Underwater Photography

Jul/Aug 2012
Issue 67

AQUATICA™

A5D Mk III Digital

AQUATICA™

www.aquatica.ca

Contents

Cover shot by
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Underwater Photography

A web magazine UwP67 Jul/Aug 2012

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Editorial

Print v digital

The article by Jesper Kjøller later in this issue about the thinking behind their new magazine Dive the World makes interesting reading but I suspect, even at this early stage of this Editorial, you might have the sneakiest suspicion where I'm going to take this. However, you may be wrong.

Digital photography has almost totally replaced film. Fact. Get over it. Like for like it's better quality, quicker and much cheaper to run and so much easier to share.

When it comes to publishing however, and in particular, magazines, there is still the old claim that "they're tactile and I like turning the pages". Also "Size matters and quality counts".

All of these are totally true if you look at them from one angle but if you move round the circle and look back you might say that the flexibility of paper distorts the image whereas a flat screen is static and displays the image perfectly. Turning or flicking pages is actually also quite exciting on a touch screen tablet but in a different way but it's all still about 'the reveal'. The moment when you see a new page layout. That's what that is all about.

Size has always mattered to 'man' ever since the dawn of time except where mobile phones and integrated circuits are concerned but, with publications, 'size matters' is a slight red herring. It should really be 'size to viewing distance ratio' (now you know why it has never really caught on). Basically what it means is that the larger an image is, the further away you should be from it to view it comfortably. Reducing the size of the image doesn't necessarily reduce its effect especially when it's viewed from the correct distance.

Apple's recent introduction of Retina Displays are a new generation of higher definition screens aimed (sucessfully) at making the pixel invisible and they provide a viewing experience which is significantly enhanced, even on a 15" screen at close distances (no I haven't got one but they all know me by my first name at the local Apple store).

Let's just go back a paragraph to the size-to-viewing-distance ratio to make the final point. Multiplex cinemas were created firstly to keep cinema companies profitable and secondly to meet the needs of the customer (obviously the companies promoted it in the reverse order). The result was an increase in cinema audiences without (too much of) a decrease in audience enjoyment.

I guess the trick is to see how much smaller images can be and still be effective. YouTube has proved beyond doubt that a small size can still be popular otherwise we wouldn't watch it so much and people wouldn't post videos to it.

It's a bit like that game 'Kerplunk' which has proved the perfect business model for most modern corporations i.e. if we cut back this expense or service, will anyone notice or will the business collapse and image viewing, unfortunately, is a little like this.

The truth is that there are just as many people out there who see and appreciate quality but the unfortunate truth is that there are far, far fewer nowadays who are prepared to pay for it.

New Oceans series on BBC

Don't even start me.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

News, Travel & Events

WildPhotos 2012

WildPhotos, the must-attend event in the wildlife photography calendar is back this year on the 19 & 20 October.

Presented by Mark Carwardine and Chris Packham, the annual two-day event is packed full of inspirational talks from the world's top wildlife and conservation photographers, including winners of the prestigious Veolia Environnement Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition. Learn from industry experts, hear the stories behind the spectacular images, find out about the latest technologies and join the debate on the hottest topical issues right now.

This year we are delighted to announce that award-winning photojournalist Brian Skerry will be presenting the WildPhotos Keynote on Friday 19 October: Creativity, communication and conservation – an

underwater view.

Specialising in marine wildlife and underwater environments, Brian has been a contract photographer for National Geographic since 1998 and is currently on his twentieth major assignment for the magazine. This is an unmissable opportunity to catch one of the greats in underwater photography – buy your ticket today!

www.wildphotos.org.uk

Call for entries: CIWEM Photographer of the Year

The CIWEM Environmental Photographer of the Year (EPOTY) contest is now calling for entries. The competition is open professional and amateur photographers, aims to be an international showcase for environmental photography and video and has a category for "The Underwater World". The competition solicits that will inspire people around the world to start taking care of the environment.

There is a total prize fund of £7,000 and full entry details are available on the EPOTY website. The deadline for entries is 31 December 2012.

www.ciwem.org

CAREER OPPORTUNITY: DIVE TRAVEL MANAGER

Divequest are seeking a qualified SCUBA diver to fill the administrative position of Dive Travel Manager. Prior experience in this area would be helpful, but it is by no means necessary. We will provide suitable training.

This administrative post requires great attention to detail and accuracy.

A competent knowledge of world geography and a passion for nature, particularly the underwater world, are essential, as is a love of travel.

Good computer knowledge and keyboard skills are essential.

The post involves coping expertly with, the many and varied pre-booking and post-booking client requirements of the Divequest tour programmes. In summary, the work includes sending out brochures to enquirers, answering telephone calls, letters and e-mails prior to booking and afterwards, preparing and sending out booking confirmations, invoices and other pre-tour paperwork, solving problems for clients as they may arise, keeping our databases up to date, making flight reservations and other air arrangements, compiling, reviewing and maintaining our in-house supplier rates documents and managing our social media channels.

In addition, the post holder will also be involved in the surface logistics side of our business, communicating with, and making payments to, our local agents and suppliers around the world.

The ability to communicate positively and in an articulate manner with existing and prospective clients is an integral part of the role as the overwhelming majority of Divequest bookings will be generated as a result of this work.

Some of these duties will be shared with existing staff.

You will need your own car. Our offices are four miles from Clitheroe, Lancashire and situated in the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

For further information please contact Rachel Lee Horsfield

rachel@divequest.co.uk

The Farnes and Sharm with Adam Hanlon

Firstly, I am running two Farne Islands trips.

The first is a day trip on Friday August 17th. This is a one day trip, that will focus on photography with the seals. We will restrict the number of divers to 8, to allow for camera gear and will only actually run the trip if conditions are good and the seals plentiful! It costs £70/person for the boat and lunch.

Secondly, I have booked the boat for the weekend of 20/21 October. This is a more general diving trip, although there is every likelihood that we will see lots of seals! This will cost £130/two days with lunch. Accommodation on Friday and Saturday nights is not provided, but I would recommend the Purdy Lodge as being convenient.

In years gone by, we used to run an annual trip to Sharm el Sheikh in November. I have decided to start doing it again!

The trip will run from the 12th to the 19th November and we will be staying in the very comfortable and ideally situated Hilton Fayrouz hotel in Naama Bay. This gives easy access to all the restraints, bars and amenities of downtown Sharm. Non-divers are very welcome, in fact this is a great holiday for divers and non divers. For divers, I have included 6 days boat diving in the package. The intention is that this will be easy scenic diving, amidst the wonderful reefs on the Northern Red Sea. The holiday will cost £1049 for divers and £849 for non divers. These include flights ex Manchester, B&B accommodation, transfers and for divers, 2 boat dives/ day over six days including tanks and weights.

Please contact me as soon as possible if you are interested or to book.

www.adamhanlon.com

The World Festival of Underwater Pictures modernizes its visual identity

Created in 1974, the World Festival of Underwater Pictures is the only event of its kind in the world; it gathers both best productions and leading specialists of underwater environment. This festival is present worldwide particularly through tours organized in France and abroad. Throughout i ts 39 years of existence, it has acquired an undisputed reputation around the world.

The Festival is now changing its visual identity by meeting three goals: Convey an image of closeness and friendliness. The festival is at the heart of underwater world exchanges. Develop the festival international dimension.
Be the symbol of a world of promise and wealth for the future of man.

Spiral of life, wave winding on itself, blue swirl .... The new World Festival of Underwater Pictures visual identity refers to its new dimension as well as the marine world it represents. The graphics have been boosted by a sense of motion and volume accentuating the idea of a protective and generous sea and a changing world.

www.underwater-festival.com

Maria Munn fundraising campaign

Maria Munn is launching a "Dive the World" fundraising campaign to help as many compact camera users as possible over the next year to take beautiful underwater photographs.

Starting in the UK this month she will be offering her advice to dive clubs and schools and selling her award-winning book and DVD titled "Underwater Photography for Compact Camera Users" to help raise funds for Shark Savers and the Manta Trust as well as The School of Hope in Mabul, Malaysia.

More information will be launched soon on her website.

www.oceanvisions.co.uk.

S/Y Fiji Siren

Our ever growing fleet of luxury liveaboards will expand again in 2013 as we add the S/Y Fiji Siren to the list of Phinisi Schooners.

Frank, who has also built our other Siren Fleet yachts, has confirmed that the building is ahead of schedule and that the boat will be ready by April 2013. This will allow plenty of time for the S/Y Fiji Siren to stretch her sea legs and make the journey to Fiji from Indonesia ready to begin cruises in October.

Like her sister yachts the S/Y Fiji Siren will be a 40m Phinisi with 8 double or twin bed cabins. She will retain the same great features such as the spacious dive deck, comfortable lounge and the camera charging station along with minor adjustments to increase your comfort.

www.worldwidediveandsail.com

Underwater.kr Shootout NAD Lembeh

8-15 December 2012

Underwater.kr are organizing an underwater shootout competition to be hosted by NAD-Lembeh, Lembeh Strait, Indonesia from 8-15 December 2012.

The total prize is over $35,000 and includes cash, diving gear and underwater photography equipment. Please note, the list of great prizes will keep growing so please keep visiting event page to see what's new!

www.underwater.kr/shootout

Fiji Photo Expedition with Jack Connick

Oct. 11-20th, 2012

This all-inclusive trip to the Garden Island of Taveuni, Fiji, is being lead by owner Jack Connick.

Fiji is the "soft coral capital" of the world and multicolored coral covers many walls and divesites. Especially oriented to photographers, everything is included; airfare from LAX, 7 nights Ocean View rooms, 3 meals a day, 3 boat dives a day, unlimited shore diving, and much more!

Cost is $3750, with a 3-day extension available for $650. Non-divers are welcome!

www.opticaloceansales.com

MSY SEAHORSE.COM

Download our online brochure
HERE

Cocos on Argo
with Tanya Burnett and Kevin Palmer
August 30 - September 9, 2012

Join an extraordinary photo and diving adventure aboard the Expedition vessel Argo to Cocos Island, Costa Rica. This charter is a full 10 days aboard to maximize diving and photographic opportunities while scheduled for the very peak of marine life activity around the island. This is prime territory for pelagic animals and professional support will be on hand to help maximize imaging results and answer technical needs.

Argo is the support vessel for the Deep See submarine and opportunities are available to book a dive up to a 1000' in this remarkable marine park at an additional cost. Only 3 spaces available due to a late cancellation!

http://reefphoto.com/shop/index.php?main_page=events&event_id=45

Photography Adventures

visit www.GregorySweeney.com

Sailfish & Sardine Run
in Isla Mujeres, Mexico
January 14 - 20 2013
*more dates in Jan
private charter, limited to 5 guests

Tiger Sharks Bahamas
March 8 - 14 2013

Whale Sharks - Mexico

Manatee Photography
February 2013

Africa Photo Safari

ODEX 2012

Sydney Olympic Park Aquatic Centre

Sept 8/9 2012

The Oceania Dive Travel & Watersports Expo (ODEX) is a spring consumer event that is co-located with Blue Edge, an international freediving and spearfishing show.

These events will be a family friendly 2-day extravaganza of product showcases, media launches and seminars relating to scuba diving, dive destinations, underwater imaging, freediving, spearfishing, fin swimming and marine conservation.

Ticket Costs: Adult $7 Children $6 (this includes access to leisure pools and 4hrs FREE car parking when you validate your parking ticket on purchasing your tickets). Prices may slightly increase after July 2012.

Special features:

Oceania Marine Conservation and Popular Science Symposium

2nd Blue Water Hunting & Freediving Forum

2012 Australian National Finswimming Championships

SSI World Series Freediving Championships

www.odex.com.au

Cairns Underwater Film Festival (CUFF) have launched their 2012 photo and film competition.

Entries open 2nd May 2012 and close on the 25th July. Winners will be announced at the 2012 Cairns Underwater Film Festival on the 25th August.

The photo competition offers categories to appeal to all underwater photographers: Wide Angle Nature, Macro, Diver in Harmony with the Reef, Creative and Young Photographer. In addition this year there are two dedicated compact camera categories: Wide Angle and Macro and the short film category. An additional award will be given for the image judged Best in show1.

Cairns Underwater Film Festival is a volutneer run, not for profit giving back to the local community, last year we donated over $7000 to the Cairns Turtle Rehabilitation Centre (CTRC) and Minke Whale research last year. Money raised from ticket sales, competition entries and raffles all contribute to the money CUFF is able to donate at the end of each festival.

Cairns Underwater Film Festival is now in its 6th successive year. The prize pool is thanks to generous local and international sponsors, who contribute to make the festival what it is.

Cairns Underwater Film Festival is all about celebrating the underwater world and getting out there, enjoying it, minimizing our impact and preserving it for future.

www.cairnsunderwaterfilmfestival.com

In August 2012 The World ShootOut Introduces the Underwater World with a SEA CHANGE!

This is the second year in a row that the World ShootOut universal underwater photo competition takes place worldwide. Introducing new categories and glorious prizes, we are proud to invite all divers, underwater photographers, diving centers, live aboards and media partners to take part in one of the most innovative, creative, international and festive events ever produced!

During the month of August 2012, the whole underwater world will be performing as a huge underwater festival, hosting young, amateur and professional photographers from all over the world, competing with each other for some very worthy prizes, including cash prizes, luxurious diving trips, diving equipment, photo gear and more.

Producer David Pilosof initiated the first World ShootOut competition in 2011, breaking all boundaries and introducing an international competition as never featured before. Hundreds of photographers from 27 countries around the world took part in the first World ShootOut competition and over 1,500 images were submitted, ranging from those that captured the calm lakes of the Nordic countries and Canada to others that showcase the exotic secrets hidden in Alaska and dramatic images of the great white shark in the Gulf of Mexico.

Up until now, the competitions have awarded underwater photographers with over half a million dollars of prizes!

WORLD SHOOTOUT
Underwater Photo Grand Prix

World ShootOut 2012

This year, the World ShootOut underwater photo competition consists of two main sections:

1.Real-Time ShootOut

A global real-time underwater photo shootout takes place during the whole month of August, 2012. Photographers enjoy complete freedom of choosing their own diving destination and can take part in the competition by diving in any natural water resource found around the world, including seas, oceans, lakes, rivers, under the ice and more.

This is a wonderful opportunity for underwater photographers all around the world to either take a few days off for the sake of some diving in their local area, or to finally book the holiday they've been dreaming of in an exotic dive destination.

Upon returning from their diving vacation, photographers can submit their best images to the 5 real-time shootout categories and win some very worthy prizes, including a $5,000 cash prize awarded to the winner of the Diving Destination category!

2.Images of the World

Photographers can stay at home and still take part in the competition!

Each photographer is invited to submit his best and most impressive underwater images and video clips, taken anytime and anywhere in the world, to the 3 creative Images of the World categories.

Competition Registration

Competition registration is open and can be carried out until August 31st, 2012.

SPECIAL INTRO BONUS for participants who register until July 31st, 2012 - a free additional set of images in each category the participant has registered to.

Images Submission

Participants' chosen images

can be submitted to the Real-Time ShootOut and Images of the World categories throughout the whole month of August. Deadline for submitting images is September 3rd, 2012.

Winning Ceremony

All World ShootOut categories winners and nominees will be announced on the festive Epson Red Sea winning ceremony in Eilat, Israel, November 9th, 2012.

Photographers are all invited to the Epson Red Sea Eilat Shoot-Out as well, which takes place in Eilat on November 4-10, and to take part in the winning ceremony at the end of this event. However, World ShootOut participants who do not make it to the Eilat Shoot-Out and the winning ceremony will simply receive their prizes by mail.

www.worldshootout.org

Visayas with Jennie Soriano

27th September - 7th October 2012

Swedish underwater photographer, Jennie Soriano will be hosting a 10-night photography expedition in the Visayas 27th September - 7th October 2012.

Jennie will also be joined by her colleague and marine biologist Anders Salesjo. You can join Jennie & Anders and pick up some photographic trips and techniques from the Swedish Underwater Photography champions.

Since taking her first breaths under water in the Baltic Sea in 1996, Jennie has worked as a dive guide and course assistant on dayboats as well as on liveaboards in the Red Sea, Thailand - Similan and Surin Islands, Greece and the Canary Islands. Jennie has studied marine biology and fish ecology, and has a strong passion for conservation, the environment and marine life in general. Her broad experience spans both tropical and temperate waters, and even after 15 years of diving her curiosity has not been satisfied. She is still an active participant in all kinds of dive-related workshops – be it about sharks, nudibranchs or underwater photography.

She is a member of the underwater photo committee of the Swedish Diving Federation and recently represented her country as team captain in the 13th CMAS World Underwater Photo Championship in Turkey.

www.uwphotos-soriano.com

http://worldwidediveandsail.com/special-diving-trips/uw-photo-workshops.html

DSLR Housings for

CANON
5D Mark II
5D Mark III
7D
40D, 50D
60D
450D Rebel XSi
500D Rebel T1i
550D Rebel T2i
600D Rebel T3i
1100D Rebel T3

NIKON
D80
D90
D300s
D700
D800, D800E
D3100
D5100
D7000

OLYMPUS
E330

PENTAX
K-5
K-7

SONY
A33 SLT, A55 SLT
A35 SLT
A65 SLT

DSLR Housings

Ikelite digital SLR housings offer top-of-the-line professional grade features in a contoured, durable and corrosion free case. A clear view of the camera and o-ring seals is an added advantage during both assembly and operation. Thoughtfully placed controls put important camera functions within comfortable reach.

Our proprietary circuitry remains the most accurate and reliable TTL on the market today. And because we feel that TTL exposure is so important to underwater photography, we build it into every digital SLR housing. Enjoy perfect exposure in every shooting scenario when used with compatible Ikelite DS Substrobes.

- Four Port Locks
- Top Accessory Mount
- Tripod Mounting Point
- Pro Video Lite 3 Battery Pack Mounting Points
- Video Trigger Control for Cameras with Video
- New Handles and Tray

DS161 Movie Substrobe
The DS161 Movie Substrobe combines all of the functionality of our renowned DS160 with a powerful 500 lumen LED video light. This strobe is everything you need for stunning photos and video.

DS160 Substrobe
The Substrobe DS160 has quickly made its mark becoming the favorite of underwater photographers.

Underwater Systems • 50 W. 33rd. Street • Indianapolis, IN • 46208 • 317-923-4523 www.ikelite.com

New Products

Aquatica A5D Mk III housing for the Canon 5D Mk III

Saddle up! The new workhorse from Aquatica is being introduced!

The Aquatica Team is proud to introduce you to the Aquatica A5D Mk III housing for the acclaimed Canon 5D Mk III.

Aquatica has upped its game with this housing. A whole range of features have been added to it. Introduced is a new designed camera tray, accurately positioning the camera by a simple push-on a tab. The zoom actuating pinion gear and the lens release lever now pulls out to quickly remove the camera whit a lens and zoom gear attached.

Three bulkheads access holes allow external monitor, triggering device and/or sound recording accessories to be used. Video controls where redesigned for easier reach and smoother operation.

The AF-ON & STAR button access is equipped with a rotating collar that prevents ambient pressure from pushing it back in the housing. A new Focus/Zoom gear system with smaller housing pinion gear and larger lens gear gives smoother zoom action.

The same 90m/300ft depth rating applies (optional to 130m/425ft). Made in Canada means that all Aquatica housing are born and bred in one of the world most rugged diving environment, if it works in our local conditions, it will work everywhere else!

Strobe connectors are now giving access to TTL flash exposure via third party TTL converters. These connectors are easily user serviceable without requiring special tools. These improvements were implemented with the working professional in mind, reliability and user's friendly field maintenance being the key word here.

The record button is relocated closer to your thumb and is now oversized and bright red. The Live View toggle is an easy reach and the SET button is also oversized. The multi-controller pad is accessible via extenders pioneered by Aquatica. Push buttons are made of stainless steel. Their smooth operation and positioning gives the photographer a very intuitive and normal feel to the housing.

