

Pictures from Wrecks & Brothers 2005

Richard in particular was keen to some serious wreck diving under his belt, I also wanted to dive the Brothers as it was the one major Red Sea location which we had yet to do. As luck would have it I found a tour which offered all the major Northern Red Sea wrecks and included the Brothers so we duly booked for a party of 5. Perhaps I should mentioned that some of our number who need to plan holidays far ahead to fit into there business dealings. This means not being able to take advantage of special offers and booking 6-9 months before departure. In this case we booked in March for a November holiday. One thing we have learned is never to get into conversation with people about how much was paid for the holiday, the wrong answer can spoil your week!. I was not too concerned when our chosen boat was changed in July as it was itinerary rather than boat which was our major concern and the replacement was of equal standard. At that point it did seem to be out of the operator's hands as our original boat was being moved by its owners (as distinct from the tour operator with whom we booked) to the deep south. I was more concerned when a week before the departure we were advised of a further change of boat to Explorer 1 which did not seem to be quite up to standard. Even more concerning was that our flights from Bristol had not been booked and we had been switched to Gatwick. Some harsh words were exchanged and I finally managed to extract some concessions which made the changes acceptable to our party. Strangely enough we managed to get through this without getting to stressed, being determined to enjoy our diving and letting everything else get sorted later. Only when we got to the boat (which was a bit old but perfectly adequate) did we find that the other 17 passengers had also been messed around and were very uptight especially as many had booked for a different itinerary. In the end it all worked out ok and we got good value for money. However, I have stayed well clear of this operator ever since. The diving itself was memorable. As well as some superb dives on the Abu Nuhass wrecks and Thistlegorm (including a night dive), we did the Rosalie Moller (bombed the same night as the Thistlegorm) and the Dunraven. In the latter case it's the reef alongside I found more interesting than the wreck. The members of the party were Richard Vivian, Ken Blay, Chris Sealey, Ed Zedlewski and myself.

We then spent 2 days diving on various parts of the Brothers where we saw our first thresher sharks. There are a couple of wrecks on the Brothers, but they are too deep to allow much time for exploration. We had had our fill of wrecks by then and frankly the scenic aspects are much more rewarding. The Brothers is not a location for the nervous as the swells are quite strong and getting back into the boat can be dangerous. During our time there we got caught in a downdraft which whistled us to 40M by the time we had regained control, we had to rescue a Russian diver who got into trouble and Richard dropped his camera and strobe when the boat lurched heavily as he was climbing the ladder. Max our dive guide swam to 60M in an effort to retrieve the camera (on air). When we checked the echo sounder later, we found the boat was moored in 100m even though it was only the same distance from Big Brother – quite a drop off. Fortunately Richard had downloaded most of his pictures so it was not a total disaster and the insurance has provided him with a replacement.

On the way back to Hurghada we did the Salem Express. Despite the initial problems with boats and flights it was a super week with plenty of new experiences. We also found a new airline called Astreus who offered a far more comfortable flight than the usual charter operators - I actually had enough leg room. We did 17 dives in total at the following sites: (note Astreus went bust in 2011 – b*****r)

Shab Algur – 14M	Giannis D – 23M	Ummask – 16M
Rosalie Moller – 33M	Thistlegorm – 29M	Shaab Mahmoud – 22M
Beacon Rock(Dunraven)	Big Brother 40M	Little Brother – 31M
Shaab Shear – 16M	Salem Express – 30M	Shaab Abu Hashish – 15M

