Underwater Photography

Sept/Oct 2011
Issue 62

Nauticam

innovation underwater

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

"...designed to make underwater photography easier and more enjoyable for the user."
Dr Alex Mustard

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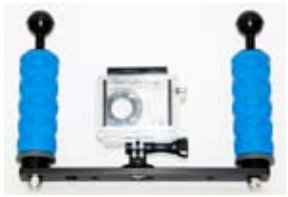

Underwater Photography

A web magazine UwP62 Sept/Oct 2011

Cover shot by
Chris Hamilton

Underwater Photography

Publisher/Editor Peter Rowlands
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peter@uwpmag.com

Editorial

Solo diving

For some reason we don't get many readers letters here at UwP HQ but it's always nice when we do as it confirms that someone is still out there.

Wade Hughes' response to Alex Tattersall's article on the Solo Diving SDI course was refreshing in that there are still people out there that can make their own mind up and prefer to live by their most reasoned and reasonable rules.

Wade's letter was a great excuse for me to contact Bob Halstead for his opinion. I met Bob on MV Golden Dawn for the first time a few years back and it was so refreshing to hear his views based of decades in the diving industry. As an ex-teacher he has an analytical mind that is not afraid to approach decisions differently and, more importantly, to stand up and be counted.

Unfortunately it seems the insurance companies are jumping on the bandwagon rubbing their hands in glee that they've found another get out clause.

Pigmy seahorses

The guidelines for pigmy seahorse photography produced by Dr Richard Smith and included on page 7 of this issue are a timely reminder of how delicate marine life can be and how clumsy and inconsiderate we can be at times.

From very early on in my UwP career I took a dislike to the widespread fascination for these timy creatures and took a deliberate stance not to include pictures of them. Don't ask me why because I don't know. I just did. And don't ask me to change my mind because I won't. That way, as hindsight would have it, I've been doing my little bit for these cute creatures for quite a while.

And if I suddenly take a dislike to pictures of any other particular marine creature I will let you know so that, if you are submitting an illustrated article, you know not to include pictures of them.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

Readers Lives

More enough

I really got a kick out of the editorial/ article enough is enough in issue 61. I am also a Olympus e-pl1 owner. I agree with your friend. I am not looking to upgrade because it does everything I have wanted it to do and its compact. For most of us who do not make a living with our camera's it needs to be about the dive and the ability to record and share with friends. It is about the memories. Here are two really good examples of fun with cameras.

The first one Cleaning Station was done with my Canon A95 point and shoot (no strobe just on board flash). The second was with my pen a ys-01 strobe and an old sea life 960 (first generation). Both make me happy and my friends think they are cool. Point is it should never be about buying the next cool gadget. It should be about enjoying the one you have. When it breaks upgrade!

Although I should point out that I don't think I will go past the PEN.... like your friend it does what I want for the price I like.

AJ Genova

Solo thoughts

Thought the latest edition of the mag was terrific. The SDI (Solo Diving) piece (although padded with too much personal waffle for my own taste), was a brilliant expose.

Along with your own editorial regarding the puppet tv presenters, the SDI piece reflects, unfortunately, the way of the world. There's a cause here that UWP and thinking subscribers might want to take up: an inventory of personal diving incidents to put diving safety in perspective and to challenge some of the group think that you refer to in your editorial.

For example; Since my first scuba dive dive in 1962, I have had two equipment failures, neither of them while using scuba, both while using hookah, and both while in the water with another diver, who was unable to come to assist, and had no need to anyway.

Of all the divers I have known in that same period, none of them have had any scuba equipment failures. Three are dead from diving related misadventure (one shark attack while spearfishing, one shallow water blackout while spearfishing in deep water-both had partners with them; one drowned in a cave after going in without a line - but with four buddies, three of which drowned with him).

More of my friends are dead from motor vehicle accidents. And on that point, why this obsession with preventing solo diving which, in the statistically unlikely event of catastrophe will result in loss of single soul, when every day and night, solo drivers of all ages and experience levels driving vehicles from motorcycles to juggernauts roam our streets, and solo pilots fly over densely populated cities and suburban areas? Rockclimbers happily solo, surfers happily solo, skiers happily solo. Why not divers??? Definitely food for thought.

Anyway, enough rant.

Wade Hughes FRGS

Having received the above letter, UwP contacted Bob Halstead for his comments. Whether he likes it or not, Bob qualifies for 'legend' status.
In the early 1980's he built a 20 metre live-aboard dive boat, the Telita, to enable diving adventurers from around the world to join him in PNG. They were able to cruise to the most remote of Papua New Guinea's islands and reefs.
In 1996 he sold the company, including MV Telita, and now, from his base in Cairns, he leads adventure dive tours to PNG and the Coral Sea in association with friends Craig de Wit on board MV Golden Dawn, and Alan Raabe on FeBrina. He also offers guiding services to private Super Yachts.

Bob Halstead's thoughts

Authorities just love divers to make "risk assessments" before any dive. I suggest that the "Dive Buddy" should be a part of that assessment. A survey I did years ago that revealed that more advanced (my definition = 100 dives +) divers were getting into trouble BECAUSE of their buddies, than were rescued by them. In other words the Buddy had INCREASED the risk of the dive for the experienced divers.

Any thinking person will realise that the really important Buddy is the one in the Dive tender on the surface looking out and able to rescue you if you surface away from the boat.

Unfortunately certifying agencies have been stuck with the Buddy System - and "no-decompression diving" (A really stupid concept for sport divers who should treat every dive as a decompression dive) that they inherited from Navy diving manuals. Now they are reluctant to change "established practice". However in the wilds of PNG I can tell you that solo diving for anyone who is self-sufficient and wants to - photographer or not - is alive and well. We do allow buddy diving but prefer ALL our divers to be self-sufficient, and absolutely not dependant on a buddy even if they choose to share a dive with one.

My current thinking goes along the lines that in my life I am sick and tired of people in authority telling me what to do with my life (The Nanny State). I like being alone underwater and "One with Nature". I wear a completely redundant pony bottle system, have never had a diving emergency except when I ran out of film with my old camera (I too now have a digital camera about to get wet for the first time) and I don't tell other people how they should dive.

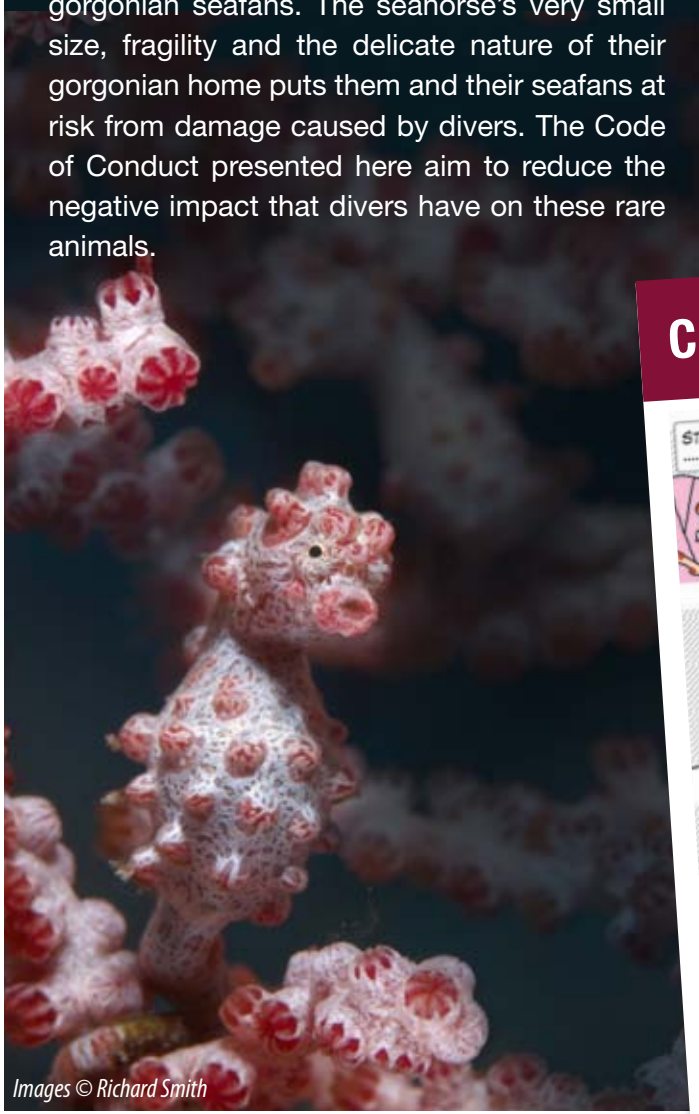
I still LOVE Diving. Just had a wonderful 4 week cruise with Captain Craig de Wit on MV Golden Dawn which included a dive on a Bristol Beaufighter wreck at 62m, a drift dive at 4 knots, a solo drop off in the Coral Sea well away from other divers followed by a swim through a pass in the reef, exploring new dive sites and, inadvertently, a swim with a large crocodile that nearly bumped into Julian Cohen (who was diving by himself). If I had to give it all up I'm sure I would become a menace to society, which is food for thought after the British riots.

