



Underwater Photography



Jul/Aug 2010



50 years ago underwater photography was something of a dark art practised by a handful of pioneers. Fast forward to today and thankfully things have changed. Now you can capture your adventures in vivid colour with a compact and easy to use outfit that won't cost you a kidney. Where can I get such a wonder? Cameras Underwater of course, we'll even show you how to get the best out of it.

TODAY... ANYONE CAN DO IT



Underwater cameras



Lighting systems



Underwater video

WHAT BAGGAGE
ALLOWANCE?



Thank you: The Underwater Studio and Steve Warren

Cameras Underwater Ltd. Specialist equipment for scuba diving, snorkelling, surfing, skiing, water sports, hiking and all wet and demanding conditions.
www.camerasunderwater.co.uk. Phone: 01404 812277 / 020 7839 1991. Email: sales@camerasunderwater.co.uk

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by Phil Mercurio



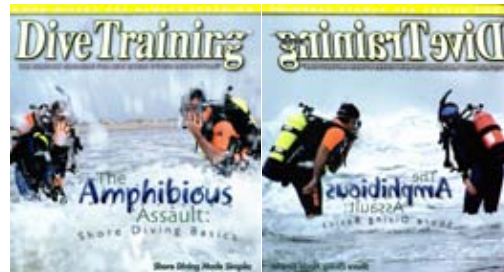
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Cover shot by
Wade Hughes

Underwater Photography
2001 - 2010 © PR Productions
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Editorial

NAUI rights theft competition

Underwater photography seems to have more competitions available to enter than any other type of photography. They are an opportunity to see how the standard of your shots compares and there is always the possibility of winning a prize of either equipment, travel or cash. Indeed some of the more hotly contested competitions only have cash prizes and there is a small band of European photographers who make a tidy living entering and winning such events.

Naturally in such competitions the image is king and the value of a winning entry is enhanced by its raised public awareness because, in addition to the prize money, many winning shots have gone on to be used in advertising, promotional editorials and stock libraries to earn more than the original prize money. What use they are put to is a separate contract regarding copyright but most ethical competitions reserve the right to use winning images to promote the event and future ones.

So far everything seems to be fine but imagine a competition whose rules are designed to acquire “perpetual, non-exclusive rights to use the photo in any way, including but not limited to advertising and promotional use.” I hope, like me, you would consider such a clause as a blatant misuse of a photographers image yet such a competition does exist and is currently being run by NAUI, the thus far respected dive training agency.

The competition in question has been running for 4 years and each year there are grumbles from the underwater photography community but this

year, initiated by Jason Heller of DivePhotoGuide, a written dialogue has been taking place between Jed Livingstone of NAUI and the responses to our complaints about the rules were robust and unrepentant and left us in no doubt that there was no way the rules were going to be changed.

The responses were quite disparaging about underwater photographers who cared about the image rights of those who might unwittingly enter this unethical competition.

‘They don’t have to enter if they don’t want to’ was the stance.

Now he is perfectly entitled to place whatever rules he wants upon competition entries but he must be aware that such rights grabbing terms will be highlighted in the underwater photography media to make sure that those who chose to enter, do so fully understanding the implications.

The world is a changed place even within the last 4 years since his “competition” has been running and underwater photographers know divers, and divers advise those who want to learn to dive and, before he knows it, the word has spread to the very people he wants to attract, that NAUI is run by “businessmen” who use unethical tactics regarding underwater photo competitions. More importantly these newcomers can then be advised that there are other ways to learn to dive. Websites like MySpace, Twitter, YouTube and blogs have become immensely powerful forms of communication which have been used very

effectively to highlight unethical corporations.

My impression is that his mind is made up and he is perfectly entitled to take that attitude but he should be aware that the ability to communicate is very different nowadays and even a very well established corporate identity can be adversely affected by the mass disclosure of unethical practices.

My final concern is for the companies who have been encouraged to donate prizes. I wonder if they were fully informed of the unethical rules behind this competition. I suspect that, if they were, they would retract their prize rather than be associated with such a blatant and unethical competition.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com



NAUI Wants to See You...“Just Dive” in 2010!
Get your camera, get in water, get creative and get GREAT prizes!

Details of the competition you should avoid are at

www.nau.org/ContentDetail.aspx?ID=185

News, Travel & Events

Cameras Underwater presents Martin Edge & Alex Mustard On Underwater Photography

6th November 2010
Imperial College, London.

Cameras Underwater are very proud to present Martin Edge and Alex Mustard On Underwater Photography. Martin and Alex are two of the world's most respected underwater photographers, not just for their creative and award winning images, but also for their willingness to share their knowledge behind the shots. This is your chance to spend a day improving your photography with them.

This special event will see Martin and Alex take to the stage for a full day discussing the techniques, ideas and approach that go into producing memorable underwater images. They will be the only presenters at this event, allowing them to perfectly dove-tail the teaching content and giving them time to talk in detail about techniques. All the talks will be prepared specifically for this event and will be illustrated mainly with brand new images.

In the morning they will take it in turn to present a series of short talks on perfecting classic techniques and creative ideas for images. After

lunch they will host a unique two-man show, both armed with a projector and their Lightroom catalogue, they will showcase their latest experiments and ideas, showing both the finished images and the nearly images that paved the way. This will be a rare opportunity to see the thought process and the refinement of technique that goes into producing stunning images.

Throughout this session they will bounce ideas off each other, not always agreeing, and strongly encourage the audience to get involved. The final session will be a review of your pictures, where Alex and Martin will look at pictures from the audience, giving you direct feedback on how to improve your photography.

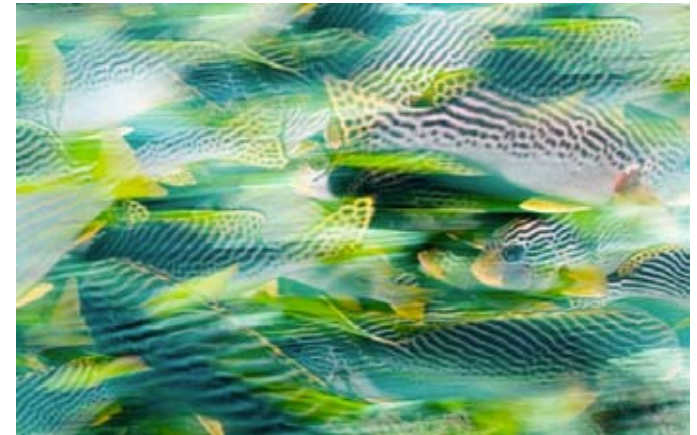
Thanks to the sponsorship of Cameras Underwater, this unmissable event costs just £20, and will be held in central London on 6th November 2010.

Please book early to avoid disappointment.

www.camerasunderwater.co.uk

Tickets cost just £20 and can be bought online from the Cameras Underwater website:

http://www.camerasunderwater.co.uk/store/product_info.php?cPath=209&products_id=1045



Manado's First Annual Fish & Critter Hunt with Ned and Anna DeLoach 16th - 23rd October 2010

On October 16-23, Anna and Ned DeLoach, co-authors of the best-selling series of marine identification field guides in the business, lead an exclusive action-packed week of marine life education and underwater fun with Eco Divers at Kima Bajo Resort & Spa, Manado.

Modelled on the DeLoach's successful Caribbean Fish & Critter Hunt, the activities have been tailored to North Sulawesi's world-famous reefs.

The week's activities include Basic Reef Fish and Invertebrate Identification; Daily Underwater Fish and Critter Hunts for the area's most sought-after species. Also an Underwater Photo/Video Workshop covering:

- How to capture memorable wildlife portraits
- Getting close to elusive species
- Macro photography
- Waiting for the right moment
- Framing your subject to best advantage

Special Nightly Presentations include:

- Cephalopod Behaviour – The Outrageous Antics of Some of the World's most Outrageous Animals



- Symbiosis and Camouflage: Hiding in Plain Sight
- The Diverse Reproductive Repertoire of Reef Fishes
- Which Fish Eat What

As an added bonus the couple will debut the long-awaited Reef Creature Identification – Tropical Pacific, with more than 2,000 species photos, many taken by the authors in North Sulawesi.

www.eco-divers.com

San Diego UnderSea Film Exhibition Call for entries by July 15th 2010

This is a call for entries for the 11th Annual San Diego UnderSea Film Exhibition, scheduled for Friday and Saturday evenings, September 17th and 18th, 2010, at the beautiful Qualcomm Hall located at 5775 Morehouse Drive, San Diego, CA 92121.

Here is your chance to see your work in a state-of-the-art venue on a giant screen. Each evening will feature a different program consisting of 14 to 16 short underwater films from locations all over the world.

We are accepting Standard Definition NTSC DV, and 1080i60, 1080p30, and 720p30 High Definition video, either on mini-DV/HDV tape, or archived on a CD or DVD as a self-contained, full resolution QuickTime movie file. If you are working in a tape-based format (DV NTSC or HDV 1080i60), please submit your entry on mini-DV/HDV tape for best results.

If you are working in a tapeless



format, please submit your entry as a full resolution, self-contained QuickTime movie file archived on a CD or DVD.

No film can be longer than five minutes and at least 50% of the footage must be underwater

For full details of the entry requirements please visit our website.

www.sdufex.com

www.uwpmag.com

Maria Munn Photography Workshop

SY Mandarin Siren
9 - 19th January 2011

We are very pleased to announce Maria Munn from the UK will be joining us on the SY Mandarin Siren in Raja Ampat between 9th and 19th January 2011.



She will be running her ever popular workshops for those with compact digital cameras and housings. The cost is 2,750 Euro per person and includes all tuition from Maria as well as up to four dives per day, free nitrox, free scuba equipment rental (not cameras, dive computers or torches). All meals, soft drinks and beer.

Maria speaks Spanish and Portuguese and is a passionate conservationist helping support Sea Shepherd, The Shark Research Institute, The Shark Trust, and many others as well as The Scuba Trust, a charity to help divers with disabilities.

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Underwater Photo Tutorials

Online education for the Underwater Photographer

Created by Jack and Sue Drafahl, Underwater Photo Tutorials is a unique web based subscription service offering underwater photographers online classes and instruction on Adobe Photoshop, Lightroom, Elements and Underwater Digital Photography.

The Digital Duo have taken their 35 plus years of photographic and image editing experience to design a website providing photo education 24/7 for beginner, intermediate and advanced underwater photographers. Here's your chance to learn at your own pace. You can start, stop and review any of the tutorials, enjoy them in the comfort of your own home, or even while you travel. All you need is the subscription and Internet service!

The subscription service is \$199 for a year or approximately \$16 a month and includes: tutorials on Photoshop CS2 and newer versions, including CS5, all versions of Lightroom, and Elements versions 5



through 8. As Beta testers for Adobe, they are able to release tutorials covering new content whenever Adobe releases software.

There are also educational tutorials on underwater digital still photography and underwater video by additional well known industry photographers including Ernie Brooks, Stan Waterman, Carl Roessler and Geri Murphy just to name a few.

www.underwaterphototutorials.com



Issue #7 available soon!

Dear UwP Readers:

Now on its **7th Issue**, *Wetpixel Quarterly* brings you the best in underwater imagery in a collectible, coffee-table-worthy publication.



Order issues #1-4 in the Year 1 Collector's Edition while still available!

Subscribe and order back issues online:

www.wetpixelquarterly.com



North Sea Film Festival

Studio/K in Amsterdam

November 19 - 21

We are proud to announce that the fourth edition of the North Sea Film Festival, the only underwater filmfestival in the Netherlands - will take place from November 19 till November 21 at Studio/K in Amsterdam.

We are staying in Amsterdam, because we liked it! This festival location, with its comfortable cinema chairs, restaurant, well stocked bar and huge foyer will guarantee a great festival ambiance. The philosophy won't change: we will still be screening high quality films on surprising topics, (this time also in full HD for qualifying films) organise workshops and an information market.

This year we have included a third category: the AC, Amateur Category for all filmmakers who are

www.uwpmag.com

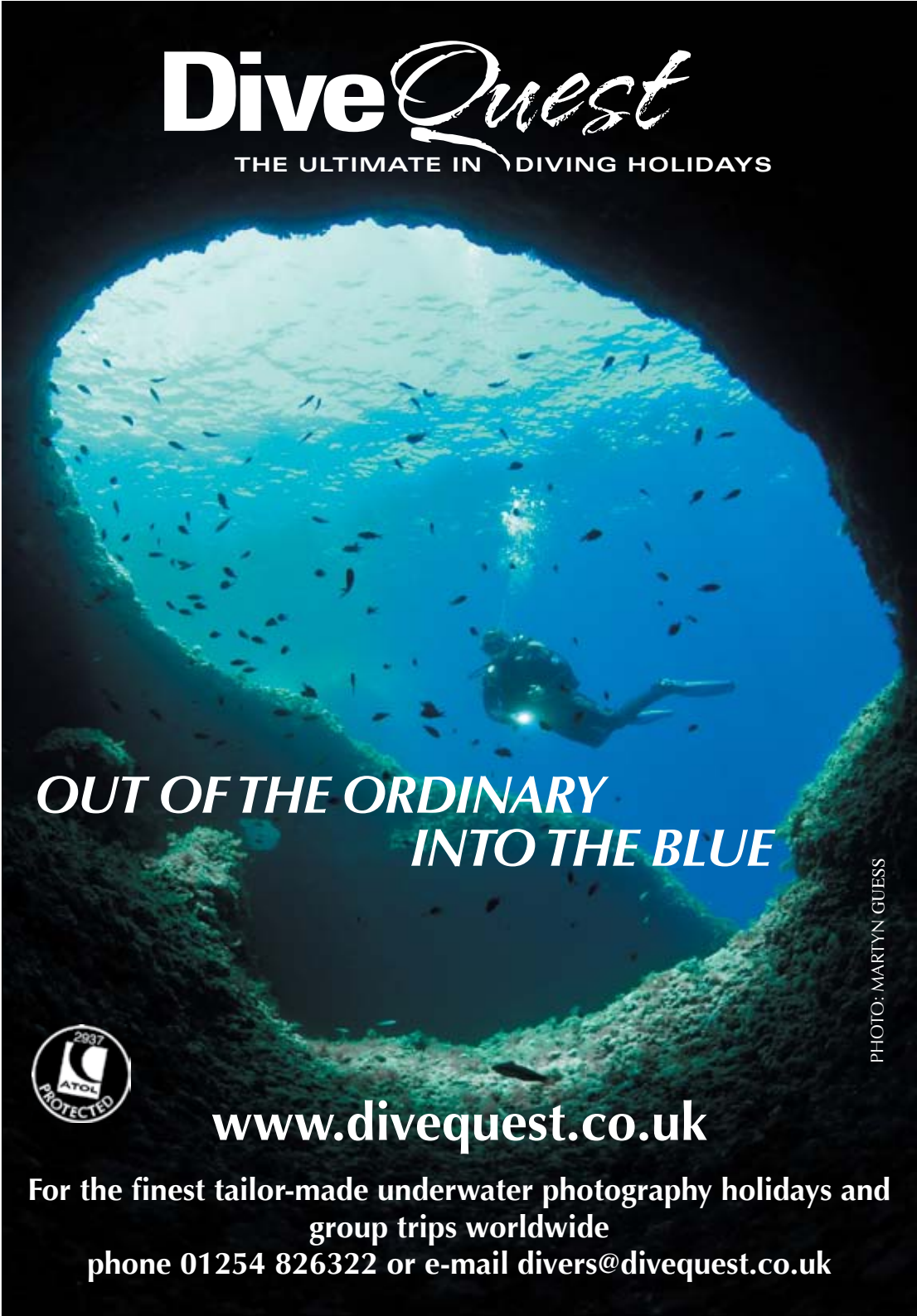
not able to spend the whole year underwater. These talented filmmakers are invited to send us their short films with a maximum length of 6 minutes for the festival selection.

Our own visits to festivals abroad secured already some beautiful productions!

We continue to focus and display other artforms, we are still working on it! The festival organisation will again invite as many filmmakers as possible, which are requested to take part in the Q&A sessions after the screening of the movies.

If you want to submit film yourself, you find all information at the festival site

www.northseafilmfestival.com



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PHOTO: MARTYN GUESS

Aaron Wong Photography Workshops

SY Philippine Siren

14th - 19th July 2010

19th - 24th July 2010

Aaron Wong will be running two photography workshops in the Philippines offering you the chance to learn from one of the most talented and artistic photographers.

Topics that will be covered on the workshop include:

Basic underwater photography, Macro photography, Wide angle photography, Lighting, Composition and Basic post production.

The workshop is open to complete beginners and those with more experience and whether using a compact or dSLR.

The trips are limited to 12 spaces on each workshop and the price is 999 Euro

www.aaronsphtocraft.com
www.worldwidediveandsail.com

INON UK Uw Photo Course



Essex based retailers Ocean Optics are now offering an intensive underwater photography course for beginners.

The INON UK Level One Underwater Photography Course has been developed by Mark Koekemoer and Steve Warren, who run Ocean Optics.

Believed to be the most comprehensive beginners course in the UK, it is also thought to be the only programme approved by a major underwater camera equipment manufacturer. Only four students can attend each course to maximise personal attention.

Full camera systems are provided. Underwater radiophones enable one to one coaching while submerged and all courses take place on Ocean Optics unique full size artificial coral reef set.

www.oceanoptics.co.uk

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Triton Bay**



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info@indocruises.com

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of the trips in 2010**

WETPIXEL ALASKA EXPEDITION June 11-23, 2011



with Eric Cheng and Alex Mustard

Wetpixel editor Eric Cheng and well-known underwater photographer Alex Mustard are leading a 13 day diving expedition to Alaska in June of 2011. Their itinerary starts in Sitka and ends in Ketchikan.

The Nautilus Explorer features 2 double-occupancy executive suites, 8 double-occupancy staterooms, and 2 dormitory bunks. We will be taking 20 guests plus Eric and Alex for a total of 22 divers (leaving the dorm bunks empty). See the ship tour on Nautilus Explorer's website for full details.

Dives will be conducted off of a large aluminum skiff, where all dive

equipment will stay for the entire diving schedule. The skiff drives right up into the rear bay of the Nautilus Explorer and you can easily walk on and off of it without any effort! The majority of dives are done during slack tide and typically last from 45-60 minutes. All dives are strictly timed; for safety, you must be on the surface at the end of pre-determined dive times. Water temperature ranges from the low 40s to the low/mid 50s F.

