

# RRT REEF BRIEF

Volume 2000, Issue 2

February 10, 2000

## Important Dates

### Next Classroom training dates:

**3/1** Training Class  
Second half of  
Fish ID-Daniel  
Hughes

### Meetings:

**2/9** Scubanuts  
regular meeting  
@ Wormon's!

**2/16** 6:45 PM Board  
Meeting @  
Southeast  
Branch Library.

**2/16** 7:30 PM Regu-  
lar Meeting @  
Southeast  
Branch Library

## From Your Coordinator

It is February already and many of us are hoping for warmer weather so we can go diving and count fish! It is truly Winter, but plans are being made for the coming spring and summer dive season.

First of all, we have reserved ten (10) rooms at Kelly's on the Bay/Aquanut Divers for the first weekend of April as well as the first weekend of May. These dates will encompass at least two of the training modules for the Class of 2000. April will be for Fish ID and Fish Counting. The May dates will be the completion of the photography module, which, as you know, is led by Linda and Frank Black each year. Another module, such as wreck mapping, may be incorporated in these dives, time and weather permitting. If you are interested in helping out Brian Salzman and diving with a bunch of really nice, new Team members, sign up at the February meeting. We will need to let some of these rooms go back to Kelly's if we can't fill them. It would be really great if we could fill them and have one of their dive boats all to ourselves!!

At the January meeting, the Reef Quarterly was discussed. For those of you who were not there, Marc Dillon and Ray Smith agreed to collaborate to begin producing that high class, glossy paper periodical. It was widely received in the North Florida market and did a lot to increase the stature and recognition of the Team. Please take the time to thank Marc and Ray and offer your assistance if you have an interest!

Also, if you weren't at the January meeting, you don't know who were nominated for our slate of officers for 2000. They are as follows: Lex Waters, President; Mary Lyons, Vice President; Billy Taylor, Secretary; Jim Nelsen, Treasurer. Rob Rush was nominated for Safety Officer, and John Perkner agreed to be Science Officer for another year to see our grant through and the deployment of the Reef Balls.

As in the past, we will accept nominations from the floor during February's meeting. All officer and Board members, will be voted on at that time. So, you need to have a say in the future of the Team. Come to the February meeting and vote!

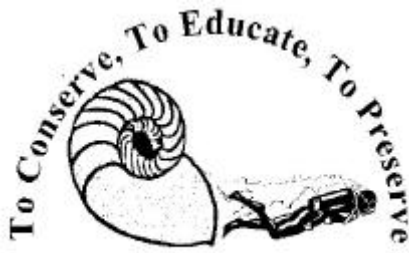
*Jim Cribb*

## Science Officer Update

Great news . . . the water can't possibly get any colder . . . so it can only get warmer from here. Mr. Dillon is already calling to go diving so I can tell we will get an early start on finishing up our monitoring grant work. However, as I look out of my downtown office window I can see hundreds of reefballs sitting on the dock just below, waiting for someone to take them offshore where they can become home to our "scaly" little friends. (I know, don't forget our "crusty" little friends too.) On top of all that work, I am going to begin putting together our second monitoring grant request . . . with a special focus on that reefball placement . . . so don't worry, there will be no shortage of diving opportunities this year . . . and well into the next.

One other note for those who did not make it to the Earth Kinship conference, our booth looked great and I had the opportunity to talk to some very interesting people. Thank you Jim Barnes for setting that all up and to Lex for the video and Billy for the great pictures on his PC . . . see you all soon.

*John Perkner*



Jacksonville Reef Research Team

### Reproduced from EPA "Coral Reefs"

Coral reefs are among the world's richest ecosystems, second only to tropical rain forests in plant and animal diversity. However, they are extremely sensitive environments that have special temperature, salinity, light, oxygen, and nutrient requirements. If environmental conditions fall outside the acceptable range of these requirements, the health and dynamics of a coral reef community can be severely disrupted. That's why coral communities are sensitive indicators of water quality and the ecological health of the coastal watershed. They respond to alterations within the entire coastal watershed, such as changes in freshwater flows and nutrient inputs. Consequently, pollution from the destruction and alteration of surrounding coastal watersheds can directly affect the health and productivity of a coral reef.

