

NOTICE: IF YOU SEND ME A NOTE ( AND I LOVE RECEIVING THEM) PLEASE DO NOT JUST HIT REPLY- SENDS THE WHOLE LETTER BACK TO ME- EXPENSIVE ON SAT PHONE. PLEASE CLICK ON MY E ADDRESS! THANKS SO MUCH.

NEW GUESTS- SINUS INFECTION- BACK TO SCHOOL-CHRISTMAS IN MAY- HEALTH WEEK-  
PLAY DAY- SHIPWRECK- NESS AND JIM-ORCHID ISLAND

Hi, Everyone,

May was off to a whirlwind start with William Baron, working in Honiara, bringing his sister, Isobel, and her husband, Karl Ong, here to sample our underwater delights. The sinus infection I picked up in Honiara refused to let go, so I reluctantly stayed home and caught up on voluminous office work ( where DOES it come from???) and listened to their tales of adventure at the end of the day. They were joined by Richard Wollocombe, filming local culture at Biche village around the corner. We treated Richard to just ONE dive, and he is hooked- promising to return. Richard and I know an astounding number of people in the dive business, including Chris Newbert, who first enticed both of us to the Solomons, and the guides I had on my Galapagos trip; needless to say, we had a great time swapping stories.

Next arrivals were Chris & Catherine Filardi (Chris is head of Conservation International in the Solomons) and Paul and Susanne Graf. Their village visit schedule was so busy, they squeezed in only a few dives- and can't wait to come back and sample more. And it was back to school for my Divemasters and out of the water for me. Engaging such subjects as Supervising Certified Divers, Assisting Instructors in Teaching, the physics behind the dive tables and computers, all of our brains are getting a super workout. I'm not sure who's learning more- me or them. We even constructed our own Haldanean model ( anyone remember what that is?) that we could put stickers on showing how our different tissues load and unload nitrogen during a dive.

It was Christmas in May when Nate arrived from Honiara bearing all 43 boxes of gifts and supplies we had shipped from Hawaii. High stakes business occurs at all hours in the library with the new Monopoly Game; the kids are getting unwitting math practice with the colored Double Fifteen Dominoes set, and there are some very well dressed babies in the village.

The long anticipated Health Week launched with 7 "Quit-smoking Candidates" and their buddies coming to the front of church to get their "QUIT - KITS" (toothbrush, toothpaste, sugarless gum, dental floss, tobacco free pin) and a prayer for their success. Daily health talks and games stressed the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and marijuana, the 3 most abused drugs here. Wednesday dawned sparkling and clear for our march for health. Assembly lines here at the house and over in the library constructed signs bearing all kinds of anti-drug messages in both English and Language. A lively,

sign-waving group  
marched briskly from neighboring Kio out here to Vuana and back to the  
school to our  
anthem " I Wanna Be Tobacco Free".

That evening, winners of the poster contest received their prizes, with every  
entry receiving something. The Saturday evening finale, a slide  
show of the weeks activities, brought forth "oohs and aahs" and howls of  
laughter.

Happiness is a play day with my entire "A Team"- the first time we had all  
been diving together since early March. Toana worked it's mystical magic on  
my spirit, with 6 of us drifting down into spiraling blue and yellow  
fusiliers, silver surgeons, and ever present gray  
reef sharks out in the blue , checking on our flaming  
scallops, many-lined basslets, multiple nudibranchs inshore, with our  
resident school of yellow-striped scad entertaining our safety stops. .  
Exploring "Shipwreck" ( for the ship-like rock formation on Mbulo's NE  
shore) on our 2nd dive, we finned back and forth between infinitely varied  
hard coral beds and an endless labyrinth  
of interconnected caverns, caves, and tunnels, with their mesmerizing light  
shows.

Ness Smith and Jim Catlin from England arrived after 6 weeks of doing  
research  
on the effects of SCUBA on the local population ( Ness) and the presence of  
the giant bumphead parrots known locally as topa (Jim). Here at our guest  
house for 2 weeks to both finish there research and relax and explore, they  
are beyond amazed at the beauty and variety of our diving. Heading for  
Shipwreck, we noticed a tiny islet almost buried in blooming wild orchids.  
The pull was irresistible, and Orchid Island proved another of Mbulo's  
treasures. Our 2nd BLACK long nosed butterfly contrasted with its yellow  
mate, our first Mimic Filefish, and constantly changing beds of hard corals  
competed with the best yet maze of caverns  
and tunnels. Ness, Dellington and I surfaced to Viso and Jim already on  
the boat prattling excitedly about coming up in the bush. They had found our  
long-searched for "slot" that goes back underground and surfaces in a pool  
in the jungle.

And as I leave you for this month, I can just hear our wall out in front  
calling to me- I may just have to skip out and go diving. Have a GREAT  
month- the beginning of summer for many of you, "winter" for us down here  
( the water temp actually read only 83 last week).

Lots love and hugs to all,  
Lisa

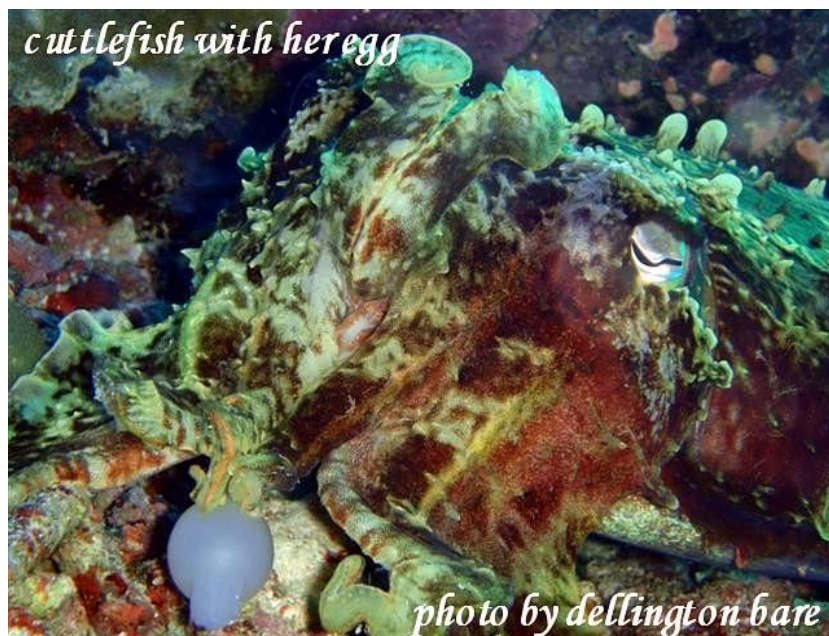
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"Lose yourself in the adventure-find yourself in the richness".





*light show at orchid island  
by dellington bare*



*orchid island*

*by dellington*



*mimic filefish*

*by*

*dellington bare*