Underwater Photography

Jul/Aug 2021
Issue 121

UWP

AQUATICA™ Digital

AR5 & A7S III Now shipping!

Canon EOS R5 *features:*

- *45MP Full-Frame CMOS Sensor*
- *8K30 Raw and 4K120 10-Bit Video*
- *DIGIC X Image Processor*
- *Sensor-Shift 5-Axis Image Stabilization*
- *Subject Tracking with Deep Learning*
- *CFexpress & SD UHS-II Memory Card Slots*

AR5: $3,199 USD

Sony Alpha a7S *III features:*

- *12MP Full-Frame Exmor R BSI CMOS Sensor*
- *Extended ISO 40-409600, 10 fps Shooting*
- *5-Axis SteadyShot Image Stabilization*
- *759-Point Fast Hybrid AF*
- *Updated 61 point auto focus*
- *Dual CFexpress Type A/SD Card Slots*

A7S III: $2,949 USD

www.aquatica.ca

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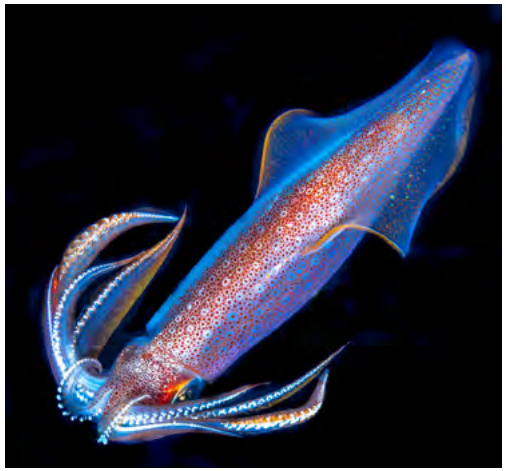
A web magazine UwP121 Jul/Aug 2021



Cover shot by
Attila Kaszo

Underwater Photography *2001 - 2021*
© PR Productions
Publisher/Editor Peter Rowlands
www.pr-productions.co.uk
peter@uwpmag.com

Editorial

Find your level

Richard Yorke's excellent article about his underwater photographic equipment journey makes poignant reading, is full of valid points and I think should apply to the majority of UwP readers.

At the back of his mind before considering any new purchase is 'What do I need from it or What do I want it for?'. Those are much more intelligent questions than the more often 'This is going to improve things for me'. The marketing department's dream is to create a desire which can overrule rational thought.

It also helps to be individualistic in your thinking and not swayed by those in your group who have upgraded to bigger and supposedly better outfits.

The other attribute to develop, and Richard has done this very well too, is to be underwater photographically contained and by that I mean non dominant on a dive. He is a keen marine biologist and Seasearch volunteer so his first aim is to observe and record the marine life and only then photograph it.

As a result, Richard is very comfortable with his level so if you go chasing another upper level always be aware that it might lead to a disappointment either photographically or financially.

The eyes have it

I well remember a marine biologist we were diving with in the UK a while back saying that such and such a creature or some specific local marine life was very rare.

My dive buddies and I looked at each other quizically until one of us came clean and said "Well, not where we've been diving. We see lots of them". And that's the point.

Even in local waters, let alone the open ocean, we cannot be everywhere and see everything and that is where, for once, underwater photographers can claim some good press. Within our ranks we have an incredible knowledge and experience base capable of spotting the unusual and providing important feedback to the marine biological world.

Take a recent case as an example. A small group of enthusiast macro photographers were diving in, and I will only be as specific as the west coast of Scotland to avoid a Twitching stampede, when one of the group came across a very unusual crinoid shrimp which was thought to be only in the Mediterranean; yet here it was and photographed to prove it. Then, blow me down if another one was found on the east coast very shortly afterwards so it can't have been the same one on holiday.

So the point is that we are providing invaluable eyes and time underwater not only capturing life in all its beauty but also making new finds to add to the database of marine life whereabouts.

Take a bow, all, and keep looking.

Parting Shot request

A few issues ago there was a sad faced emoji instead of a Parting Shot which resulted in a healthy response but the vaults are now empty so if you have a story within a story to go with an interesting image, I'd love to hear from you.

It only needs up to 500 words maximum and the image doesn't need to be super high res. Just an interesting twist to the story to close each issue.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Less is more

A reasonably regular UwP contributor messaged me recently to tell me he was selling his bulky camera outfit and intending to replace it with a smaller and lighter 'lower format' system.

I highlighted 'lower format' there because there is a misguided perception that going down a format means going without photographically but nothing could be further from the truth.

True, full frame top of the line SLRs are amazingly fast and super high res but put them in a large housing with a wide aperture lens and you can say goodbye the hand baggage (remember that?) in a blink.

Even if you feel that full frame is the minimum you could put up with, all manufacturers, and typically Sony, are coming out with 'compact' full frame versions which can be housed in correspondingly smaller and lighter housings.

The result is we have to make very few compromises photographically to save size and weight even if there may still be a significant denting of the wallet.

We've never had it so good.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

News, Travel & Events

Lembeh Photo & Video Workshop

December 1 to 11, 2021

We are very excited to offer this 10 night trip to Indonesia to participate in a one of our photography workshops.

Price includes transfer from Manado to the resort, nitrox, and 26 daytime boat dives. This resort offers a 2:1 diver to guide ratio + Reef Photo staff will be there too for photo support and expert guidance. Don't miss your chance to come along, so reserve your spot by putting down $1000 deposit today.

Dive packages include full board (3 meals per day), hot drinks and water, evening dinner on the day of arrival, and breakfast on the day of departure. The dives stated in the package are day boat dives only. Dives are non-transferrable and unused dives non-refundable.

The resort does offer specialty dives for those that are interested: night dives, mandarin fish dives, and black-water dives for an additional fee. Minimum of 2 divers to book.

Best currently available flights are probably to Jakarta with many options available and connecting to a Garuda Airlines domestic flight to Manado.

$2,389 Per Person, Beachfront Room, Double Occupancy

$2,949 Per Person, Beachfront Room, Single Occupancy

NAD-Lembeh Resort and the Lembeh Strait are famous all over the world for the peerless macro and muck diving.

www.reefphoto.com

British Society of Underwater Photographers
Inspiring and informing underwater photographers since 1967

New BSoUP website

A not-for-profit helping its members to create stunning underwater images, regardless of experience level or equipment, by using a network of experienced underwater photographers to inspire better photography.

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Our monthly on-line meetings featuring world class speakers are available to members only. At the beginning and end of the evening members can chat to each other, ask questions and hear about relevant activities.

BSoUP Membership provides access to restricted pages of the website:

- judges' comments from the monthly competitions
- the most recent editions of our '*infocus*' magazine
- video archive of past meeting
- discounted entry fees for competitions like the British and Irish Underwater Photography Championship
- monthly competitions open to members only

BSoUP Regular - £35 / 1 Year

BSoUP regular full price subscription

BSoUP Student - £10 / 1 Year

For students in full-time education

www.bsoup.org.uk

Guadalupe Island Great White Shark Workshop

September 14-19, 2021

Join Jim Decker and Adobe Lightroom expert Erin Quigley on a unique photo expedition to Guadalupe Island shooting Great White Sharks aboard the luxury liveaboard dive boat Nautilus Explorer.

Great white shark encounters at Guadalupe Island are nothing short of spectacular. It's simply the best destination in the world for calm clear water and consistently high probability of multiple shark encounters per day.

The sheer number of sharks in the bay that we cage dive in is amazing. On many dives, we see two to three great whites, although we have seen up to 47 sharks on one trip! Guadalupe Island is home to at least 366 individually identified sharks and still counting.

Jim and Erin will be on board and in the water with you to assist with UW photo techniques, offer technical support, and teach post-production workflow in Adobe Lightroom. Nightly image critiques will give you immediate feedback on the day's images. Seminars throughout the trip will cover shark specific shooting techniques.

www.backscatter.com

The leading online resource for underwater photographers and videographers

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

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

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

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

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

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

DIVE PHOTO GUIDE

www.divephotoguide.com · contact@divephotoguide.com

Not just Basking Sharks!

Although our summer is highly focused on the consistent basking shark migration to the Hebrides we also run a variety of other wildlife and scuba adventures. Although it's a hard time for international travel - the UK has a lot of unique underwater opportunities! We haven't seen many of these sharks in photo competitions as yet!!!! Will you be the first!?

www.baskingsharkscotland.co.uk

Macro Underwater Photography Workshop Crystal Blue Resort, Anilao Philippines

March 20-30, 2022
Blackwater Workshop
March 30-April 3, 2022

Improve your macro underwater photography skills with Photo Pro Mike Bartick at Crystal Blue Dive Resort in Anilao Philippines.

Known as the nudibranch capital of the world, Anilao is home to over 600 species of Nudibranchs. You're also likely to see many species of frogfish, octopus, Rhinopias, pipefish, seahorses, and many other macro reef and muck diving critters.

Beginner, intermediate and advanced photographers will all benefit from this workshop. The workshops are fun, informative and will include natural history and photo techniques along with demonstrations and photo coaching.

The best way to learn is by shooting and our photo pros will be on location with you to help improve your technique and to correct mistakes. Daily seminars throughout the trip will cover Macro shooting techniques.

In addition to shooting techniques, Mike will also conduct some live edit sessions using his workflow method for improving your images and learning stronger compositions.

This course is limited to just 20 guests in order to maximize the one-on-one time with our instructors. Each boat dive is limited to just 4 divers and a guide. The guides are professionally trained critter spotters and know how to assist photographers in getting the best shots.

www.backscatter.com

From Photographer TIM ROCK

Ocean Dreams Pacific

www.oceandreamspacific.com

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Also on this site: Tim Rock
Double Blue Images Logo Wear

Tiger shark & Gt Hammerhead Diving
9 Day Live Aboard, February 19 - 27 2022

Tiger Beach, Bahamas is known as one of the best shark diving locations in the world. The encounters with large Tiger Shark, Lemon, reef, and bull sharks are up close and without the use of a cage. Our charter also dives at nearby Bimini, where migrating great hammerheads arrive to snack on stingrays while bull sharks lurk in the same waters.

Diving without a cage among these large sharks allows you to get up close and personal for a thrilling adventure full of action. Seeing this many species of sharks is an opportunity to appreciate and value their role in our oceans.

Join us on a 9 Day live aboard cruise to first Tiger Beach in the Bahamas for tiger, lemon, and reef shark action then down to Bimini Island for Great Hammerheads and bull sharks

Our charter on February 19 – 27 2022 is in prime shark season for Tigers and Hammerheads. We depart/ return to West Palm, Beach Florida making for easy flight connections to any southeast Florida airport.

Our boat is the MV Dolphin Dream, a 86' expedition charter yacht with 5 shared cabins, diving platform, and a large galley with plenty of deck and upper deck space.

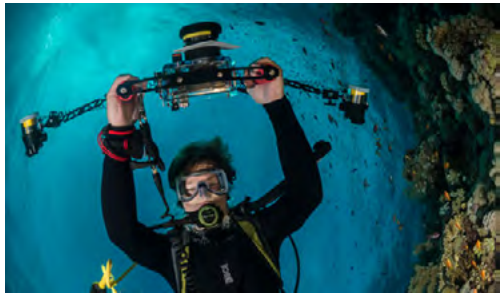
It holds 10 guests plus crew and is very stable and comfortable to ride through the Caribbean waters. Divers must be experienced: these are long and multiple dives with no cages and filled with the consuming action of sharks swirling around you.

Photographers will enjoy the clear water and bright sand bottom and taking images of sharks over the green sea grass or reefs. The hammerheads and tigers come close to divers creating opportunities for beautifully detailed video or stills.

Underwater photographer host Gregory Sweeney is your host and is available to offer photography tips during the trip and while preparing for travel.

www.TigerSharkDive.com

Scuba Travel Escorted Photography Holidays



The world of underwater photography never stays still. Technologies evolve, new destinations make a name for themselves and the exciting encounters come in thick and fast. We organise workshops for all experience levels and budgets put you and your camera in front of the action. Our divers have gone on to win awards and competitions all over the globe! Scuba Travel are privileged to work with award winning photographers across the board. Sail away with Alex Mustard, Martin Edge, Martyn Guess and Mario Vitalini and take your photos to a whole new level.

www.scubatravel.com

Fiji On The Nai'a Photo Workshop

October 16 - 26, 2021

Trip Leader: Mark Strickland

Join Bluewater Dive Travel at the soft coral capital of the world! Dive 10 nights on the Nai'a, the top liveaboard in Fiji! With awesome visibility and breath-taking soft corals, Fiji is a must-visit for all scuba divers.

Mark Strickland's life-long interest in the sea has included over 10,000 dives and careers as a lifeguard, boat captain, and scuba instructor. His passion for underwater photography has led him to many top dive locales. Mark now resides in Ventura county, California.

www.bluewaterdivetravel.com

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- Stunning Scenery
- One - Seven Day Tours
- Guided by Marine Biologists
- Scientific Research Programme

New Products

Nauticam NA-D6 housing for Nikon D6

The NA-D6 is designed with the Nauticam's Mission Control philosophy, placing the most used controls within easy reach from the ergonomic handles. The NA-D6 features double thumb levers at the rear of the housing that trigger the AF-ON and REC buttons of the camera on the right side and PLAYBACK/ INFO on the left. For the NA-D6 theyve been moved slightly forward to allow even easier access. Nested levers for ISO and the 'Pv' control are also located near the right handle for easy access. A dual action lever for 'Fn1' and 'Fn2' customizable buttons a the front of the camera has been redesigned for enhanced usability from the left handle.

Connectivity to external monitors via HDMI or external controls over Ethernet are facilitated through the bulkheads of the NA-D6. The housing has M28 and M14 bulkheads at the front and a rear M16.

The NA-D6 ships with a pre-installed manual LED flash trigger which provides reliable flash triggering for the majority of optically triggered external underwater strobes. Strobe power must still be adjusted on the strobe itself. A TTL version of the flash trigger (26308) is also available to provide automatic exposure control with compatible strobes. These flash triggers are self powered by replaceable batteries.

Even a camera as capable as the D6 is only as good as the glass in front of it. The Nauticam N120 Port System supports a wide variety of Nikon F Mount lenses with both optical glass and acrylic port options. For those looking for even higher optical quality and flexibility, The NA-D6 can also take advantage of Nauticam's water-contact optics. Wide Angle Conversion Lenses such as the WACP-1, WACP-2 provide up to 140º of ultra-sharp wide-angle coverage with a ~0" minimum focus distance. For super-macro the SMC-1 and SMC-2 deliver up to 4x magnification when used with compatible lenses expanding what is possible underwater. Nauticam's magnifying viewfinders, available in both 45º and 180º versions allow for easier use of the D6's large, bright optical viewfinder and can be installed in minutes without tools.

www.nauticam.com

SOONSUN Dome Port for GoPro Hero 8 Black

Waterproof up to 147ft (45m): This dome port integrated waterproof housing case. It is not only good for taking half and half photos in shallow water, but also great for deep diving photography. With the help of 10x macro filter / red filter, you can capture vivid underwater wildlife and natural scenery.

The dome port lens housing case is compatible with GoPro Hero 8 Black action camera perfectly.

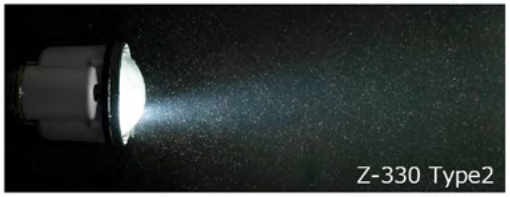
www.amazon.com

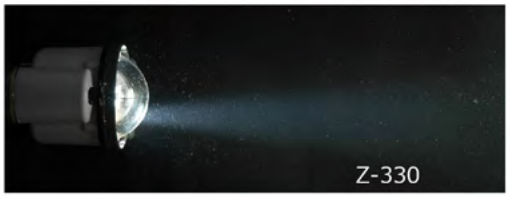
BACKSCATTER

THE BEST BANG FOR YOUR BUCK

OLYMPUS E-PL10 UNDERWATER CAMERA REVIEW

Inon Z-330 Type2 & D-200 Type2





We are pleased to announce official release of “Z-330 Type2” and ”D-200 Type2” .

The Type2 strobes are equipped with a newly designed fly-eye dome lens capable of suppressing uneven light distribution to deliver ideal circular lighting.

The newly designed dome lens has a carefully arranged fly-eye inner surface which suppress uneven lighting without sacrificing strobe power and beam angle (110 degree underwater) generated by INON patented T-configuration flash tubes.

The shutter-linked Focus Light delivers same 220lm and its beam angle gets wider through the newly designed dome lens.

www.inon.jp

REEF PHOTO & VIDEO

Nauticam NA-A7RIV for Sony a7R IV

“Resolution Rethought”

Sony, has come up with yet another addition to their a7 line that is sure to impress. This fourth edition of the a7R sees the inclusion of an updated 61MP Exmor R BSI CMOS sensor and enhanced BIONZ X image processor. Despite its high resolution, it can shoot at up to 10 frames per second with full autofocus and shoot 4K video either from the full width of its sensor or from a Super 35 crop. The NA-A7RIV underwater housing provides fingertip access to all key camera controls in a rugged and reliable aluminum under-water housing. Ergonomic camera control access is one of the defining strengths of a Nauticam housing, and the NA-7RIV continues this tradition.

www.reefphoto.com

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WE ARE UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHERS... JUST LIKE YOU

Aluminum T-housing for the Gopro Hero 9

Would you like to go diving or snorkeling with the GoPro Hero 9?

We recommend using the aluminum T-housing as an underwater housing for your Gopro. The underwater housing is small, sturdy and is equipped with stainless steel buttons. The maximum depth is 250 meters!

This underwater housing is a lot firmer than the standard protective housing from GoPro. Each housing is machined from one aluminum block and fully assembled and tested in Germany.

The T-HOUSING is designed to use your GoPro HERO 9 camera with the front lens on. This makes the camera twice as safe against water damage.

This T-housing is known for good heat dissipation. The heat that the camera produces is optimally dissipated, making condensation practically impossible.

The underwater housing is very compact. The dimensions are 10.9 x 8.5 x 5.1 cm and it weighs only 360 grams.

There is also an (optional) magnetic filter and macro system available. The filter system works with magnets and contains 4 color filters: 3 red shades for different depths in tropical blue water and a magenta filter for green water.

www.uwcamerastore.com

REEF PHOTO & VIDEO

Nauticam NA-A6600
for Sony Alpha a6600

"The Best APS-C Sony Ever"

Sony has hit a home run with best-in-class AF, huge battery life, rugged build and amazing all-around performance. This is a mirrorless DSLR shooters can love; in a travel friendly size. Installed in the new Nauticam NA-A6600, it allows ultimate versatility, lens compatibility, ergonomics and superior wet lens compatibility.

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WE ARE UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHERS... JUST LIKE YOU.

Nauticam NA-FX3 housing for Sony FX3

Looking at the specs, the Sony FX3 is strikingly similar to the A7S III less an electronic viewfinder. Take a closer look and it's the powerful video features of the A7S III with cinema-centric controls and exterior design.

The FX3 can capture 4K at up to 120fps with 15+ stops of dynamic range with the option for RAW over HDMI. Controls are optimized for video with direct iris, ISO and shutter angle control. With the addition of an internal fan, the recording time limit for 4K60p has been removed. The NA-FX3's compact size make it ideal for the traveling filmmaker and those looking for a more nimble underwater system.

The Nauticam NA-FX3 is designed to deliver an intuitive user experience in a rugged and reliable platform that is supported by the extensive Nauticam lineup of accessories and premium optics. The NA-FX3 is built around the N100 port system that is shared by all full-frame Sony mirrorless systems in the Nauticam lineup, allowing seamless crossover for existing Sony shooters.

www.nauticam.com

REEF
PHOTO & VIDEO

Nauticam NA-R5
for Canon EOS R5 Camera

"The Professional Powerhouse"

Few cameras can provide the technical prowess, for stills and video, that the Canon R5 provides. From 8K video to 20 FPS stills this camera shines. Paired with the innovative NA-R5 housing, there are no boundaries to the creative possibilities for pro or enthusiast. Unleash your potential with the latest technology from Canon and Nauticam.

www.reefphoto.com

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8|9
PROFESSIONAL
UNDERWATER
GOPRO COLOR

COMPATIBLE WITH
GOPRO 5 GOPRO 6 GOPRO 7
GOPRO 8 GOPRO 9

Nauticam NA-GH5SV housing compatibility

Panasonic's GH5 and GH5S have long set the bar for Micro Four Thirds hybrid shooting, offering high quality 4K capture and excellent still imaging capability.

The NA-GH5SV, which supports the GH5 and GH5S also now supports the latest update to the lineup, the GH5 II.

The Panasonic LUMIX DC-GH5 II adds improvements to both video quality and autofocus through the use of the updated Venus processor found in the full-frame S1H camera.

The updated Venus processor allows the 203.MP sensor to record full-sensor oversampled 4K 10-bit 4:2:0 video at up to 50/60p or 4:2:2 DCI 4K at 30p/25p. There is also the option to record at VFR DCI 4K/60p for smoother post-processing workflow.

Other notable improvements to the interface are the ability to resize the waveform exposure assistance tool and the ability to view the vectorscope when setting white balance. The viewfinder's refresh rate has also been increased to 120hz and the LCD is 1.5x brighter with a wider color space.

The GH5 II will also allow for simultaneous output over HDMI while recording internally at 4K/60p. The NA-GH5SV is compatible with the Nauticam HDMI2.0/1.4 system to allow for the use of supported external recorders/monitors.

www.nauticam.com

17431
FOR SONY FX3
FULL-FRAME CINEMA CAMERA
NA-FX3
PRE-ORDER NOW
SHIPPING BEGINS 2ND JULY 2021

The NA-FX3's compact size make it ideal for the traveling filmmaker and those looking for a more nimble underwater system.

Sony FX3 is strikingly similar to the A7S III less an electronic viewfinder. Take a closer look and its the powerful video features of the A7S III with cinema-centric controls and exterior design.

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For more information about set ups and port chart, please visit our website www.nauticam.com

Nauticam
innovation underwater

Flex-arms

Flex-arm is a trademark company that has operated in the plastic molding sector since 1979, following also the design and construction of injection molds and over the years has successfully developed a good experience in different fields of application.

The new line of flex arms is designed and produce and guarantee the perfect solution for the personalized assembly of supports, both photographic and underwater, for the placement of flash, torch, lighting, cameras and action cams.

We offer a wide range of fully interchangeable accessories, including trays, threaded knobs, supports and modular segments, which, thanks to their modularity, create the right solution for all kinds of uses in photography and video footage, both underwater and on land.

www.flex-arm.com

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NEW - Hugyfot Vision Xs with 5" monitor for GoPro Hero 9

Nauticam NA-A7SIII housing for Sony A7 S III

NEW - Ikelite 200DL housing for Nikon Z6, Z6 II, Z7, Z7 II

250M T-housing for GoPro Hero 9 (also available for Hero 5,6,7 and 8)

EUROPE'S NR.1 UNDERWATER CAMERA STORE

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Weefine WFS02 Ring Strobe

The Weefine WFS02 ring strobes are specifically designed for underwater use to provide the most colorful and natural wide angle lighting on the market. A professional grade round flash tube and powder coated reflector produces a perfectly soft, stunningly warm 5500K light.
Full power guide number at 1m/IOS 100: 24
Color temperature: 5500K
Coverage underwater: 90 degrees
LED lighting: 1 watt spot light and 1 watt red light
GN levels: / 1/1.4/2/2.8/4/5.6/8/11/16/22/24
Flashes per full charge : 1200 times at full power flashes
Recycle time: Approx. 1.5 seconds at full flash
Battery: 14.8V 50.32Wh Li-ion batteries pack
Waterproof: 100m
Size :(119 x119mm h= 135.5mm)
Weight with battery: 1050g on land, 240g underwater
Optical connection compatibility

www.weefine.com

www.uwcamerastore.com

Ikelite Anti-Reflection Ring for Olympus M.Zuiko 9-18mm Fisheye Lenses

This self-adhesive vinyl label covers the white lettering and ring details on the front of the lens to reduce reflections when used behind a dome port underwater.

Designed specifically for use with the Olympus M.Zuiko Digital ED 9-18mm f/4-5.6 lens. There are also versions available for the Sigma 15mm f/2.8 EX DG Diagonal Fisheye and Canon RF 15-35mm f/2.8L.

Shipping is only available within the United States. Outside of the US, please visit the Stores section to find and contact your local Ikelite Dealer. Prices are listed in USD and do not include taxes, duties, or currency conversion fees.

www.ikelite.com

DJI Osmo Action with aluminum 250 meter T-housing superdeal

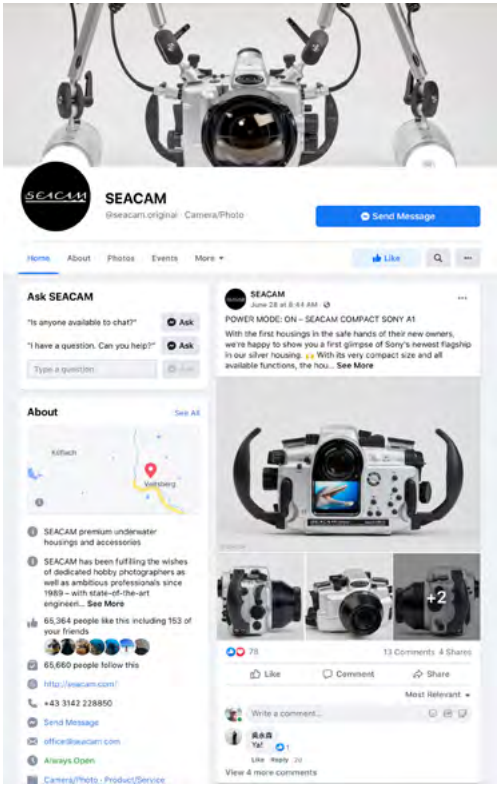
DJI Osmo action is a great action camera with dual screens, 4K HDR video, UHD image quality, 8x slow motion and waterproof to 11 meters from itself.

