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Mike Minges  
(910) 278-4358

**Treasurer**  
Brenda Vrooman  
(910)842-8390

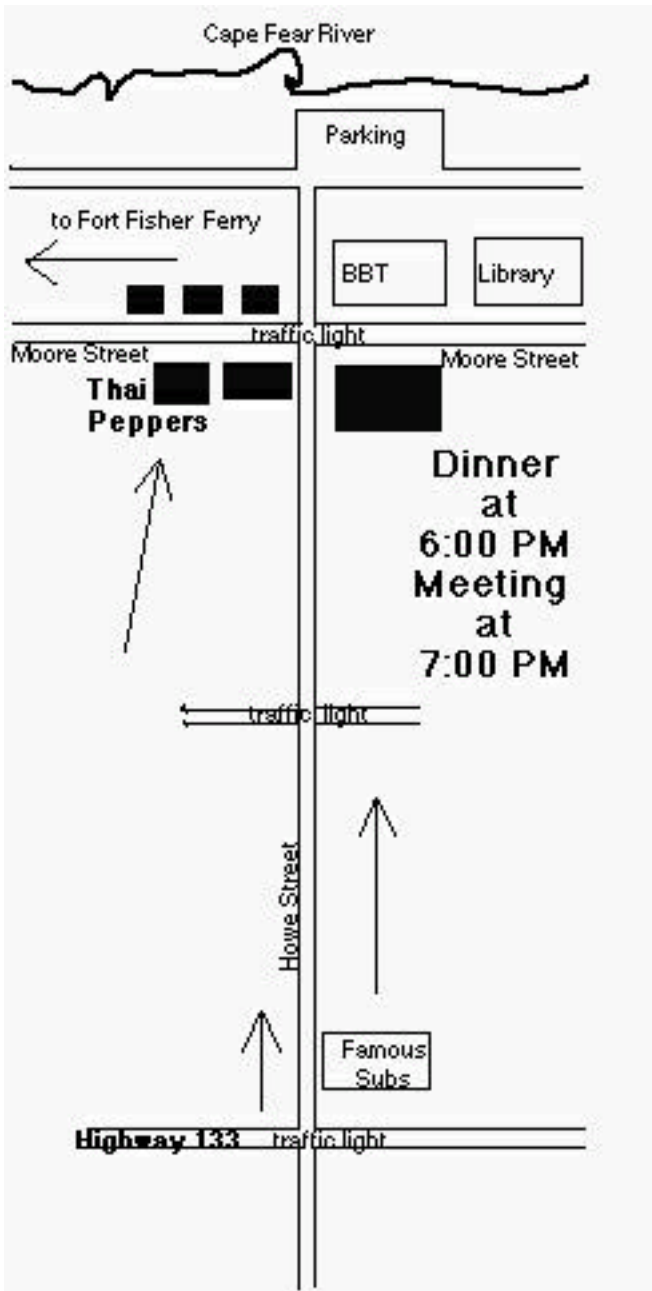
**President**

Steve Bland  
(910) 371-3233



**Secretary**  
Sally Thomas  
(910)845-2330

**Newsletter**  
Bryan Woodard  
(910)457-4358



**Through My Mask**

by Steve Bland

Looking back over my notes it seems that we have had a lot of good ideas and initial gusto. Then we tend to get lax. We seem to jump at the chance to dive or party; but do not move toward volunteering to help plan or help carry the load. It really is not that heavy a load, when each one carries a little of it.

Scott has the fish count program worked out. Please contact him to see about a date to dive and count fish.

One idea that has come up is a membership drive. Do we all talk diving up to our friends? Is that enough to help sustain the club or do we need a more aggressive plan of advertising.?

We presently have speakers for July and August. Any help for September and October would be greatly appreciated.

The night dive June 26 on Fred Walker's boat came off without a hitch. The weather was marginal to begin with but improved. The ocean was beautiful with visibility in the 70 to 80 foot range. There was a fairly strong current but everyone handled it with little inconvenience and had two good dives.

This was the first official club dive this year. Early dives were rescheduled due to weather or mechanical troubles. The Wrightsville Beach dive to the 23 mile ledge with Bob and Janet Beason is rescheduled for Saturday July 17, and the Hebe dive is scheduled for Sunday, July 25. There are spaces available for the Hebe dive so give Bryan 457-4358 or Jerry (910) 642 3993 a call. Better yet, if you want to go, just drop a note along with \$90 to secure a space on the boat to the club post office box. Bryan or Jerry will contact you to confirm the space.



Next meeting: July 13 at 7:00  
p.m. at Thai Peppers  
Restaurant 115 Moore Street,  
Southport

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**Officers and interested persons to  
meet at Thai Peppers the 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Tuesday at 7pm**

### **Minutes From the Last Meeting by Sally Thomas**

**June 8 meeting with 21 members present.**

#### **Old business:**

- Scott Fowler reported on the Great American Fish count. The seminar will be held Saturday June 26 at the Fort Fisher Aquarium. Register by calling 800-8OCEANO or on line. A virtual dive is planned so he hopes the building is done. The actual dive is scheduled for the second Saturday in July(the 10<sup>th</sup>).
- The night dive boat is filled. If there are more eager participants, another boat may be commandeered.
- Rodale's sign-up list for inclusion in a modified club roster was circulated. The purpose is for their national club roster with benefits.
- Weather Service Tour? Shoot for November meeting in Wilmington. Moved and approved by member present.

