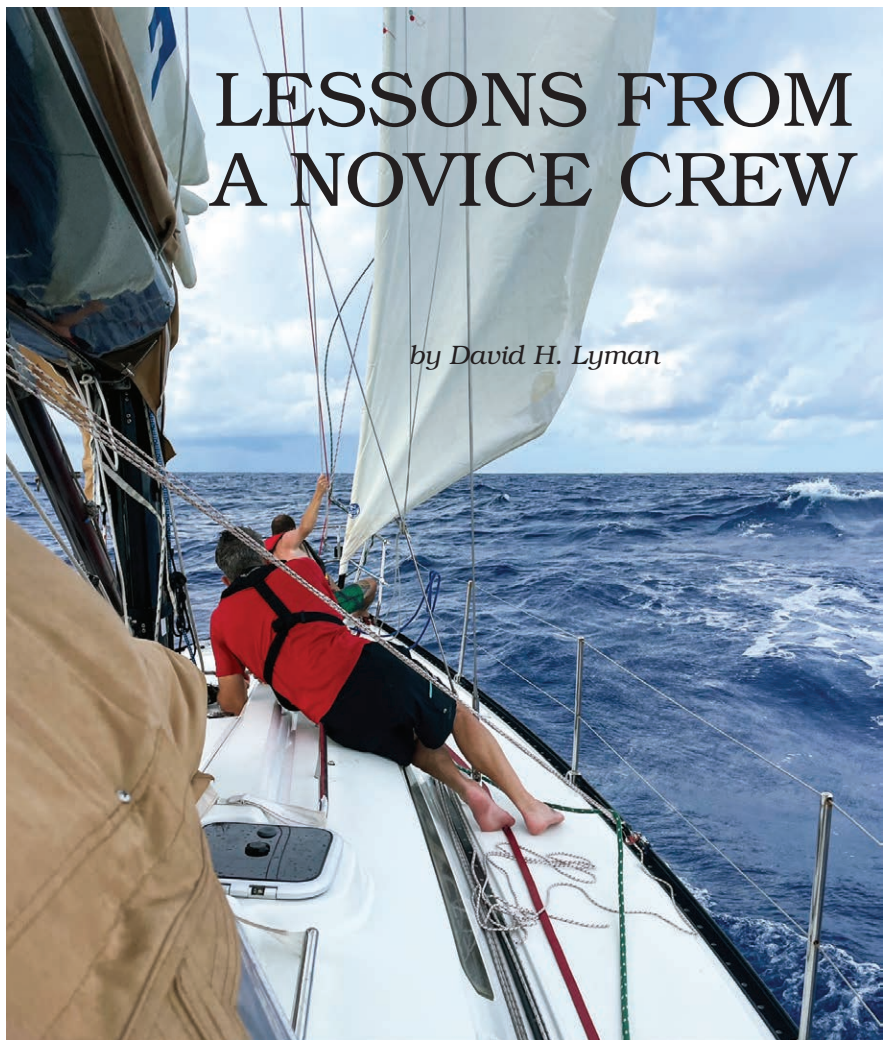
The ARC Racing Division, present within the ARC direct route only, is run using IRC ratings. Unlike the bulk of ARC participants, who are firmly in cruising mode, the Racing Division crews can be highly competitive.

In the latest edition of the ARC there was a big wind hole on the rhumb line, and light variable winds at the start. Before the start, meteorologist Chris Tibbs suggested that boats go south to the latitude of the Cape Verdes to pick up the tradewinds. However, a handful of boats in the Racing Division elected to go north in search of more wind. One of them, the French X-Yachts X4.3 *Agecanonix*, was 500 miles out of the Canaries in Force 8 winds with four- to five-metre breaking seas and cross swells, when an involuntary gybe caused the death of 73-year-old crewmember Max Delannoy. The main boom preventer apparently failed, and Delannoy, at the helm, was slammed into the wheel by the mainsheet and thrown partially overboard. The skipper, Philippe Anglade, was injured while trying to bring him back aboard, A Mayday call was made from *Agecanonix* requesting a medical evacuation, but Delannoy was declared dead before outside help could be provided.

With one deceased and one injured out of a three-man crew, the decision was made to abandon ship. At the request of the Maritime Rescue Coordination Center, the cruise ship *PV Mein Schiff 1* diverted to evacuate Anglade, his son Jean-Philippe, and the body of Max Delannoy. When the sea state permitted, *Agecanonix* was recovered and returned to the Canary Islands.

LESSONS FROM A NOVICE CREW

by David H. Lyman



IT was November 20th, 2021, and I had just arrived in St. Maarten on a Southerly 534. After a 1,700-mile voyage from Newport, Rhode Island, the crew and I were congratulating ourselves for completing a trouble-free voyage. Then we heard about *Lappwing*, a boat that had just been towed into harbor. There was a story to be told, and seeing as it's my job to tell stories, especially about boats and voyages, I went to work.

Lappwing and her crew, a couple on their first offshore voyage, had departed from Hampton, Virginia, heading for Antigua. Word on the docks was that some 550 miles north of the islands *Lappwing* had gone to the assistance of a disabled boat that was part of a rally fleet. In responding, they wound up with contaminated fuel and a broken rudder that threatened to fall off and flood the boat. They limped into St. Maarten in search of repairs. (See story on page 21.)

I spoke with *Lappwing's* owners, Roy and Sharon Lappalainen. Roy also sent me contact information for Karen, one of the crew on the disabled C&C 121 that they assisted.

My conversation with Karen tells a more complete story of problems encountered and solved. Karen read and made corrections to my text. Her story provides lessons for us all — crews, boatowners, skippers and rally organizers. I have used her words where I can, then compressed information to save space.

Why not a yacht, we thought

"My fiancé, Martin, and I have been traveling and exploring North America in a motorhome for the last three years," Karen began. "So why not a yacht, we thought. We go online to Find-a-Crew, and there's a boat owner looking for crew. We sign up and fly to Hampton, Virginia, to find we are part of a yacht rally to the Caribbean, a group of some 70 other boats and 300 people, all heading offshore to the islands.

"Two days prior to our arrival, we hear from our 75-year-old owner/captain that our fourth crewmember, an experienced sailor, ex-marine, and someone who had helped the owner sail his boat to Virginia, had suddenly departed earlier that day.

"Martin and I had never been to sea before so we knew we needed a fourth crewmember. We searched the internet and on short notice found a guy who was able to fly up to join us. He was a 25-year-old sailor who'd been living on his own boat for the last six months. He'd taken a few classes and had been hiring out as crew for short deliveries up and down the coast. I don't think he had any offshore experience. Not like this voyage."

Most of the owner's sailing experience had been on the Great Lakes, with some coastal cruising and racing on the East Coast. Karen said this offshore trip was a first for everyone on board.

The boats in Karen's rally had been advised to depart two days earlier than the planned November 1st, 2021. "The weather was changing," Karen told me. "A front was approaching. It was recommended we all leave to beat the storm. We had enough time to provision the boat but there was no time to get out into the bay and practice reefing, changing sails, man overboard drills, use of the VHF radio, steering or cooking underway.

"Most of us left on October 30th, but it wasn't like a race with everyone lined up. Boats left when they were ready.

"Conditions were okay on our departure and remained that way most of the way down. There were squalls where the wind did blow up into the 30s, but there were no storms. There were a lot of calm spells and light winds."

Karen and Martin were aboard a C&C 121, a 40-foot sloop. The design, a family club-racer/cruiser, was never really touted as an offshore passagemaker. Her fuel and water tank capacity (according to specifications for the design, 35 gallons and 80 gallons respectively) were not ideal for long voyages with multiple crew. Otherwise, Karen said, the boat was comfortable. There were two private cabins, the one forward where the owner slept, and the one aft for her and Martin. The new guy slept on the settee in the main cabin.

So, off they went, across the Gulf Stream, out into the Atlantic. This was "learning on the job" as the new sailors were getting used to sailing, navigating, trimming sails, reefing, living life on an angle. "We didn't use the mainsail at night for the first few days until we had a better understanding of sail management."

This C&C, I'll call her *Odyssey*, had a main with slab reefing and a jib of unknown lineage on a furling drum on the headstay. There was also a gennaker, stowed in its bag on the foredeck. "It wasn't until we were far out at sea, in lighter wind, that we got to rig it for the first time. The owner led us through the procedure of assembling the sail and hoisting it, but we had problems getting it completely furled, so for three evenings in a row we had to it take it down and stow it in its bag, which we lashed to the lifelines at the bow. Two mornings, we got up to find the bag had opened and the gennaker was streaming alongside the hull in the water. After the second time we bagged and stowed it never to be used again."

Odyssey was a few days into the voyage when the crew noticed that the solar panels were not keeping up with the boat's electrical demands: navigation instruments, lights, autopilot, refrigerator and freezer. So they ran the engine for a few hours each day to charge the batteries.

The 35 gallons in the C&C 121's fuel tank are enough to motor for about 50 hours. Running the engine for two to four hours a day to charge the batteries would use up all the fuel over a 15-day voyage. Karen said that the rally coordinator recommended carrying enough fuel to motor at least a quarter of the trip, "So we had another ten gallons." There was a large swath of calms extending from 200 miles south of Bermuda to 24 degrees north, before the easterly tradewinds filled in. Everyone heading from the East Coast to the Caribbean last fall wound up motoring for a few days. (The rally director told me he'd put 100 hours on his engine on the way down.)

By mid-voyage, *Odyssey* was already low on fuel, as well as water. They had only just begun to use their 1.5 gallon per hour watermaker, so had not replaced any of the fresh water in the tanks.

Day 8 - Halfway to the Caribbean

"On the morning of our eighth day at sea, we couldn't get the jib to completely unfurl. The wind was 20 knots, gusts to 25, so we were doing just fine and we just kept sailing. Around two that afternoon we heard a loud "SNAP!' The jib and headstay came down, off to the starboard side into the water. The reefed mainsail was up, so we were still moving, the jib trailing along the side. The owner managed to get the boat turned into the wind and the crew dropped the main. Martin and the new guy went forward to begin hauling the sail and stay onboard."

"The wind was still pretty stiff, so parts of the sail would catch the wind and lift up out off the water, making it difficult, if not dangerous, to pull on deck. The sheets, still attached to the sail and the boat, were also whipping around.

"As the sail came in, the men secured it to the lifelines. But we were on a 40-foot boat with a 50-foot sail and headstay. There was still a lot of sail left, so the men draped the remaining half over the top of the dodger, covering the solar panels, with a good 15 feet drooped over the port quarter. It stayed that way for about a day.

"The men retrieved the jib sheets, coiled them and tied them off to a cleat up forward. "A few hours later, the engine just quit and wouldn't turn over. Evidently, the coiled sheets came loose and fouled the prop. The shaft must have locked up in the transmission, for we couldn't shift back into neutral to restart the engine.

"While all this is going on, I'm below at the nav station, the owner is steering, shouting instructions, Martin and the other crewman are forward tying off three halyards to cleats on the bow to secure the mast. I asked if I should call a Mayday and the captain instructed me to get on the VHF and call Pan Pan — whatever that is.

"'We are not sinking,' he tells me, 'so it's not a Mayday call.' I call, then call again. Ten minutes go by and there's no response.

"Why isn't anyone responding? I'm thinking. Of course, without using the mainsail at night for the first few days we had fallen behind the rest of the pack. We were all alone out there in the middle of the ocean. We hadn't seen another boat for two or three days. Now I'm getting scared."

Calling for help

"The guys were busy so I had to find another way to tell people we were having problems. Satellite email took too long and I hadn't yet realized that there were SOS buttons on the Navionics devices, another training gap of a rushed departure. I remembered I had emailed my sister in California before we left. She had all the emergency and rally contact information, just in case.

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Left: Wrestling the headsail the day before the headstay let go. Even then you can see that it's not completely unfurled.

Below: Drifting on November 8th, with the sail along the sidedeck.

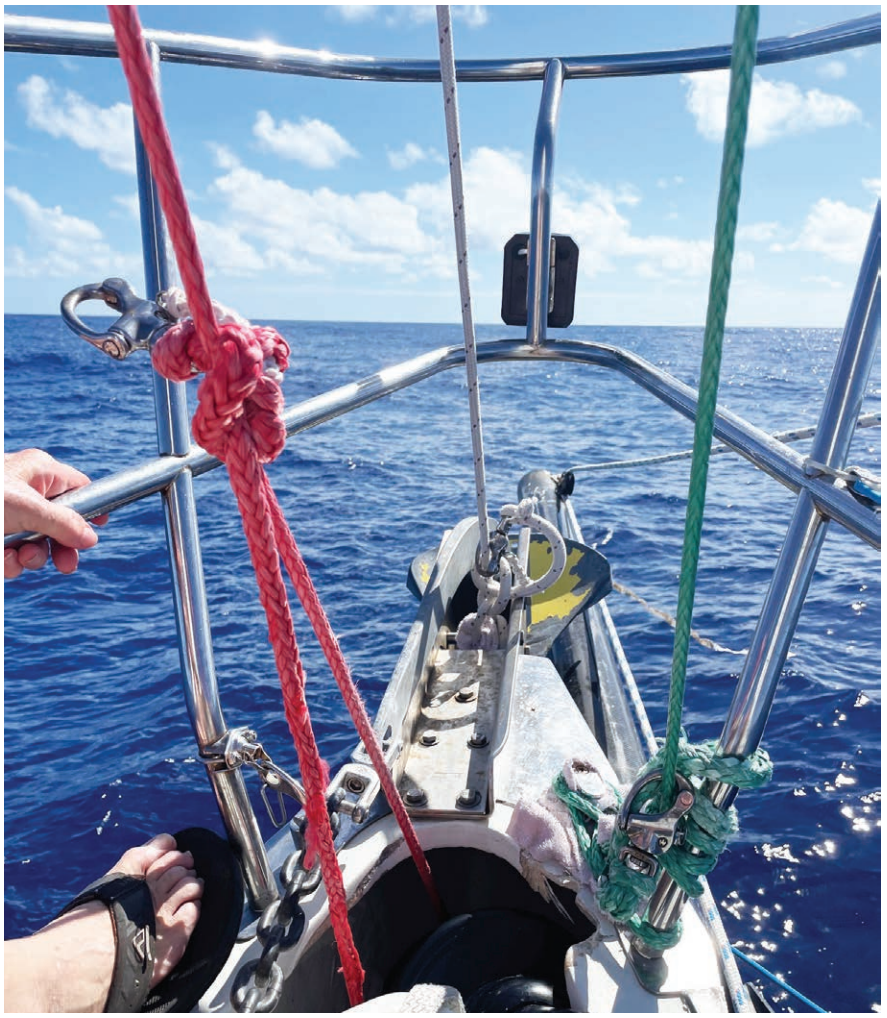


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"I called her on the sat phone. When she answered, I said, 'This is a Mayday. No, I'm not kidding. You need to call the rally shore support number I gave you. Tell them we've lost our headstay.' But all she could make out was a garbled 'Mayday.' So my dear sister, who lives in San Diego, calls her local Coast Guard, who calls the Coast Guard in Florida, who hands the call off to the station in Puerto Rico.

"Less than hour later, I get a call by one of the Coasties in Puerto Rico, but his accent is so thick I can't understand a word he's telling me. I'm sitting there, looking at a wall of radios and instruments. A few of them have red SOS buttons. So I begin pushing them.





Above: Headsail draped through cockpit. During a squall, that center area filled with rainwater and two of the crew used it for a bath!

Right: Halyards were tied off at the bow to replace the forestay.

Below: The Leopard circled us with videos running to document and determine what the problems were.

"Within minutes, I get another call from the Coast Guard. They have relayed a message to the rally shore support team. Soon after, I have a flurry of emails from their emergency response team. Thank God! One message saying they have found a boat nearby, a Leopard 48, also in our rally. They will divert to assist. They should be here before morning."

