

The Surface Times

Volume 5, Issue 07
 July 2010

The Importance of Audible Signaling Devices

By Karen Bostic, MSDT

The April 2010 edition of "The Surface Times" featured a product that many of you might think you don't need – the Dive-Alert Plus. Trust me, you need it or some other type of signaling device and I'll provide examples of why.

Once on a night dive in Cozumel, my buddy was running low on air so after signaling the dive master that we were going up, we surfaced. As you probably know, Cozumel is drift diving, meaning the current pushes you along the reef and typically the boat follows your bubbles and picks you up when you surface. At night they do pretty much the same thing, but they follow dive lights underwater instead of bubbles. One of the most popular reefs for night diving in Cozumel is Paradise Reef so when your group is diving this reef, you're not alone. Frequently, there are multiple boats in the area with dozens of other divers in the water with you. Apparently we surfaced long before any of the dive boats anticipated divers coming up so the dive boats were off in the distance. My buddy and I did the appropriate thing and shined our flashlights on top of our heads so that someone on a boat could see us. They must have been looking the other way because no one came for us. Luckily I was raised in the country and all good country girls know how to whistle with their fingers. Not real lady like but it sure comes in handy sometimes. Anyway, I whistled several times and got the attention of a dive boat, not the right one, but they were able to radio our boat to come pick us up. Had I not known how to do the country girl whistle, we could have spent a lot more time in the water waiting to be picked up. After this incident I began carrying a whistle with me on every dive.



Last year when I began teaching I traded in my whistle for a Dive-Alert Plus. The underwater signaling device works great for getting students attention, especially when you're in the lake and they are distracted by the fish. I recently discovered this device is a great surface signaling device as well.



Inside this Issue

Training Specials	2
A Few More of My Favorite Things	2
Creature Feature	2
A Word from Our Sponsors	3
A Few More of My Favorite Things Cont'd	3
Travel	4
Practice Makes Perfect	5
Audible Signaling Devices, Cont'd	5
DAN	6





Training Specials

WBD Season Pass

Take any or all of the 38 PADI/DAN specialties offered at We B Divin' in a 12 month period. Crewpacks not included.

Get your **PADI Master Scuba Diver** and your **DAN Diving Emergency Specialist**.

\$699 — **Unbelievable!**

Learn to Dive Package

A whale of a deal, tell your friends.

Group Class Tuition, Student Materials, Personal Gear (Mask, Snorkel, Fins, Boots, Bag) chosen from a wide variety of options, and a shorty wet suit. Upgrades are available should you desire.

\$695

eLearning

Don't have time to spend in classroom but want to get certified?

Sign up for on-line learning. Do all of the classroom on your time at your location on your PC. Then spend 8-12 hours with us in the pool and 4 dives in open water.

Package price \$720

A Few More of My Favorite Things

by Caryn Landers, Dive Master

I had shared a list of a few of my favorite little dive items. Not big things, like my regulator or computer. Of course I need those. This was a list of small things that, while not necessary, sure do make diving better. After I made the list, I kept thinking of more things that should be on it so here is part two.

I love my mask strap cover. I know, that sounds boring because it is such a little thing but believe me if you've ever had a bunch of hairs stuck to a silicone mask strap and pulled off, you understand. The strap cover is smooth on my hair and also helps identify my mask if there are similar ones lying around. One of my masks has a "que strap" that has super-easy adjustment buttons AND a smooth cover. The button adjustment is very helpful for switching between diving with or without a hood. My que strap came already attached to my mask, but they are available now as replacements for other standard mask straps.

Continued Page 3

Creature Feature



©2009 Ned DeLoach

For me at least, one of the most fun parts of going to a new dive destination is identifying the aquatic life that is new to me. These fish for example, Right away I know they are butterfly fish from the shape. I can observe their behavior and know that it is typical for butterfly fish, but I need a reference to identify them.

White Collar Butterfly Fish:

Found around Pakistan, also known as Red-tailed Butterflyfish, Collare Butterflyfish, or Redtail Butterflyfish, has a rich brown to black color with light spotted scales throughout. Its mask-like head includes two white bands with a black band through the eyes. The tail is most distinct with a wide red band followed by black and white bands.

They eat stony corals and will frequently be found in pairs nipping on sessile invertebrates that live in on and around the rocks as well.



A Word from Our Sponsors

Atomic Aquatics

COBALT



The Cobalt uses a high contrast, full-color OLED (organic light-emitting diode) screen with brightly colored digits displayed on a black background. Illumination can be adjusted from a dull glow to an intense blast of light and color. Navigating the menu is simple. The four magnetic buttons direct you to the various menus for setting the dive parameters and personal info. A system so straightforward and intuitive you won't believe it. The screen is divided into three sections, which include everything a diver needs at a glance.

