



# Underwater Photography

Mar/Apr 2013  
Issue 71



# ULTRALIGHT

CONTROL SYSTEMS



We manufacture trays for your digital camera & video housings and arms to add a strobe or light.



**16 years in business.**  
**100% customer satisfaction**  
**guaranteed.**

Special  
GoPro  
mounts

## The original arms with the O-ring in the ball.

ULTRALIGHT CONTROL SYSTEMS SELLS THE ONLY TRAYS, HANDLES, ARMS, CLAMPS AND ADAPTERS THAT ARE MANUFACTURED AND ASSEMBLED IN THE USA. QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SERVICE ARE OUR #1 PRIORITIES. ALL PARTS ARE MACHINED (NOT MOLDED) FROM THE HIGHEST GRADE ALUMINUM AND HARD ANODIZED. OTHER PARTS ARE STAINLESS STEEL.



Made in  
the USA

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

“Often copied,  
never equaled”

# Contents

- 4 Editorial
- 5 News, Travel & Events



- 14 New Products



- 29 Easydive Leo II Pro  
by Rico Besserdich



- 35 Canon MP-E 65 macro  
By Gary Sun



- 38 Digital downsizing  
by Martin Heyn



- 43 Nauticam 12-50 port  
by Phil Rudin



- 46 Olympus E-PL5 & PT-EP10  
by Dan Bolt

Cover shot by  
Alex Tattersall

# Underwater Photography

A web magazine UwP71 Mar/Apr 2013



- 51 Ocean drifters  
by Ryo Minemizu



- 54 Sea of Cortez  
by Alex Tattersall



- 59 Molluca muck  
by Mark Webster



- 65 Menjangan  
by Attila Kaszo



- 68 Sailfish & sardines  
by Gregory Sweeney
- 72 Competition results

- 75 Parting Shots  
by Augusto Salgado, Nigel Marsh and Bart Hazes

Underwater Photography  
2001 - 2013 © PR Productions  
Publisher/Editor Peter Rowlands  
[www.pr-productions.co.uk](http://www.pr-productions.co.uk)  
[peter@uwpmag.com](mailto:peter@uwpmag.com)

## Anything's possible

In a world where it's too easy to look at the bleak side these are very exciting times, certainly in terms of photography.

A couple of months ago, following a fortuitous conversation in a model helicopter shop, I was put in touch with a local guy who was into aerial photography. I was looking for an affordable way of filming from one boat to another from various angles.

I e mailed him but he was overseas 'flying' an ROV as part of the salvage of the Costa Concordia - the cruise ship which ran aground in the Mediterranean in 2012. On his return we met up and he gave me a demonstration of his octocopter; a flying platform powered by eight propellers under which was a separately controllable Canon SLR camera.

The result was a most impressive piece of kit and it got me to thinking that there are now no subjects that can't be filmed; everything is possible and from any angle albeit it at a cost of several thousand dollars.

Technical developments have now produced quadcopters for a few hundred dollars under which a GoPro camera can be mounted up to produce stunning aerial shots and Eric Cheng of Wetpixel and Lytro fame has been keeping us up to date on his particular

## Editorial

progress in this fascinating world.

All of this got me thinking that the human element is being removed from the photographic process. No longer do you have to go to the ends of human endurance to get yourself into a precarious position to film the never before; you just send up a quadcopter to do it for you and that's fine because the image is king. How the image is captured is not the issue.

The same is true in our underwater world and has been for a long time. ROVs have been developed to go to any depth fitted with high definition cameras to capture images without us having to put a toe in the water. True, they are needed to go to depths below which we are physically unable to operate ourselves but, above those depths, isn't it much more enjoyable to actually go down there yourself, to experience the sensations both physically and visually and to compose the shots how you want them?

So whilst nowadays anything is possible remotely, sometimes it's more pleasurable to do it yourself and actually, in truth,, there are still some things that will never be possible. For example, try slamming a revolving door.

## More and more complex

Photographically, I'm lazy.

I like things to be quick and easy; the result of an instinct to think that now's the best time to press the shutter and capture the image. That's why I love digital because it gives me the instant confirmation that I was either right or wrong.

I guess that's why I've nearly always used filters and available light. It's quick, easy, automatic and colourful. Sure the end results aren't as punchy as a strobe lit shot but I enjoy the simplicity which brings a feeling of freedom which, to me, equates to enjoyment.

I'm sure the New Products and Product Review sections are of major interest to a lot of UwP readers and, judging by some of the camera set ups I see uw photographers using, the promotion leads to sales for uw camera stores. Things that let you get closer and closer, wider and wider and brighter and brighter.

There are those within our midst who wouldn't be seen dead without dual strobes on multi-jointed arms fronted by macro lenses with additional diopetre lenses; and that's obviously fine but I guess my message is Never forget how little equipment you need to have a good time.

## Specifications

I'm embarrassed to admit I've been measurebating a lot recently since I wrote my last Editorial about choosing my next camera.

Fortunately I think there is light at the end of the tunnel but it has been a fascinating and honest experience. It was also very reassuring to receive Martin Heyn's article on Digital Downsizing later in this issue where he describes his journey from SLR to 4/3rds without any feeling of loss.

My particular requirement centres on video output so I'm approaching it from a different angle to Martin but the reasoning is actually the same. What is the end product I want to achieve?

From a video point of view YouTube has become the industry standard in terms of output and marketing and the output required to fill a computer screen with sufficient optical quality to impress is, quite frankly, a doddle.

Even when the desired output is comparatively low it is difficult to make an informed judgement as to what camera will be the best without actually trying/using it so I'm renting several and will keep you informed.

**Peter Rowlands**  
[peter@uwpmag.com](mailto:peter@uwpmag.com)

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

# News, Travel & Events

## Blue Whale Cafe with Amos Nachoum

Jan 13 - 28, 2014



Measuring between an impressive 70 to 90 feet, blue whales are the largest creatures on the planet, and every winter they journey home to the Costa Rica Dome to eat, play, mate and most importantly birth and nurse their calves. Unlike any other habitat, blue whales can be observed in almost every stage of their life here. For this reason I call the Costa Rica Dome the “Blue Whale Cafe” — the ultimate gathering place for the sea’s SuperGiants during the months of January through March.

Just 500 miles west of Costa Rica, deep in the heart of the Pacific Ocean, the Costa Rica Dome has attracted scientific interest since the 1950s. Rich in plankton blooms, algae and other nutrients, it is the feeding ground for a variety marine life. Because of its stable, nourishing

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

habitat, the Dome is critical to the endangered blue whale’s future.

Surprisingly, there’s been only one onsite study of the Costa Rican Dome, conducted five years ago by the BBC and National Geographic. Since then no other scientist, diver or photojournalist has ever explored the Costa Rican Dome, mainly due to logistical issues and lack of in-depth knowledge of the location. But I’m excited to announce that Big Animals has designed an exclusive, authentic, first-of-its-kind expedition to the Costa Rican Dome in 2014 to mingle among the supergiants. This is a peerless and exhilarating expedition for ocean enthusiasts and divers, complete with phenomenal never seen before views.

Partnering with world-recognized best dive operators Undersea Hunter Group on the 130 foot luxury and seaworthy dive vessel ARGO, and world-leading blue whale research Richard Sears, 14 adventurers will dive into the dome to experience and record the most complete picture of the SuperGiants’s life.

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

## Coming Soon - S/Y Fiji Siren

Siren Fleet Liveboards will begin operating diving safaris in Fiji with the S/Y Fiji Siren from October 2013, run in partnership with the Darling Family’s Volivoli Beach Resort.

Our 7-night and 10-night liveboard dive trips offer diving at some of Fiji’s most highly rated dive sites.

With 20 years’ experience of diving in Fiji, we have the knowledge to bring you to the optimum locations at the best time of year.

Departing from Viti Levu



we visit the Namena Reserve and Savusavu before moving onwards to Taveuni Island and the Somosomo Strait. Also diving Wakaya Island in the Lomaiviti group and the Nigali Passage.

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



Under Water Visions

Nauticam

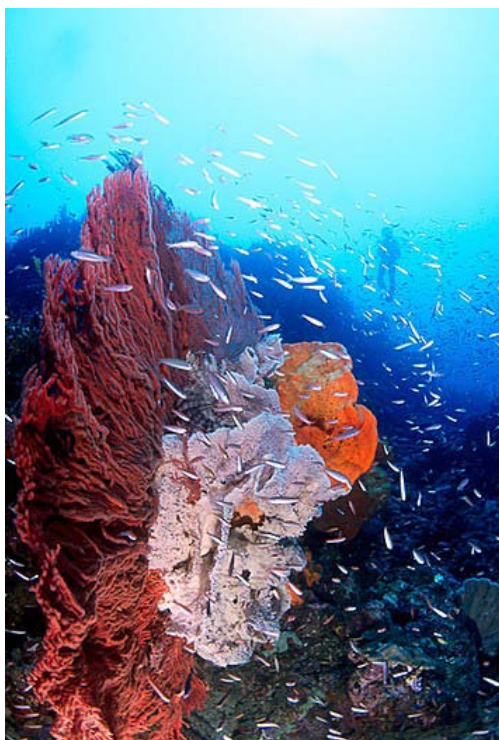
Stand Out from the Crowd

[www.uwvisions.com](http://www.uwvisions.com)  
[www.nauticamuk.com](http://www.nauticamuk.com)

## Ultimate Papua New Guinea with Michele Westmorland 9th - 20th October 2013

Michele Westmorland is a well respected and highly regarded freelance photographer, adventurer and explorer! She has extensive experience of photography above and below the waves but her underwater photography skills are what set Michele apart from the ordinary travelling photo journalist. In the early 1990s, Michele made her first trip to Papua New Guinea and made her first foray into photographing underwater life and scenery. Since then Michele has notched up over 25 visits to Papua New Guinea and is widely acknowledged as something of an authority on this mysterious destination.

For her inaugural Divequest expedition, Michele has chosen to charter the liveboard FeBrina for a 9 night cruise of its 'Signature Itinerary' taking in Walindi, Kimbe Bay, Witu and Father's Reef. This particular itinerary has long been acknowledged of something of a 'Best of the Best' diving on offer in Papua New Guinea and with someone of Michele's experience at your side, you'll never have a better opportunity to get more out a trip to one of the world's top dive destinations. Papua New Guinea



*Busy reefs of Kimbe Bay (Michele Westmorland)*

stands totally apart from the usual travel destination. Those divers with a spirit of adventure and a yearning for discovery should look no farther than Papua New Guinea and in particular the island of New Britain.

[www.divequest.co.uk](http://www.divequest.co.uk)



[www.divequest-travel.com](http://www.divequest-travel.com)

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

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

*Sharks & Dolphins of The Bahamas with Charles Hood 19 - 26 April 2013*

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

*Ultimate Papua New Guinea with Michele Westmorland 19-30th October 2013*

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



# DPG Expeditions

## Guadalupe Great White Shark Photography Expedition

September 7 - 11th 2013



## Wild West Sulawesi



Many world class dive destinations are known around the large and sprawling island of Sulawesi, including Bunaken National Park, Lembeh Strait, and the Tukang Besi chain of islands. Yet very few divers have explored Sulawesi's Wild West coast.


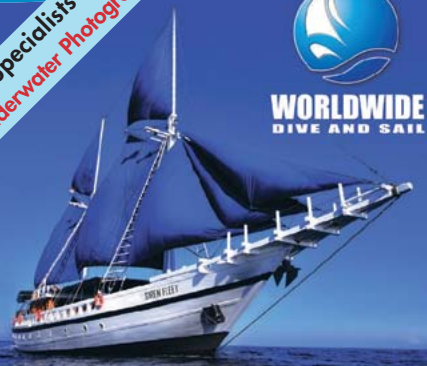
Facing the deep Makassar Strait that separates the islands of Sulawesi and Borneo, this long stretch of coastline boasts a series of great dive sites. Cold upwellings from the depth provide for a good chance to see larger fish, including sharks, trevallies, barracuda and eagle rays.

At the same time, secluded bays and sheltered islets offer tranquil diving rich in macro subjects.


Very few divers have ventured this far, yet from June to September, the SMY Tambora offers cruises combining West Sulawesi with Indonesian Borneo or North Sulawesi. With May-September being the best time to visit and dive in this part of the country, Wild West Sulawesi makes for a great dive destination over the summer holiday months.

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


Specialists in Underwater Photography

## Siren Fleet



**Six Luxury Liveboards**  
Spacious cabins & Dive Deck  
Superior Service & Dive Guides



Truk • Fiji • Palau  
Indonesia • Maldives • Philippines

Call the experts: +44 208 099 2230  
www.sirenfleet.com  
info@sirenfleet.com

## Sea of Cortez with Alex Tattersall 28th September - 5th October 2013

One of the primary focuses of this trip is to spend several days diving with the famously friendly California Sealions in the waters around Los Islotes off La Paz. Our trip is planned to coincide with the young sealions making their first unsupervised dives, catching them at their most curious, cute and mischievous.

The Sea of Cortez offers much more than sealions. This is just one of those places where anything can and often does show up. With luck the Whale Sharks and Manta Rays will be visiting the Sea of Cortez at the same time as you will be. Manta Rays can be very friendly in the Sea of Cortez as they are quite used to diver. As we drop down on to some reefs, the mantas may well find us and treat divers to a personal acrobatic display. Check out the patterns on the undersides of the mantas as this will help in identification and you will know if a particular Manta Ray joins you on another dive.

The focus of this trip is to maximize our time underwater where the real practical learning can take place. As such, formal, directed teaching will mostly give way to a more informal hands-on approach



to improving our photography together in a relaxed, non-competitive environment. Although Alex will be available to share his technical and creative experience and provide feedback and suggestions for developing your individual photographic style, the expectation is for all guests to contribute to a constructive and enjoyable peer-learning experience for all.

[www.divequest.co.uk](http://www.divequest.co.uk)



## Tambora Dive Cruises

Dive & Explore  
Indonesia's Last Frontiers  
aboard SMY Tambora




Kei Islands  
Triton Bay  
Raja Ampat  
Fak Fak  
Toli Toli  
Borneo  
Halmahera  
Banda Sea



[www.tamboradive.com](http://www.tamboradive.com)  
[info@tamboradive.com](mailto:info@tamboradive.com)

## Nauticam & ReefPhoto Bonaire Workshop July 13th - 20th 2013



We are excited to repeat our Bonaire trip July 13-20, 2013, at the Roomer hotel. Roomer is a very cool family run boutique hotel that provides easy access to Bonaire's excellent southern dive sites with some of the easiest shore diving entries on the island.

Nauticam USA's Chris Parsons and Reef Photo's Alan Egan will be on hand for photo shows, critiques, and gear support. This week long adventure includes lodging, breakfast, unlimited shore diving with Nitrox, and a truck rental for \$1195.

Tanks for shore diving are provided by Belmar Apartment's Dive Shop, which is directly across the street from Roomer. An excellent shore dive is also available at Belmar, as well as unlimited tanks for shore diving, and access to the shore diving and drive through tank station at

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

### Buddy Dive.

As an added bonus, right now flights are cheap! The past few years have seen a significant increase in airfare costs to the island, but right now prices are competitive. R/T from Houston on United is \$620, and we've seen it go for twice that.

Bonaire's gently sloping dive sites have prolific life in as little as 10 ft of water. Most sites are easily accessible from shore, allowing divers to set their own schedule, and stay as long as they wish. This convenience and flexibility makes Bonaire the perfect place to get to know a new underwater camera system, or fine tune your skills!

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



**Underwater Photography Workshops with Mark Webster**  
Red Sea 13-20 October 2013  
Maluku Divers, Ambon Indonesia 22 February to 1 March 2014  
[www.photec.co.uk](http://www.photec.co.uk) [www.oonasdivers.com](http://www.oonasdivers.com)



**ECO DIVE RESORT**  
Alor Archipelago, Indonesian Seas



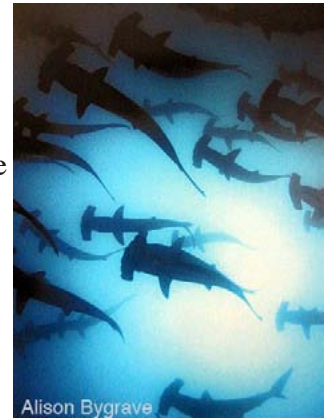
**DIVERS** [www.alor-divers.com](http://www.alor-divers.com)



## Galapagos with Shannon Conway 11th June - 24th June 2013

Shannon has chosen the infamous Galapagos Islands of Ecuador for his next Art of Underwater Photography expedition. The photographic potential here is immense, however it is for the experienced diver and photographer only! Because of the nature of Galapagos diving, and the prevalence of swift currents, Shannon will not be conducting a formal workshop as he usually might. It is simply not possible to dive and shoot the way he might

usually where conditions are calmer. Shannon will be available and willing to critique and evaluate your work in the evenings. He will also give talks and host discussions on some evenings.



[www.divequest.co.uk](http://www.divequest.co.uk)



Download our online brochure  
**HERE**

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

## 2013 Underwater Photography Workshops with Rico Besserdich

Professional underwater photographer Rico Besserdich has announced the dates of his 2013 workshops:



30th April to 7th May 2013:

“Shooting Big Fish“

Location: Yap Pacific Dive Resort - Yap, Micronesia

7 nights, 5 days of diving. USD 1,699.00 per person ( includes B&B accommodation, dives & workshop ) for more informations & reservations :

[www.yap-pacific.com](http://www.yap-pacific.com)

22nd -29th June 2013:

“Creative Underwater Photography“

Location : Oonas Dive Club - Sharm El Sheikh, Red Sea

7 nights, 5 days of diving. EUR 749.00 per person ( includes B&B accommodation, dives & workshop )

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

10th -17th November 2013:

“Creative Underwater Photography“

Location : Oonas Dive Club - Sharm El Sheikh, Red Sea

7 nights, 5 days of diving. EUR 749.00 per person ( includes B&B accommodation, dives & workshop )

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

The main objective of Rico’s workshop is to develop a creative, individual style of uw photography, the idea is to become different and (as a photographer) stand out from the masses. There will be no teaching of photography basics or main functions of a camera since candidates will be expected to know this already. The workshops are ideal for those who already master the basics of uw photography, but want to bring their results to the next level.

[ricobesserdich@gmail.com](mailto:ricobesserdich@gmail.com)

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

## Mantas, Dolphins, Sharks & Baitballs Socorro Islands

May 23rd - June 1st, 2014

The Revillagigedos Islands, also known as the Socorro Islands, are located 250 miles offshore southwest of Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. They form an oasis for pelagic life amongst their volcanic shores. Many hammerhead and silky sharks, giant manta rays, dolphins, sailfish, schools of jacks and tuna come to feed, mate and get cleaned by small pandemic Clarion Angelfish.

These animals tend to be quite friendly towards divers at times, allowing for fantastic interactions and blue water photo opportunities.

Optical Ocean Sales has organized a trip to go at a perfect time of year to find baitballs; schooling small fish that the predators encircle and feed on. These swirling “balls” of fish are attacked above and below water by sailfish, sharks, and dolphins - and are a mass of action for underwater photography.

Our expedition will be on the Solmar V, a luxury liveaboard, which has been sailing these waters for many years, with probably the most experienced and friendly crew around. Best of all, our head guide will be Erick Higuera, a biologist and photographer, who just won the



Beneath the Sea “Stan Waterman Award for Underwater Video” for his film “Baja”. He has worked for many years on the Solmar and has extensive experience in the islands.

He will be joined by Optical Ocean Sales owner Jack Connick (making his 4th trip to the islands), to help you get the most of your underwater photo opportunities.

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



## Backscatter Expedition to Komodo & Alor with Berkley White and Erin Quigley

Imagine islands where every dive features reefs teeming with life and some of the world's most unique and tiny creatures, where dragons roam the beaches, and where local villagers free dive with you. This is what you will experience on an epic adventure to Komodo and Alor.

Backscatter Owner Berkley White first explored Komodo in 1995 and his images were some of the first extreme macro and wide angle scenics to come from an area that many consider the homeland of Indonesian underwater photography.

Berkley now has logged hundreds of dives and years of boat charter experience across the Indonesian archipelago from Bali to Raja Ampat. With all of this experience, Berkley specifically chose to return to Komodo and Alor for his Indonesian adventures in 2013.

Berkley has teamed up with Erin Quigley to bring you the ultimate in learning during your photo dive adventure. Erin Quigley is an Adobe ACE certified expert specializing in customized workflows and editing strategies. She is an award-winning underwater photographer and video editor, and creator of GoAskErin.com, which provides custom tutorials and one-on-one instruction specifically developed for the underwater photographic community.

Each of the 10 guests on this exclusive trip will have access not only to Berkley's extensive and inspirational photographic techniques, but also to personalized one-on-one editing and workflow sessions with one of the world's top Photoshop and Lightroom gurus.

