

and more. I saw more here than I did in Mexico. Jerry and Kelly even helped the guys with everything they needed to go "bug hunting." They had a blast. One of the great things is the shallow reefs at the end of the day. There was much to see between 20-35 feet, our profiles allowed plenty of time to see it. I recommend the dives from Pompano Beach over Ft. Lauderdale. We had much better vis, reef color, sea life and far less boat traffic. Fathoms of Fun originates in Pompano Beach and offers a camera table and fresh water rinse buckets are available. Their other boat, Fishfood, travels from Ft. Lauderdale and is a smaller vessel without camera table. (Ph: 954-942-7333; e-mail [jkturmaine@earthlink.net](mailto:jkturmaine@earthlink.net); website [www.scubaexcursion.com](http://www.scubaexcursion.com))

**ScubaTech, Destin, April 2002, Tom Chase (trchase@msn.com) Prospect, KY.** Vis: 15-50 ft. Water: 63-68 F. Dives logged: 165. Dive restrictions enforced: tables for non-computer divers. Very good dive operator. Boat (Sea Cobra) well set-up except for photography. One of the most safety-oriented operators I have encountered. Dive staff and store staff were friendly and helpful and appeared genuinely interested in our well being. Dove limestone reefs twice and wrecks twice. Saw mostly game fish, caught shovel-nosed lobsters for dinner. Overall diving quality pale by comparison to Florida Keys. Last dive was a combination dive/snorkel trip to jetty. My kids snorkeled while I dove below them.

Good bargain \$22 included all gear (even wetsuits) for snorkel trip. Nitrox was available. (Ph: 850-837-2822; website [www.scubatechnwfl.com](http://www.scubatechnwfl.com))

### Panhandle

**Hydrospace, Panama City, April 2002, Timothy Corwin, Southampton, NY.** Vis: 20-50 ft. Water: 60-64 F. Dives logged: 825. Went out first with Panama City Dive Center. 45' boat but slow and cramped. Dived same site both dives. All artificial reef diving. Next day, went out with Hydrospace. 45 wide beam with nice cabin and 20 knot cruise. Including crew, 16 people and lots of space. A well-run operation, but only allowed a 45 minute surface interval between dives because they were in a hurry to get back. Diving is ok for beginners, mediocre for experienced. Saw a lot of dolphins, but not while diving. (Ph: 888-874-3483 or 850-234-3063; e-mail [dive@hydrospace.com](mailto:dive@hydrospace.com); website [www.hydrospace.com](http://www.hydrospace.com))

### VENEZUELA

**Horisub Dive Resort, December 2001, Sarah and Kevin Henke, Wichita, KS** Vis: 60-80 ft. Water: 82 F. Dive restrictions: 130 ft and 500 psig. Dive your own profile: yes. Horisub hosted Paul Humann and experienced REEF members for a week of underwater exploration to fill in fish survey blank spaces around Venezuela's Mochima National Park, which encompasses 32 islands and some of the adjacent mountainous terrain. This 950-square km national park in Eastern

Venezuela was created on December 20, 1973. We did three boat dives each day, surveyed 14 sites and identified 203 species of fish, including southern stargazer, mottled jawfish, southern guitarfish, key worm eel, diamond pipefish, sapo cano, spiny sailfin blenny, redbanner blenny, spotjaw blenny and resh pike blenny. We could not readily identify several fish. The photos of these fish are undergoing further study.

Another surprise was seeing the saddle bass, normally found at 250-750 ft, in abundance at 40 ft. Range extensions were noted for the plane head filefish, saddle parrotfish and two stripe puffer. Arturo Barrios, the owner of Horisub (+58-416-680-3800 or horisub@telcel.net.ve) was an accommodating host. His divemasters are safety conscious and knowledgeable of the area. **(Ph: (5881) 814878 or (5881) 816755 or (016) 6803800; e-mail horisub@lrs.com.ve; website www.larutadelsol.com/horisub)**

**Atlantis Dive Center, Isla Margarita November 2001, Lee Knapp (kenipper@ionet.net) Prairie Vlg., KS.** Vis: 50-70 ft. Water: 77-80 F. Logged dives: 215. Dive restrictions enforced: Turn around on air left in the tank. The dive shop is well run and very friendly. Atlantis does not have a boat, so they contract. No problems there, the captain provided an excellent launch. Atlantis and boat handled all equipment and provided the divemaster. It took 50 minutes to travel to Los Frailes. Fortunately the water was calm. First two days were

shallow dives along the shore (50-55'). Lots of fish, dozens of puffer fish. Good macro and wide angle. Last day was a deep dive and some currents — especially at the site with a very large school of tarpon. **(Ph: 58-95-48668; e-mail atlantis@enlared.net or atlantis@unete.com.ve)**

## VIRGIN ISLANDS, BRITISH

Patch reef diving on these closely-grouped islands is easy, pleasant, and fairly similar regardless of which island you choose, although the quiet British Virgins and St. John are far less crowded and more pleasant than the cruise ship havens of St. Thomas and St. Croix, where hurricanes and fishing have taken a toll. . . . BVI is a yachter's paradise with crewed or bareboat sailboats galore, and it's also served by several land-based dive operations. . . BVI has nice little hotels, good restaurants, congenial surroundings, and British style.

**Aquaventures, Long Bay Resort, April 2002, Hank Martin (hmartin@elminc.com) Boonton, NJ.** Experience: 101-250 dives. Vis: 50 to 75 Feet. Water: 78 to 82 F, choppy, surge. After reading the Chap Book, I decided not to use Baskin, and found Aquaventures, a small shop near Road Town Harbor, and used them for my 12-year-old son's Open Water certification. They were great. The owner, divemaster and instructor were dedicated to making every trip a good one, even when we were the only two people. I was comfortable with my