



# THE SAFETY STOP

COJO's MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

On Location from: COJO Diving World Headquarters  
158 Garden Grove Road, Lincoln, NB, Canada

ISSUE 52

## What's New

Welcome to the **May 2015** edition of The COJO Diving **Safety Stop Newsletter**.

**Spring is still trying to spring!!!**

**April** has been yet another busy month but COJO can't wait for **May** and warmer temps! Summer is coming maybe just **not this year!!!** During **April** COJO ran several courses in both **New Brunswick and Ontario**... Woo Hoo!



COJO "Joe" headed to **Ontario** for a much needed break from Connie. She can be a handful!! And of course found a few dive sites while he was there.

The **Spring PADI Open Water Diver** course kicked off with students in the pool learning new skills. Awesome job to all students and to Instructor **Juanita!! Claire** and **Matt** took a **Discover Scuba Diving** class for their first breaths underwater.. Woo Hoo!! Congratulations to **Alex and Dale**, well done!!

This month COJO is continuing to work on plans with partner **Nature Trust of New Brunswick** to explore New Brunswick's unbelievable hidden treasures!!

COJO encourages you to send in your pictures for the **Photo Of The Month**. If your picture gets chosen, your picture and name will be published in the Safety Stop and you could win a coupon redeemable for merchandise or services at COJO Diving.

Thanks and Safe Diving!!

**Connie and Joe**  
COJO Diving



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### Courses During April

**What a month!!** It's starting to get busy now!! During April, we managed to run the following courses:

- **PADI – Self-Reliant Course**
- **DAN – Oxygen Provider**
- **PADI – Discover SCUBA Course**
- **PADI – Open Water Diver**
- **PADI – Dive Master Course**

What an exciting month for some exciting training!!



### Courses To Come

During May COJO will be crazy busy running the following courses!!

- **Continuing – PADI Dive Master Course**
- **09 May – PADI Discover Scuba (Nature Trust of NB Group)**
- **12 May – PADI Advanced Open Water (classroom)**
- **14 May – PADI Enriched Air (classroom)**
- **16-18 May – PADI Advanced Open Water (dives)**
- **20 May – PADI Self-Reliant Course (classroom), 23 May (dives)**
- **23 May – PADI Open Water (pool), PADI Discover Scuba**
- **25, 28 May – IANTD Normoxic Diver (classroom)**
- **30-31 May – PADI Open Water (checkout dives)**

May through to September are absolutely **AWESOME** with courses and if you would like information on a course you don't see here or on our Training Calendar, contact us at [cojodiving@gmail.com](mailto:cojodiving@gmail.com) for more details!!



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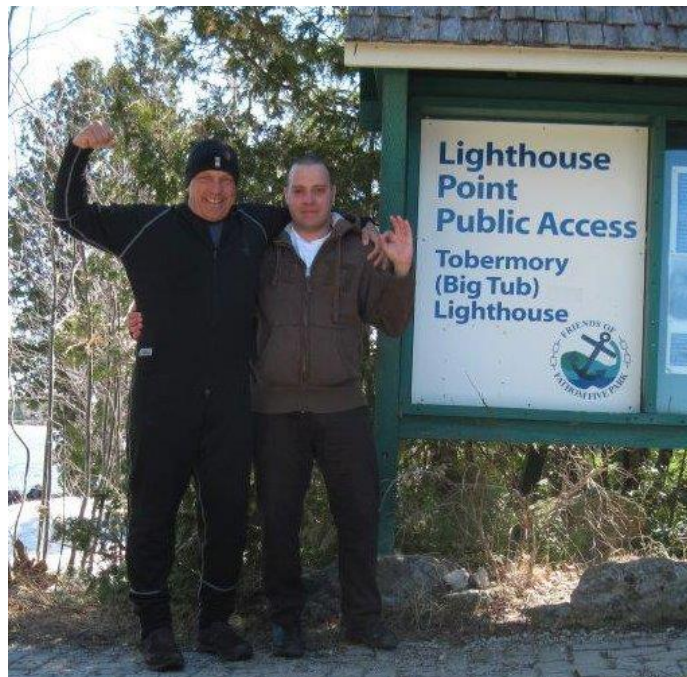
### EVENTS DURING APRIL

#### Wreck Diving Tobermory

Joe had to travel to [Ontario](#) for work and decided to get some weekend diving in for a change! He found that [Wreck Diving](#) in [April](#) can be really cold!!

