



MID-MORNING SNACK

By Sandy Sondrol

It was late June. We were with DiveTech on the North Wall of Grand Cayman at a dive site called Leslie's Curl.

As we were going along the wall at about 85 feet, a Goliath Grouper had swum by. It was a nice size, probably 5 feet long and 125 to 150 pounds. Then, as we came back along the top of the wall, we came across the same fish resting on the top of the wall.

We could see that it had something in its mouth. On closer observation there was the tail of a sting ray hanging out of its mouth. Closer still and we could see the anal fin of the ray just inside the Grouper's lips.

When we had passed the Grouper earlier in the dive, it had not had anything protruding from its mouth. So, sometime during the 5 minutes between sightings, it had caught a fairly large stingray.

Several of us from the boat watched the Goliath Grouper for 5 to 10 minutes, and it did not move. It was just lying on the coral, moving slowly from side to side with the motion of the water. Even when I moved in very close to snap photos, it remained in one spot.

After returning from the dive, no one that I told the story to knew that Goliath Grouper would eat stingray. However, when you are as big as that fish, you can apparently eat just about anything that you want to.

That Goliath Grouper reminded me of the dive shirt cartoon of the two divers swimming into what appeared to be a cave. But, from a longer distance, it was the gaping mouth of a huge fish. For the stingray, there was more than a kernel of truth to that tee shirt.

