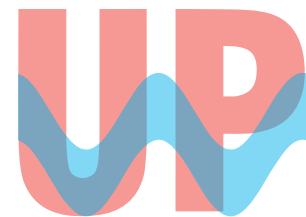


Underwater Photography

Mar/Apr 2012



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never equaled”

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Cover shot by

Underwater Photography

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Underwater Photography
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Publisher/Editor Peter Rowlands
www.pr-productions.co.uk
peter@uwpmag.com

Editorial

35mm equivalent and film references

I was editing Dan Bolt's excellent review of a new 4/3rds lens for this issue and also Phil Rudin's article on macro lenses for the same format when I had a sort of lightbulb experience. Let me explain.

Traditionally, in order to describe the capability of a lens, the first term that tends to be used is 'focal length'. Do a Google search for the aforementioned and you'll be asleep in no time with dreams of light convergence (and divergence), nodal points, focal planes and refractive indices (that's more than one index, in layman's terms).

Please don't get me wrong. Focal length is a useful way of describing a lens's capability but, unfortunately, it doesn't tell you the whole story because you need to know the size of the image gathering device in your camera.

In 'the old days' virtually everyone used a 35mm film camera whose format size was 24mm high x 36mm wide and the focal length of lenses associated with that size became a sort of benchmark. In

general terms 50mm was a standard focal length, 24mm was wide angle and 100mm was telephoto.

Unfortunately, in today's digital age there are now several sizes of image sensor available (4/3rds and APS-C to name the 2 most popular) and to complicate matters even further manufacturers camera lens mounts can accept lenses designed for one size format to be mounted and used on a larger or smaller sensor size camera. The resulting complexity needs more explanations and asterisks than a share dealing advert (focal lengths can go down as well as up, terms and conditions apply, angle of coverage may vary with altitude and we reserve the right to change things to suit us at any time).

An attempt to simplify the resulting complications it to use a '35mm equivalent' i.e. the focal length it would have been with the 35mm film format. Unfortunately this line of logic fails to take on board that the vast majority of today's photographers, and especially underwater photographers, I suspect have never 'shot film' or know what on earth '36 exposures' is all about.

At this stage I fully accept that, of our 10,000+ regular readers, I am probably now transmitting to less than one handful but I will persevere. You see, it really is all very simple if, rather than focal length, we use "angle

of coverage". In other words the diagonal angle from bottom left to top right of the frame (please note that in the southern hemisphere this must be measured from the bottom right to the top left of frame...).

The resulting figure is in degrees of coverage i.e. the description of an angle and I was delighted to find that I can generate this (on my Apple Mac keyboard) as a symbol by pressing the Shift, Alt & 8 keys. Please note that the '&' has been included here to make the wording read correctly but shouldn't be pressed to generate a ° symbol.

So there we have it. Just as DSLRs have become SLRs so too, if I had my way, focal lengths would be consigned to the film dustbin and lenses would be described simply as an 84° F2.8. This would be followed by a simple letter to denote the sensor size - A = Full frame 35mm, B = APS-C and so on.

Furthermore I would pass emergency legislation to give mandatory life prison sentences to those camera manufacturers (and, if necessary, all of their employees) that allow a lens from one format to be mounted onto the camera of another.

The White Album

Some of you may be surprised by the 'image' on the front cover of this issue and quite rightly so. Let me confirm straight away that there isn't one, just in case you thought your computer screen was faulty.

The simple truth is that I couldn't find a suitable image in any of the articles which have been submitted for this issue. That's not to say there's anything wrong with the articles. I think they are well up to the standard of UwP's eclectic output.

A UwP cover needs to be a very special image and you have 64 previous issues to gauge my interpretation of the height of this particular bar.

I'm sorry I couldn't find a suitable image for you this time but I seek consolation from the fact that if it was good enough for the Beatles in 1968 it's good enough for UwP now.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

News, Travel & Events

Liquid Capture: Masters of Underwater Photography

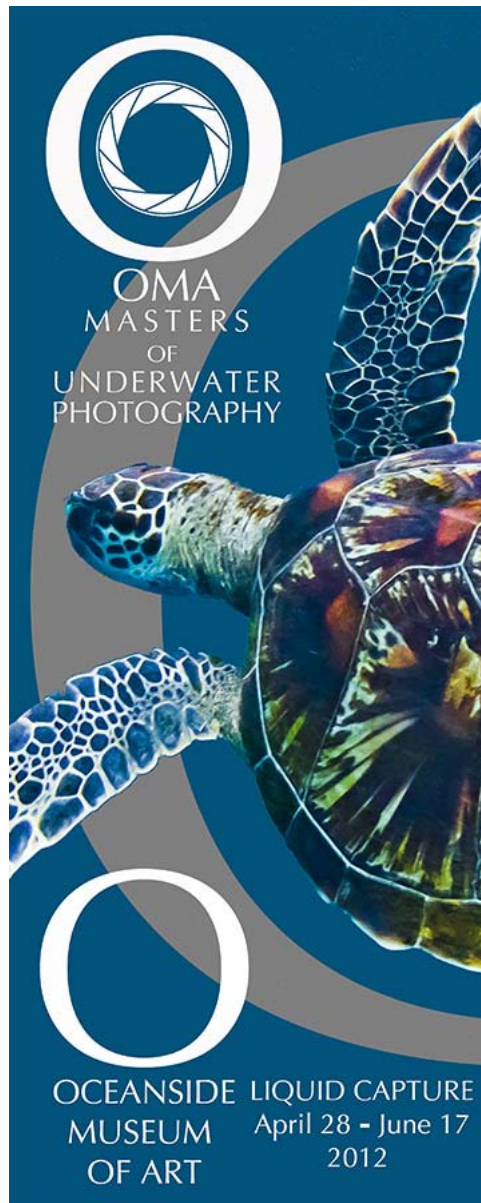
April 28- June 17, 2012

Exhibition Reception and Panel Discussion May 5, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Liquid Capture: Masters of Underwater Photography is a juried exhibition presenting the best underwater photographic art from around the world. Organized by renowned photographer Lee Peterson, this exhibition will feature images reflecting five specific categories: Ocean Environment Underwater, Macro, Diver, Ocean Environment Above Water and Marine Mammals. An optional category is Submersion, a creative look at diving. Selected artists will have the opportunity to display their photographs in a world-class museum setting and will have their artwork published in the exhibition catalogue.

www.oma-online.org

www.uwpmag.com



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OF
UNDERWATER
PHOTOGRAPHY

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LIQUID CAPTURE
April 28 - June 17
2012

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Issue 65/5



U/w Photo Workshops with Mark Webster in 2012

MY Juliet, Red Sea
14-21 October 2012



The Red Sea has long been a favoured dive location for underwater photographers and with good reason. The variety of corals, fish and water clarity is hard to beat.

The Northern Red Sea sites are perhaps the most popular and best known. During the 2012 workshop will visit some of the classic sites in the North and perhaps introduce you to some sites that you may not have dived before.

As with previous workshops the emphasis will be on informality and everyone is free to ask questions throughout the day. During the workshop there will be daily themed presentations and Mark will be on hand to help and advise on the best techniques and solutions whatever equipment you choose to use.

www.oonasdivers.com

Lembah Hills Resort
1-8 December 2012



As with previous workshops the emphasis will be on informality and everyone is free to ask questions throughout the day.

There will be some themed presentations suitable for users of both digital and film systems and Mark will be on hand to help and advise on the best techniques and solutions whatever equipment you use.

Lembah Hills Resort is situated in a secluded bay overlooking Lembah Island and the strait. The luxurious boutique accommodations all have a view of the strait and are cut into the hillside with winding paths down to the waters edge. There is a central bar and dining area, WiFi internet, very spacious camera room and a well equipped dive centre

www.photec.co.uk

Photography Adventures

visit www.GregorySweeney.com

Photo Tours:
Manatees, Whale Sharks,
South African Photo Safari



Sailfish & Sardine Run

in Isla Mujeres, Mexico

January 14 - 20 2013

*more dates in Jan available

private charter, limited to 5 guests



Tiger Shark Dive

March 8 - 14 2013



Bahamas

30th March - 1st April 2012

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- Children's **art work**
- **Lectures** with a diving theme
- **Sale** of diving equipment
- Diving **Ball**

www.paftachov.cz



Reef Photo expand to new premises

We've outgrown our little home on Fort Lauderdale Beach, and have just completed renovations on a larger space in Fort Lauderdale.

We are very excited about this new store, with 50% more retail show room space, and more than twice the overall square footage.

Our new spot is 5-10 minutes off of I-95 via either the Sunrise or Oakland Park exits, providing much easier access for our customers in Miami and West Palm Beach.

As of Friday, February 24th, our new retail show room and warehouse will be located at:

Reef Photo & Video
2303 N Andrews Ave
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311

You are all invited to our grand opening celebration, stay tuned for details!

Best regards,
Ryan Canon
Reef Photo & Video

toll free 877.453.8927
local/international 954.537.0644
fax 954.537.0645

www.reefphoto.com

www.uwpmag.com

Wildscreen Panda Awards film competition

The Wildscreen Panda Awards are the world's most prestigious and influential awards in the natural history filmmaking industry. Leading filmmakers from across the globe enter the competition for a chance to win the highest accolade in the industry - a Wildscreen Golden Panda - with the winners being revealed at the glittering Gala Awards ceremony during the Festival week.

Please read the entry rules to ensure your production is eligible.

Review the Panda Award categories and choose which categories to enter your film.

Log into / register for MyFestival.

- Complete a separate entry form for each production submitted and nominate it for consideration in one or more award categories. The deadline for completing the form is Friday 30 March 2012 and for sending entries it is Friday 27 April 2012.

www.wildscreen.org

DiveQuest

THE ULTIMATE IN DIVETRAVEL



Photo: Rachel Lee Horsfield

www.divequest-travel.com

The Cayman Photoquest with Martin Edge 5-15th May 2012

Ultimate Papua New Guinea with Michele Westmorland 9-30th October 2012

Bali: The Art of Underwater Photography with Shannon Conway 21 November - 1st December 2012

Galapagos: The Art of Underwater Photography with Shannon Conway 11-24th June 2013

The Fiji Photoquest with Martin Edge 4-15th October 2013

Palau: The Art of Underwater Photography with Shannon Conway 1-11th March 2014

Truk: The Art of Underwater Photography with Shannon Conway 4-11th May 2014



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7. - 14.7. 2012**

USD 3 190



www.blueafricatours.com
blueafricatrips@gmail.com

**Red Sea Macro Madness
with Adam Hanlon
26th June to 3rd July 2012**



Holiday Designers has teamed up with Wetpixel editor Adam Hanlon to offer a unique opportunity for underwater photographers.

They are offering a weeklong macro photography workshop with award winning professional underwater photographer Adam Hanlon to the Northern Red Sea resort of Nuweiba in June 2012.

Nuweiba is an ideal venue for the event as it has easy shore access to a small reef that boasts a large number of macro subjects. The ability to vary dive times and to dive the site multiple times will help ensure that participants get plenty of opportunities to refine techniques with Adam's guidance.

The workshop is ideally suited to the SLR or micro 4/3's camera user seeking to enhance his or her abilities in a structured format or the



accomplished photographer seeking a like-minded group to dive with.

Adam is the editor of Wetpixel, the world's foremost resource for underwater imaging and is an award-winning underwater photographer. He has been taking pictures underwater for over 20 years and has a portfolio of his underwater work on his website.

The trip dates are 26th June to 3rd July 2012. There is an option to spend an additional week after the workshop in Nuweiba, practising and refining the new skills.

For further information or to book, please contact Dan Lion at Holiday Designers on 0203 3840023 or via email on danlion@holiday-designers.com. Trip spaces are limited, so please get in touch soon to avoid disappointment.

www.holiday-designers.com

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HERE

Oonas Red Sea Photo Workshops

with Rico Besserdich 18-25 May 2012
and Paul Duxfield 9-16 June 2012

Oonas Dive Club is pleased to host two new Photography Workshops in 2012. World renowned photography experts, Paul (Duxy) Duxfield and Rico Besserdich are presenting two workshops, each one aimed at different levels of ability from beginners all the way to those who are interested in taking their photography skills to competition level.

The Photography Weeks take place in Sharm El Sheikh where guests will stay at Oonas Dive Club. Participants will spend their days on our dive boats visiting a variety of specially selected Red Sea dive sites which are ideally suited for great photo opportunities.

Photography expert, Paul Duxfield has a passion for underwater photography and video. For the second year running Paul is returning to Oonas Dive Club, to run his popular Red Sea Photo Workshop.

Rico Besserdich's workshop is all about Creative Underwater Photography for Contests and Competitions. Rico is the head of the photo critics, a team of photo PROs who help newcomers with constructive critics to their first contest submissions. A gold medal



winner in 2010, Rico has just been awarded the title of World Champion Underwater Photographer for 2011/12!

www.oonasdivers.com

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Image: Todd Mintz

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New Products

Ikelite Canon HF G10 video housing



Molded of clear polycarbonate to provide seamless construction and corrosion proof performance. This “Clearly Superior” design provides full view of the camcorder, control functions, and assurance the system is safe. The camera’s large viewing screen can be seen easily using the External Mirror on the side of the housing. Just open the camera’s LCD monitor, rotate 180° and fold back against the side of the camera. Actual image will be reversed when viewed through the mirror.

A magnified Super-Eye Viewfinder is provided for enhanced viewing of the camera’s optical

viewfinder.

Fail-safe mechanical controls are provided for important camera functions. Access to the camera’s touchscreen menu functions including white balance and manual focus is provided via two controls.

The tray and handles remove with just two nuts for packing. Includes two 3/8-16 threaded stud mounts with wing-nuts for attachment of PRO-2800, PRO-V8 or Pro Video mounting arms. Optional weighted bases are available for additional stability above and below water.

www.ikelite.com



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Cameras UNDERWATER



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Ultralight

Amphibico, Sony CX700



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Pro 2800

Gates, Sony CX700

ikelite, Olympus XZ1

www.camerasunderwater.co.uk

Tel: +44 (0)1404 812277

Fantasea FP7100 for Nikon Coolpix P7100



The FP7100 Housing was specifically designed for the new Nikon Coolpix P7100 digital camera. It is manufactured to the highest professional standards of function, style and durability. It is depth rated to 60m/200 feet and is fully functional with ergonomically designed and labeled controls. The Fantasea FP7100 is the ultimate waterproof home for the Nikon Coolpix P7100.

The FP7100 Housing was designed to be compatible with a complete accessory system, enabling photographers to enhance the quality of their images.

Feature Highlights:

- Depth rated to 60m/200 feet
- Access to all camera controls and functions
- Shock resistant
- Double O-ring seal
- Special mount for lighting accessories
- Removable double fiber optic cable connection



- Removable flash diffuser
- Easy and secure installation of camera
- Labeled controls for comfortable operation
- Removable anti-glare hood for the LCD screen
- Compatible with a wide range of underwater photo accessories

www.fantasea.com

Cameras UNDERWATER



INON S2000

Ultralight

INON UWL-H100
with dome unit

Panasonic FT3
camera + housing



ikelite DS 161

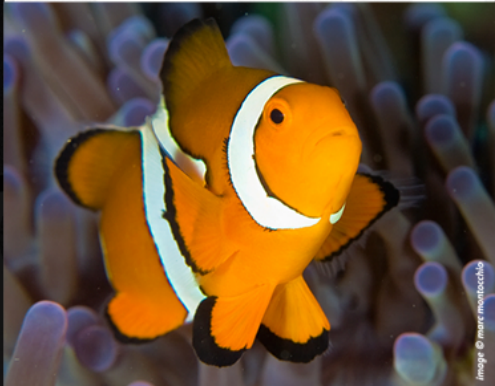
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- Fibre Optic Cable Socket x2
- 100m Depth Rated



WWW.SEA-SEA.COM

SEA & SEA
THE UNDERWATER IMAGING COMPANY

New 10 Bar housings

10Bar Underwater Housings have been busy and are pleased to announce the release of new housings for the following cameras:

Sony NEX- FS100 Camcorder



An E-mount broadcast-standard professional camcorder with Sony's Super35 format Exmor CMOS sensor, which is specially designed for shooting HD motion pictures.

