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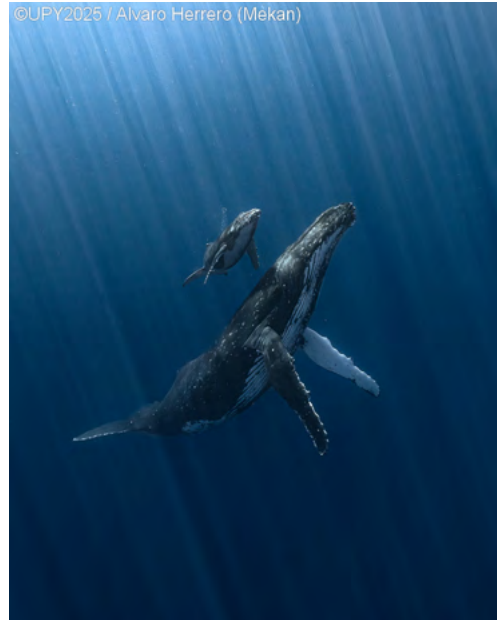


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A web magazine

UwP143 Mar/Apr 2025

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

Feel free to stop reading this at any time or to nod off whenever you want. It is for acquired tastes but relevant, and hopefully useful, so here goes:

Progress is a great thing and innovation should surely be embraced but there is a modern capability which is offered to us by many manufacturers based on 'We can make it do this'.

Take, for example, adding artificial light underwater. Early attempts, pre 1900, involved igniting magnesium in an oxygen rich glass enclosure. This produced a 'flash' (not a strobe) of bright light which illuminated the subject during a long/timed exposure which could be up to 30 minutes.

Incredibly, underwater, this was the same basic technique that was used until the early 1970s - disposable flashbulbs (not strobebulbs) with bare wire ends which, when shorted together in a metal holder, ignited and produced a flash of light.

By this stage, film emulsion was much more sensitive and allowed exposure times of a fraction of a second so the camera shutter had to be synchronised with the flash so one opened and the other flashed at exactly the same time. The camera did this very simply by closing two contacts when the shutter was fully open and this, almost instantly, ignited the flashbulb.

# Editorial

The really big breakthrough came with the invention of the electronic flash; a device which charged up a capacitor to a high voltage and then discharged it through a glass tube containing xenon gas with a contact at either end. The duration of this instant flash of light was much shorter so it 'froze' the subject and made it appear much sharper which was a big bonus. The other big bonus, especially for underwater photographers, was that the flashgun could produce another flash as soon as the capacitor had been recharged by the battery; so no need to change flashbulbs after every shot.

Fast forward slightly to the mid seventies and we saw the first commercially made, purpose built underwater flashguns. These were still triggered conventionally by closing two contacts together so were very simple but their effect on the quality of underwater images at the time was seismic.

In order to 'sync', the shutter speed was almost fixed at around 1/60th sec which left the underwater photographer to decide what aperture to set on the lens. Since this was based totally on the distance from the flashgun to the subject, the bigger the distance, the wider the aperture. Not that difficult at all, really.

So where is all this going? Well, I reckon this is exactly where the 'We can make it do this' syndrome came in. Life was pretty simple at this stage. Decide on the distance, set the aperture and touch two contacts together. We never had it so good.

But pretty soon we were offered Auto Flashguns where a very clever, separate sensor measured the light reflecting from the subject and reduced the flash output accordingly so, in theory, no more over exposures. That sensor was then incorporated in the camera, making it much more accurate and so Through the Lens (TTL) circuitry began.

Circuitry is very much the appropriate word here because electronic components were now being used to control the light output and this, in turn, needed more than two wires to complete the circuit and trigger the flash. This led to a great many problems because there was typically a 5 wire cable between the camera and flashgun.

On land, with no salt water, if they were to be easily separated, there as an external 5 connector shoe on top of the camera which mated with the matching set on the base of the flashgun. The flashgun too had a removable lead so that made 20

touching contacts to transmit the data back and forth, all of which have to be clean and dry. Take the combination underwater and that doubles the touching contacts to 40 protected from saltwater ingress by small O rings. If any saltwater moisture got into the system it caused havoc with the signals between camera and flash.

Fortunately the fibre optic cable came along and simplified operations enormously; so there were far, far less flash malfunctions. Fibre technology is digitally based and it this which has provided us with very accurate and reliable versions of TTL exposure control.

Unfortunately camera manufacturers all have their own versions so we now have, to name but a few - Nikon iTTL, Canon sTTL, Pentax pTTL and Olympus/Panasonic HSS/TTL. This complicates life for underwater flashgun manufacturers and has encouraged the arrival of third party adapter makers.

All very complicated when the original idea was only to set the aperture based on the distance to subject, triggered by shorting just two wires. Throw in the modern and hugely important, instant feedback LCD screens and, IMHO, you have a no brainer.

Sometimes, often, less is more.

**Peter Rowlands**  
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[www.uwpmag.com](http://www.uwpmag.com)

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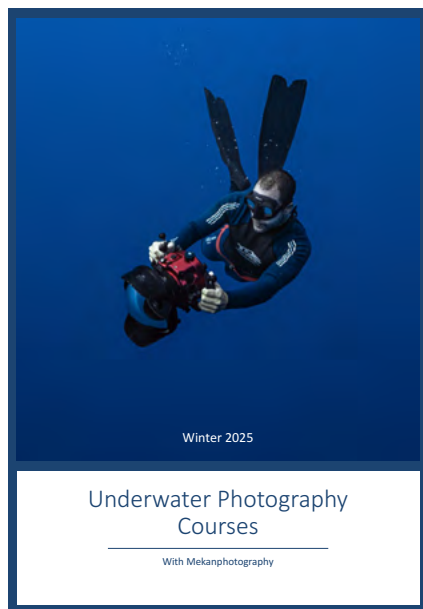
# News, Travel & Events

## Alvaro Herrero photo courses and trips

UPY Underwater Photographer of the Year 2025, Alvaro (Mekan) Herrero is an internationally acclaimed photographer who has received numerous awards in some of the most prestigious competitions around the globe. His passion for underwater photography is not only evident in his stunning images but also reflects his deep connection with nature, where he finds his true sanctuary.

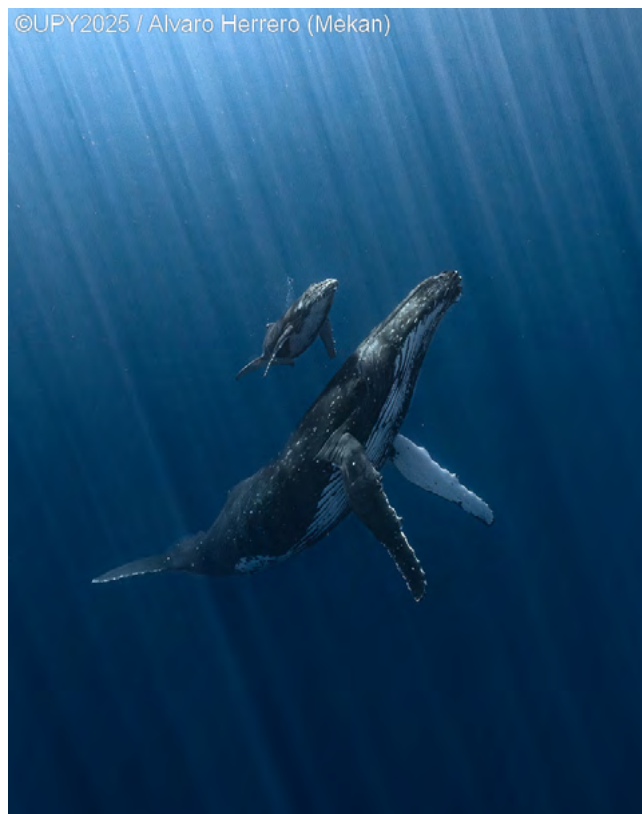
With many years of experience under his belt, Alvaro has traveled extensively as a professional underwater photographer, capturing breathtaking images at depths exceeding 100 meters and in the profound darkness of Mexico's cavernous ecosystems. His remarkable encounters, including intimate moments with whales, have enriched his understanding of the underwater world.

Driven by a desire to share his extensive knowledge and expertise, Alvaro has developed a series of comprehensive courses in underwater photography and videography. These courses are designed to inspire



and educate aspiring photographers, allowing them to benefit from the insights he has garnered over a decade of exploration and adventure in this captivating field.

In addition to these courses, Alvaro also organizes several expeditions to locations such as French Polynesia and Baja California. This offers participants a unique opportunity to learn directly from him in some of the most stunning environments on the planet.



**Underwater Portrait Photography Workshop**  
**Long Beach, California**  
**2nd-4th May, 2025**



Are you an underwater portrait photographer looking to hone your skills, or maybe a land photographer looking to move into underwater?

The underwater studio photography workshop will help you to learn and up-skill in this amazingly creative niche genre.

Underwater studio photography is the process of treating a swimming pool like a photography studio and creating work like you would in a dry studio, but utilising all the amazing traits that water can provide. It's an approach that creates a mindset which looks at all aspects of the pool as potential backdrops for the photoshoot.

Class numbers are limited to 5 people, so that everyone gets a decent amount of attention and time with the models during the workshop.

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

[www.underwater-photographer.com](http://www.underwater-photographer.com)



## David Doubilet

Beneath the Sea's Legend of the Sea Program recognizes a personal vision, the drive to follow that vision, coupled with a dedication to purpose; sometimes that expression is calculated, well-reasoned, educated wisdom; sometimes it is plain and simple luck; sometimes, it involves exceptional personal bravery in challenges which today seem ordinary, but then ... way back then, when the Earth and the sea were new, it was often heroic.

David Doubilet was born and raised in New York City. His father was a physician who became a professor of surgery at New York University. At age 8, David, an asthmatic child who at first had little interest in the outdoors, discovered the joy of underwater exploration while attending summer camp on a freshwater lake in the Adirondack

## BENEATH THE SEA® Proudly Presents their LEGEND OF THE SEA FOR 2025

Mountains. Growing up in New York City, he had fewer opportunities to explore his passion during the year, but his family spent summers at their seaside home in Elberon, New Jersey where he took up snorkeling.

At age 12, he began taking pictures above and under water, wrapping his camera in a plastic anesthesiologist's bag given him by his father. His father encouraged him in other ways, taking him along on a fishing trip to Andros Island in the Bahamas, where David learned to dive with scuba gear. In his teens, David began working at the island's Small Hope Lodge and would return every summer through his college years as a diving instructor, taking undersea pictures in his spare time.

Back on the mainland, he worked part-time as a diver and photographer for the Sandy Hook Marine Laboratory. He entertained thoughts of becoming a marine biologist, but when he entered Boston University, in Autumn 1965, he soon gravitated toward film and broadcasting studies. Over the summer following freshman year, he attended a pilot course in underwater photography at the Brooks Institute of Photography in Santa Barbara, California. Bored with his first efforts

at motion photography, by the time he graduated in 1970, David Doubilet was firmly set on a career as a still photographer.

The following year, Doubilet traveled to Israel, where he photographed the garden eels of the Red Sea. The resulting photographs were published in National Geographic in 1972. It was the beginning of a relationship that has lasted over 40 years. In 1976, he became a contract photographer for the magazine. His work appears in its pages multiple times each year, carrying his byline as photographer, and in recent years, as the author of the articles.

He has to date published 80+ stories for National Geographic magazine and has been a testimoe for Rolex since 1994. He has returned many times to the Red Sea, a location he calls his "favorite underwater studio," producing nearly a dozen stories. His adventures in the warm water zones have taken him to Indonesia, Micronesia, Australia, and New Guinea in the Pacific, as well as to Sri Lanka and the Seychelles in the Indian Ocean. He has also documented cold temperature ecosystems and both polar regions.



Besides photographing the living creatures of the world's waters -- crocodiles, alligators, stingrays, sharks, and barracuda -- he has pursued his love of history, uncovering the wrecks of ships and planes at the ocean's bottom, including the USS Arizona, in its resting place at the bottom of Pearl Harbor.

Apart from his magazine work, and served as the still photographer for the feature films *The Deep* and *Splash*. In 1989, Doubilet published his first book, *Light in the Sea*. His book *Pacific: An Undersea Journey* was published in 1992. His subsequent books include *Water Light Time*; *Great Barrier Reef*; *Fish Face*; and *Face to Face with Sharks*. His latest book is: *Two Worlds: Above and Below the Sea*.

**PAF TACHOV 2025**  
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April 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> 2025

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AUGUST, 2025

## Gannet Diving Specialist Photography Trip

These boat trips are designed for those who want the chance to capture the classic diving gannet shot as they enter the water just off the Bass Rock. The tour lasts approximately two hours, during which you will have the opportunity to see hundreds of gannets diving around the boat. We will be using chumming (throwing fish) to encourage the gannets to dive.



Gannets dive in all sorts of different ways so you should come away with some incredible images.

<https://seabird-centre.seafari-edinburgh.co.uk/gannet-diving-photography-trip>

Join BBC and National Geographic cinematographer Cristian Dimitrius with Blue Green Expeditions for an EXCLUSIVE special full-boat charter aboard M/V Ortelius for a rare opportunity to visit both Spitsbergen and Greenland! The best of the Arctic includes opportunities to see the polar bears and walrus of Spitsbergen and then transition through pack ice to visit a local Greenland village. The ice and history of Greenland is quite remarkable!

Travelers will have the opportunity to participate in several citizen science projects (phyto & zooplankton collections, benthic surveys, and beach clean-ups of plastics and nets.)

Diving and snorkeling are offered, as well as talks by our team of renowned scientists and image-makers. Your scientific knowledge and appreciation of this pristine, delicate Arctic ecosystem and the megafauna we encounter will grow.

Land excursions, presentations by the expedition team, and zodiac tours will allow you to experience the very best of the Arctic!

GOALS: Contribute to scientific knowledge of the Arctic ecosystem  
Raise funds for charities dedicated to getting youth involved in marine careers

Use images/video from professionals and data collected from citizen scientists to develop multimedia educational tools across a variety of platforms, including live-streaming to classrooms

Use the expertise of scientists onboard to explore new areas above and below the water with the assistance of citizen scientists. Projects include plankton tows, reef surveys of key indicator species, sample collections, and marine mammal ID.

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## Muck & Magic with Saeed Rashid June 2025



Join underwater photographer Saeed Rashid in Indonesia on our latest laid-back adventure. Dive into the incredible marine life of two exceptional regions of North Sulawesi on a remarkable 17-day itinerary.

Returning first to Lembeh Strait - one of Saeed's favourite locations - for a week of photography and fun at Dive into Lembeh Resort, the itinerary then moves to the seldom-visited Bangka Archipelago for a second week at the sumptuous Coral Eye Resort. Uniquely, travel between these two locations is by boat, including two exploratory dives en-route to add to this adventure.

Diving highlights will include muck diving in Lembeh Strait, seeking a plethora of weird and wonderful smaller marine life, coupled with



wall dives, huge volcanic boulders, pristine coral reefs and more macro photography in Bangka.

With a generous 36 dives included, great company and informal presentations from Saeed, this promises to be a spectacular adventure for marine life enthusiasts and budding photographers to hone their photography skills.

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

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

# digital **DIVELOG** AUSTRALASIA

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Swimming with Sharks

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**EQUATOR DIVING**

KEN HOPPEN

Wakatobi a beacon for the future

MIKE SCOTLAND

## UWACAM app

**UWACAM Impresses at BOOT 2025 in Düsseldorf – Innovative Underwater Photography with the New App from Bumbayaya GmbH**

[Düsseldorf, January 2025] – **BOOT 2025**, the world's largest water sports trade fair, provided the perfect stage for the launch of the new **UWACAM** app.

