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At Wakatobi, you don't compromise on comfort to get away from it all. Our private air charter brings you directly to this luxuriously remote island, where all the indulgences of a five-star resort and luxury liveaboard await. Our dive team and private guides ensure your in-water experiences are perfectly matched to your abilities and interests. Your underwater encounters will create lasting memories that will remain vivid and rewarding long after the visit to Wakatobi is concluded. While at the resort, or on board the dive yacht Pelagian, you need only ask and we will gladly provide any service or facility within our power. This unmatched combination of world-renowned reefs and first-class luxuries put Wakatobi in a category all its own.



"A fantastic and unique location with some of the best dive sites we've ever experienced. The sites are great at 25 metres, 15 metres and 5 metres, so perfect for any kind of preference. The service and support was downright luxurious. All in all 5 stars!"

T. Marshall Manson



www.wakatobi.com

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Alejandro Prieto

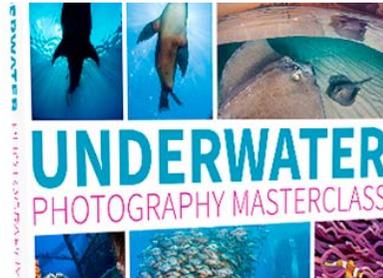
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Underwater Photography

A web magazine Uwp89 Mar/Apr 2016

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Underwater Photography 2001 - 2016
© PR Productions Publisher/Editor
Peter Rowlands
www.pr-productions.co.uk
peter@uwpmag.com

In the music business the second album is always seen as the most important in a band's career. The overwhelming success of their groundbreaking debut album has to be followed with something equally amazing. I am really delighted to report that 'your' second year UPY entries have more than surpassed last year both in numerical and consistent quality terms. You blew us away last year and this year you blew our visual minds.

If ever there was a testament as to the healthy state of underwater photography worldwide, this 2016 Yearbook is the showcase and, for me, the most exciting part is that I suspect the majority of the images in here, and the thousands of entries, were taken in the last 12 months. If this trend continues we will all be part of an annual 'state of the nation' event.

Judging such a prestigious competition is both an honour and a responsibility in equal measure. We three judges have far too many years of uw photography experience between us; years which have moulded our visual tastes without introducing inflexibility for the latest equipment and techniques;

years which, despite their increasing numbers, never cease to provide genuine excitement before viewing each year's UPY entries.

As a result of the above I would like to say 'Thank you' to all those who entered this year but a more focussed (pun intended) 'Thank you' to all those who entered but whose images are not in this Yearbook. The overall standard of entries this year was a big notch higher than last and the increased number of entries made it, quite literally, a fierce competition to judge but that is the very nature of a successful competition.

The other point to make to those whose images are not in this Yearbook is that images are always, and will always be, subjective. Your work was judged by just three people. Put your same work in front of another three experienced underwater photographers and there would almost certainly be a different order; that's the nature of competitions.

I hope this 2016 Yearbook will serve as a reference work that will inspire you to produce even greater images for next year.

Black is the new black

Trends come and go in underwater photography and the latest must surely be deepwater night photography.

This probably started in Hawaii and involves diving at night tethered to a boat with a downlight to attract deepwater life. The subjects are certainly different and, from what I have read, the senses are on full alert in anticipation of what will suddenly appear. It could be anything from small pulsating planktonic life up to large predators speeding in for an evening snack.

Photographically it is a challenge with the size of your subject unknown and, with no natural light or reference, your sense of scale is distorted.

In the UK we have some good locations to practice this style of photography and the west coast of Scotland has probably the best combination of terrain and planktonic life.

Judging from the results I have seen, the hard work seems well worth the effort and some extraordinary marine life is being captured, sometimes for the very first time on jet black, inky black backgrounds.

Every now and then I get an e-mail with an image attached asking if I could use it in UwP and the answer in the past has usually been that we are looking for illustrated articles with several images.

Historically the Parting Shot at the end of each issue of UwP was intended for single images where there is a 'story within a story' but when Tony Myshlyaev sent me his lovely shot (page 73) soon to be followed, coincidentally, by Shane Wasik's (page 74) I thought I'd start "My Shot" as a good place for those single images.

So I'm encouraging you to send your "My Shot" which can be a particular favourite of yours or one which brings back particular memories and should be sent with around 300 words of explanation together with camera details and settings.

I think we've all got a "My Shot" in our archives which deserves to be dusted off and put on show for all to appreciate.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

www.uwpmag.com

You can download all of the 80 winning images from UPY 2016 at
www.upylondon.com/2016yearbook.aspx

News, Travel & Events

UK National Fish Vote

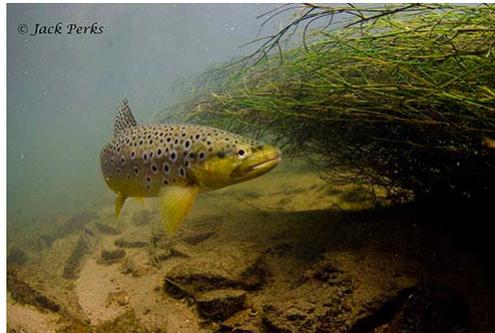
Why have a national fish?

Other countries have national fish with Japan having the Koi carp and South Africa has the Galjoen. The UK already has a national bird with the robin topping the list last year (over 200,000 people voted) We have a plethora of amazing species to be found around our coastline and in freshwater habitats. This vote is a celebration of all things fish and raising awareness for species and issues that face them.

Who can vote?

Anyone! its free and all you need to do its put your email down as verification (all information is kept private and not shared with anyone) Although it has a major interest to anglers theres no reason why anyone else with a interest in fish can't vote from scuba divers, conservationists, aquarists or fish and chip enthusiasts.

As well as the main vote theres some additional questions which are optional to get some info on current subjects like what are the biggest threats to fish, should burbot be reintroduced and should a trust be set up for freshwater fish conservation?



When is the voting?

Voting starts on the 23rd of January and will continue until the 27th February when the top ten will be announced and from those another month of voting will go on until the poll ends on the 26th March and the results will be added up. You won't need to vote again if you have already voted for the first stage.

What to think about when voting

Which species would benefit from being the national fish? - Some fish included on the list have no angling value but are still important additions to british fauna from the huge Basking Shark that visits much of the west coast in the summer to the Vendace the rarest freshwater

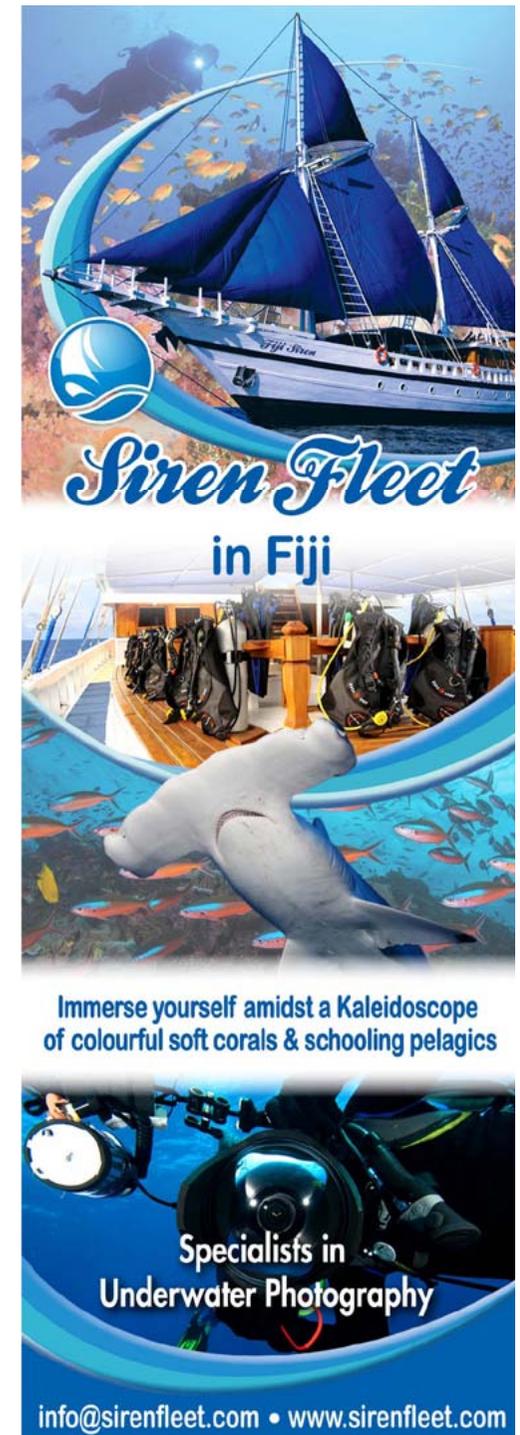


fish in the UK. Others for example are susceptible to over fishing like sea bass and salmon so being voted national fish brings them out into the attention of the public.

Favourite fish - Whether you enjoy a bit of haddock and chips or like catching gudgeon down the local canal you'll likely have a favourite fish which will influence your vote.

Typically British fish - Think about which species you would want to represent the UK and what that species reflects for example sticklebacks are small and the males even have the breeding colours red, white and blue like the union jack. Some species can be found all over the UK like brown trout found in streams in cornwall to lochs in shetland and everywhere in between.

<http://fishvap.blogspot.co.uk/2016/01/uk-national-fish-vote.html>
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2WHCHR9>

An advertisement for Siren Fleet underwater photography. It features a collage of underwater scenes: a sailboat with blue sails, a diver, a shark, and a school of fish. The text 'Siren Fleet in Fiji' is written in a stylized font. Below that, it says 'Immerse yourself amidst a Kaleidoscope of colourful soft corals & schooling pelagics'. At the bottom, it says 'Specialists in Underwater Photography' and provides contact information: 'info@sirenfleet.com • www.sirenfleet.com'.



Scuba Saint Lucia



Scuba Saint Lucia at Anse Chastanet Resort in Soufrière, St. Lucia has become a SeaLife Underwater Photography Teaching and Rental Center.

Nestled in the hillside next to the majestic twin Pitons lies one of the Caribbean's most beautiful and diverse diving resorts. Scuba Saint Lucia, a part of the Anse Chastanet resort, was established in 1981 and is a PADI 5 Star Dive Resort, offering comprehensive facilities for divers of all levels.

SeaLife recently released its new Micro 2.0 camera, the second generation of permanently sealed cameras that feature a new Sony 16mp CMOS sensor and other features that make underwater imaging easy and enjoyable with impressive high resolution results.

Scuba Saint Lucia offers rentals of the new cameras and all the user needs to do is book a dive and complete a brief orientation and safety check. The rental SeaLife Micro 2.0 camera features will be demonstrated by a staff member who will point out underwater imaging basics, offer assistance and imaging tips.

www.ansechastanet.com

Norway Orcas



Basking Shark Scotland guides Shane and Luke have recently returned from a hugely successful winter whale season in Norway.

Orca numbers were in the hundreds over a two week period providing some fantastic above and below water photographic opportunities. Snorkelling with Killer Whales or Orca is not as dangerous as first imagined given that this particular population are fish-eating specialists, and as much as these iconic cetaceans are the target of these expeditions the real star of the show was the humpbacks.

In addition to the humpbacks the opportunity to photograph fin whales which are the second biggest mammal on the planet was an added bonus and 20m long whales were a spectacular sight.

Basking Shark Scotland uses their highly experienced team, marine biology knowledge and photographic experience to create fantastic tours for this migration.

There are limited spaces available for 2016 and on a week basis.

<https://youtu.be/S8WQdeflmlg>

www.uwpmag.com

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Whale Sharks trips in
2016



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Beneath the Sea 2016

Beneath The Sea is pleased to announce and congratulate the winners of the BTS 2016 International Imaging Competition.



Best-In-Show Prize: The David Doubilet Award for Excellence in Underwater Photography.

Turtle Love by Edwar Herreno, France

Equipment: Nikon D300, Tokina 10-17mm, Sea&Sea Housing and Strobes

The winning images can be seen at the Beneath The Sea Film Festival on April 2, 2016

The 40th Annual Beneath The Sea Dive Exposition will take place April 1, 2 and 3, 2016 at The Meadowlands Exposition Center, Secaucus, New Jersey- 10 minutes from Manhattan.

www.BeneathTheSea.org

www.uwpmag.com

Bird's Head Seascape Manta ID database

Teaming up with the Bird's Head Seascape website and Conservation International we are excited to announce our online Bird's Head Seascape Manta ID database: a visual and interactive platform that invites you to meet the manta rays, follow our work, and contribute towards manta research.

For the past six years Manta Trust's Indonesian Manta Project has been working to better understand and protect manta rays across this vast archipelago, and one of the most important ways we do this is through the use of photo identification.

Our photo ID work in the Bird's Head Seascape (BHS) began in 2011 when we teamed up with Misool Eco Resort and Papua Diving to start learning about the manta rays of Raja Ampat. Five years later it has expanded into a comprehensive research and conservation program that encompasses much of the Bird's Head Seascape, and includes a passionate team of local, national and international partners.

Our vision for the BHS Manta ID site was to give everybody the opportunity to get to know and love the BHS manta rays through an easy to use and highly visual online platform. In addition, BHS visitors



can use this site to submit (and even ID) their own manta ray photos, contributing directly to our research while learning about "their" manta rays in the process.

As our manta library grows so does our understanding of the manta population, each photo acting like a piece of the puzzle. Increased understanding is critical for the development of successful species conservation and we encourage BHS visitors to get involved and help us with this exciting and important research...every photo counts!

By sharing our science through this site, our hope is to inspire empathy towards these vulnerable rays and connect those people who might not otherwise be able to visit the BHS manta rays.

www.birdsheadseascape.com



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INDONESIAN SEAS

www.alor-divers.com



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SCOTLAND



Basking Shark Adventures in the Hebrides
www.baskingsharkscotland.co.uk



THE SARDINE RUN
Shark & Shoal Diving Adventures

2016 Departures Still Available

www.TheSardineRun.co.za

Palau Siren



After a full 4 month refit in Cebu, under the watchful eye of the WWDAS team, the Palau Siren will be back in action in February 2016!

If you would like to be hooked in at Blue Corner, drifting in Ulong

Channel or experiencing some mantastic dives in German Channel, please contact the Siren Fleet reservations team, they only have availability from June 2016!

Worldwide Dive and Sail is very excited of have the Palau Siren plying the Rock Islands of Palau once again and they have been working on some very special trips, with Paul Collins and Richard Barnden of Sam's Tours Unique Expeditions, to offer you some very exciting and exceptional trips in 2016 and 2017!

www.sirenfleet.com



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www.uwpmag.com



Experience The Bird's Head Seascape

www.birdsheadseascope.com

Site administrators, Burt Jones and Maurine Shimlock, along with web designers, Newmediasoup, announce the launch of www.birdsheadseascope.com.

The new site is the ultimate source for information about one of scuba diving's most popular destinations, including Raja Ampat, Cenderawasih Bay and Triton Bay.

The site provides information about additional sustainable tourism options, local news, conservation initiatives, groundbreaking scientific research, and stunning photography with the aim of conserving this region of West Papua.

www.birdsheadseascope.com

Digital Photo Class with Jack and Sue Drafahl Bonaire. May 7 - 14, 2016

We have been offering this unique underwater photography course now for 15 years, but the 2016 class will take a new direction. We will address the problems encountered when shooting and editing, by lecturing utilizing images submitted by the students.

Sue will be available for help underwater with your camera during the 3 dives each day, and Jack will be in the classroom for consultation on shooting or editing problems encountered throughout the week.



www.jackandsue.com

The leading online resource for underwater photographers and videographers



TECHNIQUES

Learn the fundamentals of underwater photography and progress to the latest, most innovative techniques taught by the top pros in the industry

TRAVEL

Read about the experiences of accomplished shooters as they visit the world's most iconic dive spots, and get inside tips on maximizing your dive vacation

ARTICLES

Discover the world of underwater imaging through compelling features from photographers, filmmakers, ocean scientists, industry experts, and more

NEWS

Keep up to date with everything that matters to underwater photographers, from the latest gear and gadgets to the newest developments in marine research

GALLERIES

Browse the portfolios of the industry's biggest names in underwater photography and share your own work online with like-minded members

EXPEDITIONS

Journey with us to the hottest dive destinations on the planet and learn better technique from the most talented image makers in the scubaverse

DIVE PHOTO GUIDE

www.divephotoguide.com · contact@divephotoguide.com

The Sardine Run

One of South Africa's most unknown, yet spectacular events takes place within a scant window of opportunity every year around June or July. International marine experts and authors have described it as the ocean's equivalent of the spectacle of East Africa's Great Migration, "the Serengeti of the Sea". We are talking, somewhat surprisingly, of the "Sardine Run" which we South Africans have been taking for granted all these years!

Basing ourselves at scenic Port Edward we will be launching daily and heading down the incredible Wild Coast on the lookout for Sardine action. We will be getting air support from helicopters who will put us onto Bait Balls, Mantas and Mola Mola (Sunfish) The Humpback Whale migration will also be in full swing and you will have a chance to photograph these majestic creatures up close.

This stretch of coast is stunning with cliffs on the ocean which provide a spectacular backdrop to the dolphins playing in the surf.



www.TheSardineRun.co.za

Great White Sharks Isla Guadalupe, Mexico Nov 17-24, 2016



If you want to boost your adrenalin to its limits, and if your diving experience and perfect buoyancy control meet our stringent qualifications, it may be possible to experience an ultimate out-of-the-cage, blue water encounter with these incredible sharks.

These perfectly evolved predators rule their world, and being only a few feet away from such a magnificent and powerful creature will at once humble and amaze you.

With two cages and only ten guests, it is quite possible to stay in the water from morning to night: the only limiting factor is your ability to stay warm.

www.biganimals.com

French Polynesia



Master Liveboards will soon launch a new destination: French Polynesia. Built of steel and with a cruising speed of 11 knots the French Polynesia Master welcomes aboard 25 guests for 7 or 10 night dive safaris diving between Fakarava and Rangiroa in the Tuamotu Archipelago.

Her 4 decks provide ample space for relaxation as well as dive equipment and camera preparation, whilst her experienced crew members ensure you receive the highest quality service on your diving holiday.

If you wish to see specific pelagics, book your trip according to the following dates: • June: Grouper Spawning season • June to October: Manta season • July to November: Humpback whale season • December to March: Hammerhead and eagle ray season

www.masterliveboards.com



UNIQUELY α TTL

Sony Alpha a7 II, a7R II, a7S II

Introducing an important term that has been missing from all previous discussions about taking the Sony Alpha 7 series underwater: TTL. When your subject is quickly approaching, you'll be glad to have the only housing that provides TTL support for Alpha 7 cameras. An integrated TTL circuit features model-specific encoding, which has been fine-tuned to Sony's latest flash exposure protocol. The circuit is powered by the strobe for zero maintenance and no batteries to change. Exposure compensation in TTL mode is supported using the camera's built-in control. At this time, only Ikelite DS strobes are capable of powering the circuitry. SEA&SEA, INON, and Nikonos strobes will still enjoy fast recycle times and improved battery life, but must be used in manual exposure modes only.



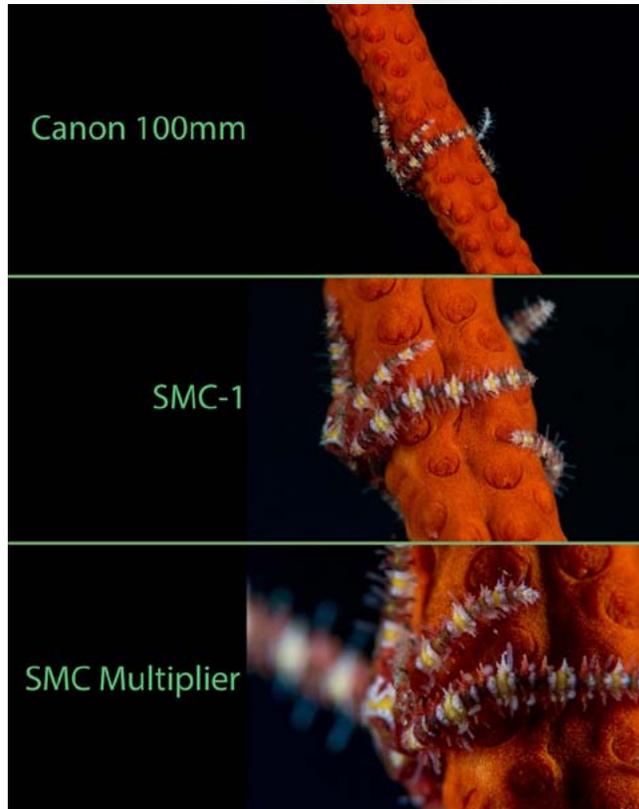
Find an Authorized Ikelite Dealer at Ikelite.com.

New Products

Nauticam SMC Multiplier

The SMC Multiplier is an add-on lens for the Nauticam SMC. Not familiar with the SMC? This is Nauticam's Super Macro Converter 1, and it has certainly taken the underwater super macro shooting world by storm. It was designed from the ground up for use underwater, and optically engineered for maximum image quality, reducing distortion, aberrations and other lens defects common with simpler wet macro lenses.

The SMC achieves a maximum of 2.3:1 reproduction when using a lens like the Canon 100mm or Nikon 105mm. It is ideal for either full frame (i.e. Canon 5DSR, Nikon D810, Sony A7RII) or APS-C (i.e. Nikon D7200 or Canon 7D Mark II) cameras. And while this sort of magnification clearly falls into the realm of super macro, we've already established that you want to go beyond that. You want "Super Duper Macro"; fear not, the SMC Multiplier is ready to fill that need.



www.nauticamusa.com

Recsea Sony video housing



This compact, lightweight housing is compatible with Sony FDR-AX30/AX33/AXP33/AXP35 video cameras. The Recsea underwater housing is machined from solid blocks of aluminum. The end result of this meticulous attention to detail is one of the smallest, lightest underwater video housings ever produced.

This is a rugged housing yet it only weighs 2.4kg. Small and light enough to hand carry on aircraft, it's the perfect tool for the travelling diver. Because the housing body conforms so closely to the camera, the housing attains nearly neutral buoyancy (slightly negative) for effortless underwater handling.

www.recsea.com

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M10 Ball Joint

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<http://acquapazza.jp/en>

www.uwpmag.com

Nauticam
innovation underwater



NA-A7II Housing
for Sony A7 II/A7RII camera



NA-RX100IV Housing
for Sony Cyber-shot DSC-RX100 IV Digital Camera

www.nauticam.cn

Nauticam 蓝天海

SeaLife Sea Dragon 1500



Ergonomic and compact, the universal Sea Dragon 1500 lights use COB LED technology to reveal stunning and natural colors in underwater stills and videos.

- * Sunlight's CRI = 100
- * Color temperature 5700k
- * Wide 120-degree beam angle
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- * Removable 25W Li-Ion battery
- * Universal mount fits all cameras with 1/4 20" screw
- * Waterproof to 200ft / 60m

Like all Sea Dragon dive/photo/video lights, the 1500F light can be easily mounted to one or more extendable flex arms, grips and trays.

www.sealife-cameras.com

Isotta housing for Sony RX100 IV



This new ISOTTA housing from Italy offers extremely high quality workmanship and numerous innovative elements. All functions are very easy to use.