<http://wetpixel.com/expeditions>

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Have you saved a lot of time benefitting from the experience of UWP contributors? They give you their time and talent for free so, please, donate to the UWP contributors and help keep UWP free to download.

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basis i.e. the more pages they contribute, the more their percentage.

When deciding how much you want to donate please bear in mind that PayPal's charge for amounts smaller than £3 or \$6 can be as high as 24%!! Whilst I accept that PayPal is absolutely brilliant and safe, I don't want this to become a 'Donate a lot to PayPal'!!

You can make a donation in either US \$ dollars, UK £ sterling or € Euros by following this link



Donate here



www.uwpmag.com/donate.html

Manatees

with Mauricio Handler

January 31- Feb 5 &
Feb 5-10, 2011



There are few places where encounters with wildlife can touch a persons soul changing it forever. The Manatees of Crystal River are in such a place.

Photographer, expedition leader and long time National Geographic underwater team member Mauricio Handler will be leading a group of photographers returning to one of the most inspirational and moving places he has ever been to,

2011 may well be the last year to encounter them in the water on their terms as new regulations may stop in-water encounters forever.

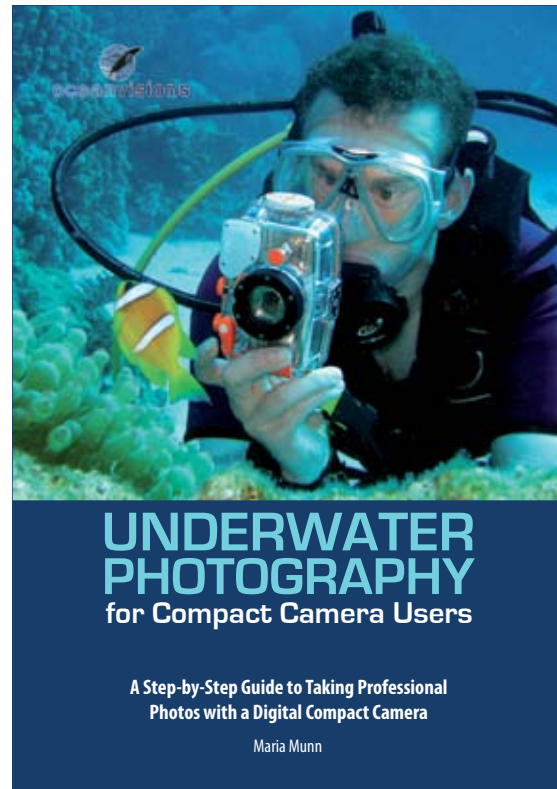
www.handlerphoto.com

Underwater Photography for Compact Camera Users

by Maria Munn

Maria's guests, to name a few, have won three Sport Diver Magazines 'Photo of the Month' as well as two winners of Capt Don Habitat's Photo Competition in Bonaire, and more recently Daniel Norwood won the British Society of Underwater Photographers' Best Beginner Portfolio. This book will share all the secrets to show and inspire how both beginners through to the more advanced, can take beautiful underwater photographs with your compact camera in an easy-to-understand way.

Chapters include how to choose, set-up and care for your camera, through to understanding all of the different settings, specified for each make and model of camera, showing how they work underwater to achieve the best results possible. Each chapter is fully illustrated with photos to demonstrate the techniques used. Additional chapters include how to photograph different subjects underwater as well as a special "Guest Gallery" to inspire how all models



and makes of compact cameras can achieve stunning results.

The book will be printed on FSC Paper and each copy will be carbon offset. It will also be available as an E-Book. 10% of all sales will be donated to help Marine Conservation Charities worldwide as well as The Scuba Trust to help divers with disabilities learn how to dive. The book will be available from 21st June. To reserve your copy or for more information, email Maria

maria@oceanvisions.co.uk

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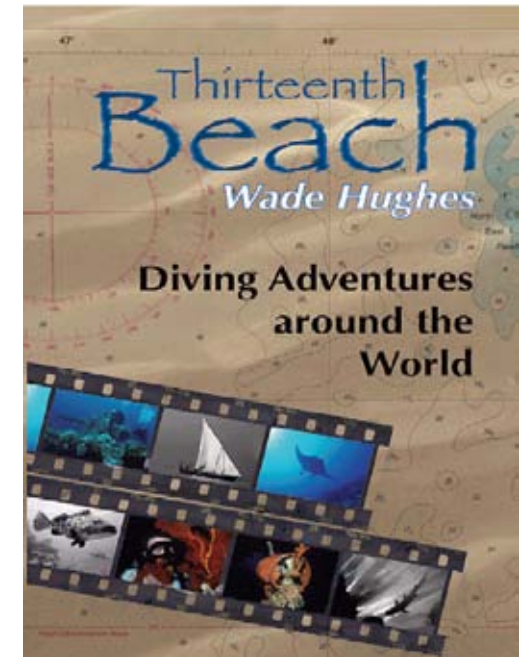
www.alor-divers.com tel: + 62 (0) 81317804133

Thirteenth Beach: Diving adventures around the world

by Wade Hughes

Available as hardcover; softcover

Thirteenth Beach is an absorbing account of travel and adventure. It sweeps you into the action, beauty, and drama that awaits any underwater adventurer. It's written with a sharp eye for detail, an ironic sense of humor, and a personal style that puts the reader in exotic locations and in the water, facing thrilling and amusing experiences, shoulder to shoulder with the author. This is an ideal traveler's fireside companion.



“Fantastic read!!! I read it twice.” Steve Sutton, Diver, adventurer.
California

“Fascinating read...a book for all of us looking for the ultimate underwater adventure.” www divesiteonline.com

“A book for divers...written by a diver.” www.adirondackdivers.com

“A strong sense of adventure!” Ron & Viv Moon, Kakirra Adventure Publications, Australia

To buy your copy from Amazon for just £10.27 click [here](#)

“Visions in the Sea” Summer Series

Charlie Hood Workshop - Wildlife of Cornwall

3rd & 4th July 2010



The weekend activities will start each day with morning talks, by Charlie Hood, giving advice on what to try out on the day. You will also have the chance of a one to one advice session each day with Charlie, as well as a chance to enjoy dinner and a couple of drinks with fellow underwater photographers. Whether we dive or snorkel will depend on the wildlife and weather conditions on the weekend.

If the Basking Sharks are still in the area then we will spend time snorkelling with these magnificent creatures. Your entry fee will also allow you to enter your 2 best photos taken on the day. The winner and runner up will receive prizes and will be entered into the Summer Series finals.

Tickets cost £80 per day

www.visionsinthesea.com

Wetpixel Night Safari Ambon 2010

With Eric Cheng and Tony Wu

7 - 16th Nov 2010



Ambon has a combination of reef and muck diving. For this trip, we will be concentrating on muck/ critter diving, and we will devote much of the trip to diving in the evening and night. Although the resort is situated at the best critter sites, we will dive from boats. The dive sites are located inside Ambon bay, and most of the time, we will be diving in relatively shallow water.

Because we will be diving a lot at night, you will need to bring adequate lighting. A minimum of two torches (three would be better) plus lots of batteries would be a good idea.

Also, while the muck sites are sheltered and shallow, there can be

strong current at times. Our night dives will be concentrated during the period between new moon and first quarter moon, so in theory, the current will not be strong.

However, you never know with Mother Nature, so we'll need to be flexible and adapt to prevailing conditions.

Finally, the dive sites we will be diving are where the newly described Maluku frogfish (*Histiophryne psychedelica*) has been found. We will, of course, hope to see this elusive fish, but to date, only a handful of these animals have been spotted, so please manage your expectations accordingly.

<http://wetpixel.com/i.php/ambon>



Our motive: Your passion

Precise underwater housings from Subal.
Designed for hands - made by hands.

^w | www.subal.com

Now available:
SUBAL ND3s for Nikon D3s
SUBAL CD7 for Canon EOS 7D
SUBAL CD4 for Canon EOS 1D MK IV



New Products

Zen PT-EP01 Dome



Optically coated glass dome port offers 100 degree wide angle field of view and eliminates distortion with Olympus M.Zuiko Digital ED 9-18mm f4.0-5.6. This is a 25% increase over the standard Olympus port!

Olympus has made waves with the introduction of their compact, affordable, and very capable E-PL1 and PT-EP01 housing. This combination is the least expensive interchangeable lens camera system ever offered to underwater photographers. This mirror less Micro-Four Thirds camera features DSLR performance in a compact camera form factor.

Zen Underwater is a Fort Lauderdale based manufacturer of accessory optics for underwater photographers

MSRP \$499

www.zenunderwater.com

INON Snoot Set for S-2000



On June 12th INON INC. releases a new accessory for INON S-2000 strobe to narrow down the beam angle providing various effects such as blocking extra diffused light, eliminating backscatter or to highlight a subject or to make spotlight effect.

The package contents include a two step telescopic Rubber Hood, Snoot Tube 26 (inner diameter 26mm), Snoot Tube 10 and fly-eye lens structure W40. The various combination of packaged parts supports 6 different beam coverage from approx. 16° (horizontal) up to approx. 105°.

www.inon.co.jp

Light & Motion Sola 600



Light & Motion is pleased to announce the shipping release of the all new Sola 600 compact imaging light. The Sola 600 stakes out a new category of lighting with its versatility. From compact cameras to DSLRs to video housings, the Sola 600 is the perfect companion for all of these underwater imaging platforms. The Sola packs a blistering 679 lumens of light for 75 minutes with a clean even beam pattern and delivers 225 lumens of red light for close-up work at night.

Berkley White of Backscatter Underwater Video and Photo, returned from his first trip with Sola and shared his impressions: "The Sola's tiny size and feather weight made it a great travel companion and added no noticeable weight to my camera rig. The Sola's quick-flip power switch was easy to operate without even looking at the light. The waterproof charging ports didn't require me to break a seal between dives, and my favorite feature was the critter-friendly red LEDs, which didn't attract the swarming sea bugs."

The new 600 Lumen compact imaging light:
\$579

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DSLR Housings

Ikelite digital SLR housings offer top-of-the-line professional grade features in a contoured, durable and corrosion free case. A clear view of the camera and o-ring seals is an added advantage during both assembly and operation. Thoughtfully placed controls put important camera functions within comfortable reach.

Our proprietary circuitry remains the most accurate and reliable TTL on the market today. And because we feel that TTL exposure is so important to underwater photography, we build it into every digital SLR housing. Enjoy perfect exposure in every shooting scenario when used with compatible Ikelite DS Substrobes.



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- Tripod Mounting Point
- Pro Video Lite 3 Battery Pack Mounting Points
- Video Trigger Control for Cameras with Video

DS160 Substrobe
The Substrobe DS160 has quickly made its mark becoming the favorite of underwater photographers.

DS161 Movie Substrobe
The DS161 Movie Substrobe combines all of the functionality of our renowned DS160 with a powerful 500 lumen LED video light. This strobe is everything you need for stunning photos and video.



See Life and Hugyfot



See Life through The Lens are pleased to announce they have been selected to become a Southern dealer for Hugyfot Underwater Camera Housings.

Hugyfot underwater camera housings are renowned for their distinctive sexy curves which lead to very compact and ergonomic housings. Hugyfot housings act as a second skin around the camera and allow full use of all camera functionality.

Helen Rushton, owner of See Life and a Hugyfot user for 4 years said, "We are delighted to have been chosen to represent Hugyfot. The Hugyfot products are beautifully ergonomic, simple to use and a joy to dive with."

Based near Southampton, See Life Through The Lens specialise in underwater and landscape photography workshops across the South.

To learn more about Hugyfot or to arrange a try dive, contact Helen on

helen@seelifethroughthelens.com

Subal ND3 housing for Nikon D3/D3x



With the SUBAL ND3 SUBAL offers an aluminium housing for the digital SLR-camera Nikon D3 / D3X.

The camera is mounted on a saddle for precise positioning inside the housing. Ergonomic placement of all important controls provides convenient and comfortable handling of the camera functions. A 4 mm main-O-ring and the SUBAL QuickLock latching system make it virtually impossible to close the lid if the O-ring is not lying correctly in its groove. Maximum security is assured. Threaded holes on the base and in the top shoe allows mounting of trays, aiming lights or other accessories.

Generous shading of the LCD-monitor provides a bright and clear image. The housing incorporates an excellent viewfinder optic for full frame viewing. Optionally the housing can be assembled with the magnifying Viewfinder Optic GS 180 or the magnifying, 360° rotatable Viewfinder Optic WS 45.



As with all our products choice of materials, machining, surface protection and finish conform with SUBAL's well known standards of reliability and workmanship.

All SUBAL ports with bayonet mount are fitting this housing. The max. depth rating is 70 m (210 ft) and the ND3 weighs approx. 2,7 kg (w/o port and accessories). Underwater it is all but neutral (depended on used port and accessories)

www.subal.com

www.uwpmag.com

Ultralight TR-DM



The Ultralight TR-DM is a new digital tray for use with Ikelite small and medium housings (with female threads), Olympus Pen or similar size housings, Fisheye Fix housings and any housing that has two female threads on the bottom for attaching to a tray.

The slots in the bottom of the tray allow the photographer to adjust the housing right or left for best placement for handle and for reaching the housing buttons.

The TR-DM will accept either the AC-H or the TR-DHB handle and will accept the TR-DUPL on the right side to make it a double tray for dual strobes. A second handle, AC-H can be added or the AD-3816-2 ball for a second strobe or spotting light.

www.ulcs.com

Amphibico housing for Sony HDR XR550V AND CX550V



Amphibico has introduced the Dive Buddy EVO HD Elite II for the Sony HDR XR550V and HDR CX550V video recorders.

The Dive Buddy has full electronic controls with mechanical white balance. It features a 3.5" LCD viewfinder and a built in moisture alarm.

The Dive Buddy EVO HD Elite II housing provides easy to use electronic grip controls at your fingertips. These newly designed marine grips have access to all key camcorder functions to create exceptional HD video.

It is sold without ports, with flat or wide angle options available. It has a FOV of 69°, identical to that of the camera. It has been pressure tested to 330 feet, and is constructed of marine grade aluminum.

www.amphibico.com

SUBAL DP-100 'The Small One'



Designed primarily for 'Fisheye-Macro' shots with DX format cameras, SUBAL now offers a small dome port with only 100mm glass diameter.

When using a fisheye lens you can shoot spectacular perspectives with a subject like a nudibranch in the foreground in combination with the whole reef landscape behind thanks to the 180° angle of coverage.

As all SUBAL ports the DP-100 uses also mineral glass in top optical quality.

The port costs € 890,- and is deliverable from stock.

www.subal.com

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Nikon D90 housing



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These exclusive and innovative T-Shirts can be ordered through the SharkTees website. A user friendly platform has been established in order to allow you to fully customize your T-Shirt, including model, color, size and printed design. Once ordered, T-Shirts can be shipped to almost anywhere in the world.

For diving centers, institutions or shops, T-Shirts can also be personalized with the company logo.

www.sharktees.com

Olympus PT-EP01



The PT-EP01 Water Protector for the OLYMPUS PEN E-PL1 is the first waterproof housing to be created for a Micro Four Thirds System camera, and offers waterproof integrity to depths of up to 40 meters.

Making the most of the inherent Micro Four Thirds System advantage in compact, lightweight design, the PT-EP01 Water Protector is significantly lighter and more compact than conventional SLR camera waterproof housings of the past.

In addition, it allows users to easily enjoy underwater photography by taking advantage of the OLYMPUS PEN E-PL1's Underwater Macro and Underwater Wide shooting modes. Optical connectors also allow the use of up to two UFL-2 Underwater Flash units for off-camera illumination

www.olympus.co.uk



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Ultralight TR-LB



The Ultralight TR-LB is an L shaped bracket for compact Ikelite video housings

It comes with two 12/24 screws to attach it to the housing and will accept only the TR-DHB handle.

To use two lights on the set up you take the TR-LB and put it on the TR-D tray with the TR-DUP upgrade to allow the use of two handles TR-DHB.

An AC-CS clamp goes onto the handle and the AD-SSL is the adapter to the Fix lights.

www.ulcs.com

Subal CD4 for Canon EOS 1D Mark IV



The SUBAL CD4 is the only housing on the market where the access to the video function is especially optimized. The housing can be used for the Canon EOS 1D Mark III and EOS 1Ds Mark II also.

The Subal CD4 housing allows access to all functions of the Canon EOS 1D Mark IV. Start/Stop of the video function can be used with your hand on the right handle. The ergonomics of the housing are again unbeatable.

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Buoyancy: All but neutral (depended on used port and accessories)

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For sale is the housing, 8" dome port w/shade, macro port, and camera. All ports come with neoprene covers. Both ports have some small scratches on the outside of the acrylic. I will include a free sync cord with each port.

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Prices are as follows:

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8" Dome port w/shade: 400 EUR

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Aquatica housing for the Canon 550 / T2i Rebel



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Working quietly in our North American headquarter, our dedicated team has come up with an aluminum housing design that is second to none and, quite importantly, priced at 1999.00 USD to make it the most affordable aluminum housing in its class

www.aquatica.ca

INON M67 Lens Adapter Base for Fujifilm FinePix 80 & 200



INON INC. have announced a new M67 Lens Adapter Base for the Fujifilm marine case WP-FXF80 for the FinePix F80EXR and the WP-FXF200 for the FinePix F200EXR. This allows the attaching of INON M67 series close-up lenses UCL-330 and UCL-165 M67.

