



# KELP KRAWLERS DIVE CLUB

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[www.kelpkrawlers.org](http://www.kelpkrawlers.org)

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## MEMBERSHIP

Kelp Krawler dues:  
\$15 single or  
\$25 for a family  
Membership.

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## MARCH Prez Sez:

Have We Outgrown our Meeting Space?

Attendance at the Kelp Krawler's meetings is at an all time high and growing. The meeting room's capacity at Dirty Dave's is 30 people. We continually meet or exceed this number.

Dirty Dave's has been a wonderful host for our club meetings. We pay no fees to use the room, we have great service, and the food is excellent and reasonably priced. This question is no reflection of the great service or any concerns posed by the restaurant.

I have the pleasure to stand before the group and facilitate the discussions. What I see from the audience is a lot of dedicated club members that are crammed into very tight quarters. Frankly, from my viewpoint folks look uncomfortable. This sentiment was shared by Steve Fornoff when he facilitated the meetings. Around mid-meeting, I see folks growing uncomfortable due to what appears to be lack of air circulation, tight quarters and warm temperatures. On a winter day with a full room, it can be very stuffy. This is only magnified when the weather warms up.

It is my opinion, that our club's assets are our members and our future members. I am thrilled to report that a lot of the original Kelp Krawler members have been at the meetings lately, we are seeing a lot of Aquanauts in the audience, and new

members are joining. The board tries very hard to put together an agenda for the meeting that is informative, fun, and includes a guest speaker. We joke that every speaker comments about the attendance at the meeting, "standing room only", but for our guest speakers, and for those that help set-up the room, there is always sound, audio and personnel space challenges for our speakers, guests, and members.

This question has been asked before, and I was one of the first to comment that there is no place in Thurston County like "Dirty Dave's". I am humbled to say, that maybe there is no place like Dirty Dave's, but change may be necessary to address our growing membership.

I would like to include this subject at our next meeting for discussion. If club members share my feeling and wish to suggest other establishments that could host a club our size, I would like to encourage your suggestions. We do not pay for the space at Dirty Dave's, but I feel our membership fees could cover a modest room charge at another restaurant or facility.

If you agree, I feel that the qualities we seek for a meeting facility are: a room capacity between 50 to 70 people at an established business (we will not have to move again), reasonability priced food, a range of food selections, appropriate space and acoustic considerations for a speaker, hook-ups for audio visual equipment, heat in the winter and air conditioning (or window that open for

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circulation) in the summer, parking, and a central location.

I would love to hear member's opinion on this question. Is my assessment way off? Do folks share my concerns? Any opinions or suggestions are welcome.

## **A DAY OF DIVING ON THE PUFFIN**

On a crisp January morning, Sunday the 21st, an eager team of nine Krawlers; *Mark & Carolyn Reece, Dave Miller & Colleen Symmons, Andy Mohrle, John Cipriano, Mike Fitz. Amy Kurtenbach & John Brown* met outside Tugboat Annie's at the West bay marina at 9:00am to take Capt. Steve Boothe up on his gracious invitation for a two tank dive aboard his boat "the Puffin".

The Puffin is a well laid out 35' combination Sport fishing & Dive boat that had just recently arrived in the South Sound from Neah Bay to berth here for the winter. The Puffin has plenty of space for a two-tank / six-pack charter. It has a small but spacious cabin with a raised booth seats & table, a stove combination cabin & butt heater dry suit melter and one head. The rear deck had a covered space with two more booth seats, making a comfortable area for 4 to get out of the wind while underway; the rear deck remained open to the elements with all gear tied off along the rails with bungee cords.

***Dive #1, The wreck at Taylor Bay:*** We loaded up that morning and headed out to Taylor Bay to dive the remains of a 100 foot long wreck sitting nearly upright, slightly leaning to one side & perpendicular to the shore in 50-60' feet of water. The water was calm & glassy with very little current, probably because we were protected by the bay and not out in the channel, the water temp hovered around 48 degrees visibility was low averaging 10 foot or less. The wreck consisted mainly of the hull and scattered wreckage along side. The hull still fairly intact from Stem to stern and it's covered in sea life, large white plumose anemones, nudibranchs and various species of vertebrates. The deep crevices in wreckage looked like the perfect makings for an Octo-Den, unfortunately we didn't see any on this trip. The bow & fore deck is still intact but little if anything is left of the cabin or any topside aspects of the vessel.

