

# ADVENTURE SCUBA DIVE LOG



SPRING/SUMMER  
406-259-7363

1211 GRAND AVENUE, BILLINGS MT 59102

NEWSLETTER  
WWW.DIVEMONTANA.COM

## Un-Belizable Belize

By Carolyn Bakker

How was Belize you ask? Un-Belizable is what you will hear from the divers that went on our recent excursion. From our first glimpse of the tropical blue water and barrier reef through the plane window, we knew we were in for a good time.

Belize is located directly south of Mexico on the Caribbean side of Central America. This tiny little country lays claim to the second largest barrier reef in the world. It is home to nearly 400 species of fish, and 70 types of hard corals. Our journey took us to a small island off shore called Ambergris Caye (pronounced key). Ambergris is located about 36 miles north of Belize City stretches 25 miles along the Belize Barrier Reef.



We arrived at the tiny (and I do mean tiny) San Pedro airport in a 10 passenger plane (eleven if you count the passenger sitting in the co-pilot seat!) and arranged for our resort to pick us up. A golf cart (yep, the primary mode of transportation is a golf cart) quickly arrived to carry our luggage. They offered additional golf carts to get us to the resort, but as it was just on the other side of the runway, they suggested that we might enjoy the stroll.

Our accommodations were thatched roofed huts (best huts I've ever stayed in- Gilligan never had it so good.) amongst palm trees and a short walk to the beach. The dive shop was on the pier and the bar was near by. The major requirements for a good time were covered.

The first morning we met our Divemaster and his Assistant. Carlos and Toreano showed us to our



boat and we got ready to go. Within 15 minutes we were at our first dive site and falling off the back of the boat.



The reef system in Belize is amazing. The abundance of corals and variety of fish are breath taking. The reef is so large that we didn't run in to other groups of divers very often. That also contributes to keeping the reefs in good shape. Even though there are a lot of divers, they are spread out enough to minimize damage to the reef. The Divemasters are also good stewards of the reef in encouraging divers to practice good buoyancy skills.

We saw a large variety of fish- and made friends with a whole lot of grouper and nurse sharks. Carlos would bring a chum tube full of fish with him on many of the dives. That would attract a variety of fish who would follow him like the pied piper. Towards the end of the dive, he would remove the fish from the tube. It was fascinating to watch the grouper and sharks interact. Those groupers can hold their own when it comes to dinner time.

The underwater environment of Belize has great variety. In the sheltered side of the reef

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### WHAT'S INSIDE....

- GEAR LOCKER- REGULATOR CARE & FEEDING
- DIVE PLANNER- DON'T MISS THE FUN!
- GEAR SWAP STARTING SOON!

# GEAR LOCKER

## Care and Feeding of Your Regulator

By Mandy Glover

Whether it is a rental or your own, your regulator is your life support system under water, and a little preventive maintenance can keep it functioning properly and safely. Believe it or not, two of the main enemies of regulator function are sand and water. Getting sand in a regulator can cause it to free flow or breathe wet, and you might have to chew your first breath. I have yet to see a diver sit on the beach and pack his regulator with sand, but many do it unintentionally by dragging it or setting it on the beach where it can get sand kicked on it or stepped on.

Here are a few simple ways to keep your regulator clean. I find it easiest at most shore entry sites to don my gear using a picnic table or tailgate, and then just walk down into the water. This keeps everything but my feet from getting in the sand. If you have to lay your gear on the beach, it is best to use a tarp or blanket, and coil all of your hoses and lay them on top of your BCD, out of sand and water. If you prefer to don your fins in the water, it is a good idea (in more ways than one) to keep your regulator in your mouth. Make sure your hoses are secured at all times, both in and out of the water.

Of course, a little sand is inevitable, and this is where enemy number two comes in...water. Rinsing your regulator with clean, fresh water is important but it must be done properly. It is important to keep water out of the first stage. To do this, make sure the dust cap is securely in place, and NEVER press the purge button on either the primary second stage or the alternate when the system is not under pressure. This prevents water from entering the first stage through the hoses. Also, do not use a forceful stream of water to rinse, this can damage delicate parts in the second stage and allow water to enter. Make sure to rinse under hose protectors as well, as salt deposits and sand



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are shallower dives and popular snorkeling sites like Shark Ray Alley. Shark Ray Alley was a great stop for a surface interval. The area is popular with stingrays and larger head turtles looking for an easy meal. The local fisherman harvesting conch for the local restaurants clean their catch in this area. This attracts a crowd-fish and people alike. Several of us in the group got out and snorkeled and brought back conch shell souvenirs. Fortunately the divemasters offered to clean our finds or our dive bags would have taken "stinky" to a whole new level.

Along the of reef crests are mountains of corals separated by meandering sand channels. On several dives we saw spotted eagle rays cruising the reef and turtles tucked into nooks on the top of the reef. The underwater topography changes from very deep to very shallow as you make your way from the wall to the coral gardens.



