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“Often copied,
never equaled”

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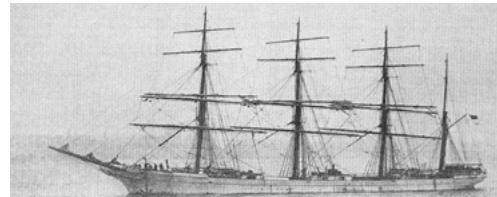
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Underwater Photography

A web magazine UwP79 July/Aug 2014

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Colin Marshall

Underwater Photography 2001 - 2014
© PR Productions
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www.pr-productions.co.uk
peter@uwpmag.com

Editorial

Fashion is the new fashion

There have been many, many 'fashions' in underwater photography as people try and produce images which are different and more eye-catching.

If you cast your mind back (which I unfortunately can) you will remember the craze for putting a red filter over your flash/strobes to achieve a highly coloured foreground. This became overdone and they were soon the first shots into the bin in competitions.

Then there was conventional land filters with split prisms, grads, spot focus and blur, all of which lacked subtlety and soon faded away.

Possibly one of the most groundbreaking fashions was 'double exposures' where part of the film was exposed, then rewound and reloaded to expose the other part to produce an exciting combination of scale or forced composition. Despite heralding from the film era I think it is still a relevant technique today and much simpler to achieve with computer manipulation. The results can be much subtler and as a result they have stood the test of time and so have never really gone away like some fashions do. Good ideas last.

Then there was the ability to capture blurred motion at the end of an exposure rather than at the beginning when rear curtain flash sync became available. This was superbly demonstrated by Tobias Bernhard's 2000 WPOTY winner of a Grey reef shark at speed where the motion trails were

behind the shark creating a superb feeling of action through movement. As with double exposures, I think this technique will still produce ground breaking images when used correctly.

In recent times we've had fashionable equipment - snoots, teleconverters etc and even fashionable subjects - sharks, pigmy seahorses, nudibranchs etc so there is no boundary as to where a fashion comes from.

Then there was (and still is) a period when a certain underwater photographer's style of images became the new fashion. Here I'm referring to David Doubilet's simple yet very effective use of a distant diver with a torch to give a tremendous feeling of depth and scale. They were signature shots which many others emulated without a feeling of plagiarism because it was a technique so suited to underwater and yet still subtle.

Now in the digital age we have a master who is producing 'genre' images. These are so unique that it is not possible to go anywhere near them technically without looking so obviously like a lame copy. Rather like trying to emulate Ennio Morricone's Gabriel's Oboe from the Mission or Mark Knopfler's Wild Theme from Local Hero. I refer, of course, to Dr Alex Mustard who has produced several images of a unique fashion/genre. Multi exposure sommersaulting divers entering the water, crisp sponges on spinning backgrounds,

something so simple as a jet back or gorgeous blue background, remote lighting perfection and taking split levels to another level (pun intended) to name just a few.

I am sure his photographic eye will continue to astonish us and I, personally, look forward to that but my job is to predict what the new 'fashion' will be and I think that mermaid photography will be very big for a while. I know it's nothing new but I suspect it will very mainstream for a while.

I've just spent a week on a Red Sea liveaboard where, unbeknown to me when I booked, Katrin Felton was the assistant diveguide/mermaid and her presence and capability produced very exciting sessions of mermaid photography for all those on board and much to the amazement of the other boats moored next to us. It's not often you see a mermaid on the back deck.

The problem is that, like all fashions, once you have seen too much of it, it loses its visual appeal and you end up at the proverbial bus stop waiting for the next 'fashion'.

I guess the thing to do is enjoy it while it lasts, don't think it will last forever and look forward to the next 'fashion' when it comes along.

Hopefully in future issues of UwP I'll be able to tip you off as to what's up and coming :-)

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

News, Travel & Events

Arturo Telle will be the fourth Master of the El Hierro Open Fotosub



The Grancanarian photographer originally from Germany, Arturo Telle has been confirmed by the organization as the Master of the Maroma team in the 18th Team Edition Open Fotosub of El Hierro, that will be celebrated this October.

One of the most awarded European photographers of the last decade, Arturo is a classic choice for the Open Fotosub, an event in which

he has the record of victories after proclaiming himself as the winner on four occasions, including the last one in 2013.

Apart for the numerous awards in other prestigious open competitions, such as the Eilat Red Sea or the Lanzarote Open, Arturo has been Spanish Champion in 2008 and Worldwide Sub Champion in 2011.

www.openfotosub.es

www.uwpmag.com

Eilat, Red Sea Live Broadcasts

This September, the Eilat Red Sea production will be carrying out two interesting live broadcasts, which will be featured online.

The first live broadcast will be on September 12th celebrating the vibrant contribution of shipwrecks to the sea, as artificial reefs.

The second live broadcast will be carried out on September 13th. We'll be broadcasting the official awards ceremony of the Eilat Red Sea international underwater photo competition, which takes place in Eilat, Israel. During the ceremony and for the first time ever in the



diving industry, judges will be voting in real time for the 2014 Underwater Photography Global Championship and the champion team will be announced.

www.eilatredsea.com

Dive with Great Hammerheads & Bull Sharks in Bimini

Jan 25th - 31st 2015

See our other

Underwater Photography Adventures

with Tiger Sharks, Whale Sharks, & Manatees

www.GregorySweeney.com

Issue 79/5



www.openfotosub.es/en



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www.elhierro.travel



Issue 79/6

2014 international Travel Photographer of the Year awards open for entry

The 2014 international Travel Photographer of the Year awards (TPOTY) are open for entry. With three portfolio categories, three single image categories, a New Talent award, HD video category and the Travel Photographer of the Year and Young Travel Photographer



of the Year titles to win, amateur and professional photographers of all ages and from all countries have plenty of themes and options to choose from. Entries close on October 1st.

The winning photographers will have the privilege of seeing their shots displayed at a major exhibition at London's Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) in 2015.

The awards will be judged by a hugely respected international panel, including Daria Bonera, photo agency director and photo editor and editorial coordinator for 'Touring' - National Geographic Traveler Italy, award-winning photographer and picture editor Eamonn McCabe, wildlife photographer Chris Weston,

Manfred Zollner, deputy Editor in Chief of FOTOMagazin (Germany), and Caroline Metcalfe, photography director of Condé Nast Traveller.

The overall winner of TPOTY – the Travel Photographer of the Year 2014 - will receive £2,500 and a Plastic Sandwich personalised leather print book or iPad case. In addition, they will receive a private showcase of their travel photography at next year's Travel Photographer of the Year exhibition. The 2013 exhibition attracted over 48,000 visitors in just five weeks, so this presents a fantastic opportunity for exposure for the winning photographer.

www.tpoty.com

www.uwpmag.com

Wildscreen Festival October, 19-20th 2014



Wildscreen Film Festival is the world's largest and most prestigious international wildlife and environmental film festival.

Held in the city of Bristol, UK since 1982, the Wildscreen Film Festival has helped nurture and shape the natural history filmmaking industry as we know it today.

With more than 100 separate events, the Festival provides a first class programme of talks, masterclasses, workshops, film screenings, workshops and evening events.

Playing host to industry heavyweights, the Festival is also an essential international marketplace. Films are bought and

sold, commissions and collaborations are established, and new talent is discovered.

The Festival culminates in the prestigious Wildscreen Panda Awards - the 'Oscars' of the wildlife television and film industry - where filmmakers from across the globe get a chance to win the highest accolade in the industry, a Wildscreen Golden Panda.

Earlybird tickets for the Wildscreen Festival 2014 will be on sale from Thursday 12 June. These are only available for a limited time and offer a significant discount for getting in there early! .

www.wildscreenfestival.org

Dive into tomorrow's ocean The competition is now open!

CONTEST REGISTRATION OPENING FOR THE 41ST EDITION OF THE WORLD FESTIVAL OF UNDERWATER PICTURE
OCTOBER 30 TO NOVEMBER 2 2014
PARC CHANOT, MARSEILLES - FRANCE

Set up in 1974, the World Festival of Underwater Picture is the only event of the kind worldwide. It gathers the best productions and the greatest specialists of the underwater and marine world.

The world Festival of Underwater picture is a major meeting for all the oceans' fanatics.

30 prizes are currently awarded to the best works with prize money of more than 30,000 euros. Apart from their outstanding quality, these audiovisual productions help to promote the underwater world and raise public awareness of this undeniably rich but extremely fragile environment.

The festival is present all over the world, namely with tours organised in France and abroad, during which prize-winning films of the latest edition are shown.

- Films and photos competition, book, music, website or advertisement prize... The World Festival of Underwater Picture is open to both professionals and amateurs. This year a new category is proposed. Its aim is to allow every one to express himself on the marine world: films made with a smartphone (underwater or aerial video footage are accepted).

To get registered :
www.underwater-festival.com

- For 40 years, the Festival has offered a programme of underwater films in contest, most of them unreleased. Activities, forum and photographs' exhibitions aimed at the general public and the scientific community. First scuba dive in pool, playful workshops, interactive games are an opportunity for young visitors to discover the underwater world in a fun way.

In 2014, the Festival theme will be :
"Ocean : future for Mankind"



Wetpixel Tiger & Oceanic Whitetip shark trips

After a hiatus of a few years, Wetpixel will be returning to photograph and dive with the amazing shark populations of the Bahamas.

We are planning two trips for 2015, one to dive with tiger sharks (*Galeocerdo cuvier*) and one to dive with oceanic white tips (*Carcharhinus longimanus*).

In both cases, we will be diving with Epic Diving, who “specialize in unforgettable encounters with sharks” and have been responsible for a large number of the award winning images of sharks that have been produced recently. Both trips will be shore based, with day boats going out to the dive sites and will be designed to maximise photographic opportunities.

Wetpixel Tiger Sharks Expedition 2015.

This will run from 4–10 January 2015, and will be based in the town of Freeport (FPO). \$3,750.00.



Wetpixel Oceanic Whitetip Shark Expedition 2015

This will run from 12–18 April 2015, and will be based on Cat Island (flights into New Bight airport (TBI)). \$3,550.00.

www.wetpixel.com

www.uwpmag.com

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Tulamben, Bali Uw Imaging Intensive Workshop October 11-18



The beauty, mystery and wonder of Bali is legendary – this is an island that has a ceremonial event occurring somewhere on the island 365 days a year. Temples and offerings grace every nook and cranny of towns and countryside, while the people are quick to embrace visitors to their land.

The diving is no less amazing and wondrous – particularly in the relaxed and quiet northeast corner of Bali known as Tulamben. Join us for a spectacular week of diving, photography, education and all the magic Bali has to offer.

Workshop Leaders:


Chris Parsons is a pro underwater photographer currently residing in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

An early adopter of digital underwater with a science and software development background, he can bridge the gap between the creative and technical sides of today's image creation process. Chris is an integral part of the Nauticam team.


Elly Wray is an underwater photographer, scuba instructor, and Reef Photo & Video team member who honed her craft while living in the Cayman Islands.

Elly is an enthusiastic teacher who brings her background in diving, photography, graphic design, post-processing, and publishing together with her passion for the marine environment to create a well-rounded educational experience for her students.

http://reefphoto.com/shop/index.php?main_page=events&event_id=78



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Worldwide Dive and Sail in the Galapagos



Worldwide Dive and Sail, the founders and owners of Siren Fleet Liveaboards, bring you the latest in liveaboard luxury with the launch of their new brand “Master Liveaboards”. The new fleet brand is designed to offer divers an even wider choice of diving destinations than that already provided by their Phinisi yachts plying the waters of the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

Master Liveaboards comes into being with the first yacht to be brought under the brand umbrella; “Galapagos Master”. She is currently in operation as the Deep Blue,

however in November 2014 she will be brought into dry dock for a refit and modernization by the experienced Worldwide Dive and Sail team, led by Frank Van der Linde.

Guests are offered a choice of lower deck, main deck or upper deck cabins – in a twin bed or double bed configuration. Prices for 7-nights start from US\$4750 per person, with 10-night trips from US\$6150 per person.

www.masterliveaboards.com

Great Hammerhead Sharks & Bull Sharks in Bimini January 25 - 31st 2015

Join photographer Gregory Sweeney in the Bahamas on the island of Bimini for cageless dives bringing you face to face with great hammerheads and bull sharks.

Hammerheads migrate and aggregate in the warm, luminous waters off Bimini in the winter months so Gregory Sweeney has teamed up with the experts at Neal Watson’s dive center, the pioneers of hammerhead diving who have learned the secrets of where to look for these amazing creatures

The all inclusive dive package includes 5 boat days with 2 tank dives plus accommodation and food. The shallow depths allow for long dives and loads of close encounters and time with the hammerheads for photography and observing behavior. Guests will stay at a luxury marina and dive resort where we will stay in villas with water views. The resort features a marina, swimming pools, multiple restaurants and sushi bar, sports activities, and beach.



Gregory Sweeney is an accomplished underwater photographer who hosts many photo tours throughout the year including a Tiger Shark Dive, swimming with wild dolphins, humpback whales in Tonga, a manatee photography workshop, swimming with whale sharks, and a trip to the Gulf of Mexico Sardine Run with Sailfish. He also takes guests to his African safari lodge then to Cape Town for the jumping great white sharks and penguins. Guests benefit from his experience at finding great animal encounters, the best operators, and from his photography mentoring while on location.

www.gregorysweeney.com

Dive Lembeh
15th - 23rd Sept 2014



Lead by Paul Macdonald, downunderpix will be running an underwater photography focused dive trip to Lembeh, North Sulawesi on the 15th - 23rd September 2014.

North Sulawesi is known as The Land of Smiling People and lies in the very epicenter of the world's marine biodiversity in the Indo-Pacific Ocean.

Lembeh Straits is known as the muck diving capital of the world. Muck dives consist of sandy black slopes with good visibility, approximately 10-15m. It is a macro-photographers dream, as the slopes are teaming with allsorts of fascinating

critters and the black sand reduces backglare.

Muck diving Lembeh Straits is one of the few places in the world where you will see the elusive hairy frog fish, pygmy sea horses, larger sea horses like the thorny seahorse, mimic octopus, wunderpus and flamboyant cuttlefish to name a few.

Last but not least, Lembeh is also surrounded by sites with small walls and slopes full of soft corals. Lembeh diving truly does have something for everyone.

www.downunderpix.com

www.uwpmag.com

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DPG

Project Seahorse



In 2013, Project Seahorse, a marine conservation organization based at the University of British Columbia and the Zoological Society of London, launched a brand new citizen science program called iSeahorse. Using data collected by individuals around the world, iSeahorse will assist us, and other scientists globally, in assessing seahorse populations and distribution, and providing crucially necessary conservation management plans to appropriate authorities.

We are calling on anyone who has seen a seahorse in the wild to contribute information to our citizen science database. We are collecting this data through our iSeahorse website and free iPhone app (search 'iSeahorse Explore' in the App Store) Once uploaded, data about seahorse sightings becomes part of our efforts to understand these magnificent creatures.

www.iseahorse.org



Issue 79/12



Great Barrier Reef Photo & Video competition 2014

The Great Barrier Reef Photo and Video competition for the 2014 Cairns Underwater Film Festival is now open for entries with a massive prize pool worth over \$70,000. This year we have a new video category and will be raising money for local marine charities: the Cairns Turtle Rehabilitation, the Minke Whale Project and the Tangaroa Blue Foundation.

The competition is running over the next three months leading up to the festival, with entries for the film competition closing on the 12th July, whilst the photo competition closes on the 23rd July. Festival organisers are now calling on local underwater photographers and filmmakers to get their entries ready.

www.cairnsunderwaterfilmfestival.com

This year's competition prize pool includes dive expeditions to the Great Barrier Reef, Coral Sea, Papua New Guinea, Palau, Bull Shark diving in Palau and Great White Shark diving in South Australia. We have to acknowledge and thank the dive and tourism industry for the tremendous support and commitment they have shown to the festival. Once again we have an incredible prize pool, which includes a range of diving and snorkelling day trips, underwater camera equipment and courses

Run by a team of passionate volunteers the festival screens a combination of local and international talent, giving filmmakers a chance to showcase their talent in the only Australian festival of its kind.

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New Products

Nauticam NA-D4S Housing for the Nikon D4S



Nauticam shipped the world's first housing for the D4, in April 2012. The D4S and the D4 bodies are identical, so in theory, no new housing was needed, but Nauticam simply does not rest on laurels. Since that time, Nauticam has continued to innovate, with improvements being added to new housings regularly.

Improvements include lightweight handle brackets, improved galvanic protection, new style focus knobs with higher gear ratio, and 3 standard sized tripod sockets. The housing also features an integrated reflective prism to facilitate the use of the new Flash Trigger for Nikon.

The NA-D4S supports both the D4S and the D4 cameras. The NA-D4S comes in two different configurations, one with 2 Nikonos



Bulkheads installed (for shooters utilizing Nikonos style sync cables) and a version without the bulkheads (for shooters utilizing the Flash Trigger).

www.nauticamusa.com

Subal Black Magic housing



This professional housing offers full access to all camera functions including manual focus control. All Type 3 SUBAL ports can be used. This allows the use of a lot of lenses like Panasonic, Sigma, Canon as well as the Metabones-Adapter.

Max. Depth rating: 80 m or TEC version 150 meter on request

Weight: approx. 1,9 kg with handles (w/o port and accessories)

Buoyancy: All but neutral (depending on port and accessories)
H x L x W: approx. 143 x 210 108mm (w/o port and handles)

www.subal.com

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Nauticam
innovation underwater



Housing for Sony A6000

NA-A6000



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www.nauticam.cn

Sea & Sea Extension Ring 46 with Focus Knob



Until now, auto focus has been the only option available when using a zoom gear. With the new Extension Ring 46 with Focus Knob, you can now manually focus a compatible zoom lens. When your camera's AF frames do not cover your subject, you can manually focus a compatible lens without changing composition.

Compatible Housings: MDX series housings.

Compatible Lenses: Canon EF 16-35mm F2.8L II USM, Canon EF17-40mm F4L USM, AF-S Nikkor 18-35mm F/3.5-4.5G ED, AF-S Nikkor 16-35mm F/4G ED VR(as of June2014).

A compatible FC focus gear required for manual focusing (can be used in conjunction with a compatible zoom gear).

www.sea-sea.net

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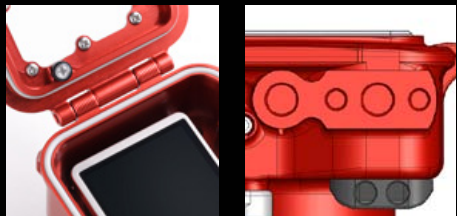
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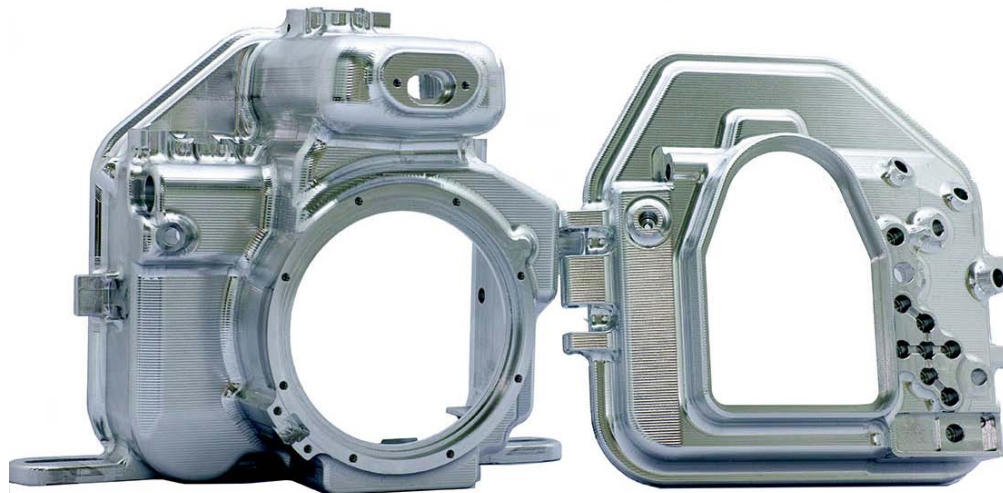
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APSO-RX1002

Underwater Camera Housing for SONY RX100 II



<http://acquapazza.jp/en>

Acquapazza housing APSO-A 7R for the Sony A7R



Japanese underwater housing manufacturer Acquapazza are busy working on their housing APSO-A 7R for the Sony A7R - the revolutionary 36 megapixel full frame mirrorless camera.

The main features of this housing are that they are designed for use with A mount lenses - 100-mm Macro - 50-mm Macro and 16-mm Fisheye using mount adapter LA-EA4 which provides AF.

With the Sony strobe HVL-F 20M you can shoot TTL exposures and as there will also be an optical cable connection you can use your existing strobes.

The rear LCD viewing port can be either flat for use with the INON 45

degree viewfinder or tilting to allow the camera LCD screen to be tilted at any angle from 0 to 45 degrees.

An ACQUAPAZZA original grip is standard equipment and the camera is mounted on a quick release tray.

All the operations of A7R are available with the APSO-A 7R housing and all the push button and shafts and main door are double O ring sealed.

The standard color is mat black and 15 colors are available to order including the new light green colour.

www.acquapazza.jp/en



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Ikelite Housing for Canon PowerShot G1 X Mark II

Dive into underwater photography with this powerful yet travel-sized camera system. The Canon PowerShot G1 X Mark II sports a huge sensor, much larger than most compacts, paired with a fast and sharp zoom lens. When combined with true Canon TTL flash through a direct connection to the camera, you have everything you need for crisp and colorful underwater photos.

MSRP \$750



www.ikelite.com

Optical Slave Converter for Ikelite DS51, DS160, DS161 strobes

Trigger your Ikelite DS-series strobe off any camera or strobe flash. The Optical Slave Converter simply attaches to the strobe's electrical bulkhead in place of a sync cord connector. The enlarged slave window provides approximately 90 degrees field of view for remote triggering. Or thread on the included fiber optic port for the attachment of and triggering via a fiber optic cord.

The Optical Slave Converter automatically configures itself for compatibility with both pre-flash and



non pre-flash camera modes.

The Optical Slave Converter can be extended using the optional 3-foot Extension Cord.

www.ikelite.com

www.uwpmag.com

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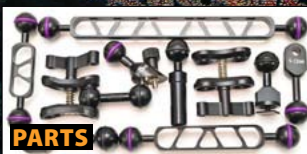
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FIX Neo 2000DX SWR



Nauticam USA announces the FIX Neo 2000DX SWR underwater photo and video light. The Neo 2000DX SWR is four lights in one: a powerful 2000 lumen wide beam for focus assist or video shooting, a focused 720 lumen spot beam for macro, a red beam for a stealthy night dive focus light, and a unique red/white mixed mode.

Gone are the days when you had to choose a light that could only help you shoot in one mode. Most of today's sophisticated cameras can switch between wide-angle, macro, and video all on the same dive.

By simply toggling the Neo's mode button, you can switch the light from wide beam for maximum coverage, to a focused beam to isolate light on a small subject, to a red light for a covert night focusing light.

Acquapazza APSO-RX1002 for Sony RX100 II now available in light green



As if 14 colours weren't enough Acquapazza have announced that their APRO-RX1002 for the Sony RX100 II is now available to pre-order in light green.

The full 15 colour range is available to pre-order and is as follows:



www.acquapazza.jp/en

www.nauticamusa.com

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Ikelite Housing for Panasonic Lumix GH3, GH4 DSLR



We've designed this housing to offer one of the best performance to dollar purchases in the world. The Ikelite DSLR housing is a seamless blend of functionality, lighting integration, durability and waterproof integrity.

Other housings simply waterproof your camera. An Ikelite TTL housing improves your photos. TTL or "Through-The-Lens" flash metering means the camera controls flash duration to properly expose an image. Our built-in proprietary circuitry tells your camera that a TTL external flash is attached, allowing the camera to adjust exposure more accurately than with slave TTL strobes.

Fiber optic slave flash units

require the camera's flash to fire every time. This creates a shutter lag as you wait for the camera's flash to recycle in between shots, drains your camera's battery life, and builds up heat inside of the housing. Ikelite electronics translate direct electrical impulses from your camera, triggering your strobe and precisely adjusting its power without the need to fire the camera's flash. This eliminates the slave TTL strobe issues of signal interference, inconsistent exposure due to weak fiber optic transmission and false triggering caused by light rays bouncing off the water's surface or your buddy's flash going off.

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Nauticam NA-EM1
Olympus OM-D E-M1



"SLR-style Control in a Mirrorless System"

Nauticam, the leading manufacturer of mirrorless housings, is pleased to announce an exceptional housing for the flagship camera in the Olympus Micro4/3 line, the OM-D E-M1. Designed with the pro shooter in mind, this housing features a new integrated handle system reminiscent of Nauticam SLR housings, signature Nauticam Port Locking Lever, fiber optic bulkheads, integrated vacuum check and leak detection system with optional vacuum valve and enhanced viewfinder options.

