

representation of healthy, large reef fish at both islands. Schooling sharks followed us on some dives at Conception. Turtles frequent at both islands. Saw school of dolphins at surface off Conception. The *Sea-Ray* is an independently owned live-aboard charter that works out of the Exuma and Abaco island groups. It accommodates twelve passengers with a crew of four. The week that we were on the boat there were five in our group and two marine biologists engaged in reef research and a crew of three. The weather was ideal. Our group of five basically had the boat to ourselves. The most comfortable, accommodating, enjoyable charter I have been on in the Caribbean! The crew was extremely friendly and engaging. The captain went out of his way to put us on good sites: beautiful walls, healthy reefs and even a fascinating wreck off Rum Cay that is not visited very often due to wind and current. The service for diving was the best. We never had to haul our equipment or change air tanks. We encountered some technical glitches with our regulators, and what couldn't be fixed was exchanged with rental equipment on the boat. Water level dive platform where we sat while the crew brought us our tanks. On surfacing, we handed up our weight belt, slipped out of our B. C. in the water, and the crew hauled it topside for us. Wonderful needle spray showers on the dive platform gave us warm fresh water. Cameras were stowed in a convenient fresh water barrel. A separate fresh water barrel was available for other equipment. Three excellent night dives and one night visited a marina for

a little 'shore excursion'. The other shore trip was to an archeological site to see cave pictographs on Rum Cay. Cabin accommodations were the most homelike and comfortable we have ever encountered, even in the most expensive boats. Ordinary flush toilet and tub/shower in the bath that we shared with two other cabins were not crowded. We had a real queen-size box spring and mattress bed, firm and comfortable. The lounge had three very large 'man-eating' sofas and a complete electronic entertainment system with the most complete selection of videos I've ever encountered! The bridge is equipped with computer-assisted navigation and GPS and Loran C. The captain, Ray O'Quinn, has extensive experience — twenty years of live-aboard charters. The boat is stable and comfortable under way. Food was good and plentiful. Homestyle meals of good variety were served graciously. Home made bread every meal! This charter was the lowest priced we've ever purchased — though we didn't have a full boat. My advice is to pounce! (800-856-5994; e-mail depewt@mindspring.com; website www.searaycharters.com)

BELIZE

Belize Aggressor, October 1999, Dan and Sheila Collier, Santa Barbara, CA. Vis: 50-60 ft. Water: 80-82 degrees. Dive restrictions enforced: 130 max. Good: Blue Hole — Great dive (stalactites/stalagmites). Boat facilities (hot tub/dock/dive lockers). Crew (Capt. John and all). Organized events after we came to port (Jaguar Paw/Trip to Ruins). Diving: Very

colorful, awesome sponges and coral, lots of species of fish, night dive neat tarpon. Only downside: No big stuff, but we know that in advance. Food — Great! Barbeque on Half Moon Caye. (Aggressor Fleet 800-348-2628 or 504-385-2628 Fax: 504-384-0817; e-mail: info@aggressor.com; website www.aggressor.com)

Belize Aggressor III, March 2000, Vlad Pilar, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Vis: 50 to 70 feet. Water: 77 to 78 degrees, choppy. Dive your own profile? Yes. Dive restrictions: 110 feet. A well-organized dive boat and operation. Boat was clean and well-maintained; had a refit some 3 months previous to trip. A spacious equipment area and dive deck. 15 passengers; capacity 18; were very congenial group, though of wide range of ages (20 to 60 yrs). Food was good though little choice for each meal. The crew was superb both in attitude and profession and knowledge. Cabins on small side. Diving offered variety of walls, shallow coral. All in excellent condition. Lots of smaller fish and critters. A 20-minute dive with 2 wild dolphins a highlight and unforgettable experience.

