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OCTOBER 2020 NO. 301

The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

COMING TO THE CARIBBEAN?

— See passage tips page 12

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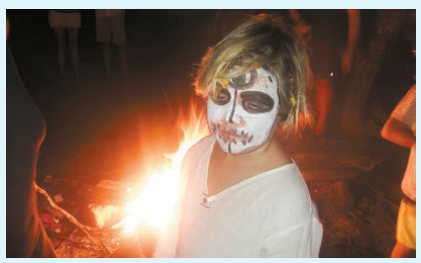
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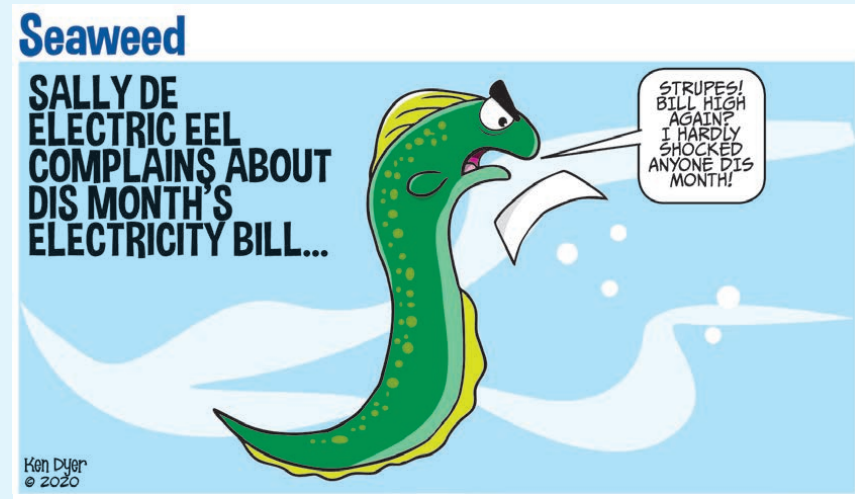
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On the cover: Hey, everybody, it's almost island time! See pages 12 and 13 for pro tips on passages from the US East Coast and Europe to the Caribbean. See you soon!



Info & Updates

Caricom Sets Regional Travel Bubble

Caricom Heads of Government have taken a major step towards revitalizing the Covid-19 challenged travel and tourism sectors with agreement to institute a Travel Bubble among Caricom Member States and Associate Members which meet the agreed criteria, from September 18th.

A comprehensive report from the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) provided recommendations on how the Bubble would operate, and laid out the eligibility criteria for countries to participate. The recommendations included that countries would be categorised ranging from those with no cases to those which had low, medium, high and very high risk with respect to the rate of positive cases over a 14-day period. The level of risk would be determined by the number of positive cases per 100,000 of the population within a 14-day period. Only those countries with no cases and those in the low-risk category would be allowed to participate in the Bubble, and CARPHA will assess relevant data to advise on participation.

Travellers from countries within the Bubble will be allowed entry without being subjected to PCR testing prior to arrival and will not have to undergo quarantine. Travellers may, however, be subjected to screening on arrival.

It was agreed that, initially, Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent & the Grenadines will be in the Bubble, as they presently meet the criteria. Other Member States and Associate Members will be allowed to participate when they meet the criteria.

Details on how this affects yacht entry into St. Lucia can be found here: www.stlucia.org/en/saint-lucia-designated-travel-bubble

As this issue of *Compass* goes to press we await details on how the establishment of this Travel Bubble will affect yacht entries in other Caricom member states.

Revised Grenada Yacht Arrivals

Currently ALL yachts wanting to enter Grenada MUST register on SailClear (https://sailclear.com). MAYAG is no longer managing Grenada's yacht arrival and quarantine process. All the relevant entry forms have been uploaded into SailClear. Yachts will not be accepted for entry to Grenada if they have not registered with SailClear.

After October 1st, the location for yachts' heath arrival testing will no longer be Port Louis Marina. As this issue of *Compass* goes to press, the new location for heath arrival testing has not yet been determined.

CAMPER & NICHOLSONS MARINAS



After October 1st, the location for yachts' heath arrival testing in Grenada will no longer be Port Louis Marina, shown at top of photo.

The quarantine anchorage remains at St. George's Pandy Bay with the same regulations and restrictions. The quarantine time depends on what island you arrive into Grenada from.

It is strongly advised that you arrive with a PCR test taken no more than five days before arrival into Grenada or departure for Grenada if your journey is more than five days. Sailing time can be taken into account.

Requests for information can be made to info@puregrenada.com or info@health.gov.gd

Reminder: File a Float Plan

Glenn Tuttle reports: An occurrence last month demonstrates the utility of having a Float Plan filed with a friend familiar with you and your boat.

S/V Bonobo filed a Float Plan with a friend regarding a voyage from Cozumel to the Rio Dulce. Their ETA to the Rio Dulce was September 2nd. When the yacht failed to arrive on time, their friend filed an online report with Boatwatch.org.

Within hours, a BOLO (Be On Look Out) was being broadcast on the Maritime Mobile Service Network (14.300), the SSCA HF Radio Service Net, the Doo Dah and Cruiseheimers Nets, and the Waterway Radio & Cruising Club Net. Facebook Groups all over the Caribbean were covered with the Boat Watch Facebook Group lookout.

—Continued on next page



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Long-time cruiser Sabrina Nichols of *S/V Honey Ryder* immediately picked up the lookout and notified Boatwatch that the *Bonobo* was anchored at the entrance of the Rio Dulce, without an engine and trying to arrange for a tow over the bar. Boatwatch immediately called the friend who filed the missing report and let him know what was happening. He was relieved to know his friend was okay.

This is not an extraordinary event. But it proves the usefulness of filing a Float Plan with a trusted friend who will take action if you are overdue.

Boatwatch is a free service, run by cruisers for cruisers. We operate a SSB Radio Station, FCC Call sign KPK daily at 1215 UTC, (0815 Eastern Time) on frequency 8.104.

Boatwatch received a great idea from a cruiser: the intent is to report things lost or found at sea that could help find the owner, and/or assist Coast Guard agencies, friends and families, and possibly aid with missing or overdue vessels, airplanes, etcetera. Check out the new page called Flotsam and Jetsam at https://boatwatch.org/reporting-flotsam-jetsam

Boatwatch.org and the SSCA HF Radio Service Net stand by 24/7 to help cruisers. Boatwatch.org, the SSCA HF Radio Service Net, and the Caribbean Safety & Security Net need help with radio relays stations in the Caribbean. Anyone interested in helping with this net is requested to contact Glenn Tuttle at KPK@ssca.org.

A sample Float Plan by USCG Auxiliary can be found at boatwatch.org/resources

Eight Bells

RAY THOMPSON



The Power Boats Team reports: It is with great sadness that we let our many customers and friends know that Ray Thompson passed away on August 6th after a protracted illness. He was 88 years old.

Ray was an active member of the Board of Directors of Power Boats since its incorporation in 1973 and was instrumental in Power Boats expanding its functions to include the servicing of yachts in 1991. Ray was convinced that such a facility would provide much-needed services for foreign yachts south of the hurricane belt in Trinidad and he was so confident in this new venture that in January 1991, at 59 years old, he resigned his successful managerial position at a large local company to become the manager of our newly installed yacht haulout department.

Ray approached his new job with extraordinary focus and determination. His oft-repeated dictum, "We lead, others follow!" became well known among our staff. He was passionate about giving the best service possible and was fastidious that boats should be hauled carefully and put on land with their keel chocks and side stands meticulously placed so as not to cause the slightest damage.

Many of Ray's customers became his friends. He and his wife, Hanna, would often entertain customers at their home, and also, being a highly experienced tournament fisherman, Ray regularly took customers fishing with him on Saturday mornings, provided of course that they were able to get up early enough!



'Many years ago, Ray installed a bell on the travel lift…'

Ray had a keen sense of humor and here is a little glimpse of it: Many years ago, he installed a bell on the travel lift and when he was launching a particularly troublesome customer, he would ring the bell. We all knew of this arrangement so when we heard the bell, we would laugh. Thankfully though, very, VERY few customers got "the bell treatment" over the many years that Ray operated the travel lift!

Ray retired in December 2005 and spent his retirement years mostly in his boat, *Why Worry*, fishing solo off the north coast of Trinidad. This was more than a hobby for him: fishing was his deep passion and he enjoyed it immensely. In retirement he continued to serve Power Boats as a director until he fell seriously ill in May 2018 and was no longer able to attend board meetings.

With Ray's passing, *Why Worry* now sits quietly on land while the schools of mackerel, king fish, tuna, and other species swim around carelessly, no longer concerned about being snagged by one of Ray's carefully baited fishing lines.

Ray lived to see his dream of making Power Boats into a well-respected and successful yachting facility become a reality, and in achieving this he personally played a significant role. He lived a full life and earned the right to now rest in peace.

SSCA's Caribbean Webinar Available

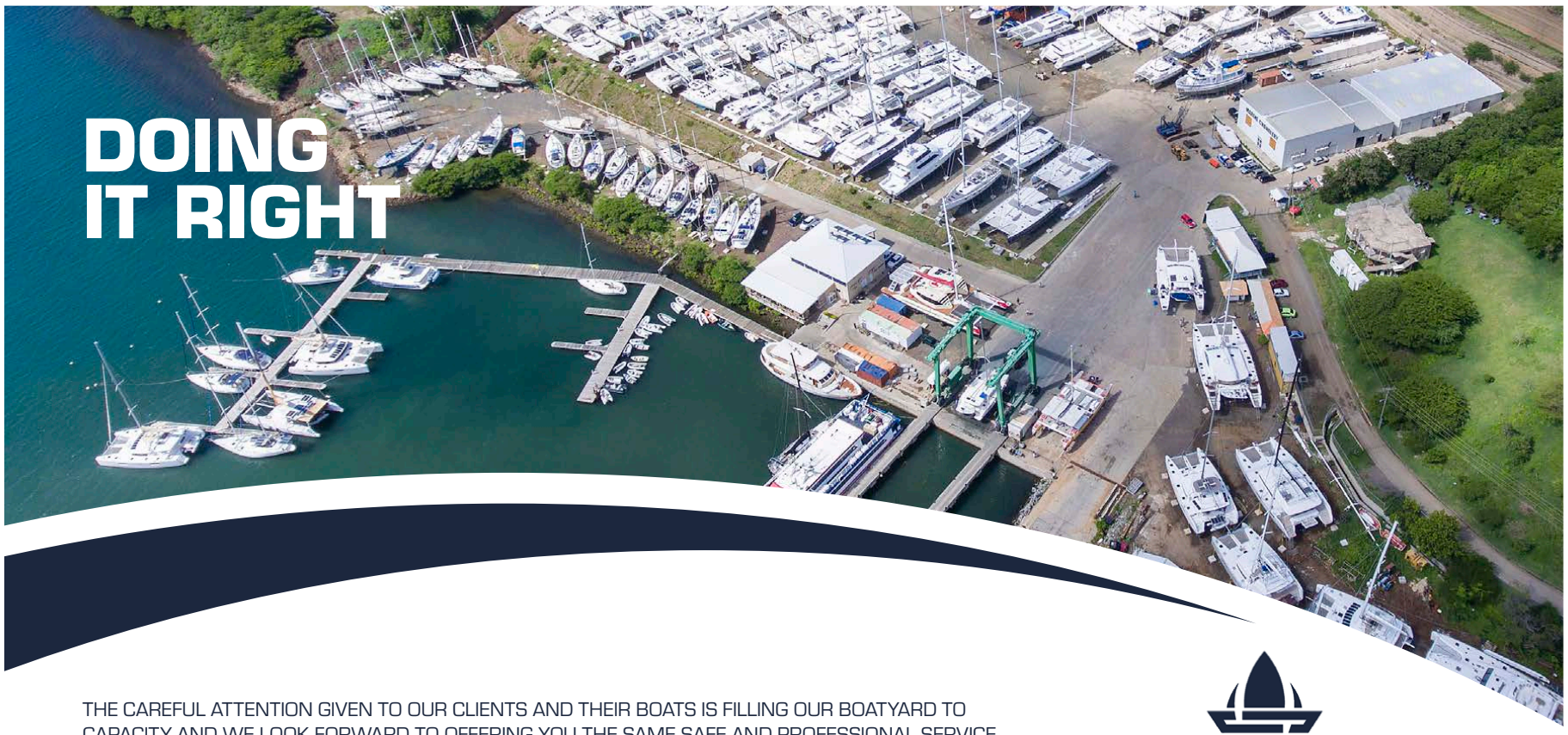
The second in a series of informational webinars to help cruisers determine the on-the-ground situation in various areas they plan to visit was given on September 10th by Seven Seas Cruising Station Hosts of the Caribbean and Canary Islands. It is available at https://youtu.be/gBCIldYvWVM

Speakers include José Mendez of Marina Pescaderia, Puerto Rico; Agustin Martin of the Canary Islands and Regional SSCA Host for Europe; Russ Goedjen of Shelter Bay Marina, Panama; and moderator Joan Conover.

As this series continues, it will include various Cruising Station Hosts in the Atlantic Islands, Pacific/Asia Eastern/Western Caribbean, Africa and South America. The first webinar, about Trinidad, is available at https://youtu.be/ypRfkaxE_v4

Visit www.ssca.org for more information on the Seven Seas Cruising Association.

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—*Continued from previous page*

ABMA Office's New Location

The Secretariat Office of the Antigua Barbuda Marine Association has been relocated. Along with the offices of the Caribbean Sailing Association and Antigua Sailing Week, it is now located on the National Sailing Academy Compound, Dockyard Drive, English Harbour, Antigua.

US Sailing Mag Offices Lost in Fire

On September 7th, the offices of the popular sailing magazine *Latitudes & Attitudes* (formerly *Cruising Outpost*) in Berry Creek, California, were destroyed by wildfire. *Latitudes & Attitudes* is now being operated remotely and the publishers assure their readers that the winter issue will be printed as planned.

The current fall issue is available free at latsatts.com/latitudes-attitudes-issue-32

Gustavia Yacht Club International Photography Contest

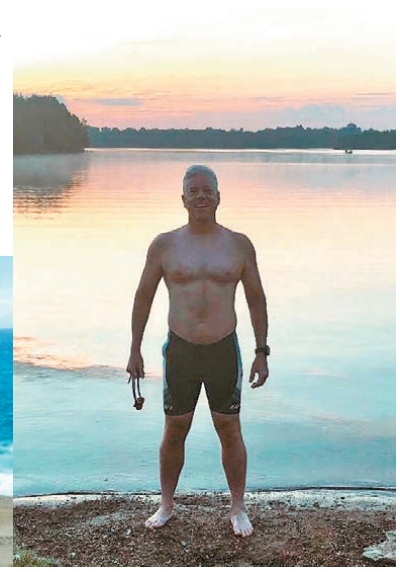
Jean-Pierre Hennequet reports: Due to the current restrictions required by the Covid pandemic, the prizegiving for the Gustavia Yacht Club International Photography Contest, which was originally scheduled for September 24th in Monaco, will instead be held in the third week of March 2021 in St. Barts, during the St. Barts Bucket regatta. Fifty-six photographers from 17 countries have entered the contest.

Upcoming St. Lucia Channel Swims

Sue Dyson reports: On September 13th, 2019, Cameron Bellamy left the shores of St Peter's Bay, Barbados, and swam a 94-mile expanse of open sea. He arrived in Moule a Chique, St. Lucia, on the 15th. On the heels of the one-year anniversary of Bellamy's swim, more endurance athletes are planning to come to St. Lucia.

St. Lucia Channel Swim is gearing up for a number of swim attempts in October and November. The channel swim is a 21-mile (33-kilometre) attempt from St. Lucia to Martinique. Since 2018, this channel swim has been completed three times out of five attempts. The first swim of 2020 in October will be historic: Katie Blair will be the first person to attempt to swim from St. Lucia to Martinique and back to St. Lucia. In November, Edward "Ted" Lomicka and Chris Allshouse will each attempt swimming from St. Lucia to Martinique at separate times just weeks apart.





Above: Katie Blair will be the first person to attempt to swim from St. Lucia to Martinique and back to St. Lucia.

Right: Ted Lomicka will attempt swimming from St. Lucia to Martinique.

The year 2020 was to see the third annual St. Lucia Channel Swim Event, which includes not only attempts from St. Lucia to Martinique but also open-water clinics and shorter distances races. Due to Covid regulations, the organizers had to cancel the group gatherings for 2020. But through the guidance of St. Lucia's Chief Medical Officer and Environmental Health teams, the solo swims are able to continue.

As in the past years, each solo swim is organized through collective efforts with the Ministry of Youth Development & Sports, St. Lucia Tourism Authority, the Marine Police Unit, Emergency Services, SLASPA, and the Ministry of Tourism; they are also supported by officials in Martinique, local boat captains and support crew.

The St. Lucia Channel Swim Event promotes water safety, awareness of open water swimming, and keeping clean seas and beaches. Organizers are hopeful for the return of the St Lucia Channel Swim Event in 2021.



Chris Allshouse (at right, with his wife) will attempt swimming from St. Lucia to Martinique.

Nominations Open for 'International Sailor of the Decade'

The Yachting Journalists' Association (YJA) and MS Amlin Boat Insurance have announced announce a new award, the YJA MS Amlin International Sailor of the Decade award. Nominations for the YJA MS Amlin International Sailor of the Decade will be open to all until October 23rd 2020 via the YJA website (www.yja.world).

The award will be presented during the Yacht Racing Forum on November 23rd. The award ceremony will be livestreamed worldwide via social media and on the major sailing news platforms.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Caribbean Compass* we welcome new advertiser St. Kitts Nevis Marine Surveying, on page 30.

Good to have you with us!

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Palma de Mallorca	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Mar 2020
Genoa	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Apr 2020
Genoa	-	Ft. Lauderdale	May 2020
Taranto	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Aug 2020
Palma de Mallorca	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Sep 2020
Genoa	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Sep 2020
Palma de Mallorca	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Oct 2020
Genoa	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Oct 2020
Palma de Mallorca	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Nov 2020
Genoa	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Nov 2020
MEDITERRANEAN ► CARIBBEAN			
Genoa	-	St. Thomas	Apr 2020
Palma de Mallorca	-	St. Thomas	Oct 2020
Palma de Mallorca	-	Le Marin	Nov 2020
Genoa	-	Le Marin	Nov 2020
US EAST COAST ► CARIBBEAN			
Ft. Lauderdale	-	St. Thomas	Nov 2020
CARIBBEAN ► US EAST COAST			
St. Thomas	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Mar 2020
St. Thomas	-	Ft. Lauderdale	May 2020
Le Marin	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Nov 2020
Le Marin	-	Ft. Lauderdale	Dec 2020
US EAST COAST ► MEDITERRANEAN			
Ft. Lauderdale	-	Palma de Mallorca	Mar 2020
Ft. Lauderdale	-	Genoa	Apr 2020
Ft. Lauderdale	-	Genoa	May 2020
Ft. Lauderdale	-	Palma de Mallorca	May 2020
Ft Lauderdale	-	Taranto Italy	May 2020
Ft Lauderdale	-	Genoa	Sep 2020
Ft Lauderdale	-	Genoa	Oct 2020
Ft Lauderdale	-	Palma de Mallorca	Oct 2020
Ft Lauderdale	-	Palma de Mallorca	Nov 2020
CARIBBEAN/US EAST COAST ► SOUTH PACIFIC			
Le Marin	-	Papeete, Brisbane, Auckland	Nov 2020
Ft. Lauderdale	-	Papeete, Brisbane, Auckland	Nov 2020



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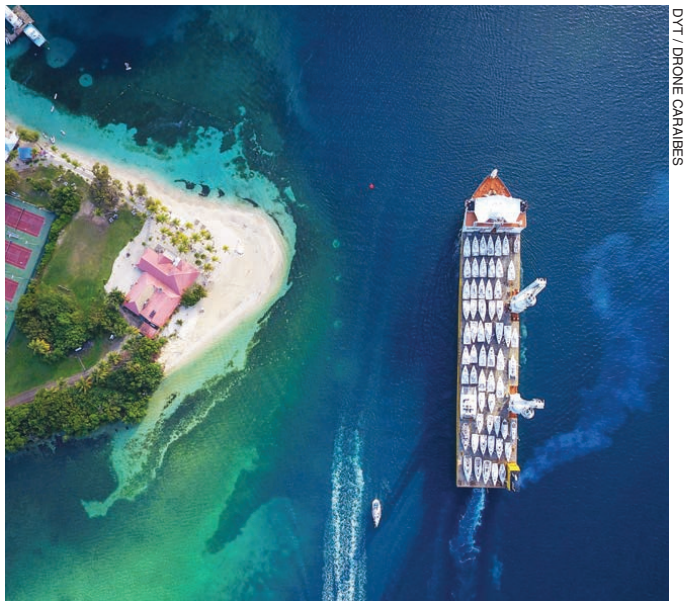
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Departures from Palma de Mallorca: October 20th and November 10th

Departures from Gibraltar: October 20th and November 10th

Heading to: Le Marin (Martinique), St. Thomas (USVI)

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Visit www.sevenstar-yacht-transport.com (Sevenstar) and www.yacht-transport.com (DYT) for more information or contact one of our helpful representatives with any questions.