Optimized for **DIVEVOLK** ([divevolkdiving.com](http://divevolkdiving.com)) **Seatouch housings** and developed in collaboration with **award-winning underwater filmmaker Matthias Lebo** ([matthiaslebo.com](http://matthiaslebo.com)), this app is user-friendly and features large, clear controls, enabling effortless and stunning shots.

It offers professional functions typically found in high-end cameras, supports the LOG format for advanced color corrections, includes built-in LUTs (Color Lookup Tables) to restore underwater colors, and provides a manual mode, user presets, histogram, focus peaking, zebra function, and much more.



As an official product of **Bumbayaya GmbH** ([bumbayaya.ch](http://bumbayaya.ch) / [uwacam.com](http://uwacam.com)), the UWACAM app has been specifically designed for use in **DIVEVOLK Seatouch underwater housings**. Visitors were able to experience the app live at the **DIVEVOLK booth**.

UWACAM simplifies underwater photography with an intuitive user interface that is perfectly adapted for underwater operation. The app offers precise control and delivers impressive results for both hobby divers and professionals.

[www.uwacam.com](http://www.uwacam.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](https://seasave.org)  
Questions? [Director@SeaSave.org](mailto:Director@SeaSave.org)**

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

# New Products

## Nauticam NA-Z50II housing for Nikon Z 50 II



The Z50 II is Nikon's follow up to its inaugural DX (ASP-C) sensor mirrorless camera that shares the new Z Lens Mount with their full-frame Z cameras. The Z50 II features several notable improvements over its predecessor especially in the video-capture and auto-focus categories.

The Nauticam NA-Z50II is designed to work exclusively with the versatile Nikkor Z DX 16-50mm lens featuring a fixed flat port that is compatible with our powerful WWL-C wide-angle wet optic and CMC-1 macro optic via the pre-installed bayonet-mount system. The NA-Z50II's form-fitting style and intuitive control placement make the system ideal for the traveling photographer that demands a reliable and portable

underwater imaging platform.

The compact nature of the Nikon Z50 II is translated directly into the design of the NA-Z50II. Compared to the NA-Z50 housing for the original Nikon Z50, the NA-Z50II is built around a clamshell closure that allows for a drop-in installation of the camera with no tray necessary.

For video shooters, the Nikon Z50 II maintains separate exposure settings in Still and Video modes and switching between the modes is done via a convenient switch which is easily accessed on the top of the NA-Z50II housing. With extensive Auto ISO controls, the NA-Z50II is an ideal platform to create video content with the Z 50's UHD 4K 60p/30p or HD 120p capture.



Dimensions 290mm (W) x 146mm (H) x 156mm (D)

Weight in air 1.95kg

Buoyancy in water -0.49 kg (incl, camera, lens and battery)

Depth Rating 100m

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

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MFO-1**



- provide ample focus distance for different sizes of subjects
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Mid-Range Focus Optimizer 1  
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**81203  
SMC-3**

2.3x magnification



- The SMC-3 weighs only two-thirds of the SMC-1
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- Slightly less expensive than the discontinued SMC-1
- Increased Working Distance

**PRE-ORDER NOW !**



**17342  
NA-R1**

Housing for Canon EOS R1 Camera

*\*photo by Dr Alex Mustard  
www.nauticam.com*



## TRT Electronics Smart 2+

Those who follow TRT Electronics products on social media may have already seen the new SMART 3 trigger, but today, I would like to introduce the newly released SMART 2+.

Now, we are launching a SMART update because a new trend has emerged in the underwater strobe market.

Instead of built-in optical TTL, these strobes feature a unique flash control system that enables much more precise exposures. We believe this method will be widely adopted in the future, as it eliminates issues related to LED brightness and works flawlessly even with lower-quality optical cables.

The AOI Ultra InTeli Strobe PI TTL control has been integrated into our NIKON and SONY triggers.

The Olympus version, we have added an HSS limit adjustment option while ensuring that it runs perfectly in AOI RC mode. The SMART 2+ is a new trigger with updated firmware, meaning that older i-TURTLE 2 SMART and s-TURTLE 2 SMART models will not be compatible with the new strobe.

Summarizing: The AOI feature



has been introduced in the setup software of the i-TURTLE 2 SMART+ (Nikon) version. On the strobe, the TTL system should be set to SONY, and our Nikon trigger can control it accordingly.

The s-TURTLE 2 SMART+ list has also been updated to include this strobe model, allowing SONY users to utilize this system as well.

Meanwhile, the o-TURTLE 2 RC SMART3 operates this strobe in RC mode and has received a new feature that enables it to automatically switch to High-Speed Sync mode when the HSS limit set in the setup program is reached.

We have more innovations planned for this year, so be sure to follow our Facebook and Instagram accounts!

**Facebook  
Instagram**  
[www.trt-electronics.com](http://www.trt-electronics.com)

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

# BACKSCATTER MINI FLASH 2



THE  
PERFECT  
MACRO  
STROBE  
FOR  
ANY  
CAMERA



## Backscatter Smart Control Optical TTL Flash Trigger Review & Setup Guide




The Backscatter Smart Control Optical TTL Flash Trigger provides super-accurate, automatic flash exposures with Olympus/OM System and Sony cameras using Backscatter strobes. The Olympus/OM System trigger is TTL compatible with the Mini Flash 2 and Hybrid Flash, while the Sony trigger is TTL compatible with the Hybrid Flash. The Backscatter Smart Control Optical TTL Flash Trigger is more than just a TTL trigger, it also can be used for manual triggering, rapid firing over 30 frames per second, and HSS (high speed sync), all built into a self-contained USB-C rechargeable unit.

The Backscatter Smart Control Optical TTL Flash Trigger has three different models, two universal types for Sony and Olympus/OM System cameras, and one for Nauticam full-frame Sony housings.

Underwater systems utilize different methods to achieve TTL through a camera, housing and strobe, including hardwired TTL, digital optical TTL, and S-TTL (slave or mimic TTL). The Backscatter TTL trigger uses a digital optical system in the form of Smart Control Optical TTL, which is a proprietary TTL system, to achieve accurate results.


The Backscatter Smart Control Optical TTL Flash Trigger features a hot shoe connector, a USB-C port, a power switch, and a battery indicator button. Two LED lights display status and battery level. The status light blinks blue when the trigger is on, while the battery light blinks green 1-5 times to indicate battery level (5 blinks = 100% battery power, 1 blink = 20% battery power or less).









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### Chasing M2 Pro Max ROV Retra Maxi Strobe



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Stronger Power, 3 Knots Speed | Up to 5 Hours of Battery Life | Unlimited Battery Life with AC Power | More Advanced Exclusive Accessories | Depth Rating 490ft / 150m | 4K UHD EIS Camera

Chasing M2 Promax ROV  
Standard Set Includes: ROV, Remote Controller, 300WH Battery, E reel, 200m Tether & Hard Carry Case.

Chasing M2 Promax ROV  
Advanced Set Package includes: ROV, Remote Controller, E- Reel with 200 Meter Tether, 128G SD Card, 300Wh Battery x2 & Hard Carry Case.

Chasing M2 Promax ROV  
Professional Set Package includes: ROV, remote controller, 128G SD Card, shore based power supply (200M) & hard carry case.

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



With a Guide Number 46 and an optional built-in 6000 lumen ultra-wide video light, the Retra Maxi is the most powerful underwater strobe and video light combination ever made!

Pre-order now! Shipping is expected in early May 2025, with exact dates to be confirmed by the end of March 2025.

If you have a diving trip planned before then, feel free to reach out to us. We'll be happy to explore alternative options with you.

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[www.backscatter.com](http://www.backscatter.com)  
[www.uwcamerastore.com](http://www.uwcamerastore.com)

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## Isotta Housing for RED V-Raptor X Cinema Camera



In a surprising move, Isotta has unveiled its first housing for a pro cinema camera—the top-of-the-line V-Raptor X. Featuring the flagship DSMC3 modular body, the V-Raptor boasts an 8K VV 35.4-megapixel global shutter sensor offering 8K/120p and 4K/240p recording and 17+ stops of dynamic range. Previously sporting an adaptable Canon RF lens mount, the camera is now also available with Nikon's Z mount for even more lens flexibility.

Hewn from aluminum, anodized and painted signature red, the Isotta housing for the RED V-Raptor X looks to be an impressive piece of kit. Sporting Isotta's classic single-handed open/close knob and built around the company's B120 port system, the

housing features a back that is entirely detachable from the front, and a lockable tray, allowing for easy insertion of the camera. All buttons and removable parts have double O-ring seals, and there's a moisture sensor with LED indicator fitted as standard. As well as three M16 ports, there are two M24 ports, allowing straightforward connection of a monitor such as the Atomos Ninja V+. There's also a full complement of M6 holes for attaching brackets, tripods, handles, etc.

The RED V-Raptor X is priced at \$8,965.

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

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

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 **+31 (0)165 55 39 44**

## Nauticam EMWL Angled Relay Lens



The Nauticam EMWL (Extended Macro Wide Lens) is a wet-mounted accessory lens for capturing macro-sized subjects with a wide angle perspective. It features interchangeable objective optics for different fields of view, allowing photographers and videographers to capture a variety of perspectives of the same subject through the same lens. This lens is all about perspective distortion - making small foreground subjects appear large in the frame compared to background subjects or the environment.

The specialized 'EMWL Angled Relay Lens' is part of the EMWL system that sits between the focus unit and the objective lenses. This replaces the standard relay lens and allows for using objective lenses at an angle



which can help with subjects that may be difficult to reach circumstances or for creating unique perspectives.

Dimensions 250mm(W) x  
91mm(H) x 54mm(D)

Weight in Air 1.05kg

Weight in Water (+)/pos. 0.5kg

Depth Rating 150m

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



## Nauticam NA-Z8 for Nikon Z8



**"Z9 Performance in a Z7 Body"**

Every few years Nikon manages to hit a home run with a camera that just does everything better than seems possible.

The Z8 is that camera and more.

46MP/30FPS/

4K 120P/8K 60P/N-RAW 12-Bit/  
ProRes RAW 12-Bit.

Lightning fast customizable AF for stills & best ever Live AF. Nauticam has met the challenge by crafting a new level of its legendary ergonomics into the NA-Z8 housing.

Nauticam and Nikon; bringing underwater imaging to a new standard.

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

## BACKSCATTER HYBRID FLASH



GUIDE NO.  
**F40**  
AND  
**5000**  
LUMEN  
VIDEO LIGHT



## Insta360 X4 Invisible Dive Bundle

The Insta360 X4 Invisible Dive Bundle is an 8K Waterproof 360 Action Camera, 4K Wide-Angle Video, Invisible Selfie Stick, Removable Lens Guards, 135 Min Battery Life, AI Editing, Stabilization package.

The Insta360 X4 delivers 360° video in stunning 8K or 5.7K60fps! Use Active HDR to keep shots color accurate too, even in action scenarios.

With Insta360 X4, get out there and shoot, not having to worry about lining up a shot. Shoot first, then reframe easily after, all in the AI-powered Insta360 app.

The signature third-person Insta360 shot, a specialty of 360 cameras. Immerse your viewers in obstruction-free 360° video, just like you're using a drone or as if you have your own film crew.

4K & 170° ULTRA-WIDE POV - X4 can also be used as a wide-angle 4K action camera at a whopping 4K60fps, or get super wide views with the incredible 170° MaxView at 4K30fps.

FlowState Stabilization and 360° Horizon Lock deliver smooth, level



shots, no matter how intense the action is.

X4 can handle temperatures as low as -4°F (-20°C) with ease. You can also take X4 down to 33ft (10m) without a dive case or 164ft (60m) with the Invisible Dive Case.

Compared to Insta360 X3, X4 offers 67% longer run time. Capture up to 135 minutes on one charge, with fast charging to get back out there faster than ever.

[www.insta360.com](http://www.insta360.com)



## Nauticam NA-R5C housing for Canon R5 C



**“Cinema Mastery”**

The excellent Canon R5 has lots of fans, but serious video shooters sometimes felt a bit throttled by the built-in limitations of that camera. Canon's answer is the R5C. All that was great about the R5 has been fully unleashed.

You get Canon best-in-class white balance and AF and simply stunning image quality. Nauticam rose to the challenge with exceptionally elegant engineering incorporating full cinema zoom and focus in a compact form factor that inspires confidence from the very first use. Underwater cinema work has never been this easy.

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

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**MX-R5 Mark II**

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## Seacam Canon R5 Mk II housing



CANON shooters have waited a long time for this update – and now it’s finally here. The R5 II is as compact as the R5 and combines incredible speed with highest image quality, ideal for all kinds of adventures, be it video or photo.

The SEACAM silver underwater housing for the EOS R5 allows for a simple and ergonomic handling of all important functions under water – the perfect partner for the long-awaited upgrade.

Dimensions 260 x 190 x 140mm without port, viewfinder and handles.

Weight 2150 g without port, viewfinder and handles, neutral under water depending on port and viewfinder.

Operation Depth - 80m deeper operation depth upon request.

Price from EUR 5250 excl. shipping, taxes and custom duties

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

## Bigblue 65,000-Lumen Pro Video Light



The Bigblue Dive Lights VL65000P; the ultimate professional underwater video light designed to elevate your underwater photography and videography to new heights. As the biggest and brightest model in the Bigblue Dive Lights lineup, the VL65000P is engineered to illuminate the vastness of the ocean, making it perfect for capturing stunning scenes such as shipwrecks and vibrant reefs.

The VL65000P is best used in pairs to significantly reduce shadows, providing even lighting for your underwater adventures. This exceptional dive light offers four power settings, each delivering a cool white light at a color temperature of 6500K. With an impressive 160-degree extra-wide beam angle, this light ensures your videos and photos are free of hard edges, resulting in crystal-clear, evenly lit footage.

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



## Nauticam NA-A1 housing for Sony a1



### “Do-Everything Powerhouse”

Sony has reconceived what a pro camera should look and feel like with the Sony a1.

Sony maintained the form factor of the A7 series, but loaded it with state-of-the-art technology that provides superior stills and video performance. 4K 120p, 8K Video, 50MP @ 30FPS, 9M dot EVF and more breaks new ground in this class. If you can dream it, the a1 can do it.

Married to the Nauticam NA-a1 housing with its superior ergonomics, the underwater possibilities are near limitless.

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

# WORKSHOPS

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MAY 04-11, 2025

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

A few spaces still remaining!



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## Ikelite Deluxe housing for Canon EOS R8



We've set up the Deluxe 200DLM Underwater Housing for Canon EOS R8 exactly the way we would use it with Dual Tray with Dual Handles, Trigger Extensions, Vacuum System, and a set of spare O-Rings.

This is a full featured and durable waterproof housing for Canon EOS R8 mirrorless digital cameras. Suitable for scuba, snorkel, surf, pool, and any application in or around the water. Our custom ABS-PC blend is lighter than aluminum yet strong enough for almost anything you want to throw at it.

The included Vacuum System allows you to check for leaks prior to entering the water.

\$1,690.00

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

## Keldan Lights

We have been working hard on exciting new products to address the demand for travel-friendly gear.

The brand new RC2 is a tiny WIRELESS short range remote with a range of 2-3m. It is designed to work for lights mounted on the camera or placed within a short distance from the remote.



