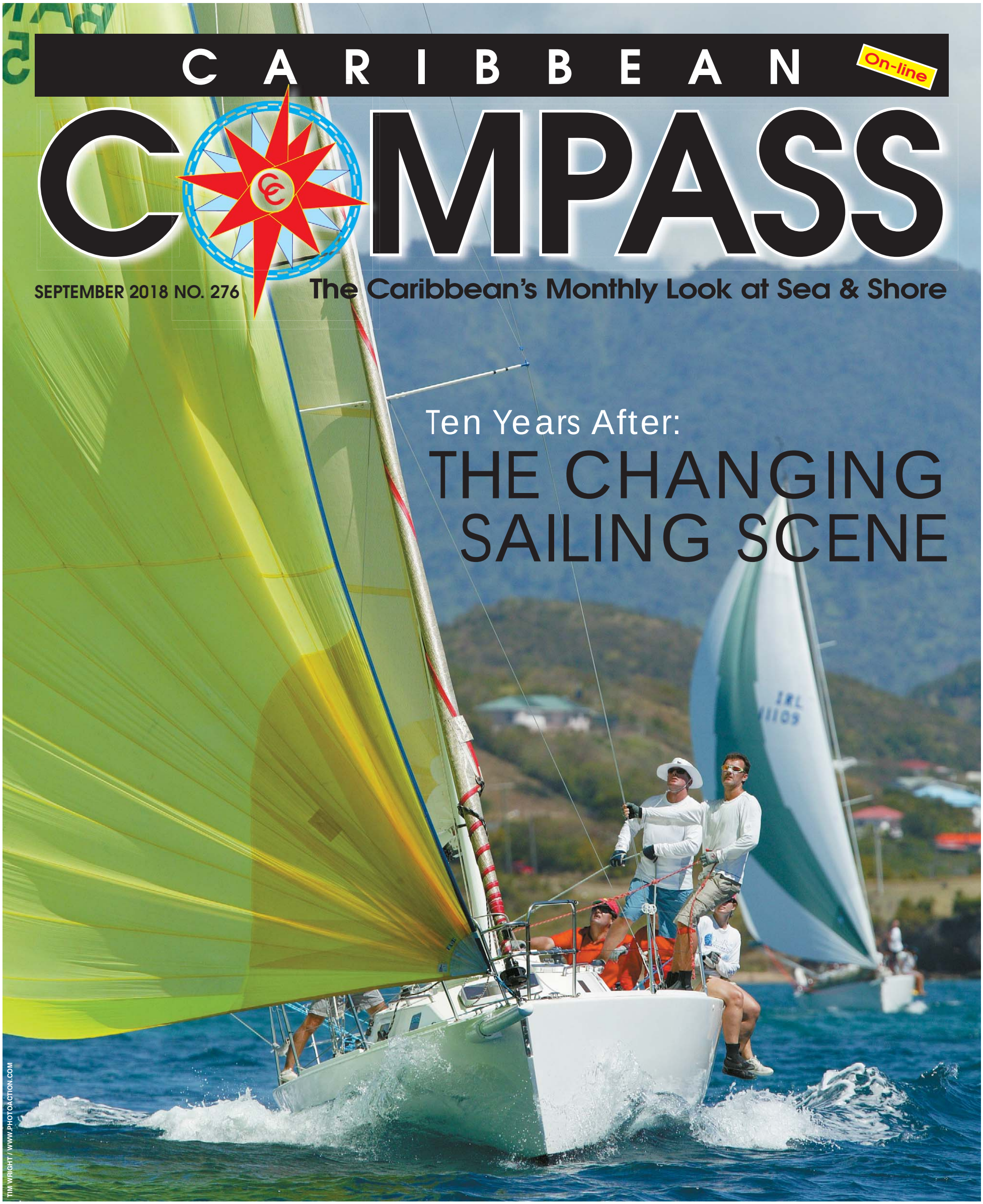
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SEPTEMBER 2018 NO. 276
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore

## Ten Years After:
# THE CHANGING SAILING SCENE



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**SEPTEMBER 2018 • NUMBER 276**




GREG SCOTT

## Redonda Reborn

A rocks-to-riches story..... 12



LYNN KAAK

## Sailors' Hike

St. Pierre's offbeat ruins ..... 18

## Ten Years After

How was our crystal ball?..... 20



LAURIE CORBETT

## Southern Swing

The Windwards were hot! ..... 24




SCOTT MASEAR

## DEPARTMENTS


| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Info & Updates | 4 | Seaboard Birds | 30 |
| Business Briefs | 8 | Look Our For… | 31 |
| Eco-News | 10 | Readers' Forum | 33 |
| Regatta News | 14 | Caribbean Market Place | 34 |
| Y2A | 17 | Calendar of Events | 37 |
| Book Reviews | 26 | Meridian Passage | 37 |
| Caribbean Memories | 27 | Classified Ads | 38 |
| The Caribbean Sky | 28 | Advertisers Index | 38 |



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*On the cover: A decade ago – Grenada Sailing Festival 2008 by Tim Wright. How have the Caribbean's racing and cruising scenes changed over the past ten years? See story on page 20*



# Info & Updates

**New Colombia Nautical Guide**

The government of Colombia has just released a comprehensive new guide in English and Spanish for Colombian waters. This link is to a compressed PDF file, which will be easier to download for the sailing community:
*https://we.tl/QQJweRohKC*



CARLOS DEL CASTILLO

**ROAM Entry Now in Puerto Rico and USVI**

The "Reporting Offsite Arrival – Mobile" (ROAM) system for pleasure boats arriving in the United States from a foreign port is now available in Puerto Rico and in the US Virgin Islands. The CBP ROAM app is a free mobile application that provides an option for pleasure boaters to report their US entry to CBP via their personal smart phone or a tablet located at local businesses to satisfy the above reporting requirements. In limited areas, travelers arriving in remote areas may also be eligible to use the ROAM app.

To use the ROAM app, travelers input their biographic, conveyance, and trip details and submit their trip for CBP Officer review. The Officer may initiate a video chat to further interview travelers. Once the Officer reviews the trip, travelers will receive a push notification and an e-mail with their admissibility decision and next steps, if applicable.

As part of the CBP ROAM program, Marina Pescadería, Puerto Real, Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico is an official US Port of Entry. Now arrivals in western Puerto Rico do not need to go to the Mayaguez office, by sea or land, to fulfill United States entry requirements. You can just arrive at Marina Pescadería and do everything from the marina office.

In eastern Puerto Rico, Puerto Del Rey marina has installed a ROAM kiosk under the new boathouse — just walk over to it and enter your information if you would rather not use the app.

In the USVI, pleasure boats can now clear in using ROAM at the St. Croix Yacht Club. The club was founded 66 years ago for the purpose of "extending to visiting yachtsmen the hospitality of St. Croix". Contact Manager@StCroixYC.com for details.

*Visit www.cbp.gov/travel/pleasure-boats-private-flyers/pleasure-boat-overview/roam for more information on ROAM.*

**Radiofax Changes Effective this Month**

The US National Weather Service's Ocean Prediction Center, in cooperation with the US Coast Guard, will be incorporating 72-hour forecast information into the radiofacsimile broadcasts from Boston, Massachusetts (call sign NMF), Pt. Reyes, California (call sign NMC), and Kodiak, Alaska (call sign NOJ).

The introduction of the 72-hour forecast information into the radiofacsimile schedule will take place September 4th. No forecast information will be removed as a result of this change.

To add new information to the radiofacsimile broadcasts, the schedules will be adjusted. The new schedule can be found at ocean.weather.gov/radiofax_update.php.

**Fund Supports Marine-Related Livelihoods**

The Caribbean Tourism Recovery Fund, established by the nonprofit organization Tourism Cares and the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association, has collected more than US$275,000 in charitable donations to build long-term recovery and enhance the ability of destinations affected by last year's hurricanes to rebound.

Assistance has been provided for training and education, restoring destination capacity, the physical restoration of tourism-related infrastructure, social enterprise development, job creation, hotel training, voluntourism, marketing and public relations support, and the environment.

Marine-related efforts include:

- My Brother's Marine Workshop in St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands received a grant to support the creation of a marine trade school for at-risk youth that will help at least 25 students get jobs.
- Kidz at Sea on St. Maarten is helping youth get jobs with a three-week course on boat repair. Run and supported by marine professionals, the aim of Kidz At Sea is to get local schoolchildren interested in waterborne activities to lead to careers in the marine industry while making the region a more attractive yachting and boating destination.

*—Continued on next page*





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DOYLE CARIBBEAN

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• Environmental Protection in the Caribbean, which is diversifying the tourism market in St. Maarten by developing and offering eco-tours, received funding to help create jobs and help travelers appreciate and preserve the natural resources on the island.



HUBERT WINSTON

*The Caribbean Tourism Recovery Fund has provided resources to create sustainable livelihoods in hurricane-hit Dominica via community-based yacht services at Scotts Head*

• Local Area Management Authority Yacht Moorings in Dominica will leverage the resources received to create sustainable livelihoods for locals living in Soufriere-Scotts Head. A new mooring field will encourage boats to stop in these communities, creating further economic opportunities for locals via small social enterprises such as restaurants, laundry services, suppliers of fish, produce and ice to visitors, snorkel and diving trips and tour guiding. Additional income will be available for families who will police the mooring balls and receive rental income through the lottery system.

• The Marine Center for Innovation Grupo Puntacana Fundación in the Dominican Republic is training others in the region, in destinations that suffered severe reef damage. The project, supported by the fund, focuses on reef restoration to protect the remaining wild colonies of coral while increasing their population with genetically diverse corals grown in underwater nurseries.

*Visit www.tourismcares.org/Caribbean for more information.*

**Eight Bells**

The Caribbean Community mourns the loss of the great writer Sir Vidia (VS) Naipaul.

The Trinidad-born Nobel Laureate was a prolific author of both fiction and non-fiction works that elicited much critical acclaim and earned him many literary awards. He was acknowledged as a master in the use of language. His unsparing critique of post-colonial societies across the globe was the basis of much of his work.



*The late VS Naipaul is best known in the Caribbean for award-winning novels such as* A House for Mister Biswas *and* Miguel Street, *which are set in Trinidad*

**Carriacou Children's Education Fundraiser**

Devin & Liz Taylor report:

The 19th annual Carriacou Children's Education Fund (CCEF) boat jumble and auction was held on August 2nd. Always timed to coincide with the Carriacou Regatta, it is still proving a major event on both cruisers' and residents' calendars. This year the event was held at L'Esterre RC School, with the support of the principal Robert Martineau. The new venue was a success, with improved lighting and lots of opening windows to enjoy the breeze. Two cruisers, Frank and Shep, gave generously to support a free bus (Malcolm Fraser) from Tyrell Bay for those wanting to attend.

After last year's hurricanes and subsequent collections for disaster relief, donations of clothing, especially, were less than usual. However, the donation of many large items by cruisers, local residents and local businesses helped power the auction to its highest-ever fundraising amount. The free haulout from Carriacou Marine was well sought after, and kayaks, a stand-up paddleboard, a dive computer and restaurant vouchers made bidding very competitive. This year again several children volunteered to help at the jumble sale as a way of giving back for the support they received from CCEF in the past.

The overall fundraising for 2018, including donations from the CCEF WiFi (supported by the Slipway restaurant) in Tyrell Bay helped drive the funds to an above-average year despite the challenges.

The event is truly a win all around, with some people donating items and gaining space, while others find a bargain or a rare item. Not least, the most needy children of Carriacou have an opportunity to maintain their education or get funding for school meals and uniforms.

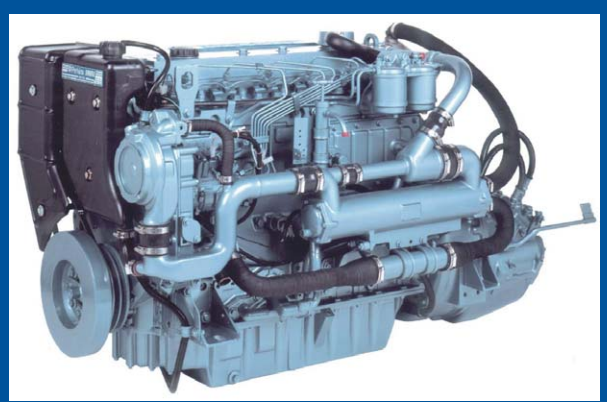
Visit Carriacou and support this event by either donating items to reduce your waterline or by picking up a bargain at the auction next August.

*Visit www.carriacouchildrenseducationfund.org for more information.*

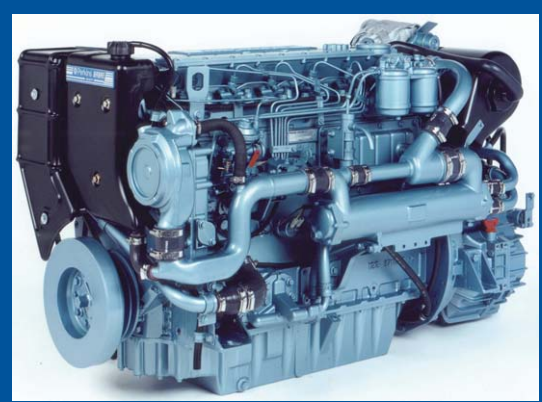
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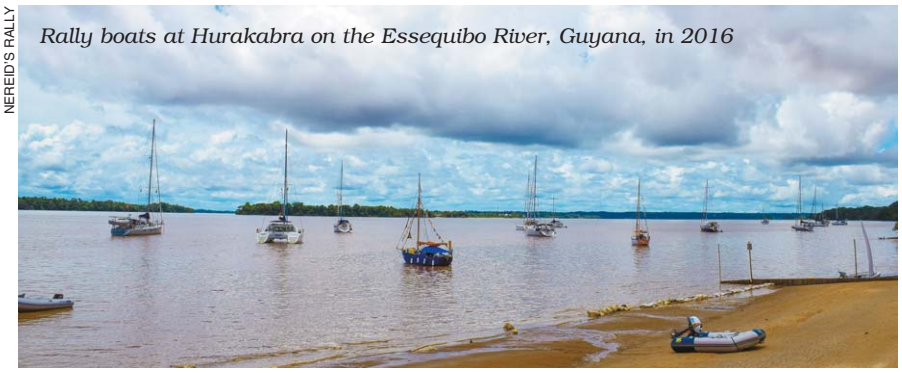
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**Nereid's Rally 2018 Cancelled**

Organizer David Metalicani has confirmed that the 2018 edition of the Nereid's Rally, from Trinidad & Tobago to Guyana, Suriname and French Guiana, has been cancelled after 11 of the 15 entered yachts suddenly dropped out.

NEREID'S RALLY



*Rally boats at Hurakabra on the Essequibo River, Guyana, in 2016*

An August 17th news item in the *Stabroek News* said that the "short notice withdrawal" of the majority of the 2018 rally fleet followed widespread publicity of an attack on a fishing boat in Guyanese waters as reported last month in the *Washington Post* (www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2018/world/pirates-return-to-the-caribbean; see related letter on page 33).

The sixth annual international Nereid's Rally was scheduled to run from September 3rd to October 14th.

*Read the full Stabroek News report at www.stabroeknews.com/2018/news/guyana/08/17/yachting-event-cancelled-after-media-reports-about-piracy*

**Grenada Dive Fest Next Month**

The Pure Grenada Dive Fest, taking place in Grenada and Carriacou, lures ocean-lovers looking for a reason to travel and help save the ocean while doing so. With the opportunity to explore wreck dives, go on clean-up dives and help eradicate the invasive lionfish, advanced and beginner scuba divers will enjoy this festival's many offerings to help bring awareness to Grenada's marine habitat.

The four-day event, October 3rd through 6th, is designed to showcase the bountiful and vibrant marine life that can be found off the islands' shores.

"This is the only event of its kind on the island and we hope that dive enthusiasts and lovers of the sea will travel to Pure Grenada to enjoy the events we have scheduled," said Patricia Maher, CEO of Grenada Tourism Authority. "It is the second year of the event and our continued goal is to put the spotlight on Grenada and Carriacou's amazing undersea world and one-of-a-kind aquatic offerings."

The first two days of the festival provide participants with the opportunity to discover the destination's reefs and wreck sites. Underwater photo enthusiasts can register to participate in the photography competition with the chance to win prizes for categories such as the most creative selfie, best reef photo and best wreck photo. Day two, themed Wreck Diving, caters to all divers, offering a beginner's pool diving course and the opportunity for certified divers to explore some of the islands' 14 wreck dives including the newest, *M/V Anina*.

The second half of the festival aims to make a positive impact on Grenada's underwater ecosystem. October 5th, Project Aware Dive Against Debris Day, includes clean-up dives off the shores of all three islands and local school-outreach presentations to educate Grenada's next generation on best practices in dive marine conservation.

GRENADA DIVE FEST



The final day of the festival, Invasive Lionfish Eradication Diving Day, starts at Morne Rouge Bay/BBC Beach with the boats sent off to predetermined dive locations and reconvening with their catches at Coconut Beach Restaurant on Grand Anse Beach. The Lionfish are prepared and served at the evening social event where the winning underwater photographers will be awarded prizes.

Grenada's coast is a haven for seahorses, turtles, sharks and rays due to the warm waters and healthy coral reef systems and sponges. Divers and underwater photographers have the opportunity to see a plethora of species of fish and marine creatures in the islands' waters.

There is no registration fee for the Pure Grenada Dive Festival. Interested parties are invited to visit www.puredivinggrenada.com to choose their preferred dive shops to book specific events listed in the festival calendar.

*Vsiit www.puregrenada.com/plan/events/pure-grenada-dive-fest for more information.*

**Where's Panama?**

Owing to circumstances beyond our control, the article on Cruising Destinations in the Panama Canal Area, promised for this month's *Compass*, will appear instead in a future issue.





# See why the Caribbean is worth defending.

**Join The Nature Conservancy and help us Defend Paradise.**

The Nature Conservancy works throughout the region to protect seas, coastlines, and coral reefs on which we all depend. We need your help to protect our waters and our way of life. To find out how you can make a lasting impact on conservation in the Caribbean and to join our campaign to Defend Paradise, visit **nature.org/defendparadise**.

The Nature Conservancy

DEFEND Paradise

# BUSINESS BRIEFS

**Basil's Bar Mustique Relaunched**

Lucy Fleming reports: As over-the- water rum shacks go, Basil's Bar is in a league of its own. Many have tried to replicate the cocktail of intangibles that has appealed to generations of partygoers heading to this Caribbean paradise, but no one can ever quite reproduce the essence of Basil's or indeed of Mustique itself, although many have tried!



Luke Ferguson, Head Chef and Manager, is now at the helm as the season gathers momentum. However, with the legendary Basil still in attendance, it is no surprise that a pop-up Basil's Bar was set up at the Goring Hotel during the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's wedding in 2011 — this man knows how to get a party started!

Designer Philippe Starck has overseen the total overhaul of the building over the last two years. He has managed to keep the DNA of Basil's fundamentally unchanged but has added a significant sparkle and style to the new and improved open-sided, over-water venue that has seen it all. Whether it is a couple of rum punches as the sun sets and turtles bob up for air in the clear waters beside you or champagne-fueled all night 'Jump Up' parties with celebrities at play alongside the local fishermen, Basil's has been there done that.

The gleaming open kitchens are proudly producing the new menu that has been launched, offering a simple but delicious selection of tacos, local fish and meats, jerk chicken and flatbreads washed down by Mustique Mules — or a Hurricane David if you dare!

The new water-level walkway surrounding Basil's means young and old can watch a kaleidoscope of fish gliding by, lit up at night by underwater lights. The jazz and other live music pulses from the stage as artistes from all over the world fly in for a chance to play on this most low key but famous of stages with an audience like no other. The sun rises and sets, the music plays on, and the Basil's star is re-born.

A selection of deep-draft moorings is available, and Mustique also offers yachtspeople the opportunity to shop at the island's grocery store, Stanley's famous fresh fruit and vegetable market, and the fish market and bakery. Please contact the Mustique Moorings Office on Tel 1 (784) 488-8363 or VHF CH 68/16.

