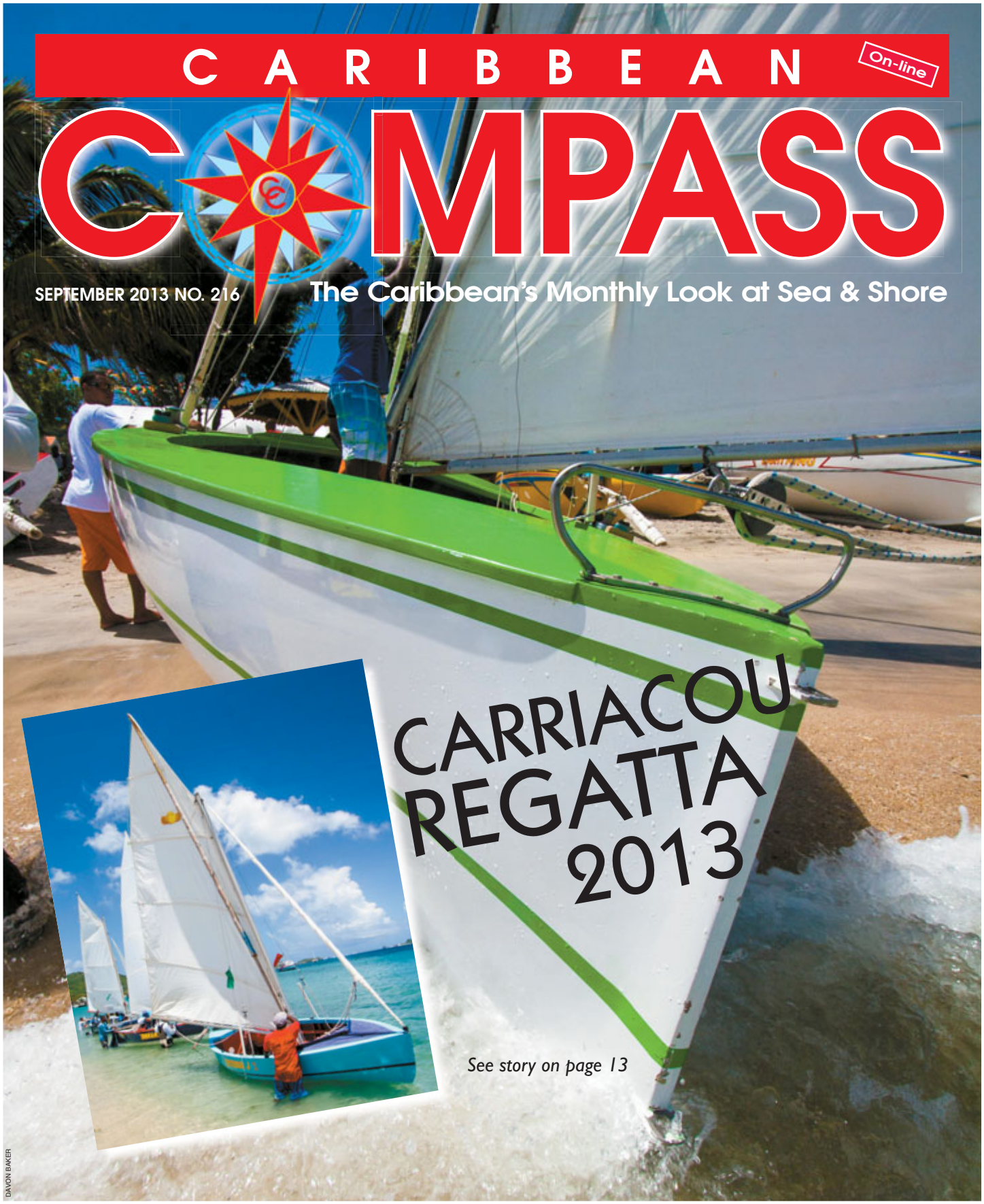
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The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore



CARRIACOU REGATTA 2013

See story on page 13

DAVON BAKER

HOOK IT!



Sufix
LINE

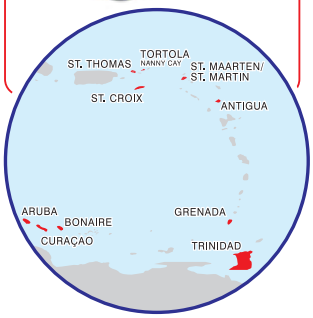


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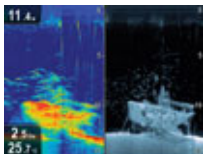
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CARIBBEAN FISHING TOURNAMENTS

October 2013
- The 2013 Chivas Regal Aruba Caribbean Cup
- Guy/Girl "Reel Challenge" - St.Croix

November 2013
- Funfish Tournament, Trinidad
- Budget Marine St. Maarten Annual Wahoo Tournament
- Trinidad Tarpon Tournament
- VIGFC Wahoo Windup - VI
- GHSF Wahoo Tournament - VI
- TTGFA Wahoo - Trinidad & Tobago

January 2014
- Budget Marine Spice Island Billfish Tournament, Grenada
- Bonaire International Fishing Tournament
- GHFC Marlin Tournament - VI

March 2014
- TTGFA Marlin Madness - Trinidad
- GHFC Dolphin Tournament - VI
- TIGFT(Tobago International Game Fishing Tournament)
- Curacao Annual International Blue Marlin Release Tournament

April 2014
- Tortola Spanish Town Fisherman Jamboree & Wahoo Fishing Tournament

May 2014
- Antigua & Barbuda Fishing Tournament
- TTGFA King Fish Tournament-Trinidad
- St. Martin Billfish Tournament
- The 3rd Antigua and Barbuda Marlin Classic
- The 47th Antigua and Barbuda Sport Fishing Tournament

June/July 2014
- Kingfish Tournament, Trinidad
- GHFC Jungle rules Sport Fish-VI
- Tobago House of Assembly Commercial Fishing Tournament
- St. Martin Billfish Tournament
- Junior Angler Tournament, Trinidad
- Trinidad Tarpon Thunder Tournament
- The 50th July Open Billfish Tournament

August 2014
- BVI Billfish Tournament
- Tarpon Tournament, Trinidad
- The BVI Open
- USVI Open/Atlantic Blue Marlin Tournament

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ISSN 1605 - 1998

Cover photo: On this month's cover, the clean sweet lines of the sailing craft of the Grenadines are captured by Carriacou photographer Davon Baker



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

'*Caribbean Compass* has proven to be the premier guide to yachting in the Caribbean... the magazine does a great job of keeping readers in-the-know on destinations, yachting news and trends.'

Christy Recaii, writer
St. Lucia

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Info & Updates

Stolen Boat Notice

The sloop *La Paloma,* a 2001 36-foot Beneteau charter sailboat equipped with a single 27-horsepower Yanmar engine, was reported stolen from Blue Lagoon in St. Vincent on or about August 2nd. The hull and sail are white. The vessel name appears in small letters port and starboard aft. The hailing port, "San Diego, CA", appears on the stern. The dodger, genoa and the front portion of the green bimini cover were not on the vessel at the time of the theft. The hull identification number is BEY76147A101. The vessel is US Coast Guard registered under number 1108288.



Report any sightings to any law enforcement agency and to Nautilus Investigations at Toll Free: (877) 628-8468, Ph: 305-232-9555 or Glenn@NautilusInvestigations.com.

New Frequency for Coconut Telegraph Net

Beginning September 1st, the Coconut Telegraph, the Eastern Caribbean's SSB net, is moving to 8170 USB every morning at 0800 AST. The net, established in 2007, has kept cruisers connected and helped them share information on a four-megahertz frequency but the net had a limited range. The new frequency should improve range to cover the whole Caribbean Sea up to the Bahamas, down to the north coast of South America and west to Central America. Cruisers who never listened to the net and those who have enjoyed it for years should tune in every morning and try it out. It's a lot of fun and all are welcome.

For more information contact Harry on Sea Schell *on the* Coconut Telegraph *any morning at 0800 AST or at hkschell@gmail.com.*

Bequia Youths Survive Sinking

Cheryl Johnson reports: The ordeal started on July 28th at about 12:30PM. Four



Sinking survivor Trevin Williams says that swimming after fast gumboats, like the ones displayed here by builders Orson Ollivierre, James Hunt and Kingsley King, gave him the stamina to swim over ten miles to safety

friends — Vazel Williams, 17, Terrence Ollivierre, 21, Prince Richardson, 17 and Trevin Williams, 18 — were returning home to Bequia from Petite Martinique on a speed-boat when, about half an hour into the trip, the hull cracked.

—*Continued on next page*

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Atlantic Canvas & Sail
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St Lucia
Rodney Bay Sails
Rodney Bay

St. Vincent
Barefoot Yacht Charters
Blue Lagoon

USVI St Croix
Wilsons' Cruzan Canvas
Christiansted



—Continued from previous page

According to Trevin, "the boat went down fast". He said that they thought they could have swum to the uninhabited islet of Petit Canouan but they did not make it and the tide was carrying them to the north, "so we just had to go with the tide".



Trevin: 'God had a hand in it'

On board there was one life vest, which was given to the weakest swimmer. Then there was a pairing-up. Trevin and Prince were together, and Vazel and Terrence. Earlier Trevin, better known as "Screech", had made a call to someone who contacted the Coast Guard. The Terrence/Vazel team told Screech and Prince that if they saw the Coast Guard, to send the Coast Guard to pick them up. But the Coast Guard got to Terrence and Vazel first. Screech said that he and Prince saw the Coast Guard but the men did not see them because "all the (Coast Guard) guys were on one side of the boat".

Screech said a catamaran passed in the afternoon; "We waved and he waved back but continued going. When night came we were behind Petit Nevis. The tide brought we from Petit Nevis to in front of Bequia." It is a test that he will never forget.

On their journey, Screech said that Prince began to give up and "asked me to tell his niece, Tia, that he love she." According to Screech, Prince faltered and was going underwater: "I go for him down bottom and told him we have to make it, we almost reach."

Many persons have heard of situations where animals helped to save lives. According to Screech, he had never seen birds fly in the night in the manner they did that night. "Two birds flew overhead from the time the boat sank until we reach to Bequia." At no time did Screech think he was not going to live.

While all this was happening at sea, on land a community was locked in prayer, including, of course, the families of these youngsters: Brielle and Alex, aged seven, and Barrack, five, joined hands and prayed. It is refreshing to hear that these three little children understand the value of prayer.

On a lighter side they can laugh at this now: Screech said while they were in the water he saw two sharks but decided not to tell Prince; he didn't want him "to panic". According to Screech, "Then I noticed that Prince was swimming in the direction of Mustique" so he called his attention to this and Prince said it was "because his eyes were closed." He too had seen the sharks and didn't want to tell Screech, so he closed his eyes and began to swim just anywhere away from the sharks.

The two young men came ashore on the south side of Bequia after some ten hours in the water.

Screech feels his experience with sailing Bequia's fast model gumboats, which the "skipper" swims behind to tack and gybe, strengthened him to be able to swim for such a long period. He also felt that God had a hand in his survival.

See related letter in this month's Readers' Forum, page 39.

Cruisers' Site-ings

• Chart corrections are regularly posted on the Imray website, ***www.imray.com***: go to "corrections" and there they are for each chart. These notices are not only applicable to Imray Iolaire charts but to ALL charts of the area, both paper and electronic.

• Are you a woman who sails? Check out ***www.facebook.com/groups/WomenWhoSail***.

• The Saint Barth Yacht Club now has a Facebook page, ***www.facebook.com/saintbarthyachtclub***

• The St. Croix Environmental Association puts out an interesting and informative newsletter. For more information visit ***www.stxenvironmental.org***.

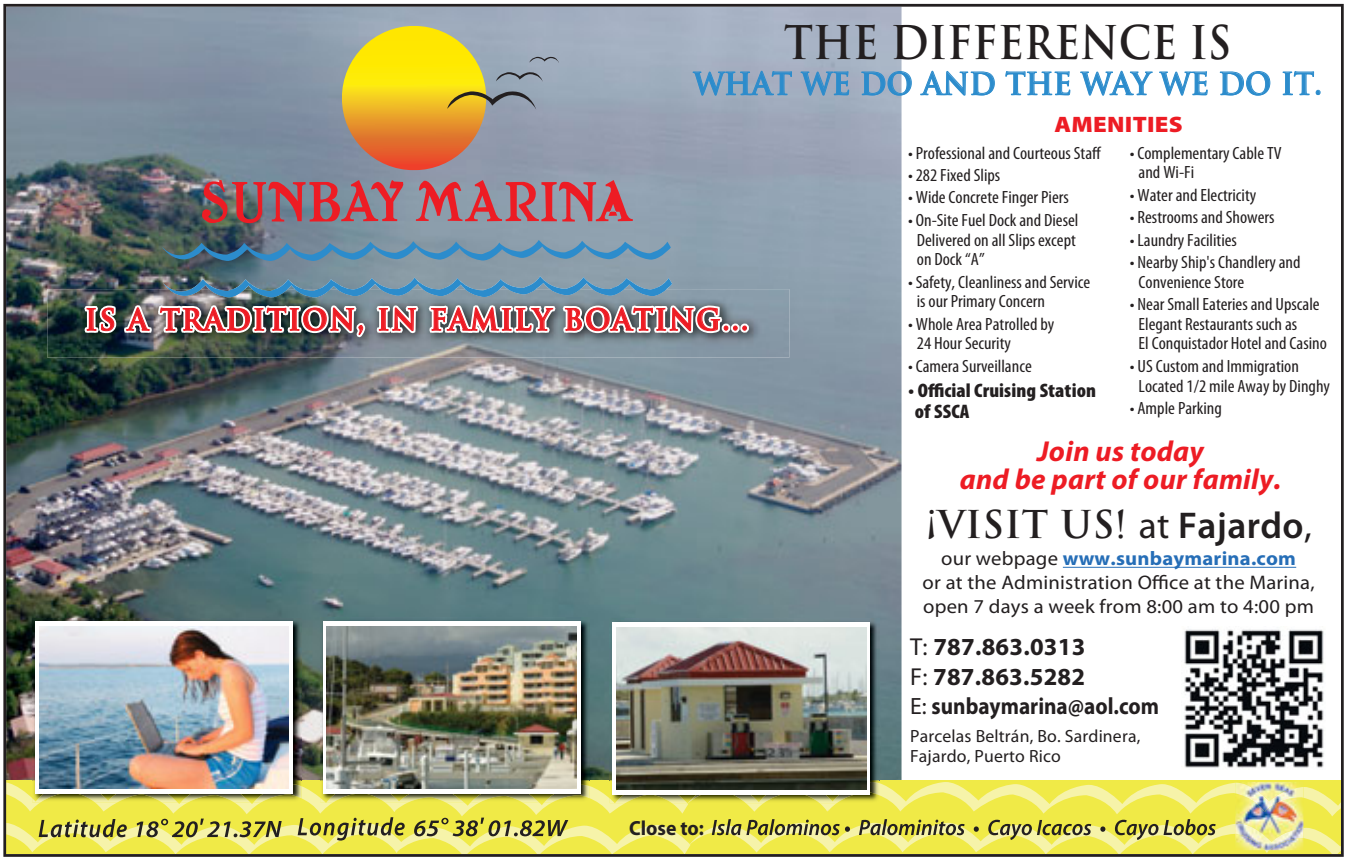
SSCA Gam in Florida, November 15th through 17th

You're invited to SSCA's biggest party of the year. Join other cruising enthusiasts in Melbourne, Florida, from November 15th through 17th for two full days of seminars. Keynote speaker Amaia Aguirre will talk about cruising Cuba. You'll also find a variety of SSCA supporters displaying their wares, answering questions and offering "boat show" prices. On the Sunday, you can attend the huge indoor nautical flea…

—Continued on next page



The focus will be on Cuba at a November gathering of world's largest organization of voyaging cruisers



—Continued from previous page

…market, as well as sit in on a variety of intimate Roundtables where you can talk to experienced cruisers on a one-to-one basis regarding your equipment and/or the places you hope to someday visit.

On-line registration is now open. All of the above is included in your registration fee of just US$35 for SSCA members or $50 for non-members at the "early bird" rate, or $40/$55 after October 31st.

The theme this year is Clean Wake, Worldwide and Locally. Used sails and sailcloth will be collected for the SSCA Clean Wake Project "Second Life Sails", which benefits Haitian fishermen who rely on sail-powered boats.

Seven Seas Cruising Association, Inc. is the largest non-profit organization of voyaging cruisers in the world. Founded in 1952, SSCA is celebrating 61 years of making cruising dreams come true.

For more information visit www.ssca.org and click on SSCA Events.

Master's Thesis on Carriacou and Cruisers Complete

Last year Erin Heeney visited Tyrell Bay, Carriacou, Grenada to conduct research on the relations between locals and yachties. Her master's degree thesis is now complete.



ERIN HEENEY

Erin says, "As a researcher and avid traveller by land and sea, I have many questions surrounding tourism… Typically tourists are classified by their nationality, with little attention given to the way in which they travel and the motivations behind such travel. In the case of ocean cruisers, or "yachties" (people who live on and travel by private sailboat), they are rarely considered in tourism discussions yet they have significant economic and social impacts on many small islands throughout the world."

In May and June 2012, Erin interviewed individuals to hear their stories about Tyrell Bay, the people who live there, and the yachties who visit. The interviews centred on the interactions and relationships between locals and yachties and how they perceive one another.

Erin found that "The (relationship) between locals and yachties in Tyrell Bay was very positive and based on common and shared attitudes and behaviours, few tensions, and a somewhat balanced power structure. There is a sense of connection between the two communities that is based on understanding and real relationships. There was a sense that yachties are more like locals than other tourists… There is a strong social connection between locals and yachties in Tyrell Bay, which forms the basis of a positive tourism experience."

She adds, "However, there is some worry that as the world becomes more globalized and as more tourists visit Tyrell Bay, there is the opportunity for the social and cultural fabric of the community to be compromised. Based on research from around the world, it is frequently found that tourism that is grassroots or community-based, as seen in Tyrell Bay, is more successful in the long run. In order to ensure a sustainable future, this sense of open communication already seen between locals and yachties needs to be fostered and further supported by other stakeholders such as local and federal governments and economic development agencies."

For the full report see http://erinheeney.files.wordpress.com/2013/08/research-snapshot-relations-between-locals-and-yachties-in-tyrell-bay-carriacou.pdf.

New Flights to the Eastern Caribbean

Crew changes? Guests arriving? Airlift to the Eastern Caribbean has some new additions!

American Airlines will be increasing its service from New York's John F Kennedy International Airport to Antigua & Barbuda this fall. The carrier will be operating daily non-stop flights to Antigua from November 21st, 2013 to March 31, 2014. American will be operating a 737 aircraft for the New York service.

From London, Virgin Atlantic will also be increasing its service to five flights into Antigua's VC Bird International Airport this winter, while Thomas Cook will be adding a new once-weekly service to Antigua from Manchester.

American Airlines will also be adding two new flights from Miami to St Kitts. Beginning November 21st, the two new Miami flights will operate on Thursdays and Saturdays, in addition to the existing Friday and Sunday flights from Miami that were added last year.

Tradewind Aviation introduces their signature "Premium Scheduled" nonstop service to Anguilla and Nevis from San Juan, Puerto Rico. Anguilla and Nevis join Tradewind's St Bart's route.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Compass* we welcome new advertisers Marigot Casino of St. Lucia, on page 36; and Crown Foods of St. Lucia, in the Market Place section pages 42 through 44. Good to have you with us!



BUSINESS BRIEFS

Solar-Powered Light Art in Grenada

Creating a work of art that is useful in daily life is the aim of many artists, artisans and craftspersons. Chris Mast and Lilo Nido, owners of Art Fabrik, winner of the 2012 Caribbean UNESCO Award of Excellence for Handicrafts, have introduced to Grenada new high-quality solar-powered lights for living, learning and earning.



"Little Sun" solar-powered lights were created by an artist and an engineer to provide one evening of light for your boat, home or garden when charged in five hours of sunlight. Little Suns are durable, affordable and safe additions to hurricane-readiness kits and boat essentials. By buying the Little Sun lamp, you help make light available to communities with no or inconsistent electricity across the globe. Buy a Little Sun and share the light! And help reduce energy consumption and raise global awareness of energy access and solar power.

Supporting art that makes a difference in and to communities is part of what makes Art Fabrik unique. Over the last 27 years, with the assistance of up to 45 home workers and local contractors including a number of graduates from the School for the Deaf, Art Fabrik's batik production house at 11 Young Street, St. George's, Grenada has supported local crafters by combining elements of their craft with elements of batik to produce unique end products. Specialty items such as Fair Trade crafts and the Little Sun make the Art Fabrik boutique a shopping experience with a conscience. Art Fabrik is to date the only retail outlet in the Caribbean where the Little Sun is available.

For more information on Little Sun lamps visit www.littlesun.com.

For more information on Art Fabrik see ad in the Market Place section, pages 42 through 45.

Sea Hawk Paints CEO Recovering from Shark Attack

Erik Norrie, CEO of New Nautical Coatings, which manufactures Sea Hawk Paints, is in good spirits after recovering from a shark attack on July 29th near Scotland Cay in Abaco, Bahamas.

"I had just speared a grouper and was swimming back to the boat with it when this shark grabbed my leg, and I felt a crunching sensation," reported Norrie. "And when I turned around, the water was filled with blood. It looked like a Jaws movie," he said.

The shark was about six feet long and took a large chunk out of Norrie's calf. "I got a look at him when he was swimming away with a piece of my leg in his mouth," said Norrie, who has been spearfishing since he was eight. He was in about five feet of water, and was able to make a quick tourniquet around his leg, using the rubber of his spear gun to slow the bleeding, which probably saved his life. "I immediately threw the speared fish down because there was an enormous pool of blood around me and that shark was swimming all through the blood, sort of looking around for more," he said.

Norrie's wife, Spryng, and their four daughters witnessed the horrific scene. The girls held hands and closed their eyes. "They were gathered together in prayer, just praying out loud, and my eldest daughter started texting friends of mine to pray," continued Norrie.

A doctor vacationing from San Diego just happened to be within three minutes of them and helped the family get Norrie to shore and to a medical facility, and then to Jackson Hospital in Miami.

For more information on Sea Hawk Paints see ad on page 17.

New Stock at Parts & Power

Parts and Power is pleased to advise their latest stock list of marine and industrial generators, engines, JCB equipment, UPS, transfer switches, marine air conditioners and marine drives is now available.

For more information visit www.partsandpower.com.

US Boating Associations Target Colombian Market

The National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA), US Superyacht Association (USSA) and Florida Yacht Brokers Association (FYBA) embarked on a collaborative visit to Colombia on July 28th to explore potential business opportunities for their members and the US recreational marine industry. Hosted by ProExport, Colombia's public-private tourism and export organization, the visit was a chance for the US and Colombia to work together to better understand opportunities that now exist for both countries as a result of the recent Free Trade Agreement.

John Mann, chair of the USSA, says, "The prime proximity of Colombia to the Panama Canal and below the hurricane zone makes it a natural stop for traveling yachts. We look forward to the opportunity to work with them."

The Republic of Colombia represents the fourth largest economy in Latin America and has the third largest population with nearly 46 million inhabitants. It is also the only country in South America with two seacoasts (Pacific and Caribbean). Aided by major security improvements, steady economic growth, and moderate inflation, Colombia has become a free market economy with major commercial and investment ties to the United States.

—Continued on next page





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—Continued from previous page

"Colombia offers a variety of water access points and promising infrastructure for a growing marine industry and our collaborative efforts with ProExport Colombia will allow us to share our expertise and knowledge as we work together to develop the market," says NMMA president Thom Dammrich.

The NMMA is hosting the first USA Pavilion at the second Cartagena Boat Show, which will run from March 22nd through 24th, 2014 in Cartagena, Colombia.

Charlie Irons Joins Yacht Haven Grande St. Thomas

IGY Marinas announces the recent hiring of Charlie Irons as the Director of Operations for its flagship marina, Yacht Haven Grande St. Thomas, USVI. Charlie comes to IGY with key international luxury destination management experience, bringing a range of skill sets to chart the next steps for the property including tenant services, cruise ship customer growth and hotel development.

