



REEF-in-Brief

*The e-Newsletter of the
Reef Environmental Education Foundation*

November 2005

1. **Welcome** - Hello, again from REEF HQ in Key Largo! We are glad to say that today officially marks the end of Hurricane Season (though Tropical Storm Epsilon is churning in the middle of the Atlantic as I write this!) We are sure that many of our members, partners, and folks in general around the Wider Caribbean are breathing a little easier now. Once again, hurricanes wreaked havoc with "REEF-in-Brief" - this time it was Hurricane Wilma that canceled our delivery of the October edition. Although it was a near-miss for us here in Key Largo, the REEF office came through okay, though we were without power for about a week and closed for about 10 days overall. In any event, we continue to wish the best for those affected by this year's season! We are also looking forward to, hopefully, a nice, calm winter! - Bryan Dias, REEF Director of Outreach & Education

2. **14th Great Annual Fish Count** - The 2005 edition of the GAFc was another great success for this premier citizen science marine conservation event. The GAFc generated nearly 2,000 surveys in the month of July. It also boasted participation from approximately 1,000 volunteers throughout REEF's survey regions who contributed directly to marine conservation. For the fourth year in a row, the folks at Stellwagen Banks National Marine Sanctuary and the New England Aquarium set the single-day GAFc record for involvement - they had just over 100 divers complete 127 individual surveys! Also, our terrific partners at Project S.E.A.-Link in Maui, also once again, set the year's record for the most events at a whopping 16! Overall, this year's GAFc had over 75 individual events.

We at REEF would like to thank all the outstanding event organizers who did a terrific job. We'd also like to thank all the volunteers - rookies and veterans - who made this another successful GAFc! Look for the kick-off for the 15th GAFc (July, 2006) coming soon! Find out more at www.fishcount.org.

3. **REEF Field Station of the Month** - We are proud to designate [Blackbeard's Cruises](#) as the REEF Field Station of the Month. Bruce Purdy, owner, has been a long-time supporter of REEF and is very dedicated to marine conservation. If you are interested in a great Bahamas dive trip, drop them a line (and let them know how much you appreciate their support of REEF!) Here are a few things they are up to:

- Blackbeard's is sponsoring an Aquarium trip in January on the Aqua Cat that will feature REEF as part of the program. This trip was organized by Aqua.org and involves a key aquariums and their members on a weeklong trip to learn discuss marine conservation issues in the Bahamas.
- They have two trips in January on the Cat Ppalu for the Longspine Sea Urchin (*Diadema*) recovery and of course REEF! Jan 14-20 and 28-Feb 3rd. Spaces

What's in this issue:

- 1 - [REEF-in-Brief November](#)
- 2 - [14th Great Annual Fish Count](#)
- 3 - [Field Station of the Month](#)
- 4 - [Field Station Program Grant](#)
- 5 - [Holiday Gifts from REEF](#)
- 6 - [Dive Into Mystery](#)
- 7 - [REEF Events](#)



The 14th GAFc was another successful installment of this premier citizen science marine conservation event!



available still and inquiries can be made to reef@catppalu.com.

- The Bahamas Ministry of Fisheries has asked Blackbeard's to keep tabs on the lionfish population in the Bahamas as they are sprouting up more and more.
- Blackbeard's is moving to Freeport where they will be based for all future trips effective December 28th. They are looking forward to exploring new areas in the Grand Bahamas area as well as the more northwestern islands.

4. **REEF's Field Station Program Gets A Boost** - We have recently received a grant from the US National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) in support of REEF's Field Station Program. As you probably know, REEF Field Stations are dive operators, non-profit organizations, and other groups concerned about marine conservation. They support REEF by membership in the program. Often, REEF Field Stations are the initial point of contact between the organization and new members. Most actively teach REEF Fish Identification and support the program in other ways.

Though it has existed for about 10 years, this new grant support will give it a dedicated budget and provide several resources to help make the program more effective. In the coming weeks, we will be generating informational and promotional materials for our Field Stations. Additionally, we will continue to run "REEF Regional Capacity Building Seminars" in key locations. These are designed to bring numerous stakeholders together in a workshop setting in order to discuss the REEF program and how best to implement it in a given location. The seminars also provide the opportunity for Field Stations and potential ones to learn about REEF Fish ID and see an exemplary course being taught by REEF staff. We thank NFWF for their support.