A Galileo type eye piece is supplied. It gives a bright and full view of the view finder. For those seeking the ultimate in viewing for still image, the optional Aqua View Finder, in 180 and 45 degrees are available, all can easily be installed in minutes.

Priced at just 3,199.00 USD, it is the most economical and best designed of its category.

www.aquatica.ca

Reinventing Nikonos RS Lenses On Digital SLRs

My dear colleagues: After months of research work, thinking and rethinking concepts and approaches, cancelling out options, acquiring new ones, me and my team have made a 20 year old underwater photographer's dream come true. A working prototype of a Nikonos RS lens that fully communicates with a regular Nikon DSLR.

The Nikonos RS 13 mm Fisheye and the Nikonos RS 20-35 Wideangle are considered the world's best underwater optics. I remember that 10 years ago the performance of the Nikonos 20-35 easily dwarfed my usually "state of the art considered" Nikon 17-35 behind a coated 9" port with an exactly matched extension ring. The pictures looked like that from a normal lens compared to a Leica.

I'm going to present a second part when the Nikonos lens will be dive ready and thoroughly tested on its optical capabilities compared to regular lens/domeport combinations.

Video Number 1 Here:
https://vimeo.com/44657439

About the Author: Andrej Belic has started diving in 2000 and explored many technical aspects of it: photography, rebreather diving, wrecks'n'caves, apnea freediving. In the last year he was investigating various possibilities on improving current underwater photography techniques: The first result is the world's first adaption of a Nikonos lens on a Nikon DSLR.

His site will be relaunched soon…

www.abelic.net

Backscatter Magic Flip-Up Color Correction Filter for GoPro Dive Housings

Backscatter is pleased to announce development of a custom Magic flip-up color correction filter for the new GoPro Dive Housing.

The unique mount design allows users to quickly add or remove the filter for land and water use or as color drops off with depth. The housing adapter locks securely in place without modifications to the stock GoPro Dive Housing, is easily installed by the user, and does not vignette in any shooting mode.

- First 100 units shipping end of 1st week of July.

- Anodized aluminum constriction with a positive snap in both the down and back positions.

- High speed tested on scooters and pole cams.

- 30 second install and removal with the provided hex key.

- Enlarged lower left lobe on filter for easy one-finger flip.

- Price US$49. (Only $10 more than original Magic GoPro filter)

Please note: Backscatter will continue production of its very popular Custom GoPro Housing with glass flat port.

A lot of divers prefer the additional flexibility of this housing's 55mm filter threads and unique o-ring mount for polarizing and split neutral density filters. This housing is also compatible with Backscatter's soon to be announced macro lens.

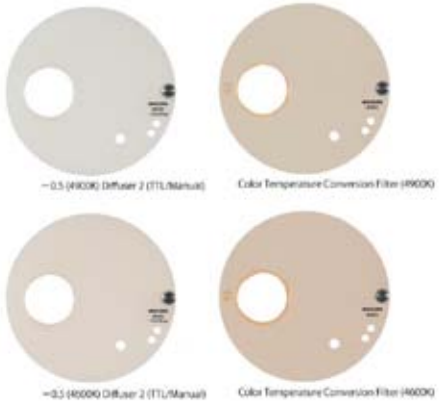
www.backscatter.com

INON Colour Temperature Conversion Filters

Sample image processed RAW file at color temperature 4600K. Changing color temperature adds vivid blue on back ground water.

Inon has announced new color correction filters for the Z240/Z220/ D2000 and S-2000 series strobes. These filters warm the strobes color temperature from a native 5600°K to 4900°K or 4600°K, typically providing a richer shade of blue in wide-angle images. The filters are available in two versions, one for Z and D series strobes and another for S series. In addition, they are available in either a 4600°K or 4900°K versions and with -0.5 or non-diffused versions.

Adding these filters on strobe enables to reduce color temperature of strobe light. Two different grade filters deliver strobe light at color temperature 4900K or 4600K from original 5500K and each grade filter has non-diffuse version at same power output and half stop diffused version which increases beam angle to 110 degree.



Reducing color temperature of strobe light will yield following effects; Capture skin tones of a diver more healthy, Brighten up warm color subject and Make back ground water color richer blue without changing foreground subject color by converting RAW image at 4900K or 4600K.

www.inon.co.jp

Recsea WHC-G1X housing for Canon G1X

The Recsea WHC-G1X housing for Canon G1X has the following features:

Compact and durable, precision machined corrosion-resistant aluminum housing.

Lightweight, designed to withstand depths of 100 meters (328 feet).

Changeable Lens Port System for 28LD Port Adapter and other options.

Original dial locking mechanism for easy opening and closing.

Front and Rear Control Dial.

Half-Press Shutter Trigger for precise camera shutter control.

Dual Back Cover O-Ring System for added protection.

Full camera function controls.

www.scubasymphony.com

Sea & Sea MDX-GRD4 for the Ricoh GR4

The Sea & Sea MDX-GRD4 is a precision machined housing for the Ricoh GR4 cameras.

By inserting the Fiber-Optic Cable (L-type) into the housing connector, an external strobe will be optically connected to the camera's built-in flash enabling full-featured strobe photography and creative lighting expression.

The optional DX-2G Wide-Angle Conversion Lens and CU125 Lens with 2G Adapter can be mounted on the port of the housing.

The optional LCD Monitor Hood with Lens can be mounted. The monitor hood covers the entire LCD preventing unnecessary reflections and glare while helping to provide clear images from corner to corner.

Depth Rating: 55m

www.sea-sea.net

SeaLife Introduces the DC1400 Limited Edition Pink

SeaLife, a leader in underwater photographic equipment, announced today that it will launch a new DC1400 Limited Edition Pink camera in September. With attractive pink grip-pad, accents and controls, the DC1400 Limited Edition Pink is more than a stylish and feature-packed digital underwater camera; it's also designed to help raise money for breast cancer research. For each camera sold, SeaLife will donate $5 to a leading breast-cancer-research charity organization.

www.sealife.com

Leak Insure Sachets Save Thousands of Pounds

Since Leak Insure Sachets where introduced two years ago, they have now saved over £50,000 of camera equipment. This landmark was reached when Leak Insure received feedback from a customer, thanking them for saving his camera and housing worth over £3,000.

Leak Insure absorbent sachets have been designed to absorb leaks in underwater camera housings and other underwater equipment. The sachets contain fast acting highly absorbent granules that can absorb 400 times their own weight in water.

www.leakinsure.co.uk

INON Video Base V4

The Video Base V4 is a dedicated optional accessory to attach lighting arm including Shoe Base/D Holder on Canon's WP-V4 housing.

The Video Base V4 consists of a base plate which is specifically designed to match with unique base shape of Canon WP-V4 for the VIXIA HF M52, HF M50 and HF M500 HD digital camcorders and is attached to the housing with the base plate and push fit around the lens port to allow the INON LED flashlight LE550-W securely.

www.inon.co.jp

Sea & Sea MDX10 for Fuji X10

The MDX-X10 is an ergonomically designed and precision machined underwater housing made from solid block aluminum alloy. The housing is compact and has a small internal volume reducing excess buoyancy.

The M67 Wide-conversion Lens can be mounted on the port or the Close-up Lens 125 can be attached to the port with the M67-M62 Step-down ring.

The camera's zoom is limited to 85mm with exclusively designed rubber gear due to the structure of the port.

By inserting the Fiber-optic Cable L-type into the housing connector, an external strobe will be optically connected to the camera's built-in flash enabling full-featured strobe photography and creative lighting expression.

Smooth and easy adjustment of the zoom lens and camera power switch by an exclusively designed power/zoom control. The rear multi-point controller allows for subtle and fast control of the camera's sub and main command dials. The playback button, AE/Enlarge button and WB button are each situated for ease of operation.

The housing can be easily opened and locked with the rotary latches and hinges.

While mounted inside the housing, the camera flash can be activated or disabled with the flash control button and disablement lever. With the Screw mount for SA8 M10 Fixed Ball Base, various lighting options are possible.

Depth Rating-100m

Dimensions (WxHxD) 165x105x125mm (including port)

www.sea-sea.net

Fisheye FIX Aquavolt 3500

Fisheye are pleased to announce the release of the new FIX Aquavolt 3500, heralding a new era in LED lighting technology.

With a maximum output of 3500 from 24 high luminance 1.2 Watt white LEDs, users have full control over power output through the control interface located on the rear panel.

The rear panel features a backlit LCD display providing instant information about actual output power, remaining battery life, inner temperature and remaining burn time. The removable battery pack provides a continuous burn time of 60+

minutes at full power and the light emits an even 115 degree beam at a temperature of 6,500-7,000K.

The FIX Aquavolt 3500 is aluminium with a double o-ring seal and includes a YS adapter mount, a charging cradle, a hand grip, protective covers, spare o-ring and o-ring grease. A remote controller is

optional for more ergonomic control. The unit weighs just 498g in air or 295g in water, has a diameter of 65.5mm/length of 152.6mm and retails at £1059.95 in the UK (US$1380 Worldwide RRP).

www.uwvisions.com

Ultralight Polecam

Want to video dolphins riding the bow wake? How about a shark or sailfish that comes close to the boat? UCLS's new Polecam enables photographers to capture the action from all new angles. Mated to the GoPro underwater video system on a tripod mount, the 24-inch painted wood poles can extend your reach and facilitate accessories mounting with a male and a female connector at each end. Polecam sections are $9.95, and caps run $9.95-25.95 depending on the model.

www.ulcs.com

Nauticam NA-5DMKIII

As the international leader in innovative underwater camera housing technology, Nauticam is pleased to announce support for the 22mp Canon 5D Mark III. The NA-5DMKIII housing builds on Nauticam's solid reputation for ergonomic functions, extensive control options and ease of operation while upholding the robust quality standards that have become a hallmark of the Nauticam brand. Nauticam takes great pride in delivering excellence well beyond expectations.

The NA-5DMKIII underwater housing custom built for Canon 5D Mark III is a refinement of the acclaimed design used in NA-7D for Canon 7D. Nauticam took Canon SLR housing ergonomics to another level with relocated command dials and piano keys found on NA-7D, and has built upon these advancements with NA-5DMKIII.

All Nauticam housings are machined from a solid block of seawater resistant aluminum alloy and then hard anodized making them impervious to corrosion. Hardware is marine grade stainless steel. Clear acrylic windows are protected with a scratch resistant coating.

If the video capabilities of the 5D Mark III are of primary importance, Nauticam's NA-DP4 housing for the SmallHD Monitor can take video performance to another level. The monitor housing easily mounts to the top of the NA-D4 and utilizes the optional HDMI Bulkhead for true HDMI connectivity. Utilizing DP4 features like Focus Peaking, Focus Assist, False Color, 1:1 Mapping and DSLR Scale, this larger monitor vastly improves composition, focus capability and exposure visibility.

www.nauticamusa.com

Acquapazza APSO-NEX7 for the Sony NEX-7

Acquapazza are pleased to announce that the release of their new housing, the APSO-NEX7 for the Sony NEX-7 camera, will be at the end of July.

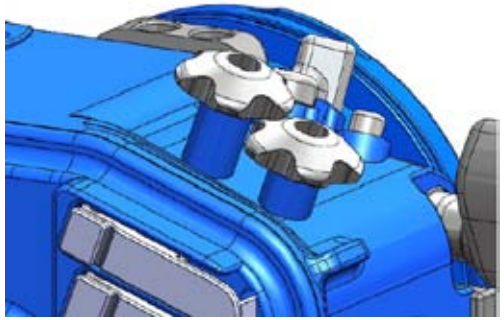
It follows the successful design of the APSO-NEX5N but offers several improvements to accommodate the new camera. The 2 most significant options are the choice of a bayonet port fitting or the traditional M86 threaded port (which you must specify at the time of ordering) and the second is the provision of a manual focus/zoom gear control in addition to the option of the AMRS (Acquapazza Magnetic Rotary System) for focus and zoom.

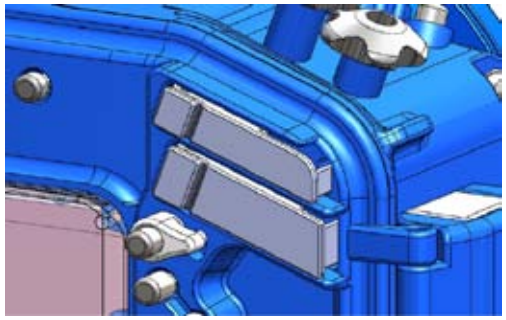
What sets the Aqcaupazza APSO-NEX7 apart from most of the other housings is the optional ability to adjust the tilt of the LCD screen whilst underwater from 0° to 45°. This offers a major benefit for viewing subjects near the seabed or for more stable handling when shooting video.

In addition a magnifying lens hood can be attached for a more detailed view of the LCD screen.

The NEX7 features the 'Triple-Dial-control' system that gives ergonomic control over the major exposure controls. Acquapazza have tilted the control knobs for the top 2 controls by 20° to make them much easier to control with your middle or index finger.

The 'Review' and 'Video Stop/start' buttons are perfectly positioned for your right thumb by using an extended paddle lever design.
The 'Video Stop/Start' will give particularly smooth beginnings and endings to your footage.





The electronic viewfinder has received much praise from land users but underwater the large tilting LCD screen is the optimum for shooting and previewing images.

In keeping with Acquapazza traditions, the back door is double 3.2mm O ring sealed, there are ports for 5 E-mount lenses and 3 A-mount ones and the housing is available in no less than 14 amazing colours!

The combination of the eagerly awaited Sony NEX-7 and the Acquapazza housing make it a hard combination to beat.

www.acquapazza.jp

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FIX S100

Recsea G-1X

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INON INC. is pleased to announce official release of new LE series LED flashlight the LE700-S.

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The LE700-S runs on 3 x AA batteries which are easily obtainable yet provides 25% plus brighter than predecessor model with on board Cree high-power LED “XM-L”. The rated practical burn time with “Eneloop pro” rechargeable batteries, is approx. 110 minutes which benefits divers especially for night dive.

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www.inon.co.jp

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-0.5 (4600K) Diffuser 2 (TTL/Manual)

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The YS-D1 sets a new standard for underwater strobes. From subtle light output as low as guide number 1 to a maximum power of guide number 32, control of underwater lighting has become effortless with the YS-D1.

Revising the algorithms used for the DS-TTL system, the YS-D1 employs a totally new slave TTL system. The strobe can adjust the interval between the pre flash and the primary flash in order to be compatible with a wide-variety of cameras, if not all, on the market today.

The YS-D1 is the most versatile underwater strobe available today. The DS-TTL exposure compensation function enables subtle lighting control by adjusting the Light Level dial in DS-TTL mode.

Powered by only four AA batteries, the YS-D1 offers a maximum light output of Guide Number 32

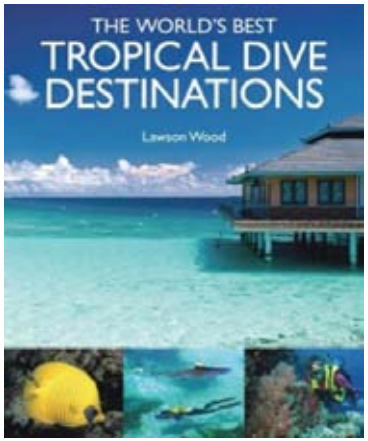
Compared to the YS-110Alpha, the YS-D1 is 1EV more powerful, 50g (1.8oz) lighter and 10% smaller. Not only is the YS-D1 suitable for macro photography, but also is robust enough for wide-angle photography. it is also ideal for macro photography which requires delicate light level control. The strobe's guide number can be reduced to 1.

The YS-D1 is the world's first slave TTL strobe equipped with an exposure compensation (EV) control function

By controlling the actual flash light level, the strobe realizes accurate exposure compensation with EV value. Regardless of a compact or a SLR camera, you can achieve any desired exposure compensation.

www.sea-sea.net

The World's Best Tropical Dive Destinations By Lawson Wood



This comprehensive illustrated reference covers the Caribbean Sea, the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, the Indo-Pacific and the Pacific Ocean.

Superb quality underwater photography shows a huge variety of wrecks, marine habitats and aquatic species.

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Dedicated Nudibranch Identification Guides are being developed for the iPhone and also work on the iPad and iPod. Capitalizing on the popularity, ease of use and high-resolution touch screen of the iPhone, this innovative field guide does not require access to the carrier network or Internet.

NEW! Just released and available in the Apple App Store, is the third in the series of iPhone Apps dedicated to the identification of Nudibranch from around the World. The Australia / New Zealand Region which features 1067 species of Nudibanch (Sea Slug) from the Australia and New Zealand region, where marine diversity ranges from tropical to cold water species. All endemic species are presented as well.

www.nudibranch.com.au

Giant Killer?

Olympus OM-D E-M5

by Alex Mustard

The diminutive OM-D E-M5, is small, but packs serious specs. Pictured here with Olympus's own housing and dome.

In the last issue of UwP, Peter commented in the editorial that we now truly have three exposure controls underwater: aperture, shutter speed and ISO. The penalties incurred by bumping ISO on the latest SLRs are so small that we can consider changing ISO as freely as we alter aperture or shutter speed.

And it is this philosophy that makes the new Olympus OM-D E-M5 such an exciting camera. In low light conditions the E-M5, as I'll call it from now on, wins on all three counts even compared to many SLRs (I'll explain more below). Add to this image quality that outguns the Canon 7D and Nikon D300 and you have a very exciting photographic prospect in a tiny package.

The E-M5 is a new addition to the Micro Four Thirds (M43) camera range, a system of mirror-less interchangeable lens cameras developed jointly by Olympus and Panasonic. The M43 sensor is smaller than APS-C/DX and only half the size of full frame SLRs. This means small cameras and small lenses, but the optics don't lack quality or price for that matter, not offering much saving over SLR lenses. The extensive lens range covers all the standard angles favoured by underwater photographers, with fisheyes, wide angle zooms, standard zooms and macro lenses.

The E-M5 brings plenty of new tech to M43, including format leading dynamic range, ISO performance, autofocus, image stabilisation and an electronic viewfinder. This is clearly a hugely desirable upgrade to anyone currently shooting M43 or a serious compact. But in this article, I am interested if it is also enough to be a "no buts" alternative to an SLR for even the most serious underwater photographer?

The E-M5 packs 16MP onto its small sensor, which might have your alarm bells ringing when it comes to image quality, particular at higher ISOs. But camera sensors are advancing at such a rate that we're constantly being forced to reconsider the established wisdom. Shooting in low light is, in fact, the E-M5's party piece.

As the light gets limited

The combination of high ISO performance, image stabilization and the greater depth of field of M43 format all combine to benefit low light shooting underwater. The foreground of this image was lit with strobes, but I used an exposure of 1/10th second to get the blue deep inside the cave. Olympus E-M5 + 8mm fisheye. 2 x Inon Z240 strobes. ISO 200, f/6.3 @ 1/10th.

the E-M5 wins on the swings, the roundabouts and the slides. The smaller sensor means we can shoot with a more open aperture than an SLR, I found f/5.6 was giving me sufficient depth of field for fisheye shots, where I might have to use f/8-10 on my DX Nikon and f/11-13 on my FX Nikon. The ISO performance was very impressive, significantly better at a pixel level than a Nikon D300 or a Canon 7D. There is no significant noise in RAW files at 100% at ISOs 200 and 400. By ISO 800 the camera has only a very minor noise, at ISO 1600 the noise is visible but still not especially intrusive and at ISO 3200 the noise is clear, but the file remains entirely useable. ISO 6400 would be useable online, such as in the pages of UwP. And finally the E-M5 has a 5-axis in body image stabilizer that really works. I shot blur free available light wide angle at 1/15th and even did a macro shot at ½ second without flash.

The Olympus OM-D E-M5 is a serious camera but it is also a serious investment, costing $1000 USD (or €1100 Euros) for only the body. Usefully (and rare in this type of camera) the E-M5 has twin control dials (for aperture and shutterspeed) and lots of direct control buttons that always make a big difference to the speed and ease with which important settings can be changed

The OM-D E-M5 housing with flat port for macro in Gozo.

through a housing. Having to go through menus always frustrates the photographic process. Furthermore, the camera controls offer extensive customizability, allow you to move important and regularly used controls to where they are most easily reached.