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Sea Dragon 1200 and 2000 Dive Lights with Flex Connect Handle



SeaLife recently introduced its Sea Dragon Dive Lights, combining the popular, compact Sea Dragon 1200 and 2000 light heads with the new Flex-Connect Handle. Divers can instantly switch from a handheld dive light to a powerful photo/video light by mounting the light head onto any Flex-Connect arm, grip or tray.

“Ease and versatility is what SeaLife stands for,” said Karl Schuster, SeaLife’s Dive Sales Manager. “All of the compact components travel easily and allow divers to adapt to any underwater adventure.”

The new Flex-Connect Handle provides a comfortable and ergonomic solution for transforming Sea Dragon lights into a handheld dive light that’s perfect for exploring wrecks,

illuminating caves, and diving at night. In addition to providing powerful lighting for uw photography, Sea Dragon Photo/Video Lights were designed for use as dedicated dive lights, with features including a wide 100-degree beam, one button control, and three power levels.

The small handle with rubberized grip fits into the palm of a diver’s hand, allowing comfortable underwater control of the light. Using SeaLife’s Flex-Connect mounting system, Sea Dragon light heads click instantly into the handle and can be removed with the push of a button. The recessed release button ensures that the light head will be removed only when intended.

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Aditech Mangrove VC-3L6



Mangrove's new line of professional Video and Dive LED lights is an industry breakthrough. This underwater wide beam video light is designed with an integrated battery and lighting head in a single compact unit. The light weight construction and penetrating beam give excellent colour and light uniformity ensuring a superior performance for video use underwater.

The VC-3L6 specially designed for underwater video and photo is supplied with a solid-State LED module array emitting a staggering 6750 lumens. Featuring two output levels, the 50W light can dim from high to medium power output level allowing you to dim lighting for a quick exposure adjustment. Sun-similar light in 16:9 illuminating with approx. 100° reflected beam angle and approx. 200 W (halogen).

www.aditech-uw.com

Gates Sony AX100 housing



The Gates AX100 combines Ultra High Definition UHD resolution (3840 x 2160) with a platform dedicated to underwater motion imaging: Instant auto focus tracks subjects; internal color correction flip filter; a big window for a clear view of the camera LCD viewfinder; compact, lightweight for travel; and an extraordinary 20MP still image capture.

Reaching the far corners of the world, Gates housings are tasked with demanding projects extending from marine research and military to television and cinema productions. Experts know that failure is not an option, so they never take a chance.... they take a Gates!

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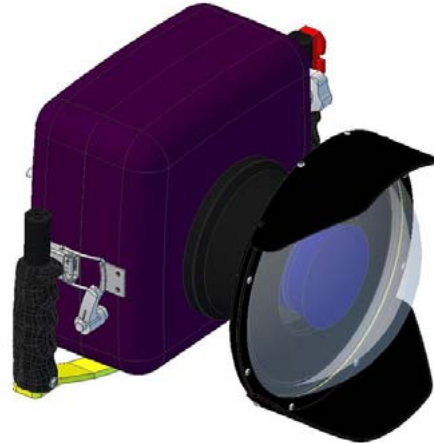
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BS Kinetics Black Magic



The well-tried BS Kinetics underwater housing Atacama was specially updated for the Blackmagic Production camera 4K. With dimensions of 230mm x 137mm x 222mm (WxDxH) and a weight of about 2,4 kg its light and fits in any baggage.

The BS Kinetics port system allows the usage of a large variety of lenses. Gearwheels and a special distance ring allows mechanical control of focus and zoom. Furthermore all other functions of the camera can be controlled underwater.

The price of the underwater housing is 2200 € including 19% VAT and it will be available end of June.

www.bskinetix.com

Nauticam NA-A6000 for Sony A6000



Nauticam has more experience with mirrorless housings than any other manufacturer, yet continues to innovate with each new release. The pioneering features of the earlier Nauticam housings are apparent with the simple but secure rotating housing latch and superb progressive shutter release providing optimal “feel”.

The NA-A6000 also sports some of Nauticam’s latest technology with the re-designed port locking latch that replicates the famous Nauticam DSLR port latch – making housing port changes easier than ever.

The new housing allows easy one handed operation of both command dials, video recording and EV control.

www.nauticamusa.com

Nauticam
USA

Nauticam NA-NEX5R
Sony NEX-5R and
Sony NEX-5T



“Back to the Future”

Nauticam continues to evolve the NEX housing design with a myriad of refinements present on the new NA-NEX5R. Designed by photographers to maximize functionality, the new NA-NEX5R exceeds expectations in virtually every regard. The NEX-5T, an upgrade to the NEX-5R, can be used in the NA-NEX5R housing with no modifications. A powerful system at a modest price - the NA-NEX5R is ready to go at a moment’s notice.

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INON accessories for Olympus TG-835/PT-055



INON INC. is pleased to announce some new accessories and current products compatibility for the Olympus TG-835 compact camera and PT-055 housing.

By attaching Olympus step up ring "PSUR-03" on the PT-055, the UWL-H100 28M67 Type2 wide angle lens and Dome Lens Unit II can be used. The INON underwater micro fisheye lens "UFL-M150 ZM80" is also compatible

For macro the UCL-165M67

close-up lens and super close-up lens with high quality UCL-100M67 are also compatible.

For strobe photography "S-TTL" Auto strobe with the INON S-2000/Z-240/D-2000 is available using the Optical D Cable.

Basetrays, handles, ball joint arms and bouyancy arms are also available to make this a complete system camera.

FG16 Housing for Canon PowerShot G16



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Ultralight Hotshoe Adaptors



Ultralight Control Systems have announced 2 new products for the accessories market.

The first is the AD-HS-YS which fits into and secures to a hot/coldshoe and will accept a YS fitment accessory such as a focus light or strobe. As with all hot/coldshoe attachments it should

not be too heavy or bulky as it could put undue strain on the hot/coldshoe.

The second accessory is the AD-HS-GP which allows a GoPro to be mounted onto a hot/coldshoe. If the

popularity of the GoPro phenomenon is anything to go by, Ultralight will have a winner on their hands with this product.

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Nauticam USA

**Nauticam NA-RX100 II
Sony RX100 II**



“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 make for one powerful, compact package.

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Nauticam NA-EM10 housing for Olympus OM-D E-M10

Nauticam is pleased to announce the NA-EM10 underwater camera housing for the new Olympus OM-D E-M10 mirrorless interchangeable lens camera. The E-M10 inherits the spot as the “go to” mirrorless camera for underwater shooters, taking over for the wildly popular E-M5; adding a better LCD, a better processor, EVF improvements, and WiFi in a smaller body. The E-M5 has been the most popular mirrorless camera in the Nauticam lineup to date, and the E-M10 will build on that and keep the Olympus mirrorless tradition going strong for underwater shooting.



The E-M10 shares the same image quality and focus speed with the flagship E-M1 camera at an aggressive new \$699 price point (body only, USA), which is almost 50% less than the E-M1 street price today.

Nauticam’s mirrorless housing lineup continues to get better and better, incorporating features pioneered in the digital cinema and SLR lines at a consumer friendly price point.

Ergonomics are still the driving design objective. Aperture and Shutter Speed controls are at the fingertips, and can be reassigned to other key functions with a single function button press. The F1 function button is placed at the photographer’s right thumb, an ideal location for focus lock, and F2 is just behind the shutter release and easily located by feel. The Video Record button is engaged via a lever placed at the right thumb, and easily distinguished from other pushbutton functions.

The housing gains the new-style port locking mechanism, which will be familiar to people who have seen Nauticam SLR housings.

www.nauticamusa.com

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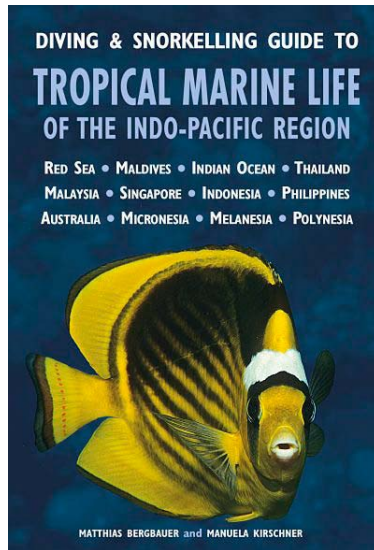
Diving & Snorkelling Guide to Tropical Marine Life of the Indo-Pacific Region 2nd edition

This handy pocket guide enables divers and snorkellers to identify more than 270 of the most common species of marine life likely to be encountered in and around the coral reefs of the Indo-Pacific region, including fish, reptiles and amphibians, and invertebrates. Each species featured is illustrated with an outstanding colour photograph, accompanied by a species description covering nomenclature, size, habits and distribution.

Dr Matthias Bergbauer is an ocean biologist and works at Munich University. Manuela Kirschner is a successful underwater photographer with awards from national and international photography competitions.

They are also authors of Reef Fishes of the Indo-Pacific, to be published by John Beaufoy Publishing in September.

193 x 132 mm 224 pages £12.99
paperback Publication August 2014



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Winning Images with Any Underwater Camera by Paul Colley

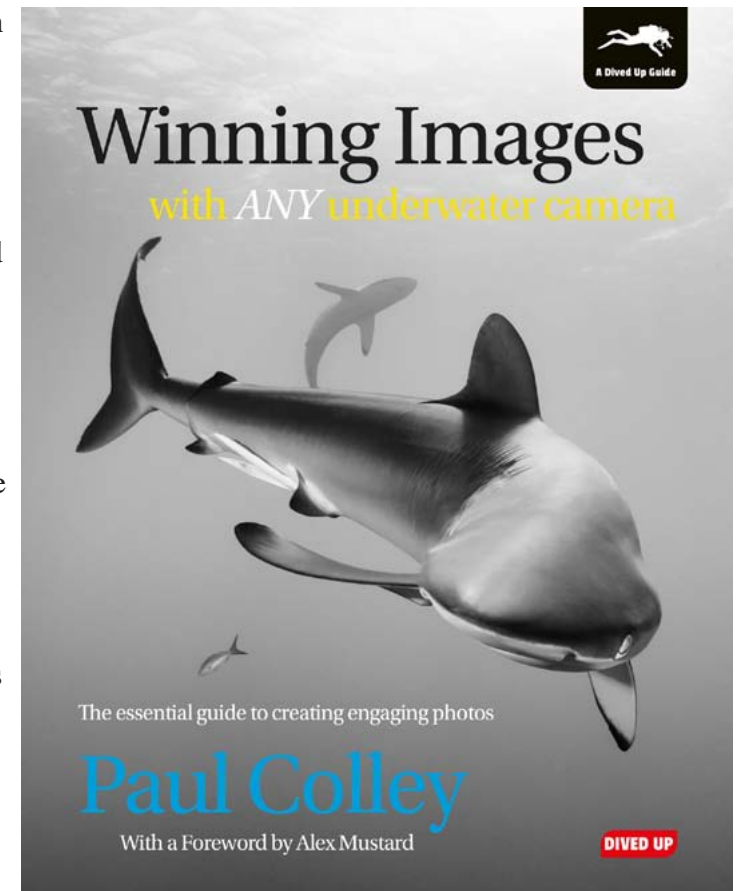
What makes this book different is the research that award-winner and underwater photography instructor Paul Colley has done into why some images communicate so much better than others. He draws on the lessons and experience of his mentors in underwater photography as well as expert topside photographers, artistic traditions and much more recent research into how we actually look at images.

As well as breaking down concepts and showing how to use elements like light, viewpoint, contrast, colour and perspective the book also contains sections on: Easy-to-Remember Reference Models (to get a head-start when planning photo dives); Advanced Techniques; and Post-Production Techniques.

Because it focuses on composition and techniques rather than technology, Winning Images is just as relevant to camera users on a budget as it is to those with high-end equipment and will help any photographer to improve their results.

As Alex Mustard says in his Foreword: 'This book will arm and inspire you to transform your underwater photographs, whatever camera you use'.

Paul first took a camera underwater in 2006, won his first competition in 2007 and then never looked back. Now an international award-winning underwater photographer, he writes a monthly column for Sport Diver US about compact cameras, and travel articles for the UK and international dive press. An accomplished instructor, this is his second book about diving (after Diving and Snorkelling



Ascension Island, Guide to a Marine Life Paradise: Dived Up Publications, 2013), but he is never happier than when teaching people how to take great underwater images.

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Issue 79/25



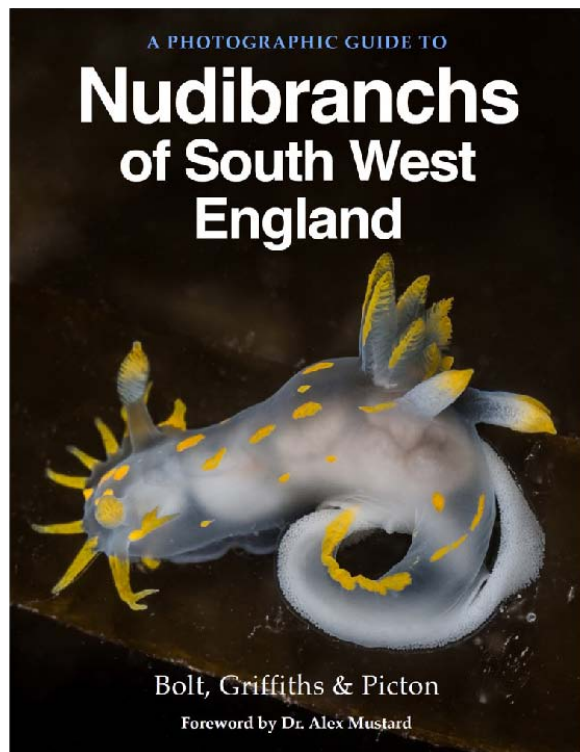
Nudibranchs of South West England is now available in the ePub digital format

A Photographic Guide to Nudibranchs of South West England is now available in two eBook formats; Apple's iBook and the more widely used ePub digital format.

The iBook can only be viewed on iPad and Apple computers running OS-X Mavericks, has a properly designed book layout for both landscape and portrait viewing and has up to 8 images per species shown in an interactive 'gallery', over 500 in total. All images can be viewed full screen and interactive images and web-links are heavily utilised

The ePub can be read* on any PC, Android device (laptop, tablet, phone), all Apple products and Linux based computer and uses a simple 'flow' layout regardless of screen orientation. It has up to 4 images per species, over 270 in total but does not have interactive images or web-links and images might not be viewable full screen.

* using an ePub reader. These differ in their presentation of text, chapters, search and images so your reading/viewing experience relies heavily upon your choice of reader.



We tested the ePub on the following platforms/readers: Adobe Digital Editions (PC/Windows), iBooks (iPad, OS-X Mavericks), Blue Fire Reader (iPhone), Calibre (PC, OS-X, Linux), Universal Book Reader (Android)

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Ikelite Vega Light review

by Peter Rowlands



If you are in the market for a video light you've got plenty of choice and if you are an LED light manufacturer you have got a lot of competition. This is because what used to be a quite specialised item is now run of the mill as digital cameras have been adopted by the huge majority of divers and LED technology is delivering high output from lower voltage batteries and giving increased burn times.

The Ikelite Vega Light is a compact and stylish unit which incorporates 7 LEDs giving a 2000 lumen output at full power with half and quarter options. With a full charge and at full power it gives a 45 minute burn time which increases to 180 minutes at quarter power. The circular

beam angle is 65° giving an effective angle of 52° which is ideal for macro. If you wanted to light a wider angle scene I understand there is an optional 100° diffuser which the manufacturer claims has "virtually no output loss thanks to a special, patented material." This diffuser was not available at the time of the review.

It took me a little while to get my head round the operation of the single charging and output rotary switch because it rotates more than once. To lock the VEGA for travel you rotate the switch anti clockwise until it comes to a stop with the small lock switch at 6 o'clock. To charge it rotate the main switch 180° clockwise



and plug the charger into the two gold plated charging holes. A full charge of a flat battery takes about 3 hours.

The Vega is a factory sealed unit for foolproof operation and is 1.9 x 5.6 in (50 x 142 mm).

It weighs only 11.2 oz (318 g). A wrist lanyard is supplied as standard and there is a ¼ " BSW tapped hole for adding shoes and mounting arms.

The rear of the Vega has 3 LEDs on either side. The left side has three red LEDs showing battery charge while the right hand blue LEDs

indicate the power output. Graphically very simple and effective.

Visually I've always liked black, red and silver livery so I like the look of the VEGA. The MSRP is \$550 which is very competitive so if you're in the market for a new or a higher output light, the Vega should be on your research list.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

Olympus Tough TG-3 Review

By Jim Decker

Olympus was kind enough to send along a pre-release sample of the newest Tough camera to The Digital Shootout, the TG-3. The tough series of cameras are truly tough—waterproof to 50 feet without a housing, crushproof to 220 pounds, drop proof from 6 feet, and freeze proof. Put the Tough TG-3 in a housing and it's waterproof to 150 feet! Even if you have a partial flood of the housing at depth, the camera will survive. This makes it great for the person who is rough on their gear or for a rental department needing ultimate reliability.

Macro Mode

The Olympus Tough TG-3 doesn't have a macro mode—it has microscope mode. In microscope mode you can get crazy close up macro—with no other accessory lenses needed. This camera will focus so close in microscope mode that if you have any lint or debris on the

inside of the housing lens, it will focus on that instead of the subject, so make sure your lens port is clean! You can get super close up shots of blennies, so much so that you can see their teeth and their need to floss. All of the images shown are completely uncropped from the camera. While there is a digital zoom capability to enlarge things even greater, all the images displayed were shot with no digital zooming.

A downside to the macro is how close you need to be to pull off these shots. You are practically on top of the subject. This makes it difficult to impossible for more skittish critters that require more distance. The good news is that you can't get closer than the minimum focus distance of the lens since it will focus on the inside of the housing port!

Macro mode has a focus lock so you can lock focus and take pictures without refocusing every time half

shutter is pressed. This is very handy for difficult to focus on subjects and allows you to move the camera back and forth to find the final focus.

Video Light Instead of Strobe

For all of the macro shots I used a video light instead of a strobe. This greatly simplifies shooting macro subjects. Since the light is constantly on, the camera's auto exposure does a great job. When combined with a focus lock, you can shoot in continuous shooting mode to get rapid fire shots like an SLR while not having any lag with recycle time since the strobe isn't firing. The light is bright enough to get a fast shutter speed and knock out any ambient light. I mounted the light to the shoe adapter of the housing and pointed it straight down. While this technique works fine for macro, a light is not bright enough to pull off large



wide angle scenes. A decent set of strobes are needed for wide angle shots.

Exposure Control

Unfortunately, there is no manual exposure mode on this camera. The addition of aperture priority is a godsend for working with external strobes and is the recommended mode for fish portraits and wide angle

scenes. No longer are you chasing strobe exposures because the aperture changes at will. While there is no shutter speed control, you can use exposure compensation to adjust your background exposure.

Wide Angle

The wide angle shots shown here are done with the UWL-04 lens. This lens gives

an approximate angle of 165 degrees with the TG-3. The lens is a wet lens and simply screws on to the housing underwater. Just make sure you “burp” the lens underwater to remove any air trapped between the lens and the housing.

1080p Video

There is no separate video mode for the TG-3, just a red record button on the back of the camera. This is a good thing since you don’t need to fumble around switching modes when some surprise action pops up. You can also use the exposure compensation and white balance without any limitations since there is no separate mode like other cameras.

Custom White Balance

There are 2 custom white balance presets in the camera. I had no problem executing a custom white balance at 50 feet with correct color. The nurse shark in the video was shot with a wide angle lens and natural light with a custom white balance. The wide lens allows one to get closer to the subject and get more clarity and contrast from the image by shooting through less water.

Fast Focus Even in Macro Mode

Focus is super fast, even in the challenging conditions of macro. Only on a rare occasion did the camera have an issue with focusing on the smallest critters of the reef. This is probably one of the fastest focusing compact cameras overall, and definitely the fastest for macro photography.

Downsides

There are a couple downsides to this camera.



First, it only shoots JPEG not RAW. This is a big disappointment and something we have been complaining about to Olympus for the TG series cameras. Compared to a RAW image, the JPEG photos from this camera lack a bit of detail and seem a bit heavy handed on noise reduction. This really only becomes apparent at increased magnifications and if one was to make very large prints.

The second downside is no manual exposure mode. While aperture priority is a big welcomed feature on this camera, going that one further step to include shutter speed adjustment will make wide angle shots easier to pull off and make it easier to balance foreground exposures with strobes and pull in the background exposure with shutter speed.

Conclusion

The Olympus Tough TG-3 is the most capable macro camera we have ever shot. When combined with a focus or video light, you have a super compact killer macro rig you can take with you on any dive, even if you have another larger angle system.



Jim Decker
www.backscatter.com

Jim Decker is the CEO of Backscatter Underwater Video & Photo, one of the largest suppliers of underwater imaging equipment worldwide. The Digital Shootout is an annual, week-long event where underwater photographers can take their imaging skills to the next level via workshops taught by some of the industry’s top pros.

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Zen DP100 fisheye port

By Phil Rudin

Zen Underwater, the highly acclaimed hand-crafted optical glass dome port manufacturing company is located in Ft. Lauderdale Florida, USA. Zen has recently announced a new optical glass port for the DP100 port line designed for use with the Nauticam Mini housings for the Olympus and Panasonic Micro four-thirds cameras using the Panasonic 8mm F/3.5 Fisheye lens.

This new port builds on the success of the highly regarded Zen 230mm, 200mm, 170mm, 100mm and Olympus Pen line of optical glass ports. Like all Zen ports the DP100 port line is made from the finest materials using state-of-the-art design and advanced optical technology.

The DP100 is a 100mm (four inch) port made from the same Broadband AR coated BK7 optical glass found in all Zen Underwater ports. The DP 100 line of ports all have a depth rating of 100 meters (328 feet) and are designed for Aquatica, Hugyfot, Ikelite, Nauticam, Olympus, Sea&Sea and Subal (type 3&4) housing mounts.

These ports are designed exclusively for use with lenses like the Nikkor 10.5mm F/2.8G DX fisheye,

Canon 8-15mm F4L fisheye zoom and the extremely popular Tokina 10-17mm F/3.5-4.5 fisheye zoom some of the ports have a removable lens shades.

At a little over half a kilo the Zen DP100 ports are very travel friendly and easy to pack in a carry-on bag like the ThinkTank Airport Security roller-bag that I travel with. The new DP100 port for mirrorless housings has two parts, the dome port is a Subal DP100 port with the Subal type 3 housing mount.

The port ships assembled with the Zen PA-N85-S3 port adapter for Nauticam MILC housings, the adapter fits between the Zen/Subal port and housing. The port adapter can also be used with other Subal type 3 ports from Zen or Subal to support a wide verity of legacy lenses plus current

Nauticam NA-EM5 housing with Zen DP100 port and Olympus 12mm F/2 lens

Hawksbill Turtle, Panasonic 8mm fisheye, ISO-200, F/9, 1/250th, with two Inon Z-240 strobes





Nauticam NA-EM1 housing with Zen DP100 port and Panasonic 8mm fisheye using two Inon Z-240 strobes

Azure Vase Sponge, Panasonic 8mm fisheye, ISO-200, F/8, 1/250th, with two Inon Z-240 strobes

and future Micro 4/3 lenses. Lens adapters like the Olympus MMF-3 can be used with Zuiko Digital ED lenses like the extremely sharp 50mm F/2 macro and many more. This port adapter is NOT compatible with the Nauticam housings for Sony NEX and A type cameras.

While the new DP100 port is specifically designed for use with the Panasonic 8mm F/3.5 fisheye I have also used it with the Olympus 12mm F/2 and the Olympus 17mm F/1.8 rectilinear lenses with an excitable loss of corner sharpness.

The port ships with a storage cover to protection the optical glass.

The Panasonic Lumix G 8mm F/3.5 is a “full frame” fisheye lens for Micro four-thirds cameras which has a 180 degree above water diagonal angle of view covering the entire camera sensor. The lens is extremely light at 165grams (5.82oz) and measures just 6.07 x 5.18 cm (2.39” x 2.04”) so it can easily fit into your pocket and takes up very little space in a carry-on bag.

The lens ships with front and rear storage caps, a quality storage bag and

has a one year manufactures warranty. The lens has a built-in (nonremovable) shade and a curved front element which prevents the implementation of filter threads on the front of the lens. Gelatin filters can be installed on the rear of the lens in a small filter holder for your photo needs. The lens has 10 elements in nine groups with one ED lens which helps minimize distortion and chromatic aberration commonly associated with fisheye lenses. Current Olympus and Panasonic cameras also have distortion correction software in camera. The out of focus areas across the frame have a smooth “bokeh” which is well controlled by the seven blades used to form the rounded shape of the lens iris.

Multicoated lens elements help to prevent lens flare and reduce ghosting. The lens has an internal focus stepping motor which provides extremely fast, smooth and near silent auto focus which is especially useful when shooting video. The lens will also remain in focus all the way to the port glass which is ideal for close focus wide angle work. The Panasonic 8mm fisheye has excellent image quality across the frame from F/4 to F/16 with the very best results in the F/ 5.6 to F/8 range where depth of field will be well beyond the needs of most photographers.

