Underwater Photography

a web magazine
Issue 47
Mar/Apr 2009

Our motive:
Your passion

Precise underwater housings from Subal.
Designed for hands - made by hands.

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SUBAL

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Publisher/Editor Peter Rowlands
www.pr-productions.co.uk
peter@uwpmag.com

PROVEN
URPRO COLOR CORRECTION FILTERS

"Look-alike colors" do NOT perform alike!
...and here's why:

Experience demonstrates *URPRO Filters' proven performance cannot be matched by Copy Cat filters with "similar colors" and lower prices!* When you have the best underwater color correcting filters available, it is expected —and flattering— when others attempt to copy our success.

URPRO Filters are *scientifically designed professional-grade Underwater Color Correction Filters*. These Filters provide superior full-color images on all digital, cine, video, and film cameras. URPRO Filters embody exclusive and proprietary properties which regulate light to optimize underwater color correction. Using *natural sunlight only*, URPRO Filters restore the complete color spectrum to depths ranging between 10 feet and 60+ feet.

URPRO FILTER HIGHLIGHTS:

- URPRO developed the original underwater color correcting filter technologies for tropical blue green water and green algae water
- URPRO Filters are scientifically designed high-performance Underwater Correction Optical Filters
- URPRO CY Filters and URPRO GR Filters are Proven for their ability to provide the full color spectrum using natural sunlight or electronic flash in tropical blue green waters and green algae waters

URPRO MANUFACTURING STANDARDS

- URPRO exclusively manufactures URPRO Filters in Optical Glass and Optical Plastic
- URPRO Optical Plastic Filter manufacturing standards meet/exceed ISO 9001:2000, and meet/exceed other recognized international standards
- URPRO exclusively retains these underwater color correction trade secrets, proprietary manufacturing methodologies, and Patent(s)

URPRO TECHNICAL STANDARDS

- URPRO Optical Glass and Optical Plastic Filters have *identical color correction and light transmission characteristics*
- URPRO Optical Glass and Optical Plastic Filters boast parallel surfaces which provide superior light and image transmission characteristics
- URPRO Optical Glass and Optical Plastic Filters demonstrate edge-to-edge distortion-free image capturing capabilities
- URPRO Optical Glass and Optical Plastic Filters can be used inside/outside of an underwater housing
- URPRO Filters are *not affected* by salt or fresh water
- URPRO Optical Plastic Filters have a durable anti-scratch coating on both sides
- URPRO Optical Plastic Filters can be custom shaped for special OEM/Research applications
- URPRO Optical Plastic Filters are "mounted" in anodized filter rings, or can be "unmounted"

PROS AND U/W MANUFACTURES USE URPRO

- URPRO Filters are routinely provided "as original Filters" by many very prestigious international camera and underwater housing manufactures. Some of these include Ikelite-USA, Gates Underwater Systems-USA, Amphibico-Canada, IMAX-Canada, Epoque-Japan, Foto Leone-Italy, Sealux-Germany, Sea&Sea-UK, Tocad-Japan, Nimar-Italy, Sony Corporation-Japan, Light & Motion-USA, Aquatix International-USA, BS Kinetics-Germany, Onderwaterhuis-The Netherlands, MediaSub International-France, and others

EXPERIENCE
THE POWER OF
COLOR
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Editorial

Articles in UwP it would appear are like London buses. None turn up for ages and then three turn up all at once. Such is true for 3 articles in this Issue about underwater photography courses.

Regardless of how unplanned UwP is, all of these articles illustrate that there is no better way to improve your underwater photography skills than to go away on a trip with like minded individuals under the tutelage of an experienced pro.

In this issue we feature no less than 5 such courses and all of those who attended the various trips came away with the same conclusion - my underwater photography came on leaps and bounds as a result.

Even if you take the services of a photo pro out of the equation, there is still no better way to improve and enjoy your underwater photography than to dive with other underwater photographers. True, you may never see them underwater but the feedback and conversations in the evening whilst looking at others results could never be achieved by operating in isolation.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

Readers Lives

Complaint

I just wanted to drop you a quick note to complain. Since reading UWP I have been seduced into taking trips to Sri Lanka Dahab Egypt, now Bali on Jan 22. You are costing me a fortune! I have purchased a compact digital housing, (I had a perfectly good film outfit but you convinced me I needed to try digital). This week I purchased an SLR housing and I see new strobes, arms and sync cords in my future. This addiction is your fault. I won't even mention the cost of books, magazines and computer software and hardware. Please stop publishing these articles and pictures that entice me to spend all this money, you're killing me!

On a more serious note, I love the magazine and your advertisers should too! Thanks very much.

David Bethune

Hi David

Many thanks for your e mail.

Here at UwP we always take complaints very seriously but in your case I have no sympathy. You are embarking on a most enjoyable, frustrating, bank balance emptying, inspiring, educating experience. In addition I'd like to include your letter in the next issue so you have already become a published journalist....

Peter Rowlands

The following e mails were received after my editorial in the last issue UwP46 complaining that the standard of recent BBC underwater series had been severely compromised by following a Steve Irwin type delivery and American financial influence. I was worried my comments might lose our Australian and American readers but it turns out I was pleasantly wrong...

Dumb BBC

After just having read your editorial in the recently released Underwater Photography Magazine issue 46, I must wholeheartedly agree with your take on the whole underwater documentary industry and indeed the whole natural history genre in general.

Yes I am an Australian and I am from an hour south of the now famous or infamous Australia zoo, home of the croc hunter himself. I have a great passion for underwater video myself and long to get in the industry if I can, growing up seeing David Attenborough documentaries and now seeing the dribble they try and pass off as educational, irritates me to. How is an animal supposed to act as nature intended with some idiot pulling its tail? We are all aware that if u irritate a creature... many will go for you, we do not need to see and idiot almost get bitten every time he is on shot.

Despite him being a fellow Ozzie, I was never a fan of Steve Erwin his shows always seemed to dramatized and pointless. I'd hate to wonder what he was trying to do to that black ray before he got hit. I dive with them regularly and they have never shown any hint of aggression or indeed defensiveness aside from just swimming off if they are not happy with your presence.

I think there is unfortunately a market for this cheap rubbish due simply to those who have no interest or intelligence to appreciate the wildlife that is to be shown.

Watching something like the Blue Planet series is much more to my liking.

In any case, I doubt you will loose your ozzie readership over your comments, I for one am not going anywhere.

Keep up the good work Peter.

Barry Duffill

I just read your editorial and before I could read another page I felt compelled to write and tell you how much I agree with your comments 110% (not a typo).

I think you were brave to sight the ausie presenter but you are completely on the mark with this kind of dumb sensationalising reportage. Bring back more Blue Planet with more technology, not fat Dive controllers making normal diving look dangerous!

More power to your emagazine!

George Day

I recently discovered Underwater Photography and greatly enjoyed the newest issue. I like that you have full exposure and gear details for each photo.

I wanted to e-mail to let you know that I wholeheartedly agree with your editorial. We need more Attenborough- and Hall-style nature documentaries and fewer Irwin-style "documentaries". The latter amount to a "we're so cool, we're so awesome, and look how dangerous this is" approach, rather than (as you say) letting the animals, unique situations, and artistry tell the story.

You're absolutely right to put blame on the Discovery Channel. In general, they make shows to appeal to the lowest common denominator for $$$ sake, and I think they're trying to compete with dumb male channels like Spike TV here in North America.

I look forward to the next issue.

Ben Speers-Roesch

Couldn't agree more with your editorial. Let the wildlife speak for itself and get the presenter out of the bloody frame!

Its sensational enough with a muppet "pimping my wildlife encounter". Its almost got to the point where I will write off any "wildlife" broadcast that does not feature the venerable Sir David. It seems he's the only one who can direct and produce the producers/directors to deliver a product that accurately reflects what the TV guide says. The only conclusion I can make is budget. It's cheaper to film an "on camera" piece with a human telling us why something is special or important that it is to actually shoot the creature and add a voiceover later. I have seen plenty of humans but not many six gills...would rather see the shark in its glory than hear about the dangers (sic) of diving at night and in a current. No offence to the presenters or safety bloke Richard Bull, but they are very much secondary to the actual subject/ interest and should remain off frame.

Simon Brown

Just a note of support for your editorial in Uwpmag46. I daresay you will come in for a great deal of stick for your views but most divers I know fully agree with your sentiments about recent TV programmes. It may hearten you to know that last year we (Durham University) awarded Alistair Fothergill (Producer of Life in the Freezer, Blue Planet, Planet Earth etc) an honorary doctorate in recognition of his vision in making the type of wildlife programmes we are not ashamed of.

Many thanks for your inspirational Uwpmag.

Dr David Hyde

I have to say its been a while since I had such a giggle. Been waiting for this bomb to burst for a while as there is nothing worse than watching a program shot in some of the most gorgeous dive locations with rare and awesomely stunning marine life just to have it stuffed up by a poorly directed show where you see more of the host than the marine life.

Thanks for taking the time to vent and truth be told this should have been done a long LONG time ago !!!! Now lets hope the studios wise up and give divers what they want and entice the non-diver to take up the sport.

Ian Keller

I am sorry you have had to jeopardise your magazines coverage but I think you are right in your comments. Not a novice but a newcomer to diving I have had the same conversations with my wife (a complete non aqua person) The continual hyping up of the danger aspect the diving was totally unnecessary and detracted from the coverage. Anything that dangerous if you believed the commentary should not have been undertaken let alone filmed for the possibly gory outcome (bring on the real gladiators)

Anyone who was in the middle of their training and watched these so called experts go against all the safety lectures that they were going through must have wondered what was going on.

Obviously the new motto for TV diving if its really dangerous , carry on anyway and for good measure film it. Unless perhaps it was not quite that dangerous and they were trying to kid everyone (I am a cynic.)

John Bettle

Just read your editorial "Dumb BBC" issue 46. I could'nt agree more, you hit the nail on the head as they say. The programs you mentioned were an embarassment to anyone who has dived and loves the underwater environment. Why can't they find a diving David Attenbourgh, I am sure

there is one out there.It seems that anytime an American is envolved in these programs, it turns into sheer sensationalism, everything seems to be focused on the presenters, and how they are risking life and limb to bring us these shots of marine life. I am not interested in the dangers they are facing, I have dived for years and know the dangers, I just want to see the marine life and hopefully see something I have'nt seen before, and empathise with the presenter when I see something familiar. Thanks for the frank content of your editorial, and I am sure you have spoken for a large portion of the diving fraternity, especially in the U.K.

Kevin Monaghan

I'd like to voice my support for your comments on the 'quality' (in its most exact sense) of the programmes! You're not alone!

Whilst I'm joining you on your soap-box, I'm also dismayed at the various dull paper-based dive magazines - they seem to be the very quintessence of repetitiveness! I only have a soft spot for Asian Diver - though that's really due to the quality of the photography! There! I feel better now...

Keep up the good work!

Mark Atwell

No chance of loosing your Ozzie readership with your comments in the editorial of edition 46.Many Ozzies like myself are tired of the Irwinisation of many programmes and also the association of Ozzies attitude to be similar to that of the late Mr Irwin, of which most of us are not!!!

I would hope that the collective us (your readers, divers with a mutual respect for the diving environment) with help of quality publications like yours shall show that the only interaction required is that of our fingers on the shutter release.

Keep up the great work with the publication of UWP mag.

Corey Pollard

Just a quick note to say how much I enjoy and appreciate UWP, and also to assure you that you won't be turning off many Australian readers with your critique of the 'Steve Irwin delivery' - the man was far more revered in the USA in particular than in Australia, where he was widely regarded as an (admittedly somewhat loveable) embarrassment. He made a career stirring up animals for entertainment and apparently, sadly, died this way.

Anyway, congratulations on your magazine, always look forward to the next issue.

Regards from an Aussie,

Pij Olijnyk

News, Travel & Events

The World's First Underwater Photography and Freediving Course

9/10 May 2009, Gosport, UK

DeeperBlue, the world's premier provider of Freediving courses are delighted to bring the world's first underwater photography and Freediving course in association with Ocean Optics!

Freedivers are more likely to get good shots of underwater life as without blowing bubbles, fish aren't scared away and come and check you out! Plus, there are many situations where it is not possible or allowed to use tanks. Our two day certification course takes place at the stunning 30m Submarine Escape Training Tank (S.E.T.T), where you can dive in 34 Celsius / 94 Fahrenheit warm water all day!

Over the weekend there are two Freediving and two Photography theory sessions and then four tank sessions where you can put what you have learnt into practice. Ocean Optics will be bringing down all the latest equipment for you to try out so you'll get hands on with the best gear and find out how to turn even

the smallest underwater camera into a masterpiece creator! There are no minimum performance requirements for entry onto the course and it is perfect for those new to underwater photography as well as those with plenty of experience as the experienced instructors will tailor make what they teach to your level.

Tuition, all equipment, manuals, certification, delicious lunch and dinner are included and spaces are limited to 10 participants. There is only one date scheduled for 2009 so early booking is essential.

www.deeperblue.com

2009 Workshop with Mauricio Handler

Borneo, Malaysia Oct 1-8, 2009

This years Pacific workshop will take place once again on Mabul Island, Malaysia. This will be my third workshop to this part of the world. It's that good!

The workshop will cover wide-angle natural and mixed-lighting, macro and extreme macro, composition and telling a story as well as Digital workflow. Evening image critiques and one on one reviews with me are an essential part of this week.

We will be staying at Sipadan Water Village Resort while we dive the waters off Mabul, Kapalai and Sipadan. There is amazing macro on each and every dive. In addition wide-angle subjects abound including Green Turles, schooling Barracuda, Bumphead Parrotfish, Batfish and much more. Exotic and rare tropical fish surround us everywhere.

This workshop will give you the knowledge needed to create professional looking images that go far beyond fish ID pictures.

Non workshop companions welcome.

www. handlerphoto.com

Sea Lady UW Photo Competition

UWH s.r.o. and the Sea Lady proudly presents an underwater photo contest. The competition takes place at Komodo and Nusa Penida, Indonesia from 26th of September till 10th of October 2009. The competition is international, open to amateurs and professionals.Maximum 20 (twenty) participants ONLY!

Prizes include:

- two week stay for two persons on the expedition boat Sea Lady in Indonesia. Value: 3580 EUR
- one week stay including diving for two persons on the MM Diving base on the Nusa Penida island in Indonesia. Value: 1500 EUR
- A one week stay for 4 persons in an Acistav apartment in Harrachov Mountain. Value: 600 EUR

Other prizes were donated by UWH, Sony, Ikelite, Seamaster, Anhinga, Divetravel and WaterProof companies and the Ocean magazine. Total value: 2500 EUR

www.sealady.eu

Solomon Islands / Bilikiki Charter

Led by: Rod Klein

October 6-20, 2009

Join Photo Pro and Diving Adventure Magazine Senior Writer Rod Klein on a "diving adventure"of a lifetime in the fantastic Solomon Islands October 6-20, 2009. Visit Rod's Solomon Island photo gallery to see for yourself what great diving is in store http://www.rhkuw.com/gallery/solomons08/index.html

This 15-day itinerary was developed with renowned photographers Chris Newbert and Bret Gilliam to offer some of the most exciting and varied diving to be found. The 130-ft. Bilikiki has earned the reputation as one of the world's best liveaboards and her 20 years of servicing the most discriminating customers has refined the operation to a science.

Unlimited diving aboard this ship means anywhere from 4-10 dives per day and night are common. Visibility can exceed 200 feet and each day offers a new adventure with giant fish schools, pygmy seahorses and other macro subjects, an unending variety of tropical fish in dazzling colorations, and the world's most perfect reef structures and soft corals. This is where mantas and whale sharks share the sites with orcas and saltwater crocodiles. And don't miss the WWII ship and aircraft wrecks. Visit several villages for a unique cultural experience and the chance to acquire their legendary carved hardwood bowls, masks, art and craft designs. This is at the top of every diver's list. Onboard photo seminars.

All prices are per person, 15 days/14 nights all-inclusive except drinks. Stateroom (queen bed, extra upper berth, private bathroom & shower) $4999

www.rhkuw.com

Maria Munn Photo Trip

Nuweiba

22nd June 2009

Come and join me for a fabulous week at the spectacular resort of the Coral Hilton Beach in Nuweiba, Egypt with Emperor Divers where you can really hone those underwater photographic skills to perfection.

Whether beginner or advanced this really is the most spectacular location to practice both wide angle and macro photography on the beautiful house reef in front of the hotel. Dawn dives and night dives are an absolute must for gorgeous shots of Nuweiba's beautiful pier as well as its' resident lionfish.

One of my guests, David Kittos, has already been featured in Sport Diver for his beautiful photo of a lionfish taken on the house reef and I've just won my first Underwater Photography Medal for a photograph taken at Nuweiba's gorgeous pier.

Photos are reviewed between dives or underwater and there are numerous chances to repeat photographing the same subjects. These include Spanish Dancers, Lionfish, Sea Moths, Stargazers, Big Eyes, Fish Schools around the pier,octopus, moray and peppered eels, the chance of seeing turtles,

gorgeous coral formations and lots of gorgeous anemonefish.

Personal dives, presentations, photoshop evenings as well as a good old round of Championship Crazy Golf for an Ocean Visions Trophy are just the beginning of what this week awaits you at Emperor Diver's friendly and professional Dive Centre in Nuweiba. The Dive Centre Team are very good friends of mine and a warm welcome and the personal touch are guaranteed for a fantastic week of diving.

www.oceanvisions.co.uk

www.underwaterphotography.com 2008/9 World Champion -

Michel Lonfat

Every January a panel of judges select the best images entered in our online photo contest from the previous year. Gold, silver, and bronze medals are awarded for the top three from each category in order of merit.

The judges comprise of industry professionals, previous year's World Champions, our site moderators - anyone we can rope in!

Michel only joined the contest at the end of March 2008 but managed 179 entries to the photo contest in that time!

The quantity is never as important as the quality, which has been of the highest standard in Michel's case. It is the mark of a great photographer that they don't just enter strong images - they never enter weak ones. In this respect his consistency alone made him stand out head and shoulders above the crowd.

One judge said "This year world champ has to be Michel Lonfat. His entries are to a high standard, the split level's are superb. I know he has only been in the comp for a short while but he seems always to come up with the goods.. "

The range of Michel's work is impressive, both cold and warm water, and all categories. Much of Michel's diving is done in his native Switzerland in the gin-clear, but cold, Verzasca River near Tessin. His warm water material is every bit as noteworthy. He has dived the Caribbean, Celebes sea, the Indian Ocean, Mediterranean, and Red Sea. He has entered something in ALL our categories with numerous 'hotshot' placings in our monthly contests.

www.underwaterphotography.com

Tony White Kima Bajo & Kungkungan Bay workshop

3rd - 15th July 2009

Tony White will be hosting an underwater photographic workshop in collaboration with Eco Divers, Manado.

Aimed at all levels of experience, it addresses the specific needs of each guest who will spend five days at Eco Divers' Kima Bajo Resort & Spa, just 15 minutes from the famous Bunaken Marine reserve. Here Tony will concentrate on all aspects of wide-angle photography before moving on to one of the world's top muck diving resorts, Eco Divers' Kungkungan Bay Resort. Perfectly situated in the Lembeh Strait, the group will again spend five days with the focus now on the many varied techniques involved in successful Macro photography.

The workshop is limited to eight guests to ensure full individual attention.

Success can be yours too! In September 08, David Henshaw took a Tony White workshop with the focused aim of achieving competition-winning photography. In less than two weeks his skills were honed and David has since won the BSOUP Beginners Portfolio and a winning first in the Portfolio category at the recent Australasia Scuba Diver Shoot Out held at Kungkungan Bay Resort.

www.eco-divers.com

2009 Underwater Images Photo-Video Competition

April 1, 2009 is the deadline for entries in the 12th annual Underwater Images Photo/Video Competition. The Underwater Images competition is a non-profit corporation registered in the State of Ohio with all proceeds from this competition going to marine conservation, educational, and scholarship purposes..

Although based in Ohio, this competition is international and the prizes reflect an international flare. Included among the prizes is the Best of Show prize sponsored for the 12th year in a row by the MV FeBrina and Walindi Plantation in Papua New Guinea. First Prize awards also include dive trips to other resorts in Papua New Guinea, Honduras, the Solomon Islands, the Cayman Islands, Bonaire, Hawaii and Indonesia. In addition there are numerous awards of diving equipment and gift certificates from sponsors.

The major international charities that the Underwater Images Competition has supported for over a decade include Mahonia Na Dari and Pro Peninsula. At DEMA 2008 Roger Roth and Carol Kender presented a check for $4000 to Mahonia Na Dari. Max Benjamin accepted the check on behalf of the non-profit group.

Mahonia Na Dari ("Guardians of the Sea") is a Nature Conservancy program, which has been working to protect Papua New Guinea's abundant biodiversity by teaching their own instructors and students the importance of sustainability of their own natural resources through hands-on experiences. Pro Peninsula is a conservation organization dedicated to empowering communities in Baja California, Mexico to protect and preserve their environment, with their main focuses being on a Sea Turtle Conservation Network which has gained international attention. Since 1998 Underwater Images has contributed significantly to each of these organizations. The third beneficiary for 2008 is DiveHeart, a not-for-profit organization that facilitates scuba training for physically challenged children and adults.

www.uwimages.org

Orca Divers Underwater Photography Competition 2008

Orca Divers, a PADI Scuba Diving School based in Chorlton, UK recently held their 2nd Annual Underwater Photography Competition. The prizes for this annual event, totaling over £2300, included an Inon Wide-Angle Lens and Adapter, Suunto D6 metal diving computer; a diving holiday with Emperor Divers, 4th Element Proteus 5mm Wetsuit; Mares Origin Sport Airtrim BCD; Tusa Mask Fins and Snorkel; Atomic Mask and Snorkel; PADI Family Gold Diving Society Membership and Fleece and a canvass print of the Capernwray Shoot Out winning entry donated by Cameras Underwater.

72 entries were displayed under 2 categories: Warm Water and Cold Water. The judges, Kirk Mottershead from Benchmark Photography, Paul Duxfield (Duxy) and Dave Glanfield from Cameras Underwater, chose an overall best in show, and then 1st to 3rd place in each category. There were also prizes for the top photograph as chosen by the Orca Divers Club members who attended the event and for the best photo taken at our Shoot-Out at Capernwray. The Shoot Out was held in January diving in 5 degree water and the best photo taken on the day received a prize.

