



Indonesia's Leading Dive Resort



Bunaken Oasis offers world-class luxury accommodation with world renowned scuba diving sites in the heart of Indonesia, Bunaken National Park in North Sulawesi. Five-time winner of Indonesia's Leading Dive Resort at the World Travel Awards

info@bunakenoasis.com
www.bunakenoasis.com



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Underwater Photography 2001 - 2025

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www.pr-productions.co.uk

peter@uwpmag.com

Editorial

Marine life behaviour

Nigel Motyer's excellent account of Basking Shark aggregations off Malin Head in Northern Ireland are another example of how underwater photography has helped to change perceptions about marine life behaviour.

My earliest recollection was when Peter Scoones shot video footage of Orcas in Norway stunning herring with a slap of their tail.

Fast forward to Nigel's images and we certainly have unusual behaviour and the speculation is that they are aggregating prior to mating.

The final proof will be when there is an underwater image or, better still, footage of mating taking place.

Coming back full circle to Peter Scoones, I always remember him saying that, as a wildlife cameraman/person, underwater or on land, the main subjects were always sex and death.

Not much changes.

UPY Smartphone category

I'm delighted to see that UPY has a Smartphone category this year and look forward to seeing that images that it attracts.

I have been a great believer in the capabilities of these small chip 'cameras', which, I think it is fair to say, have stunted the development of compact cameras but they do have one significant drawback - ergonomics.

In a lot of cases a small camera is actually easier to handle when in a housing. The enlarged controls/buttons and spacing make it much more logical and efficient to operate.

The problem with smartphones is that, ergonomically, they were designed as a phone first and camera second and this continues in most housings underwater. The result is point and shoot at arms length.

The first improvement, which most housings already have available, is a base tray and stabilising handles.

The second improvement, which a lot of housings already have, is a shutter release lever. This makes picture taking/filming ergonomically ideal.

The final improvement is physiological. The more capable your camera spec, the more empowered you feel. That's why most people use cameras which are far more capable than they are. A smartphone is seen as less capable but, in the right hands and shot to their strengths, will produce excellent images underwater.

Roll on January.

Flashes becoming strobes

Going back as far as I do, I pre-date electronic flashguns. We used disposable flashbulbs (NOTE flashbulbs not strobebulbs).

The advent of electronic flashguns was a godsend, especially underwater and certainly environmentally. Also the technical quality of underwater images improved dramatically.

Whether you call them flashes (correct) or strobes (incorrect) matters not; as long as you understand how they can improve your images.

So?

Well, things are almost going full circle because most modern strobes/ flashes are designed to keep up with the fast frame rates of electronic cameras so that means they really are, technically speaking, not flashguns but strobes :-).

And.....relax.

News, Travel & Events

Bunaken Oasis Dive Resort & Spa Celebrated as Indonesia and Asia's Leading Dive Resort



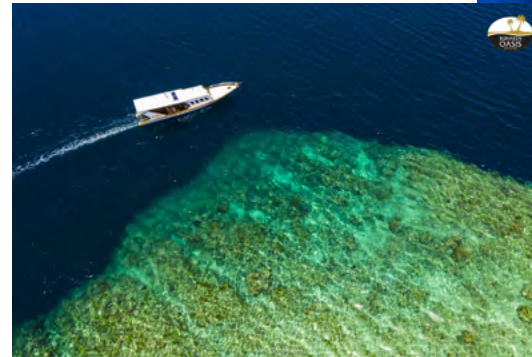
Bunaken Oasis Dive Resort & Spa has once again earned global acclaim. For the eighth consecutive year, the resort has been named Indonesia's Leading Dive Resort at the prestigious World Travel Awards. This year also marks a historic milestone, with Bunaken Oasis recognised for the first time as Asia's Leading Dive Resort.

These honours underscore the resort's commitment to redefining luxury in North Sulawesi, blending five-star comfort with a strong dedication to ocean conservation. From bespoke dive experiences to the carefully curated spa offerings, every detail reflects the resort's mission to deliver excellence while promoting sustainability.

Owners Simon and Elaine Wallace expressed their delight: "The team we have is amazing, and they deliver incredible service. This award means the world to us and our team."

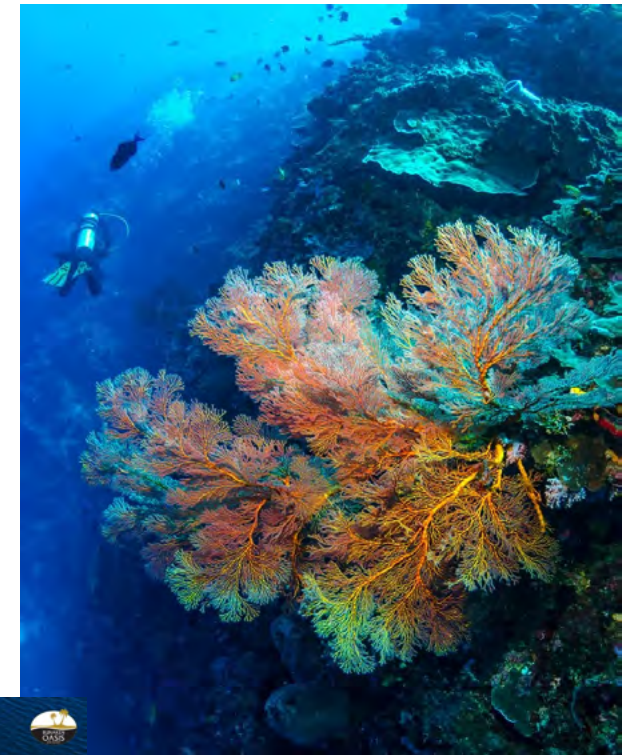
At the heart of Bunaken Oasis' success is its extraordinary staff, supported by visionary management. Dive guides, spa therapists, chefs, and guest service professionals collaborate seamlessly to create personalised experiences that keep guests returning year after year. These awards celebrate not only their dedication but also the loyal guests who continue to support and champion the resort.

With this dual recognition,



Bunaken Oasis solidifies its reputation as a destination where luxury and sustainability meet, offering travellers an unparalleled gateway to the wonders of Bunaken National Marine Park.

www.bunakenoasis.com



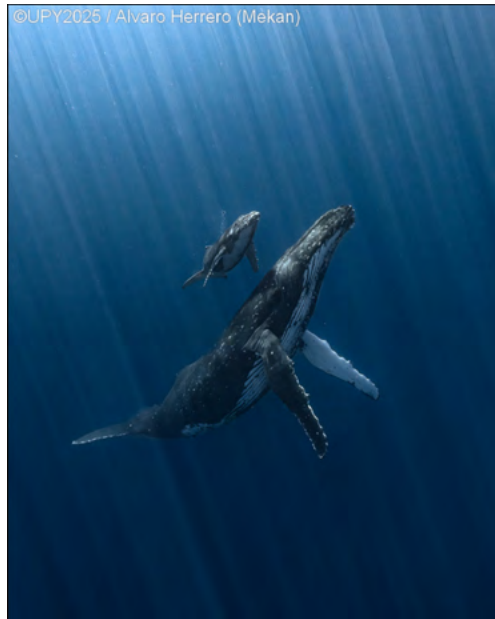


Could you be Underwater Photographer of the Year 2026?

The search for the world's finest underwater images begins as the Underwater Photographer of the Year (UPY) 2026 competition officially opens for entries on 1 November 2025, closing on 4 January 2026.

The world's largest and most prestigious underwater photography competition, UPY attracts thousands of stunning submissions from every continent. The contest has a glittering array of prizes, and last year over 50 different photographers took home a prize. Once again, the winners will be revealed at a prestigious awards ceremony in Central London and showcased internationally through major media outlets worldwide.

The last four overall winners—Alvaro Herrero (Spain), Alex Dawson (Sweden), Kat Zhou (USA), and Rafael Fernandez Caballero (Spain)—captured breathtaking scenes from the Pacific Ocean, the Arctic Ocean,



the Amazon River, and the Indian Ocean, highlighting the contest's global reach.

“UPY is the most important contest for underwater photographs,” said Alex Mustard, Chair of the Judges. “It’s always packed with astonishing images being revealed for the first time. The first Underwater Photographer of the Year, Phil Smith, was named in 1965 and today the contest celebrates every style of underwater photography, from icy oceans to swimming pools.”

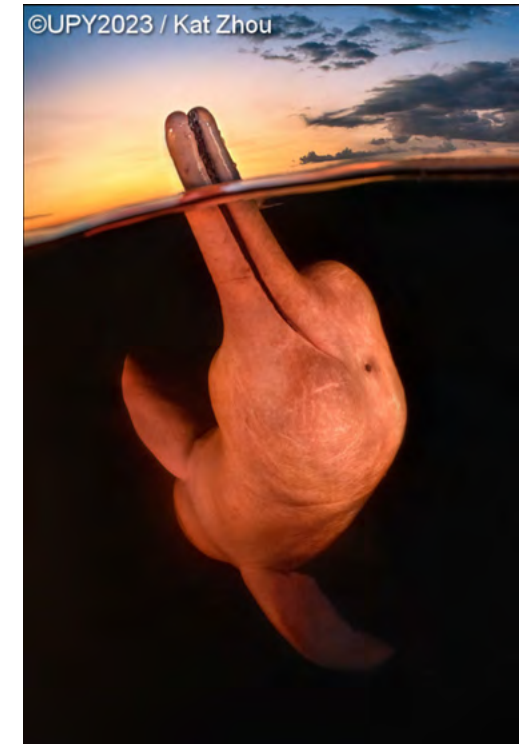
New for 2026: Smartphone Category

Phones are the camera that everyone carries in their pocket and the gateway for creating your first



images to share your underwater experiences. This new category, sponsored by leading phone housing manufacturers DIVEVOLK, aims to showcase the inspirational variety of images it is possible to capture with phones underwater. This category has cash prizes and in this first year is totally free to enter up to 5 pictures. The category is open to everyone.

UPY also continues its valued partnerships with The Crown Estate, the Save Our Seas Foundation and PADI, as well as a host of leading diving brands who support the competition through prizes and



sponsorship.

UPY is an annual, international competition with 14 categories, including Macro, Wide Angle, Behaviour, Wreck, and Conservation photography, as well as three categories exclusively for images taken in British waters.

All entrants benefit from UPY's bespoke results system, which provides feedback on how far each entered. The expert judging panel of Peter Rowlands, Tobias Friedrich, and Alex Mustard, gather in one room, seeing and evaluating every image entered in the contest.

www.underwaterphotographeroftheyear.com

www.uwpmag.com

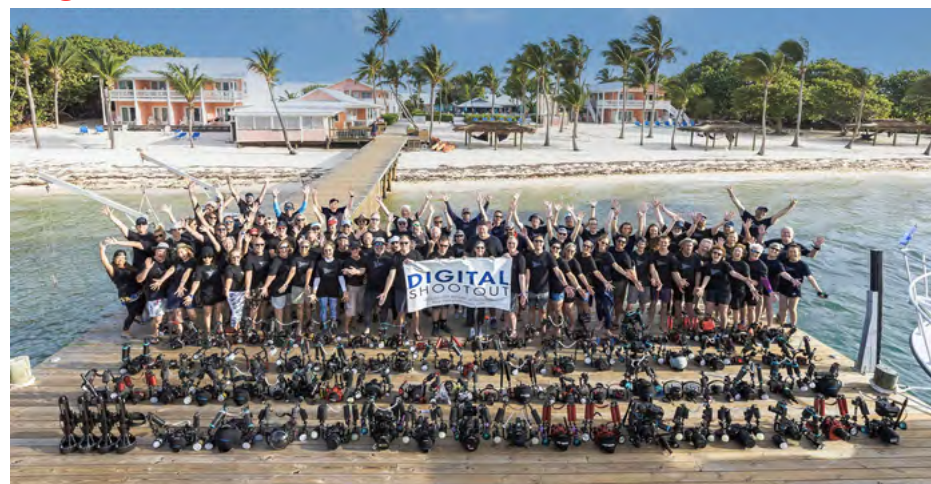


UNDERWATER IMAGING COMPETITION 2025



50 AWESOME PRIZES WORTH \$85,000
23 PRESTIGIOUS SPONSORS
10 EXCITING CATEGORIES
1 DPG GRAND MASTER
WWW.UNDERWATERCOMPETITION.COM/MASTERS

Digital Shootout In Little Cayman, June 2026



The Digital Shootout, hosted by Backscatter, is a renowned annual event for underwater photography and videography enthusiasts. It is a two week-long immersive workshop and competition that provides participants with the opportunity to improve their skills, test the latest underwater photography gear, and engage with a community of like-minded underwater image-makers.

Little Cayman has vibrant marine life and clear waters, making it an ideal setting for underwater imaging.

Each afternoon we offer professionally produced seminars on basic and advanced photo and video techniques. Just learning how to assemble your camera for the first time? Looking for the secrets of exposure and strobe placement? Our seminars are world renowned for their simple delivery of complex topics and

DIVE INTO THE BEST DEMO GEAR STAFF IN THE INDUSTRY



will take you to the next level.

The workshops and experts assembled at this event will whisk you along the learning curve of underwater photography. By the end of the week, you will be shooting well enough to enter our friendly competition. The best images shot during the week will be awarded over \$30,000 in prizes.

www.thedigitalshootout.com

www.uwpmag.com



South West Rocks (Australia) 2x Photo Workshops with Nicolas Remy October 2026

Join award-winning photographer Nicolas Remy and for an unforgettable 4-day underwater photography workshop in South West Rocks, one of Australia's most spectacular dive destinations.

Home to large aggregations of grey nurse sharks (sand tigers), the famous 125-metre Fish Rock Cave, 3 meters long wobbegongs, seasonal hammerheads, and critically endangered guitarfish, this location is a dream for wide-angle enthusiasts.

Each workshop includes:

- Daily coaching and image reviews with Nicolas Remy
- Pre-trip webinar on mastering wide-angle shooting at South West Rocks

- Small group of just 8 underwater photographers
- A follow-up online image review two weeks after the trip

Two sessions are available:

- New Moon: 8–11 October 2026
- Full Moon: 23–26 October 2026

Experience the thrill of photographing large sharks up close — no baiting involved — in one of the world's best-kept secret dive destinations.

Read Nicolas' article in this of UwPmag to learn more, or visit his website for workshop details.

www.nicolaslenaremy.com/trips

DPG Masters Underwater Imaging Competition 2025

The DPG Masters Underwater Imaging Competition is a long-established and widely respected contest that celebrates the splendor of the oceans and the challenging art of underwater photography and video.

The organizers call on underwater shooters of all levels, from novice to professional, to compete in what has become the “World Championship” of international underwater imagery events.

The prizes, worth more than \$85,000 in total, include dive trips with the world's top resorts and liveaboards, and the latest underwater photo and video gear. Entrants compete for prizes in 10 categories, with the photographer or filmmaker behind the top entry among the category winners crowned “DPG Grand Master 2025.” The overall winner will receive a top trip prize as well as a top equipment prize.

This year's illustrious judging panel comprises six top photographers: Nicolas Remy, Jennifer Hayes, Álvaro Herrero (Mekan), Jill Heinerth, Aaron Wong, and Kate Jonker. As well as assessing your entries, each of these seasoned

DPG MASTERS
**UNDERWATER IMAGING
COMPETITION 2025**

photo pros is offering a unique “mentor prize” to one lucky winner— an invaluable hour-long one-on-one video chat session to review your portfolio and give you handy tips and advice to help make your underwater photography even better.

NOW ACCEPTING SUBMISSIONS

Winners will be revealed on UnderwaterCompetition.com and published by supporting media partners worldwide shortly thereafter. The entry fees are US\$10 per image or video entered. As with all Underwater Competition Series events, 15% of entry proceeds will be donated to marine conservation efforts. Submissions close on Monday, December 1st, 2025 11:59PM PST.

www.underwatercompetition.com

digital **DIVELOG** AUSTRALASIA

AUGUST 2025 | No 413 www.diveblog.net.au

f i



RETURN TO VOLIVOLI
CATHIE and Dr TERRY CUMMINS

WHERE GIANTS COME TO MATE
VADIM BELAKOV

UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY
MIKE SCOTLAND

TRITON BAY DIVERS
THOMAS HAIDER

The bucket list trip: GALAPAGOS.
KEN HOPPEN

THE ATTRACTION OF SWEETLIPS
MIKE SCOTLAND




UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP
CREATING AWARD-WINNING IMAGES

Dive Dauin Photo Festival with Nicolas Remy
20-28 June 2026

Join The Underwater Club's 2026 Photography Workshop with award-winning photographer Nicolas Remy at Silver Reef Dive Resort, a photography-centric resort in the heart of Dauin, Philippines.

This exclusive workshop is designed to prepare participants for success at the Dive Dauin 2026 Festival & Photo Shootout, offering:

- Daily talks and personalised coaching with Nicolas Remy
- Low 2 guests per guide diving ratio
- Access to some of the world's richest macro dive sites
- A fun trip shared with like-minded underwater photographers

• The chance to push your creativity to new levels — whether you're in it to win, or simply to grow as a photographer

Combining pre-festival dives, workshop sessions, and festival participation, this is an unparalleled opportunity to refine your craft and capture world-class images in one of the world's best macro destinations.

Places are limited to 14 participants, so early booking is recommended.

www.nicolaslenaremy.com/trips



The 20th World Shootout Awards Are Open!

Calling all underwater photographers!

The prestigious 20th World Shootout Awards are officially open for entries in 8 still categories and a video clip!

We invite you to submit your most impressive underwater photographs captured between **November 2nd, 2024**, and **November 1st, 2025**.

Cash and Dreamy prizes

ENTER TODAY >>>>

www.worldshootout.org

Indonesia nudibranchs

Hello again, my nudibranch friends. I have added another PDF to my ID books - Indonesia nudibranchs to purchase on Gumroad here:-

<https://nudibranchs.gumroad.com/ibooks/group2.jpg>

The new publication contains over 650 species!



Jim Anderson

www.nudibranch.org

www.nudibranchs.gumroad.com

Phil Rudin's 6,000th dive

Phil Rudin, UwP's Senior Reviewer for over a decade, recently clocked up his 6,000th dive while at Scuba Seraya in Tulamben.

Seen here with with local guide Eka.

Phil Rudin
[Instagram](#)



SEPTEMBER FRONTLINES UPDATE



Antarctica's Whales Under Threat

Dear Peter,

The Southern Ocean is one of the most remote places on Earth, yet the pressure on it has never been greater.

Every year, fleets of massive industrial trawlers descend on Antarctic waters and haul in staggering amounts of krill, billions of these tiny crustaceans that whales, penguins, seals, and seabirds depend on for survival. In fact, this year's haul was one of the largest ever recorded.



Krill are the foundation of the Antarctic food web. Remove them, and entire ecosystems collapse. For whales in particular, krill mean life itself.



GALAPAGOS

NIGEL MARSH PHOTOGRAPHY ESCORTED GROUP TOUR

- * From AUD 10,220 pp twin share
- * 7 nights including all meals
- * Up to 20 guided dives
- * Topside wildlife tours

The Master the Galápagos 7-night liveaboard trip includes the islands' most spectacular dive sites.

Expect to see silky and Galápagos sharks, schools of hammerheads, the occasional whale shark, sea lions, eagle rays and marine iguanas, along with an astounding variety of reef fish.

Nigel will provide photography tuition and talks to help you capture it all!



Scan the
QR code
for more
information

CLASSIC CABIN: AUD 10,220 PP
PREMIUM CABIN: AUD 10,450 PP

Terms & Conditions. Non-refundable deposit of AUD 650 due now, 2nd instalment AUD 2500 3 Mar 2027, balance 3 Jan 2028. All payments made are non-refundable. Standard T&Cs apply: diveplanit.com/booking-terms.



Travel dates:
3-10 April 2028
AUD 650 deposit
to secure your
place



Booking details:
claire@diveplanit.com
Ph: 0408 708 828



Ocean Geographic Photographer Recognition Program

A new horizon awaits for underwater photographers ready to be seen, celebrated, and supported.

Ocean Geographic and The Underwater Club are proud to announce the launch of a prestigious new initiative — a biannual Underwater Photographer Recognition Program that honours the world’s most compelling ocean storytellers.

This is not just a photo contest. It’s a curated journey and an international platform

designed to:

- Elevate emerging and established talent
- Foster professional growth and opportunities
- Spotlight photographers shaping the future of ocean conservation through imagery

Application Requirements

You are invited to submit a portfolio of your 10 best pictures captured in the past 5 years (from 01 November 2020), each accompanied by:

- A caption (20–100 words) providing context and story
- A short personal introduction (min. 100 words)

This is your opportunity to share not just your pictures — but your voice, vision, and purpose.

All submissions will be reviewed by the Ocean Geographic Advisory Editorial Board.

Successful applicants will be recognised with one of two designations:

- Ocean Geographic Photographer (OGP) — the

epitome for excellence and impact

- Associate Ocean Geographic Photographer (AOGP) — honouring outstanding promise and potential

Symbols of Distinction

The OG Photographer Pin

An exclusive enamel pin, designed to be worn at exhibitions, dive events, and recognition ceremonies — a discreet symbol of excellence in underwater imagery.

The OG Alumni T-Shirt Reserved for OGPs, featuring the title and your year of induction (e.g., Ocean Geographic Photographer – Alumni 2025).

Who Can Apply?

- Must be a current member of The Underwater Club
- Must pass the Seven core photography knowledge quizzes with 80%+ (no need to rewatch course content if you already have the skills — simply validate your knowledge)

You don’t need to be a public figure or influencer to succeed.

Portfolios are judged solely on merit: technical excellence, artistic vision, originality, and storytelling power.

As a benchmark, successful applications typically reflect the standard of pictures used in features published in Ocean Geographic or awarded in major underwater photography competitions.

Application Fee

The fee supports the dedicated review process by Ocean Geographic editors and board members.

- Early Bird: USD 200 (first 50 applicants)
- Standard Fee: USD 250
- Applications open now
- Deadline: 30 November 2025

This is your chance to have your portfolio reviewed by world-leading editors in underwater photography — and to take a meaningful step forward in your creative journey.

www.theunderwaterclub.com

New Products

All New Sea & Sea YS-D130R Underwater Strobe



Sea & Sea is proud to announce the launch of the newly designed YS-D130R underwater strobe, available from late November.

Building on Sea & Sea's long legacy of innovation, the YS-D130R introduces five key improvements that deliver even greater lighting control, reliability, and creative freedom beneath the surface.

1. Circular Flash Tube for Natural, even Illumination

For the first time since the YS-D250, the YS-D130R adopts a circular flash tube design, producing beautifully uniform, natural lighting that wraps smoothly around your subject.