Belize Aggressor III, June 2000, Mel Cundiff, Boulder, CO. Vis: 40 to 60 ft. Water: 80 to 81 degrees, choppy, strong currents. Dive restrictions: none except no deco diving and not below 130 ft. A comfortable live-aboard with an extra large dive deck. Most of our dives were in the Light-house Reef area and, on average, these were some of the best Caribbean reefs I've been on. The reefs at Ambergris

Caye are much inferior to those visited by the *Aggressor*. These dives produced not only some of the largest sponges, but also the largest diversity I've seen anywhere in the world. Some were smoking on our dives. The food was great and the crew helpful. This boat has an efficient set-up to fill air and Nitrox tanks — a separate fill hose at each dive station. Night dives were after dinner so more night critters were out.

Belize Aggressor, June 2000, D. Demming (Demmingfsc@aol.com), Hudson, OH. Vis: 75 to 85 Feet. Water: 83 to 84 Fahrenheit, choppy. Dive your own profile: yes. Any dive restrictions: normal 130 limits with no time restrictions. UW Photography comments: excellent

Belize Aggressor, June 2000, Dave Reubush, Hampton, VA. I had been on the *Wave Dancer* twice before so I decided to try the *Aggressor*. The boats go to about the same set of dive sites, just on a slightly different schedule. Most of the cabins are below deck so that you have to climb stairs to get to the dive deck. *Wave Dancer* has most cabins on the same level as the dive deck. The food, while good, was probably not as good as that on the *Wave Dancer*. From my experience the *Aggressors* go more for buffet style with simpler foods than the Peter Hughes boats. However, I really don't have a complaint. I would rate the crew at 9.5, the best crew of any live-aboard that I have been on. Both local dive masters really hustled and made life easy. I had a problem

with the connection between my high pressure hose and air-integrated computer and they robbed a part from a rental hose to fix it and did not charge me. They were good at finding neat stuff to see, so they made it worthwhile to tag along with them. Alan from the *Aggressor* office was the boat. He was helpful to my daughter and good with all the passengers. Unfortunately, I picked another week where the wind blew a lot (tropical wave hung over us for a lot of the week). As a result the viz was not what I remembered from the previous trips. Lots of squid and green morays. Very cooperative when I wanted to take their picture. The *Aggressor* has scooters for rent that allow you to cover a lot more territory. At least one group ran into a Manta.

***Nekton Pilot*, December 1999, Mark Bryant (bryant0614@aol.com), Pensacola, FL.** Vis: 30-100 ft. Water: 78-79 degrees. Weather: sunny, dry. Water: calm. Restrictions: depth 130', 500 lbs., buddy pairs, attend dive briefings, no drinking before dives, no collecting and no touching. All reasonable and appreciated. 2 large carpeted tables with air guns, and several dip stations. Very accommodating and sufficient for 6 UWP's. No charging receptacles at the stations, had to take to your room or the salon. Had several TV's and VCR's for video playback in VHS mode. Show the other divers what you saw immediately after the dive. The *Nekton Pilot* is incredible. 12 divers on board with 11 crew. Food was plentiful and good. The divemasters were friendly and eager

to help. The nightly sealife slide shows were informative and enjoyable as well as the slide contest. The Captain and the Engineer were less friendly and cheerful, but hey, they aren't known for great personalities, that's why they do what they do. They are also building *Nektons* for other locations. What they say about the No Seasickness is true. I usually get seasick but didn't after I stopped the use of my initial use of Dramamine. (800-899-6753, 954-463-9324; Fax 954-463-8938; e-mail info@nektoncruises.com; website www.nektoncruises.com)

