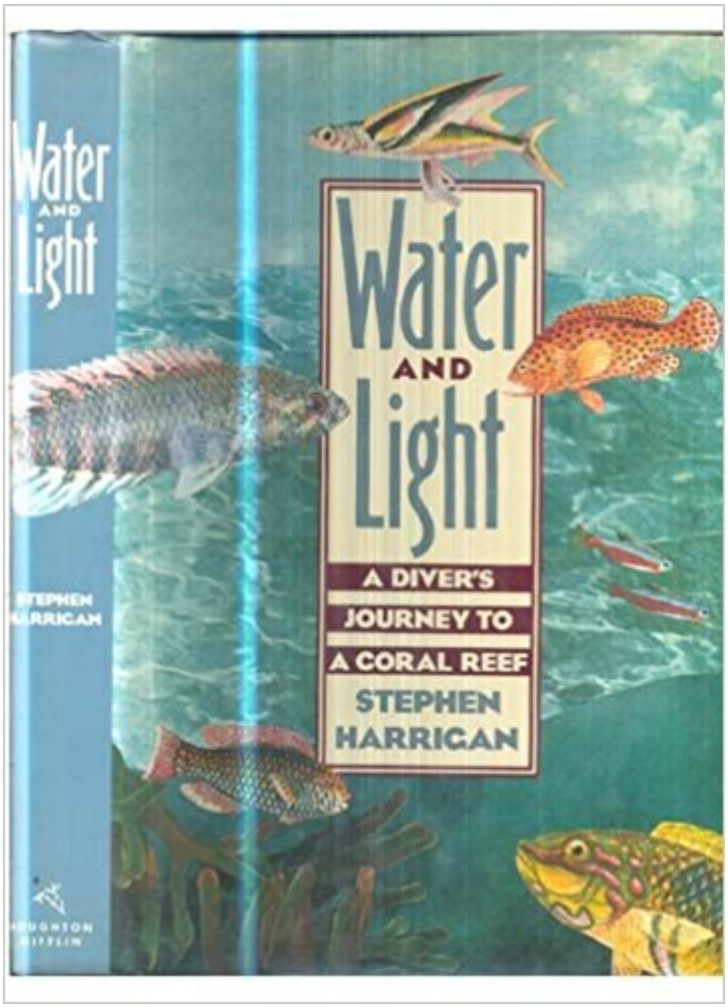
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Water And Light: A Diver's Journey To A Coral Reef



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Synopsis

A celebration of diving takes readers to the reef off Grand Turk Island in the Caribbean, offering insights into its myriad sea creatures and describing the humans on land. By the author of Aransas and Jacob's Well.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

One of the great joys of diving, writes the author, is discovering the spaciousness of the underwater world. Novelist Harrigan (Aransas)sic gives a sparkling account of an extended visit to the Caribbean's Grand Turk Island, where he explored a coral reef and observed such colorful sea creatures as polyps, stingrays and octupuses. Entranced by the grace with which turtles glide since one can't 'fly' thru water? or stet 'flights' as poetic effect?/meant for poetic effect, but glide is good.gs through water, he muses about the species in a long essay, amusingly noting that the leatherback is the only variety without staggeringly bad breath. Harrigan also reports on his encounters with other divers, one of whom he saved from drowning, and his experience as the first paying guest at an underwater lodge in Key Largo (Debussy's La Mer was among the records in his room). As he surveys diving through the ages, the author hopes for the development of lighter gear. The book may well inspire readers to check their equipment and begin planning their next trip to a coral reef. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.