*For more information on Basil's Bar see ad on page 9.*

**Multihull Company En Route to Annapolis Show**

Amanda Borroughs reports: The Multihull Company announces that several brokers will be attending this year's United States Sailboat Show in Annapolis, Maryland. The prestigious show, running from October 4th through 8th, attracts sailors from around the globe and we are thrilled to be displaying two Balance Catamarans.

In attendance will be TMC President, Phillip Berman; Sales Manager, Andrew Holland; and our expert brokers, Alexis De Boucaud, Chris Rundlett, Chrystal Young, Will Miller, Cal Landau, and George Ottoni. We will be showing the Balance 526 *Dragonfly* and the Balance 451 *Mahi Mahi*, on the docks. To arrange a time to personally inspect a boat or speak with an agent, contact Lauren@multihullcompany ahead of the show to make an appointment.

*For more information on the Multihull Company see ad on page 36.*

**Budget Marine St Maarten: We're Ready!**

Robbie Ferron reports: The experience of restructuring after a hurricane hit like Hurricane Irma is one that is difficult to put into words. "Digging out" from such a situation is not just a question of building back, but also involves building back under less than ideal circumstances and with fewer facilities than what one is used to.

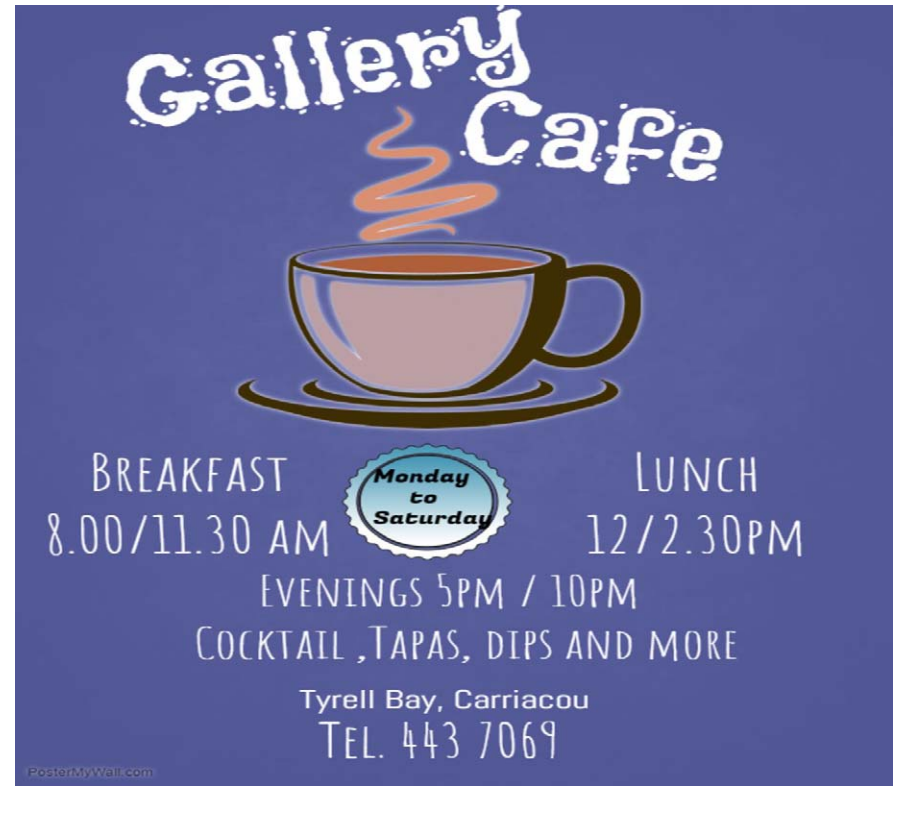
In the case of Budget Marine St Maarten the "digging out" has resulted in the company being leaner, …

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…more focused, and more ready and motivated than ever to do business. Business levels show a steady increasing trend on a seasonally adjusted basis. A fully installed software system is able to efficiently handle the complexity of multiple sales channels, huge amounts of stock and regular replenishment. The retail section of Budget Marine St. Maarten remains the largest single dedicated chandlery floor in the Eastern Caribbean outside of Puerto Rico and the offering — still growing — outranks all others without exception.
*For more information on Budget Marine see ad on page 2.*

**Horizon Yachts' Special Charter Offers**

Horizon Yacht Charters reports: Charter any available bareboat catamaran in the British Virgin Islands from November 1st to December 15th, 2018 and you'll get nine nights for the price of seven. Or when you charter any available catamaran for one week (seven nights/eight days), you'll receive a ten-percent discount.

When you charter any available monohull in the BVI this summer or fall, you will get ten nights for the price of seven. Or charter one week (seven nights/eight days) and you'll receive 15 percent off any available monohull.

*Visit https://horizonyachtcharters.com for more information on Horizon Yacht Charters.*

*For information on Horizon Yachts Grenada's Yacht Management Program, see ad in the Market Place section, pages 34 through 36.*

***Desperate Deliveries* Available as Paperback**

Cris Robinson reports: My latest book, *Desperate Deliveries*, is now available from Amazon as a paperback as well as an e-book. It includes 21 colour photographs.

*Desperate Deliveries* is a true adventure story of boat deliveries and life in Venezuela, a continuation of the experiences related in my previous e-books, A Small Slip (which will also be available in paperback shortly), and Malandro, written under the name Kay Vyner.

*Desperate Deliveries* in paperback costs US$22 in USA and £16.48 in the UK plus taxes and shipping. By the way, I get less than $3 or £2 of that per book; Jeff Bezos and his crew get the rest. Fair enough, the upkeep and polishing of Jeff's boat costs more than mine and he uses it less. I don't make money writing books, but I make a lot of friends — and that makes the effort worthwhile.

*Find Desperate Deliveries in paperback or as an e-book at Amazon.com.*

**Peters & May Renew Sponsorship of Antigua Sailing Week**

Having sponsored Antigua Sailing Week since 2016, Peters & May announce the renewal of their Sponsorship to include both the 2019 and 2020 events. Antigua Sailing Week grows year on year, with participants traveling the globe to compete in five days of racing.

As the official shipping and logistics partner to Antigua Sailing Week, the renewed commitment of Peters & May marks the further development of relationships with the Ministry of Tourism, Port Authority and the Antigua & Barbuda Marine Association.

Alison Sly-Adams, Commercial Director of Antigua Sailing Week is pleased to continue in collaboration with Peters & May; "As participants' post-Antigua Sailing Week schedules become increasingly busy, return sailings to the US, Europe and Mediterranean grow in popularity every year. The service Peters & May offers is therefore an essential part of the options we offer to our competitors."

*Visit www.petersandmay.com for more information on Peters & May.*

*Visit www.sailingweek.com for more information on Antigua Sailing Week.*

**Sea Hawk's New Technical Sales Representative**




*Bringing experience and enthusiasm, Bill Wolf is the new technical sales representative for New Nautical Coatings, makers of Sea Hawk paints*

Michael O'Keene reports: New Nautical Coatings, Inc. has announced the appointment of Bill Wolf as technical sales representative for its growing domestic and international markets. Based in Stuart, Florida, Wolf will report to Tommy Craft, vice president of sales, Sea Hawk Paints. His responsibilities include sales, technical support, customer training and executing new business development initiatives.

"As Sea Hawk continues to expand in the premium yacht coatings market, advanced sales technical support is critical to meeting our growth goals," said Erik Norrie, Sea Hawk CEO. "Bill brings the perfect balance of experience and enthusiasm that is certain to ignite our expanding business among marine service professionals and boat builders alike," Norrie added.

Prior to joining New Nautical Coatings, Inc. and the Sea Hawk brand, Bill managed regional sales and superyacht technical support for Pettit Paints. Before that he spent three years as project engineer at Rybovich Super Yacht Center. Bill is a certified NACE Coating Inspector (CIP Level 2) with comprehensive knowledge of antifouling coatings, corrosion control, paint inspection and project management, enabling him to assist boat owners and marine service professionals in specifying and applying the appropriate coatings with exceptional results and cost savings.

A trendsetter of marine bottom paints, New Nautical Coatings, Inc. and the Sea Hawk brand was established in 1978 and is dedicated to bringing only the highest quality products and customer satisfaction to today's mariner. New Nautical Coatings is family owned and operated with a commitment to excellence. It provides a wide array of application-specific marine coating products that include antifouling systems, primers, solvents, and resins. Now offering innovative products globally, the Sea Hawk brand has enjoyed unprecedented growth and continues to grow as its products become more in demand worldwide.

*For more information on Sea Hawk Paints see ad on page 15.*

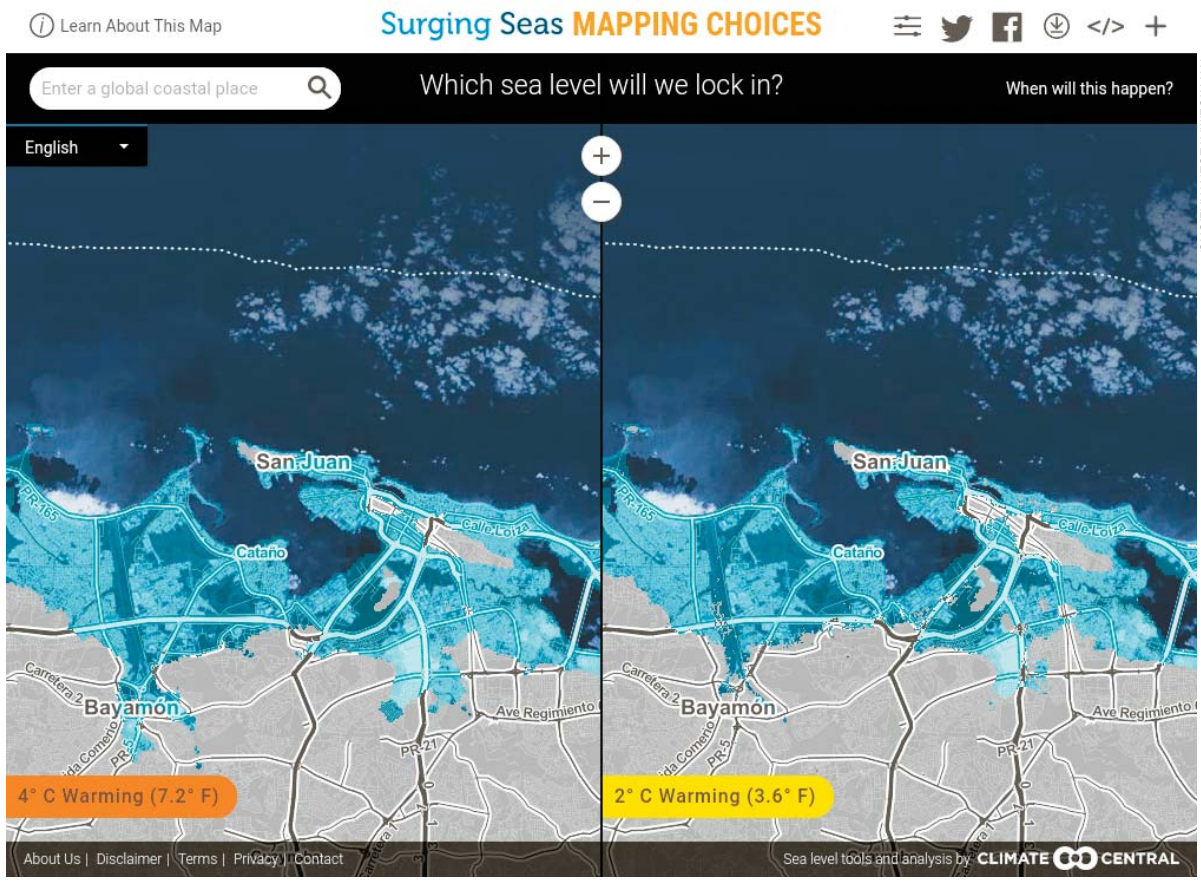


# Caribbean Eco-News

**Tools to View Sea-level Rise**

Climate Central's Program on Sea Level Rise offers tools for US coastal communities, including Puerto Rico and the US Virgin islands, to assess risk from rising sea levels and coastal floods. Spanish language versions are available.

The tools provide maps, sea-level projections, flood risk projections and detailed exposure analyses. Coastal stakeholders have downloaded Surging Seas maps and analyses tens of thousands of times for planning, risk assessments, policy analyses, and making presentations. Overall, Surging Seas has achieved more than 100 million page views. Information and downloads include customizable maps, slides, and fact sheets.




In Risk Zone Map (ss2.climatecentral.org), users can search, zoom or pan to a specific location; choose a water level; and select a layer to see threats to population, property and more. Downloadable screenshots available in PNG or PowerPoint formats.

In Mapping Choices (choices.climatecentral.org), users can also search, zoom or pan to a specific location to view how much sea level rise could be locked in based on carbon emissions this century.

In Risk Finder (ss2.climatecentral.org), users can choose different sea-level rise models to view how emissions today can impact local sea-level rise and coastal flood risk in decades to come. In addition, users can explore demographics, property, schools, medical facilities, hazardous waste sites, airports, and much more. Downloadable graphs and tables are available in PowerPoint, PNG, and XLS formats. In Risk Finder, users can also download two-page fact sheets tailored to their zip code, municipality, county or congressional district. Or users can download four-page local reports that include key local takeaways, basic methods and assumptions.

Climate Central is a non-profit research and journalism organization providing authoritative, science-based information to help the public and policymakers make sound decisions about climate and energy.

*Visit sealevel.climatecentral.org for more information.*

**Trinidad & Tobago to Ban Styrofoam**

In July, the Trinidad & Tobago Government approved a ban on polystyrene foam products, to be implemented by 2019.

Planning Minister Camille Robinson-Regis says local polystyrene manufacturers have been given time to make their products environmentally friendly. In the meantime, the Minister says the importation of styrofoam products into the country will be banned.

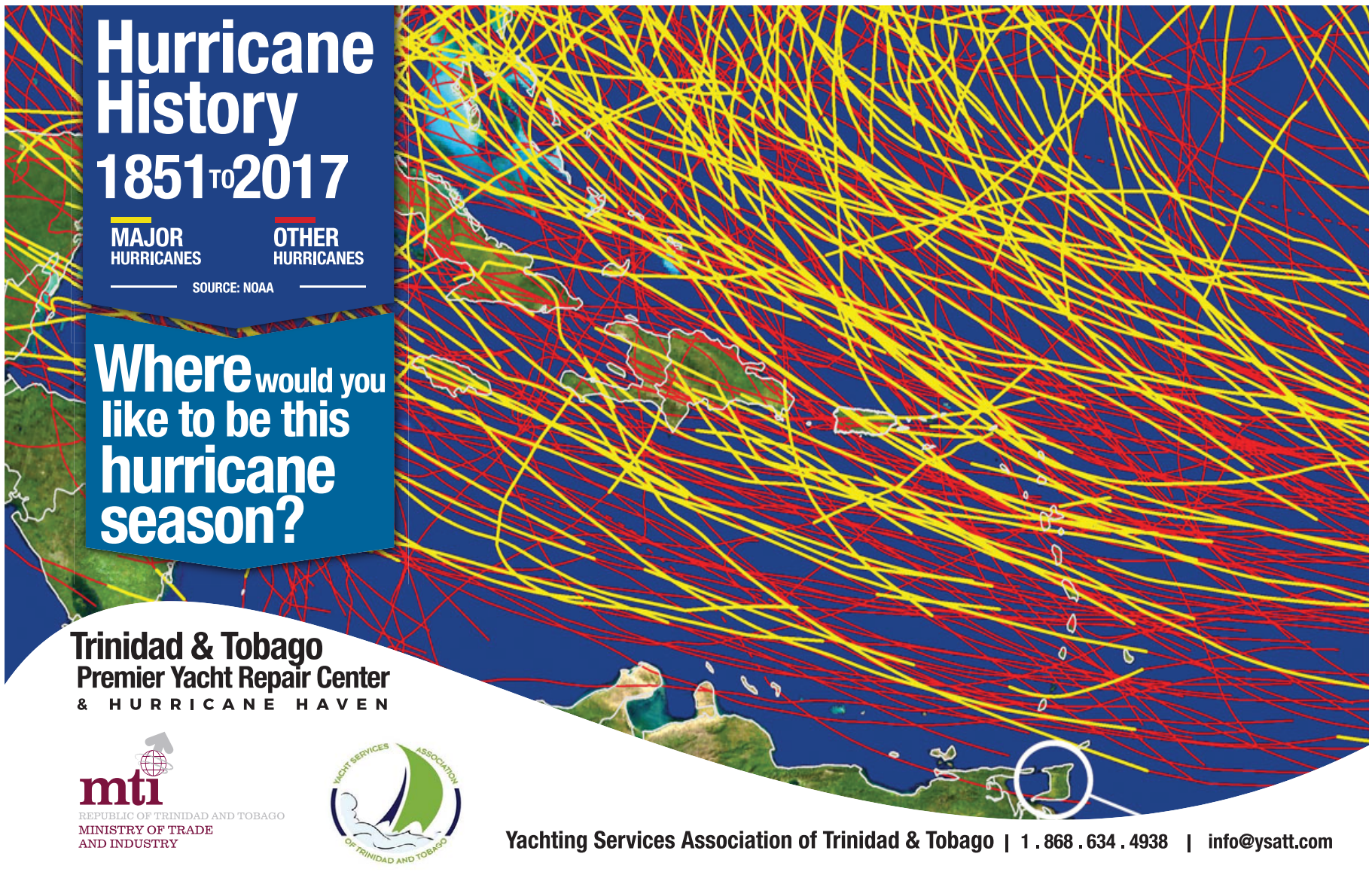
In addition to the planned ban, Government is also pushing citizens to begin recycling other waste such as PET plastic bottles, drink cartons, aluminium cans and glass bottles.

The phasing out of polystyrene foam products has already begun in Tobago, after the Tobago House of Assembly passed a motion to do so last year.

**Dominica to Ban Many Single-Use Items**

Effective January 1st next year, Dominica will ban a number of single-use plastic and styrofoam items considered to be harmful to the environment.

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The full list of items that will be banned in Dominica has yet to be finalized, but banned items will include plastic straws, plates, forks and knives, and styrofoam cups and food containers.

Announcing this intention in June's budget address, Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit said his government wanted to help preserve Dominica's famously beautiful natural landscape. "Dominica prides itself as being the Nature Isle. We must in every way deserve and reflect that designation," Skerrit said.

**Marine Environment Key at SVG Summer Camp**

Marine environmental protection was a key factor in St. Vincent & the Grenadines' Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Summer Camp, which was joined by the Public Education Awareness Outreach Program of the National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Authority.

To promote the protection and conservation of the marine environment, the NPRBA facilitated a beach clean-up at the Colonaire Beach, a known sea-turtle nesting habitat, on July 26th. Approximately 36 students, ages six to 11, and their teachers participated. A decomposition timeline activity was done prior to the beach clean-up to emphasize the harmful impact of pollution on the environment and, ultimately, our health.

July 23rd, the NPRBA facilitated a water-quality collection and analysis training session with approximately 18 students and teachers from the STEM SVG Summer Camp. The participants received both theoretical and practical training in collecting water-quality samples and analysis of data. This activity took place along the South Coast Area, ranging from the White Sands Beach to Indian Bay Beach. The activity was very well received by both students and teachers.

**St. Lucian Kids Helping Their Environment**

Twenty-five students from across St. Lucia recently spent a week in summer camp at the Quilesse Rainforest Reserve, organized by the Caribbean Students Environmental Alliance (Caribbean SEA) and sponsored by Lucelec. They learned about protecting the watershed and got to know the plants and animals of the rainforest. The camp was led by Mary Beth Sutton, the founder of Caribbean SEA in a number of islands, and Nadia Cazaubon, the St. Lucia Programme Director, who runs projects with groups of children around the island all year round.

There was discussion about pollution of various kinds and when they arrived home at the end of the camp, the children found there was still more to learn and lots to do. Single-use plastics were a big issue, and they attended a community showing of the movie "A Plastic Ocean". JJ of Marigot Bay opened up his dancehall as the venue for more than 30 children plus parents, and the event was attended by Anthony Mark, President of the Marigot Development Committee, who reminded the children that the future of Marigot was in their hands.