Bob Halstead
www.halsteaddiving.com

Diving with

Pygmy Seahorses

Pygmy seahorses are a group of very small fish, between 1.4 and 2.7 cm in length. Two of these, Bargibant's and Denise's pygmy seahorses, live exclusively on the surface of gorgonian seafans. The seahorse's very small size, fragility and the delicate nature of their gorgonian home puts them and their seafans at risk from damage caused by divers. The Code of Conduct presented here aim to reduce the negative impact that divers have on these rare animals.



Images © Richard Smith

Bargibant's pygmy seahorse
(*Hippocampus bargibanti*)

Host

Gorgonian seafans of the genus *Muricella*

Identification

- Maximum length 2.7 cm
- Short pug-like snout
- Pronounced bumps over body
- Colours include pink, red and yellow with darker bumps

Denise's pygmy seahorse
(*Hippocampus denise*)

Hosts

Seven gorgonian and a whip coral species are known hosts

Identification

- Maximum length 2.4 cm
- Longer, slender snout
- Body can be smooth or bumpy
- Colour very variable, including pink, red, white and yellow

Gorgonian seafans

- Bargibant's and Denise's pygmy seahorses spend their entire adult life on a single gorgonian seafan, often inhabiting an area the size of a dinner plate, so the survival of their seafan home is vital for the seahorse.
- Seafans grow very slowly, reaching 100 years of age and several metres wide.
- Seafans are extremely delicate and easily damaged if touched.

Threats

- Pygmy seahorses have the smallest populations of any known seahorse.
- Their biggest threats are habitat destruction and impacts from divers.

Code of Conduct

This code of conduct was created from hundreds of hours of behavioural scientific research, observing the impacts of diver interactions on pygmy seahorses.

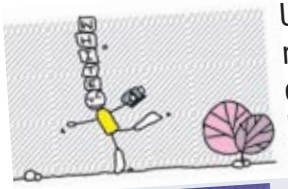
CODE OF CONDUCT GUIDELINES

Do not touch or manipulate pygmy seahorses in any way, as this can easily damage or even kill them

Do not touch the gorgonian home of the seahorse (they are extremely slow growing and delicate), take particular care of camera position and exhalent bubbles

Do not use a torch/flashlight or camera focus light to highlight a pygmy seahorse, this disorientates and stresses them

Five photo limit per diver using flash photography, as more can stress the animal



Use white balanced natural light rather than artificial light for video capture to reduce disturbance from bright lights

No night diving with pygmy seahorses - they sleep at night and lights disturb them

Be aware of the surrounding environment, pay close attention to fin positioning, so not to damage other corals

Created with generous support from Wakatobi Dive Resort, Walea Dive Resort and Murex Dive
Drawings by Mean Mora-mmoraa.com, Design by VisarkStudio.com

For more more information go to - OceanRealmImages.com or contact Dr Richard Smith - Richard@OceanRealmImages.com

News, Travel & Events

SY Oriental Siren Workshop

with Don Silcock

23rd Aug to 2nd Sept 2012

Don Silcock, renowned underwater photographer and diving journalist, will be joining SY Oriental Siren for her third trip in Timor-Leste in 2012 to host a photography workshop. Don will be onboard to assist divers with camera set up, composition, lighting and photo editing.

As well as giving presentations on underwater photography, Don will give one-to-one tuition both on the boat and underwater, working to individual needs so that you get the best results from your camera.

The 34 metre SY Oriental Siren is built from the finest Asian teak and ironwood. She is a traditional twin mast junk, rigged with traditional style sails that are both functional and beautiful. Thus she has been custom-made with all the luxury facilities for the modern diver. For our 10 night trip to East Timor we welcome 14 guests aboard the Oriental Siren- this ensures abundant space for all. This trip will be a true dive adventure led by Don Silcock and will include complimentary photo workshops.

Trip runs from 23rd August to 2nd September 2012, priced at 2600 Euro per person.

www.worldwidediveandsail.com/liveaboard-diving/timor-leste.html
www.equatordiving.com/east_timor_trip.html

Oceanz Dive Conference & Exhibition 2011

12/13th November

Tauranga, New Zealand

New Zealand's biggest dive show & photo competition is coming to Tauranga. Resurrected from the highly popular events of old, the event, sponsored by TDI/SDI and New Zealand Underwater Association, will celebrate the New Zealand diving industry and unique marine environment. The event will comprise of a large exhibition featuring equipment manufacturers, government bodies, underwater photography, personalities, education, travel and training agencies. There will be larger outdoor displays with a working recompression chamber on site and an area for wet demonstrations. Guest speakers will give presentations on a variety of topics from marine reserves to cave diving, wreck surveys to what the police dive unit do for day job.The highlight will be the national underwater photography competiton covering a variety of catagories and the selected top images will be displayed at the entrance to the event centre. The current prize pool is worth over $11,000 and with images restricted to being taken in NZ terriority (not just to NZ residents), a great outcome will be the promotion of NZ's marine environment to the general public. The winners will be annoucned at the Gala Dinner, where there will be further presentations and entertainment.

www.oceanzdiveconference.com

DIVE THE GHOST FLEET OF TRUK LAGOON

Closed Circuit Rebreather — April 11th - 23rd 2012

This is a very special trip we organized with our friends on the Odyssey liveaboard and at Blue Lagoon Dive resort. If you have been longing to dive the Ghost Fleet of Truk Lagoon and spend as much time as you want exploring and filming the wrecks then this trip is for you!

This trip itinerary has been customized for extended bottom time and rebreather safety. While open circuit divers are welcome, we are prioritizing spaces for rebreather users and our diving schedule will be based on extended profiles. Spaces are limited to 11 divers.

Russ Sanoian is the product manager at Backscatter and a freelance underwater and nature videographer based in Monterey, California. Russ will be offering personalized pre-trip consultations and on-site assistance for this unique adventure. Russ is well known in the diving industry as a great educator and mentor of new photographers and technical divers.

We will arrive at Blue Lagoon Dive resort on April 12th and will dive from the Land Based resort for 4 days to get all our gear sorted out and dialed in. Some of the deeper wrecks like the Japanese destroyer "Oite" and "Katsuragisan Maru" will be options for those divers that want to do some deeper dives or the Japanese "I-169" is a shallow wreck and very unique being the only Submarine in Truk.