In the aluminum T-housing underwater housing you can take it with you to 250 meters depth and make the most beautifull underwater images. The T-housing also protects your camera during other, rough, sports.

The combo is currently available for €429

www.uwcamerastore.com

SEACAM goes Facebook



It took quite some time, but we are finally ready: SEACAM is now officially on Facebook. On our profile, you will find many interesting posts, our latest technical innovations and and the most beautiful pictures from the world of SEACAM underwater photography. “Like and share” us and become a member of our global SEACAM family.

Facebook

Isotta housing for EOS R5

Isotta is shipping their signature red housing for the Canon EOS R5 mirrorless camera. It has fiber optic connections, along with 3 x M16 and 1 x M24 ports for electric connections, vacuums, or HDMI out. It uses Isotta’s 120mm port system.

The Isotta housing for EOS M5 is shipping now,.

www.backscatter.com

DOME SAGA 4 100mm

Its small size and low weight make it ideal for travel

The Saga 4 100m windshield - with removable sun visor for Ikelite DT:

Ref. 1110 Canon / Nikon 8-15
Ref. 1111 Tokina 10-17

Nimar housing for Hasselblad X1D II 50C

Nimar has announced their housing for the Hasselblad X1D II 50C medium format camera. It accepts Nimar’s NIM-108 port system and is equipped with a vacuum leak detector and optical strobe trigger. It can also be optionally fitted with a 5 pin Nikonos bulkhead and a second side grip handle.

The Nimar housing for Hasselblad X1D II 50C is shipping now, priced at $1,395.

www.nimar.it

www.sagadive.com

Seacam housing for Sony A1

Seacam is shipping their housing for the Sony A1 full frame mirrorless camera. It offers S6 and/or fiber optic strobe triggering and is compatible with all standard Seacam ports. It has 4 bulkheads for S6, vacuum, or video out and is tested to 80m (with a super deep version also available.)

Dimensions (W x H x D): 250 x 160 x 120 mm excluding port, viewfinder and handles.

Weight: 1810g excluding port and viewfinder, neutral under water depending on port and viewfinder.

www.seacam.com

Subal housing for Nikon D6

Austrian housing maker Subal is now shipping its high-end housing for the Nikon D6. Nikon's new flagship DSLR features the same 20.8MP sensor found in the D5, but the company's newer Expeed 6 processor, which gives the camera the ability to shoot 14fps bursts using the viewfinder or 10.5fps in live view mode.

The housing ships with 5-pin standard Nikon bulkheads and is compatible with the optional Subal TTL V3 system, which supports strobes such as the Ikelite DS161, Sea&Sea YS-D3, and Inon Z-330. The standard housing is depth-rated to 80m (260ft) but a 120m (400ft) version is also available.

The Subal ND6 is available now from retailers such as Backscatter, priced at $5,900.

www.backscatter.com

live!
WETPIXEL
Over 200 episodes of discussion, news and information for underwater image-makers
https://www.youtube.com/c/Wetpixel-live

The Diving and Snorkeling Guide to Hawaii

Authors Tim Rock and David Fleetham are happy to announce the availability of the new, handy guide for snorkeling and diving in the Aloha State.

The Diving and Snorkeling Guide to Hawaii is now available on Amazon, Blurb and Apple iTunes in paperback, fixed format eBook, PDF and fixed format Kindle versions

The Hawaiian islands sit isolated in the north central Pacific Ocean. Hawaii is America's 50th state and is, by far, one of the more special states in terms of geography, ocean life and natural beauty.

A large part of the western part of the state is set aside as a marine reserve with small islands, atolls and reefs. The eastern side is inhabited and developed and a major worldwide tourism destination.

This guide is intended to bring to the diver the most popular and unique dive sites of the accessible Hawaiian Islands. They are known for their unique submerged lava formations, array of beautiful hard corals, variety of endemic fish and amazing dropoffs. Plus, there are numerous World War II remnants here.

In this new 2021 Edition, each site is introduced with general location, frequently dived depths, dominant marine life and logistics.

The authors are internationally published marine photojournalist Tim Rock and Maui resident and underwater photography master David Fleetham.

Full color, 96 pages, 72 sites.

See these websites for a copy of this innovative new bucket list book:

Paperback
Kindle
Blurb
Apple Bookstore

www.uwpmag.com

Secret Seas - Discover Oman's unique world

By Paul Flandinette & Michel Claereboudt

240 Pages

295 Photos

160 Species

Hardback 300mm x 240mm
Printed on sustainably sourced
170 gsm matt art paper
Common and Latin name indices

Paul Flandinette is an award-winning film maker, professional underwater photographer, author and artist. His film making career has included productions for some of the world's leading companies and government organisations as well as several broadcast documentaries.

He is passionate about the underwater world and has dived extensively in the in the Far East, Red Sea, Caribbean and the UK.

He has been living in Oman since 2013 and has spent the last seven years photographing Oman's underwater world.

Michel Claereboudt is Professor of Marine Ecology at the Department of Marine Sciences and Fisheries at Sultan Qaboos University in Muscat.

He is an internationally recognised authority on corals and echinoderms and continues to research the ecology and biology of corals and other reef invertebrates.

Michel has been living in Oman since 1997 where he has made thousands of dives and has an intimate knowledge of Oman's underwater that few can equal. He is also an underwater photographer.

Join professional underwater photographer, Paul Flandinette and marine scientist and underwater photographer Michel Claereboudt on a breathtaking journey of discovery into one of the last remaining underwater worlds to be explored.

The richness and diversity of Oman's marine life contrast with the arid landscapes that cover most of the country. The southwest monsoon, or Khareef as it is known locally, is one of the world's most powerful weather systems and, each summer, transforms the seemingly barren terrain of Dhofar into a lush and verdant land of plenty for wildlife and plants. More rain falls here in the summer than in the whole of Arabia combined in a year.

What is less well known are the massive effects the Khareef has on Oman's underwater world. In the Arabian Sea powerful winds and currents combine to draw vast volumes of cold water up from the depths bringing with them enormous quantities of nutrients that support an abundance of marine life. This creates a unique ecosystem in which tropical and temperate species live side by side. Meanwhile, in the Sea of Oman, a layer of cold water lying just a few metres below the surface protects corals from the searing summer heat.

The diversity of Oman's marine life is spectacular. Oman is one of the world's most important sea turtle rookeries; four out of the seven species find nesting sanctuaries here. Coral communities brimming with life are home to over 1,600 species of fish and nearly 200 species of corals. Whale sharks, the world's largest fish, make regular seasonal appearances while colourful reef fish glide over vibrant corals and rocky outcrops that provide shelter for shy species such as the dramatically patterned dragon moray eel. The 'macro' world of crustaceans and nudibranchs, meanwhile, is no less fascinating.

In an underwater world, where mysteries still run deep, Secret Seas is brimming with stunning images featuring over 160 different species while an insightful narrative explains why Oman's seas are so special.

E mail for further details:
secretseasofoman@gmail.com

Light
by Parabjeet Singh

Parabjeet Singh is a Bangalore-based photographer and film-maker whose work has been published internationally in newspapers and magazines. In 2020, following a difficult year, he embarked on an international holiday to reignite his creativity and positivity only to find himself stranded at his first stop Perth, Western Australia thanks to COVID 19.

His journey through that emotionally and financially complicated year inspired the creation of his just released coffee table book 'Light'. It captures 15 inspirational people Parabjeet met in Perth at that time, in both his superb photographs and captivating prose. People he credits as being his 'light at the end of the tunnel'.

For one of the portrait sections Boudene Huckle helped him refine his underwater photography skills in the backyard swimming pool of a new friend.

Parabjeet takes up the story:

"After doing a couple of test shoots, I offered a session to Boudene. It was her first underwater shoot as well. She was very comfortable in the water and because she is a model who has done a lot of shoots, she understood basic concepts of feeding off the light, posing and taking direction very well.

One of the biggest constraints I had while shooting underwater was that I did not have a 'proper' underwater camera. I couldn't afford one so I used my Gopro and really pushed it to see what I could possibly do with it. I was very happy with the results I was able to achieve with it. Using the Gopro, no artificial lighting and lots of test practice shoots later I was able to figure out how much of a time window I had to do a shoot using just the light from the sun, what time of the day was the light the best and what side of the pool had more light falling etc.."

Boudene's story:

"I'm Boudene, a 16 year old South African Freelance model living in Perth. I'm currently studying ATAR and playing WANL (Western Australian Netball league) netball. I love being creative and trying new things.

My shoot with Parabjeet was my first ever underwater shoot and initially the prospect of holding my breath for long amounts of time frightened me. But it was one of my favourite shoots I've ever done and an unforgettable experience.

The experience taught me to have a lot of patience and persevere through our unfavourable weather conditions and parameters of the pool. The flexibility and stillness for both Parabjeet and I, allowed for the beautiful symmetrical shot, my favourite shot that Parabjeet kept trying to nail, and I'm so glad we got it. Parabjeet was very patient with me getting used to the cold weather and finding the right pose. I just followed his direction, vision and persevered through the extensive process. And am very proud of what we produced as the results were worth all Parabjeet and his hard work.

Parabjeet's creative vision was something I appreciated as it was so different from all my previous shoots and added a stand out experience to my model portfolio and resumé.

He was able to capture beautiful moments that I was fortunate to be a part of as well as a truly unforgettable experience. Equally professional and kind.

I would like to thank him for allowing me to be a part of his beautiful journey."

Photography, for Parabjeet is not about pointing and shooting images. The alchemy he believes lies in knowing your subject and what makes them unique. There is a story in every frame and the learning never stops. His subjects in 'Light' each have their own story whether it is 106 year-old Nellie Marriott, dancer Drew Holloway or Congolese model Astrid Tshidibu who features on the cover.

www.parabjeetsingh.com/aboutme

www.parabjeetsingh.com/shop

United Nations World Oceans Day Photo Competition 2021

The winners of the United Nations World Oceans Day Photo Competition 2021 have been announced, with the stunning images showcasing a fascinating spread of marine flora and fauna around the planet, from the Faroe Islands to Costa Rica.

There were six categories in the contest - The Ocean: Life & Livelihoods, Above Water Seascapes, Underwater Seascapes, Digital Ocean Photo Art, Faces Of The Sea and Oceanic Discoveries.

Award-winning Belgian photographer Ellen Cuylaerts, who curated the contest, said that there were around 1,400 entries from across the world. She added: 'The diversity of the judges made this a very interesting year for the contest, with musician and photographer Julian Lennon and Swedish TV host Joakim Odelberg among those on the panel.

'The images we selected evoke a feeling of places we want to be right now and want to protect. We, along with the United Nations Division of Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea, which produced the competition, hope these images will inspire us to rebalance our relationship with the oceans. It's time to make an impactful change.'

Renee Capozzola from the U.S was crowned winner of The Ocean: Life & Livelihoods category thanks to this stunning photo of two local fishermen paddling in a traditional canoe along a shallow coral reef off Adonara Island in Indonesia. Capozzola said they were practising handline fishing, which is 'a type of sustainable fishing without poles or nets' .

Tom St George from the U.S claimed first prize in the Oceanic Discoveries category. His winning image was shot in the Sistema Sac Actun underwater cave system off Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula. St George says the water-filled chambers are 'renowned for their incredible beauty and crystal clear waters' but they are facing 'increasing pressure from pollution and the over-extraction of water'

www.unworldoceansday.org

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

UW Technics TTL flash converters

by Phil Rudin

UW Technics is a group of companies which develop and produce electronic devices for underwater housings and underwater flashes. The company's home offices are in Moscow, Russian Federation.

UW Technics TTL flash converters can trigger a verity of flashes via sync cords or fiber optic cables. The TTL converters are compatible with many DSLR and Mirrorless cameras from Canon, Nikon, Olympus, Panasonic and Sony. The TTL converters are also designed for a verity of different housings.

Canon converters are made for Aquatica, Hugyfot, Ikelite, Isotta, Nauticam, Nexus, Nimar, Seacam, Sea & Sea, Seafrogs and Zillion housings. Nikon converters are made for Aquatica, Hugyfot, Ikelite, Isotta, Nauticam, Nexus, Nimar, Seacam, Sea & Sea and Seafrogs.

Olympus converters are made for Nauticam and Seacam. Panasonic converters are made for Isotta, Nauticam and Seacam. Sony converters are made for Ikelite, Isotta, Nauticam, Sea & Sea and Seafrogs.

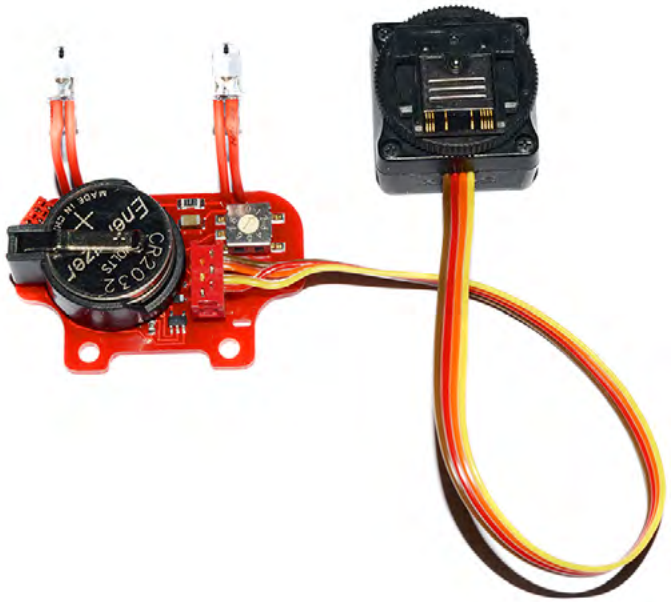
Also within these housing manufacturer's, different housings may require different flash converters. Make sure that you consult your authorized UW Technics dealer or the manufacturer for the correct TTL converter for your camera and housing. Each unit comes with a helpful instruction manual which is easy to understand.

For my review I have been testing the UW Technics 11075-HHS TTL converter for Nauticam housing's using Sony A7/R II/III/IV, A1, A9 and A9 II series cameras. My NA-A1 Nauticam housing is for the Sony A1. Currently this converter is compatible with the Ikelite DS161, DS160, Inon Z-330, Z-240, S-2000, Retra Pro's (including Retra HSS support), Sea&Sea YS-D1, YS-D2 (made in China only), YS-250 and Subtronic Pro 160 and Pro 270 flashes.

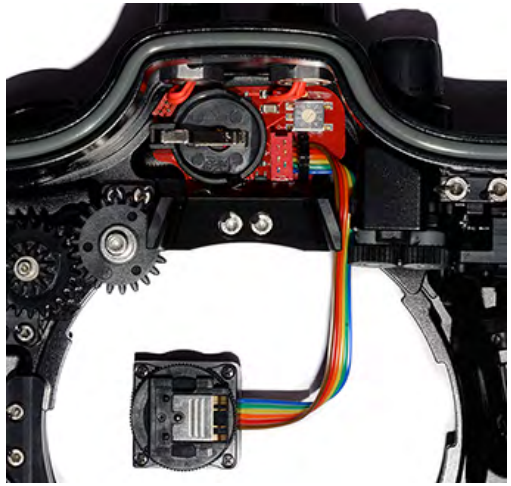
As of this writing high speed shutter mode is only available using the Retra Pro strobes which allows sync up to 1/8000th sec. Not all of the converter models support the same strobes so be sure to check the uwtechnics.com web site to see which flashes are supported for your camera and housing type.

My UW Technics trigger is designed for use with fiber optic cables and was very easy to install into my housing. Simply remove the two Allen screws holding the press block at the front top inside the housing and replace them with the longer screws provided with the trigger board.

Before installing the trigger board make sure that the two CR2032 batteries that power the board have the "plus" terminal in the up position. Use the screws to mount the trigger board back into the housing over the top of the press block and you are done.



Cocoa Damselfish Juvenile, feeding on Sergeant Major Fish Eggs. UW Technics, Sony A1, Sony FE 28-60mm at 35mm, Nauticam WWL-1B, Two Inon Z-330 flashes in S-TTL, ISO-250, F/14, 1/400th sec



The trigger board holds two red LED optical lights which are pushed into the optical bulkheads on the housing to the maximum depth. The wires holding the red LED's will need to be gently bent for installation. A color coded wire extends from the trigger board to the proprietary mount which pushes into hot shoe on the camera. Make sure that the foot is pushed as far forward in the hot shoe as possible so that all contacts connect properly.

When I say that the mount is proprietary it is identical to the mount on any Sony land flash. This proprietary connection is needed for proper TTL performance with each flash type and to take advantage of the highest sync speeds possible with for your chosen camera.

The Sony A1 will sync to 1/400th of a second in full frame and 1/500th second in APS-C mode. With a manual trigger the camera will only sync to 1/250th sec. It makes no difference if you shoot the flash in TTL or manual the higher speeds for the A1 will work both ways with my Inon Z-330 flashes.

Once the trigger is connected to the camera while mounted in the housing you can test fire the trigger. One of the things I really like about the UW Technics trigger is that it turns on when you turn the camera on and off when you turn the camera off. I have used several flash triggers in the past both manual and TTL that require you to turn the unit on before closing the housing and then off when the housing is opened. On more than one occasion I have had to release the vacuum on my housing because I forgot to turn on the trigger. I am sure this feature also extends battery life.

Once the camera is turned on you can trigger the camera and you should see the bright red LED's flash through the fiber optic ports. I always test fire my strobes prior to a dive to be sure that everything is on and functioning properly.

Schooling French Grunts, Teardrop Reef, Palm Beach, Florida, Sony A1, Sony FE 14mm F/1.8, Nauticam housing, Two Inon Z-330 flashes, UW Technics in S-TTL,-1 stop exposure compensation, ISO-320, F/13, 1/125th sec

I have two Backscatter MF-1 flashes which are small and only fire in manual mode. While not on the UW Technics list of compatible flashes they work fine in manual and sync up to 1/500th sec. I suspect other manual flashes not listed using fiber optics will work as well.

Be aware that the wiring is long enough to stick out of the housing when the camera is mounted or when it is removed. Always check to make sure that the wires are fully pushed inside the housing before sealing the rear cover. Pinching the wiring can damage the unit and prevent a properly sealed housing.

What is TTL

When your camera directly controls the output of your flash by metering the light output 'through-the-lens' it is referred to as TTL. TTL +/- flash exposure compensation is controlled in the camera menu and works using TTL enabled flashes like the Inon Z-240 and Z-330 strobes with S-TTL.

TTL works by firing one or more pre-flashes when the shutter is half pressed. The camera's metering system then measures the pre-flash(s) along with the ambient light level to calculate the power needed from the flash to make a proper exposure.

The pre-flash is metered in a

few micro-seconds before the shutter is released triggering the main flash. The duration of the main flash exposure is determined by metering based on ISO, aperture, TTL exposure compensation values and the selected metering mode, i.e. spot, center weighted and so on.

Shutter speed will have little noticeable effect on the flashes TTL output because the flash occurs within 1/1000's of a second while the shutter moves much more slowly in most cases. Each camera manufacturer has a different propriety TTL protocol hence the need for different UW Technics triggers for each camera brand. The UW Technics triggers have the same hotshoe design as the camera brand being used and they mimic each brands dedicated flash protocol.

I have used TTL flashes underwater since the film days and have found TTL to be most effective for macro and close focus wide angle photography since it relies on accurate metering by the camera for proper exposure. The larger the primary subject is in the frame the better the TTL will work because the metering will be more accurate.

With wide-angle, if the foreground of an image being lit by the flash only takes up say the lower third of the frame while the area lighted by ambient light takes up two-thirds of the frame the TTL exposure may be much less accurate. In this situation flash exposure compensation will need to be applied for TTL to work correctly.

While +/-flash exposure compensation can resolve some TTL exposure issues, shooting in manual and changing the flash power level, aperture, ISO or shutter speed can be just as accurate.

Field testing the UW Technics TTL converter

My equipment for this review was the Sony A1 camera, Nauticam NA-A1 housing, Sony FE 90mm F/2.8 macro lens, the Sony FE 14mm F/1.8 lens with ZEN Underwater 230 mm optical glass dome port and the Sony FE 28-60 with Nauticam WWL-1B water contact optic. I also used two Inon Z-330 flashes with fiber optic cables for both manual and S-TTL exposures.

The flashes were set to manual output using the EV control on the left rear of the flashes to control power output. For all TTL I used the S-TTL setting which is the first setting on the power switch with the Z-330 EV control centered on +/-0.0. To control the S-TTL I used the +/-flash compensation in the super menu accessed through the Fn button on the camera. For both manual and S-TTL I used the cameras color histogram when reviewing images to judge exposure not the LCD image. I shot mostly manual mode in the springs and local waters with wide angle. I also shot Blackwater macro using the Backscatter MF-1 flashes which are manual.

When using Inon S-TTL for macro I use +/-flash compensation with the Z-330 EV controller the output is much less accurate than using the cameras EV settings. Keep in mind that flash compensation is changed in the (Sony) super menu while the exposure compensation dial on the camera is for (+/-) ambient light changes.

The combination of the UW Technics trigger and the Inon Z-330 S-TTL produced accurate and pleasing exposures with little need for added +/-flash compensation. Very dark subjects had a tendency to overexpose while bright white subjects would under expose. This is a result of the camera's

Juvenile Tuna (8cm), Off Palm Beach, Florida, Blackwater dive, Sony A1, Sony 90mm F/2.8 macro, Nauticam NA-A1 housing, Two Backscatter MF-1 flashes. ISO-500, F/16, 1/400th sec

18% gray metering system trying to make very dark subjects lighter and very light subjects darker.

Adding from +/-0.3 to +/-1.0 stops flash compensation usually resolves the over/under exposure issue. If you find yourself needing to add more than +/-one stop of light chances are the flashes are not aimed correctly, the flashes are too far away from the subject or in the case of shooting wide open (F/2.8) may be too close to the subject.

It you are looking for accurate TTL across a range of subjects the UW Technics TTL-converters should be on your short list for consideration. The Nauticam version retails for $450.00 and plug-in Ikelite and Nikonos bulkheads for wired flashes can also be added for $150.00. The UW Technics TTL triggers can be purchased through the uwtechnics.com web page or at authorized retailers world wide.

Phil Rudin
Instagram

Sea and Sea YS-D3 strobe review

by Mike Bartick

DEMA 2019 BC, Sea and Sea unveiled their new professional grade YS-D3 Lightning strobe. With great anticipation, I was able to get a set underwater and begin using them to see if they lived up to their namesake of ”Lightning” strobe.

At first glance there is a resemblance between the slightly smaller D2 series of strobes and the D3 but make no mistake, this newly engineered strobe is anything but an old strobe in a new cover.

What I look for when considering a new strobe isn’t anything different than the average shooter where decisions are based on simple categories around what or how i like to shoot the most. Of course wide angle is the real test but other key features include color temp, recycle times, beam angle and spread, an easy to understand user interface and of course, budget.

The YS-D3 Lightning strobe is freshly designed from the ground up as the new flagship strobe from the engineer team at Sea and Sea. On the spec sheet, the innards of this “high performance strobe” includes a precision ground aspherical shape troidal lens which assists the dual flash elements to increase the guide number to 33 (land test) while spreading the beam evenly and smoothly without a diffuser.

To accommodate the increased power output, a complete re-design of the electronics was necessary in order to achieve this vital upgrade. Larger capacity condensers and a newly designed charging circuit increases reliability and durability while simultaneously decreases the lag time between flashes or recycle times. In addition to the newly designed inner workings, the outer strobe-head also underwent serious design changes including a collar for bayonet mounting accessories.

Whats in the box:

1 YS-D3 strobe and standard 110° diffuser, O-ring, lube, YS mount and straight ball mount

Spec sheet:

• Guide number measured on land is 33 or 28 with flat 110° diffuser.
• Battery 4 x AA- 6V Ni-MH: 4.8volts
• Color Temp: 5600k | 5250 with diffuser

An aggregation of snappers, sheltering behind a small patch of reef along the Punta Sur area of Cozumel Island. Nikon D850 | Sigma 15mm|Sea and Sea Optical Dome | f ,11 @ 1/160, strobe power EV 1.5 (3/4 power)

• 11 steps of light
• Travel ready weight with 4 Eneloop batteries and ball mount- 26+ oz.
• Underwater-Nearly neutral fully loaded.
• Exposure control-DS-TTL, Slave TTL and/or manual with 11 steps
• LED adjustable spotting light- 2 steps of power (does not turn off when strobe is fired)

New accessories for the YS-D3 Lightning strobe mount bayonet style, snap into place and are very secure, accessories include:

• Snoot- Reduces the spread of the beam flash to assist with creative lighting
• Domed diffuser- assist's in widening (150º) beam spread
• Flash Prism to assist with off camera lighting*
• Standard 110º diffusers
• Diagonal ball mount

User interface:

• Power on\off - knob
• Flash Duration adjusted in 1/3 stops-knob
• Duration selection in guide number and EV -/+ values
• Backlit panel for visual confirmation of TTL and control knobs
• Push button control for activating spotting light

In the real world

I've been using the strobes now in various scenarios over the last few months while diving from shore and by boat in California, Florida and Cozumel and have pushed the strobes as needed. Macro, wide, bluewater, blackwater and in kelp, I've trudged through parking lots and was even humiliated by breaking waves trying to get out of the water a few times.