*These young St. Lucian volunteers couldn't believe the pile of garbage next to the sign saying 'HELP KEEP THIS PLACE CLEAN'!*

The children wanted to know what they could do to stop so much plastic waste clogging up St. Lucia's waterways and breaking down into micro-plastics that are becoming part of our food chain. Naima, aged ten, spoke for many of her friends when she announced that "seeing a bird throw up plastic is gross," while her brother said he would be checking the stomachs of the fish he caught in future to see how many of them contained plastic.

The next day, Caribbean SEA organized a clean-up campaign and the children filled huge bags with as many plastic bottles as they could find, from the roadside, the mangroves and the beach. The plan was to take the bags to the mayor of Castries who was offering five dollars for each full bag, but the children were delighted when the Mayor's environmental manager, Mr. Soomer, came to Marigot himself to meet them. The children then surprised Mr. Soomer by asking if they could have school supplies instead of money for their bags full of plastic. Mary Beth Sutton, who has been working with the children of Marigot for 15 years, observed that, "Marigot children are dedicated to making a difference in their community and we are proud to assist them in their efforts toward a cleaner and healthier environment!"

***Journal of the Reserve Naturelle* Available**

The latest issue of the *Journal of the Reserve Naturelle* of St. Martin is now available free online (in French and English) at https://reservenaturelle-saint-martin.com/journaux-pdf/2018/journal32.pdf.



# Removal of Rats and Goats Transforms Redonda

*by Tim Knight*

If conservationists had waved a magic wand, the results could hardly have been more spectacular. Within 12 months of removing goats and thousands of rats from Redonda, this Caribbean island has experienced a miraculous transformation.

Since the ambitious restoration programme reported in the January issue of *Compass* (see "A Dying Island Given a Second Chance at Life" on page 11 at www.caribbeancompass.com/online/january18compass_online.pdf), the rock of Redonda has been transformed from an inhospitable lunar landscape to a greener haven. More importantly, the unique plants and animals native to this isolated, uninhabited outpost of Antigua & Barbuda are making a rapid recovery after being freed from an alien invasion.

The evocatively named Redonda Ground Dragon (*Pholidoscelis atrata*), a black lizard found nowhere else on the planet, has doubled in number — just one of the many beasts that have been pulled back from the brink of extinction by removing predatory black rats and plant-devouring goats.

In less than a year, numbers of the equally rare Redonda tree lizards have tripled, hundreds of new trees have sprung up, land birds have increased tenfold, and the island's globally important seabird colonies — including Magnificent Frigatebirds and several booby species — are having their best breeding year on record.

Speaking on behalf of the Department of the Environment, Dr. Helena Jeffery Brown said: "The Government of Antigua and Barbuda considers the return to life of Redonda as a shining beacon in our collective efforts towards ecosystem restoration and biodiversity conservation that will bring us another step closer to attaining some of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets."

The project's coordinator, Shanna Challenger, of the Environmental Awareness Group and Fauna & Flora International, added, "This has been the opportunity of a lifetime — witnessing the rebirth of an island. Changes forecasted to happen in five years occurred within months.

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GREG SCOTT / CARIBBEAN HELICOPTERS



ELIZABETH BELL / WMIL



JENNY DALTRY / FFI



*In just a year, the removal of goats and rats from Redonda has allowed native plants and animals to flourish on this former 'lunar landscape'. The project's Isabel Vique and Shanna Challenger admired one of the re-emerging trees in March*




—*Continued from previous page*

Our conservation efforts really show the benefits of invasive species removal on Caribbean island ecosystems."

**Blood, sweat, toil and teamwork**

In the field of conservation, where successful outcomes can take years if not decades to materialize, the spectacular results on Redonda appear remarkably swift.

The reality, of course, is that this "overnight" transformation was a long time in the making. It took seven months of blood, sweat, toil and — above all — teamwork to catch dozens of nimble goats and remove over 6,000 rats from every inch of Redonda's rugged terrain. This Caribbean island makeover involved meticulous planning, ingenuity, and edge-of-the-seat manoeuvres that included abseiling down sheer cliff faces to lay down rat bait and — thanks to the skilled pilots of Caribbean Helicopters Ltd — landing equipment in very tight spots.



SALINA JANZAN

*Magnificent Frigatebird chicks in their nest on a ficus tree. The island's globally important seabird colonies are now having their best breeding year on record*

New Zealand-based Wildlife Management International Limited led the rat eradication team. "We have over 30 years of experience in clearing invasive species from islands," said ecologist Elizabeth (Biz) Bell, "but having a ground team, rope access team and helicopter team using a combination of bait stations and scattering by hand to successfully target all of the rats makes the Redonda project unique."

The British Mountaineering Council played a vital role in ensuring that even the steepest cliffs could be reached. Safety was paramount, as CEO Dave Turnbull recalls: "The volcanic cliffs of Redonda presented an extremely challenging environment for the climbers to operate in; the BMC was very pleased to support this important conservation project and help ensure the safety of the team throughout the work."

The safe removal of the malnourished herd of rare-breed feral goats presented an altogether different challenge, as Dr. Karl Campbell of Island Conservation can attest: "This project was essential for the well-being of the goats and to enable the ecological recovery of the island. The translocation of goats has seen a suite of positive impacts, and further benefits will unveil themselves in time."

One intriguing consequence of removing the predatory rats is that lizards on Redonda are rapidly changing their behaviour, according to scientists from Harvard University and the Museum of Natural History in Paris. "We measured anti-predator behaviour and found that the Ground Dragons are becoming fierce and fearless now that the rats are gone, chasing and eating even adult tree lizards," said Dr. Colin Donihue. "This new balance of nature is more in line with what we'd expect of these animals before rats were ever on the island."

The long list of organizations that cooperated in this mission reflects the complex challenges that had to be overcome. The government of Antigua & Barbuda along with the EAG and FFI joined forces with leading technical specialists from the UK, USA and New Zealand.

Thanks to their collaborative efforts, Redonda has been rat free since March 2017, while the feral goats have been rehoused and are being cared for by the government's Veterinary and Livestock Division on Antigua. Biosecurity equipment and protocols have also been installed to prevent future invasions.

**What's next for Redonda?**

Redonda harbours endemic species that occur nowhere else in the world, including at least five species of reptiles, and globally important colonies of seabirds. Conservationists argue that Redonda's unique wildlife, coupled with the historical remains of one of the region's largest guano mines, warrants greater protection for the island. They're not the only ones. A recent nationwide survey revealed that over 96 percent of Antiguans and Barbudans agree the island should be protected.

Preparations for designating Redonda and the surrounding sea as a reserve are now underway, led by the Redonda Steering Committee, chaired by the Department of Environment.

According to Dr. Robin Moore from US-based Global Wildlife Conservation, which has supported this project and is now helping with planning for the protected area, "It's incredible to see this radical and rapid transformation of Redonda from a bare rock to a carpet of vegetation. As plants and animals continue to rebound, this could truly be a showcase sanctuary for wildlife."

# Redonda Facts

• Redonda harbours a number of endemic species that occur nowhere else in the world, including at least five species of reptiles, such as the Redonda ground dragon (*Pholidoscelis atrata).* In 2015 all of the surviving reptile species on Redonda were evaluated by the IUCN as Critically Endangered, meaning they faced an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild.

• Redonda has regionally and globally significant colonies of seabirds, including brown boobies, masked boobies, red-footed boobies, Magnificent Frigatebirds and red-billed tropicbirds. It was internationally recognized as an Important Bird Area in 2009.

• The black or ship rats (*Rattus rattus*) that invaded Redonda were among the largest recorded members of this species and were observed hunting and killing the island's lizards and seabirds. Diet analyses have shown they also consumed enormous quantities of plants and invertebrates.

• Christopher Columbus named the island in 1493 and claimed it for Spain. Redonda was later transferred to the British Crown and around 7,000 tonnes of seabird guano was harvested annually from 1865 to 1914. It is believed that rats were introduced to the island during this period. The mining community was disbanded during World War I, after which the island was uninhabited. In 1967, Redonda became a dependency of Antigua & Barbuda.

• The Redonda Restoration Programme is supported by, among others, the Darwin Initiative through UK Government funding, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, Global Wildlife Conservation, Betty Liebert Trust, US Fish & Wildlife Service NMBCA and Syngenta Crop Protection AG.

The Redonda Restoration Programme is part of a larger effort to protect global biodiversity. Most highly threatened vertebrates are found on islands, with invasive species introduced to islands being a leading cause of extinction. Removing invasive species from islands is an effective and proven way to save many of our world's most vulnerable species. To date, there have been more than 400 successful projects to remove invasive rodents from islands. The pace, scale and complexity of these efforts are increasing in recognition of the threat invasive species pose to biodiversity.

• The Aichi Biodiversity Targets form an integral part of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, adopted by signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity at a 2010 meeting in Nagoya, Japan. They comprise a series of strategic goals that aim to halt biodiversity loss, maintain ecosystem services and protect the variety of life on the planet that is essential to human well-being.

• The rat eradication and goat removal work was completed by June 2017, and Redonda was officially declared rat-free in July 2018, after an intensive three-week survey failed to uncover any signs of rodents anywhere on the island. This aligns with customary best practice, which is to wait at least one year before declaring a rat eradication operation successful. The entire population of black rats was eradicated using Klerat, a bitter, waxy rat bait containing the active ingredient brodifacoum that has been used successfully to remove rats from dozens of Caribbean islands since the early 1990s. This was readily eaten by the rats on Redonda but ignored by the native reptiles, mammals and birds. The bait was distributed at intervals of not less than 40 metres, even down the high cliffs, to be certain of reaching every rat. The rat eradication team lived on the island for more than two months to monitor bait uptake and remove rat carcasses. The goat operation took more than six months and aimed to bring the healthiest animals back to Antigua alive at the request of the Department of Agriculture. Recent genetic tests indicate the goats, which have unusually long horns, are of Spanish origin. Most of the goats were successfully captured by hand after being shepherded along temporary fence lines, but some were caught using live snares. All of the goats were found to be very thin and stunted due to the lack of food on Redonda, but have since gained weight and have begun breeding on Antigua.




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# REGATTA NEWS

**CSA Five-Year Racing Calendar 2019-2023 Released**

The Caribbean Racing Circuit for 2019 onwards has no fewer than 19 international events listed, including passage racing, offshore, round the rocks, round the cans, and around a number of different islands. Depending on the boat and your preferences, racing is served up for classics, superyachts, match racing and CSA classes, plus new for 2019 is the Caribbean Multihull Challenge (see item on next page).

The RORC Transatlantic Race, which finishes in Grenada, launches the season and offers racers a great way to make their passage to the Caribbean prior to the main racing season. A passage race from Barbados to Antigua as part of Barbados Sailing Week gets boats to Antigua in time for the Superyacht Challenge. The end-of-season final race is the Antigua-to-Bermuda Race, a great way to begin the move north for the summer. Stops at St. Thomas, St. Croix, the British Virgin Islands and St. Barths ensure that regatta options are varied.

For sailors who want to get to their summer 2019 racing destination more quickly, shipping options out of St. Thomas, Antigua, Martinique and St. Maarten will allow you the time to enjoy the Caribbean season to the fullest before heading off.

The Caribbean Sailing Association committed to issuing a five-year calendar each summer to assist campaigning yachts with their plans and to ensure that newcomers to the region clearly understand the choice of options to race at an international level throughout the region. Peter Holmberg, past president of the CSA says, "The Caribbean region is unmatched in the wide range of options on offer and also in the cooperation of all events who work together to ensure minimal conflict of event dates."

*For the international calendar listing visit https://caribbean-sailing.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2019-2023-CSA-Caribbean-Circuit-Regatta-Calendar.pdf*

*For a full list of all Caribbean events including regional and local visit https://caribbean-sailing.com/caribbean-race-calendar/calendar*

*More information about the organization can be found at www.caribbean-sailing.com*

ON THE HORIZON

**Caribbean Dinghy Championship Next Month**

The Caribbean Dinghy Championship 2018 will be hosted by Antigua Yacht Club on October 27th and 28th. The CDC provides teams of sailors from CSA-member islands with an opportunity to compete against other member islands in a variety of popular one-design sailing dinghies. Classes of boats in the CDC event have included the Laser Radial, Laser Standard, Optimist, International 420, and Zoom 8s. The 2018 event will see the introduction of the two-person RS Feva class. Each island is eligible to send one team of up to six sailors.

*Visit https://caribbean-sailing.com/sailing-development/caribbean-dinghy-championship for more information.*

**Trio of Route Options for ARC 2018**

Las Palmas de Gran Canaria is set to welcome the 33rd edition of the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers this November. Sailors from all over the world congregate in the port city to begin preparations for a transatlantic voyage to the Caribbean.

CHRIS DOYLE



ARC sailors have a choice of routes, and for the first time three starts are planned for 2018. The first start comprises 75 boats sailing the "ARC+ Cape Verdes" route, introduced to the event five years ago. On November 11th, this ARC+ fleet departs, sailing initially to the Cape Verde islands for a three- to five-day stopover, then restarts for St. Lucia on November 21st for the second stage of the crossing.

The smallest fleet, pioneering a new route and a new destination for 2018, will depart from Las Palmas on November 15th. The 20 boats that make up the "ARC+ St. Vincent" fleet also sail initially to Cape Verdes for a three- to five-day stopover, restarting on November 25th bound for Blue Lagoon Marina in the popular destination of St. Vincent & the Grenadines.

The largest fleet of yachts, over 225 in total, sail on the traditional route directly from Las Palmas de Gran Canaria to Rodney Bay, St. Lucia, a total of 2,700 nautical miles. That start is planned for November 25th.

This November, over the course of the three staggered start days, approximately 1,600 sailors aged from ten months to over 80 years of age will depart from Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. These sailors hail from all over the world and include an all-female crew from Finland and a four-time Transat Jacques-Vabre winner.

The boats are as diverse as the crews on board, from the traditional long-keel cruisers to the recently refitted 130-foot superyacht *G2* (ex. *Cinderella IV*). Multihulls have proved extremely popular with a total of 54 catamarans on the entry list spread across the different routes — a record entry thanks to the increased capacity.

*Visit www.worldcruising.com/arc for more information.*

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**New! Caribbean Multihull Challenge - St Maarten**

The new Caribbean Multihull Challenge – St Maarten will take place from February 8th through 10th, 2019. The event will be an official Mount Gay Red Cap Event, having signed Mount Gay as one of the leading sponsors. The first edition of this, the only all-multihull regatta in the Caribbean, is now open for registration.

In addition to three days of racing, the event will offer nightly entertainment and a fun beach party on the Saturday afternoon, where Mount Gay Rum will be presenting Rum Specials. Venues for parties and prizegiving will alternate nightly between the Sint Maarten Yacht Club and Buccaneer's Beach Bar. "We are extremely excited to participate in this great initiative. Mount Gay Rum has a special connection with the sailing community… To make this regatta an official Red Cap Event is something we are particularly proud of. We are confident that we can offer a unique event, both on- and off-shore where participants and spectators can enjoy competitive sailing and entertaining events while enjoying Mount Gay Rum," says Roel Kokkelmans, Mount Gay Rum brand manager.

The Caribbean Multihull Challenge – St Maarten will welcome multihulls ranging from classics built in the 1970s using marine plywood, to highly advanced contemporary designs built in carbon fiber. Courses will be specifically designed for multihulls with downwind or reaching starts and long reaching and running legs. By breaking away from the traditional windward/leeward courses, common to regattas where multi- and monohull boats race on the same courses, boats entered in this event will have the opportunity to revel in high-speed fun.

*Visit www.smyc.com/caribbean-multihull-challenge for more information, the Notice of Race, and to register.*

**32nd Antigua Classics in 2019**

The Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta 2019 will take place April 17th through 23rd. To be eligible for the Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta, all entries should have a full keel, be of moderate to heavy displacement, built of wood or steel, and be of traditional rig and appearance. Old craft restored using modern materials, or new craft built along the lines of an old design, are acceptable. Vessels built of ferrocement may be accepted if they have a gaff or traditional schooner rig. Fibreglass yachts must have a long keel with a keel-hung rudder and be a descendant of a wooden hull design.



TIM WRIGHT / WWW.PHOTOACTION.COM

Yachts not fitting into the above categories may apply, providing documents, photographs or drawings to support their request for entry in the Spirit of Tradition Class. All entries unknown to the Regatta committee must be accompanied by underwater and rig photographs or drawings, and are subject to approval by the Committee, whose decision is final.

*Visit www.antiguaclassics.com for more information.*

**Bequia Sailing Club Announces 2019 Easter Regatta**

Bequia will once again host its ever-popular Easter Regatta next year. Registration and skippers' briefing will be on April 18th, with racing over the Easter weekend culminating in the grand prizegiving on April 22nd.

Classes will include Racing, Cruising I & II, J/24, Surprise, and Windward Sloops, as well as the local double-ender fishing boats, and a fun race day for children. There will be a full program of social events.

A number of improvements are being built into next year's event including a new and on-line scoring system as well as making this regatta the "greenest' ever.

*Contact bequiasailingclub@gmail.com for more information.*

**New Antigua Sailing Week Rules Seminar**

A new Racing Rules of Sailing Seminar, sponsored by Newport Shipyard, will take place on April 26th, before the start of racing at Antigua Sailing Week 2019.

The Rules Seminar is designed to clarify the *Racing Rules of Sailing*, in an easy-to-understand fashion. Chief judge David Pelling will use race course scenarios to demonstrate how the rules should be interpreted. There will be time for questions and answers following the seminar. Race Manager Lorna Saunders says, "ASW has been given a great opportunity to offer this seminar, which I believe will benefit our competitors, not just from a safety point of view, but to contribute to their performance."

Newport Shipyard is the summer home to many boats following their Caribbean season. General Manger Eli Dana says, "As the last major regatta in the Caribbean season, Antigua Sailing Week is a strategically important event being the last port of call in the Caribbean Region for many yachts heading north. As such we are delighted to be a sponsor of the event and further strengthen our partnerships in Antigua & Barbuda."

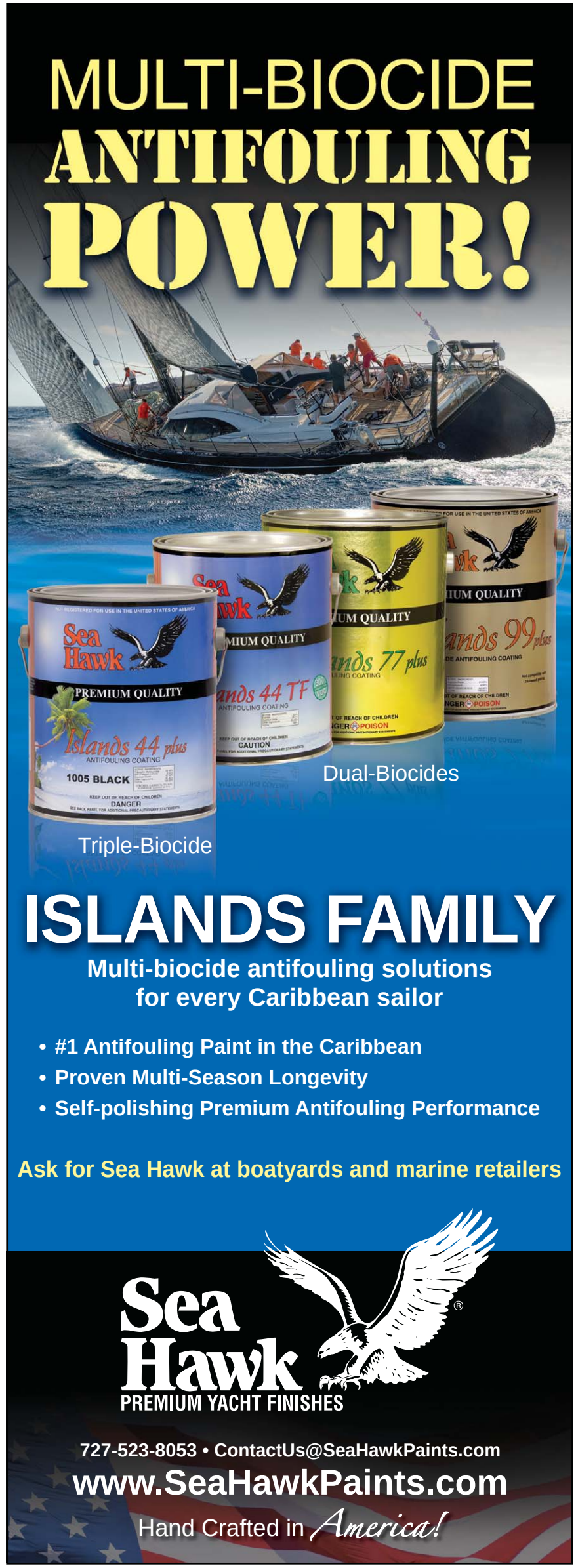
All sailors participating in both the Round Antigua Race (April 27th) and Antigua Sailing Week (April 28th through May 3rd) are eligible to attend the Newport Shipyard Racing Rules of Sailing seminar.