***Dive #2, The Wreck at Olympia golf & country club:*** After everyone was aboard, several of the group huddled into the cabin to warm-up and grab something to eat as we headed south back to Budd inlet to find the wreck of a cement hulled schooner about 100yds offshore of the Olympia golf & country club. As we pulled up to this site we could see one of the two masts still penetrating the surface, we dropped another marker buoy and Capt. Steve ran the live boat keeping the Puffin a safe distance away from the shallow wreckage and protruding mast. Once again the visibility was low, and getting worse around 3-6ft with a very soft, silty or "mucky"

bottom at 40' that you could literally sink into, the current was very light so the particulates just hung in the water column adding to the low visibility if silt any was kicked up, the water temp was again a toasty 48 degrees. The Vessel's hull and deck were still in tact, you can peer into fore and aft cabins through one of several access holes in the deck and hull, some large enough to enter. One of the masts has fallen into the other and lays at an angle across the deck, there are several Drums and lift bags tied to various parts of boat as if someone was attempting to raise her one more time - but failed. There is an entangled mess of stainless cable, heavy rope and chains draped all over the mast and forward decking which present a very real entanglement hazard to the unsuspecting explorer, especially in the low visibility around this site. Rumor has it that the original owner had raised this boat after it had sunk in the Hawaiian islands and sailed her all the way back to the pacific northwest only to have it happen all over again, and create a new reef for us in Budd inlet.

Capt. Steve said he'd like to do it again if we can make a six-pack out of it, he'll keep it affordable at \$300/day for the south sound sites and a bit more to cover add'l fuel costs if we head to the Narrows sites if we're interested, all in all it was a great day & good time w/fellow Krawlers on a nice boat and I look forward to doing it again soon.

## **DOMINICA, the Natural Queen of the Caribbean**

*Authored by Steve Fornoff and Amy Kurtenbach*

Dominica (pronounced dom-en-EE-ka) is home of the highest peaks (4,747') and the largest rainforest in the Caribbean. The island was created by a series of volcanic eruptions and colliding tectonic plates. Dominica is located south of the Virgin Islands and has no relation to the Dominican Republic which shares a similar sounding name.

Looking out of the window of the plane approaching the Island just before sunset, you are taken back by the green jungle. It is hard to believe that there is still an island in the Caribbean that is as lush, mountainous, rugged, and as wild as it was when pirates frequented its waters. Aside from the modest farms in the hills and villages along the coastline that we could see from the plane, much of Dominica appears to be relatively untouched by commercialism and un-tainted by excessive tourism.

Large hotels chains and restaurants are non-existent. Tourism on the island is mostly from cruise ships which pull into port (usually one ship a day) and overshadow the modest capital town of Roseau, divers, and general eco-tourism. Literature describes the is-

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lands attributes to be its waterfalls, jungles, rainforests, healthy reefs, quaint villages and its people. We agreed with this assessment. Dominica is said to be one of the best areas in the Caribbean for whale and dolphin sightings. On a whale watching trip, many in our group witnessed eight sperm whales spy hopping, and we had the pleasure to be escorted back from one of our dives by a group of dolphins drafting our boats wake.

The underwater bathymetry can be described generally as having shallow coral patches, pinnacles, gentle slopes, and vertical walls. The variety of coral is limited and no where near as diverse as many of the other islands in the Caribbean (very similar to the Hawaiian Islands), but the rugged volcanic rock, white sand, varieties of sponges and sea plants, create an interesting backdrop for sea life. The critters on the reef are plentiful. Our group saw many different types of fish and invertebrates. Notables included: large seahorses, spotted drums, moray eels, truck fish, cow fish, flying gurnards (fish), peacock flounder, squid, trumpet fish, barracuda, lesser electric ray, porcupine fish, puffer fish, acres of garden eels at 30', large crab, lobster, slipper lobster, resident school of sweepers under the dock at the resort, black bar soldier fish, common Caribbean octopus, glass eyed snapper, baby damsel fish (bright blue dots), scorpion fish, dolphins and sea turtles. Seahorses usually do not leave a general area making their location generally known by many of the dive masters. John Brown's keen northwest eye for spotting critters, spotted a pair of black seahorses near one of the dive site boat moorings that our guide did not know about (way to go John!). I am sad to report that the group did not see a frogfish which are common, but it was not due to lack of effort. Wendy Rude was bound and determined to find a frog fish. I wonder if Wendy Rude actually saw any other fish on her last few days of diving due to her conviction. She only had one critter on her mind~ FROG FISH!

Due to the islands and our resorts location, we were able to dive in both the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. All the dive sites had reportable notables, but one site was unique to the experiences of the group and to the island. One dive site was named Champagne; it is a novice dive site with an average depth of around 70'. It's appropriately named for the many streams of

air bubbles that rises from submerged volcanic gas vents that looks like the bubbles in a champagne glass. If you hold your hand over the vents, the water is extremely hot. There are also remnants of wrecks at the site that were not noticeable until the dive master pointed them out. An old cannon resting on the sea-floor was encrusted with coral.