The 4XR is a new, WIRELESS remote-controllable light which is an upgrade of the popular 4X light but with a higher lumen output and the remote-receiver.



We have also added a new 8XR version with high CRI 96 which is the perfect light for shooting Macro. It has a built in WIRELESS remote control receiver as well.



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

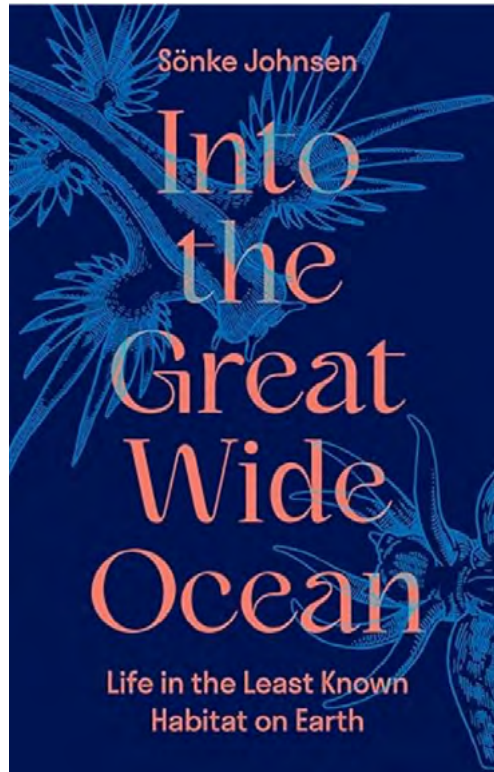
[www.uwpmag.com](http://www.uwpmag.com)

## Into the Great Wide Ocean: Life in the Least Known Habitat on Earth by Sönke Johnsen

A seagoing scientist explores how life thrives in one of the most mysterious environments on Earth

The open ocean, far from the shore and miles above the seafloor, is a vast and formidable habitat that is home to the most abundant life on our planet, from giant squid and jellyfish to anglerfish with bioluminescent lures that draw prey into their toothy mouths. Into the Great Wide Ocean takes readers inside the peculiar world of the seagoing scientists who are providing tantalizing new insights into how the animals of the open ocean solve the problems of their existence.

Sönke Johnsen vividly describes how life in the water column of the open sea contends with a host of environmental challenges, such as gravity, movement, the absence of light, pressure that could crush a truck, catching food while not becoming food, finding a mate, raising young, and forming communities. He interweaves stories about the joys and hardships of the scientists who explore this beautiful and mysterious realm, which is under threat from human activity and rapidly changing before our eyes.



Into the Great Wide Ocean presents the sea and its inhabitants as you have never seen them before and reminds us that the rules of survival in the open ocean, though they may seem strange to us, are the primary rules of life on Earth.

[Link](#)



# WATERPIXELS™ Underwater Imaging Community



Dive into a world of extraordinary beauty and discover the captivating realm beneath the waves.

Waterpixels is an innovative online community designed to connect professionals, industry experts, enthusiasts, and newcomers who share a passion for underwater imaging. Waterpixels is here to provide an engaging and inclusive space where you can explore, learn, and connect with like-minded individuals from around the globe.

Join us and become part of a thriving community of underwater imaging enthusiasts. Together, let's dive into the depths, capture awe-inspiring moments, and celebrate the beauty of the underwater world.

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

# UPY 2025 winner!

by Alex Mustard

Spanish photographer Alvaro Herrero is named Underwater Photographer of the Year 2025, his photograph 'Radiant Bond', which won the Wide Angle Category, shows the special relationship between a mother humpback whale and her new-born calf. The photo was taken in French Polynesia and triumphed over 6750 underwater pictures entered by underwater photographers from around the world.

The contest has 13 categories, testing photographers with themes such as Macro, Wide Angle, Behaviour and Wreck photography, and includes three categories for photos taken specifically in British waters. The winners were announced in an award ceremony in central London, hosted by The Crown Estate. This year's judges were experienced underwater photographers Peter Rowlands, Tobias Friedrich and Dr Alexander Mustard MBE.

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



Alex Mustard, Peter Rowlands and Alvaro Herrero UPY 2025 winner



# Underwater Photographer of the Year 2025



## 'RADIANT BOND'

Alvaro Herrero (Mekan), Spain

A mother humpback whale accompanies her calf to the surface for its first breath early in the morning. The youngster is releasing a few bubbles as it rises, perhaps this is because it is still learning to control its breathing, or it is simply experimenting with its own body.

Every year, during the southern winter, I travel to French Polynesia to photograph these majestic animals. My favourite time of day is the early morning, because the light is soft and angled, allowing me to find the perfect angle to clearly define the shape of these animals in blue. For me, this photo is one that shows a mother's love for her calf, communicating both the fragility and beauty of our oceans, and revealing one of the amazing species with whom we share our home world.

Mo'orea, French Polynesia

Nikon , Z7 II, Isotta , Nikkor Z 14-24mm 2.8 s, iso 1100, f/8, 1/640, Natural Light

### Judge's comments:

An heartwarming interaction between mum and baby, in a perfectly timed pose of both majestic animals that look so comfortable in their underwater home. The photo invites us to observe, while giving the whales their space, both in the frame and from the photographer. The spearing light is dramatic, while the shadow the calf is casting on its mother is subtle. Mekan won the title of Marine Conservation Photographer of the

Year back in 2022 with the saddest of images of humpback, this uplifting family portrait is a perfect counterpoint. Alex Mustard

The overall winning image represents us as a Competition, and our community as a hobby/sport/profession, to the world at large for a whole year and sometimes it is very difficult to decide between them but this year, for me, this delicate yet powerful study of a mother and calf's bond says all that is great and good about our world. We face our challenges, true, but the increasing populations of whales worldwide shows what can be achieved. Peter Rowlands



# MACRO

## CATEGORY WINNER

'MAGIC BACKLIT'

Paolo Bondaschi, Italy

At the end of this dive, I spotted a couple of underwater photographers focused on shooting and it piqued my curiosity about what they were photographing. I signalled to my guide to check what they were shooting. After realizing that it was one of my favourite subjects, a hairy shrimp, I waited patiently for my turn and used the time to plan and prepare for the shot. I chose to shoot it in profile, backlight with a snoot. My guide and my buddy played a fundamental role in expertly managing the light of the snoot. After a few test shots to find the right setting, I finally got the photo I was looking for.

Secret Bay, Anilao, Anilao, Philippines

CANON, EOS R7, MARELUX MX-R7, EF-S60mm f/2.8 Macro USM + wet lens AOI UCL-90PRO, iso 100, f/16.0, 1/200, Backscatter MF-1 + Backscatter snoot OS-1

**Judge's comments:** Perfect execution and image! What a nice winning shot for this strong macro category this year. I love the minimalistic approach to a subject which is tiny and not easy to get a crisp shot of. The perfect position of the hairy shrimp is almost too good to be true, but these animals are very skittish and we concluded this is natural perfection, which is also emphasized to the maximum by the very selective lighting by the photographer. *Tobias Friedrich*



# WRECKS



## CATEGORY WINNER

'DEEP WRECK'

**Alex Dawson, Sweden**

The wreck sits on the reef at around 104m depth. When she sank she got wedged between the reef wall and a small reef so there is a swim through under the wreck. We did 25 min bottom time and about 2 1/2 hours of deco to produce this image.

Gulf Fleet No 31 wreck at Shaabruhr Umm Qammar, Egypt

Nikon, Z9, Nauticam Z9, 8-15 fisheye, iso 800, 4,5, 1/80, ambient light

**Judge's comments:** Without a doubt one of my favourite photos in the whole competition. And also, as I learn now, one of our deepest. This image is packed with the feeling of adventure, in a finely crafted composition that draws you in with layer upon layer of interest, from foreground corals to the clouds of fish above the wreck. Understandable quality, once you know it was taken by last year's Underwater Photographer of the Year! *Alex Mustard*



# BEHAVIOUR



## CATEGORY WINNER

'FACE OFF'

**Shunsuke Nakano, Japan**

This is a photo of two male Asian sheepshead wrasse fighting. The unique form of this species is characteristic of males, who form harems and claim territories during the breeding season. The one on the left in the photo is the harem king, who has defended his territory for more than 10 years and is estimated to be over 30 years old, while the one on the right is a young challenger.

Although I had planned carefully to capture the images, the 2024 season was more difficult to predict than usual, and despite staying there for a week during the breeding season, I was only able to observe this scene once, for just 10 seconds. And this was the only photograph I was able to take. The sight of them fighting in their flashy white outfits was so magnificent I can still remember it vividly.

Sado Niigata, Japan

Nikon, D850, Nauticam NA D850, af nikkor 28-70mm f3.5-4.5 d with Nauticam WACP-1, iso 200, f/16, 1/250, INON Z330

**Judge's comments:** Perfectly timed to capture the moment of the contender challenging the king. The fight for hierarchy is the strongest form of behaviour. Well lit with no distracting background, this image leapt out immediately and continued to be the one to beat off the challengers.

*Peter Rowlands*



# PORTRAIT



## CATEGORY WINNER

'HYDRATION'

Abdulaziz Al Saleh, Kuwait

I had the idea of photographing the camels drinking water for about one and half a years. I wanted to photograph them drinking water from the underwater perspective because I did not see any images showing this. The weather was a critical, and it took me several weeks to get the best possible shots. The first week the camels were a bit hesitant to drink water while my camera was under the water and only few gathered to drink, which is not what I wanted. But after several days the camels had already accepted to me and my equipment.

After my first week of shooting the Camels, I changed to electronic synch cords for my strobes instead of fibre-optic cables because of problems. And finally the shots came together.

Al Wafra desert, Kuwait

Nikon, Z8, Nauticam NA-Z8 , Nikkor 8-15mm fisheye, iso 100, F/18, 1/100, Inon Z330 (dual)

### Judge's comments:

Such a joyous image and a portrait of camels certainly took us by pleasant surprise. Great eye contact, well chosen angle and surface distortions gives you plenty to look at and the lower, childlike, cheeky mouth adds a heartwarming finale to a quality photograph, which is much more than just an eye-catching subject.

*Peter Rowlands*



# CORAL REEFS



## CATEGORY WINNER

'KALEIDOSCOPE OF COLOUR'

Catherine Holmes, United Kingdom

Raja Ampat, Indonesia, is a magical destination where the colour, beauty, biodiversity and dense fish life can almost be an overload on the senses- a celebration of healthy reef life. I was lucky to find perfect conditions with clear water and schooling baitfish swirling amongst the canyons of a large coral bommie, adorned with verdant soft corals.

I aimed to capture the reef teeming with life and colour to inspire us all to protect this valuable habitat. All around the world, our oceans, and in particular the coral reefs, are under threat. They are vital habitat for the myriad of species they support, and critical for the oceans health. Climate change, pollution, overfishing and destructive fishing all threaten this environment, and the devastating outcomes are seen worldwide with bleached and dying reefs, with dwindling fish life. Awareness is essential to protect and sustain these precious environments for the future.

Gorgonian Passage, Wayil Batan Island, Misool, Raja Ampat, Indonesia

Nikon , D500, NA-D500. Nauticam, Nikon Fisheye. 8-15 (3.5-4.5) @12mm, iso 320, f/11, 1/160, Retra Pro strobes- with diffusers

### Judge's comments:

This image just screams "coral"! It's also rare to see a vertical image which works well of a coral reef. The light distribution on the image is absolutely beautiful and the reef full of colour. A very well deserved winner of this category. *Tobias Friedrich*



# BLACK & WHITE



## CATEGORY WINNER

'CHASING DOLPHINS'

Enric Gener, Spain

This image was captured in the northern Red Sea during a freediving expedition in search of bottlenose dolphins. The moment portrays an intimate mating ritual, where several males—four visible in the picture, though others were nearby—were playfully chasing a female. It was a dynamic and ritualistic display, with the males engaging in friendly skirmishes and occasionally mating with the female, their bodies joining briefly for just a few seconds. Notably, the female was not attempting to escape; she actively participated, playing along and waiting for them. The entire group swam gracefully and at a slow, deliberate pace, creating a mesmerizing underwater scene.

Red Sea, Egypt

Canon, 5D Mark IV, SeaCam, Canon EF 16-35mm 1:2.8 L III USM, iso 160, 4, 1/500, No Lighting

### Judge's comments:

This image shows the definition of black and white photography, the composition comes alive with the thoughtful conversion to monochrome. Fantastic image. *Tobias Friedrich*



# UP & COMING



## CATEGORY WINNER

### 'AURORA UNDERWATER'

Ruruka, Korea

I first travelled to Cancun, Mexico, for a shoot two years ago, and since then, I've been captivated by its charm. These days, I find myself visiting Cancun frequently. From where I live, it's a very long journey - about 24 hours by plane - but this place perfectly aligns with the direction of my photography and offers a variety of shooting opportunities. To capture this particular photo, I visited during the rainy summer season and worked with a local Korean guide as my model.

Cancun, Mexico

Nikon, Z8, Nauticam NA-Z8, Nikon Z 24-50mm F4 with Nauticam WACP-1, iso ISO800, F9, 1/60s, Natural Light

#### Judge's comments:

Extraordinary image with a high technical standard and perfect postproduction of it! The diver is well positioned in the golden ratio while not being in front of anything. The balance of the light from outside which falls into the cave is just an excellent repetition and shows what the image is all about. Well done and a very well deserved category winner. *Tobias Friedrich*



# COMPACT



## CATEGORY WINNER

### 'THE BEAUTY OF THE SWAMP'

**Bryant Turffs, United States**

I captured this image at one of my favourite locations within the Everglades ecosystem. Historically, I primarily dove in saltwater, but I have become enamoured by this foreboding environment, with clear waters, light filtering through cypress trees, and the fish species, both native and introduced. I have revisited this spot many times trying to capture various subjects and the light just right. The water levels vary significantly, sometimes completely drying, during different times of year. The fish species are in constant flux, and this location is often dominated by exotics. Ironically, on this occasion, I hadn't invested too much thought and I was enjoying the scenery when this Florida Gar positioned itself perfectly in the frame of my GoPro.

Everglades National Park , United States

GoPro, Hero 7 Black, GoPro Supersuit, AOI 0.73x Ultra Wide Lens, iso 791, F/2.8, 1/180, N/A - Available

#### **Judge's comments:**

A stunning three dimensional composition placing this rarely seen Florida gar in its swamp habitat. It is, quite frankly, amazing that this image is shot with a simple GoPro camera demonstrating how many people already have all the gear that they need to capture beautiful underwater photos.

*Alex Mustard*



# British Underwater Photographer of the Year



## CATEGORY WINNER

### 'THE CURIOUS SEAL'

David Alpert, United Kingdom

North Devon is easily one of the most beautiful coastlines in Britain. High jagged cliffs pounded by an unforgiving sea. With the second highest tide change in the world, the outgoing current whips up against waves and wind rolling in from the North Atlantic. Stand back and marvel.

Diving windows are limited so I based myself in the area for two months last year, exploring different locations. This shot shows a grey seal off Lundy Island, a marine protected area since 1973. Seals are delightfully curious creatures, more interactive than any other species I have dived with around the world. Briefly, I become one of the privileged few, crossing the bridge into the world of a sentient wild animal.