That night the Leopard 48 repeatedly attempted to contact *Odyssey* on VHF, but was too far away. But another boat, *Lappwing*, heard the calls and responded.

Lappwing had left Cape Henry on November 1st. *Lappwing* called *Odyssey* on VHF and said they could be there in a matter of a few hours.

"*Lappwing* found us before dark, drifting, no headstay, no jib, a fouled prop, and no engine to charge batteries, low on fuel and water. We'd already turned off all electronics and refrigeration."

The two boats chatted on VHF. It was still blowing 20 to 25 knots, and the seas were big so nothing could be done that night. Without headsails, *Odyssey* was unable to heave-to, so spent the night drifting under bare poles. *Lappwing's* skipper elected not to heave-to in order to try to match *Odyssey's* drift rate: *Odyssey* had no AIS and he was worried about losing sight of them in the night.

Karen picks up the story. "For the next two days, we had regular Iridium emails from the rally emergency support team and advice from the professional skipper on the Leopard 48. He advised us on everything from battery charging, chafe management and relieving jammed transmissions to making sure we all got enough rest, food and water so we avoid making mistakes and bad decisions. They were experienced, calm, and knowledgeable and kept us safe and sane until we were safely underway again.

"Next morning the Leopard 48 arrives and motors to meet us and *Lappwing*. Conditions are still rough, winds in the 18- to 20-knot range, so sending someone over the side to free the prop is out of the question. The rally people and Chris Parker at the Marine Weather Center advised we sail east toward more settled conditions, so all three boats hoist a reefed main and off we went in search of calmer conditions.

"With periodic VHF chats, we headed east. That night, with no compass light, no nav instruments and just the anchor light at our masthead, we hand steered with two-hour watches, following the Leopard 48's stern light in the darkness.

"What is really cool, is this is our first sailing experience," she added with a chuckle. "Here I am, a 50ish-year-old retired doctor looking for a little excitement. This is my first voyage on a boat, any boat. Martin, also retired, and I have been traveling North America in a motorhome, so many of the systems are the same — batteries, solar, septic, water pumps, 12-volt refrigeration, propane stoves, living in confined spaces. But this was perhaps a little more than we expected.

"At 5:00AM, Day 10, I came on deck for my watch. The sun was just rising and it was relatively calm. All three boats were drifting, all within sight of each other. A lazy swell was rolling but very little wind so I radioed the other boats that I was going to take a peek at the prop. I took my mask, held onto a line and slipped over the side.

I wanted a bath anyway. As I looked under the stern of the boat, the water crystal clear, I could see both jib sheets were wrapped around the prop. With the boat rolling, I did not feel safe diving below to unwrap the lines. The new guy's a young buck, I'll let him do that."

The new crewmember dove under the boat and within a few minutes had the sheets unwound and cut free. With the prop now free, the crew could move the shaft, free it from the transmission, shift into neutral, and start the engine.

Fuel transfer

"While we were busy with clearing the prop, the Leopard 48 deployed their dinghy, motored over to *Lappwing*, picked up two jerry cans of fuel, and returned back to their boat. The skipper asked us to drift a long line downwind to him, tied to a seat cushion. He picked it up, tied it to his dinghy, then tied one of his lines to the dinghy,…

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…now filled with fuel cans, jugs of water and dry bags of canned goods, boxes of milk, bags of rice. We pulled the loaded dinghy over to our boat. I climbed in and handed 40-pound jerry cans up to the men on deck. But now, the boats had drifted too far apart for them to pull their dinghy back, so we untied our line and let the dinghy drift. The Leopard 48 motored around and with a boat hook the skipper picked up his line and secured his dinghy.

"The mission accomplished, our engine running, the prop free, we all waved goodbye and headed off to Antigua."

Three hours later, *Lappwing's* engine died. Roy changed the filter, then cleaned the filter bowl, all to no avail. "All that rolling around that night under bare poles must have stirred up some crud in the fuel tanks and fouled the lines," Roy said. Then *Lappwing's* rudder failed and she diverted to St. Maarten for repairs.

Odyssey's adventure wasn't over either. Soon after leaving the other boats, the crew still had issues. "The autopilot kept turning us in circles, so we ended up hand steering for three days until we made landfall."

After reaching the tradewinds, it became evident to the crew that without a jib there was no way *Odyssey* was going to sail to Antigua. Also, with still limited fuel, there was no way they were going to motorsail those last 500 miles. They diverted to the US Virgin Islands.

"We pulled into Charlotte Amalie late on the afternoon of the 15th day, too late to clear into Customs and the health authorities. So we anchored. Next morning we launched the dinghy, but the onboard wouldn't start, so we hailed someone for a ride to clear in. With that done, we returned to the boat one last time to help the owner get safely into a slip at the marina."

What are you going to do next? I asked.

"We have a few options, but even after everything we just experienced we realized we both love sailing, and want to learn more and find another boat in the Caribbean. We're even thinking of getting our ASA sailing certification."

LESSONS LEARNED



During a squall, Martin and Karen hid under the sail in the cockpit.

Karen and Martin certainly had a lot of "experiential learning" crammed into their two-week delivery. What can we learn from their story? A lot.

The offshore boat

You could write a book about the right boat to take to sea on a long offshore voyage. Don Street did, all 700 pages: *The Ocean Sailing Yacht*, published in 1973. I have a copy and refer to it on occasion, to the point where I don't know where Street leaves off and my own experiences take over. Other authors have added their voices over the years, each from their own experience.

This C&C was perhaps not the ideal offshore boat for a 1,700-mile, two-week voyage, with fuel capacity being one issue. What happens if you lose the ability to sail? I'd advise carrying enough fuel to motor a third of the way; halfway would be better. Six additional six-gallon jerry cans strapped down on deck would have allowed them to run the engine more to keep the batteries charged and to motor though calms. Know your boat's fuel consumption at various RPM.

The rig

I love a sailboat with more than one headstay, be it an inner forestay for a staysail, or a Solentstay — two headstays attached to the bow, one with a light-wind genoa, another with a high-cut yankee. Should one headstay fail, you still have a second stay to secure the mast, as well as a jib to sail with or heave-to.

With no jib, *Odyssey* was unable to work to windward. With a compromised mast, held up forward by jury-rigged halyards, putting the wind aft the beam was their only option.

Before a bluewater voyage, inspect the standing and running rigging, preferably having it done by a professional rigger.

Pre-departure preparation

The time spent in preparing a boat and new crew for offshore is critical. Provisioning and stowing for a month-long voyage to and through the islands can take two days. Training a new crew on raising, lowering, trimming and reefing various sails should take a day. Throw in a man-overboard drill. A thorough briefing on safety, communications, navigation, shipboard living, and abandon-ship procedures — all these can take a day. Don Street recommends taking novice crew for day-sails in heavy weather for practice, so the first bad weather encountered isn't offshore.

When to depart

If you're not ready to depart, don't. Going off half-cocked has ruined many a voyage.

Experienced delivery captains on last fall's voyage south told me, "Don't give me waypoints and a departure times. Give me the weather details and I'll make my own route and departure date." Too many new owner-skippers turn over the sailing of their boats to routers and technology. They substitute convenience and the ease of push-button operation for good seamanship.

It's worth noting that *Lappwing* left on November 1st, the rally's original starting date. Although *Odyssey* left two days earlier, anticipating an approaching front, *Lappwing* reported fairly light winds on departure.

The skipper

Any skipper heading offshore on a long voyage had better have made a similar voyage before, on their own boat or someone else's. If not, then hire a pro skipper to come along as a mentor. They'll get your boat there and teach you a great deal in the process. You can read all the books, take all the classes, watch hours of YouTube video, but nothing replaces experience at sea.

The Crew

On a voyage like this, the crew should have made a couple of offshore, deepwater voyages previously. Many insurance companies want to see your crew's sailing resumes.

Also, know if your crew gets seasick. A few hours into the voyage and the crew become incapacitated, you are now handicapped.

I could go on… but I won't.





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

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

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

February					
DATE	TIME	20	0252	11	1908
1	1235	21	0339	12	1959
2	1331	22	0427	13	2050
3	1421	23	0513	14	2140
4	1508	24	0615	15	2228
5	1553	25	0715	16	2315
6	1636	26	0818	17	2401
7	1719	27	0920	18	0001 FULL MOON
8	1803	28	1020	19	0047
9	1849	**March**		20	0134
10	1926	1	1116	21	0215
11	2036	2	1209	22	0323
12	2117	3	1257	23	0411
13	2208	4	1343	24	0510
14	2229	5	1427	25	0611
15	2348	6	1511	26	0713
16	2436	7	1556	27	0812
17	0036 FULL MOON	8	1641	28	0909
18	0122	9	1729	29	1001
19	0207	10	1818	30	1049
				31	1135

OUR PASSAGE TO… ANTIGUA?

by Sharon Lappalainen

I'd never sailed on an ocean passage before, unless a charter from Ft. Meyers, Florida, to the Dry Tortugas counts. This was our bid to sail to the Caribbean, to live our dream of cruising on our Northwind 43, S/V *Lappwing*. My husband Roy and I had purchased her some five years earlier. We upgraded her electronics, added solar, and had professionals do what was beyond our skills or more likely our patience. Then we sold our worldly goods to live aboard before retiring from civil service jobs to pursue the cruising life.

Which brings me to the day last fall when we left Annapolis, Maryland, for Cape Charles, Virginia, to top off fuel, water and point the compass southeast. The plan had been to follow the track of a sailing association-hosted rally voyaging from the Chesapeake to Antigua. As members of the association ourselves, we had wanted to join the rally, but delays with an "expedited" passport renewal put us behind. So, all fueled up and escorted out of the harbor by dolphins, we began our adventure on our own. We had light winds and calm seas, and it was a good day to sail. We felt confident after a year of sailing the East Coast from the Chesapeake Bay to Florida, up to Maine and back again. We also had years of bay racing with the Annapolis Yacht Club.

The first days brought easy conditions. No seasickness, a struggle of mine. By Day 4 we were fishing, but catching eluded us. The next days were easy sailing, but on Day 9 our luck changed. Fresh winds at 25 to 30 knots ripped the reefing line on our jib furler during the night. Still, *Lappwing* is a sturdy girl and handled the overpowered jib. Plus her standing rigging had been replaced the year before.

Then we heard a VHF radio call from a Leopard 48 to a C&C 121. We had caught up with a couple of the association's rally members! We learned that the C&C was in distress. (See "Lessons from a Novice Crew" on page 18.) Being halfway to Antigua already and having spare fuel on deck, we responded and altered course.

The distressed C&C had lost their forestay, the jib sheets were wrapped around the sail drive and possibly the rudder, they were low on fuel and water, and their engine wouldn't start. When the Leopard arrived it was decided that lying ahull was in order as the sun was setting and we wanted to match the drift rate of the disabled C&C. So we dropped our sails.

Now, this lying ahull business in rough seas is, in a word, uncomfortable. I can attest to the inadequacy of modern cabinet latches. They might hold back paper towels, but practically everything else from tools to cleaning supplies spewed all over our cabin sole. Note to self: order better latches.

With the dawn, we fired up our engine and motored back to the distressed boat and the Leopard after drifting apart overnight. With advice from the Leopard's skipper and the rally's shore support the beleaguered boat was able to get somewhat organized and all three of us sailed under reefed mains towards better weather. We were some 556 nautical miles from Antigua. Talk was of diverting to the US Virgin Islands.

After the C&C's pick-up crewmember freed its sail drive from the jib sheets, their engine started and the fuel transfer began. The Leopard skipper devised a plan to drop fuel jugs into their dinghy and transfer them. We lost our first jug overboard because of a wave, as well as the boat hook we used to try to retrieve it. But the intrepid Leopard crew recovered both boat hook and jug, and our remaining three fuel jugs went into their dinghy. The Leopard contributed fuel, water and provisions, and all was transferred without incident.

While this was going on we sorted out our jib furler and reefing line. Then, in light air, we all fired up our engines and began to slowly motor.

Until *Lappwing's* engine failed, that is. And it wouldn't start back up. Our engine never started again the rest of the passage, despite all our efforts and the rally's advice and support. The fuel was fouled.

Well, *Lappwing* is a sailboat. So we put up the sails, but with two- to three-knot boat speed we didn't get very far that day. The buddy-boat situation quickly fell



apart and we were separated by more than 15 miles by nightfall and out of VHF radio and AIS range. A daily mini-blog we started for friends and family at the start of the passage on Predict Wind became popular (https://forecast.predictwind.com/tracking/display/SV_Lappwing), posting daily tidbits of our travels. (It was this blog, shared by fellow cruiser Judy Long, which got the attention of those in the cruising community who helped us later in St. Maarten.)



Above: This was our bid to sail to the Caribbean, to live our dream of cruising on our Northwind 43, S/V Lappwing.

Left: Our rudderpost had snapped and the collar cracked.

On rally advice we altered course to 23°N, 63°W to get east of the rhumbline to stay ahead of the weather that had been forecast just for our little band of boats by Chris Parker (thank you Chris!).

But that night is when we discovered why the autopilot was struggling. Our rudderpost had snapped and the collar cracked. We had to slow down even more to keep pressure off the rudder.

By morning we were 173 miles from Antigua but only 95 miles from St. Maarten, an island known for boat repairs. We made for St. Maarten and arrived in Simpson Bay under sail after 15 days at sea. The following day we were towed into the lagoon to a mooring.

Then, for over a week, we struggled to clear Customs due to lack of a form documenting our exit from the US. Who knew that was required? Well, we certainly didn't, and that is on us. But we had diverted for an emergency. So with help from the Seven Seas Cruising Association, Dockside Management company, Hank Schmidt and many others, Shipping Maritime Affairs Sint Maarten was alerted to our plight and sent Marine Inspector Paul Ellinger out to *Lappwing*, where he confirmed that our rudderpost was broken and the collar was cracked, and alerted Customs.

As I write this we have been allowed to clear in and are in the midst of arranging for repairs.

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Los Roques: A Trip Worth Taking

by Vicky and Florian Grassl



We had most of the islands entirely to ourselves.

Inset: Most of the islands are just sand and grass.

We, Vicky and Florian Grassl from *S/Y Ibex*, spent two weeks on Los Roques late last year. Initially it was almost impossible to find up-to-date information on these islands, especially on entering in Covid times. So we have written up our experience in general, and the formalities and practicalities as we experienced them, for others who plan to go there.

We know things are changing fast in Los Roques, but feel free to use this information as you see fit, if at all.

We used the anchorage descriptions from the third edition (2006) of Chris Doyle's *Cruising Guide to Venezuela and Bonaire* and found them still very useful and accurate. The only significant change we noticed: when approaching the Dos Mosquises, the three palm trees on the northern island are not there anymore, while there are three palm trees in best view on the southern island. The approach line, bearing and waypoints described still worked for us.

Our experience

We always had Los Roques on our list of places we wanted to go, but were unsure whether we should dare it in times of Covid. We got lots of naysayer feedback — "not open," "too complex," "too expensive," "too dangerous," "the next country won't let you in" — but none of this was from people who had actually been there recently. On social media we found crew from two boats who had been there in June and July, 2021, and they reported a very good experience. Our main issue was not knowing whether, in any particular week, Los Roques would be open to enter. So we extrapolated from the social media posts' information and hoped the sequence hadn't changed. We were lucky: it hadn't.

Entry formalities, which are done on Gran Roque, were a bit more complex than those in the Eastern Caribbean, but not more complex than in other Latin American countries (see Formalities and Practicalities). Even the language barrier (they don't speak English, we had no Spanish) did not present a significant problem. After two or three hours we were cleared in and ready to go.