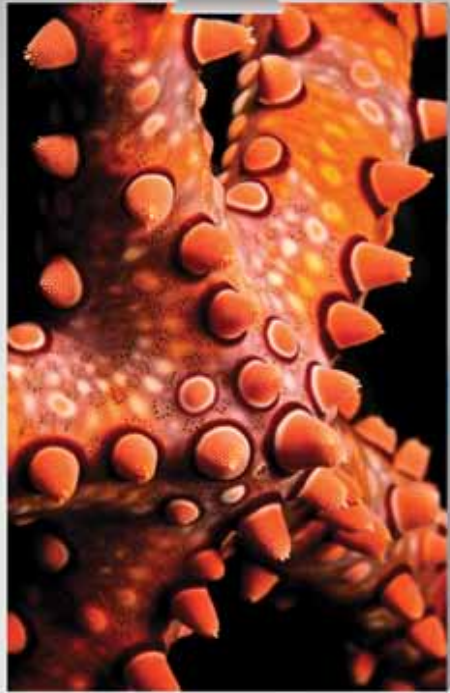
[www.Backscatter.com](http://www.Backscatter.com)



# DS161 Lithium

## The Choice of Professionals

Only a round flash tube and custom made powder-coated reflector can produce the even coverage and superior quality of light that professionals love. The first underwater strobe with a built-in LED video light and Lithium Ion battery technology, Ikelite's DS161 provides over 450 flashes per charge, instantaneous recycling, and neutral buoyancy for superior handling. The DS161 is a perfect match for any housing, any camera, anywhere there's water.



# New Products

## Aquatica AD4 for Nikon D4

Nikon's flagship D4 camera is a professional imaging tool with equally impressive still and video capabilities. With customized controls, next-generation lens gear system and uncompromised viewing,

Aquatica's new AD4 housing puts the D4's power into the hands of photographers shooting in the world's most demanding underwater environments.

Aquatica was the first to offer access to the Fn and Pv controls. This is done via a unique toggle lever that accesses the two buttons and gives the photographer control over such things as the power aperture (Close + Open), index marking in video mode and also allows easy viewing of photo shooting information.

The AD4 is also optimized for video shooting, to take advantage of the D4's broadcast quality 1080p HD video functions. All video controls are designed for easy reach and smooth operation through the housing. This includes a next-generation lens gear system with a smaller housing pinion gear and a larger lens gear for smoother action while zooming in a video sequence.

A newly designed camera tray delivers smooth and precise positioning of the camera in the housing and allows the user to insert and remove the camera using a simple push tab. The zoom actuating pinion gear and the lens release lever also pull out so the camera can be removed from the back while



keeping a lens and zoom gear attached.

Left-hand control buttons are angled and positioned for faster access to the various functions and a quick lever was added for the important ISO access. On the right hand the Live View lever has been relocated closer to your thumb. The multi-controller pad found on the Nikon D4 is made accessible with a simple and proven design and its SET button has been oversized. All push buttons are of high quality Type 304 stainless steel and operate smoothly for a natural feel and intuitive operation.

Three bulkhead access holes are provided to accept multiple external accessories such as our remote trigger (# 19304), Water Wizard external radio transceiver housing, external monitors and/or other accessories. Aquatica also boasts the most comprehensive selection of easily interchangeable strobe connectors in the industry. The 20069-



NK includes two of the classic 5-pin Nikonos connectors and the 20069-KT is supplied with a time proven 5-pin Ikelite connector. Both versions are ready to accept currently available TTL converters. Aquatica standard strobe connectors are also now replaceable in the field without the need for specialized tools.

Of course, the AD4 housing is an integral part of one of the most established and comprehensive port and accessories system of the industry. Aquatica's port system has been a stable platform for more than 20 years and remains one of the most reliable and popular designs on the market.

[www.aquatica.ca](http://www.aquatica.ca)

Shoot Underwater Video?



**AQUALITE VIDEO eLED**  
Incredibly Powerful Compact  
Wide-Beam Video Light  
600 Lumens - 90° Beam Angle



www.sea-sea.com **UK Underwater Kinetics**

**Nauticam NA-NEX6 housing for Sony NEX-6**



Nauticam is very excited to announce their first new mirrorless housing of 2013: The NA-NEX6 housing for the Sony Alpha NEX-6 Camera.

The Sony NEX-6 camera provides a compelling combination of excellent features borrowed from the best of the new NEX-5R and some highlights of the top-of-the-line NEX-7 including: OLED electronic viewfinder (EVF), bright 3.0" LCD display new exposure mode dial, new Fast Hybrid autofocus, built in WI-FI and the ability to utilize Sony's PlayMemories Camera Apps. The NEX-6 may be the Sony's most appealing blend of features and technology for many photo and video enthusiasts.

Nauticam manufactures the most highly regarded aluminum housings for the NEX series in the

world, and the NA-NEX6 builds on that reputation. The industry leading features of previous housings are present such as the effortless (but secure) single locking rotary housing latch, rugged machined aluminum case, 100 meter depth rating and the patented port locking system. A new rear mounted housing o-ring makes maintenance easier than ever, while the simple port lock and lens release button supports lens changes without camera removal.

A re-engineered camera tray with a unique self locking mechanism gives an audible and visual confirmation of proper camera installation. Of course dual fiber optic ports are standard and take advantage of the built in Sony flash.

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

**RECSEA RX-100**



**THE RECSEA RX100**

- ☒ OPERATIONAL MAXIMUM DEPTH 80M
- ☒ ALL FUNCTIONS ACCESSIBLE
- ☒ ULTRA LIGHTWEIGHT, ALUMINIUM BODY
- ☒ SUPPLIED WITH: DIFFUSER, STROBE MASK HAND STRAP, O-RINGS & O-RING GREASE

RRP - £899.99 (HOUSING ONLY)



WWW.CAMERASUNDERWATER.CO.UK  
TEL: 01404 812277 EMAIL: SALES@CAMERASUNDERWATER.CO.UK

PACKAGES HOUSINGS STROBES LIGHTS MORE +

## The Olympus PEN E-PL5 Camera and PT-EP10 Housing



Pro Quality in a Carry on Size  
Fast Autofocus & High Speed Shooting

**BACKSCATTER**  
Underwater Video & Photo

Free Lifetime Tech Support with Every Purchase  
Discounted International Shipping Options

USA West HQ	USA East
+1 831.645.1082	+1 603.432.1997
Skype:	Skype:
Backscatter_West	Backscatter_East

[BACKSCATTER.COM](http://BACKSCATTER.COM)

## Seashell iPhone 5 housing



Don't worry about using your iPhone near water. All you need is Seashell's iPhone underwater housing!

Zear Corporation Limited, a leader of underwater camera and iPhone housings announces its launch of SS-i5, the underwater waterproof photo housing for iPhone 5.


The housing can withstand up to 40 meters water depth, 1 meter shock proof, dust proof and -10 degree C freeze proof and it has obtained most international certifications including REACH requirements for European Community. Seashell has obtained over 30 international patent (Invention patent, utility model and design patent) and worldwide registered trademark.

Seashell's innovative design allows you to configure the Seashell housing to your iPhone with or without phone jacket, it allows you to




operate the touch screen underwater, providing an instant waterproof solution during sun & beach vacation, water sports, water festival, water amusement parks, snorkelling, diving and etc. The housing is also available in yellow, black and red to customize your style.

[www.seashell.hk](http://www.seashell.hk)





# ACQUAPAZZA





**That Amazing Moment,  
with SLR Quality**

## APSO-NEX5N

Underwater Camera Housing for SONY NEX-5N

<http://acquapazza.jp/en>

蓝天海



**NA-NEX5R** housing for  
Sony Alpha NEX-5R Camera



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

## INON UCL-100LD/UCL-100M67 Close-up lens



INON INC. is pleased to announce official release of new UCL-100 LD and UCL-100M67 close-up lenses.

They are designed to provide 100mm focal length (underwater) for high magnification photography yet give a high quality image, and effectively suppress vignetting even when using at zoom wide end of wide 28mm (35mm film equivalent) camera.

Two different types either 28LD compatible type or M67 screw mount are available to suit to your camera system.

A 3 elements in 3 groups construction effectively suppresses aberrations compared to 2 elements in 2 groups lens. Inner optical surfaces (four of them) have antireflection coating to successfully provide



superior quality images with high resolution and high contrast.

The UCL-100 makes minimum shooting distance short both on land/underwater enabling to get closer to a subject for close-up/macro imaging

The UCL-100 LD has lockable INON 28LD Mount to support easy, speedy yet reliable installation on 28LD Mount Base while the UCL-100M67 carries M67 screw mount to provide wide versatility.

The lens barrel has joint screw mount on its front side to hold another INON M67 series close-up lens for super macro imaging

[www.inon.jp](http://www.inon.jp)

## GoPro Perfect Images With One Flip Of a Finger



The Backscatter Flip3 Filter  
Perfect Color for Above and Below the Surface  
Learn More: [Backscatter.com/GoPro](http://Backscatter.com/GoPro)

**BACKSCATTER**  
Underwater Video & Photo

Free Lifetime Tech Support with Every Purchase  
Discounted International Shipping Options

USA West HQ	USA East
+1 831.645.1082	+1 603.432.1997
Skype:	Skype:
Backscatter_West	Backscatter_East

[BACKSCATTER.COM](http://BACKSCATTER.COM)

Want Precise Control?



# YS-D1

Underwater Strobe

**INTRODUCING DS-TTL II with E/V CONTROL**  
more responsive, more precise, more reliable



- COMPACT** Smaller than the YS-110a
- POWERFUL** From GN1 to GN32
- VERSATILE** TTL, DS-TTL II & Manual EV Control Slave & Hardwired
- ERGONOMIC** No Slave On/Off Switch, Optional Strobe Mounts
- DEPTH RATING** 100m!!

WWW.SEA-SEA.COM

**SEA&SEA**  
THE UNDERWATER IMAGING COMPANY

## Retra releases prime LSD



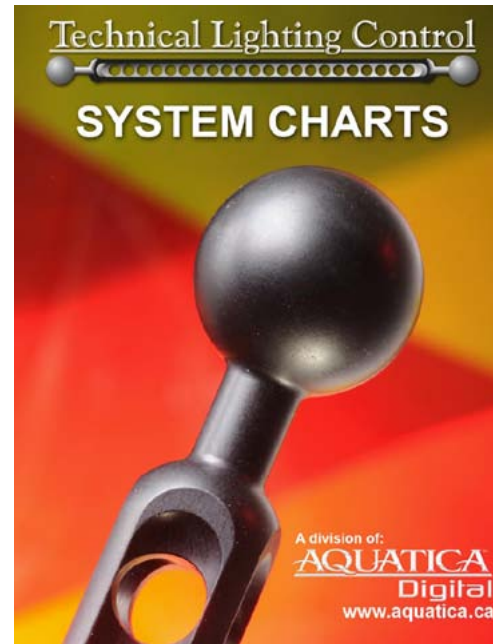
The new LSD prime is the most fun and easy to use Light Shaping Device we have ever made.

Choosing from one of the thirteen standard shapes you can never run out of ideas for shaping your light beam. And they are easily exchangeable too.

The housing is anodized aluminium and tested at 6 bar. With the same lens technology we used to win a gold medal on the World UWP Championship we are bringing the highest levels of performance in a product that costs just 349,00€ (incl. VAT)

[www.retra-uw.com](http://www.retra-uw.com)

## Technical Lighting Control chart



Just added online is the new Technical Lighting Control system charts. These self-explanatory charts help shed light on the often confusing aspect typical of many lighting systems.

The new format clearly shows attachment options available from TLC for the most popular strobes on the market as well as for housing, both from Aquatica and other manufacturers as well.

[www.aquatica.ca/en/tlc.html](http://www.aquatica.ca/en/tlc.html)

# 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](http://www.nauticamusa.com)

**Nauticam**  
innovation underwater

**NA-D600** housing for  
Nikon D600



## Ikelite Nikon D5200 housing



Ikelite proudly announces a full-featured, TTL enabled underwater housing for the Nikon D5200 Digital SLR camera. The Ikelite housing is packed with standard features which complement the D5200's upgraded sensor and image processing. The Ikelite housing is built by experienced divers in the USA and comes with unlimited access to Ikelite's unparalleled customer support team.

The Key Features are:

- TTL Flash Exposure

More bang for your flash buck with the superior exposure, recycle time and reliability of hard-wired TTL flash. The camera's built-in flash does not need to fire, providing the extended battery life and zero lag time between exposures. Ikelite proprietary circuitry allows direct communication between the camera and current Ikelite DS Substrobes for the most accurate through-the-lens (TTL)

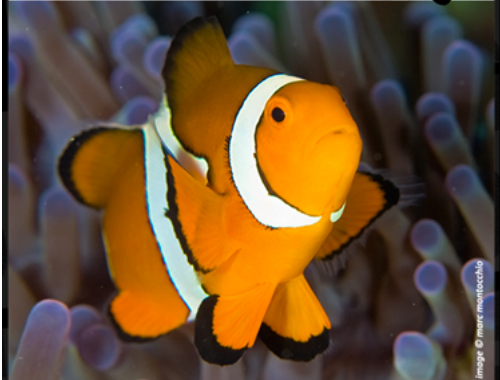
metering control of an off-camera flash. Electrical bulkhead and TTL circuitry are provided standard and included in the base purchase price.

- Ergonomic handling

Controls are provided for all critical camera functions. Shutter, video recording start/stop, and a large zoom control knob can all be comfortably reached without removing your hands from the handles. Comfortable rubberized grips provide quick-release attachment points for strobes and accessories. The try and handles may be removed from the housing for convenience in traveling. The complete housing is neutral or slightly negative in freshwater depending on choice of lens port.

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

# Demand Quality?



## MDX D800 - D600

- Machined Solid Block Aluminium
- Corrosion-Resistant Coating
- Ergonomic Design
- Takes optional VF45 Viewfinder
- Port Locking Mechanism
- Locking Latches
- Fibre Optic Cable Socket x2
- 100m Depth Rated



WWW.SEA-SEA.COM

**SEA&SEA**  
THE UNDERWATER IMAGING COMPANY

## Epoque DCL-30 wide angle lens



The Epoque DCL-30 wide angle supplementary lens converts a 28mm lens on a compact camera into a wide angle 112° coverage without any vignetting.

It can screw directly onto Olympus, Ikelite, and other housings. It is available in four versions, for 67mm (M67), 46mm (M46), 55mm (M55) or 52mm (M52) filter thread.

Color correction filters (CY and GR) can be put on directly and easily.

[www.époque-japan.com](http://www.époque-japan.com)

## Ultralight GoPro Hero3 cage with the LCD back



The only modification needed to the Hero2 cage was the mechanism on the top that holds the camera in the cage. Those mechanisms will be available to anyone who has a Hero2 cage and want to now use it on their Hero3. Balls come standard on the cages.

For all your go pro attachment needs and any underwater photographic accessory needs contact Ultralight Control Systems.

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

## Nauticam USA

### Nauticam NA RX100 Sony DSC RX100



### “Simply Awesome”

With 20mp, this camera and Housing package offers the complete control and image quality of an SLR system with the size and convenience of a compact system. Controls are simple, but well thought out with easy to access push buttons.

Dual command dials immediately access frequently used manual settings like manual focus, F-Stop, and Shutter Speed. Full 1080P HD video performance and excellent wet lens options makes for one powerfully small package.

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



**ACQUAPAZZA**



**It is compact and is best high definition.**

**APSO-NEX7**  
Underwater Camera Housing for SONY NEX-7



<http://acquapazza.jp/en>

## Aquatica Close Up Kit



This Close-Up kit is a new addition to the Aquatica system, which is arguably one of the most comprehensive in the industry, consisting of a macro port lens holder with +5 and +10 diopters lenses, these are water contact diopters and are made from high-quality achromatic dual elements BK-7 mineral glass, each lenses is treated with both a scratch resistant and anti reflection coating for maximum protection and brightness. Optical performance is maintained to the highest standard, providing a very flat plane of focus which is virtually free of color fringing.

The Aquatica close lenses have true magnification value, when a close up lens is not air sealed, refraction will rob it of most of its magnification when immersed underwater. The Aquatica r +5 and +10 Close-Up lenses will retain their strength at all time. The doublet formula also



guarantees improved performance over single element design.

Super macro is within your reach, with the +10 offering as much as 2.2:1 magnification using a standard 105mm Macro lens. At twice life size, imagine the possibility of having a radical point of view on your subject, showing details so small that the human eye cannot resolve normally!

[www.aquatica.ca](http://www.aquatica.ca)

## The Wahoo HD Monitor For DSLRs



Compose Your Vision on a Five Inch Screen

**BACKSCATTER**  
Underwater Video & Photo

Free Lifetime Tech Support with Every Purchase  
Discounted International Shipping Options

USA West HQ	USA East
+1 831.645.1082	+1 603.432.1997
Skype:	Skype:
Backscatter_West	Backscatter_East

[BACKSCATTER.COM](http://BACKSCATTER.COM)



**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>

## Nauticam NA-G15 housing for Canon G15



Nauticam is proud to introduce the NA-G15 aluminum camera housing for the latest version of Canon's iconic G series of compact cameras: The Canon Powershot G15.

The NA-G15 should prove to be the ultimate housing for fans of Canon's compact G15 camera. Both camera and housing are loaded with heavyweight features packaged in a lightweight, rugged and easy to operate system.

The NA-G15 takes advantage of Canon's excellent control set on the G15 and provides an extremely easy interface – even with gloves on. Programmable front and rear command dials are readily available to forefinger and thumb while never releasing grip. The mode dial is quickly accessed at any moment. Manual aperture and shutter speed adjustment is intuitive and thanks to the G15's unique exposure



compensation dial – so is EV control.

Video functions are more easily engaged than on the G12 because of the new dedicated record button. Nauticam has provided a flash

deployment lever and a window to allow for monitoring Canon's indicator LEDs showing power, ready to shoot, flash activation status and a "cannot focus" warning. This housing is designed and field-tested to capitalize on the considerable potential from both camera and photographer alike.

Nauticam includes a 67mm port thread for mounting optional wet lenses as standard and they precisely engineer the optical glass port specifications for optimal wide angle accessory lens compatibility.

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



**GOPRO HERO 3 BLACK EDITION**

The HERO3: Black Edition is the most advanced GoPro ever. 30% smaller, 25% lighter and 2x more powerful than previous models. Wearable and gear mountable, waterproof to 197' (60m), capable of capturing ultra-wide 1440p 48fps, 1080p 60 fps and 720p 120 fps video and 12MP photos at a rate of 30 photos per second, the HERO3: Black Edition is the world's most versatile camera.

**WHAT'S INCLUDED**

- HERO3 BLACK EDITION CAMERA
- 197' / 60M WATERPROOF HOUSING
- RECHARGEABLE LI-ION BATTERY
- ASSORTED MOUNTING HARDWARE
- USB CHARGING CABLE

RRP: £349.99

**RECOMMENDED ACCESSORIES**

- EPOQUE EL-1000
- ULTRALIGHT TR-D
- ULTRALIGHT TR-GO
- BATTERY BACKPAC
- ULTRALIGHT AD-GO
- FLOATY BACKDOOR
- SANDISK ULTRA MICRO SD

**Cameras UNDERWATER**

[WWW.CAMERASUNDERWATER.CO.UK](http://WWW.CAMERASUNDERWATER.CO.UK)  
TEL: 01404 812277 EMAIL: SALES@CAMERASUNDERWATER.CO.UK

# EPOQUE EL-1000



NUMEROUS MOUNTING  
OPTIONS AVAILABLE

## THE EPOQUE EL-1000

- ☑ SMALL LIGHT-WEIGHT DESIGN
- ☑ CORROSION-PROOF ALUMINIUM BODY
- ☑ RECHARGEABLE BATTERY
- ☑ HIGH POWERED 1000 LUMEN LED
- ☑ 4 MODES: 100%, 50%, 10% & FLASHING
- ☑ BURN TIME: 70 MINUTES FULL POWER

RRP £169.99



WWW.CAMERASUNDERWATER.CO.UK  
TEL: 01404 812277 EMAIL: SALES@CAMERASUNDERWATER.CO.UK

PACKAGES HOUSINGS STROBES LIGHTS MORE +

## Acquapazza and DPMerrill housings



Sigma has announced that its DP3 Merrill compact digital camera will be available in early March for the street price of \$999.

As the final camera in the Sigma DP Merrill lineup, the DP3 Merrill features a high-performance 50mm F2.8 lens, which is equivalent to 75mm on a 35mm SLR camera providing 1:3 macro magnification.

The trio of DP Merrill cameras is a complete compact camera tool set, The DP1 Merrill and DP2 Merrill cameras are known for their wide angle and standard range, respectively, the DP3 Merrill delivers impressive optical performance for mid-telephoto and macro shooting.”