I've also used all of the accessories and can report that the D3 lightning strobe's and accessories all performed well in all scenarios.

The life span of batteries depends on usage and output. I normally live by the "rule of thumb" to swap batteries after every 2 dives no matter what, but I've gone 3 dives without any issues.

Standard Eneloop nI-MH 1.2 volt|1900 mAH batteries:

• Full power discharge- 200-225 exposure
• EV +1.5 275+
• EV +1.0 power = 325+ exposures

Recycle times using:
Standard Eneloop Ni-MH 1.2 volt|1900 mAH batteries

• Full power EV +2 = 1 second
• EV+1.5 power less than a second but needs a little break after 3 - 4 rapid photos
• EV 1 and less - No waiting

(Above) The deep water diamond squid displaying its incredible colors, deep in the Gulf Stream off the Atlantic coast of Florida
Nikon D850\|60mm\|f ,14 @ 1/200\| EV 1.0 \| Domed diffusers
(Left) Shooting Sailfin Blennies is certainly fun and surely fast action shooting. Quick recycle times and fast shutter speeds are needed to freeze the action of the rapid "bobbing" movements, a trademark for this type of blenny. The sand and sunlight were both bright so I decided to carry that through and overexpose the background to create a high key image using different strobe durations.
Nikon D850\|105mm\|f ,11 @ 1/400 \| strobe power, forward strobe EV 1.5\| Rear strobe EV+2 (full power) domed diffuser

• Snoot- The snoot bayonet mounts and snaps into place (as do all of the strobes accessory items) allowing the user to drastically reduce beam spread when used. The snoot is equipped with a small diffuser which also decreases any harsh contrast

The flash prism works well to slave on camera or off and even works with off brand products that require slaving. They are highly sensitive and small and fit right into the strobe head.

The D3 has large a strobe attitude, packs well for travel and performs like a larger strobe. Its tough to make a comparison to the 250 but i think we all want that strobe back. The D3 isn't the 250 but it sure feels like its mini me. Stronger than the D2 series yet, smaller and lighter than the 250.

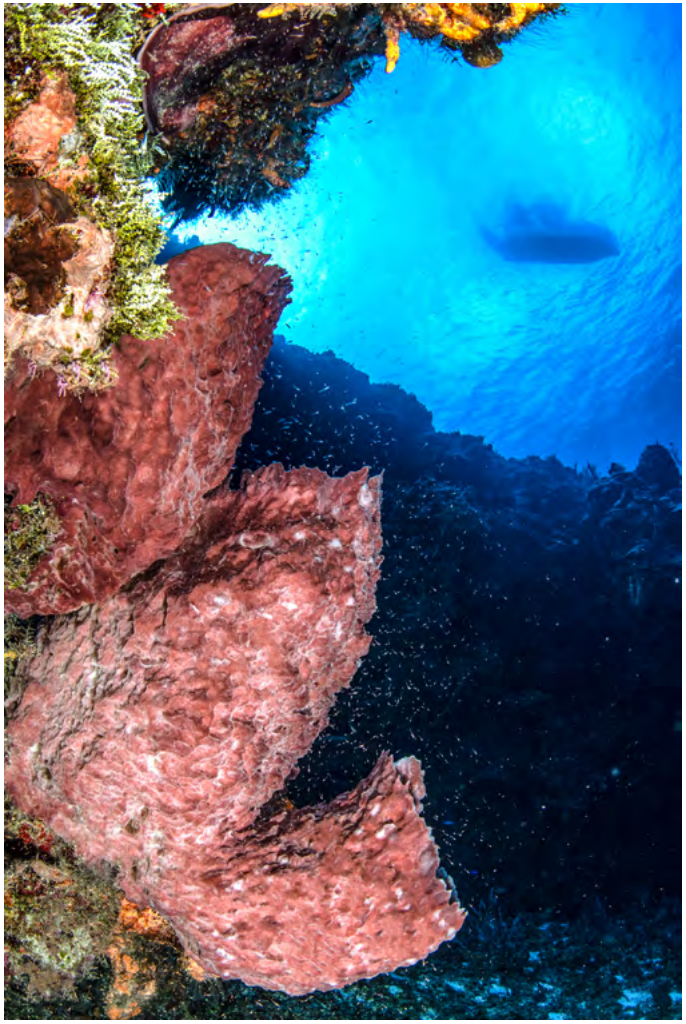
when using the snoot while the strobes focus light becomes your snoots targeting light. Its accurate and effective for macro subjects such as larger nudibranchs. One thing that i like is that the focus aiming light does NOT turn off between shots which makes it easier to keep your eyes on the prize. The downfall of the snoot is that the aperture in this version is too large for super macro.

Domed Diffuser

I've used the domed diffusers for wide angle and CFWA and found that the increased beam spread is easy to manage and really works well against backscatter. In addition, the intensity of the output is softened slightly which decreases and smooths away "hotspots" resulting in better detail in the shadow and further smoothing contrast. This became apparent when shooting aggregations of fish, particularly when there are reflective and dark fish hanging out together. Ive come to love the domed diffusers with these strobes.

The flash prism works well to slave on camera or off and even works with off brand products that require slaving. They are highly sensitive and small and fit right into the strobe head.

Gorgonian in California
Nikon D850|60mm+Kraken wide angle conversion lens|f14 @ 1/40 | EV +1.5, dome diffusers



Framing a boat at the surface in portrait mode and taking advantage of the seemingly endless visibility of Cozumel.
Nikon D850 | Sigma 15mm|Sea and Sea Optical Dome | f ,13 @ 1/1125, strobe power EV 1.5 (3/4 power)

On land testing showed a sensitivity range on low power of about 10+ feet. Underwater is approx. the same depending on visibility, increasing the distance with a clear line of site. They don't require any battery power to operate either-FYI.

One of the things that keeps bringing me back to the Sea and Sea brand is the reliability of the product, ease of use, durability for everyday use and the power output achieved using standard Eneloop (or compatible) AA batteries. Their strobes are simple with an easy to understand user interface and can be fired using either fiber optic cables or electric synch cords.

I know there is a huge elephant in the room in regards to the YS-D2 overheating issues (although rectified on the D2J model) but as more and more people begin diving again, I believe that these strobes will restore the lost faith. I find myself excited to dive with these strobes and feel that they can take whatever I demand of them, the simple, travel friendly design makes them an even easier choice for globetrotting or shore diving.

Blue water, blackwater, green water, macro or wide, I've found the D3 strobes to be fast, responsive and accurate. With quick recycle times and the new accessories, the YS-D3 strobe will definitely prove themselves to be the new flagship strobe from Sea and Sea. The dual strobe elements and domed diffusers add a new level of accuracy and beam spread that I'm very happy with it overall.

Mike Bartick
www.divecbr.com

www.seaandsea.jp

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DIVECBR.COM

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Blackwater Safaris
Chef Prepared Meals

Get your macro on!

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Through the Vintage Lens:

Carl Zeiss Jena Pancolar 50mm f/1.8

By Arnau Argemi

We have become accustomed at the perfectly engineered look of the pictures taken with our modern lenses. The Through the Vintage Lens Series is a project with the goal of capturing underwater fauna and sceneries using the unique perspective of vintage lenses.

With this project, my intention is to explore the new creative possibilities that imperfect vintage lenses can have on our image-making. From extreme, bubbly bokeh to razor sharpness, these lenses can help capture the underwater world from a different point of view. In this series, I will show images taken underwater with vintage lenses. Additionally, I will explain a bit of the history behind the lens as well as walk you through adapting the lens to your modern camera and your housing system. I will also give tips on how to shoot these lenses in terms of camera settings, lighting type, composition, and post-processing modifications.

The first lens that I acquired for this series is the Carl Zeiss Jena Pancolar 50mm f/1.8, a classic East German prime lens known for its excellent sharpness and pleasing bokeh.

Carl Zeiss first opened an optics workshop in Jena in 1846. After World War II, Jena was incorporated into the Soviet occupation zone, or East Germany. The Pancolar lens was produced in East Germany.

There are two versions of the lens: 1) Zebra version, which is single-coated and recognized by its distinctive black and silver stripes, and 2) Electric version, which is multi-coated (marked as “MC”) and all black with red, green or white markings.

The lens is structured in 6 elements of 4 groups. It has a 49mm filter mount and a minimum focus distance of 35 cm. This minimum focus distance is very close compared to many other 50mm prime lens (a short minimum focus distance is great for underwater use as you can get closer to your subject and get a larger magnification to fill the frame and avoid any backscatter).

The lens was produced in M42, EXA, and Praktica B mounts. While more expensive, the M42 mount versions are easier to adapt to modern DSLRs or mirrorless cameras. With an

The Carl Zeiss Jena Pancolar 50mm f/1.8 lens Zebra model copy next to my Fotodiox M42 to Nikon F mount adapter.

Ringneck blenny coming into frame on top of an underwater pipe. Nikon D90 & Carl Zeiss Jena Pancolar 50mm f/1.8. Camera settings: f/1.8, ISO 100, 1/200.

Comber staring down at the camera after feeling its territory was being invaded. Nikon D90 & Carl Zeiss Jena Pancolar 50mm f/1.8. Camera settings: f/1.8, ISO 100, 1/200.

Seahorse looking sad as it camouflages hanging from a seagrass branch over the sand. Nikon D500 & Carl Zeiss Jena Pancolar 50mm f/1.8. Camera settings: f/1.8, ISO 50, 1/250.

M42 to your camera's mount adapter (in my case, M42 to Nikon F adapter), you can adapt the lens to your modern camera. It is important to mention that the Zebra version tends to have a yellow tint on the glass. This yellow tint can actually come in handy when photographing underwater as it brings out a more pleasing blue color for the water. However, this also means that to shoot with this lens, it is best to set manual white balance before shooting.

The main challenge of using the Pancolar underwater is adapting the lens to your housing and port system. The lens measures 60 mm in length which is very similar to the Nikon 10.5mm fisheye lens when set at infinity focus distance or the Nikon 40mm micro lens when set at minimum focus distance.

However, the lens is not capable of focusing when put behind a 4" dome port. Therefore, the best port option is a flat port. For Nauticam users, you will need to use the Nauticam 60 macro port or the Nauticam 45 macro port for this lens.

In order to fit it better within the 60 macro port and to get higher magnification of your subject, I have found that using a 1.4x teleconverter comes in handy. With a Kenko Teleplus HD teleconverter, the lens fits the 60 macro port well and allows you to fill the frame with smaller subjects.

Since you are shooting at f/1.8, the loss of one stop of light due to the teleconverter is not significant.

Original Carl Zeiss Jena® advertisement of the Pancolar lens.

The lens mounted on my Nikon D500 with the M42 to Nikon F mount adapter and a Kenko Teleplus HD teleconverter.

The Nikon D500 with the lens inside my Nauticam NA-D500 housing with the 60 Macro Port and dual Inon Z240 strobes.

Felimare picta nudibranch crawling along a patch of sand. Nikon D90 & Carl Zeiss Jena Pancolar 50mm f/1.8. Camera settings: f/1.8, ISO 100, 1/200.

An important thing to consider is that once the lens is in the housing, you will not be able to modify the lens' aperture or focus distance. Thus, I recommend shooting with the lens wide open (at an aperture of f/1.8) and set to the minimum focus distance (35 cm). While not at the aperture at which the lens is the sharpest in the corners, at f/1.8 and at the minimum focus distance the lens will render the most interesting bokeh and a great center sharpness for fascinating and unique shots. Given that aperture is fixed at f/1.8, you need to play with ISO and shutter speed in order to achieve the correct exposure of your shot.

Generally, good jump-in settings are 1/125s and ISO 100, but these will

Yellow ringneck blenny popping out of a hole surrounded by colorful algae. Nikon D500 & Carl Zeiss Jena Pancolar 50mm f/1.8. Camera settings: f/1.8, ISO 100, 1/125.

depend on the depth, visibility and weather conditions of your dive site.

To nail the focus, the best way I have found to shoot with this lens in a housing is to shoot in continuous low mode and rock forward and backward while taking pictures. While rocking, make sure to check for the focus indicator shown in the viewfinder. Pro Tip: Take a lot of shots! Nailing the focus underwater while hovering and holding a heavy housing is hard and will require a bit of "spray and pray".

I have found that the best set-up in terms of lighting is to use dual strobes in low power (1/10th full power) on long strobe arms. At low power, the strobes are powerful enough to correctly expose your shot (due to the f/1.8 aperture) but also fast enough to fire several times in a row if you are shooting in continuous low mode. Additionally, long strobe arms allow you to move the strobes freely to achieve the lighting angles and the bokeh effects you want for your shot. However, at such a large aperture of the lens, most strobes tend to be too powerful (and end up overexposing all shots). If your strobes are too powerful, an alternative is to use a powerful flood torch for your lighting. The additional benefit of using a torch instead of a strobe is being able to more easily identify when the subject is in focus due to the increased amount of light coming through the viewfinder. Moreover, you can instantaneously see through the viewfinder the effects of moving the light source to achieve certain lighting styles or bokeh effects. Finally, ambient light shooting is also possible due to the large aperture. However, I recommend staying relatively shallow (<5 meters) in order to take advantage of warmer colors and avoid getting "all-blue" shots of critters.

When it comes to sharpness, at f/1.8, the lens is very sharp at the center of the frame. However, the corners do appear smooth with many aberrations and some slight vignetting. Thus, I suggest keeping the composition simple with mostly bullseye-type shots of critters in front of colorful or open-water backgrounds.

Additionally, this lens does have some flaring issues, so avoid shooting directly into the sun or using direct backlighting. There is very little need for post-processing the images due to the high quality of the photos that come out of the camera using this lens. However, I do recommend bringing up the contrast of the image a little and decrease the vignetting as most vintage lenses suffer from low contrast and vignetting. Personally, I also like to increase the texture and the sharpness of the image for tack-sharp shots.

Overall, this lens renders images comparable to those of modern lenses with the beautiful Zeiss colors, smooth bokeh and tack sharpness.

For a Carl Zeiss Jena Pancolar 50mm f/1.8 in excellent condition, you will have to pay 90 euro, which makes this lens also a bargain.

Despite the initial struggle of adapting a vintage lens to your underwater system and using manual focus, this lens delivers excellent results and gives a unique perspective of the underwater world. Consider giving a different look to your portfolio!

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Have, Have not or Had

by Richard Yorke

Your recent editorial concerning the cost of equipment and how it splits us into the 'haves and have nots' drew my attention for several reasons.

Firstly it missed out 'hads'! This is the group of people who have had the expensive setup but either got trapped in the past due to the cost of keeping up with developments, or have lost their investment in an unfortunate flood and been unable to afford the replacement costs.

Although some, who only see me diving, might think I am in the first of these groups, stuck in the past, with a camera first available in 2008 ..... 13 years ago!! I feel I am more of a person that questions what I need, and what I require to provide it. My underwater camera satisfies those needs so I see no reason to replace it with a more modern one.

My photography started many years ago with a Brownie 127 and has gone through many generations of equipment each upgrade being made to obtain a new function or an increase in quality when I felt it was of use to me. I was often a little behind the cutting edge as I only traded up when I thought I would really use the improvements that arrived with each new generation.

I came quite late to diving, but of course I just had to take a camera down with me. However the cost of the equipment was quite a shock and there was no way I could take the camera I was using at the time (a Konica Minolta A2) down as no housing was ever made for it. So I worked on the same basis of getting a camera that did only what I knew I would use, and the result was that I went in at the bargain basement end as in effect it was all so new to me that I had no real idea what 'extras' I would use, so I returned to that times equivalent of my original Brownie, with a Nikon E3100 in a CP3 Fantasea housing just to see if I was going to take to it, and if so, to discover what I felt I would actually use, before investing in more expensive gear.

When you look at the specs today you would laugh in just the same way that the Brownie now seems little more than a child's toy! Just 3.2 MP and no manual controls. However I took advantage of a visit to relations in Australia to have a PADI underwater photography course, more to give me time underwater to learn,

The Nikon Coolpix 3100 was produced in 2003.

The Fantasea housing allowed full control down to 40 metres.

Monocle Bream, Scolopsis bilineata, Coolpix 3100 1/115 f2.8 ISO 100. Available light

Spiny squat lobster, Galathea strigosa 1/80 f11 ISO 100 50mm Macro

rather than continually being chivvied to keep up! However it proved well worth doing, and their attitude that the person behind the camera was more important than the camera was very refreshing and the result was that even with that very basic setup I got pictures I'm not ashamed of today!

I progressed with underwater photography from that very basic model to a better compact which gave me more pixels, RAW files and a single strobe. The result was probably not so much better pictures, but of being able to take pictures in a greater range of situations, for example at lower light levels.

When I finally felt the need to upgrade my A2 and move on to a DSLR on land, I chose an Olympus E520, chosen because in my film days I had used an Olympus OM1 for many years and wanted to get back to the sort of flexibility of interchangeable lenses that that had given to me.

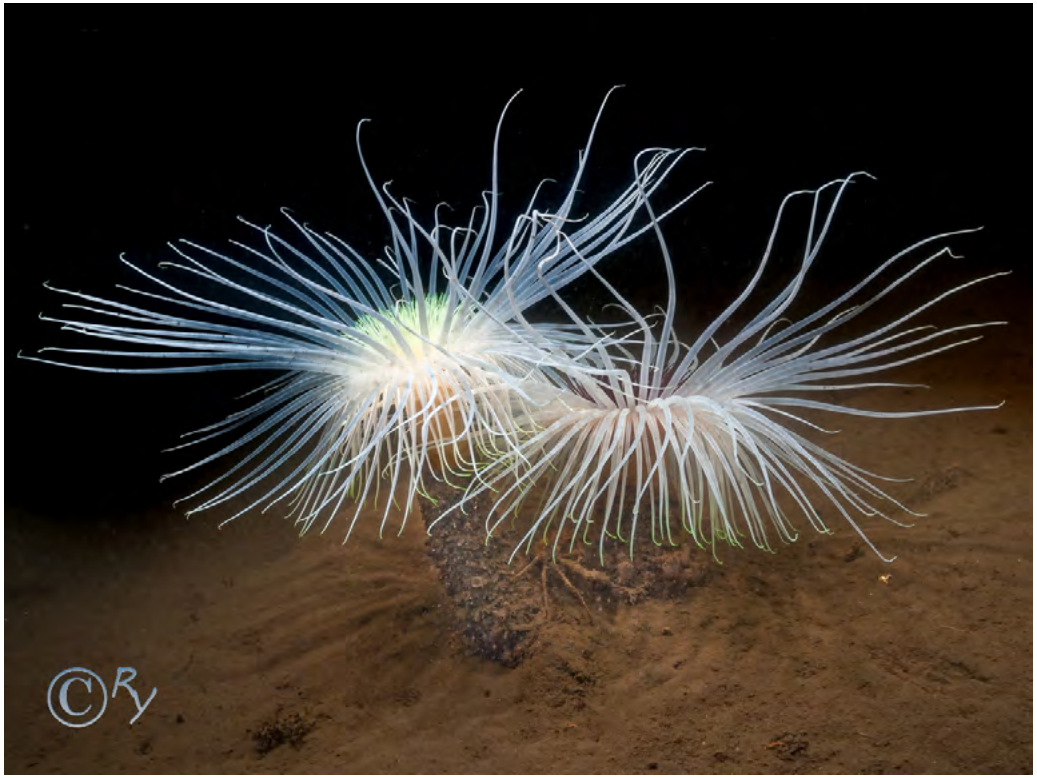
While I was making the move I realised that the different lenses would be useful underwater as well and as I discovered that Olympus had a housing for the camera that was more reasonably priced than the more usual metal ones that were sold for DSLR cameras I also moved underwater with that at the same time. The delay to make the move also meant that by that time, I had become a little more aware of my requirements for underwater photography and what sort of things I wanted to be able to do with my camera so I was able to make more informed choices over things such as ports and I ended up buying Athena mini dome ports for my standard lens but I liked the Olympus macro port and over time I have been very happy with those choices which gave me easier access to confined spaces.

At the same time I become hooked on UK diving, much of it with Seasearch (more of that later), so further improvements were made with better strobes and a focus light as light levels were usually very low. It was a moderately big step but worth it.

However, although my progress on land continued and I more recently moved to a mirrorless camera, this move was due to my desire to have the benefit of improvements relevant to use on land where I really appreciate things such as pre-capture, image stabilised long lenses and many other improvements that increased my enjoyment when on land, but these were not things of use to me underwater.

I had also become aware that not only were housings very expensive, they only fitted one camera model. So having spent a large sum on the new equipment I was not tempted to spend several more on housings and ports to use the new system underwater, as I realised starting out on that path would prove very expensive every time I felt the need for an upgrade, yet of no real benefit to be underwater.

So my photography is now split into two distinct sections, above and below water. I carried on with my



Fireworks anemone, Pachycerianthus multiplicatus 1/60 f8 ISO 100 Olympus 14-54 f2.8-3.5 MkII

Mysid shrimp 1/80 f9 ISO 200 50mm Macro

E520 underwater, a wise decision as it turns out for several reasons. I might otherwise have become one of the 'hads'! That is someone who HAD an 'all bells and whistles' underwater setup, but flooded it! It was my own fault that I flooded mine as I felt I had better things to do that become totally anal about daily maintenance, stripping, cleaning and re-greasing seals and so on, and one day I made a mistake.

However, because I had not moved with the times underwater I had benefited from comparatively low second hand values. Not only had this allowed me to move up to Pro lenses (after modifying existing ports to take them), but I had bought a cheap spare body, so although I was in the wilds of Scotland when I forgot to seal the housing properly, I only missed that day's pictures. I was back in action the following day with the spare body, just taking wide angle shots rather than macro. On my return I was lucky enough to pick up a replacement spare body and a macro lens for just £150 (though even second hand that was still a bargain)

As a result of this policy I can relax when I dive without the dread of a flood happening, as although I think it unlikely to happen again given the number of dives I have done compared to problems, and I also having learnt a lesson and take a bit more care with final checks, I know I won't loose a fortune if I it does.

I also have the advantage of knowing my camera inside out through long use, so no trying to get a more complex model 'under control' while on the bottom with time constraints. It also leaves me free to update my 'land camera' without the problem of having to buy a new housing for every new body so I am no longer a 'had' in that respect either and I have already upgraded the OM-D E-M1 to the MkII which only required the change of the body.

Stalked jellyfish, Haliclystus stejnegeri 1/100 f9 ISO200 Olympus 14-54 f2.8-3.5 MkII

Yarrell's blenny, Chirolophis ascanii 1/100 f13 ISO 200 Olympus 14-54 f2.8-3.5 MkII

My pictures might not match those taken by some semi-professional and professional photographers, but that is probably due more to the person behind the camera than the camera. In any case, they are good enough to be included in several ID books and can produce prints big enough to put on my walls, and that is fine by me.

The ID potential takes me back to Seasearch; a very worthwhile organisation of citizen scientists who can fill in survey forms to help produce a map of bottom types and life in our seas which has proved valuable in studying the effects of climate change and the sighting of areas for conservation. It has in turn given me a purpose to my diving and my underwater photography.

How many casual underwater photographers know what they take pictures for (or even of!). Like so many of the pictures we take these days they may get posted on social media and maybe shown to friends, but could you even find them in a year or two! I have old black and white pictures taken by relatives back as far as about 1890 and hundreds of pictures since then but not so many more recently as they are probably on phones or disks that were thrown away or can no longer be read on modern computers.

Is it worth spending thousands of pounds on equipment to produce pictures that rarely see the light of day, and the pictures they do take are not as good as they could (or should) be as the camera is too complicated and used too little to get the best out of it.

I don't think there is a need for a split into "haves and have nots" within photography above or below water. Everyone who dives should be able to afford to take pictures provided they first work out what they were going to do with the pictures and what equipment is needed to produce

John dory, Zeus faber 1/80 f9 ISO 100 Olympus 14-54 f2.8-3.5 MkII

the pictures of the standard required for that purpose.

It is probably something much simpler than they imagine, and not necessarily new! Don't forget the second hand market, though look for your housing first as there are fewer of those for sale and it is easier to buy a camera to fit a housing than vice versa!

Start from the basis of what will be done with the pictures. A post on facebook does not need massive numbers of pixels, nor does a picture sufficiently detailed to make an identification of what you saw when you get back on land with your ID books, and there is no doubt that the value of Seasearch records has increased greatly with the advent of simple photography to enable accurate identification.

Having this purpose to your dive also greatly increases the satisfaction you get from it. It certainly has for me, and it can be done, probably better, on a much smaller budget than you might think.