Its color temperature is precisely calibrated to 5600K, matching natural

sunlight, and remains stable even when using the included diffuser or dome diffuser.

2. Newly Engineered Battery Rear Cap

A completely redesigned waterproof design moves the sealing surface from the cap to the strobe body itself—minimizing the risk of water intrusion when opening or closing.

The battery is now secured inside the strobe, preventing accidental drops during handling and making operation safer and more dependable in any diving environment.

3. Compatible with Lithium-Ion Battery for Faster Recycle Time

In addition to conventional AA rechargeable batteries, the YS-D130R supports a dedicated lithium-ion battery.

This upgrade significantly reduces recycle time and enables continuous firing, letting you capture every fleeting moment without missing a single shot.

4. Bright and Customizable LCD Display

The newly improved LCD panel clearly displays vital information such as battery level, strobe mode, and EV value at a glance.

Users can also tailor the interface to their preference, with options for: EV step adjustment (0.3 / 0.5 / 1.0 EV), Display orientation (normal / inverted)

This ensures intuitive, flexible operation, no matter the shooting situation.

5. New HSS Mode for High-Speed Sync Shooting

Alongside Manual, DS-TTL, and RC modes, the YS-D130R introduces

HSS (High-Speed Sync) mode, allowing synchronization at shutter speeds faster than 1/200–1/250 sec.

HSS mode makes it possible to shoot against strong surface sunlight without overexposing the subject, and to freeze fast-moving scenes such as darting fish or splashing water with remarkable clarity.

With its innovative features, durable construction, and advanced control, the YS-D130R sets a new standard for underwater strobe performance—a perfect companion for photographers who demand precision and reliability in every dive.

www.seaandsea.jp

BACKSCATTER MINI FLASH 2



THE
PERFECT
MACRO
STROBE
FOR
ANY
CAMERA



Nauticam NA-OM5II housing for OM Systems OM5 MkII



The OM-5 Mark II refines a proven formula: a compact, durable, and feature-rich mirrorless camera that is both lightweight and travel-friendly. With the addition of USB-C connectivity, an enhanced menu system, and several innovative video enhancements, the OM-5 Mark II stands as an exceptional choice for hybrid photographers and videographers.

The NA-OM5II adheres to Nauticam's Mission Control philosophy, ensuring accessible and intuitive control for critical functions. These include Front & Rear dials, REC, AF-ON, CP, Fn1 and Fn2 Lever. Nauticam's Port locking system facilitates rapid and seamless lens changes. Battery and memory card replacements are equally effortless thanks to the rotary-style housing lock and lens release button. An optional M14 vacuum valve unlocks the full capabilities of the pre-installed Vacuum Check and Leak Detection



System. The NA-OM5II LCD window, available as an optional feature, enables the utilization of Nauticam Full Frame viewfinders for enhanced viewing. For lighting and accessories, the housing incorporates an M10 treaded mounting point, a cold shoe mount, and optional handles and tray equipped with strobe mounting balls. Dimensions 197mm(W) x 154mm(H) x 99mm(D). Weight in air 1.3kg. Buoyancy in Water -14g (Includes camera and battery). Depth Rating 100m. Port Mount N85

www.nauticam.com

UW CAMERA STORE .COM

BACKSCATTER HYBRID FLASH HF1 PHOTO & VIDEO



**GN40, 5000 LUMEN
100M DEPTH
120° BEAM ANGLE
250g UNDERWATER
TTL, HSS, MANUAL**



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LET'S MAKE STORIES TOGETHER!



#17822
NA-OM5II

Housing for Olympus
OM-5II Camera



#17233
NA-ZR

Housing for Nikon
ZR Camera

Isotta Universal Smartphone Housing

- Compatible with any phone model currently on the market
- Joystick for cursor control
- Ergonomic for horizontal or vertical use, perfect for Instagram shots
- Red and Black colored anodized aluminum body;
- Designed to attach up to 3 spheres;
- Bluetooth connection;
- Compatible with any phone model currently on the market;
- Ergonomic for horizontal or vertical use; perfect for Instagram shots;
- Prepared to attach an adjustable mount for additional lenses;
- Joystick for cursor control;
- Dedicated button for shooting, ok and back;
- No app needs for basic function;
- 1 USB-C socket for charging the housing's battery (charger not included);
- 1 USB-C socket to use the housing's battery as powerbank for the phone (cable not included);
- 1 rechargeable 21700 battery (not included);
- Double O-Ring seals on the



- removable parts;
 - Back housing completely detachable from the front housing;
 - Single-hand closing knob;
 - Prepared for ISOTTA vacuum system (not included);
 - Moisture sensor with LED indicator;
 - Working depth: 100 meters;
 - Sizes (LxHxP): 113/176 mm x 80 mm x 235 mm;
 - Air weight: about 1 Kg without the phone;
 - Water weight: about 300 gr without the phone.
- € 850

www.isotecnic.it/en

www.backscatter.com

www.uwpmag.com



NAUTICAM
MFO-3
 MID-RANGE FOCUS OPTIMIZER 3



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 INFO@UWCAMERASTORE.COM
 +31 (0)165 55 39 44

Nauticam NA-Shinobi II housing



The Atomos Shinobi II features a bright 5" 1500-nit 10-bit HDR screen that is powered by Sony FP series batteries. The Nauticam NA-Shinobi II Housing seamlessly integrates the Shinobi II into your underwater system. Connected to supported cameras and housing with the Nauticam HDMI Cable and Bulkhead system, shooters can take advantage of the monitor's full suite of focus and exposure analysis tools.

The various overlays and visualizations of the Shinobi II can be activated via the buttons on the face of the NA-Shinobi II including the powerful Analysis Mode that places the most commonly used exposure tools alongside the footage.

The NA-Shinobi II comes with the

outgoing watertight Standard HDMI bulkhead and cable pre-installed as well as the additional M16 HDMI that is affixed to the supported camera housing. A 200mm HDMI (D-A) cable is included for connecting the M16 bulkhead to the camera inside the camera housing.

www.nauticam.com

BACKSCATTER
FLIP
 UNDERWATER
 GOPRO FILTERS



BACKSCATTER

THE BEST BANG FOR YOUR BUCK



OLYMPUS E-M10 IV

Nauticam NA-Z5II housing for Nikon ZR



The Nikon ZR is a compact full-frame cinema camera that was developed in collaboration with RED Digital Cinema. It's perfect for both video professionals and enthusiasts who want to take their video game to the next level. With features like 32-bit float audio, super-fast autofocus, and the ability to capture up to 6K60 video in REDCODE, N-RAW, or ProRes RAW formats, the Nikon ZR is sure to impress.

The NA-ZR underwater housing upholds Nauticam's dedication to innovation. Essential controls are conveniently accessible via ergonomic handles, facilitating an efficient setup that optimizes time spent in the water and minimizes time spent on rig maintenance.

The Nauticam NA-ZR is designed to accommodate both Z-Mount and F-Mount lenses. With the compact design of the NA-ZR housing, there are newly released zoom and focus gears that will drive off the main zoom/focus knob on the housing.



Nauticam's professional water-contact optics deliver the highest underwater image quality. The FCP, WACP, and WWL lines enhance wide-angle, while the MFO and SMC offer exceptional macro and super macro capabilities. The EMWL allows you to shoot macro, wide-angle, or combine the styles for unique images.

www.nauticam.com

Circular tube

130 watt-seconds

Equipped with Li-Ion Battery

DS-TTL

iRC

Y.S.-D130R
UNDERWATER STROBE SYSTEM

Available Soon!

10%
0.0
CANON-A

Clear LCD display
Manual/TTL/RC/HSS modes
Custom setting

SEA&SEA
THE UNDERWATER BANGBO COMPANY
<https://www.seaandsea.jp>

UW
CAMERA
STORE **COM**

BLACK
FRIDAY

4 DAYS OF
IRRESISTIBLE DISCOUNTS
STARTING FRIDAY 28TH OF NOVEMBER

ALL DEALS ARE ONLINE ON BLACK FRIDAY
UWCAMERASTORE.COM/BLACK-FRIDAY

MAKING STORIES TOGETHER SINCE 2002

Aquatica AZ8 Housing for the Nikon Z8



In our never ending quest to offer the latest and greatest possible equipment to the underwater photographer/videographer, we offer our housing for the Nikon Z8 Mirrorless camera!

Continuing in Aquatica's reputation for offering premium quality at affordable prices, the AZ8 housing has the finest ergonomics and control accessibility combined with the famed ruggedness of our all aluminum construction and distinctive hard coating.

The housing supports not only the new Z-mount lenses but also the FTZ Adapter.

Our Surveyor Vacuum System (valve and pump) is now included as standard equipment with all AZ8 housings.

www.aquatica.ca

Marelux Special Offers



Purchase two Apollo III Strobe units, and receive a free 42703 Artemis 4500 RMT Video Light (with Remote Shutter Control) (USD 350).



Purchase two Apollo S Strobe units and receive a free 47719 SOFT Dock for Apollo S (USD 149) - One 42109 Strobe External Slot (USD 40) - One set of 42108 Strobe Color Filter (USD 10) - One set of 42107 Strobe Flat Diffuser (No.1/No.2/No.3) (USD 10)

Promotion Period: 1 August-31 December 2025

www.marelux.co

www.uwpmag.com

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KRAKEN **CAMERA RINSE BAG**

45 X 35 X 30 CM

**KEEP YOUR GEAR SAFE
AND RINSE ON LOCATION!**



LET'S MAKE STORIES TOGETHER!



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+31 (0)165 55 39 44

Kraken Abyss 10000



Depth-rated to 330 feet (100 meters), the Abyss 10000 has a beam angle of 120 degrees, allowing a pair of lights to provide coverage for expansive reef scenes. The light runs on three 21700 Li-ion batteries, which provide a runtime of around an hour at 80% .

www.backscatter.com

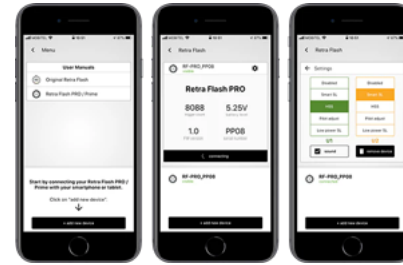
Get ready for the optical evolution from Seacam



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Retra Flash firmware update



Keep your Retra Flash up to date with the latest firmware updates available on the Retra UWT Smartphone app.

The Retra UWT App is ready to download for free on Google Play and the App store.

To update your Retra Flash, turn on the device by turning the mode dial on the Retra Flash to BATT/TEST.

To activate bluetooth on the Retra Flash Pro Max, push and hold the Pilot/Test button until "BLE" (bluetooth enabled) appears on the display. On other Retra Flash models, push and hold the Pilot/Test button until the indicator light turns blue.

Open the Retra UWT application on your smart device and click on "RETRA FLASH".

www.retra-uwat.com



Nauticam NA-Z8 for Nikon Z8



"Z9 Performance in a Z7 Body"

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The Z8 is that camera and more.

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

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You can now also use your Nikonos RS conversions on Sony cameras with the matching LA-FE 2 Monster adapter!

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Please note that we don't sell the original lenses, but we're happy to help with the search if needed.

www.seacam.com



Nauticam NA-R5C housing for Canon R5 C



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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.

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www.aoi-uw.com

Ikelite Housing for Nikon ZR 6K Cinema Camera



The Nikon ZR is the company's first camera to wear the Red branding alongside the manufacturer's name. It's a full-frame video camera built around the same sensor as the Z6III, making it capable of 6K/60 video in either N-Raw or the Red-derived R3D NE Raw format. It also adds internal 32-bit float audio capture and shutter angle to Nikon-developed subject-recognition autofocus and in-body image stabilization.

Ikelite anticipate supporting this exciting new cinema camera from Nikon. We do not yet have enough information to suggest a timeline. If you would like to receive an email when we make an announcement about this model, please sign up for notifications.

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Nauticam NA-A1 housing for Sony a1



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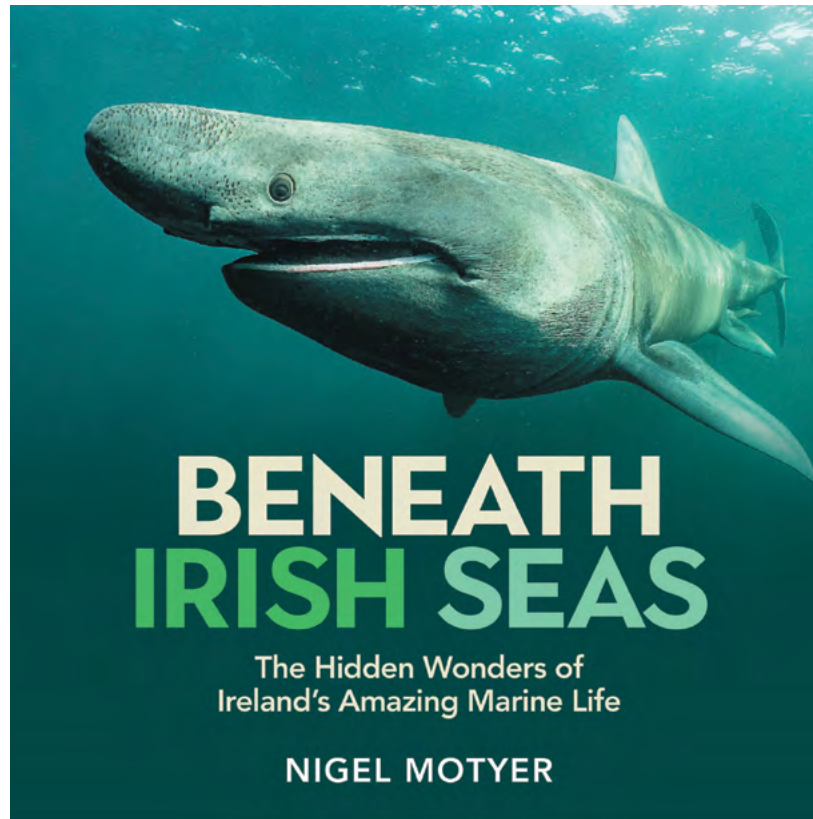
The Hidden Wonders of Ireland's Amazing Marine Life

by Nigel Motyer

This glossy four-colour hardback is a stunning photographic showcase of the beauty and biodiversity of Ireland's coastal waters, featuring an array of magnificent flora and fauna, including majestic basking shark gatherings in the Atlantic depths, swirling shoals off the Skelligs and breathtaking coral reefs.

Award-winning photographer Nigel Motyer has been diving and photographing Irish seas since the 1980s and has an unmatched portfolio of Irish underwater imagery. His photography has featured in many publications worldwide, including National Geographic. In these pages he challenges the misconception that marine wonder belongs only to sunnier shores, highlighting the vibrancy and captivating natural drama of Irish seas.

Beneath the crashing waves and jagged cliffs of Ireland's coastline lies a world few have ever seen, teeming with kaleidoscopic colour and untold beauty. Through the lens of internationally acclaimed underwater



photographer Nigel Motyer this stunning visual journey reveals the vibrancy of Irish waters, alive with astonishing biodiversity and compelling natural drama.

Motyer, diving and photographing Irish waters since the 1980s, shares an unmatched portfolio built over decades, this is the first book to comprehensively document Ireland's underwater wildlife through powerful, vibrant imagery.

Eye-opening and accessible, Beneath Irish Seas challenges the idea that marine wonder belongs only to tropical reefs. The magic is here – just off Ireland's shores, waiting to be discovered.

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Sea Save Foundation



Photo by: Joe Platko

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By taking action, you've joined a passionate community that LOVES celebrating ocean successes, staying up to date on environmental challenges, and learning ways to help with our efforts from leading conservationists. With the public as our ally, we go to the United Nations and other global bodies to offer economically viable, sustainable, and environmentally friendly plans to decision-makers.

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Nauticam Experience Day at Onderwaterhuis.nl

by Patrick Kranenbroek

On Saturday, October 25, Onderwaterhuis.nl hosted a special day dedicated to Nauticam: the Nauticam Experience Day. None other than Mr. Edward Lai, the founder and CEO of Nauticam, was present at this inspiring event.

Under great interest from underwater photographers and videographers from the Netherlands and Belgium, two well-attended sessions were organized featuring multiple presentations.

Photography Presentation

The first presentation was given by underwater photographer Faycal Chabini. Faycal had put together a beautiful photo presentation and explained the path he had followed.

Starting with a GoPro to take snapshots underwater, he gradually expanded his camera setup as he photographed more. The real work began for Faycal when he purchased a Canon EOS R5 II with a Nauticam underwater housing. He then added more lenses, including various wet

lenses such as the Nauticam FCP, MFO-1, and MFO-3.

Faycal has captured stunning photos all over the world, and the entire audience enjoyed these magnificent images.

Design of Nauticam Lenses

After a short break, it was Mr. Edward Lai's turn. Mr. Lai first presented the different techniques and calculations he uses in designing lenses and explained how even a small adjustment in a lens can ultimately affect the final result.

Nauticam was already a specialist in designing underwater housings for cameras, but he had no experience designing lenses until Alex Mustard asked him for a solution to switch lenses underwater. "Can you make a macro lens that I can attach to my port?" was Alex Mustard's request. "I don't know, but I can try," was Mr. Lai's reply.

And so, he designed the wet lens SMC-1, a lens with exceptionally strong magnification and excellent



contrast. Alex Mustard used it to photograph a nudibranch, capturing the rhinophores in perfect sharpness. He submitted this photo to the Wildlife Photographer of the Year contest in 2014, and it was immediately Highly Commended.

Alex continued to stay in contact, and through his ideas and



collaboration with Mr. Lai, many more lenses were developed at Nauticam. Today, this has resulted in an extensive range of both macro and wide-angle lenses from Nauticam.

The recently introduced MFO-3 was also featured. This lens had been eagerly anticipated, and attendees took full advantage of the opportunity to test it in the demo aquarium.

On the Film Set

The third presentation was a video presentation by Belgian filmmakers Tommy Vuylsteke and Pieter Germeys from BLUE Motion Pictures.

The presentation focused on their collaboration, but more importantly, on the collaboration of 150 professionals involved in a film. Tommy and Pieter demonstrated how footage is captured in an indoor tank and how it appears in the final film.

They also explained the Nauticam equipment they use and why they keep duplicate sets of all



components. In their early years, they occasionally faced leakage issues with housings, but since switching to Nauticam underwater housings, they have had no problems with waterproofing.

Pieter and Tommy shared their preparations for a film shoot and how they ensure that camera equipment is assembled a day in advance.

The audience in the practical room at Onderwaterhuis.nl was fully attentive and enjoyed the stunning footage.

Over snacks and drinks, attendees continued

to discuss the session in the Onderwaterhuis.nl showroom. Various wet lenses could be tested in the aquarium, and Mr. Lai and the specialists from Onderwaterhuis.nl were available to answer any questions about Nauticam lenses.

It was a fun, inspiring, and informative day.

Patrick Kranenbroek

DUIKEN magazine

www.duiken.nl

www.nauticam.com

www.uwcamerastore.com

Smartphone housings

by The Backscatter Team

This review places its focus squarely on underwater smartphone housings rather than getting into the specs of specific phone models.

The housing itself has the greatest impact on performance underwater, largely because of the companion app and available accessories.

The app controls key features such as wide and telephoto lens choice, camera settings, and color correction—the more feature-rich the app, usually means better overall image quality.

Accessories are equally important: color filters, wide-angle and macro lenses can dramatically improve color, sharpness, and clarity.

But a housing's role isn't just about capturing great images—it's about ensuring the phone survives the dive. To that end, housings vary greatly in their protective features. Some of the models we tested include vacuum systems for pre-dive leak checks or integrated moisture alarms, providing the confidence needed to protect the device that holds your essential banking and personal data.

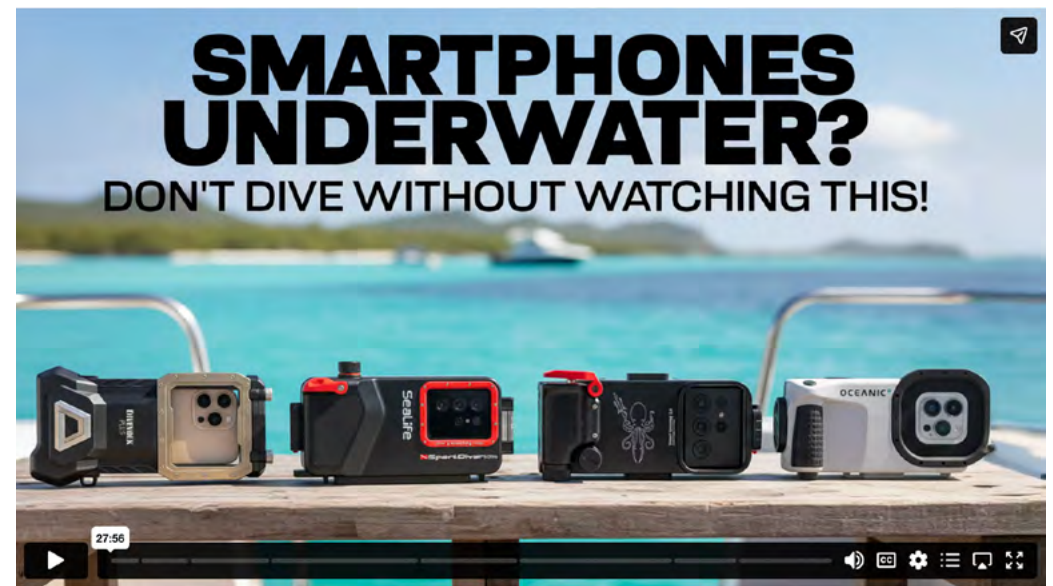
SEALIFE SPORTDIVER ULTRA



The SeaLife SportDiver Ultra is our overall top pick, offering the best balance of ease of use, features, and accessory support. Its companion app is straightforward to learn yet powerful enough to deliver consistently strong results. The accessory ecosystem is among the best in this group, with a particularly well-designed lens mount that is easily adjusted underwater.

While the app occasionally lagged during testing and filters and lenses cannot be stacked, these are minor drawbacks compared to the overall package. With its user-friendly design, ergonomic build, and reliable performance, the SeaLife SportDiver Ultra is an excellent choice for both beginners and experienced divers seeking a capable, adaptable housing.

The SeaLife SportDiver Ultra works with most smartphones, including larger models, and supports



Smartphones provide an inexpensive, simple, travel-friendly entry point for divers looking to get into underwater photography. Check out our video review above.

both iPhone and Android. This makes it one of the most universal options available.

This housing is comfortable and well thought out. A large grip and thumb rest give it a secure feel, while the extended shutter release and clearly labeled, easy-to-reach buttons make one-handed shooting a breeze.

