Underwater Photography

Nov/Dec 2024
Issue 141

UwP

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WORLD TRAVEL AWARDS WINNER 2021 Indonesia's Leading Dive Resort

WORLD TRAVEL AWARDS WINNER 2022 Indonesia's Leading Dive Resort

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Underwater Photography

A web magazine

UwP141 Nov/Dec 2024

Cover shot by
Peter Stenberg

Underwater Photography *2001 - 2024*

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Editorial

Saluting Snoots

I think it's fair to say that underwater photography equipment accessories start out as an attempt to sell us more 'gear'; something to help us take different images that will stand out from the crowd in competitions but discarded when too many similar shots kept popping up.

A good example is the Magic Tube whose images initially caught the eye but then became tedious as it was extremely hard to find a subject that suited the technique. And yet the lack of success in competitions didn't seem to deter entrants.

The snoot, on the other hand, hit the scene with a bang with a shot from Keri Wilk entitled 'Stargazer Eyes' and after an early dodgy period when people just shot the wrong subjects, the techique lasted as more and more photographers chose the right subjects and different angles.

The result is that nearly all flashguns/strobes are available with a snoot accessory and some have been cleverly developed with different shaped masks, variable snoot angles as well as flip designs.

I'm primarily a video shooter so snoots don't really apply but I happily accept that they have cemented their place in the creative world and that they are still an effective choice for a lot of macro subjects.

Close ups

Traditionally, when you wanted your lens to focus closer, you added a + dioptre lens. The standard strengths were +1, +2 and +4; +3 was achieved by using the +1 and +2 together.

Underwater, in a housing behind a flat port, they worked well but you were committed to them for the dive. Enter the Wet Close Up Lens; initially designed to go over the Nikonos 35mm lens but it could be removed and fitted underwater.

Land camera manufacturers then designed Macro lenses for reflex cameras that could focus from infinity down to life size (the same size as the film frame or image sensor). These were ideal for underwater photography but, like so many things, we wanted to get closer and closer until we had to invent a new category - 'SuperMacro' - achieved by stacking close up lenses.

Then came Nauticam with their SMC range, capable of magnifications which made it possible to fill the frame with subjects just millimeters across - physically demanding but the resulting images were truly ground breaking both photographically and marine biologically.

Just as we pushed the photographic boundaries so too did our/your imagination to come up with beautiful bokeh backgrounds of complimentary colours, leading to introduced backgrounds using artificial aids such as reflectors, glitter and even the ubiquitous metal scouring pad. The potential seeming limitless and the effect, when well done, quite beautiful.

There are those whose passion is SuperMacro - glued to the viewfinder dive after dive, hour after hour - producing images of subjects only just apparent to the naked eye. There are websites dedicated to the artform and its discussions and even SuperMacro only competitions.

So we've come a long way from the humble close up lens and the images have been inspirational along the way but, for simple me, I can't envisage this branch of underwater photography developing any further because I can't see any further for it to go.

Go on then. Surprise me. Prove me wrong and I'll eat my (liquorice) hat.

Sat nav domes

Sat nav domes? What's he on about now? Well indulge me.

I suspect Pete Atkinson's excellent article on domes and split level shots will be glossed over by the majority of UwP readers because all the science has been understood and all the problems solved. All you have to do is earn enough spare cash to 'invest' in one or more of the excellent water contact lenses produced almost entirely by Nauticam and the amazing Edward Lai.

Make no mistake, the image of the underwater world is all the better because of him, his Company and their lenses but, just as with Macro developments, simple me can't see there being any other lenses we'll need but I am always prepared to eat my (still liquorice) hat.

So where does the Sat nav domes come in? Well, just as we don't have to know about domes to get excellent underwater images, so too the London cabbie doesn't need to learn 'The Knowledge' - all the streets/roads in London and the routes to go from one to the other. All they need is a Sat Nav in their cab.

Get it now?

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

Sea Save Foundation

Sea Save Foundation stands witness to the health of the oceans and the threats they face, we document problems and develop solutions, arm people with knowledge, and tools so they can make a difference.

With the public as our ally, we go to the United Nations and other global bodies to effect international change. We attend these meetings so we can offer creative, economically viable, sustainable, and environmentally friendly plans to decision-makers.

Stay Informed. Get our free weekly global ocean news summaries. Stay on top of the latest, critical issues affecting our oceans.

Your Virtual Front Row at CITES CoP! Our team leads efforts to protect endangered marine species from trade threats. Join us to stay on top of this crucial mission.

We will be live at the United Nations in 2025: We're pushing for the High Seas and Plastic Pollution Treaties. Our Ocean Week in Review is a featured commitment. Sign up for immediate updates.

SCUBA Auction Alert! Divers, here's your chance to hit all your global bucket-list destinations AND support ocean conservation. Sign up now for updates!

Signup now to receive information about all topics: SeaSave.org
Questions? Director@SeaSave.org

Sea Save Foundation is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization

Dive with Reef Check in the Red Sea

REEF CHECK CITIZEN SCIENCE EXPEDITION

July 5-12, 2025

Expand your skills on this Luxury Liveaboard Dive Experience aboard the MY Turquoise

- **Get certified as a Reef Check EcoDiver & Citizen Scientist**
- **Learn how to photograph for scientific research and conservation**
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- **Photo opportunities on healthy reefs & scenic wrecks**

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OFFICIAL submerge ADVENTURE

Seasick Productions

News, Travel & Events

Could You Be Underwater Photographer of the Year 2025?

The search is on for the world's best underwater photographs. UPY - the Underwater Photographer of the Year 2025 contest opens for entries on 1st November 2024 closes on 4th January 2025. The contest is widely regarded as the world's leading underwater photography competition, attracting thousands of entries. The winners are announced at a prestigious award ceremony in Mayfair, London, and showcased around the world in the mainstream media.

Chair of the judges, Alex Mustard said "UPY is the most important contest for underwater photographers, and is always packed with astonishing images being revealed for the first time. 2025 marks 60 years since Phil Smith was first awarded the title Underwater Photographer of the Year.

Today the contest is truly international with winning images coming from across the globe. Our last three overall winners were taken under ice in the Arctic Ocean, in the tannin-stained waters of the Amazon River, and at night close to the equator in the Maldives. ."

A new addition to the contest for 2025 is a category dedicated to coral reefs. This habitat arguably has the most colourful and highest concentrations of life on our planet, yet is also existing on the knife edge of the climate crisis. UPY invites any style of underwater photography linked to coral reefs for this important category.

UPY also welcomes PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) as a new category sponsor, who are linking up with UPY's highly prized Up & Coming category which celebrates new talent. PADI's Dave Murray said ""As the world's largest purpose-driven diving organisation, PADI is committed to making the underwater world accessible for all and creating positive ocean change. Sponsoring the 'Up & Coming' category in the Underwater Photographer of the Year 2025 competition aligns with our mission to inspire ocean exploration and conservation."

UPY is also very happy to be continuing our relationship with existing category sponsors The Crown Estate and the Save Our Seas Foundation, as well as all our prize sponsors, which include many of the leading brands in diving.

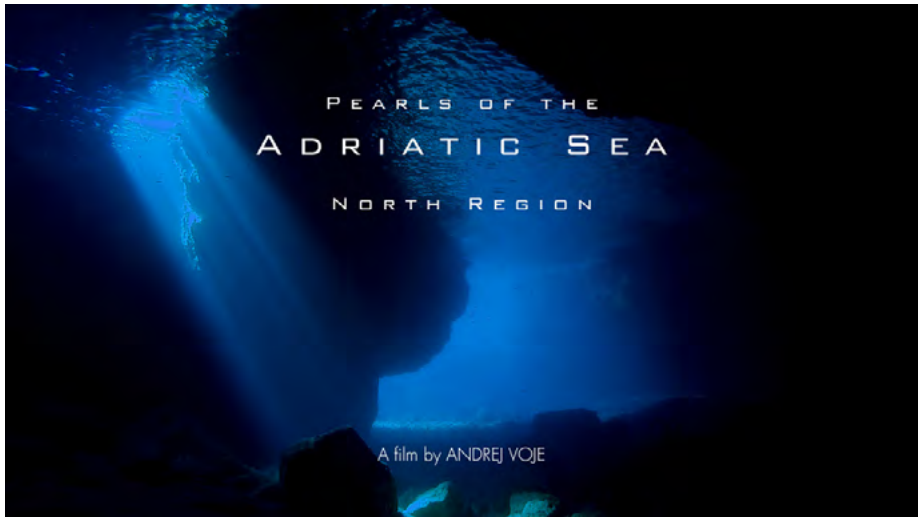
UPY is an annual competition, that celebrates photography beneath the surface. The competition is truly international and has 13 categories that test photographers with themes such as Macro, Wide Angle, Behaviour, Wreck and Conservation photography, as well as three categories for photos taken specifically in British waters.

The contest incorporates a bespoke results system, providing feedback to the photographers on how far through the contest every single image has progressed, so every entrant benefits from taking part. Our experienced judging panel consists of photographers Peter Rowlands, Tobias Friedrich and Alex Mustard.

Please contact:

info@underwaterphotographeroftheyear.com
www.underwaterphotographeroftheyear.com

Pearls Of The Adriatic Sea - North Adriatic



I would like to share with you the trailer for my first underwater documentary Pearls Of The Adriatic Sea - North Adriatic! With more than 30 years of experience as a diver, underwater photographer and videographer, I have captured the stunning beauty of the Northern Adriatic showing its fascinating marine life and hidden treasures. This is the first film in the series Pearls of the Adriatic Sea, which consists of 4 films. Later, the films Central Region, South Region and Underwater archaeological excavations on the island of Mljet will follow.

I have dedicated a considerable part of my life to exploring the underwater world. I have experienced many beautiful and extraordinary moments beneath the sea surface, so I feel the duty to share all these stories told by creatures from the underwater world with a wider audience. Until now, I have shared these stories through reports in magazines and newspapers, with contributions for TV shows and with lectures in schools, libraries and cultural centers. The audience was always impressed by the pictures, films and stories shown. This gave me the impetus to take the next step.

Now the time has come for these stories to be connected and presented in a documentary film.

https://vimeo.com/1012775010
www.pearls-of-the-adriatic-sea.com

Reef Check Citizen Science Expedition

Red Sea

July 5 - July 12, 2025

Embark on an extraordinary adventure aboard the My Turquoise boat, exploring the mesmerizing underwater world of the Red Sea. This trip isn't just about diving — it's about making a difference.

Partnering with Reef Check, a renowned non-profit organization dedicated to ocean conservation, we offer a unique blend of top-notch dive travel and citizen science. Contribute to vital ocean science efforts while experiencing some of the best diving the Red Sea has to offer.

•Expert Guidance: Learn from and work alongside accomplished marine biologist Dr. Ahmed Shawky PhD during the entire trip.

•Impactful Storytelling: Dive and connect with Linden Wolbert, Justin Lutsky and Abbey Blake who will be documenting your citizen science training, exploration and accomplishments throughout the voyage.

•Reef Check EcoDiver Certification: Learn to identify key indicators of fish, invertebrates, and substrates to assess coral reef health by collecting data and become a fully certified Reef Check EcoDiver.

•CoralWatch Training: Learn to quantify coral health and bleaching using the CoralWatch Health Chart.

•Marine Mammal Observation: Learn to professionally monitor whales, dolphins, and other marine mammals to help reduce the negative impact of operations on marine wildlife.

•Underwater Laser Photogrammetry: Learn about this unique tool to measure the body length of marine megafauna without disturbing the animals.

•Citizen Science: Participate in meaningful conservation work with Reef Check.

Reef Check

BENEATH THE SEA's 46th annual Oceans Exposition and Dive Travel Show

March 28, 29 and 30, 2025

BENEATH THE SEA's 46th annual Oceans Exposition and Dive Travel Show will once again be at the New Jersey's Meadowlands Exposition Center in Secaucus, New Jersey March 28, 29 and 30, 2025

This year BENEATH THE SEA will have almost 200 exhibitors from all corners of the world, 50 plus seminars and workshops presented by specialists and experts in their field, exotic destinations,

social events, and leaders from every segment of the dive industry, to entertain, inform and excite the experienced diver, new diver, and non-diver equally. These exhibitors represent the training agencies for scuba diving, manufacturers of scuba equipment and accessories are here at BENEATH THE SEA so that you may see, touch, and discuss what is new in scuba diving products. If you are a Dive Traveler, BENEATH THE SEA is filled with dive destinations, liveaboard dive boats, resorts, and airlines that will take you to those far-away places. If it is a new technique you want to learn -- be it digitally editing video, digitally manipulating your underwater slides, catching up to all that flash and dash on the Internet, finding out how you can save a life, or discovering the latest in mixed-gas diving, BENEATH THE SEA will have over 50 seminars, exhibits, and workshops explaining the latest from the fields of scuba diving, oceanography, Northeast diving, wrecks, rescue, and all kinds of underwater photography. While at the show, stop by the Woman Divers Hall of Fame booth and meet these stars of our diving world.

When business is done: PARTY ON!!! BENEATH THE SEA is a great place to meet and socialize with other divers, talk to the experts, and find that special buddy you've been looking for on every dive boat from New Haven to Papua New Guinea. Saturday is the busiest day at BENEATH THE SEA. Still, there is time for the V.I.P. awards dinner with its presentation of the annual Divers of the Year awards. Sunday the excitement continues with the Ocean Pals Sea of Sweets party and special events program for children and their families – children accompanied by adults admitted free.

And we're still making plans, keep an eye on our website:

www.BeneaththeSea.US

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- Huge Camera Room
- Very Few Stairs
- Small Resort - only 15 rooms

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www.nad-lembeh.com

New Products

Nauticam NA-A9III for Sony a9 III

The NA-A9III underwater housing provides unfettered access to all of the camera's key controls. On the inside, you will see a feat of engineering as access to important controls has been rerouted out to the left and right handles. This makes changing your settings on the fly a breeze allowing you to take full control of the creative process that we enjoy as image creators.

This latest housing for the Sony a9 III is sure to be a reliable tool for the professional and amateur alike.

Nauticam is continually developing new optical accessories that raise the bar of what is possible in underwater imaging. The unparalleled optical quality of Nauticam's Water Contact optics such as the FCP-1, WACP-1 or WWL-1B which offers up to 170° field-of-view, full zoom through, an almost 0" minimum focus distance with supported lenses.

For macro, the SMC-1, SMC-2 and SMC-3 all deliver tack-sharp super-macro magnification levels up to 4x with the Sony 90mm macro lens.

The standard optical glass viewfinder is very good and travel-friendly, but many photographers prefer the ease of a magnified viewfinder with an adjustable diopter. Nauticam produces a "straight" 180° enlarging viewfinder and a 45° angled enlarging viewfinder to enhance the ease of close-quarters work often associated with macro shooting.

The Nauticam system is temperature compensated, eliminating false alarms caused by a change in outside temperature, or from a camera heating up on an action-packed dive.

Model Number: 17437
Port Opening: N120
Depth Rating: 100m

www.nauticam.com

Nauticam Cooling Fan System for NA-R5II Housing

Nauticam is excited to announce a new innovation for the highly anticipated NA-R5II Housing for the Canon EOS R5 Mark II camera. This latest release builds on Nauticam's legacy of excellence, offering unmatched ease of use, ergonomics, and performance for underwater image makers of all creative disciplines.

Designed to elevate the potential of the Canon EOS R5 Mark II, the NA-R5II housing is compatible with Nauticam's comprehensive range of professional accessories and optics, setting a new benchmark for underwater imaging solutions.

Introducing the Patent-Pending Cooling Fan System

For videographers looking to push the limits, Nauticam has developed a game-changing Cooling Fan System—a patent-pending, in-housing technology that maximizes your camera's internal recording capabilities. Regardless of your resolution, frame rate, or compression settings, the Cooling Fan System ensures you can achieve your creative vision without overheating concerns.

Powered by two rechargeable AA batteries, the Cooling Fan System is effortlessly controlled via a dedicated button on the rear of the housing, enabling activation with a simple press of your right thumb—all while maintaining a firm grip on the housing. LED indicators provide real-time fan and battery status, making it easy to monitor and adjust as needed throughout your dive.

The NA-R5II housing is now shipping, and the Cooling Fan System will be available soon! As always, Nauticam remains committed to delivering the solutions that professional image makers demand—bringing your underwater projects to new creative depths.

www.nauticam.com

Diveandsee 30m USB Tethering Cable

Take Full Control Underwater: 30m USB Tethering Cable for Camera Remote, Live View, Start/Stop, Record. The DNC-1030 USB 3.0 Fiber-Optic Tethering Cable is designed to provide reliable high-speed data transfer for underwater photographers. With a 30-meter length, it enables fast tethering between your underwater camera housing and surface computer, delivering blazing 10Gbps speeds for efficient photo and video transfer.

This cable supports real-time feedback and remote camera control, allowing photographers to adjust camera settings from the surface and capture the perfect shot. Whether you're working with EOS Utility, Capture One, or other compatible software, this tethering solution boosts productivity and makes your underwater photography easier and more professional.

The DNC-1030 is perfect for underwater photography and videography, allowing seamless tethering between your camera and computer. Plug the waterproof connector into your underwater housing and connect the USB 3.0 port to your computer on the surface. This tethering system is easy to set up and provides real-time data feedback so you can make adjustments on the go.

After connecting the camera and your PC/Mac via USB, you can use Remote to perform Remote Shooting. You can check the composition, focus, and exposure on your PC/Mac screen before you shoot.

The 30m USB tethered cable costs $840.

www.diveandsee.com

BACKSCATTER

THE BEST BANG FOR YOUR BUCK

OLYMPUS E-M10 IV

Kraken Sports KR-S80 Flash

Dive into the depths with confidence and capture stunning underwater images with the KR-S80 Flash from Kraken Sports.

Designed for both discerning professionals and enthusiastic beginners, this versatile strobe is your perfect companion for underwater photography and videography.

Key Features:

Powerful Illumination: With 80 watt-seconds of power, the KR-S80 delivers brilliant lighting for macro, close-focus wide-angle, and even big animal photography.

Dual Functionality: The included 3000 lumen COB LED provides exceptional lighting for video work, making it a versatile tool for all your underwater adventures.

User-Friendly Design: Ergonomically improved for ease of use, the KR-S80 is powered by 2x high-capacity 21700 batteries, ensuring long-lasting performance.

Depth Rating: Reliable up to 330ft/100m, perfect for deep dives.

Lightweight: Weighing just 375g underwater, it's easy to handle and maneuver.

Fiber Optic Compatibility: Unlike its bigger sibling, the S160, the KR-S80 is fiber optic only, simplifying your setup.

RC02 Remote Control Compatibility: Adjust brightness, switch between flash and LED mode, and control up to two flashes simultaneously or independently with the RC02 remote control.

The KR-S80 Flash offers the perfect balance of power, simplicity, and versatility.

www.krakensports.ca

Nauticam Super Macro Converter SMC-3

Nauticam is proud to introduce the SMC-3, the latest evolution in our line of water contact optics! Designed as a renewed version of the acclaimed SMC-1, the SMC-3 boasts a lightweight build—now only one-third the weight of its predecessor—without compromising on optical performance.

SMC-3 Specifications

Dimensions 70mm x H 32mm
Weight in Air 307g
Weight in Water 215g
Max Magnification (*1) 2.4x (lens dependent)
Working Distance (*1) 51-103mm
Lens Construction 3 elements in 2 groups
Lens Coatings Anti-reflection Coating
Mount Thread Diameter M67
Depth Rating 100mm

Key Features

Ultra-Lightweight Design: Weighing in at just one-third of the SMC-1, the SMC-3 offers unparalleled portability for on-the-go use.