Bill Watson won the top prize of the Overall Best in Show with his superb Tompot Blenny Portrait taken on an Orca Divers workshop at Trefor Pier in North Wales

Matt Hudson won 1st prize for a photograph taken in Cold Water with a wonderful shot of a seal nibbling on a diver's fin. Matt also won 2nd place in the Warm Water category with a Porcelain Crab on Anemone. Bill Kenyon won the 1st prize in Warm Water with a great shot of Flounder Eyes taken in Indonesia.

The standard of the competition was even higher that last year. Nick Robertson-Brown, owner of Orca Divers, who teaches underwater photography said "We had some top quality entries and the 3 judges found it really difficult to pick out the best photographs. Entries were taken from all over the world including Madagascar, Australia, USA, Maldives, Tanzania, Lanzarote, Egypt, Caribbean, Indonesia and, of course, from our own UK waters as well." Orca Divers received over twice as many entries as in the previous year and hope that this interest in underwater photography will continue to grow.

Later this year Orca Divers will be hosting a major underwater photography event – watch this space….

www.orcadivers.com

Celebrate the Sea Festival 2009 Philippines

12-14 June 2009

Her Excellency, Gloria Arroyo, President of the Republic of the Philippines,declared the month of June to be the Celebrate the Sea month and the second Saturday in every June to be the Celebrate the Sea Day.

Celebrate the Sea has seen the greatest increase in competitors since its inception in 2002 with over 5500 entries from 38 countries in 2008. The 2009 festival is destined to be bigger and bolder than ever before. The main venue for the 3 days festival from 12 to 14 June is once again the landmark at Manila Bay foreshore, the Manila Ocean Park, the Philippines' first state-of-the-art Oceanarium comprising of open water marine habitat, boutique mall, and restaurants.

Confirmed to attend for the 2009 festival, are international luminaries and underwater photography legends from National Geographic David Doubilet and Jennifer Hayes, BBC's Blue Planet & Planet Earth Cinematographer Peter Scoones, deep sea explorer and inventor Phil Nyutten PhD, coral spawning discoverer Carden Wallace PhD and many more associates of the Ocean Geographic Society.

CALL FOR ENTRIES

Photographers and films makers, send in your entries now to compete in Asia Pacific's most prestigious international underwater imagery competition where the premier prize is the conferred title of 'President, Grand Award of Highest Achievement 2008' with US$2000 as prize money. It gets even better. If you are visiting the Philippines any time from 15 Feb to 15 May; stay or dive with one of the participating resorts / operators and you will be eligible to enter your pictures in the WOW Philippines Imagery competition.

The Celebrate the Sea Festival is a non-profit event funded and produced by OceanNEnvironment Australia and for 2009 the partner and principal sponsors are the Department of Tourism Philippines and PCSSD. From the first to the current Festival, Rolex has been supportive as a major sponsor.

www.celebratethesea.com

DivePhotoGuide Wetpixel Competition

DivePhotoGuide.com and Wetpixel.com are proud to announce the winners of their 4th annual underwater photography & video competition in association with Our World Underwater.

The competition is part of a joint series often referred to as the "Super Bowl" of international underwater imagery competitions, collectively the competitions boats over $80,000 in world-class prizes, esteemed celebrity judges, significant media support, and the reputation to attract some of the planet's best underwater imagery.

The competition is truly an international event. Entries were received from all corners of the globe. Winners alone represented 22 countries.

Photographers & videographers of all levels, from novices to the top pros in the world, competed in eight still-image categories and two video categories. Prizes include scuba diving trips to some of the top photo destinations in the world, including Socorro Islands, Wakatobi-Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, the Red Sea, Grand Cayman, the Solomon Islands and Vietnam. Other prizes including camera housings and strobes, focus lights, dive equipment and other valuable items were awarded to the winners and announced during the film festival at the 39th annual Our World Underwater show in Chicago.

Best of Show
by Justin Gilligan

The unique competition series was founded by professional underwater photographers Jason Heller & Eric Cheng and hosted by popular websites DivePhotoGuide.com and Wetpixel.com and in association with Our World Underwater, one of the largest consumer scuba diving expos in the US.

Winning images from this and past year's competitions can be found at

www.underwatercompetition.com

"Aphrodite" the Cyprus Experience Competition

Larnaka, Cyprus June 1-6, 2009

Aphrodite, goddess of romance and passion, of fashion, beauty and art, has captivated poets and painters for centuries. Known for her numerous affairs of the heart, both playful and sophisticated, stories of Aphrodite make our world a livelier place. This is the inspiration for "Aphrodite", the Cyprus Experience competition - making the diving world a livelier place by combining diving with hi tech, photography and extreme sports, tourism, conservation and even new categories for beginners and video clip, produced during the event in Cyprus.

The "Aphrodite" Underwater Photography Competition is open to both amateur and professional photographers, shooting with film or digital cameras.

"Aphrodite" 2009 is produced by David Pilosof, renowned underwater photographer and the producer of Epson Red Sea competition.

We'll meet on Saturday night

June 6, 2009 20:30 at Larnaka promenade, the winners of the competition will go back home with checks in the amount of 20,000 euro, 3 weeks diving trip to Papua New Guinea including air fare Singapore/ Papua New Guinea/Singapore, Subal housing, BS Kinetics housing and other valuable prizes.

www.aphroditecyprus.com

Discover UNDERWATER Photography

SLR-DC Housings

The Ikelite SLR-DC housing takes full advantage of the digital SLR camera's 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 include conversion circuitry that provide TTL compatibility with the latest Ikelite DS Substrobes. Many housings also include a Flash Compensation Module which provides over and under-exposure compensation in the TTL mode and easily allow you to switch to Manual Exposure Mode which provides eight power settings. All exposure compensation is done on the back of the housing. There is no need to access complicated camera menus.

Canon
EOS 5D
EOS 5D MKII
EOS 20D
EOS 30D
EOS 40D
EOS 50D
EOS 350D, Rebel XT
EOS 400D, Rebel XTi
EOS 450D, Rebel XSi
EOS 1000D Rebel XS

Nikon
D40, D40x
D60
D70, 70s
D80
D90
D200
D300
D700

Olympus
E3
E330
E-400, E410
E420
E510, E520

Sony
A-200
A-300
A-350
A-700

Substrobe DS160

From its first introduction in 2001, the Substrobe DS125 became the overwhelming choice of professionals and discerning photographers the world-over. Now the best is even better. Introducing the new and improved Substrobe DS160.

The Substrobe DS160 is compatible with all Ikelite TTL systems and current digital cameras, as well as all older TTL film cameras including the Nikonos system. A variety of sync cords, sensors, and TTL adapters are available to connect to almost any camera system currently on the market.

Compact Digital Housings for

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• Olympus • Sony

Ikelite offers housings for more than fifty different digital still camera models to meet the diverse demands of the underwater photographic community. Ikelite's Compact and ULTRAcompact Digital Still Housings are molded of clear polycarbonate. Dive while knowing your system is safe and have complete visual access to the camera, LCD, monitor and control functions. Most housings are rated to 60m (200').

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

New Products

Aquatica Nikon D90 housing

Aquatica is proud to introduce its new housing for the Nikon D90 camera. This exciting product is part of a new line of Aquatica underwater camera housings that are designed and built from a solid piece of aluminum to take advantage of the new, smaller and less expensive D90 DSLR camera, making high quality underwater photography and High Definition video more affordable for the recreational diver.

Made of precision machined aluminum and anodized to military specification, the new and affordable Aquatica D90 housing was crafted with the user in mind. It features all of the controls for still or video features favored by professionals in a compact, lightweight and easy-to-use design. Built around Aquatica's well established bayonet port system, this new Aquatica housing will accommodate all current ports, extensions and gears.

The Aquatica's robust aluminum construction also means no warping or twisting, which can affect the controls when diving the deeper part of the recreational diving limit. In addition, our acclaimed Aqua View Finder, along with many other accessories, is fully compatible with this new housing.

Size: W 8.5" (13.25" with grip attached) x D 5.25" x H 6.75" /W 21.6cm (33.6cm with grips attached) x D 13.3cm x H 17.15 cm)

The Aquatica housing for Nikon D90 with single strobe connector retails for $1799

www.aquatica.ca

Heinrichsweikamp Remote Slave Unit

The Heinrichsweikamp Remote Slave Unit (RSU) activates a second strobe with the light from a master strobe.

The RSU is small, watertight and needs no power supply yet the Photosensitivity of the RSU is very high and in clear water (e.g. pool) strobes can successfully triggered over a distance of more than 50 meters.

The built in microprocessor discriminates between the light from a camera flash and other light sources, i. e. reflected sunlight or diving lights. With this technology unwanted triggering is limited to a minimum.

2 versions are available - Nikonos and Sea & Sea.

www.heinrichsweikamp.net

REEF PHOTO & VIDEO

Seatool Nikon D300 housing

Small and light enough to hand carry on aircraft, the Seatool ND300 offers exceptional underwater balance.

All camera controls are placed within easy reach, even for divers with small hands. The command dials and shutter release are exactly where you expect them to be for effortless operation, even one handed.

Your new Seatool ND300 housing comes standard with connections for optically fired strobes with opional single or dual Nikonos style bulkheads.

The Seatool ND300 offers three viewfinder options: Optical window, 45° or 180° Inon Magnifying Viewfinders.

www.reefphoto.com
www.seatoolusa.com

UK Germany Panasonic LX3/DL4 housing

The DL4 housing for the Panasonic LX3 is machined from solid aluminium and is rated to 60 metres.

There are controls for shutter, zoom, programme, joystick, menu, flash +/-, Function and Self timer.

A Nikonos bulkhead is standard for external strobes.

The DL4 costs €1050 ex VAT and, with camera installed weighs 1250gms and measures 170 x 110 x 110mm including the glass port.

UwP hopes to including a full review in the May/June issue.

www.uk-germany.com

Sea&Sea DX-1200HD

Boasting a 12 megapixel High Definition CCD, 3" TFT LCD monitor, 35-102mm 3x optical zoom lens plus "High Definition" movie capture, "Sea&Sea" underwater mode and SDHC compatibility the new DX-1200HD is small, light and easy to use making it ideal for those new to underwater photography as well as more experienced shooters.

Drawing on their years of experience in underwater photography Sea&Sea have built a rugged and durable polycarbonate housing for the new DX-1200HD. It has neat little touches such as a flip down flash diffuser, a flip out connector for fibre optic cables and an accessory shoe-mount for spotting lights and strobes making it incredibly practical in use. Depth rating is 45m.

The housing accepts the same Sea&Sea wide-angle and close-up conversion lenses as the DX-860G it replaces plus the new 125 Close Up lens (with an adaptor) as well as Sea&Sea strobes which help to expand the range of subjects and opportunities available to the underwater photographer.

Suggested Retail Price on the DX-1200HD is a competitive £364.95.

www.sea-sea.com

REEF PHOTO & VIDEO

Seatool Sony HDR-SR11/12

The Seatool SR11/SR12 underwater housing for the Sony HDV Handycam HDR-SR11/SR12 is one of the smallest, lightest underwater video housings ever produced.

At just 1.5kg it's small and light enough to hand carry on aircraft and because the housing body conforms so closely to the camera, the housing attains nearly neutral buoyancy (slightly negative) for effortless handling underwater.

The housing utilizes a flip out mirror & lcd reversing circuit, allowing the user to take advantage of the camera's LCD Screen for composition. Optional 3" external monitor now available.

www.reefphoto.com
www.seatoolusa.com

Watershot Canon WDS-450D housing

Watershot announces the release of the WDS-450D Housing (supporting the Canon 450D/XSi Rebel/Kiss X2). This housing features the precision build quality of brands costing twice as much. This machined aluminum housing is compact, light-weight, durable and ergonomically designed allowing all functions easily accessible for all users.

The standard WDS-450D Kit features a Standard Flat Port, 18-55mm zoom gear, 2x optical ports for external strobe connectivity (optional electrical sync port coming soon), Watershot bayonet port system for easy port removal/replacement, hand strap, removable camera tray, leak sensor, and full access of controls.

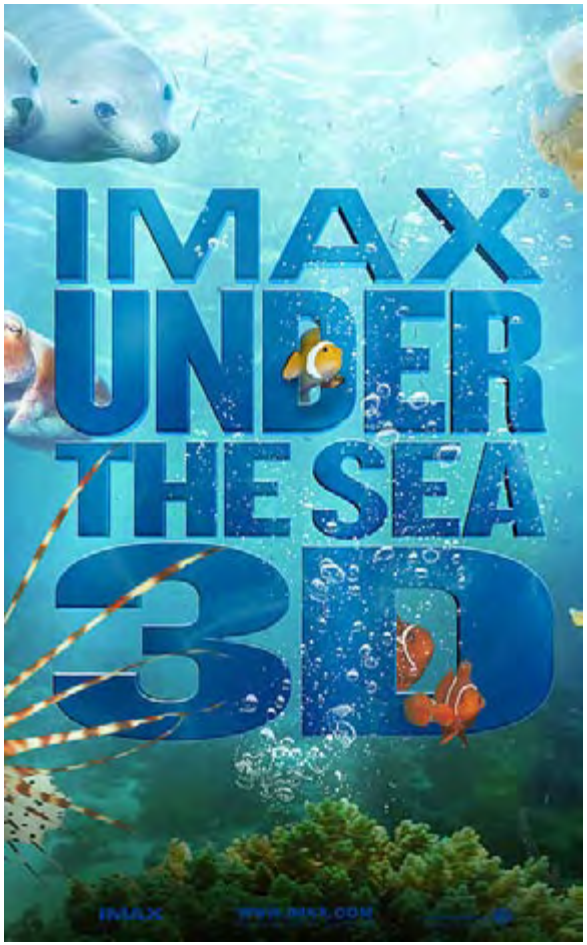
www.watershothousings.com

IMAX Under the Sea 3D

Award-winning documentary filmmaker Howard Hall and the production team behind IMAX® film favorites "Deep Sea 3D" and "Into the Deep 3D" return for a dynamic new underwater adventure, "Under the Sea 3D."

Filmed entirely with IMAX® 3D cameras for a vivid, immersive viewing experience unlike any other, this new film will transport audiences to some of the most exotic and isolated undersea locations on Earth, including Southern Australia and the Great Barrier Reef, as well as Papua New Guinea and Indonesia in the famed Coral Triangle, for face-to-face encounters with some of the most mysterious and stunning creatures of the sea.

Discover the habits and habitats of Great White Sharks, Flamboyant Cuttlefish, Leafy Sea Dragons, Giant Stingrays, Jellyfish, Green Sea Turtles, playful Australian Sea Lions, six-foot Garden Eels and a multitude of brilliantly colorful fish and sea life as they play out the daily dramas of their lives amidst vast coral formations that rise from the ocean floor.



Narrated by Jim Carrey, "Under the Sea 3D" offers an inspirational and entertaining way to explore the unique beauty of this rarely seen realm, and an awareness of the impact that global climate change is having on the oceanic wilderness.

www.imax.com/underthesea

Ikelite WD-4 Wide Angle Conversion Dome

The new WD-4 Wide Angle Conversion Dome provides all of the benefits of a dome port underwater without the limitations.

The WD-4 simply slides onto the standard port of the Ikelite housing for the G10— no modification to or replacement of the housing's original port is necessary. The WD-4 can be removed and replaced underwater so there is no limit to the camera's zoom or macro capabilities. Approximately 3/4 of the camera's zoom range can be used with the dome in place.

The conversion dome corrects for the refractive magnification of the flat port underwater to restore the camera's original angle of coverage. The WD-4 and Canon G10 combination provides 28mm angle of coverage with incredibly crisp corners. In comparison this option is effectively as wide as and sharper overall than a housed Canon G9 underwater with external wide angle lens.

www.ikelite.com

10Bar housing for Nikon D90

Made of polycarbonate, 10Bar Housing is a sturdy choice for the D90 camera. It is equipped with full-function control buttons, bulkhead connector for external flash and optional interchangeable ports for the popular lens. The Polycarbonate lid cover allows taking pictures and checking on the camera much easier. For the closure, the double o-ring and air lock design provide ease of use and added security.

Recommended working pressure 60 m. 219 X 190 X 161 mm (LxWxH) Approx. 2.6kg (Housing only)

Slightly negative in salt water.

www.10bar.com

Fantasea Canon PowerShot SD1100 housing

The FSD-1100 housing is ideal for outdoor and underwater photographers' needs. Underwater photographers can dive or snorkel and capture all the excitement of this fascinating world, while outdoor photographers also have the option of capturing the action of such activities as white water and paddle sports, sailing and boating, surfing, fishing, hunting, backpacking and camping. The FSD-1100 protects the Coolpix camera from water, sand, dust, and other damaging elements.

Features include: double O-ring seal on all controls, Anti-glare hood over LCD screen, Removable flash diffuser and 46mm threaded lens port

Thje FSD-1100 is depth rated to 60 meters/200 feet

www.marinecamera.com

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Feb 07-14, 2009 Tiger Sharks and Great Hammerheads
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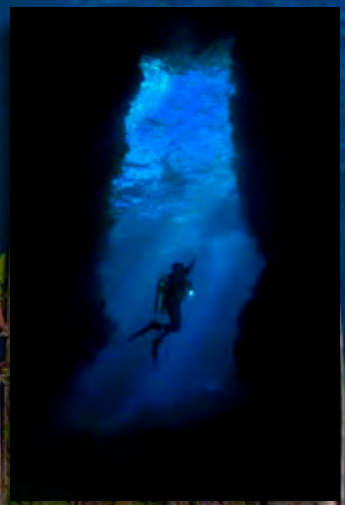
May 16-24, 2009 Oceanic White Tip Sharks
Jul 13-20, 2009 Sharks and Dolphins

More information: **http://wetpixel.com/links/bahamas**

OTHER EXPEDITIONS

Mar 07-Mar 22, 2009 Sorong, Halmahera, Ambon, Indonesia
Mar 25-Apr 09, 2009 Ambon and the Banda Sea, Indonesia
More information: **http://wetpixel.com/ultimateindo**
Nov 24-Dec 06, 2009 Eastern Fields, Papua New Guinea
Dec 08-Dec 19, 2009 Eastern Fields, Papua New Guinea
Contact Wetpixel for details: **http://wetpixel.com/contact**

Diving Adventure Magazine
Solomon Islands /Bilikiki Charter
Led by: Rod Klein
October 6-20, 2009



Join Photo Pro and Diving Adventure Magazine Senior Writer Rod Klein on a "diving adventure"of a lifetime. Visit Rod's Solomon Island photo

http://www.rhkuw.com/gallery/solomons08/index.html

This 15-day itinerary was developed with renowned photographers Chris Newbert and Bret Gilliam to offer some of the most exciting and varied diving to be found. The 130-ft. Bilikiki has earned the reputation as one of the world's best liveaboards and her 20 years of servicing the most discriminating customers has refined the operation to a science.

All prices are per person, 15 days/14 nights all-inclusive except drinks
Contact: Stephanie Miele, Diving Adventure Magazine
888-778-9073 x 203 toll free 207-729-4201 x203 (outside of US)
Email: travel@divingadventuremag.com

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300 ft depth rating (upgradable to 450 ft).
Sturdy aluminum construction.
Modular port system.
Dual strobe connectors.
Angled push buttons

5D Mk II
DIGITAL HOUSING

The Aquatica Housing for the Canon 5D Mk II & Nikon D90 are shipping now

www.aquatica.ca

Aquatica Canon 5D mark II housing

Aquatica is proud to announce its latest addition, the housing for the incredible Canon 5D mark II, with 21 mega pixels and HD video this camera/housing combination will change the rules of underwater imaging. The Aquatica housing is equipped with a hydrophone to take full advantage of the Canon 5D Mk II potential. Machined from solid aluminum, treated and anodized to military specification, then painted with a robust weather and wear resistant finish, this addition to our already wide selection of housings will benefit from the same 300 ft.

depth rating that set us apart from our competitors.

The 5D Mk II housing features easy access to the now vital video function controls while retaining its ease of operation for still imaging, it has the same mounting bayonet that will accept our existing accessories as well as ports, including our tack sharp Megadome, Aqua View finder and remote control cord, it is therefore in a position to address every aspect of this demanding activity that is underwater photography.

Depth rating: 300 feet/90 meters Weight: 2.9 Kg / 6.4 Lbs Dimension: (with grip attached) W 35cm x H 19.5cm x D14.5cm / W 13.78" x H 7.65" x D 5.72"

www.aquatica.ca

Best Underwater Point & Shoot Cameras for 2009

The Backscatter team went on a quest to find the holy grail in underwater point & shoot cameras. Sometimes you just want to travel light. If you're like us, you want a camera that is perfect for a pocket, beach party, and a quick after work dive.

Over a thousand waterproof camera options are now available and many would work well for general water sport activities, however we demand a camera that will also excel in the unique demands of underwater photography. The majority of cameras we screened were either disappointing or just not suitable for an inspiring underwater photographer. We first defined the target user groups and then hashed out a list of our minimum features.

Our target diver type... you!

1) New underwater photographer wanting an easy point & shoot camera with growth potential.

2) Advanced underwater photographer wanting a compact camera solution.

Our camera feature requirements...

1) Great to excellent image quality.

2) Camera must fit in a pocket when used topside.

3) Camera must be point & shoot easy, but offer intermediate to advanced controls.

4) Underwater housing must easily work with underwater strobes.

5) Underwater housing must accommodate wide angle lenses.

To read all about their findings visit Backscatter's website.

www.backscatter.com

SUBAL in corporate image makeover

Renowned manufacturer of high quality aluminium underwater camera housings, Subal, today takes the occasion of personnel changes at it's Austrian headquarters in Steyr to present its new corporate design and logo.

Subal stands for perfection. "Our underwater camera housings are designed and manufactured to fit their respective cameras like a second skin and feature numerous details finished to the highest handmade quality standards," says Peter Stangl, Subal's CEO.

Throughout its 57 years Subal has operated at the cutting edge of industrial design. Innovative use of technology, extremely high quality standards and a dedicated, enthusiastic staff have all combined to make the Steyr firm a worldwide market leader.

The brand makeover reflects Subal's self awareness and signals the company's future strategic positioning in the market. The new logo, featuring the central design element "S" gives a more modern and dynamic look. The consumer realises immediately they are looking at the original, genuine article with its symbol's straight, clear lines. Innovation has a name – Subal.