Lundy Island , United Kingdom

Canon 5D MKiii, Nauticam , Canon EF 16-35mm f/2.8L iii USM, iso 200, F/8, 1/200 , 2 x Inon Z330 Strobes

**Judge's comments:** In the UPY competition we usually see a lot of seal images, especially in the British categories. I used to be a soft touch for these images, but having seen so many now, my standards are very high. This image though is truly a stunner! So well framed in the sea weeds and with the light coming from the back in the shallow waters. The composition is completed by the curious look of the seal to the photographer. An excellent portrait. *Tobias Friedrich*



# Most Promising British Underwater Photographer of the Year 2025



## 'FLUO SPINY SQUAT LOBSTER'

**James Lynott, United Kingdom**

This image was taken on a wonderful night dive at Inveraray, Loch Fyne. This site is known for being home to many beautiful fireworks anemones at shallow depths, but it also has an old pipe covered in concrete blocks which is home to lots of life, including the spiny squat lobster. These squat lobsters are usually found clinging upside down on boulders/overhangs and disappear the instant the camera shutter is pressed. However, on this night dive they were wondering about in the open and didn't seem to mind having a few pictures taken. These squat lobsters show the brightest fluorescence I have seen in crustaceans and I was really pleased on this dive to be able to capture the whole animal in frame. I used excitation filters on my strobes, along with a yellow barrier filter in front of the lens to capture the fluorescence.

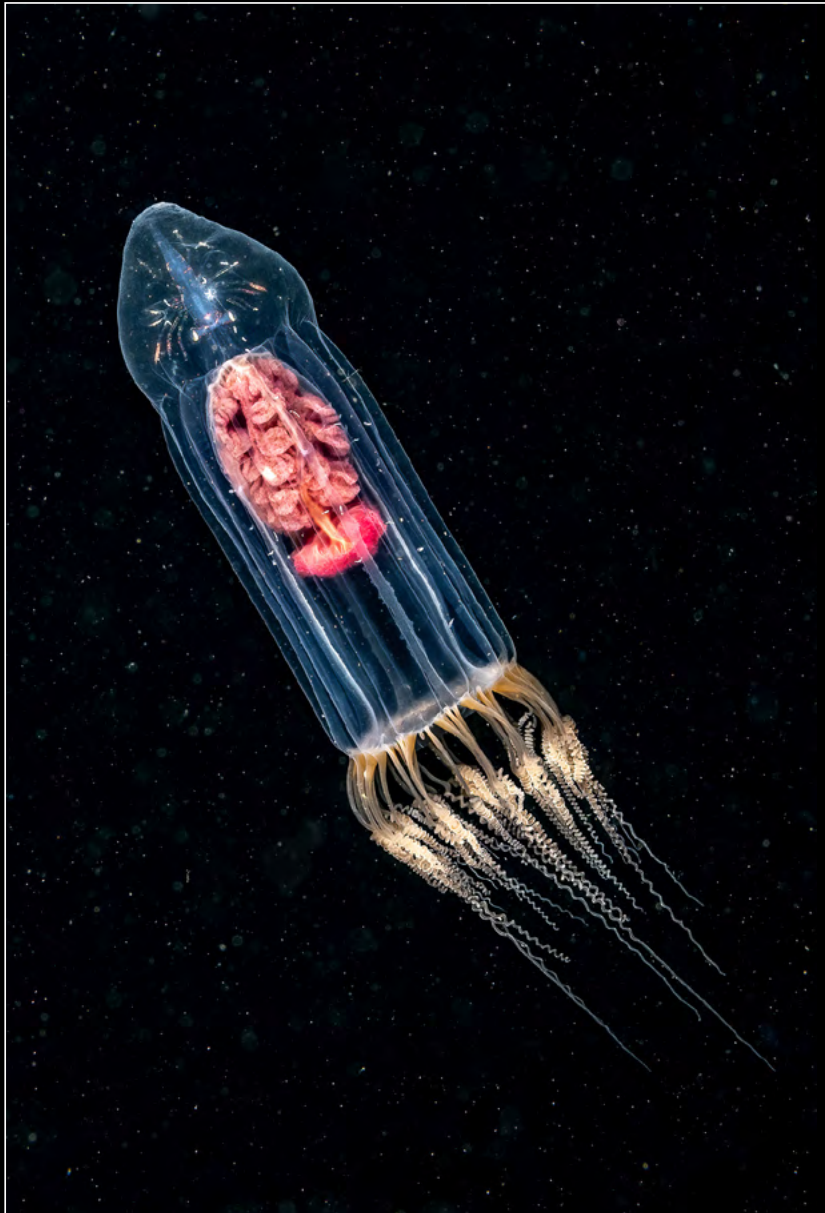
Inveraray, Loch Fyne, Scotland

OM SYSTEM, OM-D E-M1 MarkIII, AOI UH-EM1III, M.Zuiko Digital ED 14-42mm F3.5-5.6 EZ, iso 500, f/6.3, 1/50, 2 x Sea&Sea YS01-Solis w/ Nightsea filters

**Judge's comments:** James's fluorescent exploration of British waters has revealed another stunning subject when photographed with this technique. A little more contrast in processing, a tiny crop and a rotation into vertical and this truly memorable shot could have gone all the way...  
*Peter Rowlands*



# BRITISH WATERS MACRO



## CATEGORY WINNER

### 'THE HITCH HIKER'

**Dan Bolt, United Kingdom**

Occasionally in my time under the water I have come across this medusa 'Neoturris pileata' in the open water but had not taken a decent photo of one. On this occasion however, my buddy and I were specifically targeting them and other similar creatures to try to explore the idea of UK 'blackwater' photographic opportunities. Of the many, many(!), images I took that day, this one revealed a larval crustacean within the bell of this medusa. The frames either side of this capture actually show that the larval crab (or lobster) is actually on the outside of the bell, but in this instant it was perfectly on the opposite side from me and hence the effect of being contained within the transparent body.

Scotland, UK

OM Systems , OM-1, AOI UH-OM1, Panasonic 45mm macro, iso 250, f/13, 1/250th, 2x Sea & Sea YS-D3Duo

**Judge's comments:** This is a beautiful and rarely see jellyfish, but the wow moment really comes when you spot the hitchhiking shrimp through the transparent bell. Stunning, surprising and novel.  
*Alex Mustard*



# BRITISH WATERS LIVING TOGETHER



## WINNER

'RUSTY HAVEN'

Dan Bolt, United Kingdom

This image shows nature's ability to make the best of a bad situation. The iron block and heavy chain are actually holding a small barge in-place on the surface where local scallop divers store their equipment. The barge itself is a floating reef system all of its own, and the anchor blocks have attracted many species too.

I was actually practising for a different underwater photography competition when I took this shot. For a couple of days before an on-the-day "splash in" competition, this crab was consistently in this position, or very close by. Sadly on the day it was no-where to be seen! Happily for me though that meant I was able to use my practice photos for UPY!

Loch Carron, Scotland

OM Systems, OM-1, AOI UH-OM1, Olympus 14-42mm with Nautocam WWL-1, iso 640, f/7.1, 1/50, 2x Sea & Sea YS-D3 Duo

**Judge's comments:** A well chosen angle to include just enough background to combine visual depth with location. The chain links starting off powerful in the foreground then receding delicately out of the scene topped by the small inquisitive fish entering the top of the frame. A worthy winner.  
*Peter Rowlands*

# THE 'SAVE OUR SEAS FOUNDATION'

Marine Conservation Photographer of the Year 2025



## CATEGORY WINNER

'1 / 200.000.000'

Robert Marc Lehmann, Germany

This tiger shark is just one of around 200 million sharks that lose their lives every year at the hands of humans.

Since I was six years old (35 years+), I have been intensively studying sharks. In all these years, hardly anything has changed and that is frustrating. Sharks protect their habitat, the sea, through their ecological function as "health police". Over a billion people depend on the sea every day and we all breathe the oxygen that is largely produced in the sea. If we continue to eradicate the animals that guard our largest and most important habitat, we are taking away our own livelihood. And that's why I've been fighting for people to see and understand sharks through my eyes. Every time I take a photo like this, it hurts, but through imagery I can inspire millions of people to understand sharks and their situation and make a difference.

Indonesia

CANON , R5 , -, CANON EF 24mm f/1.4L II USM with EF to RF Mount, iso 1000, 5.6, 1/6400,

**Judge's comments:** A stunning, story-telling image, with four men hauling this huge ocean predator onto land. The light is beautiful, the composition immersive and the timing, capturing the fisherman's gesture, is perfect. Although an everyday occurrence and legal in most places, the man reaching out to stop the photo reveals what his conscience reckons on what they are doing. Powerful photography. *Alex Mustard*



# DPG Masters 2024 Competition Winners Announced



DPG is proud to announce the winners of the DPG Masters Underwater Imaging Competition 2024. Once again, thousands of photographers and filmmakers from dozens of countries competed in what has become known as the “World Championship” of international underwater imaging events. The competition invited submissions to eight image categories and one video category, with entries evaluated by a panel of award-winning underwater photographers: Nicolas Remy, Steven Kovacs, Shane Gross, Tanya

Houppermans, Imran Ahmad, and Andy Sallmon.

For the first time in the contest’s long history, it was a video entry that was deemed the best overall. Canadian videographer Eiko Jones’ short film, entitled *The Journey*, brilliantly captures the drama-filled life cycle of salmon in the rivers of British Columbia, Canada. The first place winner in the Short Film category earned Eiko the title “DPG Grand Master 2024.”

Congratulations, too, to the Gold winners in the photo categories—



*Shooting Location: Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada*

*Equipment: Nikon Z6, Z CAM E2-S6, Sigma AF 8–16mm f/4.5–5.6, Nikon AF-S 60mm f/2.8 Macro, Aquatica and Nauticam housings, Nauticam EMWL, Laowa Macro Probe, Keldan video lights*

*Videographer’s Comment: “This short film is a compilation of sequences from my longer film ‘Heartbeat of the River.’ My goal in producing this short film is to showcase the incredible journey the salmon of Vancouver Island’s Campbell and Quinsam Rivers take in the completion of their life cycle. It’s a triumph over adversaries and obstacles that has gone on for millennia along the coast of British Columbia and the United States.”*

Vanessa Mignon (Traditional), Andrea Michelutti (Macro, Compact), Massimo Zannini (Wide Angle), Luc Rومان (Over-Under), Matthew Mak (Conservation), André Moyo (Blackwater), and Filippo Borghi (Portfolio)—as well as all the runners-up. Finally, special thanks to our amazing sponsors for their incredible

generosity, to our knowledgeable judges for all their hard work, and to everyone who participated.

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

# Olympus M. Zuiko 8mm f1.8 Fisheye Pro

by Andrew McLachlan

Lens choice plays a crucial role in underwater photography. Superior optics allow us to overcome the challenges of image quality, light refraction, and distortion, which allows us to produce stunning imagery. One such lens that meets these requirements for my micro four thirds (MFT) set-up is the M. Zuiko 8mm f/1.8 Fisheye PRO lens. When this lens is paired with a mini-dome, it offers exceptional quality and versatility, allowing photographers to capture dramatic wide-angle imagery, close-focus compositions, and creative perspectives that can be difficult to achieve with standard rectilinear wide-angle lenses.

My particular set-up for using the OM1 and M. Zuiko 8mm Fisheye lens (Zuiko 8mm) beneath the waves is an AOI UH-OM1 Housing with an AOI DLP-06 Acrylic Dome Port. An AOI PN-24 Extension Ring sits between the housing and dome port. My strobe choices are either the AOI Ultra Compact Q1-RC Strobes or the new AOI Ultra-InTeli P1 Strobes.

The Zuiko 8mm lens offers an incredible 180-degree diagonal

field of view and a close focusing distance of 2.5cm (front lens element to subject), making it one of the widest lenses available for MFT photographers. This allows photographers to capture vast underwater landscapes, reef structures, wrecks, large marine life, and close focus wide-angle (CFWA) photography. The extreme close focusing capability of the lens when paired with a mini dome is an incredibly powerful tool for photographing small marine creatures within their habitat.

Another major advantage of using this lens in a mini dome is the compact size. When compared to the larger dome ports required for rectilinear wide-angle lenses, a mini dome significantly reduces bulk and drag underwater, making it easier to maneuver in tight spaces such as coral reefs, caves, and wrecks.

The Zuiko 8mm also excels in low light conditions with its fast f/1.8 aperture.

Another benefit of using fisheye lenses in mini domes is that the amount of water between the



*M. Zuiko 8mm Fisheye Lens, ISO 200, F8 @ 1/250 sec., AOI UH-OM1 Housing, AOI DLP-06 Lens Port, 2 X AOI Ultra-InTeli P1 Strobes*



*Zuiko 8mm Fisheye Lens, ISO 800, F16 @ 1/320sec, AOI UH-OM1 Housing, AOI DLP-06 Lens Port  
Zuiko 8mm Fisheye Lens, ISO 1000, F8 @ 1/1000sec, AOI UH-OM1 Housing, AOI DLP-06 Lens Port*



*Zuiko 8mm Fisheye Lens, ISO 200, F8 @ 1/250sec, AOI UH-OM1 Housing, AOI DLP-06 Lens Port  
Zuiko 8mm Fisheye Lens, ISO 1000, F8 @ 1/125sec, AOI UH-OM1 Housing, AOI DLP-06 Lens Port*



subject and the lens is reduced. This helps with clarity, contrast, and color reproduction as there is less water for the light to travel through, therefore, the loss of such details is minimized. I find the close focusing capabilities of the Zuiko 8mm in a mini dome set-up especially useful during situations when there is more particulate matter floating in the water column due to turbidity.

Fisheye lenses are noted for their distortion effects which can be used creatively to emphasize curvature and exaggerate the sense of depth, making compositions more dynamic. When positioned correctly, subjects can appear larger than life, which I have found works exceptionally well for capturing large marine life here on Grand Cayman such as for stingrays, and sea turtles.

While this distortion can be used artistically in many instances, it may not be something that all photographers find appealing. In situations where maintaining straight



*All shots:*

*Zuiko 8mm  
Fisheye Lens,  
ISO 800, F16  
@ 1/320sec,  
AOI UH-OM1  
Housing, AOI  
DLP-06 Lens  
Port*

lines is preferable a rectilinear lens would be the better option.

A mini dome is typically considered too small to effectively capture over-under (split) shots, as it lacks the necessary waterline separation required for smooth transitions between underwater and topside elements. A larger dome port would be better suited for such compositions, and I do often resort to my 8" dome for split shots, but I have also had some success with capturing over-under (split) shots with my 4' dome on Grand Cayman.

Due to the extreme curvature of the mini-dome and the nature of fisheye optics, flare and chromatic aberrations can sometimes occur when shooting towards the sun. However, these can often be minimized with careful positioning. Strobe positioning is also critical to avoid illuminating unwanted backscatter due to the extreme field of view of fisheye optics.

I typically have the strobes pulled back slightly behind the housing handles and how far out or close they are to the housing depends on my proximity to the subject matter. At other times I may



*Zuiko 8mm Fisheye Lens, ISO 500, F8 @ 1/250sec, AOI UH-OM1 Housing, AOI DLP-06 Lens Port*

play around with some creative strobe placement for different lighting effects on subject matter, such as a single strobe with a beam restrictor or an inward lighting technique.