The trigger is spring-loaded and has a fine pressure point. The keys are all engraved or inscribed legibly. The camera is mounted on a carriage and ensures a perfect fit.

All buttons are double sealed and made of extremely stable POM. The entire housing is made of aluminum.

The built-in water alarm was installed at the bottom on the housing and the port provides 67mm filter threads.

www.isotecnic.it/en



Coming soon!

APSO-A72

Underwater Housing for the Sony ILCE-7M2/7RM2



<http://acquapazza.jp/en>

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Seahorse, Fantasea Line, and more.
We dive what we sell!

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Ewa-marine housings



Ewa-marine flexible underwater housings (sometimes called ‘Splashbags’) are available for a wide range of cameras. The housings are made from tough double-laminate clear PVC, and provide a flat optical glass window for the lens. The housing is closed and sealed by an anodised aluminium clamping rail, which is secured by means of captive handwheel nuts.

Most camera controls can be operated through the flexible plastic. For awkward but essential controls, access thimbles are provided on some models.

Housings of this type reduce in volume as the depth increases. A maximum operating depth of 10m is recommended for most models, not because water will enter the housing, but because a point will be reached at



which the housing will cling tightly to the camera and the controls will become difficult or impossible to operate.

Buoyancy can be adjusted by adding optional ballast weights, either internally or externally (or both), depending on the model.

www.camerasunderwater.co.uk



Nauticam NA-RX100IV for Sony RX100 IV



“Amazing 4K Compact”

With the ability to shoot stunning 4K video and 20mp stills, this camera and housing package offers image quality approaching that of an SLR system with the size and convenience of a compact. Controls are simple, but well thought out with easy to access push buttons. Dual command dials immediately access frequently used manual settings like Manual Focus, F-Stop, and Shutter Speed. The addition of excellent wet lens options make for one versatile, powerful, compact package.

www.reefphoto.com



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Ikelite Sony Cyber-shot HX90, WX500



There's no greater assurance than being able to see the o-ring seal. Simply close the two double-passivated stainless steel locking lid snaps, and see the o-ring form a solid black, watertight seal. Large, easy-to-reach controls are provided for all important camera functions including the rear dial.

200 ft (60m) depth rating

Controls for all important camera functions

Controls are not provided for Flash pop-up switch, Viewfinder pop-up switch

Near neutral buoyancy in fresh water
1/4-20 thread tray mounting with 3 in (76mm) spacing

Weight 3.0 lb (1360 g)

Dimensions 6.8 x 5 x 5.8 in (173 x 127 x 147 mm)

3.9-inch diameter glass lens port

Ikelite products are designed, built and tested in the USA. We use locally sourced, top-grade materials. Our housings are built by hand and individually tested for fit, function and waterproof integrity. We back our products with over 50 years of experience and service within the dive industry.

www.ikelite.com



Nauticam NA-EM10 Package Special for Olympus OM-D E-M10



"Ready to Dive"

It's never been easier to start shooting great underwater images than with this ready-to-dive package from Reef Photo & Video. This package includes: Olympus O-MD E-M10 with 14-42mm lens, Nauticam NA-EM10 housing and Macro Port 56, Easitray, Inon S-2000 strobe, fiber optic cable, mounting hardware, 16GB memory card and rechargeable batteries. This is the perfect opportunity to 'dive' into a mirrorless system! Enjoy quality imaging in an easy-to-use, travel-friendly, package.

www.reefphoto.com



ACQUAPAZZA



High definition in the palm of your hand.
APSO-RX100M4
 Underwater Camera Housing for SONY RX100 M4






<http://acquapazza.jp/en>

Nauticam housing for Olympus E-M10 MkII



The NA-EM10II is the sixth Olympus Mirrorless Product designed and manufactured by Nauticam, and the sixteenth model built around the Micro Four Thirds lens line up!

The compact design is sculpted to provide convenient access to shutter release, front command dial, rear command dial, Fn1, Fn2, Movie, and even the EVF/LCD selector lever at the photographer's right hand.

A rubberized zoom and focus control provides ergonomic, tactile lens control.

More than just good looking, this is a rugged housing, ready to tackle thousands of hours of underwater abuse.

Crafted from solid aircraft aluminum, the housing can reach depths of 100m with ease.

Dual fiber optic synch ports are standard and take advantage of the camera's built in flash for strobe

triggering.

To make the most of the E-M10 Mark II's excellent electronic view finder (EVF), Nauticam allows for installation of the acclaimed 45° and 180° magnified viewfinders, providing the ultimate in composition and focus ability. NA-EM10II accepts the new MIL Style Viewfinders (32205 and 32204), so no accessory window is required to mount the viewfinder!

The NA-EM10II housing is designed for a right hand on the grip shooting style, but this isn't always the best solution for users with very large hands, or in cold water with thick gloves. Our shutter release extension was designed to enhance ergonomics in these configurations, and is included with every housing at no charge.

www.nauticam.com

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www.uwpmag.com

Subal Nikon D5 housing Ikelite Mirrorless 2-inch Lens Extension



Subal has released images of their new housing for the Nikon D5 camera. At present, details are not yet available, but it will be available in Subal standard color or black, white, red and blue as an option. The images depict it being equipped with fiber optic ports and electrical ports for strobe triggering. This suggests that it will be compatible with their TTL converter.

It will ship in February (a month before the camera), priced at €5,988 in Europe.

www.subal.com



The Ikelite Mirrorless 2-inch Lens Extension extends a Mirrorless Lens Port by 2 inches (50mm) for use with longer lenses.

www.ikelite.com

THE NEXT GENERATION YS-D2 Underwater Strobe



READY & TTL
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CONTROLS (BACKLIT)
FASTER RECYCLING TIME
WIDER EV RANGE
AND MORE...



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SEA&SEA
THE UNDERWATER IMAGING COMPANY

Issue 89/17



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Leica X-U

Leica has announced the Leica X-U, which is being marketed as the company's first "underwater" camera. It is actually waterproof to 15 meter (45 feet) without a housing and is equipped with a 16.5 MP APS-C sensor. It has a fixed Summilux 23 mm f/1.7



ASPH lens with a the close focusing distance of 20 centimeters (8 inches).

The Leica X-U will be shipping at the end of January priced at \$2,950.00.

<https://us.leica-camera.com>

Seacam Sony A7 II R/S housing



Seacam has announced their new housing for the Sony A7 II R/S mirrorless camera. The housing is the first of the company's compact range of housings for mirrorless cameras. It features full compatibility with Seacam's port system, as well as electronic strobe triggering with the option of an optical trigger with dual fiber connection.

www.seacam.com

INON Carbon Telescopic Arms



INON INC. is pleased to announce official release of its "Carbon Telescopic Arm" series

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i-Pix GP-H3 Housing for GoPro 3/3+/4

The iPix is a Gopro 4 compatible diving housing for GoPro with external battery. This aluminium housing comes with an unique external battery extender that can boost the GoPro battery life up to 3 hours from the normal 60 minutes.

This housing is depth rated to 150m and works with GoPro 3, 3+ and 4 with the LCD screen attached. (does not work well with Hero4 Silver with the built in screen)



www.oceanleisurecameras.com

Ultramax UXDS-3 strobe

The Ultramax UXDS-3 strobe is safe to use at a maximum depth of 200ft. The battery compartment cap is secured via double o-ring seals as is the main body of the housing which also has a gasket as an enhanced barrier against water penetration.

The Ultramax UXDS-3 has a GN of 66 at ISO 100 on land. and offers a coverage angle of 90°, which is 50% wider than Ultramax's previous model and can be increased to 100° using the supplied diffuser. The diffuser also softens the light to prevent backscatter, glare, and hard shadows.

Color Temperature is daylight-balanced at 5700K.



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Delta 3 strobe arms are the latest evolution in strobe arm technology, lightweight, robust, with totally redesigned ergonomic knobs featuring finer threads for more accurate tensioning.

www.aquatica.ca

Gates XA35 housing For Canon XA35 / XA30 / Hf-G40

Following a long tradition of housings for Canon professional camcorders, the new Gates XA35 housing is the latest addition to the family as a compact, travelable and versatile underwater motion imaging platform. An evolution of the XA25 housing, the new XA35 housing supports existing Canon XA25, XA20 and HF-G30 cameras as well as the new XA35, XA30 and HF-G40 Canon cameras.

www.gateshousings.com

Isotta housing for Nikon D500



Isotta proudly announces it's underwater housing for Nikon D500.

Isotta has reduced the weight of its product even further without compromising on quality and robustness. As with all Isotta housings the D500 functions down to 100m.

The development team takes all customer feedback into strong consideration. Based on Isotta user feedback the team has equipped the D500 with the new and improved port release and lens release functionality. Changing ports and lenses is now even easier than before.

As with all housings the D500 also comes in its unique signature bright red color which has made it famous amongst the world of underwater photography.

www.isotecnic.it/en/



Nauticam NA-5DSR for Canon 5D Mark III, 5DS & 5DS R



"Truly Refined"

At 50mp, the Canon EOS 5DS (R) is the highest resolution SLR to date. This extraordinary camera demands an equally impressive housing, and the renowned Nauticam design team has left no detail overlooked in refining the solid design of the NA-5DMKIII to complement the shooting experience of the 5DS (R). In a marriage of form and function, the NA-5DSR features (among many thoughtful improvements) Nauticam's patent pending multi-controller, yielding a user interface that is nothing short of elegant in its ergonomics.

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Backscatter FLEX DIVE Filter for GoPro



The FLEX FILTER system is a simple press on color correction filter system for the Hero3+ and Hero4 standard housings. The FLEX system allows any filter from the FLIP4 system to mount to the FLEX FILTER frame, giving you the flexibility to expand your filter system in the future. The DIVE filter is included and is optimized for blue water, 20 to 50 feet deep.

The FLEX frame is made of a flexible material that will not shatter or break, ensuring your FLEX filter system will stand up to rough conditions.

www.backscatter.com

i-Torch Venom 38 Black Video Light



Powerful and surprisingly affordable, this is an all-in-one super wide-angle video light with a maximum of 3800 lumens in the white mode. The Venom also has a red night diving mode and a blue fluoro-diving mode. The light is powered by a rechargeable lithium cell that is enclosed in the tail of the light. Recharging is simple, just unscrew the tail of the light and plug it in to the supplied charger.

- Max output: 3800 lumen
- Beam Angle: 120 degrees
- Power levels: (white) 100%, 75%, 50%, 25%, (red) 100%, 40%, (blue) 100%
- Colour temperature: 5000k - 6500k
- Burn time: 55min at 100%
- Battery: 3400mAh Li-ion
- Depth rated to 100m
- Weight: 360g, (~150g underwater)

www.oceanleisurecameras.com

Divextras Piranha



The Piranha is the lightest, most powerful, dive scooter we could build; and to maximize utility for both technical and recreational divers we have made it modular. With neutrally buoyant battery modules you can build and dive the scooter you need.

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www.dive-xtras.com

10Bar Large Float Tubes

10 Bar's Large High Density Foam Buoyancy Tube fits on your underwater photography arms to provide a more neutrally buoyant system. Rubber stoppers slide on arms to offer secure attachment.

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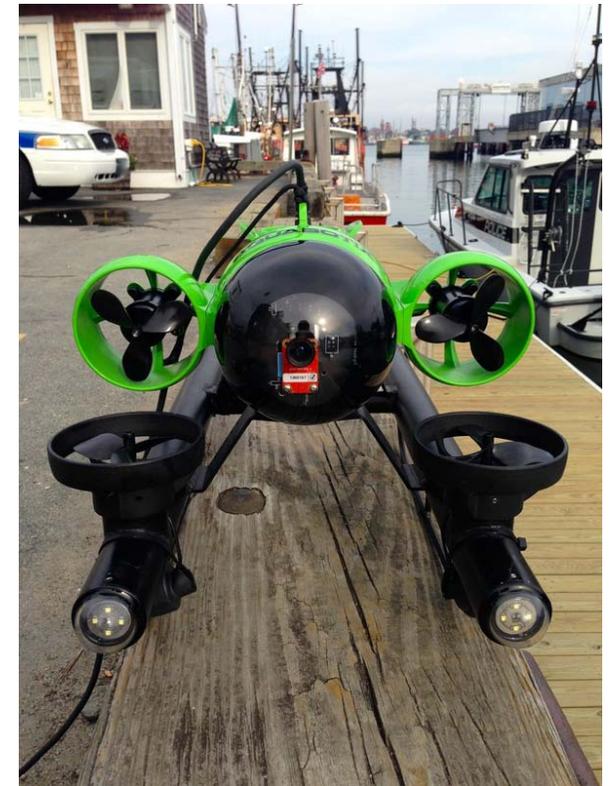
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HydroView remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) and live underwater video systems in the AquaLens pole-mounted cameras provide users with real-time video images of conditions under water. Still images and video can be recorded to document and share findings. Whether your use is professional or recreational, Aquabotix has the right system for your underwater viewing needs.



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Nauticam housing for Sony CLM-FHD5



The Sony CLM-FHD5 is a compact, crystal clear HD monitor at an attractive price point. The small size results in a compact underwater housing that pairs well with mirrorless and DSLR underwater systems.

The CLM-FHD5 features all of the convenient assist functions required to get great underwater video. 3x and 6x magnification allow a quick focus check, and Peaking clearly displays in focus edges with red highlighting.

The Nauticam HDMI Cable and Bulkhead system fully conforms to the HDMI standard, and uses genuine HDMI connectors. Rugged strain reliefs protect connections from wear and tear.

www.nauticam.com

xit404 HandGrip



Our HandGrip is a useful pistol grip with a clamp for devices that have a 1" diameter ball or 1/2" Lock Line mount. The HandGrip has a pocket designed to clamp onto these mounts. The pistol grip comfortably fits in your hand or glove. Devices such as dive lights or POV cameras are just a few uses for this nifty HandGrip. For example use it to hold onto a GoPro or a Sola Dive Light. The handgrip is fabricated from sturdy Black ABS plastic.

www.xit404.com

www.uwpmag.com

You're gonna need a bigger boat

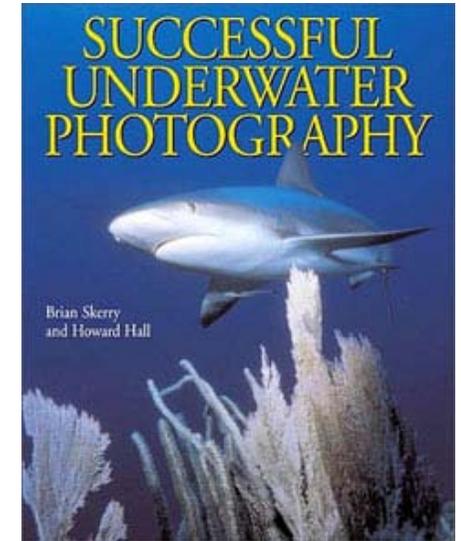
Deepshots Olympus 8mm PRO Focus Gear



Deepshots Olympus 8mm PRO Focus Gear is for the fantastic Olympus 8mm f1.8 PRO fisheye lens intended to be used with Nauticam or Olympus PT-EPx housings. This gear allows you to use the lens in full (or semi) manual focus mode. This is especially handy for underwater film makers with m43rd equipment.

www.deepshots.co.uk

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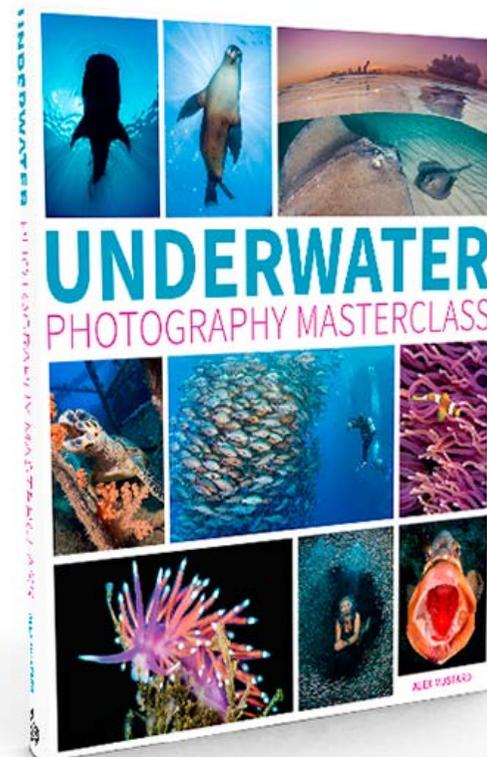
www.wetpixel.com

Alex Mustard's new book "Underwater Photography Masterclass"

Alex Mustard has announced his new book Underwater Photography Masterclass. It is a brand new instructional book covering classic and cutting edge techniques, which are covered in detail by an author whose experience is clear on every page. The book is already printed and available for pre-order. Shipping times vary with region but are expected to be from late March to late April.

"It covers all aspects of underwater photography, from equipment to novel creative techniques, but its focus is particularly on light and lighting," Alex told Wetpixel. "It is based on the techniques and advice that really works for me and that I have seen really work for the students on my workshops. It is also packed with detailed, real world tips that I have picked up shooting all around the world and exchanging ideas over the last 15 years on Wetpixel."

"I am really proud of it and I can't wait to hear what people make of it. I worked very hard putting it together, it is designed to be very easy to use in the field. It is a travel



friendly size, but packed with content. I tried not to waste a single sentence. The book is structured to be read from front to back, but because each new spread covers a new topic or technique you can dip back into it, on any page, for refreshers, even between dives. I've tried to write something fresh, so whatever you've read before you'll want to read this too."

www.underwaterphotographybook.com

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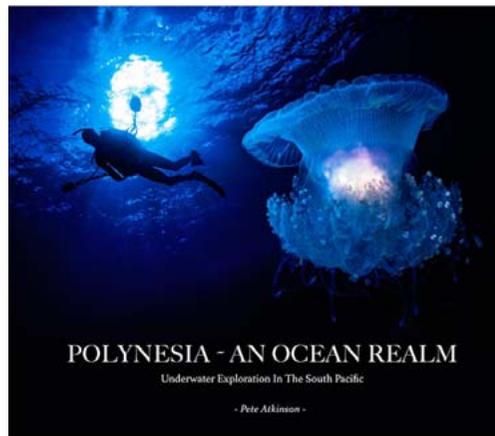


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Polynesia An Ocean Realm by Pete Atkinson



Inspired by Jacques Cousteau, Pete bought an old yacht on the south coast of England in 1982 and sailed to the South Pacific.

He had no experience, relevant qualifications, life-raft, radio, GPS (or insurance) but he says, "I had read a lot of books and I had a plastic sextant I had bought at a jumble sale..." He also had a degree in marine zoology.

For 20 years he sailed 45000 miles all over the South Pacific having the life of which he had dreamed, diving with whales and sometimes too many sharks. He found adventure above and below the sea aboard a beautiful, but somewhat marginal, wooden yacht!

Escaping the rat race is the dream of many, but few achieve it. This book shows that with passion and determination anything is possible, even on a limited budget. Pete made ends meet by shooting pictures underwater - using home-made



acrylic camera housings - and writing articles for diving and sailing magazines.

The twelve chapters cover French Polynesia, the Cook Islands, Kiribati, Tonga and Pete's favourite, remote Beveridge Reef, where there is no land at all. But it has what he loves most, exceptionally clear water and lots of sharks!

This is a book not only for those interested in adventure in the ocean, Polynesian life, marine biology, sailing and diving but also those who aspire to escape a humdrum life and become a pirate!

US \$9-99 48000 words, 339 pictures 242 pages

www.peteatkinson.com/book

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Canon G9X review

by Bertie Gregory

I'll begin by saying this is not going to be a classic geek fest review. I won't be pixel peeping and I definitely won't be using graphs that require a degree in computer science to interpret. Instead, I'm going to discuss the quality of a few key features that you actually need to take notice of underwater. I took the G9X to the Red Sea for a weeklong liveaboard with Scuba Travel. I used it with a Recsea housing and an Inon wide angle wet lens. I shot mainly with ambient light but I also used a pair of Inon Z240 strobes.

Low Light Performance

With the release of every new camera, low light performance continues to be a hot topic. Canon and Nikon seem to be leading the arms race in the DSLR market, whilst Sony are dominating the competition with mirrorless cameras. Compact cameras (of which the G9X is one) seem to receive less attention in this area and traditionally have been pretty poor when put along side the aforementioned. I generally wouldn't dream of using a compact above 400 ISO for fear of producing a horrible red rash of ugly noise across the

image.

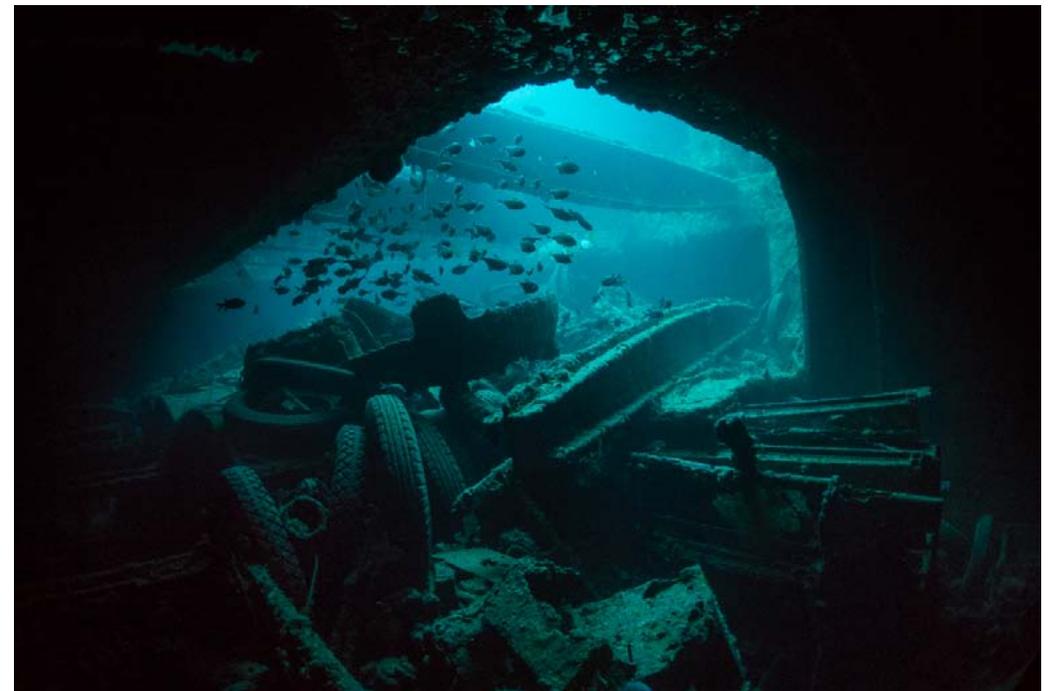
This G9X has made me totally reconsider. The Red Sea is a relatively easy shooting location; crystal clear blue water and plenty of ambient light. That said, it does get pretty challenging inside some of the wrecks. The huge wreck of the SS Thistlegorm is famous for it's cargo holds of Second World War motorbikes, trucks and ammunition. The long corridors get pretty dark and gloomy so before, I would see little point in taking images inside the wreck with a compact camera if I didn't have any strobes.