"Our logo now reflects Subal's successes and development," says Stangl, "and the new design stands for our dynamic approach and ambitious plans for the future."

With this initiative Subal follows a continuing development to be a world leader for quality and a trend setter in the underwater housing industry. The company's revamped corporate design with the new logo and the motto "Our motive – your passion" are the core elements of the new marketing campaign. The brand re-launch ensures clear differentiation from competitors and once again underlines Subal's pioneering spirit.

SUBAL. Yesterday, today or tomorrow – the original is here to stay and remains the best choice.

www.subal.com

Sea&Sea RDX DSLR Housings

Sea & Sea Ltd is pleased to announce the introduction of new DSLR underwater camera housings to supplement the existing model range. The new waterproof camera housings are intended to compliment the MDX series which are machined from a solid block of aluminium. The latest RDX housings are manufactured from a high quality polycarbonate resin so as to dramatically reduce finished costs thus offering a wider range of products to the price sensitive market.

Sea & Sea Sunpak of Japan have rationalised the design so as to incorporate the usual ergonomics, functionality and above all, dependability you expect from Sea & Sea but with a lower price tag. This move provides affordable DSLR underwater camera housings for experienced photographers and beginners alike. The first two RDX waterproof housings are for the Nikon D60 and Canon EOS 450D cameras; there will be more to follow.

These underwater housings provide the facility for quick and simple mounting and removal of the camera without having to worry about gear alignment. There are two fiber optic cable ports offering a more cost effective and less complicated way of firing strobes. Alternatively, the optional TTL converters can be used with traditional sync. cables and Sea & Sea strobes. A port adapter is available for those wishing to utilise the Sea & Sea NX series of ports and finally, for those on a budget, the unit can be purchased without the grips and stay. The basic retail cost of an RDX housing is £824.95 inc VAT.

www.sea-sea.com

HDVSEATEK

With the advent of HDV video cameras in compact, professional housings the remarkable image quality of 1080i is now available to underwater videographers. What has been lacking are self-contained yet powerful underwater video lights and an affordable, high quality super wide angle High Definition underwater video lens ...which does not vignette.

After extensive research, development and field testing, HDVSEATEK is proud to offer the powerful self-contained SEASTAR underwater video lights and the SEADRAGON 110 super wide angle underwater video lens for Gates and Amphibico housings.

www.hdvseatek.com

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www.sea-sea.com

New Guam's Ocean

A new book by Guam-based marine photographer Tim Rock highlighting the undersea beauty of Guam's ocean and the beautiful coastal topography is now available.

Guam is a special mix of urban development and natural beauty. Surrounded by miles of stunning coastline and rich coral reefs, it has one of the most diverse marine communities in the Pacific with 400 coral species and over 1000 different fish.

In this book we start in the north and circumnavigate the island, traveling down the east coast, around the southern tip and then visually visiting the popular west coast reefs and bays.

Enjoy this look at Guam's special ocean world. The 160 page book contains 275 color photos above and below Guam with captions. It can be purchased at Blurb.

www.blurb.com

Leyndardómar sjávarins vio Ísland

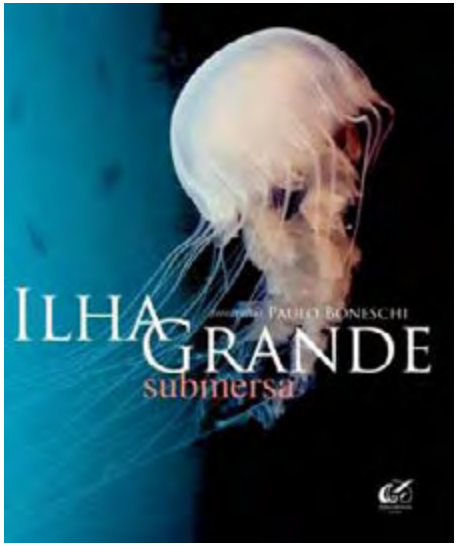
The only book available on underwater life with Iceland is "Leyndardómar sjávarins vio Ísland" which came out in November 2008.

It is known to the world that the nature in Iceland is beautiful but this book opens up Iceland underwater, showing all kinds of creatures living in the cold sea around Iceland.

The book is 168 pages, written in Icelandic but more than 100 beautiful photos have a voice of their own. A unique book for nature lovers for 20 pounds. Please contact the photographer for further information.

pdungal@gmail.com

Ilha Grande Submerged



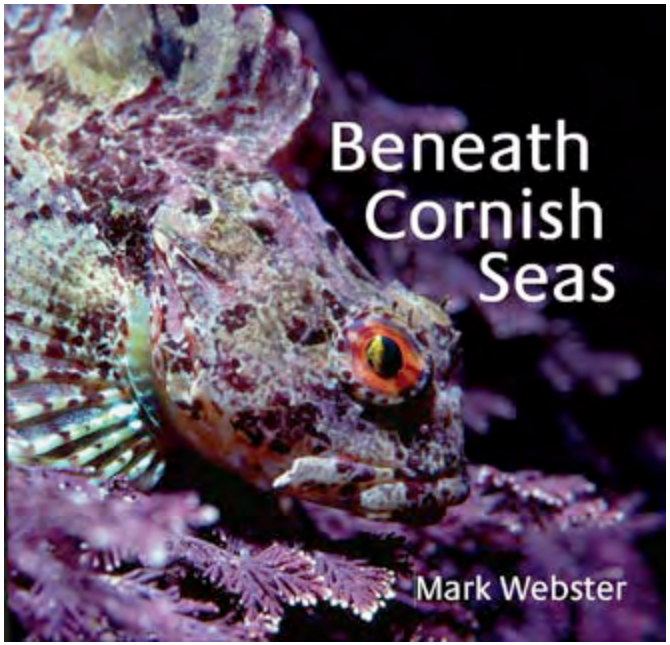
With an area of 193 square kilometers and 106 beaches, Ilha Grande island shelters a rich biodiversity. The book Ilha Grande Submerged shows that this tropical paradise, located at a distance of 200 km from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, is a haven to more riches than the human eye can perceive. With 176 pages, the book illustrates the visible and invisible universes of that ecosystem, revealing beings that measure less than 25 millimeters.

The magnificent images in the book are by Paulo Boneschi, photographer and scuba diver who for more than 26 years has investigated the ocean bed around the island

adoiscom@terra.com.br

Beneath Cornish Seas

by Mark Webster



Hidden below the surface of the temperate Cornish seas is an amazing array of colourful marine life. A multitude of invertebrate species, including anemones, soft and stony corals, and even sea fans more common on coral reefs, paint the rocks with carpets of colour. Fish life is profuse, with shoals of bass and mackerel, wrasse, flatfish, blennies, scorpion fish, tope, sharks, and visitors from warmer, Southern waters. In summer there are trigger fish, sun fish, basking sharks, and even leatherback turtles. In Beneath Cornish Seas, Mark Webster's stunning underwater photographs give an insight into the life in our rock pools, and below the waves.

Mark Webster developed his interest in underwater photography while working in the commercial diving industry. It quickly became a passion, and he was soon scoring highly in competitive photography. He has represented the UK four times at the CMAS World Championships of Underwater Photography, achieving Silver and Bronze medals. His publications include The Art and Technique of Underwater Photography, Diving and Snorkeling Belize, and Passions – Scuba Diving. He writes regularly for Diver magazine and UwP in the UK, and his work has featured in a host of diving, photographic and wildlife publications and exhibitions.

Beneath Cornish Seas is an 80 page paperback containing 93 photographs and retails for £10.95.

www.alisonhodge.co.uk

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CONTROL SYSTEMS

Want to upgrade to First Class?

It's almost free with Ultralight.

Upgrading from a compact camera to a DSLR system is a big move financially but it does open up a whole new potential for you. Fortunately if you chose Ultralight for your compact strobe mounting arm system, it will cost very little (or even nothing) to upgrade. The same arms and arm clamps will perform seamlessly and you'll be upgraded to First Class in no time at almost no cost.

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"Often copied, never equaled"

10Bar Panasonic LX3 housing

by Sim Chee Ghee and Peter Rowlands

I managed to test the 10bar-LX3 housing recently in Anilao, Philippines. The first dive with it was a night dive, which turned out to be a night(mare!) dive! The operations on the housing require a lot of practice and one must be able to see the buttons properly! I ended up turning my focus light to the back of housing to see them!

The control buttons are cleverly designed to reduce clutter, so some of them rotate to control separate buttons. It does require some practice but once mastered they do a very good job.

The housing is extremely compact and sturdy, barely larger than the camera itself. Do insert the camera carefully to avoid scratches, I already got some! The housing is made of 6061 aluminium, one of the most extensively used of the 6000 series aluminium alloy and is a good choice for tough performance in seawater.

The back of the housing is acrylic , which is good to allow full view of the camera's LCD and water tight control. It weighs 920g dry, slightly negative underwater and comes with double O-rings and a bulkhead. The camera's hotshoe cable is a tad too long, however it can be disconnected which I did since I was using fiber optic connection with a Sea& Sea YS-110 Alpha strobe. The bulkhead can be ordered with the standard Nikons V or S6 connection.

The housing also features the new key hole locking system, which locks real tight for superior water integrity. The port has the standard M67

thread to allow macro wet lens or colour filter attachment.

An optional dome port is available. It's to be used with Panasonic's own wide converter (DMW-LW46) with lens adapter (DMW-LA4),which converts the LX-3 widest setting at 24mm lens into 18mm!!!

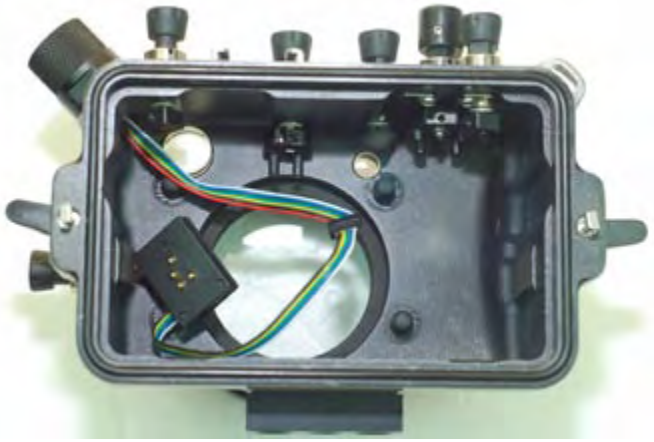
A comprehensive manual is available and the housing comes with a soft carrying bag and spare main O-rings.

Alternative housings

Currently not many choices out there for LX-3 housings except :

UK Germany recently announced theirs, more info at www.uk-germany.eu

Nautilus LX-3 from Japan, more infos at: http://dive-tail.cocolog-nifty.com/blog/2008/10/lx3-d762.html



All in all the 10bar LX-3 is a fully useable, reliable and reasonably priced compact housing with many pro-like features and it has a 2 year warranty.

Sim Chee Ghee
www.scubasymphony.com

I have always been a big fan of Panasonic compact cameras. They have a bewildering range but I am particularly drawn to the LX series which is their top end, controllable camera offering aperture/shutter priority automation as well as full manual control including manual white balance, not to mention 16:9 aspect capability and the ability to shoot RAW as well as jpg images. Finally I also think the cameras just look good and my latest LX3 in black livery has a great retro, almost 35mm Leica look.

My first LX was the LX2 and I bought it mainly for land use but, rather naively, I expected an underwater housing to become available to use it as a useful back up (or even an alternative) to a DSLR system. Such a housing never really appeared so I learned a useful lesson – if you are buying a camera to use it underwater, make sure there is a good housing available first!

In hindsight it came as no surprise to me that a suitable housing never materialised. There are just so many controls to operate. Now I know this is also true for many other compacts cameras but there is one particular control on the LX series which is different, if not unique, and that is the 'toggle' control which adjusts, amongst other things, manual apertures and shutter speeds. This nipple-like control can not only rock from side to side but also up and down as well as being a push button too. Show that to an underwater housing manufacturer and it's easy to see why the LX2 was largely ignored.

2 years later, enter the LX3 and, by sheer good fortune, my wife's compact had just died and I made the supreme sacrifice of letting her have my trusty old LX2, to help her out, so to speak. The next day I was down at the Panasonic shop making a mess on their glass displays with my wet nose pressed up against their LX3 cabinet, or altar as I call it.

The LX3 was an interesting development in that Panasonic had decided that enough was enough with the megapixel hype. The discerning photographer wanted to maximise the performance of the existing pixels rather than bloat the specification with extra megapixels. In addition it had the ability to shoot basic HD movie footage and finally, and most importantly for me, it had a Leica 24mm F2 lens. I especially love this focal length and F2 is a 'fast' lens for low light shooting. I was happy enough but when I heard Japanese housing manufacturer 10Bar were not only planning a housing but promising a 'toggle' control I was delighted and they kindly sent me one to evaluate.

First impressions are how small and light it is. Even with the camera installed

it only weighs 1.2kg and ignoring the protruding controls, the main housing body is only 140mm wide by 85mm high. Being aluminium it is bulletproof and can operate down to 60 metres and has been tested to 90m. A good start by anyone's standards.

In designing an LX3 housing, 10Bar had to make some tough but ultimately obvious decisions. With cameras boasting larger and larger LCD screens the controls get squeezed to one side. This is no real problem for land use but for an underwater housing manufacturer it becomes a real limitation. The result is that on the 10Bar housing some of the important controls operate 2 functions either by a rotating, swinging or pushing action.

For me, the most important control is Manual White Balance because I do a lot of available light work with filters. To achieve this simply you need to set the 'Assign' control to Manual White Balance, then all you need to do is press that control, toggle right and press toggle. Job done. It took a bit of working out but I got there eventually so if you have a favourite or much needed control, the secret is to set the 'Assign' button to that function.

Control over the LX3 'toggle' button is very clever indeed and it feels almost the same as using the camera on land but with one big difference. Because of the mechanical design (which basically reverses the action), pushing the housing control to the left actually toggles the camera control to the right. Similarly up is down and down is up, if you follow my meaning. This reversal is puzzling at first but it soon becomes second nature. The ability to operate this toggle control sets this housing apart and the engineers at 10Bar are to be congratulated for this achievement.

Closing the rear plate is done slightly differently with two rotating and sprungloaded levers. This is a neat design but takes some getting used to. However it is soon second nature and seals the housing very effectively with both piston and compression O rings.

The 10Bar LX3 housing is totally mechanical and there are controls for every camera function. The housing comes with an Ikelite bulkhead as standard but Nikonos V and S6 are available options. For those with fibre optic triggered external strobes, the 10Bar housing has a control to turn the internal flash on and even one to push it back into the camera when not needed.

The standard port is flat but is screw thread interchangeable and there is an optional dome port for use with Panasonic's wide adaptor which converts the 24mm lens into a very useful 18mm.

The retail price of the 10Bar LX3 housing is just USD $630 which, for a fully functioning aluminium housing, really is extraordinarily good value. It is a quality housing for a quality camera.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

Don't settle for 2nd best

Film - No Filter
No White Balance

Digital - No Filter
Manual WB

Magic Filter
Manual WB

Digital cameras have opened up new possibilities to underwater photographers. For available light photography manual white balance is an invaluable tool for restoring colours. But when you use it without a filter you are not making the most of the technique. You're doing all the hard work without reaping the full rewards.

These three photos are all taken of the same wreck in the Red Sea. The left hand image was taken on slide film, which rendered the scene completely blue. The middle image is taken with a digital SLR without a filter, using manual white balance. The white balance has brought out some of the colour of the wreck, but it has also sucked all the blue out of the water behind the wreck, making it almost grey. The right hand image is taken with the same digital camera and lens, but this time using an original Magic Filter. The filter attenuates blue light meaning that the colours of the wreck are brought out and it stands out from the background water, which is recorded as an accurate blue.

www.magic-filters.com

Making a ring flash

By Alexander Mustard

With the credit crunch in full swing, I felt it was timely to pen another Do It Yourself article. Underwater photography has always been an expensive passion, so for those who want the fun of new toys without the pain of paying, here is another project to add to my homemade polecam in Issue 45.

I have long been curious about using ring flashes underwater. I have played with a few, but never owned one, or had the chance to shoot one extensively. Their main advantage is hat they produce high quality flat, directionless, front lighting that is well suited to revealing colour and detail in subjects. They also make camera rigs more compact and easier to squeeze into and light tight places. They are best suited for macro and super-macro photography at short camera to subject distances (one manufacturer quotes less than 50cm on their website).

Several commercial models have existed or still exist. Perhaps the best known and most commonly seen is Inon's Z22, which is actually a quad flash, with 4 straight flash tubes arranged around the port. As far as I know, it is now discontinued. British underwater photographers Martin Edge and Ken Sullivan developed their "Ring of Light" flash, but, with only Nikon film-TTL protocols and no manual controls, its popularity has waned with the migration to digital. Still current are UK-Germany ring-flashes, they continue to produced small numbers of their custom versions, and Athena's AFR-10 that has become popular in recent years. There may well be others.

While I have always wanted to use one, a few factors have always stopped me putting my hand in my pocket. First many of the older systems do not offer fine manual control over flash power. Second quite a few of the rings are narrow bore and as such do not fit all ports, particularly the increasingly wider macro ports required to house fatter, more modern lenses like the Sigma 150mm macro and the Nikon 105mm VR. It is possible to get custom-made narrower ports, but these don't always fit the new lenses. The other stumbling blocks are price and travelling. Most of these units are considerably more expensive than standard strobes and if you have one you will still need to buy and bring standard strobes for other types of shots. More weight, more expense.

So instead of buying one I decided to make one. Not a fully functioning ring-flash, but a ring reflector box powered by my existing strobes. It is not an original idea, I have seen it done on land, and the designs seem ideal for submergence with no moving or electrical parts. The entire system is intended to fill up with water quite happily.

Not only was this design much more inline with my DIY skills, but more importantly it would cost very little, weight very little and would fit all my lenses and ports as well as allowing me all the manual power settings of my normal strobes. One other advantage would be the ability to open the strobes out and shoot normally. For me this is not a big issue because I find that focusing each dive to a particular type of photography produces the best results. But it is worth mentioning.

In this article I want to run through how I made it, how it worked and whether it was worth it.

I won't provide a precise step-by-step guide

Ring flash lighting is appealing underwater, but is it worth it? I decided to build my own to find out.

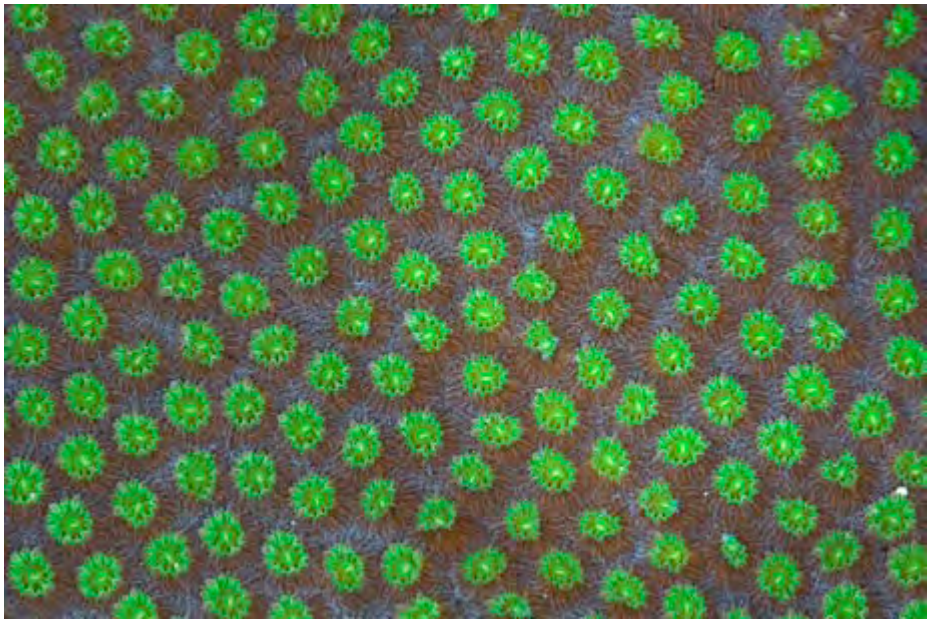
In production: before being painted it is easy to see its origins as a casserole dish. My Inon strobes fire light in the sides, which comes out of the ring shaped opaque window around the front of the port.

to building one, because the exact parts that you will need will depend on your housing and strobe setup. But the basic design is very simple. It is a reflective chamber around the port with holes in the sides into which the strobes are fired and an opaque window at the front, around the port, out of which the light shines. As you can see from the photos, the reflective chamber and opaque window are only about 25mm (1") wider than the port.

I chose to make the outside of my reflective chamber out of a plastic, microwaveable casserole dish and the inside out of a rubber drainage tube, that happened to fit snugly on my Subal ports. I cut a port-sized hole in both the bottom of dish and in the lid so the port would fit through and then holes in either side of the dish to fire the strobes into. Both internal surfaces were made reflective: the inside of the dish I sprayed with chrome paint and the rubber tube was covered in two layers of aluminium foil (the paint did not set on the rubber, when I tried it). I then put the tube inside the dish and glued the lid down, which kept it all together. Later I sprayed the outside of the dish black to give it a nicer finish. It all cost less than 20 Euros.

I put it together and tested it by photographing cactuses in the house. Much to my surprise it worked and worked well. The light loss was more than a stop compared to aiming the strobes directly at the subject, but since my Inon Z240 strobes pack a lot of punch I was not overly concerned at this stage. I also stretched some short sections of old wetsuit sleeves over the front of the strobes to stop any light spillage, just to be sure that all the light was coming through the ring-reflector. In the future I might make more permanent light funnels for my Inons.

My January photo workshops in Grand



(Left) Pool tests. Much to my surprise the system held together and worked. Nikon D700 + Sigma 150mm + Canon 500D. Subal housing. 2x Inon Z240 fired through ring diffuser. 1/250th @ F10.
(Right) Coral detail. The ring-reflector produces shadowless lighting, which is accentuates the patterns in the star coral. Nikon D700 + Sigma 150mm + Canon 500D. Subal housing. 2x Inon Z240 fired through ring diffuser. 1/125th @ F14.