Joe has been diving his guts out in [Tobermory](#), [Brockville](#) and in [Essex County](#)!! He teed up with the [Aquateers of Canada](#), the local Base Borden SCUBA Club for fills and tank rentals while there!! Special thanks to the Aquateers!! While he is Essex County, he stayed at [Town's Estates](#), a beautiful Bed and Breakfast in Harrow and diving out of [Drexler Diving Systems](#) with [Mike Drexler](#) and [Jeff Omstead](#)!!

Joe and Miki were in [Tobermory](#) to do a [PADI Self-Reliant Diver](#) course.. great job Miki!!





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### Kingsclear Expedition



On **April 2<sup>nd</sup>**, COJO hosted the **Kingsclear Expedition** presentation. This is a large expedition that will go on during the summer of 2015 where **COJO Diving's Exploration Group** will be searching for, mapping and laying line through the old Kingsclear Settlement in New Brunswick!! This promises to be one of the best expeditions yet with tons of insight into the local community pre-Mactaquac Dam!!

### JOE Awarded the PADI MSDT Rating!



Photo credit: Edna Leone Martin

Joe received his **PADI Master Scuba Diver Trainer** rating in **April**.. awesome achievement!!! Being an **MSDT** shows Joe has the experience and certifications to offer all the training a diver needs to become a PADI Master Scuba Diver – the ultimate recreational diver rating.

Contact us on how to start (or continue!!) your journey to a **Master Scuba Diver** certification! Also stay tuned for a program to run this Fall, Sep – Oct where we will offer a selection of Specialty courses to help you reach your goal of **Master Scuba Diver**.



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### EVENTS DURING MAY

#### Annual Gear Sale & Swap

That's right it's back!! Time to check your garage and gear boxes and clear out unneeded gear! This May 10 event is a chance for divers to sell off **unwanted gear** that is someone else's **treasure**!! Shop samples and discontinued items will also be available. Cash only or trade for table purchases!!

Setup 9-10am (Sellers Only), Sale 10am - 2pm (Woo Hoo!!!)

Tables will be setup beside the store (or inside if bad weather).

Check out the [Facebook Event](#) page for just a few of the items that will be for sale!!

#### May Long Weekend – Deer Island!!



Connie and Joe will be on Deer Island May 16 – 18 to run a PADI Advanced Open Water Course. So excited!! All AOW students will receive a reusable Intova Snap Sights film camera for the photography dive!!

- May 16** – 5:30pm – **Navigation Dive**
- May 17** – 12pm – **Underwater Naturalist**
- May 17** – 4:30pm – **Drift Dive**
- May 17** – 6:20pm – **Photography Dive**
- May 18** – 12:55pm – **Deep Dive**



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### New River Island Expedition Brief

On May 22 Joe will talk about the **August** expedition at New River Beach with diving at the New River Island Nature Preserve in Maces Bay. The goal is to conduct **underwater marine life surveys** to determine the organization and health of the shore line sites, and provide that data to the **Nature Trust of New Brunswick and REEF Organization**. This is a weekend trip based on the mainland with boat/kayak travel to the island each day.

## MORE UPCOMING COURSES AND EVENTS!!

**June 3** – COJO Pro Review

**June 5-7** – PADI Rescue Diver Course

**June 15, 17 19** – Normoxic Trimix (classroom)

**June 18** – River Cleanup Dive with the Fredericton Anglers Club

**June 27 – July 1** – Normoxic Trimix Course (Quebec)

**TBD** in **June** will be a REEF Surveyor course – this is a free course to teach divers how to identify and record marine life surveys for REEF.org. We will sponsor a GAFC (Great Annual Fish Count) dive in **July** at a **super secret** (OK, just yet to be determined!!) **New Brunswick Dive Site!**

Also starting in **June** we will be at the **Tara Manor Inn in St. Andrews** running monthly **Discover Scuba** courses!! Contact the **Tara Manor Inn** for more information and to Register!