For more information visit www.yachthavengrande.com.

New Sailing School in Tortola

Tortola Sailing School has launched its new sail-training centre in the BVI.

The school specializes in professional and recreational sailing courses for visitors and local residents alike. Steve Varrow, the school's chief instructor, explains, "We feel there is a need for a broad-based stand-alone training facility in the BVI to enable students from the BVI and other countries to get professional training to qualify themselves for a career in the maritime industry. The BVI has one of the most stable maritime economic platforms in the whole Caribbean and the cruising grounds are some of the best in the world.



"Whether you go on to become a sailboat captain, chef, engineer or business owner in the marine industry, you need to have a basic understanding of boats and sailing. At Tortola Sailing School we run courses from Introduction to sailing right up to Yachtmaster Offshore 200GRT."

Recently appointed as an International Yacht Training Worldwide partner school, Tortola Sailing School can offer the complete range of recreational courses in the IYT Worldwide training scheme. Courses currently on offer include Introduction to Boating & International Crew (Power or Sail), International Flotilla Skipper (Power or Sail), International Bareboat Skipper (Power or Sail), International Certificate of Competency, Power Boat Master, Navigation Master, Weather Master, VHF Radio Operator's Certificate, Yachtmaster Coastal (Power or Sail), and Yachtmaster Offshore (Power or Sail).

The IYT Worldwide training scheme is accepted in more countries and recognized by more government bodies than any other training scheme in the world. The professional yachting courses are recognized by 24 different governments worldwide for commercial use including the British Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

For more information visit tortolasailingschool.com.

New Director at Horizon Charters St. Maarten Base

Elisabetta el-Karimy is the new Base Operations Director at Horizon Yacht Charters' St. Maarten base.

Born in Florence, Italy, Eli speaks five languages and lived in numerous countries before settling in St. Maarten. She has sailed the Mediterranean and crossed the Atlantic. She is an RYA Yachtmaster and, outside of sailing, her other interests include being a passionate cook and medical anthropologist.

With an expanding fleet and full support team in place, Eli is looking forward to the future. "I am so happy to be a part of the Horizon team. We have an experienced team and an expanding charter fleet, so it promises to be an exciting season ahead!"

For more information visit www.horizonyachtcharters.com.

New Location for Tobago's Store Bay Marine

Store Bay Marine Services in Tobago has recently opened its new premises just 200 yards up the road from its existing location on Pigeon Point Road. The new premises are larger and feature brand new laundry facilities for customers.

The company will continue to provide services for visiting and domestic yachts, including a team of service engineers for repairs to diesel engines, outboard engines (two and four stroke), marine electrics and electronics, refrigeration and air conditioning, marine woodwork, metalwork and GRP and plumbing. SBMS can also undertake marine canvas work, commercial diving, long-term in-water boat storage, mail order chandlery, water provision and internet facilities, including WiFi by the hour.

For more information visit www.sbms.co.tt.

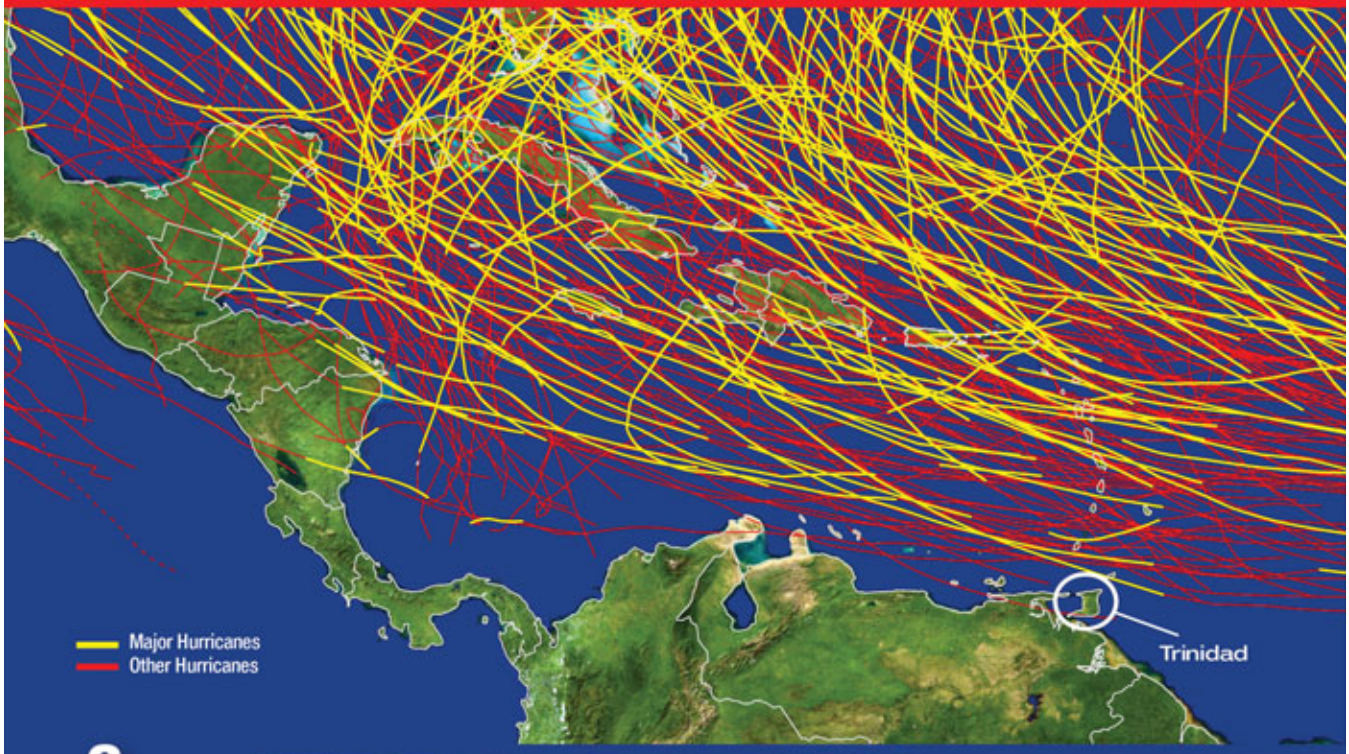
Naturalist Launches Unique New Wildlife Guide

The fascinating fauna of one tiny Caribbean island can now be explored by people around the globe, thanks to naturalist, author and wildlife photographer Mark Yokoyama. Yokoyama officially released the second edition of his book *The Incomplete Guide to the Wildlife of Saint Martin*, showcasing an astounding array of animals from St. Martin/St. Maarten. The guide features more than 500 stunning color photographs and profiles hundreds of species, from mammals and birds to insects and spiders, some of which can't be found anywhere else in the world. This unique work also features special sections on local ecology and the history of biology on the island — a "who's who" of Caribbean researchers, explorers, and naturalists reaching back to the mid-1600s.

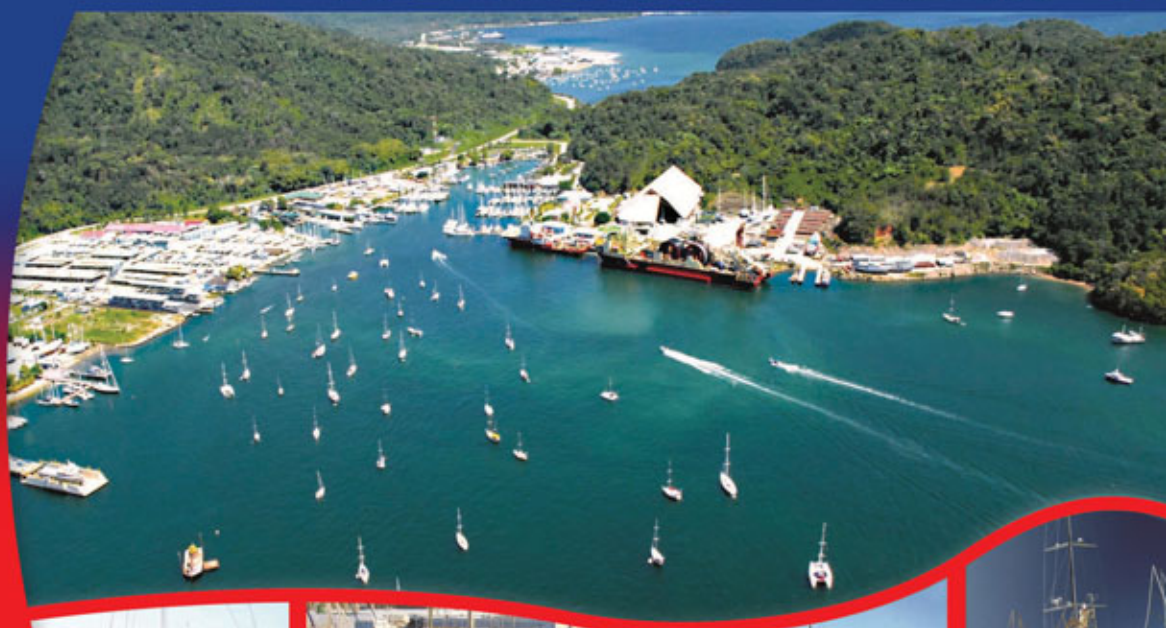
The publication of the book is just the beginning for Yokoyama, whose mission is to make knowledge about wildlife and natural heritage freely accessible to everyone. He recently launched a wildlife education program to teach students on the island about local fauna and promote wildlife awareness among locals and tourists. He is also working on a French-language edition of the book.

To learn more about Yokoyama's work and download a free electronic version of the guide, visit www.sxmwildlife.com. The Incomplete Guide to the Wildlife of Saint Martin *is available on amazon.com.*

Hurricane History 1851 to 2012 - Source: NOAA



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CARIBBEAN ECO-NEWS

Students Eat Lion Fish in Dominica Schools

The "Eat Fish in Schools 2013" program, held in late June in Dominica, was organized by the Dominica Fisheries Division and sponsored by stakeholders including the Dominica Marine Center. The event focused on educating primary school students about Dominica's marine environment and the sustainable use of fish, including the utilization of the invasive and environmentally destructive Lion Fish as a



valuable source of protein. Four primary schools, Roosevelt Douglas, Savanne Paille, Clifton and St. John's primary schools participated in the event where they demonstrated their culinary skills. It was a tremendous success as kids prepared fish meals out of Lion Fish and other local foods. All the foods prepared, as well as all the seasoning, were locally obtained in the rich resources of Dominica. In the recipe competition, Savanne Paille Elementary School was the overall winner, preparing an assortment of Lion Fish dishes.

Mangroves Can Cope with Sea Level Rise

A new report by The Nature Conservancy and Wetlands International shows that mangroves can adapt to rising sea levels by building up soils in some locations, allaying fears that mangroves may be lost as sea levels rise. The review shows that under some circumstances, mangrove soils can build up at similar rates to local rises in sea level, allowing mangroves to survive *in situ*. This is important because mangroves provide risk-reduction services against coastal hazards such as storm surges.

Past evidence suggests that some mangrove soils have built up at rates between one and ten millimetres per year. Currently global mean sea level is rising at a rate of three millimetres per year. This suggests that in some places, mangrove soil surfaces will be able to keep up with rising sea levels. This is key, as mangrove trees cannot survive if their aerial roots are submerged for a long period of time.

This latest report highlights the need to maintain, restore or enhance sediment supplies to mangrove areas. The sediments contribute to the build-up of soils, but the supply of sediment to many mangrove areas has been reduced because of dams, diversion of watercourses, etcetera. Mangroves also need protecting from pollution and the felling of trees: the underground roots of healthy trees can push the soil up, while the roots of trees weakened by habitat degradation are less able to hold soils together, potentially leading to erosion and loss of surface soils. Restoring mangrove areas and safeguarding the health of trees can help mangrove soils to build up and so keep pace with sea level rise.

"In some areas, however, mangrove soils may not be able to build up fast enough to keep pace with sea level rise," alerts report lead author Dr. Anna McIvor of The Nature Conservancy. "In these areas, local planners should allow space for mangroves to colonize landward areas as sea levels rise. This will help to ensure that mangroves continue to reduce risks from coastal hazards into the future, benefiting local communities."

Some mangrove forests have survived in the same location for thousands of years by building up soils beneath them as sea levels rose. In Twin Cays in Belize, mangroves have created a layer of old roots and sediments that is up to eight metres thick in some places. By building up soils, mangroves also help to lock up greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, and this provides another reason for protecting mangroves and their soils from degradation and loss.

For more information on The Nature Conservancy see ad on page 32.

Biras Creek Resort Hosts Students to Explore Mangroves

In late July, Biras Creek in Virgin Gorda teamed up with Dive BVI to host a group of high school students from the Jesuit College Preparatory School in Dallas, Texas, to learn about the local mangroves and the numerous fish and bird species that inhabit them. As part of Dive BVI's Summer Marine Biology Program, the students had a chance to learn why this delicate habitat is so important to sustain the local ecosystem and how the intricate mesh of mangrove roots offers a quiet marine region for organisms such as algae, barnacles, oysters and sponges.

For more information visit www.biras.com.

Documentary Highlights Seaside Village's Environment

On July 27th at the Paget Farm Community Centre, residents of Bequia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, were given the opportunity to view preliminary footage from the documentary "Reclaiming Paget Farm". The film highlights environmental problems in the village of Paget Farm, a fishing community on the south side of Bequia. The problems include inadequate drainage systems, marine debris and littering.

The documentary is the brainchild of Jessica Jaja, a master's degree candidate from the University of Ottawa, working in conjunction with Skylark Productions of Barbados and UNESCO Sandwatch (SVG). While working on her master's thesis on the response to climate change in Paget Farm, Jessica became aware of the problems concerning trash deposits in the village and was impressed by the community's desire to clean up the neighbourhood. She hopes that the final documentary will assist in finding solutions at community level to eliminate the garbage that currently accumulates on the shoreline in Paget Farm.

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

About 60 people, including students from Paget Farm Government (primary) School and from the Sandwatch environmental group of the Bequia Community High School attended the screening. Presentations were also made by Kirk Ollivierre of Sandwatch; Herman Belmar, Deputy Director of Grenadines Affairs; and Clerise Derrick, a teacher at Paget Farm School whose students had decorated the Community Centre with posters to raise awareness of the importance of a clean environment.

For more information about the film and its production, Jessica can be contacted at (784) 527-6016 or jjaja013@Ottawa.ca.

Disposable Diapers an 'Environmental Nightmare'

Disposable diapers are a "nightmare", say members of the Venezuelan environmental group RAO (Red de Aviso Oportuno) Anzoátegui, who walk miles of beaches every month while studying sea turtles. In July they were working in the Mochima National Park, which offers spectacular and varied landscapes, only to find the shoreline defiled by large amounts of waste. Disposable diapers, they say, are increasingly dumped on the beaches of Anzoátegui State.



Disgusting. Disposable diapers on the beach are an eyesore, a health hazard, and an environmental nightmare. Do the parents who left these here really want their children to grow up in a dirty world?

Disposable diapers represent a single use, and then are discarded, creating a huge environmental impact. The disposables are manufactured with cellulose, polyester and/or sodium polyacrylate, a highly absorbent polymer that is not degradable. These substances remain present in the environment for years, occupying space in the natural environment and, on many occasions, in the stomachs of marine fauna.

Marina fauna have a right to eat natural food, not our garbage. Humans have a right to enjoy clean beaches, free of urine- and feces-soaked rubbish. RAO Anzoátegui reminds parents that, if you absolutely must use disposable diapers instead of environmentally friendly cloth ones, please dispose of them properly.

'Before and After' Study of Caribbean Coral Damage

A comprehensive photographic survey of the Caribbean's coral reefs is getting underway, using high-technology cameras, robotics and computerized recognition programs to develop a baseline body of data before climate change takes an irreversible toll on this fragile underwater ecosystem.

The Catlin Seaview Survey, sponsored by the global insurance company Catlin Group Ltd., will collect hundreds of thousands of images with specialized cameras to learn how populations of corals are faring under rapidly changing conditions. Ove Hoegh-Guldberg, director of the Global Change Institute at the University of Queensland, Australia, leads the project, and the Scripps Institution of Oceanography is helping to analyze the data.

Within the next five years, the group plans to return to locations hit by coral bleaching, disease, tropical storms or other threats to present the "before and after" to scientists and the public, highlighting the vulnerability of the Caribbean's reefs.

"The plan is to really treat this as a race against time and get a global baseline together within a three-year period," said underwater photographer Richard Vevers, the survey's project director. "It really is a huge endeavor, but it's critical that we get this baseline before bleaching events come through."

The Catlin Seaview Survey will deploy several different camera systems and an underwater robot to collect images and data in the Caribbean. The project will start in Belize and then head to Mexico, Anguilla, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Guadeloupe and the Turks & Caicos Islands, ending in the Bahamas.

One camera, carried by a diver, takes a 360-degree photograph of shallow reef systems every three seconds and is carried along coral reefs for distances of about two kilometers. This camera is hooked up to a GPS system, so scientists analyzing the photographs later can pinpoint exactly where the photographs are taken. Photographs can provide estimates of diversity, showing what percentage of cover is coral and what percentage is algae or how much of the coral is healthy. By returning to the same plot over a period of time, scientists can make an exact gauge of how the reef is changing.

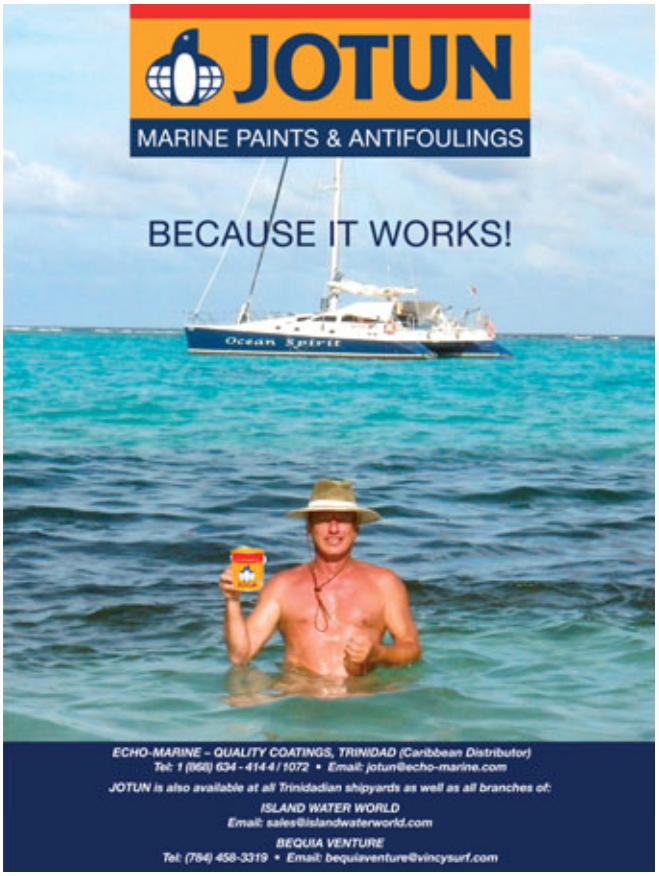
Because manually analyzing hundreds of thousands of images would take years, the study is working with computer scientists to develop an automated system of identifying and counting corals, using the same facial recognition technology developed by the CIA to identify terrorists.

Finally, a joystick-controlled robot will explore reefs at depths beyond 30 meters, too deep for human divers to reach. Discovering the relationship between these deep-water reefs and shallow-water reefs is one of the main goals of the survey.

A recent study out of Stanford University found that the vast majority of the world's coral reefs might be eliminated by rising ocean acidification by the year 2100. Coral reefs in the Caribbean are especially vulnerable, which is why the Catlin Seaview Survey chose the region as its second area of study. Overfishing has left reefs ill-prepared for the bleaching events and acidification that will likely come with climate change. Algae and seaweeds are the corals' biggest competitors. In a healthy reef system, herbivorous fish keep these plants in check, but the numbers of herbivorous fish in the Caribbean have been dramatically reduced. Those factors, combined with a mysterious disease that wiped out 90 percent of the region's black-spined sea urchins in the early 1980s, meant there were not enough grazers left in the Caribbean to control the algae, and a lot of the reefs shifted from coral dominance to algal dominance.

—Continued on page 34





REGATTA NEWS

St. Croix Regatta: 21 Years and Going Strong

Karen Stanton reports: Adapting to changing conditions over the past two decades, the St. Croix International Regatta is still going strong. Early fall hurricanes back in the '90s propelled the St. Croix Yacht Club to switch our fall regatta date to the middle of winter, eventually becoming part of the CORT series. The loss of Innovative, our major sponsor for quite a few years, set us back a bit, but the club managed to generate enough funds through individuals to keep this regatta going. Last year's regatta saw another date change: with the Caribbean racing schedule being overcrowded during the winter months, the regatta committee decided to change it back to the fall.

And for the 2013 St. Croix International Regatta there's an innovative format change, motivated by the sailors themselves. Some competitors felt if they are going to travel all the way to St. Croix, they wanted three days of racing, while others who love to race but are not able to take the time off pushed for two days of racing. So we came up with an idea — two regattas in one.

On Friday, November 15th, the Commodore's Race is scheduled. The race committee will be running numerous races for all classes.

On Saturday and Sunday, November 16th and 17th, there will be racing in Buck Island Channel. All classes with seven or more boats will be racing for our Traditional Rum Weigh-In for the winning skipper. The scales are ready to go for this year's event!

All awards will be presented on the Sunday. Prizes for the top three finishers will be awarded for the Commodore's Race and the weekend racing. Entry fees for all will be US$150, whether you race two or three days.

The entertainment will be over the top, with St. Croix's premier entertainers performing each night. The Free Rum party will be held on Thursday, November 14th.

Come to St. Croix for great racing, live entertainment and good old Crucian hospitality!

For more information see ad on page 13.

Don't Miss St. Lucia's Mango Bowl Regatta!

St. Lucia's Mango Bowl Regatta, November 30th to December 1st, is now "all systems go"! After last winter's very successful Inaugural Mango Bowl Regatta, the St. Lucia Yacht Club is sparing no effort to make this year's event bigger and better.



Highlight the dates in your diary and watch this space for regular updates.

Joining the very competitive St. Lucia fleet, organizers expect participants from the region including Barbados, Grenada, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, St. Maarten and Martinique, from whence come the majority of Surprise Class boats. With a local fleet of six J/24s, plus around 20 cruising class yachts, there is every reason to believe that participation will surpass last year's 31 entries.

The Skippers' Briefing will take place at 6:00PM on Friday, November 29th at the St. Lucia Yacht Club, followed by a barbecue and the weekly Friday Night Jump-Up at Gros Islet. Racing will begin on the Saturday morning in Rodney Bay and continue after lunch, topped by a gala party in the evening. A further session of racing will be held on the Sunday morning with the prizegiving at 4:00PM. A spectator boat will be in attendance at all races for members of the public and press.

The St. Lucia Yacht Club and IGY Rodney Bay Marina are working together to train young St. Lucian sailors through the Youth Sailing Programme. The main objective is to provide a new area of employment opportunities, but in the short term our new sailors are participating enthusiastically in regional regattas and giving fellow competitors a run for their money!

For more information contact Mango Bowl Regatta Co-ordinator Anne Purvis at slycsecretary@gmail.com or SLYC Sailing Captain Fredric Sweeney at sweeney4490@hotmail.com

March 2014 Dates Set for South Grenada Regatta

The South Grenada Regatta (SGR). based at Le Phare Bleu Marina & Boutique Hotel, is an event with lots of character and its own unique style. This is where family catamarans meet racing yachts, and veterans, first timers, locals and visitors all mingle in an environment of keen competition and fun.

The SGR Committee has started planning for next year's event and the first hot topic discussed were the 2014 dates. For the first time in five years the SGR Committee have decided to move the date slightly, to be the first weekend in March: Thursday, March 6th to Sunday, March 9th.