Cayman provided an ideal opportunity to put it through its paces. Half expecting it all to float away in pieces, I decided to test it first in the pool. It would be less embarrassing there. Again it worked well. If I sound surprised, I was. I photographed a rubber duck attached to a diving weight and got pleasing flat light. In the reflective pool I was easily able to shoot at F22 without taking the strobes to full power using my Sigma 150mm with my D700 on base ISO. But there was not that much room for manoeuvre and I was worried I might not be able to shoot on F22 on the reef. So I took some shots at wider apertures between F10 and F14 to get a feeling for the depth of field these apertures produced.

Cayman is a wide-angle destination, with clear waters, colourful sponges and dramatic walls and caverns. So it took me a few days to get the chance to shoot the ring-reflector in the ocean. But once I did I was pleased that it produced acceptable results. I started off with easy subjects, such as coral details, which were well suited to the flat light. The shadowless lighting certainly revealed the patterns of the corals, although at the expense of textures.

I then moved on to shoot fish and critters. Again the ring flash worked well and produced many pleasing images, although because of its limited range it performed best on highly

(Left) Because of the limited range of the ring flash I generally had to stick to approachable subjects, but was happy with the results. Nikon D700 + Sigma 150mm + Canon 500D. Subal housing. 2x Inon Z240 fired through ring diffuser. 1/125th @ F13.
(Right) Alex was in Lembeh as UWP went to press, but he managed to send this extra image in. Ring flashes produce flat lighting, which suits some images,although the effect is boring to some. Nikon D700 + Sigma 150mm + Canon 500D in Subal housing. F11 @ 1/10th. ISO 400. Inon Z240s fired through ring flash.

approachable species. Over the two weeks I also tried it with the Nikon 60mm AFS lens, which I should remind you is really quite wide on an FX camera. This allowed me to shoot larger species from within its camera-to-subject-distance sweet spot, and again I was happy with the results. I was generally able to shoot at F14-F16 with the Sigma 150mm, which was adequate, but it would be nice to have another stop to play with. For critters on the sand I could reach F22, but for more distant fish I might have to drop as low as F8-F11. With the 60mm I shot balanced light images at F8-11, without using the strobes on full power.

The over-riding impression was how easy the system was to use. Nothing to adjust, just shoot, shoot, shoot. Changing orientation was simple. I look forward to using it next time I am in cold waters, where I always feel less inclined to fiddle with everything and just want to bag the image. I also felt that light fell off more quickly than in conventionally lit images, probably because it was coming directly from the front. This has advantages and disadvantages, depending on the affects we are after. I never had problems with backscatter, possibly because in Cayman's clear waters the flash power fell off before I found myself shooting through too much water.

In conclusion, my ring diffuser certainly produced ring-flash lighting and fulfilled its brief in being inexpensive and lightweight for travel. It is excellent for shooting small subjects, getting light inside complex shaped subjects and for revealing patterns.

I would like to refine my design to improve its light efficiency so that I could shoot on F22 on all subjects, should I want to. And I need to find a more durable reflector than aluminium foil, which is really only good for a couple of weeks of diving before it needs replacing. Apparently, it is possible to get stainless foil that will last longer in seawater.

Apart from that I feel that there are two main downsides to the images. First, which was pointed out by friends who saw some of the early shots, is that flat lighting gets boring after a while. The ring-flash is excellent for adding certain images to your portfolio, but you would not want to use it for all your macro photography. I tried adjusting the power of the two strobes, but it is still not possible to produce any directional lighting without moving the strobes away from the ring. The second, and perhaps more critical

I like this image of a flounder, but feel that I may have got slightly better results without the ring flash, particularly avoiding the highlight in the foreground. This is the drawback of a ring-flash. It is not always ideal and in most cases its lighting effect can be replicated with carefully positioned dual strobes. Nikon D700 +

downside is that ring flash lighting can be so closely approximated by placing two strobes either side and close to the port, that I would struggle to distinguish the shots on 9 out of 10 subjects. This is probably the main reason we don't see more ring flash systems underwater.

But maybe as I test it more I will discover more subjects that reveal its advantages. There is one factor that is undeniable, that you the guaranteed to be the centre of attention when you stride onto the diveboat and put your contraption down on the camera table. Tupperware Mustard they called me.

Alexander Mustard
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Take 3 Workshops

by Alan Larsen

Being serious about underwater photography can be frustrating. The technical aspects of getting exposure and lighting right can be challenging enough but if you have to follow a dive guide on a whirlwind tour of the reef, it can be hard to find a suitable subject to shoot, let alone spend sufficient time with it to get a decent image. Even when you don't have to follow a guide it doesn't get much better. Other divers are reluctant to buddy with a photographer – even on a club trip with your mates (although they all want a copy of your photos afterwards…).

The answer is to dive with other underwater photographers. But how? – especially if there are none in your club or among your usual dive buddies. One way is book onto an underwater photo workshop. But 'workshop' sounds worryingly serious and raises a number of questions: Does it mean a 'photography course' with lots of teaching and learning? Or is it just a dive trip with a group of photographers? Are workshops only for accomplished photographers with housed dSLR systems? Or are they for photographers with all levels of experience and ability including those who use compact cameras? And of course, it probably means travelling alone, and taking the risk that you might not get on with the other participants.

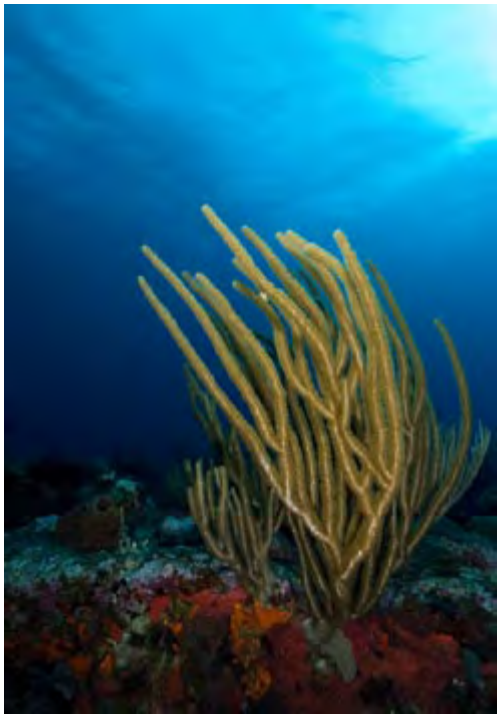
In 2008 I went on three photo workshops. I found that the range of experience went from beginner to those who had started in the days of film; and the equipment ranged from compact camera to housed dSLR. And as for not getting on with the others: at last I was among a group of divers as obsessed as me about underwater photography and wanting to talk f-stops, lenses, Lightroom and critters all day long!

It didn't mean compromising on dive destinations either. Each was to a different part of the world with excellent diving.

And each was with a different photographer, who had a different style and approach. But they all provided a similar experience for the underwater photographer who wants to do more than just take a few 'snapshot' memories of the dive.

The first workshop was with Mauricio Handler and took place on St Eustatius (known as Statia) in the Caribbean. It was advertised in UWP

RedSea: Giannis D at Sha'ab Abu Nuhas, Red Sea
Nikon D200 in Subal ND20. Tokina 10-17mm at 10mm. 1/30 @ f8 Manual, ISO 100. No strobes. Auto White Balance plus post processing. Depth 16 metres



Gorgonian at Hangover, Statia.
Nikon D200 in Subal ND20, 2x Inon Z-240 strobes. Nikon 12-24mm at 12mm. 1/60 @ f11 Manual, ISO 100

Soft corals at Alternatives 4, Ras Mohammed, Red Sea
Nikon D200 in Subal ND20, 2x Inon Z-240 strobes. Tokina 10-17mm at 10mm. 1/80 @ f13 Manual, ISO 100.

Whip coral shrimp at Coral Garden, Tulamben, Bali
Nikon D200 in Subal ND20, 2x Inon Z-240 strobes. Nikon 105 VR micro. 1/200 @ f16 Manual, ISO 100

mag and although I hadn't heard of Mauricio, a google search told me that, as well as being known in his own right, he worked for many years with David Doubilet. So I guessed that he might know a bit about underwater photography!

This workshop was the most 'full on' in terms of learning – although that also reflects the stage of development I was at with underwater photography at the start of the year. There was a lot I needed to learn, so I had to think a lot more about it.

Mauricio gave a daily session covering all the basic techniques: starting with wide angle using only natural light, adding flash, and moving on to macro photography. He also covered composition, creative techniques, workflow, post processing, equipment maintenance, and tips for packing and travelling with photographic kit.

As with the others, this was a workshop for all levels of experience, although it did assume a basic knowledge of photography. I had upgraded a year earlier to a housed dSLR system that I had already taken on three trips. There were others at my level, as well as some who had been at it for years. We did three dives a day (with Golden Rock Divers); two before lunch and one after. Each day we went to a dive site suitable for practising the techniques we had covered in Mauricio's presentation that day.

Statia has several wrecks as well as the usual barrel sponges and gorgonians that cover Caribbean reefs: perfect for wide angle photography, both natural light and with a touch of strobe. And there were plenty of critters for macro: Sailfin blennies, Pike blennies, Yellow headed jawfish (stuff I'd never seen) and more.

A new experience for me was that we repeatedly dived the same few dive sites. Not because there weren't any others. But because it gives a better opportunity to get a good image. Even without a camera I've never quite understood divers who think that diving a site once is enough. For me it's like seeing an opera again: different production, different mood, different experience. All adding to my understanding and enjoyment of the work.

For a photographer, diving a site again means that you already know what to expect and look for. You can head straight for something you spotted earlier. Or you can go back to improve on a shot that didn't quite work out. And there's no reason not to spend a lot of time with one subject to get the 'killer' shot.

Every evening after dinner we had an open critique session. We all provided five images from the previous day and Mauricio openly critiqued them. As the week drew on, we all joined in – and the critique became more 'open and honest'! For this session, we were allowed to post process the images, but absolutely forbidden to crop them. This was hard at first; but I began to appreciate the discipline of framing the image correctly in the camera. As a result, I now usually reject an image if I have to do more than 'trim' the edges when processing it. It was also useful to see everyone else's images. As well as learning from the critique, it was a great source of ideas and inspiration and different ways of looking at subjects. Much of the learning on a workshop comes from interaction with the other participants.

By the end of the week I was

Anemone fish at Anemone City, Ras Mohammed, Red Sea
Nikon D200 in Subal ND20, 2x Inon Z-240 strobes. Nikon 60mm micro. 1/125 @ f22 Manual, ISO 100

Harlequin shrimp at Seraya Secret, Bali
Nikon D200 in Subal ND20, 2x Inon Z-240 strobes. Nikon 105 VR micro. 1/125 @ f22 Manual, ISO 100

exhilarated and exhausted. In six days I had moved on in skills and experience to an extent that would have taken several years and much frustration on 'ordinary' dive trips.

The second workshop was with Martin Edge on a liveaboard (MY Typhoon) in the Northern Red Sea at the end of July. I heard about this trip from Martin when I had a day's tuition with him at the end of 2007. (You can read about my day with Martin on my website.)

This was no ordinary 'wrecks and reefs' Red Sea tour. We moored in two places over the six days – at the Alternatives near Ras Mohammed for reefs, and at Sha'ab Abu Nuhas for wrecks – and again made multiple visits to the same dive sites.

At Abu Nuhas, we devoted a day each to the Giannis D and Chrisoula K (Tile wreck) with three dives on each; plus two dives on Carnatic before crossing back to Ras Mohammed.

This provided plenty of opportunity to take full advantage of the changing light on the wrecks, especially on Chrisoula K where the light streams into the hold onto its cargo of tiles. We were also able to get the classic shots of Giannis D with both the midday and the late afternoon sun.

On each of our two dives at Anemone City I spent fifty minutes with one anemone. Heaven! And we timed our dives on Alternatives to coincide with the late afternoon 'dappled light' on the shallow reef.

Martin gave a photo briefing before each dive, suggesting where and how to get the best shots on that particular dive site. He didn't give any formal talks on this trip – although I have since been on another trip when he did.

He was also available throughout the day to answer questions and give advice. And he made sure that he had seen everyone's images regularly during the week.

Being on a liveaboard gave even more time to chat and learn from each other. Downloading and reviewing images took place in the lounge,

Sailfin blenny at Blue Bead Hole, Statia
Nikon D200 in Subal ND20, 2x Inon Z-240 strobes. Nikon 105 VR micro. 1/125 @ f22 Manual, ISO 100

often with someone looking over your shoulder and offering an opinion – usually constructive and helpful!

The trip ended with a competition. Everyone submitted three images and all present, including the crew, voted for their top three, the winner taking home a trophy from Martin and a t shirt from the boat.

The final workshop of 2008 was with Mark Webster in Bali at the end of November. Snorkelling on the Liberty wreck in Bali in 1996 had inspired me to learn to dive; I had therefore wanted for a long time to return to dive on it.

We stayed at Tauch Terminal on the seafront in Tulamben, with several dive sites on the doorstep. The diving in that area is great; the Liberty Wreck is covered with so much coral that it's a wide angle wreck and reef dive, as well as being full of macro life. And there's plenty more dive sites in the area, including muck diving at Seraya Secrets a short boat ride away.

Bali is located in that area of Indonesia that has the greatest marine diversity in the oceans. Great subjects were not hard to find: from reef scenes with barrel sponges, gorgonian fans, colourful soft corals and schooling fish, to pygmy seahorses, ghost pipefish, harlequin shrimps, triplefin blennies, whip coral shrimps and gobies, a variety of nudibranchs – and much else besides.

Mark gave a presentation every day on a different aspect of underwater photography. He also encouraged us to bring a couple of images for discussion and critique, especially images that hadn't worked in some way. As with the other workshops, Mark was available throughout to answer questions and give advice on technique, settings etc.

This workshop also ended with a competition, voted this time by the staff from the dive centre and with the winner getting a trophy from Mark to take home.

Overall this felt like the most informal of the three workshops, the location adding to the relaxed atmosphere. Apart from a couple of mornings when boat excursions had been arranged, we were diving at our own pace from the shore.

Despite their differences, all three workshops afforded similar opportunities to learn and to take photos in a photographer-friendly environment.

In my initial exchange of emails with Mauricio Handler, he described his workshop as 'an intense week of learning and camaraderie'. It is a good description that could be applied to all three trips.

Over the three workshops I made sixty dives exclusively with other photographers. The workshops were all in 'high yield' destinations – those that offer maximum opportunity to get great images. And the opportunity was maximised by being able to go back to the same dive site again and again, as well as being able to spend as much time as I wanted to with each subject. I learned lots too; and made new friends.

In short, the environment and atmosphere on each was tailored entirely to the needs of underwater photographers.

I'm hooked. In 2009 I've already been on a workshop to the Maldives and I'm planning at least one more this year.

I have also booked a trip with my old club this year. I will take my camera, even though I know that I won't have the same photographic opportunities that I'm now used to. But at least I now know that there's an alternative. I might even let them have some of my photos if they ask…

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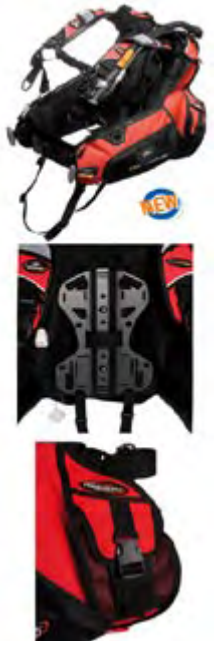

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Ocean Visions Compact Workshop

by David Kittos

I am addicted to underwater photography. I admit it. Primary symptoms of my addiction include always complaining that dives aren't long enough and my buddy ascending on their own and then never speaking to me again. It's a pity that being enthusiastic about photography and actually taking good pictures are two different things. For a long time, my pictures were fairly mediocre. Naturally, I blamed my little compact camera and thought about upgrading to a DSLR-based system. Unfortunately, the cost of doing this was a show-stopper - the quote I got was about £5000. Now, my kit isn't *that* bad - I use an Olympus SP350 with a PT30 housing, Inon close-up and wide-angle lenses as well as an Inon Z240 strobe. I just had to learn to use it properly. So I decided to invest in an underwater photography training course geared up for compact camera users.

Maria Munn's underwater photography work with compacts is well known in the UK and I had attended some of her presentations at Ocean Optics and LIDS. She specialises in this subject so I signed up for her September 2008 workshop in Nuweiba, hoping to take my photography to the next level.

The venue was the Coral Hilton, complete with house reef which was to be used for all the dives. Once everyone got to know the reef and where the different fish lived, there was no need to go looking for subjects any more, saving time for practicing composition skills, trying out new techniques and experimenting with our cameras.

At the start of the workshop, Maria went through the basic maintenance process for our housings and explained the use of standard camera controls. During the week, we were assigned objectives such as taking particular types of photographs or using specific composition or technical skills. We had two dives a day, image reviews and presentations.

Learning about composition and exposure were the most interesting parts of the workshop. Maria explained complicated ideas in a very simple way. Here are a few useful tips we got:

Maria Munn (centre) of Ocean Visions reviewing images with some of the workshop guests

Clown fish move in and out of the anemone in a pattern so it pays to observe them before taking pictures Olympus SP350, PT30 housing. f5.0 @ 1/160 EV: -2 ISO: 100 Aperture Priority Strobe: Inon Z240 (type 3) on TTL

The lionfish completely blocks the sun to give a dramatic effect to the picture. Joint 1st prize in the workshop's competition.
Olympus SP350, PT30, f8.0 @ 1/500, ISO: 100, Inon Z240 (type 3) on 1/32 power, Inon UFL-165AD Fisheye Conversion Lens. Exposure: Manual

I couldn't get the diagonal lines I wanted so I made my own!
Olympus SP350, PT30, f5.6 @ 1/250, EV -2, ISO: 100, Inon Z240 (type 3) on 1/32 power, Inon UFL-165AD Fisheye Conversion Lens. Exposure: Aperture priority

The private beach at the Nuweiba Coral Hilton

- Get close and slightly below your subject to enable you to shoot at an upward angle.

- Unattractive background can ruin an otherwise good image. If faced with this problem, try taking the picture with the subject against blue water. Other options include shooting from a different angle showing less of the distracting background or using a wider aperture with a shallow depth of field. If all else fails, a tight composition that includes head and eyes may produce a good enough result.

- Look for strong diagonal lines (rule of thirds composition rule). Where these donít exist naturally, tilt the camera slightly to create them yourself.

- Before attempting to take a photograph, observe the subject. For example, clownfish seem to have a pattern in their movements in and out of the anemone.

- Try to get the subject between the sun and the camera. This can be a diver or a manta-ray or a school of fish. If this technique is executed successfully it can create a dramatic effect in the picture.

- Exposure compensation (EV): should be negative for very dark and positive for very bright objects

The workshop lectures covered underwater scene modes (macro and wide-angle), when to use them and how they affect the picture. Maria also talked about f-stops/shutter speeds and provided settings (based on compact cameras) for different types of shots such as wide-angle, close-focus wide-angle and macro. For example, f8 was the

Typical reef sceen at Abou Lou Lou Olympus SP350, PT30, f8 @ 1/500, EV 0, ISO: 100, Inon Z240 (type 3), Inon UFL-165AD Fisheye Conversion Lens. Exposure: Manual

A superb composition shot with a P&S camera by Chrisi Neeson. Joint 1st prize in the workshop's competition. Canon Ixus 90, Housing WPC-24, f2.8 @ 1/200, EV:0, ISO: 200, Exposure: Auto

recommended initial f-stop for a macro picture: this gives maximum depth of field. Obviously there are no recipes for success in underwater photography and all the guests were encouraged to experiment as much as they can. It doesn't cost anything to shoot ten versions of the same picture and one of them might turn out to be a competition-winner.

We also learned about ambient light shots, how to set custom white balance for cameras that allow it and what to do if it's not available (use Cloudy setting). There was a jetty at the beach in front of the hotel, and at a depth of 2m, it was teeming with marine life with lots of natural light. This provided an ideal environment to try available light shots and the air at this depth never seems to run out.

I was very impressed by a technique discussed by Maria and demonstrated underwater: this was about controlling how light or dark the background is. She shot a picture of a lionfish against blue water using different shutter speeds: 1/30 for light blue, 1/90 for deep blue and 1/500 or 1/1000 for black. When I tried this myself afterwards, my camera was screaming "UNDER-EXPOSURE" when I used a shutter speed of 1/1000. Despite that I was so pleased with the picture that I really didn't care.

During the only night dive we did in the week, we got to practice low light shots. Using high ISO settings with compact cameras should generally be avoided because the sensor is so small and noise starts creeping in. This is where a good strobe comes in very handy. I had serious problems focusing but did manage an impressive (for my standards!) macro shot of a marble silver moray eel sticking its head out of the sand. The Inon Z240 (type 3) is a powerful strobe with TTL as well as manual controls and I recommend it to anyone with a compatible camera and housing. One thing to note about the house reef of the Nuweiba Coral Hilton: it is home to more than 200 lionfish - they are absolutely everywhere. Since they are attracted to light, it's best to be careful during a night dive at this reef and any other dive site where lionfish can be found.

Our last dive for this trip was at dawn. Visibility had been good all week but during this very early morning dive, it was perfect. Using the Inon UFL-165AD fisheye conversion lens which Maria had lent me, I set about trying to take a close-focus wide-angle picture of a lionfish against blue water and completely blocking the sun. After manoeuvring myself close enough and shooting upwards, I waited for the lionfish to get into position between my camera and the sun. While it was moving I kept shooting, reviewing and adjusting the exposure. Twenty minutes and thirty shots later, everything came together and the resulting image won me the Sport Diver 'Readers Picture of the Month' competition for January 2009. Now, that is *real* progress. Chrisi, a fellow guest, produced a stunning photograph titled 'Domino Fish' using an Ixus 90 compact camera. The image impressed everyone, Maria and dive centre manager included. There was an informal competition at the end of the week with prizes offered by Ocean Visions and Emperor Divers, giving everyone the chance to show off their achievements.

The best feature of the workshop was Maria's determination to help everybody in and out of the water. She would demonstrate *using our cameras* underwater and this went on for the entire week. How much more hands on can you get? The logic of this is I'd like to know the answer about

This little moray eel stuck its head out of the sand during the night dive. Olympus SP350, PT30, f8 @ 1/60, EV 0, ISO: 100, Inon Z240 (type 3), Inon UCL-165AD Close up Lens. Exposure: Manual

something and see it working on my camera, not somebody else's. Maria appears to have encyclopaedic knowledge of most compact digital cameras used for underwater photography. She helped her guests get the best results from their cameras and I even learned how to use my strobe effectively in full manual.