Olympus E-PL3



The latest in the EPL line of Micro Four Thirds camera with a tilting 16:9 LCD screen, clip-on flash, an improved 12MP Live MOS sensor and very fast autofocus.

Panasonic DMC-GF3



The upgrade model for the Micro Four Thirds GF2 sports a new processor for the 12MP sensor improving camera performance like faster autofocus and higher continuous shooting rate.

Every 10Bar housing is machined from a solid block of marine grade aluminum, anodized and coated with epoxy paint. Clear UV resistant high grade acrylic is used for the back cover. All housings are assembled in our facility in Hong Kong by our expert craftsmen and then pressure tested to 10 Bar.

www.10bar.com

Aquatica D7000



- Lightning Fast Focus
- 1080p HD Video
- Compact Size
- Great Ergonomics

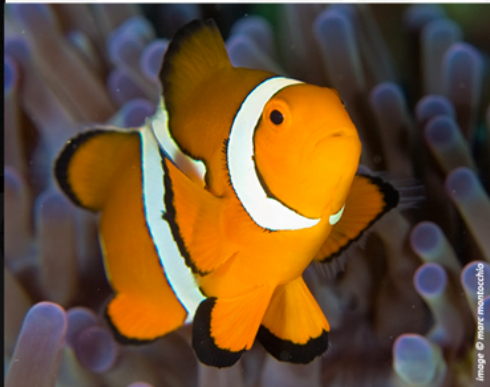
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Built-In Modelling Light
75m Depth Rated



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Nauticam Nikon NA-V1 housing



Nauticam announces the new NA-V1 housing, incorporating some of the best features of earlier Nauticam offerings.

The NA-V1 also features the type of innovations people have come to expect from Nauticam, including a clever patent pending switch to make using both the EVF and the LCD possible.

This is a very compact and lightweight housing, with all of the key V1 camera controls available from the ergonomic grip sculpted into the side of the housing. A choice of hand strap and left/right handle means the shooter can customize the housing to meet their specific needs.

Initially, two lenses, the Nikkor VR 10-30mm f/2.5-5.6 and the Nikkor 10mm f/2 are supported. Given the camera's deep depth of field and

fast focus, macro shooting is ideal with this setup, and the 10-30mm is supported via the Macro Port 45 (part #36135).

Nauticam is now shipping a flip macro close-up lens holder (part #25101) that attaches to the 67mm threads on the Macro Port 45, and is ideal for shooting macro with the V1. Zoom is supported on the 10-30mm with an optional zoom gear.

For wide angle, the 10mm lens is supported with a choice of 2 ports, a 3.5" dome (part #36131) and a flat port called N10 Pancake Port (part #36151), which optionally supports use of the FIX UWL-04 Wet Conversion.

NA-V1 also features an audible and visual leak detector and cold shoe accessory mount.

www.nauticamusa.com

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Housing 55m Depth Rated
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Strobes Available



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**Nauticam
USA**

**Nauticam NA-NEX5N
Sony NEX-5N housing**



“Back to the future”

The Sony NEX-5N provides DSLR image quality with the full HD video of a camcorder in a compact size.

The Nauticam NA-NEX5N extends that capability with a form fitting aluminium housing and a full range of ports from fisheye to macro.

But the most innovative twist is a port adaptor to use Nikonos lenses from the pin sharp 15mm UW Nikkor to the super macro combination of 35mm and extension tubes.

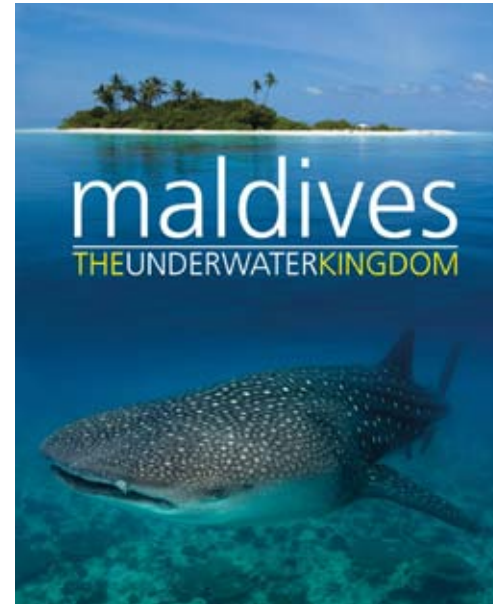
For decades the Nikonos range of lenses were world leaders but the advent of digital saw them put on the shelf. Now we can use them all over again to benefit from the past with a camera for the future.

www.nauticamusa.com

**Maldives: The
Underwater Kingdom**
Words and images by
Scubazoo.

A stunning book documenting the underwater world of the Maldives, The Underwater Kingdom presents some 300 powerful and emotive images gathered over a period of 10 years. Scubazoo, the acclaimed underwater photographic team, presents an unrivalled view of the natural world under these idyllic islands, and addresses the urgent need for global action to help preserve their unique diversity.

Maldives: The Underwater Kingdom progresses in a series of photographic sections, describing the range of seascapes, the diversity of animals found there, their survival techniques, behavioral patterns and future conservation efforts. The images are accompanied by informative text from the photographers on all aspects of the Maldives. The book showcases the many aspects of that fragile ecosystem starting with its lagoons, seagrass beds, reefs, channels, caves and atolls. The marine life which depends upon the integrity of these varied environments is presented with



breathtaking imagery, from the most detailed close-up of a coral polyps to awesome shots of the world's biggest fish - the whale shark.

In addition to the gorgeous photography, an accompanying 30-minute DVD offers breathtaking footage, bringing the marine life featured in the book to life. Maldives: The Underwater Kingdom will provide hours of enlightenment for anyone interested in nature, diving, photography or conservancy.

www.scubazoo.com

**Nauticam
USA**

**Nauticam Olympus
XZ1**



“Total control”

This camera and housing package offers complete control and image quality of an SLR system with the ease of use expected of a compact system.

Controls are simple but well thought out, with familiar push buttons for quick access to functions like macro mode, flash mode, etc. Dual control rings immediately access frequently used manual settings like ISO, F-Stop, and Shutter Speed. With a dedicated movie start/stop button recording 720P / 30fps video clips is only a pushbutton away.

www.nauticamusa.com

Sea & Sea YS-D1



The new YS-D1 looks like being a great all round strobe and will be available in March.

The YS-D1 has three TTL circuits meaning it will be compatible

with most digital cameras available. It is 25% more powerful than the YS-110a (GN32) in a similar sized body, is depth rated to 100m and is powered by 4x AA batteries. In addition, DS-TTL II mode comes with Exposure Compensation (+/- 4) and Manual mode has 11 steps of control for fine tuning exposure.

The YS-D1 can be triggered in slave mode or hardwired with a sync. cable and can be mounted with a traditional YS-mount or with an optional 1" ball mount.

SRP £554.95.

www.sea-sea.net

VF180 Viewfinder



Straight prism viewfinder compatible with both RDX and MDX housings. The magnification ratio is 1.2x without sacrificing the field of view and you can compose your images as if you are looking directly through the camera's viewfinder. Its 8 element 6 group optical lenses reproduce natural colors. The viewfinder is filled with nitrogen gas to prevent condensation and fogging. The eyepiece guard helps provide a clear view as it does not allow light to enter the viewfinder.

SRP £974.95

www.sea-sea.net

Two Worlds One Camera

New SeaLife DC1400 HD
An easy way to capture amazing underwater images, the DC1400 features simple to use "Piano Key" controls, Super Macro Auto Focus down to one inch, and colorful HD video.

"Piano Keys" instead of buttons, stunning HD video and a depth rating of 200 feet. Easy to use and even easier to expand.

SeaLife
www.sealife-cameras.com
facebook.com/SeaLifeCameras

The advertisement features a large image of the SeaLife DC1400 HD camera housing on the left. In the background, a diver is shown underwater, and a sea turtle is swimming. The text is overlaid on the image.

www.uwpmag.com

Nauticam
USA

Nauticam NA-EPL3
Olympus E-PL3



"Full HD and 12mp"

The NA-EPL3 housing from Nauticam delivers the advanced functionality of the E-PL3 in style and with the ergonomics that people have come to expect from Nauticam.

This is a very compact and lightweight housing, with all of the E-PL3 camera controls available from the ergonomic grip sculpted into the side of the housing. A choice of hand strap and left/right handle means the shooter can customize the housing to meet their specific needs.

Depth Rating: 100m
Dimensions: 168mm x 138mm x 91mm. Weight: 1.03kg (2.2 lbs.)

www.nauticamusa.com

Issue 65/15





ACQUAPAZZA



APOL-XZ1
Underwater housing for OLYMPUS XZ-1

**High Picture Quality Close to SLR
Using a Large f.1.8-2.5 Lens**



<http://acquapazza.jp/en>

Acquapazza Sony NEX5N housing



Acquapazza will be releasing its long-awaited and highly-anticipated APSO-NEX5N housing in early April and we'd like to provide some additional information to our original announcement in UwP63.

The NEX5N allows you to use your telephoto lens and manual focus is also supported with a focus gear!!

The new NEX has seven types of ports

1. Dome port (front port dome 115+ dome adaptor).
2. 16 port.
3. 1855 port.
4. 30M port.
5. 55210 port
6. A50M port (for use with an E 50mm macro lens).
7. A100M port (for use with an E 100mm macro lens)

Ports #1-#5 use E-mount lenses so autofocus is available.



The 55-210mm port has limited applications also has been made much smaller.

The 30mm macro lens has a high resolution, resulting in beautiful photos.

#6 and #7 are for E macro lenses. They use the LA-EA1 mount adapter, therefore they can only be used with manual focus.

So, with the NEX, you will absolutely be able to get those high resolution images.

www.acquapazza.jp



ACQUAPAZZA



**That Amazing Moment,
with SLR Quality**

APSO-NEX5N
Underwater Camera Housing for SONY NEX-5N



<http://acquapazza.jp/en>

Sea & Sea Fisheye Port 240

This is a replacement for the NX Fisheye Dome Port. It's a versatile high quality dome port suitable for various wide-angle full frame lenses.



LCD Monitor Hood with Lens

This hood attaches to the LCD monitor area of a compact digital camera housing. The hood reduces light and reflections and provides clear images from the LCD monitor from corner

to corner. The lens has an anti-reflective coating to further reduce unnecessary reflections and glare. Ideal for those who want an enlarged and clearer view of the LCD monitor. Compatible LCD monitor size: 62x47mm.

www.sea-sea.net

Cameras UNDERWATER
Est. 1991

Housings, lights and accessories for compact, system, SLR and video cameras

Tel: +44 (0)1404 812277
www.camerasunderwater.co.uk

Steve Knight



- 5 important reasons to make Reef Photo and Video your choice for underwater photo and video
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amazing world beneath the water's surface in 14MP images and 720p high-definition video.

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LED lamp



Technical data	
Lamp	LED Seoul P7 / 10 Watt W724CO-E
Electronics	Microprocessor controlled
Lithon-Battery	7.4V, 2900 mAh, user-replaceable
Size	19cm x 2.5cm (Head: 3.3cm)
Weight	250 g

Our compact, lightweight and powerful lamp is ideal for most situations underwater. Its brightness surpasses that of similarly compact dive lamps, meaning that for many divers, it can take the place of a big main lamp. As a backup lamp, its modest weight and compact size make it fit into most jacket pockets.

Controlled by a microprocessor and dimmable in three steps, this lamp is a high-end product, made in Germany. The powerful lithium ion battery allows for a minimum of 100 minutes at full capacity, with no decline in brightness; at the lowest capacity level, it is a minimum of 400 minutes. The housing is milled from solid aluminium. It is sealed with double o-rings, approved for a diving depth of 300 metres and tested for 500 metres in the pressure tank. The high-quality piezoelectric makes for easy, one-handed control.

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Samsung Electronics America, Inc., a market leader and award-winning innovator in consumer electronics, announced today that it is now shipping a new line of advanced SD and microSD cards that are ideal for digital imaging and mobile devices. The seven new models of SD and microSD cards are now available as part of either the High Speed Series or the Plus Extreme Speed Series, both of which deliver up to 24MB/sec read speeds on cards with a capacity of 4GB or higher.

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Advanced Underwater Photography by Larry Gates

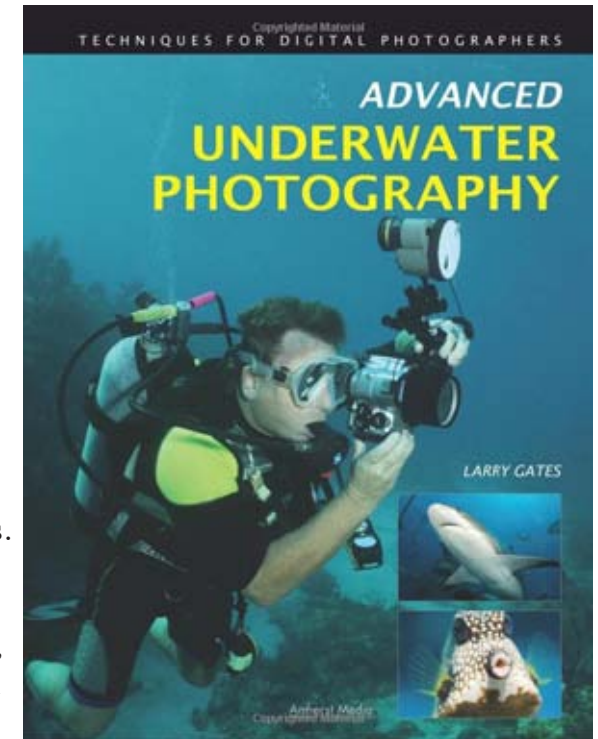
Designed for photographers who already have strong diving skills and understand basic photographic techniques, this reference defines what advanced underwater photography is while teaching the skills necessary to create professional-quality images.

Opening with a quick overview of the basics—such as exposure, focus, subject selection, and composition—the author then expands on each of these topics, showing the techniques pros use to achieve truly stunning images.

A major factor in advancing beyond the basic level of underwater photography is moving from a point-and-shoot or semi-adjustable camera to using a full-featured digital SLR camera.

The myriad equipment choices available when making this transition—including cameras, lenses, underwater housings, and the lighting units designed to be used with them—are explained, as are their respective advantages and shortcomings.

Because both beginning and



advanced underwater photographers can have equipment-related issues, a trouble-shooting section is included to ensure that minor equipment problems won't ruin a costly dive trip.

By taking these skills to the next level, Gates provides the tools readers need to become better problem solvers and more mission-oriented in their approach.

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Oceaneye Arri Alexa housing

The Oceaneye housing for the Arri Alexa cameras offers the versatility of handheld diving as well as remote operation on a crane at surface. The camera's power is provided from a mains current unit or a block battery. If feeding HD SDI or ARRI RAW out to record at the surface, the camera can be kept in the water all day without surfacing.

The multicore underwater cable comes in two lengths, 25 and 45 meters and controls all parameters of camera through ethernet to your laptop or Arri RCU-4 unit. Dual link video to the surface is available if 4:4:4 color space is required. Because the lens is controlled via ARRI lens motors, almost any prime lens can be used as well as many small zooms.

