

UNDERWATER *Journal*

Explore • Discover • Challenge

Issue 12 • 2009



The Real Deal

"It's something we do for our children and our planet, and it's something I plan to keep doing as long as I am able."

-Tim Taylor

**Florida Shark Tournament
pushed to Catch-and-Release**

Cetacean Rescue

Wreck Dive on the Antilla

Queen Anne's Revenge

Shearwater Pursuit

CRR Trimix Simplified



Pg 4 Shark Tournament Goes Catch-and-Release

Learn how one group turned the Fort Myers Beach, FL, *Are You Man Enough Shark Challenge* (AYMESC) into a 90% catch-and-release shark fishing event.

Pg 7 One Whale of a Tale

A group of Canary Island divers comes to the rescue of a snared Bryde's whale.

Pg 11 Dive Log: Antilla

Heard of the Antilla? Well, if you haven't been to Aruba, maybe not. Discover what you could be missing on fun wreck dives in the Southern Caribbean.

Pg 17 Profile: Tim Taylor

Learn how one individual has turned a boat and a dream into reality by becoming a self-made ocean explorer who really "walks the walk."

Pg 24 Queen Anne's Revenge

Dive in with one of history's most notorious pirate ships, Blackbeard's Queen Anne's Revenge, as both historian's and volunteers bring up artifacts outside the inlet near Beaufort, North Carolina.

Pg 31 Shearwater Pursuit

Hands on review of the no nonsense, Shearwater Pursuit computer for technical, as well as highly avid divers.

Pg 38 CCR Trimix Simplified

Trimix for Dummies? Dr. Mel Clark's book is it for diving with rebreathers.



Cover - Tim Taylor takes aim at a large, female oceanic white tip shark in the waters of the central Bahamas.

Image: Walt Stearns copyright © 2009. Camera system - Nikon D300, Tokina 10-17mm lens in a Subal housing, Sea & Sea YS-250 strobes.

DIRECTORY

Underwater Journal is published by Aquafield Communications, LLC.
www.UnderwaterJournal.com

Editor-in-Chief - Walt Stearns
wstearns@uwjournal.com

Art Director - Cheri Craft
Webmaster - Margaret Chatham
Assistant Editor - Karen Stearns
1st Copy Editor - Brian Bienkowski
2nd Copy Editor - Gina Rhodes

Advertising - Ralph Viscusi
rviscusi@uwjournal.com

Contributors

Heidi Coluzzi
Carlos Suárez
Pierce Hoover
Michael Salvatore
Christopher P. Weaver

All contents copyright © 2009
Aquafield Communications, LLC.
No use may be made of material
contained herein without
written consent from
Aquafield Communications, LLC.
Inquiries, contact: info@uwjournal.com

