



REEF-in-Brief

The e-Newsletter of the
Reef Environmental Education Foundation

April 2007

1. Welcome -

Happy spring! For many of you, April means warmer weather, dusting off dive gear for the upcoming season and hopping on a plane/train/dive boat to help out on a REEF field project. In this issue, learn how YOU can participate in the Grouper Moon Project in the Cayman Islands next year, join the Advanced Assessment Team (AAT) on its important monitoring events, volunteer at the REEF booth at Ocean Fest Dive Expo in Ft. Lauderdale, or nominate your favorite teacher for a scholarship to join a REEF Field Survey in 2007. You'll also meet another great addition to the REEF Board of Trustees, Key Largo dive operator, Amy Slate, and hear from our den mother and office manager, Kim. For you armchair explorers, Joe has a great book recommendation and will introduce you to 3 new REEF Field Stations. New training materials and new items available at the REEF store will fulfill all your REEF gear needs. Finally, Earth Day is Sunday, April 22. As we celebrate our natural treasures and the people who work to protect them, please join REEF in mourning the loss of a friend and one of REEF's greatest volunteers, Kawika Chetron, of San Francisco. Our thoughts and prayers are with Kawika's family.

Wishing you the best that spring can bring,

Leda A. Cunningham, Executive Director

2. Little Cayman Project Added to 2008 REEF Project Schedule

-By Christy Semmens, Director of Science

Join REEF next winter in the Cayman Islands, January 20-27, 2008. This special expedition to Little Cayman will coincide with REEF's annual conservation research program, the Grouper Moon Project. The week will feature presentations about spawning aggregations and the research that REEF is conducting in collaboration with the Cayman Islands government and scientists from Oregon State University to better understand and protect the local annual mass spawning aggregation of Nassau grouper. In addition to Grouper Moon activities, fish identification seminars and survey training will be offered throughout the week. These daily slide shows and discussions will include both introductory and advanced identification topics, covering the extraordinary fish biodiversity found on the reefs of Little Cayman Island. REEF fish surveys will be conducted during the daily dives.

The week will be led by REEF Director of Science, Dr. Christy Pattengill-Semmens. The package includes lodging in oceanfront beach bungalows at the all-inclusive [Southern Cross Club](#), 6 days of diving, and all meals in the club house dining room. This unique trip is a great way to take a dive vacation that counts!

To find out more, about this and other REEF Field Surveys, visit www.reef.org/fieldsurv. To book your space on this special expedition, contact the Southern Cross Club Reservation Office at 800-899-2582 or info@SouthernCrossClub.com.



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2007 Field Survey Season at a glance

(Space still available on all trips)
<http://www.reef.org/fieldsurvey/>

- Tortola, British Virgin Islands – April 14-21
- Exumas** – May 12-19
- Monterey Bay – May 22-27
- St. Vincent, Grenadines – June 9-16
- Paul Humann's Key Largo Discovery Tour – July 7-14
- San Juan Islands – July 22-27
- Kona Coast, Hawaii – Aug 4-11
- Woods Hole, Cape Cod – Sept 11-16
- Ned and Anna Deloach – Bonaire – Sept 22-29
- Utila Bay, Honduras – Oct 20-27
- Anguilla – Nov 10-17
- Cozumel – Dec 1-8

** We have just had two cancellations for our Exumas (Bahamas) Field Survey aboard the Aqua Cat led by Ned and Anna Deloach, May 12-19, 2007. Please contact Tami at Travel for You, Inc., 1-888-363-3345 to sign up for this fantastic trip!



Beach bungalows at the Southern Cross Club, the location of the Little Cayman Field Survey in January 2008.

We have begun planning our 2008 season starting off with Christy's Little Cayman trip in January (up on our website already), but others that are in early planning are listed below. We'll have more details for the next Enews in May.

2008 Field Survey Plans

Grouper Moon Expedition, *Little Cayman Island* - January 20-27, 2008

Liveaboard from *St. Kitts to Saba* with Explorer Ventures – Feb 24 – March 1, 2008

Turks and Caicos aboard the Aggressor – April 19-26, 2008

Isla Mujeres – May, 2008

Other areas where we are just beginning planning are: *Curacao, St. Thomas, Belize, Costa Rica, Dominica, and Cozumel.*

Look for more details over the coming two months on these other trips.

