

# Underwater Photography

a web magazine

Issue 31

July/Aug 2006

Ikelite DS51 substrobe  
Panasonic TZ1  
Olympus Mju720  
Olympus E330/10Bar  
Sea&Sea DX-D200  
Getting the blues  
Gt White tagging  
Photo Pro life  
1st dive guide workshop  
Digi Techniques workshop  
A models woe  
BSoUP Splash In  
Book/DVD reviews  
Parting shot



# Show Your **STUFF!**



Canon  
EOS 5D  
EOS 10D  
EOS 20D  
EOS 300D  
EOS 350D, Rebel XT  
Nikon  
D-200  
D-70, 70s  
D-50  
Olympus  
E-330  
E-300  
E-500

## SLR-DC Housings

The Ikelite SLR-DC housing takes full advantage of the digital SLR cameras innovative features. The housing is injection molded of clear, lightweight polycarbonate for strength, visual access to the camera, LCD screens and camera controls. The housing provides controls for most camera functions. Most Ikelite SLR-DC Housings for Canon, Nikon and Olympus includes conversion circuitry that provides TTL compatibility with all Ikelite DS Substrobes. Housings for Canon and Nikon also include a Flash Compensation Module which provides over and under-exposure compensation in the TTL mode. At the push of a button, switch to Manual Exposure Mode which provides eight power settings. All exposure compensation is done with 2 buttons on the back of the housing, no accessing complicated camera menus.



photos by David B. Fleetham



## NEW 8" Dome Port

All new dome port system utilizing a new 4" radius dome and interchangeable mounting Body lengths. Larger radius dome is better for over-under photos.

- #5510.81 Dome Port is ideal for the new zoom lenses like 12-24mm Nikon and 10-22mm Canon.
- #5510.82 Super Wide Port is for very wide lenses like the 10.5mm Nikon and 15mm Sigma fisheye.
- #5510.83 Extended Dome is 3/4" longer than the #5510.81 for longer zoom lenses.



## NEW DS-200 Substrobe

Take the venerable Substrobe 200, add the newest IC chips and IGBT circuitry and you get the new DS-200 Substrobe. This ultra wide and ultra powerful strobe is compatible with current digital cameras and any TTL circuitry included in our housings. State-of-the-art electronics provide a blazing 200 watt seconds of power recycling in an incredible 1.6 seconds.



  
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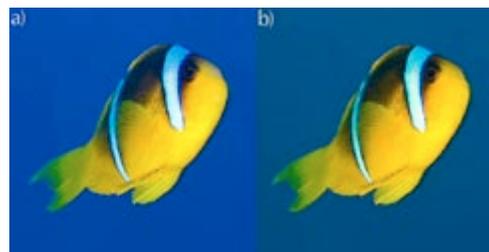
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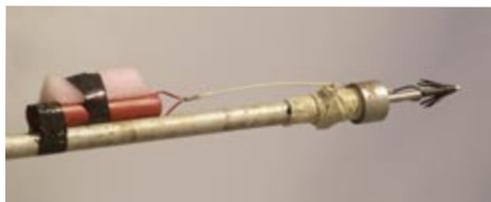
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# Editorial

## Link to UwP

The fact that you are reading this means that you have subscribed to UwP and I thank you for that. Subscribing cost you nothing - just a very small amount of your time. In return you get a free magazine devoted to your favourite subject and that seems like a very fair deal to me.

Thus far UwP has asked very little of its readers but now I'm going to ask you for a small favour.

If you have a web site would you be so kind to include a link to UwP. This will help new readers to discover us and learn about all the new and exciting developments in the underwater photography world.

Thank you in anticipation.

## Is Green is the new blue?

I cut my teeth in UK waters in the mid to late '70s. Back then there was very little commercial equipment available and just getting a full length diver in frame was a major breakthrough.

Fortunately lenses like the Nik 15mm came along as well as 16mm fisheyes and domes for

housed cameras which opened up our horizons considerably and electronic flashguns helped add light into the dark green corners.

Given the difficulty/limitations of low viz green water photography it is understandable that the majority of underwater photographers choose to hop on a plane to somewhere hot, clear and blue. Everything is easier, more comfortable and, in diving/photo terms, much more cost effective.

I'm as guilty as the next but having recently moved to Devon I suspect I will now be diving more in the UK than overseas and will have to relearn all the old tips and techniques to try and wring a decent image out of the green murk.

There's a very good website devoted to green water photography

[www.digigreen.net](http://www.digigreen.net)

If you find yourself struggling to get decent images there's plenty of experienced members there to help with advice.

Photography in green/UK waters is not easy but sometimes the greater the challenge the greater the satisfaction in achieving a result.

Now then, where's my drysuit powder and flask of hot coffee...

**Peter Rowlands**

[peter@uwpmag.com](mailto:peter@uwpmag.com)

# Readers Lives

## Come on down

Just a quick note in response to your editorial in UWP30, "Come on down". You've hit on a subject that's also been bothering me to no end - dramatization of the ocean's predators in order to hype a supposedly educational programme/show/exhibition.

It's not just the Plymouth Marine Aquarium; how many times have you seen Discovery Channel and even the National Geographic Channel airing shows with breathless, carnival side-show headlines as "Hunter Hunted" or "Jaws: Top Predator".

Invariably, the trailers for these shows use clips of a shark (usually a great white for impact), mouth agape, battering into a cage as if to devour the cameraman whole. The voiceover is usually done in a deep baritone, set to a soundtrack that would not be out of place in a B-grade Hollywood horror movie.

Cut to commercial, and there's a short advert by the WWF trying to educate the audience about the evils of shark fin soup (I live in Hong Kong, where this is a major problem). After watching the over-the-top, sharks-are-all-going-to-eat-you National

Geographic segment, it's not hard to see why the conservationists aren't getting anywhere.

It's truly sickening that supposedly educational and conservation-minded companies such as National Geographic can't seem to resist the lure of sensationalism. Their mission is to entertain, yes, but not at the expense of their true mission, which is to educate and conserve.

Ok, I'll stop ranting. Is there any way we can organize a petition to Nat Geo and the Discovery Channel through UWP?

Cheers,

Benjamin Kao

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# News, Travel & Events

[www.h2guide.com](http://www.h2guide.com)



I would like to call your attention to our new travel portal

[www.h2guide.com](http://www.h2guide.com)

Our guide works like a Wiki, so every user that has a logging can write articles in a growing number of categories and add these articles (we call them "Spots") to an interactive world map and upload pictures for that Spot.

The Category "Scuba Dive Site" describes interesting locations to dive.

At the moment we have only a few but the list is growing.

Maybe our site is interesting for readers of your mag and we would welcome their contributions..

Kind Regards

Thorsten Roellich

[www.h2guide.com](http://www.h2guide.com)

## Eco Divers Underwater Photo Seminars

Kevin Haigh, owner of Red Sea Images, the Red Sea's largest dedicated underwater photography centre, will be running photo seminars this November with Eco Divers in North Sulawesi, Indonesia.

Kevin, one of the dive industry's established names, opened the first PADI dive centre in London in 1986 and the first dedicated underwater photo/video centre in the Red Sea in 1993. A PADI Master Instructor who wrote his own Photo Specialty, Kevin graduated in his native England in consultant design engineering. He now specialises in teaching beginners and professionals alike on how to get the best from their photography.

This year's seminars will be held at Tasik Ria Resort, 19 to 26 November, and at Kungkungan Bay Resort, 28 November to 05 December. The format will be relaxed with Kevin offering advice and presentations each day, followed by discussions, image adjustments and Kevin's nightly PhotoShop Tip. Beginners are welcome to join the seminars, as



entry-level topics will include camera basics, light and use of strobes and techniques.

Presentation topics include composition arrangements such as knowing your environment; where creatures live and how to find them; a fun look at fish; macro mania with a different slant; using and working with models underwater; wrecks which were sunk just for photographers; night critters and more.

Kevin says about underwater photography "Everybody has a personal goal and so therefore competes with oneself. When we think we are there, we change the goal and the cycle begins again".

[www.eco-divers.com](http://www.eco-divers.com)

## Upcoming International Photo & Video Competitions

Provided by:

[DivePhotoGuide.com](http://DivePhotoGuide.com)

This latest photo competition news is brought to you by [Divephotoguide.com](http://Divephotoguide.com).

**July 15**

2006 National Wildlife Photography Award Competition  
[www.nwf.org](http://www.nwf.org) (USA)

**Aug 10**

6th Marmara Festivali Underwater Photo and Film Competition  
[www.marmarafestival.org](http://www.marmarafestival.org) (Turkey)

**Aug 15**

The 7th Annual San Diego UnderSea Film Exhibition  
<http://sdufex.com> (USA)

**Aug 30**

The Santa Barbara Ocean Film Festival  
[www.ocean.com](http://www.ocean.com) (USA)

[www.DivePhotoGuide.com](http://www.DivePhotoGuide.com)



## Santa Barbara Ocean Film Festival deadline 31st Aug 2006

The Santa Barbara Ocean Film Festival, SBOFF, a filmmaking event developed to bring the finest ocean films from around the world to Santa Barbara for screenings wants your films!

The Santa Barbara Ocean Film Festival is open to all professional and amateur filmmakers, and will accept submissions in the following categories:

Ocean Adrenaline - Heart-pounding films of ocean adventures, close calls with nature, ocean sports, amazing encounters, or anything that will get your adrenaline pumping

Marine Conservation and Natural History - Educational or inspiring films of underwater wonders, environmental imagery, new discoveries, or historical treasures

Ocean Travel - Films from marine expeditions, amazing journeys, and anything that will lead viewers into the ocean world

At its core, the festival is a visually stunning event, capturing the beauty, the power and the grace of the sea and its inhabitants. Adrenaline junkies, SCUBA divers, sailors, fishermen — are all encouraged to submit to this year's Santa Barbara Ocean Film Festival.

SBOFF encourages you to submit short narratives (under twenty minutes in length) or broadcast length films. There is even a category for your best short. The deadline for entry is August 31, 2006.

All proceeds from the event will support The Environmental Defense Council, a nonprofit law firm working with citizen groups on environmental issues protecting our ocean, air and water quality, preserving open spaces, saving species from extinction and guarding public health.

[www.ocean.com/look](http://www.ocean.com/look)

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Manado, Kungkungan Bay

Palau, Yap, Truk  
Bikini Atoll  
Australia's Coral Sea  
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**Mauricio Handler  
Sipadan UW Photo  
Workshop  
Oct 12-29 2006**

This years annual housed-systems workshop will be held at Sipadan Water Village in Borneo, Oct 12-19.

This is an amazing place for such a week of learning. As many of you may know, I conduct one of the most intense workshops in the business. At the end of this week, you will walk out as a thinking photogrpaher with new tools to carry you through years to come.

Price for this week is \$2140 plus



air. I have excellent prices on air as well. Contact me asap if interested.

[www.handlerphoto.com](http://www.handlerphoto.com)

**adventureh2o Papua and Togian trips**



Adventure H20 have put together some most creative and exciting itineraries for 2007 / 2008. One of the first will be a voyage to the Triton / Etna Bay region off the coast of Papua.

Joining us on this exploratory voyage to the land of the Kamoros Coastal People will be Dr. Kal Muller as guest lecturer. Also, Burt Jones & Maurine Shimlock will be with us on assignment for major dive magazines.

In June '07 we are heading to the Togian Islands via Halmahera and all the way up to Sangihe/Talau of North Sulawesi.

[www.adventureh2o.com](http://www.adventureh2o.com)

[www.uwpmag.com](http://www.uwpmag.com)



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## Red Sea experience joins Eco Divers, Manado

Bjorn Ramoult and Caroline Gerresch will join owners, Jim & Cary Yanny, in the management of its centre at Tasik Ria Resort from June 2006.

Bjorn and Caroline have a long and successful track record in the diving industry, having recently managed the PADI 5 Star IDC Centre for Emperor Divers at the Millennium Coral Beach Diving Hotel, Marsa Alam, in the Red Sea.

They have many years of instruction and management under their belts, including extensive liveaboard experience and will further strengthen Eco Divers' seasoned team of Steve and Miranda Coverdale, Kungkungan Bay Resort managers, and Jim & Cary Yanny, owners of Eco Divers.

Bjorn is a PADI Course Director and Caroline a PADI IDC Staff Instructor. In 2002, they were awarded the PADI Certificate of Recognition for Excellence in Conducting Scuba



Courses.

“Eco Divers has long been involved in conservation projects,” says Jim Yanny, “and Caroline and Bjorn are the perfect ambassadors to carry forward our environmental philosophy. Plus they also come with some additional useful skills with Caroline being a graduate in medicine and Bjorn a graduate in electro-mechanics!”

[www.eco-divers.com](http://www.eco-divers.com)

## Wetpixel/DiveFilm podCasts



Wetpixel is proud to announce a partnership with DiveFilm.com, a website dedicated to showcasing underwater video. DiveFilm features underwater filmmakers and offers high quality video podcasts about the underwater world, available through a free iTunes subscription and other podcast subscription mechanisms. Contrary to the name, video podcasts do not require a video iPod, and you can watch the broadcasted video right on your computer monitor.

DiveFilm has broadcasted video by numerous Wetpixel members, including Mary Lynn Price, Paul Wags, Eric Hanauer, Steve Douglas, and more!

Check out DiveFilm's podcast by clicking on “DiveFilm Video Podcast” in Wetpixel's right-hand menu!

[www.wetpixel.com](http://www.wetpixel.com)



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## New Products

### Ikelite DS51 Substrobe

The Ikelite DS51 Substrobe replaces the DS50, which has been a favorite of underwater photographers the world over. In addition to incorporating all the same great features of the DS50, the DS51 provides a Manual Exposure Mode with six (6) manual power settings in one-half f-stop increments for precise illumination of subjects underwater.

The compact, lightweight and affordable Ikelite DS51 Substrobe is an excellent choice for many underwater photographers. Its digital electronics make it fully compatible with digital cameras as well as traditional film cameras such as the Nikonos. The strobe can easily switch between TTL/Auto and any of the six (6) manual power settings for complete control over lighting the subject. The DS51's intensity and angle of coverage make it equally suited for macro and general photography. The strobe's wide-angle diffuser increases the angle-of-coverage up to 80 degrees, softens the light and helps to reduce backscatter. The DS51 Substrobe's power rivals strobes twice its size, recycles in a



quick 3.5 seconds, and provides 200+ flashes on a set of batteries. Much shorter recycle times and more flashes per set of batteries can be realized during TTL/Auto operation.