Despite being a fisheye lens, the Zuiko 8mm delivers exceptional edge-to-edge sharpness, even in the reduced optics of a mini-dome. Stopping down to f/5.6 or f/8, my preferred settings, further

improves sharpness and depth of field, making it ideal for wide-angle reefscape and marine life photography. Olympus / OM System are noted for their high-quality optics and lens coatings, as a result images exhibit vivid colors and excellent contrast. The f/1.8 aperture allows for excellent low-light performance, enabling photographers to capture ambient light details in darker



*Zuiko 8mm Fisheye Lens, ISO 800, F8 @ 1/250sec, AOI UH-OM1 Housing, AOI DLP-06 Lens Port*

environments such as caves, wrecks, and deep reefs. This reduces the reliance on artificial lighting for a more compact set-up beneath the waves.

The Zuiko 8mm, when paired with a mini dome, is an exceptionally versatile tool for underwater photography. Its ultra-wide field of view, excellent close-focusing ability, fast aperture, and compact form factor make it an ideal choice for capturing stunning underwater scenes, whether shooting vast coral landscapes, marine life close-ups, or creative fisheye perspectives.

With the right technique and understanding of its strengths, the M. Zuiko 8mm fisheye lens in a mini dome can elevate your underwater photography to new artistic heights, delivering sharp, colorful, and visually striking images that capture the beauty of the underwater world.

**Andrew McLachlan**  
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# Big and Small

with Dustin Adamson

From humpback whales to nudibranchs, tiger sharks to flamboyant cuttlefish, Dustin Adamson has shot it all. In this interview, Dustin shares key insights on the gear he uses, as well as his process and workflow for creating stunning underwater films.

## **Q: What's your Current Primary Camera System?**

A: Previously I have worked with the Canon 5D II, Canon 1DX II, and Canon 1DX III cameras. In the last year I have moved to the Canon EOS R5 C which I LOVE! The ability to utilize Canon's custom white balance through pressing just 1 button is a huge deal for me and my wide angle work. In my opinion, Canon has the best underwater color of any camera out there. Having one button to achieve correct white balance at depth has really been a game-changer for me. The 8K RAW isn't something I use a lot of, but it is nice to have when a shot calls for that type of flexibility in post as well as extra resolution. Another side benefit for me is that this camera doesn't have a mirror box (it's a Mirrorless Camera), so cleaning the

sensor on this camera is significantly easier than my previous cameras. Here are some other details of what I use for my primary rig:

Canon EOS R5 C Camera  
Nauticam NA-R5C Underwater Housing  
Nauticam NA-502S Housing  
Canon RF 100mm f2.8 L Macro lens – For macro work  
Canon RF 14-35mm f4 L Lens – For wide angle work  
Nauticam SMC-1 Super Macro Converter Lens  
Backscatter Macro Wide 4300 Video Lights for Spot and Snoot shots with the Optical Snoot OS-1  
Xit 404 Tripod Legs

**Q: It looks like you had some epic whale encounters in Moorea! Tell us about what went into making a compelling edit from your stunning combo of aerial and underwater footage.**

A: I had the opportunity to join the Backscatter group trip this year, and it really exceeded all of my expectations. The accommodations, in water guides and private boat were really top notch. Topside Moorea



is the most beautiful place I have ever been. The sharp green volcanic mountains are a spectacular sight to see. I incorporated a lot of drone shots in the edit, some of which tested the drone's limitations. I was fortunate enough to get some aerial shots of the whale inside of the lagoon without feeling the need to bring the drone

and launch it on the boat. It's against the rules for swimmers to be with the whales in the lagoon, so that enabled me to get some clean shots without people in the shots. When we were in the water, it was a mixed result on the encounters that we had. You have to swim a minimum of 300 feet (100 meters) to reach the whale. This



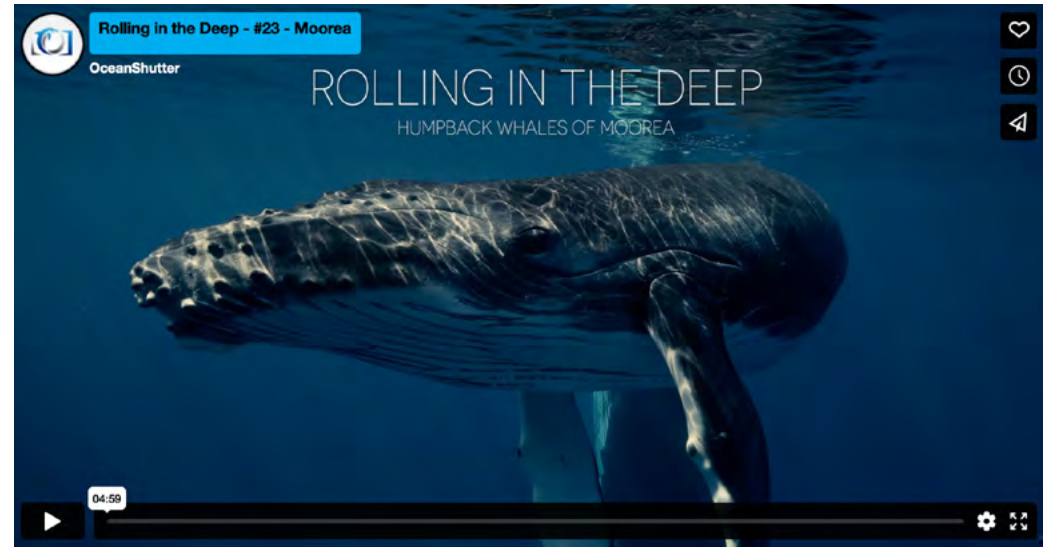
meant there was a lot of swimming! Sometimes that paid off, other times not. I was happy with the 6 days on the water. This gave us enough opportunities to get good shots in a variety of different conditions, and also shots without people scattered in the image. The private boat with only 6 people that Backscatter arranged was crucial in getting some of these shots without dozens of other swimmers in the frame.

**Q: What sort of challenges did you encounter when shooting such massive subjects?**

A: Large subjects can be tricky.

You want to get the whole body in the frame, but you also want to be as close as possible for a clearer and sharper image. The further away you are, it will degrade the image quality because of the visibility in the water. There is a balance there that you have figure out. Of course, you can't swim towards the whales, they have to come to you. We were fortunate to have some young calves that did many very close passes. They were smaller than the adults and fit in the frame easier being closer.

Because there are likely to be a lot of other swimmers from other groups, keeping people out of the shot can be challenging. You really



must work on your positioning to avoid swimmers in your shot. Pay attention to swimming patterns from the young whales and position yourself to avoid those angles. Sometimes there isn't anything you can do, and you just have to work with what you can. I would use my zoom on my lens to help cut the field of view smaller which allowed me to cut some of that out. Also, I shot the entire trip in 8K with the intention of a 4K final project. This gave me a little bit of cropping ability to help with this as well.

**Q: Tell us about your camera settings, lens choice, and other equipment considerations to be set for success under these conditions?**

A: I used the Canon RF 14-35mm

L lens from Canon on this trip. I find it to be a very nice rectilinear lens that has some flexibility with the zoom. You aren't allowed to bring lights on this, and quite frankly, you wouldn't want to. You can't get close enough, and there would be too much drag in the water for swimming. Normally in this type of a shoot, open ocean and blue water, I would take a custom white balance off of a gray card. For this shoot, I used the 8K RAW option on my camera, so manually white balancing wasn't something that I needed to do. I don't normally shoot in this mode, but this situation called for that. The RAW files are huge! So it isn't something I shoot, unless there is a reason. White balance with these video files was done in post-production in Adobe Premiere. As for camera settings, I mainly was around



*f13 and f11, with a 1/120th shutter speed. ISO was set at 160 to keep the file as clean as possible. For canon users using ISO levels in multiples of 160 is the cleanest way to shoot. For example, 640 is a cleaner ISO than 500 ISO, despite it being higher.*

***Q. In your Puerto Galera episode of Rolling In The Deep, you feature more of the classic black background and directional, snooted macro lighting that made us love your content in the first place. You recently added the Backscatter Macro Wide 4300 video light to your gear locker. What sort of impact has it had on your macro video?***

**A:** It has been a huge upgrade for me! My previous lights struggled to maintain a consistent light color

(Kelvin) between the lights. As someone who is a little obsessive regarding color, this caused me a lot of frustration over the years. The light on these is very consistent across different lights. The Backscatter Macro Wide 4300 video light is super easy to use. The batteries are easy to charge. They also don't have corrosion issues that other lights have with charging points. The spot light is perfect for isolating your subject to help create those black backgrounds.

The Optical Snoot OS-1 is an excellent tool that gives you the flexibility to shape the light and can be helpful on certain shots. I have used a homemade one in the past, but the Backscatter Optical Snoot OS-1 has permanently retired my old homemade one!

***Q: Your Tiger Beach experience looked like a ton of fun. Given that it is a relatively shallow dive, with extremely close encounters with very large subjects, what sort of lens and lighting options did you consider and ultimately decide on?***

**A:** Tiger Beach is an amazing destination! In my opinion it is the best in the world for shark photography. We had the opportunity to join Epic Diving for our 2nd trip to Tiger Beach. In this type of a trip you want to make sure you go with someone that has your safety as the #1 priority, and they do exactly that. They will put you in the right spots to get the shots you are looking for in the safest way possible. If you have

never done this trip, I would highly recommend it.

Tiger beach is just a sandy bottom at 25 feet (8 meters) deep. The water is normally clear and currents are low. The tigers are reliable from November to May. You will also encounter many other species of shark on the dive, so there is never a dull moment. They will come up and nudge you so you need to be comfortable redirecting them with your camera or hand.

Lighting is easy on this dive. I have always shot with natural light, and I prefer that for most wide angle anyway. It is shallow enough that even if the sun is behind clouds, it is generally still light enough for a nice shot. I have never felt the need for

external lighting on this dive. Because it has white sand nearly everywhere, the sun reflects off of that and lights up the underbelly of the sharks, so it really helps the overall lighting of the subjects. One of the trickier aspects is that white sand being clipped for being too bright on the screen. Make sure you have your exposure settings set to counteract that and if you have zebra functions on your camera or monitor make sure you have them on.

**Q: We love your finished videos because they all contain a strong story, told only through compelling images. Give us a quick breakdown of your post-production workflow and what goes into taking raw footage from the camera and turning it into an engaging experience for the viewer.**

A: My Post production really breaks down to this. Rating clips, Film type, Music Selection, Edit, Color Correction, Exporting.

Let's dive into each one of these:

## Rating Clips.

I go through and rate each clip that I shoot. I give them letters on usability in film or stock footage. This also gives me an opportunity to see what I have before I start on a full edit.

"A" clips are nearly perfect clips. Great color, behavior, steady, good

angles, lighting, white balance, etc.

"B" Clips are good clips that can be used but they might suffer from a little bit of shake on the footage, perhaps the lighting isn't perfect, or even the animal isn't the best representation of that particular species. Overall good clips, but they could be a little better. These often get added into my final edit.

"C" Clips – Good clips that I could still use for stock footage. May require some work to look usable.

"D / F" clips – Generally unusable clips that I end up deleting.

## Film Type

Now that I know what I have clips wise for the trip, I decide what type of short I am going to make. Is it a music video? Something with a story and narration? Something with sound effects? Depending on this, is how I choose music based on what I am looking to accomplish.

## Music Selection

Music is a HUGE part of any production. If you have bad music it can ruin the whole thing. I spend many hours searching for an appropriate piece for the project that is licensable for use. It has to be something that I like, because I will hear the music literally 100's of times



during the editing process. The music needs to mirror what you are trying to convey with the film. Do you want it adventurous? Calming? Sentimental? Those are tones that you set with the music.

## Editing

When it comes to editing, I normally lay out my music on the timeline and start editing to that. Generally, I select really engaging shots to begin the film with. Something gives you that 'Wow' factor when you first see it. In most videos, I will try to group like creatures together. For example, Cephalopods, Crustaceans, Sea Slugs etc. This gives sort of an order to the film. I also try to use some transition shots to switch to a different type of animal or switching

from macro to wide angle. I also pay attention to what clips I want to play during certain parts of the music. Perhaps I might match some behavior to specific points in the music.

## Color Correction

Once the film is basically laid out in the timeline, I will color correct each clip. Fortunately this doesn't take me long. I try to get the color and white balance right in the camera so that minimal work needs to be done in post production. I typically make minor adjustments in white balance if needed. I usually increase contrast on most clips, and add a little sharpening on wide angle shots. To color correct a five minute film, it normally only takes me 30-40 minutes. Of course if I am using RAW 8K files, it takes a bit longer

as working with RAW is more labor intensive and harder to achieve a look that I am satisfied with. I do have a LUT that I use that gets me close, but I end up doing tweaks to it on nearly every clip. I typically don't use proxy files.

## Exporting

The film is done except for final export. I will export depending on what is required. Youtube, Vimeo, film festivals, and even home use for myself, I will create different exports for each one. Maximizing the quality based on what the top limits are for the final destination.

*Many thanks for your open and illuminating answers.*

*Dustin Adamson Dustin Adamson is a multi-international award winning underwater cinematographer. He was certified to scuba dive back in 1996. Based out of Salt Lake City, Utah, he is completely self taught, and has been filming since 2011. In 2002, he married his wife Tyra Adamson, an accomplished underwater photographer in her own right. They both own and operate oceanshutter.com. He loves variety. However, he still enjoys filming all underwater creatures. Having traveled all over the world, he is always searching for the perfect shot. In 2015, Dustin had the honor of being invited to be a member of the Ocean Artists Society.*

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



# Alex Mustard's Controlling Light Workshop

by Massimo Franzese

Why attend a workshop? I have previously attended three of Alex's Red Sea workshops and this was my first in Grand Cayman. I have also run workshops and training sessions myself and I cannot stress how important it is to get some form of tuition during your underwater photography journey even if you are already a good photographer. This was his 140 workshop and 30th in Grand Cayman and ran for a total of 9 days which allowed for black water dive and a trip to Little Cayman that may or not feature on his regular 7 days one. His workshops tend to be frequented by many regulars, some people had already done this one 3 or 4 times and there is a friendly and positive non competitive atmosphere that really contributes to get your best shots as you learn not just from Alex but from your peers.

The conditions in Grand Cayman and the facilities at Ocean Frontiers, an extremely well run operation established in 1996,

allow you to practice in easy diving conditions, excellent visibility with abundance of light so that you can focus entirely on your skills. It is an ideal workshop to establish your wide angle before attempting more challenging destinations. Water is not cold but I took my 5/3 wetsuit and thermocline hood. Nitrox was offered and actually needed as no decompression time was the limit in most cases. The bottom is not really that shallow normally 12-15 meters below the boat dropping to 25-30 and then into the abyss afterwards. Some participants had 15 litres tanks but I managed easily dives in excess of 60 minutes.

There are more than 50 dive sites you can visit and two special attractions: the Kittywake wreck, intentionally sunk with the objective of being a photography subject and Stingray city, a sandbar where

*Sony A1 in Nauticam housing with two Sea and Sea YS-D3 strobes. ISO 500, f/13, 1/400, Canon 8-15mm Fisheye at 15mm*



*Sony A1 in Nauticam housing with two Sea and Sea YS-D3 strobes. ISO 500, f/16, 1/250, Canon 8-15mm Fisheye at 15mm*

stingrays congregate in mass.

On arrival you are handed over a tentative schedule however this is subject to change depending on conditions. On your first evening Alex runs an introductory session to explain how to get the most of the workshop where you are given the opportunity to introduce yourself and say what gear you use, this allows you to share settings and else with peers. It was interesting to see that except for a few participants the workshop was dominated by full frame mirrorless cameras.