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3. **Advance Assessment Team (AAT)**

-By Joe Cavanaugh, Director of Field Operations

Many of our new members and even quite a few of our long-term members do not know about our Advanced Assessment Team (AAT), what it is, how to become a part of it, and why it's such a worthwhile program <http://www.reef.org/member/aat.htm>. Let's start with the fact that all of our 33,000 + members are encouraged to conduct a fish survey anytime they are diving or snorkeling in the marine world where REEF operates, please visit our website to find out where you can conduct fish surveys: <http://www.reef.org/data/database.htm>

REEF fish survey data are then separated into two categories based on experience level- Novice and Expert. These experience levels are determined by the number of surveys completed along with passing Fish ID quizzes. REEF has 5 levels of experience for fishwatchers. Each of REEF's regions has its own levels (i.e. TWA Level 4 are only experts in the TWA, not all regions). Members must have the required number of surveys from the particular region in order to officially upgrade their experience level even if they have passed the appropriate fish ID quiz. Some of our members are even experts in a few different regions.

REEF members can take fish ID quizzes while out on REEF Field Surveys <http://www.reef.org/fieldsurv/index.htm>, and through our Field Stations located throughout our survey regions (see Field Station article in this issue). For expert level testing, our members must test with REEF staff or pre-determined AAT test proctors of which we have quite a few scattered throughout our survey regions and you may contact either Joe Cavanaugh joe@reef.org or Christy Semmens christy@reef.org for help in finding a test proctor in your region.

Ok, but what is the purpose of the AAT? Great question!

The AAT program provides the divers that are used in all of our contract work with various governmental agencies in monitoring fish populations for coral reefs and artificial reefs such as shipwrecks. Some of the agencies involved with REEF include: Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, Monterey Nat'l Marine Sanctuary, the National Park Service for both Biscayne Nat'l Park and the Dry Tortugas Nat'l Park, and many others. As a further example for instance, the main purpose of the REEF AAT project in the Florida Keys is to evaluate the effect of harvest restrictions on the fish assemblages at 16 FKNMS no-take sites. During this event, the AAT conducts a minimum of 6 roving diver surveys at each no-take site, and at reference areas that are similar to the protected sites but where harvest has not been restricted. Abundances of important targeted species have increased at most sites since the no-take areas were implemented.

Our AAT is not restricted to the Tropical Western Atlantic survey region and our Pacific NW AAT has become a very strong core AAT group that has exemplified citizen science participation in recent years over many projects. The not-so-Brat PAC AAT groups have also assembled *ad hoc* teams ready to work on special projects such as invasive tunicate removal and their initiatives fill voids in Federal and State funding for such projects.

When REEF divers have the requisite number of dives and have passed the expert quiz for their region, they are invited to join the AAT. Their email address is placed into a separate listserve for AAT members by region "TWA, PAC, etc." and members are made aware of different AAT projects



A whale shark that was seen at an AAT survey at Biscayne National Park
Photo: J.Lavan

and invited to join that project team. Benefits of diving with other AAT team members, aside from the diving expense often times being covered by grant funds, include diving with like-minded experts and learning from people with different skills and fish sighting acumen in the water.

Hope to see many of you over the coming year entering the AAT!

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4. **Welcome to New REEF Board Member: Amy Slate**

-By Leda Cunningham, Executive Director

REEF is pleased to welcome Amy Slate as the newest member of the REEF Board of Trustees. Amy brings more than 25 years experience running a small business in the local and national dive communities. In addition to REEF, Amy donates her time and expertise to the local Chamber of Commerce, Community Bank of Florida, Domestic Abuse Shelter and Children's Shelter and the Tourism Development Council for Key Largo. Amy attended Jacksonville University and transferred to the University of Florida where she graduated with a BS in Education in 1975. She taught elementary school for three years in Yulee, Florida, before moving to the Keys to start the first dive center here in 1978.

Amy's passion for the Keys, the sea and its critters started from childhood. Amy grew up in Miami and from a young age enjoyed spending time with her family beach combing, swimming, and snorkeling, making frequent visits to the Florida Keys. In 1993 Amy created Amy Slate's Amoray Dive Resort, a Keys-style boutique resort catering to scuba divers. Amy loves to dive and has been blessed to have experienced many amazing encounters with sea critters: manta rays, angelfish, groupers, turtles and even a humpback whale, to name a few. Amy performed the first underwater wedding in the Florida Keys in 1979. When an uninvited moray eel attended the ceremony, *People* magazine proclaimed, "That's Amoray!" and so was born the dive shop name. Amy is featured in many publications and on television shows, most recently, *A Wedding Story*.

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Amy Slate with brother and business partner, Justin Minichino.

5. **REEF FIELD STATION PROGRAM**

- By Joe Cavanaugh, Director of Field Operations

What does it mean to be a Field Station? Many of you have probably wondered how REEF works with our Field Stations and many more of you have likely been recruited to REEF by some of our outstanding Field Stations. Here's how the program works in a nutshell.