Japanese housing manufacturer Acquapazza are working on a housing that will accommodate all three models by incorporating interchangeable ports.

The 19mm wide angle DP1 (35mm equivalent 28.5mm) can be used with a dome port to retain the land angle. The 30mm DP2 (35mm equivalent 45mm) will have a flat port to which external wide angle or close up lenses can be added and the 50mm DP3 (35mm equivalent 75mm) will have a flat port to which an external close up lens can be added.

The resulting combination of cameras, housing and ports will provide a system capable of the finest quality images without the traditional bulk of an SLR. In fact the systems will be so small and light that you could take 2 housings and lens options and still be lighter than a housed SLR.

The beautiful sea will be even more beautiful with a DPMerrill and Acquapazza housing.

[www.acquapazza.jp/en](http://www.acquapazza.jp/en)

**Nauticam**  
USA

## Nauticam NA-EM5 Olympus OM-D E-M5



### “Full HD and 16mp”

The NA-EM5 housing from Nauticam delivers the advanced features of the OM-D E-M5 in style and with the superb ergonomics that people have come to expect from Nauticam. This is a very compact and rugged housing, with most of the E-M5 camera controls accessible from the ergonomic grip sculpted into the side of the housing. The excellent Olympus EVF is easily available with a flick of the switch. A choice of hand strap and tray options allows customizing to a shooter's specific needs.

Depth Rating: 100m Dimensions:  
185mm x 152mm x 105mm Weight:  
1.1kg(2.4 lbs.)

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

DEFENDING OCEAN  
WILDLIFE WORLDWIDE



SEA SHEPHERD



 **DONATE NOW**



**PHOTO & VIDEO**

- 5 important reasons to make Reef Photo and Video your choice for underwater photo and video
- We are divers and photographers  
Everyone on our friendly staff is an underwater photographer. We use the gear that we sell, and we keep up with the latest imaging products for both underwater and topside.
- U/W photography is our only business  
We're not a dive shop and we're more than a camera store. We concentrate all of our energy on the constantly changing world of underwater imaging.
- Selection and Inventory  
Our huge inventory from over 58 manufacturers means that we probably have what you need in stock. Orders for in-stock items placed by 4pm EST ship the same day!
- Service After the Sale  
Our in-house technicians are experts in repair and service of your equipment. In addition, our custom shop can fabricate those 'outside-the-box' parts that you may require.
- Free Ground Shipping!  
Orders over \$200 qualify for **FREE** domestic Ground shipping via UPS!

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

**ACQUAPAZZA**

**NEW TYPE**

**Coming soon!**

**APSG-DP1M**  
**APSG-DP2M**  
**APSG-DP3M**

Underwater Camera Housing for SIGMA DP EMerrill



<http://acquapazza.jp/en>

## Gates Canon compatibility



Cameras Underwater have announced that the Gates video housing for the Canon HF G-10 is also compatible with the new HF G-20.

The XA10 housing continues the Gates tradition of built-in high resolution widescreen viewfinders. The Canon XA10, HF G-10 and HF-G20 cameras all have native 1920 x 1080 sensors which means pro-quality underwater HD images and superior low light performance when paired with Gates Precision Ports.

The Gates XA10 housing provides reliable fingertip mechanical control and access to all camera functions: Simply slide the Canon remote inside the shell and White Balance, Tele Converter and all embedded menu functions are readily available.

[www.camerasunderwater.co.uk](http://www.camerasunderwater.co.uk)

## NANUK Waterproof Cases

The waterproof seal used in all NANUK watertight cases is custom designed to fit our products. The hollow core design prevents material deformation or fatigue of the seal to ensure watertight cases that will last.

The PowerClaw latching system used on all NANUK cases is engineered to keep your case closed during the toughest of missions. The PowerClaw clamps the case tightly closed using compressive force while the integrated slide lock prevents the



case from opening during transport or when dropped. The super tough nylon construction ensures your precious items remain safely inside the case no matter where the journey takes you.

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

# SIZE DOESN'T MATTER



THE LATEST GENERATION OF CAMERAS ARE HERE. HIGH RESOLUTION STILLS AND VIDEO HAVE NEVER BEEN SO ACCESSIBLE, WHETHER IT BE THE SUPER COMPACT CANON S110 WITH ITS FAST F/2 LENS, THE LARGE APS-C SENSOR OF THE SONY RX100 OR THE PRO PERFORMANCE AND HUGE MEGAPIXEL COUNT OF THE NIKON D800. HERE AT CAMERAS UNDERWATER WE HAVE A WIDE RANGE OF HOUSINGS TO SUIT ANY BUDGET, FROM MOST MAJOR MANUFACTURERS AS WELL AS A WIDE RANGE OF ACCESSORIES TO CATER FOR ANYTHING YOUR UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY REQUIRES.

**Cameras UNDERWATER**

[WWW.CAMERASUNDERWATER.CO.UK](http://WWW.CAMERASUNDERWATER.CO.UK)  
 TEL: 01404 812277 EMAIL: SALES@CAMERASUNDERWATER.CO.UK



**ACQUAPAZZA**

**NEW TYPE**

**High definition is on the palm.**

**APSO-RX100**

Underwater Camera Housing for SONY RX100



<http://acquapazza.jp/en>

## Backscatter AirLock



Most camera housing floods are preventable with good assembly technique, but even the most experienced shooter can get in a rush and make a fatal error.

Backscatter is pleased to announce AirLock, our new vacuum verification system for underwater camera housings. With custom bulkheads available for Aquatica, Sea & Sea, Subal, Seacam, Nauticam and Huffyot, the AirLock will verify your housing is leak-proof before you even jump in the water. The AirLock kit consists of three parts - a custom bulkhead, a waterproof one-way valve, and a hand pump.

By creating negative pressure inside the housing and monitoring the vacuum pressure, you can dive with confidence knowing that your camera is safe from floods. The AirLock vacuum will also lock your lens ports and prevent a port from accidentally



rotating to cause vignetting in the image or even worse a camera flood.

The AirLock is available in two different versions; a manual version that simply uses the gauge on the pump to verify that your housing has maintained negative pressure, and an electronic version that includes built-in LEDs to constantly indicate vacuum status, even during your dive. A green LED will blink when negative 5 inches Hg of pressure is maintained, a yellow LED will blink when pressure dips above that level, and a red LED will blink when the ambient pressure is reached. Such a loss of pressure indicates a leak, and that your housing is at risk of a flood - a great thing to know before you actually take your housing underwater.

The AirLock is precision machined aluminum and is easy for the user to install. The AirLock will begin shipping in late March 2013 from Backscatter dealers worldwide, with pricing to be announced soon.

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



**INON**  
[www.inon.jp](http://www.inon.jp)

**Flat / Wide Photographic Quality Underwater Flashlight**

**LE700-W**

**700 Lumen** **75° Beam**

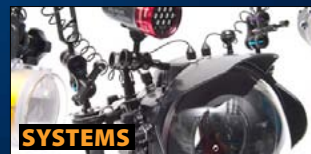
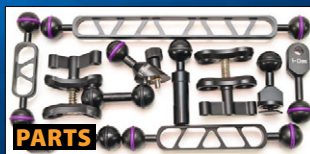
- 3x AA size batteries
- Aluminum alloy body
- Durable construction

# OPTICAL OCEAN SALES

## UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY PRODUCTS

*Realize Your Vision.*

Dealers for Nauticam, Aquatica, Gates, Equinox, Seacam, Olympus, Ikelite, Fix, Zen, Athena, Sea & Sea, Light & Motion, 10Bar, Big Blue, Keldan, i-Torch/i-DAS, Seahorse, DryCase, Fantasea Line, MAHA Power, and more. We dive what we sell!



Visit us Online at: [OpticalOceanSales.com](http://OpticalOceanSales.com)

Email: [Orders@OpticalOceanSales.com](mailto:Orders@OpticalOceanSales.com) / Ph: +1 206-284-1142 or 800-359-1295  
1800 Westlake Avenue North, Suite 201, Seattle WA, USA 98109

## Underwater Photography: A Guide to Capturing the Mysteries of the Deep

by Trent Burkholder

Explore the underwater world of photography through this informative guide written in simple language, covering the technical, mechanical, and compositional factors that contribute to producing quality images.

View 120 beautiful color photographs and 18 instructional images illustrating the successful use of the techniques described. Precise instructions are given for handling and maintaining an underwater camera, as well as how to choose from the many different types of equipment available. Learn about the historical pioneers in the fields of underwater exploration, photography, and oceanography. Included are descriptions of specific diving techniques that can result in improved photographic opportunities. Gain knowledge of animal behavior and ecology with an emphasis on safety and protection of the marine environment.

This book is a must have for any scuba enthusiast, aspiring underwater photographer, or ocean lover.

Trent Burkholder is a freelance



photographer and writer with a focus on culture and travel. He was introduced to scuba diving during trips to Asia. Since that time, underwater photography has become his driving passion, guiding him to remote areas in search of marine adventures.

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

Technical Lighting Control  
**WATER WIZARD**  
WATERPROOF REMOTE TRIGGERING SYSTEM

**AQUATICA**  
Digital



info@aquatica.ca

HOUSING FOR THE POCKET WIZARD PLUS III®

# BRING THE STUDIO UNDERWATER!

- Interface safely with:
- Surface studio lighting.
  - Additional submerged strobes.
  - Other cameras

Range of 100m/300ft and more  
Uses popular sync cord and extension.

Technical Lighting Control

# AQUATICA™

## Digital

# AD 800

You get the picture  
We bring it back!

- 90m/300 ft depth rating (upgradable to 130m/425 ft).
- Lightweight yet sturdy aluminum construction.
- Complete access to all features, including Fn and Depth of Field
- Optical strobe connectors or Classic wired connectors.
- Moisture alarm included
- Completely modular port system.



www.aquatica.ca

# Easydive LEO II PRO review

by Rico Besserdich

I had the opportunity to test the LEO II PRO Video housing for the CANON 7D, designed by the Italian housing manufacturer EASYDIVE ( [www.easydive.it](http://www.easydive.it) ). My first impression : Awesome tool ! Now, let's have a look at it !

The main difference between all other uw housings is that camera controls are accessed electronically by using the camera's mini-USB port. The "heart" of the housing is a matchbox-sized electronic unit that connects the camera to the button panels that you'll find on the right & left of the housing ( as parts of the housing's grips ).

In times when the big guys of the industry produce at least one new camera model every year, making it necessary to buy a new uw housing too because of it different bits and pieces (such as button positions), the revolutionary idea of accessing most of all camera functions electronically produces a very pleasing advantage: a multiple camera support.

The EASYDIVE LEO II supports all common camera models from CANON & NIKON - In simple words : one housing fits all! That means, we can now upgrade to a

newer camera without the annoying need to buy a new housing.

Supported cameras are ( as of December 2012 ):

CANON : 10D, 20D, 30D, 40D, 60D, 350D, 450D, 550D, 600D, 650D, 5D Mark II & III, 7D and the new 6D.

NIKON : D40, D50, D60, D70, D80, D3000, D3100, D5000, D5100, D300, D300s, D90, D7000, D600, D700 and the D800.

If switching to a different camera, the only items needed to be replaced are the housing's USB electronic and camera mount. This is sold as a bundle for approx GBP 165 (200 EUR ).

This is way cheaper than buying a new housing and indeed the multiple camera support clearly pops up as the main advantage of the LEO II. Besides this, if we want to stick with our preferred brand but we want to move to a new model, there is no need to modify the electronic at all. The CANON electronic of the LEO II simply recognises all CANON cameras and can access them. The same goes for NIKON, too. It's as simple as that.

The housing itself comes in a





*Housing is closed, sealed and ready to dive. The camera is switched on, showing the main settings on its LCD. A green flashing LED in the button control indicates : system ready.*

pleasing round-shaped design, it's made out of 8 mm thick marine grade aluminium and is depth-rated to 100 meters (150 meter & more on demand). 3 stainless-steel fastenings hold the housing's backplate which is double o-ring sealed. And for those who like to go to uw photo dives without o-rings there is a leakage detector (optical) built in, too ;-)

The 2 ergonomic grips support 2 bayonet-style strobe arm connectors each enabling you to connect four strobes or 2 strobes and 2 video/photo lights.

The single strobe cable connector is a Nikonos 5/6 pin one (switchable).

TTL functionality or fiber-optic strobe connection is not yet supported.

The standard version of the housing comes with a 6-button panel, allowing the user to access to 10 functions of the camera - some buttons can be pressed together, acting as a kind of shortcut. The PRO version comes with two button panels giving access to even more functions. I have used the so called Video Version of the housing where the right button panel controls the photo functions and the left-hand panel the video functions of my 7D.

The housing's port connector is a bayonet-style one; there are ports



*Juvenile Lionfish – Na'ama Bay, Egypt. Canon 7D in Easydive LEO II PRO housing, Canon EF-S 60mm Makro lens f/3.5 , 1/250 s , ISO 100. 2 Sea&Sea YS-D1 strobes in manual mode*

available for all commonly used lenses for u/w photography. The port diameter is of 105mm which gives space for lenses ( such as some SIGMA zoom lenses ) that often do not fit into other housings/ports.

First impression : It is a real beauty. More than this, it even looks noble, a Italian jewel of a design at its finest :-)

The housing's USB electronic

requires 2 AA size batteries (preferably Sanyo Eneloop's ) to run. The batteries unit and the electronic itself are stored inside the housing but can be easily removed.

Fully charged batteries do supply enough energy up to 12 hours of operation (actually, during my tests they lasted as long as 16 hours ).

Mounting the camera into the housing is easy. 3 cables are to



*Panorama shot of the Fiddle Garden“, Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt.  
Canon 7D in Easydive LEO II PRO housing Tokina 10-17mm lens ( at the 10mm end )  
f/7.1 , 1/100 s , ISO 100. Ambient light*

connected to the camera : mini USB, remote control and strobe connector. After switching the camera on, we'll need the housing's USB electronic, there is a tiny switch for it. 3 LED's indicate the status of the unit. Green light indicates "everything ready to go", yellow means "battery low" and red says "out of order/malfunction". The self-test takes only few seconds and the red light never blinked to me.

As the housing does not have a top window to read the camera's settings, it is advisable to turn the camera on before going to dive, de-activate the "auto off" function and set the camera's LCD to "Info" so that it displays the camera's settings such as ISO, aperture, shutter etc.

If you forget this step you would then be shooting blind. And as there is no button to switch the camera on or off, it might be a good idea not to

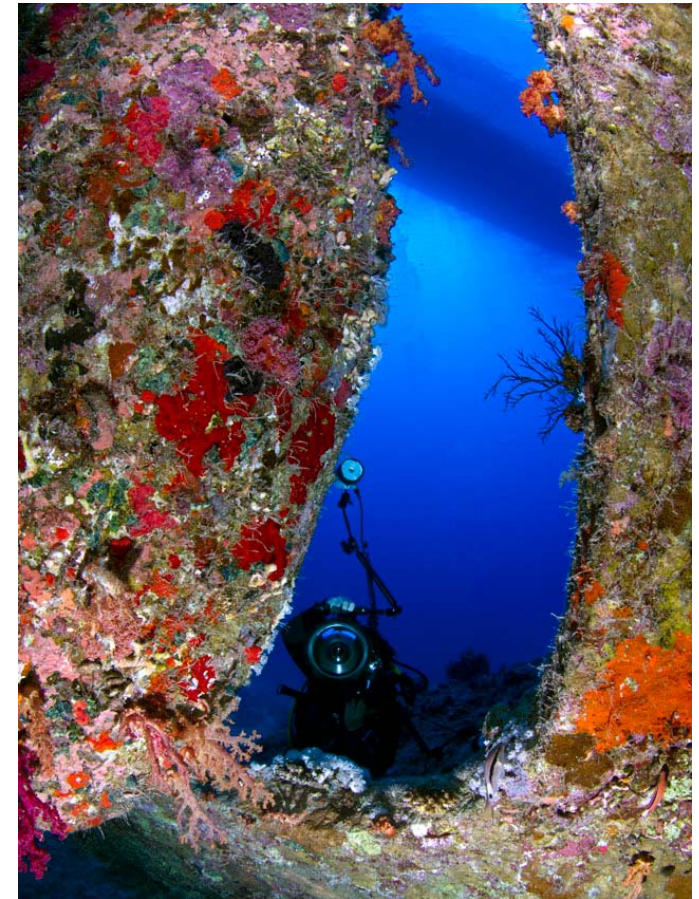
forget to switch the camera on before finally closing the housing and hopping in the water.

During my tests, every day I was out for diving for 8 hours (camera switched on all the time ) and after returning back to the hotel, the camera battery power was still at 25%, still enough to transfer all my pictures to the computer.

Mounting the backplate to the housing was quick & easy as well as mounting the port to the housing.

The bayonet style port mount gives a good & safe feeling of 'locked & tight'. When using zoom lenses (during my test I used a Tokina 10-17mm and a Sigma 10-20mm), assembling the zoom gear was easy but -as with all kind of zoom gears- it required a proper double check.

A huge variety of flatports, extensions rings



*UW photographer v/s the prop of the Dunraven – Red Sea, Egypt*

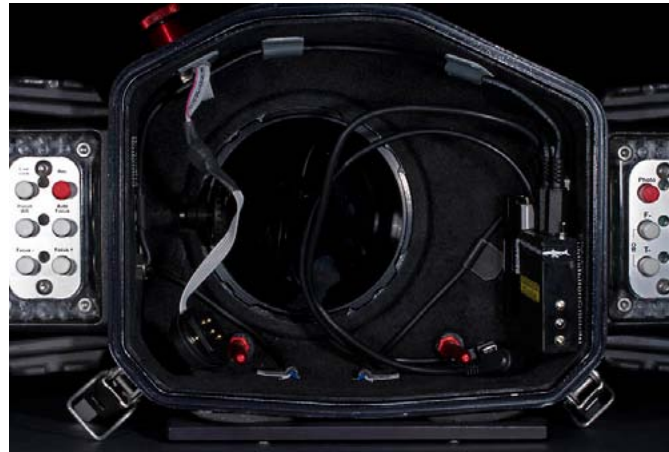
*Canon 7D in Easydive LEO II PRO housing. Tokina 10-17mm lens ( at the 10mm end ). f/11 , 1/80 s , ISO 200, 2 Sea&Sea YS-D1 strobes in manual mode*

and domeports are available and all look very solid and well designed.

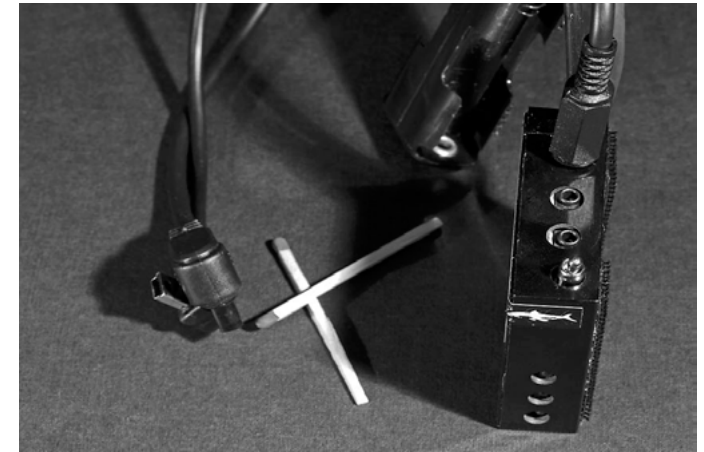
All set up for wide-angle photography (Tokina 10-17mm lens, domeport, Easydive carbon strobe-arms plus 2 Sea&Sea YS-D1 strobes ) the housing turned out to be neutral underwater.



*The ‘heart’ of the housing: The USB electronic control unit plus batteries.*



*Inside the housing.*



*The housing’s electronic USB unit. More or less size of a matchbox.*

It is very ergonomic and power-saving to be with it underwater and I never experienced any wrist ache. The 2 grips are very ergonomic and you just need your thumb(s) to access the control buttons and take your shots.

Looking through the housings “viewfinder“ to achieve a first shot comes as a bit of a surprise : There is no viewfinder ! The housing’s backplate holds 1 huge window ( polycarbonate ) and you are looking directly through the camera’s viewfinder. Although very suspicious at the beginning, I have to say that it worked just great.

For some camera models, the manufacturer offers mini-viewfinders that replace the one of the camera, providing a larger field of view.

Although, the “EasyFinder” is not available for the Canon 7D, I didn’t miss it.

Changing shutter speed, aperture and other settings worked quickly, I haven’t notice any delay caused by the USB electronics. To review a pic after shooting it ( I don’t do this after every shot, but

sometimes I like to have a quick look ) it is a good idea to set the camera to “Display last image until any button is pressed” .

However this was the way I did it. If you are used to review all your pictures, while doing your safety dive stop, you might find it disappointing that such a option is not provided by the housing as it is not provided by the camera’s remote-controllable operations.