### What are Coral Reefs and What Do They Do?

Coral reef ecosystems are unique, biologically diverse systems recognized as valuable economic and environmental resources. Many people think coral reefs are made of plants or rocks, but they are actually made of animals! A coral polyp is a delicate, limestone-secreting animal. The limestone serves as a skeleton that either is embedded within the living tissue of the coral or encloses the animal. A coral reef is made up of colonies of these coral polyps. There are several benefits of coral reefs.

Coral reefs are an important recreational and aesthetic resource for people visiting or living in coastal areas. People use coral reefs for fishing, underwater photography, scuba diving, and snorkeling.

Coral reefs provide protection for harbors and beaches, which are often found behind reefs because the reefs provide natural protection from heavy wave action caused by coastal storms.

Coral reefs are home to a number of species of fish and other marine species, including many that we rely on for food and economic purposes.

Coral reefs also serve as a laboratory for students and scientists to study and learn about complex ecological and biological processes. In addition, the reefs yield many biological treasures that are increasingly being recognized as natural sources of biomedical chemicals.

### Some Impacts on Coral Reefs

Coral reef habitats are extremely sensitive to disturbances, such as various forms of pollution and physical contact. Pollution of coastal watersheds poses a threat to the existence of coral reefs. Impacts can result from activities occurring near the reef itself or from areas within the coastal watershed that drain to the reef. Disturbances and pollution can lead to diseases in coral such as bleaching (when the algae that give corals their color die). Natural occurrences, such as hurricanes, can adversely impact coral reefs through high-energy storm surges and the resulting resuspension of sediment. However, reefs are usually able to recover from natural disturbances.

### Public Relations

The weekend of February 4-6, 2000, was the weekend for the Earth Kinship conference. Notable speakers highlighted the conference discussing di-

verse topics such as Conversation of natural resources, water conservation, and other topics regarding our fragile planet. The volunteers made the weekend work. They were: Brian Salzman, Billy Taylor, Jim Nelsen, Jim Cribb, Rob Rush, Alex Waters, Mary Lyons and Ed Lablanc.

This was excellent exposure for the Team and I hope a fine time was had by all. I know I enjoyed myself.

*Jim Barnes*

### Training

The Training Class of 1999-2000 completed the first part of Fish ID training at Jacksonville University on Feb 2nd. There were about twenty people there. The group was a mixture of current team members, students, and interested students/auditors. Daniel Hughes did his usual fantastic job. He will be completing the program next month (March) again at JU at 6:30.

The Training Class will be venturing to the Key's (Kelly's on the Bay) for Fish counting and Fish ID the weekend of March 31 and April 1. Team members are welcome on a first come first serve basis. The cost is approximately \$165.00 per person (double occupancy), or about \$115.00 per person (four occupying a room). A deposit of \$50.00 will be due at the February team meeting.

The Training Class will be venturing to Kelly's again the first weekend of May (May 6th and 7th) to complete Scientific Photography. Team members are welcome on a first come first serve basis. The cost again will be approximately \$165.00. A deposit of \$50.00 will be due at the March team meeting.

Elections are this month, so I'll see you all there.

*Brian*

**From Your Vice-President:**

Wednesday night, February 8, John Perkner and I had the opportunity to make a presentation to the Captains Club about the work we do. The membership of the club was quite impressed with the qualifications each of us must possess in order to be able to participate. We showed the video of the Monachan that illustrates how quickly artificial material becomes colonized in just one short year, and like everyone else, they were very surprised by the amount of life that so quickly accumulates on the reef. Like most non-divers, seeing what is down there is always a real eye-opener. All most people see of the bottom are the electronic blips on their bottom-finders. But for the lucky few who get to see it first-hand and up close, we know what a beautiful thing it really is. Anyway, they came away from the meeting with a greater appreciation of the efforts of a group of recreational yet highly qualified volunteer scientists who are keeping an eye on the health and productivity of our reef system. They also came away with a better idea of the sheer volume of life that these reef's support. It helps them to see that there is a lot out there to be thankful for.

John and I must have done such a great job that they even extended an invitation to come back in the near future to give them an update on our efforts. John did an excellent job of explaining to them the grant we are working on and how we are fulfilling the objectives of the grant. So, rest assured, between the Earth Kinship Conference that Jim Barnes did such a great job of coordinating our booth for, and talks like the one we did for the Captains Club, the word is getting out there about our efforts and the great reefs we have to offer to all who chose to use them.

