Overview of Curtin Bluff on Antigua

This was our second time staying at this amazing resort and we will be back next year. We were in room 75, the "Honeymoon suite" and it just could not have been better. The staff is like family to the resort and treat guests like cousins. The waterfront people have worked there dozens of years, so the reef is like their backyard with them knowing details like exactly where the octopus lives and spotted drum hides. The food was delicious with the lunch buffet among the best meals. They have a broad wine list, but we found the house wine delicious, so never bothered to purchase the fine wines they offer. The resort has a relaxed atmosphere, but the activity level is up to the guest. There are many tennis courts, Hobie cats, kayaks, paddle and sail boards, water skiing and tubing all available – but resting on the beach is also an often used "activity".

Fish identifications are done using three guides by Paul Humann and Ned DeLoach titled "Reef Fish", "Reef Creatures" and "Reef Coral". The "Fish" book is only fish; the "Creatures" book includes many genera including arthropods, cephalopods, mollusks, worms, sponges, jellyfish and more. The "Coral" book includes many types of corals, algae and sea plants.

There are also online sites including the excellent https://reefguide.org/carib/ which is very helpful for corals and sponges.

The fish, algae and land animals are identified with a high confidence but the sponges and corals are to a lesser degree of confidence. Often algae imbed themselves in sponges, making them green or purple when the base color is brown, for example. Fish sizes are of course estimates.

Identification corrections are welcome!

About the Photography: Bob used a **"GoPro 4 Black"** and Sharon used a **RICOH WG4** underwater camera. Both are excellent cameras. The Ricoh does not have the fisheye distortion, so longer distance shots are better. Often the color balance is more uniform for the Ricoh as well. The GoPro has a pole for reaching under shelves. I set it to a 1-second time lapse, so when I dive down, I hit "go" and just let it shoot. Then I use "preview" in my computer to selects the good shots. Most of the land pictures used an iPhone 8S.

To get good pictures underwater, the key is getting close to your subject. Try to shoot on sunny days. When diving down, be careful of your bubbles, as many great shots get ruined by bunches of tiny bubbles between you and the subject. Most pictures are then shoved through Photoshop where "Auto Levels" removes constant background colors and some (few) needed "Shadows/Highlights" adjustments if in dark shadow of a cave or coral. I never use color balance or Hue/Saturation alterations. The pictures were then loaded into iPhoto for rotation and cropping. The iPhoto "Export/Web page" function was used to build the index sets for the webpage. The controlling "buttons" in the website are simply hand written in HTML pointing to the iPhoto built sets.