

eras and video. Video station to view recording in dining parlor. At Statia you have to dive with a member of the marine park. The "coral police" as we called them. Not a problem though, they were friendly. The coral is pulsing with marine life. Very vibrant and healthy coral beds. Lots of rays, turtles, barracudas. Octopus on the night dive. Saba is predictable in seeing turtles and sharks. Lots of reef life on all dives. We dove there for two and a half days (10 dives) and were the only divers in the area. Fantastic!

### HONDURAS

***Bay Island Aggressor, November 2002, Scott Kramer (scottkca@earthlink.net), Los Angeles, CA.***

Vis: 20-50 feet. Water: 80-82 F. Dives logged: 416. Dive restrictions enforced: 100 feet. The boat is in great shape and the crew (especially Leech, head cook) were what an experienced group is supposed to be. We had rain and poor visibility, so dives were sacrificed; we ended up on island tours that we had to pay for out of pocket. Mary's Place is now open for business, and he has returned to his prior glory. Small VCR/TV combos in room a nice touch. Go for the two large staterooms on the second level if you have a choice. TACA's service was a 7/10, a vast improvement over its past performance. The hot-tub was a definite plus. A full boat with 20 guests never seemed too crowded.

***Bay Islands Aggressor, January 2003, Jim King (jimpat@sirisonline.com), Albia, IA.*** Experience: 501-1,000

dives. Vis: 30 to 100 feet. Water: 76 to 78 F, choppy, surge. This was at the last of the rainy season, which affected the visibility. Numerous species of fish, but disappointed that there were few larger fish. At only one site did I see grouper, snapper, etc., that were over 16 inches long. The crew and accommodations were excellent, as they have been on all the other 14 *Aggressor* trips I've been on. ([www.aggressor.com/bia\\_home.html](http://www.aggressor.com/bia_home.html))

***Bay Islands Aggressor, June 2003, Rickie Sterne/Chrisanda Button (rickandchris@alltel.net), Elkins, AR.***

Experience: 101-250 dives. Vis: 40 to 80 feet. Water: 80 to 82 F, choppy, surge. The boat was nice, but the diving was disappointing. The *Bay Islands Aggressor* was refurbished last year, and the job must have been well done. We found conditions on the boat much better than those reported in the Chapbook two years ago. The boat was clean, and we saw only one insect all week. Since all 20 divers were Southerners, we were neither surprised nor outraged. The dive deck is spacious and well organized. Both air and Nitrox fills are done with tanks in place in the gear stations. Each diver has a covered locker under his gear station. There are two freshwater showers on the dive deck, and clean warm towels were offered us after each dive. The cabins are, of course, small but comfortable. Showers are full-sized with plenty of hot water, hair dryer in the cabin. Our bags were stored outside the cabins. Couples who could share the bottom bunk had more space than

single divers. There was a lot of mechanical noise on this boat. There was a salon with two comfortable sofas on the lower deck. The main deck offered a hot tub and the dining area. There was a partially covered sun deck up top. A few more chaise lounges would have been nice, since our whole group gravitated there between dives. There were movies in the salon for those energetic enough to sit upright. The food was very good and endless in supply. Jurgen was a creative chef who made staples like tomato soup special with his seasonings. All the divers, from the meat-and-potato-trenchermen to the California cuisine crowd, were happy with the meals. Sweet snacks were offered, right on the dive deck if you liked, between morning dives, and savory snacks between afternoon dives. Fish and shellfish were each served twice. The Captain's Dinner featured beef prime rib and lobster tails. Vegetables were well prepared, and salads were not just shredded iceberg. Ah, the desserts! Nuts, fruits, chips, and popcorn were always available, and the boat served Honduran coffee. Cokes, wine, and beer were free. The first drink of the day marked your last dive of the day. We have only been diving three years and are far from jaded. The condition of the reefs in the Bay Islands and the paucity of the sea life were disturbing. As we were driven to the airport at the end of the week, we saw nine large trawlers docked in Roatan. Does their presence explain why some reef tops looked as if they had been tilled? There was high wind most of the

week and conditions limited the access to sites around Roatan. The captain did manage to take us to Utila and Cayos Cochinos. Cocos seamount off Cayos Cochinos was the best site we visited. We also enjoyed Tavaina's Wall and Caribe Point off Roatan. The *Aggressor* boat swings on its mooring line, creating a pseudo-current under the boat. Getting back to the boat required considerable exertion, including a last desperate lunge from the hang chain to the ladder. Service on the dive deck was good. We were the only two divers who chose to do the last dive of the week. Although the boat was going to return to port as soon as the dive deck was closed, neither the captain nor the two divemasters acted as if it were an imposition to keep the boat on the dive site for just the two of us. No one in our group wants to return to the Bay Islands. The reason lies in the condition of the reefs, not in the *Bay Islands Aggressor*. One big advantage of the live-aboard: what no see-ums? The *Aggressor* encourages the use of Nitrox for safety reasons and charges \$100 per week for unlimited Nitrox fills.

## TURKS AND CAICOS

***Aggressor*, September 2002, David Haupt (dbhaupt@yahoo.com), Louisville, KY.** Experience: 251-500 dives. Vis: 60 to 75 feet. Water: 82 to 84 F, choppy, no currents. Breakfast is from 7:00-8:00 a.m. Two dives, then lunch at 12:30 p.m. Two more dives, dinner at 6:30 p.m. Night dive follows. Hot towels and hot chocolate awaited