#### **New Business:**

- Trex reported on a dive operation in Fort Myers Florida that offers a Gulf Coast cruise. Learn more in the next article on this page.
- Fred Jones talked about a free rebreather course with spear fishing offered by Jim Singleton of Bottom Time at Sneads Ferry.
- Guest Speaker was Chip Barry, self-accused motor mouth, who has been a lifelong fisherman,

captain, and environmentalist. His business, C2C Systems, is constructing pinpoint maps of the off-shore waters from NC to Jacksonville, Florida combining depth and water temperature. This information is up to the minute and available on the internet at [www.smartangler.com](http://www.smartangler.com). Of particular relevance to fishermen and divers is that movement of fish populations and clear water corresponds to both.

- The live bottom habitat 30 to 60 miles off-shore is a blessing in that it is far enough not to be disturbed regularly. Computer views shown were fascinating and revealing. Visible pockets of heat that would teem with tropical fish of special interest to fish identifiers could be clearly seen on the computer screen.

### **The Ultimate Getaway By Bryan Woodard**

The *Ultimate Getaway* is a live aboard dive trip that Trex Thomas brought to our attention at the June meeting. The vessel is fast, stable, 100 feet long, and powered by twin V-12 GM diesel engines. It is docked in Fort Myers, Florida.

The basic trip is 3 days, Thursday through Sunday, for example. You would arrive at the dock between 5:00 pm. and 6:30 pm., and the boat would leave the dock at 7:00pm. While you slept, the boat would make the 12 hour passage to the *Dry Tortugas* approximately 60 miles Southwest of Key West, Florida. At 7:00 the next morning, you would be in the water for your first dive. Breakfast could be served before or after the dive. The boat would stop at 7 to 10 dive sites during the day. Most of the sites are between 40 and 80 feet of water, and you can pick and choose your dives to fit your abilities and goals. Lunch and dinner is worked into your schedule. Day two will follow this schedule. A visit to Fort Jefferson national monument can be worked into the schedule if you want. On Day 3 you will dive the wreck of the *Baja California* a World War II transport ship and an *Air Force Relay Tower* similar to *Frying Pan Tower* off the Cape Fear. The boat will arrive back at Fort Myers between 4:00pm and 5:00 pm.

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Spear fishing and collecting is allowed, and the chef will cook your catch if you want.

### Cost of 3 Day Trip

"Full Charter" = 19 paying plus one comp.  
\$435.00 per person

"1/2 Charter" = 9 paying plus one comp. \$460.00  
per person

Individual person = \$495.00

A color brochure and additional information is  
available call me at 457-4358.

## Those Feisty Damsels

By Scott Fowler

One of the first questions likely to be heard from a new diver is about shark attacks. While it does happen, it is highly unlikely. In fact, you have a much greater probability of getting struck by lightning than becoming fast food for Jaws. If I were a new diver, I would be much more concerned with a far greater danger than Blue Water, White Death. That's right...lurking just off our shore, waiting for an unsuspecting diver, is the dreaded menace that is the Damsel fish.

These pint size demons (Most average less than 6") are out there all right. They are patrolling their algae gardens and just waiting for an intruder to invade their space. Most veteran divers are aware of this lurking danger and avoid damsels at all cost. In fact, many of us have horrifying tales of repeated attacks. Most probably go something like this...*I was swimming along the ledge just minding my own business when I came across a small colorful fish swimming frantically back and forth around a hole. It was a pretty little fish so I got closer to get a better look. The last thing I remember were the eyes and erect fins. Then the nips started. I'm just glad I was wearing my wet suit or I may have been horribly mutilated...*

These small fishes are found worldwide in shallow tropical waters. Most are small, but a few species like the Sergeant Major tops out at a whopping 8". Their bodies

are oval and compressed. All species have one single continuous dorsal fin and a forked tail. Unlike most other fish though, the damsels have only a single nostril on each side of the head as opposed to the usual two. But woe to the diver who gets close enough to see the difference.

The most abundant damsels in our area are the Sergeant Major, Brown Chromis, Purple Reef fish and the Beaugregory. At one time or another, I'm sure most of us have seen the Sergeant Major, *Abudefduf saxatilis*. They are very common and easy to ID. They have five vertical black bars on a mostly pale white body. They are commonly found in large groups and can live in water as hot as 95 degrees Fahrenheit. The Brown Chromis, *Chromis multilineata*, is a little more difficult to describe. They are brown in color and the tips of their dorsal and tail fins are edged in yellow. They also sport a dark spot around the base of their pectoral fin. They mainly feed on plankton and are thus less territorial (and bloodthirsty) than some of the other members of this family. On deeper dives, you may encounter the Purple Reef fish, *Chromis scotti*. They are slate to dark blue with a bright blue crescent around the upper part of their eyes. They are usually found in small groups near the bottom. On a recent dive to the 23-mile ledge, I encountered several large aggregations of these fish milling about large sponges. I must admit, their color and activity level really gave some life to an old reef. Oh, it was a stirring sight. The last major species in our area is the farmer of the group. The Beaugregory, *Stegastes leucostictus*, tends and protects his algae garden with the hardened determination of a German Shepherd. They put a lot of work into clearing an area of living organisms so that algae will grow in its place. So they are not about to give up their homestead to any grazing fish or visiting divers for that matter. They will vigorously defend their algae farm from anything or any one who gets too close. Please give them plenty of room.

