Underwater Photography

May/Jun 2018
Issue 102

UWP

"After years of travelling to the best dive sites in the world and often experiencing poor conditions, we found Wakatobi Dive Resort. They have a perfect balance of luxury with outstanding diving." ~ Kate Pagdget-Koh

An experience without equal

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

wakatobi

www.wakatobi.com

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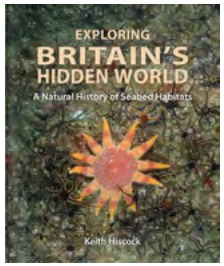

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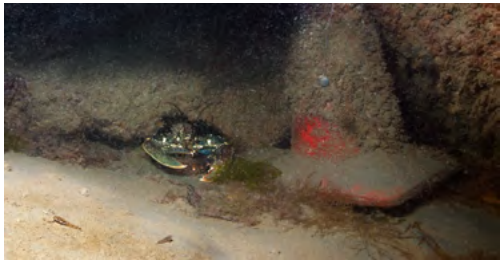

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Publisher/Editor Peter Rowlands
www.pr-productions.co.uk
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Editorial

Fake news

A diving buddy of mine was enthusing about a salvage documentary he had watched the previous evening on Netflix. Unique gold statues had been found in a shipwreck off the Nigerian coast and had been raised under the highest security and put on display in a museum in Venice.

From his description, the story and the artefacts sounded almost unbelievable and in fact that is what the project had named the unknown ship from 2000 years ago as “The Unbelievable”.

At this stage my only desire was to get home, source the programme and watch it as it sounded absolutely amazing. There was, however, a faintly distant bell sounding in my mind about the whole ‘thing’ which was naggingly starting to sound, well, unbelievable.

A quick Google scroll confirmed that the whole documentary had been an elaborate hoax by the artist Damien Hirst to promote his new exhibition in the Venice gallery.

Now I like a good parody as much as anyone; Spinal Tap and Best in Show being just two superb examples of spoof movie entertainment but when a major broadcaster like Netflix airs such a documentary as just that, it concerned me on several levels.

Get real, Daddy-o. Loosen up, Dude, I can hear the younger readers muttering and maybe I should but when the BBC withdraws its Human Planet series from box set (which it really did this week) because four scenes, including a whale hunt, had been faked, I would hope those murmurings would stop.

There are fine lines everywhere in today’s media driven world but, as far as I’m concerned, the line is big and fat and all encompassing when it comes to natural history documentaries.

And then comes the news that the winner of the Wildlife Photographer of the Year Environment category had fooled the judges by using a stuffed anteater!

Just as we underwater photographers should not manipulate subjects to improve composition and colour for competitive gain so too should natural history image makers record just that - natural history.

Blacro

Blacro? What’s Blacro? Well it’s a shortened version of Blackwater and Macro where divers descend at night from a boat, below which is lowered a very powerful light. This light attracts small creatures up from the depths and gives underwater photographers the opportunity to photograph some amazing, hitherto unphotographed, animals.

My guess is that this all started in Hawaii but has since spread literally all over the world because, when the ambient light disappears, the background behind these small creatures becomes black. Hence Blacro.

The good thing is that Blacro diving can be done anywhere in the world, even in comparatively limited visibility, regardless of whether it’s blue or green water during the day.

Photographically it brings its own challenges with focusing and exposure being the first two let alone the complete lack of scale and orientation so it is not for the fainthearted but the results being produced are really ground breaking and exciting.

3D printing

Dan Bolt’s excellent and informative article on 3D printing will make fascinating reading to all those who like to ‘personalise’ their gear with slight modifications to suit their needs.

This revolutionary method of creating products is quite a mature industry now but it still enables the individual to create bespoke one off parts very economically and there are even some shaped parts which are now very simple to have made which previously would have required very expensive machines, intricate programming and therefore prohibitive costs.

If the capability of this new technology is in time developed to its full potential it looks set to rewrite the manufacturing rule book and could ultimately reduce manufacturers’ stock levels to an on demand basis or even a download the plans and manufacture at home capability.

Exciting times, indeed.

Peter Rowlands
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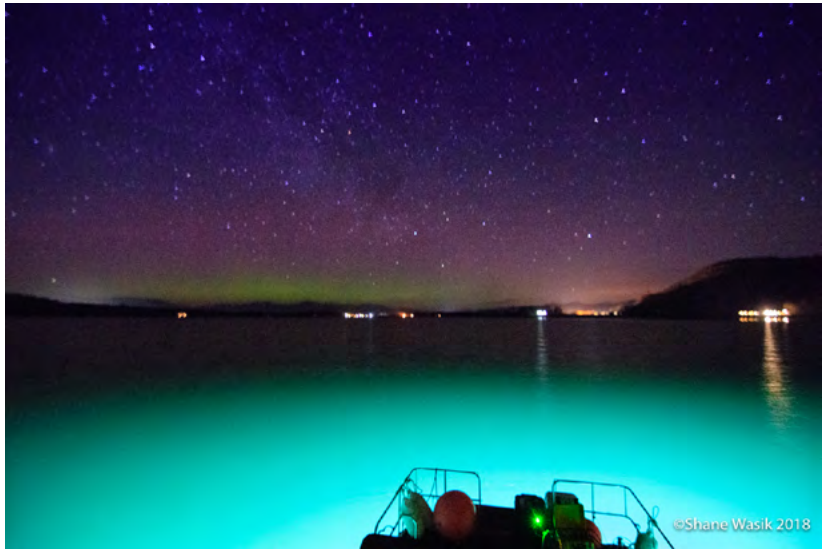
News, Travel & Events

Oban Blackwater dives, Scotland



Basking Shark Scotland (who are also known as Dive Oban & Argyll) have successfully completed highly successful trials of their new lighting system. They have invested in Orcalight technology, a surface based umbilical light system which puts out around 85,000 lumens of light in our cooler water temperatures.

During late winter, many night diving trips have been run where the lights hang a few metres above the deck of the S.S Breda, a popular wreck lying close to their base in Oban. Divers were very impressed by the ethereal conditions by lighting up the wreck, making an interesting new way of photographing the wreck. With the deck in around 12m it's a perfect depth for such an undertaking at night.

Previously using battery based lights, they have been running blacro / blackwater night dives with a variety of new and interesting beasties to capture hanging over the nearby deep water of around 220m.

This spring they will be continuing with blacro divers and also a trial with school sharks. During summer they also plan to test the system in the Hebrides with larger species such as basking sharks & minke whales during their tours. However, in September when the dark nights start to creep back in, a larger programme will be organised for floodlight & blackwater diving.

Trips can be booked by individuals on their scheduled dates or specifically by interested groups.

www.baskingsharkscotland.co.uk

Wildscreen Photo Story Panda Award 2018

For the first time in its 36 year history, the 2018 Wildscreen Panda Awards, widely regarded as the most prestigious accolade in the wildlife film and TV genre, will recognise the craft of wildlife photography, with the introduction of the Wildscreen Photo Story Panda Award.

The Panda Awards ceremony is the flagship event of the Wildscreen Festival, the world's biggest global gathering and celebration of screen-based natural history storytelling. The photo award is being launched to further cement the conservation charity's commitment to and belief in photography as a powerful and impactful tool for raising awareness about and protecting the natural world across society. It will celebrate and recognise the very best in photographic narrative, uniting it alongside the world's very best natural world film talent.

Announcing the award, Wildscreen's Director, Lucie Muir, said: " As we approach CBD 2020, in Beijing, it is essential for the future of our planet that everyone understands the critical importance of biodiversity and the responsibility we all have to protect it. Therefore, there is no better time for Wildscreen to recognise the craft of wildlife and environmental photographers in telling nature's stories, side by side and united with the world's best filmmakers. "

Entrants have between the 18 April to 8 June 2018 to submit photo stories comprising of between six to ten images that have an aspect of the natural world as a central focus, with a clear and powerful narrative weaved between the images.

The competition is open to professional and amateur photographers worldwide, over 18 years. The judges will also be looking for exceptional emerging talent photographers, under the age of 30, which will be considered for an 'Emerging Talent Photo Story Panda Award'.

www.wildscreen.org

Alor Indonesia Pindito

July 23 - Aug 4, 2018

Join Berkley White and Erin Quigley on a special trip to Alor aboard Pindito, the only liveaboard dive boat in Indonesia with over 25 years of experience! In continuous operation since 1992 under owner Edi Frommenwiler, the MV Pindito's crew is unmatched for its diving knowledge and experience in Indonesia.

TRIP 1: Bali to Komodo – Pindito July 9-21, 2018

TRIP 2: Alor – Pindito July 23-Aug. 4, 2018

This trip will start in Maumere on Flores Island and head east to explore the archipelago of Alor. With it's incredible mixture of both wide angle and macro photo opportunities you'll never be at a loss for something to shoot.

One of the most beloved and longest running liveaboards in all of Southeast Asia the MV Pindito's crew is unmatched for its diving knowledge and experience in Indonesia.

It is very important to the Pindito to offer the best possible itinerary for their guests. Planning the route includes taking in account many different factors, most important the weather. Since storms can be encountered in the tropics even during the best travel time of the year, the Pindito takes the right to alter the cruise itinerary on short notice if necessary.

www.backscatter.com

Blue Heron Bridge Photo Workshop

June 28 - July 1, 2018

Take advantage of one of the finest macro sites in the world, our own Blue Heron Bridge, located in West Palm Beach, FL.

This 3 day clinic focuses on macro photography, and there may not be a better setting anywhere in the world to hold this kind of class.

From composition to exposure to achieving that critical focus, this class with help you dial in your macro skills.

We'll dive each of the 3 days, and given the shallow depth, you can expect to be able to dive for upwards of 2 hours depending your air consumption. We'll do classroom before and after the dives, and we'll do daily critiques.

Friday 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM
dive approximately 08:30 AM
Saturday 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
dive approximately 09:30 AM
Sunday 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
dive approximately 10:00 AM

This class is intended for beginner to intermediate shooters, and all types of underwater camera systems are welcome.

An orientation session will be held Thursday evening at the Reef Photo & Video Underwater Photography showroom in Fort Lauderdale.

All other classroom sessions will be held close to the dive site.

To provide you with the best experience, this schedule may be modified due to weather, ocean conditions, or other factors.

All divers will be required to carry a fishing line cutting device while diving.

www.reefphoto.com

Single use plastic free by the end of 2019

The global alliance of Siren Fleet, Master Liveaboards, The Junk and blue o two is very pleased to announce that as part of their expanding environmental policy they are aiming to be completely single use plastic free by the end of 2019.

Working together as part of the global alliance with Siren Fleet, The Junk "June Hong Chian Lee" and blue o two, Master Liveaboards will be working with local organisations in destinations, suppliers, NGO's, government organisations, and many others in order to reach our goal across all vessels, local offices, and head offices.

This is of course an enormous project and the banning of straws recently across all alliance vessels was only the first tiny step in this process.

Updates on both our successes and challenges will be made regularly as the alliance moves forwards.

As an alliance, we lead the way in the diving liveaboard industry to a cleaner environment for everyone.

www.wwdas.com

Basking Shark spaces

Due to some group booking drop outs we now have some spaces come up on our premium basking shark and adventure photo weeks. Running Saturday to Saturday, they are the best dates in the calendar and have a 100% previous success rate for interactions and are usually where the award winning basking shark images come from. Week tours also include grey & common seals, whales & dolphins, fingal's cave, evening photography dives, puffins & seabirds, sea-eagles, along with some land based wildlife such as otters. Accommodation options include self catering houses, B&B or Hotels. Week tour £990 + accommodation, cost depending on choice.

www.baskingsharkscotland.co.uk

LAMAVE re-joins Philippine Siren

Siren Fleet proudly announces a second 'Special Siren Trip' on 9-19 January 2019 in cooperation with LAMAVE. Dive some of the best sites in the Philippines and assist LAMAVE with their invaluable research to whale sharks, manta rays and turtles!

On this Philippine Siren special itinerary: Southern Leyte and Bohol, you are invited to join in for exploratory dives to deploy or retrieve acoustic receivers at multiple sites along the route of the trip, including Cabilao, Balicasag, and Pamilacan.

This trip, Gonzalo Araujo from LAMAVE will be on board and will give several presentations explaining LAMAVE's research and how it can lead to conservation. He is an expert on whale shark research and conservation across different locations in the Philippines.

Siren Fleet embraces LAMAVE's work and objectives and we will donate a portion of all income of this cruise to them. Sign up for this Special Siren Trip, so you can participate and contribute on multiple levels to help this NGO continue their valuable work!

philippines@wwdas.com

2,700 kg of trash, mainly plastic, collected from Malaysia's beaches

Analysis of data collected during a clean-up on 3rd March reveals that nearly 2,700 kg of trash was cleared from Malaysia's beaches. Plastic bottles and other plastic items accounted for a significant proportion of the trash collected, providing further evidence that urgent action is needed to address plastic pollution in our seas.

The clean-up was conducted at 16 locations around Malaysia and involved over 500 people from 20 organisations. Together they cleaned trash from 15km of coastline.

The trash collected included 15,874 plastic beverage bottles, 6,884 plastic bags, 2,368 cigarette butts… and 203 diapers.

The clean-up is the first in a series of activities celebrating the International year of the Reef 2018 (IYOR 2018), and will hopefully raise awareness of the problem of marine debris, and plastic in particular. The hope is to persuade government and other stakeholders to take action. Possible solutions include: deposit scheme for plastic drinks bottles; improved recycling schemes;

www.reefcheck.org.my

Splash-In Photography competition

Torbay, Devon

7th July 2018

The Torbay Branch of BSAC will hold a "Splash In" underwater photography competition on Saturday 7 July 2018. The competition was held last year and the club hopes that building on its success, it will become an annual event.

Competition entrants will be able to dive from various sites throughout Torbay.

The categories will be: -

Wide angle

Close up and macro

Compact cameras - Wide angle, close up and macro.

Prizes for the winning entry in each group will be presented at a supper to be held at "Living Coasts", Torquay on the evening of 7 July.

Peter Rowlands will be amongst the Judges and Dr. Alex Tattersall has kindly agreed to give a talk at the presentation event.

Torbay BSAC will be pleased to receive sponsorship in the form of prizes for the winning entries.

www.torbay-bsac.co.uk/splash-in-2018/splash-in-competition

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www.seashepherdglobal.org

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

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

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

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

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

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

DIVE PHOTO GUIDE

www.divephotoguide.com · contact@divephotoguide.com

DPG Expedition: Search for the Loch Ness Monster

DPG is proud to announce the world's first underwater expedition to photograph the famed Loch Ness Monster in the Scottish Highlands. Last year produced a record number of sightings for Nessie (Nessiteras rhombopteryz) in the famed Scottish lagoon, so there's never been a better time to strap on a tank to make history. The goal is simple: To capture the first underwater images of the most legendary underwater subject.