Superior Optical Performance: Enjoy the same exceptional clarity and precision you've come to expect from the SMC series.

Increased Working Distance: The redesigned lens allows for a greater working distance, meaning it's easier to use and provides enhanced versatility.

Premium Materials: Crafted with advanced materials to enhance durability while minimizing weight.

Cost-Effective: Slightly more affordable than the discontinued SMC-1, the SMC-3 delivers exceptional value.

www.nauticam.com

Canon EOS R1 Mirrorless Camera Announcement

Canon Inc. announced today that it is currently developing the Canon EOS R1, a full-frame mirrorless camera, as the first flagship model for the EOS R SYSTEM equipped with an RF mount and is aiming for a 2024 release.

We expect Nauticam NA-R1, Aquatica aR1, and Subal R1 underwater camera housings to be available shortly after the camera is released.

The Canon EOS R1 is a mirrorless camera geared toward professionals that brings together Canon's cutting-edge technology and combines top-class performance with the strong durability and high reliability sought in a flagship model. This camera will dramatically improve the performance of both still images and video and meet the high requirements of professionals on the frontlines of a wide range of fields including sports, news reporting, and video production.

This camera employs the newly developed image processor DIGIC Accelerator in addition to the pre-existing processor DIGIC X. The new image processing system, composed of these processors and a new CMOS sensor, enables large volume of data to be processed at high speeds and delivers never-before-seen advancements in Auto Focus (AF) and other functions.

www.backscatter.com

Seacam housing for the Sony a9 III

Like Seacam's other Sony housings—for the a1/a7S III and for the a7R V, for example—the new a9 III housing has the "compact" designation, reflecting the small form factor of Sony's Alpha 7 and Alpha 9 series cameras, but it's the same premium build and finish we've come to expect from Seacam.

As usual, the housing is milled from a saltwater-proof light metal alloy that is twice hardened and anodized, and top-quality materials are used throughout, including stainless steel and anodized aluminum buttons and dials, offering full control over the camera's functions. The Seacam housing for the a9 III is available from retailers such as Backscatter, priced at $5,710.

www.seacam.com
www.backscatter.com

Anti-Reflection Ring for Nikon Z 12-28mm f/3.5-5.6 PZ VR Lens

A 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 following lenses:

Nikon NIKKOR Z DX 12-28mm f/3.5-5.6 PZ VR Lens

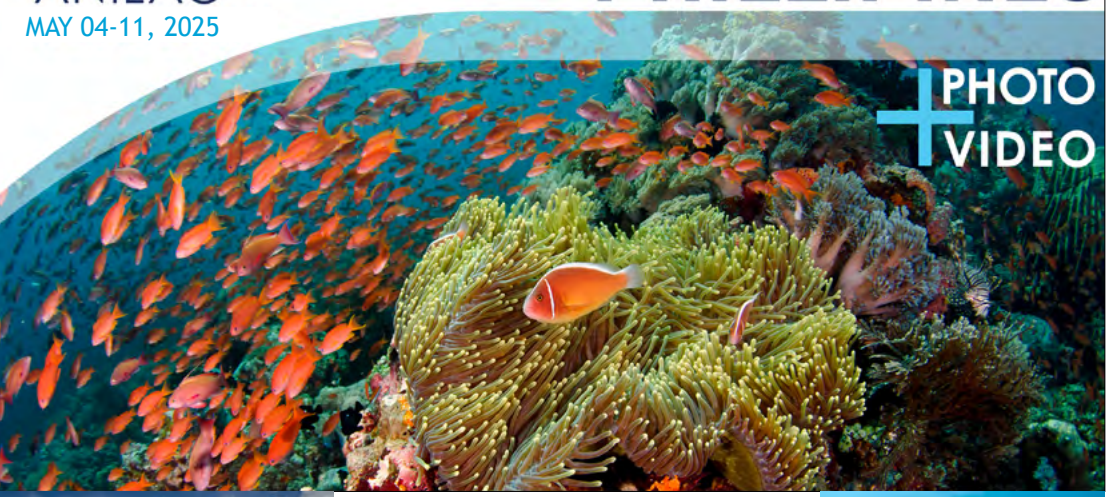
$10 from your Ikelite stockist.

www.ikelite.com

WORKSHOPS

PHILLIPINES

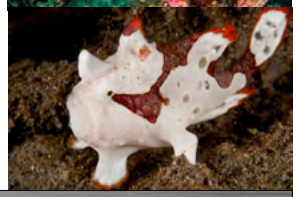
ANILAO
MAY 04-11, 2025



Join us May 04-11 2025 for a photo & video workshop held at Anilao's most beautiful resort.

Unlimited shore diving, daily boat dives, optional night and blackwater dives. Abundant, friendly support above and below the water.

A few spaces still remaining!



REEF
PHOTO & VIDEO
www.reefphoto.com

Scubalamp V6Kv3Pro Video Light

The V6K Pro v3 is a powerful and versatile video light, engineered to enhance the quality of your video and photography projects.
- Dual Buttons Switch with 9 Steps: offer precise control over light intensity.
- Supports remote control functions for added convenience, especially when using multiple lights simultaneously.
- Output: 120 degrees up to 12,000 lumens with a runtime from 60 minutes to 480 minutes depending on the settings.
- Compatible battery: Equipped with an 8*18650 battery pack for extended use.
- High Color Rendering Index (CRI): Boasting a CRI of Ra96, with CCK: 5600K, the light delivers true-to-life color reproduction.
870g 211mm×55mm.

www.scubalamp.com

Kraken Ultra Bright 5.5" 4K Underwater Monitor

Say hello to our new 'Mini Monitor'! Introducing the KRM05-3000 5" Ultra Bright Monitor, Kraken Sports' self contained 5" waterproof monitor.

www.krakensports.ca

Aquatica Canon EOS R 11 coming soon!

AQUATICA Digital

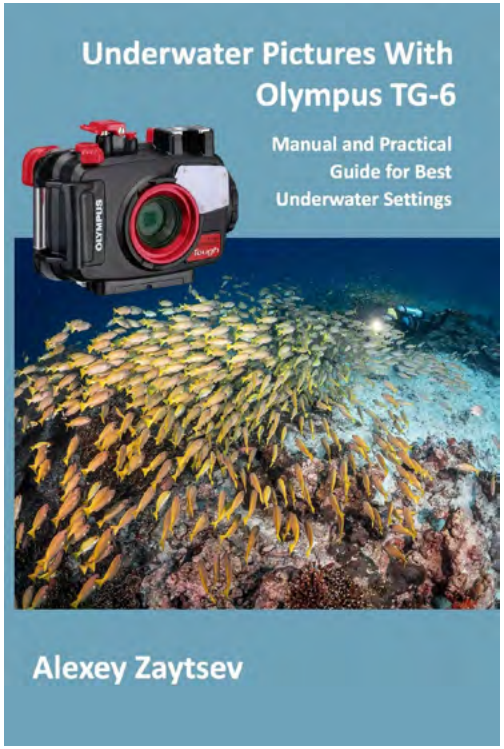
Aquatica housing for Canon EOS R5 II coming soon!
Pre-order yours now and save:
Regular price: $3,399.00 USD
Pre-order price: $2,889.00 USD
Save: $510.00 USD

www.aquatica.ca

www.uwpmag.com

Underwater Pictures With Olympus TG-6/7

by Alexey Zaytsev



This is the perfect underwater picture manual for anyone who wants to learn how to use the Olympus TG-6 camera to capture unique underwater pictures and videos.!

With nearly 100 color images and pictures of scuba divers, this book provides clear, step-by-step lessons to get you out there with your Olympus TG-6/7 camera to document your dives and your underwater adventures. This underwater photography masterclass covers everything you need to know about using your Olympus TG-6/7 camera.

The book teaches you:

- all special Olympus TG-6 settings specifically for underwater photography
- how to assemble a working kit using this camera
- “secret” recipes for all underwater situations and shooting genres: macro and super macro, wide angle, strobe and video light shooting, and video shooting

The book Underwater Pictures With Olympus TG-6: Manual and Practical Guide for Best Underwater Settings will be useful not only to scuba divers, but also to those who dive underwater without scuba gear: snorkeling enthusiasts, underwater hunters, and freedivers.

Though written specifically for the Olympus TG-6, these tips and settings also apply to the Olympus TG-5/6/7 cameras.

The author, Alexey Zaytsev, is an ambassador for Olympus and a professional underwater photographer. He has extensive experience with Olympus cameras TG-4, TG-5, TG-6, as well as mirrorless cameras in the OM-D series.

You can get this ebook for free with Amazon Kindle Unlimited!

Amazon

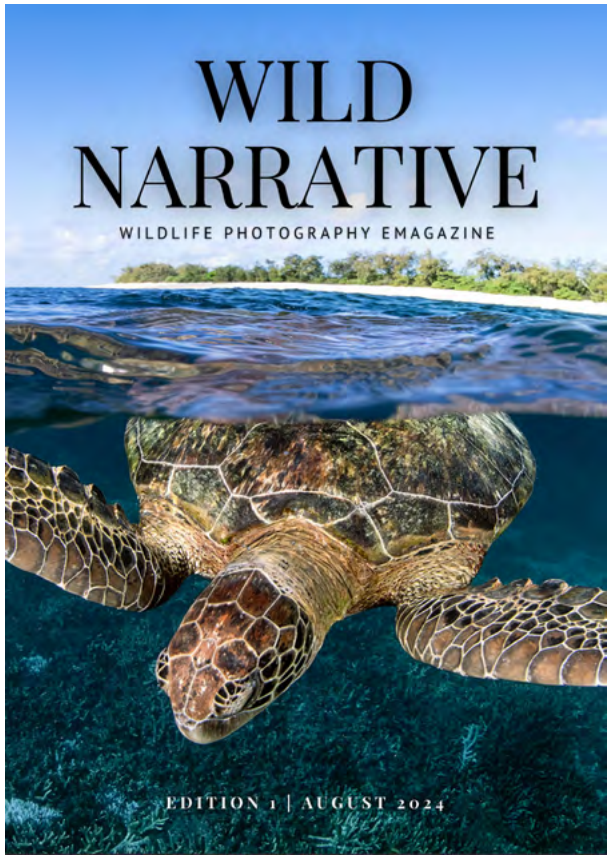
www.uwpmag.com

Wild Narrative eMagazine

Welcome to Wild Narrative eMagazine

A place to learn, discover and become inspired about all things related to wildlife imagery.

My name is Josh, and I am the face behind Josh Blank Photography, Wild Narrative and now, Wild Narrative eMagazine. For those of you who have been following my work it will come as no surprise that I am passionate about photographing wildlife (big animals in particular) in a way that excites and inspires others to get outside, experience nature and perhaps learn to capture exciting wildlife imagery of their own. The beginning of 2024 saw me searching for new and more effective ways to connect with like-minded people, and in the process find a home for the images, stories and content that I am most proud of. Thus began the creation of Wild Narrative Magazine; a place to learn new photography techniques, discover exciting locations rich with wildlife and become inspired to get outdoors and experience the natural world. My aim is to provide a quarterly resource packed full of useful articles and captivating imagery to assist all of you who share the same passion.



So, without further ado, lets dive into edition 1!

www.wildnarrative.com.au/emagazine

Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2024 winners

Selected from a record-breaking 59,228 entries from 117 countries and territories, the winners of the Natural History Museum's prestigious wildlife photographer of the year competition have been announced, with an exhibition opening on Friday 11 October.

The Canadian marine conservation photojournalist Shane Gross was awarded wildlife photographer of the year 2024 for his image of tadpoles, The Swarm of Life, captured while snorkelling through lily pads in Cedar Lake on Vancouver Island, British Columbia

Our photography exhibition is back for its sixtieth year to reveal more of nature's stories.

It'll take you on a visual adventure through different environments and give you a window into the wildlife that calls them home.

See first-hand how our activities, both good and bad, are shaping the natural world

Explore breathtaking images, from majestic predators on the hunt to stunning compositions

Witness powerful stories of survival, fragility and the delicate balance of life

Every photograph is a reminder of the wonder of the natural world.

WPY2024 link

Winner, Wetlands

The Swarm of Life
by Shane Gross, Canada

Shane Gross looks under the surface layer of lily pads as a mass of western toad tadpoles swim past.

He snorkelled in the lake for several hours, through carpets of lily pads. This prevented any disturbance of the fine layers of silt and algae covering the lake bottom, which would have reduced visibility.

Western toad tadpoles swim up from the safer depths of the lake, dodging predators and trying to reach the shallows, where they can feed. The tadpoles start becoming toads between four and 12 weeks after hatching. An estimated 99% will not survive to adulthood.

Location: Cedar Lake, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada

Nikon D500 + Tokina fisheye 10–17mm f3.5–4.5 lens at 11mm; 1/200 at f13; ISO 640; 2x Sea & Sea strobes; Aquatica housing

Winner, Underwater

Under the Waterline
by Matthew Smith, UK/Australia

Matthew Smith carefully photographs a curious leopard seal beneath the Antarctic ice.

He used a specially made extension he designed for the front of his underwater housing to get this split image. It was his first encounter with a leopard seal. The young seal made several close, curious passes. 'When it looked straight into the lens barrel, I knew I had something good.'

Though leopard seals are widespread and abundant, overfishing, retreating sea ice and warming waters mean that krill and penguins – their main food sources – are both in decline.

Location: Paradise Harbour, Antarctica

Nikon Z 7 II + 14–30mm f4 lens; 1/200 at f11; ISO 640; neutral density graduated filter; Aquatica AZ6/7 housing + Matty Smith 12" split shot dome port; Sea & Sea YS-D3 MKII strobes

Ikelite OM Systems TG-7 Review

by Paul ‘Duxy’ Duxfield

In a past life as the Sales Manager of Cameras Underwater, and then Ocean Leisure Cameras, both now sadly gone, the victims of Covid 19 and the rapidly changing face of underwater photography retail.

Long before their demise I left to pursue a more focussed position within the travel industry, and for the last ten years I’ve been running photography trips for divers and snorkelers around the world, helping them to get the best from their underwater photography equipment, from GoPro’s all the way up to DSLR’s and all the equipment that goes along with this fun hobby, which is now more accessible than ever.

I’ve always been the champion of the beginner and those wishing to start out in this pursuit at more affordable prices, so I’m keen to see of any new developments within this sector.

And importantly, and not just because they’re my friends, I’ve remained in contact with all of my old colleagues, as they’ve all set up internet based underwater photography retailers, but more of this in a bit.

You see gone are the days when you could pick up a very capable Canon Compact camera and underwater housing new for under £500 and unless you opt for second hand then this price point is mostly occupied by action cameras like GoPro’s and the like.

Nothing wrong with GoPros at all by the way, in fact I’m a big fan of them and very regularly advocate for their use for both stills and video, however they’re quite narrow in their scope, being very very good at wide-angle available light shooting but no good if you’d like to learn how to use a strobe/flash or control a camera more, and importantly learn the skills that you can transfer to a higher end camera further down your journey into underwater photography.

And even if you didn’t want to progress to a more advanced camera, GoPros have a natural limit to their capabilities, particularly if you’d like to shoot macro shots as well.

Since lockdown was over I’ve diversified into running accompanied snorkelling trips with a Bristol based company called Snorkel Venture, this has been an education for me into the hopes and expectations of a whole new bunch of aquatic photographers.

And the camera they nearly all come armed with is one from the Olympus TG range, the current model being the TG7.

The Olympus TG is a logical choice for the snorkelling community, as most models are waterproof to just over 10m depth, they’re tough and

can be used with a whole ecosystem of accessories, from Olympus and also from third party manufacturers, such is their popularity. They're also small and easy to carry and handle on a snorkel.

They've likewise been adopted by a lot of divers too, as they possess extraordinary macro chops, and so nudibranchs and critters just a few millimetres long are well within their grasp, and unlike a regular action camera they have a built in strobe which can easily trigger an external strobe giving you a lot of flexibility.

You just have to look online to see what the underwater macro photography community can do with these tiny tough marvels. I've included a couple of macro shots I took with it but to be honest it's another unique facility of the current combo I'm rocking that attracted me personally.

From a diving standpoint, and arguably from a serious snorkelling position it's wise to put them in the security of an underwater housing, this gives it another layer of toughness, and some peace of mind, so even if you were to inadvertently get water in the housing the chances are the camera would still come out of the ordeal relatively unscathed.

As I mentioned there's a wider ecosystem than just Olympus' own branded kit, and I also suggested that I have a very specific use case scenario.

You see I'm very keen on taking split or half half shots, and they're particularly relevant for the snorkel trips I do.

So the last few years I've used a very inexpensively priced special housing for my GoPro's, something which cost less than £50 to achieve these unique viewpoints , and for snorkelling this is fine, but I've always hankered after something with more immediate control and functionality, and also which I could take on a dive to greater than 15m for other shots.

The GoPro split housings don't work well for diving, being ridiculously buoyant and also they aren't tough enough to go deeper, so they're pretty much limited to surface use.

The Olympus TG range gave me the functionality but up until recently there's been no practical way to do split or half half shots with these cameras.

So checking in with my old colleagues Adam Green and Steve Bridge at the newly formed Nemo Photo, I found that there was a solution to my dilemma.

They're the UK importers of Ikelite underwater housings and accessories, and after a quick research on the Ikelite website, which btw is a lot more snazzy and up to date than it was when I was at Cameras Underwater and OLC, I discovered that Ikelite do a very specific dome port that attaches to their underwater

housing for the Olympus TG7. And even though way back then in my previous role I wasn't a big fan of Ikelite housings as I felt they were very clunky and poor to handle, even on their website the housings looked a lot better than their past offerings from 20 years ago.

So after a discussion with Adam he agreed to send me an Ikelite with the all important dome port and lens to test and feedback.

This is to work with the fisheye lens attachment that fixes directly to the Olympus TG 6 or 7. And then the camera with this attached goes inside the housing and all is sealed within.

This is very different to using the housing as it is with a flat port and wide-angle lens. Whilst split shots are achievable with the above they're rarely successful and a huge amount of luck is involved, so this Olympus TG and Olympus fisheye housed within the Ikelite with the dome is very much unique and so far no other manufacturer that I know of allows such a thing.

It's also worth noting that the Olympus fisheye lens is ludicrously inexpensive by comparison to most fisheye lenses, which brings the price of the dome and housing down by comparison to others quite considerably.

The Ikelite Housing

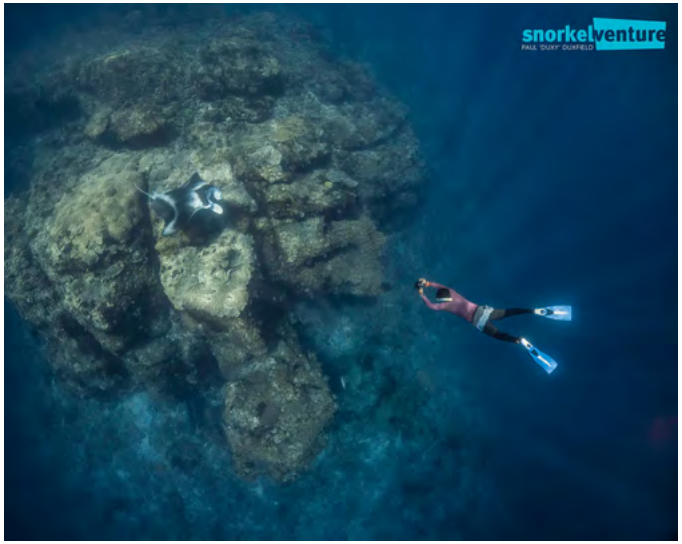
Unlike earlier Ikelite housings this one seems much more tailored to the camera itself rather than just a one size box with a bunch of buttons.