The housing runs on two AAA batteries that power the housing and Bluetooth controls, with runtime depending on battery type (about 50 hours on alkalines).

SeaLife includes everything needed to mount the phone inside the housing in the box, including three different sizes of rubber grips that are easily installed and swapped out for a

perfect fit.

Powering on is simple: press the internal power button, pair the phone through the app, and the app will guide you through setup.

The SeaLife uses a vacuum system that monitors internal pressure to detect leaks before they happen.

The SeaLife app is beginner-friendly yet powerful. It includes lens modes, zoom, exposure, video resolution, frame rates, and underwater white balance modes. The white balance system worked especially well when paired with the included SportDiver Bluewater Filter.

We did encounter two drawbacks: The app could be laggy at times, with a slight delay between



a recurring issue with all wide lenses tested on smartphone housings, some more pronounced than others. Among the options, this was one of the sharper lenses, yet its image quality still fell well short of what a compact camera paired with a dedicated wide-angle lens can deliver.

The SeaLife SportDiver Ultra has a suite of compatible accessories and includes a SportDiver Bluewater Filter right out of the box. SeaLife's lens holder system was also our favorite, since it can be easily adjusted, even in-water if needed.

DIVEVOLK SEATOUCH

The DiveVOLK SeaTouch stands out as one of the most versatile smartphone housings available. Its fully touch-screen compatible design uses a flexible gel membrane instead of Bluetooth controls, allowing direct access to the phone's native camera or advanced apps such as the Blackmagic Cinema app.



This opens up far more creative control and flexibility than other housings. Paired with the ability to combine a wide angle lens and the effective DiveVolk M67 Red Filter, it produced some of our favorite clips shot with a smartphone.

That said, the system isn't without flaws. The lens mount can be finicky in use, and the included macro lens leaves something to be desired. Still, for divers who want maximum customization and

creative freedom in a compact rig, the DiveVOLK SeaTouch is an outstanding choice.

The DiveVOLK SeaTouch works with most smartphones, but requires a specific tray for each model and is purchased alongside the housing. While not as universal straight out of the box as some of the other housings in this review, it still covers a wide range of phones.

We have also experienced variable quality with DiveVOLK smartphone trays. The trays we received for iPhones were top-notch quality, made with durable plastic and fit the phone and inside the housing like a glove. Android trays on the other hand, were 3D printed and much lower quality, with some customers reporting them breaking or having fitting issues.

During our testing, we found the gel membrane to work reliably with taps, but swipes could take a few tries. Overall, this was a minor inconvenience compared to the unlimited app access gained by the touchscreen.

The gel membrane could be difficult to see through on land, but underwater, it was clear and easy to see. In terms of housing build quality, the housing feels less solid and ergonomic compared to other housings in this review, however, it encountered no issues during our tests.

The gel membrane itself does feel delicate, and we do advise taking extra care of the gel screen to protect it from scratches or hard surfaces when diving or traveling with the housing.

Critically, before the phone is installed in the housing, DiveVOLK advises that all screen protectors are removed. If the screen protector is in place, the phone can become trapped inside the housing. This problem has been reported by customers, with some needing to break the housing in order to free

button presses and response. The mode menu can only be cycled through in one direction. If you skip past the mode you want, you have to scroll through the entire menu again, which is a hassle when trying to capture fleeting moments. Overall, the app is capable and easy to learn, despite these quirks.

SeaLife offers an impressive range of accessories. The included SportDiver Bluewater Filter worked well with underwater white balance modes, though the filter cannot be mounted with a lens, unlike the DiveVOLK SeaTouch. Additional filters include a SportDiver Greenwater Filter and a SportDiver Yellow Filter for fluorescence shooting.

The optional SportDiver 6-inch Dome Port snaps to the front of the housing, working as a wide-angle lens for scuba or snorkeling, and allowing for easy split shots. Unlike some housings, the dome doesn't need to be aligned with a specific phone lens, keeping the operation simple. The SportDiver 6-inch Dome Port was also one of the overall sharpest lens accessories we tested.

The SportDiver 52mm Wide Lens widened the field of view and allowed closer focusing, though the corners stayed soft. Softness at the edges was



their phone.

The app experience of the DiveVOLK is entirely up to the user; anything from the native camera app to pro-level camera apps will work. This flexibility even allows basic phone functions like calls and texts on the surface (provided there is a signal). We used both our iPhone 13 Pro Max's native camera app and the Black Magic video app. Though the phone's native camera app had novel features like panoramas, our overall favorite option was the Blackmagic video app. This app unlocked advanced features, manual controls, focus peaking, and reliable lens selection, allowing us to capture video with the most control.

The app flexibility has also made DiveVOLK SeaTouch popular with tech divers, who will leave the housing clipped to a downline during long deco stops to watch downloaded movies, shows, or play games while waiting to clear.

DiveVOLK has a wide array of accessories that cover basically everything you would need for your smartphone housing, but we found the optics of both the wide angle and macro lens to be of poor

quality, resulting in soft-looking images.

Mounting additional accessories or attaching the housing to a tray requires the DiveVolk Expansion Clamp, which provides 67mm threads for lenses and filters. While useful, this clamp is somewhat finicky and did loosen mid-dive multiple times during our testing when not carefully secured.

In our testing, the DiveVolk M67 Wide Lens expanded the field of view but was very soft, producing smudgy corners with overall poor image quality. The DiveVolk M67 Red Filter on the other hand, was our favorite filter, delivering the best color correction of any we tried.

The +8 close-up lens also has poor optics, showing fringing, with an extremely thin depth of field, and a tight working distance, making it our least favorite macro option.

OCEANIC+

The Oceanic iPhone is the top pick for beginners and casual shooters, offering a streamlined experience designed around comfort, simplicity, and ease of use.

Loading the phone, pulling a vacuum, correcting color, and even sharing media are all straightforward processes. Nearly every function runs through the companion app, which also handles photo and video color correction. With a paid subscription, the app even doubles as a dive computer, making the Oceanic iPhone more versatile for recreational divers.

That simplicity, however, also highlights its limitations. Without support for interchangeable



The Oceanic+ was the most comfortable housing to use in this review. The large grip and directional buttons make handling this housing a joy.



lenses or filters, the housing's creative potential is restricted compared to more advanced systems. The need for a subscription to unlock full functionality is also a drawback for a product that already comes at a premium.

The Oceanic iPhone works only with iPhones, making it more limited than other housings. It supports a wide range of models, including larger phones. Everything needed for installation comes in the box, including rubber mounting grips and a retrofit kit for larger iPhone Pro Max Models.

The Oceanic iPhone was the most comfortable housing we tested. It features a large, secure grip, big tactile buttons, and clearly labeled controls. Instead of a cluster of buttons, it uses a directional pad with an orange command button, keeping the operation straightforward. Navigating menus is simple, and overall, the Oceanic iPhone set the standard for ergonomics in this review.

The Oceanic iPhone pulls a vacuum automatically, and no hand pump is required. Setup is completely guided through the app which uses a video to walk the user through every step of the way.

Oceanic is the most app based housing in this review. The app is super simple and easy to use, though it lacks some advanced camera control features of the others. It has photo, video, and a "Smart Mode" that captures both photo and videos

simultaneously.

The app accurately records depth and dive time, which is displayed on the screen. We found this info did get in the way when composing photos or videos.

What's unique is its one-touch, AI-driven color correction. The color correction wasn't always perfect for every image and video but it is effective for instantly sharing content.

Oceanic also offers a subscription for more advanced features, letting the housing function as a dive computer. Though this added functionality is cool, it is a hassle to continue to pay for a product that has already been purchased via subscription.

Accessory options are where the Oceanic iPhone falls behind. It does not support filters or lenses, relying solely on the app for color correction and lens control.

The Oceanic iPhone is a good simple system, but it will struggle to capture wider and close-up shots, keeping its field of view restricted for fish portraits.

KRAKEN KRH07

The Kraken KRH07 is the most durable housing in this review, built with a solid aluminum front and designed for divers who prioritize ruggedness above all else.

Powered by a single 18650 lithium-ion battery, it not only runs the housing but also charges the phone inside, making it possible to shoot all day without removing the device.

Kraken's companion app is straightforward and responsive, all while the housing also supports a



wide range of accessories for added flexibility.

Additional features include a depth and temperature sensor, though the depth readings proved very unreliable in testing. Mounting the phone is also more involved compared to other housings, requiring extra assembly.

The Kraken KRH07 works with most smartphones, including both iPhone and Android models, making it one of the most universal housings available. It can accommodate a wide range of phone sizes right out of the box, with no need to order extra parts when switching between models.

While the Kraken KRH07 felt comfortable in hand and its controls were solid and responsive, other build-quality factors held it back. The unintuitive phone mounting system and complicated vacuum setup detracted from the overall experience and ultimately lowered its ranking.

The Kraken KRH07 has the least intuitive phone installation system we tested. Instead of a simple mounting brace, the phone is held in place with an adhesive pad, which is not very secure. Though Kraken does provide a spare sticky pad with the housing, the pads will wear over time. To fit the phone into place, the housing includes foam blocks which need to be trimmed in order to secure phones.

First-time housing owners, or those looking for a simple phone housing system will find mounting a phone in the Kraken housing to be a hassle, and we have had this housing returned for this reason alone.

While a vacuum system is a valuable feature on any housing, Kraken's was the most difficult to use in this review. The vacuum valve is located on the



front of the housing while the vacuum status LED indicators are on the back, making it awkward to monitor the light while pumping. Even worse, the vacuum status key is located inside the housing, completely hidden once a phone is installed.

The indicators themselves are unnecessarily complicated. One light controls four different patterns for Bluetooth and phone charging, while the vacuum indicator LED has five different patterns for vacuum status and housing power. The sheer number of LED patterns makes them almost impossible to memorize without a key for reference. To make matters worse, red can mean multiple things: a solid red means low battery but holding vacuum, a single blinking red means vacuum is holding but housing charge is under 50%, and a double blinking red signals a leak. The overlap of the red light creates serious potential for confusion that could result in water entering the housing.

Kraken's app includes everything needed to shoot photos and videos underwater. It starts with a written pre-dive checklist before moving to a clean, easy-to-use interface. Switching between photo

and video is done with a single button press, and the controls were among the most responsive of any housing we tested with no lag between pressing a button and the action taking place.

We did encounter some quirks when using the Kraken app. When switching between photo and video modes, our video resolution would change back to the default, resulting in some clips being shot in HD that were meant to be shot in 4K. Also, photos and videos taken with the app did not automatically save to our iPhone 13 Pro Max or 15 Pro's photo folder, and instead had to be transferred over using the Kraken app, twenty videos at a time. This was time-consuming, and makes this app less friendly for instantly sharing photos and video.

Kraken supports the Kraken KRH07 with a wide range of accessories. The housing itself comes with ¼"-20 threaded holes, making it easy to mount on most trays.

A snap-on red filter is available, though we found it the least effective of the filters we tested and often had to tweak and experiment with different white balance settings in the app for acceptable results. The red filter also cannot be mounted with a wide angle lens at the same time.

For lenses, Kraken offers an optional Kraken M52 and M67 Lens



Adapter that bolts securely onto the housing, supporting both 67mm and 52mm optics.

The wet lens must be lined up with the active phone camera lens before jumping in the water, as it requires a hex key to adjust the lens holder's position. We tested the Kraken KRL-07 M52 Wide Angle Lens for Smartphones and the Kraken KRL-03 +12 Macro Lens. The wide-angle lens was compact, and though it did increase the field of view, it had soft corners and lacked sharpness.

The Kraken KRL-07 also vignettted when using the app's ultra-wide lens mode. The Kraken KRL-03 macro lens provided a generous depth of field and comfortable working distance, making it one of our favorites for super close work.

All in all, smartphones make an excellent choice for divers who want a travel-friendly video system, a way to capture simple snapshots, or a lightweight alternative to carrying a separate camera setup. With the right housing, they can produce good video and snapshots, especially for casual



shooters.

However, they are held back by key limitations. Smartphones cannot trigger strobes, making it impossible to achieve the same color, contrast, and lighting control as dedicated cameras.

Their controls are slower and less intuitive underwater, and lens performance is often subpar, with softer corners and less sharpness overall.

Importantly, there is always the question of risk: bringing a smartphone underwater means exposing a lifeline—containing banking apps, travel documents, and essential communication tools—to the possibility of flooding, as well as the risk of total loss if the phone is dropped overboard or not properly

clipped off. While the risk may be small, it is never zero.

Dedicated underwater cameras, like the OM System TG-7, will deliver superior results, especially for serious photography. For divers who value image quality and creative control above all else, a dedicated camera remains the clear choice. For everyone else, smartphones offer a surprisingly capable, compact alternative.

The Backscatter Team
www.backscatter.com

Nauticam MFO-3

By Rob Aarsen

This autumn, divers in the Netherlands were captivated by a grey triggerfish. Normally, they live further south in the Atlantic Ocean. But this wanderer had made a burrow in the Frans Kok Reef – one of the busiest diving sites in the Grevelingenmeer – where he (or she) seemed quite content. Naturally, such a rare sighting calls for photographs. The question is: do you take the 105mm macro or the wider 60mm for a portrait? The 105 is perfect for a goby, but this creature – an adult about 45 centimeters long – won't fit in the frame with a 105. So go for the 60 after all...? A new close-up wet lens from Nauticam, the Mid-Range Focus Optimizer (MFO-3), solves this dilemma.

Turning the 105 into a 60

The MFO-3 is a wet lens that mounts in front of the port on your underwater housing. It was developed at the request of Alex Mustard, who found during a blackwater photo trip that some subjects were simply too large to capture with his 105 macro lens. At his request, Nauticam developed a wet lens that gives longer macro lenses a wider angle of

view (38° instead of 23°) and a shorter focusing distance (0–150 centimeters instead of 31 centimeters–infinity). This effectively turns a 105 macro into a 60 macro – ideal for photographing larger subjects at close range. The magnification factor remains roughly 1:1.

On full-frame cameras, the MFO-3 can be used with, among other lenses, 100 (Canon), 105 (Nikon – used for this test), and 90mm (Sony) macro lenses. For OM System cameras with an M43 sensor, the MFO-3 can be paired with 90mm or 60mm lenses. Nauticam is continuing to expand the range of lenses optimized for use with the MFO-3.

The fish portrait

Our triggerfish has an inquisitive nature and comes closer when I gently tap on an oyster with my pointer. Sometimes he gets so close that I have to fin backwards to keep his head fully in the frame.

I estimate that the portrait shot was taken from about 30 centimetres away. With just the 105mm macro, I would have had to shoot from much farther back to fit the fish in –



Nikon D810, Nauticam housing, 105mm macro with Nauticam MFO-3 lens. Sea & Sea strobes. 1/25th@F7.1. ISO 64



*With the Nauticam MFO-3.
Nikon D810, Nauticam housing, 105mm macro with Nauticam MFO-3 lens. Sea & Sea strobes. 1/160th@F9. ISO 64*



*Without the Nauticam MFO-3.
Nikon D810, Nauticam housing, 105mm macro lens. Sea & Sea strobes. 1/160th@F18. ISO 64*

resulting in flatter, less vibrant images.

While diving with the MFO-3, I steer clear of the oysters that are abundant in the Grevelingen. The wet lens is 11.4 centimeters long and protrudes quite a bit, so a scratch is easily done. Despite the large “snout” at the front, the camera doesn’t tend to tip forward. The lens group sits towards the back, close to the housing port, keeping the setup well balanced.

An added bonus of the extra length is that I can position my strobes more easily on either side of the lens

— a perfect start for a fish portrait.

In the swimming pool, I carried out an unscientific test with a metal fish and a measuring tape. With the 105mm lens alone, the whole fish fits in the frame at 1.5 meters.

At 40 centimeters, only the upper-left part of the head and one eye are visible. With the MFO on the 105mm, the whole fish fits in the frame at 40 centimeters (measured from the front of the macro lens).

There is quite a bit of vignetting in the corners — that’s because my macro



Pool test. Left: the fish at 40 cm with only the 105 macro. Right: same distance with the 105 plus MFO-3. Notice the difference in perspective and depth of field.

While diving with the MFO-3, I steer clear of the oysters that are abundant in the Grevelingen. The wet lens is 11.4 centimeters long and protrudes quite a bit, so a scratch is easily done.



Grevelingen jetty was constructed exclusively to provide easy access for divers to the water.

lens sits in a port that is slightly too long. Without the MFO, this isn't an issue, but with the wider angle of the wet lens, it becomes noticeable. Using the correct port length, where the lens sits against the front glass of the port, solves this.

So, what do we think?

With the MFO-3, it's like diving with two macro lenses at once. You can photograph tiny nudibranchs and large lobsters on the same dive.

Thanks to the wider field of view and shorter working distance, you can get much closer to larger subjects — reducing the amount of water between you and your subject. You notice the difference in the viewfinder image: a better, much clearer view on the subject and more responsive autofocus.

The 3D autofocus tracking in my Nikon D810 easily followed the fish's eye, even without a focus light (which the fish didn't like). And you

really see the difference when reviewing the shots on the big screen at home.

The photos taken with the MFO-3 are sharper with more depth of field, more contrasty, and more vibrant than those taken from a larger distance with just the 105mm.

As the dives went on, I found myself using the MFO-3 more and more. In short: it's a keeper.

Many thanks to Onderwaterhuis.nl for providing the test unit.

Rob Aarsen
www.in2thedeep.com

www.uwcamerastore.com



UW Technics External TTL converters

by Phil Rudin

UW Technics is a group of companies which develop and produce electronic devices for underwater housings and underwater flashes. The companies home offices are headquartered in Tainan City, Taiwan. UW Technics TTL flash converters can trigger a variety of flashes via sync cords or fiber optic cables. The internal TTL converters are compatible with many DSLR and Mirrorless cameras from Canon, Nikon, Olympus and Sony. The TTL converters are also designed for a variety of different housings. Canon converters are made for Aquatica, Hugyfot, Ikelite, Isotta, Marelux, Nauticam, Nexus, Seacam and Sea & Sea. Nikon TTL converters are made for Aquatica, Hugyfot, Isotta, Marelux, Nauticam, Nexus, Seacam and Sea & Sea. Olympus converters are made for Nauticam and Isotta housings. Sony converters are made for Isotta, Marelux, Nauticam, Seacam, Sea & Sea and. Also within these housing manufactures different housings may require different flash converters.

The subject of this review are the new EXTERNAL TTL converters which come in M16 and M24 also for Canon, Nikon, Olympus and Sony

cameras. I will describe the features of external converters later in the review. External converters for Canon are designed for Aquatica, Ikelite, Isotta, Marelux, Nauticam, Seacam, Seafrogs, and Sea & Sea. External converters for Nikon are designed for Aquatica, Ikelite, Isotta, Marelux, Nauticam, Seacam, Seafrogs, and Sea & Sea. Converters for Olympus are designed for Aquatica, Ikelite, Isotta, Marelux, Nauticam, Seacam, Seafrogs, and Sea & Sea. Converters for Sony are designed for Aquatica, Ikelite, Isotta, Marelux, Nauticam, Seacam, Seafrogs, and Sea & Sea.

Compatible underwater strobes: Inon Z-240/ Z-330/ S-220/ D-200, Sea&Sea YS-D1 / YS-D3 Mark II / YS-D3 DUO / YS-250, Ikelite DS-232 / DS-230 / DS-162 / DS161 /, DS160 / DS-125, Subtronic Pro-270 / Pro-160, Retra Pro MAX (including HSS) and Marelux APOLLO III V2.0 (including HSS), Marelux APOLLO-S (including HSS).

Make sure that you consult your authorized UW Technics dealer or the manufacture (UWTechnics.com) for the correct TTL converter for your camera and housing. Each unit comes with a helpful instruction manual which is easy to understand and is



available through authorized dealers or direct from UWT.

I have used internal flash triggers from several manufactures including Marelux, Nauticam, Turtle, UW Technics and more. What I like about the external trigger is a completely enclosed system that does not expose any of the electronics to possible damage from water droplets or flooding other than the wiring harness which can easily be replaced. It leaves extra space in the housing for things like an additional battery or other accessory. You can have a backup internal trigger already installed in the

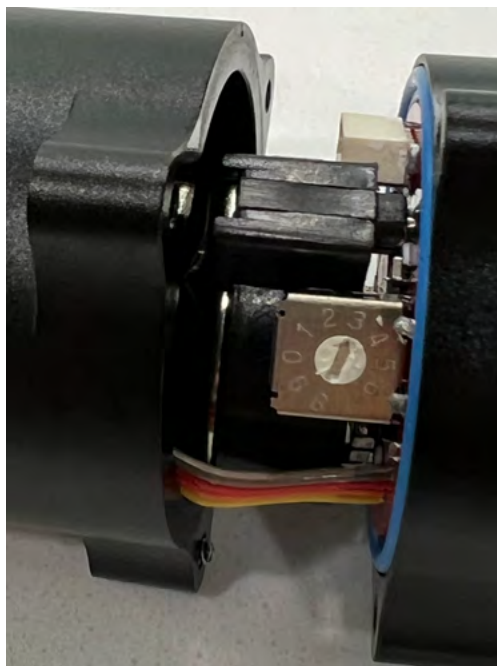


housing and more.

For my review I have been testing the UW Technics external TTL 18023-M24 converter for Marelux housing's using Sony A-1, A7C II and A7CR cameras. Currently this converter is compatible in TTL with all of the strobes listed above and will allow high speed shutter sync using the Marelux Apollo III, Apollo S and Retra Pro Max strobes allowing shutter sync up to 1/8000th sec. Not all of the converter models support the same strobes so be sure to check the uwtechnics.com web site to see which flashes are supported for your camera and housing type

Since the external flash triggers come with both M16 and M24 threads the first thing you will want to consider is where to install the trigger on your housing. Some housings will have more choices than others and the trigger size may interfere with accessories on your housing. The size of the flash trigger is about 5.4cm tall to 6cm tall with the plastic caps for 45 degree fiber cords and 4cm in diameter at its widest point.

Prior to installing the flash trigger you first need to open it up with the provided tools and chose the setting for your type of strobe on the little white dial with the arrow that moves from 0 to 9. I set my test unit on number 3 to sync with the Marelux



Apollo S strobes that I own. The unit ships with two CR2032 batteries pre-installed which are reported to last up to 65,000 flashes or one year in standby.

Installation is simple, just remove the bulkhead cover for the port you are using, grease the O-ring, put the wiring harness through the bulkhead and thread the main unit into place. I covered the unit with a cloth and used channel-lock pliers to gently tighten the unit into place. Once in place the wiring harness with the hot shoe can be attached to the harness from the trigger.