DPG is partnering with local dive experts and Loch Ness experts to maximize the chances of experiencing the Loch Ness ledged up and close. Because Loch Ness averages a depth of 433 feet (132 meters), we will also be using a homemade deep-sea submarine to explore past the limits of recreational diving.

"We've offered a lot of pioneering underwater expeditions in the past but this is absolutely a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," says DPG Editor Joe Tepper. "If you want an underwater image that no one else has, then you must join this expedition."

DPG's "Search for the Loch Ness Monster" expedition takes place February 29-March 6, 2019.

www.divephotoguide.com

ikelite

PANASONIC LUMIX DC-G9

Introducing a lightweight, full-featured housing for the ultra-fast Panasonic Lumix G9 mirrorless camera. The 200DL Housing is customizable to suit your needs from scuba to pool to surf. Our new ABS-PC blend construction is durable, lighter than aluminum, and corrosion-proof. The versatile new Dry Lock (DL) port system is simple, robust, and ready for anything you want to throw at it.

Order now through any Authorized Ikelite Dealer. Find one at ikelite.com.

New Products

Humaneyes Underwater Case

Vuze VR Underwater Case gives you the freedom to shoot VR videos and photos under the water (maximum 135 feet/41 meters) This case enables you to capture underwater VR experiences with your Vuze or Vuze+ camera. Designed especially to protect your camera and recreate the conditions needed to capture full spherical images in underwater light conditions.
Depth rating: 135 feet/41 meters
Approx Weight (in air): 3.68 lb (1.67 kg)
Approx Buoyancy:
Seawater: Negative .78 lb (.35 kg)
Freshwater: Negative .85 lb (.38 kg)

The new underwater case will be available soon for $2,995.

Humaneyes Technologies, makers of the 360-degree Vuze camera, released earlier this year, have announced a new housing that allows the device to capture 3D video underwater, though the press release doesn't specify to what maximum depth. The $800 Vuze—essentially eight full HD cameras in one—can capture 360-degree footage at up to 4K resolution.

The company made various additional announcements: The Vuze VR Studio VR rendering software will be available in beta for Mac; users will be able to automatically create content that can be shared on Google Street View; and a new smartphone app will be launched that allows images/video to be previewed and exposure settings to be adjusted.

It was also announced that an early-2018 update will give the Vuze live-streaming capabilities—though it's unclear whether this will function when the device is submerged.

www.humaneyes.com

Ikelite housing for the Sony Alpha A7 III

The hot new Sony Alpha A7 III camera is fully compatible with the existing 200DL Underwater Housing for Sony Alpha A7R III and A9 cameras. Suitable for scuba, snorkel, surf, pool, and any inspiration in or around the water.

Key features include:

* Ergonomically curved and extendable levers for shutter release and AF-ON button
* Soft-touch control knobs
* Robust yet lightweight DL (Dry Lock) lens port system
* Integrated vacuum valve
* Access to all important camera functions
* Stay-cool, corrosion-proof ABS-PC blend housing with stainless steel and hard anodized aluminum controls
* Integrated flash bulkhead with optional TTL strobe exposure
* Water pressure tested to 200 feet (60 meters)
* Made in the USA

www.ikelite.com

Sea & Sea DX Macro Port 15

Macro Port for Canon EF-S 35mm Macro IS STM lens.

The new macro port has been designed exclusively for this lens and is the only port to accommodate it.

Although the port has an M67 screw mount, no close-up lens can be used due to the lens's very short close focusing distance.

Specifications

[Dimensions (DIAxD)] 132x48mm / 5.2x1.9inches

[Weight] Approx. 308g / 10.9 oz

[Depth rating] 100m / 330ft

[Construction] Corrosion-resistant aluminum alloy (anodized, anti-reflection coating on the inner surface)

[Distance] Between the port mount and inner glass surface : 14.5mm

www.sea-sea.com

10Bar HS-DC-Op-EPL5 (Olympus E-PL5)

Made of 6061 aluminum, the 10Bar Housing is a sturdy choice for the Olympus E-PL5 camera. For those who favor small cameras, it is the ideal housing to suit their needs. The 10Bar EPL-5 is an outstanding example of the next generation of high-end housings for Micro Four Thirds compact cameras. With excellent fit and finish, rugged construction, and meticulous attention to detail, all in a user friendly sized package, this is a beautifully executed housing. Ergonomic command dials make this housing a joy to use.

www.aditech-uw.com

Hugyfot Arius 1500

The Arius 1500 video lighting system is equipped with 4 'true color' LED's producing an output of 1.500 lumen and a 5.700 Kelvin color temperature, providing an unprecedented spectacle of lifelike and true colors.

It has an extremely leveled beam of 120° without the presence of a hot spot.

The Arius 1.500 video lighting system is equipped with a rechargeable Li-Ion battery that provides 1 hour of light at full power.

Dimensions (length x diameter): 140 x 72mm

Weight (with battery): 315gr

Color: black/red

Pressure rated: 200m

www.hugyfot.com

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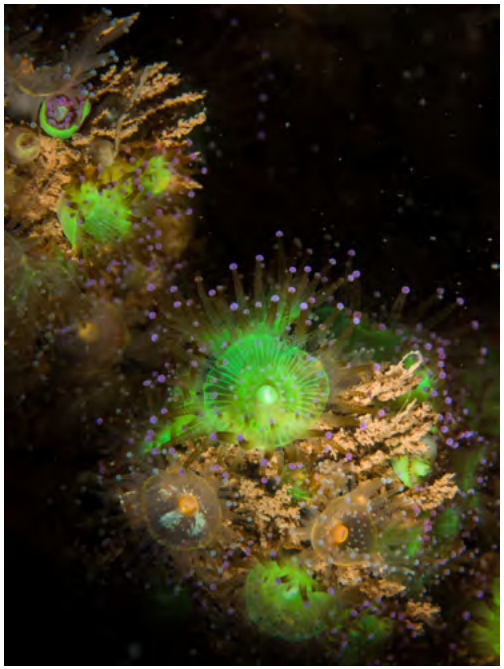
UWCameraStore Fiber snoot Pro dual

The Fiber snoot pro dual is specially designed for macro photography. The snoot concentrates the light on a small area and allows you to emphasize a specific area or compensation and hide the background. With the correct set-up it also prevents backscatter.

The UWCameraStore Fiber snoot Pro dual is available in versions for the following strobes: Ikelite DS161, DS160, INON Z-330 , INON Z-240 / D-2000, and Sea&Sea YS-D2, YS-D1,

UwP's Dan Bolt is currently testing the version for his Sea & Sea strobe and we will be including his full review in the July/Aug issue of UwP.

In the meantime here's a couple of images to tickle your taste buds :-)



www.uwcamerastore.com

Retra Flash discontinued until July/August

The positive response we received for the Retra Flash has empowered us to think bigger and better. This would not be possible without extensive support and feedback from you - the community of underwater photographers.

First and foremost, our goal is and has always been to produce the best possible product. And secondly, we want to make our products available.

Over the past 6 months we focused on the development and improvement of the production process to shorten the delivery time for the Retra Flash. Unfortunately, this had not worked and our average delivery times for the Retra Flash was 10-12 weeks. This is not acceptable and not fair to the photographers who needed to wait for a long time before their products were delivered even after the pre-order phase!

After much consideration, we have decided to discontinue the production of the Retra Flash and focus solely on development in order to improve the production and finally the availability. All Retra Flash accessories and LSD products are still in production and available and we are continuing our service and warranty on all our products.

Our ideal is to make the best underwater strobe on the planet. This is why we want to take it a step further. We will uncover the new product in July/August 2018.

www.retra-uwt.com

INON Strobe Dome Filter

INON INC. is pleased to announce official release of new Strobe Dome Filter [4900K] and Strobe Dome Filter [4600K] to use for Z-330 strobe to change its native color temperature.

The Strobe Dome Filter [4900K] warms up native color temperature of the Z-330 5500K to 4900K while the Strobe Dome Filter [4600K] changes native 5500K to 4600K.

Warmer color temperature delivered from Z-330 strobe through these filters benefits to enhance healthy skin of divers or highlight warm color subject. Also shooting in RAW with same white balance setting (4900K or 4600K) on a camera provides richer blue on background water column with keeping natural color of a subject lit by strobe light.

www.inon.co.jp

Fantasea FML Port System expnsion

Fantasea is pleased to announce the expansion of our FML Port System.

Our customers can now enjoy a wider range of popular Sony and 3rd party lenses to use with our FA6500 and FA6000 Housings for the Sony a6000, a6300 and a6500 Mirrorless cameras, ranging from super macro to fisheye.

All products are now available and accepting orders!

www.fantasea.com

Ikelite Panasonic DC-GX9 housing

Introducing a professional grade, compact waterproof housing for Panasonic Lumix DC-GX9 digital cameras. Perfect for any application in or around the water from scuba to surf to pool.

The Panasonic Lumix DC-GX9 is a solid and capable compact interchangeable lens camera Customizable controls, a TTL flash hotshoe, and in-body 5-axis image stabilization make it a good choice for underwater use. The GX9 features a 20MP CMOS sensor, 4K/UHD video at 24p and 30p, and a 121-point contrast-detect AF system.

A custom ABS-PC blend housing provides strength and performance year after year with minimal maintenance. The ABS-PC material is fundamentally corrosion-proof and considerably lighter than aluminum. The specially formulated color deflects the sun to keep your camera running cooler, longer. Compared to black or clear housings, the light color provides superior contrast for enhanced view of the camera, LCD screen, and o-ring seal.

www.ikelite.com

ACQUAPAZZA
PRODUCTS

Underwater Camera Housing for
Panasonic LUMIX GH5

APPA-GH5

www.acquapazza.jp/en

Orcatorch D820V

Orcatorch D820V is a compact and lightweight USB charging video light. It has 120 degrees super wide floodlighting with no blind angle for underwater photography.

D820V offers three kind of light sources: Neutral white, UV and Red, which not only helps your photography or videography in the dark water but also can creates amazing fluorescence of marine organisms. The unique designed titanium alloy side button switch provides easy operation underwater.

The main features are:

* Three lighting sources: neutral white, red and UV
* 120 degrees super wide flood light
* Titanium alloy side button switch, easy operation
* Safe lock function, avoid misoperation
* USB charging function
* LED Charging indicator
* Intelligent Over-Heat protection
* Smart rechargeable Li-ion battery
* Water pressure resistant construction, depth rated to 150m
* Reverse polarity protection, to protect from improper battery installation
* Over-discharge protection function
* Aircraft-grade high strength aluminum material
* The latest diamond grade hard-anodized seawater-corrosion-resistance finish
* Two sides coated toughened glass with high water pressure resistance under deep water

Ikelite housing for the Panasonic DC-G9

Introducing a professional grade, compact waterproof housing for Panasonic Lumix DC-G9 micro four-thirds mirrorless digital cameras. Perfect for any application in or around the water from scuba to surf to pool.

The Panasonic Lumix DC-G9 is built for speed. It boasts a large 20MP Four-Thirds CMOS sensor, fantastic in-body image stabilization, and an updated autofocus system.

The metal body is weather-sealed with a bright articulating rear LCD display and large, high resolution electronic viewfinder. The DC-G9 supports high-speed UHS-II media, captures Ultra HD 4K video at up to 60p, and features a high speed mode capable of up to 180 fps in Full HD.

This housing features our robust Dry Lock (DL) port system. "Dry Lock" refers to the placement of the o-ring on the outside of the port mount. This improves visibility of the seal and reduces the chances of water dropping onto your precious camera sensor.

DL ports are the lightest on the market, yet robust and capable of standing up to rough surf. Attachment is quick and secure. A system of extensions can accommodate a huge variety of lenses with ease.

You can enjoy the fastest and most accurate TTL exposure on the market by adding the PT1K Panasonic TTL Kit with Hotshoe # 46031 and a compatible Ikelite DS strobe. Exposure compensation can be used added or subtracted in the camera.

Our new ABS-PC blend front is stronger than its clear counterpart, provides improved contrast and visibility, and keeps your camera running cooler in the sun. ABS-PC is significantly lighter than aluminum and is fundamentally corrosion-proof.

Every housing is made in the USA, individually inspected for fit, and water pressure tested to 200 feet (60m).

MSRP $1595

www.ikelite.com

Gates RED DSMC2

Gates Underwater Products – manufacturer of the world's most reliable underwater housings – today announces the Pro Explore Underwater Housing. A dedicated, purpose built motion imaging acquisition tool for the RED DSMC2 platform, Pro Explore breaks barriers in underwater high resolution 8K imaging in a compact, travel-friendly rig.

Like all Gates professional systems, you get the works. Pro Explore housing price includes numerous items like RT47 External Monitor housing (with shade extension), Seal Check Lite, woven carry lanyard, tether points, spare kit, tool kit, interface cables, and more. Port and SPR's are ordered a la carte to fit your lens(es) of choice and application.

www.gateshousings.com

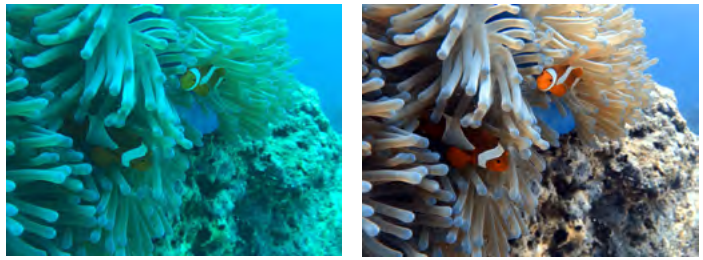
Dive+ iOS app video correction testers wanted

We have just launched our one-touch underwater video color correction feature along with our latest released Dive+ app (2.5 version). It is available on iOS and Android.

As this feature is still in closed beta testing and not open to all, we are inviting you to have a try and give us some feedback to refine the algorithm.

Download the app from the link below, create a user name and enter the Code UWP. Import your footage, click Correct Colours. You can then save the results.

Below are two examples of what the App can do with still images.



Please check the demo post for the video before & after effects:
https://www.facebook.com/diveplusofficial/videos/2136540939907730/

http://dive.plus

ACQUAPAZZA
PRODUCTS

Underwater Camera Housing for

Sony ILCE-7RM3 APSO-A73

http://www.acquapazza.jp/en/

Aqualite Travel Grip

The Aqualite Travel Grip is a collapsible camera grip that can hold a camera with up to two Aqualight photo/video lights.

This grip comes included with all new purchases of an Aqualite Pro 100 light, or it can be purchased as an accessory.