It's also a much more aesthetically pleasing solution, having rounded edges in a grey body with dedicated strobe connectors.

And even with the dome attached I could still fit it inside my Apeks Tech shorts pockets, so it was practical to snorkel with as well as dive.

The controls on the housing whilst not up to much more expensive and sleeker offerings from Nauticam and Marelux, they were much easier to use than I remember Ikelite housings being, and even the very important zoom lever wasn't too clunky in operation.

This was important as you have to zoom into 2x whilst using the fisheye lens otherwise you'll get a completely circular view, and it only took a bit of practice with the fine motor skill of nudging the lever to achieve this.



The Dome Port

The port is made from acrylic, and is around 15cm across with the familiar petal shaped hood surround.

The surround is rotatable and is secured in place with a couple of grub screws.

As with all these devices I've always found that over time they slacken anyway so I now prefer to keep them relatively loose and locate the petals in the proper orientation periodically, i.e. longer petals at 12 O'clock and 6 O'clock, or if I notice them intruding into the shot at all.

First time I removed the flat port from the housing to screw in the dome it was very stiff to rotate so I used a strap wrench to do it, but to be honest after a couple of goes it slackened off a lot and the 'stiction' after greasing the o rings diminished to an easily manageable state to turn without the aid of a strap wrench.

The size of the dome allows split shots as I hope the supplied shots display, but it's not a huge dome so it needs a little practice.

And unlike the GoPro it actually focusses, so locking the focus off at around a metre from the front gives sufficient depth of field with a small sensor, but this also means that if you don't take care to half press the shutter release to lock focus, then because of the Olympus TG range having such good close focussing capabilities it will actually focus onto the front of the dome if you're not careful, so it's not as fire and forget as a GoPro is, however personally I like the challenge of learning new things so it's worth the effort in my opinion.

The Olympus TG 7

Prior to shooting with the latest model TG i've used every model up to the 5.

There wasn't a great deal of difference from an out and out quality standpoint, but I did find it a lot quicker to lock focus and shoot than earlier models, and the RAW buffer is definitely better as I was able to easily shoot of quick bursts at up to 20 frames per second which made shooting fast action like dolphins and the like much easier, but a caveat is that you will end up with a lot more shots to go through.

The overall experience

Compared to my regular go to GoPro set up with either a Backscatter AOI lens attached or with the Shoot Dome housing, I welcomed most the ability to review pictures immediately, not possible with a housed GoPro, and the inherent flexibility of a camera rig that could shoot 20 Raw files in a second if so desired, trigger a separate strobe and even with the fisheye attached allowed a semblance of zoom.

So will it replace my GoPro set up?

My answer to that is not quite yet, as I still think that if used for split shots and general reef wide-angle scenes the GoPro Raw files seem a little bit more malleable to the editing that is definitely needed.

I use Adobe Lightroom, Photoshop and Topaz as my current editing workflow and I just find that in very specific use case scenarios like wide angle reef scenes the GoPro just very slightly edges it.

Ideally you'd have both, something which I've been lucky enough to do the last few months, and with them both being small I was able to bring them both along on a dive or a snorkel.

I also think the current GoPro's are better shallow water video tools as well, however the TG7 is no slouch in this regard, and has some advantages having a larger screen and also the ability to directly influence the white balance, something which is trickier with a GoPro.

If you could only have one and wanted an all rounder then the Olympus TG7 is the much more obvious choice, and inside the Ikelite Housing allows the use of a fisheye lens and a dome, something which I personally think is a must if

you're even a slightly bit interested in wreck or reef photography.

Most folk who try a fisheye lens for the first time come away from the experience sold, as it just massively improves the picture quality and contrast of reef and wreck scenes especially if the visibility isn't great.

So a big thanks to Adam and Steve from Nemo Photo for allowing me to test and try out this Olympus TG 7 rig, my next task with it is to use it with a Backscatter strobe out in Lembeh which is another first as Olympus have a very nifty automatic function with certain strobes.

I'll get back to you about this.

Paul 'Duxy' Duxfield
Facebook
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Sigma 105mm F/2.8 DG DN Macro Art lens

by Phil Rudin

Sigma is a Japanese company founded in 1961 which exclusively provides quality photography and video-related products worldwide. All products are manufactured in Aizu in the Tohoku region of Japan. The Sigma 105mm F/2.8 DG DN Macro Art Full Frame lens is the subject of this review and combines the very latest in technology and optical performance in a classic mid-telephoto macro with up to life-size (1:1) reproduction.

The Sigma 105mm F/2.8 DG DN Macro Art autofocus lens was specially developed by Sigma for the mirrorless full-frame L-Mount and Sony FE-mount cameras. The Sigma 105mm macro has an F/2.8 to F/22 aperture range and a rectilinear angle of view of 23.3 degrees or around 35 degrees (at 157.5mm) if you switch to APS-C mode. The lens has all metal construction with a plastic lens hood and ships with a nicely padded carry case for travel.

The lens weights in at 710g (1.6 lb) and is 74mm X 135.6mm long or (2.9" X 5.3") making it a bit longer (V130.5) and tad heaver (V602g) than the Sony FE 90mm F/2.8 macro which many of use have used for years. The front filter size is the same 62mm as the Sony 90mm and it has nine rounded diaphragm blades with seventeen lens elements in twelve groups.

The Sigma 105mm Art has manual and "A" settings for aperture control with an on/off click stop an AF/MF switch and a focus limiter switch with stops of full (1:1 to infinity) 0.5 meters to infinity and 1:1 to 0.5 meters. I find the 1:1 to 0.5 meter range, which is the same as the Sony 90 macro to be too limiting and would rather see the range expanded to 1:1 to a meter giving the advantage of speeding up auto focus over the full extension to infinity.

Unlike the Sony 90 macro the Sigma 105 has no image stabilization and relies on the in-camera IBIS feature on Panasonic and Sony full frame cameras. The Sigma 105 macro retails around $710.00 for Sony and $800.00 for Panasonic L-mount in the US V. $1098.00 for the Sony 90mm.

We all have our own 'go to' lens review sites which do above water testing and frequently focus on the extremes like corner sharpness, LoCA (longitudinal color aberration, bokeh and more at F/2.8 or the widest F/ number. This is all great but most underwater photographers rarely shoot macro with a full frame camera below about F/9 and F/13 to F/22 is much more common. When shooting underwater the air/water interface of the flat macro port will likely cause far more problems than those above water review concerns. In fact the flat or macro dome ports will likely cause more color aberration than the macro lens alone. In the case of the Sigma 105 macro the LoCA numbers are

quite good above water. Full frame cameras with high megapixel numbers like the Sony A7R V with 61MP tend to expose lens flaws more easily than say M43 cameras with lower (20's MP) and quality lenses are a must for full frame. The Sigma 105mm Art is one of those lenses that is well suited to high MP FF

photography.

After using the Sony 90mm F/2.8 macro for about a decade I can say without hesitation that the Sigma 105 macro provides a bit better edge to edge sharpness and the color rendering is excellent. For those using older Sony FF cameras you will find the focus to be slower than the Sony 90mm. This was not a big issue for me using the newer A7RV AF system but the lens still hunts a bit more than the 90mm.

We would of course like all areas of a photo to be in crisp focus if desired but everything in photography is a tradeoff. Each of use has a limit for what they will tolerate as far as image quality is concerned and many equipment choices will be made based on cost and personal tolerances.

Field Testing The Sigma 105MM F/2.8 Art Lens

For this review I was shooting the Sigma 105mm macro with the Sony A7R V (61MP) in a Marelux MX-A7RV housing with two Marelux Apollo S strobes fired both wirelessly and with fiber cords using a UTechnics flash trigger. Marelux has a verity of macro port options which include a dedicated macro port 104 for Sigma 105, macro port 71 with a 30 locking extension and the macro port 32 used with 70mm's of port extension.

Nauticam users shooting Sony have a choice of a dedicated N100 macro port 110 or the N100 to N120 35.5 port adapter II with N120 extension ring 20 II and the macro port 60. Nauticam also has port choices for Panasonic L-mount housing users.

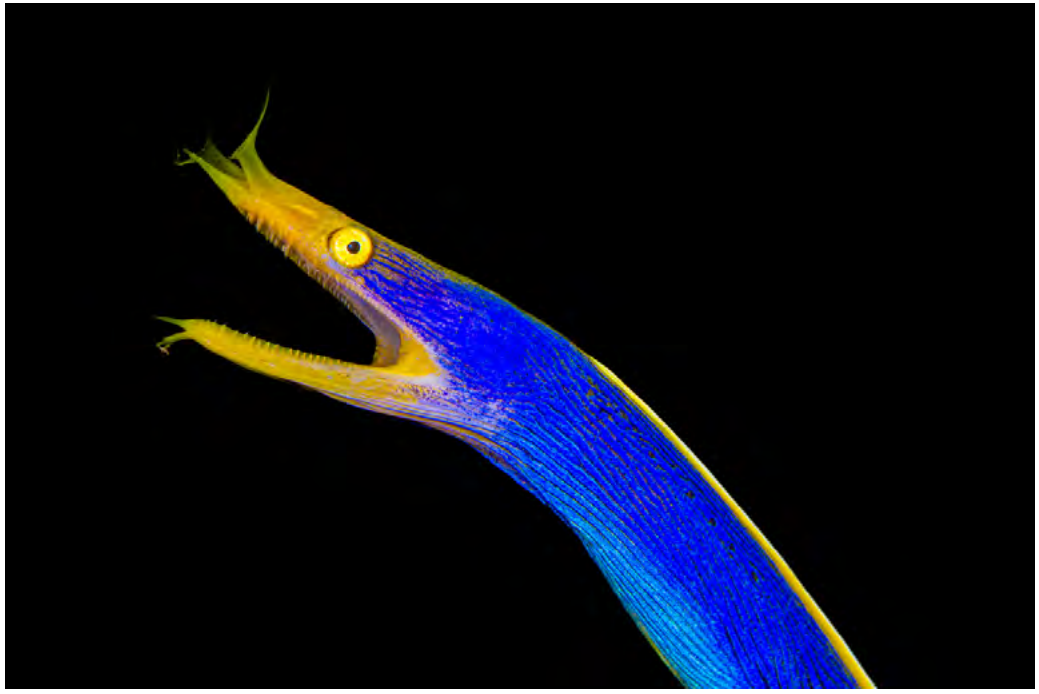
I chose to use the Marelux 32 port which I own for other lenses and a combination of extensions (in my case a 30 + 40) because I already use both the 30 & 40 for other lenses when I travel. I can also add a 15mm extension when using a dry closeup lenses like the Nikon 5T or extension tubes in the 15mm range.

Flabellina sp. with eggs taken today on the house reef at Scuba Seraya Resort, Bali Indonesia. Sony A7R V, Sigma 105mm macro, Marelux housing, two Marelux Apollo S strobes and Marelux +10 C/U lens, ISO100, F/22, 1/250th sec

During a recent trip to Bali, Indonesia I also used the Marelux +5, +10 & +15 closeup lenses both as standalone lenses and stacked for up to +23 magnification. I found the Sigma 105 macro to be the better choice over the Sony 90 macro for all

Tiny Goby hiding on orange sponge, Scuba Seraya Resort, Tulamben, Bali, Indonesia, Sony A7RV, Sigma 105 macro, Marelux housing and two Marelux Apollo S strobes, with MX-+15 C/U lens, ISO 100, F/20, 1/250th sec

Small Hermit Crab (dardanus pedunculatus) trying to hide on pink tube sponges. Sony A7RV, Sigma 105 macro, Marelux housing and flat port, two Marelux Apollo S strobes with UWT flash trigger, one strobe off camera with Marelux red filter. Scuba Seraya house reef Bali Indonesia, ISO 100, F/18, 1/250th sec



Adult Ribbon Eel (Rhinomuraena quaesita) Scuba Seraya Resort house reef, Tulamben, Bali. Sony A7R V, Sony Sigma 105mm macro, Marelux housing and macro port, Apollo S strobes, ISO-100, F/16, 1/250th sec

of my "super macro" and use the 90 macro when I want a bit wider view and with C/U lenses to +10.

I used Apollo S strobes which are small with four Marelux six inch double ball arms and I was able to move the strobes just about anywhere I needed them to get light on the subject. I also used the Apollo S strobes off camera with color filters and other accessories triggered with the LumiLink 2.0 wireless flash trigger. The LumiLink trigger allowed me to fire the off camera strobes without any on camera flash as a slave or any pesky fiber optic cords getting in the way. For flotation I used one or two 1500ml Flexibuoy's which can be easily moved underwater for best balance.

With the Sony 90mm macro the focusing ring is pushed forward on the lens for auto focus and pulled back for AF off. The Sigma 105mm macro AF/off switch is on the side of the lens and is pushed forward for AF and back for off. With both lens configurations you can mount the camera and lens from the rear of the housing and with both I have bumped the lens off the auto focus setting when inserting the camera into the housing. Warning, always check that AF is engaged after the camera is in the housing even if you are only making a battery change and don't fully remove the camera. I intend to resolve this issue on the Sigma lens with a small stop and some tape because it happened more than once on a recent trip.

Above water I manually move the aperture ring on the lens to change settings. Underwater you need to set the lens to the "A" setting on the aperture ring and use the lock on the lens to keep the "A" locked in place. This allows you to use the camera controls on the housing to change aperture settings.

In the water I used the same lens settings I use with the Sony 90 macro, Manual mode, AF-C, focus area

This tiny Polyclad Flatworm, Prosthecaereus sp. is on a blue Tunicate which is about 25/27 mm tall, the animal is 3 to 4 mm long. Scuba Seraya house reef, Tulamben, Bali, Indonesia. Sigma 105mm macro lens with a Marelux +15 C/U lens stacked with an additional MX+5. Sony A7RV, Marelux housing and two Apollo S strobes. ISO 100, F/13, 1/250th sec

Boxer Crabs, (Lybia tesselata) also called Pom-Pom Crab, Scuba Seraya House Reef, Tulamben, Bali, Indonesia. Sony A7RV, Sigma 105 macro, Marelux housing, Apollo S strobes, Marelux +10 C/U lens, UWT flash trigger. ISO 100, F/20, 1/250th sec

Mexichromis multituberculata, Scuba Seraya, Tulamben, Bail. Sony A7R V, Sigma 105 Art macro, Marelux housing, Marelux Apollo S strobes, ISO 200, F/22, 1/250th sec

tracking spot, single frame, if I shoot multi-frame it is always at five FPS with the Apollo S strobes set to MTL mode. Around 95% of the time for macro with the 105mm I am shooting at ISO 100 to 200, at 1/250th sec. I shift around from F/11 to F/22 with the higher stops being the norm. I set the Apollo S strobes to manual and the power level to 6 of 12 settings or half power. I have diffusers but use them mostly for wide lenses and I also like to play with the color filters and the SOFT snoot. I shift off of 1/250th sec. depending on the ambient light background, higher F/numbers are used for greater DOF at 1:2 or greater magnification, I favor ISO 100 and will tweak the strobes rather than go to a higher ISO if needed. I use the +10 and +15 C/U lenses most frequently but find the +5 and +10 & +15 stacked best for some subjects.

I have provided several photos for this review using C/U lenses selecting the amount of magnification based on my experience sizing up how I think the subject will fill the frame. My advice for those just getting into shooting macro is that life-size on is quite small, about 35mm on the long side for full frame. If your subject is not filling the frame in the EVF or LCD adding a closeup lens is counter productive. Once you have learned how to capture subjects at life-size then and only then should you add additional magnification.

If you have issues with your lens "hunting" try focusing on a fixed object like a rock about the same distance as your subject to get the lens into the proper focus range then move to the subject. If you only intend to shoot macro at 1:2 or greater magnification then setting the focus limiter from 1:1 to 0.5 meters will reduce hunting but if you are backed up beyond 0.5 meters the lens simply won't focus until you move back into the under 0.5 meter range.

If you own a Panasonic L-mount or Sony full frame underwater system and want to add a macro lens option or add to your current macro collection the Sigma 105mm F/2.8 macro provides excellent image quality at an affordable price with ports and extension combinations you may already own. The Sigma 105 macro is a lens I would highly recommend for Sony users especially if you love shooting beyond life-size.

I would like to thank marelux.co for their input and technical support with this review.

Phil Rudin
Instagram

The Author is the Senior Advisor for the Marelux Management Team

Scubalamp Snoot

by Alexey Zaytsev

Taking a picture with a snoot is not what you'd call an easy activity. But it sure is fun. Especially when you're just learning how to do it. I already have experience using snoots, so I can't be called a beginner. This time I was testing a snoot from the Chinese company Scubalamp.

It is originally designed for use with strobes from D-MAX, and D-PRO from Scubalamp. But with the help of special adapters, it can be installed on strobes of other popular brands: Seacam 150D, 160D; Ikelite 161, 160; Sea&sea YS-D2, YS-D3, and Retra stobe. The snoot is easy to set up on the strobe both on land and underwater. Push the button, twist and it's already mounted. When it's not needed, I stash it in my BCD pocket.

I usually dive with a 14-42mm zoom lens on my Olympus M1 Mark 2 camera and a VIFINE wet wide-angle lens. I have a wet macro lens Olympus PTMC-01 or Nauticam CMC-1 mounted on arms.

When I need to photograph small subjects I swap the wide-angle lens for a macro lens right underwater. In this configuration, I use two D-PRO strobes. The left strobe has a wide-angle diffuser attached. The right strobe has a snoot adapter attached. When the adapter is attached, it is not possible to use the diffusers. But the D-PRO strobes even without diffusers have an extremely wide beam angle of 120 degrees, so this is not a problem. When shooting small and small objects with the snoot, I switch off the left strobe. Adjusting the size of the light spot is very easy. You just turn the special adjustment wheel on the snoot.

Olympus M1 Mark II, Nauticam housing, YUNEEC 14-42mm/F3.5-5.6 on 12 mm

Olympus M1 Mark II , Nauticam housing, YUNEEC 14-42mm/F3.5-5.6 on 42 mm + lens Olympus PTMC-01 1/250 f13 ISO 64

By rotating the adjustment wheel, you smoothly adjust the size of the light spot. The Focus/target light of the D-PRO strobes has an output of 500 lumens. Surprisingly, the light spot of the snoot can be seen even in the daytime. But of course, it is easiest to operate the snoot in twilight or at night. Macro photography with the snoot becomes a real and exciting adventure. With my left hand, I hold the flash and point the light at the subject, while my right hand naturally presses the shutter lever. Interesting observation. The snoot's optical system is arranged in such a way that you

Olympus M1 Mark II, Nauticam housing, 60 mm + lens Olympus PTMC-01 f2,8 1/250 f13 ISO 400

Olympus M1 Mark II, Nauticam housing, 60 mm f2,8 1/60 f16 ISO 400

see a clearly defined circle of pilot light. But in a photograph, the boundaries of the light spot appear blurred. This makes the lighting look more natural. I'm very happy with the result. The snoot makes the lighting less harsh. It gives a dramatic and even

Olympus M1 Mark II, Nauticam housing, YUNEEC 14-42mm/F3.5-5.6 on 42 mm 1/250 f11 ISO 200

magical effect to the resulting images.

The snoot can also be used for wide-angle photography. Try it in combination with a zoom lens and a wide-angle lens or even a zoom lens. In this case, you can give a light accent to a particular object in the frame. In my garage, I found a rubber ring that was the perfect size for the snoot. I attached it to the front of the snoot. This is the only improvement I wanted to make to it. One more wish for SCUBALAMP to provide a protective cap on the snoot so that the optical surface cannot catch scratches during transport or storage.

The Scubalamp Snoot costs $268

My verdict: I highly recommend this simple but effective tool to enhance the artistic effect of your shots.