*Attendance of the seminar needs to be confirmed in advance at www.sailingweek.com/newport-shipyard-racing-rules-of-sailing-seminar-registration.*

**New Double-Handed Class for Antigua Sailing Week**

In view of the growing demand for double-handed racing, the organizers of Antigua Sailing Week have added a new double-handed class. Double-handed racing is all about crew stamina and how to pace yourself.

*—Continued on page 32*



# Annual Martinique Yole Race
## Not 'Around' This Time




WWW.YOLE365.COM

For the first time in its 34-year history, the Tour de la Martinique des Yoles Rondes was not an around-the-island contest. The traditional courses in the eight-day multi-legged regatta for Martinique's indigenous sailing yoles — 35-foot, open, sprit-rigged racing craft — were changed this year owing to the huge volume of sargassum seaweed clogging the harbors and coastline on the island's windward side. Requiring some creativity on the part of the organizers, the Fédération des Yoles Rondes, all eight races in the 2018 series, held July 29th through August 5th, took place off the lee coast, which was less affected by the seaweed.

In addition to the course changes, the usual warm-up race was dispensed with this year, making the 2018 edition a unique version of Martinique's most popular sporting event.

The start of the "Tour", originally planned for the windward town of François, took place instead at Schoelcher, a community well known for its annual international dinghy-sailing week, which had not hosted a leg of the yole event since 2014. Day One took the 16-strong yole fleet from Schoelcher to Prêcheur, Leg Two was from Prêcheur to Prêcheur, Leg Three from Prêcheur back to Schoelcher, Leg Four from Schoelcher to Anses d'Arlet, Leg Five from Anses d'Arlet to Marin, Leg Six from Marin back to Anses d'Arlet, Leg Seven from Anses d'Arlet to Fort de France, and the eighth and final race day saw action around the buoys in Anse des Flamands off Fort-de-France. The Tour — a sail-racing marathon with no equal elsewhere in the Caribbean — contains no lay day.

The new leeward-side format was a challenge for the racers, too, who had built up years of experience perfecting the tactics and strategies required in the usual counter-clockwise round-island format. Nevertheless, last year's second-place winner, *UFR/Chanflor*, from the town of Robert, dominated the 34th edition of the Tour de la Martinique, taking first place in three of the legs. It was skipper Félix Mérine's tenth Tour de la Martinique overall win.

In second place overall was *Brasserie Lorraine*, and third was *Somarec*. Last year's champion, *Rosette/Orange*, settled for a hard-fought fourth.

*For more information on this year's* Tour de la Martinique des Yoles Rondes *visit http://federationyolesrondes.com/letour/2018, www.tourdesyoles.com, www.yole365.com and www.yoles-rondes.com.*

*For an inside look at a past running of this event, see Jan Alexander's report on page 18 at www.caribbeancompass.com/online/september16compass_online.pdf*







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# ACADEMIC WORK ON THE WATER

*Youth to Adult, "Y2A", is a series of articles demonstrating the value of Learn to Sail programs for Caribbean children.*

Learning about many elements of sailboats, sails, and sailing supports the academic work that children are doing in school. A term that is becoming popular, "STEM" — Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics — in countries around the world supports and advances applied academics through experiential learning inside and outside the conventional classroom. Sailing is rife with opportunities for supporting this type of academic reinforcement.



MARGO LYNCH

*Learning about sails and sailboats engaged these fifth-grade USVI students and added meaning to many lessons learned in the classroom*

In the US, a non-profit festival occurring every two years in Washington, DC has taken a firm hold. Co-founder Diane Birnie Bock has this to say: "The USA Science and Engineering Festival was designed to help kids discover how FUN and how IMPORTANT it is to hone their technical skills. STEM will touch every single aspect of their lives, and being well equipped will allow them to succeed in both work and play throughout their future. We offer hundreds of hands-on activities for K-12 graders and their families to try, taste, experiment, create. Three days of exciting shows, exhibits and activities. The next Festival will be in Washington DC in April, 2020. Our goal is to inspire and invigorate the next generation."

In St. Thomas, USVI, Margo Lynch tells Y2A, "This year after the hurricanes, I ended up teaching a fifth grade class again. We did several STEM activities in the classroom. However, I knew getting the kids out on the water would be a wonderful way to take the math we had learned and give it some meaning.

"So we took the fifth grade of the Antilles School to the St. Thomas Yacht Club and had them measure the area and perimeter of Laser sails and worked on basic simple machines (i.e. levers, pulleys, wedges, inclined planes, screws, wheels and axles). In some cases, "machines" are hardware on the boat, in other cases they are found in the design itself. For example, the bow of the boat is a wedge. In addition to identifying those machines on sailboats, we got all of the children out sailing a Hobie Wave."

Paraphrasing from US Sailing's Reach program on their website: Sailing becomes an educational platform, challenging youth to embrace the marine world, establish a love of learning and explore productive Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)-based careers. Combining educators, sailing instructors, engineers and scientists with today's youth provides them with a one-of-a-kind authentic learning experience, and gives students the opportunity to apply classroom learning in a cooperative work environment.

Bringing the academic angle to Youth Sailing doesn't have to be limited to STEM. Sailing is entrenched in other subjects, including world history, sociology, environmentalism and physical fitness. After all, throughout mankind's history, sailing has been employed for exploration and commerce. For young people to understand that "To boldly go where no man has gone before" did not originate with a 1970s television show, children can learn that Captain Cook coined the phrase when he wrote of his sailing exploits in the Pacific Ocean, which was the "outer space" of his time, the 1700s. Bringing the past to life by having a child take tiller and mainsheet in hand imagining him or herself at the helm of a schooner is a way to better relate to the colonial period's primary form of commerce. Piracy has also been romanticized in recent decades and this fascination can fuel a young person's curiosity for a period in history where seafarers relied on their wit, moxie and limited instruments to thrive and survive in a time when sailing was king, prior to the age of motorization leading to rail and air transport, and then advanced navigational instruments.

**A Different Kind of Experiential Learning**

Richard Bode, in his book *First You Must Row a Little Boat*, expounded on the many lifelong benefits of experiential learning, such as he had obtained in small boats as a child, first in a row boat and later in a small centerboard sailboat. Bode asserts that his understanding of basics related to seamanship led to his success in dealing with the larger challenges and dilemmas of adult life. He ended his book this way: "I had moved across a continent, migrated to another place and another time, but I had not left the essence of myself behind. I had sailed as a boy, I had sailed as a man, and I was sailing still."

Salient points from Bode's book include: "But if we want to learn, truly want to learn, we must break through the protective veneer of false pride and allow the masters of the past and present to enter our lives. We need to find those special people who contain the lore of the race and can pass on to us what we yearn to know. They may be individuals we meet personally in the classroom or the shipyard or the office down the hall. Or, they may be individuals we never meet and never can meet because they belong to another age — although we know them well by the works they left behind.



"I picked Capt. Harrison Watts, who taught me how to row a little boat and how to climb the wind. I picked Ed Doubrava, who showed me the shortcuts across the shoals and flats and found my first sailboat, a makeshift duck blind, buried in the cattails. I picked Simmy Baker, who taught me how to splice a rope and persuaded me to keep my centerboard lowered at all times. These men were my masters — and I had chosen them; they hadn't chosen me."

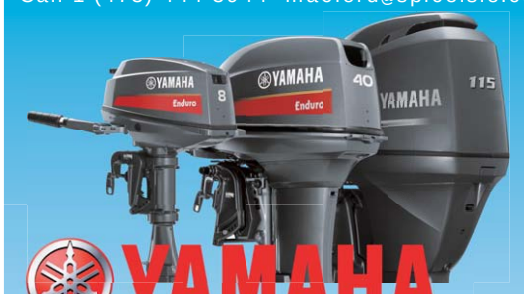
Richard Bode's description of getting his little sailboat underway from its mooring is a metaphor for learning and maturation inside or outside the classroom: "Make sure the sheets are free and not tangled or secured, so the boat won't start sailing in circles around her mooring when you raise the sail. Hoist the sail, raising it as high up the mast as it will go, and let it flutter in the breeze. Drop the centerboard, check the rudder to make sure it's firmly fixed, and then step back and stare at the boat until she is so indelibly imprinted in your mind that you can see her plainly with your eyes closed.

"Think of how the boat will behave when she's under way, how she will dip and soar. Listen to the sound of the wind in the rigging, the gentle slurping of the hull. Grasp the tiller, feel the subtle pressure of it in your hand — how you move it toward the sail or away from the sail to change your angle to the wind."

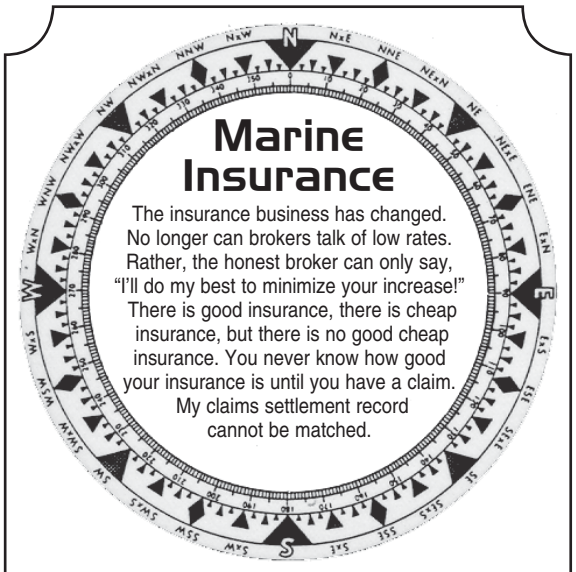
Sailing is excellent for reinforcement of standard academic subjects through experiential learning.

*Ellen Birrell cruises the Caribbean aboard* S/V Boldly Go *with partner Jim Hutchins. She believes that the financial freedom for her current lifestyle came from learning opportunities she had in youth including sailing. She serves as chair of the Caribbean Sailing Association's sailing development committee.*

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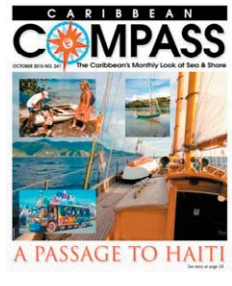
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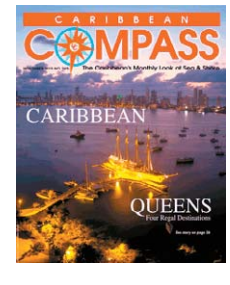
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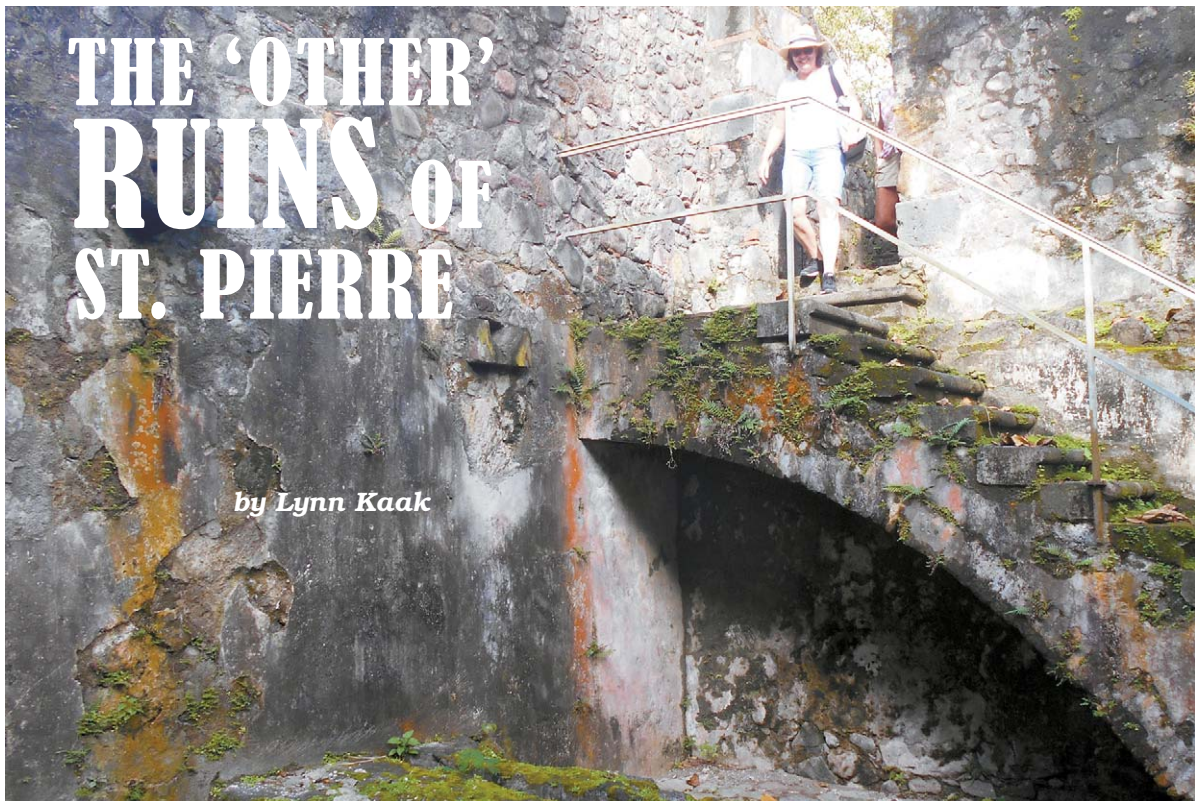






# THE 'OTHER' RUINS OF ST. PIERRE



by Lynn Kaak

If you have been to St. Pierre, Martinique for more than an overnight stay, odds are good that you know about the catastrophic volcanic eruption of Mt. Pelée in 1902. The town was destroyed by the *nuée ardente* (glowing cloud) — an explosive expulsion of superheated gas — and buried under volcanic ash. What is now a fairly quiet village of about 4,500 was once a bustling town of 30,000 (the population of Martinique's capital, Fort de France, currently stands at about 90,000). Before its destruction, St. Pierre was the cultural and economic center of the French West Indies.

Most cruisers have acquainted themselves with the easily accessible ruins that you see as you walk north past the covered market, and the famous remains of the prison and the opera house. However, how many have seen the lesser-known ruins beyond the downtown area?

If you walk northward on the waterfront street, past the covered market and up towards the gas station, you will eventually reach the Roxelane River, and one of the first of the "other" artifacts from before the eruption: the Pont Roches (Rocks Bridge). The stone bridge you will cross was built in 1766 to replace the wooden bridge originally put in place in 1667. At the north end of the bridge there is an information panel, conveniently written in English as well as French.

After crossing the bridge, follow the cobblestone road inland and upriver. The dykes and containment walls are all part of work done in the mid 1700s to contain the river. Follow this road to the end and around to the left. This will lead you to Rue Levassor. Turn right (inland) to get to the next set of ruins.



*Above: Although the 1902 volcanic eruption destroyed most of St. Pierre, tile work in the offices of the 19th century mental asylum remained intact*

*Left: At the east end of the Engineers' Quarters there is a staircase, with access to the upper level*

On your left you will see what is left of what was once the Engineers' Quarters. An aqueduct on the hill above fed water to the site, and provided water for the kitchen, stables and decorative fountains. The Engineers took good advantage of their abilities to create a very agreeable living space.

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At the east end there is a staircase, with access to the upper level. (Bat lovers will want to look up in there.) Information is posted around the site, with English, French, and pictures to help you envision what the facility was like before all Hell literally broke loose on the town.

After strolling the grounds of the Engineers' Quarters, go across the road to what remains of the Maison Coloniale de Santé. It was an *avant-garde* mental asylum that utilized the healing qualities of water to try to help as many as 200 patients (inmates?). The rusting skeleton of a metal chair used to hold patients is still there, bolted to the ground close to the administrative offices. The office area is identifiable by the impressive tile work that is still quite evident.

The facility was opened in 1838, taking advantage of the water system from across the road, and the proximity to the Roxelane River. Some exploration of this site will divulge some interesting, and potentially unsettling, secrets, such as the cells used for the more dangerous patients, the crude toilet facilities, and a room that looks suspiciously like a torture chamber, complete with another iron skeleton for a chair.

*—Continued on page 32*

*Above: The ruins of L'Eglise, dating back to the days of Martinique's earliest European inhabitants*

*Right: Looking over the Engineers' grounds and fountains towards the asylum. 'The Engineers took good advantage of their abilities to create a very agreeable living space'*




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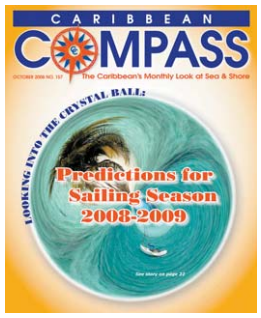
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# TEN YEARS AFTER

## *Part One:* Did Post-Recession Predictions for the Caribbean Sailing Sector Come True?

*The Caribbean yachting sector has often been praised for its "resiliency" in the wake of various negative impacts.*

*After the 2007-2008 global economic downturn,* Caribbean Compass *asked a cross-section of people in the Caribbean yachting sector to gaze into their crystal balls and reveal their predictions for the sailing season 2008–2009. The results were published in our October 2008 issue (page 22 at www.caribbeancompass.com/online/october-08compass_online.pdf).*

*This month, in 'Ten Years After, Part One', we'll revisit 2008's predictions and see how clear, cloudy or cracked the crystal balls were!*

*Next month, in Part Two, we'll ask people to gaze into their crystal balls exactly a decade later and give us their predictions — vis-à-vis our resiliency in the wake of a bad hurricane season — for the coming sailing season 2018–2019.*

*Thanks to all the fortunetellers who have participated!*

**What Did the 2008 Crystal Balls Predict?**

• RACERS WILL HAVE BIGGER BOATS

While Robert Holbrook predicted, "The impressive fun regatta circuit will continue to entice European sailors who wish to add some variety to their cruising plans while they have their boats stationed in the Caribbean," Ellen Sanpere, then of the yacht *Cayenne III*, noted, "In the racing sector, we've seen a cooling-off in some regattas for the under-40-foot boats." Ellen's husband, Tony Sanpere, added, "There will be more, larger racing yachts since there are more regattas offering IRC classes and better race courses more suitable to the big machines."

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*Above and below: Tony Sanpere's prediction came true: In the 2008-09 season racing boats (and cruising boats, too) got bigger, and the trend has since continued*

CHRIS DOYLE



• CRUISERS WILL GO SOUTH AND WEST

Some identified rising costs, more regulations, the proliferation of bareboats, and the desire to cruise new waters as reasons to predict that a number of cruisers would leave the Lesser Antilles. Julia Bartlett, then of the yacht *Marietta*, said, "…the Western Caribbean is increasingly popular and new boating facilities are gradually being constructed. I think that this is owing more to overflow than a conscious move westwards. The Western Caribbean is no safer than elsewhere in general. As cruisers drift west, the crime rate will increase in relation to the number of 'rich' boaters in underdeveloped areas, as it always has, and the Western Caribbean will become commercialized and a disappointment to those with a jaded palate.



*Julia Bartlett predicted that cruisers will complain about commercialism — and support it*



*Los Testigos. In 2008 Mary Stone presciently said, 'Cruising Venezuela requires security to be a constant concern'*

"Commercialism will continue to blossom because cruisers will continue to support it, despite what they say and despite the effects of the recession."

Betty Fries, then of the yacht *Forever Young*, said, "The countries bordering the coasts of Central and South America have a prime opportunity to attract the significant resources represented by cruisers coming to their shores by ensuring safe anchorages and benevolent neglect. Cruisers could be lured away from Trinidad by one well-run, well-supplied, well-equipped boatyard."