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An advertisement for Acquapazza underwater camera housing. The background is dark with blue water splashes. In the center is a large, orange and black camera housing. To the right is a smaller, black camera housing. The text 'ACQUAPAZZA' is written in blue on the left. At the top right, it says 'Underwater Camera Housing for SIGMA DP2 / DP2s / DP2x / DP1 / DP1s / DP1x'. At the bottom, it says 'ACQUAPAZZA APSG-DP2x, DP1x' and 'http://acquapazza.jp/'.

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Thailand's Underwater World

A Book By Chris Mitchell and Jez Tryner

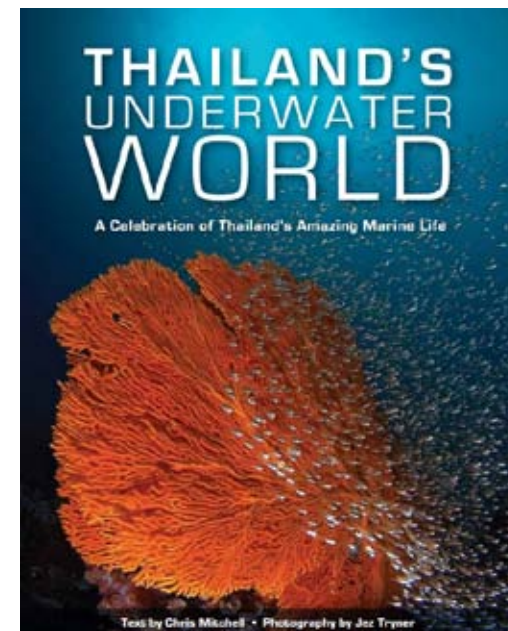
Thailand's Underwater World explores the Thai Kingdom's enchanting aquatic environments that are usually hidden from human eyes.

Through Chris Mitchell's captivating text and Jez Tryner's stunning photography, experience the beauty and sometimes bizarre nature of Thailand's marine creatures and their habitats. Discover the mysteries of Thailand's ocean life as engaging chapters reveal each creature's secrets, from the giant but gentle whale shark and the impossibly graceful manta ray to the tiny but vividly coloured nudibranch. See exclusive images of the USS Lagarto, the lost World War II submarine that was finally discovered 70 metres deep in the Gulf of Thailand 60 years after she disappeared. And find out why future generations may never get to see the beauty of Thailand's marine environment if action to preserve this hidden world isn't taken soon.

Thailand's Underwater World is published by Marshall Cavendish and the international publication date is 31st March 2012 and you can sign up to be notified on Amazon.com and pre-order on Amazon.co.uk.

Chris Mitchell is a British dive journalist based in Bangkok, Thailand. He is a Field Editor for Scuba Diver AustralAsia magazine, contributes regularly to several international diving titles and publishes DiveHappy.com, a personal guide to scuba diving in Asia.

Jez Tryner is an English photographer who has been working in Southeast Asia for 17 years. He has shot for most international dive publications, National Geographic and the BBC as well as shooting underwater films and documentaries. Now based in Bali, he advises people on the best places to dive.



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Our World Underwater 2012 winners

The Our World Underwater international underwater photography and video competition has become known as the “Superbowl” of underwater imaging events. The competition celebrates and highlights both art of underwater photography as well as the beauty of the ocean.

This year the celebrity panel of judges included Alex Mustard, Berkley White, Brian Skerry, Keri Willk and Matt Weiss. They went through thousands of images taken by novice to professional photographers from around the world.

\$60,000 in prizes were awarded to the winners, who represented more than 15 countries. Congratulations to Jeffrey Hartog . who won Best of Show for his 1st place image from the Commercial, Conceptual and Fashion category.

Winners were announced live on stage during the Our World Underwater film festival in Chicago (February 17 & 18, 2012), and will be published by supporting media partners worldwide.

Winning videos will also be broadcast as episodes on the iTunes-featured DiveFilm Podcast Video.

As with all UnderwaterCompetition.com events, 15% of entry proceeds will be donated to marine conservation efforts. The judges and staff at DivePhotoGuide.com and Wetpixel.com congratulate all the participants - the level of imagery was outstanding.

www.underwatercompetition.com



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Luc Eeckhaut



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(Top left) Novice
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First look: Olympus 12-50mm

by Dan Bolt

Anyone who knows me knows just how much I like shooting with my Olympus PEN E-PL1 and Olympus PT-EP01 housing. I love the camera, I love the housing, I love the ports and I love the lenses. However, amongst this love nest I do have a least-favoured bit of kit; and that is the Olympus 9-18mm wide-angle zoom lens. I don't want to take too much away from this tiny little marvel of lens design, but even behind the superb Zen dome port it is very easy to end up with soft edges and personally I find the rectilinear distortion a bit too exaggerated for my tastes.

If I had waited for a few months and gone for the E-PL3 I could be using an external wet-lens to give me the same 100degree coverage, but alas I was far too keen and as such can not apply the wet-lens solution to my housing. So having trawled for an alternative to the 9-18mm for some time I was quite keen to get my hands on the newly released Olympus 12-50mm lens.

Looking at the specification it was clear that it would be an interesting lens for underwater use, giving a 35mm equiv zoom range of

24-100mm, and even better it would fit behind both the Zen dome-port and the original Olympus flat-port which came with the PT-EP01. This is one of the new breed of MSC (movie and stills compatible) lenses so it is silent in its operation, has both manual and electronic zooming and, most usefully for putting into a housing, the zoom and focusing elements are all internal.

Putting it behind the Zen dome and jumping in the water means you get full use of the 85degree angle of view, which while not as wide as the 9-18mm is still pretty useful. At the wide end you can focus very close indeed, certainly within 0.20m of the port. On-land this close-focus ability is kept throughout the zoom range, but underwater it quickly jumps out to about 0.5m at 20mm, 1m at 30mm and 1.5m at 50mm. Not so useful in the murky waters of the UK but potentially not a deal-breaker in clearer water. Someone who knows a good deal more about domes/optics than I do may be able to explain why this is the case? (Our esteemed Editor has since contacted me to recommend adding a + dioptre as the left shots show works. The exact strength is still being ascertained).



*Common Starfish at 12mm (84°)
(1/125th, f/12, iso320, +4 dry dioptre,
1x YS-110a*



*The same Common Starfish at 50mm
(24°) 1/125th, f/18, iso320, +4 dry
dioptre, 1x YS-110a*



(Top left) Boring Sponge, 1/100th, f/3.5, iso200, 12mm (84°), 2x YS-110a strobes, Zen dome



River Dart topside, 1/30th, f/7.1, iso800, 12mm (84°), 2x YS-110a strobes, Zen WA-100 dome



(Right) Common Starfish, 1/125th, f/14, iso200, 50mm (24°), SubSee +10, 2x YS-110a strobes, Zen dome

The surprising bonus of this long focal distance is the ability to make use of strong dioptres. I've got an old Subsee +10 which is often far too strong for other lenses, but on the 12-50mm at its longest zoom (35mm equiv of 100mm) suddenly it becomes a pretty useful macro lens too. Using the +10 cuts the working distance down to about 20cm with a frame covering about 40mm. Not super-macro territory but certainly very useful on the same dive where you can also shoot diver portraits.

The lens also has a dedicated macro mode, but this fixes the lens at 43mm for your entire dive

while not providing as much magnification as a +10 and a working distance of only 10cm. Personally I would prefer to use the external dioptre and retain the zoom capability.

My first impression of this lens is quite favourable. Certainly it has a versatile zoom range for exploring new dive sites where you don't know what you will encounter. There is some light drop-off in the corners at 12mm but nothing too dramatic, and I have been impressed with the sharpness even fully open. It's not the quickest lens at f/3.5-6.3 but the PEN cameras have superb high ISO handling and good image stabilization which can negate the



Best of buddies, 1/50th, f/3.5, iso800, 12mm (84°), 2x YS-110a strobes, Zen WA-100 dome

effects of a slow lens. Focusing was always very snappy even in the dark waters of my local river on a cloudy day in February.

By the next issue of UWP I should have spent a week in the Maldives so hope to have more feedback on this lens.

Dan Bolt

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Mirrorless Macro

by Phil Rudin

For the past two years or so I have been receiving E-mails from many underwater photographers worldwide asking my opinion on what I feel is the best macro lens option for the Micro-Four-Thirds and Sony Alpha NEX mirrorless camera systems.

The magic number that everyone seems to want to get too is 1:1 or life-size, where the image captured on the sensor is the same size as the subject in the frame. The first thing that needs to be understood is that this number, 1:1 is not a single unit of measure. While you can find many different macro lenses from the 30mm to 200mm range that achieve a 1:1, reproduction ratio 1:1 still refers to the size of the image being recorded. At 1:1 on a full frame 35mm sensor the life-size image would be 24 X 36mm, on APS-C it would be 23.5 X 15.6 and on 4/3rds it would be 17.3 X 13mm. For this reason the smaller the sensor, the smaller the subject can fill the entire frame and be 1:1.

Kit lenses for macro

The Olympus 14-42mm F/3.5-5.6mm ED “kit” lens has a maximum

magnification ratio of around 1:2.1 on the 4/3 sensor at the minimum focus distance of 0.25 meters (9.84 inches). The lens is a bit slow to focus and gets better with each new camera incarnation, so expect better auto focus speed with the 14-42 type II / IIR kit lens and with the newer Pen cameras over the older ones.

At the 42mm end of the lens the angle of view is 29 degrees. This lens delivers decent performance and very good image resolution with little vignetting for a low cost Kit lens. With this lens image stabilization is gained in the camera body for all lenses.

The Panasonic 14-42mm F/3.5-5.6 MEGA O.I.S “kit” lens has the image stabilization built into the camera body and not the lens. The Panasonic camera bodies also apply more in-body lens correction to the entire lens line than does the Olympus line of Micro 4/3 bodies. This lens also has a 29 degree angle of view with a minimum focus distance of 0.3 meters (11.8 inches) from 21-42mm this greater focus distance gives a maximum reproduction ratio of 1:3.1 on the M43 sensor. This lens also has



Panasonic 45mm F/2.8 macro

very good image quality for its price point.

The Sony E 18-55mm F/3.5-5.6 OSS “kit” lens for the NEX cameras also has an angle of view of 29 degrees at the 55mm end of the lens on the APS-C size sensor. This lens has a minimum focus distance of 0.25 meters or (9.84 inches) and a maximum reproduction ratio of 1:3.3 on the APS-C size sensor.

This lens is a bit soft on the corners but very sharp in the center. It also has the Sony lensbased image stabilization which seems to work quite well. With the addition of several of the current close-up lenses like the ReefNet SubSee +10 magnifier these three lenses can get close to the 1:1.1 to 1:1.6 range with some image quality lost while using the same flat port designed for the kit lens with an adapter to attach the close-up lens.



Sony E 30 mm F/3.5 Macro



Seaweed Blenny Panasonic 45mm macro, ISO-200, 1/160th, F/22

Macro lenses for NEX & M43

Getting to life-size and beyond with excellent image quality requires a dedicated macro lens. At this time the best choices for M43 and NEX cameras are two very distinctly different lens choices.

The older Panasonic 45mm F/2.8 MEGA OIS Leica DG macro-Elmarit and the recently released Sony E 30 mm F/3.5 Macro. The Panasonic 45mm F/2.8-F/22 macro is one of the high quality Leica branded lenses for Micro 43 camera bodies. With the Panasonic camera bodies the lens takes full advantage of the optical image stabilization built into the lens plus the lens corrections applied by the camera bodies.

When used with the Olympus M43 bodies the lens stabilization is turned off and the lens profiles are not applied by the camera. The Olympus in body stabilization does work with this lens to control lens movement.

On the M43 cameras the lens has a 35mm equivalent of a 90mm macro lens with an angle of view of 27 degrees. At life-size (1:1) the lens has a minimum focus distance of 15.24cm (six inches). These lens should be used with a dedicated macro lens port like the ones from 10Bar, Acquapazza, Aquatica, Athena, Nauticam, ZEN Underwater and others. These ports allow the lens to sit just inside the port glass to take advantage of every millimeter of space between the port glass and the subject.

Many of these ports also have the 67mm threads for close-up lenses built into the end of the port. I have used the Reefnet SubSee +10 and the Inon UCL-165M67 close-up lens both single and stacked with the 45 macro. Close-up lenses added to any lens reduce the distance between the subject



Polka-Dot Batfish Sony 30 macro, ISO-200, 1/160th, F/9

and the lens port. With about 15cm (six inches) of distance between port and subject at 1:1 that distance is cut to about half 7.5cm (three inches) with a +10 close-up on the 45 macro.

The +10 C/U lens will get you to a reproduction ratio of about 2:1 (twice life-size) on the M43 sensor with the 45mm macro lens focal length. At 2:1 you still have an adequate working distance but you may scare off many of the more skittish subjects. This lens has excellent optics, the image stabilization is ineffective at macro distances greater than about 1:3 and like many of the M43 lenses it is light weight and small making it an excellent travel lens.

When announced in 2009 the price was set at \$900US, £590UK, it can now be found for less in the new and used market. The Sony E 30mm F/3.5-F/22 macro lens for the Sony Alpha NEX mount cameras was announced in mid-2011 as an entry level lens with excellent image quality for its price point of \$250US, £189UK. A less robust



Swallowtail Aglaja Panasonic 45mm macro, ISO-200, 1/160th, F/22



Hermit Crab Panasonic 45mm macro, ISO-200, 1/160th, F/13.



Hairy Blenny Sony 30mm macro, ISO-200, 1/160th, F10



Hermit Crab Sony 30mm macro, ISO-200, 1/160th, F/10

feeling lens it never the less has many of the features of a quality macro lens like full 1:1 max reproduction ratio at a minimum focus distance of 9.5 cm (3.75 inches). This lens is smooth and quite for both still and video use. The angle of view on the Sony APS-C sensor is around 50 degrees equivalent to a 45mm lens on a 35mm sensor. I have found the lens to auto focus quite well on the NEX-5 and 5n cameras until you get to very close range.

Since the lens is at around one to two inches from the subject at the 1:1.5 to 1:1 range holding the camera

steady can be a bit of a challenge. It can also be difficult to light a subject so close to the port glass and use of a close-up lens is a waist of time because the subject would need to be pressed up against the glass to get any focus at all.

For me the lens shines more when shot from about 1:2 at 8cm or so (three inches) out to around 45cm (18 inches). In this range you can fit a wide verity of subject sizes into the 50 degree AOV of this lens with stellar image quality for such an inexpensive lens. The custom macro ports that

fit the Panasonic 45 macro can also be used with the Sony 30 macro which are very close in length. Other options for macro are possible with both the NEX and M43 systems.

A verity of lens adapters allow use of almost any lens with these cameras if you are willing to manually focus and set apertures. While this may not be much of a hassle on land the degree of difficulty goes up sharply underwater when ports gears and other hardware need to be redesigned for each new lens. If you are an M43 or NEX shooter I think

you will find both of these lenses will help you fill a void in an otherwise barren mirrorless macro range. I would like to thank NauticamUSA.com and ReefPhoto.com for use of much of the test equipment and for their technical advise while testing these lenses.

Phil Rudin

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Olympus XZ-1



Fish Faces

by Ángel Cegarra

Sometime after we have completed our first diving certification and with not many dives in our logbook, we soon start to feel more and more comfortable with the equipment and spend less energy in our underwater experience.

We are able to enjoy the fascinating world that opens its door to ourselves and start to discover hundreds of new creatures that appear in front of our diving mask. Probably we will get one of those uw identification guide books for marine life. There is a strong desire to understand how the fishes and marine invertebrates live and interact with each other.