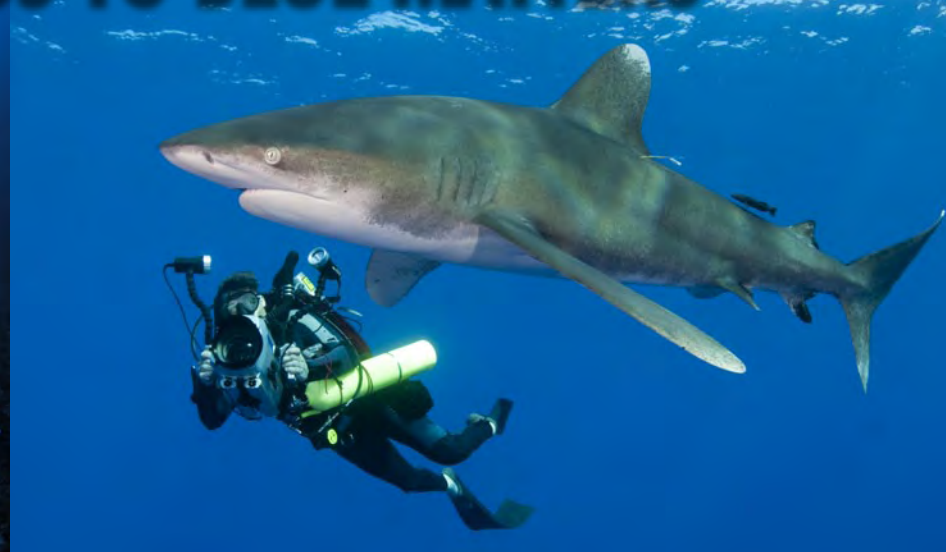
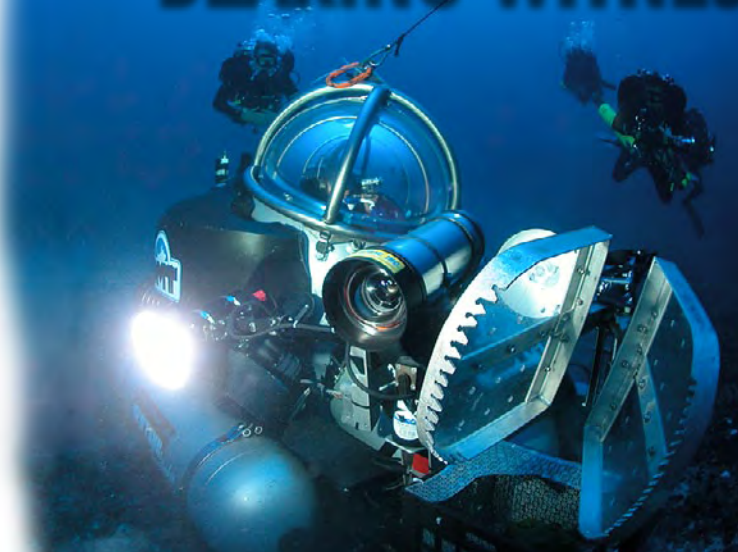
On the last day of school, my fifth-grade son drop-kicked his backpack into the air, scattering books and homework all over the yard and street. Amid the scraps of paper drifting around, I spotted an intricate pencil drawing. The subject was a boat; its decks bristled with cranes and small blimp-like shapes that I guessed to be submarines. Carefully scripted across the bow in block letters was the name: Research Vessel Sharkfinder I.

It seemed familiar because it brought back memories of my own grade school scribbling. Instead of filling notebooks with math homework, I'd often devote the pages to detailed blueprints of the expedition ship I'd one day command. Like so many my age, a primary inspiration for my designs was Captain Cousteau's Calypso.

*by Pierce Hoover
photography Walt Stearns
& Tim Taylor*



TIM TAYLOR BEARING WITNESS TO BLUE MATTERS



Four decades later, my son's daydreams are based on a different vessel, and a different crew. To compare any dive team to the now-legendary Cousteau organization might seem like sacrilege to some, but in reality, Tim Taylor and the team behind the Research Vessel Tiburon share many similarities with their French predecessors.

Cousteau never set out to be famous. He and his crew answered the call of adventure, operating on a shoestring and, in the early years, in near anonymity. And even after Hollywood discovered the charismatic Frenchman, and made him a near household word, the funding never quite equaled the fame, and the crew never allowed stardom to overshadow the work.

Spend even a few hours in the company of Tim Taylor and the parallels with Cousteau seem justified. Like the Calypso, his Tiburon is a vintage vessel that has been lovingly and painstakingly refurbished and maintained by her captain and crew. "If you touch something on this boat, chances are good that I have rebuilt or replaced it," he says.

Like the Calypso, the Tiburon was purchased and maintained with personal funds, and serves not only as a platform for explo-

ration and research, but also a floating media and communications center. To date, the Tiburon's crew hasn't produced the sort of epic programming that made Cousteau famous, but that day may come.

"I've always wanted to be an explorer of some sort," Tim admits. "I grew up watching the Apollo moon walks, and of course, Jacques Cousteau."



Divers use a lift bag to raise a large coral head for examination during a 2005 survey of the Sherwood Forest Reef System in the Lower Florida Key's.

The R/V Tiburon has participated in a number of AGRAA studies in Dry Tortugas with Dr. Robert Ginsburg of the University of Miami.

Chilled wine served with a juicy steak.

Warm, soothing hot tub under the stars.

Flat-screen DVD player in your private stateroom.

60 feet to Heaven

100-foot plus visibility.