Dive centers, non-profits, resorts, and boat operators can show their support for REEF and marine conservation by becoming a Field Station for REEF. Field Stations distribute survey forms and REEF literature and are active participants in our education and outreach programs. Specifically, Field Stations organize fish ID classes for their constituency, sign up new REEF members, proctor Fish ID quizzes, and organize special fish survey dives for the Great Annual Fish Count (GAFC) and other events. Additionally, Field Stations are our first choice in hosting Field Surveys and are utilized on many of our Advanced Assessment Team (AAT) projects.

Our recently added Non-Profit/Academic Field Station (NAFS) program is designed for non-profit organizations, academic institutions or other similar groups. The NAFS membership creates a tremendous opportunity for organizations to form a long-term and beneficial relationship with REEF. There are many different non-profits out there addressing slightly different aspects of marine conservation and "pooling" (forgive the bad pun) our resources, where appropriate, makes a lot of sense. To learn more about our Field Station program please visit our website at <http://www.reef.org/member/fieldstations.htm>.

NEW REEF FIELD STATIONS

REEF would like to welcome Greenforce (Bahamas) as our latest Non-Profit/Academic (NAFS) Field Station. Greenforce is a UK based non-profit organization set up in 1997 with the principle objective of conducting baseline surveys and long-term monitoring studies using volunteers (sounds familiar, huh?). They run two terrestrial conservation programs in Tanzania and Ecuador and two marine conservation expeditions in the Bahamas and Fiji. Greenforce (Bahamas) was invited by the Bahamas National Marine Trust to provide baseline data on selected sites within marine replenishment areas. For several years now, Greenforce has been submitting their fish surveys to REEF and the synergy between what they are doing in the Bahamas and the REEF mission makes them a natural candidate for a REEF NAFS Field Station.

Greenforce uses volunteers over 10-week phases throughout the year, in which participants are trained in several survey methods from marine scientist instructors. Volunteers learn to identify fish, invertebrates and corals found on the local reefs and seagrass beds. Greenforce has land-based and in-water marine creature identification training and a similar testing method to REEF's own experience level testing.



We look forward to working more with Greenforce <http://www.greenforce.org/> in the coming years. Welcome aboard!

Please also welcome Nail Bay Resort, located in Virgin Gorda, British Virgin Islands <http://www.nailbay.com/> and Coco View Resort located in Roatan, Honduras <http://www.cocoviewresort.com/>. Take a moment to check out their websites and consider them if you are planning a dive trip to any of their destinations.

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6. NOTES from "KIM" . . . *REEF's pencil pusher*

First off, I can't tell you how wonderful it is to work at REEF and learn about the, who, what and where of it all. Having resided in the Keys for over 5 years, I never knew the importance of the work accomplished by REEF, the AAT folks and our wonderful partners. Well, that's about to change as we embark on a new campaign to promote REEF to others outside the "industry", starting with our own back yard. My other passion will be finding new and exciting ways in which to raise money for some of REEF's special projects, such as our Intern Program.

And speaking of INTERNS, they are a very valuable commodity for REEF. They handle the majority of our correspondence from members, processing internet sales, mailings, surveys, data input, educational outreach, training, preparation and distribution of all our curriculum, starter kits, advanced kits, special field projects . . . AND SO MUCH MORE . . . to include some grunt work as well as handling special event displays to promote REEF! Without them we would be at a loss for manpower. Yes, I'm building up to something that I hope our REEF friends will support.

Our intern applications come to us from all over the world. For our summer program this year we received over 20 applications. Our application and interview process is very extensive which is why it was very difficult for us narrow our choices for a final decision since all the applicants were very strong this year. After a 3 week review and scoring process, we're pleased to announce that **Paige Switzer**, a student at Coastal Carolina University, pursuing a double major in Marine Science and Biology with a particular interest in coral reef management was chosen as REEF's intern.

"I spend most of my time with friends and family. I love college football, swimming, and animals (I can't stay away from the humane society- I already have adopted a fluffy white cat and a bunny!). I am a marine science and biology major. I hope to one day have a career working on coral reef management, and I am currently involved in the largest student philanthropy on my campus for Children's Miracle Network." -*Paige Switzer*

Marissa Nuttall a student at Texas A&M, working toward her B.S. in Marine Biology with a minor in Chemistry, with an interest in raising public awareness of conservation through education was chosen for the "[Our World-Underwater Scholarship Society](#)", paid Summer Internship Program, assigned to REEF. Both will be joining us toward the end of May.