My UW Technics external trigger is designed for use with fiber optic



Yellow Damselfish eating eggs off a dead whip, Sidam, Bali Indonesia, Sony A1, Sony FE 70-200mm F/4 macro at 166mm, Marelux housing and port, two Marelux Apollo S strobes TTL using UWT flash trigger, ISO-100, F/11, 1/100th sec

cables and has threaded bulkheads for the two red LED triggering lights. You can chose a fiber optic cable with a threaded cap on the end or a straight or 45 degree cable end that pushes directly into the provided port caps. The choice for my strobes was optical cords with 45 degree mounts on both ends. Be aware that for TTL, HSS and MTL (multi frame shooting) you should be using 613 optic cords which I purchased new from Amazon for around \$35.00US each. I had several other cords which work great when shooting manual but not at all

for TTL with my Marelux strobes. Also make sure that the wired hot shoe is pushed as far forward in the shoe on the camera as possible so that all contacts connect properly. This proprietary connection is needed for proper TTL performance with each flash type and to take advantage of the highest sync speeds possible for your camera brand. My Sony A1 will sync to 1/400th of a second in full frame and 1/500th second in APS-C natively and I occasionally sync as high as 1/800th but rarely above. With the A7C II & A7CR cameras I use the

HSS a bit more because both cameras have a top sync of 1/160th sec.

Once the trigger is connected to the camera while mounted in the housing you can test fire the trigger. One of the things I really like about the UW Technics trigger is that it turns on when you turn the camera on and off when you turn the camera off. On more than one occasion I have had to release the vacuum on my housing because I forgot to turn on an older style trigger or on board flash controlling TTL. Once the camera is turned on you can trigger the camera and you should see the bright red LED's flash through the fiber optic ports. I always test fire my strobes prior to a dive to be sure that everything is on and functioning properly.

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

What is TTL?

When your camera directly controls the output of your flash by metering the light output through-the-Lens it is referred to as TTL. TTL +/- flash exposure compensation is controlled in the camera menu and works using TTL enabled flashes like the many listed strobe brands above. TTL works by firing one or more pre-flashes when the shutter is half pressed. The camera's metering system then measures the pre-flash(s) along with the ambient light level to calculate the power needed from the flash to make a proper exposure. The pre-flash is metered in a few micro-seconds before the



Hard coral and anomy, Paradise House Reef, Bali Indonesia, Sony A7RC, StrHori 6mm F/2.8 circular fisheye, Marelux housing and 140mm glass port, two Marelux Apollo S strobes TTL using UWT flash trigger, ISO-160, F/11, 1/160th sec

shutter is released triggering the main flash. The duration of the main flash exposure is determined by metering based on ISO, aperture, TTL exposure compensation values and the selected metering mode, I.E. spot, center weighted and so on. Shutter speed will have little noticeable effect on the flashes TTL output because the flash occurs within 1000's of a second while the shutter moves much more slowly in most cases. Each camera manufacture has a different propriety TTL protocol hence the need for different UW Technics triggers for each camera brand. The UW Technics triggers have the same hot-shoe design as the camera brand being used and



White-eyed Moray Eel, Scuba Seraya Resort House Reef, Bali Indonesia, Sony A7RC, Sigma 105mm F/2.8 macro art, Marelux housing and macro port, two Marelux Apollo S strobes TTL using UWT flash trigger, Marelux +10 C/U lens, ISO-50, F/22, 1/160th sec

they mimic each brands dedicated flash protocol.

I have used TTL flashes underwater since the film days and have found TTL to be most effective for macro and close focus wide angle photography since it relies on accurate metering by the camera for proper exposure. The larger the primary subject is in the frame the better the TTL will work because the metering will be more accurate. With wide-angle if the foreground in an image being lighted by the flash only takes up say the lower third of the frame while the area lighted by ambient light takes up two-thirds of the frame the TTL exposure may be much less accurate. In this situation flash exposure compensation will need to be applied for TTL to work correctly. While +/-flash exposure compensation can resolve some TTL exposure issues not all strobes work as well as others. In some cases shooting in manual and changing the flash



Tiny Shrimp riding on a starfish, Paradise House Reef, Bali Indonesia, Sony A7RC, Tamron 90mm F/2.8 macro, Marelux housing and port, two Marelux Apollo S strobes TTL using UWT flash trigger, Marelux +10 C/U lens, ISO-100, F/16, 1/125th sec

power level, aperture, ISO or shutter speed can be just as accurate. I have also found that some photographers reject TTL completely as a non-professional tool and only take advantage of the strobes HSS features if it has them.

Field testing

My equipment for this review was the Sony A1, A7C II and A7CR cameras, using Marelux MA-A1 and MA-A7CR housings with Sony FE

70-200mm F/4 macro lens, Sony FE 28-60mm zoom with Marelux Aquista 120 wet lens, Tamron 90mm F/2.8 macro, Sigma 105mm F/2.8 macro and the all manual AstrHori 6mm F/2.8 circular fisheye. I used a variety of Marelux ports and extensions for these lenses and two Marelux Apollo S strobes. The flashes were set to TTL (called auto sync on Apollo strobes) using the exposure compensation settings in the camera menu. For TTL I used the cameras color histogram when reviewing images to judge



Concrete Sculpture, Paradise House Reef, Bali Indonesia, Sony A7RC, StrHori 6mm F/2.8 circular fisheye, Marelux housing and 140mm glass port, two Marelux Apollo S strobes TTL using UWT flash trigger, ISO-50, F/11, 1/160th sec

exposure not the LCD image. All of the images for this review were taken in Bali Indonesia using TTL, HSS and MTL. I also tried rear-curtain shutter with slow shutter speeds and a variety of +/--flash compensation to control light output. For most images I was shooting in AF-C and center weighted metering.

The combination of the UW Technics trigger and the Apollo S strobes in TTL surprised me producing accurate and pleasing exposures with limited need for added +/--flash compensation. Very dark subjects had a tendency to overexpose while bright

white subjects would under expose. This is a result of the camera's 18% gray metering system trying to make very dark subjects lighter and very light subjects darker. Adding from +/-0.3 to +/-1.0 stops flash compensation usually resolves the over/under exposure issue. If you find yourself needing to add more than +/-one stop of light chances are the flashes are not aimed correctly, the flashes are too far away from the subject or in the case of shooting wide open (F/2.8) may be too close to the subject.

The high speed sync features of the Marelux Apollo and Retra Pro Max are also worth a look especially if your cameras highest flash sync speed is 1/250th or lower. Faster sync speeds can help control ambient light while shooting near the surface in bright sunlight, shooting splits or shooting wide open with bright backgrounds. I like using HSS on night and blackwater dives where you want to freeze camera motion and get really pitch black backgrounds.

The UWT trigger also works well when shooting multi-frames per second at up to 20FPS.

I would be the first to admit that I am old school coming from a film background before auto anything and have not really embraced TTL over the years, On this four week trip to Bali I resolved to shoot in TTL for the entire trip to see if I could be dragged



Nudibranch, Paradise House Reef, Bali Indonesia, Sony A7RC, Tamron 90mm F/2.8 macro, Marelux housing and port, two Marelux Apollo S strobes TTL using UWT flash trigger, Marelux +10 C/U lens, ISO-100, F/14, 1/60th sec

into the twenty-first century and to my surprise after a short learning curve I have become a TTL convert. The combination of the UWT trigger and the advanced TTL features of the Marelux Apollo S strobes was very compelling even when shooting with very wide lenses. Gone were the issues of trying to balance the TTL light with the ambient light the combination just worked rendering more keepers and more time to concentrate on composition. While I still believe newer photographers should master manual lighting to understand the relation between camera settings and manually controlled lighting it is clear that some have neither the time or inclination to learn. For these folks TTL can help them produce some stunning results.

If you are interested in shooting in TTL, HSS or MTL you need a quality flash trigger and the UWT external

trigger works brilliantly for all of these features in one unit with strobes that have the complete feature set. The UWT external flash triggers retail for around \$650.00 USD. Contact UWT at uwtechnics.com for information and product manual downloads.

Phil Rudin

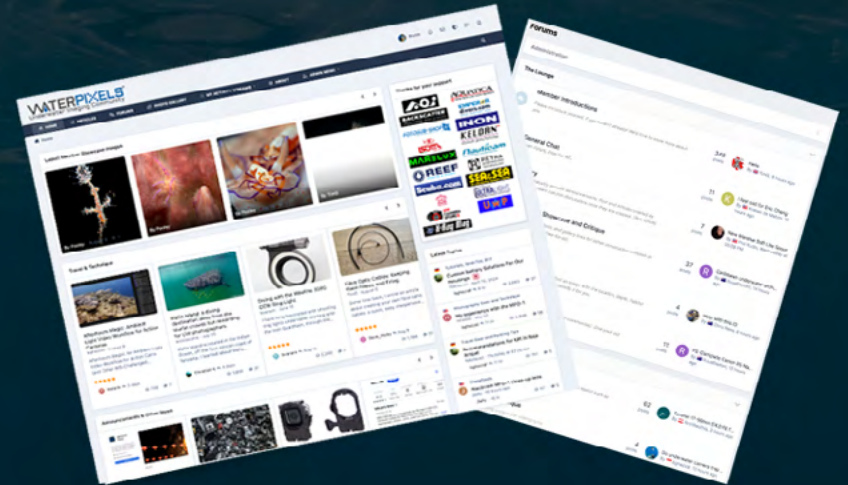
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WATERPIXELS™

Underwater Imaging Community



Setup in late 2023, Waterpixels is a thriving online community for underwater image makers.

With over a 1000 members, the forum is run by a small, dedicated team of individuals who share a passion for underwater photography and who want to support the underwater imaging community.

Our objective is to provide members with a free community website and share advice, experience, knowledge and ideas that can enhance skills and creativity.

To support our commitment to keeping Waterpixels accessible to everyone, there is no charge for membership. We aim to cover running costs through sales of Waterpixels merchandise, donations from our community members, and, perhaps in time to come, carefully selected advertising partnerships. We do not sell or pass on data.

By joining Waterpixels, you become part of a vibrant community that is driven by a common love for underwater imaging. Whether you're a seasoned professional or just starting your journey, whether you use a large mirrorless or DSLR system, a GoPro or a compact, we welcome you to explore our platform, engage with fellow members, and take advantage of the wealth of resources available to you.

www.waterpixels.net

Interview with Florian Fischer

by Peter Rowlands

Hi Florian.

Thank you for taking the time to be interviewed. I'm looking forward to reading your answers.

Your early career in the creative and IT industry, although potentially more lucrative, didn't seem to inspire you so how does working underwater rekindle that creativity? Is it the environment or the lack of surface interference?

I think coming from the advertising world and being a creative person at heart, I see a lot of similarities between what I used to do and what I do now with Behind the Mask.

Ultimately, both are about conveying a message or selling a 'product,' if you will. The big difference is that before, I was often selling fashion or consumer concepts that sometimes felt a bit superficial to me. I had to create stories to evoke emotions around products that didn't always have that inherent depth.

Now, with Behind the Mask, the 'product' I'm sharing is something profoundly meaningful: the love for the ocean. I'm bringing genuine emotions and real experiences to

people, and that makes the creative process feel so much more authentic and rewarding. I don't have to invent a narrative; I live it, and I'm privileged to share it through our videos and content.

It's also incredibly fulfilling to collaborate with a team of like-minded people who share that passion. We're all learning from each other and multiplying that joy and energy. In the end, it just feels like a much more balanced and real way to be creative, and it's exactly where I want to be.

Behind the Mask is groundbreaking in terms of its quality and creativity in a world where high def cameras, still and video, are readily available to all. How does your approach differ and make you stand out from the crowd?

So, the way I see it, Behind the Mask is doing something that's not necessarily new if you compare it to other lifestyle or adventure industries like skateboarding or surfing. In those worlds, people have really embraced the culture—they wear the fashion, they identify with the lifestyle, and there's a lot of emotional storytelling



that makes it 'cool' even for those who don't do the sport.

In the diving industry, that hasn't really been the case. People don't walk around in 'dive culture' fashion or see diving as this super relatable, emotional lifestyle in the same way. And that always struck me as a gap—because diving is incredibly cool and emotionally rich. It's just that the storytelling wasn't there to make it relatable to a wider audience.

So what makes us stand out is that we brought that emotional storytelling into diving. We're doing what surf or skate films did for their communities: making it feel alive, relatable, and cool. If we'd started in





a different industry, this might not have been groundbreaking—but in diving, it was a fresh approach. And honestly, it's also challenging because the industry mindset can be a bit old-fashioned. But by focusing on emotional storytelling and connecting people to the ocean in a new way, we've carved out a unique space.

A lot of underwater photographers operate individually but you seem to prefer being a team member and perhaps the leader. Is this how you operate at your most productive?

I think that really gets to the heart of what Behind the Mask is all

about and my own philosophy as well. Yes, there are times when creative people need to work alone and really dive into their own creative space. But in the end, I don't see creative projects as a democracy where you just compromise between two visions. Instead, it's about having a leader or a guiding vision and then letting each person on the team own their part of the process.

With Behind the Mask, it's all about that natural flow of understanding who's responsible for what, giving everyone the freedom to do their best work, and then coming together as a team to create something greater than any

one person could do alone. It's that synergy and that sense of everyone knowing their place and contributing to the bigger vision that makes it so rewarding.

So yes, we're definitely more of a creative community than just a production company led by one person. We value both the solo moments and the collaborative spirit, and that's really at the core of how we stay creative and productive.

How was the emergence of Behind the Mask affected by the Covid Pandemic and now, several years later, are things back on an even keel?

So this is a really interesting one for me personally because I struggled a lot with how COVID affected everything. It wasn't so much the pandemic itself, but the timing of it.

Right before COVID hit, we were ready to really launch Behind the Mask into this big network of travelers, creatives, clients, and brands. It felt like we had the rocket on the launchpad and then suddenly, the launchpad collapsed. That was COVID for us.

A lot of people pivoted really quickly to reinvent themselves online, but I didn't feel like rushing into that was the right move for us. I needed time to rethink and understand what

the future potential really was.

Now, a few years later, I feel like we've emerged more focused. We've transitioned into a community that's open for others to join, where we're sharing not just underwater filmmaking but the whole experience of freediving, performance, and storytelling. We've realized that everyone who goes underwater with a camera can be an ocean ambassador. And our role now is to guide and build a big community around that idea, to help people feel confident and collaborative rather than competitive.

So yes, we're doing social media work, we have the travel side of the company, but the Academy is really my main focus now. That's where my heart is: sharing our passion and making sure people can join us, learn, and become part of this underwater storytelling movement.

Your early work came from within the dive industry but you soon managed to attract significant clients from outside. Was this the original intention and how did you go about promoting your services in such a wide world?

Originally, Behind the Mask wasn't set up like a traditional business at all. It was more of a passion project—something we poured our own time and money into because we wanted full creative control. You know, in the creative industry, they say that the less you're driven by money upfront, the more truly creative you can be. That was our philosophy: to build an identity first and let people associate our work with quality, emotion, and inspiration. And as more people got to know us and connected with us, including professionals and potential clients from outside the dive industry, it all grew very naturally.



So yes, while it was always in the back of my mind to expand our reach beyond just the dive world, our main focus was on creating meaningful work that we fully owned and believed in. Now we do all sorts of things—collaborating with museums, working with TV and documentary productions, and reaching a much wider audience. It's all about sending these little satellites—these pieces of our work—out into the world and seeing the reactions and connections that come back. It's magical and really rewarding.

Your videos are extremely well edited with great soundtracks. Is that part of the post processing something you get heavily involved in?

Oh, absolutely. I think post-production is one of the most underrated parts of underwater filmmaking. A lot of people think it's all about capturing the footage, but for me, the real creative magic starts after you've filmed everything. You come back with all this raw material, and now you get to puzzle it together into something that expresses exactly what you want.



I would imagine that you have used a wide range of underwater imaging equipment based on the job in hand but is there one system which caters for most of your requirements?

I think this topic can get a little over-discussed because sometimes people think having the latest and greatest gear is what makes a great video. That's really a misconception. For me, it's less about the specific piece of equipment and more about how comfortable you are with it. The gear should feel like an extension of yourself so you can focus on capturing those creative ideas rather than fighting with the camera.

That said, I do use a wide range of tools. I'll shoot with everything from small action cameras or 360 cameras to mirrorless or big cinema cameras, even drones. My personal go-to for most underwater work is the RED Monstro full-frame camera. It's not the newest model out there, but it shoots in 8K RAW and gives me a ton of flexibility in post-production. I love that I can handle things like white balance afterward and really focus on the creative side when I'm actually underwater.

Of course, it's a heavy camera and not something I'd use solo without a team to help manage it, but I've gotten used to it and it's my tool of choice. It's not always about having the latest gear; it's about having the gear that lets you bring your vision to life in the most seamless way. So that's the "weapon of choice" I rely on.

Is there a long term plan for Behind the Mask and how far ahead do some of your projects take to come to fruition?

Essentially, my main focus for the future

of Behind the Mask is to build a strong, thriving community of underwater filmmakers and photographers who really identify with the spirit of what we do. We're launching the Behind the Mask Academy and starting with our first big trip to the Maldives. That's just the beginning. We're talking to everyone who applies, figuring out their goals, and helping them find the path that suits them best. It's really about guiding people to the next level, whatever their individual challenges are.

In the long run, I want to create a physical hub right here in the Azores. That means people can come, spend time in our environment, and really learn everything from underwater filming and storytelling to editing and conservation storytelling. It's all about reducing a bit of my own travel, having a stable place where we can welcome people, and cultivating a community that really makes a difference in how people perceive and love the ocean.

So that's the future I'm excited about—building that strong, supportive, and powerful community that brings the love for the ocean into everyone's heart.

Thank you Florian for such informed and insightful answers. I am sure they will be inspirational to many underwater photography readers.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

www.behind-the-mask.com
www.behind-the-mask.com/academy/

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It doesn't even matter if everything went as planned when you were shooting. Nature is unpredictable, and the ocean's always going to throw surprises at you. So I love going with the flow and then, in the editing room, looking at what we have and turning it into something unique. The editing is where you control the emotional value, the pacing, the music, the narrative—everything comes together there. It's honestly the part I love most, because you get to shape the final story in a way that really moves people.

So yes, I'm very heavily involved in that part of the process myself, and it's where I feel like we really bring the heart of our work to life.

Beneath Irish Seas

The journey to publishing a book of my underwater photography

By Nigel Motyer

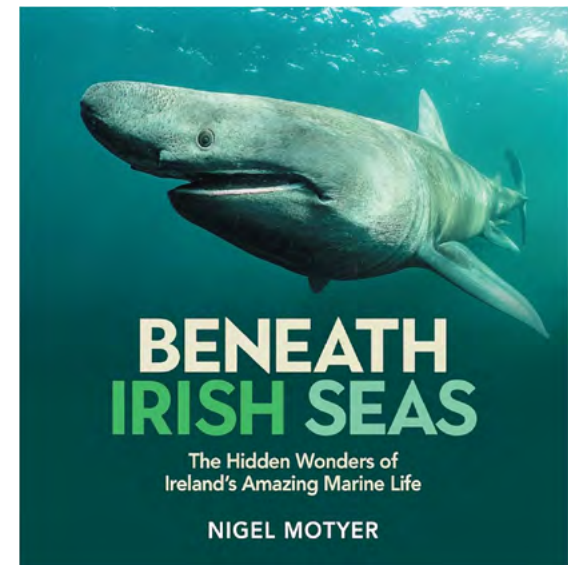
They say everybody has one good book in them, I kept mine hidden for a long time; even I couldn't see it. It was only one day when I opened Lightroom and it gave me a message that said my catalogue was too big to export that I began to wonder, a bit of a nag in the back of my mind, why do I take so many pictures, and what am I going to do with them?

Like most photographers, I had thought about producing a book over the years but I couldn't quite see beyond the idea that it was just a part of me that wanted to see my pictures in a published collection, I didn't see the story, I couldn't hear the message, in short, I couldn't ever quite see the point.

So roll forward a few years and I was doing a story on basking shark aggregations off the west coast of Ireland and the journalist I was working with was looking at some images I had on my laptop. She couldn't quite believe that Ireland's marine world was so colourful. That's a reaction I

A reef wall showing the stunning colours and biodiversity of a west coast Reef. Valentia Island Co Kerry, Ireland. Nikon Z8, 8-15mm lens Nauticam housing, 2 x Kraken KS160 strobes. 1/50th @ F7.1 Iso 1000

A Blue Shark shadowed by a curious Common Dolphin. Offshore, west of from the Aran Islands. Nikon D750, 16-35mm lens, Nauticam housing. 1/125th @ f9 ISO 1600





A split shot of a curious Grey seal approaching the camera. Dalkey Island, Dublin Bay, Ireland. Nikon D850, 16-35mm lens, Nauticam housing. 1/400th @ F10 ISO 500



A Crayfish sit just below the Kelp line at Black Rock, Co Mayo, Ireland. Nikon Z8, 8-15mm lens Nauticam housing, 2 x Kraken KS160 strobes. 1/60th @ f6.3 ISO 200

get a lot but she suggested I should consider doing a book. Knowing that she had authored a number of books herself, I asked her, if I did want to do that, how would I go about it? She said if I was interested, she'd make an introduction to her literary agent and I could talk to him.

I remembered a conversation I'd had with a good friend of mine who works in our national broadcaster. He was asking about my photography and was wondering what it was about underwater photography that had me so hooked? I told him that

it was the actual challenge of taking a creative image underwater that I loved more than the showing of them afterwards. He told me, that as a commissioning editor, he has found that the really creative work comes when the creator approaches it from an audience perspective, he went further, he thought that you can't be really creative if you are not thinking about an audience's perspective. By now the idea of a book was becoming a little more real to me and I started to really think about what a book would look like and how I would present the

concept to somebody who had never been underwater before. In short, I started to think about the audience.

The idea was really still just a desktop exercise but, one day when I sat down to try to figure out what I was going to do with this oversized Lightroom catalogue and not being overly techy, it was starting to look like a painful job so, like when starting all hard jobs, doing something else looked like much a better idea and I started to go through the images and see what was really worth keeping. This time though, I was

trying to look at the images with a different perspective, I was trying to find pictures that others would find interesting. I didn't really know it but I was trying to find my audience's eyes, pictures that told those who'd never dived, my story, the story of what it was to be beneath Irish seas. The place I'd spent a good portion of the previous forty years.