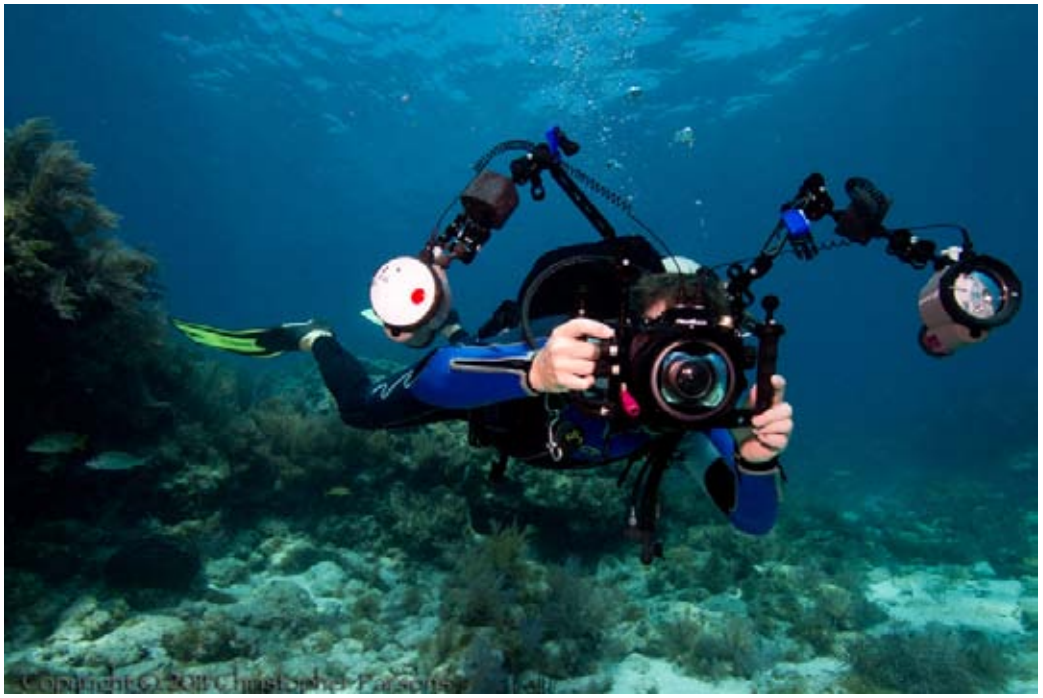
We will then board the live aboard Odyssey on April 15th in the evening and will have our choice of wrecks to dive for an entire week and can spend the whole day on one wreck if the group so chooses.

All Backscatter trips are educational experiences, but this trip is best suited for intermediate to advanced technical divers.

www.backscatter.com

Reef Photo Key Largo Weekend Workshop

2011-09-16 thru 2011-09-18



Join us for an information packed weekend of diving and learning about underwater still photography. This class is perfect for beginner to intermediate underwater photographers and is designed to take your imaging skills to the next level. All different camera systems are welcome, from point&shoot compacts to mid-range interchangeable lens cameras to SLRs. Don't have a system yet? No problem, rental camera rigs for entire weekend will be available at nominal charge. Boat diving on the beautiful Key Largo reefs and wrecks is included for all three days.

$565 includes the seminars and instruction, 2 tank boat diving each day with divemaster and photo instructor, tanks, weights, free use of demo gear on selected dives, working lunch (Friday), and daily critique sessions.

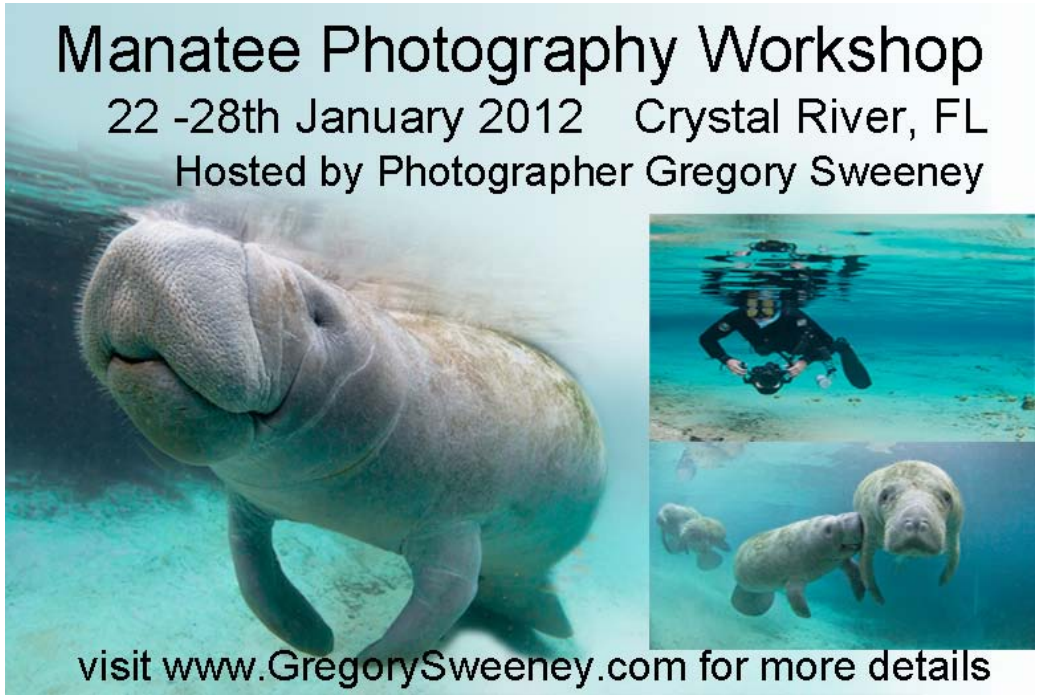
We'll cover a wide range of underwater photo topics, starting with some easy techniques to quickly elevate your game. We'll cover a bit of theory, and some basic topics like composition, exposure, and focus. We'll talk about strobe positioning

and how we can use strobes effectively. Gear will be covered as well, both from the standpoint of what is available these days and how it fits into your shooting style. We'll talk about basic housing/gear maintenance. Last but not least we'll cover post processing workflow and how to turn the images on your SD card into an easy to use catalog of images you can use in many different ways.

What to bring: Your dive gear. Air tanks and weights are included. Your scuba certification card. Your camera with housing. Some demo camera systems will be available on individual dives. Your laptop computer if you have one. Mac or PC, no problem. If you have Lightroom, great, that's the main tool we'll use.

Sessions will be held at the Holiday Inn, Key Largo, at Mile Marker 100. We can offer a special $129/night rate at the hotel.

www.reefphoto.com



Exploring the True Behaviour of Crocs

Okavango Delta
July 2012

I've just returned from two weeks on a Nile croc scouting expedition in Botswana. Brad Bestelink is an extraordinary filmmaker and was my guide on the expedition. Together we've launched the world's first croc expedition worthy of real adventurers. This is the 'first expedition of its kind' anywhere in the world.

The initial departure, during the third week of July 2012, will be seven days of croc encounters for just two diver/photographers. The second departure, during the last week of July 2012, will combine five days of croc expedition with an eight-day Big Cat Safari (encountering lions, cheetah and leopards), and is also for only two diver/photographers.

Contact Amos Nachoum because these spots will fill up fast.

www.biganimals.com

BSoUP / DIVER Print Competition 2011

Deadline: Saturday 1st October 2011

The annual BSoUP / DIVER Print Competition is scheduled to take place at the DIVE Show National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham over the weekend of 22-23 October 2011.

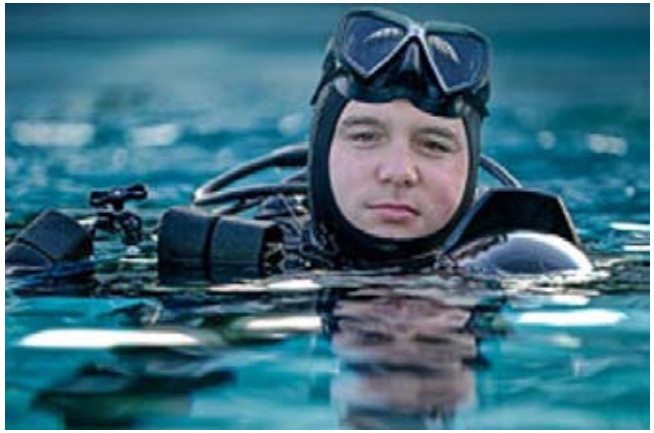
There is a total of 4 trophies and 10 individual awards. Oonasdivers have generously donated a holiday at Marsa Shagra to be taken by 23 October 2012, which includes flights, transfers, 7 nights full board in a tent (upgrades available) and 5 days unlimited shore diving for the overall winner.