The DS51 is compatible with the Ikelite DS Sensor and EV-Controller. When used with the EV-Controller, the DS51 Mode switch is set to the TTL/Auto setting and the EV-Controller then provides ten (10) power settings in half-stop increments.

[www.ikelite.com](http://www.ikelite.com)

## Cameras Underwater becomes SeaLife Distributor

Cameras Underwater is pleased to announce that it has been awarded the UK and Republic of Ireland distributorship of SeaLife camera products.

Manufactured by Pioneer Research of New Jersey USA, the SeaLife range includes the flagship DC500 5M pixel camera and 60m underwater housing, featuring the unique low shutter-lag "Shark Mode". SeaLife camera accessories include



snap-fit add-on lenses and a digital variable-output slave flash which can be used with cameras and housings from all manufacturers.

[www.camerasunderwater.co.uk](http://www.camerasunderwater.co.uk)



[www.heinrichsweikamp.com](http://www.heinrichsweikamp.com)  
[info@heinrichsweikamp.com](mailto:info@heinrichsweikamp.com)



## Most popular cameras

Welcome to a feature provided by DIGIDEEP.com underwater housing database

### Canon 350D

Still on top of the list is the Canon 350D featuring eight megapixels. It maintains its status as one of the most popular entry DSLR cameras worldwide. This price worthy peek-performance has also led to a huge variety of underwater housings. Potential buyers should compare the different implementations of +/- EV button control and check for standardized strobe connections to maximize their personal underwater experience with this gadget.



No. of housings available: 11. Price range 1,000 USD - 1,990 EUR

### Nikon D200

If you can get your hands on a Nikon D200 right now you should not wait to order your underwater housing for it. Priced a little bit higher than the Canon digital Rebel XT but coming up with much higher performance Nikon managed to create a product that is almost as popular among underwater photographers as the Canon 350D, even though the price difference is around 1000 EUR/USD between these two models. You will find D200 owner with a big smile on their face at the higher horse power seems to have a fair price if you can afford it.



No. of housings available: 7. Price range 1,500 USD - 3,270 EUR

### Casio EXILIM Zoom EX-Z750 (orphan of the month)

A very popular point and shoot camera for the future digital underwater photographer it seems. A large screen and easily accessible controls make this an attractive product on the first glimpse. A more in depth-review reveals the very important manual white balance feature required for (magic) filter photography and taught during the new PADI digital underwater photography course. Unfortunately no housing manufacturer has paid attention to the underwater demand for this camera. So who is going to help more than 500 registered owners to find a solution apart from ewa-marine bags?



[www.digideep.com](http://www.digideep.com)

## Light & Motion special offer Gates HC3 housing



From now until July 31, 2006 you can take an additional \$1000.00 off any Bluefin FX1/Z1U housing or Bluefin FX1/Z1U Travel Package.

[www.uwimaging.com](http://www.uwimaging.com)



The Gates HC3 housing packs into small spaces yet delivers big high definition results. The camera LCD is easy to see from wide viewing angles through the giant 2x3 in (51x76 mm) window, even in bright daylight. Gates premium line of distortion-free ports provides the clearest, sharpest images possible – a no-compromises requisite for any HD endeavor.

[www.gates housings.com](http://www.gates housings.com)

## Ricoh Caplio 500G

The rugged Ricoh Caplio 500G features an 8-megapixel camera and boasts of high resistance to water, dust and shock.

The camera can withstand the temperature of -10°C and allow the photographers to work in such low conditions. Its 28mm wide-zoom lens can capture large scenes and its 3x optical zoom can reach the objects which seem to be inaccessible.

It has a powerful flash and its anti-blur function allows you to take pictures at fast shutter speeds.

The new addition in the camera



is a 2.5 inch LCD camera and optical viewfinder that so the photographer can use whichever is right for the situation, for more reliable photography.

[www.ricoh.com](http://www.ricoh.com)

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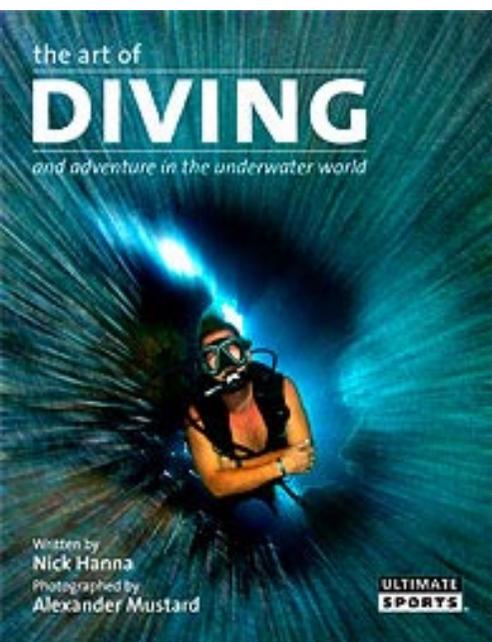
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Macro Lens

.54x Wide Lens



From "The Art of Diving"

*I am particularly grateful to Ocean Optics, London, who supply and maintain all my underwater equipment.*

Dr Alexander Mustard

THE ART & TECHNIQUE OF  
**UNDERWATER**  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
Mark Webster



From "The Art and Technique of Underwater Photography"

*I would like to take this opportunity of extending my thanks to... Steve Warren at Ocean Optics, London, UK...*

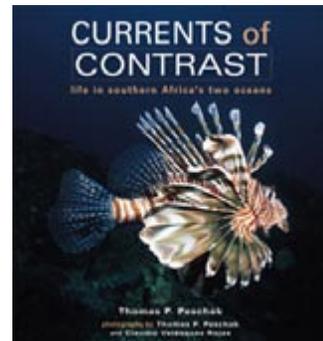
Mark Webster

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**OUR CLIENTS MAKE**  
**OUR REPUTATION.**



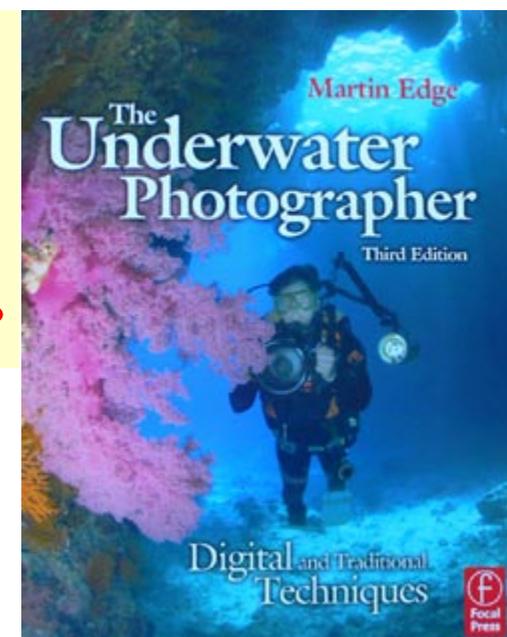
From "The Realm of the Pygmy Seahorse"

*The Ocean Optics team in London - Andrew Bell, Matt Crowther, Andrew Pugsley, Sidharth Thaker - were in the unenviable position of trying to satisfy my photographic needs and supporting me in the field.*  
Constantinos Petrinos



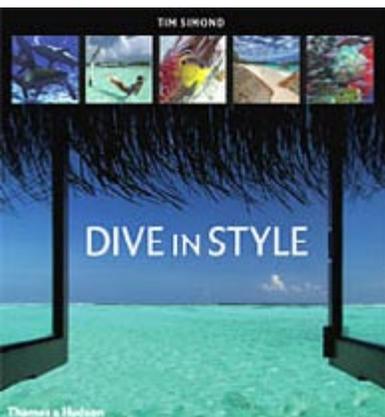
From "Currents of Contrast"

*I would never have successfully completed it without the great generosity, enthusiasm and knowledge of the many people whose paths crossed mine on my many journeys: Steve, Andrew, Dan (Ocean Optics).*  
Thomas P. Peschak



From "The Underwater Photographer"

*I would like to thank... Steve Warren, Colin Doeg and all the staff of Ocean Optics, thank you for your continuing support.*  
Martin Edge



From "Dive in Style"

*Ocean Optics of London will give you totally unbiased advice, even to the extent of losing themselves a sale.*

Tim Simond

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[www.oceanoptics.co.uk](http://www.oceanoptics.co.uk)

# Panasonic DMC-TZ1 and DMW-MCTZ1

by Peter Rowlands



Panasonic are a relative newcomer in the underwater compact world but they have made an impressive start with the DMC-TZ1 and 40 metre DMW-MCTZ1 underwater housing.

The camera is a 5 megapixel point and shoot and boasts a 10x optical zoom (35-350mm 35mm equivalent). This is very impressive on land but a bit extreme underwater! A nice feature as far as I'm concerned is that the camera can provide 16:9 format by cropping top and bottom of the frame. Sure you can do this with software later but it would be tedious applying to all your shots when the camera can do it for you.

From an underwater photographers viewpoint the TZ1 is [www.uwpmag.com](http://www.uwpmag.com)

an interesting camera and has three important features. Manual white balance, optical image stabilisation and a Scene mode for underwater. The white balance is useful when using colour correcting filters, the stabilisation helps shutter blur and the scene mode is a very useful setting for general use including (as I found) the built in flash.

Speaking of the built-in flash the TZ1's is tiny yet still packs some power even when diffused by the housing. I found it effective to at least a metre underwater and was amazed by its ability to focus and fire in very low light conditions.

There are comprehensive camera reviews at [www.dpreview.com](http://www.dpreview.com) so follow their link to find out more. The



*The 'Underwater' setting in the Scene mode produces very good results down to about 10 metres*

*The built in flash is surprisingly effective and the autofocus is excellent in low light conditions.*





housing is very well designed and constructed and all of the controls fall easily to hand. No setting up is required to install the camera, you just slot it in, check the piston design O ring seal and close the back which automatically engages the locking mechanism.

The large 2.5" LCD screen is a joy to view and is slightly shielded by an inner rubber surround. In practice this works well but a larger, external hood would be belt and braces.

The one downside of the housing, and this is true of most housings except some Olympus ones, is that the description of each control is moulded in the clear polycarbonate housing which can be difficult to read in certain light. This could well be more of a problem for me as I use/test a variety of cameras/housings and each varies. If, like most sensible people, you have just one camera you will very soon get used to the controls.

For some reason Panasonic have designed an odd shaped front port which will make fitting external wide angle lenses problematic if not impossible but if all you want is a good point and shoot camera with a very effective underwater scene setting you should give the TZ1 serious consideration.

**Peter Rowlands**

[peter@uwpmag.com](mailto:peter@uwpmag.com)

[www.dpreview.com](http://www.dpreview.com)

*Photo © Denise Antipas*



# Come on board!

Magic filters work with compact cameras which have manual white balance. They are simple to use and will dramatically improve the colours of your available light shots.



In less than a year, shots taken with Magic filters have won major international photo awards and been published regularly in diving magazines and books.

Digital filter photography is a new technique which is incredibly simple yet will improve your pictures amazingly. PADI include white balancing and colour filters in Level 1 of their new Digital Underwater Photography specialty course.



In short, Magic is revolutionising available light photography underwater and they cost as little as £19 (\$30).

**So come on board and discover a more colourful life.**



[www.magic-filters.com](http://www.magic-filters.com)

# Olympus Mju720 & PT-033

by Peter Rowlands

The Olympus Mju720 has a good solid feel right from the start. Its chrome and brushed metal surfaces will be hardwearing and its diminutive size hides a powerful performance. The 720 provides 7.1 megapixels with a 3x optical zoom (38-114mm equivalent 35mm).

For a full review visit the excellent [www.dpreview.com](http://www.dpreview.com).

Olympus more than any other digital compact manufacturer embraced the underwater market right from the start. As soon as a new model came to the market so too (usually) did a diving depth underwater housing. This combination must make the Olympus compacts the most popular for underwater use.

This popularity does not come undeserved because the quality of their housings is, in my opinion, the finest on the market. They have a feeling of rigidity and smoothness of operation that few other housings have and for them to be able to produce such a high standard at such a reasonable price is remarkable.

The other design attribute which separates Olympus from the opposition is their use of aluminium front port surrounds. These are

threaded to accept accessory lenses and filters and make them capable of taking on a wide range of subjects. This is a housing you can start off with straight away but then expand your accessories to suit your needs.

My only gripe with the housing design is the use of over centre catches for closure. Whilst these are very effective they are more complicated than other designs and require healthy fingernails to open them as they are well shrouded to prevent accidental opening.

The large 2.5" LCD screen is well shielded with an external rubber hood and, unlike most other manufacturers, the control icons



*For someone who wants to dip their toe into underwater photography the Mju720 and PT-033 housing should prove an ideal partner.*

*(Right) The overcentre catches are good but need healthy fingernails to open them!*

*(Below) The camera fits very snugly into the housing and need no special alignment.*





are moulded into the button surface making identification of each control extremely simple.

In a strange sort of a way the camera is easier to handle in the housing than it is on its own as the tiny fag packet size can make large fingers and thumbs unwieldy.

In terms of underwater use the 720 is basically a point and shoot auto camera with no control over shutter speeds and apertures except to a certain extent by using the 'scene' modes. Included in these modes are four settings for underwater but in practice I didn't find these improved things that much and would

recommend using a colour correcting filter for more colourful images (well I would, wouldn't I!).

Overall though for someone who wants to dip their toe into underwater photography the Mju720 and PT-033 housing should prove an ideal partner.

**Peter Rowlands**

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# Olympus Evolt E-330 SLR + 10Bar Housing Review

By Jeff Mullins

When Olympus released their latest Evolt E-330 7.5 megapixel Live-View digital SLR earlier this year. I knew that this camera was for me. I converted to digital back in 2003, after a lot of years taking underwater photographs utilising film SLR's.

My introduction to digital underwater photography was with the Olympus C-5050z coupled with a pair of Inon Z220 strobes and Inon accessory lenses. This set-up gave me the flexibility on photo shoots to cover almost any subject from 1:1 macro through fish portraiture to wide angle - all with one camera. Gone were the days of two housings, a couple of Nikonos cameras and a truck-load of strobes & lenses. To me it was a breath of fresh air.

I was diving armed with a 1Gb compact flash card and a 256Mb XD card and could take 170 Raw images without opening the camera! I could review images as I took them, add a close-up lens or two for additional magnification or screw-on a wide angle lens to capture broad scenes

- But just as importantly I could see my subjects on the LCD screen at arms length. No longer did I have to hold my camera up to my mask as I approached some elusive creature, only to find it had been scared-off by my close presence. With the camera at arms length, I could now sneak-up on creatures that had defied my approaches for years, even place the camera in small crevices and ledges where I just physically couldn't get myself, as it always seemed this was where my prey was hiding.