Looking at the pictures in the book we recognize the body of the fishes we watched diving, the colors are the same and the shape of the animal matches with the mental image we made. Those are flat pictures, taken from a lateral point of view and are very useful to identify the animal and learn its scientific name. This type of photograph only gives us classification information which places ourselves in a somewhat insipid and aseptic position far away from our protagonist. When reading this book we are receiving only knowledge.

But there is another type of fish's photographs which get us closer to the creature, in those the scientific characteristics retreat in a second position for the picture to reach a dramatic dimension. The fish appears as "somebody" who shows "feelings" and catch our eyes. The position of his body, fins, eyes and face tell us he is happy, sad, angry or just feeling indifference. We can locate him into



(Left) Clownfish . 1/125 sec at f/11. ISO 100 . Canon EOS 400D . Sigma EF 50 mm f/2.8 Compact Macro . Sea&Sea DX-350D . Two Sea&Sea YS-250 on manual mode .

(Above) Hawk fish on rock and coral . 1/160 sec at f/14. ISO 100 . Canon EOS 400D . Canon EF 100 mm f/2.8 Macro USM . Sea&Sea DX-350D . Two Sea&Sea YS-250 on manual mode .

a history and in his own natural environment and even be able to feel his mood.

It is relatively easy to catch expressiveness taking pictures of marine mammals or big size fishes like sharks, either because of their closer evolved biology or just for their big size. With sea lions or seals the expressiveness is guaranteed. There is a trend in underwater photographers to focus on big size marine animals, like sharks

and whales, and in very small ones, like cleaning shrimps. Both the very little creatures, difficult to see at a glance, and the big ones, are always striking; the first ones for their capacity to surprise and the second for their size.

But we can show a lot of expressiveness in pictures of simple small reef fishes if we have enough patience and if we apply the skills and techniques needed. The golden rule of shooting

up and from a beneath the creature's eyes level is definitely a huge advantage here, although we can get a nice result from above provided the fish is looking at us.

A nice idea that works well is to imagine the fish as a photographic model who poses for us. Working with models, I prefer neither to have the divers very close to the main subject nor to have them as the protagonist of the scene. With marine invertebrates or fishes my preference is to use them as the main actors that catch our eyes. It is funny and inspiring to imagine them as cartoon characters with their own personality that want to express themselves and talk to us.

A gently physical approach is critical to avoid spooking the fish and see how he swims away from our side. Although many times, surprisingly, we can note that the same fish that left some minutes ago is back and swimming around us. Many of the non pelagic fishes are very territorial and often we will find ourselves invading their own activity area, so it is natural that they want to come back and recover the lost space.

Before the approach it is useful to decide about the picture we want to obtain. In this case we want a fish portrait with the fish as the very first protagonist of the scene. We do not want extra actors to distract ourselves like very small fishes swimming close or coral branches hovering around; the main actor will always appear in the foreground. In order to emphasize our subject is nice to get a uniform uncluttered background, which can be achieved with the following techniques:

1- Angle the strobes facing downwards or even a little bit of pointing backwards in order to create shadows that give relief to the subject, also reducing the amount of light which reaches the reef



located behind the fish. The darker the background the better the fish will be shown in the foreground. Please see the picture of the clownfish in shadows within his anemone.

2- Use of wide apertures to reduce the depth of field creates a deliberately blurred background. This can cause to have some parts of the subject to be out of focus, but anyway the photo will work if the eyes of the creature are sharp. We need to practice



(Left) Mediterranean cardinalfish with eggs . . 1/250 sec at f/4.5. ISO 200 . Canon EOS 400D . Canon EF 100 mm f/2.8 Macro USM . Sea&Sea DX-350D . Two Sea&Sea YS-250 on manual mode.

(Above) Anthias anthias in front of a red sponge (Mediterranean fish) . 1/250 sec at f/5.6. ISO 200 . Canon EOS 400D . Canon EF 100 mm f/2.8 Macro USM . Sea&Sea DX-350D . Two Sea&Sea YS-250 on manual mode .



Triggerfish . 1/125 sec at f/8. ISO 100 . Canon EOS 400D . Sigma EF 50 mm f/2.8 Compact Macro . Sea&Sea DX-350D . Two Sea&Sea YS-250 on manual mode.

Mediterranean Blenny . 1/250 sec f/14. ISO 200 . Canon EOS 400D . Canon 100 mm f/2.8 Macro USM . Sea&Sea DX-350D+ Nexus woody's diopter . Two Sea&Sea YS-250 on manual mode

in advance in order to get familiar with the results using this technique, because when “hunting” for our fish we will not have time to check the LCD.

3- Taking the shot when the fish is swimming out of the reef so a uniform blue color background will increase its presence. With the aperture fixed accordingly to the

flashes power settings, depending on the shutter speed chosen, we will get a more intense blue or a soft pastel blue color.

The precise moment of the shot has a very big importance in this type of photography. It probably will decide whenever we got a wow picture or just another average one. We have always heard about the “peak

of the action” and it is very applicable to our approach. In order to get that moment of expressiveness it is useful to play to “capture” the fish. This means to follow its way of swimming and analyze the movements through our viewfinder to “predict” the “next pose”, then wait some seconds and press down the shutter exactly at the right moment and keep doing this until we are satisfied with the obtained picture. As said before, during the process we do not have time check the LCD after each shot, so remember to keep the same flash to subject distance to avoid over or underexposed pictures.

Please note it is very important not to make any quick movement ourselves during this “follow the fish” time. To follow its position with our camera must not imply to chase the creature.

As an example please look at the picture of the triggerfish. I was around 20 minutes stopped on the sand, near a reef pinnacle where he was swimming around. Since he is a very territorial species (as are most of non pelagic fishes) was hovering around myself turning back close frequently. I was shooting him trying to get a nice upwards front angle but the most of the shots I got were taken from a side view. He kept doing this and turned around the pinnacle again following an upward trajectory so it was

possible to guess in which direction he was going to appear later. I moved my housing to focus the corals located in that position and locked the shutter pressing down a little bit, after some seconds the triggerfish was showing a very nice mouth open presence in the expected place. It was a mix of luck and patience.

With this approach to catch the peak of the action we will dedicate more time to take the picture than it is “usually required” for a standard shot. This implies that, after the dive, we will end up with a lot of pictures from a few subjects instead of a few pictures of many subjects. I believe it is a good compromise if we look for a special photograph.

As a conclusion I would like to highlight that, as with other areas of underwater photography, the practice and patience are our best friends to get a satisfactory picture. When diving, If you do not feel happy with your last shot, I encourage yourself to spend more time to improve it. For sure you will lose opportunities with other subjects in the same dive but you can always come back. The more you practice, the better results you will achieve.

Ángel Cegarra

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Freshwater

by Jack Perks

My name is Jack Perks and I'm fairly new to the underwater photography game with a few dives in Cornwall and the Red sea but my real passion is 'green water' photography otherwise known as freshwater photography.

Freshwater photography is nothing new in the UK with dozens of inland dive sites like Stoney Cove to name one but our hundreds of rivers, streams and brooks are a relatively untapped source for the underwater photographer to get shots and they can really come up with some surprising results.

Firstly you have to assess how your going to actually get the shots, scuba diving is rarely viable as most rivers are not deep enough or too strong flowing to stay down so snorkelling is often a better bet as it allows more flexibility. Then conditions have to be taken into account, similar to diving visibility, temperature and weather must be considered.

Subject matter is almost endless with fish being an obvious choice and other species that would be difficult or impossible to get in large dive

sites and the sea become available to the underwater photographer. Try to have an idea of what your going to photograph with waterfowl the best place would be a country park where the birds are regularly feed and willing to come close and where the water is clear enough to get detail below the water also. Don't use bread to entice the birds closer though as its bad for the birds digestion and clouds the water up so use small amounts of bird seed this is a good option as it sinks prompting the birds to put there heads under the water.

Amphibians are a great choice as frogs and toads will often breed in rivers and are more preoccupied

*(Top) The strobe has just lit the fish here to bring it out
F/4 – ISO 100 – 1/100. Nikon 10.5mm Fisheye Nikon D200 Sea & Sea housing and strobe
(Right) Natural light – Due to their size most swans are quite happy to come close to you
F/5 – ISO 250 – 1/2000 Nikon 10.5mm Fisheye, Nikon D200 Sea & Sea housing and strobe*





Fish often look for a structure like this tyre in the background. F/15 – ISO 250 – 1/250. Nikon 10.5mm Fisheye, Nikon D200 Sea & Sea housing and strobe

with mating, then the large camera in their face. Dragonfly larvae and other large water insects can with a little encouragement be photographed with a macro set either in the river or removed into a tub and photographed then released back.

The real tricky customers are the fish of course some like bullheads will sit in the middle of a small stream and stay perfectly still while you take your time to compose the image however more often than not it's a lot harder with other species. Fish have a lateral line running down their bodies

that detect movement in the water so if you're snorkelling they feel your presence straight away and bearing in mind the water has to be clear to get your shots this means the fish get a huge head start before you even get a glimpse let alone a shot of one!

I've found a couple of ways to get around this. One is using a pole cam though a DSLR will more than likely not fit on a pole so a smaller camera like a GoPro or something similar would have to be used this creates a lot less disturbance in the water and are more likely to get near



Natural light – The frogs are far more interested in breeding than to take notice of me. F6.3 – ISO 250 – 1/160. Nikon 10.5mm Fisheye, Nikon D200 Sea & Sea housing and strobe

the fish. You can even get monitors attached so you can view the footage you are shooting.

A method I have had frequent success with is 'underwater camera traps' which I have two main methods though if possible I'd recommend using a monitor attached to the camera so you can view the fish underwater and shoot what you see but for a lot of photographers this isn't an option so self-improvised techniques are used instead, by setting the camera to time-lapse function this takes pictures

in intervals of however long you set it for and with a prefocus on where the fish are likely to go you have a good chance of getting the shot it can be further encouraged with putting bait in the area. This however can be very haphazard so I've tried a manual version by attaching string to the camera's trigger and two weights on the handles of the housing keeping it stationary and pulling the string from a distance every time a fish comes by this means you control when the shutter goes off, I'd highly recommend

*Rare white clawed crayfish at Stoney.
F/5 – ISO 640 – 1/40. Nikon 10.5mm
Fisheye, Nikon D200 Sea & Sea
housing and strobe*



though when safe and possible to get in with the fish but these two previous methods are brilliant for very shy fish. Composition is incredibly important when leaving the camera in the river as your going to have a lot of images in that one area. Be ultra sure you have greased the o-ring and make sure the camera is sealed tight as running water will be going over the camera for hours potentially

An advantage to this kind of photography is the use of natural light, of course strobe lighting is a well used factor in underwater photography but particularly when those light rays just cut through the water it can really make a image as normally with the rivers your probably only going to be shooting in no more then four of five feet of water. For this very reason over/under shots are a good choice as well getting the best of both worlds in one shot. Waders are a useful tool as in the winter a freezing river is not something id recommends in a wetsuit! Just taking images as you walk

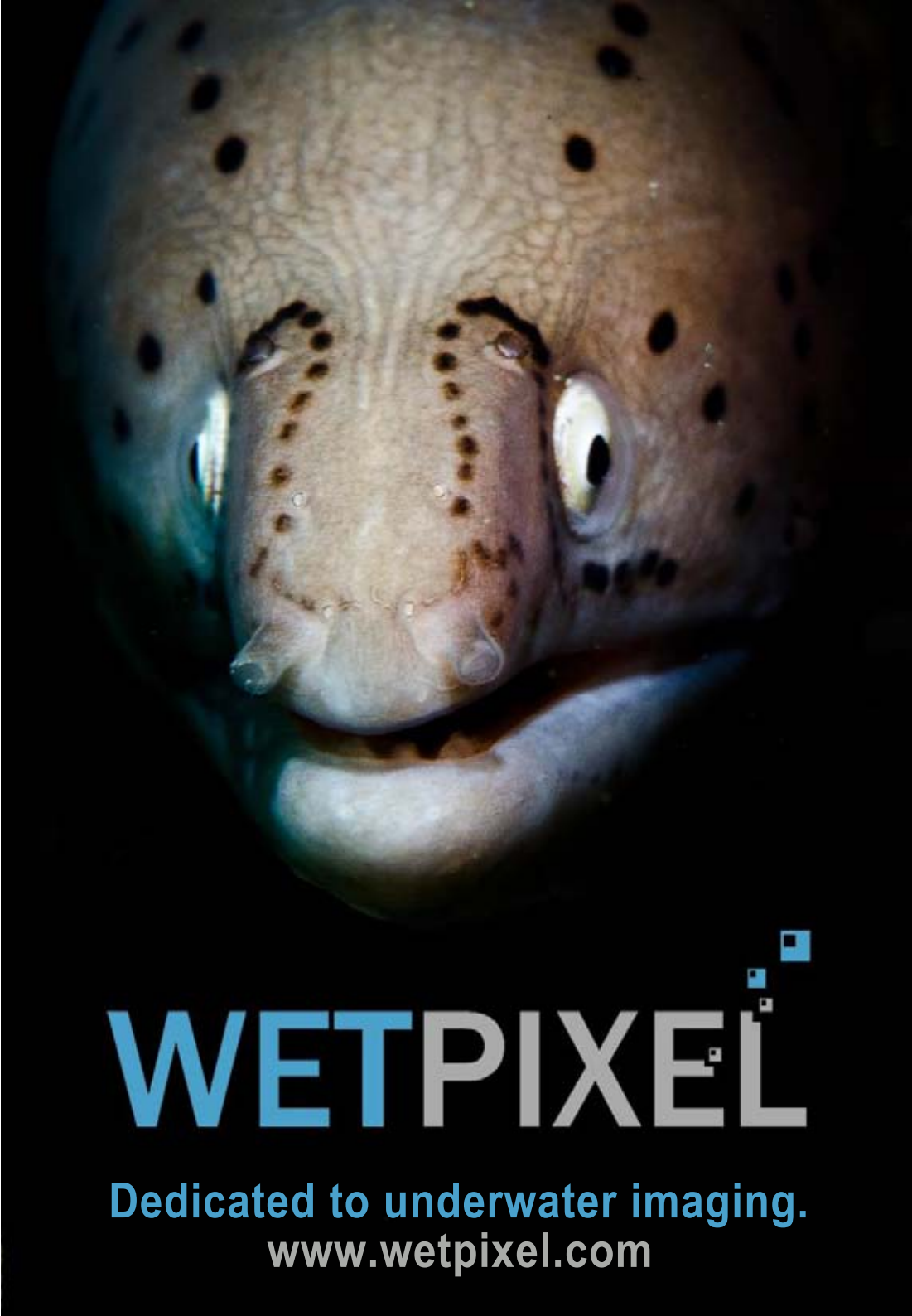


around particularly of the underwater landscape can make a beautiful image.

A word on health & safety try not to go on your own, as rivers can be unpredictable and dangerous having a buddy or shore cover is recommended

Jack Perks

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Issue 65/42

Sea Turtles of Barbados

by Phil Rudin

Barbados is a visually stunning island surrounded by an enchanting turquoise-blue sea that is home to an abundance of Caribbean marine life. Miles of unbroken white sand beaches like “The Crane” (rated one of the top ten beaches in the world) are set in a backdrop of sloping cliffs that rise from the sea to heights of 100 feet or more. Barbados is the easternmost Caribbean island and is part of the Windward Islands chain. The island formed as a result of volcanic activity which later led to the growth of huge coral formations which surround the island and extend to approximately 300 feet.