Further prizes will be announced as and when they are confirmed.

www.bsoup.org

"The Techniques of Underwater Photography"

by Alex Mustard
GDT Festival, Germany
October 28-30th 2011

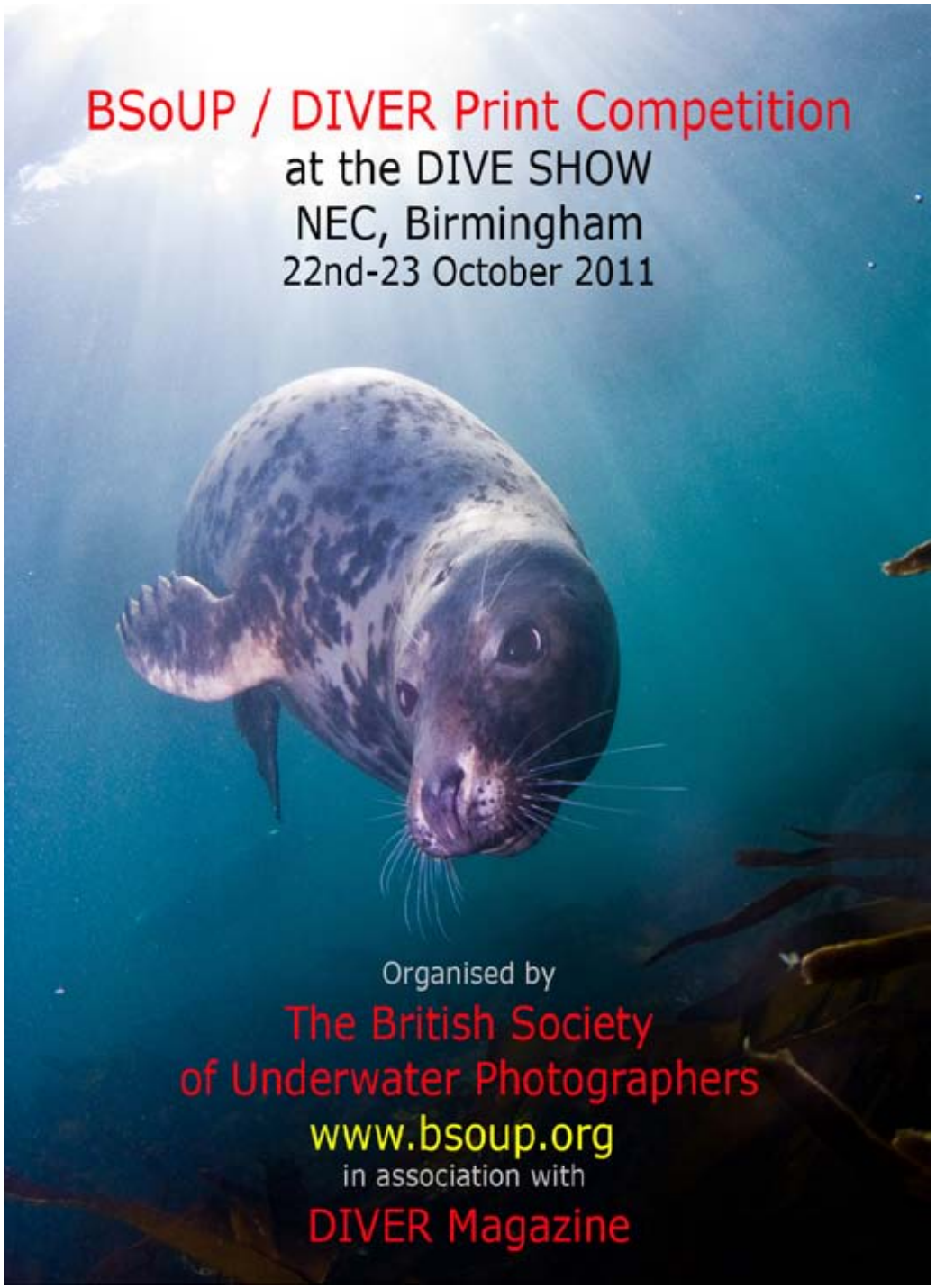


Dr. Alex Mustard, 32, is an award-winning marine biologist and is worldwide considered to be one of the most inventive and creative underwater photographers. He authors numerous specialist books, which have been translated in various languages.
Alex writes regularly for different international magazines about his special techniques of underwater photography; overall more than 300 articles on marine life, diving and underwater photography have been published.

In the seminar "The Techniques of Underwater Photography" at the International Nature Photography Festival of the GDT from October 28 – 30, Alex Mustard will explain the advantages of working beneath the surface and discuss the similarities and differences from shooting wildlife on land. He will share some of the more advanced techniques and specialist equipment he uses, with examples from his portfolio of images from around the world.

Alex will finish by discussing some of the choices for dipping your toes into underwater photography. Many subjects can be photographed while snorkeling and while a DSLR housing with all the bells and whistles costs as much as a fast telephoto lens, there are options for every budget. On Saturday evening (October 29) Alexander Mustard is giving a special highlight with his presentation "Why underwater?" - a treat for dedicated underwater photographers and everybody else enthusiastic about images taken in aquatic habitats.

www.gdtfoto.de



Emperor Marsa Alam expands to new resort

On 01 October 2011, Emperor Divers will open their new dive centre in the Marsa Alam area. Situated in a brand new seafront hotel, Moreen Beach, the centre is 20 km south of the airport, giving the same Emperor Divers' experience that guests have come to know and love in Port Ghalib. The added bonus is that there is now a great housereef and the Centre is closer to the Marsa Alam jetty saving time when visiting southern sites.

The housereef is literally on the doorstep and ideal for more experienced divers offering plenty of guided or unguided options, day and night, as well as regular morning and afternoon trips to Elphinstone for those 'big' encounters. With the Centre being closer than ever to the Marsa Alam marina, Emperor continue to offer Dolphin House trips to divers and snorkellers and with shorter transfer times, guests can dive even more southern sites such as Shaab Marsa Alam whilst still enjoying the famous 'Overnight Elphinstone' trips.

Moreen Beach is a 4 star hotel operated by Concord Hotels and is the ideal venue for divers and non-divers alike. For divers with family and friends who simply want to relax, then this is the place to do more half-day trips and lazy starts while everyone can enjoy the sandy beach and fabulous facilities.

Emperor Divers still offers free transfers from other hotels; however, for those staying in Port Ghalib, the same renowned Emperor service is on-hand where you wake up and walk to your dive boat or have a short zodiac transfer.

www.emperordivers.com

Underwater Photography Guide
Ocean Art Photo Competition 2011

Underwater Photography Guide is proud to announce it is accepting entries for the second annual Ocean Art Photo Competition 2011.

There are over $75,000 worth of prizes, including over 25 liveaboard and scuba diving resort packages, dive equipment, and much more.

This is one of the largest underwater photography competitions held in terms of prizes.

The competition has 12 categories, including a Novice dSLR category and 3 compact camera categories, giving underwater photographers of all levels a chance to win a great prize. Unique categories include SuperMacro, Cold/ Temperate Water, Nudibranchs, and Divers/ Fashion. The more traditional categories include Wide-Angle, Macro, Marine Life Portraits, and Marine Life Behavior.

Winners from each category will be awarded a package at a fantastic resort or on a liveaboard. Winners will be able to rank the prizes they would like to receive, making it far more likely for winners to receive a prize they want.

Judges include world-renowned underwater photographers Martin Edge, Marty Snyderman, Tony Wu, and Bonnie Pelnar. Martin Edge is the author of The Underwater Photographer, a top-selling book on underwater photography. Marty Snyderman has won an Emmy and has been published in dozens of top publications such as National Geographic. Tony Wu is a renowned underwater photographer and author of Silent Symphony. Bonnie Pelnar has been published in numerous diving and travel magazines, and conducts photography workshops at tropical destinations around the world.

Photos must be submitted before the deadline on November 20, 2011.

www.uwphotographyguide.com

WildPhotos 2011

21-22 October 2011

Royal Geographical Society, London

It's countdown to WildPhotos 2011... an extraordinary gathering of the world's leading wildlife and environmental photographers, providing a unique mix of photography knowledge, art and inspiration.

Taking place on Friday 21 and Saturday 22 October 2011 at the Royal Geographical Society, London, WildPhotos 2011 is the UK's largest nature photography symposium.

The first ten delegates who register at http://www.wildphotos.org.uk/delegate-registration will receive free entry to the Veolia Environnement Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2011 exhibition* at London's Natural History Museum (opening 22 October 2011).

We are delighted to announce our keynote speaker for Friday 21 October – world-renowned and celebrated American landscape photographer Jack Dykinga.

A Pulitzer Prize winner, Jack Dykinga fuses a photojournalistic, documentary approach with large-format landscape photography, to promote a focus on environmental issues through his work.