Alexey Zaytsev
www.alexphotodive.com

https://scubalamp.com/products/osd?VariantsId=10117

UW Camera Store Flip Snoot Pro for Backscatter HF-1

by Peter Rowlands

The Backscatter Hybrid Flash HF-1 is an impressive piece of kit which combines the power of a wide angle flash with a bright video light all in one well designed and manufactured unit.

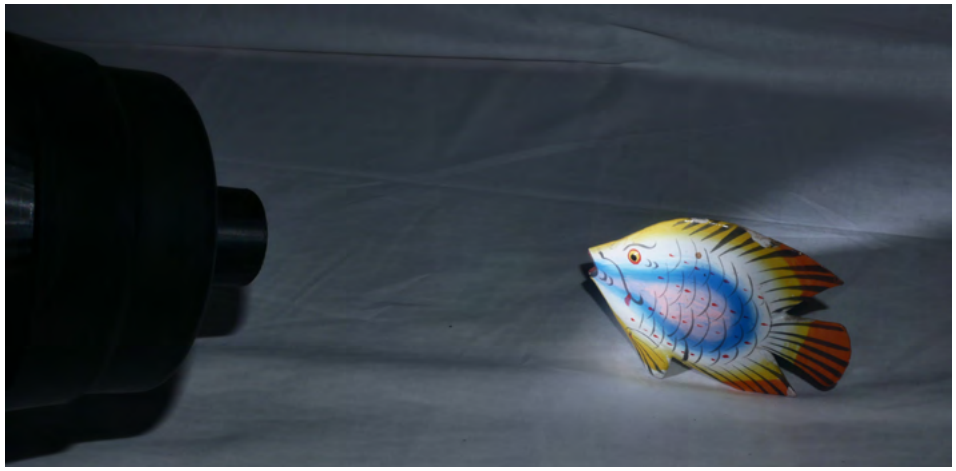
The addition of the UW Camera Store Flip Snoot Pro completes the package nicely and is a great tool for underwater photographers who want to switch quickly between shooting with or without a snoot. It can be flipped into place within 1 second so that you can capture that special moment within a flash.

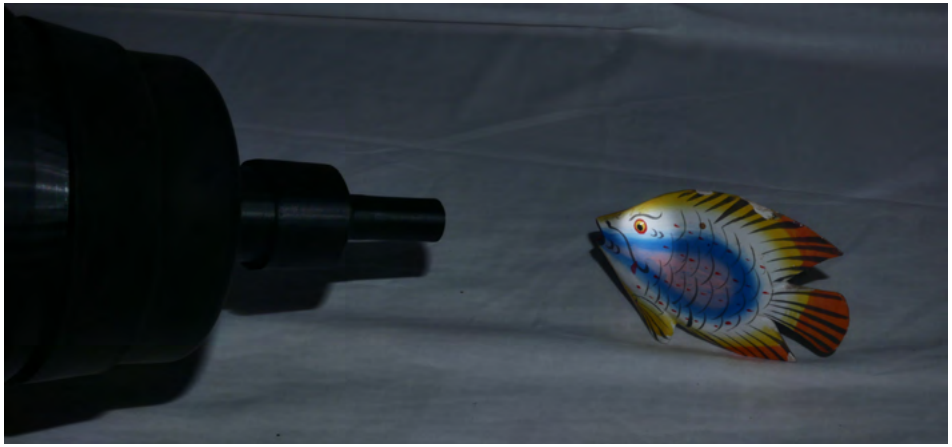
The UW Camera Store Flip Snoot Pro is well designed and sturdy; it is made with a 3D printer and is testament to the capability of this amazing technique to produce bespoke, low volume numbers, ideal for the underwater photography market.

The Snoot is easily mounted onto the front of the HF-1, rotated to suit your particular rig and secured tightly by an Allen key screw . The hinge is very robust and the friction can be adjusted by tightening/loosing an Allen key. The retaining clasp is both positive and easy to operate.

There are three 'settings/angles' of light output. The first is without any snoot and would be useful for most general macro shots. The second snoots the output considerably and the third produces a very focused spot of light. The direction of the light can be adjusted in the usual way by repositioning the flash as a whole to suit the subject.

Snoot photography started as a bit of a





gimmick as most underwater photography equipment accessories tend to but, credit to the technique and the results being produced, it has stood the test of time and is now well established as a very effective and creative way of showing the same old subjects but in a new, exciting light.

If you are considering buying a Backscatter HF-1 (and it's hard to think of a reason why not), the addition of the UW Camera Store Flip Snoot Pro more than completes the package and there will be virtually no subject you can't photograph, all on the same dive.

If you already own an HF-1 and are into macro photography, the UW Camera Store Flip Snoot Pro makes an obvious choice for the ideal accessory to complete the package. Treat yourself to some creative macro images or, at this time of year, start dropping some subtle hints for what you'd like in your Christmas stocking.

The UW Camera Store Flip Snoot Pro costs Euro 149 and to order one or find out more details, just follow the link below.

Enjoy.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

https://www.uwcamerastore.com/flip-snoot-pro-for-backscatter-hf1

We've got you covered!

Magic filters are now available in 3 options. Original Magic for use in blue water with DSLR and compact cameras with Manual White Balance, Auto-Magic for compact cameras in automatic point and shoot mode. GreenWater Magic for use in green water with DSLR and compact cameras with Manual White Balance. Prices start at just £25.

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

www.magic-filters.com

Doug Perrine

by Peter Rowlands

Reading about you, I get the impression there was an element of a talent waiting to find a place in your formative years. Was there a moment when those elements aligned for you in the classic 'light bulb' moment?

Honestly, there were many times when life opened doors and beckoned me on the path of my destiny, and I blithely ignored them and squandered most of my youth searching for a direction. I was 34 when I embarked on the tentative beginnings of a career in nature photojournalism. By contrast, folks like Bob Talbot and Gutsy Tuason were highly successful in their teens!

Was there a time when you felt you had what it takes and the desire to go full time?

During the last part of my tenure as a student at the U. Miami marine lab (aka Rosenstiel School), having soured on a career in fisheries science, I began to have some articles with photos accepted at niche publications like Sea Frontiers magazine.

When a new monthly divers' newspaper called Underwater USA ran one of my photos as the cover of one of their earliest editions, my ego kind of exploded and I concluded that I was going to be the new rising star of underwater journalism.

Managing editors are highly skilled at deflating such pretensions, but by the time my self-image was mashed down to size I had already taken a couple of part-time occasional jobs that

(2002) – This picture, from the South African Sardine Run, shows an early stage of baitball formation. The common dolphins have broken off a chunk of the sardine shoal, pushed it up to the surface, and are commencing to feed on it. The other large predators have not yet arrived. Nikonos RS camera with Nikonos RS 13mm lens, ambient light, Fujichrome Provia 400 F, pushed one stop, camera settings not recorded

would give me enough free time and flexibility in my schedule to take on self assignments and do some writing, and had managed to get a few images published in national magazines such as National Wildlife. Nature publications like that were where I aspired to see my work, but they generally don't give assignments, so when I was offered some from dive industry publications I took them to meet expenses while building my portfolio.

What were your primary motivations in deciding on a career as a marine life photographer?

First, there were my personal issues: I really wasn't temperamentally suited for employment by any entity other than myself, and I wanted to spend most of my time outdoors and in wild places. Nature photography was perfect for that.

Secondly, there was a desire to show people things they had never seen before, and to open their eyes to the amazing adaptations and intricate lives of wild animals.

Thirdly, I was firm believer in Baba Dioum's dictum that "In the end, we will conserve only what we love; we will love only what we understand and we will understand only what we are taught." I believed that putting photographs and stories of species in need of conservation in front of people's eyes would inspire the political will to take the steps necessary to protect them.

Remember when I started my career, almost nobody knew what a shark, whale, dolphin, or sea turtle looked like in its natural habitat.

Do you believe that approach has helped save animal species?

Certainly, it was very valuable in addressing the conservation challenges of the time. I have no question that enabling humans to bond with wild creatures by looking into their eyes on printed reproductions played an important part in reducing whaling and over-fishing, allowing populations to recover temporarily.

The most effect I had personally was probably by portraying sharks as wildlife going about their lives, rather than demons stalking humans,

I believe I played a part in building the movement against finning and revenge-killing. But now the threats are less direct and more insidious. Nearly every species on earth is threatened by climate change, habitat loss, and expanding human populations.

It's one thing to convince people to switch to dolphin-safe tuna, but quite another to convince them to limit their family size, stop flying on airplanes, downsize their automobiles, and cut way back on red meat.

Doug Perrine free-dives to photograph an oceanic whitetip shark; photo by David Fleetham, Canon EOS 5D MKII, Canon 17-40mm lens @ 23mm, Ikelite housing, ISO 250, f6.6, 1/160 sec

As a rule, underwater photographers, who should be among the most aware of what's at stake, are among the highest emitters of climate pollution from air travel. As coral reefs are bleaching and dying around the world, divers just keep flying farther to find the last few that are still alive, with little acknowledgment that the flight to enjoy and document that beautiful surviving reef is helping to seal its doom.

How would you like to have people think about wild animals?

Nobody said it better than Henry Beston, in a quote that was once seemingly everywhere, but I don't see reproduced as often these days:

"We need another and a wiser and perhaps a more mystical concept of animals. Remote from universal nature and living by complicated artifice, man in civilization surveys the creature through the glass of his knowledge and sees thereby a feather magnified and the whole image in distortion.

We patronize them for their incompleteness, for their tragic fate for having taken form so far below ourselves. And therein do we err. For the animal shall not be measured by man. In a world older and more complete than ours, they move finished and complete, gifted with the extension of the senses we have lost or never attained, living by voices we shall never hear. They are not brethren, they are not underlings: they are other nations, caught with ourselves in the net of life and time, fellow prisoners of the splendour and travail of the earth."

You eventually settled in Hawaii and I presume the marine life played a big part in that decision?

I was a student at the University of Hawaii from 1970-1973, with the last two years at the Hilo campus on the Big Island. When I reached Hawaii Island I realized I had found the home that I had been missing my entire life. I left to travel the world in 1974, but the plan was always to come back. By 1997 I was bored with the "same-old, same-old" limited species set of the Caribbean – West Atlantic region, and fed up with Miami traffic and hurricanes. I mistakenly imagined that Hawaii would be the gateway to the Indo-Pacific and its extreme biodiversity. Only a couple of years after I moved back, the last direct flights from Hawaii to the Western Pacific were canceled, and I was faced with having to fly to the U.S. west coast in order to turn around and fly over Hawaii to reach points westward. Nonetheless, I never regretted the decision to return to Hawaii. Los Angeles would have been a much better base for international travel, but not a suitable place for someone like me to live. In the age of covid I appreciate being here more than ever. What Hawaii lacks in species diversity and splashy colorful species it makes up for in unique species (world capital of endemism, and of endangered species) and ease of ocean access, not to mention being a really comfortable place to live, with incredible beauty above water.

Your desire to capture unique animal behaviour must have felt a wide remit. Were your early trips chosen with economic/logistical limitations or did you choose an animal and take it from there?

For dive magazine assignments, of course I followed the standard destination model – go to a particular locale and photograph whatever is there. But when I started organizing my own expeditions I put together what I believe were the first (for marine life, anyway) trips focused on a particular species. For some of my expeditions there was a focus on a particular behavior – such as the mass spawning of Nassau groupers. My trips then became the model for the Big Animals expeditions, the Silver Bank whale trips, etc. In the meantime I quit offering trips to the public because of my inability to reconcile the other passengers' expectations that I was there to serve them, and my stated formula that I was there

(2015) – A lone, young, female humpback whale approached my boat off Kona, Hawaii, then dived under it. Hanging over the low gunnel of my boat, I could see that she was blowing a thin stream of silvery bubbles from her blowhole, while swimming around to create shimmering spiral curtains – all the while looking up at her work. There are no schooling fish to trap in these clear, empty waters, and there were no other whales in sight, so I concluded she was either amusing herself, indulging a creative urge, or just practicing her technique for future bubble-netting endeavors. Nikon D800E (36MP DSLR), Sigma 14mm lens, Nauticam housing with 9" dome port, ISO 800, f8, 1/320 sec

(2008) – While photographing marlins balling sardines off the tip of Mexico's Baja Peninsula, we occasionally had a Bryde's whale blast through and engulf most of the baitball. This picture captures the moment when the whale's throat pleats were fully expanded with water and fish, just before it began to push the water back out through its baleen. This photo was Highly Commended in the 2009 WPOTY competition. Canon EOS 40D (10MP DSLR), Tokina 10-17mm lens @ 14mm, Subal housing with dome port, ambient light; ISO 200, f 5.6, 1/800 sec

for my own photography and was sharing equally in the costs, in spite of also doing all the work of researching and organizing the trip, as well as assuming the financial risk of a failure to fill all the spots. A lot of my travel has been project-driven. After signing a contract to produce a book on sea turtles, I spent two years traveling the world in an attempt to document every life stage of every species of sea turtle.

Seapics, the stock agency for your and eventually others' images must have been quite rare in those days. In today's social media world it is easy to publicise but, back then, how did you 'spread the word'?

Before the internet, there were libraries and newsstands. I was able to start getting my pictures published back when I had only a handful of publishable pictures because of my scientific background and writing ability. Publishers are rarely interested in receiving submissions of photos, no matter how good, as they have no immediate use for them. They are looking for stories. My familiarity with current research in marine biology enabled me to shoot relevant photos and submit words-and-photos packages to magazine publishers. Having those appear in print then put them before the eyes of photo editors who might already have stories but needed supporting images. When a book publishing convention was fortuitously scheduled for Miami, I took the opportunity to put together a proposal for a coffee table book, which I pitched at the convention. Nobody bit on that one, but one of the publishers made an offer to put together a book on sharks. Once that book was published I became one of the go-to photographers for pictures

of sharks. SeaPics grew out of the International Shark Photo File, which I created as a one-stop shop for shark images. Remember, in those days photo researchers couldn't go online, search for the images they wanted, and download for use. Slides had to be sent by post, and later by expensive couriers such as FedEx, and there was always a chance of delay, loss, or damage. The fewer different entities a researcher had to deal with, the easier their life became. With a wide range of images from many of the leading shark photographers of the time, I could supply an entire book about sharks with one shipment of slides.

The image stock business must be a far cry from its heyday but the digital world makes image distribution so much quicker, safer and therefore much cheaper to supply images. In addition there are more media outlets than ever before so is it still a worthwhile business model? Please feel free to have a 'pop' at free magazines etc etc :-)

Hardly. Photo use payments are continuing to decline, and there are ever more amateur photographers posting their images online and happy to have them used for free. Image stock agencies are continuing to fail, while a few are hanging on by continually streamlining, cutting costs and reducing photographers' fees.

You have been successful in competitions in the past. Were they an incentive?

Winning a competition always gives you a boost, but I've entered fewer competitions in my life than some younger photographers enter in a year. None really had a big impact on my career. For me the competition was always to get paid for having an image published.

(2021) – False killer whales are large, highly social dolphins that are Critically Endangered in Hawaii. They rush through the ocean at high speed while seeking prey, but when they make a kill, they summon the other members of the pod to share the catch.
I was able to free-dive down to photograph these family members sharing a large yellowfin tuna. Sony a7r3 (42MP mirrorless digital camera) with Sony 20mm lens in Nauticam housing with dome port, ambient light, ISO 800, f6.3, 1/640sec., ambient light

Did winning the Wildlife Photographer of the Year in 2004 with your iconic bronze whalers in sardines image change your career in the way that an Oscar might to an actor/actress, either opportunistically or financially?

Not on an Oscar level, no, but certainly had more impact than any other competition.

WPOTY at that time was on a three-year sponsorship cycle, and the third year, when I won, there was no prize money. Furthermore someone in the office apparently made a mistake and sent a full-resolution image file out with the press announcement, instead of the low-res, which probably resulted in a lot of unpaid uses.

I did get just a few high-profile and well-paid uses out of that, but remember the photo licensing business had already started its downslide at least five years earlier.

Actually, the NHM itself has given me a large share of the business that came from that win, as they have continued to publish books and other products featuring winners from past years.

(2003) – On my third year of chartering a private boat for the then little-known Sardine Run off the Wild Coast of South Africa, I finally got the baitball I wanted. I waited for cinematographer Peter Lamberti to run through his battery so I could be alone with the wildlife.

The baitball of sardines was surrounded by a couple of hundred sharks, that I could see. My microlight spotter pilot later told me he could see thousands more streaming in from all directions.

A strict dominance hierarchy ensured that the largest sharks (duskies and bronze whalers) fed on the baitball (along with tuna and diving gannets), while the smaller blacktips and other sharks circled on the periphery, hoping for scraps and hassling the photographer.

I tried to position myself on the opposite side of the baitball from the attacking sharks. When I saw sudden movement I would start shooting blindly toward the fish, hoping to capture a shark bursting through, as eventually happened.

Because of the blinding fast speed of the action, I used a housed Canon strobe with high speed sync, rather than an underwater strobe, so I could shoot at a higher shutter speed.

This photo was the grand prize winner in the 2004 WPOTY competition, while another of my shots of a shark circling the baitball took the Marine Life category in the same competition.

Canon EOS D60 (6MP DSLR) with Sigma 14mm lens, in UK Germany housing, with dome port, Canon 550EX strobe in UK Germany housing, ISO 200, f5.6, 1/800 sec (grayscale conversion by Stephen Frink)

(2014) – This is an example of the images I create to sell as large prints at art galleries in Kona, Hawaii, where I live. It's a composite of two Hawaiian green sea turtles basking on the beach (a uniquely Hawaiian phenomenon), and a photo taken from the exact same vantage point a few weeks later of a sunset at the same beach. Nikon D800E (36MP DSLR), with Nikon 20mm lens, light painting with flashlight, ISO 800, f14, 25 sec. (turtles)

As originally a film shooter and a marine animal behaviour specialist, and with the advent of digital imaging, do you feel you have experienced the best of times?

Not in the sense of great photo opportunities. New technologies and discoveries continue to produce possibilities for images that surpass what came before. For example just look at the amazing imagery of mesopelagic life that has been created since blackwater diving spread around the world. Low-light camera sensors and camera traps have enabled previously impossible shots of nocturnal and evasive animals.

(2010) – While traversing the waters of the far northern Baa Atoll in the Maldives on a liveaboard, we stopped at an uninhabited island for a dinner picnic on the beach. As the sky darkened, the wavelets lapping on the beach lit up with the bioluminescence of thousands of tiny ostracods in a breeding aggregation. Cruise Director Berkeley White was kind enough to shuttle me back to our ship to get my camera, which I propped on a jacket on a plastic chair for lack of a tripod to capture this time exposure. Nikon D700 (12MP DSLR), Nikkor 17-35mm lens @17mm, ambient light, ISO 3200, f4.5, 30 sec

On the other hand I do believe that I have experienced the best of times in the sense that I came into the world while there were still significant amounts of wildlife and wild spaces.

During my life cheap air travel, and the spread of dive businesses around the world provided access to wildlife internationally on a scale never before possible. Now wild areas and wildlife populations are shrinking everywhere, the sixth great extinction is underway, the climate crisis is making everything less predictable while wreaking havoc with habitats, and no responsible person can justify the greenhouse gas emissions of frequent air travel just to take pictures, even if picture sales could pay for it, which they no longer can.

In my generation, an average middle-class resident of any developed country lives better than the European royalty of previous centuries, but at a cost of significant and unsustainable depletion of the earth's resources and pollution of the biosphere. The generation just behind mine was the first in American history to not expect a standard of living higher than its parents' generation, and we can expect that trend to continue.

Did you see the advantages of digital cameras for underwater imaging and were you an early adopter? I've read that you knew Jim Watt who certainly was.