See ad on page 6 for more information.

Warm Weather Diesel Do's and Don'ts

The Parts and Power team in Tortola, BVI, reports: Although diesel engines tend to be more tolerant to high temperatures than petrol engines, the Caribbean heat can still be hard on them. See the tips below for how you can get the most out of your engine.

• COOLANT

Do check your coolant regularly with a hydrometer. The glycol in your coolant helps control heat better than water, meaning it protects your engine against both heat and cold.

Do pay attention to your exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) cooler. It can easily get starved of coolant when mounted high above the engine. Glycol content in your coolant is important, so make sure the fluid levels are topped up to maximum before use.

Don't top off the coolant with plain water. A proper product such as a water/glycol mix is recommended.

• FUEL

Do drain the fuel/water separator every day. This is vital because water in your fuel can damage injectors.

Do check your fuel tank seals regularly. A damaged seal can't keep the dirt out.

Don't pour cold fuel into hot fuel tanks. This can cause condensation that adds water to your fuel.

• ENGINE CARE

Do use genuine Perkins filters and parts for your Perkins. The people who designed your engine know what is required to make it work efficiently.

Don't shut down your engine without letting it idle for five to ten minutes. The DEF injectors in your engine need to be cooled down to maintain their life.

Visit www.partsandpower.com or contact info@partsandpower.com for more information about Perkins engines, maintaining your engine, or running your engine during warm weather.

Savvy Grenada Sailing Charters

Savvy Grenada Sailing Charters has partnered with Snaggs Bar in Hillsborough, Carriacou. They will take you sailing aboard the traditional Grenadine sloop *Savvy* to Saline, Sandy, and White Island during the day. Afterwards, you will chill at Snaggs Bar as the sun goes down.

Every Saturday night, they also have Mos and his boys with their traditional string band singing ol' time calypso, reggae, and Ska. Check out the authentic local vibes!

Visit www.facebook.com/savvygrenada for more information and follow Snaggsbar on Instagram.

Virtual Boat Showings in Grenada

Chrystal Young reports: The challenge for yacht brokers during the pandemic isn't finding buyers - there are a lot of people who want to buy boats - but showing yachts. Chris Rundlett from The Multihull Company in Grenada has adapted to that situation by scheduling virtual boat showings. Chris connects with boat buyers through WhatsApp, the most reliable app for this region. He walks the interested party through the boat and customizes the experience by showing a more detailed view when requested and by explaining whatever catches the eye. It has worked out well and boats are selling: often, the buyer will come to Grenada, do their quarantine, and jump right on their boat!



Chris Rundlett from The Multihull Company in Grenada hosts virtual boat showings.

For more details on how this works, contact Chris by phone via (786) 450-7163, WhatsApp via (473) 457-3245, or e-mail at chris@multihullcompany.com. Visit his YouTube channel for pre-recorded walk-throughs: www.youtube.com/channel/UCT3JltBjxjQ4UJo7RTxK56w.

Building a DIY Dinghy

Domi Montesinos reports: During the Covid confinement, I was in St. Martin with our catamaran *Lady 't Bee* and took the opportunity to design and build a plywood and epoxy catamaran tender. To give other cruisers a chance to do the same, I wrote a book about the process. It offers instructions, pictures, and drawings. When I was anchored in Rodney Bay, St. Lucia, later in the summer, many sailors discovered this unusual dinghy and showed interest.

The DIY dinghy book can be found on www.amazon.com/Wooden-epoxy-dinghy-catamaran-yourself-ebook/dp/B08GCYNGYS.



REGATTA NEWS

Caribbean Regatta Interest Survey!

Caribbean regatta directors have collaborated on a survey designed to assess the level of interest of participants worldwide and regionally to race in Caribbean regattas in the 2021 season.



TIM WRIGHT / WWW.PHOTOACTION.COM

This was Grenada Sailing Week 2020. It is now time to get a better understanding of international participants' thoughts for all Caribbean regattas in 2021.

President of the Caribbean Sailing Association, Alison Sly-Adams, says, "As plans gain ground for rallies and races like the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers, the RORC Transatlantic Race, and the Salty Dawg Rally, it is time to get a better understanding of our international participants' thoughts about bringing their boats to the region. We are cognizant that the situation remains dynamic and that plans for competitors and events may need to change as the dates approach. We would like to get individual feedback from boat owners, managers, charterers, and crews to assist in event development and to understand their challenges."

Please take the survey now at www.surveymonkey.com/r/CKB637L.

Bonaire's Kant'i Awa Regatta

Pam Teitel reports: Kant'i Awa Snack is a small bar with a million-dollar view on Bonaire's waterfront, next to the old regatta house. Owner Gaston Chirino recalls the days when the island's regatta was about sailing and community. The ambiance along the shore and in the water was the focus. But in recent years, that intimate focus shifted to a big festival in town and, he feels, lost a lot of its charm.



JULIE MORGAN

Arnd Chirino (Gaston's nephew) and Jeamy Zaalman now manage Kant'i Awa Snack and organize regular events for cruisers. Since they've gotten to know lots of sailors, they decided to create their own regatta on August 15th and 16th and convinced visitors to compete in their floating homes. Nine yachts joined the sailing races with very tight competition. The first three boats finished within one and a half minutes of each other after more than two hours of racing.

Ronnie Ramos, visiting from Puerto Rico on *Campechano*, offered his expertise to the start committee. The yacht *Ventura*, hosted by Enzo and Patricia from Chile, functioned as the start boat.

Getting the cruising community together with the local boats and people, on shore and at sea, was great! More than 90 competitors joined in yachts, beach cats, two Sunfish and Optimist categories, kite foils, and windsurf foils. In front of Kanti Awa, there were micro boats, kayaks, stand-up paddleboards, and even adults sailing the tiny Optimists. Micro boats are unique 30-, 35-, and 40-inch vessels. Sails and rudder set, they are released at the start line and must reach the finish without adjustments

Between races, everyone was treated to a barbecue with plenty of drinks and music. Cruisers arriving on Bonaire are required to quarantine for two weeks prior to enjoying our island to make sure they're Covid-free. There was plenty of space for people to participate yet distance.

Without sufficient wind for the kiters and windsurfers, only the foilers found enough propulsion to rise to the occasion. Many of the Sunfish sported the Blue Destination sails from the 2019 World Sunfish competition here on Bonaire.

Sunday afternoon completed the competitions with kayak, SUP, and Optimist races for anyone. The SUP-racers had to start seated, while the adults in the Optimist class needed to first stand in the water and get in the tiny boats without tipping them over. It was entertaining for all on shore!

At the awards ceremony, the winners were treated to beautiful trophies handcrafted by Jopie Soliano. Throughout the weekend, music was provided by Mimoun, DJ Marv, Kabes, and others.

With renewed excitement, there is talk of workshops to build new boats and of sailors dusting off their old boats and joining the next competition, at the Bonaire Regatta running this month from the 14th through the 17th. A workshop for cruisers to build mini-replicas of their own or other favorite boats will also be organized.

ON THE HORIZON

Carib 1500 and ARC Rally Updates

World Cruising Club (WCC) reports: The Caribbean 1500 rally from the US East Coast to the Eastern Caribbean has been postponed until 2021. The health and well-being of our participants, staff, and all those involved with the rally at each stopover has been our primary concern in planning the 2020 Carib 1500 as a Covid-secure event. However, travel to the Caribbean from North America is still problematic: there are restrictions on who can visit and protocols for arrivals requiring periods in quarantine. The hoped-for general easing of restrictions sufficient for WCC to deliver a Covid-secure rally has not taken place. As a result, the WCC directors have decided to postpone the 2020 edition of the Carib 1500. The team will now concentrate on planning a fresh new start in November 2021.



SALLY ERDLE

ARC participants' time at sea this year will count toward St. Lucia's quarantine requirement.

The 2020 ARC and ARC+ rallies are proceeding, however. To allow time for planning a Covid-secure ARC/ARC+ in Las Palmas and in the rally's Caribbean end ports this year, entries for ARC/ARC+ 2020 closed on August 31st.

ARC sailors have a choice of two routes for 2020:

Sailing via the Cape Verdes: ARC+ will depart Las Palmas de Gran Canaria on November 8th, sailing to Mindelo, Sao Vincente, Cape Verde for a three- to five-day stopover before the restart to Rodney Bay, St. Lucia on November 19th.

—Continued on next page

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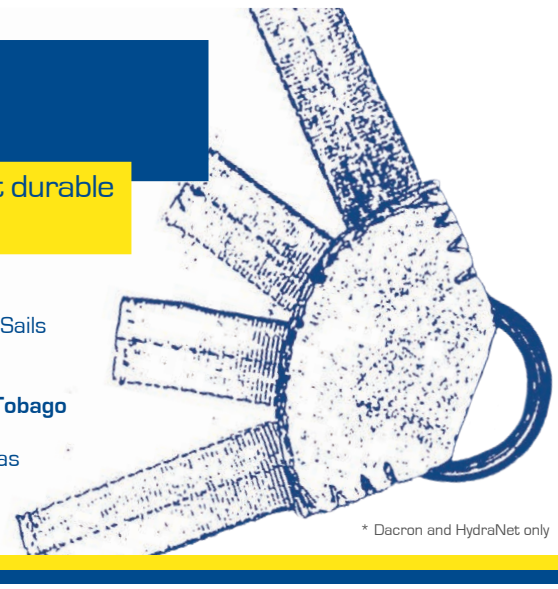
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—Continued from previous page

Sailing directly to St. Lucia: The ARC fleet will start their Atlantic adventure on November 22nd sailing directly to St. Lucia, spending 18 to 21 days at sea on the classic tradewind route.

The traditional ARC pre-start programme in Las Palmas will have a different format this year, with the rally hallmarks of support and social cruising maintained virtually. Expert advice from the team of ARC lecturers will provide guidance through online seminars and interactive Q&A sessions, and ARC crews have already been growing the community via VHF and SSB chats.

Unchanged in 2020 is the eclectic range of yachts set to sail with the ARC with the boats lining up for the start on 22 November ranging from 30 feet (9.1 metres) to over 100 feet (30 metres).

The ARC offers fun competition for cruising sailors, competitive racing for those so inclined, and a spectacular welcome in Rodney Bay for all. ARC participants' time at sea will count toward St. Lucia's quarantine requirement.

Interest for next year's ARC rally is anticipated to be strong. Due to sailors swapping from this year, the event is expected to be oversubscribed in 2021. Next year's ARC entry list is scheduled to open soon.

Visit www.worldcruising.com/EnquiryStage1.aspx to receive the 2021 information package and e-mail updates.

St. Barth Cata Cup 2020 Canceled

The organizers report: It is with a heavy heart that we took the decision not to carry on with the 13th edition, scheduled for November, this year being different from others in many aspects.

We will unfortunately not have sufficient time to fully dedicate ourselves to the organization of the regatta due to personal matters being more time-consuming than in the past and the ongoing global circumstances that reaffirm our commitment to directly shift our focus to the fourteenth edition in 2021.

We are aware that many of you will be disappointed, but we genuinely believe that it is for the best.

We prefer to let the storm pass this year and set the right course for 2021 with a renewed and positive energy.

Visit stbarthcatacup.com for more information.

Friends of Antigua Sailing Week Launched

Antigua Sailing Week reports: As the Covid-19 pandemic continues to challenge countries around the world, Antigua & Barbuda is no exception. Currently, yachting stakeholders are cautiously optimistic about the potential for some normalcy regarding yacht-racing events in 2021. The Antigua Sailing Week (ASW) team is working on the race formats and shoreside protocols to ensure the safety of everyone involved. Entries from around the world to attend the six-day regatta (April 24th through 30th, 2021) are already coming in.

With the importance of the event to the national economy of Antigua & Barbuda and as the anchor at the end of the Caribbean season, ASW creates vital revenues for the entire island and facilitates businesses to support themselves over the long summer period. The cancellation of the 2020 edition hit the organization, which is a not-for-profit, and the island hard. In order to assist in creating a safe and successful 2021 regatta, the event organizers are launching a "Friends of ASW" program.

ASW President Alison Sly-Adams says, "Antigua Sailing Week was the first regatta of its type in the region and continues to create important economic activity for the island as well as destination marketing. In 2019, the event injected EC$7.4 million (US$2.7 million) directly into the economy. When the world went into lockdown due to Covid-19 and ASW 2020 was cancelled, the financial burden occurred immediately."

She continues, "We're committed to delivering an excellent week of racing for our participants in 2021 and hope that our long-term supporters will see the value in assisting the event and ensuring that the show can go on. We know that the international yacht-racing season was massively impacted this year and that many sailors are anxious to get back to racing. We welcome them to ASW 2021, an edition that will surpass all of their expectations and deliver safe interactions, modified to adhere to local guidelines."

Antigua Sailing Week organizers are launching a 'Friends of ASW' program.



SAILINGWEEK.COM

Different levels of support are available, from US$200 for individuals to US$2,500 for corporations. Donations of any size are very welcome.

Visit www.sailingweek.com/friendsofasw for full details and to show your support.

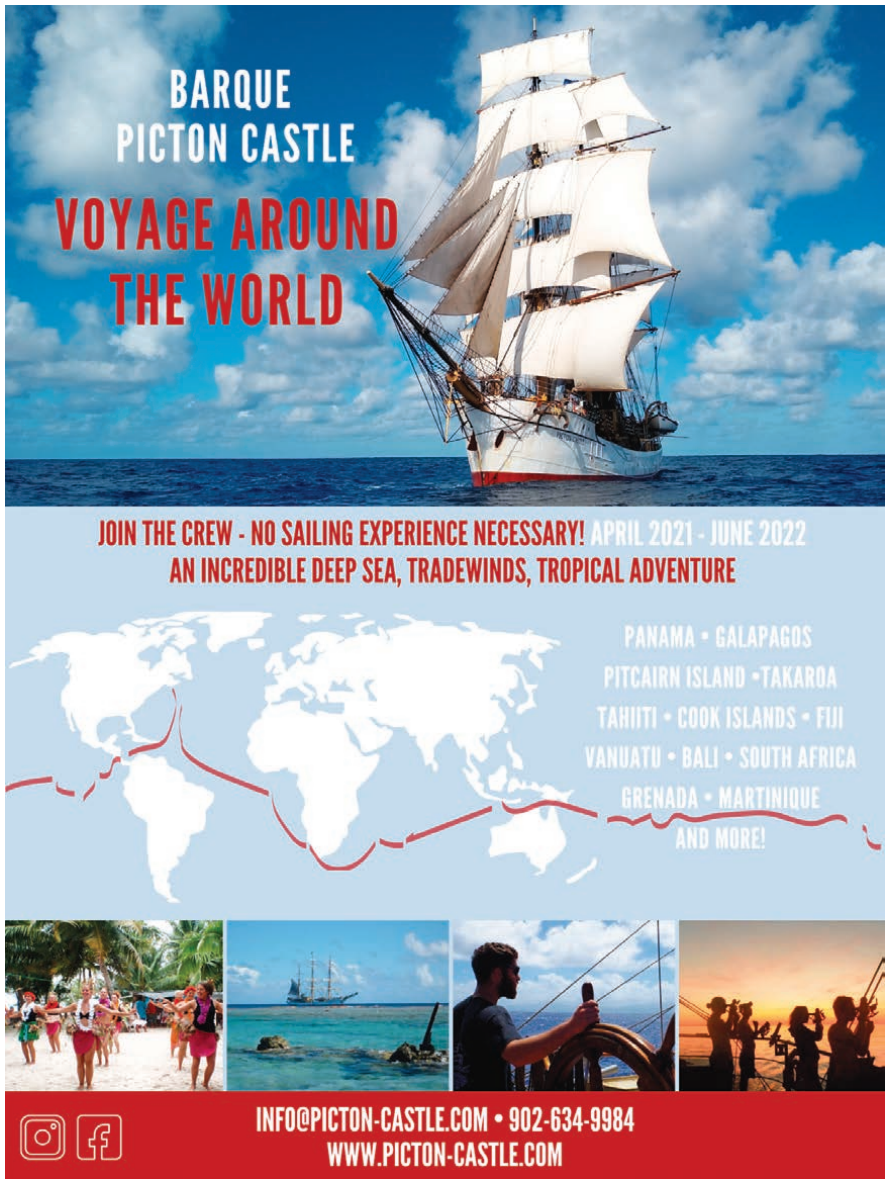
Panama Posse Rally Expands to Caribbean

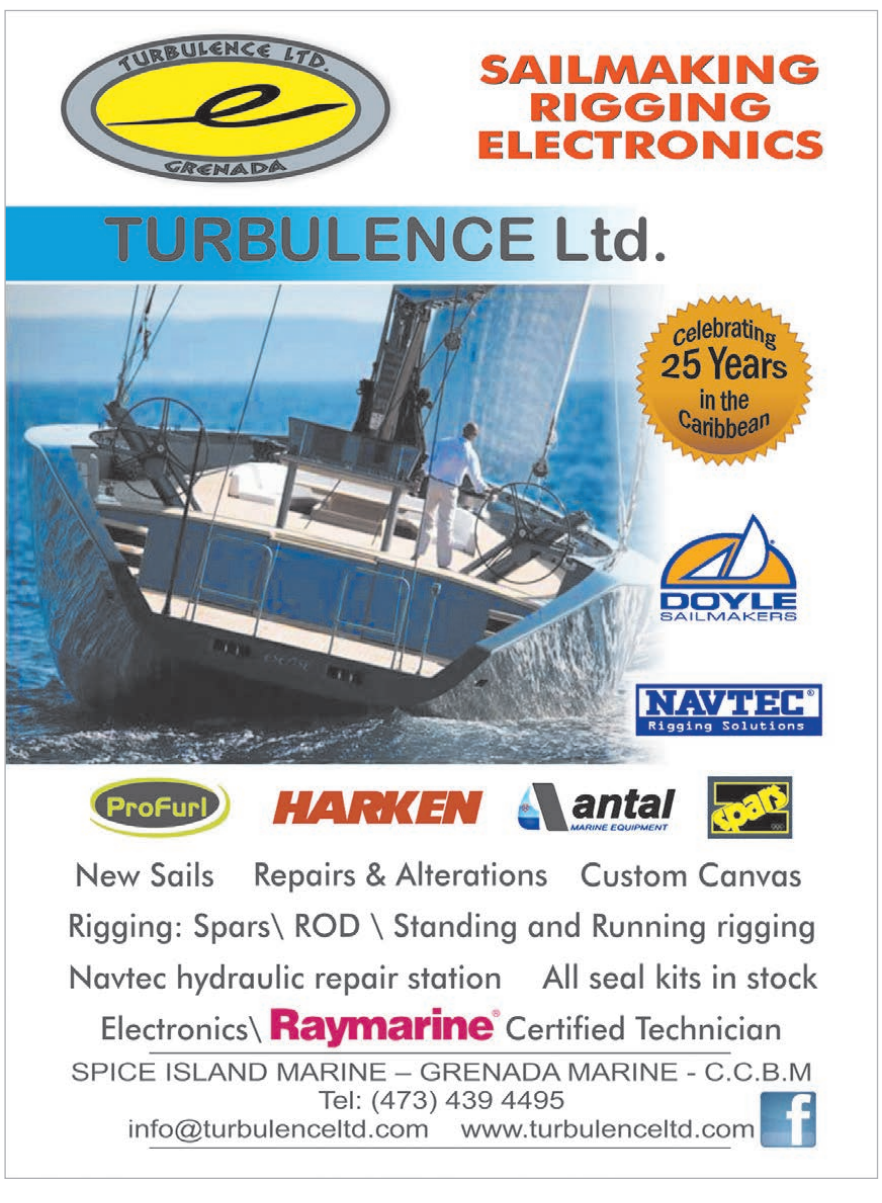
Dietmar Petutschnig reports: The 2021 Panama Posse has expanded from the Pacific to the Caribbean, with stops including Panama, Colombia, Jamaica, Roatan (Honduras), Rio Dulce (Guatemala), Belize, the Mexican/Mayan Riviera, and Cuba.

The fourth annual Panama Posse connects California with Florida and vice versa.

Sail without a set schedule on your own boat in your safe bubble. Benefits include savings from more than 31 marinas offering discounts to Posse members, 24/7 live chats, live group calls to cover weather, safety, logistics, and seminars, and a dedicated Panama Canal agent. The routes feature plenty of things to see and experience, including over 40 UNESCO World Heritage sites. More than 500 anchorages along the way are vetted and updated by participants and documented and shared via a live cruising guide, GoodNautical, which all participants can access.

Visit https://panamaposse.com/sign-up for details.







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PETITE CALIVIGNY YACHT CLUB ROUND ISLAND REGATTA 2020

Not bad for a regatta that had only a few days to pull everything together!

The Round Grenada Regatta 2020, held over the weekend of August 21st through 23rd, was a tremendous success considering that official permission related to Covid regulations was only granted days before the event. Several last-minute entries bought the participating number of boats to 13. The fleet, an interesting mix of eight monohulls, two racing cats and three cruising multihulls, was divided into three classes: monohulls over 49 feet, monohulls under 48 feet, and multihulls.