GoPro style mount on the top of the handle can hold an Aqualite as a keylight, and is fully adjustable for the best direction of light.

Perfect for GoPro and any other compact underwater camera. It collapses down to a tiny 6.5” x 2.5” x 1.5” when not in use. This makes it perfect for travel or any time you need to conserve space. When collapsed, it will easily slide into a backpack, a laptop bag, or even your pocket.

Designed for use in either hand, this is a truly versatile, compact camera tray. Simply turn it around for left handed use without losing functionality.

Strong, reinforced, non corrosive composite and stainless steel construction makes it practical to use so that bumping into obstacles won’t break your grip, but it also doesn’t weigh you down and is always easy to carry with you. Resists saltwater, sun and impact damage for years.

The grip’s ergonomic handle is tilted forward and inwards to accommodate the body’s natural position. This provides less wrist fatigue and level horizon shots. It also has finger grooves for better grip and is small to be comfortable while wearing gloves.

Retra Inon Z330 mount

Retra has produced a mounting kit to allow their LSD to be used with the new Inon Z330 strobe.

It is available either as a complete unit or as a user installed upgrade kit/mounting band for LSD owners that are currently using the Z-240/D2000.

www.retra-uwt.com

Anglerfish Creative Lighting

Anglerfish Creative Lighting Ltd. started in 2015 when Mazyar Jalayer design and built an underwater remote strobe trigger for his photography.

The trigger allowed him to shoot images taken with the strobe mounted off camera.

This lighting setup allowed him to capture images that captivated other underwater photographers.

The performance and built quality of the trigger captured the attention of other photographers.

Since then the brand has grown to represent unique set of products used by underwater photographers.

www.opticaloceansales.com

Acquapazza Smartphone case

Japanese housing manufacturer Acquapazza are developing a waterproof case for smartphones and when completed they will decide whether to market it.

The case is designed to be a safety product which can be taken with you on a dive but used if there is the appropriate signal as soon as you surface should there be an emergency.

The Acquapazza Smartphone case is an alternative to existing bulky underwater housings limited to 40 metres because it is being developed for use down to 80 and 150 metres.

The waterproof case will be designed for use with the smartphone without any additional protection cases or wallets but will provide increased protection from impact damage as well as water ingress.

All that remains to be seen is how much demand is envisaged before development becomes production.

www.acquapazza.jp/en

Acquapazza APSO-A73 housing for the Sony Alpha ILCE-7RM3

The existing Acquapazza housing APSO-A73 is compatible with the Sony Alpha ILCE-7RM3 so both the ILCE-7RM3 and Sony Alpha ILCE-7M3 can be used in the APSO-A7R3 housing.

www.acquapazza.jp/en

The 50 Best Dives in Indonesia - the Ultimate Guide to the Essential Sites

By Tim Rock and Simon Pridmore

Indonesia is a huge country that most divers agree offers the best scuba diving in the world. Its vast archipelago of thousands of islands extends over 2 million square km of sea and acts as a porous barrier between the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Indonesia connects Asia with Australasia and encompasses a vast part of the rich reef system known as the Coral Triangle.

This is scuba nirvana: home to the greatest diversity of life forms on the planet and there are countless great scuba diving sites. So many that it can be hard to choose where to start or, after you have started, where to go next. The seemingly impossible mission that Tim Rock and Simon Pridmore chose to give themselves in this essential guide was to pick the top fifty sites: the best of the best. To make the task a little easier, however, they adopted a couple of strategies.

First, they decided not to rank them in order. Which makes sense. After all, how can you assess whether a dive in the blue with half a dozen whale sharks is better or worse than a drift across a fantasyland reef-scape inhabited by millions upon millions of fish resplendent in all the colors of the universe? Second, they vowed not to be swayed by personal preference for certain types of site but to list as wide a variety as possible. And third, they wanted to make sure that all the key Indonesian scuba diving areas, from Aceh in the west to Biak in the east, are represented.

Whether you are an experienced veteran of Indonesian diving or a novice planning to visit the region for the first time, this book is for you. If you are new to Indonesia, you will find half a lifetime of sites to choose from. And, even if you know Indonesian waters well, there will still be at least a few dives in these pages that you have not yet logged, maybe never even heard of!

Not only does this book help you pick out the key hotspots in relatively well-known places like Bali, Komodo and Raja Ampat, it also introduces you to the top sites in more remote, much less visited parts of the country, such as Mapia, Maputi and Manuk. There are shipwrecks, deep walls, enormous fish aggregations, weird creatures, wild rides, ancient reefs, kaleidoscopic seascapes and even an undersea volcano.

Full color throughout with 220 paperback pages, maps and over 270 images. eBook File Size: 129128 KB. Published by Createspace & Mantaray Publishing

Tim Rock and Simon Pridmore are internationally published authors with decades of Indonesian dive experience and have previously worked together on the Diving and Snorkeling Guides to Bali and the Diving & Snorkeling Guide to Raja Ampat and Northeast Indonesia.

www.timrock.photoshelter.com
www.simonpridmore.com

https://www.amazon.com/50-Best-Dives-Indonesia-Essential-ebook/dp/B079X3HL9V/ref=asap_bc?ie=UTF8

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Sony A7R III and Acquapazza APSO-A7R3 housing field review

by Phil Rudin

My first review of a Sony A7 full frame mirrorless camera was in UWP issue #86 in Sept/Oct 2015 covering the A7 II followed by an A7R II review in issue #90 May/June 2016. During the current release cycle Sony has introduced the A7R III first on Oct. 25, 2017 followed by the A7 III which has just started to ship in April 2018. Sony has also released the High speed A9 sports camera and I am sure an A7S III video oriented body will be announced in the near future. All of these cameras have the same magnesium alloy body and the control placement is near identical, the A9 has an additional Drive/Focus mode dial on the left top of the camera. At this time I have both the A7R III and the A7 III in house. Both cameras work in the Acquapazza APSO-A7R3 housing which was shipped to me prior to the A7 III release.

Acquapazza is part of Yamamoto Industry Co. founded in 1969 and based in Japan. The company's technical expertise was in the world of motor racing where they produced products for both cars and motorcycles that shaved 1000th's of a second off the racer's times. The company has since turned its focus to the ocean and its technical skills to producing underwater housings that are both fashionable and extremely functional.

I met Mr. Yamamoto at the DEMA show in November 2017 and had an opportunity to look at his current Sony APSO-A7R II housing and discuss development of the APSO-A7R III housing. When I expressed an interest in reviewing the APSO-A7R III housing Mr. Yamamoto offered one for review in advance of the product release.

Sony Alpha A7R III camera

Sony's new flagship Alpha A7R III is one of the third generation Sony full frame mirrorless cameras and the second generation to include sensor based in-body image-stabilization or (IBIS). Sony debuted the first Alpha A7, A7R & A7S cameras during 2013 when they were the first mirrorless interchangeable lens cameras to feature a full-frame (36 X 24 mm) image sensor with a body the size of the current Olympus

E-M1 II & E-M5 II mirrorless cameras. Sony has made it quite clear that they intend to challenge Canon and Nikon in the pro and "Pro-Sumer" markets by focusing heavily on their full-frame lineup of mirrorless cameras. Many readers are familiar with the A7R II and I would like to point out some of the upgrades in the A7R III that will be useful for underwater shooters.

The ISO range on the A7R III has been expanded to 100-32000 from 100-25600, the Electronic

viewfinder is now 368K dot v. 235K, frame rate has been increased from 5 fps to 10 fps in continuous shooting mode, focus points have been increased from 399 to 425 and the LCD resolution has increased from 1229K dots to 1440K. One of the biggest improvements for underwater photographers is a huge increase in battery life from CIPA rating of 290/340 (EVF/LCD) shots to a rating of 530/650 shots per charge. This is a figure that varies depending on the lens being used. With the Sony 90 F/2.8 macro I was getting results in the 140-200 image range with A7R II with the new A7R III that number has at least doubled. Dynamic range has also increased from 13.9 to 14.7 with a DXO rating of 100 up from 98 for A7R II. The A7R III has also added dual card slots with one supporting UHS-II ultra high speed cards. The second large improvement for underwater photography is in auto focus speed and accuracy even in low light. The AF speed particularly with the Sony 90mm macro was an issue with the A7R II. Thanks to the faster processing speed, improved circuitry, increase in AF points and more this is no longer an issue even at ten frames per second. The new body also has the same AF point joystick found on the Sony A9 which allows you to quickly move the focus points around in the frame.

Sony currently offers a verity of excellent lenses with weather sealing which are well suited to U/W photography. In addition several other lens manufactures are making direct mount auto focus and manual focus lenses for the Sony FE mirrorless cameras. Lens adapters like the metabones, Sigma and others have also opened up the ability to use Canon, Nikon, Sigma and many other lenses with full AF and/or manual control as well. Many photographers have made the move from Canon or

Hawksbill Turtle feeding on sponge, White House Reef, Cozumel Mexico, Sony A7R III, Canon 8-15 F/4L Fisheye USM lens, Metabones Adapter, Acquapazza APSO-A7R3 housing with Inon Dome Port II with shade removed, Two Ikelite DS-161 strobes with dome diffusers, Manual, ISO-400, F/14, 1/105th sec, at 15 mm

added the Sony Alpha A7R III body to their bag and still use their complete line of Canon lenses with an adapter.

Most photographers when they hear the word mirrorless camera naturally assume that this equates to a much smaller and lighter overall underwater camera system compare to like quality DSLR camera systems. This is not entirely the case with the Sony A7r III system and should not be the only consideration when moving to a full frame camera.

While the 42.4MP A7R III body at 627G (22.11oz) and 126.9 x 95.6 x 73.7 mm is smaller than the Canon 50.6MP 5DR body at 845G (29.81oz) and 152 x 117x 76 mm or the slightly heaver Nikon D810 the differences in systems for the most part ends there.

Split shoe, Car Wash Cenote Yucatan Mexico, Sony A7R III, Canon 8-15 F/4L Fisheye USM lens, Metabones Adapter, Acquapazza APSO-A7R3 housing with Inon Dome Port II with shade removed, ISO-200, F/6.3, 1/250th sec, at 8 mm, Two Ikelite DS 161 strobes with dome diffusers, Manual.

While mirrorless systems like Micro43 are able to incorporate much smaller lenses this is not the case with quality 35 mm full frame mirrorless lenses. Larger sensors mean bigger lenses with heaver glass to cover the larger full frame sensors. This is a simple issue of physics and while some mirrorless lenses for full frame can be designed a bit smaller and lighter than DSLR lenses those used for U/W photography remain about the same size and price as their full frame DSLR counterparts.

As an example I shot the Sony A7R III with the Sony 16-35 mm F/4 zoom, Sony 90 mm F/2.8 macro and Canon 8-15 F/4 Fisheye with metabones adapter for this review. The 16-35 mm on release in 2015 retailed at $1348.00USD, weights 518G (18.27oz) and is 78x98.5mm (3.07x3.88 inches) while the Canon 16-35 mm F/4L lens on release in 2014 retailed at $1199.00USD, weight 615G (21.69oz.) and is 82.6x112.8mm (3.25x4.44 inches) not a great deal of difference.

The Sony 90 mm F/2.8 on release in 2015 retailed for $1098.00USD weight 602G (21.23oz.) and 79x130.5mm (3.11x5.14 inches) while the Canon 100 mm F/2.8L on release in 2009 retailed for $1050.00USD weight 625G (22.04oz.) and 77.7x122.9mm (3.06x4.84 inches). Again not much difference between these lenses which both focus at 1:1.

With wide angle lenses like the 16-35mm on mirrorless full frame you can get away with slightly smaller ports and still get decent corners at F/13 and above.

Image quality with the A7R III is more than impressive at any ISO setting you would normally use underwater. The high resolution from the 42.4MP sensor allows a wide margin for cropping images. Be aware that high resolution full frame sensor cameras do not allow much margin for error when it comes to focus and depth of field. Any mistakes in focusing will be obvious in the high res image and no amount of post processing will correct the problem.

The Sony A7R III retails for around $3198 / £3199 / body only.

Acquapazza APSO-A7R3 Housing

One of the advantages of the Acquapazza APSO-A7R3 housing is that both the Sony A7R3 and A73 camera bodies use the same magnesium alloy frame with almost identical button placement so one housing can be used with both cameras with little to no modification.

The first thing other divers noticed about my test housing while working on this review was the attractive blue color. Acquapazza offers sixteen different colors from basic black which is standard to optional light green, red, violet, champagne and many more.

When my test housing arrived I immediately wanted to mount the vari-angle grips which are included as standard equipment with the housing. These grips come with spacers which allow you to move the grips in and out

(Left) Acquapazza APSO-A7R3 housing with Optional slanted back and Vari-Grips

Acquapazza housing with Acquapazza 170 dome port, Vari-Grips set back for optional slanted back for LCD

for use with heavy dry gloves or no gloves at all.

What I like most about the grips is that they can be angled in a verity of positions to best suit the shooting style. The grips can be angled back if you are shooting video or stills using the LCD screen or pushed forward for use with the standard flat back and accessory optical viewfinders like the Inon 45 degree finder I used for macro. The largest spacers accept a standard size threaded ball head to allow mounting arms and lighting equipment to the housing.

The standard housing back has a flat LCD viewing window and a mounting point for any of three optional Inon optical viewfinders. You can also add an optional slanted back cover with a 45 degree LCD window and no EVF finder. Both backs secure to the front half of the housing using two simple cam locks. Just depress the locking buttons and turn the cam lock 45 degrees to open.

The front part of the housing has two white O-rings which seal the housing half's together for a dry and secure fit. I have used several housings with a double O-ring sealing system and found them to be very effective.

Both housing backs have seventeen push buttons and three wheels for Mode, rear camera dial and EV+/-dial. A push lever on the right side of the housing can be used to start/stop video or for rear thumb focus.

The Sony A7R III menu allows you to program most function buttons with just for about any available function a person would want. The top right array of buttons is setup for the five button Joystick wheel plus the AF on and AEL (no AF/AEL switch like the A7R II).

The bottom right array of function buttons include Fn, the five button wheel functions, review and trash. The C3 and menu buttons are on the top left side of the housing back along with a pressure release valve.

On the far left side of the optional angled housing back is a control for the LCD which I found quite useful while shooting wide angle and macro. It allows you to change the angle of the LCD screen from about 45 degrees to almost flat.