It is hoped a Dinghy Concert will take place on Wednesday, March 5th. Although not part of the SGR, a Le Phare Bleu Dinghy Concert is the perfect way to celebrate the start of the regatta. If you have never heard of a Dinghy Concert, visit www.dinghyconcert.com and all will be revealed.

For more information visit www.southgrenadaregatta.com.



Kids Capture Picture-Perfect Workboats

The Carriacou Regatta was started in 1965 by Jamaican yachtsman J. Linton Rigg with the aim of encouraging the building and development of the small cargo and fishing boats he saw as an endangered species. He reasoned that if boats were built to race they would find useful work the rest of the year. Today, many of the island boats that are built to race do nothing else! The 48th annual Carriacou Regatta Festival was celebrated with a series of races for the famous decked sloops and open boats from August 2nd to 5th.

This colorful event is always a feast for photographers from near and far. This year, local children joined the shutterbug brigade.

Marina Fastigi reports that on the Sunday, "Kids with Cameras" got together at the bustling Esplanade, in Hillsborough, to capture images of the racing. Kids with Cameras Carriacou, launched in 2012, is a Kido Foundation youth photography project, aimed at raising awareness of wildlife and biodiversity conservation and fostering interest in recording and reporting traditional cultural activities. During weekends and holidays, 32 "Kayak" children aged nine through 12 have explored natural sites, photographing wildlife and flora as well as landscapes and cultural landmarks of Carriacou. Armed with 15 digital cameras, KwCs captured images and took part in computer sessions, learning to edit their own photographs. Offering a start at the art of photography, the project aims to introduce to the very young a variety of possible future professions in the field of media, while empowering them to become stewards for the preservation of their island's natural and cultural environment. Marina says, "We wish to thank the Australian Embassy in Trinidad for providing the equipment to start this project, and the Grenada National Trust and Rufford Small Grants Foundation for facilitating its implementation and continuation. Special thanks to Carriacouan photographer Davon Baker for providing training sessions and technical advice and for making available his computers at D-Zone to edit photos. Thanks also to Allison Caton and to Allan Clement and Deefer Diving for helping with transportation."

Providing a spectacular array of photo ops for the Kids with Cameras, more than 30 locally built open boats (undecked double-ended sailboats, built in various Grenadine islands and Grenada and traditionally used for fishing), six stern boats (small sailboats with transom sterns), nine decked sloops (a type formerly used for cargo, built in Carriacou), plus a number of internationally standardized Optimist and Laser dinghies, took part in the year's event. There was also a well-attended series of races for international yachts (see story on page 14).

As Carriacou Regatta nears the half-century mark, a new regatta committee earned kudos for well-run races, and a new crop of regatta photographers was born. Watch out, Tim Wright!



RIZEL ROBERTS

Left: Rizel Roberts's action shot of small open boat racing

Below: Young photographers focusing on youth sailors





KNISHA CUDJOE

Knisha Cudjoe caught the skipper of My Love *in profile for a pleasing portrait*

Workboat Division Winners

Small Open Boat A
1) *Lightning* (Carriacou)
2) *Wet* (Grenada)
3) *Unity* (Grenada)

Small Open Boat B
1 tied) *Bad Feelings* (Mayreau) and *Hard Target* (Mayreau)
3) *My Love* (Bequia)

Small Open Boat C
1) *Reborn* (Grenada)
2) *Classic* (Grenada)
3) *Voop* (Grenada)

Small Open Boat D
1) *More Worries* (Bequia)
2) *Shamu* (Bequia)
3) *Nerissa J 2* (Canouan)

Long Open Boat A
1) *Bequia Pride* (Bequia)
2) *Lightning* (Bequia)
3) *Skyler* (Carriacou)

Long Open Boat B
1) *Eclipse* (Carriacou)
2) *Iron Duke* (Bequia)
3) *Improved* (Carriacou)

Long Open Boat Open Race
1) *Bequia Pride* (Bequia)
2) *Lightning* (Bequia)
3) *Eclipse* (Carriacou)

Small Stern Boat
1) *D' Rage* (Petite Martinique)
2) *Storm* (Petite Martinique)
3) *Solo* (Petite Martinique)

Small Decked Sloop
1) *Marie Stella* (Carriacou)
2) *New Moon* (Carriacou)
3) *Run Away* (Carriacou)

Large Decked Sloop
1 tied) *Margetta O II* and *Glacier* (Carriacou)
3) *One Drop* (Carriacou)

Sloops Round Di Island
1) *Glacier* (Carriacou)
2) *Margetta O II* (Carriacou)
3) *One Drop* (Carriacou)

Traditional Class
1) *Savvy* (Grenada)
2) *Beauty* (Petite Martinique)

Woburn Class
1) *Top Ranking* (Grenada)
2) *Fog Up the Place* (Grenada)
3) *Slip Away* (Grenada)

Optimist Class
1) *#002*
2) *#001*
3) *Phoenix*

Laser Class
1) *Volvo*
2) *#11*
3) *#3*

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Yacht Races at Full Strength

by Jerry Stewart

As Carriacou Regatta 2013, held August 2nd through 5th, drew closer, it became apparent that we would be spared the weather instability of previous years. The steady easterly breeze experienced by the eight Grenada-to-Carriacou Feeder Race entrants on the Thursday was to hold for the weekend, resulting in one of the best Regatta weekends I've experienced.

James Benoit, the Regatta's race officer from the Grenada Yacht Club, while taking the finish times for the feeder race, assured me that this was a return to years gone by when this race was a regular feature.

The feeder race started at the town of Gouyave on Grenada's west coast, and the benign conditions permitted many sub-five-hour times with the Baltic 42 *Tropical*, sailed by Christian Nelias, recording an elapsed time of three hours and 48 minutes to correct out in first place. Palm Tree Marine's *Tulaichean II*, a Beneteau First 38.5 sailed by Carriacou Regatta regular Mike Bingley, cruised into second and *Adleme*, a Beneteau Oceanis 411 skippered by Victor Cox, was third.



The Grenada-based Tulaichean II *crew took second place in the Feeder Race and went on to grab overall first in CSA class at Carriacou Regatta 2013's yacht series*

Doyle Sails Two-Handed Round Carriacou Race

The next day, 26 yachts crossed the start line of the Doyle Sails Two-Handed Round Carriacou Race. Old friends returned and new friends joined us for what turned out to be a three hour and 12 minute circumnavigation by *Tropical*, just six minutes slower than Don Marmo's catamaran, *Ned Kelly*, which was first in fleet on elapsed time. The winds were steady at 15 knots, with seas less than one metre. The beat up to Gun Point was fun for everybody, and no squalls while close to the Windward reef. Perfect!

The 13 entries in CSA (measured) class included Suzy Stanhope's Spirit 56, *Spirited Lady*, a Regatta regular that adds a touch of class to the event. Conditions were perfect for her as she powered north on the long beat ahead of the fleet. Rating started to count against her as the beat turned into a reach and the Beneteaus disappeared ahead. We were very happy to see Roy Hopper's Beneteau 38, *Windborne*, a past winner, return to this event but he was beaten into second by the much improved *Tulaichean II*. Event newcomer Alan Kingsman sailed his J/105, *Jab Jab*, into a solid third, a force to be reckoned with in the future, I think. Using the round-the-island race as a warm-up for the local Carriacou Sloop racing was *Glacier*, the current champion Windward Sloop. When not fishing, with racing sails bent on, she can point, go fast to windward and reach like a rocket. When she passed my Hughes 38, *Bloody Mary*, on the reach I had to check we were not aground!

Fun Class, their ratings to the CSA rule requiring an owner's declaration, was well supported by ten entries ranging from the Trident Challenge *Moon Rebel*, raced by Robert and Leslie Carlisle at 10.6 metres to Frank Pearce's 18.4-metre schooner, *Samadhi*. Martin Jennett of schooner *Scaramouche* fame brought his newly acquired Doug Peterson-designed Serendipity 43, *Maxima*, to the Regatta and won the round-the-island race, beating last year's winner, Andy Smelt's *Yellow Bird*, a Spencer 44, into second and the powerful *Boyo* sailed by Bon Vanderhoeven into third.

The Multihull Class had three catamarans, the Australian *Outsider*, an OceanCat 49 raced by Ian James; Don Marmo's *Ned Kelly*; and Bill Cororan's *Mandu*. *Ned Kelly* looks inoffensive but in any breeze points unreasonably high and flies. Which it did! *Outsider* came in second and, eventually, *Mandu* third.

Post-race festivities at the Lazy Turtle Pizzeria finished Day One as reasons for success (or lack of it) were debated and plans were laid for Saturday's victory until late.

Island Water World Frigate Island Race

Island Water World provided prizes for Race Two, the Frigate Island Race, for fully crewed yachts. The fine conditions continued, creating the day of the J/24s. St. Lucia-based Edgar Roe has been a welcome competitor at this regatta for several years, giving his appropriately named J/24, *Loose Cannon*, fine results with a pick-up crew. *Island Water World Die Hard*, the J/24 sailed very competitively in the Southern Caribbean by Robbie Yearwood was sailed up from Grenada single-handed, placing sixth in the Feeder Race. Island Water World managed to keep their fine CSA Class first-place trophy "in house" as *Die Hard* sailed a near perfect race, with *Loose Cannon* second and *Tulaichean II* a very close third.

Uwe Gerstmann's Joshua, *Salai*, worked her way into the results in Fun Class with a well-sailed third, while *Maxima* and *Yellowbird* changed places to give *Yellow Bird* the win. *Ned Kelly* was able to finish clear in front of *Outsider* in the Multihulls.

The results were posted at the Twilight Restaurant and The Old Rum Shop, which both had enough cold beer, rum and fried chicken to make a memorable street party.



Proud Tulaichean II *skipper and crew at prizegiving*

On the Sunday of the race weekend the yachts have a layday, permitting our competitors to visit Hillsborough and watch the local sloops race. As in previous years, taking a mooring at Sandy Island effectively put one on the race course, right in the middle of the action.

Budget Marine Hillsborough Race

The final day's Hillsborough Race, sponsored by Budget Marine, initially looked a little light but by 10:00AM the breeze had filled in enough to provide a viable event, if a little slow. *Island Water World Die Hard*, too good in the light airs, won CSA class, with *Tulaichean II* and *Tropical* a close second and third. *Yellow Bird* won Fun Class with *Salai* second, and once again *Ned Kelly* beat *Outsider* in Multihulls.

Prizegiving at the Slipway Restaurant offered a Doyle Sails bag with Mt. Gay Rum to all competing boats. Overall winners in the CSA Class were *Tulaichean II* first, *Island Water World Die Hard* second *and Bloody Mary* third. In Fun Class, overall winners were *Yellow Bird* first, *Maxima* second and *Salai* third. Overall winners in the Multihull Class were *Ned Kelly* first, *Outsider* second and *Mandu* third. Doyle Sails and Mt. Gay provided prizes for Friday's race, Island Water World for Saturday's, and Budget Marine for Monday's. Palm Tree Marine's *Tulaichean II* won the Budget Marine trophy for overall CSA first, along with dinner for two at the Lazy Turtle. *Die Hard* received a Budget Marine Trophy and dinner for two at the Slipway Restaurant.

While this yacht regatta is a somewhat out-of-season, low-budget event, it offers great racing and lots of fun, and cannot function without a small group of volunteers under race officer James Benoit. James, Barbara, Gus and Claude, thank you for giving up your weekend so we might play!

Thanks also go to Mt. Gay Rum, Doyle Sails, Island Water World, Budget Marine, Lazy Turtle and the Slipway Restaurant.

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Looking for the right team to manage your yacht? TMM St. Vincent has what it takes to ensure she is well cared for in your absence. You can rest assured that we are dedicated to looking after your yacht with a consistent level of care and commitment to customer service. Ask about our flexible management options to suit your needs.

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As part of its fleet expansion TMM St. Vincent are looking for more catamarans to add to their fleet. If you're looking to place your catamaran in charter management with a company that has a proven track record, a great industry reputation and a team that makes sure that your yacht is in tip top shape for sailing "the finest waters anywhere" then TMM St. Vincent would like to talk to you.

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Tel: 784 456 9608 Mobile: 784 494 8490
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Carriacou Homecoming – CCEF Revisited

by Melodye and John Pompa

"Welcome to Carriacou where the local time is 8:10AM and it is Tuesday the 30th of July. Please remain seated until the pilot has brought the plane to a complete stop."

We made it — at least Melodye and John did. Too bad John's suitcase didn't; Mr. Suitcase finally arrived on Friday. This was our first visit to Carriacou since we sailed north in March 2012. At that time, we fully expected to return in July, but while we were visiting family in the States, we got a buyer for our yacht, *Second Millennium*. The whole sales transaction took place very quickly and before one could say "Goodbye, Carriacou" we were living in Florida.



Not necessarily boat racers, but a signature part of the annual Carriacou Regatta nonetheless, CCEF fundraisers have gathered over EC$200,000 for local education

When the plane did come to a complete stop and we got off we were greeted by our dear friend Lizzy from *S/V Horta* and our good friend and taxi driver Bubbles. What followed, and did not stop until we finally left Carriacou a week later, was the constant meeting of friendly faces and "welcome home" greetings from some of the best people we have ever known. Who says you can never go home?

Our trip to Carriacou was not just about seeing old friends. We went back to take part in the festivities of Carriacou Regatta, and most importantly, the activities sponsored by the Carriacou Children's Education Fund. CCEF had its start back in 2000 when a small group of visiting yacht folks decided to come up with some way to repay and thank the people of Carriacou for the warm and friendly welcome we always received. It was in 2000 that CCEF had its first auction and a spectacular (at the time) EC$3,100 was raised for the children! Visit the CCEF website at www.carriacouchildrenseducationfund.org for more history of CCEF and find ways to participate in helping the children. CCEF provides school uniforms for some 50 children each year, school lunches for 20 Harvey Vale Government School children through the Meals from Keels project, and scholarships and a book stipend for graduating secondary school students to attend TA Marryshow Community College.

With the total money raised since 2000 over EC$180,000, this year we set as our goal breaking the EC$200,000 mark. Excuse us for saying "we"; old habits are hard to break. What we meant to say was "the current custodians of CCEF have set the goal of breaking the $200,000 mark".

When we started telling people that we had the boat for sale and were planning on retiring from the Caribbean, almost everyone asked us not what were we going to do, but rather, "what about the children?" We told them "not to worry, there were some very capable and dedicated folks who will pick up the reins of CCEF and carry it to even further heights."

Our good friends Lizzy and Harm from *S/V Horta* and Judy and Gordon from *S/V Dreamcatcher* representing the visiting yachts, along with Conny and Georg from Arawak Divers, have done yeoman-like duty as the driving force of CCEF. This core group has had plenty of support from others like Jerry (formerly of Tyrrel Bay Yacht Haulout) and Barbara (formerly of *S/V Kasheter*).

With the goal of $200,000 set, it was time to go to work and make it happen. The traditional pre-regatta barbecue at Tanty Lizzie's Seaside Fountain Bar and Restaurant was the kickoff activity, "meet old friends, make new friends", and was an overwhelming success. CCEF was off to a great start with record amounts raised by donations and the ever-popular raffle, which offered a pool of eight prizes! From the comments we heard during the evening, all had a good time.

Next on the agenda was the world famous Carriacou Children's Education Fund auction! World famous it is because we have had as many as 90 visiting yachts from 20 countries anchored in Tyrrel Bay and attending the CCEF auction. This year more than 60 yachts were in the bay for the festivities.

The owners and management of After Ours nightclub had graciously offered their facilities for storage throughout the year and for the annual auction. The bargain table, always a popular attraction and staffed by John and Yolanda of *S/V Joyo*, Bram of *S/V Donna Dee*, and Ian of *S/V Celtic Spray*, broke another record by selling goods to the tune of over EC$1,300. Other tables of interest included household items, kids and linens, T-shirts, books and charts, and art prints, all manned by volunteers.

John of *S/V Stingo* served as auctioneer, assisted by Harm and Gordon. Up for bids were the usual boat parts of all kinds, assorted certificates for dinner for two from area restaurants, a cake from Patty's Deli, several laptop computers, and, new this year, a round-trip ticket to Grenada on the *Osprey* ferry and a prepaid phone card from LIME. The biggest ticket item and with the most bidding activity was, as usual, the haulout from Carriacou Marine. By the end of the day, total sales from the auction and all the tables reached more than EC$8,000.

Special guests attending the auction included several people who have been instrumental in assisting CCEF in their various projects throughout the years. Susan Peters, social worker attached to the Ministry of Carriacou and Petite Martinique, has used funds from CCEF to provide school uniforms to hundreds of children since 2001. Patrick Compton, formerly principal of the Hillsborough Secondary School and manager of the Grenada Union of Teachers bookstore, has provided advice and assistance in the TA Marryshow scholarship program since its inception in 2006. With Mr. Compton's retirement this past year, Henry Stiell, formerly principal of the Hillsborough Government School, has stepped in to fill Mr. Compton's shoes, both at the bookstore and with the scholarship program.



Many sponsors, too numerous to list here, provided goods and services for these fund-raising activities. For a complete list, please visit www.carriacouchildrenseducationfund.org and show your appreciation for their support by patronizing their businesses.

How did we do against the goal set for this year? As a matter of fact, very well: by the end of the week, the total had gone over EC$204,000! Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this success over the years.

In addition to surpassing the financial goal set for 2013, this year also marked another special event: the Carriacou Children's Education Fund is now officially registered with the Government of Grenada as a non-profit, thanks to the assistance of the law firm of Nigel Stewart and Associates.

Then, all too quickly, our visit to Carriacou was over; time to go home, to our new home. When we boarded the plane at Lauriston International Airport, we both took window seats (actually, all nine passenger seats are "window" seats) to have a last glimpse of the island. As our flight gained altitude, we could clearly see the mangrove lagoon in Tyrrel Bay where we safely spent many a tropical storm, along with Hurricanes Ivan and Emily — fond memories in a way, especially the camaraderie and cooperation of all who were forced to take shelter. The friendship and fellowship of the cruising community is something we will remember forever.

When we were living on *Second Millennium*, we always said that we never say goodbye. Rather, when we parted we said, "'til we meet again". To all our friends on Carriacou and all those we met over the 18 years that we lived in the Caribbean, "'til we meet again".



Venezuela: Is It Safe?

by Sally Erdle

"By any reasonable argument Venezuela ought to be the preferred destination for yachts heading south for the hurricane season. There are over 1,100 miles of coastline to cruise, 80 offshore islands to visit, and South America's third largest river, the Orinoco, to explore. If that is not enough to tempt you, then ashore Venezuela can offer a choice of 32 national parks, 15 percent of the world's bird species, 5,000-metre-high mountains and the Angel Falls, the world's highest with an uninterrupted drop of 807 metres. With very little imagination you can picture Venezuela as being the major, year-round yachting centre of the Caribbean with yachting there a multi-million dollar industry. But isn't, and it's not likely to be — unless some changes are made…

"It will not be easy to improve matters. Amongst Venezuelans there is a sense if not of complacency, then of acceptance: this is the way Venezuela is, and if you choose to visit Venezuela then you must accept it. Well, boaters do not like being hassled for no good reason, or robbed simply because they are there."

Those words were written by cruiser Alastair Buchan — in 2000. But in the subsequent 13 years, rather than developing its fabulous cruising grounds, marinas, chandleries and boatyards into a regional yachting powerhouse, Venezuela became something of a cruising ghost town. What happened?

In a word, crime.

A Wave of Armed Attacks

Starting around the early 1980s, Venezuela was a favorite Caribbean destination for both cruising and boat work — and then it plummeted "from hero to zero" in the wake of a tsunami of violent crimes against visiting yachts that began in 2000 with the reported attack on a boat called *Dutch Concrete*.

It is true that the main Venezuelan cruising grounds span an end-to-end distance roughly equal to that from Trinidad to Puerto Rico, and yacht-related crimes also do happen along the island chain. But from 2007 to date, there were 32 assaults on visiting yachts in Venezuela reported to the Safety and Security Net (see www.safetyandsecuritynet.com/venezislands.htm and www.safetyandsecuritynet.com/venezmainland.htm) involving injuries, often by gunshot, to and/or physical restraining of crew in the course of a robbery; there were four deaths. This compares with ten reports to the Net of such assaults on yachts in *all* of the Lesser Antilles in the same period, and no deaths. Although we can compare numbers of crime reports from the island chain with numbers of reports from Venezuela, we don't have yacht arrival statistics for Venezuela, so we can't compare actual crime rates — but it's doubtful that over recent years Venezuela hosted three times more yachts than the entire Lesser Antilles.

Regardless, as the cruisers' online resource Noonsite (www.noonsite.com) has said, "It is not so much the number of attacks [in Venezuela] that cause concern, but the violent nature of these attacks."

Certain parts of Venezuela were especially problematic. As early as 2001, Venezuela's Organización Nacional de Salvamento y Seguridad Marítima (National Organization for Rescue and Maritime Safety, a.k.a. ONSA) began to advise all boaters to avoid the coastal areas east of the yacht-service hub of Puerto la Cruz, unless traveling in company. Reports in 2003 and 2004 spurred ONSA to increase the threat level for the Paria Peninsula, which runs eastward from Carúpano toward Trinidad (see map on page 20), to "high risk". Melodye Pompa of the Caribbean Safety and Security Net wrote to *Compass* in January of 2008: "…it is noteworthy that every report received by the Caribbean Safety and Security Net from the Paria Peninsula for the past seven years involved assault and robbery — a distinction unique within our cruising grounds."

DAVID MORGAN



Kiwi cruiser Brenda Webb takes a stroll on deserted Sotavento, the westernmost of the two Los Aves islands

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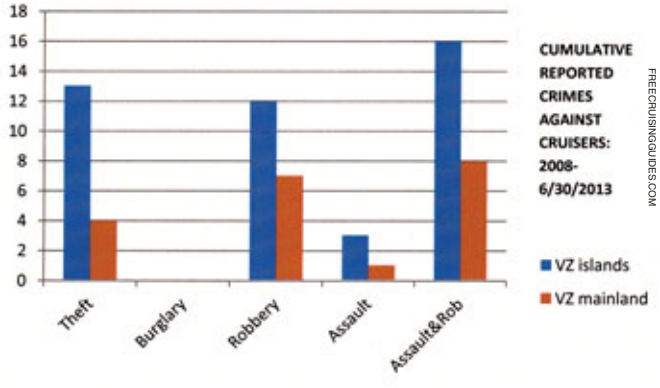


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In 2008, it was reported that the Venezuelan Navy and Coast Guard had stepped up their patrols to combat acts of piracy. Nevertheless, 2008 turned out to be a very bad year. According to Noonsite, in September 2008, the yacht *Chrysalide* was anchored outside Marina de Caraballeda, west of Puerto la Cruz near Caracas. Four men attacked, and in resisting the attack, skipper Philip Armand Leudiere was shot several times in the head. Philip's wife, Catherine, remained captive until the robbers finished their looting.

That November, Ken and Cathy Peters were anchored at Isla Borracha near Puerto la Cruz aboard their yacht, *Chill*, along with another boat, *I'Lean*, with fellow cruisers Steve and Gloria Davis aboard. At approximately 1730 a *piñero* (pirogue) with three men aboard approached the two yachts asking for water. When one of the crew came back up from below with water, the men shot Ken and attempted to kill Steve. Steve apparently then shot at the pirates, killing one and injuring another. Ken was killed and Steve was shot in the thigh. Noonsite noted: "This is the fifth shooting incident in Venezuela that has been reported to Noonsite this year (plus numerous boardings and thefts)."



The Caribbean Security Index has compiled reports of various types of crimes against cruisers over the past five and a half years. This graph indicates that the incidence of robberies involving assault is high in Venezuela, while that of simple burglary — i.e. theft of items from an unattended boat, a fairly common crime elsewhere — is quite low. (Data from CSI, the Safety and Security Net and ONSA vary owing to differing collecting, sorting and reporting methods)

The beat went on with the 2009 attack and shooting up of the yacht *Navarna III* off Cabo Tres Puntas, the 2010 armed boarding and gunpoint robbery of the crew of *Boldly Go* between Los Testigos and Margarita, and, in 2011, the boarding and assault of the crew of *Bikini* at Porlamar, Margarita, resulting in the skipper's hospitalization.