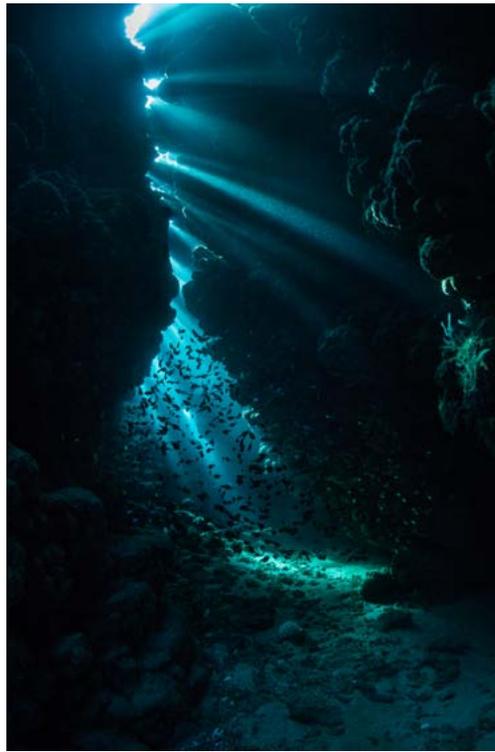
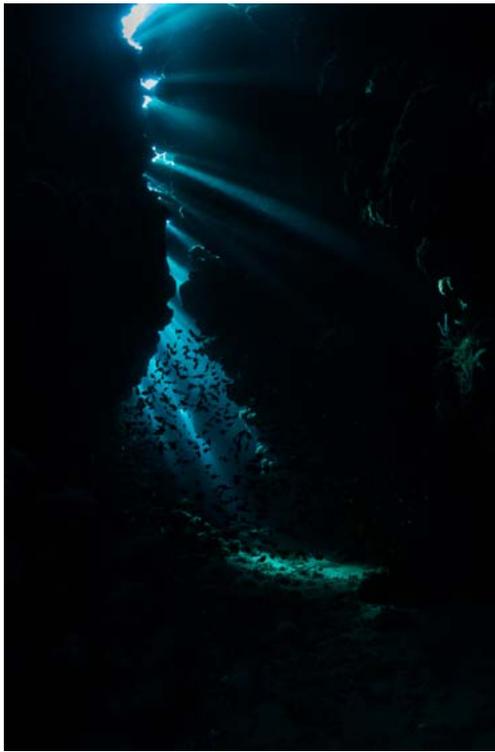
Whilst swimming through one of the holds, I turned to look back behind me and noticed how the gloomy light filtered through an entry hole. My eyes could barely pick out detail in the foreground but I thought I'd crank the ISO and see what happened. That evening, I blew up the image on my computer and was shocked by the lack of noise. The noise that was there looked nice, not the horrible digital colour noise that has previously shamed compacts. Instead, trying really hard not to sound pretentious, it was a filmic textual kind of noise.



Canon G9X and Recsea housing

Inside the SS Thistlegorm in low light shot at 800 ISO





The difference between a wide and narrow dynamic range in a Red Sea cave. Please note this comparison was made in postproduction and is not a comparison between 2 cameras.

Dynamic Range

Compact cameras have also been traditionally poor in their dynamic range. That is, the ability of a camera to capture detail in the brightest whites whilst still retaining detail in the darkest blacks of an image. The small cave near Jackfish Alley in Ras Mohammed national park is probably one of the best tests of dynamic range in underwater photography. Bright white beams of light stream in through a small crack into a dark cave: the

scene has very bright whites and very dark blacks. Previous compacts would have struggled in this situation- their narrow dynamic ranges would force you to expose for the bright beams of light leaving next to no detail in the moody shadows of the cave. Again, the G9X is a step forward. The ability to shoot in RAW further widens the dynamic range, as there's potential in post to pull even more detail out of the shadows and darken areas of over exposure. I should mention the ability



Jackson Reef with auto white balance settings



Jackson Reef with manual white balance set

to shoot in RAW on compacts has been around for a few years but the RAW files produced continue to get better at resolving hidden detail.

Manual White Balance

The ability to set manual white balance has been a crucial aspect of any camera for its use underwater. As depth increases, certain colours are lost by the absorption of water. This issue can be resolved using artificial light sources. The only problem with this is that strobes can't light anything much more than a metre or two away and creating a natural looking scene is often quite difficult. Turning strobes off and setting the white balance manually is a clever trick to restoring colours to an image more evenly. Canon compacts have tended to be the best at this. The G9X certainly doesn't let the side down.

Wide Angle Wet Lenses

Just like white balance, adding a wide-angle wet lens is another way

to dramatically improve underwater images. Adding a wide-angle lens allows you to be much closer to your subject whilst still fitting it in the frame. This eliminates the amount of water between you and your subject making images sharper and with better colours. Using wet lenses on compact cameras has the added benefit of being able to take them on and off underwater. In one dive you could shoot a 1cm nudibranch and a 1000cm whale shark. Meanwhile, with a DSLR setup you don't have this luxury- you have to choose beforehand whether you're going to be shooting wide angle or macro.

Some of the most recent Canon compacts have suffered in this area because of their long zooms. This is because the underwater housings have also had to be long to accommodate this zoom. This has subsequently made attaching wide angle wet lenses difficult as they have tended to vignette- you can physically see the lens in the images in the form



Lionfish close-up at night

of a circular black border. Fortunately, the G9X doesn't have a long zoom and so with the Inon wet lens, there was next to no evidence of that black border. That said, sharpness did fall off towards the corners. but, that's the price you pay for a relatively affordable wide-angle setup.

On the topic of swapping from something very big to something very small, the camera performed well in macro. The focusing is fast and accurate, even in low light.

Shooting macro brought an issue with the Recsea housing to my attention.

The shutter button on the housing is an actual button rather than a lever trigger like those made by other housing manufacturers. I found this frustrating as often, particularly when shooting macro, I want to only half press the shutter button on the Recsea made it difficult to find the biting point and often I accidentally pressed the button all the way down taking a picture. This becomes an issue when photographing sensitive subjects with flash and when you're trying to capture a 'moment'.



A diver investigates the Red Sea's most photographed motorbike in the cargo hold of the SS Thistlegorm!

On the topic of capturing a moment, a great way of doing this is to fire a burst of frames. Unfortunately, like previous compacts, the G9X still has a slow rate of shooting at less than one frame per second.

Final Thoughts

I couldn't do a review on the G9X for underwater use without addressing the elephant in the room- the camera is a touch screen and to my knowledge no manufacturer, Recsea included, has managed to create an underwater housing

that allows you to operate the touch screen. This is a shame as aside from this flaw, the camera is probably the best compact camera I have ever used underwater. It's important to note that it is still possible to take full manual control of the camera but this does involve setting some custom buttons and swapping between shooting modes.

In summary, would I recommend this camera to others? The answer depends on what you plan to use it for. If you're an advanced

amateur and looking to take total control of a camera, then no. If however you're starting out in underwater photography or just want a camera to take down on dives that will give you the potential to take awesome shots, then yes. Many thanks to Cameras Underwater and Inon UK for the loan of the photographic kit.

Bertie Gregory

Bertie is a 22-year-old professional wildlife photographer, filmmaker and presenter. He recently finished filming a 24-part series for National Geographic following his adventure to track down British Columbia's coastal predators. Keep an eye out for the series premier in April 2016.



www.camerasunderwater.co.uk

Nauticam WWL-1 vs INON UWL-H100 with dome unit II

by Jussi Hokkanen

It seems Nauticam is planning to take over the whole underwater photography business by releasing new products with increasing speed and not only products they are familiar with but also in completely new areas like optics. The latest Nauticam product to hit the shelves just before Christmas was the Nauticam WWL-1 wide angle lens. This beast of a lens promises to beat all the others currently on the market and also comes with a new optional bayonet system on top of the traditional M67 thread. With this Bayonet system you can turn all M67 Nauticam flat ports to bayonets. With the lens Nauticam also releases a separate port adapter which will also work with many other housings. Soon to be available are bayonet adapters for the Nauticam Macro lenses so you can forget about screwing on lenses underwater.

The WWL-1 is not really a travel friendly lens; it weighs 1.3 kg and comes with its own semi-rigid carry case. Even underwater it still weighs 600 grams so now those Nauticam buoyancy arms you bought will come really handy.

As with all Nauticam products, it really looks the business and the company promises it is sharper and more flexible in use than any previous wet-lens. They also promise that the lens can be fully zoomed through and will work with various compact and mirrorless cameras. The full compatibility list can

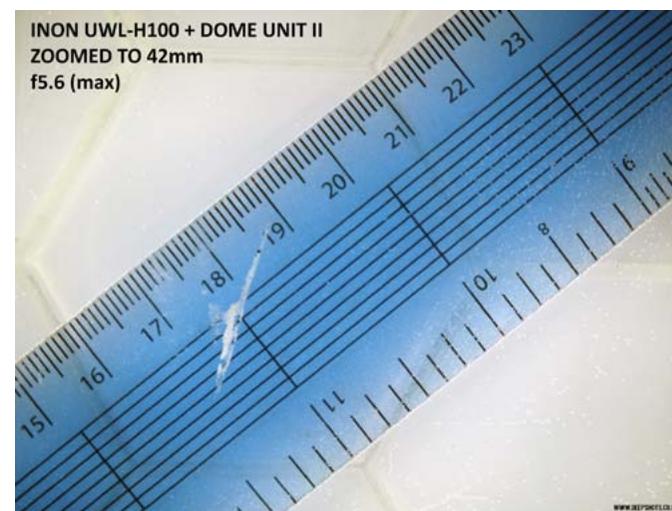
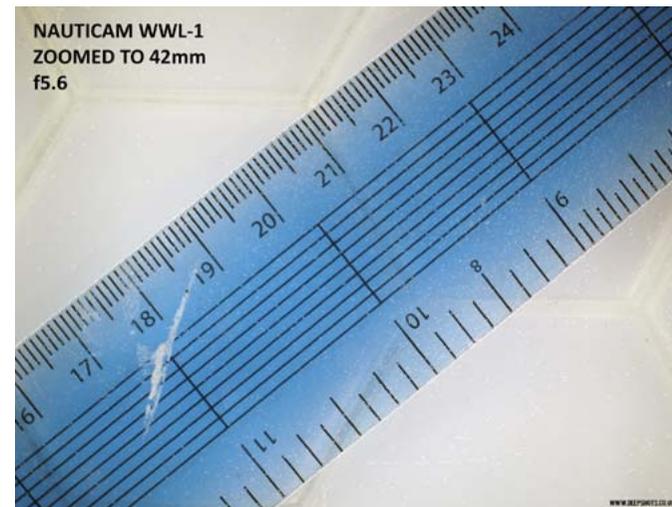
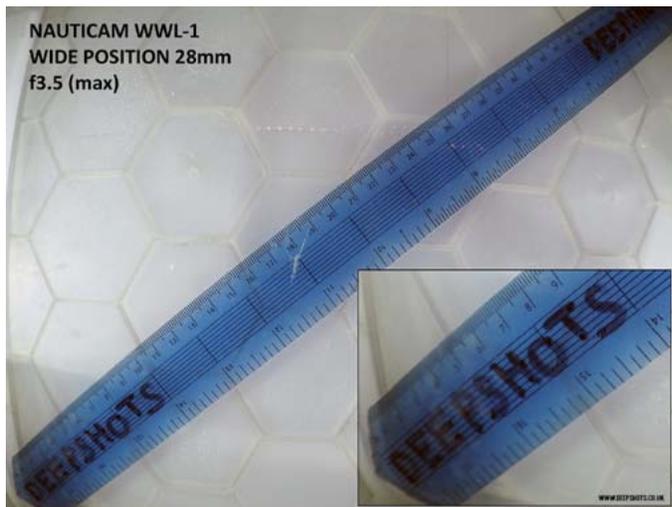


be found on the manufacturers website.

There have been some early reviews of this lens already but I still decided to put it through my test tank to see if the differences can be seen in a not so scientific test. Here I have pinned the WWL-1 against its closest competitor the Inon UWL-H100 M67 lens with the additional glass dome port unit installed, which has so far been the benchmark lens combination when it comes to a sharp underwater wide-angle lens. These images are taken with Olympus PT-EP12 housing and an Olympus 14-42 EZ lens, which is one of the lenses on the company's compatibility chart.

First two pictures are taken at full aperture f3.5 and the following two at f8.0. The last two are taken with the Olympus lens is zoomed to the 42mm position to test that hailed zoomability. Remember that these images are taken with one camera + one lens and you might get different results with different combinations.

As you can see the WWL-1 is sharper both at full aperture and the closed down shots. The difference is not huge but is significant nevertheless. Inon UWL-H100 + Dome unit II seems slightly wider here but that can be argued is due to the fact that in my test tank the housing stays in same



position. Due to the size and especially the length of the WWL-1 its dome sits closer to my trusty old ruler. But would you count the camera's position when testing lens angle or the front lens' position? All I can say that Inon UWL-H100 + dome unit is wider if the camera is not moved closer. When it comes to the "zoomability" the Inon UWL-H100 combo seems to perform well until the last few mm where it gets a bit soft. The Nauticam WWL-1 is

still pin sharp even when fully zoomed.

The size of the Nauticam lens might put you off but I gotta say the new bayonet system is excellent. It is extremely easy to attach and replace the lens. You will easily do this even in pitch black conditions as the lens just softly slots in to the right position. The Nauticam bayonet system is also more universal than the Inon's system. You can buy the quite a bit smaller and lighter

UWL-H100 lens + dome combo also as a bayonet version, but it will still only fit to a diminishing list of compact housings, Inon has decided to support. The Nauticam bayonet system will fit virtually all housings that have a M67 port thread just by purchasing the port bayonet mount adapter.

All this sharpness and flexibility does not come cheap. The WWL-1 costs £765 and if you want to enjoy the bayonet you will need to add the



WWW.DEEPSHOTS.CO.UK

Nauticam M67 to Bayonet Mount Converter for £61, bringing the total cost to a £826.00. The Inon lens with a dome port comes to £650.00, but of course you will not have the similar flexibility with mounting options.

Due to the cost of the WWL-1 Nauticam is marketing it not only as a traditional wet-wide-angle lens but also as a replacement of a camera lens and a dome port. Few writes I read about the lens seems to suggest that in some cases with mirrorless systems there is some truth to this. As the WWL-1 lens is sharp and can be zoomed through it is still cheaper to by it than a dry wide angle zoom lens

from Olympus or Panasonic and an dome port. And as it is designed to be a wet lens it keeps the corners sharper than a rectilinear zoom lens behind a dome port would plus the added flexibility of course. Interesting idea. Nauticam has also announced a new port; Macro port 29, to be used with short zooms like the 14-42EZ and the WWL-1

Recommended if you can bear the size and the weight.

Jussi Hokkanen
www.deepshots.co.uk

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UPY 2016 winners

by Duncan Whittaker

UwP speaks to the winners of the four main categories to get an insight into the thought process of a champion photographer...

Davide Lopresti

Underwater Photographer of the Year 2016

Do you spend time thinking up images before a dive trip?

I spend a lot of time thinking about the photos and planning how I take that particular picture; I try to see it in my mind. Sometimes, the conditions in the water change and my plans are altered so I have to think about how to quickly reinvent the photo. The main part it is to think and use your brain before and during the shoot.

When you are shooting do you have competitions in mind primarily?

When I photograph, I never think of a specific competition; my only thought is for the photography and the best result. My aim is to photograph to the best of my ability; the competition at the moment of the shot does not come into play.

If not, what makes you decide on which images to enter and do you consult with anyone else for a second opinion?

The photo selection process for a contest is always a very complicated and difficult procedure. However, when you have a strong photo that works, this strikes immediately and you don't have any doubt. I usually choose my photos alone for the contests.

Do you value competitions as an indicator of how good your shots are?

I think competitions are a good indicator of how well we have managed to communicate with our photography. An important part of photography is what others feel about it and the emotions that this is able to communicate. I think that competitions can be good indicators of this as a photo is able to get to the emotion of another person.



Do you have any advice for new underwater photographers who have never entered a competition?

The three best tips I can give are photographing, photographing, and photographing.

Achieving good results requires so much effort, so much dedication, and love for the sea; and a little luck never hurts.



Pier Mane

Up & Coming Underwater Photographer of the Year 2016

Do you spend time thinking up images before a dive trip?

I am really a beginner; I only started in mid 2014 reading Martin Edge's book plus a few other books. I look at pictures on the internet and get inspiration; I ask myself how I could replicate these images. I am at the phase where replicating images helps me to master the techniques. I look at Davide Lopresti's Gold photo this year; what a creation! I have thought and thought about how I would do it and still have no idea; even if he explained it in the caption. So, next trip I will practice long exposure and perhaps next purchase will be some snoots.

When you are shooting do you have competitions in mind primarily?

Definitely not; or at least up to now. I have been in competition from a very early age; first with skiing and then the corporate ladder. When I started with underwater photography I promised myself I was going to do it just for myself; something for fun and to express my creativity rather than external rewards. Although it is likely that I may now participate in future competitions, I still want to go underwater free of pressure to create

a competition picture and I would rather continue focusing on producing images that I enjoy making and looking at.

If not, what makes you decide on which images to enter and do you consult with anyone else for a second opinion?

This was my first competition; my portfolio is rather small but I had no clue what to submit. I attended a workshop with Martin Edge in November; competition photographs were discussed and his guidance was to select "wow" pictures. I looked at what other photos had been successful and tried to imagine which of my images would look good in a publication. The night before the deadline I asked Martyn Guess if he liked my 20 selected pictures.

Do you value competitions as an indicator of how good your shots are?

I wanted to stay out of underwater photo competitions as I wanted to be happy with my own development without relative comparison. A few friends encouraged me to submit a few images to the UPY and I agreed. I felt I needed some confirmation that I was working in the right direction. Although I entered

all of my photos into the up and coming category, I never expected that they would select three images; I was hoping to place one. I have to say that looking at competition images helps to raise your personal standards and entering competitions helps to push the boundaries.

Do you have any advice for new underwater photographers who have never entered a competition?

I am not sure if I am in a position to give any advice as I am still learning. I would suggest to everyone to do it for fun; don't take it too seriously. The judges have taken incredible

pictures and have achieved great heights in this field but in the context of UPY they still represent only three points of view. If the judges do not select your photos then that does not mean your photos are not great in their own right; my favourite picture I took so far is an open mouth black tip I shot in South Africa; it did not even place. I wish UPY would put all of the 3500 entries somewhere; this would be a great source of inspiration. I want to dedicate my winning picture to all new underwater photographers as my advice is in the title; Three pillars – practice, patience, and luck.



Dan Bolt

British Underwater Photographer of the Year 2016

Do you spend some time thinking up images before a dive trip?

Like most underwater photographers, I do try to anticipate what I might encounter on a dive and therefore have the right camera setup that I think might cover whatever turns up. On 90% of my dives I do not think about the images I might be able to take and the other 10% are those repeat dives where I am going back for a specific subject; on these trips I will try to think about how best I might use the situation I'm likely to find myself in. But as we all know, nature rarely performs to anyone else's schedule but her own!

When you are shooting do you have competitions in mind primarily?

Unless I'm in an 'on the day' type of competition (when the whole point of the dive is to enter the comp), then no. I primarily shoot because I love the marine eco-system and I find it endlessly fascinating. This is what drives me to take photographs; to spot unusual behaviour, rare animals, or just the every-day 'amazing' that non-divers don't get to see. If I find a subject and situation that I can see

might build into something special then I will switch into 'competition mode' for my shooting but to be honest that doesn't happen too often.

If not, what makes you decide on which images to enter and do you consult with anyone else for a second opinion?

Underwater photographic 'success' is often driven by this year's fashionable trip, newly accessible creature, latest bit of kit, or technique made popular by "pro's". This I try to avoid because I think that you're not really proving anything other than your ability to copy an image someone has already taken. Walking this path will, on occasion, decrease your chances of winning, but it means that when you are judged highly then your shot will stand out of the crowd. I don't consult because, trust me, I am my own harshest critic!

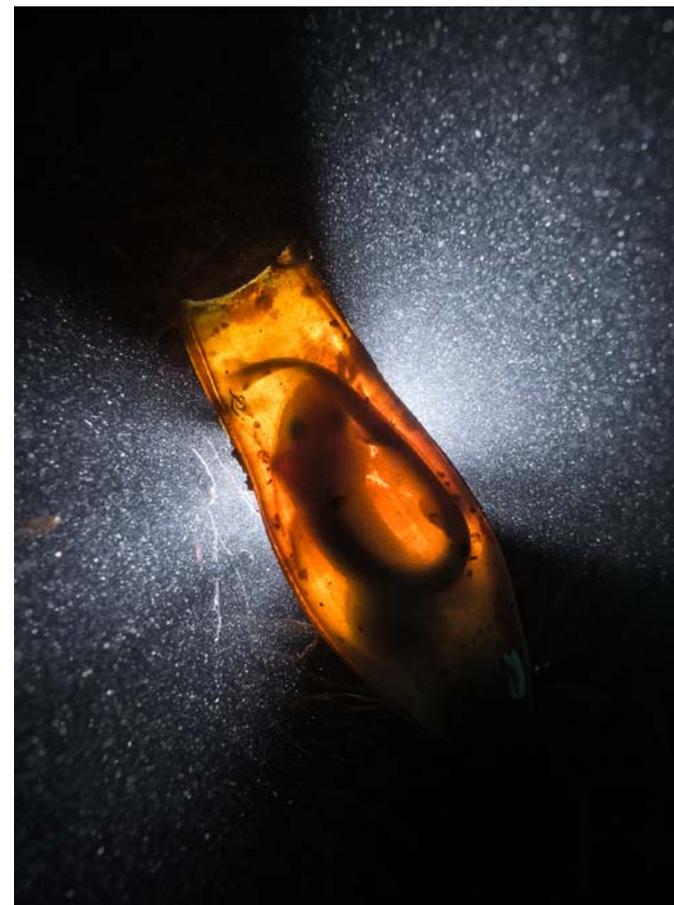
Do you value competitions as an indicator of how good your shots are?

Obviously it is very gratifying to do well in competitions and it feels good to have internationally acclaimed judges feed-back on your work. But, if you are trying to develop

your own individual style then you have to accept that not everyone will like your photos and therefore you may go through patches of winning nothing at all. It is possible to be very happy with the work you're producing while accepting that not everyone will 'get' your imagery.

Do you have any advice for new underwater photographers who have never entered a competition?

Get the basics right and the rest will come! Chatting to some people at the recent UPY awards, they said they "must try harder," to which I said "stop trying so hard!" It is very easy to get consumed by chasing competition-level images. When, more often than not, once you are relaxed with your approach to photography, are competent with your kit, know your subjects and have patience, then the magic will start to happen.



Marty Engels Dunmore Most Promising British Underwater Photographer 2016

Do you spend some time thinking up images before a dive trip?

