

# Underwater Photography

May/June 2013  
Issue 72





Dive with us at our new dive centre in Tioman Island, Malaysia! Photographer friendly and nitrox ready....



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**Rouge**



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Aquatica 5DMK3



Watershot iPhone 5 Pro



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# Underwater Photography

A web magazine UwP72 May/June 2013

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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)

## Cover Shot

I make no apology for choosing this issue's front cover. Photographically it's not a brilliant shot but that's not the point. The point is the subject matter and the image tells it like it is; stark, depressing and hopefully frightening. That is how powerful a photograph can be.

Most normal mortals have an inbuilt fear of drowning and I hope that this image conveys in the strongest possible way what it feels like, for us, to effectively choke to death. The shark unfortunately was dead when the net was discovered but thankfully the ray was cut free and lived to swim another day.

We had a similar front cover shot on UwP67 in July/Aug 2012 by Jordi Chias Pujol of a small turtle suffocating in a heavy fishing net. It had won the One Earth category in the recent Veolia Environnement Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2010 so it was obviously a good photograph photographically.

This issue's front cover by Attila Koszo almost certainly won't win any prizes photographically but competitions aren't everything. What is important is the truth and we as underwater photographers have the power to illustrate that truth.

Photographing the truth may, in the long term, save the beauty.



## Editorial

### Invest in 'glass'

Alex M's (you know who he is) excellent article in this issue on choosing between a Nikon D600 and 800 makes fascinating reading and it illustrates how far technology has progressed and how we are, most definitely, the beneficiaries.

His very informative and stunningly illustrated article is providing you with the information to help you decide whether to choose between an amazing camera or a really amazing camera; either of which is capable of producing stunning results in excess of your requirements.

At the end of the day it all comes down to money but if you can save a really large amount of money buying a Nikon D600 over an 800 without a noticeable disadvantage in overall image quality, you'd be a fool not to because, with the money you save, you could invest in the best available 'glass' which is an awfully trendy term used for lenses with a wide constant maximum aperture and which, in the cold hard photographic light of day, really do make an optical difference.

## Sinking wrecks

I must start by apologising on behalf of my British maritime nation for our lamentable track record in sinking obsolete naval vessels which we, by the way, the law abiding taxpayer, have paid for.

For the record we have scuttled just one, yes 1, in the whole of our maritime history and that was back in 2004. It was HMS Scylla, a Leander Class frigate which served us in the Iceland Cod War amongst other duties and now lies in 30 metres of water and has attracted the most amazing marine growth.

In the words of Wikipedia, the sinking of HMS Scylla has benefitted Devon and Cornwall's economy, with a large increase in visitor numbers to the National Marine Aquarium and local diving schools reporting a large increase in divers wanting to experience the wreck.

Recently we were denied the opportunity to scuttle aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal, 210 m (689 ft) long and displacing 22,000 tons preferring to sell her for just £3 million for scrap.

Can you imagine the revenue it could have created from visiting divers from all over the world?

In the words of the late, great Ian Dury "What a waste".

## Dive the World magazine

I take no pleasure what so ever in writing this piece but hopefully it will bring an era to an end.

Unfortunately glossy and beautifully printed Dive the World magazine has folded (sorry for the pun) ALLEGEDLY owing subscribers, contributors and presumably printers not insignificant amounts of money.

News like this is never good but hopefully it will become undeniable proof that, for once and for all, to produce, print and distribute a quality magazine based on underwater photography will never, ever, stand on it's own two feet without the likes of Paul Allen or Larry Ellison to support such a venture unconditionally.

It is a classic sign of the times; an inevitable consequence of people power and technology.

The only light at the end of the tunnel is that if either Messrs Allen or Ellison are reading this they might like to invest in an online publication such as UwP to make it glossier.

If your are reading this Pauly or Lazza my contact details are:

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

# News, Travel & Events



## Lembeh Shootout 2013 2nd - 9th December

NAD Resort and Underwater. kr are proud to publicise our 2nd annual underwater shootout, held in conjunction with primary sponsor, Nauticam, in Lembeh, Indonesia.

Join us for a week of fun and prizes between 2 – 9 December 2013, with prizes over US\$35,000 including cash!.

These “competition” weeks are open to all nationalities, and are a good chance to practice your photography with strict rules relating

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

to the environment and behaviour. Many participants from last year felt that this emphasis on being a good photographer helped them to focus and in the end get a more valuable shot.

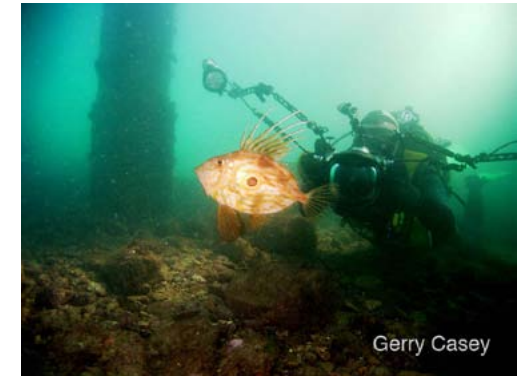
The 7 Nights Shootout Package Price is only US\$996.00/person

[www.uwimg.net/lembeh2013](http://www.uwimg.net/lembeh2013)

## Photographing Marine Animals with Paul Naylor South East Group MCS 7/8th September 2013

The aim of the course is to show those new to underwater photography how to start taking successful photographs/images and help existing photographers who are not having the success they had hoped for to improve their technique.

Paul Naylor, author of three underwater guides to marine species of Britain, will lead you through when and how to use the types of



equipment available to the underwater photographer.

The course will take place at Leeson House, Swanage, Dorset  
Contact Gerry Casey:

[gerry.casey1@btinternet.com](mailto:gerry.casey1@btinternet.com)  
[www.mcsuk.org](http://www.mcsuk.org)

## The Southern Atolls

*Maldives expeditions in 2014*

A spectacular photographic expedition to the pristine Southern Atolls aboard the luxurious MV Maldives Princess

1 Week and 14-day expeditions starting 8th Feb and 31st March

For more details, please visit:  
<http://uwimg.net/maldives2014>

## Maldives Expeditions 2014

Award winning underwater photographers Kay Burn Lim and EunJae Im have put together an amazing itinerary for their Maldives expeditions in 2014 with carefully crafted routes and trips during the peak diving season. The expeditions will take their groups further South than most other operators to pristine diving grounds aboard the luxurious 147 foot Maldives Princess liveaboard.

4 weeks in February and April will be spent in the extreme South where much larger schools of big predators congregate. Whalesharks and Mantas are also a common sight. Very few operators have worked in this region and those in the know have incredible stories to tell.

August is when the expedition heads to Baa Atoll and Hanifaru Bay. With a little luck, it is possible to witness huge school of mantas feeding within a tiny area. A week over the Christmas holidays is also part of the schedule and is when the peak diving season starts. What better way to



spend your Christmas day than on an island for a BBQ party on the beach after an excellent day of diving?

This promises to be a spectacular opportunity to dive the best the Maldives has to offer on one of the most luxurious liveabords in the Maldives.

[www.uwimg.net/maldives2014](http://www.uwimg.net/maldives2014)

# DiveQuest

THE ULTIMATE IN DIVE TRAVEL & UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY TOURS



Photo: Martin Edge

[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

## Cat Island Oceanic Whitetip Photography Expedition

May 4- 10 2014



epic diving

Dive  
Photo  
Guide.com



## Pictures of the Year competition Call for Entries

Two Competitions: One Entry -  
You have until 28 May to submit your  
entries to the most influential Pictures  
of the Ocean competition.

12 Categories: 38 Prestigious  
Awards

The Winners of the Most OG  
Pictures of the Year Competition will  
be announced on 6 July at the 8TH  
MALAYSIA INTERNATIONAL  
DIVE EXPO 2013

Your entry will be judged during  
the 12th Celebrate the Sea Festival,  
Brunei on 8 June 2013

You are invited to share with the  
world your experiences and special  
moments with the seas.

As your work will influence  
changes, we view the importance  
of awarding you with special  
recognitions with prestigious Awards  
for Outstanding Achievement,  
Merit of Excellence and Special  
commendations. Doublet Award for  
Outstanding Achievement

## University of Miami RSMAS underwater photo contest Call for entries



The 2013 University of Miami's  
Rosenstiel School of Marine and  
Atmospheric Science Underwater  
Photography Contest is calling for  
entries. The contest is open to amateur  
photographers who earn no more  
than 20 percent of their income from  
photography. The deadline for entries  
is May 17th.

Since its inception in 2005,  
the contest has drawn entrants from  
across the globe submitting more than  
400 images per year. Photographs are  
judged in five separate categories:  
Fish or Marine Animal Portrait,  
Macro, Wide Angle, UM Student, and  
Best Overall. The winning images are  
displayed on our website as well as  
in a traveling exhibit throughout the  
South Florida community.

[www.ogsociety.org](http://www.ogsociety.org)



[www.rsmas.miami.edu](http://www.rsmas.miami.edu)

For more information contact [trips@divephotoguide.com](mailto:trips@divephotoguide.com)


Issue 72/7




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## Tobias Friedrich 2013 trips

Tobias Friedrich is a professional underwater photographer with over 50 publications and many cover shots in the last years for various well know dive magazines around the world.

During his photo trips he joins as a photo expert and explains techniques, which should help the participants to improve their images. The trips are very practical and a lot of fun for everyone.

The trip dates for 2013 are:

07. -14. September 2013

### EXPEDITION GREENLAND –

Discover the giants of the arctic: icebergs and whales, during an expedition limited to six people to East-Greenland. Price including accomodation (all meals, excl. alcohol), diving and dayboat are 2900,- Euro (excl. Flights and stopover expenses) and can be booked via NORTHERN EXPLORERS:

28. September – 05. October

2013 POLARLIGHTS NORWAY – The best of mid-Norway: Artic salmon, deep sea corals, kelp forests, chimeras as well as polar lights (if we are lucky) can be seen. Price incl. accomodation, meals and diving (excl. flights): ca. 2.650,- Euro and can be booked via NORTHERN EXPLORERS:



21.-28. November 2013

WORKSHOP EGYPT – During a liveaboard trip to maybe the most amazing dive spot in the Egyptian Red Sea, the Brother Islands, Tobias Friedrich will explain in detail how to improve your underwater pictures. Price of the trip is 999,- Euro (excl. flights and expenses) and can be booked via Nautilus Tauchreisen:

The price is 190,- Euro and can be paid directly on the boat.

[www.below-surface.com](http://www.below-surface.com)  
[www.northern-explorers.com](http://www.northern-explorers.com)  
[www.nautilus-tauchreisen.de](http://www.nautilus-tauchreisen.de)



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Borneo  
Halmahera  
Banda Sea



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

## Basking Shark Scotland



Basking Shark Scotland is pleased to announce dedicated shark diving trips from May 2013. Our Oban based trips are focussed on getting amazing interactions with the sharks from a brand new fast and comfortable 12m cabin RIB. Come and experience our 10m+ sharks effortlessly glide past, as you obtain stunning footage of these gentle giants. Along with the sharks we also visit local seal colonies for fantastic playful interactions in good visibility.

Excursions are based on single, two and three day itineraries, with the longer trips including island landings and overnight accommodation. Our location is well known as one of the best places for wildlife watching in Scotland. Minke whales, dolphins, porpoises, eagles, puffins and otters

are all regularly seen during the summer season. All of these fantastic experiences are set in the spectacular Scottish islands, with wonderful local produce and hospitality.

Our trips can cater from novice swimmers to full professionals and can be tailored to our clients wishes. We can arrange accommodation and transport for those visiting from afar, along with gear rental and even DSLR hire. We are a HSE media diving contractor with qualified commercial divers so professional filming can also be arranged. We can easily organise groups and private tours along with taking individual bookings. Please see our website and facebook page for more information.

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

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



Underwater.kr  
**Lembeh Photo Shootout**  
2~9 Dec 2013

**NAD**  
Lembeh  
North Sulawesi, Indonesia

Prizes Over US\$35,000 include Cash!  
Date : 2 ~ 9th Dec 2013  
Location : NAD Lembeh Resort, Lembeh Strait,  
North Sulawesi, Indonesia  
For more information, please visit our website  
[www.underwater.kr/shootout](http://www.underwater.kr/shootout)



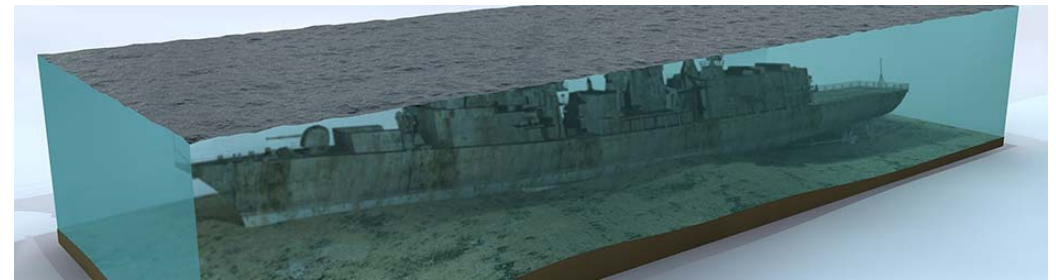
**ECO DIVE RESORT**  
Alor Archipelago, Indonesian Seas

**ALOR**  
DIVERS

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## An artificial reef for Weymouth and Portland and a possible blue print for the whole of the UK

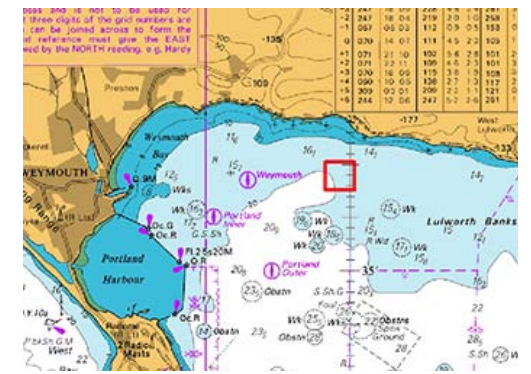


Through the three year process of obtaining permissions to sink two destroyers and create artificial reefs, Weymouth and Portland Wreck to Reef have by coincidence created a new way to manage an area of sea-bed by the people for the people.

It has been suggested that Weymouth and Portland Wreck to Reef now has a blue print that should be adopted across the whole of the United Kingdom.

The jewel in the crown of these reef sanctuaries, is of course the once jewels of our naval history, our warships.

Our ex naval ships could be cleaned and made ready responsibly here in the UK and would help create much needed habitat for our ailing marine environments and bring decades of revenue to our coastal communities.



The UK is sadly out of step with the rest of the world with regards to giving ships as 'deeds of gifts' to any organisation. Portugal and Thailand sunk four ships in 2012, with Portugal planning to sink another two warships this year.

It is hoped by signing this petition you will help Wreck to Reef change the British Governments view and, by deed of gift, give us at least one vessel.

[www.wrecktoreef.co.uk/e-petition/](http://www.wrecktoreef.co.uk/e-petition/)

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



Download our online brochure  
**HERE**

# 2013 British Underwater Photography Championships

organised by the British Society of Underwater Photographers (BSoUP)

Saturday 6th July 2013

The 2013 British Underwater Photography Championships, organised by the British Society of Underwater Photographers (BSoUP), will take place on Saturday 6th July at Mount Batten, Plymouth, Devon. All underwater photographers are invited to participate, whether they are members of BSoUP or not.



There are four categories: Marine Life, Mankind in the Sea, a Theme category to be announced on Friday 5th July, and Humorous. A maximum of one entry per category is allowed.

Images entered in the Marine Life, Mankind in the Sea and Theme categories will also be entered in the overall competition for the Grand Prize.

Prizes, trophies and individual awards will be presented for winning images in each category as well as a grand prize for the best overall image. All prizes except that for the Humorous category will be awarded by an independent panel of judges; the

Humorous category will be judged by the audience present.

Viewing and judging of the images entered will take place at the Mount Batten Centre on the Saturday night. Earlier in the evening the Hotel Mount Batten will again be putting on a substantial buffet dinner for us.

[www.bsoup.org](http://www.bsoup.org)

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



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## TPOTY 2013 awards now open for entry

The 2013 TPOTY awards are now open for entry, and close on October 1st. This year marks our 10th birthday, and we plan to celebrate in style, with some surprises in store! New categories and new prizes await, so start planning your entry into the world's leading travel photography awards.

### Free Lembeh photo workshop with Wolfgang Pölzer

Want to learn all about underwater photography? Then there's no better place to be than at award-winning Eco Divers Resort Lembeh this September.

Wolfgang Pölzer, respected underwater photo journalist, book author and double gold medallist at the CMAS World Championship of Underwater Photography, will be running a FREE week-long underwater photography workshop. Dates run from 28th Sept to 5th Oct.

Born in a small town in Austria, he studied marine biology at university and over the past fifteen years has published many books and worked as freelance journalist and photographer for several diving, travel

The Travel Photographer of the Year (TPOTY) photo contest is run by photographers for photographers. Whether you are amateur or professional, beginner or expert, young or old, wherever you live in the world, TPOTY is for you!


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

and nature magazines.

In this workshop everybody – from beginner to professional – can learn from his extensive knowledge, through nightly slide shows and also one-on-one critique sessions with individual guests. Taking part is absolutely free when guests book a 7-night package, as Wolfgang is offering his workshop purely out of his aspiration to share a love of underwater photography.