Prepare to be moved by Dykinga's keynote session 'The Power of Images – from Damnation to Celebration' and learn how photography can ultimately change our intrinsic values.

Breaking with tradition, WildPhotos 2011 welcomes two compères this year.

Chris Packham, TV presenter, photographer and author returns as compère for Saturday's sessions; with Mark Carwardine, zoologist, active conservationist, award-winning writer, TV and radio presenter and widely published wildlife photographer, opening the first day of sessions as Friday's compère.

We're thrilled Mark and Chris are your hosts for this year's WildPhotos, as the duo are currently in high demand for their work both in front of, and behind, the camera.

Our compères bring a wealth of experience and industry know-how to the proceedings, with second-to-none presenter skills – putting WildPhotos 2011 delegates in expert hands over the two days.

www.wildphotos.org.uk

Worldwide Dive and Sail and Eco Divers Resort, Lembeh

Worldwide Dive and Sail and Eco Divers Resort, Lembeh are to team up to offer 3 fabulous 14 night dive-safaris to bring you the ultimate in diving North Sulawesi, Indonesia. Guests will spend 7 nights aboard boutique liveaboard SY Mandarin Siren to dive the northern Sanghie Islands of Ruang, Siau and Bangka and a further 7 nights at the Eco Divers Resort, Lembeh to dive the critter hot spot; the Lembeh Strait.

Departing from Lembeh, the 14-night trip gives divers 12 full days of diving with up to 4 dives offered per day. Dive times vary between 50 and 80 minutes to allow you plenty of time to explore the variety of dive sites on offer. Equipment rental and nitrox fills are included at both the Eco Divers Resort and aboard SY Mandarin Siren. Accommodation is in a double or twin bed cabin / guest room and offered full board inclusive of soft drinks, tea, coffee and beers. Our chefs cater to special requirements and all meals are freshly prepared to order. Transfers from/ to Manado airport are also included in our deluxe package.

Trip Dates 13-27 July; 21Jul -04 Aug; 30Jul- 13Aug 2012

Prices start at 2995Euro per person based on 2 people sharing a twin or double bed cabin / guest room*

For a limited time only you can receive 14 nights for the price of 12!!

Book by 31st December 2011 and pay just 2500Euro for the full 14 night package.

www.worldwidediveandsail.com
www.eco-divers.com

VIP Winter Dive Package at Capernwray

The good people at Capernwray, the scenic inland dive centre on the edge of the Lake District, are offering a very special package for divers this coming winter. Already famous for its crystal clear water, great underwater attractions, amazing fish life (including huge trout and monster sturgeons!) and easy access from the M6 motorway, this year, for the first time, Capernwray are offering weekend winter packages for visiting divers, based just 50 yards from the water in their luxury on-site 'eco' house, 'Clearwater'.

Already garnering rave reviews from previous guests, 'Clearwater' is a stunning, luxury modern 'eco' holiday home on the cliff top above the water at Capernwray. Built to the highest standards and clad in local stone, Clearwater sleeps up to six guests and features a stylish, contemporary interior. Features include discreet lighting, under floor heating throughout, a central vacuum system and satellite TV and DVD players in each of the three bedrooms. There are also two glass- fronted and covered balconies looking over the water, with a gas barbeque provided on the main balcony.

Why not make the most of the safe, benign environment at Capernwray by spending a long weekend this winter and enjoy superb diving in the crystal clear waters of one of our best diving destinations? Not only is this an ideal venue for all standards of diver, the stunning water clarity in the winter makes this an exceptional time of year for underwater photographers to capture those award-winning images! Described by no less an authority than Alex Mustard as " one of the finest venues in the UK for underwater photography", Capernwray is THE place to come to hone those wide-angle techniques; you could even get the mighty sturgeon full frame, if you are lucky!

This special package, from 1st November to the end of March next year 2012.

www.dive-site.co.uk

DSLR Housings for

CANON
5D Mark II
7D
40D, 50D
60D
450D Rebel XSi
500D Rebel T1i
550D Rebel T2i
600D Rebel T3i
1000D Rebel T3

FUJI
S-5 PRO

NIKON
D80
D90
D300
D300s
D700
D3100
D5100
D7000

OLYMPUS
E330

SONY
α33, α55 SLT

DSLR Housings

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

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

- Four Port Locks
- Top Accessory Mount
- Tripod Mounting Point
- Pro Video Lite 3 Battery Pack Mounting Points
- Video Trigger Control for Cameras with Video

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

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

Underwater Systems • 50 W. 33rd. Street • Indianapolis, IN • 46208 • 317-923-4523 www.ikelite.com

New Products

Backscatter Custom GoPro Housings

The GoPro is an awesome camera, but it can't focus underwater. Our custom lens ports solves this problem!

The Backscatter Custom GoPro Hero Underwater Housing is the perfect accessory for using your GoPro HD Hero camera underwater. The Backscatter GoPro Housings solves the critical problem of the housings that ship with all models of GoPro cameras - the dome port on the stock housing does not allow the camera to focus underwater. The Backscatter GoPro Housing uses high-quality glass or optical acrylic for its flat port, which will yield razor sharp video underwater at 1080p video resolution. The housing also includes a user-installable red filter, to improve the colors of your video at depth. The filter is easily removable when not needed.

Keeping the housing that comes with your GoPro camera for topside use, and use the Backscatter GoPro Housing underwater in the best way to go. The Backscatter GoPro Housing is also compatible with the GoPro BacPac by just replacing the back of the housing. EACH and every Backscatter Custom GoPro housing is pressure tested at 180 feet (54 meters) for 1 hour.

A 3D version is also available with flat optical acrylic ports which allows you to combine two 1080p HD HERO cameras into a single housing to record 3D video and photos while simultaneously recording in 2D.

www.backscatter.com

Nauticam Olympus EPL2 housing

The NA-EPL2 housing from Nauticam delivers the advanced functionality of the E-PL2 in style and with the ergonomics that people have come to expect from Nauticam.

This is a very compact and lightweight housing, with all of the E-PL2 camera controls available from the ergonomic grip sculpted into the side of the housing. A choice of hand strap and left/right handle means the shooter can customize the housing to meet their specific needs.

The same Nauticam patented locking port release system used in the popular Sony NEX-5 and Panasonic GH2 housings has been incorporated, allowing easy and secure port changes. Ports are available for the major lenses that are useful underwater, including the Olympus M.Zuiko 1442mm F3.5-5.6 II kit lens and the Olympus M.Zuiko ED 9-18mm f/4.0-5.6 wide angle zoom.

The port system for NA-EPL2 expands upon the existing port system for the NEX-5 housing, adding additional ports for the Olympus m4/3 lenses. Panasonic Lumix m4/3 lenses and Leica m4/3 lenses can be used with this camera as well, further expanding the lens choices.

The E-PL2 supports manual, program, aperture, shutter speed, auto, scene and art exposure modes. Metering is accomplished via a TTL capable Digital ESP 324 zone multi-pattern system. Several white balance modes are available including custom white balance.

www.nauticamusa.com

Ultralight GoPro accessories

Ultralight have announced several new products.

The:TR-GPD, double tray for GoPro, allows you to utilize two lights by adding two handles to the tray.

TR-GP3D, double tray for the 3D housing, allows you to hold the camera much steadier and add two handles to the tray.

GP-3D-Cage, cage for the 3D housing (cages are designed for shooting situations that might cause the tabs on the bottom to break off, cages do not use these tabs. The 3 cages we have now are the one for the regular GoPro, one for the LCD installed on the GoPro and this latest one for the 3D housing.

www.ulcs.com

Nauticam USA

Nauticam Olympus XZ1

"Total control"

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

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

www.nauticamusa.com

Fantasea Eyes - Upgraded Underwater Optics

Fantasea Line releases a new line of underwater optic accessories, featuring an upgraded design, which enables installing color correction filters inside the various lens accessories. This innovative feature allows photographers to produce underwater vivid and colorful images or videos while making use of wide angle and macro lenses.

Fantasea BigEye Lenses are patented wide angle lenses which are perfect for shooting seascape, divers, ship wrecks and schools of fish, without moving further away from the subject, thereby still taking full advantage of water clarity and artificial light sources. The BigEye Lens recovers 100% of the camera lens optical properties underwater.