The Barbados Sea Turtle Project at the University of the West Indies-Cave Hill Campus was established to restore marine sea turtle populations and to act as a catalyst for similar efforts in other Caribbean countries. The project hopes to achieve this goal through conservation measures, monitoring programs, education and public awareness activities. The project has formed partnerships at the national Government level, with the tourist sector and serves as the international focal point for Widecast (Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network) in Barbados.

The Widecast network has coordinators in more than forty Caribbean nations and territories which link scientists, resource managers, policy-makers, educators and conservationists. Widecast’s



A team member swims a captured turtle slowly to the surface

objectives are to obtain and update information on sea turtles in the Caribbean and to provide current management recommendations to area governments. Widecast and the Barbados turtle project hope to reverse declines in turtle populations of both endangered and vulnerable sea turtle stocks through government enforcement of national laws and international agreements, as well as conservation and education efforts.

Over 900 hawksbill and green turtles have



A turtle weigh-in.

been tagged and identified by BSTP since mid 1998 when the in-water tagging program began. Turtles that are re-sighted after six months or more are again measured to provide information on growth rates, movements between reefs and where the most important foraging habitats are off the Barbados coastline. Genetic analyses through DNA testing show that the nesting populations of hawksbills in the Caribbean are highly structured while the foraging grounds are quite mixed throughout the



Measurement of carapace using a cloth tape.

Caribbean range. By studying turtles in the water rather than on native beaches a more accurate picture of their movements can be gained.

I had the opportunity to join three BSTP staff members Barry Krueger Ph.D. and volunteer interns April Stevens and Micah Herriot, during part of the in-water monitoring program aboard the 'Ali Cat', a Hightide Watersports dive vessel. Hightide Watersports is located on the grounds of the prestigious Coral Reef Club. They have collaborated with BSTP so that their dive and snorkel customers



Measurement of carapace using calipers.

have the opportunity to experience the fieldwork involved with this turtle research project. Once the 'Ali Cat' has reached the dive location Hightide staff members accompany their clients on a reef dive while the turtle researchers enter the water as a group in a different area. Once I entered the water with the research team we descended to about sixty feet and formed a line 20 feet above the reef and about 50 to 100 feet apart drifting with the current. I immediately noticed the large number of barrel sponges that turtles had been feeding on, a



Flipper tag to track and gain data.

good sign that we were in the right area for turtle collecting. The three member team then began looking for turtles of around a foot or more in length, most often hawksbill and green turtles. Once a turtle has been spotted the team surrounds it and attempt to catch the turtle by hand. Once a turtle has been secured one of the team members swims it to the surface and it is taken aboard the Ali Cat. The turtle is then placed on its back on the dive deck in the shade and the team diver returns to the reef to continue the hunt.



Laparoscopic examination to determine the turtles sex.

During this process issues arise, foremost is the safety of the turtles and divers. As April explained, the last 20 to 25 feet are the most critical as the turtle begins to become more buoyant near the surface. As a result the diver may tend to rocket to the surface and not be able to make a required safety stop or a slow enough ascent. On the surface the handler has to control the turtle until the boat arrives and the turtle is loaded aboard. Once all of the divers are back aboard the Ali Cat the data collection process begins. The turtles are then

measured, weighed, given an identification number, tagged and the sex of the turtle is determined. A snip of flesh is also taken for DNA testing to determine the turtle's location of birth all while meticulous written records are being maintained. This allows the researchers to determine how far the turtles are traveling to forage in the area. Measurements are made with a cloth tape along the carapace (top shell) and also with a set of calipers. These measurements are then logged along with the weight of the turtle so that growth patterns can be established in recaptured turtles.

A grinding tool is used to cut an identification number into the carapace. White paint is then used to make the number more visible to team divers while in the water. Once a turtle is released it is not recaptured for at least six months, the number is shed during the growing process so that no permanent marking remains.

A custom-manufactured flipper tag is then inserted into the turtle's flipper. The turtle tagging techniques are used to gain data for storage in the Caribbean states data storage base. When long distance tag returns occur the information is shared through the Widecast marine turtle tagging center.

If the turtles sex cannot be determined a laparoscopic examination is used to determine if gonads are present in the turtle. A very small incision is made behind the rear flipper and the laparoscope is inserted, once the sex is determined the incision is closed with a single suture to prevent infection. Thousands of these

procedures have been performed around the world without any harm to the turtles. The turtles are then returned to the sea where they continue to provide valuable insight into their life cycle.

If you are interested in joining in a turtle dive in Barbados contact

www.divehightide.com

Phil Rudin



Isla Del Coco

by Alex Tyrell

The Hammerhead Shark has been high up on my 'hit-list' since I started diving, but has been one subject that had eluded me for quite some time. So with a portrait of a Hammerhead in mind I set off on the extensive journey from the Philippines to Costa Rica (via L.A. & Dallas) to dive the world famous Isla del Coco aboard the luxurious liveaboard, MV Argo, which is part of the Undersea Hunter Group. Cocos Island is very remote, requiring a crossing of over 300 miles taking between 32-36 hours from the port of Punteranus. You will be navigating the open ocean of the Pacific, which can be a very rough ride when heading into swells that potentially originate near Antarctica! I timed my trip for the start of the dry season, so we only had to endure a mild swell on the outward journey making for a comfortable crossing. The thought of travelling for this duration to simply get to the dive site seems a little daunting, but it gives you plenty of time to sort out your dive gear, set up your camera system, and if travelling over numerous time zones on your journey to Costa Rica, sleep off the jet lag so you're fresh and ready to dive upon arrival at the island.

Seasons for Marine Life Encounters

Isla del Coco is by no means a new dive destination and many articles have been written and documentaries made about this stunning UNESCO World Heritage site. The dramatic island landscape, with waterfalls pouring off of the mountainous cliffs was even featured in the opening scene of



Hollywood blockbuster Jurassic Park! So the aim of this article is not so much as to give you a report on the diving, but to explain how I approached and photographed the different subjects I encountered during my trip in January 2012.

To begin with, however, it is worth noting that there are two seasons at Cocos that will influence some of the marine life that is to be encountered. From May through to November is the wet season



The MV Argo sitting on the mooring at Manualita Garden. Nikon D7000, Nikon 12-24mm at 24mm. Camera Settings: f/8 1/250th ISO 100.

(Left) A huge school of Bigeye Trevally with Divemaster Edwar at Shark Fin Rock. Nikon D7000, Subal ND7000, Inon Z240's, Tokina 10-17mm at 10mm. Camera Settings: f/11 1/125th ISO 500.

with a higher probability of rough seas making for a more arduous crossing, and more challenging diving conditions when you arrive at the island, especially surface conditions. You will be rewarded with a greater number of sharks during this period though, with large schools of Scalloped Hammerheads. So if you have the iconic 'Hammerhead Wallpaper' shot in mind, then think about planning your trip between June and October. Don't expect to return



(Far left) Hammerhead: The shot I had wanted for so long; portrait of a Scalloped Hammerhead approaching a cleaning station at Manualita Outside (while I turn blue)! Nikon D7000, Subal ND7000, Inon Z240's, Nikon 12-24mm at 17mm. Camera Settings: f/8 1/100th ISO 500.

(Left) A close encounter with a curious Galapagos Shark at Small Dos Amigos. Nikon D7000, Subal ND7000, Inon Z240's, Nikon 12-24mm at 24mm. Camera Settings: f/11 1/125th ISO 500.

with a 'Hawaiian Tropic' suntan if you visit then though, as they are not joking when they call it the rainy season; you can get up to 300mm (12 in) per month at this time of year! December through to May is the dry season bringing calmer seas and easier diving conditions, but expect a few less sharks. There is however the possibility, if you get really lucky, to encounter 'bait balls' during this time. The calmer sea conditions enable the population of sea birds to actually 'see' when a school of Green Trevally have been forced up to the surface by predators. So, flocks of birds all heading to the same spot is the telltale sign of a bait-ball, and then it's simply a matter of following them. If you strike gold and get in the water with a bait ball, expect to see Bottlenose Dolphins, Oceanic Blacktip Sharks & Yellowfin Tuna attacking from below and a barrage of birds striking from above – the video footage that Divemaster Edwar showed me looked awesome!

Lens Choice:

The majority of photographers will concentrate on wide-angle imagery whilst at Cocos, as it is renowned as a 'big-fish' destinations. But there are macro opportunities available if you so wish. I stuck to wide-angle for all but one dive, as I have more than my fair share of macro back in the Philippines. I found that the Nikon 12-24mm lens behind a Zen DP-200 dome was most effective for the majority of the dives. The Tokina 10-17mm got a few outings when I was hoping for that close encounter, but this turned out to be more of a rarity, so the 12-24mm became my lens of choice. The Tokina did prove valuable for shooting the huge schools of Trevally, when a fisheye lens simply lets you fit more of the school in. Plus the Tokina was great on the night dives when shooting the mass of hunting White-Tip Reef Sharks.

Subjects:

Scalloped Hammerhead (Sphyrna lewini):

This is probably the most famous photo subject at Isla del Coco and photos of these awesome

Elasmobranches is what every photographer wants to capture, especially the 'Hammerhead Wallpaper' shot of the school silhouetted against a blue-water background. However, these sharks can be a little shy and are very much affected by the noise of your bubbles upon exhalation. The ideal solution would be to use a Closed-Circuit Rebreather (CCR) to get in amongst them without bubbles to frighten them off. But the majority of us will be diving on Open-Circuit Scuba that emit noisy bubbles, so what is the best way to get close? Well, you won't find this recommended in any dive agency's training manuals, but quite simply you have to hold your breath! The Divemasters of the Argo call it becoming a 'blue diver'. Simply put, upon seeing an approaching shark, you hide in the rocks and then hold your breath until you turn blue! Through a week of diving you will improve your breathe-hold ability, but do expect a few post-dive headaches from CO2 retention! One useful trick that was passed onto me at the start of the week was to make sure I was ready as soon as the skiff got to the dive site. This let me be the first in the water

and following a quick descent to the cleaning stations ahead of everyone else, gave me a valuable few minutes to be on my own with the sharks. This proved to be a short window of opportunity when I bagged some of the better shots of the trip. The best sightings of hammers during the trip came at Small Dos Amigos, Alcyon and Manualita. My preferred lens was definitely the Nikon 12-24mm, as we didn't see the huge schools that a fisheye lens would have been good for, so I ended up with the better portraits using this lens around the 18-24mm focal length.

Galapagos Shark (Carcharhinus galapagensis):

This is a fairly large shark, growing up to 3m/9ft in length and they have quite a curious nature. We saw three of these beautiful sharks cruising in and out of the cleaning station situated at around 25m/80ft at Punta Maria, but they stayed just on the edge of the ideal distance for photos. I had better luck with photographing these at Dirty Rock and particularly Small Dos Amigos. Here they stayed a bit shallower, so I managed some quality time with them towards the end of the dive when the others had run low on air and ascended, leaving only the Divemaster and me in the water. At the end of a

memorable dive at Small Dos Amigos, one individual got very curious, coming straight at me and did not veer off course until it was a meter away, letting me get a nice head-on shot.

White Tip Reef Shark (Triaenodon obesus)

These are seen on every single dive at Cocos and after a few dives you start to ignore the smallest of the shark species you will encounter. That is until you do a night dive at Manualita where they get together in large numbers to hunt by the light from divers torches. Here you will encounter a feeding-frenzy as they attack the reef fishes illuminated by the dive lights, leaving just a few shimmering scales in their wake. Instead of a simple portrait, I wanted to get some shots with the ambience of this dive, so opted to shoot with a high ISO so I could capture the beams of light from the dive lights in the background of the image. Setting the ISO to 1250 let me use an aperture of f9 to give the depth of field for the divers in the background and 1/100th shutter speed froze the action. Strobes were placed quite close to my Zen DP100 mini dome port, angled outwards and set to a low strobe power so as not to over expose the light coloured underside of the sharks. This dive was just too fast-



White-Tip Reef Sharks on my first action-packed night dive. Nikon D7000, Subal ND7000, Light & Motion Sola 1200, Inon Z240's, Nikon 12-24mm at 12mm. Camera Settings: f/6.3 1/125th ISO 100

paced to compose your shots through the viewfinder, plus this would mean getting right in amongst the feeding sharks, highly increasing the chances of an accidental nibble from one! So I set my camera up in a portrait format, pre-focused the camera a foot in front of the dome and then positioning myself so that the divers were facing towards the camera and I was just above the feeding sharks. It was then a

matter of quickly dropping the camera below me to the sharks level, taking one or two shots as they approached, and quickly pulling the camera out of the feeding action. Shooting 'blind' will mean a lot of images end up in the trash, but this really is the only way to work with the frantic pace of the action.



The very weird Rosy-Lipped Batfish at Lobster Rock. Nikon D7000, Subal ND7000, Inon Z240's, Tokina 35mm (Macro). Camera Settings: f/11 1/125th ISO 500

Rosy-Lipped Batfish (Ogcocephalus porrectus)

This is a very strange looking fish that appears to be wearing bright-red lipstick! It is endemic to Cocos Island and was my only planned macro subject of the week. It is similar in appearance and often mistaken for the Red-Lipped Batfish, which is found in the nearby Galapagos Islands. Before my trip I researched the size of this fish, and selected the Tokina 35mm macro lens as appropriate, but couldn't find much info on its behavior except that they are normally found at a depth in excess of 30m/100ft. When I went to photograph this fish, I didn't have a very long surface interval from my previous dive, and my guide Chipopa had to search the sandy bottom at 30m/100ft+ for quite a while before finding one. As I settled down to get the shot, I checked my dive computer and only 6 minutes NDLs left! To make matters worse, these fish turned



The DeepSee submersible at Manualita Garden with new pilot Philippe on his first training dive at the controls! Nikon D7000, Subal ND7000, Inon Z240's, Tokina 10-17mm at 10mm. Camera Settings: f/11 1/125th ISO 500.

out to be quite uncooperative, turning away from the camera when you approach them. My tactic for getting this shot had to be quickly adapted, whereby I let the fish settle on the bottom while staying about a meter away, then quickly swim in and grab a shot before it had a chance to turn it's back on me! In retrospect, a better choice of lens would have been the 105mm, but airline weight restrictions prompted me to leave this behind!

DeepSee Submersible

This is a subject that only the MV Argo and Undersea Hunter Group could possibly offer. Shmulik, the owner of the DeepSee, was in the process of training a new pilot, so was working in Manualita Garden in much shallower water than



A unique view from inside the DeepSee Submersible with a background of Scalloped Hammerheads. Nikon D200, Nikon 10.5mm, f/13 1/80th ISO 100 (Photo by Samuel 'Shmulik' Blum)

the 450m max operating depth. This gave me an opportunity to get a rare shot that not many people have, the DeepSee in action. The sub is 6m/18ft in length, 3m/9ft wide and 3m/9ft tall, so I opted to use the Tokina 10-17mm. I started shooting from the side and slightly below, but was then directed by Shmulik to go over the top of the sub. This gave me a downward angle that I wouldn't normally use, but in this instant it worked much better giving a view of the whole sub plus the pilots inside. For those with a bit more spare cash than me, dives were offered to depths of 300m/1000ft, which gave the opportunity for some very unique photos letting you get shots through the Perspex dome that becomes invisible once submerged. I guess that this would probably make this the most expensive camera housing out there, costing approx. \$4 million! According to Shmulik, people commonly try to



A Marble Ray swims overhead at Big Dos Amigos. Nikon D7000, Subal ND7000, Inon Z240's, Nikon 12-24mm at 12mm. Camera Settings: f/8 1/125th ISO 500.

shoot straight through the dome to open water, but to capture the moment and the highlight the fact that you are actually in a submarine, try to incorporate the passengers and the illuminated control panels into the image.