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# And Now, Doc Octo!!

## Assessing Risk



*On a long enough timeline, the survival rate for everyone drops to zero.*  
**Fight Club**

Every activity in life carries with it some risk. In the US, 450 people a year die falling out of bed, while another 13 are crushed to death wrestling those big vending machines for free snacks. Some may argue that the benefits associated with the necessities of living such as eating, sleeping or working justifies taking some risk. But what about the risks associated with things that aren't absolutely necessary? In this month's column we will touch on just that; how we assess the risks associated with diving.

First, let me spoil the ending. Here is a bitter truth that all psychologists know, we suck at assessing risk. The problem is that most of our thinking, and that includes the assessment of risk, is done using mental shortcuts called heuristics. Psychologists tell us using heuristics saves time and usually we get a workable answer. But sometimes these mental shortcuts fail and wow, do they fail miserably. Just look at Las Vegas. I think we can all agree that those beautiful casinos were built because the house wins more often than the players. Why does the house win? News flash, because we suck at assessing risk and the house doesn't. Don't believe me? Let's do a quick experiment and test your skill to assess probability. Imagine a die with four green faces and two red faces. The die will be rolled 20 times and the sequence of greens (G) and reds (R) will be recorded. Which is the most likely sequence; RGRRR, GRGRRR or GRRRRR? If you picked the second sequence, well you'd be wrong. You're in good company, but you are still wrong. The correct answer is the first sequence, if you don't believe me do the math. The point of this example is that quick answers are often flawed. Psychologists call flaws in these mental shortcuts cognitive biases. Now, let's look at a few of the common biases that might make you take unnecessary risks while diving.

**The Optimism or affect bias.** "It's just a beautiful day and I feel great, what could go wrong?" Here's the point; nature, physics and physiology don't care that you "just feel great." How you feel has nothing to do with the risk of an activity, your performance or the need to prepare and train. I'm sure Scott will back me up on this one, but the universe doesn't care about you. Even if it did, chances are pretty good it hates you. Sheck Exley, one of the pioneers of cave diving, spent a great deal of time analyzing cave diving



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fatalities. From this analysis he distilled many of the rules of safe diving we still use today. One common theme in many of his grim case reports; people who broke all the basic rules just couldn't imagine anything could happen.

**The Dunning-Kruger effect.** Seems for some people, the less they know (or the less skill they have) the greater their confidence. Psychologists studied this phenomenon after hearing of the bank robber McArthur Wheeler. Wheeler being a bright fellow, had heard that lemon juice could be used as invisible ink. This gentleman would cover himself with lemon juice prior to a robbery to render himself, well invisible. You ask yourself, how could anyone be that stupid? Well, in Wheeler's mind he was a master criminal. Beware, there are people that believe despite minimal dive training, they can tackle any challenge. Of course they are wrong, there is no substitute for the slow and steady acquisition of any skill. Ironically, people with the most skill, often underestimate the degree and importance of that skill.

**The Gamblers fallacy.** This is the belief that individual random events are influenced by prior random events. This is the reason people wear diapers while running the slots in Vegas. They figure that because the machine has not paid out, it soon will. The diapers are there because their bladders usually give up before the machine does. Of course that sounds crazy, but let's do another thought experiment. I flip a coin and it has pulled heads for the last ten tosses. What is the chance the next toss will be heads? Of course, it is 50%. The probability of an independent event is not influenced by the preceding random events. So how could this pertain to diving? How about not checking the oxygen content of your dive gas? Sure, every other time it was fine. Just because you got away with cutting corners and breaking rules, doesn't mean your good fortune will continue. As often quoted; "These problems tend to be self-correcting".

**The Availability Heuristic.** In these instances people overestimate the risks associated with dramatic, publicized or personal events. Conversely, people underestimate the risks of the mundane. For example, a few years ago everyone was alarmed that a great white was found in the Bay of Fundy. Family members feared for my life, I was just a shark meal waiting to happen. Not very likely, just look at the annual Diver's Alert Network fatality report. The major cause of diver fatality in my age group? Not sharks, that's clear, nope plain old boring heart attacks brought on by high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes and smoking. Who could have seen that coming? But the point is that a death by shark attack, even though very unlikely is assigned a higher risk because of its violence. Similarly, common events are assigned lower risk because they are everyday. Forget the sharks, lack of fitness and unattended cardiovascular risks will kill more divers than Jaws. We're not gonna need a bigger boat.