Jim Watt was a close friend and neighbor. He could not resist any shiny new gadget, and was an irrepressible evangelist for whatever had caught his fancy. He jumped in with the Canon D30, Canon's first prosumer DSLR, with a whopping 3 megpixels. I was not convinced. When he pounced on the next model, the 6MP Canon D60, he did win me over, and I never looked back. It was the D60 I used to shoot that winning photo in the NHM WPOTY

(2008) I was assigned by Scuba Times Magazine to photograph Bud Turpin, a Hawaii contractor whose hobby was creating temporary underwater sculptures out of erupting lava. The assignment led to many hair-raising experiences, and a friendship that continues to this day. Bud and I have both come to the realization that diving on an eruption is way too dangerous to justify (and is now illegal, as well). I just did a Google Image Search to see if mine are still the only underwater pictures of erupting lava available, and discovered that AI generated images are now available for free download (at no risk whatsoever). Canon EOS 20D (8MP DSLR), Tokina 10-17mm lens, Subal housing with dome port, twin Inon Z220 strobes, ISO 400, f6.3, 1/60 sec

(2003) – This picture was taken prior the Sardine Run off at the Aliwal Shoals of South Africa, using a polecam to photograph tiger sharks attracted to bait. Canon EOS D60 (6MP DSLR), Canon 15mm lens, ISO f 2.8, UK-Germany housing with dome port, Inon Z220 strobes x 2, ISO 200, f5, 1/60 sec

competition – the first digital winner they recognized.

Are there any other influencers you would like to recognize?

Too many to mention, but Howard Hall was a particularly important one, and gave my career an early boost by hiring me for some of his film projects, and letting me keep the photos I shot on them. I also owe a big debt of gratitude to Steve Lucas, who is probably not reading this, as he left underwater photography years ago to concentrate on more lucrative fashion and product photography. When I was barely surviving on day gigs in Miami while starting my career, Steve often hired me as an assistant, and also gave me my introduction to Skin Diver Magazine, where he was regularly featured. He was a very generous mentor, with an under-appreciated talent for writing.

What are your current shooting setups?

Nikon D850 for macro and general use, and Sony a7r4 for wide-angle, both in Nauticam housings.

Do you feel that there is little else to capture by human intervention and that the future is remote cameras/vehicles for more time and depth?

I believe that there is a lot more unrealized potential for remote cameras & vehicles, but human-operated systems will always have a place. The largest portion of our planet, containing the vast majority of unknown species, is the deep sea, and it is an extremely inhospitable place for the human body.

Do you still have a bucket list of animals and behaviours?

Oh sure – it's endless, but I have no ambition of actually trying to empty that bucket myself. I'm now mostly focused on what I can do locally in my home state of Hawaii to document the amazing community of life we have here, bring attention to it, and perhaps contribute to slowing the extinction juggernaut. This planet, and its ocean, have given me a wonderful life and career, and I feel an obligation to pay it back in some small measure by greatly limiting my overseas travel, producing my own pv electric power and some of my own food, driving electric, etc. The guides who might take me to see those bucket list things are all excellent photographers in their own right now. They live there and have more and better opportunities to document the phenomena than me, so there is no need for me to burn precious fossil fuels to get my own body out there. Besides which, Sir David's film crews have already made themselves miserable camping out there for weeks or months so that I can watch their best results condensed into a few minutes in glorious hi-def on my large screen tv in the comfort of my own living room.

Thank you, Doug, for your illuminating, inspirational replies and for your groundbreaking images.

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A professional's life

by Alexey Zaytsev

My name is Alexey Zaytsev and I am a professional commercial underwater photographer. I live on the island of Cozumel, Mexico. Cozumel is a Mecca for divers from the USA and Canada. Cozumel, for North Americans, is like the Red Sea in Egypt, for European divers, just as convenient a place to dive. A short flight from Texas or Florida, good year-round weather, and a well-organized dive industry.

For two years now, I have been photographing divers who come to dive on Cozumel. And now it is my main form of income. I want to share with you some of the experiences I've had doing this, as well as some of the photographic equipment I use for my work.

Before I moved to Mexico, I was also a professional underwater photographer. I worked in almost all Russian magazines for diving enthusiasts and was editor-in-chief of several of them. In my work, I had to take a lot of underwater photos during expeditions and editorial trips. I used these photos to illustrate articles about trips to different exotic places of our planet. Yes, I used these photos for work, but I never sold my pictures to anyone else.

I ended my career as a journalist and editor because I left Russia after Russia attacked Ukraine in 2022. Finding myself in forced immigration in Mexico, I had to use my skills as an underwater photographer to make a living at it.

When I started shooting underwater on Cozumel, I quickly concluded that it was no longer possible to shoot the way I had been shooting before. Usually, most of my underwater photography was done with a fisheye lens. It's good for underwater landscapes with divers in the frame, but for commercial diver photography, the fisheye was not the best choice. 180 degrees is too much for photographing people. Divers who book a photo shoot with me want to see themselves first and foremost in the photo. Of course, you can make a beautiful photo of coral with a diver in the frame, and you can make a photo of the diver against the coral. But in the second case, there are two problems: distance to the diver and barrel distortion. Ordinary divers,

Olympus OM1 II, Nauticam housing, 2 x Scubalamp D-PRO strobes, 1/125 sec f8 ISO1250 Olympus 8 mm f 1,8

not photographers, don't understand why the photographer wants to get so close to them. They think the shooting distance is very short and instinctively try to stay away from the camera. The diver in the frame, especially if it is closer to the corners of the frame is subject to distortion, which also impairs the perception of the photo.

In my search for wide-angle optics for shooting people, I decided to try a combination of a zoom lens and a wet wide-angle lens. I have had experience with the Chinese company Weefine WFL-02 wide angle lens and Olympus TG series cameras. For this popular compact camera, wet wide-angle lenses are the only and best way to get good wide angle shots. Weefine's wide angle lenses are known in the US and Canadian markets under the Kraken brand.

The WFL-02 lens has an M52 thread. To mount it on a Nauticam flat housing port I used a special step-up ring from M52 thread to M67 thread. As my luck would have it, a few years ago I bought an Olympus PEN 9 camera with the Olympus M.Zuiko Digital 14-42mm f3.5-5.6 EZ ED kit lens. Before that, the idea of using this lens with my main Olympus M1 Mark II camera never occurred to me.

I had underestimated this lens. With such a tiny size it has very impressive performance. The focal

length equivalent at full frame is 28-84 mm. Maximum angle on land 75° and 29° at 42mm focal length. The minimum focusing distance of the lens is only 0.2 m.

The Weefine WFL-02 wide angle lens with Olumpus TG cameras has an angle of view of 150 degrees diagonally. The focal length of the lens of TG cameras at wide angle is equivalent to 24 mm at full frame. The 14 - 42 mm lens is equivalent to 28 mm at wide angle. The angle of view of the 14-42mm lens with this wide lens underwater is 127 degrees.

My opinion - this is the perfect wide angle for shooting underwater. And not only for shooting divers. Landscapes, marine life, it all looks

much more natural than fisheye.

Before the digital age, I shot for many years with a Nikonos V camera with a 15 mm Nikkor lens. The angle of view of this lens was even smaller, only 94 degrees. I liked the images taken with this lens. The 14-42 mm zoom with the Weefine WFL-02 lens makes the images look as similar as possible to those of the legendary Nikkor lens.

I liked the combination of the 14-42mm zoom lens and the Weefine wet wide-angle lens. So much so, that I stopped using my favorite Olympus 8mm fisheye to shoot at sea. Now, I only photograph with the fisheye in the Mexican cenotes, there, in the confined space of the caves, the 180-degree angle is really necessary.

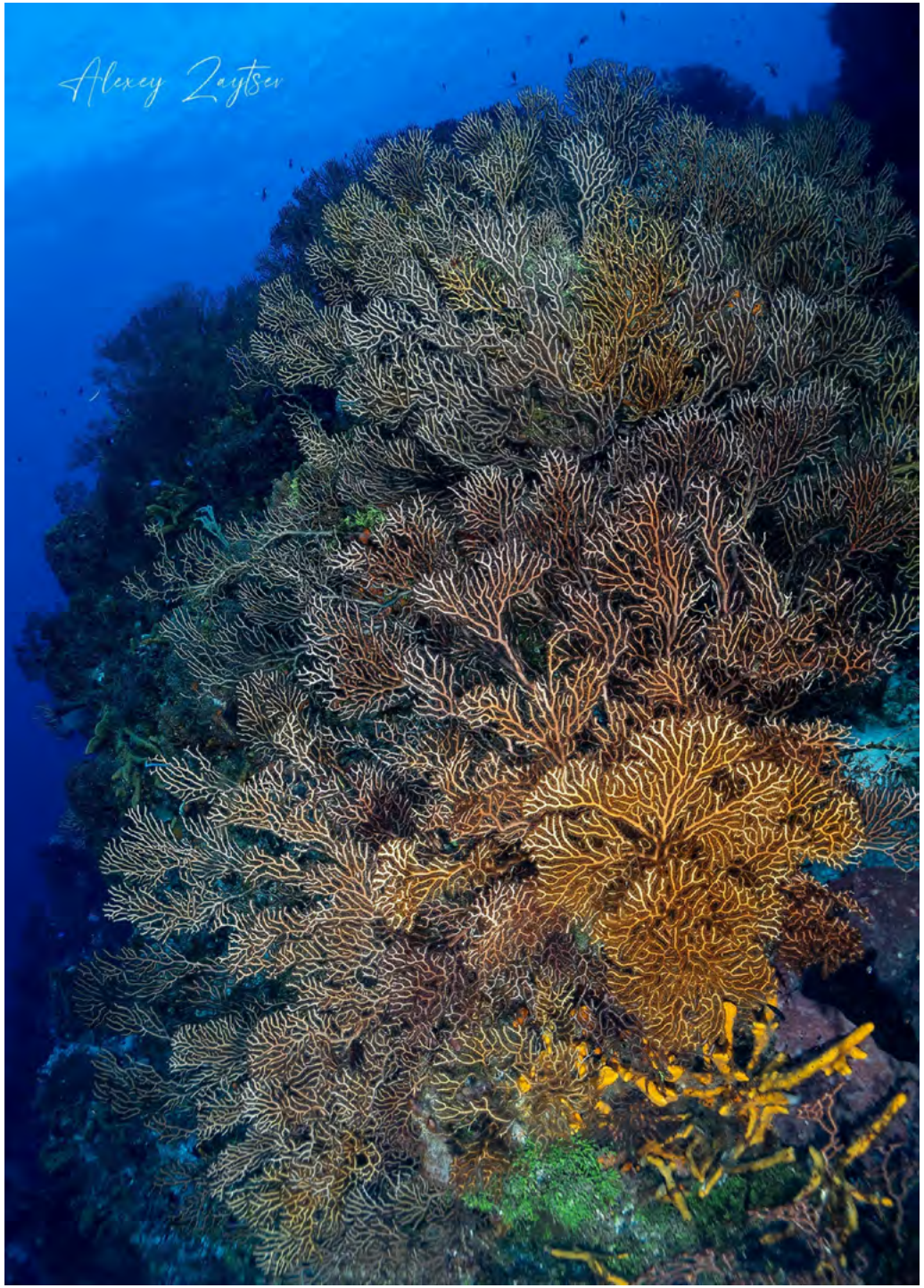
The next challenge I faced was the light. Since, in the past, I traveled a lot, the best choice for me was Inon strobes. They are quite compact and lightweight and have the necessary power. In Mexico, I arrived with an Inon 330 strobe.

A small digression. What is the specialty of diving on Cozumel Island? Usually, the first dive is always done at maximum depth. The area of Palancar Reef, in the southwest of the island, is a steep wall going into the abyss. And on a morning dive, this side of

(Both images) Olympus OM1 II, Nauticam housing, 2 x Scubalamp D-PRO strobes, 1/250 sec f8 ISO400 Olympys 14-42 mm @14 mm Weefine WFL-02

the reef is always in the shade. The sun is not high enough to illuminate the wall at a depth of 20 to 25 meters. You have to increase the ISO to get blue rather than black water in the background. The strobes, on wide-angle scenes, are also running at maximum power. The second feature is a constant current. At times it is very strong. To photograph divers, you need to overtake all the divers, turn around to face the group, find an interesting object in the foreground, such as a large sponge or coral, and hold yourself on the flippers against the current to take a picture. Since the divers are swimming towards me in the current and are in motion, I use tracking autofocus (C-AF+TR). This is not staged photography, but real reportage, and my models are most often not paying attention to me and the camera.

The moment I take a picture, they might start to clear the mask of water, do some equalizing, or exhale



(Both images) Olympus OM1 II, Nauticam housing, 2 x Scubalamp D-PRO strobes, 1/80 sec f8 ISO400 Yuneec 14-42 mm @14 mm Weefine WFL-02

and bubbles might cover their face. Or just turn their head the other way when they see something interesting. The shot will be ruined. Naturally, you can manage to take a couple more shots while the diver is approaching you and the composition of the shot is still not ruined by the movement of the object. But if your strobes do not have time to recharge, the second frame will not be illuminated as you would like, and the third frame may be completely dark because the strobes have almost completely used up the capacitor charge. The group of divers continue their movement in the current, and again I have to overtake them, find a shooting point, and shoot. So many, many times during one dive.

I liked my Inon strobes. But I wanted a faster reload speed. I started looking for a solution to this problem and noticed the D-PRO strobes from the Chinese company SCUBALAMP. By that time, which was a year ago,

Olympus OM1 II, Nauticam housing, 2 x Scubalamp D-PRO strobes, 1/250 sec f16 ISO100 Olympys 60 mm f2,8

there were already a lot of reviews and publications about these strobes on the Internet. Many famous underwater photographers started to use these strobes and according to their reviews, I concluded that this is what I needed. I was not embarrassed by the lack of TTL on these strobes. For me, manual power control has always been preferable.

Since last October, I started using these strobes in my work and I can say that it was the right decision. The recharge rate of the strobes is very fast. I stopped getting underexposed shots by doing several shutter release presses in a row.

I won't go on at length about these strobes. There have been many publications about them on the internet over the last year, including in this magazine.

I'll just list the main things I like them for:

*Powerful enough for shooting in bright sunlight and backlighting.
*Even spot of light and wide angle of the light beam. *Warm color tint gives photos a pleasant saturation of red, orange and yellow colors.
*High recharge rate at maximum power.
*Easy and intuitive operation.
*Powerful pilot light - it is enough even for video shooting at night, for macro and wide-angle shooting at close range.
*Battery capacity is enough for several days of diving. No need to charge the batteries after each day of diving as I can see the battery level on the display.
*Customer service

About that last point. Any equipment can break down. During the warranty period, the manufacturer is obliged to provide repair services for its products free of charge. But this is only part of the service. If the manufacturer is on the other side of the globe, the logistics of providing this service is also important. I purchased my strobes not through a distributor, but directly from Scubalamp. A few months ago, one strobe stopped working. For some unknown reason, it stopped turning on, and replacing the batteries did not help. I contacted Scubalamp, and sent them a video taken on my phone showing that replacing the batteries was not working. The company responded very quickly, and shipped me new strobe innards to Mexico, with detailed video instructions on how to open the strobe housing and do the replacement. I only had to pay for postage from China and two weeks later I was back with working equipment.

All of the above makes the D-PRO strobes a truly professional tool for the job. I can safely recommend these strobes not only to professionals but also to experienced amateurs of underwater photography.

I'm very much my working kit right now. In addition to the wide-angle lens, I take underwater the CMC-1 macro lens from Nauticam. This gives me a versatile system, for shooting almost any subject or scene. The macro lens with a 42mm zoom lens allows me to shoot real macro. My clients often want to buy pictures of what they saw while diving. By changing lenses, and sometimes shooting with just a zoom lens, I can photograph anything from nudibranchs to sharks.

But that's not the end of the story. I was already excited that I had found my perfect working configuration when three months ago, my Olympus M.Zuiko Digital 14-42mm f3.5-5.6 EZ ED zoom lens failed. This lens has an electric zoom drive. You turn the zoom ring on the lens, and the built-in motor moves the lens to the tele or wide-angle position. The lens is suddenly "off", the camera can no longer see it, the lens no longer

Olympus OM1 II, Nauticam housing, 2 x Scubalamp D-PRO strobes, 1/250 sec f8 ISO320 Yuneec 14-42 mm @14 mm Weefine WFL-02

responds to the rotation of the zoom ring, and the viewfinder image is replaced by a black screen.

The nearest camera repair shop is in mainland Mexico, in a city that you have to fly to by airplane. I contacted the repair shop online and they told me that this is a typical problem for this lens. You have to change the stub, a group of electrical contacts inside the lens that connects the motor and the lens processor. The part is inexpensive, but shipping the lens across Mexico, and the labor to repair it all makes the cost of this service almost equal to the cost of the lens. It was urgent to find another solution. I started looking on eBay for used lenses and unexpectedly found another solution. Panasonic also produces lenses with micro4/3 mount. In their range of optics there is a similar lens with almost identical characteristics and dimensions. I found an interesting offer on eBay, Panasonic made a limited batch of 14-42mm lenses for YUNEEC, a drone manufacturer. For some reason part of the batch of these lenses ended up being available for sale. I bought this lens for only USD 100. Brand new! My buddy, an engineer from California, made a zoom actuator for this lens on a 3D printer and sent me a package from the USA. Within a week, I was back to underwater shooting with my favorite configuration of photographic equipment.

The bottom line is that I can't find any differences in image quality between the Olympus 14 42 mm and YUNEEC/Panasonic lenses. The quality of the images that my not-so-new Olympus M1 Mark II camera produces still pleases me. And the main thing is that my clients like these pictures and buy them. So far I am not going to switch to other photographic equipment, and I think that for my tasks, for commercial underwater photography, the quality of the micro4/3 sensor is quite enough.

The only criterion I would like to improve my kit is to shoot better quality video. That's why now I'm closely following the progress of micro4/3 cameras for video shooting underwater. And so far I don't know who will win - OM or Panasonic/ But that's a topic for another research and article.

I hope you found my experience interesting and learned something useful. Want to ask me questions, message me on my website, Facebook or Instagram account.

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Smart choice

by Sabine Roesel & Mark Fothergill

My dive buddy, Mark and I met last year while volunteering at the Gozo turtle nest, which is another story altogether.

I had ecently moved to Gozo from Germany with the intention to get back into diving after a break of 28 years. Mark was diving solo and looking for a regular buddy so it seemed the logical thing to team up. I quickly discovered, it's like riding a bike, once learned the 'muscle memory' kicks in and you quickly progress to where you left off.

We soon discovered that both of us love to dive at a glacially slow pace; searching for hidden treasures of nature and enjoying the different environment. Mark likes taking photos, but as a part of the dive, not as the purpose of the dive. He has delved into the higher end of underwater photography in the past with digital full frame SLR, but the attraction of enjoying a dive whilst manhandling equipment the size of an ROV wore off over time.

Nowadays, given the trade off in picture quality the objective is to use a set up which can be slipped into a thigh, or BCD pocket, but with expectancy of producing something better than your average holiday snap! Also, the convenience of this evokes the old David Bailey principle of always carrying a camera so an opportunity is never missed.

Both of us gravitated towards the Divevolk housing as we both have a collection of redundant (sacrificial?!) iPhones. The attraction of the deeper depth rating and pressure balanced housing and the ability to use the touch screen being most attractive.

Octopus Suzie's Pool Cirkewwa. Early morning, natural light. Water depth 5m. iPhone 11 Pro Max, Focal length 4.25mm, f/1.8. Taken with ProCamera app.