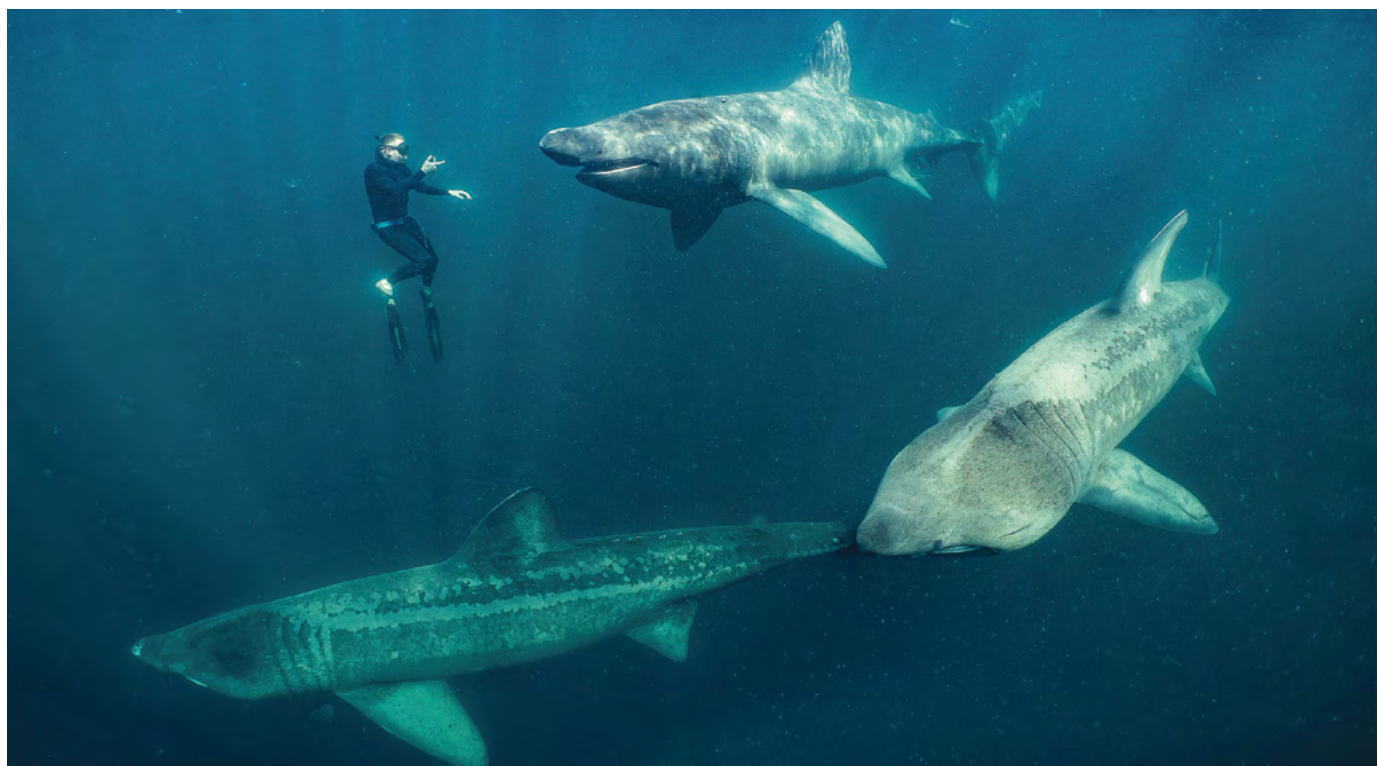
I started to think about a presentation, in my head I think it was more a power point presentation at that stage, but that allowed me to select images I hadn't looked at in years and

build a fresh story. Images that would tell a tale or reveal the colour and diversity of the underwater world around our coast. Once I'd selected a portfolio of about 100 images, I decided to see how I would present them in a book format to showcase Ireland's coastline in a way that in the first instance, would surprise and hopefully draw in a non-diver.

I downloaded the software for an online photobook service and set about laying out the images. Almost without knowing it, I had moved from the challenge to myself to make images I rated, to images that told a story that built a narrative or moved a unobvious point along. It was totally different perspective and it really surprised me how much this changed my view of my own images. Pictures I had previously liked became less impressive; images I had forgotten came back into my head and I was constantly searching through the collection to find an image to illustrate something to an invisible audience largely in my head. It was absolutely true that having an audience in my mind made me much more demanding of myself.

The process of making my online book was really enjoyable but knowing when it was finished was tricky. In truth I could probably still be stuck on that phase now but something my son told me stuck in my head. He was going for a job and had just come back from his first proper challenging corporate interview and was relaying the questions he'd been asked and he told me an impressive line he'd thrown into one of his answers. "Progress beats perfection every day of the week". With that in my head and expectations high, I hit submit and waited for the book to arrive.

When I did though, I was pretty disappointed with the reproduction, it fell way short of the quality I had in my head, all I could see was the colour



Its only when you see a diver beside an full adult basking shark that you can appreciate the size of them. Adult Basking sharks can grow up to 12 meters long. Nikon Z8, 8-15mm lens Nauticam housing. 1/125th @ f9 ISO 1600

shifts, the greens were wrong and the blues lacked contrast. Print settings set for mass production of holiday snaps couldn't handle the subtlety I had seen on my Mac screen. However when I showed the book to folks around me, they largely didn't see the issues I saw, so in the spirit of "Progress over perfection" I decided to call that literary agent and set up a meeting.

A couple of weeks later I'm sitting across the table from him, pitching the idea of a book showing Ireland underwater. Ten minutes into the conversation I could tell that he was setting me up for a gentle decline to take on my project. The idea of Beneath Irish Seas wasn't grabbing him, I

could feel him slipping away. In fairness he was a serious player in the literary world representing some of the very best journalists around, global names with incredible life stories, famous memoirs and important stories that had to be told, my pitch wasn't landing, not until that is, I took out the book I had made up. He sat up, flicked through it, then again, this time more slowly, he looked me in the eye and said that he only agreed to take the meeting as a favour to the journalist who introduced us, he said he was getting ready to let me down gently, until that is, he saw the book. This surprised him and he really didn't know it was like this around our coast, was this really all taken in Ireland? Exactly the



*A Hydrozoa jellyfish. Nikon d850, 105mm lens
Nauticam housing, 2 x Kraken KS160 strobes. 1/150th
@F22 ISO 500*

reaction I wanted. He asked could he keep the book for a few weeks to show it to some people and he'd get back to me.

The following week I got on a plane and went to Indonesia for a month of diving around Raja Ampat and Triton Bay. While there I got an email to say that five publishers had now expressed interest



*Split shot of a diver just below the surface at Hook Head Co Wexford. Nikon Z8, 8-15mm lens, Nauticam housing.
1/250th @f22 ISO 500*

the book! By the time I landed back in Dublin we had two meetings set up and within a week a contract signed with Merrion Press and a deadline for a finished book in only 10 weeks' time! I went from my first introduction into the publishing world straight into a contractual publishing deadline and a race to finish the book in a matter of weeks.

I learned that the production of a book like mine worked on a timeline running back from the Christmas market. The book had to be ready for the wholesalers book buyers in July/August, they would

assess the market suitability and dictate the volume of projected sales and help define the price point. This in turn would help dictate the size of the book and the print run. So time really was of the essence.

The project was now moving out of my hands into a collaborative process with the publisher putting huge time pressure on me and the publishing team now gathering around me. I had to finish the image selection with the designer and write all the text and captions. They had to fact check it, design and focus group a cover wrap



A diver swims past the mouth of a cave in Hook Head, A limestone area in the southeast filled with caves and gullies providing great shore diving, Co Wexford, Ireland. Nikon D750, 16mm fisheye, Nauticam housing. 1/80 @ F3.2 ISO 400

design, lay it all out, taking into account multiple opinions, and proof it in only 10 weeks. Incredibly we did all of that and off the book went to the printers in Dubai. Then nothing. it suddenly felt awfully quiet after all that activity.

One day, while the book was away being printed, I woke up with the sudden realisation that I had never checked the name of the book to make sure it wasn't used by somebody else. Of course the publisher had done that already but I didn't know that and I grabbed

my phone and googled it and to my surprise my book was the first five or six returns. It was even available for pre-order. All of sudden it was real and publication was imminent.

I'm typing this the week before the book launch, I only saw an actual hard copy of the book myself a few days ago. Sometimes I do get the jitters about it coming out, this is something I've spent a good portion of my life building and now it's days away from being out there to be judged and criticised. You get one shot at a first book, that's a little



A Male Cuckoo Wrasse swims through Kelp in Donegal, in the North of Ireland. Nikon D750, 16-35mm lens, 2 x Inon z330 strobes Nauticam housing. 1/60th @ f6.3 ISO 200

nerve wracking. I hope people enjoy it but you never know. The publisher had asked me who I'd like to invite to review the book and despite the nervousness about what they'd say, I thought of the underwater photographers I most admire, in for a penny I thought, they can only say no, so let's just ask them.

We didn't have an actual book to show them but Brian Skerry and Alex Mustard both generously agreed to review a PDF version of the book. Having those two guys review the book made me even more nervous,

but they were both so kind, generous and encouraging with what they said.

I had worked with Brian on a National Geographic story on Ireland's marine world way back in 2003 and 2004 and I'd met Alex a few times and we've frequently visited the same places and even shouted hello's from one boat to another on occasion but we'd never actually travelled or dived together.

Their kind words came at a time when we'd just spent an intense 10 weeks pouring over and debating every minute detail of every image in



A typical west of Ireland reef scene, a diver over a Crayfish on a yellow boring sponge. Panasonic Lumix GH5, 14-42 Panasonic lens with Nauticam WWL B supplementary lens in a Nauticam Housing. 2 x Keldan 15K lumens video lights. 1/60th @6.3 ISO400 I spent a summer shooting images with constant light rather than strobes. It was an interesting challenge. 1/60th @6.3 ISO400

the book and I needed some positive affirmation about the finished article so I am hugely grateful to them both for giving their time and their support of the book in the way they did.

The funny thing was that in this period, after the book was signed off and gone for printing, I was still diving and taking pictures. All through the summer I was still shooting but I

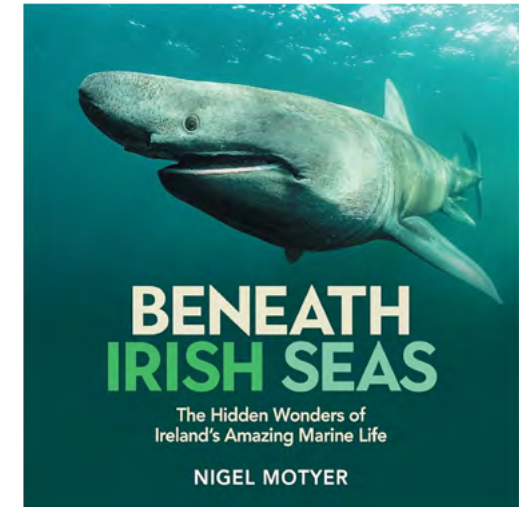
noticed that the way I shoot images has now distinctly changed. I'm much more selective on what I shoot and my post dive edit is much more brutal.

Fans of the Seinfeld sitcom will remember Elaine asking the question was an individual "sponge worthy". I am now asking is an image "catalogue worthy"

The process of selecting images



A Butterfly Blenny hides in Killary Fjord, Connemama, Co Galway. Taken with Nikon D750, 105mm macro lens, 2 x Inon z330 strobes, Nauticam housing. 1/15th @f13 ISO100



www.amazon.co.uk

from my back catalogue has made me much more picky on what now goes into the catalogue. I spend more time getting the lighting right, looking at the composition, things I was vaguely paying attention to now become much more front of mind before I trip the shutter.

I think I'm becoming a better photographer, and it only took 40 years!

Nigel Motyer
Instagram



www.uwpmag.com

South West Rocks: Where Currents Meet

by Nicolas Remy

When fellow divers find out that underwater photography is what I do for a living, the conversation almost always leads to one question: What are your favourite places to dive?

After years of diving across tropical and temperate waters, my top-five list always includes these three words: South West Rocks.

This unassuming coastal town, nestled on Australia's mid-north coast in New South Wales, sits in the heart of the Great Southern Reef—a vast chain of temperate ecosystems stretching thousands of kilometres around the southern half of the continent. South West Rocks is the gateway to Fish Rock, a lonely island two kilometres offshore that shelters an astonishing diversity of marine life and the world's longest swim-through ocean cave simply known as Fish Rock Cave, with 125m in length. Declared a Mission Blue Hope Spot in 2021, it's one of those places where tropical and temperate species cross paths, carried by the currents that define the region.

With just 5,500 residents and limited urban development, South

West Rocks has kept its easygoing, small-town charm. There are no high-rise buildings here—mostly low-slung houses, pristine beaches, and the lush green of surrounding national parks. Kangaroos sometimes graze by the roadside, cockatoos screech from the trees, and white sea-eagles are regularly spotted when you take a stroll by the ocean.

The Road (and River) to the Rock

Every dive trip begins the same way: loading the boat on the Macleay River, under the curious eyes of pelicans, then cruising downstream toward the open sea. The ride to Fish Rock takes about 30 minutes, an opportunity to admire a stunning, untouched coastline, where rolling green hills and golden sandy beaches stretch as far as the eye can see. There are no construction in sight for dozens of kilometers, except for the white beacon of Smoky Cape Lighthouse. It's a rare and calming landscape, perfect for daydreaming, only occasionally interrupted by dolphins passing by or a humpback whale spotted during its migration (between May and



Grey nurse sharks in the entrance of Fish Rock Cave. Nikon D500, Tokina 10-17mm, 2x Inon z240. Nauticam housing. 1/160, f/8, ISO 320



November).

With such a view, the boat ride goes by in a flash—provided you're not prone to seasickness (don't forget your tablets if needed). Before long, you'll spot Fish Rock, a rocky outcrop rising from the Pacific, and the only island in sight for miles. Time to zip up the wetsuit: the real magic lies below.

A Crossroads of Currents

Fish Rock may look small—barely 170 metres long above water—but beneath the surface it expands into drop-offs, gullies, and canyons plunging to 35 metres. It lies directly in the path of the East Australian Current, the same "EAC" that Marlin and Dory surfed in *Finding Nemo*. This warm current sweeps south from the Great Barrier Reef, bringing with it a shifting mix of nutrient and some migratory species.

The island's resident celebrities are the grey nurse sharks (*Carcharias taurus*), which are also called sand tiger or ragged tooth sharks outside of Australia. Dozens can usually be most of the year except for a few weeks where the water gets too warm (around February-May). Gliding slowly through gullies or hovering in the lee of the rocks, these sharks spent the day resting, half-asleep to conserve energy. They only fully wake up at night when they may go hunt for a meal, their diet includes fish, as well as cephalopods, crabs and lobsters. Despite their toothy, intimidating grin (they can't fully close their mouth), they are harmless to humans, unless provoked. It's one of the most photogenic shark species, and one that you can approach near touching distance without any baiting, provided you remain calm and minimise any movement.

Sharing the same real estate are two of



Grey nurse sharks aggregating. Nikon D500, Tokina 10-17mm, 2x Inon z240. Nauticam housing. 1/250, f/9, ISO 320

the largest wobbegongs species in the world (the spotted wobbegong and gulf wobbegong). These are cousins of Raja Ampat's iconic tassled wobbegong, only much bigger, with some individuals reaching 3 meters in length. Despite their laid-back appearance, these carpet sharks are ambushed predators and can launch a lightning-fast strike passing prey. They are a near guaranteed sighting all-year-round at Fish Rock.

Out in the blue, bronze whalers, bull sharks, and even scalloped hammerheads may occasionally be spotted swimming by. During the hammerhead season from October to January, schools of two hundred individuals been sighted by lucky divers. The water gets at its warmest in March, which brings the elegant leopard sharks, found either resting on the sand or swimming gracefully. Another photographer's favourite is marbled stingrays, the

size of dining tables, which are found cruising around the rock and through Fish Rock cave during the whole year. Blue groper patrol the reef and will approach you at arm's length, as they used to be fed urchins by divers. Turtles, eagle rays, cownose rays and the occasional XXL Queensland grouper complete the picture at different times of the year.

Fish Rock really is a wide-angle playground, though there are various nudibranch species, a few anemonefish and even the odd blue-lined octopus seen from time to time, if you must get your macro fix.

Even though the EAC flows North to South, wind, swell and Fish Rock's topography means currents are ever-changing along the dive sites surrounding the island. A location that's calm in the morning can be swept by strong flow in the afternoon. Visibility may vary anywhere from three to thirty metres, shifting with plankton blooms, rainfall, or changes in wind and swell direction. These fluctuations constantly reshape the sites, ensuring that no two dives are ever the same. I once watched the water transform from clear blue with twenty metres of visibility to a green ten within minutes as the current turned—but that murk brought with it a sudden swarm of fish life, including two photogenic leopard sharks! At Fish Rock, there's always a silver

lining, and always something worth photographing. Let's now discuss the dive sites you might be visiting there.

Into the Cave

Nothing defines Fish Rock like its cave, a tunnel that cuts straight through the island from eight to twenty-four metres depth. The upper entrance is a broad, five-metre cavern where wobbegongs are often found resting on the bottom, careful with your fins! When the water cools down and forms a thermocline, grey nurse sharks sometimes move inside the cave seeking warmth, and creating unique photo opportunities.

Entering the cave, you'll immediately feel the surge pushing and pulling—a living breath of the ocean. Depth gauges flutter as pressure waves sweep through, and the pulse of the sea presses gently against your eardrums. The first eighty metres slope gradually into darkness, where torch beams reveal large lobsters crawling across crevices and walls. The tunnel then narrows to a single-file squeeze before dropping ten metres down a vertical chimney, leading into the final horizontal passage.

As you continue, a faint glow of daylight begins to appear ahead, filtering through a shimmering curtain of glassfish that conceal the exit and part as you approach. Beyond them,



My heart started pumping when I crossed paths with this large bull ray in the narrower section of the cave. Nikon D500, Tokina 10-17mm, 2x Inon z240. Nauticam housing. 1/125, f/8, ISO 200

you'll arrive at the bottom of an underwater canyon with steep walls—sometimes patrolled by ten or twenty grey nurse sharks gliding silently, as if welcoming you back to open water. Follow the gorge, and you'll arrive at another of Fish Rock's treasures: Fish Bommies.

Fish everywhere!!

Fish Bommies nearly always hosts dense gatherings of marine life. Here, a mix of schooling fish species – which vary with seasons - swirl in

an underwater choreography that is mesmerising to watch. It's easy to get distracted and lose track of your buddy in this moving maze, but keep an eye to your gauge as some bommies sit in 25 to 30 meters depth. Large wobbegongs lurk surrounded by moving fish and are fantastic photo opportunities.

Further south, a couple of parallel canyons known as the Shark Gutters provides sanctuary to yet more grey nurses. The sandy floors lie around 25 metres deep, the walls



A critically endangered whitespotted guitarfish, resting in the current, off Green island. Nikon Z9, Nikon Z 24-50mm, Nauticam WACP-1B, 2x Retra Flash Pro. Nauticam housing. 1/60, F/11, ISO 250

rising to fifteen. On days of limited visibility, the sharks tend to appear at the last minute and can get your heart rate up! Permanent moorings are setup in this site, and during safety stops batfish sometimes come and hang out with divers there.

The Aquarium, on the island's southern flank, lives up to its name. Between twelve and eighteen metres, the beginner-friendly site is a constant blur of motion, with stripeys, diamondfish, yellowtail scads and other species sweeping in all directions. Within the confusion, a

turtle glides through, a bull ray zooms by or a grey nurse appears for an instant before disappearing into the crowd. The site can be current-swept, but then nearby Shark Gutters or the cave entrance would offer calmer refuges.

To the north lies the Submerged Pinnacle, a reef that rises to eight metres from the surface and attracts all sorts of pelagics and turtles. When current allows, experienced divers can drift along Colorado Pass, tracing the island's northern wall and eventually looping back toward Fish Bommies—a



Schools of fish cross paths at Fish Bommies. Nikon Z9, Nikon 8-15mm fisheye, 2x Retra Flash Pro. Nauticam housing. 1/80, f/13, ISO 320

thrilling navigation best attempted with a local guide who knows how to read the currents.

The Sound of Whales

One of Fish Rock's hidden pleasures is auditory. Between May and November, the calls of migrating humpback whales are often heard as they reverberate underwater. On one dive, the sound grew so powerful I felt my chest vibrate; our skipper later said a whale had passed within a hundred metres. On another, a shadow the size of a bus slid past at the edge of

visibility—silent, majestic, and gone in seconds.

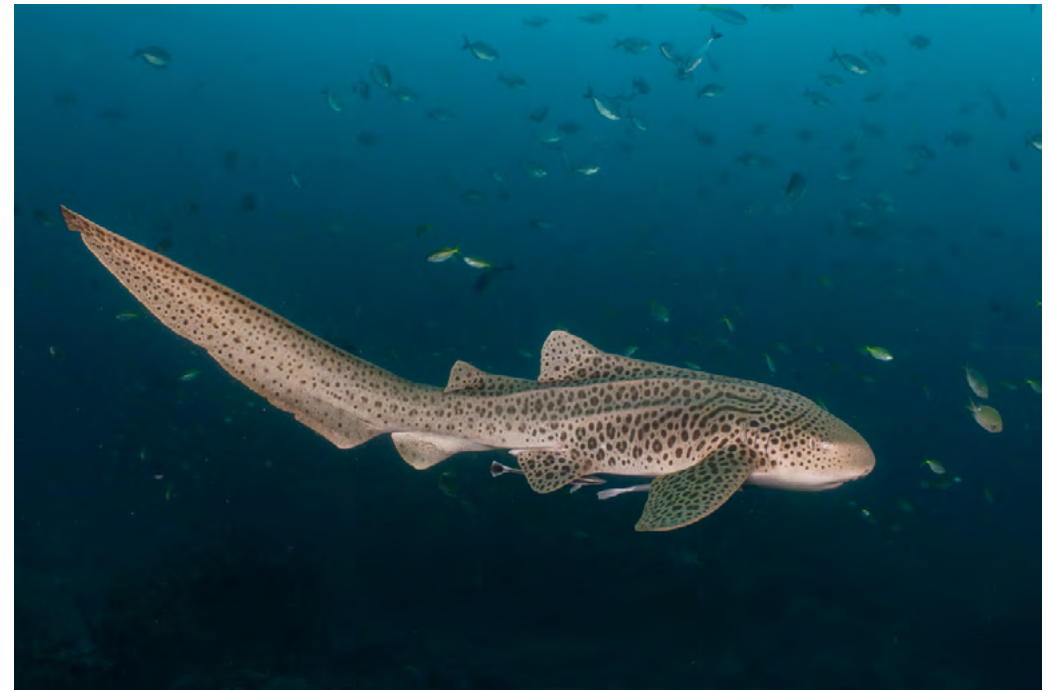
Each dive here feels unpredictable, charged with the sense that anything might appear from the blue. It's that combination of familiarity and surprise that keeps drawing me back.