Not as much in the past but probably more and more in the future. I only started underwater photography 3 years ago; so instead of thinking about “winning images” I have focused primarily on my photographic skills and making the ocean my home. Each of my trips was set out with a personal goal to learn a new photographic skill and to extend my ability to capture photographic opportunities; and there is still a lot to be learned.

When you are shooting do you have competitions in mind primarily?

No, not at all.

If not, what makes you decide on which images to enter and do you consult with anyone else for a second opinion?

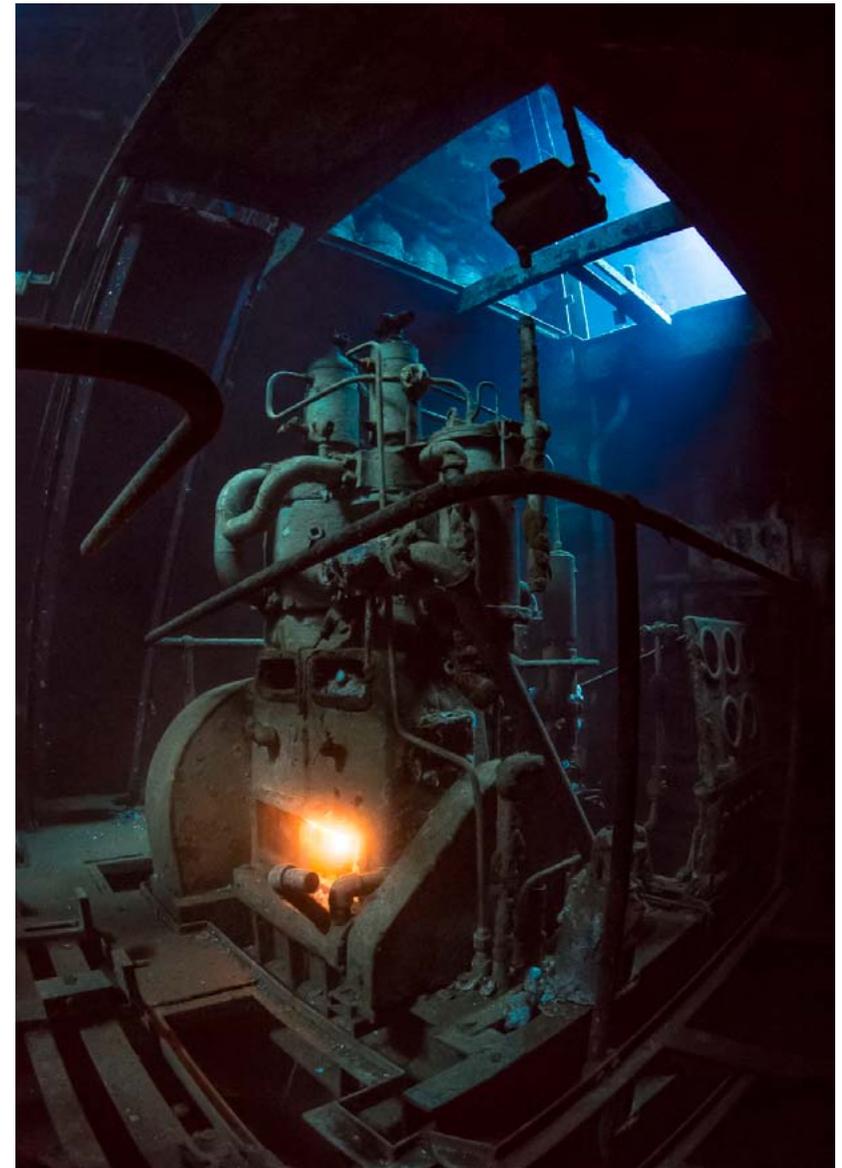
I try to enter my best images; those that are technically as good as possible at the time of shooting but also which mirror my compassion for the ocean and which are able to transmit this to the audience.

Do you value competitions as an indicator of how good your shots are?

This depends on who is judging the competition; if the judges are successful and highly experienced underwater photographers with inspiring portfolios then I will certainly take it as an indication that my photography is on the right way. To be absolutely honest, I would not enter my images in a competition with a judging panel whose work I do not admire.

Do you have any advice for new underwater photographers who have never entered a competition?

Think outside of the box; produce original images to the highest technical standard which show your love to the world below the waves and with the highest respect to the ocean and all its creatures.



You can download all of the 80 winning images from UPY 2016 at

www.upylondon.com/2016yearbook.aspx

Duncan Whittaker

Issue 89/37



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“Often copied,
never equaled”

Martin Edge interview

by Duncan Whittaker

In a publication like this, Martin Edge is a man who needs no introduction. Most of us will have read his book 'The Underwater Photographer' shortly after picking up our first housing and some will have attended his tuition sessions abroad or in the UK.

After judging UPY, Martin chats to UwP about taking pictures underneath the surface...

Out of everywhere you have travelled, where were your 3 favourite places for underwater photography?

1st would be Sipadan, 2nd Raja Ampat, and 3rd the Red Sea. I first went to Sipadan in the 90s when it was difficult to get to and at its prime; it is my spiritual diving home. It was a totally untouched destination. We could get the boatman to take us around the island and drop us on the schooling jacks and schooling barracuda and the turtles were everywhere. It was just the most awesome place.

Raja Ampat is unbeatable for corals and fans; it's a great place. It's a long way but worth it when you get there.

St John's caves in the southern Red Sea are great for light; some people go chasing sharks and whales and big stuff whereas I go for light. And the wrecks of Gubal in the Red Sea are very conducive towards me teaching underwater wreck photography; there are some superb intact ship wrecks that photograph very well and continue to win competitions to this day and it's great for my

clients because it's a safe environment for me to teach.

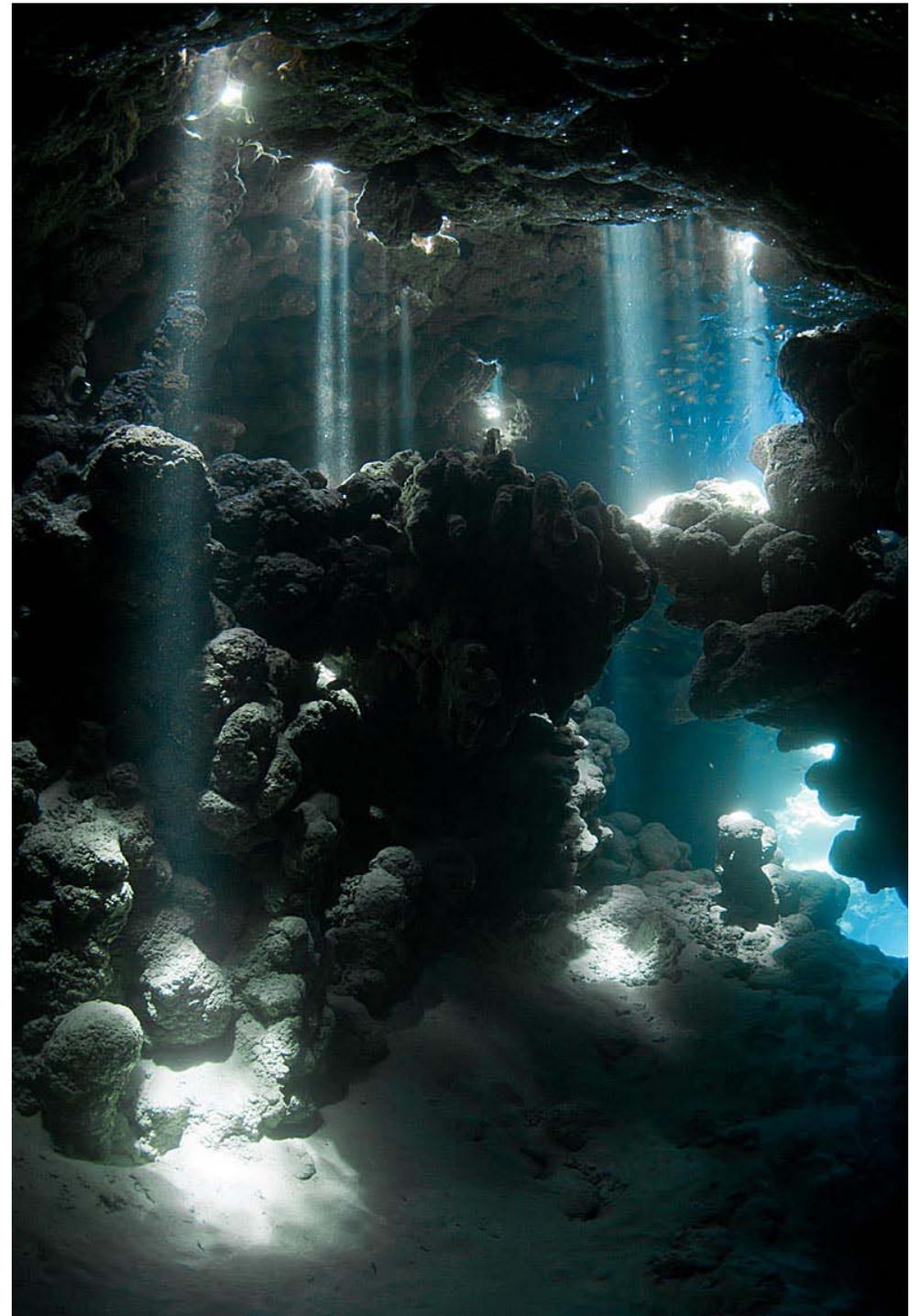
What is your favourite ever piece of photographic equipment?

When I first started diving it was all film cameras with Nikonos lenses and one lens in particular was the Nikonos 15mm. I went to my mother and she lent me the money to buy this lens. It was the optimum wide angle lens that you could put on a Nikonos camera; very sharp and at the time very expensive. It was the lens that everybody wanted and to this day it is probably the sharpest lens that I have ever used.

When you tutor people who are completely new to underwater photography and they want to know what they should buy, what do you recommend?

First of all I ask them what budget they have and how much they want to get into underwater photography. Then they come and do a one day course with me using a swimming pool in

Edge's Cave, Red Sea. f 5.6, 1/4 sec, ISO 800, Tokina at 14mm, Subal housing, Nikon D300, Inon 220 strobes.





Slow motion blur, Loloata PNG. f8, 1/2sec, ISO 200, Subal housing, Nikon D300, Nikon 12-24mm, Inon 220 strobes.

Bournemouth. Some are very enthusiastic and want the best that money can buy and then there are other people who are on a budget.

Can you describe some of your most effective and rewarding lessons that you have delivered?

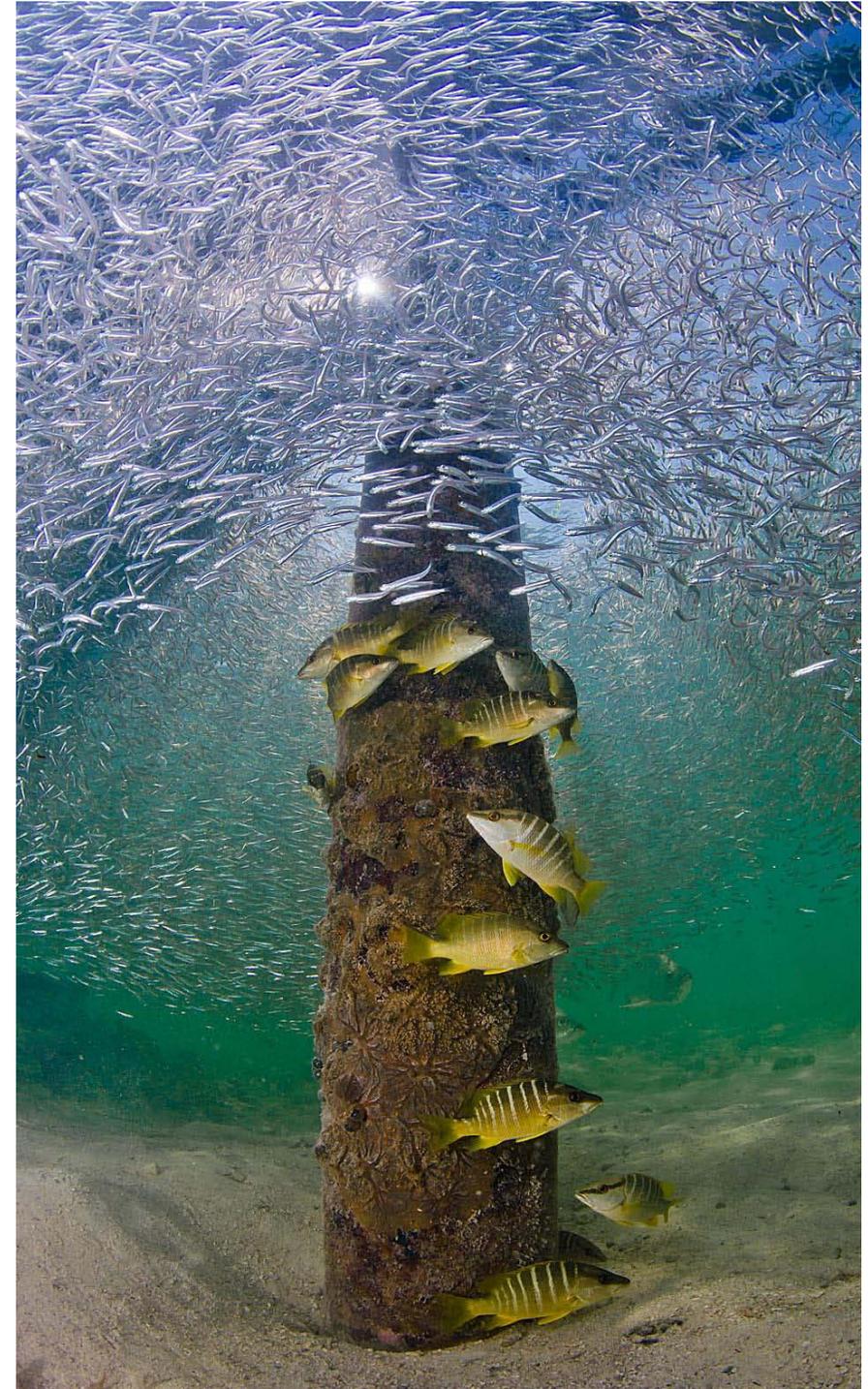
I have taught people from scratch who have not known one end of a camera from another and I had one guy who was deaf; they were rewarding. I also think back to people who saved up for the equipment they needed and then went on to be very good underwater photographers; some went on to be at the top of

Feeding frenzy, Grand Cayman Pier. f14, 1/200th sec, ISO 100, Nikon D7000, Tokina 10mm end. Nauticam housing, Inon 220s.

the things they do and I taught them, so this is something that has been very special to me. Do you take pictures underwater?

Yes.

Well you'll have to come down to Bournemouth for the day. I would say that I can improve your photography by 5 years in one day. That's what I do with the people who come and I offer them their money back if I don't succeed. I must have taught close to 1000 people now over the last 25 years and I've never had to forego any payment!





Bat fish, Raja Ampat. f13, 1/125th sec, ISO 500, 17mm end of Tokina, Nikon D7200, Nauticam housing, Inon 220 strobes.

What is the best advice you have ever been given with regards to underwater photography?

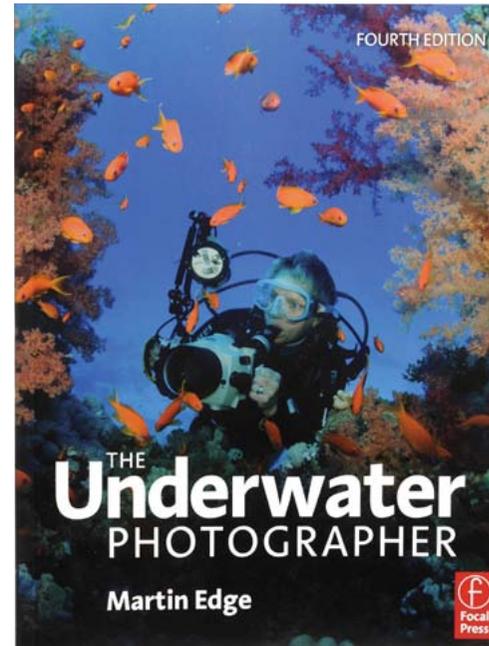
I had a couple of mentors in my early days. One of them is Peter Rowlands whose magazine you are writing for. He has always been a big influence with me and if I ever needed any advice then I would go to him and I sometimes still do to this day. And someone who died fairly recently is Peter Scoones; he's a legend and I used to seek his advice very often. One night at a BSoUP meeting, one of the main speakers didn't turn up so we had a question and answer session with Peter Scoones instead. That night, he had won

the monthly competition with a picture of light and I was fascinated with it.

During the break, I sneaked up on him and he explained to me about the time of day, the depth, and how the ripples on the water affect the light. He had a good old chin wag and I just listened and probably the next weekend I went down to Swanage Pier and tried it out.

This is something which I still use today. I met both of them through BSoUP and it was BSoUP that made me the teacher that I am today because I got to pester all of the best photographers for tips and techniques.

www.uwpmag.com



Have you got any plans for a new edition of The Underwater Photographer?

Not at this moment in time but it doesn't mean that there won't be a 5th edition in the future. The only thing that has really changed in the last 4-5 years is equipment; the techniques haven't changed. With it being the 4th edition, I've had 4 goes at getting the content and explanations right so another edition at this time would probably be too similar to the 4th edition.

What trips do you have planned in the future?

I'm going out to Lembeh with a group in September and that is a macro workshop. I work exclusively for Scuba Travel and have done for over 6 years now and they are a very efficient



Yawning blenny, Dumaguete. f16, 1/320th sec, ISO 200, Nikon D7000, Nikon 105mm macro, Nauticam housing, Inon 220 strobes.

company who fulfil my needs to the letter.

Which current underwater photographers do you admire?

I think the best underwater photographer in the world at this moment in time is Alex Mustard. His forward thinking, technical knowledge, desire, and obsession to experiment with things are inspirational. The images that he produces are phenomenal.

There are the Asian photographers who specialise in ultra super duper close



Jellyfish, Cornwall, circa 1987. f22, 1/250th sec, Fujichrome 100, Nikonos 3 camera, Nikonos 15 mm wide angle lens (as discussed in interview), Oceanic 2000 strobe.

up. There's a very well known guy called Yoshi Hirata; his work is just phenomenal and I met him 20 years ago because he worked on the island of Mabul when we used to visit Sipadan. I've got a lot of respect for the work that he and some of the other Asian photographers have been doing for some time.

When you judge the UPY and Ocean Art competitions, what is it exactly that you are looking for?

I am looking for the "Wow!" factor; something that comes up and I'm just blown away. To be honest, we are getting quite a lot of that "Wow!" factor these days. Some of the stuff that I see in the competitions that I judge are just "Wow!" They are just amazing.

It's also intimidating as well to be honest and I have to ask myself, "Could I produce that quality of image?" I am fastidious towards over processing of images and I'm also a stickler towards people who insist on keeping the same aspect ratio for a crop.

There has to be an element of post processing; we often find in the competitions that people just go too far and we refer to this as "over processed." It is important to bring out the colours a little bit, bring up the contrast slightly, increase the saturation, and

crop that image to the best dimensions that please you.

Can you discuss one of your images that is particularly significant to you?

The picture of the jellyfish was a picture that changed everything for me. It was taken in 1987 and my wife Sylvia and I were in a dive club called Hamworthy Sub Aqua and we went down to the Lizard Peninsula and I was very into my photography but still had a lot to learn.

We went out diving and there were lots of jellyfish. When we got back to Porthoustock there was a jelly fish in a rock pool. On the second dive, everybody got in the inflatable to go out but I decided to stay and photograph this jelly fish in the rock pool. The kind of reaction was, "There's loads of jelly fish in the sea! Come out with us and have a dive." I went in the rock pool and took that picture. If it was in today's era then it would have gone viral because I won a lot of competitions with it. Nobody has really bettered it since; they have tried but they have never done it. The jelly fish picture made me realise that there's a difference between going diving and taking pictures.

Duncan Whittaker

Martin Edge offers 1:1 tuition with programmes tailored to meet an individual's needs and budget. He adopts a modular approach enabling photographers to select areas of specific interest and for those who want to combine teaching with practice he offers an accompanied underwater photography session in a swimming pool. Many find it helpful to determine the areas of focus after the introductory photo clinic. A typical full day programme consists of the introductory photo clinic/critique, agreed topics/teach-ins and a swimming pool session with review and basic Photoshop skills if necessary.



www.edgeunderwaterphotography.com/pages/tuition.asp

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Underwater Photography Masterclass

with Alex Mustard

Q. Your new book, *Underwater Photography Masterclass* is out soon, what can you tell us about it?

AM. 192 pages, 280 images, soft back, so light enough for travel. I actually wrote a 400 page book and then we concentrated it into 200. It is packed with techniques, tips and ideas. In some ways I don't want to say too much. I am really proud of it, but I want people to enjoy discovering what's unique about it for themselves.

I started with a blank piece of paper and planned the book cover to cover, to share what I think you really need to know. It is very much my take on underwater photography. What I think will really make the difference to your photos. That way, whatever you have read before, you'll really get lots of out reading this book too.

Q. So how have you made it different?

AM. The book is a course, or a masterclass on the whole of underwater photography, told from the perspective of understanding, controlling and mastering light and lighting. It is based on the techniques and advice that I have found really works for me and have seen really work for the students on my workshops.

It is also packed with detailed, real world tips that I have picked up shooting all around the world. It includes everything from how to get a pygmy seahorse to face your camera to why you want to flinch first when playing chicken with a basking shark!

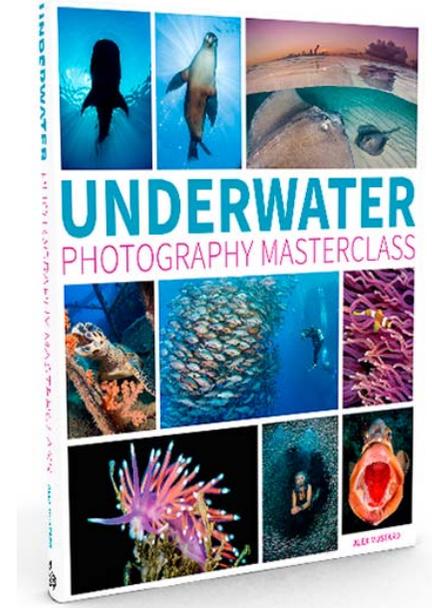
It doesn't skip on the essentials either, covering how to go about diving for your images and how to select the appropriate underwater photographic equipment. There is a section on "hacks for your housing" – how to set up your rig for the best performance and a list of common equipment problems

and field solutions.

Q. Who is the book aimed at?

AM. Although it presents some ideas and techniques that have never been in books before, I don't think of it as advanced or technical. I have taught these ideas and techniques on workshops all around the world and know that new photographers can put them into practice from their very first dive. There are just two diagrams in the whole book, and no equations!