[www.eco-divers.com](http://www.eco-divers.com)

## 2013 San Diego Undersea Film Exhibition 11 - 12th Oct



**SAN DIEGO UNDERSEA FILM EXHIBITION**

2013 14TH ANNUAL OFFICIAL SELECTION SAN DIEGO UNDERSEA FILM EXHIBITION

TICKETS \$15 AT [WWW.SDUFEX.COM](http://WWW.SDUFEX.COM)

FRIDAY & SATURDAY  
OCTOBER 11 & 12  
7 PM AT QUALCOMM HALL  
UNIQUE PROGRAM EACH EVENING

The 2013 San Diego Undersea Film Exhibition is calling for submissions. The event will be held on 11 and 12 October in the Qualcomm Hall, San Diego. Films that have been selected will be projected in a High Definition format in a state of the art venue onto a 30 ft. screen. There are no prizes and an independent panel of distinguished judges will select the approximately 30 films to be shown during the two night event. The deadline for submission is 15 July 2013.

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

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

## Win a 10-Night Trip to Truk Lagoon with the Siren Fleet

To celebrate the launch of their newest destination, Worldwide Dive and Sail's Siren Fleet is offering you the chance to win a 10-night liveaboard safari aboard the S/Y Truk Siren!! Enter their online competition and you could be well on your way to diving the wreck capital of the world!



Commencing operation in November 2014, the S/Y Truk Siren will offer divers the choice of 7-night or 10-night itineraries year round. There are over 61 wrecks to dive in Truk Lagoon as well as stunning coral pinnacles within the lagoon that attract sharks and other pelagic fish species. Many of the wrecks are within suitable depths for recreational divers (40m/130ft) however some sites require tec/wreck diving qualifications and experience.

A spacious dive deck, with plenty of storage is one of the signatures of the Siren Fleet yachts and the S/Y Truk Siren is no exception to this rule. The deck will also be refitted to provide a more flexible set up and a wider range of facilities for tec diving groups.

On board tec/wreck divers can benefit from an oxygen & helium blending station along with manifold

twin-tank sets and stage tanks. There will also be a deco bar for safety stops and required decompression stops. Meanwhile dive activities are also supported by 2 rhib tenders – providing extra surface cover and greater flexibility of dive plans.

All guests will be provided with 15l tanks and nitrox\* (up to 32%) free of charge, as well as a full set of Aqua Lung rental equipment (bcd, regulator, wetsuit, fins & mask). Poseidon MKVI recreational rebreathers will be available for rental or courses and the S/Y Truk Siren will be fully rebreather-diver friendly.

Contact the Siren Fleet team to reserve your place, book by 31st May 2013 to qualify for their "Early Bird" Special. Trips are priced as follows:-

7-nights Standard Rate €2500  
10-nights Standard Rate €3550

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

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

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

Photo: Annie Crawley, Family Dive Adventures

**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)

DEFENDING OCEAN  
WILDLIFE WORLDWIDE



SEA SHEPHERD



## Wetpixel Lembeh Macro Workshop 12-23 October 2013,



The trip is based at Lembeh Resort, and the timing has been carefully selected to ensure maximum subject and photographic potential for the workshop. The dates are 12-23 October 2013, but as we only have a few spaces left, please get in touch very soon.

## Wetpixel Whaleshark trips July/August 2013



We also have a few places left for the Wetpixel Lembeh Macro Workshop Hosted by Wetpixel Associate Editor Alex Mustard, this will provide everything you would normally expect on a Wetpixel trip, as well as formal teaching, coaching and encouragement to help you produce stunning images.

Over the past few years, Wetpixel has run photographer-friendly trips to Isla Mujeres, Mexico in order to observe and record the world's largest aggregation of the world's largest fish. This year, we have a few spaces on the first trip (30 July to 5 August), and 3 spaces on the second trip (5 to 11 August) still available. These represent an amazing opportunity as they are normally heavily over-subscribed.

[www.wetpixel.com/expeditions](http://www.wetpixel.com/expeditions)

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



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# New Products

## Nauticam NA-EOSM for Canon EOS M



Nauticam takes great pleasure in announcing an exceptional new housing for a brand new competitor in the mirrorless interchangeable lens camera market: The NA-EOSM for the Canon EOS M. Nauticam designed the new NA-EOSM to be as easy as the EOS M itself.

The new housing will offer an intuitive upgrade to those moving beyond a compact system with an easy and logical interface. The NA-EOSM is engineered for optimal ergonomics utilizing state-of-the-art technologies.

Every control is designed for easy access while maintaining hand position. The EOS M combined 4-way control pad and the control wheel are readily engaged by the right thumb for quick adjustment of aperture, shutter speed, ISO and other

key features in a very similar way to other Canon displays. Of course the mode dial on top of the housing offers instant access to camera exposure options and Movie mode capability. Dedicated buttons for Menu, Info, record and playback make video and still photography a pleasure with the NA-EOSM.

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

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# Shoot Underwater Video?



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Incredibly Powerful Compact  
Wide-Beam Video Light  
600 Lumens - 90° Beam Angle



WWW.SEA-SEA.COM **UK Underwater Kinetics**

## Ikelite Nikon D7100 housing



Ikelite proudly announces a full-featured, TTL enabled underwater housing for the Nikon D7100 Digital SLR camera. The Ikelite housing is built by experienced divers in the USA and comes with unlimited access to Ikelite's unparalleled customer support team.

Proprietary built-in TTL circuitry makes this the only housing for the Nikon D7100 that can actually improve your photos. Our 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.

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. 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.

Lens ports can be removed and replaced quickly with a simple positive locking system which provides visible assurance when the housing is assembled properly.

200ft (60m) depth rating. Lens zoom gears included with housing. US Market Suggested Retail Price \$1,500. Lens port, camera and lens not included.

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

# RECSEA RX-100



## THE RECSEA RX100

- ☑ OPERATIONAL MAXIMUM DEPTH 80M
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## Acquapazza Sony NEX ports SEL1018 and SELP1650 and a tray for mirror less housings

Japanese underwater housing manufacturer Acquapazza has announced two new Sony NEX ports as well as a 2 handle grip for mirror less housings.

The SEL1018 is for the Sony 10-18mm F4 lens and is a bayonet mount extension ring which takes the INON Front Port Dome115. Featuring a minimum focal length of only 10mm (equivalent of 15mm on a 35mm camera), the SEL-1018 wide-angle zoom lens delivers highly detailed, super wide-angle photos without the fisheye distortion of the VCL-ECF1.

An AMRS (INON, Inc. patented magnetic rotary system) ring or a manual gear can be used to control either the zoom or focus but not both.

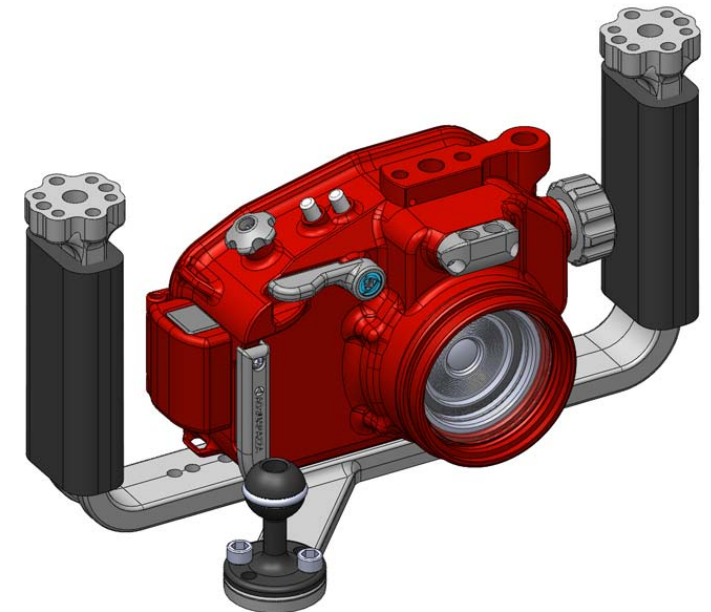
The SELP1650 port is for the 16-50mm F3.5 – F5.6 lens which covers a 16mm to 50mm range (35mm equivalent = 24-75mm) for flexible shooting. This is a flat port to which an M67 adaptor can be fitted to take 67mm close up lenses.

It is not possible to operate the power zoom lever on this lens and the AMRS magnetic system is so powerful that it causes the lens to malfunction but with the manual gear the main ring can be rotated to provide either zoom or focus. In fact



this same ring can control BOTH zoom and focus if the camera is set to DMF focus mode. In this mode, if you half press the shutter release lever, the focus position is chosen which you can fine tune by rotating the focus ring. With the shutter release not pressed the manual rotating ring operates the zoom.

The tray and 2 handle grip is adjustable to suit any hand size and the soft grip handles are not moulded for a particular size hand so are much more versatile to handle. When placed on a level surface the grip provides a stable position. 6



kinds of adaptors can be added to the base and top of either of the handles for mounting focusing lights and accessories.

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

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

蓝天海

**NA-S110** housing for  
Canon PowerShot S110 camera



**NA-G15** for Canon  
PowerShot G15 camera



www.nauticam.cn

## Fantasea FG15 Housing for Canon PowerShot G15



Fantasea Line proudly announces the release of a new and stylish waterproof housing for the Canon PowerShot G15 camera.

The FG15 Housing, specially designed for the Canon G15, meets the same high and professional standards of function, style and durability as previously found in popular and successful Fantasea F series Housings (FP7000 and FP7100). It is ergonomically designed, fully functional and features easy-to-use, clearly labeled controls. This shock resistant housing protects your G15 camera from damaging elements including water, sand, dust, snow, ice and pollutants.

The FG15 has been successfully depth tested to 80 meters (240 ft.) and



is certified to a maximum depth of 60 meters (200 ft.), which is well beyond the 40 meter (130 ft.) dive limit of most compact housings.

The FG15 Housing is supported by a complete accessory line, including wide angle and macro lenses. Additional accessories include a variety of color correction filters and lighting sets, which enable photographers to further enhance the quality of their images and videos.

www.fantasea.com

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## Nauticam LCD Magnifier with Dioptic Adjustment

Nauticam announces the “LCD Magnifier with Dioptic Adjustment” for select Nauticam underwater camera housings. The magnifier uses a specially designed optic to perform well underwater, and features a dioptic adjustment so the user can dial in the lens correction to get a very sharp view of the camera LCD. The molded rubber sunshade virtually eliminates problems seeing the LCD in bright sunlight.

This new part allows everyone to see the LCD screen much more easily than without it, and makes getting accurate focus and interesting composition much easier.

The LCD Magnifier with Dioptic Adjustment is now available for Nauticam housings for the following cameras: Canon EOS M, Canon G15, Canon S110, Panasonic LX7, Sony NEX-5R (Serial # A045572 and later), Sony RX-100 (Serial # A040732 and later)

Approximate adjustment range, -2 to +3 diopters

Broadband anti-reflective multi-layer coating



+10 Achromatic lens, manufactured specifically for underwater usage

Additional Nauticam housings may be supported in future releases.

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

**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)

## Amphibico Genesis FS700 housing for the Sony NEX-FS700U

The Amphibico “GENESIS” line of compact Prosumer HD housings is proud to announce its next creation for the Sony NEX-FS700 camera.

The Sony NEX-FS700U Super 35 Camcorder is a fully professional large-sensor video camera. Hot on the heels of the FS100, this compact, highly modular camera uses a very similar-sized Super 35 CMOS sensor as the FS100. But as a marked improvement over that earlier model’s sensor, the FS700 features a native 4K resolution sensor. Unlike smaller, broadcast-style sensors or the larger “full-frame” sensors of some DSLRs, the NEX-FS700’s imaging area matches that of standard Hollywood film cameras. The sensor’s large size offers a variety of other advantages, including increased control over depth of field, higher sensitivity in low light, lower image noise, and an exceptional dynamic range.

One unique feature for a camcorder of this class is the FS700’s ability to record bursts of super-slow motion video at rates

up to a whopping 960 fps. (These bursts range from 8 to 16 seconds, depending of the frame rate). Full-resolution recording is possible at



up to 240 fps; at 480 and 960 fps, resolution is reduced

As for the housing, it is built with the same high quality solid aluminum construction as our previous pro line of housings, no compromise was taken to create the New “GENESIS” line from Amphibico.

Keeping in mind total ergonomics and underwater balance, its compact design with an intergraded electronic grip system makes the unit extremely user friendly underwater. Our engineers worked very diligently on its design, keeping in mind size, weight, balance and it’s on board electronics allowing easy and complete access to all key camcorder functions, it will give users the ability to create the best possible HD video underwater.

MSRP \$6395 US

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

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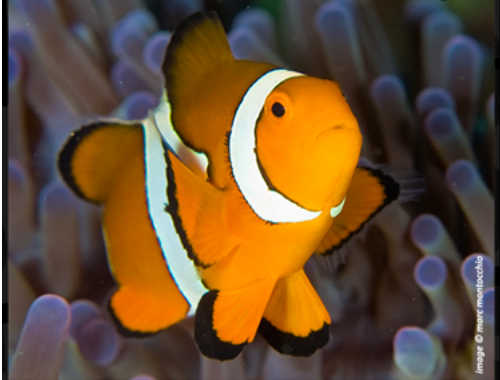
**NA-D7100** housing for  
Nikon D7100 Camera



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

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## 10 Bar GoPro Hero 2 & 3 Housings

10 Bar is pleased to announce its Action Cam Line of Products.

GoPro cameras have become so popular for sports enthusiasts that as an underwater camera housing manufacturer, we have introduced aluminum housings for their cameras. 10 Bar's GoPro Hero 2 & 3 housings are machined from a solid block of 6061 aluminum. They are sturdy and work perfectly with GoPro Hero cameras for action sports and underwater activities. The clear acrylic back cover allows easy checking on the rear LCD monitor of the camera thus offering ease of use underwater. The housings are pressure tested to 90m, more than adequate for sport diving.

### Mask / Hose Clamp Mount

The mount is especially designed to clamp onto a mask with a frame or a regulator hose. This design provides a hands-free solution as well as compatibility to both worlds - original GoPro housings and others which have standard 1/4" tripod thread. With one device fitting all, the mount can be



used with your action cam to provide a third eye, recording everything you saw on your dive. You might discover something really interesting afterwards, something which you might have missed on your last dive.

### GoPro Hero 3 Red and Magenta Filters

The square-shaped red and magenta filters for GoPro's Hero 3 housings are now available. With the choice of filters, you will get much improved color balance whether you are in blue or green water.

[www.10bar.com](http://www.10bar.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)

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**APSO-RX100**

Underwater Camera Housing for SONY RX100



<http://acquapazza.jp/en>

## UN Universal underwater LCD magnifier

The UN Universal underwater LCD magnifier (UNZ-2499) provides 3x magnification and fits on most housings with a flat up to 3" screen size. It is shown here on Canon G15 housing (WP-DC48)

A simple draw string secures it onto the housing's LCD, without obstructing the push buttons.

Draw strings can be extended to any length or changed to bungee cords on your own ( extension and bungee cord not included)

The UN Universal underwater LCD magnifier costs RM 320.00



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

## Gates Sony F5 and F55 housing

The F55 Housing is a marquis member of the Gates family of housing for digital cinema and broadcast TV. Designed specifically for the Sony F5 and F55 cameras, the F55 shares many functional features with its cinema brothers including full camera and lens control, support for a wide variety of DSLR and PL mount lenses, fully adjustable buoyancy / trim, and Gates Precision Ports for no compromises image quality.



[www.gates housings.com](http://www.gates housings.com)

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**APSG-DP3M**

Underwater Camera Housing for SIGMA DP EMerrill



<http://acquapazza.jp/en>

## Green Force Squid LED 1850

The Squid LED 1850 is a true performer. His 3 'true color' LED's offer an output of 1.850 lumen with a CRI (Color Rendering Index) of >80. In combination with his 4.000 Kelvin color temperature, this video lighting system proves an unprecedented spectacle of lifelike and true colors. The Squid LED 1850 has an extremely leveled beam of 120° without the presence of a hot spot.

The Squid LED 1850 is compatible with all Green Force Flexi battery packs, as well as with the Hybrid 8 and 12 battery packs.



The casings of Green Force Squids are made of seawater resistant aluminum. They have been treated with three processes to produce a hard, corrosion-resistant surface.

[www.green-force.com](http://www.green-force.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.



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RRP: £349.99

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## 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)

## Mangrove housing for Sony HDR-PJ780VE/790V/650VE



Aditech releases the new type IV Mangrove housings MVHS-L and MVSH-XL for the Sony camcorders HDR-PJ780VE/790V/650VE, etc. The housing's front case is constructed from marine grade aluminium, machined, hard anodized and the rear case is machined from solid Delrin, it features a state of the art LANC control system that allows accessing almost all camcorder functions, including the White Balance, the external controls on the housing are linked by 12 electromagnetic pushbuttons to corresponding controls on the camera inside the case. The Mangrove housing is designed for optimal grip operation, it is depth rated to 200 meters (660 feet)

The maintenance-free electronic 12-key control makes operation even easier. Now, for the first time, it is possible to operate all camcorder functions (such as manual WB,

aperture and shutter time, zoom and many others) using the electronic touch screen control. This control set is much easier to use than the mechanical controls or mechanical touch screen on competitors systems.