I'll admit, now and again I yearned for faster focus ability and cursed the shutter lag on more than one occasion, but the benefits of the Olympus C-5050z camera set-up, far outweighed the few criticisms I had.

At one stage I was lured by some advertising and foolishly visited a local camera store to look at digital SLR's, not knowing that these cameras didn't have a Live-View facility - the ability to see the image on an LCD screen before the shutter was depressed.

I should have carried out a bit



more research before my visit, as I felt a proper fool when I, (holding Nikon's latest SLR) asked the young digital genius behind the counter "How do you turn on the LCD screen to take a pic?" I was quietly ushered aside and shown the point & shoot range of cameras and told "These are what you need mate, they have LCD screens for viewing pics. SLR's only have a screen for viewing after the pic has been taken" - Well no-one told me! So it was back to the reliable Olympus C-5050z until something better came along - and gladly, now it has.

The Evolt E-330 through some

unique research by the Olympus team, now offers Live-View on a large LCD screen. The first of its kind in the SLR world. This along with a range of underwater housings to suit the camera becoming available in mid 2006, was the news I - and I'm sure - a lot of other Point & Shoot users, had been waiting for.

I chose a housing by Hong Kong based manufacturer 10Bar for my camera, I was swayed by the depth rating (90metres or 300') and standard Nikonos style sync socket. Also price and availability helped in the decision, plus 10Bar were very accommodating



in manufacturing a port for me that suits not only the standard 14-45mm zoom lens, but also the 50mm & 35mm macro lenses - which I am sure will be popular with many other photographers.

While 10Bar prepared my new port, I busily familiarised myself with the Olympus E-330 camera's controls above water.

## The Camera

I found the E-330 menu's easy to access, particularly the major functions like ISO speeds, F stops, shutter speeds, aperture, quality settings, memory card selection, metering, flash mode/output and exposure compensation. Most of these functions are available as one-touch to access the menu, then rotate the main dial to select the desired setting.

The E-330 has two memory card slots, one for compact flash cards and the other XD cards. This allows the use of two cards to be used alongside one another, giving the photographer a

huge memory capability (a nice bonus for underwater use). Card selection is very quick and easy from the one-touch menu's.

The large 2.5" LCD (215,250 pixels) is very easy to view from almost any angle and has nice clear/bright natural colours. It swivels out to various angles (above water) for overhead or waste level shooting.

The Live-View function has two modes, namely A & B – not too hard to remember! A Mode is a standard Live-View, all functions of the camera work including Auto Focus. The one small downfall is the LCD only displays 92% of the actual image being photographed. This is due to the technical restraints of the optics required to achieve Live-View. But in practice I found this to not be a handicap at all and quickly became accustomed to allowing for the additional 8% of coverage that was not viewable in the LCD. A Mode is what most underwater photographers are going to use.

mode is of any use underwater, mostly due to the shutter delay.

Like all SLR's, the E-330 also has a standard optical viewfinder that shows around 95% of the actual image being photographed. This can be closed when using the LCD screen in Live View mode, or left open at the risk of metering errors if ambient light enters the viewfinder. In practice I found the only application for the optical viewfinder was in very bright sunlit areas, where the LCD was lit by direct sunlight (above water). In this situation I had a better view of scene details and ability to check focus.

Olympus have also included their dust reduction system, this saves a lot of editing time later, removing dust from the final images with Photoshop. This has been a feature on all Olympus SLR's for some time now, a very nice feature that starts at every turn-on or can be executed manually.

On the negative side, one function I really liked on the Olympus C-5050z was not easy to access on the E-330. The My Mode function on the C-5050z gave me access to eight of my own settings that were easily re-called to take me quickly from extreme macro to medium telephoto through wide angle settings by pressing one button and rotating a dial. On the E-330 I only have two My Mode's, one of these is accessible by pre-programming a one-touch button

*Soft Coral Goby – Tulamben, Bali.  
Olympus E-330 , ISO 100, 1/125th @  
F16, manual exposure, 50mm macro  
lens, 2x Inon Z220 strobes @ full power  
with -.5 diffusers.*

B Mode by comparison, shows 100% of the image being photographed on the LCD. The mirror is locked-up in this mode and there is a slight delay in shutter release. Currently out-of-the-box the E-330 has no autofocus in B Mode – only manual focusing, but at the time of writing Olympus have released a firmware upgrade that enables autofocus by pressing the AEL/AFL button. It remains to be seen if this

any time, but it needs to be held while depressing the shutter button. This might be OK above water, but underwater requires the use of two hands! The second My Mode is only accessible through the user menu's and takes quite a few button presses (and a good memory) to find. This is no big deal, but a few more easily accessible My Modes would have been a nice feature and very easily built-in at production.

## Lenses

In use I found the standard 14-45mm kit lens to be great for above water use, it focused fast and produced sharp images, I also added a 40-150mm telephoto zoom for above water photography and a



50mm macro for underwater use. There are also currently an 8mm, 35mm macro and a fast 14-54mm lenses available.

All of the above lenses are the Zuiko Four Thirds (4/3) system lenses, these lenses are specifically designed for the sensor size used in the 'E Series' Olympus digital SLR cameras and their focal lengths need to be doubled to give a comparison to the old 35mm SLR lenses – so for instance the Olympus Zuiko 50mm macro is equivalent to a 100mm macro lens on a film SLR, in terms of image area and angles of view. Of these lenses I found the 50mm macro to be the sharpest and also had a great ability to focus in dull lighting conditions. Sigma are also producing lenses to suit the Olympus mounts.

The LCD playback functions of the E-330 offers seven image detail options. The first three



*Schooling Batfish – Amed, Bali. Olympus E-330, ISO 100, 1/125th @ F4.1, shutter priority, 14-45mm lens (23mm), natural light.*

options give a full-screen size images with basic file number, quality and date functions. The fourth shows a smaller image on the LCD with the auto focus point, quality setting, four separate colour histogram graphs and detailed exposure information. The fifth is a full screen size image overlaid with a large histogram graph. The sixth & seventh are full screen size images with highlights and shadows flashing, these indicate potential over or under exposure in the image. Each of these playback screens have their applications and can be quickly scrolled through by pressing the Info button.

The camera produces nice JPG images, with various options for quality, colour and compression - plus it also produces RAW images with the option of an accompanying JPG image.

## The Software

I shot RAW for my tests, but found the software that came with the camera too clumsy to use for RAW processing and opted to wait for



*Lionfish – Amed, Bali. Olympus E-330, ISO 100, 1/125th @ F6.3, manual exposure, 14-45mm lens (45mm), 2x Inon Z220 strobes @ -2 power.*

Adobe to release an updated camera RAW plug-in that supports the E-330 camera for Adobe Photoshop CS2. This was released at the end of June 2006 as a free download and works very well.

## Housing Build & Functions

10Bar produced my port and housing in a couple of weeks and I was ready to get the camera wet (not) by the time it arrived. Manufactured from clear polycarbonate, the overall appearance of the housing was sturdy and well engineered. Two decent sized handles place the users hands in the correct position for easy use of most controls.

Controls are all double 'O' ring sealed and the rear access cover of the housing is easily removed using a small tool supplied with the housing. The sealing method of the rear cover is quite unique,



*Pixie Hawkfish in Crinoid – Tulamben, Bali. Olympus E-330, ISO 100, 1/125th @ F22, manual exposure, 50mm macro lens, 2x Inon Z220 strobes @ -\_ power.*

with no latches to hold it in place. 10Bar have developed an air lock system that utilises a single 'O' ring and a vent valve that is released when assembling and dismantling the housing. It works very simply and is easy to check the 'O' ring is sealing visually before entering the water. I really like the system and its simplicity.

The controls buttons are large and easy to press using gloved hands, there are controls to access all features of the camera except the optical viewfinder closing lever. Some controls are shared for two or more

functions, this is achieved by twisting the control to reach a near neighbor. At first I found this a bit cumbersome, particularly after using the Olympus PT-015 for the C-5050z as this had a button for each camera control. But it didn't take long for me to adjust to the new way of accessing controls. If individual push buttons were fitted for each control, the manufacturer would need to reduce the overall size of each button control as they would be crowded close together – this would detract from the build quality and



- 1.Shutter**
- 2.Exposure Compensation**
- 3.On/Off, Mode Dial**
- 4.Main Dial**
- 5.Live View, A/B**
- 6.AEL/AFL, Drive Mode**
- 7.OK**
- 8.WB, AF, ISO, Metering Mode**
- 9.Play, Delete**
- 10.MENU, INFO**
- 11.Zoom**



strength of those currently fitted.

There are two strobe mounting shoes, one on the top of each handle. An anodised alloy base-plate comes standard with the housing with nice sturdy stainless steel fittings. Various strobe mounts are available from 10Bar to suit different strobe arms, plus they also have their own flexible strobe arms and brackets. I chose to use my existing Inon Z220 strobes fitted with Locline arms as I was comfortable with them and understood the strobes capabilities.

10Bar provided a pair of adaptors that my arms bolted directly too for a very reasonable price. I fitted a Sea & Sea sync cord with a Nikonos 'T' connector, that plugs directly into the 10Bar housing's bulkhead.

I don't use TTL flash underwater, but from what I understand Olympus cameras have their own TTL circuitry that only works with Olympus flashes so I don't think this camera/housing combination will provide TTL functions to the popular brands of underwater strobes. But for my

purposes I am happy to control my exposures manually. (Incidentally 10Bar do manufacture a housing for the FL-50 flash that offers full TTL functions underwater, these are available as a kit with the housing).

The standard anodised aluminium port excepts the 14-45mm standard zoom lens, but a little extra gets a port capable of fitting the 35mm macro & 50mm macro lenses. I opted for this port as I want to use the 35mm and 50mm macro lenses most of the time. 10Bar also manufacture an extension to allow use of the Olympus extension tube for greater magnification. They also supply (as an option) a slip-on port shade for use with the 50mm macro lens, to prevent internal reflections between the port and lens. I ordered this part but so far haven't needed it, as I think this would only be a problem in bright shallow, back-lit scenes (not a normal macro situation).

One negative on the housing exterior was a mould-release mark on the rear cover. This mark is significant and is located over the top right-hand side of the LCD when the camera is installed in the housing. Admittedly underwater I didn't notice it, but if it was located somewhere else on the rear cover it would be much better. 10Bar have indicated that they will be moving the position of the mould release, but this will not be an



*Blue Ribbon Eel – Tulamben, Bali. Olympus E-330, ISO 100, 1/160th @ F22, manual exposure, 50mm macro lens, 2x Inon Z220 strobes @ -\_ power.*

immediate change.

## Assembling Camera/Housing

Fitting the E-330 camera to the 10Bar housing was very-very simple, so simple in fact that I did it without instructions as my housing was built before instructions were written. The camera fits to a base plate that slides onto a track in the base of the housing, the function dial control button is

lifted and the base plate slides into the housing, then the spring-loaded dial control is lowered onto the camera. Fit the strobe hotshoe to the camera and then fit the rear of the housing to the main body and away you go! I am more than impressed with the ease of assembly. If the zoom lens is fitted it needs a strap attached to the lens before assembly and this needs to line-up with a pair of nylon 'lugs' in the port, but this is also very simple.

## Beneath the Sea

Armed with the standard kit lens (14-45mm zoom) I headed off to see how it all works underwater. Overall feel was nice, buoyancy was perfect with my two strobes fitted – just very slightly negative. I left the optical viewfinder open (as this can't be controlled underwater), as I had heard that the LCD screen was difficult to focus with. Well let me tell you, I have only looked through the viewfinder once and was quickly reminded of my old film SLR days – So quickly reverted to the LCD screen which is just great – bright, clear and easy to focus with.

Admittedly the 14-45mm lens is not a fantastic lens for underwater use, it doesn't focus particularly close (approximately 50cm is closest focus with lens at 45mm) and it is a reasonably 'slow' lens with maximum apertures of F3.5 at 14mm to F5.6 at 45mm. So focus is a little slow in dull conditions, I only experienced no focus at 36 metres in heavily overcast conditions. But being a zoom lens it is very versatile and may suit a lot of photographers. Olympus also produce a faster 14-54mm F2.8-3.5 zoom lens.

I used the camera in Live-Mode A and had no problems with battery life. After filling a 1Gb compact flash card and a 256Mb XD card with test images on one dive, the camera took

a lot of above water shots on the same battery. I have since used the 50mm macro lens in the housing. This lens is a joy to use, with fast focus and much better low light focusing ability than the 14-45mm (being an F2.0 lens helps) with very sharp detail in the images.

## Conclusion

If you want a camera/housing combination that has Live View and is more capable than all of the Point & Shoot cameras available, then this set-up is both affordable (compared to many SLR set-up's) and has very few negative aspects. It is a great stepping stone for those photographers wanting more than their point & shoot cameras can offer.

**Jeff Mullins**

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A close-up photograph of the AQUATICA A200 Pro Digital camera housing. The housing is silver and black, with various controls and a large lens. The text 'AQUATICA' and 'A 200 DIGITAL PROFESSIONAL' are visible on the housing.

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# Sea & Sea DX-D200 housing

By JP Trenque

In the good ol' days of film photography, one could purchase a camera, a housing and a set of ports and expect a good few years' enjoyment with it before having to consider upgrading the system. And candidly enough, I expected the same when I purchased my D100 and Sea & Sea housing in May 2003. Then the D70 came about, shortly followed by the D2X and now the D200.

The first reviews I read about the D200 camera were so enthusiastic that my right brain pushed me to take the plunge while my left brain tried to make up excuses like "upgrading now will avoid too much depreciation on the D100 set-up". Yeah, right! So in January this year, I purchased the new camera body. In the following review, I will try to resist temptation to delve too much on the qualities of the D200. Anyway, you've probably heard them all by now.