The next day after a two tank dive excursion you have a session in the pool that allows you to really understand how your strobe position has to be to have even illumination of your subject. We also had an inward lighting target that a few of us tested. In the evening we had the first of the four lectures on controlling light. Those move from ambient light all the way to mixed light and other techniques such as cross strobes. During the evening session there is also image sharing and commentary that is extremely useful as Alex also gives you tips and ideas for post processing. In terms of diving this 9 days special had 22 dives plus the



Stingray sandbar. On the last day you could add an unlimited time macro dive on a shallow reef so quite a bit of diving going on. I am not really a fish portrait shooter but I enjoyed both the black water diver and the macro dive.

However being a wide angle shooter I skipped a night dive. I decided to arrive one day later and the comment I want to make is that if you are an experienced photographer you can get plenty of practice experience even

on the day boat. The difference is that while in the workshop you focus on the most photogenic dive sites on a day boat you are more at the mercy of the typical diver schedule and the focus is to dive at different sites



*Sony A1 in Nauticam housing with two Sea and Sea YS-D3 strobes. ISO 500, f/11, 1/400, Sony 24-50 G + WACP-C*

and look for fish. This is another differentiator of Alex workshops that is even more evident in other destinations like the Red Sea.

Together with the lectures Alex follows a progression from ambient light to more complex lighting scenarios. Specifically we used some fairly shallow sites with cracks in the reef that allow you to focus on different type of photography without flash. Most of those scenery lend themselves to



*Sony A1 in Nauticam housing with two Sea and Sea YS-D3 strobes. ISO 500, f/16, 1/400, Sony 14mm GM*

black and white and with a mirrorless camera you are invited to set black and white in the viewfinder so that you can see how the image will come out. This is a fisheye trip. You can do pretty much everything with one lens but it is worth to take a macro lens in case conditions are rough. I also took a 14mm rectilinear for the Stingrays and for splits where I prefer straight lines.

One of the things that I have learnt shooting

mirrorless since 2014 is that you need to have a complete understanding of the way the evf represents the scene and you can't just trust the light meter if you want to have maximum dynamic range. In my case shooting a Sony A1 I set zebra to show the clipping point of the image so that I never clip highlights when I use live view. The resulting shots appear dark in the review however Sony full frame files have at least 3 stops latitude in the



Sony A1 in Nauticam housing with two Sea and Sea YS-D3 strobes. ISO 500, f/13, 1/80, Canon 8-15mm Fisheye at 15mm

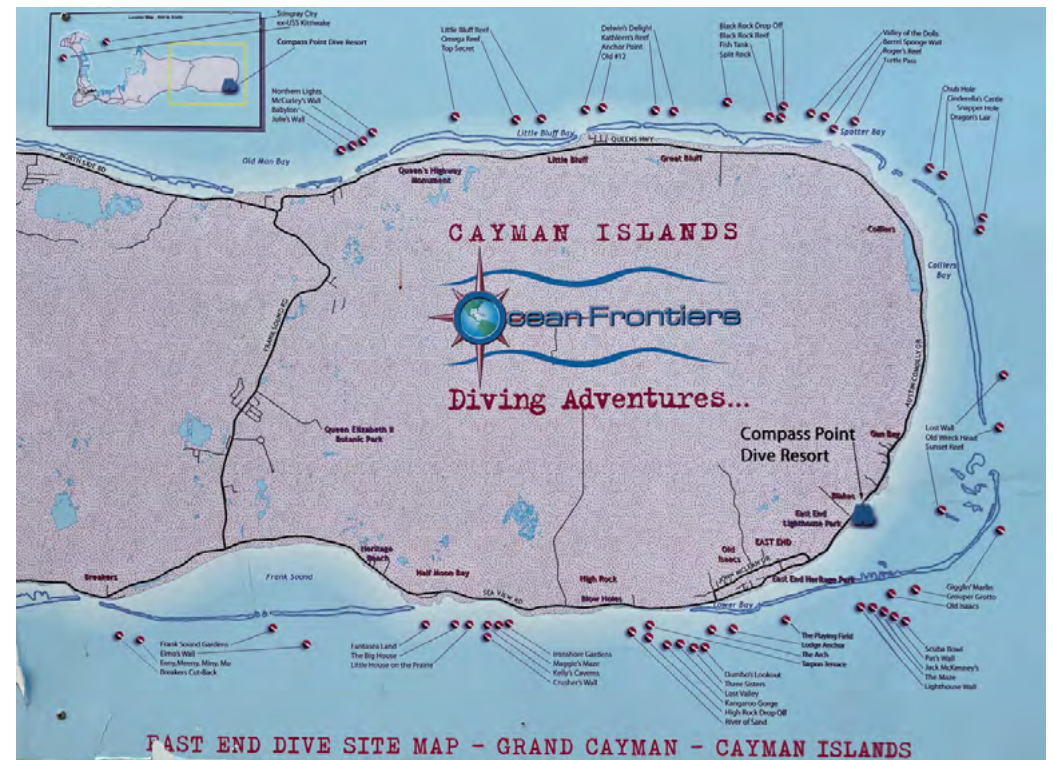
shadows and if noise becomes an issue you can denoise.

The Kittywake wreck is another perfect practice scenario for ambient light shots. The wreck has dropped to deeper water following a hurricane a few years ago and no longer stands upright. If you look at older photos be aware it is now quite tilted. This easy to navigate and not too large shipwreck is ideal for ambient light and filter photography as well as black and white scenes depending on the angle of the sun. Alex explains very well how to make the most of the sunlight and the resulting shots can be indeed dramatic. There are also

set subjects for you to take and of course you can go off the beaten track if you want your unique shots. I spent both dives on the Kittywake outside as I was thinking there would have been a second trip instead, thanks to good conditions we went all the way to Little Cayman for a three dive trip.

Little Cayman presented similar sponge formations to Grand Cayman but more fish and turtles. Apparently turtle numbers have been decreasing in Grand Cayman in the last ten years and there are speculations the locals eat them.

The workshop always offers a trip to Stingray City, this is done earlier



than the day trippers so you have around 90 minutes before the rest of the tourists arrive. The sea conditions are generally not flat so split shots are difficult but one of us managed to get a very good one. I decided to focus on underwater shots using a rectilinear lens as I wanted to have actions close to the dome with burst shooting. There are quite a few people in the line of sight and when the rays are fed it gets really messy. It was somewhat difficult to get ambient shots while the stingrays, if approached and managed with the right behaviour, would swim right up to your camera and even rub on you, which can result in suction

bites.

I took 470 shots due to the burst settings and managed to pull up several that I like really close to the dome. As I used a rectilinear lens the camera focus tracking worked perfectly and using shutter speeds of 1/400 I did not get excessive blur. I would recommend even higher speed if conditions allow.

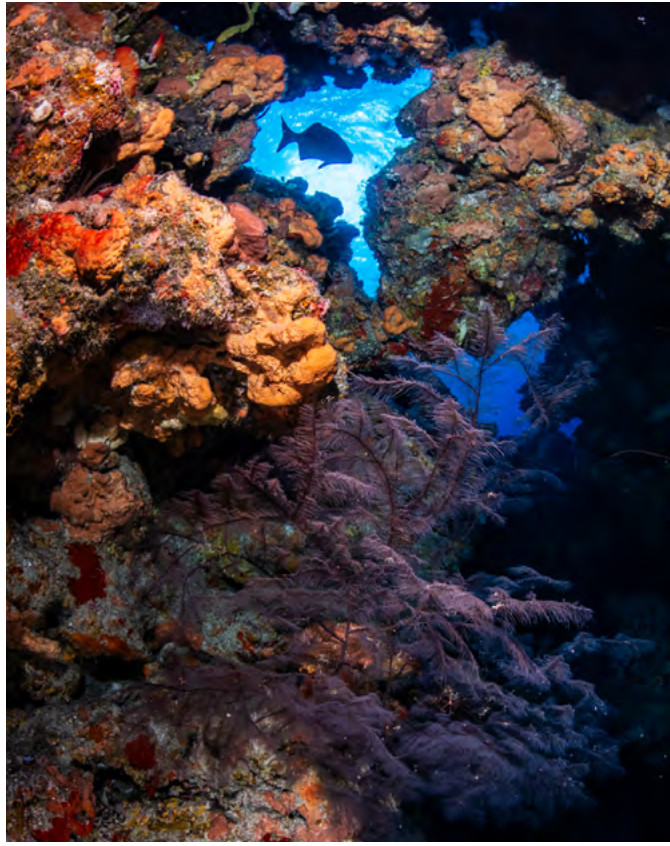
Another highlight of the workshop is the X dive, Ocean Frontiers takes you to a secret spot where there are around 12 resident caribbean sharks so everyone can get some good shark photos. The dive site though is fairly deep and the light is



*Sony A1 in Nauticam housing with two Sea and Sea YS-D3 strobes. ISO 500, f/16, 1/125, Canon 8-15mm Fisheye at 15mm*

not ideal. As divers sit on the sand the visibility can quickly deteriorate. The good news is that sharks are present anyway on the east end reefs and I got some of my best shark shots while three sharks were circling me and one came right to my dome port. The shark appears to be further away as I was shooting a fisheye but it was literally less than one foot away.

During the workshop we were very lucky with the winds and did not have to resort to a back up



*Sony A1 in Nauticam housing with two Sea and Sea YS-D3 strobes. ISO 500, f/13, 1/400, Canon 8-15mm Fisheye at 15mm*

plan of shooting macro, however the dive site that is used for that purpose has quite a bit to offer and I definitely recommend doing the macro dive on the last day especially after the indigestion of wide angle it can feel quite good to look close.

As mentioned we had the unique opportunity to perform a black water dive at the Don Foster Dive center on the west side of the island. It is relatively new in Grand Cayman but it was extremely well run and all of us got a good selection of subjects. This is

not typically offered during the workshop but if you happen to be in Grand Cayman or arrive before the workshop or leave later I would recommend doing it if you have not done it before.

During the week I could see improvements from all participants that culminated in the end of the show video that Alex built where each participant chose their 10-12 favourite images of the week. I also had the opportunity to connect with fellow photographers, and some of us I have to say also seasoned Margarita drinkers as we even ran a ranking of the few bars we visited. Having said that, there is really not a lot of time for relaxation and at end of each day you feel quite tired and in need of sleep. I opted for a single occupation room that was right on the beach and could get a few hours of sun there and on the boat so that I did not come back totally pasty white however some participants did not look like they had been to the caribbean after the week had gone by. After one week here I came back with what I think are 12-15 very strong images which in general is a good outcome considering my own standards.

To conclude I would recommend this workshop to anyone that wants to improve their wide angle photography, including very experienced shooters that may have developed bad habits. The clear and easy conditions allow you to see what you are doing wrong and course correct during the workshop or even during the dive itself.

**Massimo Franzese**  
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# Don't settle for 2nd best



Film - No Filter No White Balance



Digital - No Filter Manual White Balance



Magic Filter Manual White Balance

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

# The Evolution of Underwater Photography: From Scuba to Rebreathers

by Fernando Lessa

Underwater photography has always felt like a high-stakes game of cat and mouse: how quickly can I find my subject, and how long can I stay with it before the scene vanishes? But in reality, it's more than just a race against time; it's a complex balance of technology, science, and human physiology.

The desire to document the unseen underwater world is hardly a new pursuit. In fact, the initial challenge was simply to get a camera underwater—a goal achieved in the late 1800s. Early gear was rudimentary, and creativity was often limited by the functionality of the equipment. The holy grail was to stay submerged long enough to capture truly unique moments.

## The Advent of Scuba Gear

The invention of diving suits—from basic rebreathers in the early 1900s to the mass popularization of scuba gear by Jacques Cousteau—was a game-changer for photographers. Equipment became more accessible, reliable, portable, and safer, offering greater freedom for underwater exploration. The 1990s saw further advances with the normalization of mixed-gas diving, enabling divers to reach greater depths and stay submerged for longer periods. What once felt impossible—dives lasting hours—have since become common and standard practice. Advancements in modernized



*Sockeye salmon, fresh from the ocean, on their migration to the headwaters. Sony A7III Tamron 17-28mm f11 ISO 1600 flash Sea & Sea YS-D3. Northeast Coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia. Canada*

equipment have still not seen its limits, with some daring to dive for two-digit hours while maintaining relative safety.

## How Did This Affect Underwater Photographers?

For underwater photographers, extended dive times are critical. Capturing those rare, hard-to-get shots often required patience. However,

photographers had to contend with limitations such as 36-exposure rolls of film, inefficient batteries, and bulky equipment prone to flooding or malfunction. While scuba gear allowed us to stay underwater longer, the technology of cameras couldn't keep up. Photographers often found themselves limited by their gear's inability to last as long as their dives.

The true breakthrough came with the popularization of digital cameras and lithium-ion batteries. This allowed photographers to spend



*Swimming below the fish and releasing no bubbles enables some pretty cool images. Sony A7III Sigma 15mm f2.8 + Sigma MD11 adapter. Northeast Coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia. Canada*

up to 1, 2, or even 3 hours capturing images—something that would have taken an entire day in the 1980s. Divers embraced the new technology, strapping on extra tanks and stage bottles, and the “astronaut” look became a familiar sight in the diving world. Today, it’s not uncommon to see divers so loaded with gear that walking or even scratching their backs seems a challenge. In cold-water dives, the sheer volume of equipment is staggering, with some even requiring lifts to get out of the water!

The combination of powerful cameras, long-lasting batteries, and

reliable gas supplies seemed like the perfect formula for underwater photography. But then, there’s the issue of exhaust bubbles. The moment you release them, all the marine life you’ve been photographing scatters away so much for that perfect shot.

### **The Challenge of Being a Professional Underwater Photographer**

Being a professional underwater photographer adds another layer of complexity to the already difficult



*Remote locations are no problem for the RD1. For the weight of a single tank scuba rig, one can stay up to 4h, depending on the depth and the breathing effort. Northeast Coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia. Canada*

task. In addition to dealing with time constraints, gear failures, and unpredictable environments, there’s the pressure of consistently producing good results—images or videos that meet the expectations of clients.

In 2016 I moved to Canada to explore new horizons, including cold-water diving. Coming from the warm waters I was accustomed to, adapting to cold-water dives was challenging enough. But working professionally in this new environment presented additional unique difficulties. In tropical waters, I could easily walk around with a set of doubles, but in

cold waters, it became much more challenging with a dry suit. I had to account for air to inflate my suit, torches, heated undergarments, and—yes—pee valves, all while still aiming to return with quality images.

