



DIVER

PROFILE

by Andy Murray



Liza Cole was appointed the Marine Ranger for St Abbs & Eyemouth Voluntary Marine Reserve in June. She is a keen recreational diver having been diving for 9 years, she is also a PADI Rescue Diver. Liza has been working in Marine Conservation since 1996, and has been lucky enough to work in some fantastic places including Lundy Marine Nature Reserve in Devon and now St Abbs!

WHERE DID YOU LEARN TO DIVE?

Believe it or not, I learnt to dive when I lived in deepest, darkest Mid Wales! Not in the murky waters of the peat stained lakes that are plentiful in the area, but in the sea of St David's in Pembrokeshire where I used to head whenever I had a free weekend.

WHAT TYPE OF DIVER ARE YOU?

Well, a sort of international freelance amateur really! All sounds very grand but basically someone who gets a dive in whenever the weather is kind and a buddy available, in the UK and abroad! I'm definitely not a techie. I dive to look at the view, enjoy the marine life and experience the feeling of being weightless.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE PIECE OF KIT?

Difficult, but I guess the piece of kit that I would take to a desert island would be my mask as even without any other kit, this would enable me to see the life on the reef!

DIVE BUDDY - WHO DO YOU ENJOY DIVING WITH MOST?

I've dived with many great buddies over the years but I suppose my top two would be my sister, Kate, and my friend, Maggie. With either of these I know I'm in the water with someone who dives for the same reasons I do, someone I trust & with whom I can communicate effortlessly underwater (well, most of the time anyway!). Makes for a relaxing and enjoyable dive.

FAVOURITE DIVE SITE?

My favourite British dive site so far would have to be Gannet's Stone off the east coast of Lundy. A pinnacle covered in Jewel Anemones, Pink Seafans and all the fantastic life that Lundy is famous for, plus a pair of resident fin-pulling grey seals! Of course, I've yet to dive St Abbs so this could soon change!

BEST COUNTRY VISITED?

The best dive destination I have visited so far has been Fiji, where I spent three months on a Coral Cay Conservation expedition last year monitoring the coral reefs. Some of the sites we visited had never been dived before, and it was awe inspiring to see the diversity of fish life as well as the absolutely pristine coral reefs.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO GO DIVING?

The chance to see marine life literally in its element as well as the overall feel-good factor that diving brings.

DREAM DIVE DESTINATION

There are so many places at home and abroad that I'd love to dive that its difficult to choose, but I guess it would have to be the Galapagos Islands.

WHAT BUGS YOU MOST ABOUT DIVING?

Divers who have no awareness or respect for anything or anyone around them. I suppose you'd call them the mask kicking, marine-life-bashers!

BEST DIVE BOOK EVER READ?

Stars Beneath the Sea by Trevor Norton, which tells the amazing stories of the pioneers of diving well before the time of Jacques Cousteau. It's almost unbelievable what these crazy characters got up to, but thank goodness they did what they did!

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE DIVING TO NON-DIVERS

Better than outer space – you're weightless, but unlike space, there's so much to see!