SharpEye Lenses are accessory macro lenses designed for shooting close-up images of fish, corals, textures and more. The macro lens magnifies the subject and enables the

camera to focus on short distances for creating super sharp images.

RedEye (red filter) and PinkEye (magenta filter) are color correction filters used to restore the red color absorbed by blue or green water. In shallow depths, these filters can serve as an attractive alternative to artificial light sources.

EyeDaptors are lens adaptors designed for mounting different lens accessories, such as the SharpEye Macro Lens with a 67mm thread, on a wide selection of compact digital housings.

www.fantasea.com

INON Micro Fisheye Lens UFL-M150 ZM80

INON INC. released new "underwater insect-eye lens" for a compact digital camera and its adapters to attach on their Mount Base.

This new lens provides 150° ultra-wide angle fisheye imaging even shooting distance as close as 0cm, by simply attach the lens to the INON Mount Base and setting the camera's zoom position to approximately 80mm (35mm film equivalent).

Zooming out will create a circular fisheye effect.

www.inon.co.jp

Underwater Micro Fisheye Lens [UFL-M150 ZM80] / [M27-LD Mount Converter for UFL-M150 ZM80] installed on Canon [WP-DC38] + INON [28LD Mount Base DC38]

Subject/shooting distance : Perch sculpin(10cm/3.9" in length)/ approx.1cm/0.4"
Equipment : Canon PowerShot S90/ WP-DC35, INON UFL-M150 ZM80, Z-240 x 2 (S-TTL)
Photo data : 1/250, F8, ISO100

Subject/shooting distance : Raggy scorpionfish (approx.20cm/7.9" in length)/approx.5cm/2.0"
Equipment : Canon PowerShot S90/ WP-DC35, INON UFL-M150 ZM80, S-2000 x 2 (S-TTL)
*Photo data : 1/30, F5.6, ISO80 (*Zoom position wide end [28mm](35mm film equivalent))*
Photo by : F. Torii (INON INC.) at "Bitagane" Atami, Shizuoka, Japan

*(*Zoom position [85mm](35mm film equivalent))*
Photo by : F. Torii (INON INC.) at "Wannai" Osezaki, Shizuoka, Japan

Gates External Monitors On Aquatica Camera Housings

Gates can now install the EM43 External Monitor on the Aquatica 5D MKII Underwater Camera Housing.

The Gates EM43 External Monitor is a big 4.3" / 110mm color active matrix LCD to assist with framing and focus - even in bright sunlight. Sophisticated features like power-on and auto-format sensing mean no worries about accidental battery depletion or different worldwide formats. A low battery light tell you when it's time to change the 8AA cells, which can be alkaline (recommended, NIMH, NiCad or Lithium.

www.gateshousings.com

Nikon AW100/AW100s

Nikon Corporation is pleased to announce the release of the AW100/AW100s, the first model in Nikon's new COOLPIX AW series of compact digital cameras suited not only to normal shooting situations, but also equipped with a number of features and functions that make them fun to use in a variety of outdoor situations.

The AW100/AW100s, Nikon's first compact digital camera with waterproof, shock-proof and cold-resistant specifications, is a high-performance model with an effective pixel count of 16.0-million pixels. It offers not only basic camera features such as a backside illumination CMOS image sensor and functions for capturing still images with superior image quality and recording full-HD movies with the same superior picture quality, but is also equipped with a number of new features including GPS support, an electronic compass and a map display.

www.nikon.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~~

Your advert could be here instead for just £5.00

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

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

Email: maddox666@gmail.com [Ref:c147]

SOLD! – Subtronic Nova analog version no ttl converter

~~Subtronic Nova analog version no ttl converter~~

~~The strobe is 3 years old in good condition~~

~~All sockets in S6~~

~~800 €~~

~~Rudolf Sollböck~~

~~Ref C146~~

Your advert could be here instead for just £5.00

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

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

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

Sell your stuff

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

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

Check out small ads here

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INON X-2 housing for Panasonic GF2

INON INC. has launched a lightweight aluminum body housing X-2 for GF2 for Panasonic's digital SLR camera LUMIX GF2.

The LUMIX GF2 is Panasonic's signature mirrorless DSLR model with compact and lightweight body yet supporting professional photography, high quality full HD movie and 3D still imaging with its world's first 3D interchangeable lens.

The INON X-2 for GF2 housing is built not only to concentrate on downsizing but engineered to pursue stress-free handling, intuitive operation, reliability and durability after we got back to the basic shooting underwater, and supported by wide

variety of INON lighting arms and high quality optical glass ports to enhance LUMIX/LEICA lens performance underwater offering full-blown underwater equipment in total.

The X-2 for GF2 housing enables you to enjoy high quality and creative photography/footage better than point and shoot compact digital cameras.

Optional Leak Sensor is available at a time of housing order.

www.inon.jp/products/housing/x2_gf2/top.html

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"Often copied, never equaled"

UK Germany GoPro housing

UK Germany have announced an aluminium housing for the GoPro camera to enable it to be used down to 100 metres.

The LCD BacPac can be used in the housing and the flat port enables sharp focus underwater.

www.uk-germany.eu

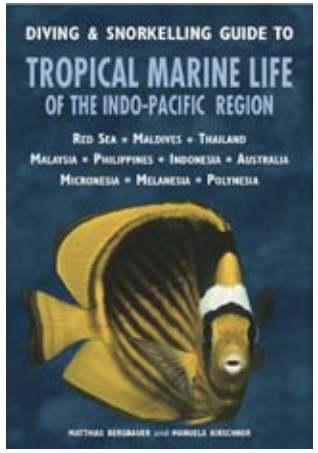
Optical Ocean Sales, LLC in Seattle

Optical Ocean Sales, LLC is proud to announce it has expanded into a retail sales center conveniently located on Lake Union at 1800 Westlake Ave North, Suite 201 in Seattle, thus continuing it's 8 years of service to the diving community. We are the only dedicated underwater photography equipment store in the northwest. Optical Ocean's new retail location gives the community the opportunity to put their hands on the most popular brands. In addition we strive to be a center for continuing education, travel information and first-rate personal service, crucial when dealing with such complicated systems.

www.opticaloceansales.com

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

by Matthias Bergbauer and Manuela Kirschner

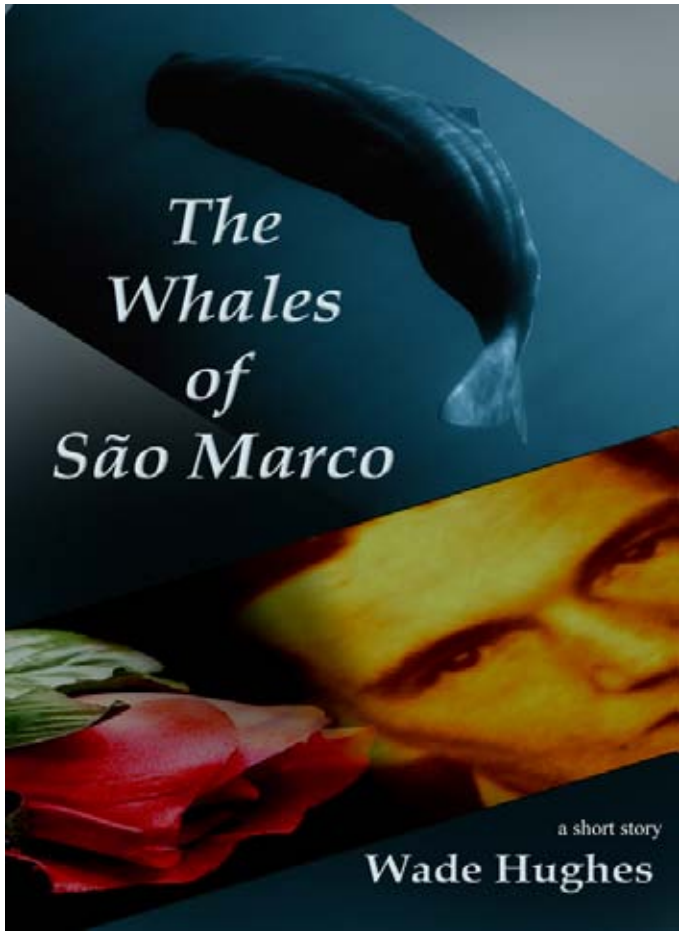


The Indo-Pacific region includes the major diving destinations of the Red Sea, the Maldives, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia, the Great Barrier Reef, Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia and accounts for 92% of the world's coral reef.