Soon, I found myself diving deeper into technical diving, and with it came the familiar “astronaut” look, as I strapped on more and more gear. In just a few months, I accumulated more certifications than credit cards. But despite all the gear, I found myself barely able to take care of the basics—like putting on my fins or dry gloves. My dives were limited not only by

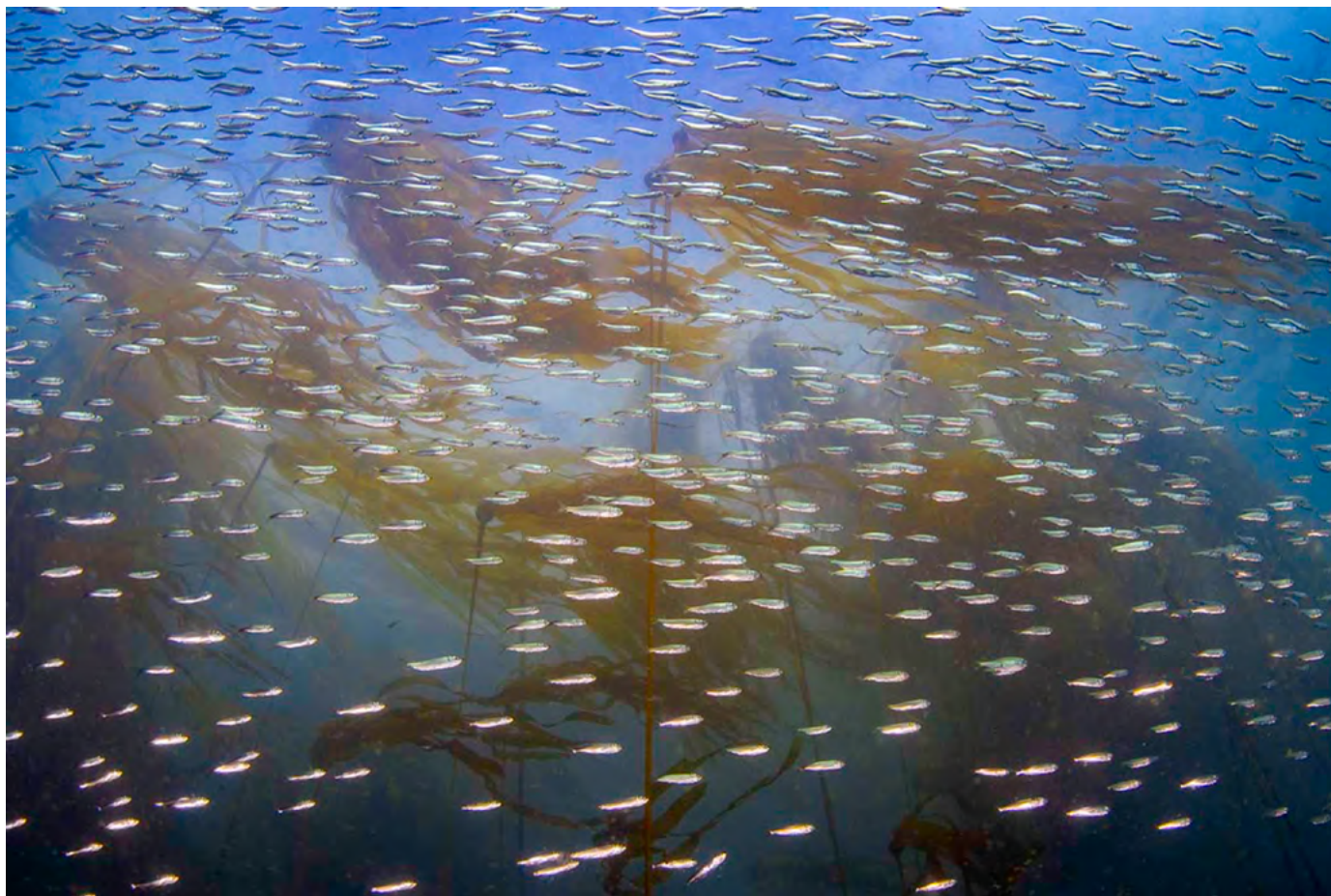
the amount of equipment I could carry but by the sheer frustration of trying to work with technology that was decades old. The tipping point came when I found myself nearly purchasing a 60-year-old refurbished regulator just to have my bubbles released behind me instead of in front of my face.

As my career progressed and assignments grew more complex, the limitations of traditional scuba gear became even more apparent. The more equipment I had, the fewer times I could dive. How many tanks could I fit safely in my car? Filling tanks, dealing with inefficient gear, and watching as fish scattered the moment I released a bubble—it all became too much. There had to be a better way.

## Enter the Closed-Circuit Rebreather (CCR)

Closed-circuit rebreathers (CCR) have been around for much longer than scuba gear. The concept of simple breathing in and out of a bag dates back to the late 1800s and was refined during World War I with an improved understanding of oxygen as well as carbon dioxide removal. While initially developed for military use, rebreathers remained largely in obscurity after the popularization of scuba gear, thanks in part to Jacques Cousteau's media efforts, though also the missing technology linkage - monitoring oxygen partial pressures via sensor technology that even today remains somewhat fickle.

Living and diving in the Pacific Northwest gave me the opportunity to see the evolution of diving gear firsthand. I began noticing rebreather divers more frequently, and the more I inquired about them, the more intrigued I became. However, the responses I received were often mixed—CCR divers were passionate about their machines but



*Pacific Herring swimming by kelp forest. Small bait fish are known for avoiding bubbles and loud divers. The use of CCR enables the documentation of a more natural behaviour. Sony A7III Tamron 17-28mm f8 ISO 1600 flash Sea & Sea YS-D3.*

quick to mention the drawbacks: they were bulky and expensive, the training was lengthy, and maintenance often required sending the unit to faraway parts of the world.

By 2021, my frustration with traditional scuba gear had reached its peak. I started diving deeper into the world of CCRs. After extensive research and countless emails, I took a discovery dive with a fully automatic CCR from a well-known brand. My life

changed that day. The fish didn't swim away. The silence underwater was profound. I could approach marine life like never before, and I had four hours of scrubbers and gas to work with—far more than my camera and video gear could last. It was everything I had dreamed of... until I came out of the water.

The machine was heavy, complicated, and full of blinking lights, cables, and gauges. I needed assistance getting in and out of it, and the



*Sometimes, on a closed system, the fish be so confident that they get can get too close for the shots. Sony A7III Tamron 17-28mm f11 ISO 1600 flash. Babine Lake, British Columbia, Canada.*



*Once fish realize you are not dangerous, they will simply not care at all about your presence. Sony A7III Tamron 17-28mm f8 ISO 1600 flash. Babine Lake, British Columbia, Canada.*

maintenance requirements were a headache. The final straw came when I learned that I couldn't train with a used unit until it had been inspected and upgraded by the manufacturer—despite it being fully functional and inspected just a year earlier.

### **The RD1 Solution**

I knew that a CCR was the answer to my problems, but I also knew that the available options weren't quite what I was looking for. I wanted something compact, simple, and

without complex electronics. I needed a unit that could withstand the demands of real-world use and could be serviced easily, preferably with just a basic diver's tool kit.

In 2022, I came across an article in InDepth Magazine by fellow journalist Michael Menduno, featuring a CCR buyer's guide. As I skimmed through the guide, one machine caught my eye: the Rebreather Day 1 (RD1). According to the article, this machine had been tested in commercial diving environments, including seafood harvesting, which

was a good sign of its durability.

After visiting the RD1 website, I was intrigued. The gear was fully manual—no batteries, lights, or beeps. It was back-mounted, which made sense for carrying a large camera. I could assemble and disassemble it in the field, and it was easy to service, with parts made from commonly used diving gear. Best of all, the price was a fraction of what I would pay for a "famous brand" machine.

A few weeks later, I was on a plane to Rhode Island, meeting the "crazy scientist" behind the RD1

to begin my training. Two years later, with over 200 hours on the RD1 in both ocean and freshwater, my underwater photography has transformed. I can approach marine life in ways I never thought possible, hear sounds I didn't even know existed and stay underwater as long as I need to (at depths ranging from 10 to 60 feet). I can easily carry enough gas and scrubbers for 24 hours in my car and handle most issues, which are incredibly rare, with a simple diver's toolkit. If I'm working in shallow freshwater - like filming salmon - I can



Large fish can get pretty comfortable and get very close.  
 Sony A7III Tamron 17-28mm f16 ISO 1600 flash Sea & Sea YS-D3.  
 Morice Lake, Smither, British Columbia, Canada.

easily do 4h underwater with a full canister and 2 small 2L of air and O2.

What I learned through training on CCRs, is that all rebreathers are basically the same - breathe in and out of a bag, remove CO2, and add oxygen - though specific configurations, build quality, and features are a reflection of its developer's experience. In this case, the RD1 developer's diving style aligned with my own, being to go to work in a repeatable fashion, work the equipment hard, and not want to deal with the finicky details that often come with the technology. Mind saying that assembling, cleaning and doing basic maintenance is quite straightforward

since the system mostly uses common scuba parts and gear.

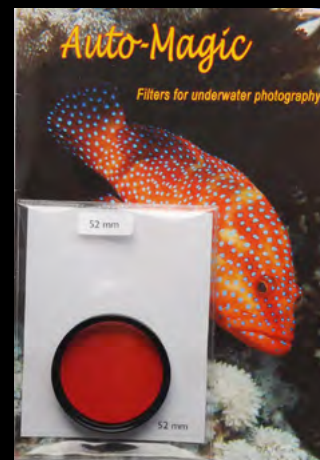
Using a rebreather specifically the RD1 has changed not only the way I dive but the way I work. For the first time in years, I feel like I have a system that enables me to dive for longer, safer and in a streamlined fashion. I've changed my connection with the underwater environment, and now I can feel I'm part of it, and not just a visitor. I don't need to look for the fish. I can now wait for the fish!

**Fernando Lessa**  
[www.fernandolessa.ca](http://www.fernandolessa.ca)

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

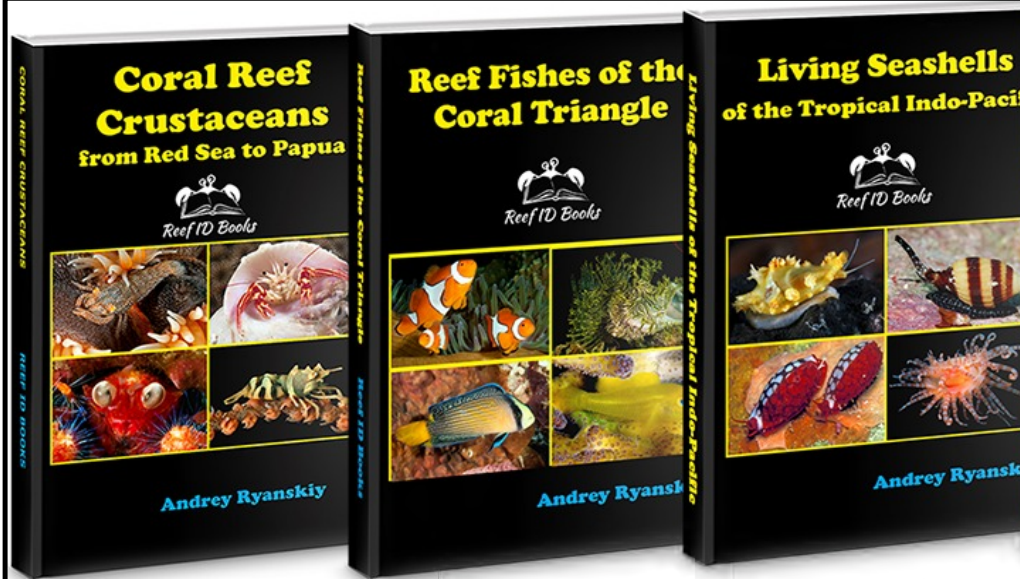


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- What's the difference between God and a lawyer? God doesn't think he is a lawyer.
  - What's the difference between a lawyer and an underwater parasite? One can breathe underwater.
- Can you identify these parasites?

Answers  
on page 61

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1

Alor, Indonesia

© Colin Marshall / Ardea



4

Candidasa, Bali, Indonesia

© Colin Marshall / Blue Planet Archive



7

Seraya, Bali, Indonesia

© Colin Marshall / FLPA / Minden



2

Lembeh, Sulawesi, Indonesia

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5

Lembeh, Sulawesi, Indonesia

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8

Amed, Bali, Indonesia

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3

Seraya, Bali, Indonesia

© Colin Marshall / Alamy



6

Lembeh, Sulawesi, Indonesia

© Colin Marshall / FLPA / Minden



9

Lembeh, Sulawesi, Indonesia

## Kit for sale

If you're looking for a specific piece of kit, enter a keyword (e.g. flash, housing, Ikelite, etc.) to show only the adverts you want.

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### FOR SALE – Nauticam Na-d800 Housing for Nikon D800

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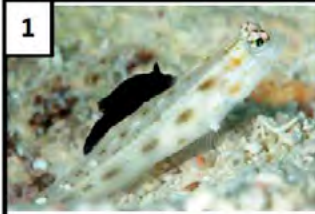
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# Marshall's Mysteries 20 – Answers 1



**Black  
Gymnodoris  
Nudibranch**  
(*Gymnodoris  
nigricolor*)

Nudibranch feeding on the skin between the fin rays of the Fierce Shrimpgoby (*Ctenogobiops feroculus*). Fairly rare, originally believed to be endemic from Japan. Described recently, in 1960.

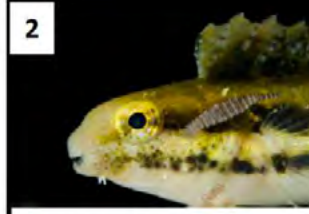
© Colin Marshall / Alamy



Considered parasitic as the goby receives no discernible benefit from the nudibranch, compared to the mutualistic symbiotic relationship with snapping shrimps. Image below is of the same goby with a Djedda Alpheus Snapping Shrimp (*Alpheus djeddensis*).

The shrimp digs and maintains the burrow for both animals whilst the goby (with better eyesight than the shrimp) keeps a look out for any predators.

Komodo, Indonesia



**Zebra Leech**  
(*Piscicolidae*  
Family)

Leech on Shorthead Fangblenny (*Petroscirtes breviceps*). The Zebra Leech seems to target Fangblennies.

Leeches are relatively rarely seen (compared to Isopods and Copepods shown below). Leeches are annelids, also known as segmented worms



**Fire Urchin Snails**  
(*Echineulima  
asthenosomae*)

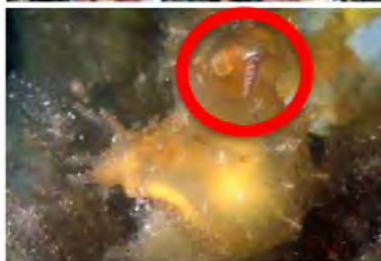
Parasitic Shells on Fire Urchin (*Asthenosoma varium*) and on Common Sea Star (*Archaster typicus*) below.

© Colin Marshall / biosphoto



Lembeh,  
Sulawesi,  
Indonesia

© Colin Marshall / Alamy



Lembeh,  
Sulawesi,  
Indonesia

Other parasitic gastropods include some Pyramid shells (Pyramidellidae Family), seen here feeding on an Indian Sea Hare (*Notarchus indicus*), a rare sighting.



**Tongue-biter  
Cymathoid Isopod**  
(*Cymothoa exigua*)

Female Tongue-biter Cymathoid Isopod parasite inside the mouth of False Clown Anemonefish (*Amphiprion ocellaris*). Using its claws, the parasite severs the fish's tongue by cutting off the blood vessels, causing the tongue to fall off. It then attaches itself to the tongue base, acting as the fish's new tongue. The Isopod feeds off the fish blood and mucus.

© Colin Marshall / biosphoto



Komodo,  
Indonesia

Other Cymathoid Isopods, all Cymathoidae Family, are shown here. Above is *Anilocra* sp firmly latched on to a Threespot Dascyllus (*Dascyllus trimaculatus*).



© Colin Marshall / Alamy

Alor,  
Indonesia

Cymathoid Isopod causing obvious damage on a Speckled Damsel (*Pomacentrus bankanensis*).



© Colin Marshall / Alamy

Raja  
Ampat,  
Indonesia

Bluestreak Cleaner Wrasse (*Labroides dimidiatus*) trying to remove a relatively large Cymathoid Isopod on Bluestreak Fusilier (*Pterocaesio tile*).