In landscape the 45 angle works best while in portrait the flatter view of the LCD worked best for me. The front half of the housing uses dual white O-rings to seal the ports and extensions. Just lineup the small locking slot on each port or extension with the triangle mark on the bottom of the housing and press the port over the O-rings and onto the mount. Then rotate the port about 30 degrees

Acquapazza housing with camera installed

C-53 Wreck Starboard Prop, Cozumel Mexico, Sony A7R III, Canon 8-15 F/4L Fisheye USM lens, Metabones Adapter, Acquapazza APSO-A7R3 housing with Inon Dome Port II with shade removed, ISO-400, F/13, 1/125th sec, at 14 mm, Two Ikelite DS 161 strobes with dome diffusers, Manual

clockwise until the port locking device clicks into the port locking slot. Depress the port lock and reverse the process to remove the port.

Remember to occasionally clean and re-grease all of the O-rings. Inside the front half of the housing is the camera tray which has a standard tripod mounting screw. Once the camera and lens are attached to the tray it can remounted into the housing where it is held in place by a small friction lever on the bottom of the tray. The left side of the housing has the main zoom control and the right side has the aperture control dial, shutter release, on/off switch and C2 & C4 buttons.

The top of the housing has the on camera flash on/off switch and mounting points for two fiber optic cables. The top of the housing also has an M14 mounting point on the right and M16 on the left for Flash sync sockets, HDMI out and more. The bottom of the housing also two standard mounting points for housing trays, other lighting accessories and tripod.

As noted above I used three lenses for this review, Sony FE 90 mm F/2.8 macro G OSS, the Sony Vario-Tessar T* FE 16-35 mm F/4 ZA OSS and the Canon 8-15mm F/4 Fisheye zoom with Metabones adapter. All three lenses are well constructed with weather sealing and handle the higher resolution A7R III (42.4 MP) sensor with outstanding results.

The 90 mm macro is without question the sharpest macro lens I have ever used with any camera. Acquapazza also has port systems for Sony FE 12-24 F/4 zoom, 16-35 F/2.8, 24-70 F/2.8 and F/4, 28-70 F3.5-F5.6, 28F/2 with the 16 mm fisheye converter, 50F/2.8 macro and Sigma A mount 150 & 180 APO macro lenses with the LA-EA3 adapter. Sigma and others have also announced or are in production on direct FE mount lenses which I am sure will also be considered for support going forward.

I used the Acquapazza housing with a third party Nikonos bulkhead connector and wired Ikelite DS 161 strobes shooting in manual mode. The APSO-A7R3 housing also supports fibre optic TTL and manual using the Sony HVL-F20M land strobe mounted to the camera and placed in

the down position inside the housing. The housing has an ingenious magnetic control switch for turning the strobe on and off while it is inside the housing. Once the Sony strobe is turned on you have full control of off camera strobes like the Inon Z-240 and Z-330 via fiber optic cables.

Battery Life for video can be increase with the optional Anker PowerCore 10000 by removing the Sony strobe from inside the housing. The PowerCore cannot be used in conjunction with the flash sync cord for stills. The PowerCore uses a standard L type micro USB cable to connect to the camera.

One of the first things I noticed about the housing after I installed the Veri-Grips was how small and light it is. For a FF mirrorless housing it weights in at only about 2.19 Kilograms (4.82lbs) including the Vari-Grips and slanted rear cover.

The housing has a depth rating of 100 meters (328ft) with the provided flat back and to 200 meters (656ft) with the slanted back. You will need to contact Acquapazza for advice on which ports can be used at depths beyond 75 meters (246ft).

The housing retails with the flat back and Vari-Grips for around $3200 US for ports, extensions, gears, custom colors and more contact your authorized Acquapazza dealer.

Field testing the Acquapazza APSO-A7R3 housing

My field testing of the A7R III/APSO-A7R3 took place in Mexico on the island of Cozumel and in the Cenotes of the Yucatan. The three lenses I used were setup as follows. The Sony FE 16-35 mm F/4 zoom (UWP #88 review) was setup with the Acquapazza 170 dome port, the 1635 extension

with focus knob and the 1635Z gear LB. Both of the Acquapazza zoom gears I used consist of two parts. The main gear slides over the lens zoom ring and is held in place by a threaded ring that slides into place over the main zoom ring. As with all gears it took a bit of time to locate exactly where the gear should be placed for best results.

While I had a focus gear for the Canon 8-15 Fisheye zoom I just found the auto focus to work so well that I never tried the manual focus gear. Even in the low light of the Mexican Cenotes I was able to use the AF with excellent results. I tried to keep the aperture at F/13 or above for best corner sharpness but some of the images in the article are well below F/13 and I will let readers be the judge regarding corner sharpness. The Canon 8-15 F/4 fisheye zoom (UWP #93 review) was configured with the Inon Dome Port II with removable shade, Acquapazza C815 port extension with focus wheel

(Top left) Split shot, Santa Rosa Wall, Cozumel Mexico, Sony A7R III, Canon 8-15 F/4L Fisheye USM lens, Metabones Adapter, Acquapazza APSO-A7R3 housing with Inon Dome Port II with shade removed, ISO-200, F/14, 1/125th sec, at 8 mm

(Above) Cenote Guide Miki, Dos Ojos, Yucatan Mexico, Acquapazza Housing, 170 Dome Port, Sony A7R III, FE 16-35mm F/4 ZA OSS lens at 17mm, Two RGBlue System-02-2 lights, Iso-6400, F/9 1/30th sec

Sailfin Molly, Cenote Edan (AKA Pondarosa) Yucatan Mexico, Acquapazza Housing, Acquapazza 90 macro port, Sony A7R III with FE 90mm F/2.8 Macro G OSS lens, Two Ikelite DS-161 Manual, ISO-200, F/18, 1/250th sec

Cenote Guide Miki, Tajma Ha, Yucatan Mexico, Acquapazza Housing, Acquapazza 170 Dome Port, Sony A7R III with FE 16-35mm F/4 ZA OSS lens at 16mm, Two RGBlue System-02-2 video lights, ISO-3200, F/6.3 1/20th sec

and zoom gear C815 Z. This lens can be used with the Metabones or Sigma lens adapters.

If you intend to use the circular fisheye end of the lens the dome shade must be removed to prevent vignetting. With the Sony 90 macro I used the Acquapazza E90M macro port. This port is light weight, has the standard 67 mm threads for mounting closeup lenses and a block on top with three different thread sizes for mounting focusing lights and other accessories. All of the lenses can be mounted onto the camera and installed from the rear of the housing while the ports are in place.

I used two Ikelite DS-161 strobes with a Nikonos dual sync cord and two Ikelite dome diffusers. The dome diffusers widen and soften lighting much like a small soft box for land photography. The dome diffusers work well for both wide angle and macro with about a half stop loss of light. I also only used two 20cm (8 inch) strobe arms which made the complete system quite small and easy to carry.

Once in the water the housing very easy to manoeuver using just my right hand. After several hours a day in the water I experienced very little fatigue in the wrists and forearms.

Using the LCD screen for focus and playback with the slanted back focus was quick and accurate shooting in AF-S with front shutter release. The Sony A7R III also has an excellent electronic viewfinder which I used while shooting macro with the flat back and an Inon 45 degree optical finder. I also used AF-S and front shutter release for macro. I tried out the rear focus which also works very well however the AF on this camera with the front shutter release was very accurate and fast so I used it for the bulk of the review period. If you do not intend to buy the optional slanted LCD back I would recommend adding the optional Inon 45 or 180 degree optical viewfinder to the housing if you intend to us the EVF frequently.

The zoom/focus control is smooth and easy to reach with one finger. I controlled most setting changes like focus mode, frame rate, focus area, flash mode, ISO and more from the control display on the LCD

accessed through the Fn button. This makes control changes very easy to see while you navigate through the settings using the arrow buttons.

I had the front (F/stop) and rear (shutter speed) control wheels setup to make those adjustments. The slanted back plate control lever on the left side allows you to move the LCD forward almost flat against the rear of the camera to prevent ambient light from affecting the view of the LCD. With the LCD slanted out to 45 degrees the screen is much easer to see while holding the housing below eye level and looking down into the screen. I found this to be a very comfortable shooting position for both stills and video.

Moving the LCD in closer to the camera body helps when holding the housing in the vertical (portrait) orientation and away from your body. While the camera EVF has a dial for diopter control each person has different needs when it comes to using an LCD. I tend to hold the housing closer to my mask while others vision requires holding the housing farther away. I am old school guy and generally favor the EVF over the LCD but was hard pressed to see any difference in image sharpness between the two with all things being equal.

If your goal is the very best image quality using a full frame sensor camera with excellent lenses then you should consider the Sony Alpha A7R III/Acquapazza APSO-A7R3 system.

After over twenty dives with the Acquapazza APSO-A7R3 I have come away with a very positive impression of the Acquapazza housing line and hope to review future products.

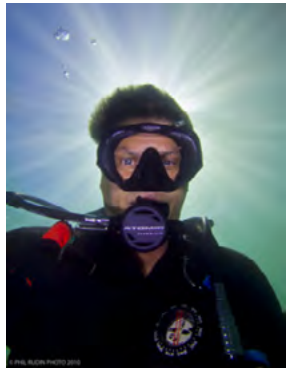
I would like to thank Mr. Yamamoto for the loan of the equipment for this review, contact acquapazza.com or through their FaceBook page.

I would also like to thank Miki Kurimoto Owner of Scuba Freedom in Playa Del Carmen, Mexico. Miki was an excellent guide for all of my Cenote diving needs. Miki can be reached at scubafreedom.com and on her Miki Kurimoto FaceBook page.

Phil Rudin

www. scubafreedom.com

www.acquapazza.jp/en



RGBlue RMGF-1 Screen Magnifier

by Phil Rudin

AOI Japan Co. Ltd. is a company that you may have associate with the line of Acrylic and glass dome ports for Olympus mirrorless housings systems. AOI distributes products in Asia, Europe, Oceania and The Americas.

What you may not know is that AOI also produce the RGBlue line of video lights, Spot Beam lights, Twin beam lights and the very useful Screen Magnifier system which is the subject of this review.

The RMGF-1 Screen Magnifier (Screen-shaped image magnifier) is designed for use in harsh underwater environments. Above water when light rays pass through a convex lens they spread, making the subject appear larger than actual life size. Underwater the same refractive indexes of light rays is much smaller which restricts magnification. RGBlue has developed an image magnifier using the light condensing lens technology developed for the System 01 and 02 underwater lighting systems.

The magnifier is a large four inch screen designed to enhance the image size when looking into the LCD on the camera back. The magnifier provides optimal magnification of 2X when placed at the correct distance from the LCD screen.

For those familiar with enlarged optical viewfinders for DSLR cameras and Mirrorless camera electronic viewfinders (EVF) you are aware that diopter adjustments can be made to enhance overall image size and quality through the viewfinder. With the LCD screen the only way to optimize the image based on the viewers vision is to move the housing in and out until the image looks sharp. The RGBlue magnifier allows better vision into the LCD allowing you to better see and fine tune the subject you are trying to photograph.

The RMGF-1 Screen Magnifier is made with an acrylic lens and ABS resin frame. The magnifier ships with a neoprene carrying case and coil strap which can be attached to the housing to prevent loss. Without the case and coil strap the magnifier weights 37 grams, 5 grams underwater.

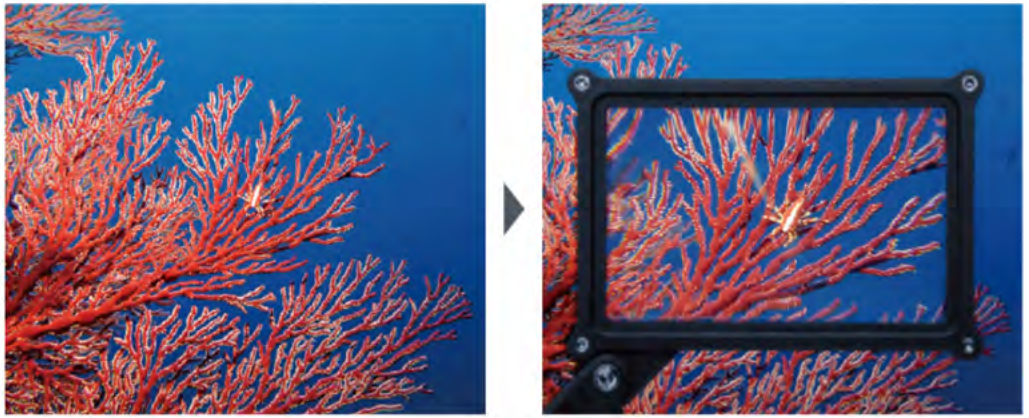
The RGBlue Magnifier can also be used off camera as a magnifying glass to help find small subjects while shooting super macro. The magnifier ships with a ABS resin grip and wing screw to attach the grip to the screen. It can be used with the coil cord attached to the BCD or with a wrist strap as I did. This allowed me to see the fine detail in subjects much smaller than life size and would be excellent for critter observers as well as macro photographers. I found that just letting the magnifier dangle from my wrist while not in use never interfered my camera system while shooting macro subjects.

To mount the magnifier to any housing RGBlue offers an optional RFLA-1 Ultracompact Micro Flex Arm system. This system is designed to mount on the housing cold shoe or to any number of other mounting points based on the housing design being used. I used the magnifier with both Ikelite and Acquapazza housings by using a threaded mounting point on the housings.

The magnifier is very well designed for the

Without Screen Magnifier

With Screen Magnifier



*The above comparison photos are not composite image but real photos.

small consumer compact camera housings. You can remove or install additional arm sections depending on the size of the housings and your needs. The mounting system also has a cold shoe for mounting a video light, focusing light or other accessory.

The Micro Flex Arm system is made of aluminum and has mini O-rings on the ball heads just like the standard ball head lighting support system which have been used for years. Once the Micro Flex Arm is adjusted to your liking it will stay securely in place unless you want to move it.

RGBlue also offers an optional RMGF-HD1 silicone rubber hood for the screen magnifier. I found the hood to be very useful especially while shooting macro or wide angle in shallower water where ambient light makes the LCD screen harder to see. The hood weights 67 grams on land

and 13 grams underwater.

In use I found that the screen enlarged the view of the LCD with little to no loss of image quality. The LCD screens offered on current cameras very in size, magnification and resolution so results will very a bit between different camera manufactures and camera models. I had no issues with the screen moving while in use but this could also very depending on how strong the current may be.

I tend to use the EVF with an optical magnifier on my personal housing system for all of my macro work so for me the screen would be more useful for wide angle with the LCD and particularly for fast moving subjects. Panning while looking into an optical viewfinder is not the most ideal way to shoot fast action subjects like sailfish, sharks bait ball action and more. I also found that the magnifier works equally well with LCD screens in the 3:2 or 4:3 format.