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

Publication date October 2011 £12.99 224pp 192 x 130mm

www.johnbeaufoy.com/diving.html



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Outdoor Photographer of the Year

Deadline 25th September 2011

Outdoor Photography's annual photography competition, Outdoor Photographer of the Year, showcases the very best outdoor images from around the globe, from both amateur and professional photographers. This year, the competition is even better, with bigger prizes, a new category, plus the exciting news that the winning images will feature in a London exhibition.

With categories covering everything from landscapes and wildlife to travel, adventure and environmental issues, the competition looks to reveal the very best of British and overseas photographic talent in the natural world.

Entry for this category is now FREE this year, to help encourage the next generation of outdoor photographers. There are over £10,000 worth of great prizes up for grabs!

The competition will be judged by leading figures in the outdoor photography world. The stakes are higher than ever…and in January 2012, someone will be crowned the Outdoor Photographer of the Year. Could it be your moment?

www.opoty.co.uk

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AN-5

AQUATICA™ Digital

Photo taken by Chris Doyal with an Aquatica AD7000

This is my fourth Aquatica housing, and the AD7000 tops them all.

Chris Doyal

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AD7000

www.aquatica.ca

Light & Motion Sola 4000

By Peter Rowlands

As with all emerging technologies, specifications improve year on year and this is certainly true with LED lights and especially so for video lights where wide angle coverage and power are desirable.

The invention of LEDs (light emiting diodes) promised to eclipse traditional methods of lighting such as halogen and HID bulbs but the journey has taken longer than most expected as manufacturers had to solve the problems that needed to be overcome, mainly in the heat dissipation department.

West coast of America manufacturer Light & Motion have been at the leading edge of underwater lighting (and also bike lighting, as it happens) for decades and their Sola 4000 represents the widest and brightest handheld LED light on the market today. This development follows the Sola 600 and 1200 which, in a very short space of time, have become the lights of choice with underwater photographers, mainly as spotting/aiming lights.

The Sola 4000 is testament to the fact that LED output has come of age for filming and we are lucky that we operate underwater where is an almost infinite source of heat sync – water – to dissipate the heat generated by this small 16 bulb array. The generation of such heat creates problems on land and the Sola 4000 should ideally not be used on land or, if important to check it, only for a very few seconds indeed. They generate that much heat that the LED array could be damaged. Indeed if one was left on on land there is a strong possibility that it could cause a fire.

With that in mind, Light and Motion have gone to significant lengths to build in not one, nor two but actually three safety devices to eliminate the possibility of any potential problems, especially in the baggage compartment of an aeroplane. Indeed the Sola 4000 is designed to be disassembled for air transport so that the battery pack is totally isolated from the light array.

Charging a Sola 4000 is simplicity itself with the multi voltage fast 5 amp charger. The 4000 has two through hull bulkhead contacts with a polarity pin for safety so no disassembly is needed. Once the 6 cell Li-ion battery is fully charged the rear

The majority of the blue aluminium front plate is milled for maximum surface contact to give improved cooling.

Once the 48.8 Li-ion battery pack is fully charged all the LED lights turn green.

With the front retaining ring unscrewed, the LED array plate can be removed, turned round and the retaining ring screwed back again for safe flying.

Before diving, turn the top switch 90° anticlockwise so that it is pointing at the diver decal and the lower switch 90° to unlock it. Slide the switch fully forward to activate the light and toggle this to go up or down the 7 available power settings. To turn the light off pull the switch fully back and hold for 3 seconds.

LED array goes fully green and you have 7 levels of light output available to give a burn time varying from 240 minutes down to 60 minutes.

The Sola 4000 has a chunky feel to it being 85mm in diameter and 140mm long and there is provision for either a 1" ball adaptor or LocLine knuckle in the base of the light. I was loaned a beta light and underwater it is all but neutral and the quality of light output is super smooth with enough power to act as very useful fill in with wide lenses and more than enough power to make you stop down your lens for macro shots. The Sola 4000 is operable to 300ft (90 metres).

At $1599 no one can claim that the Sola 4000 is cheap but you are getting top of the line lighting in a neat, self contained, unit. It is the sort of light that will repay you every time you use it for it will improve the quality of your images beyond recognition. If you are serious about your filming, the Sola 4000 will be seriously good for you.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

Nauticam NA-GH2 for the Panasonic DMC-GH2

By Peter Rowlands

There's no doubt that since their debut about 3 years ago Nauticam have captured a major slice of the market by producing well designed, ergonomic housings at competitive prices. In addition to the obvious Nikon and Canon ranges they have gone out on a limb and produced housings for cameras which only have a limited demand such as the Nauticam NA-645DF housing for PhaseOne 645DF and Mamiya 645DF cameras with Phase One P+ Digital Backs.

Now I'm not saying that their new NA-GH2 housing for the Panasonic Lumix DMC-GH2 will have limited demand, it's just that Nikon and Canon account for the vast majority of the potential market. However, since it's arrival, the Panasonic GH2 has been responsible for creating an almost new genre of camera and I, for one, am delighted that Nauticam decided to design a housing for it.

Before going into detail about the housing let's try and put the camera into context. Traditionally there have been compact and SLR cameras with an obvious gap between the two in terms of specification and performance. Compacts had small chip sensors and SLRs had much bigger ones including up to full frame 35mm. Obviously the bigger the sensor, the more it costs both in financial terms and in the corresponding processing power

My first choice lens is the 8mm fisheye for both video and stills in UK waters and Nauticam offer a nice compact acrylic dome for use with this lens.

needed. It was developments in this power and chip technology that allowed camera manufacturers to produce mid size sensors at mass produced prices and this led to the arrival of what are known as EVIL cameras - electronic viewfinder, interchangeable lens cameras which offered much improved picture quality (over a compact) from a small package with the ability to use different lenses and have the ability to add an external electronic viewfinder. Let's call them compacts on steroids and they provided a very attractive option to those who felt limited by a traditional compact capability. Sony and Olympus were/are the market leaders with Panasonic linking up with Olympus to concentrate on the 4/3rds format EVIL camera while Sony went

Nauticam are to be congratulated on their design for this is not an easy nor a conventional camera to house but they have done a marvellous job.

for a DX size sensor similar to most SLR cameras.

Now that's not too complicated, is it? Another genre of camera neatly slotted in between a compact and an SLR. Then what happened started blurring the gap with the arrival of Mirrorless Interchangeable Lens cameras such as the GH2 and Sony Alpha range. In truth they had always been around on the edge of the market and, in theory, offered the speed of an SLR in a smaller body without a mirror box. I think it's fair to say that the early models of the cameras, the Panasonic GH1 and early Sony A series were either too expensive or not really good enough, certainly as far as the electronic viewfinders and autofocus speed were concerned.

Then came the Panasonic GH2 and it made people sit up and take notice for several reasons. Firstly the electronic viewfinder performance was hugely improved as was the autofocus speed helped

by the arrival of new lenses built from the ground up with speed and silence in mind. All of a sudden there was a really credible alternative to the more expensive and heavier SLR. The problem was that the new lenses were quite expensive so a multi lens outfit wasn't a whole lot cheaper but, for today's traveller, the whole outfit offered a significant saving in weight.

Why have I gone into so much detail? Well I think that it is important to know and appreciate it when reviewing the Nauticam NA-GH2 housing because I suspect that most people's route to the GH2 will be as an upgrading compact or even EVIL user (as I was) rather than an SLR user wanting a lighter outfit and this is important.

As soon as I read the spec of the GH2 I could hear boxes being ticked in droves, especially coming from my compact direction. It is a very fast, responsive camera, produces lovely high ISO images and both the video and stills image quality are of a very high standard indeed. Ergonomically it was instantly familiar on land and the electronic viewfinder made surface shots on bright days a breeze compared to having to use the LCD screen. The lack of a flipping mirror reduces vibration and most of the lenses have Mego OIS (optical image stabilization) which extended the shooting range in low light.