I tested the camera in the Olympus PT-EP08 housing, which is very light and small enough to griped directly, rather than via a handle. A warm housing as Peter Rowlands calls them. It is significantly cheaper than a SLR housing, but also less refined ergonomically. Perhaps the biggest disappointment for many

The OM-D E-M5 has very effective in body image stabilization, which makes it easier to take longer exposures without camera shake. This is an extreme example for testing purposes: a macro of a scorpionfish taken without strobes using the light of a Sola 600 light and ½ second exposure. Olympus E-M5 and 45mm lens. ISO 400, f/16 @ ½ sec.

M43 converts is that the housing has a different port size (using the Sea & Sea RDX mount) to existing Olympus M43 housings. A port adaptor should be available soon.

I was also disappointed with the poor view the housing provided of the E-M5's electronic viewfinder. I had really looked forward to trying this underwater to see whether I preferred it to the screen or not. Ultimately I had to shoot using only the screen. Phil Rudin has written previously in UwP about the benefits of using external optical viewfinders with electronic viewfinders.

The Olympus housing offers optical flash control via fibre optic cables. Olympus makes its own brand of underwater strobes, which should

The Olympus housing is a warm housing, meaning you grip the housing directly, as you would a camera, rather than using handles. We were using the handles only for attaching strobes

The camera and housing have many direct control buttons, but even if you are forced to navigate the menus, they are easy to understand. Most options are on the super control panel.

The housing provides access to all the important camera controls, but it is not particularly ergonomic. You cannot reach the shutter speed and aperture controls while holding the housing with only your right hand. You must reach across with your left to change them.

offer focal plane synchronized high speed flash (standard synch speed is 1/250th), although I wasn't able to test this. I was happy to use both Inon Z240 and S2000 strobes with the E-M5. Both worked well on TTL and manual.

One frustration I had with the flash system is TTL lag. The E-M5 does not have shutter lag, but when I used it in TTL mode there was a pre-flash lag before the photo is taken, which was an annoying half a second. We felt that there might be a cure somewhere in the settings, but the only one we found was using manual flash, which has no lag. As a result I shot manual flash with moving subjects, although this is a time many would prefer the aid of TTL.

The M43 lens choice is ever growing. I love shooting fisheye and the 8mm fisheye lens (which is made by Panasonic) is a real gem on M43. The lens is sharp and because of the small format it delivers excellent depth of field without needing to be stopped down that much. This means we can illuminate wide angle scenes without the need for very large strobes. With 16MP of resolution there is room to crop if you are unable to fill the frame with this ultra wide optic. The 8mm fisheye also has a filter slot, ideal for filter photography underwater.

There are a number of wide angle and standard zooms available. I was only able to try the 9-18mm during this short review, which worked well. For macro I used the 45mm, which was very sharp. I know people are excited about the forthcoming 60mm macro lens, but I think the 45 might be more useful in lower visibility diving. The focus was swift and accurate with this lens.

Olympus state that the E-M5 has the world's fastest auto focus. It is a fun claim, and I am not sure how it is measured, but using it in the low contrast underwater world it is clear that the AF is inferior to leading SLRs. But it is nonetheless very impressive in AF-S mode, a different world to any compact or M43 camera I have tried before.

AF-S is good for static subjects and high magnification photos, but is less helpful for frame filling shots of erratically moving subjects such as fish. The focus tracking of the latest SLRs is impressive with these subjects and it is one of the few areas the E-M5 cannot match them. I tried AF-C once underwater and it really struggled. I gave up with it and switched back to AF-S, which quickly picked up the subject again.

If AF lags behind SLRs, then image stabilization is arguably an area where the E-M5 outperforms them. The 5-axis system is built into the body and therefore works with any lens. It offers advantages for long exposures in balanced light

In addition to the fisheye, I also shot wide angle with the 9-18mm, although I didn't feel I had the best port setup during the test. I think a port extension would improve performance. Nonetheless, I was impressed by the lens as long as I kept it stopped down. Olympus E-M5 + 9-18mm @ 9mm. ISO 200, f/11 @ 1/250th.

wide angle images in low light, blue background macro shots when we don't want to sacrifice depth of field and scenic shots in ambient light wide angle, such as wrecks. No SLR can offer an image stabilized fisheye.

In conclusion, the E-M5 is a fine camera with strengths well suited to underwater photography. Its image quality is certainly a match for the popular DX/APS-C SLRs and therefore is entirely appropriate for large prints, publication, almost anything. It is a good all rounder, but its abilities in shooting in low light are particularly noteworthy.

High ISO performance is very impressive for such a small sensor. This test shot was taken at ISO 3200 and shows low noise, decent dynamic range and good detail. No noise reduction has been applied. Olympus E-M5 + 8mm fisheye. 2 x Inon Z240 strobes. ISO 3200, f/22 @ 1/200th.

Its biggest shortcoming compared with SLRs is with fast moving subjects, such as swimming fish portraits. Single servo autofocus is good, tracking autofocus was less impressive. Furthermore, I found that when I used TTL there was a shooting lag caused by the pre-flashes. Compared with compact cameras it is a big step up in this area.

The Olympus housing provides full functionality, but is well behind current SLR housings in usability and ergonomics. This is a pity since the camera matches SLRs in so many areas. That said the Olympus housing probably well judged to its market, being considerably lighter and much more keenly priced.

If you are currently shooting a compact, the E-M5 is an exciting upgrade, giving you SLR matching features in a small, light package, that is straight forward to adjust to, you can still use the LCD screen to frame images.

The camera is also a desirable upgrade for existing M43 users, assuming funds allow for camera, housing and port adaptors. The camera has significantly improved AF, ISO, dynamic range and resolution although the video probably doesn't quite match the current king, the Panasonic GH2.

I can also see it appealing to some current SLR shooters, who are looking to downsize, without compromising on performance and image quality. It would be a great second camera, small in stature, but high in quality. In film days many serious photographers owned both housings and Nikonos viewfinder cameras, and I can see the E-M5 appealing to SLR shooters for the same reasons the compact Nikonos did.

The dominant trend in all technology has always been downsizing. Computers used to fill rooms, personal stereos used to fill your shoulders and mobile phones used to fill briefcases, perhaps micro is the future for underwater cameras too? All underwater photographers should have a serious look at the E-M5.

Alex Mustard
www.amustard.com

Acknowledgements

This review event was organized by Pete Bullen of Oceanfoto.co.uk (www.oceanfoto.co.uk). Pete offers photographer specific coaching and guiding in Gozo. We stayed at the Ulysses Hotel (www.ulyssesaparthotel.com) in the heart of the diving hotspot of Xlendi in Gozo, and dived with the great gang at Moby Dives (www.mobydivesgozo.com) and made boat dives with Pete Allday of Ocean Dreams (www.oceandreams.uk.com).

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Nauticam NA-GX1 for the Panasonic GX1 review

by Jussi Hokkanen

Pictures taken with Panasonic 8mm fisheye and Panasonic-Leica 45mm macro with Inon Z-240 strobe.

Before the digital camera revolution nobody talked about the picture quality of this and that camera. If you had a small camera with a decent lens it took as high quality pictures as any expensive SLR. Since then, for years now in fact, manufacturers and punters alike have been obsessed with megapixels and image quality comparisons. Today we are returning to the beginning of this circle. Almost any decent digital camera is able to produce stunningly good results and the image quality difference between top DSLR cameras and mid-range compact cameras has almost disappeared.

I don't generally bother with geeky image quality tests but as it happens I was browsing the pixel peeping Mecca of the world: DPreview.com and used their handy studio comparison tool to put four cameras side by side. The cameras I chose were the new Canon PowerShot G1X, the latest high-end Canon DSLR; EOS-5D MKIII, The Olympus interchangeable lens compact camera E-PL3 and the new Panasonic GX1. All these cameras ranging from 500 pounds to 2500 pounds were able to produce, at least in my eyes, almost identical quality pictures when in low ISOs. The image quality difference between the chosen compact cameras and the Canon DSLRs are insignificant in real life. (OK, OK… once you turn the ISO readings up high you can see big differences… but let's say below 400 ISO). From an underwater photographers point of view this situation is ideal and this all leads me to the subject in hand: underwater photography with compact cameras, especially the one I have had my hands on lately; The Panasonic GX1 system compact and the Nauticam NA-GX1 housing especially designed for it. I was lucky to spend some quality underwater time with the said package this June in Yucatan, Mexico

Camera design:

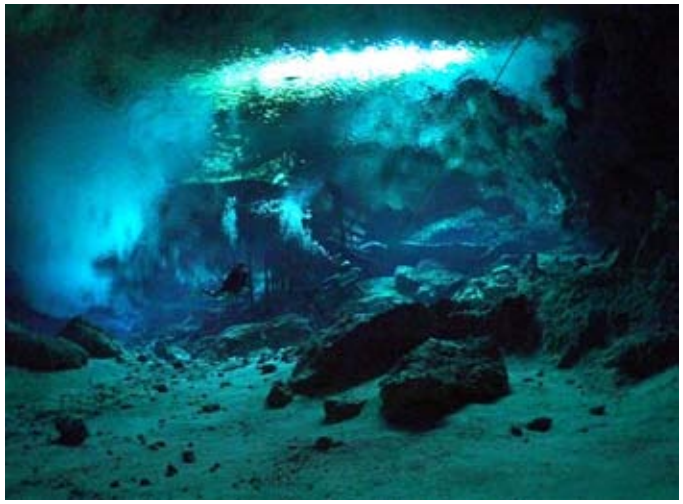
The GX1 camera is the latest Panasonic system compact camera and it replaces the already dated GF1, which was one of the first successful interchangeable compact cameras that helped to create a completely new field onto the camera marketplace. The new Panasonic GX1 has been updated with the latest micro four-thirds sensor, which is more up to date with the current strong competition. The GX1 has of course also a touch screen, which can be handy topside but useless underwater. From an UW-photographers point of view luckily all the manual non-touch-screen controls still remain and make this camera "houseable". Along with the GX1 update comes a new Panasonic lens called the X PZ 14-42 f3.5-5.6. This lens is an extremely compact standard zoom that has lost it zoom and focus rings and instead has power-zoom levers for zooming and

manual focus. I've never been a big fan of power-zoom glass and thankfully the fad passed in the early nineteen nineties as many of the lenses of that era were just cumbersome. The new Panasonic lens generally behaves reasonably well and zooming speed with this lens is quite manageable. Still, I have to hand it to Panasonic. Because of the lenses' unconventional motorized design; it is probably the world's flattest interchangeable 28-80mm zoom lens. The lens design brings also a reasonably rare extra feature for underwater photographers … but more about that a tad later.

Housing Design:

Nauticam designed and manufactured very good aluminium housings for the previous Panasonic G range cameras but this time the offering comes with an added bonus. The new NA-GX1 housing retails in the UK for £899 and is over £300 cheaper than any existing Nauticam system compact housing. The new housing is slightly boxier in shape compared to the previous Panasonic housings and in a way somehow also feels a bit more bulky. However, when you put it next to a previous Panasonic housing you realise that the differences are more visual than anything else. Another new thing on the housing is the simplified flash connector port. Instead of the 4-way flap that was bolted on top of the flash window, the new adapter is a simple 2-way Sea&Sea type connector where the cable end openings are drilled straight into the polycarbonate window. Nice and simple. The housing buttons and levers are generally very nice to use, which is not a surpirse, of course, as all Nauticam housings I've ever handled have been extremely ergonomic.

Earlier Panasonic G-range cameras suffered



from a housing related pop-up flash issue. Unlike some other cameras the pop-up flash of previous Panasonic system compacts only fired if it was allowed to open fully: i.e. the spring-loaded flash unit was fully extended to maximum height. If you take a look at the intricate flash system of the GX1 you will see that although easy to operate with a human finger, when in a housing with a small lever, the operation becomes very difficult. The problem was actually too hard to be resolved and so previous Nauticam Panasonic housings did not have pop-up flash push-down levers. This was a problem as the cameras did not have any other way to disable the internal strobe. Fortunately the new GX1 works better as the flash, although still having the same spring system, will fire without being extended to its full height. So now inside the housing the flash opens only about 1cm and can be pushed down with a simple lever.

The NA-GX1 housing offers full control of all camera buttons excluding the touch screen controls. A special mention needs to be given to how well the back rear dial now works. This was another

headache for some designers as the tiny flush fitting wheel needs to be both pressed and turned. With Nauticam's clever spring loaded design this task becomes a doddle underwater. The only slightly confusing housing control is the dual-tier main wheel that controls the on-off switch and the main mode dial. At least I managed to turn the camera off a couple of times accidentally when I was supposed to be only touching the top part of this dual-dial for mode change. During my week with the NA-GX1 I however quickly learnt to use this dial.

Lens Choices:

The system compact camera lens range has been growing steadily and now for the GX1 camera you already have pretty much all the lenses you could really want for both land and underwater photography. For underwater super

wide-angle photography you can use the Panasonic 8mm fisheye or the 7-14mm super wide zoom inside a dedicated dome port. Don't forget you can also use all Olympus system compact lenses like the well priced 9-18mm. For macro you can use the 45mm Panasonic-Leica inside a basic flat port, which quickly became my favourite during the tests. This lens is as good as any 100mm DSLR macro lens and can produce amazing results. Additional magnification can be added on the 67mm port thread if so desired.

An interesting newcomer to the Panasonic lens range is the new, already mentioned, motorised Vario X PZ 14-42mm zoom. What makes this lens stand out from the previous Panasonic 14-42 lenses is the wet lens possibilities it offers. Because of the new X zoom design the lens, while zooming, only moves in and out about one centimetre, in a pump action sort of way. This makes it a perfect lens to be used with an external wet wide-angle and macro adapters that can be attached on to the port thread and exchanged during the dive. Unfortunately the ports Nauticam currently offer are either too long or too short as the port needs to be just the right length. The company is to release a new flat port for the Vario X lens that will be the correct size but unfortunately this port did not make it in time for my trip. Nauticam is also bringing out some sort of gearing device that allows the operation of the Panasonic X lens' power zoom lever inside the housing. The Vario X 14-42mm will be an interesting and extremely flexible choice for UW-photographers once all the necessary bits and bobs are available.

Final words:

Nauticam manages to somehow raise its game again with the new NA-GX1 housing. Never before there has been a sub thousand pound housing of this quality, size and material. Also the GX1 as a camera is extremely attractive choice among the ever-growing range of interchangeable lens compact cameras. Its image quality is as good as it gets, competing with the Sony NEX range. My biggest gripe with the Sony's admirable NEX range has always been the toy-like user interface. The Panasonic comes with a normal camera interface that is much more pleasing to use. Also, in comparison with the other manufacturers like Sony, the GX1 lens range is pretty unbeatable. The Sony NEX range only really offers 5 lenses. For the Micro Four Thirds system the choice is already nearly twenty.

Forget your cumbersome SLR housings. This package costs a 1/3 and weighs a quarter of a full-on DSLR setup. You can't go wrong with the NA-GX1 as it easily matches at least the low-to mid end DSLRs underwater.

Jussi Hokkanen
www.deepshots.co.uk

Field testing the Sony Zeiss 24mm F1.8 for NEX cameras

by Phil Rudin

Sony has experienced amazing success with their NEX line of cameras for both above and below water use. The NEX-7 is one of the most soughtafter mirrorless cameras on the planet and the supply of housing for the camera is not keeping up with the demand.

As resolution increases with the APS-C size sensors it is become more and more obvious that high-quality lenses are necessary to take full advantage of the sensors huge pixel count. Of the eight lenses so far released by Sony for the NEX system the Sony Zeiss 24 mm F/1.8 lens has the highest image quality in the range. The 36 mm full frame equivalent lens has the Zeiss optical design with a maximum aperture of F1.8. The lens will focus to a minimum distance of around 6 inches which allows you to shoot very close to the dome port. The lens has very fast autofocus but at the same time is smooth and quiet minimizing noise and image jitter when shooting in movie mode.

I test of the lens in a Nauticam NA-NEX7 using the Nauticam 4 inch dome port for mirrorless cameras and lenses like the Olympus 9-18mm zoom. In this port configuration the lens sits a bit far back from dome which brings the subject even closer to the dome at minimum focus distance. While the lens seems to work quite well with this port configuration having a port designed for this lens would probably be an even better choice. Shooting stills I found the Lens extremely fast with excellent autofocus accuracy. With a diagonal angle of view of around 63° on the APS-C size sensor the lens is rather narrow for use underwater compared to most wide-angle lenses however because of its close focusing abilities it becomes quite useful as a portrait lens for medium to large size animals. This lens produces stunning fish portraits and works quite well as close focus medium wide-angle lens. It produces rich colors with excellent corner to corner image detail.

At a minimum aperture of F1.8 this lens can also produce very shallow depth of field for creative images with superbly defocused backgrounds. If you're considering the very best optics available for the Sony NEX system this lens should be high on you're list for consideration. The Sony Zeiss 24 mm is now selling for around $1100 in the US.

FRENCH ANGELFISH, NEX-7, SONY/ZEISS 24MM, ISO200, F/9, 1/125TH, TWO INON Z-240 STROBES

Phil Rudin

We've got you covered!

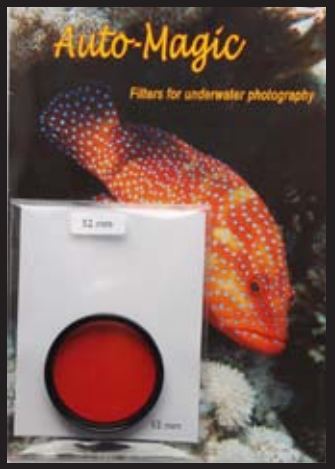
Magic filters are now available in 3 options.

Original Magic for use in blue water with DSLR and compact cameras with Manual White Balance,

Auto-Magic for compact cameras in automatic point and shoot mode.

GreenWater Magic for use in green water with DSLR and compact cameras with Manual White Balance.

Prices start at just £19.



The Auto-Magic formula is now available in a Plexiglass filter that can be added or removed underwater.

www.magic-filters.com

Breaking the rules

By Joel Penner

What happens when you're set up to shoot video with your new DSLR only to find out that the focus button isn't working on your housing? Normally, you'd just have to enjoy the dive, and not be able to capture any images along the way. Why not switch over to your backup system? That's exactly what I did!

While at the Digital Shootout in Little Cayman I happened to be testing the Backscatter Flip-Up Magic Filter connected to the new GoPro Dive Housing. For most of the dive trip I had been shooting comparison video clips with the GoPro, as well as using it topside for time lapses, but on this dive I caught myself wanting to take some stills. That's when I thought, "Why not use the photo feature?" I ended up taking still images the whole dive and was pleasantly surprised with the results I got from the camera.

The GoPro camera

The GoPro has no manual controls when it comes to aperture and shutter speed. In addition, it uses auto ISO to attain proper exposure. Also, I think because the camera is really geared for video, it tends to default more often to shutter speeds that I would associate with video frame rates. A few of the shots in this article were shot with 1/60, for example. By using video lights, the camera shoots at lower ISO and images can appear cleaner. This can also aid in the camera choosing to use a faster shutter speed, but is completely unpredictable, so a steady hand while taking a photo is necessary in case the camera decides on 1/30 or 1/60 as its shutter speed.

Sometimes Rules Are Meant To Be Broken

When you read the instructions (you all read the instructions, right?), it clearly states that you only want to use the Magic Filter between 3-12 meters or 9-40 feet. Back in February, I had the opportunity to test the Backscatter Custom GoPro Housing and Magic Filters - http://www.backscatter.com/sku/bs-gpuwg.lasso - while snorkeling with the Manatees. I had accidentally kept my lights on while running the Magic Filter. The footage looked good, but I was reminded that I shouldn't use the

(Above) The author at work but the camera he used to take the shots in this article was the GoPro on top of his main housing system! Photo by Jennifer Penner

(Right) Lights, camera, action is fine but add a Magic filter and, theoretically, you are breaking 'the rules'. When you get shots like these, however, it obviously pays to break the rules!
Shot with a GoPro Hero2, Magic Filter and Gates VL24 Lights at 30 feet.

