

HAMPTONS • MAY/JUNE 2022

AFLOAT USA

THE BEST OF EVERYTHING
ON AND AROUND THE WATER

Surfin' into
Summer



Aquaverse

Celebrating Life on the Water

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Richard's experience with photography began with 30 years of running a camera specialty store called Jaydee Camera Exchange in Midtown Manhattan. When the store closed for good, Richard decided to take his own photos as a professional photographer, starting with Real Estate industry event coverage. His market area has expanded to the Hamptons, where his photojournalism is published in a variety of online and print outlets.



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Tia is the passionate soul behind Savour TV and Liebe PR, a boutique agency that offers a welcoming and celebratory space for diverse clients of literature, culinary destinations, wineries, breweries, travel, art, and retail. Tia finds joy in spending time with the love of her life and family, traveling internationally, and serving as a mentor to young women. Visit liebepr.com.



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Sarah Azzara holds multiple degrees in the humanities and currently teaches writing at Stony Brook University. A writer, songwriter, visual artist, and award-winning poet, her work has appeared in multiple publications including *The Southampton Review*, *The Santa Ana River Review*, *The GW Review*, and *POST-Stranger*. When not teaching, tenting, or rocking out with her band Miss Vicious, Ms. Azzara resides in New York, where she takes care of an array of animals both human and otherwise.



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GOING DEEPER

THE BEST DIVING ON
THE EAST END

BY RICHARD LEWIN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY NOEL HENDRICKSON



The 1781 sinking of the HMS Culloden in Fort Pond Bay, just west of Montauk Point, has naturally created one of Long Island's premier dive sites. Photo by Eco-Photo Explorers.



Photos: Top: The imprint left behind by a cannonball on the wreck of the HMS Culloden by Eco-Photo Explorers. Left: An Atlantic Bay Scallop in Long Island's Peconic Bay by Eco-Photo Explorers.



It is fairly easy to find a place to go for a swim on the East End, with all the natural waterfront, coastline and swimming pools. If your passion is diving, however, finding the safest and tested locations is not as simple.

Good and safe diving locations in our area mostly fall into four categories: County and State Parks, Artificial Reefs, Charter Boats and Jetties, and Natural Dive Sites. The non-profit Long Island Divers Association (LIDA), along with offering lessons and certification, has become the de facto official center for information about local diving. According to LIDA President Barry Lipsky, its mission, along with encouraging the diving experience on Long Island, includes identifying and saving quality dive sites, protecting the rights of divers to waterfront access, and educating divers about the unique nature of our local ocean waters. Lipsky points out that our offshore diving areas differ from most others in several ways. Besides the sea floors being dotted with antique shipwrecks, the waters are colder,

darker, and have more currents than other geographic regions. **County and State Parks.** Cedar Beach sits on the south side of the North Fork facing Shelter Island Sound in the Peconic Bay. Cedar Beach County Park in Southold is free and open to the public, boasting over 2,800 feet of shoreline. There is a broad variety of marine life for viewing, including crabs, scallops, snails, fish and sponges. The area is regularly used by Cornell Cooperative Extension for marine life studies and experiments. Orient Beach State Park has 45,000 feet of frontage on Gardiner's Bay, with two designated areas specifically recommended for scuba diving. Divers are required to obtain a permit to dive from New York State. Also on the North Fork is Clark's Beach in Greenport, commonly referred to by the mysterious name

"Secret Beach". Be sure to contact LIDA to arrange a visit and to get instructions for the lock, since LIDA controls beach access. **Artificial Reefs.** One of the most ambitious programs affecting the New York State diving community has been the development of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's "Bureau of Marine Habitat Artificial Reef Program". Thanks partly to major support by LIDA, Barry Lipsky and Governor Cuomo, in 2018 a plan was approved to build a dozen artificial reefs in the "Marine District", each 12 miles off the Atlantic coastline in 125-foot deep water. The reefs have multiple benefits. Firstly, building materials for the reefs are primarily large vessels that are out of commission and need disposal sites. Secondly, marine life is naturally attracted to these structures,

providing sea life with a safe living and breeding space, and plenty of subjects for study by divers. Our local artificial reef, Shinnecock Reef, is constructed from the materials of three barges, a tugboat, a wood drydock, two wood boats, a steel cruiser, a steel and concrete tower, two steel trawlers, surplus armored vehicles, and steel and concrete bridge rubble (mostly from the reconstruction of the Tappan Zee Bridge). **Charter Boats and Jetties.** Charters like Sea Turtle Charters in Montauk specialize in shark and scuba dive charters. Three recommended locations for diving include Fort Pond Bay at Navy Road and both sides of "the jetties" (Montauk Harbor eastside and westside).