In 2015, Grenada's Petite Calivigny Yacht Club revived a long tradition of round the island racing, starting and finishing at Le Phare Bleu Marina on the south coast of Grenada, which has been home base for the PCYC since it was founded in 2010. The regatta includes an overnight layover in Tyrell Bay, Carriacou, for crews to get some rest before heading back down to Grenada the following day.

The Skipper's Briefing was held on the beach at Le Phare Bleu Marina on the Friday evening. The race started at 7:00AM on Saturday morning with participants able to choose which side of the island they raced up that day. Most choose the west (leeward) coast, except for the two 18-foot racing cats, which went up the east coast. Everyone enjoyed a great sail on the way up to Carriacou with 15 knots of wind from the southeast.

'EVERYONE PITCHED IN TO MAKE IT HAPPEN'

by Rosie Hoggarth

Permission to hold the race was subject to various protocols due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Instead of the usual party and dinner at Carriacou Marine in Tyrell Bay on Saturday night, Carriacou Marine provided a wonderful last-minute take-out barbecue for all the skippers and crews.



David Shiever, who raced his Catalina 42, *Half Baked*, wrote, "This year's regatta was extra special as it has to be one of the first events of its kind to take place since Covid-19 closed the islands. We know that took a lot of hard work on the part of the Club's leadership and we're really appreciative." David raced in Class 3, taking the west coast on the way up. He said, "The highlights of our weekend were certainly the postcard perfect conditions we had on Saturday during the first leg up to Carriacou. Everyone sailed their butts off."





Top: Colin Dykstra, overall winner

Left: David Shiever says, ' The event was definitely a highlight of our summer thus far.'

He adds, "Sunday's start was more of a drag race out of Tyrell Bay with the wind abeam and a southerly course set. Everyone made the most of the early conditions as we knew winds were forecast to ease. Just off the northeast tip of Grenada the wind fell apart. At one point we were drifting backwards. The fleet was pointing every direction of the compass and by about 1:00PM, it was obvious to all that the only way to get home before dark was via motor." On the leg back down to Grenada, no boat crossed the finish line under sail because of the lack of wind.

David says, "The event was definitely a highlight of our summer thus far in Grenada. This regatta should be on anyone's itinerary looking for good times and some action on the water. Boats ranged from go-fast racing cats to 50-plus-foot cruising yachts. And even if you're not first across the finish, everyone feels like a winner." *Half Baked's* crew took second in their class, making them hungry for another chance next year.

Simon Brown of *Sailing Britican*, an Oyster 46 that raced in Class 2, said, "The PCYC Round Island Regatta was competitive, fun and friendly. We went up on the leeward side and back on the windward. It's just a shame that the wind died on Sunday as we were having a blast!" *Britican* came in first in their class.

Commodore of the PCYC John Whitsett said, "Even though Mother Nature was a little cranky, Richard Szyjan in a Formula 18 arrived in Carriacou from Le Phare Bleu in three and a half hours on the first day. The second day was windless, with no finishes. But everyone pitched in to make it happen — the government, the sponsors, the club's members, the participants, the spectators. It was friends helping friends while having a good time. A special shout-out to the crew of *Milagro*, who towed the engineless J/24 down the length of Grenada to the finish. True yachtsman spirit! A big thank you to all."

Thank you to Le Phare Bleu Marina and Carriacou Marine for being great hosts again this year. The historic Lightship at Le Phare Bleu was utilized as the committee boat and the location for the final prizegiving when everyone returned on Sunday.

Special thanks to all our sponsors Budget Marine, West Indies Beer Company, Westerhall Rums, Agostini Insurance, Blue Light Distillery, Island Water World, Meat & Meet Market, Republic Bank, Glenelg Spring Water, and Eastern Caribbean Rums for providing prizes; to all our volunteers in Grenada and Carriacou, without whom none of this would be possible, and to everyone who participated in the event.

Visit www.pcycgrenada.com and www.facebook.com/PCYCGrenada for more information.

Caribbean ECO-News

A Better Lionfish Trap?


BILL WATTS

According to a report in the journal *PLoS One*, a recent study indicates that a new trap for invasive lionfish works so well that scientists believe that, in addition to helping control the intruder that eats native fish, it could provide a moneymaking opportunity for fishermen.

The Gittings trap, named for its inventor, can be deployed deeper than spear fishermen, who currently provide most lionfish control, can go, allowing it to catch lionfish abundant at those depths. It also could provide a more regular supply of lionfish, which would encourage more restaurants and retail chains to sell them. Gittings, a scientist with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, invented the trap about six years ago.

Researchers from the University of Florida and other agencies studied the Gittings trap and modified lobster traps for six months in 2018, analyzed their findings and wrote the new study, "Testing the efficacy of lionfish traps in the northern Gulf of Mexico."

A total of 327 lionfish visited the traps, which caught 141 of them, along with 29 other fish, the study said. The Gittings trap uses no bait, but rather a structure that attracts lionfish. It lies on the seafloor with a circular bottom frame. When someone retrieves the trap, the frame rises, allowing net curtains to close quickly around the fish. Since it only closes upon retrieval, Gittings believes any problems caused by lost traps would be minimal. The lack of bait minimizes attracting other species.

Scientists believe lionfish — native to the Indian Ocean and South Pacific — were released by aquarium owners in South Florida. They have spread throughout the US East Coast, the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico, where they are now found in dense populations. Lionfish are indiscriminate eaters, basically swallowing any creature that fits in their mouths. They can reach maturity in less than a year, and reproduce year-round, with females capable of releasing 50,000 eggs every three days. That allows them to quickly outnumber native fish populations.

Spearfishing is generally successful to land large numbers of lionfish, but divers can descend to only about 130 feet without technical diving equipment.

The traps show promise, but need further testing before they can be distributed widely to ensure that they don't catch other species and that they work properly in various environments at an affordable cost, the study said. Issues that still need study include how the Gittings trap can collect smaller lionfish, which have frequently escaped from it, and how native fish can be excluded from the traps, Harris said.

Read the full story at www.upi.com/Science_News/2020/08/26/New-research-shows-NOAA-scientist-built-a-better-lionfish-trap

Coral Spawned 'in Captivity' in Mexican Caribbean

As reported in the *Yucatan Times*, coral spawning has been achieved under controlled conditions in Quintana Roo. After ten years of research, scientists from Inapesca in Puerto Morelos managed to spawn corals under controlled conditions, the first time that the sexual reproduction of corals in captivity has been recorded in Mexico. The achievement restores hope for the recovery and repopulation of coral reefs in the Mexican Caribbean.

"The recovery and repopulation of coral reefs in the Mexican Caribbean have incalculable value for the marine ecosystem because they protect the coasts against erosion and the onslaught of waves, and serve as habitat for a large number of marine species, including those for human consumption," said a statement from the Regional Center for Fisheries Aquaculture Research.

This project is carried out in collaboration with the Academic Unit of Reef Systems of the Institute of Marine Sciences and Limnology of the National Autonomous University of Mexico, through the laboratory of scientist Anastazia Banaszak, who carries out the cryopreservation of gametes of these species, in addition to the collaboration of the Healthy Reefs Initiative (Inicitaiva Arrecifes Sanos). It is intended to obtain coral colonies that in the future can be reintegrated into the natural environment through restoration programs.

It is hoped that the ability to sexually reproduce selected species of corals will ensure a genetic diversity not guaranteed by the usual restoration method, fragmentation.

Read the full story at www.theyucatantimes.com/2020/08/corals-are-successfully-reproducing-under-controlled-conditions-in-quintana-roo

BirdsCaribbean Concerned Over Developments in Grenada

Last month, BirdsCaribbean reported being deeply concerned about three critical bird habitats and ecosystems in Grenada that are threatened by development: Mt. Hartman, La Sagesse, and Levera.

In the Mt. Hartman Estate**,** the Mt. Hartman Resort Group is clearing dry forest habitat for a new resort and marina. Mt. Hartman National Park provides critical habitat for one of the world's rarest birds, the critically endangered Grenada Dove. It is also a home for the Grenada Hook-Billed Kite, an endangered subspecies. The area is internationally recognized as an Important Bird Area and as an Endemic Bird Area of the Lesser Antilles by BirdLife International and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. The area also contains two vital wetlands and the largest expanse of black and red mangroves on the island. The wetlands provide essential habitat for numerous species of resident and migratory shorebirds and waterbirds.

La Sagesse is listed as a Natural Landmark and Area of Cultural and Historical Interest. There has been extensive clearcutting of mangroves and other vegetation on the headland and around the salt pond, to build a 100-room Six Senses resort. Before deforestation, the La Sagesse Pond and Beach supported white and buttonwood mangroves that provided cover for critically endangered hawksbill sea turtles. The area is also a nesting site for the endangered leatherback sea turtle. A diverse array of some 89 bird species attracts birding tours to this site.

The Levera Wetland is Grenada's only Ramsar site, designated as a Wetland of International Importance in 2012. Some forest has already been removed to build temporary worker's housing. Singapore Heng Sheng (Grenada) Development PTE Ltd. now owns the property with the aim of constructing a one billion dollar resort.


REGINALD JOSEPH

La Sagesse Pond in May 2019 (left), before a new resort and hotel development plan was approved. La Sagesse Pond in August 2020 (right), four months after extensive clear cutting and bulldozing

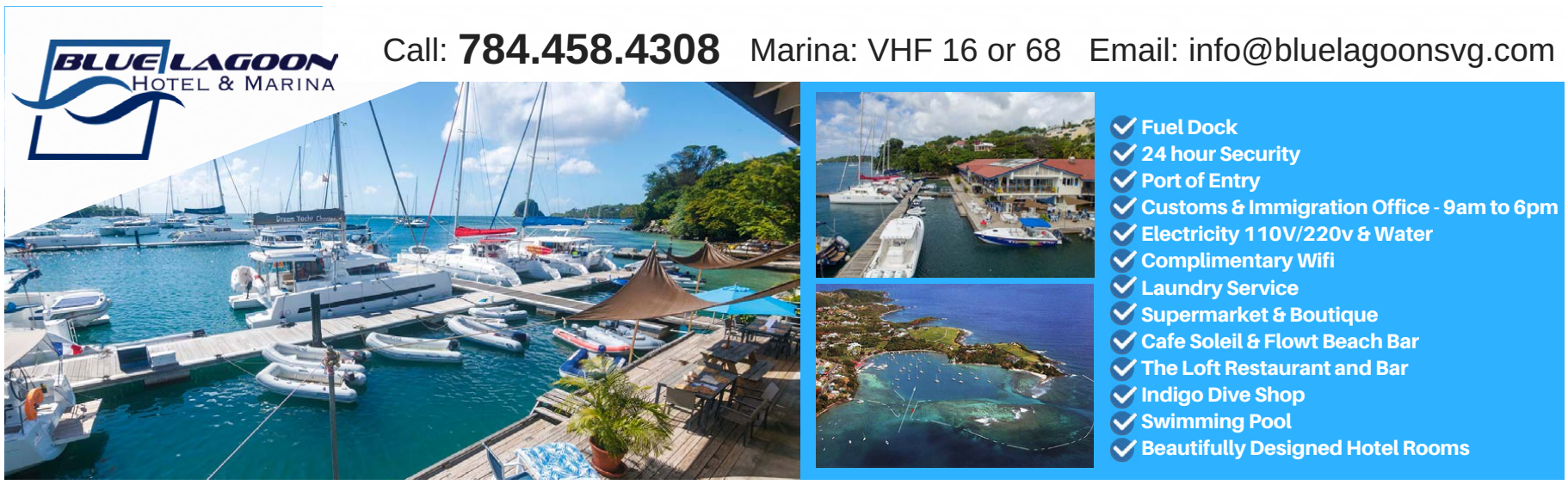
The 500-plus hectare site includes a variety of habitats: woodland, dry scrub forest, mangrove wetlands, beach, brackish pond, seagrass beds, and coral reefs. Surrounded by red, white, black and buttonwood mangroves, the large freshwater pond boasts a large diversity of wetland birds. Levera is critical habitat for several species of mammals, snakes and fish. The beach is the third largest nesting site for endangered leatherback sea turtles in the Caribbean. Up to 1,400 nest here each year.

Plans for the mega-resort at Levera include a water park, golf course, villas, and 500-room hotels. Most residents feel this kind of development is inappropriate for this area. A survey of local stakeholders showed that only 15 percent support hotel development here. More than two thirds support the establishment of a National Park and Recreational Area.

BirdsCaribbean's Executive Director Lisa Sorenson commented, "Not only are these significant habitats for many vulnerable species of birds and endangered wildlife, wetland areas perform myriad important ecosystem services that improve the safety and health of local communities. These services are increasingly important and economically valuable in the face of climate change."

BirdsCaribbean is an international network committed to conserving Caribbean birds and their habitats. More than 100,000 people participate in its programmes each year, making BirdsCaribbean the most broad-based conservation organization in the region.

Visit www.birdscaribbean.org for more information.



HEADING SOUTH FROM THE US, SANELY

For the past five decades I have listened to stories of boats heading south from the East Coast of the United States to the Caribbean. Some were such idyllic trips that the crew never once put on their foul weather gear. Some trips were a bit bouncy. And other times, boats ran into major storms. Some of these latter trips resulted in damage or disaster, losing boats or even crews. Many years ago I quit counting when my 39th friend or acquaintance was lost while doing this trip.

This is not a passage to be underestimated. Your boat and crew must be prepared to face heavy weather. Before you go out and put your boat to the test, make some practice runs. In your home waters when a good hard blow comes through, take your boat out and "put the bricks to her." Ascertain any deficiencies in both boat and crew. Take your boat back in, rectify the deficiencies, then go out in a second blow. This time you will be much better prepared than you were the first time. Then go home again and rectify any deficiencies that are still not corrected from the first trial in a blow. And so forth. Then, when you eventually head offshore and run into a bad blow, both the crew and boat will have been through similar experiences before, so no major problems should be experienced.

Unfortunately, many recreational sailors fail to follow this advice; instead, they take off from the East Coast and run into their first truly bad weather at sea. The crew becomes petrified. When they arrive in St. Thomas, the boat is put on the market — and there ends their dream of an idyllic winter cruise in the Caribbean.

Also, be prepared for cold weather at the start of the trip. Make sure you have enough sleeping bags or blankets to keep the crew warm, and insist that every crewmember has plenty of really warm clothing (not just jeans and sweatshirts), hats and good foul weather gear including seaboots. Being cold is fatiguing, and as the late Jim Crawford, a seaman par excellence, stated, "Fatigue is the rust that destroys boats." Every time in my seven-decade sailing career I have gotten my tail in a wringer, it has been because I allowed myself to get too tired and made poor decisions. A cold, wet, tired crew is a crew that makes mistakes. Keep your crew dry, warm, well rested and well fed, and the chances of them making mistakes are minimized.

This subject is covered in more detail in my book *Street's Transatlantic Crossing Guide*.

JUMPING-OFF POINTS

Points from Newport to New York

I strongly advise NOT heading directly offshore from this area. It's much better to go coastwise down to Little Creek, Virginia, near Norfolk at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay, or, if your boat will pass under the 65-foot bridge south of Norfolk on the ICW, farther on to Morehead City/Beaufort, in North Carolina.

The reason I say this is that the autumn weather window for heading south is very small. If you leave in October or early November, there is too much danger of encountering a late-season hurricane. Data from NOAA shows that in the last 20 years or so there have been more hurricanes in late October and early November than there have been in the previous hundred years.

Unfortunately, as each week goes by in November the weather on the East Coast of the States becomes increasingly unstable, to the point that by the end of November the weather forecasts are only good for 24 to 36 hours. Boats can take off from the northeast coast of the States in the face of a northwester, with glorious sailing, clear visibility and the wind aft of the beam, but all too often the northwester then turns, swinging around to north and finally northeast. A 25- to 30-knot (and sometimes more) northeaster blowing against a two- or three-knot current in the Gulf Stream produces sea conditions varying from dangerous to disastrous.

Unless you have a megayacht that can continually knock off nine knots or more, your chances are minimal of leaving the northeast coast of the United States and getting across the Gulf Stream on a weather window, since the weather predictions are only good for 24 to 36 hours.

Thus, if you are departing from Newport, I recommend heading down the coast, through Long Island Sound. If a blow comes through, there are plenty of places to stop. If you pick up the beginning of the fair tide at South Norwalk, Connecticut, and maintain a six-knot speed through the water, you can carry that tide all the way down Long Island Sound through Hell Gate, New York Harbor, out through Sandy Hook and on down the New Jersey shore. This is where a northwester coming offshore gives a glorious sail with smooth water; it will really blow you on your way.

A good eye must be kept on the weather, because from the mouth of New York Harbor to the mouth of the Delaware River there are really no reliable harbors. Similarly from the mouth of the Delaware to the Chesapeake Bay there are no harbors. However, if you have maintained your six knots over the bottom as you approach the mouth of the Delaware, take a look. If the weather is going around to the south and you don't like the look of it, you can head up the Delaware on a fair tide, pass through the Chesapeake & Delaware Canal, and still pick up a fair tide at the northern end of the Chesapeake.

Once in the Chesapeake you can push on south to Little Creek, Virginia, at the mouth of the bay, or stop in Annapolis or one of the wonderful little harbors in the Chesapeake and enjoy oysters, crab and other wonderful seafood.

If the weather permits, however, when you reach the mouth of the Delaware you can continue offshore to Little Creek.

If you can fit under the bridge south of Norfolk, there is only one way to go south. You should continue through the ICW to the Morehead City/Beaufort area. This is a trip of three days, but if you have the time you can easily spend a week to ten days doing some wonderful cruising, either going up the various rivers visiting the beautiful ante-bellum towns that have hardly changed in the last 150 years or, if you have a shoal-draft boat, going out to the outer banks in Kitty Hawk, where flying started.

Morehead City/Beaufort

At Morehead City/Beaufort you can sit and wait for a good clear northwester to blow through. You are far enough south so that although it may be cold, you will not have to contend with ice, sleet or snow. If you leave at the top of the tide, carry the tide down to Cape Lookout. A couple of hours after you leave Cape Lookout you will be in the Gulf Stream, the northwester will blast you across, and by the time the northwester swings around to the north you will be clear of the Stream. You can then set a course east-southeast and sail that course "until the butter melts." (It is said the most important piece of navigation equipment on this trip is a pound of butter on a gimbaled table.) The northwester will swing north, then to northeast. If you are lucky the northeaster will continue right on down to where you pick up the Trades. Many boats in the 40-foot size range have done this route from Morehead City/Beaufort to St. Thomas in seven days.

Work your way east-southeast, until you reach the longitude of 68° to 70°W, as it must be remembered that in November and early December the Trades are still likely to be southeast or east-southeast, rather than east or northeast. This means if you have not worked your way well east, you will end up hard on the wind for the last few days of your trip if you are heading for St. Thomas.

With a favorable weather forecast, you can leave from Morehead City/Beaufort at any time from early November right up until about December first. However, if you have not left by the beginning of December, you should either delay your trip until the following year, or follow the ICW all the way down to Jacksonville or Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

In December it is not advisable to try to depart for the Caribbean from Charleston or the ports south of Charleston, as in that area the Gulf Stream is well off shore. The problem of getting across the Stream here is roughly the same as trying to get across the Stream from the northeast coast of the States.

Little Creek

If your boat will not fit under the 65-foot bridge on the waterway near Norfolk, wait in Little Creek until you obtain a favorable weather report. Then head east-southeast and try to get across the Gulf Stream as fast as you possibly can. If the wind goes light, turn on the mill and motor or motorsail. Don't worry about running out of fuel — once you are across the Stream and south of the gale area, if you are out of fuel and get becalmed it is just a pain in the neck and a delay. But if you don't make it across the Stream within your weather window, you can end up in disastrous circumstances. There is not enough space here to list the horror stories. Again, your course is east-southeast until the butter melts. Work your way eastward to longitude 68° to 70°W, before heading directly to St. Thomas.

The weather window from Little Creek is basically the month of November. Come December, forget about it and wait until next year.

Miami/Fort Lauderdale

If you don't pick your weather carefully when sailing from the Miami/Fort Lauderdale area to the Caribbean, you face a dead beat to windward for 1,200 miles — a miserable trip. I have done it a couple of times, having to deliver bareboats on a schedule. We were locked into it and all we could do was put our heads down and bang away.

The proper way for the cruising yachtsman to get from the Miami/Fort Lauderdale area to St. Thomas is to go over to Grand Bahama and wait there until a norther — i.e. a northwest front — is predicted. You can take off on the face of a northwest front: it may blow hard, but the wind will be coming off the land and you will have a smooth sea. Leave the northeast Providence Channel and head east for as long as you can.

