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## **Placencia Inner Reef Laughing Bird Caye**



A National Park and World Heritage Site! This beautiful and unique Caye is located eleven nautical miles east of Placencia. The boat ride takes about 30 minutes to some of the most beautiful dive sites in Southern Belize. The formation of most of the dive sites are fringing reef systems, with spur and groove formations, and occasional drop offs and areas of patch reef. These sites are ideal for entry level and novice divers as there are very weak currents, and many of the sites are protected, and these sites are also suited to experienced and expert divers who have good buoyancy control, and a fine eye for details, as there are many reef critters that will make the dives enjoyable and exciting.

### **Coral Garden**

Location: One half nautical miles southeast of Laughing Bird Caye

Dept: 35-80 feet/10-25mt

Access: Boat

Expertise Rating: Novice

Coral Garden is known for its abundance and variety of coral. Critters include spotted drum, huge lobsters, cleaner shrimp, arrow crabs, and lots of variety of reef fish. Coral mounds separated by sandy patches rise from 100 feet/30mt, to 30 to 40 feet/10 to 12mt from the surface. This dive can be done at either the 70 foot/21mt range or at 40 foot/12mt range.



### **Laughing Bird Drop Off**

Location: East side of Laughing Bird Caye

Depth: 15-80 feet/5-24mt

Access: Shore/boat

Expertise rating: Novice



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At the 15 to 25 feet/5-8mt, sandy patches make this site a perfect location for open water training and checkout dives. A coral wall slopes down gradually from about 25 to 80 feet/8-24mt. Sightings here could include lobsters, barracudas, lizardfish, Nassau grouper, angel fish, furry sea cucumber and lots of other juvenile reef fish.

### **Laughing Bird North**

Location: One nautical mile north of LBC

Depth: 25-80feet/8-24mt

Access: Boat

Expertise Rating: Novice

On top of the slope here are scattered coral patches on the seafloor which makes it a perfect habitat for the protected queen conch. The dive itself is along a slope running from north to south at around 25 to 80 feet/8-24mt. Impressive wire coral and lettuce leaf corals lines the side of this wall and forms a perfect habitat for spotted moray eels, lobsters and trumpet fish. Spotted eagle rays may also be seen gliding along this wall.

### **Laughing Bird South**

Location: One and a half nautical miles south of Laughing Bird Caye

Depth: 25-80ft/8-24mt

Access: Boat

Expertise rating: Novice

At this site a huge canyon, at 50 feet/15mt, runs north to south. This dive can be done either in between or on the east side of the canyon. Lobsters can be found in groups of 4 or 5 hiding out in the crevices of the canyon. On the sandy bottom in between the canyons wall is a usual hiding spot for southern stingrays and nurse sharks. The southern part of the canyon catches a bit of current and is an excellent habitat for healthy coral growth.



### **The Wreck**

Location: 0.2 nautical miles northwest of Laughing Bird Caye



Depth: 30-90 feet/10-27mt

Access: Boat

Expertise Rating: Intermediate

At 90 feet/27mt just off laughing Bird Caye lies the Miss Pamela, a small tugboat, sunk in 2002 to create an artificial reef and an additional dive site in the inner reef. The wreck has created a micro reef with good fish life, including one or two goliath grouper and a huge barracuda preying on schools of silversides sheltering around the wreck. The visibility and dive ability of the wreck is generally wind dependent as bottom sediments are easily stirred up. A dive light is a good accessory to have on this dive.

### **Long Coco Split**

Location: One nautical mile east of Mosquito Caye, about 3 nautical miles from Laughing Bird Caye.

Depth: 25-90ft/8-27mt

Access: Boat

Expertise Rating: Novice

This area has basically the same marine life as dive sites around Laughing Bird Caye. The formation here is a bit different from most sites in Southern Belize and it is also possible to dive a bit deeper here. Most of the activity at this site is at the tip of the split where large schools of silversides can be found here along with bigger predator fish. Black corals and gorgonians give this site a unique appearance as it is inner reef.

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