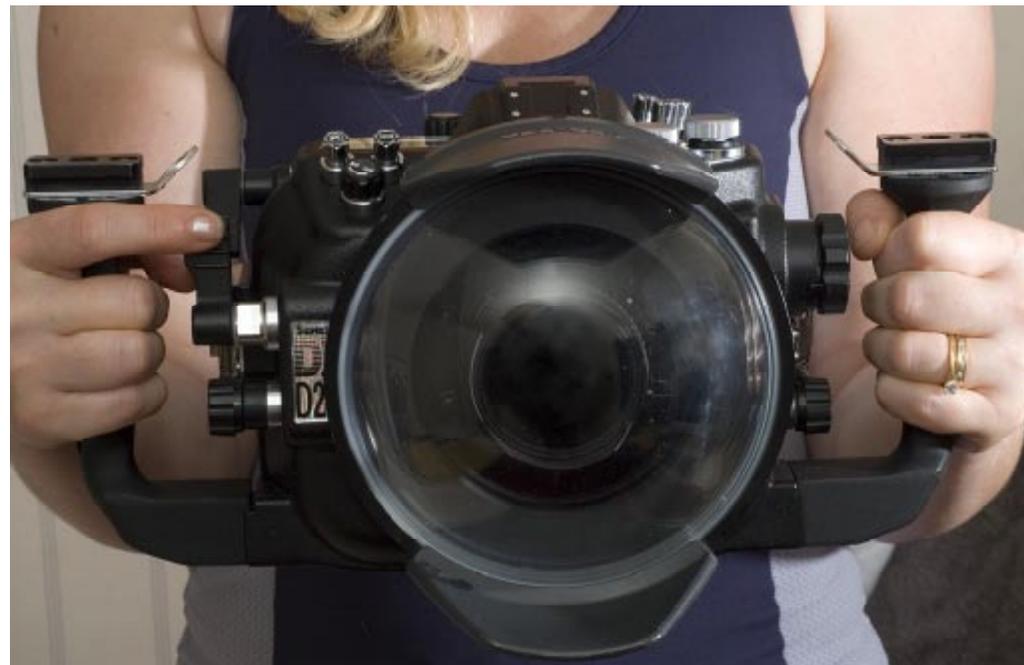
To me, the choice of housings was quite obvious. As a previous owner of Sea & Sea equipment, I would stick to Sea & Sea, or any manufacturer that would offer compatibility with my NX ports. Standardisation? Surely not! When Bristol-based distributor Alan James

called me early spring to say there was a waiting list, his powers of persuasion landed me on that list. Several friends opted for different brands and we all had a race over who would get their housing on the market first. I didn't win, but in hindsight, I am very glad I had to wait a little for my new toy.

I have now played with it in UK waters and have taken it out on a Red Sea trip, so here are my first impressions.

My initial reaction when the parcel arrived was how light and compact the unit was. Sea & Sea have done away with the big metal base plate that featured on the previous DSLR housings and the handles are now attached directly to the main aluminium body. Yes, aluminium, coated with hard alumite. No more resin housing with a translucent back.

Unlike the DX-D100 which looked like a one-size-fits-all square plastic box, the DX-D200 is built so that the camera fits snugly inside. In fact, its shape is very similar to that of the F90x and F100 housings. Having such a compact unit makes it easier to travel, especially as the combined camera + housing weight is 1.3kg



*The D200 handles and controls make it easy to use even with small hands.*

*The aluminium housing is coated with black alumite.*



lighter than the D100 package despite the heavier camera body. When I recently flew to Sharm el Sheikh, the whole set-up fitted easily in the rucksack I carried as hand-luggage. Compactness comes at a price though and the guys from Sea & Sea haven't managed to fool old Archimedes, as we'll see in a moment. As a final point about general aspect, the shiny silver colour has given way to a stealthy matt black, probably in an effort to appeal to technical divers.

When I bought the DX-D100, I liked the idea of seeing through the case to check for any water leakage. Now, a water detector with a red flashing light does that for me. The 2 pins are encased in a tube which traps water, thus ensuring a continuous alert even if the amount of water is minimal.

Loading the camera is easy, thanks to the same locking mechanism that featured on the previous Sea & Sea housings. A base plate containing a cog to control the M/S/C focus modes is attached to the camera tripod mount to secure the camera in the housing. The cog looks more robust than the D100 version. In the past, I always removed it when using the camera on land for fear of breaking it, but the new version can be left in place, especially as it does not prevent battery changes.

The back of the D200 sticks out of the open housing for easy access to the CF card slot and cable connectors located on the side. A port locking pin mechanism can be found underneath the camera. Although it prevents lens changes without opening the back of the housing, I know a photographer who regretted lacking this feature on a different brand of D200 housing recently when his flat port came loose!

The back of the housing is secured via 2 double-action locking cams, rather than the 4 that



*Unlike its predecessors for Nikon DSLRs, the DX-D200 is extremely compact.*

were found on the DX-D100 and DX-D70, which makes opening the housing easier. 2 small pins prevent accidental misalignment of the back. If anything, it feels like good engineering.

The handles are adequately positioned for easy operation of the shutter and AF-Lock controls, even for small hands. They also hold the strobe arm shoes and feature 2 rings to clip the camera onto you. Unlike other brands, there is no third strobe-arm shoe for shooting in portrait. While on the subject of strobes, it is worth mentioning that the DX-D200 comes with 2 wired-in strobe connectors as standard, unlike some of its predecessors. Mine came with both 5-pin connectors, although Sea & Sea Japan announced it with one 5-pin and one 2-pin. It is also possible to mount an optional TTL adaptor.

Controls are available for almost all camera functions: Power switch, Shutter, Main command dial, Sub-command dial, Exposure compensation button, Exposure mode / Format button, Focus



*A locking mechanism located underneath the hotshoe can be used to prevent accidental removal of the port.*

/ Zoom dial, Focus mode dial, White balance button, QUAL (image quality/size) / Reset button, ISO sensitivity button, Bracketing button, Delete / Format button, Playback button, Menu button, Thumbnail button, Protect / Help button, Enter button, AF-area mode dial, Multi selector buttons, AF-ON lock button, AE/AF lock lever, Metering selector dial.

The following controls are not accessible:

- The infamous rear curtain synch button, which is placed in an awkward position on the camera, on the left-hand side of the viewfinder. That's a shame.
- The user-assignable function button next to the lens. It could have been handy.



*Some push-buttons can be locked in a down position. A useful feature when using a combination of button + dial on the D200.*

- The multiple exposure / timer function which is operated by a push button + dial. Oh well...
- It is not possible to lock the multi-selector. Big deal.

All the buttons are precise and Sea & Sea has provided a facility to lock some of them on a down position. I found this feature extremely useful, as a number of camera operations require a button to be pushed while the control dial is turned. For example, to change the ISO setting, you can press and lock the ISO button and then turn the control dial with one hand while the other hand is holding the housing. The downside of this is that it is easy to lock the buttons accidentally, which can prevent the camera from firing. I was less pleased with some of the dial knobs, like the aperture control on the bottom right hand-side of the housing which sometimes failed to grip the dial on the camera



*It is possible to change the card (loading sideways) while the camera is locked in the housing. 2 Pins prevent accidental misalignment of the back when closing the housing.*

(right index finger when holding the D200) and could be a bit fiddly at times. But I think a minor adjustment will probably resolve this. The shutter control is very tactile even with gloves on and it is easy to feel when the camera focuses and when it will fire.

The viewfinder has improved over the D100, It has a 0.66x magnification, which Sea & Sea claim allows the photographer to see the whole camera viewfinder. In practise, I was disappointed to discover that I still needed to move my eye a little to see the whole frame. On the plus side, reviewing the picture is much easier on the D200 than on the D100 and D70, thanks to the large LCD screen. The housing is also obviously equipped with a large window.

I mentioned Archimedes earlier. Although the housing is very light, it is very compact and therefore quite heavy underwater. It is slightly

negatively buoyant with the camera, a 10.5mm lens and the fisheye port (no strobes) and will pull upwards a bit. Use it with the 105mm lens, the compact port and the extension ring and you could remove a kilo off your weightbelt! Hold it with one hand while you're stalking fish for a while and you will develop your forearm muscles! The weight underwater is comparable to that of the F90x housing. I never found it too uncomfortable even in a macro configuration, but a small floater attached to the strobe arms would not go amiss.

In all, I am extremely happy with my purchase. The Sea & Sea DX-D200 is not the perfect housing yet because of its viewfinder, lack of some controls and occasionally fiddly dial commands. However, it is extremely competitively priced compared to other metal housings and handles beautifully underwater. Oh, and it looks rather good and serious too!

**JP Trenque**

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URPRO continues to be honored by many professional and amateur photographers from all corners of the globe who use our underwater correction filters to capture the full spectrum of color on their pictures. Many are just discovering the magic of underwater photography while others are veterans who have transitioned through film, video, and cine, and who are now avid digital enthusiasts.

Recently, we received a series of vibrant images along with a letter from Paul LeBourgeois, MD who has used the URPRO filters for many years. His enthusiasm for scuba diving and underwater photography is contagious. With his permission, we'd like to share part of the letter and some of his copyrighted images.

*April, 2006*

*Dear URPRO*

*.....I was introduced to diving by my father in 1960. At this time the basic equipment was mask, snorkel, fins, and a hard plastic back-pack to which an enormously heavy tank was attached. It had the life-saving 'J-valve' which warned when the air was almost gone. I think my Dad and I had the first single-hose regulators made. At this time, there were no pressure gauges, no depth gauges, and no weights.....and we had absolutely no idea that "dive tables" existed. We relied solely on the notion that if we didn't ascend faster than our bubbles, we'd be OK.....oh how times have changed!*

*In 1986 my wife and I took a trip to Bonaire where she rented a VHS underwater camera and housing. Initially, I thought that there would be no better way to waste time underwater than fooling around with this "gadget." Half-way through the dive, my wife handed me the camera to take some footage of her. Upon our return home, I became "motion-sick" sitting on the couch as I watched the footage captured by my unsteady camera movements. But it was too late—I was and still remain enamored at capturing underwater pictures.....*

*My profession as a pathologist allows me to travel the world and to pursue my passion of underwater photography. Recent travel destinations are focused on Indonesia and Papua New Guinea where I record the variety of colorful species found near the 'Wallace Line.' Through the years, I have used almost every video camera and housing that was labeled as "this year's sensation."*

*...My first URPRO filter was purchased in about 1990 for the Sony MPK-TRS which was the first housing I could get my hands on that shot 8mm video. Since that time I've tried almost every brand and variation of housing and camera, but I always purchased*

*the URPRO filter because it was the only one that really worked. If I purchased a system with a pre-supplied filter that looked like a washed out jelly-bean, I would immediately replace it with URPRO filter. I don't know how many custom URPRO filters I've had made for my systems, but the most recent is a huge filter that fits over the front of my HD FX1 housing so I can use the internal flip-in device for a diopter to get good macro.*

*I am humbled, gratified, and proud to experience the magic of the underwater world, and without URPRO filters on my cameras, I would probably have quit long ago, because for me, the devil is in the details, and color is king.*

*Signed,  
Paul LeBourgeois  
24 April 2006*

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# Getting the Blues

by Alexander Mustard

Background blues are a very important component of tropical diving images, yet the techniques for getting the most pleasing blues rarely seem to be discussed in much detail. This article is here to redress the balance.

First, conditions are crucial. The richest and most vibrant blues occur when the water is clear and the sun is high and bright. Digital cameras are certainly more forgiving in this respect than film cameras and can produce good background blues in a wider range of conditions, but it remains very important to seek out the best conditions. On any dive and depending on the lens there is usually one or two perfect angles that will produce the most pleasing blues and I spend much of the first few minutes of my dives hunting for them. Only then going on to look for subjects to drop in front. Late in the day or early in the morning the blue of the water lacks its sparkle, although these times are very suitable for darker more moody water colours.

Exposure is also crucial. All the cameras that we use underwater were originally designed for land photography and their metering systems are programmed for that environment. As a result a camera's metering will generally

over expose our background water. As a general rule of thumb an underexposure of 2/3 of a stop, relative to a matrix/evaluative metering reading of the scene, tends to produce the nicest blues. Or most of the time F8 @ 1/60<sup>th</sup> sec on ISO 100 usually gets you pretty close in the tropics!

We can further refine the exact shade of blue according to our tastes. Most photographers favour rich deep blues, which add drama, impact and moodiness to underwater images. These deep colours look particularly good next to warm coloured, brightly lit, foreground subjects (such as a yellow fish, and orange sponge or the classic red soft coral). Deeper blues may require further underexposure. Underexposure is also required when the sun is in the frame as it helps to hold the detail in the sunburst and restrain the size of the sunball (see my article in UWP Mag 25).

When I am shooting balanced light fish portraits my own taste for blues is for slightly lighter, brighter but still rich blues. To find these I usually have to dive shallower (particularly over white sand in the 5-10m depth range) and underexpose less. These blues give a cleaner and more vibrant look, which I think suits this type of subject more than deeper moody blues.



*In filter photography we can control our blues with our camera angle. Here I chose a downward camera angle to produce a rich deep blue behind the turtle. Nikon D2X + 16mm. Subal Housing. Magic Filter. F3.5 @ 1/50<sup>th</sup>.*

## Digital considerations

None of this is really that new. These rules have been pretty much the same since the days of film domination. And at first glance things might seem easier now. Back then different film stocks rendered quite different blues - Kodachrome for natural blues, Fujichrome for saturated blues and Ektachrome for rich royal blues – and it could be a challenge to choose the correct stock for a particular dive. Digital offers an advantage, it seems, through variable white balance and saturation (available in RAW files), which offers us a sliding scale of adjustment tuneable to the exact conditions.

But there is one important difference for shooting blues in digital imaging that is linked to this adjustable white balance. On digital it is important that we get plenty of white light from our strobes onto our subject. This ensures that we (or the camera, when set it to Auto-WB) can use a low colour temperature value for the white balance and therefore keep blues blue. This was never an issue on film as the “WB” of the film is fixed. Irrespective of the foreground lighting the blue was always blue. On digital if we change the WB to adjust the subject’s colours then we inevitably affect the blue.

This is a potentially confusing principle, and not one I have heard discussed before. So to aid comprehension, let me put it another way. If I am too far from a subject, I will not get enough white light from my strobes onto it. As a result the subject appears too blue. No problem, I think “I can fix that in the RAW converter”. And indeed by increasing the colour temperature value in the converter I can remove the blue from the subject. Unfortunately this same adjustment also acts on the background, sucking the richness from the blue. Even if you



*I find that slightly brighter mid-blues work best as backgrounds for fish portraits. Nikon D2X + 105mm. Subal Housing. Subtronic strobes. F10 @ 1/125<sup>th</sup>.*

don’t shoot RAW, you will find that the camera will do a similar thing in Auto-WB.