By February 2010, Angelika Gruener (herself the victim of a firearm attack with her husband and son aboard the yacht *Angelos* at Punta Pargo in 2008) wrote, "Only the bravest sailors are still cruising in Venezuela." Yet, as recently as last year, the following incidents were reported on Noonsite:

In January 2012, the crew of the yacht *Akat* were attacked and boarded off Carúpano while underway bound for Grenada. The crew were wounded and the boat ransacked.

In June 2012, the catamarans *Pélagie* and *Bella Ciao* were subject to an armed robbery on the Caño Guamal, a side stream of the Mánamo River. "At half past seven in the evening a speedboat with four man arrived. These men were of Hispanic appearance, about 35-40 years of age; one wore army trousers (camouflage type)... All of them wore leather boots. All four [boarded *Pélagie*] with three pistols pointing..." After the robbery of both boats, the crews proceeded to the nearest Guardia Nacional: "We asked them to sign our written report (in Spanish) of what had happened the night before. They refused to do so, saying that [according to jurisdiction] they were not able to do this." A source subsequently informed them, "The men who robbed you were indeed policemen. After they had robbed you they attacked tourists at the lodges and the lodge owners insisted that the authorities investigate."

In August 2012 those aboard the catamaran *Feline Good* were robbed at gunpoint by five men while at anchor between Puerto la Cruz and Mochima National Park.

Ellen Birrell, victim of the 2010 attack on *Boldly Go* between Los Testigos and Margarita, recently reported, "French friends who reside in a slip at Puerto la Cruz were on anchor in Porlamar last year along with two other French boats. The three boats were attacked simultaneously one evening and one woman was shot in the leg. Also in 2012, Peter, who lives aboard in Porlamar and owns restaurant and dinghy-building companies there, was boarded and shot in the arm."

Have Conditions Changed?

Should cruisers worry about incidents that happened half a decade ago, or even last year? That depends on whether or not conditions have changed. For many years cruisers avoided Colombia because of the crime risk there. Today the Colombian coast guard patrols the coastline and has been sensitized to yacht security and the value of yacht tourism; increasing numbers of cruising boats are calling there (see related news item, "US Boating Associations Target Colombian Market", on page 7). There may be fewer crime reports these days from Venezuela, too, but is that because crime against yachts is getting under control or because there are fewer yachts to prey on?

We don't know. But in a wider context, Venezuela is now "far and away the most dangerous country in South America", according to a study reported in the December 28th, 2012 issue of the *Christian Science Monitor*, citing a homicide rate of 73 per 100,000 of the population. (For comparison, neighboring Trinidad & Tobago recorded 27 homicides per 100,000 in 2012.) The article notes, however, that much violent crime in Venezuela is centered in the capital, Caracas — a place cruisers don't frequent. And in any big country there are bound to be safer and not-so-safe areas, as well as gang-related crime that does not much affect visitors. Cruisers can attest from their own experience that they have found parts, at least, of Venezuela to be safe (for examples, see the stories on pages 20 and 22).

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But the overall picture of the country is not encouraging. The *CSM* article says, "These figures [showing a marked increase in violent crime] are just part of a wider pattern that began… in 1999. The blame for this lies on both internal and external factors. The internal factors include rampant corruption in almost all branches of the security forces, a lack of investment in the police force, weak gun control that has led to a proliferation of arms, and a lack of coherent security policy.… On the external side, there is the fact that Venezuela has become a principal transit nation for Colombian cocaine. This has led not only to the presence of Colombian criminal networks in Venezuela… but the development of Venezuelan organized crime. Principal among this homegrown organized crime is the 'Cartel of the Suns', a powerful drug-trafficking network allegedly led by senior members of the military." (Note that a French cruiser reported that in 2003 he and his crew were boarded, beaten and robbed while at anchor in Puerto Santos by "several men in military battle gear, guns in hand… a squad of six young men with bad intentions and a big motorboat, equipped with automatic guns and bulletproof vests, wearing hoods to hide their faces and gloves to leave no fingerprints. Because of the quality of their equipment… they could be renegade soldiers.")

As Angelika Gruener wrote in 2010, "Of course, criminals exist and attacks can happen everywhere. But one difference between crime against yachts in the Eastern Caribbean islands and Venezuela is this: in many of the islands the officials try to get the bad guys who are detrimental to their tourism industries, while currently in Venezuela it seems that nobody is taking care of the yacht crime. The attackers can get away with impunity, and they know it." Have things changed since then?

Recommendations

Today, cruiser, marine surveyor, former operator of a boatyard in Venezuela, and long-time Venezuela resident Cris Robinson says, "I would say security-wise things have got worse, as far as the mainland coast and Margarita are concerned. The media is not reporting bad news any more but nothing concrete has been done to improve security in coastal waters, a problem that would be difficult to remedy even if anybody was concerned.

"Local boats are armed to the teeth and ready to defend themselves. Don't come unless you are prepared to do the same.

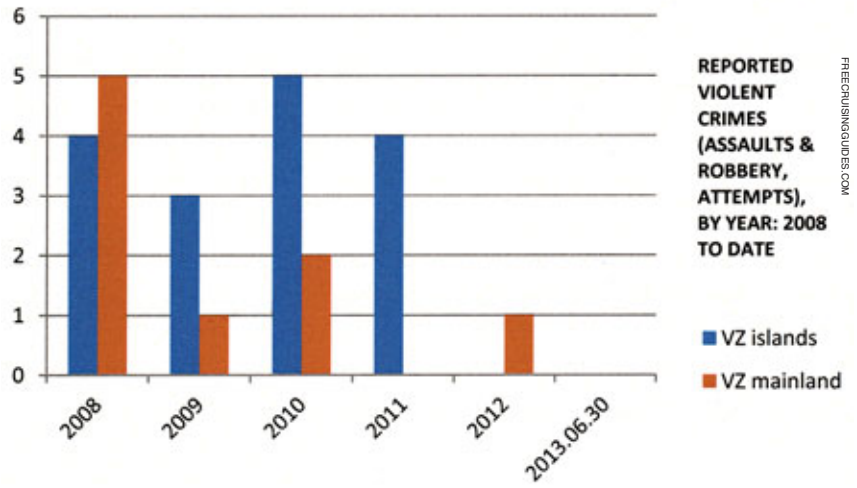
"Most boats heading west now avoid the mainland coast and Margarita and go direct to Roques, then Aves, which seem to be okay so far regarding piracy, but the level of bureaucracy and the associated fees and 'commissions' is rising. One can avoid Gran Roque (the west end of Los Roques is great, and there's nobody there) and the guard post on Sotavento (Barlovento is still paradise) and be okay.

"Good news is the dollar exchange; it is high and rising on the black market. The boatyards are struggling on and you might get a cheap job, labour-wise, but you should probably bring your own materials or make sure the yard has your favourite antifouling in stock."

Ritchie Laesker of the Venezuelan Marine Supply (Vemasca) chandlery says, "Due to the general situation in the country it could be a little irresponsible to invite yachties to visit. I don't necessarily mean there is a risk to them only; everyone there has been, or has someone in the family who has been, a victim of some sort of violence. There are no authorities or higher instances where you can go and ask for help or protection.

"On the other hand, the infrastructure improved a lot. A new boatyard was built in Margarita. There are two now: Astilleros del Caribe (65-ton Travelift) and Astivamar (100-ton Travelift). Both are mainly working with fishing boats and Venezuelan yachts. Puerto la Cruz, Higuerote and La Guaira are servicing Venezuelan customers as well.

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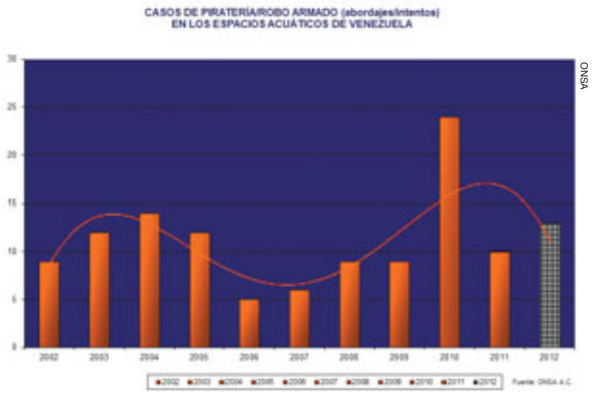


The numbers of violent crimes reported from Venezuela to the CSI are going down, but no doubt so too has boat traffic. And, as Harmon Brink of the Safety and Security Net says, 'The crime in Venezuela is much more than reported on the Safety Net website; this is as not all crime is reported to us. I know at least three boats over the last year that have been visited by pirates with brute force and all they could find was taken, even dirty laundry'



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"My recommendation would be, if someone *needs* to go, stay in a marina, don't walk around and never go anywhere at night. Note that international check-outs must be submitted three days in advance as boats must be inspected (for drugs) prior to leaving."



Venezuela's maritime safety organization ONSA provides this graph of incidents of piracy/armed robbery (boarding and attempts) in Venezuelan waters over the past decade. ONSA tracks reports of attacks on commercial vessels as well as yachts

Venezuelan writer Oscar Hernández, a contributor to Chris Doyle's *Cruising Guide to Venezuela and Bonaire*, tells *Compass* readers, "With my hand on my heart I would encourage visiting yachts to visit the country only if they take all precautions regarding their personal security. It is a lottery. Our visitors will be in the same statistics that we have in the country: very high criminal rates and along the coastline fewer authorities and piracy once in a while. For years we have tried to encourage government to understand the benefit of visiting yachts for the economy and the generation of employment. But Venezuelans have not yet understood the value of tourism in this oil-producing country.

"Of course the country is beautiful and Los Roques is the best. My recommendation is to follow Chris Doyle's book, avoiding the mainland. Sailing near the Carúpano coast is not safe. The best thing is to sail the northern islands and as far as Los Roques. There is nothing to look for on the mainland unless you pay the fees in a marina in Puerto la Cruz and leave the boat there to see the country by bus or plane. Forget overnights in Mochima.

"I recommend that a telephone is available at all times and to use the contacts in the sidebar of this article in case of emergency."

Conclusion

As Brenda Webb says in her article on page 22, "Going to Venezuela is a very personal choice to make and we wouldn't advise for or against. At the time we went we felt it was worth the risk — but because the situation is changing constantly we would urge sailors to research as much as possible before deciding whether or not to go." Each cruiser will have to decide for him or herself.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

- Maritime Emergency telephone: +58 (212) 715-7105 or +58 (424) 231-3300 or +58 (269) 416-4686
- ONSA's online emergency report forms: www.onsa.org.ve/sar
- If you have an emergency position indicator e-mail transmitter (i.e. SPOT Satellite Tracker), you can sign up at ONSA's Maritime Emergency Net (www.onsa.org.ve/spot) for an immediate mSAR response.

INFORMATIVE RESOURCES

- Caribbean Safety and Security Net: www.safetyandsecuritynet.com. As well as reports of crimes against cruisers, the website includes a list of safety tips accumulated throughout the nearly 17 years of the Net's existence.
- Noonsite: www.noonsite.com/Countries/Venezuela and www.noonsite.com/General/Piracy
- Caribbean Security Index: freecruisingguides.com/caribbean-security-index-csi
- ONSA (Venezuelan National Organization for Rescue and Maritime Safety) www.onsa.org.ve
- Chris Doyle Guide updates: www.doyleguides.com/updatesvenez.html
- Venezuela Cruisers on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/547046078683243
- *Compass* has published numerous articles about cruising in Venezuela over the years. Go to www.caribbeancompass.com, scroll down to Caribbean Compass Back Issues Archive, and type "Venezuela" into the search field.
- There is also a relevant blog entry at http://indigomoon.us/triplog/tr021.html.
- Phil Chapman: If anyone would like to ask us any questions regarding our experiences of Venezuela you can e-mail us on svchaser@gmail.com or visit our blog at www.blog.mailasail.com/chaser2.
- Oscar Hernández: My son, Oscar Jr., and I can be contacted in case of a specific need for traveling inside the country or any recommendation for our friends the cruisers while traveling: oscarhernandezbernalette@gmail.com, or tel +58 (412) 234-8007 (Oscar Sr.), +58 (414) 265-9555 (Oscar Jr.).



FOR ME, VENEZUELA HAS THE EDGE

by Phil Chapman

My wife, Yvonne, and I have been cruising Venezuela's coast and offshore islands aboard *Chaser2*, a Hunter 44DS, for the past six years. During that time we have also visited many Caribbean islands including Cuba, Hispaniola (the Dominican Republic and Haiti), Jamaica, Curaçao and Bonaire, as well as most of the Windward Islands. In my opinion, from a cruiser's point of view, Venezuela has the edge on all of the above. One never has a problem finding an anchoring spot because none of the anchorages are crowded, along the coast or offshore.



Chaser2 *in a calm, uncrowded cove*

Weather, too, is an important factor — in Venezuela we can sail all year round without the threat of storms and hurricanes. Of course we know we need to keep a check for anything unusual, but generally the wind and waves are good. The waters around the coast are surprisingly clear, especially when one considers the number of ships transporting heavy oil from one of the largest oil-producing countries in the world. We have never seen any pollution from ships in our Venezuelan travels.

The majority of the cruisers I have met visiting these shores have stayed far longer than they anticipated. They are surprised by the welcoming people, the crystal-clear waters and the tranquility. As a consequence, many people have decided — as we have — to spend more time enjoying what is not available elsewhere.

Coming from Trinidad on our first visit to Venezuela, *Chaser2* arrived at the islands of Los Testigos. We have been back to Testigos, too — they are beautiful islands. A Guardia Nacional outpost, where you should report your arrival, is adjacent to the anchorage. You cannot check in to Venezuela here (that needs to be done either in Isla Margarita or on the mainland), but it is reassuring to know the Navy is keeping an eye on things. When arriving from the east it is better to sail offshore to Los Testigos and avoid the northeast coast of the mainland; this is a rather unsavoury area and many

CHRIS DOYLE



The immense cruising ground of Venezuela has a lot to offer, including — no doubt because of the country's disturbing reputation for crimes against yachts — scores of empty anchorages

anchorages are either exposed to the northeast or overlooked by heavy populated barrios. I like to avoid these overcrowded slum areas for obvious reasons. I wouldn't walk the streets of London or Madrid late at night for the same reasons.

Moving from Los Testigos onward to Isla Margarita, Porlamar in the south is a favoured anchorage. Juan Griego in the north is much nicer, but depending on your onward travels may be a little out of the way. But certainly if you want to visit Isla Blanquilla, 60 miles north, Juan Griego is an ideal stop-off and a lovely town.

I won't list all the places in Venezuela we have visited; anyone interested is welcome to visit my blog mentioned below. I would like to recommend a few places that are certainly worth a visit.

Isla Blanquilla is a beautiful picture-postcard island in the middle of nowhere. It has white sand beaches and two palm trees, and the coral and snorkelling are very good. Rarely are there more than three or four boats in the anchorage, though there were 12 when we visited with our daughter and granddaughter, which was a little disappointing — we were hoping to have it to ourselves!

Moving back into the coast, the Gulf of Cariaco is beautiful. Cumaná at the western end of the gulf is a clearance port; the marina office will help you with the paperwork for a fee or you can get a cab and do it yourself at the port captain's office. The officials are all helpful, but Spanish-style bureaucracy reigns here, making check-in a lot more difficult than it needs to be, and compared to many Caribbean islands it is expensive. Having said that, don't be tempted to avoid clearing in; that is illegal, as everywhere else, and can result in fines or worse. The fees will soon be recouped when you fill up with diesel. With the exchange rate currently 30 bolívares to the US dollar, 100 litres of fuel costs five bolívares, or 150 gallons for a dollar. (I always give them a big tip.) Some places are not allowed to sell fuel to foreign-flagged boats, or else they charge extra for the privilege, i.e. one bolívar per litre. That's a big increase, but still 30 litres or eight gallons for a buck isn't bad.

The Gulf of Cariaco itself has many stunning anchorages, including Laguna Chica and Laguna Grande on the north side and Marigüitar on the south side with a lovely hotel and restaurant ashore overlooking the anchorage. For cruiser services, Medregal Village is outstanding. Approximately 25 miles due east of Cumaná on the northern shore of the gulf, it's an oasis with beautiful gardens, hotel, swimming pool, bar and restaurant as well as a haul-out yard at very good prices for monohulls and catamarans up to 47 feet. There are rooms to rent if you prefer not to live on the hard while you are working, and special discounts for sailors.

Marinas in the mainland city of Puerto la Cruz are good too, with inexpensive and good facilities, and most have bars and restaurants. Hauling out is possible in TMO (TechMarine de Oriente) marina, though you are officially not allowed to work on your own boat, only with their recognized staff.

About 60 miles northwest of Puerto la Cruz is the offshore island of La Tortuga. With an area of about 156 square kilometers (about 60 square miles), it's as big or bigger than many of the Windward and Leeward Islands, yet it's uninhabited apart from the coastguard base and a few fishing huts.

One of our favourite anchorages of all is at Cayo Herradura just a quarter mile off La Tortuga. In the shape of a horseshoe, it's peaceful and picture-perfect, with white sandy beaches.

—Continued on next page

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—Continued from previous page

There are coral reefs for snorkeling — it's like being anchored in your own swimming pool. Sometimes we barbecue on the beach; there is always plenty of driftwood to burn. On their first visit to Cayo Herradura, our friends Peter and Sylvia of *Tradewind* had a long, wet and uncomfortable sail and arrived after dark; they went straight to bed. In the morning, sitting in their cockpit surrounded by beautiful waters and beaches was better than anywhere else they had ever been in the



Clockwise from above:

Enjoying a sunset beach braai with cruising friends

Our granddaughter is a regular visitor

The swimming pool at Medregal Village in the Gulf of Cariaco



Caribbean. They were in the anchorage alone. "We had never before encountered that," Peter told us. Peter and Sylvia have been cruising the northern Caribbean and Windwards for 15 years. Come the weekend, however, there can be as many as 30 motorboats in Cayo Herradura. They don't affect the cruisers, though, because we anchor farther away from the beach and they like to "park" as close to the beach as possible. Weekends are a good time to meet the local people; many speak English and we have often been invited aboard their boats for drinks and to tell our stories of living aboard. They are very proud of their motorboats, especially the sound systems!

On our travels to Bonaire last year we sailed about 45 miles west from La Tortuga to Carenero on the Venezuelan mainland. We entered a river inlet and anchored outside the Club Bahía de los Piratas, adjacent to the mangroves. It really is a lovely spot, with parrots and red ibis waking you in the morning and accompanying your sundowners in the evening. The marina is a private yacht club, but if you are smart (ie. no Speedos and a T-shirt), and use their bar and restaurant facilities, they welcome you ashore. Walking through their hotel/apartment block you can get to the main road; they will even phone a taxi for you to go into the town of Higuerote. The restaurants were excellent in the marina, a place we want to go back to this year.

If travelling west, the choice is along the coast or out to the archipelago of Los Roques. When we have travelled this route we have taken the offshore route to Los Roques and returned along the coast. Travelling east, offshore is not really an option — it's uncomfortable against wind and current. Along the coast, winds are more favourable and we have had some of our best sailing returning to Puerto la Cruz from Curaçao.

Gran Roque with its sandy streets and *posadas* (guest houses) is very attractive. There is a small airfield, but no vehicles. Internet is available and there is a bank and some shops that sell most things, but it is advisable to stock up before you arrive. Water is available and maybe you can find a friendly fisherman to give you some petrol or diesel if necessary. The islands and waters of Los Roques offer some good fishing and great sailing in sheltered waters.

The western coastal route generally allows you to sail west or east with more northerly or southerly winds. There are many anchorages and marinas. Ensa Cata makes a beautiful overnight stop; the fish and coral are amazing.

These are a few of our favourite destinations while sailing Venezuela, but the country has a lot more to offer inland. One time we took a bus to Mérida, a well-known university town in the Andes mountains that has many tourists, both Venezuelan



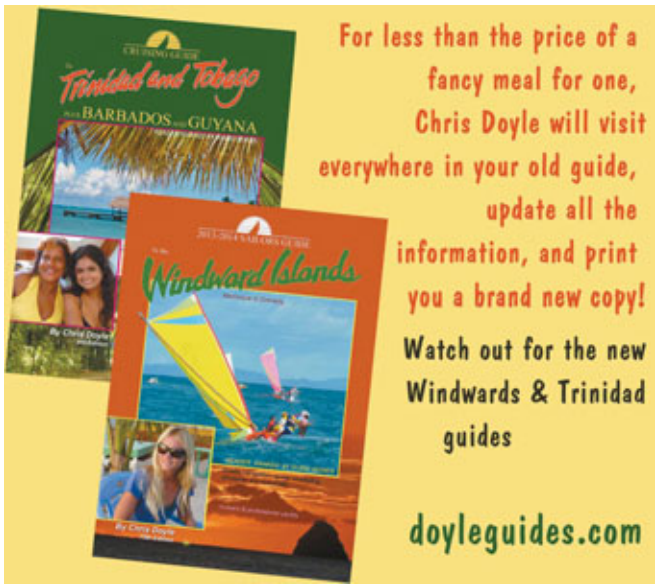
and foreign. We stayed in a *posada* for a few nights. Luckily the cable car was working, so were able to go high into the Andes. In Mérida also there is a wonderful zoo, good for adults and children, though maybe safety is not one of the strong points — it was possible to stroke a lion. In town we booked a tour from one of the many tour companies and took a four-day trip to Los Llanos, catching piranha fish for dinner, catching alligators for photos and seeing anacondas. We have also driven to the Orinoco River, where tours can be taken to Indian villages.

Getting around Venezuela is inexpensive and "over 60s" get half price. Our flights from Caracas to Cumaná were 300 bolivares for the two of us — that's US$5 each. (I think I'd rather pay US$10 and be under 60, but that's the way it is.) Long-haul buses are cheap, too, but wrap up — the air con is either full on or off, and it's never off.

For us foreigners and wealthier Venezuelans who have their money in dollars, the cost of living is very good. But the Venezuelans who earn their money in local currency struggle because inflation is so high.

Venezuela has a lot to offer, and many cruisers we have met like it so much they have bought houses here or live long-term aboard their vessels in one of the marinas.

If anyone would like to ask us any questions regarding our experiences of this country you can e-mail us on svchaser@gmail.com or visit our blog at www.blog.mailasail.com/chaser2.





DESTINATIONS

Los Roques:

A Highlight of Our Caribbean Cruising

by Brenda Webb

My husband, David Morgan, and I spent ten days in the Venezuelan archipelago of Los Roques last year and rate it as a highlight of our Caribbean cruising.



The waters were absolutely pristine, the fish life around the coral was amazing and the beaches were the best we have ever seen. The anchorages were fantastic and we were often the only cruising yachts there — perhaps for a reason!

Aboard our Kiwi yacht, *Bandit*, accompanied by buddy boat *Balvenie* with Mark Farrell and Amanda Church on board, we left Grenada in February 2012 headed for Colombia and, after much research and soul searching, opted to spend time in some of the Venezuelan islands en route.

After reading numerous articles on various websites (including Noonsite) and other cruisers' blogs, we made the decision to go to Venezuela. We were well aware of the risk of piracy but by purposely avoiding known danger spots such as Isla de Margarita and Isla La Tortuga and heading straight for Blanquilla we felt more comfortable. Missing the mainland and Isla de Margarita meant we could not officially check in to Venezuela but we opted to take that risk.

Being "under the radar" in Venezuela brought its own risks of being caught by authorities and made to pay huge fines or bribes, and that was something the crews also took into account.

Blanquilla proved to be a tranquil haven with idyllic white sandy beaches and brilliant snorkelling. Both *Bandit* and *Balvenie* were approached by local fishermen in the anchorage but they only wanted to trade freshly caught fish for batteries, engine oil and Coke.

Neither boat's crew felt in danger at any time but we made sure we travelled closely together. Being evenly matched for speed meant even during night passages the two boats were never more than a mile apart. Not that it would have helped, really — but being close and in contact via VHF, SSB and satellite phone did give us a feeling of security. Being Kiwis we do not carry any firearms but had discussed at length our options if approached at sea.