Once the norther dies out and the Trades fill in, fall off on port tack and see where you end up. Some boats have been very lucky and have laid St. Thomas in one tack. Others have fetched the eastern end of Puerto Rico, and some have only laid the western end of Puerto Rico. If you do this you can duck into Mayaguez, take a rest, recuperate and restock, then head south and east along the south coast of Puerto Rico. Make sure you have on board a copy of *Street's Guide: Puerto Rico, Spanish, US and British Virgin Islands*, which describes this area in detail, complete with sailing instructions. The one problem with taking this route is that you may enjoy the south coast of Puerto Rico and the Spanish Virgin Islands so much you never get to the Eastern Caribbean!

Re: hopping along the numerous stepping stones on Bruce Van Sant's "thornless path to windward" from Florida to the Virgins, you must have unlimited time and patience to wait for all those individual weather windows. You may spend so much time waiting for weather that by the time you arrive in St. Thomas, the hurricane season is approaching again and it will be a case of either returning to the States, or quickly getting to Grenada, Trinidad or Venezuela to be south of the hurricane zone!

I advise using the US NOAA charts appropriate to your routing, and Imray-Iolaire charts of the Caribbean depending on your landfall. (Check Imray-Iolaire chart catalogue at any major US chart supplier.) If you are going via Bermuda, use Imray-Iolaire chart E5: Bermuda; plans St. George's, Hamilton, dockyard marina.

Visit Don Street's website, www.street-iolaire.com, for more information.

Visit Noonsite.com for the latest Covid-related yacht entry regulations regarding your intended Caribbean landfall destination.

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WESTWARD ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

A passage across the Atlantic Ocean is not a trip to be lightly undertaken. Your boat and crew must be prepared to face heavy weather. If this will be the first ocean passage for you or your boat, do some rehearsals. While still in your home waters, when a good hard blow comes through, take your boat out for a sail and ascertain any deficiencies in either boat or crew. Take your boat back in and rectify the deficiencies. Then go out in a second blow, which you will be much better prepared for. Go home again and rectify any deficiencies that are still not corrected from the first trial. Etcetera.

The hardest part of sailing westward across the Atlantic is getting from Europe to the Canaries or Madeira. Once there it is basically all downhill and easy sailing to the Caribbean.

Take a look at the weather charts on the back of the Imray-Iolaire North Atlantic Passage Chart 100. These will show why you should have gotten out of Northern Europe by September, as the gale frequencies there increase drastically after mid-September, through October and November.

If you are leaving from Gibraltar, carefully check your weather report — in November you can run into some bad southwest blows, and the northwest coast of Africa has virtually no harbours of refuge. Take off on a good weather report from Gibraltar, and work your way well to the west to give yourself plenty of sea room before heading southwestward to Madeira or the Canaries.

Madeira and the Canaries

In the Madeiran Archipelago island of Porto Santo, there may be room in the harbour at the marina, or you can anchor off. In Madeira one can find a wonderful secluded anchorage in Bahia D'Abra. It is absolutely deserted, and a few miles west of there, one can find the Quinta do Lorde marina three miles east of Canical.

If you continue on to the Canaries you will discover that there are relatively few anchorages and the marinas are usually chock-a-block full. Unless you are joining the ARC rally (www.worldcruising.com/arc), forget about going to Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, until after the ARC departs. The ARC will have two starts this year, one on November 8th, bound for the Cape Verdes, and one on November 22nd, bound direct for St. Lucia.

There is a marina at Rubicon on Lanzarote, plus Puerto Calera where space might be available. The islands' best infrastructure to support the yachting industry and make good any deficiencies discovered in gear and equipment is in Tenerife.

In the opinion of many, the nicest islands in the Canaries are the three westernmost islands: Palma, Hiero and Gomera.

The Cape Verdes

We visited the Cape Verdes on *Iolaire* in 1985 and 1989 and preferred them to the Canaries. I revisited them via "the big bird" in 2002, and again in 2005 on *Sincerity*, an 88-foot ketch.

I recommend spending December exploring the Cape Verdes, and crossing the Atlantic in January when the Trades have filled in and late-season hurricanes are avoided. Landfall should be Isle Sal to check in, and then sail downwind to São Nicolau, Sta. Luzia (an uninhabited island with a three-mile-long white sand beach), and São Vicente and its port city of Mindelo.

Mindelo is wonderful, with beautiful colonial Portuguese architecture. There is a 120-berth marina (www.marinamindelo.cv) with repair services, electronics, rigging and sail repair. One resident also points out that the Cape Verdeans are wonderful at improvisation; he feels that within three weeks anything broken on a yacht can be replaced or repaired.

After Mindelo, sail south to Santiago, which has a dozen unexplored anchorages available to the experienced sailor — check Google Earth and see what I mean. Then visit Fogo, with its colony of blue-eyed, red-haired Cape Verdeans descended from a French count who arrived in the 1880s and cultivated grapes (and the local damsels!). Then on to Brava, which has an excellent harbor on the northeast side and a sheltered cove on the southwest corner, a perfect jumping-off spot to cross the Atlantic.

Across the Pond

I am strongly of the opinion that when crossing the Atlantic you should go from the Canaries down to the Cape Verdes, enjoy the cruising there, and then cross from the Cape Verdes to the Eastern Caribbean. The reason I say this is because the Great Circle route from the Canaries is 2,535 miles, but this route can really only be sailed by boats that have plenty of fuel and/or are lightweight fliers with a crew that is willing to do a lot of sail changing, setting spinnakers and the like. The more traditional route is to head southwest from the Canaries, at least down to 20°N, and then across — about 2,615 miles. This route brings you quite close to the Cape Verdes, so why not sail from the Canaries to the Cape Verdes? It is only 780 miles, with guaranteed tradewinds down the African coast.

While there are several good harbors with interesting towns and villages ashore, the Cape Verdes are not the Virgin Islands. The coastlines are unreliably charted and underdeveloped, but they do offer the yachtsman who is skilled in coastal piloting and eyeball navigation a wonderful opportunity to wander off the beaten track. You can enjoy the Cape Verdes and then take off from Brava, a wonderful little island where the Yankee whalers used to pick up crew. From there to Antigua (2,175 miles) you are down in the deep tradewinds, and will have some glorious sailing as the course is a little bit north of west and the tradewinds are a little bit north of east. You can rig your spinnaker pole semi-permanently out to starboard, to be used to wing out the jib if it is blowing hard, or for your spinnaker if the wind goes light.

Iolaire, 46 feet on deck, has sailed three times from the Cape Verdes to the islands of the Eastern Caribbean — in 14 days and some hours in 1949, under gaff rig when owned by RH "Bobby" Sommerset; then in 1985 and 1989 under my command as a double-headsail Marconi yawl. On all three trips the spinnaker pole was rigged to starboard and left up there for the entire trip. No gybing!

Southwest Winds

If you look at the weather charts, you will note that in November in the Canaries, there is a southwest arrow. If the wind goes round to the southwest, you should sit in the Canaries and wait until it goes back around to the easterly quadrant. It can blow southwest for two or three days and blow hard. The ARC has discovered this occasionally, when participants were discouraged to discover they were beating to windward in heavy weather for the first three or four days of their transatlantic crossing, rather than having a delightful sleigh ride all the way.

It should be noted that a southwester could settle in for even longer periods. In 2002 dozens of boats that left the Canaries were driven all the way down to the Cape Verdes, where they stopped to pick up fuel and/or wait for the wind to go around to the east.

This article is updated from a version that appeared in the October 2013 issue of Compass.

Resources

Covid Regulations

As this issue of *Compass* goes to press, yacht entry regulations regarding the Covid pandemic are evolving. Check Noonsite.com for the latest updates.

- Canary Islands: www.noonsite.com/place/canary-islands/formalities/#biosecurity-section
- Madeira: www.noonsite.com/place/madeira/formalities/#biosecurity-section
- Cape Verdes: www.noonsite.com/place/cape-verdes/formalities/#biosecurity-section
- Caribbean: See Noonsite also regarding your intended Caribbean landfall destination.

Boat Preparation and Sailing Directions

Boat preparation and sailing directions westward across the Atlantic are covered in more detail in my *Transatlantic Crossing Guide.* The comprehensive *Street's Guide to the Cape Verde Islands* was published in 2011. Both are available at online booksellers.

Charts

I recommend the following charts for a westward transatlantic crossing:

- Imray C20: Gibraltar to Azores and Canaries
- Imray-Iolaire E2: Islas Canarias. Plans: Pto de la Luz, Pto de los Marmoles and Pto de Naos, Pto de San Sebastian, Pto de Santa Cruz, Darsena Pesquera (Santa Cruz de Tenerife), Morro Jable, Pto de la Estaca
- Imray-Iolaire E3: Arquipelago da Madeira. Plans: Pto Santo, Pto do Funchal
- Imray-Iolaire E4: Arquipelago de Cabo Verde. Plans: Pto da Furna, Pto Grande, Pto de Sal-Rei, Pto Novo, Pto da Praia, Cavaleiras, Pto Velho, Bahia da Palmeira.

SEAWISE WITH DON STREET

Are You Ready to Go?

This article is a result of information personally gathered during 12 transatlantic passages and almost 40 trips from the Caribbean to the US East Coast or the reverse. Added to this is information gathered over the last 60 years from sailors who have done these passages and from reading about passages on these routes.

Be Ready for Leaks

Steel, aluminum and fiberglass boats seldom leak, but when they do it is usually serious, and all too often the pumps are inadequate or do not work — which in mid-ocean can be fatal.

To prove how inadequate the standard pumps supplied by the builder are, if you have a heavy or moderate displacement boat, pull a seacock, let the bilge fill to the floorboards and see how many hours it takes you to manually pump the bilge dry (you can't depend on an electric pump). If you have a modern, shoal-bodied fin keeler, fill the bilge to two or three inches above the floorboards and see how many hours it takes you to manually pump your bilge dry. Now imagine doing this in rough seas!

If you want a pump that really moves water, research the virtues of the Edson 30-gallon-per-minute manual pump.

Is Your Safety Gear Ready?

If your liferaft re-certification date is long overdue, have it re-certified, but only by someone certified to check and repack your type of raft.

Inflate all of your lifejackets, leave them inflated for 24 hours, deflate, take out the CO2 cylinder and replace it. This operation may be a shocker: the lifejackets might not stay inflated or the cylinder might be rusted in place. Take any lifejackets with problems to the liferaft repacking facility and have them repaired or replaced. If you have automatically inflating lifejackets, make sure the cylinders can easily be replaced, and purchase a good supply of spare cylinders. This is necessary, as sometimes in heavy weather on deck crew will suddenly discover their life jacket inflating by accident.

Make sure that your EPIRB information is correctly entered so if you activate the unit, the correct information will show up and a search can be started immediately. When *Rambler* lost her keel and capsized in the Fastnet Race, she turned turtle so fast that her EPIRBs were underwater and unreachable. One personal EPIRB was activated, but because it was not properly registered it was almost two hours before a search could begin.

Are Your Sails Ready?

Coming from the East Coast to the Caribbean, expect a spell of heavy weather. If you are unlucky you may be hit by a full gale of 50 knots. Be prepared!

Check your sails carefully and, if not quite new, take them to the sailmaker and have him or her stitch a line up the leach and three feet in on each seam. Then if a seam opens up, the sail will only split to the re-stitched portion. The sail can then be dropped and re-sewn underway. (If this precaution is not taken, if a seam opens up the sail usually splits luff to leech. By the time the sail is taken down, it is a repair for the sail loft.)

Go out in ten to 12 knots of wind and check your reefing procedures; pull up from *Compass* my article on reefing from the December 2014 issue (www.caribbeancompass.com/online/december14compass_online.pdf, page 28).

If you have a storm trysail, you may need it, so pull it out, hoist it and check the gear and leads. If you have a single-headsail boat with a removable staysail stay and a heavy-weather staysail, set this up and hoist the staysail. Make sure the hanks and snap shackles are well oiled and work freely.

Be Ready to Bleed!

If your boat's engine has not been used much over the summer, check your fuel filters and buy a dozen spares. This sounds excessive, but space does not permit me to tell the stories of boats that have left for the Caribbean, run into heavy weather, had all the sludge in the bottom of the fuel stirred up, and run out of fuel filters. Voila — no engine.

If your engine is self-bleeding, fine. If not, get out the engine manual, photocopy the instructions on how to bleed the engine, blow up the print so it can be read in poor light without reading glasses, and have it laminated. Then bleed the engine, marking every nut, bolt and connector that must be opened and closed with red nail polish. Then bleed the engine again to make sure you understand the procedure. Then take the wrenches you used and the laminated directions, put them all in a plastic bag, and hope you never have to open it

A Covid Sailing Odyssey: Plans Fall Through but Dreams Come True

by Stephen Kieswetter

Wednesday, March 11th 2020. A comparatively relaxing flight from Frankfurt (Germany) to Barbados. On time, unusual. Temperature-guns are pointed at my head twice upon arrival. Unusual. Then on time when departing towards Port of Spain later that day: again a surprise. Finally the arrival at Piarco Airport is on time. Now this is very unusual. Is something wrong?

Turned Away at Trinidad

Taxi is ready to pick me up as arranged, so all is well. I am in the Immigration line. The lady officer checks my passport, keeps it, says, "Ah, you come from Germany; please step over there." I wait, 30 minutes. I walk back to the booth, ask what the matter is. "Wait over there," is all the answer I get. After another 30 minutes a Port Health person hands me a mask and guides me to the Port Health office. I have to fill a form: where I come from, where I am headed. A handwritten white-board note says that since "11.00h local time all entries of persons originating their



Arrival at Horta after the collision.

travels from France, Germany… in the last 14 days are blocked from entering Trinidad and Tobago." I try to argue, but to no avail. My luggage is being stored somewhere; it contains my essential sailing equipment, including some basics like handheld VHF, solar panel for iPad, etcetera.

Why was I headed to Trinidad? I wanted to visit and work on my trimaran, *Infinity*, which has been based at Power Boats in Chaguaramas since my singlehanded transatlantic crossing in 2017. The project: a lithium battery electrical refit. After the refit I wanted to sail up and down the island chain, as in the past years. Then I would go home to earn money for all this adventure. This is now clearly impossible. Apart from the monetary loss (expensive material is sitting at Power Boats) it is a big disappointment.

To give this hardly digestible cake its icing, I am locked into a brightly lit waiting room at 11:00PM, together with a family of four and one other person. Plastic airport row-seats. No window. No lying down. The only sofa is taken by the family. Later a Spanish captain joins us. The toilet can only be visited with a guard watching.

This is my first real "lockdown."

6:00 the next morning. After eight hours I am called to join a Caribbean Airlines official, guided to a gate and flown back to Barbados; it turns out that Caribbean Airlines just used my return ticket. Arriving at Barbados I have to take a decision: fly back to Germany without getting to work on my boat or go sailing, or stay around and go to Trinidad after 14-day quarantine.

A Change of Luck

This won't surprise many sailors: I opted to stay around, and then go to work on *Infinity* after the quarantine. Suddenly my luck started to change. A dear friend, Colin Dykstra, a seasoned circumnavigator with a beautiful Chris White catamaran, was test sailing his completely refitted *Segue* in St. Vincent. I booked LIAT from Barbados to St. Vincent, went through Immigration in Barbados and finally got my passport back. The few hours in relative freedom in the airport felt good. Flying to St. Vincent was even better. I was full of hope. I would get some sailing and then surely get back to Trinidad to work on *Infinity*. The taxi ride to the Blue Lagoon confirmed the fear Covid brought to people even in this remote place. I arrived, took my heavy bag to the dark jetty and was so happy to meet Colin in the dinghy that I almost cried. The so eagerly awaited Caribbean Feel finally sank in.

Singlehanding on a 31-foot trimaran has made me immune to discomfort, so imagine how my positive vibes were augmented by the luxury on *Segue*: a cabin for myself, fresh water from the watermaker, lithium power systems, a full-sized pantry. And expert cooking because, yes, Colin is a renowned chef, not only a sailor, IT expert, boat captain, well read and educated.

I paid my way as best I could by doing chores and projects to make *Segue* even more perfect, working in cramped spaces around the ruddershafts or the daggerboard bearings where there is little room to maneuver with tools.

We sailed with three additional crew from St. Vincent to Dominica on March 13th. *Segue* is luxurious but also a splendid sailing boat turning speeds of up to 14 knots, averaging nine or ten with the Trades from the right quarter.

Dominica Days

The Portsmouth Association of Yacht Services (PAYS) is a pleasant network of yacht service people. They assist when arriving and thereafter. Sadly Covid meant that some treats were no longer possible, including the yachties' barbecue we had planned to enjoy.

Nevertheless we visited some places by dinghy and by bus, including the capital, Roseau. The damages from the 2017 hurricanes were still visible where the road was washed away; but the buildings and the positive mood of the people were nicely rebuilt.

Then we heard that Trinidad would lock down. Our Trinidadian crewmember had to fly home to avoid being stranded.

With the world freezing in lockdowns we left Dominica for Antigua. It was a perfect overnight sail with splendid Caribbean conditions, sailing 100 nautical miles in little more than 12 hours.

Locked Down in Antigua

St. Johns was the only port of entry still open. We cleared in on March 19th and the next morning transferred to Jolly Harbour and went into łockdown. This meant stay on board except for the supermarket (only open in the morning, masks mandatory, wait in lines, limited number of people allowed to enter). No restaurants or bars.

The cruising sailor's day did not change much in many other aspects: Work on the boat, cocktail hour (albeit with virtual VHF participation only), extensive swimming, fancy work, reading. Even meeting people — while swimming by their yachts with more than ten metres social distancing and saltwater cleanliness.

We did go to sea to empty the holding tanks, authorized by the Antigua coast guard. We also shifted our position, with perfect inshore tacking, to the north shore, a beautiful anchorage at Long Island. After a few days we circled around Antigua's "Wild East" towards Falmouth. This even more professional harbor is an impressive place for any sailor. With yachts like the J Class *Valsheda* around, luxury yachting is lifted to another level, especially for a small boat sailor with a living space of two square metres below decks and fresh water only from bottles. Lock-down activities stayed largely unchanged, but the opening of pizza take-away was reason to celebrate.

The urge to move is hard to keep under the lid for any sailor. I am no exception. I was happy to sail on with *Segue* but there were no good places for her to go. By now I also needed to head back to work and family at home. A sailor who can't find a flight has an obvious choice: join a sailing yacht as crew and sail back towards the old continent.

Now Lady Luck was really smiling on me. My sailing was about to go up several gears.

Next Stop, France

It so happened that two very impressive trimarans sat smack next to *Segue*: *Shockwave* (the former *Paradox*), and *UltimEmotion2*, the former *Prince de Bretagne*, a racing prototype. As a trimaran sailor I was in their irresistible magnetic field. The 24-metre *UltimEmotion2* was sailing back to Bretagne (western France) soon, and short one crew. Despite my being only an amateur, these professionals allowed me to join them. Sailing with French professionals in itself is something for any sailor's bucket list. To sail such a sailing machine was a dream come true.

We left on May 5th. Now I learnt what speed was. Truly breathtaking. Sticking the head out of any dodger is just that: breath taking. The speed was seldom below 20 knots. We stood two teams of three-hour watches, with one hour on the tiller for each of the six crew. *UltimEmotion2* has three bunks shared between the six. After a while it became normal to lie down in a pre-warmed bunk, after climbing over the sailor sleeping in the bunk in front. "Bunk" was in reality the hull's carbon surface, covered with a camping mat. With the rudder shaft passing through the hull next to my head it felt like sleeping on the axle of a high-speed train, noise included.

Just one day out of Antigua we reached lower temperatures and started wearing foul weather gear. With heavy fronts forecast in the north and on the French coast we decided to stop on the Azorean island of Faial, at Horta, for a suitable weather window. Closing the southwest corner of Faial we had covered 2,430 nautical miles in just five days. The average speed was close to 20 knots but we once logged a phenomenal 34.4. (This video says more than any words: www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Gfhk35Hrzc)

Drama at Horta

Then disaster struck. Twenty nautical miles short of Horta our speed went from 25 knots to three with a big bang. It was like hitting a wall. There were plenty of minor injuries and bruises; I was "cooking" dinner on a step at the companionway and hurtled towards the engine room five metres farther into the cabin. I came to on the cabin floor, having hit something with my head.

We thought we had hit a heavy Moon Fish, which was sighted by crewmembers. We were in trouble. The daggerboard was squashed into the hull and we had water coming into the main compartment. We set to pumping water from the bilge, taking down sails, ready for entering the port — all with the difficulty that the port was very crowded, not suitable for such a huge ship as *UltimEmotion2*, and, due to Covid regulations, only open for re-fueling and re-stocking, with nobody allowed onshore.

Actions during the ensuing hours: treatment of the injuries and a Covid test for me — my first, which came back negative. This was very impressive, with people in white suits, masks, and every PPE you can imagine.

The repair took us ten days. The crew did the work with excellent support from the people of Horta: the officials, the health personnel, the shipwrights, the provisioning staff — even beer was delivered for the hardworking and shore-hungry crew. During this time we were allowed to stay on a charter yacht.

The harbormaster ordered us to have our work surveyed in the Azorean capital, Ponta Delgada on São Miguel, 170 nautical miles east of Horta. We made that our sea trial and reached the island in 12 hours, the last 40 miles motoring due to lack of wind.