The M67 Lens Adapter Base is available in a variety of models to suit most compact underwater housings.

www.inon.co.jp

www.uwpmag.com

usaNexus.com
858-481-0604



D70



D200



D80



1Ds Mark II



Fiber optic sync



D2x



5D



5D

The “Fibresnoot”

by Phil Mercurio

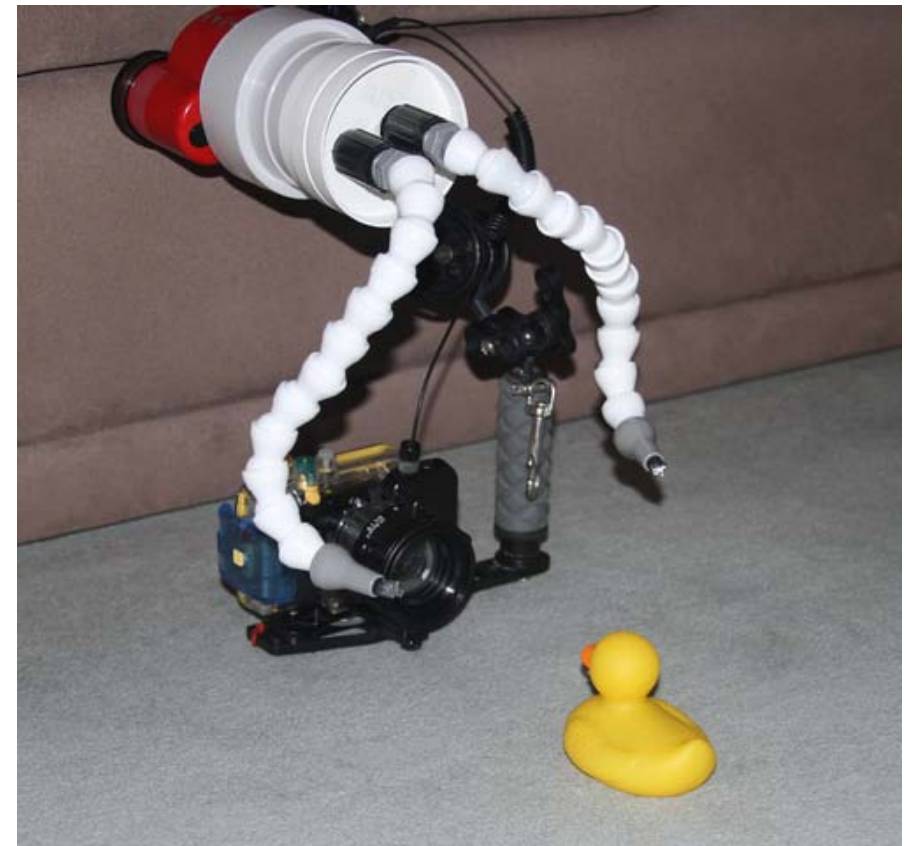
I’ve always admired ingenuity and people who can think outside the box. We have many examples of this alternate thinking in the dive industry from pioneers in the exploration of the underwater world. While taking past dive courses I read about many instances where people saw a need and found that an item was not commercially available so they made it themselves. While I am sure most are aware of past cave diving and underwater photography applications, there are still those among us who push new bounds in their respective fields. Recently in underwater photography there have been new and inventive ways to give a unique perspective, effect, or technique that often blur the lines between the art and science of this discipline. Even elements of studio photography are spilling over into the arena for underwater use.

These processes and gadgets are continuing to drive and push people to look past the garden variety happy fish snaps. One such novel invention and hot topic in several photography forums has been Keri Wilk’s photos where a selective lighting method commonly referred to as a “snoot” was used. A “snoot” reduces the spread of the strobe flash from a very wide coverage to more of a spotlight effect depending on the distance from the “snooted” strobe to the subject being photographed. This technique has even resulted in one commercial company coming out with adapters for their own strobes. While having my own DIY attempt at “snoot” photography, where I went through the motions of purchasing funnels, wandering into

hardware stores with my strobe, and generally receiving strange looks from family and friends, I had my own light bulb moment. I did trial several snoot designs with adapters, diffusers, filters, and different end caps with some decent results on land but had quite a bit of difficulty aiming it while underwater.

In a nutshell, I put together a design to redirect the light energy from my strobe using fiber optic cables. My intention was to not only pinpoint/spotlight the light like a bendable/moveable snoot but also possibly turn a single strobe into a dual strobe effect by using two separate arms to redirect the light. Hence the fiber optic project was born. Other than the fiber optic cables, pretty much everything else was found at a local hardware store. For practical purposes, I have kept this design raw and inexpensive since I really didn’t want this to cost so much that a second strobe purchase would seem more reasonable given the effort, time and initial cost. I hope the following is informative and useful for others willing to “give it a go.”

A simple purchase list would include the fiber optic cables, a mount design for the strobe head, and a flexible but supportive arm. For this project I used 70 feet of 1.5mm diameter unjacketed, end glow,



fiber optic cable (from thefiberopticstore.com). This size was a little stiff but they are supposed to be easier to cut and polish than the larger diameter cables.

One of the challenging aspects of this project was to come up with a concept for the arms of this design. I had debated using an inexpensive DIY design which I still think would have worked but in the end thought I’d spend a few extra \$\$ on what I knew would be a longer lasting and more robust option. For this I borrowed a design and easily accessible piece of kit which was able to be purchased off the shelf. If you have never heard of Loc-line, it’s a great assortment of designs for



mainly industrial, construction, automotive, or aquarium water flow applications. They are pieces of plastic that fit together into a rigid yet flexible customizable arm/tube and can come complete with threaded ends and nozzle fittings. They stay in position where directed, are light, and relatively inexpensive. I was able to find their catalog and very detailed product dimensions and blueprints online. This helped when trying to maximize the number of strands of fiber optics able to be used in a tube and whether or not it would all fit inside the arms.

The strobe and fiber optic arm mount was nothing more than a PVC storm water reducer (plus cap) with several small irrigation pipes. I was able to find a threaded irrigation tube connector that fit the Loc-Line arm perfectly, via a female/female coupling. I used a photocopy of the strobe to estimate where the irrigation pipes should be placed, wanting them directly over the flash point. I cut out the photocopied strobe and drilled small alignment/guide holes through the end cap in order to make sure they were in alignment. I put



everything together, tested light out put, and pulled it apart several times to make sure it all fit and was aligned the way that was needed prior to putting the finishing touches in place and gluing it together.

Inside each Loc-line arm I put the 20 strands of 1.5mm fiber optic cables. I cut and polished each cable end. On several DIY forums I found some references to polishing the fiber optic ends. I ended up polishing each end with 400 grit sand paper, inspecting each end with a small magnifying glass (*a loop like a geologist or gem inspector would use), polishing again with a finer abrasive paper (1200 grit) and inspecting again. As directed from web advice, a glass finish was not necessary but I was a little particular on this step. Again I was thinking long term and at the end of the day, better light transmittance means more light output and possibly saving strobe battery power during a dive. I also placed (*loosely) a length of heat shrink tubing (10mm ID) over the rest of the length of the cables to keep them semi-contained and to provide some casing to slip them up into the loc-line arms. After that it was only a matter of pushing the



other bound end of fiber optic cables down into the irrigation pipe and screwing down the loc-line arm on top into the female/female coupling.

A challenge to underwater photography for myself (*and possibly others) has been strobe placement and positioning. In order to pre-empt any difficulties with this underwater, I spent some time on land testing the equipment and getting a feel for the best position for the unit itself and repositioning the fiber optic arms themselves. As I am sure most you know, while underwater you only have a limited amount of time to find subjects, take photos, and get used to a new setup so the more time you can become familiar with its use beforehand, the better. Again the main advantage to using the Loc-line arms were the ability to fine tune where the light was coming from to allow for some creativity in lighting, pinpointing, or redirecting the light where I wanted it. Prior the first dive, I soaked



was great. It was not unwieldy, not heavy, nor cumbersome to swim with. The light output itself seems to be fairly even when both arms are used. It's definitely not a sexy piece of kit and there is definitely room for improvement in the aesthetics category, but until a commercial product becomes available, I'd recommend trying something like this yourself. Probably the main area I think needs improvement is not with tweaks in the design or construction but with my ability to aim the arms and adjust light output accordingly. I am already eager to jump back in and practice! This has definitely been a fun project and I know I will be using this new piece of UW photography kit often in the future!

Phil Mercurio
pmercurio@gmail.com



the entire setup in a bucket of water. I wanted to remove any glue residue with an initial soaking so that most of the dissolvable compounds would be gone prior to taking it underwater and in direct contact with my strobe or affecting the fibers themselves. I thought that this extra step could possibly protect my strobe rather than thinking later it could have been preventable.

Modifications would be made of course if a different strobe was used or if a longer arm length was necessary. The INON strobe that I use has two flash points which both fire, this has enabled me to isolate each flash point for each arm with the bundle of fiber optic cables but this may or may not be possible with other strobes. A larger single flash point would still be usable for a design like this and splitting the fiber optics into two arms would be just as easy. As I had hoped, the use underwater

The Library Project donates books and libraries to under financed schools and orphanages in the developing world. We believe education is the key motivator to



breaking the cycle of poverty that exists in the developing world. As of May 2010, we have established 241 elementary school libraries. We've put more than 150,000 Chinese language children's books into the hands of eager young readers. Over 50,000 children now have access to improved educational infrastructure. Together we are changing the world, one book at a time.

"Libraries put children in the driver's seat of their education," says Tom Stader, founder of the Library Project. "Library books are different from textbooks. Kids may be inspired by the teachers in lessons and then explore their interests further in a library. With a library their imagination gets involved."

Education is change, and The Library Project is creating change in the simplest way possible, by giving children the resources to learn and grow. To succeed, they need support. If you are interested in donating or finding out about other ways of becoming involved, please visit their website at www.library-project.org or contact Tom Stader at tom@library-project.org. Our website contains a wealth of information about each of the libraries we have donated in China to date as well as prospects for future libraries

www.library-project.org



The New Kid Named G11

By Lawrence Alex Wu

The Canon G11 might be a new kid on the block, but only to replace the already market dominant G10 which has won the hearts of many photo hobbyists as well as professional photographers as a must have camera. After befriending this newbie with its Canon WP-DC34 housing and some diving snaps in Bali, I realized that this kid really has what it takes to get those great underwater shots that I strive for as a professional underwater photographer.

Being accustomed to shooting with a dedicated wide angle lens which fits outside my usual housing on a dive, I am skeptical of the wide angle performance of most compact cameras underwater, never mind the young G11. But after a few snaps of adult diver sized corals fans (Figure 1), I was surprisingly convinced that the 24mm wide angle on the G11 with its matching WP-DC34 housing really has what most underwater photographers' need to capture images from the macro range to the wide - exactly what you'll see on a typical dive. As well, with two strobes from my own underwater camera setup and less than two meters from a giant moray, I could even frame in the

meter and a half high barrel sponge above it.

For quicker and easier ambient* light underwater photos without the green or bluish washed-out look, setting the Custom White balance regularly is essential and performs better than the 'underwater scene mode'. Fortunately, junior G11 can have his shortcut button - on the left of its LCD screen - programmed to perform this task, turning white balance calibration to an unbeatable SINGLE button action! So coupled with its improved low light performance from the new Dual Anti-Noise System and Image Stabilizer features, I wasted less time fiddling with strobes and camera settings to enjoy more of my dive with more great pictures and a new toy friend.

This newest G11 model now also lets you manually add or subtract the four principal colors to control White Balance; blue, red, green and yellow. So unless you are just too deep to shoot in ambient light, there's literally no reason to come out with bluish or greenish underwater photos with this new feature! (* photography that doesn't involve extra flashes or strobes and uses only the available



light)

Furthermore, with the two Custom Modes (C1 and C2) on the camera set for ambient light shooting on one and macro shooting on the other, changing shots with the G11 is literally a twist of a dial. Once programmed in, these custom modes will automatically preset much of the G11's settings like lens zoom, macro/landscape, flash/no flash, image size, continuous drive, metering methods, picture review screen, shortcut button, Av/Tv/M/P and much more. Word of warning though, if you use your ISO - which is not set by C1 or C2 modes - for shooting low ambient light photos like I do, remember to set it back to a lower ISO to avoid noise in your pictures.

The G11's focus point in Macro mode is 1 centimeter in front of the lens which means you can fit easily a whole nudibranch, crab or shrimp onto the full 10 megapixel frame - which also prints great



quality 12.2 x 9.1 inches (larger than A4) prints at 300 dpi. This is often where underwater compacts beat SLR cameras. Not only can they handle decent macro and wide angle underwater photographs with the same lens but also cost less - especially on

underwater accessories, weigh less and allow for LCD framing instead of having to fix your mask to a tiny optical view finder for every picture... imagine diving with a camera boxed in front of you!

Similarly to its younger G10, I found that the camera's LCD colours were actually more saturated than compared to the same image on my laptop; fortunately this is easily corrected with most image programs. Though the really great feature when reviewing photos on the LCD screen is that you can choose to show the blown out highlights...a common occurrence when shooting into the sun underwater. In addition, the G11 has an improved iContrast feature which helps reduce these common over exposed areas automatically. Another nice surprise was that the G11 downloaded all its photos and automatically rotated them on the computer - except for upside down taken shots which can you tell?...It's just something I do.

The partner Canon WP-DC34 housing performed well giving access to all the buttons except the main control dial next to the screen. However, the hard-to-find-documented replacement action which took me a few hours to find, is to hold the shortcut button while clicking the left (macro) or right (flash) buttons. So write this one down before you



lose track of which article you read it in. Favorably, this also works in most cases for the camera where the same dial is used.

In Continuous Drive Mode and connected to a fibre optic sync cord, the camera repeatedly captured over 20 successive images in one round at almost 0.9 frames per second after the first shoot. Perfect for shooting subjects underwater during an action sequence like mating or feeding. Maximizing the camera to that level usually takes a few more seconds for the flash to recharge, but even still, a full battery usually lasted me a full day of around 4_ hours of diving and shooting!

Worth mentioning also is that little brother G11 has a more powerful flash that can pack a punch over two



meters more than the G10 on land plus a new Low Light mode to take advantage it. This is one of those magic settings which anyone who likes night time people shots should know about. Most indoor and night photography flash shots only light up people - and usually unflatteringly - while losing the beauty of the background. But this mode automatically balances the ambience of night scenes like candle lit rooms or outdoor night lights with the flash to light up those lovely smiles too!

As well, the welcomed return of a flip out screen can offer shooting from all kinds of situations that can be very difficult such as from the floor or above the masses of heads in a concert. Rotating out the maneuverable screen also makes it the perfect

feature if you like taking self portraits.

So both above the waterline and below, junior G11 will perform for you on your dive with both wide and macro shots at your fingertips. And without a doubt, if you invite this kid to your kit, you'll likely be proud of the picture quality and find the seasoned signs of a mature camera in your hands.

Lawrence Alex Wu





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5th ANNUAL OUR WORLD UNDERWATER INTERNATIONAL UNDERWATER PHOTO & VIDEO COMPETITION

DivePhotoGuide.com and Wetpixel.com are proud to announce the winners of the 5th annual Our World Underwater international underwater photography & video competition. The competition is held in association with Our World Underwater and part of a joint series often referred to as the “Super Bowl” of international underwater imagery events, with world-class prizes, esteemed celebrity judges, and significant global media support.

Thousands of entries were received from dozens of countries and the winners represented fourteen countries. The quality level of the images submitted was very high, and the bar is continually being set higher each year. A formal statement from the judges is posted here. Congratulations to the winners!

The winners were presented during the film festival at a special 40th anniversary Our World Underwater show in Chicago.

In 2010 photographers & videographers competed in seven still-image categories and two video categories, to win nearly \$50,000 in prizes including premium dive trips, underwater photography and video and diving equipment and more. Dive packages to some of the top photo destinations in the world included The Sea of Cortez, Wakatobi-Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, the Red Sea, Grand Cayman, the Solomon Islands, Vietnam, and Norway. Other prizes included underwater strobes, focus lights, and Cressi dive



***Wide Angle Traditional - Gold and Best of Show
David Barrio***

equipment.

Esteemed judges included leading professional underwater photographers, cinematographers and magazine editors: Eric Cheng, David Doubilet, Ric Frazier, Alex Mustard, and Berkley White comprised the judging panel for still categories and Steve Douglas, Eric Hanauer, and Mary Lynn Price



***Wide Angle Unrestricted - Gold
Keri Wilk***

for video categories.

Winning images will be published by supporting media partners worldwide, and Divefilm.com will be podcasting the winning videos as episodes of the iTunes-featured DiveFilm Podcast Video and DiveFilm High Definition Podcast Video.

As with all Wetpixel & DivePhotoGuide



Novice - Gold
Jeremy Kozman

competitions, 15% of proceeds will be donated to marine conservation efforts.

Congratulations again to all of the winners from around the world!

OWU 2010 JUDGES STATEMENT

What a competition! The judges at Wetpixel and DivePhotoGuide were extremely impressed with the quality of submissions this year. Both photographers and digital cameras have fully

www.uwpmag.com



Macro Unrestricted - Gold
Luc Eeckhaut

matured in synchronous harmony, bringing the possibility of high quality underwater imaging to every diver with even a passing interest in underwater photography.

“Mystery Wreck,” this year’s Best of Show image by David Barrio, is brilliant in its black-and-white invocation of nostalgia. In nearly all of the categories, submissions showed clear signs of innovation, both in feats of technological excellence and in capturing different views of old subjects. There were many, many incredible images, making



Compact Cameras - Gold
Matt Curnock

the judging process extremely difficult.

Macro photography winners were dominated by animals in striking -- and strange -- situations, and by well-planned, selective use of light and focus. Our wide-angle winners took us from dramatic cave formations to leopard seals on Antarctic icebergs to lilies floating in freshwater



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Macro Traditional- Gold
Keri Wilk

ponds.

The Compact Camera winners show that point-and-shoot cameras are capable of capturing images every bit as interesting as images captured by SLRs. Small size and increased depth of field given the same amount of light make compact cameras versatile tools for the underwater photographer.

Finally, we are excited to announce winners from the first Novice category we have offered at

Our World Underwater. The Novice category gives non-professional photographers with little experience in underwater photography contests a chance to compete against their peers.

Congratulations to all of the winners of the Our World Underwater photography contest!

If you would like to take a closer look at all the winning images, please visit our website

www.underwatercompetition.com

DivePhotoGuide.com



Trials and Tribulations....

of shooting a Dive Training reverse cover

By Joseph C. Dovala

Few directives cause more abject terror amongst the photographers of Dive Training Magazine – OK, mostly me - then “make it an exact 180 degree reverse.” These seven simple little words so casually uttered by Cathryn Castle Whitman, the Executive Editor, pretty much never translate to an effortless pair of “mirror” images on the cover. Many of these projects require real work and take more shots than Britney Spears to get it right. Covers have been shot from the ocean to fire stations to driveways and virtually everywhere in between. All manner of critters, boats, microscopes, toys, water, and of course divers have made their appearance on them. They also come in three enticing flavors: 180-degree exact reverse, where all the components of the image remain relative to each other without moving them; conceptual, where the two images convey an abstract idea for a feature inside; and a reverse/conceptual combined, which keeps most of the elements in exact positions but some maybe changed

to fit a concept. Considerable effort is made to get it right, but as many of you can attest by your letters to the editor, details do slip by and our mistakes are exposed for all to see. What follows is a first ever account of anecdotes of some of the difficulties faced while setting up these images. And if you think shooting these photos is tough wait to you hear what it’s like to model for one.