We spent two days on Gran Roque itself. Others try to get out to the smaller islands quickly, but we think getting to know Gran Roque and its people is part of the experience and was well worth it. This is a simple place: no cars, streets are sand, electricity is available only a few hours a day, cash only (no ATM, no credit cards accepted), limited grocery supplies, etcetera. But all of the people we met gave us a warm welcome, were friendly and super helpful. We found a few people speaking English and learned about the village, how the people live, how the domestic tourism business from the Venezuelan mainland works, were they get their water from, and more. The domestic tourists stay primarily in *posadas* (lodges) on Gran Roque and are brought by small open boats to a few of the beaches during the day. There are a handful of local yachts (one catamaran and a few trawlers) that take charter guests, mostly domestic as well.

The remainder of the two weeks we spent on the small islands. Most are totally uninhabited. On a few there is a single bar/restaurant or a *posada* — all very simple. But most of the islands are just sand and grass, and here or there mangroves or a few palm trees.

There are lots of reefs. Eyeball navigation is a must. The available charts were helpful in principle but inaccurate in detail. Some areas have not even been surveyed. Paired with our own eyeballing, we found the descriptions of how to enter the different anchorages in Doyle's guide very helpful. However, anything in the guide regarding formalities or practicalities is outdated. We have a 2.1-metre draft and had no issues with the places we visited. We anchored at Gran Roque, Crasqui, Sarqui, Dos Mosquises, Cayo de Agua and Francisqui, and visited a few more islands by dinghy.

The sailing was easy in ten to 20 knots of wind, with a calm sea as it is sheltered by the outer reefs. There are only short distances between the islands.

Everything else was pure enjoyment as well: long sand beaches, reefs to explore, and lots of fish, turtles, stingrays and lobster. The southern island of the Dos Mosquises has a turtle nursery and some display boards on the history of the Amerindians, who lived there before the Spanish seafarers took the place. Nowadays, there are two or three guys living on that island, who take care of the turtle nursery and who were happy to show us around. We met only two other foreign sailing yachts during our stay and had most of the islands entirely to ourselves.

A trip well worth taking.

FORMALITIES AND PRACTICALITIES

Disclaimer: things on Los Roques change fast, even outside of Covid-related regulations. The information below describes simply our specific experience.

We are Austrians and our boat is registered there. We sailed from St. George's, Grenada, for a little over 50 hours and arrived and cleared in on October 29th, 2021. We left on November 11th for Bonaire.

Formalities

• Covid-related regulations: In general, Los Roques are open. Last year they had alternating open and closed ("radical") weeks, i.e. it was only possible to enter every other calendar week. The week starting October 25th was an open week; hence we could enter on October 29th. This policy was changed by a decision on October 25th to suspend that approach for two months, so during November and December 2021, all weeks were open. Some local people said that they expected that by January 2022, there would be the alternating week thing again. We do not know what the current situation is.

• Covid entry protocol: By bringing a negative PCR test from our departure port (Grenada), we could clear in without any further testing or quarantine. We are fully vaccinated, but no one checked on that on Los Roques. We have heard there is a possibility to test on arrival, i.e. entering without a negative PCR test from the departure port, but we did not take that option, hence do not know whether and how it would work out in practice.

• General entry: We were given permission to stay for 14 days, which we believe is the usual timeframe sailors are allowed to stay.

• Entry process: In general we believe that the details of the entry process as well as the fees to be paid depend on the individuals on duty at the various authorities. The entry experiences of the two other boats (in Los Roques in June and July of 2021), our own experience, and the process given on Noonsite, were all somewhat different and the fees varied. Our specific experience on Gran Roque follows.

We arrived around 7:00AM and anchored off the northwestern-most jetty (a blue colored floating jetty). After getting the boat ready and some breakfast we started the entry process at around 9:30AM. This took five steps. We did not need a visa or an agent.

1) Medical check: We took the dinghy to the jetty, and by coincidence first talked to the guys who do the medical check. Look for guys in orange T-shirts in an igloo-shaped building with white top and blue bottom, just a bit northwest of the jetty. It turned out it is the first authority to visit in sequence. They checked our negative PCR test from Grenada and stamped it. There were no fees.

2) Capitaneria: Next we had to go to the harbormaster (*capitaneria*), located in an elevated container just southeast of the jetty. He first checked the stamped PCR test, and then let us in. He did paperwork, completed and stamped a Spanish form, told us we were allowed to stay up to 14 days and he could do the exit paperwork as well at the same time if we paid US$20.

—Continued on next page



—*Continued from previous page*
(The extra paperwork is to fill in the exit date in the same form.) We did not get a receipt for the US$20, but the amount seemed in line with what we have heard from others

3) Guarda Costa: From the *capitaneria* we were sent to the coast guard. This is located in a larger building farther northwest from the medical check "igloo." It's a white building with the highest antenna mast on the shoreline; the building has Guarda Costa written on it, which can be seen and read with binoculars from the



anchorage. The guy made an entry into his book and checked our papers, including the one from the *capitaneria*, but we did not get any further paperwork and paid no fees. The guy stated he would visit us the following day on our boat for a "maritime security check," but he never showed up.

4) SAIM: The next stop was the SAIM *(Servicio Administrativo de Identificación, Migración)* office at the airport. It is in walking distance at the other end of the village, or take your dinghy to the airport jetty. We paid the administration and park fees there and got a little flag to fly to show we had paid the park fees. We paid in total US$265 for two people for 14 days on a 42-foot boat. As mentioned, we heard from others that they paid different amounts here for same number of people, duration of stay and boat size, but we did get a receipt stating the exact amount we paid. We heard from others that they were able to pay with a credit card, but this was not possible for us (possibly due to a more or less daily electricity outage).

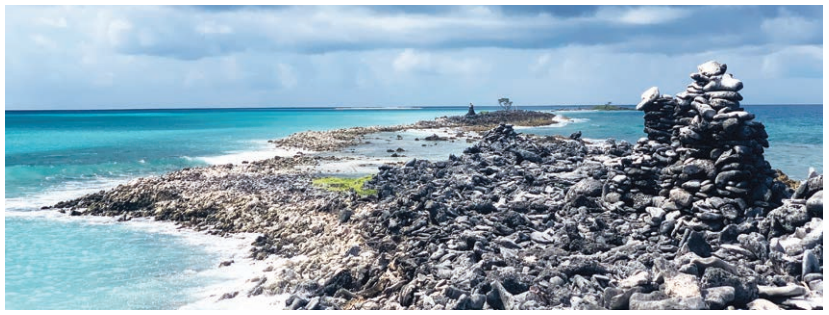
5) Immigration: This is right next to the SAIM office at the airport. They stamp the passports and issue the inbound clearance. We were told we needed to pay a fee of three *petros*, a virtual currency, which was then calculated into *bolivares* and from there to US dollars. It turned out to be US$168 for two people, for entry and exit. This is more than we have heard from others, and we did not get a receipt for this other than the clearance paper (which does not state the amount paid). It did not feel like bribe money, but then, there was not really an alternative either. We have heard from other people that they were able to get the Immigration entry and exit stamp at the same time. We asked this specifically, and were told that this is illegal (the explicit word was used) and that we should come back two or three days before we would want to leave.

In general, all the people we dealt with were very friendly and helpful; people on the street would help finding places, etcetera. We do not speak Spanish, but with the medical guys we just used hand signs, the harbormaster called an English-speaking lady to be translator for us, the coast guard guy knew a few words in English, and at the SAIM and Immigration offices they used Google translate to communicate with us.

Top: On a few of the small islands there is a single bar/ restaurant or a posada.

Left: We anchored at Grand Roque, Crasqui, Sarqui, Dos Mosquises, Cayo de Agua and Francisqui, and visited a few more islands by dinghy.

Below right: Piles of coral rubble attest to the existence of numerous reefs.



• Exit process: We went back to Immigration two days before we left and got our passports stamped with no further fees. As we got the inbound clearance there, we expected to get an outbound clearance, but that was not the case; for that they sent us back to the *capitaneria*. We were surprised about that, as we paid the US$20 there to cover the exit as well, but had no paper that stated "outbound clearance" (while the inbound paper was explicit in that regard).

Back at the *capitaneria*, the harbormaster simply shrugged, took the form he issued us originally, turned it, made a handwritten note in Spanish that we are authorized to depart on a given date for Bonaire, and stamped it. We still had no zarpe or paper that stated "outbound clearance," but no one in Bonaire cared. They made copies of the papers we had with no further questions

• PCR testing for departure to next country: We checked with the aforementioned medical guys as well as at the airport. To the best of our knowledge it is not possible to do a PCR test on the island; they only do antigen tests. We were told this would be free of charge at the walk-in clinic. At the airport the fee is US$80 (they bring the swab to the clinic). This means if one's next country requires a departure PCR test from the last port, one needs to check with them for an exception or choose a different country as next port (Bonaire does require a departure PCR test from previous port, but when asked specifically, they told us that under the circumstances we could do one upon arrival in Bonaire.)

Practicalities

• Money: The island uses US cash only — no other currency, no ATM, no bank, no credit cards accepted (unless you are lucky at the SAIM office). Change is hard to come by, so bring as many small denomination bills as possible.

• Mobile Network: There is mobile network coverage if you have a SIM card that works in Venezuela (locals told us it is a slow network though). It was not possible for us to buy SIM cards. There is a store which sells SIM cards from time to time, if they have some, but not during the time we were there (we checked multiple times). The store has "Movistar" written on it and is opposite of the Frank Louis grocery shop (everyone knows the latter, just ask for it).

• WiFi: This is hard to come by. There are only few lodges/bars with WiFi. (We used the WiFi from Posada Galapagos for our most important emails and paid a few dollars. Sending 400KB of attachments for our Bonaire entry took about an hour.)

• Provisioning: Bring everything you need. There are a few grocery stores and bakeries on Gran Roque, but food is expensive, and availability depends on the day relative to supply ship arrival. On some days, there is a small fruit and vegetable market at the "new" basketball court (the large, high red roof seen from the anchorage).

• Other supplies: There is no diesel available. Dinghy gas could be available from time to time, but we heard it is bad quality. Don't expect to be able to get any boat parts or supplies.

For more information visit our blog, both in German and English, at www.sailing-ibex.com.

Editor's note: En route from the Windward Islands to Los Roques it is advised that cruisers avoid sailing near the mainland of Venezuela and the islands of Los Testigos and Margarita, due to reports of possible pirate activity in those areas.

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Safe and Friendly: Île-à-Vache, Haiti

by Jean-Pierre Desilets

Many years ago a Texan couple with a large trimaran wrote about going to Île-à-Vache, Haiti, in the *Compass*. (See "Our 'Out of Africa' Experience at Cow Island' by Bill and JoAnne Harris on page 15 at https://bit.ly/3GxBU8S) Since reading this article, my wife Tania and I have been going there every possible time we can.

Anchoring there for the first time, you fall in love with the simplicity of the inhabitants. Customs clearance is easy: just go to the hotel and for US$50 they will take care of everything for you. There is an anchoring fee of US$10 for seven days, which includes garbage collection if needed.

I recommend arriving in daylight, as the fishermen use anything — and I mean anything — as buoys for their fish pots. They mostly use the small (350ml) clear water bottles that are hard to see in the day, so think about it at night!

You will be greeted by folks in small dugout pirogues welcoming you to Île-à-Vache. They will be very polite and ask how was your journey and how long have you been at sea. If you are tired and need some rest, simply ask them to tell everyone to come back and see you later. Suggest a time and they will let everyone else in the bay know to meanwhile stay clear.

Despite having virtually nothing, the people of Île-à-Vache are among the most respectful I have ever met. Tania and I sailed on our catamaran *Mama Cocha II* from Canada to Île-à-Vache most recently in 2021. We were exhausted upon our arrival because of very foul weather off the coast of Cuba while entering the Windward Passage. But we had to say hello to our good friends Vildor, Clevense, Hanse, Ashley and many more, before telling them that we needed a break and some rest before continuing on our day with them. Not five minutes went by before we went from being 15 in the cockpit to two — Tania and I.

Later on they came back and we invited them aboard. We talked about the situation in Port-au-Prince and even they did not want to go there, as the situation was very bad. But Île-à-Vache, they say, is and will always be safe and peaceful.

We started to distribute the 2,500 pounds of stuff that we had been saving for them — clothes, lots of used boat gear, some old cell phones, games, etc. Unlike in the better-off islands of the Eastern Caribbean, where people will reject offers of items that are not in working condition, here they need everything and anything you can spare. At one point we offered a pair of nice sandals but one side was coming unglued. My friend told me to give it away on another island, where it could be repaired, as they couldn't do that here. I took out a tube of Crazy Glue and the biggest smile came upon his face! After you have given everything you can possibly spare, you might be asked for additional things they need (tip: rope and fishing gear are prized), so be prepared to say, "Sorry, we have no more."

I have to say, if you are not willing to share your love — meaning donate whatever you can, such as clothes, toiletries, food, etc. — please have the kindness to not come here. Think about it. They see you arrive with your million-dollar boat (to their eyes), and if you say you have nothing to share it simply doesn't make sense!

Before leaving port to head to Île-à-Vache we bought eight pounds of pasta, everything we needed to make five gallons of spaghetti sauce, and lots of flour to make bread and pancakes to share. On the pasta day we hosted aboard, we started serving plates of pasta with bread one by one but couldn't keep up with the demand, so our friends began sharing their own plates with the others that were arriving, taking care to make sure that everyone was eating. Fishermen, too, heeded our invitation to come and get plates of pasta. When everyone aboard our cat was full, I prepared the rest of the pasta, mixed it with sauce in our five-gallon caldron, gave it to Ashley along with paper plates and plastic forks, and sent him off to the island. Not 15 minutes went by and he came back with a smile telling us that everybody on the beach was very grateful for what we were doing.







Top right: Our friends arrived in their dugout pirogues.

Centre: Watching TV and enjoying pasta aboard Mama Cocha II

Bottom right: Vildor and his wife Dieuvane invited us to their home.

The next day, I decided to make two gallons of cherry jam and a mega batch of pancakes. Some friends came to see us on the boat and we told them we were busy, but that we would have a pancake day at 1:30PM at the community centre. I told them that this was mainly for the young children, and that they had to bring plates as we had run out. They went on their way saying that they would see us there.

Well, we were there at 1:30 sharp and from that time to 4:30ish I made three pancakes every two minutes, and every child on the island was unbelievably happy. At the end of the day I told Ashley, who helped me all day, that there was half a gallon of jam left over and he could do whatever he wanted with it. He took that pot with the jam and walked to where the children were playing, knocked on the pot with a large serving spoon, and as they flocked to him he gave them each spoonful of jam in their bare hands. Finger lickin' good, as the Colonel would say!

If you are lucky enough, like we were, the people here will prepare for you a bowl of almonds and cashews like you have never seen before. They climb the trees, make the nuts fall, and one by one, crack them open with a machete, then boil them, dry them and finally roast them over an open fire with pieces of wood pushed into a ring of three rocks. All of this takes five to seven hours of work for one bowl of more or less two cups full. One day Vildor and his wife Dieuvane invited us to their home, where she prepared a delightful supper of rice, two bowls of different veggies and beef slowly cooked for hours on her "sort of hibachi" — tasty like we have never tasted before.

If you need any stainless polished, this seems to be a local specialty. No need to tell them how, either. As an example, we had one guy do the barbecue. It took him the whole day (with a lunch break for our famous spaghetti, of course), but at the end of the day Tania ordered me not to use the barbecue for the rest of the season, as we were on our way back home to Canada and the barbecue literally looked brand new. Hanse, a very small boy, got right under the floorboards, cleaning everything he could reach. Just be sure to bring your own products, and at the end of the day, along with their pay, offer your helpers the rest of the polish and other products they used and they will be very grateful.

We spent only three days there last year, as our weather window pushed us to leave, but Tania and I have already decided that next time we will drop the hook for a week or more, to have time to visit the whole island.

Planning to go? For more information e-mail us at jeades@hotmail.com.



ST. CROIX, TIME AND AGAIN

DESTINATIONS

by Nancy Magnine



Left to right: Whether walking or driving, there's a lot to explore. Sunset on the Fredricksted waterfront. Point Udall, the easternmost spot in the United States.