# Marshall's Mysteries 20 – Answers 2

*Isopods and Copepods can be found on pages 142-145 of "Coral Reef Crustaceans from Red Sea to Papua" by Andrey Ryanskiy.*



5

**Bopyrid Isopod**  
(Bopyridae Family)

Alor, Indonesia

Bopyrid Isopods (crustaceans) live in the gill cavity of the Cleaner Shrimp (*Lysmatella* sp) - an ectoparasite as it is strictly outside the body. Like the Cymathoid Isopods, but different family (Bopyridae). These parasites are almost always found in pairs; a large female with a dwarf male.



© Colin Marshall

Emperor Shrimp (*Zenopontonia rex*) showing clear outline of Bopyrid segments or pleons.



6

**Growth**  
(not a parasite)

Trick question! Following the previous animal, one would assume the swelling around the fish's gills is another Bopyrid Isopod, but they seem to only invade shrimps and crabs – not fish. This Crosshatch Goby (*Amblygobius decussatus*) likely has a growth, perhaps due to a viral papilloma



© Colin Marshall / Alamy

Halmahera, Indonesia

Lembah, Sulawesi, Indonesia

Bopyrids also parasite crabs, as seen in this Wire Coral Crab (*Xenocarcinus tuberculatus*) with a very swollen carapace.



© Colin Marshall / biosphoto

Basket Star Shrimp (*Lipkemenes lanipes*) with clutch of Bopyrid eggs.



© Colin Marshall / FLPA / Minden

Lembah, Sulawesi, Indonesia

The growth on this Sebree's Pygmygoby (*Eviota sebreei*) above is also likely a growth, not a parasite.



7

**Bertrand's Copepod**  
(*Cardiodectes bertrandi*)

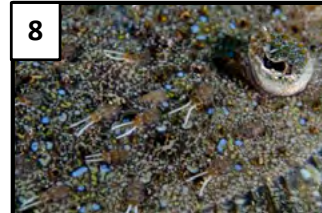
Lembah, Sulawesi, Indonesia

Parasitic Copepod with distinctive green egg case on Rhinoceros Triplefin (*Helcogramma rhinoceros*). Copepods are crustaceans, as are Isopods.



© Colin Marshall / Ardea

Pale Dwarf goby (*Trimma anaima*) with another *Cardiodectes* Copepod with spiral egg cases.



8

**Sea Lice**  
(*Caligid* Family)

Infestation of Sea Louse (plural of Lice) on a Panther Flounder (*Bothus pantherinus*). Sea Louse are Copepods, but in a different family to the *Cardiodectes* Copepods (which are part of the Pennellidae Family).



9

**Human**  
(*Homo sapiens*)

Another trick question! Hump-back Cleaner Shrimp (*Lysmata amboinensis*) cleaning diver's teeth. The shrimp is *not* the parasite – it is in a mutualistic symbiotic relationship; the shrimp benefits from food and the "client" has parasites removed. Humans are considered by many to be the real parasites, even non-lawyers...

For a free compilation pdf of all the "Marshall's Mysteries" published to date, contact [colintrmarshall@yahoo.com](mailto: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](mailto:peter@uwpmag.com)**

## How to submit articles

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

1. The text should be saved as a TEXT file and attached to the e mail

2. Images must be attached to the e mail and they need to be 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 Abdulaziz Al Saleh

I had the idea of photographing the Camels for about a year and half. I wanted to create a new image which has never been seen before. A new angle with a new perspective of an animal which holds deep cultural and historical significance of the region. The photo process took about three to four weeks, mainly due to several reasons including Camel behavior, rapidly changing weather, and the sync speed issue.

Camels were not comfortable enough to gather in big numbers to drink, which is not ideal because I wanted to fill the frame. Fortunately after several days the Camels accepted my camera equipment and myself.

During the time of shooting, winter season had already started in Kuwait, temperatures dropped significantly and that made the Camels to drink once a day only and the each shooting attempt took no more than 4 minutes.

Regarding the sync speed issue, during the second week, I changed to Sync cord wires instead of fiber optic cables which did not help to shoot rapid images.

The area of the Camels has to be accessed only by a 4wd vehicle. And Fortunately my vehicle turned to be useful in such conditions.

## Abdulaziz Al Saleh

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](mailto: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.)



*Image caption: Hydration. Country taken: Kuwait. Location: Al Wafra desert. Camera make: NikonZ8. Lens: Nikkor 8-15mm fisheye, ISO: 100. Aperture: f/18. Shutter: 1/100. Lighting used: Inon Z330 (dual) Housing: Nauticam NA-Z8*



# My Shot(s)

by Tom Ingram

In my 23 years of diving, I've been fortunate enough to enjoy some very memorable moments underwater. The wonders, the colours, the verity of the underwater world amazes and grips us to go back and see what the next dive has in store. Nowhere more so than right here in the uk.

Since taking up underwater photography more seriously 3 years ago this has only turbo charged my enjoyment as now you begin to slow down, observe behaviour and discover amazing new creatures.

One day in June last year this was certainly the case!

Many of the British readers will be familiar with Porthkerris on the Lizard Peninsular in Cornwall; this is undoubtedly one of my favourite places to dive. I normally try to do at least 3 trips a year if I can, to enjoy the family atmosphere and the great variety of diving on offer.

This trip I was focusing my diving on the fantastic shore dive they have right off the beach. I call it 'the dragons back' for obvious reasons if you go there and you let your imagination run away with you.

On this particular dive we went in around 11am and we were concentrating on the inside passage of the reef around the aptly named 'fishbowl' which is around 3-6metres and then head north along the reef which gradually deepens to 15-20metres depending on tide, where there are numerous submerged reefs and gullies to explore.

A small cuttlefish was a very welcoming site as we swam through the fishbowl. Theses fascinating creatures gather here in numbers at certain times of



*Canon G7x MK 111, Isotta housing, 2x Inon z-330 strobes, AOI UWL-09 wide angle lens, F5.6 1/200s iso 125*

the year and are always a pleasure to see.

The visibility wasn't the best this dive, around 3-4 milky metres but good enough to catch sight of something a bit further away. As we turned a corner of the golden kelp covered reef in about 15 metres, this is where we caught first site of a very unusual creature.

I edged slowly over to it, my heart rate quickening in excitement, hoping not to spook it, but my presence didn't seem to bother it at all. I'm embarrassed to say I had no idea what it was. It looked like a deep-sea eel-like creature that has some how got off the beaten track.

I began to take some pictures as I knew we had

stumbled on something very different, so I had to document it at least. It was about 50cm or so long with an eel-like body tapering to a pointy tail. It started by being up right in the water just above the bottom, then after a while it began to swim horizontally and show off the incredible red dot on its dorsal fin.

After a few magical minutes of enjoying time with the mysterious fish it turned and swam calmly away. We then turned back the way we came and slowly headed back to the fishbowl, keeping a look out as on the dive earlier the same day would you believe, we had a huge local common octopus casually come out of the gloom and put in an appearance for us.

We had met twice before on previous dive trips, so this time I felt like she wanted to say hello again but I'm sure this wasn't the case. Being in the presence of such an intelligent creature is always such a thrill! To have seen three amazing creatures in one morning was extremely lucky!

So our dive had sadly come to an end after nearly two hours; we clambered back up the steep rocks to the car but as we were still on cloud nine that didn't bother us.

Over lunch, some research began into what the mysterious fish could be. Surely a striking fish like that wouldn't be hard to pin down if it was indeed a native British fish.

With a few handy marine life books on hand, it wasn't long before we were pretty sure we had found a match. It turns out the fish was a Red Band-Fish. Apparently, they are thought to be fairly common around the British Isles, but are extremely elusive, so they are rarely seen. They apparently live in a vertical burrow in the soft mud and divers only get a glimpse of their heads usually, if at all.

I've been told since that there is a site in the Fal estuary which has burrows where the Red Band-Fish live. This is only a short distance from Porthkerris so perhaps they have spilled over to a site closer to the shore dive but who knows.

For me this was probably a total chance encounter but it epitomises what I love about diving, you just never know what's around the next corner of the reef! I for one cannot wait to get back in and find out.



*Canon G7x MK 111, Isotta housing, 2x Inon a-330 strobes, AOI UWL-09 wide angle lens, F5 1/125s iso 125*

**Tom Ingram**

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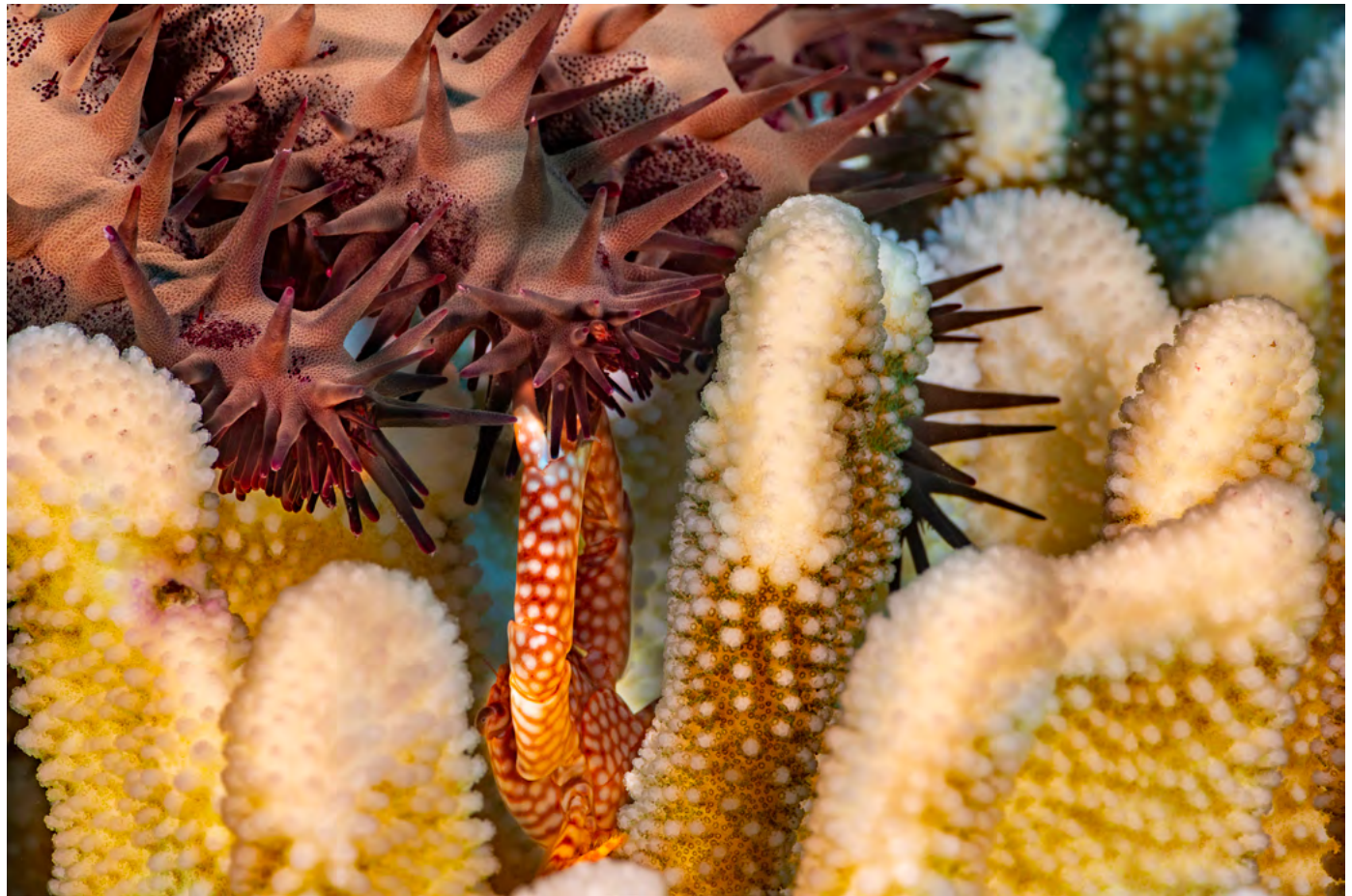
# Parting Shot 1

by David Fleetham



Crown-of-thorns seastars, *Acanthaster planci*, roll across the reef in a destructive path that leaves coral colonies decimated. When this one tried to engulf a cauliflower coral, *Pocillopora meandrina*, it bit off more than it could chew, or ingest in the starfishes case. A female spotted guard crab, *Trapezia tigrina*, with a tail full of eggs defended her coral home as if her life depended on it, and it very well may have. She relentlessly pinched the tube feet of the seastar, which noticeably recoiled each time. Before too long the starfish rapidly slithered off the coral and down the reef in search of a meal that would be less painful.

**David Fleetham**  
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*This was originally shot off Maui, Hawaii on Kodachrome (some of you may have to Google that) back in the 80's and then scanned. Likely this was a Canon F-1 in an Ikelite housing with a manually focused macro lens and two large Ikelite 150 substrobes.*

**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.**  
*Images can be any size bigger than 20cm (horizontal or vertical) @ 150dpi saved as jpeg format and about 500 - 750 words would be fine.)*

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# Parting Shot 2

by Eric Lambert

Some moments in underwater photography are so fleeting, so unexpected, that you only realize their true significance when reviewing your images back on land. This was one of those moments. A moment underwater that lasted only a fraction of a second—but left an impact that lingers forever.

Drifting along a coral reef, I had my eyes set on a Rhinopias, one of the ocean's most masterful illusionists. With its frilly, leaf-like appendages, it blends into the reef like a living, breathing piece of coral. These elusive scorpionfish are a prized subject for photographers, their bizarre shapes and hypnotic camouflage making them one of the ocean's most fascinating creatures. I hovered patiently, waiting for the perfect shot, admiring its intricate patterns and textures.

Then, in a flash, something unexpected happened. The Rhinopias yawned—or so I thought.

In an instant, the Rhinopias snapped open its cavernous mouth in a slow, exaggerated yawn. A harmless display, I thought—until I saw the flash of electric blue and orange stripes deep inside. My camera clicked instinctively, capturing a moment I

hadn't even fully processed. There, staring out from the abyss of the Rhinopias's throat, was another fish—Blue-banded surgeonfish, vivid and helpless, caught in the jaws of fate. A fish which was staring back at me from deep within the predator's mouth.

It was only later, reviewing my images, that I saw the full story unfold. The unfortunate Blue-banded surgeonfish had been swallowed whole—still vividly intact, frozen in a moment between life and death. A tragic masterpiece of nature's raw survival.

Predation is a fact of life in the ocean, but rarely do we see it unfold in such a surreal way. The Rhinopias, with its quiet, ambush-hunting strategy, had likely been resting motionless for hours, waiting for the perfect opportunity to strike. The surgeonfish, unaware of its deadly surroundings, had made one fatal mistake—swimming too close to what it thought was just another part of the reef.

This is the ocean's silent reality. No sound, no struggle—just the split-second vanishing of one life into another.

Back on land, reviewing the image on my screen, I was struck by



*Sony A7rIII in Nauticam Housing, with a Sony 90mm f/2.8 macro lens, 1/80 sec, F16, ISO 100, with 2 Inon Z-330 strobes on TTL*

the rawness of what I had captured. The last fleeting moment of the surgeonfish's life, frozen in time. A haunting, mesmerizing farewell—a parting shot, quite literally.

The ocean is full of stories. Sometimes, we don't even realize we've captured them until it's too late.

**Eric Lambert**  
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