"I grew up in Singapore, England, and the US. I am current studying Marine Biology at Texas A&M University at Galveston (Class of '08). Since I first started diving, I have grown more and more interested in exploring and conserving our underwater environments. My greatest interest lies in introducing other people this amazing underwater world!"-*Marissa Nuttall*

For this years summer interns, it will be their 1st trip to the fabulous Florida Keys and we'd like to make them feel welcome and to also have a KEYZEE and comfortable home away from home. How best to do that? Well, coming from a very strong background running non profits, I always have my hand out for one thing or another, especially when it will benefit a key component of the organization, our INTERNS. SO . . . my special project this month is raising funds for the summer program. The REEF intern housing needs a much needed mini face lift to cheer the place up plus we'd like to raise enough to also pay a summer stipend to cover their meals and gas. **BUT REEF CAN'T DO THAT WITHOUT YOUR HELP!** If you'd like to help me in this worthwhile project . . . think of our interns as one of your kids . . . please send a donation (or gift card) payable to REEF, earmarked for INTERN PROGRAM and send to my attention and I'll put your donation to good use. We'll even take pictures and send it out in a future Enews.

Should you decline in sending a donation, here's the "**Intern Wish List**" . . . this list was compiled by our current interns (Jen and Isla) both of which will be leaving us early next month. You may want to purchase a specific item to help them out, but here goes;

2-alarm clock radios, 2- twin bed sets, bedding/comforters for twin sets, 2-small end tables for the bedrooms, 2-lamps for bedroom, 2-small trash cans for bedroom, bathroom & beach towels, we have a washer but need a dependable dryer, DVD/CD stereo system, 4-fire extinguisher, 4-smoke alarms, blender, curtains, nautical pictures, 2-recliners, love seat, coffee table, 2-end tables, lamps for small living room, TV stand, shower curtains, pots/pans/kettle, BBQ grill, plastic patio furniture, bike with bike lock for local transportation, plastic hangers decent tool kit, good 1st aid kit, sturdy-tall trash can for kitchen with lid, small upright vacuum cleaner, books, DVDs, CDs . . . PLUS emergency Hurricane kit supplies such as battery operated lamps, flash lights, generator, battery operated fans, canned/dry



Paige Switzer-2007 REEF Summer Intern



Marissa Nuttall-2007 Our World Underwater REEF Summer Intern

good products to name just a few.

As you can see, we can't do this without you and your generosity would be greatly appreciated, not only by me and the staff, but our current and future interns. If you have any questions concerning this project please feel free to call me directly or send me an email at kim@reef.org, I'd love to hear from you.

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7. 2007 Trip Scholarships Available for Educators

If you are a teacher or educator, you may be eligible for CEDAM's Lloyd Bridges Scholarship for Educators. CEDAM International is a non-profit organization dedicated to the understanding, protection and preservation of the world's marine resources. CEDAM's Scholarships, awarded annually, enable qualified educators to participate - at no cost to themselves- in a CEDAM approved expedition. This year CEDAM will be awarding two scholarships for participation in REEF's Discovery Tour led by Paul Humann in Key Largo, Florida from July 7-14th, 2007. To be eligible, applicants must be a teacher (elementary or secondary) or actively engaged in an education program at an institution or environmental organization. The scholarship will be awarded on the basis of both merit and financial need. CEDAM International will cover the recipient's airfare and REEF Field Survey expenses.** For more information and application, please go to www.cedam.org.

**Please note that CEDAM's website will not be updated until 4/15/2007, however you can still download the application and learn more about the organization.

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8. Seeking Volunteers . . . OCEAN FEST Dive & Adventure Sports Expo

Ocean Fest 2007 is right around the corner, April 21st and 22nd. Our super interns will be manning the booth Saturday & Sunday and we're looking for some "awesome" REEF volunteers to help man the booth and promote REEF on both days during the hours of 10am-6pm. This is an great event, if you've never been, you'll want to go. It's held annually at Ft. Lauderdale Beach, just south of Las Olas Blvd. There is paid parking available at Bahia Mar and Beach Place OR catch the Sun Trolley (954.761.3543). You'd have a lot of fun volunteering for the REEF booth, because it'll give you the opportunity to enjoy the event, free seminars, a free REEF t-shirt, the beach, and so much more. Please contact our interns (JENN or ISLA) and sign up today via their email at intern@reef.org.