The diving in the Maltese islands is varied. The are great opportunities at shallow depths using available light and the effects that produces. Those who are familiar with the diving here know it can also get very deep, very quickly.

Over the past few decades the fish life has increased for a number of species (sadly not others), the underwater scenery is great given the often spectacular visibility. Of wrecks, there are plenty, both those sunk as artificial reefs and those as casualties of two World Wars.

Both of us have learned to work within the limitations of a smart phone and try to get the best

Tugboat Rozi, Cirkewwa. 30m water depth. iPhone 11 Pro Max, Focal length 4.25mm, f/1.8, 1/120 exposure. Panorama mode in iPhone Camera app. Colour image post processed in Photoshop Elements.

we can out of the simple set up.

The main issues we have found are:

• You can't use strobes, as they won't synchronize so use video lights which don't have the penetration - limited to macro, close up or night dives.

• Use red filters, or manual white balance down to 15m max, then consider monochrome at deeper depths and widen the dynamic range.

• Look for opportunities where the natural light creates interesting effects.

Sabine's bent is towards video using the native Apple app and filters. Stills are taken with the 'live fotos' option enabled at all times and sometimes as screenshots from the videos.

Sabine:

"I usually put the captures together into a clip, while also building up my very own marine life database.

The Mediterranean doesn't burst with many colorful creatures. It challenges it's diving visitors more with very well camouflaged species who have extraordinary skills in hiding.

Furthermore, diving around Gozo and Malta offers underwater landscapes, seagrass meadows, multiple caves and wrecks as backdrop, which in themselves are subjects for stunning shots.

I have built up a wide collection of photos, some of which hold special memories, like my favorite one of a very curious juvenile grouper.

I spotted him under a rock in about 3m depth, just below the exit spot at Xatt L-Ahmar. With the idea of taking a quick shot before ending the dive, he decided my camera was an interesting object for further investigation. He swam right up to my lens so I just kept my shutter button pushed for taking a clip. The shot is a take out of that clip.

One of my favorites are octopus. On early morning dives, right after sunrise they normally are quite unfazed by the presence of divers. Watching them change color and texture always leaves me stunned and fascinated.

My most recent favourite is a picture of a Loggerhead hatchling was taken just a few days ago and is a good representation of my to diving related passion: Marine life conservation. As a volunteer for

Juvenile Grouper at Xatt L-Ahmar
iPhone 14 Pro Max + Divevolk Seatouch 4 max
ISO 160, Ultra-Weitwinkelkamera 13mm, f 2.2, 1/60s, natural light

Loggerhead hatchling at Ramla Bay, Gozo
iPhone 14 Pro Max + Divevolk Seatouch 4 max
Video frame grab

Nature Trust Malta, I have the opportunity to take footage when turtles get released after rehab, or when, like in this case, hatchlings get found on the bottom of the nest on inspection. Loggerhead hatchlings normally hatch during night time, so it's rare to capture them at daylight on the begin of their journey of 20 plus odd years, before the females hopefully return to nest on the beach they were born."

Mark:

"I have played around a bit with video, but stills are really what does it for me. I do use the iPhone app , but prefer to use ProCamera which allows manual white balancing and greater range of control over settings from manual to full auto, resolution, RAW/HEIC and JPEG and so forth. Post processing, I use Photoshop Elements as I can buy a single user one off licence for a reasonable price. I gave up using the full version of Photoshop as soon as Adobe went subscription only. And, I really don't require the full power of the application for my needs.

Fish portraiture and lighting effects are my primary interest.

The two aspects which I can fully exploit, even with a smartphone are using available light at very shallow depths (0-10m) and creating effects with back and white images at depth. The majority of my diving is at normal recreational depths up to 40m."

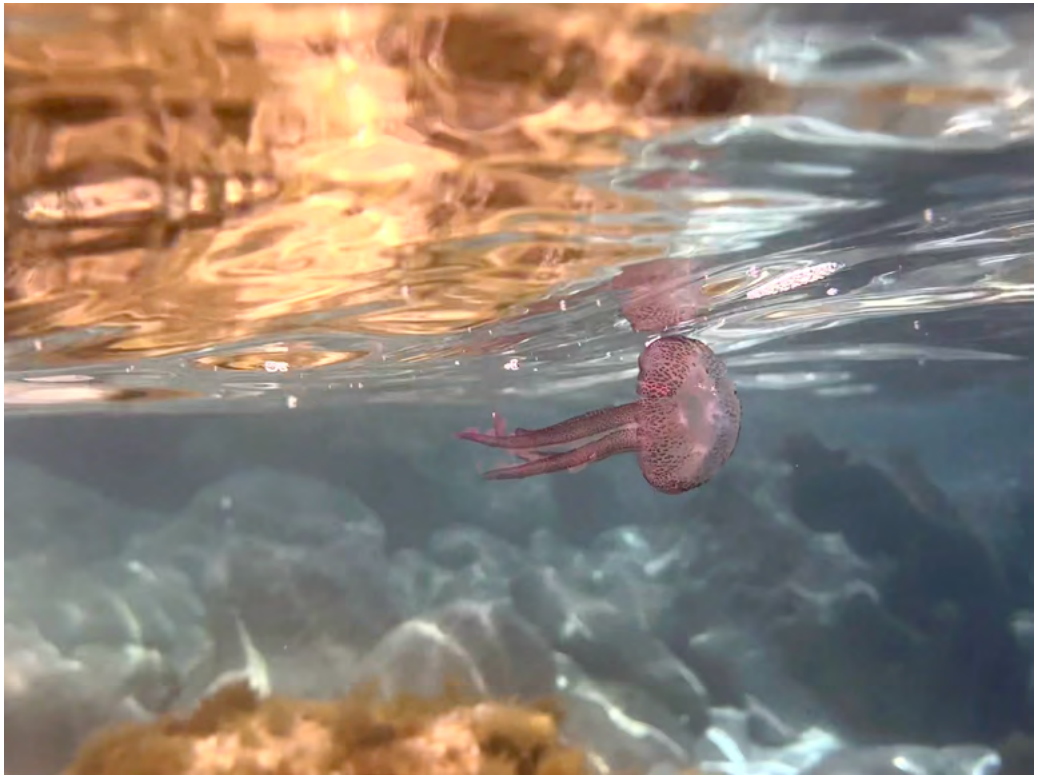
The Maltese Islands boast a number of signature dives which lend themselves to divers of all certification levels and abilities. One of these, Cirkewwa, next to the Gozo ferry terminal offers a long reef dive and two wrecks (artificial reefs sunk intentionally) at around 35m. The site can be like Piccardilly Circus at times. Best is to arrive at first light and be out of the water before the dive schools arrive.

There is a shallow area of 5 meters water depth one of the entry/exit points which lends itself to snorkeling and shallow natural light photography. The octopus in the photo was taken in this area and happily played for 10 minutes before beating a retreat.

My image from Cirkewwa depicts Fried Egg Jellyfish (Cotylorhiza tuberculate) at Suzie's Pool. This was shot for the lighting effect alone. The water depth here is 2m, or less and in the mornings the downward reflection from the surface can create some great effects.

Fried Egg jellyfish at the entrance to Suzie's Pool, Cirkewwa. 1.5m water depth. iPhone 11 Pro Max, Focal length 4.25mm, f/1.8, 1/60, ISO 875 exposure.

MV Xlendi Wreck, located at Xatt L-Ahmar Dive Site. iPhone 14 Pro Max + Divevolk Seatouch 4 max. ISO 400, Ultra-Weitwinkelkamera 13mm, f 2.2, 1/60s, natural light



Reflections … Mauve Stinger at Dahlet Qorrot. iPhone 14 Pro Max + Divevolk Seatouch 4 max. ISO 64, Hauptkamera 24mm, f 1.78, 1/729s, natural light

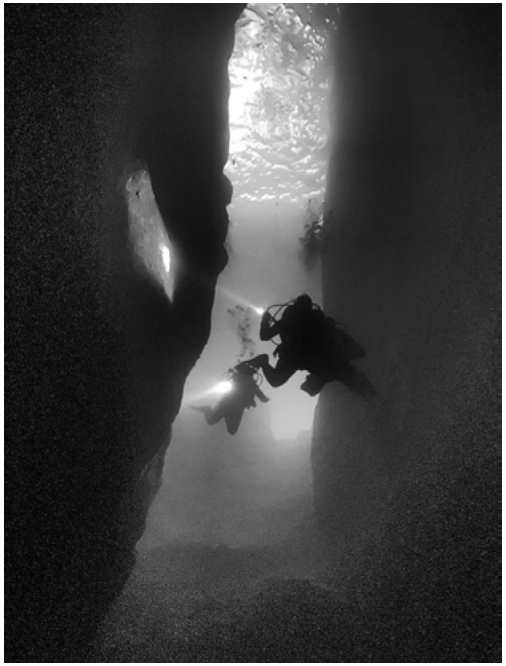
These jellyfish swarm the Maltese Islands for a few weeks most summers and can grow to about 40cm across. They are completely harmless. Suzie's Pool is named after the wife of Peter Lemmon who has written one of the definitive guides to Maltese diving (now on the 5th edition).

The other photograph is of the tug boat Rozi which is just off the reef at the northern tip at a maximum depth of 37m. The Rozi was sunk as an attraction for Captain Morgan Cruises who at the time ran a mini submarine and served as focal point for the dive. Being a tug boat it was constructed of heavy gauge steel and has hardly deteriorated in the 20 odd years I have dived there. The photo was taken with the iPhone Camera App in Pano mode taking advantage of the excellent underwater visibility there.

I was looking for something atmospheric and the conversion to monochrome and stretching the dynamic range in Photoshop Elements together with the bend

Flying Gurnard, Mgarr Ix-Ini in 8m water depth natural light. Taken with ProCamera App on a iPhone 11 Pro Max.

Inland Sea Tunnel, Dwejra, Gozo



Inland Sea Tunnel, Dwejra, Gozo. iPhone 11 Pro Max. Available light.

distortion created by the app gave me what I was looking for. Naturally, this is hardly how it appears in real life!

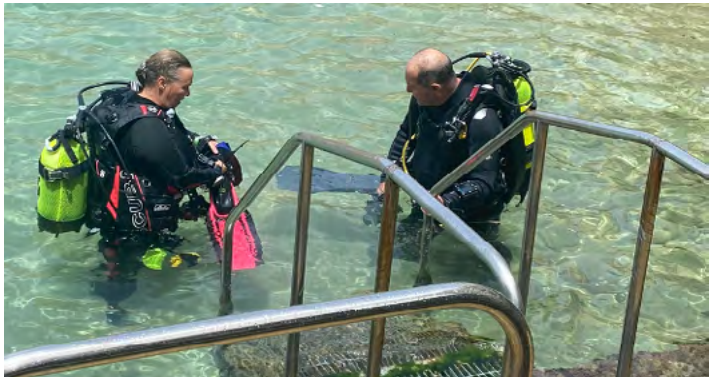
Moving over to Gozo, the picture one remembers most is the Azure window which subsequently collapsed in 2017. However, this site offers reef/wall dives, a chimney, the Blue Hole. The Inland Sea is a collapsed cave connected to the sea by a 200m long tunnel. The dive along the wall outside the tunnel is not very inspiring however the tunnel itself is much more interesting.

The tunnel starts at a depth of barely 2 meters and descends to 26 meters where it enters the open sea. Divers need to be particularly careful when entering at the shallow end as the tourist boats are constantly going back and forth through the tunnel entrance.

Mgarr Ix-Ini is at the end of a long, narrow sheltered inlet on the south coast of Gozo. The water is shallow, no deeper than 6m m before it meters the open sea. There are two caves and another gulley below the Ta Cenc Hotel and Resort. The bottom is sandy with sea grass and is home to a few sea horses in the summer months. It is a good place to find flounders, octopus, moray eels, cuttlefish and Flying Gurnards as shown in the accompanying photo.

There are some 70 dive sites which can be reached from the shore in the Maltese Islands. This is a tiny selection of the most popular places to dive.

Sabine Roesel & Mark Fothergill
Instagram



A new technique for over/under shooting

by Pete Atkinson

The established protocol for shooting half and half pictures is to focus on the underwater subject, use a small aperture and hope the background falls within the depth of focus. For full frame cameras, f20 or f22 is required. With a crop sensor or APS-C sensor f16 is sufficient because of the apparent 'greater depth of focus' with a crop sensor.

The problem with this approach is that acceptably sharp areas closer than the underwater subject are wasted. If the closest acceptably sharp area is actually on the subject (and the sharpest area is now just behind the subject) it increases the likelihood that the above water background will also be acceptably sharp. But how do you achieve this?

My technique is to test the lens above water. With the Nikon Z50 on a tripod, I focus the Sigma 8-16mm lens and FTZ converter at f16 on infinity. I take a picture, including objects a hundred metres away. Incrementally manually focus closer and closer making a note of where focus lies on the lens barrel. Take a snap of each lens position with your phone and make a note of the frame number. Look at the sequence of pictures at 100% on your monitor. Choose the closest focus position where the background is still acceptably sharp. Acceptably sharp is variable; sharp enough for the intended use. So for big glossy prints you might choose a different focus position than for a use on social media. With a mirrorless camera you can use manual focus and just focus as close as you can but still retain ìfocus peaking highlightsî on the background. The in-focus indicator in the viewfinder will indicate what is at sharpest focus when underwater, and peaking highlights should indicate what else will also be in focus below.

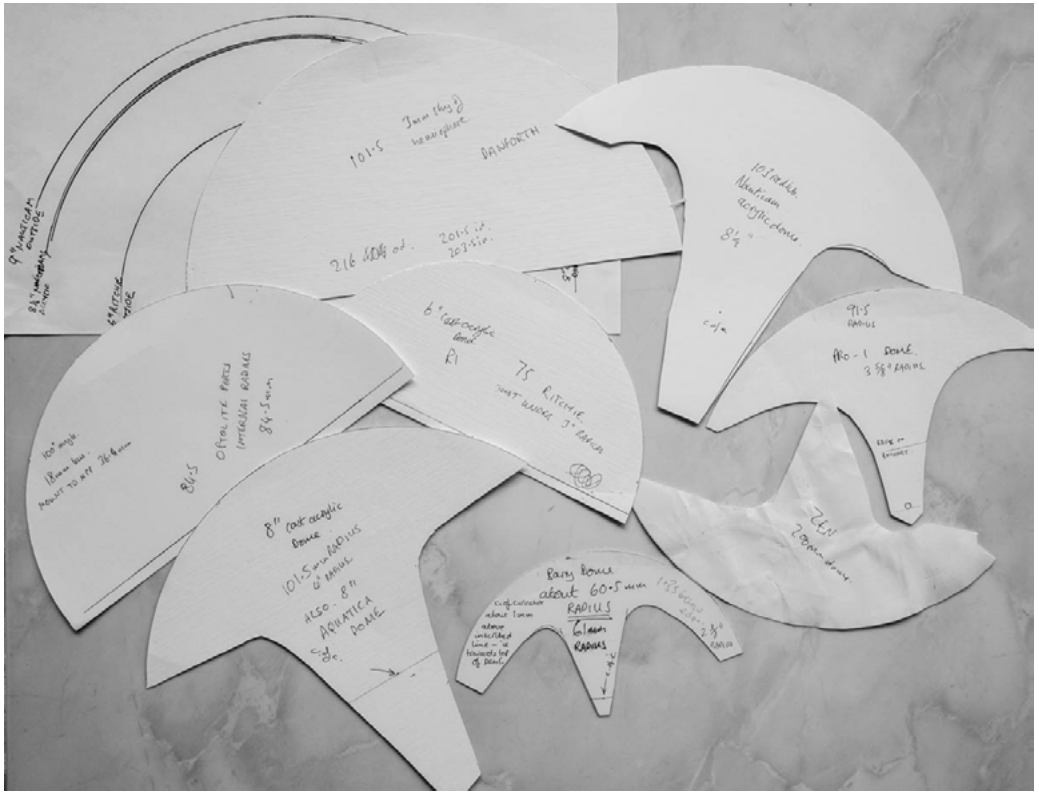
Once you have determined this sweet spot you can tape the lens in position. For my 8-16 Sigma it's roughly at 0.4m with an 8.5" dome.

As for exposure, if the topside part is a stop over and the underwater part is a stop under this can be corrected in Lightroom easily. In swimming pools the difference in exposure above and below is small and needs little correction. If you want to shoot in the evening and have a person or reef underwater you will need flash. Even during the day a flash can be useful on the underwater part, particularly if you have a model close to the camera. Don't expect to light a model underwater more than 2m away at f16 and ISO 200.

So to summarise: the aperture is determined by wanting above and

A small dome can emphasise irregularity in the meniscus. Focused underwater. 6" Ritchie dome. Nikon D800E, 1/20th at f22, ISO 400

This 14" dome was initially built for a Seacam housing then converted to a Subeye Reflex with an 18mm lens



Patterns for some of the domes that I have measured over the years

Darryl Torckler making a pattern to measure the radius of one of his dome ports

below both acceptably sharp. F16 for crop sensor or f22 for full frame.

I like to use a shutter speed of at least 1/200 but I can't use faster than this if I need to use flash with the Nikon Z50. The meniscus at the dome will be sharper with a faster shutter speed.

The ISO can be then adjusted for the amount of light. I much prefer to work on sunny days when my base settings are f16, shutter 1/200th and ISO 200. So I donít need to adjust anything on the camera, I just pay attention to the film of water on the dome.

The size of the dome determines the look of the picture too. Bigger domes make it easier to focus above and below simultaneously because the virtual image is further away and less curved.. The largest I made was 14î which is a problem for travel! It needed a substantial rotating lead weight to persuade it to float at roughly the half way position. It's also easier to control the meniscus with a large dome. Waves are less of an issue. With a small dome even a small ripple will have a big impact. But an unusual meniscus line can add interest to any picture.

We use wide lenses underwater so that we can get close to the subject and reduce the amount of water we are shooting through. Always, water is the lowest quality of anything in the optical path. Reduce it as much as possible.

Wide lenses behind flat ports narrow the field of view, produce chromatic aberration, and create pincushion distortion.. A dome port reduces all three. But it acts as a negative lens underwater and produces an image of infinity at 3 x the radius in front of the dome. The lens has to be able to focus on this close virtual image. This virtual image is curved and concentric with the dome so if you focus on the middle of it, it's possible that the corners will fall outside the depth of focus and be blurred. This softening of the corners is worse at wider apertures. So even when not shooting over/under we try

Bobbing the housing up and down created these ripples in the pool at Oasis Spa in Kamala, Phuket. Nikon Z50, FTZ, Sigma 8-16, 1/250th, f16, ISO 250

The underwater part of a model bisected by the meniscus is larger. In Photoshop select everything below the meniscus and use Edit, Transform, Scale to align everything and then crop. Nikon D800, 16-35 at 35mm, 1/200 s at f13, ISO 400

to use f11 or smaller to improve the corners of an image. Water contact optics reduce this issue considerably but most can't be used for over/under shots unless you are using the Nauticam WACP 1 or 2. So for good over/under shots this underwater virtual image needs to be in focus, but also the topside view needs to be included in the depth of focus.

The dome needs to be placed so that the center of curvature of the dome and the apparent front entrance pupil (or no-parallax point) of the lens are in the same place. Panoramic photographers have calculated this front entrance pupil position for many wide lenses. For example, the no-parallax point of the 8-16 Sigma at 8mm is 73mm in front of the lens mount. Port extensions are used to ensure that the dome is in the right place. Domes can be glass or acrylic; acrylic is less expensive, lighter and easier to polish if it get scratched. I prefer acrylic.