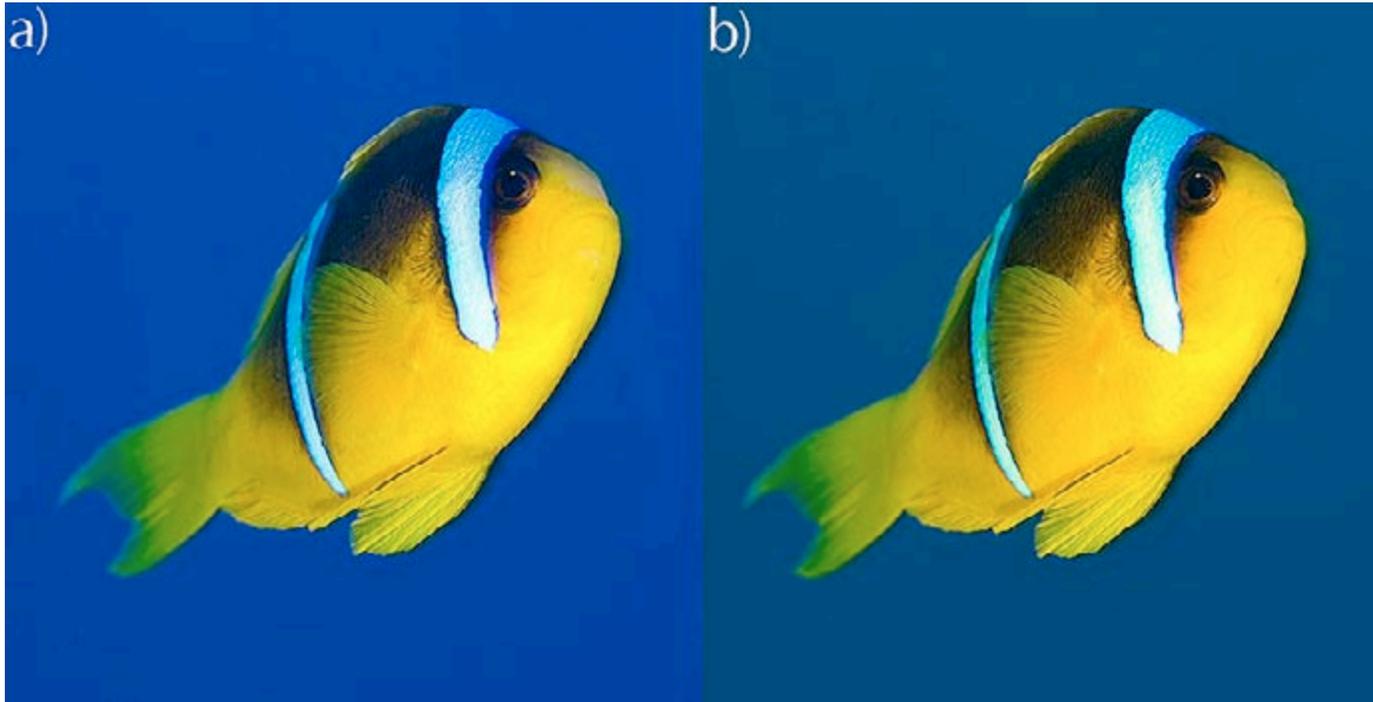
The result may be subtle, but it can be enough to just take the edge off really pleasing blues in many digital images.

The result of over correcting WB is that



*Clear water and bright sunny conditions are required to produce rich blue water backgrounds. Nikon D2X + 10.5mm. Subal Housing. Subtronic strobes. F8 @ 1/80<sup>th</sup>.*

blues tend to look washed out (see the example of the stripy snapper). Colour correcting JPGs in Photoshop (or similar functions such as Enhance in iPhoto) usually has a slightly different effect – rather than washing out blues it tends to make



*This image compares the blues on an image processed with a) a cool colour temperature and b) with Cloudy WB. Cloudy WB is a popular setting for underwater photography because it warms up images. However not only does it warm up the light on the subject, but also warms up the water creating a slightly muddy colour. Nikon D2X + 150mm. Subal Housing. Subtronic strobes. F7.1 @ 1/60<sup>th</sup>.*

blues muddier (adding too much red to the image) or increasingly purple (too much magenta). Any quick browse of the internet will reveal that both washed out blues and red/purple blues are becoming increasingly common trend in underwater images.

The solution to getting rich blues backgrounds in our high tech digital images is to get our underwater photography basics right and get as close to our subject as possible.

### Other digital factors

There are other consequences to this line of thought. Certain WB settings such as “Cloudy” have become popular with underwater photographers because they add a pleasing warming effect to underwater images – which as described above helps to overcome problems of not getting enough white light onto the subject. The downside of this setting is that it will also warm up a nice pure blue to a reddy-greeny blue. A better solution is to use a cooler WB setting (around 4500K) and ensure we get close enough to the subject so that we do not



*Underexposing blues by about 2/3 of a stop (-0.7) compared with a matrix metering of the scene helps produce the deep blues that underwater photographers favour. Nikon D2X + 12-24mm. Subal Housing. Subtronic strobes. F7.1 @ 1/60<sup>th</sup>.*

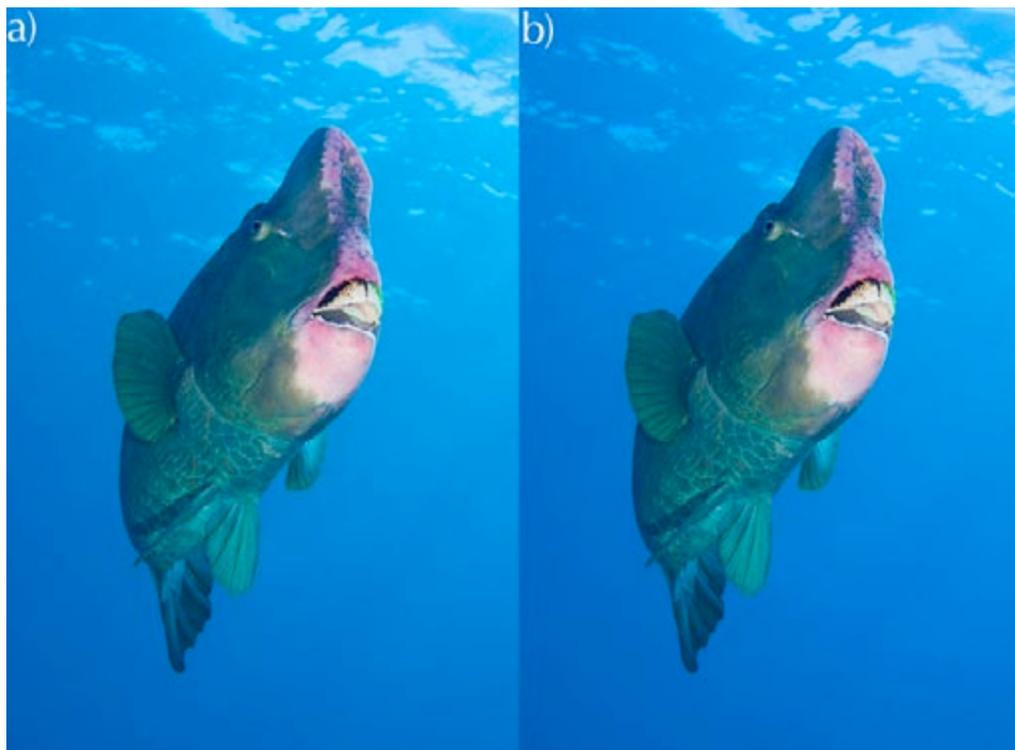
need the warming crutch of Cloudy-WB.

It also follows that warm colour balanced strobes will also help produce richer blue backgrounds because they allow us (or the camera)

to set cooler colour temperatures in the white balance. Brands such as Subtronic and Ikelite are well known for having warm coloured light and therefore will produce bluer backgrounds compared with a cooler strobe such as Inon, when the WB of both images is set on the subject.

Another factor that affects the blue colour recorded by the camera is the brand. The venerable Fuji S2 was well known for producing greeny blues, while Nikon's latest DSLRs, the D2X and D200, produce richly saturated blues not dissimilar to those produced by Fuji's Velvia and Provia slide films. Canon DSLRs tend to produce less saturated blues, and have the advantage of being cleaner with very smooth tonal gradients. Most of the time these characteristics can be changed in the RAW converter, but to my eyes at least there is no denying that each of the manufacturer's has a look.

Filters also help to produce pleasing, deep blues because they block much more blue light relative to warm colours, thus slightly under exposing the blue. Interestingly, different underwater filters also produce different blues. The UR Pro CY filter tends to produce deep royal blues and the Magic Filter produces purer mid-blues, although not as dark. In available light photography it is hard to control the exact exposure



*We can use post processing in Photoshop to fine-tune blues to our tastes. Here I used the Selective Color tool to change the original a) to b). I simply increased the magenta and decreased the yellows in the Cyans to produce a subtly more pleasing water colour. Nikon D2X + 28-70mm. Subal Housing. Sea & Sea strobes. F5 @ 1/250<sup>th</sup>.*

of the blue relative to the subject as both are illuminated by the same light source. But we can get quite a lot of control by changing the camera angle to alter the brightness of the blue - shooting down into deeper water to get darker blues and slightly upwards to get lighter ones.

## Post processing blues

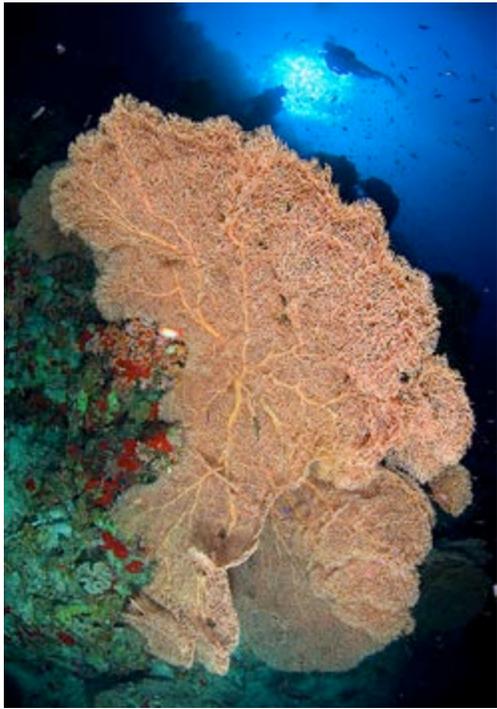
Of course the RAW conversion is not the end of the line for digital processing and Photoshop offers us many ways to improve the blue in our images. As always with Photoshop there are many ways to achieve an effect, but the one I would like to discuss here is one of the simplest to use - the new "Selective



*This is a common problem with digital images. I was too far away from this snapper when I took this image. As a result the image was too blue. I adjusted the WB in the raw converter to get rid of the blue cast on the subject, but this also sucked out the blue from the background, producing an unattractive washed out look.*

Color" tool introduced (under Image>Adjustments) in Photoshop CS2.

The Selective Color tool allows us to alter the hues of the blues and cyans in the image without



remove any green tinge to the water. To adjust the Blue colours again increasing the magenta will deepen the blue and removing the yellow will tend to make the blue more vibrant.

There is a caveat with this technique, and that is to go easy on the magenta particularly if the images are going to be printed/published in CMYK. Overly rich deep blues on the computer screen can have the tendency to print purple because they contain too much magenta. Although a good CMYK conversion will avoid this problem.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, there is certainly some irony in the fact that the flexibility provided by adjustable white balance in digital imaging actually makes it more important to get our basic technique correct under the water if we want to produce great blues in our digital images. And while post processing can help us achieve pleasing blue backgrounds in all conditions the best blues will always come from finding the perfect angle in the ideal environmental conditions.

**Alex Mustard**

[www.amustard.com](http://www.amustard.com)

*Early morning or late afternoon dives produce much more muted water colours, which can often create a pleasingly moody effect. Nikon D2X + 10.5mm. Subal Housing. Subtronic strobes. F8 @ 1/250<sup>th</sup>.*

having to go to the effort of masking off the open water section of the image (assuming that there is not a lot of blue or cyan in the subject). If the background is predominantly cyan then use the tool to select the Cyan colours in the image, and if it is blues then select the blues. To adjust the cyan colours try increasing the magenta in the cyans to produce a richer blue colour. It is also worth reducing the yellow in the cyans to

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# Unravelling the mysteries around the White Shark

Five days tracking in the name of science

By Mario Lebrato

They appear as renowned TV stars in the documentaries, being the most feared creatures in the oceans for the beach lovers since Spielberg labelled them as “man-eaters”. However, few human beings have been close to them, and even less has had the possibility to touch them. Myself, an aspirant scientist studying “Marine Biology and Oceanography” in the National Oceanography Centre (University of Southampton) came across the possibility to encounter face to face, one of the most enigmatic, misunderstood and feared predators on Earth in the waters of South Africa. This opportunity could not be qualified as a diving adventure or a photographic trip, but as a research experience for a student like me, taking advantage of the possibility of performing my still immature photographic skills during the scarce free time during the research project.

Popular destinations during the last years for the ecotourism industry to the encounter of the White Shark (*Carcharodon carcharias*), the waters around South Africa deserve, indeed, the reputation they have achieved. Populations of this apex predator reach presumably their highest and wealthiest numbers in the world around Dyer Island, Geyser Rock, and the “Ring of Death” in False Bay. Scientific studies based on Photo Identification of the dorsal fin, which acts as a fingerprint, reveal a stable population of roughly 1000 recognizable Great Whites around Dyer Island (Scholl, 2002).

This figure entails a degree of error because, for instance, some individuals could not have been recognized as “new” ones during the field monitoring studies. Yet, for the avid diver as well as for the enthusiastic photographer looking for a lifetime experience, this is the right place to go. I would even challenge the “hesitant” public by saying that chances of watching a White Shark in its realm from the cage, from the boat, breaching, or just passing and keeping an eye on you are the highest on Earth, always with benign weather conditions and during the right season. My own experience demonstrates this efficiency with more than 20 encounter days in a single month, with journeys of more than 15 sharks having visited our research vessel. The potential for the tourism industry is astonishing, but I would like to remind to anyone interested that the pick season is during the cold months (June, July, August and September), when the majority of the Great Whites swim, encircling the islands, in search of the seals that populate these oceanic rocky outcrops.