The housing's sleek, ergonomic design feels like a natural extension of your hands and makes capturing that perfect video sequence fluid and easy. The Mangrove MVHS-L/-XL is a universal housing that accepts nearly the entire line of Sony HD video cameras, the camcorder mounts on a specially engineered universal camera tray that can be adjusted by the customer in any position in just a few minutes.

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



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## Hugyfot HFN-D600 for Nikon D600

The HFN-D600 housing is machined out of a solid block AlMgSi1 high strength aluminum. Each housing is sanded by hand, sandblasted and finished with a hard anodisation and Teflon coating. The housing is pressure rated to 100m.

All Nikon D600 camera controls can be accessed (on/off, shutter release, shutter speed, aperture, program dial, main dial, push buttons, lens release).

Dimensions (W x H x D):

220 x 230 x 130 mm

Weight (without camera): 2,7 Kg



Color (anodized): black  
Pressure rated: 100m

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

## Nauticam NA-D7100 for Nikon D7100



The NA-D7100 is designed specifically for the new Nikon D7100, and represents the latest level of development, engineering and ergonomics in underwater camera housings. The NA-D7100 builds on the heritage and success of Nauticam housings for Nikon D7000, D600 and D800. The very capable D7100 is Nikon's best DX format camera ever, and is an ideal camera for the serious enthusiast to the seasoned professional. Lens support is the widest in the industry, and Nauticam offers a huge range of supporting accessories.

Nauticam pioneered numerous engineering breakthroughs in previous housings that now come standard on the NA-D7100. The patented housing Locking Latch System has received acclaim worldwide for its ease and functionality. These recessed latches

are equipped with safety locks, reduce bulk and require minimal physical effort to engage and release.

Nauticam housings are the finest, most ergonomic, most usable camera housings on the market today, and the NA-D7100 is a shining example of that. Every control is well thoughtout, every button, lever and switch considered not in terms of what is easier for the designer, but what is right for the shooter. One example is the patent pending Multi Controller Pad that is located within easy reach of the right thumb. The device virtually recreates the Nikon multi selector on the back of the NA-D7100 housing allowing full multidirectional use of this powerful tool, and no other manufacturer has it.

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

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The Diveandsee DNC-5 is a 5" Underwater LED monitor with HDMI Input

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Supports Resolution: 1920 x 1080

Depth: 316 ft / 95 m

Bright panel 400 cd/m2

Size: 6 x 4.2 x 1.7 inch / 154 x 107 x 43 mm

Weight: in air - 2 lbs / 910 g, in fresh water - negative 300 g

Battery: 5 hours of continuous use

Peaking

Blue Gun

DSLR scaling



The set includes monitor, bulkhead connector (thru hole 0.5" (12,7 mm) / M12, 0.55" (14 mm) / M14 or M16 threads), mini HDMI right-angle connector, 1 metal and 1 plastic protective cap, 1" ball mount adapter, and quick charger.

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

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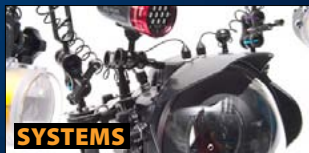
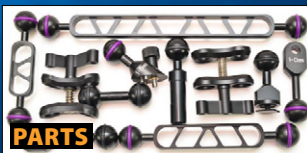
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## Housing Sentry for Ikelite housings



UnderWater Camera Stuff announced that a customized fitting has been developed so the Housing Sentry may now be installed in an unused control location of an Ikelite housing. This new fitting allows the Ikelite user to reap the benefits of a vacuum leak-prevention system without adding another opening to their housing.

This new Ikelite control location fitting is the sixth option available for the Housing Sentry. The fitting is stainless steel and replaces an unused control with no modification needed to the housing. When it is time to upgrade equipment, the fitting can be removed and the original control re-installed, easily bringing the housing back to its standard configuration.

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

## Sea & Sea MDX-6D for Canon EOS-6D



This new Sea & Sea housing is made from black anodized aluminum alloy and gives access to almost all of the camera's essential underwater functions, apart from the Depth-of-Field Preview button.

Key features of the MDX-6D housing include:

- \* Shutter lever tension can be adjusted with a spring.
- \* Port lock can be accessed without opening the housing.
- \* New grip design with threadless fixings.
- \* Tripod socket on the centre underside of the housing.
- \* Optical Viewfinder 0.5x as standard.
- Other interchangeable viewfinders can be used.
- \* Built-in leak sensor immediately alerts you to water ingress.
- \* Depth rating of 100m / 330ft.

[www.sea-sea.net](http://www.sea-sea.net)

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“Often copied,  
never equaled”

# Nikon 1 J2 and Housing

By Steve Brown

My name is Steve Brown, I've been a keen photographer since I was a boy so when I became interested in diving it seemed only natural to take pictures of the underwater environment too!

I first was bitten by the 'diving bug' in 2003 when I did a try dive whilst on holiday in Kuredu Maldives and the rest is history! Since qualifying as a PADI open water diver I've always had a camera as part of my diving kit, and I'm now a PADI Underwater Digital Photography Speciality Instructor.

I started out with an Olympus Mju 700 compact camera & housing, which actually produced some great results, to a bridge camera, and then an SLR with strobes plus a bit of underwater movie, and most recently the Nikon 1 J2 with the new housing. Sounds like a lot of equipment, but I do have the advantage of owning a Photographic & HiFi business with my wife Amanda, on the Isle of Wight. We've got 2 shops on the Island & have been in the trade for 29 years selling cameras and all things related to photography.

The digital era has brought about many changes and advantages to the world of underwater photography as

well as to that on land.

When Nikon offered to loan me the J2 for my holiday in Cuba this year, I jumped at the chance to use one of these highly regarded cameras to see for myself if really could live up to the reviews!

For those not familiar with the camera, it's Nikon's second generation of compact system camera with a range of interchangeable lenses. It has been advertised on TV extensively, in various colours, you'd have been unlucky to have missed it! As with the J1, its predecessor, the J2 has a 10 million Pixel CMOS sensor which is designed to always be one step ahead of the action, whilst being simple to operate. The camera has an auto scene selection, programmed auto with flexible program, shutter & aperture priority auto and of course, full manual control.

The shutter speeds range from 1/16,000 to 30sec & bulb. The metering methods are matrix Centre-weighted or Spot and for quick exposure adjustments there is a generous -3 - +3 exposure compensation in increments of 1/3 EV. Images are stored to SD, SDHC & SDXC cards in jpeg or RAW formats for still images & MPEG-4



for video (1080p HD)

The built in flash enables the use of external strobe lights via an optical lead, and has a selection of modes for on land use. When shooting without flash (particularly underwater) the manual white balance mode is

very useful, as is the ISO override of 100-3200. To date this camera has collected a number of good reviews and the J1 was Europe's best selling system compact camera in 2012. To find out more & get the full specification go to Nikon's website.



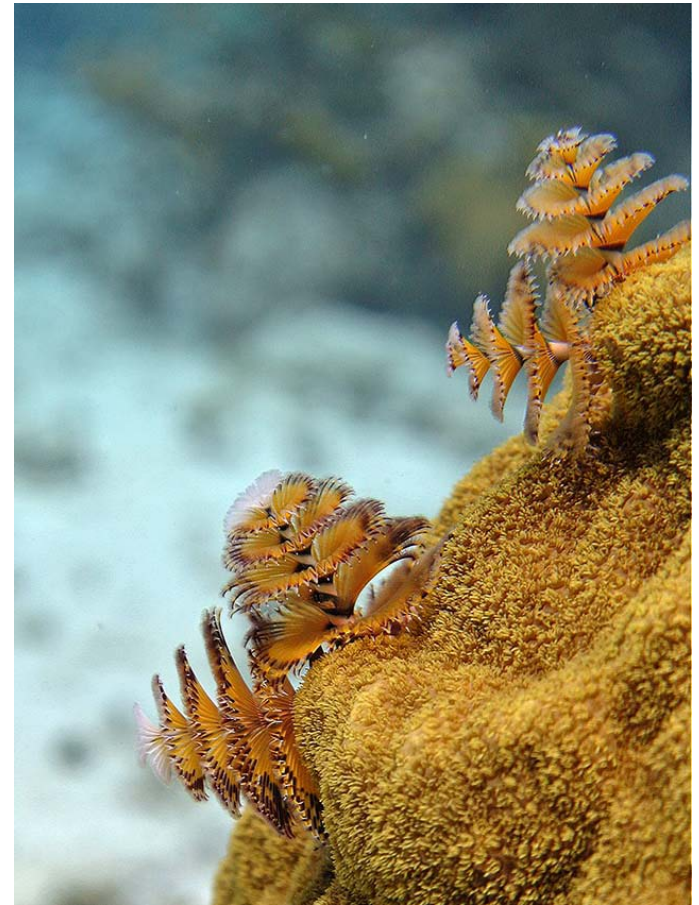
*French Angelfish, 1/640, F4.5, ISO400, 10mm Focal Length, Program.*

When the kit arrived my first impression was how neat the housing is compared to the SLR housing I've been used to. Its smart white finish with smoked plastic back not only looks good but feels like a quality product too. It is designed to accommodate the Nikon 1 J1 or J2 with the 10-30mm lens and will go to a maximum depth of 40m. There is a flat side O ring system and a secure clasp to ensure the camera stays dry. I was able to attach my wide angle lens via the 67mm thread on the front and as I previously mentioned, the strobe with an optical cable. There are two optical outputs for multi strobe use.



*Flamingo Tongue Cowrie, 1/640, F5.6, ISO400, 30mm Focal Length, Aperture Priority, -1 exposure compensation.*

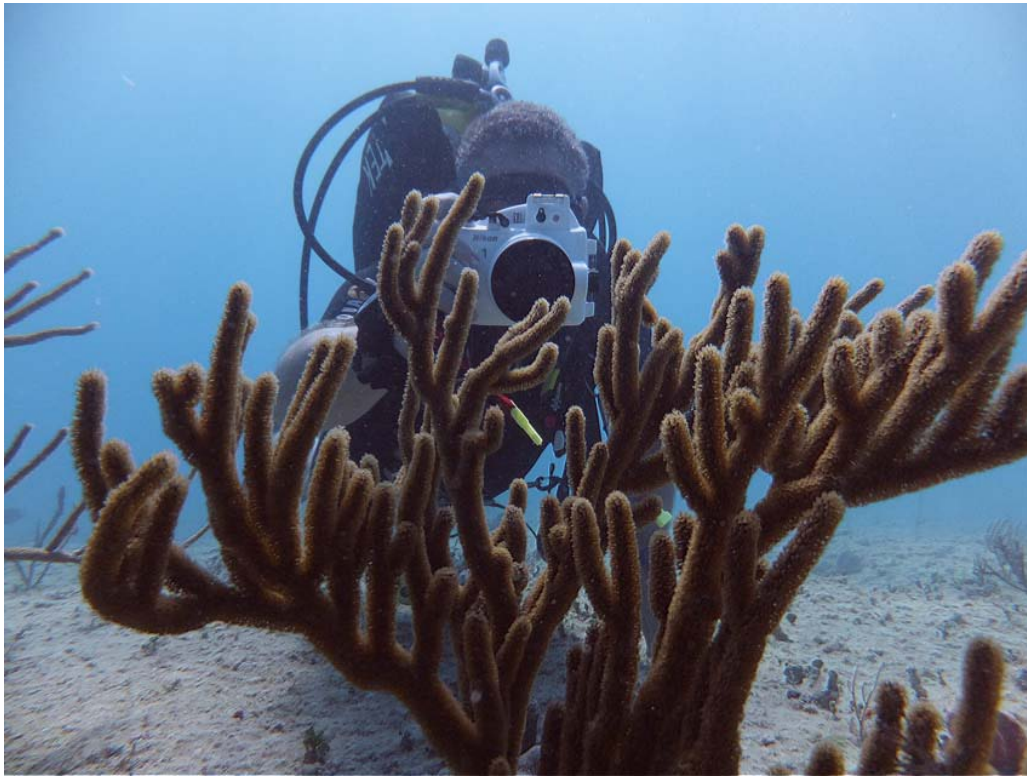
Once in the water I found the shutter release was easily located and the focusing was as quick and accurate as it is on land, even in lower light situations. The zoom, if required, is controlled smoothly courtesy of the positive control on the outside, and the rubber grip ring around the lens inside. The 10-30mm lens (35 mm equivalent: 27-81 mm) has 20cm close focus which adds to its versatility and there's even a black accessory ring



*Christmas Tree Worm, 1/640, F5.6, ISO400, 30mm Focal Length, Aperture Priority.*

supplied to fit to the front of the lens, to minimize any reflection from information printed on the surround.

Navigating the menu was a piece of cake too, the screen display is perfect for comfortable viewing through the mask and the white buttons are clearly marked with black letters so no guess work was required! I found it really easy to find the exact mode especially things like the white balance,



*Steve Brown with Nikon1, taken with a Fuji F500.*

which I use frequently, and screen brightness. I found the grid screen option really useful for framing the shots underwater too.

The apertures (when in aperture priority) are changed by an 'up/down' switch within thumb's reach and movie start/stop has a large button marked with a red spot in the vicinity of the shutter release. Although I didn't use the HD movie mode a great deal, the short clips I did take were every bit as good as a dedicated HD movie camera.

Throughout all this vigorous testing the lithium-ion rechargeable battery held up well lasting two 1 hour dives (with playback of course on the boat trip back) and still didn't fail, I think if I'd used movie more maybe it would have used more power, never the less, I had ample battery life for my needs.

So far so good, however there were a few niggles most of which I was able to resolve one way or another. The first of which was manual exposure this was inaccessible

when in the housing, so I made good use of the exposure compensation function. The other limitation was the flash, although the strobe was controlled faultlessly, once the flash is popped up inside the housing, (which you need to do before closing it up) there is no way of switching it off, so unfortunately all of the pictures for that particular dive had to be with flash. The way round that? Well, there is a 'snap shot' option in video mode which does not fire the flash, but this automatically sets the picture format to 16:9. To be honest this didn't really present any problems for me in Cuba, as the conditions were very good and most of my pictures were taken using

natural lighting with manual white balance.

So to summarize, I found the Nikon really easy & enjoyable to use and would most definitely recommend it to my customers & students. The results are impressive both in and out of the water making this the ideal camera for holidays and at home, not just because of the size & weight but it's a fraction of the price of the DSLR equivalent & so it keeps the whole family happy!

**Steve Brown**

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# Nikon D600 vs D800

## Field Review

by Alex Mustard

It was only a handful of issues of UWP ago that if you wanted a 20+ megapixel, full frame Nikon SLR your only option was the £5000 (\$8000 USD) D3x. How quickly things change; not only do we now have the 36MP D800 and D800e, but Nikon have recently introduced the D600, whose 24MP sensor outperforms the D3x in tests and costs just £1300 (\$2000 USD).

Nauticam have recently launched their new NA-D600 housing and more housing manufacturers will have versions out soon. So I headed to Norway to put the camera through its subaquatic paces. But rather than do a pure D600 review, I also packed a D800 to do a comparative test in Nauticam housings. Anyone considering one of these cameras must surely have thought about the other. Swapping between them in the same housings on alternate dives made the similarities and differences obvious, even through 7mm mitts!

Yes, I decided to use the Nudibranch Safari at Gulen Dive Centre, north of Bergen as my test

location. I realize a winter macro trip to frigid Norwegian waters isn't everyone's typical diving, but the event attracted no shortage of heavy weight underwater photographic gear. These are very much conditions where these systems need to be able shine.

The D600 is currently the second highest resolution SLR from the major players, exceeding all of Canon's cameras and only topped by the Nikon D800. However, the D600's 24MP sensor is, for many, much closer to the resolution/file size sweet spot they want, actually preferable to the hard drive punishing D800.

The D800 out specs the D600 in most areas, as you would expect from a camera that is considerably more expensive. I am sure you already know that on paper it has more pixels, as well as better build quality and better autofocus. The D800 also has a 1/3 stop faster maximum flash synch speed of 1/320th on FX, compared with 1/250th on the D600. The question I wanted to answer in Norway was "how much do you give away opting for the cheaper camera?"