Although it feels totally contemporary, the book also covers classic techniques (often with a modern



CHAPTER SIX

MASTERING AMBIENT LIGHT

Far too many underwater photographers never dive without strobes. Their arguments go, "just in case" and "they cost me a lot," which are reasonable, but I strongly believe it stops them reaching their full potential. You won't understand and be able to fully exploit ambient light until you take time to truly get to know it. Turning your strobes off for ten minutes is not enough. On my week-long Cayman workshops we all take our strobes off for a whole day! Available light suits many subjects. It gives light and color to our photographs in a completely different way and with different rules to strobes. But a major reason I suggest taking your strobes off is that mastering ambient light pays you back tenfold when you put them back on. While this chapter concerns ambient light, the lessons are just as precious for balanced light photos taken with strobes. Or, in the words of Martin Edge, "photography is all about light, underwater wide-angle is all about the natural light."

> BETWEEN CONTINENTS Ireland
The hidden pleasure of ambient light photography is leaving your strobes behind and enjoying the freedom of a maneuverable and compact rig. This is pure photography: you, your lens, and light. The hidden reward is that it teaches you lessons of light that are valuable for all your wide-angle photography.



MASTERING WIDE-ANGLE LIGHTING

Focusing and framing wide-angle photographs is straightforward; it is lighting that will make your work outstanding. This chapter focuses on creative and advanced lighting techniques. Consider them as artistic options, to be used more sparingly than the standard high-quality illumination methods covered in Chapter 4. Throughout this book, I have covered techniques individually because it makes them easier to understand and to implement, but they can, of course, be combined. Controlling light in wide-angle photography is about far more than knowing how to create these lighting effects. A true master of lighting does not simply throw the book of tricks at the subject. You should carefully select techniques that suit the scene, make the most of and help solve problems in the composition to create the image and atmosphere envisaged. In 1980, Mike Portelly produced one of the great underwater films, *The Ocean's Daughter*. Few underwater works are as creative, but for me Portelly's talent is not in the innovations, rather that each effect is entirely justified by the narrative of the story he was telling.

► **WORLD WAR II BIKE, Egypt**
Creative lighting requires learning how, but just as important is when, where, and why to use it. I spent hours underwater just observing the nuances of light that could evoke such different atmospheres. Carefully learned how to translate what I saw, or wanted to see, in a reliable way onto film! — Mike Portelly



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twist) and it is a text that celebrates and tries to learn from the rich history of underwater photography. There is even a quote from Peter Rowlands in there, and chapter 2 starts with a joke he taught me!

That said the title is Underwater Photography Masterclass, which indicates that it is not focused on the absolute basics. Instead its theme is light and lighting, which means the advice is not specific to any particular camera. Light is the same for all.

It is for enthusiastic photographers of all levels and all cameras. Although many of the lighting techniques require you to use two strobes - you wouldn't write a golfing book without assuming the student has a putter! The book explains exactly where to position them for the effect you want and importantly why. There are plenty of pictures of me underwater showing you how I shoot certain shots. The book presents

techniques for the full range of diving conditions, from clear tropical water, to chilly murky conditions.

Q. What has the feedback been like so far?

AM. My wife likes it and my dog wagged her tail! I have been very secretive with the manuscript. Nobody has read more than a couple of chapters! Last summer when I was writing it, I sent different parts to a couple of friends. I chose photographers who have never done workshops with me. I wanted feedback from people who weren't too familiar with my ways of thinking about underwater photography and my teaching methods. I wanted to make sure it is easy to follow and really useful. I wanted to check I wasn't assuming too much or too little. Without knowing each other, both wrote back to me saying that they were already trying the techniques on

CONTROLLING LIGHT UNDERWATER

Auto and manual exposure modes are there to help. Although everyone will tell you to shoot manual, it is OK to use auto exposure underwater and TTL flash, if and when it helps. The truth is that auto modes, designed to work on land, are more often a hindrance underwater, particularly in more complex lighting situations. When auto modes get it wrong, and underwater they do frequently, you can't be completely sure why. Should you dial in exposure compensation for the flash, the camera, or leave it alone in case it gets it right next time?

Manual is the most popular reuse underwater simply because it is the easiest, most reliable way to get the shot. The big advantage of manual is that camera and strobes do what you tell them and they keep doing it. If the exposure is wrong, you see it, make a change, and it is right. As most underwater photos are taken from the same distance, exposures stay remarkably consistent.

HISTOGRAMS

A histogram is simply the image represented as a bar graph of exposure. It is a useful tool for checking exposures, when you are struggling. Histograms are particularly helpful on night dives, inside wrecks and caverns, when the LCD screen shines so brightly that correctly exposed pictures look overexposed, causing you to underexpose.

However, in my experience, histograms hinder underwater photographers more than they help. I have even banned people from having histograms overlaying their images on my workshops, because they are too focused on the graph and not the photo. Getting correct exposures is relatively easy underwater, what really marks out strong work is achieving a good quality of light, and the histogram tells you nothing about that. In fact, by overlaying a histogram on the picture, it stops you seeing the details of the lighting. Instead, look at your images full screen on your LCD to spot uneven lighting (with hotspots and unwanted shadows), identify it and remedy it (see Chapter 6). There is no correct histogram, it depends entirely on the scene and photographer's intentions, which is why I have refused to show any in this book!

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BLACK AND BLUE BACKGROUNDS



When starting out in macro photography, particularly underwater where all pressures are greater, you tend to think only of subjects. You'll get decent shots, but the quality of your macro will sky rocket when you properly control backgrounds. This photography is anything but complicated, simply deciding not to shoot an exciting subject because it is badly positioned means you are on the right path. Backgrounds should be cast in the supporting actor role. When they clamor for too much attention, they pull the eye from the main subject and lessen the overall impact. Simple, single-color backgrounds are the easiest to exploit.



► **A PYGMY SEAHORSE IN FAN** (left)
Framing a subject against open water gives the option of either black or blue/green backgrounds. Black is more graphic, blue more faithful to reality. The difference here is simply in the shutter speeds: in this case 1/200 sec. for black and slowed down to 1/125 sec. to allow the blue through.

BLACK IS ALWAYS IN FASHION

Black backgrounds are the classic option for macro photography underwater. They make colors pop, they give images a strong graphic look, and they even make messy subjects look good! Or, as painter J.M.W. Turner exclaimed, "If I could find anything blacker than black I'd use it!"

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their dives (before answering any of the questions I'd specifically asked them about it)! So I am really excited about people reading the whole thing. And even more so about them putting the ideas and information into use.

www.underwaterphotographybook.com



► **A SCREEN TEST**
Use the LCD screen not to admire your work but to check for mistakes in focus and lighting. You'll be taking lots of workshop or turn-off 'rotate left' or 'auto-rotate' so that they are shown full screen first as a 'test shot'. You want to see them in and in the same orientation as the scene is in reality.

WHEN I USE AUTO

I choose my exposure mode, manual or auto, and my flash mode, manual or TTL, based on what gives the best chance of getting the shot. Almost all the time manual is my preference, but I will use auto exposure when it is better, say when shooting fast-moving subjects. In those cases, I use TTL (or TTL+AE) for macro, especially on very cold water dives. It limits my lighting options, but unless it is a case where I probably wasn't going to try anything more fancy than point and shoot.



► **A PUKET SOUND KING CRAB** (Canada)
I use TTL when it is the best way to get the shot. When diving in Canada, I knew my finger dexterity would not last as long as my desire to take photos. I used TTL for point and shoot simplicity for this juvenile king crab with simple flat lighting.

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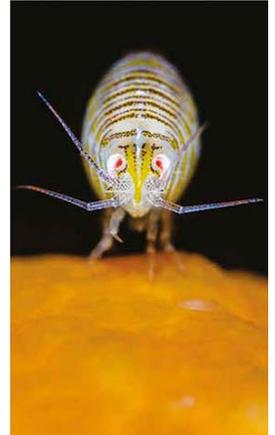
The easiest way to produce a black background is to frame a subject against open water. Easy is relative, as you will often have to comb to unlock this angle and earn your background. Use the combination of a fast shutter speed and small aperture to stop ambient light contributing to the stroke only exposure. Then, when a subject is framed against open water, you will get a black background with high quality, even lighting.

Not all compact cameras let you close the aperture to more than f8, which can make it difficult to get a really strong black background in bright, shallow conditions. Some let you use faster shutter speeds with flash to compensate. Also ensure you are on a low ISO—which you should be for all macro. However, if you are struggling to get your 'Turner Black', try using a diamond camera angle, or only chase black backgrounds in darker conditions. All cameras struggle to produce black background in very bright conditions or when framing directly toward the surface.

BLUE SEA, GREEN SEA

Black backgrounds are the most graphically powerful, but can be overused and lead your friends to ask if all your photos are from night dives. Blue or green backgrounds are also produced by framing against open water, while allowing the ambient light into the picture. Blues and greens look particularly good with pink, red, yellow, or orange subjects. They suit fish portraits and behavior shots, which benefit from the more realistic atmosphere. In murky water, a green background makes backscatter less obvious (see page 52).

The simplest way to get a blue or green background is a macro photos to start with a black background shot and slow the shutter speed down until the color comes through. This is much more effective when you use an upward camera angle, framing the subject against the brightest background. However, macro pictures are usually taken at small apertures and you may still end up with an unacceptably long shutter speed, especially in darker, green water conditions. The solution is to bump ISO up a bit (losing some image quality) and open up the aperture a little (reducing depth of field). A little of all three (shutter speed, aperture, and ISO) is usually better than a lot of one. Also remember to reduce your strobe power to compensate. If the conditions are really dark, it is best to shoot black backgrounds, and wait for brighter conditions for blues and greens.



► **A ANEMIPOD ON SOFT CORAL** (Scotland)
A black background is a staple of underwater photography. All colors look great against black. It makes pictures so eye-catching that some shoot all their macro shots this way.

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Underwater Photography Masterclass is published by Ammonite Press and is available for pre-order. It will be shipping in April.

Ocean Art Winners

The prestigious Ocean Art Underwater Photo Competition, organized by the Underwater Photography Guide, has announced the 2015 winners.

This year's Ocean Art Competition attracted a very high caliber of photos, representing entrants from over 50 countries.

The Best of Show was a spectacular



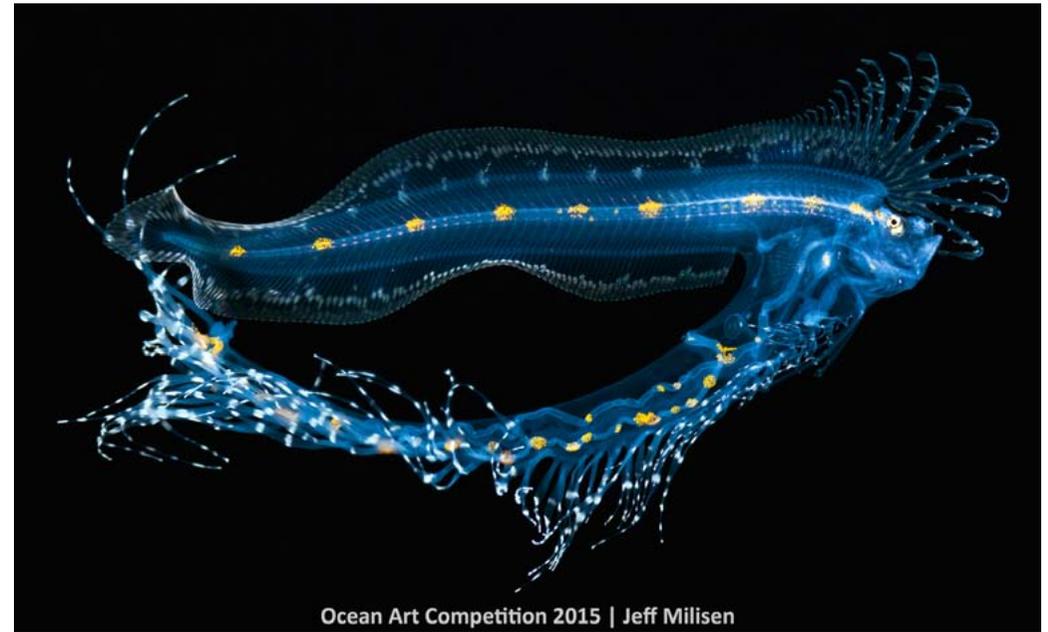
Ocean Art Competition 2015 | Simon Chiu

1st Place Mirrorless Macro

Simon Chiu
"Shyness"

It's a small filefish always camouflages in soft coral. I used 2 diopters which has very short focus distance for this shot, so I had to hold myself still to avoid scaring away this cute fellow.

Location: Mactan, Cebu, Philippines. Camera: Panasonic GF1 + Panasonic 45mm lens + 2X Sea and Sea YS-D1 + FIT(10) + FIT(5)



Ocean Art Competition 2015 | Jeff Milisen

1st Place Macro & Best of Show

Jeff Milisen
"Feeling Exposed"

*I was on a blackwater dive with a member of the Roddenberry family (of Star Trek fame) watching a parade of underwater aliens drift past when this larval cusk eel swam by. The external stomach helps the developing fish grow as fast as possible by eeking every last bit of nutrition from its every meal. Out of the four divers underwater that day, we had over 1000 blackwater dives under our belt and none of us had ever seen anything like it, whether on earth or boldly going elsewhere! Location: Kailua-Kona, Hawaii
Camera: Canon T1i, Canon 60mm lens, Ikelite housing, dual Ikelite DS-51 substrobes.
Settings: f13, 1/125, ISO 200*

photo of a larval stage eel photographed at night in 4,000 feet of water off the coast of Hawaii.

Other outstanding images include some out-of-this-world fish and marine life shots, rarely seen underwater

behavior, cute portraits, dreamy scenes in the conceptual category, sharks, whales and some dramatic moments between humans and marine life.

Thousands of entries were viewed by the judges before the final set of

1st Place Novice DSLR

Irene Middleton “Panic Puffer School”



Ocean Art Competition 2015 | Irene Middleton

Every summer schools of Starry Toado Pufferfish (Arothron firmamentum) start appearing at the Poor Knights Islands, off Northern New Zealand.

Normally found in Pelagic waters, strong easterly winds blow the pufferfish into the marine reserve islands where they often survive for less than a few hours.

The marine reserve offers a safe haven to many fishes but the thriving population of Jacks and Bream make short work of this exotic delicacy.

As soon as divers enter the water the schools of puffers race over to seek shelter which is what they were doing when I snapped off this shot. Soon after I left the water about half of them had been devoured.

Location: Maroro Bay, Poor Knights Island Marine Reserve, Northland New Zealand. Camera: Nikon D300, Sealux housing, Tokina 10-17mm Fisheye lens, Ikelite D125 strobe and DS50 on slave.

amazing images were selected and deemed some of the best underwater photos in the world.

Ocean Art 2015 judges included prestigious underwater photographers

www.uwpmag.com

Tony Wu, Martin Edge, and Marty Snyderman, accompanied by Underwater Photography Guide publisher Scott Gietler.

Ocean Art is one of the most



Ocean Art Competition 2015 | Alessandro Raho

1st Place Compact Macro

Alessandro Raho “The Fluorescent Cerianthus”

The use of these particular filters makes the fluorescence of some animal species stand out. They are typically used in night diving, but for this photo I used them during the day. Location: Noli (SV) Italy. Camera: Canon G16 in Isotta Housing with two YS-D1 strobes. Yellow filter on.

prestigious underwater photography competitions worldwide and may have

the largest prize purse of any single underwater photo competition.

www.uwphotographyguide.com/2015-ocean-art-contest-winners

Brent Durand

Issue 89/47



Bermuda Stamps

by Ron Lucas

Bermuda has a rich history of producing postage stamps dating from 1848 when a hand made stamp consisting of the words HAMILTON BERMUDA in a circle with the year and postmaster's William B. Perot's signature in the middle was first issued. These very rare stamps were produced only 8 years after the world's first and most famous stamp was issued in the UK - the Penny Black.

Although several hundred thousand Bermuda stamps are issued every year these are relative small numbers compared with larger countries and their unique designs celebrating our history, culture, flora and fauna make them highly collectible by serious philatelists and residents. First Day Covers such as displayed make interesting gifts for visitors and relatives overseas.

Nowadays the Bermuda Philatelic Society produces 4 issues annually and stamps are available as sheets, individually or groups and as First Day Covers which are usually sold for a period of one year as in the case of the Bermuda Reef Fish Stamp Issue. These were initially scheduled for release in late May 2015 and will be available for purchase until 1st June 2016.

Recent issues have included Bermuda Shells, Bermuda in Bloom, Bermuda Roses and Lefroy botanicals. Stamps have also celebrated important anniversaries such as the 2009 issue for the 400th anniversary of settlement following the shipwreck of the Sea Venture on our reefs during a hurricane. This event was also celebrated in Shakespeare's The



Tempest.

It usually takes at least six months to produce a stamp issue from idea to point of sale in Bermuda Post Offices and through the Bermuda Philatelic Bureau, UK and USA representatives. The Philatelic Bureau is responsible for the production



Bi-Color Coney Nikon D70s in Ikelite Housing and Strobe, f6.3 1/60 sec



of postage stamps for the Bermuda Post Office. The stamp images are the result of the creative vision of the Stamp Design Advisory Committee which is a Government of Bermuda appointed group that works with historical, environmental, and arts organisations for inspiration to create original artwork for the commemorative stamps that collectors world wide have come to appreciate and expect from the Bermuda Post Office.

So it was a great honour when I was approached in 2014 to submit photographs for consideration. The stamps that were eventually selected had to be representative of Bermuda tropical fish, be readily identifiable and be suitably posed for positioning on the regular format of Bermuda stamps: 28.5mm X 52mm. Over 20 images were reviewed by the Committee and eventually 6 chosen, one of which would be printed on the First Day Cover envelope whilst the others would be available as stamps for purchase.

Whilst Keno Simmons of the Department of Communication and information completed the stamp designs I was asked to provide the information for the First Day Cover enclosure



Queen Parrotfish Terminal Phase Nikon D7100 in Nauticam Housing with Inon Strobes f10 1/125 sec

describing the 5 stamp species and also to write an introduction. I enlisted the help of a colleague Judie Clee who is the local Coordinator of REEF to provide input and review descriptions for accuracy. Judie helped edit my 2008 Bermuda Reef Portraits book and also descriptions and photos for the free Bermuda Reef Life HD app.

To my complete surprise, the Bermuda Post Office created a wallet size 2016 Calendar card with the Yellowhead Wrasse (Redback) stamp artwork and photo on one side. This was distributed free of charge on the counters at Post Offices in Bermuda during December 2015 and January 2016.

I am extremely proud to have my photos honoured on Bermuda Stamps as I was when one of my hawksbill turtle photos was used as the basis for the design of a silver commemorative coin celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the Bermuda Turtle Project a few years ago.

If you would like to obtain a first day cover for just \$5.50 USA you can email philatelic@gov.bm for further information.

Ron Lucas

Ron is the author/photographer of the Bermuda Zoological Society Bermuda Reef Portraits book and Bermuda Reef Life HD app for iOS and Android smartphones and tablets.

www.ronlucasphoto.smugmug.com

Shooting Squid

by Dan Bolt

Cast your mind back to March 2013 and more specifically UWP no.71 – it's the one with Alex Tattersall's gorgeous Sea Lion image on the cover. I was electronically thumbing my way through that edition because I re-read UWP back-issues quite often when I'm looking for inspiration. Photographic fashions may come and go, but good technique is an absolute through it all and for me issue no.71 is memorable for a great article by Ryo Minemizu entitled 'Shooting Ocean Drifters'.

In that article Ryo discussed shooting small mid-water critters with a complicated macro lighting setup which produced some very intriguing images. My interest in the techniques discussed back in 2013 was recently rekindled during a night-dive under one of my local piers. The amount of marine life that comes onto the shallow sand at this site is truly amazing and made more so given that most life topside has gone into hibernation for the winter. One of the regular visitors to this spot throughout the winter are large numbers of the juvenile form of the Common Squid (*Loligo vulgaris*) which measure between 2 and 5cm in length. It is these little creatures that reminded me of Ryo's article, and so I decided to see if I could reproduce the same stunning images he was getting of similar subjects.

Kit-wise it's fairly straight forward;

two snooted strobes pushed forward to create a 'sweet-spot' of light to highlight the subject against a black background. Knowing how quick the baby squid can be, I opted to use my fastest focusing lens; in this case the superb Olympus 12-40mm f/2.8 Pro. Adding a spotter torch on the top of my Aquatica AEM1 housing and the setup was complete.

As I eventually found out (after much underwater swearing!); working with this technique gave me a sphere of light/focus no more than 10cm across within which I had to place my fast-moving subject (hopefully striking a nice pose too) and boy was that hard work! At first the squid are very jumpy and will not let you get close enough to place them in the 'zone'; staying with them for a few minutes yielded a noticeable change in behaviour when they seemed to accept the camera's presence and calm down, once or twice even hunting in the torch light.

This change in attitude gave a surprising number of photographic

Paignton Pier at night. Panasonic GM1, 8mm fisheye, f/3.5, 1sec, iso800

Night squid

Olympus EM-1, Olympus 12-40mm, f/7.1, 1/320th, iso320



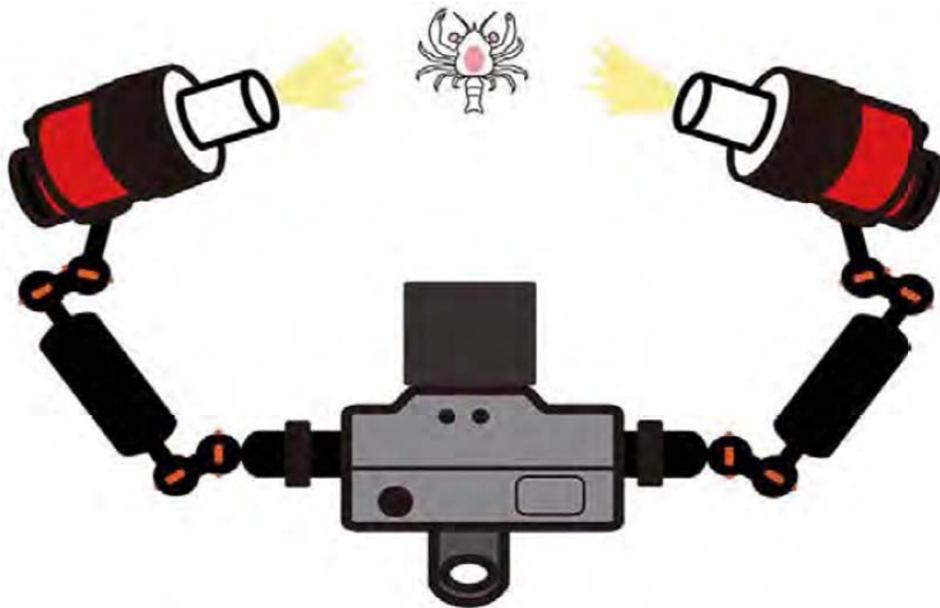


Illustration by Ryo Minemizu in UWP 71

opportunities – even allowing me to shoot some narrow depth-of-field images as well as waiting for ‘peak-action’ shots too. Being the UK in winter, no dive would be complete without a healthy amount of backscatter; in this case the sand being kicked up by the swell rolling over my head. If the squid stayed close to the sea-bed the sand in the water provided for a beautiful star-like backdrop to the images; if it moved a few feet into the water column the sediment levels dropped off, making nice, black backgrounds very easy to achieve with such a focused approach to lighting.