Seal Island in False Bay is a renowned spot for witnessing natural predation events on Cape Fur Seals (*Arctocephalus pusillus pusillus*). The best





*(Left) Gt white swim past  
(Above) Accoustic tag being attached  
(Right) Accoustic tag ready to attach  
(Below) A wounded Cape Fur Seal*



hours tend to be during the early morning (05.30 until 9.00 GMT) and the late afternoon (18.00 until 21.30 GMT), when the dim light natural condition enables White Sharks to take advantage of their upper dark body and ambush the seals from below. Dyer Island and its adjacent rocky counterpart (Geyser Rock), also shelter a large population, being a traditional diving destination. Trips used to depart from Gansbaai, but since a ramp was constructed in Kleinbaai, the White Shark adventure starts from here, where a good number of operators will take tourists to their encounter. A less known destination is Mosselbaai (the scenario of our research); located further north of Dyer Island. This spot bears a small Seal Island, which acts as a magnetic bar for the White Shark. Despite the remarkable number of sharks present, its remote situation has slowed down the “ecotourism frenzy” and only one

operator works in the waters surrounding the island. Curiously, the seal colony is very close to a popular tourism beach, where incidents with Great Whites are very uncommon, depicting the true nature of this predator, which avoids human encounters and concentrates on energetic preys such as seals and blubber from whale carcasses.

In order to unravel the private and mysterious life of the White Shark, remote sensing equipment provides a powerful and reliable tool to study its movements and activities at a local scale. Acoustic telemetry is a scientific method, part of the remote sensing, that allows the tracking of animals, following their movements in a minute-by-minute time scale. At any one moment, the position of the animal in spatial terms can be acquired to analyze its behavioural ecology. The study, coordinated and developed by the PhD candidate Ryan Johnson,





*Shark alley and Cape Fur seals at Geysers Rock*

and locate its geo-position). Following the “bip-bip” sounds emitted by the tag through the headphones, we were able to track this specimen for 103 hours non-stop, which constituted a new world record in the continuous tracking of a shark (the previous was 96 hours by Dr. Gruber from Florida University). The track consisted mainly on following the animal and each 10 minutes annotate the geo-position in order to be able to describe the spatial utilization of its habitat.

Mysterious and enigmatic as the White Shark reveals itself, some of the results obtained were striking at the beginning, but started to make sense after sensible consideration.

The daily routine of our individual consisted on staying from around 9 o'clock in the morning until 7 o'clock in the evening near the same place, close to the mouth of a river along a sandy beach. During this period, the animal did not cover much distance range (roughly less than 2-3 km in such an amount of time every day), but remained close to the “surf” part of the beach. In this zone, the waves broke continuously, creating more oxygenated waters;



*Sniffing out the bait at Dyer Island*

the shark could take advantage of these conditions by swimming more slowly and thus, spending less energy while performing the “ever swim” condition of the majority of the elasmobranches.

This apparently metabolic benefit of swimming slower in more oxygenated waters could be explained by the fact that hunting a prey in this environment is not an easy task, and White Sharks may space their meals by several days. As if the animal had an internal clock, at around 7 o'clock in the evening and 6 o'clock in the morning (at night was the same story as during the light hours), almost every day the shark departed from its light/dark periods location to the surroundings of its hunting grounds: the Seal Island.

They may be following light cues and then are able to adapt their internal rhythms exactly to our man-made clocks, coinciding with the hours when dim conditions are present, having more chances of getting a meal. Upon arrival to her destination, she started patrolling near the high-risk zone in order to intercept Cape Fur Seals, either departing or coming back to the island. Apparently, the shark



*Breaching just in front of the cage*

varied its strategy depending on the Moon phase, taking advantage of brighter conditions when full Moon, as opposed to a different strategy in darker situations. This, however, only represents a field appreciation, difficult to test scientifically due to other confounding variables and unknown factors.

One successful breach was witnessed on a Cape Fur Seal. The predation took place at 19:21 GMT, when completely dark conditions were almost present, and then a picture was impossible to take. The seals used all kind of techniques and tricks to avoid becoming the next meal of one of the White Sharks patrolling the island. As shown in one of the pictures, many seals presented healed wounds from past encounters with sharks, mainly inexperienced individuals in the trial and error learning phase. Some fresh injuries also indicate recent hunting attempts where the seal successfully escaped. This fearsome predator has refined its strategy during



*Hydrophone machinery to detect the tag*

thousands of years of evolution to hunt the seals successfully. At the same time, its prey has also adapted to the situation and only after experience and learning, can Great Whites catch the speedy Cape Fur Seals in the waters of South Africa.

The photographic equipment used during the research study consisted on a NIKON D70 with two camera bodies: a polarized 28-80 mm and a polarized 70-300 mm zoom. I felt quite happy with both; in the relatively close shots, I could get extraordinary pictures. I used polarized zooms because during the majority of the field days, sun conditions were continuous. Operating with a special camera device, I could avoid the shiny and reflectance bits that some shots disclosed. With the second zoom (70-300 mm), I was able to get distant views, which I mainly used in trying to capture the numerous whales at that time of the year. However, whales with calves remained extremely distant and I was not able to get any good image of such a nice pair. I should also have carried a bigger zoom to catch in images the breaching events of Humpback whales (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) in the distance, very poorly performed with my equipment and

probably my inexperience.

Other equipment used was a Konica Minolta DiMAGE Xg, which I remember using in a couple of “wet situations” attached as a critter cam to a pole, in order to get close views and sex recognition by absence or presence of claspers (reproductive organs). For the wounded seal pictures, I borrow a friend’s camera (Panasonic DMC-FZ20). For the next research I am trying to get a housing for the NIKON D70 because the quality of pictures underwater will be increased in case of cage diving or snorkelling.

A note on photographic tips when diving in South Africa is the fact that the normal season to travel is during the cold months and accordingly, the water is freezing and murky. Specially when diving near a seal colony and surroundings, the waters can some times have 1-metre visibility or even less. Amazing pictures are normally taken in other classical destinations with clear waters; South Africa is a typical example of excellent surface pictures, but the majority of the time, discouraging underwater footage. Transparent waters are common during the summer period, when less sharks are present and chances of a shot are intrinsically reduced. Yet, I remember having 3 or 4 days of excellent visibility while being there during the winter, so I guess it is a matter of chance that your White Shark adventure day coincides with positive sea conditions.

As a last note, the operators that organise tourism adventures to the encounter of Great Whites vary in prices and quality, but people have almost the same chances of seeing the animals with any of them. What is true is that one of the boats where I worked for a time before the acoustic tracking, took special care of the animals more specifically

than the others (Barracuda from Shark Diving Unlimited) trying to avoid perturbations, such as flash use or making them jumping excessively after the baited rope end. The boat is also comfortable, big and the service is excellent; they provide transportation from Cape Town, meal, diving gear, as well as accommodation for a reasonable price. I recommend them most strongly to anyone interested in a trip to Dyer Island.

**Mario Lebrato**

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# Life as a tourist photo Pro

by Troy Mayne

It is very difficult to make a living as an underwater photographer but a great way to start or to supplement your earnings is to work as an underwater photographer in the tourism field.

It sounds like an easy gig, and it can be, with certain well developed skills. On the Great Barrier Reef in Cairns, there are quite a few dive operations who employ underwater photographers to visually record a passengers underwater experience and then sell it.

There are many different ways that this is done. Various techniques and equipment are used to produce and sell underwater images. Digital photography has propelled digital stills to the fore front, where video once ruled. Nowadays photographs are taken, printed and sold before a passenger steps off the boat.

I work on day cruise vessels. Generally the best money to be made is on the introductory divers but many people also purchase images of themselves snorkeling. It will probably be their first and for many last underwater experience and they buy images on impulse.

As a result the photographs have to be good, and selling techniques honed to grab the attention of the passenger and then convince them to buy the image.

Most underwater imaging companies prefer applicants to have underwater photography experience or at least photography experience. They have to be at least Divemaster qualified, although instructors are preferred as Workplace Health and Safety laws in Australia require a high level of training as photographers generally operate underwater alone.

To be successful, underwater photographers have to be extremely well organized, computer literate, and a good sense of bearings, working as part of team is also very important as the photographer may rely on other team photographers and dive crew to ensure all photographic opportunities are maximized.

The operation I photograph for does not require much navigation compared to other operations, but there are three various types of underwater photographs that have to be taken, snorkelers, divers and seawalkers (platform helmet



*D70s, Aquatica Housing, Nikkor 12-24mm lens on 13 mm, Manual, shutter 1/400, F7.1*



*D70s, Aquatica Housing, Nikkor 12-24mm lens on 13 mm, Manual, shutter 1/250, F/7.1, Ikelite 200 Strobe on manual 1/8 power.*

surface supplied diving). These three activities operate concurrently so time management, speed and organization is paramount.

On a busy day of up to 350 passengers, the underwater photographer is required to take up to 600 photographs per day that are printed for sale. The underwater photographer is usually in the water for up to four hours with only enough time to change tanks, batteries and memory cards. Poor organization could cause missed photo opportunities with flat batteries or low on air situations!

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An underwater photographer can be ascending between the surface and 10 metres many times a day trying to capture a days reef activities, even more if they are unorganized.

The ability to take photos is of course paramount. Composing inexperienced divers and snorkelers with marine life is extremely difficult and takes some practice.

At the site I work at we have a resident Napoleon Maori Wrasse and three turtles that are 'trained'. Getting to know how to interact with them to get them to pose is very difficult. Although it is generally the humans,



*D70s, Aquatica Housing, Nikkor 12-24mm lens on 13 mm, Manual, shutter 1/160, F/7.1, Ikelite 200 Strobe on manual 1/4 power.*

that are far more difficult to get into position than the marine life.

Whilst the underwater photos are being taken there is a photographic team above water on the Pontoon taking photos and printing index sheets, producing slideshows, and selling the photos. It is a finely honed operation with all members working tightly within the team for maximum efficiency. A small error can cause the loss of hundreds of dollars in profits as the whole day is very structured.

All members of the team rotate through the various positions through the weekly roster. So the ability to

take portrait and group photos is also a very important skill.

Equipment can range from housed compact cameras with a strobe to housed DSLRs. I operate with a range of DSLRs including Nikon D70s, D100, and D200. Other operations require a lone photographer to swim around a large divesite chasing snorkelers and divers in an attempt to capture them all, then print and sell photos.

Capturing all passengers can prove a great challenge and many times prioritization must be done in order to photograph the people who

are likely to buy photographs the most. Understanding the dynamics of the passengers is an art.

It's not all just capturing people, interesting photographs of marine life sell as well, particularly if a passenger witnessed the animal.

Pay is normally based on a retainer with some sort of commission structure, so the incentive is there to take good photos and sell them. Most underwater photographers work as casual employees, although on the Great Barrier Reef diving is all year round and lack of work is hardly a problem.

Some may believe that the work may become mundane, but the challenge is to try and photograph passengers in a different way. The worst of my days on the reef is still better than the best day in any office.

Like most of the dive tourism industry, underwater photographers are very transient animals and move regularly, positions are available all the year round. If you think this industry may interest you, give it a try, it surebeats working for a living!

Some may believe that the work may become mundane, but the challenge is to try and photograph passengers in a different way. The worst of my days on the reef is still better than the best day in any office.

For further information on employment contact [stuart@](mailto:stuart@)



*D70s, Sea and Sea Housing, Sigma 10-20mm lens on 13mm, Manual mode Shutter1/2500, F/7.1, Sea and Sea DX 90 strobe on manual half power.*

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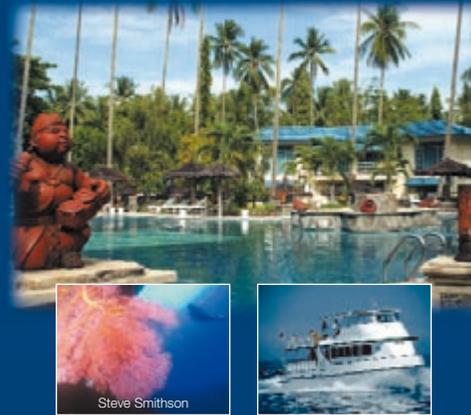
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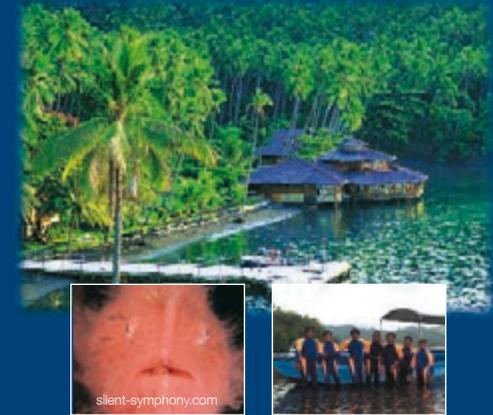
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# 1st Mabini (Anilao) Philippines Dive Guide / Spotter Workshop

by: **Nonoy Tan**

On May 11-12, 2006 local dive guides and “spotters” for underwater photographers converged at Solana Bezo Resort ([www.divesolana.com](http://www.divesolana.com)) of Anilao, Philippines to participate in a workshop organized by the Mabini (Anilao) Resort Owners Association and the local government.

Conceptualized by videographer Marissa Floirendo, the workshop intends to strengthen local capability of providing world-class dive guiding and spotting services to underwater photographers. Also, the aim is to deepen cooperation among stakeholders (private and government) in providing alternative sources of income for subsistence fisher folks.

Throughout the Philippines, numerous dive areas continue to be discovered that are of special interest to macro underwater photographers. The potential of these areas are yet untapped because the underwater macro life have been largely unknown, even to local residents. However, as more divers explore these seemingly barren reefs, the need for professionally trained dive guides and

spotters will surely increase. Hence, this workshop, which is a precursor to a series of training activities, especially targeted for those residing in coastal villages. Before becoming dive guides, some of the trainees in the workshop had been subsistence fishermen.

The trainees came from different parts of the country. Six dive guides were from Anilao, one from Calatagan (Batangas), two from Davao (southern Philippines), and two from Donsol, Sorsogon. Anilao is a popular destination for muck diving, and a frequent host to professional underwater photographers. At the same time, Davao is being explored as a macro photography destination. Donsol, albeit known for its whale shark interaction, will soon be promoted for macro photography too. This convergence of dive guides/spotters from different parts of the Philippines was the first of its kind. Coming from varying backgrounds, the trainees were able to share experiences, learn from each other, and develop camaraderie.

During the workshop sessions, the trainees were presented with a



set of protocols to follow before, during and after the dive with an underwater photographer. They were also given an introduction to basic camera setups, and had an opportunity to handle different cameras. Also, the trainees were provided tips on where and how to find macro critters, including an explanation of behavioral characteristics that are of interest to underwater photographers. After completing actual dives, the trainees were able to develop maps of the dive spots, which illustrated the various critters found in the areas. Furthermore, with the aid of books, they tasked to identify their common and scientific names. The list of critters included species of frogfishes, ghostpipefishes, sea moths, dragonets, nudibranchs, commensal shrimps, eels, etc. Finally, the workshop closed with a “graduation” ceremony and

night socials.

The workshop was a tremendous success and has inspired the organizers to expand the training course to other places in the Philippines, as well as convert the training materials into local dialects.