Shot with a GoPro Hero2 and Gates VL24 Lights. Shot at surface. Using the new flip up Magic Filter, I was able to flip it up to disengage it as I was swimming towards the turtle. © Joel Penner, Newmediasoup, LLC

Shot at 40 feet using a Magic Filter and video lights to light up the fans and sponge.

Shot with a GoPro Hero2, Magic Filter and Gates VL24 Lights at 85 feet

lights with the Magic Filter.

Then, a few weeks ago in a WetPixel Google Hangout, I heard Alex Mustard mention that he had heard of people getting positive results with this combination. This validation stuck in the back of my mind as we started the Digital Shootout and I had my GoPro setup ready to do more testing.

Many of the dive sites on Little Cayman are on Bloody Bay Wall, putting us in some excellent photographic set-ups that are deeper than the manufacturer's suggested usage rating for the Magic Filter. While at 85 feet, I looked out through this beautiful red coral and saw my dive buddy in a perfect modeling set up. With my video lights on full, I proceeded to compose my shots, and with a steady and stable hand, fired off a few shots. The images looked more than acceptable in the LCD of my GoPro, so I proceeded to take more photos throughout the dive. At the end of the dive, there was a cooperative turtle at the surface. As I swam toward the turtle, I was able to effortlessly flip up the Magic Filter (on the surface the Magic Filter will cause your image to be very red) and got off about 5 shots.

While the resolution of the GoPro LCD is low, these images looked good. It wasn't until I downloaded the images that I realized how well the combo had actually worked. I found that there was very little white balance and color correction needed on these shots. Magic Filter, GoPro and video lights for stills… another option for underwater image making! Who knew?

Joel Penner

Joel Penner is the Founder and Creative Director of Newmediasoup, LLC

www.newmediasoup.com

www.thedigitalshootout.com

www.backscatter.com/learn/news/news.php?ID=138

Leopard Seals - friendly monsters

by Bartosz Strozynski

"Wild beauty", Antarctic Peninsula, Leopard Seals fascinates people because of their opened, dangerously looking mouths with huge teeth, but they look also very attractive smiling to diver, (f/10, 1/125, ISO400), Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III, Canon EF14mm f/2.8L II USM, housed with Seacam

Probably the most spectacular Antarctic subject for wildlife photographers is the leopard seal. Antarctica and surrounding waters is the only place in the world where this mammal can be encountered. It is called a leopard seal due its characteristic spots on skin, but after spending some time with the animal, I found it to be more similar to a big dog than to a leopard.

There are a great number of leopard seals around Antarctica waters and you may often see them sleeping on small icebergs. They seem to be very lazy and uninterested in jumping into the water to help us in our photographic endeavours but as soon as they get in, they transform into extremely fast moving and, at first sight, scary monsters. With a bit of luck though, you can meet the leopard seal while diving and play with them, making spectacular pictures and recognising that, in reality, although really wild, it is a very friendly, playful and graceful animal.

For underwater photographers this is a really amazing experience to make portraits of 3 meters long and 500 kg heavy mammals in underwater action. A Leopard seal may change its face from baby looking into killer looking mode in just couple of seconds, still keeping photogenic and inspiring nature. Having made numerous picture of this seal so far in different places and conditions, I see each of them as very unique. I have not made any duplicates. A bit different timing or angle always makes real difference in composition.

In my view, the frightening, crazy killer and unpredictable devil stereotype presented in famous movie "Happy Feet 2" is unfounded and doesn't reflect reality. It is true, leopard seals are predators and eat meat, but eating penguins is only a small part of its diet. Surprisingly, the major share of its food is krill. Big, heavy animals usually eat small shellfish! The scary reputation of seals is caused by its bloody way of penguin hunting. It comes over so badly because killing penguins looks more like killing for fun than for food. Leopard seals patrol the coast where penguins enter and leave the water for feeding, looking for its victim's mistake. It is really difficult to hunt penguins, because they

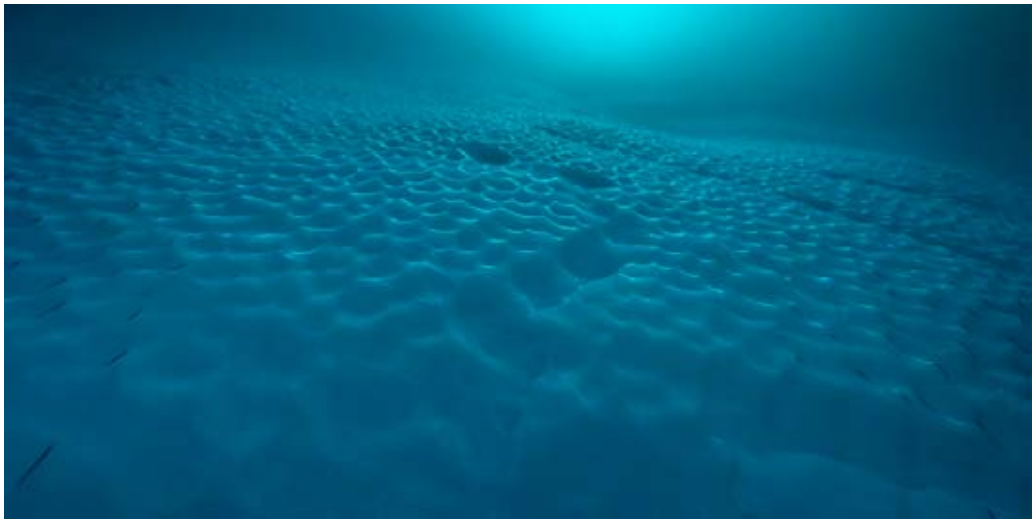
"Noon nap". Leopard Seals summer activity is usually limited to two tasks, eating krill and penguins and sleeping. When sleeping, they do it on beautiful icebergs, (f/16, 1/160, ISO400), Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III, Canon EF14mm f/2.8L II USM, housed with Seacam

swim really fast. Leopard seals don't kill penguins immediately after the catch, just injure it a bit to stop it from escaping and then it starts a ritual dance around its victim, scalping it piece by piece and finally after making a bloody show, kills it. It is interesting that very often the corpse is left uneaten. Many skeleton remains can be found on bottom and it looks like a penguin cemetery.

The completely opposite face of a leopard seal may be observed when diving with them. I believe this is truer view of this fascinating mammal. When we manage to find leopard seal in the water willing to play, the game starts. In the beginning it keeps its distance, watching the stranger but with time it starts to be braver when approaching a diver. It is circling around testing our reactions, step by step getting closer and closer finally reaching face-to-face phase. It is not clear why leopard seals enjoy looking at underwater camera

"Smile". Leopard Seal with closed eye in lovely view, (f/9, 1/125, ISO400), Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III, Canon EF14mm f/2.8L II USM, housed with Seacam

"Abyss", Endless sculptured Ice bottom, (f/16, 1/125, ISO400), Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III, Canon EF14mm f/2.8L II USM, housed with Seacam



"Paparazzi". Leopard Seal playing with diver and making morning toilet at the same time. It is very unique to catch this animal doing it underwater and in the same time playing with diver. Excrement is red because is made of krill pieces, being main food for Leopard seals, (f/13, 1/125, ISO400), Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III, Canon EF14mm f/2.8L II USM, housed with Seacam

"Giant". Giant Iceberg passing waters of Antarctica in north direction. This region of the world is full of enormous ice formation, but this one was exceptionally huge; our boat looked like Lego of my son next to room wall, (f/16, 1/125, ISO100), Canon EOS 5D Mark II, Canon EF14mm f/2.8L II USM

dome port, presenting its grace and jaws attributes. There may be two hypotheses for it. The first says, that because dome port is reflective, they use it as a mirror, admiring itself, but another, probably more realistic, says that mirror reflection is seen as another seal and all the show is simply about competing with each other, expressing its grace, strengths and domination of another seal.

Looking at pictures of leopard seals, you may see very different faces of these mammals, like smiling, warning, biting, but also pushing the dome. To give you some feeling how close I was making some of these pictures, it is worth saying they were made using 14mm lens, in distance of 0-30 cm from teeth. At first sight it may be scary but I never experienced any aggression from these animals. I felt a lot of fun from this close interaction and enjoyed it. For sure

"Push", Antarctic Peninsula, Leopard Seal pushing underwater housing dome port with its nose. Leopard Seal is very curious mammal, but pushing diver with nose, is very exciting experience, monster pushing diver to start closer interaction, play, (f/7.1, 1/125, ISO400), Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III, Canon EF14mm f/2.8L II USM, housed with Seacam

"Dance". Leopard Seal circling around diver, it looks like underwater dancing, (f/11, 1/125, ISO400), Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III, EF14mm f/2.8L II USM, housed with Seacam

it is nature and risk always exists but respecting wildlife and not breaking frontiers limits threats to a minimum.

Antarctica is really challenging environment for photography, especially for underwater activity. Everything looks very beautiful, ready to catch, but being exposed to wind, coldness, waves, cold water, rapidly changing weather and shining snow in huge contrast to rocks and water, photography becomes an extreme exercise. In this environment any planning and execution are under serious exposure.

During all my trips to Antarctica, fortunately I was always lucky to dive with leopard seals, play with them a lot and make many shots. It was very demanding time, exposing my skills, but finally successful and rewarded. Fascinating mammals with very bed reputation became my favourite underwater photographic subject of cold waters and I am sure I will meet them in short future again.

Bartosz Strozynski

Underwater & Nature photographer, composer, lyricist, author of music videos and multimedia projects, graphic artist, sculptor.

Awarded in many international photographic competitions, including the prestigious International Photography Awards, European Wildlife Photographer of the Year, International Nature Photo Competition Asferico and Great Photographic Competition of National Geographic, presents his photographs in many international publications. Participated in numerous photographic expeditions, including the prestigious Elysium Epic Shackleton's Antarctic Visual Epic Project. Fascinated by the Arctic and Antarctica, specializing in underwater photography, winter photography, photography of aquatic mammals and underwater photography in rivers. Author of articles on diving and underwater photography published in many countries.

The creator of music and text appearing on the album "Private Only", the artist's debut album released in 2011.

Author and producer of music videos and multimedia projects published in several media; designer of music album artwork and promotional materials.

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Making a Difference in Your Photo Workshop

By Pam Murph

You have done it – finally booked that underwater photography workshop that has been on your to do list for some time. Now all you have to do is sit back, relax and count down the days until your trip. Or….if you want to get more out of your experience then consider a different approach. The way in which you go about getting prepared and the mindset you have about the workshop can make a world of difference. It did for me – on both workshops I have done since 2011. After finally scheduling that underwater workshop I had wanted to do for a number of years, I asked myself what to do to get ready. And after coming back from my second workshop earlier this year, I wanted to share what I have learned from my own experiences and from those I have met along the way.

First, get in the mindset of preparedness – in all aspects of the trip. Learn something about where you are going. Is there anything unique to the area - like Jellyfish Lake in Palau; or Sting Ray City in Grand Cayman. Knowing can enhance your experience. You are going to be busy and having time to experience the location to its fullest might mean adding on a few days to experience the destination more fully. Do you know what type of plugs they use for electricity, do you need adapters? Important information for charging all our camera related gear. What about currency, language, weather, water temp, up to date passport, visas? We

I had several components I wanted to pull together for a shot during my 2nd workshop – snell's window, blue sky, and a sting ray coming overhead. This is my end result after staying in one place taking shots as sting rays came near. Nikon D90, Tokina 10-17 at 10mm, f/9 @ 1/80, ISO 200, ambient light, magic filter.

This was the first time working with magic filters and I had only tried ambient light a few times before this. Nikon D90, Tokina 10-17 at 10mm, f/11 @ 1/100, ISO 200, ambient light, magic filter. Since this shot was close but not exactly what I thought it could be, I put this into a review session for feedback.

Sting Ray City at dawn to shoot strong light. Before my first workshop, I did not understand how use light to get a good B&W photo and was afraid of trying manual white balance. Now I do use these tools with ease. Nikon D90, Tokina 10-17 at 10mm, f/9 @ 1/80, ISO 200, ambient light.

know all of this, but just a reminder to get into the preparedness mode that sets you up for success.

Spend some time with your camera before the trip taking pictures and getting to know it better. I am not a full time photographer – so I can admit to not having the camera in my hands all of the time, forgetting certain settings and functions, and not always being up to speed. You might be laughing at me for adding this suggestion, but it is easy to think that we know our camera. Do not assume – get it out and play before you go. In addition, make sure you are covered - equipment insurance and DAN. Accidents do happen – to your gear and to divers.

Check, double check and then triple check your gear. If you think there are too many checks, consider a photographer I ran into last year in Bonaire. They planned for 3 weeks of diving and shooting to find out all of their o-rings were still at home. They admitted to not following their usual prep routine which included three checks and wished otherwise once there. Finding a store nearby with spare parts is hard to do in most of the locations we travel to for these types of trips. So make sure you have checked everything out before you go. And then start thinking about spares. Go prepared with spare parts, especially o-rings, batteries, sync cords, and memory cards. Go prepared with what you cannot live without. I have found it helpful to make a checklist that I use when packing to make sure I all my gear – camera as well as scuba equipment.

The first workshop I went on focused on understanding and controlling light underwater and I spent the majority of the week doing this through wide angle work. We were also able to get in some additional work along the way. I choose my focus on lighting because understanding light underwater is key to what we do as underwater photographers. Each workshop is different. What is the focus of the workshop that you have just put a down payment on - lighting techniques, shooting macro, big animals, caverns, wrecks, creative techniques or something else? Have an understanding before you sign up and go. It helps in preparation for the trip and can enhance your enjoyment as well as your overall satisfaction. I

Adding another element, a model, to my previous shot. This was done in my second workshop – a year later. Nikon D90, Tokina 10-17 at 10mm, f/9 @ 1/100, ISO 200, DS 161 & 125 strobes. I had this shot in my head before I went on the trip – preparedness.

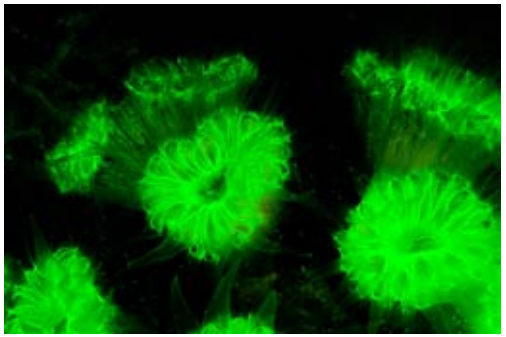
Working on using ambient light from the inside out and model on a wreck. Nikon D90, Tokina 10-17 at 1mm, f/7.1 @ 1/100, ISO 200, ambient light, magic filter. Thanks to Nadya for swapping out with me so we both had models for the week.

Trying out new 105 macro lens. Tons of shots to get used to a new lens and then added a snoot for some fun. Nikon D90, 105mm lens, f/20 @ 1/160, ISO 200, DS 161 strobe with homemade snoot.

choose my second workshop for the focus on new, creative techniques that I had not had previous experience with. In addition, know whether this is a photography trip, where there is no formal teaching but a well known photographer may be along for the trip and it is tailored for photography, or a photo workshop where teaching occurs with things like lectures and photo reviews from a professional.

These are usually fairly intensive weeks: three to five dives per day, being up very early or late in order to get a particular shot, changing gear between dives, downloading and sifting through files, lectures, photo reviews, preparing gear for the next day, and somewhere in there finding time to eat before falling into bed. I was told that is was a busy week, but did not fully understand this until after the first day or two of the workshop. Get a sense of how intensive the week is going to be. For me, it has all been worth it – my first dawn Sting Ray City Snorkel to understand light in the early morning, use magic filters, and take black and white photos produced a part of my portfolio that I could not have gotten without doing a workshop. Photo workshops are also not very conducive to family vacations because of the intensity. Think before you sign your family up to join you on one of these trips.

What equipment do you need to have for the workshop? This overlaps with your understanding of the focus and type of workshop you have signed up for. Know what lens, domes, ports, extensions, diopters, snoots, strobes, filters, scuba gear, or other equipment you need. This will make the trip a better experience for you. For example, if you are going to be doing photo reviews nightly, then having your laptop can be crucial. If I had not had mine on each of my trips, I would have missed out on what I consider one of the most important components of a photo workshop – photo review sessions. These are extremely helpful – everyone sharing a few of their shots from the day, good and not so good, to learn from each other, get feedback on how to improve your shot, and see how others interpret the underwater world. Go out on a limb during these and put up some that are not your best – ones you want to improve upon – challenge yourself and learn how to do it better. One night I did this and then when we went back to the same dive site later in the week, I was able to spend some more time with the subject and get a much better image because of the interaction in the review session.



Trying fluorescence photography – using special filters at night to see how parts of the reef look when it fluoresces. Nikon D90, 60mm lens, f/18 @ 1/200, ISO 400, DS 161 &125 strobes.

Working with off camera strobes inside the Kittiwake. We first worked on using off camera strobes in a pool before trying them on a wreck. Nikon D90, Tokina 10-17 at 12mm, f/11 @ 1/125, ISO 200, DS 161 strobe, off camera strobe attached to divers tank. Thanks to Tilley at Ocean Frontiers for patiently modeling for almost an hour so all the participants could try this technique.

Doing a workshop leads to a few etiquette reminders. Do not leave your manners at home. In regards to the boat ….showing up on time and prepared each time the boat goes out or for each dive briefing on a live aboard will keep you on everyone's good side. There will be more camera gear than you can imagine on one

of these trips. Be mindful of sharing and not hogging all of the space. There are a lot of open housings and changing out lens and equipment between dives. Be careful on the boat and around the camera table. Also, don't use that onboard shower to rinse off after the dive without first looking around to make sure there are no open housings or water sensitive equipment in your line of fire. Spraying without looking just might get you thrown overboard! Underwater…Be mindful of where you are on the reef in relationship to other photographers. If everyone is shooting wide angle, then be aware that you could easily swim into someone's shot. Look around and down to see what is going on (there may be someone below you taking shots at an upward angle). If you would like to add a model to your shots, then consider trading out with another photographer. Talk about the shot and what you would like to achieve before the dive (prepare) and then both of you can have a go at taking the shot and modeling for each other.

Check the ego at the door. Everyone is on this trip to learn and grow in their underwater photography knowledge. Going in with the notion that this is about learning and not competing helps in the overall outcome. Just as in the review sessions I mentioned, do not feel like you have to put up your best every time – be open, check your ego and put things in that you want to improve on. For me, I went in with the notion that in order to grow and take better pictures, I had to be willing to take some risks and leave my ego at the door. Do not be afraid to ask questions, ask for help, or acknowledge that you do not understand something that is being taught. I asked a lot of them (probably drove the leader crazy) and took lots of notes. You are paying for the experience and knowledge of the professional leading the workshop. They have a lot to share as do the other participants. This is a learning experience. Get as much as you can out of it.

Challenge yourself. What are your goals for goals for this workshop? Is there a particular type of shot you want to polish? Is there a new technique you cannot wait to try out? Are you interested in adding a model to your photography for the first time or learning how to work with models better underwater? Do you have that new snoot with you or want to have a go with new equipment? Go with the mindset of getting outside your comfort zone, learning new skills, acquiring new knowledge and improving your photography overall. I went on my first workshop trying to really hone my close focus wide angle skills. I was having a lot of trouble with lighting the reef and dealing with ambient light in the background. By the end of the workshop, I understood how to take this shot and get the picture that I wanted. When I was getting ready for my second workshop, I read up on homemade snoots and made one to take with me. I worked in the pool the first afternoon with some weighted down toys, tried it in the ocean, and then I asked for feedback and suggestions on how to improve this technique with the leader. I also took my new 105 macro lens to try out. By the end of the week, I had some shots with my lens and snoot I am really proud to show

After the feedback and with practice in the first workshop, this is the shot I was able to achieve. I can now achieve consistent CFWA work that I like. Nikon D90, Tokina 10-17 at 12mm, f/11 @ 1/125, ISO 200, DS 161 & 125. strobes.