When the ocean gets agitated

The South Pacific ocean is wild and of course, doesn't always cooperate with dive plans. With no barrier reef to break the swell, rough conditions sometimes cancel boat



An inquisitive blue groper having no idea about personal space! Nikon Z9, Nikon 8-15mm fisheye, 2x Retra Flash Pro. Nauticam housing. 1/100, f/13, ISO 320



The elegant leopard shark passing by. Sony A1, Sony 28-60mm, Nauticam FCP-1, 2x Backscatter Hybrid Flash. Nauticam housing. 1/50, F/11, ISO 400

dives. Fortunately there are still a few good options for outdoorsy travellers. Depending on the swell's direction, a snorkel from the Trial Bay Gaol boat ramp can be excellent for turtles, wobbegongs and small fish schools.

Topside, the region offers plenty to explore. Arakoon and Hat Head National Parks provide walking trails through eucalyptus forest and along stunning beaches that can be surprisingly empty, school vacations aside! Hat Head's headlands are excellent whale-watching spots during migration months. The Smoky Cape Lighthouse offers one of the finest

coastal views in New South Wales, some picnic tables and a good chance to spot a white sea eagle.

Foodies will appreciate the nutty-flavoured oysters farmed in the Macleay, and the local beef is famous across the state. On hot afternoons, join locals for a swim in South West Rock Creek, where teenagers leap off the bridge into the cool water.

Hiding in plain sight: Green Island

Most divers come to South West Rocks only wanting to dive Fish Rock and miss out on Green Island, a

hidden another midway between the town and its iconic rock. With the right conditions, Green island's East flank offers a shallow drift dive between ten and fifteen metres, with marine life surprisingly different from Fish Rock.

If luck is on your side, you may see the critically-endangered whitespotted guitarfish—flat-bodied rays with shark-like dorsal fins that can reach three metres long. They're timid; approach too fast and they'll be gone in the current in no time. During late summer, leopard sharks rest serenely on the seabed there, while we've seen schooling eagle rays

in Winter and chunky Queensland groupers round the year, together with the usual suspects: wobbegongs and bull rays (large smooth stingrays). On a calm day with clear water, this truly is world-class diving.

Planning your trip

South West Rocks lies roughly five hours' drive from both Sydney and Brisbane (both have international airports), or just one hour from the smaller airports of Port Macquarie or Coffs Harbour. Once there, visitors find a mix of holiday parks, motels, and AirBnBs, two supermarkets,



Curious batfish hanging in the shallows. Nikon Z9, Nikon Z 24-50mm, Nauticam WACP-1B, 2x Retra Flash Pro. Nauticam housing. 1/160, F/13, ISO 250



A lone grey nurse shark cruises peacefully amongst a myriad of fish. Nikon D500, Tokina 10-17mm, 2x Inon z240. Nauticam housing. 1/80, f/8, ISO 400

and several cafés and a few good restaurants. Enjoy the welcoming & unpretentious atmosphere typical of an Aussie coastal village.

Diving is possible year-round, but timing shapes what you'll see. Grey nurse sharks peak from end-May through January, migrating South when the water warms above their comfort zone. Hammerheads are occasionally spotted from October to January, while humpback whales are around between May and October. Water temperatures swing from 17 °C in winter to 25 °C in summer, and thermoclines can drop it suddenly.

Visibility, too, can change quickly, part of Fish Rock's changing charm.

Two professional operators—Fish Rock Dive Centre and South West Rocks Dive Centre—go to Fish Rock and know the island intimately.

Conditions can be demanding, but in skilled hands they're managed safely, allowing divers to experience one of Australia's most extraordinary dive destinations. I have done 12 trips with Fish Rock Dive Centre and keep diving with them - we share the same passion for underwater photography. I will be running two 4-days trips with them in October 2026.

Nicolas Remy
www.nicolaslenaremy.com

www.fishrock.com.au
www.swrdive.com.au



www.theunderwaterclub.com



www.uwpmag.com

MantaFest 2025, Yap, Micronesia

By Jennifer Ross

For many of us, returning to Yap each year feels less like travel and more like coming home — home to mantas, coral gardens, and a community that shares our love for the sea. From late August to early September, Manta Ray Bay Resort & Spa, along with Yap Divers hosts an outstanding event called MantaFest. As the name implies, this tiny tropical island paradise in Micronesia comes alive with two weeks of diving, creative photo workshops, and camaraderie. Now in its 18th year, MantaFest 2025 welcomed both returning participants and enthusiastic newcomers from around the world.

On arrival, guests are greeted with hand woven baskets filled with dive goodies and handmade flower head leis presented by local children dressed in traditional attire. It is not unusual to feel as though you have stepped back in time as you get a real taste of Yap's people, heritage, and rhythm of life.

Dive. Learn. Create. Repeat.

At the heart of MantaFest lies its signature photography workshops

- a dynamic blend of daily dives, workshops, and creative sessions. This year's event was led by a trio of world-class professionals: David Fleetham, Tim Rock, and Logan Wood. Between them, these mentors bring decades of underwater photography expertise to the table, covering everything from wide angle storytelling to post-processing and cinematic video techniques.

Each day unfolds with two morning dives, followed by a delicious lunch aboard the S/V MNUW, the resorts repurposed sailing vessel turned floating restaurant. Afternoons bring hands-on seminars, one-on-one photo reviews, and professional photo processing techniques using the latest image rendering software. For those who still have a hankering for more - a variety of dusk, evening, and night dives are optional offerings.

The Manta Ray Capital of the Pacific

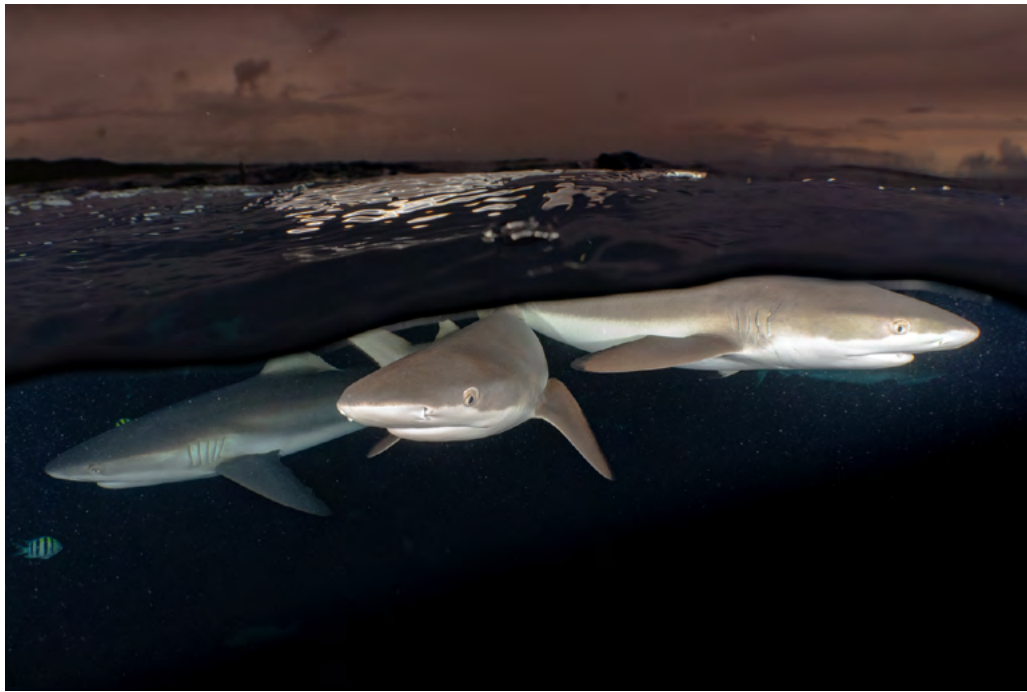
Yap's gentle giants - its resident manta rays - remain the crown jewels of any dive trip here. With wing spans reaching up to 20 feet, these graceful creatures glide effortlessly



(Best in Show) by Phil Seys.

Presenters. From left to right, Tim Rock, Nicholas "Nico" Erhieisap (Dive Master/boat captain), David Fleetham, Bill Acker, Logan Wood (Ikelite).





Big Animal - DSLR category- First - Bonnie Zalenski

through the cleaning stations and channels that surround the island. Each manta is individually identified by its unique belly markings, making every encounter a personal reunion for divers who return year after year. There's nothing quite like hovering silently while a manta loops overhead, framed by shafts of tropical sunlight.

Diving Beyond the Ordinary

While the mantas may steal the spotlight, Yap's variety of diving experiences offer something for every lens. One local favorite is the Mandarinfish Dive, held at dusk when

these shy, jewel-toned fish perform their mesmerizing courtship and mating dance - a burst of color and motion that challenges even seasoned macro photographers to capture the perfect shot.

Equally unforgettable is Yap's Vertigo Shark Dive, a thrilling and unconventional encounter that puts divers in the middle of the action. Often, as soon as the boat approaches the site, the sharks begin to gather in a Pavlovian response to the engines hum. Unlike the static setups common elsewhere, Yap's shark dives give photographers the freedom to position themselves as close, or as



Big Animal - Non DSLR category- First - Ella Marie Shew

cautiously distant, as they like. With bait secured in a reef-mounted PVC tube, gray reef sharks and blacktop reef sharks appear by the dozens, circling gracefully in the water column.

For an added creative twist, participants can also take part in Shark Split Sunset Sessions, capturing dramatic over-under images with glowing skies above and sleek predators below. It's the kind of high adrenaline artistry that defines Mantafest's blend of adventure and art.

Adventures in Blackwater

For the third year, Blackwater Diving is offered to those thrill seekers wanting an 'out of this world' experience. Conducted offshore in the inky darkness over depths of thousands of feet, these dives reveal strange and ethereal creatures that drift up from the deep - larval fish, tiny squid, and translucent organisms that look almost alien under a photographer's light. The growing enthusiasm for this otherworldly

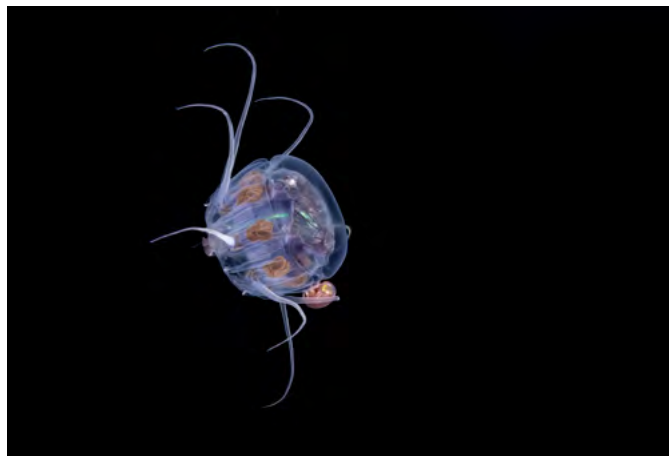


Macro - Non DSLR category- First - Ann Donahue

experience has inspired Yap Divers to begin offering blackwater dives weekly during the calm season (June - mid-November).

Personal Touches

Yap and the Mantafest experience inspires participants to share their talents and gifts with others. Adding an artistic flourish to this year's event



Macro - DSLR category- First - Scott Shew



was visiting muralist Susan Watkins from Alaska who painted a stunning reef scene featuring “Melissa” a known manta ray, and a green sea turtle, alongside beloved dive guide Erwin and boat captain Nico. The mural will forever grace the wall of Manta Ray Bay Resort & Spa for all to enjoy for years to come.

Another delightful addition to Mantafest 2025 was daily sunrise yoga courtesy of visiting diver and yogi Marybeth Kochis from New Mexico. Every



Behaviour - DSLR category- First - Chris Forbes



Behaviour - Non DSLR category- First - Susan Watkins

morning at 5am participants were welcome to gather pool side to stretch and limber up for an hour while Mother Nature painted a breathtaking canvas of Her own in the sky.

Competition and Celebration

Of course, Mantafest isn't just about diving - participants have multiple opportunities to enjoy



Winners - from left to right, Ann Donahue (first place macro, first place topside and second place behavior), Ella Marie Shew (first place big animals and second place macro), Scott Shew (first place video), Chris Forbes (first place behavior and first place topside), Phillip Seys (Best in Show/Grand Prize)



prizes generously provided by event sponsors and partners. Collectively, all of the photo entries capture the unique experience of Yap from every perspective.

Looking ahead to Mantafest 2026

As the final evening drew to a close and the Mantafest “family” gathered for a last time under the stars onboard the MNUW, one sentiment echoed through every conversation: “we can’t wait to come back!” Plans are already underway for Mantafest 2026, promising new workshops, cultural experiences, and of course endless encounters with Yap’s magnificent marine life. For those who dream of warm blue water, world-class diving, and a global community of divers who feel like family - Mantafest 2026 is the place to be!

excursions and photo opportunities topside, too. Yap’s unique cultural stone money banks, village and mountain hikes, coastal walks complete with a festive barbecue to delight the tastebuds are just a few of the land based events. Models in traditional attire are available to add cultural interest.

This years photo and video contest once again impressed the judges with submissions ranging from majestic wide-angle manta shots to delicate macro portraits of Yap’s tiniest critters. Winners walked away with top tier underwater gear and travel

Jennifer Ross has been scuba diving since 1986 and discovered her passion for underwater photography with a point and shoot compact camera in 2021 during Covid. The Mantafest event on Yap holds a special place in her heart and this most recent gathering marks her third time attending. For Jennifer, Mantafest feels like a homecoming, where friends, fellow photographers and the resort owners have become family.



Jennifer Ross
Facebook
Instagram

Basking Shark Aggregations

By Nigel Motyer

You'd be forgiven for thinking that if Nemo was 12 meters long, they'd have found him a lot quicker and it would have been a much shorter film, but maybe not. Basking sharks are huge, but despite their size they are, or perhaps were, very hard to find. I think I was diving nearly twenty five years before I managed to get into the water beside one. Despite their size, man they were hard to find!

Those first experiences were usually in the early season, April or May, just as the plankton blooms were starting and the basking sharks reappeared around the south west coast of Ireland. They would then work their way up the west coast, gather briefly off the northern shores of Malin Head then run up to the Hebrides where they were frequently seen between the islands of Coll and Tiree, just west of Mull. I say reappeared but in truth we didn't really know where they'd been, perhaps they'd never left, perhaps they just went deep to ride out winter storms. Despite these being the second biggest fish in the ocean, very little was known about their lifecycle. That all changed about fifteen years ago.

Basking sharks, or Sunfish as they were sometimes called, were actively hunted in Ireland, the last commercial fishery for them was based on Achill Island but that closed down in the mid 1980's. At the turn of the last century their oil was highly valued and fuelled the street lamps of major European cities but when gas and electricity took



Mating behaviour is generating huge aggregations of sharks and the stretch of coastline from Loop Head up to the Aran Islands seems to be a hot spot. Now, in late summer, hundreds, perhaps even thousands of adult sharks gather at this location, to aggregate, form Torus's and, we believe, mate. Nikon D850, 8-15mm lens, Nauticam housing. 1/250th @f7.1 ISO 800

over that task the fishery became less and less viable, particularly as the populations of sharks declined to perilously low numbers. I remember visiting Achill Island as a freshly qualified diver in 1987 and seeing dead basking sharks tied up floating beside the pier at Purteen, waiting to be rendered and for years there was an old rusting tank of basking shark oil sitting on the pier waiting for the value of the oil to get back to a commercial price.

Not surprisingly, after the fishery closed down basking sharks were a very rare site, occasionally, on really calm days you might spot, a nose, dorsal

fin and a lazy sweeping tail breaking the surface. They had the reputation of being shy, and with good reason, as they likely associated boats with harpooners and kept well clear. On the few occasions in the 80's and 90's that I saw them I never got close enough to see them properly underwater and certainly not to take a usable picture.

As my fascination with sharks of all types grew, I tried a few times to go specifically looking for "baskers" in Ireland but without any real success. It always felt that the Basking shark action was happening somewhere else. For a while the Isle



An earlier image of a Basking shark feeding on krill. The visibility was so bad that I frequently didn't see the shark until it was a meter or two in front of my camera. Nikon D300, Tokina 10-17 lens in an Aquatica Housing. ISO 400 1/80th at F4.5

Of Man was a hot spot and then Cornwall, in fact the first time I saw a really clear image of a basking shark was when Charlie Hood shared some fantastic images he'd taken in clear waters off Cornwall.

Then about fifteen years ago I got a call from a ranger from our National Parks and Wildlife service asking if I could be in Donegal the following morning as they had just come in from a day of tagging basking sharks and they wanted somebody to get into the water and photograph the sharks they were tagging so they could identify

the sex of the tagged sharks. I loaded the cameras and snorkelling gear into the car and made the four hour drive north.

The next day we tagged nearly 60 sharks. I'd never seen anything like it, there were fins everywhere. It was flat calm off Malin Head with big patches of pink Krill in the water and the sharks were in a feeding frenzy. I would hide out in a ball of Krill and wait for the sharks to barrel through with mouths agape. In the ball the viz was two meters, swim outside the Krill and the viz was more



A drone image of a basking shark torus forming. If you look closely you can see a small snorkler in amongst the group giving a sense of scale. The Rib on the top left is 7 meters. DJI Mavic Pro 2. 1/15th @f2.8 ISO 400

like fifteen meters. Just an incredible day. Filled with enthusiasm we went out the following day but after 9 hours searching on the water, covering fifty miles of the Malin Head coast, we saw nothing, not a single shark. It was nuts, how could so many 10-12 meter sharks just disappear in 24 hours, But they did, and I didn't see another basking shark for seven years!

Roll forward to 2016 and we were fifteen miles offshore chumming to lure blue sharks, and hopefully a mako or porbeagle, to the boat, it was looking like it might be a quiet day but as we waited we got a call from a local fisherman to say that he had a group of Humpback whales beside his

boat, he knew we were taking pictures and thought it might be interesting for us. We anchored off the chum and headed the couple of miles to where he was and spent a wild hour watching Humpback whales lunge feeding.

When the whales had dispersed we headed back over towards our chum slick but on the way spotted a couple of fins, I jumped in and was staggered to see what we thought was one or two basking sharks was actually about 12 basking sharks circling just below the surface. This was clearly different to all my other basking shark encounters, there was no feeding and the group stayed



In the torus we found that the sharks are generally very ambivalent to the snorklers, often they were curious and swam towards us underwater and very frequently they would follow us as we swam back to the boat. Nikon D850, 16-35mm lens, Nauticam housing. ISO 800, 250th @F14

in a tight circular formation. We now know this is a Torus, the name given to a basking shark aggregation when the multiple sharks form a nose to tail circle in what is believed to be a mating behaviour.

It really was a remarkable encounter; we spent about an hour in the water with the sharks before they slowly dropped down into deeper water. A little later that day when unsuccessfully trying to

get into a group of Bluefin Tuna, we came across what we thought must have been the same group, in all likelihood though it was probably a different group but basking shark sightings were so rare in our experience, we just didn't believe there could be two huge groups within the same few kilometres of each other.

What we now believe is that the Basking shark population has steadily grown since the ban on



Within a torus we never saw any feeding as the water was mostly reasonably clear but one of two of the sharks yawn and almost look like they are flushing their gills from time to time. Nikon D850, 8-15mm lens, Nauticam housing. 1/320th @f9 ISO 800

commercial fishing came into effect forty years ago, the populations are now recovering to the point that mating behaviour is generating huge aggregations of sharks and this stretch of coastline and from Loop Head up to the Aran Islands seems to be a hot spot. Now, in late summer hundreds, perhaps even thousands of adult sharks gather at this location,



Many of the adults have lampreys attached to them, These ugly parasitic fish use a circle of teeth-like hooks to dig into the flesh of the sharks and feed on their blood. Its speculated that the sharks breaching behaviour may be to try to dislodge the lampreys from their skin. Panasonic Lumix GH5, 14-42 Panasonic lens with Nauticam WWL B supplementary lens in a Nauticam Housing. 1/125th @f6.3 ISO 400

to aggregate, form Torus's and, we believe, mate.

I say we believe, because in truth we don't know for sure that this is what's happening here. I don't believe anybody has actually seen mating happen but we have some evidence that this is what they doing. The sharks are mostly socialising rather than feeding, there seems to be some subtle inter shark behaviours like nodding to each other and some display colour changes, becoming

much paler for periods but without doubt the most obvious and dramatic behaviour is that they jump. At times we were seeing Basking sharks breach around our boat every five minutes. In fact this is the easiest way we found to locate sharks as it's hard to miss a 12 meter shark leaping right out of the water, even from quite some distance. These are huge events, massively energetic and at times very dramatic.

I was in the water a few meters from my buddy when a shark



breached and landed between us. We didn't see it happening but we sure saw and heard the landing. We were completely engulfed in white water but close enough to see some lampreys shaken off the shark by the splash. Researchers continue to speculate why they do this; is it to rid themselves of Lampreys, an eel like parasitic fish that digs into their skin, or is to attract the attention of other sharks? We don't know for sure but it seems to happen predominantly at these aggregations, we don't see it at other times of the year.

My personal view is that these mass gathering events are a mating aggregation and although we haven't seen it yet, at some point in these groups the sharks come together and mate. One of the reasons I believe this is that frequently I can see abrasions on the pectoral fins of the female sharks. When I look through my images and video from these events, you can clearly see the

difference between the males clean smooth pectorals and the abrasion lines on the females fins. We know other shark species mate by the males biting down on the pectoral fins of the females to hold them in place while they fertilise them.

It's a rough process that in toothed sharks can leave the females fairly beaten up. With basking sharks, their teeth are much less sharp but still many of the females show signs of these types of tooth abrasions on their pectoral fins. So we haven't seen actual mating yet but I'm very conscious that the aggregations we have seen to-date have largely been seen and observed at the surface but, using sonar, we could clearly see these groups gathering in deeper waters. When diving in these areas we have swum in amongst huge numbers of sharks gathering on the bottom in the deeper darker waters and I believe that in time, this is where we will see mating occur.

Its funny how things come back to you, but back in 2009 or perhaps 2010, I was working on a BBC production called Waterworld and the underwater cameraman on that show was Doug Anderson of Blue Planet fame and an absolute legend in the underwater world.

One day between dives we were chatting and he told me he'd seen this unusual basking shark behaviour up in



A split shot of a basking shark near the surface. Nikon D850, 8-15mm lens, Nauticam housing. 1/160 @f6.3 ISO800

Frequently when sighting only one or two fins on the surface means there are many more sharks in the layers of the Torus below. Nikon Z8, 8-15mm lens Nauticam housing. ISO 2000, 250th @ F8

Malin Head. It became a little segment in one of the episodes of the show, but looking at it now, clear as day, it was a basking shark torus, before we even knew that was a thing Doug had filmed it while freediving, complete with a breach captured on camera too, probably the first time that torusing and breaching in Basking sharks had been filmed anywhere in the world. We didn't know it then but perhaps it was an early sign of the

recovering populations.