*The Nikon D600 and D800, Nikon's most recent FX SLRs.*



*The Nauticam NA-D600 ready for action in Norway. Swapping between the NA-D600 and NA-D800 on consecutive dives made the differences and similarities obvious.*



*(Left) Nauticam's excellent multi-selector pad is also on the NA-D600. Also note the exaggerated grooves on the dial for adjusting shutter speed (top of the frame), ideal for easily flicking through settings with just your thumb.*

*(Right) The D600 produces huge, highly detailed twenty four megapixel files, that have low noise and capture a high dynamic range. Do you really need more? Nikon D600 + 105mm VR + Subsee +10. Nauticam housing, Inon Strobes. 1/250th @ f/32. ISO 125.*

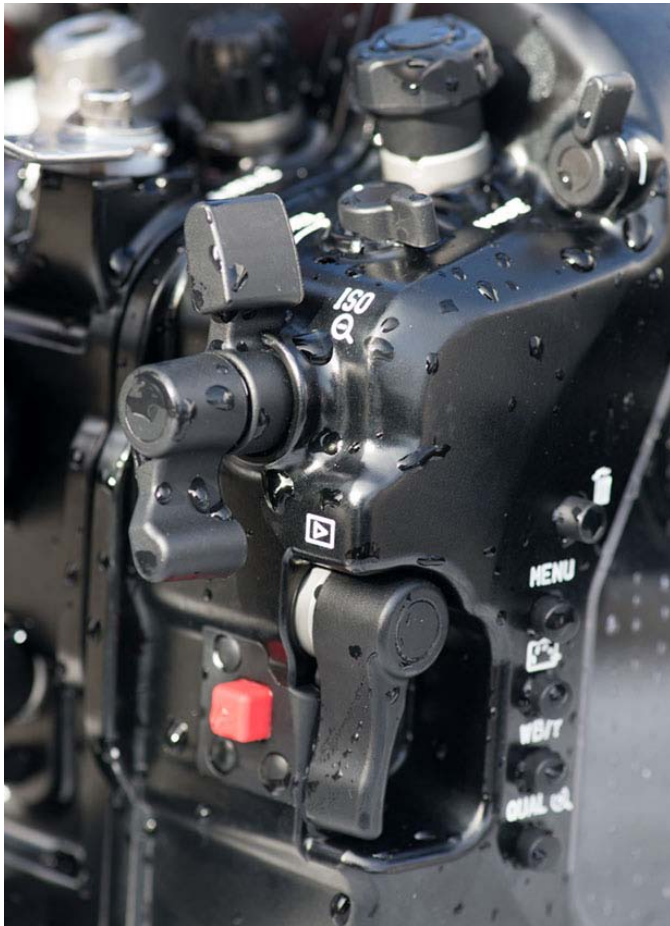
## Housings

Although the Nikon D600 is considerably smaller and lighter than D800, the two Nauticam housings are very similar in size, appearance and controls. The NA-D600 is several hundred

dollars cheaper than the NA-D800 and thanks to Nauticam's constant drive to continually improve their housings, it actually adds a couple of useful features lacking from the NA-800.

Both have Nauticam's excellent multi-directional control for the multi-selector pad, first

introduced on the NA-D7000V housing. They both also have very nice control dials for aperture and shutter speed, which were easy to use, even through the 7mm of neoprene on my gloves. Also the buttons on the backs are well spaced and easy to use even with cold hands.



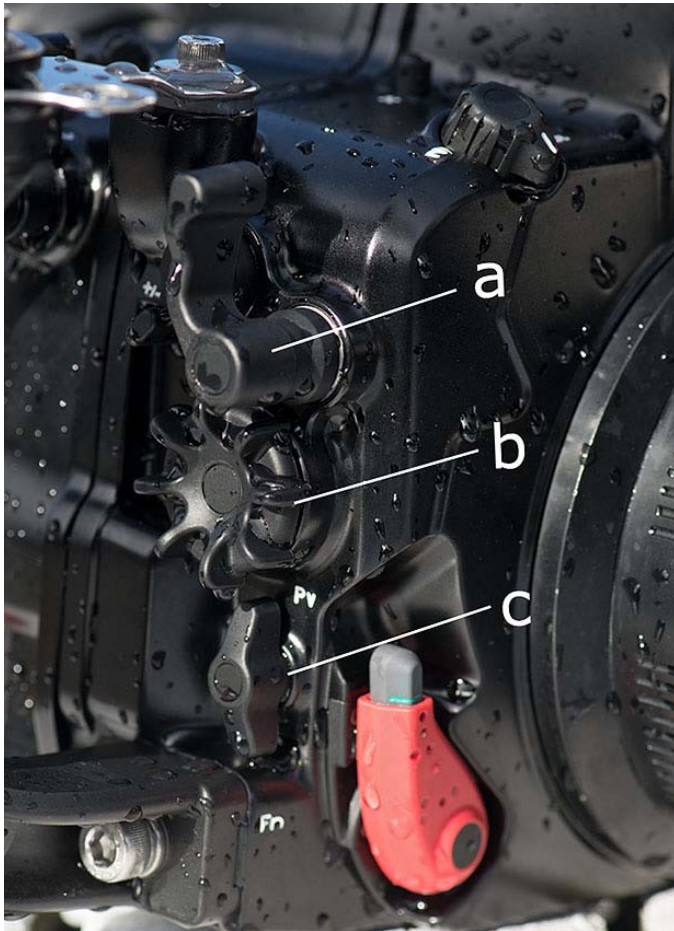
*(Left) Nauticam's NA-D600 provides thumb levers to make it easier to access important controls. For your left thumb there are levers for Image Playback and ISO. (Right) Both cameras have good autofocus, but the D800 is excellent in this regard. Shooting nudibranchs at high magnifications, on moving pieces of kelp, is a tough challenge for any AF system and as the magnification went up, so the difference between the cameras was more obvious. I doubt I'd notice any difference in wide angle photography. Nikon D800 + 105mm VR + Subsee +10 diopter. Nauticam housing, Inon Strobes. 1/320th @ f/25. ISO 100.*

I also like that Nauticam uses different coloured, sized and shaped buttons on their housings. On the NA-D600 the INFO and Liveview buttons are close together (see photo), but they can be swiftly differentiated, even just by touch, as a result of this thoughtful design.

As on their previous Nikon housings, the NA-D600 helpfully provides access to a number of important push button controls via ergonomic levers positioned to fall beneath your thumbs when you hold the handles. For example, the button for ISO on is accessed through a convenient lever,

positioned beneath your left thumb, as it is on the NA-D800. Although on the D600 this button is dual function, so you have to make sure that you are not reviewing an image when you try and change it, otherwise you end up zooming out the image!

The D600 does not have a dedicated AF-



*(Left) A new addition for a Nauticam housing is a control (marked c on the photo) to access the programmable Fn and Pv buttons on the front of the camera. Some other manufacturers already had this feature on their D800 and D4 housings. Also shown are a) contoured shutter release and b) deeply grooved aperture control dial. (Right) A wider scene of a nudibranch feeding on hydroids, photographed using the 60mm lens. With the wider 60mm lens the autofocus performance difference between the two cameras was much harder to detect. Nikon D600 + 60mm. Nauticam housing, Inon Strobes. 1/250th @f/13. ISO 200.*

ON button for back-button focus, but the AF-L/AE-L lock button can be easily customized for this function. Nauticam helpfully provide access to this button via one of the paddles.

The D600 uses multifunction buttons on the back (like the D7000), rather than having dedicated

buttons for ISO, quality, WB. While this might sound like a disadvantage, the dual use rear buttons are actually better placed to reach from the handle of the housing, then when these buttons are on top of the camera and therefore the housing, as they are on the D800, where strobe arms etc can be in the

way. So for underwater use this is perhaps a small advantage.

The most notable difference with the NA-D800 is that the NA-D600 includes a dual function lever on the front of the housing, below the aperture dial, which presses the Function (Fn) and Depth Of Field

Preview (Pv) buttons. This is a first for a Nauticam housing.

Several manufacturers (such as Aquatica, Seacam and Subal) have already introduced access to these buttons on their D800 (and D4) housings. These buttons are very useful when shooting video and recording the unprocessed signal via the HDMI port, because they allow smooth, seamless changes of aperture. It should be noted that in video mode on the D600 this powered aperture function is not available.

However, for stills shooting these controls can be customized for a variety of functions. For example, on my Subal D4, I have customized the Pv button to turn off my flashes, which is useful for shooting silhouettes on the fly.

Another neat feature that is new on the NA-D600 is a small lever that depresses the lock button on the mode dial. This lever holds its position when switched, making changing modes a one handed, rather than two handed job.

In short, the NA-D600 is an evolution of the popular NA-D800 housing. Adding a few new features and selling for less money. Nauticam fans will not be disappointed.

## Cameras

The main sensation when switching between the D800 and D600 is how similar they feel. Almost everything feels the same, when using them. Through a housing (and Nauticam's 45 degree viewfinder) I felt both gave a very good viewfinder image and I didn't feel there was any noticeable difference in this area between the cameras.

When the D600 was released, quite a few of us

turned our noses up at the quoted 1/200th maximum synch speed. This can be increased to a much more acceptable 1/250th through the menus.

The main difference I noticed between the cameras is in autofocus performance. Both are very good, but switching between, the advantage of the D800 is clear. It is important to note that shooting nudibranchs at super macro magnifications in the dark waters of Norway is a stern test of autofocus. I tried to keep my use of the focus light to a minimum because it does seem to make the slugs turn away more quickly, and that means moving yourself and the risk of kicking up a sediment lying on the kelp, causing scatter in your photos.

The D600 was noticeably poorer than the D800 in both acquiring and holding focus in dark conditions with the low contrast and razor thin depth of field that results from super macro accessories such as the Subsee +10. With the 60mm the difference was much less obvious, and I suspect would be almost impossible to detect with wide angle lenses.

With super macro, I definitely needed the focus light more with the D600, than the D800, consistent with the fact that the D600's AF is quoted to work only down to -1 EV (while the D800 is rated to -2 EV ambient light). However, both are designed to work with lenses as slow as f/8 (good news for macro shooters with teleconverters).

Also the D600's MultiCam 4800FX autofocus sensor's 39 points have poorer frame coverage than the D800 (and much less than a DX camera, the new D7100 is particularly good in this regard).

Using the two cameras side by side tends to exaggerate differences. On both cameras the autofocus performance is a positive feature.



*The D600's AF system has noticeably poorer frame coverage than the D800, although both are relatively poor compared to DX Nikons, especially the forthcoming D7100. But you can still avoid bullseyeing subjects. Nikon D600 + 105mm VR + Subsee +10 diopter. Nauticam housing, Inon Strobes. 1/250th @ f/29. ISO 100.*



*On paper the D800 out performs the D600 in most specification, but how significant are these differences are for underwater photography Nikon D800 + 60mm. Nauticam housing, Inon Strobes. 1/250th @ f/14. ISO 200.*

## Image quality

The D800 may be the measurebators' champ, but even in the geeky DXO mark sensor evaluation, but the D600 runs it very, very close. Almost matching the D800 in dynamic range (the difference between the D800 and D800E is the same as the difference between the D600 and D800E) and the D600 actually beats the D800 by a similarly irrelevant margin in high ISO shooting performance. The D600 can also squeeze in 1 more frame per second, however, I don't believe the D800 is really limited for underwater photography in this regard.

For underwater photography I found the D600 sensor's performance phenomenal. Image quality is as close to state of the art in resolution and dynamic range, as almost anyone could need for many years.

I know I didn't shoot sunbursts with my macro lens, but holding details on a white nudibranch, perched on a light sucking frond of kelp is a similarly tough challenge for a sensor. Both D600 and D800 were state of the art performers.

The D800 definitely realizes its extra resolution when using prime lenses and quality diopters. While the D600 files had marginally less noise at higher ISO levels, but with these latest high resolution cameras you do need think about noise in a different way because the final reproduction size of the image has a much bigger bearing on what ISOs will be acceptable in any situation. In short, I would not be afraid of turning up the ISO if you need to on either camera.

## Conclusion

I prefer the D800 to the D600 for underwater photography, mainly because its superior autofocus was often noticeable when switched between them on a super macro trip in dark waters. If you mainly shoot wide angle this difference will be much harder to notice.

But I must stress that both are excellent underwater cameras, which feel and perform very similarly in the Nauticam housings. I would regularly forget which I was using and if someone said to me I had to use the D600 for all my underwater photography I would be perfectly happy.

They both produce stunning images, suitable for huge reproduction, over a wide range of ISOs. The D800 has more resolution, but also fills up hard drives quicker, with data that 9 times out of 10 most of us probably don't need. The D600 files are also huge and very, very impressive.

The price difference will probably determine the direction of a lot of sales. If you are buying a system from scratch, the total system price difference between D800 and D600 systems is much smaller. However, most people considering these cameras will probably own strobes, ports and Nikon lenses already. When considering just the camera and housing prices for the systems I used, the D800 costs \$6600 USD and the D600 costs \$5400 USD (source B&H and Reef Photo Video). This is about 20% cheaper, which is a considerable saving.

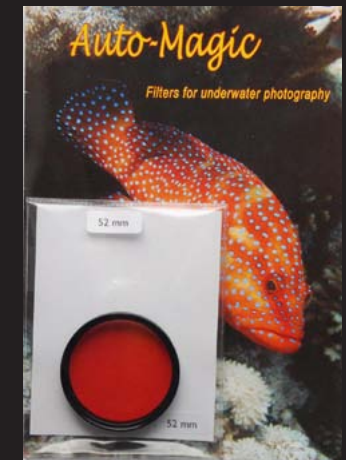
The D800 is the better camera, but if you plump for the cheaper D600 you can be assured you have a great camera that does almost everything with the same excellence. And with the improvements that Nauticam have brought to the NA-D600 housing, you can feel a little smug that you have not just a cheaper housing, but an even better one than the NA-D800.

**Alex Mustard**  
[www.amustard.com](http://www.amustard.com)

## Acknowledgements

*Thank you to Alex Tattersall of Nauticam UK for lending me both Nauticam housings and the D800 camera for the review. A special thank you to Miho Tsuruoka for lending me her D600 camera. Thank you to everyone on the Nudibranch Safari. See you next year!*

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# Shooting Mermaids

By Steve Anton

Folklore has it that mermaids have been around for untold centuries. No fable can withstand the test of time without some truth. I am here to show you some truth and hope you can help spread the fable.

As a kid growing up in South Florida there were always the stories and myths about mermaids. Of course during my days of growing up, there were also TV programs about genies, witches and a friendly dolphin. The South Florida I grew up with also had brochures about mermaids at almost every diner and motel. It was a captivating thought, to be able to see them perform, and then one day I did. The beauty and grace was amazing and the mermaids seemed so real. In every child's life there comes a moment, when reality intervenes with perception. For most, it is when they learn there is no Santa Clause. For me...I still believe in mermaids.

As an older kid, I would always dream of the water and learned to scuba dive. I would learn to be a fish and once bitten by the photography bug, I learned capture the beauty that is the underwater world. I also never forgot the mermaids.

From the early days of Hans Hass, starting in 1938, the Austrian

photographer and his lovely wife Lotte, introduced their amazing underwater photographs and movies to the public, The public had never seen anything like Hans' world. This was many years before Mr. Cousteau began. This new world had its first swimming cameraman and he had a huge impact on so many others. In this new world, masks, fins and underwater cameras were still being developed. There is an amazing collection of his works still available on the internet and even by today's standards, they are the measure of underwater photography and cinematography. His mermaid was Lotte.

The lure of the depths has captured so many of us and at an early age. When I started diving, the pinnacle was to own a Nikonos camera. I still have my Nikonos II and the Seconic light meter. They still work and are on my shelf looking down at me as I type this. Today there are so many cameras and systems available, that to say one is the best is as say one car is the best. Which is best for you is the real question. For many, that best is determined by a budget. That camera budget is often in competition with all the other



*Trina Mason's Sassy Tail-Sony-NEX-7, Nauticam Housing, ISO -100, 18 MM, F-6.3 at 1/100, Natural light.*



diving equipment for your attention. I, myself, have learned that it is best to look at the housings you can afford and develop the camera system from that, since many of the housings can be double the cost of the camera and adding different lens to the housing can jump into large digits. The best news is that even inexpensive cameras, such as the point-and-shoots today, will do an amazing job. The photograph doesn't care what camera you are using, nobody ever asked Picasso what paint brushes he used.

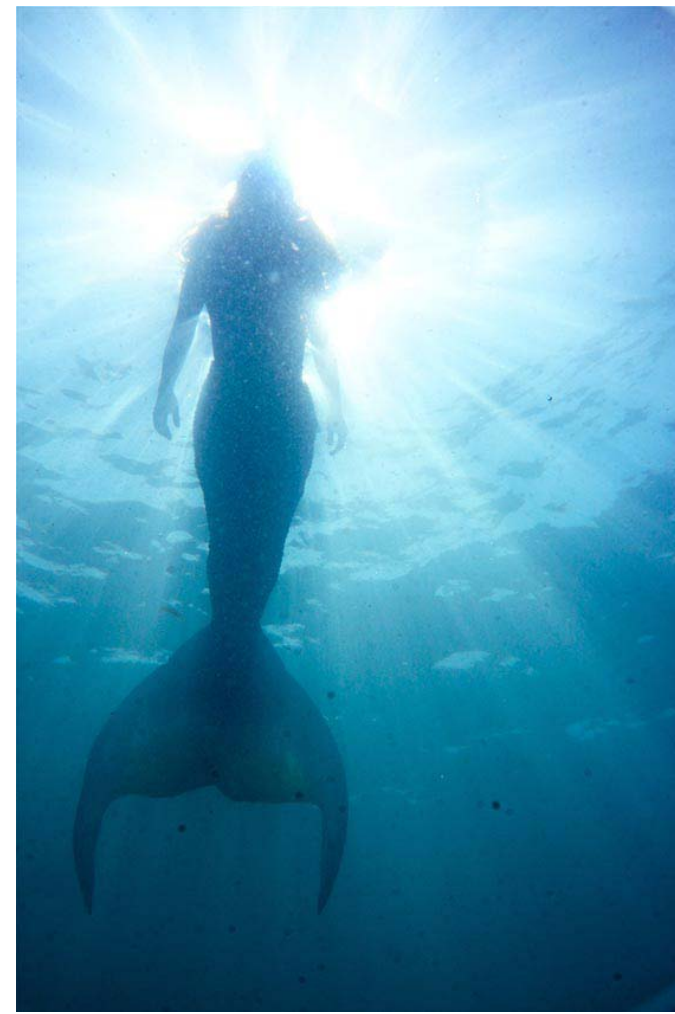
As photographers, we are all consumed with seeing the finished product and digital gives us the instant gratification that film never did. But what you see in the camera isn't always what shows up on your screen. So practice and more practice are needed. If you are a beginning diver and/or beginning photographer, I have always recommended to my photography students, that time spent practicing in the pool, learning your camera and settings, will pay off well in open water. It's boring in a pool, but lots less expensive than coming back from a day of diving, wishing you hadn't made so many mistakes. So at the end of the day, reviewing your photos, should be your reward, not agony!