The PRO version of the housing comes with 6 more buttons on the left side. Which camera functions are accessible through those buttons depends simply on the USB protocol of the camera and on what you want. The USB unit of the housing is programmable, by the manufacturer, which gives users the opportunity to create their own ideal setup. There is a list of accessible camera controls ( depending on camera model ) and you can choose which function you would like to access with which button.

For NIKON, the selection of focus points is

working with the LEO II, but regrettably it is not for CANON.

But despite the disadvantage of not being able to change autofocus points of my 7D ( often I had it set to middle focus spot only), I’ve found the housing extremely easy & ergonomic to use while shooting underwater.

I am not a videographer but as the Video version of the housing was given to me I of course used the opportunity. The left button panel of the housing accesses the video functions of the camera.

Live View on/off, recording on/off, white balance ( presets ), autofocus + manual focus controls are provided. The right side button panel provides magnification & ISO control when shooting in video mode. I’ve shot around 40 minutes of video in several takes and haven’t spotted any problems.

An Easydive housing is like a Ferrari : If you know how to handle it, it is a incredible powerful tool ;-). The Easydive LEO II PRO is a very well



*Glassfishes – Na'ama Bay, Egypt  
Canon 7D in Easydive LEO II PRO housing. Canon EF-S 60mm Makro lens.  
f/3.2 , 1/250 s , ISO 100. 2 Sea&Sea YS-D1 strobes in manual mode*

designed & high quality piece of kit for the advanced underwater photographer, with easy access to the most important functions of his/her camera underwater.

Digital SLRs of the newer generations do come with a overwhelming array of functions & buttons (some of them very confusing), but in the end what makes a shot is still having an eye for photography.

The Easydive housing does add several functions, however LEO II can't access all options of your camera. It never will. So, if you

prefer to play with buttons, wheels & magic sticks instead of taking photos underwater this might be not the right housing for you. The question is: do you really need more ?

Having one housing that can host several different cameras comes in very handy and inexpensive and the USB electronics, and therefore the accessible controls customized is a value which speaks for itself.

To sum up, as a professional underwater photographer, I can highly recommend this housing.

Standard Version ( housing body, USB electronic, 2 grips, 1 Nikonos



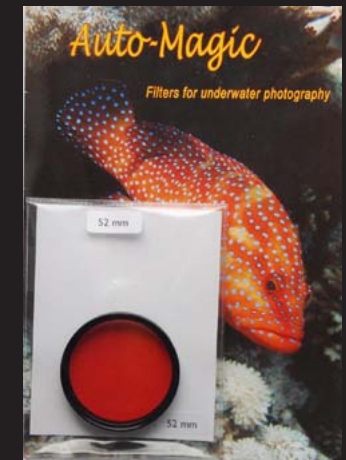
strobe connector, backplate, camera mount, zoom control, 1 button unit with 6 buttons ) is 1690,00 EUR ( GBP 1.390,00 ). PRO Version“ : ( including another button unit with six more buttons ) is 2090,00 EUR ( GBP 1.720,00 )

**Rico Besserdich**  
facebook.com/rico.besserdich  
www.maviphoto.com

[www.easydive.it](http://www.easydive.it)



# We've got you covered!



Magic filters are now available in 3 options.  
Original Magic for use in blue water with DSLR and compact cameras with Manual White Balance,  
Auto-Magic for compact cameras in automatic point and shoot mode.

GreenWater Magic for use in green water with DSLR and compact cameras with Manual White Balance.

Prices start at just £19.

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

[www.magic-filters.com](http://www.magic-filters.com)

# Canon MP-E 65/2.8 Macro

By Gary Sun

The Canon MP-E 65/2.8 Macro lens was introduced in September 1999. It is a manual focus lens, dedicated to macro photography with EF lens mount for Canon EOS series SLR. The magnification ratio is between 1:1 and 5:1.

As it is MF only, there is no built-in drive motor. The MF feels very smooth. When the magnification is 1:1, the length is the shortest at 98mm; and when the magnification ratio is 5:1, the length is the longest at 228mm. The change in length is 130mm!

The first three internal lens elements incorporate a floating design. UD glass lens is used to eliminate the dispersion that is prone to large magnification in macro photography.

At 5:1 reproduction, the magnification is particularly large and it is not easy to use this lens. There are also strict requirements for the tripod. The image may be blurry if the tripod vibrates a little so it is better to use a high-speed shutter to create a black background and reduce the chance of photo blurring. Also, without enough patience, it is difficult to make good use of this lens.

## Working distance

For MP-E65, it is not that important to understand the normal concept of closest focusing distance. The focusing distance (i.e the distance between film plane and subject) announced by the manufacturer is within 0.243m ~ 0.313m. However, the key parameter is the working distance in front of the lens, i.e, the distance from the lens front to the subject. According to the marking on the lens, the working distance is as below:

For Magnification Ratios 1X, 2X, 3X, 4X, 5X the Working Distances are 101mm, 63mm, 51mm, 44mm and 41mm respectively. It cannot focus beyond this range.

## Effective aperture

Although MP-E65 nominal maximum aperture is f/2.8, this aperture is the effective aperture only in 1X. In other magnifications, the effective aperture is decreasing and the principle is similar to an ordinary lens + extension ring. From the optical structure of the lens drawing, at the areas beyond 1X, it is equivalent to adding an extension ring in the middle of the two optical groups



*Goby Baby 4mm*

*Nauticam housed Canon EOS 5D Mark III in M mode with 2X Inon Z-240 Canon MP E-65 4:1. Sensitivity: ISO 500. 1/160 @ f/11*

and the magnification can be greatly improved.

I have the following suggestions to help you use this lens:

1. I recommend that beginners to macro photography practice with a

100 mm Macro lens before using this lens, as you will be easily frustrated if you cannot autofocus or focus properly.

2. The bigger the magnification, the more shallow the depth of field



*Hairy Shrimp 4mm*  
*Nauticam housed Canon EOS 5D Mark III in M mode with 2X Inon Z-240 Canon MP E-65 4:1. Sensitivity: ISO 200. 1/200 @ f/16*



*Isopod 1mm*  
*Nauticam housed Canon EOS 5D Mark III in M mode with 2X Inon Z-240 Canon MP E-65 4:1. Sensitivity: ISO 320. 1/250 @ f/16*

will be. In the more shallow depth of field, it is more difficult to control the focal plane as well as the main focus. Regarding to the port selection, I use 100 Macro port with a 7cm extending ring to obtain a four times magnification, so the depth of field is a little deeper than 5-times. Moreover, the distance of the subject to the glass in front of the port reaches 44cm, which is beneficial to position the strobe light.

3. The more shallow depth of field, the more difficulty will be to find the subject to focus through the viewfinder. Generally in the high-power magnification, people take much longer time to find the subject, even causing the front lens to touch the subject. It requires certain degree of practice and familiar with the lens to be able to quickly find the subject through the viewfinder and focus in different magnification. It is better to use a focus light, as the magnification gets bigger, the

viewfinder is becoming darker, you will not be able to locate the subject clearly without additional light source illuminating it, not even mentioning to focus.

4. It is recommended that the minimum aperture to choose is f14. If using the lens's minimum aperture of f16, my personal experience is that the image quality (sharpness, contrast and saturation) will be slightly worse. However, if the magnification is 4:1 or 5:1, in order to achieve the maximum depth of field, we have to choose f16.

5. You will need to be "very good" at holding your breath, stabilizing your hand or be able to find the support (lens, camera body, hand or other body parts). It is difficult to focus under high magnification when only relying on hands.

6. Increase the shutter speed at least to 1/160 and above to reduce the effects of shakiness and to obtain a better and sharper image quality. I usually choose M mode and shutter speed of 1/200 to shoot,

with the aperture size depending upon zoom times or depth of field needed.

**Gary Sun**

*Chairman of underwater photography committee,  
 Guangdong Photography Association, China*



*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](http://www.magic-filters.com)*

# Digital Downsizing

by Martin Heyn

While preparing for a dive trip I looked into my “camera closet” and was surprised at all the camera gear I had. Some of it had not been touched in months and other items not used in years. The closet was full of lenses, housing parts, strobes, ports, clamps, arms, etc, all acquired over the years from multiple DSLR systems.

I thought: “wow, how much camera gear do I really need?” Then “what am I REALLY doing with my photos that requires this much stuff?” It was time for a “reality check.”

Truth be told, I have never sold a photo. I have yet to make an amazing wall sized print. I have not entered a major photo contest in years. To my chagrin National Geographic has not approached me about joining their staff!

How about you? What are you really doing with your photos?

Hence my “Digital De-Evolution” began. Maybe “De-Evolution” is a bit misleading. I was only willing to contemplate “downsizing” due to the introduction of the new mirrorless class of cameras and the continuing evolution of those in the point and shoot class.

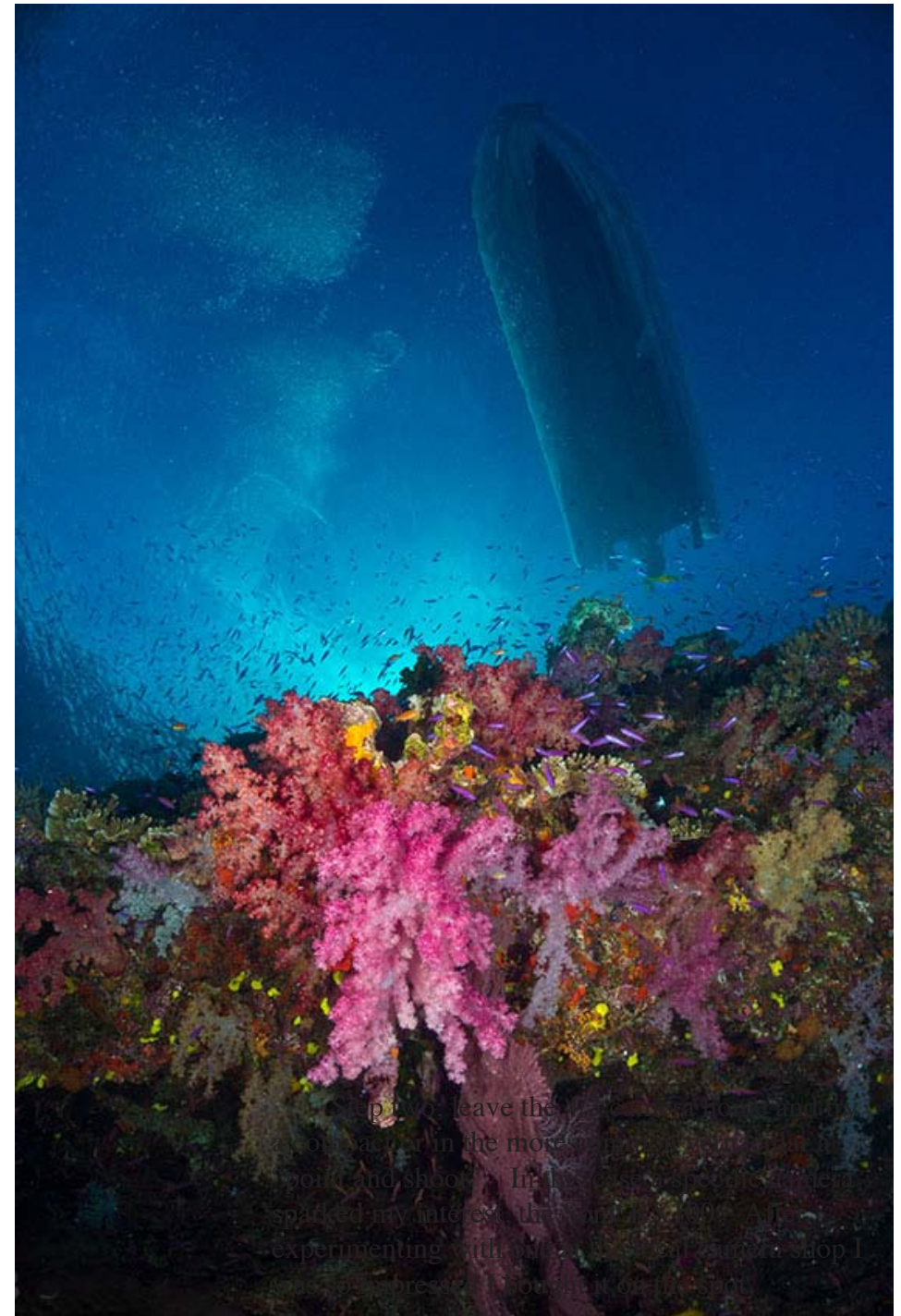
Step one in my “De-Evolution;” leave the Nikon D7000 at home and try one of the 4/3 mirrorless cameras. I

started with the Panasonic DMC-GX1 camera, Panasonic 14-42mm f/3.5-5.6 Lumix G lens, Panasonic 8mm f/3.5 Lumix G Fish Eye lens, Aquatica +10 diopter, 2x Sea & Sea YS-D1 strobes and the Nauticam GX1 housing.

I was apprehensive and thought I would miss my Nikon D7000 and Tokina 10-17mm. I did not! The Lumix 8mm f/3.5 worked just fine. As they say “the best zoom gear are your fins”. Even the Panasonic 14-42mm kit lens performed better than expected. In fact I was so impressed with the system and the resulting photos that upon our return I sold all of my Nikon DSLR gear!

No more scrabbling over slimy rocks, into surf, clutching 25lbs of camera gear to my chest that cost more than some cars I have owned. No more trying to sneak a +40lbs carry-on past airline check-in desks. Of course one downside is I will burn a few less calories not pushing that DSLR beast into the current.

***Sony RX100, Inon H100 WA Lens & Dome, Nauticam housing, 2xS Sea&Sea YS-D1, 1/320, f/4.5, ISO200***





*Nikon D800, Nikon 105mm & +5 Fit diopter, Nauticam housing, 2x Sea&Sea YS-D1, 1/125, f/16, ISO 40*

*(Top right) Panasonic GX1, Panasonic 14-42mm lens, Subsea +10 diopter, Nauticam housing, 2x Sea&Sea YS-D1 1/160, f/20, ISO 320*

*(Right) Sony RX100, Subesa +10 dipter, Nauticam housing, 2x Sea&Sea YS-D1, 1/160, f/11, ISO125*

Over 10 days of shooting in Fiji, on the Nai'a, I was impressed by what this "Point and Shoot" could do. With the addition of the Inon H100 lens and its companion dome I attained wide-angle results on par with my Nikon D7000. While you can shoot decent macro with this camera it is not anywhere close to what can be done

with an interchangeable lens camera and good glass.

It was then time to ask some hard questions. What combination of equipment would give me the results I would be happy with.

First, what am I doing with my photos? Second based on what I am doing with my photos how much



system do I really need to buy?

Now it was time to look at where and how I really share my photos.

First: I post them at underwater photography sites like Wetpixel.com and Scubaboard.com. Typically these images are “downsized” for viewing to 72-150dpi and a max length of 1200 pixels. A three-megapixel camera can provide enough pixels for that.

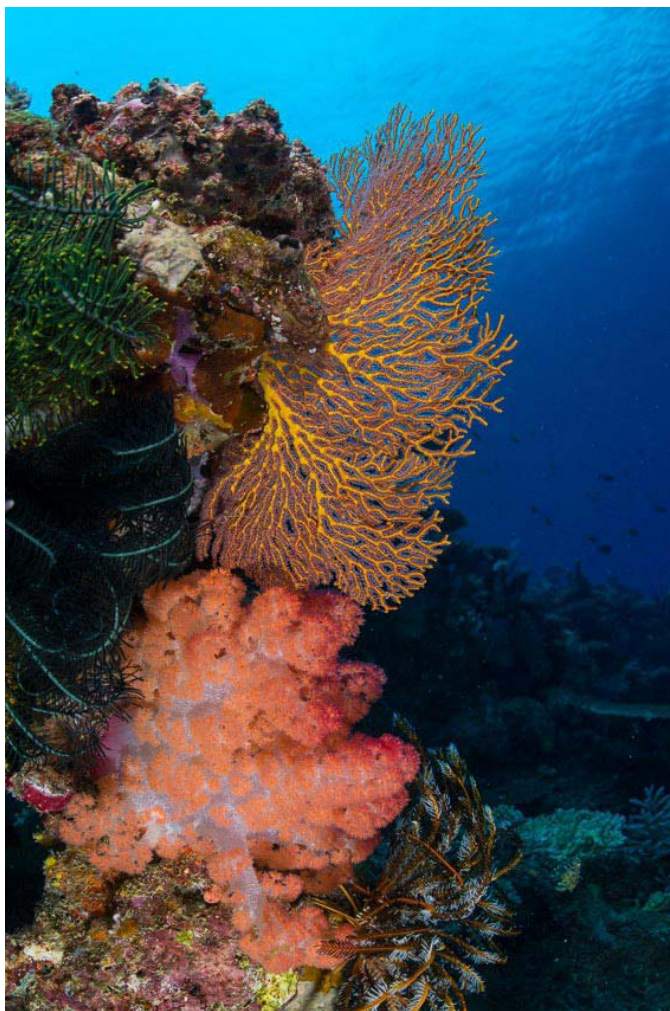
Second: I choose the best of those images and post them to my own website: [www.aquabluedreams.com](http://www.aquabluedreams.com). Which in all honesty is just a way to rationalize the hobby out of control. As to quality needed see #1.

Third: Three to five times a year I put together a HD slideshow of our most recent dive trip. Technically you can use any size file but the max capacity of a Blue Ray disk is 50gigs. Short versions of the video are posted to Vimeo HD with a max file size of 5GB. Be forewarned if we invite you to dinner you will be forced to enjoy your desert while watching our latest excursion.

Fourth: 10-12 of the very best images get printed in 8”x10” up to 24”x36” to be displayed at home.

Therefore, on the most basic level, a deciding factor is megapixels needed to get a high quality 24” x 36” print. 300ppi is considered an “Art Print” of the highest quality. At 150ppi you can get a very good quality print viewed “at arms length” and who gets closer than that to a poster sized print? In addition most of the better online printing companies can “upscale” your file to give you excellent quality poster size print.

Theoretically for online sharing any camera over 3 megapixels will “work.” Given the largest print I do is are about 24”x16” and I have had good



*Nikon D800, Sigma 15mm +Nikon 1.4 teleconverter, Aquatica housing, 2x Sea & Sea YS-D1*

luck with online printers “up-scaling” my files, any camera with 8 megapixels or more would “work”.

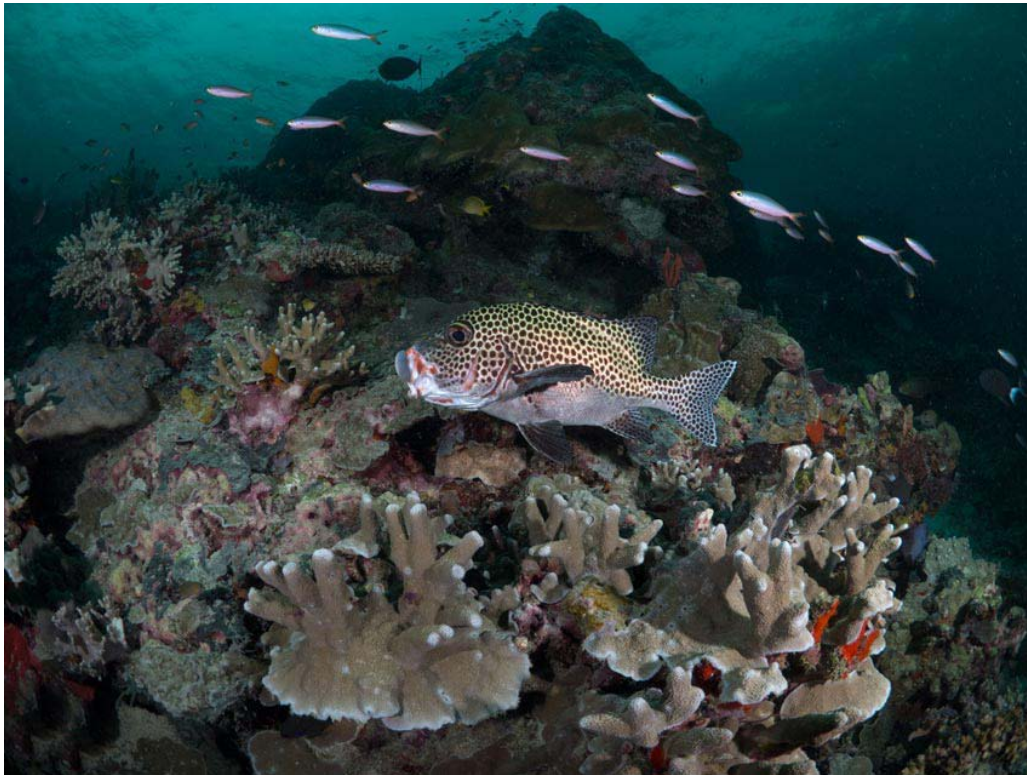
Most all of us have some form of budget. An additional significant consideration was cost vs. final results given what I am really doing with my photos. The following is a fairly accurate break



*Sony RX100, Inon H100 WA Lens and port, 2x Sea & Sea YS-D1, 1/160, f/4.0, ISO 200*

down of what general systems cost.