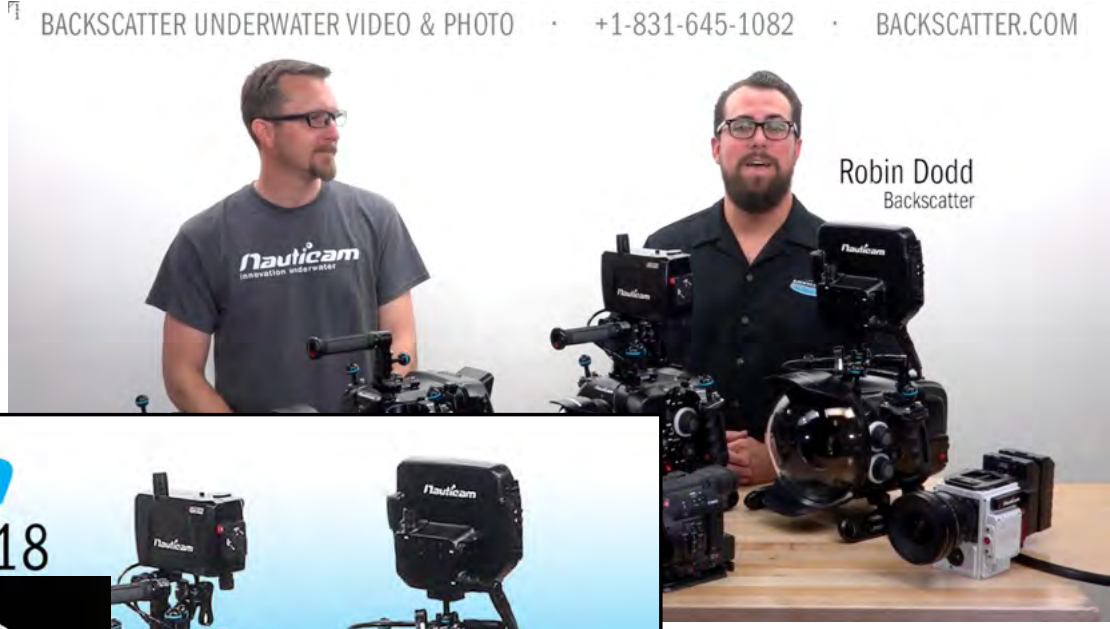
As a magnifying optic for spotting small subjects it is a winner especially for those with diminished vision. I was able to see the detail in small nudibranchs not possible with my aging eyes.

The US pricing supplied by Backscatter Underwater Video and Photo the US RGBlue distributor. Screen and grip $98.00, Micro Flex Arm $158.00 and Hood $16.00. I would also like to thank Yoshinori Kuno from RGBlue with the equipment and technical support.

You can obtain further information in English and Japanese at RGBlue.jp

Phil Rudin

www.backscatter.com
www.RGBlue.jp



NAUTICAM BEST UNDERWATER CINEMA CAMERAS 2018

3D Printing

by Dan Bolt

Perhaps the only up-side to a long, wet, windy and (as it turned out) very snowy winter in the south-west of the UK, is that it gives the idle mind time to wander off in directions it might not otherwise have found itself.

These past few months haven't been the best for diving opportunities, so I decided to pick up on a few projects I'd been meaning to look into for some time. The most interesting of these was to set about designing & 3D printing some new parts for my camera setup. Nothing vital, but some parts that would make my underwater photography just that bit easier.

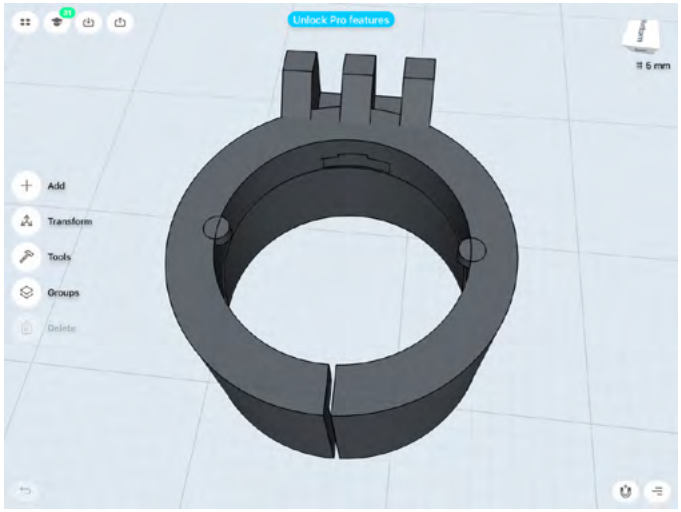
Home-made projects in the underwater photographic world are nothing new, and indeed there are many fine people out there all contributing to self-help forums and sharing their knowledge. I've never been one to use forums and prefer to find these things out the hard way… trial and error. I find it much more fun that way!

And so the first step wat to find a decent bit of software to help me design my 'prints'. I'm a PC user at home but do have an iPad Pro with Apple Pencil as well, so I decided to see what software (apps) were out there and available at a reasonable cost. It actually didn't take me long to decide that the iPad & pencil combination was the way to go, and after downloading a few free trials for different CAD apps, I ended up sticking with Shapr3D. This app can only be used with the apple pencil and as such they designers have put an awful lot of thought into how one interacts with the screen/object to

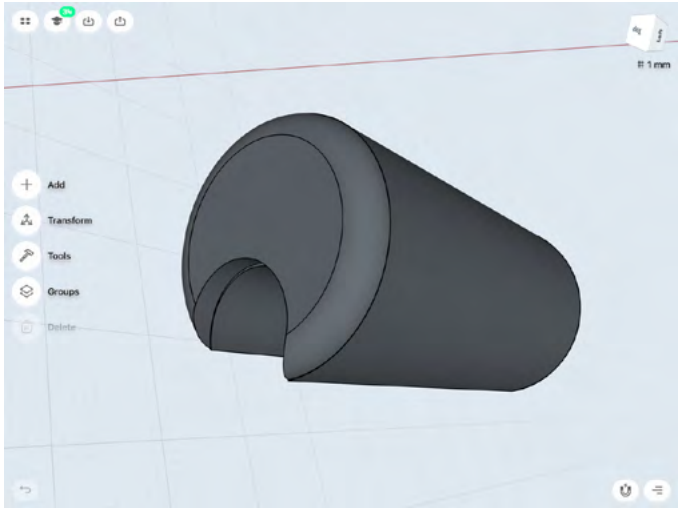
enable some very complicated models to be drawn.

Shapr3D is free to download but with limitations on print quality and numbers of workspaces (models) you can store. At the time of writing it was also possible to sign up for the 'pro' version for a 2-week free trial, which meant you can export hi-res files for printing and there are no limits to the number of models you can create. It's not a cheap app, but it definitely is a 'pro' level tool and you can subscribe on a monthly basis rather than having to fork-out for an annual licence.

I had a number of models in mind and they would test both my ability to design something



that actually works (I'm not well known for my practical abilities!) and the 'promised land' of Rapid Prototyping that 3D printing is famous for. The first couple of models were quite similar, one was



a replacement base for an old Flip Snoot Pro which is no-longer available, and the other a flip-base for a Subsee 5+ holder. In both instances I had one-half of the original product and needed a bespoke part to enable me to use it on my Aquatica AE-M1 housing.

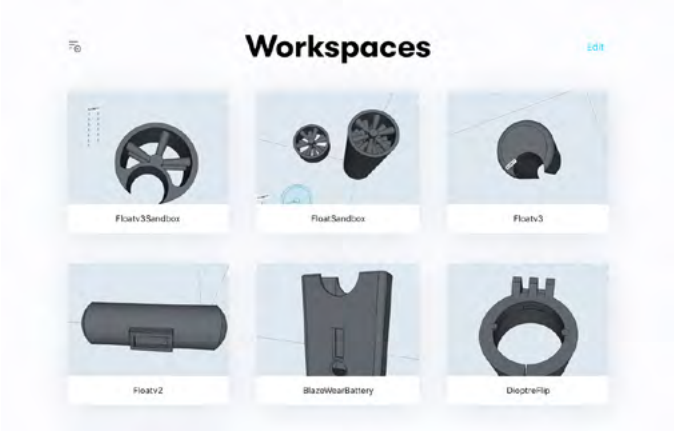
It didn't take long to get to grips with the software and using a cheap digital calliper I was able to be quite accurate with my measurements too. With the first couple of models ready for exporting & sending to the printers, I signed up to the 2-week free trial with Shapr3D.

The next step was to find an online 3D-printing service which the right knowledge, rapid turnaround times… and the right price point. It's easy-enough to get results from an internet search, but it took a bit more digging to settle on using the UK-based company called 3DQuickPrinting.com. Not only was the quote for these first couple of prints very competitive, but the owner struck up a conversation with me about their intended usage and discussed options for how fine the print needed to be and also what material to use.

It was this keen-ness to understand the purpose of the prints that was key to me working with the 3DQP team for all my models. Having someone 'in the know' and happy to chat about options was invaluable to the success of the whole project.

So with files uploaded to the 3DQP website, one of their 8 "Stratasys 1200 SE" printers that 3DQP have set about using a .254 Slice height in a high density ABS material to create my snoot and flip bases in very quick time. Two-days after uploading the files I had a parcel on my doorstep, not bad! And to my utter amazement they both worked too :)

Another bonus about working with plastic prints is that it is easy to adjust the model if it's not a 100% perfect fit. I had to do that with the flip-base as the aligning nodes were slightly too big. A simple fix with a fine file sorted out the problem. Its is also



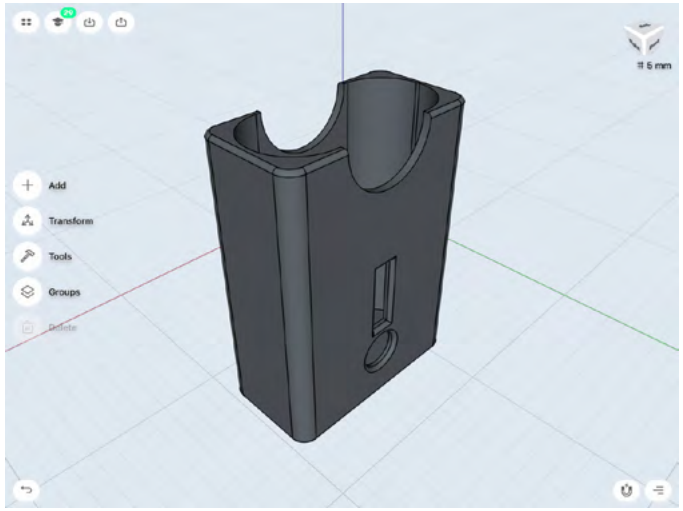
very easy to drill and tap a thread into the plastic too.

Having had a couple of dives with these first models and buoyed on with the success, I set about designing my other two objects. One was a battery holder for my BlazeWear heated vest (to stop it turning itself off when I put my weight-belt on), and the other was a prototype 'float-sleeve'.

The battery holder was simple enough to design, but the float-sleeve allowed me to really explore the Shapr3D app in all it's technical glory. Sadly, ABS plastic is porous and so will not create an air/water tight void to provide the lift, but as a prototyping tool this method is priceless.

I had a few ideas (non rooted in any kind of scientific or engineering principals!) for the internal structure of the float, and had I wanted to pursue this as a product it would have been simple to figure it all out properly.

Once again, the 3DQP team turned around my orders with next-day printing & delivery, and both prints turned out to fit perfectly. I've now done over a dozen dives with the battery holder and it doesn't turn off any more – a huge relief with a 10-day trip to the cold waters of Scotland in the next couple of



weeks

The float-sleeve fitted like a glove and was super-tough too. I can stand on it on one foot and there is no give in the material at all. There is definitely some promise in the design and I may work on it further.

As a learning exercise this was great fun. And the added bonus of having some usable, bespoke products at the end of it makes it all the more worth-

while too.

I would like to thank Chris Murphy from 3DQuickPrinting.com for his help and enthusiasm, and above-all turning around the work in super-quick time.

Dan Bolt
www.underwaterpics.co.uk

www.3dquickprinting.com
https://shapr3d.com

Don't settle for 2nd best

Film - No Filter No White Balance

Digital - No Filter Manual White Balance

Magic Filter Manual White Balance

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

www.magic-filters.com

Photographing Alligators in Florida

by Hannes Klostermann

To many divers, being in the water with apex predators is a thrilling and fascinating experience. Though while thousands of divers swim with sharks on any given day, bespoke crocodilian (i.e. crocodiles and their close relatives like alligators, caimans etc.) encounters are still fairly rare. In fact, there are only three popular destinations to experience these prehistoric looking animals up close and personal. American Crocodiles inhabit the Chinchorro Banks in Mexico and Jardines de la Reina in Cuba whilst alligator encounters can be experienced at the Everglades Outpost in Florida. Here Chris Gillette conducts guided sessions with American alligators for up to four people.

The Everglades Outpost

The Everglades Outpost is a legitimate wildlife rescue facility - registered as a non-profit educational organisation - which takes in, among many other animals, so called "nuisance" alligators. These are individuals that are at least 4ft/1.2m in length and have turned up in someone's back yard so are therefore believed to pose a threat to humans, their pets or property. As there are more than a million alligators in Florida they are deemed a healthy and stable population so, sadly, the usual way of dealing with nuisance alligators is to kill them and harvest their meat. Between 7000 and 8000 alligators die this way every year. At least Fluffy will be safe now! Oh well...

Luckily some trappers work with rescue facilities like the Everglades Outpost and therefore a few lives are spared. Rescue facilities are not allowed to relocate "nuisance" individuals as they are known to return to their capture site following release. Instead, they remain in captivity – certainly still preferable to being shot dead whilst they're taking a nice relaxing bath in a swimming pool!

Seeing a slight ripple at the surface was the "worst" conditions we encountered during our three hour session. The water is simply crystal clear and perfect for taking photographs. Not one of the images in this article had any backscatter removed. Nikon D500, Nauticam housing, Tokina 10-17mm @ 10 mm, 2 x Inon Z240 strobes, F14, 1/125th, ISO 100.

The Everglades Outpost alligator enclosure currently contains 15 "inmates": 14 females and one large male called Casper*. The enclosure is nicely kept and spacious, featuring a sandy area where the alligators can bask in the tropical sunshine. The large artificial pond has crystal clear fresh water, a maximum depth of around 6ft/1.8m,

and a temperature in the low 20s Celcius / low 70s Fahrenheit (at the end of march). This makes photographing the animals an absolute joy! But more on that later…

*Fun fact: Alligators can be quite easily trained to recognise their name! With some individuals, this only takes a couple of training sessions! While this, of course, is not a natural thing to do, it really goes to show how clever they are.