As far as criticisms go, I have none. Maria's teaching style and the workshop content were spot on. Also, the on-site Emperor Divers dive centre, offered excellent service. It would have been nice to be able to photograph some big stuff like wrecks and sharks, but this would have meant going on a live-aboard or perhaps a completely different location.

As a parting note, Maria reminded me on numerous occasions that I am supposed to look after my buddy. I consider my wrist firmly slapped. Will I remember this advice for my next trip? I will certainly try...

David Kittos

Alex Mustard's Cayman Workshop

by Julian Cohen

Twelve enthusiastic underwater photographers arrived in Grand Cayman in late January 2009 to attend Alex Mustard's Digital Madness Workshop. There was a complete mix of nationalities and backgrounds. A few Americans, some Brits and a Serb. All came with one aim; to improve their photography and to learn something of what makes Alex Mustard such a force in today's world of underwater photography.

Alexander Mustard trained and worked as a marine biologist until 2004, but now works full time as a professional underwater photographer. He took his first pictures underwater at the age of nine. He is widely regarded as one of the world's most creative underwater photographers. His images are known for their distinctive style that makes them instantly recognisable. They have won many awards and have been widely published. Alex was an early adopter of digital and has pioneered many of the specialist techniques of digital underwater photography, such as the use of filters in available light photography and using telephoto lenses underwater.

The subject of the workshop was "Light". It may sound a little innocuous but as we all know, shooting light underwater is not technically easy to do, and is the basis to making any image, underwater or not. As photographers we are painting with light and knowing how to control that light is the essence of all that we create. Alex split his lectures into three areas, ambient light, strobe light and balanced light. He gave us lectures on all three and in between we were let loose on the walls and reefs of the East End of Grand Cayman to experiment. Diving usually consisted of two morning dives and an afternoon dive, although we had one four dive day and a couple of long shallow dives in areas not usually dived.

Alex has dived the Caymans for fifteen years and has an intimate knowledge of the dive sites. As long as the weather allowed we got to dive the very best that the East End had to offer. Each site was chosen for a particular aspect. Babylon for its colourful sponges and soft corals, Ironshore Gardens for its macro, High Rock Drop Off for its walls. We had

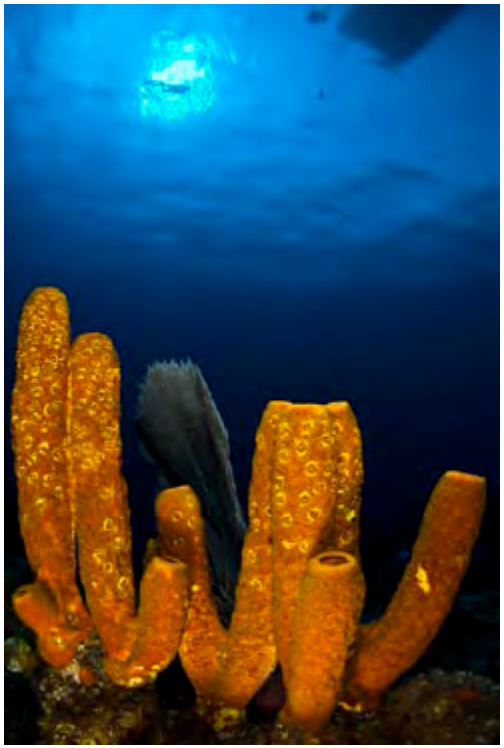
Close encounter at Stingray City Nikon D200, Subal D200, Spot-Meter Mode Tokina 10-17 mm f-3.5-4.5@17 mm ISO 100 1/125 at f8

All underwater images by Julian Cohen using a Nikon D200 in a Subal housing

Workshop participants and their gear. All sutface photos © Predrag Vuckovic
www.extreme-photographer.com

I spent 45 minutes trying to capture this pretty little puffer. 1/250 at f10 105mm Micro Nikkor.

The Anchor at Snapper Bay 1/160 at f9 Tokina 10-17mm
(Right) Everything comes together in the composition of this photo. 1/250 at f8 Tokina 10-17mm



a ninety minute dive in six meters of water over a wreck that had broken up and got moved about during Hurricane Ivan in 2004. This site is never dived by day boats and half the group were rewarded with a sighting of a two meter Great Hammerhead in three meters of water. We were actively encouraged to shoot wide angle as much as possible so I got to give my new Tamron 10-17mm a good workout. It did not disappoint, with its corner sharpness and close focusing ability. This is now my go to lens for wide angle. Grand Cayman also has some excellent macro opportunities so I ended up with quite a mix of shots; some of these are definitely going into my portfolio.

I feel that one of the main advantages in doing workshops and courses such as this is that it gives you an opportunity to dive places that the normal day boats go to quite infrequently. Unless you are a professional photographer with a budget that allows you to rent a boat for yourself, many of us dive with others in the group that are not photographers. This can lead to frustration on both sides as the non photographers don't want to hang in the water while you sit in front of a fish for fifteen minutes, and you want to stay in one place for as long as it takes you to get the shot and not go rushing around the dive site at breakneck speed. The boat was usually moored over the same site for two dives and we were allowed to enter the water in our own time before diving the site a second time. This really allowed you to scout the site, take some shots and see what was working, then check your shots back on the boat and discuss ideas before going back and trying to improve on the first dive.

Diving with twelve other photographers was a refreshing experience for me. For once I didn't have the biggest camera rig on the boat and there were no comments as I got on the boat, as everyone had a DSLR with two strobes, some had three. We were split pretty much between Canon and Nikon systems with one Olympus. Housings were predominantly Subal, with a couple of Sea and Seas thrown in and strobes were Ikelite D125s, Inon 240s and Sea and Sea 250s. Alex had his home made diffusers for his Inon 240s and a nice little ring flash system he

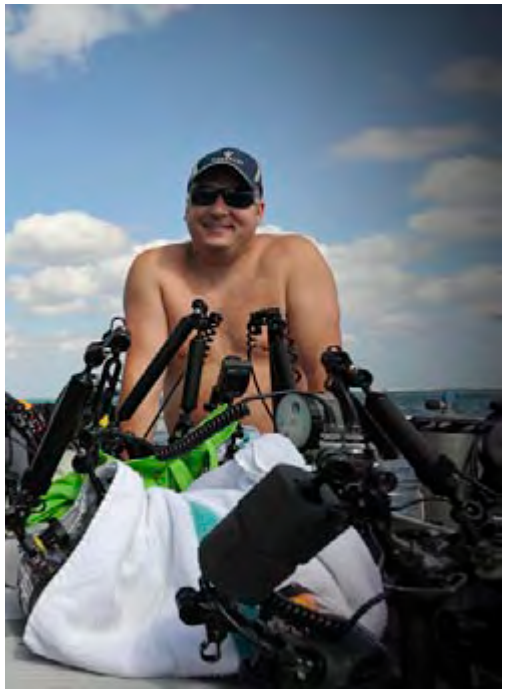
Anemone 105mm Micro Nikkor. 1/80 at f14. I am used to seeing these all over Asia Pacific but they are not common in the Caribbean. This one seems to glow with colour.

was testing that was made from a Tupperware box and what looked like toilet paper rolls!

Probably the highlight of the trip was a morning spent in waist deep water on a sandbar called Stingray City. No strobes and no scuba so everyone was weighted down so that you could drop under the water quickly and hold your breath while the rays swam towards you expecting to get fed. An early start ensured we could get free time with the stingrays before the cruise liner tourist boats arrived. Early morning light lent itself to black and white photography, as we were encouraged to shoot across the light to catch the shadows of the ripples on the sand bed. Each person applied their own individual style to produce end results that were quite different.

Each night there was a review session with the photos projected onto the wall by the swimming pool as we relaxed and discussed our images. There was no sense of competition, and everyone shared ideas and thoughts in a friendly and light hearted manner. I was quite surprised at the ability of the group as a whole. Everyone there had at least one quite exquisite photo that any professionals would have been happy to claim as their own. It was fascinating to see how different people interpret the same subject, and also to see the style that someone naturally adopts. After a couple of days it was possible to identify the owner of a photo just by viewing it.

The course was run in a particularly efficient manner. Everyone was on time and keen to get going each morning. Alex acted as a natural leader, encouraging and offering advice constantly. At no time did I feel that he was holding anything back; his methodology in creating his photos was open and available for all to see. Actually applying it however, was a different matter, but that is what keeps us diving and shooting. If you want any kind of final thoughts on the trip, then of the twelve of us, three had already done more than one trip with Alex before, and five, including me, will be back in June to dive with Alex in the Red Sea. Don't think you can have a better recommendation than that.



Alex Mustard

Julian Cohen

www.flickr.com/photos/juliancohen

Surface photos by
Predrag Vuckovic
www.extreme-photographer.com

Julian Cohen & Predrag Vuckovic

See us at the LONDON INTERNATIONAL DIVE SHOW 28/29 MARCH ExCeL, London

I'M GOING TO DIVE FEST party on the beach ARE YOU? www.divefest.co.uk

Photo: Simon Rogerson

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Compact Camera Course

Part 1

by Maria Munn

Getting into underwater photography is addictive. For those just starting out and looking to buy a compact camera (or perhaps a more advanced underwater photographer looking to buy a back-up to an SLR system), the choice of cameras and accessories is nothing short of overwhelming. Over the next few issues I will be sharing some tips to help you get to grips with the set-up and show how to achieve award-winning results with any kind of compact.

The hardest part in getting started is knowing what camera to buy. What do you look for?

Which camera?

Ask yourself what you want to achieve from underwater photography and what your budget is? What kind of depths do you dive to so that the housing is adequate. If you like deep diving, then housings made by Ikelite for compacts will be more robust than the camera's own brand of housing. Then look at a system with which you can grow in the future.

Next ask a few more involved questions such as: what is the battery life like? Can the built-in flash be used with the camera's housing or does a shadow occur if there is a large port on the housing? Is possible to fit external lenses onto the front of the housing? For those passionate about wreck photography, a wide-angle lens on the front of the housing is a must to photograph large subjects. However, for those who are crazy about nudibranchs and macro photography, this might not be so important and may decide on a strobe as their first compact camera accessory to really bring out the colours of their subject. Would you like to get really creative with your underwater photography and have full manual control over your settings to change both the aperture and shutter speed of your camera to achieve darker backgrounds with your photographs? Or if you are shooting with a strobe, being able to adjust the aperture settings on a compact is absolutely essential to control the lighting of your subject and prevent it being overexposed. Sound daunting? Don't worry, all will be explained over the forthcoming issues.

Secondly, the newest cameras with the most megapixels aren't necessarily the best models to choose. Along with having a 10 – 14 megapixel capacity, the increased information being stored on the camera's chip can sometimes result in digital noise. A way to overcome this is to shoot with the camera at a medium resolution which will reduce the count to around 6 megapixels. This is still of a high enough quality to give sharp 16 inch x 12 inch prints comparable to those taken with an SLR set-up. Depending on the budget, it may be a better idea to

invest in a good second-hand model and be able to buy a strobe or a wide angle lens at the same time.

Lastly, make sure you can see the screen underwater and access all of the important menu functions easily. This is especially important for those who are planning use their camera in temperate waters where gloves make accessing the controls difficult. Make sure you can access the film speed, aperture and shutter speed controls as well as white balance. The latest compacts made by Canon can custom set a button to become a one-touch manual white balance button which can be really useful when taking photographs of wrecks and caves to help bring the colours back in some scenarios.

Before choosing, always find out as much information as you can to save you any expensive purchase errors, forums such as Wetpixel (www.wetpixel.com) are an excellent resource for any newbie getting into underwater photography.

Before you start taking images, there are a couple of really important Menu Settings that need to be adjusted to make sure that the camera will focus exactly where you want it too. One of these is the setting called the AiAF or AF Frame mode which always needs to be set to Centre. The other setting is the Face Detect Mode which always needs to switched off. If either of these settings are left on, the camera will search for what it thinks is the subject underwater and if you decide to take a photo of a moray eel hiding in a rock, guess what, the camera may think that the rock is the subject, leaving you with a fluffy, out-of-focus moray eel.

Here the subject is too far away to make a real impact. Getting closer and approaching your subject slowly helps to make a much better photograph. (Left) Fuji Finepix F300 1/6th @ F8 Built in flash ISO 100(Right) Canon Powershot A570. 1/500th @ F8 ISO 80 Built in flash.

Getting the shot

So now you have an idea of the equipment you need, what are the key points to being able to get those fabulous shots? The golden rules of underwater photography are always the same.

Perfect Buoyancy, staying still for long periods during a dive to study subjects and the ability to get as close as possible to your subject while staying level and shooting up (although there are some subjects that suit looking down better!). Talking to dive guides before the dive will help you find the best subjects as well as those that you should keep away from, such as titan triggerfish when they are breeding.

Always approach your subject as slowly as possible, so as not to frighten it. Get as close as you can and try to fill the frame as much as possible to really give an impact to the photo. It really does make such a difference.

Camera control

Moving onto the camera settings, so many people tell me that they are really phased by all the controls that a compact can offer underwater that they haven't got a clue where to start apart from the Underwater Mode which is a standard manufactured setting usually found in the Scene Menu. The latest Canon Ixus and Powershots have nicely placed this in the White Balance menu making it easy for divers to toggle between the settings. Compacts made by Olympus have four different underwater modes to capture fast-moving subjects, large schools of fish,

Pier at Nuweiba Auto Underwater Mode/Manual White Balance Both shots were taken at the same time of day at a depth of 2.7 ms. However, the photo taken with manual white balance appears a little too unnatural compared to the one taken with the underwater setting at such a shallow depth.

small creatures and even a mode for snorkelling.

All of the modes in each different make of camera work in exactly the same way by adjusting the colours to make underwater images look less blue-green as the colour is absorbed by increasing depth of water. This mode can work very well from just beneath the surface to about 10 metres in depth. Always shoot with the sun behind you and when in low light conditions, be careful as the camera may choose a higher film speed to expose the picture correctly resulting in noise issues. Noise refers to small specks of colour that interfere with the clarity of the image and occur in sources such as poor lighting and can be red, green, orange or other colours. The picture taken of this pier at Emperor Diver's Centre in Nuweiba was taken with a Fuji F31D on the underwater setting at a depth of 2.7 metres. The other picture was taken at the same time on a manual white balance setting. Note the difference in colours at shallow depths.

Just by gaining confidence in changing a few settings on your camera can change a blue photograph into a beautiful, colourful one and make you enjoy your underwater photography even more.

Use of Film Speed Underwater

Having the confidence to change film speeds underwater does not only help to control overexposed subjects or blurry fish, but can also give an artistic effect to particular subjects. Film speed or ISO refers to the sensitivity of the camera's chip to. When in lower light conditions, a faster film speed is needed to ensure that subjects are sharp and in focus. When in shallower water, a lower ISO number such as 100 will help to enrich the colours of static subjects, such as wrecks and reefs. Using this particular film speed will also help to give beautiful punchy colours to macro subjects when the camera is used with an external strobe and helps to avoid overexposure of the subject.

So where do you use a speed of 200? This ISO number suits faster moving subjects such as clownfish, lionfish, turtles etc, and by pressing your finger lightly on the shutter button, keeping it in the halfway position and panning with these kinds of subjects, will help to ensure that the resulting photograph is sharp and in focus.

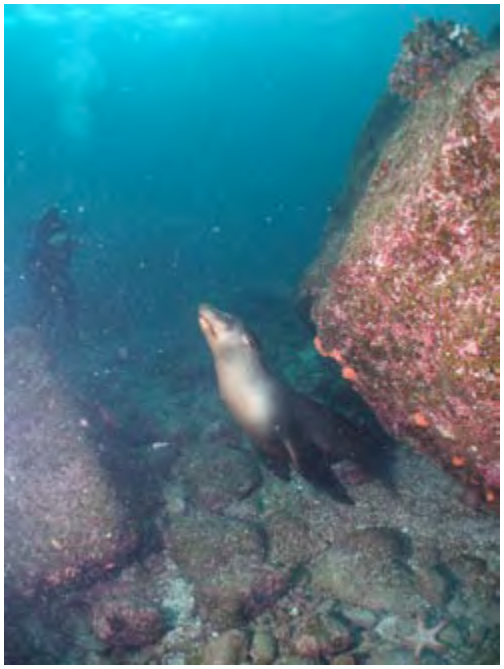
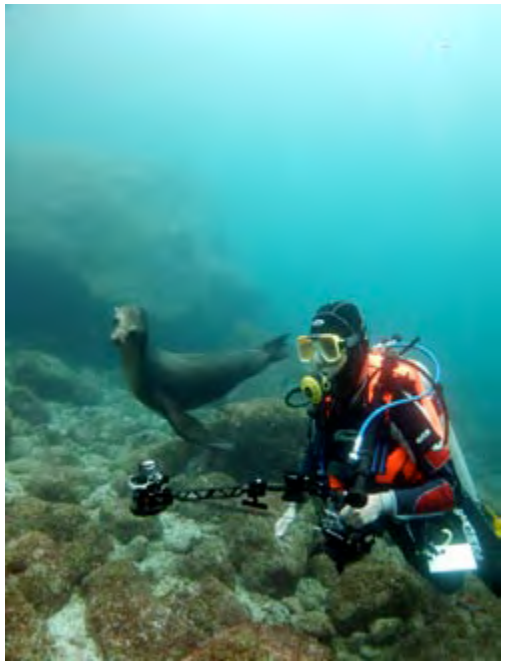
Moving onto 400, this is best used where the light conditions are lower such as photographic scenes where flash is not being used such as deeper dives, cave shots and inside wrecks. This allows the camera to capture images in lower light levels without the need for flash and can be extremely handy when following a group of divers through a wreck where the sandy bottom has been kicked up accidently.

Using higher film speeds can result in a loss of clarity and detail to the image which is often referred to as "noise" or "digital grain." However, for wreck enthusiasts, this can actually be an advantage as it can give a fantastic artistic antique effect to underwater wrecks and artefacts.

Filters for Fabulous Underwater Colours

Filters are fabulous tools to help beginners taking underwater photographs for the first time to get wonderful colours as well as enhancing the colours of video footage taken on a compact camera underwater.

There are two main types of colour correction filters for underwater use, red filters for blue water and magenta filters for green

Sealion Scene with no flash, flash and Magic Filter
I was at Los Islotes, Sea of Cortez last January at 7 ms and the viz was poor. I took these three photos, the first was with ambient light and there was too much light at the surface which ruined the photo, the second was with flash but this lit up all the particles in the water and the third was taken with a Magic Filter which gave the scene a colourful natural look.

water. There are some filters made by UR Pro which simply screw onto the front of housings made by Olympus and Ikelite Housings. Magic Filters are a great alternative and can be cut to fit any kind of compact camera housing as well as SLR ones.

Wide angle subjects such as wrecks or reefs can really benefit from the use of a filter as colours will be retained both in front or and behind the subject and the colours are really enhanced with a natural look.

Simply remember to use them when there is lots of ambient light available, shooting with the sun behind you up to a maximum depth of between 10-15 metres depending on your conditions. When using Magic Filters, calibrating the camera's white balance can help give your subject richer colours for a little deeper. Using a film speed of at least 200 will ensure that subjects remain sharp, in lower visibility this may well need to be 400.

Using a Camera's White Balance Settings Underwater

White Balance may be a new term to those changing from film to digital, but those who are used to video recording have been using this method for a long time by using a white card to balance their cameras to the colour of light.

With a digital camera's white balance controls, (normally marked AWB or WB on all camera models), neutral colours can be truly neutral under all lighting conditions and other colours are more natural or you can precisely control what colours look like for special effects. This function affects the colour reproduction of a subject dependent on its' surrounding light conditions. For example, using the daylight setting on your camera will help counteract bright sunshine on a subject in shallow water conditions up to 5 metres. By choosing the cloudy mode, this helps to warm up underwater subjects and can work as an optimum choice when there are bright pink subjects underwater such as Spanish Dancer Eggcases to give them a more natural pink colour instead of using manual white balance.

Some cameras will allow you to set the custom white balance setting from the touch of one button such as the newer Canon range, whereas with other makes you may have to access this through the Function Set or Menu buttons. Whichever way, it is definitely worth the effort to find it and practice how to use it to get the most of your creative streak in underwater photography.

Where is it best to set the camera's manual white balance? At the beginning of your dive, all you need to do is to calibrate your camera

Lionfish being brown can look very flat without flash. Here is an example to show the difference between a photo taken using Manual White Balance compared to one taken using just the Built-In Flash with a Canon Ixus 90. The eye of the fish is now lit as well as the patterns of the fish.

using a white card, slate or the palm of your hand and hold it close to your camera so that the light is shining on it. Switch your camera to the Custom White Balance Pre-Set Mode, moving the card as close as possible to the camera so that the frame is filled with the white card and press the Menu/ OK button to calibrate this setting. Remember to switch your Exposure Value Button (+/-) to 0. By doing this, all underwater subjects with an element of white in them will be replicated as such, and thus the natural stronger blue colour-cast is almost eliminated. Some wide angle subjects such as wrecks where there is a strong blue background could be rendered to a bluey/violet hue to compensate for the blue natural effect. Some subjects don't work very well when manual white balance is set, such as brown subjects like lionfish or moray eels as their colours seem very flat compared to the same photo being taken with flash. Also the eye of the fish is not always clearly visible when using this setting and again can appear quite flat. Red subjects such as red anemones or firecorals are not as vibrant as those which are taken with flash. Careful thought must be used to avoid disappointing results with these kinds of subjects.

When using custom white balance it is important to recalibrate your camera every time you change depth up or down by 5 metres to avoid photos becoming either over pink or red. It is just as important to remember that as subjects pass above such as moving dolphins, that if your camera is pointing upwards towards the surface whilst on the Custom White Balance setting, there is a high risk that the top part of your photograph will have a pink/red cast over it.

Finally, always remember that manual white balance, filters and the flash on your camera all help in putting colours back into underwater photographs and, therefore, using two of these together, or even all three will render most subjects with a very undesirable pink or red colour cast.