Domes can be hemispherical or a section of a hemisphere. Measuring the internal radius of an unknown dome can be done in this way. Draw a circle with compasses about the right size and cut a pattern out with scissors. Fold the paper pattern enough to get it inside the dome and see it it fits perfectly against the inside of the dome. It's easy to see if it's too large or small. Adjust the size, cut a new pattern and try again. Pretty quickly you will have a pattern the right size. Measure from the compass pin hole to the edge; that's the internal radius of your dome. With this information you can calculate what dome extension, if any, is needed to place the dome so that the centre of curvature is coincident with the front entrance pupil of the lens.

It is also possible to shoot two photos, one focused above and one focused below and put them together in Photoshop. If shooting a person both above and below, the bottom part will appear larger than the top. You can match the underwater torso with the above water part by bringing the image into Photoshop, selecting everything below the meniscus and going to Edit, Transform, Scale. Squash the bottom of the picture so it lines up with the top, then crop off the edges as needed. For people close to the camera, I prefer to focus above water so that the face is sharp as it seems more natural if the underwater part is slightly softer.

To keep the dome free of droplets there are two approaches; beading agents and wetting agents.

Le Meridien hotel in Phuket has four pools; in one I have seen 60m visibility. Fisheye lenses are not the best for architecture! Nikon Z50, FTZ, Tokina 10-17 prefocussed at 0.4m, 1/200 s, f16, ISO 200

A child's life jacket can be used to float the housing at precisely the right depth. Here my D800 housing also has a foam buoyancy collar around the port extension

Some people like Pledge Lemon as a beading agent. You polish the dome with this and as you lift it out of the water the drops will run off cleanly. If there is surface scum from, for example, sunscreen lotion, the polish will only last for about 30 minutes before it breaks down and droplets adhere to the surface. Rain-X is a beading agent for glass but don't use it on acrylic. Rain-X Plastic can be used, but I haven't tried it.

The second approach is a wetting agent. With a glass dome, I found that a freshly cut potato worked well. With acrylic, spit is very good. Ideally pre-spit the dome and smear it around with a tissue, not with greasy fingers. You can do a pre-spit well in advance, let it dry and then re-spit before you go into the water. (I donít remove the dome shade.) So if using a wetting agent, dip the dome underwater, lift it out and gently rub off any residue with your fingers. On the next dip a thin layer of water should be retained all over the surface of the dome for several seconds, time enough for a few shots through that layer of water. Re-dip for each sequence. Another advantage of this method it tends to hide any scratches in the dome. And of course, spit is something you always have with you when you need to reapply.

I encourage models not to use suntan or body lotion, as a film of that on the surface sticks to the dome and attracts dirt every time you dip!

You can use detergent as a wetting agent instead, but I have found spit to be longer lasting and more convenient.

Working in most swimming pools you can stand on the bottom, or on tiptoes in fins. If it's deeper and you can't touch the bottom it is better to float the camera housing on something, a child's lifejacket can be used to support it so that you are not trying to lift the housing partially out of the water. Maybe try wearing a lifejacket yourself!

I have shot hotels with a fisheye lenses but they are not kind to architecture even though they are fun to shoot. The 8-15mm Nikon fisheye is far more use on a crop sensor camera than on a full-frame for which it was designed as it reproduces much of

A refracted view of a shark through the surface with the underwater view and the sky won the Innovation Award at the Wildlife Photographer of the Year in 2004.

what the 10-17 Tokina offered and is very sharp. But at a price! Although the Tokina wonít autofocus with the FTZ adapter I have shot it prefocused at 0.4m but the buildings were a bit soft for my taste.

I love the caustic light patterns on the bottom and sometimes you can add interest by bobbing the housing up and down to create additional rings. Shooting up slightly allows you to capture reflections on the underside of the surface. Always look for shadows too! I like to shoot slightly downwards sometimes, showing the surface as well as the meniscus.

Enjoy.

Pete Atkinson
www.peteatkinson.com

The Wrecks of Abu Nuhas

by Peter Stenberg

The pinnacle of the adventure of shooting in this incredible place. Capturing a panorama that really showcase the grandness and beauty of these wrecks. This shot is a panorama consisting of 5 separate vertical shots and then stitched together using Lightroom. It shows a diver explores the rear mid-section of the iconic and striking wreck of the Chrisoula K. Here the precious cargo of Italian floor-tiles can be clearly seen through the now opened up part of the port side of the ship.
1/60s f/10 ISO 320 Nikon 16-35@16mm.

A few hours outside of Hurghada, north of the island of Shadwan, right where the Gulf of Suez meets the open Red Sea, lies the famous and equally infamous reef of Shaab Abu Nuhas.

This triangular shaped reef called Abu Nuhas is feared among even the most seasoned captain because of it's treacherous position. It' situated right before the safe passage, or at least the unobstructed waters of the open Red Sea that awaits ships after successfully navigating the Gulf of Suez.

Here more ships than on any other reef in the Red Sea have met their faith due to heavy weather, navigational errors or simply due to bad luck. Earning this reef it's reputation as the Ships Graveyard.

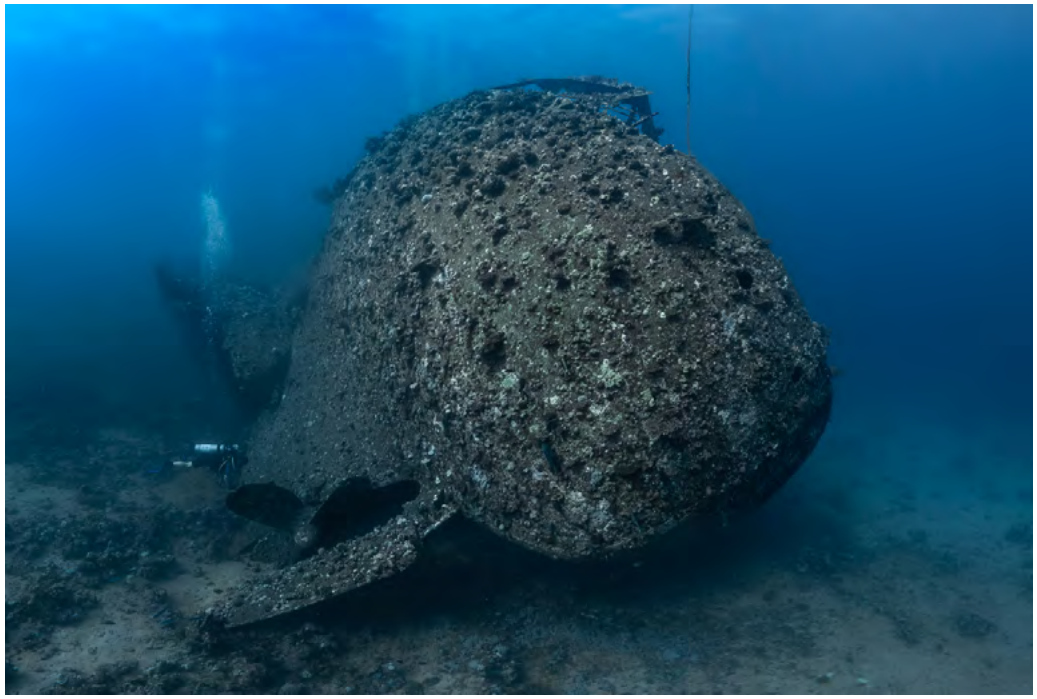
Since the Suez Canal in the mid 1800s finally opened up the shortcut that connected the western world and the valuable trade-route of modern day India, several ships now make the bottom around this reef their final resting home.

This route remains to this day one of the busiest routes of cargo-ships in the world and in-between dives you are often reminded of the importance of this route by the number of huge ships sailing by while the rusty remains of tragedy lies beneath the surface calling for any diver, seasoned wreck-diver or novice alike.

"I realised that this would be the perfect spot and opportunity for me to sharpen my skills, practise new techniques and to land some great shots was now at the fate my shutter."

I set out on this trip hoping to capture some great images of these iconic wrecks and the marine life that surrounds it and at times totally engulfs it. Equipped with my Nikon d850, wide-angle 16-35mm & a 105mm macro lens I headed to Egypt with my hopes high on landing some great shots and trying out some new techniques, like shooting a panorama underwater for the first time.

Right up on arrival in the Red Sea I realised that this would be the perfect spot and opportunity for me to sharpen my skills, practise new



The availability of great wrecks in this location is just amazing and combined with the interesting, and sometimes tragic history these wrecks are nothing short of fantastic dives and the opportunities for some amazing wreck shots really are everywhere .On the left a diver explores the rudder and massive propeller of the oldest of the wrecks found here, the Carnatic which sunk in 1869. 1/80s f/10 ISO 200. Nikon 16-35@16mm.On the right is the stern section with intact rudder and propeller of the Chrisoula K. 5 vertical shot panorama 1/50s f/11 ISO320 Nikon 16-35@16mm

techniques. Landing some great shots was now at the fate my shutter. With typical Red Sea conditions and visibility everything was lining up to be just optimal for wreck photography. So shooting here perhaps the greatest challenge was going to be capturing the images that I had in mind without too many divers in the frame, taking the feeling of exploration away from the viewer. Because as beautiful as this place and it's wrecks are, it is a very popular spot. I had previous to the trip researched the wrecks and I had a good idea of what awaited me underneath the surface. My main goal was gonna be capturing really clear high quality shots of the wrecks from the outside using ambient light only. This decision was partly made because previous to this trip one of my strobes had malfunctioned just a few days before the trip, leaving me with more limited options for shooting strobe-lit photos.

Even though these waters have a fearsome reputation several of the wrecks here are now easily available for divers. Partly due to their relatively shallow depth. On most wrecks a dive beneath 30 meters is not even possible, let alone necessary. But also because the wrecks are lying almost on top of each other in typical Red Sea clear blue waters with a visibility often exceeding 30 meters.

In the area surrounding the Abu Nuhas reef there are at least seven wrecks and four of these lie within easy reach, right next to and even on top of the reef itself.

These four most famous and classic wrecks here are Chrisoula K, Carnatic, Ghiannis D & Kimon M. All of them equally impressive with lengths averaging around 100 meters and they all have an interesting story about the devastating circumstances that led to their demise. Remembering these stories, the people who were on it and the ethical consequences of diving in sites where human fates came

to an end is important and almost inevitable as the wrecks remind you of their dramatic end as you witness the destruction of these huge ships around the reef.

One of the most iconic and photogenic wrecks in the Abu Nuhas is the magnificent Ghiannis D (pictured above). A more picture perfect shipwreck on the bottom is hard to imagine. It's hard not to evoke memories of Tin Tin walking on the bottom among the remnants of old shipwrecks lying on the bottom.

This is really one of those wrecks where imagination and expectation of the creative mind meets reality in a wonderful composition.

The fact that the wrecks, like for example the oldest wreck found here, the Carnatic - sunk in 1869 - have with time been converted into a reef itself really helps to make this not just dives that reveals rusty structures of old ships but amazing reef dives.

The wrecks are completely covered in hard and soft corals in all colours, sometimes making the wreck almost indistinguishable form the reef itself. Fish and marine life have made both the exterior and interior parts of the wrecks their home. Bigger fish like jackfish, napoleon wrasse, groupers and sometimes even tuna are attracted to and circle the area hoping to find their next meal. While smaller schools of fish, like the beautiful

The famous and photogenic stern of the Ghiannis D lies at rest on a 45 degree angle and she is a striking sight. She was on her way to Saudi Arabia carrying a precious cargo of wood when disaster struck and due to a navigational error she hit the reef in 1983. The wreck offers great swim-through possibilities in several differens rooms and sections including the intact engine room. Capturing this wreck in this angle is a well photographed angle but surely makes for a stunning composition that will land this classic a spot on my wall.
1/80s f/9 ISO 250 Nikon 16-35@16mm

Orange anthias pulsate in and out of the foliage like a breathing rhythm of nature. The pastell coloured soft corals that contrast the deep blue water that symbolise the Red Sea canvas are literally everywhere to be found. 1/60s f/10 ISO 160 Nikon 16-35mm @16mm

The amount of marine life that flourish in, on and around the wreck is quite incredible. Pictured here is the commonly seen Blue Spotted Stingray (1/100s f/13 ISO 100 Nikon 16-35mm @35mm) and a big grouper chasing a school of glass- fish inside the Carnatic (1/80s f/10 ISO 200 Nikon 16-35mm @16mm)

orange anthias hover next to the hull, closer to the comfort of protection among the broken wreckage.

Here all the usual inhabitants of the coral reef seem to naturally belong. Nudibranchs, scorpionfish, morays, lion-fish, blue spotted stingrays and a personal favourite, the crocodile fish (pictured above) are easily spotted on and around the wrecks. It's hard to find any part of the wrecks that isn't converted to a home for marine life.

If you dare to venture inside to explore the internal parts of the wrecks, you will beside from having the opportunity to explore parts of their valuable cargo and even an intact engine room, find that even the darkest corners have become a lively habitat with a delicate play of life opening up before your torch.

Schools of red cardinal fish stare back at you with their big glaring eyes as you expose them as they hide in the corners. Huge schools of glass-fish play a beautiful game of hide and seek as they move around in the dark, simultaneously hiding while preying on unsuspecting smaller critters.

Given the fact that the wrecks have spent decades, and (like the Carnatic), even a century and a half on the bottom, they are still surprisingly intact. But the question of how long always lingers. Parts of the swim throughs that used to be possible and iconic parts that used to stand tall have slowly started to break away. Entire sections with iconic features like for example the famous and well visited "tool-shop" on the "Wreck of Tiles", The Chrisoula K are now completely collapsed. Forever hidden in the broken wreckage as if nature and time turned the page and closed a chapter, leaving the ones who come after with less and less.

Time and nature are probably the biggest driving factor of the inevitable destruction of these time capsules, but it's also clear to see that dive practices like mooring, anchoring and sheer popularity with divers also drives this process forward. It's not hard to imagine that the unnatural disruption caused by bubbles, dive lights, noise, pollution and bad dive practices drive not only the decay of the wrecks forward. But they also drive marine life a little further away from this beautiful testament of natures force to turn a tragic event like ships, cargo and lives being lost, in to an opportunity for life to once again flourish and thrive. Ethical questions like this is always a consideration when diving in a popular spot and an ever growing part of the awareness that a diver needs to have in his or her tool-box in the modern days of diving, where untouched and pristine is growing more and more scarce.

So one can only hope that this fantastic place will continue to be treated with the respect that it deserves. Not only to respect the people and ships once lost here, but to respect the work that nature has done in shaping this "Ships Graveyard" into a wonderful display of nature and Red Sea diving at it's best.

The wreck of the Chrisoula K truly is evidence that nature takes and nature gives. The wreck has completely been engulfed by corals and now appears as an extension of the reef itself for life to flourish.

Diving here truly is an experience for any diver, seasoned wreck-enthusiast or nature lover with a taste for reefs. Diving here leaves everyone wanting more.

Peter Stenberg
Instagram

Melasti Macro

by Ollie Newhouse

My wife and I had travelled to Bali once before for our honeymoon, where we dived only briefly. This time, however, we were returning solely with the intention of capturing the macro life Tulumben is famous for. Equipped with an Olympus EM1 MK II in a Nauticam housing, two Inon S-2000 strobes, a snoot, and a Nauticam CMC-1 wet lens, I was about a year out of practice but eager to get back into some clear water after a particularly slow start to the British summer, where murky green water still reigned when our flight departed Heathrow T4.

After a gruelling flight, the humid, frangipani-scented air let us know unequivocally that we had arrived in Bali. Three hours in a taxi later, we found ourselves in Amed, ready for diving tomorrow.

Tulumben is universally recognized by divers for its most popular dive site, the USAT Liberty—a United States Army cargo vessel torpedoed by the Imperial Japanese Navy in 1942 while en route from Australia to the Philippines. Shortly after, it beached itself on Tulumben's black sandy shores.

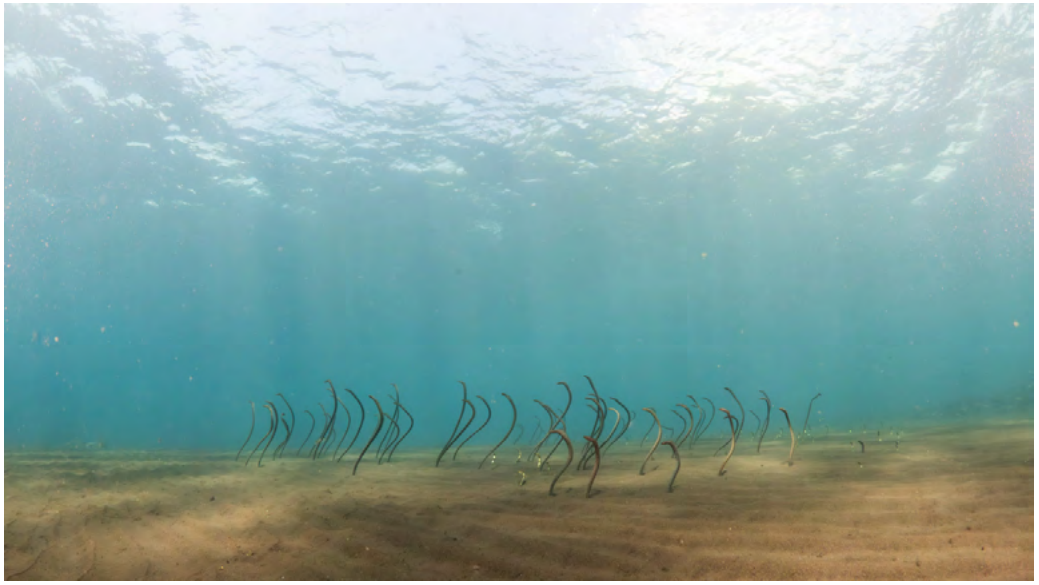
In the years that followed, multiple earthquakes caused the Liberty to slide back beneath the waves, where it has remained ever since. Naturally, I had to dive there first: camera check, strobes check, lens cap check, O-rings check. And into the water I went, using an M.Zuiko 8mm Pro fisheye lens and a 4-inch Nauticam dome.

With two Inon strobes, I had to pick my subjects carefully; as brilliant as the Inon S-2000 (the predecessor to the newly released S-220s) strobes are, they are better suited to macro subjects. However, aside from reefscapes, they hold up well for the price point.

Large barrel sponges and sea fans with resident feather stars were the highlights for me. I was saddened to hear from my dive guides that the resident bumphead parrotfish, which I had seen so many photos of on the Liberty wreck, were no longer as prevalent as they once were, due to illegal fishing during the COVID-19 pandemic when locals had to spear them for food. This was a sobering reminder of just how far-reaching and grim the pandemic has been,

Peacock Mantis Shrimp staring menacingly
Olympus Em1 mk II, Nauticam NA-EM1 II housing, two INON S-2000 strobes, M.Zuiko 60mm Macro, F13, 1/250, ISO 200

Our first Glimpse of the mighty USAT Liberty
Olympus Em1 mk II, Nauticam NA-EM1 II housing, two INON S-2000 strobes, 8mm M.Zuiko F1.8 fisheye lens, F9, 1/40, ISO 400



A meadow of garden eels greeted us on the beginning of our route to the liberty 8mm M.Zuiko F1.8 fisheye lens, F13, 1/160, ISO 800

particularly for the tourist industry and those areas so dependent on it.

The wreck itself was as impressive as I had imagined, spanning from its shallowest point at just 3 meters down to 30 meters at its deepest. With a large open cargo hold, you can swim up and through towards the surface. An abundance of life clings to and inhabits the Liberty, offering both wide-angle and macro opportunities. Nudibranchs, pipefish, and small reef fish are abundant. A highlight before we arrived at the wreck was a large meadow of garden eels playing their game of peekaboo with me as I made my slow approach to photograph them. As I got closer, trying to breathe as calmly as possible so as not to startle them, they would sink slowly down into their chambers. Fortunately, they allowed me the opportunity to snap a few shots before completely disappearing. I have been fascinated by these creatures ever since reading David Doubilet's account of them in his book ***Water Light Time***, and I was thrilled to capture my own photographs of the species.