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9. Book Recommendation by Joe

REEF usually does not suggest books for our membership to read other than our esteemed Fish ID books by Paul Humann and Ned DeLoach. However, for those of you who are concerned about the state of our fisheries and declining fish populations worldwide, I would suggest a newly published book, "The End of the Line," by Charles Clover. He also wrote one of the current National Geographic articles (April, 2007). As The Independent suggests, his book is "the maritime equivalent of Silent Spring." Clover takes the reader on an unbiased tour of many of the most important fisheries throughout the world from Africa to Iceland, offshore to nearshore. His appraisal and commentary of fishery management is candid and insightful. I highly recommend this book to all our members who find themselves trying to contemplate the disequilibrium between fishery management and sustainability. The book ends with some positive examples of fishery management of which there are sadly too few, and he has some helpful tips for all of us to do our part to ensure fish stocks for the next generation of fish surveyors.



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April 20th-22nd

10. Special Tribute: In Memory of Kawika Chetron

-By Christy Semmens, Director of Science

This past month we lost a member of the REEF family – Kawika Chetron. Kawika lived in San Francisco, and was an avid diver in the Central California area. Soon after becoming a REEF surveyor in 2002, Kawika quickly became one of our most active and knowledgeable surveyors. He had a gift for finding the rarities. He quickly earned his way through the ranks to be rated an Expert REEF surveyor and was a member of the REEF Pacific Advanced Assessment Team. His prolific surveying put him at the top of the list for REEF surveyors in the Pacific region, at nearly 500 surveys. Kawika's skill as an underwater naturalist was reflected in both his identification skills as well as through his photography. He was an extremely talented underwater photographer and Kawika was always very generous in sharing his photography with REEF for our training programs. He gave a seminar each year on the "less than usual suspects" to be seen on a REEF survey as part of the Great Annual Fish Count in Monterey Bay. Kawika was a passionate and kind individual and he will be greatly missed. His legacy will live on through his contribution to the REEF database and his photography. On behalf of the REEF staff and Board of Trustees, our thoughts and support are with Kawika's family.

To see Kawika's underwater images, visit <http://www.coldwaterimages.com>.



A self portrait – Kawika with a harbor seal. Photo by Kawika Chetron.



Kawika joins Brice Semmens on a survey dive in Monterey Bay during a Field Survey in

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11. REEF Parts - Things To Know - Here are a few notes and news bits we'd like you to know about:

- **New REEF California Invertebrate and Algae Training and Survey Materials Now Available!**

After officially launching the new REEF Invertebrate and Algae Monitoring Program in California last summer, we are excited to announce the availability of two new products to support the card and an image-based training curriculum. Both products feature the 63 species that are included in the program, which serves as a companion to the ongoing Fish Survey Project. Visit <http://www.reef.org/cgi-bin/shop.cgi> to purchase these and other REEF materials.



Thanks to the following people for generously donating images for the California program: *Mike Brennan, Kawika Chetron, Steve Lonhart/MBNMS, Georgia Arrow, Chris Grossman/diver.net, Carl Gwinn, E King/MBNMS, Kevin Lee, Jennifer and Jeff Mondragon, Janna Nichols, Ross Overstreet, Josh Pederson/MBNMS, Lauren Ragsac, and Donna Strong.*

- **The Cafe Press REEF Store got a new FACE LIFT**

We've added **more than 40 new items** to the store, plus we incorporated some exclusive designs from our generous REEF artist Eleanor Cavanaugh, yes, she is the bride of our Director of Field Operations from London and studied at the Art Institute of Chicago; she currently works as an art therapist with the Monroe Association for Retarded Citizens. SALE, SALE, SALE, that's right, all our items were drastically discounted for those of you who are registered for one of our many great Field Station trips. New books have also been added for your reading pleasure. So buy, buy, buy, get our reef logo out there, and spread the word. All the sales go toward many special REEF projects throughout the year.



ALL OUR ITEMS HAVE BEEN DRASTICALLY REDUCED FOR YOUR SUMMER FUN & FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO PLAN TO TAKE ONE OF OUR GREAT FIELD TRIPS!

Sale

Don't Miss Out on Your Chance to Support REEF'S special projects!

When you purchase an item from the REEF Store, you're making a contribution to REEF.

Store Hours: 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week. Go to www.reef.org, click on "Visit our Online Store", then click on "REEF Gear" and have fun shopping. We've just added over 35 new items to include new exclusive items with designs from REEF artist Eleanor Cavanaugh.

Proceeds from our REEF Store help to fund special REEF projects such as our Summer & Fall Intern Program



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- **Going on a trip?** order Scan forms, underwater survey paper, books, and other items at the [REEF online store](http://www.reef.org)

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Contribute Now

Please consider supporting REEF and the critical work we do by donating generously.

See You Next Month!

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<http://www.reef.org/enews/enews.htm>

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