As an underwater photographer, especially if you are a critter shooter, mermaids are fun. They like to have their photo taken and don't run and hide. They are much easier to direct and also can assist in hauling equipment. They are easy to find, usually they have a Facebook page, websites and cell phones that text. Mermaiding is a very fast growing field of aquatic entertainment and fun to do. There are dozens of mermaid tail and accessory manufacturers that can also point you to mermaids and them to you. These mermaids



*Finding Nemo- Sony-NEX-7, Nauticam Housing, ISO- 200, 18 MM, F-5.6 at 1/60, Natural light, pool location*

range in age from three- or four-year-olds, to full adults, over sixty. So, wherever you find them or they find you, have your camera ready and skills to match. There are mermaid gatherings such as a Merpalooza, a mermaid convention, August 9th thru the 11th, 2013. [www.merpalooza.com](http://www.merpalooza.com).



*Mermaid Sun Angel- Sony-NEX-7, Nauticam Housing, ISO- 400, 18 MM, F-22 at 1/250, Natural light, ocean location*

There is a Mernetwork, at [www.mernetwork.com](http://www.mernetwork.com). There are mermaid magazines such as [www.themermaidmagazine.com](http://www.themermaidmagazine.com). The culture of mermaiding is huge and growing rapidly. There are several tail manufacturers and accessory companies, making amazing lifelike tails, such as the Mertailor,

www.mertailor.com, Mermaids R Us, www.mermaidsrus.com and Aquatails, www.aquatails.com to mention just a few. This is a new way of looking at underwater photography that many have not considered but should. We are all water types and sharing the love of what makes us, us, is very important.

Looking at them, mermaid tails seem like innocent fun. If the model has never swam in a tail, there is a definite, strong learning curve; a swim-ability lesson is needed. There have been several incidents where, new mermaids, in the new tails, didn't understand that their feet are bound and moving in a tail is learned and not a natural art. Just dropping them into the water and waiting for them to surface can be a very bad way to learn, that they are not waving "hi" from underneath, but need help to get to the surface. Holding their breath while waiting for someone to rescue them isn't the best way for a model to build the trust relationship necessary between a photographer and model. Make sure the model and photographer understand that the shallow end can be a very good start to learning mermaid photography. An experienced underwater mermaid will already have the swimming skills, modeling and breath-holding ability that an untrained model won't know. They will also know about makeup and have most of it. Makeup is important and there are make up artists who specialize in underwater makeup. Having a model who is completely comfortable underwater is the secret to good mermaid photos. I have found that sometimes, it is much easier to teach someone who is comfortable underwater, to model, than teach a model to be comfortable underwater. If you can find one that is both, then let the mermaid swim.

Once you have mastered the art of not

drowning your mermaid, it's back to the water, but which water? Many folks dive in cold water, wearing wetsuits. The bottom portion of a mermaid tail can help keep them warm, but the top can be a cool lesson in freezing. I always shoot wearing something that isn't any warmer than my subject. If I'm getting cold, then they most likely are also. I have learned that a model who is comfortable is a much better subject, even if they are professionals and they never let you see them shiver. The natural looks and expressions models give can give away what they are feeling and cold isn't very pretty; it also severely reduces the breath-holding times.

Mermaids usually do not wear masks, since it isn't as attractive and also smears makeup. Learning to communicate effectively is another big challenge. Time spent in a pool is time well spent. That is where you can develop the special signs you use and also to nurture that unknown little communication skill that sometimes develops between and model and photographer where nothing needs to be said and it just flows. I sometimes let the mermaid use a mask with no straps, that fits her, she can clear it and look for directions or as we move to another location. I let them gently hold it to their face and then have them hand it to me or the safety diver/assistant. It is always best to train as a team, you, the mermaid and the safety diver/assistant. Adding a unknown or new safety diver at the last minute can be tough. Developing the trust and also communications skills are very important, especially in open water.

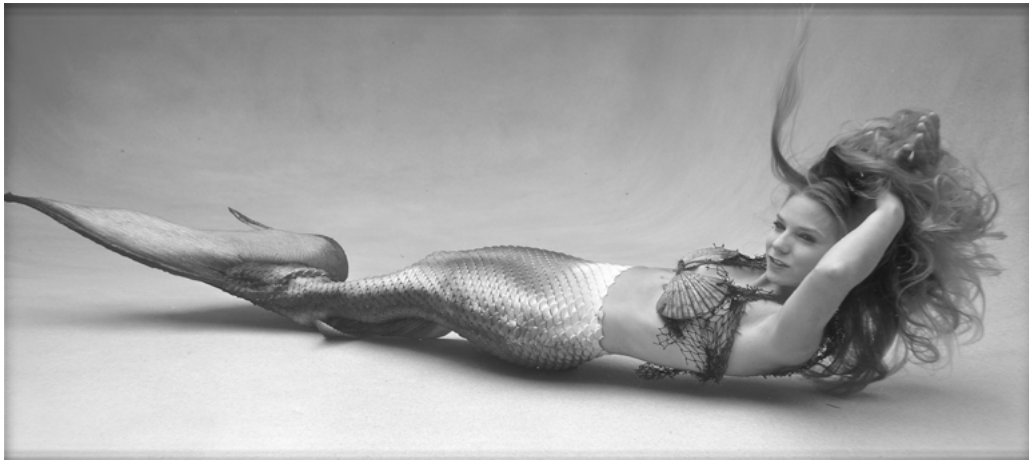
Adding color and balance to an underwater photo should be an easy thing for most accomplished underwater photographers. Adding the allure of a mermaid and new settings can open a creative door that many have never known existed.



*Arlene Brooks -Sony-NEX-7, Nauticam Housing, ISO 400, 18 MM, F-5 at 1/500, Natural light, in Weeki Watchee Springs*

It often takes practice and time on both the model and photographer to get the right shot. That one great mermaid shot will make folks take a lot closer look at your work, than about any fish photo could ever do.

In the end consider mermaids as a conservation



*Trina Mason B&W- Sony-NEX-7, Nauticam Housing, ISO 200, 18 MM, F-6.3 at 1/80, Natural light, pool location*

resource. People will identify with saving a mermaid's habitat, much easier than they will will a fish.

## Steve Anton

Eric Ducharme  
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*Steve Anton, a native of South Florida, started snorkeling at 4 years old and scuba diving in 1974, where he first learned underwater photography. Steve's passion for diving lead him to the U.S.Navy where he pursued his career as a Navy diver. In his time with the Navy. Steve worked on all facets of diving, from ship and salvage diving to dive supervisor and also as an explosive ordnance disposal diver. He*

*became a NASDS Scuba instructor in 1981. He was one of the founding divers for The Organization of Artificial Reefs in Tallahassee (OAR)*

*Steve is also an award-winning professional photographer and videographer, who also volunteers his time with the "Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep," organization. He is also the vice commander, historian and archivist for the Submarine Veterans, South Florida base.*

*Mr. Anton is on the board of directors for the Boynton Beach Historical Society and is currently the father to three wonderful dogs who were all rescued. In his spare time he likes to take photos while snorkeling and scuba diving around his little bit of paradise in South Florida, where he still lives today.*



# A Shot In The Dark

by Mark Webster

I think we have all been there.... you are on a live aboard or in a resort and have enjoyed three or perhaps four good dives during the day. Now the sun is setting as you reach for your first beer when the dive guide asks you if you are night diving and you are torn between two strong desires. If you decline you will most certainly enjoy your beer, but you might also suffer some mocking disapproval from the dive guide and fellow guests and of course you might well miss some killer shots. I am the first to admit that I am not the most avid night diver, but there are occasions when you should resist the demon drink and get underwater after dark to capture some of the unique critters and behaviours.

Some don't enjoy their night dives simply because they have not prepared well enough before the dive and the whole experience becomes a struggle, particularly with a large and unwieldy camera system. So thinking about preparing your camera system for ease of use in the dark is very worthwhile and you can of course experiment with the configuration during the day. Neutral buoyancy or close to it is very desirable, so that

you are not struggling with any weight in the dark, and it is wise to ensure that you have your system secured to you with a lanyard just in case you drop it!

I always prefer to night dive a site that I have previously seen during the day, so that you at least have some sense of direction. Also plan to explore a much smaller area than you would do during the day to avoid getting lost and make sure you know the direction you need to return. If you are diving from a live aboard in the

*(Top) Scorpion fish – night dives are a good time to practice your snoot photography as you can see more easily the direction of the light beam if you attach a small torch to the snoot.*

*Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 10-17mm FE and 2x teleconverter, Inon Z240 flash gun with fibre optic snoot, ISO200 f11 1/125.*

*(Right) Saron shrimp – the Saron shrimp is perhaps the most spectacular of the shrimp species which is rarely seen during the day. At night they come out to join the party and scavenge for a meal. Nikon F90X, Subal housing, 105mm micro, Inon Quad flash, Velvia 50 f11 1/125.*



Red Sea then night dive locations are often busy with other boats so it helps to have a means of identifying your boat both from below the surface and above if you surface a distance from the boat. Dive guides are increasingly reluctant to hang a strobe below the boat on busy sites as they are often stolen, so you might want to pack a handful of light sticks.

If you are making a beach dive from a resort then you may have a reef slope that is easy to follow back to the shore. But if the topography is more complicated make sure you have a compass with you and know the return bearing and perhaps leave some lighting on the shore or note a landmark with lights to guide you back on the surface. The easiest end to a night dive is of course being picked up by a tender, but this can only work if you can be seen on the surface and have not moved out of the dive site area. Having a strobe on your BC (some flash guns have a strobe function) or carrying a signalling torch will ensure your boat cover can see you! It is also wise to agree a maximum duration for the dive so that the surface cover can begin looking immediately if you don't appear.

Regardless of your choice of camera system the most important equipment will be your torches. Some divers work on the principle of "the more light the better" at night in order

to light as large an area as possible during their dive. However, this is not the best choice for photographers, as the larger light will often disturb potential subjects before you get to them and I find it is better to use the small powerful narrow beam torches and focus lights which are available from several manufacturers.

Where you choose to mount your torches is also an important consideration as it is essential to keep your hands free for operating the camera. Some photographers prefer to mount the torch directly over the lens either on the accessory shoe or on the port itself on an adjustable bracket so that any subject directly in front of the camera will be lit. You can improve the flexibility of this by including a short arm, extra ball joint or a short LocLine arm. You might prefer to attach one of the torches to the flash gun, so that you know that when you see your subject is lit through the viewfinder your flash gun is also pointing in the right direction. This is also handy for shots which require you to hand hold the flash and also allows you to direct the torch at the camera controls and displays. There are a number of torches which will attach to the side of your mask, which can be used when searching for subjects or looking at the camera settings and then extinguished for the photography - it is important to try



*Parrot fish beak – parrot fish are a classic night time subject as once they have settle in for the night they will not move so you can concentrate on the composition. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 105mm micro, Inon Quad flash, ISO100 f11 1/125.*

various combinations to discover what is most comfortable for your own equipment and techniques.

Some flash guns do have focus lights built in and can be effective at night, although the beam may be too broad and spook your subject before you capture the image. The other consideration is that the focus light



*Stargazers are a classic night time subject, but can be quite large so you may need to dedicate a dive to finding them with a 60mm or wider lens. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 60mm micro, Inon Quad flash, ISO100 f11 1/125.*

will drain the batteries in the flash, so use it sparingly.

Some subjects are certainly spooked by white light, so you may consider having a red filter on one or more torches which is less intrusive to night critters and still allows the camera to focus. There is at least one focus light on the market that is able

to switch between white and red light during the dive. This is an expensive option but if you are keen on your night diving then worth the investment. For occasional use just buy a sheet of stage lighting filter and make your own.

The final thought on lights is that batteries do expire and torches do flood so always use fresh batteries and carry a spare in you BC pocket to find your way home!

Most of us rarely shoot wide angle at night unless you are chasing a particular subject. Most of the critters are in the macro range and so we can dispense with long arms and big wide angle guns, if you have a choice. You will want to focus on finding subjects and composing them so position your guns on short arms and plan to minimise the number of movements you make with your flash guns particularly if your light source is on them. Specialist lighting tools like ring flash work very well with night diving, but you can mimic this set up if you have a pair of small flash guns that can be mounted directly on the port or adjacent to it.

Those photographers who use a housed DSLR or EVIL system will normally choose to use either a macro lens in the 50mm to 105mm range or perhaps a zoom lens in the 24-100mm range which often have a close up or macro setting at their “long” end. Auto focus will work well provided there is enough light and it is directed at the main subject. Shadows cast by the edges of rocks and crevices can upset the system and it is often useful to either use auto focus lock or be able to switch to manual focusing if the lens persists in hunting. You might need to pre-focus on an object of a similar size, lock the focus and then move back to your target subject and capture the image.

Flash exposure control can be either TTL or



*My preference is for small narrow beam torches. This economical example is from Ikelite but there are numerous others to choose from costing from a few pounds/dollars to many hundreds if you must have the best!*

manual. TTL works well at night as the subjects are often bright with good contrast, generally fill the frame and there is no natural light to upset the exposure - your torches will have no effect. Manual guns with multiple powers are well suited to macro or close up images and with the flash in a fixed position it is easy to determine an average exposure for the dive. Remember you can also reduce or increase the ISO setting as well as flash power if over or under exposure is a problem.

Many night active fish and crustaceans are mesmerised by the torch light and will freeze when caught in the beam. Species which hide from you during the day will often pose happily at night,



*Decorator crab with hydroids – decorator crabs with all sorts of adornments will be found out foraging during the dark hours. Look for examples with contrasting negative space to enhance the subject. Nikon D100, L&M Titan housing, 105mm micro, Inon Quad flash, ISO200 f16 1/125.*



*Mandarin fish are mostly seen at dusk and are a good subject to start with whilst you wait for full darkness. If you look amongst shallow rubble areas when night falls you will often find them resting. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 105mm micro, Inon Quad flash, ISO100 f11 1/125.*

such as squat lobsters in the UK and decorator crabs, coral or porcelain crabs in the tropics. As you play your torch across the reef watch out for those tell tale specks of light reflected from the eyes of prawns, lobsters, crabs and even octopuses. Once locked into the torch beam they will normally happily pose for several photographs, but will be quickly gone if the beam leaves them. Sleeping fish are another good subject - wrasse for instance in our home waters and

parrot fish in the tropics - but are often well protected by the crevice they have chosen and so need careful lighting to avoid casting strong shadows.

Many species that hunt at night will be attracted to your torch beam particularly when you find a subject. Lion fish and tarpon are a good example and you will often be surprised by one darting into shot to consume your subject, particularly if it is a tasty prawn or crab! On a recent



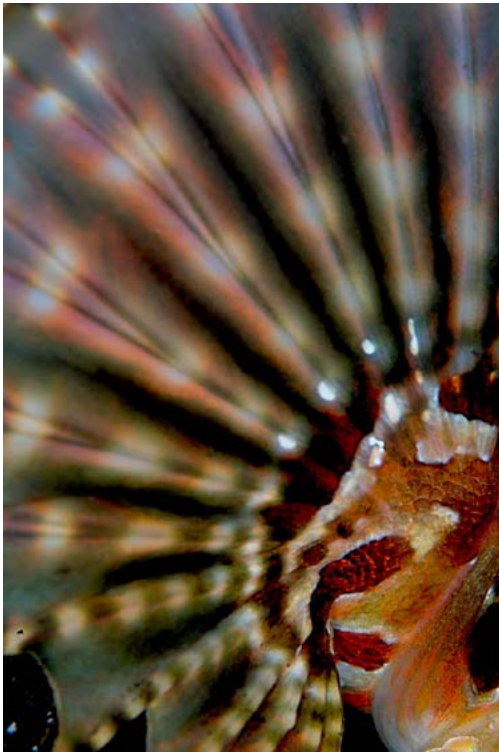
*Puffer fish eye – species like this puffer fish will settle in and under the coral after dark and are generally mesmerised by the light, but once you move the torch off your subject they will often swim away. Nikon D100, L&M Titan housing, 105mm micro, Inon Quad flash, ISO200 f16 1/125.*

trip to the Red Sea my wife was blissfully unaware of a very large lion fish that hovering directly below her armpit and against her BC, thankfully with its spines folded back. It struck just as she was finally ready to shoot a small cuttlefish that was slowly emerging from under the coral.

This raises another word of caution if you are diving in the tropics. Remember that a number of species with painful defensive mechanisms emerge at night. Not

only lion fish are active, but also moray eels and a number of species of urchins emerge which can give a very unpleasant sting. Scorpion fish and stone fish which are so difficult to spot by day are still there at night and have particularly potent venom's – so check the seabed carefully before you kneel down or steady yourself with a hand.