Astacilla longicornis on a Tall sea pen, Funiculina quadrangularis 1/80 f5.6 ISO 100 Olympus 14-54 f2.8-3.5 MkII

seasearch

Seasearch is a national project for volunteer divers who have an interest in what they are seeing under water, who want to learn more and who want to help protect the marine environment. The aim of Seasearch is to record marine habitats and species found around our coast, and to use the information to identify sites of specific conservation concern. The data collected helps us with our conservation work and raises public awareness of the value of our marine environment. Once you are qualified as a Seasearch Observer any dive can be a Seasearch dive, you just fill in a simple form and send it in to us!

Many Seasearchers are keen underwater photographers and seasearch is a fantastic way to improve your marine species identification and knowledge while making new friends and having fun!

www.seasearch.org.uk

Richard Yorke
www.richardy.co.uk

Guam Kayak Diving

by Tim Rock & Elaine Kwok

I have just finished a book about diving in Hawaii with a guy named David Fleetham as my co-author. Dave is a great photographer and one thing he does off his home waters of Maui is go kayak diving. On Guam, I had always had a boat or boat access so never really thought about trying it until COVID and its many restrictions hit our island.

We were still allowed to do some outdoor activities like individual water sports (swimming, snorkeling, diving with a spouse or roomie) on Guam during our lockdown. This was great as the small but scenic island of Guam in Western Micronesia is blessed with one of the world's richest coral reef marine environments. It thrives with more than 1000 fish species and over 400 kinds of hard and soft corals, 1,600 mollusk species and a dozen different marine mammals.

The betterment of Guam's diverse underwater world has been the thrust behind a series of nature preserves set up around the island in the last decade. These areas allow breeding stocks to prosper to make more fish and allow corals to grow without stress. In a far-sighted move, the island was studied and some small, but very important, areas were set aside to help replenish the reefs. The most popular sites and also my personal favorites are Piti Bay and Tumon Bay.

Then a lightbulb went off. My friend Satoru Wada owns a place called The Tropical Beach House Guam. It is in front of the Westin Hotel right on the beach and it has options for water fun. He was able to stay open and accommodate flight crews staying at the hotel. The crew members couldn't wander anywhere away from hotel grounds on their layovers, but they could swim and dive in front of the facility. Thus, the kayak diving was still in operation while all the other boat diving options on island were shut down.

Many people launch SUPs from inner Tumon and nearby Gun Beach. Both are part of the diverse Tumon Bay Marine Preserve. These little Two-mile protected stretches of west coast bays are amazingly rich in diversity. Just within them are more than 200 fish species and 50 or more corals. To put it in perspective, this is basically more than double any Caribbean destination. The SUP folks head out over the reefs to try to see sea turtles and mantas. But for diving, SUPs don't cut it. Kayaks do. So I decided to give this a try. I called Wada-san and he said come on down. We got a kayak all geared up and my camera gear secured. There were others who wanted to join in. So it would be a fun day on the sea and a new trick for this old dog.

There is a choice of a single or double kayak. If the dive bunch is a small group of, say, four divers, one kayak will carry tanks and BCs and weights. But you can also be a one-person band and load your kayak up. Ocean kayaks can easily carry a single scuba set-up. My friend has submerged moorings in four places outside the reef in about 30 feet (9m) of water. From there you can go deeper or shallow. He has found some places that turtles seem to love so that's why I like going out with him as he knows where they like to sleep and swim. On

my first trip, we saw 10 turtles on one dive, which is very good for Guam.

Some people are in it just for the dive and paddle out over the reef flats and past the dropoff as fast as they can. But I like the whole experience. Pushing off from the beach and starting in to the sound of the lap of the waves on the bow and

the gentle splash of a paddle is far different from your typical dive boat experience. I love the feeling of gliding over the clear, inner bay waters.

Wada-san or his guide will normally paddle out along a lush, jungled limestone cliff finger near the bay's end. In these shallows, you can see juvenile eagle rays, baby blacktip sharks and small fish schools. There are many types of puffers in here and also marauding shoals of convict tangs. Then you head out a sandy pass and it is a short paddle over the barrier reef to open ocean and to the various dive sites.

People who are not divers often just go out and snorkel too, having the assurance of a moored kayak nearby. I regularly snorkel out there too. You never know what will swim by. Using a small vessel speeds things up coming and going but there is no rush. There is a certain serenity of a soothing paddle on the Pacific.

The dropoff doesn't start until about 60-70 feet (18-22m), so there's lots to see along the northern end of the preserve. The terrain is mainly castle corals and some Medusa-like pillars. There are also soft corals and some anemone colonies. Macro buffs can check for nudibranchs, spotted

blennies, hard coral gobies and colorful Christmas tree worms. If we go south from the cut the chance to see mantas and blacktip and whitetip sharks improves. There is one spot named Turtle Town that normally lives up to its named with green sea turtles and the occasional hawksbill.

Plus, we have four or five types of schooling fish like striped surgeons, goatfish and snubnose surgeons and lots of roaming herbivores. People also do this kayak exploration in the Piti marine preserve farther south and occasionally in Guam's southern Agat Bay. But Tumon is really the main spot.

Only after storms when surf is high is it not safe to venture out by kayak. Then nobody does anything anyway. While COVID sucked in many ways, we learned to work around it in Guam with some great snorkeling trips and fun kayak dives. If you get the chance at your next destination, I recommend it for a fun time and a new experience.

Tim Rock & Elaine Kwok
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Shooting Blackwater

by Phil Rudin

When most seasoned divers talk about muck diving, exotic places like Milne Bay, Lembeh, Anilao and Mabul come to mind not Riviera Beach, Florida. But in the last fifteen years or so the intracoastal waterway between Riviera Beach and Singer Island, also known as the Blue Heron Bridge has become a mecca for muck divers and photographers from around the world. Now Palm Beach County, Florida has become a mecca for blackwater divers and photographers from around the world.

Let me warn you that blackwater diving can become very addictive, sometimes to the point of abandoning all other areas of diving. I have many friends that are making blackwater dives several times a week in Palm Beach, Florida and plan their international dive trips around blackwater diving.

During the past five years blackwater diving has become an international pursuit for many divers and underwater photographers. Fueled by an explosion of quality images that are circulating the internet on sites like Facebook, Instagram and in underwater specific photo computations. Dive resorts around the world are adding blackwater to their list of dives and classes they offer clients.

What is blackwater diving

For the uninitiated let's review what blackwater diving is and why has it has become so popular.

Blackwater dives are night dives in the open ocean or other deep water areas where the bottom may range from 50 to over 300 meters and more. Upon entering the water divers drift in the current following a large float with a weighted line that drops to around 14 meters (45ft). The weighted line is adorned with an assortment of bright lights that are used as a reference for the divers and the dive boat drifting above the divers. The lights are spaced about every three meters so that divers can judge depth.

Keep in mind that without a depth gauge you have know frame of reference for how deep you are because you will not be able to see the bottom or the horizon. The tree of lights is the only reference for depth and proximity to the dive boat which you will want to be near when the dive is over.

Adult Longfin Inshore Squid, Palm Beach, Florida. Sony A1, Sony 90mm macro, Nauticam housing, two Backscatter MF-1 flashes, ISO-500, F16, 1/400th sec. sync

In Palm Beach County, Florida Blackwater dives are conducted from around five to six miles off shore, so a long swim home if you separate from the boat. In the same waters we will drift from about one to seven miles during a normal ninety minute dive. Most blackwater divers will limit themselves to diving near the surface to the 25 meter range only occasionally going deeper following a subject they have been photographing.

Animals like Flyingfish, jellyfish and Seahores can be found at or near

Winged Comb Jelly Back lit with yellow light, Palm Beach, Florida. Sony A1, Sony 90mm macro, Nauticam housing, two Backscatter MF-1 flashes, ISO-500, F16, 1/400th sec. sync.

Comb Jelleyfish, Palm Beach, Florida. Sony A1, Sony 90mm macro, Nauticam housing, two Backscatter MF-1 flashes, ISO-500, F16, 1/400th sec. sync

the surface sometimes hiding in the sargassum weed along with other small fish. Avoiding boat traffic is a major concern near the surface so be aware.

Blackwater diving is not for amateurs; you need to have excellent bounce control, a familiarity and high comfort level with diving at night, well maintained dive gear and a redundancy of well charged dive lights. Also realize that your best dive buddy is the light tree you are following and not the rest of the divers with you. Also be aware that you are in an area where large animals also roam. If you don't feel comfortable doing a solo dive at night then you probably should not be blackwater diving.

Keep in mind that this article and other articles like it are not a substitute for getting proper blackwater dive training. In Palm Beach County Pura Vida Divers offers blackwater dive training and they run blackwater trips twice or more times a week, weather permitting. Walker's Dive Charters also runs bi-weekly blackwater trips. Both of these operators are highly recommended in the area and should be considered if you are traveling to Palm Beach County.

I believe the reason blackwater diving has become so popular is that it opens up a new world of fascinating and unusual creatures that can only be observed and photographed by recreational divers at night and in deep water.

Why all of these unusual blackwater creatures are found near the surface at night and not during the day is simple. At night our vast oceans host the largest vertical migration of animal life on the planet when zooplankton rise from the depths to feed in the shallower waters near the surface. The plankton then attracts both pelagic and larval stage critters which feed on the plankton, mate, spawn and continue the circle of life in the sea.

Many of the pelagic and larval stage critters found while blackwater diving are no bigger that a centimeter

or two in diameter and may be as small as only a few millimeters. Most of these small critters shy away from dive lights and flashes. They become agitated and rapidly move or move so randomly that trying to photograph them is a distinct challenge. This challenge is what draws many underwater photographers to blackwater diving. Capturing images of many of these very shy animals requires photographers to up their game or come home empty handed.

For photographers your first goal should be to learn how to move through the water and approach your subject. Excessive hand movement, fin kicks and body movement disturb the water around you much like a ship moving through the water. This disturbance will send the small subjects you would like to photograph flying in every direction.

A much better approach is to restrict movement and drift with the current allowing the subject to come near you without spinning away, folding up into a ball or just disappearing in the night. Excessive camera motion creates the same problems, so move the camera slowly and go with the flow.

Finding a subject to photograph requires one or more dive lights. How the lights are used varies greatly among photographers. Some photographers use a ring light attached to the macro port on the housing while others hand-hold a light for locating critters. Others attach video lights to the housing or support arms while others have head mounted lights and some use all of the above. I suggest you experiment with several lighting configurations, find what works best for you and then stick to it. Using narrow beam lights verses wide beam lights is another personal preference.

All blackwater photography is done with macro lenses and I would recommend the following equipment for best results. If you are using a full frame sensor camera a macro lenses in the 60mm to 105mm range will work best, for APS-C sensor cameras 40-60mm macro lenses and for M43 cameras 30-45mm macro lenses will be best. Most photographers will be using auto focus for best results so I suggest a camera with the very best AF and tracking that you can afford.

Since most subjects will be moving within the frame adding closeup lenses is not suggested because they have such limited depth of field and require that you be very close to the subject. Many subjects will only take up a portion of the frame so be aware many images will need to be cropped dramatically so this is where a camera with a high megapixel count will come in handy.

Regarding flashes many of the critters you will be attempting to photograph are very translucent and require a great deal of light to expose properly. Many photographers are using two flashes and some use a third slaved flash over the top of the macro port pointing downward to help make translucent subjects pop.

Eyed Flounder, (Bothus ocellatus) Palm Beach, Florida. Sony A1, Sony 90mm macro, Nauticam housing, two Backscatter MF-1 flashes, ISO-500, F16, 1/400th

The background for all blackwater photos is black to dark purple and you will encounter a ton of particles in front of your lens that will create backscatter. To reduce backscatter and keep the water color as black as possible I use low ISO values and high F/stop values. For my Sony A1 full frame camera and 90mm macro combo I shoot at ISO-100 or 500 at F/16 to F/22 at 1/400th sec. and try to keep the background black rather than milky purple.

Some photographers also like using manual strobe power settings with lower power levels for faster recycle times which requires the high ISO settings. I have used both manual strobe power settings and TTL settings for blackwater. With Inon S-TTL I add about +1.0 to +3.0 EV of strobe compensation to properly

Caranx sp. Jack (15mm long) Palm Beach, Florida. Sony A1, Sony 90mm macro, Nauticam housing, two Backscatter MF-1 flashes, ISO-500, F18, 1/400th sec. sync.

expose translucent subjects and +/-0.0 for reflective subjects using my two Inon Z-330 flashes.

I also like the manual Backscatter MF-1 flashes because of the small size, streamlined design, ample power and battery life. In manual power mode I set the flashes to around 3/4 power and use F/stop or ISO changes based on the cameras histogram.

Using Auto-ISO does not work well it will push the ISO to the highest limit because of the blackwater bias.

For small very close subjects I move the strobes close to the macro port and for larger subjects like squid I move the strobes out several inches and turn them outward to avoid backscatter. Side lighting, top lighting and backlighting are also possibilities depending on subject matter.

Once you have captured some respectable

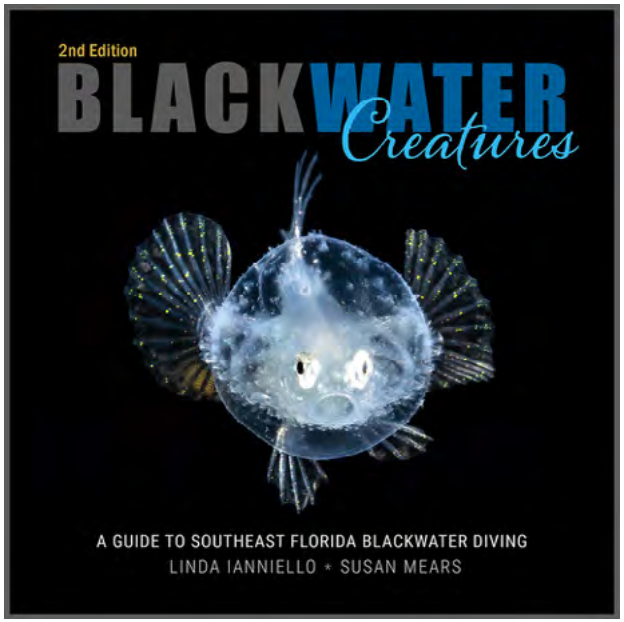
Ctenophore, Palm Beach, Florida. Sony A1, Sony 90mm macro, Nauticam housing, two Backscatter MF-1 flashes, ISO-500, F16, 1/400th sec. sync

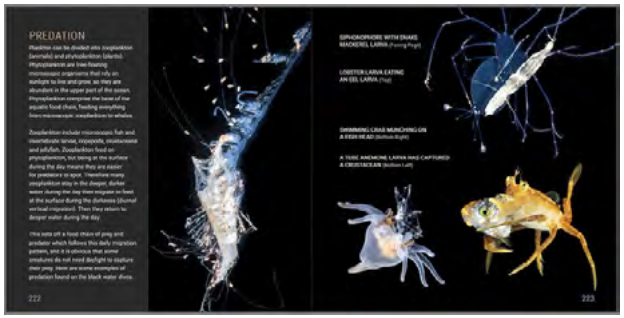
images you may want to identify what you have photographed. This may be easer said than done as resources are in limited supply and several of the creatures you may see have not yet been identified.

I highly recommend investing in the newly released "second edition" of the book Blackwater Creatures by Linda Ianniello and Susan Mears. It contains 240 pages with over 380 excellent images indexing fishes, crustaceans, mollusks, gelatinous zooplankton and a raft of other miscellaneous critters. It also contains interesting tidbits of information about the behavior of these creatures and several pages of reference sources.

This book is the source I used to caption all of the blackwater images for my articles. The book retails for $45.00 US and can be shipped world wide for an additional shipping fee.

Phil Rudin
Instagram





www.blackwatercreatures.com

Blackwater Cozumel

by Mike Bartick

Cozumel is known to be a quick get away dive destination throughout the US with many of the divers repeating the same trip several times each year. Exploring the lush, sponge covered reefs while drift diving is the norm for this area and I must say, it is easy diving and very beautiful. I recently spent 12 days shooting there, mostly wide angle and some macro during the daylight hours but that wasn't really the primary reason for my visit. The main goal for this trip was to train a dive operation in the fine art of blackwater diving, or drift diving in the open ocean, at night.

I enjoy blackwater dive in any location that I visit as I feel exploring the night sea offers a unique perspective of the local environment. BW diving also provides local divers and DM's the chance to see another layer of their home turf and elevates their own ability to understand the reef systems that they frequent daily. Imagine being a dive guide and having the opportunity to learn about an area that you've been diving for years or the opportunity to see something new.

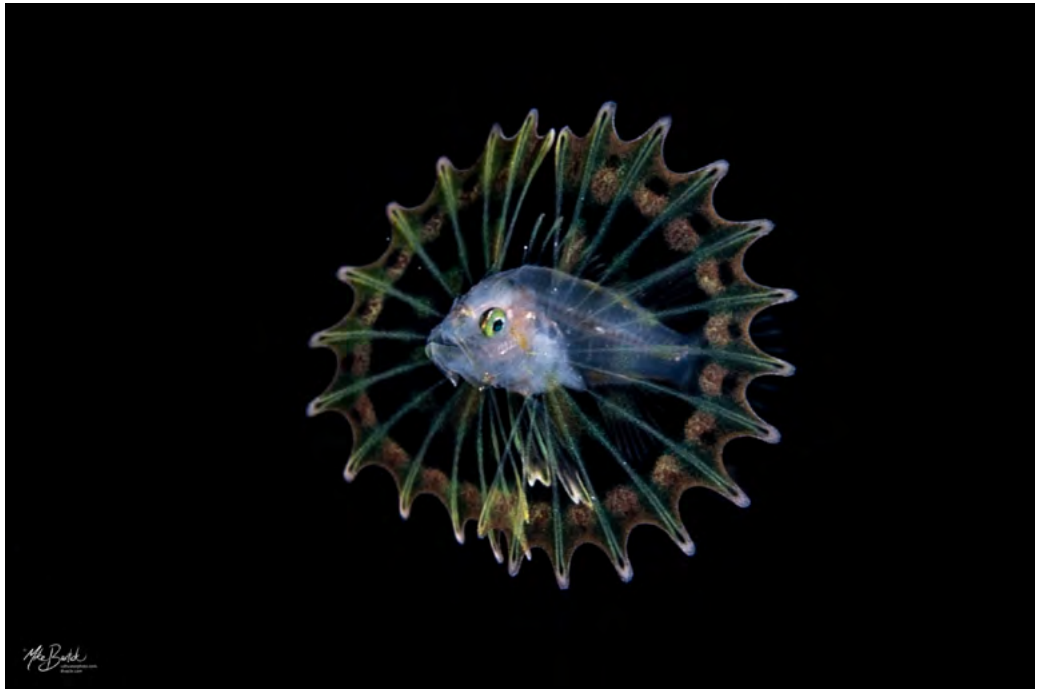
This is the main appeal for myself and other BW divers of course but sometimes it can take a little convincing when you're the listing team.

One of the biggest challenges in doing blackwater in a new location is getting the dive operations to get "on-board" with the idea. The common feeling of blackwater being a novelty style dive, is still relevant so there is a little (or a lot) of convincing that needs to be done which often times runs right to the wire. Fortunately, I was introduced to a dive operation where the owner was not only interested but fully supportive and was instrumental in providing us with the proper platform, boat crew, captain and guides.

Jumping into the water in a new area is usually done with a little tension build up from the planning phase. Months of chatting, putting the gear together, being sure the team is lined up (repeatedly) and then the travel logistics. Finally stepping into the water for the first time is a true relief, which is again replaced with the self imposed pressure of finding subjects.

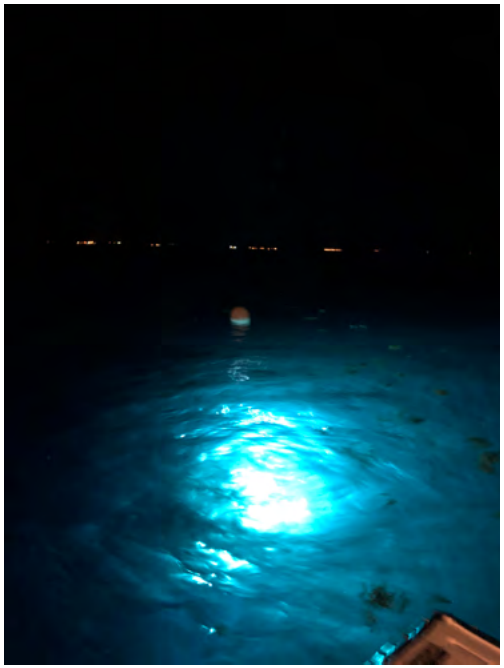
Due to the swift and legendary down currents in Cozumel, it was important for us to select the location that would keep us away from impending peril but close enough to benefit from the moving water. We discussed the possible target points by using google earth and my trusty navigation app and with the help of local divers, DM's and most importantly, the boat captain, we identified our first jump location. We then dropped a pin on our nav map and set out just prior to sundown. Not knowing what to expect, It was important to check the water and to make any adjustments to our position per the Captain's advice.

Configuring a downline isn't always as easy as slapping a couple of lights on a rope either. First, we must consider wind and the size of the buoy. If the buoy is too large is



Lionfish larva- Its not uncommon to see larval fish hunt or drift vertically in the water column. With their dorsal fins extended they resemble small jellyfish and with their designs, can make some incredible images.

All images:
Nikon D850, Sea and Sea housing, 60mm lens. 2 YSD-3 Lightning strobes-domed diffusers. Kraken Hydra 3500s-focus light. f14 @ 1/250, ISO 320, Strobes half power.

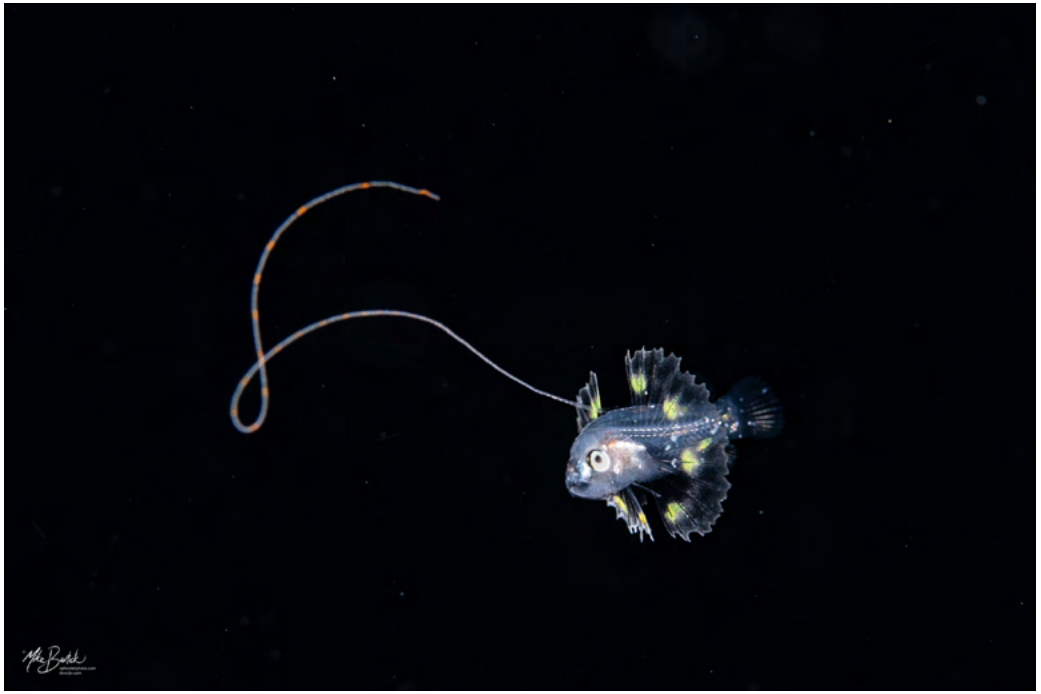


Unexpected company on our first blackwater dive. Nearing the end of the dive, I saw a large fish near the downline and as I approached, I realized it was a shark. This poor guy was scared out of its mind seeing us and after a few minutes of investigating us, took off as fast as it could. Contrary to fear based ideals, sharks are hardly ever seen on blackwater dives and was most certainly as surprised to see us, as we were to see it.

Deep water fish such as this Pudgy Cusk eel (Spectrunculus grandis) is known to settle in depths ranging from 2000-4800 meters. Cusk eels are a very diverse group of fish that can also be seen worldwide.

becomes a sail and the wind will push the light system through the water too quickly. Second we configure the line which includes lights and arms and of course, weight at the bottom to slow the drift and to keep the line taught.

The idea is to allow the light system to move through the water fast enough to explore, yet slow enough for us to keep up, stop and shoot photos and to attract planktons. Tethering is not an option. Having safety and action plans in place is also of primary importance so setting up



Soapfish larva-Unlike their adult selves, the soapfish larva is very pretty. With a circular dorsal fin design and elongated pennant on its head. They swim quickly and erratically avoiding predation.

The exotic looking Cerataspis montstrosa is an uncommon subject too. One of the difficulties in properly assigning identity to a subject found on BW dives is that the larval subject often appears to be something completely different from its adult self. This zoa, was actually linked to a more commonly known shrimp in the last decade through raising the zoa into its adult stage.

some kind of protocols are something that should never be overlooked when you're planning any kind of exploratory dives.