To sum up, all of the above may seem daunting at first, anything other than the Green Square Mode or Programme Mode can seem extremely complicated, but after a little practice, navigating your way through your camera's menus will, in time, become easier and easier. Practice on land with your camera in the housing to get acquainted with all the controls and when you first do a proper dive, find one shallow spot with your buddy, a good subject and keep on practicing. Soon all of the above will become second nature and you will be ready to move onto the other controls in your camera and get even more creative! Just remember to never delete any photos in your camera as a bad-looking colour photograph may turn out to be an award-winning one when it is turned into black and white! Most of all, have fun, take pleasure in shooting subjects which interest you and stay safe, believe me before you realise it you can lose your buddy, boat and run out of air, so do keep an eye on all of these. Until the next issue, Happy Snapping……..

Maria Munn
www.oceanvisions.co.uk

Peter Scoones

by Gillian McDonald

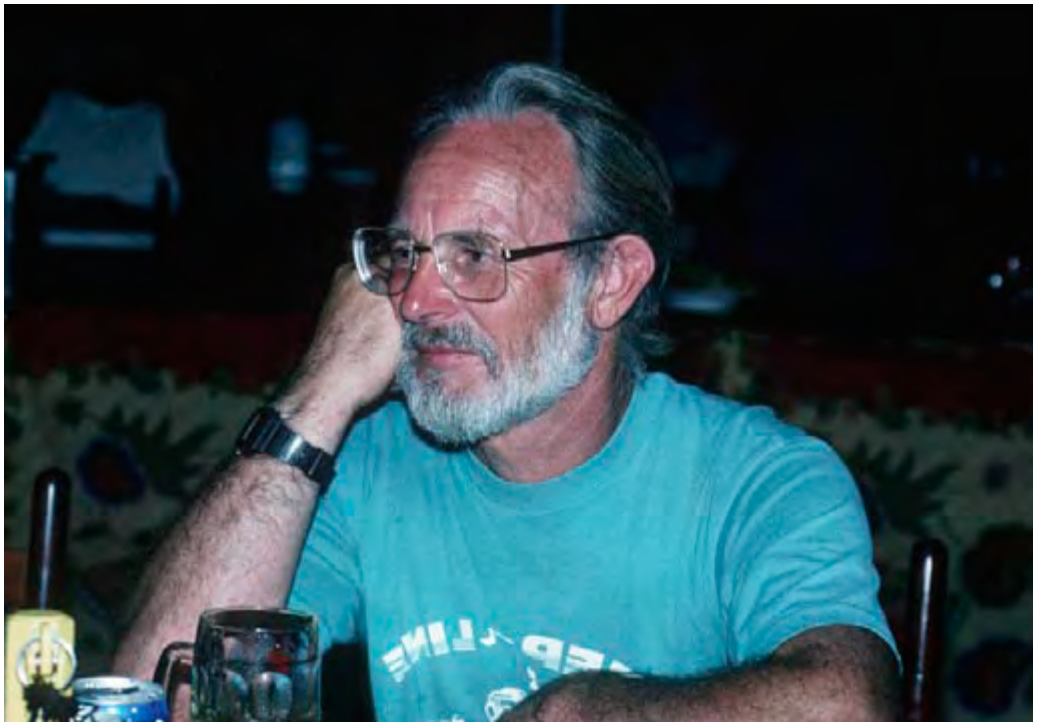
All portrait pictures by Georgette Douwma

There is little, if anything, that Peter Scoones does not know about underwater image making. A BAFTA and two Emmys surrounded by numerous other awards are testament to his creative achievements. But it is Peter's dual expertise in both artistic cinematography and technical wizardry which make him both unique and extra-ordinarily accomplished in this challenging field. His creative talent has taken him many times around the world for a string of unrivalled wildlife documentaries, many for the BBC Natural History Unit in the company of perhaps the greatest and most distinguished wildlife presenter ever known, Sir David Attenborough. However, he also designs, builds and maintains all his equipment and remains at the very cutting edge of his field today after an underwater career spanning nearly five decades.

He made his first film with an 8mm camera in a homemade Perspex box in the early 1960's, using only a mask, snorkel and fins. From there he has progressed to become one of the leading wildlife natural history underwater cameramen in the world. When I arrived to interview him at his central London flat he was designing a new viewfinder because the cameras he uses have changed their configuration. "Necessity is the mother of invention" says Peter.

Born in Wanstead, North London in 1937 to a sailing family, a marine career seemed almost inevitable. After school he qualified as a naval architect but on subsequently passing the entrance exam to the Royal Naval College at Dartmouth for commissioned officer training, his eyesight was tested below standard. So, when National Service loomed, instead of two years as a naval clerk he signed up for nine years in the RAF "to learn something useful". That something was photography.

At the time, Peter was a serious racing sailor "I'm the sort of chap who is 100% involved in whatever activity I am doing, nothing else intrudes" he says. Posted to Singapore, he headed the RAF sailing team. The fast, keeled sailing boats became sluggish when coated in marine algae and hauling them up slipways was time-consuming and cumbersome. Instead, the team borrowed masks



and snorkels from the Navy and scrubbed the hulls underwater. Having never previously considered what was under the yachts he raced, Peter observed the shoals of pretty, colourful fish feasting on the debris. Around the same time Hans Hass's boat moored nearby and Peter had a 'eureka' moment. Hass was already his hero and Hass's presence and the lovely marine life meant the area was probably a prime location for the beautiful images he had seen on TV and in the cinema.

So, after persuading the Navy to teach the basics on their O2 rebreathers they formed a diving club. "The RAF disapproved of diving, considering it a dangerous activity, but we ignored them" Peter grins. Due to limited equipment they became highly adept at snorkelling and learned to skip breathe. "I could hold my breath underwater for 3-4 minutes, I still do it. You can't film while breathing it disturbs you, makes you wobble".

Due to the lack of kit, as a temporary measure using RAF machine shops, recycled aircraft oxygen tanks and various hoses Peter built a couple of aqua lungs. "Demand valves are fairly simple things" he says, with typical understatement and modesty.

Already hooked on the underwater world through snorkelling, Peter's first ever dive, off Palau Tekukor nearly 50 years ago, was not without drama. Attached by rope "the tanks were very valuable, we didn't want to lose one" he floated down over the drop-off and with "wow" on his lips as a school of batfish wafted gently by he was completely captivated. With his skip breathing technique he stayed down far longer than expected for the air in the tank, so the crew began hauling the rope in. As he was being drawn inexorably towards a large cluster of nasty black sea-urchins, the stings of which can be very painful and indeed serious if multiple, he planted his feet firmly on the wall and pulled as hard as he could. Not only did his first dive feature beauty, awe and danger, he also incurred the wrath of the Far East boxing champion who he pulled into the water on the other end of the rope.

Peter was keen on both wildlife and photography since school days, so it wasn't long before his joint passions of image-making, diving and nature came together. Ever inventive, he would scavenge discarded, scratched aircraft windows returning them to stores and claiming a replacement, thus acquiring pristine sheets of Perspex to model housings from. He made cement from Perspex chips dissolved in chloroform, controls from used hydraulic linkages and created waterproof shafts – this was before o'rings were widely available. Unlike today when you can buy a housing off the shelf, there was nothing for it then but to build his own and in this he was truly a pioneer. "There was the Rolleimarin designed by Hass but that was way outside our budget, Nikonos which evolved out of Cousteau's Calypsophot didn't emerge until 1963, necessity is the mother of invention – if it doesn't exist, build it". There was that signature phrase again.

Tending towards moving film he housed a Bolex C-8 8mm cine camera and shot his first travel piece. He then moved from Singapore to Aden in the Red Sea and created his first feature film 'Breathless Moments'. This won the gold medal at the first Brighton film festival in 1965 and led to several production companies contacting him wishing to distribute the film. But, with great disappointment it transpired the 8mm media was

not production quality and could not be used commercially. Peter immediately rejected 8mm, bought a 16mm camera and says “I could never afford to film for myself again. The film was so expensive I had to get paid in order to fund it”.

Around this time he co-founded the British Society of Underwater Photographers (BSoUP) with Colin Doeg. Colin, a journalist at the time, has himself contributed significantly to British underwater photography including taking the first picture in British waters ever to win an open international underwater photographic competition. BSoUP is still going strong today boasting membership from many of the foremost underwater photographers in the UK. Having just celebrated it’s 40th anniversary, Peter and Colin are still both regular attendees at the meetings in London, a testament to the down to earth nature of both these amazing men.

Says Colin “being a superb camera mechanic as well as accomplished photographer helps Peter handle with aplomb the most dreaded event in any underwater photographer’s life... a flood. It is an unforgettable experience to see him calmly pour pints of sea water out of his custom-made camera housing and begin to salvage his expensive video camera anywhere on land or sea. Surrounded by an awe-struck audience and often an ashen producer or client - he can strip his camera down to its carcass, wash and sun-dry all the vital electronic circuit boards and have it working again in as little as a couple of hours”.

Colin continues “Peter is hugely talented and is probably the most self-sufficient wildlife underwater cameraman in the world. He has introduced many new ideas, including the use of polecams and cameras slung beneath radio controlled rafts. In the early days in the UK he pioneered the concept of standard sized openings in the body of housings so the ports were interchangeable, something we all take for granted today. He also used to produce correction lens from raw Perspex and blow his own dome ports”.

At the end of his nine year stint he left the RAF and joined a colour laboratory in London. For the next few years he absorbed as much as possible about underwater filming. To supplement his strong technical background and optical knowledge he thoroughly researched and read everything ever written on the subject, teaching himself. “I learnt from anyone who could tell me” he says, “I was a sponge, soaking up everything that I needed”.

During this time Peter became involved in a production company and continued to push the boundaries of underwater filming. Combining his by now extensive knowledge with an electronics expert colleague, they invented systems for the oil industry. One such project was developing inspection cameras for the BP offshore oil platforms. The only other equipment in existence was inadequate for the low visibility of the North Sea. So, necessity calling again, they developed a camera based on the silicon-intensified technology being used by NASA which functioned in low-light and worked remotely from the platform without the need for divers.

Their reputations spread and one day there was a knock on the door of the workshop in Richmond just outside London. It was David Attenborough (subsequently to become Sir David) and a colleague from the BBC Natural History Unit who wanted to film a live coelacanth in low-light conditions, something that had never been done before. The primitive looking, pre-historic coelacanth, which usually lives around 1,000ft deep, was only re-discovered in the last century after scientists thought it had become extinct along with the dinosaurs, 65 million years earlier. Attenborough was heading to the Comores islands as part of the BBCs ‘Life on Earth’ series to follow up reports of local fishermen hauling coelacanths up from the deep. He had heard about Peter’s camera and wanted to hire it. Peter seized his opportunity. Not only had he read about the coelacanth in school and long harboured an ambition to film it, but he also knew his camera was a completely unique and innovative asset that he

was certainly not going to hand over for someone else to use. “I told them they could have my equipment for free” he recalls “as long as they paid for me to go out with them and operate it”.

Thus began Peter’s long standing involvement with the BBC including ‘Reefwatch’, ‘The Trials of Life’, ‘Sea Trek’, ‘Life in the Freezer’, ‘The Blue Planet’ and ‘Planet Earth’ which was the first broadcast in high definition, among many others. ‘Reefwatch’ filmed in the northern Red Sea was the first ever live underwater broadcast. At the time, production quality camera heads were not integrated with any recording device, thus filming was achieved by passing the image back to the surface where it was adjusted and recorded. The BBC technicians in Bristol were developing their own cameras “but their knowledge was limited” Peter recalls “I knew their equipment wasn’t going to suffice, but they were disinclined to listen to a external freelancer. So I made my own camera. It was less snazzy and elegantly engineered than theirs, but it out-performed them every time”.

During ‘Sea Trek’, Peter enhanced the polecam which he had originally invented for filming killer whales in Norway for an Australian broadcaster. The whales would not approach if there was a diver in the water so Peter put the camera on a pole over the bow of an inflatable boat and drove right up to the creatures. The resulting film, ‘Wolves of the sea’ included the first recording of whales ‘carousel feeding’, herding the herring into balls near the surface then using their tails to stun them before scooping them up. With the modern proliferation of wildlife films and tourist excursions this kind of behaviour is now observed by a wide audience, but then it was completely new. The film went on to win the annual Wildscreen Festival. For ‘Sea Trek’ Peter

used the polecam to film dolphins in the Bahamas coming towards the boat rather than going away, this was yet another first.

Peter’s next invention was ‘the dog’. He developed remote capability by buying a broadcast quality recorder and housing it, connecting it to the camera by umbilical wire and ensuring the unit was neutrally buoyant so it would follow him in the water. He developed the camera control system from scratch, making a colour viewfinder so he could control the image. No longer was he reliant on an onshore technician. This was a revolutionary development and used right up until the BBCs spectacular ‘Life in the Freezer’ displaying life in the Antarctic in 1993, again with David Attenborough. Around this time broadcast quality camcorders became available which Peter housed so everything was finally all in one unit.

The following years brought a great variety of projects including, in 1995, ‘Great White Shark’ portraying the natural behaviour of great whites in California and South Africa. He still considers this to be the definitive depiction of these magnificent creatures, and as usual expresses this with no arrogance, simply as a fact. Peter is often accompanied on filming projects by his wife Georgette Douwma who is a highly accomplished photographer in her own right. The couple compliment each other delightfully with the ease and comfort of very good, old friends and also provide support and strength where needed.

The BBC’s blockbuster series ‘The Blue Planet’ came next and Peter’s skills were described by Sir David Attenborough thus: “Peter has a remarkable gift of composition. He understands fish just as other cameramen understand chimpanzees. He knows fish so well he can sense what they are going to do. You can see it in his footage. He moves as the fish move. We told him to go to his favourite destination and produce the footage for a film,” Attenborough says. “We would construct the story to go with it. He went to Sipadan and the resulting film won a Palm d’Or at the Antibes film festival in France.”

Peter’s most recent, major involvement was with yet another BBC/ Attenborough landmark ‘Planet Earth’. This was right at the forefront of technological advancement using High Definition

(HD) technology for the first time. Aware of technical limitations on 'The Blue Planet' the series producer Alastair Fothergill approached Peter a year before filming and asked him to build the HD housings. Peter feared he would invest much time and effort creating high quality, top-end equipment only to see it hired out to other cameramen rather than filming himself, a prospect he was distinctly uncomfortable with. On assurance he would be fully involved he went ahead with the build, only to find some of his fears were realised with less involvement than expected. Apart from the frustration, this had a very real effect on his income. To balance this, after 'Planet Earth' wrapped up, rather than the equipment remaining with the BBC as is usual Peter insisted it be returned to his ownership and he now hires it out himself, maintaining it, continually developing it and still shooting himself where possible. His current involvement is with the BBC's next great wildlife epic entitled simply 'Life'.

Peter is intensely environmentally aware. He eats fish, but not reef fish "it seems a bit of a nonsense to go filming them then come back and eat them". He also invests clean-up time on a reef before filming, clearing discarded fishing lines and ropes "it's amazing how much rubbish comes from boats, often operated by ex-fishermen who regard the sea as somewhere to dump rubbish. They don't have an understanding of the reef or what we want to see on it, because they don't see it".

It would be forgivable if this uniquely talented man were to have a sense of arrogance or conceit about his many pioneering achievements. Not so. Peter is a true genius, but still more than happy to share his knowledge and discuss any topic with openness and generosity. "I'm just a chap who is learning how to take excellent pictures underwater" he says. It sounds falsely modest, but he really means it.

Gillian McDonald

Morehead City Shark Missiles

By Chris Walker

I'm hovering 80 feet below the surface thirty miles off the coast of Morehead City, North Carolina. In all directions I'm surrounded by large sharks. There is no other place I would rather be. There are so many sharks below me that I worry about inadvertently kicking one while looking the other way. High above me the largest sharks circle endlessly like jumbo jets hovering over a busy airport. My camera's memory card is packed with a ridiculous number of exposures and I can't stop smiling. I don't want to look at my computer because I know that my time is almost up. Instead I lower my camera for a brief moment and take it all in.

Carefully fining my way through a narrow passageway in the dark interior of an old shipwreck I come face to nose with a large shark. Neither the shark nor I can swim very well in reverse so I sink to the bottom of the hallway and try to be small. Undisturbed by my presence, the shark silently glides over me close enough to touch. Figuring that I might as well take a picture, my powerful strobes illuminate the beast at close range. Now very disturbed, the shark bolts out of site with a loud CRACK of her tail.

Kneeling on the sandy bottom at 110 feet I'm completely engulfed in a massive cloud of baitfish. The water is clear but there are so many fish that I can hardly see five feet in any direction. Suddenly the school nervously accelerates in one direction. Hundreds of small fish zip past me like snowflakes blowing in a blizzard. I ready my camera and right on cue a large shark emerges. I snap as many pictures as I can as she slowly cruises an arm's length away. In a moment she is gone. The baitfish relax and engulf me once again. I regroup and wait for this amazing spectacle to repeat.

Back onboard the boat everyone enthusiastically recounts their shark encounters. Some bring back proof in the form of bright white shark teeth; others capture digital photos and videos. All are excited and many stories are exaggerated over the long ride home. The sharks get bigger and the encounters become closer. The guy with the foggy mask swears that there weren't any sharks down there. The spear fisherman talks about that giant grouper that he would have shot if there were not so many sharks around. In the end we all feel fortunate to be able to visit these

This big girl was circling above the World War II shipwreck of the Caribsea. She was just one of over fifty sharks in the area that day. There was a lot of bait around her and it was difficult to get a clear shot of her head. F/4.5, 1/125th, ISO-320 Nikon D70S with Tokina 12-24mm lens @ 12mm, Single Ikelite DS125 strobe set for TTL.

magnificent creatures in their natural habitat.

North Carolina's resident sand tiger sharks hold a special place in my heart. I find photographing them enjoyable and rewarding. Best of all, it is pretty easy to do. Even amateur photographers can capture stunning images.

The small town on Morehead City, North Carolina is about a day's drive from most major cities on the east coast of the US. This diving and fishing hotspot is located at the southern end of the fabled Outer Banks. These barrier islands have long been known for their beautiful natural beaches and wild horses. Offshore, the warm Gulf Stream Current mixes with the cooler Labrador Current creating a bountiful and unique marine ecosystem. The diving is diverse. The shipwrecks are world class and the marine life is unbelievable. Wrecks

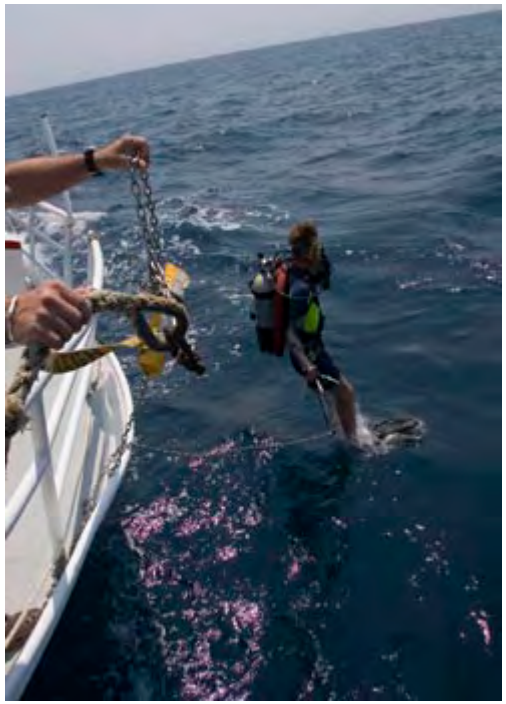
(Left) Sandtiger sharks hovering above a shipwreck, a common site in Morehead City, North Carolina. F/10, 1/125th, ISO-320 Nikon D70S with Tokina 12-24mm lens @ 12mm lens, Dual Ikelite DS125 strobes set for TTL.

(Centre) This photo was taken in January of this year on the World War I wreck site of the Schurz. To say that there was a lot of bait fish that day would be an understatement. F/5 1/125th, ISO-640. Nikon D70S with Tokina 12-24mm lens @ 20mm, Dual Ikelite DS125 strobes set for TTL.

include everything from WW11 German U-boats, Black Beard's pirate ship, artificial reefs and several wrecks that no one has gotten around to identifying yet. Marine life includes massive schools of fish, rays, turtles, and of course sharks. Since the dives are conducted in the open ocean, there is no limit to what could swim by. The prime dive season extends from May to October. At this time, dive conditions are pleasant with water temperatures averaging 75F degrees and visibility averaging 80 feet. Typical dive depths range from 80 to 130 feet. Redundant breathing systems, NITROX computers and surface signaling equipment are the norm. Divers are typically allowed to plan and execute their own dive profiles. Experienced dive operators, like Olympus Dive Center, offer comfortable boats and professional service.

For the photographer the selection can be overwhelming. The sharks are my favorite, and in North Carolina there are a lot of them. There are many species, but the Sandtiger Shark is most commonly encountered by divers. Schools of sandtiger sharks congregate year round near many of North Carolina's numerous dive sites. The wrecks of the Caribsea, Papoose (now known to actually be the W.E. Hutton) and the SPAR are popular and reliable shark dives. Sandtiger sharks can also be found around rock ledges and near just about any dive site in the area at some point during the year. The cooler waters of the winter months bring increased numbers of sharks. Some scientists speculate that they gather to breed. At certain times, more than a hundred individuals can congregate over one location. Sandtiger sharks are extremely tolerant of divers. Typically they are very well behaved. However they are large wild animals and should be treated with respect. It is not a good idea to touch them or spear fish around them. Each year thousands of divers of all experience levels dive with the sandtigers in North Carolina. Since no bait or chum is used, divers are offered the unique opportunity to observe these sharks behaving naturally in their aquatic environment.

Sandtiger sharks, also known as grey nurse and ragged tooth sharks in other parts of the world, are popular in aquariums. They can grow to over ten feet in length and weigh more than 350 pounds. Sandtigers are found throughout a wide range of temperate waters and possess the unique ability to hover motionlessly in the water column. Like divers, sandtiger sharks use air to regulate their buoyancy. To do this they swim to the surface, open their mouth ridiculously wide and gulp air. This is a behavior that you have to see to believe. Sandtigers live long lives and reproduce slowly. They can be predictably located and readily captured. In the past this has lead to exploitation through over fishing and trophy killing. Sandtigers were one of the first shark species to receive governmental protection. In North Carolina, populations have rebounded to plentiful numbers. In the USA, sandtiger sharks remain



(Far left) Captain John Thompson swims along side of a North Carolina sandtiger shark. John's pictures of me with the sharks that day were much better than the ones I took of him. Notice the scratches and scars on the side of this shark. Is this evidence of mating? F/5.6 1/125th, ISO-320 Nikon D70S Tokina 12-24mm lens @ 12mm, Dual Ikelite DS125 strobes set for TTL. (Left) Captain Fred McCall swims the anchor down to the wreck. Olympus Dive Center's crew uses a full face mask with underwater communications. Site conditions are relayed to the divers before they get in the water. This helps you decide – Wide angle or macro?

federally protected. Despite this, they are occasionally killed by spear, sport and commercial fishermen. Sadly, when a shark is killed, the remaining school will leave the wreck site for months or even years. Where do they go?