The final thing my buddy & I learned from our dives was this; composing and accurately focusing on a fast-moving subject was far and away

easier with the Olympus EM-1’s large rear-screen that is was using a Nikon D7200’s viewfinder – one-up for the Micro Four-Thirds shooters ;)

Dan Bolt

www.underwaterpics.co.uk



Don't settle for 2nd best



Film - No Filter No
White Balance



Digital - No Filter Manual
White Balance



Magic Filter Manual
White Balance

Digital cameras have opened up new possibilities to underwater photographers. For available light photography manual white balance is an invaluable tool for restoring colours. But when you use it without a filter you are not making the most of the technique. You're doing all the hard work without reaping the full rewards. These three photos are all taken of the same wreck in the Red Sea. The left hand image was taken on slide film, which rendered the scene completely blue. The middle image is taken with a digital SLR without a filter, using manual white balance. The white balance has brought out some of the colour of the wreck, but it has also sucked all the blue out of the water behind the wreck, making it almost grey. The right hand image is taken with the same digital camera and lens, but this time using an original Magic Filter. The filter attenuates blue light meaning that the colours of the wreck are brought out and it stands out from the background water, which is recorded as an accurate blue.

www.magic-filters.com

Lord Howe Island

by Scott Portelli

World Heritage listed Lord Howe Island is one of Australia's best kept secrets. Part of NSW, Lord Howe Island is approximately 600 kilometers from Sydney. With its towering twin mountains and coral lagoon setting the scene for one of the most picturesque destinations in Australia if not the world, this place offers so much for all walks of life.

Mt Gower is the highest peak on the Island, which stands at 875 meters. For the brave of heart you can make the 7-hour trek to conquer its peak. But it is well worth the effort, as nothing showcases the breadth of Lord Howe Island like the view from the top of its highest summit. There are so many spectacular walks on the island, and no matter where you go, the towering presence of Mt Gower makes a great backdrop as you explore the island. Towering cliffs and a spectacular coastline of pristine beaches and lush rainforest cover the island from end to end. And beneath the waves it is equally impressive.

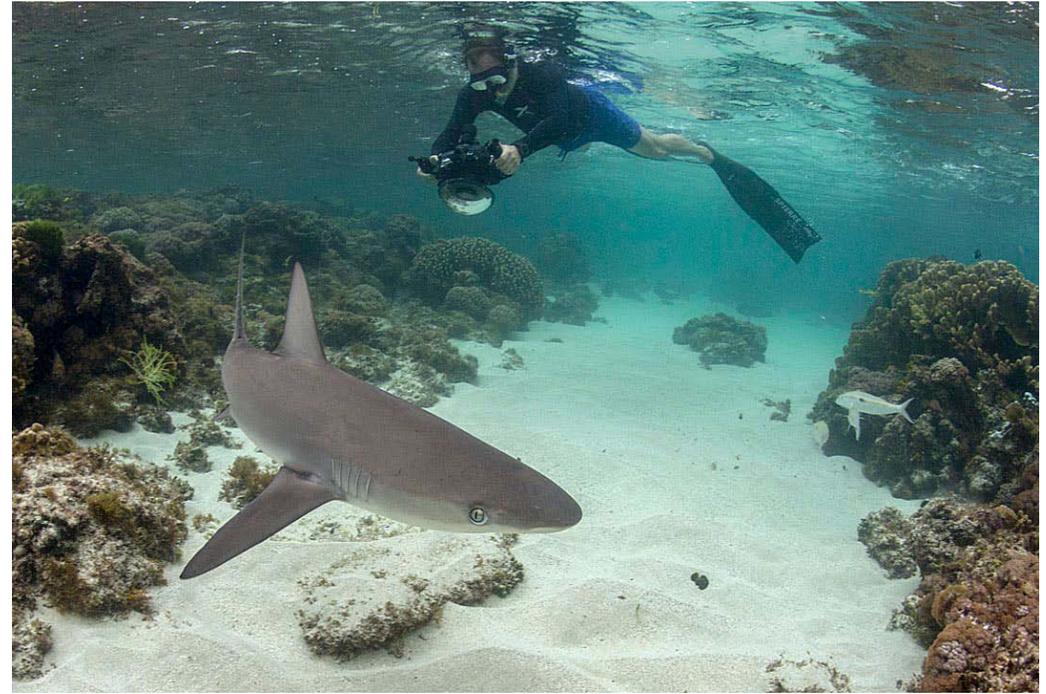
The island is teeming with marine life and even has some local hotspots that entice you to take the plunge more than once. Whether you are in knee deep water with turtles at Settlement beach or snorkeling the pristine Ned's beach with large Silver Drummer and King fish looking for a quick meal, there is always something for the avid diver and

photographer.

In the late afternoon, depending on the tides, visitors often take a stroll along Settlement beach. The main attraction being a number of green turtles grazing on the seagrass in less than 1 foot of water. You can literally walk up to these turtles and watch them eating the grass or resting in the warm shallow water. They are not in the least concerned about the human feet walking beside them and continue to munch away on the lush sea grass. So, with only fins, mask and snorkel you can get down to their level and cruise along the shallows eye to eye. They are so used to people that we don't appear as a threat. It's an ideal place to practice your split shots with the stunning rainforest and blue sky as your backdrop.

The other hotspot that is easily accessible is Ned's beach. Here you have a seascape of rich green sea grass and hard corals that stretch across the entire beach. In the shallow water a resident group of Silver Drummer and King fish congregate waiting for a quick meal. The fish are in 6 inches of water and will almost beach themselves to get a free feed. Years ago, a few of the restaurant owners would throw some of the food scraps into the water and the local fish started to realise if they kept coming back, there was an endless supply of food. Over the years, visitors started feeding the fish bread scraps, but more recently





the local authority placed a healthier food source for visitors to feed the fish.

This is another great spot to get in and photograph the fish, the water is clear and the fish will come face to face with you in the water. I have spent countless hours here taking split shots with the fish as they are very accommodating and somewhat predictable, especially when there is food involved.

But Ned's beach has so much more to offer. Galapagos whaler sharks will come into the shallows, most probably attuned to the splashing and activity caused by the nearby fish frenzy being fed pellets by visitors. The Galapagos Whaler are quite a curious shark and about 1 ½ meters in length. They are common in all areas around Lord Howe Island and you will see them on most

dives. Another visitor that can be found around Ned's beach are turtles of varying species, including hawksbill, loggerheads and green turtles. They too stay in the shallows and graze on the abundant sea grass.

Hard corals, sandy bottoms, intricate structures, caves and an eclectic range of unique marine life is what Lord Howe Island offers for the experienced diver. You can tell by the healthy array of life below the water that there has been minimal impact on the marine environment.

The Admiralty Islands sit at the northern end of Lord Howe Island and are the jewel in the Island group, offering some of the best and most accessible diving from the main Island. Almost a third of all Nudibranchs identified by the



late Neville Coleman were discovered in LHI and specifically around the Admiralty Islands. It is the ideal spot for wide angle and macro photographers and never disappoints the avid diver that is seeking an eclectic range of species.

There are over 25 dive sites around the Admiralty Islands, with the most popular ones being Noddy Island, Rupert's Reef, Sugarloaf Island and Tenth of June Bombora. Diving depths are between 15-40 meters and the dive sites consist of large pinnacles and coral reefs with large numbers of pelagic fish schooling in the deeper water.

For many divers the LHI region contains something even more elusive, the pinnacle of all pinnacles, Balls Pyramid. Located 23 kilometers south east of Lord Howe Island. 1 kilometer

in length, standing 521 meters above sea level it is the tallest ocean pinnacle in the southern hemisphere. Often on the top 50 dive sites list of places to dive in the world, it is easy to see why it attracts so much attention. Crystal clear waters and an abundance of marine life including the only location on the planet where you can see the rare Ballina Angel fish, Balls Pyramid is a must do dive.

On the boat trip out we are frequented by a resident pod of pacific bottlenose dolphins looking to surf the bow of the boat. If you are quick enough, you can jump in the water and swim with this group and if you are entertaining enough they may just stick around.

Balls Pyramid also contains the rarest stick insect in the world which lives exclusively on this 1km long volcanic





stack. It is 12 centimeters long and the heaviest flightless stick insect in the world. Thought to be extinct from the main Island these insects managed to survive exclusively on Balls Pyramid.

Diving in the area there are a number of species you see on a regular basis including Galapagos sharks, green turtles, giant stingrays, painted morays, lion fish, blue crayfish and schools of trevally. Finding the rare Ballina angelfish is also a bonus. But no matter what you are looking for the diving is spectacular and in one of the most unique places in the world.

Even if the weather is bad, you still have the lagoon which is thriving with marine life, and due to the shallow nature of the lagoon, you can spend a lot more time under water. One of the dive sites, Comets Hole is a natural upwelling of fresh water which has created a hole in

a sandy part of the lagoon, surrounded by coral. This fresh water layer meets the salt water creating a nutrient rich environment where the marine life gathers. Even a snorkel in the lagoon is quite rewarding, you are bound to bump into giant stingrays, Galapagos sharks and turtles.

The simple fact is that this is probably one of the most undiscovered places to dive in Australia. The island limits the number of guest to 400 at any one time which means you can often walk along a beach and not run into another soul. For divers, this means you are not competing with multiple divers at any dive site. All the dive sites are fairly unique but it might take a few years to explore them all. It is well worth the effort nonetheless.

Scott Portelli

ANTARCTICA



NYE 2016/17



DIVE, SNORKEL, PHOTOGRAPH



Join award winning wildlife & underwater photographer Scott Portelli
For a trip of a lifetime, to snorkel, dive, photograph and explore Antarctica

Dates: 25th Dec 2016 to 4th January 2017

Duration: 11 days | Fly/Sail

Start: Punta Arenas, Chile (fly to King George Island, Antarctica)

Finish: Ushuaia, Argentina

This is Africa

by Tom Burd

“Leave your lumbago on the beach, hook your feet into the floor-straps, and hang on for dear life!” Perhaps my memory of the actual safety briefing is a tad hazy, but this is the general advice needed when launching a RIB through the rough South African swell. Grab your camera housings and tuck in those strobe arms, as reaching the dive sites here is an experience in itself.

The province of Kwa-Zulu Natal on the Eastern coast of South Africa is one that all divers and thrill seekers should remember, even if you can't pronounce the name! Spread over an area larger than Scotland, this region is renowned for its world class shark diving, whale encounters and the phenomenal sardine run.

The beautifully wild coastline is a photographer's paradise, boasting many opportunities to witness Africa's iconic land mammals and discover a variety of breath taking scenery. The diving in South Africa is extremely varied and seasonal, ranging from the warm tropical reefs of the Indian Ocean at Sodwana Bay, to the cold kelp forests of Cape Town. This makes it impossible to cover everything on a single trip, but if you have a particular species on your tick-list, the chances are you can probably find it here at some point during the year! Top this off with the incredible current exchange rate for UK travellers, and South Africa becomes a major contender for that next photo trip.

My objective for this visit was sharks, sharks and more sharks. With this in mind the first stop



King of the reef, the bull shark's muscles and curves make for some great portraits. Nikon D7000, Nauticam Housing, Tokina 10-17mm Fisheye at 10mm, f13, 1/250, ISO 200, Available light.

was Shelly Beach, a small bustling town 2.5 hours South of Durban. Roughly 8 km offshore lies the phenomenal Protea Banks, a 6 km long reef rising to 27 m below the surface.

With no natural harbours to provide shelter from the constant pounding waves, getting out to sea requires a touch of improvisation: the “surf launch”. Early in the morning, before the winds pick up, the dive boat is dumped onto the sand and dragged with great effort through the first breakers,

before everyone scrambles aboard and straps in!

The final step relies on the expertise of the skipper, who must perfectly time his exit between the rocks and the incoming waves. This can be very bumpy and with little storage space available, a cushioned container for your camera equipment is highly recommended. I personally use a large beer cooler bag! Not only does this come in very handy for post-dive barbecues (or “braai” in Afrikaans), but it is extremely well padded and has convenient



Waiting for a gap in the waves at Shelly Beach. Timing is vital!
© Kym Pollard, Aqua Planet Dive Centre

When the sun shines there are many interesting lighting opportunities within the top ten meters of water. Nikon D7000, Nauticam Housing, Tokina 10-17mm Fisheye at 13mm, f18, 1/320, ISO 200, 2x Sea and Sea YS-D1.

carry handles. It also does a great job of keeping your kit cool on a sunny day, helping to prevent any inconvenient housing fog during the dive.

If you survive the launch then keep your eyes peeled at all times, as whales and dolphins are galore in these highly productive waters. We were lucky enough to see many humpback whale breaches, and even be in the water to witness a “fly-by”

from a mother and her calf!

July to October is typically the period of their migrations along the coastline, however last year they stayed into late November. This coincided particularly well with my trip, being also the beginning of the hammerhead season on Protea Banks. By this I don’t just mean the occasional sighting, I’m talking about regular, Galapagos-style schools of thousands of scalloped hammerheads





Witnessing schooling hammerheads on Protea Banks is a moment of true joy, and one that every diver will cherish forever. Nikon D7000, Nauticam Housing, Tokina 10-17mm Fisheye at 10mm, f9, 1/100, ISO 500, Available light.

(without the need to take out a second mortgage)!

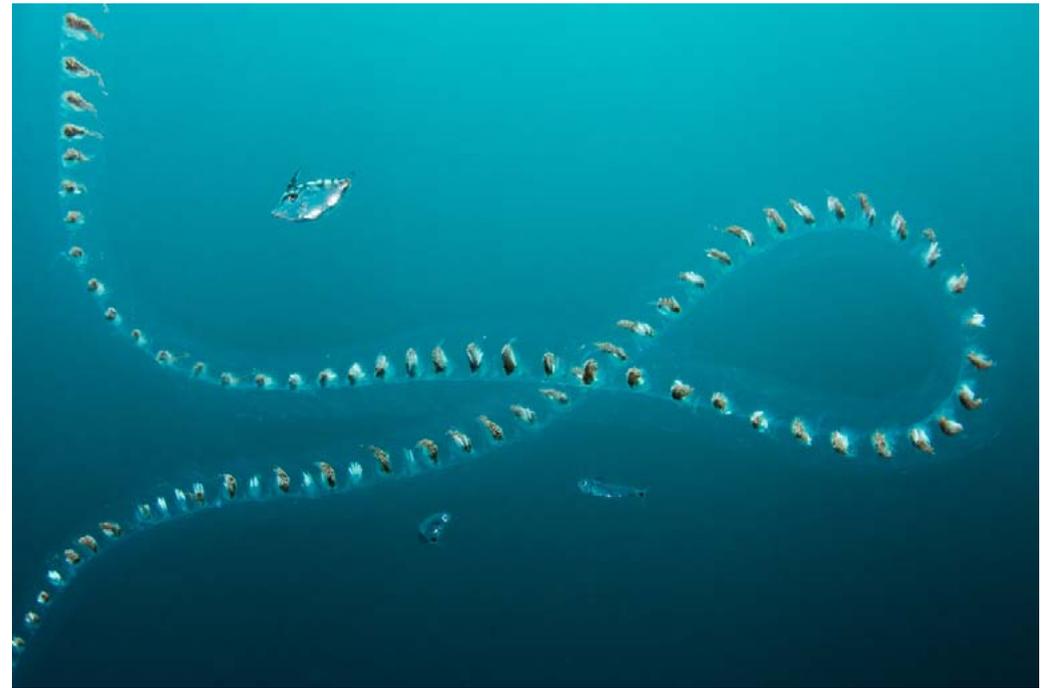
The compromise that you make by choosing South Africa over a Galapagos liveaboard is the visibility, which normally ranges from 5-15m. This makes it very challenging to photograph such skittish animals, so don't expect to come home with crystal clear shots in blue water.

After a few dives I actually found that removing my strobes to reduce drag was critical for any attempt to photograph the distant schools, which always seemed to linger on the edge of visibility. Without a rebreather it's unlikely that you will get close

enough to need a flash anyway! However, on a couple of days, the water cleared and we were greeted by the most amazing sight of a dense hammerhead wall, spanning from top to bottom. The sheer number of sharks was mind-boggling and I was instantly transfixed by their beautiful undulating bodies.

Being in their presence was an incredibly humbling experience, especially considering the huge pressure on shark populations worldwide, and I could have honestly gone home very happy at that point.

There was more to come however, as South Africa is widely



This delicate siphonophore was a few metres in length and home to a variety of juvenile fishes. Nikon D7000, Nauticam Housing, Tokina 10-17mm Fisheye at 17mm, f11, 1/250, ISO 400, 2x Sea and Sea YS-D1.

considered the home of the baited shark dive. Although understandably a controversial topic, these close encounters within the top 10 m can provide some of the best photographic opportunities, especially when visibility is low.

Historically the most famous location for this is Aliwal Shoal, a reef situated 90 km to the North, where people have been diving with sharks since the 1980s. The main attraction here is the large population of blacktip sharks (*Carcharhinus limbatus*), a species which is

widespread along many tropical and sub-tropical coastlines, and is surprisingly even found throughout the Mediterranean Sea. These fast moving, agile predators are great fun to share the water with, and divers quickly find themselves surrounded by over 20 individuals at a time. To get a clean shot without the baiting equipment and divers in the frame is not easy, even with so many sharks to choose from! Luckily however, halfway through our first dive another boat joined nearby, which created a "corridor" of sharks travelling in-



A glimpse into the mayhem of a baited dive at Aliwal Shoal! Nikon D7000, Nauticam Housing, Tokina 10-17mm Fisheye at 14mm, f20, 1/100, ISO 500, Available light.

between the two groups of divers.

This was the perfect opportunity to photograph them away from the baiting process, as they were much calmer and presented against more pleasing backgrounds. I was also tentatively hoping for a tiger shark (*Galeocerdo cuvier*) to make an appearance, as they are regular visitors here from December to May, but of course they decided to arrive a few days after my departure!

Protea Banks offers similar baited dives to Aliwal Shoal and even boasts a greater variety of species.

Whilst the blacktips are less abundant, it's more common to encounter large bull sharks (*Carcharhinus leucas*), known locally as Zambezi, as well as the slender bronze whaler or copper shark (*Carcharhinus brachyurus*). Even great hammerheads (*Sphyrna mokarran*) occasionally come to investigate!

Bull sharks in particular have always fascinated me, and I jumped at the opportunity to capture their raw power through the lens. Normally the cheeky blacktips start the proceedings by creating havoc around the drum,



In particular on Aliwal Shoal, most sharks were accompanied by a charismatic remora or two. Nikon D7000, Nauticam Housing, Tokina 10-17mm Fisheye at 10mm, f16, 1/100, ISO 500, 2x Sea and Sea YS-D1.

whilst the bulls waited patiently below for these hyperactive little puppies to calm down, before rising up to take pride of place. Their beefy outline is a perfect candidate for silhouettes through the murky water, and they exude a relaxed but confident “king of the reef” personality, making it easy to predict their swim patterns and plan your shots.

Interestingly, they have the unique ability to thrive in extremely varied water salinities, from hypersaline lagoons to entirely freshwater, hundreds of kilometres upstream.

This is the aquatic equivalent of an Arctic fox surviving a trip to the Sahara desert! For a long time it was actually believed that Lake Nicaragua, the largest lake in Central America, contained its very own species of freshwater shark. However, in 1961 it was shown that they are in fact bull sharks, which are thought to have jumped up the rapids of the San Juan River from the Caribbean, just like salmon!

The reef itself on Protea is covered by magnificent sponges and hosts a variety of fishes including



Not far from Shelly Beach, a drive around the beautiful Lake Eland nature reserve is a great way to relax after a day diving. Nikon D7000, Nikon 70-210mm at 135mm, f7.1, 1/250, ISO 100.

grouper, kingfish and stingray, but it is tricky to explore properly due to the extreme currents found here. We once drifted over 6 km on a single baited dive! As a result it is necessary to quickly descend and stay close to the guide, who is dragged along by a permanently deployed surface marker buoy. Photographers, in particular, must pay serious attention to the whereabouts of the guide, as current strength varies with depth and the skipper cannot follow two SMBs at once in these conditions.

After 15 minutes of flying over

the reef, the group starts a slow multi-level ascent, with good chances of some mid-water shark encounters. Whilst wide-angle photography takes priority on Protea, you may also want to put on your macro lens for at least one dive, as the variety of planktonic life during the safety stops is astounding! From salps and siphonophores to tiny jellyfish, these intricate alien-like creatures are completely mesmerising.

Between November and March, ask the skipper to drop you over “Sand Shark Gully” on the



The true force of nature is ever present on South African beaches!

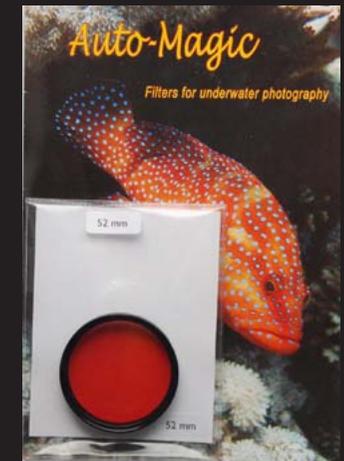
Southern Pinnacles, where dozens of giant guitarfish (*Rhynchobatus djiddensis*) congregate at 40 m. These unique looking rays can grow up to 3 m in length, and are often found cruising along the sand in squadrons. During the colder months of May to September, it is more common to dive the Northern Pinnacles, where a series of caves provide shelter for huge groups of spotted ragged-tooth sharks (*Carcharias taurus*). These ferocious looking “raggies” migrate North from Cape Town in order to mate, and the sight of a cave packed to the brim with them would certainly be worth a visit on its own!

Although not for the faint hearted, a trip to South Africa is

always exhilarating and full of surprises. Keep an open mind and allow yourself enough time to properly explore the area, as there is so much to visit and nature will always dictate your sightings. If you enjoy fast drifts, adventure, and can embrace the prospect that a great white shark might just decide to turn up, then I guarantee you won’t be disappointed!

