

PressRelease

Dive Friends Bonaire Starts the New Year with a Gigantic Clean Up Dive at Karel's Pier

Kralendijk, Bonaire, Dutch Caribbean, January 21, 2012

On Saturday, January 21, 2012, volunteers gathered at Dive Friends Bonaire at Yellow Submarine to participate in the first quarterly Clean Up Dive of the year. The weather was perfect and the turnout was fantastic. A large number of resident divers attended, as well as guests of Dive Friends Bonaire and a surprising amount of customers from other dive centers on the island. The dive community of Bonaire proved once again how much they care about their marine environment.

Asko Zuidam of Dive Friends Bonaire addressed the group of 102 divers and explained what trash should be recovered and what should be left behind, as well as how to keep from damaging any marine animals. Sue Willis from the Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB) program gave an explanation of how to safely remove fishing line and announced the launch of a new project to help Bonaire's sea turtles. The Fishing Line Project is running with sponsorship from the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) and aims to reduce the amount of fishing line, hooks, nets and other debris found on Bonaire's reefs; items which pose a great threat to our endangered sea turtle population.

After the briefing, the divers headed over to Karel's Pier, entered the water, descended, and began to fill their bags with trash. When filled, the bags were brought to the surface to those working as shore support. There, Dive Friends crew and volunteers checked once again to be sure no marine creatures had been inadvertently included, counted, and tallied the trash for statistics, and then disposed of it responsibly.

Karel's Pier is home to a lively bar and restaurant, and unfortunately the underwater terrain can accumulate more bottles and cups than is normal on the reef. The statistics of the rubbish collected once again confirmed this to be true. Items collected include: 1,085 glass bottles, 38 plastic bottles, 102 fishing lines, 238 plastic cups, 148 pieces of random plastic, 133 beverage cans, 39 firework remains, 2 cell phones and much more. The total number of items collected was 2,104!

That evening, all participants and their families were welcomed back for a Pot Luck BBQ and raffle—Dive Friends Bonaire (with help from our sponsors) provided drinks and main courses, while participants supplied side dishes. After dinner, the guests were treated to a cruise on board the Good Return. Sponsors for the event include: Selibon, At Sea Restaurant, Van Den Tweel, Ouray Sportswear, Reef Clothing, Deep Blue Gear, Dive Shades, Body Glove, the Bonaire Marine Park, Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire, East Coast Diving, Tusa and Suunto.

The next quarterly Dive Friends Bonaire underwater cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, April 21st, 2012.

Additional information about the cleanups is available at: http://www.dive-friends-bonaire.com/clean_up_dives.html. All are welcome to join in.

Dive Friends Bonaire is one of Bonaire's premier diving facilities with convenient locations in Kralendijk, at Yellow Submarine, Hamlet Bonaire, Dive Inn, and at Port Bonaire and three retail stores in Kralendijk. For additional information, visit <http://www.dive-friends-bonaire.com>.

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