Natural Dive Sites. The 1781 sinking of the HMS Culloden in Fort Pond Bay, just west of Montauk Point, has naturally created one of Long Island's premier dive sites. HMS Culloden was one of the British fleet of 14 war ships assigned to guard the local waters during the Revolutionary War. Sadly, it failed in its mission and came to rest in 15-25 ft of water off Will's Point (now Culloden Point) in Montauk. Ponquogue Bridge in Hampton Bays, also considered one of the top diving locations around, has recently been upgraded and reconstructed. Fortunately for divers, the piers and pilings at the north and south ends were preserved, leaving prime diving opportunities intact. When planning any diving excursion, be sure to ask about certification, which is required by most businesses. If you are looking for scuba training on the East End, contact Hampton Dive Center in Riverhead. Whether you're diving for recreation, curiosity or research, opportunities abound in our East End waters. It just took us going a little deeper to help find them.



Eco-Photo Explorers Take Exploration to New Depths

BY ERIN ROSEN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ECO-PHOTO EXPLORERS

“For most of history, man has had to fight nature to survive; in this century, he is beginning to realize that, in order to survive, he must protect it.”

—Jacques-Yves Cousteau

Divers explore Silfra in Iceland, a fissure on the Earth's crust flooded with glacial melt water.

“As we say in the diving community,
take only pictures, and leave only bubbles...”



the underwater wrecks look like today and how marine life has inhabited these artificial reefs.

They recently gave one of their local historical presentations, Long Island Firsts: Making History in Our Own Backyard, at the Rogers Memorial Library in Southampton, NY. This particular program examines Long Island’s unique history by citing the events that happened here for the very first time. For example, the first transatlantic flight that ever took place took off from Long Island. These local stories are intriguing and look to inspire the feeling of immense pride Long Islanders have for the place they call home. Of course, their programs not only cover stories and history from up and down the New York coast but also regions globally like Greenland, the Galapagos, Yucatan, the Maldives, under the ice in Antarctica, and the Russian Arctic, Indonesia, and more.

Eco-Explorers will continue to travel the world to document the threats to our environment as well as shine a light on the underwater realm and how incredible it is. By raising awareness about our environment, about our natural resources, and about preserving our history, they are making good on their promise to help protect and preserve the underwater world for future generations.

Eco-Photo Explorers specialize in all aspects of underwater still

photography (wide-angle and macro), nature photography, magazine, and technical writing. They can assist companies, whether it’s a dive resort, dive shop, liveaboard, or other expedition-related services. Eco-Photo Explorers have also participated in several expeditions as onsite photographic experts. They run workshops, seminars, and provide personal photographic coaching. They are also available for SCUBA demonstrations and technical support in research projects, scuba diving support, and photo documentation of projects. For their programs, they are contracted by libraries, local organizations, or anyone interested. The programs can be either in-person or virtual. They run approximately 90-minutes in length and are family-friendly. All the programs can be custom-tailored to specific audiences’ needs.

Don’t miss their special presentation at Aquaverse, a brand new Aquaculture, Boating and Seafood Showcase anchored at Claudio’s Greenport on Saturday, May 21, 2022. Schedule available at aquaverseusa.com.

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Christopher Weaver and Michael Salvarezza have made it their mission to protect nature. They have been scuba diving together for decades and started photographing below the surface in 1989.

Their love of the ocean and passion for diving led them to establish their company, Eco-Photo Explorers, where they have become ambassadors between the two worlds and strive to make the public aware of the ocean and its inhabitants. The ocean is an enormous part of the ecosystem, but it doesn’t always receive the attention it deserves since it’s below the surface.

The team has spent countless hours underwater, amassing an extensive, varied library of their own stock photography. They’ve combined their photography with historical research and put together multimedia presentations. Michael

Salvarezza explains, “We use our own photography and our research together to tell compelling stories with interesting themes. If we’re talking about the environment and the marine world, our photography can illustrate what we’re seeing. For example, shipwrecks have a lot of history, and it’s one thing to talk about the history of the ship and its location, but it’s another to be able to show you what’s there now.” From the early colonial days to modern times, there are tragic tales featuring many shipwrecks that lie on the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean from the north, off the Long Island Sound, and to the south, from different eras in American history. The audience can see what



Top: Christopher Weaver;
Bottom: Mike Salvarezza



Top left: A family of False Clown Anemonefish from the Philippines. Above: A Lyre Tail Grouper in Egypt’s Red Sea. Photo by Eco-Photo Explorers.