The Panasonic fisheye and Zen DP100 port combination have been



Green Finger Sponge, Panasonic 8mm fisheye, ISO-200, F/ 6.3, 1/250th, with two Inon Z-240 strobes

my goto fisheye system for some time now. I have used this lens and port with several Olympus and Panasonic cameras and will share the following observations. This port and lens combo can be used with a verity of Nauticam Mini housings including current housings for Olympus E-PL3&5, E-M10, E-M5, E-M1, Panasonic DMC-GF2&3, GX-7, GH-3 the soon to be introduced GH-4 and the Blackmagic Pocket Cinema camera along with three discontinued



Divemaster Dewey, Panasonic 8mm fisheye, ISO-200, F/8, 1/250th, with two Inon Z-240 strobes

micro 4/3 housings.

All of the housings can be setup with a variety of strobe placement options for both still and video photography. One of the things I like most about this lens/port combination is the ability to create a very compact and light weight ultra wide angle package using two small strobes like the Inon Z-240 or S-2000 strobes. I use a one inch mounting ball secured to the cold shoe on the top of the housing with a triple arm clamp and

two 100 mm double ball arms. I then put one of StiX large floats on each arm and use a standard clamp for my two Inon Z-240 strobes which are fired via optical cable.

With the E-M1 housing I leave the grips in place and with housings like the E-M5 housing I remove the tray and grips and just use the wriststrap to support the system. With the E-M1 housing I can also just mount the Z-240 strobes directly onto the bulkheads on the grips. With



Azure Vase Sponge, Panasonic 8mm fisheye, ISO-200, F/ 11, 1/250th, with two Inon Z-240 strobes

way behind the port or they will show in the corner of the frame or cast a harsh light into the corner of the frame. The strobe cables should also be well secured behind the housing so they don't appear in the frame.

To get greater distance between the strobes a more conventional configuration using double strobe arms attached to the grips is recommended. At ISO-100 to ISO-400 and shutter speeds in the 1/125th to 1/320th range I prefer using F/stops in the F/5.6 to F/8 range which works quite well with most subjects. These settings will provide all of the depth of field you will require for both CFWA and wider shots like large animal or wreck shots.

Keep in mind that all fisheye lenses create more distortion than wide rectilinear lenses will so choose your subject and composition accordingly. The closer a straight line like a wrecks mast is to the center line of the fisheye lens the less distortion will be created.

My view is that the Panasonic 8mm F/3.5 fisheye is a must-have lens for any underwater micro four-thirds shooter and that the Zen DP100 port provides the very best optical quality for a port of this size. This port is not recommended for use as an over/under port a much larger port would do a better job.

The Zen DP100 fisheye dome for Nauticam mirrorless housings sells at your authorized Zen Underwater dealer for around \$899.95, £729.95 incl.VAT. The Panasonic 8mm fisheye sells in the \$640.00, £840.00 range and a robust used market for this lens can be found on the internet.

Phil Rudin



**Mexicandiver Magazine
Cozumel Mexico
6 day workshop
5 nights accommodations at
Hotel Casa del Mar.
All model, make-up artist,
airport transportation, and park
fees, meals, and instruction by
professional photographer
Phil Rudin.**



this configuration I use the triple ball clamp and add a Nauticam 250mm x 60mm carbon fiber float arm to help boost the housing. All of these configurations allow you to get the strobes very close to the port for CFWA and by simply turning the strobe beam angle away from the port subjects at a greater distance will get excellent coverage with little backscatter.

Shooting with the housing tray removed and the wrist-strap allows you to move the strobes about two inches closer to the port. The strobes should be all the

Digital Shootout 2014

Little Cayman

By Joanna Lentini

Compared to other professions, passions and pastimes, there aren't many live forums in which underwater photographers can congregate to learn, share and compete with each other all in one place. Of course there are some impressive online communities and "members only" societies that provide much of this, but in terms of comprehensive support and a generous selection of demo gear alongside world class diving, there really is nothing that compares to the annual Digital Shootout (DSO) hosted by Backscatter Underwater Video & Photo. Now in its 13th year, dating back to the days of film, 2014's event took place at Little Cayman Beach Resort. This outstanding event combined with an enviable dive venue undoubtedly offers a great opportunity for like-minded underwater photography and video enthusiasts to share their underwater passions.

Founded in 2001 by Backscatter Owner Berkley White and Light & Motion Int'l Sales Manager Dan Baldocchi through their joint dive travel venture Underexposures, this event has evolved into a true industry stand-out. What really sets this

Shootout apart is the extraordinary quality and quantity of demo gear, which is on offer for all participants to take turns on. The Backscatter staff literally lugged an actual ton of demo gear from both US coasts. The DSO staff also includes sponsor reps from an array of industry leaders such as Canon, Nauticam, Aquatica, and Light & Motion, many of whom had their own equipment and expertise on offer as well. I think we all know the heavy price tag on underwater imaging equipment, so this is a truly unique and invaluable opportunity to give a wide array of high-end cameras, housings, lighting options, and other big ticket items a try before you buy while diving with and learning from many of the industry's true knowledge leaders.

In recent years, the DSO has alternated locations bi-annually between Bonaire and Little Cayman. The return to Little Cayman this year clearly provided a familiar environment for the seasoned staff to operate within which facilitated a very smooth albeit frenetic agenda. The schedule below gives a sense as to the full end-to-end nature of this





friendly competition. As clearly stated from the outset, the non-stop activities are not meant to overwhelm. Instead, the event is designed such that participants can pick and choose which dives and workshops they care to attend, while hopefully leaving enough on the table that they care to return year after year. Indeed, roughly 50% of this year's shooters were repeat attendees.

The daily seminars are tailored to all levels of experience, with attendees ranging from brand new shooters who are just getting started, to well-recognized professionals who still seem to be asking meaningful questions to continue to improve their expert technical skills. There is something to learn for everyone, and Berkley White stands out as an expert amongst experts who is able to connect with the audience at all levels. Attending Berkley's first two seminars of the week was a true privilege. For the chance to hear such an accomplished photographer passionately speak about his own personal underwater photo and video techniques felt well worth the price of admission on its own.

Later on in the week Erin Quigley of GoAskErin.com dove into the world of Lightroom

Randy Johnson. 1st Point And Shoot

5, highlighting all of its new bells and whistles, such as the awesome Radial Filter. Apart from the software updates, she articulated everything from workflow to image editing, even providing students with an invaluable laminated keyboard shortcut list. Erin is an award winning underwater photographer and Lightroom expert that is easily accessible throughout the week for any and all post-production issues. Super friendly, she is a pleasure to be around both in the classroom and on the dive boat.

If video is more your thing than you won't want to miss the seminar taught by Final Cut Pro expert Mary Lynn Price. In this class, you'll go over everything from pre-planning your shots to post-production work in FCP.

As each seminar is full of invaluable information all of the class notes are thoughtfully bound in a spiral notebook and provided to participants upon arrival to Little Cayman. Therefore, if you feel like an afternoon nap on the hammocks or that an additional dive is calling, you can feel at ease knowing you still have all the

Cecilia Clementi. 1st Wide Traditional



Jay Kavanagh. 1st Macro Traditional

content you missed at your fingertips.

Each evening after dinner the staff gathers everyone alongside the pool and puts on a slideshow of submitted images from the day's dives. Each participant is encouraged to enter up to three images and/or a sixty-second video. If you can muster up the time and energy to get some JPEG's to the Creative Cave staff by 5pm you'll

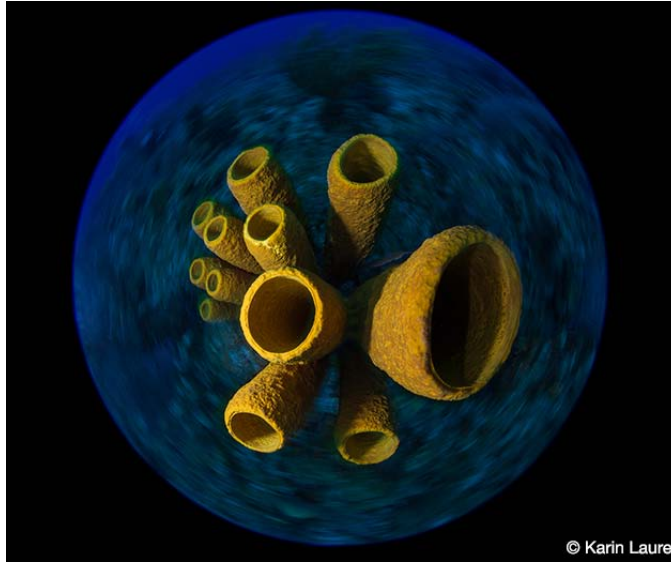


© Louis Kahn

Louis Kahn. Jim Watt Award

have the opportunity to have your images/clips critiqued by the DSO crew later that evening. This is an important step in the learning process but still some found there weren't enough hours in the day to make their submissions. If you plan to attend a future shootout make sure you don't skip this step, as there is a lot to be learned from the process. And as Backscatter CEO Jim Decker pointed out, the vibe at the DSO is not as ultra-competitive as one might think. There is a feeling of camaraderie and the emphasis is placed more on learning than on competition. Perhaps this is why the DSO has been so successful?

Speaking of success, let's jump into the competitive side of the event. The contest is broken into six categories and one Best in Show named the "Jim Watt Award" in remembrance of a true icon of the underwater imaging world. Jim Watt was the first pro photographer to attend the DSO and to share his knowledge with participants. After passing away in 2007, it was quite fitting to name the superlative category in his honour. Per Berkley White, the winning image, an incredible close-up



© Karin Laurel

Karin Laurel. 1st Wide Unrestricted

macro shot of a nurse shark's eye by Louis Kahn from Seattle, was rightfully one that Jim would have loved himself.

Each still photography category has a first, second and third prize-winner, however the video contest includes an additional award for honorable mention. In addition to all of this, there are some incredible prizes raffled off to the rest of the participants at the end of the evening. Amongst the awards are camera housings, strobes, video lights, as well as trips to the Maldives and Indonesia!

As you can see from the winning images on the DSO's site, the diving and underwater photo opportunities are truly world class. The on-site operators, Reef Divers, are top-notch and these hard-working professionals handle the heavy lifting making a dive vacation what it should be. They are not afraid to share a drink or two with guests during Happy Hour either, providing for enhanced camaraderie by week's end. Sites such as Mixing

Bowl, Bus Stop, and Randy's Gazebo offer just some of the highlights. Over the course of the weeklong event the DSO crew split up and rotated between dive boats, providing participants the opportunity to actually jump in to the water with the experts and extract further advice while topside.

While plenty of macro opportunities exist, this is a wide angle mecca thanks to some dramatic walls, cavernous swim-throughs, and a spectrum of species of grouper, rays, and turtles all of whom offer up close and personal dome port contact. The popular Tokina 10-17mm lens would be a good choice here for cropped-sensor DSLR users. If lucky, you might enjoy a prized encounter with the gargantuan Loggerhead Turtle who can be seen barreling across the reef at this time of year.

At the end of the weeklong marathon, I sit for a moment to catch my breath and talk with Jim Decker, CEO of Backscatter. A true protégé of Berkley White, Jim's broad and deep expertise across the complete spectrum of equipment and technique is equally impressive. I learn that a semi-annual shootout is now being considered with one held on both the Eastern and Western hemisphere each calendar year. Now wouldn't that be something? For next year, Backscatter is planning a new venue in Roatan, Honduras (June 13-20, 2015). I can hardly wait . . .



Joanna Lentini



Seacam D4 Silver



Subal D800



Aquatica A-EM1



Gates XA25/XA20/G30



Aquatica HD Wave



Fantasea FG-16



Recsea RX-100MKII



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Presbyopic Near Vision Mask Correction

by Quentin Bennett

From our early forties our ability to see things close to us deteriorates considerably in a process known as presbyopia.

This deterioration is even more noticeable in the darker conditions prevalent underwater, particularly in our non-tropical climes with their darker and murkier waters. The consequentially larger pupils make the effects of presbyopia even more obvious. I noticed the deterioration whilst diving long before I noticed it in normal life. Do understand that underwater, with wider pupils, the f stop of the eye is open, and consequently the depth of field is greatly reduced. This truly reveals that lessened ability to focus closely.

On land generally there are three ways to correct presbyopia : by using single vision near reading lenses, bifocals, or progressive lenses. Progressive lenses usually have the advantage that by using different areas of the lens corridor one can get different focal lengths and, therefore, adjust one's near vision focus distance.

In air progressive lenses are

generally the most convenient form of correction, but they are complex lenses and cannot satisfactorily be applied on the inside of a diver's facemask.

For some years we have endeavoured to mimic the effects of a progressive lens underwater by partially utilising a process known in the contact lens and refractive surgery worlds as simultaneous vision, or monovision. To function correctly the process is dependent on your possessing binocular vision, whereby both eyes function in unison and fuse the two eyes separate images successfully into one with 3D vision.

Remember that I am discussing this correction for near vision only, and particularly for underwater photographers and scientists who generally require a higher standard of vision than the everyday diver. Also, please understand that this process does not work perfectly for everyone, and that we are using it ONLY for intermediate and near vision, and NOT for distance vision.

With our technique we correct each eye separately for near vision



Slug between the eyes", Fine-lined Tamja (Tambja tenuilineata) on Northern scorpionfish (Scorpaena cardinalis) Tie-dye arch, New Zealand

utilising a slightly different focus power. We then rely on the brain to fuse these slightly differing images to give a greater depth of field than is achieved with two lenses of the same power, as is normally prescribed.

An understanding of the dioptric power system is relevant here, but this is useful to all photographers, as we so often talk about diopter lenses.

The dioptric power of a lens is the reciprocal of the focal length in meters. As an example, a lens with a focal length of 50 centimeters, 1/2 meter, has a power of 2.00 Diopters. A

lens with a focal length of 33 cms, 1/3 m, is 3.00 Diopters, and so on.

So, from knowing the required focus distance, one can work out an approximation of the required lens power. Important to remember is the likelihood that if the diver still has some remaining accommodation, or internal ocular focussing power, these figures won't be absolutely exact, the focus will be closer, and a lower addition will be called for. Your ophthalmic practitioner will advise you on this.

As with everything when

dealing with human beings, there is great variance, and no two persons' requirements are the same.

As a generalised example of our monovision near vision correction, one may fit a +2.00 addition reading lens before the left eye. This should be perfect for reading one's pressure gauge, as its focus will be approximately at about 1/2 meter or 20 inches. Then the reading lens before the right eye may well have an +3.50 diopter addition, giving a focus for this eye at about 30 cm or 12 inches which is often convenient for looking at ones camera monitor screen and very small marine sessile creatures.

So, in this example, we have pretty acceptable focus, through the two near lenses combination, from about 55 cm to about 25 cm. The light level and pupil size can have an influence here, but we have found the technique very successful, and generally a great improvement over fitting both near vision segments of the same power.

Everyone is slightly different, and one needs to measure the distances at which you feel that you personally most need critical near focus, and then discuss this with your ophthalmic practitioner, who can demonstrate it in a trial frame. Perhaps print and take this article with you so that the practitioner can



Deadman's fingers (Alcyonium cf. aurantiacum), Fiordland, New Zealand

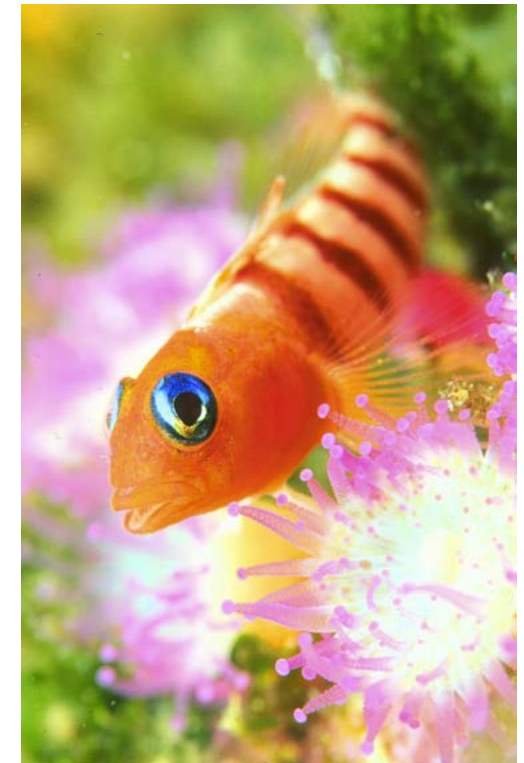
understand what you are trying to achieve. We all have our kit set up differently, and it is important that you provide your practitioner with the approximate working distances that you require.

This near simultaneous vision correction is made up as bifocals or as half eyes, so that you are corrected, as necessary, for normal distance vision at the top, and then have the bifocal segments for your closework at the bottom of the lens. Generally the top of this segment will line up with the lowest edge of your iris, the coloured

part of your eye. This may vary, depending on your requirements.

Having the segment too high interferes with looking into your eyepiece, but having it too low means that to view your monitor you have to either hold the monitor very low, or incline your head back uncomfortably. Combined with the limitations of mask design and optics, these can be annoying.

Having a mask with the glass close to the eyes is a great help, and a lot of masks of newer designs bring the glass back closer to the eyes.



Blue-eyed triplefin (Notoclinops segmentatus), Poor Knights Islands, New Zealand

So I believe that it is very important that a lot of care is put into the position of the top of the near optics section. As I say, the usual position is to place top of the near lens on a level across the very bottom of the ocular iris behind. Don't hesitate to fiddle around with a felt tip pen, your mask, and your camera, in a swimming pool, and see at what height you want the top of the segment, before committing.



Jewel anemone (Corynactis australis), Matauri Bay, New Zealand

Underwater photography apart, this system is convenient when diving, as it gives a practical range of close vision for finding different sizes of small and interesting creatures and the ability to read gauges, computers, and the like. Initially it can feel strange, but after a couple of dives one realises what a great improvement it is. Just like using progressive lenses in air, once one is used to it becomes intuitive and one never thinks about it.

For those affected, remember that presbyopia is a sign of maturity and, if you are diving, old age is still a very long way in the future !

Stock Versus Bespoke Lenses for Distance Correction in Facemasks

Should you require correction of your vision for distance, discuss it with your ophthalmic practitioner. They will know firstly whether spherical lenses will correct you adequately, and whether horizontal centration of the lenses is critical.

If investigating stock divemask lenses check that the lenses to be supplied are the correct annotation. This means minus power if you are short-sighted or myopic, and plus



Crocodile fish (Cymbacephalus beauforti) eye, night, Komodo Island, Indonesia

power if you are long-sighted (far-sighted) or hyperopic. Diveshops often have little understanding of this and the other technicalities of vision correction that are relevant. Astigmatism is not correctable with stock divemask lenses.

Most stock mask correction lenses are of minus power, and these would be a disaster to a far sighted diver. I have “rescued” far-sighted divers who have had a diveshop attempting to sell them minus correction lenses.

Stock correction lenses supplied by the dive mask manufacturers

are spherical and ground with their optical centres at an average distance apart. Humans are all different and our personal PD or pupillary distance may well be very different from that provided by these stock lenses.

The type of diving that you do can be very relevant. The centration of the stock correction lenses may well coincide with your own pupillary distance (distance between pupils) which would ease any doubts as to whether they would be adequate.

Particularly in higher powers, poor centration of lenses causes induced prism effects which can lead



Ladybug amphipod (undescribed Cyproideidae), Cannibal Rock, Rinca Island, Indonesia

centration is even more critical than in an air environment. This is because narcosis, psychological and other effects can exaggerate the induced prismatic effects of a lens not centered correctly before the ocular pupils. From safety and comfort points of view, this could be less than satisfactory.

There also can arise the important factor of whether your astigmatism should be corrected. There are two almost counter arguments here. Firstly with your pupils probably open wider, especially in darker UK waters, you want the sharpest acuity possible. On the other hand the possibly slightly wet optics of a flat lens and the flat glass/water interface, vision is slightly compromised underwater anyway, and the lack of correction of a small amount of astigmatism is no great compromise. One very generalised guideline is to ensure that you pass or, better, exceed the driver's licence standards with your facemask correction! Discuss this with your ophthalmic practitioner.

Quentin M. Bennett

to considerable discomfort, perceptual changes, and even double vision. This is more likely if you are diving at depths where narcosis is likely to have an effect. Anyone who has worked with inexperienced ratings in a chamber knows that they are already getting a little tiddly-push at 20 meters of depth. At depth in water you are probably affected by narcosis to a greater extent than you realise.

In higher lens powers, lens centration cannot be out by more than a millimeter or so to fail ISO standards. I argue that in the underwater environment lens

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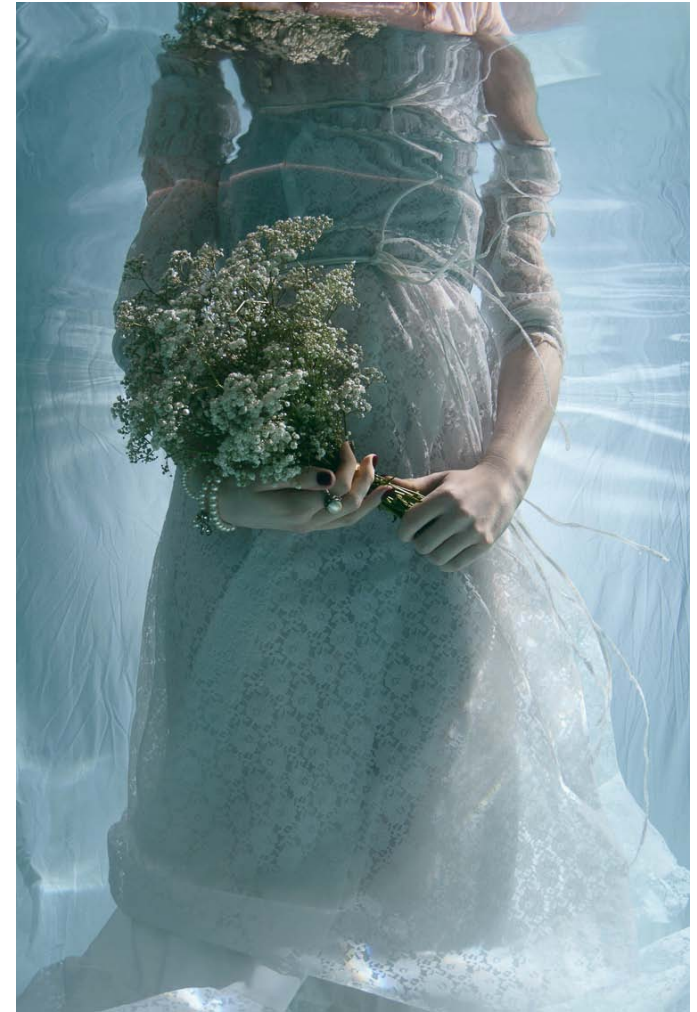
Underwater Love

by Rosie Anderson

First off I'd like to say all this underwater photography malarkey is new to me. I'm, I guess you could say, a fine art wedding photographer to trade. I'd never even considered taking an underwater photo series until I saw a beautiful Chagall painting of a couple merging in an embrace into a deep blue watery canvas. It was such a quick step in my mind – "I could do that with a couple underwater!", I thought "how hard could it be?" Pretty hard as it turned out.

So first the technical bit - straight of the bat I must admit I got some help. My husband, Doug Anderson, is an underwater cameraman who does quite a bit of work for the natural history unit of the BBC. He was pretty useful for the kit. I used his D7100 with a Tokina 10-17mm lens. Doug only has the Zen 100mm mini dome (it's easier to travel with I think) and I wasn't that keen on the distortion on it so I borrowed a 200mm Zen dome from Alex Tattersall at Underwater Visions.