An engineer examined the repair with police supervision; and declared it suitable to continue. A weather window opened a week after our arrival in Ponta Delgada.

The Last Leg

By now our new destination was Sète in the South of France instead of Bretagne. We had to sail an extra 700 nautical miles and pass through the Gibraltar Strait into the fickle winds of the Med.

We sailed the 1,100 nautical miles to the Strait in two days, going through at 20 knots in the dark against a 25-knot headwind. When the wind died down, Mediterranean style, we motored 350 miles past famous places like the Costa del Sol. At Ibiza we lucked out: a strong southeast wind propelled us the 300 miles to our destination in just 12 hours.



Sailing with French professionals is something for any sailor's bucket list.

The usually bustling holiday town of Sète was in a ghostly mood at midnight on June 3rd when we docked. But on the way to a pre-booked hotel we found the only open bar in town, and stayed there until it closed — just ten minutes and three beers after our arrival.

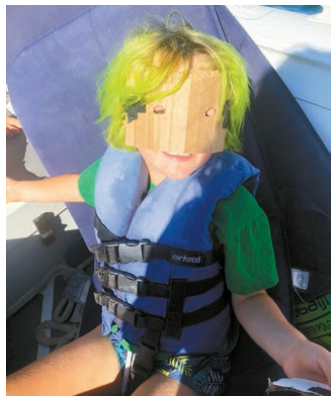
The end of my Odyssey was an anti-climactic 14-hour train ride to Cologne, Germany, through unheard of border controls.

For me Covid meant money lost and plans not executed. But also my bucket list was reduced by two wholly unexpected highlights: luxury Caribbean cruising and high-speed racing-style ocean sailing.

An Odyssey is no walk in the park – but an experience not to miss. This is the reason why we still read Homer.

Stephen Kieswetter is an engineering consultant living and working in Germany. Infinity *is a 19-year-old Corsair trimaran. In 2016 he took nine days to sail the 1,500 miles from Amsterdam, Netherlands, to Lagos, Portugal, singlehanded and non-stop through the North Sea, down the English Channel, across the Bay of Biscay and down the Iberian coast. He left Lagos in 2017 on* Infinity *for the 3,800-mile, 21-day Atlantic crossing, choosing to make Trinidad his base to be out of the hurricane zone and because Don Stollmeyer at Power Boats agreed to store* Infinity *ashore in its own "house" on a specially made trailer. Stephen now sails from Trinidad once in a while.*

by David Carey



"Trick or treat, smell my feet, give me something good to eat!" The chant rang out from my dinghy full of little monsters on the warpath for candy, mayhem and laughter. We motored up to a seemingly empty yacht anchored among the shallows of Grenada's Prickly Bay. The children looked worried, a no-show perhaps? But I knew better, the decorations adorning the transom and the large spiders in the cabin windows gave away the plot.

"YAARRGGGHHH!!!" Five adults dressed as pirates, ghosts and zombies sprang from their hiding places on the cockpit floor, the kids squealed with delight. Knowing they had found another boat full of candy, they giggled and laughed, holding out their bags to receive the precious bounty.

A cruiser Halloween in the Caribbean is a very interesting thing. The fact that trick-or-treaters can't walk from house to house knocking on doors doesn't stop anyone from getting into the spirit. The kids pile into dinghies and knock on as many transoms as they can find. Hailing from Australia, my family is not accustomed to this pagan celebration of dress ups, gore, and sugar-fuelled chaos. We had no idea Halloween was such a big deal in other countries of the world. I was amazed at the planning fellow cruisers, most from the States and Canada, had put into the Halloween 2019 celebrations. It was clear this was going to be a night to remember.

CRUISING KIDS' HALLOWEEN



Top: It's not necessarily the most expensive costumes that get the attention.
Left: Anyone sporting a bandana, a toy gun and Mom's eyeliner will be Jack Sparrow.
Below: An empty wine box turns a kid into a box troll.

The VHF radio net had been full of chatter all week, cruisers organising how the day would unfold, which boats were participating and where the after party would be. Chatting to our new American friends, it didn't take long to realize that this was going to be a proper party, and if we didn't get involved, we would surely regret it. After googling Halloween costumes, and seeing the time and effort revellers were investing in their outfits, it was clear we were a tad behind the eight ball.

As always, when living on a boat, ingenuity goes a long way, and it's not necessarily the most expensive costumes that get the attention. When you are in short supply of party hire stores, you need to get creative. An empty wine box turns a kid into a box troll, a paper plate with holes cut out makes a great mask, and any anyone sporting a bandana, a toy gun and Mom's eyeliner will be the best Jack Sparrow you ever did see.



Of course, there are always those who take it to the next level, like Katie Rose from *S/V Space Between*. It was clear in the lead up that she was in charge of organising this incredible event for the kids, and she had no qualms about admitting that when it came to Halloween, she could get a little carried away. I had never seen a proper Jack-O-Lantern before. However, as soon as I noticed Katie's custom pumpkin-carving set, complete with razor-sharp scalpels and specialized carving equipment, I knew this was a woman who took Halloween seriously! I kept a keen eye out for the finished product, but it had been kept well hidden, only to be revealed on the night of the event.

With the kids dressed to the nines in their best Halloween outfits everyone could muster, we scrambled into the dinghies to begin our pre-planned course around the bay. Looking around, I counted at least 12 dinghies full of kids whizzing this way and that, the parents more than happy to join in with the fun, adorned with wigs, strange hats and face paint. It really amazed me that cruisers had intentionally packed this stuff onto their boat for such an occasion! The children would shout advice as they passed each other's dinghies, advising on which boats had the best chocolates, whizz fizz, and Hershey's Kisses.

Once the kids had acquired enough candy to keep every dentist on the island busy for the next year, we made for Calabash Beach for a potluck to end all potlucks. Food from over 30 families from around the world was shared with friends, both new and old. With a beach bonfire in full swing, we settled in for the night. Katie, dressed in a special-order "zombie fairy" outfit, had organised frightful party bags, gory games, monster face paint, and ghoulish treats for the kids to devour. She was clearly in her element and had really outdone herself.

Sitting by the bonfire with my cruiser buddies, watching the kids go crazy in the sand and below the stars, thriving in this phenomenally special part of the world, I knew that this was one of those times I would look back on and say thank God we made the decision to go cruising.

Trying something new and different, as with everything we had experienced in the Caribbean over the past 12 months, had once again proven to be worthwhile. And just when I thought the night couldn't get any better, a shimmering orange light appeared near my side. I hadn't noticed it until now, the face of the most frighteningly beautiful, hand carved Jack-O-Lantern I had ever seen.

Happy Halloween 2020 everyone!

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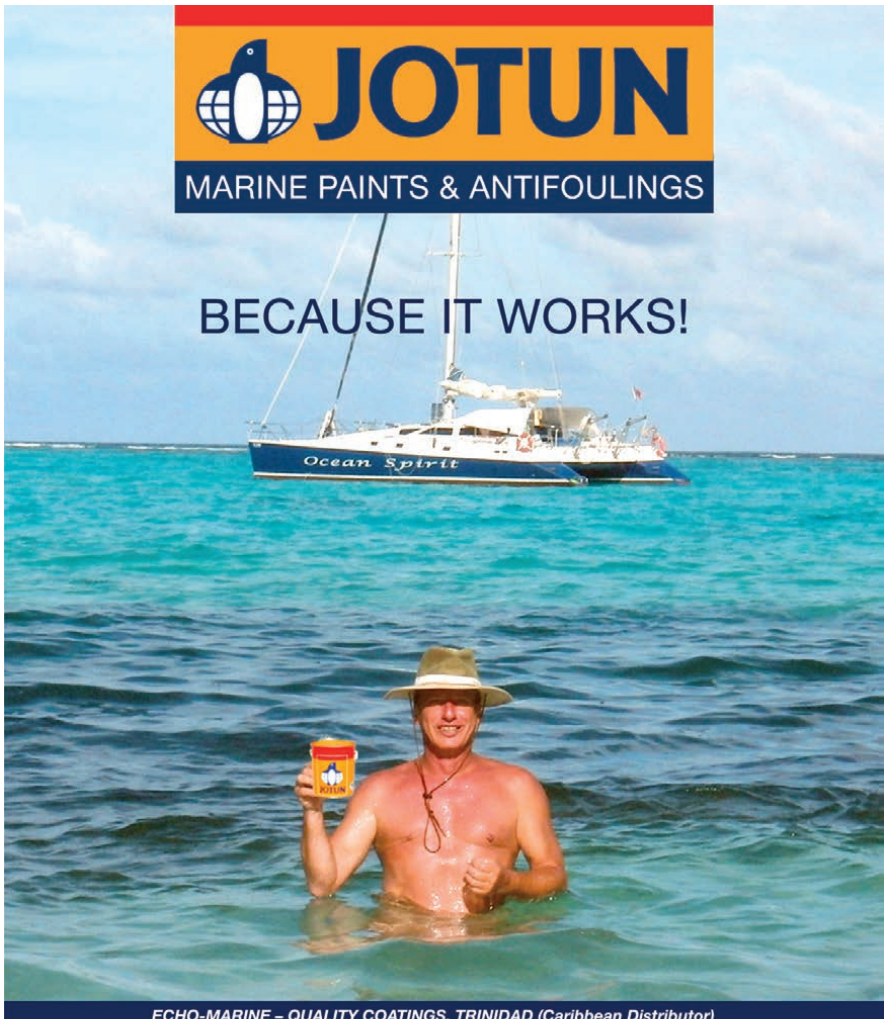
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TRINIDAD'S BLACK LAKE



A surprise at the Great Dorset Steam Fair.

by Christine Gooch

What's the link between the biggest Steam Fair in Europe and a lake with no water in Trinidad?

In 2017 my husband and I visited the Great Dorset Steam Fair. The first fair took place in 1968, in a small field in rural Dorset, England, and boasted seven steam-driven fairground organs and a showman's steam engine. By 2017 the field had grown to 600 acres, and it took 200 tonnes of coal to power the hundreds of lovingly polished steam engines and fairground attractions, ten miles of electric cables to power the lights that turned them into a fairyland playground at night, and 550 barrels of beer were waiting to be consumed (not that this was the main attraction, you understand!)

Wandering up and down the rows of gleaming showman's engines, we spotted a steam lorry bearing the logo "Lake and Trinidad Asphalt Co." We were hooked, and vowed that when we returned to the Caribbean, we would visit the curious place where the lorry would once have worked. Meanwhile, some research on the internet led me to the Steampunk Forum at Brass Goggles (www.brassgoggles.co.uk), where a Canadian enthusiast identified it as a British-made 1928 Foden steam lorry. Another post on the same forum said that Trinidad Lake Asphalt was "a pretty big outfit" in Northern England "that contracted road repair jobs for local councils." They kept steam-powered asphalt tankers running in the UK well into the 1950s, using steam from the boiler to keep the asphalt liquid. Well, who knew?

Back to the present, and a fine day in January 2020 saw a multi-national group of 11 cruisers bowling south down the centre of Trinidad on the Uriah Butler Highway, with Jesse James, tour guide *extraordinaire*, in the driving seat. A narrow



GOOCH (ALL PHOTOS)

The pitch felt like warm, gloopy mud.

strip of houses, shops, garages and other businesses lining the road gave way to shopping malls and large outlet stores on the outskirts of the town of Chaguanas.

After a breakfast stop at the village of Debe for what Jesse described as "the tastiest doubles in Trinidad," the highway ran through flat, open countryside with the mountains of the Central Ranges visible in the distance. This flat land would once have been covered in sugar cane, harvested first by slaves and later by indentured Indian labourers. When the highway ended we turned west, joining the two-lane Southern Trunk Road running along the coast to the village of La Brea. The road through La Brea undulated like a duvet on a badly made bed, and some of the older wooden houses were decidedly lopsided. This is because the Pitch Lake we had come to see extends under the village and the road so that they are constantly rising and sinking in slow motion.

Located on Trinidad's southwestern coast, the Pitch Lake is the world's largest commercial deposit of natural asphalt. Covering approximately 100 acres and 250 feet deep at the centre, it holds approximately ten million tonnes of asphalt.

Like many sites in the Caribbean, there is an Amerindian legend attached to the Pitch Lake. While celebrating victory over another tribe, the Chaima Indians cooked and ate hummingbirds, which were considered sacred. To punish them, the angry gods caused the earth to open up and swallow the entire village, leaving in its place molten pitch. Just a legend? Well, Amerinidian pottery shards have been found in the asphalt, and hummingbirds can still be seen fluttering around the lake, so who knows?

A more prosaic explanation for the formation of the Pitch Lake is that crude oil seeps from a fault line in the sandstone where two parts of the earth's crust meet. Or that the lake was once a huge mud volcano from which muddy asphaltic oil seeped. Over the centuries, the lighter oil and mud mixture evaporated, leaving behind the pitch.

The English adventurer Sir Walter Raleigh "discovered" the Pitch Lake in March 1595, while searching for the fabled gold of El Dorado. He reportedly used the pitch to caulk his leaking ships. In 1792 the Spanish, who had colonized Trinidad, set up a refinery on the Pitch Lake. This was short-lived, as in 1797 the island fell to the British and the Spaniards were forced to leave. In 1850 Thomas Cochrane, the tenth Earl of Dondonald, teamed up with Trinidadian Conrad Frederick Stollmeyer for a series of experiments that resulted in them successfully using pitch to cover uneven surfaces. The rest, as they say, is history. The Trinidad Lake Asphalt Company has been exporting asphalt from the Pitch Lake to countries all round the world since 1888, to be used in manufacturing and road paving. In fact, the road in front of Buckingham Palace in London is paved with Trinidad asphalt, as are La Guardia airport and the Lincoln Tunnel in New York. Pitch was also used to caulk the decks of Thames sailing barges and fishing smacks, so boats from our home port of Brightlingsea might well be carrying a piece of Trinidad too.

Looking down from the slight rise of the car park, it seemed as though we were looking at a lake of black water. It is one of only three known pitch lakes in the world, and the only one that visitors are allowed to walk on. Because the surface of the pitch is stable in some areas but like quicksand in others, we had to be accompanied by a guide. She showed us a photograph of a dejected-looking man covered from head to foot in pitch, a worker at the pitch refinery who had fallen through the surface. He was rushed to hospital and survived, although I'm not sure how they managed to clean the pitch off him. At this point our guide, Amena, stressed the difference between pitch and asphalt. "Now, I don't want you all goin' away thinkin' that pitch and asphalt are the same thing — they are *not*," she told us firmly in her sing-song Trini accent. "Pitch is *raw* – asphalt is *refined*."

Amena led us down the slope and through a gate to the lake. The part nearest the fence was dotted with clumps of tall grass and puddles of water. In one of two of the puddles water lilies were growing. "Follow me — I don't want you all spreading out all over the place," Amena instructed. "And don't tread on the shiny bits," pointing out silvery areas on the surface which would give way like thin ice, sending us down through the pitch-black depths.

Bending down at a small hump in the pitch, Amena used her finger to break the surface and make a small hole. She explained that if workers see a mound like this they break into it to begin mining. The skin, known as "elephant skin" because of its wrinkled surface, is approximately six inches deep. In another place, one of the "shiny bits," she picked up a handy stick and dug out some pitch. It clung to the stick like black molasses.



And it looked like sticky molasses.

Following in Amena's footsteps we made our way across the surface of the lake, dodging the shiny bits and stepping over streams and puddles. In places, narrow cracks showed where the fault lines were. The faint smell of pitch wafted on the breeze and the ground was hot beneath our feet; I wasn't sure if it was from the sun beating down or the volcanic heat below the surface rising.

On the far side of the lake we could see the refinery. A hundred and eighty tons of pitch can be extracted in a five-day week. The pitch is refined by boiling to evaporate the water. Once refined it yields 142 tons of asphalt, which is made into small pellets for export; China is Trinidad's main market. Since the 1950s the whole process has been mechanized, but in the earliest days hundreds of workers broke loose pieces of pitch,

→

…each weighing about 25 kilos, using a tool called a mattock, and carried them on their heads to waiting mule carts. The pitch was taken to the landing stage, known as Brighton Pier, from where flat-bottomed boats carried it to sailing ships anchored in deeper water. The mule carts were eventually replaced by a light railway, whose rails had to be moved every day to stop them sinking into the lake. In the mid-1920s more than 1,200 people labored on the Pitch Lake; today there are around half that number.

After being mined the pitch renews itself, bubbling up from beneath the surface. Amena showed us a place where this was happening, which resembled the lava flow from a volcano. Turning back to face the way we had come, she showed us a rise in the land indicating the former height of the lake surface, approximately nine metres above the surface we were standing on. Mining has reduced it to its current level, but it is estimated that there is still another 400 years' worth of pitch under the lake. "I want you all to take off your shoes and walk on this," she said. "But keep walking — don't stand still." The pitch felt like warm, gloopy mud and our feet sank into it, leaving a maze of deep footprints. It takes about a month for the renewed pitch to harden to a firm crust.

As we crossed another part of the lake, heading back towards the entrance, the "rotten eggs" smell of sulphur filled our nostrils. In the wet season the puddles can grow to a depth of five feet and become sulphur pools in which people bathe, hoping to ease a variety of ailments including skin conditions and joint pain. Even now in the dry season, small shallow pools were home to gorgeous lilac water lilies and buzzing insects flitted over the surface.



Part of the Pitch Lake refinery.

Jesse doesn't often do tours to the south of the island, but if you can persuade him to get a group together and do one to include the Pitch Lake, it's well worth the experience.

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Tales of a Salty Legend:
Paul Johnson

by John Everton



ELLEN BIRELL

Paul resides full-time in Carriacou aboard Cherub*, a 42-foot Venus design that he acquired and rebuilt after she was holed in a hurricane.*

If you've ever admired any one of a number of salty-looking, gaff-rigged, double-ended yachts cruising in the Caribbean, chances are that the work of designer and boat builder Paul Johnson has caught your eye.

I first met Paul in 1972 when I sailed *Pole Star* into the tiny inner harbour of Gustavia, St. Barts. He had sailed his 28-foot gaff ketch, *Venus* (later to be known as *Little Venus*), there after building her with Dade County pine, salvaged from an old church being torn down in Florida. She was strip-planked, edge-fastened and glued with a combination of epoxy and Thiokol formulated in Europe. Paul was living aboard with Barbara, with whom he had his first son, Magnus. Magnus was born in Roadtown, Tortola, and delivered by Dr. Robin Tatersall — the expert sailboat-racing obstetrician and plastic surgeon who lived and had offices in his "Purple Palace" — in exchange for Paul building him a couple of doors.



Paul Johnson, aboard Cherub *with his friend Angie and the author.*

St. Barts in those days was quiet and had but a few visiting yachts. There were none anchored in the outer harbour, which is packed these days, with no distinction left between Publique and Corossol Bays. When I first arrived, I encountered a dredge in the middle of the entrance to Gustavia — the whole harbour was still being dredged.

On Sundays I would see Paul sailing *Venus* on mizzen alone out of the harbour, calling "Yachting anyone?" Generally about six of us would answer the call, haul anchors, follow his lead and set sail to Corossol Bay to enjoy a cold beer or two and clean boat bottoms in the clear blue water.

A friend of the yachtspeople in those days was LouLou Magras, who ran a small but excellent marine chandlery with the best products from Europe and North America at bargain prices. He also had a kerosene fridge always stocked with welcome ice-cold Heineken beers, one of the few book swaps in the Caribbean and — a shower. He also organized a dinghy race around the harbour. Halfway around, the contestants tied up at the main dock and, shipping their oars onto their shoulders, had to run into the old Select Bar, drink a beer, and head back to the race course. Winner and losers were awarded a case of Cockspur Rum from Barbados. It was a good way to clean out LouLou's dad's warehouse of Alma's old stock.

Paul became a guru to LouLou, who sent him to the States to survey a new boat that LouLou was buying, to be named *Che*. (LouLou had hanging in his store a picture of Ho Chi Minh, with a sign saying, "Glory to you Uncle Ho"). Later — together with Bruce Smith, who went on to build his own 34-foot *Woodwind* on the West Coast of the USA, and Blair Dollin, who built his 42-footer also on the West Coast — Paul built *Pluto* for LouLou, to his own design. *Pluto* was a 34-foot gaff ketch, strip-planked, edge-fastened and glued with Resco epoxy. I sailed twice with LouLou on *Pluto* from the Chesapeake Bay to St. Barts, weathering a gale each time, and can attest to her strength, sea-worthiness and speed.

After getting to know Paul in St. Barts I next ran into him in St. John, USVI, where he was doing epoxy repairs on wooden boats. I was privileged some years later to be in Bermuda when Paul was building two 42-foot Airex-cored fibreglass hulls that would be rigged-gaff ketches. The boats *Venus* (the bigger one) and *Moon* were being built at Dockyard, side by side in a warehouse. Paul, who supplied the designs and building expertise, was in partnership with a Bermudian, John Frith, who handled the financial side and materials and helped to build *Moon*. *Moon* later took John, Jill and their three kids to St. Barts, the Azores, England, and back.