***Nekton Pilot*, December 1999, MW (mimi.wong@dhecmail.com, Minneapolis, MN.** Vis: 70-100+. Water: 78-79 degrees. Weather: sunny. Water: calm, no currents. Dive Restrictions: 130 feet max. *Nekton Pilot* had been in Belize for 5 weeks when we joined the boat. I'd agree with *Undercurrent's* 1999 report that the boat needs a major overhaul — musty odors in some rooms, ceiling tiles that were askew, carpeting not in place. Compared with the *Aggressor* and Peter Hughes fleets, this is a step down in terms of facilities. Accommodations are very basic. Food is plentiful (no need to bring your own snacks) but is not gourmet. No local fish during week — had one peel and eat shrimp night and one night had orange roughy. Otherwise, prime rib, chicken, etc. Food was well prepared with good variety. All American crew. You never feel like you've stepped into another country — which is fine if that's what you want. However, a local crew presence would have added

some additional perspective on the dive sites, culture and other interesting tidbits about Belize besides supporting the local economy. Diving is good — pristine reefs, good visibility, fish variety. Crew did not seem familiar with dive sites during briefing and there was a lot of “you tell us what you see.” Dive facilities are well set up — staggered entries help ease the crowding associated with 30+ people trying to get into the water. Basic routine is 8 am — dive briefing on first site. Dive until 11:45 am and lunch at 12 noon. 2nd site dive briefing is at 1 pm with dinner at 6 pm. Slide shows on coral reef ecology, reef fish identification, turtles, etc. each night from 7-8 pm. Night dives begin at 8 pm. Dive masters never accompanied any divers and while they delivered a dive briefing, never bothered to check out divers’ skills, particularly at the beginning of the week. Definitely not a trip for anyone uncomfortable with jumping into 130+ foot deep water without a visible wall and navigating their way toward the wall and shallows! Divemasters made a big deal out of the one person on deck assigned to watch for divers bubbles — big joke as the crew member assigned to this task spent time chatting at length with guests and horsing around. Crew was very young and needs to exert a more professional demeanor and get better presentation skills. Hygiene and foul language of some crew members was commented upon by several guests. Despite the glossy advertising and the presence of several snorkelers, the crew did not make any special accommodations to

take snorkelers in the skiffs to shallower depths for snorkeling trips at all. Overall, diving was very good and guests seemed to have a good time — many return guests, however I’d opt for another live-aboards next time around.

Nekton Pilot, December 1999, John Sommerer
(john.sommerer@jhuapl.edu),
Silver Spring, MD. Vis: 50-100 ft. Water: 76-78 degrees. Restrictions: less than 130 ft. No decompression. Adequate camera table space with light load. Would be bad with more photographers. No charging stations. Some film ruined by careless on-board processing. Due to Christmas, had an extra day of diving. Captain took the boat all the way to Sapodilla Cays in search of mantas or whale sharks, but didn’t find any. Bad vis, but lots of critters, esp. Xmas tree worms. Diving was best by far at Glovers Reef, second best at Lighthouse. Lots of big fish, but very few rays/sharks. Dolphins several times. Crew complained that Captain did not follow plan, so they were rarely prepared for dive sites. Moved off best dive site of week after one dive. Outstanding service, extra effort to do something special for Christmas. Very experienced crew, with many retained from previous trips on same boat.

Nekton Pilot, January 2000, Dan Kiley, Brownsburg, IN. Vis: 80-100 ft. Water: 78-79 degrees. Very nice boat, one of the most comfortable live-aboards around (and I’ve been on a lot). Small dive platform, but I’d trade that for the huge living and eating areas.

Wider Caribbean

Very professional, we had a diving accident that was handled very well.

Nekton Pilot, February 2000, Jim Virgil, Coeur d'Alene, ID. Vis: 50-100 ft. Water: 78-81 degrees. Weather was very windy four days so we were stuck behind one island. The Hughes and *Aggressor* boats were behind the same island and we rotated dive spots. The visibility was poor for the first three days, but it cleared up and the diving was great the rest of the week. The water was 78-80 degrees. The fish life was very healthy as was the coral. They insist that you do not go deeper than 130'. Other than that you are on your own unless you don't want to be. There was always a crew member who would dive with you. The food and service were excellent as usual and the crew was always accommodating. Your meals were buffet with mid morning and mid afternoon snacks. The cabins are large with plenty of water for showers. This was our fourth trip on the *Nekton* (the first at Belize) and we believe that it is the best dive boat on the Caribbean. The last full day of diving was just off Half Moon Cay and the diving was spectacular. We were joined by a couple of dolphins who swam with us most of one afternoon. The visibility was 100' plus. Your last dive was Friday morning so the boat could return to Belize City Friday afternoon. As your first day of diving is Sunday and your last dive is Friday AM you only get a little more than five days of diving. You arrived in port after lunch and the *Nekton* gave you gratis trips to either the Belize Zoo (it was very good) or

downtown for shopping. You ate dinner Friday night on your own.