Safety First

The experience is run by Chris Gillette, a professional alligator handler with years of experience with these animals. While he makes this a fun and very enjoyable experience, his first priority clearly is safety. He conducts a thorough safety briefing before anybody enters the enclosure. It is important to remember that even though the alligators are held in captivity, they are still very much wild animals. Granted, some of them have become accustomed to humans to a certain extent. Throughout the session Chris keeps an eye out for nearby alligators that we're not dealing with directly. He likes to stress that although he works with the animals on a daily basis, he does not trust them. What he does trust in is his ability to read the situation and understand what they're up to.

It is hard to describe, but despite there being 15 alligators in the water, the whole experience is incredibly serene. In a way this reminded me of a shark dive: something that sounds crazy and borderline suicidal to the layman but in reality is simply an incredible experience. The animals move at a very relaxed pace and hardly show any interest in those strange looking, yet potentially delicious creatures that share the water with them. Having said that, they do become a bit more active and more easily excitable when the temperatures go up in the summer. In any case it is of utmost importance not to peak their interest by flailing or splashing around. All movements need to be slow and deliberate.

During our safety briefing - as if they were to demonstrate what not to do - two peacocks, which move freely within the Outpost, started fighting right outside the alligator enclosure. Four of the reptiles immediately entered the water

Split-level images are certainly a favourite with any crocodilian. Beware of particles at the surface! Nikon D500, Nauticam housing, Tokina 10-17mm @ 14 mm, 2 x Inon Z240 strobes, F14, 1/125th, ISO 100.

from the opposite end of the enclosure and began investigating in their typical, quiet and motionless fashion with only the top of their heads breaking the surface. As Chris informed us, there have been occasions on which peacocks had made very poor

This was probably my favourite perspective. There is nothing quite like seeing these prehistoric creatures swim right above your head! The trees seen through Snell's Window, as well as the sunrays provide a pleasing background. Nikon D500, Nauticam housing, Tokina 10-17mm @ 10 mm, 2 x Inon Z240 strobes, F11, 1/200th, ISO 100.

decisions and jumped the fence. This turned into a true feast for the alligators very quickly! This is

exactly the deal with these creatures. Everything seems slow, calm and even lazy until it doesn't anymore and things become very messy very quickly. This is an important thing to keep in mind. As with sharks, you simply want to avoid looking like potential prey! As part of this basic concept, everybody moves around the pond walking as quietly as possible. No swimming or fins are allowed. Of course this doesn't mean that you will be instantly death-rolled when your camera makes a little splash at the surface, but you will want to keep the noises to a minimum. Clear communication with Chris is also crucial as he can advise on what can or cannot be done.

All you need for this experience is a wetsuit, mask and snorkel. A weight belt is necessary should you want to join them on the bottom or have them pass over your head. Taking a camera might also be a good idea – not just to take pictures but also as the world's most expensive shield for added peace of mind.

To make things more controllable, only one person is allowed in the water with Chris at any given time during the three hour session. Time in the water, as well as cost, is usually split equally amongst the participants but it can be arranged in whichever way the group desires. Normally, each participant would get

Casper warming up after a photo shoot. Nikon D500, Nikon 10-24mm @ 14 mm, F6.3, 1/200th, ISO 100.

Intercepting the animals as they "walk" along the bottom works well to get a close pass. This smile is simply irresistible! Nikon D500, Nauticam housing, Tokina 10-17mm @ 17 mm, 2 x Inon Z240 strobes, F13, 1/160th, ISO 100.

two turns in the water, giving everyone an opportunity to review pictures (without having to worry about nearby alligators) and adjust their setup. That's enough of me rambling on about alligators, equipment and safety. Let's take some pictures!

Photography

From a photographic perspective, the alligator experience at the Everglades Outpost could hardly be any better. As previously mentioned, the water is crystal clear and completely flat. At most there was a little ripple at the surface from the wind that had picked up during our session. Backscatter is a non-issue. In fact I haven't removed a single spec from any of the pictures in this article. Beautiful trees hang over the pond and provide an appealing backdrop seen through Snell's Window. The only thing I wouldn't consider ideal is the lining of the pond. Since this is an artificial body of water, the bottom and walls are mainly concrete. This is not the most appealing environment for your subjects to be placed in. Nevertheless, this can be mitigated to a certain degree by using different angles.

Chris has a special bond with the 9-10ft/3m male, Casper. The pair have known each other for over 10 years and Chris is usually able to gently point him in the right direction for photo ops or steer him away should you be uncomfortable with him bumping the camera. Like our beloved sharky friends, alligators all have different personalities and Casper is about as calm as they come, making him the ideal photographic subject! His female companions are a

lot less “nice” and not as used to humans. This did help quite a bit when trying to get “mouth open” shots, but wasn’t as desirable for everything else. Therefore, most of the session will usually revolve around Casper. You can either approach him in a natural way or ask Chris to place him wherever you’d like him to be. Once Casper has been steered in the right direction, breathe in, sink to the bottom as gracefully as possible, and an overhead pass for a silhouette or strobe-lit underside shot will be a breeze. This can be repeated pretty much as often as the photographer desires.

However, weighing in at around 250 lbs, Casper’s cooperation is very much required. He is definitely not going to do anything he doesn’t want to do. Sometimes he would sink to the bottom and rest there for a while. In response you will have to dive down, but this also gives plenty of angles to work from. Provided photographers move slowly, pictures can be taken right on the dome. Note that this is however a no touching experience apart from by the handler of course. As this is a legal requirement to conduct these sessions it is strictly enforced.

Creating split-level images is certainly a favourite with any crocodilian. This can be easily achieved as you will be standing up and the water is very flat. The only issue I had (and noticed too late!) was that there were a lot of small particles floating on the surface. These tended to stick to the dome, causing strange distortions on some images. They’re not really droplets, but the water sheets off the dome differently around these particles. Here it would definitely be ideal to enter the water specifically for over-unders and therefore not get the top half of the dome wet in the first place. The usual method of spit, dunk, lift, shoot, which had never

Casper showing us his pearly whites. Even though this is clearly one of the least comfortable positions to be in in front of a large alligator, they do remind me of frogs from this angle. Taken within inches from the dome. Nikon D500, Nauticam housing, Tokina 10-17mm @ 17 mm, 2 x Inon Z240 strobes, F14, 1/125th, ISO 100.

Very occasionally, Casper would bump the dome. Clearly, this image could have used strobes closer to the dome and more depth of field. The lesson here is, be prepared for very close encounters! Nikon D500, Nauticam housing, Tokina 10-17mm @ 17 mm, 2 x Inon Z240 strobes, F14, 1/125th, ISO 100.

failed me previously, didn't work very well in this setting. Maybe I should've re-applied the spit more often? Possibly. I certainly should've done some more pixel peeping to check for artefacts, as they are not all that obvious when not zoomed in. Can you tell they're present in the not-bumping-the-dome split? Either way, pixel peeping with 15 alligators around me simply didn't feel right, so I kept it to a minimum.

In hindsight, what would I have done differently? Not an awful lot really! I definitely would've liked some more time in the water, as it just went by so quickly, but that's true for any time you find yourself in perfect conditions, I suppose. Naturally, having more time allows for trying more creative techniques once you've bagged the shots you absolutely wanted to get. Considering that this was my first time in the water with these animals, I was still more than happy with the images that I managed to create (apart from a few heartbreakingly distorted, otherwise great half-and-half images) and I can definitely recommend this to anyone who has a soft spot for prehistoric predators.

Alligators would occasionally rest at the bottom and Casper preferred to have his eyes closed. Though he could clearly still sense his surroundings, this allowed for a very close approach and countless angles to shoot from. Also, the sunrays dancing on their skin created beautiful colour and texture. Nikon D500, Nauticam housing, Tokina 10-17mm @ 10 mm, 2 x Inon Z240 strobes, F11, 1/200th, ISO 100.

Sometimes, even the Tokina 10-17 would simply not be wide enough! This was shot inches from the belly of the alligator. A little piece of anatomic trivia here: alligator penises are permanently erect and can be deployed and retracted rapidly using a specific set of muscles and tendons that act like a rubber band. When not in use, they're protected by thick skin. The greyish part between his rear legs is where the magic happens! Nikon D500, Nauticam housing, Tokina 10-17mm @ 10 mm, 2 x Inon Z240 strobes, F11, 1/200th, ISO 100.

The first alligator picture I posted on social media generated several comments implying I had large spherical objects made of metal suspended from my groin area ("You've got balls of steel!"). I'm not going to lie, I went in the water that day feeling a little nervous. However, whilst having respect for potentially deadly animals is never a bad idea, being nervous was completely unjustified and that feeling vanished very quickly. Just like sharks, these are simply incredible creatures that don't deserve the bad press they're usually getting.

Make sure you pay Casper and the girls a visit next time you're in the area and see for yourself!

No balls required.

Hannes Klostermann
hk-underwater.com

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Magic filters are now available in 3 options. Original Magic for use in blue water with DSLR and compact cameras with Manual White Balance, Auto-Magic for compact cameras in automatic point and shoot mode. GreenWater Magic for use in green water with DSLR and compact cameras with Manual White Balance. Prices start at just £22.

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

www.magic-filters.com

Hurricanes Maria and Irma in Saint Pierre, Martinique

by Jean Michel Machefert

If you read the issue 98 of UWP magazine I wrote an article on the numerous and beautiful wrecks and tropical sceneries to be seen in Saint Pierre (Martinique, French West Indies), from almost the surface down to depths by far too important for divers. This first trip occurred in July- August 2017, and it was so good that we decided with my wife to come back for 2 weeks in February 2018.

Since August 2017, almost no change, only 2 hurricanes the first one was Irma (huge hurricane with a radius of 300km, 5th category on 5 on the Saffir Simpson scale) on September 6th with a trajectory of the centre a distance at more than 400km north from Saint Pierre. In the northern part of Martinique the gusts reached around 130km/h and the swell a height up to 5 to 7m. The second hurricane was Maria (also major hurricane in 5th category) on September 18th with a trajectory of the centre at a distance of 50km north from Saint Pierre. During this hurricane the gusts reached 120km/h and the swell a height up to 6m in the bay of Saint Pierre. Now thanks to the weather forecast there was almost no serious damages in Saint Pierre and only a couple of small yachts broke moorings and run aground on the black sand of the beach in the middle of the city luckily with only some scratches on the paint.

So in February 2018 we decided for the first dive to visit the wreck of the Amélie sunk in shallow water south of Saint Pierre during the eruption of the Montagne Pelée I told in the article in UWP magazine 98.

A general view of the wreck of the Amelie (depth 9m) in July 2017 before the hurricanes, Nikon D2x, housing Aquatica, Tokina 10 - 17mm at 10mm, 1/ 60, f 11 , ISO 200 , 2 strobes Nikon Sb 910, Patima housings, ½ and full power

A general view of the wreck of the Amelie in February 2018 after the hurricanes at the same place as the picture just over, Nikon D2x, housing Aquatica, Sigma 17 - 70mm at 17mm, 1/ 200, f 8 , ISO 400 , 2 strobes Nikon Sb 910, Patima housings, ½ power

In February 2018 after the 2 hurricanes: nothing under water, only sand. Only the big anchors used for mooring are still here but less prominent than in July. Photo by Marie Machefert

Near the beach some remains of deck railing and some wooden beams from the wrecks sunk in 1891 during a hurricane as they can be seen in July. Now after the storm nothing visible. Nikon D2x, housing Aquatica, Tokina 10 - 17mm at 10mm, 1/ 100, f 10 , ISO 200 , 2 strobes Nikon Sb 910, Patima housings, ½ and ¼ power

This wreck lies close to the shore in shallow water on a flat sea bed at a maximal depth of 9m.

As soon as we are under the surface at the first sight it looks different than in July. At the "front" part of the wreck close to the shore there was in July a big barrel sponge located at the right side of the wreck and an accumulation of sponges and life in front of it. Now in February, no more sponge even broken and a big round hole instead of the accumulation! This can be seen on the pictures taken from the same place but with 2 hurricanes in between. The main structure of the wreck is still here with a kind of cross in metal but the ground inside the wreck is now covered by sand with some metal structure more prominent than in July, and still plenty of small colourful fishes.

Some but few barrel sponges with some damages can time to time be seen and this is quite strange to notice that they do not anymore lye close to the bottom but they seems to be hung on metallic remain of the wreck. Some of these barrels sponges are partially broken but not always.

Let's go on the left side. In July, there was here only turtle grass with some turtles and no visible remain of a wreck. Now after few meters there is a new big sandy patch with quite a lot of garden eels (Heteroconger) who were not here in July and as a cherry on the cake, a very big part of wreck almost 20m long fully cleaned. As it can be seen on the picture this part should be one of the sides of the hull of the Amélie with welded plates of steels reinforced by metallic frames.

Such discovery after stormy weather in sandy areas is quite common and for example after the storm ravaging the coast of southern Maine in March this year the hull of a sloop was discovered. The same hurricane Irma as we had in Martinique also washed up the coast

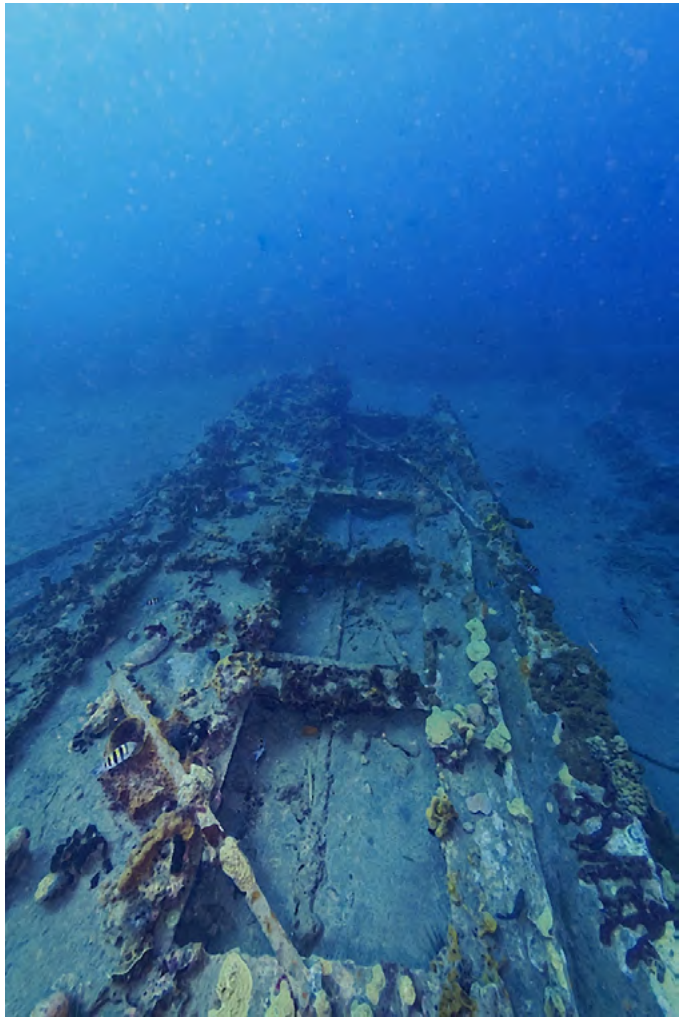
of Florida exhibiting a 15 feet long canoe several hundreds of years old probably from the native culture. Many other examples are also known on the east coast of the US during the storm season.