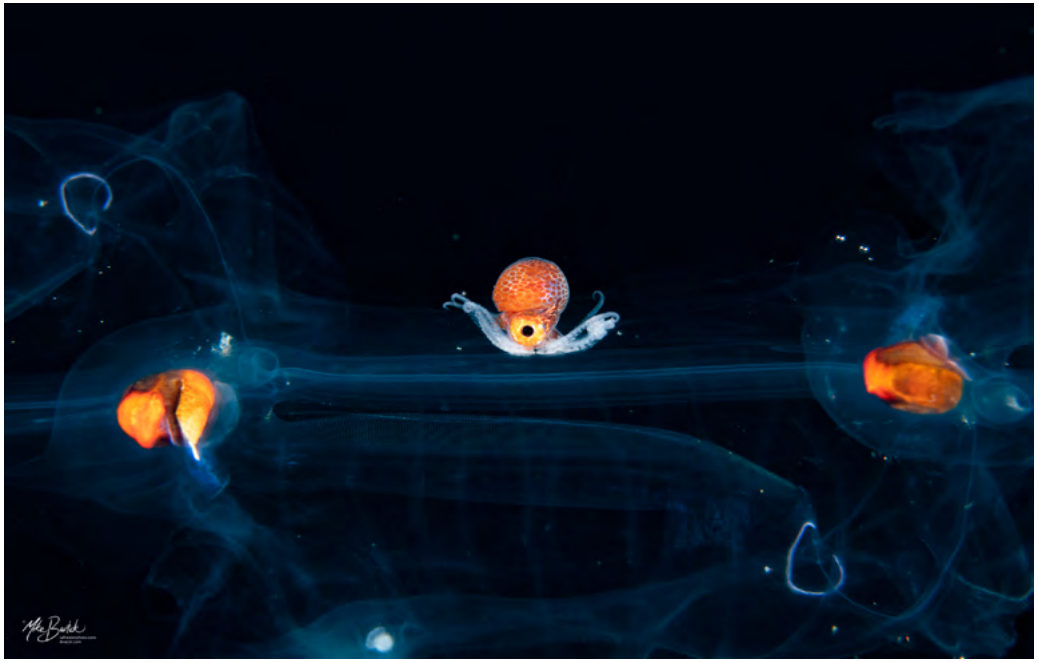
Arriving at our pinned destination, the captain gave us the nod so we fired up the lights, threw the line in the water and waited for sundown. The feeling onboard was pure anticipation at this point, so I began to run through images on my phone to help with shape recognition. Finally after everyone checked and re-checked the gear, it was time to jump.

Once we got into that clean, Cozumel water things warmed up quickly. The water was so clear that the flashing the strobes in the distance reminded me of twinkling fireflies in a dark garden. The pace was right and the line was perfect and after a short period of time everyone settled in, relaxed, and had a great time exploring and shooting.

We experienced large salps chains with male Argonaut hians, jellyfish, even deepwater fish which indicated to me that our site selection was right on the money.

Sticking to our plan, we all surfaced at 90 minutes to find our captain was positioned perfectly for our pickup and the surface crew managed to get us all back onto the boat without issue. Soon we all debriefed and excitedly chattered about the dive and what we had found. After exchanging intel with the captain we learned that we had drifted nearly 6 miles!

One of the things that I've noticed about the subject matter seen on BW dives, is that in many locations the subject matter can be very similar, I call this the baseline. Planktons like sea butterflies, pteropod, heteropods, crab and shrimp zoa in addition to other sea faring subjects. This baseline is a great foundational point for strong blackwater diving and indicates that the choice of the location is a good one. We continued to go back to the same patch of water for the next few nights, according to our GPS and



Common baseline subjects like sea butterflies, pteropods and salp chains play an important role in our oceans ecology and an important role in discovering new locations for blackwater diving. The salp in this image actually has a male paper nautilus riding along which is also somewhat common and is a strong indicator that the coveted shelled females will be in the same waters.

enjoyed some great dives together as our team began to bond.

In all we are able to do 5 nights of blackwater dives and came away with a great collection of images. My impressions is that Cozumel has really strong potential for this style of diving and so, I am planning a return trip in just over a months time for another go. Hopefully at the end of the second round the local dive operators will begin to see the value of offering blackwater dives to their normal curriculum of diving.

Special thanks to:

Aldora divers Cozumel, Sea and Sea Underwater Imaging, Ultralight control systems, Kraken sports and Tracy Winholt, also the boat captains and crew for their willingness to stay up late and explore, without their help, this would never have been possible.

Mike Bartick
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Lord Howe Island

by Attila Kaszo

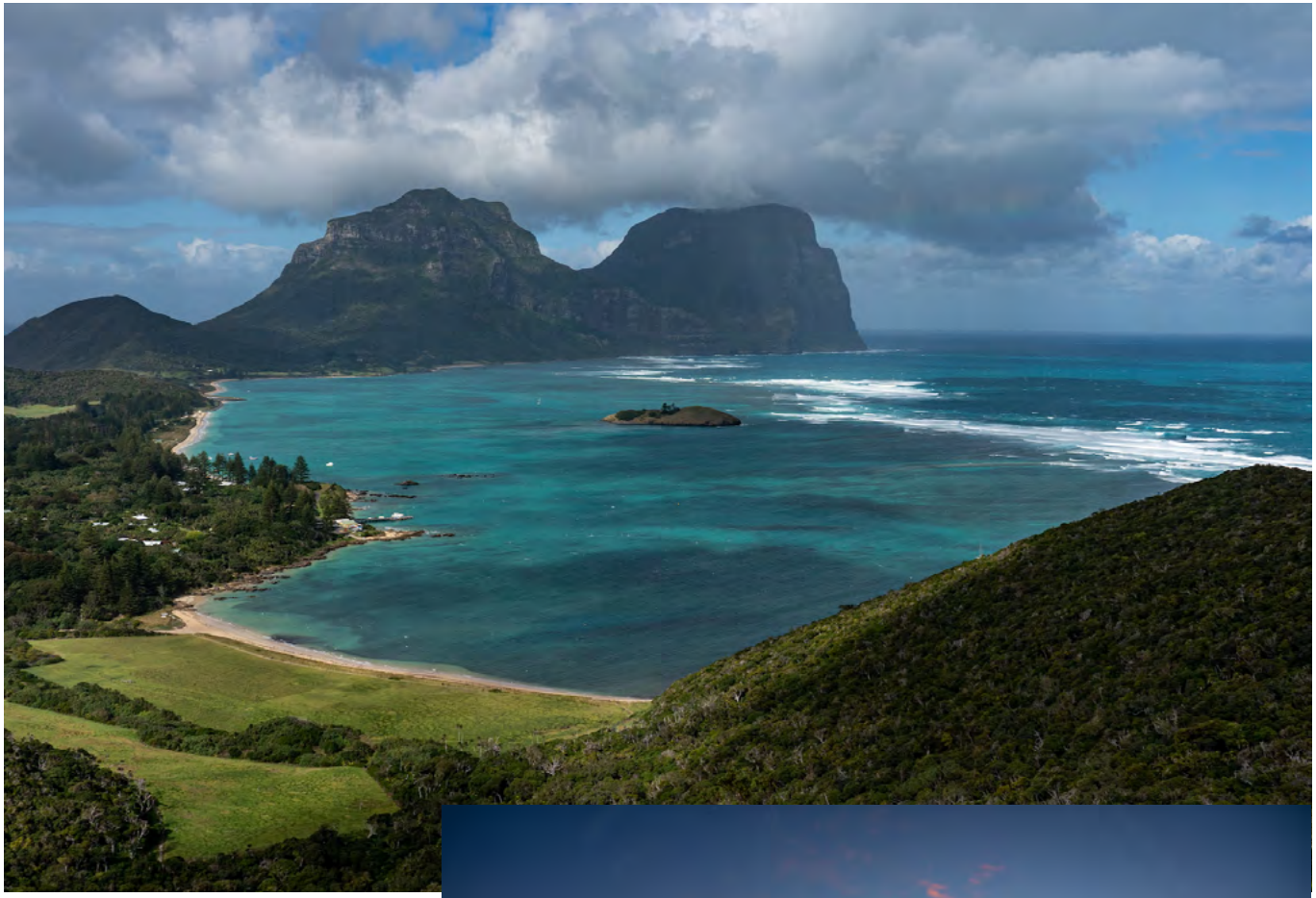
Situated 600 kilometres to the East of New South Wales, Australia, in the Tasman Sea, is a small group of islands with habitat like no other.

Listed as a UNESCO World Heritage area in 1982, Lord Howe Island has often been described as an oasis and even the Galapagos of the Asia Pacific. Many world renowned naturalists and scientists including Sir David Attenborough have been awed at the sheer beauty of the place and its unique and rare flora and fauna, in many cases, endemic to its biosphere.

Being the world's southmost coral barrier reef, the waters surrounding the islands are protected by a marine park with levels of zoning, providing protection to its inhabitants and also offering recreational opportunities for visitors and the local community.

Australia holds the dubious title for the fourth highest animal extinctions in the world, according to statistics by the IUCN in 2018. Considering that Australia has only had white settlement since 1788, it has managed 40 extinctions and 106 critically engaged species. Lord Howe Island however, is a good example of how potential ecological disasters can be averted by dedicated and conscientious people.

Prior to discovery in 1788 by Lieutenant Ball, the islands and its surrounding waters had flourished with animals and plants not known on the mainland. Settled in 1834, the island named for Admiral Lord Howe of the British Navy, became a supply station for whaling fleets. So began the gradual destruction of the island and its marine life.



At dawn Ned's Beach comes alive with schools of fish moving into the shallows. These Sand Mullet were in water half a meter deep. The difficulty in getting images is that the fish swim and touch the lens port, believing the contents to contain food. Patience and a fair bit of luck is needed as well, especially with split shots. Nikon D800 / 2x INON Strobes Sigma 15mm @15mm, f2.8 F6.3 / 80th

Ball's Pyramid lies 23km from Lord Howe Island and takes about two hours to reach by boat. A remnant Shield Volcano which now hosts thousands of seabirds and offers protection to many marine creatures. Diving around the stack can be demanding, with strong currents and ocean swells pushing divers abilities to the limit.

Double-header Wrasse a species which resembles the Humphead Wrasse is found in a few isolated pockets of reef around Lord Howe Island, Norfolk Island and the northern New South Wales coastline. There is some debate regarding a possible sub species occurring only around Lord Howe Island. Nikon D800 / 2x INON Strobes Tokina 16-28mm @28mm, f2.8 F8 / 160th

Of the 28 islands in the group, the largest and most easily settled was Lord Howe Island. It offered all the necessary attributes for settlement including fresh water and animal food sources, the latter from the surrounding waters and on land, in the form of birds, of which two species were eaten into extinction. As crops were planted a further species of parakeet was destroyed because it was considered a pest. In 1918 rats arrived on the island and within ten years five more bird species became extinct.

By 1970 it was estimated that just a handful of endemic Woodhens were surviving and they too were heading for extinction. Many other smaller invertebrates faced similar challenges, the most noted was the Lord Howe Island stick insect or Phasmid. It was considered extinct until rediscovered in 2001 on an isolated ledge of Ball's Pyramid, an extinct shield volcano extending some 562m vertically, at a distance of 23 kilometres from Lord Howe Island. The insect has not been reintroduced to the island to date, and is still considered as critically endangered and listed as the rarest insect in the world.

Gradually action began to eliminate, cats, wild pigs, rats, mice, introduced owls, and to a large extent sheep and goats. By 2019, a successful rodent eradication program had been carried out and around 90 thousands rats and mice had been removed. The last 3 years of the management program to 2021 was primarily a success due to the diligence of the islands Administrator Peter Adams, who with his outstanding managerial ability and dedicated staff propelled the program to a new level, ensuring its resounding success.

The western side of the island has a large semi-enclosed sheltered coral reef lagoon filled with dominant coral outcrops on white sand. Being so remote from other landforms, the lagoon offers a wide variety for

Pro Dive boat in the Lagoon just before the next storm broke.

The stunning Galapagos shark, is more commonly found in current lines at the seaward side of the Lagoon. The best time to see them in numbers is late afternoon when it is not unusual to have 30-40 sharks swimming alongside divers. I found it best to swim at about 5m below the surface to the back of other divers. Nikon D800 / 2x INON Strobes Tokina 16-28mm @16mm, f2.8 F14 / 250th

marine species some of which are only found there.

By contrast to the west, a picturesque beach and shallow reef on the north eastern side of the island known as Ned's Beach has an attraction like no other. Schools of Sand Mullet, large Silver Drummer and a few odd sorts like Spangled Emperor and Green-blocked wrasse are regular visitors, due mainly to the fact that the Parks Service provides fish food encouraging the fish to the delight of both visitors and locals. I may add, that while I benefited from encountering all these fish, I don't support the feeding of wildlife unless there are extenuating circumstances such as the preservation of the species.

We decided to attempt some sunrise pictures at Ned's Beach with the 4 meter rolling swells. To make the exercise more difficult, I decided to try a few split shots as well. As predicted the fish rolled up as expected, but the sun was partially blocked by cloud and the waves were very difficult to negotiate. To add to frustration, I only had about 30 minutes to get the pictures before the sun was too high. The fish very quickly realised that I didn't have any food for them, and word got around…they vanished!

Day two and we tried the same technique. Sand Mullet seemed to dominate but became over friendly, trying to eat the dome port of my housing. Obviously too close for pictures, I waited for my wife to get close enough to entice the fish to her, which she did. I finally got a few snaps and that was the end of the exercise.

While we were visiting a large low pressure system moved in, making diving even in the lagoon difficult. Five to seven meter swells hammered the island, turning the water into a swirling mass. Visibility usually

20-30m reduced to about 5m with suspended particles so dense at times that I didn't bother to get shots at all.

After a few days the water settled in the lagoon, so photography was limited but achievable so we made an attempt to dive Ball's Pyramid in 5m swells, with some amount of success. Currents around the island were particularly strong, running in several directions on the same site. Our expert dive operator Aaron Ralph of Pro Dive managed to rig cross lines so that descent could be achieved by most, but not me unfortunately. My camera rig weighs 11.7kg and to manoeuvre that while holding cross lines and trying to descend was not on my agenda.

The second attempt was more fruitful, current still running but more manageable. Water clarity was about 15m but with considerable suspended matter in the water column. A cave nearby at 26m offered some protection and opened up a gallery of Painted Rock lobsters and Southern Slipper lobsters. They were wedged into crevices, probably due to the heavy sea conditions so photography was again challenging to say the least. Hard to estimate numbers, but at a guess three to four hundred packed the cave. I was told that "usually" the crustacea are freely moving about the cave floor rather than the situation we found them in.

Unlike diving around the mainland, this region is best explored in summer months, when seas are relatively calm and water clarity exceeds 30m. Mainland ocean conditions are the direct opposite.

The diving highlight for me was a drift dive just before sunset on the outside of the coral reef. Galapagos sharks school in this area on most occasions and seem happy incorporate divers in their family groups. They swim alongside some at arms length. A few more adventurous ones took a liking to my yellow fins but I quickly dissuaded them of their choice.

Galapagos sharks (Carcharhinus galapagensis) are a species of requiem sharks found worldwide around tropical oceanic islands. The sharks we swam with were about 2m long but we had three that were more around 3 meters. I found them beautiful, but then I am biased toward sharks.

Fish such as the Double Header wrasse, Green-blocked wrasse, Lord Howe Island Coralfish, McCulloch's Anemonefish, Painted Morwong and the Three-striped Butterfly fish are all unique to the island group.

While I'm not in a position to rate the established dive sites of the region, simply because I couldn't get to them, from what I saw, the potential looked well in line with the best sub tropical regions I have visited. The marine environment includes the unusual combination of both tropical and temperate species of both animal and plant. That together with rare fish only found around the islands makes Lord Howe well worth the effort.

I'll add a footnote to this essay, that being, that Lord Howe Island is not a low budget attraction. Anyone intending to visit is well advised to research the available accommodation facilities and book well in advance as the island has a ceiling cap of 400 people at any one time.

One of the most beautiful fish found at Lord Howe is the Green-blocked Wrasse or Surge Wrasse. Nikon D800 / 2x INON Strobes Sigma 15mm @15mm, f2.8 F8 / 100th

Attila Kaszo
www.ambvision.com

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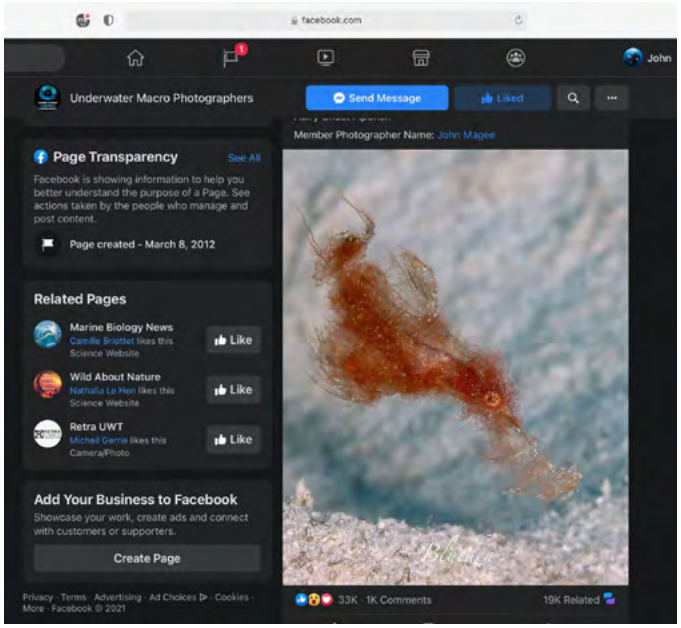
My Shot
by John Magee

A day of diving with Passions of Paradise out of Cairns Australia led to me finding one of the most amazing creatures in my macro career, Harry the hairy ghost pipefish. As an underwater macro photographer here on the Great Barrier Reef, we are very lucky to have such amazing diving right in our back garden and so I take advantage of this every week.

On this lucky day, I started as always, by heading directly under the boat to look for things hiding in the sand. After around ten minutes I came across and patch of red algae and seaweed drifting along the bottom but spotted something drifting the in other direction to the current. There it was. For the next 65 minutes I stayed with this elusive creature as it fed on things too small to even see, taking as many pictures as I could until I had to leave it to its algae.

I haven't seen a ghost pipefish in more than a year and a half and so two days later when I was next out with Passions of Paradise and they went back to the same site, I had to go and check for 'the Irish Setter' pipefish again. Within five minutes I spotted it feeding and dancing across the sand, in an area that must be his home. Spotting him immediately meant that I got to spend a 70 minute dive just focussing on him, the star of the show. For a macro diver and photographer, this was like winning the lottery. Time was running out for me on this dive though, and just as he started heading towards a patch of coral where his mate may have been hiding, I had to surface. Guess where I will be looking first next time?



Canon 5D mark IV with a Canon 100mm f2.8 L Macro Lens. Aquatica Underwater housing, Ikelike 160 strobe. 1/125, f16, ISO 400.

After showing a friend the picture, she gave him the nickname 'Hairy Harry' and after putting his picture online, Hairy Harry became a bit of a Rockstar with over 34 thousand likes just on one Facebook page.

John Magee
www.blueden.com.au

Do you have a favourite shot with a short story?
If so, please e mail the image and text to
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and yours could be the next My Shot

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
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Subjects -, Anything from whale sharks to nudibranchs in full detail
Equipment reviews - Detailed appraisals of the latest equipment
Personalities - Interviews/features about leading underwater photographers

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

How to submit articles

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

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

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

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

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

Parting Shot 1

There is a diving spot about an hour from my home. It is supposed to be a great place to meet seahorses. I saw pictures from my fellow divers proving the rumour was true. I did many dives there, yet I haven't seen a seahorse there yet. I saw a pipefish once or twice, but no seahorse.

There is a harbour on my way to that seahorse spot. It is popular among fishermen and sailors, not so much among scuba divers. It is silty, visibility is usually bad, or even worse. I dive there occasionally, because murky water means colourful sponges start appearing in quite shallow water. Also plenty of interesting tiny critters can be found there if one is patient.

Once I went for a photo dive in the harbour. The visibility was really bad, I was swimming slowly with my fins up and my mask very close to the silty bottom. I was on my way to a flat rocky reef so was not expecting anything interesting on the patch of silt between the shore and the reef. Then suddenly it was right in front of my mask. I almost hit it with my nose. A perfectly camouflaged seahorse. Not yellowish or brownish as it is usual, but gray, a perfect match for the gray silt on the bottom. Well, almost a perfect match. A perfect match except that orange eye. That bright orange eye. I could not believe I found a seahorse there, even without looking for it.

That happened a couple of years ago. I haven't seen a seahorse in the harbour since then. Yet every time I go for a dive there I hope I will meet it again.

Camera: Nikon D300, Housing: Sea&Sea, Lens: Nikkor Micro 60mm
Lighting: 2x Ikelite Substrobe Ai, Aperture: F22, Shutter speed: 1/250sec ISO: 100. Exposure mode: Manual

Daniel Poloha
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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

Parting Shot 2

Jakarta Aquarium & Safari is located in West Jakarta in a big Mall. In the main tank apart from the various fish and an annoying turtle there is a pod of Mermaids that call the main tank home. The Aquarium features a daily underwater theatrical play called the “Pearl of the South Seas” where the mermaids perform.

The leading role belongs to Nikita who is also the Indonesian Female Freediving Champion. She is also a freediving instructor, a mermaid instructor, an underwater model and a mother. Sometimes, after the show, she dives down to the glass and interacts with the audience.

On this day Nikita knew her daughter was among the audience. She could not see anything outside the tank, she only knew, approximately where her daughter would be. She dove down and by luck or instinct placed her hand exactly opposite her daughter’s.

Watching the joy in the eyes of the little girl was an amazing experience. Me and the other photographer in the water were very lucky to be there at that moment.

The picture was shot on breath hold.

Olympus OM-D E-M5 mark III with Olympus M.Zuiko Digital ED 8mm f/1.8 Fisheye PRO Lens behind a 4.33” Dome port in a Nauticam housing. f/2.2, 1/100 sec , ISO1600, P Mode

Nicholas Kouvaras
www.freedivingsociety.com

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

UP8
Mar/Apr
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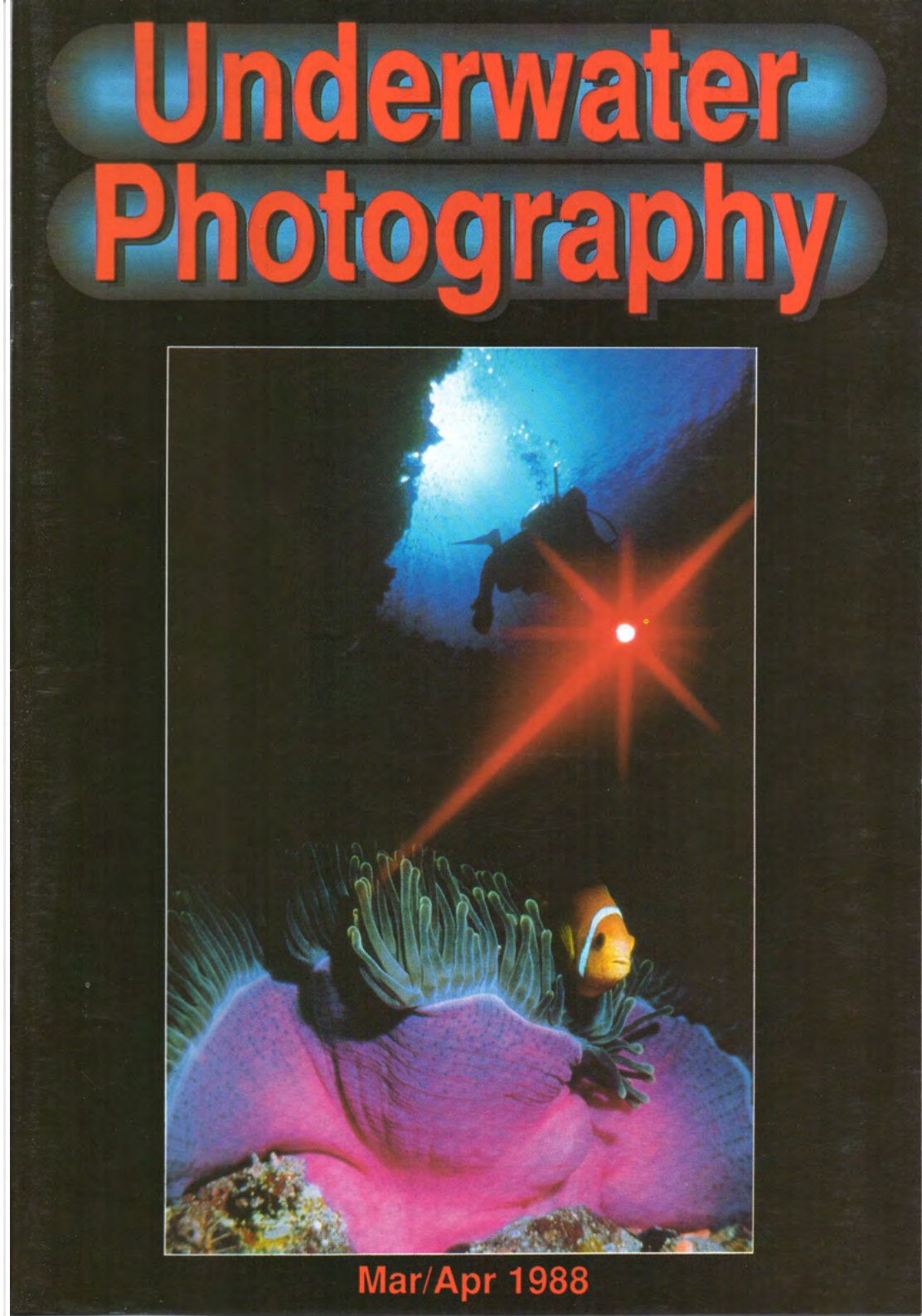
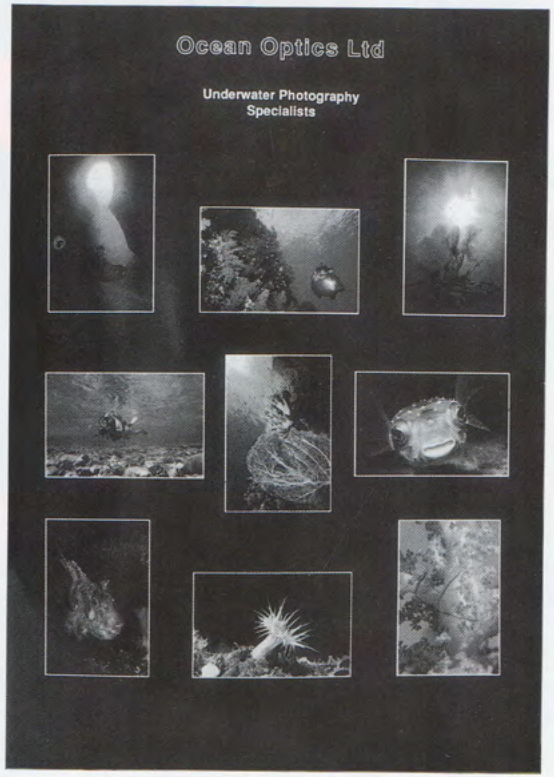
Issue 121/63



IT MIGHT BE ALL YOU NEED



The New Ocean Optics Colour Catalogue is now available and is bigger and better than ever before. Its 44 pages include details of the latest quality products as well as help on choosing the right equipment for you.