The wind was predicted to be 18 to 25 knots, waves six to eight feet, and swells at or over six feet, but this didn't stop a group of good friends from making an ordinary sail from St. Thomas to St. Croix into a race. Four very different boats — A Kaufman 47, *Quetzal*; a Spirit 47, *Luna*; a Caliber 40, *Lost Loon*, and a 60-foot Bill Tripp-designed ketch, *Libra* — joined in this friendly competition dubbed the Valentine's Cup 2021.

The February morning broke clear in Christmas Cove on Great St. James island as the crews from the four boats took morning coffee and planned sailing strategies. Each crew would take their own boat's time using GPS tracking, starting at the southernmost tip the island and finishing at a pre-determined GPS waypoint.

As we all nosed off into open water, the conditions were just as predicted. Seas were large and challenging, sometimes sending huge waves over the coaming into the cockpits. Winds were clocked between 22 and 30 knots. Nevertheless, we all carried on to the finish line in Frederiksted. In first place with a time of 4:09 was *Quetzal*, second was *Libra* at 4:15, *Luna* was right behind at 4:16, and the reliable *Lost Loon* came in at 4:43.





Above: St. Croix boasts so much local art!

Left: The entrance to Fredricksted's seaside park.

Bottom right: Heading from Christmas Cove to St. Croix with the Valentine's Cup 2021.

But our main goal wasn't race results — it was the island we hurried to get to.

This would be the second trip to St. Croix for us on *Lost Loon*, but not our last. We would be sailing strictly within these US Virgin Islands waters due to the complex pandemic-inspired Customs and Immigration regulations on other islands throughout the Caribbean. What we discovered in St. Croix was a secret gem of an island, off the beaten cruising path. We would call it "home" for a short while that season.

Approaching the island of St. Croix from the north one is greeted with the lush, green mountains of the forest region in the northeast. Rounding Hams Bluff and Mt. Washington into the lee of the island, the seas settle and the landscape drops gently to beautiful white sand beaches that are dotted with simple oceanfront accommodations. The anchorages in Frederiksted, the only village on the western part of the island, are to the north and south of the 1,500-foot concrete pier that had been port to many a cruise ship in previous years. It was now used by local dive shops, and by visitors and locals for fishing and watching the sunset. The pier is also one of the best artificial coral reefs around. The holding is better on the north side of the pier in front of the remnants of Fort Fredrick, in sand and light grass patches.

Frederiksted is a quiet seaside village with all the appeal of the old Caribbean: brightly colored buildings, a classic clock tower, and a beautifully maintained waterfront. She comes alive with a lineup of restaurants and music after the sun goes down. We lunched at Polly's, which is a restaurant famous for breakfast (get there early on the weekend as the line extends down the sidewalk!), dined at CiBoNe, an intimate restaurant with excellent cuisine, and another day stopped at Tap Deck for a casual dinner of poke bowls and personal pizzas. Down the quiet back street, and just a block from the pier, lies the Lost Dog Pub. It is a local dive bar that has serves up terrific homemade pizza to enjoy with a cold beer.

Taking a walk down the waterfront, we discovered several more places to stop for refreshments and relaxation. Louie and Nacho's, Smoke and Turtles, and The Fred are other refreshment stops located south of the Frederiksted Pier. Frederiksted also offers a well-stocked market, a small bakery, a launderette, and several local artisan and gift shops.

Farther down the beach toward Sandy Point we found perfectly private sandy spots to stop and take a swim break. At the south end of the strand, we approached the Sandy Point National Wildlife Refuge, which, in an effort to preserve the leatherback turtle population, is off limits during the week and closed from April through August.

Going north of the pier, one can reach the laid-back Rhythms at Rainbow Beach where many tourists and locals rent a beach lounge, take out kayaks or paddleboards, or enjoy a sunset cocktail.

From the street we found a long winding walk up Creque Dam Road to the top of Mt. Victory, revealing beautiful views of the western shoreline. Our self-guided tour brought us back on Mahogany Road past enormous towering mahogany trees, a quaint chocolate factory and sugarcane fields. This was an adventurous nine-mile walk on paved roads and some rough gravel, but a great way to gain an appreciation of the island forest area as well as a good workout off the boat.

One appealing attribute of this location is the coral reef that encompasses most of this part of the island, making it a popular dive destination in the Caribbean. The Navionics map lights up with dive markers up and down the coast marking such dives as Swirling Reef of Death (the name belies its underwater beauty), Armageddon and Aquarium. On our dives at these sites we discovered them flush with reef fishes, turtles, rays, and healthy, bright colored coral. The Pier itself is an underwater attraction for divers and snorkelers, as over the years the old pilings and concrete supports have come to harbor beautiful coral, other marine life, even (we are told) resident seahorses. All of the dive operators, located directly off the pier, are friendly and very forthcoming with dive information. Snorkeling here is easy. One evening we rented underwater lights and did our own night snorkel. What an amazingly different world the depths become when the daylight fades from the sky!

Renting a car is the best way to see more of this island. To the northwest is the forest region with deep green stands of mahogany and tamarind trees. The north end is dotted with resorts and beaches, where there is more diving and snorkeling when the weather is settled. Salt River Bay National Park runs evening and night excursions into the bioluminescent waters. To the northeast, the landscape changes to a more arid and barren terrain. The view from Point Udall looking east over the endless and the mesmerizing Caribbean Sea is spectacular. There is also a nice hike out through the rocky outcroppings of Jack and Isaac Bays.

Our stop in the bigger city of Christiansted took us to the boardwalk for a beer, where many helpful and friendly locals greeted us. This is another great location for a self-walking tour to see evidence of the island's varied heritage. Over the years, St. Croix has flown the flags of Spain, England, Holland, France, the Knights of Malta (the religious order), Denmark, and the United States. Cruzans' pride in their history and culture is evident in the island's many museums and their dedication to preserving the native history and fine arts.

There is anchoring room and a mooring field in Christiansted Harbor, but we did not take the boat here.

Returning to Frederiksted in the late afternoon, we were greeted by locals and vacationers gathering at the pier to watch the sunset, restaurants beginning to show signs of opening, and divers completing their afternoon scuba sessions off the pier. One amiable local fellow stopped us on our way, and offered up a poem. His verse was inspiring and he shared with us that he was writing a book of poems, soon to be published. We gave him our support and encouragement. Voices and laughter abounded as children and adults alike felt refreshed from the heat of the day and enjoyed the unobstructed sunset view. We watched as groups readied for evening dives, brave swimmers jumped off the pier, and families played along the waterfront. Back on the sailboat in the anchorage, as the light faded, we were thankful for the safe harbor and welcoming atmosphere of this seaside community.

St. Croix offers many of the cruising conveniences of the other Virgin Islands. We discovered a bus system that runs a regular schedule between Fredriksted and Christiansted for one dollar, and taxi-buses that charge US$2.50, but run a more direct route. Stops are made at Kmart, Pueblo, and other shopping centers. Propane is available near Christiansted and reasonably priced. There is also a self-laundry available just off the waterfront. We were fortunate not to have needed medical services while on the island, but noted that the Fredriksted Health Care offers several medical specialties as well as Urgent Care.



Close your eyes and imagine palm trees swaying with a gentle southerly breeze alongside clear turquoise water, the sound of waves gently crashing on the white sand beach against a backdrop of old Caribbean architecture. In the distance there are church bells announcing the hour, seagulls calling each other to lunch, and children squealing as they play in the water. It is for all of this that the crews of the Valentine's Cup would enjoy a leisurely return sail to this laid-back Caribbean island of St. Croix time and again.

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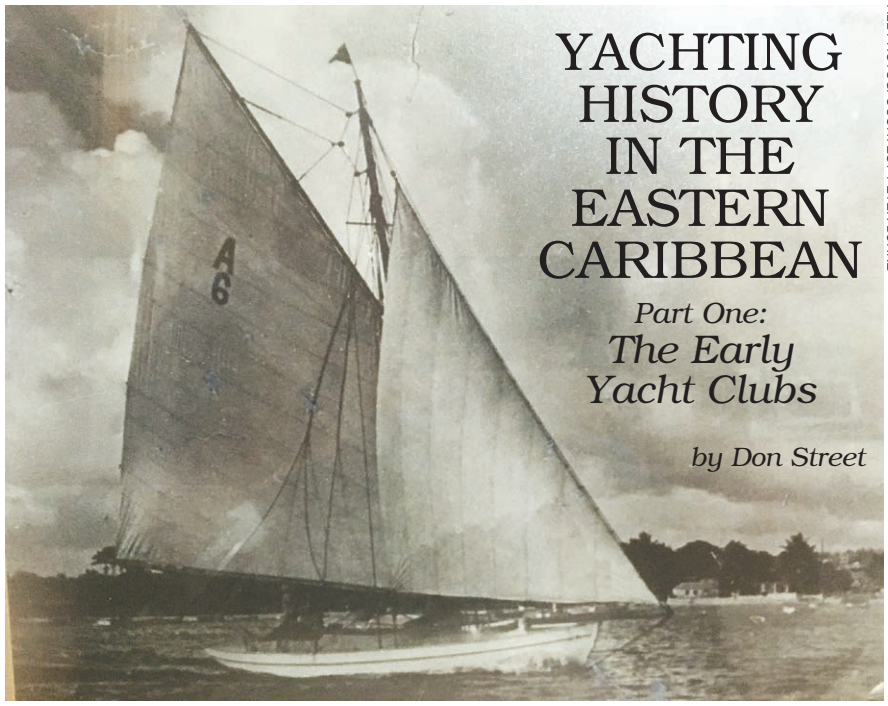
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Yacht clubs were seminal forces in the growth of yachting in the Eastern Caribbean. The earliest organized yacht clubs in the area were in Barbados, Martinique, Grenada and Trinidad.

The development of one-design sailboat classes brought the clubs together. The late Ray Smith said that in the 1930s there were three 6 Meter class yachts in the lower islands of the Eastern Caribbean: one in St. Lucia, one in Trinidad, and one in Barbados. These were probably owned by British colonial officials, who could have them shipped out to the Caribbean at little or no cost. The St. Lucia and Trinidad boats were shipped to Barbados for regattas.



ALL PHOTOS: COURTESY PETER BURKE

YACHTING HISTORY IN THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN

Part One: The Early Yacht Clubs

by Don Street

Very soon after World War II, good waterproof plywood became available for boat construction and *Yachting World* magazine sponsored two racing classes, the Heron, an 11-foot gunter-rigged sloop, and the GP14, a Marconi sloop, both designed by Jack Holt. Bell Woodworking supplied both as flatpack kits easily assembled by skilled amateurs.

The GP14s, designed in 1948, became the most popular. GP14 classes sprouted up in the 1950s in Barbados, Trinidad and Grenada, and soon there were inter-island dinghy regattas. In 1962 five or six GP14s were taken to Grenada on a retired PT boat named *Connemara* to compete at the Easter Regatta. In 1967, Barbadian sailors Jackie Hoad and Bill Tempro won the GP14 World Championship in Ontario, Canada.

The Barbados Yacht Club

The Barbados Yacht Club was formed in 1924. It became the Royal Barbados Yacht Club in 1933, and upon the island's independence in 1966 again became the Barbados Yacht Club.

The club obtained a lease on a magnificent five-acre property called Shothall on Carlisle Bay. The clubhouse, built in 1810, was formerly the residence of the chief engineer of the British Regiment stationed on the island at that time. The club bought the property in 1926 and the main clubhouse is now a National Trust listed building. With more than a thousand members, the BYC is the largest yacht club in the Eastern Caribbean.

Before World War II and during the 1940s to '50s, yacht racing was very popular in Barbados, with all of the racing boats being locally designed and built. The boats were all different designs and ranged in size from 18 to 35 feet and were classified as A, B, C and D classes. On an average day of racing there were more than 50 boats competing.

In 1957, a group of local and expatriate boating enthusiasts founded the Barbados Cruising Club as an alternative to the Royal Barbados Yacht Club, which they perceived as being elitist. A clubhouse, modeled on the St. Lucia Yacht Club building, was erected in the early 1960s.

Yacht Club de la Martinique

Some 50 sailors from an existing sporting club formed the Yacht Club de la Martinique in October 1935. In 1936 there were 15 boats of miscellaneous design that raced in the bay of Fort-de-France. The big event was a race from Fort-de-France to Diamond Rock and back.

Immediately after World War II, three members imported three Requin 30 sloops from France. This class, similar to the Dragon but having a larger cabin with primitive sleeping accommodations for two, was a standard training sailboat for the French Navy. Whenever the French training ship *Jean d'Arc* arrived there were races between the local yachtsmen and the French naval officers and cadets. By the 1960s there were, I think, six or possibly eight Requins in Martinique.

YCM was first based alongside the big drydock then moved to its present location in the Carenage. The club has expanded through the years to some 700 members.

The Grenada Yacht Club

In the mid-1930s a few Grenadian businessman who were sailors raced locally built boats of various sizes and types. As related by founding member Michael Forshaw, according to the Grenada Yacht Club website (www.grenadayachtclub.com), the exact date of the meeting of visiting yachtsmen and local yachting enthusiasts held to discuss the formation of the Grenada Yacht Club is unknown. It is however, believed to have taken place in 1953 in the home of brothers George and Julien Rapier.

The founding members present were the Rapier brothers, Charles ("Laddy") McIntyre, Colin McIntyre, Leonard Smith, Eric Glean, Michael Forshaw, Gordon and Betty Salhab, and Maurice Gellineau. Regular meetings were held, and the first officers of the club were elected. John Slominski served as the first Commodore and Leonard Smith as first Secretary/Treasurer.

In 1954 a request was made to the government of Grenada for lands on which a clubhouse could be erected, and a plot adjacent to a banana storage shed at the entrance to the port was handed over. The club members set about raising the funds for the erection of the clubhouse. A Miss Lucan, whose brother had been the founder of the Grenada Sailing Club, which became defunct after his death, donated all funds from the Sailing Club to the Yacht Club. The club members cleared the site and put in a slipway themselves.

More members, whose membership fees would boost the coffers, were recruited. Life membership was offered at a cost of EC$100, a princely sum in those days. Among those who made this commitment was George Joseph, Managing Director of General Traders Ltd., who offered the club one of his company's prefab aluminum buildings at a greatly reduced price in exchange.

The opening night of the clubhouse was a joyous occasion. This joy, alas, was short lived. September of 1955 saw Grenada devastated by Hurricane Janet. Part of that devastation was the loss of the St. George's Pier along with the newly erected clubhouse.

In 1957 the rebuilding of the St. George's port began and the Grenada Yacht Club was informed that the land allotted to them would be needed for this project. The Club was compensated and offered a 25-year lease on the land known as The Spout. The new GYC clubhouse there was opened in June 1960.

During World War II one club member designed a 16-foot V-bottom sloop that could be built with timber readily available from local merchants. Being V-bottomed, the frames were straight — no need to search for crooks in the woods. Six or eight, possibly even ten, might have been built during the war years. Soon after the war ended, club members Ray Smith and his brother Ron, both enthusiastic sailors, decided they wanted something faster. They bought plans for the International 14 and built one. To obtain oak for frames they found old wagon wheels, cut out the spokes, built a big steam box, put the rims in, steamed them until they were flexible, straightened them, and fastened them to a timber to keep them straight while they cooled. Then the straightened wheel rims were put back in the steam box and bent to the shapes needed to build the International 14.

Eric Glean built a 23-foot *Prudence,* designed by L Francis Herreshoff, in his yard in the southeastern side of the lagoon where he established Glean's Garage. The lead keel was cast in a concrete mold.