The project received invaluable support from various stakeholders. These included Joel Uichico (President of the Resort Owners Association of Mabini) and Mayor Rowell Sandoval (Mabini, Batangas). Trainers were Nonoy Tan, Gutsy Tuason, Karina Escudero and Marissa Floirendo – all Filipino underwater photographers and videographers.

**Nonoy Tan**

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# Digital Techniques Workshop

with Alexander Mustard

The Northern Red Sea is at its best in late June – the strong winds of winter have died away, the water has warmed to a pleasant 26°C and large schools of fish gather at prominent divesites, such as Ras Mohammed in spawning aggregations. I was first introduced to the wonders of the Red Sea in this season in 1998 on Peter Scoones's charter to film for the coral reefs episode of the BBC series Blue Planet. And ever since I returned each year at exactly the same time.

This year I thought it was finally time to share these wonders with a wider audience and decided to run my Digital Techniques Workshop with the help of Peter Rowlands of UwP Magazine and in collaboration with Tony Backhurst Scuba. The Red Sea in summer has always been a popular time for Red Sea workshops and if I was to join the party I only wanted to get involved if we could offer something a bit original.

For starters we chose the very spacious and luxurious liveaboard MY Typhoon (regularly voted one of the top boats in the Red Sea). It has loads of space for camera gear, charging and laptops, and plenty of space on the dive deck for kitting up without falling over cameras!

Photographically I always wanted to encourage the group to experiment and take the pictures



*Everyone had their favourite school, but mine are always the Bohar Snappers – each of these fish is 70cm long. Photo by Paul Carre. Nikon D200 + 15mm. Ikelite housing. Magic filter. 1/100th @ F5.*

they wanted, rather than the shots I did. So rather than teaching underwater photography as simple formulas for macro shots, close focus wide angle etc, I started more from the first principles of lighting, story telling, composition and filter



*The week started with wreck photography. We made 3 dives on the Giannis D, timing each to get the sunlight illuminating the best features of the wreck. Here Mike Brodbelt lines up on the classic stern shot. Photo by Alex Mustard. Nikon D2X + 10.5mm + Wratten 22 contrast filter. 1/40th @ F4.5*

techniques. The intention was to provide the knowledge so that the gang could figure out how to take their images, rather than just plug in camera settings I told them. And of course be able to take



*(Above) The schools were out in force at Ras Mohammed. Here a ball of Bohar Snappers gather at Shark Reef. Panorama photo by Peter Rowlands. Two images stitched together. Nikon D70 + 16mm. Subal housing. Magic Filter. 1/90th @ F2.8.*

*(Right) Sunlight streams in the portholes of the Giannis D. Photo by Ralph Mortimore. Nikon D100 + 10.5mm. Sea & Sea housing. 1/8th @ F4.5.*

great pictures on their next trip when I won't be there! The downside of this approach is that it requires a bit more thinking time underwater, so we devised a diving schedule that got us the maximum amount of distraction-free time underwater.

Diving-wise we were totally focused on photography. There was no group diving and everyone was encouraged to find their own space underwater. We didn't try and see all the sites and instead concentrated on repeat diving the handful of places we knew would be most productive. We did two days on the wrecks, two days on reefs and two days concentrating on the schools at Ras Mohammed. With Peter and I on board many people got stuck into filter photography and a few compact users even tried our new secret Auto-Magic Filter (it will be launched in the next issue of UWP). Red Sea diving is ideal for filter photography with clear



*We even managed to squeeze in a snorkel with dolphins between dives at Abu Nuhas. Photo by Martin Foulkes. Nikon D200 + 16mm. Sea & Sea housing. Magic Filter. 1/90th @ F6.3.*



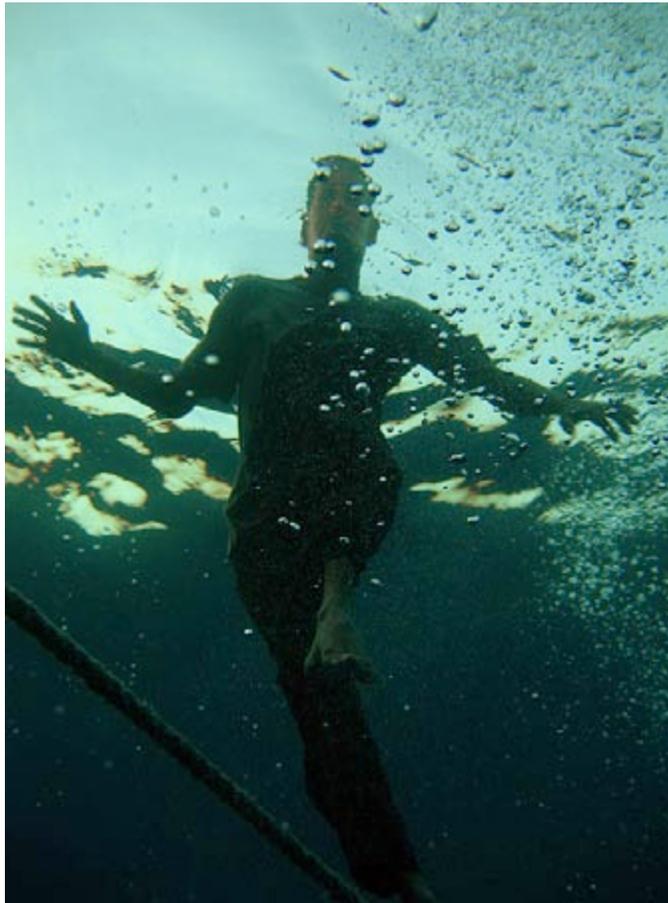
*Dusk dives were a big part of the week. Lionfish are particularly cooperative at this time of day and can be a lot of fun to shoot with wide lenses. Photo by Anders Petersen. Olympus 7070. Anthis wide angle lens. Strobe. 1/100th @ F5.6.*



*The group produced some stunning images. This picture was taken by our youngest diver, 15 year old Daisy Foulkes on only her second dive with a camera. Olympus C40, Inon WAL. 1/60th @ F5.*



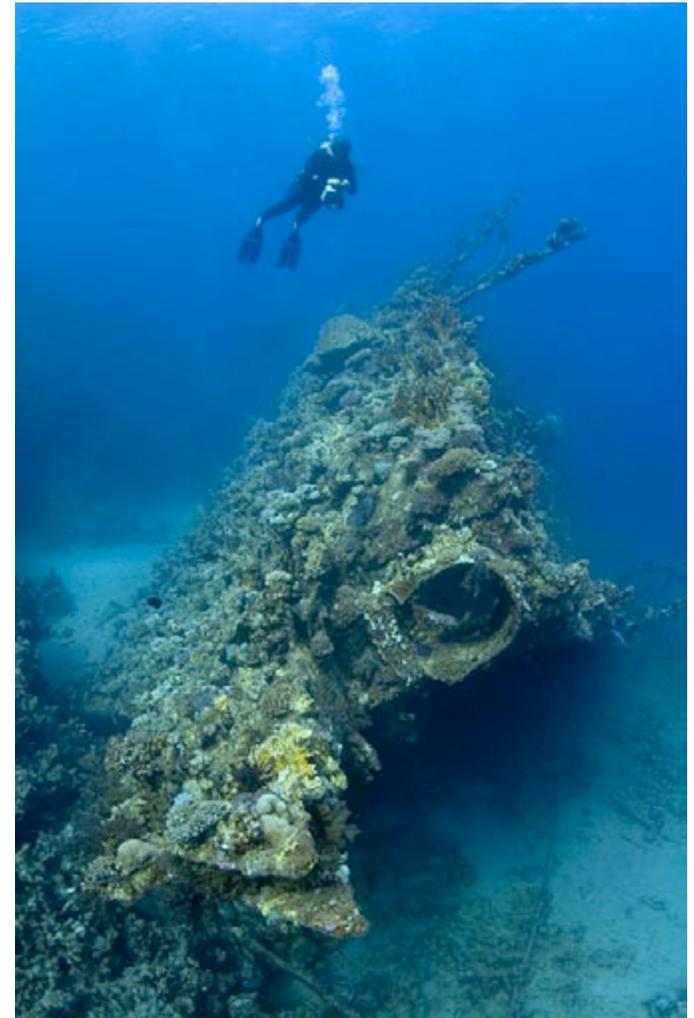
*There were also two schools of barracuda hanging out helpfully in the shallows. This smaller school, being watched by Samantha Bean, was only at 8m. Photo by Alex Mustard. Nikon D2X + 12-24mm. Magic Filter. 1/50th @ F5.6.*



*Throughout the week I tried to encourage everyone to experiment and try new ideas. Tony Stannard really surprised me with this picture of one of the crew tight rope walking at dusk. Nikon Coolpix 7900. Sea and Sea wide angle lens. 1/120th @ F2.8.*

water and sun on every dive. General consensus was that filters were by far the best technique for both the wrecks and the schooling fish.

Because we were repeat diving so many of the sites dive briefings were kept to a minimum and this meant that I was able to give my 8 photography talks in short 30 minute focused lectures just before



*I (Alex) do a spot of modelling above the bow of the Carnatic. Morning dives here ensure that the sunlight is illuminating the distinctive bow of this wreck. Photo by Timo Ahomaki. Nikon D70s + 15mm + Magic Filter. Hugyfot housing. 1/30th @ F5.6.*

people jumped in the water. This also meant that evenings, the traditional lecture time on photo-weeks, were entirely free for reviewing images and providing personal feedback.



*The large plasma screen in the saloon allowed me to give lectures during the day, so tips were fresh in peoples' minds when the jumped in the water. This also left evening free for reviewing images.*

We also decided not to have any sort of competition during the week, to encourage everyone to share ideas and help each other. I have always felt that one of the biggest benefits of trips like this is the osmotic learning that comes from seeing how other photographers work both below and above the waves.

I have to say that we were particularly lucky too. Nearly all the divesites we dived were really at their best when we dropped in. Only The Alternatives disappointed with poor viz. At the wrecks on Abu Nuhas the weather was so glassy calm that we were even able to shoot the bow of the Krisoula K without any swell. At Ras Mohammed the schools were out in force with Bohar Snappers, Batfish, Barracuda and Unicornfish all there in

impressive numbers. And at Small Crack I have never seen so much fish spawning on one dusk dive. I do a lot of dives to photograph fish spawning and I have never seen as many fish (1000s) spawning with this intensity. Wow. Dusk diving was a big part of the week as this is when lionfish come out and pose, and it is also the ideal time for shooting moody sunbursts. We even had (fleeting) encounters with sharks and dolphins during the week.

Anyway, all that remains is to thank the gang for making it such a great week. The group and their cameras were: Alex Mustard (D2X Subal), Peter Rowlands (D70 Subal, Panasonic FX01), Timo Ahomaki (D70 Hugyfot), Andy Barker (D70 Seacam), Samantha Bean (D70, Sea & Sea), Mike Brodbelt (5D Subal), Jarret Brown (D70



*The gang on the upper deck of MY Typhoon.*

Subal), Paul Carre (D200 Ikelite), Martin and Linda Foulkes (D200 Sea & Sea), Daisy Foulkes (Olympus C40), Anthony Holley (F90X Subal, Ricoh G3), John Leslie (DX 8000g Sea & Sea), Ralph Mortimor (D100 Sea & Sea), Jane Ossman (D100 Sea & Sea), Anders Petersen (Olympus 7070), Tim Priest (D70 Nexus), Peter Regan (D60 Subal), Tony Stannard (Coolpix 7900) and Martha Tressler (D100, Subal). And finally many thanks to the crew and dive guides (David and Tracy Allen) on MY Typhoon for their large part in making it such a fun and successful week.

**Alex Mustard**

[www.amustard.com](http://www.amustard.com)

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# A model's woe

by Peter Rowlands

In hindsight I suppose I was a bit naive in not spotting the signs.

For the last 18 months I had been modeling for 'Alexis' (I've changed his name from Alex Mustard to protect his privacy). Everything seemed to be going so well. Shots of me were regularly published in books and magazines but then things seemed to change and I was a fool not to notice.

Firstly I was used in silhouette as a 'large object' (see UwpP25) to help sun ray shots and then, only a couple of months ago, I caught him oggling the centrefold in 'Wetsuits Monthly'. Sure it was the same black number which has kept him so happy for the last 18 months but this one was different - it had flashy yellow panels and leg stripes. I should have taken more notice right then but what with producing UwP and a recent house move I just let it slip by. Foolish me.



It was only on a recent trip to the Red Sea that the truth finally sank in. Alexis wanted a cover shot for an upcoming book on the Red Sea so naturally I kitted up and made my way to the location. Imagine my horror when I saw 'Denise' (AKA Denis Antipas for privacy reasons) in my spot and Alexis seemingly taking shots.

In my innocence I thought there must have been a mistake so went to take up my position obscuring Denise (see photo top left) only to be waved away by Alexis. Well the shame of it.

I swam off in shock. My modeling career seemingly in tatters, my mind in turmoil. Who?

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When? How? Why?

Without realising it I swam round in circles for several minutes and as I came round a small coral head I saw 'them' again - and they were still at it.

I'm not proud of what happened next. I think most of you would have reacted the same as me. Denise gave me two fingers and I replied with a defiant middle one. Then I just flipped and wanted to punch 'her' lights out. Trouble is with a specific



*All photos by Alexis Mustard with his D2x thingy*

gravity of around 1 there's virtually no surprise element so I resorted to what every girl would and pulled the bitch's hair.

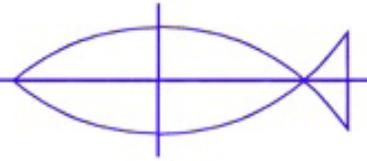
Boy did that make me feel good but in the end it achieved nothing. Her shot looks destined for the Red Sea front cover and my modeling career is over.

Let this be a lesson to all you would be models.

**Petra Rowlands**

[peter@uwpmag.com](mailto:peter@uwpmag.com)

# The British Society of Underwater Photographers



## Splash In 06 winners

The British Society of Underwater Photographers annual Splash In took place on July 1st in Plymouth, Devon.