I used three light sources to create the "look". Firstly I backlit in water using Orcalight's "Seawolf" A2260. This is a big bright LED light running at about 22000 lumens on full. It was nice to have and easier to compose around than an underwater slave flash as well as flooding the pool with lovely white light which really helped relax the models. On the housing I stuck one of Doug's Inon Z240 flash units but did not use it as a light source. I pointed it straight up to fire the slave on two Bowen Gemini flash units – which were on tall stands on either side of the pool. I liked the "dappled" look



*Top left. Full length body shot - iso100 f/9 1/40 sec
17mm lens - Nauticam D7100 – Bowens GM500
Flash – Orgcalight A2250 – Zen 200mm Dome*

*Above. Holding Bouquet - iso100 f/8 1/50sec
Tokina17mm lens - Nauticam D7100 – Bowens
GM500 Flash – Orgcalight A2250 – Zen 200mm
Dome*

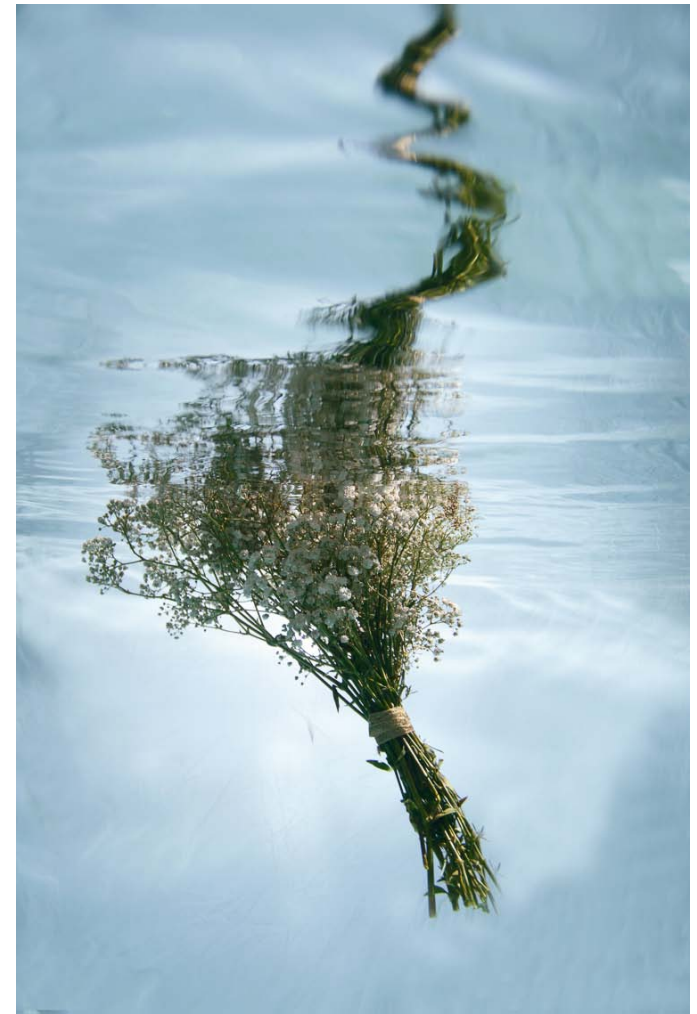


Above. Braces - iso100 f/8 1/50sec Tokina17mm lens - Nauticam D7100 – Bowens GM500 Flash – Orgcalight A2250 – Zen 200mm Dome
Above right. Floating embrace - iso100 f/8 1/50sec Tokina17mm lens - Nauticam D7100 – Bowens GM500 Flash – Orgcalight A2250 – Zen 200mm
Far right. Floating Bouquet -iso100 f/8 1/50sec Tokina17mm lens - Nauticam D7100 – Bowens GM500 Flash – Orgcalight A2250 – Zen 200mm



the surface flash units created so it was important to have these tall on stands and keep a little bit of chop on the surface of the pool when we were working.

The back round was less technical – a bed sheet hung off a ladder. Not rocket science really. I really wanted a deep pool so the models would look like they were floating mid-water. I contacted Sea and Sea in Paignton, who have a 4m deep test pool.– David Millin was so helpful.



My assistant Jessica Reid was hugely important to keep things right from a styling point of view when I was shooting – I genuinely could not do a job like this without someone like Jess. I had no idea how difficult it is making creative decisions underwater. It seems like there is just too much going on for ones brain to think about the art! Jess really kept me right mostly by going through our inspiration pin boards on the iPad pool side.



***Above. Underwater Kiss - iso100 f/8 1/50sec
Tokina17mm lens - Nauticam D7100 – Bowens
GM500 Flash – Orgcalight A2250 – Zen 200mm
Dome***

***Balloons - iso100 f/8 1/50sec Tokina17mm lens
- Nauticam D7100 – Bowens GM500 Flash –
Orgcalight A2250 – Zen 200mm Dome***



Finally the Grade was hugely influenced by underwater photographer Steve Jones who gave me a crash course in Photoshop and curves grading specifically for underwater. It was a wonderfully fulfilling part of the process watching the finished graded images emerge from the Flat RAW files.

Obviously as a wedding photographer I have an interest in capturing the unspoken connection between two people. It was instantly apparent to me that something about being underwater changed things and made that connection really intense (which was weird because, as it turned out, there is absolutely nothing romantic about an underwater shoot!). So it just got me thinking about why that was the case. Maybe capturing that moment in time was made more intense due to the moment being defined by the length of one breath. Maybe it is a trust thing between the couple combined with a change in their sensory experience. Maybe it is that as we are made mostly water ourselves and being immersed creates a connection on a level we don't realize. ... Maybe not! Or maybe it just doesn't matter – its all about the chemistry and the H₂O.



Rosie Anderson
www.rosieanderson.co.uk

Small ads



SOLD! – Ikelite housing for a Canon 5D MKII

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

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Subtronic Nova analog version no ttl converter

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

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

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HMS Repulse

by Mike Robinson

During 1941 Britain was engaged in a struggle for her life. Under siege by Nazi Germany, her shipping lanes and cities under constant threat, both the Royal Navy and RAF were over stretched and struggling to cope with the demands placed on them by the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill.

Against this backdrop the continued expansion of the Japanese into China and the threat posed by them to British Far East territories such as Hong Kong and Singapore could not be ignored. To do nothing was not an option, but desperately short of aircraft, ships and men what could the embattled country do to protect the empire, and more importantly, the vital natural resources that empire provided?

After the First World War it was decided that the best way to defend Singapore, and the far east in general, would be a strong Naval force of powerful warships to act as a deterrent, this deterrent to be formed up and deployed to the region only in times of need. Falling back on this plan the Admiralty, driven by Churchill, created Force Z comprised of three capital ships and four destroyers which were sent to Singapore as a show of force. Only

two of the capital ships reached Singapore with the assigned Aircraft Carrier being damaged during the voyage which left the battleship HMS Prince of Wales and battle cruiser HMS Repulse critically short of air cover for their operation.

On the 7th of December 1941 the Japanese simultaneously attacked Pearl Harbor and Singapore and began to land troops in Malaya, Force Z had signally failed as a deterrent. The two large ships and escorting destroyers were deployed North to contest the Japanese landings in Malaya, but by the time they had sailed the Japanese had landed nearly all their troops and the invasion fleet was preparing to return home. After a fruitless search Force Z turned and headed back to Singapore. They would never make it.

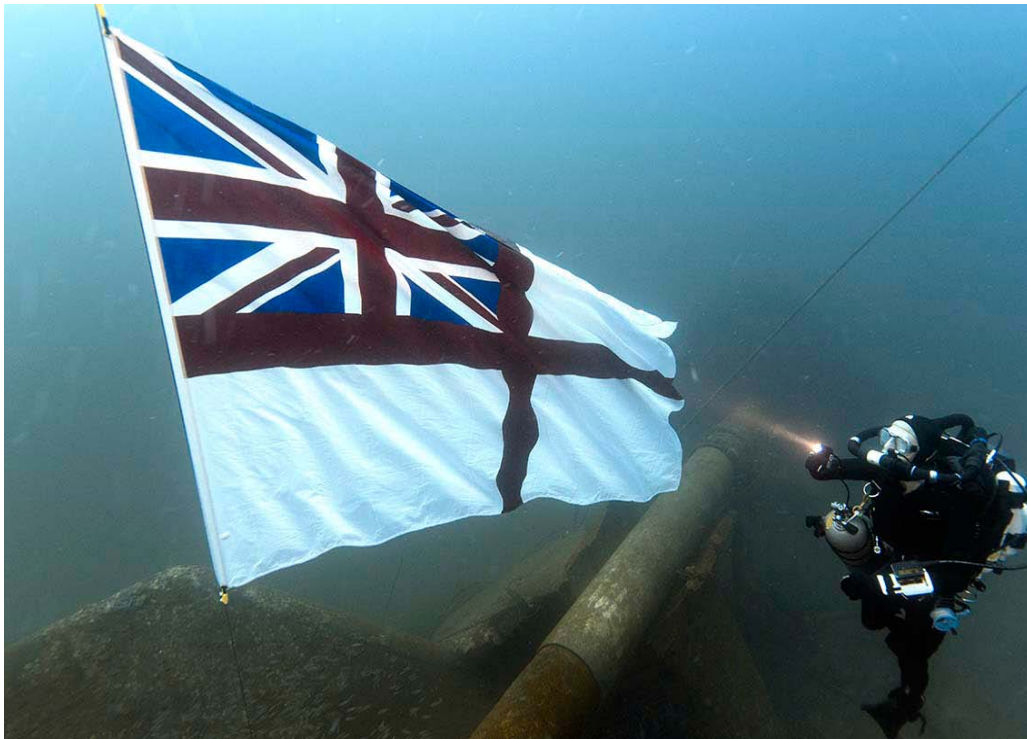
On the 10th of December Prince of Wales and Repulse were attacked by land based Japanese torpedo

HMS Repulse in 1926

The one that got away. Damage caused by the first torpedo to hit the Repulse.

*Canon 550d, Tokina 11-16mm
Wide angle lens, Sea&sea YS-D1
Strobes(x2), Aquatica housing, 8in
Dome f/7.1, 1/25, ISO400, 11mm*





Adam examines the White Ensign on HMS Repulse . Canon 550d, Tokina 11-16mm Wide angle lens, Sea&sea YS-D1 Strobes(x2), Aquatica housing, 8in Dome f/7.1, 1/30, ISO400, 11mm

bombers. The 270m long, 44,000t Prince of Wales was hit by a single torpedo in the first wave of attacks and crippled, her damaged propeller shaft shaking violently and shattering water tight seals and bulkheads throughout the ship. Repulse meanwhile was having better luck and superbly handled by her Captain managed to dodge 19 torpedoes over three separate attacks, but with Prince of Wales out of action the aging battle cruiser could not hold off the Japanese

indefinitely. Against a concerted attack by another 17 torpedo bombers she was hit once on the Starboard side and a further four times on the Port side. The 242m, 32,000t ship capsized and sank in just 11 minutes along with 508 of her officers and men.

With the Repulse sunk and the Prince of Wales crippled a final attack was made to finish her off in which three torpedoes hit the ship. Finally, almost 2 hours after she was first damaged, HMS Prince of Wales



Fuel Oil still seeps from the Repulse over 70 years after she sank.. Canon 550d, Tokina 11-16mm Wide angle lens, Sea&sea YS-D1 Strobes(x2), Aquatica housing, 8in Dome f/10, 1/50, ISO800, 16mm

capsized and sank. 327 of her crew were killed.

The sinking of the two ships was a public relations disaster for Britain, Churchill and specifically for the Royal Navy. HMS Repulse was one of the most famous and popular ships in the fleet and a veteran of the first world war. Of more material concern however was how the Prince of Wales, one of the most modern, sophisticated and powerful ships in the fleet, if not the world, had been crippled by a

single torpedo and then sunk by an enemy widely regarded as inferior in every way.

An investigation was launched during the war which led to a number of recommendations, but even as late as 1966 the Royal Navy were still in search of answers and deployed a diving team to investigate the wreck. It was during these dives the tradition of raising the White Ensign on the two wrecks originated. As the interest of the navy waned an increasing



Adam's torch backlights the muzzle of a 15" gun on HMS Repulse. Canon 550d, Tokina 11-16mm Wide angle lens, Sea&sea YS-D1 Strobos(x2), Aquatica housing, 8in Dome f/9, 1/30, ISO400, 16mm



The remains of the prop shaft. Blown apart by salvage teams to access the bronze bearings. Canon 550d, Tokina 11-16mm Wide angle lens, Sea&sea YS-D1 Strobos(x2), Aquatica housing, 8in Dome f/9, 1/60, ISO400, 11mm



A Carley float life raft crushed under HMS Prince of Wales. Canon 550d, Tokina 11-16mm Wide angle lens, Sea&sea YS-D1 Strobos(x2), Aquatica housing, 8in Dome f/7.1, 1/30, ISO800, 11mm

number of technical divers began to visit the wreck. These group's interests ranged from history to photography and even technical questions into the sinking along with a steady stream of divers taking the opportunity to show their respect and replace the White Ensigns which have been damaged or even drifted away over the years.

I was offered the chance to take part in an expedition this year to dive the Repulse and Prince of Wales and having only recently taken up underwater photography (I bought my Aquatica housing in late 2012) my mind was immediately filled with visions of award winning pictures of 15 inch guns in crystal clear visibility. Diving mainly in the UK my opportunities for large scale pictures had been limited to two trips to Malta, one of which suffered with bad weather and associated poor visibility so I was keen to try something new and booked myself a place. Shortly before the trip in

May 2014 my friend and partner in crime Adam, who is a member of the Royal Naval Reserve Diving Branch, contacted me and asked if I'd help him replace the Ensign on the Repulse, how could I refuse?

As anyone who travels to dive will know getting equipment where you need it to be is a challenge, add a camera and housing into the mix and it immediately becomes even more complicated. To make matters worse we wouldn't just be taking standard SCUBA equipment, we'd need to take equipment for mixed gas diving at depth; the Repulse lies on her port side with the highest point of her hull at 35m, the seabed is at 58m, while the Prince of Wales is deeper again with the seabed at 68m and the shallowest point at almost 50m. The airline we chose has a standard weight limit of 23kg, and a rebreather in a bag weighs almost exactly 23kg! Excess baggage allowed us another

bag each but with wetsuit, regulators for emergency bailout cylinders and all the other necessities of technical diving there was no room left for the camera equipment, there wasn't even any room for clothes. We found a reprieve in the allowance of 23kg for carry on as long as the bag was the correct size. Packing a housing, strobos, camera, lenses and dome port into a carry on sized bag presented an interesting puzzle and left me with only my laptop bag for both my laptop and clothing for the 10 day trip, 3 t-shirts would be enough surely?

With the wrecks almost 60 miles offshore the initial 12 hour flight was not the end of our travels. Joining the dive boat on a Sunday morning we would travel for over 24 hours and arrive on site for the first dive at around 1000 on Monday morning. Arriving on the site of HMS Repulse the first thing that struck us was the smell; recent salvage activity has damaged the hull and a steady trickle of fuel oil

was bubbling to the surface creating a thin slick on the surface many hundreds of meters long. Watching the shotline snake down into the water the visibility looked phenomenal and we were all keen to get in the water and see the wreck.

The first shock was the current. Although we had been warned that it was strong no one was really expecting to be dragging themselves down the line with both hands, fortunately it subsided at around 20m and we were able to take a more relaxed descent to the wreck which is where we got our second shock. Hovering over and around the wreck was a cloud of silt stirred up by the current and my anticipated 20-30m of visibility was a murky 5 or 6m. Great in the UK, not quite what you expect in the South China Sea!

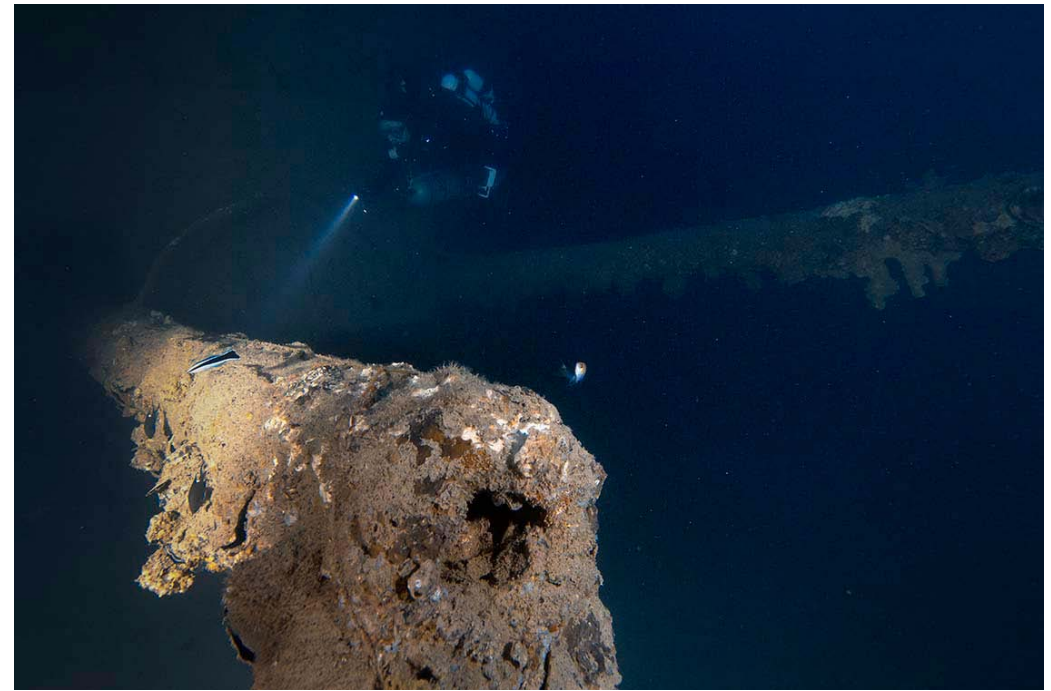
I looked in dismay at the hazy outline of Adam a few meters away and chanced a peek through my viewfinder, perhaps the camera would magically remove the fog bank that engulfed us? Rather predictably all I saw was a small hazy diver with a hint of wreck behind him. I was less than impressed. One of the benefits of a rebreather is the ability to talk, and be understood, in the water and both myself and Adam made our views abundantly clear to one another

We dropped over the edge of the wreck and a poor situation became

rapidly worse. At 58m not only had the visibility dropped to 3m but the silt above was cutting out most of the light and it was dark. Very dark. Inside my Aquatica housing rested a Canon 550D with a Tokina 11-16mm wide angle lens behind an 8" dome, the best tools I had available to tackle my planned shots of big guns, big props and anything else "big". As we swam forward along the wreck I began to experiment, seeing what, if anything, I could achieve in these conditions with the help of my two YS-D1 strobes. As my heart wasn't really in it the predictable answer was "not a lot".

We finned past the 15" guns and from the muzzle couldn't make out any more than a diver's torch at the turret, a couple of test shots confirmed that there would be no grand panoramic shot of a diver studying some of the biggest guns ever used by the Royal Navy. Reaching the bow provided yet more disappointment as I knelt on the seabed expecting to see the silhouette of the ship towering above me, Adam hovering beside it to give a sense of scale. I could see it all my head, unfortunately all my camera could see was a dark haze surrounded by a slightly lighter haze.

We returned to the shotline and made our way to the surface. Having spent 45 minutes on the bottom we were now committed to sit in the



Adam swims past the 5.25" Guns which failed to protect HMS Prince of Wales from the Japanese. Canon 550d, Tokina 11-16mm Wide angle lens, Sea&sea YS-D1 Strobes(x2), Aquatica housing, 8in Dome f/7.1, 1/30, ISO800, 11mm

raging current for at least another hour. As you may imagine this did nothing to improve my mood and until I'd been back on the boat for a while and eaten some of the excellent Thai food that was provided it was best for all concerned that I just sit and stew for a while.

As we began to prepare for the second dive I reviewed what I'd seen and what I could now reasonably expect to achieve, I also watched and felt quite sorry for Dave, a fellow photographer, who was emptying

water out of his flooded strobe. It was true that the gun and bow shots were almost certainly not achievable, however the visibility on top of the wreck was better and seemed to improve throughout the dive so there could be some scope for some decent pictures of the Ensign being raised and while we were along the bottom I'd seen some interesting smaller features which I could play with.

The second dive was much the same as the first only instead of heading to the bow we went aft to

Adam swims along the prop shaft of HMS Repulse prior to attaching the Ensign. The propeller was removed some time ago. Canon 550d, Tokina 11-16mm Wide angle lens, Sea&sea YS-D1 Strobes(x2), Aquatica housing, 8in Dome f/10, 1/30, ISO800, 11mm



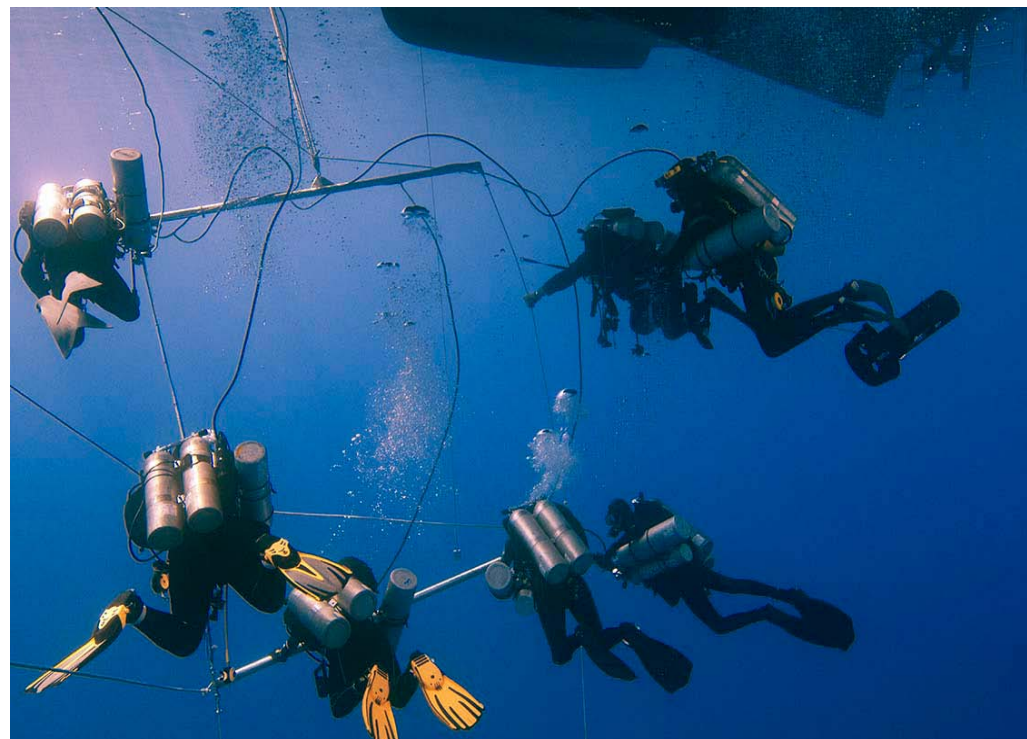
look at the prop shafts and rudder (the props themselves have all been salvaged). We spent the dive looking at the damage caused by the recent salvage operation and making a plan for the rigging of the Ensign which due to the poor visibility we had decided to do the next morning.

The plan was to collect a lot of pictures showing the deployment and then get some “Arty” shots once it was in place, fluttering majestically in the current. Heading the 100m aft from the shot line we reached the prop shafts and took some time to take pictures of them before Adam got to work. Within 20 minutes the buoy was released and the ensign pulled clear of its bag and with a little encouragement to release a few twists it did indeed begin to flutter majestically in the current!

I went to an excellent presentation on deep wreck photography at the London International Dive show last year where the top tips of “turn up your ISO” and “turn down your shutter speed” were given and so I went to

work set at ISO800 and 1/30ths with the strobes set at a very low power to pick out nearby colour which seemed to work quite well. As the trip went on and the visibility improved I was able to reduce this to ISO400 but kept the long exposure in all but a few cases.

In the middle of the week we carried out two dives on the Prince of Wales and if Repulse was dark she was positively black. Completely capsized the only way to see anything of interest is to get under the inverted deck. We were rewarded with the truly evocative sight of trapped and crushed Carley float life-rafts which stood



With 12 divers doing anything up to 2 hours of decompression it often got crowded on the trapeze.. Canon 550d, Tokina 11-16mm Wide angle lens, Sea&sea YS-D1 Strobes(x2), Aquatica housing, 8in Dome f/9, 1/30, ISO400, 11mm

out against the silt and steel of the wreck and fortunately for me were big enough to fill my frame while the silt was light enough that the strobes cut through the darkness with very little back scatter. It goes without saying that there was to be no large scale images of the Prince of Wales.

Returning to the Repulse for a final dive I took the opportunity to capture some images of the smaller features I had seen on the first dive; an imploded 4 inch shell casing

and voice pipes near the mast. The current had dropped over the week and I was amazed by the improved visibility along the top of the wreck as we made our way back towards the shotline after an hour on the bottom. I followed Adam up the line and at around 15m above the wreck turned to take one last look. Beneath me, crystal clear, was the damage caused by the first torpedo strike, all it needed was a diver in the lower right corner peering in to give a sense of scale,




With 12 divers doing anything up to 2 hours of decompression it often got crowded on the trapeze. On this occasion Louise found my camera appearing in front of her from above.. Canon 550d, Tokina 11-16mm Wide angle lens, Sea&sea YS-D1 Strobes(x2), Aquatica housing, 8in Dome f/9, 1/30, ISO400, 11mm

but the only other diver was already a dozen meters above me and after an hour at 50m, with nearly 2 hours of decompression already to do, asking him to go back down would be above and beyond the call of duty. I took the picture anyway, but of course I know there's something missing.

I didn't get my large scale pictures of guns and props where a more experienced or more dedicated photographer may have done. But what I did achieve is to get a number of images I was happy with in

conditions that were neither what I'd hoped for or even had any cause to expect. My pictures have been seen by more people than I could ever have hoped, been featured on the Royal Navy's web site and now they are appearing here. Not bad for someone who a year and a half ago had never taken a picture under water.

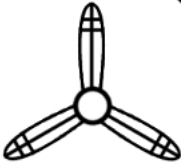
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The wreck of the Hera

By Mark Webster

As underwater photographers we generally have the images we intend to capture foremost in our mind when we visit a wreck and are often unaware of the individual tales of suffering and loss which may have occurred during the sinking of the ship. When marine life takes over the remains of a shipwreck the beauty and tranquillity can mask the grim circumstances of the loss and so we should make the effort to know the history of the wreck and spare a thought for those who perished as we enjoy the dive. One of my local wreck sites had a dramatic and sad end for many of its crew when it came to grief on February 1st 1914 in Veryan Bay close to Falmouth in Cornwall. When you visit the location even on a calm day you cannot help but feel the sense of isolation and desperation the crew must have felt during the wrecking.

