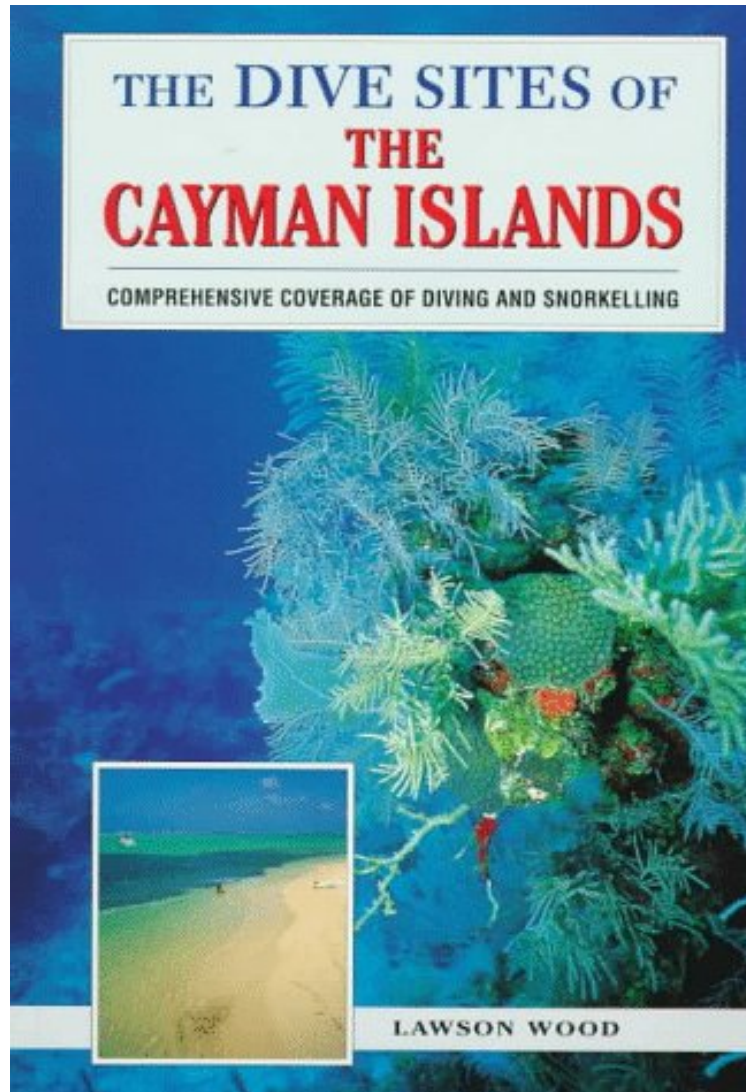


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## The Dive Sites of the Cayman Islands (Dive Sites of the Cayman Islands, 1997)

*Lawson Wood*

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**Lawson Wood : The Dive Sites of the Cayman Islands (Dive Sites of the Cayman Islands, 1997)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Dive Sites of the Cayman Islands (Dive Sites of the Cayman Islands, 1997):

5 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Overrated but comprehensiveBy James Q. SmithWhile I've yet to dive nearly half of the sites in Grand Cayman, I did over 40 dives in Little Cayman, LYB, and covered over 70% of the North sites listed in Wood's text. The description of the reefs range from stellar to adequate, and quite a number are

inaccurate. Wood is far more comprehensive in covering all sites than other texts in print, but dive guides have tended to cover limited sites in more detail. Lets use Mr. Wood's LYB review as a sample of the book's quality. Both myself and other independent divers who dove Little Cayman this month were surprised to find Mr. Wood's glowing recommendation for divesites listed as 1-8, on LYB Northeastern end; on the same day we dove the traditional Bloody Bay area, visibility on sites 1-8 were less, and the top of the reef often deeper. The terrain was almost flat, with reef laid roughly as fingers in sand perpendicular to shore ... and while healthy and plentiful of life, were of no comparison to what Mr. Wood's calls the 'well dove' areas of Jackson and Bloody Bay. Both longtime resident Sam McCoy and divemaster Lowell comment that they come here only on request ... and need I say someone is 'pushing' us there through clever writing? As for the well worn areas of Jackson, Bloody Bay, McCoy's Wall and westward, they remain stellar ... and here Wood does not detail a review that does these sites justice. Could Mr. Wood have gotten some tips from a Marine Biologist to reduce human pressures on the best reefs in LYB by directing divers elsewhere? The book is handsome and well written, but the content needs added research. Being most comprehensive, the next edition should benefit from dive maps as common in competitor texts, as maps needn't be large, diagrams will suffice, but it needs accuracy. If Mr. Woods hasn't dove all the sites personally, I'm sure a plethora of divers would gladly volunteer their experiences. Mr. Wood spends a section on the text describing emergency procedures, and ways to travel within the Caymans from the USA and Europe. While helpful, any text is likely to be obsolete as it goes to press, so I would not dwell on these issues for long. It would be most interesting to hear the stories of how the reefs were discovered, the perils of Bob Soto and Sam McCoy's early days, the history of Paul's Anchor, the shark tales of Marilyn's Cut, why Donna was so delighted etc., most of which I asked for from bar talk after a day's diving.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Is Out-of-Date - IMHO, Online Information is Better. By SkierGuy This was a great book when it came out, or shortly thereafter. I took this book on my trip to Grand Cayman last month, and found the information woefully outdated. With a couple of major hurricanes damaging some sites, and many more dive sites added since this was published, you're better off researching dive sites with Uncle Google.

4 of 6 people found the following review helpful. the Dive Sites of the Cayman Islands By A Customer As snorkellers, we found the book is generally quite helpful. The information "minimum depth" remains a mystery to us. The detail given for locating some shore access reefs is often insufficiently accurate. For instance, we were unable to find Mitch Miller's Reef, in that "South of Cemetery Road towards Timms Point" was meaningless given the mapping in the book and the lack of meaningful maps available on the island. Too bad, because the description is glowing!

Divers get the grand tour of the best marine sites of Grand Cayman Island, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman Island, where they'll discover: The Cayman Turtle Farm, Stingray City, plus Molly the Manta, and other strange-shaped creatures.