Other subjects include Eagle Rays, that came closer than in areas where I had previously encountered them, Marble Rays that are present on most dive sites and are easy to approach, plus Manta & Mobula Rays also made appearances through the week. Huge schools of Big Eye Trevally can be found on a few different sites. If luck is on your side, you may get close enough to get shots of Tiger Sharks, Oceanic Black Tip Sharks, Yellow Fin Tuna and Bottlenose Dolphins, which I did encounter but just that bit too far off for decent images. Like a lot of marine life encounters, it a matter of right place, right time!

The trip to Isla del Cocos was a

memorable one and I would like to thank the crew of the MV Argo for all their hard work that made for a very slick dive operation. The vessel is luxurious by liveaboard standards, very comfortable and more than capable of handling the potentially adverse conditions of the Pacific Ocean. The set up for photographers is good with individual cubbyholes for camera storage on the dive deck and numerous sockets for charging purposes. Cabins are extremely spacious, so you won't be getting claustrophobia in your bunk! And the tasty food was plentiful and varied. When I return to Isla del Coco, it will definitely be on the MV Argo!

Alex Tyrell

Alex is the Photo Pro at Atlantis Dive Resorts in Dumaguete, Negros Oriental, Philippines

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North Sulawesi

by Marco Walter

My wife and I spent our more than three weeks lasting honeymoon-trip in one of the most diversified diving areas of the world: Manado Bay and Bangka Island. Both areas belong to the Bunaken National Park in the most northern part of Sulawesi, Indonesia. Starting point of the amazing trip was the Murex dive resort near by Manado, the capitol city of North Sulawesi. From there, daily trips to the bay of Manado and to the Bunaken N.P. are offered. Already in 1991 the underwater area around Bunaken, Manado Tua, Siladen, Montehage and Nain islands became a national marine protected area. Today, the park covers a total area of 79,056 hectares, 97% of which is ocean. There is an entrance fee that is used for the preservation of the park and for the villages on the islands.

The Manado Bay is a paradise for critter lovers were the appeal of the underwater landscape doesn't lie in colourful and well grown corals, but still impresses by its biological diversity. The sea floor is mostly covered by dark, grey lava sand which mostly prevents the growth of corals. However, there are quite a few knoll reefs which form important

retreat areas of rare species. One of the most popular dive sites there is Bethlehem-Poopoh, whose rare critters were discovered more than 20 years ago by one of the dive pioneers in that area and today's owner of the Murex dive resort, Dr. Han Batuna. The dive guides told us that the name Bethlehem stands for 'Better than Lembeh' – we actually can't disagree. There, the sea floor is abundantly covered with sea grass where many species of nudibranches can be discovered: Polyceridae, Notodorididae, Gymnodorididae, Chromodorididae, Halgerididae and Phyllidiidae. Besides, many sea horses were found by the experienced dive guides, like the Estuary Seahorse (*Hippocampus kuda*) and Thorny Seahorses (*Hippocampus histrix*). Also well hidden Ghost Pipefishes, e.g. the Ornate Ghost Pipefish *Solenostomus paradoxus*, small frog fishes (Clown Anglerfish *Antennarius maculatus* and Painted Anglerfish *Antennarius pictus*), Leaf Scorpionfishes (*Taenianotus triacanthus*), and well hidden Snake Eels (*Ophichthus melanochir*) mark attractive motives for macrophotographers.

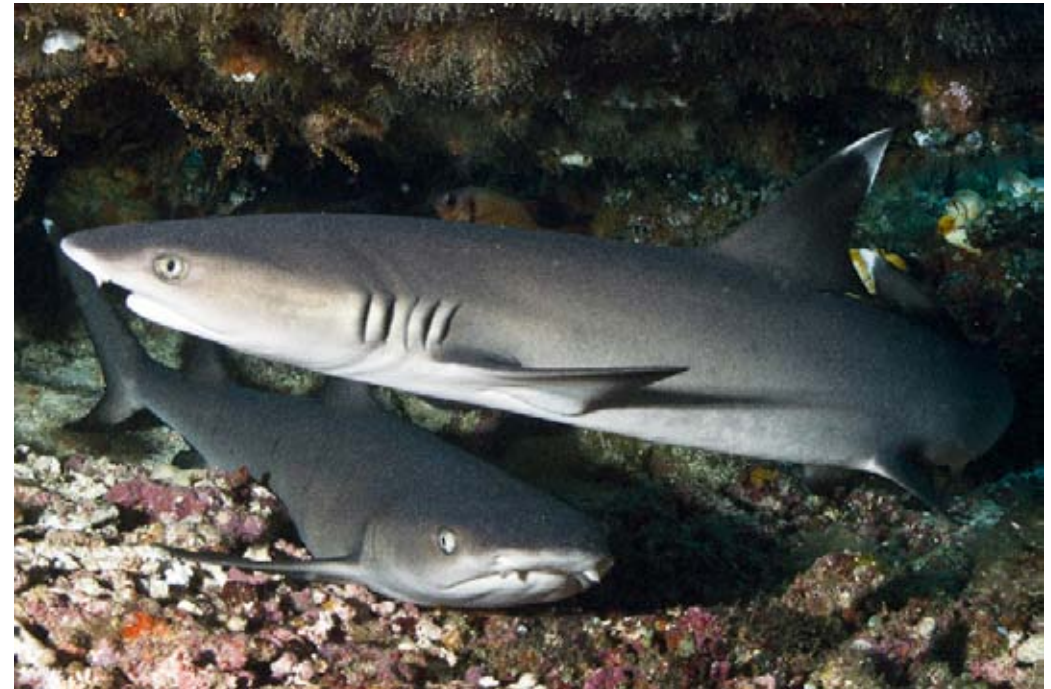


(Above) *Knotted Fan Coral Melithaea ochracea* at Mandolin, Bunaken Island – Sea & Sea DX-1G with 18 mm wide angle converter, Manual: 1/125th, f5.7, ISO 100, Sea & Sea YS-110_: Manual.

(Right) *Clown Anglerfish Antennarius maculatus* at Bethlehem-Poopoh, Manado Bay – Sea & Sea DX-1G: 24mm, Manual: 1/100th, f16, ISO 100, Sea & Sea YS-110_: Manual.

The centrepiece of the Bunaken National Marine Park, Bunaken Island, lies about 60 minutes by boat away from Manado. Compared to the Manado Bay, most of the dive sites around the Bunaken Island are characterized by very deep and steep walls, pocketed with small caves and overhangs. All places are nicely covered by hard and soft corals. The location and the structure of the island





(Above) Mimic Octopus Thaumoctopus mimicus at Paradise Pier, Bangka Island – Sea & Sea DX-1G with 18 mm wide angle converter, Manual: 1/125th, f5, ISO 100, Sea & Sea YS-110_: Manual.

(Top right) Juvenile White-Tip Sharks Triaenodon obesus at Sahaung, Bangka Island – Sea & Sea DX-1G with 18 mm wide angle converter, Manual: 1/125th, f6.3, ISO 100, Sea & Sea YS-110_: Manual.

(Right) Stone Fish Synanceia sp. at Paradise Pier, Bangka Island – Sea & Sea DX-1G with 18 mm wide angle converter, Manual: 1/125th, f12, ISO 100, Sea & Sea YS-110_: Manual.



cause quite strong currents which are responsible for the good chance to see pelagics like sharks, eagle rays, and swarms of mackerels and tunas as well as marine turtles. For us, the two most exciting dive sites at Bunaken Island are Mandolin and Ron's Point. The dive site Mandolin couldn't be more diversified. On the one hand, the dive guides discovered small Pygmy Seahorses (*Hippocampus bargibanti*)

well hidden in gorgonians of genus *Muricella*. On the other hand, it is worth looking into the blue from time to time as there are good chances to see huge swarms of juvenile Sawtooth Barracudas (*Sphyaena putnamiae*) and Blue-Striped Snappers (*Lutjanus kasmira*), and groups of Napoleon Wrasses (*Cheilinus undulates*). Compared to that, the dive site Ron's Point is located at the land

tongue of the Bunaken Island where strong currents almost guarantee the occurrence of sharks and huge fish swarms. We saw many White-Tip Sharks (*Triaenodon obesus*), Black-Tip Sharks (*Carcharhinus melanopterus*) and impressive Grey Reef Sharks (*Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos*). Swarms of Dogtooth Tuna (*Gymnosarda unicolor*) and Big-Eye Trevallies (*Caranx sexfasciatus*)

completed a perfect dive day.

From Manado Bay, one has the possibility to do some trips to the highlands of Minahasa and to the pulsating city of Manado to get to know the country and its people. We decided to make a one-day trip to the Mahawu volcano, around 1800



(Far left top) Caldera of Mount Mahawu, Minahasa Highlands with the active Lokon volcano in the background.

(Far left bottom) Sulphur lake near by the village Tomohon, Minahasa Highlands

*(Left) Two green turtles *Chelonia mydas* were set free by Buddhist monks.*

m a.s.l. From the summit, one has a gigantic panorama view to the city of Manado, the Manado Bay, the islands Bunaken and Siladen as well as to the surrounding mountain area. The fact that Indonesia is part of the geological 'ring of fire' can be experienced in real-life. Indonesia is arranged at the boundary of the Philippine and the Eurasian tectonic plate, where earthquakes and volcano eruptions occur frequently. During the time of our trip, the nearby volcano Lokon erupted dense clouds of smoke up to the sky. The volcanic evolutionary history of that area can also be experienced by the visit of

the sulphur lake near by the village Tomohon. The idyllically situated lake is of bright green colour and sulphuric gas bubbles emerge continuously. The way to the Minahasa highlands runs through several small villages. Near by Pineleng, we visited one of the traditional markets. Without going into the details, it is a fact that the poor local people offer to sell animals which we, as being guests, actually want to admire in their natural environment, regardless if under or above the water.

By chance, we became witnesses how a few Buddhist monks bought two green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*) at

one of these markets. In the evening, the turtles were set free in a ritual with vocals and benediction.

After nearly two weeks of fantastic dives and adventures, we travelled to Bangka Island, approximately one hour by boat away from the north of Manado. By contrast to the Murex dive resort in Manado, the resort at Bangka Island is idyllically situated on a small bay, almost perfectly integrated in the nature with its green rain forest. The resort is designed for up to 16 guests who stay in small traditional cottages, directly at the white beach. There is no civilisation noise, no traffic,

and therefore, no stress – a perfect place for recreation. The remoteness of the island leads to the fact that the surrounding dive sites are not visited by the boats of any other dive resort – simply fantastic. One of the most impressive dive sites in that area is Paradise Pier. There, one can experience the volcanic activity of the entire region even underwater. The wooden pier of an abandoned hotel complex became densely overgrown by many species of soft corals and gorgonians. The highlight of this dive spot are several hot springs where water with temperatures of up to 50 °C comes out of the earth's interior. We discovered two Stone Fishes (*Synanceia* sp.) which were perfectly buried in the dark lava sand and, one the most exciting creatures I've ever seen: a Mimic Octopus (*Thaumoctopus mimicus*), actually discovered by my wife. The dives at Paradise Pier were brought to



Banggai Cardinalfishes Pterapogon kauderni at Teluk Kambahu, Lembeh Street – Sea & Sea DX-1G with 18 mm wide angle converter, Manual: 1/125th, f8.9, ISO 100, Sea & Sea YS-110_: Manual.

perfection by huge swarms of Blue-Striped Snappers (*Lutjanus kasmira*). Another exciting dive site at Bangka Island is Sahaung. There, a huge rock formation, a few hundreds meters away from the coast, causes strong currents and guarantees impressive dives. We saw many Reef Sharks, groups of Big Sawtooth Barracudas (*Sphyrna putnamiae*), swarms of Blue-Striped Snappers (*Lutjanus kasmira*), Dark-Banded Fusiliers (*Pterocaesio tile*) and Mackerels (*Scomber scombrus*). Additionally,

juvenile White-Tip Sharks (*Triaenodon obesus*) staying below a huge solid table coral at daytime were perfect motives for photographers.

From Bangka Island, daytrips are offered to one of the most spectacular dive areas of the world: Lembeh Street. What we expected were dive sites totally covered by trash caused by the industrial use of that sea gate, especially near by the harbour which is permanently used by huge container ships. The life below the water surface seems to be arranged with that specific



Swarm of glassfish Parapriacanthus sp. at Nudi Retreat, Lembeh Street – Sea & Sea DX-1G with 18 mm wide angle converter, Manual: 1/125th, f4.1, ISO 100, Sea & Sea YS-110_: Manual.

situation as there are many critters and exciting creatures more or less hidden in the grey lava sand. Beside numerous species of nudibranches (Polyceridae, Notodorididae, Gymnodorididae, Chromodorididae and Phyllidiidae), we discovered bizarre Scorpion Fishes, rare Flathead Fishes (*Papilloculiceps longiceps*) and octopuses. To our surprise, we even discovered many Banggai Cardinalfishes (*Pterapogon kauderni*) at the dive site Teluk Kambahu. As this specie is in fact endemic in a

small area around the Banggai Islands of Sulawesi, we were quite surprised to see them in the Lembeh Street. One of the dive guides told us later, that a fishing boat has been captured years ago by customs officials. The crew set the Banggai Cardinalfishes free which were originally caught for aquaristic purposes. The dive site Nudi Retreat is not as wasted as most of the other spots in the Lembeh Street. We found small walls densely covered by colourful soft corals and gorgonians. There, the guides



Blue-Striped Snappers Lutjanus kasmira at Ron's Point, Bunaken Island – Sea & Sea DX-1G with 18 mm wide angle converter, Manual: 1/125th, f7.2, ISO 100, Sea & Sea YS-110_ : Manual.



Three Halgerda malesso nudibranches at Bethlehem-Poopoh, Manado Bay – Sea & Sea DX-1G: 24mm, Manual: 1/160th, f4.2, ISO 100, Sea & Sea YS-110_ : Manual.

discovered a few Pygmy Seahorses, many species of nudibranches, swarms of glassfish (*Parapriacanthus* sp.), Leaf Scorpionfishes (*Taenianotus triacanthus*) and a rare Electric Shell (*Lima scabra*) which imitates electricity by small blue and red lightnings between their mantles in order to avoid predators.

The dive spots in North Sulawesi belong to the most impressive ones in the whole world. One finds everything you dream of, from muck dives with rare critters to steep walls with many

pelagics. But this biologic diversity marks a challenge for each underwater photographer, not concerning the motives, but relative to the equipment. Which lens should a photographer choose when the dive guide tells you that you have good chances to discover small Pygmy Seahorses as well as swarms of tunas and pelagic sharks during the same dive? If one chooses the macro lens, you will definitely see fish swarms, or you choose the fisheye lens and you will for sure discover pygmy seahorses. To avoid that anger, I decided to use my flexible compact camera system for the most of the dives: Sea & Sea DX-1G camera with an 18 mm wide

angle converter and a Sea & Sea YS-110_ strobe. For the surface shots, I additionally used my F-90x Nikon-SLR and several lenses.

Marco Walter
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Lembeh Strait

Indulgence and Muck

by Mark Webster

They say that time passes more quickly as you get older. There may be something in this as I was surprised to realise that when I returned to the Lembeh Strait recently more than ten years had passed since my very first visit. In those early days Lembeh Strait was just emerging as a unique habitat and a must visit location particularly for underwater photographers. Accommodation choices were limited to either one resort on the shores of the strait or choosing one in Manado, or a basic hotel in Bitung, and making a daily transfer for your diving. Whatever your choice the diving and range of strange critters was stunning and we all began to enthuse about muck diving.