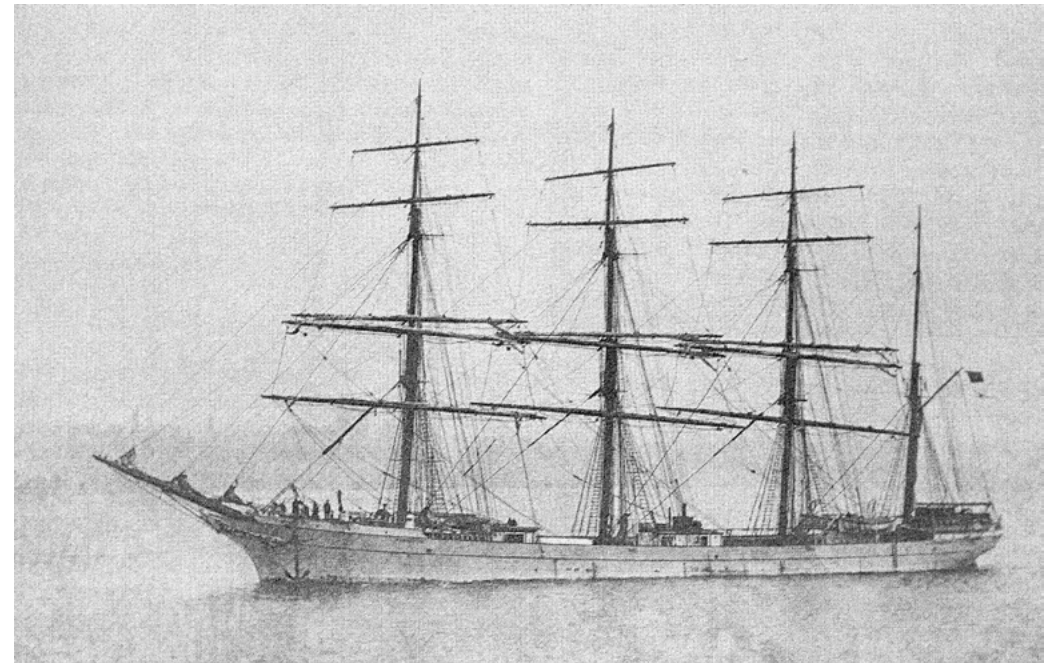
The Hera was a four masted steel barque built in 1886 in Tecklenberg, Germany and was originally named the "Richard Wagner" after the popular composer of the time. She sailed under the British flag with this name until 1890 when she was sold to Rhederei Aktien of Hamburg who renamed her "Hera", the Goddess of

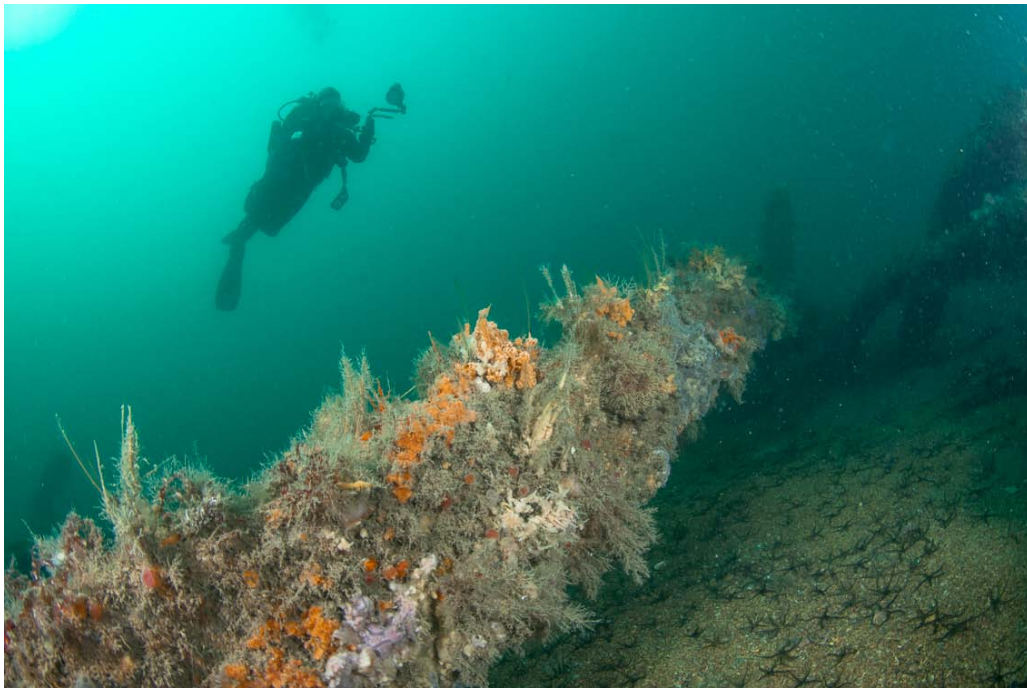
Power and Riches and the wife of Zeus in Greek Mythology. She was 280ft in length with a net tonnage of 1,994 and today would be admired as a classic tall ship. However at the turn of the century her ilk was common and she spent her working life carrying mostly minerals from the Americas to Europe.

On November 2nd 1913 she began her last voyage with Captain Lorentz as her master from Pisagua in Northern Chile with a cargo of nitrates bound for Europe. On the evening of February 1st the following year she was closing on the Lizard in a strong WSW gale. Lorentz was unsure of her exact position as they had been

The Hera in her heyday as a classic tall ship. Origin of image unknown.

The remains of the Hera cover a large area of seabed and the highest points can be found at the bow and the stern. These elevated areas attract soft corals and anemones that can feed on the nutrients born by mostly gentle currents. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200 f11 1/60.





There are several sections of mast remaining some of which lie between the two sections of the wreck which makes navigating between them easy. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200 f8 1/30.

navigating by dead reckoning for the preceding three days due to a faulty chronometer and had not yet seen land. He was very much aware that only two years previously a company sister ship, the square rigger Pindos, had been lost on the Manacles reef in similar conditions. Anxious to avoid a similar fate the captain had decided to stay well clear of the Lizard and make slowly for Falmouth bay in the hope of spotting either the Lizard light to his stern or the St Anthony light to the north east of Falmouth as he

approached. The weather worsened in the darkness and one can only imagine the crew's mounting concern as the hours passed with no sighting of either light and the certain knowledge that they were fast approaching land. The Hera had in fact passed both these lights and not seen them in the poor visibility and was closing on Nare Head to the north east of Falmouth. The horrified crew suddenly sighted the offshore island of Gull Rock directly ahead through the mist and attempted to put the ship about, but it



There are areas of the hull which are accessible and these provide shelter for schools of pouting which disperse initially but soon regroup and become inquisitive. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200 f8 1/30.

was in vain with the gale driving them relentlessly forwards. The ship ran over the adjacent Whelps reef which ripped through her hull and she then stumbled onwards inside the towering cliffs of Gull Rock where she quickly settled.

Distress rockets were fired and attempts were made to launch the lifeboats but conditions proved to be too severe and the port lifeboat capsized alongside throwing several of the crew and Captain Lorentz into the sea where they quickly drowned.

The remaining crew abandoned the starboard lifeboat and followed the Chief Officer up the jigger mast to get clear of the breaking seas. The ship continued to sink and the men were forced to climb higher into the freezing wind and spray where gradually many of them succumbed to fatigue and exposure and slipped into the sea. The Falmouth lifeboat "Bob Newbons" had been launched when the flares were spotted by coastguards at Portloe but could not make the wreck until well after 2 o'clock the



Spider crabs are frequently seen on the wreck and foraging on the surrounding maerl beds which are rich in molluscs and smaller crustaceans. A weed covered part of the hull section of the wreck makes a good backdrop. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200 f11 1/30

following morning, some three hours after the Hera had struck the reef. On arrival they were unable to locate the wreck due to the sea conditions and poor visibility and it was only the sound of the mate's whistle being blown furiously from the rigging which led them to her. Sadly only five of the crew of nineteen were found alive in the rigging and they were close to death themselves.

As always the tragedy provided profit for some and the wreck was auctioned within two weeks for

salvage. She was sold to Harris Brothers of Falmouth for the princely sum of £205 and although only her fore topsail remained above water the salvors made short work of recovering most of her gear and rigging. The wreck was then forgotten until 1970 when the Sub Aqua club from RAF St. Mawgan near Newquay discovered her remains in 12 to 15m of water.

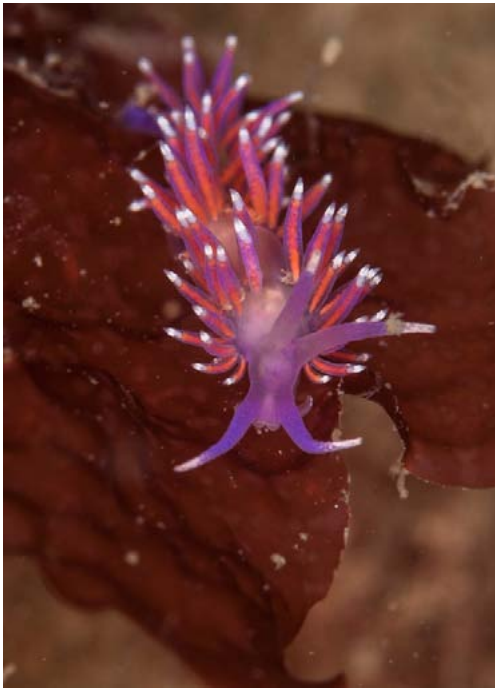
Since then the Hera has become one of the classic wreck dives of the area being in shallow and relatively sheltered waters and there is a



If you are exploring under the hull plates be aware that there is a large population of conger eels on the wreck. They are not aggressive but occasionally a diver gets a nip if they surprise the conger. Nikon D100, L&M Titan housing, 12-24mm zoom, Subtronic mini flash guns, ISO 200 F11 1/60

substantial amount of wreckage still to be seen. The hull now lies in almost two separate halves with the remains of her masts to lead you to from one to the other. Both bow and stern have areas of wreckage which stand up 4-5m from the seabed. The steelwork here is festooned with plumose anemones and dead men's fingers and attracts a wide variety of fish life. The central section of the hull is largely collapsed although the ribs and deck beams are easily distinguished. The cargo of nitrates washed away long

ago, but the remains of the holds still yield some interesting finds. Determined divers often find unusual coal waste 'briquettes', about 25cm square, which are embossed with a coat of arms. Some are still in good condition, although you have to dig deep in the wreckage to find them. There appears to be no record of this as cargo or its destination so perhaps it was carried to make use of surplus hold space or it is all that remains from the original salvage operation. Small non ferrous items are still found



The spring time is good for finding nudibranchs. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 105mm micro, Inon Quad flash, ISO 100 f20 1/125

and occasionally, notably after winter storms, more substantial fittings are recovered. The seabed here is heavy sand and shingle and extensive beds of pale mauve maerl (a calcified seaweed) which settles quickly after rough weather and so the site often has good visibility.

Photographically the Hera is an excellent dive with a wide angle lens as there are several large areas of wreckage that rise above the seabed covered with colourful marine growth. The light coloured seabed also reflects



Maerl is a form of calcified seaweed which forms small coral like clusters on gravel seabeds. The colour can vary from deep purple to pale pink and orange and is most vivid in the springtime. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200 f11 1/30

light so when the visibility is good you can create compositions that include a vista of wreckage in the background. Exploring the darker openings of the wreck will reveal many lobsters, congers and schools of pouting. In the summer months explore the kelp on top of the hull plates for John Dory which are common but very hard to spot.

It is also well worth exploring off the wreck particularly on the maerl beds which are home to all sorts of camouflaged fish and a favourite

haunt for cuttlefish, gurnard, flatfish and scorpion fish. A dive with a macro lens will not disappoint either as you will find dozens of small hermit crabs and dragonets in the maerl and many species of nudibranchs and often common cowries on the kelp.

The Whelps reef which was responsible for the Hera's demise is only a few hundred yards away on the south side of Gull Rock. At high water the tips of several rock peaks are visible, but as the tide falls the full hazard of the reef is revealed. Below

the water on the south and east side of the visible rocks the reef drops rapidly to 25m in a series of walls and gullies to a bright sand seabed. The reef supports a spectacular array of colourful marine life and ranks as one of the nicest reef dives in the area. So very often we start with a deeper first dive on the Whelps and then visit the Hera for a slightly shallower dive.

The port of Falmouth is only 45 minutes away by charter boat, or you can launch your own RIB from the excellent slipway at the water sports association and get there even faster. The position of the wreck is Lat. 50.11.48N 04.54.01W and is often buoyed in the summer months but is easily found from marks which the local diving centres can provide. Generally current is not a problem on the wreck, although on spring tides it would be best to wait for slack water. There are few opportunities to dive wrecks of the noble tall ship era and less still where the remains are recognisable in such shallow waters. So it is certainly worth considering if you are visiting the area and putting together a varied itinerary for your photography.

Mark Webster
www.photec.co.uk

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

Go Gozo

By Peter Rowlands

Before we start I must emphasise that I paid for this trip myself and was not offered nor did I ask for any discounts from anyone. OK. Read on.

Little did I realise when, in January, I booked this trip with Pete Bullen of Oceanfoto on Gozo that these dives would be some of the first I would be doing this year. Such were the relentless winter storms that I did not dive in the UK from mid December to mid April and even then the viz was shocking!

My wife Debbie and I had chosen mid May to visit Gozo with its combination of rising temperatures

but prior to the busy full on holiday season. The water temperature was a cool 18°C which for me is borderline between semidry and dry but I decided on the semidry and only felt slightly chilly towards the end of an hour long dive. This soon faded away when I emerged into the Gozitan sunshine.

Pete Bullen is an accomplished ex pat underwater photographer who specialises in small group trips of up to 4 people who want the time and space to improve their uw photography skills in an unhurried, informed atmosphere. His knowledge



Mgarr ix-Xini. An easy entry shore dive with a mariad of photographic subjects in less than 15 metres of water

Bob, the dog



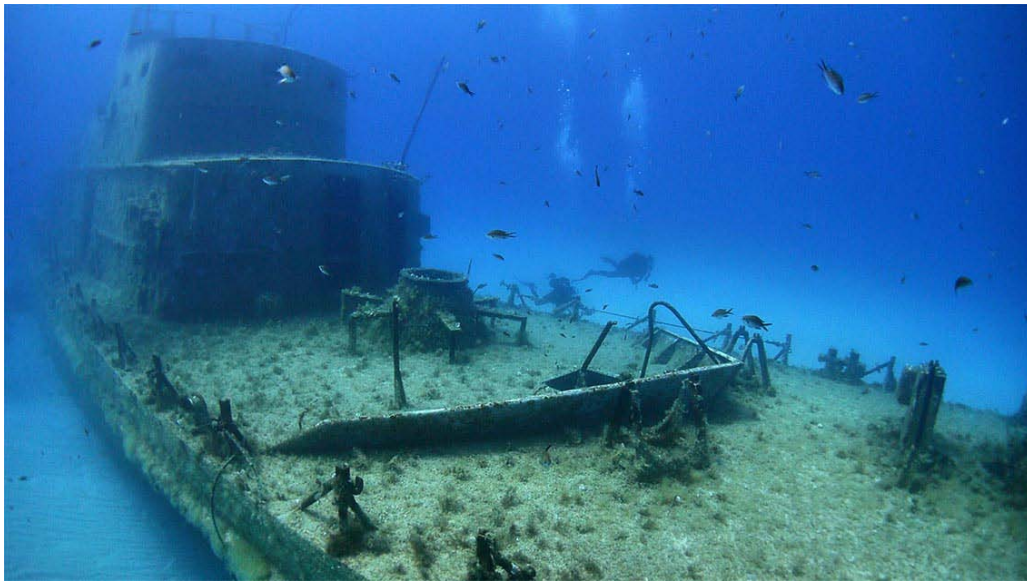


Video frame grabs. Panasonic GX7, Nauticam, 14-42 lens, INON UWL100 wide lens and dome. Available light with an Original Magic Filter.

and enthusiasm for all things Gozitan and diving is infectious and he works in conjunction with Moby Divers in Xlendi – a well run, well stocked dive school manned by pleasant and helpful staff. Pete’s partner Sue is an instructor there and then there’s Bob, the dog - a more loveable, graceful and characterful dog you could ever wish to meet. He accompanied us on all our travels and was always waiting on the shore to bark his disapproval about how long we’d been away.

The beauty of Gozo is that there is nearly always a lee shore and this proved to be very useful as on our arrival, in typical Rowlands fashion, the wind had picked up considerably and limited us to a shore dive in Mgarr ix-Xini. When I say limited, that really isn’t the right word. If I had a dive site like this on my doorstep at home I would visit it continually because, for photography, there is no better way than to become familiar with the site and its subjects. Water access is easy with very little tidal range and the viz was good.





In terms of subjects I shot octopi, flying gurnards, flatfish, weever fish, scorpionfish, wrasse and tube worms so there was plenty of subjects to practice on. Not bad for a first dive!

I was using my newly acquired Panasonic GX7 in a Nauticam housing with the 14-42 power zoom lens and the INON UWL100 wide angle lens and dome. When fitted with Stix buoyancy floats in strategic places this makes a very capable outfit to handle, even one handed, and shoot steady video. Pete could have left me in Mgarr ix-Xini for the rest of the week and I'd have been very happy but he had lots of excellent dives up his sleeve including some great scenery and cave dives in blue water.

For me the tour de la resistance

was a short RIB ride from Mgarr harbour to dive the scuttled P31. It was decommissioned in 2004 and bought by the Malta Tourism Authority who then funded everything from the planning to the actual sinking of the wreck. The 52 meter long and 7 meter wide vessel lying in about 18 meters depth on clear white sands makes this wreck a great dive for both beginner and advanced divers not to mention great for free diving. It has been cleaned and doors removed so even penetration can be carried out safely. It's a great wreck photographically with plenty of light and loads of access for different camera angles.

Probably the most famous dives on Gozo are the Blue Hole and Inland



Video frame grabs of wreck P31 off Comino

To watch a short video of the P31 go to

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EnerC4YTB68>

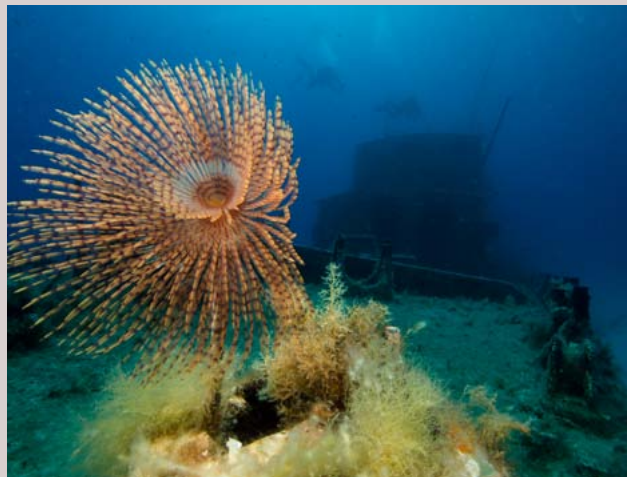
UK divers Oliver Taylor and his partner Sibylla were also on our trip. He was getting to grips with his Olympus system and I asked him to write a piece about his time on the trip:



Before

“Having recently moved from a compact to a mirrorless system, and wanting an early season opportunity to practice and improve I booked 5 days guided camera diving with Pete Bullen of OceanPhoto in Gozo.

I’m not a competent photographer but think I know what I like, sometimes taking a ‘not bad’ picture, and excuse my photography by calling it ‘reportage’. Much of my diving is with a BSAC club (London Hellfins, great club) so I fall into the no doubt familiar trap of having a camera with me rather than diving for the camera so I wanted an opportunity to get some pure camera diving with an added bonus of nice clear water after the awful UK winter and perhaps be pushed out of my rut.

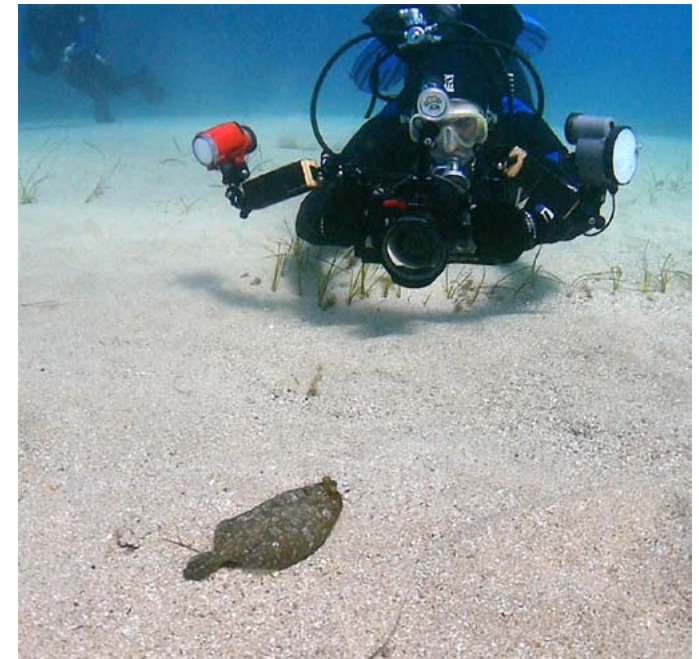


After

The diving was relaxed and un-hurried I quickly demonstrated my rut finding ability, and Pete quickly started working to help iron the ruts out. During the 5 days we worked on using a wider aperture range rather than my go-to f8 to f11, to take my time with a subject, to work strobe positions more, to improve my post-processing and looked at more formal approaches to composition

Back home some weeks on, in the murk of the English Channel I find a new ease with a subject even when club diving, I have a more solid base from which to work, and a developing sense of how I want to develop my practice.”

Oliver Taylor



Oliver experimenting with strobe positioning.



Sibylla surrounded by fish



Bob makes it known that we've been away too long.

Pete Bullen "working"



Sea. These are very impressive arches and swim throughs. Unfortunately the wind made these undivable for a couple of days and when the wind abated the sun went shy so we dived it with lacklustre light which was a shame because they must be truly awesome on a sparkling day.

Most transport to and from the dive sites is in 4x4s and this is for a very good reason. If you thought the British urban road pot holes were bad, think again. Actually in Gozo they're not really pot holes anymore because strictly speaking they've all become joined up to become just rough

www.uwpmag.com



Blue Hole on a choppy day

terrain! The word on the street is that there are only two millionaires on Gozo. One fixes car suspensions and the other repairs punctures :-)

Pete Bullen's services only cost slightly more than a standard diving package with Moby Divers and what you get for that little bit extra is a personalised service which will show in the images you return with. For anyone on the early steps of the

underwater photography ladder or for those how just want to be left to concentrate on honing their skills Pete Bullen provides the perfect level of attention.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

Pete Bullen's site
www.oceanfoto.co.uk



Nelson Bay

by Klaus M. Stiefel

“Save yourself a ticket to Indonesia and drive up to Nelson Bay” my friend Al, usually not a man of undue hyperbole, said to me with conviction. A few weeks later I indeed make the trip up north, and three hours after leaving my Sydney city home I stand on the shores overlooking the famous Fly Point, one of the prime dive sites in Nelson Bay. Located just about two kilometers west of the heads separating Nelson Bay from the open Pacific Ocean, it faces north across the tranquil, shallow bay. Gum trees and ferns grow above the ochre-brown rocks. The coastal vegetation is noticeably close to the high watermark, an indication of very calm waters. Pelicans glide above me, and cockatoos screech from the trees behind the steps leading down to the dive site. It’s a nice place, even topside.

A short time later I slide into the ocean with my scuba gear on and my camera clipped to my harness. A healthy sea-grass meadow gives way to an underwater landscape dominated by large sponges, soft corals and tunicates. And these sessile invertebrates are inhabited by a diverse set of fishes, crabs, nudibranchs and flatworms. This is a macro photographer’s candy shop. I remember Al’s words as I snap shot after shot for the next 90 minutes. None of the dives in Nelson Bay are very deep (typically less than 15 m), which allows for prolonged dives – and believe me, you will want to stay underwater for a long time and look at all the fantastic marine life. What makes Nelson Bay such a beautiful dive site?

The currents on continental east coasts



Fly Point, Nelson Bay. Canon 5DII, Canon L 17-40 mm @ 17.0 mm, f/10.0, 1/50, ISO100

Trumpetfish doing a little dance in front of lots of bullseyes and yellowtail scad. The trumpetfish are among the more tropical inhabitants of the waters around Nelson Bay. Olympus TG-2, internal strobe, f/3.2, 5.1 mm, 1/125, ISO200

typically run from the tropics to the poles. Hence, the Australian east coast receives warmer waters from up north. The entrance of Nelson Bay is oriented especially well-fit to catch these tropical currents, and with them a smorgasbord of tropical marine animals and their larvae. They then thrive in the protected waters of the bay. A second factor contributing to the great Diving in Nelson Bay undoubtedly is the presence of a number of marine sanctuaries. These increase fish diversity, numbers and the sizes of individual fish, compared to areas where fishing takes place. I have never seen such



huge flatheads as in Nelson Bay, and some of the scorpionfish are seriously plus-sized as well.