If you survive the attentions of the stone fish, you might try looking for macro compositions of abstract colours, patterns and delicate



*Lion fish pectoral fin – don't forget to look for abstract opportunities at night. Lion fish will be hunting with their pectorals extended which allows you to focus on details like this. Nikon D100, L&M Titan housing, 105mm micro, Inon Quad flash, ISO200 f16 1/125.*

shapes. These are often found in the polyps of night feeding corals, sea urchins, anemones and sleeping fish, particularly parrot fish. You can then fill the frame with only the pattern or perhaps use the eye of the fish within the pattern to produce striking image.

When moving about and settling



*Keeping you rig compact helps a great deal on a night dive. Most of your subjects will be shot at close range so long flash arms are not required.*

down for a shot, bear in mind that your vision is severely limited and pay particular attention to where you place your fins, hands or reef prod, whether you are diving a tropical or temperate reef, as delicate marine organisms are all too easily wiped out by careless or blundering movements in the dark.

If flash photography of the night critters is not enough to get you excited you might consider seeking out fluorescent subjects to create a really different look to common species. For this you will need some additional equipment and there two companies (NightSea and GlowDive) that currently offer underwater fluorescent filter photography kits. The kits comprise a filter for the flash and one for the lens and are not cheap, but will certainly give you a new perspective on night diving. If you are

the practical and resourceful type you might be able to make your own.

At the end of your dive you may be focussed on finding your boat, but be prepared for some last minute opportunities as the surface lighting will often attract squid, mackerel and garfish looking for an easy meal. They will generally drift around the edge of the pool of light but will often remain immobile when a torch is directed at their eyes.

Night photography can produce some dazzling and unique images and is really worth the effort and preparation involved. It is all too easy, especially on a diving holiday,

to think you have had enough as the sun goes down, the bar opens and the prospect of all that damp kit is less than alluring. So get organised, get into those dark and forbidding waters and you will be surprised at how exciting and productive this often underrated activity is.

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



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# Coral Spawning

by Alex Tyrell

As we approached the large Brain Coral, I checked the time on my dive computer. It had just turned 7pm. I looked up as I heard muffled shouting coming through my buddy, Shin's, regulator, accompanied by wild arm movements! Looking closer in the direction he was gesturing, I could see small pink spheres slowly starting to emerge from the coral, floating gently up into the water column and then gradually disappearing into the watery darkness. A small school of Yellow-Backed Fusiliers (*Caesio xanthonota*) passed over the coral head, feeding on the erupting eggs, while Shin ascended to get the word out to the other divers that it was finally happening. I had seen this amazing event on documentaries and earlier that day had even been looking at Alex Mustard's great backlit-photo from Grand Cayman for inspiration. But now I was seeing it with my own eyes – Coral Spawning. I had to act quickly, as I knew my time was limited. I took a few test shots, quickly checking the LCD for blown-out highlights, and then readjusted my strobe power and angle for the next shot. I had less than 10 minutes before it was all over and

had to work around the other divers, as the main reason for being there was to actually catch the coral gametes, cross fertilize and cultivate them.

Coral spawning has been studied for a while now, making it a fairly predictable event. But that information is very site specific and cannot be transferred between different areas. Here on Koh Tao it can be narrowed down to about possible 5 days of the year. It was with this in mind that a collaboration of Eco-Divers from New Heaven Reef Conservation Project, Save Koh Tao & Eco Koh Tao, commenced the third year of culturing coral larvae from the annual mass spawning of corals around Koh Tao, in the Gulf of Thailand.

The aim was to raise coral colonies with a unique genetic design for their reef restoration projects. For three nights at the beginning of March, divers were out on the reefs of Chalok Baan Khaos in the south of the island, waiting for the corals to spawn. Eggs had been sighted in the target colonies (*Symphillia* & *Goniastrea*), so it was just a matter of being there when it all happened. Spawning events are usually witnessed a few



*Brain coral spawning as divers approach from behind: F/8 – 1/125th – ISO 500 @ 14mm. Nikon D7000, Subal ND7000, Tokina 10-17mm behind Zen mini Dome, Twin Sea & Sea YS-250 Pro's (A. Tyrell)*

nights after the full moon in spring. This year the full moon was on February 26th, so the observations started on 1st March. It is difficult to pick the exact night the corals will spawn and, as it only occurs once a year, you don't want to miss it! Therefore, it's best to play it safe and go early, rather than late.

The first potential night of spawning didn't see any action. The following day is where I came into the equation, when on the dive boat I saw Nathan Cook from Eco Koh

Tao, who brought me up to speed with the progress and said he was due out again that night. It was too late for me to get a space on the boat, so I asked Nathan to let me know if the spawning didn't happen, so I could come along the next evening. I got the call from Nathan the following morning saying the corals didn't spawn, but were looking very close to it, so they were hoping for it to go off that night. A few Facebook messages to Shin at New Heaven Dive School and my space on the boat had been

arranged.

When I arrived at about 5.30 that evening the whole operation was being coordinated by Chad Scott, who is focusing on this project as part of his Masters Thesis. New Heaven Dive School owner, Dev, was also heavily involved with the operations. The site set-up is an important part of the process considering the whole operation and the spawning itself happens at night. Colonies of target species were marked at 4 different locations throughout the bay. Colonies housed predominantly one or the other species of coral, but some areas had a mixture of both target species. Buoys marked the separate sites, with lines running underwater to mark the different target colonies within that site. The four sites were also marked with lights that flashed once the sun was down for easy location.

Once the sites were marked, pairs of divers were sent into the water shortly after sunset to monitor the colonies and alert the rest of the team once the corals started showing signs that they were about to spawn. When corals are preparing to release eggs, the bundles of eggs and sperm appear on the mouth of the corallite. This is called 'setting'. In some coral colonies, like the *Goniastrea*, this is far more obvious than in other species, like *Symphillia*. The *Symphillia* seems to change its appearance when ready to spawn, with the tissue surrounding the corallite swelling up more than it would do on a normal night. Historically, the *Symphillia* colonies (in Chalok Ban Khao) have spawned approximately an hour before the other massive species (e.g. *Goniastrea* & *Platygyra*) and so they expected to see them 'set' before the other species this year.

The divers were armed with flashlights and small cone-shaped plankton nets, modified to have

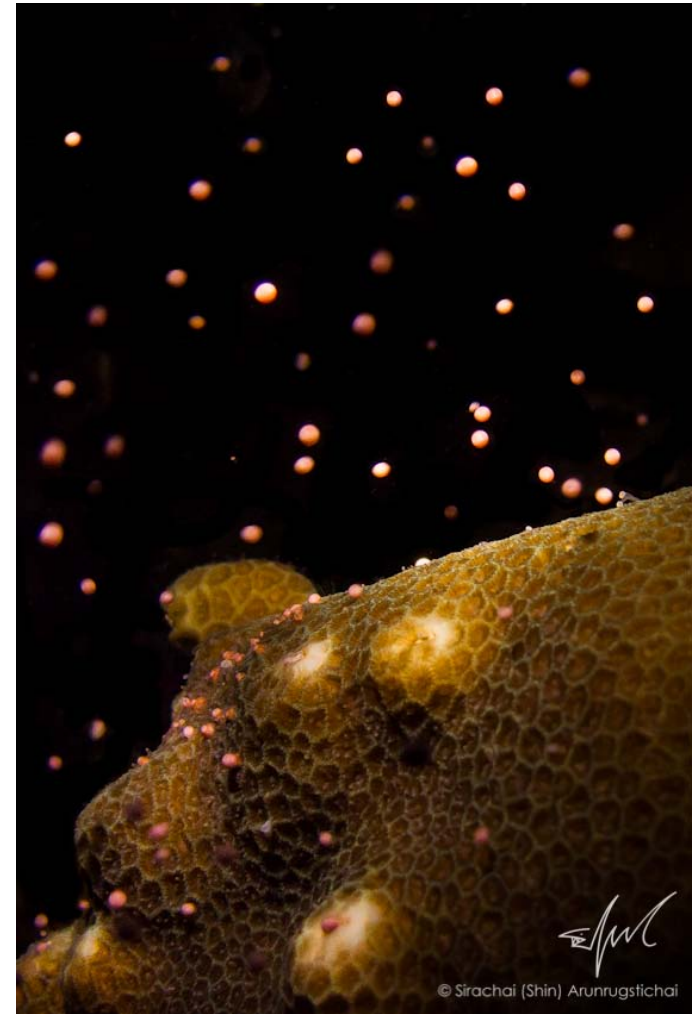


*10-year old Kailash Cook catching coral eggs: F/8 – 1/125th – ISO 500 @ 10mm. Nikon D7000, Subal ND7000, Tokina 10-17mm behind Zen mini Dome, Twin Sea & Sea YS-250 Pro's (A. Tyrell)*

the top-third of a water bottle at the end of the net. Coral eggs are essentially buoyant, so the aim is for the net to be held or placed over a colony as it spawns and catch as many bundles of eggs as possible. The *Goniastrea* tend to be buoyant and are relatively easy to catch. The *Symphillia* are much smaller and far less buoyant, making this method of collection less effective for that specific species.

That evening it was a bit choppy and the bay of Chalok Baan Khao is very shallow. These factors were not ideal for the collection of the coral eggs and were going to make taking photos a bit more of a challenge too. The *Symphillia*, as expected, went off first, releasing plumes of eggs and sperm at intervals of around 30 seconds to 1 minute. The whole event does not last long, maybe 10 minutes, and if you miss it, then you've missed it and have a long wait to try again!

That afternoon I had been debating with



*Coral Spawn Macro: F/2.8 – 1/100th - ISO 100 – E.V. Comp +1/3 (No Flash). Canon G11 in OEM housing with Dive Light. (Shin Arunrugstichai)*

myself whether to set up for wide-angle or macro. I eventually decided to go wide and set up with the Tokina 10-17mm on my D7000 behind a Zen mini dome with Subal housing. I used twin Sea & Sea YS-250 Pros and a Sola 600 Photo focus light. I also

set up a Canon S100 in FIX housing with Inon Z240's and Nightsea Fluorescent filters, hoping to capture some fluoro-images of the spawning. I had previously shot an Anemone spawning and the spawn fluoresced, so anticipated something similar with coral eggs. Needless to say I was a bit loaded on the dive, so soon found a suitable area to leave the fluoro set-up until I wanted to use it later in the dive, letting me concentrate on my DSLR.

Photographing the actual spawning wasn't too technical from a lighting point of view. There is no ambient light to consider and no sun-angles to think about. Lighting the scene is done solely by the strobes, which were positioned well behind the dome to minimise backscatter. The hardest part was framing and composition, as my photography was second in line to the science. I therefore had to work around the other divers and attempt to compose shots with quite a few people around one coral colony, as well as trying to keep out of the way! In preparation for this I had set the ISO to 400 enabling me shoot with a slightly lower strobe power for quicker recycling, letting me nip in and out, getting shots off in bursts. I soon upped this to ISO 500 though, for better exposure at f/8 that I wanted to maintain depth-of-field.

It was all over too quickly for

the spawning of the Symphillia Brain Coral, and even with the surge and waves, eggs had been caught successfully (as well as a few images on the memory card). Surprisingly though, the other Symphillia colonies nearby did not appear to have spawned. Corals are hermaphroditic, but cannot self fertilise. To create fertilised eggs you need eggs and sperm from different colonies. So although eggs were captured from this colony, there were no other eggs to cross-fertilise and they were therefore released.

By 7.30pm a number of Goniastrea colonies began to 'set'. These colonies appeared to be synchronizing their release and as such the divers were able to catch eggs and sperm from a number of different colonies across the reef. Once eggs were 'caught' in the nets, the top of the attached bottle cap was opened into a submerged jar, whereby the buoyant gametes float up into the jar for transportation. While the eggs are visible, the sperm is harder to see with the naked eye. But it is assumed that it is collected in the water at the same time as the eggs are transferred to the jar.

The duration of spawning for the Goniastrea colonies was a bit quicker than the Symphillia. I used the Fluoro set-up this time and managed to get a few shots in between Shin catching



***Buckets on the Boat: F/4 – 1/15th – ISO 400 – E.V. Comp -2 (Flash used). Canon G11 in OEM housing with Dive Light (Shin Arunrugstichai)***

the eggs. To my delight the coral spawn did fluoresce and even though the quality of the images isn't quite as good as with my DSLR, I am happy with them. Maybe next year the fluoro-filters will go on the DSLR rig.

Back on the boat after the 2-hour dive, the eggs and sperm from different jars (from different colonies) were added to separate buckets to allow for cross fertilisation. This occurred at approximately



***Coral Eggs in a Jar: F/2.8 – 1/200th - ISO 200 – E.V. Comp -2 (No Flash). Canon G11 in OEM housing with Dive Light (Shin Arunrugstichai)***

9pm, after which time the buckets were transferred to shore. Battery powered aerators were used to oxygenate the water. Spray bottles were used to break up the bundles of eggs coalescing at the surface. This simulates wave action and what would naturally occur in the ocean. During this time it is also important to wash the sides of the buckets gently with water to ensure the eggs don't get caught out of water on the sides of

he buckets. The eggs were left in the buckets for about 90 minutes before being transferred into semi-permanent holding tanks at the dive school. Within this time the eggs should be fertilised. The holding tanks are made of cement and had been washed down and cured before use. They had previously held juvenile Turtles in rehabilitation, so their exposure to seawater had already been assured prior to introduction of the coral eggs. The water contains aerators and is changed every day, however it is important to have a system that allows for the removal of water while not removing any larvae.

Within approximately 48 hours the larvae will develop cilia and start 'swimming'. At this stage the panula larvae is circular in shape, and as a result, tend to swim in circles. By approximately 72-hours they will develop into more of a pear-shape and be able to actively move in a desired direction. Within approximately 4-5 days they will begin swimming down searching for suitable substrate on which to settle. As the tanks are smooth, they are not an ideal settlement location for the larvae. So 'cement buttons', which have 'cured' in the ocean, have been placed inside the tanks. The larvae more readily choose these when it's time to settle.

I feel very lucky to have witnessed this natural spectacle, even

more so seeing that I had only been in the water a matter of minutes before the spawning started! I would even go so far as feeling a little bit guilty, as the other divers were on their third night of diving and I just jumped in and it happened. Everyone was so happy to have witnessed this amazing event and capture the gametes in the process, that I don't think they cared how many dives it took to see it.

**Text by Alex Tyrrell  
& Nathan Cook  
Photos by Alex Tyrrell  
& Shin Arunrugstichai**

*Alex Tyrrell is the owner of  
Dive4Photos, who provide underwater  
photography training through Crystal  
Dive Resort in Koh Tao, Thailand.*

[www.dive4photos.com](http://www.dive4photos.com)

For further information on the various marine conservation related projects and courses available on Koh Tao, please see the following links:

[www.ecokohtao.com](http://www.ecokohtao.com)  
[www.newheavendiveschool.com](http://www.newheavendiveschool.com)  
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# Clouds Over Jervis Bay

by Attila Kaszo

It was mid morning when we arrived at Point Perpendicular, the northern towering headland leading into Jervis Bay.

The boat ride was exhausting, not because the fishing trawler which heaved and rolled in the big swells, but more to do with what we drank the previous night.

It was 1970, and I was visiting this place for the first time as part of my “open water” course. There was no dive shop facilities, nor dive operators, only a local ship builder, Alf Settree, who occasionally steamed out with fishing or diving parties keen to harvest or explore the region.

Not much has really changed in the 30 plus years as far as fishing and diving are concerned, it is still going strong. We see more fishers, a lot more divers than in 1970 and clearly more impact above and below the water.

However, what changed was in 1998 Jervis Bay was declared a Marine Park. The ramifications of this management process were significant.

Diving around the “Torpedo Tubes” (named because of the torpedo platforms built to terrorise the “invading” Japanese during WW2)

wasn't as exotic as it may suggest. Huge boulders that had fallen formed most of the base to the cliffs, and overall there wasn't much about. We did what we needed for our course and went back to our campsite to prepare for the next day. Only after some discussions with a few locals were we told that far better diving was to be had if we knew where to go, isn't that always the case though!

The area now known as “The Docks” was on the agenda and when we dove a truly amazing site unfolded. Clear water filled with masses of schooling fish everywhere, stingrays, large Blue Grouper, Drummer and Red Morwong darting around the rocks. This was my first real insight into what Jervis Bay had to offer.

*This is what a Jervis Bay seascape looks like at its best. Taken on the NE side of Bowen Island at about 30metres, the Sea Whip garden is playing host to dozens of anemones. The anemones will migrate to another patch of whips once their food source becomes scarce. Aquatica / Nik F4s – S/S 1/60th @ f8 – ISO 100 Velvia – Lens 20mm f2.8 Nikkor - Strobe Sea & Sea 200*





*Humpback Whale and Calf resting. Jervis Bay benefits from both the Northern and Southern migration of these whales as they make their way to and from Antarctica. Aquatica Nikon D2X, 12-24mm f2.8 Nikkor @12mm, 1/80th@f5.6, ISO 200*

The Docks is not an isolated reef in the middle of the bay, it is in fact part of the rocky shoreline accessible to most people. I thought at the time if this is what's it's like here, I can only imagine what some of the more inaccessible parts of Jervis Bay must be like.

As the years passed I explored vast areas of Jervis Bay and the surrounding coastline, documenting many underwater scenes both in stills and motion.