The ultimate in cutting-edge technology, the Cobalt offers all the goodies you could possibly want in an incredibly intuitive system. The Cobalt's RGBM algorithm offers three user levels—standard (liberal), recreational (middle-of-the-road) and conservative. It earned a Testers' Choice for a console-style dive computer and is one of two overall favorite data crunchers of 2010.

Shipping the end of September, retail \$1200.

Be the first in your neighborhood to have one!

Continued from Page 2

A Few More of My Favorite Things

I love my little dry box. It drops nicely into my big bag but keeps important things safe and dry. Depending on the size, it can hold a cell phone, keys, glasses, and ID. Some larger ones can also hold first aid items and tools.

I love my fish identification book. Ok technically that's not really dive gear. But I do love it and it is diving related. My family has a big set that includes different regions and types of animals that can be seen diving. It's great to throw one in my carry-on bag when going on a trip so I can preview what I'll be seeing. What is really handy though, is the little waterproof mini-book. It can go right in the boat bag so I can check on what I saw while it's still fresh in my memory. Or if you're not a butterfingers (like me, who would drop it) stick it in your BC pocket. It's waterproof so you can look up those critters while you're still looking at them.

I love my custom regulator mouthpiece. Again, sounds really boring. However after clamping your jaw on a standard regulator mouthpiece on and off all day, your jaw can feel fatigued. My custom mouthpiece is molded to my teeth and therefore so much more comfortable and secure.

I love my special scuba diving bathing suit. Why would I have a special suit just to get covered up by a wetsuit? Exactly because it goes under a wetsuit! Wetsuits, to fit properly, must be quite form-fitting and tight. Not too tight, of course. Most standard bathing suits for men are baggy and bunch up inside the suit. Many suits for women have fancy strings or decorations that get smashed into your skin under a suit. And all you women know that getting a wetsuit on is not the most, ahem, ladylike maneuvers anyway. My diving-bathing suit keeps me covered up with bike-short style legs while I'm wiggling into my suit. The tight, smooth design helps my wetsuit slide on and doesn't bunch up inside it.

What is the best thing about all these favorite gadgets? We B Divin' has them all and most of them are under \$50, some of them under \$20. Can't say that for your regulator!



Travel 2010

Cozumel

December 22—25

Double occupancy accommodations at Hotel Cozumel. Round trip transportation to and from airport. Round-trip airfare DFW-Cozumel

Diving provided by We B Divin' Cozumel includes snacks, drinks and lunch on the boat. Towel service, fresh water shower & gear stowage provided on board.

Cocos Island

October 25—November 6

Aggressor Live Aboard, see all kinds of pelagics everywhere you look. They will be sharks, hammer-well all kinds of sharks, and you name it. whale heads, all

Sold Out !!!!!!!!!!!!!

Fly DFW to San Juan Costa Rica (SJO) non-stop, board the boat for seven incredible days of diving.

Lake Travis

September 18-19

Diving at Windy Point and with Lake Travis Scuba (boat diving) in Wreck Alley, The Pecan Grove, and others. Complete your Advanced Open Water, Deep Diver Specialty, Wreck Diver, Search and Recovery Diver, etc. Meet at We B Divin' Sat 9am to drive down to Austin and return home around 6pm on Sunday. Spend the night in a hotel or camp. Call and reserve your spot.

Travel 2011

Truk Lagoon

November 27— December 04, \$3300 plus airfare and 1 nite hotel

See the ghost fleet of Truk Lagoon, the world's best shipwreck destination. That's only the beginning of your adventure. You'll see an abundance of incredible tropical fish, anemones, gorgonians and eagle rays.

The Odyssey, a 132' air-conditioned live-aboard vessel has spacious rooms, private ensuite facilities, and a large entertainment lounge. All meals and beverages are included and so is the nitrox. Small groups of only 16 guests on board. Ambient temperature 70-90 F and water temperatures 82-82 F.

Dive at your leisure, or an experienced local dive guide who will show you all those places you wouldn't find on your own. On a normal itinerary all sites can be dived within the recreational dive limits.





Practice Makes Perfect

by Jason Mahanay, Dive Master

Like many sports, scuba divers improve their skills with practice. Frequently, people plan trips to a tropical location for several days of diving, with several months or even years since their last dive. I believe that spending a weekend at a local lake before a dive trip will greatly increase your dive trip experience.