For shark enthusiasts the good news is that since those first sightings of Toruses back in 2010 and 2016 it has become more common to see this event. In the last four years, at the end of the summer, if the weather is calm, big numbers of sharks are seen from the cliffs around Loop Head.

The growth of Instagram wildlife enthusiasts and drones has seen our feeds flooded with video clips of

shivers of basking sharks (yes, that's the collective noun for basking sharks) around this time and while this is lovely to see it brings home the need for sensible protection efforts for these areas.

There is no doubt this location is a basking shark hot spot with global significance for their populations. It's critical that both the sharks and these areas are given protection and in a positive step towards this in 2022 the Irish government passed legislation to give the sharks protected status.

In October 2022 they were added to the list of protected species in the 1973 Wildlife Act and a code of conduct was published on how to safely interact when in the vicinity of the sharks. Now, if you want to photograph or film the sharks you must apply for licence to do so from the Irish National Parks and Wildlife Service. It couldn't come at a more important time too as although commercial fishing for these sharks has stopped, other dangers still remain.

This year my buddy filmed a couple of dead



basking sharks on the bottom after they had been caught in a tangle net, drowned and dumped back into the sea. If these areas are a critical mating location for these still perilously rare animals, we must protect these locations from this type of activity so the fight goes on to get these locations now designated as Marine Protection Areas (MPAs).

In a world where so many of the stories of our bigger sharks are tough to read, massive population declines and brutal over



When we saw breaching sharks but found no sharks on the surface we could see them using sonar on the seabed. Sometimes when diving in these areas a big group of sharks would swim by. Nikon D850, 8-15mm lens, Nauticam housing. 1/250th @f8 ISO 2500

fishing, actually the basking shark story may turn out to be a real beacon of hope. In my lifetime we have gone from nearly killing the last few left, to stopping the fishing, granting them protection and watching the populations recover.

Just this last August in Galway, the Irish Basking Shark

Project ran a conference for Basking shark researchers from all over the world to gather and share their knowledge and data. The thing that struck me was that so many of the researchers from other parts of the world are still struggling to find their sharks.

The Irish experience

tells us there is hope in the recovery efforts. Something we should all feel good about then is that this magnificent fish, the second biggest fish in the ocean is recovering and finally finding a safe haven again, beneath Irish seas.

Nigel Motyer
[Instagram](#)

www.uwpmag.com

BUIPC winning diary

by Kirsty Andrews

Having recently won the British & Irish Underwater Photography Championship for the second year running, UWP Mag asked me to give some insights into the day, perhaps giving away some secrets of my success.

The competition window is 10pm Friday to 10pm Saturday but my trip started a little earlier as my club, the Bristol Underwater Photography Group, had a 4 day charter booked on the Celtic Cat out of Porthkerris, Cornwall.

When BSoUP changed their historic Plymouth splash-in weekend to the BIUPC, taking place all over the UK and Ireland, entrants were encouraged to get together in groups to enjoy the sociable competitive aspect on a micro-scale - the timing of our BUPG trip was coincidental but nice in a way. Some upsides and downsides, as I will explain.

The week before the competition - constant checking of the weather forecast. Winds not great but at least no Easterly which tends to blow out the

whole of the South coast.

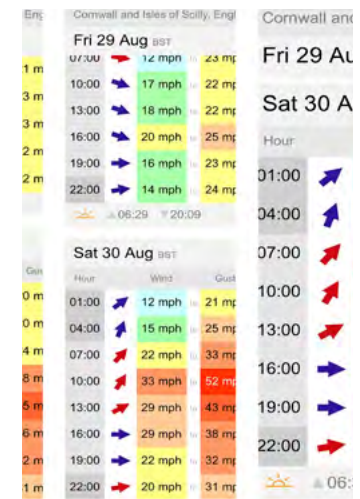
9am Friday - although the competition hadn't yet started, I arrived in Cornwall for day 1 of our charter. Time to get the gear together (I shoot a Nikon D500 and mostly my Retra Pro strobes) and check out the conditions. Two fun dives with our group on the Manacles reefs.

4pm Friday - I wanted to check out the shore dive as well; it had been productive for me before. I chatted to the Porthkerris staff about conditions and recent spots, and Sophie the PK DM gave me foolproof directions to spot an octopus in a den with eggs - massive thanks to her. The only trouble was the den was directly under the boat mooring so was only diveable early and late. But the den and the eggs were very accessible.

10pm Friday the competition opens! I usually do a night dive at this point; I love them and the unique wildlife and behaviour they bring. This time though I was wary of a slight swell, and opted to pass. Nothing to do with the excellent pub grub



Mother octopus and eggs, Porthkerris house reef. Macro winner and overall championship winner. Mother octopus with eggs Nikon D500 in Nauticam housing. Nikon 60mm lens, Nauticam MFO-1 diopter. Single Sea & Sea ysD1 strobe with uwcamerastore fiberoptic snoot. 1/250th, f25, ISO 800



Weather watching



Mankind's impact Highly commended - Lobster sitting outside an abandoned pot on maerl, Helford River. Nikon D500 in Nauticam housing. Tokina 10-17mm lens and twin Retra Pro strobes. 1/25th, f11, ISO 640

Wide angle winner - Common octopus portrait. Nikon D500 in Nauticam housing. Tokina 10-17mm lens and twin Retra Pro strobes. 1/40th, f11, ISO 500

with fellow photographers in the Three Tuns at 7pm...

6am Saturday Feeling cross with myself for skipping the night before, I did at least get up early to revisit the octopus mother (before the boat charters started while access was safe).

I set my camera up specifically for the shot, with my 60mm lens and MFO-1, and a single strobe with fibre optic snoot enabling me to direct the

light into the den. The octopuses pull rocks towards the entrances of their dens so getting close and getting light on the subject is the challenge. Even with my fibre snoot I found myself shooting upside down just to get the best angle. It's important for this shot to get eyes and eggs in focus so depth of field is a challenge and I pushed to f29, with high ISO. The dive was only 20 mins and maybe a dozen shots in total; I knew what



Zooming cuttlefish, Porthkerris house reef. Nikon D500 in Nauticam housing. Tokina 10-17mm lens and single Retra Pro strobe. 1/5th, f16, ISO 160

I wanted and was pretty happy with the results.

10:15 Saturday - The East Narrows on the River Fal, on the Celtic Cat. Reunited with my group and with a macro shot in the bag.

Prevailing winds restricted our site choices but the Fal would have been a great choice anyway.

Lens choice was a real dilemma. I decided to hedge my bets, with my trusty 60mm lens and a versatile combination of a twin flip with CMC-2 and MWL-1 wet lenses (for close-up and a wide, midrange 130 degree field of view respectively). I find this is a

handy set up when I don't know what I'll see, but it's quite big and unwieldy.

The pink maerl beds of the Fal are an absolutely stunning habitat, there's a wall that drops off to 30m+ and the shallows are delightful, especially for macro: crabs, worms etc, or on the larger side, thornback rays and mid-size sharks. We had a very enjoyable 90 minute dive. There's a population of butterfly blennies in bottles that I particularly like here and I spent much of the dive shooting them. It's a good topic for 'mankind in the sea', one of the BIUPC categories. In the end though I didn't enter these



Pair of crawfish on the Manacles reef, Cornwall. Nikon D500 in Nauticam housing. Nikon 60mm lens, Nauticam MWL-1 wet wide lens and twin Retra Pro strobes. 1/30th, f18, ISO 800

shots as I was aware that similar images had been awarded in previous years.

I had some other nice opportunities, like a nurse hound egg case with two shrimp on it, against pink maerl. One oddity in this comp is you can only enter 2 images in total, so image selection is tough.

One of the downsides of diving as a group in an on-the-day competition is that if you're not careful you can all be shooting the same subjects. As

it turns out though we all had very different takes on this dive. Cathy Lewis shot some lovely super-macro of skeleton shrimp which ended up being commended in BIUPC - I didn't see any, having my eyes on slightly bigger subjects.

Dive 3: 90 mins on the Helford river. The winds changed again, but we found shelter in the Helford. I changed to my Tokina 10-17mm fisheye lens, for variety, although visibility was pretty murky.



Butterfly blenny in an abandoned bottle, Fal River. Nikon D500 in Nauticam housing. Nikon 60mm lens and twin Retra Pro strobes. 1/125th, f8, ISO 250

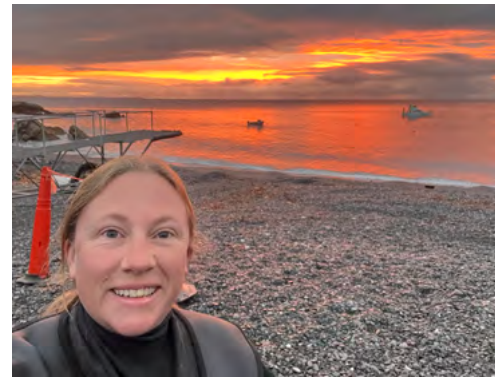
Although for some of my group it's their favourite local dive, for me the Helford river can be hit or miss so thought I'd play around with arty blur techniques in case I didn't find a subject. As it happened I saw a few nice thornback rays, and also found a very old abandoned couple of lobster pots with some massive lobsters hanging out next to them. These ended up one of my favourite shots of the day.

For an on-the-day competition, this type of diving is a bit of a gamble as although I've dived these sites many times, I was relying on a subject

appearing when I needed it. I'm an optimist and an opportunist though, so happy to take the chance.

3pm Saturday. Several of the group including me had planned a shore dive to finish off the day, but when we got back to base, lunchtime rain combined with the consistently strong winds meant, to quote the staff, "you couldn't see your hand in front of your face". I took the hint and opted to take a look of my shots of the day instead, hoping I'd got them in the bag.

6pm Saturday I was happy with my macro shots but not particularly



wowed with my wide angle effort. Astonishingly, divers had just started to surface from the shore reporting 5m or so viz - the tide was rising and bringing clean water in. So, I thought I'd give it one last try.

Funnily enough this is exactly what happened last year, when I wasn't quite satisfied with my efforts, went in for a final dive in dusk light and shot the winning photo of an ICM cuttlefish. It made me late for the group BBQ but was worth it!

This time, the viz was surprisingly ok with my favourite Tokina 10-17mm, but there weren't many subjects about. I revisited spots I knew and saw some nice crawfish but no special shots. On my way back at the end, finally, a lovely octopus, in the kelp. It moved away from me but pretty slowly and steadily, investigating nooks and crannies in the kelp covered rocks. In order to get the camera as close as possible, I set up for a vertical shot and then shot close-ups blind 'from the hip'. This meant

lighting was a bit of a gamble due to the thick kelp, but as the octopus emerged at the top of a rocky section, I got the portrait I was looking for. And was late for the group BBQ for the second year in a row, but it was worth it.

All in all, it was, as it turned out, a successful day competition-wise but importantly I was able to enjoy the group experience and concentrate on images for the competition at the same time. Pub grub and BBQ's topped a perfect weekend.

Kirsty Andrews
www.kirstyjandrews.co.uk

Instagram



6th Think Pink Photo winners

by Allison Vitsky

The Sixth Think Pink Photo Competition announced its winners, celebrating underwater photography. In the Macro category, Joanna Chen won first place with a goby portrait. Andrea Michelutti won the Wide Angle category with a stunning reef photo. This competition raised over \$8000 for cancer research and support.

www.diveintothepink.com



First Place - “Pink Harmony” - Andrea Michelutti (Italy)

Red Sea, Egypt

Sony RX100 Mark VII, Marelux housing,
Marelux Aquista 100 wide-angle wet
lens, dual Inon Z-330 strobes (f/10,
1/2000s, ISO 500)

“This coral fan, teeming with hundreds of glassfish (*Parapriacanthus ransonneti*), was exactly the kind of scene I had been looking for. I wanted to shoot the moment where the pink of the coral blended seamlessly with the pink of the fish, set against the clarity and light typical of the Red Sea. It took several dives, and a fair amount of patience, to find the position where the animals could “converse” with the sunlight. I got as close as I could without disturbing the school of fish, preserving the delicate quiet that defines moments like these. Moving slowly, I took a few shots to capture this pink-on-pink composition, complemented by the blue sky and the splendid Egyptian sun.”



First Place - “Egging Me On” - Joanna Chen (Australia)

Tulamben, Bali, Indonesia

Sony a7R Mark IV, Sony FE 90mm f/2.8 Macro, Seafrogs housing,
Nauticam SMC-1, Backscatter Mini Flash, Weefine Mini Gear (f/22, 0.8s,
ISO 64)

“Anyone who knows me knows pink is my favorite color of all time—so why not incorporate that into photography? I made it a mission in Tulamben to experiment with creative lighting and slow shutter on a variety of little critters. This shot was taken of a common ghost goby (*Pleurosicya mossambica*), which, as the name suggests, is quite a common sight in Indo-Pacific waters. However, what makes this particular subject stand out is its eggs, laid on a stunning blue tunicate. The vision I had was to ensure the eyes and the eggs of the goby were sharp, while creating a contrasting color palette with the blue of the tunicate against pink lights, and adding background blur with slow shutter. Setting up the shot took a lot of patience, waiting for the tiny 2cm goby to position itself right on top of its clutch of eggs, positioning the snout and video lights correctly, and panning the camera with slow shutter to create the trailing light effect of the goby’s fin. The final result proves that even the most common subjects—with creative shooting techniques and the right behavior, can turn out rather striking!”

Underwater Awards Australasia 2025 winners

by Ian Bongso Seldrup

The organizers of the Underwater Awards Australasia 2025—DPG, Underwater Australasia, and UW Images—are proud to announce the winners of the 2nd edition of the underwater imaging competition focused on the Australasian region. The winning entries were revealed on September 6th, 2025, at Go Diving Show ANZ in Sydney, Australia.

The competition called for passionate underwater shooters from around the world to submit their most captivating and compelling images and videos from the Australasian region. Shooters were invited to immerse themselves in the challenge of capturing the essence of this extraordinary realm, where every frame tells a story of the delicate balance and breathtaking beauty that characterises our oceans.

Entrants competed in nine categories for prizes worth more than A\$70,000 in total, including dive trips with the world's top resorts and liveboards, as well as the latest underwater photo and video gear. The prestigious judging panel comprised photo judges Tobias Friedrich,

Jayne Jenkins, Matty Smith, Tanya Houppermans, Scott Portelli and William Tan; and video judges Philip Hamilton and Ross Long.

The overall winner of the competition—the “Best of Show”—is James Ferrara, whose stunning leopard seal takes the top spot in the International Waters category. The other category winners are Vadim Belakhov (Sharks), Neil Vincent (Conservation), Talia Greis (Sydney), Marcia Riederer (Australian), Jake Wilton (Portfolio), Luciano Morales Corinaldesi (Smartphone/Action Cam), Imogen Manins (Tough TG), and Laura Gourgas (Reels Showcase).

The organizers would like to extend their congratulations to all the winners, runners-up and honorable mentions, as well as their thanks to everyone that entered the competition. The organizers would also like to express their immense gratitude to the contest's esteemed judges and generous sponsors, without whom the competition would not have been possible.

www.theunderwatercompetition.com



© James Ferrara | Underwater Awards Australasia

Best of Show: International Waters – Gold “Wide Open” by James Ferrara (USA)

Shooting Location: Antarctica

Equipment and Settings: Sony a7R Mark V, Nauticam housing, 2x ONEUW ONE 160X Mark II strobes (f/5.6, 1/250s, ISO 800)

Photographer's Comment: “When it comes to photographic subjects in Antarctica, the leopard seal sits at the top of my list. Known for their mix of curiosity and aggression, they're a dream subject for any underwater photographer. While these powerful predators often rest on ice floes to conserve energy after a big meal, I was fortunate enough to spend time in the water with this one. At first, it was standoffish, keeping its distance, but as the encounter progressed, it became increasingly curious. By the end, it was opening its mouth and flashing its teeth—a clear display of dominance, a reminder of who's in charge! Though I felt a jolt of nerves, the thrill of experiencing my dream scenario kept me focused, present, and absolutely in awe.”

Australian – Gold

“Minke Elegance” by Marcia Riederer (Australia)



Shooting Location: Ribbon Reefs, Great Barrier Reef, QLD, Australia

Equipment and Settings: Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, Nauticam housing (f/7.1, 1/200s, ISO 500)

Photographer’s Comment: “The sea is calm, I cling to the mermaid line trailing behind the boat. Then, from the blue, a shadow begins to form. It grows larger, clearer—sleek gray skin, a white blaze on the side—and suddenly I’m staring into the eye of a dwarf minke Whale. It doesn’t rush. Instead, it glides in a slow, deliberate arc, as if weighing me up. I stay still. The whale draws closer, its presence filling the water around me. For a moment, I wonder, am I observing it, or is it studying me? Scientists still don’t know why minkes approach humans, but it feels like we are both simply curious about each other. It’s a rare and humbling privilege to share space with such a remarkable creature, a reminder that the ocean is full of wonders and we should take better care of it.”

Conservation – Gold

“Crocodile and Plastic Bottle” by Neil Vincent (Australia)



Shooting Location: Kakadu National Park, NT, Australia

Equipment and Settings: Nikon D850 (f/8, 1/2000s, ISO 560)

Photographer’s Comment: “While watching the crocodiles catch diamond backed mullet at Cahill Crossing, Arnhem Land, NT, a tourist on the bank threw a water bottle into the water near a crocodile. Reflexively, it snapped at the bottle, crushed it a couple of times, and then swallowed it. In the heat of the hunt, crocodiles don’t understand plastic water bottles. I still don’t understand why people use plastic water bottles—and I certainly don’t understand the stupidity of people!”

For full details of all the winning images

www.underwatercompetition.com

Torbay Splash-in 2025

by Tim Allen

The Torbay Splash-in underwater photography competition took place on Saturday, 13th September. Organised annually by Torbay BSAC 0008, the competition is open to all and attracts talented photographers from all over the Southwest. Photographs must be taken in the Torbay area and within a 19-hour period. There are four categories of entry: Beginner, Compact Camera, Wide Angle, and Close-up, as well as a Popular Vote prize.

Fourteen competitors registered and submitted a total of 50 photographs. Tim Allen, Torbay's Diving Officer, noted that strong westerly winds forced most competitors to go around to the more sheltered areas in Torbay, notably Babbacombe and Anstey's Cove.

In the evening, a presentation dinner was held at the Royal Torbay Yacht Club, where all the photographs were shown, and a Popular Vote held to select a 'peoples' favourite'.

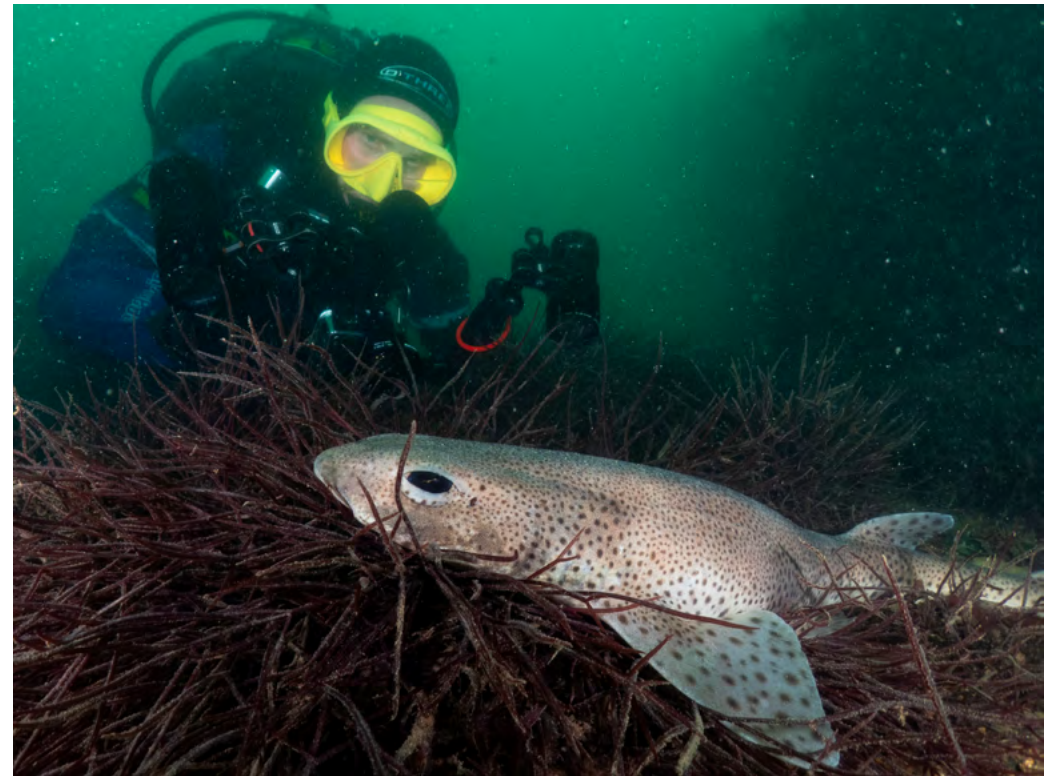
Judging was conducted anonymously by Peter Rowlands, editor of Underwater Photography Magazine, who

remarked that the images were very impressive, given the difficult diving conditions on the day.

Beginner Category

The Beginners' Category is for those who have never won or been runner-up in an open competition before. There was a strong entry this year with 10 photos submitted.

The Beginner First Prize was again sponsored by O'Three, who provided a voucher for 50% off a new drysuit.



Beginner First Prize - Jane Tanasa

Peter Rowlands liked the very nice eye contact and the subject in the foreground, calling it a very powerful shot.

Jane commented: "We came across this patient and possibly sleepy small spotted catshark close by Mushroom Rock at Babbacombe. These beautiful and elegant creatures are always a joy to see and are often very tolerant of divers with cameras! The picture was taken with an Olympus TG7, with a wide-angle lens"

Second Prize - Darran Hill

Darran noted: "The photo was taken under the pier at Babbacombe on Saturday morning. I was focussed on photographing some prawns and getting them used to my video lights when I saw the crab glaring at me. I could get one of my lights behind it which added a nice backlit dimension, so I took a couple of shots before returning to the prawns. The photo was taken on an iPhone 16 in a Sealife SportDiver housing. I also used two Orca 710v lights and a small diopter lens"

Wide-angle - First Prize Dan Bolt

Peter liked this photo the most of the two split-shot photos submitted of dogs swimming. The composition with the dog's face and pose, together with the background, combine for a very striking photo.