Things have changed since then of course and now we have between ten and twelve resorts on or close to Lembeh Strait, but because these are widely scattered along the shores of the mainland or Lembeh Island they are well separated and the area still has a remote feel to it. Despite the new resorts the strait is not crowded with divers and with more than forty dive sites to choose from you will rarely find yourself sharing a site with another boat.

I recently had the opportunity to visit the newest resort to open on Lembeh Strait which aims to offer a more indulgent topside experience between the dives each day. Lembeh Hills resort lies on the mainland side of the straight north of Bitung and has been carefully designed to blend with the natural surroundings. The architect who designed the resort has been previously involved in



(Top left) All the rooms at Lembeh Hills have different features and are furnished to a high standard with all the facilities you would expect at an up market hotel. Nikon Coolpix S3000, programme mode.

(Top right) The views from the resort across the Lembeh Strait towards Lembeh Island are spectacular.

(Above left) The resort boasts an enormous camera room with individual preparation bays and power supply to each, all next door to the dive centre.

(Above right) This small hermit crab marched down the reef slope and seemed fascinated with the reflection in my dome port. Eventually it tried to climb onto it after intent investigation with his feelers. Nikon D300, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom plus 2X teleconverter, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200, f11 1/30.



(Above left) Thorny seahorse - these seahorses are quite large, perhaps up to 100mm, and are often seen swimming vertically across the seabed. If you follow patiently your subject will find a perch and pose gracefully for the camera. Nikon D300, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom plus 2X teleconverter, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200, f11 1/30.

(Above centre) Sharp nose snake eel - these snake eels are quite common and often seen with attendant cleaner shrimp. Using a CFWM technique gives a different perspective to the usual macro image of these fish, showing the seabed topography in the background. Nikon D300, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom plus 2X teleconverter, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200, f11 1/30.

(Above right) Imperial shrimp - this species is often found in pairs on sea cucumbers, but may also be seen with larger species of nudibranch hitch hiking in search of a shared meal. Nikon D300, Subal ND2 housing, 105mm micro, Inon wet lens, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200, f16 1/250.

other resort projects in the strait, but has striven to produce something a little different from the others with this design. Instead of a complex which fringes the shoreline, the rooms at Lembeh Hills have been built into the hillside giving each one spectacular views across the strait and towards Lembeh Island. The construction has preserved the existing mature trees and topography so that each room is surrounded by foliage.

The rooms are of a boutique style with individual styling and decoration features in each design providing very spacious and comfortable living areas and well appointed bathrooms with the additional choice both inside and outside showers.

The clever positioning of the external showers means you can also enjoy al fresco bathing in complete privacy with a wonderful view over the strait. A small feature perhaps, but my wife loved it!

Dining is in a central restaurant complex which enjoys the same views along with an adjacent infinity swimming pool. There is also a spa so non diving partners are well catered for and enjoy the Lembeh sunshine during the dives. Just below the restaurant and closer to the water level is a well equipped dive centre and an enormous camera room with separate work stations and individual power outlets.

The aim of the resort is to provide a full service

approach, which means that you don't carry any of your diving kit and your cameras will also be loaded and offloaded (and rinsed) for each dive. There are even golf carts to whisk you too your room if you are feeling lazy and small touches like a hot flannel, fresh towel and small fruit box after each dive. The hot flannel sounded like overkill to begin with in the warm climate, but it is really very pleasant and refreshing and we found ourselves looking forward to it! The dive centre has plenty of good quality equipment for hire if you want to just bring the basics and can provide nitrox and 15lt bottles if you need them. The overall impression in the resort and dive centre is of attention to detail and the staff

work hard to ensure all the guests are comfortable.

Although I have dived in the Lembeh Strait many times I never tire of the unusual habitat and denizens to be found here. On your first visit you may be concerned initially at the dark and seemingly lifeless nature of some of the dives sites. Despite the black sand and lower visibility you will quickly discover that there are numerous critters to be found with the help of your guide. A good guide with sharp eyes and an understanding of the critters and their habitats is essential. The guides at Lembeh Hills all have many years experience working with the original and older resorts and they will amaze you with what can be found during each dive. If you have a particular critter request then they will be delighted to try and fulfil your wish list, but of course the critters do change with the seasons.

Black sand is not the only habitat here and there are several sites which have good coral reefs, walls and also a mixtures of low lying reef, rubble and muck. During our recent visit we were spoilt with some of the best visibility I have ever seen in the strait, produced by a combination of very neap tides and calm conditions outside the strait, which gave us quite a different view of familiar sites. At the end of the strait there are some wall dives with vibrant soft corals if you need a wide

angle fix, or you can take a day trip offshore to Bangka island for a more traditional reef dive.

The usual (well for Lembeh anyway) macro subjects were seen in abundance, but because the visibility was unusually good I found myself concentrating on wide macro subjects for many of the dives in an effort to capture some habitat and blueish water behind unusual subjects. So we focussed on some of the larger macro subjects - frog fish, wasp fish, sea horses, scorpion fish, crabs etc. which would be suitable for a wide and close approach. I use a 2X teleconverter with my 10-17mm fish eye zoom which provides a slightly narrower view at the wide end of the lens, but also means you can shoot a true macro subject at the long end which makes for a very flexible catch all lens.

The good visibility does not make this technique any easier as you are often working on a silty or sandy seabed which is easily disturbed and there is still plenty of plankton in suspension so careful lighting and some post processing is required for the best results. Many of the dive sites are on a gentle slope which is a bonus when you can find a suitable critter as you can collect more light and possibly open water behind the subject. Shooting down the slopes is more of a challenge to capture the natural light and although you may



(Left) Nudibranch - there are many species of colourful nudibranch to be found here and if you are patient with your subject you can capture a slightly different image to the usual portrait shot. Nikon D300, Subal ND2 housing, 105mm micro, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200, f16 1/250.



(Right) Juvenile Wonderpus octopus - although we saw more 'normal' sized adult Wonderpus, there seemed to be numerous juveniles on this trip which I had not seen before. Smaller than your hand, they were the perfect size for a 105mm macro lens. Nikon D300, Subal ND2 housing, 105mm micro, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200, f11 1/60

record the habitat in the background the image will lack impact. Flash positioning is also important and it is best to experiment with each subject to find the optimum. For me the best position is often close to the port and slightly above (say 1 o'clock and 11

o'clock) to use the beam edge when the subject is very close to the port and avoid hotspots in the foreground. Fortunately most of these critters are quite patient with the persistent photographer or at least they move very slowly!



Striated or hairy frog fish - these frog fish do move from day to day over quite a large area to select a better fishing position. This one was waddling purposefully across the seabed towards a clump of weed and simply skirted around me as he got closer. Nikon D300, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom plus 2X teleconverter, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200, f11 1/30.

You also need to be careful of what else may be on the seabed when you have chosen a subject. A good critter stick (stainless steel prod) is essential and you can often use this to just hold yourself off the seabed. However some subjects may require lying on the sand, so look carefully for any marine life you might harm or unwanted venomous denizens! Also be aware that your prolonged activity may attract the interest of

creatures with unpleasant stings - I was concentrating hard on a wasp fish through the viewfinder, when my wife kindly pointed out an inimicus scorpion fish inches from my hand which had left a trail in the sand from perhaps three metres away as it trekked across to see what I was up to!

The guides are always keen to try and find new, smaller and ever more obscure species for their guests and often it takes a few moments to realise



Bearded scorpion fish - you can vary the lighting technique you use on a common subject to produce a different style of image. Here the scorpion fish is lit with a fibre optic snoot to create a moody and threatening atmosphere. Nikon D300, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom plus 2X teleconverter, Inon Z240 flash gun and fibre optic snoot, ISO 200, f11 1/250.

just what you are being shown. Hairy shrimps are popular at the moment, but these are incredibly small (even more so than a pygmy seahorse) and although I had a wet lens to give me 2:1 with my 105mm macro lens it was not nearly enough for these tiny critters. For my next visit I will come armed with additional stackable wet lens firepower, although you can consider other combinations to reach say 4:1. These tiny subjects need

manual focus or you can lock your AF and then rock focus although you need to be pretty steady for the whisker thin depth of field.

If you need a fix of pygmy seahorse there are three types commonly seen here - the Bargibanti (in pink and yellow), Denise and Pontohi - all of which need patience and extra magnification to photograph well. First of course you need your guide to show you the subject and



Commensal shrimp on sea whip - almost every sea whip in the straight will be host to one or more species of goby or shrimp. They are small and take patience to capture a shark shot as the sea whip is often vibrating in the current. Nikon D300, Subal ND2 housing, 105mm micro, Inon wet lens, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200, f16 1/250.

and it is surprising just how a small amount of motion will upset your focus at high magnification.

The Pontohi are best taken in profile as they are wafer thin, although one example we were shown was a pregnant male which had a much stouter body. There is also the pygmy pipe horse which seems to be a cross between a pipefish and a true seahorse and these are very small and thin and being bottom dwellers are difficult to photograph with any separation from the background.

Mimic and Wonderpus octopuses are another must see critter particularly if you are visiting Lembeh for the first time. It is not many years ago that seeing this species was considered rare, but now most of the guides know exactly what to look for and they are seen on most black sand dives. During our visit there seemed to be an abundance of juvenile Wonderpus smaller than my hand

which could be photographed with a 105mm lens but still performed all the behavioural and display repertoire they are so renowned for.

So our trip was a success photographically and we enjoyed the sense of coming home to Lembeh Strait and its familiar denizens, even though I was ill equipped to capture the smallest discoveries on offer. Lembeh Hills resort offers a quite different experience top side between dives with a balanced blend of indulgence and subtle attention to detail which made our stay very relaxing and enjoyable. So between

now and the next visit I need to gather equipment and hone my super macro technique to capture those hairy shrimp in detail!

Mark Webster
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you can then be left to work on the perfect image. However, be careful to keep one eye on the location of your seahorse in the fan when checking your images as they are exceedingly difficult to spot again without help! The Bargibanti don't like torch light on them, so manual focussing is the best approach. The Pontohi seahorses are generally found in shallow water amongst halimeda weed, hydroids, or green sea squirts. So you may also have some surge to deal with as well

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Starting From Scratch at Ground Zero

By Joseph C Dovala

July 1, 1946 – “One man feared gravity would be destroyed and everything would fall up. Another prophesied that when the atomic bomb wet off at Bikini, all the water in all the oceans would be turned to gas, automatically dropping ships to the bottom. Another thought the Operation Crossroads bomb would blow a hole in the bottom of the Bikini lagoon and let all the water in the sea run out...”

Such were just a few of the predictions published in Newsweek Magazine immediately prior to the atomic testing that took place in the Marshall Islands in 1946. To be sure, our ignorance of “controlled” nuclear fission was staggering. The unknowns outweighed any meager knowledge we had at the time. Even today Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, and very recently, Fukushima, are evidence we still have a lot to learn. There is much speculation as to why we further needed to test the new terrifying weapons so soon after the devastation of the Japanese cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. Perhaps

as the new dominant power that emerged out of WWII, we needed to flex some muscle; especially to the Soviet Union. Despite Nagasaki and Hiroshima, many nations did not believe we had such devices; even some people in Japan still doubted they could exist.

To prove the point, 73 obsolete and captured warships were prepared with full battle readiness for the tests. On July 3, and again on July 25, two nuclear bombs known as Able and Baker, about the size of those dropped over Japan, were detonated on and in the lagoon. “Operation Crossroads” was hailed as a mighty experiment for “the good of mankind and to end all world wars.” Perhaps this forecast has proven true; we haven’t had a world war since (although we came real close during the Cuban missile crisis of 1962). Maybe between all the hundreds of tests, which caused more than a few human casualties, and the horrifying results of the only two atomic bombs used on a population, this often used rhetoric through out history has finally indeed come true.



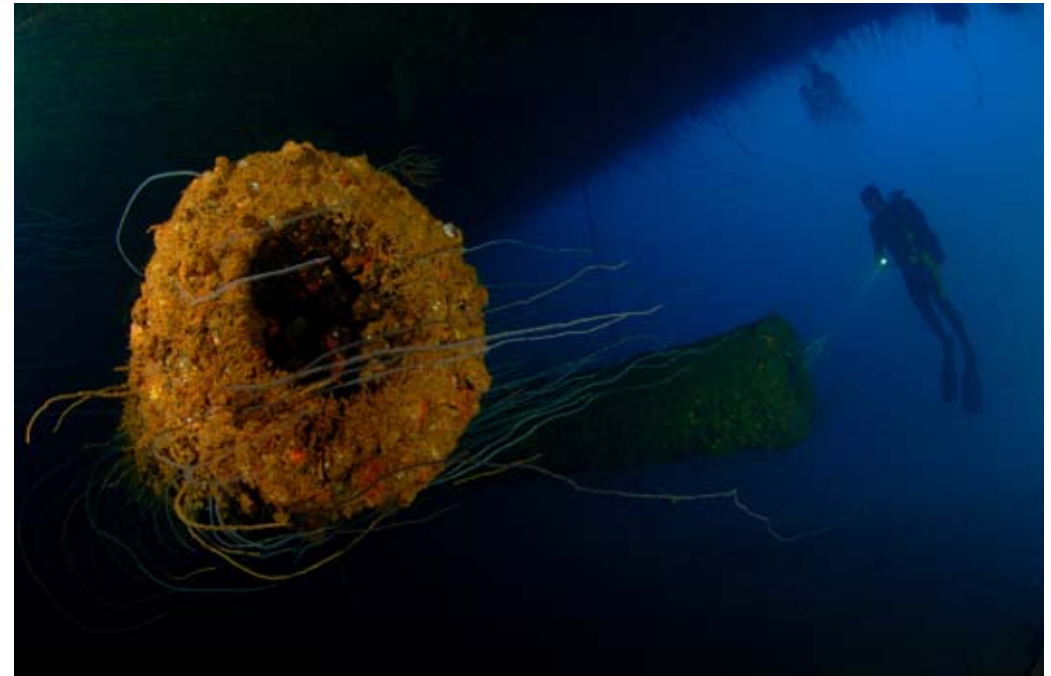


We'll see.

After spending time diving the sunken ships of Bikini atoll and the Marshall Islands, one would be hard pressed to find a more beautiful South Seas island. Bikini is covered in rusting carcasses of construction equipment from over the years. The jungle is also reclaiming a dump on the southeast end of the island complete with a cache of C-4 explosives. Nearby is a large hill of radioactive sand.....Whoa, STOP! Didn't I just say you'd be hard pressed to find a more beautiful "South Seas" island? Besides the trash and explosives, there is also

over 6 miles of white and pink sand beaches without a single human footprint. With the exception of the diving compound the coconut palm tree line is unbroken from one end of the island to the other. You would never know the malevolent history here unless you were told. Nature took pretty much all the nastiness we could dish out and after 50 years, a blink of an eye in Earth time, she has nearly erased the lingering radiation to less than what you'd receive from a single transcontinental flight across the U.S.

In a few more "blinks" of time, she will have reduced the cesium 137 half-life contamination currently





concentrated in the plant life to insignificant levels. The concrete rubble and rusting steel will be deconstructed to sand and ferrous compounds. The fabulous ships in the lagoon will become part of the seabed.

As divers we get a chance to travel to offbeat regions of the world. We can time travel by visiting shipwrecks, like those in Bikini, and soak up culture quite different from our own. We also visit the unseen (for most people) ocean realm and view first hand the early warning signs of a troubled environment. Diving can be far more than a “sport” if one’s mind is open to the possibilities. It’s also about trying to understand

our place and responsibilities in this world. Bikini’s history teaches that despite our arrogance as a species we will not be able to destroy the earth. In spite of making an unforgivable mess of things, Mother Earth will continue on. We do not need a plethora of draconian directives to live in harmony on this planet, we just need to be conscious of our action and their effect on the world - kind of like what most of us were told somewhere around kindergarten.