**Conformity Bias.** A neat set of experiments from psychologist Solomon Asch in the 50's told us things about ourselves we probably didn't want to know. Basically, we are a bunch of spineless wimps who cave at the first smell of group disapproval. Here is the experiment. Solomon presented subjects with a series of lines and asked them to find two that matched in length. When subjects were alone there was no problem, people could easily match lines of equal length. However, add a group of people hired to influence the experimental subject and Ta-da; people will ignore their own views and side with the





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group. Ok, let's imagine we are at a dive site and it looks bad. The group feels that after all the effort to get there, we should just dive. "Come on, you wimp lets dive, and while you're at it, have a cigarette." Beware the power of group influence. The dive credo "any diver can end any dive for any reason" was created for just this situation.

**Cult indoctrination.** If you think you are too clever to fall for any of the above logical flaws, you're wrong. As humans we are wired to listen to authority figures, follow those of higher status and defer to the group. Further, out of necessity we are forced to use flawed mental shortcuts to save time. However, knowing how we think is, I feel, the first step in avoiding some of these logical missteps.

Now, go out there and dive like Connie told you.



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### Featured Certification **PADI Master Scuba Diver**



Join the best of the best in recreational scuba diving and live the dive life as a **PADI Master Scuba Diver**. The **Master Scuba Diver** rating places you in an elite group of respected divers who have earned this rating through both significant experience and scuba training. [Fewer than two percent](#) of divers ever achieve this rating. When you flash your Master Scuba Diver card, people know that you've spent time underwater in a variety of environments and had your share of dive adventures.

Every diver, who is at least 12 years old, should aim for Master Scuba Diver!

The path starts with earning a **PADI Open Water Diver** certification, followed by **PADI Advanced Open Water Diver** and **PADI Rescue Diver** (or qualifying certifications). You also need to earn five **PADI Specialty Diver** certifications and have logged a minimum of 50 dives.

**Contact us** for more information on how to start your journey to **PADI Master Scuba Diver!!**



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April to June 2015

### FEATURED PRODUCT

## REUSABLE UNDERWATER SPORTS CAMERA!!

Sign up for ANY course with COJO scheduled in April through June and get an INTOVA SS01 Sports Utility Camera with Flash for just \$13+HST!!

This film camera is **pre-loaded** and with a **100+ foot depth rating** and **built-in flash** it is great above and below water!!





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### Photo of the Month

This picture was submitted by **Connie Bishop**. It's the first underwater picture at Deer Island Point since the never-ending Winter started!! Beautiful picture Connie!! Keep up the awesome work!!

For her picture, Connie wins an **all-expenses PAID** vacation weekend on Deer Island in May... Woo Hoo!!!



**Keep sending in those pictures!!!**



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### Other News

We would love for you to follow us on Facebook. Become a friend of COJO Diving at <http://www.facebook.com/COJODiving>

Our book "Sidemounting for the Recreational Diver" is available either In Store or by e-mail. For information about the most awesome way to dive send a note to [info@cojodiving.com](mailto:info@cojodiving.com) !!



Our new book, "The Technical Tao of Joe" will be out this summer!! Don't miss out!! This book gives you insights on Joe's ways of teaching. Awesome for anyone taking a course through COJO or from anywhere!!

Our Saguenay Trimix course and dive trip has been moved from May to the July 1<sup>st</sup> weekend. Please check out our COJO Training Calendar at [www.cojodiving.com](http://www.cojodiving.com) for details!!

Come in and visit us at the [COJO Diving World Headquarters!!](#) We have a beautiful facility with a nice fireplace to sit and warm up at after a cold day of diving. There is always lots of coffee and hot chocolate, free internet and Joe usually has fresh popcorn on!!

Thanks and we are looking forward to diving with you soon!!

Connie and Joe!!