Diving in an elongated bay with a narrow entrance also means that the underwater naturalist not only has to watch shrimps & nudibranchs, but also the tide tables: diving is only recommended around high tide, otherwise a swift drift inlands or out into the open ocean towards New Zealand is in the books.

But during the twice-daily periods when diving is possible, you will see supreme marine biodiversity: a large nudibranch fauna, with new



Phyllodesmium serratum, one of the many nudis in Nelson Bay. Canon 5DII, Canon 100 mm f2.8 macro lens, Hugyfot housing, 2 x Inon z-240 strobes, f/16.0, 1/200, ISO160

species to spot on many dives; bumblebee shrimp hiding in the invertebrate overgrowth; triplefins, gobies and pipefish populating the ground; and seahorses and cuttlefish hiding in-between sea-fans and finger-sponges. Besides sighting the more common spotted wobbegong sharks, you will be able to see banded wobbegongs resting in the sea-



Grey nurse shark. Lots of these around the offshore islands off Nelson Bay. Olympus TG-2, internal strobe, 4 mm, f8, 1/640, ISO200

grass. Sting rays and blind sharks complement the cartilaginous fish assembly.

At night, a different ensemble of marine animals comes out. Armies of decorator crabs populate the sponges. These curious crustaceans stick sponges and coral polyps to their bodies which camouflage them perfectly. If they don't move,



Pelican Reflection, Nelson Bay Marina. Canon 5DII, Canon L 17-40 mm @ 40 mm, pol filter, f/8.0, 1/100, ISO100

they are exceedingly hard to spot. I have never seen as many decorator crabs as in Nelson Bay, and the specimen there also decorate themselves especially exquisitely. Sleeping tiny leatherjackets, temperate ocean filefish, hold onto sea weed blades and tunicates with their mouths, a unique way of keeping them in place when surges and currents



Male ringscale triplefin. The female is colored drab brown. Very active little fish! Canon 5DII, Canon 100 mm f2.8 macro lens, Hugyfot housing, 2 x Inon z-240 strobes, f/16.0, 1/200, ISO160

threaten to move them out of their home range. Minute shrimps and crabs hide in anemones and sea-pens; conger and moray eels undulate over the sand. Finally, a good way distant from any urban center, light pollution is sparse in Nelson Bay and on a cloudless night you will see a fantastic sky full of stars upon resurfacing from your night dive.

And it's not just what kind of animals are there, but also what they do: I've seen some amazing marine animal behavior in Nelson

Bay: A humongous cuttlefish trying to catch a banded morwong; copulating nudibranchs; two male octopi attempting to mate with one female at the same time (!); and a male cardinal fish carrying a mouth overfull with ready-to-hatch eggs. I have seen cleaner shrimp working on the skin parasites of fish, and damselfish vigorously defending their home ranges against intruding fish twice their size. To me, observing and photographing the behavior of marine animals in their natural environment is



Wobbegong shark. These large sharks are great photo subjects, since they stoically rest on rocks and are unfazed by cautiously approaching divers. Olympus TG-2, internal strobe, f/7.1, 5.9 mm, 1/30, ISO200

an absolutely enthralling experience.

Add to that a few offshore islands (Broughton Island, Cabbage Tree Island) which can be reached from Nelson Bay by boat in about half an hour. The underwater landscape there is naturally different from the sheltered shore dive sites inside the bay: between rugged rock formations large fields of kelp sway in the surge. The current and surge can be considerable at these sites. Instead of a macro heaven, this is shark central. Grey nurse sharks calmly

swim around in circles, not afraid to come close to us divers. On the rocks, wobbegong sharks rest. These unusual sharks are nocturnal hunters, and chill during daytime. Some of them are up to 2 meters long, but due to their camouflaged skin patterns and coloration they are surprisingly easy to overlook. On a dive trip this April we had difficulties seeing the grey nurse sharks as well, but not because of bad visibility, rather due to the dense, very large schools of bullseyes and yellowtail scads.



Bumblebee shrimp hiding in a tunicate. This is another rather tropical inhabitant of Nelson Bay. Canon 5DII, Canon 100 mm f2.8 macro lens, Hugyfot housing, 2 x Inon z-240 strobes, f/16.0, 1/200, ISO160

The logistics of diving Nelson Bay are fairly easy, with three quality dive shops in town both renting tanks and equipment for shore dives and taking divers out on boats. A separate operation organizes dolphin-swims in the bay, which I haven't done yet, but of which I have heard good things from several friends. Accommodation is easy to find in several price classes, since the area is a popular holiday destination for city dwellers from Sydney and Newcastle. No one has to

stay hungry or thirsty after the dives either, with a number of restaurants and Aussie pubs in town.

The shores of New South Wales, the Australian state encompassing Sydney, are rich in scenic coastlines and great diving spots. To me, the underwater world in Nelson Bay is one of the highlights of this shoreline.

Klaus M. Stiefel

evolution photoganza



3rd annual underwater photography & marine biology workshop with Dr. Klaus M. Stiefel Malapascua, Philippines September 17-22, 2014

Fantastic Philippines

by Phil Rudin

With over 7000 lush tropical islands and nearly twice as much coastline as the United States, the Philippines is one of Asia's premier beach resort destinations. The Philippines has an endless array of white sandy beaches, warm clear tropical waters and over 15,000 square miles of healthy coral reefs. The Philippines is a true paradise for divers of all skill levels and an area you could not fully explore in two lifetimes. The flora and fauna found here is world class by any divers standards with some of the most unique critters I have ever encountered. This article details two excellent dive resorts in the Luzon area of the northern island group where Manila the capital is located. Crystal Blue Resort is located in the bay area known as Anilao perhaps the most well known dive destination in the Philippines. El Galleon Beach Resort is located in Puerto Galera Philippines about an hour boat ride from CBR in Anilao. If you are traveling to this area of the Philippines I would strongly recommend that you try to split your stay between these two excellent resorts. You can find a number of

packages that include both resorts with transportation from the Manila.

CRYSTAL BLUE RESORT

The first leg of my trip was by van from Manila to Crystal Blue Resort a relaxing three hour drive. On arrival I was met with the warm Filipino hospitality found throughout the islands. In the words of the immortal rock band Led Zeppelin, CBR truly is a "Stairway to Heaven" for macro fauna junkies of all skill levels. The unusual marine critters found in Anilao are second to none and were in great abundance at all of the dive site I visited.

CBR is built into a sloping landscape using beautiful architecture which is surrounded by local vegetation. At the top of the property are the guest accommodations which include family villas, superior rooms and deluxe rooms on three levels. The rooms are all fully air-conditioned with private bath, balcony or terrace, excellent views and much more. Go down a few steps to the main office and gift shop, Down some more steps and you are in the dining area. This area has inside and outside seating



with a library and social area. This is the area of the property where the free WiFi works best. Every evening guests would gather there to socialize, read and view images on their computers. Just beyond this area is Gil's Place the large open air dining area which overlooks the crystal blue waters of Balayan Bay and the islands beyond. From this vantage point you can watch the dive boats coming and going to the protected marine park and house reef which is directly in front of CBR. If you return later in the day you will be treated to a magnificent sunset while dining in style.

The kitchen opens every morning a 6:30 with piping hot



fresh brewed coffee, fresh fruit and a variety of meal options served buffet style. A la Carte dishes are also prepared by the Chef as well as vegetarian and vegan options during the dining hours. Water, coffee and tea are always available in the dining area. The Chef's specialties include seafood, continental, oriental and Filipino cuisine. The buffet-style dishes served during lunch and dinner include two or three delicious entrees and a number of side dishes all prepared in CBR's professional kitchen. I enjoyed the buffet style



Ghost Pipefish Detail, Olympus E-M1, Nauticam NA-EM1 housing, Olympus 60 mm macro, ISO-100, F/13, 1/320th, two Inon Z-240 strobes with Nauticam float arms, Saga +5 closeup lens

Clown Fish Eggs, Olympus E-M1, Nauticam NA-EM1 housing, Olympus 60 mm macro, ISO-100, F/13, 1/320th, two Inon Z-240 strobes with Nauticam float arms, Saga +15 closeup lens.

meals and the variety of food options. Restaurant service does not end until 9:30pm to accommodate the needs of those doing sunset and night diving.

Going down a few more stairs you reach the Cantina and Camera room level. The cantina is another meeting area where drinks and snacks of all sorts are served. This is a great spot to unwind with a cocktail, critique the days diving and discuss your latest super macro techniques.

The newly finished camera

room is one of the most well thought-out camera rooms I have ever seen. It features twenty-five large individual camera bays and four video bays with some excellent features. Each bay has large storage spaces both above and below the work area. I had all of my camera bags taken directly to the camera room and never had anything other than my land camera in my room. The bags stored under the work station with plenty of room to spare while all of my changers and other

related equipment where within easy access on or above the work surface. Each bay has several power outlets so charging is never an issue. The room is environmentally managed and kept very dry at all times. It is very clean and each bay is equipped with a heavy towel to absorb moisture and a plastic basket for small items like tools and O-ring grease. The room and each bay are very well lit making camera maintenance quite easy and well organized. Mike Bartick, CBR's on site Photo Pro put a lot of time and effort into the design of the camera room and it shows. Mike teaches workshops during the year which are well worth attending.

From the camera room you

can head down a few more steps to the dive shop area. The dive deck is covered to protect divers and equipment from direct sunlight. It has large hanging racks for wet dive equipment, three equipment rinse tanks and an area with showers and seating. On the opposite side of the dive deck area are restrooms, equipment storage boxes, bench seating and large camera rinse tanks. Nitrox is available on site along with a great view of the Arthur's Rock Marine Sanctuary which runs in front of the property. Go down a few more steps to the pebble beach where your Banca (boat) awaits. The Banca is the unique Philippine dual outrigger style vessel used by fishermen for



Leaf Fish, Olympus E-M1, Nauticam NA-EM1 housing, Olympus 60 mm macro, ISO-320, F/22, 1/320th, two Inon Z-240 strobes with Nauticam float arms

centuries throughout the Philippines. Each Banca has a covered area for protection from the sun and they are driven directly onto the beach so all you need do is board. From the time you arrive all of your luggage and gear is handled by the exceptional staff at CBR. Dive equipment and cameras are always loaded into the Banca by the dive staff unless you advised otherwise. When your dive day ends your gear is rinsed, stored and awaiting your arrival the next day. The dive area and camera room are locked down and guarded at night for your piece of mind.

Once you have boarded your banca for the days diving the rides to the dive sites are for the most part short and very comfortable. Most dive plans call for a two tank morning dive of less than 70 feet and a one tank dive after lunch with night dives offered daily. You can also beach dive on the outstanding house reef or arrange for additional dives at the more than thirty-five named dive sites around CBR. I never went to the same dive site twice unless we ask to go back. I dived with the same dive guide, Edgar my entire stay and had a camera on every dive.



I simply told Edgar what lens I was using and the size of the critters I was looking to photograph and before I had finished with one subject Edgar had found at least two or three more for my enjoyment. I can't say enough about the professionalism of the staff at CBR and the ability of the Dive Masters to find the most unique and unusual critters.

If you are considering a trip to Crystal Blue Resort be aware that you will need to be able to handle a sizable number of steps each day. I found CBR to be a stairway to macro heaven and look forward to my next trip back to the resort.



EL GALLEON BEACH RESORT AND ASIA DIVERS

For underwater photographers CBR and El Galleon both offer excellent opportunities for both wide angle and macro with CBR being the more macro oriented of the two. Out of the water things are quite different in regard to the resort locations. CBR is in a quite location with little to see within walking distance of the resort so guests stay on the property most of the time. El Galleon on the other hand is a five minute walk the bustling beach town of Sabang. Located in the center of Sabang's large lagoon and marine reserve, El Galleon is on a beach lined with hotels, restaurant, dive shops, retail businesses and more. Most of the dive sites are within a fifteen minute boat ride from the floating dock at Asia Divers premier dive training center. El Galleon has a wide verity of room options including sea view rooms, family



rooms, poolside rooms, budget rooms, penthouse suites with private kitchens, large private balcony's and spectacular ocean views. Most of the rooms are on the ground floor and second floor levels, however some of the rooms with excellent ocean views are up a large flight of steps. Like CBR you may want to consider your room choice based on your ability to navigate several flights of steps everyday. Large villas, studios and house rentals are also available in the Waimea section of the property. Arthur's Restaurant at El Galleon Beach Resort offers a verity of meal plans

in an open-air dining area which has both covered and tree shaded seating. All meals include warm Filipino hospitality and a diverse selection of both local and international culinary delights. The Point Bar above the dive center is the after hours spot where guests and passersby meet to unwind after a day of diving. I also found that the free WiFi worked best for me while at the bar. In the center of the property is a swimming pool surrounded by palm trees where you can relax and enjoy the warm breeze or cool off in the refreshing crystal clear water. El Galleon

also features the La Palm Spa situated next to The Point Bar and a conference room which seats up to twenty-five people. The camera room is next to The Point Bar it has several work stations with high pressure air and plenty of charging outlets. I had all of my camera equipment moved to this room on arrival and never needed to move any camera equipment into my room. In addition to scuba diving El Galleon can arrange sunset cruises, beach Bar-B-Que's, Kayaking at San Rafael Falls, Trekking Tukuran River, trail biking, motor biking, golf outings, paintball and more. El

Cup Corals, Olympus E-M1, Nauticam NA-EM1 housing, Panasonic 8 mm fisheye, ISO-250, F/5.6, 1/100th, two Inon Z-240 strobes with Nauticam float arms and Inon 4600K diffusers

Galleon can provide a wide range of family activities as well as excellent scuba diving and snorkeling.

Asia Divers is a PADI Career Development Center located at El Galleon Beach Resort and the only PADI CDC in the Philippines. The dive center has ongoing recreational courses, speciality courses and an iDAP college for instructor training. Group and individual instruction is available from one of Asia Divers experienced course instructors. The dive center is located on a large fixed dock that leads to an equally large floating docks where the dive boats are prepared for the days diving. Asia Divers has a large dive equipment storage building on the dock where each divers equipment is stored in large numbered plastic boxes at the end of the

days diving. Once you have been assigned a box the dive guides clean and store your dive gear at the end of your dive day. Every day your gear is setup by the dive guides and is ready to go when you arrive at the dive center. A dive boat sign up board is located in the bar where you can chose the boat and time you want for your next days dives. Once you have checked personal gear, analyzed and signed for Nitrox your gear is loaded on your boat by the dive guides. Most trips are one tank dives since the boar rides are so short. When you return to the dock the dive guides have your next tank of Nitrox ready to be analyzed and sign for. This is a great system for those using Nitrox, quite well organized and controlled by the dive staff. I recommend that if you are doing multiple days of diving with several dives each day that you consider adding the additional cost of Nitrox to your dive package at both resorts. Asia Divers can provide Nitrox training course if needed. Asia Divers also has a booking office and a well stocked dive shop



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Nudibranch detail, Olympus E-M1, Nauticam NA-EM1 housing, Olympus 60 mm macro, ISO-100, F/13, 1/320th, two Inon Z-240 strobes with Nauticam float arms

just across from the main dock. The compressors and Nitrox systems are behind a large glass wall in a room facing the walkway which is so clean you could eat off the floor. Asia Divers schedules five dives each day for divers of all skill levels including night dives, just sign up for the times you want to dive each day. Most dives are limited to no more than six divers with a dive master in the water on each dive. Most of my dives were with Jamie, a British Dive

Instructor who found loads of critters to photograph and was an all-round great guy to dive with. The dive center operates several Banca style boats for the over thirty dive sites within fifteen minutes of the dock along with two high speed mono hull outboard motor boats for longer trips like the fifty run to Verde Island. Puerto Galera and the marine sanctuary have a wide variety of dive sites including everything from shallow muck dives to a number of excellent wreck and reef dives at

a verity of depths. I shot everything from super macro to wide-angle and fisheye during my ten day stay and never came close to running out of new subject. For me the icing on the cake was the action packed dives we made at Verde Island. If you go to El Galleon plan on at least one trip to Verde Island, the sheer numbers of fish that are found there is simply astounding. Verde Island is a two tank morning dive with a stop at the beach between dives to look for ancient porcelain washed ashore from a nearby wreck site.

Once you have left Manila finding a working ATM may present a problem so if you are using the local Paso rather than credit cards be sure

to load up before you head out to the resorts. Also be aware that internet is often slow and at times non-existent once at both resorts.

If you are planning a trip to this area of the Philippines you may want to start by visiting the divecbr.com and elgalleon.ph web sites which both contain a wealth of useful information beyond this review.

Phil Rudin

www.divecbr.com

www.elgalleon.ph

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The “Big 5” of Lembeh

By Colin Marshall

The African Big 5 are well known - Elephant, Lion, Buffalo, Leopard and Rhino. The term “Big 5” was coined long ago to refer to the animals most prized to hunt, due to the high degree of difficulty and danger in the hunting process. Things have changed since then. Today, the practice of being driven in an airconditioned 4x4 through the bush towards a GPS tagged trophy animal, to then shoot it from a safe distance with a high-powered, laser-sighted rifle (with an armed guide by your side in case things go wrong), is viewed with contempt by most. Happily, most shooting of the Big 5 today tends to be with cameras.

It is debatable whether the criteria “difficult to hunt” is applicable today, or whether the Big 5 should be adjusted to reflect some combination of “difficult to spot” and “difficult to photograph”.

Lembeh in North Sulawesi in Indonesia needs little introduction – generally acknowledged as the world’s premier muck diving location. What could be the Big 5 there? Perhaps it should include both the “difficult to spot” and “difficult to photograph” criteria. The creatures selected should be not too common, but not too rare either. For example, I have only seen the tiny Hairy Shrimp once in Lembeh; a lovely creature, but not a pragmatic choice for the Big 5 – too “difficult to spot”.

“Difficult to Photograph” is a worthy criteria, recognizing that some creatures are much more difficult to take a good image of than others.

Some could say that everything is “difficult to photograph” as even an immobile Stonefish is difficult to take an original image of. But some creatures do seem to be more difficult than others to simply get in focus, let alone worrying about lighting, composition and backscatter challenges!

Anyhow, my contenders for the Big 5 are as follows:

Ornate Ghost Pipefish (*Solenostomus paradoxus*)



The standard portrait shot of the Ornate, with everything in focus, is hard enough. But this fish has plenty of potential, with a huge variety of colors and lacy patterns.

One could suggest all Ghost Pipefish (including Robust, Velvet, Halimeda) as a generic Big 5 contender. I don’t agree, mainly as I petulantly find the Robust Ghost Pipefish irritatingly boring. Often when diving in Lembeh the guide has signaled me to abandon whatever I am engrossed in, to follow him seemingly endlessly to finally reach a.... Robust. These experiences have led me to now, prior to entering the water, agree with the guides

a special signal for a Robust (take out regulator and feign a large underwater yawn). I can then reciprocate with my special signal (resembles “V for victory”).

Thread Pipefish (*Kyonemichthys rumengani*)



This amazing creature (aka Lembeh Sea Dragon) was only recently discovered and described. According to Allen & Erdmann (in the excellent “Reef Fishes of the East Indies”), it has also been seen in Flores and Milne Bay. Recognizing the amazing camouflage, it is perhaps much less rare than we think. It used to be seen easily at Nudi Retreat (along with Pontohi Pygmy Seahorses, on the same boulder, no less), but they have not been seen there for a while.

Due to its small size and constantly wriggling body, this is definitely a “difficult to photograph” fish.

Bobbitt Worm (*Eunice aphroditois*)



These alien-looking worms are named in honor of Lorena Bobbitt, the lady who cut off her husband's todger, allegedly in retaliation for domestic abuse.

I have only ever seen Bobbitts in one other location (Komodo National Park), but there is one site in Lembeh (Retak Larry) where Bobbitts are more or less guaranteed (at night).

I have never heard of anyone suffering a bite from those formidable jaws, but allegedly the spines down the side can damage nerves and cause (permanent) numbness. As for all creatures – treat with respect!

Tiger Shrimp (*Phyllognathia ceratophthalmus*)

These are my favourite shrimps on the planet. I particularly like that they are so fearless – one once come out from the protection of a coral bommie and walked purposefully towards me over the sand in an attempt to intimidate me – for a long way!

One could also add Harlequin, Saron or



Coleman Shrimps as contenders, but I don't feel that these are associated with Lembeh to the same extent as Tigers.

Pegasus Sea Moth (*Eurypegasus draconis*)



The impressive “wings” and long snout of this fish led it to be named after Pegasus, the divine Greek winged horse (whose father was Poseidon, the God of the Sea, appropriately).

These ground-hugging fish are fairly unusual and regularly seen in Lembeh. They are comical

to watch as they waddle around the sea floor, and infuriating to photograph as they continuously rotate away from cameras.

Mimic (*Thaumoctopus mimicus*) and Wonderpus Octopus (*Octopus photogenicus*)



Both are real contenders for the Lembeh hit-list. The Mimic, as the name suggests, can be seen imitating a variety of other creatures to avoid detection. However, I am not so sure that it is imitating others. To me, the Mimic is simply doing the underwater equivalent of break-dancing, to distract any potential threats – or prey – with its bizarre movements.

I prefer the Wonderpus over Mimics as it seems more colorful, active, and generally more abundant.

One could also include Hairy, Mototi, “V”, Long-arm, Night and Blue-ring Octopuses. These are relatively rare in Lembeh. It seems asking for trouble to add a potential killer like a Blue-ring in the Big 5, especially as its method of dispatching

people is so innocuous. An often painless bite, followed by paralysis, then suffocation as the lungs fail, despite being fully conscious and unable to communicate with anyone. Death within minutes. Nasty way to go.

Rhinopias Scorpionfish (Rhinopias sp)



These are often seen as a Holy Grail for many visitors to Lembeh, but are far from guaranteed.

A pair (often in different colors) will occasionally turn up, then after a few weeks

simply disappear, probably from being fed up with photographers shrieking and banging followed by intense blinding strobe action.

Pygmy Seahorse (Hippocampus sp.)

There are a number of different Pygmy Seahorses (the standard Bargibanti, the new-ish thin Pontohi and the bald Denise) found in Lembeh, often on the same dive site.

There are some (controversial) views that Bargibanti in particular suffer from excessive interaction with photographers (due to stress from touching & prodding, blinding strobe lights). Bargibanti on their coral fans aren't as mobile as Rhinopias. Furthermore, once photographers knock the fan the Bargibantis are on, the polyps contract and the seahorses are much easier to spot by predators. I have often witnessed wrasse attacks on Bargibantis (yes, likely signaled by my presence, and aided by my carelessness with the fan), and they are vicious assassins.

There are enough excellent images of Pygmies out there and perhaps the Big 5 should not include Pygmies for the noble reason of simply reducing Seahorse Stress. Maybe it's time to move the spotlight onto another creature and give the Pygmies a rest...

Flamboyant Cuttlefish (Metasepia pfefferi)

The Flamboyant is generally seen walking on the sea floor (rarely seen in the water column), and will display its amazing colors as a warning to predators and irritating photographers. And for good reason as the flesh of this cephalopod is poisonous, with a similar toxin to the Blue-ring.

I have often spent a large proportion of a dive



trailing a hunting Flamboyant. They seem quite oblivious to humans and continue on their search for prey, occasionally stopping and shooting out their laser-like tongue to catch an unsuspecting victim.

Cockatoo Flounder (Samaris cristatus)



This is a very unusual flatfish. I have never seen this anywhere except Lembeh.

Unlike more static fish, this creature is highly mobile, racing around the sea floor and regularly kicking out its white dorsal fin rays as a warning.

Hairy Frogfish (Antennarius striatus)



Lembeh is world-famous for the prevalence of Frogfish, of many different species. Frogfish are a more or less guaranteed sighting, even if “just” a Painted Frogfish.

But of all the Frogfish, the prize surely goes to the Hairy Frogfish. The range of “hair” length and variety of color seems infinite, making it an especially photogenic model.

Devil Scorpionfish (Inimicus didactylus)



Devil Scorpionfish (aka Spiny Devilfish) are common in Lembeh, often nearly entirely buried, waiting to ambush prey – or to insert sharp, highly painful spines into any unsuspecting feet walking about the sand. Beware - I have seen these fish buried in soft sand in knee-high water – always shuffle your feet when walking in sand!

It’s hard to think of a more evil-looking fish. Even the Stonefish seems quite placid in comparison. But they probably have very sweet personalities below that ugly exterior...

Stargazer (Uranoscopus sp)

These monsters remind me of the gangster “Jabba the Hutt”, for anyone old enough to remember the original Star Wars movies.

Marbled Stargazer (*U. bicinctus*) burying itself in sand, showing its internal worm-like respiratory organs

Once buried, Stargazers provide the classic face shot, with the ferocious mouth and eyes



watching for any prey who happen to enter its domain.