Mary Stone, of *M/V Lady Astor*, was prescient: "[In Venezuela]… the uncertainties for 2009 are government economic policies and the parallel value of the US dollar and the Euro. Cruising Venezuela requires security to be a constant concern." She added, "Although inflation shows no sign of abating… even with the growth, yachts can continue to enjoy the ABC islands' beauty and services in relative economy and safety."

However, Julia Bartlett commented, "The Eastern Caribbean island chain has a huge variety of experiences to offer the cruisers, but mostly I hear how disappointed they are with it because it is 'commercialized'. I hear this while they are taking advantage of a choice of haul-out facilities and modern supermarkets. We're spoiled by all that is accessible to us these days. The island chain doesn't do that well when it comes to hurricane risks and some islands are relatively expensive, but boat-maintenance facilities are excellent, security is passable, the sailing is fantastic, the islands are beautiful — and so here is where the boaters are."

Tony Sanpere observed that "More marinas are in the design, approval, or construction stages," and Camper & Nicolsons Port Louis Marina predicted: "We envision Grenada being one of the premier yachting centers in the Caribbean."

• INSURANCE RISK WILL BE BETTER SPREAD

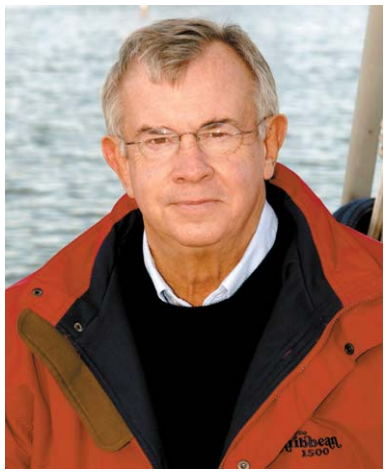
A decade ago, Robert Holbrook, Managing Director of Admiral Yacht Insurance, observed: "There seems to be a move by certain yards to make substantial improvements to their lay-up facilities. This started in the BVI, and then Grenada after Hurricane Ivan, but seems to have migrated to other islands such as Antigua, St. Lucia and Curaçao. Tie-down facilities and engineered cradles are now much more prevalent. Due to these improvements we now have a better 'spread' of risk, which is obviously an advantage in the event of a catastrophe."

Overall, our 2008 crystal-ball gazers predicted "business as usual". Julia Bartlett wrote, "I am hearing more American boaters talking about returning to the States than I remember in previous years… but I am sure they will be replaced by new faces looking to stretch their dollars and attain a different quality of life. The number of boats will carry on increasing until prices get significantly higher; cruising will be more than ever a middle-class retirement plan in the future."

Tony Sanpere agreed: "For the average cruiser it is business as usual. More boomers are retiring and coming down."

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And the late Steve Black, founder of the Cruising Rally Association, predicted: "The Caribbean region will continue to be an excellent area for private yacht owners to visit.

Many of the economies are geared to tourism and a healthy relationship has been established. Our yachtsmen have been well received and have become good ambassadors for the Caribbean when they return home."

**How Do Those Predictions Look Ten Years On?**

Outside of one-design classes such as the J/24, IC24, Surprise, etcetera, the Caribbean racing circuit has indeed seen bigger boats — and cruising boats have gotten larger, too.

With the notable exception of Venezuela, in general the Caribbean yachting economy has recovered economically from any recession effects. And although the ABCs and western Caribbean destinations from Colombia to Guatemala are gaining in popularity with cruisers, the Eastern Caribbean offers an ever-increasing array of goods and services for boaters (what Julia said some cruisers decried as "commercialism") and is still "the place to be".

But forces other than the recession — most notably last year's hurricanes — have had unforeseen impacts on what was predicted in 2008. The yacht insurance scene especially has been upended.

Following up on the past decade, contributors old and new share their perspectives:

Jacqui Pascall, owner-operator of Horizon Yacht Charters Grenada & St. Vincent (horizonyachtcharters.com/grenada/st-vincent) emphasizes that "No comments on the Caribbean boating scene can stand without reference to the terrible damage suffered by our neighbours in the northern islands in 2017 — some experiencing two destructive hurricanes in a very short space of time. This obviously had a huge impact on the character of our business last season and will continue to shape the 2018-19 season.



SALLY ERDLE

*Top: The late Steve Black predicted that 'the Caribbean region will continue to be an excellent area for private yacht owners to visit'*

*Above: Jacqui Pascall notes that last year's hurricanes caused a pronounced southward shift*

"As a direct result we saw a significant increase in interest in the southern Caribbean and subsequent bookings from those who would normally be repeat clients to the northern islands. The situation offered an opportunity to explore new cruising waters and new island destinations, and we foresee this will continue to be reflected in our bookings for the forthcoming season and longer term."

Ellen Birrell and Jim Hutchins of S/V *Boldly Go* report that "Business is certainly NOT as usual in the Virgin Islands/Puerto Rico area. Coming up on Hurricane Maria's first-year anniversary, it's hardly a celebration here. As a ripple effect of all the major resorts of St. Thomas and St. John, save one or two, still being closed, many scuba, sightseeing, day charter, restaurant and other ancillary businesses have gone out of business. Ferries between USVI and BVI are running on a fraction of their pre-Maria schedules. The US Park Service moorings that dot the many bays around St. John sit mostly empty.



KENMORE HENVILLE

*Above: Ellen Birrell and Jim Hutchins: It wasn't 'business as usual' in the hurricane-hit islands*

*Right: Approaching the bridge at Fronteras, Rio Dulce, Guatemala: A westward migration continues*

"From June through August for the past five summers, our sloop has been in the fleet of Boy Scouts of America's Sea Base St. Thomas. Ironically, this year Mother Nature struck one of BSA's main High Adventure facilities in Arizona with forest fires, closing it for the summer, so displaced Scouts flooded every available sailing charter slot in the USVI. But our story is atypical in an otherwise depressed region where charterers, cruisers and landlubbing vacationers alike are few."

Julie San Martin, Historian of the St. Croix Yacht Club (www.stcroixyc.com), says, "I have sailed multihulls all my life and organized races in St. Croix for a long time. In 2008, we all believed life on St. Croix would get better; current setbacks were just that, prosperity would return – soon. Could not have been more wrong — over the decade, our only industry, the refinery, closed (2012) and we then had a jolly good time with Irma and Maria (2017), the first two Category 5 hurricanes to hit in the same year for a century, and ten days apart. If it weren't for bad luck, we would have no luck at all."

Julia Bartlett recaps her 2008 prediction: "Most of us predicted, correctly, ten years ago that there would be a general movement of cruisers south and west away from the increase in mooring fields and higher-priced cruising permits — not to mention exposure to dreaded named storms. These increases and last year's volatile hurricane season have filled the marinas here in Guatemala early, and dry storage facilities are doing very nicely too."

Karen Stiell, Regatta Manager for Grenada Sailing Week (grenadasailingweek.com) says, "Jimmy Bristol was right with his predictions in 2008: more and more skippers keep their boats in the southern Caribbean. Grenada Sailing Week, formerly part of Grenada Sailing Festival but an independent event since 2012, has grown over the last decade and is now firmly established on the regatta circuit. In the wake of the events that affected the islands to the north in 2017, Grenada and the southern Caribbean saw an influx of boats; marinas, boatyards and bays were fuller. Grenada Sailing Week saw a record number of participants register for the 2018 regatta."

Mary Stone of *M/V Lady Astor* looks back at her predictions: "Here is what I missed with regard to my observations over the last ten years. Venezuela's inflation rate was not 30 percent. It is now 1,000,000 percent. Of course what still remains is violent crime, food shortages, and corruption. And so we get waves of economic refugees from Venezuela washing up on shore. And of course there's always the usual drug trafficking and human trafficking."

Mary adds, "The ABCs are stable, with clear Immigration and Customs rules, few crime incidents and a wider diversity of UK, European, and more American vessels passing through. Last year's storm season caused the ABCs to swell as hundreds of vessels sought safety. It is happening again now; if there are fewer storms this year then the swelling may reduce. Relative to Trinidad and Grenada, there are no bargains in the ABCs, but services and craftsmanship are good and almost everything is available on island or quickly shipped in at reasonable cost."

Marc Rooijakkers, managing director of Curaçao Marine (www.curacaomarine.com) reviews: "A decade ago sailors might have been stressing a bit about the possible changes in governance in the ABC islands. Changes did come, but they didn't affect the sailing community or, if they did, it has been for the better. 2010 was the year that the Netherlands Antilles ceased to exist and the islands transitioned into a different status. They are now independently tied to The Netherlands. Of course there have been changes, but overall none of them had major negative effects. The economic, political and safety situation in Curaçao has remained stable or has slightly improved.

"Yachts may now enter Curaçao for periods up to six months with a temporary import license, which can be obtained by completing a Customs Clearing Form. The Curaçao Customs Office has awarded Curaçao Marine a 'Bonded Warehouse' (entrepot) status, which means that once a yacht is stored at the warehouse there is no time limit for storage. Notify Curaçao Marine when you wish to come and we shall arrange a temporary import license for you.

"As for Curaçao Marine, the business has been growing steadily; each year more new visitors or returning customers have found their way to our facility. Thanks to our bigger trailer (60-ton next to the 40-ton slipway trailer), the yachts that we haul have gotten bigger and bigger. In the past ten years we have grown into the biggest and most comprehensive technical marina and boatyard of the ABC islands. Early in 2017 the yard changed ownership and management and has been growing steadily into the main hub for sailors traversing the western Caribbean. For us a first visible sign of change was always on the planning board; in the past, bookings for hurricane season started to come in around March each year, but every year we noticed that our planning board filled up faster and earlier! Now it is wise to book at the beginning of the year or, if you really want to play it safe, we even recommend making your reservations towards the end of the year.

Marc adds: "The current situation in Venezuela is also bringing more sailors to Curaçao, and many yacht owners in Venezuela have been bringing their yacht to Curaçao for safekeeping.

"It seems it truly was business as usual, but with steady growth!"

And yes, the bareboat fleet has grown. Loïc Bonnet, founder of Dream Yacht Charter (www.dreamyachtcharter.com), reports: "We started in the Seychelles in 2000 and knew we needed to have a presence in the Caribbean, as it's one of the world's premier sailing regions. We established ourselves in this important market with charters from Martinique, Guadeloupe and St. Martin.

"We increased our investment in the Caribbean in the late 2000s, opening a base in the BVI, then in Cuba in 2010 and broadening our reach within the Grenadines. We also saw the importance of appealing to a wider market other than just sailors. I wanted everyone to have the option of experiencing a destination by boat even if they had no sailing expertise.

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STEVE JOST

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"We pioneered our by-the-cabin charter product, first in the Grenadines and then the BVI, offering the ability to book a cabin on fully crewed, catered yachts with a guaranteed departure. Today we offer three- to 11-night cruises in six Caribbean destinations including the BVI, Cuba, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Martinique and St. Martin."

But of the cruising population, Julie San Martin observes: "While the US economy looks like it will continue to be prosperous, there just don't seem to be as many living aboard and cruising the Caribbean; they can't all be avoiding St. Croix! Not a scientific count, but there are many fewer visitors to Christiansted harbor and the St. Croix Yacht Club than we saw in the 2008 era. US Customs & Border Patrol has most certainly been a big part of the problem. They are finally making it a bit easier for US vessels and citizens to move in and out of the territory. For our regatta in March 2018, all vessels and passengers (captain took their passports) had to clear at the airport — it was charmingly like the 1970s!

CURAÇAO MARINE



*Willemstad, Curaçao. In 2008 Mary Stone remarked on the allure of the ABC islands, and Betty Fries predicted: 'The countries bordering the coasts of Central and South America have a prime opportunity to attract the significant resources represented by cruisers coming to their shores'*

"I think – and this is a total hunch – that there are fewer cruisers than there were ten years ago. One of the many reasons is age — at 72, I am among the oldest group of baby boomers; the youngest boomer is 56. We are running out of boomers who can still sail."

Ken Goodings and Lynn Kaak on *Silverheels 3* say, "The regatta scene does seem to have more larger, professionally crewed, boats. It is a lifestyle, and a career for some professional crew.

"The comments about bigger boats were certainly spot on. Over the past ten years of cruising, we have seen bigger and bigger boats in the anchorages, with far more catamarans. There aren't too many of us with under-40-foot boats out here, but we tend to be the longer-term cruisers — the lower key, long haul lifestyle, as opposed to the 'two-year bounce' or 'living the captain's dream' for a set time.

"Sailboats are far and away the primary vessel of choice for cruisers now. There are some motor vessels, but they are a very small percentage compared to the sailing fleet. However, having said that, it seems that power cats are slowly becoming a thing, if the charter fleet out of St. Lucia is any indication. It makes sense, though, as they are fast and comfortable, with greater fuel efficiency over a monohull. Not everyone wants to depend on the wind."

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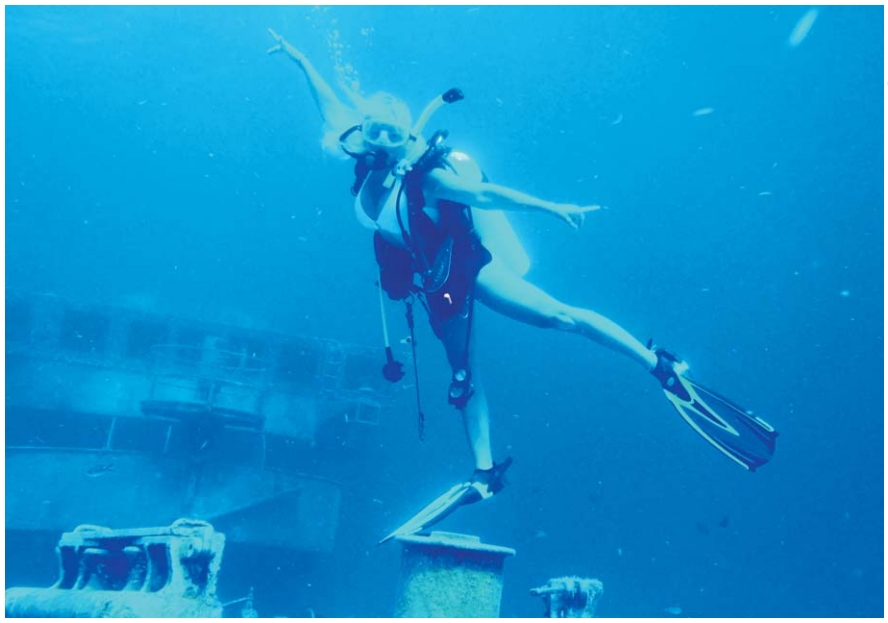
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—Continued from previous page



BILL HARRIS



ELLEN BIRRELL

JoAnne and Bill Harris of *S/V Ultra* have a particularly apt viewpoint: "From the day we met, we both had the idea of one day cruising the Caribbean. Every year we saved, and had decided that between 2008 and 2009 we would set sail for our cruising adventure.



*Clockwise from above left:*
*JoAnne Harris and her husband began cruising the Caribbean right in the wake of the 2008 recession, and happily continue today;*
*English and Falmouth Harbours, Antigua. For a great many, the Eastern Caribbean remains 'the place to be';*
*Not 'as usual': Little Lameshur Bay, St. John, USVI this summer, with three lone boats — all with the Boy Scouts' fleet*

"Well, the economy definitely turned for the worse, but even when the market plunged, we kept our goal, sailed away and became full-time liveaboard cruisers. We are still cruising the Caribbean and are super happy we stuck to our plan.

"As sailors, we trim our sails to the shifting winds — and these can be economic or weather-related."

And as Steve Black's crystal ball predicted in 2008, "The Caribbean region will continue to be an excellent area for private yacht owners to visit."

*Next month in Part Two: In light of events of the past decade, what are some predictions for the coming Caribbean sailing season?*


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# It Was Different Last Season

*by Laurie Corbett*

The editor has asked some of us previous *Compass* contributors to comment on the past and provide any expectations for the coming years. I really do not have much to say in the way of expectations for the future, but I can tell you that last year was so different for us!



*Cruisers just wanna have fun — often in groups*
*Above: How many cruisers can fit on top of Ma Peggy's Rock in Bequia?*
*Below: A Paget Farm, Bequia refreshment stop during an organized rum shop tour*



To set the stage, my wife, Dawn, and I are among the portion of Caribbean cruisers who enjoy our boat for only six or so months a year, when our homes are snowed in. We have stored our boat in Chaguaramas, Trinidad and Spanishtown, Jamaica but have recently favoured Grenada's Spice Island Marine.

Yes, we have noted the changes over the past decade: During the 2007-08 economic downturn, US and British boats were on the decline, but Canadian flags seemed more numerous. Was this a difference in the national economic engines, or perhaps the temperature? Prosperity slowly returned, and boat numbers grew fast among the lower islands, especially. Three to five years ago, every existing chandlery increased their floor space by at least 25 percent, hardware stores have expanded their boating materials section, specialty shops catering to boaters have popped up, and complete new boatyards and marinas have sprung up. Whole islands have seemingly become more prosperous. Even in Tyrell Bay, Carriacou, where ten years ago you might not find a place to buy a supper, now has a giant grocery store, let alone a great selection of restaurants. One can expect these trends to continue, I guess.

But what was last season? I recall that, after the hurricanes damaged so much of the northern islands, many of us contacted each other to feel out what the season would bring. Cruising areas were destroyed, boatyards and service facilities disassembled, and some of our close friends had their winter homes damaged or destroyed. Certainly in the affected islands, considering any trends tells you nothing. Hard work and hard decisions are still being made.

What about the surviving anchorages? Would the coming season be crowded in the remaining cruising grounds, or would it be a quiet season as people questioned the lifestyle or their selected geography? Here is what we noticed.

In Grenada and Carriacou, anchorages were a little bit more crowded. Each year, both the community of "stationary" cruisers, and of "nomadic" cruisers who enjoy the waters grow significantly, and the new boatyard at Clarke's Court probably made this population even bigger. Our December 2017 trip through the Grenadines was probably too early in the season to tell a difference, but later in the season we got word of mouth that they enjoyed good business from both the expanded charter trade out of St. Vincent and Martinique, as well as the liveaboard visitors.

We were in Rodney Bay, St. Lucia at least four times, and there were a few more boats. It was easy to tell, though, that the turnover was constant. We would blame the jet skis and the loud music on the water for that, owing to the effect it has on us.

*—Continued on next page*

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There are great assets for the cruiser there, and always a fun time ashore; but the jet skis and noise take their toll.

The most fantastic changes were in Martinique and Bequia, and these are worth noting.

More boats were everywhere in Martinique, and cruisers swarmed the island. Cruisers rented cars, climbed onto buses, and fought the regular tourist traffic to visit giant grocery stores, Le Marin's excellent chandleries, hiking trails and distillery/art/garden tours (Clement Estates was a favourite), or crowded the streets and cafés seeking internet and croissants.

It was in Ste. Anne that the crowding was most profound. A pretty anchorage that would sometimes hold a couple dozen boats ten or 12 years ago now had a fairly stable boat population of 200, and that certainly changed our personal experience.

With so many boats in close proximity, one would think that sunset parties would be raucous affairs. Well, with limited cockpit space and dozens of friends within 500 feet, happy-hour get-togethers aboard actually became a little awkward. The problem pretty much solved itself as hiking became the thing to do. Somebody would suggest on a morning SSB net that they would be going for a walk, and up to two dozen people would meet them at the dock! We would typically enjoy the power of incrementalism as one foot followed the other during a continuous, long-distance series of conversations, switching groups and conversations every ten minutes or so. The hike would typically end at a café or restaurant, and a bunch of hungry, thirsty, sweaty people, all a little high on the making of new friends, would swarm the place by mid-afternoon — and carry on with food, wine, beer and ice cream until a later social event was quite out of the question.



*Above: The differences of last season included crossing paths with more megayachts and cruise ships. Cruisers could see more traffic, day or night, and more of these big boats in the remaining viable destinations*

*Below: Cruisers mustering for a hike at the Ste. Anne dock. 'More boats were everywhere in Martinique, and cruisers swarmed the island'*



Ste. Anne has many hiking opportunities within walking and busing distance: the famous Trace des Caps with its Baie des Anglais, Savanne des Petrifications, and the great individual beaches and restaurants of Anses des Salines, as well as such challenges as the Piton Creve Coeur. We could take a leg-stretching hike with long-legged Lynn of *Silverheels*, a "death march" with Anina and Charlie of *Prism*, or show up to follow whoever spoke first on the radio each day.