See you at the Southeast Branch Library next week. And, by the way, get those regulators reconditioned. It will be dive season before you know it, and we still have plenty to do to get the grant done!

*Lex Waters*

**1999 DIVE SCHEDULE**

Day	Month	Dive Date	Rain Date	M	J	Location
Saturday	April	04/03	04/10		*	Jaxspots
Sunday	April	04/17	04/24		*	Jaxspots
Saturday	May	05/08	TBA	*		<b>BB</b>
Sunday	May	05/16	05/23		*	Jaxspots
Sunday	June	06/06	TBA	*		<b>CR Culverts</b>
Saturday	June	06/19	06/26		*	Jaxspots
Saturday	July	07/03	Open		*	Jaxspots
Sunday	July	07/04	TBA	*		<b>JW</b>
Saturday	July	07/10	07/24		*	Jaxspots
Sunday	July	07/18	TBA	*		<b>EEF Culverts</b>
Sunday	August	08/08	08/15		*	Jaxspots
Saturday	August	08/14	TBA	*		<b>HH Barge</b>
Sunday	August	08/15	08/22		*	Jaxspots
Saturday	August	08/28	TBA	*		<b>TR Anna</b>
Saturday	September	09/04	TBA	*		<b>JW</b>
Sunday	September	09/12	09/19		*	Jaxspots
Saturday	October	10/02	10/09		*	Jaxspots
Sunday	October	10/10	10/17		*	Jaxspots
Sunday	October	10/31	TBA		*	Jaxspots
Sunday	November	11/14	TBA		*	Jaxspots

Notes: M = Monitoring Dives      J = Jaxspots Confirmation and Discovery Dives

Meet at Mayport Marine promptly at 7:30 for all dives, unless specified otherwise

Contact Alex Waters at 262-5001 or John Perkner at 273-4562 with questions on the schedule.

## 1999 Officers/Board of Directors

President - Jim Cribb	904-264-1840 (H)	904-264-0520 (W)
Vice President - Alex Waters	904-262-5001 (H)	904-260-3911 (W)
Secretary - Mary Lyons	904-724-0324 (H)	904-708-8456 (M)
Treasurer - Jim Nelsen	904-641-0717 (H)	904-448-0305 (W)
Board/Webmaster - Ray Smith	904-389-9668 (H)	904-854-5990 (W)
Board/Chief Scientist - John Perkner	904-273-4562 (H)	904-791-5064 (W)
Board/Training Officer - Brian Salzman	904-646-3241 (H)	904-641-6611 (W)
Board/Safety Officer - Dennis Short	904-268-0414 (H)	904-332-1849 (W)
Board/Public Relations - Jim Barnes	904-757-1928 (H)	904-778-6089 (W)

**SUPPORT YOUR  
NEWSLETTER BY  
SENDING AN  
ARTICLE OF  
GENERAL  
INTEREST TO THE  
TEAM!**



black and white horizontal stripes.

**Similar Fish:** remora, *Echeneis naucrates*.

**Where found:** both INSHORE and NEARSHORE inhabiting inlets, bays, and among mangroves; frequently seen around bouys, pilings, and wrecks.

**Size:** common to 30 pounds.

**\*Florida Record:** 103 lbs., 12 ozs.

**Remarks:** spawns in spring and early summer; feeds on crabs, squid, and small fish.

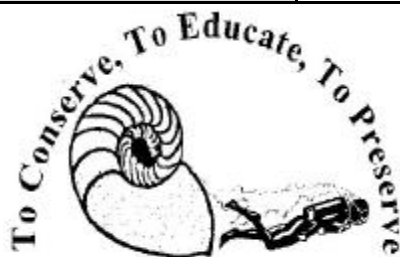
### Cobia

**Family Rachycentridae, COBIA**  
*Rachycentron canadum*

**Description:** long, slim fish with broad depressed head; lower jaw projects past upper jaw; dark lateral stripe extends through eye to tail; first dorsal fin comprised of 7 to 9 free spines; when young, has conspicuous alternating

In This Issue...

**Elections of 2000 Officers! Meet at Southeast Branch Library!**



Jacksonville Reef Research Team

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