The Top 5

After much deliberation, here are my Big 5 for Lembeh:

- 1.Hairy Frogfish – has to be on the list
- 2.Wonderpus Octopus – just beats the Mimic
- 3.Flamboyant Cuttlefish – another cephalopod, but Absolutely Fabulous!
- 4.Ornate Ghost Pipefish – wins the “difficult to photograph” prize
- 5.Tiger Shrimp – my favorite shrimp, and it’s my article, so it’s on the list!

However, I have to wonder whether a Big 5 list is yet another example of “dumbing down” on the planet – encouraging people to trivialize a potentially rich and meaningful experience into a superficial one.

Returning to the Africa analogy, there are many other animals which are much more exciting to see than the Big 5. A caracal, porcupine, armadillo or chameleon is highly memorable due to its rarity. Similarly underwater in Lembeh, there are so many

individual species that are very rare and beautiful (even just considering Nudibranches), and it would be a pity to miss something special due to being fixated on seeing the Big 5. This is where the guides come to the fore, as they are superb at finding unusual things (not least as they are probably quite bored with the Big 5!).

Back to Africa, there are expensive safari camps catering for people who demand “to see everything in a day”. The guides take them where the animals are known to be, either through GPS tagging or by sending out trackers beforehand with mobiles. To me, there is something romantic and special about simply going out and looking to see what you can find. And when you see something “ordinary”, being patient will often be rewarded with some amazing behavior or by something else emerging from the background.

One could take this approach in Lembeh and simply dive without a guide to see what one can find. I actually do this about half the time, often accidentally as I get separated from the guide due to being absorbed by some critter. Returning to the dive boat I hear about all the things I missed. But the pleasure I derive from occasionally spotting something special myself is immense and somehow adds to the magical experience of Lembeh. But I would

generally recommend having a guide - just let them know you want to see more than whatever is on your hit list.

In conclusion, I recommend a relaxed approach regarding hit lists when in Lembeh. At the end of the trip, look back and reflect on your Big 5. Compare lists with your partner and fellow divers. The key is to explore the environment and enjoy whatever is there, at that time. The variety is incredible in Lembeh and it is really rather silly to look for only 5 species!

Colin Marshall

The author has enjoyed about 500 dives in Lembeh. He continues to be amazed that on just about every dive, he still finds some creature that he has never photographed before. Furthermore, he feels the variety of Lembeh dive sites is unparalleled – in addition to the “standard” muck black sand sites, there are also amazing coral sites. All in all, his favorite place in the world to dive. He recommends the Black Sand Dive Retreat, especially as the house reef is unbelievable, with the possibility to swim to about 5 sites from the resort’s beach, including even the famous Hairball site. He can be contacted at colintrmarshall@yahoo.com and is happy to have his proposed Big 5 list challenged!

lembeh strait north sulawesi indonesia



Australian Anglerfish

by Paul Macdonald

Anglerfishes are a strange family of around 40 species with pectoral fins modified for crawling, the first dorsal spine modified into a device for luring prey and the 2nd and 3rd spines long and separated. They have large extendable mouths and expandable stomachs for feeding on large prey. These odd creatures are very difficult to spot by divers as they resemble the sponge or weed of the reefs they inhabit. Whilst known as anglerfish in Australia, they are also known as frogfish in other countries.

There are 23 anglerfish species found in Australia with 3 commonly found (and endemic) to Southern Australia being the Smooth, Prickly and Tasselled Anglerfishes.

Anglerfishes are of the Antennariidae family and are found in almost all tropical and subtropical oceans and seas around the world. They live generally on the ocean floor around coral or rock reefs. They are often brightly coloured and blend in with their surroundings. Colouration can also vary within one species, making it difficult to differentiate between them. The front most of the three dorsal fins is called the

illicium or “rod” and is topped with the esca or “lure”. The esca takes a different form in each species. Because of the variety of colours even within a single species, the esca and illicium is a useful tool to differentiate among different varieties. The esca usually resembles the food of the anglerfish’s prey. If lost, the esca will regenerate. In many species the illicium and esca can be withdrawn into a depression between the second and third dorsal fins for protection when they are not needed.

Anglerfish generally do not move very much, preferring to lie on the sea floor and wait for prey to approach. Once the prey is spotted, they approach slowly using their pectoral and pelvic fins to walk along the floor. Anglerfish eat crustaceans and fish. When potential prey is first spotted, the anglerfish follows it with its eyes.



Ricoh GX8, Sea & Sea housing, SeaLife strobe, f/13, 1/60 sec, 15mm, ISO-250

Then, when it approaches closer, the anglerfish begins to move its illicium in such a way that the esca mimics the motions of the animal it resembles. As the prey approaches, the anglerfish will slowly move itself to prepare for its attack. The catch itself is made by the lightning fast opening of the jaws, which enlarges the volume of

the mouth cavity up to twelve times, pulling the prey into the mouth along with water. The attack can be as fast as 6 milliseconds. Anglerfish can also expand their stomachs to swallow animals up to twice their size.

There are no means to distinguish between male and female anglerfish other than by dissection. Whilst most



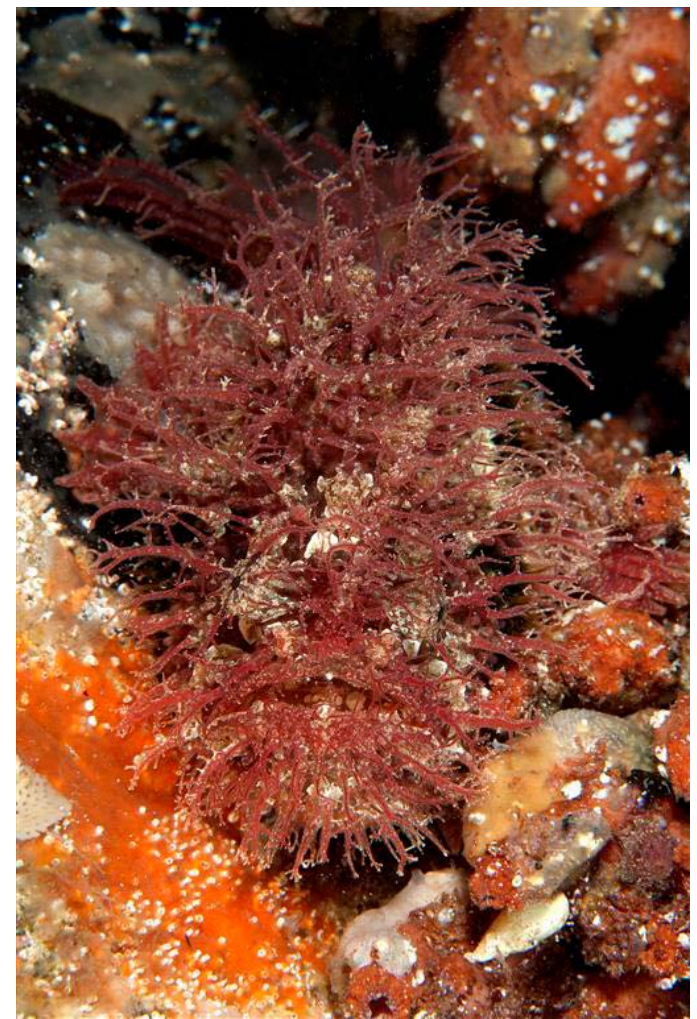
Nikon D700, Sea & Sea housing, 105mm, 2x Sea & Sea YS110 strobes, f/14, 1/60, ISO-400

anglerfish species spawn at the surface releasing 10s of thousands of eggs to be distributed by the currents, those endemic to Southern Australia show a level of parental care for their eggs. In the case of the Smooth Anglerfish and the Prickly Anglerfish one of the mating pair stays close by to guard the



Nikon D700, Sea & Sea housing, 105mm 2x Sea & Sea YS110 strobes, f/14, 1/60, ISO-400

eggs from would be predators. With the Tasselled Anglerfish, courting males gather round the female whilst she lays around 5000 eggs in a large mass. As the male releases sperm, the female fans it to the eggs with the caudal fin. The female then covers the eggs completely with her side and guards them.



Nikon D700, Sea & Sea housing, 105mm, 2x Sea & Sea YS110 strobes, f/14, 1/60, ISO-400

The approach of these anglerfish species means they have a narrow geographic distribution compared to other anglerfish species.

The Tasselled Anglerfish (*Rhycherus filamentosus*) is covered with fleshy tentacles which provide it with camouflage in its natural habitat.



Nikon D700, Sea & Sea housing, 105mm 2x Sea & Sea YS110 strobes, f/14, 1/60, ISO-400

The species is extremely difficult to spot as it is well camouflaged when it remains motionless.. This species is brown to red above with dark marks on the sides separated by white areas extending up from below. It has a dorsal fin comprising four parts. The first is a long illicium with an esca that resembles two worms. The second and third dorsal spines are separate. These are followed by 12 to 13 soft rays.

The Tasselled Anglerfish grows to 23 cm in length. It is endemic to Australia and lives on rocky reefs

from Bass Strait to South Australia.

The Prickly Anglerfish (*Echinophryne crassispina*) has a short, deep body that is covered with tiny bifurcate spines. The eyes are surrounded by a ring of close-set dermal spinules. The dorsal fin is comprised of four parts, a short illicium two separate skin-covered spines and a long-based soft-rayed fin that is separate from the caudal fin.

Colouration of the species is variable, but may be reddish, brown, pinkish or yellowish and it grows to

about 7 cm in length. The species is endemic to Australia, occurring from Tasmania and Victoria to South Australia.

It is not commonly seen because it lives under rocks and ledges.

The Smooth Anglerfish (*Phyllophryne scortea*) is highly variable in colour. It can be yellow, orange, brown or black and have patches of grey. It may also have skin flaps on the body. The Smooth Anglerfish is a slightly compressed, deep-bodied fish. It has a dorsal fin that is divided into four parts. The illicium protrudes from on the tip of the snout and is the first spine of

the dorsal fin. It is followed by two separate spines that are covered by puffy-looking skin. The posterior surface of the second spine is concave. The fourth part of the dorsal fin comprises 15 to 16 rays.

The species grows to 10 cm in length and is endemic to Australia, occurring from Tasmania to south-western Western Australia.

Paul Macdonald

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Oslob Whale Sharks

by Attila Kaszo

Whale Sharks (*Rhincodon typus*) are slow-moving filter feeding sharks and the largest known non-cetacean species. Claims of individuals over 14 m (46 ft) long and weighing at least 30 metric tones (66,000 lb) are not uncommon.

Whale sharks originated about 60 million years ago, and today, they are listed internationally as a vulnerable species, but still commercially targeted in some Asian countries.

Fortunately, not all Asian countries hold the same harvesting view, and many fishing communities have turned to tourism as the main source of income.

Donsol and Oslob in the Philippines are such examples. Whale sharks had been visiting these regions for decades and during those decades were hunted. In 1998 at Donsol, they were apparently “discovered” and after international support hunting turned into whale shark watching which turned into eco tourism. Oslob went much the same way but later in 2006.

There appears to be some controversy and confusion regarding the Oslob site, in that feeding the whale sharks by the locals has

somehow upset the ecosystem and accordingly drawn criticism from some quarters. Clearly, feeding any wild animal is not something that should be encouraged, but given the relatively small amounts of fish “burley” that is put into the water and the area in which these sharks are being fed poses little impact on the regions biodiversity. More important to the animal’s welfare is the extent of physical human contact with these giants.

As human nature has it, people get a bit excited when a 14-meter fish swims past, so the impulse to touch it and grab that Kodak moment seems to prevail over common sense. There is certainly a case in keeping people at a “safe” distance, and I would completely support such action. On the flip side however, whale sharks like most wild creatures have the

*Above: Nikon D800 Nikkor 16mm
Available light @ f22, 1/125, ISO 200*

*Right: Nikon D800 Nikkor 16mm
Available light @ f8, 1/320, ISO 400*





Above: Nikon D800 Nikkor 16mm Available light @f8, 1/500, ISO 200

Above right: Nikon D800 Nikkor 16mm Available light @f8, 1/160, ISO 400



ability to leave the area or move away from a hazard almost instantly. So if the shark wants to it does just that, as do whales I have worked with and so on. In fact some of my best work has been outside the “viewing areas” where the sharks had left the feeding zones and were swimming about 200 meters away and in a blink almost on top of me having a close up and personal and then gently swimming away.

Before I went to Oslob, I read a number of petitions against visiting the area, mainly for the reasons I have outlined, and that some reports indicated that the sharks had severe

rub marks on their necks, apparently from trying to get into the boats carrying food, and other reports suggesting that the sharks had deep cuts and abrasions over their bodies from boats crashing into them.

I saw none of this at all. The only cut I saw on a shark was on its back and it could well have been an outboard propeller, I don't know. All the sharks I saw, about thirteen, looked very healthy and active, and had no problem swimming away from people in the water.

My research also indicated that the sharks at Oslob were transient and that different individuals moved through the region during the year. Unfortunately there is still relatively little known about these sharks, which makes management of them difficult. Non the less, erring on the side of caution may be the prudent way to go, along with considering the needs of the locals who depend on some form of income for their survival.

From my perspective, it's a better option to accept how the village manages its resources now than to entertain the harvesting practices of the past.

Attila Kaszo
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Southern Colours

by Attila Kaszo

Much has been and still is written about our tropical seas and the spectrum of biodiversity and colour that is found there.

Unlike the tropics however, colourful patches are usually limited to areas that are more protected from strong ocean conditions. Artificial structures tend to be the preferred locations for sessile groups. Pylons, jetty's and old wooden structures tend to be very popular.

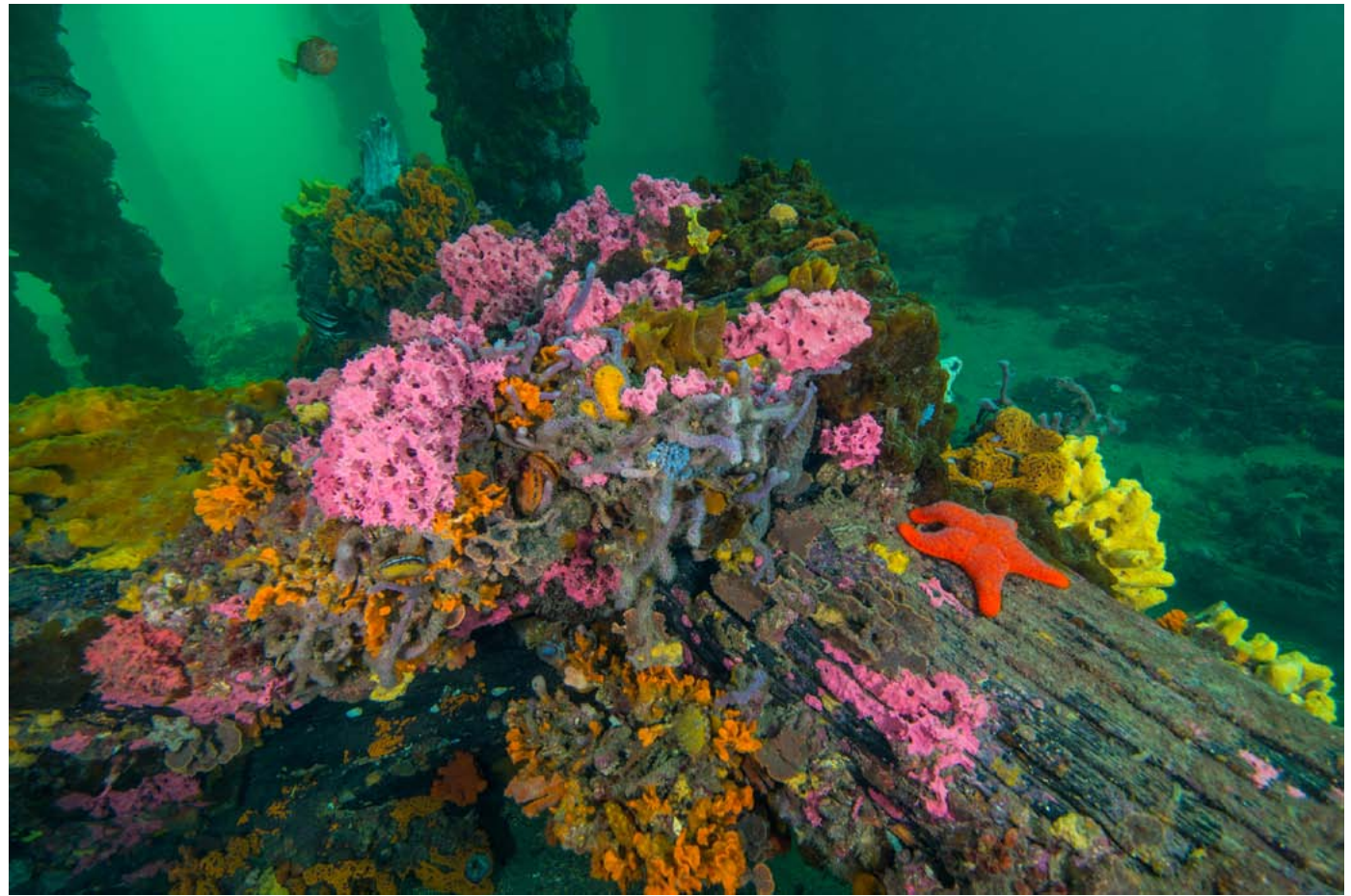
Many divers seem to naturally gravitate toward the warmer waters with good reason, but colder water can bring some outstanding photo opportunities, which can rival the best tropical patch of reef.

I am fortunate to live in a country that offers both tropical and temperate diving; the choice of where to dive becomes a subjective one.

I decided to "re discover" some of the past diving haunts, which years ago were the mainstay of SCUBA diving for most enthusiasts living in temperate regions of the country.

The southern part of Australia offers some really outstanding dive locations with a spectrum of colour that is just awe-inspiring. Without concentrating on one particular location, it's fair to say that each area has its own uniqueness and biodiversity suitably saturated in a kaleidoscope of colour, and like tropical locations you won't find everything in the one spot, which can make the adventure even more exciting.

Probably the greatest disadvantage of diving in cooler water (12-16°C) is the gear you need to wear



Nikon D800, Nikkor 16-28mm f2.8 @ 1/60th @ f8, 16mm, ISO 400 – 2x Inon Z240, 2x L&M 2000

to keep warm. Most of my friends use Dry Suits or Semi Dry, well worth the investment if your diving is mainly in these sorts of conditions. However if you're like me, occasionally visiting the colder areas then a good quality Wet Suit will do just fine.

Most of my dives were over one hour and one occasion I stayed in for two hours fifteen minutes. I'll admit on that occasion I was a bit cold. But overall, most of the diving can be done with relative comfort in a wet suit.

Photography in these conditions is really no different to the tropics. Depending on the visibility and the type of images your interested in capturing, will dictate the lens and lighting combination most suitable.

The regions I dived and the conditions lent themselves more to close up image capture and I particularly wanted to show the amazing textures and colours I saw.

For most of my shots I used two strobes and



Nikon D800, Nikkor 60mm f2.8 @ 1/60th @ f13, ISO 200 – 2x Inon Z240, 2x L&M 2000

two video lights. The reason for the video lights is to fill some darker areas pulling back some contrast the strobes make and to give an overall softer highlight to others parts. The strobes were set to $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ power settings while the lights were at full power at 2000 lumens each.

Photography in these areas comes down to the photographer's preference of subject and their



Nikon D800, Nikkor 60mm f2.8 @ 1/60th @ f11, ISO 200 – 2x Inon Z240, 2x L&M 2000

creative ability. The huge advantage of this sort of diving is that you tend to stay in a relatively small area because of the growth, and accordingly you use less air, so longer dives and invariably you begin to see more and more the longer you spend watching a particular patch.

This happened to me on all dives. I would find a nice patch of growth, settle down with video

lights on and just watch. After a few minutes what I thought was a raised sponge started to move and revealed itself as a Sponge Decorator Crab. Even nudibranchs 10cm long can adequately camouflage to the extent that a diver can swim over them and not see from looking. It really does pay to sit and observe rather than madly paddle about and not really see anything.



Nikon D800, Nikkor 60mm f2.8 @ 1/80th @ f8, ISO 200 – 2x Inon Z240, 2x L&M 2000

In conclusion temperate really can't be compared to tropical diving. Both offer a different spectrum of biodiversity and both can offer spectacular diving.

Great diving I believe is to experience it all and enjoy what's under there now, it may not be around for as long as you think.

Attila Kaszo
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Turtles of the Seychelles

by Christophe Mason-Parker

The Seychelles is made up 115 islands dotted across the western Indian Ocean. They are split between the mainly uninhabited outer islands, and the inner islands, which are home to the majority of the population of 89 thousand people. Most of the inhabitants live on one of the three main granitic islands of Mahé, Praslin and La Digue.

The inner islands sit on the Mahé plateau, a raised area of seabed with shallow waters and ideal conditions for the growth of coral reefs and seagrass beds. The warm, clear waters surrounding the islands white sandy beaches are home to a huge diversity of marine life including marine turtles.

Although there are five species of turtle found in Seychelles waters, it is only the green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) and the hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) that nest on the islands shores. Globally both species have seen their numbers decline with the hawksbill listed as 'critically endangered' on the IUCN Red List, while the green turtle is listed as 'endangered'. The Seychelles hawksbill population is the largest remaining in the Indian Ocean,

and is one of only five populations worldwide that still have more than one thousand females nesting annually.

Within the Seychelles there is a long tradition of harvesting marine turtles, and green turtles remained an important food source up until the mid 1990s. In addition to their meat, the glutinous layer known as 'Calipee', found beneath the lower shell of the animal, was considered a delicacy. Though the prevalence of biotoxins within the flesh meant hawksbills were never a preferred food choice, the animals were not spared as their shells were highly prized within the local and illegal international markets where they were made into jewelry and ornaments.

The idyllic Beau Vallon Bay with its many dive sites is the perfect place to find both green and hawksbill turtles. Canon 7D, Sigma 10-20mm, ISO 160, f/8, 1/400

A green turtle feeding on seagrass. Canon 7D, Tokina 10-17mm, Ikelite housing and single Ikelite DS160 strobe. ISO 125, f/10, 1/250





A hawksbill turtle begins the process of covering her nest. Canon 7D, Canon 55-250mm. ISO 400, f/5.6, 1/1000

Although the economic value placed on turtles created a lucrative market for their products, the Seychelles has a commitment to conservation. Since 1994, sea turtles have been afforded full protection under Seychelles law, and it is illegal to kill, possess or eat turtle meat. Though small scale poaching does still occur, the main threats to local turtle populations today include coastal development, pollution, and entanglement in longlines and fishing nets.

Fortunately, the protection afforded to marine turtles within the Seychelles over the last two decades has meant that they are now regularly seen in the waters around the inner islands. On the island of Mahé hawksbill turtles are encountered on most dives and usually allow divers to approach closely. The majority of the island's dive centres are found in the village of Beau Vallon on the north coast of the island. It is the perfect place to base your self with easy access to nearby dive sites and good



A hawksbill hatchling makes the journey towards the waters edge. Canon 550D, Canon 55-250mm. ISO 800, f/5.7, 1/100

snorkeling off the beach.

Beau Vallon bay is a shallow sweeping bay lined with a perfect coconut fringed beach. Within the bay a patchwork of coral reef provides several dive sites, all of approximately fourteen metres in depth. The coral reef is vibrant and healthy and it is not unusual to observe a hawksbill turtle or two on every dive. Often they will be found on the reef with their heads buried in a coral thicket, oblivious to all that is going on around them. Hawksbill's are easily recognised by

their pointed beak and the jagged edge of their carapace. They are usually associated with coral reefs where they feed on sponges, tunicates and jellyfish.

The Baie Ternay Marine National Park, a five minute boat journey to the north of Beau Vallon is a particularly good location for spotting turtles. Whether diving or snorkeling, this stunning bay is home to several hawksbill turtles as well as a couple of greens and the healthy coral reef acts as a perfect backdrop for wide angle

photography. During daylight hours, the turtles are often found resting on the reef between five and ten metres and can easily be approached with a little patience.

Around the three main islands, sightings of green turtles are less frequent than those of hawksbills, though by no means rare. Greens, however, tend to be wearier of divers and for those wishing to get up close and personal with green turtles then a trip to Bird Island should definitely be on the itinerary.

Bird Island is the most northerly of the Seychelles islands and is a thirty minute plane ride from Mahe. This tiny coralline island is home to thousands of Sooty Terns, which breed during the south-easterly trade winds. The powder white beaches are important nesting sites for hawksbill turtles, while in recent years a population of green turtles has taken up residence in the shallow waters alongside the island's coastline.

There is no dive centre on Bird Island but this is not a problem as the turtles can only be reached by snorkelling. In fact they are always in the same location a few yards from the shore and in only two metres of water. The size of the population is unknown but there are usually a dozen green turtles at any one time in an area the size of a football pitch.

The green turtles appear on a rising tide, venturing into the shallows to visit the seagrass beds that hug the shore. They spend hours consuming vast quantities of nutrient poor *Thalassia* before heading back out onto the reef as the tide recedes. The population is made up of both adults and juveniles, and over time certain individuals have become habituated to the presence of humans. The turtles lack of fear and their tolerance of snorkelers



A green turtle takes a breath of air. Canon 7D, Tokina 10-17mm, Ikelite housing and single Ikelite DS160 strobe. ISO 200, f/13, 1/250

allows for close up encounters over sustained periods of time.