Much the same experience was the cruiser norm in Bequia, with some minor changes in the anchorages. If you were anchored near the back of the much larger pack, you could awake with two or three megayacht gin-palaces swinging on their hooks just behind you on the flats off of Lower Bay. Displaced from the glories of the northern islands last season, they too were enjoying this special anchorage.

There was another change in Bequia as well, as if, because of this opportunity to shine, the inhabitants were on their best behavior. The streets of Port Elizabeth were as free from litter as we had ever seen them, and we remarked that it seemed to make a psychological difference. We assume that part of the change was owed to the efforts, trials and tribulations of a team called "Action Bequia". We all should push to find what worked, bottle it, and transplant it elsewhere.

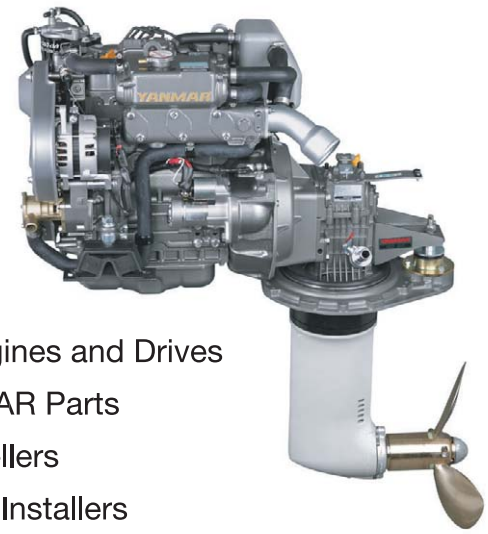
Otherwise, the Bequia experience was the same as always. A call would come out on the FOD (Friends of Denis) morning SSB frequency, and people would show up to hike. Ma Peggy's Rock was a favourite hike, as was the hike along the northern ridge through Cinnamon Garden to an attractive little park called Spring Top. One morning, we mentioned that we were going to stretch our legs in Lower Bay, and a dozen people showed up! We did not even have a destination! The formula was still the same: meet, hike and converse, lunch and converse, carry on, then back to the boat to soak our feet, thus limiting the usual happy-hour activity.

One enterprising couple who had recently moved to the island started up some local rum shop tours. What a surprise to them when they had to get the large school bus to make *two* full trips to Paget Farm for our first Bequia rum shop tour!

So what about the coming season? Will we again wear out our legs and tongues? Will we all again spread out over the anchorages, with full cockpits at sundown? Will there be another series of events to create more change? My crystal ball is clouded over — but we'll take it as it comes.

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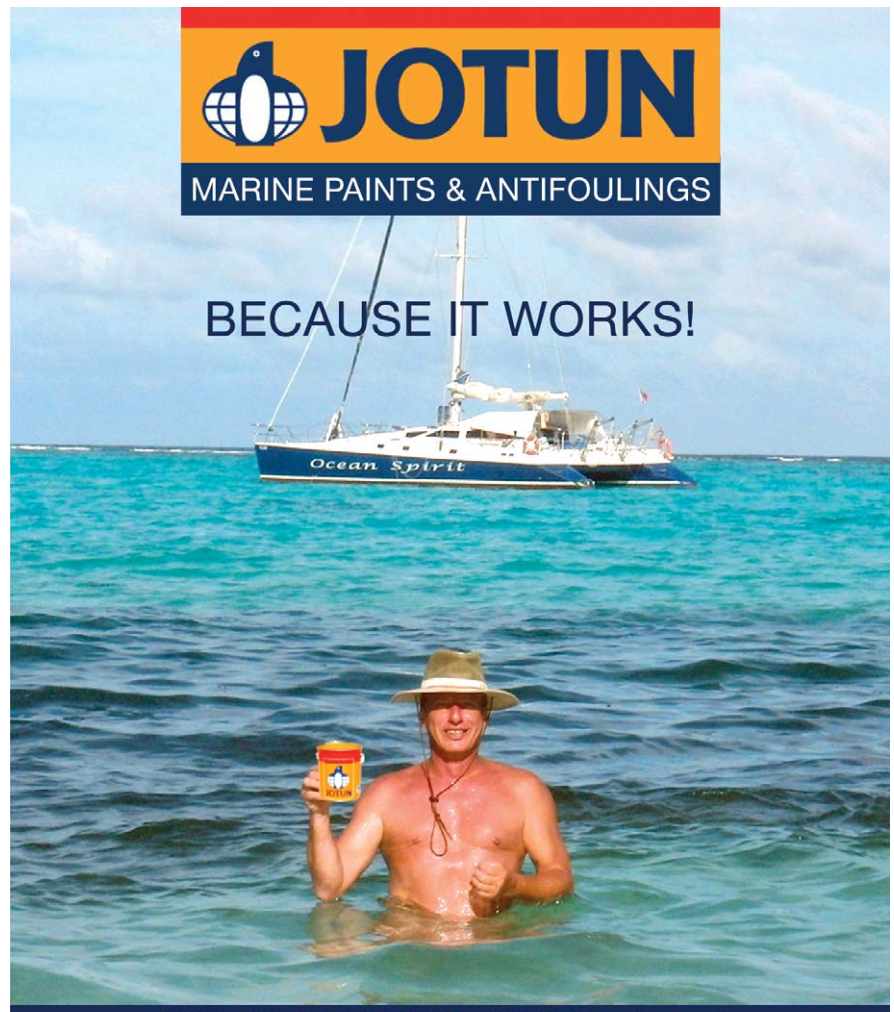
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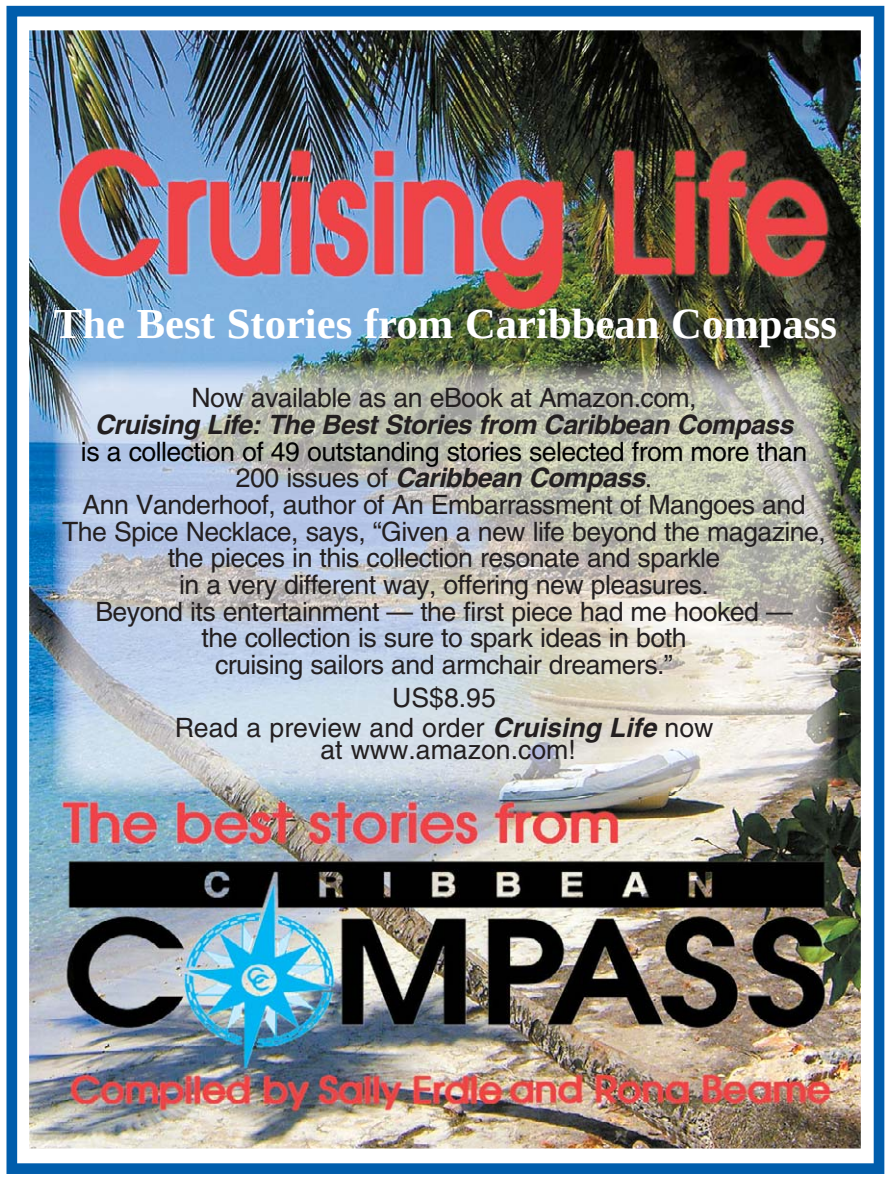
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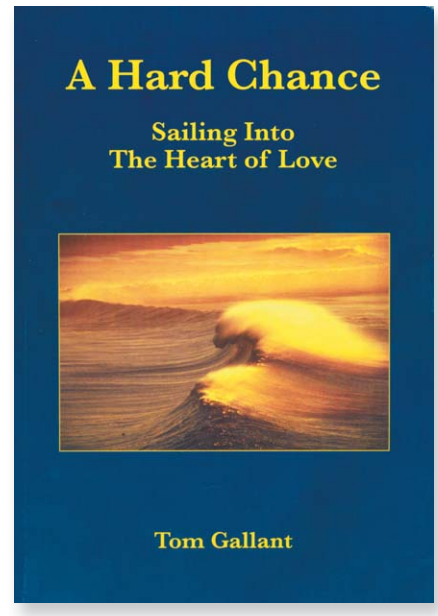
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BOOK REVIEWS BY BOB BERLINGHOF

# Two by a Gallant Captain

***A Hard Chance, Sailing Into The Heart of Love**, by Tom Gallant, non-fiction, Pottersfield Press ©2005, available in paperback on Amazon.com (not on Kindle), 223 pages. ISBN-10: 1895900689, ISBN-13: 978-1895900682*




Tom Gallant's earnest narrative about his life before and after a crippling accident befalls his wife, Melissa, is as personal and natural as something you might hear late at night, hanging out in the cockpit of an old wooden schooner after a few rums, once the hilarity has worn off and what's left is an honest baring of the soul. Yet there are quite a few laughs along the way, as we get to see life through the unique prism of Mr. Gallant's pen.

The author is well known in the Caribbean as the owner/captain of his beloved schooner *Avenger*, and he has distinguished himself as a playwright, journalist, novelist, singer/songwriter, and poet in his native Canada. The phrase *a hard chance*, we are told, refers to an expression used by the "old fellows who sailed coastal schooners up and down the eastern seaboard" meaning "contrary weather". Through twin narratives, he tells us of his own hard chances.

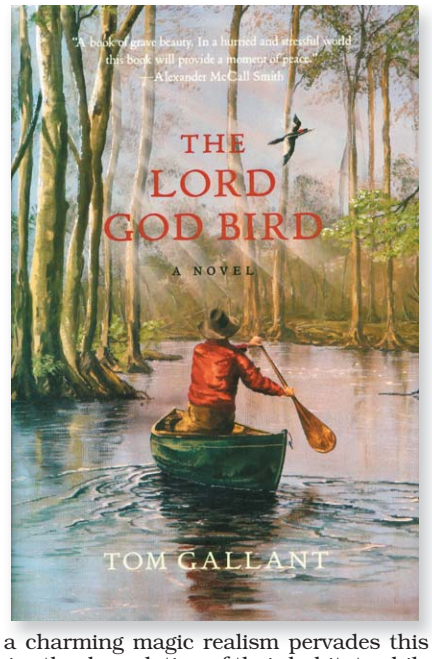
The lead story is how he and Melissa coped after their devastating car accident. They were hit by a bus on Melissa's side while she was driving. Tom woke up in the hospital with a concussion and broken ribs. Melissa was on life support, not expected to live, but upon waking she was severely disabled, both mentally and physically, requiring a lengthy rehab, with no hope of complete recovery.

To leaven such heavy fare this thread is interspersed with the story of how they met, fell in love, and their many years of sailing adventures before the accident. Tom shares his delight sailing around the Maritimes of Canada and the Eastern Caribbean's varied ports, befriending local and foreign waterfront characters along the way. He articulates the double-edged freedom of cruising life without glossing over the unvarnished fear and the courage required to persevere through life-threatening gales, highlighting the camaraderie among his crew and the friendships that develop while island hopping on a shoestring budget.

What emerges is a remarkable document that is a testament to the many kinds of love, the bonds that matter in life. The sailing chapters are remarkably visceral, and the slow recovery of Melissa is at times heartbreaking, frustrating, and triumphant. For a couple that was about to split up on the day of the accident, they both learn to give and receive gifts of love.

***The Lord God Bird**, a novel, by Tom Gallant, Quantuck Lane Press, ©2012, available in hardback on Amazon.com (but not Kindle), 218 pages. ISBN-10: 1593720475, ISBN-13: 978-1593720476*

Tom Gallant is a novelist as well as a memoirist. This novel is set in Big Woods, Arkansas, and is as down-home as a corncob pipe. All of the principal characters have names except for "the man", an everyman at the center of it all. He is a widower, living alone among his farm animals, and since his wife died he has carried on as best he could. While canoeing deep in the swampy woods he spots an ivory-billed woodpecker, long thought to have been extinct and called the Lord God Bird because of its size and magnificence. Soon ornithologists from Cornell University come calling, followed by other birdwatchers, both professional and volunteer, and they are welcomed into his home.




The man is wary of these outsiders, some who live up to his code of right and wrong, and others who fall short. He hopes to preserve what is left of the woods by having the bird positively identified and photographed. Along the way he is offered support by his neighbor Bud, Bud's daughter Ruby, and Ruby's three daughters, all trying to recover from the death of Ruby's husband in Afghanistan, and whose love give the man a reason to continue living.

The hero is old-fashioned and conservative in the most positive sense. His values, seen through his everyday life of milking cows, building a canoe, and taking pleasure from the simplest things — whether cooking a meal, enjoying bourbon with a good cigar, or talking to his animals and observing their response — are shared with the reader. The story also features a sweetly imaginative first-hand account of how animals communicate through their thoughts and memory; a charming magic realism pervades this tale of the endangered birds' struggle to survive the degradation of their habitat, while their privacy is being threatened by the very bird-watchers who wish to help them.

With this novel Tom Gallant has created a mini-masterpiece, written in spare, evocative prose — a story of love, loss, man's greed, and the ability to love again. The hardback edition is beautifully bound and amazingly inexpensive for a copy in good condition on Amazon.

# An Unexpected Offer

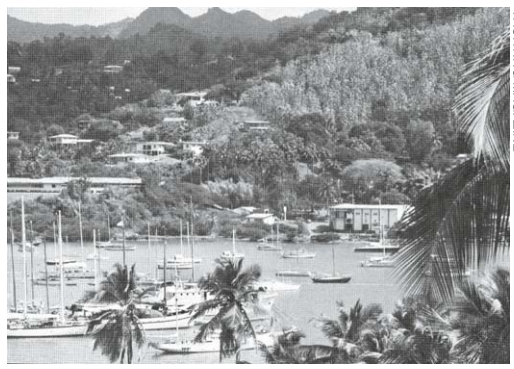
*by William Pringle*

In the fall of 1979, my wife Debbie and I and our two young kids sailed back to Grenada to see how the island had changed since we had left it in 1974, just after its full independence from Britain. We no longer had our lovely 60-foot charter cutter, *Clover*, and instead sailed in on our new 28-foot engineless Bahamian racing smack, *Slip Away*. One of the reasons we wanted to visit was to re-connect with *Clover's* erstwhile crew, Bernard (Mousie) Byer and Herman (Baby Face) Thompson, and we were quite curious to see how Grenada had changed under Maurice Bishop's new People's Revolutionary Government.

As we sailed up the cut into the Lagoon, one change was immediately apparent: there were no yachts and only a few local fishing boats tied up at the Grenada Yacht Services (GYS) docks where once yachts were rafted two deep. We went alongside the fuel dock, looking for Customs and Immigration at their office by the Patio Bar, but both the office and the bar were closed, and had the look of having been closed for some time. I finally found Neddie, our old taxi-driver friend, who took me into St. George's to the main Customs building on the Carenage where I reported our arrival. They said an officer would come to inspect us shortly.

When he arrived, I at first mistook him for a casual dockside lounger. He wore no type of uniform, had dreadlocks, and had the unmistakable aroma and the bloodshot eyes of someone who had recently been smoking marijuana. But he did the paperwork efficiently enough, stamped our passports, and welcomed us to the people's republic of Grenada. I asked him if he knew Mousie Byer, whereupon he grinned broadly and said that Coast Guard Commandant Byer had recently left for Cuba to undergo a 14-week training course in operating the four coastal patrol vessels that Cuba had donated to secure Grenada's borders, so he wouldn't be back anytime soon. When I asked if he knew Baby Face Thompson, he said, "Wait… I know you! You're Billy Bones from *Clover*! I'm 'Little Joey' who used to sail with Carl Schuster on *Zig Zag* back in de old days. Baby Face is in Tortola with Mellow, dem start a varnish company deh in Road Town. You need any ganja?"





YACHTING MAGAZINE



*Above: 'We no longer had our lovely 60-foot charter cutter,* Clover'

*Right: GYS in its heyday (lower left), now the site of Port Louis Marina*

*Below: 'So in 1979 we returned to GYS on our new 28-foot engineless Bahamian racing smack,* Slip Away'

This was a far cry from the days in Dr. Sir Eric Gairy's regime, when Sgt. John, the Immigration officer, would organize searches at 4:00AM for that very substance on *Clover*.

But Carl Drakes, the old GYS general manager, was still in office, although GYS itself had been nationalized, and we had a drink in his office for old times' sake.

GYS itself was a wreck. Many planks were missing from the docks, the SyncroLift had been broken for some time, and the machine and wood shops had been abandoned, as had the marine chandlery. The electronics shop and fuel dock were the only functioning businesses besides the fish unloading dock at Clancy's Island.

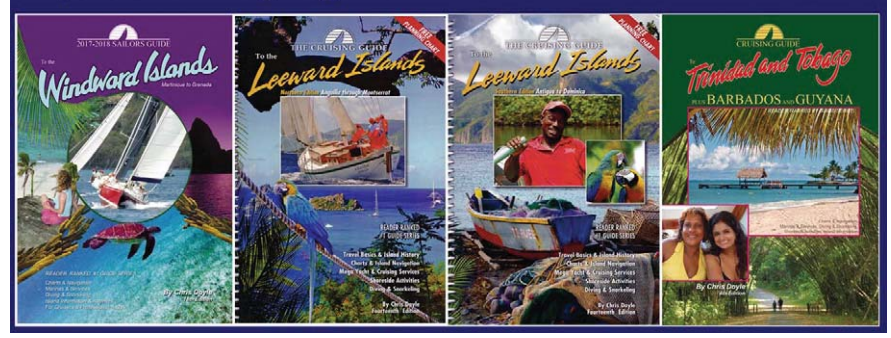
And there were very few tourists anywhere. Grand Anse beach might as well have had a sign that said 'Grenadians only', even though the St. George's Medical College was then located there. The drive-in movie theater on what is now Maurice Bishop Highway was closed, but the Royal Theater in Belmont was packed every night with locals. And in the five weeks that we stayed, we only saw three small cruise ships, all Italian, tie up at the old Geest Dock. Chinatown, the impromptu bar/tourist shop area just outside the Customs fence, had disappeared entirely, including Mama's Bar, where we had first met Maurice Bishop.

And it has to be admitted that it was somewhat unnerving seeing Jeeps with .50 calibre machine guns driving by, manned by camouflage-wearing Rastas smoking giant spliffs. Who knew what indignities they might have suffered under white colonial rule that resentment and ganja could expose in an ugly way? But nothing ever happened, besides a few dirty looks, and the vast majority of Grenadians were as friendly and philosophical as always.