Adding another element, a model, to my previous shot. This was done in my second workshop – a year later. Nikon D90, Tokina 10-17 at 10mm, f/9 @ 1/100, ISO 200, DS 161 & 125 strobes. I had this shot in my head before I went on the trip – preparedness.

Adding fish life to a CFWA snooted shot is not easy. I only got off 3 shots before the angelfish was gone. Nikon D90, Tokina 10-17 at 10mm, f/10 @ 1/100, ISO 200, DS 161 strobe with homemade snoot

off. The end results you see with this article are the product of the learning process, taking shots over and over, and then trying again. I trashed a lot of photos along the way, but I came out with many keepers too.

Regardless of whether you are a beginner or an advanced underwater photographer, there is something to be found for everyone in a photo workshop. This is one way to take your skills to the next level. I think that most of us would agree that we are interested in learning and growing in what we do as underwater photographers. There is so much to be learned while participating in a workshop. Just imagine how much better it could be by putting a little extra effort into the experience. I know when I came back, I was so excited about the quality of the pictures I got on my first trip and the improvements I could see in my work. The real test came when I shared with other underwater photographers, and they could see the difference in my work and that sealed it for me. When I was getting ready for my second workshop, I was able to prepare even more and knew some areas I wanted to concentrate on and new things I wanted to try. I have already put my down payment on my next workshop. Hope to see you there.

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Pam Murph

Do We Need Depth?

by Mark Webster

The maximum depth of a dive is always an important consideration, normally due to decompression penalties that may be incurred. When we start diving the conversation is often related to how deep we have been and the urge is usually to make your first 100ft/30m dive and to even greater depths in order to join that elite group of 'deep divers'. I was no different in this respect and spent many happy dives fumbling around in the dark cold water at 60m on wrecks. From this I moved into commercial diving where you rarely see much of what is around you due to poor visibility and darkness. I then discovered photography and of course my world was reversed and all I desired was more visibility and more light!

Photography is all about capturing light and although we are often using artificial light to restore colours in our images the contribution of natural light to the exposure is always an important consideration. In macro photography we frequently expose entirely with flash, but in wide angle photography the preference is often to use the natural light only for the exposure or in balance with your strobe light. So to maintain the maximum intensity and the best quality of light it is logical to stay as shallow as possible and, even though our desire for subject diversity will always

Deeper rock pools enable you to capture some of the marine life whilst viewing through the water surface and perhaps capturing a fellow explorer and Snell's window. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 10-17mm FE, ISO 200 f11 1/200.

(Right) Working in sheltered gullies allows you to set up half and half shots with some land features in the background. There are various means for keeping the dome drop water free – I use spit or detergent both of which help the dome shed water as you prepare the shot. Nikon F90X, Subal housing, 15mm fish eye, Ektachrome 100ASA f11 1/125.

drive us deeper and we cope with the inevitable compromise, it is worth regularly dedicating entire dives working just below the surface. So to pose the question in the title of this piece…..do we need depth to find interesting subjects or is there enough to keep us busy without the need to clear our ears so often or at all?

Of course we do not need to don SCUBA gear for all our underwater photography. There are a number of spectacular subjects that are active in very shallow water or just below the surface, although they mostly require a visit to specific locations. Whales, whale sharks, basking sharks, great white sharks, sail fish and the infamous sardine run with its diversity of species all fit this category. These are the big ticket targets which often require a dedicated and sometimes expensive trip to capture the desired images. But even if you are still saving for that possibly once in a lifetime long haul trip, there are many other excellent imaging opportunities to be captured with just a snorkel or with SCUBA in very shallow water.

I am sure we all have happy memories from childhood of exploring rock pools armed with a shrimp net, hand reel and bucket searching for what seemed then very exciting and intimidating marine life. Well, most of us have never quite grown up, so why avoid rock pools with your now adult hunting equipment of camera and housing? Wherever there is a significant tidal range and rocky foreshore you will find rock pool opportunities ranging from only a few centimeters depth to those that are deep enough to submerge and swim in. You won't of course find big critters in the pools, but you will find those that live in the intertidal zone, many in the macro range, and opportunities for your wide angle lens in mini sea-scapes and half and half shots.

Rock pools offer excellent opportunities to capture reflections on the surface as they are generally sheltered. Add a variety of soft coloured weeds and mollusks for a slightly different still life study. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 10-17mm FE, ISO 200 f11 1/125.

When the tide comes in and conditions are calm it is also worth exploring those rocky foreshore areas that dried out at high tide. There are a number of critters and fish that emerge to feed as soon as there is enough water and my most recent discoveries include a colony of tiny Montagu's blennies at a local beach dive. Not a rare species as such but one that is rarely seen on a normal dive. Working with your camera in very shallow water in these intertidal areas can be hard without a little preparation. Many of the small fish here are skittish and you need to be able to stay fairly still in one position for a while to gain there confidence and capture the image. So adding extra weight, particularly in a dry suit, is a good idea and trimming the buoyancy of your camera system and keeping it as compact as possible for one handed operation is very helpful leaving your other hand to hold on.

Montagu's blenny – rock pool and intertidal species are not often photographed in the wild and it can offer a worthwhile and rewarding challenge to hunt for small fish like these in very shallow water. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 105mm micro, Inon Quad flash, ISO 100 f11 1/125

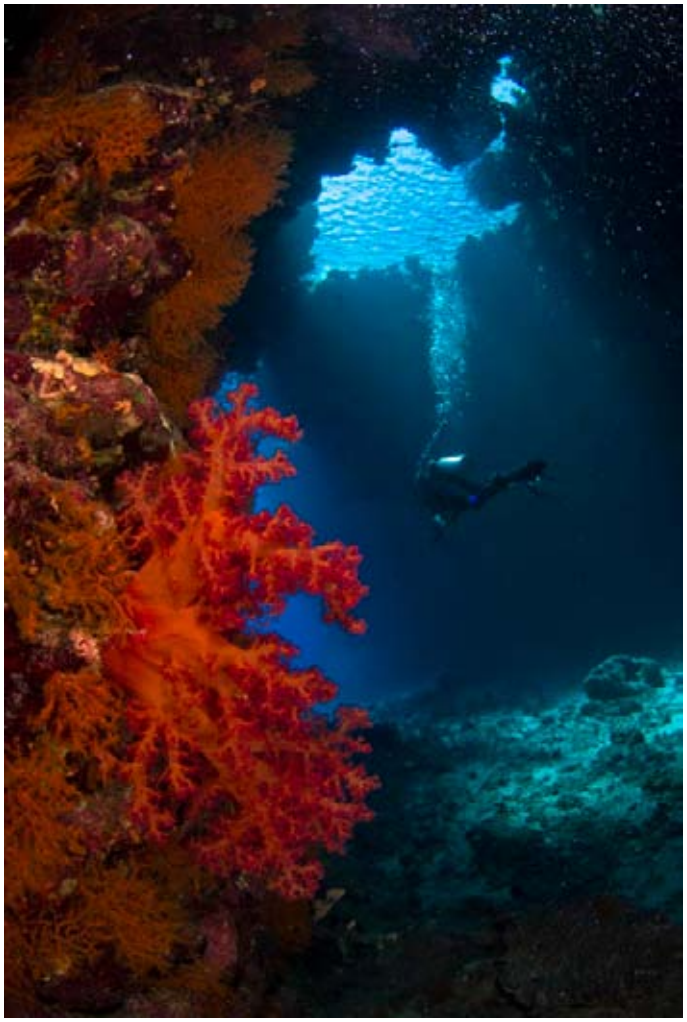
Tidal gullies are often also filled with photogenic flotsam and jetsam like leaves, floating sea weeds and the occasional jelly fish which all come in on the rising tide and get trapped. So for a slightly different subject it is sometimes worth getting below with your wide angle lens to

shoot these ‘through the surface’ to include some land features in your image and perhaps a touch of Snell’s window and maybe some reflections. Snorkelling in these areas can also produce some excellent results particularly if you can work with a buddy or model in the shot and may produce opportunities for split shots with the shore in the background.

I have previously waxed lyrically regarding the opportunities in temperate weed beds, but it is worth mentioning again here as depths rarely exceed 3m and there are some stunning and colourful scenic’s to be captured with a wide angle lens. If you have the patience to explore the weeds slowly and carefully you will also find plenty of marine life for your macro lens as well. Many species of nudibranch will be found grazing and laying their egg spirals in the weed and during the spring will be joined by hundreds of sea hares following the same behaviour. Pipe fish, sticklebacks, scorpion fish, flatfish and various crab species all enjoy the cover and camouflage provided by the weed

If you are in tropical waters you will often find some of the most colourful hard corals in the first couple of metres depth and there is always plenty of fish feeding activity on top of the reef table. When the tide is high you will find bigger species like the bump head parrot fish grazing on the coral or waiting to be cleaned, which provides the opportunity for a closer approach. Camouflaged sessile species like scorpion fish and stone fish are also worth looking for as they frequently use the shallows for ambush, which just shows how cautious you should be when wading out for a dive! If you are shooting with natural light in the first couple of metres depth then you can maintain colour balance with manual white balance adjustment

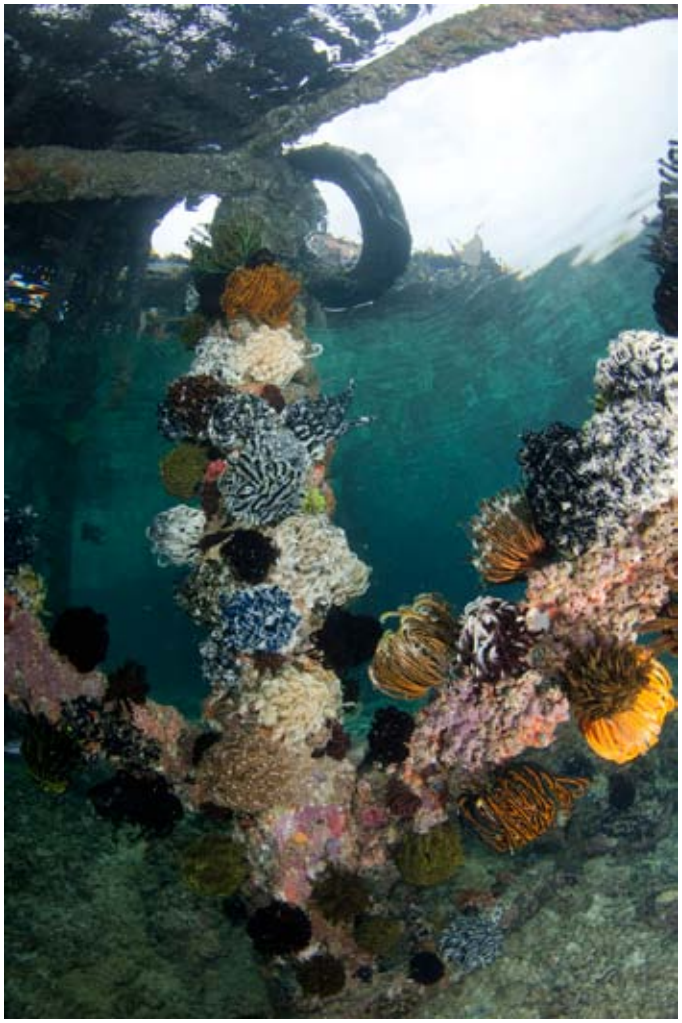
Boat and divers silhouette – silhouettes shot in shallow water make great images especially when the sun is low and there is a chance of Snell’s window to add impact. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 10-17mm fish eye zoom, ISO 200 f11 1/125.



Diver in cave – in larger cave systems there are often opportunities to use the natural light to expose a distant area or subject whilst using flash to expose a colourful foreground. In this image I was lucky that a passing diver entered the frame at just the right moment. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 10-17mm fish eye zoom, Subtronic Mini flash guns, ISO 200 f11 1/30.

There are several 'big ticket' subjects around the globe that can be photographed close to the surface and the basking shark is most certainly one of them. Getting close to them needs a little behavioural knowledge, a good boat man and snorkeling fitness to keep pace with the subject! Nikon D200, Subal ND2, 12-24mm zoom, ISO 200 f8 1/80.

False stone fish – this scorpion fish was sitting in less than 2ft (60cm) of water on the edge of the reef table a stone's throw from the shore. As my flash guns were flat I had to use natural light with manual white balance, but the colours are still bright enough. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 10-17mm fish eye zoom, ISO 200 f11 1/125.



Jetties are popular dive sites for photographers particularly in tropical waters. They attract all sorts of corals, sponges, invertebrates and numerous species of fish. The pilings themselves can produce colourful and graphic compositions with a variety of shapes and intersections. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 10-17mm fish eye zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200 f11 1/80.

either during the dive or in post processing if you record your images in RAW format. You can continue to do this with increasing depth, perhaps to 5m, but beyond that the camera will perform better with a little help from a correction filter like the Magic Filter which is both efficient and easy to use.

Coral reef tables are often dissected by deep gullies, overhangs and caves with collapsed ceilings which all offer opportunities to work with strong sunlight and shafts of light. It is worth exploring these and playing around with exposures to see how the light behaves at different shutter speeds to produce either a flood of light or tight well defined beams. Water movement on the surface can make these shafts of light dance, which is difficult o capture of course, but it means the quality and direction of light is constantly changing. Shooting several image sets from the same position over a period of time can produce very different results. A model or passing diver swimming through the shot at the right moment can make the shot.

If you yearn for images of big subjects but lack the big travel budget for whales, whale sharks or great whites then here are a few suggestions which should not break the bank. If you are UK based then there are a number of opportunities around our coastline to meet up with the basking shark which is big enough to provide a substantial buzz. They are regularly seen in late spring and early summer off the south west peninsula between Land's End and Plymouth before they follow the plankton north on the west coast. The Isle of Man in July and August

Dugong and diver – all mammals must come to the surface to breath and dugongs do this fairly regularly between feeding sessions. They are generally found in shallow water, so it is easy to follow them toward the surface and then capture the image as they return to the seabed to feed. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 10-17mm fish eye zoom, Subtronic Mini flash guns, ISO 200 f11 1/80.

is the next opportunity before they move to the west coast of Scotland around Oban and Mull. The arrival of the sharks is never guaranteed and tracking them down at sea takes some patience and local knowledge, but once you have had your first experience of snorkeling with them you will be hooked.

Another subject to consider in the UK are seals which are found all around the coastline. Not all are approachable but there are colonies in the Farne Islands, Scilly Isles and Lundy Island (and I am sure many more) which are accustomed to and perhaps entertained by visits from divers in shallow water.

If you visit the Red Sea then perhaps plan your trip to include visits to the dugong colonies close to Marsa Alam. These mammals do not offer a guaranteed encounter but have no fear of divers when found grazing on the sea grass in shallow water often in the company of large green turtles. The same area offers the opportunity to visit dolphin reef where there are pods of common and spinner dolphins which are very accustomed to visits from snorkelers and divers. Elphinstone Reef is also close by and has become well known for close encounters with oceanic white tip sharks that cruise boldly just below the surface.

So, underwater photography does not always require diving and when you are using your SCUBA gear don't forget to spend time in just the first few metres of water where the light will be plentiful and there are numerous opportunities to vary your photography and perhaps present a slightly different view of the underwater world.

Mark Webster
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Diving Lord Howe Island

By Tom Davis

Lord Howe is an isolated and unspoilt island about 500 kilometres off the east coast of Australia, roughly two hours flight from Brisbane or Sydney. The island was declared a World Heritage site in 1982, because of its unique flora and fauna and its exceptional natural beauty. As you approach the island, on one of the light planes which fly the route from the mainland, you are greeted by the sight of a wonderful sheltered lagoon surrounded by towering peaks, and you land on a tiny grass runway stretching across virtually the entire width of the island. Lord Howe Island is just 11 kilometres long, 2.5 kilometres wide, and it is surrounded by the clear waters of the Pacific Ocean. The island has many beautiful sandy beaches, the world's southernmost coral reef, and birdlife and walks that attract people to the island from all around the world.

We were on the island to conduct marine life surveys, for the island's Marine Parks Authority, as part of an ongoing program of monitoring the condition of the marine park. The marine park totally surrounds the island out to a distance of 3 nautical miles and large sections of it are designated Sanctuary Zones where all forms of fishing are prohibited and the fish life abounds in these areas. Because the island is distant from the mainland there are no substantial river systems causing runoff, and visibility surrounding the island is typically 20m-30m, and when the East Australia Current sweeps clear blue waters down from the Coral Sea visibility can be up to 50m. The East-Australia current also brings tropical larva with it, and the island is surrounded by coral reefs and the majority of fish species are of tropical origin, even though the island itself lies at a more temperate latitude.

The islands isolation also means that Lord Howe is blessed with a very high number of endemic species both above and below the water. Photographers searching for photos of unusual animals have a range of subjects to choose from including Lord Howe's very own species of Anemone fish –Mcculloch's Anemonefish – Amphiprion mccullochi, the Half-Banded Angelfish - Genicanthus semicinctus, and the Three-Striped Butterflyfish - Chaetodon tricinctus.

The western side of the island shelters a large lagoon fringed by coral reefs, towered over by the twin sentinals of Mt Gower (875m) and Mt Lidgbird (777m). This lagoon provides excellent shallow diving in a

A Galapagos whaler shark cuts through a school of Spotted Sawtails in the lagoon". Olympus C-5060WZ, Olympus PT-020 housing, Natural light, F8.0, 1/125s, ISO 100

Lord Howe Island from Malabar Hill", Olympus C-5060WZ, Olympus PT-020 housing, F4.0, 1/1000s, ISO 80

number of holes in the reef, and in the passages from the lagoon to the waters outside. Comets hole and Erscotts hole in the lagoon were two of the best sites we explored, with a very high diversity of fish species and a bewildering mixture of tropical corals, interspersed with temperate algae, and fields of seagrass.

The sites in the lagoon were also the best places to get photos of Galapagos Whaler sharks, which are very inquisitive. If you behaved calmly these sharks would sometimes approach within arm's reach, after circling a few times, providing the opportunity to get beautiful shots of these handsome sharks with clear shallow water as a backdrop. Or you could observe the shark's interaction with other fish, seeing them hunting, herding fish, or being cleaned by the cleaner wrasse which are abundant in the lagoon. Also present in the lagoon were large schools of the endemic Three-Striped Butterflyfish. Seeing schools of these striking yellow-finned fish, with three vertical black bands, is perhaps one of the most memorable sights when diving Lord Howe. Usually butterflyfish are encountered in pairs or small groups, but this species seems to gather in groups of 50 to 100 fish, making striking photographic subjects, although it can be frustrating trying to get all the fish facing the same way.