Nekton Pilot, March 2000, Steven Dingeldein (sdingeldein@triad.rr.com), Burlington, NC. Vis: 50 to 100 Ft. Water: 80 to 84 F, calm. Dive your own profile. Restrictions: Return with 500 PSI, dive within either table or computer limits. Great dive operation and very good boat. True diving freedom. The dive platform gives you your own somewhat crowded space, but you learn quickly that you don't need to rush after briefing to get into the water. The first briefing 8 AM and the dive platform is open until 11:45 AM. Two dives possible. You have lunch while the boat moves to another site and the next briefing is at 1 PM. The dive platform is open again until 5 PM and after dinner it opens again for a night dive. Easy to get 4-5 dives in a day. Night dives every night and a couple of dawn dives for the adventurous. Nightly lectures well done and a photo contest at the end of the week. Crew does a great job and the food was outstanding. The 1/2 day tour in Belize city to Altan Ha, a Mayan ruin (or the Zoo if you prefer) was fun. We stayed an extra day and when cave tubing in the jungle. The diving was very good, but very little large critters. But the small stuff made up for the lack of big stuff and the dive conditions were very good at most sites. I enjoyed the last two dives on the windward site of Turneffe Island — best vis of the trip and a couple of toadfish during the day (fairly common at night). A great crew, a great boat (showing its age, some-

what) and great food. Prepared for UW photographers with rinse buckets and a large area to work.

***Nekton Pilot*, April 2000, Alan and Barbara Fischl, Great Neck, NY.**

Vis: 60-90 ft. Water: 81-83 degrees. Dive restrictions: 130' limit. Our second trip on the NP; the first was in the Cal Sal banks. The boat is very nice, and as advertised, exceedingly stable. The diving in Belize is nice and easy. No currents, no big pelagics although we did see a pod of 6 or 7 dolphins on one dive and 2 dolphins on another. The best diving by far was down south, off Glover's reef. The boat is the most comfortable of any live aboard we have ever been on, and we've been on ten. The cabins are roomy and air conditioned and the dive operation is very efficiently run. The crew couldn't do enough for us, and all of them did their utmost to make our diving as enjoyable as possible. Food was good but not great (thank heavens!). Also spent 6 days doing surface kinds of things in Belize (Mayan ruins, tubing thru rivers, jungle treks, etc.) and it was not to be missed!

***Offshore Express*, Coral Beach, February 2000, Ken Paff (KenMartha@aol.com), Detroit, MI.**

Vis: 50-70 ft. Water: 80 degrees. I try to write an honest review for you at least once a year; this one is something a little "different": a down-home, inexpensive live aboard ["camp aboard"] with good diving and fun. [I think I had your first-ever one published on any Cuban diving — Isla de la Juventud from early '94]. Seven of us went. Mostly sunny. Calm [protected]. The 50' *Offshore*