In July 2017 some parts of wrecks were also easy to see by snorkelling along the beach as some remains of deck railing and some wooden beams. In Saint Pierre such wrecks with wooden relics were not sunk during the eruption of the Montagne Pelée in 1902 (the boats destroyed during the eruption were burnt and there is no more not damaged wooden structures on them) but they are typical of the 19 big ships anchored in the bay of Saint Pierre and destroyed during the hurricane of the 8th of August 1891. Saint Pierre is really a dangerous location for ships, but what a wonderful spot for wreck lovers.

In February 2018 after the 2 hurricanes: nothing under water, only sand. Only the big anchors used for mooring are still here but less prominent than in July.

Let us visit now some reefs in shallow water (less than 5 m deep) north of Saint Pierre. Such reefs are washed every year by storms and almost no big sponges nor can elevated life be seen. On some pebbles some white and soft sea fans moving with the swell are easy to see but the majority of the life consists either in very small and soft species as hydrozoans or in hard and almost flat species as boulder coral where plenty of mimetic life as scorpion fish are observed. So no change after the storms, here the life continues as before until the next one.

Now this is time to dive a little bit deeper on the reefs with the summit at 15m. Even if they are located close to the shore at such depth the huge barrel sponges typical of the area can be seen without major damage. Deeper than 15m all the aspects of the life remain unchanged, and even the big deep water sea fans or the black wire coral moving with the tide currents.



New part of the wreck of the Amelie in February after the hurricanes at the same place as the picture of the turtle, Nikon D2x, housing Aquatica, Nikkor 10.5mm, 1/ 200, f 7 , ISO 400 , 2 strobes Nikon Sb 910, Patima housings, ½ and ¼ power

Barrel sponges at a depth of 20m in February after the hurricanes, Nikon D2x, housing Aquatica, Nikkor 10.5mm, 1/ 400, f 8 , ISO 400 , 2 strobes Nikon Sb 910, Patima housings, ½ and full power

So what to conclude?

Even if Martinique was not hit directly by the major hurricanes of 2017 in the West Indies, this is quite unusual to have in the same month two times

such heavy storms in Martinique.

After the storms with swell up to 6m the diving spots in shallow water (maximum depth 10m) were completely transformed with big movement of sandy layers covering completely the bottom of the sea at some places leading to the hiding of some remains of wrecks. At the same time at some other locations (may be depending on the direction of the swell with some influence of the shore and local currents) the sand was completely washed leading to the discovery of "new" remains from wrecks. The discovery of "new" or at least forgotten remains is quite a frequent phenomenon

In such shallow water the storms destroy almost all the prominent and not flexible life as barrel sponges as soon as they are not protected from the flow created by the swell. The "flexible life" as sea fans can survive in this area and after the storm it is rapidly occupied by fishes who leaves the shallow water few days before the storms. I was in Guadeloupe some years ago and I had the opportunity to dive 2 days before the hurricane Dean (category 2 on August 16th 2007) and even if there was no wind the water was milky and it was amazing to see that there was almost no fishes at places plenty of life few days before.

Moreover near the shore in the splash area extended during the storm only the hardest living creatures as brain corals can survive, and almost nothing else.

In deeper water (more than 10m) there was almost no destruction of the life whatever it is hard as brain coral or fragile as barrel sponges. Nevertheless it seems that even in deep water the structures of the wrecks are destabilized by the increased movement of water caused by the surface swell and after some repetition of the phenomenon it can lead to the collapse of some parts of the wrecks, even if they are in depth and if they seem not to be affected. For a diver it is even more important than usual to take care by entering into wrecks after storms.

Of course there is no absolute rules on the consequences of a storm or a hurricane on the underwater life and on wrecks, but this article intents only to give a pictured description of an example of medium sized hurricane (in Martinique but not in the north as in Saint Barth or Saint Martin hit by the centre of the depression with winds over 360km/h and swell over 10m).

Blocks without life in shallow water (2m) in the splash area during the storms in February after the hurricanes, Nikon D2x, housing Aquatica, Sigma 17 – 70 mm at 17mm, 1/ 200, f 10 , ISO 400 , 2 strobes Nikon Sb 910, Patima housings, ½ power

Turtle on turtle grass in July, Nikon D2x, housing Aquatica, Tokina 10 - 17mm at 10mm, 1/ 125, f 11 , ISO 200 , 2 strobes Nikon Sb 910, Patima housings, ½ and full power

Jean Michel Machefert

Jean Michel began to dive in caves, lakes and the oceans in 1987. He started underwater photography in 1992 using a Nikonos IV. After shooting many years with a Nikon D70 he now uses a Nikon D2x in an Aquatica housing.

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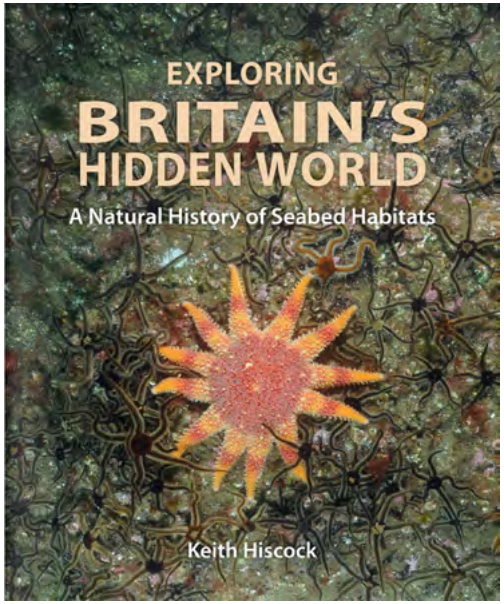
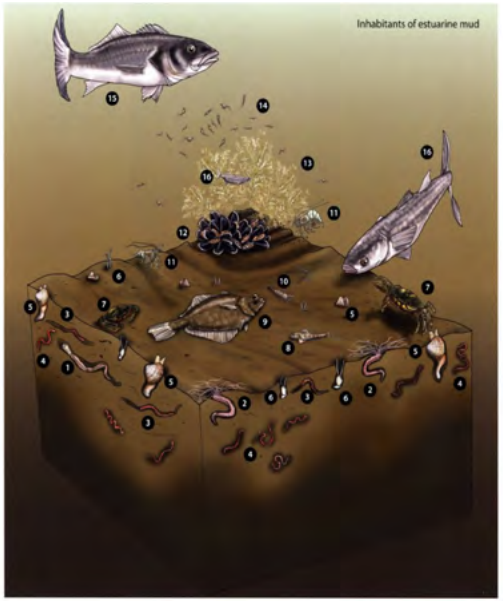
Book Review

Exploring Britain's Hidden World

by Keith Hiscock

by Peter Rowlands

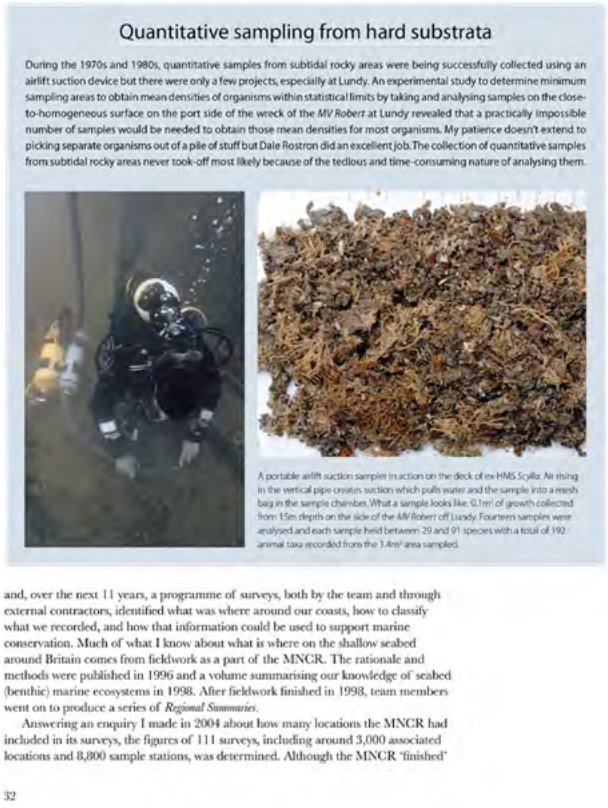




Every now and then someone comes along who can bridge a communication gap; capable of excelling within the academic, scientific world yet able to explain it to the majority of us, the laypeople, in terms that we don't find highbrow and intimidating yet still imparting information at an intelligent, embracing level. Such a person is Keith Hiscock, the author of Exploring Britain's Hidden World - A Natural History of Seabed Habitats.

There can be no doubt that the 20th century saw developments and discoveries on a scale hitherto unprecedented; the combustion engine, air travel and space exploration being the headline acts but it has been underwater, as always invisible to the public's eye, which has revealed a world of intricate complexity with seemingly boundless potential yet without it there would be a certain collapse of the natural world as we know it.

At the turn of the century our knowledge base was achieved with crude mechanical grabs taking samples from fathoms below but by the end of it we had instruments to record and quantify every aspect combined with AUVs to take them to places and for durations way beyond our human limitations. And yet, despite such huge technical, scientific advances, it was actually our new found ability to be able to go, and stay, underwater ourselves for useful amounts of time that brought about our 'understanding' of how it all fitted together because we could see it with our own eyes in real time; the juxtaposition and the intricate jigsaw of habitats which support a profusion of life on a par with any tropical rain forest or jungle.



Quantitative sampling from hard substrata

During the 1970s and 1980s, quantitative samples from subtidal rocky areas were being successfully collected using an airlift suction device but there were only a few projects, especially at Lundy. An experimental study to determine minimum sampling areas to obtain mean densities of organisms within statistical limits by taking and analysing samples on the close-to-homogeneous surface on the port side of the wreck of the *MV Robert* at Lundy revealed that a practically impossible number of samples would be needed to obtain those mean densities for most organisms. My patience doesn't extend to picking separate organisms out of a pile of stuff but Dale Rostron did an excellent job. The collection of quantitative samples from subtidal rocky areas never took-off most likely because of the tedious and time-consuming nature of analysing them.

A portable airlift suction sampler in action on the deck of ex-HMS *Scylla*. Air rising in the vertical pipe creates suction which pulls water and the sample into a mesh bag in the sample chamber. What a sample looks like. 0.1m² of growth collected from 15m depth on the side of the *MV Robert* off Lundy. Fourteen samples were analysed and each sample held between 29 and 91 species with a total of 192 animal taxa recorded from the 1.4m² area sampled.

and, over the next 11 years, a programme of surveys, both by the team and through external contractors, identified what was where around our coasts, how to classify what we recorded, and how that information could be used to support marine conservation. Much of what I know about what is where on the shallow seabed around Britain comes from fieldwork as a part of the MNCR. The rationale and methods were published in 1996 and a volume summarising our knowledge of seabed (benthic) marine ecosystems in 1998. After fieldwork finished in 1998, team members went on to produce a series of *Regional Summaries*.

Answering an enquiry I made in 2004 about how many locations the MNCR had included in its surveys, the figures of 111 surveys, including around 3,000 associated locations and 8,800 sample stations, was determined. Although the MNCR 'finished'

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The Marine Nature Conservation Review incorporated surveys from Muckle Flugga, the furthest north island in Britain, to Bishop Rock in the Isles of Scilly in the far south-west. Image of Muckle Flugga: David Connor/JNCC.

Describing the abundance of species at a survey station in 1988 during the MNCR survey of Shetland. The blue box is an early diving computer – the Orca Edge. Image: Sue Scott/JNCC.

in 1998, it was never complete. Much survey work remains to be done, as there are gaps in knowledge that predictive algorithms cannot fill. Most importantly, all of the information collected through the MNCR was held in a database that could be interrogated and used to support environmental protection and management.

MNCR surveys also described sediment communities and, especially where sediments were localised amongst rocks, used a suction sampler. Here, a suction sampler is in use at Craignish in west Scotland. Image: Sue Scott/JNCC.

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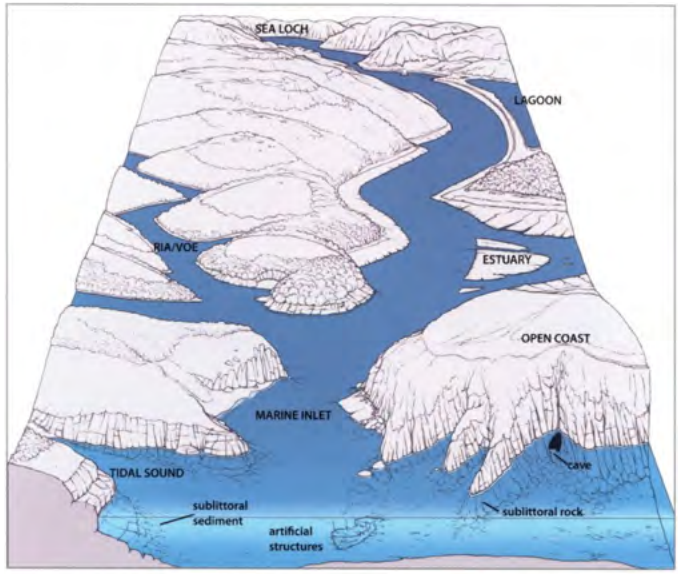


Coastal physiographic and habitat features likely to hold distinctive communities of species. Based on a diagram in the *MNCR Rationale and Methods*

By fortuitous coincidence, the last 50 years of scientific discoveries have been in Keith's working lifetime as an ecologist and conservation scientist and both he, and now us, have benefited. The results from this most productive of times are condensed into this book for all to absorb.

Exploring Britain's Hidden World is like a perfectly presented personal scrapbook produced from a life at the coalface, so to speak. This is not a stuffy scientific delivery but a celebration of what could be portrayed as bland but in Keith's hands it comes alive with its infinite variety, the text is a well weighted fusion of down to earth and science and the images are consistently good at showing what is needed without fancy lighting and photographic trickery. Both are equally complimentary.