It contains details of equipment from Nikonos, Sea and Sea, Subatec, Pelican, Aquaflash, Nimar, EWA Marine and video as well as books for all tastes.

For your copy, just send £2 UK, £3 Europe or £4 Overseas and it will be sent by 1st Class post or Air Mail. Access and Visa can be accepted over the phone so get your copy today and keep up to date.

Ocean Optics Ltd

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Mon-Fri 9am to 5pm. Late night Thursdays til 7pm.

Underwater Photography Magazine

Issue No 8
Mar/Apr 1988

Contents

Editorial

The euphoria of keeping UP going for a whole year began to evaporate towards the end of the year when I realised that a large number of renewals would soon be due. That's make or break time for small circulation magazines like UP as, if the subscriptions fall due to lack of renewals, some hard-nosed financial decisions would have to be taken.

I am very pleased to say that the response from those readers due for renewal has been fantastic. The rate of renewal has been extremely high and is pleasantly reassuring as I look upon it as the first real indicator that UP has a working formula and is relevant to todays underwater photographer. Please write in if you disagree.

There are many reasons for UP's continued presence but the most important is that we are independant and openly available to our readers. There's no better example of this than the letters page where the free flowing comments make riveting reading. I suspect that for every letter (and we print every letter), there must be dozens of conversations about the topics raised and hopefully sometimes a heated discussion might result if the topic is particularly vital. That heated discussions take place is a good indicator that the subject is important enough to care about and that subject is always based on underwater photography.

It is only by having such an open forum that the previously imposed barriers can be lifted from underwater photography and allow it to blossom even further. With those barriers lifted it's then up to all of us to work towards improving the underwater image and the image of underwater photography.

Underwater Photography is published bi-monthly by Ocean Optics Ltd

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Write UP's

Amateurs v Professionals

Underwater photography is an expensive, time consuming pastime but has the great advantage of adding another dimension to diving. It helps too to create a better understanding of the environment often coupled with conservationist attitudes. It goes without saying that underwater photography should be encouraged at every stage.

Entering competitions is one way for photographers to assess their progress and the beginners category is an ideal starting point. It is just as important though to motivate and encourage the lucky ones who then move into the category usually called "open".

It's here that competitions like Brighton fail, with the bronze medal beginners immediately facing the full time commercial photographer. At Brighton 87 the felony was further compounded with the introduction of the Grand Master, complete with extra charges, but lacking a UK section.

There should be a second division for advanced but still recreational photographers. This would leave a first division for those who are not simply recreational but commercial photographers; and to which the recreational photographers might graduate on winning golds.

To some extent the precedent has been set with a commercial cine section at Brighton. Underwater photography has reached the stage when it should adopt the thinking that governs surface photography where there is a clear division between the recreational and commercial photographer.

M.Glover, Birmingham

Split level shots

In December's issue of Diver, two Brighton Festival award winning pictures were reproduced: "Three is company" and "Sunset". I was very surprised to see these particular shots and that they had been entered for the competition.

In these pictures, not all the ingredients had been shot undertwater, as the rules clearly state they should be. Both the pictures I mentioned are composites, i.e. combinations of two photographs to create a third picture. Sometimes it is not at all easy to recognise that a picture is a composite and not a straight shot and they may have been accepted as split level shots. Split level shots are usually accepted in underwater photography competitions as long as the underwater content is meaningful.

Part of the mentioned pictures may have started life as a split level shot but by taking away the supposedly not very meaningful underwater part of a split level shot, one is left with a land shot so the 'third picture' was created with a land shot and an underwater shot.

I am not against combining land and under water images but if there is a rule which disallows such pictures, one should abide by the rules.

Perhaps such a rule should not be there at all. In the first place, it limits the possibilities of creativity. In the second place, the rule was either not applied or interpreted in a different way from how I interpret it, or, quite possibly, no one noticed any deviation from the rules. In that case, it would have been better not to have the rule.

If rules cannot be policed and enforced, they are not worth having.

Georgette Douwma, London

Brighton rules ignored?

Mike Valentine's shot entitled "Sunset", which won a medal at Brighton '87, looked to me as if the boat section of the combination image was taken with the camera well out of the water and so should be considered as a land shot.

I liked the shot very much but should it have been allowed?

G.Boyne, London

I thought exactly the same as you, so I asked Mike Valentine how they were taken and this is his reply:

You are, in fact, wrong to assume that my "Sunset" picture was taken with the camera not in the water when taking the top picture of the composite and readers may be interested to know how I took the photograph.

When attempting a split level or half-in, half- out shot, it is best to use a housed camera. If you try with a Nikonos with its small front lens port, it's almost impossible to judge when the 'wave' is at the correct height. Using a camera in a housing allows you reflex viewing but, more importantly, with a large wide angle dome port, you have a larger frontal area for the wave to lap against. This gives greater control over taking the picture.

I used a Hydro 35 housing, Nikon F2 and 24mm lens behind a fisheye port. The original photograph was published on the front cover of the November 84 issue of Subaqua Scene.

My wife Francoise can be seen underwater holding a red flashgun. Light from it has refracted through the surface. Using a soft edged mask I have replaced Francoise with some glass fish, lit with a white light in front and red light behind. Combining the two creates the illusion of hopefully one homogenous shot.

Incidentally, the glass fish are upside down but I've read and re-read the Brighton rules and can't find a "no inverted shots" clause so I hope I can keep my silver medal!

Mike Valentine, London

We stand corrected, Mike, and thank you for putting us straight about this shot. I feel that how to produce these type of split level shots will make a very good article and that this type of shot may become as popular and effective as double images have been over the past few years.

Competition rule breaking

The editorial in UP No 7 could not be more true. It is accurate to the last word.

The organisers of competitions who make the rules are those who are the first to violate and ignore these same rules when it becomes convenient to them.

An example is Antibes Film Festival in December 1987 where the video category allowed for a 20 minute maximum for each entry. Somehow, for reasons unknown, a 45 minute professional video took all three first prizes. This kind of rule bending cannot be allowed to happen at any level.

If we allow these Festivals to continue, we are forfeiting, without question, countless hours and days and even years of work, not to mention the money and emotional investment. More importantly, we are sacrificing our pride in the profession.

I wonder if others are beginning to despair and pull out of these silly competitions. Until the day when these festivals award the deserved respect toward participating artists, more and more artists will find futility in entry.

One last word of advice: dedicate your valuable time to more enjoyable diving and underwater photographic holidays without thinking of competitions. You will notice the difference.

S.K.Maholay, Switzerland

Competition organisers are all too often unaware or oblivious to the hard work put into underwater photographs and they act surprised when they receive angry reactions to their activities such as rule bending/ breaking.

We can all disagree with a judges' opinion but when clearly stated rules are ignored by both the entrant and the organisers, there seems very little point in entering future such events.

Natural Brighton

My preference is for natural shots as I assemble my photos into 30 minute AV's to remind me of my holiday and to show to other clubs. This year I had some slides I liked so for the first time ever I entered them for Brighton 87 and to my amazement was awarded a highly commended.

Presumably the judges liked what I liked. After all it is personal taste unless the panel have been given specific instructions.

The creation of clever images usually requires the help of a regular buddy or darkroom facilities neither of which I am blessed with. So with a no frills but adequate camera and 6 days in the Red Sea with a strange buddy, one has to adjust and do it all in a short space of time. This must be the lot of many amateur underwater photographers.

Slang the Brighton judges by all means but remember they chose what they liked. If the organiser had chosen a panel of technical underwater photographers there would have been different results but would the images have shown the non diving public what the underwater world is like. The camera can lie! Is this the state of the art?

J.Kentish, Southampton

All photography is about having an opinion and that's fine. The problem is when a panel of judges is assembled whose knowledge of the underwater and the underwater photographic worlds is very limited. A suitably chosen panel of image makers could have done justice to both your entry (taken for your reasons and under your circumstances) and to those who treat competitions as events for which they stretch themselves to the limits of their imagination and capability.
Remove the desire to stretch imagination and capability by being judged by incorrectly chosen panels and underwater photography will surely suffer - and that's to everybody's detriment.

Disappointed Brighton winner

I went to Brighton 87 and waited eagerly for Sunday afternoon. When the 'near misses' were shown I was overjoyed to see one of my slides on the screen and I could have gone home quite happy. I could not believe it when I found that I had won a silver medal, especially with all the confusion that followed.

My pleasure was short lived, however, when the time came to collect my medal and we were told there was only time for those who had won golds. As many of the gold medalists were not there, the presentation became a flop. I was very disappointed and somehow felt "cheated".
Unfortunately it hasn't ended there. Having just received UP, I find that in all probability I should not have won as the judges were not capable of the task!

Quite frankly the whole event is an embarrasment to me and I am beginning to wish I had not entered, let alone won. Unfortunately, having "won" a major competition, I am now forced to enter the Grand Masters category and can never enter for the best portfolio or Most promising British Underwater Photographer.

Looking at the list of winners I feel sorry for those who won bronze's in classes where no silver or gold was awarded. They aren't considered good enough to win but nevertheless must be "Grand Masters" next time.

I suppose we all ought to look on the bright side; at least next time we stand a chance of winning one of the super prizes on offer. I'm sure that Mr Valentine really needs another Nikonos and yet another Red Sea trip far more than some incompetent beginner.

Lyn Randall

Don't get too downhearted, Lyn! You've won a medal and hopefully there won't be a Grand Master section in the next Brighton.

Two Brighton 87's?

Having read Pip Evered's report on Brighton '87 and Diver Magazine's account of the same event, I am sure that there must have been two such events happening at the same time; so completely different were the reports.

J. Ward, London

Final Brighton?

Just a note to say that my wife Anne and I attended Brighton 87 and do agree most heartily with Helmut Debelius and also your reply. During Derek Berwin's presentation I actually looked around several times to see if this was the prelude to a special "spoof" item!

I also agree with the comments made by both Alex and Tamara Double and Terry Arpino.

Could the Bernard Eaton ego-trip, old boys bandwagon possibly not be the ideal vehicle for future events of this nature?

C. McMurtry

From an underwater photographers point of view, the presentation of the winning results was an undeniable shambles but, rather than continue to harp on about it, let's just hope that the organisers of any future competitions will seek advice and act upon it to improve their particular event and so advance the cause of underwater photography.
Perhaps we should call that the last word for now about Brighton 87 and look forward to the future with optimism.

Eilat car thefts

I thought I should drop you a line with some information which may be of use to UP readers.

The latest sport among the local petty villains is to wait for divers to leave their cars on the beach whilst shore diving from the beaches outside Eilat and then break the window with a hammer and relieve them of any cash in the car. This happened to us on two consecutive days and, fortunately on both occasions, the thieves left our camera equipment but I feel that it won't be long before they organise a market for this.

My advice is to leave as little as possible in your car. Even though it will not stop this happening, it will avoid several tedious hours in the local police station waiting for an insurance form!

M.Webster, Cornwall

Croft lives!

Congratulations on UP, a really beautiful production.

In Brian Pitkin's report on the Friday film show at Brighton, he mentions the Stan Waterman film 'Deep Dive' showing the record 240' snorkel dive by Bob Croft and writes "Croft survived this only to die in another record attempt two years later".

I am pleased to report that Bob Croft is alive and well having heard him lecture on the dive at the "Beneath the Sea" Conference near New York just two years ago.

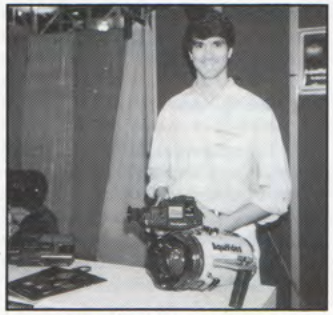
He had a unique system of "topping up" his last breath before diving which was fascinating to all those of us who are deep snorkeling fanatics.

Reg Vallintine, London

New Products at DEMA

New Orleans

The annual trade event of DEMA (Diving Equipment Manufacturers Association) is a huge show combining equipment manufacturers and travel exhibitors. The travel section has continued to expand while the equipment exhibits seem to struggle to show anything really new and innovative. Dive shop owners from literally all over the world come to DEMA to see what's new and order for the coming season. UP went along to look for new underwater photography equipment.



Aquavideo have been producing tubular housings for some time. They had their version for the Sony Handycam Pro V9/90 on show. A high resolution wide angle lens adaptor and dome port are included for $1049. Details from Aquavideo, 5065 NW 159th St, Miami, FL 33014-6334. Tel 0101 305 621 0222

Mr Yamaguchi of Sea and Sea Japan holds their new 15mm lens and optical viewfinder for the Nikonos. Its a neat and well built lens which should be in the shops by June with a price tag well below the Nikonos 15mm.
UP will be testing the first ones and reporting in full in a forthcoming issue.

The Ikelite stand showed their complete range with new video housings for most of the new camcorders, a pre-production video light with a seperate aiming light, an improved eyepiece magnifier and a Nikon F3 TTL compatible Substrobe flash and SLR housing.

Chris Newbert was selling and signing copies of his excellent book "Within a Rainbowed sea" which features superb photography and printing. They cost around $99 in the USA. Copies are available from Chris at Box 1953, Kailua, Kona, Hawaii, USA. Tel 0101 808 325 5589.

Hypertech showed their housing for the Sony V9 Handycam Pro (Its the V90 in the UK) which has interesting optional lights with free flooding bulbs. A wide angle lens adaptor and dome port is included and they will be imported into the UK by Ocean Optics and should cost around £595 for the housing and about the same again for twin 50w lights covering 120°.

Val Ranetkins of Amphibico, Canada showed a pre-production model of his housing for the Sony Handycam Pro V9/V90. It's aluminium with some internal electronics to slow the zoom rate and allow all the camera's functions to be operated via the remote socket on the camera. It has a built-in microphone and should cost around £895 in the UK.

Bob Barcik of Sea Fans Magazine holds the latest issue of this new format magazine which is selling very well in the States. PAL versions will be more expensive and should cost around £24.95 in the UK. Each issue contains approx 90 minutes of high quality presentations featuring dive locations, interviews and photo tips with excellent editing and post production.

The Berwin's were doing great business with their T shirts, sweatshirts and colour prints. The response to their Deep Down Designs has spurred them on to expand into this market with several different designs. Details from Derek Berwin, 45 Algers Road, Loughton, Essex.

Rossano Lugli, the owner of Plastmeccanica, Italy, poses with Nimar's prototype of their video housing with it's seperate, much larger viewfinder. New housings for the latest camcorders and SLR cameras are 'in the pipeline'. Nimar products are imported by SOS Ltd and Ocean Optics.

U/w Research Products Int. show their patented colour correction filters which are available for use on lenses and in masks to enable you to see the true subsea colours. Several versions and sizes are available. 58mm Nikonos versions cost $50 in the USA.

Lee Petersen holds his MCD Nikonos flash system which has some novel features and accessories for macro and general use. A front Cokin filter holder takes filters and the mounting and positioning capabilities are very versatile. For further details, contact Aquacraft, 7992 Miramar Road, San Diego, CA 92126. Tel 0101 619 271 9000.

Isotecnic from Italy showed a full range of neat manual and slave flashguns for the Nikonos together with a selection of movie/video lights from 50 to 250 watts output. The flashguns use plastic housings and the movie lights are aluminium. For further details contact Isotecnic, Via Zappo, 37017 Lazise, Italy. Tel 045 7581117

Aqua Vision Systems have taken over from Aquavision to produce the Capsule 8 video and Aquatica SLR housings. Their latest housing is the VHS-Sea for the JVC GR-C9 and similar camcorders sold by Sharp, Toshiba and Zenith. Further details from 804 Deslauriers, Montreal, Canada H4N 1X1

A very interesting product which must have evolved from the dwindling oil market is the C'Cat. A very small remotely operated vehicle with a built-in video camera. Its aimed at the amateur/yachting market and has a great number of fun applications. Checking your anchor, locating wrecks, finding fish and so on. It was larger versions of the C'Cat which found and photographed the Titanic.

The cost and size of these ROV's has come down dramatically until they are now attractive to all marine users. They cost around $5000 in the USA including lights, hand control, TV monitor and a 50m umbilical cord.. Further details are available from USAL, 12555 West Jefferson Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90066.

Larger and more expensive (about $11,000 in the USA) than the C'Cat (left), J.W.Fishers Mfg Inc showed a more capable ROV with more commercial applications in mind.

4 thrusters give good stability and position control while the built-in colour video camera has a wide angle coverage and pan and tilt capability. The housing is aluminium.

4 video lights are attached externally and sledge feet are incorporated for seabed landings. Further details are available from J.W.Fishers Manufacturing Inc, Anthony Street, Taunton, MA 02780, USA. Tel 0101 617 822 7330.

DEMA GOSSIP

Sony USA had a stand displaying their marine products and told us they have formed a 'special projects' department. This will include underwater video products to follow on from the soon to disappear Handycam and Marine Pack.

In artwork form, an artists drawing of their Marine Pack 70 was on their wall but no further details were available so we don't know which camera its for or if it will ever materialise as many products don't.

Underwater Kinetics (imported into the UK by Sea and Sea) showed a very useful sized carrying case measuring 22.5 x 19.6 x 9". It should take a housing and several accessories.

Nikon USA were there too but we couldn't see any reflex Nikonos's and they said they knew of nothing in the pipeline so we'll just have to wait longer.

Peter Rowlands

The making of "The Sea Gypsy"
by medal-winning Mike Valentine

By now many people would have hopefully seen "The Sea Gypsy" which was presented at Brighton '87 and shown on B.B.C.2 this January. I thought it may be interesting for UP subscribers to read about some of the trials and tribulations of turning "The Sea Gypsy" from an idea into a finished T.V. film.

Three years ago I appeared on the T.V. chat show "Pebble Mill at One" singing the joys of underwater photography as a hobby. Watching this programme was a young 16 year old school girl, Emma Crewsden. Emma wanted to learn more about underwater photography and so wrote to me explaining her interest, saying that if I was ever near Cambridge, where she lived, to drop in for a chat. When I did eventually call in on
Emma I realized that with her long red hair she could make a striking underwater model.

I soon discovered she could swim, but had never been diving, let alone imagined herself becoming an " underwater model". However, due to her vivid imagination and sense of adventure, she wanted to try it immediately and it took some fast talking to explain to her mother why I wanted to tie her daughter down to the bottom of a swimming pool. After seeing some of my previous photographs, her concern subsided and we were ready for our first session.

Well Emma turned out to be a "natural". Having tested many girls for this type of work, you never can tell how they will look until you actually photograph them. It is not enough to be able to hold your breath, you actually have to smile, with your eyes open and react to the fish and environment while overcoming the fears of actually being tied down some 60' underwater, with your air supply sometimes 15' away. I have nothing but admiration for girls who can do this.

Upon completion of Emma's training, it was time to find a suitable tropical location. Fortunately I received a commision from British Caledonian to photograph their hotel on the island of "Bonaire" off the coast of Venezuela in the southern Carribean. Now it is standard practice for many photographers to combine several jobs into one shoot and therefore after working hard for a few days photographing the hotel, island and it's diving sites, I had time to photograph Emma in a variety of costumes which she had designed for the trip. Most of these

(Above) *Emma poses in her clown fish dress, knowing that Francoise is just out of shot with the air. Nikon F2, Hydro 35 housing, 24mm lens, Ektachrome 100, 1/60th @ F8 in 25 feet of water off Bonaire.*

shots appear in my audio-visual "The Sea Gypsy"and it was this AV that was instrumental in raising money to shoot the film.

One of the problems confronting a stills photographer who wants to become a film maker is this: in a photograph hopefully everything is perfect; exposure, framing, composition and it's overall effect; the "statement" the photographer wishes to make. However film is made up of many photographs, 24 every second and therefore many thousands throughout its length. Joining all these images together to make a consistent narrative flow is not easy. It is not enough to have a series of beautiful individual images, each one must flow smoothly into the other and the whole, tell a story.

"The Sea Gypsy" audio-visual gave me the opportunity of seeing if I could link together scenes of a girl wearing different costumes, into a story about a girl's journey underwater and the creatures she meets there, without spending a large amount of money on actually filming those sequences. The audio-visual could act as a "storyboard" for the film's narrative. Also more importantly it could show sceptical producers, from whom I would try to raise the finance for making the film, that it was possible to really pose a girl 60' underwater and successfully film her.

After approaching many people with the script and audio-visual, I eventually convinced a company R&H Wale (Export) Ltd., to finance the production and now all the real work could begin. Feature films for the Cinema are shot on 35 mm film, but as "The Sea Gypsy" was to be shown on television it was to be filmed in 16mm as this format is more than adequate for the relatively small size of the T.V. screen.

The camera I decided to use was an Arriflex SR, a professional 16mm film camera. It holds 400' of film, this lasts just over 10 minutes at the normal speed of 24 F.P.S., but could also run up to 75 F.P.S. for "slow motion" shots, although the film then only lasts just over 3" per roll. The underwater housing I would use could be hired from a company, but at £500 per week, I decided that buying a housing from Seacam at £3,000 would be more cost effective.

Lenses for underwater filming follow the same trend as underwater still cameras and I elected to use a Kinoptic Tegea 5.7mm behind a dome port. The housing also takes a 10:1 zoom lens, but the majority of the filming would be done using the wide angle. The camera itself was hired, for the Arriflex SR outfit alone can cost almost £20,000. For our location I chose the Red Sea and the Lady Jenny V as our boat. There are many places in the world I could have chosen, but the Red Sea still provides some of the best shooting possibilities along with consistent underwater conditions. For crew I selected Emma as the "star", Francoise, my wife, as production manager and Emma's safety diver and Phil Barthropp as camera assistant.

Francoise's title of production manager sounds grand, but was well deserved, for you cannot just take professional film equipment from one country to another without filling in many vast and complicated forms called "Carnet de Passage". It was her job to complete the laborious task and the other 1000 and 1 dull but necessary jobs which take place behind the scenes of any film.

Phil Barthropp as my assistant's main responsibility, was to ensure the correct loading of the camera and its smooth technical running and maintenance, as well as act as an underwater assistant. In one scene, Emma appears to run over the sea bed - in fact nylon fishing line tied around her waist is pulled by Phil, just out of shot. The line in the first take cut right through Phil's gloves into his hand, but without complaining he went on to do four more takes. Phil would also check the area for stone fish, scorpion fish etc. before we set up each scene for filming. It was also his job to load the film camera - a great responsibility for if any foreign material gets into the magazine during loading, it can cause the camera to jam or cause a "Hair in the Gate" which ruins the scene.

The film stock is actually a negative, with a positive print made from it for view-

(Above) *Francoise Valentine takes Emma to the location, feeding her air from an extended hose and second stage on the end of a pole. The pole allows Francoise to feed air to Emma without appearing in shot. Same equipment details as opposite.*

(Above) *The lionfish dress needed a great deal of preparation during which Emma kept her mask on. Nikonos V with 15mm lens, 2001 flash, 1/90th @ F8, Ektachrome 100 in 30 feet of Red Sea water*

(Above) *The underwater footage was shot with an Arriflex SR camera in a Seacam housing with a Subatec movie light.*
(Left) *The author pauses to pose for a location portrait.*

ing and there are only three manufacturers making suitable film stocks - Kodak, Fuji and Agfa. The same discussion between underwater photographers as to the relative merits of one film versus another, takes place between film cameramen and I decided to use Fuji film. This is rated 125 I.S.O. (which used to be called A.S.A.). Fuji also make a high speed stock rated at 500 I.S.O. and is a real boon for low light filming. However, little of the high speed stock was used due to the relative high light levels in the Red Sea.