Express is operated by Coral Beach out of Ambergris Caye. Their mainstay is a two-day, five-dive trip to Turneffe and Lighthouse Reefs. You can sleep on the boat or camp [much better; they provide tents, mattress, sheets] on Half Moon Caye, a park/sanctuary for boobies and other birds. \$250 all inclusive. We did one better. We booked via email a four day, 11-dive trip. 11 divers total, including our group. Two divemasters and full crew. Diving at Lighthouse Reef is quite good by Caribbean standards and much better than the barrier reef in N. Belize. Excellent corals in good health, good fish variety, not a lot [but some] big fish. Mostly wall dives, also includes the Blue Hole. One hammerhead at Half Moon Caye Wall. Two dolphins with us on two successive dives [followed boat in between] which played or courted for us. Eagle Rays. Lots of travel time to the reefs, but relaxed pace once there. Beautiful beaches [no bugs] for evenings. Good food. Fresh fish caught off the boat. Competent and fun dive crew. Coral Beach has a nice inexpensive in-town hotel and land dive operation also, run by the family of Allen Forman. Book direct via email, avoid US booking agents that will sell you a package. (501-26-2817 or 26-2013; Fax 501-26-2864; e-mail forman@btl.net; website www.coralbeachhotel.com)

***Wave Dancer*, December 1999, Karen and Dale Alberstone, Beverly Hills, CA.** Vis: 25-75 ft. Water: 77-78 degrees. First live aboard and probably our last. The boat was ok, nothing special. The cook was wonderful and the food was very tasty

if you got there before they ran out. The captain often had little left to eat. The crew was superb on the boat but offered little assistance around the reefs. We were often left to dive with only our buddy and often we returned to the boat cold, bored and disappointed that we did not see anything. There are mostly little critters in Belize which are difficult to find. Due to conditions, we only dived at Lighthouse Reef where every dive site looked the same except Blue Hole that was a great dive experience. We never dived Turneffe Reef. Our main reason for taking a live-aboard was to dive areas inaccessible by the land-based operations. This was not the case. We spoke to snorkelers who saw sharks, eels and manta rays off Ambergris Caye. (800-932-6237; 305-669-9391; Fax 305-669-9475; e-mail dancer@peterhughes.com; website www.peterhughes.com)

Wave Dancer, January 2000, Bob Puschinsky, (puschinsky@aol.com), Seabrook, TX. Vis: 75-100 ft. Water: 78-79 degrees. Typical Hughes boat. Outstanding accommodation, service, food and enthusiastic crew. Diving quality marginal. Fished out for most part. Good fun diving. Night dives easy.

Wave Dancer, February 2000, Mark Emde, Blue Grass, IA. Vis: 60-80 ft. Water: 72-74 degrees. Dive restrictions: 130' max. staff was excellent, divemasters Annie and Cindy both had a lot of energy, gave excellent briefings before every dive. The captain and his wife were real friendly personal people. Food was good, but seconds were hard

to come by. I asked for seconds once and could tell that they didn't want to give them to me. Nitrox system blew a seal, I dove on two tanks contaminated with vegetable oil, I was on the dive deck when they were bleeding the system. I asked the captain what was going on, he reluctantly told me. I liked the Peter Hughes's boat over the *Aggressor*. Wider beam, didn't rock so much. Deco bar made deco stops fun.

Wave Dancer, February 2000, Peter and Ellen Wood, Yarmouth, ME.

Vis: 50-80 ft. Dive restrictions enforced: computer. As we have come to expect: good service, good food, great staff, responsive to divers requests, good diving. Peter Hughes fleet still sets the standard for live-aboards. Note: Water was a cool 78 degrees and evenings were cool.

Wave Dancer, April 2000, Galen White (Zipscuba@aol.com),

Lawrence, KS. Vis: 80 to 100 Feet. Water: 76 to 78 F, no currents. Dive restrictions: 130 feet back with 500 lbs air and dive with buddy but nobody checked. This was my second trip on the *Wave Dancer*. Weather was a little cool at nights. It was like diving off the back of a 5 star restaurant, Peter Hughes and his crew of people have their act together. Also two dolphins followed us for about 2 or three days and a good time was had by all. Excellent camera tables, rinse tanks, battery charging area and on board film processing.