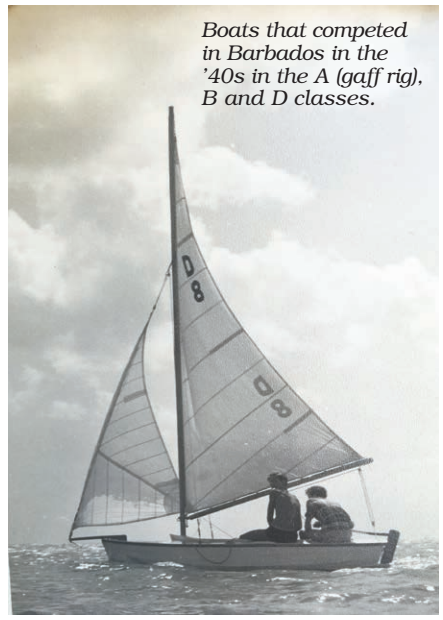
When I arrived in Grenada in 1960, the GP14 class was well established, as number of GYC members had built them. By '64 the number must've been about 20. All were well built, some spectacularly so. Those built by Porgy and Al Rapier were so carefully built that they were under weight, so compensating weight had to be added to meet class specifications.

In the 1960s and '70s, a three-day party started every year with the arrival of cruising boats from Trinidad racing for the Girl Pat Trophy. They would bring as many of Trinidad's GP14s as possible, and there was GP14 racing over the weekend. The profit from the bar and food sales supported the club's January Round the Island Races of '69, '70, '71 and '72 for boats with a minimum waterline length of 45 feet.

These four "big boat" races brought Grenada into the international yachting scene. In 1970 Keith Beken, who was then the world's most famous yachting photographer, took some magnificent photographs that appeared in *Yachting World* magazine and in his books. Stories of the '70 and '71 races appeared in yachting magazines on both sides of the Atlantic.

The Trinidad & Tobago Yacht Club

The Trinidad Yacht Club was formed in 1935, with 14 members and seven sailboats. The following year, the members acquired the first clubhouse, located at Cocorite. By the early '40s there were 80 members. In 1947, the membership had outgrown the space at Cocorite and a new clubhouse, at Bayshore, was officially opened in 1949.



Boats that competed in Barbados in the '40s in the A (gaff rig), B and D classes.

In the late 1950s the club started building a substantial fleet of GP14s. After independence in 1962, the British gave Trinidad two Vosper Thornycroft gunboats, which Commander David Bloom, seconded from the Royal Navy, made available to carry GP14s to Grenada to race. As the story goes, Commander Bloom requested that the gunboats only have one 40mm cannon, mounted on the bow, to leave room aft for the GP14s.

A single cannon proved adequate when the Trinidad Army mutinied in 1970 and headed to Port of Spain on the only road from the army base. The narrow road is cut into the side of a cliff. Bloom ordered Commander Kelshall to put the gunboat *Trinity* in place, blasting away at the cliff. Rocks tumbled down and blocked the road, and the mutineers retreated. The scar on the cliff can still be seen today.

To include its sister island, the club eventually changed its name to the Trinidad & Tobago Yacht Club. It now includes many sportsfishermen and boasts a membership of more than 900.

The Trinidad & Tobago Sailing Association

In the mid-'70s sailors including Sydney Knox, Dougie Myers and a few others, got together, and formed the Trinidad Yacht Racing Association. This association controlled yacht racing in the San Fernando Yacht Club and Point-a-Pierre Yacht Club. In 1964 the name was changed to the Trinidad Yachting Association. It acquired a long-term lease on a plot of land on the north side of the cove on the eastern side of Point Gourde, near Chaguaramas.

To reflect its expanded activities the name was again changed, to the Trinidad & Tobago Sailing Association. To ensure that all money was spent only to benefit sailors, rather than being spent on a fancy restaurant, tennis courts or a swimming pool, to become a voting member of you had to be a sailboat owner. It did not matter what size; even a Sunfish qualified you as a voting member.

Thanks to the late Ray Smith, Philippe Lachenez-hude, Peter Bue, Daniel Castagane, TTCG, and Jesse James for information in this article.

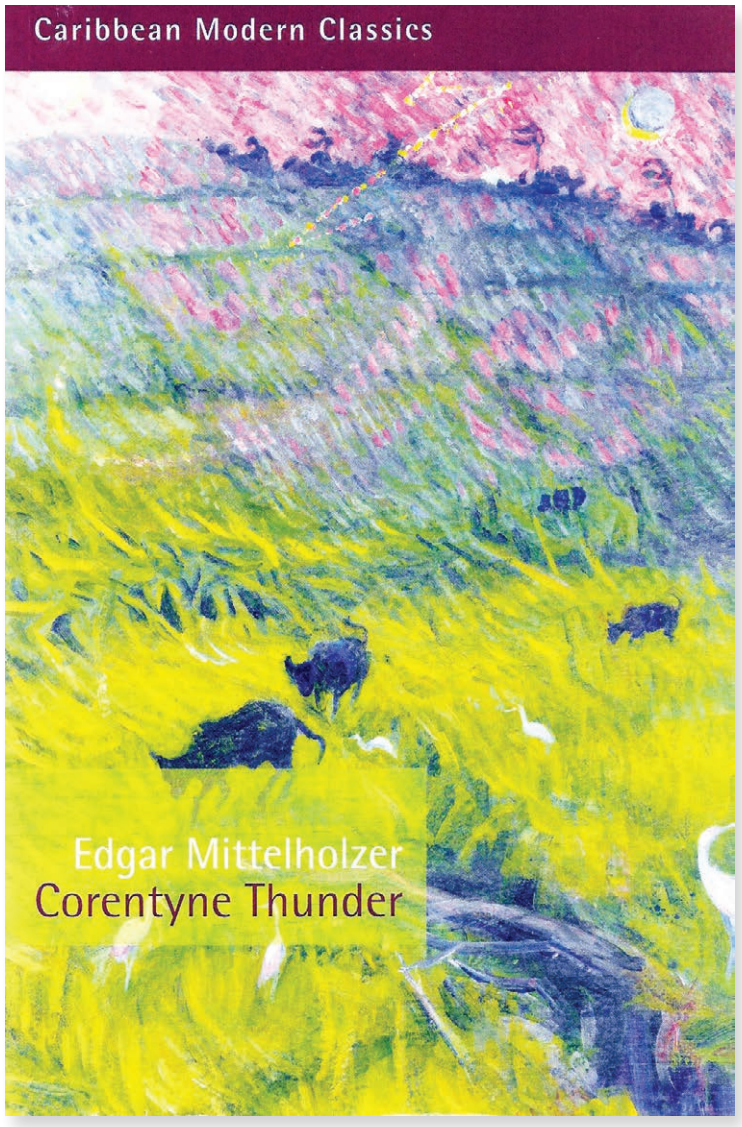
The development of yachting in the USVI, BVI and Antigua will be dealt with in a future article.

BOOK REVIEW BY J WYNNER

A SIMPLE STORY, BEAUTIFULLY TOLD

***Corentyne Thunder**, by Edgar Mittelholzer, Peepal Tree Press Ltd., © 2009. 241 pages. ISBN13: 978 1 84523 111 8*

Corentyne Thunder was written by Guyanese novelist Edgar Mittelholzer. First published in 1941 and now one of the Caribbean Modern Classics series, it is not only a brilliant first novel, it is also a work of art in which he relates the life of a miserly Indo-Guyanese peasant, the cow-minder Ramgolall, and his family on Guyana's Corentyne coast. Mittelholzer paints beautiful written scenes of landscapes and the varying weather moods on the Corenytne savannah in this wonderful narrative.



In an introduction to the novel, Juanita Cox, a PhD in Caribbean Studies, says that one of her aims was to show just how "literary" Mittelholzer's approach to the writing of this story was. She notes that Mittelholzer's insight into the lives of Indo-Guyanese peasants on the Corentyne coast came directly from experience.

Cox's introduction is a must-read for a detailed insight into Mittelhozer's work in this novel. She points out that deliberate similarities between two pieces of literature are made evident with respect to elements of dialogue and plot. In Molière's *The Miser*, the key protagonist, Harpagon, becomes hysterical on discovering that his money-box has been stolen (by his son Clèante) from his hiding place in the garden:

"Ahh! My poor, my dear money, my lovely money, my friend, they've taken you from me! And now you've gone, I've lost my prop, my comfort, my joy. I'm finished...."

Similarly, when Sosee stole money from Ramgolall to buy a sexually alluring dress to impress Big Man Weldon, Ramgolall's response was:

"Sombre day! He thought he would have died from very sorrow. He had been ill and fevered for a week after, talking wild tales and fighting so that he had to be strapped down to the hospital bed."

The story revolves around Ramgolall and his family. He is the father of five children. His eldest son died in an accident at the age of five and his other son, Baijan, is the owner of a rice-mill in Essequibo.

Sosee, the snobby sister and eldest daughter, is the badly treated and submissive mistress of Big Man Weldon, a rich cattle owner and the proprietor of the Little Benjamin estate, for whom she has borne seven children.

Beena and Kattree, who are 18 and 16 respectively, are the children of Ramgolall's second wife. "Beena was thin and very brown, like Ramgolall. She had beauty like the beauty of the savannah before the sun rose in the morning." She is the self-sacrificing one, and harbors a secret love for her married neighbour who murdered a man who was always belittling him.

"Kattree was of a lighter brown and her eyes were like the dark lowing of the cows in the afterglow of sunset." Kattree is free-spirited and has no sexual repressions. She has an affair with Geoffrey, her half-sister Sosee's eldest child, and chooses to become a single mother. Beena and Kattree live with Ramgolall on the savannah and help him to mind the cows and keep the home. For the most part, the story unfolds around these three.

From the very beginning of the book, and every step along the way, the author portrays the environment and provides an account of the weather along with the Ramgolall family's daily activities.

"When Ramgolall and Beena were driving home the cows, the sky had taken on a soft, mauve tint patterned with a curtain of cirri that trailed over the dome-like phantom fronds of a dead palm. Low breeze came weakly across the savannah, seeming as though it were breathed from an organ playing a dirge in the dank twilight of the far-off courida trees."

Another scene describes: "When the twilight of the coming night had gathered into a deep burnt-umber hue, the sky had ceased to drip. The grey had split in the west and long veins of pale gold ran in parallel bands across the sky, beginning in the south and ending hazily in the north-west. In the east and in the north and overhead the grey had become transparent and high, and hazily mottled, rigid like frosted grass, with specks of cobweb clinging to it. No wind blew and the air smelt fresh and watery. The sun had already gone down, and the pale gold bands in the west were slowly fading into a drab white colour, the colour of cold sandstone."

Though some readers may find the descriptive passages too numerous, readers who love nature and the environment will enjoy the ever-changing scenes of the savannah and the weather the artist has pictured.

But descriptive scenes of the weather and the savannah are not all that Mittellholzer is about. Though the story is a simple one, it is deeply layered and employs a wide range of intertextual references, as Cox has noted.

Corentyne Thunder is a gem. It is a wonderfully written novel set in a unique environment that lends a tranquil feel to the story despite all Ramgolall's family dynamics.





The Beloved Zenaida Dove

Doves have long evoked strong emotions in the human heart. Soft, plump and lovable, these gentle creatures are often associated with fidelity because some species remain with the same partner for life — in fact, the pair bond can be so strong that it extends beyond death. True to the amorous expression "lovey-dovey", doves are immensely devoted and affectionate to their mates, whom they charm with tender kisses, moans and soft coos instead of chirps and songs. As well as being dedicated lovers, they are also fiercely loyal to their offspring, caring and protecting them with enormous dedication.



BELA BROWN

Not surprisingly, doves have been symbols of eternal love, loyalty and beauty since the Early Bronze Age. In ancient Mesopotamia, doves were associated with Ishtar, the Assyrian goddess of love, sexuality and war. Later, the ancient Greeks — whose word for dove means "bird of Ishtar" — adopted the dove as the symbol of Aphrodite, goddess of love and beauty. The list of deities associated with doves keeps going: Venus and Fortuna, Roman goddesses of love and luck; Xochiquetzal, the ancient Aztec goddess of love; Kamadeva, the Hindu god of love — are all associated with doves. Christianity adopted doves as symbols of God, peace, love and reconciliation. Judaism likens the dove to the people of Israel. More recently, in 1949, the dove was adopted as the symbol of the World Peace Council.

Doves and pigeons belong to the family Columbidae. Contrary to popular belief, the difference between doves and pigeons is not biological, but rather linguistic — and not found in all languages. The word "pigeon" derives from old French and is generally used to describe the larger species of the family, while "dove" originates from old Nordic and is used to describe the smaller, more delicate-looking species. However, this distinction is not always accurate as the words are interchangeable.

Doves and pigeons are characterized by stout bodies, small heads, thin, relatively short beaks, short necks and strong flight. They differ anatomically from other birds by lacking a gallbladder, secreting bile directly into the stomach instead.

There are 18 species of doves in the West Indies, including the Zenaida doves, a small genus of smartly attired tan-colored doves native to the Americas. The type species (the one on which the description of the genus is based) is the lovely Zenaida Dove, found across most of the region, as well as along the northern coast of the Yucatan Peninsula. The word Zenaida (pronounced *Zen-eye-da*) is of Greek origin meaning "of Zeus". The Zenaida Dove is named after Princess Zenaide Bonaparte, the wife of French ornithologist Charles Lucian Bonaparte, who introduced the Zenaida genus in 1838.

The Zenaida Dove is a middle-sized bird with a tan mantle, whitish belly and cinnamon head and neck. It features a metallic purple gloss patch on the lower portion of the hindneck. Like all doves, the intensity of its colour varies depending on the subspecies, age, sex and reproductive rank of the individuals. For example, males are deeper in colour and during the breeding season have a vivid lilac or pink patch on the lower hindneck.

The species is almost identical to and can be easily confused with the Mourning Dove and the Eared Dove, which also occur in the West Indies. However, the Zenaida Dove can be distinguished by distinctly white-tipped secondary feathers (wing feathers that sustain the bird in the air by giving lift) and a short, less pointed tail. It differs from all other doves by having 12 rectrices rather than 14 — those are the long tail feathers used for steering in flight.

There are three geographically distinct subspecies of Zenaida Dove, differing in colour: The *Zenaida aurita Salvadorii,* found in the Yucatan Peninsula, is less tinged with cinnamon and has a greyish to olive brown back, the *Zenaida aurita zenaida,* found in the Bahamas, Cuba, Cayman Islands, Jamaica, Hispaniola, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, is darker overall, and the *Zenaida aurita aurita,* found in the Lesser Antilles from Anguilla to Grenada, is brighter with a whitish belly and deep cinnamon neck and head.

The Zenaida Dove has a beautiful mellow song, similar to that of the Mourning Dove, but faster paced. It is often heard cooing soulfully — "cooOOcoo-coo-coo" — its soothing, gentle voice rising and falling, like a breathless sea on a calm day. Typically found alone or in very small flocks, the Zenaida Dove is a forest dweller, inhabiting mainly coastal dry forest and mangrove forest. It is less numerous in high-elevation wet forests. It can also be found in agricultural land, plantations, shrubland, gardens and parks. Like all doves, it is an extremely fast learner, able to easily adapt to changing environments. Although highly territorial towards members of the same species, actively excluding any intruder from its territory, it will happily forage alongside other species.