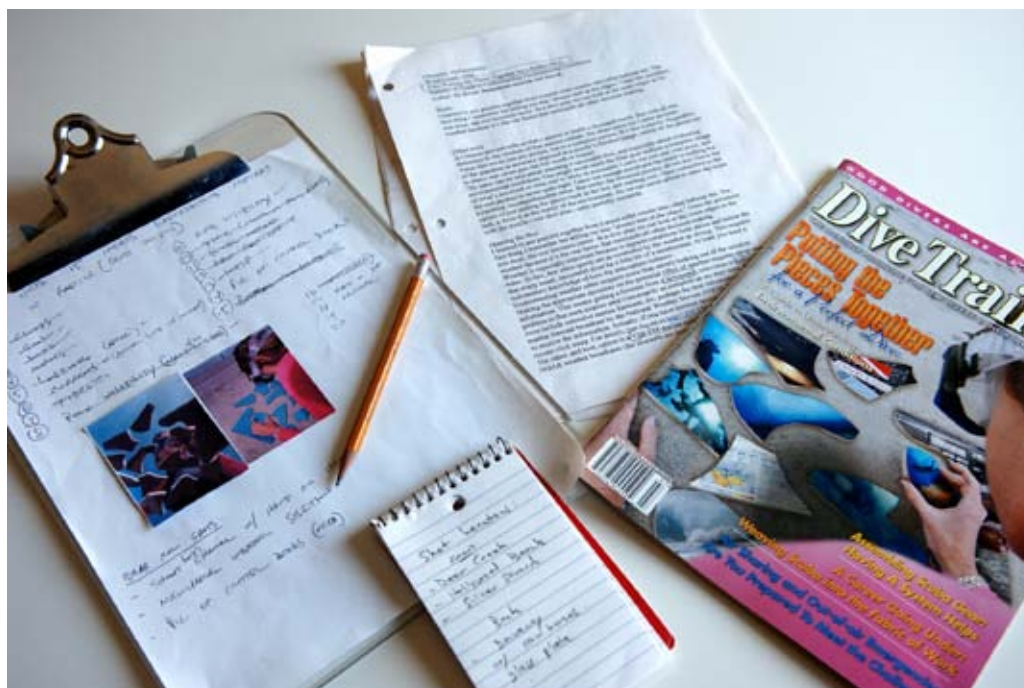
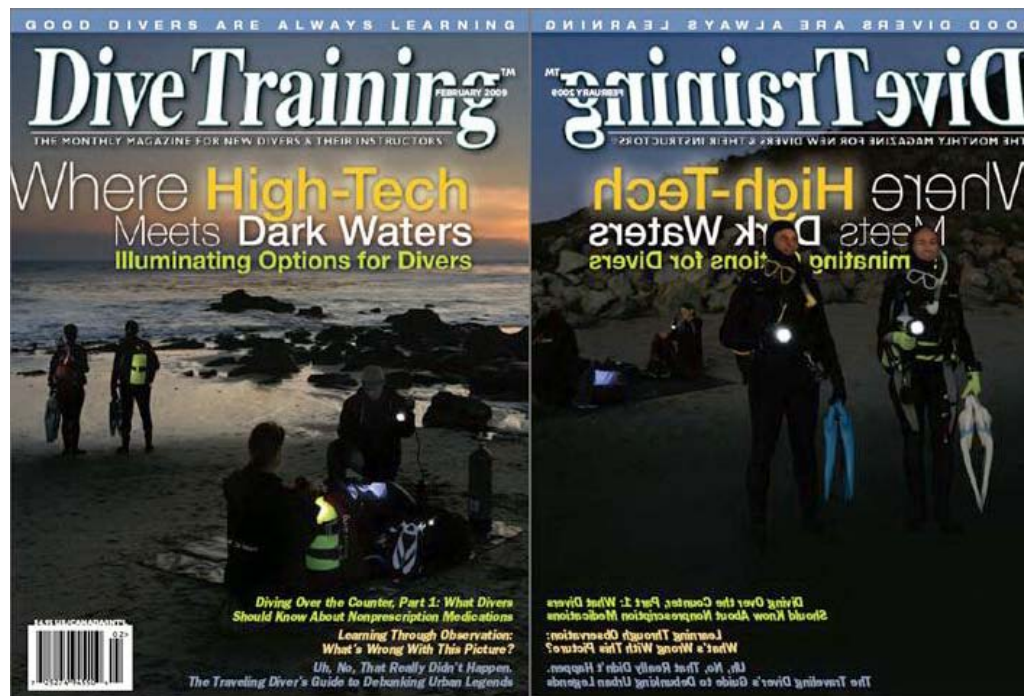
First I’d like to qualify that I’m a relative new comer and didn’t shoot

Topside “Dive Lights” 180 degree exact reverse cover. Land versions of the reverse covers are usually not restricted by time but often become more complex.

Settings Front, Nikon D700, Nikkor 17-35mm WA, f/9, 1/50sec, -2EV, ISO 400.

Settings Back, Nikon D700, Nikkor 17-35mm WA, f/9, 1/20sec, -1.3EV, ISO 400.

Covers are generally story boarded out first to see how best to tackle them.





For many shoots there are people behind the scenes helping the image come to fruition. This was required to shoot straight down needed for the forward of the “Swim Cover.” Photo by Janine McMurdie

my first cover until July 2000. It was an inside image and was basically a mistake. I was trying to get a better angle and shook the camera by accident, that gave just “the look” Cathryn and Doreen Hann, (art director, aka “goddess of design”), wanted. Sorry ladies. Anyway, there are others who started back at the beginning and are still hot on it today. There were also some who shot a great cover or two and then wised up and got scarce. There just isn’t enough space here to mention everybody, but realize a whole lot of people work very hard to put out this highly successful magazine every single month.

Lynn Laymon and his partner Linda Walden are two contributors who go back to the beginning. They shot many of the covers for the first seven

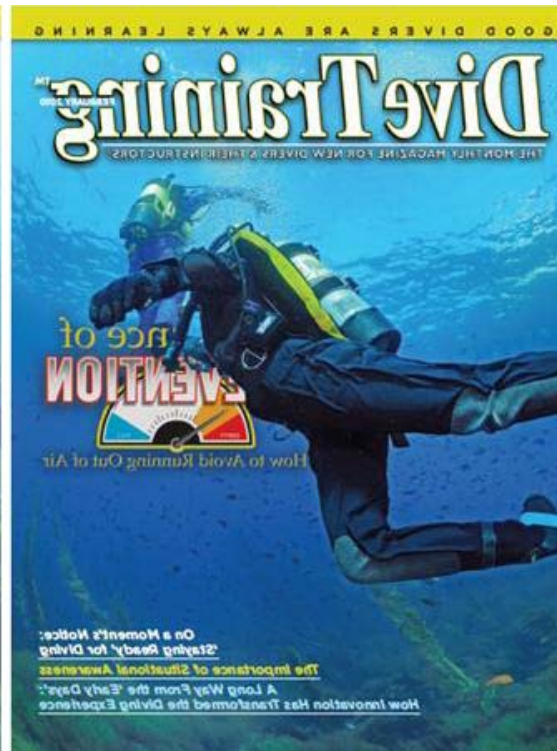
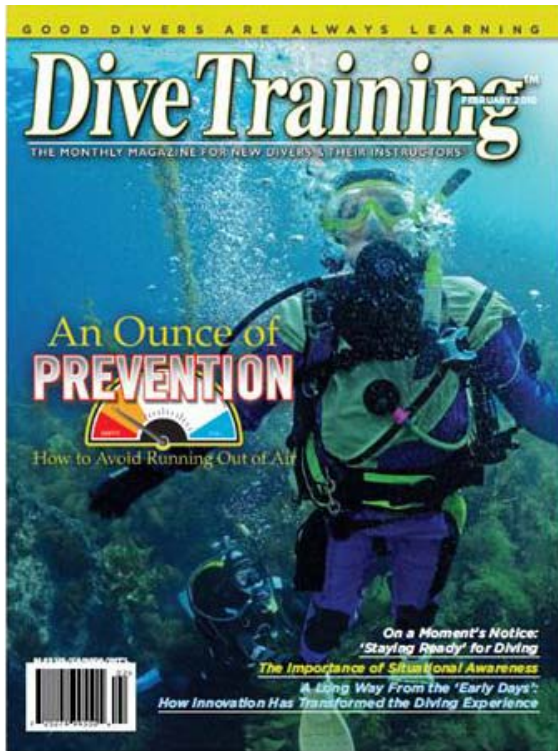
years. As Lynn puts it, “Living in Hawaii then, we most always had favorable shooting conditions.” Be that as it may, this dynamic duo went to great lengths to get the “exact reverse.” One of their earliest covers required a giant stride from a boat, first shot from the sea surface and then shot from an elevated position from on the boat. Since they were using film at that time there was no way to know for sure if they got it, so Linda, the model, had to perform over 70 giant strides. That’s SEVEN-ZERO picture perfect boat entries in a row. Remember two of the jumps had to match up perfectly. Hands, arms, fins, body attitude, everything had to be lined up. Sounds simple doesn’t it? As difficult as this assignment was at least Lynn could talk to Linda



Finished “Swim” 180 degree conceptual reverse cover. Settings topside, D100, Nikkor 12-24mm WA, f/14, 1/50sec, ISO 200. Underwater, D100, Light & Motion Titan Housing, Nikkor 16mm FE, f/13, 1/25sec, ISO 200, Twin Sea & Sea YS-120 strobes half power w/diffusers.



Many images are needed with slight variances in order to find the best match between front and reverse images in the final version.



Underwater “Panic Ascents” 180 degree exact reverse cover. These are by far the most difficult especially if there’s motion being conveyed. Communication, water motion, dive requirements are all conspiring against the photographer and models.

empty milk jugs used to pour warm water down the model’s wetsuits and tied it in an inverted position under his arms with a spare weight belt to give him more floatation. Don’t laugh; plastic jugs were used by early cave divers for buoyancy control. It took two rolls of film and most of the day but with this in-field adaptation he was able to get the shots. Besides the impromptu dive gear manufactured in the field, sometimes it’s necessary to build some kind of contraption to create an image in the first place. In the “Stewards of the Ocean” issue, Barry had to build a remote triggering telescope to get the camera out over the divers in the water for a straight down shot. Using some spare piping, fishing line, and a ladder he was able to get the camera in the proper position. By this time he was using digital and with instant feedback it only took 75 shots to acquire the front cover photo. He then had to get in the pool and keep all six divers in the correct position for the inside reverse. When you look at the finished product you’d think it must have been a quick setup in a swimming pool and buda-boom-budda-bing – done! The reality is anything but simple and as Barry is so fond of saying, “That’s our job to make ‘em look uncomplicated.”

As mentioned earlier not every month carries an exact reverse but always two different images are used

during the shoot and make suggestions or corrections. Once below the surface communication is reduced to pre-dive briefings, slates, and hand signals, some of which are highly animated. When shooting an underwater communications cover, the job called for two divers swimming along toward and away from Lynn. Sounds easy enough, but fin kicks, breathing exhalations, and desired buddy location all had to be coordinated in openwater, with the limitations of gas supply, decompression requirements, and a constantly moving environment factored in as well. It was up to the

photographer to know when to hit the shutter. Lynn exclaimed, “When shooting exact reverses underwater the keys are kick cycles and exhalations.” I’ve certainly had more than one trashcan filled because of errant fins and bubbles.

In March 1998, Barry and Ruth Guimbellot, another long-term contributor team, set out for their second reverse cover at a quarry with a simple concept - at least on paper. There would be two divers on the surface giving the OK signal toward shore where an “instructor” would be signaling back. The two

covers would be 180 degree reverses of each other. The weather was still cold from the winter and a howling wind screamed down across the quarry. Trying to keep the divers in a relative position with a fluttering dive flag was a constant battle. The environmental conditions were bad enough, but Barry had misjudged his buoyancy in the fresh water and when he lifted his large camera system clear of the water he would sink. Between the howling wind and his lack of positive buoyancy he just couldn’t get the proper positioning. In desperation, he took one of the

(almost, more on that later). For example, in the October '05 issue "The Forever Diver," the front cover shows a boy with snorkel gear in swimsuit (my step son Eric) standing on a wave washed beach from above. The "reverse" cover from below shows a close-up, looking up at, a technical diver (friend Joe Tezak) as the boy all grown up exploring the deep. Seemed easy enough, except 12-year old Eric was "distracted" by all the activity on the beach, the ladder kept sinking into the sand, and Joe was in a full dry suit, which takes all of about three minutes in the hot sun to start sweating like an Enron executive. Barry and Ruth's "Learning the Scuba Language," January '06 conceptual cover barely happened because of lost baggage and a storm named Gamma. While many of the problems associated with an exact reverse aren't necessarily an issue with "conceptuals", there nevertheless needs to be a coherent tie in between the images and deadlines still exist. These kinds of assignments only bring a little sigh of relief on my part.

Being behind the camera takes a fair amount of concentration and definitely requires an attention to detail. On the other side of the lens a good model merely has to have perfect buoyancy control, never blink, make no unnecessary fin or arm movements, have a picture perfect

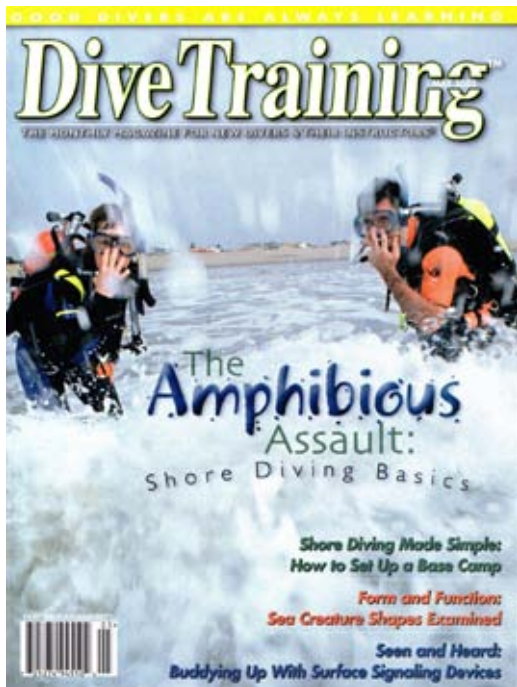
Conceptual reverse "World's Apart" cover. These usually are the easiest and often can be images already in stock. It's a real treat to get these assignments!

form in the water at all times, and most important, know "instinctively" what the photographer wants. Of course, basic black or too much of the same manufacturer's gear doesn't cut it either. I have been fortunate enough to have some friends, not all divers, and my wife Janine who, without a moan or whimper, will gladly subject themselves to the sometimes crazy ideas in getting the shot – well most of the time. One of the most memorable covers we did was an earlier one from May '03. It was actually to illustrate my feature article on shore diving, so



I thought what better way to do that then from inside the surf line at eye level! My models, Joe and Janine, had to stand up, with full gear, to the rushing water, with the sand under their fins washing away with every wave. It was demanding to say the least and they took shot after shot in stride for both front and back. Dozens of times they got back on their feet after being knocked down and continuously kept their masks clear of fog. I knew it was time to quit when their facial expressions took a turn toward the hostile side and the

cursing was starting to draw attention from the beach goers. Besides I'd had enough of the waves slapping me upside the head into the camera housing. But it seemed the shoot went well 'till the slides came back and it was discovered....well, I'll let Janine tell it. "It turns out that my snorkel was on the wrong side of my mask (this of course was not acceptable for a magazine that is responsible for showing new divers how to do it "right"). So, after some expletives and a serious reprimand from the photographer, it was back to the surf



even a little blood once in awhile goes into the images. We're obviously not curing the energy crisis here, but seeing the finished issue with the concept all laid out nice and clean by the art staff makes the effort worth it. So the next time you look at a DT cover and see a fin slightly out of place or Lego Man's legs on backwards, relax and be happy you didn't have to be the model.

Joseph C. Dovala
www.jcdovala.com

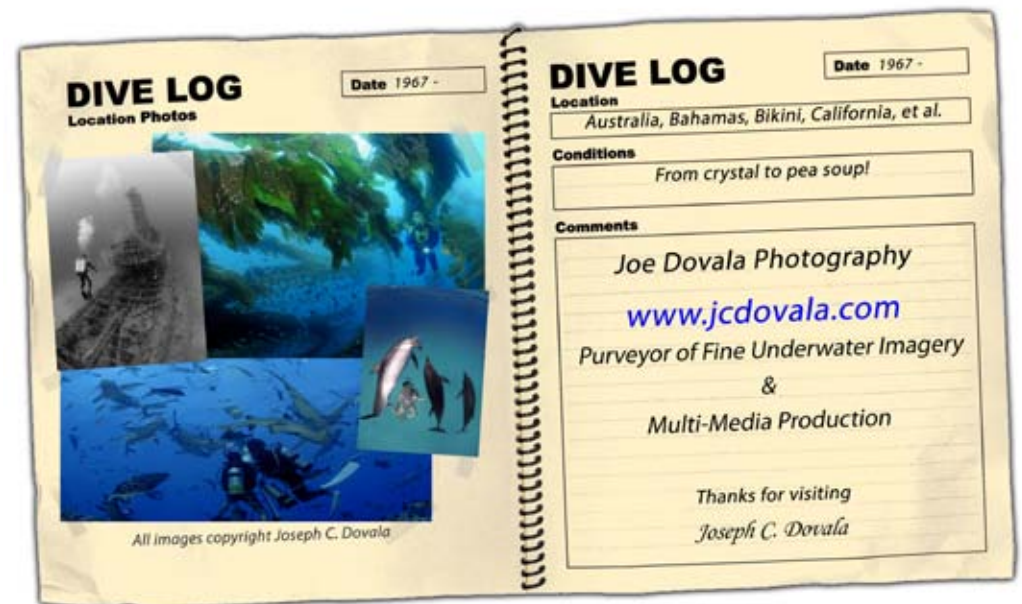


line - and the surf was even bigger - for take two. This was one of those make it or break it moments between photographer and model, however, all well that ends well as we are now happily married." And yes, as the photographer I know all too well that I should've noticed the snorkel during the first session. But hey stuff happens.