Both yachts' crews had every intention of clearing in with national park authorities on arrival in Los Roques but soon after anchoring off park headquarters in El Gran Roque the crew of a Swedish cruising yacht approached and warned us not to.

The Swedes had been in to apply for a permit to cruise and were told it would cost them US$900 — far more than the "official" fee. When they told the authorities they could not afford that they were given 48 hours to leave, regardless of the weather. Their advice to us was to risk cruising Los Roques without a permit and be prepared to leave or bribe our way out if approached by the coast guard.

We left the main island, keeping to the outer islands before heading to Los Aves. We purposely kept on the move, not staying more than one night in an anchorage, and hardly saw another boat, let alone an official one. We found ourselves constantly looking over our shoulders but even that didn't take the gloss off being in what we consider the Caribbean's best cruising ground.

Going to Venezuela is a very personal choice to make and we wouldn't advise for or against. At the time we went we felt it was worth the risk — but because the situation is changing constantly we would urge sailors to research as much as possible before deciding whether or not to go.



Clockwise from left:
A Venezuelan fishing boat anchored in the turquoise waters of El Gran Roque, the only inhabited island in the Los Roques archipelago

Yet another beautiful and uncrowded beach with pristine waters in Los Roques. We purposely kept on the move...

Kiwi cruiser David Morgan with a freshly caught fish given by friendly Venezuelan fishermen at Isla Blanquilla





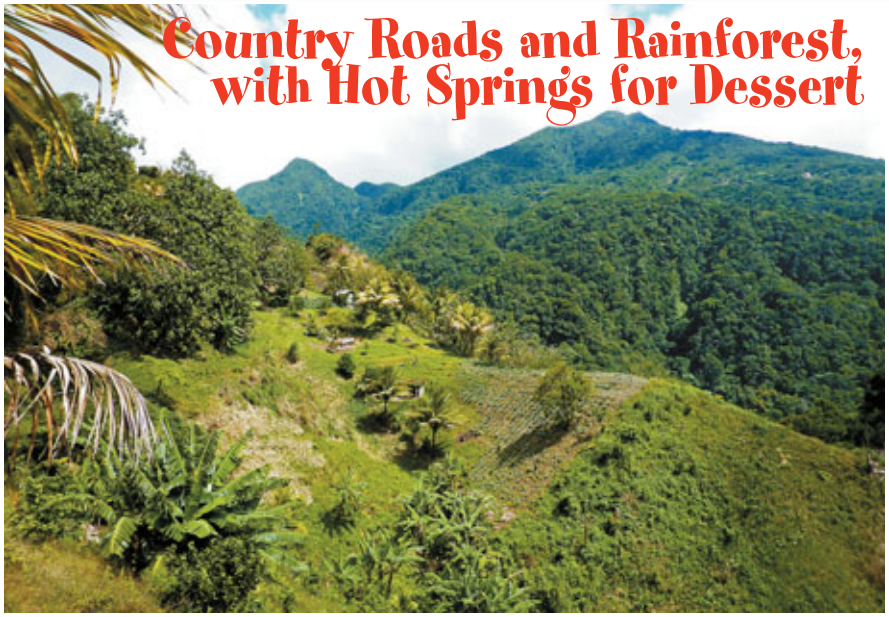
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At Morne Prosper, small farm plots dot the rainforest-covered landscape

Dominica's Waitukubuli National Trail covers the Nature Isle in 14 segments, starting at Scott's Head in the south and ending at Portsmouth in the north. An easily accessible segment for those visiting the island by yacht is Segment 3, which runs south-north a couple of miles inland from where yachts anchor in the Castle Comfort area just south of Dominica's capital, Roseau. Segment 3 of the Waitukubuli Trail takes you through both rainforest and cultivated areas, from Bellevue Chopin to Wotten Waven. The road to the trailhead is easily covered by bus; you need to take a bus going east from Loubiere.

If you dinghy down to Aldive and leave your dinghy there, the road east is just a short walk to your south towards the other end of the village. Ask to be dropped off at Bellevue Chopin ("bell-view show-pan") and look for the trail markers.

The whole trail from Bellevue Chopin to Wotten Waven takes about six hours at a reasonable pace. (You can also do just the prettier half of the hike by taking a bus to Giraudel and starting from there. This is a loop road. Walk south from Castle Comfort to where the gas stations are, take the road heading inland and wait for a bus. Ask to get off in Giraudel.)

This trail goes through quite a few villages and uses minor roads and feeder roads much of the way, with linking trails through the interior. We did this hike with Sea Cat (Octavius Lugay of Sea Cat Tours, VHF channel 16), who seemed to know everyone we met along the way.

—Continued on page 34



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Above: You can choose to start the hike at Bellevue Chopin or at Giraudel

Below: Our friend Sea Cat showed us the way



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To Bequia and Back:

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

by Donald Stollmeyer



The Trinidad-built Ballerina Girl *anchored at Grenada's Sandy Island*

AFTER seven very long, often tedious years of construction in Trinidad, I launched my 43-foot cruising catamaran, *Ballerina Girl*, in December 2012. The long sweaty hours, the never-ending mosquito bites, the interminable expenses... at last they were at an end.

Ballerina Girl's hulls and decks were built using a fiberglass/foam core, vacuum bag process, so she is strong but quite light. She has a standard main and jib but she also carries a powerful gennaker. I outfitted her with a turbo-charged 130-horsepower (no, that's not a misprint) five-cylinder diesel, mounted on a central pod under her bridgedeck. Some rather unkind friends even questioned why I had bothered with the mast.

Over the Easter holidays, my family of five headed off to Bequia, hoping to get there just in time for the prizegiving ceremony at the Easter Regatta. We had not been to Bequia for several years and it would be wonderful to see familiar faces and to reacquaint ourselves with that special place. I was sure we'd have a great trip but most importantly, I was dying to see how fast those 130 horses would push us!

The Good

We passed through Trinidad's Boca at 6:10AM on Easter Thursday and headed



Watch that speedo — not bad for a cruising cat! And it got better...

north into a nice breezy Caribbean Sea. Although well loaded, *Ballerina Girl* danced her way over the waves and before we knew it we had the hook down in Sandy Island's tiny lagoon (this is the Sandy Island just off the northeast tip of Grenada) at 5:40PM. That's 91 nautical miles in 11 1/2 hours, an average of almost eight knots. Pretty quick. Suddenly those mosquito bites didn't seem so bad after all!

We spent a peaceful night and day anchored in Sandy Island's pristine lagoon, a place we've visited many times in the distant past. Boats with more than three feet of draft cannot get into the lagoon, so normally we have the island to ourselves, but on this occasion it was Easter Friday and a small pirogue came across from Grenada with a group of people, intent on spreading some joy. We had a lovely morning and later that afternoon we prepared to depart but had to wait for my son, Daniel, and my daughter, Adelle, who had gone for a stroll around the far, windward side of the island. They were gone for a long time and I was beginning to get annoyed at them delaying our departure, not realizing the drama that was unfolding.

Unknown to us all, one of the pirogue's group who had gone spearfishing on the reef had been swept around to the windward side of the island. To cut a long story short, it turned out that when Daniel and Adelle were strolling around the island they saw the spearfisherman way out to sea in some really big waves, his head occasionally bobbing out of the water. Dan got word back to his friends on the beach who raced their pirogue around the reef to the windward side. The spearfisherman could no longer be seen, but with Dan giving them directions, repeatedly sending them farther and farther offshore, the pirogue was eventually able to locate the guy and haul him aboard. The poor man was almost delirious with exhaustion. This was a very, very close call and had Dan and Adelle not been there, the spearfisherman would undoubtedly have perished. Anyway, everyone eventually returned and settled down to some more food and drink, so with many "thank you's" and "be carefuls", we left this happy group, weighed anchor and headed north to our next stop, Carriacou.

The wind continued to be kind to us, 18 knots and more on the beam but with a fairly big sea. *Ballerina* was skipping along and we regularly saw over ten knots on the speedo as we cut through the swells towards Carriacou. I've sailed this stretch many times before and I know there are no rocks in this part of the ocean but today, on two separate occasions I saw big splashes in the same place, well away to windward. Perhaps I was still preoccupied with the near tragedy at Sandy Island, but for some reason I assumed they were Bonaparte Rocks, which are normally located just to the south of Carriacou. I saw the splash a third time and inexplicably, once again I assumed it was Bonaparte Rocks. At the time, my family was lounging on the coach roof when suddenly, Pauline, Dan's girlfriend, looked up and shouted, "A whale!" And in a flash Bonaparte Rocks were back where they were supposed to be, just off the tip of Large Island, south of Carriacou.

We quickly rolled in the jib and motored directly to windward to where the whale was treating us to an amazing spectacle of repeated breaches, rising high in the air, white underbelly glistening brightly in the sun, its massive body crashing back into the sea with an almighty tower of spray. This spectacle was, to use the modern word, "awesome". When we got really close (in my opinion too close, but who am I to question the superior knowledge of the crew?) we realized there were three humpback whales, two adults and a calf. We motored alongside them for a few minutes, not more than 20 feet away from the nearest one. While my family reveled in the sight, I prayed loudly for the whales not to breach. Suddenly they sounded and were gone forever. I have sailed in the Grenadines for many years and never once before had I seen a whale. To see these colossal creatures for the first time was wonderful, but to see them in this joyous mood, breaching over and over, well, it was just indescribable.

We anchored at Saline Island that night. The next day, while motoring into 21 knots of true wind passing Sandy Island in Carriacou, we found out how fast the 130 horses could push us. An interisland cargo boat was motoring hard, smoking its way towards Hillsborough. As it came up alongside us, Dan said, "You going to take that, Dad? Let's see what she can do!" The time had come. Somewhat gingerly I slowly pushed down the throttle and *Ballerina*'s speed increased past eight knots, to nine knots, then to ten knots and we started to gain on the cargo boat. The smoke from her exhaust increased noticeably. Dan egged me on further. I pushed the throttle harder forward. *Ballerina*'s bow rose up some more as she edged towards 11 knots. The smoke from the cargo boat grew even blacker and one of the crew went inside. More coal? I pressed the throttle all the way and we climbed to a steady 11.5 knots... and we pulled away. Eleven and a half knots into a seriously strong headwind in a sailing boat! I didn't stop grinning until I fell asleep that night.

Next day we stopped off at Union Island, then a night in the Cays and the next night in the lovely big bay in Canouan. On Easter Monday we headed off to Bequia and after another wonderful sail we arrived in Admiralty Bay early in the afternoon. My daughter was on the helm as we passed well to the lee of the small islands south of Bequia. Just before we rounded West Cay, with the wind funneling through the channels, *Ballerina Girl* touched 13.9 knots using the small jib and main. Who did you say built that boat? Oh, man!

In Admiralty Bay, the wind was belting over the hills and streaking down across the sea, not that unusual at Easter. We went ashore just in time for the prizegiving and had a lovely evening meeting my old racing friends from Barbados, Grenada and the other islands. It was super to be in Bequia again. Next day we visited Port Elizabeth then rented a car and drove around the island to remind ourselves how beautiful it really is.

All too soon we were pointing south to begin the trek back to Trinidad. The wind had conveniently swung 15 degrees to the north, so once again we were reaching along in wonderful conditions. When we got to Union Island, one of Dan's friends, "Danny B", joined us with his kiteboard and from then on *Ballerina Girl* was transformed into a kiteboarding platform. This was wonderful and we spent many days visiting the surrounding islands, photographing Danny B flying on his kiteboard. Unfortunately, one afternoon when kiting in Ashton, Danny B had a pretty bad fall which resulted in his dislocating a shoulder. We motored across to Palm Island where Chris Doyle's *Sailors Guide to the Windward Islands* reported a French doctor was located, and indeed he was. The doctor soon returned Danny B's shoulder to its original position and refused to accept payment. He is to receive a bottle of Trinidad's finest on our next visit. I promise!

Next day we left Union and continued south to Grenada in a good breeze of 18 to 22 knots, aft of our beam all the way. The sun was out and the sea was sparkling. This is sailing at its best; it could not be any better. Well lubricated with the best rum punch in the world, we laughed and sang as we rushed past Carriacou, Kick 'em Jenny and Isle de Ronde, broad reaching at between ten and 13 knots towards the leeward coast of Grenada. And then, well, it actually did get better. As we came around the coast of Grenada, the swells evened out behind us and the breeze came charging across the water in sustained gusts, sometimes touching 28 knots. Our water tanks were low, food was almost exhausted and the stocks of beer and rum were seriously depleted. *Ballerina Girl* was light.

—Continued on next page



—Continued from previous page

I saw the gust coming along the water from quite far off and as it hit I bore off a few degrees. The boys whooped and hollered as Dan shouted the readings on the speedo: 12... 13... 14... 15... 16... and finally 16.1 knots! The wind carried us all the way to Point Saline at the southwest tip of Grenada and we motored up to Prickly Bay for the afternoon and night. By this time, I was sure our luck would run out but next day we sailed off at dawn and had a lovely crossing to Trinidad, arriving in Chaguaramas in time to clear Customs and Immigration before overtime hours commenced at 4:00PM. This marked the end of a glorious sailing holiday.

The Bad

Our trip through the Grenadines was wonderful in virtually every respect and I do not wish to spoil the telling with relatively small annoyances, but there is one matter that I feel should be addressed by the authorities, and that is the placement of private rental moorings on the public seabed in some of the popular anchorages. We had to deal with this imposition in Clifton Harbour and in Salt Whistle Bay. I have to say up front, the guys who operate these moorings were not unduly aggressive, but I do not believe they are entitled to commandeer areas of public usage for their personal commercial benefit. Additionally, I would not trust a mooring of unknown quality and I, like many other cruisers, do not wish to spend money unnecessarily. I trust my own ground tackle and very importantly, if I drag or get washed up, then I and no one else am to blame.

Rental moorings are placed in the prime anchoring spots and often remain unoccupied, yet still, boaters are told they cannot anchor near to them lest the owner of the mooring gets a rental later on. I had to anchor in relatively deep water well away from the beach in Salt Whistle Bay while several rental moorings that were located near the beach remained unoccupied overnight. The same occurs in Clifton.

The authorities need to address this issue as it seriously hampers cruisers who are more than willing to pay for their clearances, their cruising permits, their Tobago Cays park fees, and generally support the local economy in so many ways.

Best of all, though, there is a simple answer that offers a win-win solution. No private rental moorings should be permitted in depths of less than 25 feet. If this regulation is imposed, the prime spots could be utilized by the cruisers who are supporting the economy and are paying for the use of the area, and if the prime spots are all occupied with anchored boats, they have the option of renting a mooring in the deeper areas, areas in which they would likely be more willing to pay for a mooring. I don't mean to offend anyone but there is need to sort out this problem.

The Ugly

It was getting dark and we could not find a good place to anchor in Clifton Harbour (there were several unoccupied rental moorings in prime spots), but eventually we were able to nudge up close behind the outer reef. Wind, please don't swing 180 degrees in the night....

After dinner I came into the cockpit and noticed the dinghy was gone. I knew I had not tied it properly, damn it! We called to our neighbor who came across in his dinghy and he and Dan searched the harbor in the dark for at least an hour without success. (Bottle of Trinidad's finest to be delivered on our next trip.) Jeremy, kiteboarding king of Union Island, came out and also searched. (Another bottle of Trinidad's finest...!) In the end, the dinghy could not be located, even within the small confines of Clifton Harbour. Next morning, some fishermen found it on the leeward shore of the harbor. It took the payment of EC$800 (about US$300) to get it back. We cleared Customs and Immigration and, as the young people say, "We buss it outa dere one time." That is, "We left immediately."

It leaves a very sour taste when something like this happens. This was not a case of salvage. The dinghy drifted to shore just a few hundred yards downwind and the people who found it took awful advantage of the situation. I needed my dinghy back and I paid for it, but YUK, this was nasty.

Final Reflections on the Holiday

Well, by the time we got back to Trinidad, the "Bad" and the "Ugly" were relatively small blips on the radar and we were left with those incredible sailing days, the lovely anchorages, the fun and the laughter. *Ballerina Girl* performed beautifully. At 11.5 knots she was exceptionally fast under power but... at 16.1 knots she was faster under sail, and I'm so glad I installed that mast!

Donald Stollmeyer is the manager of PowerBoats Mutual Facility boatyard in Chaguaramas, Trinidad.









'The whale was treating us to an amazing spectacle of repeated breaches'

Coming *South* to the Caribbean



by Frank Virgintino

From the East Coast of the US, you can harbor-hop or take one of a number of offshore routes to the Caribbean. Note your choice of 'doors' to the Caribbean Sea using the offshore routes



You live in North America and you have made a decision to take your boat to the Caribbean. What a great idea! There are three questions that need to be dealt with before you cast off your lines: "Where is the Caribbean?", "What parts of it do I want to cruise?" and "How do I get there?

Where is the Caribbean?

Many cruisers think that "the Caribbean" is that set of islands from the Virgins to Grenada that make up the Lesser Antilles — or what has come to be called the "beaten track". Authors write books and articles entitled "Cruising the Caribbean" when what they really mean is cruising the Lesser Antilles.

The Caribbean Sea is approximately 1,500 miles east to west and as much as 700 miles north to south. The Caribbean region is comprised of the Greater Antilles (Cuba, the Cayman Islands, Jamaica, Hispaniola [Haiti & Dominican Republic] and Puerto Rico), the Lesser Antilles, and the mainland countries of the Caribbean such as Venezuela, Colombia, Honduras as well as many others. There are over 7,000 islands in the Caribbean, 28 of which are separate nations.

Where in the Caribbean do you want to cruise?

You must determine how much time you have, as rushing through the Caribbean is not a good idea given that there is so much to see and do. Assuming that you are planning to make for the Caribbean at the official end of hurricane season, the end of October, you have to decide where you want to spend your time (and money) cruising. Read and research before you cast off. Monthly boating-related periodicals like *Caribbean Compass, All At Sea, The Boca, La Regata,* etcetera, can help you acclimate to the Caribbean and can be found on line at no charge. Cruising guides to the entire region as well as various parts are abundant and informative. Cruisers' websites including www.noonsite, www.safetyandsecuritynet.com and www.freecruisingguide.com can help you immensely with your research.

Knowing what parts of the Caribbean you want to visit will help you determine your route to the Caribbean.

Traditional ways to the Caribbean

There are a number of offshore routes from the East Coast of North America to the Caribbean. These include heading for Bermuda and heading directly to the Lesser Antilles from the Chesapeake Bay. The value of heading to Bermuda is that, if you want to make landfall in the Virgin Islands or the Eastern Caribbean, you have your easting out of the way. However, the Bermuda route is difficult in many ways and, except in rare circumstances, should not be one of the routes you consider.

The Caribbean 1500 rally departs in early November each year from the mouth of the Chesapeake and heads to "the Caribbean" via the Atlantic Ocean to make landfall in Tortola. Rallies provide camaraderie and support and work hard to figure the right weather window to depart. Nonetheless there is always risk of storm at sea and sailing with other boats does not make the voyage without risk; nothing can do that. Before you consider this route, ask yourself whether you are sure you want to make your Caribbean landfall in the Virgin Islands. One of the biggest drawbacks of this route is that it is in the Atlantic Ocean. When everything goes well, it is a true joy and you will have completed a "right of (offshore) passage" at sea. At other times, you will wish you had stayed home and cut the grass.

Another route to get to the Caribbean is to follow the "Thornless Path", a term coined by the famous author Bruce Van Sant in his quintessential work, *The Gentleman's Guide to Passages South: The Thornless Path to Windward.* The strategy essentially eliminates the offshore part of the trip, which many cruisers do not like, and harbor hops all the way to the Lesser Antilles. In the book, the author explains ways to "beat the Trade Winds" by using local wind shifts and weather in a way that can make a difficult trip easier. The biggest drawback is that the trip can be just plain tedious. Day after day of heavy easterly winds in your face can make it grueling at times. If you are sure you want to make your destination the Lesser Antilles, this method can get you there. It is tried and true and many have used it. You must really understand what the author is saying or you will be buffeted by headwinds while you sail east on a lee shore in the Atlantic Ocean. His understanding of complex weather patterns and how to time them are those of a master and to benefit from his concept, you must become a master as well. It is not enough to know that a "norther" is coming down from North America. You must also know how big it is and how fast it is moving. You must know what its impact is when it starts and also must be able to understand when and how it ends.



A faster and safer alternative

There is an alternative way to get to the Caribbean that is safer and much easier than either of the two routes mentioned above. This is via the Windward Passage (the cut between eastern Cuba and western Haiti). When I say this — and I have said it repeatedly — many cruisers ask me why most cruisers do not follow such a route. The answer lies in the definition of the Caribbean. So long as you allow "the Caribbean" to be defined as the Lesser Antilles, the traditional routing will follow.

—Continued on next page



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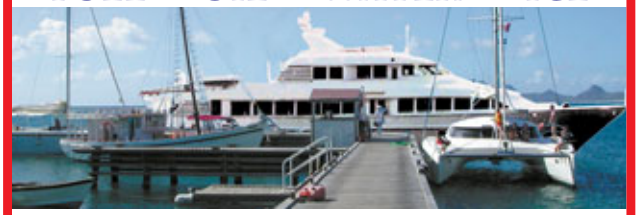
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—Continued from previous page

But if you study a map of the Caribbean and then study the winds and the currents, it becomes very apparent that there is a much better alternative. I make the case for this route in my book *A Thinking Man's Guide to Voyages South — the many facets of Caribbean Cruising*. After reading the book, a cruiser wrote to www.cruisersforum, "Does anyone know how many times Frank Virgintino, who has written this guide, has sailed the Windward Passage and south of the DR to Puerto Rico? It sounds like an option; however Bruce Van Sant did the thornless path about 20 times before he wrote his cruising guide." My response was that I had sailed to the Caribbean many times over 40 years, but that the test of the route I recommend was that in studying the map, winds and current, the answer would become self-evident.



KATCHOR

Looking at the map, you can clearly see that from the mouth of the Chesapeake it is almost 50 percent more distance to get to the Caribbean via the offshore route to Tortola than it would have been had you routed to the Windward Passage. Moreover, the tradewinds normally are east to northeast, and once you decide to take the Windward Passage you can head south and free your sheets. Once through the Windward Passage *you are in the Caribbean*. Not only are you in the Caribbean, but also you are no longer on a lee shore; you are on the south shore. From the Windward Passage, you can lay out your Caribbean adventure. You can head for Jamaica or for the ABC islands or the Dominican Republic. Even if you still want to route to the Eastern Caribbean, you can use the south side of Hispaniola and Puerto Rico to make landfall in the Virgin Islands. You can use the katabatic winds to make your easting while at the same time avoiding a dangerous lee shore on the north side. From the Windward Passage, there are a multitude of wonderful anchorages and harbors in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico as you head east.

If you define "the Caribbean" as the Lesser Antilles, you will route directly to the Lesser Antilles. If you define the Caribbean as being more than the Lesser Antilles, then the quicker you get there the better off you are, especially if the distance is shorter and the route safer, with a better angle for wind and seas.

The Back Door

Take a look at the map again and notice the western part of Cuba. That is where the "back door" to the Caribbean is. This entry into the Caribbean is rarely, if ever, discussed. For those that do not want to do any offshore work, it may be considered the counterpart to the Thornless Path into the Caribbean. It is a wonderful way to access the Caribbean, however it does require that you cruise the south coast of Cuba. To cruise the south coast of Cuba, you must clear into Cuba and currently, for US-flagged boats that can be a problem. Nonetheless, on this route there are frequent and beautiful stops all the way (see *The Cruising Guide to Cuba* available free at www.freecruisingguide.com) to Hispaniola. The entire south shores of Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico are not lee shores under most conditions and can help you make your easting by using the katabatic winds created by their mountains.

For more details on cruising the Caribbean from the west end of Cuba or the Windward Passage see "The Caribbean's Back Doors" in the October 2012 issue of *Compass* at www.caribbeancompass.com/online/october12compass_online.pdf.