We stayed at the Castle Comfort Resort one mile South of Roseau. The resort was small with 17 rooms, a modest court yard, pool, hot tub and a small hut that served as a fully stocked bar. The rooms were small but clean with minimal furniture. The staff was very friendly and readily assessable if you needed help or just wanted new towels. The resort had the feeling of a bed and breakfast that happened to have a dive operation, and an ocean in its front yard. Breakfast and Dinner was included in the dive package. We were offered western food, but the native food was outstanding. We were served a variety of items family-style which included:



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## Calendar of Events

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>Mar 17th</b> | <b>CLUB DIVE:</b> Sund Rock in Hoodsport. Meet at 9:00 am and have fun diving. |
| <b>Mar 20th</b> | <b>CLUB MEETING,</b> 7 PM. Dirty Dave's Pizza.                                 |
| <b>Mar 31st</b> | <b>WORK PARTY AT SUND ROCK,</b> All Day Event.                                 |

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goat, flying fish, king fish, mahi mahi, coco tea, sapodilla fruit, breadfruit, tania, dasheen, barbequed jerk chicken and pork ribs, breadfruit salad, coconut macaroons, etc. We did not go hungry.

The dive operation was called Dominica Dive. They were one of the larger operations on the island; and because they did business with the cruise ship industry they had a large fleet of newer boats. Our boat for the week was a two ladder entry catamaran with rear and side exists and a sundeck. It was a very comfortable dive boat with plenty of space for our gear.

This island offers visitors over twenty land tours and hikes into the mountainous jungle. There were "boiling" lakes, over 300 rivers, waterfalls, and more. On our last day (off-gas day), our friend Judith organized a fabulous hike to a couple of waterfalls. Judith was new to our group and a non-diver, so she spent several mornings exploring the island while the rest of our group was out on our 2-tank boat dives.

In addition to the boat dives, we were able to enjoy great shore diving 24 / 7 right off the hotel dock. The shallows (5' to 30') were covered by large boulders with a variety of coral and sponges. These rocks were home to a wide variety of fish, eels and even 6" red seahorse which Roger found at 15'. There were so many Spotted Drum fish living in those rocks that after a couple of days we stopped signaling our buddies to check them out. On the last dive day one diver in our group did a 100 minute shore dive, came to shore, quickly grabbed another tank and immediately went back out for another 100 minute dive.....poor Amy, she looked like a 'prune' for rest of the night.

This trip was a WONDERFUL dive vacation and Dominica is a place that many of us will look forward to returning to for great Caribbean diving.

Adventurous Kelp Krawlers and Friends included: Wendy Rude, Steve Sutton, Ken Domingo, John Brown, Amy Kurtenbach, Ron and Brith Grinnell, Steve and Carolyn Fornoff, Judith Klinger, Roger Tabor, Dee Quiggle, and Kathy Redmond.

## WAY TO GO KELP KRAWLERS!!!

On January 27, 2007 over 20 Kelp Krawlers gathered at Sund rock to host the first Transparent Tunicate removal. Our efforts were in step with our new friends in Aloha Oregon, Pacific Dive Club, who drove up from Oregon to participate. In total we had over 35 divers in the water on Saturday and a complimentary number of helpers on land. Thank you everyone! I also want to extend a hand-shake to Washington SCUBA Alliance and REEF. Janna Nichols provided the club with educational materials, advice, permit assistance, and most importantly put us in contact with the club from Oregon. Thank you HoodSport N' Dive for waiving the site fees for the event. Everyone's support made the day a huge success. Together, everyone mentioned made this first of many tunicate removals a success.

No one will deny that northwest recreational SCUBA divers are a unique breed of folks, but I underestimated Northwest diver's level of commitment to the environment. I was overwhelmed by the willingness and the pure enthusiasm of the divers that volunteered on Saturday. The parking lot at Sund Rock was packed with vehicles. Every single diver who showed up at the site came prepared to wreak havoc on the "Invaders". Most divers were armed with spatulas, tongs, spoons, knives, etc. Other divers put together strange contraptions made from PVC pipe. It was apparent that divers were going to "clean house" on Saturday.

I am proud to report that over 2000+/- Tunicates were removed from Sund Rock on Saturday and now reside as fertilizer in my raised vegetable garden. I cannot wait to harvest my first "tuni" tomatoes this summer. Thank you everyone who made this first "Tunibuster's", event a success.

### Upcoming Trips:

**PORPOISE BAY CHARTERS, Canada**  
Apr 26—29, 2007, contact Amy Kurtenbach

## LOCAL DIVE SHOP INFORMATION

### **Capital Divers 866-3684**

Nitrox, argon and hyper filtered air fills available.

[www.capitaldivers.com](http://www.capitaldivers.com)

### **Hood Sport 'n Dive (360) 877-6818**

The shop has now moved to a new location in HoodSport with convenient boat access. Stop by, say hello and fill up with some nitrox while you wait. Offering discounted access to the **Sund Rock Marine Preserve** for paid members.

[www.hoodspordndive.com](http://www.hoodspordndive.com)

### **Underwater Sports 493-0322**

The Olympia Shop is now pumping hyper filtered Air. Discounted air cards for Kelp Krawlers: 10 fills for \$25.

[www.underwatersports.com](http://www.underwatersports.com)