Once the two dives on the Liberty were complete, the bar for diving in East Bali had indeed been set high. However, this bar was cleared with the power and vigour of an Olympic pole vaulter, and for this, I owe a huge thanks to my dive guide, Ivan, at No Fear Diving in Amed.

The Seemingly less common Squilla (Lysiosquillidae) Mantis Shrimp Olympus Em1 mk II, Nauticam NA-EM1 II housing, two INON S-2000 strobes, M.Zuiko 60mm Macro, Nauticam CMC-2 Wet lens F9, 1/250, ISO-200

The next dives were when we got into the good stuff: the macro and super macro. We arrived at Sidem Beach, Tulumben. To the right lay a pristine coral reef, reminiscent of those seen in Jacques Cousteau documentaries or BBC's ***Blue Planet***, a kaleidoscope of colours and species all fighting for attention. To the left was some black volcanic sand, scattered with rubbish and tufts of rock and seaweed, affectionately known as "muck." Any self-respecting underwater photographer immediately turns left.

Armed with the tried-and-tested M.Zuiko 60mm and the CMC-1, we descended beneath the still azure waters and into the macro world. Sidem and Melasti are two of the great muck diving sites in East Bali, both within 20 minutes of each other. I will address these two dives as one dive site, as they are both very similar and equally magnificent.

Gentle slopes of volcanic sand make macro subjects pop out in dramatic clarity against their obsidian background. The most challenging part of diving in this location is a sort of critter triage—deciding which species to settle down with and spend precious time, camera battery, and nitrox on, and which to move on from to continue the hunt. This is a problem I was very glad to have.

A peacock mantis shrimp proved to be a particular challenge. Positioning the strobes in such a way as to illuminate the creature without

making it look flat was tricky. As it slunk back into its crevice, I had to keep the strobes tight enough to the port so they wouldn't be blocked by the surrounding rock. Shortly after photographing this subject, I encountered a Squilla mantis for the first time, with its raptor-like appendages tucked tightly beneath its large body, ready to stealthily ambush its unsuspecting prey. Its alien eyes followed me as I composed my shot, swivelling on their axis in such a curious way that I couldn't help but feel it was pondering me deeply, or sizing me up…

As Ivan and I descended deeper, we came across a seemingly barren bed of small, leaf-like fronds of seaweed. However, to the super macro-trained eye of my dive guide, this location was teeming with life. This is the habitat of the fan-favourite sacoglossa, the Shaun the Sheep sea slug. I managed to locate a larger (approximately 5mm) individual, and once my buoyancy was as required, I began snapping away at this bucket list species.

Ivan, meanwhile, was scouting the area for more subjects, when suddenly I heard a loud shout about 5 meters to my right (quite an impressive feat underwater). Ivan was pointing at a large Stiliger Ornatus, a species we had discussed the day before in the dive shop. Ivan's love for this slug is so strong that he has a tattoo resembling it occupying most of his forearm.

Once the excitement subsided enough for us to regain control of our faculties, we both started snapping away at this incredible species, essentially a Shaun the Sheep sacoglossa with iridescent blue and yellow bands spanning the full length of its body and feathery appendages. A gentle current kept its leafy stage moving erratically, allowing me to test the limits of the 2016-built EM1 MK II's autofocus, and I really cannot complain at all. I love this camera, and as things stand, its most limiting factor is, was, and most likely always will be its operator, in my case anyway. I steadied myself and composed a portrait of this slug, and after capturing the shot I had in mind, I put the camera aside and appreciated the moment for a minute or two before moving on.

I could write for pages about all the species I saw during my dives in Melasti and Sidem. I ticked so many species off my bucket list that I lost count:

Finding this Stiliger Ornatus with Ivan was a highlight of the trip Olympus Em1 mk II, Nauticam NA-EM1 II housing, two INON S-2000 strobes, M.Zuiko 60mm Macro, Nauticam CMC-2 Wet lens, F18, 1/250, ISO 200

The fan favourite Shaun the Sheep Sacoglossa Olympus Em1 mk II, Nauticam NA-EM1 II housing, two INON S-2000 strobes, M.zuiko 60mm Macro, Nauticam CMC-2 Wet Lens, F11, 1/250, ISO-200

ghost pipefish, clown frogfish, seahorses, pom-pom crabs, and nudibranchs of every shape, size, and description imaginable. Truly a paradise for macro photography.

Just when I thought we had seen the full spectrum of photographic opportunities this small corner of East Bali has to offer, I was given the chance to do some UV night diving, a style of diving/photography that had always intrigued me. The ethereal nature of photographs taken in this style never fails to capture my eye. So, of course, I accepted.

Armed with my trusty 60mm and two large

A small crab nestling amongst coral polyps Olympus Em1 mk II, Nauticam NA-EM1 II housing, two INON S-2000 strobes, M.Zuiko 60mm Macro, F7.1, 1/125, ISO-2000

One of the trickier subjects was this Orangutan Crab under UV lights. Olympus Em1 mk II, Nauticam NA-EM1 II housing, two INON S-2000 strobes, M.Zuiko 60mm Macro, F3.5, 1/100, ISO-2000

homemade UV dive lights, Ivan and I descended into the still black waters just in front of the dive shop in the shadow of Mount Agung, an active volcano which towers somewhat ominously over the small tranquil town of Amed.

This underwater landscape is transformed under UV. Once drab and dull creatures jump out at you in brilliant, luminous yellow, green, orange, and blue. It was a psychedelic world completely separate from the place I have dived many times before during the day. Once the immediate awe wore off, I faced the steep learning curve of taking photographs in this foreign world. I desperately negotiated with my camera, increasing the ISO and slowly dropping the shutter speed and aperture to capture images with enough light and depth of field to do justice to these fairytale-like creatures.

Two particularly tough yet rewarding shots were of an orangutan crab glowing orange under the UV spotlight, which was particularly uncooperative, refusing to stay still for even a moment, and a nudibranch I have yet to identify that glowed a brilliant blue, It crawled along the black sand speckled with red fronds of seaweed, creating a truly out-of-this-world scene as electric blue specks of phytoplankton drifted all around us in the darkness. Unfortunately, I only had the chance to complete two UV dives before it was time to move on to the next stage of our trip; however, this is certainly a style of photography I wish to explore more in the future.

As this stage of our trip approached its end and the dives stacked up, I found something strange coming over me. I became increasingly excited to return to the UK. Discussions with dive guides that began with me lamenting my return to cold temperatures and challenging visibility transformed into excitement as they ignited conversations about UK diving—wrecks, kelp forests, grey seals, blue sharks—all the things that make UK diving special. Suddenly, in a moment of revelation, I realized I was sitting with people who dive day in and day out in my idea of paradise, and they were wishing for the opportunities I have on my doorstep in sunny (ish) South Devon. I made a promise to myself to take full advantage of this fortunate position once home.

I'm sure many divers and underwater photographers are as guilty as I am of taking for granted the natural beauty and diversity we have here on our doorstep. However, I found that sitting in a dive shop on the other side of the world my passion for the rugged beauty of British diving had been reignited…

Since returning home, I have joined my local branch of the British Sub Aqua Club and look ahead excitedly to exploring the abundant waters of my home in south west Devon.

Ollie Newhouse

Instagram

Marshall's Mysteries 18

"Behavior" focus in this edition. Do you know what these animals are, and what they are doing? Have a guess – answers on page 72

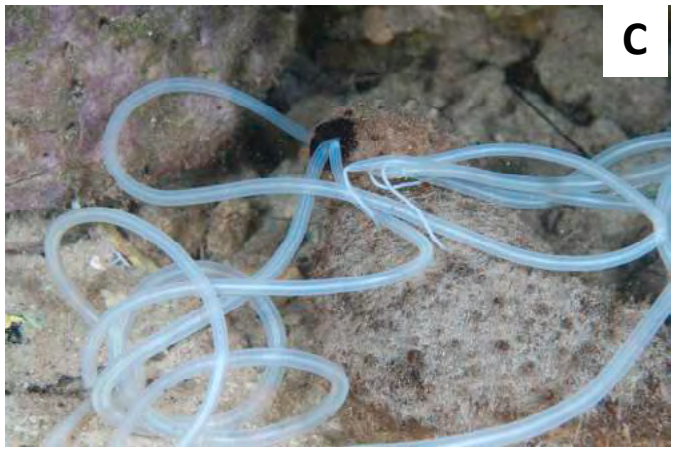
© Colin Marshall / Alamy

Lembeh, Sulawesi, Indonesia
image about 5 cm across

© Colin Marshall / Alamy

Pulau Koon, Moluccas, Indonesia
Animal about 50 cm across

© Colin Marshall / FLPA / Minden



Raja Ampat, Indonesia.
image about 10 cm across

© Colin Marshall / Ardea

Bali, Indonesia
image about 30 cm across

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Komodo, Indonesia
image about 20 cm across

© Colin Marshall / Alamy

Bali, Indonesia
Animal about 20 cm across

Small Ads

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SEA & SEA MM2 U/W CAMERA WITH ACCESSORIES: - Yellow SUB 50 TTL strobe / arm extension - SEA & SEA 16mm Wide angle lens MM-2 - SEA & SEA Macro lens ML-2/3T plus attachments - Removable view finder - **... More >**

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Marshall's Mysteries 18 - Answers

A

Girdled Glossodoris Nudibranch (Glossodoris cincta) ejecting defensive chemical secretions, perhaps in response to a perceived threat of the nearby Elegance Coral (Catalaphyllia jardinei).

This nudibranch feeds on sponges, which are noxious to predators. Whilst they can perhaps extract chemicals from the sponge for their own defense, it is more likely they just take defensive refuge in the sponges.

B

Mating pair of Bigeye Trevallies (Caranx sexfasciatus).

After pairing up, the male swims underneath the female and instantly, for a few minutes, changes to a dark black, the female keeping her normal silvery colour. This male chases off any other approaching fish. The pair increase speed and break off from the main group to mate in peace.

C

Volcano Sea Cucumber (Holothuria turriscella) extruding white sticky respiratory Cuvierian tubules.

When faced with a threat, these tubules are ejected, elongate rapidly in water, quickly becoming sticky, immobilizing potential predators like fish or crustaceans. The adhesives contain toxins which cause severe irritation on human skin and even blindness if in contact with the eyes (difficult to imagine how a diver could do this...). The tubules are regenerated within some weeks.

D

Blushing Coral, Cladiella sp, which turns from brown to white when touched by a fish or a clumsy diver.

Like most corals, the coral polyp responds to mechanical, chemical or light stimuli, retracting into the skeleton, protecting it from harm, causing the apparent color change.

E

Spawning Blue Starfish (Linckia laevigata).

Blue Stars are able to reproduce sexually and asexually. In the latter, the starfish produces a clone by splitting into two (fissiparity) or self amputation. In sexual reproduction, the Blue Star arches its body to release millions of eggs or sperm cells as high as possible into the water column. This happens usually only once a year.

F

Following a confrontation over reproduction or territory rights, Goldstripe Wrasse (Halichoeres zeylonicus) hovering over defeated rival male, presumably confirming he is dead.

Allegedly males of these kinds of wrasse (even of different species) will inevitably fight to the death in aquariums, exacerbated by the confined space.

If you think any of the identifications or information above is wrong, please let me know at colintrmarshall@yahoo.com.

Guidelines for contributors

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

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

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

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

How to submit articles

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

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

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

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

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

My Shot

by Peter Stenberg

Shot with a Nikon d850 in a Sea&Sea housing and illuminated with a single Sea&Sea DS3 strobe. 1/250s, f22, ISO 200

Before the dive where I took this shot, which was on a night dive on the SS Thistlegorm later that same night, I encountered for the first time in my life a Crocodile fish on that same wreck but with my wide-angle setup in my hands. I took off-course a few shots, but it was with my 16-35mm and the nearest possible focal length just made it really hard to do anything other than an id-shot that didn't really stand out.

So I decided right then and there that I would return the same night with my 105mm macro-lens and get a head-on portrait shot.

I spent the surface interval changing the lens and while the sun set over the calming Red Sea I set my mind to take a portrait of a Crocodile fish. Preferably straight ahead and with both eyes looking in to the camera providing some eye contact to draw the viewer in.

With my target in my mind I left the surface with my two dive buddies and headed for the part where I saw it on the last dive. I had previous to the dive briefed my two buddies on the plan and warned them that if I found a Crocodile fish I would be prepared to spend some time getting the shot right and it would be better for them to focus on exploring more of the wreck and just keep a more "out of corner of their eye" contact with me.

So maybe 15 minutes into the dive I spot maybe the same Crocodile fish lying on a perfect spot right on the wreck with nothing infront and enough space to get my camera in place. I slowly make my approach, making sure to check my surroundings as I position my camera right infront to allow a head-on shot just like I envisioned. I take a few test shots as I move in closer. Adjusting the light of my strobe while simultaneously trying not to disturb him. My second strobe had an accident just before this trip, leaving me with only one strobe on this dive. I carefully adjust the strobe in center

and on top of my camera to be able to get both eyes illuminated and allowing only the outer edge of the light-cone to hit the target to create some shadows and texture. A few test shots and I see that the eyes are illuminated nicely to give them both a popping feeling. My pulse starts to go up and I'm so immersed in the moment realising that if I can just get some eye contact in the shot, this is going to be a real keeper.

Anyone who's ever tried to take portraits of fish know that their eyes move really fast and independently, making eye contact really hard to capture. But I wait patiently for the look that I want and after some time pass my patience pay off and BOOM. Eye contact locks in and it's almost like that lazy looking stare reaches through my camera telling me to press the shutter because this is it. The shot went off in the exact right time and I knew I had it. Check the display and yes! I give off a satisfied grin and look up to my right, there are my buddies just shaking their head and thinking I'm crazy for lying here waiting like this, missing the whole dive for just a crocodile fish.

Their laugh is only replaced by amazement when I show them the back of the display and we joke about it over dinner when I show them the finalised shot. It cost me more or less a night dive to an amazing wreck, but the satisfaction of setting out to find a shot and having it on the memory card really is the feeling all underwater photographers do this for. Knowing you have a shot that you can't wait to edit, export and showcase, is really the feeling that drives this madness we love so much.

Peter Stenberg
Instagram

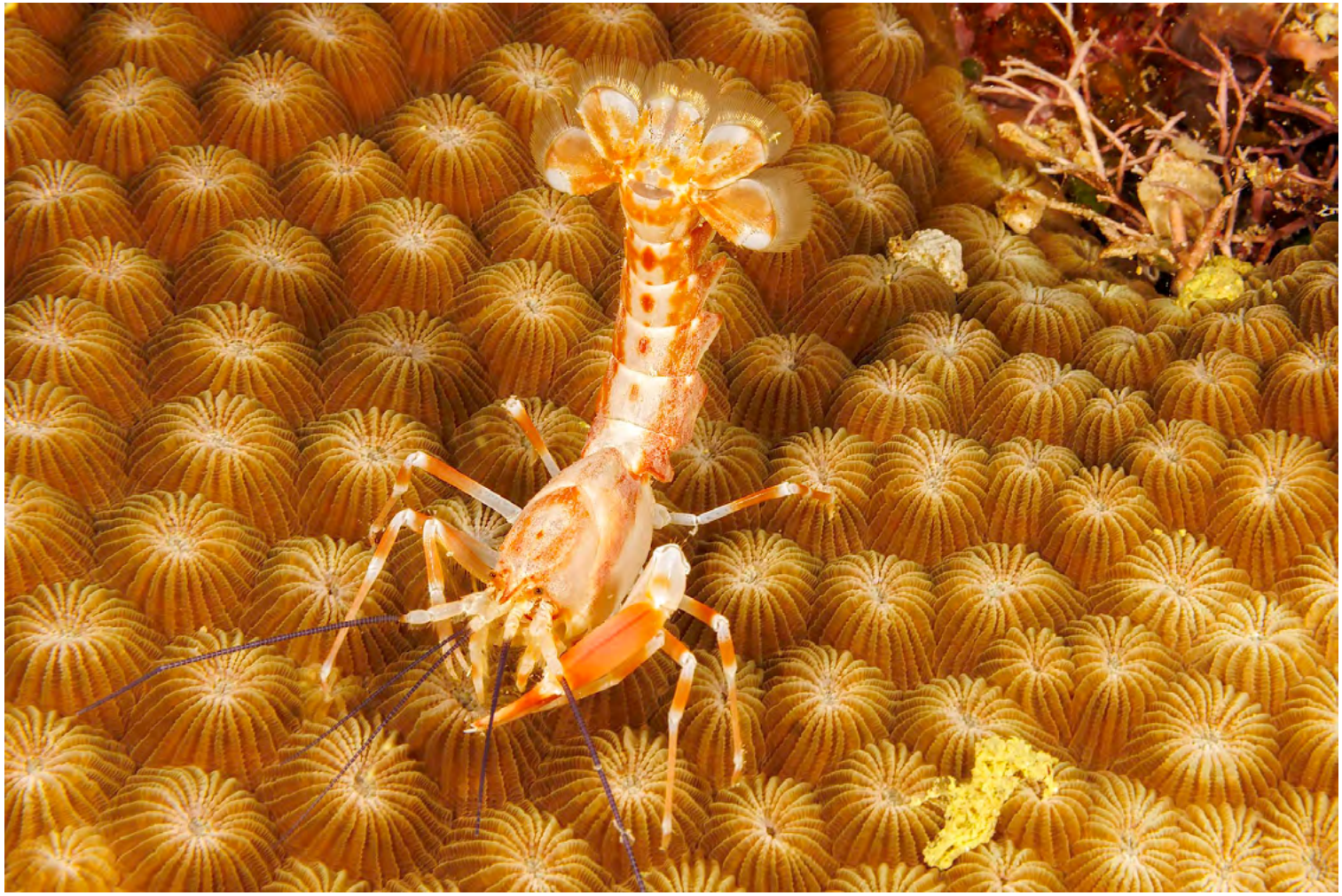
Do you have a favourite shot or an image/s which made a dive special?
E mail yours with some text to
peter@uwpmag.com
and yours could be the next My Shot/s
(It's very easy. Images can be any size bigger than 20cm (horizontal or vertical) @ 150dpi saved as jpeg format and about 500 - 750 words would be fine.)

Parting Shot

by David Fleetham

As more and more divers become capable photographers recording the abundance of marine life in our oceans, it is increasingly difficult to find and shoot something unique. The moment I saw this shrimp I was sure I was looking at a creature that was far from common. I was near the end of my dive along a wall off the island of Yap, Micronesia. Canyons cut back into the reef and create dark crevices that are always worth exploring with a light. It was here that I found this axioid shrimp, Paraxiopsis majuro. This crustacean was described by B. Kensley just recently in 2003 from a single specimen found in the lagoon of Majuro Atoll. It has since been recorded on a lagoon reef in western Kwajalein Atoll where it was found under a rock. Its movement reminded me of a scorpion, in that it would hold its tail high and scramble sideways over the bottom. This is the first record of this species for Yap and one of the reasons that keeps me scouring the reef for tiny eyes looking back at me.

David Fleetham
www.davidfleetham.com



Canon EOS R5 mirrorless in an Ikelite dry-lock housing with a Canon RF 100mm macro lens, 1/125 sec, F32, ISO 100, with two Ikelite 230 strobes on TTL. Depth was around 40 feet.

Do you have a shot which has a story within a story?
If so e mail it with up to 750 words of text
and yours could be the next Parting Shot.
peter@uwpmag.com

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