Dan commented: "This shot was completely unplanned. While we were kitting up, I saw someone throwing a ball into the sea for this dog (he's called Bailey), and so I quickly found the owners and asked if they would mind me using him as a model for the Splash-in. They were generous enough to agree and we had a good laugh trying to get him to swim in front of the camera. Of the 100-or-so images I took of Bailey, this one had the best eye contact, making it an easy choice to enter. Taken on an Olympus E-PL7 with Panasonic 8mm fisheye in an Olympus housing and a custom dome port in natural light"



Wide-angle - Second Prize Dan Bolt

Dan commented: "Sometimes I do plan a shot and given the prevailing conditions I wanted to try something I'd not done before, a panorama split image. My buddy Kirsty kindly gave some of her time to be my model and it took quite a few attempts to figure out where the light was best, how deep, and far away she needed to be, and how much background I wanted in each image to make this a successful venture.

I'm very pleased with the way it turned out, and it has spurred me on to try this technique again. Taken on an Olympus E-PL7 with Panasonic 8mm fisheye in an Olympus housing and a custom dome port in natural light"





**Compact Camera - First Prize
Tony Reed**

Peter Rowlands noted that this was a very effective shot that grabbed your attention.

Tony commented: "The swan shot wasn't planned at all. I saw an opportunity and took it as I was walking through the town by the harbour looking for anything that caught my eye. A local chap feeds the swans with swan food every day and has done since he was a child, he was telling me. There were a lot there and he said it would be fine for me to get to the water's edge and take some photos"



Second Prize - Tony Reed

Tony commented: "At Elberry Cove I found some nice, coloured seaweed which lit up well in the dark. With that and a break in the clouds for about 40 minutes, I left my camera running in live composite to capture the star trails and then merged the 2. It was all quite rushed due to time and conditions"



**Close-up/Macro - First Prize
Dan Bolt**

Peter Rowlands liked the face-on pose of the two shannies and although they are a similar colour to the background, they still manage to stand out, making a very striking photo. Dan commented: "Given the strong winds from the south on this day, my buddy and I spent the day at Babbacombe. As my buddies and I always say the visibility there always looks good in the shallows, I decided to take advantage of the high tide and aimed to photograph the many shannies on the wall of the small pier in the relatively clear water. You have to be patient in this game, but after a while they grow used to your presence

and I was very fortunate as, just for three photos, these two sat looking at me and on the same focal plane giving me the perfect opportunity to capture their cheeky expressions. Taken on an OM Systems OM-1 with 12-50mm kit lens in an AOI housing and Sea & Sea YS-D3 strobes. I also used a Subsee +5 dioptre"

This shot also won the Popular Vote and Peter Rowlands was happy that the Popular Vote had agreed with one of his first prize awards!

Tim Allen
www.torbay-bsac.co.uk

Swiss Masters in UW Photo 2025

by Fritz Liechti

From 10 to 13 September 2025, Switzerland, and in particular the Verzasca Valley in Ticino, became the stage for one of Europe's most exciting underwater photography events.

Ten of the world's best underwater photographers, including four world champions, competed in an exciting live competition for the best photo in four categories.

The Swiss Masters in UW Photo is structured as a competition modelled on the UW Photo World Championships. The images, taken by some of the world's most renowned underwater photographers, aim to showcase the unique beauty of the Verzasca and encourage viewers to rethink their attitude towards protecting the often heavily polluted waters in their own environment.

The photographers from various European countries and the USA have become ambassadors for river photography and environmental protection.

Who is behind it?

The organiser and director of the Swiss Masters in Underwater Photography is Fritz Liechti. Fritz, himself a multiple and successful participant in national and international underwater live photography competitions, has been a passionate diver, diving instructor and CMAS staff instructor in underwater photography for over 40 years.

The underwater photographers were Dr Alex Mustard (UK), Lisa Svensen (DEN), Jos Broere (NLD), Nuno Gonçalves (POR), Stella del Curto (SUI), Steven Miller (USA), Guglielmo Cicerchia (ITA), Damir Zurub (CRO), Peter Borsch (GER), Pedro Vasconcelos (POR). The jury was Harald Slauschek (AUT), Franco Banfi (SUI), Jean Rydberg (USA), Mirko Zanni (SUI), Tom Peter (SUI).

The first competition day started on Thursday at 9 a.m. with the first dive and the first rays of sunshine in the Verzasca. After a quick lunch, the second dive took



Wide Angle category Lisa Svensen (DEN)



Creative Nuno Gonçalves (POR)

place in the afternoon with a change of dive site. At 5.15 p.m., the photographers had to hand in their memory cards to the IT team. Any deletion or editing of the photos was prohibited and monitored.

On Friday, two more dives were carried out between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. At 3.15 p.m., the photographers had to submit four photos (one photo per category) to the IT team. Then the work of



Wide Angle with Model Guglielmo Cicerchia (ITA)

the five-member jury began.

The photographers went into the water with sealed camera equipment and had to take photos in the following categories: • Wide angle • Wide angle with model • Creative • And the special category “Watch”

After surfacing, any manipulation of the photo was prohibited. In short, pure photography without



any computer editing was required. In an age of countless image editing possibilities – including AI – the focus here is on the photographer. Above all, however, the focus was on the Verzasca.

The competition took place at the R. merbrücke and Misura diving sites under the watchful eye of numerous spectators and Ticino television station RSI.

Diving in the Verzasca

Diving in the Verzasca is very dangerous without detailed knowledge of the dive sites and the current water and weather conditions. Every year,

OVERALL WINNER – DR. ALEX MUSTARD

WIDE ANGLE



WIDE ANGLE WITH MODEL



CREATIVE



Fritz Liechi



Special category "Watch" Peter Borsch (GER)

there are fatal accidents involving swimmers or divers in the Verzasca.

As soon as the current is a little too strong, or the diver swims just a few metres out of the safe area, they can be swept away even at low water levels and become trapped under boulders. Local divers, the Gruppo Sub Verzasca water rescue, or the Hotel Posse in Lavertezzo can provide information on this.

We have all the time accidents with divers without knowledge of the dive sites and water conditions. When there is a thunderstorm up in the mountains the water level can go up in 30 min for up to 4 m. Absolutely deadly.

If enough sponsors can be found, the Swiss Masters in Underwater Photography will be repeated in 2027. Apparently, all the photographers want to come back, which speaks even more in favour of the event. Many thanks to all sponsors, helpers, the municipality of Lavertezzo, the Fondazione Verzasca and the Gruppo Sub Verzasca.

Fritz Lietchi

www.photo-swissmasters.ch

<https://youtu.be/2sSQ6sxoQyQ>



Book Review

Beneath Irish Seas:

**The Hidden Wonders of Ireland's
Amazing Marine Life**

by Nigel Motyer

by Peter Rowlands

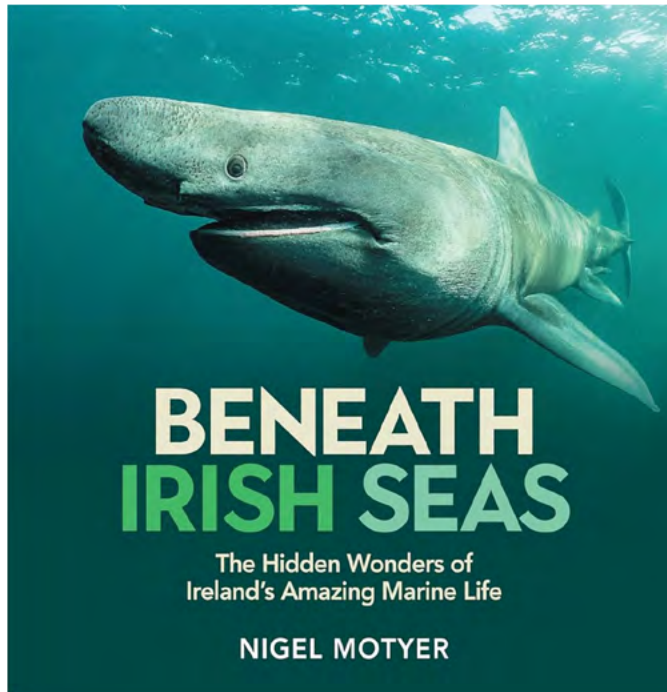
We tend only to review books about underwater photography - techniques, equipment and so on - but this new book by Nigel Motyer breaks the trend and deserves special treatment.

I think it's fair to say that this review will probably not encourage too many sales within the underwater photography community; an underwater photographer rarely relishes receiving a book of another underwater photographers images so this review is to encourage present seekers to buy this book for non divers to show them just how stunning the underwater world is and especially in Irish waters.

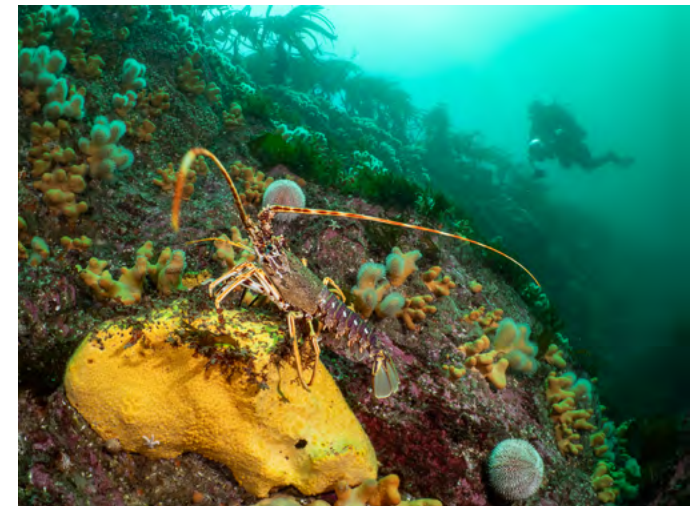
Captured over 4 decades, this collection of images is a celebration of the extraordinary depth and variety of subjects and environments from this isle in the North Atlantic, little visited by travelling underwater photographers.

225 hard back pages, 23cm x 22cm in size, full to bursting with high quality images of the vibrant marine life, where conditions can be trying photographically, from all corners of the isle combine to give comprehensive coverage including excellent topography and aerial images, this book is a testament to an environment which is pristine because it is respected and well cared for.

The subjects are world class - whales, seals and dolphins obviously - but the extraordinary



images of basking sharks are probably unique in the world and, for maybe the first time ever, capture previously unknown group behaviour which looks almost certainly like a mating aggregation. These images are quite breathtaking in the sheer number of sharks, and these are big creatures - the



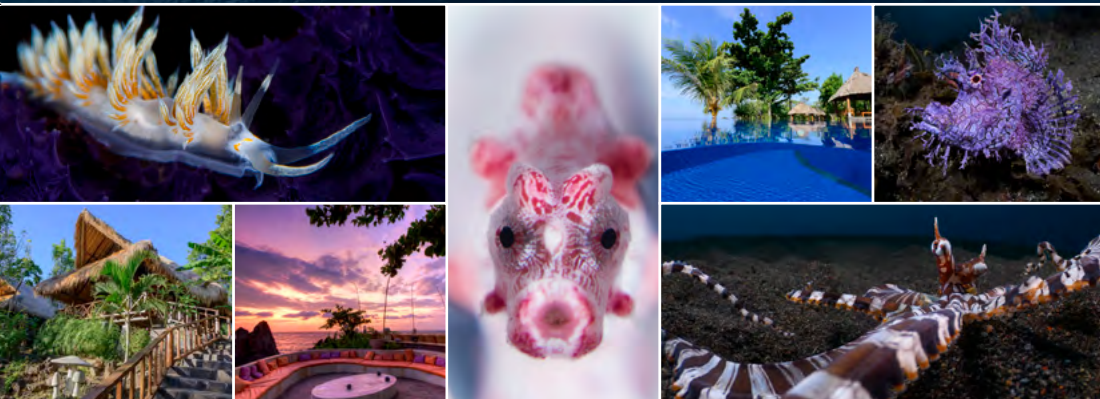
second largest fish in the sea, in fact, but also the compositions capture perfectly how exciting, and daunting, it must have been to be amongst them. This section of images elevate this book to a whole new level and are worth the price of admission alone - €27.99 with the electronic version just €9.99.

Peter Rowlands

peter@uwpmag.com

www.irishacademicpress.ie

www.uwpmag.com

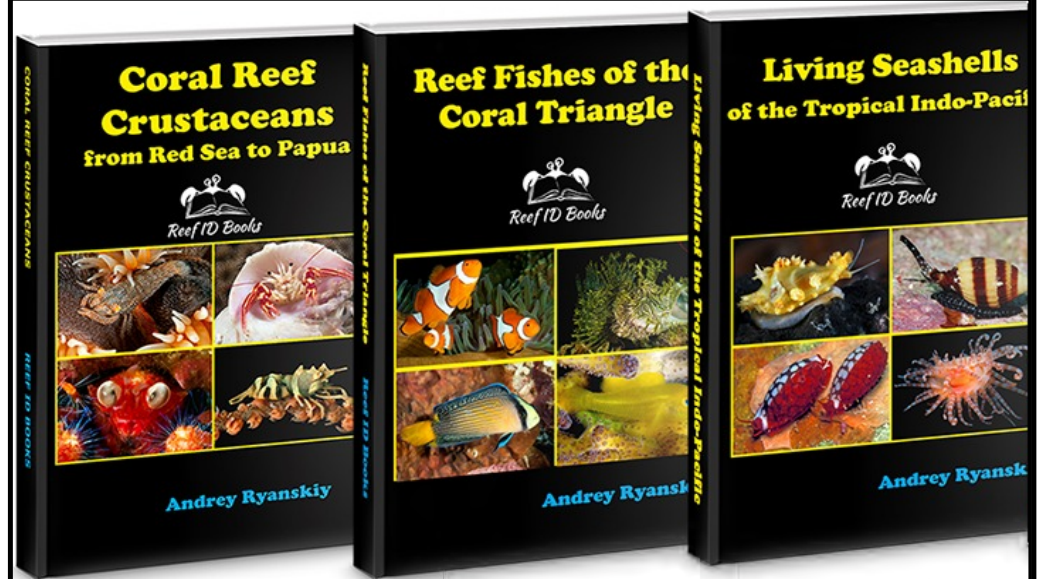


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Marshall's Mysteries 24

Answers on
page 82

Camouflaged Critters. The images below seem to be a study in nothing-ness! But there are often gems in the rubble. This is why most of us need eagle-eyed guides, like the great guide "Man" in Lembeh (@abdulrahmantampilang on Instagram), who I clearly remember showing me "C" below! Can you spot the critters?

A

© Colin Marshall



Raja Ampat, Indonesia

Image about 10 cm across

C

© Colin Marshall



Dili, East Timor

Image about 15 cm across

B

© Colin Marshall / nature in stock



Dili, East Timor

Image about 20 cm across

D

© Colin Marshall / FLPA / Minden



Alor, Indonesia

Image about 10 cm across

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.

Search UWP adverts



FOR SALE – SET of Sea & Sea YS 250 PRO

SET of Sea & Sea YS 250 PRO, incl.diffusers and TCL ball mounts, 2x batteries, 2x chargers (EU and UK). 5-pin Dual Sync cord-1pc, 5-pin Sync Cord N-2pc, 2sets - Double Ball Arm L and M, YS-TTL Converter, spare ... [More >](#)



FOR SALE – Sea Frogs Panasonic GH5 housing, flat and dome port

Brand new and never taken underwater, 40 metre Sea Frogs (formerly Meikon) housing for the Panasonic GH5. Flat port for macro lenses and dome port for wide angle. No zoom or manual focus controls. Prefer sale in the UK and ... [More >](#)



FOR SALE – Aquatica Macro Port & 2 x Sea & Sea YS -120 Duo Strobes

Aquatica Macro Port (Manual & Autofocus) for any DSLR Aquatica housing with the 4 lugs bayonet fitting. £180. Sea & Sea YS -120 Duo Strobes with instructions & one Diffuser they are in good used condition and in full working ... [More >](#)



FOR SALE – Nauticam Na-d800 Housing for Nikon D800

Nauticam Na-d800 Housing for Nikon D800 Excellent condition. Full overall by Nauticam in December 2017, not in the water since. Vacuum check; electronic monitoring circuit installed, no vacuum system. 2000 euros + shipping ... [More >](#)



FOR SALE – Nauticam flat ports and lenses Sony 28mm and 90mm

Nauticam flat port for Sony 28mm + sony lens 28mm +Nauticam flat port for Sony 90mm + sony lens 90mm+Nauticam trigger flash for sony. SOLD Can be sold separately. Total price 1260€ (does not include insurance and shipping) ... [More >](#)



FOR SALE – SEA & SEA MM2 U/W CAMERA WITH ACCESSORIES

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



FOR SALE – Nikon D500 + Hugaftot D500 setup

This one year old set of equipment is in excellent working condition and will serve great to a new owner. The reason for sale is a switch to a new equipment. Nikon D500 (19k clicks). Sigma 10mm F2.8 Fish Eye. 128Gb XQD Lexar ... [More >](#)

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Marshall's Mysteries 24 - Answers

A



Stumpy-spined Cuttlefish (aka Dwarf Cuttlefish; *Ascarosepion bandense*; re-named in 2023, from *Sepia bandensis*). Eye circled in red.

The clearer image below shows the Cuttlefish using one of its two feeding tentacles to catch a Goby.



© Colin Marshall / BluePlanetArchive

Like many Cephalopods, they can quickly change colour & pattern for camouflage & communication, as shown by the pair below.



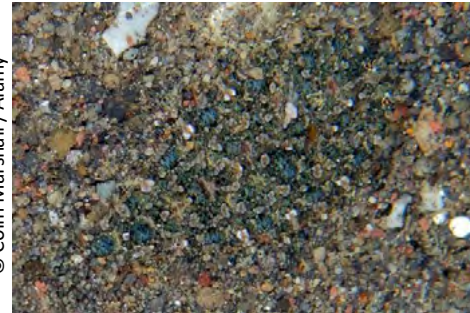
© Colin Marshall / Alamy

B



Blotched Flounder, *Asterorhombus intermedius* (eyes circled in red).

Like Cephalopods, flatfishes can change colour to camouflage, using chromatophores, specialized cells with colour pigments, which can be activated to match the surrounding sand pattern, as shown by the same fish in the images above & below.



© Colin Marshall / Alamy

This Flounder also has a lure (circled below), which is actually the first (modified) dorsal fin.



© Colin Marshall / Alamy

C



Simplex Shrimp (aka Snake Eel Shrimp; *Phyllognathia simplex*), circled in red.

Shown in more detail below, the first, with added detritus to make it even more camouflaged, feeding on a small Sea Star.



© Colin Marshall / Ardea



© Colin Marshall / Alamy

Simplex Shrimps are in the same family as Harlequin Shrimps (often seen munching on large Sea Stars) and, my favorite, Tiger Shrimps. This night dive (in East Timor) is the only time that I have seen the Simplex Shrimp.

D



This is a partially buried Goram Dragonet (*Diplogrammus goramensis*), the eye circled in red.

The image below shows what it looks like when it is not buried in its preferred habitat, sand rubble.

Clearly does not rely solely on being buried; its pattern works well to camouflage the fish even when on the surface of the sand.



© Colin Marshall / Ardea

To see a collection of my favorite images, land and sea, follow me on Instagram (@colintrmarshall).

Guidelines for contributors

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

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

Uw photo techniques - Balanced light, composition, etc

Locations - Photo friendly dive sites, countries or liveaboards,

Subjects -, Anything from whale sharks to nudibranchs in full detail

Equipment reviews - Detailed appraisals of the latest equipment

Personalities - Interviews/features about leading underwater photographers

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

How to submit articles

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

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

2. Images must be attached to the e mail and they need to be 150dpi

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

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

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

My Shot

by David Fleetham

I regularly inspect antler coral for the inhabitants that call these branching structures home. These corals, with their complex lattice of intertwined branches, form an underwater city full of life. Nestled among the crevices, I often discover a variety of residents: tiny crabs clinging to the stems, shrimp tucked into protective alcoves, and small fish darting in and out with surprising agility. One particular family of small gray fish has always intrigued me. They are quick to vanish into the coral maze, their cryptic behavior and muted coloring making them frustratingly elusive. Capturing them on camera, or even just seeing them clearly, is always a challenge.

The difficulty lies in illuminating such a habitat. Light struggles to penetrate the narrow passages of the convoluted polyp maze. To peer inside requires careful maneuvering of strobes and focus lights, a juggling act that often feels like trying to shine a torch into the keyhole of a locked door. But persistence has its rewards.

These mysterious residents are spotted crouchers, *Caracanthus maculatus*. Small and inconspicuous, they are masters of camouflage. Their mottled bodies blend seamlessly with the coral branches, rendering them nearly invisible to both predators and curious divers. Belonging to the family Caracanthidae, crouchers are specialists: they have evolved to live exclusively among stony corals such as antler coral. Their flattened bodies allow them to wedge securely between branches, and their behaviors are adapted to life within this fortress-like environment.

The presence of the spotted croucher is a vivid reminder of how coral biodiversity depends on the health of the reef itself. Without living coral to provide protection and resources, species like the croucher would struggle to survive. Each inspection of these habitats reaffirms the importance of preserving coral ecosystems—because within every branching coral lies a hidden world of remarkable creatures, each perfectly adapted to its coral refuge.



Shot with a Canon EOS R5 mirrorless in an Ikelite dry-lock housing with a Canon RF 100mm macro lens, 1/125 sec, F20, ISO 200, with two Ikelite 230 strobes set on TTL.

Do you have a favourite shot or an image/s which made a dive special?

E mail yours with some text to peter@uwpmag.com

and yours could be the next My Shot/s

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

David Fleetham
www.davidfleetham.com

Parting Shot

by Peter Rowlands

Having had no Parting Shot submissions for this issue, you've got me again and, following on from Nigel Motyer's excellent article about Basking Sharks, I thought I would take the opportunity to dust off this shot from the 1980's off Plymouth.

At the time it was rare to get a full length shot of a Basking Shark and this was taken with a Nikonos V with a specially housed and domed 16mm Nikkor full frame fisheye. This made an especially small and simple to use camera. Aperture priority exposure at F5.6 gave a wide depth of field from about 2ft (60cm) to infinity.

This shot was taken half way out to the Eddystone Lighthouse, Plymouth at a time when Basking Sharks were regularly sighted off the south coast of the UK. That has changed considerable now and sadly sightings are very rare. But on the bright side we are seeing many more Tuna and Octopus!

Discerning eyes will have clocked the grain - this was shot on Agfachrome 1000 slide film which, at the time, was the fastest colour film available. The grain is obviously obvious but, to me, it is more atmospheric than distracting.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com



Snorkelling with an Appollo scooter. Nikonos V, housed 16mm Nikkor full frame fisheye, I'm guessing 1/125th @ F5.6. ISO 1000

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.)

peter@uwpmag.com

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