All systems include the cost of the camera body, lenses, aluminum housing with tray or handles, 2 strobes, 6 clamps, 4 strobe arms, 2 sync cords, associated zoom gears, wide angle dome, macro port or wet lens equivalent. For the DSLRs



*Panasonic GX1, Lumix 8mm Fish Eye lens, Nauticam housing, 2x Sea&Sea YS-D1, 1/100, f/7.1, ISO 800*

and Mirroless cameras 3 lenses are assumed, wide angle, macro and a generalist. For the compact the equivalent in wet lenses were included.

Full Frame DSLR System	\$14,810
Crop Sensor DSLR System	\$10,040
4/3 or Mirroless System	\$6725
Compact Camera System	\$4873

Note: For each class the most\* or least expensive housing were used. For the full frame class think Nikon

D800 or Canon 5D Mark III.

The following photos were taken with a variety of cameras; full frame DSLR, cropped sensor DSLR, 4/3 mirroless, and compact cameras.

Can you see a \$10,000 difference? Cameras and settings can be found at the end of the article.

Clearly this is not meant to be a technical “how to pick your camera” article as sensor size, lenses, auto focus systems, etc have not been

touched upon. For me it was an exercise in reality. In being realistic about what I am doing with my photos and how much money I can rationalize given how I am sharing my pixels.

What did I discover? It is unlikely I will ever own a DSLR again. But years of shooting DSLRs with excellent macro lenses has set the bar at such a high point that, at this time, most compact cameras even with diopters don’t meet my expectations. I will buy mirroless 4/3 system. Drum roll please; it will be the Olympus OMD-EM5!

But then again maybe I’ll hold out till the new Zeiss lenses come out

for a Sony NEX system, or wait and see if someone announces a housing for the new Fuji or...

**Martin Heyn**

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



**Closer Than Ever**



**Up Close in Brilliant Color**

Bring the undersea landscape to life with the SeaLife DC1400 camera and new 16mm Fisheye Wide Angle Lens.

[sealife-cameras.com](http://sealife-cameras.com) [f /SeaLifeCameras](https://www.facebook.com/SeaLifeCameras)



# Nauticam

innovation underwater

Striving to improve the experience of amateur and professional underwater photographers through our tireless pursuit of the most thoughtfully innovative of ergonomic solutions.

thought at your fingertips  
[www.nauticam.com](http://www.nauticam.com)



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

# Nauticam Olympus 12-50 mm port

by Phil Rudin

The 12-50mm F/3.5-6.3 ED M.Zuiko EZ micro 4/3 lens from Olympus has been released for several months now and has become widely discussed in underwater photography circles and U/W photography forums. In this article I will review some of the new underwater equipment made to support this lens and talk about why it is becoming so popular among Micro 4/3 camera owners.

The Olympus 12-50 zoom is the prime “kit” lens sold with the Olympus OMD E-M5 camera world wide, the lens also works for any of the M4/3 camera bodies back to the E-PL1. The E-M5 camera and lens sell for around \$1199/£1140 and the lens alone is \$469.00/£264\* This lens is a compact, lightweight 4.2X zoom lens that covers a wide range (84-24 degrees) and also has a macro feature. The lens has a minimum focus distance of 20cm (7.87”) and locks at 43mm in the macro mode.

Once locked into the 43mm macro mode the lens focuses in a range from around 20-50cm (7.87-19.68”). The Olympus specs say the lens will fill the frame at around 48x36mm at highest magnification. I am getting measurements closer to

36x27mm or about 1:1 on a 35mm sensor. The 36x24mm 35mm 1:1 difference v. 36x27mm for the M4/3 is the difference between the 4/3 format and the 35mm 3/2 format. On the M43 sensor, with the Olympus 60mm macro lens you would be getting true 1:1 magnification of around 17.3x13mm (0.68x0.51”) at full magnification making the 43mm macro mode on the 12-50 a 1:2 lens on the M43 sensor.

This is the only kit lens I am aware of that has a zoom range as wide as 24 degrees and as long as 84 degrees with a macro function of such high magnification. The lens has the MCS (movie and still) mechanism for smooth and quite zooming during movie clips. The lens also has great build quality with the Olympus dust and splash proof construction which is excellent for harsh conditions.

Depending on your system type this lens can be used with a

***Whip Coral Shrimp Pair, Olympus E-M5, Nauticam NA-EM5 housing with Nauticam port and zoom gear, Olympus 12-50 mm zoom, at 43mm, ISO200, F/16, 1/8 sec, 2X Inon Z240 strobes***



number of housing configurations. For the current and past Olympus Pen and OMD housing systems the lens will fit behind the stock port designed for the housing. It can also be used with the Zen Underwater WA-100 Pen dome port for a wider angle of view and closer focus distance through the zoom and macro range.

Olympus has added an upgrade to the OMD firm wear which allows the camera to zoom the lens from to 12mm or to 50mm when set to U/W wide angle or U/W macro mode. I don't know if this is an update that will reach all past Olympus M43 cameras or not. I hope to see custom gears for Olympus housing systems as well in the near future but this remains up in the air.

Nauticam has introduced a macro port and zoom gear set that allows control over both the power zoom function and macro function of the 12-50 zoom lens. The port has the standard Nauticam port locking system, 77mm threads for mounting accessory closeup lenses and a left hand control that allows the lens to be shifted from E-zoom to macro modes by a clockwise or counter clockwise turn. The E-zoom function works off the main zoom control also accessed with the left hand. In a review of the Nauticam NA-NEX-5 for UWPMAG.COM I described the housing as a brilliant fusion of advanced engineering, innovation, style, ergonomics and compactness.

This port and zoom/macro gear are of that same excellent design we have come to expect from Nauticam living up to the "Innovation Underwater" Nauticam logo. The gear works in power zoom to allow a smoother zoom while shooting video. While some may suffer from sticker shock when seeing the port/gear combo price of \$800.00/£560.00 you will certainly come to appreciate the ease of control this



system provides once you hit the water. Because of the complex gear design needed to control both power zoom and macro the gear set includes nine parts and twelve screws to complete the assembly. The gear includes several pages of instructions for mounting which is really not that hard for anyone who can follow a few pictures and turn the included screwdriver. This port is also ideal for the 60mm macro with or without the Nauticam 60 macro manual focus gear.

The 12-50 zoom lens will also work with other Nauticam flat ports and the four inch dome port with the Olympus auto zoom. Keep in mind that you will only be able to use the 12mm and 50mm ends of the lens with the firmware upgrade. You can also lock the lens in the 43mm macro mode before mounting the camera in the housing if you only want to shoot in the macro mode. An after market gear for the 12-50 zoom and Nauticam housings is also being made by DIGI&DIVE which mounts quickly and controls the manual zoom function from 12 to 50 mm, this gear does not access the macro mode but is reported to work quite well. The



*Anemone Shrimp with Eggs, Olympus E-M5, Nauticam NA-EM5 housing with Nauticam port and zoom gear, Olympus 12-50 mm zoom, at 43 mm, ISO200, F/13, 1/250 sec, 2X Inon Z240 strobes*

gear can be sourced through, [unterwasserkamera.at](http://unterwasserkamera.at) for €95,00.

With the manual zoom gear the lens is set by turning the zoom control on the left hand side of the housing. The power zoom takes a dive or two to master and you can run past the desired stopping point if you bare down to hard on the control. The focal length of the lens as it changes can be seen in the upper right corner of the camera display if you want to set a precise focal length between 12 and 50 mm.

Since most underwater closeup lenses for DSLR and Mirrorless cameras use the 67mm thread, Nauticam is offering a 77mm flip adapter for the 12-50 zoom port which will hold the 67mm lenses. At the time of my review I was using a 77mm to 67mm step-down ring to mount my SubSee +10 closeup

lens to the port using a SAGA 67mm flip holder. This configuration created vignetting at around 13mm to a full blacked out circle around the image at 12mm. With the Nauticam flip holder this is not an issue and you have full range of the lens as you would without any attachments. At the 12mm to 14mm end of the lens, especially with F/stops below F/8 corners begin to soften as you would expect with a flat port. This is hardly a deal breaker for such an excellent zoom range.

While using the ReefNet SubSee +10 closeup lens I was able to get slightly greater magnification at 50mm more than than I did in macro mode (43mm) and without a closeup lens. The +10 closeup lens is of little use in macro mode because of how close the lens will focus locked at 43mm. I was able to gain greater magnification at 43mm using the thinner Inon UCL165 lens. The focus was very close but still within a safe working distance to the subject. I was also surprised at how fast the lens was able to focus in most cases for an f/3.5-6.3 lens. Not as quick as the 60mm macro but still quite good for a higher end zoom lens.

For Micro 4/3 system owners the Olympus 12 to 50 zoom is an excellent addition to the lens lineup and a must have for those getting into a Micro 4/3 interchangeable lens underwater system. Advanced users



*Ribbon Eel, Olympus E-M5, Nauticam NA-EM5 housing with Nauticam port and zoom gear, Olympus 12-50 mm zoom, at 43 mm, ISO200, F/14, 1/250 sec, 2X Inon Z240 strobes*

will also enjoy this lens for travel as it covers a wide range of subjects in a small and light weight package. As a top-side travel lens it will also cover most of your needs shooting needs.

**Phil Rudin**

*Thanks to Chris Parsons,  
NauticamUSA.com and  
ReefPhotoVideo.com for their  
knowledge and support with this  
equipment.*



# Olympus E-PL5 and PT-EP10

by Dan Bolt

And so it came to pass that almost two years to the day since I first got hold of my faithful Olympus E-PL1, that my chums at CamerasUnderwater thrust into my eager hands the Olympus PT-EP10 housing for the newly arrived E-PL5 PEN camera.

As we all know, two years in the real world might as well be two light-years in the digital imaging world with the latest batch of class-leading cameras being hugely more capable photo taking devices than models only a generations or two older. The same is true of the E-PL5, as after the launch Olympus's much lauded O-MD camera at roughly twice the price of the next best PEN camera there was a real gap opening up not only in terms of performance but in quality and expectation of the PEN line of cameras too.

While the O-MD has seen a large uptake amongst underwater photographers, thanks in part to Nauticam releasing a housing mere milliseconds after the camera was seen in public for the first time, Olympus' decision to redesign the port mount on their own O-MD housing left us current PEN users

high and dry. With their offering of a plastic housing which cost as much as an aluminium one but reliant on 3rd party manufacturers to come up with an adaptor for our existing ports, seeing new-comers to the M4/3rds format using all the new toys was some-what frustrating to say the least.

Enter, stage-right, the E-PL5; the new 16 mega-pixel, 8fps, super high-ISO and dynamic-range Micro Four-Thirds kid on the block. Those specs sound familiar? Well they should because this new little tech-monster uses the same image-sensor and processing engine as its much more expensive cousin the O-MD. In fact, aside from a few firmware and ergonomic tweaks, the only real functional differences are that the E-PL5 does not have a built-in electronic viewfinder, a weather-sealed body nor the O-MD's superb 5-axis image stabilization system (though the E-PL5 still has in-body IS).

*Olympus 60mm macro, manual, +5 Subsee, 1/250th, f/11, ISO200, an easily over-exposed nudibranch is handled well by the dynamic range of the sensor*



So in a way there is almost no reason for me to be writing this review because if you've read about the O-MD's awesome image quality, amazing high ISO performance, class-leading dynamic range and blisteringly quick operation, then you may as well stop here because guess what? The E-PL5 pretty much matches it on every measure.

Coming, as I did, from the E-PL1, the first impression of the E-PL5 is how very, very fast it is. Everything you ask this camera to do it does with a sense of measured urgency in order to ready itself to perform the next job you ask of it. In playback and menu operation this is all very nice to have, but where the speed really makes itself felt is in the auto-focus system. Obviously a camera this small and cheap is never going to give top-end dSLRs a run for their auto-focus money, but it gives it a bloody good go and even in low light is really very fast indeed.

In fact the AF system on the E-PL5 has breathed a new lease of life into all my M4/3rds lenses because of its speed, even the Panasonic 45mm macro, which has a bit of a reputation for hunting, is super-quick and a joy to use. Putting the latest lenses on the body really shows its ability though; the supplied 14-42mm kit lens or the Olympus 60mm macro are almost instantaneous to lock focus; something that rarely happened on my old camera.

I will add a quick word about speed and SD memory at this point. Up until now the slowest part of any camera I've owned has either been its processing chip, the internal buffer, or the data-buses used to shunt image files around. Not so with the E-PL5. This camera makes use of the latest high-speed memory on offer with gusto. Here's a practical example: if I use a standard class 10 SD



*Olympus 60mm macro, manual, +5 Subsee, 1/250th, f/9.0, ISO200, the fast flash synch frost this tiny nudi being battered around in a current*

memory card and shoot (RAW & jpeg at the same time) at 8fps, I'll get maybe 14 shots (less than 2 seconds) before the buffer fills and the system slows down. Replace that card with a Sandisk Extreme UHS-I compatible card and you'll get 22 frames - nearly 3 seconds of shooting. That's an astonishing



*Olympus 14-42mm kit lens, manual, 1/60th, f/9.0, ISO800, a rainy day in January demands good ISO performance to let in the ambient light*

60% improvement in throughput and could make all the difference in capturing that peak action. By the way, if you've never heard what 8fps sounds like; just go to your local retailer & give it a go! I guarantee it'll put a smile on your face.

The much flaunted high ISO abilities of the



*Olympus 14-42mm kit lens, +5 Subsee, manual, 1/200th, f/5.0, ISO200, tiny selectable AF points allow for very accurate focusing*

O-MD are also carried across to the E-PL5. The change this can bring to your photography can not be overstated; being able to shoot at ISO1600 and still have a high-quality printable image, and even going to 3200 for projection/web use, is an astonishing leap from all previous PEN models. It takes a little while to realise how much impact this has on the type of photography you can now achieve; in terms of low light or creativity the boundaries have just been pushed back yet again.

Now I would love to show you

a stunning sun ball shot to show-off the dynamic range of the new sensor. But as this is the UK in winter, and everyone had seen hundreds of gorgeous O-MD sun balls, I thought I'd treat you to a dull rockpool image with no other purpose than to show that DR is useful for more than just sun balls. Take a look; its a natural light split-shot image facing into the sun using the Panasonic 8mm fisheye. So you'd expect either the entire sky to be utterly blown-out or the shadows in the pool to be inky black-holes. And yes, while the top-left-corner



*Panasonic 8mm fisheye, aperture priority, 1/200th, f/13, ISO640, natural light. Pretty impressive dynamic range*

is a little blown out, the rest of the sky retains clouds and colour and yet at the same time the detail in the shadows of the pool are still there. Pretty impressive stuff - the dynamic range, if not the image.

In summary this camera is an awesome and very welcome addition to the PEN range of bodies, however there are one or two notes of caution from an ergonomic point of view that I feel compelled to share with you. Looking around me in everyday life I

see that most folks, as they grow from a child into adulthood tend to 'grow' uniformly ñ that is to say that for a large percentage of people their hands and fingers actually get bigger after 12th birthday rather than maintaining the small and sleek dimensions of a pre-teen. Unfortunately this fact of nature is a little wasted on the clever folk at Olympus because this camera, simply put, is too small to hold! Even if you do use the supplied 'grip' (which you have to remove before

placing the camera in its housing) there is simply no-where for a fully-grown adult to securely hold it by. Compounding this lack of real-estate the buttons and control-wheel are so small (and so easily activated by accident) that this camera is actually easier to use INSIDE the housing with the larger, better placed buttons that it has.

My last niggles with the E-PL5's design is the screen; bright, crisp and gorgeous to look at it may be, but because it uses the 16:9 format, if you choose to shoot 4:3 aspect-ratio then you end up with a viewing area smaller than the original E-PL1. This apparently is called progress. Yes I know it's all to enable one to shoot full HD video but I do find it frustrating as this model is sold primarily as a stills camera.

Ergonomics, it seems, comes at a cost. And anyone previously owning a relatively cheap PT-EPx housing will not be surprised by the PT-EP10 - it retains all the good, and not so good, features of Olympus' other PEN housings. It is small, light and easily operated with one hand but I've always felt that the shutter release is in the wrong plane for those using the housing with handles, and the same goes for the zoom dial. As odd as they may feel at first you quickly get used to it, and as I've mentioned already the buttons are sensibly placed and



*The offending port cover that needs to be removed to use mini-domes*

*Panasonic 8mm fisheye, aperture priority, 1/30th, f/3.5, ISO2000, natural light. At dusk in a shaded pool, these karp demonstrate the great ISO performance of the E-PL5*



easily accessible even while wearing 7mm mitts.

The big plus point for existing PEN shooters is that the PT-EP10 retains the same bayonet mount for the range of 3rd-party ports widely available. This represents a clear, and relatively inexpensive, upgrade path for many people. I have three additional ports; an Athena mini dome and two Zen ports for the 9-18mm wide-zoom and 45mm macro lenses. Of these only the Athena port fitted onto the new housing without any trouble. Both Zen ports needed a slight modification to them before I was happy that the force used to twist

them onto the mount wasn't damaging the housing. All I had to do was file off a thin layer of aluminium from the inside of the bayonet so that the action was smooth and didn't require a strap-wrench to remove after a dive.

And the modifications don't end there. Olympus plainly had other designs for either the camera or the housing that didn't make it to the final manufacturing process. There is a blanked-off bulkhead on the front of the housing (looks about the right size for a Sea & Sea type optical fibre) which has a moulded cover that protrudes from the body of the housing by at most 10mm. Sadly

this cover is in exactly the wrong place to enable close-fitting mini-domes to be seated properly into the mount. Having just packed away my metal file, I now reached for a junior hacksaw and set to carefully sawing off this offending bit of plastic - that took some courage I must admit.

I am happy to report that I know other people are advising a 'minor modification' to the housing to enable the use of mini-domes so I feel better about having chopped mine around a bit. And it works like a charm with all my ports so I am now a very happy chap. In addition, it is now impossible to place the camera into the housing



*Panasonic 45mm macro, manual, 1/200th, f/2.8, ISO640, L&M SOLA600. Even a low-end video light is useful enough with such good ISO performance*

without popping up the flash, this is a nice touch and one certain to save some blushes ñ all we have to do is to remember to put the (external) flash onto the camera in the first place.

So to end with; the only real surprise to the E-PL5 is the price, considering the specification is so close to the O-MD it is an outright bargain (and don't forget the flash synch is now 1/250th, rather than the painfully slow 1/160th found in earlier PEN models). The PT-EP10 is a very usable housing for the price. If you travel a lot, or require small and light kit for other reasons (freediving photography for example) and a 40m

depth limit isn't an issue, then it is hard to beat.

As a parting note I should say that I am not sponsored by Olympus, nor am I given the kit to review nor do I receive any form of payment for putting this piece together. All the reviews I do are based on kit that I actually own and have paid hard-cash for, so you are getting my truly honest opinion - which I sincerely hope you find useful.

**Dan Bolt**

[www.underwaterpics.co.uk](http://www.underwaterpics.co.uk)



**YOU WANT IT ALL, YOU WANT IT ALL, YOU WANT IT ALL AND YOU WANT IT NOW!**

**LIKE DIVING?  
LIKE PHOTOGRAPHY?  
YOU'LL LOVE US**



London's premier underwater camera store

Ocean Leisure Cameras is the one-stop central London underwater photography specialist store. You can find many places selling UW photo kit but only one place has it all

Address:  
11-14 Northumberland Ave  
London, WC2N 5AQ  
Underground: Embankment

Contact:  
Phone: 020 7930 5051  
info@oceanleisurecameras.com  
www.oceanleisurecameras.com

Open 7 days a week

**CAMERAS**

**HOUSINGS**

**LIGHTS**

**LENSES**

**KNOWLEDGE**

# Shooting Ocean Drifters

by Ryo Minemizu

Jellyfish, small shellfish and larval fish start their lives drifting in the ocean. Generally they are referred to as plankton which is swept away or drifts with the tide as they have limited swimming ability.

It is really interesting to see and photograph these subject as some are transparent and some are very particular in shape – a far cry from their adult appearance. We can see them during the day from just under surface up to 10m depth and some of them can be observed during night by using their light-harvesting characteristic with a torch. They vary in size from a few millimeters to tens of centimeters so different techniques are needed to capture these subjects while drifting.