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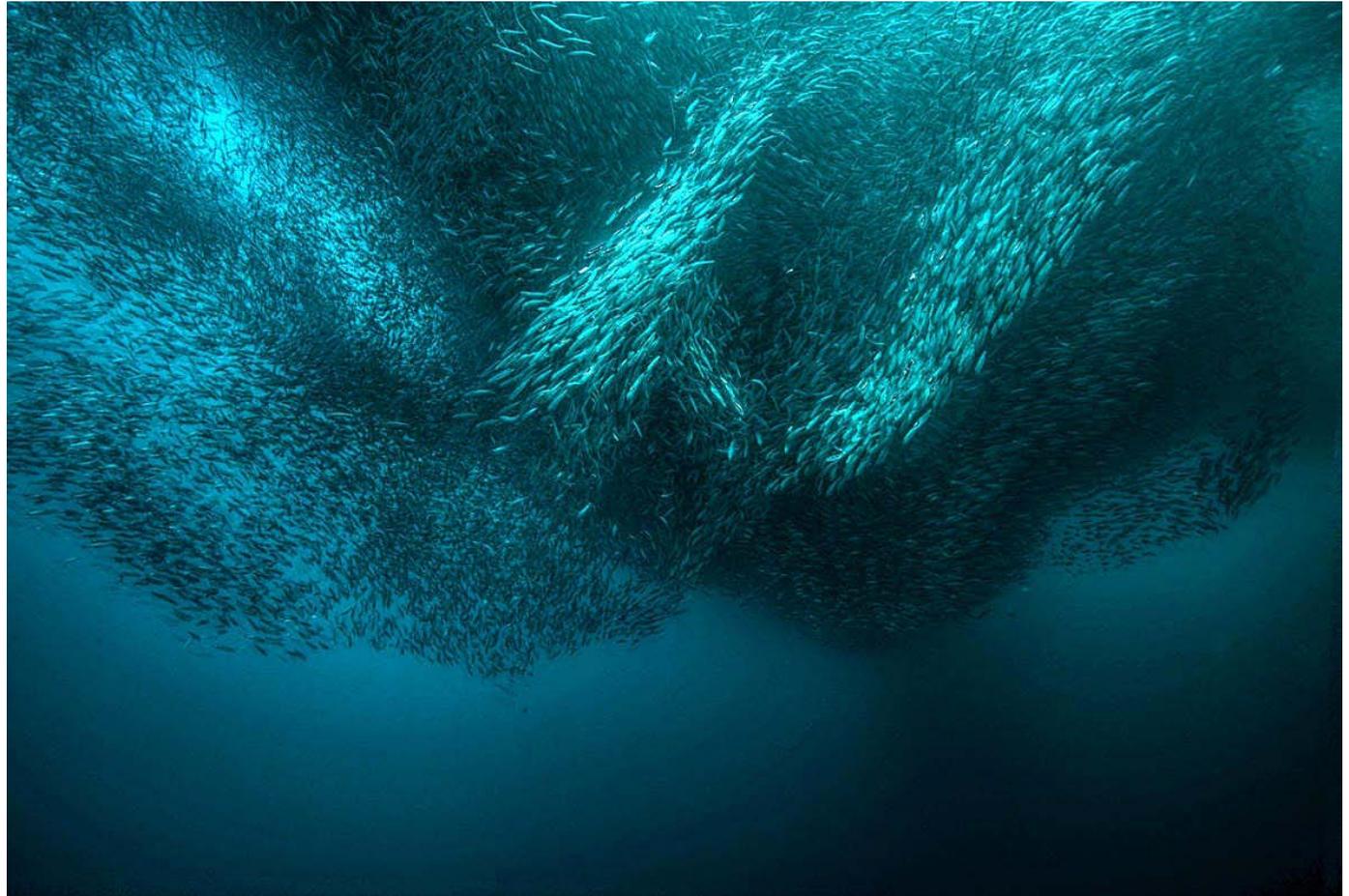
Great Moalboal Sardine School

by Klaus Stiefel

Moalboal in the south of Cebu is your typical charming little Philippine country town with a church, a buzzing fruit and fish market, a statue of national hero Dr. Jose Rizal with the usual book in his hands, and a hand full of pawn shops. From the chicken-barbecue street-corner eateries you can watch the city life involving market-goers of all ages, groups of giggling school-kids in bright white uniforms, and lots of very relaxed looking guys leaning on their mopeds and tricycles, hanging out on street corners and offering rides.

The tricycle is one of the main forms of transportation in the Philippines - it's a side car welded to a motorcycle in an act of impressive back-yard engineering. A short tricycle ride with a driver who would undoubtedly make it in formula 1, if given the chance, brings you to Panagsama beach, the diving suburb of Moalboal. About a dozen dive shops on the rocky shore indicate that there must be something worth checking out below the waves.

And there is. The steep walls and the healthy hard coral cover on the reef tops are worthy of many dives. But the signature dive of Moalboal is undoubtedly an excursion into the massive school of sardines just off the rocky shore in Panagsama. In my time as Savedra Dive Center's photo-pro, I was mesmerized by this massive school of fishes. Right in front of Savedra, at or just below the steep drop off, probably at least a million of the small silvery fishes congregate. They form the most astonishing



Sardine Dynamics. High dynamic range fusion of 3 shots taken with a Canon EOS5DII, Canon L 17-40mm, Hugyfot housing.

patterns! Within seconds a homogeneous mass of eyes, scales and fins transforms itself into eddies, swirls and vortices. At times some of the sardines swim about in a separate fish-ball; then a three-dimensional pathway forms between that ball and the main school, and sardine bodies without end flow back and forth. If you enjoy the hypnotizing patterns of the atmospheric bands of Jupiter played at time-lapse speed, or if you are fascinated by the

rotating swirls of foam on top of your cappuccino, then you will be thrilled by the sardines! To put it in geeky terms: Non-linear pattern formation and emergent animal group behaviour at it's best!

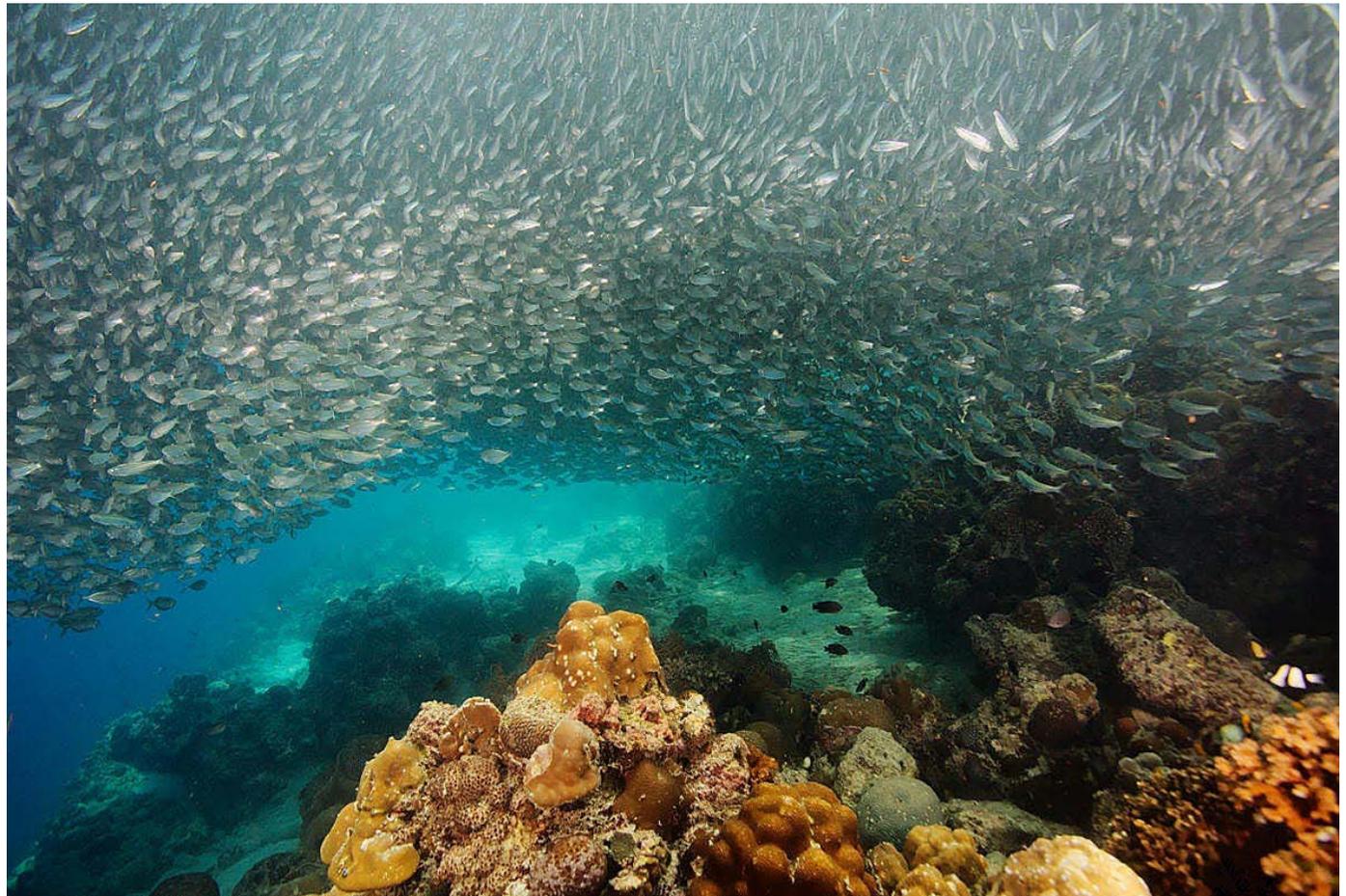
We as divers influence the way the school looks: the sardines don't particularly like bubbles. So swimming below the school and exhaling our air makes the fish part. The sardines also don't like fast-changing light: Sometimes I see dive guides

shaking their diving torches up and down repeatedly and quickly, which startles the school into darting a few meters away. I personally don't engage in such fish-scaring!

While divers might scare the fish, we don't eat them. A number of jacks, from below, and needlefish, from above, certainly try. Whenever these predators make a go at the sardines, the school bursts apart. I particularly like watching the jacks, which hunt in packs. And once a week or so, someone reports seeing a thresher sharks hunting sardines! In contrast to Malapascua island, further north in the Cebu province, where threshers can be seen daily at cleaner stations, such thresher shark encounters are a matter of luck in Moalboal - luck which, irksomely, I have lacked so far.

Currently, the sardines are right in front of Panagsama beach, all day, every day. According to Savedra owner Kalle Epp, the sardines used to have a steady presence from around 1999 to 2005 but then disappeared. They came back to a small nearby rocky island called Pescador and stayed there from 2007 to 2011. A new school has been living at Panagsama from 2013 until now. It's not clear what makes the sardines as a group decide to move - it's some enigmatic emergent decision taken by millions of fish minds in a strange form of piscine democracy. During my time in Panagsama, the sardines moved their home location along the coast 150 meters to the south within a few days, with no trigger for the move apparent to me! Did they follow a local aggregation of plankton or did they try to avoid predation and fishing? I would love to know!

If they don't decide to move again, the future of the great Panagsama sardine school seems safe: Fishing at both Panagsama and Pescador is



Sardines on the Reef. Canon EOS5DII, Canon L 17-40mm, Hugyfot housing, 2 x Inon z-240 strobes, f11, 1/160, ISO400

restricted to hook & line fishing and spearing by locals. The 'fairly well enforced' absence of net fishing lets the sardine school as a whole live.

An important question of course is: How to photograph these amazing masses of fish? It's surprisingly hard to capture the magnificence of this spectacle of nature. One problem is that there are so many sardines that they darken the sun. When swimming underneath the sardine school it seems like clouds have covered the sky all of a sudden,

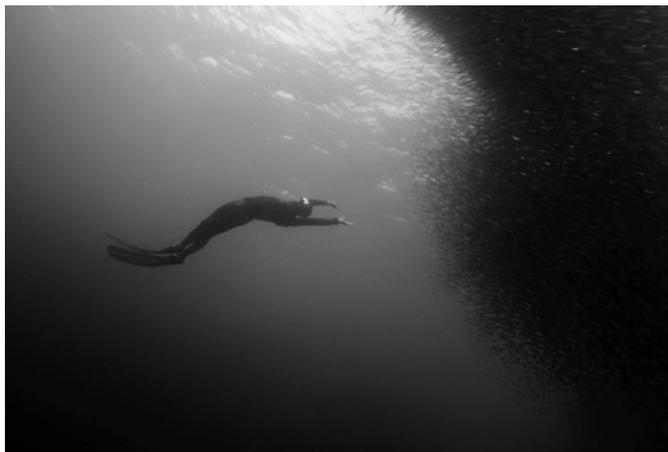
but it's really the massive number of densely packed fish occluding the sunlight. So, there is not as much ambient light as one would wish, and the school is so big that even a powerful strobe will not illuminate the whole school.

The aforementioned fear of bright & fast light by the sardines makes strobe use even less attractive. In my opinion it only makes sense to use a strobe when including some parts of the coral reef into the shot, where the artificial light restores some

of the warmer colors in your photograph.

For the quality of the natural light a big factor is the time of the day to head underwater. In the morning, the visibility is best, but the sun is still hiding behind the mountains to the east, in the center of Cebu (the island rises to 1013 m at Osmeña Peak). In the afternoon the sun is out in full force, but a tad higher waves make the viz worse, as does the trickle of sardine feces through the water. Just as you can't have the pudding and eat it, and you can't have a million sardines without the end products of sardine digestion. However, the bacteria in sardine guts and salt water are very different than those which make humans sick, and I believe the hygienic problem here is small; I have certainly never heard of anyone getting sick after a sardine dive! Where the fish poop is a problem though is in photography: You will typically have to edit out a few poop specks in post-processing with the 'heal brush' tool.

One option to overcome the issues of low ambient light to photograph the large fish school is to use the high dynamic range technique (HDR). HDR gives vibrance to the image by eliminating local over- or under exposure, by using the properly exposed areas from 2 or more shots taken of the same scene in rapid succession. This is normally done with a camera on a tripod so not an option in mid-water below the sardines. Instead, I used good buoyancy, a steady hand and a wide depth-of-field to keep the image steady while my 5DII fired 3 shots in rapid succession. Is HDR still a 'photograph' or is this 'cheating'? I think it's only dishonest to image-manipulate if one does not state what one did, either in-camera or on the laptop. The proper question is, how far along the gradient from photography to digital art is HDR? In my opinion, it



Freediver approaching Sardines. Canon EOS5DII, Canon L 17-40mm, Hugyfot housing, f14, 1/100, ISO640

represents the light falling on the camera sensor in a very cleverly enhanced way. In fact, the eye has a significant higher dynamic range than any camera, and so a high-dynamic-range image might be closer to what we actually see. HDR captures the light that was present in the moment the 3 exposures were taken - a longer moment than a single exposure, but still an instant.

Culturally, HDR has moved from an esoteric image processing trick used by photo nerds to a technique so widely-used that it now comes with many cell phone cameras. I use LuminanceHDR 2.4, by Giuseppe Rota and colleagues, for my HDRing. This program has a wealth of options for creating an HDR image, and an algorithm for aligning the individual shots, should the aforementioned good buoyancy and steady hand be less than perfect.

Sardine school shots often come across as eerie, unreal images. They appear more like an abstract piece of art and less like a nature



Sardine Arc. High dynamic range fusion of 3 shots taken with a Canon EOS5DII, Canon L 17-40mm, Hugyfot housing.

photograph. All the viewer sees are odd three-dimensional patterns formed by countless silvery lines before a blue background. This eerie atmosphere in the shots of the sardines is an effect I really like; But it's not the only way to photograph the sardines. To put them more into the context



Lady in black scanning the tidal flats for tasty edible crabs and shellfish. Yes, I used a polarization filter for this shot. Canon EOS5DII, Canon USM 100 mm f2.8, f22, ISO100

of their environment, I recommend including the reef or a diving model into your shots.

And there is one type of sardine shot I can't tell you about from personal experience: quality shots of predatory fishes having a go at them. The jacks, needle fish and the occasional thresher sharks are too fast & shy to be good photo subjects. To shoot acts of predation

on the Panagsama sardines I can only recommend to go diving a lot and..... luck!

Klaus Stiefel

Underwater photographer, biologist and popular science author Dr. Klaus M. Stiefel is the manager of Submariner Dive Center in El Nido, Palawan, Philippines.

After growing up in land-locked Austria, Klaus has lived and dived in Southern California, Okinawa, Sydney and, currently, the Philippines.

Klaus shoots a Canon 5DII in a hugyfot housing and, for some of his time underwater, dives a Pelagian rebreather. His newest book "The Camera and the Brain" is still looking for a good publisher!



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South West Ramblings 18

by Mark Webster

I recently described the unusual local habitat of the maerl beds here in the south west and mentioned in passing the adjacent eel grass beds in the river Fal. I thought it would be worth dedicating this ramble to this particular habitat as it is found in a number of locations around the UK and does offer a unique environment and some great image opportunities for the photographer looking for something a little different, with sometimes challenging conditions.

The sea grass (*Zostera marina*) that we have in the south west of the UK is a hardy species found throughout the Atlantic and Pacific. Distribution is patchy in the southwest, but it is also found on the Dorset coast, Solent estuary and Isle of Wight, Wales, western Ireland and western and eastern Scotland including Orkney and the Shetland Islands.

It can withstand quite cold water conditions and surprisingly will be found within the Arctic circle in Norway, Iceland and Russia. The areas where the grass is most healthy are shallow bays and estuaries where sea conditions are perhaps a little kinder, but they do often survive some

very heavy winter storms. The eel grass beds in Cornwall are healthiest in spring and summer but survive year round and there is often an abundance of life to be found during winter if the weather remains mild.

Although there are eel grass beds in the river Fal, notably off St. Just and St. Mawes, the healthiest and most extensive beds are found in the Helford river estuary. These are mostly located directly off Grebe beach, close to Durgan village, extending directly offshore towards the middle of the estuary and east towards Toll point. In fact this area of the Helford estuary is classified as a voluntary marine conservation area in recognition of the fragile nature of the habitat.

The extent of the eel grass beds are marked by a line of moored buoys which warn against anchoring within the protected area. Although the eel grass often extends beyond the line of buoys in the summer months, it does work well at preventing damage from anchors in an area that is extremely popular with yachts, fishing boats and other pleasure craft.

The visibility in the estuary will vary with the level of rainfall, but on



One of the first species you will notice that cling to the eel grass blades are juvenile snakelock anemones which are perfect for confirming exposure settings etc. Nikon D200, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom, Subtronic Mini flash guns, ISO 100 f8 1/40.

The eel grass beds in the Helford estuary are classified as a voluntary marine conservation area marked with warning buoys to discourage anchoring within the habitat.





Many other species of nudibranch use the eel grass beds in spring for spawning when you will find the eel grass blades decorated with their egg spirals. D300, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom and 2X teleconverter, Subtronic Mini flash guns, ISO 200 f10 1/13.

average will vary from 2-3m up to 10m during calm dry periods. When the waters appear murky it is best to dive on the flood tide which will push some of the brackish water up river and often produces better visibility under a surface layer of 2-3m.

If you are diving the eel grass beds with one or more other photographers then you need to agree to dive solo to get the best imaging conditions. Even when conditions are at their best here the eel grass always has a fine coating of sediment and the seabed is very soft and silty so every movement has the potential to spoil the visibility for your own shot and for someone else if you are working in close proximity. It is best to spread out and move very carefully especially when approaching to set up with a subject.

Currents are very gentle here so be patient if you disturb the sediment and eventually it



Sea hares are found here in abundance and there is often two distinct seasons, one in the spring and one in late autumn if the summer has been warm. D300, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom and 2X teleconverter, Subtronic Mini flash guns, ISO 200 f14 1/10.

will clear. I often simply swim out offshore on a southerly bearing to the edge of the eel grass beds and then slowly work my way back north towards shore exploring and hopefully leaving any sediment behind me. This is predominantly a macro destination, but it is worth exploring occasionally with a wide angle lens or wide macro set up when conditions are good or you are seeking a particular or larger subject.

The eel grass beds are little like a muck dive due both to the conditions and also your initial impression is of apparently lifeless areas of green stalks. You need to move slowly here and look carefully focussing your gaze on small areas to begin with and slowly you will begin to see activity from various different species.

There is an abundance of macro subjects here, but the beds also provide excellent shelter for many



The hermit crabs here are mostly very bold and will approach the camera, this one ended up investigating my dome port. Nikon D200, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom and 2X teleconverter, Subtronic Mini flash guns, ISO 200 f14 1/40.

juvenile species of fish and cuttlefish in particular. The grail subject here is of course the spiny seahorse, which has occasionally been brought to the surface by fishermen in their keep pots. This is the ideal habitat for them, but to date I have not been able to find one despite my determined searches! I can recall being shown seahorses in the eel grass off St. Mawes in the mid 1970's, before my interest in photography, and not being too impressed as they seemed common then. I have not seen one in the UK since but I have not given up hope yet.....

Start by examining the blades of eel grass in your selected area. There are always numerous small snakelock anemones clinging to the blades and these are a good subject to capture first and use for a few practice shots to get your exposure and flash positioning perfected.



There are several species of shrimp living on the eel grass blades but this is the most exotic looking and also difficult to find due to its camouflage. Nikon D7100, Subal ND7100 housing, 105mm micro, Inon +10 wet lens, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 100 f18 1/80.

Closer examination of the blades will reveal other species clinging to them and feeding along with invertebrates and mulluscs such as seas quirts, spiny cowries and juvenile starfish. In the spring time look carefully for nudibranchs and their eggs as several species are abundant here which contrast very well with the green of the eel grass.

One nice find here are tiny cling fish which blend almost perfectly with the colour of the eel grass until flash reveals some additional colour. I am not sure if these are juvenile Cornish sucker fish or perhaps the small head cling fish, however they are hard to spot but once found are usually quite tolerant of a close approach with a macro lens. If they do move they are slow swimmers and generally



One of the nicest subjects here are the tiny cling fish. Difficult to spot and a challenge to photograph well but worth the effort. Nikon D7100, Subal ND7100 housing, 105mm micro, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200 f18 1/80.

just hop over a couple of blades further away and settle again. So be patient and eventually you will have a willing subject, but you may need to part the blades a little for access with your camera so be as gentle as possible to avoid spooking the subject and disturbing the fine silt.

Another small subject that clings to the blades are small shrimp, some of which are almost totally transparent whilst others have near perfect camouflage, so both are equally hard to spot.

On the seabed between the eel grass stalks you will find an abundance of marine life. In the spring and late autumn there can be literally thousands of sea hares grazing or mating and leaving their spirals of delicately coloured eggs. You will often find one



Pleurobranchus membranaceus is the largest UK nudibranch, similar in size to a tropical Spanish dancer. Look for the eggs first and the parent will not be far away. D300, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom and 2X teleconverter, Subtronic Mini flash guns, ISO 200 f16 1/30.

riding on the back of another during the mating process and sometimes large groups head to tail in a sort of Bacchanalian orgy.

Every few years after a warm summer we have seen the invasion of the much larger Mediterranean species of sea hare (*Aplysia depilans*) in October and November, which can reach the size of a rugby ball. These beasts are often a dull brown, grey or black colour so are not as photogenic as their smaller cousins, but nevertheless are a most impressive sight.

Another large species of mollusc closely related to the sea hares and smaller nudibranchs is the *Pleurobranchus membranaceus* which is the largest sea slug in the UK. Again these are



There are many species of swimming and burrowing crabs to be seen here, particularly in the sand patches between the thick growths of eel grass. Nikon D100, L&M Titan housing, 105mm micro, Subtronic Mini flash guns, ISO 200 f18 1/80.

springtime breeders and you should look out for their large white gelatinous swirls of eggs to begin with. Once spotted begin to look carefully amongst the stalks and you may be lucky enough to spot the perpetrator which often look a drab dark brown until lit with flash when their true colouring of red or orange is revealed. These sea slugs have quite a textured appearance with many nodules and a wide skirt or mantle that can be used to swim in the same manner as a Spanish dancer nudibranch in the tropics. This is not one of the most beautiful sea slugs but is an unusual species to encounter so is worth recording in its habitat.

