

# 4TH OF JULY NIGHT DIVE

The day started out a little on the wet side. We made our way through the many highway wrecks toward our destination—Little Deeper. The forecast called for a break in the weather by the time we were scheduled to go out and we crossed our fingers. The boat was sold out and we waited for the break that would allow us to dive. We figured out what had gone wrong. Karen had forgotten the Pineapple and I'd forgotten the Oreos. We won't make that mistake again! The sky lightened and we headed out—only an hour past our scheduled departure time. It was a magical night. The seas were flat, we had two night dives—not the usual twilight, then night dive. Glowing eyes were everywhere we shined our

Photo by Jeri L. Curley



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light. Lobster were out thumbing their noses at us. They always seem to know when we can't take them! I was trying out a couple of diopters that would allow me to take super macro photos. I quickly realized that I had to get very close to focus! Not easy when fish are swimming away! I didn't even try to get the eyeball photos of the turtles we saw! At one point I looked over and saw the sun. No wait, that's a death ray. Blinded temporarily by Anthony's light, I didn't realize that a little burr fish was headed straight toward me. Since he was swimming too close to get any photos, I tried to shield him from the light and point him toward the safety of the reef. But he'd have none of that. I cradled him in my hands, trying

to block some of the light, then I pointed him toward the reef. As he swam away, I noticed a movement not far away. An octopus! Stand still little octopus! Brittlestars were out as well. I didn't even notice the cryptic teardrop crab in the photo with the bristle worm and brittlestar. I guess that's why they call him cryptic. We headed out to the Brass Ring for Nitrogen Scrubbing essentials and long discussions of the cool things we saw. It was a late night, but the water was warm and full of critters to see and photograph.

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Night dives Rock! Let's do it again!

—Jeri L. Curley