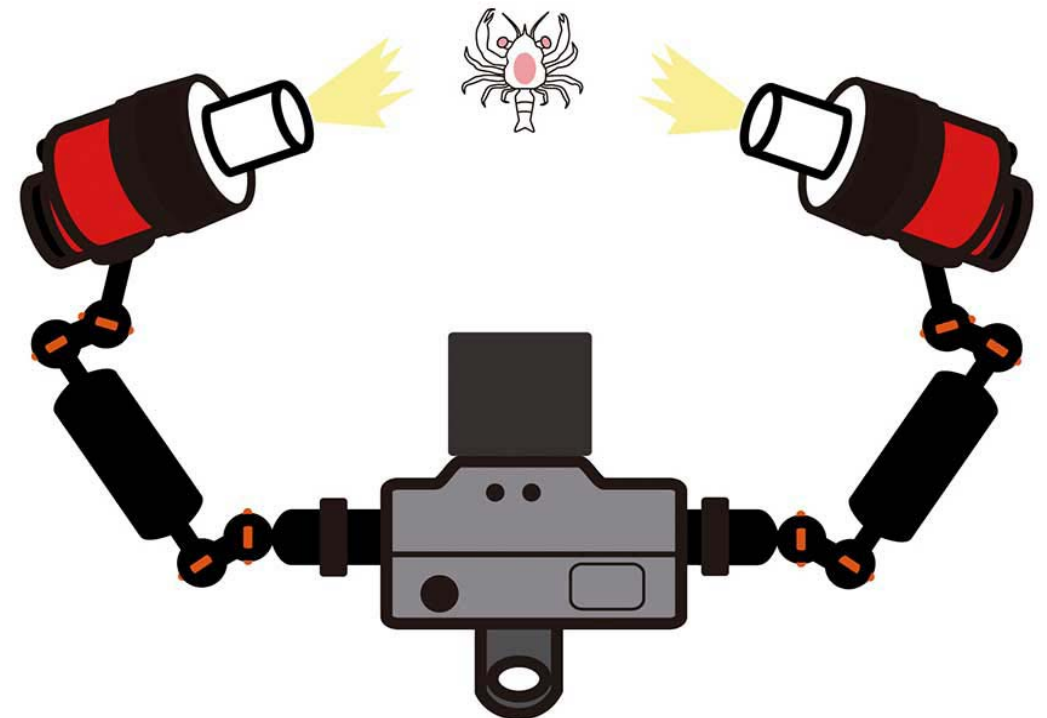
The first thing we have to consider is the balance of an underwater housing. When shooting these ocean drifters neutral buoyancy is a must. It would be ideal if we can comfortably hold a housing with one hand without feeling wrist strain. I manage this with my INON X-2 for EOS60D combined with Multi Ball Arms with Stick Arm Float S and Mega Float Arms to lighten total underweight of the housing. The

configuration of buoyancy devices can be adjusted to get neutral balance.

The next decision is what lens to use. As with any subject, there is variety of shooting styles including wide and macro. We can use a wide lens at close focusing distance shooting ocean drifters with seascape behind or a macro lens to capture the micro world in detail. I normally use Canon EF50mm F2.5 compact macro lens and EF8-15mm F4L Fisheye USM for shooting ocean drifters. When using the EF50mm F2.5 compact macro lens with EOS60D which is a crop camera, focal length is approx. 75mm and reproduction ratio is 3:4. Minimum focus distance is 23cm which is best suited shooting distance to shoot most ocean drifters.

## Lighting technique without backscatter

The last technique but not the least important is lighting. When shooting transparent marine life on a black background, small particles around the subject are also illuminated. Normally strobes are positioned on either side of the camera but this would create backscatter. In such situations, dark field imaging





technique (more specifically incident-light dark field imaging ) for photo microscopy is useful. Attach a snoot on an INON strobe to narrow down the beam coverage and extend it with a strobe arm to light just to the right of the subject. This lighting technique can reduce backscatter.

### Focusing

Needless to say, using narrow strobe light makes it extremely difficult to focus on moving subjects so it is better to use manual focus to pre-focus the lens to a certain distance. Put your finger in front of

a lens to take sample shot and make sure that the finger is lit up by a strobe as well. Next, make a composition for actual subject and move camera back and forth to get satisfactory focus and then press the shutter release. This pre-focus technique is unique to the combination of EOS 60D and Canon EF50mm F2.5 compact macro lens which provides larger DoF comparing to a life size macro lens.

**Ryo Minemizu**  
[www.seacam.jp](http://www.seacam.jp)

*After working as a local dive instructor based in Osezaki, Shizuoka, Japan, he started new carrier as a photographer in 1997. He published a pictorial book of marine crustacean Marine Crustacean in 2000 and Coral Reef Shrimps of Indo-West Pacific in 2013 both from Bun-ichi Co.,Ltd. His current interest is shooting marine plankton including jelly-fishes not only in Japan but in the U.S. and Southeast Asia.*





Dive with us at our new dive centre in Tioman Island, Malaysia! Nitrox ready...



Join our Facebook UW Photo Contest! Prizes over USD \$30,000 Free entry! Like our Scuba Symphony Page!



Olympus EPL-3



Aquatica HD Wave



Seacam D4 Silver



Subal D800



Recsea NEX-7



Aquatica NEX-5N



Waterproof W30



Recsea RX-100



Recsea G-1X



KLEARPORT



Light&Motion Sola Video& Photo Lights



Sea&Sea YS-D1



Canon WP-DC48/G15



10bar M67 adaptor for WP-DC48



Seahorn Snoot for ALL strobe models!



ULCS/GoPro Pistol Grip



Scuba Symphony- Your Ultimate One-Stop Diving and Underwater Imaging Solution!  
 S103A Centrepoint Bandar Utama  
 47800 Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia  
 Tel: +603-77107197 Fax: +603-77251197  
 Email: [scubasympphony@gmail.com](mailto:scubasympphony@gmail.com)  
 Online Shop: [www.scubasympphony.com](http://www.scubasympphony.com)



# Sun, sealions and burritos

with Alex Tattersall

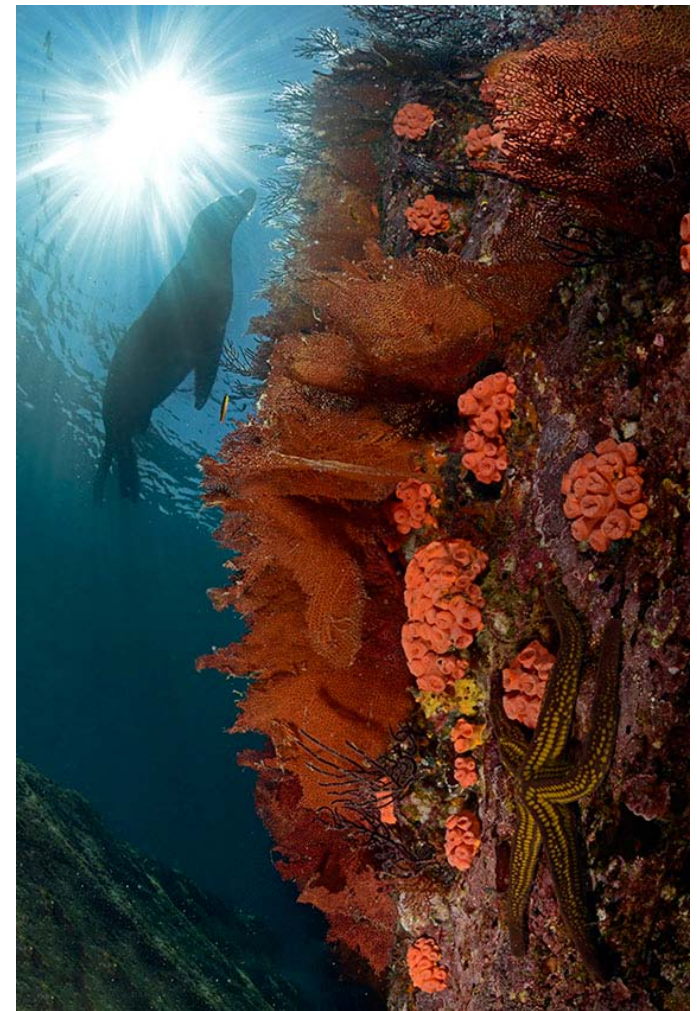
I love Latin America. I spent a colourful gap-year backpacking around Central and South America and, whilst I learnt to dive in Caribbean Venezuela, I was too empty of pocket to take advantage of the spectacular diving on offer. I was happy then to have the opportunity to make a visit to La Paz, on the Baja California peninsular to delight in the offerings of the Sea of Cortez, affectionately known (following a quote from the great Jacques Cousteau) as the World's Aquarium.

At close to 5 million years old, the Sea of Cortez is widely considered to be youngest of the seas, a long narrow stretch of water sheltered from the mighty Pacific by the Baja California Peninsular. As a result, it serves as a refuge for many large pelagic species, humpback whales, manta rays, whale sharks, Orca, leatherback turtles, whilst boasting an exceptional number of fish and invertebrate species. Moreover, the site contains more than a third of the world's total species of marine mammals and marine cetaceans. Biologically speaking the Sea of Cortez is the richest body of water on our planet with a significant area named as a UNESCO world marine heritage site. Above the surface, the desertified mountains drop into turquoise sea colours reminiscent in many ways of the Egyptian Red Sea.

Once underwater though, the topographical features, reef structures, coral species and marine life contrasts greatly with that of the Red Sea. The Sea of Cortez experiences far more substantial water movement resulting in a considerably larger variance in water temperature (between 15

degrees Celsius in the winter months to 30 degrees Celcius during the summer). As a result, coral reef structures are very different from those in the Red Sea. The richness of marine diversity in this body of water is a direct result of this significant water movement which washes up high levels of plankton to nourish and support a rich and diverse food chain. Water temperature and water clarity are two very important considerations when deciding upon the optimum seasonal period to visit the Sea of Cortez as a dive destination. After all, if we want to dive in chilly conditions with limited visibility, surely we can do that in the UK. Being informed in our choice of time to visit will also afford the best possible sightings and interactions with the species we wish to encounter.

We stayed at la Concha resort (<http://www.laconcha.com/>), host to the Cortez Club Dive Centre (<http://www.cortezclub.com/>), located a kilometre North of the vibrant little tourist town of La Paz. Diving from the centre is on small day boats as many of the best sites are within one hour from the resort. Limited numbers of liveaboard boats operate in the area but as far as I can I like to support the local economy and experience some of the local life, and with the choice of colourful eateries and tequila bars in the town we were very happy, if not a little light-headed, with our decision to be land-based. If you are thinking to visit La Paz and stay at la Concha resort, a word of advice, ask to stay in the newly refurbished side of the hotel. And, expect loud and colourful marriage fiestas during the weekends. A lovely side of Mexico where



*The midmorning sun shines onto the face of the Isolotes outcrop resulting in excellent lighting conditions. At 5 meters, the D800 copes well with sunbursts.*

*D800, Sigma 15mm, Nauticam housing, Zen 200mm dome, 2x INON Z240, 1/250, F16, ISO250*

you'll see locals dress up in traditional clothing and dance until the early hours. Also, I wouldn't recommend taking the honeymoon suite unless



*Poor vis is common with feeding whaleshark, the answer it seems is to get closer.  
- D800, Sigma 15mm, Nauticam housing, Zen 200mm dome, 1/400, F5, ISO500*

you can comfortably ‘perform’ with an open-air toilet surrounded by a one meter high wall and a cowboy style swing door within three paces from the bed. The Brit inside me meant that I, personally, feel this is stretching the love a little, especially with the omnipresent refried beans making appearances on plates at all times of the day. Incidentally, La Paz holds the world record for the world’s longest burrito weighing 5.8 tons and measuring 2.7km. (<http://blog.cbriveras.com/la-paz-news-the-worlds-largest-burrito-nov-9-2010/>).

To me, that shows how cool this little town is.

Day One, we emerged jetlagged and confused from our room and, after a breakfast of refried beans, guacamole, tortillas and cactus juice (olé), we found our way to the dive centre. Having dived several times with our wonderful UK grey seal colonies in the Farnes and Lundy island, I was very keen to see one of the area’s main attractions, the resident colony of 250+ Californian Sealions on the small outlying island of Los Isolotes and so requested this



*Wonderful interaction between wild animal and semi-wild human (my wife;).  
- D800, Sigma 15mm, Nauticam housing, Zen 200mm dome, 2x INON Z240, 1/250, F9, ISO320*

to the very accommodating dive centre. We boarded the boat prepared for the 45 minute buzz up the coast to Los Isolotes. Within five minutes from leaving the jetty, our captain nonchalantly pointed out a whale shark on the surface and would have continued had he not been flagged down by us, frantically shouting ‘Stop’, ‘Stop’.

We visited the area in November, towards the tail end of the long five-month whale shark season in La Paz and the captain was clearly not

as excited as we were. Still being the customers, we spent a good 20 minutes in the plankton rich water with the majestic creature, which became two and then became three. We were the only boat in the area, with only four of us on board, a contrast to the increasingly familiar shots from the Maldives of whale sharks and mantas being chased down by armies of divers and snorkelers.

As we continued on, within another ten minutes we encountered a small pod of bottlenose dolphin and



*How can you resist these eyes. I borrowed my wife's Olympus OMD-EM5 setup for one dive and was surprised by its competence.*

*Olympus OMD-EM5, Panasonic 8mm Fisheye, Nauticam NA-EM5 housing, FIT Pro 4.33" optical glass minidome, 2x Sea and Sea YS-D1, 1/200, F11, ISO 500*

then to our absolute delight, a mother and baby humpback whale pair cut through the surface some 20 meters from our boat. The Sea of Cortez is one of the world hotspots for whale-watching, a season that starts late October and runs through until May with a peak in January/February. More than 20 species are seen in the area including Sperm Whales, Finback Whales, Minke Whales, Grey Wales and the magnificent Blue Whale. With a newfound glint of excitement in our

eyes and broad smiles on our faces, we finally arrived at our destination, the rocky outcrop of Los Isolotes and the Californian Sealion Colony. This was only Day One.

The journey North from La Paz to Los Isolotes can take from 45 minutes on a calm day to up to 90 minutes with rougher seas. With no toilet on the boat, this can challenge even the strongest of bladders. As the boat rounds the last of the headland, the final stretch of water



*Charging bull sealion - This was a warning to me that I was too close to this 350Kg giant's family. I like to maintain fast shutter speeds with fast moving animals such as sealions. The D800 shows little difference in noise performance between ISO 100 and ISO 640 so I set ISO quite high to be able to have a more closed aperture.*

*-D800, Sigma 15mm, Nauticam housing, 200mm Zen dome, 2x INON Z240, 1/200, F11, ISO 640*

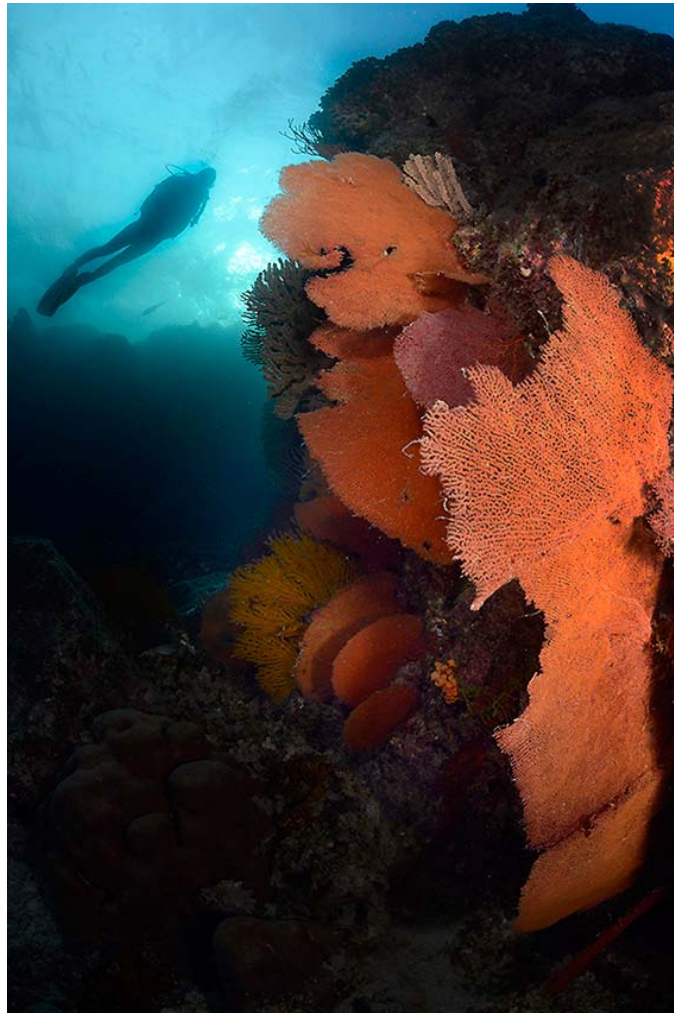
becomes exposed and the delightful odour of fresh sealion starts to waft along on the breeze. Approaching the pinnacle, the odour intensifies and is joined by the inimitable sound of barking, which to an underwater wildlife photographer like myself, causes great excitement, like a ringing bell to Pavlov's dogs. What photo

opportunities await!

Diving with Californian Sealions is like diving with UK grey seals, on steroids. It is a treat first to be able to fall into warm water in a thin wetsuit. As you jump in and approach the rocky shallows, the barking heard at the surface surrounds you underwater. The enormous bulls, weighing some



*What a poser - This female was resting in a cave entrance and was curious to see me arrive. I'd put on the 60mm macro lens to get some nice sealion portraits and she was very happy to oblige. Strobes were on long arms in front of me to get light onto her. I have found that with the larger field of view, the 60mm is a different tool on FX format cameras. D800, 60mm AF-S macro, Nauticam housing, macro port 60, 2x INON Z240, 1/250, F11, ISO 320*



*The rich colours of the gorgonians in the Sea of Cortez contrast wonderfully with the azure of its water (during the right season)*

*D800, Sigma 15mm, Nauticam housing, Zen 200mm dome, 2x INON Z240, 1/125, F14, ISO500*

350kg, are very vocal in their territorial patrol displays moving with incredible agility. Their presence is certainly intimidating, especially as they charge with their teeth bared, and I did have a couple of 'heart in mouth' moments. Back on board, I told of my encounter with a large male that had me pinned to a rock and the captain showed me a large scar on his arm from a male sealion bite. The females, very graceful in their movement divide their time between basking on the surface in large harems and frolicking with their ever-playful pups. It is these juveniles though that are the highlight for many, cute and curious little nibblers that use divers and snorkelers as playthings, grabbing fins and mouthing bubbles, sometimes giving a playful nip, though at times a little too hard.

As ever, timing is important to get the optimum experience with the pups. Coming too early in the season would mean overprotective parents and overly-cautious pups, too late and territorial preparations would already be under way for the next brood. Opinion differs between boat captains but between early September and mid November is ideal, before the waters turn cold and visibility deteriorates. For photos, morning is ideal as the waters turn murky with sealion waste later in the day!

**Alex Tattersall**  
[www.uwvisions.com](http://www.uwvisions.com)

*I am organizing a return photo trip to La Paz at the end of September 2013 through Divequest for another week of sun, sealions and burritos.*

[www.divequest.co.uk/Focus-on-mexico-sea-of-cortez-alex-tattersall](http://www.divequest.co.uk/Focus-on-mexico-sea-of-cortez-alex-tattersall)

### Small ads



#### **SOLD! – Ikelite housing for a Canon 5D MKII**

Ikelite housing for a Canon 5D MKII, Ikelite 8" dome port (no scratches) for a Canon fish eye lens, Ikelite ports Canon 17-40mm and a macro 100mm-IS lens. I am based in Scarborough, U.K. £1100 ovnoraminrobin@hotmail.com

Your advert could be here instead for just £5.00



#### **For sale – extrem'vision(up to 100 m!!) and video camera sony vx 2000**

I'm selling a fantastic underwater housing extrem'vision(up to 100 m!!) and video camera sony vx 2000 in really good condition!!!coming with a pelican case!!!!The underwater housing is coming with :- 2 lenses ( 1 macro and 1 wide angle) - 1 red filter. - 2 set of o'rings - Sillicon for the o'rings. - Digital screen.The sony camera vx 2000 is coming with :- A set of batteries ( 2 large, 1 medium, 1 small) - 5 new dv tapes. - 2 cleaning tapes.Extrem'vision is a French Brand known worldwide.it's strong, reliable and easyto repair if any problems.....REALLY GOOD CONDITION!!!!2000 euros!!!!!!fabien mouret

Email: [maddox666@gmail.com](mailto:maddox666@gmail.com) [Ref:c147]



#### **SOLD! – Subtronic Nova analog version no ttl converter**

Subtronic Nova analog version no ttl converter

The strobe is 3-years-old in good condition

All sockets in 56

800-€

Rudolf Solböck

Ref C146

Your advert could be here instead for just £5.00



#### **For sale – Aquatica housing 5D, 8 inch dome, dome shade and canon 5D body**

Aquatica housing 5D, 8 inch dome, dome shade and canon 5D body including 2 spare batteries and spare charger for sale £1600 + p&p.Housing:Aquatica 5D housing - good to 90m, 8" optical acrylic dome port – some minor scratches but not visible in photos, 8" dome shade / guard, for wide angle lenses, Spare O ringCameraCanon 5D, 3 Batteries, 2 Chargers, StrapAll for £1600+ p&p, will accept paypal, or cashPlease feel free to ask any questionThe equipment has not been used for a while but I have just upgraded to a canon 5D mark II package so have this for sale.I am based in London and if you wish to come round and have a look/examine the equipment prior to parting with your money we can arrange that.