As a light meter I used a Minolta Digital meter inside an underwater housing, as I find it is more accurate to use an incident light meter (one that measures the light falling onto a scene), rather than the more usual Sekonic which is a 'reflected light' meter. For lighting, I decided to shoot near the surface and only use a small Subatec 80w lamp as a 'fill' light. I would never try and light an object more than 4' away from the camera. I wanted to retain a "natural" look in the film, but the lamp was used to great effect in shooting scenes of a lion fish to reveal the fish's hidden colour.

In total we were on board the Lady Jenny V for two weeks, but with travelling days and losing some filming days due to equipment breakdown, we actually had six days filming, in which we exposed 15 rolls of film; 6000' - a total running time of two and a half hours, of which I hoped to have about 10 minutes of edited running time. Dividing the total running time into the edited time gives a ratio of about 15:1 and most films of this nature have what is called a high cutting ratio. When making feature films, the ratio can be much higher.

After returning to London, it was now time to start editing the film. Many people make the mistake of trying to edit their own work. Because they like a particualr shot, or remember how difficult it was to shoot a particular scene, it is tempting to keep the shot in the film. However, if it is irrelevant to the overall story then the shot must be thrown out and end up on the "cutting room floor". The editing of a film is one of the most creative stages for it is not just a question of assembling scenes. There are many editors working on feature films in this country. They are all known for their flair, pace and style of editing and I was lucky enough to work with one of Britain's leading editors - Tony Lawson. Tony has edited "Mutiny on the Bounty", "Dragon-slayer" and "Castaway" and it was therefore a great experience to work with him.

The film took four weeks to cut together and during that time I filmed the closing Dolphin scene and the opening title sequence. Again this is quite normal, for sometimes only when a film takes shape in the cutting room can you see that something needs to be added, which although is not scripted is vital to the successful flow of narrative.

Music plays a strong part in "The Sea Gypsy". The reason I wanted to use music so much was also to reduce costs in selling the film abroad. With no dialogue to translate, costs could be kept down. It was like a challenge to see if I could make a film with no dialogue at all!

Upon completion, the film was entered in Brighton '87 and it was recently shown on television. But I am also proud to have "waved the flag" for Britain with the film for it has won the Palm D'Or and the "Grand Prix de la Ville D'Antibes" at the Antibes Film Festival, which means it is to be shown throughout France and the rest of the world.

Payment indeed for the hard work put into the film by Emma, Francoise and Phil. During the year it has taken to make the "Sea Gypsy", I felt like giving up many times, but I kept on going and that is the advice I give anyone starting a similar project: No matter how hard it seems, keep on going, for if I can make it, so can you!

Mike Valentine

TWICKERS
WORLDWIDE
DIVING

THE PHILLIPINES
BELIZE
Galapogos
SHARM EL SHEIK
THE SKELLIG ISLANDS
LADY JENNY V
CAYMAN ISLANDS
SUDAN
BONAIRE
TRUK LAGOON
TURKS & CAICOS
THE RED SEA

For details of dive trips to these exciting locations, contact Len Charlton

UP in the UK at Swanage

with Martin Edge

There cannot be many divers in the country who have not at sometime visited and explored the waters of Swanage. Situated on the south coast, eight miles west of Bournemouth, Swanage sees hundreds of divers every year. Novice and 2nd class alike, all making for these offshore sites.

The wreckage of the 'KYARRA' lying in 30 metres off Durleston Head; Ballard Down and Cannon-Ball Reef, two shallow 10 metre dives situated to the east of the bay. Your fancy might be a drift over the Peverill Ledges, a most exhilarating dive. But if, like me, your first love is underwater photography, then these dives will appear 'hit and miss'. Agreed, they have a lot to offer, but you never quite know what. You never know what visibility to expect until you're down there. You can calculate tides, but we've all known it to be running a little faster than we anticipated. There can be some terrific sized pollack on the wreck of the 'KYARRA', but on a good day it's not uncommon to have one hundred divers in the water. There's photogenic close up subjects on Ballard Down, but there is also a lot of barren sandy patches and you could spend your time diving in a 'desert'.

Whether you are a novice having recently purchased your camera and flash or a seasoned photographer with trophies to your credit, perhaps you are anticipating that first trip to a tropical destination and you wish to practice your skills. Or, like me, you may be a person that really enjoys taking photographs underwater and if you are, then diving is just a means to an end.

Whatever the reason, you want that image on film, you want to improve and you want to enjoy.

Forget for now those offshore sites with that loose porthole you want to get at or the haul of scallops you've promised the wife. Visit Swanage with camera in hand and let the waters beneath Swanage Pier be your underwater classroom of photography.

Extremely popular during the summer months and especially on Bank Holidays, The Pier is capable of absorbing large numbers of divers and vehicles. Parking can be difficult for late arrivals, but there are several car parks nearby. For divers on the Pier, access to the water couldn't be easier- but we are photographers first and divers second, so lets discuss photography.

Walk out to the end of the Pier and look down the pillars into the water at the visibility, it's a good guide. In summer it averages 15 feet, on a good day 20-25 feet. If the sky is clear and the visibility looks reasonable, consider wide angle opportunities.

(Above) *Finding a good backdrop or 'negative space' for fish photography is important. A slave flash has added dramatic backlighting. Nikonos 111, Oceanic 2003 flash. 1/60th @ F22 Ektachrome 64 film*

At the end of the Pier at the bottom of the steps on the left hand side is a good entry/jump point. The depth is about 5 metres. If you choose this type of entry, it's easy for a friend or buddy to pass your equipment to you.

On walking back to your vehicle you will see the most popular entry point down the steps by the gents toilets. If the visibility looks good underneath the wall by the Diving Shop then you've picked a good day. Take advanage of this and use wide angle. You are in for some terrific opportunities.

Let's suppose that for the purpose of this article you have access to your buddy's Nikonos and 1x3 Extension Tube. Make your entry down the steps by the toilet, carry your fins with your camera. There's a large piece of concrete that breaks surface in 4 feet of water. You can use this to balance your equipment and make any final adjustments before you dive.

Under the Pier beside the harbour wall are lots of nooks and crannies where you will always find shrimp and blennies. The shrimp aren't shy, but be patient, you are in five feet of water, you've got plenty of time so use it. Coax the shrimps into your frames. Don't press the shutter the first time he performs, wait until the pose and his position look good. Look down the side of your Nikonos towards the extension tube framer, it will give you a more accurate idea of perspective and the angle of view than looking at the area from over the top of the

camera.

Make sure you get the flash away from the camera and hold it. The nooks and crannies can cause drastic shadows from front standard lighting. Try side lighting, if your buddy's flash has a slave capacity then use it. The transluscent tissues of the shrimps give good results and you can eliminate the unwanted detail of the wall and produce a black background. If the shrimps won't perform for you then don't waste film; call in on them on your way back.

The tompot blenny is shy but inquisitive. They live in small holes all over this wall. Find out the holes which are slightly smaller than your framer so that when he does pop his head out, he shouldn't be aware of the framer - only you and your camera. Again, be careful with the flash angle. Be aware of the shadows which can be caused by the framer, don't rush or prod the Blenny, he'll appear but be prepared for the shot to develop.

About 25 metres along the Pier on the left hand side is a 10 foot long hollow steel pipe with a diameter of about 2 feet. It harbours some large tube worms and shoals of juvenile bib. Its the size and tentacles of the tube worm that will interest you. Before you place your camera and flash into the pipe, think about the picture you want. How will you light it? From what angle? Have you got control over the colour of the background? You need to make the tube worm stand out from the cluttered sides of the pipe. Try either side lighting or backlighting from the lower left or right. Put your flash into the pipe first, being careful not to disturb any sediment and line up the angle on the subject as best you can. Think about composition before you frame the subject and if you do cause the tube worm to retract, don't worry. I've seen them reappear almost immediately.

Continue to swim towards the end of the Pier. You will notice the visibility getting better. The depth is still 3 metres and if the sun is shining, you will see shafts of sunlight piercing through the rafters of the Pier above.

There are some super opportunities for wide angle shots in this area. Iron girders have broken away and formed archways. They are overgrown with kelp and provide an attractive backdrop for diver shots. Look for the best spot taking time to consider the sun's position and Snell's Window etc. Get your model to swim through the picture. You may wish to discuss the pose with him. You are only in 3 metres of water so surface and talk!

If you have an eye for plumose anemones, then you'll begin to see orange

(Above)
By selecting the right size hole harbouring a blenny, it's possible to entice a Blenny into the framer without frightening him but be prepared to spend some time getting a shot like this as blennies are very cautious and have the ability to know when they are just out of the focus range. Food can be a great encouragement but be careful it doesn't affect the water clarity. Nikonos 111 with 1:3 extension tube, Oceanic 2000 flash. Ektachrome 64 1/60th @ F16.

(Below)
The pillars at the end of the pier harbour anemones and, at the right time of day, shafts of sunlight which combine well when shot with a wide angle lens. Handheld side lighting has added to the strength of this shot and it was taken in under 5 metres of water. Nikonos 111 with 15mm lens, Oceanic 2003 flash handheld on low power, 1 foot from the anemones 1/6oth @ F16. Ektachrome 64 film.

(Above)
Swanage Pier above water on a summer's day.

(Right)
Starburst shots abound under the pillars but a wide angle lens is essential when the viz is low. Nikonos 111, 15mm lens, 1/60th @ F22, Ektachrome 64 film.

(Below)
The shrimps situated on the wall beneath the dive shop inhabit the nooks and crannies in profusion. Nik 111, 1:3 extension tube, Oceanic 2000 flash, Ektachrome 64 film 1/60th @ F16

and white ones growing from the pillars. However, the best specimens are at the end of the Pier where topside its out of bounds to the public. Its dark here but the viz can be excellent and the sun shafts down to inspire almost anyone.

Along both sides of the Pier near the outer edges you will find thin strands of seaweed stretching to the surface. Using the popular sunburst techniques and framing the shape and the contours of the weed in the shadow of the pier can produce good silhouette shots.Shooting into the sun should need apertures of F22 so bracket with shutter speeds up to and including 1/250th. A wide angle lens is ideal here.

The dilapidated section of the Pier near the end extends to a width of seven pillars. With a shingle and stone bottom, viz can be excellent but because of the extended pier planking topside light levels are reduced. In this area there are metal frames lying in the right hand corner with several anemones growing vertically. They are quite large and suitable for a Nikonos Close Up Outfit and 28mm lens/framer. If you intend to work this site a lot, settle down, take your fins off and get to work.

At Swanage Pier you can spend 90 minutes of constructive, concentrated, enjoyable underwater photography. You've been careful, patient and quiet. You've had no worries about time and depth, boat cover or your buddy's well being. Its an ideal location to take your first underwater photographs or to capture a prize winner. It's a great location to sharpen up your skills and its so easy to dive.

I know the Pier well and think its perfect for underwater photography. Are there any other better sites in the UK which UP readers know of?

Martin Edge

UP Overseas in Cyprus
with Benny Sutton

Like everyone else, I like to read about the exotic dive locations throughout the world in this and other publications. Through words, and more importantly, pictures we can get some idea as to whether we would like to visit the places we read about ourselves. In the majority of cases it is the nearest we'll actually get to being there (without taking out a second mortgage!).

One destination that, price wise, has traditionally offered good value to the migrant European diver is the Mediterranean. Admittedly it doesn't have the unrivalled marine life of the Red Sea but then it's horses for courses - I wouldn't take my family on holiday with me to Egypt! As a compromise between a diving holiday and a holiday with diving (subtly different), where there is civilisation above water and photographic opportunities below you can't do better than the easternmost island in the Greek Mediterranean, Cyprus.

Lying just 100km off the coast of the Lebanon the climate is assured, yet the culture owes more to the British and the Greeks than to the Middle East. Historically many influences have played their part in determining the island's culture. Roman and Byzantine ruins are numerous, testament to their diverse history. Underwater too, 2,000 year old amphorae and stone anchors are common, littering the sea bed next to wrecks of more recent vintage.

After the Turkish invasion in 1974 when the northern part of the island was occupied the potential for tourism in the south was recognised and development began. The Cypriots really know how to welcome the tourist, the people are genuinely friendly, the food is great beaches uncrowded and car hire reasonable.

The potential for diving was opened up when an operation called Cydive was started on the South West coast in the small town of Paphos some seven years ago. BSAC National Instructor Mark Caney along with Cherry Dobbins and their Cypriot partner Phivos Roussis have built Cydive into the premier operation out there. They offer the full range of BSAC, PADI, SAA and SSAC courses along with specialist courses such as....Underwater Photography. They also offer non-cattle boat diving.

Paphos makes an ideal base, picturesque waterfront tavernas, a good range of hotel and self-catering accomodation - it's increasingly developed but nicely so. A hire car is essential, both to get at the diving and for general sightseeing. The pine scented slopes of Mount Olympus in the Troodos mountains are within striking distance and make a nice day trip. Also close by are numerous ruins, excellent beaches and deserted coves to discover, if you take the dirt-tracks. Landrover Safaris are run by Cydive to the more remote spots, non-divers are welcome.

(Above) *Wrecks and clear water make great subjects and Cyprus offers both. Canon T70 in a Subal housing. Fill in flash with SR 2000. Kodachrome 25, 1/60th @ F5.6 in 3 metres on the Lighthouse wreck*

Impressive scenic diving exists all along the coast and can be easily reached from the shore, usually after a short clamber over rocks. Once in, the terrain falls into distinct habitats. Flat, eel-grass or weed covered plains alternate with sandy bottoms interspersed with rocky outcrops - but the most fertile grounds for U/W photography are the rocky gullies where overhangs, arches, caves and drop-offs are plentiful.

Until you get to know the site I would advise taking supplementary 15mm and close up lenses as the subjects vary from these extremes on every dive! No more than one in ten dives need be devoted to capturing the macro shots so dust off the extension tubes only on repeat sites.

I hope I can be forgiven for making comparisons again, but what Cyprus has that the Red Sea lacks, is wrecks. The two most popular for photography are the Achilleas and the Vera K. Both are offshore boat dives and both are conveniently shallow at ten metres.

(Above) *Using a wide angle in clear water allows large areas to be covered. Add a diver and you have an impressive scene. Nikonos V with 35mm and Subawider. Available light. Kodachrome 64 in 3 metres. 1/90th @ F5.6*

The Achilleas rests upside down, its most prominent feature being a large prop but is nowhere near as interesting as the Vera K, a Lebanese freighter fairly intact but in three main sections in a depressed crater. The bridge section is probably the most photographed U/W location in Cyprus, a shot of this very location titled "Hi There!" won me a bronze medal at Brighton. The surrounding area also holds much of interest with a huge (but not often observed) resident Grouper, a series of arches and more than enough assorted wreckage to explore.

The Lighthouse wreck is an equally large but un-named vessel lying in only three metres just twenty yards offshore! It's easy to find as the wreckage shows permanently and it can be snorkelled or dived. Due to its exposed position however, entry and exit requires flat calm so you should do it whenever conditions permit if only on a short stay.

Being shallow, the wrecks can be photographed easily by natural light. Finding the best angles usually requires an orientation dive but I find some 'formula' shots can be employed if short of bottom time.

For instance if the wreck is intact it can be as effective to swim off to the limits of visibility as it is to stay in close. Adding a diver in frame gives and idea of scale and sense of relationship (especially when showing your work to non-divers). Shots of divers peering into or out of wreckage can also be effective but personally I think that flash spoils the feel unless used well off-camera to highlight selective areas.

If you're heading to 'blue water' diving with your camera for the first time, attention needs to be paid to the light, both for colour contrast and exposure. The difference in light levels between mid- water and the bottom can fool your meter. Readings should be taken from both and err on

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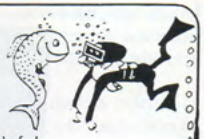

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(Right) *By varying the angle of lighting, the wreck changes shape and produces a dramatic frame for the diver. Nikonos with Subawider and Aquaflash handheld to the left. 1/60th @ F11. Kodachrome 64 film*

the underexposed and, of course, bracket heavily.

The land photography in Cyprus warrants taking a few extra rolls of film along to wile away those surface intervals. The countryside is superbly scenic and, in the villages, traditional Greek life continues much as it has done for centuries. Beware, the whitewashed buildings should be underexposed by a stop for safety.

The sunsets are also exceptional, all reds and oranges. I have spent many a twilight hour chasing the sun down the coast, looking for a suitable foreground to do it justice. Remember though that because of the lower latitude on the globe, when the sun goes, it disappears behind the horizon in a matter of minutes, so time it and be ready to shoot fast.

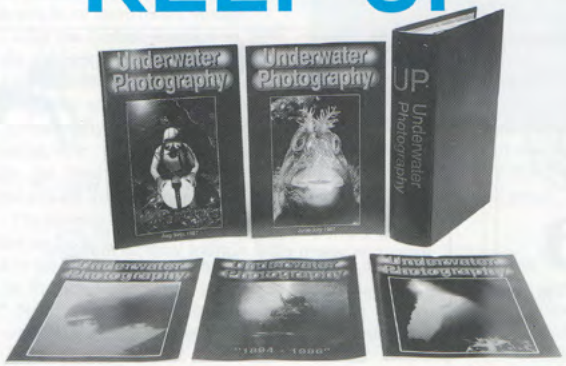
Next year should see cheaper flights and a subsequent increase in visitors to Cyprus. Hotels and self catering appartments are springing up every year to cope with the increase in demand but it should be many years, if ever, that it reaches saturation as it has in some other Mediterranean countries.

Probably the best value to get you there is to shop around for a package. A word of advice though, don't be fobbed off with a flight to Larnaca which is a three hour onward road journey. Paphos airport is now getting regular international flights from all large UK airports.

So, if you're looking for an inexpensive, attractive location, have a look at Cyprus.

Benny Sutton

KEEP UP



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How was it done?

Ronan Quinlan shoots Fungie, the dolphin

Taking pictures of dolphins is, at the best of times, a chancy business. When I heard that two divers, Ronnie Fitzgibbon and John O'Connor, in Dingle, Co Keery had managed to "tame" one, I was off. Cameras and diving gear packed, I headed west.

I was fortunate in that I knew the two divers involved. My purpose was to take black and white pictures, under and over the water. I think black and white is far more difficult to shoot (effectively!) underwater than colour. If conditions are not perfect, you can only try to play with the contrast. My problem was to have some dry cameras for the surface shots as well as the housed gear. This meant taking two boats, one a small cabin cruiser, the other an inflatable. This served two purposes. On the one hand I kept cameras and other land gear dry. On the other, I had a boat for the dolphin (named Fungie) to play around. This was to provide me with a target when he jumped. It also ensured a human factor in the pictures which was important to the story.

The equipment chosen for the underwater work was a Nikon F3 with 20mm lens behind a dome port on an Ikelite housing. For overwater shots I used a Nikon F3 with 105, 50 and 20mm lenses and had a 200 and 300mm which were never used.

Underwater, the dolphin was a treat. He came close - too close sometimes - and stayed for long periods. This allowed me to shoot lots but it was difficult to manoeuvre precisely and every time I moved, he moved. He had a big advantage being very agile in the water. Using flash was out of the question as, apart from the difficulty of coverage (he's nearly 12 feet long) I had been warned that he disappears if a flash is fired and will not return for an hour or more.

The day was bright and the viz was about 3 metres so it was necessary to remain in shallow water to maximise the available light. Going down to 9 metres it was too dark so I decided to up-rate my Tri-X 400asa film to 800asa (to increase contrast) and was getting a light reading of 1/125th. There was too much movement to capture so I had to have a faster shutter speed. Nearer the surface the light increased to give speeds of 1/250th and 1/500th at apertures around F5.6.

All in all I spent 3 days with Fungie and found that the surface shots were more difficult than the underwater! If there were boats around, he would jump near them (if he was in the mood!) and if there were snorkellers, he would play with them, sometimes jumping and sometimes not. The only answer was to keep the camera to my eye but this proved very tiresome in a neoprene suit and my arms soon began to ache. It would have been better to change for the surface shots or wear a membrane dry bag. Just as underwater, fast shutter speeds were needed to freeze the action and I was using 1/1000th and faster wherever possible.

I have always made a practice of never mixing black and white and colour on a shoot believing that it is better to concentrate on one and do it properly. Trying to do both invariably ends up with neither being perfectly satisfactory. Three days may seem a lot but the actual shooting time can be quite short, especially in late autumn when conditions are not always perfect.

The thrill of diving with a creature like this is indescribable. He's the perfect poser and takes an interest in strangers and strange looking cameras. This makes him the perfect subject and a unique underwater experience.

If you are tempted to travel to see Fungie, you would be well advised to contact one of the original "buddies" who are more than helpful to visiting divers. You can contact them through me at 9 Ashfield Park, Mulhuddart, Dublin 15. Tel 0001 202504

Ronan Quinlan

Photographing sharks
with Jeremy Stafford-Deitsch

Sharks present a special challenge to the underwater photographer. Usually shy, but sometimes dangerous, it is no easy thing to capture their immense beauty on film.

When discussing sharks it is nessessary to move from generality to specific species and particular techniques. Here I will outline techniques that have worked for me with the grey reef shark (Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos) in the hope that others will be encouraged to experiment for themselves. I have illustrated my article with other species and brief captions but would not advise someone to attempt to photograph a particular species without their being well informed about its behaviour.

Diving on Red Sea and Indo-Pacific reefs, one often sees grey reef sharks. They are typical looking sharks with compact bodies and a prominent black edge to the tail. Grey reef sharks are usually 5 feet or less in length and dramatic subjects for a photograph. However, they are not always as timid as they appear and must be treated with respect. There are clear-cut rules when photographing these sharks.

The grey reef shark does not like to he harrassed or followed. It is thought that this species is vulnerable to predation by larger sharks such as the tiger shark. If a grey reef shark is followed then it may flee but alternatively it may respond by going into the infamous 'threat display' - pectorals lowered, snout lifted and erratic slowed swimming. This is a warning by the shark that it is about to turn on its protagonist.

A few weeks ago I was diving on a reef in the Coral Sea beyond the Great Barrier Reef. Another diver had a video camera and was anxious to capture the grey reef shark on film. It was dusk - a time when even the most docile shark can become bold. I came across this diver following a grey reef shark and trying to film it.. To my horror, the shark made no attempt to flee but rather went into the classic threat display. The diver had no idea that the shark, frozen five feet in front of him, was moments away from launching an attack. I managed to intercept my friend and prevent a disaster but there is a clear message in this: know what species of shark you are dealing with and what you can and cannot do.

Divers have been bitten by grey reef sharks when they tried to photograph the display - the firing of the strobe apparently triggering the attack. So if you come across a grey reef shark that seems to be swimming erratically, don't photograph it!

(Above) *Grey reef sharks gather in a pretty setting. The coral head has some dead fish hidden behind it. Fujichrome 50 was chosen to bring out the pink of the soft corals. Nikon F3, 24mm lens, wide angle strobe on medium power, Fujichrome 50, F5.6 @ 1/60th in the Sudanese Red Sea.*

In fact there is a dark side to the grey reef shark's personality. I was once focusing my camera on a butterfly fish. Looking through the viewfinder I suddenly saw a gaping mouth speeding towards me at a blinding speed. On reflex I released the shutter. When I got the film processed I could make out the blurred, charging shape of a tiny grey reef shark perhaps only a foot and a half in length.

Despite their undeniable aggression, grey reef sharks feed on small bony fish and cephalopods. Thus they can be attracted in to feed by taking dead fish down on a reef. If there is a current flowing then in all liklehood the sharks will appear from down current. This allows the photographer to set up the scene: pick out an attractive coral head or sea fan and place the bait next to it so that the sharks will swim into a chosen

(Above) *The great white shark can only be safely photographed from within a shark cage.*
Nikon F3, 24mm lens, available light, F5.6 @ 125th, Kodachrome 64 in South Australia.

(Above) *Photographing oceanic white tips is an unnerving activity as the sharks do not hesitate to approach divers, even under unbaited conditions.*
Nikon FE2, 24mm lens, wide angle strobe, F8 @ 250th, Ektachrome 100 off Hawaii.

setting. You don't need masses of fish either: one good sized barracuda will do. The more bait there is, the more chaos that is likely to ensue, and of course you are trying to control the situation. Furthermore, the bait should be securely tied down or it may vanish in seconds!

Sometimes the sharks are pugnacious and sometimes they are timid. In my experience, the grey reef sharks of the Red Sea tend to be more cautious than their Pacific brothers. If you are trying this technique for the first time, you would do well to observe from a distance to see what happens. Spearing fish in the presence of sharks is like waving a red rag in front of a bull. It is better to have the fish caught previously.

Feeding grey reef sharks can be frustrating. They can hang in the distance or flash in for a spectacular frenzy. It might look good but it's hopeless for a still photographer. The slower the sharks move, the better the pictures are likely to be and it takes a few days for them to calm down enough to be photographed properly.

My favourite camera set up for photographing medium sized sharks at a close range is a Nikon FE2 with a motor in a housing. I use a wide angle strobe on a low power setting to avoid over exposing the white underbelly of the shark. With flash sync of up to 1/250th I can freeze the swiftest action. I find a 24mm lens behind a dome is ideal - I can get all of the shark in and also a bit of the reef on which he lives.