Crimson Barrel Sponges that are the size of a compact car.

Sheer Caribbean walls plunging thousands of feet into the abyss.

BELIZE
CAYMAN ISLANDS
TURKS & CAICOS
UTILA, HONDURAS

Just 60 feet below this luxurious dive yacht lies a glorious Caribbean paradise filled with Eagle Rays, Tarpon, Sea Turtles, Sharks and Sea Horses.

Just 60 feet above the pristine reefs and walls is a diver's dream resort complete with digital photo studio, sprawling sun deck with wet bar, onboard chef and service from a smiling professional crew.

Aggressor offers divers four remarkable Caribbean itineraries, Belize, Cayman, Turks & Caicos and Utila, each offering a unique variety of spectacular diving. Reserve your adventure today and ask us about our affordable, all-inclusive Caribbean packages for singles, couples and groups.



See our Specials at www.aggressor.com
 Call for a Free DVD
 +1-800-348-2628
info@aggressor.com

AQUA LUNG
 Official gear of Aggressor Fleet

AQUATICA Digital
 Official underwater housings of Aggressor Fleet

Save 50% on select Belize, Cayman, Turks & Caicos and Utila Aggressor "Bring a Friend Weeks."

World-wide Adventures Since 1984



Belize



Cayman Islands



Cocos Island, Costa Rica



Dominican Republic



Fiji



Galapagos (2 yachts)



Kona, Hawaii



Maldives



Palau



Turks & Caicos



Utila, Honduras

Reef Photo by Jim Church School of UW Digital Photography

DIVE, SNORKEL, GLASSBOTTOM BOAT

PENNEKAMP STATE PARK

Now a SDI/TDI Five
Star Facility

Capt Slate's
Atlantis Dive Center

Mile Marker 106.5
Key Largo, Florida Keys

800-331-3483 • 305-451-3020

Eventually, the call of the sea overcame the pull of the moon; Tim learned to dive in toe cold waters of Maine and New Hampshire, and eventually moved south to find work aboard dive boats, first in West Palm Beach and Miami, then in Key West, working his way up from deck hand and divemaster to boat operator and shop owner.

"It was an exciting time to be in Key West," he recalls. "The Marine Sanctuary was in the formative stage, and there was still a lot to discover out on its boundaries. The whole tech diving movement was just getting started, and Billy Deans and his group were rewriting the rules on deep diving."

It was Billy Deans who introduced Tim to the new techniques of extended range and mixed-gas diving. Armed with these new skills, Tim was able to venture deeper and farther a field. In the Dry Tortugas, he discovered the reef system known as Sherwood Forest, and the Araby Maid, a 19th-century sailing schooner that sunk in more than 200 feet of water.

To support these longer, deeper missions, Tim needed a boat that could house a crew for days or weeks at a time, and also support the increased complexity and equipment demands of exploration diving.



Due to projects like the exploration of North America's deepest coral reef at Pulley Ridge (pictured below with Dr. Sylvia Earle), rebreathers have become the tools of choice for the Tiburon crew. Among the collection of CCR systems available, they favor [KISS Rebreathers](#) for their durability and simplicity to operate and maintain.



The M/V Tiburon

Before the vessel Tiburon became the Tiburon, it was a live-aboard named after the Gulf Stream that had a short career in the Cayman Islands during the late 1980's. Shortly after the management closed shop the vessel went off the map. A few years later Tim was looking for a larger vessel to utilize as a live-aboard for the charter dive operation, Looker Diving in Key West. He found it in a marina up in Stuart, Florida.

Undaunted by the vessel's somewhat decrepit state, Tim purchased it in 1996 and set to work on a painstaking restoration effort that transformed the boat from a dockside liability to a seaworthy research platform. As it turned out, other than in need of a serious mechanical overhaul and some attention to cosmetics, the vessel's hull and frame was quite sound. Besides, at the time, the price was right.

Dubbed the Tiburon (Spanish for shark), this boat has become the cornerstone of Tim's exploration efforts, and today it complies and exceeds the highest Coast Guard and NOAA standards for a research vessel of its size.