Even after all this time, I'm still

amazed at how beautiful this place really is, and still amazed at listening to new comers diving the Bay for the first time being exhilarated by its spectacle.

The Park extends outside the bay, to encompass marine protected areas north and south. The overall size of the park is over 22,000 hectares (220km) and 120km of coastline. The bay has about 45 kilometres of shoreline and relatively shallow with water depth of about 40mtrs at the heads then varying to shallower



*Flying underwater at 1.76 meters a second, Fairy Penguins are difficult subjects to capture. After a week of shooting I managed two acceptable images. Bowen Island at the gateway to Jervis Bay Marine Park boasts a colony of about 5,000 nesting pairs. Much can be written about these birds, but suffice to say they are a delight when encountered and their habitat remains secure in the Marine Park. Nikonos V, 35mm u/w Nikkor, 1/500th@f5.6, ISO 100 Velvia*

depths throughout the bay. Its size by comparison can be measured by water volume, that being about six times that of Sydney Harbour.

Generally the water is clear throughout the year, due mainly to the bays size and shape of its entrance and the small catchment area that feeds fresh water into it. The Marine Park principally comprises of 20% Sanctuary Zones, 72%

Habitat Protection and the remaining designated to general use.

Without going too much into the science and the areas biodiversity, it's fair to say that the prominent currents that bring it's amazing range of marine creatures and plants are due to the East Australian Current sweeping in from the north, bringing with it warm blue water and all that that travels in it, and the nutrient enriched



*Australian Fur Seals only started to frequent the Marine Park about 15 years ago. There are two primary locations where they haul out, one to the north of the park the other south. They do not breed here, but their numbers seem to indicate they have established a well stock colony. Overall numbers of these mammals have increased since hunting ceased, but are still well below prior to it. Their only known natural predator are Great White sharks and Orcas, which also migrate along the East Australian current past the Marine Park.*

*Nikonos V, 15mm u/w Nikkor, 1/60th@f11 ISO 100 Velvia*

upwelling's from the southern oceans.

We can boast to having Humpback whales with calves, seals, dolphins, Grey Nurse sharks, aggregating Port Jackson sharks, Giant Australian Cuttlefish, rare and endangered Bleeker's Blue Devil Fish, huge caves and the list goes on. How's that for starters!

There are however some threats to our ecosystem as well. Foreshore over development threatens to impact on the catchment, Marina



*Hunted to near extinction, Grey Nurse Sharks (*Carcharius taurus*) are still threatened. Their numbers remain so low that unless considerable long term conservation measures are adopted, this species will cease to exist in the wild on the east coast of Australia. It's greatest threat is that the habitat it enjoys coincides with prized fishing grounds. The sharks in the main are caught by accident and hauled quickly to the surface during which time they suffer embolism. So the catch and release program common with other species does not work with this one, and accordingly the majority that are caught die.*

*Nikonos 2, 15mm u/w Nikkor, 1/60th@f8 ISO 100.*

construction proposals and Aquaculture farms could seriously impact and damage the fragile balance that has been struck over millennia. So what's the answer?

As a conservationist I take into account the reason why this park and others around the country were established, primarily as a sanctuary for species that were struggling to survive because of overfishing and destruction of their habitats. Reef assemblages, which are identified as in tact habitats,



*Once a common fish on the southern east coast, Long Snouted Boarfish have become a rare sighting. They became perilously close to oblivion after extensive hunting by line and spearfishers. The fish are an easy target, and due to their large size were favored as a table fish. The Marine Park offers some level of protection in the Sanctuary zone regions, but unfortunately the fish are unaware of these boundaries, and if caught by line fishers, would seldom be thrown back. Rollie Marine 6x6, Rollieflex f3.5 camera fixed lens's, ISO 100 Ektachrome, Strobe Sea Tite Australia.*

are given Sanctuary Zone protection and are in essence no go zones for harvesting.

All that sounds reasonable doesn't it? Well, in a small way it is, except fish are not aware of the zones or barriers, so in lies the dilemma. As soon as they leave the zone they are potential targets for fishers. The other issue is the overall size of the zones. In Jervis Bay Marine Park, only 20% is



*Rare and very difficult to find the Red Indianfish (Pataecus fronto) favors reef that has kelp growth at its base. Its vibrant orange coloring is not noticeable unless it is lit artificially. Due to its shape and habit of staying near kelp beds, it's a brilliant mimic resembling its surroundings making it a perfect ambush predator. Aquatica / Nik F4s, 105mm lens, 1/60th@f11 ISO 100 Velvia, Sea & Sea 200 & Sea-Tite Australia strobes.*

designated as Sanctuary Zone, overall within the New South Wales coastline and estuarine regions there is 6.5% designated as Sanctuary Zone, hardly enough to make any significant impact at all.

To truly derive a benefit, Sanctuary Zones need to be linked, as are terrestrial wildlife corridors. Without such continuity only "islands" of Sanctuary are created

which only benefit insular ecosystems and provide very little benefit to the Park proper.

I have lived in this area since 1990 and have logged a lot of dives and seen many changes underwater to habitats.

I have seen plans for all sorts of development, from a Nuclear Reactor site to a Naval Armaments Depot, to various commercial fisheries ventures



*Humpback Whales like this one, off Point Perpendicular, migrate to the tropical waters off Queensland to have their young annually, then go all the way back heading to Antarctica with their calves. Jervis Bay has always been a place for a bit of respite for these large mammals, but they were hunted and slaughtered to the brink of extinction so their visits to the bay stopped. Since whaling ended, there has been a gradual return to the bay not only of Humpback Whales, but also Southern Right Whales, the occasional Minke and even less frequently Orcas. Nik D700, 400mm f4, 1/3200th@f5.6 ISO 400 .*

to 500 plus vessel berth marinas. All of these proposals were supported by developers and the local City Council, keen on attracting business and further developing the area, all of course at the expense of the very things that attracts tourism here in the first place.

Fortunately dedicated citizens and conservationists have thwarted all of these proposals. I just wonder how long it will take for authorities

to see the real value of these natural wonders, and put aside the rhetoric to preserve in tact what remains.

We have won most of our battles, but I wonder if we will win the war?

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

*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)*

# South West Ramblings 3

by Mark Webster

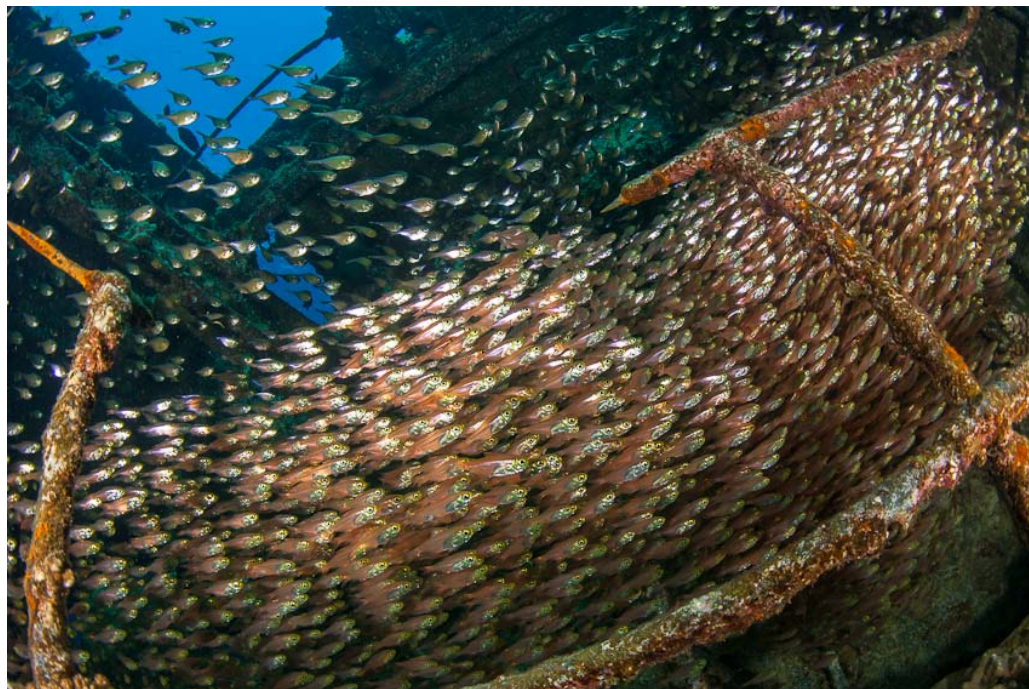
This installment of south west ramblings has been delayed by work and a dismal winter and perhaps should include east and far east ramblings in the title as during the cold months most of our diving has been in warmer overseas waters. I do dive at home throughout the winter time when the weather gods permit, and they have not been kind this year, but the winter months are normally reserved for overseas trips as my work in the real world tends to keep me fully committed during the summer. It is always nice to shed the dry suit for the freedom of a wetsuit and packing for the trips, compiling lists and planning how to get past the hand baggage limitations is all part of the fun, some say!

So the first foray was to the northern Red Sea to host a workshop on the MY Juliet which is a very comfortable live aboard that has been operating for some time. Being a mature smaller live aboard she takes a maximum of 14 guests which gives us a comfortable group size of 12 resulting in more time for personal attention and the group also tends to gel quicker. Some of the latest generation live aboard boats take

24-28 guests which to me seems too many even if you are not part of a photo group as you are able to saturate a dive site with your own group let alone those other divers you may encounter from boats at the same site. Although I have been coming to dive in this area of the Red Sea since the 1970's I have never tired of it and always look forward to that first dive of a trip when you drop into the water and are immediately reminded of the vivid blue of the water and how well it contrasts with the mass of colourful

*(Top) The MV Marcus (some know as the Chrisoula K) is an easy wreck to penetrate and in the main stairway above the engine room you will normally find dense schools of glassy sweepers and hatchet fish. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO100 f11 1/60*

*(Right) Early morning dives on a reef wall are a good time to find lion fish that are still out hunting. They are always a willing and attractive subject offering the opportunity to perfect your image or play with different techniques. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO100 f8 1/30*



subjects on and off the reef.

Our group was keen to dive some of the classics and as we were blessed with perfectly calm weather, which held all week, we made the crossing from Ras Mohammed to Abu Nuhas immediately to make the most of the variety of wrecks lined up on its northern face. You may have dived these wrecks many times before but you can always find a new challenge photographically and the mood of the wrecks changes constantly with the light throughout the day. We all tend to focus on wide angle images when wreck diving, but it is well worth putting your macro lens on for a few dives and ignoring the big shot. There are countless critters on these wrecks as well as corals and invertebrates to keep your macro lens fully engaged. Remember to inspect any open pipe end you come across for a few minutes as most are home to a blenny or perhaps a small eel which may not show themselves immediately.

The more recent wrecks offer great picture opportunities but I think that my favourite at Abu Nuhas is the SS Carnatic which still retains the graceful lines of sail and steam in both the bow and the stern. Despite the number of divers who have visited this wreck since it was first rediscovered in the modern scuba age, the structure and marine life have endured remarkably well. Sadly the bulwarks of the stern section have begun to collapse with a large section now lying on the seabed and I suspect this is a result of careless mooring by one of the larger day boats or live aboards. Most boats bring their divers to the wreck in RIB's and moor with a lighter line to the centre section of the wreck which does far less damage. Another feature now destroyed is a very large table coral that had formed on a vertical steel section in the collapsed mid section of the wreck. This was one of the land mark



*The SS Carnatic is one of the most visited wrecks in the Red Sea but despite this the corals and marine life are in excellent condition. The graceful shape of this wreck makes it one of my favourites that I am never tired of visiting. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO100 f11 1/60*

features of the wreck in the early days, but now lies broken and dead amongst the debris. But despite these changes the wreck still has great appeal to me and is well worth several dives with different lens combinations.



*The SS Carnatic is known for her unusual square shaped port holes which were a marketing feature in her day. They can be used to frame a boat on the surface, diver and marine life if you are lucky. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO100 f16 1/60*

Our guide was keen to take us to Ras Mohammed, where we had some very strong currents, and then to Tiran to dive on the north side of Jackson reef where schooling hammerheads have been seen recently on early morning dives.

As predicted, we did see the sharks which is a real buzz, but poor light and increasing depth meant that it was not a photographic success for me! Knowing this the following day I elected to put a macro lens on the camera and spent a happy hour up in the shallows patiently waiting for a leopard spotted blenny to cooperate – not the same rush as getting close to hammerheads but photographically much more satisfying!

A week in the Red Sea passes all too quickly and leaves you pondering all the images that you had planned or hoped for but did not complete for all sorts of reasons. But that of course is what brings us back again and again to a location like the Red Sea as we continue to chase improvement and perfection in our images, so we will be back in 2013.

Our second trip took us still further east to Indonesia and included a trip to a new location for us, the island of Ambon. The diving around Ambon already has a reputation as a hot muck diving destination and currently has only one dive resort catering to the needs of a photographer, so it's a little like stepping back to the early days at Lembeh Strait. Ambon has also been the start or finish destination for a number of live aboards on the Raja Ampat and Banda Sea routes. Maluku Divers is an established operation that relocated to a new expanded resort in 2010, closer to the airport and closer to some of the big name muck sites and the purpose of our visit was to check out the facilities and diving for a planned workshop in 2014.

A short ride from the airport brings you to the intimate Maluku Divers resort which is laid out on level ground a stones throw from the water. There is a house reef dive in front of the resort but the majority of dives are made from one of three boats



*One of the most appealing coral fish are the leopard spotted blennies which are often found in fire coral in shallow water. They are a nervous subject but if you are patient their natural curiosity will overcome the fear and you will be rewarded with a portrait shot. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 105mm micro, Inon Quad flash, ISO100 f22 1/180.*

a short ride north or south from the resort or east across the bay towards Ambon city.

If you need a fix of reef diving and some exercise for your wide angle lens then you can go



*This tiny juvenile thread fin lion fish was hiding in the branches of a red gorgonian and seemed very surprised to have been spotted by me. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 105mm micro, Inon Quad flash, ISO100 f16 1/180.*

on a longer excursion to the mouth of the bay and the reefs beyond. There is also a wreck dive close to the port of Ambon City which is well worth a visit for both wide angle and more macro critters. The



*Rhinopias in various hues can be seen in Ambon is quite striking but also surprisingly difficult to spot initially. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 10-17mm FE zoom, 2xTC, ISO200 f11 1/30.*

wreck is the SS Aquila (originally the SS Duke of Sparta) which was sunk at anchor in 1958 by US aircraft during Operation Haik against the communist rebellion in Indonesia. This is a large wreck (137m long, 17m beam), very intact with 50 years of coral growth to decorate it and with an average depth of 30m on the main deck is best dived with nitrox.

Ambon hit the ichthyology headlines a few years ago with the discovery of one of the weirdest looking frogfish ever seen. This was

the Maluku or psychedelic frogfish (*Histiophryne psychedelica*) first seen in Ambon in 2008 and rarely again since then. The species had apparently turned up in an aquarium shipment in 1992 from Bali to the Dallas aquarium, although these examples soon died, but were not initially classified as a new species. So it is possible that the species exists elsewhere in Indonesia but so far has only been seen in the wild in Ambon. We of course did not get lucky enough to see this remarkable frogfish, but



*Hairy gobies were a new species to me, but seem to be abundant in Ambon. However they are a frustrating subject that is both very small and constantly on the move. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 105mm micro, Inon wet lens, Inon Quad flash, ISO100 f29 1/180.*

talking with the local guides the consensus is that it is most likely a deepwater species that only comes into shallow water to spawn and nurture the eggs until they hatch.

Another species that is relatively abundant here was also on my want list. *Rhinopias* scorpion fish were seen frequently in the early days in Lembah Strait, but I have not seen any during my last two visits and the local rumour was that they were being targeted by the aquarium trade. They can still be seen reliably at

Maluku and the guides tell me that there is a population of between 12 and 20 spread between the various sites on both sides of the bay. Two of these sites are very close to the resort and we were lucky enough to see four specimens on more than one occasion – two were the paddle flap species (*Rhinopias eschmeyeri*) and two of the weedy variety (*Rhinopias frondosa*), so I was more than happy despite my first attempts being cut short by a small ingress of water into the housing.

Nightmare! Luckily the small amount of water was readily absorbed by a strategically placed tampon in the housing and I was able to trace the reason to an obvious cause. Examining the O ring seat of my extension ring with a wet lens to magnify I discovered a tiny string of Delrin swarf across the groove obviously left as the cutting tool was removed during manufacture. I pulled at it with a pair of tweezers and it continued to unravel around half the circumference of the O ring seat. I have used this extension ring for years with no issue, so I must have been lucky until now and something had caused this fine swarf to detach itself during O ring cleaning and replacement. So with disaster averted I returned to the Rhinopias, with a little help from the guides of course, the very next day.

Besides the Rhinopias the Ambon dive sites offer a plethora of muck species to keep any photographer fully engaged from super macro offerings such as the hairy shrimp, numerous species of frog fish, exotic nudibranchs, commensal species and a full range of more normal reef fish if you feel the need. The guides introduced me to a species of coral goby that I had not seen or photographed previously, which they are calling hairy gobies. These tiny little fish live in pairs in



*Fire urchins are plentiful in Ambon but only a few will be home to coleman shrimps or in this case the alien looking zebra crab. . Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 105mm micro, Inon wet lens, Inon Quad flash, ISO100 f16 1/180*

small branching corals which they share with coral crabs. They look a little like the lemon gobies found in the Red Sea but are much smaller and more nervous. They look very similar to the species *Gobiodon acicularis* but have a fine stubble of hair particularly around the face of the fish which give them the appearance of a little old man, well to me anyway! I managed to capture reasonable images of a black and green variety, but one with an orange face eluded me to total success.