Once grey reef sharks have been attracted in, common sense takes over. They are looking for the food and obviously one does not want to sit on top of it. The best time to get pictures is usually when the sharks first turn up: they make a few cautious, close approaches before grabbing the bait. Once the bait is taken, however, they can go wild, charging all over the place. It is best to retreat at this stage. Strobes that emit a powerful whine when recycling seem to fascinate excited sharks - I've had a few bitten!

Always wear a full suit when feeding sharks: on rare occasions they will butt you. If this happens, retreat immediately. Also, keep turning around all the time - the sharks instinctively sneak up from behind. Another point: time and time again I've seen grey reef sharks take particular interest in clear and brightly coloured fins. I always wear black fins and would recommend others do the same.

There is another, remote danger when feeding grey reef sharks. That is, the larger, more dangerous species might be attracted in. This can happen. If any other species of shark turn up that is larger than the grey reef shark, then I would leave the area. I would imagine that if a fifteen foot tiger shark or great hammerhead put in an appearance, most divers would need little encouragement to do likewise.

If all this sounds like lunacy, then let me say that I and others have fed and photographed grey reef sharks on hundreds of occasions without mishap.

Photographing grey reef sharks is, for me, part of a fascinating adventure.

Jeremy Stafford-Deitsch

Jeremy's book "Shark - A Photographer's Story" is published by Headline Books and costs £14.95.

Back to Basics

Making a concious decision to take up underwater photography is something we all must have done at some stage but the level on which we operate depends on our personal circumstances, finances and the degree of our interest/commitment.

Far less concious a decision or question is **WHY** do we take underwater photographs and it is this basic question which, if asked at periodic intervals, will help to keep you and your attitude to underwater photography on a sane plane.

Simplifying your subjects will make your underwater photography much easier and far more effective. Rolls of film shouldn't be needed to achieve shots like this if you do one roll of test exposures which will then set you up for correct exposures every frame.

There are many reasons for taking underwater photographs. For most of us the first is usually to record the marine life we see. These results are then shown to fellow divers and non-diving friends for a mixture of their entertainment and to boost our ego. No harm in this whatsoever. That's one of the main underlying reasons why we're attracted to the hobby in the first place.

This situation can lead to a variety of follow-on activities, the start of which is a slide show to your fellow divers. Then, depending on their reaction, (and let's assume it's favourable), even the faintly ambitious will be encouraged to produce and show more material. This is when we must ask the question WHY because things can get out of hand.

The pleasure/ego aspect is fine as long as finances and time permit but what so often happens is that the whole delivery gets out of proportion with thoughts of perhaps two projector audio visuals, trips to exotic locations and generally going overboard to impress and produce a lot of material. It can see you going away with dozens of rolls of film (when was the last time you shot dozens of rolls on land, let alone a whole roll in one day?) That's fine if the results come out as planned but usually this whole expanded process swamps the original enjoyment of taking photographs underwater. The whole thing starts to take on oversize proportions and, above all, it gets too serious. You've spent a lot of time and money and you want to get the most out of it. That leads to increased pressure and major disappointments if the shots don't come out. This over emphasis can totally dominate a diving trip; if the underwater photographs don't come out, the trip was a total failure, regardless of how fantastic the diving actually was.

That's when WHY must be asked again. Do we need this pressure? Can't we get enjoyment on a smaller scale? If you still want to get stuck in with dozens of rolls of film etc and produce masses of material, then fine. Carry on and accept the consequences. But if you've got to this stage and are starting to get put off underwater photography because it seems so intensive and you aren't producing the material, take a step back and slow down. Ask the question WHY?

If you are in a hurry to take underwater photographs, it's usually because you've got limited dive time either on a particular day or on the trip as a whole and you want to make the most of it. This gives rise to sayings like "Always use a whole roll of film per dive". "Don't forget to bracket (take extra shots at one stop either side of the estimated correct aperture)" and "Take several shots of the same subject, just in case". These will give you a better chance of getting some good results. The secret of success, it seems, is directly linked to the volume of film exposed. It's time to ask WHY again.

If you are shooting whole rolls, bracketing and taking several shots of the same subject, doesn't that mean that you don't know if your shots are going to come out? If so, wouldn't it be better to concentrate on how to get the shots right with a few frames rather than still be uncertain after a whole roll? So the answer to the question "WHY do I shoot whole rolls of film?" is probably "Because I'm out of control and I haven't taken the time to find out what works so I have to try and get the shots by using rolls and rolls of film."

At this stage it would be so much better to go back to basics and get enjoyment from finding things out like: what's the correct aperture to use with flash etc. So many of us are so wound up and in a hurry to take photographs underwater that it seems like a waste of time to spend time exposing test rolls of film. Yes it does seem like a waste of time but, if you do it just once, it will let you forget about bracketing and using whole rolls etc because you will know exactly what settings to use. In that way you will take away a lot of the self-inflicted pressure and so enhance your enjoyment of underwater photography.

Available light and a piece of card cut out to look like a ray were the basic elements for this shot. It was taken in the Med but could have been done almost anywhere. If you find flashguns and accessories too complicated, go back to basics with available light and simple techniques. Its very easy and enjoyable.

In future Back to Basics, we'll find out how to know more about getting the most from your camera and so increase the chances of success without resorting to rolls and rolls of film.

Next issue, we'll start with available light and work our way through to artificial light from electronic flashguns and continuous light sources.

Peter Rowlands

UP in Antibes, France

The 14th Festival of Underwater Photography

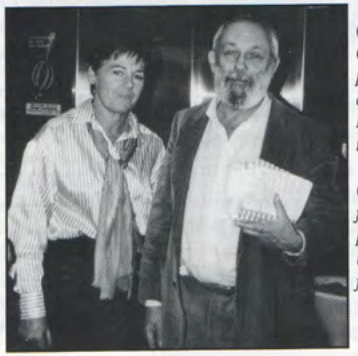
The following is an account not only of a truly international competition but also of a festival in the true sense of the word. A meeting place for like-minded participants as well as the general public. It has been staged for 14 consecutive years and must be able to claim to be the most established and largest event of its kind, certainly in Europe and maybe even in the world. It is the Antibes Festival and it was held on December 2nd to 6th 1988. That it has continued for so long without UK underwater photographers knowing too much about it is another indication of our insularity when it comes to events outside the UK.

The original idea was dreamt up and materialised by one man, Daniel Mercier, backed by a small team who amazingly manage to put on an annual show which not only captures the imagination of the general public but also keeps the specialists stimulated. They are constantly on the lookout for new material to show. Representatives of the Organisers go to all of the other events and approach underwater photographers whose work has impressed them. Both Mike Portelly and Mike Valentine were actively encouraged to submit their films after they showed work at Brighton. It is in this way that Antibes keeps its position as the leading Festival for up to date quality.

Part of the success of this event must be due to the town and the country in which it is held. The town of Antibes provides the 5 story building in which all aspects of the event are housed, and France has a population steeped in maritime history with the Mediterranean shore forming its southern boundary. Add to this a remarkable succession of French underwater pioneers and you have an inbuilt response which eclipses most other countries. This combination brings over 15,000 visitors over 4 days and produces reassuring queues on the Saturday and Sunday.

The building in which the Festival takes place is a 5 story community building with meeting rooms and a projection room in the basement and a large theatre which must seat 2000 people on the first floor. There is masses of hanging space and even a restauraunt/canteen and bar on the top floor.

Another reason for the events continued success is the time of year which it is held. The usually hectic Cote d'Azur in the summer becomes a sleepy but warm location in winter; an ideal venue with temperatures still usually in the 70's; a perfect place



(Above) *One of Manfred Burkert from Germany's portfolio which won the top prize and 3000 francs. Double exposures did well in the competition. Another shot of Manfred's appears on the front cover of this issue.*

(Left) *Full time organiser Daniel Mercier finds time to pose with his wife for a festival portrait. It is due to their untiring organisation that Antibes has become the biggest festival in Europe and probably the world.*

(Above) *The judges manage a smile after three days hard work to arrive at their decisions.*
(Right) *British judge Gillian Lythgoe and French underwater film maker Christian Petron are forced to hold a copy of UP.*

(Right) *Children's art adorned the walls providing some lovely ideas and themes. The innocence and simplicity of delivery served to point out that adult underwater photography can be too complicated at times and could benefit from simplification.*

(Right) *The main foyer combined trade stands with static educational displays featuring man's future in the sea. It is this educational aspect to the Antibes Festival which attracts such a response from the general public.*

to spend a few days away from the British winter to mingle and converse with the greats of the underwater world.

There is a large selection of trade stands and book stalls in the foyer together with several invited print displays. The result is an array of images from children's art to professionally produced prints which serve as the perfect stimulus.

For underwater photographers, the main attraction is the presentation of the results of a most comprehensive competition. There are sections for all the usual categories plus many more special awards and several panels of well qualified and sensibly chosen judges spend days arriving at their final choice. The amount of serious effort which goes into the judging is very impressive. But it doesn't just end there. In the film and AV sections, the general public can sit in on the projection too. This means that keen film makers or AV producers can see the total entry and so gain a much more accurate impression of what eveybody is up to in terms of techniques, deliveries and standards.

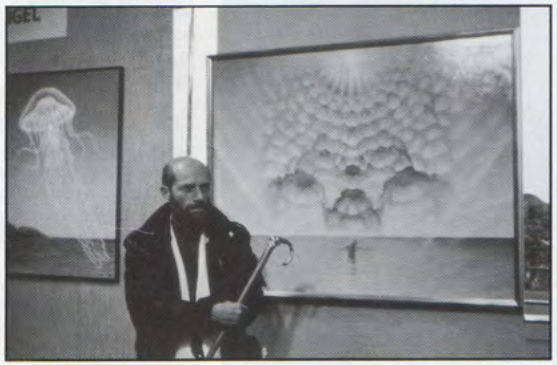
Now personal opinions will always differ (especially if you haven't won) and that's where Antibes is really different. After the awards are announced at a faultless ceremony on the Saturday afternoon (this gives the winners plenty of time to celebrate and have their brains picked and hands shaken), there are special meetings on the Sunday where entrants and any interested parties can sit down with the judges and discuss why what won what and so get some definite feedback as to the direction of their underwater photography. Being able to do this in a relaxed but no-nonsense environment is a really major benefit. It's a pleasure to see a knowledgeable panel of judges discussing and defending their decisions and listening to a free flow of ideas and comments. It can only help to keep underwater photography in the right direction.

Once the winners are known, their entries are projected to the general public. This gives all those who attend a chance to study the entries in detail and find out their winning qualities. The films and videos are re-shown every two hours on the Saturday after the presentations and all day Sunday. For those who come to Antibes to learn, there's no better way. Being able to watch such high quality material more than once is an invaluable way of learning new techniques and deliveries.

This year the British did well with Mike Valentine winning the Gold for his 16mm film "Sea Gypsy". The continental audience loved it and showed no reticence in expressing their spontaneous applause. Mike Portelly also hit Gold with his video

(Left) *The audio visual judges discuss the results with the entrants and so leave no room for misunderstanding and provide a unique feedback for entrants.*

(Right) *Bengel, an artist from Cadaques, Spain who studied under Salvador Dali, was invited to display his marine paintings*



(Right) *The static displays showing Man's future plans for undersea living fascinated both young and old alike and they served as a reminder that we must look to the sea for most of our future resources.*

"Scubadiving" featuring Anika Rice learning to dive in the Red Sea. Mike also hit Gold with a commercial he directed for Halton Roy Productions entitled "Pepsi slice".

A special prize was awarded to the Anglia Television team who produced the excellent series on the Galapagos Islands which has been recently shown on British television. Most of the footage was shot by Dieter Plage.

In the still competition, Georgette Douwma won a prize for her colour prints and Linda Pitkin also won a prize for her colour slides.

All in all there were over 70 major awards and entries were received from all over the world although there was an obviously high percentage of European entrants. The attraction for entrants was not thousands of pounds of prizes or equipment but the prestige of winning. One slight disappointment was the mounting of the prints which, after hanging for 4 days, looked decidedly loose and tatty but a run round with a spray can could soon have sorted that out.

The organisation of the event is relaxed and faultless. They even take the show onto the road afterwards and travel around France for the next few months putting the prints and films on display in over 60 towns. Such coverage must guarantee the event's continued success and helps to generate attendance for the next event.

The results are available in print right after the presentation ceremony and, to encourage publicity through the press, duplicates of the winning entries are available the next day!

They that they even announce next year's dates so enough is enough. Put the 12th to 16th of October 1988 into your underwater photography calendar and make your way down to Antibes for a short winter break and an eye opening experience.

All of this must be very expensive, you must be asking but last year, the cost of entering the competition was 100 Francs (about £10) for an unlimited number of entries and this also included meals for two for four days and a place at the special buffet/party on Saturday night! Organiser Daniel Mercier is considering raising this to 200 Francs and even then it's ridiculously cheap.

Hopefully some enterprising travel agent will read this and offer a package from the UK?.....If not, make your way down there, sample the cuisine, drink the wine, soak up the atmosphere and see some great underwater photography.

Peter Rowlands

Competitions

1st International Underwater Photo Contest. The Royal Blue Dolphin Aqaba, Jordan May 22-28th 1988

This major new contest is to take place in Aqaba organised by the Aquamarina Hotel Club and NELOS, the Dutch diving federation. Each country has been asked to nominate a representative to compete as sponsored underwater photographers but others are being actively encouraged to come along to the event and compete under their own finance. This is a unique opportunity which should be of great interest to keen competing underwater photographers.

His Royal Highness King Hussein, a keen diver himself, will be present at the competition and will personally congratulate the winners.

An international panel of judges has been appointed including England's David George and journalists from the diving press worldwide will be in attendance for maximum publicity.

Anyone who has been to similar events where underwater photographers from all over the world congregate to practice their art will know how invaluable it can be to attend these events. Seeing how experts operate, the equipment and the techniques they use and their results will give the visitor an unparalleled opportunity to learn so much more about the sport. This event is even better than that because you may end up winning the main prize!

A full range of events are planned and tours are available from Marine Adventures, 307 Louizalaan, B1050 Brussels, Belgium. Telex 25008 B. Tel 32 2 6404060.

UP are sending a staff reporter (sorry, the vacancy has been filled) and we will be including a feature in the next available issue.

South Florida Underwater Photographic Society 5th annual world underwater photography contest

Entries are invited for this competition which is being held in conjunction with the Miami Underwater Photography Weekend being held at Barry University on April 30th 1988.

There are more than $5000 in prizes and entries must be in by April 18th 1988. For further details, contact World Underwater Photography Contest, PO Box 610217, N.Miami, Fl 33261-0217

Jacques Dumas Trophy

The CMAS are organising an underwater photography competition in remembrance of this unforgetable pioneer of the underwater world.

The competition is organised every two years and is open to underwater photographers all over ther world.

Entrants must submit four(4) 30x40cm unmounted colour prints and four(4) slides. They must not have won or been placed in this competition previously and they must have been taken underwater.

The winner will win $1000 and a handsome trophy. This was won last time by England's Peter Scoones.

Entries must be sent to CMAS to arrive no later than 31st December 1988. Further details are available from CMAS/ Jacques Trophy, 47 Rue du Commerce, 75015 Paris, France.

UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

WIN A TRIP FOR TWO TO EGYPT

Entries are invited for this major international competition being organised by the British Society of Underwater Photographers on behalf of the Egyptian State Tourist Office.

RULES

1. The competition is open to underwater photographers from all over the world.
2. Entries must be in the form of 35mm colour slides in 2"x2" mounts which must have been taken underwater in the Egyptian Red Sea.
3. Up to six slides per category can be entered by each entrant.
4. **There are three categories:**

A. Pictures where the predominant subject is free swimming or drifting, e.g. fish (individuals or groups), Planktonic life, turtles etc.

B. Pictures where the predominant subject is bottom dwelling, e.g. corals, anemones, octopus, crabs, starfish, scenery or any other subject that is not moving at the time of photography.

C. Pictures where the predominant subject is man in the sea, e.g. Divers and snorkellers etc.

In each of the three categories, the judges will be looking for pictures that demonstrate the attraction of the Egyptian Red Sea for its colourful marine life and diving activities. In each class, the inclusion of Man, fish or static material as well as the main subject is accepted. There is no objection to multiple exposures or other creative techniques providing the resulting picture is suitable for the promotion of the Egyptian Red Sea diving tourism.

All slides must be marked with a spot in the bottom left hand corner when viewing the slide as you wish it to be projected. In addition, please write your name on each slide and fill in the entry form in as much detail as possible.

The entries will be judged by two leading underwater photographers, a representative from the Egyptian State, one from a land photography magazine and one from a diving magazine. The results will be announced at a special venue in April 1988 (the exact date will be notified shortly).

The Egyptian State Tourist Office reserve the right to use the winning entries to publicise diving in the Egyptian Red Sea for 12 months from the final date of entry.

All entries must be well packed and sent to BSoUP, 4 Greyhound Road, London W6 8NX to arrive no later than 31st March 1988. Return postage must be included if entries are to be returned.

DEADLINE EXTENDED TO 31ST MARCH 1988

OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

Please accept the following slides:

	No of slides
Category A: Free swimming life	
Category B: Bottom dwelling life	
Category C: Divers	

The slides were taken on a trip to.....In 19.....

PRIZES

The winner in each of the three categories will receive two tickets for a diving and sightseeing week in Egypt. The visit must take place at the time stipulated by ESTO and the winners must take part in a local reception to promote and publicise the Competition and so the tickets cannot be transferred and there can be no cash in lieu. However, in the event of one individual winning more than one award, the winner can nominate others to accompany the visit.

The results will be announced at a special reception in April 1988 to which the winners and the "nearly wons" will be invited to attend.

The decision of the Organisers shall be final and binding and the Egyptian State Tourist Office reserve the right, without restriction or payment, to use the winning slides to promote diving in the Egyptian Red Sea for 12 months from the entry date.

I have read and agree to be bound by the rules.

NAME AND ADDRESS	SIGNATURE:-
	DATE:

No entries will be returned if return postage is not included. Please pack your entries well and send them to BSoUP, 4 Greyhound Road, London W6 8NX to arrive no later than March 31st 1988.

Painting underwater with Andre Leban

(Above) *Andre displayed his work at the Antibes Festival in 1987 and attracted a great deal of interest. He's more interested in form and colour rather than detailed marine life.*

(Above) *Andre at work on the seabed off Corsica. Each canvas has to be evenly covered with a protecting coat before immersion. Andre takes about half an hour to complete a painting.*

As underwater photographers using lenses and film emulsion as our recording techniques, we capture the underwater world in sharp detail on minute pieces of film. The results of our work are usually accurate representations of the scene in front of the camera, taken in an instant; a fraction of a second which immortalises an image.

For one man, though, the camera cannot record what he sees nor capture the colours he wants so his artistic upbringing and life spent in around and under the sea has led him to work as one of the few underwater artists in the world.

Andre Leban may be a name which Cousteau followers remember for he spent a considerable time on board Calypso in those early, exciting and pioneering days. It was whilst diving to 330 feet using helium that Andre became fascinated by the blue colour of water, his senses enhanced no doubt by breathing helium at depth, and so began the urge to record the underwater world and its unique colours.

In 1966, Andre made his first canvas underwater. There were several technical problems to overcome but eventually he found a coating which, when applied over the whole canvas, would protect it whilst underwater. The paints weren't a problem as they were oil based and thick in texture.

A native of France and a frequent visitor to the Mediterranean, Andre spent a great deal of time painting in the clear shallow waters, producing a pleasing blend of real and imaginary images but with one overall effect. Andre's delivery on the canvas gives one the feel of being underwater without going into any detail. There are very few fish or marine creatures, he prefers to concentrate on the colours - the shades of blue which we as underwater photographers can so often strive to filter away.

Diving with conventional scuba equipment, each canvas takes about 1/2 an hour to complete. The paints are applied with a flexible palette knife with a few more finishing touches being added back on the surface.

Andre is a great believer in the future of underwater painting and is excited by the childrens art which is displayed each year at the Antibes Film Festival. Here he sees a naive simplicity and a freshness of approach which will hopefully continue in their work and encourage others to try this medium.

The final touch to a Leban canvas is his signature before it is displayed; destined to adorn a collector's wall, bound to catch the passing eye and give the pausing viewer a glimpse into the mood and atmosphere which we, as photographers, find so hard to capture.

Peter Rowlands

Short Ends

Derek Berwin resigns from Diver Magazine

Derek Berwin has resigned as underwater photography consultant to Diver Magazine and the Editorial listing in the magazine confirms that this is so. Mike Portelly remains as the sole consultant.

Underwater Photography Workshops on Likely Lad, Salcombe

Bill Bunting, a keen underwater photographer and skipper of the long established "Likely Lad" charter boat running out of Salcombe, Devon has laid on two special bookings for underwater photographers.

The first is from May 31st to June 4th 1988 when Peter Rowlands will be on board to help out with any advice and to process your films each day. With the BSoUP Splash In at Bovisand the following weekend, it will be an ideal time to practice your techniques for the On the Day Competition.

The second is led by Les Kemp from Sept 5th to 9th 1988. He will be on hand to advise and process each day.

The waters around Salcombe and the coastline scenery are beautiful so these should be enjoyable and productive workshops. 8 places per trip are available and you are advised to book early as it is hoped to fill up quite quickly.

For further details, please contact Bill Bunting, Likely Lad, 39 Fore Street, Kingsbridge, Devon. Tel 0548 2934.

Ocean Realm reappears

Followers of the USA diving publication market will probably not be surprised to hear that Ocean Realm is back. It seems to have had more comebacks than Frank Sinatra. But this time, says the new publisher , it's here to stay. Charlene deJori is the new Editor and she plans to continue Ocean Realm's tradition for high quality underwater photographs, well printed and laid out.

Each issue will appear quarterly and should reach around 25,000 readers. Contents will include exciting features concentrating on their readers' expressed areas of interest. Chosen for their visual appeal as well as editorial content, features are designed to stimulate, inform, educate and entertain. Feature topics of continuing interest include expeditions to exotic and remote dive destinations, as well as the popular Caribbean sites, portfolios of outstanding underwater photographers, profiles of people who have made contributions to the underwater community and marine and biological concerns .

Ocean Realm costs $5.95 in the USA. It is not known at present whether a UK magazine distributor will import Ocean Realm but if you want copies please go direct to Ocean Realm Subscriptions, 342 West Sunset Street, San Antonio, Texas 78209, USA. Tel 0101 512 824 8099.

Nikonos Shootout

Nikon USA have announced three Nikonos shootouts for 1988 in Grand Cayman, Cozumel and Bonaire. They are week long events with competitions for all categories of underwater photography with Nikonos equipment. Kodak film is provided and results are processed the same day for instant appraisal.

The atmosphere is informal and well known guest lecturers will give talks on techniques to get the most from your Nikonos equipment. A varied social calendar is a feature of these shootouts and all those who attend come away having enjoyed and learnt a great deal.

The three venues have been specifically chosen for the quality of their diving together with their excellent onshore diving and processing facilities.

The Bonaire Shootout is from June 11-18th, the Cozumel is July 9-16th and Grand Cayman is in August. For further details of these interesting events, please contact Frank Fennell, Nikon USA, 623 Stewart Avenue, Garden City, NY 11530, USA. Tel 0101 516 222 0200.

Underwater Photography Weekends, Eyemouth

A new dive centre has opened in this popular diving area and underwater photography courses will be available this year.

The diving centre has air to 4500psi, a marine interpretive area, MCS sales, film processing,equipment hire and boat parking. There is also a self service shop and full caravan park and all-in holidays including accommodation, air and boat hire can be arranged..

Lawson Wood at the St Abbs and Eyemouth Marine Reserve is organising the weekend underwater photography course on May 7th and 8th 1988. Camera hire is available and there may be another course in September so for the latest details please contact Lawson Wood, Northburn Caravan Park, Eyemouth, Berwickshire. Telephone 08907 51050/50808/50426

New video housing from Greenaway Marine

Greenaway Marine are manufacturing housings for VHS compact camcorder type video cameras. They are made from PVC tube with clear end caps and a full range of controls.

The lens views through a specially moulded dome port which allows focusing by the diver from macro to infinity underwater. The housing is virtually neutral in water with handles positioned either side for easy control. Optional extras include a wide angle adaptor and video eye magnifier.

Housings are available from £595 for most makes of video camera and further details can be obtained from Greenaway Marine Ltd, Broad Hinton, Swindon, Wilts SN4 9PA. Tel 0793 73666/7.

In at the deep end

From April 2nd to September 30th 1988, the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television in Bradford will be showing "Ocean" featuring a remarkable voyage into the "inner space of the seas around us".

In addition, there is the "Living Planet" exhibition, described as a journey through the development of the earth, exploring man's impact on everywhere from the rain forests of Argentina to the deserts of Punjab.

The cost of admission to a single show of either exhibition is just £2.50 for adults and £1.30 for under 16's.

Further details are available from NMPFT, Prince's View, Bradford BD5 OTR. Tel 0274 727488

Would any UP readers who go to see this please send us a short account of what it's like?

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*Available in Orange or Green *Fully TTL compatible with Nikonos V *Supplied complete with arm and bracket *Guide No 24 (ft) with 100 asa *20mm angle of coverage *Manual or TTL modes *140 flashes on manual (More with TTL) ***Costs only £214.95 (plus £5 p&p)***

The Sea and Sea YS50 TTL flashgun marks a watershed for today's underwater photographer.
Never has a unit provided so much of what you want at a price that you can afford and its specification, for once, is based on what you really need.
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