Wave Dancer. April 2000, Ray Sullivan, Jackson, MS. Peter Hughes consistently runs a high quality

operation. Every attention is given to detail from the moment you are met at the airport till you leave to go home. "There aren't any surprises." You get what you expect. Most diving is on Lighthouse Reef around Long Caye and Half Moon Caye. Usually a stop is made at Turneffe Reef out and back from Belize City. The water was 79-80° F. Seas were calm. Skies were sunny and visibility range from 80-200 feet depending on tides. There was rarely any current and all diving was from the ship. The tender was never used. The crew and dive staffs were very friendly and competent. E-6 processing every day. Nitrox is free. Food was quite good. All beverages included at no additional charge. 10 cabins for 20 passengers with a crew of 7. The six cabins on the main deck are deluxe rooms with full picture windows and worth the additional expenses. Two premium cabins are master suites and have even more space. All rooms have individual TV/VCR's and lots of movies are on board. Although the boat has been around for about 10 years it was refitted recently and is well maintained. The quality of diving equals or exceeds any of the Bahamas or Caribbean. The corals were healthy with no evidence of coral bleaching. There are lots of large sea fans and coral swim-thrus. Fish life was prolific with many species of colorful reef fish, eagle rays and even dolphins. There was the occasional turtle and nurse shark. Night diving was disappointing perhaps due to a brilliant full moon. A pair of dolphin has become accustomed to divers and regularly

greet the dive boats, playing and posing for photographers. Most dive profiles include a nice wall sometimes descending several hundred feet and of course the famous Blue Hole is a "must see" at least once.

Wave Dancer, May 2000, Stacie Morgan, Cumming, GA. Vis: 50-200 ft. Water: 79-81 degrees. Restrictions: drink and you don't dive. The crew was fabulous. They were all friendly and helpful. I was totally comfortable all week. This is one of the best vacations I have ever been on. Great place to take macro or wide angle. There was never a bad day during the week there.

Wave Dancer, May 2000, Russ Lido (LIPPY18182@AOL.COM), Sterling Hts, MI. Vis: 50 to 100 Feet. Water: 79 to 81 Fahrenheit, calm no currents. Dive your own profile: yes. Rec diving limits. Service fantastic. People on this trip were great. Had a great time. Reefs still in good shape. Crew made an honest effort to find the best diving conditions for us. Saw lots of smaller fish but saw no large pelagics. Ship in great shape. Thanks to *Undercurrent* Reports there were no surprises.

Wave Dancer, May 2000, Loren Miller, Denver, CO. Vis: 80 to 100 ft. Water: 80 to 82 degrees, choppy, no currents. Dive restrictions: 130 ft. I wish I had left my dry bag, mesh bag, 2 mm shorty wetsuit at home. There was no call to use them. The only minor complaint: our cabin was too cold from the a/c. There are directional fins on the vents but no

way to shut the air flow off completely. I am glad the a/c worked too well, rather than not well enough. Overall grade A. The crew was excellent A+, 3+. The Great Blue Hole dive was the only dive that was dove as a group in a regimented fashion with as many of the crew as possible in the water leading and overseeing the dive. Given that specific dives deep depth and time limits I think that level of supervision was prudent. On the other dives we were free to dive our own profile. The dive briefings consisted mostly on the topography of the sight and what we may expect to see at what depths but depth and time limits were never given leaving us total freedom to dive our own profile. Other than the Great Blue Hole all other dive sites would have been fine for beginner divers. There was never a current and the reef and top of most walls start as shallow as 30', sometimes shallower. I would only rate it 2 out of 5 because I think most beginners would not be able or at least not be willing to take advantage of the five tanks offered daily and therefore they would not get their money's worth. Crew members: Captain Steve, Geno; instructors Annie Crawley, Cyndi Quelch; kitchen staff, Dorita, Sharon, Brenda A+.

Wave Dancer, August 2000, Bradford Sims, Gainesville, FL, (Brad@constructioneducation.com). Vis: 30-60 ft. Water: 84-86 degrees. Dive restrictions: Nitrox Limits. The health of reef was excellent. Had a turtle swim up and touch us with its

fin. Night dives were the best I have been on. One night under the boat was a school of silver sides. Tarpon and grouper were darting in and out in a feeding frenzy. Large squid put on colorful shows in the light. The crew was excellent and the dive masters gave detailed information on what to look for. The video shot by the Dive master Annie Crauley was terrific. Could not dive the Blue Hole because the *Aggressor* boat broke the mooring.