I first met Tim in early 1997. The Tiburon had been in service for less than a year, but Tim was already moving past the type of



Every inch of the M/V Tiburon, including the dive deck and galley, have been rebuilt to support and house a large crew for days to weeks at a time on long-range exploration projects.



Shearwater Research

Simplicity is the Ultimate Sophistication

Dive Computers for Technical Divers

Shearwater Research makes dive computers and rebreather electronics for technical divers worldwide.

- **Powerful**
- **Simple**
- **Reliable**



www.shearwaterresearch.com

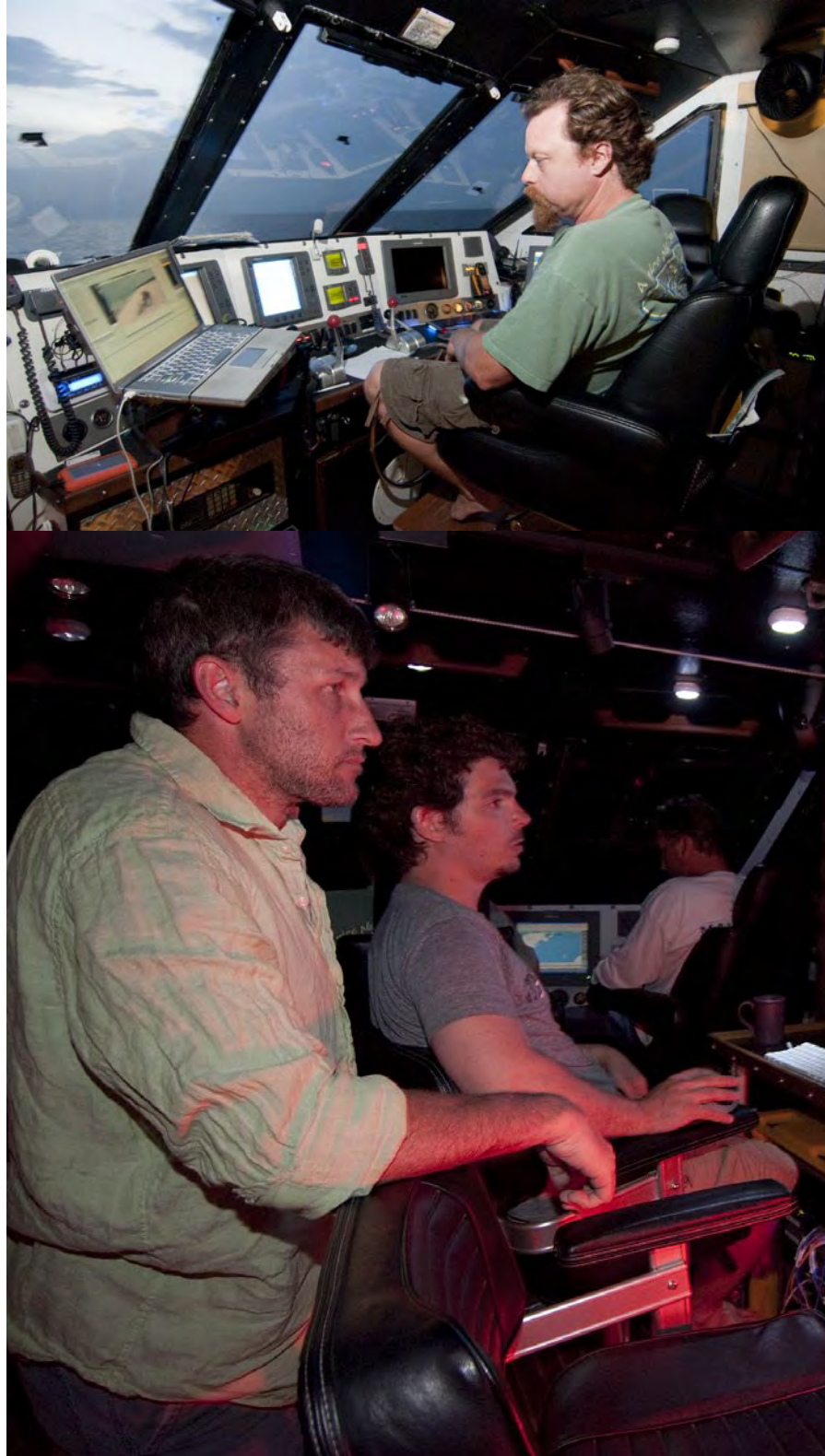
email: info@shearwaterresearch.com call: 604-669-9958

deep dive training missions that Deans and others were starting to offer - even though it meant passing up a potential source of revenue. Instead of training wealthy would-be tech divers, Tim had procured an ROV, and was using it to search for sleeping sharks on deep wrecks around Key West.