Email: [martin.abela@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:martin.abela@hotmail.co.uk) [Ref:c145]

### Sell your stuff

You'll be amazed at just how quickly your unwanted underwater photography kit could be converted into hard cash with a UwP small ad.

You can have your own UwP small ad for just £5.00 and it can have one photo as well as up to 100 words.

Check out small ads here

Buy your small ad here

# Mucking in Molluca

by Mark Webster

During the first age of global exploration when characters like Columbus, Vasco Da Gama and Magellan were the heroes of the age, one of the major objectives was to find a route to the fabled spice islands in what is now Indonesia. In the 15th century spices were a valuable global commodity which many believed offered protection from the various plagues that prevailed in Europe as well as being used to flavour food and disguise the taste of rotting meat! Prior to this era of maritime exploration these spices had been imported via overland routes in small quantities and so were a rarity which traded at very high prices. One of the best known trading areas established by the Dutch East India company were known as the Molluca islands which were rich in cloves, mace and nutmeg and the island of Ambon became a major export hub in this valuable trade.

Fast forward to the 21st century and Ambon is earning a reputation for a very different commodity which is highly prized by underwater photographers...plenty of muck on the seabed and the treasure trove of exotic critters to be found! Whilst

Ambon has been on the radar as an attractive dive location for quite some time, the development of diving facilities and resorts was arrested by political turmoil around the year 2000. The region is now stable again and the area began to become a start or finish point for several live aboard operations and one local dive centre reopened under the name of Maluku Divers. This resort was initially based close to Ambon city but in 2010 moved to a newly built resort closer to the airport and perhaps more importantly closer to some of the best dive sites in the bay.

Maluku Divers is fast gaining a glowing reputation amongst underwater photographers and divers who are keen to see the weirdest

*Rhinopias eschmeyeri, paddle flap Rhinopias – all scorpion fish yawn at some point and the Rhinopias is no exception. I spent long enough with this fish to watch him feed several times on cardinal fish and he would often yawn following the swallowing process which gave me the chance to anticipate the shot. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, 2X teleconverter, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO200 f11 1/125.*



*The waterfront accommodation at Maluku Divers is bungalow style with very spacious dimensions inside and a covered veranda to watch the sun go down with a cold beer in your hand.*



*Sea whip shrimp are seen in pairs frequently with one being very much smaller (the male possibly?). You can reduce the shutter speed in a macro shot to capture some natural light but you have to wait for your moment as the sea whip is often vibrating in the current. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 105mm micro, Inon wet lens, Inon Quad flash, ISO200 f16 1/30.*



creatures that Indonesian waters offer. So far this is the only resort here offering comfortable accommodation and the facilities that we have come to expect, so coming here is a little like the early days in the Lembah Strait when there was only one resort and you would rarely see another dive boat. The resort itself is very intimate and will take a maximum of 18 guests in spacious, comfortable bungalow style rooms each with a veranda facing the sea. There is a central complex that comprises the restaurant, a lounge area, well equipped camera room and to the side of the development the dive centre with dedicated camera rinse tanks. The resort is managed by Marcel Hargendijk and LiLi Tey, a delightful couple who ensure efficient and safe operations and are keen to assist with any issues.

There are three dive boats available, so even if the resort is full

of photographers the boats are not crowded and there is plenty of space for cameras. There are 48 named dived sites spread along both sides of the bay and whilst some do merge into their neighbours it does mean that there is plenty of choice and space to separate the small diving groups if all three boats are in action. If you are feeling adventurous and need a fix of coral reef diving then full day excursions can be arranged to the reefs outside the bay and beyond to Seram Island. There is also a wreck close to the main port which is well



*Imperial shrimp on sea cucumber – these gorgeous looking shrimps are frequently found on sea cucumbers and also on the larger species of nudibranchs. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 105mm micro, Inon Quad flash, ISO100 f18 1/125.*

worth diving, but more of that below.

Many of the dive sites have a particular species as the star attraction, so if you have a wants list it is best to declare this as soon as you arrive and the dive guides will plan the dives accordingly to make sure you achieve your goals. There are no guarantees when dealing with nature of course, but I certainly was not disappointed and the only thing we did not see was the famous Ambon psychedelic frogfish (*Histiophryne psychedelica*)

but that is a rare beast indeed and has only been seen a handful of times. I have described a few of my favourite dives below to give you a flavour of what to expect.

### Twilight Zone

The resort is located on the edge of the village of Laha and several of the sites are named and numbered after it dependant on the position between the resort and the fuel bunkering jetty to the north. The

Twilight zone is one of the original sites identified by Burt Jones and Maureen Shimlock in the mid 1990's and it has lost none of its appeal since. The dive occurs mostly under moored fishing boats so light levels are low (hence the name) and there is constant noise from generators and vessels coming and going. You should also be prepared for high levels of trash both organic and inorganic as everything from trainers and paint tins to boiled eggs and fish carcasses are simply lobbed into the water by the boats above, but of course this is total nirvana to muck critters!

You will see a huge range of muck critters here and perhaps the greatest concentration of different species of moray eels that I have ever encountered. Every hole seems to have one and in many cases there are three or four all peering out at the same time. In the shallows amongst broken coral rubble you will see Mandarin fish behaving as though it were dusk due to the low light levels, whilst further down the slope the guides will show you the resident Harlequin shrimp and any number of Harlequin, robust and velvet ghost pipefish. There are dozens of scorpion fish of various species and probably as many stone fish of which you may be blissfully unaware, so it is wise to have a long stainless steel much stick which you can use to support yourself



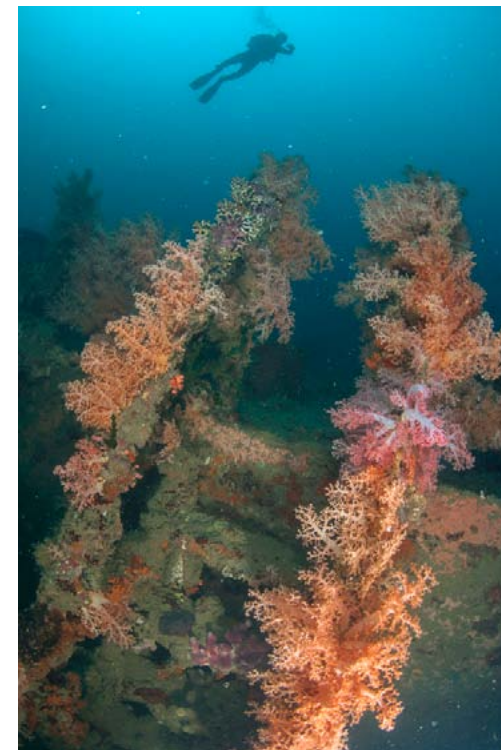
*Mandarin fish could be seen throughout the day at the Twilight Zone due to the permanent dusk quality of the light. Fishing boats are moored here most of the day blocking out most of the sunlight which just adds to the atmosphere of the dive! Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 105mm micro, Inon Quad flash, ISO100 f11 1/125.*

clear of the bottom whilst composing your images.

Under the jetty itself there are large schools of silversides and also some large catfish that seem to like to shoal in mid water. If you can persuade yourself to forsake a macro lens for one dive then there are some appealing wide angle compositions to be had when the shafts of sun light pierce down from the jetty and between the boats.

### **SS Aquila (originally the SS Duke of Sparta)**

This is a large wreck (137m long, 17m beam) which was sunk at anchor close to the main harbour in 1958 by US aircraft during the communist rebellion in Indonesia. It is still very intact and has 50 years of coral growth to decorate it, but it is a relatively deep dive with the main deck an average depth of 30m so is best dived with nitrox. Being close to the harbour the visibility is



*Stair way to forecandle deck on the wreck of the SS Aquila. Diving this wreck close to the main harbour in Ambon makes a nice break from the muck and a chance to use your wide angle lens. Sunk in 1958 the wreck is covered with soft corals and invertebrate life. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO350 f11 1/100.*

not always spectacular, but if you are used to diving wrecks in the UK you will think it is good! There are masses of soft corals which make great foreground compositions with the wreck as a backdrop, but there are

also heavy silt deposits in places so move carefully and advise your guide to keep off the deck. If you are brave then you can penetrate the wreck easily into the engine room, but only do this when led by the guides. Towards the bow the main mast still stands proud with a horizontal platform at around 12m, so this is an ideal point to start your ascent and then make a final stop above it. Be cautious when surfacing as there is a lot of small boat traffic in this area of the harbour.

## Rhino City

This dive site is correctly named for once! The *Rhinopias* scorpion fish is perhaps the most spectacular variation of this species and Ambon bay has a very healthy population of them. The guides advised me that dependant on the season there maybe a population of more than twenty around the bay, but between this site and the neighbouring Laha3 we were shown four examples, two pinkish paddle flaps (*Rhinopias eschmeyeri*) and two weedy examples (*Rhinopias frondosa*) in yellow and purple. Three of these were in surprisingly shallow water, 3m in one case, whilst the purple one was around 27m which is what I expected from previous encounters. They are fantastic looking fish and I could have spent a whole dive with them, but of course you have to share these subjects with other photographers! But there is plenty more to keep you busy whilst you wait your turn or queue for a second stint – giant yellow frog fish, red warty frogfish, octopus, cuttlefish and many true macro subjects like zeno crabs on sea whips, which you will have to ignore if you have set up for the *Rhinopias*!



*A species new to me on this trip were the hairy gobies which are found in pairs within small branch corals. They are very skittish and require a good deal of patience to capture a portrait. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 105mm micro, Inon wet lens, Inon Quad flash, ISO100 f18 1/125.*

## Pante Nama Wall

On the east side of the bay there is a nice wall dive with plenty of healthy corals which makes a nice change to the diet of muck and small coral outcrops. You can shoot wide angle on the wall or elect to stay with your macro lens and still find more than enough to keep you busy for several dives. There are many anemones and bubble corals here with attendant triple fin gobies, eggshell shrimps, ghost shrimps and hirsute orangutan crabs. Colourful gorgonians are found all along the wall which provide a home for decorator and porcelain crabs and some very attractive cowries, but you will need good buoyancy control and the use of your muck stick to get a steady shot at high



*Rhinopias frondosa, weedy Rhinopias – The shape, camouflage and appendages of these fish are immensely complex. This head on shot illustrates that complexity and is strangely appealing as a portrait! Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, 2X teleconverter, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO200 f11 1/100.*

magnification. The wall is also an excellent place to spot some exotic and strange looking nudibranchs and flat worms and we were lucky enough to find a pair of *Nembrotha chamberlaini* mating in a



splendid green hue with marbled yellow markings. Ghost pipe fish, leaf scorpion fish, bearded scorpion fish all make cameo appearances and during our dives we also had a delightful tiny clown frog fish is vivid yellow.

### **Pante Parigi 1 & 2**

The sites on the west side of the bay tend to have a mixture of coral outcrops, broken coral and rubble and grey sandy slopes. So you will find a mixed bag of muck type critters, reef fish and a healthy variety of crustaceans. One of the most spectacular looking shrimps found on this side of the bay is the Saron or

marbled shrimp (*Saron marmoratus*) which has the most striking mixture of pattern and colour which leaves you wondering what it is for. There is also another odd looking shrimp known locally as the Donald duck shrimp (*Leander plumosus*), which sounds like an odd name until you see one. The corals here include many sea whips, gorgonians and clusters of soft corals as well as some large barrel sponges all of which provide a home to crustaceans, molluscs and small fish. These are mostly in the 1:1 macro range but you may need a wet lens to increase magnification for the smaller species like the zeno crabs



*Diving is from spacious fibre glass boats with twin out boards. Plenty of room for cameras and a good diving ladder.*



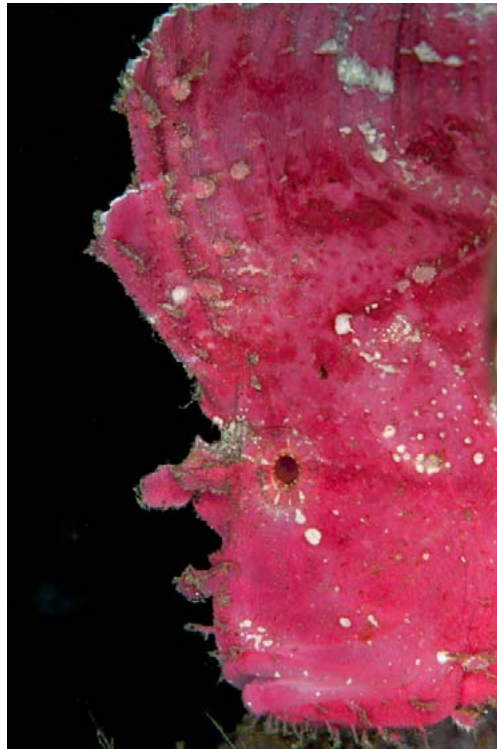
*The camera room is set up with individual work stations with non slip mats, wet trays, power sockets and additional lighting. Nikon D200, 18-200mm zoom, ISO200 programme mode.*

found on sea whips.

One species that the guides were keen to show off that was new to me were the hairy gobies (possibly *Gobiodon acicularis*) that are found in small outcrops of branching corals. These tiny fish live in pairs within the branches of the coral together with the small crabs that emerge at night. They are pretty nervous but inquisitive enough to settle for a few seconds to look at the camera. You will need a longer macro lens for these and a great deal of patience but it is worth it as these fish produce very cute portraits complete with their designer stubble.

### **Kampung Baru**

I was hoping to see some Coleman shrimps on this trip and I was not disappointed. My past experience is that the fire urchins with these attractive little monochrome shrimps are generally found between 25-30m. On this particular site we had an army of perhaps two hundred fire urchins marching towards the shallows in only 4-6m depth. Only a few had the elusive Coleman shrimps, whilst a number of others had resident alien looking zebra crabs, but of course you only need one pair to keep an underwater photographer happy. These tiny shrimp may need extra



*Striped midas blenny – there are many blennies and gobies to be found living in small holes on the reef or in man made debris, but they often get overlooked as most photographers are concentrating on the exotic species. But whilst you are waiting your turn with a muck star look around for these guys to keep you amused. A species new to me on this trip were the hairy gobies which are found in pairs within small branch corals. They are very skittish and require a good deal of patience to capture a portrait. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 105mm micro, Inon Quad flash, ISO100 f18 1/125.*

*Leaf scorpion fish are very common on most of the dive sites in Ambon bay and are found in various colours. This deep pink one is one of the most striking. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 105mm micro, Inon Quad flash, ISO100 f11 1/250.*

magnification and often need a little tinkering with lighting angles as the fire urchins literally glow red hot with flash on them.

If the Coleman shrimps were not enough, the same dive produced warty frogfish, snake eels in pairs, cockatoo wasp fish, a very well decorated weedy spider crab and to finish the

dive a mimic octopus.

The above is just a taster of what the area can offer. The hardest decision is of course which lens to put on so that you do not miss the unexpected critter the guides may turn up. But the great thing is that you can always return to a site to repeat the experience with the most suitable lens and lighting. We spent ten days here and when the time came to dry out and pack up I felt I was only just settling in and would have happily spent much longer with individual subjects.

Travelling here is also very easy with a couple route options to consider. We came via Jakarta and

spent a couple of days there to adjust our body clocks before continuing on to Ambon. You can also come via Bali which offers a very pleasant break in the journey. It is possible to make the connections without an overnight stop on the way, but it is preferable to do this so that you arrive relatively fresh for the first day of diving. So if you have a penchant for muck and perhaps a little wide angle with relative solitude then put Maluku Divers on your bucket list.

**Mark Webster**  
[www.photec.co.uk](http://www.photec.co.uk)



Underwater Photography Workshop  
 with Mark Webster  
 Maluku Divers, Ambon  
 22 February to 1 March 2014

Details: [www.photec.co.uk](http://www.photec.co.uk)  
[www.muckdivingindonesia.com](http://www.muckdivingindonesia.com)

# Diving Deer Island

## Menjangan

with Attila Kaszo

The island of Bali in Indonesia is well known and regarded as a popular tourist destination. Its varied landscape, long sandy beaches, and cheap clothing seem to be a magnet to the visitor. However, what it's not so well known for lies under the water.

I have always enjoyed Bali, but not so much the tourist congestion of Kuta, which at times can be a bit overbearing. I prefer places like Ubud, Candi Dasa and Tanah-Lot, picturesque and laid back.

This time we decided to check out some of the dive sites around the island and put shopping on the "back burner", after all, how many T-shirts can one own?

Previously all our diving had been out of Flores, places like Komodo Is. and Rinca Is., beautiful in all respects. So we thought this was going to be a few steps down from that, but since we were so close...why not!

At the north west part of Bali is Menjangan. Depending on which part of the island your on, say Denpasar, the drive can take up to eight hours,

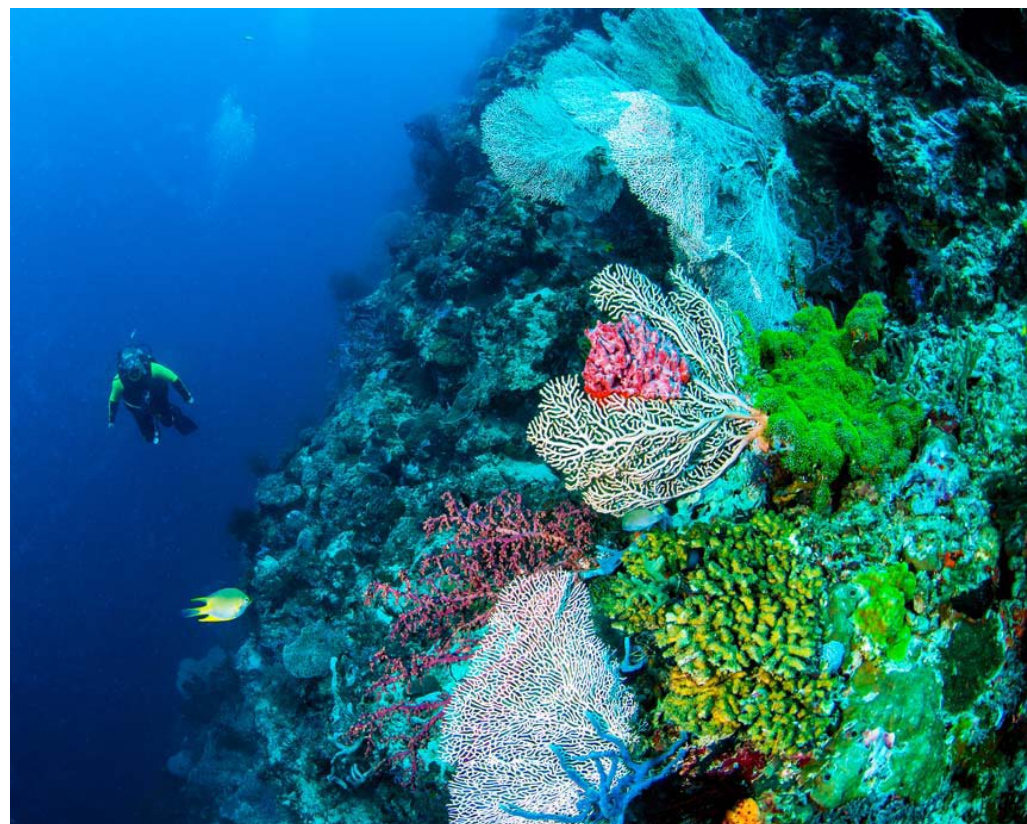
not because it's that far by road, but due more to the poor state of the roads and the general congestion along the route, sometimes down to a crawl.

There are a number of resorts of varying quality on the mainland at Menjangan. We chose to stay at Mimpri Resort a four star landscaped hideaway with its own dive centre.