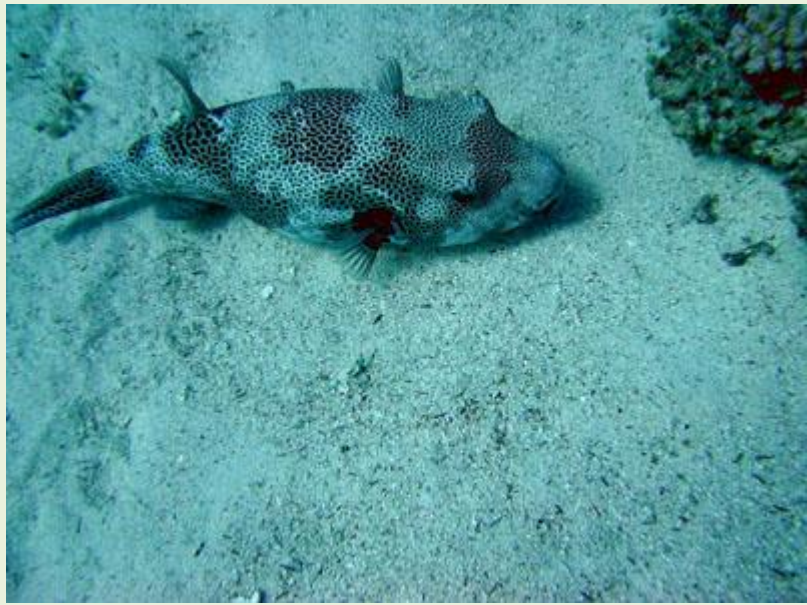
The Olympus C750 was used again on this holiday and I seem to have taken more video than stills. I will be adding the video clips once I have finished editing them into a format suitable for the web site. If you click on any pictures which have a black border, you can link to a video clip. These are being added slowly as they take a long time to prepare.



Arabian Angel Fish on the Thistlegrom



Pair of Bannerfish



Titan Trigger Fish, big ugly and aggressive at times



Box fish - largish, about 1/2 metre in length.



More nice corals



Some nice corals on the reef outside Shaab Mahmoud

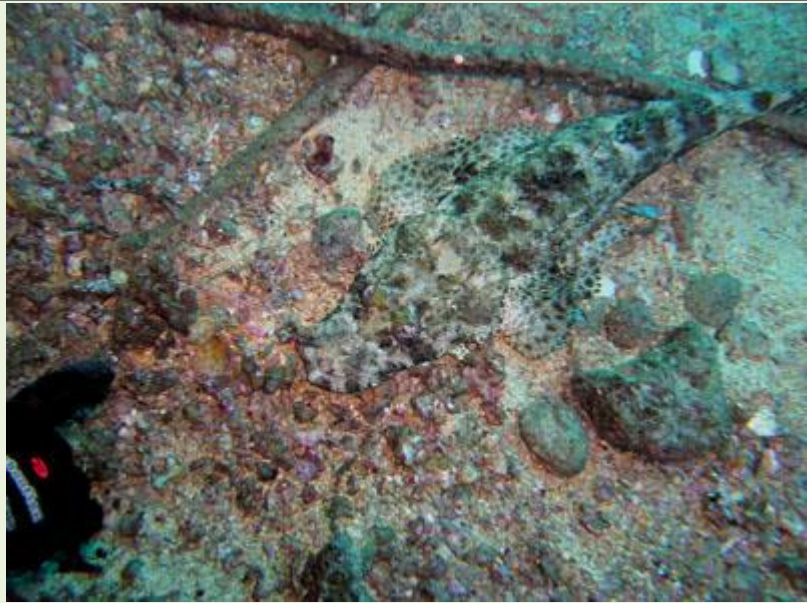


Not sure what type of fish caught in flash at night

Close up of a couple of clownfish



BAAnother nice collection of hard corals at Shaab Mahmoud



Crocodile fish on the Giannis D



Ed Zedlewski on the shotline coming up from the Tthistlegorm



Shoal of Fusilier fish at Big Brother



Chris, Ken and myself relaxing between dives



Lionfish on the deck of the Thistlegorm



Close up of a brown Moray Eel



divers ascending to the shot line at the Rosalie Moller



Looking down onto the lower deck of the Rosalie Moller.



Spanish Dancer, a large nudibranch about 8" long



Parrot Fish and something unknown sleeping at night



Night pictures really seem to bring out the colours in the soft corals



Front of a Bedford truck in the hold of the Thistlegorm



Motorcycles loaded in the back of lorries on the Thistlegorm





The ref wall at Big Brother, just beyond the Aida



View of Big Brother taken from top of lighthouse. Little Brother in the distance



Wreck of the Aida on Big Brother, we are at 35M hence lack of light



Big Brother lighthouse