Over the next few years, his desire and ability to support serious research programs spread, and netted his crew a growing number of projects. He led a study of the Sherwood Forest Reefs with Dr. Robert Ginsburg, conducted nurse shark behavioral studies with Dr. Jeff Carier, Harold Wes Pratt, and Dr. Mike Hiethaus, and became friends with Dr. Sylvia Earl during an exploration of North America's deepest coral reef at Pulley Ridge ([featured in first issue of the Underwater Journal](#)).

These and other projects gave the crew first-hand experience with a host of research and imaging tools ranging from personal submersibles to the miniature "critter cams" used in a National Geographic film project. Rebreathers became the scuba tool of choice, and Tim and others became proficient in the use of underwater still and video cameras.

Today, the bridge of the Tiburon is a high-tech sanctuary filled with computers and communications



Fans of the movie *The Matrix*, the crew affectionately refer to the bridge of the Tiburon as *the Nebuchadnezzar*. The bridge is home to a bulk of marine navigational and depth-recording electronics, including a complete data server and full onboard video editing suite.

Kidding aside, the vessel is equipped to support a wide range of oceanographic research operations, and logistical support for documentary film projects.

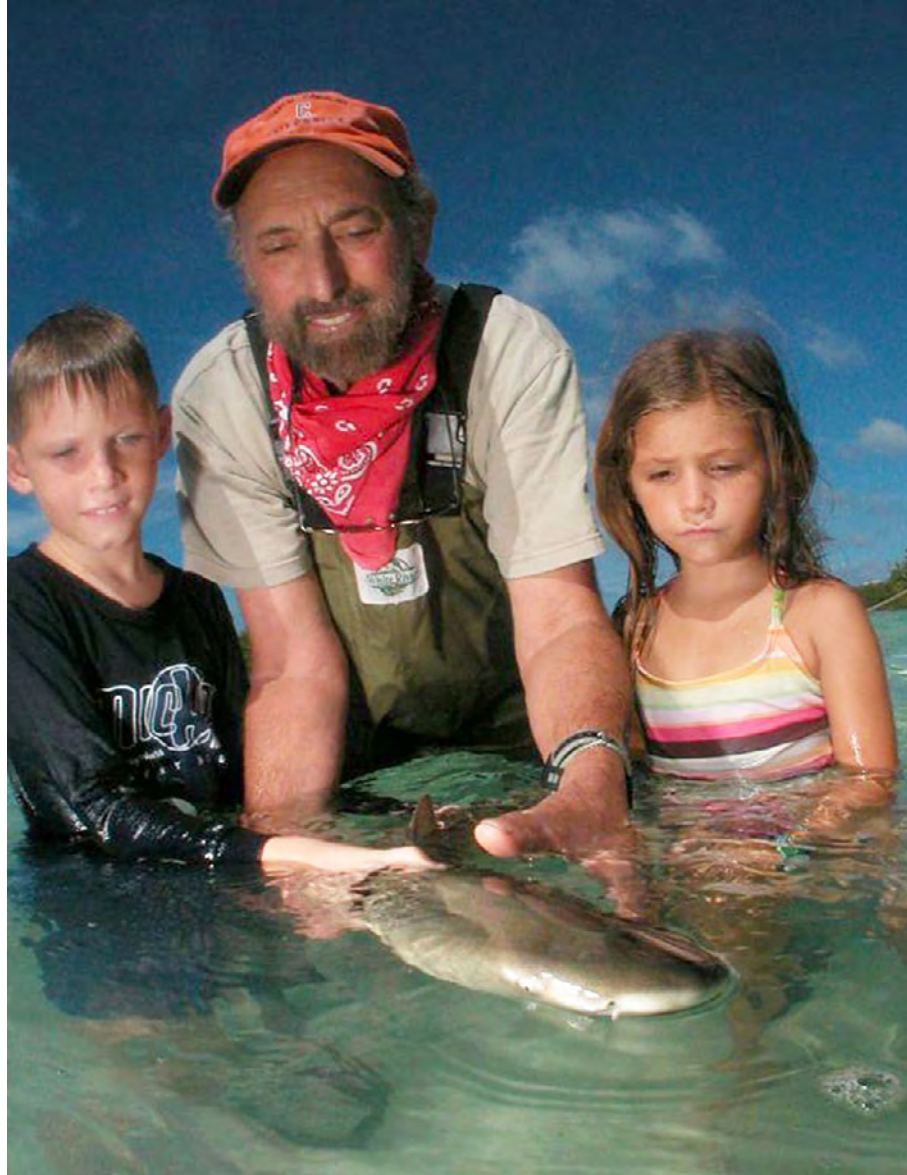
equipment, providing broadband connectivity from anywhere in the hemisphere, and the capability to produce high-definition video programming from an onboard editing suite.