About half an hour boat ride from the mainland, situated in the West Bali National Park is Menjangan Island. Its name comes from wild deer populations swimming over to the island during spring. The island is a 175-hectare sanctuary in the Bali Sea, home to Hindu monks, wild deer, rabbits, goats and some spectacular

*When shooting dropoffs, I try and squeeze in a diver somewhere to bring that personal touch to the picture. I also try to frame something that is eye catching in the foreground but doesn't entirely make up the frame.*

*Aquatica / Nik D2X – S/S 1/60th  
– 10.5mm – f5.6 – ISO 125 – Lens  
10.5mm f2.8 Nik – Inon Z240 Strobes  
x 2*



*Not that common to see juvenile Barramundi Cod (*Chromileptes altivelis*) at any time, but I came across four in a short space of time. Not looking anything like their adult colour, they make a great subject if they keep still enough. Aquatica / Nik D2X – 1/60th – 105mm – f16 – ISO 125 – Nik 105mm f2.8 macro – Inon Z240 Strobes x 2*



coral dive sites, regarded by many as the premier dive location in Bali.

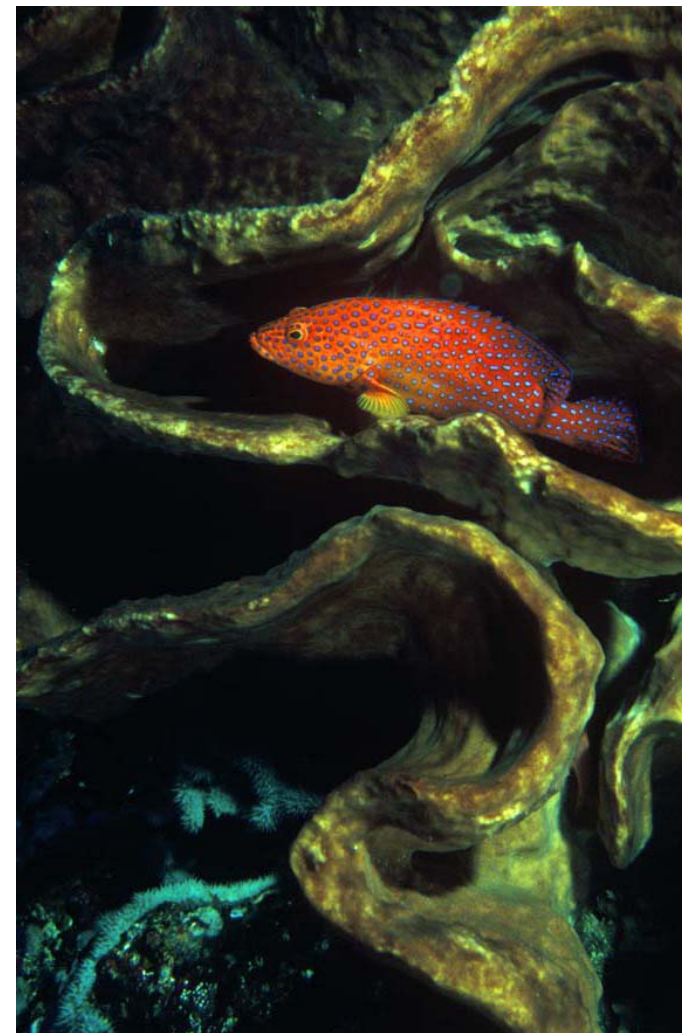
Tourism in this part of the world is less noticeable but still apparent. But to keep tourists in check, especially those who dive, a traditional maritime security force made up of local fishermen have been deployed to patrol around the island. I guess in part that works, but does little to prevent damage underwater, especially to some delicate corals. I think education and better diving practices can really do that.

We did many dives in this area including night, and probably saw about a third of the reputed 226 reef fish, which live here. For me the standout dive is a long wall, which stretches almost the length of the island. The coral walls around Menjangan are almost vertical down to about 60 meters. At about

20 meters there are huge barrel sponges growing, some are so big that a diver could sit in there, others just stunning in formation and colour.

The reef surface is fairly typical of reef that gets a battering now and then: caves, grottoes, crevasses and funnel-like splits break up the coral wall, and the surface is textured with small hideouts ideal for invertebrates and just about anything that can take refuge there. Gorgonians of many shapes and sizes blanket the dropoff, interspersed by layers of soft corals all the way down.

One thing that was obvious was the lack of large fish. Maybe the occasional reef shark was spotted, but no schooling Bigeyes, Humphead Parrot fish or Barracuda usually seen in similar areas. No doubt finfish harvesting in the past has played a significant role in this, but I would have



*Coral Trout (*Plectropomus leopardus*) in an unusual pose on a coral fold. Clearly it didn't realise it's camouflage was inadequate.*

*Aquatica / Nik F4s – 1/60th – 24mm – Velvia film ISO 100 – Nik 24-50 f3.3-4.5 – Sea & Sea 300 & 150 TTL strobes.*



*I found this relatively common Anemone Shrimp (Periclemenes brevicarpalis) just sitting there undisturbed by my presence. The trick was to wait until the tentacles of the anemone moved out of the way so I could get a shot.*

*Aquatica / Nik D2X – 1/60th – 105mm – f29 – ISO 125 – Nik 105mm f2.8 Macro + Macromate 2x Diopter – Inon Z240 Strobes x 2*

expected some sort of recovery by now unless of course it's still occurring.

The dive centre at Mimpi resort had taken on a well managed conservation and recycling program in the area. They have collected loads of bottles that would usually go into a landfill area, and made an artificial reef assemblage by cementing the bottles together and placing them

around areas where the coral is either depleted or non-existent. The migrating coral seeds quickly establish themselves on the blocks and the bottles become excellent habitat for a range of marine species. This was one of the first conservation recovery plans I had seen in this part of Asia, and was certainly encouraging.

Overall I would rate the diving at Menjangan to be very good, lots



*Boat loaded with discarded bottles from the nearby resort destined as part of an artificial reef structure program off Menjangan.*

*Nikon V1 – 1/500th – 16.9mm – f5.6 – ISO 100 – Nik 10-30 f3.5-5.6*

to see, clear water at about 30 meter visibility, 29°C water temperatures, safe and friendly.

Getting there may be a bit tiresome, but once there it's hard to pack up and leave.

**Attila Kaszo**  
[www.ambvision.com](http://www.ambvision.com)



### Back issues



99p per issue or buy the complete set for just £19.95 for all 70 issues (That's less than 30p per issue!)

Yours to keep forever.

As you know, the current issue of Underwater Photography is free to download but all of the previous issues, going right back to Issue 1, are still available to download for just 99p per issue.

It's a fantastic reference library chronicling all that has happened in underwater photography over the past 10 years.



Add UwpP58 to cart

UwpP58 — Jan/Feb 2011, 76 pages.

[Click to show or hide issue contents](#)



Add UwpP57 to cart

UwpP57 — Nov/Dec 2010, 85 pages.

[Click to show or hide issue contents](#)



Add UwpP56 to cart

UwpP56 — Sept/Oct 2010, 90 pages.

[Click to show or hide issue contents](#)



Add UwpP55 to cart

UwpP55 — July/Aug 2010, 75 pages.

[Click to show or hide issue contents](#)

Buy back issues here

# Sailfish and Sardines

by Gregory Sweeney

Each year during the winter season, nutrient rich currents flow from South America pushing their way north up onto the shallow shelf off Isla Mujeres, Mexico. This phenomenon draws in large shoals of sardines and needle fish. Following these baitfish are great numbers of hungry Atlantic sailfish (*Istiophorus albicans*). It is here in these shallow waters that marine life and predators collide in havoc.

Isla Mujeres is a small island east of Cancun Mexico. A short ferry ride gets you to this long and narrow island: it is about 8 km long and about 1 km wide. It has a casual and fun atmosphere with many places to eat and drink, beaches, shops, and private residences. The beaches are busy during the day, but at night it feels like a small town where you are among friends. Walking is an effective way to get around as everything is close, but golf carts get you further afield and you can even complete a circumnavigation of the island.

Long a destination for sport fishing, Isla Mujeres is gaining a reputation for ecotourism with the tourism industry surrounding the

whale shark aggregations occurring each summer. I have lead several groups on whale shark charters and find that the regulations are designed for the good of the whale sharks while allowing for excellent encounters.

The ecotourism spirit has spilled over to the sailfish and sardine run. Boats that once only hosted sport and sailfish fishing charters are now using their expertise to host groups of photographers and snorkelers who want to encounter this fascinating event face to face.

Sailfish and whale sharks are not the only treasures to visit while in the Cancun region. A dive in the cenotes or on the Cancun reefs is a treat. A snorkel at the Underwater Museum to see the lifelike statues of people turned into an artificial reef are all great ideas for an extended trip after your sailfish and whale shark encounters.

It is early January on a bright sunny day just a few degrees warmer than usual for the season. Our adventure begins at the dock in early morning. We board our 13 meter custom-built deep sea fishing boat; both comfortable and spacious. Captain Anthony fired up the engine



*A team of Atlantic sailfish working as a team to keep the bait ball together. Canon 5D MK3 in a Nauticam housing and a 15mm f2.8 fisheye lens. ISO 1000 1/500 at f5*

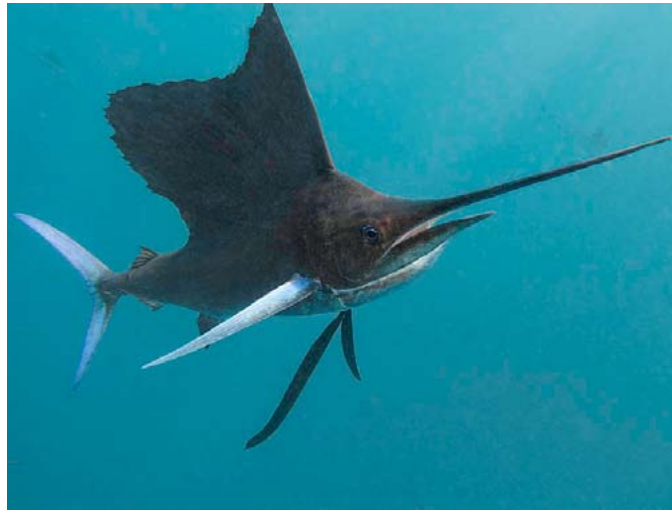




and departed the dock heading out into the Mexican Caribbean.

Locating the sailfish and sardines can take a combination of a few ingredients: lots of patience, persistence, years of experience, and one last ingredient: frigate birds. Captain Anthony, with years of fishing knowledge under his belt, knows how to locate the sailfish. Soon we spot frigate birds (*Fregata Magnificens*) swirling in a funnel cloud formation. Approaching their location the water surface looks like it's boiling from all the sardines breaking the surface, then we notice the backs of large bluish gray fish. Our excitement level rises; we don our fins, mask, and tightly clutch underwater cameras as we slip into the water. Once underwater we see a large bait ball of sardines moving in unison shifting in many different directions. Twenty to thirty sailfish are orbiting around this bait ball.

The sailfish cooperate as a team to hold the bait ball together. Every time the bait ball changes direction it encounters another sailfish: that sailfish will throw up its sail-like dorsal fin to scare the bait ball into diverting in another direction. The sailfish herd the bait ball near the surface and try not to let it sink down deep or disperse. When the



*A sailfish passes close.*

*Canon 5D MK2 in an Nexus housing EF16 -35mm  
f2.8 ISO 640 1/400 at f5.0*

*The sailfish use their sails for communication and herding the bait ball*

*Canon 5D MK2 in an Nexus housing EF16 -35mm  
f2.8 ISO 800 1/400 at f4.5*

bait ball gets close to the surface the frigate birds dive down grabbing and gulping sardines, which pushes the mass down into a tighter bait ball. This team of sailfish is not all feeding at the same time. Their method is to take turns individually going after the bait ball with astounding speed and precision maneuverability slashing the dense bait ball blindly with their bills knocking hapless individuals unconscious or wounding them enough to separate them from the safety of the bait ball. The isolated sardines are consumed within seconds on an incredibly fast return pass by the sailfish. The next sailfish with a good position has its turn and



the cycle starts again. The whole process continues unless the sardines perform enough evasive maneuvers to evade the sailfish or the predators are satiated and loose interest. Dolphins compete with the sailfish for a sardine meal in this chaos on the open seas. It was truly an amazing experience watching the sailfish work together as a team using precision, accuracy, and teamwork to control the



*A photographer capturing a shot misses a sardine  
Canon 5D MK2 in an Nexus housing 15mm f2.8 fisheye ISO 400 1/400 at f5.0*

bait ball, then demolish it. Sometimes we were swimming with 30 to 40 sailfish. Occasionally the sardines would use us as a human shield for protection from the sailfish.

As photographers we have to try to keep up with the moving stage while anticipating which sailfish will make a run next. Sometimes it is one coming from behind you and other times the bait ball and swords are heading straight toward you! This is great for video with fast action and constant movement. The action is

often right at the surface, perfect for catching the opal colors of the sailfish as they signal to one another.

The action was very fast paced; it felt like I was in a giant pinball game so I keep my equipment streamlined. I use a Canon 5D MK3 Nauticam housing with a 15mm fisheye lens that is not too bulky to carry. There is no time for strobes and the bulk would slow me down too much.

The episodes in the water with sailfish were definitely an adrenaline rush. We relaxed and enjoyed the

ride back to shore then each night as the sunset we reflected over the days experiences with ceviche and cerveza. I am tired, but the hard work paid off with exciting images and video.

I will be back in a few months enjoying the slower pace of the whale sharks, but I am looking forward to next January when we will be back to capture more dramatic images of sailfish and this intense and exhilarating experience.

**Gregory Sweeney**  
[www.gregorysweeney.com](http://www.gregorysweeney.com)



## Swim with Whale Sharks



Isla Mujeres, Mexico



July 18 - 23 2013

& July 23 - 28 2013

Sailfish January 2014

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

Photography Adventures

# 2012 Lembeh Shootout at NAD



**Best of Show Winner.**  
*Jeong-Kwon Park, Nikon D300, 60mm, f/25, 1/160sec, ISO200*

The aim of this shootout is to help shooters get better by friendly competition under rules that encourage the often forgotten disciplines of underwater photography. Only minimal photoshop(post-processing) is allowed and dive guides and judges are looking at the environmental awareness of the divers as they shoot.

In 2012 we had 25 contestants, and it was a very social occasion with lots of jokes and laughs, with quite a bit of sharing amongst the contestants as well. In 2013, we will have a judging panel of EunJae Im, Serge Abourjeily and last years MVP (most valuable photographer) Kay Burn Lim.

Simon Buxton (NAD's Proprietor) has dropped out of the judging panel for 2013 to allow him to provide help for the shooters in seminars during the week. This should hopefully ensure that everyone gets the most out of the shootout. For 2013 we have not yet confirmed the all sponsors but our target is a prize fund of more then \$35,000 USD.

Next shootout will be between 2~9 Dec 2013

[www.underwater.kr/shootout/lembeh-shootout-2013](http://www.underwater.kr/shootout/lembeh-shootout-2013)  
[www.nad-lembeh.com](http://www.nad-lembeh.com)

## **Super Macro Winner**

*Kay Burn Lim, Nikon D800E, 105mm, f/40, 1/250sec, ISO250*

## **Mirrorless Camera Winner**

*Christine Foo, Olympus OM-D E-M5, 60mm, f/16, 1/250sec, ISO200*

## **Compact Winner**

*Balqesh Abdullah, Canon S95, f/5.6, 1/125sec, ISO80*



# 2013 Wetpixel/DivePhotoGuide Our World Underwater winners

The results of the 2013 Wetpixel/DivePhotoGuide Our World Underwater contest have been announced. The contest attracted over 1500 entries from around the world, and the celebrity panel of judges which included Alex Mustard, Berkley White, Vincent Laforet, Keri Wilk, Mary Lynn Price, Steve Douglas and Eric Hanauer commented on how high the standard was this year. The overall winner and winner of the wide-angle unrestricted category was Sam Cahir with his portrait of a mako shark (*Isurus oxyrinchus*), entitled “Paris the mako shark”. The winner of the video category was “The Giants of Cenderawasih Bay” by John Boyle and Fionn Crow Howieson. Many congratulations to all the winners.



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



*Unrestricted Macro winner by Todd Bretl (United States)*

*Traditional Macro winner by Jonas Thormar (Denmark)*

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



*Best in Show and Unrestricted Wide angle category winner by Sam Cahir*



*Unrestricted Wide angle winner by Octavio Aburto (United States)*

# Guidelines for contributors

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

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

**Uw photo techniques** - Balanced light, composition, etc

**Locations** - Photo friendly dive sites, countries or liveaboards

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

**Equipment reviews** - Detailed appraisals of the latest equipment

**Personalities** - Interviews/features about leading underwater photographers

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

## How to submit articles

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

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

2. Images must be attached to the e mail and they need to be 144dpi

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

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

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

# Parting Shot 1

## Life after death?

With some pyrotechnic force, last October, two ships were sunk in the Algarve, South of Portugal, to act as diving points under the project Ocean Revival.

Around the area, where the two ex-Portuguese warships, of a total of four, were going to be sunk, for the first time in the world on the same day, several small craft were complying with the established safety distances with more than one hundred people on board.

Everyone was anxious for the Navy diving teams that had to do the check dive, surfaced confirming that all was well, so that the first chosen ones could get geared up and do the first dive.

Although some small debris was still surfacing and the silt was still settling down, the first five divers jumped eagerly into the water and started descending the guide line that took us to the 80 meters long corvette.

For me, that I have served on board this class of ships for many years, it was a kind of “déjà vu”, but the ship was upright and is all prepared to receive divers of all levels...

What a great dive it was. And two months since that day, all kinds of life is already calling the wrecks “home”... and during 2013 the last two ships – a 110 meters frigate and a 80 meters hydrographic ship – will follow, creating a one of a kind diving spot.



*Nikon D300 in SEALX housing, Tokina 10-17, 2 INON Z-240 at 10 mm, 1/50, f.10 ISO 400*

**Augusto Salgado**  
[augusto.salgado@clix.pt](mailto:augusto.salgado@clix.pt)  
[www.oceanrevival.org](http://www.oceanrevival.org)

Do you have an image which has a 'story within a story'?

If so we'd love to hear from you.

**E mail us and yours could be the next "Parting shot".**

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

# Parting Shot 2

Koh Tao, a small island in the Gulf of Thailand, is a very popular backpacker hangout and is also the unofficial dive capital of the world, with more divers certified on the island each year than anywhere else on the planet. While there is some great diving around the island I also found something very unique was happening here.

Diving at a site called Japanese Gardens I had been told to watch out for titan triggerfish, so got quite alarmed when I felt something picking at my ear. I turned around expected to see a huge triggerfish with my ear in its mouth, but there was nothing there. Suddenly the picking in my ear started again. I swatted my ear, wondering what it was, then looking at my wife Helen I could see her swatting her ears as well, swatting at something small, it was a cleaner wrasse!

I couldn't believe it; our ears were getting cleaned by a group of cleaner wrasse!

I had never heard of divers being cleaned before, so had to get some photos of this bizarre behaviour. Fortunately I had my 60mm macro lens on the camera.

Between swatting away the fish picking in our ears, which quickly become very annoying, I indicated to Helen to stay still for a few minutes so I could get some photos of the cleaner wrasse in action. I managed a couple of images, but there was only so long we could stand having these small fish picking in our ears!

After the dive we talked about how unusual, and irritating, the experience was. We also came



*Nikon D90, 60mm lens, Ikelite Housing, Inon Z240 strobe, 1/100 f16.*

up with a theory that the cleaner wrasse at Koh Tao have evolved to feed off the ear wax of the never ending supply of backpackers that learn to dive on this tiny island!

**Nigel Marsh**  
[www.nigelmarshphotography.com](http://www.nigelmarshphotography.com)

Do you have an image which has a 'story within a story'?

If so we'd love to hear from you.

**E mail us and yours could be the next "Parting shot".**

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

# Parting Shot 3

## Out into the blue

All OK? the thumb goes down, a sigh escapes your BCD  
You breath out, gravity pulls, as you embrace the sea  
A little down, a couple feet, you've barely entered the ocean  
Yet the transformation is complete, the world has gone slow-motion  
The landscape zooms as you drift down until you're almost there  
No need for bungee or parachute, all you need is a puff of air  
And there you float in perfect balance, a visitor in a different realm  
So much to see, it is quite exciting, but all you feel is calm  
A halo of anthias in their bright orange hue  
You glide silently past, looking out into the blue  
The damsels are dancing, some batfish say hi  
Parrotfish drift head-up, there must be a cleaner nearby  
They all have their business, their needs and routine  
Eat, rest, mate, fight, hide or be seen  
It's a privilege to be their guest, if only for a while  
Memories are all that's left, but they often make me smile

**Bart Hazes**



*This was shot with my (t)rusty Canon 20D and the 35mm F2 lens in an Ikelite housing with DS50 strobe. The dive site was Abu Nawas gardens, which is one of the sites near Red Sea Diving Safari's Marsa Shagra dive camp, where I was staying. After 8 years of loyal service the 20D/ikelite combo is going to be replaced by an OM-D EM5/Nauticam setup before my Red Sea Trip this summer.*

Do you have an image which has a 'story within a story'?

If so we'd love to hear from you.

**E mail us and yours could be  
the next "Parting shot".**

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