Divers return to the diveboat at Malabar". Olympus C-5060WZ, Olympus PT-020 housing, Natural light, F3.5, 1/125s, ISO 100

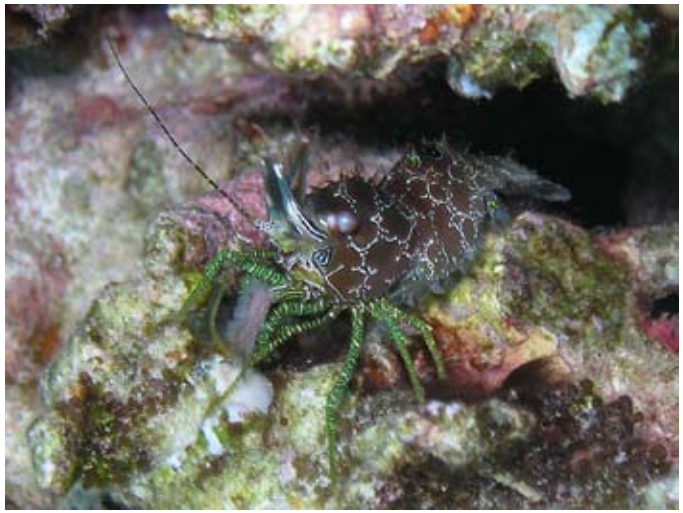
Lionfish hunting above the reef at Malabar Divesite", Olympus C-5060WZ, Olympus PT-020 housing, Internal flash, F4.0, 1/90s, ISO 80

Diving outside the lagoon provides a wilder and more rugged experience with steep walls, caves, exposed reefs, and many small islands. Perhaps the most wild and rugged site of all is Ball's Pyramid. This towering volcanic stack is situated 20km southeast of Lord Howe and rises as a sheer spire from the ocean bed to a height of 562m. To get to Ball's Pyramid requires crossing a totally exposed stretch of the Pacific Ocean, which means that it can only be reached when calm weather is guaranteed. However if the opportunity presents itself this site should not be missed. Divers who are first into the water will be met by large numbers of Galapagos Whaler sharks circling curiously under the boat. However these sharks tend to descend out of sight as other divers enter the water, so it pays to get in early. This is a really good dive for seeing pelagic fish, we were buzzed by large Black Trevally, big Kingfish, Amberjacks, and of course more Galapagos Whalers. But perhaps the most amazing thing was huge schools of iridescent Blue Mao-Mao which are a New Zealand species which has strayed to the wrong side of the Tasman Sea to get to Lord Howe. This is also the site where the rare Ballina Angelfish can be found on the deep walls surrounding the pyramid.

In the opposite direction from Ball's Pyramid, at the northern end of the island, lies Malabar and the Admiralty Islands which also provide outstanding diving. The Admiralty Island's was where we encountered the legendary "Blue Current" which I have heard older divers describe on the New South Wales coast, but which I had never encountered before. From the surface the water was an incredible Cobalt-blue colour, making a striking contrast against the rugged cliffs above. On entering the water the visibility was incredible, over 50m! Now I know that claims about exceptional visibility are often made in diving articles, but the visibility here was so striking that we made the effort to confirm it by checking it along the 50m transect tapes we were laying out for our marine life surveys. Once the tapes were laid we could see the whole 50m tape stretching out behind us, and you could make out the small figures of other divers at the far end, and see their bubbles rising to the surface above.

The Admiralty Islands had a stark and rugged beauty above the water and this was reflected in the underwater scenery. Sheer walls dropped down from the face of the islands to a bottom cut by deep groves and crevices. Large schools of grey drummer circled above, with every now and then a bright yellow drummer putting in an appearance like a huge goldfish. A Hawksbill turtle cruised past and schools of One-Spot Pullers and Damsels hugged the steep rock walls as protection against passing Kingfish and Trevally.

The Malabar divesite is nearby, situated at the northernmost tip of Lord Howe, it lies under the vertical cliff of Malabar hill which towers 200m above. The cliff extends below the water down to a steeply sloping rocky bottom at a depth of



A spectacular shrimp hides amongst the coral rubble at Erscotts hole". Olympus C-5060WZ, Olympus PT-020 housing, Internal flash, F4.8, 1/90s, ISO 80

A Mozaic Moray Eel twists itself into a knot at Balls Pyramid", Olympus C-5060WZ, Olympus PT-020 housing, Internal flash, F4.0, 1/90s, ISO 80

20m. Here the bottom is carved by deep gulleys which harbour a range of tropical species including lionfish, butterflyfish, and various wrasse species. Mcculloch's Anemonefish could be seen hovering above spectacular bulb-tentacle anemones, which also played host to Three-spot Dascyllus and commensal shrimp.

On the eastern side of the island Ned's beach is a sheltered swimming spot for tourists and has some lovely snorkelling over sheltered coral reefs. This is also where tourists come and feed the fish, and on entering the water you are met by schools of big Kingfish, Australian Salmon, trevally, and drummer. The shallow reefs harbour plenty of the islands iconic species including anemones with resident anemone fish, Double-Header Wrasse, and the ever present Three-Striped butterflyfish. Further offshore the coral reefs continue, becoming deeper and more jagged. These reefs harbour large schools of drummer plus a range of tropical species, and a varied range of invertebrate life, such as nudibranchs, starfish, featherstars, and urchins can be found sheltering in the reef crevices and under overhangs.

Apart from incredible and varied diving, Lord Howe also offers a range of land based activities. The island has a network of spectacular walking tracks, and the guided walk to the top of Mt Gower is counted as one of the top 10 walks in Australia. The walk to the top of Malabar hill is also spectacular providing panoramic view of the entire island and out to the Admiralty islands beyond. There is good swimming, snorkelling and kayaking all around the island and bird watchers come from all around the world to observe the spectacular seabirds and land based bird species that call the island home.

A range of accommodation is available on the

Juvenile Half-Banded Angelfish photographed freediving in Mermaid rockpools". Olympus C-5060WZ, Olympus PT-020 housing, Internal flash, F4.0, 1/90s, ISO 80

island. Only 400 visitors are allowed to visit the island at any one time, and there are only about 400 permanent residents on the island, so things never get crowded of busy.

Flights to Lord Howe Island leave from Sydney and Brisbane with the carrier Qantaslink. There are severe restrictions on luggage, with a limit of 14kg on checked in baggage, and 4kg of hand baggage. These luggage restrictions are a major hassle for visiting divers and photographers, and usually some compromise is required as to what diving and photographic equipment can be taken to the island. Fortunately the island has two well equipped dive operations, where dive gear can be hired if it can't be carried on the flight. Pro-Dive Lord Howe, and Howea Divers, both provide an excellent service with gear hire, and have well set up dive boats, which will take groups of divers to the many excellent dive sites around the island.

Tom Davis

Tom Davis has been diving and taking photos underwater since 2001 and currently uses an Olympus C-5060WZ, and a Nikon D200 for taking underwater photos. He lives in Shoal Bay, Australia, where he spends much of his leisure time diving in Port Stephens, and conducting marine life surveys for the Reef Life Survey foundation.

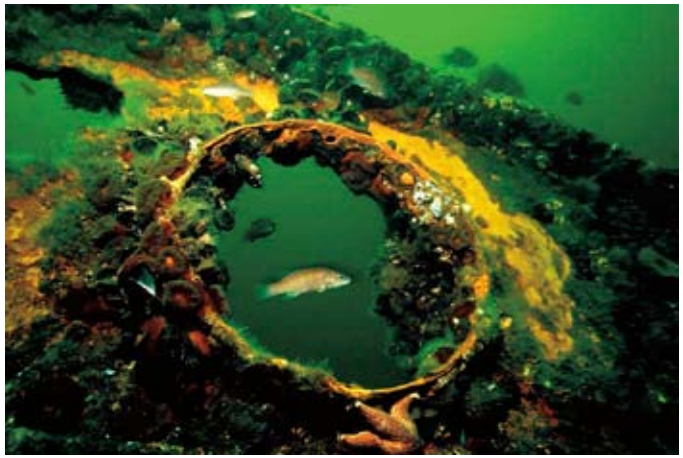
http://divingnelsonbay.weebly.com/

Exploring Aquatic New Jersey

By Herb Segars

It was one of those magical moments – unexpected and short lived. I was lying face-to-face with a goosefish (monkish), Lophius americanus and felt grateful the anglerfish tolerated my presence. In the blink of an eye, the goosefish lurched forward and settled down with its prey – a startled black sea bass, Centropristis striata. This happened in the days before digital, and I had about a dozen frames of unexposed film. As I focused and pulled the trigger, the goosefish devoured the black sea bass. With a full belly pushing the remainder of its body off the bottom, I prepared to shoot my last frame. As I squeezed the trigger, the goosefish belched; spewing fish scales into the water column. I started laughing so hard that I almost lost my regulator. The entire encounter lasted less than three minutes. The wait for processed film took the better part of a week and I prayed that all my settings were correct, as there wouldn't be a redo.

Underwater photography is just one of the many aspects of New Jersey diving and until the digital revolution, one with the least number of participants. Digital has created a rebirth in underwater photography in New Jersey as it has everywhere. Instant image feedback, high ISO with low noise and no 36-shot per dive restrictions are just a few of the things that feed this growth. It is wonderful to see photographers accomplishing underwater tasks that were unheard of in the film



The opening left by a porthole on the wreckage on the shipwreck of the Mohawk, a 387' long x 54' wide Clyde-Mallory Lines passenger liner (sailing under the Ward Lines) that sunk off the coast of New Jersey, USA, on January 25, 1935 after colliding with the Norwegian freighter Talisman. There were 45 casualties. Canon F-1, Aquatica housing, Ikelite 225 strobe, Canon 20mm lens, f8 @ 1/8 second, ISO 100

The Smoke II was a part of the Fire Department of New York for 50 years. The Smoke II was built in New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1958. It was 52 feet in length, pumped 2,000 gallons per minute and was equipped with two monitors (water nozzles). The Smoke II was sunk on August 8, 2008 on the Sea Girt Artificial Reef off New Jersey and is dedicated as a memorial to Ed Bogaert, a retired policeman and charter dive boat Captain. The site will be called the Ed Bogaert Memorial Reef. Nikon D200, Subal housing, (2) Ikelite 125 strobes, Nikon 12-24mm lens @ 12mm, f8 @ 1/4 second, ISO 200

years.

The bottom terrain of the coast of New Jersey is flat and sandy – very much like a desert. Yet we have a cornucopia of marine life that satisfies the needs of scuba divers and fishermen. Our success is due to the thousands of shipwrecks, artificial reefs and rock piles that create oases which provide structures for marine growth and habitats for marine fish and invertebrates.

Artifact hunting is one of the more popular aspects of New Jersey diving. Winter storms change the bottom terrain and reveal lost artifacts. Divers use scooters, dredges and their gloved hands to find their own part of history. It isn't necessary to dive deep as some inshore wrecks have been giving up their treasures for years. One is the shipwreck, Delaware, a Clyde Lines steamer, which sank on July 9, 1898. It caught fire and burned to the waterline. The next day, while being towed north along the coast, it sank just off Bay Head, New Jersey. The Delaware is one of the most popular artifact wrecks in New Jersey. In 1989, 91 years after its demise, the ship's bell was found by Pennsylvania diver Bill Davis. Then on October 23, 2010, 102 years after sinking, Harry Maisch IV found the ship's fog bell. The Delaware continues

to give - on May 6, 2012, divers from the Gypsy Blood dive boat brought up brass spikes and brass oil lamp parts.

The Mohawk is another one of those sites that keeps on giving. It was a 387-foot long Clyde-Mallory Lines passenger liner that sank on January 25, 1935 after colliding with the Norwegian freighter Talisman with a loss of 45 lives. In 1996, divers from the Sea Lion collected 1,000 plates that were uncovered by storms during the winter months. Again in 2004, the Mohawk gave up many more plates to the divers from the Diversion 2. The Mohawk was dynamited and wire-dragged to ensure it was not a hindrance to surface vessels. It hardly resembles a ship anymore and it is very easy to get lost in the maze of twisted deck plates and bulk heads. All these nooks and crannies are perfect homes for a favorite of New Jersey divers, the North American lobster, Homarus americanus.

Most of the shipwrecks, artificial reefs and rock piles along the coast provide suitable abodes for lobsters. How well they provide for divers depends on how frequently they are dived. Commercial dive boat captains sneak out to their "secret spots" to allow their customers the best chances of bringing home dinner. New Jersey underwater scuba hunters also bring home black sea bass, tautog (blackfish), Tautoga onitis, red hake, Urophycis chuss, summer flounder (fluke), Paralichthys dentatus, winter flounder, Pseudopleuronectes americanus and goosefish (monkfish).

For those who want food and don't have the agility to catch lobsters or the tolerance to spear fish, there are blue mussels and deep-sea scallops. Blue mussels, Mytilus edulis, are the easiest to harvest. The only chore involved is finding a location that has them. Divers choose where their mussels come from and most choose a spot high up on a shipwreck or artificial reef. These provide sand-free mollusks. They are placed in mesh bags and taken to the surface with a lift bag. There they are pulled apart and dragged behind the boat in mesh bags. The mussels tumble in the boat's wake, cleaning the exterior of the shell.

Deep-sea scallops, Placopecten magellanicus usually require a deeper dive, and many of the commercial dive boats will take clients to the deeper offshore shipwrecks. Sometimes it is necessary to move away from the wreck to find scallops in the sand. Divers use a line reel tied off near the anchor to guide them back home. I tried this with a camera and although it gave an opportunity to photograph the mollusks, the return trip of winding

A goosefish, Lophius americanus, also known as a monkfish, headfish, and allmouth eats a black sea bass, Centropristis striata, on the Keel Wreck off the coast of New Jersey, USA. Canon F-1, Aquatica housing, Ikelite 225 strobe, Canon 50mm lens, f11-16 @ 1/60 second, ISO 100

(Top) Lion's mane jellyfish, Cyanea capillata, photographed in the water off New Jersey, USA. Nikon D100, Nexus housing, (2) Ikelite 125 strobes, Sigma 28-80 lens @ 80mm, f10 @ 1/125 second, ISO 200

(Above) An Atlantic Corolla, Carolla calceola, a marine snail, in the water column in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of New Jersey, USA. Nikonos V, (2) Ikelite 50 strobes, 28mm lens with 1.28 extension tube, f16 @1/90 second, ISO 50

line, photographing and swimming left me a tangled mess.

New Jersey has a large variety of marine species for divers that photograph or sightsee. My favorite location is about 15 feet down the anchor line. I often spend an hour or more photographing the parade of jellyfish and plankters as they float past. Lion's mane jellyfish, Cyanea capillata, are particularly beautiful but they are stingers and having the tentacles of the jelly brush your face proves the point. Often, tiny butterfish, Peprilus triacanthus, seek shelter in the jellyfish's tentacles. Schools of banded rudderfish, Seriola zonata, move from jelly to jelly hoping to catch a butterfish away from its shelter. Leidy's comb jellies, Mnemiopsis leidyi, and ovate comb jellies, Beroe ovata beat the cilia that run along their body to move through the water column while many-ribbed hydromedusae, Aequorea aequorea, hunt comb jellies. If you are lucky, a tiny lined seahorse, Hippocampus erectus may come galloping by or you might see the otherworldly looking marine snail, Atlantic corolla, Carolla calceola. Moving a little deeper in the water column brings you to the realm of the naked sea butterfly, Clione limacina – merely one-half inch long, where it flaps its wings to sail along.

Once on the bottom, there are many diverse types of dive sites to visit. New Jersey has 15 artificial reef sites that encompass 25 square miles. Individual reefs are made from tugboats, barges, fire boats, M-60 Army tanks, subway cars, reef balls, attack transport vessels, armored personnel carriers and a former Navy destroyer. Artificial reefs are great dive sites for new divers because they are recognizable and easy to navigate. My personal favorite is the Veronica M, a 110-foot-long tugboat, sunk on the Axel Carlson Artificial Reef off Mantoloking, New Jersey. The Veronica M is named after my wife, Veronica. It was a gift for her 50th birthday. Of all the things in the world that a person could want, my wife wanted a tugboat sunk and named after her. There are plenty of reef sites that have been dedicated to individuals. The Smoke II was a New York City fireboat that was used to pump water on the twin towers after the attack on September 11, 2001. It was sunk on the Sea Girt Artificial Reef site off Sea Girt, New Jersey and dedicated to the memory of Ed Bogaert, a former police officer and charter dive boat captain. New Jersey's largest artificial reef is the USS Radford, a 583-foot former Navy destroyer that was sunk on the Del-Jersey-Land Reef on August 10, 2010 between the states of New Jersey and Delaware. The site is 28 miles northeast of Ocean City Inlet and about equidistant from Indian River Inlet and Cape May. Nearly three weeks after her sinking, Hurricane Irene tore the ship into two pieces and moved the larger section more than 200 feet. Prior to the USS Radford, the USS Algol (AKA-54) was our largest artificial reef at 459-feet. It was an Andromeda class attack transport that was sunk in 130 feet of water on the Shark River Artificial Reef, about 20 miles offshore of Shark River Inlet. The Shark River Reef is also the home of the Coney Island, a former sludge tanker, and the former Navy tankers, Sam Berman, Alan Martin, and Captain Bart. Nearby is the shipwreck Stolt Dagali, a 583-foot tanker that was cut in half in a collision with the Israeli passenger liner, Shalom, on Thanksgiving 1964. This offshore area is very popular with dive boats from New Jersey and New York. Its distance offshore often brings good visibility.

The average visibility in New Jersey is about

A North American lobster, Homarus americanus, photographed on the Emerald Wreck off New Jersey, USA. Nikon D100, Nexus housing, (2) Ikelite 125 strobes, Sigma 28-80 lens @ 46mm, f11 @ 1/160 second, ISO 200

The Coney Island, a 250' long x 40' wide sludge tanker, sunk on the Shark River Artificial Reef in approximately 125' of water off New Jersey. Nikon D100, Nexus housing, (2) Ikelite 125 strobes, Nikon 12-24mm lens @ 12mm, f7.1 @ 1/15 second, ISO 200

A winter flounder, Pleuronectes americanus, photographed on the Keel Wreck, approx. 7.5 miles out of Manasquan Inlet, New Jersey in 83' of water. Nikon D100, Nexus housing, (2) Ikelite 125 strobes, Sigma 28-80 lens @ 80mm, f22 @ 1/60 second, ISO 100

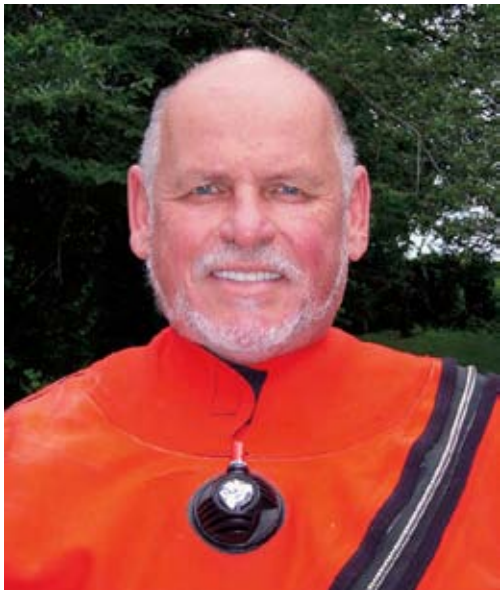
A many-ribbed hydromedusa, Aequorea aequorea, eats an ovate comb jelly, Beroe ovata in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of New Jersey, USA. Nikon D200, Subal housing, (2) Ikelite 125 strobes, Sigma 28-80 lens @ 48mm, f11 @ 1/125 second, ISO 100

15-20 feet but I have experienced days when visibility was in excess of 50 feet. On days when there is a bottom surge, I like to visit sites that come up higher in the water column. A favorite is the Lana Carol, a 71-foot scallop dredge that sunk on October 31, 1976 in a nasty Halloween storm. It lies in 90-feet of water about 8 miles off Lavallette, New Jersey. The ship is covered with blue mussels, and frilled and lined anemones. Another favorite which is also an excellent site for blue mussels is the Dykes (Steel Schooner), a 308-foot schooner barge that was sunk on the Sea Girt Artificial Reef in July 1983. The bow section sticks high off the bottom, and visibility is often better when bottom conditions are less-than-ideal.

One of our oddest dive sites is off Long Branch, New Jersey. Two very old steam locomotives lie on the bottom, upright and 15 feet apart. They are believed to have been manufactured in the 1850s, and it is not known how they got there. I found them to be one of the most beautiful sites I have dived in New Jersey. They are covered with frilled anemones and black sea bass swim in and around the pre-Civil War engines. These locomotives have been arrested in Federal Court by two amateur railroad and diving enthusiast groups. The arrest means there can be no tampering or poaching of the engines. It also means that dive boats cannot grapple into the site, a standard method of dive boat anchoring. The site is now a buoy dive.