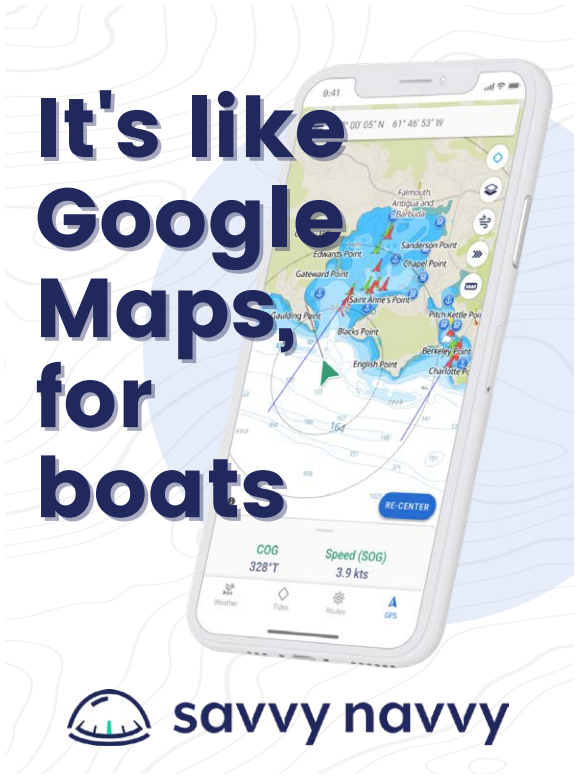
As an opportunistic feeder, it forages both in the trees and on the ground for grains, seeds, ants and earthworms. It will also eat leguminous plants, fruits and small flying insects such as flies. Zenaida Doves eat salt from deposit-rich soils, mineral blocks and other natural resources, as their diet is low on sodium needed for egg formation and the production of pigeon milk. On hot days individuals may be seen seeking puddles and streams to quench their thirst and bathe — unlike other birds who must tilt their heads back to swallow water, doves and pigeons are able to drink by suction.

The Zenaida Dove breeds mainly between February and August, but is capable of changing its nesting preferences to anytime of the year if conditions allow. Couples may start breeding as early as ten or 11 months old and remain together throughout the breeding season. The male initiates courtship with boisterous flights and circular glides before landing and approaching the female with a puffed-out breast and bobbing head. The pair will then preen each other's feathers and "kiss" repeatedly. The female is smaller than the male and very loving towards her mate, often encouraging him with kisses and quivering wings. After copulation, the couple searches for a place to build the nest. The male chooses the nesting site and then gathers the nesting material for the female to use in building it. The nest is a flimsy platform of twigs and grasses, placed usually on a mango tree, Royal Palm, tall cactus, or tall Abizia. On islands with few or no ground predators, the nests are placed on boulders, grassy vegetation and rocky crevices. On little Saba Island in the US Virgin Islands, Zenaida Doves nest in tunnel-like excavations under the matted grass.

Like other doves and pigeons, Zenaida Doves usually lay only two white eggs, which both parents incubate for about two weeks. The squabs (the term used for baby doves and pigeons) are born altricial, meaning that they are naked, blind and completely helpless, requiring the protection and care of their parents. During the first few days of their lives, squabs are fed exclusively on crop milk — a semi-solid secretion produced by both parents. This "milk" is extremely nutritious, containing more protein and fat than cow or human milk. As a result the nestlings develop rapidly, fledging at two weeks old. The parents nest again as soon as the juveniles become independent, producing as many as four broods per year.

The Zenaida Dove has benefited greatly from humans' activities such as agricultural practices, rapidly establishing itself in degraded habitats and even in towns and cities. In Barbados, the species can be found in the capital city, Bridgetown, scurrying along the busy streets and flocking among the buildings. Although much desired as a gamebird that has long endured intense hunting, its population is nevertheless increasing in the West Indies and has become exceedingly common, as well as loved, in some islands. The Zenaida Dove is the National Bird of Anguilla where it is colloquially known as the Turtle Dove.

Clearly, the delightful Zenaida Dove has already won its place in history — triumphantly and emphatically like a true child of Zeus.







The Sky from Mid-February to Mid-March

by Jim Ulik

Observing the planets in the night sky has taken a downturn this period. It may not be a favorable time for some and the closest planets can only be seen in the pre-dawn sky. Meteor showers have also slowed. Earth will not pass through large areas of debris left behind by asteroids or comets this period.

On the other hand there are at least 41 known asteroids that will make a close approach to Earth this period. The largest asteroid to pass by could have a diameter up to 1.3 km (4,265 feet). While no known asteroid larger than 140 metres in size has a significant chance to hit Earth for the next 100 years, only about 40 percent of those asteroids have been found as of October 2021.

Dr. Teddy Oglethorpe: Madam President, this comet is what we call a planet-killer.

Dr. Randall Mindy: That is correct.

President Orlean: So how certain is this?

Dr. Randall Mindy: There's one hundred percent certainty of impact.

President Orlean: Please, don't say a hundred percent.

Secretary of the Interior: Can we just call it a potentially significant event?

Kate Dibiasky: But it isn't potentially going to happen. It is *going to happen.*

Dr. Randall Mindy: Exactly. Ninety-nine point seven eight percent, to be exact.

Jason Orlean: Oh, great. Okay, so it's not a hundred percent.

Dr. Teddy Oglethorpe: Well, scientists never like to say one hundred percent.

President Orlean: Call it seventy percent, and let's just, let's move on.

Kate Dibiasky: But it's not even close to seventy percent.

President Orlean: You cannot go around saying to people that there's a hundred percent chance that they're going to die. You know? It's just nuts.

— Dialog from the movie Don't Look Up *(2021)*

Wednesday, February 16th

This period begins with a cluster of planets rising in the east. Just before sunrise Venus appears as the Morning Star. Mars can be found just to the south, or right, of Venus. In a few minutes Mercury will climb above the horizon. The messenger of the Roman gods reaches its greatest western elongation or separation from the Sun this morning.

The next five days will be the last opportunity to spot Jupiter in the western sky. Jupiter will be located just over the horizon at dusk on its way to align with the Sun. In one month it will return as a morning planet sharing the sky with Venus, Mars, Saturn and Mercury.

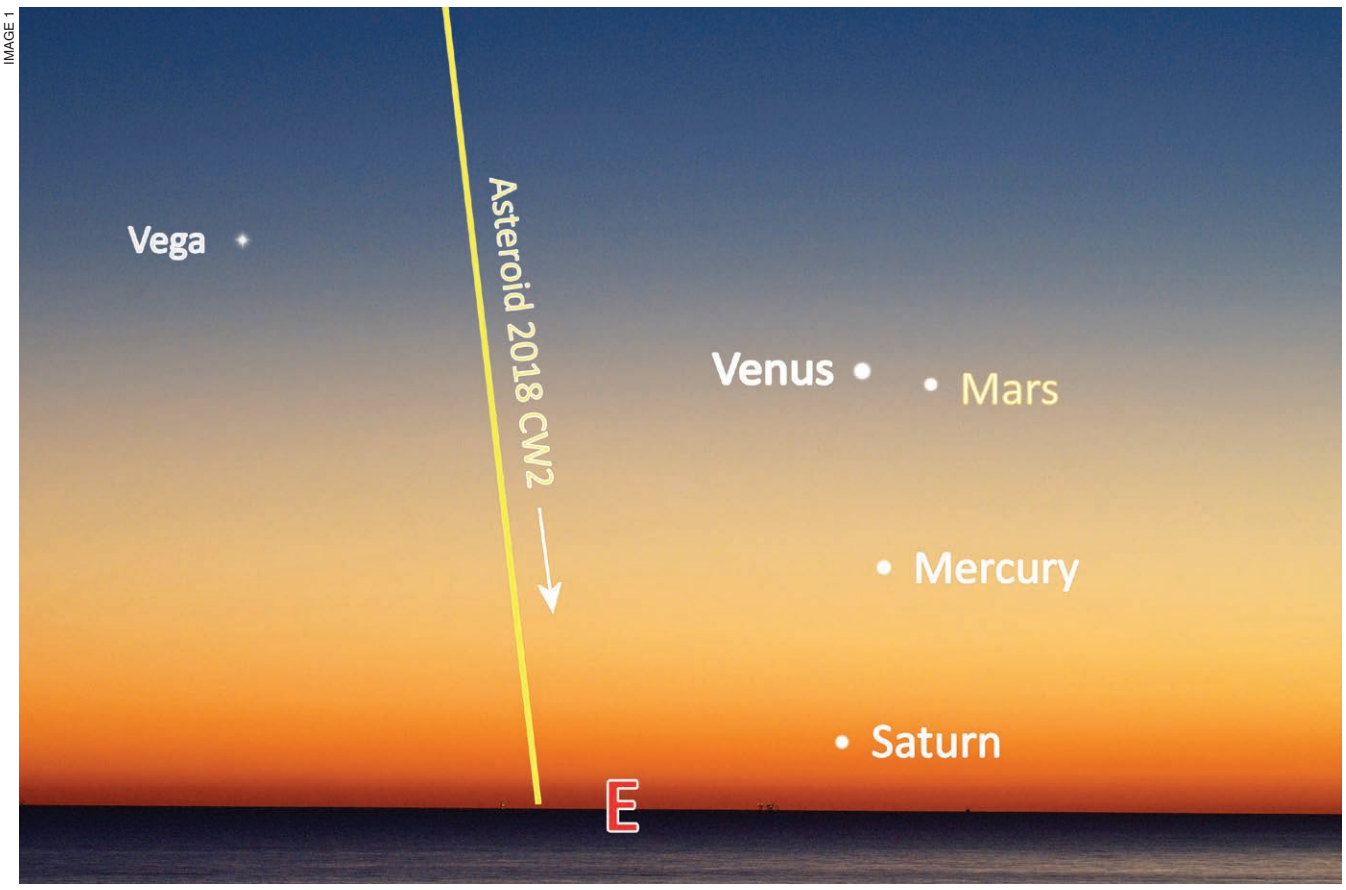
Friday, February 18th

A Near Earth Object (NEO) named 2018 CW2 makes a close approach to Earth today (see Image 1). The asteroid will zip past at 91,500 km/h (57,000 mph). It will reach its close approach at approximately 0500 hours. No worries, contrary to some posts or headlines, 2018 CW2 will not impact Earth. The asteroid crosses Earth's orbit about every eight months. The next close approach to Earth will occur on February 20th, 2024. However, its orbit is constantly being altered by gravity when it passes near Venus and Mercury.

Wednesday, February 23rd

The Moon will transition into its third quarter phase throughout the day. The third quarter moment occurs long after the Moon sinks below the western horizon. Typical for this period most celestial events occur very early before sunrise or while hidden on the opposite side of Earth.

IMAGE 1



Path of asteroid 2018 CW2

Sunday, February 27th

There is a conjunction between the Moon, Mars and Venus in the eastern sky. The trio can be seen in line for about two hours prior to sunrise. Further to the east Mercury and Saturn can be seen along the ecliptic or great circle apparent path of the Sun.

Continued on next page

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—*Continued from previous page*

Monday, February 28th

Venus has reached its highest altitude in the morning sky. At sunrise the second brightest object in the night sky will be 38 degrees above the horizon. The small sliver of the Moon has relocated to an area of sky near Mercury and Saturn. Mercury is the brighter object above Saturn.

Wednesday, March 2nd

A planetary pair can be seen about ten degrees above the eastern horizon this morning. The separation between Mercury and Saturn is less than one half degree. The planets may appear as one object unless binoculars are used for viewing.

The Moon is passing close to the Sun throughout the day. The New Moon and Jupiter are both lost in the Sun's glare. Look for the Moon to reappear in two days as it transitions away from the Sun.

Thursday, March 3rd

The pi Virginids variable shower peaks tonight. Meteors can be seen from this shower from February 13th to April 8th. The radiant breaks the eastern horizon at 1930h but the best time to catch a shooting star is after 2100h. Look straight overhead from a dark location for the best viewing opportunity. There will not be any interference from moonlight.

Tuesday, March 8th

The Moon has relocated close to the Seven Sisters. Generally six or seven stars can be seen in the cluster of stars comprising Pleiades. A pair of binoculars will reveal more stars. This could be a good time to identify some landmarks on the Moon. Image 3 identifies the location of six Apollo landing sites (in yellow) and four of the Moon's seas.

Mare Nectaris - Sea of Nectar
Mare Fecunditatis – Sea of Fertility
Mare Crisium – Sea of Crisis
Mare Tranquillitatis - Sea of Tranquility

Tonight could be an opportunity to search for the "Lost Pleiad." In addition to Seven Sisters, the cluster of stars includes their parents, Atlas and Pleione. Can you identify the missing Pleiad? Reasons for seeing fewer than seven Pleiads has been historically associated with Merope, Electra or Celaeno. The mythical Electra was considered missing because she veiled her face at the burning of Troy. Merope was ostracized for marrying a mortal. Was the "Dark One," Celaeno, absent after being struck by a thunderbolt? Even the mother star Pleione was considered the Lost Pleiad. Visually Pleione gets lost in the glare of the star Atlas.

Saturday, March 12th

Mars and Venus have appeared close since the beginning of February. This morning the planets will reach their closest apparent position in the predawn sky. Over the next few days Mars and Venus will move towards Saturn. The three planets lie in the constellation Capricornus.

Sunday, March 13th

The Moon is about halfway between First Quarter and its Full Moon phase. Tonight the Moon will make a close approach to Pollux, the brightest star in the constellation Gemini. Pollux is located off the dark side of the Moon towards the northeast.

Monday, March 14th

Today is Pi Day. This evening the γ-Normid meteor shower reaches its peak. This shower originating from an area near the constellation Norma (the carpenter's square) will be active from February 25th to March 28th. Meteors from this shower will radiate out of the south. The best viewing will be after 0400h, after the Moon sets.

Tuesday, March 15th

Yesterday the Moon passed through the constellation Cancer. Tonight it holds up in Leo near the "Heart of the Lion." Regulus is almost exactly on the ecliptic, the path of the Sun. It will rise south of the Moon riding the ecliptic throughout the night.

In the News

Artemis 1 is the first integrated test of NASA's deep space exploration systems. The spacecraft, though built for humans, will be unmanned. This will be the launching of the most powerful rocket in the world. The preliminary launch date is March 12th, 2022. It will travel beyond the Moon, 280,000 miles from Earth.

** 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.

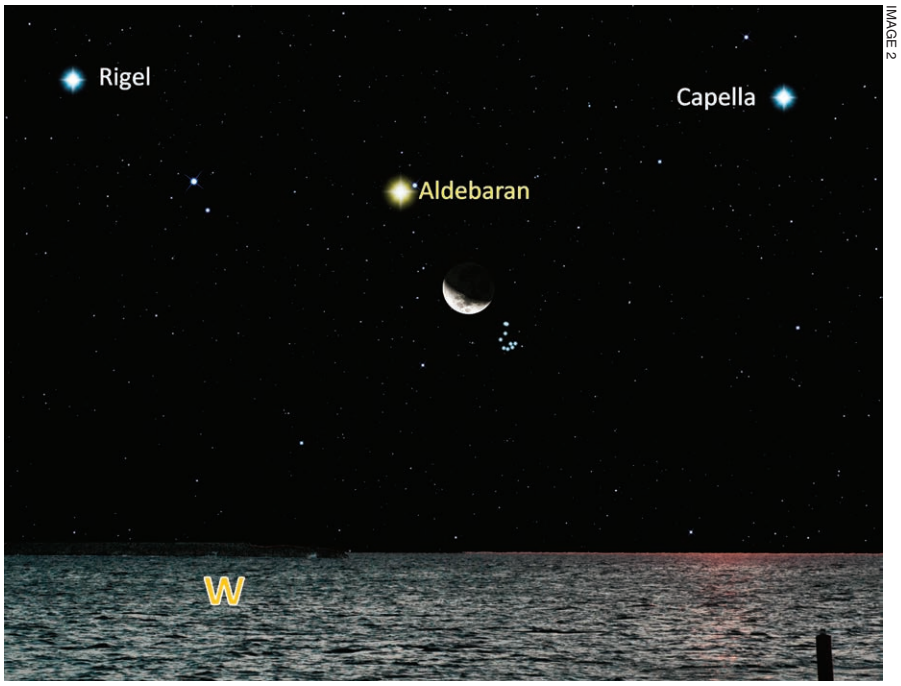


IMAGE 2

Above: The Moon meets the Seven Sisters in the constellation Taurus.

Below: Some Lunar landmarks identified on the night Pleiades meets the Moon.

