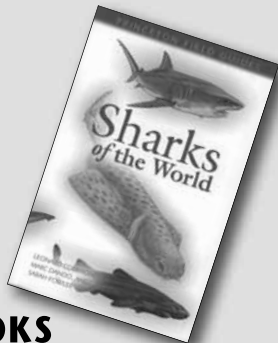
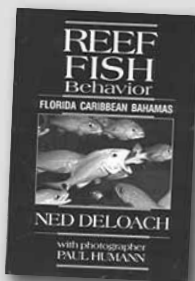
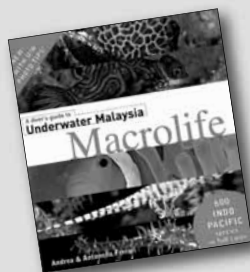


pipefish, pajama cardinalfish, razorfish, pygmy seahorses. Night dives featured slipper lobsters, hermit crabs, decorator crabs, regular crabs and the evil but strangely beautiful crowns-of-thorns. Reef structures ranged from sheer walls (often at the perimeter of islands) to pinnacles to gently sloping. The famous Leru Cut is a huge split in the rock that affords breathtaking lighting with shafts of sunlight piercing the depths and an opportunity to surface in the midst of the jungle. Another dive, Mirror Pond, also offers a forest surfacing and the chance to get a great over/under photo (or up to the canopy from below the surface as I got). There were some beach dives and a couple of wrecks. There was not one "dud" among the 56 dives and some, especially in the Morovo Lagoon, I'll never forget. Village visits are a treat with wood carvings and interaction with generally shy, gentle, welcoming villagers. Most of the nights were spent anchored in quiet or flat calm lagoons. We'd wake up to spectacular island scenery. Only

four lengthy steams, those out and back between island groups and only one of those somewhat rough. If you're in the bow as I was, you may find it difficult to sleep in rough seas and if you're prone to mal de mer you'll want to bring the Bonine! UW Photography Comments: Large, two-tiered, sheltered Camera staging table on dive deck. Two large, rubber coated tables for more extensive camera work in salon.

TONGA

Nai'a, August 2006, Ron Dion
(rondion1@juno.com), San Francisco, CA. Experience: 101-250 dives. Vis: 50 to 75 Feet. Water: 75 to 77 F, choppy. This is one of the best boats out there, but we were tossed up on a remote reef in a storm at 3am and had to abandon ship. We spent 12 hours on a desert island and were rescued by a passing Kiwi sailor. The Nai'a did all she could to help but it was a bad time for all.



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