Frank Virgintino is the author of Free Cruising Guides *(www.freecruisingguide.com).*

If coming from the East Coast and you don't want to miss the unique experiences of visiting Cuba (left) and/or Haiti (below), plot a course to enter the Caribbean farther west than the traditional Virgin Islands landfall



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Why Isn't It Stain*proof* Steel?

By Maurice Howland

Hurricane season in the Caribbean for most of us means finding our favorite hurricane hole and waiting for the all-clear signal in November. Many of us also use this time to attend to deferred maintenance like polishing our stainless steel and removing rust stains on the fiberglass. This maintenance should be a snap — right? Wrong. Attach stainless steel to gleaming white fiberglass and soon you will have a rust streak running down the side of your boat telling the world that you are a lazy slob.



What is Stainless Steel, Anyway?

So what makes steel stainless? To be called stainless steel, a steel alloy must have a minimum of 10.5 percent chromium content by mass. Chromium is hard. It is the hardest of all known metal elements, but it is also brittle. That is why your engine's head bolts are not stainless steel. Its good properties are that it takes a high polish, resists tarnishing, and has a high melting point. There are many different grades of stainless steel, but the 300 Series is the most widely used. In the 300 Series there is 304 and 316. 304's composition is 18 percent chromium and eight percent nickel. 316 is considered to be marine grade and typically contains 18 percent chromium and ten percent nickel.

That's all very interesting, but how does it work? Stainless steel does not "appear" to rust because of an interaction between its alloying elements, such as the chromium and nickel mentioned above, and the environment. This reaction forms a very



Top: Rust streaks can spoil the appearance of the prettiest boat

Above: A dinghy hold-down with pitted stainless steel

thin film that limits oxygen and water access to the underlying metal surface. Actually, the film is much thinner than the wavelength of light, so even though the steel is corroded on the atomic level it appears "stainless" to the unaided eye. On the other hand, common steel reacts with oxygen and water to form a relatively unstable, continuously growing and observable iron/hydroxide film that we call rust. Rust on both common and stainless steel seems to grow exponentially during the Caribbean's wet season, also known as hurricane season.

Why Does 'Stainless' Stain?

So what makes stainless steel stain? Researchers at University College of London claim to have solved this mystery. In the alloying process, as the steel ingot cools, tiny sulphur-rich impurities solidify at a lower temperature thus remaining molten for a time after the metal has solidified. While the metal is cooling, these impurities "suck" the chromium out of the steel around them, creating tiny grains of steel that are not stainless. Corrosion of these tiny grains is like a virus that triggers the main attack and soon "pitting" occurs.

One boat "expert" claims the rust stains often noticed around rail stanchion bases is due to what he calls "closed cell corrosion" which according to him, "will rust even the best stainless steel." He goes on to state that while we may want to blame the stainless, it is "simply the result of failure to bed the hardware properly." "The rusty hardware is waving a red flag at you saying, Hey Mr. Boatowner, there's water going through these screw holes." Oh yeah, heap on more guilt! If I re-bedded everything that produces rust stains on *Motivator*, I would never leave the dock.

The Scoop on Goop

But, if I do get off my lazy rear end to re-bed the offending hardware, how do I go about it? Again the "experts" do not agree. One "expert" is the proponent of the gasket method, whereas one places an enormous amount of goop (marine grade sealant)



Above: A rusting stanchion base. 'If I re-bedded everything that produces rust stains, I would never leave the dock'

Below and bottom: The 'experts' say that Butyl tape is less adhesive, but that was not the author's experience with this flag pole holder he wanted to remove before varnishing the rail





around the hardware to be attached and then only slightly tightens the fasteners. Twenty-four hours later, when the goop has partially cured, you return and fully tighten the fasteners so a gasket is formed. Another "expert" says, the "two step, wait to tighten and form a gasket method of bedding deck hardware method is probably one of the leading causes of deck core rot on the planet." He points out that the "two step" introduces too many opportunities for failure. His method is to tape it off, goop it up, and tighten it down.

Okay, so now that we have cleared up how to do it, what goop should I use? Once again I am afraid there is some disagreement among the "experts." There are four major classes of goop for marine use:

Polyurethane-based sealants, such as 3M 4200 and 5200 (a.k.a. the white stuff from hell)

Polysulfide-based sealants, such as LifeCaulk

Silicone-based sealants

Butyl rubber glazing tape

—Continued on next page

—Continued from previous page

If you are like me, you are pretty much addicted to 5200, but the stuff is messy, to say the least. Once while working on the radar arch, I dropped a tube of 5200, stepped on it, and then managed to track it into the salon. I didn't know that the first mate knew those kinds of words.





Top: Acid trip — Motivator's *arsenal of rust stain removers*

Above: Did you know you could polish your stainless with aluminum foil?

Below: Rusted fasteners on a 'marine' alarm. What part of 'marine' did the supplier not understand?



Polysulfide-based sealants are what we all probably should be using for most applications because their adhesion is not as aggressive as 5200, but they tend to eat some plastics. The biggest problem of carrying both types is: who needs two types of goop drying up in the tube after the initial opening? The third type, silicone-based sealants, do not belong on a boat IMHO.

I tried to break my addiction to 5200 by switching over to Butyl tape. The "experts" claim Butyl tape is the most versatile sealant above the water line. It is affected by chemicals such as diesel, so it shouldn't be used for deck fills. I figure if it keeps the rain from leaking around the windshield of a car doing 70 MPH, it ought to hold up to a little spray at seven knots.

Removing Rust

Another "expert" says, "When the boat is used in a corrosive environment such as saltwater, water with high sulphur content, or polluted water, the stainless steel will periodically develop surface rust stains. This is perfectly normal…." See, if you read long enough, you will find someone you can agree with! Then the "expert" went on to instruct on how to remove rust on stainless and fiberglass.

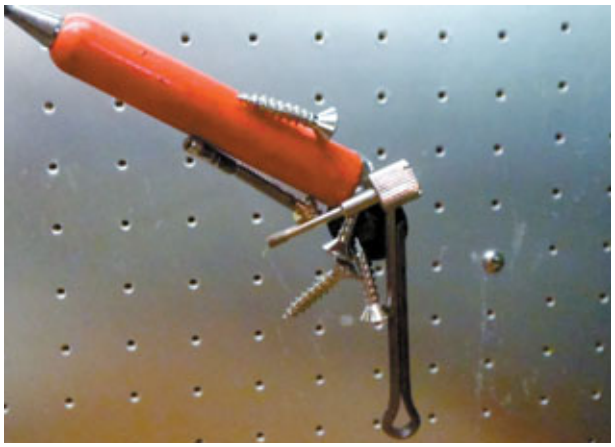
So, what is the best way to remove rust on stainless steel and fiberglass? Again, the "experts" do not agree and after a couple of weeks of boat ownership, we all become "experts".

What most rust stain removers have in common is some sort of acid. The popular brands contain either phosphoric, oxalic, or citric acid. Some of the more popular brands of rust remover found at your local chandlery look like either blue or white snot. They are actually a mild acid suspended in a gel that allows the acid time to work before drying. Because they contain acid, all of the rust-remover manufactures strongly recommend that you wear gloves and avoid eye contact or ingestion. The gloves are a good suggestion because from experience I know that prolonged contact will turn your fingernails yellow and rather unattractive.

It does not take long for the average boater to tire of paying US$10.99 for an eight-ounce tub of blue snot and start looking for an alternative that does not have the word "marine" in the label. A search of the boating forums will provide you with all sorts of alternatives from the "boater experts". The alternatives range from wood bleach (oxalic acid) to toilet bowl cleaner (hydrochloric acid). One "boater expert" warns not to leave the toilet bowl cleaner on too long or it may "eat a hole in your boat". *Motivator*'s captain is a cautious toilet bowl cleaner man.

On the somewhat bizarre side, you can polish and remove small rust stains on your stainless steel by rubbing it with aluminum foil. The person that taught me this trick also said that for stubborn stains, dip the aluminum foil in lemon juice or Coca-Cola. There is some science behind this theory, as many commercial stainless steel cleaners contain aluminum oxide, and of course lemon juice and Coke are both mild acids.





Top: Vice grips were needed to budge these bolts that were in service 18 months

Above: The author has learned to test ALL fasteners with a magnet before installing

Below: You can't prevent rust on a boat; all you can do is fight it. Even the author's shaving cream can is rusting, but this item will no doubt be replaced!



Beware Ferrous Fasteners

As if fighting the rust from stainless steel is not enough, some manufacturers of marine products like to sabotage us and include non-stainless steel fasteners with their products.

After I spent an hour removing the non-stainless steel bolts from the siren included with a "marine" alarm system, I e-mailed the manufacturer and shared my displeasure. They e-mailed back and stated that they were sincerely sorry, but it was their supplier's fault. Come on Mr. Marine Supplier, it's not that hard. If, when you place a magnet near a bolt or screw, it picks it up, it is not stainless steel.

You can't prevent rust on a boat; all you can do is fight it. In the Caribbean summer, even my shaving cream can is rusting.



SEPTEMBER 2013

♈ **ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)**
The last three weeks of this month might be challenging sailing; communication problems between the 9th and the 29th could cause problems aboard ship. Concentrate on working the ship and keeping on an even keel until these aspects clear.

♉ **TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)**
Minor squalls in your domestic sphere could cause discontent and distraction in boat business. Keep a firm hand on your emotional tiller between the 2nd and the 20th, spend your time on rewarding creative projects, and you'll sail through it.

♊ **GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)**
Your verbal skills will be in top form from the 9th to the 29th, so plot your course to take advantage of this. Let your love life and any ingenious brainstorms stay in their sailbags until after the 23rd.

CANCER ♋ (22 Jun - 23 Jul)
Romance will get a real lift after the 11th and will have a stimulating effect on boat business. Trust your instincts and keep any negativity to yourself between the 9th to the 20th or you could put new prospects on the rocks.

♌ **LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)**
You will have lots of fair wind in your sails from the 2nd to the 20th but remember to ease your mainsheet — quarreling about the cruising kitty could scuttle some positive potential.

♍ **VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)**
Your creative course will have clear skies and following seas. Use this positive aspect to organize details to embark on a prolific new voyage.

♎ **LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)**
Your verbal acuity will help you deal with the ebbing of a love affair in the first two weeks. Your sense of fairness and ability to objectively view the realities of love lost will allow that relationship to sail into Friendship Bay.

♏ **SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)**
An interesting team of business and love will step aboard around the 17th. There will be both lust and love in the main cabin this month and the effects will last into next month.

♐ **SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)**
You will have plenty of wind but whatever course you plot will meet with headwinds. Furl your sails and sit on the hook for a while — conditions will improve by month's end.

♑ **CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)**
Steer towards finishing details of innovative projects before the 9th and don't let misunderstandings and disagreements with crew or cruising buddies blow you off course.

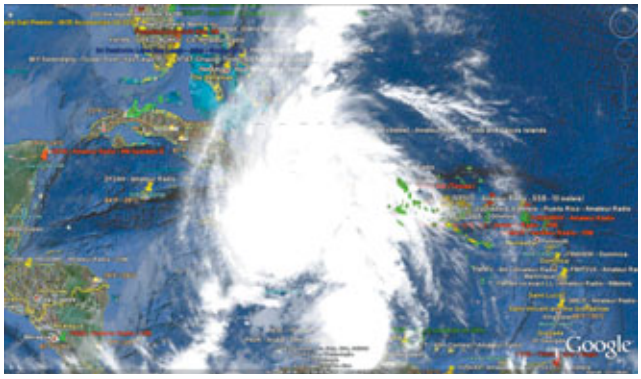
♒ **AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)**
Contrary currents with a crewmember or fellow sailor of the opposite sex could cause business setbacks. Use your increased verbal abilities this month between the 9th and the 29th for damage control and bring balance back to life aboard.

♓ **PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)**
Though your imagination will be in irons this month, boat business will be given a lift through the efforts of a female in your life and those clouds of frustration will clear up by the end of the month.

Island Poets

September Song

Come September, you should be, safe on land and not at sea,
But if the dangers you ignore, there are some benefits in store!
When slipping between hurricanes, facing their threat, it's then you gain
A prize to cherish! Empty bays and beaches all along the way!
Just sail on in and drop your anchor; no stress or crabby skipper's rancor,
Or worries in the dark of night that boats will bump, or if you might
Be washed ashore because some craft has forced you to a shallow draft!



And yes! There is another reason: September starts the lobster season!
A sizzling lobster, conscience free — and garlic butter, that's for me!
A swim to soak away the crumbs, a snooze to pass the afternoon,
The peace you knew comes back once more, that calm you started cruising for,
The lovely turquoise under wings of raucous gulls doing their thing
Behind your hardly moving boat. What better time to be afloat?
You see the islands as they were in days gone by, and friend I swear

The stresses and the constant worry evaporate into a blurry
Unimportant passing dream, and vanish like they've never been.
Watch the glowing sunset's colors or silver moonlight on the water
Don't let the season's weather daunt you, move to any bay you want to,
Your electronics let you know each weather change, rough seas, a blow,
Let prudence reign, adjust your goal, and get into a hurricane hole,
And ten to one you're safe in there — at least as safe as anywhere.
Just slip on down to Carriacou. The Mangrove has a slot for you.

If weather threats still cool your ardor — remember, life has no safe harbor!

— Nan Hatch

INGA'S Mirror

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HIPPOCAMPUS — A SEA MONSTER

What animal has the head of a horse, a pouch like a kangaroo, a tail like a monkey AND the MALE gives birth? Unsure? Its generic name *hippocampus* comes from the ancient Greek *hippos* meaning "horse" and *kampos* meaning "sea monster".

Meet the infamous seahorse!

Seahorses have long captured people's imaginations. These creatures have unique characteristics that distinguish them from all other fishes, including external armor in the form of bony plates, tufted gills, and an elongated snout. In addition, each eye can rotate independently from the other; consequently, one eye can look in one direction while the other is scouting out a completely different area.

Found in shallow tropical and temperate waters throughout the world, these upright-swimming relatives of the trumpetfish and pipefish can range in size from 1.5 centimeters to 35 centimeters long. Although not the *slowest*, seahorses are rather inept swimmers because of their body shape and can easily die of exhaustion when caught in storm-roiled seas. They propel themselves by using a small fin on their back that flutters up to 35 times per second. This dorsal fin is translucent and often nearly invisible. Even smaller *pectoral* fins located near the back of the head are used for steering.



The warm waters of the Caribbean Sea serve as home to *three* species of seahorses: the *dwarf*, lined and longsnout seahorses*. Adult seahorses spend most of their lives within a small home range, or a territory that may vary from the size of a ping-pong table to that of a football field. So as not to get swept away by the current, they use their *prehensile*, or grasping, monkey-like tails to cling to corals, grasses or *mangrove* roots. Seahorses are most vulnerable to predators, such as other fish, when they are *juvenile*. Many species are able to *camouflage* and change their body color to blend in with their surroundings and hide from lurking predators.

Father Knows Best

Perhaps the most unusual feature of the *seahorse* is that the *male* gives birth. Male seahorses are equipped with a brood pouch on their ventral, or front-facing, side. These equine-like fish will find a mate and remain with that partner, or be *monogamous*, during an entire breeding season. (Only a few other species, such as some penguins, are known to do this.)

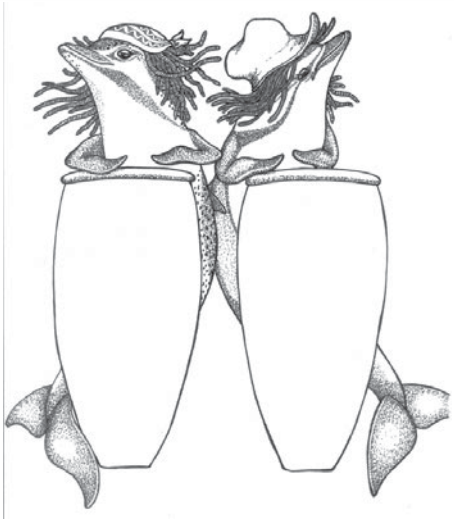
The male seahorse's *courtship* begins with a greeting ritual dance that is initiated by the female. As part of the courting ritual, the male will *dance* around and shoot jets of water through his brood pouch to show it is empty. Their elegant courtship includes the pair changing color, entwining around one another, and promenading together. Depending on the species and the water temperature, pregnancy lasts from two to six weeks, and the male may give birth to up to 1,500 tiny seahorses. After hatching, the baby seahorses remain in their father's *pouch* until they are capable of free swimming. However, less than 0.5 percent of infants survive to adulthood, explaining why litters are so large. These survival rates are actually fairly high compared to other fish, because of their protected gestation, making the process worth the great cost to the father.

Survival — Bite by Bite

Seahorses must eat almost constantly in order not to starve. This is because their bodies do not have a stomach that retains the food they eat while extracting the necessary nutrients over a long period. Like adults, juveniles can eat thousands of tiny organisms each day. Their tiny mouth is at the end of a long snout and a fused jaw so they can only suck tiny bits of food from the water such as small *shrimp*, plankton, and fish larvae, whatever will pass through the tiny mouth. And if you listen carefully, you can hear the distinctive click they produce each time a food item is ingested.

Declining Populations — How Can You Help?

Although seahorses are found worldwide and throughout the Caribbean, there is growing concern over declining populations. Of the 47 identified species of seahorses, 14 of those were discovered in the last eight years, and 33 of those species are considered threatened by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Harmful fishing and tourism practices as well as runoff pollution threaten these animals. You can make a difference by refusing to buy dried seahorses, supporting marine protected areas and educating others about these issues.

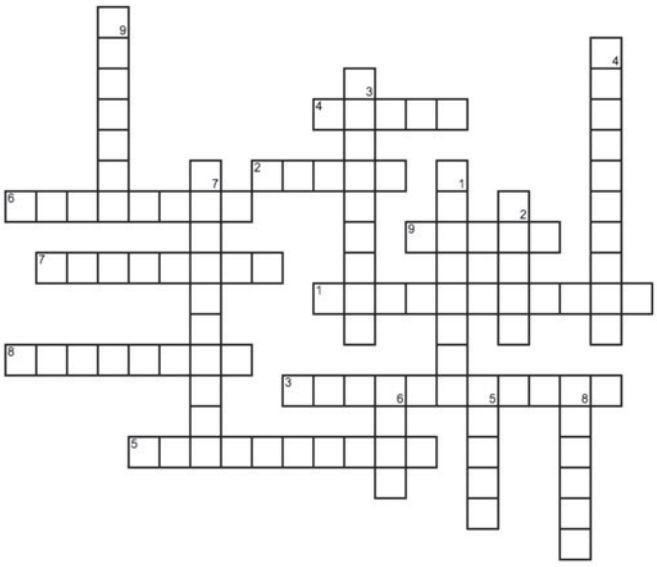


* The dwarf sea horse (*Hippocampus zosterae*) is the smallest of all seahorses and is colored beige, yellow, green or black with white markings. The lined seahorse (*Hippocampus erectus*) generally ranges in color from orange to brown, with some colored red, yellow or black. Its distinguishing feature — inspiring its name — is the white lines found on its head and neck. The longsnout sea horse (*Hippocampus reidi*) is covered in brown spots and white dots. A disproportionately long snout characterizes its head. While found in great numbers in the Caribbean Sea, these three also live in the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic *Ocean*. There are several distinct families in the suborder *Syngnathoidai*, to which sea horses belong. This suborder includes sea moths, pipefish, *trumpetfish*, cornetfish and snipefish.

Seahorse Search Crossword Puzzle

Try this fun puzzle. The answers are many (but not all!) of the words that appear in italics in the article. The answers are on page 40.

Seahorse Search



Across

1. means "horse sea monster"
2. smallest species
3. a relative
4. where papa keeps the "wee ones"
5. strange shaped tail
6. fins that help it steer
7. a favorite habitat
8. a young animal that has not reached sexual maturity
9. a courting ritual

Down

1. equine-like fish
2. another name for sea
3. flirting before pregnancy
4. "one and only" for life
5. number of Caribbean species
6. who has the babies?
7. ability to blend into one's surroundings
8. favorite food
9. they hold the record for being the ___ fish in the ocean


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Coral reef in the Caribbean © Nancy Sefton
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The Sky in September 2013

by Scott Welty

The Planets in September 2013

MERCURY - Hiding until later in the month when you can catch a glimpse in the evening sky. Setting between 1900 and 1930 hours during the last week.

VENUS - STUCK! Setting around 2030 hours all month. Enjoy!

EARTH - Waiting for a better offer…

MARS - A morning star rising before the Sun in Leo.

JUPITER - Rising after midnight and riding in Gemini. Just to the left of the moon on the 28th.

SATURN - Setting between 2100 hours and 2000 hours this month in Libra.

Sky Events This Month

5th - New Moon

8th - Moon, Venus and Spica set together (see Figure 1). If you happen to be in far southern South America the moon will actually occult (pass in front of) Venus. This is a very pretty grouping in any case. Hope it's not cloudy!

19th - Full Moon

22nd - Autumnal Equinox (see below)

24th - Venus, Saturn, Mercury in the western sky (see Figure 2).

Autumnal Equinox

Yes, time once again for the fall equinox ("equal night"). On the 22nd the sun will rise due east and set due west. We'll have equal night and day (roughly, depending on how you define "day") and you can stand in the shade of your own sombrero at noon on the equator. Now here's a nice puzzle. From the spring equinox to the fall equinox the earth moves through 180 degrees in its orbit around the Sun, and that swing takes 185 days. From the fall equinox back to the spring equinox (another 180 degree swing) takes 180 days. What?!? Why? This is the big clue that the Earth's orbit is NOT a circle. It's an ellipse, and the speed of the Earth in that ellipse is not constant. We go faster when we are closer to the sun and slower when we are farther away. Perhaps surprisingly then is the fact that we are closer to the Sun in the winter and farther in the summer. I know, it hardly matters in the Caribbean!

Saturn and the Cassini Mission

We get a pretty good look at Saturn this month in the early evening sky. The first time I showed my young daughter Saturn in a small telescope she just went nuts running around: "I saw SATURN!" It is exciting that what is a dot in the nighttime sky turns into that ball with the pretty rings even in a small telescope. Several notches above that are the pictures sent to Earth from the Cassini mission to Saturn. If you've not seen these you might want check out the photo gallery at www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/cassini/main/index.html#.UfkAF1NQ3xg or just google "Cassini mission". The spacecraft has been orbiting Saturn and exploring its many moons since 2004. Still working great. Recently it sent back this clever picture of Earth from Saturn.



FIGURE 3

The Earth as it looks from Saturn. Wave!

To Contemplate While Having a Glass of Wine on Deck

Wow, are we small! Carl Sagan called the Earth, as seen from space, "the pale blue dot". This to me is the big reward from the space program — perspective. To see our truly tiny home planet from space gives one pause. At least it should.

Scott Welty is the author of The Why Book of Sailing, *Burford Books, ©2007.*

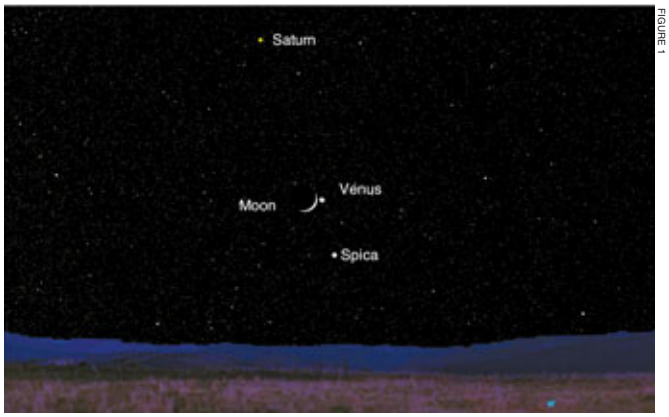


FIGURE 1

September 8th at 1930 hours, looking west: pretty crescent moon with Venus

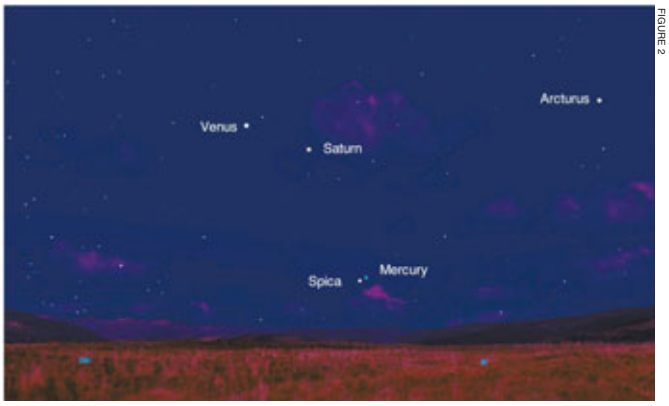


FIGURE 2

September 24th at 1830 hours. Three planets to see… if you're lucky!



