

Safaga 1994

February 1994 and 10 of us went back to Safaga and the Menaville. This time we were able to fly into Hurghada airport which had just opened for tourist flights. The whole transit operation was fairly quick (about 100kms) and smooth, none of the previous years nightmares. Early in the week we were offered the chance to do 2 nights on the liveaboard Boshrai. This was scheduled to take us up to Abu Nuhas where there were a series of wrecks all closely grouped on the same reef. The trip was fated as strong northerly winds made conditions very uncomfortable. After several hours of battling against crashing waves, the skipper decided to turn back and find a sheltered spot where we could anchor; we were all very grateful. We 2 dives at the anchorage, the second a night dive. It was not an inspiring site but the weather precluded going elsewhere but we did find a large Moral in a coral block just under the boat which provided much entertainment. Overnight weather conditions improved a bit but heading North was still out of the question. Our intrepid dive guide then suggested that we head south and dive the Salem Express. This was a large Ferry which has capsized in a storm about 2 years earlier with major loss of life. Officially it was not allowed to be dived, and we were told on no account to enter any part of the ship. This as no great hardship as it's a huge wreck and you need a whole dive just to swim round the outside. The ship is on its side with port side at 30m and the starboard side at about 10m. A fantastic dive but one tinged with sadness. Apart from the Boshrai trip, I note that we did several dives on Panorama Reef this time, this can be excellent and provided our first sharks of the trip. Overall a good week and we also met some other divers from the UK (Max and Lorraine) who we were to meet again in future years. On the trip were: Keith Stone, Martin Tarrant, , Ginni Cooper, Tim Dews, Keith Walter, Rob Peters, Alan Scrace and Alan Malcolm.

We dived the following sites, some more than once:

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|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Tobia Kebir – 17M | Gamul Soraya – 14M | Panorama – 39M |
| Disha Reef 35M | Abu Kafan – 30M | Shaab Sheer – 15M |
| Salem Express – 32M | Middle Reef – 10M | Tobia Soraya – 14M |
| Ras Abu Soma – 15M | | |

Pictures all taken with a Nikonos 5 and Iketlite Strobe.



Small school of bannerfish



Large Blue Trigger fish, can be quite aggressive



Cauliflower soft corals



Colony of Clown Fish in a huge Anemone



Emperor Angel Fish



The Moray under the boat.



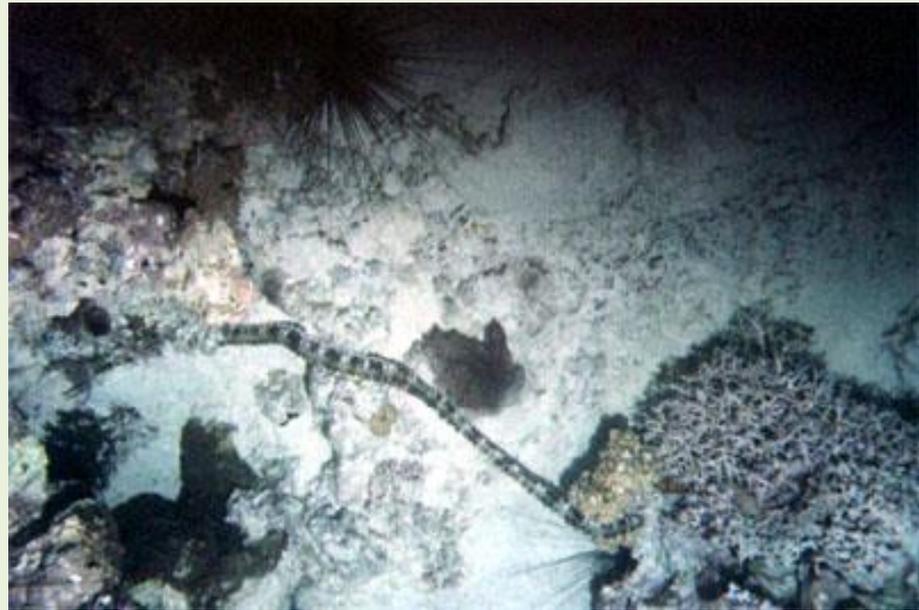
Lion Fish



Divers on the Salem Express



Martin on the prop of the Salem Express



Banded sea Snake.



School of Sweetlips



Blue Spot about to take flight



Saloon of our liveaboard, Keith Stone, Ginni and Martin at the back



Keith Walter and Time Dews (wearing hood)