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### Categories

- Current Issue
- Cruising Blog
- Advertisers Index
- Southern Boating TV
- Editors Blog
- View
- Southeast Report
- Chesapeake Report
- Gulf Coast Report
- Caribbean Currents
- Bahamas Update
- Stem to Stern
- Weekend Workshop
- Engine Room
- New Electronics
- New Boats
- Destinations
- Features
- At Ease
- Order Back Issues
- Newsletter

## Bahamas Update

By admin ~ February 4th, 2011. Filed under: [Bahamas Update](#).



### Bimini marinas protect the shark population; Immigration policies are clarified.

By Sara Lewis



#### No sharks killed here

Three marinas on Bimini have joined the international Shark-Free Marina Initiative in an effort to aid conservation of shark species threatened by overfishing. Registered Shark-Free Marinas participate in a voluntary program under which they agree to prohibit sharks from being landed at their facility. The Initiative's mission is to work with local businesses and fishermen to develop realistic goals, however; catching a non-endangered shark is not prohibited, but

member marinas encourage anglers to practice catch-and-release techniques.

"One of our main focuses in 2011 will be to encourage responsible use of our ocean," said Rafael Reyes, president of Bimini Bay Resort, which is the latest Bahamian marina to join the Shark-Free Marina Initiative. Other Bimini members include the Guy Harvey Outpost at the Bimini Big Game Club and Bimini Sands Resort and Marina. The island itself is well known for its shark research facilities, including the former Lerner Marine Laboratory and today's Bimini Biological Station, informally known as SharkLab. [sharkfreemarinas.com](http://sharkfreemarinas.com)

#### Tips for extending your stay

We've seen reports on Bahamas cruisers' nets of confusion among some non-native cruisers over applying for an extension to their stay in the Bahamas. As we discussed last month, the stated policy of the Bahamas Immigration Department is that all citizens from the United States, Canada and United Kingdom are "landed at all ports for 30 days". If you want more time, you can request an extension, which may be approved following an interview with an Immigration officer.

Southern Boating recently spoke with Brent Symonette, Bahamas Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, who confirmed this policy. "If you want to stay longer than 30 days, the officer has the authority to give it to you, if he thinks it's warranted," Brent said.

Don't forget, an extension is at the discretion of the Immigration officer, and it's a courtesy, not a guarantee. The best tips we can give you for having your request granted are these:

- The most favorable ports of entry to clear in, as far as getting a longer stay, are

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locations with both a Customs Officer and an Immigration Officer; for example, Nassau, Bimini, Chub Cay, West End, Port Lucaya, and Marsh Harbour.

- Take great care to fill out ALL the forms with accuracy and completeness. An error can affect the length of stay given or cause you to return to the office the next day.
- A neat and presentable appearance is important. Officers will be looking to limit the stay of those who appear to be a security threat as well as those who may be seeking to take the jobs of Bahamians.

Whatever time period you are granted initially, you can always visit the Bahamas Immigration's head office in Nassau to have it extended, without waiting until the last week of your initial time period to apply at another port of entry.

Currently, the working phone numbers for Immigration in Nassau are 242-322-8504 or 242-322-7530; Nassau Immigration Dock is 242-323-3330; Nassau Immigration, Airport is 242-377-7032.

## Resort Reports

**Long Island**—At Salt Pond, the waterfront resort Long Island Breeze has added a new rental cottage as well as a sturdier floating dinghy dock for its patrons. The resort's main restaurant is open for the winter season; the Patio Bar & Grill is open year-round. Contact 954-646-0364 or visit [longislandbreezeresort.com](http://longislandbreezeresort.com).

**Eleuthera**—At Cotton Bay Club, under construction are a Tom Fazio-designed golf course, a multi-storey clubhouse with dining room and beautiful ocean views, and an oceanfront pool. Call 954-915-4616 or 239-537-3553, or visit [discovercottonbay.com](http://discovercottonbay.com).

**Grand Bahamas**—A relatively new luxury resort at the far West End of Grand Bahama has been gaining attention in the upscale travel press. Nandana is a private tropical hideaway set within an exclusive, gated enclave. Its Asian-style mansion is situated on a secluded beach; guest accommodations also include "pavilions", "bengalas" and a tent-like "canopy suite". The resort's deep-water canal provides access from the ocean for yachts up to 100-plus feet. [nandanaresort.com](http://nandanaresort.com)

## Navigation notes

**Bimini**—The entrance channel at North Bimini is shallower than charted on Chart BIM 3, p. 54 of Explorer Chartbook Near Bahamas, 5th edition. A January 3, 2011, survey by the Explorer Team found the controlling depth to be 1.7 meters (5 2/3 feet) in the area of 25° 42.70' N, 79° 18.25' W. There was a little deeper water east of the dashed track. The sandbar west of this position has encroached on the entrance channel. Two larger buoys (red and green) are easily seen from well offshore, plus one smaller green buoy closer in to shore. The large red buoy is almost directly on the Explorer waypoint, so caution should be taken on approach. Channel buoys here are unreliable as the sand is fluid and storms may take them out.

**George Town, Great Exuma**—There has been a buoy missing off Sand Dollar Beach in Elizabeth Harbour at 23°30.41N, 075°44.70W since December 23, 2010. It will be replaced when weather allows.

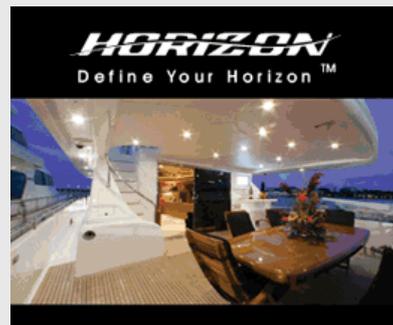
## Fuel and Dockage Rates

For a monthly update on current fuel and dockage prices in the Bahamas, check [explorercharts.com](http://explorercharts.com). Once you're on the website, you'll notice that the 5th edition of the Explorer Chartbook Far Bahamas (including 12 new pages on the Turks and Caicos) is now available.

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