—Continued from page 23 ...Sailors' Hike

At Bellevue there is a point on the road where you can see right down onto Roseau. A few steps east, the road to the trail is marked and takes you north. For a while you are on a small country road, and will pass an organic farm and composting place on your left. They offer farm tours: if someone is around you can pick up a flyer and consider coming back another day for that. The road continues on for a long way getting smaller and less traveled the farther you go. The countryside is scenic and rural.

Towards the end of the road you go into the rainforest and onto the trail, which takes you down a moderate valley and up the other side. There is a seasonal river at the bottom. You climb up and rejoin the road in Giraudel, a village known for its flowers. You soon come to a junction where you can turn uphill or downhill, both part of the trail. Downhill has great views of the distant sea and is a little shorter; it also carries you past several tiny rum shop snack places where you will be able to find a soft drink and meat patty or some such for lunch.

You continue on along tiny country roads with good views over the surrounding hills and eventually come to a trail shelter on the edge of a very deep and wild-looking rainforest valley. Sea Cat disappeared for a short while and came back with walking sticks — almost essential on this steep and often slippery descent that takes you hundreds of feet down to the Claire River. The river is a good place to take a break — find a nice spot and jump in to cool off and get refreshed for the steep ascent to follow.

Although walking uphill takes a little more energy, it is often easier than going downhill, and it will not seem so far before you come out in the lovely little agricultural village of Morne Prosper with its green fields set against the steep mountains. After a gentle climb along the road you come onto the trail and it is all down hill to Wotten Waven.

Wooten Waven is the village famous for its hot springs, so take a break here in a hot pool and relax all those tired muscles before taking a bus back down to Roseau. We walked a short way to Ti Kwen Glo Cho, which was delightful. They had a garden walk taking you to a hot pool in one direction and waterfalls in another. They also had a really funny collection of old bathtubs, all fed with hot spring water.

For more information on the Waitukubuli National Trail visit www.waitukubulitrail.com.



CHRIS DOYLE

Crossing the River Claire on Segment 3 of Dominica's Waitukubuli National Trail. This hike takes you through diverse rural areas, from country roads to rainforest trails

From a sailing family on the south coast of England, Chris Doyle earned a doctorate in psychology before sailing to the Caribbean in 1969 and becoming a resident of Grenada. An avid hiker, diver, photographer and sailor, he is the author of the sailor's Guide to the Windward Islands and several other regional cruising guides. Visit his website at www.sailorsguide.com.

—Continued from page 11 ...Caribbean Eco News

Hope in Haiti for Critically Endangered Iguana Species

International Iguana Foundation (IIF) is working closely with a Haitian community to create a wildlife reserve that would help save the critically endangered Ricord's iguana, an animal that is key to reforestation efforts in the area.

Ricord's iguanas were known to exist in just three small isolated subpopulations in the Dominican Republic: one on Isla Cabritos, a second along the southern shore of Lake Enriquillo, and a third in the coastal lowlands near the town of Pedernales. In 2007, biologist Ernst Rupp of Grupo Jaragua, working alongside the IIF, discovered an entirely new subpopulation in the Haitian town of Anse-a-Pitres.



IIF

The critically endangered Ricord's iguana

Subsequent research by Rupp and Masani Accimé of IIF revealed that this population is extremely fragile, with an estimated 250 adults left, while what remains of its dry forest habitat is disappearing at an alarming rate. With support from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, Accimé has been working closely with the Anse-a-Pitres community to create a municipal wildlife reserve that would save this subpopulation from extinction.

For more information visit http://ecoindex.wordpress.com/2013/06/10/ricords-iguana-haiti.

Caribbean Sailors Wanted for Plankton Watch

Dr. Richard R. Kirby, Marine Institute Research Fellow at Plymouth University, writes: The Secchi Disk project invites Caribbean sailors to become citizen scientists to help create a global study of marine plankton. Plankton are microscopic organisms which form the basis of the marine food chain.

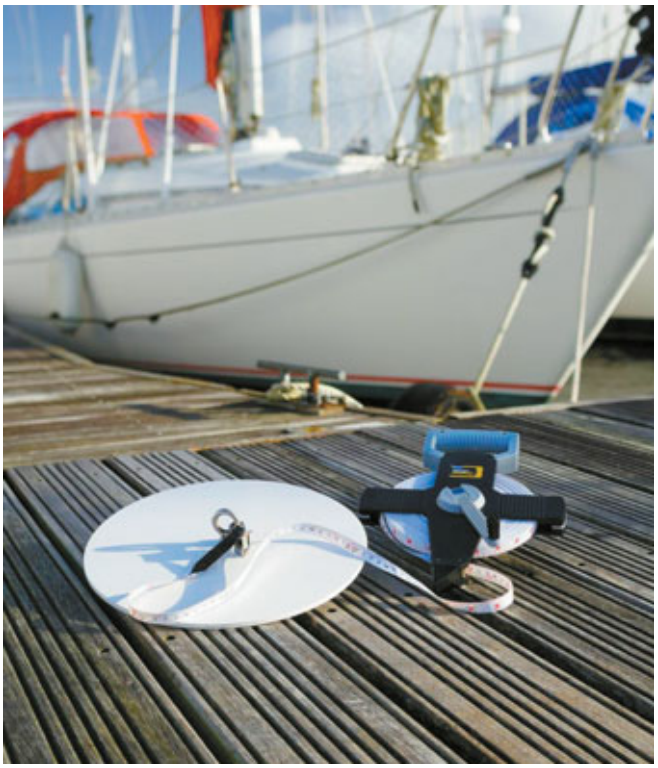
Two years ago a group of Canadian marine scientists reported that the phytoplankton in the oceans, including the Caribbean Sea, had declined globally by 40 percent since the 1950s owing to climate change. Their study provoked controversy among marine scientists however, as some thought they saw contrary results. Part of the controversy stems from a lack of data about the marine phytoplankton — the oceans are vast and there aren't that many scientists to cover them. Because of the important role played by the phytoplankton in underpinning the whole marine food chain, we need to know if, how and why they are changing — and this is where we believe citizen science can help.

Phytoplankton are microscopic, but in large numbers they make seawater cloudy. Because the organisms exist at the sea's surface, mariners can carry out a simple experiment using an easy-to-make 'Secchi Disk'. A Secchi Disk is a 30cm (11.8 inch) diameter, flat, white disk attached to a tape measure or a rope, and weighted from below by a 200-gram (seven ounce) weight. The Secchi Disk is lowered over the side of a boat and the depth at which it disappears from sight estimates the amount of phytoplankton in the sea. You are asked to record the depth at which it disappears from view. This depth can then be uploaded to a database using the Secchi app.

A major design consideration of the app is that it can operate in places where the phone has no internet connection. Participants record as many Secchi readings as they like, and these are stored as "pending readings". These pending readings can be uploaded at a later date.

This app enables seafarers around the world to take part in a science project and if we can just get a small percentage of the global population of sailors involved, we can generate a database that will help us understand how life in the oceans is changing.

Full instructions on how to take part in the project are included with the app and can also be found at www.secchidisk.org, which includes an online tutorial.



A Secchi Disk is simply a weighted white disk attached to a tape measure or rope. Sailors can use one to take part in a global study of plankton

BOOK REVIEW BY J. WYNNER

SCENES FROM THE JAMAICAN COAST

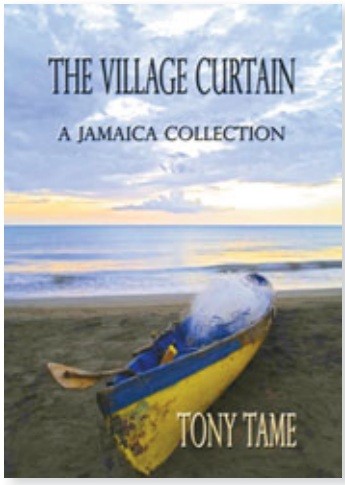
The Village Curtain *by Tony Tame, Savant Books and Publications, 2009 Edition. 246 pages, ISBN 0-9841175-0-4.*

In his first book, *The Village Curtain*, Tony Tame's atmospheric vignettes illustrate his fondness for the sea, coastal communities, fishing, and the people who make their living by fishing. "The Curtain" is centered on sketches of outsiders and village characters in the coastal areas of Jamaica.

Although marketed as a novel, the book is comprised of short stories presented in chronological order. Each story can stand on its own.

The author opens his account of life "from Morant Point on the eastern tip of Jamaica to the offshore banks south of Black River and Bluefields" with "Kingfish Season", in which he tells of the habits of the "school of big, silver-grey, pointy toothed predators with voracious appetites", and the skills of the men who fish them — including the unperturbed Leo, "The Beach Fisherman", who is really "a dynamiter of fish".

Flowing along in the idyllic Caribbean setting is a tide of social commentary. The outside characters — The Charity Man and Mrs. Carpenter — have the attention of village elder Mr. James, as they discuss the locals/non-locals conundrum; the new English police deputy commissioner said that he has not come to solve crime; a young Kingston officer gives a talk on seamanship to the village fishermen who had been fishing the area since they were ten years old.

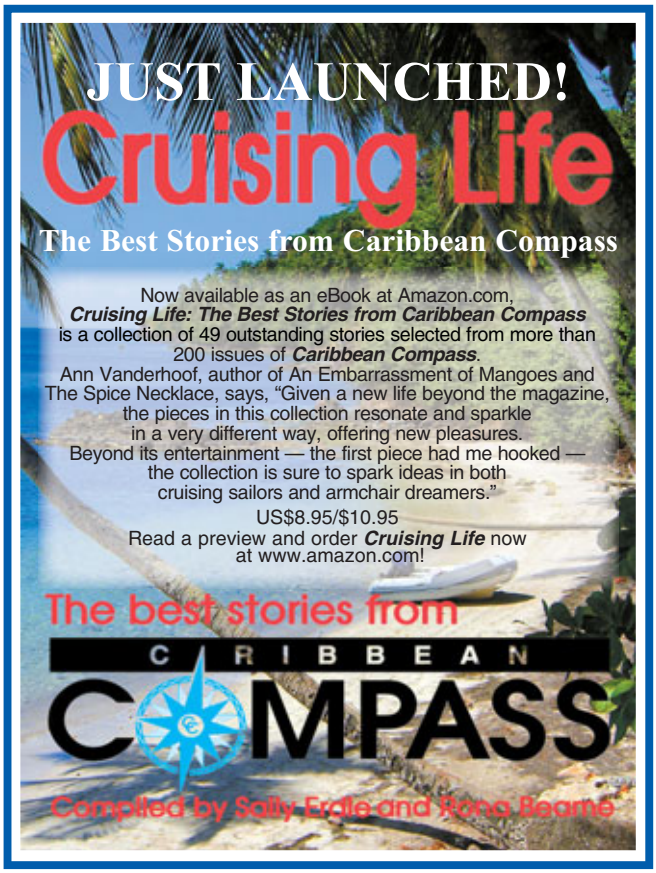


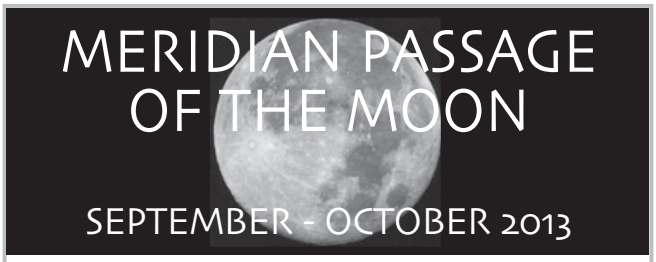
Tame demonstrates he's not without humour too, when, in "Mr. Anderson Intervenes", the Kingston-based inspector, Mr. Anderson, a film buff, comes calling. "He wore a raincoat like Colombo in ninety degree weather and he liked that line about insulting his intelligence; he tried to make it sound as cool as Al Pacino did when he was Michael Corleone in *The Godfather*. The contradiction in characters didn't bother the inspector. Roles in his world were always blurred anyway."

"Miami Time" takes readers inside a detention center where "Michael, who was serving time for being caught with illegal drugs in South Florida's Biscayne Bay, was acquiring a new skill" before his release. Tame masters the tension built into "The Technical Men", when Michael is hired to captain a boat on "a mission of mercy" to pick up a Haitian near Pointe des Aigrettes and deliver him to a waiting offshore vessel.

"He took one good look back at where the man he had picked up had just reached the top of the boarding ladder. A square man with rimless glasses, glinting in the light, was standing back from the gunwale. The Haitian stood on the deck and suddenly seemed to crumple… Michael was thinking as fast as he could. He was trying to think clearly against the natural pressure that his instinct was building. *There's something wrong with it. Me no know what it is and maybe it has nothing to do with me. But me know there's something not right about it.*"

But it is Tame's understated writing that is the main facet of the book. Beneath the tranquil surface in "The End of the Day" there is a strong current pulling a woman named Myra away from this world. In the very touching story "A Quiet, Rainy Night in the Mountains" Myra's friend, and man's best friend, "walked up the familiar gentle incline across the clearing, climbed the few worn steps to his home and, out of nowhere, there came a weariness that engulfed him and was such as he had never known… his heartbeat slowed and he half slept, then slept truly… He began to dream of the beach, something that had not happened for as long as he could remember. The scene floated in and out of focus and suddenly he saw her clearly, as he had seen her in his youth, with her brilliant smile and her arms were open to him and she said, as she had done so long ago, "Come with me, friend,' and he went with her, happily, into her world forever."





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!

September 2013					
DATE	TIME	21	0104	11	1744
1	0851	22	0153	12	1840
2	0937	23	0243	13	1934
3	1024	24	0332	14	2026
4	1107	25	0423	15	2116
5	1153 (new moon)	26	0509	16	2206
6	1238	27	0557	17	2255
7	1325	28	0644	18	2344
8	1414	29	0730	19	0000 (full moon)
9	1504	30	0816	20	0033
10	1559	**October 2013**		21	0122
11	1655	1	0901	22	0212
12	1752	2	0946	23	0301
13	1851	3	1032	24	0350
14	1949	4	1119	25	0437
15	2045	5	1208 (new moon)	26	0523
16	2140	6	1259	27	0609
17	2233	7	1353	28	0651
18	2324	8	1450	29	0738
19	0000 (full moon)	9	1547	30	0823
20	0014	10	1646	31	0909



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Hubbard's

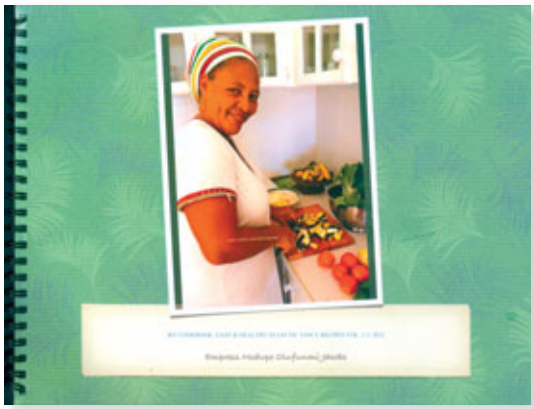
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Easy Recipes for Local Produce

We Cookbook: Easy & Healthy Vincy Recipes, *by Empress Modupe Olufunmi-Jacobs. ©2012. Paperback, spiral bound, 60 pages, color photos. ISBN 978-976-95508-0-3.*

We Cookbook is an eclectic compilation of mainly vegetarian Caribbean recipes that Haitian-born Rastafarian activist and chef Empress Modupe Olufunmi-Jacobs has collected from friends and family. The recipes incorporate the use of fresh local agricultural produce and fish harvested in her adopted homeland of St. Vincent & the Grenadines. She is also the host of the "We Cooking" television programme on St. Vincent & the Grenadines TV, a weekly cooking show, featuring the local and international chefs working in St. Vincent & the Grenadines.



In this cookbook's introduction, Chairman of the St. Vincent & the Grenadines National Trust, Louise Mitchell-Joseph, writes, "It is said that you are what you eat. Empress Modupe Olufunmi would re-invent this to read 'you are what you cook'… for visitors to our islands, this Vincy cookbook is a wonderful cultural snapshot of who we are as a people… The Vincy cookbook should be used to inspire Vincentians" — and, we hasten to add, visitors, too — "to reduce their consumption of imported foods… and turn instead to what is grown on our lush mountains, green valleys and backyard farms."

While the recipes rely largely on fresh, locally grown produce and locally caught fish, Empress Modupe Olufunmi is not above using the occasional store-bought jar of pasta sauce or can of coconut milk, or tossing a bouillon cube or two into the pot. Rice, soy "meat", soy sauce and olive oil, although by necessity imported, make appearances. But straight-from-the-land breadfruit, pigeon peas, pumpkin, cucumbers, ground provisions, christophene, ackee and eggplant, seasoned with fresh herbs such as chadon bene, thyme, scallions and ginger, are the mainstays. Fish puts in an appearance, but meat is eschewed, replaced by the unusual "gluten steaks", created by washing the starch out of ordinary wheat flour, boiling the residue like dumplings, slicing it and then seasoning it as a meat substitute — as gluten kebobs, for example. All of the recipes requiring any cooking are stove-top, reflecting the traditional Caribbean method of cooking over a coal-pot.

The book itself is user friendly: the spiral binding allows it to lie flat, open to the desired page, and can be folded back if counter space is short. Each recipe gets a page of its own, and a photo appears on the page facing each recipe (the photo credits, which appear scrawled right over many of the images are annoyingly obtrusive, though). The glossy paper should resist spills and is heavy enough to stand up to repeated handling.

Anyone interested in cooking with Caribbean produce in a straightforward, home-style way will enjoy this book.

Available at bookstores in St. Vincent & the Grenadines. For more information contact wecookin360@gmail.com.

Read in Next Month's *Compass*:

Historic Race to Havana
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WHAT THE HECK IS SEA MOSS?

Sea moss may not be growing in my cockpit herb garden, but its harvesting and cultivation are a thriving Caribbean industry. In almost every island market, bags of moss can be found hanging for sale in the spice section. Sea moss is usually made into a tasty drink and promoted as a manly "strengthening" agent or aphrodisiac. It is also a good home remedy for fighting colds and flu as it has a quality to break up chest congestion. Sea moss punch is also a local hangover remedy.

A type of algae, sea moss has a variety of different names, from Irish moss, to carrageen moss, to what I believe is the botanical name, *Gracilaria*, for the specific type found in the our part of the Caribbean. There are also species called *debilis* and *crassissima*, and in all about 15 different species of marine algae collectively called sea moss. All contain a thickening agent called agar.

Fresh sea moss is soft with some stiff cartilage. In the markets, we see it dried to a creamy white or light tan, but when it is harvested it is deep purple to charcoal in color and smells like raw fish. It must sit in the sun and be rinsed with fresh water for several days before totally dried for consumption. This moss is good for you because it contains about ten percent protein and 15 percent minerals, including iodine, sulfur, potassium, selenium, zinc, pectin, B-vitamins and vitamin C. Iodine is the important element as it is difficult to find in other foods. Sea moss also has calcium, which is beneficial for bone strength and healthy teeth.

Sea moss was once abundant in the wild, but the coasts have been ransacked for it and it is not quickly growing back. This depletion also means fewer fish close to the rocks as small fry could hide in and feed on the moss. Bigger fish would be waiting... but not anymore.



One acquaintance of mine makes a living from harvesting this weird sponge-like quasi sea vegetable from rocks around the north coast of Trinidad. Sea moss usually grows at the tide line and is picked at low tide on days with a calm sea. The plants are usually hand pulled from rocks and stones in pools and shallow saltwater. It is common for a boat to drop off pickers and then transport the harvested moss in sacks. It is a perennial, meaning if it is not completely removed from the rock it will keep on growing. The use of knives for harvesting is very bad because the moss is scraped rather than pulled from the rocks leaving no plant base for regeneration.

Over-harvesting has proven to be a problem on islands such as Antigua and Barbuda. In St. Lucia, research on the cultivation of sea moss began in the early 1980s in the area of Laborie. A type of sea moss was brought from Belize and cultivated on ropes strung to a short distance off shore. It has not been as great a commercial success as one might hope because of runoff pollution, storm damage and insufficient wave action. Wave action is necessary to increase oxygen, an important aspect in the growth of sea moss. Wave action, although necessary, makes it difficult to keep lines it is growing on secure.

The harvesting of sea moss should be banned in certain areas to allow the recovery of the stocks, but, like almost everything else in the Caribbean (don't shoot the messenger; I'm a daughter of the soil), we know that such a ban wouldn't be adequately enforced. The better alternative would be for each island nation's Marine Fisheries Division to educate people in the correct harvesting methods and at least attempt to cultivate sea moss in appropriate areas.

Sea moss is not only used in drinks and foods, but can be boiled and condensed into a paste that is wonderful for soothing and rejuvenating your skin.

One Cup of dried moss will make four Cups of soaked moss. Sea moss thickens as it cools; one Cup can make two quarts of moderately thick liquid.

Sea Moss Gel

Soak a half Cup of dried sea moss in cold water for 15 minutes. Look at the moss carefully and pick out anything that is unusually hard or dark brown. Wash moss thoroughly, but do not soak it overnight, as this will reduce its nutritional value and potency.

Next, fill a pot with two quarts of fresh water. Add the clean moss, two cinnamon sticks or one tablespoon of powdered cinnamon and a teaspoon of grated nutmeg. Bring to boil, cover and reduce heat, and allow to simmer for 20 minutes. The moss will soften and the water will thicken. Remove from heat and remove cinnamon sticks. Allow the solution to cool and place it in the refrigerator overnight, allowing it to gel.

Sea Moss Paste

Soak a half-cup of dried sea moss in a quart pot of water. Inspect the moss, pick out any hard or dark brown parts and rinse again. Using a blender combine 1 1/2 Cups soaked moss with 3/4 Cup of water at high speed. Place in glass or ceramic bowl in refrigerator to gel. Sea moss paste will last in the refrigerator for at least a week.

Sea Moss Beverage



1 Cup cleaned and soaked moss
1 Cup water
1 Cup milk
1/2 teaspoon grated nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
sugar or honey to taste
1 Tablespoon dark rum (optional)

Simmer sea moss in the water until tender. Strain the liquid through cloth or a very fine strainer. Add sugar to taste, then the rum, milk and nutmeg. Transfer the liquid to a glass jar and refrigerate until it has set. To drink, spoon out gel and either liquefy with hot water to make tea or blend with water or fruit juice and ice to make a cold drink.

Sea Moss Pudding



1/4 Cup dried sea moss
1/2 Cup warm water
1/2 Cup heavy cream
2 Cups whole milk
1/2 Cup brown sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
cinnamon and nutmeg to taste
(1 Tablespoon of lemon or orange zest can be used instead of spices)

Soak the moss in the warm water until it is softened and swollen, about ten minutes. Strain and set aside. Combine the heavy cream, whole milk and sugar in a medium saucepan over low heat and continually stir. Add the moss and the vanilla. Bring the mixture to a boil on high heat, stirring constantly so that it doesn't burn. Reduce the heat and simmer, stirring often, for 20 minutes. Remove from heat and pour and push the mixture through a fine mesh sieve into a large glass or ceramic bowl. Discard the solids from the sieve. Add cinnamon and nutmeg or zest. Using a whisk, blender, or electric mixer, whip the mixture so all the jelly is totally combined, and allow to cool. Cover the mixture with plastic wrap and refrigerate, preferably overnight.

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





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POLLUTION AND AGGRESSION IN ST. PIERRE

Dear *Compass*,

I'm writing you with a heavy heart, unsure whether to report this or not.