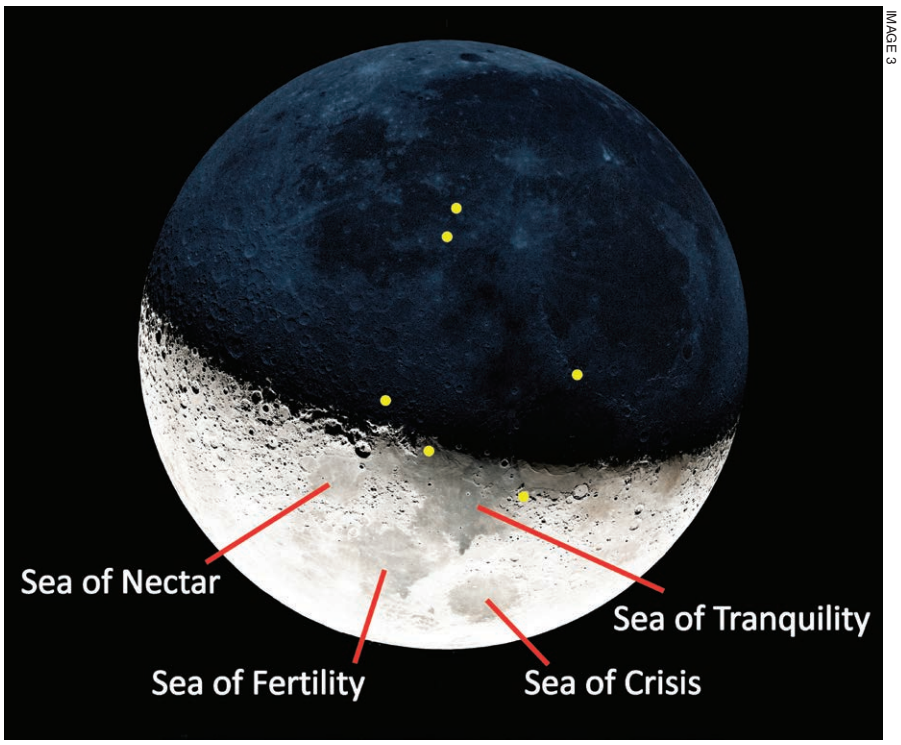


IMAGE 3

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Tiny Gems of the Coral Reef: THE GOBIES

by Darelle Snyman

When it comes to species diversity, no other fish family holds a candle to the gobies of the family Gobiidae. This wide-ranging family has over 2,000 members in over 200 genera, making them the most species-rich family of all vertebrates.

When it comes to size, gobies are easily overlooked as they are among the smallest fish you will encounter within the reef ecosystem. This does not bode well for the identification of these mostly bottom-dwelling fishes. As a group, however, they are all characterized by the presence of two dorsal fins and unusually united pectoral fins. The pectorals are fused together to form a disc-shaped sucker foot, a nifty structural adaptation that allows them to cling to rocks and coral. The range of color variation among these large-eyed little fish adds to the identification conundrum. Many are similarly drab to blend in with their sandy surroundings, others are pallid and translucent, and then there are the ones that advertise themselves in vivid colors, such as the cleaner gobies of the genus *Elacatinus*.

Members of the goby genus *Elacatinus* are well known for the cleaning services they provide other fish. It would be easy for these tiny fish to go unnoticed were it not for their vivid colors, which serve as their main signal to other fish that they are cleaners. Once you focus your attention on finding these little critters you will often see them nibbling on larger fish or hanging around coral heads and sponges waiting for clients to service. Cleaner gobies, often collectively referred to as neon gobies, get most of their nutrition from the ectoparasites and dead skin they remove from a wide variety of predatory fish. Many of the fish they service, such as groupers and snappers, would otherwise seek them out as tasty snacks, which makes cleaning such an amazing symbiotic relationship between predator and prey.

Although this is unusual, a cleaner goby may sometimes "cheat" its client by feeding on the mucus and scales that protect it. This breach of contract is a big no-no in the marine symbiotic cleaning industry. In retaliation for this offensive act the client, who eventually learns its lesson, will not return to that cleaning station. This results in the loss of future parasitic meals for the goby, which is not good business practice. This, however, is thought to occur only when the goby is extremely hungry and the client had only a few ectoparasites. To date I have also paid little attention to the gobies I have encountered, probably because I lack the equipment to really focus on them as photographic subjects.

The Sharknose Goby

A cleaner goby that has drawn my attention, however, is the cute Sharknose Goby (*Elacatinus evelynae*), probably because it is the one I have seen the most. This little cleaner can be found dashing around a coral head in a zigzag pattern, advertising its cleaning services. Cleaner gobies look frustratingly similar and the easiest way to identify the Sharknose Goby is to look for the distinctive yellow V marking near the tip of the snout. This marking continues along the length of the body to the tail, in color variations of pale blue, yellow to white.

The Sharknose Goby, as most *Elacatinus* species, is monogamous; each fish seeks out a partner and a mating pair will feed together. Although there is a hold on the predator-prey relationship during cleaning, there still are other predators around that can handicap cleaners' feeding. Studies have shown that the female within the cleaning partnership tends to clean and feed more than the male, who divides his time between feeding and keeping his mate safe. When it comes to breeding, both the male and female protect their breeding territory, but the guarding and aeration of the eggs is the male's sole responsibility. The adhesive eggs are stuck to the walls of small crevices and other substrates.

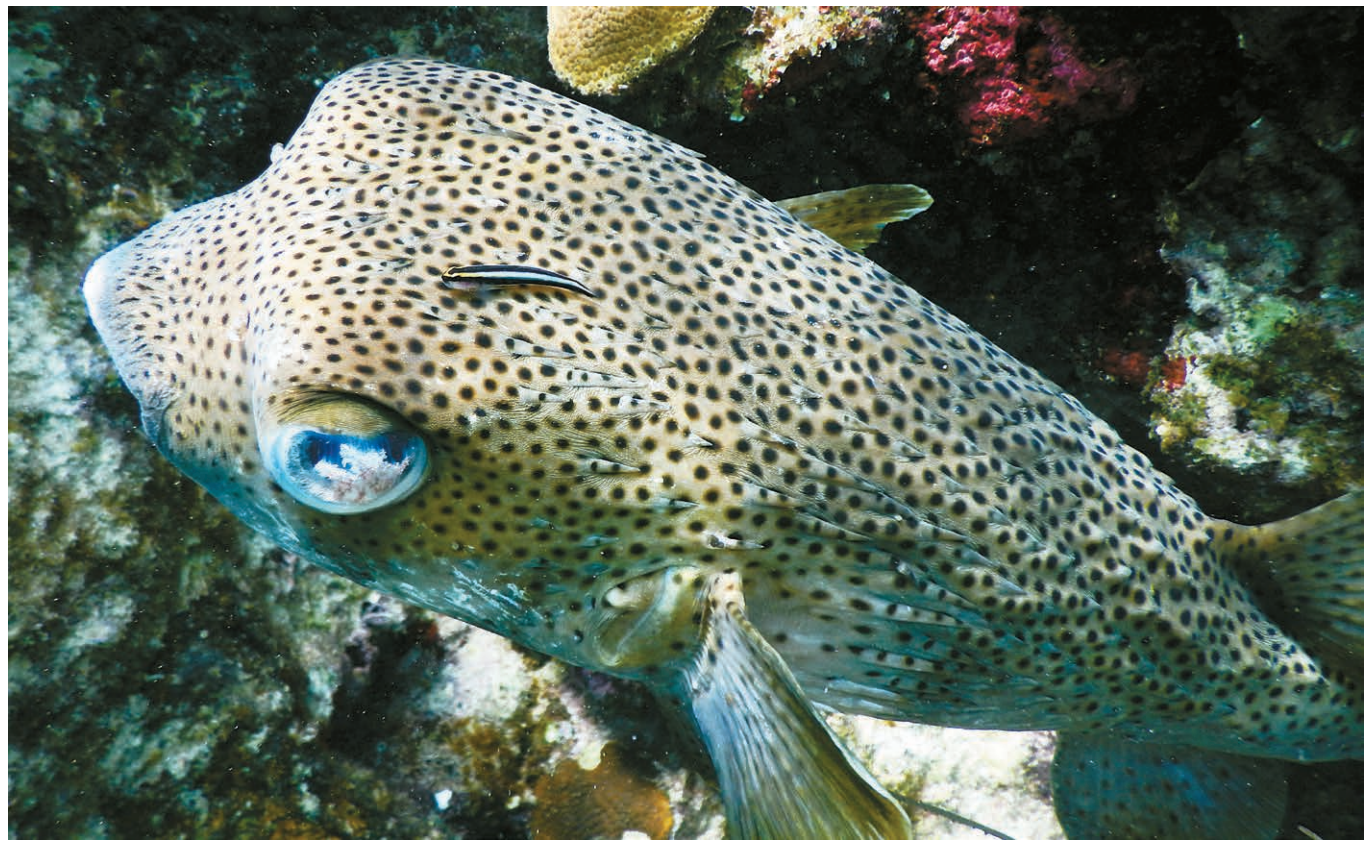
The Caribbean Neon Goby

While exploring the reefs in Belize I regularly noticed another small goby, mostly associated with brain coral, which also stood out because of the blue iridescent stripe along the side of its body. Initially, I wrongly identified it as the Neon Goby (*Elacatinus oceanops*), which bears a similar iridescent blue stripe. Further research however showed it to be the Caribbean Neon Goby (*Elacatinus lobeli*) whose thin blue stripe, at closer inspection, can be seen to be bordered in pale grey, while the bright blue stripe of *E. oceanops* is broader and has no border.

Luckily there is an easier way to distinguish between the two species: their distribution ranges do not overlap. The Caribbean Neon Goby is restricted to the waters of Belize and Honduras, while the Neon Goby is only found from Georgia to Florida and the Gulf of Mexico.

Another colorful *Elacantinus* species that you are likely to encounter because of its wider distribution is the beautiful Orange-Sided Goby (*Elacatinus dilepis*). Unfortunately I could not find any interesting information regarding this species apart from general descriptions and taxonomic information.

—Continued on next page



A tiny Sharknose Goby cleaning a Porcupine Fish.



The Caribbean Neon Goby likes to hang out on brain coral.



The Peppermint Goby has distinctive bright blue markings on the snout and near the eyes.

LOOK OUT FOR...

Ackee: Preparation is Key!

by Lynn Kaak

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



"Ackee, rice, saltfish is nice" is a line from the well-known song "Jamaica Farewell." Ackee is the national fruit of Jamaica, and has garnered a place in song and history. However, don't be in a rush to grab one off the tree and eat it like any other fruit!

Blighia sapida (named for Captain Bligh of breadfruit fame) is a member of the soapberry family. While it may resemble the wax apple and French cashew, it is actually scientifically lumped in with lychees and longan.

Ackee (akee, ankye, achee or ackee apple) is native to West Africa, and was brought to the Caribbean along with enslaved African people. While it is a source of food, it is has an ornamental quality that led to further propagation by the European colonists.

The tree produces pear-shaped fruit that get to a size of about ten centimetres (four inches) in diameter. Ripe fruit become red or a yellowish orange, and have shiny skin. A fruit is considered fully ripe when it opens up, showing the black seeds and the edible aril.

The skin and the seeds are poisonous at all times. The aril (the part attached to the seed that looks something like a brain) is poisonous until the fruit is ripe (this seems to have something to do with sun exposure) and cooked properly. Ingesting it can have adverse effects if the toxins aren't completely dealt with, so this is not a dish to experiment with. Ask an experienced local cook to show you how to prepare ackee, step by step, to get it right. Jamaican Vomiting Syndrome is a thing.

However, when done right, cleaned and cooked ackee arils have the consistency of scrambled eggs and a delightful buttery flavour. The Jamaican national dish consists of ackee boiled for ten to 20 minutes first, and then fried with vegetables and mixed with saltfish. The mild flavor of the ackee pairs well with the savory saltfish.

Trees can bear fruit twice a year, typically in spring (start of the rainy season) and fall.

The trees can grow to a height of about ten metres (35 feet). They have rather short trunks, but the crowns branch out soon and abundantly. The leaves are 15 to 30 centimetres long (six to 12 inches), bearing six to ten leaflets on each. They have a leathery texture.

The flowers appear in long chains (up to 20 centimetres, or eight inches). They will appear about two months before the fruit is borne. The five-petalled white or pale green flowers are very aromatic, enticing pollinators to the unisex flowers.

While known in the Caribbean as a food, the trees and fruit are used for other purposes, especially in their native West Africa. Unripe fruit may be used as a fish poison in lakes, and the strong wood can be used for anything that requires durability. Various parts of the tree have been be used for traditional medicine for minor ailments.

Ackee trees are most commonly found in islands that have a longer history of English rule. Typically found in larger gardens as an ornamental, they are very common in Jamaica where they line the roads.

Shirley Hall's Ackee and Saltfish

2 Tablespoons cooking oil
1 teaspoon curry powder
1 onion, chopped
1 sprig of thyme
2 cloves of garlic, minced
1 sweet pepper, chopped
4 tomatoes, diced
2 stalks of celery, chopped
1 hot pepper, seeded and minced
10 ackees, cleaned
1 pound of saltfish, rinsed, boiled, and flaked apart

When you buy or pick fresh ackee, take the ackee arils out of the pods, remove the black seeds, and with a small knife remove the little pinkish-purple string membrane. *Have an experienced local person show you how all this is done.*



When cleaned, put the ackee in a pot with boiling salted water and boil it for 10 minutes until the ackee is almost soft. Always drain the ackee after boiling, and discard the water.

Rinse, soak, boil and flake the saltfish. Prepare the vegetables.

In a large frying pan, heat the oil. Add the curry powder, onion, thyme and garlic, stirring constantly. Then mix in the remaining vegetables, adding the ackee last. Keep stirring gently and add saltfish. Cook covered for two minutes.

Shirley Hall is the author of The New Caribbean Home Garden Guide.

—Continued from previous page *... get to know your Caribbean marine life*

Many of the sand-perching gobies seen around the Caribbean belong to the genus *Coryphopterus*, another genus that includes many similar-looking species. These differences can be so slight that identification underwater becomes very difficult or even impossible. Most of the sand gobies can only be identified by a combination of features, each of which alone is not sufficient enough to identify one species from another. These types of fish barely hang around for you to take a photo, let alone make a close inspection to locate those slight markings that sets them apart. I am not even going to attempt to address the identification of these species in this article.

The Peppermint Goby

Therefore I will rather introduce you to a more colorful coral-perching member of this family found widely through the Caribbean, one that is probably easier to identify. The Peppermint Goby (*Coryphopterus lipernes*) has a golden-yellow translucent body and distinctive bright blue markings on the snout, the upper edges of the eyes and behind the eyes. They can be found singly, but sometimes form small groups that swim close to the reef. They spend most of their time during the day resting on live coral, surveying their surroundings, with brief forays to nearby algal mats to feed. Their food preferences, however, are not only restricted to micro-algae. They also feast on benthic invertebrates and detritus.

Peppermint Gobies exhibit sequential protogynous hermaphroditism, quite a mouthful of words. It basically means that through a coordinated sequence of events a dominant female will change sex to facilitate mating when the dominant male of the group dies. The eggs are laid on coral surfaces and guarded by males who fan the eggs to supply oxygen.

The Orange-Spotted Goby

Many gobies, commonly referred to as shrimp gobies, are known for the symbiotic relationship they have with alpheid shrimps. One such Caribbean resident is the Orange-Spotted Goby (*Nes longus*). This sand-colored critter can be recognized by the pairs of orange to brown patches that run down its body, often forming bars. It is little bit larger than some of its family members and can reach lengths of ten centimeters or four inches. It can be found in open, silty bottom areas cohabitating with the sand-snapping shrimp (*Alpheus floridanus*). This unlikely living arrangement benefits both parties. The sharp-eyed goby sits outside the burrow, acting as sentinel for the shrimp, whose poor vision makes it vulnerable when it leaves its burrow. When a predatory fish approaches too close to the burrow the goby warns the shrimp by rapidly wiggling its tail. The shrimp's sandy burrow in return provides the goby with a safe haven to retreat into when it feels threatened. This remarkable symbiotic relationship apparently can last for a lifetime. Studies found that they bond as juveniles and remain partnered, living and foraging together.