One of my favorite dives was the night dive. We did the dive at Hol Chan Marine park. The dive was only about 20 feet deep, but the night life was amazing. Basket corals are tight balls during the day, but at night the open up wave in the current to feed. In the crevices are huge parrot fish tucked in for the night. While they are sleeping, the octopus, crabs and lobster come out to play. What a party!

It was sad to climb back on the plane to come back to reality, but the question on everyone lips was "Where are we going next time?". I don't think any of us would have a problem returning Belize- it was un-belizable.

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*Gear Locker Cont't*

can hide here and wear on hoses. Allow your regulator to dry before storing it, and don't leave it in direct sunlight.

Remember to have your regulator serviced by a licensed technician at least annually (more often if you use it a lot), and check it before each dive. Following these few simple guidelines can ensure that you and your regulator have many happy and safe dives together.

# DIVE PLANNER

Adventure Scuba 406-259-7363

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	<i>OPEN WATER CLASS &amp; POOL</i>	<i>OTHER CLASSES</i>	<i>STORE/CLUB EVENTS</i>
<i>MAY</i>	<b>Executive Scuba</b> May 14, 15 & 16  <b>Group</b> May 10, 11, 13, 17 & 19	<b>Open Water Check Out Dives</b> May 29, 30  <b>Advanced/Specialties</b> May 29, 30 & 31	<b>High Country Divers Club</b> May 11  <b>Memorial Day Dives</b> May 29, 30, 31
<i>JUNE</i>	<b>Executive Scuba</b> June 10, 11, & 12  <b>Group Scuba</b> June 15, 17, 21, 22 & 24	<b>Open Water Check Out Dives</b> June 15 & 16 (Sports Cove)	<b>High Country Diver Club</b> June 8 <b>Yellowtail</b> June 20
<i>JULY</i>	<b>Executive Scuba</b>  <b>Group Scuba</b> July 12, 13, 14 & 15	<b>Open Water Check Out Dives</b> July 10 & 11 (Sports Cove) July 24 & 25 (Sports Cove)  <b>Rescue</b> July 17 & 18	<b>High Country Divers Meeting</b> July 13 <b>Harrison Lake Dive &amp; Mud Bug Hunt</b> July 17-18
<i>AUGUST</i>	<b>Executive Scuba</b> August 26, 27 & 28  <b>Group Scuba</b> August 1, 2, 3 & 4	<b>Open Water Check Out Dives</b> August 21 & 22 (Sports Cove) August 23 24 (Sports Cove)	<b>High Country Divers August 10</b>  <b>Canyon Ferry Dive August 21 &amp; 22</b>
<i>SEPTEMBER</i>	<b>Executive Scuba</b> September 10, 11 & 12  <b>Group Scuba</b> September 8, 13, 15, 20, 22 & 27 (RMC)	<b>Open Water Check Out Dives</b> <b>To be Announced</b>	<b>High Country Divers</b> Sept 14 <b>Yellowstone Park</b> Sept 4, 5 & 6 <b>Clean up Dive</b> To Be Determined Sept 19
<i>OCTOBER</i>	<b>Executive Scuba</b> October 8, 9, & 10  <b>Group Scuba</b> Oct. 19, 21, 25, 26 & 28		<b>High Country Divers</b> October 12

*THIS SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. PLEASE CALL TO CONFIRM DATES & TIMES. SCHEDULES CAN ALSO BE FOUND ONLINE AT [WWW.DIVEMONTANA.COM](http://WWW.DIVEMONTANA.COM)*



**Contact Information:**

**Adventure Scuba**  
1211 Grand Avenue  
Billings, MT 59102  
**406-259-7363**

Website: [www.divemontana.com](http://www.divemontana.com)  
E-mail: [adventurescuba@divemontana.com](mailto:adventurescuba@divemontana.com)

# ADVENTURE SCUBA



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# Annual Gear Swap

Winter is over and Spring has sprung! Time to start diving!. Adventure Scuba's **Annual Gear Swap** is your opportunity to clean that dive bag and turn some of the old but useable gear into new gear. Or if you don't have gear—a great way to pick up some “experienced” gear to get started with.



**SELLERS:** Bring your used equipment that you wish to consign into Adventure Scuba on **June 10 and 11th**. Gear must be in usable condition. If you have items that need to be serviced prior to sale, they should be brought in as soon as possible. Carolyn and Mandy will be available to help you price your items. At the end of the sale, the seller may use 100% of their money towards the purchase of new gear or pay a consignment fee and take the cash and dash. All unsold items must be picked up by June 19th. Unclaimed items become property of the store and will be sold to gypsies, etc.

**BUYERS:** Visit the store during the sale period and pick out your treasures. Selection will range from Wetsuits, BC's, and Regulators to knives and masks. The consignment items are sold “as is” without warranty. Shop early for best selection.

If you have any questions or want full details, please call Carolyn or Mandy at **Adventure Scuba (259-7363)**.

## GEAR SWAP DATES

<b>GEAR CHECK IN</b>	<b>JUNE 10- 11</b>
<b>SALE</b>	<b>JUNE 11-18</b>
<b>PICK UP ITEMS</b>	<b>JUNE 18-19</b>



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