Now what about the most recognized name on the masthead of photographers, which of course is none other than Marty Snyderman? He prefers not to do reverse covers because the success rate is too low. He's been in the business a very long

time and knows what he is talking about. When Marty is used for a non-diver cover the art director just flips his transparency backwards. Works for most critters because one side looks just like the other. Nice work if you can get it. Even Keith Ibsen, who creates the animated illustrated covers, as well as quite a number of inside drawings, has had to deal with challenges of the 180-degree reverse. A recent back cover had a shark's tail fin in the "wrong" direction from the front cover orientation.

Making photographs for publication can be very trying at times and quite a bit of sweat, tears, and



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Actual shots taken with Seahorn snoot by Alex Tattersall (www.uwvisions.com)



The full set.
Sorry Nemo is not included! ;)



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With the sperm whales of the mid-Atlantic Ridge

by Wade Hughes FRGS

This pod of sperm whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*) swims slowly in mirror smooth seas in mid Atlantic, off the coast of Pico in the Azores. In their midst, two newborn calves. When they see me in the water, waiting in the hope of a glimpse of the calves, they do not deviate from their chosen course. We have observed the pod from the boat for some time.

The adults are taking turns to shepherd the calves and to dive for food in the abyssal deeps, around 1000 metres below. On occasions, all the adults dive and the calves are left to face the uncertainties of their strange new world alone.

I swim with this pod a number of times, each time entering the water well away from the animals and waiting for them to approach. The underwater visibility is well over 30 metres, but sprays of audible clicks from the adult whales' echolocation confirms that they have detected me long before they come into view.

If they wished to avoid the encounter they could easily do so: there are miles of open sea room all round us. Yet, each time, they swim slowly past, allowing me intimate and



privileged insights into their lives.

As they pass, we make eye contact. A flicker of their eyes signals conscious watchfulness, and perhaps curiosity at the strange life form

that has materialized out of the blue underwater fog.

On one occasion a 50 tonne bull, escorting the pod, singles me out for close inspection. It swims so close

that I am concerned we will touch. These are wild whales: petting them, or attempting to do so, would violate that wildness. But I'm also concerned that touching could perhaps jolt the



whale and cause sudden violent motion. Even an unintended slap from a pectoral fin-or worse, from flukes that weigh around two tonnes-would deliver a crushing blow.

But, the bull avoids contact with what can only be described –in human terms- as extraordinary care. It slows its deliberate head on advance and coasts to a halt, no more than half a metre from me. I am earnestly wondering “Now what?”

The bull’s tail begins to sink and this enormous animal rotates into a head up position.

We have observed this behaviour several times before, when small pods of sperm whales have encountered each other. Writing in 1839, Thomas Beale, the first serious observer and commentator on sperm whale behaviour pondered that “...this posture they seem to assume for the purpose of surveying more perfectly, or easily, the surrounding expanse” .

Beale could well have been right. The whale seems to be closely scrutinizing me. As I stare into its left eye, with its flukes 14 metres or so beneath

my fins, the bull slowly spins on its tail. The base of its jaw and its throat pass before my face. And then I am staring into its right eye.

These are long, intense moments. We come to the Azores, hoping to get close to the sperm whales. In now hundreds of encounters, this is closer than we ever imagined would be possible. And it is one of the biggest whales we have seen. It is clearly an encounter on the whale’s terms. I feel very small.

We know not to anthropomorphize animal behaviour. But it is difficult not to consider this



animal to be anything but gentle and gracious. It is, after all, a super-predator. – the world’s largest toothed animal. It hunts, holding its breath, as deep as three kilometers beneath the surface.

Triangular scars beneath this whale’s eye testify to the desperate piercing bites inflicted by the beak of a giant squid – an animal as long, or possibly even longer than the whale itself. These are fresh marks, inflicted in a struggle to the death, in the blackness of the abyss. Yet here, on the surface, the whale is docile. Perhaps weighing its options. Perhaps carefully considering whether or not I represent a risk to the calves.

It is unlikely, but not impossible, that it sired the calves. Big bulls roam the oceans in solitude, seeking receptive females, and dispersing the gene pool.

Calves and adolescents gather in the company and care of adult females, in much the same way as do elephants. Their society is dominated by the influence of the matriarch. But, from our observations of this pod, this bull has easily fallen in with the other whales. These include large adolescent bulls, which must soon leave the pod and join the bachelor herds. These are the congregations of testy males that that the whalers of old, with eyes only for whale oil,



happily valued as “forty-barrel bulls”

Perhaps this bull’s sheer size and latent power imposes order and acceptance on the pod. Whatever it is, the younger bulls swim peacefully in company with it. The calves wriggle around it as they do every other whale in the pod. Perhaps it is the prodigal father returned after a year and a half philandering through the oceans of the world. We will never know.

It’s sheer size and impossibly close proximity impose on me . It is difficult to be elated, and yet remain calm. Elated, because this is, in many ways, the jackpot. Intimately close to a superb specimen of this

most enigmatic of species. Sobered by the realization that we must be careful in choosing what we wish for. It was the whale that chose how this encounter should unfold. Only the whale can decide how it will end. I am paying close attention!

Apparently satisfied with its close inspection, it begins to sink. Slowly and, I believe, carefully. Only when it is well clear of me does it twist and beats its flukes to catch up with the pod.

**Wade and Robyn
Hughes**
aussiesabroad@aol.com

NOTES:

The photographs shown here form part of a collection of work completed over the years since 2005, under permits and special permission issued by the Azorean Regional Secretaria do Ambiente do Mar.

All approaches towards the whales, either by boat or in person underwater are made not only in strict adherence to the Secretaria's guidelines, but also with the well being of the whales firmly in mind.

No breathing apparatus other than snorkel is used. Typically we only allow one photographer to enter the water at a time: when permit and circumstances allow, we will enable a second photographer to enter the water a discreet distance behind the first.

Our expeditions are self-funded and not for profit. Photographs are donated without charge for research or educational purposes.

Our expedition members are:
Robyn Hughes
Wayne Osborn: International Fellow, Explorers Club
Pam Osborn
Wade Hughes: Member, Explorers Club; Fellow Royal Geographical Society

All photography of whales, from either the boat, or underwater, is done in strict accordance with the

conditions of our permit which is issued by the Regional Secretaria do Ambiente do Mar. We are very grateful to the Secretaria for granting this permit, and we trust that our work is repaying the trust placed in us, and that both the whales, and the whale watching industry in the Azores is benefiting in some small way from the contributions we have made to the record over the past years. In our view, the world has a lot it can learn from the balance of regulation and self-regulation that characterises the Azorean whale watching industry.

Approaches to the whales are made using mask, snorkel, and fins only. This is both a requirement of our permit, and good, sensible practice. Bubbles from scuba would disturb the animals, and the weight and drag of a scuba, or rebreather, unit would be an encumbrance on some of the longer swims from the boat we often have to undertake to be in the best position to record an encounter. Nevertheless, the temptation to follow these mystical creatures down into the abyss is immense. Can you just imagine...!

As the world's pre-eminent sperm whale researcher, Dr Hal Whitehead, points out, sperm whales are "timid and inoffensive" (unless

Land photos by Robyn Hughes



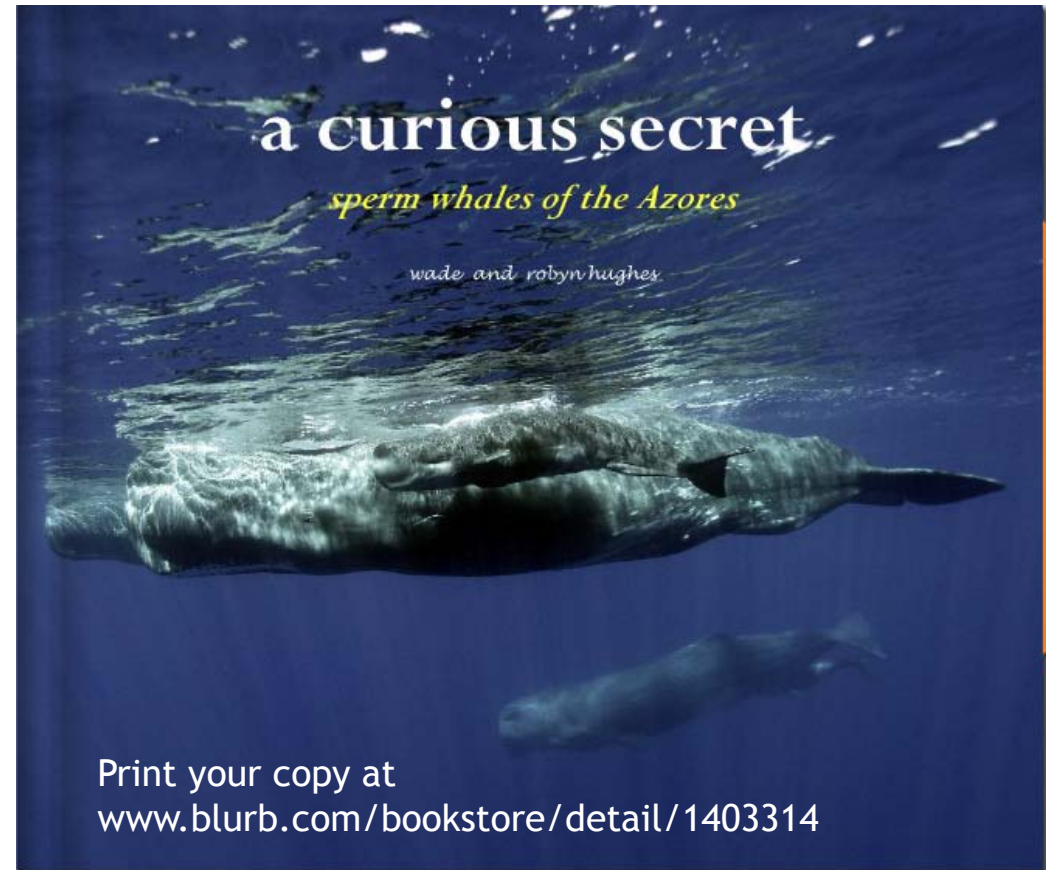


you happen to be a giant squid!) and so we are careful not to cause fright by surprising them. Usually, we only allow one photographer into the water at a time, although if circumstances are judged to be appropriate by our professional skippers and guides, we will allow a second to follow at a discreet distance behind the first.

The responses of the whales to our approaches are quite unpredictable. At different times, even the same individual whales can display anything from disdain for our presence, indifference, or active curiosity. On one occasion, a passing adolescent female whale submerged a little to avoid passing close to me,

surfaced 20 meters or so from me and sharply smacked its flukes on the surface, just once. We got the point and went looking for another whale to spend some time with. On other occasions, we've enjoyed lingering inspections from giants that loom up out of the blue, satisfy their interest, then move on to more important business. Almost every encounter is preceded by rigorous probing from the whales' sonar, often well before the whale comes within range of visibility.

Lenses for underwater use have ranged from the Nikon 12-24 zoom, through Nikkor 20mm prime, and now to Canon 16-35 zoom and 35mm



prime. I've used a number of housings, all commercially available aluminium, with domes ranging from 6 to 9 inches. Robyn uses Nikkor 70-300mm and Canon 100-400 mm zooms in the boat.

If you have a passion for whales and the sea, you can write to us at aussiesabroad@aol.com.

Wade and Robyn Hughes
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The Whales of São Marco

Wade Hughes



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Raptures of the Emerald Deep

British Columbia's Diving Wonders

by Jett Britnell

In his best-selling book, "The Silent World", Captain Jacques-Yves Cousteau waxed poetically about his intrepid 50-fathom dives into the zone of rapture, that precarious depth where... "divers become like drunken gods". Cousteau was recounting his early experiences diving under the mind-numbing effects of nitrogen narcosis. He described these intoxicating seizures as "l'ivresse des grandes profondeurs" which when translated means "rapture or intoxication, of the great depths". "Raptures of the Deep" is an evocative phrase that I always felt accurately described the dizzying underwater grandeur of British Columbia's Emerald Sea.

Widely regarded as having some of the best cold water diving on the planet, British Columbia's current-swept channels are renowned for its fascinating array of diving attractions. These luxuriant plankton rich waters support a diverse population of over 350 species of fish, 500 marine plants and thousands of marine invertebrates. No less than a dozen species of sea mammals including stellar sea lions, harbour seals, Pacific whiteside dolphins, grey and minke whales and a resident pod of killer whales frolic here. Some of the more popular critters for diver interactions are the giant



Descending upon a large cloud sponge



Wolf eels are a favorite subject

Jett uses a Nikon D200 in a Sealux housing with two Inon Z240 strobes, Ikelite strobes & a Nikon SB 800 in a Sealux strobe housing. Scandisk CF cards. In British Columbia, the workhorse lenses are a Nikon 10.5 fisheye and a Nikon 60mm macro lens although, he will sometimes use a Nikon 105 macro for certain subjects.

octopus, muppet-faced wolf eels, and six-gill sharks.

With a year-round diving season, divers of all experience levels are sure to find undersea adventure in British Columbia's Emerald Sea. No matter whether you're a recreational diver, tech diver, underwater photographer, wreck diver, there seems to be something here for everyone. While there are literally hundreds of different dive sites on Canada's west coast to choose from, the following dive sites are places that I feel offer something special in the way of attractions and overall diversity of marine life. These are the dive sites that I feel are most worthy of being named one of British Columbia's diving wonders.

Skookumchuck Narrows Sechelt Inlet, Sunshine Coast

Separating the Sechelt Peninsula from mainland British Columbia, Skookumchuck Narrows hailed as being one of British Columbia's fastest saltwater rapids. When the current turns in this narrow passage, the raging tidal flow can churn from zero to 16 knots within minutes! The Skookumchuck Rapids are quite literally a shallow rock-strewn bottleneck for the voluminous tides that ebb and flow daily between Sechelt Inlet and Jervis Inlet. It has been estimated that during 3-metre tidal exchanges, 200 billion gallons of salt water flushes through Skookumchuck Narrows. In turn, this mighty movement of water stirs up the nutrient-laden plankton broth that sustains Skookumchuck's rich bounty of sea life.

"Skookumchuck" is a Chinook First Nations word meaning "turbulent water". Yet despite the seething whirlpools, foaming eddies, and standing



Diver and giant octopus at Argonaut Wharf

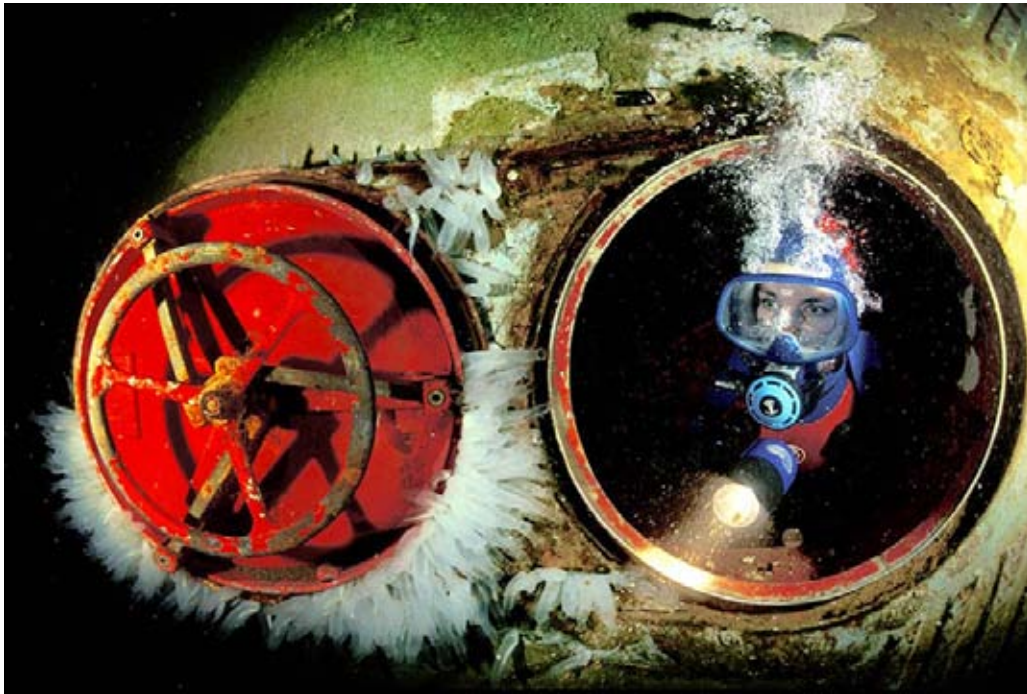
waves, a shimmering collage of sessile marine life stubbornly clings to the rocky substrate. Yellow and white encrusting sponge, purple sea stars, and a multicoloured assortment of sea anemones covers the bottom. Mosshead warbonnets, sculpins, calcareous tubeworms, giant barnacles and nudibranchs thrive in this seemingly inhospitable



Hooded nudibranchs

environment.

The periods of slack water here may last anywhere from few minutes to three quarters of an hour, depending upon the daily tidal exchanges. Hence, any diving here is conducted from a "live boat". After your descent here, you'll likely encounter other divers relaxing on the balcony of



Divers can safely penetrate the interior of the HMCS Chaudiere



Kelp forest

Egmont's Backeddy Pub. The rustic marina-style pub overlooks the water and boasts a scenic postcard view of the nearby Sutton Islets and the snow-capped Coast Mountains.