After sailing his 42-foot *Venus* between Bermuda and the Caribbean for several years with a few trips to England on the side, Paul, together with Marina, who was expecting their child, finally headed to Panama intent on crossing the Pacific. My wife Roni, our kids Kylie and Iain, and I were then aboard *Gaucho*. We spent time with them anchored off Princess Margaret Beach, Bequia, and we waved them off as they set sail westwards.

After transiting the Panama Canal they had a 77-day passage to New Zealand, arriving just in time for Eliala to be born. They spent their time sailing between New Zealand and Tonga for the next few years. Paul remembers exploring desert islets with his daughter and says, "She taught me more than I ever taught her." Eventually Marina and Eliala returned to Italy to live.

And so it was that Paul left on his ill-fated voyage with one crew, "The Cook," through the Torres Strait where *Venus* parked on a reef and never left till she sank. As the water tanks, being built into the hull, were holed, their store of fresh water became contaminated with seawater. Paul and The Cook loaded three cases of gin into his bolt-together 16-foot sailing dinghy, which served as the liferaft. They sailed for several days, avoiding Papua New Guinea and potential headhunters, to reach Thursday Island off the north coast of Australia. There they were initially arrested for alleged smuggling and having no passports, then later released and welcomed.

Besides being a boat builder and designer — there have been countless boats, including six steel 42-footers in South Africa and a junk-rigged vessel built in England by Nigel Irons — Paul is also an accomplished artist, working in oils and watercolours. He was able to save his logbook when *Venus* was wrecked in the Torres Strait; this contains a series of drawings he made from the dinghy depicting the sequence of the sinking.

Back in the USA Paul found a backer and went to work on a 38-foot *Venus* built all of fibreglass. She had an exaggerated sheer in the stern which gave her the look of a Viking ship. The interior was a beautiful example of using fibreglass as a sculpting material. The use of natural crooks of wood for handrails was another of Paul's trademarks.

On a particularly gusty and windy day Roni and I got the chance to sail with Paul and Patty (who later was to have Paul's second son, Merlin, in Carriacou) from Tyrell Bay to Chatham Bay, Union Island, and back. The 38-footer was definitely a little rocket ship. Paul claimed she was the fastest of his designs, although his favourite overall for comfort and seaworthiness was the 42-footer. On our sail she self-steered beautifully and handled well on sail trim alone while we yarned down below drinking sugar cane brandy from Alma's warehouse in St. Barts.

Unfortunately that vessel, too, went the way of her predecessor when Paul fell asleep while single-handing to Carriacou to meet up with Patty. He ended up on the rocky cliffside of the north coast of Martinique. Before Paul was airlifted off by a French Navy helicopter, he chugged most of a bottle of rum and ate a large fistful of ganja. As the helicopter rose and Paul surveyed his latest shipwreck he was, as he says, literally flying "sky high"!

Back in Carriacou, Paul built a boat powered by twin outboards called *Mostly Harmless* for Dave Goldhill in Windward. Dave was John Smith's former mate on the *Mermaid of Carriacou*.

Paul then returned to Bermuda where he rebuilt *Cherub*, a 42-foot Venus design that had been blown ashore in a hurricane and badly holed. After the repairs he sailed south to Carriacou. These days Paul, now 83, resides full-time in Carriacou aboard *Cherub*.

A couple of years ago Paul met his guardian angel, Angie, a German trained nurse who lives on her own small boat in Tyrell Bay. She is truly a Good Samaritan. Every day she sails her dinghy over to *Cherub* delivering a meal cooked ashore by Andrea, another German national. Angie takes care of Paul and his boat and, best of all, engages Paul in lively conversation. She has become his best friend and he greatly appreciates her companionship.

Beginnings

Paul was born in England in 1938 and lived with his parents and siblings on the Hamble River aboard *Escape*, a Colin Archer gaff ketch. Paul was christened Paul Erling Johnson; the Erling after Erling Tambs, a friend of his father's who had another Colin Archer design; Tambs wrote about it in his book *Cruise of the Teddy*.



Breath, *the 42-foot Venus Pete Muilenburg built at East End of St John in the early '80s.*

In 1947 *Escape* was the first yacht allowed to cruise from England to Europe after World War II. Paul fulfilled his military obligations in Shetland, where he inspected radar gunnery and computers. While in Shetland he bought an 18-foot fishing boat for £50, decked her over, built a cabin and gave her a rig. Paul had numerous adventures cruising British and European waters with this, the first of his *Venuses*, including rowing through the Caledonian Canal; meeting Blondie Hasler, who pioneered wind-vane steering; and looking for the monster in Loch Ness. After being forbidden by the harbour master to leave the harbour of Wick to encounter the 12-knot tides running between Scotland and the Orkneys, Paul got the harbour master drunk and then left anyway.

Paul eventually set out for the West Indies on his 18-foot *Venus*. In the Canary Islands he met Bernard Moitessier and Henry Wakelam, whom he agreed to meet in Fort de France, Martinique, for Christmas. When Paul arrived at midnight on Christmas Day he was overjoyed to meet up with several friends who had waited for him before starting to eat the turkey dinner!

Since then he reckons he's done 40 Atlantic crossings.

THE ROPE SPLICER

by Damian R. LaPlaca

His simple, yellow-fringed business card advertised a singular trade, rope splicing. A king's coat of arms is his logo, fitting, given that he works out of Puerto del Rey Marina in Fajardo, Puerto Rico. His card caught my eye, since I needed either a new stern anchor line or to splice the existing 150-foot line that I cut during Hurricane Dorian to save my new (to me) 35-foot sailboat from heading out to sea or crashing into a new catamaran.



I had just purchased my boat, which I named *Second Wind*, in Tortola. With Bryant, a longtime buddy, and his son, I planned to sail it home to Fajardo in late August, during a lull in the hurricane season. But the start of Tropical Storm Dorian changed our plans to cruise the Virgins. At the time Dorian was forecast to be a tropical storm heading straight for Fajardo and missing St. Thomas. We decided to find shelter at a marina in St. Thomas. Why sail into a storm?

While floating outside of Charlotte Amalie I called marinas looking for a home. The first marina was evacuating its clients. The second marina did not take transients. The engine heat alarm kept on going off. My crew eyed me with concern.

Luckily, Yacht Haven Grande, a marina for megayachts, enthusiastically welcomed us. We limped into a nearly empty marina over numerous overheating alarms. Upon arrival Bryant's son took an immediate flight out. Bryant left the next morning.

The storm was intensifying. Fifty-knot winds were forecast for the next day.

By then Yacht Haven was full of beautiful 80- to 100-foot megayachts with professional crews. My sailboat was by far the smallest vessel there. To prepare for the storm I stowed anything that could move. I collapsed and tied the dodger and bimini, and I tied separate bow and stern lines to the dock. With my dinghy I set bow and stern anchors. Finished, I stocked provisions from the local Pueblo supermarket and plenty of Dark and Stormy ingredients. I thought I was prepared.

The next morning the storm shifted its westerly path and headed north, aimed to pass right over St. Thomas. I was in for a rock and roll day. At 1:00PM I received hurricane alert by text. At 2:20PM I received a text announcing that St. Thomas reported a sustained wind of 82 miles per hour and a gust of 111 miles per hour. No longer a tropical storm, Dorian became a Category 1 hurricane and passed directly overhead.



Left: Rafael Serrano-Olmo arrived at my boat, deeply tanned, wearing cool sunglasses, and pressed white khakis.

Above: He meticulously unlaid the three strands of the inch-thick line and, using tape and his heat gun, he sealed the ends of the strands.

Bottom right: I had just purchased my boat, which I named Second Wind, *in Tortola.*

During the height of the storm my bow line snapped off the bollard and my boat pointed directly towards a beautiful new catamaran. My stern anchor failed and I was tethered to the dry world by one remaining line. My immediate concern was not my personal safety but whether I had enough insurance to T-bone the catamaran. Too late to call my broker.

I made a May Day call to the marina and to my surprise Phil and Jamie, the general manager and dock manager, drove out in a golf cart to save my sorry stern. At Phil's direction, I cut the stern anchor line to use as a makeshift bow line, we tied it around the mast, threw it to Jamie, and she muscled the boat to the dock and tied the line to the bollard. To me, Jamie and Phil are heroes.

As he left, Phil suggested a hot tea was in order. I made a cold and strong Dark and Stormy instead.

Which brings me to the need to hire Rafael Serrano-Olmo, the rope splicer, weeks later, at the marina in Fajardo. He arrived at my boat, deeply tanned, wearing cool sunglasses, crisp, pressed white khakis, overly clean boat shoes, a bright white T-shirt and a light white sweater draped around his shoulders. He looked more like a Greek shipping magnate than a tradesman doing ropework. I immediately liked him and knew I was in for an experience with a local character.

I asked him how he learned to splice ropes. "My father taught me to fish. I fished in Puerto Rico, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama. I am from Aguadilla!"

He meticulously unlaid the three strands of the inch-thick line and, using tape and his heat gun, he sealed the ends of the strands from unraveling. Slowly and deliberately he tucked each strand under the corresponding strand of the other line. I did not count how many revolutions he made.

Rafael wanted to teach me how to splice rope, since he thinks it is important to pass his knowledge down. I was surprised that he wanted to teach himself out of business. But I thought I should learn this skill in case of an emergency in open water. Seated next to him, he passed me the lines. I tried but predictably failed.

"You see that boat across from yours?" Rafael asked. "I am making an eye splice for them tomorrow. Come and see me do it and you can learn." I could not be at the marina the next day but Rafael was insistent that I come.

Rafael turned 75 on February 22nd, my birthday too. I wanted to party with Rafael on *his* birthday.

When he finished, the spliced line was every bit as strong as before. Rafael talked again about passing his trade down. He asked me again to come the next day to learn the eye splice. I told him that I wished I could but that I had an obligation in San Juan.

In Puerto Rico, some are concerned that the cooking methods and recipes from the current generation of the island's grandmothers might be lost if not passed down. But it struck me that other important knowledge might be lost if not taught.

I was grateful for his work but disappointed to see Rafael leave. He packed up his heat gun in his tool bag and gingerly stepped off *Second Wind* and onto the dock.

"See you tomorrow, Damian!"

"See you tomorrow, Rafael!"



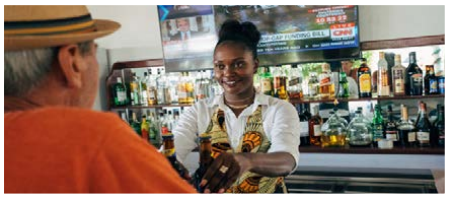
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The Sky from Mid-October to Mid-November

by Jim Ulik

Yeah, I believe in the morning
I believe I go ah back home
Well, I'll tell I believe I'm gonna get up in the morning
Yeah, people ah people, I'm gonna go back home.
— Harvey Mandel and Larry Taylor, Canned Heat (1969)

He may not have sung the blues (of course the genre didn't exist yet), but going back home was exactly what Isaac Newton did in 1665 because of the Great Plague of London. Newton was attending Trinity College, Cambridge, as the plague was beginning to spread. The plague caused the university to shut down. Isaac Newton was forced to retreat into the country a safe distance away from London. The disease was taking over 1,000 lives per week, reaching a rate of 7,000 deaths per week at its peak. Isaac Newton used this time of isolation ("Year of Wonders" 1665 – 1666) to invent calculus, discover the nature of light and develop the theory of universal gravitation.

Astronomers use calculus to study the different motions of planets, asteroids, meteors and other celestial objects as well as spaceships. Gravitation is universal. All objects are attracted to each other with gravity. Without calculus or the understanding of gravity's effect between the Earth and Moon, how could we predict the Perigean spring tide on October 16th? How many more yachts would have gone aground without that knowledge? How many dinghies would have gotten stuck under a dock?

Friday, October 16th

The New Moon is at perigee or closest orbital point to Earth. The tides will have higher highs and lower lows. If you're up before the Sun, note that the vision of Venus continues to appear as a morning star throughout this period.

Sunday, October 18th

Look for the winter constellation Orion to start making its seasonal appearance in the east just before midnight. A few minutes later Gemini will make its appearance. Within the constellation of the twins is the radiant of the Epsilon Geminids meteor shower. This is the time to begin spotting some shooting stars passing overhead. Peaking overnight, the Epsilon Geminids runs from October 14th through 27th.

Wednesday, October 21st

Still awake at midnight? If you've seen some meteors flying out of the east over the last few days they could be part of the Orionids meteor shower. The number of shooting stars originating from Comet Halley could reach 20 per hour. These meteors are entering the Earth's atmosphere at a speed of 242,000 km/h (150,000 mph). This shower is active September 23rd through November 27th.

Thursday, October 22nd

Tonight there is a close approach between the Moon, Jupiter and Saturn. The ringed planet is positioned off the dark side of the Moon. West of the Moon is Jupiter. The First Quarter Moon occurs tomorrow when it takes position east of Saturn.

Saturday, October 24th

This morning will find Mars setting in the west. Venus is rising, continuing to be the bright "morning star" in the predawn sky. For a couple of hours before the Sun rises you may also catch a glimpse of some meteors. They will appear to radiate out of Leo Minor. The constellation is located left or north of Venus. The Leonis Minorid meteor shower peaks this morning and is active October 19th through 27th.

Thursday, October 29th

There is a close approach between the Moon and Mars that becomes apparent in the east as the sun sets. As the evening progresses there will be a greater separation between the two. It is the Moon's continual progression eastward that increases the apparent distance throughout the evening.

Saturday, October 31st

Unless there is a volcano erupting or a forest fire nearby it is a rare event to see a Moon that is blue. The ash and smoke can scatter red light allowing light shifting towards blue spectrum to pass. Otherwise a simple blue filter over a camera lens will do the trick. It is also a rare event to have a Blue Moon on Halloween. That occurs once every 19 years. So, the next Blue Moon will occur on Halloween, October 31st, 2039. A Blue Moon is the second Full Moon in a month.

About every 11 years the Sun's magnetic field completely flips. As represented in Image 2, on the next page, the Solar Cycle has been in a period of reduced activity. Solar storms will now increase until they reach peak activity in 2025-2026. The increase of solar flares and coronal mass ejections will reach Earth, affecting GPS signals, power grids, satellites and radio communications.

Tuesday, November 3rd

The Moon is riding on the head of the bull. Aldebaran and the Moon will be positioned within Taurus this evening. The Moon is three days past full so Aldebaran may be difficult to spot. It is located south of the Moon.

Sunday, November 8th

The Moon catches up to the Beehive Cluster. You can find the cluster of over 1,000 stars a few degrees off the dark side of the Moon. Two of the stars or suns have a gas giant planet orbiting them.

Monday, November 9th

There are six meteor showers active during the first half of November. The random meteors radiating out of the eastern sky overnight could originate from any of these showers. The shooting stars entering Earth's atmosphere from an area near the Andromeda Galaxy are not surprisingly called the Andromedids. This shower peaks tonight yet is active September 25th through December 6th.

It is Carl Sagan Day. This day celebrates the life, teachings, and legacy of Carl Sagan, who was born on this day in 1934. He is known for his many contributions to science. The asteroid named (2709) Sagan was discovered in 1982. A telescope is required to view the asteroid as it appears to pass near the Moon this morning. Asteroid Sagan will orbit Earth for billions and billions of years.

—Continued on next page



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—*Continued from previous page*

Tuesday, November 10th

It is another predawn experience. Mercury will reach its highest position in the eastern sky. It is easy to spot Venus but Mercury is only about ten degrees above the eastern horizon at 0530 hours. Halfway between the pair is Spica the brightest star in the constellation Virgo.

Thursday, November 12th

Located right next to the Seven Sisters is the radiant of the Northern Taurids meteor shower. Meteors from this shower that peaks tonight could start to be visible around 2000 hours. The Taurids is active October 20th through December 10th.

A celestial quartet appears in the morning sky over the next two days. Look for the crescent Moon to rise along the celestial equator around 0330 hours on November 12th. Rising in line shortly after moonrise is Venus followed by Spica and Mercury. In the predawn sky on November 13th the group will square off with Venus high above the rest.

Sunday, November 15th

Thirty days have passed and the Moon has made a complete cycle of its phases. Currently the Sun and New Moon are located in the constellation Libra. The New Moon today is two days past its closest orbital point to Earth. Pay attention to those tide tables.

Top right: Active regions on the sun combined to look something like a jack-o-lantern's face.

Bottom right: The 11 year Solar Cycle. Solar activity is on the rise.

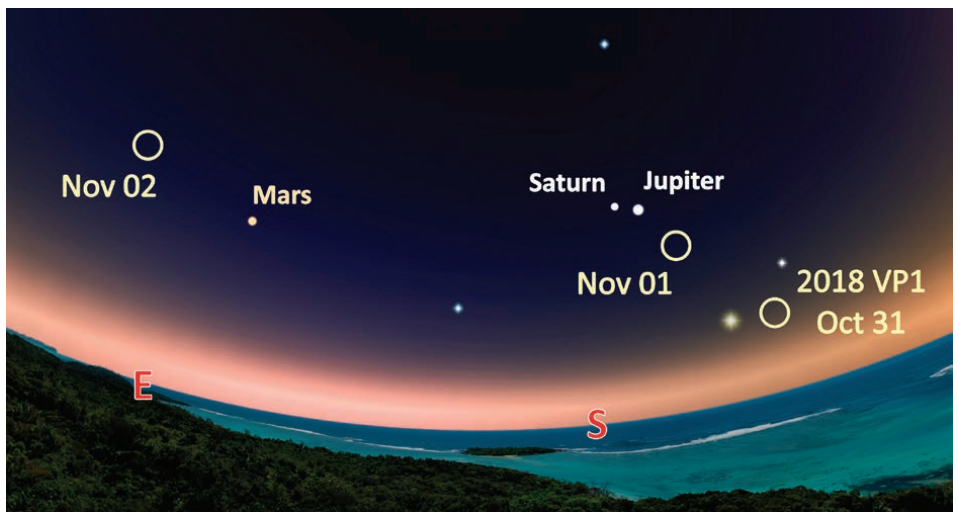
Below: Asteroid 2018 VP1 zips past Earth at 35,400 km/h (22,000 mph).

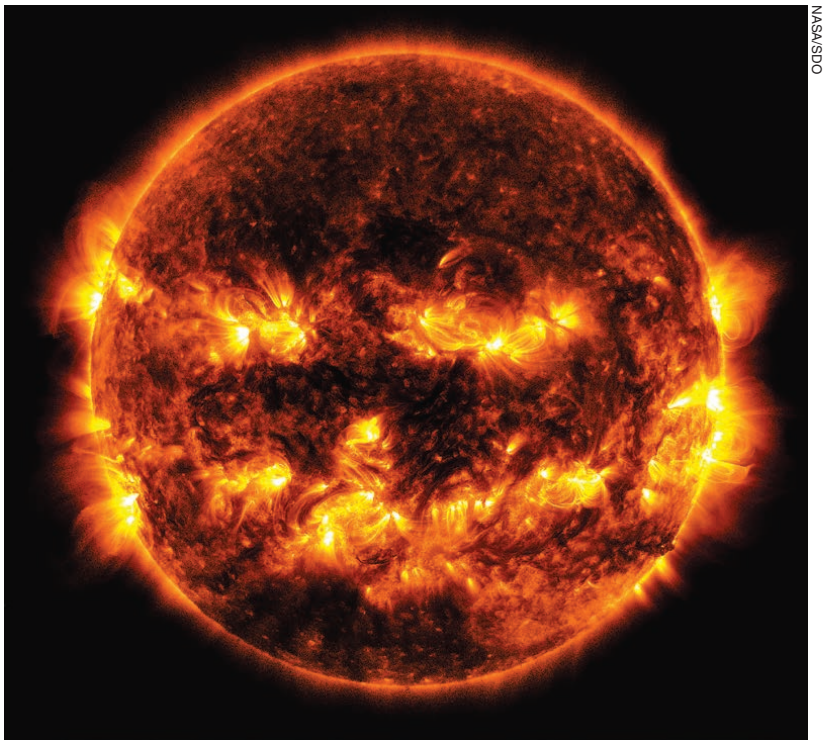
In the News

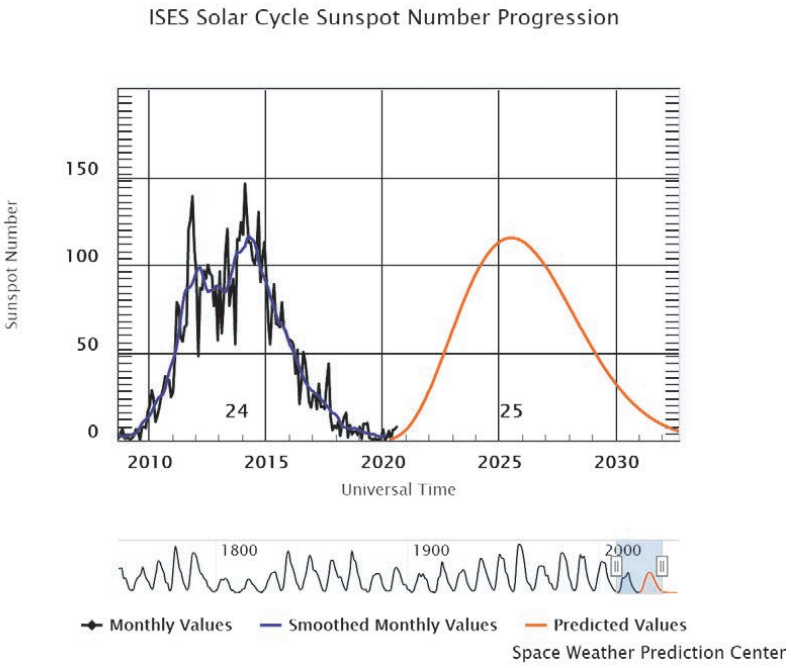
A few internet posts have implied that there is a risk of asteroid 2018 VP1 impacting Earth on November 2nd. Actually the asteroid was only observed for a few days back in 2018 when it was discovered. The short observation period makes it difficult to get reliable orbital data to accurately predict its future orbit. In any case the close approach to Earth should occur around 0530 hours AST. The pass-by will be on the opposite side of the Earth from the Caribbean.