There are many great reasons to go diving at a local lake or even a pool. The more time you spend diving, the more you will decrease your air consumption rate. This one difference could mean the difference between seeing a turtle at the end of the dive, and sitting in the boat, waiting on the rest of the divers to return.

Another benefit to diving on a regular basis is improved buoyancy control. I have seen divers that struggle with buoyancy control, and end up focusing on that skill instead of enjoying the dive. If you own scuba gear and have not used it in a while, testing it near home to insure good working order is a great idea. The worst place to find out your mask is cracked or regulator is not working is on a dive boat. Everyone has heard about divers scrambling to borrow equipment or trying to remember how their computer works as the boat stops for dive one of the trip.

Finally, if you are like many divers, you may only know a few people who enjoy the sport. By diving locally, you have a chance to meet other divers, which is a great way to learn about your next diving destination or maybe your next dive buddy. Scuba divers are passionate about their sport, and love to talk about it. I have learned countless tips from local divers telling me an easier way to handle a gear issue or a technique that has made diving more enjoyable for me.

So remember, just because the visibility is not 150 feet and the fish are not as colorful doesn't mean you won't have a lot of fun and learn a lot by diving at a local lake.



Importance of Audible Signaling Devices

Continued from page 4

In December I went on my first live aboard dive trip. On this live aboard you went on self guided tours and were responsible for making your own way back to the boat. It didn't follow us like the boats in Cozumel. I made sure to have my Dive-Alert Plus with me because when diving in the ocean you never know when you might get caught in a current and not be able to get back to the boat, which is exactly what happened to me. Although the current wasn't strong on the bottom, when I reached about 20 feet the current picked up. Doing a three minute safety stop at 15 feet pushed me quite a distance from the boat. Upon surfacing I realized how far away the boat was and between the strong current and the huge waves that there was no way I could swim it. I immediately inflated my safety sausage (something else you always want to dive with, especially in the ocean) and then sounded my Dive-Alert Plus. Between the very loud audible signaling device and my safety sausage, the boat crew had no problems spotting me and sent out a skiff to get me. If I hadn't had both an audible and a visual signaling device with me on the dive, the crew would have had a much harder time finding me.

These two examples point out the importance of having an audible signaling device with you at all times. You never know when you might need it!

We B Divin'

The Ultimate Dive Shop!

8451 Boulevard 26
North Richland Hills, TX 76180

817-605-8833, voice and fax

E-mail: editor@we-b-divin.com

The Surface Times

We B Divin' is your personal resource for scuba training (PADI), equipment sales, service, and travel.

We pride ourselves on individualized training, especially for people with water related anxieties. Our rental gear includes SeaQuest weight integrated BCD's (women's and men's), computers, and regulators for state of the art training and the ultimate in safety.

Remember, enjoyment and safety are enhanced by comfort and proper fit. We will personally fit you, whether your primary interest is diving or snorkeling.

We offer both group and individual travel opportunities. Both singles and couples are welcome. Singles may ask to room share or can choose the single supplement option. Everyone is welcome - divers, snorkelers, non-divers, shoppers, etc.

Think Outside the Bowl!

There is much to learn, many places to go and much to see.



Come learn with us, go places with us and see with us.

We're on the web!
www.we-b-divin.com

Divers Alert Network

DAN Travel Insurance

This is Dan's newest product. I am sure that I have not reviewed every Trip Cancellation and Interruption policy available out there on the market, but this one is very competitive in benefits as well as cost. Also, of course, when we use this

product we are supporting DAN which is always a plus.

Travel insurance is good for those who want to plan a trip but have pending concerns like the health of a loved one. It is very valuable when planning a BIG trip like Galapagos. Many times trips like this must be planned far in the future

and we simply cannot know what life will put on our plate in the interim. So this type of insurance protects us from a total loss.

Check the details from our web site by clicking here

[DAN Dive Insurance](#)

Divers Alert Network

Membership

DAN is the only organization I am aware of that is actively pursuing medical dive research. They provide assistance to all divers (regardless of membership status) through 800 phone numbers and will accept collect calls from anywhere in the world. This alone is

worth our support with membership fees of \$29 per year. The included subscription to Alert Diver is just a bonus.

Dive Insurance

This is the best option for Medical Dive Accident Coverage that I have reviewed. There are three plans from \$25 to \$70 per year covering not only

medical coverage for a dive accident but extra transportation, extra accommodation, lost diving equipment and much more.

I cannot stress enough how valuable it is to have this coverage. Check the details from our web site by clicking here

[DAN Dive Insurance](#)