A leisurely tour of the coral reefs of Grand Turk Island, where novelist Harrigan (Jacob's Well, 1984)

learns about nature and himself. Diving has always meant a great deal to Harrigan, but now, living far from the sea and worried that the activity is becoming nothing more than a hobby, he decides to spend an extensive period diving in the Caribbean. There, he will ``study the natural history of the coral reef, but the motivation was not as clear or, perhaps, as worthy. I wanted to be, at least for a time, my underwater self.'' He checks into a local motel on the island--a desolate and relatively unspoiled place where salt was once collected from inland pans--and begins his diving explorations. As he explores the reefs, dives down part of the great wall that edges the nearby 7,000-foot-deep channel, and chats to locals, Harrigan relates old diving adventures as far apart as Australia and Mexico. He observes the variety of fish and plant life, explains that coral is actually an animal, not a plant, and includes such diving lore as the story of the development of the aqualung--an invention that, as Jacques Cousteau wrote, meant that ``From this day forward we would swim across miles of country no man had known.'' Catching conches for his dinner, Harrigan laments the decline of the sea-turtle, ``a great being, venerable, unknowable,'' and admits to being angry with dolphins because he fails to interest them. Hoping to be transformed by the reef, his underwater destiny acknowledged, he ruefully realizes how indifferent the teeming underwater world is to his presence. He is ready to go home. A graceful and low-keyed celebration of diving and the dazzling underwater world it reveals, as much for the underwater enthusiast as for the armchair traveler. -- Copyright Ã Â©1992, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

This is the best book about scuba diving I’ve ever read and should be read by anyone and everyone that is interested in scuba diving. It does a fabulous job of describing the great things about scuba diving without telling you what you already know. That said, it is also a great story and would probably be enjoyed by non-scuba divers. This is a great gift idea for a diving inclined loved one. One warning... one of the reviewers recommended reading this to get your diving fix when you aren’t going to be able to get underwater for a while; NOT TRUE. I found the exact opposite, this book only heightened my desire to go diving to near pathological levels! If you’ve read this, I’d also recommend reading Neutral Buoyancy by Tim Ecott which is another good book about diving. It has more history and straight information than this book.

harrigan is one of the best naturalist writers around. all of his essays are outstanding reads (not to diminish in any way his novels as well).

Great book, but I just couldn’t give it 5 stars like many others did. I reserve 5 stars for truly

monumental works. In this rating system, if you rate The Lord of the Rings, Les Misrables, Great Expectations, and The Grapes of Wrath 5 stars, can you honestly count this work with them?

UT Press plans to re-issue this book in late 98 or 1999. This book simply gets it right. Without falling into the nature writing trap of endless superlatives, Harrigan lyrically describes what it's like to dive and appreciate the ocean. The book is full of interesting bits of natural history and biology, as well as amusing anecdotes from the author's actual experiences in Grand Turk. Turtles, dolphins, a whale shark, octopi, sharks, lobsters, the usual suspects among reef fish and Harrigan himself all are examined, explained, and ultimately, understood.Harrigan is a writer who dives, and the prose in places is exceptional. See his description of seeing a sea turtle from below ("like a rock that sprouted wings.") More importantly, he writes like an aficionado of the sport, not another ignorant but curious reporter. His enthusiasm for the subject, combined with his talent as a wordsmith, elevates this book to the same level as terrestrial classics like John Muir's "The Mountains of California." Nearly anyone who has been diving in the Caribbean, both vacationers and divemasters, who couldn't find the words to express what they felt upon surfacing, will appreciate this book. This novel should become a cult classic in the diving community.

I was in tears by the end of the first chapter-- I thought I was one of a FEW who feels more at home underwater than on the surface. I don't get to dive very often (family, etc.) but whenever I need to "dive", I pull out this book & I'm in Heaven. Harrigan's descriptions of not only what he sees but what feelings these visions invoke move me beyond words, as I think they would anyone who feels the ocean in their blood.

Stephen Harrigan has captured the most enjoyable account of his Diving adventures. I felt myself re-living the events and relating them to my own modest enoyable times spent in the Caribbean recently. Superbly written and hard to put down. Makes airplane flights disappear. Happily discovered we are in the same City too.

When people want to know what it's like to dive, I give them this book. Harrigan has captured the essence of scuba diving. He has nearly expressed the inexpressible.

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