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.




NASA/SDO



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Whacha Gonna Do With All Those Batatas?

by Mary Heckrotte

These recipes first appeared in the March 2008 issue of Compass. *We're celebrating our 25th Anniversary year by sharing recipes and other articles from past issues. Enjoy!*

In every market and grocery store in the Caribbean, we're sure to encounter vegetables we can only call "other root things" until we learn their local names and experiment to see what we can make of them. It's all just part of the Caribbean adventure!

Depending on where you buy them, *Ipomoea batata* is called white sweet potato, Cuban sweet potato, sweet-sweet, camote, boniato or batata. Just because it fits the Latin name so nicely, I am going to stick with batata.

This fleshy taproot looks much like the "sweet potato" known in the US. The color is a little different, though — either dark purplish or lighter reddish rather than the orange color of North American "sweet potatoes." But they are about the same size and shape. When you cut a batata, you'll discover that the insides are a creamy white and the flesh will cook up drier and fluffier than their orange-fleshed cousins.

Beef and Batata Kabobs
1/2 Cup olive oil
1/4 Cup sour orange juice
3 Tablespoons jerk seasoning
2 teaspoons cumin
1 pound lean beef, cut in 1-inch cubes
2 small batatas, boiled, peeled, cut in 1-inch cubes
1 medium bell pepper, diced
1 medium zucchini, cut in 1-inch cubes
2 shallots, cut in half

In a small bowl, mix oil, juice, jerk and cumin. Divide mixture into two zipper plastic bags. In one bag, add beef. In the other bag, add batatas, pepper, zucchini, and shallots. Shake each bag gently to coat ingredients. Chill bags 30 minutes or longer. Drain beef and vegetables, discarding marinade. Alternate beef and vegetable cubes on skewers then broil or grill 10 to 12 minutes until lightly browned on all sides.

Mashed Garlic Batatas
4 medium batatas
1 Cup sour cream
1/2 Cup butter
1/4 Cup roasted garlic
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Peel and cut up batatas, putting them immediately into a pot of boiling salted water. Boil 20 to 30 minutes until tender. Drain, add remaining ingredients and use an electric mixer to combine all until smooth. Add more sour cream and/or butter if mixture appears too thick or dry.

Batata Pudding
2 eggs, beaten
1/2 Cup milk
1 Cup sugar
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 Cup butter
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
2 Cups peeled and grated raw batata
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 can (13 ounces) evaporated milk
1 Cup shredded coconut

In a large mixing bowl, mix together eggs, butter, and sugar. Stir in remaining ingredients. Pour into a 1 1/2 quart casserole or baking pan sprayed with non-stick. Bake at 350°F for 1 hour or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

LOOK OUT FOR...

CLOVES

by Lynn Kaak

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

Szygium aromaticum, more commonly known as cloves, is a member of the myrtle family. The common name "cloves" is derived from the Latin for nail, *clavus*, to reflect the nail-like shape of the dried flower (which is also the spice that is so well known).

Cloves have an important place in world history. Originally discovered in the Maluku Islands in Indonesia, they were traded long before the Europeans showed up in the East. Traders from Asia and the Middle East sold them, but kept their origin a closely held secret as they were a lucrative commodity.

Eventually, Europeans discovered the islands, and the Dutch and the Portuguese battled for possession of the "Spice Islands." The Dutch finally won, and the Dutch East Indies Company gained a monopoly on this valuable spice (as well as on nutmeg). All trees not under their control were destroyed, and they kept the market artificially hungry for the spice by destroying excess production. Supply and demand was their plaything. This monopoly was broken when a Frenchman stumbled upon a lone clove tree (which was to be named Afo) on the side of a mountain and smuggled some of the seeds out. Those seeds found their way to French colonies, and in time, the monopoly was broken. Now, the trees can be found in many tropical locales.

The breaking of that monopoly did not happen overnight, as it can take 20 years for a tree to mature enough to create a meaningful amount of the spice. However, once that tree is established, it can last for centuries. The tree called Afo was over 400 years old before succumbing to the machete of a local farmer who thought it was in rough shape. (The remains are now walled to protect this important piece of history from further damage.)

The tree is considered an evergreen, and grows to a height of around eight to 12 metres (25 to 40 feet). It has a smooth grey trunk. The shiny green leaves are elongated ovals that look a lot like those of the bay tree.

The flowers grow in terminal clusters: clumps at the end of a branch. The flowers start with a pale colouring, turn green, then become bright red as they reach maturity. The blooms do have a nail-like appearance: a long calyx (base) leads to four petals that are unopened, looking like the end of an old nail. As they dry, they become brown.

Like many other spices, this is a tropical plant. Anything colder than 15°C is deleterious to the health of the tree. It thrives in a wetter environment, so the rugged hillsides of the Caribbean are a very suitable habitat for cloves. The young trees tend to struggle in direct sunlight, so banana plants or other forms of shade are often utilised by farmers in their early years.

There must have been a reason clove was, and is, a hot commodity. A little clove can go a long way, as any cook who has used it knows. It goes well in stews and some soups, in hot drinks, baked goods and stewed with some vegetables. A clove-studded ham is a culinary icon, and clove is essential for seasoning North American Thanksgiving Day pies — Pumpkin Spice, anyone?

It also has some medicinal uses. The smell of clove is often associated with dental offices. Clove oil has been used for centuries to treat tooth pain, and is still used in modern dentistry. It has an anaesthetic effect, and has been found to have anti-bacterial qualities, both of which are highly beneficial for dental work. Some cultures feel that chewing cloves helps with their oral hygiene rituals, besides making their breath fresher.

Traditional medicinal uses (besides for oral care) are for liver conditions, fever reduction and blood sugar regulation. (Consult your doctor before using.)

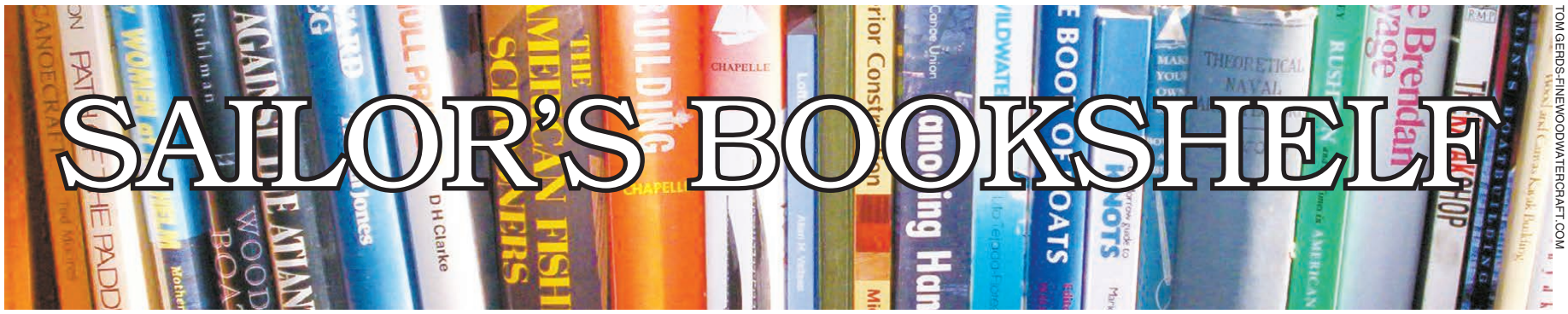
Those who may have an ant problem on their boat may find cloves a natural way to deal with them.

Clove cigarettes (kretek) are known in Indonesia, and the tobacco and clove blend can be found around the world for those who partake.

While cloves have a place on our spice racks, they also had a place in world history. Fortunately, we don't have to sail to Indonesia to find the trees now, as they may be found on the grounds of some the old plantations in the Eastern Caribbean, as well as in some gardens.



The blooms of the clove tree have a nail-like appearance.



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by Nicola Cornwell

Summer and early autumn in the Caribbean, even without Covid, is usually a quiet time and it's no different this year in that respect. Boats are hauled out or mostly resting in southern anchorages as weather-reporting websites get their annual visitor traffic peaks each time another front swings across the Atlantic. Apart from the hi-jinks of "Camp Grenada," for cruisers his time of the year is about reflection on life (along with boat maintenance) and less about hoisting the sails.

Here then, are a few books for you to consider — some new ones and a couple of must-read classics. Enjoy, knowing if you're in the Caribbean, you are in one of the best places in the world to be right now.

NEW TITLES

***High & Dry**, by Paul Sutcliffe*

The author is a former university lecturer who swapped academia for life lessons in the art of solo sailing. Plenty of thrills and spills along the way, scattered with good camaraderie and rum. If you know his boat, *Sonic Boom*, you may even find yourself name checked somewhere in the pages!

Available as paperback copy and Kindle e version via Amazon and other online retailers.

Grenada by Land and Sea,
by Wellington Moore

For those of you high and dry in Grenada, this one's for you if you want to get under the skin of this culturally and botanically rich island. Written by a veterinarian who taught at St. George's University, it's based on the recollections his many and varied explorations of the island.

Available as paperback only from http://amazon.com

***Bagadey**,*
by Jeffery Braithwaite-Izzaak

A sweet collection of poetry and prose by a Carriacou born and bred author who writes charming words about Kayak people and life, much of it anchored around stories of the sea and boats.

Available as paperback copy and Kindle e version via Amazon and other online retailers.



***Street's Guide to the Cape Verde Islands**, by Don Street Jr.*

Not strictly a new book, but sailing's version of Keith Richards, the venerable Don Street, has the ultimate guide to these tiny bits of rock that he says you should definitely stop at on your way to the Caribbean from Europe. As usual from Don, it's highly detailed and opinionated. You know he knows his stuff.

Available as paperback copy and Kindle e version via Amazon and other online retailers.

MUST-READ CLASSICS

***Breverton's Nautical Curiosities**,*
by Terry Breverton

A miscellany of the sea and all things nautical, this dip-in-and-out compendium will furnish you with all sorts of random yet intriguing nautical knowledge to impress your mates over a beer in the boatyard bar. All written in handy bite-size chunks with a chunky attractive hardcover wrapping.

Available as hardback copy and Kindle e version via Amazon and other online retailers.

***Don't Stop the Carnival**,*
by Herman Wouk

It may have been written in 1965 and reveals nothing particularly about sailing, but Herman Wouk's classic, set on the small fictional island of Amerigo, is required reading for any foreigner spending any time in the Caribbean. It's a hilarious yet heartbreaking novel about retreating from the madness of modern life and escaping to a tropical paradise. A brilliantly comic farce guaranteed to illicit wry smiles, knowing nods and occasional out loud bursts of laughter.

Available as paperback copy or via Amazon and http://thriftbooks.com or audiobook from Audible.

See bookfinder.com for used copies of older books — you can sometimes find a signed first edition.

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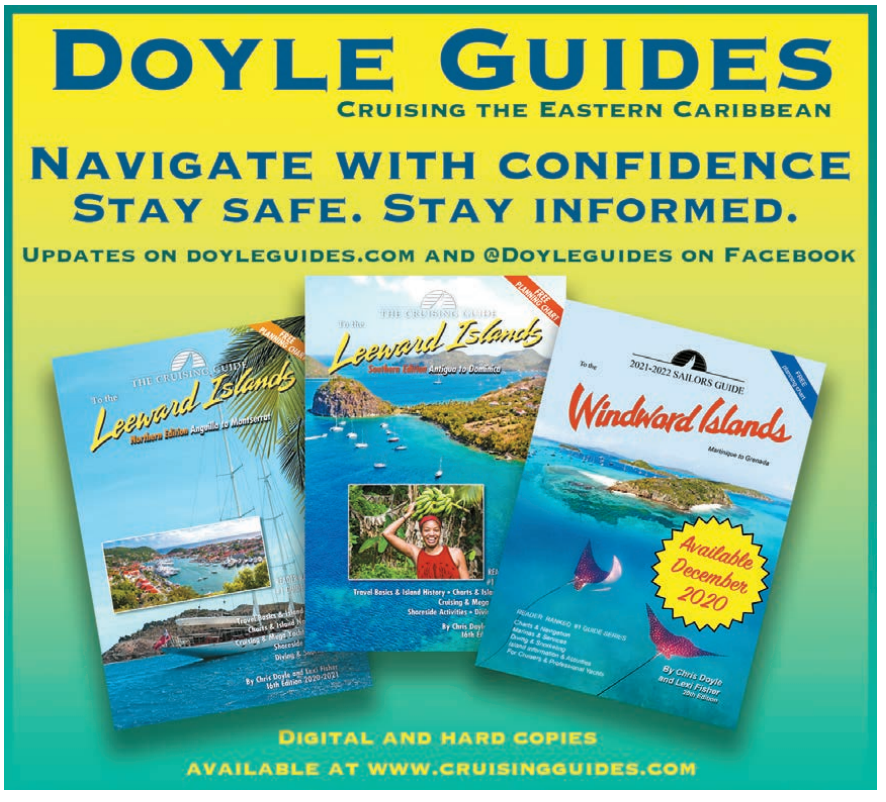
Other guides are best for shore-side information & are provided to the charter fleets so what harbours & anchorages they do include are more crowded.

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The Social Smooth-Billed Ani

Dark and witchy — the Smooth-Billed Ani is a creature whose gothic looks should have placed it among the gargoyles of Notre Dame.

The first time I noticed these birds I was struck by their oddness: they are slender, gangly creatures with plumage of darkest night and a scaly-looking face with a prominent arched bill that resembles a witch's nose, or the bill of a parrot — hence they are often called "black witches" and "black parrots." They are, however, neither witches nor parrots, but belong instead to a most unusual family of birds — the Cuculidae — which includes cuckoos, malkohas, koels, couas, coucals and roadrunners. Their closest relatives are the slightly smaller, almost identical Grooved-Billed Ani, the larger Greater Ani, and the strange Guira Cuckoo of South America. Together, these four species form the subfamily Crotophaginae.



Smooth-Billed Anis (*Crotophaga ani*) are residents of Central America, South America, the West Indies and Florida. They are arboreal cuckoos with short rounded wings used for awkward glides and long floppy tails to help them steer. They run quite well, but are clumsy flyers: a typical flight involves a few wing flaps followed by a short glide, then another flap and glide, before landing clumsily on a shrub — the long tail flopping onto its back and almost knocking it off the perch! Upon landing, Smooth-Billed Anis make no effort to smooth their feathers and as a result look disheveled most of the time.

Like all cuckoos, anis have zygodactyl feet, with two toes facing forward and two backward to help them hold onto branches. Smooth-Billed Anis are not songbirds and thus lack a melodious voice. Instead, they chuckle, moan, bark, complain and utter high-pitched whines when alarmed. Their most common call is *wooeeick! wooeeick! wooeeick!* This call is sometimes written as *ah-neee* and may be the source of the bird's name.

These neotropical cuckoos may not have lovely voices, or be considered beauties by most people, but they have much to recommend them, possessing several remarkable traits, including a highly sociable nature. Smooth-Billed Anis live year-round in flocks comprising two to nine socially monogamous pairs and their immature offspring. The size of the flock changes seasonally, from large throughout the year to small in the breeding season.

Each flock holds a well-defined territory, which it defends vigorously from neighboring flocks, with chases that can go on for days and may culminate in ugly confrontations. Fights only occur when the bird chasing overtakes the one being chased and both fall to the ground screaming like enraged witches! Once on the ground they spread their wings and tails, strutting and making little annoyed noises, while attempting to peck at each other's heads. Eventually they separate and the stranger either leaves or joins the flock. The rest of the flock gathers around in a circle and watches these confrontations with excitement. Periods of chase and fighting are often followed by a period of "rushing," in which all members of the flock go from tree to tree, around the limits of their territory, searching for strangers that may still be lurking about. Really, the life of the Ani is never dull! Although neighboring flocks have these occasional territorial disputes, they very quickly become friends again and are mostly on good terms.

Smooth-Billed Anis are altruistic creatures that care for members of their flock whether they are or are not related. They are incredibly affectionate towards one another and seem to need each other's company at all times. If one is separated from the flock, it will whine until it's reunited again. Flock members cuddle often, by gently touching bills and nibbling each other's feathers. After foraging together all day, Smooth-Billeds gather at sunset before flying together to their sleeping tree, where they sleep lined up on a limb, as close to each other as possible. Then, early in the morning, they stretch out their bedraggled wings in the sun and close their eyes, enjoying the warmth like sun-rabid deities.

Smooth-Billed Anis are common in open pastures, open land with some trees and bush, lowlands, and residential areas, where they search for insects, lizards and berries. They are intelligent foragers, feeding around the hooves of grazing livestock, or close behind any human activities that disturb the vegetation and, therefore, insects. They've learnt to recognise that a man carrying a weed-whacker or a cutlass will be cutting vegetation and providing them with an easy meal, so they will immediately gather around him.

When foraging, a member of the flock always keeps watch over its companions, shouting alarm calls if a threat is detected. The alarm calls are specific to the type of threat. For example, the "wooeeick" call marks the presence of ground predators and causes anis on the ground to fly up to a high perch; those that were already in high perches do not react. On the other hand, the "chlurp" call marks the presence of aerial predators and elicits birds to dive into the vegetation and disappear from view.

Like their relative the Mangrove Cuckoos, Smooth-Billed Anis are not brood parasites. Instead, they have a joint-nesting, cooperative breeding system, where several females in the flock lay eggs in one single communally built nest. This system carries some benefits, such as reduced predation and enhanced offspring care, but there are some costs: Smooth-Billed Anis can experience severe egg competition, particularly from late laying females who strive to make room for their own eggs by tossing other females' eggs out of the nest, or burying them under a new nest floor.

Nesting takes place during the rainy season, with several birds spending long periods of time away from the flock, sitting quietly on the chosen nesting tree. At first, they'll whine softly, undecided on where exactly to build the nest; breaking off twigs half-heartedly, dropping them; carrying leaves, dropping them. They may identify two nesting sites at once and spend time at each, unable to choose at first. They may even start building at both sites. Once they start building, the whining becomes a "complaint call": a slow high-pitched wail that shows work is in progress. This call is maintained all through the period of building. The entire flock participates in the construction of the nest, breaking off twigs from trees and delivering them to the builder at the site, who will arrange them into a bulky, open cup design. Old nests are never reused.

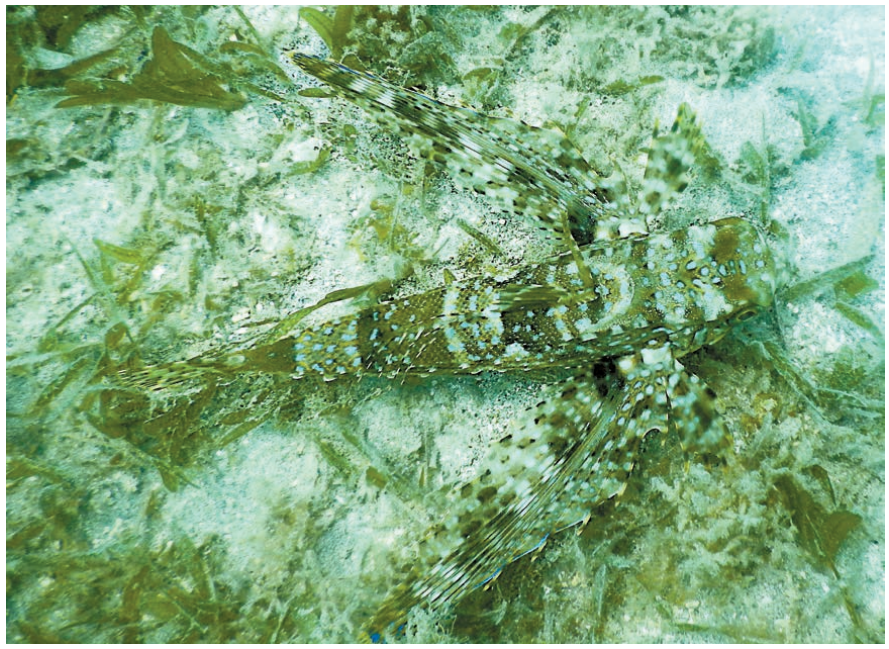
Couples are monogamous and copulate at any time of the day, without ceremony. Each female lays three to five eggs, but not all females in the flock lay. A successful nest can have up to 29 eggs, depending on the number of females laying; however, only about 24 percent of eggs laid produce surviving, independent young. Both sexes incubate, but a dominant male carries out most of the nocturnal incubation. Birds signal the desire to incubate by bringing a leaf or twig to the nest.