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Don't settle for 2nd best



Film - No Filter
No White Balance



Digital - No Filter
Manual WB



Magic Filter
Manual WB

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

Red Sea- Past & Present

by Howard Rosenstein

The first anniversary of the events at Cairo's Tahrir square and the political and security Tsunami it unleashed raises concerns and questions about the future of Red Sea Diving tourism. How will a fundamentalist regime in Egypt look at a water sports and tourism industry so clearly generated and influenced by western culture and sense of freedom. At the same time no less relevant is the significant upsurge of lawlessness and terror acts in Egypt in general and the Sinai in particular, especially in the eastern regions along the Israeli border but also along the eastern shoreline running from Taba to Sharm where the tourism industry and resorts are located. Equally troubling is the apparent inability of the Egyptian government and security apparatus to quell or control the situation.

The Sinai Red Sea shore we know and enjoy as one of the world's favorite dive travel destinations is a relatively recent phenomena and a very different from the Sinai's role from time immemorial. Indeed The Sinai throughout history, has been a battle ground rather than a diver's playground. As recent as 45 years ago

the closure of the Tiran Straits (one of today's most popular dive sites) in June 1967 was the cause of the outbreak of the 6 day war!

6 years later in 1973 saw the horrendous Yom Kippur war was fought along the entire western Sinai, the Suez (where the Thistlegorm is) and even Sharm el Sheikh was attacked. Only after 1973 when the guns were finally silenced did Diving Tourism to the area could really begin.

In the early 1970's Diving Tourism began in the Red Sea with a few small diving operations along the then Israeli administered Sinai shore and interestingly this spring marks 30 years since the Sinai was returned to Egypt as a result Camp David Peace process between Israel and Egypt (April 1982).

These 3 events, the recent one a year ago in Cairo (as well as other parts of Egypt), and those of 45 and 30 years ago cannot and should not be ignored by the Red Sea diving community, tourists and residents alike. For history can and may well repeat itself when it comes to this magnificent area.

Today's tourists to the Red Sea are spoiled and pampered to



© David Doubilet

Naama Bay - Then and now





Ras Mohamed



Sinai Shore between Naama and Ras Um Sidd



David Doubilet and Eugene Clark aboard Fantasea I Liveboard 1984.

a degree un-imagined 30 years ago. How easy and comfortable Dive Travel to the Red Sea has become, so many excellent operators, comfortable day boats, luxurious live aboards and first class professionals servicing this impressive industry. Today's Red Sea travelers take much for granted.

To reach Sharem in those early years the visiting diver had to traverse all of the Sinai interior from the northern Sinai, through the Mitla mountain pass still cluttered with the remnants of war, crashed jet fighters, endless columns of burnt out tanks, half-tracks and rocket launchers. After the pass, you had to be escorted by an Israel military convoy as you skirted the Suez Canal which was still under fire in a war of attrition (which finally ended in 1970). And then down along the Western Sinai shore until you reached Sharem.

My first dives in the Red Sea just after the 1967 6 Day War. I was immediately smitten by its beauty and the thrill of discovery and would spend the next 45 years of my life working, diving and living along the Red Sea shores from Neweiba to



Red Sea Diver 1 the first real dive boat in the Sinai

Sharem (Ofira), and Eilat and never regretting it, (well, perhaps occasionally regretting it :-).

My Red Sea professional diving career began in 1972, based in a small shack on the beach at the oasis of Neweiba. By 1973 and just before the Yom Kippur War I moved the operation down to Sharem and created Red Sea Divers which pioneered Red



Howard Rosenstein (2nd left) with Egyptian and Israeli Military officials in 1981 going over the maps of diving sites



The Yolanda Sinks Ras Mohamed 1979

Sea Dive travel in the Sinai until it closed its doors in 1982 with the Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai. From 1983 to 1997 I had the privilege and challenge to operate one of the regions very first Live-Aboard operations “Fantasea Line” Pioneering dive travel from Sharem along the entire Red Sea.

You get the point, it was not the piece of cake we know today, where the tourists biggest headache may be dealing with overweight charges on your diving gear or a log jam in the port getting on your dive boat and clearing port procedures. In 5 hours from UK or even less from many other European airport and within hours of arrival the diving holiday of a lifetime begins.

This can never be taken for granted, never, things can and just may change dramatically. Diving tourism as we know it may cease all together or be curtailed and restricted beyond recognition.

We cannot ignore current developments and must be very much aware of the potential risks involved. The current lawlessness of the region has and most likely will lead to attacks on tourists as it



Fantasea 2 at Daedalus

has in the past (Taba, Neweiba, Sharem and Luxor to name only a few).

Egypt’s recent parliamentary elections (conducted democratically for the first time ever) gave the Islamist parties nearly 70% of the seats and together with this development there are real questions being raised by the new political leadership in Egypt about the existing policies regarding the peace treaty with Israel while at the same time, areas of Sinai has become a serious security threat with active terror and criminal groups operating and attacking civilian and touristic targets. Eye witness reports of armed Bedouins with Kalatchnikov rifles protecting resorts abound.

Recently at an international dive show in Germany I met with many colleagues who continue what I helped begin what seems like a lifetime ago and they describe today’s reality of lawlessness, confusion and a degree of fear for the future as more and more dive centers, boats and hotels are shutting down and the tourism flow to the area slows to a trickle.



The Dunraven Expedition by Shlomo Cohen

European as well as the UN and other world leaders must act to help stabilize the situation. The international tourism industry together with international diving community (tourists, operators and media alike) to cooperate with like-minded people in Egypt) must make every effort to keep the Sinai open and available for all and of course to do its utmost to protect and preserve it and to keep from fading into darkness of its historical past yet once again.

A clear message should be given to the new



a region was transformed into an international playground to be enjoyed and appreciated by one and all.

In the 45 years I have called this area my home and based my various diving businesses here. I had the profound pleasure and good fortune to be a participant in and observer of, this regions incredible transition and accomplishments. Yet I sincerely fear that the incredible efforts made by so many wonderful, amazing people in this process may soon literally go up in smoke. I hope and pray that I will be proven wrong but I feel it my responsibility to share my concerns, thoughts and fears with the international diving community.

The bows of the Yolanda

leaders of Egypt that that peace treaty is good, that tourism is good and that the Sinai should never return to its previous status as badlands and battle ground. Tourism is critical to Egypt's economy, bringing important foreign currency and employing up to 20% of Egypt's work force.

Tens of thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of diving tourists over the years from all over the world came and experienced diving at its very best and went home raving about the Red Sea, wonderful times were had by all, an industry was created, jobs were created and

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Howard Rosenstein
www.fantasea.com



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Adobe Photoshop Elements 6-9 tutorial DVD

by Jack and Sue Drafaahl

Reviewed by Paul Colley

Regular UWP readers will know that Alex Tattersall reviewed the Lightroom 3 and Photoshop CS3-5 DVDs in UWP 64, but he does not use Photoshop Elements. Fortunately, I do use Elements 7.0 in conjunction with Lightroom 2.7 and was very happy to take up Peter Rowlands' request to review the remaining DVD.

I do nearly all of my post-processing in Lightroom, but have occasion to jump across to Elements for tasks that are still more efficiently done in Photoshop. Although I have an excellent in-depth manual that has helped me to unleash the power of Lightroom, I am largely self-taught through experimentation on Photoshop Elements, so I rather relished this opportunity to see if I could learn more. I was not disappointed and have immediately changed or enhanced many of my Photoshop routines as a result of following through these excellent tutorials.

Alex covered Jack and Sue Drafaahl's credentials in UWP 64 and I will not repeat them here, save to say that Jack, who narrates this DVD, knows his post-processing onions. At \$100, I thought that the Elements 6,7,8 & 9 DVD price seemed a smidgeon steep, but it has over 15 hours of tutorials in 134 lessons; the DVD cover claims 136, but I think somebody's maths is slightly adrift! I still conclude good value for money for the reasons set out below.

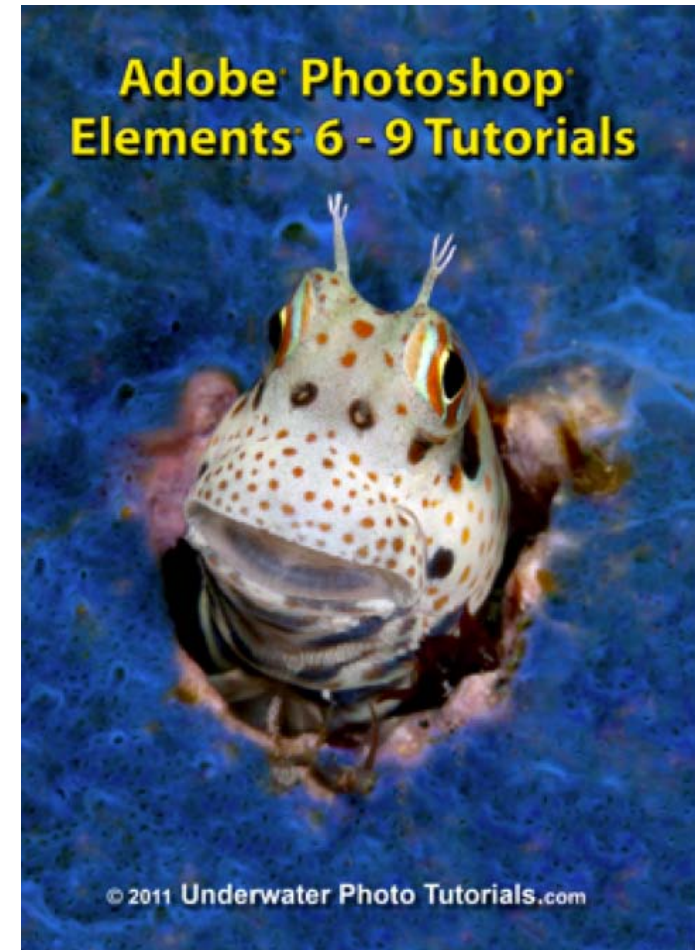
You need the right computer software interfaces before launching this DVD. I tried with

Windows Explorer (which should work according to the instructions), but it failed. But after downloading Mozilla Firefox and Adobe Flash 11, all was well.

The DVD user interface is very intuitive and I ran through all of the modules in sequence, skipping only a few for Elements 8 and above (as I use Elements 7). I found the introduction a bit slow and just wanted to get onto the substance of the techniques and tools. However, persistence paid off, because I picked up some tips that helped later on, so I would recommend going through the package patiently from top-to-bottom of the menu. I also found that there was some repetition, for example unnecessary references to Adobe ID in the introduction, over-repeated tips for using the clone and healing tools, and a mildly-irritating sequence about lens flare under the third party plug-in tutorial, which had Jack (perfectionist that he obviously is) repositioning a lens flare over and over, long after the instructional point had been made.

On the other hand, you could not accuse Jack of skipping over detail. He covers every drop-down menu item in a tour de force of this powerful software, which most of us have never exploited in full. Consequently, I learned so much about Elements that I doubt I will ever upgrade to CS3, 4 or 5 – I can now really make Elements sing and it more than meets my needs for post-processing.

There is really helpful detail about the nuances



of making selections, about how sharpening works and how to use the keyboard to best advantage. It's the small things that helped me. I particularly liked the tip for holding down the space bar in just about any mode to let you navigate around an image without de-selecting the tool in use. It makes such a difference and, despite my reasonable prior proficiency in Elements, I just did not know this simple tip.

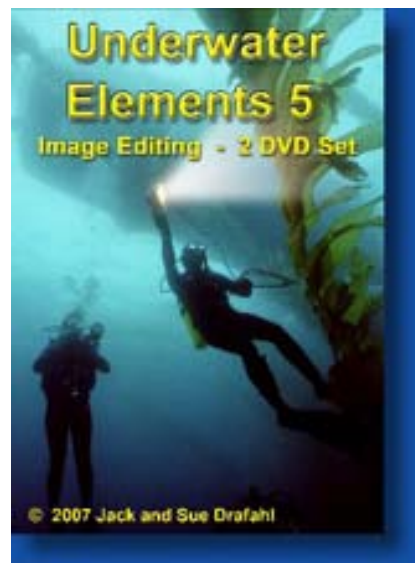
There is a very good range of plug-in tutorials at the end of the DVD including, for example, introductions to NIK software Silver Efex Pro (for black & white conversions), Define 2.0 (for noise reduction) and Sharpener Pro 3.0 (for pre-printing sharpening). And I was really pleased to see the Lightroom 3 interface addressed, which is

something that I use regularly.

In summary, despite a frustrating start due to downloading the optimum software to run this DVD, and after wading through a rather slow introduction, I found this package remarkably effective and good value. It has without doubt enhanced my skills in Photoshop Elements and I take my hat off to the creators for what was obviously a huge investment of time in working through every corner of this important software. And it was great to see that done properly in the underwater photography context and by an accomplished underwater photographer. Well done Jack & Sue!

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FRAeS LRPS
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More information can be found
at
Jack and Sue Drafahl's web site
www.underwaterphototutorials.com



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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,
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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

Bigger is better!? Not always. Looking around for a suitable christmas present to myself I found a last minute trip right before Christmas to Cape Verde. As I had not been there before and I was not interested in going again to Egypt it was not hard to make a decision. And as I am a freelancer it was quite easy to explain to my "boss" how good an offer it is. Although I had only one week for preparing my trip, everything ran its course. From the internet I found that on Sal island which was my destination there are not very many dive centers. The only one who gave me quick answer was Cabo Verde Diving (www.caboverdediving.net). Their customer friendly service and professional guides were on highest level.

To get a wow experience you do not need always big numbers on your computer display. It was our second dive of the day and about in ten meter depth. The surroundings were quite boring but the bottom was terraced and therefore there was a long line of smaller and bigger overhangs and tiny caves. My buddy was Sahin Okay from the Netherlands. As an experienced diver with more than 500+ dives around the world, he knew that a torch may be needed

also in shallow daytime dives. This time his powerful Green Force HID 100 Compact was worth of carrying. Looking under the ledges, we found big lobsters, sleeping stingrays and many other wonderful sea creatures. Suddenly Sahin started to act very queerly, turned upside down, tried to crawl in to a bucket-sized grotto and then showed me some strange signs. What I understood was that someone was eating someone. There was only 20-30 cm high slot under the ledge and in the far end I saw a porcupinefish laying there. But something was wrong in that scene. I did not see his tail and he did not move. As it was impossible to get closer to get a better view I decided to use my camera, After little digging and moving some small stones I was able to put my camera (in Ikelite housing with 8" dome port and a pair of Ikelite strobes) into a more or less suitable position. For myself there was no space and I had to shoot blind. Not seeing what I was taking pictures of, I took several frames changing a little my camera's and lights position. And what a surprise when I looked at the display. Yellowmouth moray (*Gymnothorax nudivomer*) has crabbed a Spot-fin porcupinefish (*Diodon hystrix*) but of



course it was too big catch for him. He could not swallow this fish and could not release his pray either as there was no space to open his mouth more... I am not sure who won this battle, but according to Sahin words few days later Spot-fin porcupinefish with the bite marks around his back fins was seen near the same spot. So we believe that the porcupinefish survived.

To get this final picture with all these cardinal fishes (*Apogon imberbis*) and spider crabs (*Chirostylus dolichopus*) and the nose of porcupinefish I had to use Photoshop and stitch two frames into panorama.

Kaido Haagen
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