With over 2,000 shipwrecks, 15 artificial reef sites, inlets and numerous rock piles, New Jersey has something to offer all scuba divers. To get additional information about scuba diving clubs, charter dive boats and scuba diving shops, visit the New Jersey Council of Diving Clubs web site.

Herb Segars



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The secrets of boring seagrass

By David Barrio

Underwater photographers are creatures of habit, when we go to our local divesites we usually do the same routes, take the same kind of pictures of the same subjects and even use the same lenses, missing some areas full of wonders to observe and photograph. I realized all that when Enrique Souto, an UWP friend of mine, started to explore an otherwise ignored seagrass field area at El Cabrón, one of the most dived local sites in Gran Canaria. With shoals of fish, gorgonians and many caves and arcs we never found the time to go and spend a whole dive at the seagrass fields until Enrique talked me about it and Luisa and I started to go and look for the green prairie inhabitants...

Seagrass fields are formed by two main species: Cymodocea Nodosa (which in fact is a plant) and Caulerpa Prolifera (a green algae). Some areas show only one of them and other areas are a mix of both. Ecologically speaking, these fields are very important in many ways, they serve as a craddle for many juvenile fish and organisms, fix the soil and, according to a new research released in the journal Nature Geoscience, seagrasses are a vital part of the solution to climate change and, per unit area, seagrass meadows can store up to twice as much carbon as the world's temperate and tropical forests. Unfortunately, the Canary Islands Government, in order to allow the construction of marine infraestructures, recently canceled Cymodocea´s (and many other species) protected status in a very controversial decision even though seagrasses are among the world's most threatened ecosystems. Some 29 percent of all historic seagrass meadows have been destroyed, mainly due to dredging and degradation of water quality. At least 1.5 percent of Earth's seagrass meadows are lost every year.

It did not take us long to start finding different and amazing critters although one has to be patient because searching leaf after leaf can be tedious, specially in Cymodocea areas, as its leaves are longer, thinner and the field thicker, although not as thick as the poseidonian fields of the Mediterranean sea. It is good to choose a day with not much swell, as the movement of the field makes finding subjects more difficult to even at 18 meters, the depth at which we will be diving (there are other areas at 12 meters nearby and even at tidal

General view of a Cymodocea Nodosa typical field. F11, 1/60 sec, ISO 200. Nikon D300, Tokina 10-17mm at 10mm, Hugyfot housing, 2xSubtronic Nova strobes.

An undetermined snail is another favoured critter specially when looking at the camera. F 38, 1/250 sec, ISO 200. Nikon D7000, Nikon 105mmVR with Kenko 1.4x TC, Hugyfot housing with Sagadive cone flat port. 2xSea&Sea YS250pro strobes.

areas in other islands) with a visibility that always exceed 10-15 meters and is usually 20 meters.

Most of the animals found are fairly small so macro is the most productive setup but the problem is that "small" is very different to "very small"! so we have to choose what kind of subjects we are going to look for as, for example, a skeleton shrimp is much smaller than a seahorse, being both regular seagrass inhabitants. We have tried different lens combinations ranging from a 60mm coupled with an Inon Micro Semi-Fisheye Relay Lens UFL-MR130 to 60mm with kenko 2x teleconverter and Subsee 10 diopter lens, always in nikon DX cameras, with many variations in between (I favour the 105VR with/without kenko 1.4x teleconverter and Subsee +10). Using longer lenses or their equivalents bring the first photography problem of this environment which is having a lot of leaves in between the port and the subject so, whenever possible, I try to reduce this distance by using the diopter lens that I flip on-flip off very fast with a 67mm mechanism made by Sagadive. Evidently, the shortest distance of work is acquired with the Inon microfisheye lens, it is also a lens that would be perfect for these

Razorfish (Xyrichtys Novacula) sometimes bury themselves when danger is around. At first I almost instantly deleted this picture because of the bothering leaves but, when I saw it at home, I liked the suspecting glance and how the picture shows the bushy environment. F 16, 1/180 secs, ISO 200. Nikon D7000, Nikon 105mmVR with Kenko 1.4x TC, Hugyfot housing with Sagadive cone flat port. 2xSea&Sea YS250pro strobes.

critters (small and with a tendency to stay immobile by trusting their camouflage), but it just does not deliver good quality, it is what I call a tease lens because its pictures look great in the camera´s screen but not on the computer (it is very good for video though); I wish Inon would come up with an improved version of this fun lens.

Being always close to the ground is when a 45 degree viewfinder really proves its value (even though they are expensive!) and framing and focusing are much more comfortable with this gadget. In the lighting department, I prefer to use two strobes because I noticed that the ever present leaves sometimes caused undesired shadows that

A rare white variant of the green shrimp (Hippolyte Inermis) lives within the brown leaves or small unattached branches of cystoseira sp algae that drift around the seagrass field. F 32, 1/250 sec, ISO 200. Nikon D7000, Nikon 105mmVR with Kenko 1.4x TC, Hugyfot housing with Sagadive cone flat port. 2xSea&Sea YS250pro strobes.

disappear with two sources of light, even though it can be bothersome with the couple of Sea&Sea YS250pros that I carry. Most of my friends just use one big Subtronic-type strobe, I guess it is a matter of personal preference. I also own two YS110alphas that I would recommend being lighter and smaller, and delivering enough light for this kind of pictures and with dSTTL available, but both 110s have fallen pray to Luisa and her canon S95 kit... When I dive with the Inon microfisheye lens I use it with a Glowdive optical fiber ringflash that I modified to make it reversible (so I get two different optical fiber placements). Snooting is also very convenient as it helps isolating the subject, in this case I use a

Tube worms and guinean pufferfish are easy to see and I used them to take my first pictures with Luisa´s Canon S95 and WA lens. F 8, 1/60 sec, ISO 100. Canon S95, Fix housing, UWL-04 wet lens, 2xSea&Sea YS110alpha strobes.

A green turtle (Chelonia Mydas) feeds on the seagrass unbothered by the underwater photographers. F13, 1/45 sec, ISO 200. Nikon D300, Tokina 10-17mm at 10mm, Hugyfot housing, 2xSubtronic Nova strobes.

couple of black painted orange Fanta 2l bottle plastic cones (sorry, I had to save for the viewfinder!), with different diameter home-made end attachments. There are also some wide angle opportunities, for which I have only used for a couple of shots Luisa´s Fix S95 and Fix UWL-04 wide angle wet lens (with the previously mentioned Sea &Sea YS110alpha strobes...) whenever she let me borrow it underwater (use of force and/or tank valve closing was necessary...), but I have to say it is a pleasure to dump my heavy macro rig and just shoot away with such a small and light setup. I have not had the opportunity to fully explore its potential yet, but I think it can deliver great quality images and it could surprise many diehard DSLR users; I really look forward to use it more and find its best menu settings etc...

Now that we have our UWP gear ready is time to head for the water. The El Cabrón divesite is located in east coast of the island in a deserted and protected piece of land at about the same distance (30-40 minutes driving) from Las Palmas, the capital city in the north, and the tourist oriented areas in the south (Playa del Inglés, Maspalomas...). It is a land accessed divesite (no one uses a boat to dive there) where every divecenter goes and, even though it has no staircase etc... it is usually very easy to walk in and out. Once we are in the water we would usually choose going to the left (north) to find the gorgonian fields and the gerardia macaronesica or going to the right (south) to the bastard grunt (Pomadasys Incisus) and axillary bream shoals (Pagellus Acarne), the caves and the arcs... Instead, we go straight out (east) cruising over rubble, then sand and, finally, the seagrass fields at 18-20 meters. It is good to go with as many friends as possible to increase the chances of seeing more things such as shrimps like the green shrimp (Hippolyte Inermis) and its rarer white variant, snails like the emerald neritid snail (Smaragdia viridis), nudibranchs like the Eubranchus Farrani, different kinds of polyps and anemones, various species of cephalopods of which the rarest is the elusive local bobtail squid (Sepiola Atlantica) or

some of the perfectly adapted fish like the broad-nosed pipefish (Syngathus Typhle) which mimics the Cymodocea leaves and their movement, the green clingfish (Opeatogenys Cadenati) that for the photographer is always "on the backside of the leaf...", or the short-snouted seahorse (Hippocampus Hippocampus)... Everyone who likes looking for critters will enjoy the search and know the feeling of finding one of these jewels after a long search...

David Barrio
www.davidbarrio.com

Dive the World

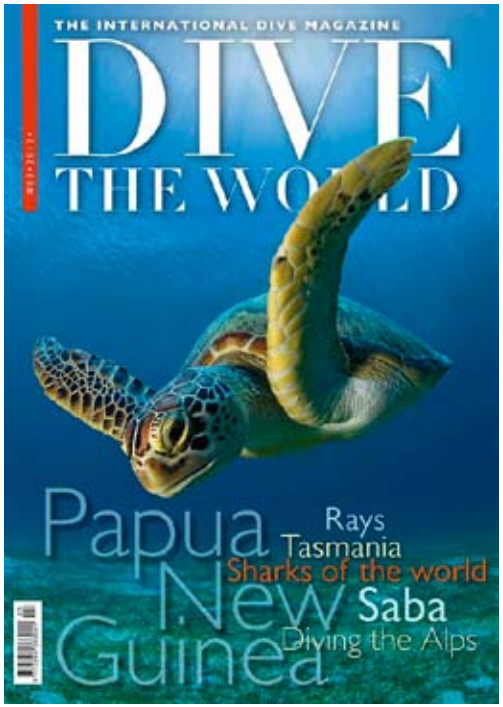
The inspiration behind a new dive magazine

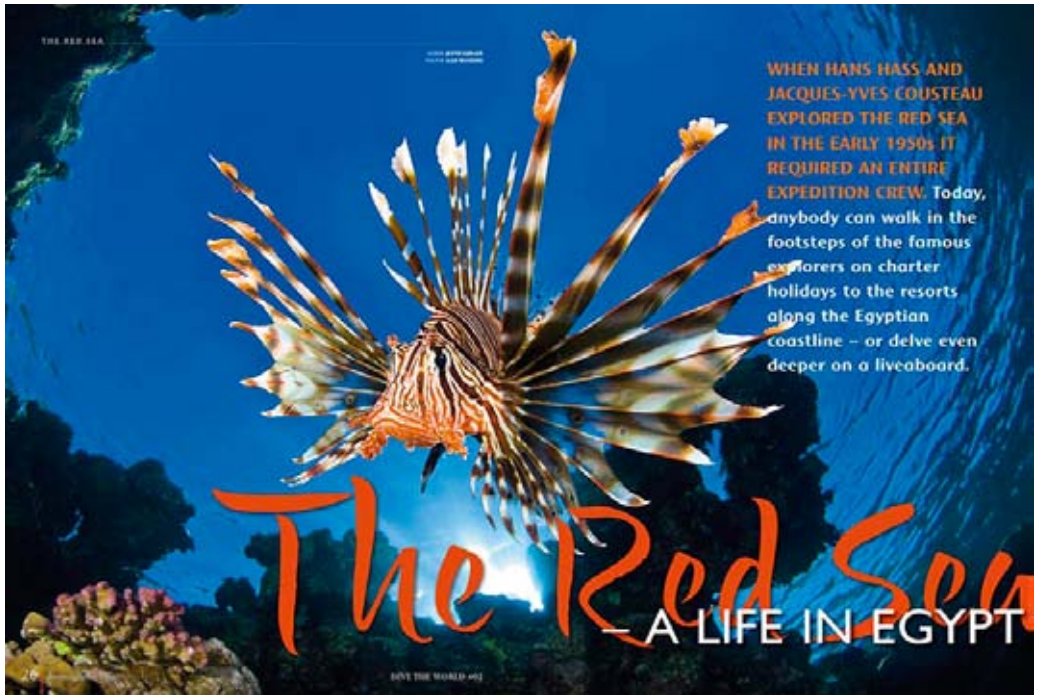
By Jesper Kjøller, Editor in Chief

Since 2000, I've had the pleasure of being the editor of DYK, the Scandinavian Dive Magazine, published seven times per year in both Danish and Swedish. For the most part, DYK has been a regionally focused dive magazine with readership in Norway and Finland, too. With our readers in mind, we've always aimed to support the local diving business by writing about diving in Denmark, Sweden and the rest of the Nordic countries. But with artistic aspirations as big as ours are at DYK, it's been quite a challenge to portray Danish diving in an attractive way. Our goal has always been to create a visually pleasing and striking magazine so over the years we've frustrated many Scandinavian underwater photographers with high hopes of getting published because we've had to turn them down. The cold green waters, low visibility and rough diving conditions of Scandinavia make it really hard to consistently produce publishable images at the quality level we're looking for. Luckily, DYK also highlights tropical destinations, and we've always strived to strike the balance between covering local and tropical destinations, green and blue water and wrecks and reefs.

When showing our Danish and Swedish magazines to people outside Scandinavia over the years at dive shows and on dive trips, we've been rewarded with some very encouraging reactions. Quite often, that reaction has been: I can't read it, but it looks very nice! Why don't you publish the magazine in English?

Our response was always that it would not make much sense to publish a Scandinavian dive magazine in English. After all, our raison d'être with DYK was – and still is – to create a magazine for Scandinavians. And really, who other than Danish wreck divers wants to read about wreck diving in Denmark? Well, perhaps a few keen divers. But our feeling was that an English version of DYK would not fly as a business model.





DYK cover - Magnus Lundgren
DTW cover - Gerald Nowak
DTW spread - Alex Mustard

Several spreads in the magazine include a full-bleed photo that occupies the entire page. For this reason, many articles and images that are perfectly suitable for other magazines will not work in DIVE THE WORLD. Image by Alex Mustard.

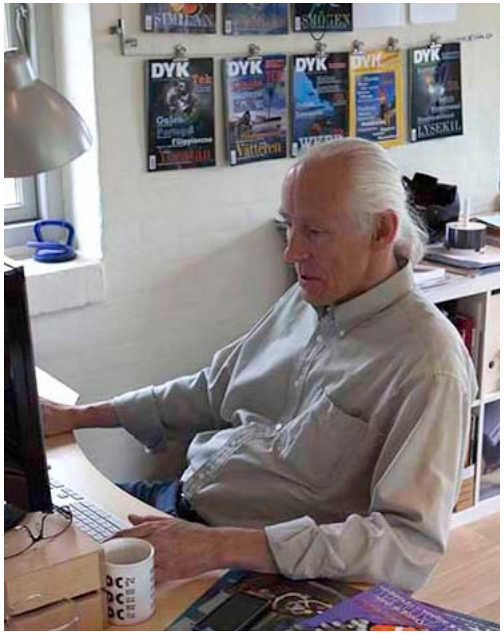
The DIVE THE WORLD team in the office in Farum north of Copenhagen, Denmark. From left to right: Jesper Kjøller (editor in Chief), Charly Nielsen (art director), Christel Bengtsson-Skårup (production manager) and Martin Baadsgaard, (advertising manager). (Below) Art director Charly Nielsen has a background as a studio photographer His influence of the look and feel of DYK and DIVE THE WORLD can't be overstated.

Back to basics

Despite not seeing a future for DYK in English, we were bold enough to feel we had something to offer the greater diving world. We felt that our Scandinavian approach to magazine design and our editorial quest for excellent images could be transformed into something with global appeal. At its core, Scandinavian design is very simple, spacious and light. Whether in furniture, architecture or industrial design, there's a distinct Scandinavian tradition – and it's a style and feeling that can also be seen in the way in which Scandinavian magazines are laid out. We decided that Scandinavian tradition is an excellent fit for a diving publication. After all, diving is a visual activity. And a dive magazine, first and foremost, should convey the feeling of being in the underwater world without too much clutter or distraction.

Many of the traditional magazines have their roots in newspaper publishing – a Fleet Street tradition, if you will. It's a heritage that ensures strong writing with journalistic integrity, but often neglects the images. And while that strategy may work for some magazines, we feel that our clean and pure style is far more suitable to the portrayal of underwater images.

We wanted to do something new, so we asked ourselves: What was it that attracted us to diving in the first

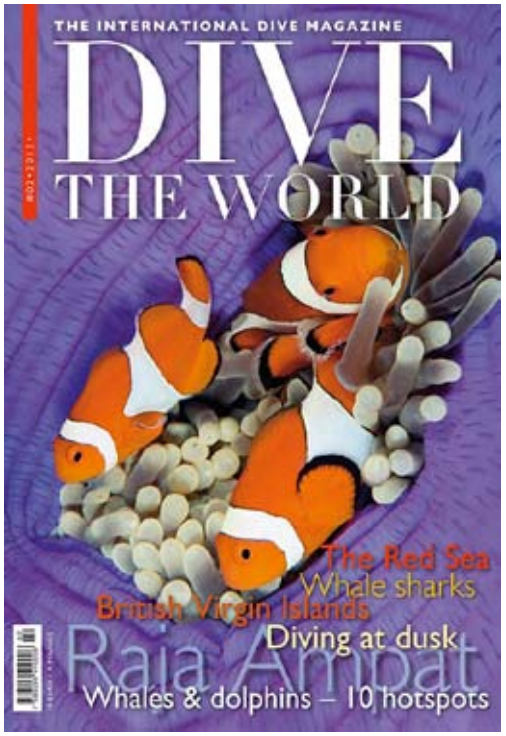


place? What if we started all over? What if we concentrated on working with the best photographers in the world and allowed them to tell great stories? What if we forget everything about local diving, equipment tests and technical stuff and just focused on one thing: the beauty of the underwater realm?

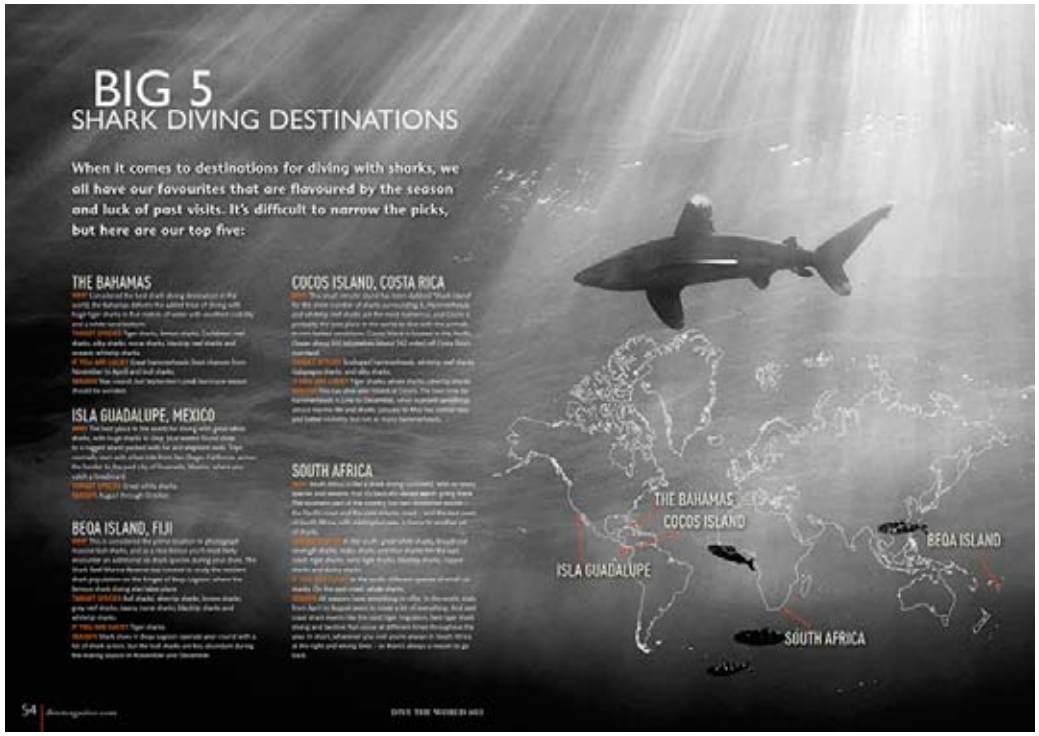
Then we took things a step further. What is it that a really good dive magazine can accomplish? It goes without saying that the magazine must be entertaining, surprising and enlightening. But ideally, the reader should be able to sit in an armchair or airplane seat and very nearly feel as if they are on a dive. If you can't go an actual dive, we decided, reading about it should be the next best thing. And it was with that inspiration that DIVE THE WORLD was born.