The hatchlings are born naked and black-skinned, with eyes closed and completely dependent on the adults for survival. All members of the flock, including juveniles, help feed the chicks. The young helpers do not increase the amount of food brought to the nest, but they take over some of the feeding trips done by the parents, reducing the adults' workload by as much as 30 percent. The number of food providers at the nest can be so high at times that some individuals may have to wait on the nesting tree for several minutes for a turn to feed the chicks. By five days old, the hatchlings have feathers and open eyes, and are able to climb out of the nest with the help of feet and bill. When the adults sense a predator nearby, they will summon the chicks out of the nest, who climb out and sit very still on a neighboring branch, fading against the dark foliage until the threat has passed. These youngsters become fully mobile at 13 to 17 days old and are almost impossible to distinguish from the adults. They remain with their large family until about one year old, before leaving to find mates in other flocks.

So, look out for these extraordinary feathery creatures; Smooth-Billed Anis are visually conspicuous and easy to identify. If you have never noticed them before, then pay attention and you will undoubtedly catch a glimpse of these "black witches" perched along the roadside, announcing your presence with their sinister-sounding cries.



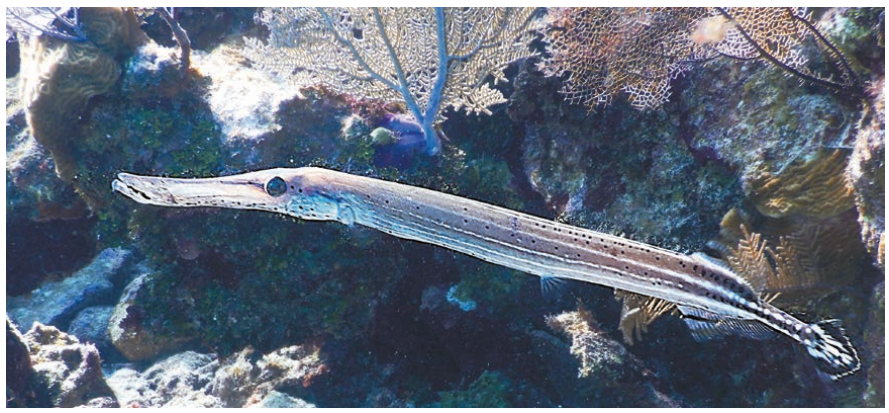
You can often see yellow goatfish scouring the sandy bottom, rooting around for tasty morsels.



This flying gurnard was so well camouflaged that I nearly missed it.



The spotted goatfish's body is adorned with three distinctive dark patches.



The trumpetfish's long snout leads into a small jaw with a short barbel on the chin.

The Weird, the Sneaky and the Hungry:

Flying Gurnards, Trumpetfish and Goatfishes

by Darelle Snyman

Coral reef fishes truly showcase the range of diverse and even bizarre adaptations that many animals have developed to feed and survive in an unforgiving world of eat or be eaten. The Caribbean waters are home to many wonderful fish species whose adaptations in terms of body shape, coloration and behavior enthrall and delight us. Here are a few more of these sometimes ordinary-looking extraordinary creatures.

The Walking Flying Gurnard

One of these weird creatures is the flying gurnard (*Dactylopterus volitans*), a winged fish that cannot actually take flight as the name suggests. If you have ever been privileged enough to see one spread its iridescent wing-like pectoral fins you might think it is getting ready to fly. This display is all for show, however: a response when alarmed to create the illusion that it is more formidable and probably harder to swallow.

I first encountered this odd fish with its blunt-shaped head in Martinique, where it was so well camouflaged on the sandy bottom among the seagrass that I nearly missed it. Unfortunately, I have not witnessed the full display of its extravagant pectoral fins. These fins, however, are not just for show. The leading edge of each fin bears short spines that wiggle like fingers, and which are used to probe the sea floor in search of tasty tidbits such as worms, mantis shrimp and small fish. As bottom dwellers, flying gurnards are not big on swimming; they prefer to walk across the sea floor using pelvic fins specifically adapted for this purpose. They might not swim but they are vocal and are able to make a drumming sound by beating a "drumming muscle" against their swim bladder. It is thought to be a means of communication between individuals.

The Crafty Trumpetfish

Another uniquely adapted Caribbean reef resident that tends to glide shyly through the water keeping a wary distance is the trumpetfish *(Aulostomus maculatus)*. It is the only member of the trumpetfish family found in the Caribbean and its elongated body can vary in color from reddish-brown to bluish-gray or even bright yellow depending on its surroundings. Its long snout leads into a small jaw with a short barbel on the chin for defense.

These benign-looking relatives of the seahorses are actually master hunters employing a variety of sneaky strategies to capture unsuspecting prey. You will often see these crafty predators hovering upside down between the branches of gorgonians, fans or rope sponges, where they remain well camouflaged. They mimic the motion of the swaying branches, patiently waiting to ambush their prey, which they capture lightning-fast by sucking it in whole. Their flute-shaped mouths might appear very small but the floor of the narrow snout is very expandable, which allows trumpetfish to feed on larger prey.

An even more sneaky hunting method they employ is called shadow stalking, where they hide behind non-threatening species such as parrotfishes. The small prey is not worried about the approaching foraging herbivore species, allowing the stealthy trumpetfish to get close to its unsuspecting quarry.

Their color changing abilities are not only for camouflage but are also used to conduct elaborate courtship displays during mating, which occurs near the surface. The security of the next generation is the responsibility of the male trumpetfish, who carries the fertilized eggs in a brood pouch on its belly until they are ready to hatch.

The Color-Shifting Goatfish

Goatfishes are another commonly encountered group of fishes whose presence you now may take for granted when exploring your favorite coral reef. At first glance these members of the Mullidae family appear very ordinary, but their prominent noses, large red eyes and barbel goatees give them a very distinctive appearance.

The yellow goatfish (*Mulloidichthys martinicus*), like the four-legged goats, will eat just about anything. You can often see them scouring the sandy bottom, rooting around for tasty morsels with their distinctive chin barbels. This foraging technique creates a sediment cloud that also benefits other fish species that feast on the algae and other prey items that are in the disturbed sand. These barbels are major sensory organs used mainly in feeding; when not in use they are tucked in grooves under the chin and gill covers.

These docile fish have not been endowed with venom, spines, razor-sharp teeth or other adaptations for self-protection. They do, however, have the ability to change color rapidly, becoming either paler or darker to make them less conspicuous to predators. You might have noticed yellow goatfish hovering above the reef in mixed schools, especially with yellowtail snappers. This is their survival strategy to reduce their chances of becoming lunch. This is called protective mimicry and works because these two species are so similar in size, shape and coloration. This not only creates confusion but also adds the value of safety in numbers. They do, however, have different feeding habits, and yellowtail snappers have more streamlined faces and clearly lack the barbel goatee.

The yellow goatfish's relative, the spotted goatfish (*Pseudupeneus maculatus*), is a more active feeder that incessantly nuzzles the sea bottom around coral reefs searching for hidden prey to keep up its energy needs. Its pale to pinkish body is adorned with three distinctive dark patches, and its face has blue lines. While foraging, spotted goatfish are paler in color but when inactive they rapidly become more mottled red to reddish-brown in color. At cleaning stations, interestingly enough, the spotted goatfish being cleaned displays a deep red color while those waiting in the queue assume the normal pale pink color.

Once again it is clear that our experience of the creatures we encounter underwater is greatly enhanced once we get to know them a little bit better, especially the ones we have become so adjusted to seeing. They are sometimes the most interesting.



The Food Fair

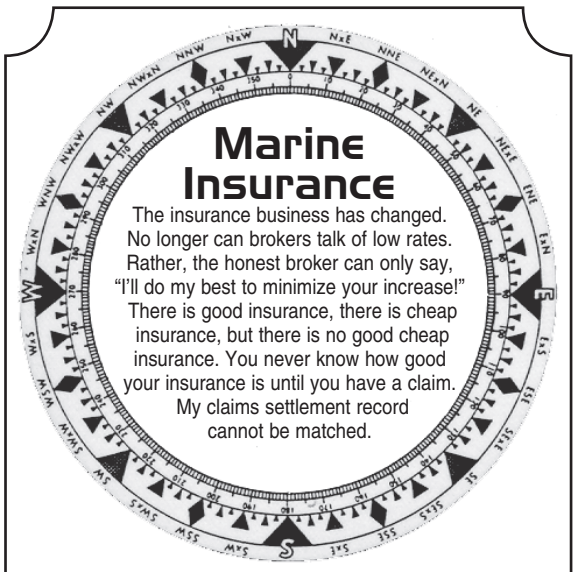
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Yacht insurance for Caribbean cruising

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...and much, much more!

Don't Miss It!



DARN COVID

Dear *Compass*,

Just read the September issue. OMG! I can't believe there's a garbage island in the Caribbean (*see article by Alex Coyne on page 13 at caribbeancompass.com/online/september20compass_online.pdf*). Darn Covid.

Maryann Matter
Key West, Florida, USA

KUDOS FOR WRITERS

Dear *Compass*,

What quality the *Compass* is month in and month out! Get particular kick out of everything/anything that John Everton and Jim Hutchinson ever publish. John's article on specifics of the Nonregatta Regatta in Carriacou delighted my heart. Love articles by Lynn Kaak and Bela Brown on nature! Articles on geology, geography, hurricanes, youth, obits, just on and on! Like Jim Hutchinson said, *Compass* IS my newspaper!

Ellen Birrell
S/V Boldly Go

CIRCUMNAVIGATORS

Dear *Compass*,

I just read in the September issue of *Caribbean Compass* that Sir James Mitchell wanted to collect the names of circumnavigators who have anchored in Admiralty Bay, Bequia.

Please add us, Maria and Steve Siguaw of *S/V Aspen* to the list. We circumnavigated from 2009 to 2013.

Thank you.

Cheers,
Steve and Maria
S/V Aspen

Editor's note: Steve and Maria had a very unusual circumnavigation, which he wrote about in the book Voyage into Hell: The True Story of a Sailing Rally, Somali Pirates and the *Quest* Tragedy. *The book is available from Amazon.com.*

Other circumnavigators who have dropped anchor in Bequia include Klaus Alvermann, who built the 29-foot double-ended Plumbelly *in Bequia and circumnavigated aboard her twice, the first time starting in 1968.* Plumbelly *is believed to be the first Bequia-built boat to sail around the world.*

Also of note are circumnavigators Susanne Huber and Tony Curphey, a married couple who sailed on their own boats, meeting up in port. Susanne bought the 1964 Rhodes 41 So Long *from Tom Hopman and Sally Erdle in Bequia after they completed their circumnavigation aboard her in 1994. Susanne and Tony won the Rod Stephens Trophy for Outstanding Seamanship in 2008.*

Bequia-born Sir James Mitchell, former Prime Minister of St. Vincent & the Grenadines, is from a traditional Bequia boat-building family. His father, Reginald, built the 165-foot schooner Gloria Colita *next to what is now the Frangipani Hotel.*

Add your name or the names of others who have sailed around the world and anchored at some point in Bequia by writing to sally@caribbeancompass.com.

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"MOM WON'T LET ME SAIL BECAUSE IT'S DANGEROUS, SO I'M GOING OUT FOR FOOTBALL INSTEAD."





CALENDAR

OCTOBER

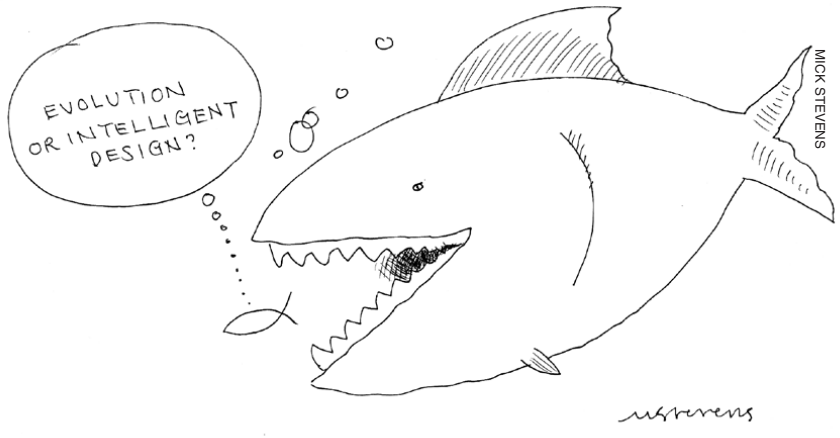
1	FULL MOON
1	Public holiday in St. Lucia (Thanksgiving Day)
1 – 25	Every weekend, Haiti Sailing Cup Race, Cap Haitien, Haiti. https://haitisailingcup.net
8	Public holiday in the Bahamas (National Heroes' Day)
12	Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI (Columbus Day)
14 - 17	Bonaire Regatta. www.infobonaire.com/event/bonaire-sailing-regatta-53rd-edition-2020
17 (TBC)	Willy T Virgin's Cup Race, BVI. www.royalbviyc.org/racing/willytvirginscup.html
22 – 25	BVI Spring Regatta, Tortola. www.bvispringregatta.org
23 - 24	St. Lucia Arts & Heritage Fest. https://eventssaintlucia.com
25	Jounen Kweyol, St. Lucia. www.stlucia.org/summerfestival
25	Public holiday in Grenada (Thanksgiving Day)
25 – 29	World Creole Music Festival, Roseau, Dominica. dominicafestivals.com/about-wcmf
27	Public holiday in St. Vincent & the Grenadines (Independence Day) Gum Boat and Coconut Boat Races at Union Island.
31	FULL MOON, Halloween
TBA	Columbus Day Regatta, St. Thomas, USVI. https://stthomasyachtclub.org/sailing/regattas/columbus-day-regatta

NOVEMBER

1	Public holiday in Antigua (Independence Day) and some other places (All Saints' Day)
2	Start of Salty Dawg Fall Rally to the Caribbean. saltydawgsailing.org/salty-dawg-fall-rally-to-caribbean
3	Public holiday in Dominica (Independence Day
7 – 8	St. Maarten Optimist Championship. manager@smyc.com
8	Start of ARC+Cape Verdes from Canary Islands to St. Lucia. www.worldcruising.com
8 - 11	BVI Charter Yacht Show, Tortola. www.crewedyachtsbvi.com
11 – 15	St. Barth Gourmet Festival. http://saintbarthgourmetfestival.com/en/us
12 – 15	USVI Charter Show, St. Thomas. www.vipca.org
14-15	Budget Marine Bonaire Waterfront Events – triathlon, sailing and fishing
22	Start of ARC from Canary Islands to St. Lucia. www.worldcruising.com
27 – 29 (TBC)	Mango Bowl Regatta, St. Lucia. www.stluciayachtclub.com
30	Public holiday in Barbados (Independence Day)
30	FULL MOON
TBA	Jolly Harbour Yacht Club Annual Regatta, Antigua. www.jhycantigua.com/jhyc-annual-regatta

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

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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2020

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

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

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

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

October					
DATE	TIME	21	1622	10	0736
1	0000 FULL MOON	22	1720	11	0827
2	0002	23	1815	12	0919
3	0042	24	1906	13	1011
4	0123	25	1954	14	1106
5	0205	26	2028	15	1203
6	0250	27	2121	16	1303
7	0336	28	2201	17	1405
8	0426	29	2242	18	1506
9	0516	30	2322	19	1605
10	0611	30	0000 FULL MOON	20	1659
11	0706			21	1750
12	0801	**November**		22	1836
13	0855	1	0004	23	1919
14	0948	2	0048	24	2000
15	1041	3	0134	25	2041
16	1135	4	0222	26	2121
17	1229	5	0313	27	2202
18	1325	6	0406	28	2245
19	1423	7	0459	29	2330
20	1523	8	0552	30	0000 FULL MOON
		9	0645		

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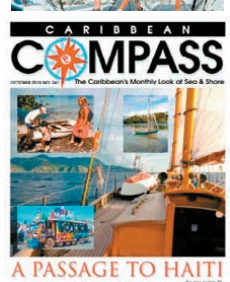
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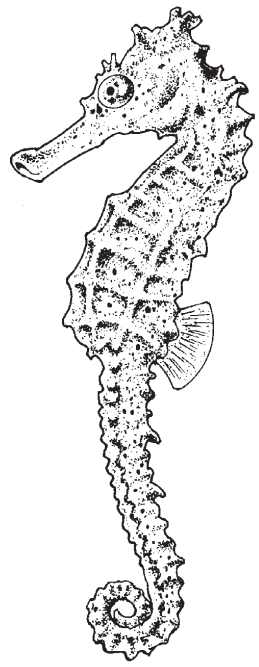
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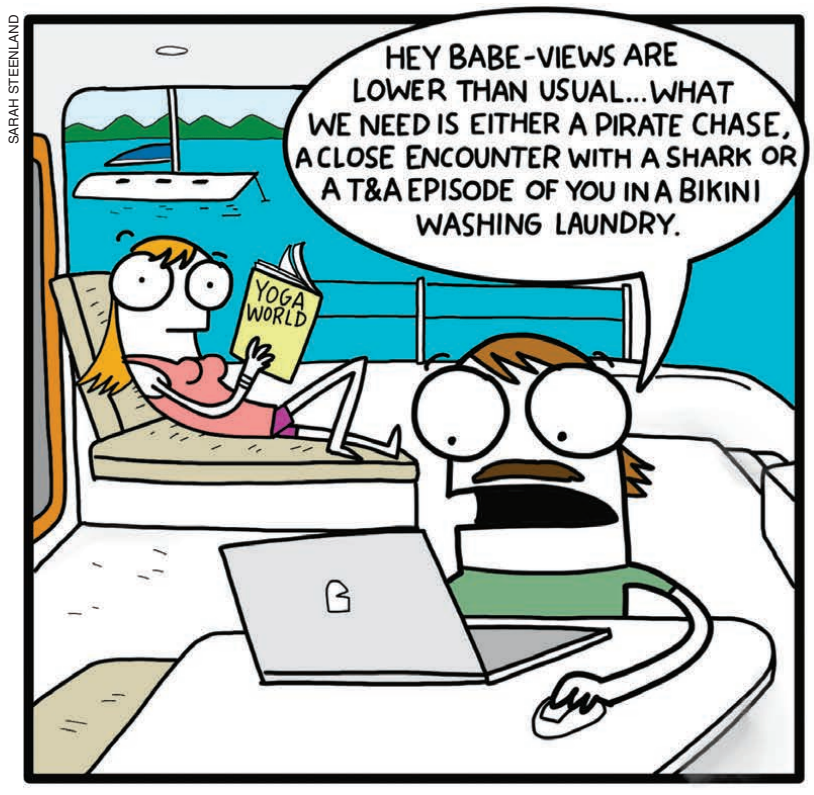
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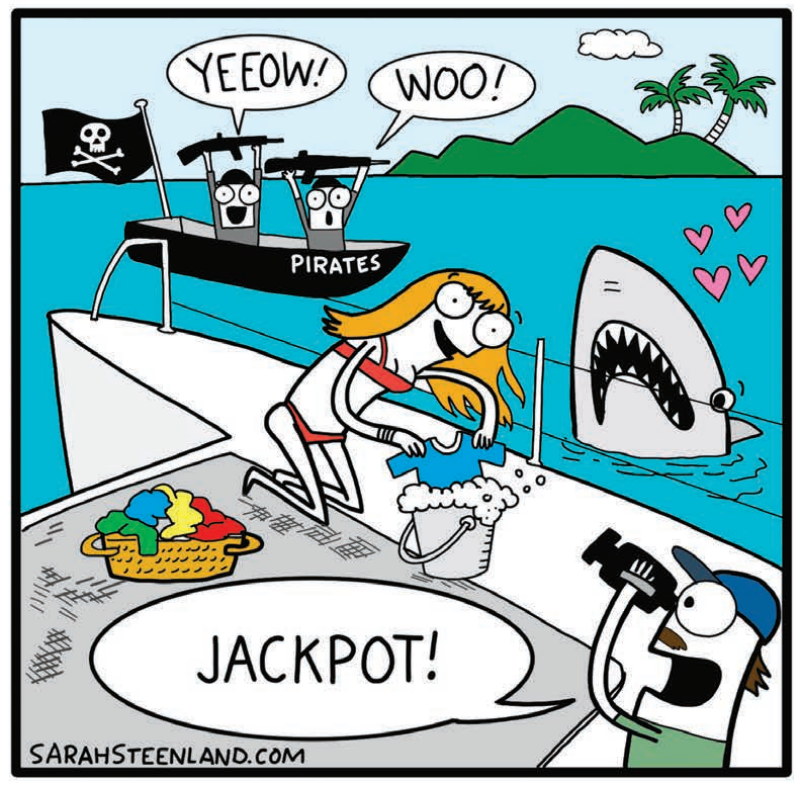
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