Next month we will take a closer look at another group of cute tiny fishes that are often confused with the gobies, the blennies.



Another species you are likely to encounter is the beautiful Orange-Spotted Goby.



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IS LARRY PARDEY THE REAL DEAL?

Dear *Compass*,

In the November 2021 issue, Nicola Cornwall's description of the call to action she received from "*Compass* Captain Sally Erdle" was a fun way to start her review about the new documentary movie on the life of world cruiser Larry Pardey. Having never heard of the Pardeys, Nicola's unbiased review of *The Real Deal* is straightforward and refreshingly honest.

I've not seen the documentary yet, but for me, coming of age in the '70s racing small one-design sailboats in protected harbors of southern California, I had just the opposite experience to Nicola's. At 19, dating soon-to-be-husband Tom, he introduced me to ocean sailing and the idea of circumnavigation. Tom had just read Pardeys' first book, *Cruising in Seraffyn*. He told me, "along with *Dove* by Robin Lee Graham, these are must-reads."

By 1978, we bought a 28-foot Bristol Channel Cutter hull and deck kit from Lyle Hess based on the design of *Seraffyn*.

For decades since, in many circumstances with countless people, I've quoted the Pardeys' "go light, go simple, go now" motto. I guess you could say it has become my own.

In 1980, due to Tom's 470 racing notoriety, we were invited to sail aboard *Seraffyn* in the (Newport Beach to) Ensenada Race. Under other circumstances I might have really taken to Lin and Larry and *Seraffyn*, but it was May — fog and next to no wind. The foggy slog turned out to be the slowest Ensenada Race on record. Tom and I were estranged by that time. Between that, the Pardeys' "bucket and chuck it" toileting method, and the nauseating roll of a boat in no wind for two days, it is mostly an unpleasant memory. Nonetheless, after decades of consuming their articles and books, if written by the Pardeys, for me, it must be credible.

Reading from Nicola's review, I asked my captain, Jim Hutchins, "Nicola called Larry Pardey 'controversial.' I wonder why?"

"What made him controversial was going out to sea to weather storms," Jim replied.

Lin and Larry's emphatic statements and their willingness to back them up with their real life experiences makes *The Real Deal* seem like it will be, for me, the real deal.

Best regards,
Ellen Birrell

PS Currently we're in Carriacou selling our sloop of 12 years, *Boldly Go*. Boo-hoo. But Happy New Year, and here's to the adventures ahead. Remember, on land or sea: go light, go simple, go now.

CRUISING CATS

Dear *Compass*,

Regarding the "Cruise with a Cat" story and the sidebar in the November 2021 issue (pages 22 and 23 at www.caribbeancompass.com/online/november21compass_online.pdf), I can't imagine taking a cat cruising — but that maritime litter box idea is ingenious!

Maryann Matter
Key West, Florida

THE 50 WAYS TO GET ASHORE CHALLENGE

Dear *Compass* Readers,

*In Jim Hutchinson's article "50 Ways" in May 2021 i*ssue of Compass (see page 22 at https://bit.ly/3fyIaBm),
Hutch reckoned there must be 50 ways to get ashore from a boat. Are there?

We asked you to send a photo of how YOU get ashore — inflatable with outboard, rowing dinghy, sailing dinghy, kayak, paddleboard, windsurfer, noodles, fins — or something else entirely? And Compass readers have accepted the challenge.

See the latest entries, from Mina L'Ecuyer and Doug Leihbacher (www.caribbeanislandsailing.com) below.

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

DOUG LEIHBACHER (2)



The well-known produce delivery vessel in Rodney Bay, St. Lucia.



A boat vendor in Admiralty Bay, Bequia, utilizes a former windsurfer.

MINA L'ECUYER



A kayaker paddling in Tyrell Bay, Carriacou.

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.

Dear *Compass*,

Please include me on the list to receive a notice when each issue comes online. Love reading CC when it's freezing out!

Thanks,
Bradford

Dear *Compass* Readers,

If you'd like be on the list to receive an email letting you know when each new issue becomes available online, just drop a note to sally@caribbeancompass.com.
CC

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CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

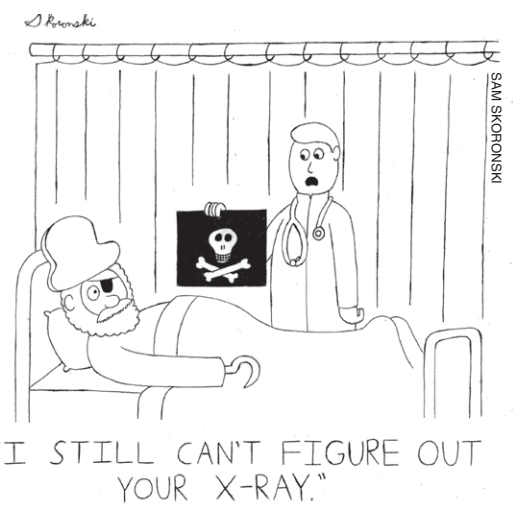
2 World Wetlands Day. www.ramsar.org/activity/world-wetlands-day
4 – 6 Caribbean Multihull Challenge. www.smyc.com/caribbean-multihull-challenge
7 Public holiday in Grenada (Independence Day)
10 SSCA Offshore Passage Preparation Webinar. www.ssca.org
11 - 13 Jolly Harbour Valentine's Regatta, Antigua. www.jhycantigua.com
12 – 13 Sweethearts of the Caribbean & Classic Regatta, BVI. www.westendyachtclubbvi.com/post/weyc-2021_2022-race-calendar
15 – 20 Barbados Independent Film Festival. barbadosfilmfest.org
16 FULL MOON
18 Public holiday in Aruba (Flag Day)
18 – 20 Tobago Carnival Regatta
21 Public holiday in Puerto Rico & USVI (Presidents' Day)
21 Start of RORC Caribbean 600 race, Antigua. caribbean600.rorc.org
22 Public holiday in St. Lucia (Independence Day)
23 Public holiday in Guyana (Mashramani)
25 Public holiday in Suriname (Liberation Day)
25 - 27 Bequia Music Fest postponed to January 25 - 30, 2023
25 – 1 March Semaine Nautique Internationale de Schoelcher, Martinique. www.cnschoelcher.net
26 Cruisers' Sailing the Pacific Seminar, Island Water World, St. Martin
26 Governor's Cup Race, BVI. www.royalbviyc.org
27 Public holiday in Dominican Republic (Independence Day)
28 – 1 March Carnival Monday and Tuesday in Trinidad, Martinique, Ponce (Puerto Rico), Barranquilla (Colombia), Aruba, Carriacou, Curaçao, Dominica, Haiti and St. Barth
TBA Round Martinique Regatta. www.theroundmartinique.com
TBA Sailors' & Landlubbers' Auction, Bequia. www.bequiasunshineschool.org

MARCH

2 Public holiday in many places (Ash Wednesday)
3 - 6 St. Maarten Heineken Regatta. info@heinekenregatta.com
5 – 7 Dark & Stormy Regatta, BVI. www.westendyachtclubbvi.com/post/weyc-2021_2022-race-calendar
7 Public holiday in BVI (HL Stoutt's Birthday) and in Belize (National Heroes' Day)
8 International Women's Day
9 - 13 Superyacht Challenge Antigua. www.superyachtchallengeantigua.com
12 Cruisers' Fishing & Liferaft Seminar, Island Water World, St. Maarten
14 Public holiday in some places (Commonwealth Day) and in St. Vincent & the Grenadines (National Heroes' Day)
17 Public holiday in Montserrat (St. Patrick's Day). St. Patrick's Day Festival, Grenada
17 – 20 St. Barths Bucket Regatta, St. Barths. www.BucketRegatta.com
18 FULL MOON
18 Public holiday in Aruba (Flag Day)
20 Vernal Equinox
20 - 27 (TBC) Yachtie Appreciation Week, Dominica. dominicapays@gmail.com
22 Public holiday in Puerto Rico (Emancipation Day)
24 Round St. John Race, St. Thomas, USVI. stthomasyachtclub.org
25 – 27 St. Thomas International Regatta. stthomasyachtclub.org
26 - 27 Antigua Optimist Open & Antigua Laser Open. www.antiguayachtclub.com
29 – 3 April BVI Spring Regatta & Sailing Fest, Tortola. bvispringregatta.org
30 Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago (Spiritual Baptist 'Shouter' Liberation Day)
30 – 4 April Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta. www.antiguaclassics.com
TBA Curaçao Youth Sailing Championships. https://ysco.org/curacao-youth-championships
TBA Foxy's Music Fest, Jost Van Dyke, BVI. https://foxysbar.com/events

All information was correct to the best of our knowledge
at the time this issue of *Compass* went to press.
But plans change rapidly these days, so
contact event organizers directly for confirmation.
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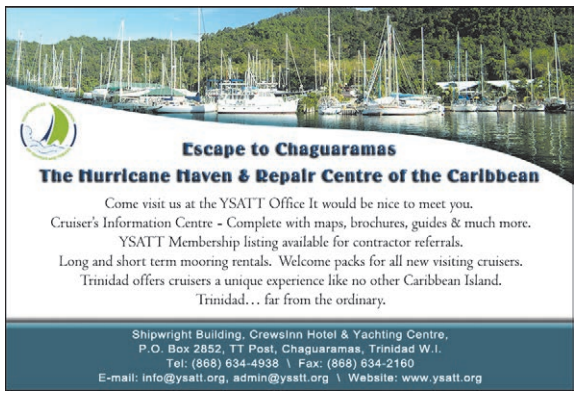
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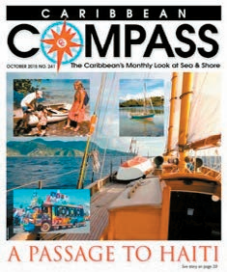
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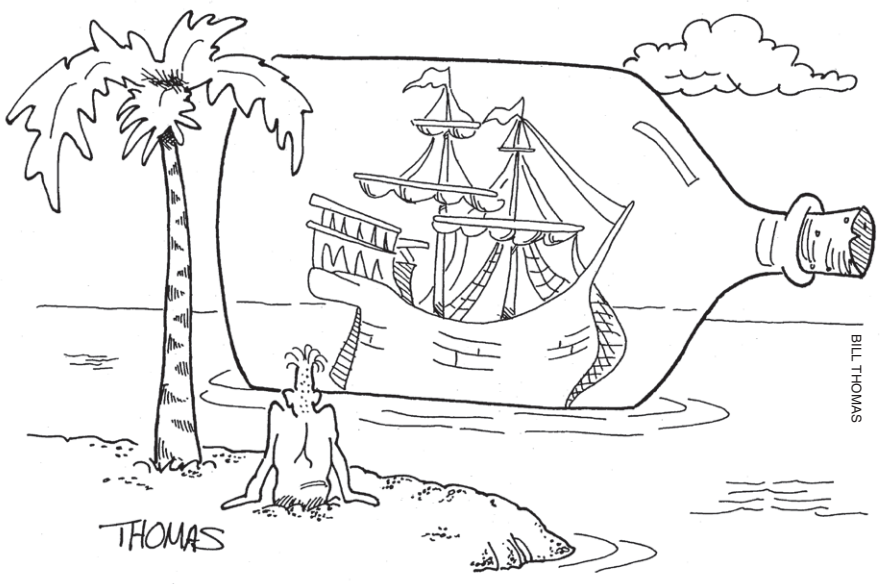






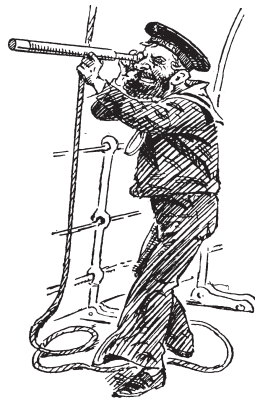


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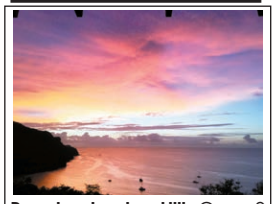
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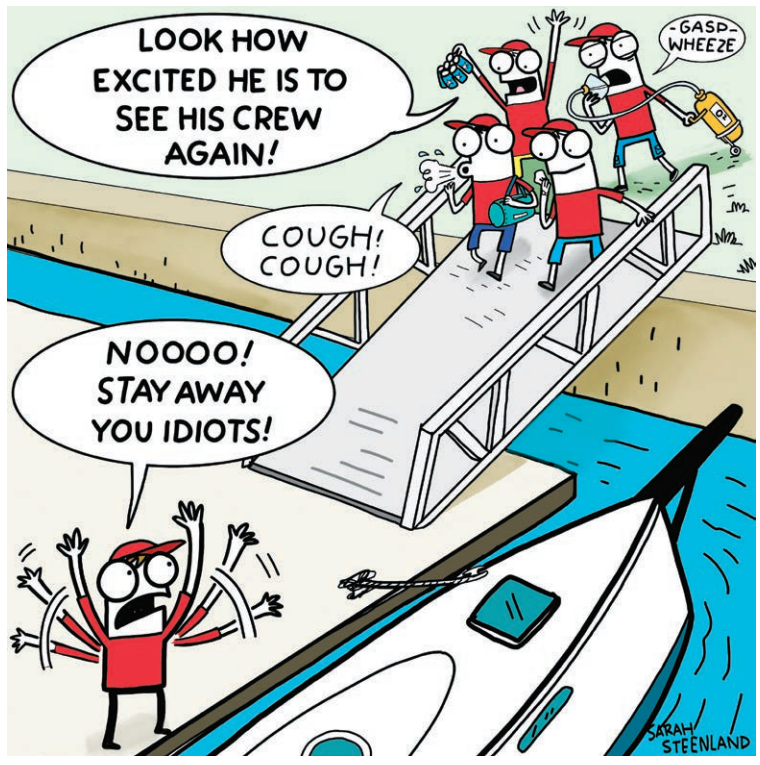
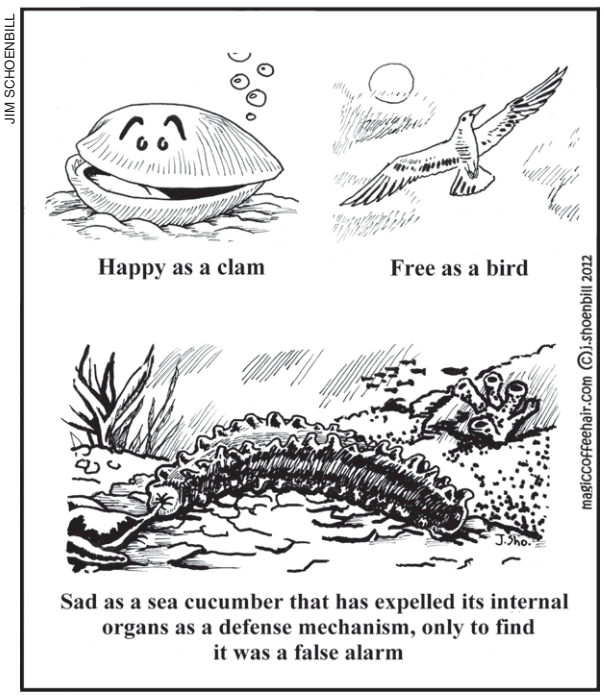


Figure 1. Overused animal clichés

JIM SCHOENBILL



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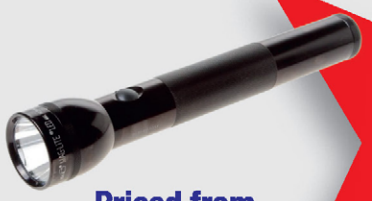
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