On July 31st, my wife and I were attacked by local fishermen in St. Pierre, Martinique after having witnessed what was a deliberate act of marine pollution.

Some 15 very large plastic bags were drifting into the open sea, coming from the fishermen's pontoon and



boat dock. We took our dinghy to see what they were. The bags were too heavy and large to take aboard our small boat, so we decided to take pictures and a video. While doing this, we were aggressively yelled at by a few individuals on the fishermen's dock.

We decided to go back to our sailing catamaran. On the way back, we were chased by a fishing boat. This fishing boat with two men aboard arrived just after us. We asked politely what we could do for them. They were extremely aggressive. I told them that I was feeling threatened and asked them to calm down. One of the men took a heavy oar and tried to hit my head. After more yelling and insulting us, the two men left our boat in the direction of another yacht anchored 50 metres from us, still yelling insults (some of them racial) and threatening us and our boat.

The other sailboat received the same treatment; they were also insulted. "You, white people, go home, this is our place, we don't need you here."

The incident was immediately reported to the French coastguard.

Of the 15 bags, only five were retrieved by a local dive boat and some more by the police who came afterwards after being called by the coast guard. The rest drifted away or sank.

The whole incident can be viewed at www.youtube.com/watch?v=SAaY2p-RD40. The incident was reported in the evening news on two TV channels and received the attention of a half page of the local newspaper.

We immediately sent an official report of the incident to the Director of Maritime Affairs and a signature-return letter to the director of the Board of Tourism and the highest authority in Martinique. Fifteen days after the event, there has been no official response or apologies to us from any local or national authorities.

Unfortunately, this is not the only incident in St. Pierre.

On May 30th and 31st, three boats, including ours, were surrounded by fishing boats. It was after 1830 hours, and almost dark. During the evening meal, in full darkness, we experienced a change in our boat's movement. We discovered that the fishermen had lifted our anchor and chain and dropped our 40 metres of chain and our anchor in one heap at another place.

The same happened to two other boats. These acts resulted in a dangerous situation, as two of the sailboats went adrift through the anchorage in full darkness with no option of lifting the chain, as there were knots in the chain and the anchors were entangled. The two skippers had to make an emergency dive with underwater lights to disentangle their chains and anchors.

On March 29th, while diving in the new protected dive zone of the Bay, a diver coming up was nearly killed by a fishing boat that passed at full speed less than five metres from him. No attention was given to the two large dive flags and three people screaming to attract attention. The reaction of the person in the fishing boat was, "You have no business here; stay out of my sea."

These are only a few of the unfortunate events that have occurred between sailboats and local individuals on fishing boats in the past four months.

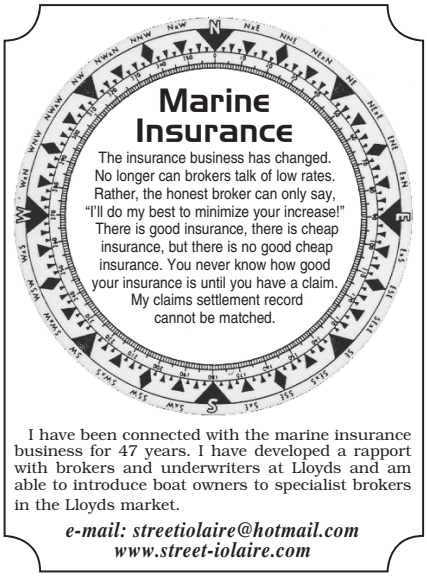
If you get into a discussion with a local fisherman, please stay calm. Don't yell, don't argue, and don't give them anything they can legally use against you or other cruisers in the future. Try to understand their demands, their wishes.

If a problem occurs, *please* report it to the authorities! There is a local state police post (*Gendarmerie*) in St. Pierre. Call the emergency police number, 17, on a local phone, or call the coast guard (CROSS-AG) on VHF Channel 16. They will contact the local law enforcement for you if needed. These services are *very* effective and act *immediately*. You are in Europe here, even if France is far away.

While we want to warn sailors of possible problems here in St. Pierre, we do want to emphasize that the problems occurring between yachtspeople and fishermen are owing to the actions of a very few and do *not* reflect the majority of the population, who are super-friendly and welcoming.

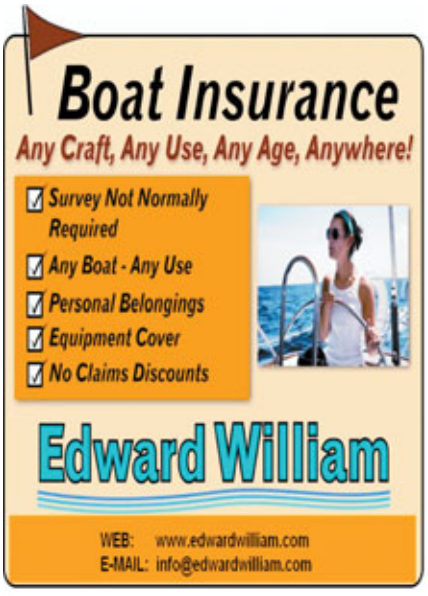
—Continued on page 45















LOA: 115'
Beam: 31'
Passengers: 218
Speed max: 34kts

Speed cruising: 25kts
Engines: 2 x MWM = 4700HP
Location:
St. Vincent & the Grenadines



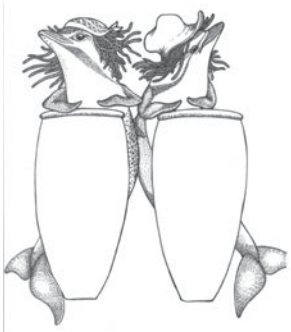
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SALTY'S ANSWERS

Answers to Seahorse Search Crossword Puzzle on page 31

Across
1) hippocampus
2) dwarf
3) trumpetfish
4) pouch
5) prehensile
6) pectoral
7) mangrove
8) juvenile
9) dance

Down
1) seahorse
2) ocean
3) courtship
4) monogamous
5) three
6) male
7) camouflage
8) shrimp
9) slowest



WHAT'S ON MY MIND

Rules That Discourage Yachting

By Don Street

I have been cruising the Lesser Antilles since 1956, and writing guides to the area since 1964. I find that in Antigua & Barbuda, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Grenada and Trinidad & Tobago there are still Customs and Immigration regulations that discourage the yachting tourist.

Antigua & Barbuda

There are Customs and Immigration officers stationed in Codrington, Barbuda, but for some reason the head of Customs in Antigua says that Barbuda is not a Port of Entry for yachts, and yachts must clear in at Antigua before sailing to Barbuda.

BETTY KARL



Barbuda is known more for its beaches, birds, beauty and remoteness than for being an entry point — but you can still clear in here with permission from the Comptroller of Customs in Antigua

If a boat is sailing from St. Barts, Barbuda is much closer than Antigua, but because of present regulations, the boat must sail to Antigua and enter. If the wind is in the southeast the boat would certainly want to go to Barbuda rather than fight its way dead to windward to Antigua. From St. Barts, with a southeast wind, a boat has to sail about 140 miles to get to Jolly Harbour to obtain permission to visit Barbuda. Once permission is granted, it is then a 40-mile sail to Barbuda; thus the total sailing distance works out to 180 miles. If the wind is southeast, since the rhumb-line course and distance is 57 miles at 124 degrees magnetic, the sailing distance direct to Barbuda is probably no more than 80 or 90, possibly 100 miles.

If a boat's crew wants to just rest, as we on *Li'l Iolaire* did a couple of times when the wind was in the southeast and we were en route from St. Barts to Antigua, we anchored for the night in the lee of Barbuda. By taking bearings on the radio tower we worked our way into shoal water, anchored for the night, had a swim the next day then continued on to Antigua. We did this as the general international agreement is that a vessel can anchor, hoist the Q flag and not enter for 24 hours (as long as there is no contact with shore). After the 24 hours the vessel must either enter or proceed on its voyage. We did not go ashore in Barbuda as at the time there was no Customs or Immigration based on Barbuda.

I presume in Antiguan waters it is legal to anchor for 24 hours as long as no one goes ashore, and then continue on to Antigua to clear. Now that there are both Customs and Immigration in Barbuda, why not let yachts approaching from the west to enter and clear in Barbuda?

St. Lucia

I have, with Imray, just completed an update of the St. Lucia chart, and also the information on the back of the chart. What with all the rules and regulations — marine protected areas rules, the permit to moor, and various anchoring, fishing and diving regulations — it is so complicated that I was not able to do a good summation of regulations on the back of the chart. I tried to summarize but warned that regulations change; check for latest regulations when you check in.

The permit to moor regulation requires you to obtain permission and pay a fee anytime you anchor outside a port area. When I first arrived in St. Thomas in 1956 this permit to moor regulation existed in all the formerly British islands of the Eastern Caribbean. Through the years every island nation except St. Lucia and Trinidad have scrapped this regulation.

St. Vincent & the Grenadines

If a boat is in St. Lucia, at Laborie or Vieux Fort, and heading south to the Grenadines, the smart skipper heads south on a glorious reach down the windward side of St. Vincent instead of fighting light airs on the leeward coast. There is a wonderful, off-the-beaten-track anchorage in the lee of Baliceaux. Boats should be allowed to anchor at Baliceaux, hoist the Q flag and stay for 24 hours if no one goes ashore, before moving on to Mustique or Bequia to enter. As long as no one goes ashore, the above is legal internationally, but apparently not in St. Vincent & the Grenadines. Customs insists that boats must proceed to a port of entry before anchoring.

Grenada

Grenada makes visiting the windward coast of Carriacou difficult for boats heading south through the Grenadines.

Grand and Watering Bays are protected by a four-mile-long barrier reef. Anchored behind the reef you have everything the Tobago Cays have to offer, plus seeing the traditional boat building at Windward side, and the ability to buy Jack Iron rum that is so strong ice cubes sink in it. And there are no other yachts. (Deep-draft vessels note than anchoring depths in these bays are only eight or nine feet.)

—Continued on page 45

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

6	Public holiday in Bonaire (Bonaire Day)
7	Fun Day Dinghy Regatta, Marina Pescadería, Puerto Rico. info@marinapescaderia.com
10	Public holiday in Belize (St. George's Day)
14	Dinghy and IC24 Races, San Juan, Puerto Rico. Club Náutico San Juan (CNSJ), www.nauticodesanjuan.com
14 – 15	Curaçao Sunfish Championship, part one. cursailing@gmail.com
16	Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis (National Heroes' Day)
19	Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis (Independence Day)
19	FULL MOON Parties at Trellis Bay and West End, Tortola, and at Nevis
21	Public holiday in Belize (Independence Day)
21 - 22	Curaçao Sunfish Championship, part two. cursailing@gmail.com
22	Autumnal Equinox
24	Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago (Republic Day)
28	Seafood & Fishing Festival, Antigua. www.antiguabarbudasportfishing.com



KIONEZ NIMROD

Carriacou Regatta 2013

OCTOBER

3	Public holiday in St. Lucia (Thanksgiving Day)
6 -12	46th Bonaire International Sailing Regatta. www.bonaireregatta.org
14	Public holiday in Belize (Pan American Day), and the Bahamas (Discovery Day)
17	Public holiday in Haiti (Anniversary of the Death of Dessalines) and Jamaica (National Heroes' Day)
18	FULL MOON Parties at Trellis Bay and West End, Tortola, and at Nevis
21	Public Holiday in BVI (St. Ursula's Day) and Curaçao (Antillean Day)
23	Woburn Thanksgiving Regatta, Grenada
25	Public holiday in Grenada (Thanksgiving Day)
25 – 27	Caribbean Sailing Association AGM and Regatta Organizers' Conference, Puerto Rico. www.caribbean-sailing.com
25 - 27	World Creole Music Festival, Dominica. www.wcmfdominica.com
26	20th Annual Nevis Fishing Tournament, Nevis Yacht Club, (869) 662-6101
26 – 27	16th Foxy's Halloween Cat Fight (catamaran regatta), Jost Van Dyke. www.foxysbar.com
26 – Nov 2	27th Annual Pro Am Regatta, Virgin Gorda. Bitter End Yacht Club (BEYC). binfo@beyc.com, www.beyc.com
27	Public holiday in St. Vincent & the Grenadines (Independence Day)
31	National Heritage Day, Antigua
TBA	Virgin's Cup Race, BVI. Royal British Virgin Islands Yacht Club (RBVIYC), tel (284) 494-3286, sailing@royalbviyc.org, www.royalbviyc.org
TBA	Trafalgar Regatta, BVI. RBVIYC

All information was correct to the best of our knowledge at 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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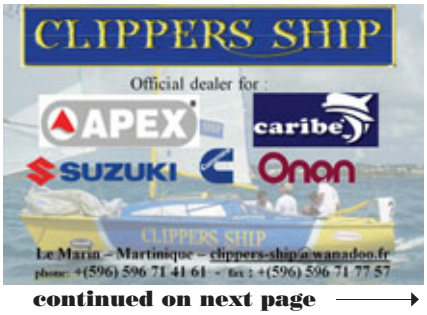
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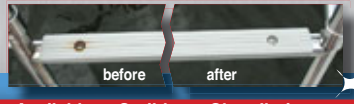


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—Continued from page 39 …Readers' Forum

St. Pierre is a very safe and pleasant city where time has stopped; one can find the tranquility of the '70s that has been lost in many other places in the Caribbean. But it is of great importance to know that there is a hard-core element among fishermen willing to do anything to stop the progress of a larger plan to welcome cruisers and place mooring buoys.

Making these actions of unfriendliness and violence public will force the government to take more serious actions. It is France after all.

Marc Verstraete van de Weyer, Capt. Ret.
S/V Bonobo

Editor's Note: Marc and Nadine Verstraete are retired Merchant Marine/Navy officers, teachers and historians. Marc is also a former member of the Cousteau team, having been a research and expedition leader for underwater discovery missions.

The Verstraetes are sailing around the world on their aluminum catamaran, Bonobo. *Authors of video and photographic works on wrecks, they are currently working in St. Pierre on a mission involving the history of the ships sunk during the 1902 volcanic eruption.*

They have sent us some excellent information on St. Pierre as a cruising destination, which we will share in next month's issue of Compass.

A SURVIVAL STORY

Dear *Compass*,

It was supposed to be just another summer trip — camp, fish and back home. But the unexpected left four Southside youths at the brink of knowing there is something after life. Early one Monday morning they embarked from Bequia on just another fishing and camping trip. They called the boat *Blue* — what a beauty, engine running lovely. Arriving at their destination on time, they set up camp, gear ready for doing what they loved — fishing.

On the Friday, one of them noticed a shift in the wind and clouds. The decision was made to head back to Bequia on Saturday; waters get rough in this area after storms.

Packed, tank full, they headed home. Suddenly the engine revved. "It was something," one of them said. "It just hit us, or did we hit it?" Whatever it was ripped *Blue* to pieces, launching the four friends a pace apart from each other; some were unconscious momentarily.

It was early on the Saturday afternoon when the call went out, "Four missing at sea". Knowing the dangers of the rough waters, the community began to feel the sense of the unknown — that feeling that all parents have when their children don't show up for school. Those who knew what to do began their own search. Others informed the Coast Guard. The hunt began. Two were soon found; two still missing. By Saturday night shocking thoughts begun to emerge — lost? Hope? Plans were made for the next day.

Dawn Sunday morning, still the thought of loss or hope in the minds of the community. Suddenly, shadows began to emerge. "Jumbie!" one lady stated on her way to early service. Awakening feet from each other on the beach, two boys explained how they were "woman-handled" by the love of their life, the sea. The tide had carried them miles, dumping them in Adams Bay where they were able to swim ashore unharmed, traumatized but well….

"Only in fairytales," I said. "Best trip!" one of them said. Smart or crazy?

Ulric Phillips
Bequia

HAPPY IN COLOMBIA

Dear *Compass*,

The marina here in Santa Marta, Colombia is looking great. There are more than 20 visiting sailboats now (August 12th) and the marina staff is working hard to finish all the facilities very well and soon. The services are great and everything is within walking distance. Nice!

Luz Adriana "Nana" Quintero
Colombiana de Armenia Quindio

S.O.S. FROM *LE TOUMALIN*

Dear *Compass* Readers,

Two years ago, it was proposed that the 28-metre (92-foot) three-masted schooner *Le Toumelin*, launched in 1988 and chartering in Martinique for more than 24 years, become the sail-training vessel and ambassador for this French island. The teaching programme was to be managed by the French maritime school in Martinique, Ecole de Formation Professionnelle Maritime et Aquacole (EFPMA), based in the city of Trinité. The school wanted to purchase *Le Toumelin* for the practical onboard training of its own students as well as those of other institutions teaching maritime and marine-related subjects such as ecology, nautical tourism, oceanography, etcetera.

Today, after months of meetings and correspondence, *Le Toumelin* and her crew are still waiting for the decision of the relevant regional authorities, and are in distress. At the end of our financial resources, we are unable to pay certain necessary expenses for the vessel, in particular the required haul-out and inspection of the hull by the French Maritime Authorities and any resulting repairs needed. Without this haul-out and inspection, *Le Toumelin* can't work anymore.

This is a call for help to all friends of the classic sailing vessels, to fans of sailing boats in general, to supporters of maritime education and sea-lovers. Help *Le Toumelin* to recover her capacity to work and sail and therefore to get the necessary funds for her haul-out and repair works required. For this purpose, a subscription drive has been launched by the Association Martinique Voile d'Antan, located at Résidence l'Escale, 26 rue du Dauphin, Anse à l'Ane 97229, Trois Ilets, Martinique. For more information contact toumelin@yahoo.fr.

Thanks for your solidarity and your help in emergency!

Pierre Brenet, Captain/Owner
Le Toumelin

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Dear* Compass *Readers,

We want to hear from YOU!

Be sure to include your name, boat name or shoreside address, and a way we can contact you (preferably by e-mail) if clarification is required.

We do not publish individual consumer complaints or individual regatta results complaints. (Kudos are okay!) We do not publish anonymous letters; however, your name may be withheld from print at your request. Please keep letters shorter than 600 words. Letters may be edited for length, clarity and fair play.

Send your letters to:
sally@caribbeancompass.com
or
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—Continued from page 40 *…What's on my mind*

The normal routine for boats coming from the north is to bypass Hillsborough (a rolly anchorage at the best of times), continue on to Tyrell Bay, anchor, hop in a cab or bus, go to Hillsborough and enter. Similarly, boats coming from the north should be able to anchor in Windward, take a cab or bus to Hillsborough (getting a good tour of the island en route), enter and return to Windward.

However Grenada Customs says they will not allow this. Perhaps this is because of the two stories of rum smuggling in the old days 50 years ago, see pages 126 and 127 of *Street's Guide: Martinique to Trinidad*.

Thus the only way a boat coming from the north can visit the wonderful east coast of Carriacou, is sail to Tyrell Bay, cab to Hillisborough to clear, then the next day sail a mile and a half downwind to Southwest Point, and then take a five-mile beat to windward, short-tacking up the shore to stay out of the strong westward-flowing current (unless you are lucky enough for your schedule to allow you to time your beat to windward with a flood, east-going tide) to Kendeace Point to enter Grand Bay. Few boats are willing to do this so Grand and Watering Bays are seldom visited by yachts unless the boat is heading north from Grenada's south coast.

One looks at the above, and the Customs and Immigration procedures on the French islands and you can see why yachts love all the French islands.

Why cannot Antigua, St. Lucia, St Vincent, Grenada and Trinidad simplify regulations to make their islands more attractive to the visiting sailor?

Editor's note: We did some research on the points Don mentions. The results follow.

Antigua & Barbuda

We are told that although Barbuda has never been an official Port of Entry it has historically been used as such — when yachts arrived there to clear in, the local officials would get the permission of the Comptroller of Customs in Antigua by telephone.

John Duffy, publisher of the excellent *Antigua & Barbuda Marine Guide* (www.antiguamarineguide.com) tells us what the situation is as of May 2013:

"Although not a Port of Entry, it is still possible to clear in and out through Codrington, Barbuda. Permission has to come from the Comptroller of Customs in Antigua. Requests can be made via e-mail at becustoms@ab.gov.ag or queenbee.fdr@gmail.com, or by fax to (268) 462-2767. Details required in the fax or e-mail are the purpose of visit, the crew list, the details of the vessel — size, class, capacity, etcetera, and the proposed period of stay.

"If you have already checked in at one of Antigua's Ports of Entry, there is no need to do it again in Barbuda. However, if Barbuda is to be your first port of call in the country then you will need to clear in with Customs and Immigration as above.

Customs in Barbuda can be contacted on (268) 460-0085 and (268) 460-0354. The Customs Office in Barbuda is manned seven days a week from 0800 until 1600. It is not necessary to clear out of Antigua if visiting Barbuda and returning to Antigua (and visiting no other island)."

John adds, "Don is technically right but his advice [on hoisting the Q flag and waiting up to 24 hours before clearing in] is rather ill-advised. The law is that you should check in with Customs and Immigration *upon arrival* (and that includes anchoring in Antiguan & Barbudan waters) but in any event (to take account of arrivals when the office is closed) you must check in within 24 hours. To be at anchor off Barbuda any time between 0800 and 1600 and not check in would be contrary to the law because you have arrived in the country.

"To stay at anchor in Barbuda for 24 hours and then move on to Antigua would be in direct breach of the law, as you will have been in Antiguan & Barbudan waters for more than 24 hours by the time you checked in (taking account that it will take several hours to sail from Barbuda to Antigua).

"The only way Don's advice would be legal is if a yacht arrived after 1600 and anchored, the crew did not go ashore or leave the yacht in any manner, and then upped anchor before 0800 and sailed to Antigua where they cleared in before 1600 that day."

Also, yachts clearing out from Antigua can visit Barbuda on their way elsewhere so long as they leave Barbuda within 24 hours of the time they cleared out of Antigua (not 24 hours from their arrival in Barbuda). However, by contacting the Comptroller of Customs they can get permission to clear out from Barbuda.

St. Lucia

Cuthbert Didier, Maritime Consultant in St. Lucia's Ministry of Tourism tells us:

"The Permit to Moor is not unique to Saint Lucia, however it's called a cruising permit in other islands. It was born out of the need, at the time, for Customs to be able to account for charter vessels and other cruisers which were on anchor in the waters of Saint Lucia.

"Please note I agree that to make Saint Lucia more yachting friendly it needs to be removed, and so do the Comptroller of Customs in Saint Lucia and his management team. The issue is that while they took a policy position, some of their officers still implement the charge.



Tyrrel Bay, Carriacou is now an official Port of Entry for Grenada. The clearance office is located at Carriacou Marine (formerly Tyrrel Bay Yacht Haulout) on the south side of the bay. Opening hours are 8:00AM to 4:00PM Monday to Friday (closed from noon to 1:00PM) and 9:00AM to 2:00PM weekends and public holidays

"I am working with Customs to correct this situation and will keep you posted. I stand committed to making Saint Lucia one of the friendliest and hassle free yachting destinations in the Caribbean."

St. Vincent & the Grenadines

SVG is far from alone in stating that all vessels, including yachts, entering the country's territorial waters must proceed directly to a Port of Entry. So do the British Virgin Islands, the US Virgin Islands, St. Lucia, Barbados and Grenada — as well as numerous other countries around the world ranging from New Zealand to Greece.

Baliceaux and Mustique are only about five miles apart, so you can clear in at Mustique and then backtrack to anchor at Baliceaux if you like. Note that although Baliceaux is uninhabited, it is privately owned and visitors are asked to limit their wanderings to the beach areas.

Grenada

In the past, some yacht skippers might have anchored in Tyrrel Bay and then gone by road to Hillsborough to clear in, but it was never legal. Readers are reminded that all vessels, including yachts, entering Grenada's territorial waters must proceed directly to a Port of Entry.

But — surprise! — as of August 8th, Tyrrel Bay is now a Port of Entry! The new Customs and Immigration office is located at Carriacou Marine. This is good news.

Nevertheless, boats coming from the north and wanting to visit the wonderful east coast of Carriacou will still have to do it by going around the long way — which should keep that area off the beaten track a while longer.

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