Wind Dancer, January 2000, Richard Wilson, Boulder City, NV. Vis: 80 to 100 ft. Water: 76 degrees, calm and flat. Dive your own profile: yes. Dive restrictions: 130 ft. Crew was friendly, courteous and helpful. Service was excellent. Good for divers, knowledgeable staff. Dive deck hard to reach for those with knee or back aches. Safety step bars broken, difficult for beginners to make accurate safety stops. (800-932-6237; 305-669-9391; Fax 305-669-9475; e-mail dancer@peterhughes.com; website www.peterhughes.com)

Wind Dancer, January 2000, Phil and Nancy Hamilton, Sandwich, MA. Vis: 40-70 ft. Water: 74-78 degrees. Most sites great wall diving with a good diversity of fish and invertebrates. Spectacular elephant ear sponges at the Black Forest site at 90+ feet. Night diving was great for photographing critters. Apart from some rays and occasional nurse sharks, not many big fish. Windy condition restricted the boat to Grand Turk and Salt Cay. The *Wind Dancer* was very comfortable and the food

was excellent. Divers were allowed to dive own profile but no decompression dives and back on board with 500 psi. Time limits dictated by meals and departure of boat to a new site. Nitrox was great doing 5 dives a day. Regular captain and photographer were on leave and the boat was being readied for whale watching trips so staff was distracted. Divemaster Brett was particularly helpful and a knowledgeable promoter of the reef surveys.

Wind Dancer, May 2000, Robert Chambers, Mesquite, TX. Vis: 75 to 100 Feet. Water: 75 to 80 Fahrenheit, choppy. Profile: yes. Dive restrictions: 130 feet on a dive in the Blue Hole. The cabins for the single diver were small but comfortable. I'd recommend the larger cabins. The food was excellent and the between dive snacks were freshly prepared. Night dives were very good with warm towels and hot chocolate (with Bailey's if you wanted it) waiting for us when we got back on board. The crew was very friendly and exceptionally helpful in all regards. The divers ranged in age from 33 to 60 and everyone seemed to enjoy each other's company. There were no "hot dogs" or people who were proud of their own experience or equipment to the point that they were annoyingly obnoxious. The only downside was having to spend the last day in port and having to leave the boat at 9 a.m. so they could get ready for the next trip. There is nothing to recommend Belize City for and we ended up hanging around the local hotel for a few hours waiting for airport transportation. Even

considering the last 24 hours in port, this was an excellent experience. They really have their program set up to please the customer. UW Photography comments: Excellent camera table set-up on the dive deck. Overnight processing for slides. Crew was especially sensitive to the needs of the photographers, providing excellent assistance with equipment, getting into and out of the water, and leading photo expeditions.

Wind Dancer, May 2000, Linda Dunn, Riverside, CA. Vis: 40-80 ft. Water: 77-80 degrees. Good: Eagles nests in Caicos. Many sharks and huge eagle rays on same two dives. Bad: Peter Hughes' 10% tip policy on top of steep prices, you feel pressured to tip. Good: Hughes himself joined us for dinner. He is pretty cool, what a marketing genius.

Wind Dancer, September 2000, Joseph J. Chudacoff, Redondo Beach, CA. Vis: 15-150 ft. Water: 82-84 degrees. Restrictions: Max. 130, two hours surface interval. Great boat, great crew, great passengers, exceptional food, good diving. A few strong currents but mainly lots of good diving (3-5 per day). I would like to have stayed onboard the last evening instead of paying \$10 cab fare to go to a restaurant that was not very good (pork ribs) and a little pricey. Spending several hours at the local airport could have been better handled by allowing passengers to stay on boat longer with a/c and comfortable seating.