The crab population here is enormous and thrives year round. It won't be long before you begin to notice that hermit crabs are everywhere ranging from the size of a pea carrying a winkle or whelk shell to the size of a tennis ball in varying shell types and often towing around one or more



These spindly spider crabs are very common around the roots of the grass. Be patient to find one on the edge of the grass to avoid casting shadows with your flash. Nikon D7100, Subal ND7100 housing, 105mm micro, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 100 f18 1/80.

large parasitic anemones.

Others are sporting spotted cloak anemones or have covered their shells with small hydroids to keep predators at bay. As soon as you begin to focus in on one you will spot another and you will soon find that some are brave and will hold their ground whilst you perfect your image or wait for the visibility to clear, whilst others are much more nervous and will scurry off in a small cloud of silt.

There are also numerous spindly decorator spider crabs which suspend themselves between stalks almost like spiders on a web covered with bits of weed and algae which often makes them a very difficult subject to portray as their camouflage is so good.

Every so often you will come to a small clearing in the eel grass and you should look here for swimming crabs that are normally partly buried watching for a potential meal or a threat. In the



Cuttlefish come into the estuary in spring to lay their eggs in the eel grass. Mating pairs are often nervous so watch from a distance until they accept your presence. Nikon D100, L&M Titan housing, 18-35mm, Subtronic Mini flash guns, ISO 200 f14 1/40.

springtime you may also find that many large spider crabs have come into the estuary looking for a mate, particularly on the edge to the eel grass beds in deeper water.

Another seasonal visitor to the eel grass beds in April and May are cuttlefish seeking a mate and then leaving their clusters of eggs (known as sea grapes) attached to the roots of the eel grass. Between August and September you will find many juvenile cuttlefish hiding amongst the blades of grass or buried in the soft silt. Some are so inquisitive and fearless that they will come close enough to touch your finger tips.

As autumn approaches dog fish will begin to come into the estuary to mate and leave their egg pouches (mermaid's purse) attached to the roots. You will also see the larger egg pouches of the thornback rays which are frequently seen on the edge of the beds. The rays generally prefer to

settle on an open seabed, so start your search on the offshore edge of the beds and follow this east towards the estuary. You will occasionally find one resting within the eel grass and they seem to me to be more approachable then, perhaps because they cannot swim away immediately without elevating above the level of the grass.

There are also well camouflaged hunters within the eel grass preying on the small and juvenile species. Patient observation will reveal scorpion fish resting on the bottom, often almost covered by weed and debris, and the elegant John Dory which weaves its way slowly between the vertical stalks. Don't ignore the seaweed and dead grass blades on the bottom as this is ideal cover for pipefish, sticklebacks and tiny juvenile corkscrew wrasse.

The soft seabed areas between the stands of grass are home to a number of bottom dwelling fish, the most common being dragonets, gobies, dabs, plaice and the occasional Dover sole. The sandy areas are also home to numerous mollusc and invertebrate species including scallops, spiny cockles, whelks, dog whelks, burrowing anemones and fan worms which need some patience to capture. Divers occasionally come to the estuary to collect scallops, but as this is a nursery area for them I would recommend only taking their picture.



In the autumn the leaves falling from the overhanging trees on the shoreline can make an attractive composition with a touch of Snell's window to capture the trees as well. Nikon D7100, Subal D7100 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200 f16 1/80.

As you approach the shore and begin to see the end of the eel grass beds you can turn east towards Toll Point and explore the low reef area here which is a complete contrast to the green of the eel grass. Tompot, leopard spotted and black face blennies, wrasse, scorpion fish, edible crabs, lobsters and of course more sea hares and nudibranchs can all be seen here.

So if your finds in the eel grass have been disappointing you can still get your photographic fix here. In the autumn there will be lots of dead leaves floating on the surface fallen

from the overhanging trees on the shore line. If you have a wide angle lens fitted then it is fun to kneel on the seabed in shallow water and then capture these on the surface with the trees encircled by Snell's window above.

So if you have not dived on eel grass beds before then they are certainly worth considering as a total contrast to regular reef diving. Other eel grass beds around the UK will offer a similar experience so it is worth investigating if your own local or regular coastal dive spot supports this species. As with all photography

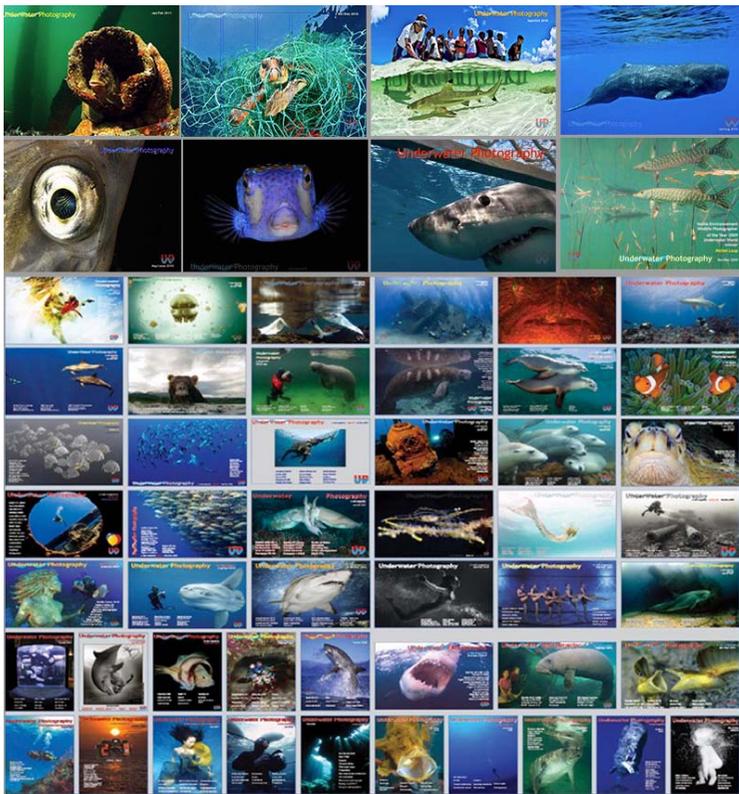


John Dory's favour both the eel grass and the adjacent reef for hunting. They are difficult to spot and require a patient and cautious approach to get close enough to use a wide angle lens. D200, Subal ND2 housing, 18-35mm zoom, Subtronic Mini flash guns, ISO 100 f7 1/30.

it is habitat and subject variety that keeps us engaged and enthused and hopefully satisfied with the resulting images!

Mark Webster
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My Shot 1

Living on the tiny island of Koh Tao is a scuba diver's dream. Within minutes you can be at the pier, on a dive boat and descending at countless sites within the hour. One would be foolish to think that the only sights are where a boat will take you. Nature is everywhere and every nook and cranny is worth a peak for a chance at many rarities. Even if it ends up being an empty handed endeavor, you may find quite the contrary on another day.

In the midst of monsoon season, when work was minimal, it was either time to get creative or sink into a catatonic boredom. Even closer than the dive sites aforementioned were the cliffs of my front yard. There was a growing obligation to explore the area. It was the nearest part of the ocean to my home and seemingly the least known. A snorkel, mask and fins were all that was needed.

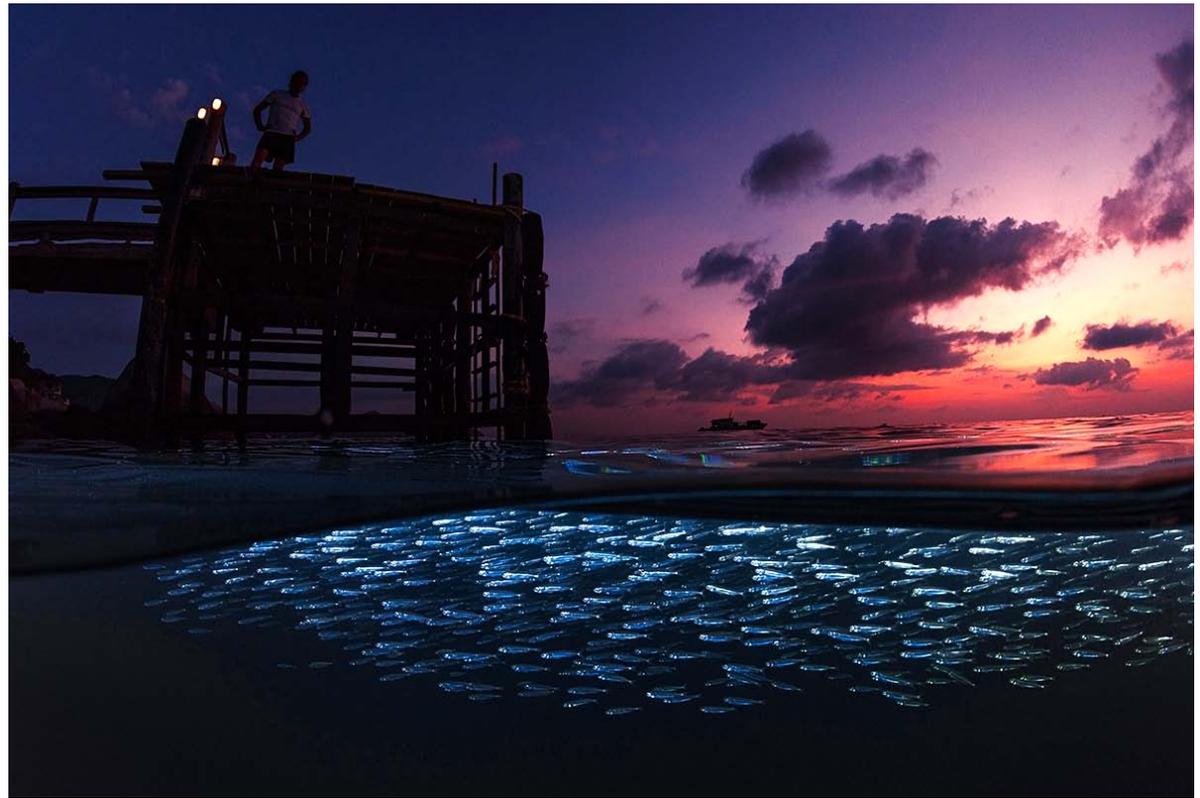
Scouting in the rain led to a small pier in front of a resort. It sheltered a large school of slender silversides. An idea for a split-level photograph came to mind. The only issue was bleak colours caused by the grey clouds amidst the torrential rains. It would be blasphemous to shoot a pier that faced westward without exploiting a golden sunset. So the waiting game began.

Every day felt more discouraging as I gazed out onto choppy seas. After the fifth day came a calm afternoon with big puffy clouds and glass-like

water flattened by a recent downpour. The sun had briefly returned. Everything that had been in my mind's eye had aligned. I cancelled my evening plans and happily went to get ready with a half hour to spare. It was important to be ready before the sun had set.

The fish were right where I had left them and after an hour and a half of shooting, every idea that came to mind had been exploited. All the boats were moored up for the night and all was quiet.

Ephemeral colours danced in and out of the warm clouds, slowly fading below horizon. Once the sun had set it seemed that the best opportunities had now passed when suddenly a few trevally arrived for their evening meal. The silversides had quickly forgotten about the camera and focused their attention onto the predators. They started towards the camera closer than before. A curious man stood on the pier with arms akimbo. The trevally darted in and out of the school, bringing the silversides ever closer. The LCD showed the man in the top right corner of the frame. He had photo-bombed the shot yet it seemed he added a new element with great potential.



Schooling slender silversides (Hypoatherina barnes) at sunset.
Subal + Nikon D700 + 16mm f/2.8D . 1/80th, f/11, ISO 800 Two Inon Z240 strobes

“Please don't move! You are in the perfect place!” I screamed. There was no time to explain my logic, nor would he truly understand what I was getting at. The sun was long gone and the last rays of light remained on the horizon. I knew I had only a few minutes left. I adjusted the composition to include the tourist above just as the school glided within range once again.

The next frame was the one. “Thank you so much! You just made my week.” I told him.

He just smirked as if everything was so simple and walked away into the night. There was no chance introduce myself or show him the image he had partaken in. I floated in silence catching my breath. In the distance, the island lit up with small twinkling lights. A smile stuck to my face as I made my way back home for a well-earned dinner.

My Shot 2

For the last 18 months we've been experimenting with pelagic black water diving. Essentially this is night diving above incredibly deep water using big lights to attract potential abyssal plankton or larger nocturnal feeding species as subjects!

My understanding is that this type of diving and underwater photography started, or perhaps is best known in Hawaii out in the Pacific. We started our own methods using 25000 lumen British made Orcalight technology, where we hang this light source from the boat in the deep trenches off the Scottish west coast. The hydrography here is perfect with the plummeting seabed carved out from glacial action and the nearby Atlantic powering a vast food web. This ranges from tiny plankton to pelagic fish and megafauna such as whales and sharks. So we have a potentially wide ranging target list including the possibilities of attracting some interesting stuff out of the inky depths!

Diving whilst tethered to the boat and drifting in the blackness isn't for the faint hearted, we all know that there are very few marine predators here but it doesn't stop your mind racing about what lies out in the darkness. Although we have been hoping for larger creatures, it's been mainly plankton that has been the target so far. However like everything else, we're always limited by the amount time and opportunity to spend on these

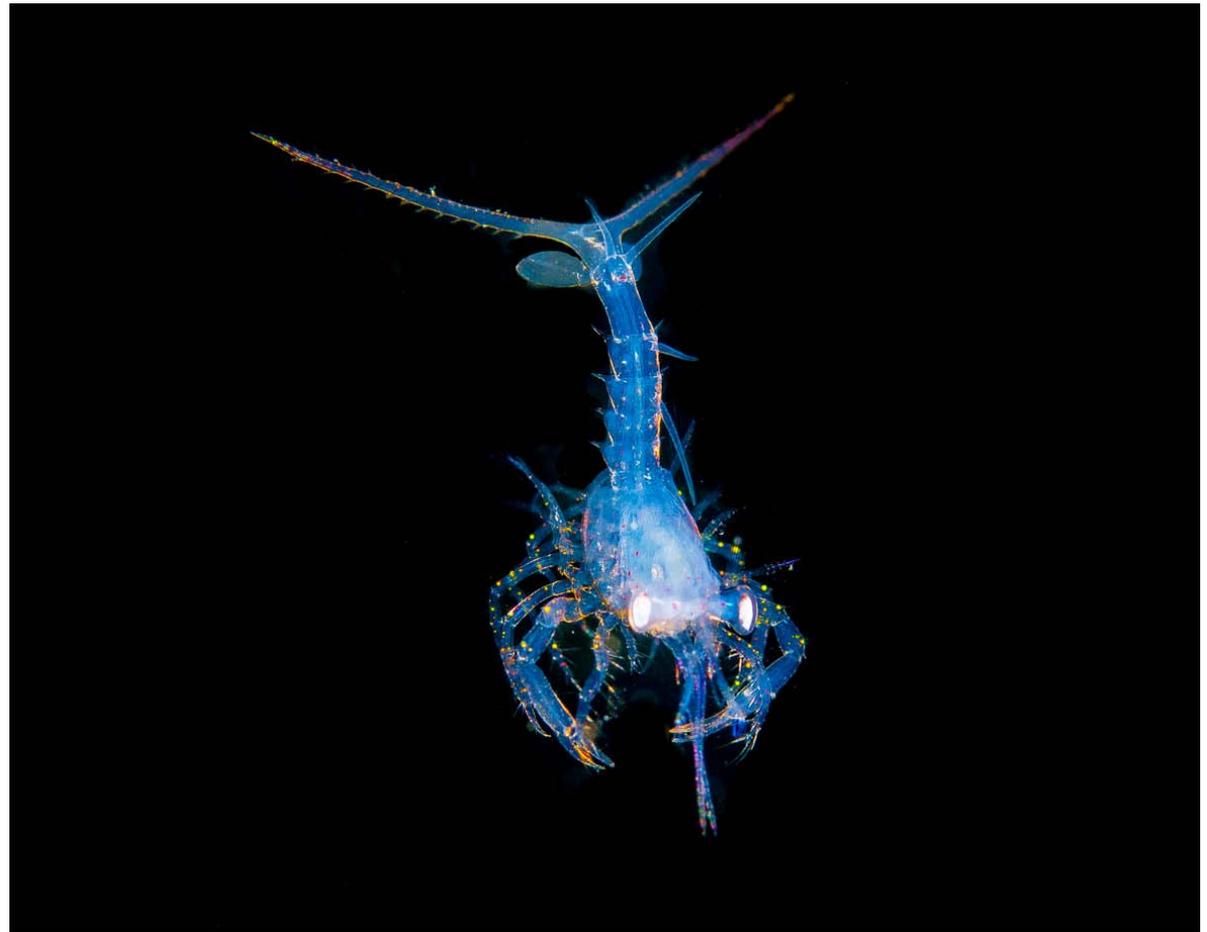
projects!

My image was taken on one such scouting evening when conditions were really great, a cool and crisp evening with very little wind which makes rigging up the tethers much easier. There was a decent amount of tide so we could cover a bit of ground and the water was warming up for the spring plankton bloom.

Focussing in on subjects is much harder than traditional photography diving as you have very little scope for reference such as the bottom, so you are just hanging there trying to keep buoyancy as best as possible.

Using a focus light on wide angle beam I could headlight into the distance scanning for subjects then once closer I could move with the camera. This particular subject which is a juvenile langoustine was probably around a finger nail in size. However it was moving around and along with it's iridescent reflective carapace which made it an easier subject to 'spot'.

Using fairly standard macro kit and settings, I had to work hard with the subject moving around, the drag of the tether and little visual reference for buoyancy. I was able to shoot for around



Nikon D7100 Aquatica Housing , 2 x Sea&Sea DS1 Strobes. 60mm Nikkor Lens. f/14,1/125 ISO400.

a minute or so and I managed to capture one that was relatively sharp with a pleasing composition facing the lens.

Although this type of diving is more well known in the tropics, we have equally as good opportunities on our own doorstep in the UK/Europe. It just takes

some thinking outside the box and some motivation to try different things!

Shane Wasik

www.baskingsharkscotland.co.uk

Guidelines for contributors

The response to UwP has been nothing short of fantastic. We are looking for interesting, well illustrated articles about underwater photography. We are looking for work from existing names but would also like to discover some of the new talent out there and that could be you! UwP is the perfect publication for you to increase your profile in the underwater photography community.

The type of articles we're looking for fall into five main categories:

Uw photo techniques - Balanced light, composition, etc

Locations - Photo friendly dive sites, countries or liveaboards,

Subjects -, Anything from whale sharks to nudibranchs in full detail

Equipment reviews - Detailed appraisals of the latest equipment

Personalities - Interviews/features about leading underwater photographers

**If you have an idea for an article,
contact me first before putting pen to paper.
E mail peter@uwpmag.com**

How to submit articles

To keep UwP simple and financially viable, we can only accept submissions by e mail and they need to be done in the following way:

1. The text should be saved as a TEXT file and attached to the e mail

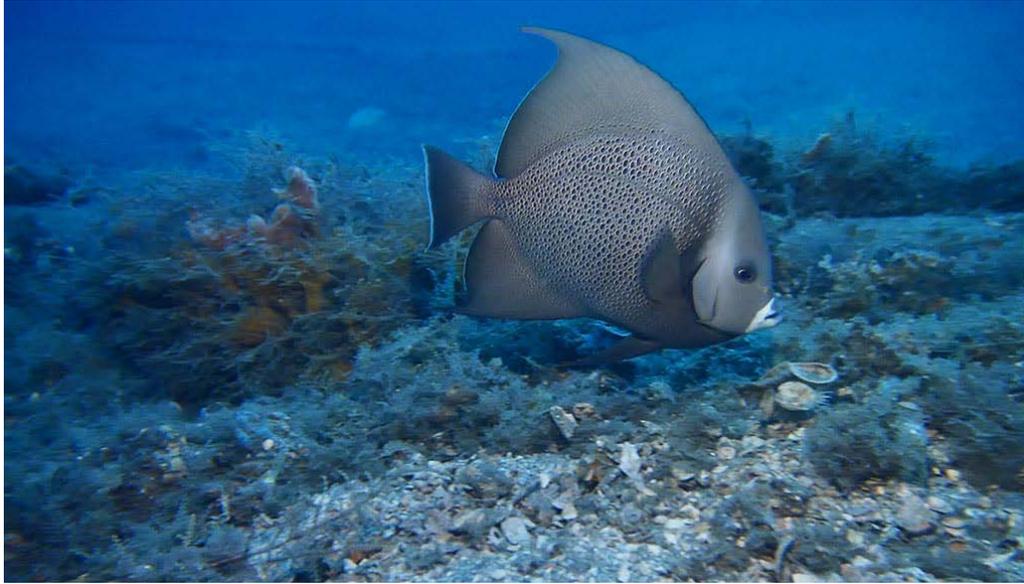
2. Images must be attached to the e mail and they need to be 150dpi

Size - Maximum length 20cm i.e. horizontal pictures would be 20 cm wide and verticals would be 20cm high.

File type - Save your image as a JPG file and set the compression to "Medium" quality. This should result in images no larger than about 120k which can be transmitted quickly. If we want larger sizes we will contact you.

3. Captions - **Each and every image MUST have full photographic details** including camera, housing, lens, lighting, film, aperture, shutter speed and exposure mode. These must also be copied and pasted into the body of the e mail.

Parting Shot



Still frames taken from 1080p footage shot with a Panasonic GX7 in a Nauticam housing with a 14-42mm lens and Nauticam WWL-1 lens. 2 x FIT 2400 lights and an Original Magic Filter (manual white balanced with the lights turned on).

I was only 10 minutes into my very first dive at the famous Blue Heron Bridge in Florida; it was dusk and I had my FIT 2400 lights on shooting video, as I do, when this beautiful Angelfish swam towards me and I hit the Record button.

It came gracefully into frame left and I expected it to swim on through and exit right but it suddenly curved round gracefully and headed back the other way. My instinct said 'keep filming' which I did but as it turned I noticed that it's left eye was not there! There was just an indentation where there should have been a healthy eye.

It was quite a ghostly sight and it happened so quickly that it was arresting yet I really wondered if I had been mistaken. The moment was over and the amazing dive continued as dusk gave way to darkness and the weird and wonderful life under Blue Heron Bridge came out on parade. It really is a most amazing place.

Back on land, rinsed, fed and

watered, I uploaded the clips onto my laptop and was amazed to see that my imagination had been true. Whether it had been like that from birth or if it had lost the eye in a bar room, fighting over a female Angelfish, I do not know but it must be a major visual limitation.

I'm surprised it hasn't fallen prey to an attack from it's 'blind' side or that it

wasn't more scarred on it's left hand side as it bumped into things it couldn't see.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

**Do you have a shot which has a story within a story?
If so e mail it with up to 500 words of text and yours could be the next Parting Shot.**

peter@uwpmag.com