It seems as if sandtiger sharks were custom built for underwater photographers. Their visible teeth and large size make them high impact subjects that are sure to evoke a response from your viewers. They are extremely tolerant of divers and can be approached with relative ease. And, most appreciated by underwater photographers, they typically hover motionless in the water column allowing time for composition, metering and bracketing. Smaller sharks often have interesting spots on their sides. Sharks of all sizes often have grass visibly growing out of their teeth. Does this mean they have not eaten in a long time?

On most days the sharks allow photographers to approach within inches before they swing their massive tails and bolt off into the distance with a loud THUMP. At other times one can only swim within ten feet of a shark before it fires off like a living missile. The term "shark missile" was coined by an ex-dive buddy of mine whose favorite hobby was to scare the sharks off at precisely the right angle so that they would launch inches over my head when I was not paying attention.

The dives can be deep so wide angle lenses coupled with powerful strobes are preferred for close up portraits. A 60MM lens or similar can produce nice images when the sharks are harder to approach. Black and white images work well when there is a lot of particulate in the water column. Some stunning ambient light photographs have been taken highlighting the schools of sharks around the wrecks. Typically all a photographer has to do is to stay in one spot and wait for the sharks to slowly swim by. If an opportunity is missed, it usually does not take very long for another one to circle back around. Adding a diver into the background can improve the photo and is fairly easy to do. The ever present schools of baitfish can enhance composition but they often complicate the picture taking process. Multiple exposures are recommended since you never know when a baitfish has covered up the shark's eye or wandered too close to the strobe and become horrendously over exposed. Of course minimizing the distance between camera and shark is important for effective lighting. A common mistake is not getting close enough. I like to wait

Nema Triplett enjoys one of her first encounters with sandtiger sharks. F/5.6 1/125th, ISO-200 Nikon D70S with Tokina 12-24mm lens @ 12mm, Single Ikelite

until I can clearly see the nose hairs (they are actually black parasites around the shark's nostrils) through the view finder before I start firing off frames. Fast recycling strobes are extremely helpful allowing you to capitalize on your opportunities with multiple exposures. It is often easier to settle down in an area ahead of the shark's path and wait for it to swim to you as opposed to chasing after the sharks This strategy often results in more "head on shots." I also find it allows time for metering the water column and lining up an interesting background. Often just before the shark that is swimming toward you darts off, it turns its head to one side making for a dramatic pose.

Sometimes the sharks hover high above the wreck midway down the water column. At these times photographers can hang onto the anchor line and swim out to meet the sharks as they approach. With good buoyancy control and some situational awareness (it is not a good idea to lose site of the anchor line) divers can extend their bottom times by taking advantage of the shallower depths. These mid water portraits often have the clearest blue water backgrounds. These sharks also tend to be the largest and are often accompanied by an entourage of pilot fish and remoras. At other times the sharks wander the interiors of the shipwrecks or lie motionless on the bottom.

People are often surprised to hear how good the diving is in North Carolina. Although the area has had an established dive industry for several decades, it still feels like a well kept secret. The diving here is unique and you just have to experience it for yourself to fully understand. Maybe you are looking to add some dramatic shark pictures to your portfolio or maybe you are just interested in some outstanding wreck diving. Give North Carolina a try, you will not be disappointed.

Chris Walker

Cuttlery Draw

by Rob Spray

We British are often portrayed as prudes while our European neighbours are considered sophisticated love machines. This isn't entirely fair but it's one reason why so many of us holiday abroad… and in Europe the place to go for erotic thrills is Holland!

We first heard about cuttlefish breeding by the Zeelandbrug from Dutch divers at an Indonesian resort. Strangely we learnt about the gathering in Holland before discovering a similar event in England, now that we've heard how greedy fishing threatens that gathering it seems all the more appropriate to relay our Dutch experiences.

Destination Duiveland!

The encouragingly named Island of Schouwen-Duiveland in the province of Zeeland is roughly 15 miles long and 7 high (smaller than Malta) so getting around is easy. Even more so because it's very, very flat and you can often see your destination in the distance! We chose to stay at De Kabbelaar in Scharendijk which is an integrated dive centre, shop and hotel. The founding family have recently chosen to rent out the shop and concentrate on the hotel but it's seamless for customers. Separating the hotel from the shop has allowed Bastien and Caroline more resources to add some more spacious rooms. We got to spread out in one of the new ones which made a great base. The hotel has a dry front door into the bar and a wet back door which opens, via two secure, chip keyed, CCTV observed doors, into a huge washing and drying area. More secure doors get you to the rooms or straight into the bar...

Diving in the Netherlands is predominantly a weekend pursuit and our local informant's most valuable tip was to go during the week. That ensured relaxed, crowd and queue free diving. It helps that the May cuttlefish season is pre-high season for land lubbers. The cuttlefish are THE big diving event in Zeeland and the bridge car park is crowded whenever a good slack falls within normal daylight hours. Luckily there's plenty of daylight in mid-May and much before 9.30 is not considered normal so you can get a chance at some undisturbed

All photos taken with Olympus E-330, macro with 50mm + 1.4x teleconvertor and wideangle with 7-14mm lenses

gloom.

Contributing to the post dive calm was a typically practical Dutch innovation - self service air fills. No more frantic runs to the dive shop before they close, and no queues because there's simply no hurry. The air is metered out at 400litres for 50 Euro cents so a 10litre tank costs 2.5Euros to top up from 50bar of leftovers. Whether the UK populace could be trusted with this breakthrough is open to question but the Dutch can clearly cope The only real problem is amassing a good stack of half Euro coins.

The island has distinct bodies of water above and below it. Above, the tideless Gravelingenmeer allows diving at any time on a selection of sites, several with concrete reef balls to provide extra habitat for the local wildlife. They work very well and bring the focus up off the light silty sea bed which makes for better vis. There are many 10s of them which makes for a good area to search. Most of the sites are shallow, the dykes

generally slope gently to 2 or 3m and then more sharply down to a plateau at 7-10m. If you keep going there's another dropoff which can take you down beyond 30m but we didn't meet anyone who recommended it and can't say we were tempted.

To the South there is the Oosterschelde, which is tidal and the sites here should be dived at slack. The currents can be strong and the water is torn past some of the features which make up the sites on this side more diverse. There are tide tables on the web and there's a set for sale in the shop with the offsets for each of the popular sites. Far and away the most popular site, North or South, is the Zeelandbrug. Whether or not the cuttlefish are there someone will turn up for slack. When the cuttlefish are there any daytime slack will be well attended, even during the week. There's decent sized car park for 30-40 cars but anglers often claim the pole positions by the steps. There's a 'hardcore members' area under the bridge where you can get a bit of shade and some gravel free concrete to change on or catch some rays.

The Dutch weather can be blazing in early summer, so we always come back with a fetching drysuit tan, and the water is warming quite fast. It's been 12oC early in May and up to 15oC by the end of the month for the 10-15m range which holds most interest. In the shallows it is often considerably warmer. Most local divers will be in semi-dries with the drysuit minority looking much more comfortable at the end of their dives. If you're aiming to spend 60-90minutes photographing wildlife then a drysuit is de rigeur. All the Dutch divers have been pretty friendly and most are very happy to explain the sites. Many of them go prepared for a good chat and carry albums of photos – even framed 12x16" prints in one case! We were warned that they could be pushy and did experience some light jostling when our strobes drew a crowd but I've suffered a lot worse in the UK from my own (ex) club members and many blue water herds. In vis which is 4-5m at best and much less than 1m in a crowd the key is to stay calm, hold your position whilst protecting yourself and above all to avoid entanglement. It's no big deal just be sensible and careful.

Where to go

We were there for the cuttlefish so we concentrated on the bridge and supplemented it with a sprinkling of the others, all on the North coast as it happens where the lack of tide makes planning trivial. With the long daylight hours it's easy to fit in 3 dives a day.

Scharendijk

An ideal starter for De Kabellaar residents, only 20m from the air station to the steps over the dyke. It's a very benign place to get used to the conditions and a great photo venue for some of the locals; barnacles, mussels, anemones, prawns and slugs. There will often be a group on the picnic bench at the top of the steps to cheer you on too.

Situated in a quiet corner of the Gravelingenmeer there's no current and it can get quite murky. That shouldn't upset you too much if you are into macro - we spent 30 minutes on buoy ropes marking the ends of the runs of reef balls snapping skeleton shrimps and nudibranchs.

Den Osse

After a few days of diving the climb up the steps from the car park, the thrill of crossing a road in full kit followed by the final ascent of the dyke can be tough on the thighs. It's a good workout and you'll be able to enjoy the view down from the top!

The shallows here are particularly nice, very clear and bright on a sunny day. It's an excellent place to get good shots of black faced gobies guarding their eggs in oyster shells and Nudibranchs

laying eggs on sea lettuce. The top of the oyster-covered slope down to the 8-10m plateau, where the reef balls are, is fringed with a wall of wireweed acting as a low-rent kelp forest. The slope is alive with fish and crabs.

Dreischor

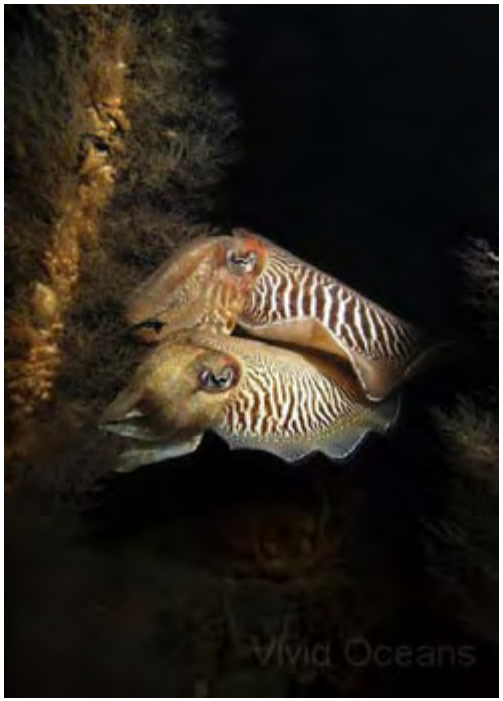
The most remote of the reef ball sites. A risk made only too apparent by the odd cube of shattered car glass is that of theft. Off season it seems lonely and remote but the opportunistic thief is more likely to venture out when picking are better in high season. It's preferable to dive with others around, you can strike a deal with other divers to share minding duties – though there may not be anyone about at all. There's usually a herd of cows about and they may be there to greet you at the shore when entering or leaving the water but won't log your dive or watch your car.

Zeelandbrug

The seabed around the bridge piers is very silty, so you probably won't get great vis. That said the major factor is divers, so it's well worth getting up early and risking a little tide. A neap tide gives nearly 2 hours of slack and few divers go in more than 30 minutes early so you can get some cuttle time to yourself. The water isn't truly slack until you see light debris stationary and the guide rope has no pull on it. A compass is vital as the bottom is uniform away from the piers so it's easy to lose your bearings. It's possible to dive between slacks but a number of people have been lost that way!

For years local divers have planted nesting material for the cuttlefish, rows of crossed sticks, grouped as villages of tents either side of the first bridge pier. There are 3 major 'villages' plus some further away to ensure peace for the cuttlefish and a better chance to study their success - TV crews were filming the planting and monitoring of sticks. Those planting the sticks attend daily and are fiercely interested in sightings, be ready to describe what you've seen and hope for some advice in return. They are concerned that numbers are falling because fishermen are taking too many, but this is pressure from angling not commercial potting. If this is affecting numbers then it's obvious that the brutal harvest of the breeding cuttlefish in Babbacombe Bay will be devastating. If they don't get to breed the population will collapse.

These are not animals in prime condition, their entire effort and energy has been devoted to procreation – I wish I could claim that – and they are dying even as they court and lay their eggs. Their dilated pupils and single minded preoccupation with their task in the face of spectators make it only too clear that they are running on empty and shutting down their higher functions to dedicate their last hours to their final, most important task. It's a quietly tragic end to a very promising and intelligent life. Cuttlefish are fantastic animals to interact with and simply absorbing to watch at close quarters. That an animal with such potential should be designed for just one season of life, for the female, is very sad. Whilst



watching the courtship and egg laying is magical one is struck by the stoic stillness of the single animals waiting to die after completing their mission. There's no frantic business as usual, just an apparent understanding that their work is over and that they can rest. To be so sentient, showing such interest in abstract objects surrounding them is surely a sign that they are worthy of much greater respect and care than they receive.

British Reserve:

Given that the UK conditions appear, from Alan James' excellent pictures, to be much more favourable perhaps it's the right time to suggest that a sustainable tourist business would do more for local prosperity and the UK's environmental reputation than short sighted slaughter during this critical period. Here you have an animal which can truly inspire and captivate any wildlife aware surface dweller and if a the price of an exclusion of fishing around the area was an accompanying ban on diving that would be a fair trade to secure better rights for these amazing creatures.

Rob Spray
www.1townhouses.co.uk

Bali Reprised

By Mark Webster

One of the perennial challenges for most underwater photographers is which lens to choose for a particular dive. This question is posed daily to dive guides at hundreds of locations around the globe and can often be pointless if your guide has no knowledge of photography and the capability of a particular lens.

Ideally we need to be familiar with a site and its subjects, which is why returning to a productive location is so attractive even if it is half way round the world from home. This was my fourth visit to Bali to host a photo workshop based at my favourite location of Tulamben and it was the second or third visit for some of our group as well, so we had a good feel for what to expect.

There are numerous excellent dive sites around Bali, but Tulamben must rank as perhaps the best simply because of the wide variety of dive sites and subjects within the bay itself, all of which are a short walk from your chosen dive centre – ours was Tauch Terminal which is situated in the centre of the bay. These include a world class coral covered wreck, classic volcanic sand muck, coral reef and a wall dive. If you pick up a copy of Roger Steen's book 'Coral Reef's Nature's Richest Realm' you will be surprised at how many shots of unusual subjects are taken at Tulamben and there is always the chance to see larger denizens here unexpectedly.

If the thought of beach diving might put you off then they have this covered as well – the local village has formed a porter co-operative serving all the dive centres. Your scuba set (tank, BCD and regulator) is carried to your point of entry and back again at the end of the dive, generally by women ranging in age from teenagers to retirement age who carry one or two (yes two) sets on their heads! They do this in worn out flip flops on the rubble beach, whilst we struggle in stout wetsuit boots, but the whole service makes diving here very easy.

Our programme also included visits to some of my favourite sites in the immediate area – Seraya Secrets which is now a well known muck site to the south, the Japanese wreck a little further south at Amed and Kubu reef just to the north of Tulamben. Seraya Secrets and Kubu are a short boat trip away using the local Jukung outrigger fishing boats which is a great fun experience not to be missed, whilst Amed is only 40 minutes away by road.

Gorgonians and feather stars – the reef adjacent to the Japanese wreck at Amed is very rich in coral populations. It has some spectacular colonies of sea fans and crinoids that cover the reef right up into the shallows and make great wide angle compositions. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, Subtronic Mini flash guns, ISO100 f11 1/125

I like to try and have several objectives for a trip so that you arrive with some focus and so my planning for the trip included playing around with a couple of different bits of kit.

180mm macro lens

It is always a good idea to try and present a different perspective on common subjects that you may have photographed before. One way of doing this is to use different lens types or combinations of lens plus converters or diopters. For this trip I dusted off my now old Sigma 180mm f5.6 macro lens which on a DX format

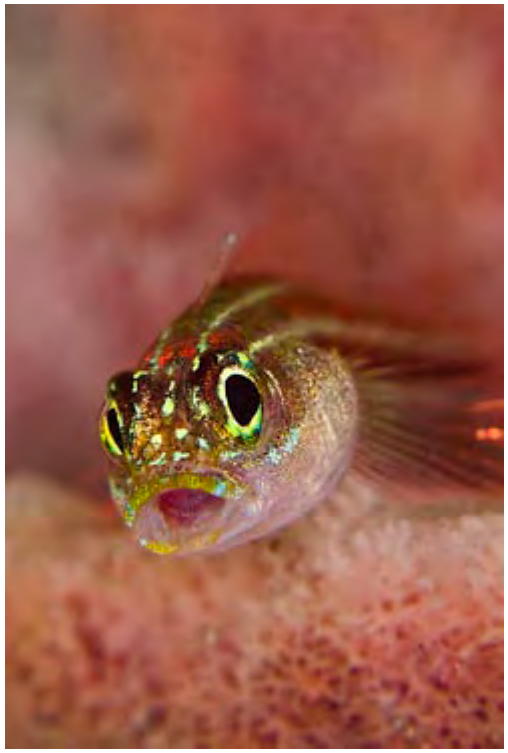
may be regarded as an extreme as it equates to a picture area equivalent close to 270mm due to the crop factor. For that reason I have not used this lens on digital as much as I did with film. The reproduction ratio is 1:2 on full frame, so the crop factor helps to bring it closer to an 'apparent' 1:1 at full magnification. However this tight framing makes it ideal for small shy critters that object to letting you come too close and the longer focal length and narrow depth of field gives a very pleasing soft focus background particularly at wider apertures.

Although this lens has a maximum aperture of f5.6 I have never really noticed much of a reduction in light levels in the viewfinder for focusing. The lens works well with the AF on my D300 and although I have a manual focus gear on the lens I don't feel the need to use it. The great thing about this particular lens is that it is no longer than an extended 60mm macro and has internal focusing, so it can be used behind a 60mm or 105mm port. Having such a small picture area it can be a bit of a handful to aim to begin with, particularly if your subject is small and well camouflaged like a pygmy seahorse for example. The very narrow depth of field also means that focusing is more critical and you may find that you will reject a lot of images for being a little soft.

Sigma 180mm f5.6 macro (right) – considering the focal length, this is a very compact and light macro lens – shown next to the Nikkor 105mm AFD. Available on the second hand market it is worth considering if you fancy a bit of extreme macro photography.

But the joy of digital is of course that you have far more frames available to get it right! This lens is no longer manufactured but can be found quite cheaply on the used market and is still supported by Sigma – I have just had mine serviced.

Using this lens with smaller apertures will require more power from your strobes due to the subject distance. You can position your strobes adjacent to or even forward of your port if you lack power – I normally use my Inon quad flash which of course is mounted on the end of the port. If you are shooting wider apertures then strobe power will not be such an issue.



Triple fin blenny – using a macro lens with a longer focal length results in a very narrow depth of field and soft backgrounds. Although the longer lens allows you to shoot skittish critters from a greater distance you do have to concentrate a little harder on your focusing. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 180mm macro, Inon Quad flash, ISO 100 f8 1/60.

The image of a triple fin is typical of the results that this lens can produce. It has a very narrow depth

Banded shrimp – one advantage of a macro lens with a longer focal length is that is occasionally allows you to gain an unusual view or composition of a common subject. I found a group of banded shrimps hanging under the shade of a steel cable drum. With a 105mm I was invading their space and they would back off into the shadows but with the 180mm I was able to get a head and shoulders portrait with some natural light behind the subject. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 180mm macro, Inon Quad flash, ISO 100 f8 1/30.

of field and although the colour of background is visible it has a pleasing soft texture that does not fight with the main subject. Another advantage of a macro lens with a longer focal length is that is occasionally allows you to gain an unusual view or composition of a common subject. I found a group of banded shrimps hanging under the shade of a steel cable drum. With a 105mm I was invading their space and they would back off into the shadows but with the 180mm I was able to get a head and shoulders portrait with some natural light behind the subject. Does the lens have good bokeh or bad bokeh though? I personally don't dwell on this too much and it seems OK to me, but I will leave you to judge for yourselves.

Mini dome port

Dome ports seem to stir a lot of discussion and angst amongst photographers when it comes to deciding which is the best. The current trend is towards ever bigger glass domes with multi coating, particularly to accommodate lenses like the new Nikkor 14-24mm which is gaining a reputation for being difficult to set up on the latest FX cameras.

Glass domes will in theory give superior performance over perspex and you will certainly need a larger dome to get the best out of a rectilinear lens that cannot take a diopter. However, although I have owned several glass domes, I find that I still prefer to use smaller perspex domes which are so much lighter in water and of course (maybe more importantly now!) for travel.

With fisheye lenses the dome size is not so critical due to their close focusing properties and the curvature of the image produced. I am always on the look out for something new and for this trip was loaned a particularly nice compact dome to trial with my Subal housing. If you follow the various options in the market you will know that Nexus also offer very compact domes for fish eye lenses and this one is visually very similar.

If you like to make close focus wide angle or wide angle macro compositions then the smaller dome sizes are much easier to work with – you can get physically closer to your subject and access subjects that would be difficult with so much more glass in front of the housing. The small diameter is also much better for working with a subject on the seabed as you can achieve a much lower perspective without having to dig a hole for your large dome. Fisheye lenses focus down to a few inches and using the depth of field you can just about touch the subject with a small dome. The compact size also makes lighting a very close subject simpler without the broad width of a dome shade to cast a shadow.

Little and large – the mini dome alongside a Subal FE2 dome shows the significant size difference. Whether a dome like this suits you will depend largely on the lenses like to use and type of images you favour.

I was using this dome with the Tokina 10-17mm FE zoom which is an extremely flexible tool and at the 17mm end is ideal for smaller subjects very close to the dome. These images of a ghost pipe fish, plume worm and feather star are perhaps typical of a 'wide angle macro' composition showing the subject in close up with a broad swathe of habitat or background included. Lighting a subject so close to the dome can be a challenge particularly if there is significant particulate matter suspended in the water. A classic flat lighting technique can work with the strobes closer to the housing, but you may need to elevate

Ghost pipe fish single – this is a typical example of an extreme close focus wide angle or wide macro composition with a small subject within 75-100mm (3-4") from the dome and some environment or back ground included. The Tokina 10-17mm FE zoom is capable of these compositions at the 17mm end or you can try adding a 1.4X or 2X teleconverter to your fish eye lens to reduce the picture angle. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, Subtronic Mini flash guns, ISO100 f16 1/40

and turn them out a little to avoid hot spotting. You still have to keep the strobes well back of course which can cause problems with shadows from the housing – each subject will be different and it may take several frames to get the best result.

