

## What to Pack for a Dive Trip to the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary

The following checklist is a suggestion only and is based on the personal experiences of sanctuary staff. Be sure to check with the dive boat operator and/or the dive shop for specific needs on your trip.

- a copy of sanctuary regulations
- your certification card(s) (including your Nitrox/Enriched Air certification card, if you plan to use Nitrox)
- your dive accident insurance card (i.e. DAN), if you have this type of insurance
- dive gear
- mask (if you require a prescription mask, its always wise to bring an extra)
- fins & booties
- snorkel
- buoyancy control vest
- regulator setup
- depth gauge
- dive computer \*\*\*This item is not required, but is highly recommended, as it will help you track your repetitive, deep dives over the course of the trip. Make sure you know how to use your computer and pack your instruction manual. Have the batteries replaced before you head offshore.
- timer
- dive knife (for safety only; no stabbing the corals or your buddy!)
- dive light (if you want to participate in night dives)
- several cyalumes for night dives (colored glow sticks like kids use at Halloween); electric ones are also available from dive shops, but the some dive boats do not allow the flashing/strobe-like lights because other divers mistake them for the boat marker)
- weight belt – make sure to bring this even if the boat is providing your weights.
- weights, if you are traveling by car (for those traveling by air, you will need to make arrangements with the dive shop/charter vessel to get the appropriate amount of weights for you)
- tank – if you bring your own, make sure it has been tested (and passed!)
- wet suit (bottom temperatures will be around 80F in the summer) – there might be "stinging things" hanging about in the water, so some protection is nice
- a couple of plastic hangers to hang up your wet suit and towels between dives
- tie wraps to secure your hangers to the pole
- photography equipment, if you wish (don't forget extra film and/or batteries!)
- inflatable emergency signaling device (fluorescent orange or yellow sausage)-optional to own, but some dive boats will provide these if you don't have your own and require you to take one on every dive
- basic spare parts for any of your equipment (i.e. straps, o-rings, cable ties) - you would hate to miss a dive because of an equipment malfunction!
- sunscreen
- swimsuit
- towel(s)
- extremely casual clothes
- hat
- sunglasses, spare glasses or contact lenses
- personal hygiene articles
- field guides. \*\*If you own the REEF Identification series, definitely bring it along. For those of you who are interested, the series contains the REEF Fish Identification, Creature Identification and Coral

Identification. The series is by Paul Humann and Ned DeLoach and is published by New World Publications.

- ❑ **NOTE: Cabins on some dive boats are co-ed with privacy curtains around individual bunks. Pack accordingly.**
- ❑ pair of warm clothes (some dive boats are kept well air conditioned to reduce effects of motion sickness)
- ❑ motion sickness remedies (generally recommended to take 2 to 3 hours prior to boarding; if you are extremely prone to sea sickness, start taking a day or two in advance; this also helps determine if the medication itself has a negative effect on you)
- ❑ money for:
  - ❑ meals and travel not covered by your trip fee
  - ❑ souvenirs from the dive boat
  - ❑ tip for crew (OPTIONAL)
- ❑ yourself, complete with a spirit of adventure!

If you have extras of any gear, it never hurts to have it along in case you lose something. However, space is limited on-board most dive boats, so try to travel light. You will most likely be living out of your suitcase.

**REMEMBER: Spear fishing is prohibited within the sanctuary. It is also against the law to have spear fishing equipment on board your vessel if you stop within the sanctuary. Leave your spear fishing gear at home!!**