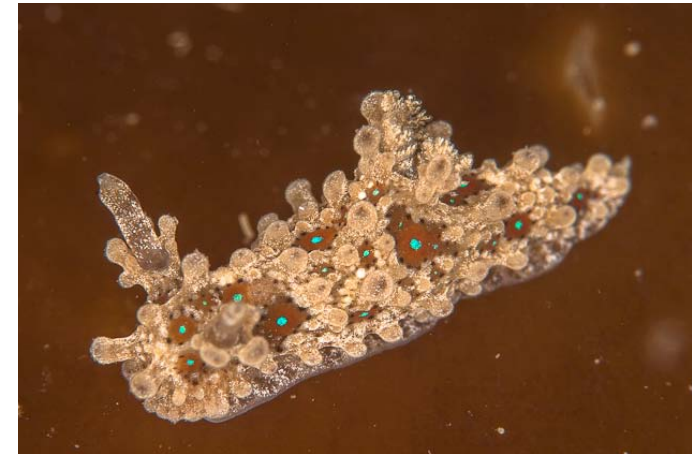
It is only natural to draw a comparison between Ambon and Lembah Strait and they are certainly very similar in topography and species. Lembah is still of course an excellent destination, but has developed at a very fast pace in the last few years and now has numerous resorts and consequently a higher concentration of divers. The great contrast and pleasure in diving in Ambon is that you are the only boat in the area and it really does feel like the early days at Lembah again with an



*Snake eels are mostly seen with just their head emerging from the sand, but on several dives we saw them out hunting which offered the opportunity to capture a different perspective. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 60mm micro, Inon wet lens, Inon Quad flash, ISO100 f29 1/180.*

abundance of critters. More resorts are bound to be built in the future so plan a trip soon if you value a feeling of at least partial solitude.

After Ambon it was back to a very wet and windy British winter for Christmas and New Year. 2012 has now been declared the second wettest



*There is a significant difference in length between the Inon Quad flash wet lens and SubSee +10 wet lens. The +10 will cast a shadow at close focus when used with the quad flash.*

*Aegires punctilucens nudibranch is an unusual species that I have seen only a couple of times and is perhaps 8mm in length. An additional wet lens for 2:1 reproduction is essential to capture these critters in detail. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 105mm micro, SubSee +10, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO100 f29 1/180.*

year on record in the UK so we are all fervently hoping for something closer to drought conditions in 2013 and some fine calm spring weather to kick off the UK diving season in style.

Regular readers may have detected my fondness for the Inon Quad flash which I find so useful for macro photography. This flash is of course now considered obsolete but I had one of the originals which lasted more nearly ten years before expiring. I am now on my second unit (used) which I hope will survive just as well. Inon also supplied a doublet wet lens for the quad which boosts magnification to almost 2:1 and I have used this extensively for smaller subjects. However, if I needed greater magnification up until now it has meant using a teleconverter and perhaps some dry diopters, which works well but of course restricts you to only very small subjects during the dive. I have had a hankering for a much stronger wet diopter and had heard very good reports of the

ReefNet SubSee units but it was not until quite recently that I had the opportunity to handle one of the latest +10 models and see the results. I was impressed and planned to buy one, but first I had to have a method of mounting it on the front of the quad flash which has a non standard thread to mount the Inon wet lens. I tested my technical drawing skills and sent off a request to Ken Sullivan (an excellent engineer BTW) who produced a perfect stepping ring for me and once the lens arrived I was in business, or so I thought.....

What I had not taken into account was the additional length of the +10 lens compared to the Inon lens, which is about half the length. The +10 works fine on the Inon quad flash until you approach the maximum magnification of the +10, which of course is quite close to the subject. At this short distance the +10 lens begins to cast a shadow

over the subject as the flash tubes are close to the lens. Not a problem with the Inon version at this range, but we live and learn. So it was back to Ken for another adaptor to fit my tapered 105mm macro port (also from Ken) so that I can use the +10 with conventional twin strobe lighting.

Having the +10 strength is a big step up in magnification and requires a little practice and familiarization to get the best out of it. You will generally only use this when the lens is set at or close to full magnification although the lens will still focus through a reasonable range with the wet lens fitted. Aiming at a much smaller subject is the next challenge and then dealing with a much reduced depth of field. I find it is best to lock the lens at its closest focus point using the MSC switch or AF lock and then gradually rock focus until the subject is sharp. Holding the camera housing steady



*Colpodaspis pusilla* is a tiny mollusc (5-8mm) sometimes mistaken for a nudibranch, but still retains its shell under a mantle. An additional wet lens for 2:1 reproduction is essential to capture these critters in detail. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 105mm micro, SubSee +10, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO100 f29 1/180.

is also important and it helps to have the housing trimmed almost neutral buoyancy so that your wrists don't give up after a while! The +10 lens is quite heavy compared to others so you will need to add a little more buoyancy to your rig.

There are several wet lenses to choose from on the market, some cheaper than others and some can be stacked to increase magnification. You

make your choice and pay the money, but I can recommend the SubSee from a user's viewpoint.

Hopefully 2013 will produce a dry and calm summer with plenty of marine life action and a bigger quota of basking sharks than in 2012!

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



**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)



**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)

# 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 Shots 1



The cyclone season in the South Pacific may not be considered the best time for diving and underwater photography. Volatile weather conditions and bad visibility not to mention the sticky heat are not everyone's bilo (half coconut shell) of kava (dishwater).

But it seems there is a different cast of actors populating the waters at this time of the year. For example, there are more small baitfish around and all kinds of reef fish in early juvenile state. So I sometimes have the more surprising wildlife encounters in the summer.

This is one such example when, after I just sucked a tank dry to improve on a very ordinary subject, I found a mantis shrimp drifting motionless past the boat on the surface. I thought it was dead or an empty carapace, but I jumped in to check anyway.

At the sight of me the lobster size animal (I think they eat them here) became quite animated and started heading for the sandy bottom ten meters below, where it promptly started to behave in prescribed mantis shrimp fashion and proceeded to dig itself in, stirring up a great big cloud

of sediment.

What made the animal abandon its safety in the sand in the first place? The only explanation I can think of is, that this may be it's way to abandon a poor fishing spot and migrate greater distances without effort. Boredom and the resulting wanderlust are surely human luxuries, aren't they?

**Tobi Bernhard**

*Subal Nikon ND800 housing, 14mm f2.5 lens behind a 6" FE dome with a 20mm extension. The lens close-focuses right on the dome. Flashguns of choice are two SB910 in Subal strobecases. 1/13th sec @F22 ISO 100*

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

A few months ago I decided to upgrade my strobes to a pair of Sea & Sea's YS-D1 units. Some initial reviews had given good feedback and being a cold-water diver I already knew the layout of Sea & Sea strobes worked well with thick gloves or even mitts.

Most of the time when strobes are compared on a like-for-like basis, it tends to be the maximum power output as expressed by a Guide Number that makes the headlines. But sometimes it is the ability of the strobe to deliver low power light that can bring some of the biggest benefits to your photography.

Take this photo for example. On a sunless mid January day in Plymouth, UK, my buddy and I dived a fantastic wall-dive just off the shore at Eastern Kings. It's a great place for nudibranchs due to the high water-flows which encourage a wealth of hydroids and sponges for them to feed on. This early in the season though there were unlikely to be great numbers of slugs around and I was tempted by the (relatively) good vis, around 4m, to put my fisheye on - a first for me at this particular site.

This wall drops down to over 40m, but as I wanted to include the surface in my shots the lack of daylight here limited my dive to just 24m. Even this shallow the camera was working hard to let in any ambient light; wide open at f/3.5 using iso640 only gave a 1/40th second exposure. Couple that with it being a 'close focus wide angle' shot with the orange sponges only a matter of inches from my dome, meant that I really did need very little light indeed to fill in the foreground and the diver.

To give you an idea of just how little light was needed, my SOLA600 spotting torch on its lowest setting of 125 lumens was creating a blown-out hotspot in the image so it had to be turned off (and to my joy and amazement the E-PL5 I was using just kept on focusing). This is where the low-power setting of the YS-D1 really struck me as being useful. To be able to balance very low ambient light levels with fill-in flash is an amazing new tool in my photographic armoury.

My buddy later told me that he could barely see the flashes going off just a few feet in front of him - a pleasant change from being temporarily blinded by them! I used the 100-degree diffuser for this image, but if I thought I needed even less power I could switch to the 120-degree diffuser which would knock the power down even less. It just goes to show that sometimes less really is more.

**Dan Bolt**

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

*Olympus E-PL5, 8mm fisheye, 2xYS-D1,  
iso640, f/3.5, 1/40th*



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If so we'd love to hear from you.

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

# Parting Shots 3



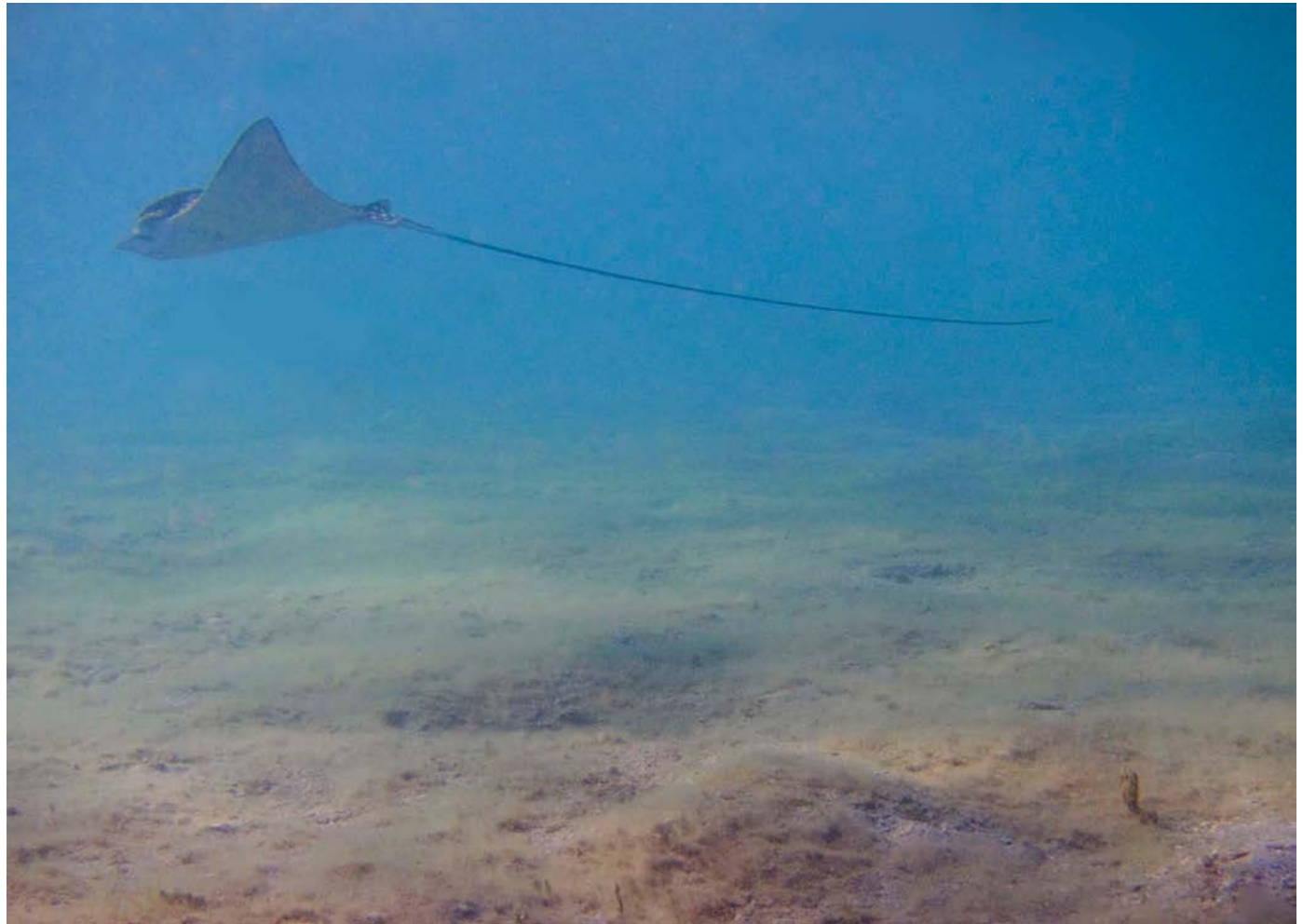
Nearing the end of another fascinating shore dive around the Blue Heron Bridge (Palm Beach County, Florida) ,I came upon an ornate Seahorse moving across the flats just off the swim beach.

After spending a few minutes taking some nice close up shots in macro mode with my Canon S90, I saw a Spotted Eagle Ray out of the corner of my eye.

I quickly switched to normal mode on my camera and swam towards the Ray. I was able to take a few nice shots of the Ray pretty close up because this one was not too “skittish.”

I went back to the Seahorse for a couple more shots and the Ray circled back around, almost as to see what I was photographing (the seahorse).

At this point I locked the focus on the ray and snapped. Seahorse and Spotted Eagle Ray. Lucky shot! (Look closely in the bottom right hand corner!)



**Mark Sagovac**

*Canon S90 FIX housing  
No strobe, ISO 200, 1/400th @ F4.0*

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

If so we'd love to hear from you.

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# Parting Shot 4

Malapascua Island, off Cebu in the Philippines is an idyllic setting for a tropical paradise. But I fear it may be paradise lost, at least as far as the marine ecosystem is concerned.

There is still a concentrated effort to use dynamite explosives to fish as it yields an easy return, but with devastating consequences to the marine life. The authorities seem to turn a “blind eye” to this practice even though there is undisputed evidence of the destruction such harvesting produces.

Malapascua is not alone in practicing poor fishing ethics, but for a destination that heavily promotes tourism, the two appear on a collision course.

This region is well known for its Thresher Shark population, and it wasn't uncommon to see 30-40 divers at a time on Monad Shoal. Most divers respected the area and remained in the areas designated by the Divemasters, some didn't, and some were of such poor diving ability that they stirred up copious amounts of silt and sand off the bottom causing almost a sandstorm affect. This of course made it impossible to photograph anything in that area. I witnessed divers smashing coral with

their fins on day and night dives.

With something like 15 dive shops on Malapascua Island at present and dive tourism growing rapidly, I wonder what sort of self or imposed regulation is being applied, or will it end up like the surrounding fishing grounds – ecologically struggling?

We found a great deal of discarded household garbage floating both above and below the waterline. Lots of discarded fishing lines, some so matted that they have become an inherent danger to many marine creatures.

There was also an eeriness about the place which I couldn't at first put my finger on, then it became blatantly clear, no sea birds of any description, something I had never seen before in a tropical location.

My theory on this was the distinct lack of finfish larger than about 15cm, and certainly no schooling fish, which are almost commonplace around intermediate and shallow reef assemblages.

A shipwreck some distance from Malapascua Island would normally be a habitat haven to large schools of fish or even a few large reef fish like Grouper, yet none were sighted. What I found was a beautiful array of soft



*Nauticam Nikon D800, 15mm F2.8 lens, Zen dome port, 1/250th @ F11, ISO 400, manual exposure, available light.*

corals, lots of macro life forms and one very lonely Puffer fish hovering around the superstructure.

Unfortunately what we also found was carelessly discarded fishing line around the base of the Dona Marilyn, which had become a lethal trap for an unsuspecting juvenile Shark and Ray.

Fortunately the Ray had not died and we were able to untangle it and it swam away.

The shark however was not as fortunate and is a stark reminder of what does occur in heavily harvested

regions, and particularly the little regard attributed to what lies beneath the surface of our oceans.

**Attila Kaszo**  
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# Parting Shot 5

Composite compositions cause considerable consternation. Some in our community see them as artistic expression, others regard them as dastardly cheating. In fact, one friend of mine has become so well known for them that everyone's first reaction to his straight shots are that they must be composites. I suspect that there is compliment hidden somewhere in that.

Of course, they are nothing new. Producing composite images was perfectly possible in traditional underwater photography. They could either be achieved with great precision and limitless possibilities in the dark room, or via multiple exposures in the camera.

These days the tools are simply more easily available to more people. And these digital tools are not going away, and in some branches of photography they've already changed the way people shoot. On film, astro-photographers would lock their camera shutters open for an hour or

more to record the trails from stars in the night sky, caused as the Earth rotates. But now they generally prefer to shoot a long series of frames over shorter intervals (minimizing long exposure noise) and then simply adding them in photo stacking software to generate the trails. The camera still needs to stay in place for an hour or more, but instead of taking one long photo, it takes many shorter ones.

So my parting shot is indeed a composite image shot with the Nikon D800 on my recent trip to Norway for the Nudibranch Safari. In fact, it is made of 77 separate frames.

In my defense to the purists, I shot all of it while I was in the water. The nudibranch with a 105mm on Gulen Dive Resort's house reef and the star trails with a fisheye while I relaxed in their wood-fired hot tub, drinking a cold beer.

**Alex Mustard**  
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