Why a printed magazine in a digital area?

A typical article in a typical dive magazine usually has a word count in the neighbourhood of 2,000 to 2,500 words spread over four to six pages, with some (and more likely, many) advertisements in between. A typical story might contain 10 or 15 images. In DIVE THE WORLD, the word and image count of articles is roughly the same. The difference is that we're spreading the material over four times as many pages. And we never put ads



We concentrate on making beautiful covers that look as good on the newsstand as on your coffee table. Image by Franco Banfi.



We have far more material than we can publish. But we encourage photographers with material and ideas in keeping with our agenda to contact us with suggestions. Image by Magnus Lundgren.

within the articles. Our ideology is simple: If the image is fantastic, let's give it the space it deserves. And if it is not fantastic, it doesn't belong in DIVE THE WORLD.

We're often asked why we bother producing a printed magazine. Why not just make a digital publication or a tablet-based magazine? Why produce something as old fashioned and atom based as a printed magazine – and a thick and heavy one, at that?

We are as hip to the latest gadgets as anyone. We love our iPads and we read many magazines and newspapers online. But while computers and tablets are great for news and searching for quick information, nothing beats the visual experience you get from good print. Diving is a cinematic activity – it needs a broad format, large pages and glossy print to let the images shine.

And while we are currently evaluating which platform to use for a digital edition of DIVE THE WORLD, we consider it a logical supplement – not a substitution – for the beauty of print.

A luxury problem

Before the advent of digital cameras it was a major accomplishment just to exit the water with a reasonably sharp and well-exposed photo. Today, digital technology puts cheap and user-friendly cameras in the hands of

almost every diver. Even beginners can get remarkably good results on their first dives. That's all well and good, but the result is that the bar is now set much higher than it once was. After all, who wants to pay for a dive magazine just to see images that hardly exceed the quality of the snapshots they took on their last dive trip?

It goes without saying that the images need to be striking when they take up as much space as they do in our magazine. We can't design our way out of lesser images. Several spreads in the magazine include a single full-bleed photo that occupies the entire page. For this reason, many articles and images that are perfectly suitable for other magazines will not work in DIVE THE WORLD.

When we began this project, I feared that we wouldn't be able to maintain the quality with close to 150 pages published four times a year. After the first couple of issues hit the newsstands, however, many photographers interested in contributing – well-known talents and talented newcomers among them – approached us. That's obviously very encouraging for us, but it leaves us with a luxury problem. There's only enough space for five or six articles per issue, and we obviously need to include a range of destinations and themes. We have far more material than we can publish. But we encourage photographers with material and ideas in keeping with our agenda to contact us with suggestions.

Our first two issues focused on tropical destinations. But as our title suggests, we aim to show the beauty of the underwater world wherever it exists, and that means in colder water and more unusual destinations, too. Our third issue features articles on diving in the Alps and Tasmania and future issues will take readers to cold-water destinations like Norway and Iceland.

Cover shots

As evidenced by the shelves at your local newsstand, a magazine cover is both a science and an art form. Most magazines – whether with a gadget, lifestyle or sports slant – feature a celebrity or a girl in a bikini on the cover (or, preferably, a celebrity in a bikini). It's difficult to sell dive magazines in that environment. Dive magazines generally don't have the possibility (or budget) to put movie stars on their covers. Instead of Jennifer Aniston, we have an image of a fish…

As a result, dive magazines in competitive markets need to advertise their content as loudly as possible to entice potential readers to pick up their magazine instead of the competitor's version. With DIVE THE WORLD, we have the luxury of removing ourselves from that battle and can instead concentrate on making beautiful covers that look as good on the newsstand as on your coffee table. We're always looking for potential cover candidates, and now that we've published three issues it should be fairly obvious what we have in mind. Clean striking images with plenty of space around the subject are the standard. If you have shots that you think would work – macro or wide angle, with or without divers – feel free to submit them.

Mission accomplished

One of the really satisfying things about working on this project has been the way the first few issues were received. Watching people thumb through the magazine the first time they have it in their hands and seeing that immediate emotional response has been a wonderful sensation.

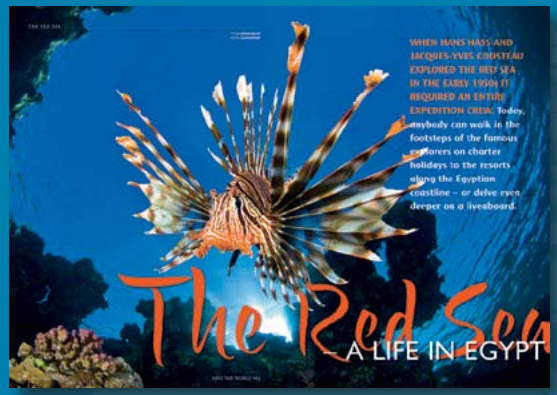
People seem to immediately get the idea behind the magazine, and they always react with broad smiles and a "Wow!" We know for a fact that we have readers who are not even divers but simply appreciate the quality of the images and the design. The response that makes me most proud, however, is when non-divers say "This makes me want to dive!" after seeing our magazine. That's when I know that we've accomplished our goal.

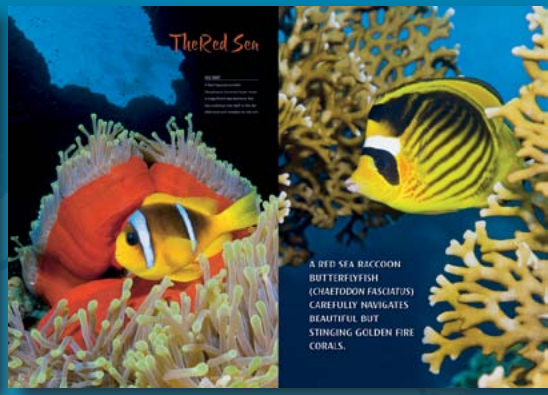
And as for DYK? It is still alive and well. We continue to publish our Scandinavian magazines with unique content. And since there's no overlapping content between DYK and DIVE THE WORLD, our loyal readers in Scandinavia can double their inspiration.

And one more thing: Starting from issue four, we will be publishing DIVE THE WORLD in a German version, too.

Jesper Kjøller
www.dtwmagazine.com

Jesper Kjøller was originally a professional musician, Jesper fell in love with diving 20 years ago – an experience that changed his life. He became a PADI Instructor in 1994 and a PADI Course Director in 1999. Since 2000, he has been the Editor in Chief at DYK – the Scandinavian Dive Magazine. In 2011, he and his colleagues started DIVE THE WORLD – the International Dive Magazine. Jesper is as happy on a tropical reef as he is on a deep, technical wreck dive in Scandinavia, and still finds time to teach PADI Instructor Courses and GUE Fundamental Courses once in a while, too.





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Lifeline?

by Wade Hughes

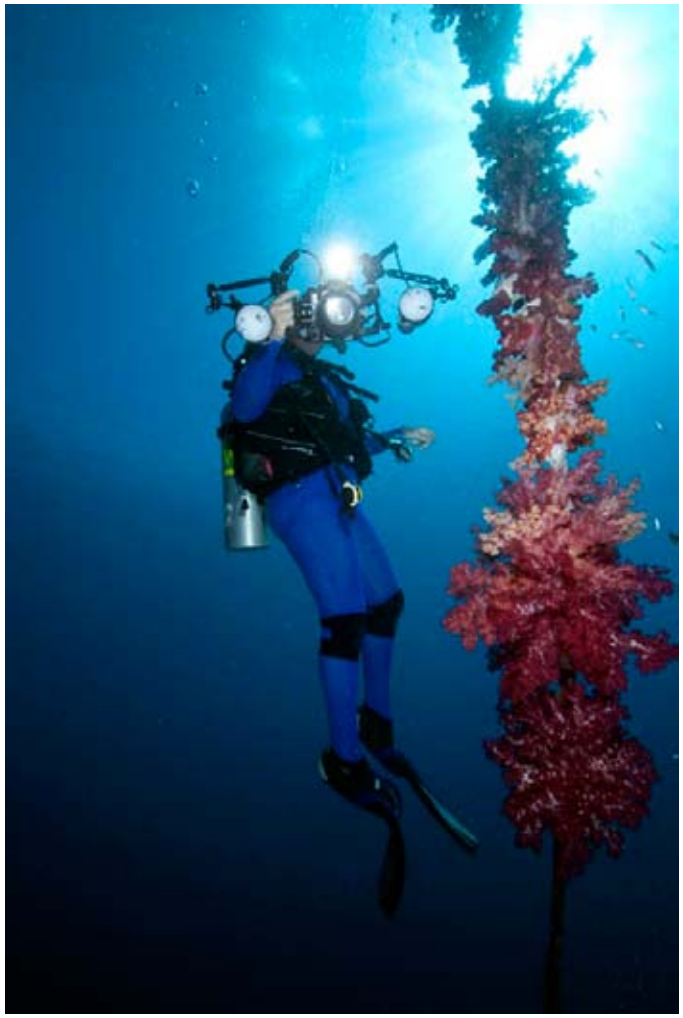
It is a rope made from the same plastic used for the manufacture of rice sacks. Seen from a different perspective, it is, perhaps, a clue to the prospects for survival of biodiversity in the sea.

It arcs downwards under the press of the tide, from a marker buoy on the surface, to a massive concrete block on the seabed, 37 metres below. Here, in mid channel between the island of Misool and the rocky islet of Ketimkerio in the Raja Ampat archipelago of Western Papua, it serves as mooring line for boats servicing the Misool eco resort.

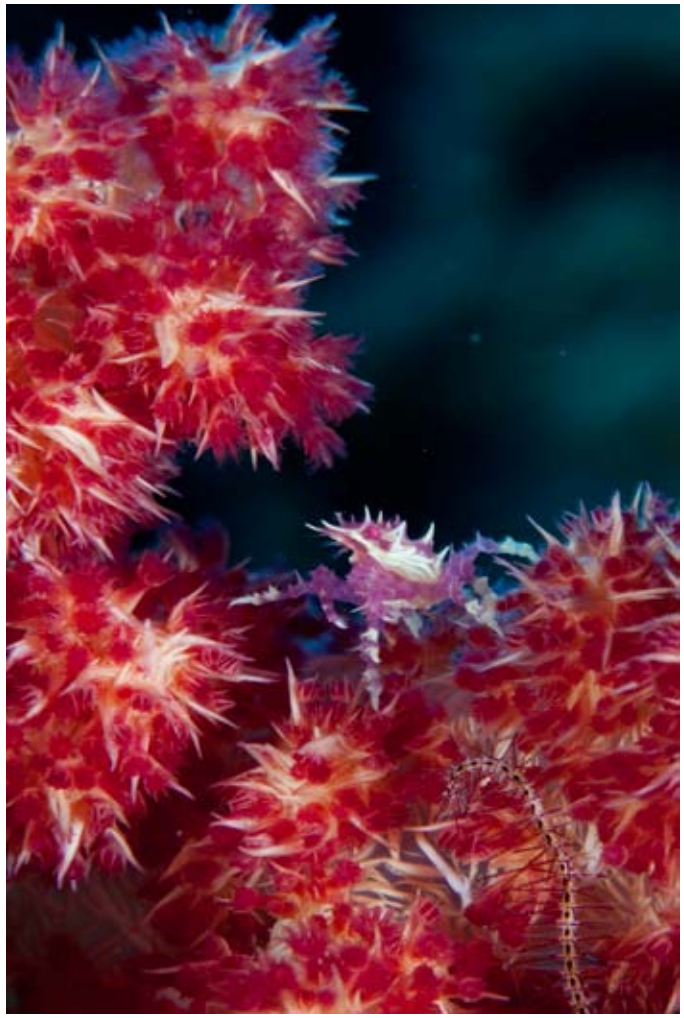
If the rope was not here, this would be open water. Elswehere, in the near vicinity other mooring lines woven from different plastic polymers, are only thinly smeared with green algae.

But because this particular rope is here, and, serendipitously woven from material conducive to marine colonization, the blank blue space of open water is etched by a line of profuse and diverse life. Soft and hard corals, cowries, fish, shrimps, barnacles, and other inverterbrates all crowd sections of this flexible strand of vertical reef.

Just thirty metres or so away, beehive shaped concrete reef-balls, pegged on a rusting mat of steel mesh draped over the shoulders of the reef facing the channel, offer additional clues to what the rope might be telling us. They are all – rope, reef-balls, and steel mesh, fulfilling the same fundamental need for life on Earth, and particularly for life in the sea; somewhere to call home. With the exception of marine mammals, reptiles, and sharks and rays,



Wayne Osborn scans the Misool mooring line for macro subjects.



Splendidly camouflaged amongst the soft corals, a crab shys away from unwelcome attention and flashing strobes.

most life in the sea, animal and vegetable, begins with a planktonic phase; microscopic and adrift, vulnerable, and at the mercy of chance. Those coral plankton that happen to bump into suitable substrate get the chance to settle and a shot at living through their full natural life cycle. Those that do not, simply drift into oblivion in the oceanic wastes, are eaten by predators, or they're killed by hostile environmental conditions. Consequently, reefs - coral, rock, artificial- are widely understood to be the foundation for life in the sea. So simply, and perhaps simplisticly, the more reefs, the more life in the sea. And human life depends on life in the sea.

Impossibly fragile and delicate, a transparent shrimp uses its natural chopsticks to pick food from amongst the polyps of a soft coral.

Little-finger nail sized coral cowries; life and colour suspended on a mooring line.

Of the seven billion of us, most of us live within 60km of the sea. We suck up to about 90 million tonnes of life out of the sea every year… well we did, until last year, when the annual rate of increase of fish mined from the sea failed to keep pace with the annual rate of increase in human population. Those trend lines are now sharply diverging as the capacity of the sea to replenish what we slaughter is in rapid decline.

But perhaps not irreversibly. I haven't been able to discover any research that indicates what percentage of the total planktonic biomass survives to complete its full life cycle. But I would contend that it is a very small percentage, based on the prodigous amounts that are produced. It is generally accepted that the total weight of plankton in the oceans exceed the combined weight of all the fish and mammals in the water. There's good reason for this. Natural systems naturally take into account natural attrition rates; hence about 1000 turtle eggs are produced to ensure that a single turtle makes it through to sexual maturity. Human industrial predation intoduces an unnatural aberration to this system. But there is a huge reserve of oceanic proto-life, in the form of plankton, that humans are

Timeless interdependency: Humans depend on the sea for food, economic livelihoods, and oxygen. For those of us fortunate enough to be born in societies that enable us to profit from our natural and developed talents – the seas offer an opportunity for adventure and an appreciation of the diversity and splendour of Nature. But today, more than at any other time in history, life in the seas depends on human intervention to continue its support of human life.
At Misool, in eastern Indonesia, even the jetty acts as a marine life magnet and haven, simply because it is protected from exploitation. It is at places such as this that the possibilities for sustainable, harmonious existence are being learned and demonstrated.

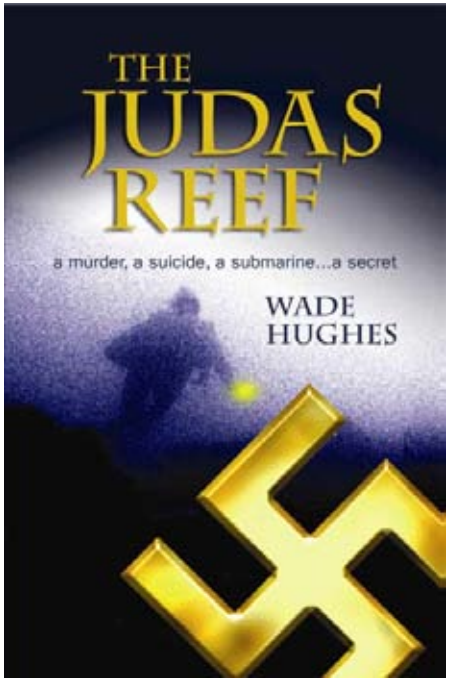
capable of nurturing and protecting.

And so back to the rope. What might it be telling us? Given the right conditions. Given time. Given education and innovative programs to help support people dependent on exploitation of the sea's resources (perhaps supplemented with motivational applications of .50 calibre ammunition, as was required when the Thai governement set out to protect and restore the marine nurseries of the Similan Islands and needed to convince poachers of the long term value of conservation measures). Given all these considerations, perhaps we can tap into the resilience of the sea, reduce some of the volume of natural attrition, to ensure that our great, great, grand-kids will be able to rely on the sea for food, oxygeni, adventure, and a sheer sense of wonder at the diversity of life on Earth.

Sixty percent of atmospheric oxygen is generated by photosynthesis of phytoplankton (embryonic marine vegetation). We acknowledge the role of terrestrial vegetation, such as the Amazonian rain forests as the 'lungs of the world" but the significantly higher contribution from marine and freshwater vegetation is often overlooked.

Wade Hughes

Wade Hughes is a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and a Member of the Explorers Club.



In 1978, the news that celebrity author Kip Whitman had murdered his wife then committed sucide rocked high society on both sides of the Atlantic.

The deaths of Whitman, a rags-to-riches British World War II hero, and Babs, his wife and heiress to a US industrial conglomerate, set in motion a fierce and deadly struggle for wealth and power. And brought to the surface secrets that had been hidden for decades.

http://books.google.co.uk/books?printsec=frontcover&id=2uQLqngzSx4C#v=onepage&q&f=false

Don't settle for 2nd best

Film - No Filter
No White Balance

Digital - No Filter
Manual WB

Magic Filter
Manual WB

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

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 pubication 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 144dpi

Size - Maximum length 15cm i.e. horizontal pictures would be 15 cm wide and verticals would be 15cm.

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

In February this year my buddy Sandy Webb and I dived a site near Phillip Island, just east of Melbourne, Australia. This site is by the San Remo pier and the bridge across to Phillip Island. It is a narrow channel that leads into a very large bay (Westernport Bay). There are extremely strong tidal flows through this channel that render it undiveable except in two half-hour tidal slack periods each day. Divers have to time their dives very carefully in this channel because the current is far too strong to swim against. If you dive for too long you will either be swept out into the ocean or into Westernport Bay. Despite the currents it is a very appealing dive site. The sides of the channel are white sand, and the bottom at 15m is covered with very diverse sponges and small red algae.

This area is also the home of a population of large smooth stingrays (Dasyatis brevicaudata). This species grows to a maximum width of 2m, and many of the rays in the channel are close to the maximum size for the species. These rays are common around Melbourne piers. They are generally not aggressive and tend to ignore divers. The rays here are also hand-fed in the shallows.

On this occasion a big ray behaved very aggressively, which is quite atypical of the species. We were about 10 minutes into the dive and busy photographing sponges. A ray appeared out of the channel, swam towards Sandy at high speed and rammed her. She saw it coming and ducked so it glanced off her shoulder. I managed to get one photograph of the encounter, which I took at the moment it hit her shoulder. The ray then swam off and we did not see it again during the dive.

I don't know what provoked this behaviour. When these rays are threatened they raise their tails in warning. But this ray did not have its tail up, as can be seen in the photo. This site is rarely dived because of the tidal flows, so possibly these rays are not used to divers. Was it territorial behaviour? Another possibility is that it was a result of the hand-feeding that occurs in the shallows here. Perhaps it was looking for a handout?

Phil Watson

This photo was taken with an Olympus E-PL3 in an Olympus housing fitted with a Zen dome port and S&S YS-01 strobe. Lens was the Olympus 9-18mm zoom at the 9mm end. Settings were F/8, 1/60 & ISO200. I had no time to adjust any settings because of the speed which it all happened. You only get the one chance with shots like this.

Do you have an image which has a 'story within a story'?
If so we'd love to hear from you.
E mail us and yours could be
the next "Parting shot".
peter@uwpmag.com