HMCS Chaudiere Kunechin Bay, Sunshine Coast

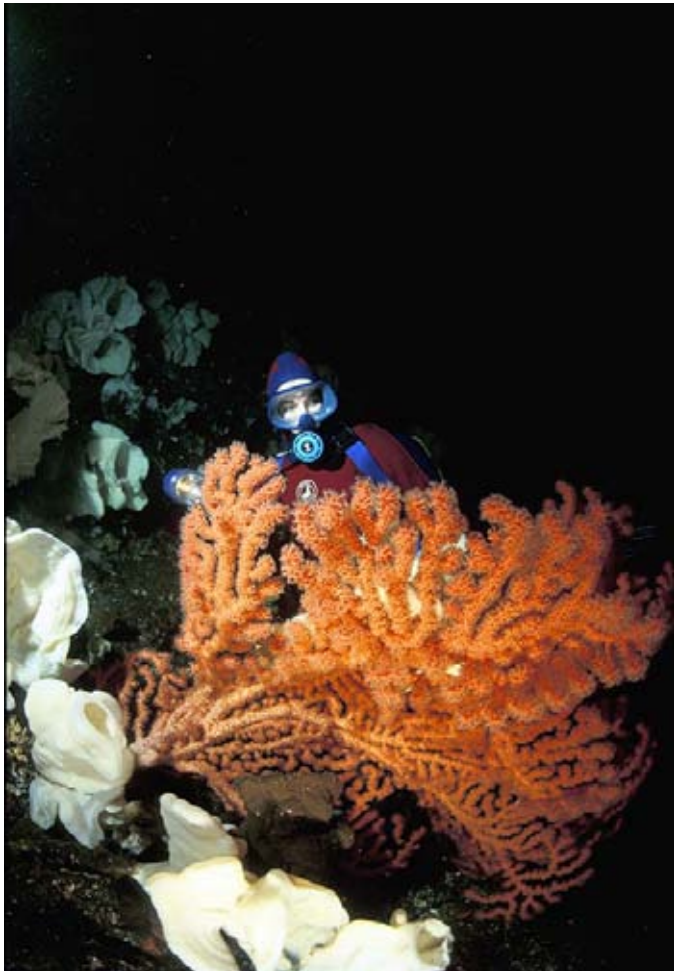
The HMCS Chaudiere was purposely sunk as an artificial reef on December 5, 1992 off Kunechin Point in Sechart Inlet. Commissioned as a destroyer escort and submarine hunter in 1957, this vessel was destined for

the scrap yard until Canada's then Minister for Defense sold the war ship to the Artificial Reef Society of British Columbia (ARSBC) in 1991 for the nominal sum of one-dollar Canadian (plus tax). Since the 1980's, the nonprofit ARSBC has been making retired Canadian Forces warships diver-safe and sinking them to enhance the marine environment by providing a habitat for marine life on an otherwise featureless bottom. To date, they have sunk six decommissioned naval ships in BC waters...

The Chaudiere rests on her port side at depths between 20 to 40 metres. The three permanent mooring lines that are attached to the ship help divers orient themselves to the wreck and also serve as descent and ascent lines. Visibility on the wreck can be exceptional or poor depending upon the season. During the winter months it can reach 40 metres or more, whereas in the summer it will average between 10 to 20 metres. Apart from the fish that congregate here, the vessel is festooned with sea squirts, encrusting bryozoans and thick

clusters of white glassy tunicates.

As shipwrecks go, the Chaudiere is a safe one to dive. This is due in large part to the countless hours of extensive clean-up work provided by numerous volunteers who, under the direction, prepared the ship for her watery tomb. Large entry and exit holes have been cut into the ship at various points to permit easy access to her 4 available decks and 67 diveable rooms. The Chaudiere promises to get even better as more life forms adhere to her imposing metal super-structure.



Cold water gorgonian coral

The Coral
Agamemnon Channel, Sunshine Coast

Most people are not aware that British Columbia's Emerald Sea has gorgonian coral fans. That's understandable since you must descend to 160 feet in just the right places to see these fabulous brick-red coral fans (*Paragorgia arborea*). When seen during a dive on a cold winter day these



Orca

majestic red sea fans, that are more often associated with warm tropical oceans, do tend to make our local waters feel that much warmer.

The earliest known discovery of gorgonian coral in British Columbia occurred one hundred years before when some fisherman snagged a branch with their nets in about ten fathoms of water. An identical specimen of coral was retrieved from the Gulf of Alaska in 1915. Until then, this species of coral was only known to inhabit Norwegian fjords. For many years the precise location of the coral dive remained a relative secret amongst a few local divers. In part this was due to the extreme depths at which this coral lives. Since this dive falls into the realm of being a decompression dive, it is for experienced divers only.



Clown shrimp

Race Rocks
Strait of Juan de Fuca, Vancouver Island

Situated just six kilometres off the southern tip of Vancouver Island, Race Rocks is a forbidden-looking group of exposed current-swept islets. Aptly named for the awesomely strong 4 to 10 knot rip tides that sweep a perfect race around them, they are the stuff of local diving legend. Unpredictable seas and violent seas have driven numerous ships aground here over the last century and tales abound of divers who were swept away by the treacherous tidal flow. Which begs the question, "Why are so many eager to dive here?"

The answer is simple. Race Rocks is renowned for being the most exciting diving area on the whole southern half of Vancouver Island. A palette of natural wonder entices divers to brave Race Rocks during slack tide intervals. Places



Race rocks

like West Race Wall are emblazoned with a flourishing array of marine invertebrates such as, yellow sulphur sponge, lacy basket stars, deep purple and bright pink hydrocorals, softball-size barnacles, colonial ascidians, small clusters of pink soft corals, king crabs, purple, red and green sea urchins, and over 65 species of hydroids. Sea anemones are quite plentiful and include painted tealia, crimson anemones, striped brooding anemones and sporadic patches of strawberry anemones. Divers are often entertained underwater by frolicking seals and sea lions.

Renate's Reef Barclay Sound, Vancouver Island

Considered to be one of Barclay Sound's highlight dives, Renate's Reef (named after Renate Christie of Rendezvous Dive Ventures fame) is the top of an open water seamount that ascends from the depths to within 10 metres of the surface. The jagged peak of this ocean pinnacle is comprised of two separate ridges that are marred with crevices. Wolf eels are seen on just about every dive and the reef's rocky terrain is peppered with thick clumps of yellow staghorn bryozoans. Underwater



Six gill shark

photographers are certain to capture some fish images here since Renate's Reef is refuge to no less than 10 different species of rockfish.

Strewn all over the colourful seascape are clusters of ghostly white plumose anemones, dinner-plate sized fish eating tealia anemones and various colourful nudibranchs adorn the reef. Descend deeper over the over the drop off and one never knows what they might see? In the sand channels that cut through Renate's rock canyons, you may see several ratfish patrolling over the bottom.

Flora Islet Strait of Georgia, Hornby Island

Flora Islet's claim to fame is it is one of the few places on earth where sport divers can swim with seemingly docile six-gill sharks. Considered a primitive shark species, the six-gill shark, *Hexanchus griseus*, most distinguishing characteristics are that it has no central dorsal fin and six-gill slits whereas most sharks have the telltale shark fin and only five gill slits. A sluggish, slow moving species, six-gill sharks can attain lengths of over six metres, though specimens in the range of two to four



Red Irish Lord face detail

meters are more common.

Six-gill sharks have been fished off Portugal at depths of over a mile. Curiously, they are often hooked in deeper water toward tropical latitudes and shallower depths toward colder latitudes. While these deepwater pelagics are known to inhabit depths reaching 2500 metres, in British Columbia these sharks are observed at depths as shallow as ten metres. The appearance of these sharks within



Wolf eel

sport diving depths at a few specific dive locations within British Columbia remains a mystery. Marine biologists speculate that these sharks ascend from their deepwater environ and move into shallower water during the summer months to either mate or take advantage of more abundant food sources.

The diving season for six-gill sharks runs from approximately June to September, with the summer months being the most opportune period

to see two or three different sharks on a single dive. While Hornby Island is perhaps best known for its sightings of six-gill sharks, as many as 28 other dive sites here offer a wide assortment of marine invertebrates and crevice reef dwellers. During the winter months, stellar sea lions haul out at Norris Rocks, providing divers with some thrilling encounters.

Row and be Damned Discovery Passage, Quadra Island

Row and Be Damned is a steep rock precipice that slopes almost vertically into the current-swept waters of Discovery Passage. Gigantic boulders in 12 to 21 metres of water are coated with pink strawberry anemones, sponge, and other forms of marine life. Giant octopus, wolf eels, king crabs and fish are also in abundance.

Diving here is only possible from a boat during the brief respite of a slack tide interval. The sea floor is embroidered with clumps of yellow sponge, scallops, colonies of hydroids, and a lush terrazzo of pink strawberry anemones. Moving in and out of Row and Be Damned's jagged crevices are tiger rockfish, red Irish lord sculpins, kelp greenlings and some rather large lingcod. Octopus and wolf eels are here, but they are sometimes not easy to spot amid the riot of colour that is Row and Be Damned's undersea terrain.

Browning Wall Browning Passage, Nigei Island

Situated off the north end of Vancouver Island, this popular current-swept wall will completely change any negative thoughts anyone may harbour

about cold water diving. Nothing can ever fully prepare you for your first jaw-gaping glimpse of Browning's pink soft coral and mustard yellow sulphur sponge studded wall. Indeed, Browning's sheer drop-off is a living kaleidoscope of varying shape, texture and colour.

A dense canopy of bull kelp crowns the Browning Wall's top 5 metres. Beneath this amber awning, the light show of riotous colour begins. Seemingly jammed into every nook and cranny of Browning's precipitous rock face are feathery hydroids, deep purple hydrocorals, lacy basket stars, various different species of sea anemones, red urchins and rock scallops. Flame-tipped and orange peel nudibranchs are also quite common.

Schools of widow rockfish swim casually in the open water column. Kelp greenlings, yellow and black China rockfish and the beautifully mottled red Irish lord sculpin sedately perch themselves on sponge covered outcroppings. It almost appears as if they are waiting for the current to spoon-feed them their next tender morsel. Most species of rock fish common to the West Coast can be seen here as well as voracious-looking lingcod, grunt sculpins and the more elusive decorated warbonnets. On a sunny day with 30 metre plus visibility underwater, I would stack

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Rock fish

Browning Wall up against any other wall dive in the world!

Jett Britnell

Jett Britnell is an internationally published marine photojournalist who has over 29 years of diving experience in British Columbia's Emerald Sea and the tropical oceans. His photography and diving articles have appeared in many diving publications worldwide.

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www.jettbritnell.com

Philippine Impressions

By Eric Hanauer

Things I already knew about the Philippines:

1. It's the world center of marine biodiversity. To be exact, the Philippines and western Indonesia boast nearly 3,000 different species of reef fishes, nearly a third of all that have been identified worldwide, along with over 300 species of corals. The further one moves from the epicenter, the less the diversity. Hawaii, for example, at the eastern fringe of the tropical Pacific, has fewer than 500 species.

2. Destructive fishing practices, including dynamite, cyanide, and bleach, pose serious threats to that marine environment.

3. Over 7000 islands spread out over many miles of ocean make enforcement of environmental laws, or any laws, difficult.

4. World War II blasted across the islands. They were conquered by the Japanese early on, and recaptured by American forces two years later. Filipinos still love Americans, and General Douglas MacArthur remains a national hero.

5. Wildly decorated Jeepneys are the primary means of public transportation in the cities.

6. Imelda Marcos was an avid shoe collector.

Things I learned on my first trip to the Philippines:

1. The dive operators are serious about marine conservation. Apparently the word got out that there is more money to be made from live fishes than dead ones. I saw no evidence of dynamite fishing in the areas I dived. No one is naïve enough



Jeepneys, Atlantis Dive Resort, Dumaguete

Kids play outside a dive shop at Puerto Galera



Subal ND20 housing modified by Sam Chae to house a Nikon D300. Ikelite 160s strobes. Tokina 10-17 @ 10mm. Manual exposure 1/60th @ F16. ISO 200

to believe that destructive fishing practices don't exist. But it seems they aren't happening in areas where people come to dive.

2. Muck diving is excellent.

The bottom is a finer brown sand, as contrasted with the coarse, black volcanic stuff in Lembeh. And like Lembeh, the quality of your photography will be in direct proportion to your proximity to a good guide. I was lucky enough to have several.

3. Bangka boats make an excellent dive platform. They are long and narrow, with outriggers that make their footprint as wide as it is long. The large ones are powered by inboard motors; the smaller ones by oars or outboards. Their narrow profile provides speed and hydrodynamic efficiency, while the outriggers provide stability. Seen head-on they resemble a Klingon bird of prey. The basic design dates back 1,000 years. Guides helped us gear up, so all we had to do was roll off the boat.

4. Jeepneys are rolling works of art. After World War II, Filipinos took abandoned Jeep bodies, stretched them, and decorated them with fanciful designs. The back is bare bones; passengers sit facing each other on long benches. They don't make military Jeep bodies any more, but new ones are manufactured in



Hermit crab. Subal ND20 housing modified by Sam Chae to house a Nikon D300. Ikelite 160s strobes. 105mm Nikkor. Manual exposure 1/60th @ F22. ISO 200

the Philippines, using Japanese and Korean engines, but still looking like the old classics. Typical fares are about 8 pesos, or 10 cents US.

5. The Marcoses are long gone, and tourism in the Philippines has seen a renaissance. There may be a cause and effect relationship.

6. Oh, and about the kidnappings. They have occurred primarily in the southern islands where the Abu Sayyef gang hold sway. That's far from the diving areas,

and nearly 90% of the victims are Filipinos. Abu Sayyef thugs are in it primarily for ransom money, not for jihad. The people we met were as friendly and helpful as can be. I don't even like writing about such things, but when I tell people about my trip, that's invariably the first thing they ask. There never was a moment when I didn't feel safe.

With 7,000 islands, any visitor can only get a fragmentary hint of



Georg Flashar and a piling, DuCoMi Pier. Subal ND20 housing modified by Sam Chae to house a Nikon D300. Ikelite 160s strobes. Tokina 10-17 @ 10mm. Manual exposure 1/250th @ F11. ISO 400

diving in the Philippines. My trip was limited to the Atlantis Resorts in Dumaguete and Puerto Galera. Although the diving at the two was similar, the topside aspects are strikingly different. Dumaguete is a large city that's about an hour flight from Manila. But the resort is in a secluded, woody area outside of town,

so it has the feel of a quiet retreat from the hustle of the everyday world.

Getting to Puerto Galera entails a 2 _ hour bus ride from Manila's airport, and a one hour boat ride. The resort is in the middle of a small town that's a raucous, raunchy mélange of bars, souvenir shops, and other tourist traps. Good natured hawkers will try to sell you \$25 Rolexes, t-shirts, cheap jewelry, weed, or their sisters.

But partying isn't mandatory, and you'll still have the option of retreating to the pampered comfort of the resort. The Atlantis Resorts were built with American tourists in mind, although a vibrant mix of Europeans and Asians predominated while I was there. Rooms are spacious, well appointed, and spotless. Food selection and presentation is excellent, as is the service, both at the resort and at the dive centers. Gear storage is well arranged and secure, and the guides do all the heavy lifting. You leave everything on the boat, it all quickly appears at the rinsing facility, and the next morning it's back on the *bangka* waiting for you. There's even a secure camera room with 110 and 220 volt current, air hoses, and lots of storage.

Of course, it all comes down to the diving. And that was excellent at both locations. Most sites are within 20 minutes or less from the resorts, except for outlying islands which



Head-on bangkas resemble Klingon birds of prey. Panasonic DMC-TZ4, Programme mode 1/500th @F4.8. ISO 250

are 45 minutes away. At Dumaguete that's Apo Island; at Puerto Galera it's Isla Verde.

My favorite site of all was the DuCoMi Pier at Dumaguete. The acronym stands for Dumaguete Coconut Milling Company, and above water it's a busy commercial pier. A smaller pier, about 50 meters away, is similar and part of the same dive. Underwater, the closely placed pilings are a brilliantly colored, phantasmagoria of hard and soft corals, sponges, nudibranchs, fishes, and other critters too numerous to recount. The toughest decision for a photographer is whether to shoot macro or wide angle, because it's all there. Subdued light filtering around the structure lends an ethereal look and feel to the experience. I could have spent all my dives there and



Bangka from below. Subal ND20 housing modified by Sam Chae to house a Nikon D300. Ikelite 160s strobes. Tokina 10-17 @ 10mm. Aperture priority exposure 1/100th @ F22. ISO 200

never scratched the surface. However, it was so popular that access was strictly scheduled, and had to be shared among the local dive centers.

Earlier this year the company decided the pilings needed repair, which would have necessitated scraping off decades of marine life. Although the pier is little known outside the Philippines, it's justifiably considered a world class dive site. There was a public outcry, especially among dive operators. One meter was scraped at the bottom of each piling

for inspection and repair, because that seemed to be the area most prone to damage. Subsequently the company decided to scrape everything. They claim that in a couple of years the marine life will be back. If you believe that, I've got some British Petroleum stock I'd like to sell you.

Apo Island has been a marine protected area for over 25 years and features hard and soft corals, along with a variety of marine life in the clearest water in the area. There are drift dives, walls, and areas with



Subal ND20 housing modified by Sam Chae to house a Nikon D300. Ikelite 160s strobes. 105mm Nikkor. Manual exposure 1/50th @ F8. ISO 400

hundreds of schooling fish. Table corals predominated, with occasional bright soft corals. One of my favorites was an open cavern, the ceiling decorated with soft corals and gorgonians, and a mob hundred of tiny glassfish fluttering around my head so close I could hear their fins beating the water as they went by.

Most of the local dives were of the muck variety, where the guides found the usual suspects: devil scorpionfishes, jawfish, nudibranchs, and of course the ever present pygmy

seahorses. They seem to know where every creature is hiding, as if they had a GPS running in their heads. Every once in a while I'd pride myself in finding my own critters, but that didn't happen very often. Once I was photographing a sea horse and didn't even notice a leaf fish posing right next to it, until somebody pointed it out.

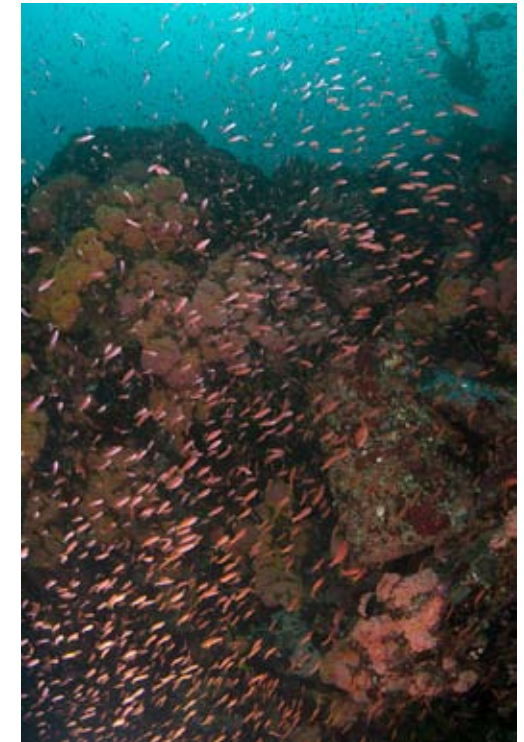
The muck diving at Puerto Galera was very similar. Its outlying island is Isla Verde, home of hundreds of thousands of anthias of various



Subal ND20 housing modified by Sam Chae to house a Nikon D300. Ikelite 160s strobes. Tokina 10-17 @ 10mm. Aperture priority exposure 1/100th @ F22. ISO 200

species. I've never seen so many of them in one place, flitting about the walls and slopes like so many butterflies. A male anthias will have a harem of up to 40 females. When he dies, one of the females will change sex and take his place. But you probably knew that.