UAT Liberty

The wreck of the UAT Liberty has to rank as my favourite dive in Tulamben Bay as it is suitable for so many different techniques and lens options. It is a large wreck but once you have dived it a couple of times it becomes easier to identify markers or way points which will help you to return to a particular area or subject. The visibility is often best early in the morning so the first dive of the day is generally wide angle. But when composing scenics or larger subjects I am constantly looking for macro opportunities for later in the day. For example, there are many sea fans on this wreck which make great wide angle compositions, but they are often home to tiger cowries, hawk fish, ghost pipefish and in one case pygmy seahorses. So it is worth making a close examination before and after your wide angle shot and then memorizing the location for later in the day. There is just about everything you would find on a reef here plus the graphic shapes of the wreckage as backdrop. On the way back to the shore you can even indulge in some muck subjects on the dark volcanic sand and amongst the rubble or try and capture an image of garden eels, perfect for a safety stop.

Japanese Wreck and Reef

The other wreck on our tour, locally known as the Japanese wreck at Amed, is a fraction of the size of the USAT Liberty, but no less packed with life. It lies in shallow water just a few metres from the beach entry and can be regarded as a wide angle or macro dive. Just a short swim to the north east of the wreck is a very rich sloping reef that runs around the headland and so with a group of photographers it is easy to split the group so that the wreck does not get too crowded. There are a number of cleaning stations on the wreck which attract the resident school of batfish, coral trout, box fish and the occasional barracuda so it is worth a few minutes patience to see what turns up. Inside the wreck is a healthy school of glass fish who are watched over by leaf (white and green) and bearded scorpion fish and small clown frog fish if you have

Plume worm and wreck – static subjects like this plume worm are a good way to practice extreme close focus wide angle or wide macro compositions. Wrecks often offer good opportunities to get below your subject on sections which stand clear of the seabed. Selecting a small aperture for the foreground subject allows you include a sun burst as well. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, Subtronic Mini flash guns, ISO100 f16 1/80

Diver on USS Liberty – when shooting wide angle on the wreck be aware of macro subjects as well for later in the day. The wreck is easy to navigate after a couple of dives and you can return to a favoured spot later in the day when the visibility drops. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, Subtronic Mini flash guns, ISO100 f11 1/80

Harlequin shrimp – these shrimp are a spectacular macro subject and once found are normally quite co-operative. When the guides find a pair they normally keep their larder stocked for them with starfish to encourage them to stay in place. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 60mm micro, Inon Quad flash, ISO 100 f16 1/180.

sharp eyes. On the short swim from the wreck to the reef area are two sea fans which are home to pygmy seahorses in only 12m and 18m which gives you plenty of time to capture an image of these tiny and evasive critters.

Seraya Secrets

Seraya Secrets has gradually built a reputation as a classic much diving site. It has a variety of habitats ranging from volcanic sand, rubble, small coral outcrops, mooring blocks and even a steel dome artificial reef structure in the shallows. A series of ridges run offshore on a gentle incline and these and the 'valley's' between each one offers a slightly different habitat and selection of critters. As with all muck sites you will see a lot more with a skilled guide and ours knew where to find the resident harlequin shrimps, boxer crabs and Coleman shrimps which are high on the list for most photographers. This time our guide had a pair of tiger shrimps to show us which was a first for me. Snake eels and ribbon eels are common here as are numerous species of nudibranch, Inimicus scorpion fish, clown frog fish, flambuoyant cuttlefish to mention only a few. The artificial reef structure is also worth a visit and slow inspection as ghost pipefish, weedy file fish, cuttlefish and scorpion fish are often seen.

Kubu Reefs

A short jukung ride to the north of Tulamben is the small village of Kubu which has a very healthy reef structure just offshore. There are two reef areas here divided by a sloping wide sandy gulley. On the northern side the coral growth is more intense with a dense carpet of miniature staghorn corals covering a submerged volcanic spur. On the southern side the coral grows more in individual bommies with dark sand muck habitats between them. Here we encountered schools of bat fish and barracuda, swarms of glassy sweepers and yet more pigmy seahorses on a fan at 25-30m. There are also numerous sea whips with commensal shrimps and gobies in various hues and it can be a good place for clown frog fish – search carefully amongst the sea squirts, sponges and hydroids. The shallows are also home to ribbon eels (black, yellow and blue), the usual array of nudibranchs and some well camouflaged peacock flounders. But do watch out for the aggressive clown fish who seem to delight in nipping an ear or a finger when you are not looking!

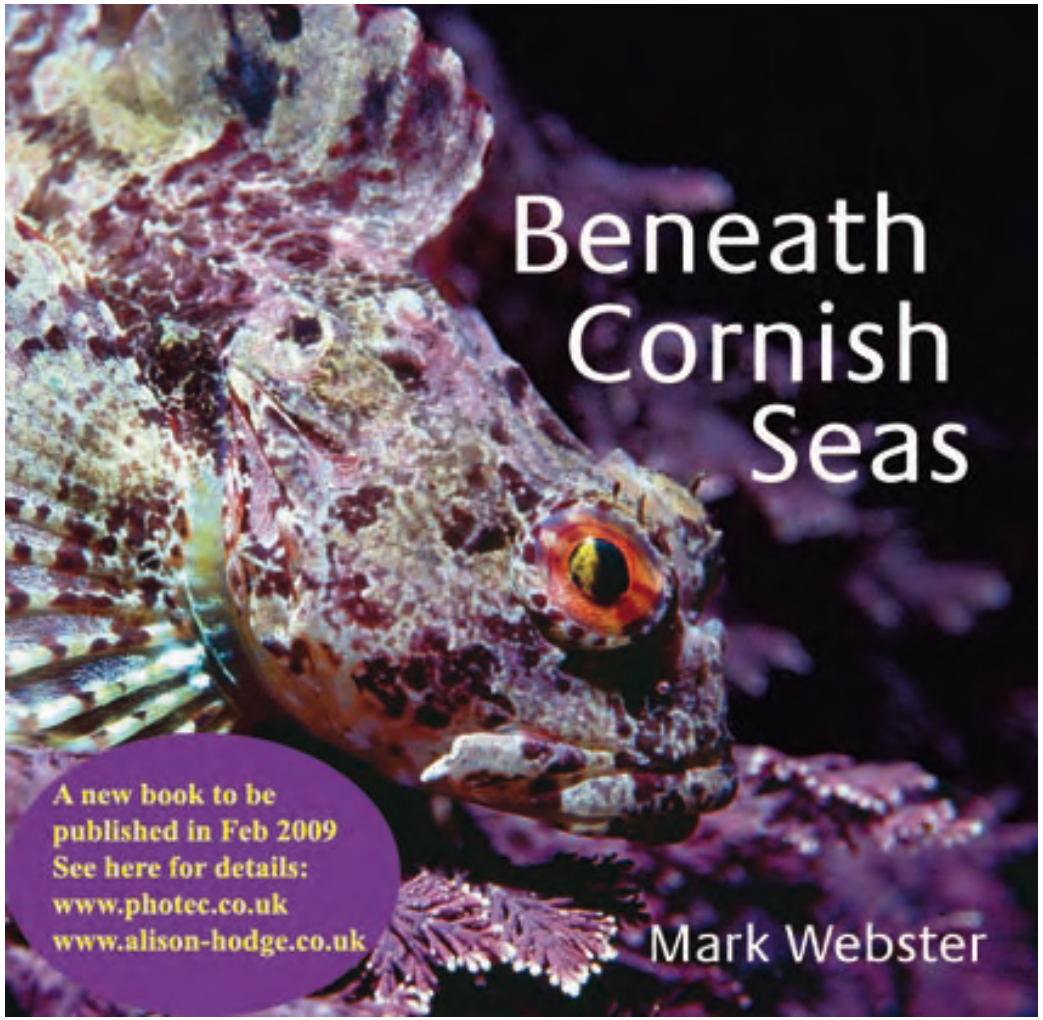
Out of the Water

Having traveled all this way you should not miss the opportunity of seeing what else this wonderful island has to offer. Away from the tourist hot spots of Kuta and Sanur the pace of life is totally relaxed and the scenery amongst the volcanic highlands, jungle, sculpted rice terraces and temples is simply stunning. If you are keen to experience a little culture then Ubud is worth a visit – this is the craft centre of Bali and has a fantastic market area as well as numerous shops, workshops, temples and a museum. It is also the place to see the traditional Balinese dances and shadow puppet shows and a good central point to tour the island from.

We are all fretting about the

credit crunch, but perversely this may have a positive effect on long haul travel. With the price of oil dropping so dramatically the airlines operating costs will fall and fuel surcharges should reduce or disappear, so the cost of travel should come down. Once you have reached your far eastern destination the cost of living and diving is perhaps cheaper than other popular destinations, so now could be the time to plan your trip.

Mark Webster
www.photec.co.uk



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Shooting Magic DVD

Alex Mustard and Peter Rowlands have teamed up to produce a 90-minute guide to underwater imaging using their Magic Filters. I had the opportunity to review the first copy to come to the US and I thoroughly enjoyed it.

I have never used one of the Magic filters and Alex thought it would be good to have a member of his target audience take a look.

The DVD is structured around six dives with Alex in his underwater studio that give you the feeling you're along for the fun. Three DSLR dives and three with a point & shoot camera demonstrate how to make the great images possible with the filters.

After each dive, the video follows Alex back on the boat to review the images shot and you're looking right over his shoulder at the Lightroom software on his laptop as he critiques and tweaks the images. We are taken along for dives on a shallow reef wall in the Red Sea, the wreck of the Giannis D and the famous Ras Mohammad site.

The video format, beautifully shot by Peter with a Magic filter on the camera, provides an incredible way to learn the correct approach to getting the most out of the filters. It turns out they aren't magic after all.

Alex shares, with terrific examples, his approach to the light in his images, the different effects shooting into and across the light have and the small but powerful adjustments he makes to create compelling images. Many of the benefits of shooting filters that had somehow escaped me in the past are immediately obvious when you watch the DVD. "Hey, he's not lugging strobes around." "There is no backscatter, none." "He can fire as many shots as fast as he wants."

The quality of the colors in the video is great even on the NTSC version. The comparison shots with filter, no filter, and white balance only, make it immediately apparent how the filters work and the benefit in using them.

In addition to going diving with Alex, the video extras include the answers to the frequently asked questions like; do I really need a filter? How often do I set White Balance? And many more including my favorite, why aren't my photos like yours? I bet he gets that a lot.

Alex also walks through his five favorite filter images and describes why they worked. The extras even include a demonstration of installing the filters on almost every lens a Nikon shooter could use. The Canon folks are on their own. Maybe he figured the Canon shooters could read the instruction pamphlet that comes with each filter, just a guess. Oh yeah, don't miss the outtakes with the exploding lobster.

The video worked for me on many levels. Putting the filter aspects aside, it was fun and educational just having the opportunity to watch a pro at work. The chance to dive with someone who makes their living with underwater photography is pretty rare; I have a few thousand dives under my belt but I never saw anyone conducting fish like an orchestra leader so they would all line up to get their picture taken.

New U/W photographers can learn a lot just by noticing when Alex breaths. The DVD captures some of the invaluable knowledge of someone at the top of their game and who clearly enjoys every minute of it.

I have always been hesitant to try the filters because I assumed they would have a big learning curve and I wasn't willing to use my valuable dive vacation time to learn the "Magic" involved. After one viewing, I'm confident I have all the knowledge I need to give filter photography a try.

If Alex and Peter's intent in making the video was to get more divers interested in Magic Filters (they aren't trying to make a killing on the DVD at only £15 or about $24 a copy), I think they've succeeded brilliantly. The *Shooting Magic* DVD is available from their website

www.magic-filters.com

Steve Williams

Guidelines for contributors

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

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

Uw photo techniques - Balanced light, composition, etc
Locations - Photo friendly dive sites, countries or liveaboards
Subjects - Anything from whale sharks to nudibranchs in full detail
Equipment reviews - Detailed appraisals of the latest equipment
Personalities - Interviews/features about leading underwater photographers

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

E mail peter@uwpmag.com

How to submit articles

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

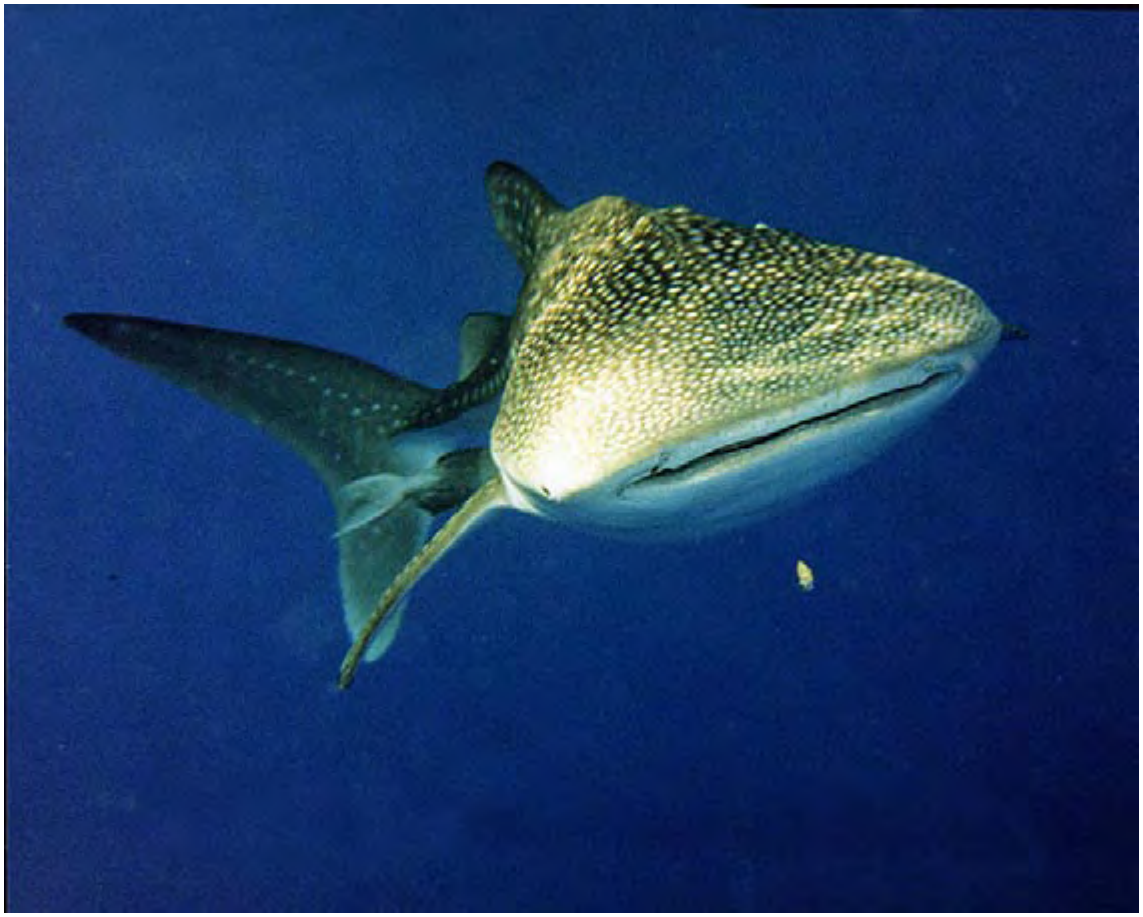
1. The text should be saved as a TEXT file and attached to the e mail
2. Images must be attached to the e mail and they need to be 144dpi

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

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

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

Parting Shot 1



Epoque-ET100, 24 x 36mm 34mm , F3.5, 1/125, Fujicolour 200 ISO

Back in 2000, I was new to underwater photography and I purchased an Epoque 35mm film camera at the dive show in Birmingham in preparation for a trip to the Maldives. One of my sons had found himself a job as a snorkel guide on Kuredu for a year so it was our onerous duty to visit him. The camera was very basic, fixed everything, but was simple to use and served as a good start point for me.

My son had been very enthusiastic about the dive sites and the wildlife that was around. He wasnít wrong. I enjoyed the diving, the water was clear, the coral was bleached in places but there was a profusion of all the usual ëcommoní stuff. Turtles, sharks, eagle ray were in abundance around the island and in one hour we saw ten turtles whilst snorkelling.

As the holiday drew to a close, we went off for a two dive daytrip to a Fushivaru.

The first dive was in a channel and provided everything one could want. Visibility was wonderful and I clicked away happily on the basis that something would come out if I took enough shots. I had learned a lot from talking to other divers and had even been introduced to one of the first digital cameras in an underwater housing by one of the Seaplane pilots. To be able to see what you had taken immediately was a revelation back then.

The second dive was on a thila in the channel which came to about 10m of the surface. As I had been clicking away with abandon, I changed the film for the second dive. I was using Fuji colour film 200 ISO. There was a strong current and, hanging in the current at the leading edge of the thila were a couple of grey reef sharks. Moving on, we came across a pair of eagle rays and some green morays and a large shoal of oriental sweet lips.

My dive drew to a close and me & my buddy were first up onto the boat. After we had taken our kit off, we relaxed waiting for the rest of the divers to surface & be picked up. Some activity from the crew drew our attention to a large shape in the water approaching us. The words Whale Shark were heard and there was a mad scramble for kit. I grabbed my fins, mask, snorkel and camera and jumped ship. We were fortunate to be directly in the path of the approaching whale shark and spent some 10 minutes swimming with it. It was a truly wonderful experience and I was very fortunate to be in the right place. I clicked away until I finished the film however, it wasnít until I got home & had the film developed that I found out quite what I had captured.

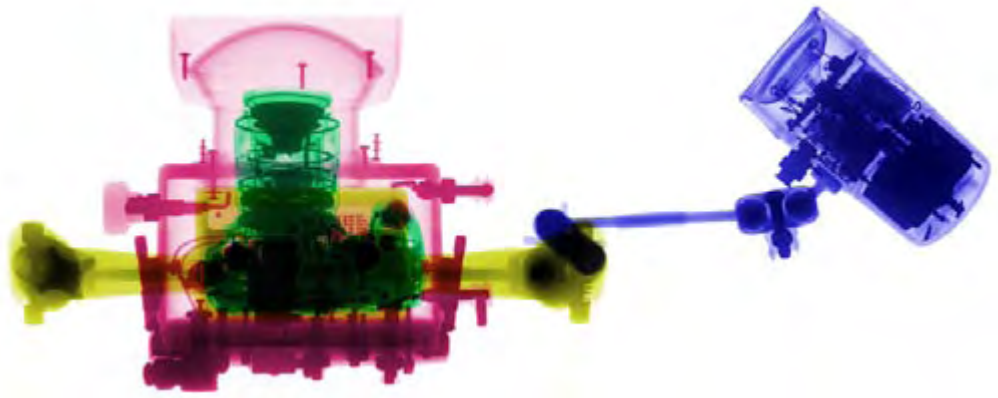
Patrick Mitchell-Jones

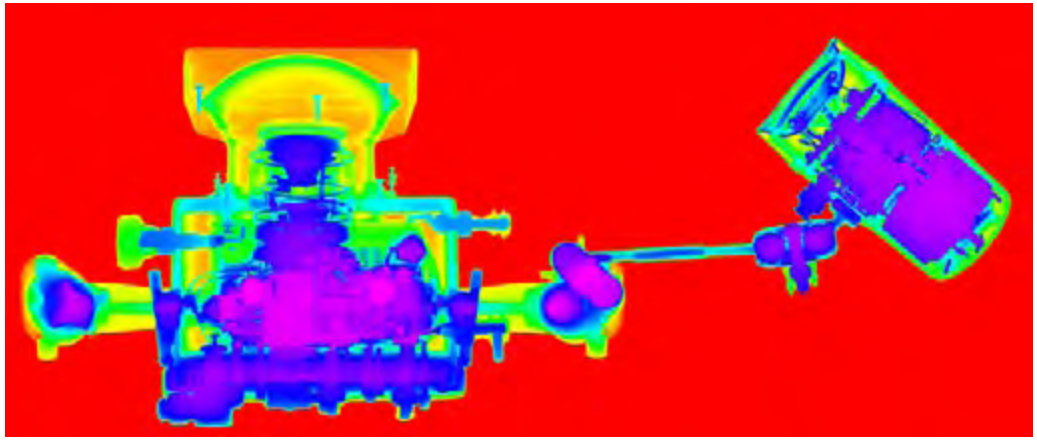
Parting Shot 2

Many fantastic images are taken underwater in the tropics, but relatively few images are taken in the freshwater northern ecosystems. This is my particular interest in underwater photography. To document the fresh water lakes in all seasons, to answer questions like what does a lake look like under the ice in winter? The resulting images are used as illustration in science books and magazines. To archive images under the ice I use a number of remote triggered camera designs, as well as the age old technique of cutting a hole in the ice, holding the camera under water and taking a picture with my hands. This past year I decided to upgrade my equipment and I sold my old Nikon film – Ocean eye rig and bought an Ikelite housing for a canon 30D. The 30D is now an out dated camera (being older than a year a camera is now outdated!) and thus a lot less expensive, and I could afford a spare camera for the case. This is a big issue for underwater photographers, since each housing is unique to the camera and the housing is often equal in price to the camera. I settled on a camera and case that I hope will last me for three years.

As a scientific photographer, I often wonder what something will look like when photographed in different light. My different light was x-rays. This image is of a Ikelite camera housing for a cannon 30d with a 125 watt flash. This is the image that an airport security officer would see if you traveled with your underwater camera set up. To take this picture I used a high resolution research x-ray machine located at a local university. This machine is usually used to check circuits during manufacturing. To achieve the high resolution the machine uses a special tube that has an extremely small point source of x-rays. Lower resolution but faster machines are used in airports to check luggage for security purposes. The specifics are this image was taken at 110 kilovolts, 1.5 milli-amp current for 3 min.

I often x-ray fish, birds, snakes, and lots of electronics for science magazines, but in this case I wondered what my underwater rig would look like in x-rays.





Ted Kinsman

www.sciencephotography.com

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