For the print competition 134 prints were submitted and displayed at the

National Marine Aquarium, Plymouth from 10th June and at the Mount Batten Centre, Plymouth on the day (1 July)

Founded in November 1967, The British Society of Underwater



*On the Day Diugital Close Up and Overall winner*

*Winner: Alan James - Lobster - a fabulous one week liveaboard holiday in the Red Sea generously donated by Tony Backhurst Scuba*

*The Overall winner of the Grand prize was selected by a panel of judges - Kelvin Boot, Director of the National Marine Aquarium, Plymouth; John Boyle, freelance videographer and Colin Doeg, co-founder of BSoUP [standing in for Tony Backhurst].*



*Humour/Creative - 18 digital images + 3 slide images*

*Winner: Tony Baskeyfield (digital) - Kitten in a wine glass - AP Valves Trophy and a Buddy jacket kindly donated by A P Valves.*

*On the Day Digital wide-angle*

*Winner: Trevor Rees*

*- Ascending the anchor*

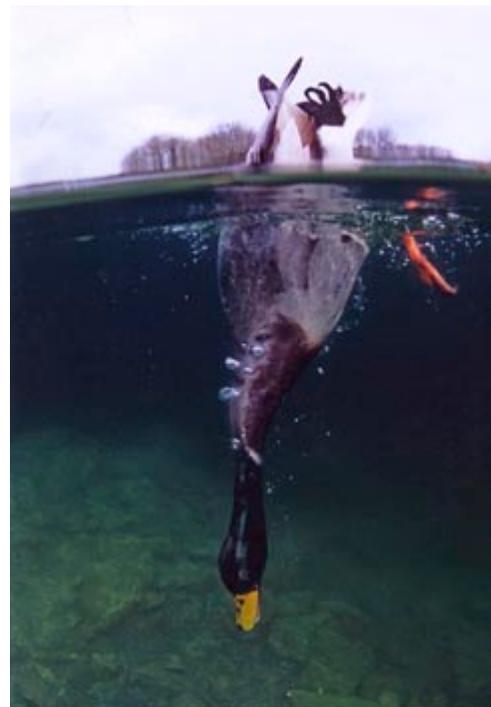
*line - Alan James*

*Photography Digital*

*Image Trophy and a £125*

*voucher to spend at Alan*

*James Photography*



*British prints- Winner: Simon Brown*  
*- Duck diving - Ocean Optics Trophy, a*  
*£250 voucher to spend at Ocean Optics*  
*Ltd, and a year's family membership*  
*to the National Marine Aquarium in*  
*Plymouth.*



*Overseas prints - Winner: Charles*  
*Hood - Hawksbill turtle - Alan*  
*James Photography Print Trophy, a*  
*£250 voucher to spend at Cameras*  
*Underwater, and a year's family*  
*membership to the National Marine*  
*Aquarium in Plymouth.*

Photographers (BSoUP) is the largest underwater photographic society in Britain, catering for both film and digital photographers. It is a not-for-profit organisation, run entirely by volunteers with a passion for underwater photography.

BSoUP holds meetings at the Holland Club, Imperial College,

[www.uwpmag.com](http://www.uwpmag.com)

South Kensington, London, on the third Wednesday of each month, which include illustrated talks by experienced underwater photographers and a monthly competition. Please join us.

BSoUP organises the annual Splash-In competition. Next year's event takes place on Saturday 30th

June, 2007 at the The Mount Batten Centre, Plymouth, Devon.

BSoUP publishes the newsletter in focus and provides advice and information on all aspects of underwater photography - digital and film.

Next BSoUP meeting:  
Wednesday 19th July 2006 at 7.30

for 8.00 p.m. in The Holland Club, Imperial College, South Kensington, London SW7.

So why not join today?

[www.bsoup.org](http://www.bsoup.org)

# Book & DVD Reviews

## Your Guide to creating Underwater Video

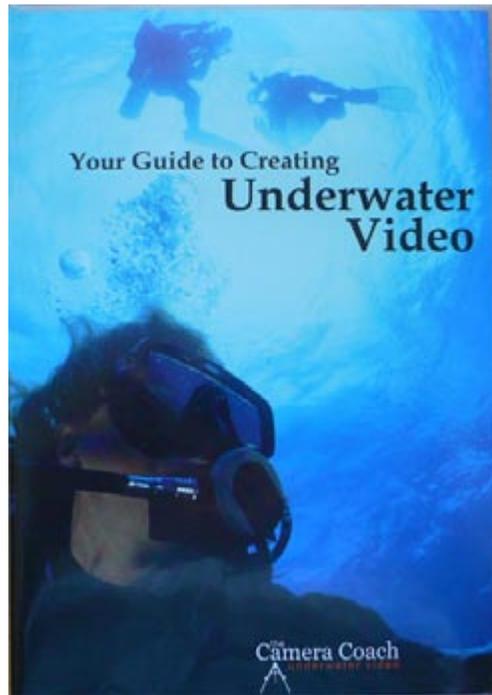
by Annie Crawley

Underwater video has always been a notoriously difficult subject to do justice in print as we are dealing with moving images in a tactile format.

With the advent of DVD technology and digital video it has never been easier to produce underwater footage and output it for others to watch. However newer, easier technology doesn't automatically produce a good end product.

This DVD provides you with what is needed from the basics right through to successful editing together with equipment choice and maintenance. It is full of very useful instruction, so full in fact that it is too much to watch in one sitting. Watching a chapter at a time with time in between to absorb the information would be more effective.

As someone who has dabbled in



video production I found this DVD hit the right level of information presentation. The only problem I had initially was with the style of the presentation. The dual presenters, Annie herself and Jeff Morse, don't come over as pro presenters and this made me lose my concentration for the subject early on. However once I'd accepted the delivery style I found the DVD very informative and well paced.

Anyone interested in improving their video overall would benefit a great deal from this DVD.

[www.thecameracoach.com](http://www.thecameracoach.com)

## Marine fish & invertebrates of Northern Europe

by Frank Moen & Erling Svensen

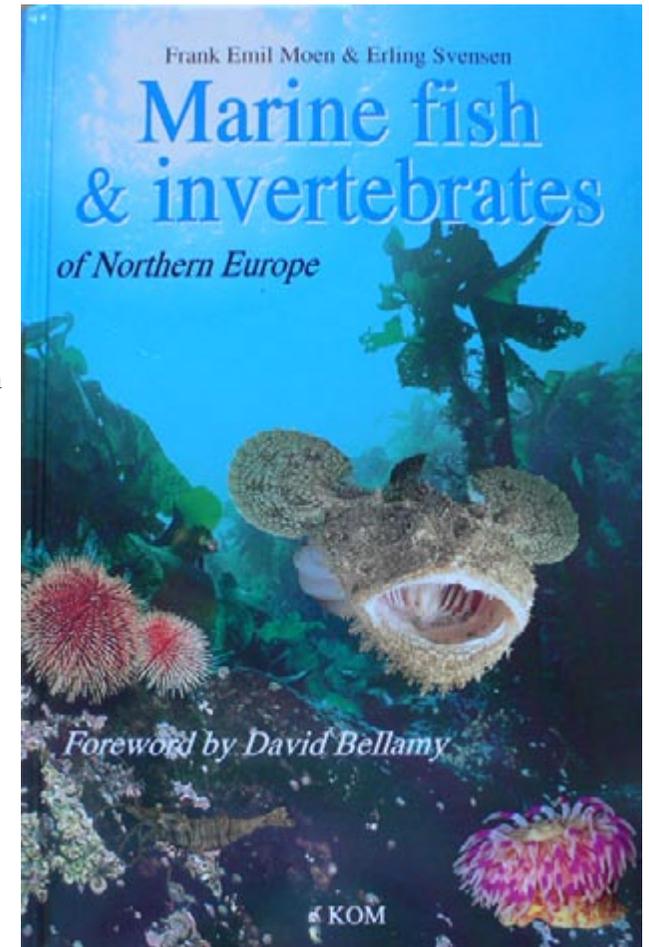
This 600 page book is a very comprehensive account of the marine life of Northern Europe.

The photographs, mostly taken by Erling Svensen, are all of a consistently high quality and are excellent for identification.

The accompanying text is both thorough and well written covering the distribution, description, habitat and biology of each subject. In addition there are several boxes entitled 'Did you know' which contain fascinating tidbits of information (Did you know the oldest recorded Icelandic cyprines are over 220 years old?)

I can't imagine how many dives it must have taken to amass such a broad collection of identification photographs and produce such extensive text. It is a credit to both authors.

As David Bellamy states in his cover note "Based on sound science and wreathed with real life pictures,



this superb book not only allows you to name their names but to understand the roles each creature plays in the balance of marine life"

The Marine Fish & Invertebrates of Northern Europe was first published in Norway by KOM and is available from Aquapress for £29.99 + postage

[www.aquapress.co.uk](http://www.aquapress.co.uk)

# Guidelines for contributors

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

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

**Uw photo techniques** - Balanced light, composition, etc

**Locations** - Photo friendly dive sites, countries or liveaboards

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

**Equipment reviews** - Detailed appraisals of the latest equipment

**Personalities** - Interviews/features about leading underwater photographers

**If you have an idea for an article,  
contact me first before putting pen to paper.**

E mail [peter@uwpmag.com](mailto: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

I travelled out to California in 2004 with Charles Hood in response to an advertisement in UWP, promising giant kelp, good visibility... and sharks.

After three days hunting jewfish through the kelp forest and being mobbed by garibaldi we left the rocks and reefs. A dayboat that seemed as big as the average Red Sea live-aboard pulled onto the jetty, and 12 divers struggled aboard.

There was a rush to get the cameras onto the shelf as there was only space for half of the equipment. The rest cluttered up the cabin, wedged in by jackets, towels, shoes and other spare clothing against the Pacific swell.

Later, several miles south of Catalina Island, we were surrounded by an expanding circle of fish guts and a slick of oily blood. With an expert shark-wrangler, the blue sharks were guaranteed. Two hours, then three and the hot Autumn sun (California, remember: where cold-water diving is 18°C!) made our undersuits

unbearably uncomfortable, but we thought about kitting up anyway, because it was the time for the sharks, guaranteed, of course.

It was a lot more comfortable in the water, but the only thing to see was a rain of white snotty chum. The small aluminium cage didn't look very inviting so we took turns to swim in circles, further and further away from the boat, with the deep blue tempting us into a downward spiral.

After an hour Hollywood arrived, the paparazzi strobing for all they were worth. Errol Flynn and David Niven, speed-boating to Avalon for the sport fishing? No, the excitement of a passing salp when there's nothing else to focus on.

Two hours, 30 bar, and out of the water. The next shift of divers splashed into the chum. Two more hours, and back to Catalina. There was a lot of talk about the persecution of sharks throughout the world.

Next day was the same. After 90 minutes I was



*Coolpix 5000 + x0.68 wide-angle supplementary lens. Twin Inon z220 at -1.0 and -2.0 stops (manual, R hand strobe in slave mode, linked by fibre-optic cable). Subal housing with dome. 1/120 and f5.6, 100 ASA equivalent, Auto white balance. Processed in Photoshop CS.*

abandoned beside a sorry fishes head, tied vainly to the cage; by then lunch was so much more attractive than the bare blue. Suddenly, a flicker of white, just beneath the swell. I peered into the blue, and the flicker disappeared. A second later, and the shark was perfectly clear. Shutter release. Again. Again: bah!

Strobe cycling. Again, great. Again; blast! Buffer full! Oh... I'm not in the cage... and the Mako had her nose on the dome... and the buffer

was full.

So I bought a DSLR.

**Tim Priest**  
[apbg25071\\_2@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:apbg25071_2@blueyonder.co.uk)

**Do you have a nice shot with a short story behind it? If so e mail me and yours could be the next "Parting shot".**

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In-depth photography portfolio with trade secrets revealed, Best Dive Sites

Rated as the Best underwater photography magazine in the Asia Pacific

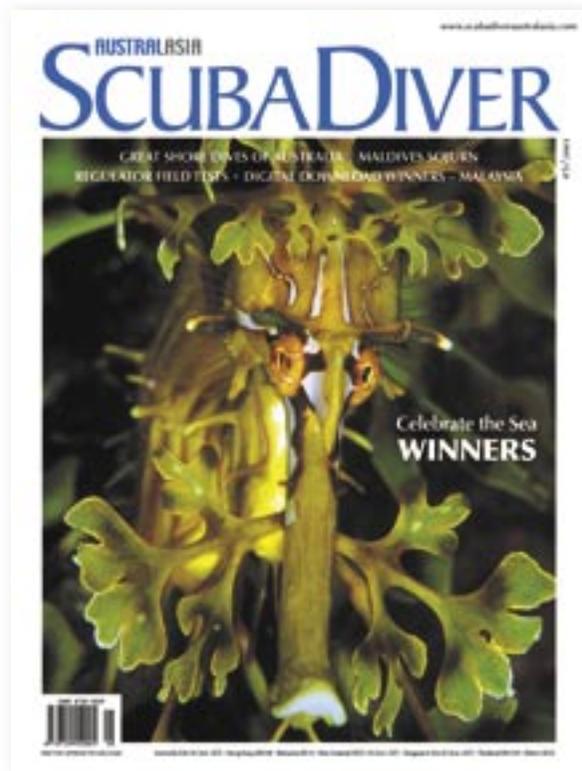
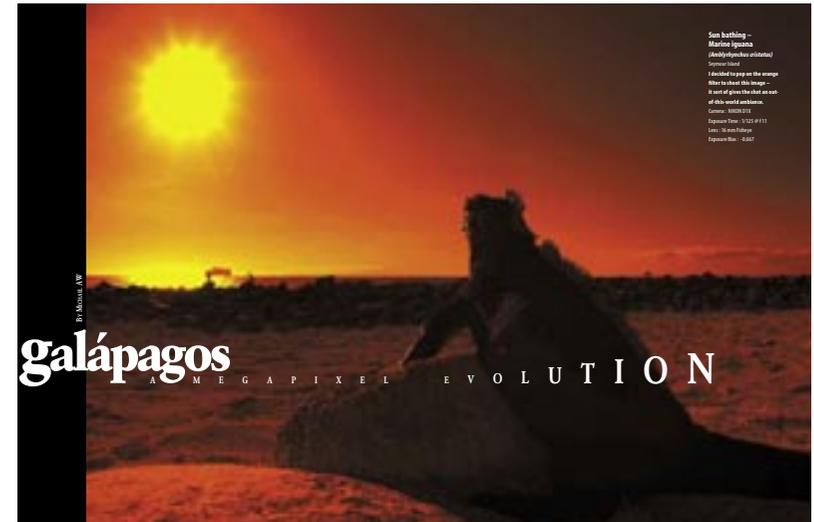


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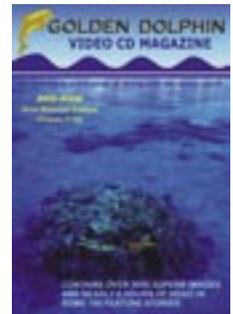
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