Though still largely unknown to the general diving public, Tim has earned a solid reputation among the inside circles of under-sea research and exploration. In recognition of his growing body of work, Tim was inducted as a Fellow National in the prestigious **Explorers Club** in 2004.

He has since been a featured speaker at Club functions, has carried the Club's flag on a number of expeditions, and in 2008 was awarded the Club's Citation of Merit, an honor he shares with such noted explorers as Robert Ballard, who discovered the wreck of the Titanic.

In addition to these and other research projects, Tim is the founder of **Ocean Outreach**, a nonprofit organization that focuses on educational awareness programs for children, our next generation of explorers. This is something Tim understands fully because of his own children, Garrett and Brooke, who like their dad have a keen interest in the ocean and as a result have become accomplished divers.

Father, boat captain, expedition leader, producer, educator, diver - Tim wears many hats, and



Like their dad, Garrett and Brooke, have a keen interest in the ocean. Both have accompanied him on projects like tagging juvenile lemon sharks with Dr. Samuel Gruber, studies of nurse sharks with Wes Pratt in the Florida Keys, and voyages through the Bahamas.





• Bahamas • Saba/St. Kitts • Galapagos • Turks & Caicos • Australia •

dreaming in BLUE?

Time for a holiday!
Rediscover the secrets of a liveboard dive yacht

"I'll definitely be back and recommend to my friends to come along. It was the most relaxing most active vacation I've ever had. My best dive trip ever!!"
Rochelle T., 8 August 2006, Caribbean Explorer II, Saba/St. Kitts

- 5 amazing destinations • 4-8 day unique itineraries
- No more than 16-20 guests per vessel
- Gear up once during the week & dive up to 5 times a day
- Trained & certified staff • Groups & individual divers welcome
- Exotic optional island tours • Nitrox & solo diver certifications
- Itineraries to fit every budget - starting at just US\$895 per person
 - Reefs, walls, wrecks, pinnacles & much more

Arrive as a guest - leave as a friend!



US/Canada: 800-322-3577
Direct +1-903-887-8571
Fax +1-903-887-8526
info@explorerventures.com

www.explorerventures.com

he wears them well. When we last spoke, he was making final preparations for a trip to the Bahamas to film oceanic whitetip sharks, and at the same time completing a grant application that would provide his dive team with the additional tools needed to conduct extended range research dives.

"I see our role as being similar to that of the Apollo 15 astronauts," Tim says. "They weren't scientists, but the scientists trained them to do the research and take the sample that the people back on earth couldn't do. We explore, observe, collect and report back."

"This certainly isn't something I'm doing in hopes of getting

rich, or famous," Tim says. "It's a passion, and one that we all have to work hard to support. If I won the lottery, it would all go to supporting this project, and all the scientific research we could take on with our additional resources."

"There's so much of the under-sea world that still begs for discovery, and there is a need for someone who will bear witness to the changes and challenges the world's oceans now face. For us, it's not an ego trip, it's something we do for our children and our planet, and it's something I plan to keep doing as long as I am able."