The Washing Machine is a unique site that's strictly for fun. It's

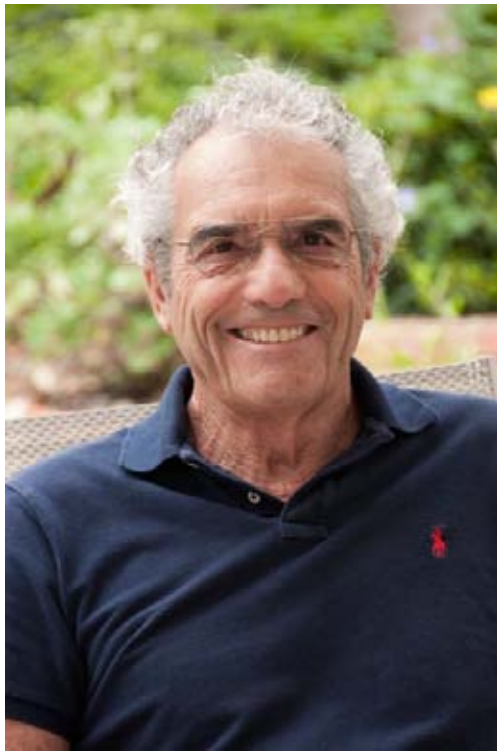


Subal ND20 housing modified by Sam Chae to house a Nikon D300. Ikelite 160s strobes. Tokina 10-17 @ 10mm. Aperture priority exposure 1/100th @ F22. ISO 200

the only one in either place where gloves are allowed, because you'll need them to hold your position in the current. It's a series of finger reefs at shallow depths, and is best dived when the current is running strong. You pull yourself down the anchor line and ride the current between the reefs. When you reach the end, you crawl over into the next cleft, and



*Aboard a bangka,
Puerto Galera.
Panasonic DMC-
TZ4, Landscape
mode 1/1000th @
F3.3. ISO 100*



Eric Hanauer
www.ehanauer.com

work your way against the current by pulling yourself along the bottom. Then it's over the top again for the ride downcurrent. The rules on this dive are no cameras and follow the guide. Once you've done it you'll understand why.

No gloves are allowed on any other dives, and guides are conscientious about keeping peoples' fins and bodies off the substrate, without acting like dive Nazis. On the sand during muck dives, no problem.

About the only things missing are sharks and big fishes. But if you are looking for a wealth of exotic creatures in a friendly country, for economical prices, the Philippines is definitely worth considering. I'm ready to see more of it.

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A diver is seen from behind, swimming in a deep, blue ocean. The diver is wearing a black wetsuit, a mask, and two large white scuba tanks. Bubbles are rising from the diver's regulator. The seabed is a flat, sandy expanse with scattered rocks and sparse, dead-looking vegetation. The water is clear but has a deep blue hue, suggesting depth. The overall scene conveys a sense of isolation and environmental degradation.

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www.wdpa-marine.org

Photo by Joseph C Dovala

Rig Diving in Borneo

by Mark Webster

I first became serious about underwater photography when working offshore as a commercial diver in the late 1970's. In those days being a reliable photographer was a valuable skill that ensured I stayed in regular work, as dive time is very expensive if the images fail to come out and need to be taken again. Life as a commercial diver can be rough on occasions and I can remember some pretty unpleasant living conditions particularly on jack up rigs in various locations. So when the opportunity arose to visit a unique dive operation on Mabul Island, which is based on a former jack up rig, I was more than fascinated by the prospect!

The name of Sipadan island has been in the top ten destinations for divers ever since Jacques Cousteau declared it one of the richest reef systems on the planet. I first heard of it more than thirty years ago from a Malaysian friend who used to camp and dive on the island before it became a must do dive travel destination. Despite his encouragement to visit in those early days work and life conspired to prevent me and it has taken until

now to see if the area lived up to its reputation as a stunning location for marine life and underwater photography.

In the 1980's Sipadan was developed very quickly as a resort destination and it was not long before this tiny island had five busy dive centres operating year round. Large numbers of divers visited the island during the following years and it was no surprise that conservationists soon began warning that the reef structures could not survive the numbers of visitors. These warnings were eventually heeded by the Malaysian government and they arbitrarily closed all the dive centres and demolished the resorts at the end of 2004. Now there is only a visitor centre and an army base on the island to cater for the comfort and protection of the strictly limited numbers of divers who are permitted to visit each day. Sipadan was declared a National Park by the Malaysian government on 1 October 2009 and longer term the aim is to have the island and reefs declared a UNESCO World Heritage site.

To reach Seaventures rig resort you must first find your way to Tawau



The Seaventures rig resort – perhaps unique amongst dive resorts. Nikon D200, 18-200mm zoom, programme mode.

The lift platform on the Seaventures rig makes diving the house reef and boarding the dive boats effortless. Olympus 3050 programme mode.

airport in Sabah Borneo where you are collected and driven to the port of Semporna, which takes between 40-60 minutes. A fast boat transfer from Semporna is next and as we approached Mabul island I strained to get my first glimpse of the rig.



When it came the rig itself was no surprise but the location within sight of a lush tropical island certainly was. My fellow travellers seemed to think nothing of it but all my previous arrivals at rigs like this had been certainly been somewhat different. The deck of the rig stands perhaps 50-60ft above the water and there is a lift platform to raise you from water level to the main deck, a very neat solution which was also going to prove very useful for the diving to come.

Sipadan island is visible from the resort and is only a twenty minute boat ride away. A maximum of 120 divers per day are now allowed to visit Sipadan and each dive centre must apply for permits for their own guests in advance which are then confirmed on a daily basis. So you are not guaranteed to have a permit each day as this will depend on the total number of divers in the resorts and the efficiency of your own resort in applying for the permits.

On arrival each day at Sipadan you have to register with the Marine Park office who will check your name and passport number against the permits for the day. The system is effective and, whilst I am not sure if there were 120 divers at the time of my visits, it did not feel crowded on the island between dives and we rarely saw divers from other groups in the water.

Seaventures have the permit system well organised and most of the guests during my stay were able to visit Sipadan as often as they wished and I managed to total four days permits in a seven day stay. Whilst many resorts will spend the whole day at Sipadan the Seaventures approach is a little different and works well. The boats leave at 06:00 and you can be diving by 06:30 which means that although light levels are lower you will have the best chance of seeing schooling bump head parrot fish and sleepy turtles along the reef. Breakfast follows on the island followed by two further dives with a second visit to the island for a coffee and snack in between. You are generally back at the rig by 12:30 for lunch and then have the whole afternoon available for dives from the rig or another boat excursion to Mabul or Kapalai.

The rig itself was converted from a drilling platform to accommodation only in the mid 1980's and so was well suited to its current role when the new owners acquired it and moved it to Mabul to open in 1999. What used to be the drill deck is now the dining area and bar at one end and a large wet area at the other for the diving equipment, showers etc. There are single, twin, double and family rooms to choose from and whilst the accommodation does not compare with that of the neighbouring



Bearded scorpion fish are everywhere under the Seaventures rig particularly amongst the steel debris and artificial reef structures. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, Subtronic Mini's, ISO200 f16 1/80.



Velvet ghost pipefish are a feature of the Seaventures dive site along with ornate ghost pipe fish. Having seen them once you can return as often as you need to perfect the shot. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, 2X teleconverter, Subtronic Mini's, ISO200 f16 1/20.

luxurious resorts it does not intend to. The accommodation is basic but comfortable and is pitched at those divers would want both a lower price point and the opportunity to dive as much as possible. This will make the resort attractive to photographers, although during my visit there was not a dedicated camera room, but I was shown an area that is planned for this function. Despite preparing the cameras and charging flash guns in your room, it is no great hardship and once your equipment is on the dive deck there is plenty of space for it and a large dedicated camera rinse tank.

The staff look after you very well here and will load all your kit onto the boats each day at the appropriate time if your name is on the dive board. If you want to dive from the rig at any time just advise the deck staff, kit up and step on the lift which takes you down into the water (knee depth for me) and you just step in. When you finish the dive the lift operator submerges the platform for you and brings you back to the main deck...very easy diving! The house reef below the rig is excellent and also has several artificial structures, which attract additional marine life, and a muck dive which in addition to the usual suspects boasts rarities like pygmy seahorses, velvet ghost pipefish, flamboyant cuttlefish and orang-utan crabs. The rig attracts

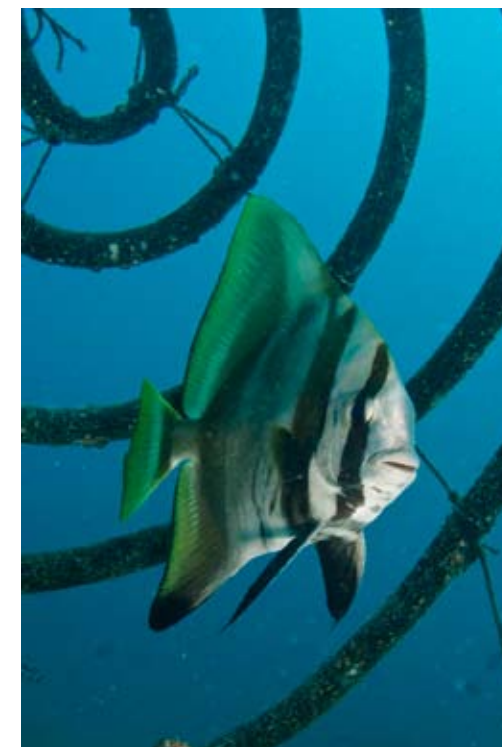


Hairy squat lobsters are regularly found on barrel sponges and make an excellent macro subject. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 105mm micro, Inon Quad flash, f18 1/125.

many schools of fish including a resident shoal of juvenile barracuda, bait fish, sardines and jacks. There are a series of down lines below the surface to take you to the seabed and a horizontal line at 6m to provide a hang off during your safety stop. Depths vary between 14-18m and there is plenty of small fish and macro life on the legs to keep you amused during ascent.

Sipadan itself is of course famous for wall diving and big fish encounters. I had heard a lot about

the resident spiralling large schools of barracuda and big eye trevally and both these stars can be seen on a daily basis. It is a buzz getting close to and amongst a big school of fish and both these species will offer a photographic challenge as their silver scales reflect flash light very effectively. On almost every dive you can guarantee that you will encounter reef sharks, green and hawksbill turtles (in such abundance that you may find yourself suffering from turtle fatigue!), barracuda, big eye trevally, bump head parrot



Batfish are commonly seen on the dive under the Seaventures rig where they favour the artificial structures which can provide some interesting negative space. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, Subtronic Mini's, ISO200 f11 1/80.

fish dog tooth tuna and numerous other schooling fish. Your guide will make a point of instructing you to keep looking out into the blue for hammerheads, mantas and whale sharks, although their possible presence will depend on the season.

The walls themselves are decorated with a wide variety of soft and hard corals, black corals, sea fans and barrel and tube sponges with plenty of small reef fish life.

You should also watch out for some of the stroppiest titan trigger fish I have encountered who seem to enjoy attacking for no good reason and can give you a nasty surprise when your eye is glued to the viewfinder! Currents can be strong at certain points around the island during the day, but even if your dive starts with current there are plenty of shelter points along the reef to stop and take images and you will eventually progress far enough around the reef to be sheltered from the current.

There are thirteen named dive sites around the island some with enticing names like whitetip avenue, turtle patch and lobster lair but many are quite similar and you will end up visiting more than one during a dive if the current is strong. At the end of your dive you can move up in to the shallows and fringing reef and explore some of the smaller life which is often overlooked in pursuit of the big name denizens. In some areas the corals are stunning whilst in others there is evidence of storm and diver damage but even these areas are worth exploring as they offer ideal habitat for scorpion fish, stone fish, ribbon eels, jaw fish and dozens of shrimp



Soft corals are abundant all along the Sipadan walls and make a perfect wide angle composition. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, Subtronic Mini's, ISO200 f11 1/60.

and goby lairs.

Although Sipadan is seen as the primary destination for this area both Mabul and Kapalai offer a contrasting marine habitat which is not to be missed. Whilst Sipadan is all about sheer walls, coral reefs and big fish action the diving around Mabul and Kapalai also offers some splendid reef and muck diving and the chance to see



If you want to see the bump head parrot fish schooling at Sipadan then you must dive early in the day when they congregate to be cleaned in the shallows. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, Subtronic Mini's, ISO400 f16 1/80

some of the weirder denizens of the Celebes Sea.

There are around fifteen named dive sites around Mabul which vary between gently sloping reefs, shallow walls and sand and rubble areas. There are also a number of artificial reef structures located on the north side of the island which have well established marine eco systems. So you can first enjoy a reef dive on the south side where I saw all the anticipated players including garden

eels, carpet anemones with clown fish, exotic nudibranchs and even a rare mosaic octopus. Then follow this with a dive on the artificial structures at say Froggies Lair and you can see a selection of amazingly camouflaged frog fish, leaf scorpion fish, octopus, squid and cuttlefish. The structures also attract schools of jacks, sweetlips, fusiliers, bat fish and within them some very large grouper. Generally the visibility around Mabul is not normally as clear as the walls



The reefs at Kapalai are a good spot to look for unusual species like these two clown frog fish perched on top of a coral head. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, Isotecnic Mini's, ISO200 f11 1/30.

of Sipadan but the variety of marine life particularly at the macro level certainly makes up for this.

From a distance the resort on Kapalai seems to be standing in open ocean. Erosion here has reduced the small island to little more than a sand bar on top of the Litigan Reef area and so is fully submerged at most states of the tide. The resort stands on stilts a few feet above the water and is a testament to the normally very calm seas here. There are twenty eight named dive sites here around

the island once again either on the gently sloping reef or on a selection of artificial reef structures and fishing boat wrecks located on sand flats on the south side of the island. The structures are covered in invertebrate life and attract a wide variety of fish species. Get closer and you will find several different species of colourful nudibranchs feeding on the tunicates and hydroids together with hawk fish and blennies and frog fish when you least expect it. There are a wide variety of corals on the reef slopes



Tunicates and hydroids cover the artificial reef structures at Kapalai and make an attractive still life image. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, 2X teleconverter, Subtronic Mini's, ISO200 f16 1/30.

with numerous colonial sea whips which are often home to ornate ghost pipe fish. If you dive on the south side do not miss the chance to explore under the resort jetty at the end of the dive where you will find schools of sweetlips and bat fish plus the chance to spot blue ringed octopus and flamboyant cuttlefish.

So was it worth the wait to finally get to dive this top ten ranked dive location? I think that the answer is a resounding yes as the combination of dive sites and habitats offers a

terrific variety of marine life and scenic opportunities which is not found at many locations around the globe. The Seaventures operation offers the serious photographer the chance to maximise dive time on a very productive site which encourages you to revisit subjects with a different lens or technique in mind to perfect the final image. If you make the long haul to this destination be sure to set aside some time for other attractions within Malaysia which has a lot to offer above the water as well.

On a closing note a few comments about security in this area. During my trip the UK and US Foreign Office websites had updated their area warnings and Malaysia and more specifically the areas around Sipadan, Mabul and Kapalai were included on the list as potential trouble spots. My own experience here was that the Malaysian government and the resorts seem to be focussed on the potential threat. There is a police and naval presence on Mabul and the army base on Sipadan itself. During my visit I saw regular naval patrols and also navy helicopters making regular flights over the area. Tourism and particularly diving tourism is a very important source of income for this area and the Malaysian government seem intent on ensuring that visitors feel safe and secure. There has not been an incident here involving tourists here since the kidnapping from Sipadan in 2000. I talked about this to other visiting divers from Europe, the USA and Asia and none seemed to be concerned or felt uncomfortable. I suppose that if we followed the warnings and advice slavishly we would not travel to many of the outstanding dive locations around the globe. However, you must of course make your own decisions when considering diving overseas although if you were to exclude this part of Malaysia you will certainly be

www.uwpmag.com

missing out on some excellent diving and the opportunity to enjoy the other cultural and wildlife attractions that this country has on offer.

Mark Webster
www.photec.co.uk



Mark Webster stayed with Seaventures on the dive platform at Mabul Island
www.seaventuresdive.com

Getting there:

A number of airlines fly to Kuala Lumpur direct from London or via one of the European hubs. From KL you fly to Tawau in Sabah on the island of Borneo and transfer by road to the port of Semporna. The final leg is a speed

boat transfer to your resort which takes around 45 minutes.

Mark Webster flew with KLM and Malaysian airlines. KLM sell a 23kg sports package for diving equipment at EU 40 each way whilst Malaysian Airlines offer a free 10kg excess for diving equipment.

When to Go:

This area can be dived throughout the year. The rainy season is between November and February.

Money:

The local currency is the Malaysian Ringgit but most resorts will accept

Stirling, Euros and US Dollars as well as credit cards.

Health:

Some areas of Malaysia have a malaria and dengue fever risk. Mabul island is a low risk area but you should consult your doctor or MASTA

www.masta-travel-health.com

Further Information:

Malaysian Tourist Board

www.tourism.gov.my

A promotional graphic for underwater photography workshops. The background is a deep blue underwater scene. In the foreground, a large, light-colored fish is swimming. To the right, a diver in full gear is visible, holding a camera. The text is overlaid in yellow and white. At the top, it says 'Underwater Photography Workshops with Mark Webster 2010'. At the bottom, it says 'Red Sea 1-8 October 2010', 'See website for details: www.photec.co.uk', and 'E-mail: markwebster@photec.co.uk'.

Muck Diving in St. Kitts -

By Jason Phillip

Most people have the notion that scuba diving is meant to be done solely above color filled, fish infested reefs in the clear waters of far flung destinations like the Caribbean. While this does indeed sound like an alluring setting, there is a whole different world waiting to be discovered among the muck. Muddy flats, piers, sea grass beds and even breakwaters can hide a plethora of critters waiting to catch the eye of the keen diver willing to unlock the hidden treasures of the muck.