When completely relaxed or sleeping, green turtles can remain underwater for a considerable amount of time. The need to breathe is stronger when feeding and they tend to surface every five minutes or so. There is a direct correlation between breath holding ability and stress, so if an animal is repeatedly surfacing to breathe it means it is time to back off and give it some space. Normally, with a little patience it is easy enough to find a green turtle



The shallow water and seagrass beds provide perfect conditions for split level photography. Canon 7D, Tokina 10-17mm, Ikelite housing and single Ikelite DS160 strobe. ISO 125, f/16, 1/200

that accepts your presence and will allow you to remain with it for hours on end.

Due to the turtles close proximity to the shore and the shallow depth of the water, it is an excellent opportunity to try split level shots. The shallow,



The hawksbill turtle has a distinctive, bird-like beak. Canon G12, internal flash. ISO 100, f/4.5, 1/1000

clear water means there is also plenty of natural light but you may wish to bring a strobe for those sunburst shots.

When you have had enough of the green turtles (or more likely when your battery is empty or your memory card full) and if you time it right, the Seychelles offers plenty of opportunities to photograph turtles above the water.



A single strobe adds colour to a green turtle positioned in front of the afternoon sun. Canon 7D, Tokina 10-17mm, Ikelite housing and single Ikelite DS160 strobe. ISO 125, f/11, 1/400

The Seychelles is one of a handful of locations where hawksbill turtles nest during daylight hours. During the last quarter of the year hawksbill turtles return to the beaches of their birth to lay their eggs. Nesting season starts to slow down around the start of the new year, and it is usually around this time that the hatchlings start to appear.

Although coastal development has impacted heavily on turtle nesting beaches on the main islands, there are still a few beaches on the south of Mahé where the animals return each year. The beaches contain information boards highlighting turtle conservation initiatives as well as a code of conduct for observers to follow.

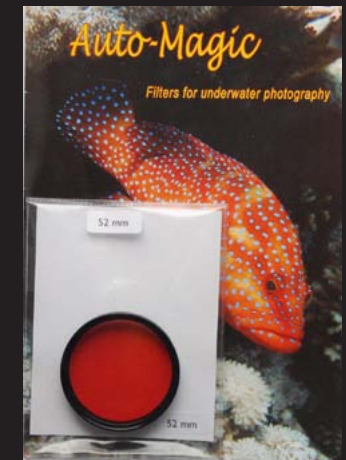
Those wishing to maximise their chances of photographing nesting turtles should head to one of the smaller islands such as Bird, Cousin or Curieuse. These islands are a short journey from Mahé or Praslin and all have active turtle conservation programmes.

In the face of numerous anthropogenic pressures, marine turtle numbers continue to decline globally and these enigmatic creatures are becoming a less frequent sight on our reefs. Whilst the turtles of the Seychelles have faced their own share of threats over the years they have managed to survive, and through the hard work and dedication of various NGOs, as well as the foresight of the Seychelles government, hopefully they will be here for years to come.



Christophe Mason-Parker
www.archipelagoimages.net

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South West Ramblings 8

by Mark Webster

It has been a while since the last gush of ramblings from my laptop, but there has been a reason for that.....

In the south west of the United Kingdom the winter of 2013/2014 will be remembered as one of the worst in recent history. The winter months were unusually mild but the region was constantly battered by powerful Atlantic storms and a continuous deluge of heavy rain which resulted in widespread flooding of homes and farmland and heavy damage to coastal sea defences. When at last the weather began to abate in March we could only look at the sea, which was the colour of mud due to the turmoil and constant run off from the land and rivers, and wonder when we might be able to see the condition of the reefs and marine life. Finally in mid March the seas were calm for a few days and, although the water colour was still not encouraging, we ventured in for the first home dives of 2014.

Generally the visibility was appalling! The water had the clarity of a thick London fog (if you are old enough to remember those events...) with a heavy suspension of fine mud and silt and many familiar seabed features had been heavily scoured by

the enormous winters seas. So we fumbled our way around for the first couple of dives not seeing much in the way of marine life, although the familiar rosettes of nudibranch eggs were already beginning to appear, so there was at least hope! By the end of the month the conditions had improved a little although navigation on some sites was still a real challenge, but we were seeing a few reef fish at last and the first of the spring season nudibranchs had begun to appear. So I spent a happy couple of dives in the last week of March exploring a small patch of reef at Porthkerris cove where I quickly discovered five different species of nudibranch which were all still very small (perhaps 8-10mm) compared to what I would normally expect to see at this time of year.

The sea lemons are normally the first to appear each year but are quickly followed by *Limacia clavigera* and often *Favorinus branchialis* which are frequently seen on or close to the sea lemon egg rosettes on which they feed and also lay their own eggs. I eventually found three examples of this activity although you have to look very carefully as the nudibranchs



Favorinus branchialis nudibranchs will be some of the first to appear in the spring. Start looking for them as soon as you begin to see the sea lemon egg rosettes as these are a favourite food and also a platform for laying their own eggs. Nikon D7100, Subal D7100 housing, Nikkor 105mm micro, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 250, f32 1/200

are very small (<10mm) and their predominantly white colour matches the eggs very well. Having found one you need to be patient and wait for the nudibranch to turn inside the egg rosette and face the camera in order to illustrate the subject, eggs and activity. *Limacia clavigera* are also found on the reef and on the kelp fronds where they feed on the sea mat bryozoans and hydroids. Apart from the occasional wrasse and scorpion

fish there was not a lot of fish activity, or perhaps it was just that I couldn't see them!

Somewhat surprisingly during our first boat dive of the season in late April on a favourite nudibranch reef we came across a male Lump sucker tending his egg brood. These fish are rarely seen in Cornish waters and normally only after a cold winter which had not been the case this year. Lump suckers are quite common in



Male black faced blennies are often seen patrolling their territories and displaying for a mate, but this is the first time I had seen one with a female that was swollen with spawn. They showed no concern at my presence, but unfortunately my air did not last long enough to see the consummation. D7100, Subal D7100 housing, Nikkor 105mm micro, SubSee +10 wet lens, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 100, f16 1/80

the North sea in the spring time when they come up from deeper water to spawn when the temperature is generally below 8c. The local water temperature has been close to 10c during this winter so this was an unusual find and inevitably I was armed with my 105 macro lens and +10 wet lens for nudibranchs. I tried hard to persuade myself to enjoy the moment!

During May we have seen numerous male black faced blennies in their striking breeding colours. Many are occupying the same small patch of reef territory that I have observed them in previous seasons (so presumably are the same fish?) but there are also many others in neighbouring territories that I haven't been aware of before. Generally May is early to see this activity, so I can



We have seen huge numbers of Rhyzostome jellyfish in May and June which make irresistible wide angle subjects when the surface is calm and the sun is shining. Just be aware of how far and fast you are moving with your subject in the current! D7100, Subal D7100 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200, f18 1/250

only assume this is due to the mild winter which has affected some activities but not others. One treat this season has been the opportunity for the first time to observe and photograph a male and female together preparing to spawn, even though it was a struggle to get them both in the frame with a 105mm macro lens! The male sported a very vivid yellow/orange and his face was very dark whilst he danced and posed with his dorsal up around the female, who was swollen with eggs and just patiently sat and watched. The male would make contact with the female every few minutes and seemed to be caressing her. Neither were distressed by my presence and they would look directly at the camera together every now and then. I spent

around 30 minutes watching and hoping to catch the spawning moment, but my breathing was getting progressively tighter as the gauge approached 5bar so in the end I had to abandon them before the event occurred.

Seeing jelly fish during the plankton season is not unusual, but every few years we see a population explosion of a particular species. This year in May and June we have encountered large numbers Rhyzostome jelly fish measuring up to 1m and more in diameter which on some days seemed to be coming by in squadrons of hundreds on the tide. Although these jelly fish can propel themselves they are largely carried with the prevailing current and you can often predict that they will return to a particular area with each change of the tide. They are great wide angle subjects particularly when close to the surface on a calm sunny day, but you have to be aware of the speed and distance of your own drift with the jelly fish on the tide. On one particular day I was absorbed with the task in hand just below the surface and found I had drifted to a headland area that we don't normally dive. As I could see the bottom around 12m below me I decided to descend and follow the reef back in to the bay towards the boat and eventual pick up. Approaching the bottom I could clearly see the reef terminating on the sandy plain of the seabed and almost immediately realized that the long tubular object I was gazing at was a cannon! This was an old iron cannon perhaps 2.5m in length which had the remains of ropes attached to it, so would seem to have been lost during an attempted recovery, perhaps being transported to shallow water on the shoreline. Although the outline of the cannon is clear, the iron is heavily corroded but the more interesting thought is where is the wreck it came



On a good day reefs like the Bizzies in Falmouth Bay can compete with those in the tropics with striking colours in the soft corals, sponges and invertebrates which produce very appealing wide angle images. D7100, Subal D7100 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 250, f9 1/30

from? Obviously this cannot be far away, so further detective work is required!

Another population explosion we have noticed this spring has been the European cowries, which are not rare by any means, but you would normally only expect to see two or three on a dive. This year though they are literally hundreds everywhere which again is possibly due to the mild winter, although they must have multiplying after the storms!

Finally some news to further lift my spirits and spur me on in this season's nudibranch quest. I received the very flattering notification that I had won the British section of the recent Nudibranch Photo Competition and also scored the runner up and commended slots, which means I now have a new Nauticam SMC lens to play with and a copy of the recently released Photographic Guide To Nudibranchs of South West England (by Dan Bolt, Terry Griffiths



European cowries have been seen in abundance this year. Normally you have to make an effort to find one of these pretty little molluscs, but this year the reefs have been overrun with them and we have taken them for granted. This image has the spines of a thorny starfish in the foreground to indicate just how small these cowries are. D7100, Subal D7100 housing, Nikkor 105mm micro, SubSee +10 wet lens, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 250, f32 1/200

and Bernard Picton) to identify my finds. Competitions do not appeal to everyone and there is always an element of luck involved in the judging, however they are a good way of giving your photography a purpose and will encourage you to think of different ways to present or light a common subject if you are trying to create images that will get noticed.

So how does the Nauticam SMC

lens perform? The first thing to bear in mind is that a +10 wet lens is a specialist tool and you will only need it when you find some really small subjects or want to focus on some very fine detail in a larger subject. It is perfect of course for UK nudibranchs which tend to be quite small and even with the 1:1 reproduction of a 105mm macro lens most species will not fill the frame. Fitting the wet lens changes

this and the SMC will increase the magnification to a maximum of 2.3:1 which is more than enough for most critters.

If you have not used one of these wet lenses before then the first challenge you will face is finding the subject with the lens fitted! Even though you may focus easily on a subject with your 105mm lens, with the wet lens installed your picture area shrinks dramatically as does the focus range which with the SMC reduces to between 100mm to 50mm from the subject at maximum magnification. So you need to be careful in your aiming of the lens at the subject and also conscious of the distance so that the lens can focus.

The autofocus with my D7100 works very well without a focus light even at maximum magnification although additional light will help the lens lock on and assist you in determining when you have the sharpest focus at the right point on your subject.

Depth of field is very narrow and the slightest movement will move the critical point in and out of focus so a little patience and a close to neutrally buoyant rig will help to get good results.

Flash positioning is also a consideration particularly if your subject is not posing on a flat section of reef. Nudibranchs in particular are often found in awkward positions under overhangs or in fissures in the reef and it may not be possible to position your flash guns in a regular arrangement as the wet lens brings you much closer to the subject. Be prepared to move them around and even discard one completely to allow good lighting access.

The results produced by the SMC were excellent with very sharp focus, well saturated colours and no evidence of fringing or aberrations at the edges of the frame. I use it with a threaded



Diaphorodoris luteocincta is a tiny species of nudibranch often only 6-8mm in length, so the Nauticam SMC is an ideal tool for shooting this and similar species. D7100, Subal D7100 housing, Nikkor 105mm micro, Nauticam SMC wet lens, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 100, f32 1/80

My Nauticam SMC was a sort of free gift following success in the Nudibranch Photo Competition and it proved itself a very able tool for shooting detail of nudibranchs like this Polycera faeroensis. D7100, Subal D7100 housing, Nikkor 105mm micro, Nauticam SMC wet lens, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 125, f36 1/125.

adaptor on the front of my port, but there are various flip systems available if that is your preference. It is a heavy piece of glass so you may want to add a little more buoyancy to your rig to compensate and help you hold the housing steady for sharp results.

If you are in the market for a wet lens then the SMC is certainly worth considering and will produce excellent results once you have mastered the nuances of using it (a shameless plug for the



competition sponsor I know....!).

So now that summer seems to have arrived and at last we are enjoying some good visibility after the plankton blooms, so I will wrap up these latest ramblings and hope to bring you tales of a stunning summer season as the year progresses.

Mark Webster
www.photec.co.uk

Book Review

Winning Images With any underwater camera by Paul Colley

By Dan Bolt

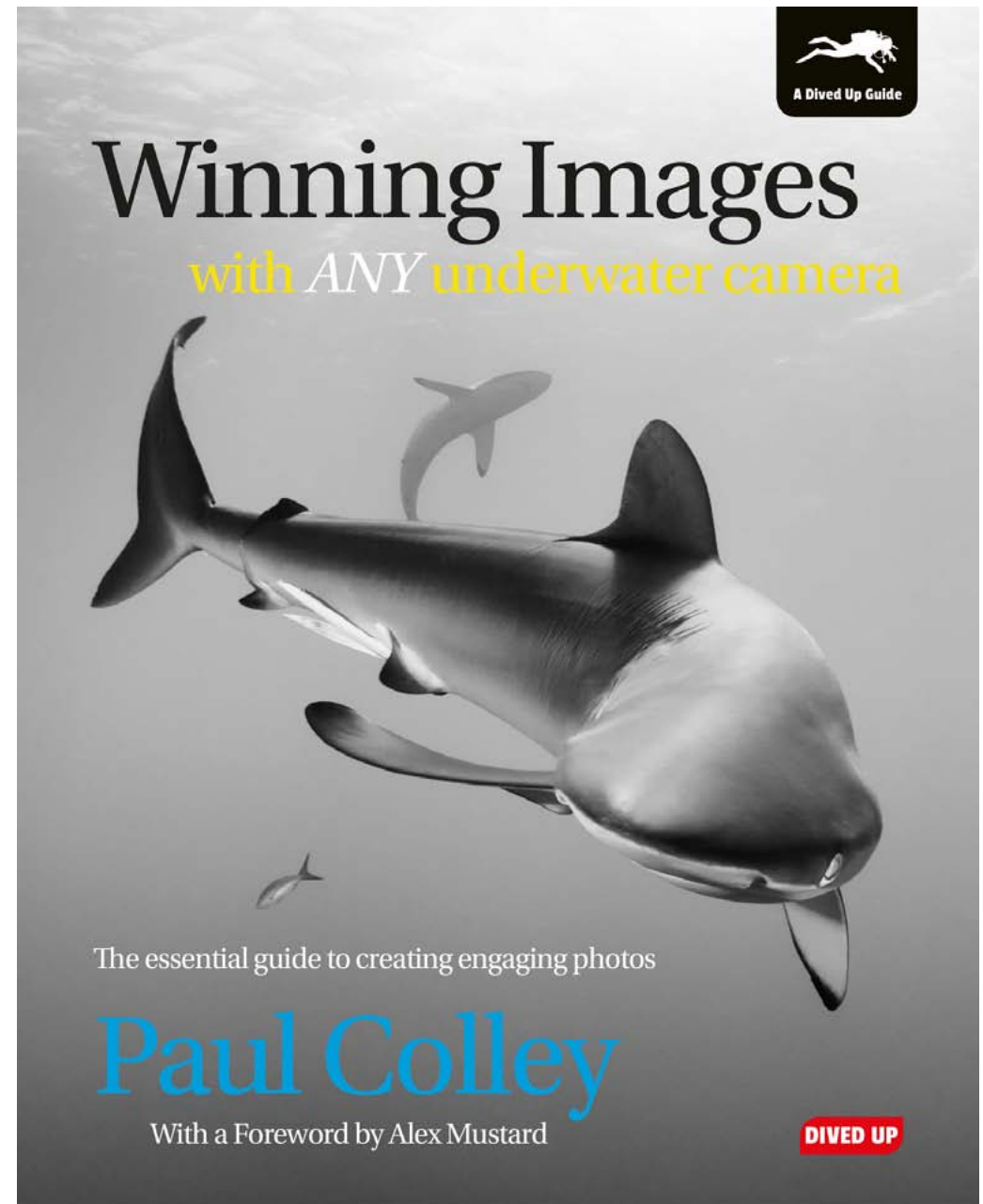
Another edition of UWP; and another book review by yours truly. This time it's Paul Colley's publication 'Winning Images With Any Underwater Camera', a book that concentrates solely on why some images 'win' and how the human brain perceives what a 'winning' image might be therefore composed of.

Of all the book reviews I've done this has been the toughest so far, as you know I like to read the subject matter upon which I'm asked to have an opinion about, and this one was, at times, quite hard going. Definitely not because it is poorly written; Paul's writing style is clear and concise and he has an ability to communicate complicated ideas well, but because the very subjects chosen for inclusion require a detailed analytical turn-of-phrase to adequately describe the concepts to the reader. [much like that last sentence!]

From the outset it is plain to see that behind these 200+ pages lies a huge amount of detailed research that Paul is at pains to impress upon the

reader. From the quotes taken from famous (and not so famous) people at the beginning of each chapter, to the neurological (almost sociological) workings of the brain's perception of form, shape, perspective and beauty with regard to aesthetics; this weighty tome applies a great deal of scientific thought (both ancient and modern) to the problem of 'making' images that will do well in competitions.

Here I feel I should include a public health warning – if you are after an easy read to help you master the fundamentals of taking photos then this book is not for you! In fact, if you were a beginner to the underwater photography world then just reading the opening chapter about 'Aesthetics and Photographic Intent' might just be enough to make you take up a far easier sport... something like entering a Grandmaster Chess tournament for example. This is by no means a criticism of the book, I just feel that the target audience needs to be defined: those of us who know how to take a photo of an engaging subject that is in focus, with little backscatter



and reasonably well lit but want to take our 'image making' to a new level and who are prepared to really start thinking about our photography. If that's you, then this book could just be the key to unlocking a new level in your photography career.

With that said; there is something in this book for all U/W photographers who want to get ahead of the game in shooting images for competitions. The 17 chapters cover areas from 'real world' topics such as selection and lighting, and progress into more subjective areas like Shapes, Vectors and picture organization. There are two chapters at the end dedicated to post production too, one to help 'rescue' compositional 'errors' in your images, the other on Image Manipulation – possibly the only chapter I thought was a little out of place seeing as this book is about 'winning' images and many competitions do not permit the techniques covered by these closing pages.

The depth to which each chapter covers its subject is quite stunning, and it wouldn't surprise me in the slightest if this book became a reference piece in its own right for future researchers. Sometimes though it can feel a bit like a PhD thesis. For example when Paul discusses the application of the Fibonacci series to 'create a natural geometry

and harmony in an image'. If you are clever enough to think about the application of proportions between multiple fast-moving subjects within a frame while diving and taking photographs then you're a much less dumberer person than I am. HOWEVER, this technique might come in handy for selection which image to enter into competitions and turning it into a 'winner'. What you get out of this book will largely depend on your desire to succeed and your current shooting style and to a lesser degree technical competence.

Paul has carefully chosen images to represent the complex ideas in the book and each does its job perfectly. Being another well-travelled Brit he has a large portfolio of images to pull on from all over the world. Some of the more technical areas (such as colour spaces and contrasts) benefit from superb illustrations, charts and diagrams that help to get the point across. If you are a macro photographer, or low-vis shooter, then you might be a bit surprised to see that all but a few images are shot in clear waters using wide-angle lenses. Yes the concepts discussed still apply, but sometimes a picture is worth a thousand words (and in this book that is most certainly true) so the omission of more macro or low-vis examples to back up the theory left me disappointed.

In keeping with the title; a good number of images in the book were shot on an Olympus XZ-2 compact camera. This goes to prove that the concepts discussed are largely 'kit' neutral and proof that you can't blame your camera anymore!

I am certain that this book will help many underwater photographers to improve their success rate in shooting 'winning' images. I would like to have seen much more space given to the 'art' of selecting which image to submit to competitions. You can have many hundreds of photographs from your latest holiday to the newest photo-destination, but if you make a poor selection of images to submit to competitions your chances are still limited. From a personal point of view I won't enter certain competitions because of the way they may be judged, or who is doing the judging – this isn't being pompous, I just don't like the 'style' of images that some competitions seem to favour; it's a personal integrity thing.

In the same vein, you might find as I have, that following someone else's 'rules' leads you to taking photographs that you are not happy with yourself – only you

will know if/when that happens and if you are Ok with it.

In summary then, 'Winning Images With Any Underwater Camera' is a detailed publication about the finer points about how to take more engaging, and hopefully award winning images underwater – the clue, as they say, is in the title. Reading it cover to cover as I have can be tough, but using the chapter list and the detailed introduction to elect area of interest will lead you to a finely detailed discussion of that particular topic which could very well have a huge impact upon your photography.

'Winning Images With Any Underwater Camera' costs £25

www.divedup.com

Dan Bolt

www.underwaterpics.co.uk



Guidelines for contributors

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

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

Uw photo techniques - Balanced light, composition, etc

Locations - Photo friendly dive sites, countries or liveaboards

Subjects - Anything from whale sharks to nudibranchs in full detail

Equipment reviews - Detailed appraisals of the latest equipment

Personalities - Interviews/features about leading underwater photographers

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

How to submit articles

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

1. The text should be saved as a TEXT file and attached to the e mail
2. Images must be attached to the e mail and they need to be 144dpi
Size - Maximum length 20cm i.e. horizontal pictures would be 20 cm wide and verticals would be 20cm.
File type - Save your image as a JPG file and set the compression to "Medium" quality. This should result in images no larger than about 120k which can be transmitted quickly. If we want larger sizes we will contact you.
3. Captions - **Each and every image MUST have full photographic details** including camera, housing, lens, lighting, film, aperture, shutter speed and exposure mode. These must also be copied and pasted into the body of the e mail.

Parting Shot(s)

I came to Adelaide, Australia to dive with the leafy sea dragons but the day after my arrival, the weather changed from dead calm to gale force winds, which turned the ocean into its best interpretation of a washing machine in full agitation mode. Although the leafy sea dragon sites were totally undiveable, Diana, my friend and local guide extraordinaire, was able to find us a good macro dive site which was sheltered from the wind and had surprisingly calm ocean conditions.

The dive site she chose had no shortage of good photographic subjects. We saw blue ring octopi which were everywhere along with cool looking fish and nudibranches. Suddenly, I heard Diana's noisemaker, signaling to me she had found something particularly interesting. By the intensity and duration of the noise, it must have been something extra special. When I caught up with her, she spun around and started swimming furiously away from me. When she finally stopped, she turned to face me and started doing all sorts of exaggerated arm movements. It looked like she was saying frogfish, she was hungry for lunch and that my next pitch should be a fastball down the middle. My face must have shown my utter confusion so she finally just started pointing towards a pillar. I scanned the area and saw a filefish that seemed to be stuck on a sea urchin. Cool, but not that exciting, I thought to myself.

Then all of a sudden, the sea urchin moved off the pillar and started swimming. What? Sea urchins don't swim. I took a closer look and realized that this was no sea urchin but a tasseled frogfish with the filefish's spine impaled on the



side of its face. At this point, all hell broke loose. I swam like a madman to get in a good position to photograph this spectacle and proceeded to kick up enough sand to make any photography impossible. As I was wondering how to salvage the situation, I realized the frogfish was swimming towards me. Looking around, I determined the direction to the nearest clear water and swam there. To my amazement, the frogfish followed, slowing swimming in midwater. I couldn't believe my luck. I calmed down and began taking pictures. When I was satisfied with my shots, I moved to the frogfish's "good" side and got some shots of it without its photobombing filefish friend. Then it dawned on me why the frogfish was following us. It needed our help to remove the filefish. I made sure Diana was done photographing the frogfish then signaled to her to try and separate the two fish. Now I wish I could end the story here by saying Diana delicately separated the two fish and the fish became best friends instead of their previous predator/prey relationship, which we later surmised, created this unfortunate connection in the first place. But I can't. This is what really happened next.



Diana calmly put out her hand next to the frogfish and the frogfish stopped and just hovered. She grabbed onto the filefish and gave it a gentle tug. No success. She then tugged progressively harder and harder but nothing would separate these fish. I decided to first take a couple more shots for good measure then I positioned my muck stick in between both fishes and firmly tried to separate them. After a couple unsuccessful attempts, I think the frogfish and I came to the same conclusion that I was not going to be of any help. And with that, the frogfish slowly turned and swam away. Diana and I both felt very conflicted after the dive. We were blown away by what we had just witnessed but were saddened that we could not help these fish from what will be an early death. I am now in the market for some good diving shears.

Todd Aki

**Do you have a shot which has a story within a story?
If so e mail it with up to 500 words of text and yours could be the next Parting Shot.**

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