After a few weeks, Carl Drakes invited me to dinner at the Nutmeg restaurant on the Carenage, which immediately caused me to be suspicious, as he was a notorious miser. After eating, he sprung it on me: How would I like to buy GYS? I was too shocked to hide my surprise, so I asked the obvious question: Who would actually own it, me or the People's Revolutionary Government? The answer was, of course, the PRG; only 49 percent was for sale, for one million EC dollars. I told Carl I'd think about it, talk it over with my wife, and get back to him.

There was an impermanence in the air, a waiting for the next shoe to drop, a palpable tension among Grenadians that hinted of danger, so we sailed back to Bequia. And I told Carl Drakes "no thanks" before we left.


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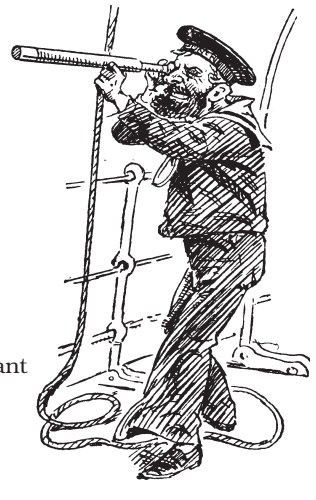
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# The Sky from Mid-September to Mid-October

*by Jim Ulik*

Even considering the advanced technology of today, did the ancient navigators know more about observing the weather, winds, tides, ocean currents, and geography to make safe passages to places unknown? There is little doubt that they had to be paying attention to nature. Studying the heavens gave them the ability to navigate by the stars. Back in the fifth century, Macedonian writer and historian Stobaeus realized that Polaris was always visible and relatively "motionless" in the northern sky. From the northern hemisphere you will always know your latitude by knowing the angle in degrees between Polaris' position and the northern horizon. The nocturnal instrument illustrated in Figure 1 will even calculate the time. A few navigational endeavors that occurred in history during this period are included in this issue's calendar.

**Sunday, September 16th**

In 1620 the *Mayflower* set sail from England to America, carrying Puritans seeking religious freedom.

Today Mars has reached perihelion or its closest approach to the Sun. Even though Mars is at its closest point to the Sun it will not appear brighter in the night sky. One reason for this is that the distance between Mars and Earth has continued to increase since the planets' close approach on July 27th. The intensity of the reflected light off Mars reaching Earth is reduced. Another reason is that Mars is only 90 percent illuminated.

If weather conditions permit, the Moon will shine prominently in the night sky. It has now reached its First Quarter phase. Use the Moon tonight to practice a simple method of finding your bearings. After the Moon is near its highest point in the sky, follow the dividing line between the light and dark halves of the Moon. That extended line points roughly south. Tonight is a near perfect model. See Figure 2.

**Monday, September 17th**

The Moon progresses eastward at 13 degrees per day. That shift puts the Moon just east of Saturn tonight. Both objects are in Sagittarius in the direction of the center of our Milky Way galaxy.

**Wednesday, September 19th**

The Moon now sits between Sagittarius and Capricornus. The area separating the light and dark sides of the Moon is a "line" called the terminator. If you extend that line southward you will find Mars.

**Thursday, September 20th**

In 1519, Portuguese navigator Ferdinand Magellan set sail from Spain in an effort to find a western sea route to the rich Spice Islands of Indonesia.

**Saturday, September 22nd**

The Sun will cross over the celestial equator today. That marks the September or Autumnal Equinox for us in the northern hemisphere. The amount of nighttime and daytime are roughly equal to each other. Go back to Figure 2 and the bearings example. On September 16th the Sun sets near the celestial equator, but on the equinox it sets at 270 degrees West. Trace the Sun's ray back towards the horizon to find true west even after the Sun has set.

**Monday, September 24th**

Shine on, Harvest Moon. The Harvest Moon is the Full Moon nearest the September or Autumnal equinox. This Full Moon is astronomically special because the time between one moonrise to the next becomes shorter around this time. For a few days around the Harvest Moon, the Moon rises less than 50 minutes later than the day before. The early moonrise for a few days around the equinox meant that farmers could work and harvest their crops for a longer time in the evenings.

COSMOGRAPHICA PETRI APIANI, 1574




FIGURE 1

*A nocturnal is used to find the local time at night by observation of stars near the North Pole*

**Tuesday, September 25th**

Low in the western sky Venus is outshining Jupiter. Venus is only 20 percent illuminated but, because it is now relatively close to both the Earth and Sun, it is very bright. The next time Venus will shine this brightly is the end of November when it appears as a morning star. As you gaze up at Venus realize that the Parker Solar Probe is flying by using the planet's gravity to increase its speed towards the Sun, its final destination. The purpose of the Parker Solar Probe is to provide new data on solar activity and make critical contributions to our ability to forecast major space-weather events that impact life on Earth.

*—Continued on next page*






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**Wednesday, September 26th**

In 1580 English seaman Francis Drake returns to Plymouth, England, in the *Golden Hind*, becoming the first British navigator to circumnavigate.

**Friday, September 28th**

The Aurigids meteor shower is active from September 18th through October 10th. This shower peaks tonight. Shooting stars will radiate out of the northeast near the star Capella (goat star). Capella is the sixth brightest star in the sky and the main star in the constellation Auriga. The star is actually a group of four stars, two large binary stars and two fainter binary dwarfs. The best viewing time for meteors is after 2300 hours.

**Saturday, September 29th**

The Moon's gradual shift eastward puts it in the constellation Taurus. Just off the sunlit side of the Moon will be the bull's eye, Aldebaran. The Seven Sisters star cluster can be found a few degrees west of the Moon.

**Tuesday, October 2nd**

The Moon has reached the Last Quarter phase. It will spend the day slowly passing through Gemini. Take a glance at the Moon when it is high overhead. Use the same technique to find your bearing as you did on September 16th. You know east, because the Sun is already rising. Around 0600 follow the Moon's terminator and extend an imaginary line down to the horizon. At 0600 the terminator line is directly on zero degrees north and 180 degrees south. Moving westward, in Puerto Rico or Aruba the time to check the terminator line for bearings is 0620. If you are in Barranquilla, Colombia the time is back to 0600.

**Thursday, October 4th**

You will have to be an early riser or very late going to sleep around 0300 hours to find the sliver Moon positioned right next to the Beehive Cluster in the constellation Cancer. The Moon appears less than one degree south of the brightest area of this cluster of 1,000 suns. There is some overlap because the span of this grouping is actually three times the diameter of the Moon.

**Monday, October 8th**

Because of today's New Moon there should be a good opportunity to observe the two meteor showers that peak tonight. As dusk turns to night, watch for the Draconids to appear. These meteors will radiate out of the north-northwest from the constellation Draco. This is a variable shower that could produce anywhere from 20 to 700 meteors per hour. In 2012 there were more than 1,000 shooting stars per hour detected.

Another meteor event is the Autumn Arietids. This shower is active from September 7th through October 27th. There are substantially fewer meteors associated with this shower. In any case, any meteors originating out of the east are from the Autumn Arietids.

**Thursday, October 11th**

Yesterday the Moon was becoming more apparent in the western sky after sunset. It was a sliver that shone brightly alongside three other planets. Mercury was the closest to the horizon. Next in line was Venus followed by the Moon with Jupiter high above. This evening there is a conjunction between the Moon and Jupiter. There is about three degrees of separation between these celestial bodies as they sit in the balance of the scales of Libra.

**Friday, October 12th**

After sailing across the Atlantic Ocean in 1492, Italian explorer Christopher Columbus sights a Bahamian island.

**Sunday, October 14th**

While Jupiter, Venus and Mercury remain low in the western sky the Moon has moved on and now sits next to Saturn. Farther east and a little higher in the sky Mars is located in the constellation Capricornus.

**In the News**

The United Nations General Assembly "declares October 4th through 10th World Space Week to celebrate each year at the international level the contributions of space science and technology to the betterment of the human condition." The mission of the World Space Week Association is to strengthen the link between space and society through public education, participation, and dialogue on the future of space activity. In 2017 more than 3,700 events took place in 80 countries. The theme for 2018 is "Space Unites the World".

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

*Jim Ulik of* S/V Merengue *is a photographer and cruiser.*

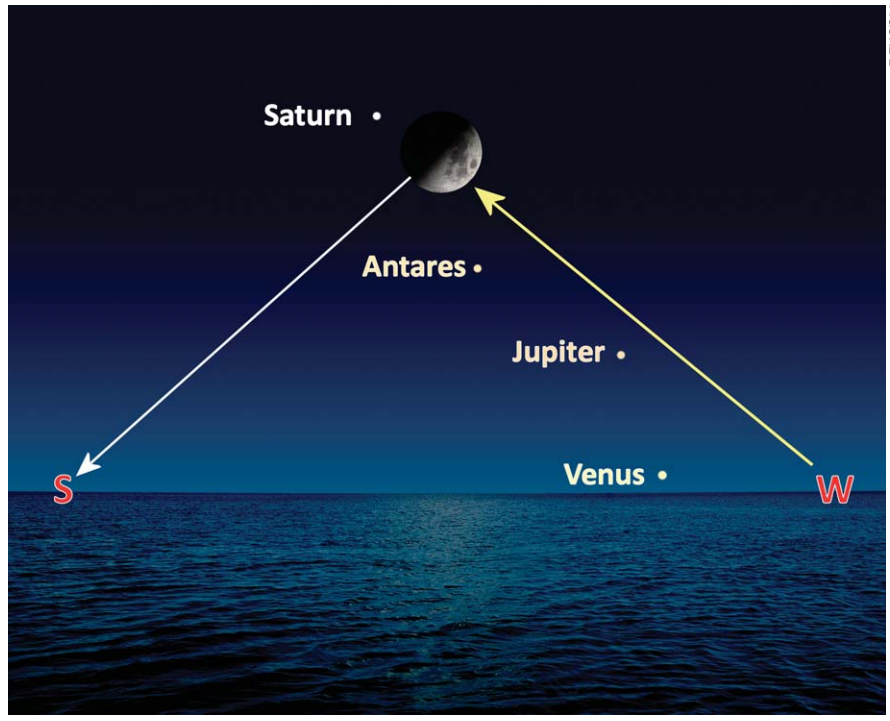



FIGURE 2

*Above: Finding south and west bearings when the Moon is at a high point in the sky at 2000 hours*

*Below: View of Santo Domingo, Hispaniola, engraved by Boazio from drawings made by Francis Drake. Drake completed his circumnavigation in September of 1580*

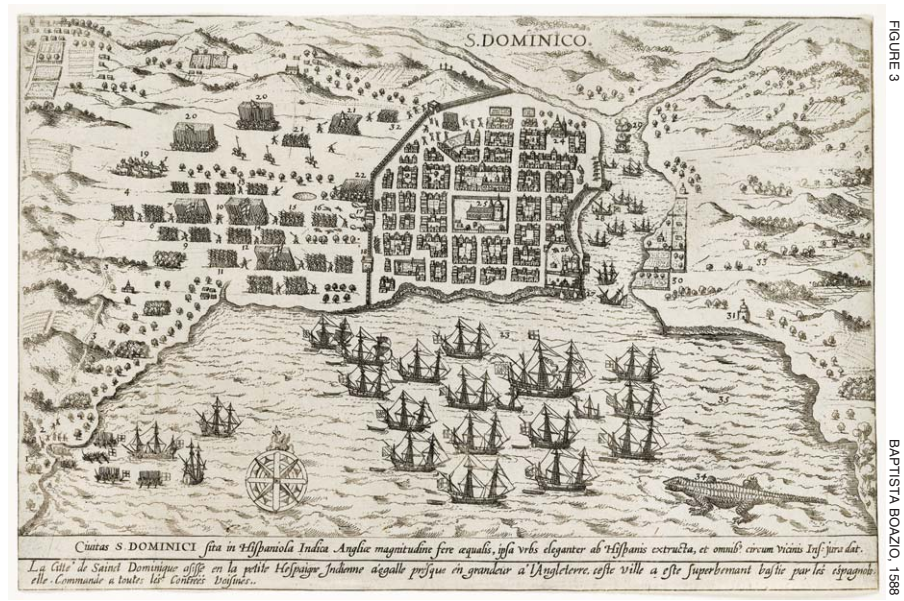



FIGURE 3

BAPTISTA BOAZIO, 1588






# THE SEMIPALMATED PLOVER

While searching for birds on the southern shores of my adopted island-home, Grenada, I found a shorebird haven nested on the eastern side of St. David's harbour — a pristine bay, fringed by almond trees and sea grape, with a small river meandering lazily through dense vegetation to lie in a slumbering sleep over a straw-coloured beach.

Here, a small group of wading birds gathers by the river mouth — they are Semipalmated Plovers (*Charadrius semipalmatus*), their tiny, cherubic reflections shimmering like a watercolour painting on the wet, glazed surface. These small plovers are named for their partially webbed or "semipalmated" toes and are identifiable by their small, plump-breasted bodies, brown upperparts and white belly, relatively long, yellow legs, a robust orange, black-tipped bill and a distinct dark breast band. The width of this band changes depending on the bird's posture: if standing upright the collar becomes wider, and it becomes narrower when the bird is hunched over. Breeding adults are distinguished by a darker breast band and a white patch on the forehead outlined in a darker shade, while juveniles have lighter highlights on the mantle.



In the Caribbean, the Semipalmated Plover may be mistaken for both the Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*) and the endangered Wilson's Plover (*Charadrius Wilsonia*), as they all resemble one another. However the latter is slightly larger, with a longer bill and wider breast band, while the Piping Plover has distinctively lighter grey-brown upperparts. Furthermore, the Semipalmated Plover is almost identical to its close relative the Eurasian-based Common Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*). In fact, some scientists believe it to be a subspecies rather than two distinct species. One way to tell them apart is by the webbed toes; the Common Ringed Plover has only two partially webbed toes while the Semipalmated Plover has webbing between all three toes.

Although the Semipalmated Plover is about 18 centimetres (about seven inches) long, it boasts a relatively long and slender wingspan that enables it to migrate with comparative ease to its nesting grounds on the coastal and inland open gravel or tundra of the North American sub-arctic, from where it migrates to wintering grounds in the Caribbean and along the Pacific and Atlantic shorelines of the southern United States, Central and South America. During migration these small birds are known to swim across bodies of water, sometimes with a line of small chicks swimming behind.

Males arrive at the breeding grounds three days before the females. Here, inexperienced males must secure territory before they can find a mate; consequently, they often clash with experienced males returning to their old nesting grounds. Males claim or re-establish territory by flying in low circles, with slow, exaggerated wing-beats, calling out repeatedly and aggressively. Experienced males rarely lose a previously established territory. A male Semipalmated Plover that was paired in the previous season usually waits for his mate to arrive before looking for an alternative mate, but if she fails to arrive, he may mate with an inexperienced, younger and often smaller female. Likewise if the male dies, the female will move away in search of an alternative. Alas, although Semipalmated Plovers are socially monogamous, about 45 percent of couples divorce at the end of the breeding season — amazingly, this is similar to the human divorce rate in the United States. The Semipalmated Plover divorces for a number of reasons, such as if a returning female finds herself replaced by another female, if the breeding site is usurped by another male, if the pair is incompatible, if the female chooses a better option because her mate failed to protect her from harassment by other males, or simply because there were too many predators in her mate's territory.

Initially, courtship takes place with the male following the female around almost continuously — this is called "mate guarding", a device used by the male to ensure his paternity by discouraging other males from approaching her. During this period he becomes very aggressive, not only towards other males — by moving towards them with wings slightly opened and head bent downwards — but also towards his own mate, whom he will threaten with aggressive vocalizations, chase displaying a fanned and cocked tail, and physically attack in order to discourage her from accepting the attentions of other males. Female copulation with other males, known as extra-pair copulation, can indeed take place when the male is not present, particularly if his mate, for one reason or another, was unable to assess the quality of all potential mates available to her prior to mating — consequently she will seek copulation with other males to ensure the reproduction of superior offspring. Nevertheless, not all females seek extra-pair copulation: many females promptly reject it, while others are bullied into accepting it by physically aggressive males. Mate guarding can be costly for Semipalmated Plovers, as the male spends too much time and high amounts of energy guarding the female, often not feeding himself. So this process is usually less prevalent with solitary couples who have a smaller chance of meeting a cuckolder and occurs more frequently in densely populated neighbourhoods.

As courtship progresses, the male becomes more gentle and begins to court the female with ballet-like flights and sweet courtship songs, and by offering symbolic nest scrapes to demonstrate what a great mate he will be. Copulation occurs in the vicinity of these demonstration nest scrapes, but only when the female fans her tail to indicate she is ready. Following copulation, the pair hollow out a small patch in the gravel, lined with twigs and moss, where the female will lay four tear-shaped eggs over a period of five days. Both male and female take turns at incubating for a period of 23 to 25 days. Although like most shorebirds, Semipalmated Plovers rely heavily on camouflage to avoid predators, during this time both birds display very similar nest-defence behaviours, such as feigning a broken wing, in order to lure a predator away from the nest, or alternatively flying away from the nest site and then calling loudly to attract the predator's attention. However, the male tends to fly and vocalize more often than the female, therefore is able to guard the nest more efficiently.

Once hatched, the young chicks are able to leave the nest and feed themselves within a day of hatching. Both parents help with parental care, but it is the male who leads the little ones away from the nest and broods them for about five days, protecting and guiding them for up to 30 days, or until the fledgling stage. The female abandons the brood about 15 days after hatching occurs.

Juveniles congregate in groups for protection and become breeding adults at two to three years of age, reproducing on average twice each season and living up to nine years. However, this species is known to harbour large amounts of internal parasites that limit its lifespan to an average of five to six years.

In the Caribbean region, the charming Semipalmated Plover can be seen foraging from August until May, on sandy beaches, marshes and saline ponds, hunting for prey such as crustaceans, polychaete worms and beach flies as well as snails, mosquitoes and grasshoppers. Individuals may be observed displaying territorial aggression towards other members of their group — while watching my little group interacting on the beach at St. David's harbour, I noticed that one individual did not want to share foraging grounds and focused all his energies on chasing or attempting to chase the remaining Semipalmated Plovers off the beach, while they simply tried to ignore him as much as possible, flying a short distance away to continue with their foraging activities. Most individuals displayed foot-trembling behaviour, also known as leg-tapping or foot-tapping — this is a habit shared by some shorebird species, associated with food-searching, in which a foot pattering movement is applied to the ground in order to startle and attract prey to the surface. Foot-trembling uses only one foot at a time, therefore lame individuals are not able to foot-tap.

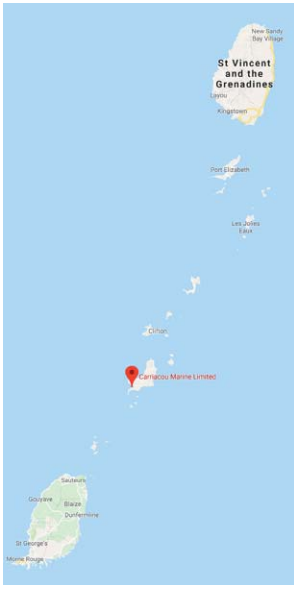
In its Caribbean wintering grounds the adorable Semipalmated Plover blends perfectly with the natural hues of the seashore and can be seen foraging on salt ponds or nutrient-rich sandy beaches, on the surf line or amidst the silver-washed driftwood. So, when strolling along a quiet beach look closely and you may find these bold little birds busy scurrying along, hunting for prey as they run, stop, peck, one leg slightly extended forward, tapping and trembling — run, stop, peck.

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*LOOK OUT FOR…*

# Pink Silk — Sounds Like a Good Name for a Boat or a Band!

*by Lynn Kaak*

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

The Pink Silk tree is one of those plants that is instantly memorable. The fuzzy flowers that festoon the foliage jump right out at you. A plethora of pink-petalled plumes, prominent with stamens, announces this tree from afar.

This is another plant that was parachuted in from the other side of the world. Originally from Asia and India, it made its way around the world quickly. It is now quite commonly found in most temperate areas, and can even stand getting a bit frozen once in a while. In the tropics, it can handle living in higher elevations.