Muck diving is a relatively new term coined to describe diving anywhere other than on the coral reef, usually in unconventional places. Whether it be on muddy flats or among a scattering of rubble, muck diving can be a very rewarding experience especially for the macro photographer as many critters cannot be found by simply diving on the reef, due to different habitat and diet needs. Muck dives abound with some of the most interesting critters, from nudibranchs to snapping shrimp, all manner of little critters can be found in some of the most seemingly devoid areas.

Areas where muck diving is at

its best are also some of the most challenging for photographers. Generally most muck dives are plagued by bad visibility and hordes of particles suspended in the water which make good lighting a critical component for muck photography. Many locations also have very fine silty or muddy bottoms that can easily be stirred up and cloud an area for long periods rendering it useless for photography. Muck diving isn't for everybody, but for those who love the thrill and challenge of slowly picking through rubble to discover that jewel of a critter.

Personally, I do as much muck diving as practicable, exploring sea grass beds and coral rubble looking for those elusive nudibranchs and other critters that most divers never see. The island of St. Kitts offers a wide array of dive sites for the avid muck diver. From shrimp gobies guarding their burrows in the silt, to pike blennies bobbing in and out of abandoned tubeworm casings, muck diving in St. Kitts is just as thrilling as anywhere else in the world.

St. Kitts is not heavily marketed as a dive destination and has therefore remained relatively undiscovered.



Pederson cleaning shrimp with eggs. F 8 Shutter Speed 1/60. Canon G10 in WP DC 28 housing using Inon UCL m67 wet lens and Sea and Sea YS DX 27 strobe.



Yellowhead jawfish hovering over its burrow. Canon G10 in WP DC 28 housing using Inon UCL m67 wet lens and Sea and Sea YS DX 27 strobe. F 8 SS 1/60



Spotted anemone shrimp on a branching anemone. Canon G10 in WP DC 28 housing using Inon UCL m67 wet lens and Sea and Sea YS DX 27 strobe. F 7.1 SS 1/30

This means that the majority of the reefs are in very good condition and in many cases virgin, not having been touched by the roving fins of divers. This adds to the thrill of diving in St. Kitts as one is always filled with great expectation of making a new discovery.

On a recent excursion to the reefs off Bird Rock Beach on the Caribbean Sea coast, I came across an area of seabed roughly the size of three basketball courts covered in various types of sea grass. There was a scattering of large chunks of dead coral, which had undoubtedly been blown off the nearby reefs during the passage of various hurricanes and storms. The mixture of sea grasses and algae provided food for many different invertebrates including nudibranchs and various shrimp. The large coral heads deposited in the



Secretary blenny bobbing out of abandoned christmas tree worm burrow. Canon G10 in WP DC 28 housing using Inon UCL m67 wet lens and Sea and Sea YS DX 27 strobe. F 8 SS 1/60

Pike blenny poking its head out of abandoned tube worm casing. Canon G10 in WP DC 28 housing using Inon UCL m67 wet lens and Sea and Sea YS DX 27 strobe. F 8 SS 1/60

middle of an otherwise featureless plain, provided refuge and cover for many different species of juvenile fish as well as crabs and the like thus presenting an ideal setting for muck diving.

Knowing that I was one of, if not the first diver to be diving over and picking through this diverse



spot, I couldn't wait to see what this dive had in store for me. All of the coral heads were deposited at least ten meters away from each other and over a hundred meters from the reef, which meant that each one had become its own isolated community, surrounded by sea grass and small rubble, housing a



View of St. Kitts southeast peninsula from the water.

multitude of different organisms.

Wide-angle photography in this area wasn't a viable option as is the case in most other muck environments. Being relatively close to shore, visibility was no more than twenty feet due to particulate runoff from the surrounding land. Also, a mild surge had kicked up the already volatile bottom making it even cloudier. Anticipating the bad visibility, I did my giant stride with my Canon G10 and dual stacked INON 165 m67 wet lenses in tow, intent on macro shots.

Once on the bottom, I headed over to the closest of the coral behemoths for a closer inspection of what I believed to be a critter haven. Before I even fully got to the rock, a quick flash of movement caught my eye in a sandy patch at the base of the chunk. I immediately stopped finning and settled into a hover a few feet away from this



Sharknose goby on a section of coral. Canon G10 in WP DC 28 housing using Inon UCL m67 wet lens and Sea and Sea YS DX 27 strobe. F 7.1 Shutter Speed 1/50

now apparent burrow in the sand. Patience being the virtue of any macro photographer, I waited a couple of minutes to see if the critter would reemerge offering a chance for a few shots. To my surprise two small eyes began slowly poking their way just above the lip of the burrow. I immediately recognized them as the eyes of a scaly tailed mantis shrimp, a notoriously skittish critter, and the first one I've seen in St. Kitts. Slowly inching my way closer, I took a few test shots to make sure the lighting and exposure were perfect. Unfortunately, before I was able to get close enough for a decent shot, the eyes vanished into the burrow with a flurry of silt and I knew that would be the last of him that I would see for the dive.

Ecstatic about my first find, I finally make it over to the coral head, which had now come alive in front of me with all manner of brightly colored

Useful Muck Diving Tips:

1. Don't flutter kick:

Fluttering tends to kick up silt and sand, ruining many good chances for photos. Frog kicking is better as it pushes the water behind you instead of down onto the bottom and keeps the water clear and bottom undisturbed.

2. Have all gear well secured:

Keep your pressure gauge, octopus and camera lenses clipped and secured properly to your BC or camera rig. This again helps you keep the bottom undisturbed since dragging gauges and the like can wreak havoc, kicking up silt when diving near the bottom.

3. Be thorough and vigilant:

It takes patience and keen eyes to find critters in most muck environments, since the visibility is usually subpar and many of the creatures that inhabit the muck, rely on camouflage to remain unseen.

4. Maintain proper lighting and exposure:

Sand, shells and silt have a higher albedo than most of the other backgrounds over a normal reef. This means that they reflect more light back to the camera. Therefore specific attention should be paid to adjusting lighting and exposure keeping them appropriate for the shot.



Flamingo tongue on a sea fan. Canon G10 in WP DC 28 housing using Inon UCL m67 wet lens and Sea and Sea YS DX 27 strobe. F Stop 8 Shutter Speed 1/160

encrusting sponges and anemones. Spending ten minutes photographing many of the usual crowd of anemone shrimp, cleaning gobies and arrow crabs, I felt like I'd exhausted this rock and decided to move on to the next. Little did I know at the time that this seemingly "routine" rock would prove to be the most thrilling out of the whole lot. The dive continued on at the same gripping pace, between running into pike blennies and more mantis shrimp, this site was a macro photographer's heaven.

Finally with no remaining bottom time I was forced to head on back up, ending the treasure hunt. I surfaced with a camera full of proof of just how rewarding diving in the muck can be! After getting home and loading the images on to my computer, I came across a surprise in one of my shots. While taking a shot of a small pencil

urchin, I unknowingly photographed a little straggler in the background. On the very edge of the image, there was a tiny nudibranch, less than a quarter of an inch long. I'd captured an image of a "Painted Elysia". Checking out the ID books, I realized that that species hadn't been reported in the Eastern Caribbean. Just another treasure of the St. Kitts muck!

Jason Phillip



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The 'golden islands' of the French Riviera

by Jean-Philippe Borges

From Marseille to Nice, the French Mediterranean coast is dotted with beautiful islands and islets. Who has never seen paradisiac pictures with beautiful white sand, big blue waves meeting red jagged coasts ? Here we are : some are very well known for tourism, others completely wild. Near Toulon, well known French navy harbour, we can meet one of those fantastic islands, in front of Hyeres peninsula : the island of Porquerolles. With the National Parc of Port-Cros, to the east, those two islands can be called the 'Golden islands of the French Riviera'.

The National Park of Port-Cros, created in 1963, is one of the oldest national park in France. It's also the first european marine park, with around 1300 hectares of marine protected surfaces. Around the islet of 'la Gabiniere', maybe the most known diving site near the park, any diver can meet big families of groupers, surrounded by walls of barracudas. The legend says 'behind every rock you can find a grouper or a moray-eel... and sometimes both of them'.

This is a legend, but during some dives in summer, this legend comes true. Also, a strong current is always present and a lot of fishes come around to feed. It's always a good diving site to prospect, following the current with open-eyes.

The island of Porquerolles, not included in the Marine Park, is less known for diving. Its orientation (East-West) allow divers to always find a good point to make incredible dives. Because of the ligurian current that pushes out the Rhone's cloudy waters, the visibility is incomparable and water is really clear almost all the year : here you can find all the best conditions to see fishes coming around to feed, hunt and make their reproduction.

There's no 'good season' to dive here : it's possible and very interesting all the year. The best is to find accomodation on the island and dive with the 'Ileo Porquerolles diving center' (www.ileo-porquerolles.fr). This is the best diving center in the zone, with very good divemasters who know all the good places.



The northern part of the island is not very deep, with a lot of diving sites surrounded by important surfaces of Ocean grass-wrack (less than 20 meters depth). A lot of small fishes find good places to feed and make nurseries. The very rare fan mussel (*Pina nobillis*) can be found in this healthy ecosystem. For divers who



Red gorgonias feeding in the current on a small wall Fuji S2 Aquatica Nikon 10,5mm fisheye Nikon SB-800 in Fantasea housing and Nikon SB-28 in Subal housing, F9,5 1/125 ISO160



The ecosystem of ocean grass in the Mediterranean Sea *Fuji S2Aquatica*
Tokina 10-17mm fisheye at 14mm *Nikon SB-800 in Fantasea housing and*
Nikon SB-28 in Subal housing F13 *1/60 ISO160*

want to find relatively rare things underwater, ocean grass-wracks are the good candidates. If you are lucky, you'll be able to find some little 'ocean grass-wrack anemones', with beautiful purple tentacles. A lot of species live around or between the roots of this marine plant, like very small green sea-slugs. Also, at the eastern part, some diving sites like 'the two brothers', 'the policeman' are full of fishes and hidden sea slugs. When the current is stronger, groups of barracudas come around to find

their prey. At the same moment, some giant but isolated balls of 10 meters of diameter, full of little fishes like sardines try to keep them safe from these incredible predators.

On the same diving site, the biggest can meet the littlest. Between some sunken peaks, around 25 meters deep, big gorgonias can be a perfect and safe place for small seaslugs and shrimps. Also, you can find on the yellow ones, some white simnia like *Neosimnia spelta*.

The western part of the island is



Family » of hervias (Cratena peregrina), during their period of reproduction in summer *Canon S1* *Canon Home-made +10 macro lens with +4 dioptries*
Sea&Sea YS-90Auto and Inon D-2000, F8 *1/40 ISO100*

deeper, with some dives between 25 and 50 meters depth. There, between some very big red gorgonias, it's not rare to find the 'gorgon's head' (*Astrospartus mediterraneus*). This specie are very strange to look at, with so many little 'arms' and 'fingers'. When you go on the top of the rocks, at around 25 meters, some moray-eels and congers live in little rifts. Almost all of them must share those narrow habitats with shrimps and other crustaceans. This is the most incredible part of those dives : the

'dentist's show'. Red Mediterranean shrimps are often inside the mouths of both moray-eels and congers to feed and make like dentists are supposed to do with your teeth : to clean them. It's not very rare to see both congers and moray-eels in the same little tiny rift, with 2 to 8 red shrimps trying to feed at the same moment. Of course, the sound made by your bubbles can spook them, but most of the time, they continue work regardless. If you are lucky, you'll also be able to find some incredible yellow white-spotted sea-



(Top left) Common mediterranean moray-eel with a red shrimp trying to clean his host. Canon S1, Canon Home-made +10 macro lens with +4 dioptries Sea&Sea YS-90Auto and Inon D-2000 F8 1/40 ISO 100

(Left) Small purple-pointed anemona on a leaf of the green ocean grass. Fuji S2, Aquatica, Nikon 60mm AF-D macro Nikon SB-800 in Fantasea housing and Nikon SB-28 in Subal housing F16 1/15 ISO 200

(Above) Head of a mediterranean grouper (Epinephelus marginatus). Canon S1 Canon Home-made +10 macro lens with +4 dioptries Sea&Sea YS-90Auto and Inon D-2000 F8 1/30 ISO 100

(Top right) The rare « Phyllidia flava » sea-slug, feeding on a wall of gorgonias and hydrozoarians. Canon S1 Canon Home-made +10 macro lens with +4 dioptries, Sea&Sea YS-90Auto and Inon D-2000 F8 1/40 ISO100

slugs, like the ‘phyllidias’ (Phyllidia flava). This little sea-slug feeds on some particular red and orange sponges. So, first thing is to find the correct sponge... and second to find the yellow phyllidia.

Some other diving sites are less deep, like the little wreck in the center of the northern part. The ‘Cimentier’ is well known for hervias (Cratena peregrina). This diving site, used all summer for ‘discover scuba diving’



and 'bubble-maker' initial diving courses, is no more than 8-12 meters deep. Between little rocks and ball-algas, some green anemones can be encountered. This is the perfect habitat for a beautiful tiny shrimp : the amethyst partner shrimp (Periclimenes amethysteus). With long and purple/transparent arms, this shrimp is very difficult to find because of its size : maximum 3 centimeters in 15-20 centimeters green tentacles of the anemone. It's always a great moment to see this animal, like a dancer in the anemone, going slowly from a tentacle to another. Some bigger fishes, like groupers are quite common but as we aren't in a marine park, they are pretty wild. It's very difficult to get closer than few meters.

Inside the ocean grass-wrack

areas, some normal and other painted combers can be found ; most of them protecting their eggs. Also, a lot of tiny red blackfaced or standard blennies are always around the divers, trying to look better at what is going one. Some of them can be found with a small crustacean behind their face : some anilocras, or 'fish-fleas'. Some can be taken off when fishes try to scrub, but most of them will remain attached and will continue to act as a leech until the death of their host.

Nevertheless, the diving sites are really full of life and, if you can spend a little extra time trying to find it, you'll really enjoy your dives. The diving centers in this area have a lot of dive sites so it'll be very unlucky if you have go diving with a lot of people at the same time. Other diving

sites, in the eastern part of the island, are deeper and can be part of another article of this incredible diving area : the wrecks of the 'Donator' and the 'Greek'. Two, at least, very fantastic dives around 45-55 meters depth. If you like trimix and CCR, you'll enjoy for sure.

Jean-Philippe Borges
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Digital cameras have opened up new possibilities to underwater photographers. For available light photography manual white balance is an invaluable tool for restoring colours. But when you use it without a filter you are not making the most of the technique. You're doing all the hard work without reaping the full rewards.

These three photos are all taken of the same wreck in the Red Sea. The left hand image was taken on slide film, which rendered the scene completely blue. The middle image is taken with a digital SLR without a filter, using manual white balance. The white balance has brought out some of the colour of the wreck, but it has also sucked all the blue out of the water behind the wreck, making it almost grey. The right hand image is taken with the same digital camera and lens, but this time using an original Magic Filter. The filter attenuates blue light meaning that the colours of the wreck are brought out and it stands out from the background water, which is recorded as an accurate blue.

www.magic-filters.com

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 144dpi

Size - Maximum length 15cm i.e. horizontal pictures would be 15 cm wide and verticals would be 15cm.

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

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

Parting Shot 1

I live in Sweden and dive in cold water all year round, preferably along the Swedish west coast or the Norwegian coast. In January 2010 I experienced one of the most spectacular dives that I have ever done during a visit to Gulen, just north of Bergen in Norway. The dive centre Gulen Dykkesenter and the Norwegian UW-photographer Christian Skauge arranges dive-safaris each year to Lurefjorden, to watch and photograph the deep-sea jellyfish *Periphylla periphylla* (helmet jelly). This magical creature is present in seas all over the world but it is very rarely seen by divers because they are few and far between and usually live at depths impossible for divers to visit. In some Norwegian fjords however, the helmet jelly occurs in permanent and extremely large numbers and during the night they perform a vertical migration sometimes all the way up to the surface.

On this particular night the air temperature was well below freezing and the snow was glistening in the light from a full moon. After a 45 minutes boat ride in the dark we were in the middle of Lurefjorden. The instruments on the boat told us that the

depth was 370 m. Our only reference point for the dive was thrown into the water, a buoy with a white line with flashing lights at 15 and 30 m. In the cold water the visibility was fantastic and we were surrounded by large orange-red jelly-fish. I quickly became completely absorbed by the creatures gracefully moving around us. The jelly fish were able to sense our lights and moved with surprising speed when disturbed. After a while I realised how easy it was to follow one with the camera, deeper and deeper down into the black water. My faithful buddy got my attention and pointed at the 30 m light. I also noticed that the other divers were well above us. When we finally surfaced my face was stiff with cold but I could not help smiling like a kid. Meetings like this are what makes cold water diving so fantastic and make it worth carrying every extra kilo of equipment, even through snow.

Lena Holm
Uppsala Dykarskola

*Canon 400D, Ikelite housing, Tokina
10-17 mm lens at 17 mm, 1/100, f 5.6,
ISO 200.*



Parting Shot 2

Every year when the water reaches 12 degrees Celsius, several cephalopod species start to arrive in the shallow waters of the Oosterschelde (Eastern Scheldt), an estuary in the south of the Netherlands: the reproductive season has arrived. Especially the mating and egg-laying of the Common cuttlefish *Sepia officinalis* is, by all accounts, a spectacular event to witness.

And so, during the last weekend of May, my buddy and I set out on the 250 kilometre journey from my home to the Oosterschelde, to try and see this extraordinary display for the first time. Alas, when we arrived there was a strong wind, and the conditions did not look good. We waited for slack water and then walked the excruciating 500 meters from the car to the dive site in full gear, but only five minutes underwater were enough to call it a day. My buddy and I couldn't see each other, even though we were holding each other by the arms.

Of course, the next day, back home, the weather was

absolutely splendid. As I was making a stroll through the garden, I noticed the newts in the small pond, bathing in the afternoon sunlight. I rushed back inside for my camera, still in its housing as it was resting in the bathtub, and lowered it into the pond.

This image of a female Smooth newt *Lissotriton vulgaris* is the result. It didn't take a 250 kilometre drive, and back, nor did it take hours of waiting for slack water and hauling dive equipment. It took just 30 minutes of patience.

Sometimes the best images are just waiting to happen in the backyard.

Joris van Alphen
joris@jorisvanalphen.com



Canon EOS 5D, Subal CD5 housing with dome port, Sigma 15mm fish-eye, 1/160 sec at f/10, ISO 320, available light.

Do you have an interesting shot
with a short story behind it?
If so e mail us and yours could be
the next "Parting shot".
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