To my mind the most important indication of an author's credibility is how they deal with today's environment and the future. The past and today's are known and to a certain extent we are sure that, if the present situation is allowed to continue, then, taken to the ultimate, there will almost certainly be no sustainable future. Keith's assessment of the current situation is a non inflammatory presentation of the facts and, like all good educators, he offers a vision of the future which is an achievable combination of personal involvement based on understanding aided by technical innovation to almost certainly redress and restore the balance.

In conclusion I can only steal part of Callum Roberts' Foreword when he says "This is the book which I wish I'd possessed when I was starting out".

Exploring Britain's Hidden World - A Natural History of Seabed Habitats is published by Wild Nature Press and costs £25.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

www.wildnaturepress.com/our-titles/exploring-britains-hidden-world/

Real Life

by Gerald Legg

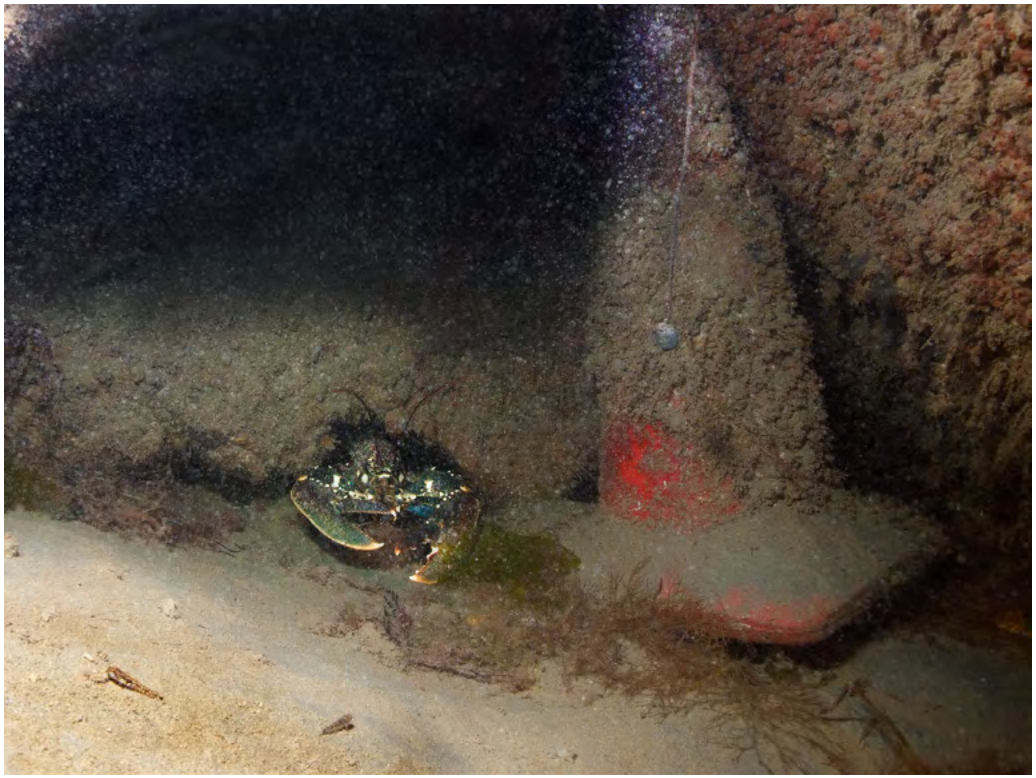
Bognor Rocks, and the close by Barn Rocks and Waldrons Reefs, Sussex, consist of low lying fossil rich reefs of calcareous sandstone in the London Clay 0-25 to 2 m high that curve out from the beach west of Bognor Regis to a little over 1 km off shore.

This can be a shore dive (shallow at low water!), but a boat makes it easier to get further out with diving at high water gives 6-8 m. Associated with these rocks, approximately five km offshore, is the Waldrons (or Waldrens) Reef a designated site of marine conservation interest.

The surrounding seabed consists of rippled sand with exposures of clay,boulders, cobbles, pebbles gravel and sand. The reefs are undercut with crevices,gullies, overhangs and small caves offering refugia for many marine animals including lobsters, crabs and several fish species.

Horizontal faces are dominated by seaweeds including reds and small Laminaria beneath which is a sparse sessile fauna. The steeper surfaces are extensively colonised by animals with many species of sponges, anemones and ascidians (notably Molgula) dominant here, with some bryozoa (sea mats)and hydroids (sea firs). High fish diversity and abundance with Corkwing Wrasse, Ballan Wrasse, Goldsinney, Pollack, Tompot Blenny, SandEels, Gobies, Gurnard, and Cat Shark occur.

Oh, and a discarded traffic cone.

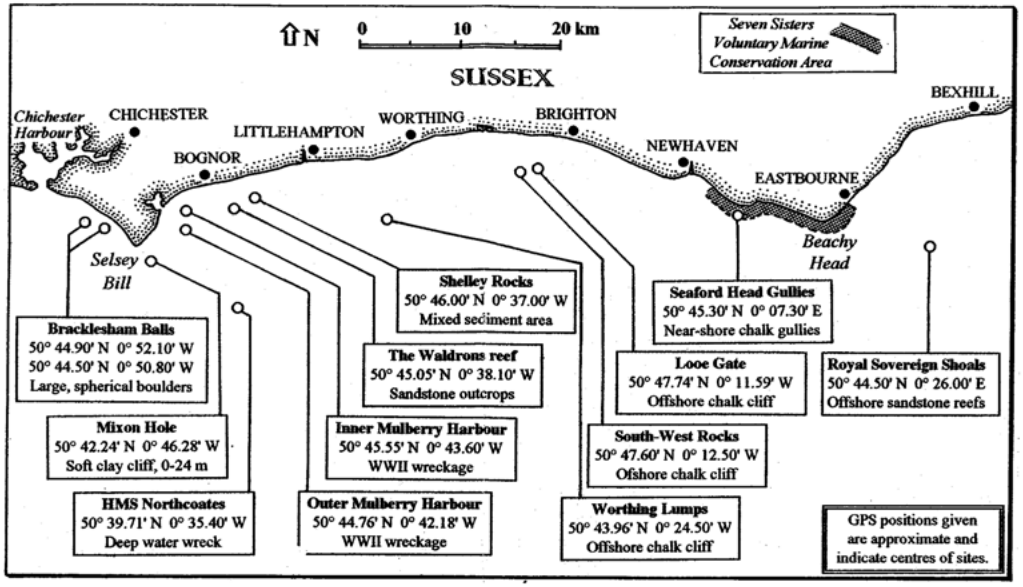


Gerald Legg

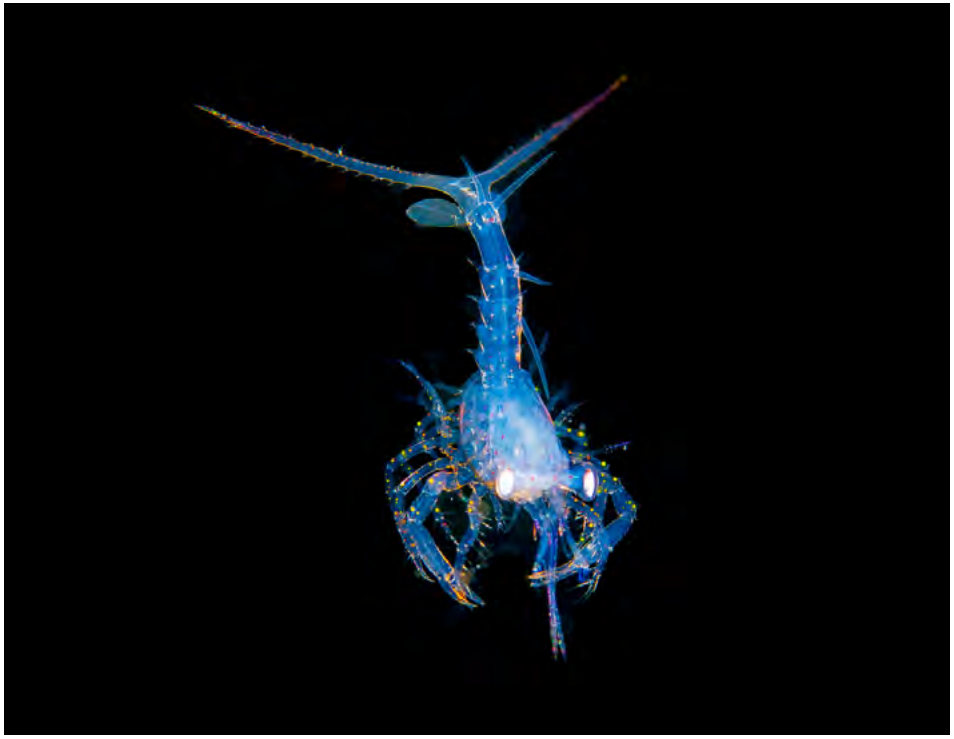
ISO 100 /f11 / 1/125 sec. Olympus E30 / Olympus Zuiko digital f4-42mm 1:3.5-5.6, Ikelite housing, Nikonos SB 105 strobe manual set at 1/4 power.

www.mulberrydivers.co.uk
www.chelifer.com/?page_id=2592

http://www.sussex.ac.uk/geography/researchprojects/coastview/Habitats/Sussex_marine_sites_of_nature_conservation.pdf



My Shot
by Shane Wasik



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

For the last 18 months we've been experimenting with pelagic black water diving.

Essentially this is night diving above incredibly deep water using big lights to attract potential abyssal plankton or larger nocturnal feeding species as subjects! My understanding is that this type of diving and underwater photography started, or perhaps is best known in Hawaii out in the Pacific.

We started our own methods using 25000 lumen British made Orcalight technology, where we hang this light source from the boat in the deep trenches off the Scottish west coast.

The hydrography here is perfect with the plummeting seabed carved out from glacier action and the nearby Atlantic powering a vast food web. This ranges from tiny plankton to pelagic fish and megafauna such as whales and sharks. So we have a potentially wide ranging target list including the possibilities of attracting some interesting stuff out of the inky depths!

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

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

Focussing in on subjects is much harder than traditional photography diving as you have very little scope for reference such as the bottom, so you are just hanging there trying to keep buoyancy as best as possible. Using a focus light on wide angle beam I could headlight into the distance scanning for subjects then once closer I could move with the camera.

This particular subject which is a juvenile langoustine was probably around a finger nail in size. However it was moving around and along with it's iridescent reflective carapace made it an easier subject to 'spot'. Using fairly standard macro kit and settings, I had to work hard with the subject moving around, the drag of the tether and little visual reference for buoyancy. I was able to shoot for around a minute or so and I managed to capture one that was relatively sharp with a pleasing composition facing the lens.

Although this type of diving is well known in the tropics, we have equally as good opportunities on our own doorstep in the UK/Europe. It just takes some thinking outside the box and some motivation to try different thing!

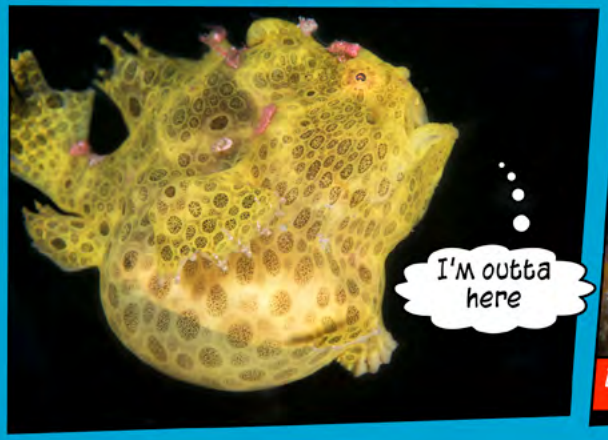
Shane Wasik
www.baskingsharkscotland.co.uk

"My Shot" can be a particular favourite of yours or one which brings back special memories and deserves to be appreciated by a wider audience.
Images need to be 150dpi, longest length (horizontal or vertical) 20cm saved as medium compression jpeg format. and sent with around 300 words of explanation together with camera details and settings.
E mail them and you could be in the next issue of UwP.

peter@uwpmag.com

FROG-FISH FIGHT-NIGHT

by Helen Brierley



Guidelines for contributors

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

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

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

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

How to submit articles

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

1. The text should be saved as a TEXT file and attached to the e mail
2. Images must be attached to the e mail and they need to be 150dpi

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

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

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

Parting Shots

Canon Powershot S120 in Ikelite housing, Fantasea BigEye Lens, ISO100, f/8, 1/4sec, no strobe.

Winter in Germany is typically not the peak time for scuba diving unless you go abroad or belong to those who are fascinated by ice diving. I belong to the latter group because to see the frozen landscape in the mystic light that passes through the ice has always raised a fascination within me.

This season I decided to try to take images not while diving under ice but in smaller rivers that are not completely frozen, just curious to see what it looks like there.

From hiking I knew about a good place to start from: a small ravine makes its way through the rocks with a small beck that flows into a river at the end of the ravine, both with not even knee-high water.

Thus, one sunny, cold day I went there to find the scenery just perfect: a lot of ice but not completely frozen up, the sun shining into the water from the side... All set up for a good shoot.

Compared to "normal" underwater or split-level shooting there are a few differences: Firstly, the hole in the ice determines where you can take the image. Also, sometime these holes are pretty small. Then it gets somewhat difficult to go for split-levels as the edge of the ice is so close to the lens that getting a well focused image becomes a problem. Especially with the compact camera I have with its sensor size the resulting hyperfocal distance is limiting that strongly.

However, taking an image below the ice is a good alternative then too. If the ice is not too thick or snow covered, the sun still lights the ground in these shallow waters very well. Also the sun beams scattered by the ice do yield nice motifs.

Secondly, when taking this sort of images the composition becomes interesting as you can only just see the image on the monitor of the camera before you shoot nor do you see what is below the ice before you take the image. However, I found great reward in what I got even though it took a while...Did I yet mention that in winter it is cold?

Kidding aside, it may sound obvious or even silly but it is cold. So you do need water-proof gloves otherwise hands get numb within minutes.

The other thing that suffers from the cold is the camera. When it is put into the water, taken out for image checking and setting adjustments the controls on the wet housing freeze. So one may need to consider to bring something along to warm up the housing from time to time. This all may sound troublesome, however, it is definitely worth it.

The images I managed to take showed me perspectives of the world below the ice that I had not seen before. It's definitely of value to try and provides a good chance of taking underwater pictures even if scuba diving is not your preferred choice for the moment.

Finally, it is also good for socialising. If you do it next to a hiking path a lot of folks who pass by will show interest in why you put that strange camera into an ice hole...

Martin Sczyrba

Do you have a shot which has a story within a story?
If so e mail it with up to 500 words of text and yours could be the next Parting Shot.
peter@uwpmag.com
and yours could be in UwP103