5. **Holiday Gift Ideas: REEF Style** - Wondering what to get that diver or snorkeler in your life. Well, wonder no more! REEF has a lot of great gift ideas appropriate for the occasion. How about a terrific video - Sensational Seas? Treat them (or yourself!) to a superb video collection of rare and terrific sights from the sea - you won't see them anywhere else! Of course, we also have a bunch of great books. Perhaps, a marine life guide might float your boat - the new fish ID book from Paul Humann and Ned DeLoach - *REEF Fish Identification: Baja to Panama* - is ideal for your next trip to the Tropical Eastern Pacific.

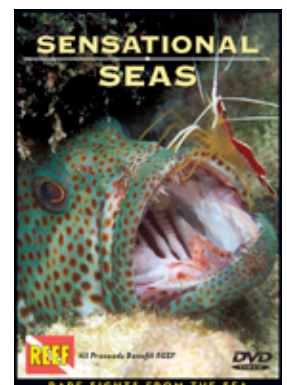
If you are more computer oriented, check out ReefNet's Third Edition of "Fishes of the Caribbean and Adjacent Waters" - the ultimate interactive fish reference for use on your PC. It's available in both CD-ROM and DVD versions and features a whole host of features and learning resources designed to help you figure out that cool fish you just saw last time out. REEF also has all kinds of materials for your next marine survey dive - underwater slates, Fish-in-a-Pocket waterproof marine guides, FishFlips (fish ID for your wrist!), and lots more! Check out our online store for these and a lot of other great gift ideas.

6. **Dive Into Mystery** - Very often around here our book focus relates to marine life

REEF's Field Station of the Month is [Bruce Purdy's Blackbeard's Cruises](#). They are long-time REEF supporters and actively run REEF-themed trips in support of the organization.



The [National Fish and Wildlife Foundation](#) has recently awarded REEF a grant in support of our Field Station Program.

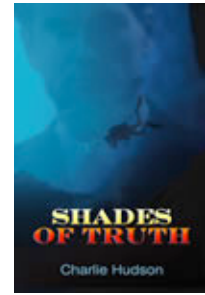


Visit [REEF's online store](#) for a whole host of gifts for the diver in your life this Holiday Season!

6. **DIVE INTO MYSTERY** – Very often around here our book focus relates to training the guides and the like. But, we also like a good mystery and REEF member Charlie Hudson has a special deal for us. Charlie's newest novel, *Shades of Truth*, was released last month. "The only thing better than combining diving with writing is also helping a worthy cause," she said when she explained she would be contributing a portion of her sales to REEF.

Her description of *Shades of Truth* is, "Take a leggy Police Detective with an attitude, add a puzzling investigation, blend with warm Florida Keys waters and mix in some small town humor for a delicious treat." Log onto <http://charliehudson.net> to read the first chapter and see Charlie's other books. *Shades of Truth* is available from Amazon.com, direct from the publisher or by request from most bookstores.

We'd like to thank Charlie for her support of REEF and her generous pledge to make some of the proceeds from this novel available to the organization.



REEF member and author, Charlie Hudson's new mystery novel (that has a lot of diving action!) is available now and part of the proceeds benefit REEF!

7. **REEF Events** - Here are a couple things to keep in mind for your next possible REEF activity:

- REEF's 2006 Field Survey schedule is up! Take a dive vacation that really counts (fish!) As always, we have an exciting slate of destinations for you to choose from in 2006 including several favorites as well as new destinations. REEF Field Surveys are a great opportunity to visit a terrific dive locale, learn from REEF staff and expert volunteers, and have a good time! For more information and to see the [2006 REEF Field Survey schedule](#), please visit our website. See you out there in 2006!
- REEF Fish ID in Key Largo - Are you around the South Florida area this Friday and Saturday? If so, [Horizon Divers of Key Largo](#) is offering a Fish ID class and dives on Friday, December 2nd and Saturday the 3rd. REEF Fish ID will be taught on Friday evening at 6:30 at Horizon Divers (100 Ocean Dr. #1, Key Largo, FL 33037) by REEF's Director of Outreach and Education, Bryan Dias. The following morning, Bryan will be on the dive boat to help you with your Fish ID and to conduct a couple surveys with the group. For more information or to reserve your spot, give Horizon Divers a call at (305) 453-3535.

See You Next Month!

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

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