*Albizia julibrissin*, sometimes erroneously referred to as mimosa (that's a whole other group of plants), is an effective journeyman for gardening and for reclaiming land. It grows quite quickly, and the tree can grow as tall as about 15 metres (50 feet), but it can also be aggressively pruned to act as a runner or for shrubs. Its tolerance for reasonable amounts of salinity makes island life easy, and while it prefers richer soil, it will put up with less desirable dirt, as long as the drainage is sufficient. The Pink Silk is quite effective at pulling nitrogen from the air, which is then shared with other plants when it loses its foliage, flowers or seedpods. It creates good shade, and tolerates full sun or partial shade with equal aplomb.

The flowers are little fuzzy pink tufts. The flower gets the "fuzzy" look from extremely prominent stamens. This makes it easy for the butterflies, bees and hummingbirds to assist with propagation. It is not uncommon to see hummingbirds and butterflies flitting around them.

The leaves are bipinnate, lining up two by two along the stems, and then the twigs and branches branch off equally, too. If left alone, the trees develop a wide, flat canopy that provides excellent shade.

In Asia, the tree is known for its medicinal qualities, as well as being somewhat edible. The flowers may be used for digestive problems, as a sedative, and the leaves and bark have the added benefits of assisting with the healing of wounds. The wood is reasonably hard, and is quite decorative.

The seeds are formed in pea-like pods. The tree propagates easily, either through suckers, the seeds, or human intervention with transplanting or cuttings.

Look for pink silk on your next walk. It is often found in areas where the ground has been torn up, such as near old excavations, roadsides or riversides. And of course, in gardens.

This is the pink silk for the tropics. Because, really, it is too hot for pyjamas, anyway.







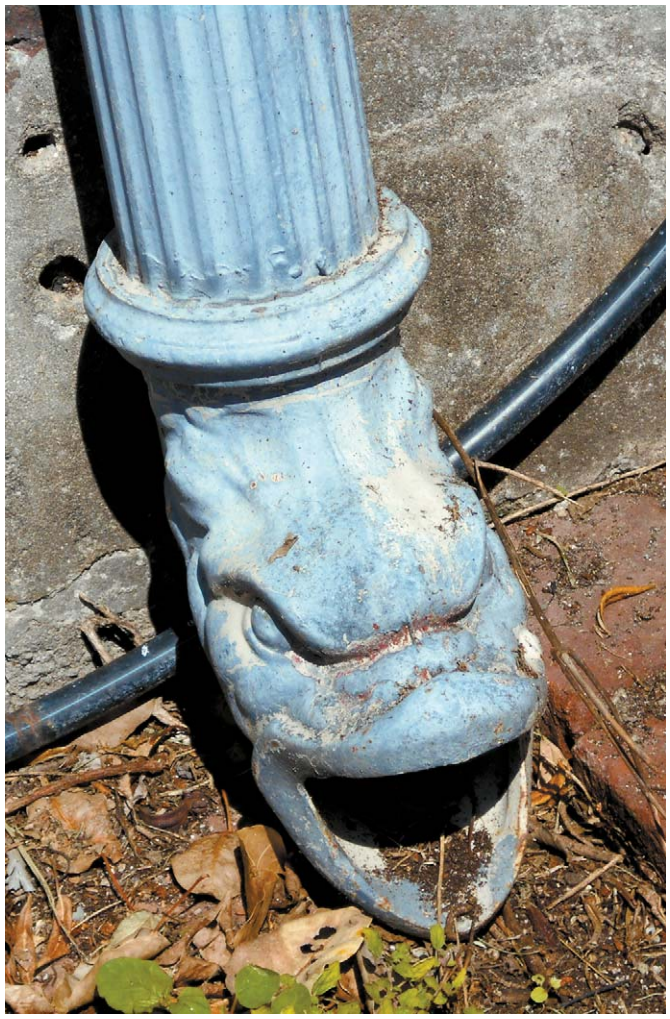


—*Continued from page 19* *...St. Pierre*

Go back west, following the Rue Levassor. In about 300 metres or so you will find the Stairway to Heaven — *l'Ascent de Ciel* — on your right. These stairs will bring you up to what was once the seminary, and is now the Diocesan Center. Follow the walkway to the road, and proceed west, towards the Caribbean, on the Rue des Bons Enfants towards the Rue de l'Eglise, which you will turn up. This leads you to the area of the ruins of the Old Fort and the church. The remains of the marble statues, as well as the pillars, can be observed. This was the oldest church in the St. Pierre area, dating back to the days of Martinique's earliest European inhabitants.

From here, you can wander back to town, or head straight north to the Earth Sciences Discovery Center. This is definitely NOT a ruin, but is a modern building designed to withstand seismic events. It houses a number of excellent displays about Mt. Pelée, as well as other, changing scientific displays. Remember to get the walking tour handset for the English translations of the displays. There is also an excellent hands-on area for the kids, which might provide a nice break from that day's home schooling, with a variety of activities to stimulate the brain cells in a fun way. Be sure to watch the video about Volcanoes in the Lesser Antilles (French, with English subtitles). There is also a very pleasant area to sit and enjoy lunch, if you brought it with you.

The Engineers' Quarters and the Asylum are about 1.5 kilometres (a little less than a mile) from the town dock, with the rest of it maybe an extra kilometre more. This loop is well worth doing, and is slightly off the beaten tourist track.







Clockwise from above:
*L'Ascent en Ciel takes you to the ruins of the church and the old fort;*
*Solitary cells in what's left of St. Pierre's colonial-era mental asylum;*
*Workmanship of a bygone age: a bronze downspout at the Engineers' Quarters*

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—*Continued from page 15* *...Regatta News*

With only two crew on board, both must be good all-rounders and understand the trade-off between pace, performance and physical demands.

Race manager Lorna Saunders says, "This will add an exciting new dimension to ASW. Safety being paramount, the double-handed class will have its own start and courses will be carefully planned to accommodate double-handed participants. The courses will be a mix of round the cans, with slightly longer legs and some days a coastal race. We look forward to thrilling, competitive sailing."

Antigua Sailing Week takes place from April 28th through May 3rd and the Notice of Race is now available. An optional Round Antigua Race takes place on April 27th, which will also offer a double-handed class.

The professional race management team will continue to offer exciting racing for participants who range from fully professional campaigns to crews of family and friends.

*Visit www.sailingweek.com for full details on Antigua Sailing Week and the Round Antigua Race.*

YOUTH SAILING NEWS

**BVI Sailor Shines in Youth Worlds**

Racing for the British Virgin Islands, 16-year-old Thad Lettsome finished the 2018 Youth Sailing World Championships in 14th place in the 58-strong Boy's Laser Radial class. At this year's event 382 competitors from 66 nations raced in nine classes. The event took place in Corpus Christi, Texas, from July 16th through 20th with two races per day until the final day when one race was sailed. Lettsome sailed on Day One to a 13th and a sixth in class, and continued to rack up all but two top 20 finishes. He placed fifth in the final race to rise one place up the leaderboard.

In December 2017, Lettsome had traveled to China for his first Youth Worlds and finished in 33rd place. Earlier in July, Lettsome finished in tenth place at the US Laser Radial Nationals. He also represents the Tabor Academy, racing Club 420s in the high school circuit.

Lettsome was awarded a scholarship by World Sailing to join their Emerging Nations Programme, which included a coaching clinic in the days leading up to the Championships. The Royal BVI Yacht Club thanks World Sailing for the support from the ENP and for putting on another great event, coach Chris Watters and everyone who supports the Youth Sailing Programme in the BVI.

The Youth Sailing World Championships is the premier event on the youth racing calendar. With just one entry per nation per event it is the ultimate achievement to gain the opportunity to represent your country.

*Visit www.worldsailingywc.org/results/index.php for full results.*

**Antigua Yacht Club Youth on the Move**

Congratulations also go to the young Antigua Yacht Club sailors who represented Antigua at international competition in July. Jalese Gordon, Daniel Smit, Rocco Falcone and Louis Bavay traveled to Texas, USA to the Youth World Championship. Later in July, Jules Mitchell and Rhone Kirby traveled to Colombia to compete at the Central American & Caribbean Games. All sailed well and benefited tremendously from the continued experience of intense competition.




SHORE LEAVE ALLOWED?

**Dear *Compass*,**

Regarding the article 'A Trio of Anchorages on Cuba's North Coast' in the August 2018 issue of Compass, can you please ask Ralph Trout if he was actually allowed to dinghy in from the anchorage and go ashore in Gibara and Baracoa? And if so when was he there? It would be a huge development worthy of mention if he was there recently, because those ports have been off limits to cruisers for several years.

**Addison Chan**
***Three Penny Opera***

**Dear Addison,**

*As you're a frequent Cuba cruiser and key contributor to the* Waterway Guide Cuba *(www.waterwayguide.com/guide/cuba), we especially welcome your queries. We asked Ralph, who replied below.*
***CC***

**Dear *Compass*,**

On this trip, taken earlier this year, we went by car. I did see yachts in Baracoa and Gibara; I don't know if the crews went ashore. As I advised in the article, "Always make your cruising intentions known when you leave a port" — the authorities will then let you know if your proposed next anchorage is permitted and whether you'll be allowed ashore.
**Ralph Trout**

'PIRACY' IN PERSPECTIVE

**Dear *Compass*,**

An article published on August 2nd in the *Washington Post* (www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2018/world/pirates-return-to-the-caribbean) implies that the risk of boaters being attacked by modern-day pirates in the Caribbean is increasing. For the average cruiser, how real is the risk of piracy?
**Concerned Reader**

***Dear Concerned,***

*We read articles written for a general audience with a careful eye. The average landlubber might throw every maritime vessel — whether oceangoing tankers, local open fishing pirogues, or private cruising yachts — into the "same boat". And the uninitiated might see "the Caribbean" as a specific spot, rather than a wide region covering more than a million square miles and containing 30 different countries and overseas territories. Thus, for some readers of that article, news of an assault on fishermen off Guyana might prompt, "Oh, no, my cousin shouldn't charter a boat in Tortola!"*

*Our major concern with the article in the* Post *is the apparent conflation of "piracy" — i.e. armed robbery of a vessel on the high seas — with "anchorage crime against yachts", which can mean something as simple (and typical) as the theft of an unsecured dinghy with no threat to human life or limb. And lumping together the sort of attacks that have occurred against freighter crews in Venezuelan commercial ports with the common pilfering of items from unoccupied yachts anchored in Eastern Caribbean bays is misleading, to say the least.*

*Although "crime against yachts" is briefly mentioned in the* WaPo *article, there are no yacht-related details. The murder-and-mayhem incidents described in detail all involve local fishermen and merchant seamen, not yachting visitors.*

*Yes, Venezuela is in bad shape, and thus the mainland coast of Venezuela has been a known no-go area for yachts for years; the incidents in Venezuela detailed in the article involve commercial shipping. Mention is made of reports of "piracy" in the Western Caribbean; again, the high-risk areas there are known and generally avoided by yachts.*

*The incidents off Trinidad related by* WaPo *befell local fishermen — Venezuelan smugglers certainly have use for those pirogues and big outboard engines. However, there have been no reported crimes involving yachts in Trinidad waters for quite some time. Yachts sailing into Trinidad come from the north and are constantly monitored; the fishing boat in question was from Cedros, in the south. According to the article on page 21 of the August 2018 issue of* Compass*: "And what of the vexatious rumours of piracy? The fact is that since the beginning of 2016, there have been over 3,000 crossings between Grenada and Trinidad by both local and foreign leisure craft, with no mishaps whatsoever."*

*Of course, there is crime against yachts in the Caribbean. But if the average cruiser keeps away from the Venezuelan mainland and other known trouble spots, and takes other common-sense precautions such as those outlined at safetyandsecuritynet.org/precaution-resources, the risk of actual piracy is remote.*
***CC***

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.*

## Read in Next Month's *Compass*:

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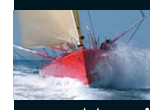
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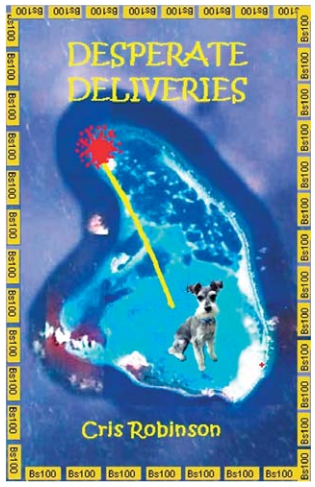
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# CALENDAR

## SEPTEMBER

| | |
|---|---|
| **3** | Public holiday in Puerto Rico and USVI (Labor Day) |
| **10** | Public holiday in Belize (St. George's Caye Day) |
| **15 – 16** | Back to School Regatta, Tortola. RBVIYC, www.royalbviyc.org |
| **16** | Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis (National Heroes' Day) |
| **19** | Public holiday in St. Kitts & Nevis (Independence Day) |
| **21** | Public holiday in Belize (Independence Day) |
| **21 – 22** | Caribbean Sea Jazz festival, Aruba, https://caribbeanseajazz.com |
| **22** | Autumnal Equinox |
| **24** | Public holiday in Dominican Republic (Our Lady of Mercy) and in Trinidad & Tobago (Republic Day) |
| **25** | FULL MOON |



ANNA LANDRY

## OCTOBER

| | |
|---|---|
| **1** | Public holiday in St. Lucia (Thanksgiving Day) |
| **8** | Public holiday in the Bahamas (National Heroes' Day), and in Puerto Rico and USVI (Columbus Day) |
| **10** | Public holiday in Curaçao (Curaçao Day), in Suriname (Maroons Day) and in Cuba (Independence Day) |
| **10 - 13** | Bonaire International Sailing Regatta. www.infobonaire.com/event/bonaire-sailing-regatta |
| **11 – 14** | Grenada Dive Fest. http://www.puregrenada.com/plan/events/pure-grenada-dive-fest |
| **12** | Public holiday in Belize (PanAmerican Day), and in Venezuela (Indigenous Resistance Day) |
| **12 – 14** | Caribbean Sailing Association Annual Conference, Antigua. caribbean-sailing.com/event/csa-annual-conference |
| **15** | Public holiday in Jamaica (National Heroes' Day) |
| **16** | St. Lucia International Billfish Tournament. www.facebook.com/slugamefishingassociation |
| **17** | Public holiday in Haiti (Anniversary of the Death of Dessalines) |
| **20** | Willy T Virgins Cup, BVI. RBVIYC, www.royalbviyc.org |
| **21** | Public holiday in BVI (St. Ursula's Day) |
| **24** | FULL MOON |
| **25** | Public holiday in Grenada (Thanksgiving Day) |
| **26 – 28** | Discover the Caribbean Regatta, Ponce, Puerto Rico. PYFC, www.ponceyachtandfishingclub.com |
| **26 - 28** | World Creole Music Festival, Dominica. dominicafestivals.com |
| **27** | Public holiday in St. Vincent & the Grenadines (Independence Day), local boat races in Bequia |
| **27 – 28** | Caribbean Dinghy Championship, Antigua. caribbean-sailing.com/sailing-development/caribbean-dinghy-championship |
| **TBA** | Foxy's Halloween Catfight (catamaran regatta), Jost Van Dyke, https://foxysbar.com |

*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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# MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

## SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2018

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 2018** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| DATE | TIME | 21 | 2116 | 11 | 1351 |
| 1 | 0413 | 22 | 2224 | 12 | 1431 |
| 2 | 0504 | 23 | 2309 | 13 | 1531 |
| 3 | 0557 | 24 | 2353 | 14 | 1621 |
| 4 | 0654 | 25 | 0000 FULL MOON | 15 | 1712 |
| 5 | 0753 | 26 | 0038 | 16 | 1759 |
| 6 | 0854 | 27 | 0124 | 17 | 1847 |
| 7 | 0954 | 28 | 0211 | 18 | 1935 |
| 8 | 1053 | 29 | 0301 | 19 | 2019 |
| 9 | 1144 | 30 | 0353 | 20 | 2103 |
| 10 | 1243 | | | 21 | 2148 |
| 11 | 1324 | **October 2018** | | 22 | 2233 |
| 12 | 1433 | 1 | 0448 | 23 | 2318 |
| 13 | 1514 | 2 | 0546 | 24 | 0000 FULL MOON |
| 14 | 1602 | 3 | 0644 | 25 | 0005 |
| 15 | 1651 | 4 | 0743 | 26 | 0055 |
| 16 | 1740 | 5 | 0840 | 27 | 0148 |
| 17 | 1829 | 6 | 0936 | 28 | 0212 |
| 18 | 1918 | 7 | 1029 | 29 | 0310 |
| 19 | 2006 | 8 | 1121 | 30 | 0409 |
| 20 | 2053 | 9 | 1212 | 31 | 0538 |
| | | 10 | 1302 | | |

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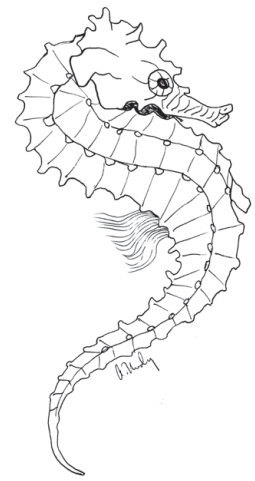
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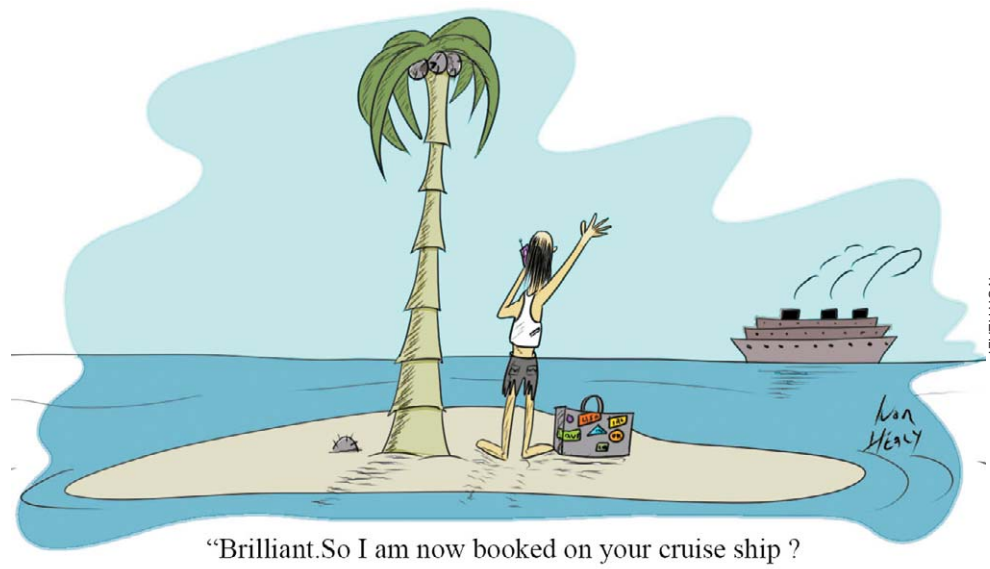



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| Blue Lagoon Hotel & Marina | SVG | 12 | Echo Marine | Trinidad | 25 | Mac's Pizzeria | SVG | MP | St. Vincent Marine Center | SVG | 29 |
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| Carriacou Marine | Grenada | 30 | Horizon Yacht Charters | Grenada | MP | Neil Pryde Sails | Grenada | MP | YSATT | Trinidad | MP |
| Clarkes Court | Grenada | 23 | Hydrovane International Marine | C/W | MP | Off Shore Risk Management | Tortola | 23 | | | |
| Cruising Life | SVG | 26 | Iolaire Enterprises | UK | 17/27 | Perkins Engines- Parts & Power | Tortola | 5 | | | |
| Curaçao Marine | Curaçao | 24 | Island Dreams | Grenada | MP | Power Boats | Trinidad | MP | | | |
| Desperate Deliveries Book | C/W | MP | Island Water World | Sint Maarten | 40 | Renaissance Marina | Aruba | 19 | | | |
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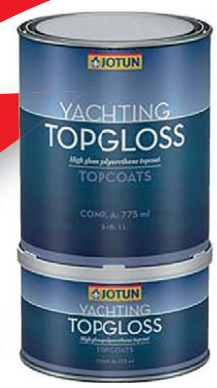
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