Luckily, the real killers of this family live mostly to the south. The Coco, Bicolor Yellow Tail, Threespot, Longfin, and Dusky Damsels are the nippers to watch for. However, with our unique position near the Gulf Stream, these pugnacious fish can and do occur in our area. I have seen several of these species on dives and I

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assure you, I have given them a wide berth. All kidding aside, they are very interesting fish to watch. Find yourself a spot of sand to kneel on and watch a damsel for a while. You'll be surprised at how many feints, jabs, and charges they must do just to defend their home. Damsels to me seem to be in a constant state of motion and a whirlwind of activity. Put one in an aquarium, and they can provide hours upon hours of entertainment. So on your next dive, give these guys some of your attention and see how many different damsels you can identify. Just be ready to get out of the water when the Jaws theme music starts playing...Daa Dum, Daa Dum.....



**Yellowtail Reeffish**  
*Chromis enchrysurus*



**Club Goes on Line with New  
Website**

**[www.bcinet.net/cfddiveclub](http://www.bcinet.net/cfddiveclub)**



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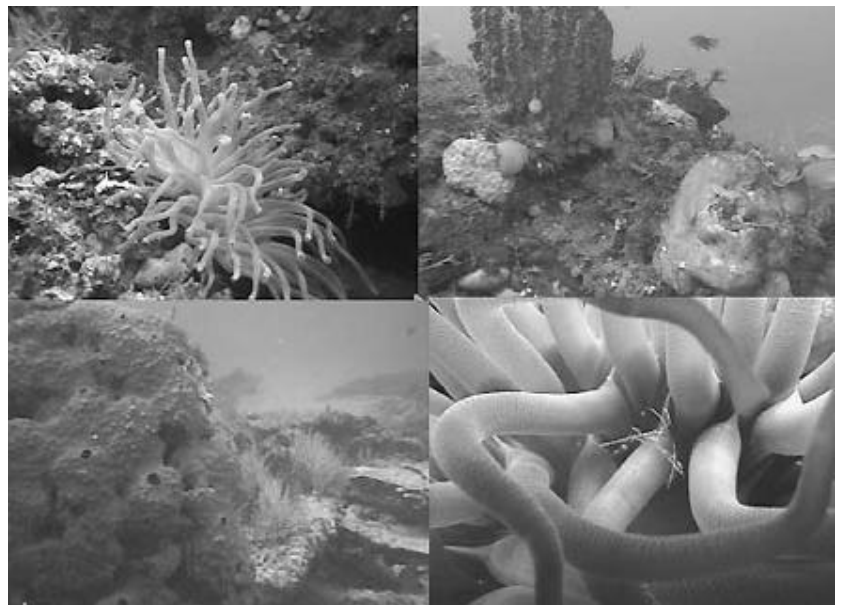
### Cape Fear Descenders' Top 10 Signs that your are a dive gear junkie

By Sott and Amy Fowler

10. On a night dive, your look like a giant Christmas tree.
09. Who needs a weight belt?
08. The dive master has to roll you into the water.
07. A U-Haul backs up to the dive boat to unload your gear.
06. Sharks avoid you for fear of entanglement.
05. So does your dive buddy.
04. The captain can rely on you to bring the spare anchor.
03. You really do have the kitchen sink,
02. You are the only one who owns a Self Contained Underwater Drinking Apparatus

*And the number one sign that your are a dive gear junkie:*

01. Two Words.....more D-rings!





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### **MEMBER BENEFITS**

- Newsletter Keeps you abreast of local diving information including offshore charters, lake activities, meetings and social gatherings.
- Educational There will be interesting and educational guest speakers at each monthly meeting plus seminars and speciality courses.
- Charters Cape Fear Descenders will work hard to book comfortable boats to exciting offshore wrecks. Charter costs are usually less than typical walk- on rates.
- Socials Throughout the year the club will sponsor social events such as picnics, quarry days, and the holiday banquet. These events should draw good crowds, good company and good fun.

Club membership is based on the calendar year January 1st, through December 31st. Membership dues are payable January 1st. There is a grace period that extends through March.

### **CLUB DIVING INSTRUCTORS**

Tom Roberson	PADI	457-4776
Wayne Strickland	NAUI	457-5201
Jeff Marlow	PADI	(910) 799-1794
Cheryl Smith	PADI	(910) 793-9799
Richard Mathews	PADI	(910) 686-9290
Scott Fowler	PADI	(910)815-3736

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**PO Box 11123  
Southport , NC 28461**