As soon as I heard that Edward from Nauticam was working on a housing, I made the commitment and sold my existing Sony NEX-5 outfit.

I have now had the NA-GH2 for over a month and only dived it in UK waters but each dive something new settles in, if you get my drift, in terms of handling and operating. It is a housing that takes time to get to know rather than one which is obvious from the start.

The Nauticam NA-GH2 handles really well as a hand held camera

Loading the camera requires a base plate to be attached to the tripod socket of the camera. This plate also incorporates an intermediate control lever for the lens release which is fine but if you want to change batteries you have to remove the base plate. With the base plate fitted, the camera slides into position once the AF Area/Mode and Mode/Drive knobs either side of the cold shoe have been lifted up. The camera slides in and hits a stop with a reassuring click as the locking lever on the right hand side engages. The camera is now held very precisely and all of the controls fall into line which is what you expect from a Nauticam. This is a very tricky camera to house but they have done a really good job.

If I'm allowed my first niggle at this stage, I'll take one but it's not one about Nauticam in particular - it's actually about all black housings

The Nauticam acrylic dome port for this lens is naturally larger than the 8mm one and changing ports is very simple with the Nauticam design.

The camera slides in and hits a stop with a reassuring click as the locking lever on the right hand side engages. The camera is now held very precisely and all of the controls fall into line which is what you expect from a Nauticam.

with black internal parts – it's not easy to see where the camera tray is in relation to the corresponding track in the housing body. Black on black needs a well-lit room or holding a small focusing light in one's mouth to help guide the camera home. I will admit to having (and using) an elasticated forehead mounted LED light but I'm really not comfortable

with too many people knowing this but it does work very well.

With said camera now positively fixed in the front housing body, the AF Area/Mode and Mode/Drive knobs can be dropped down into position and the single O ring groove and mating surfaces checked (once again a light at this stage is very useful) following which the hinged rear door is closed and secured with Nauticam's trademark rotary control closure. It has a very positive feel indeed.

My first choice lens is the 8mm fisheye for both video and stills in UK waters and Nauticam offer a nice compact acrylic dome for use with this lens. This small combination is a pleasure to use for available light work even in UK waters where the camera's excellent high ISO performance comes into its own. Finally, and at the risk of hearing howls of derision, I can't help but believe that the addition of a GreenWater Magic filter makes this an unbeatable combination for such available light shots.

My other lens is the 7-14mm which provides a versatile very wide to semi-wide zoom range which is especially useful for video. The Nauticam acrylic dome port for this lens is naturally larger than the 8mm one and changing ports is very simple with the Nauticam design. Indeed so too is changing lenses which can be done without removing the camera from the housing.

I was initially concerned about the lack of a manual focus control but in reality the GH2 has surprised me with virtually no 'hunting' even in quite dark conditions under a wreck in UK waters and using ISO 3200 gives smooth, noise free results. Coming from where I do when even 400asa was grainy and 1000asa was so bad it was treated as a special effect, having the ability to use 3200 is a dream come true.

The Nauticam NA-GH2 handles really well as a hand held camera but it also has available a neat base plate and handle assembly to which can be added ball sockets for strobe arms. The base of this can be adjusted quite precisely to get your hand and triggering finger in exactly the right place for you. A lot of thought has gone into providing the components for this system and a lot areas have been machined away to reduce the weight but at the cost of rigidity as there is a slight flexing movement when the weight of a strobe is added but this is not a major problem. The rubberised handles are very comfortable and this is something that Nauticam have always been very keen on because the handles are an important link to the camera controls and a comfortable hand position is the best start.

Strobe triggering is via fibre optic cables triggered by the camera's pop up flash which is easy to open and close. There is an external push fit adaptor incorporating 2 holes for Nauticam fibre optic cables and 2 for bare ended ones. Personally I would have preferred this to be retained with screws for security but having said that I haven't lost it yet! Unfortunately the output of the built in flash on the GH2 is not controllable so there might be a problem with battery drain on a long dive using strobes all the time but I haven't got there yet.

All of the important controls fall easily to hand, especially when handholding the housing, and Nauticam are to be congratulated on their design for this is not an easy nor a conventional camera to house but they have done a marvellous job.

I've left the final part of the review to the viewfinding because your opinion will depend on whether you are moving up from a compact or

A 10mm ball adaptor is available to mount spotting lights and there is a cold shoe adaptor on the top of the housing.

down from an SLR. Moving up from a compact and you will be impressed with the large viewing port for the 3" LCD screen. Unfortunately the electronic viewfinder is not really useable with one's eye displaced by even the lowest volume mask and there are no optics available to improve this situation and that is why someone moving down from an SLR, having got used to a 180° or 45° optical viewfinder will quite rightly be disappointed. Nauticam do produce 2 optical viewfinders but this housing is not designed to accept them.

Personally, as an ex-compact user, that's not a problem for me and I am just happy to be able to use such an excellent camera underwater in a housing that, for me, gives me exactly what I want.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

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Nauticam

www.uwvisions.com
www.nauticamuk.com

Mitsubishi A6M Zero

by Chris Hamilton

On Boxing Day in 1943 a lone Japanese pilot in a Mitsubishi A6M Zero made an emergency landing off the jungles of Papua New Guinea that almost 70 later has become one of the most unspoiled and intact aviation wrecks in Asia Pacific.

The fate of pilot Tomiharu Honda has never been determined. He may have lived to old age as an adopted villager, or wasted away in wretched solitude and starvation in the mountains. He may have met his end as a ceremonial feast for a head hunting tribe. All that can be known with certainty is that he never again saw Japan, and the craft he left behind has become one of the best-preserved and most fascinating wrecks to dive in Asia Pacific. The rusted old Zero body is also a testament to his aeronautic skills; few pilots could have made an emergency landing that resulted in so little damage to the plane. It seems most likely that the crash was due to fuel shortage. Honda must have expertly skimmed the plane over the surface of the water until it glided to a stop about 50 meters from shore. As the plane gurgled down to the shallow muck, one wanders what was going through his head as he scrambled out of the cockpit and headed for the jungle shoreline.

68 years later, the body of the plane still rests in fifteen meters of water, solid and unbroken, the propellers still straight and intact, even with some guns in place. Descending from the surface it is not difficult for divers to imagine what she must have looked like on that morning in 1943.

The Mitsubishi A6M Zero is accessible to divers today from Walindi Plantation Resort in Kimbe Bay, New Britain by day charter or live aboard. It was through the resort that the wreck first became accessible,

(Top) After almost 70 years in the mud, the plane is still in remarkable shape. – Nikon D200, Subal housing, Tokina 10-17 @ 10mm Manual exposure, One ikelite ds125 one 1 ds160- F8, 1/100 iso 200 strobes off.

(Right) A diver hovers over the cockpit. – Nikon D200, Subal housing, Tokina 10-17 @ 10mm Manual exposure, One ikelite ds125 one 1 ds160- F8, 1/60 iso 200

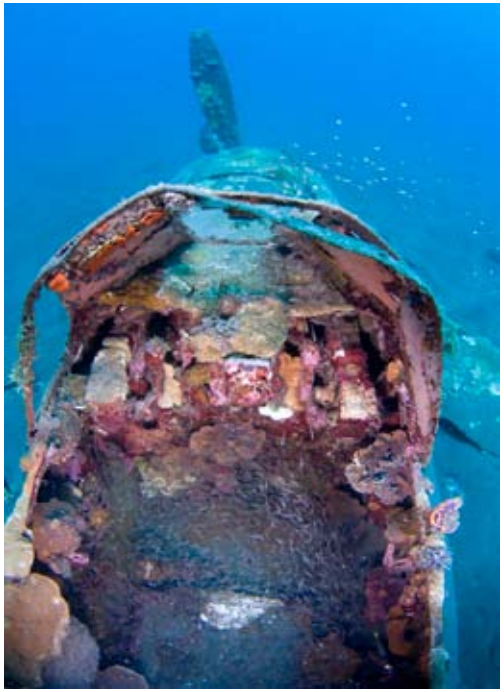
after local sea cucumber divers stumbled upon it in 2000. Completely covered in decades of sponges and corals and sediment, the odd-shaped bulge was barely distinguishable from a nearby coral bommie. When it had been determined that the odd shaped bulge was certainly a wreck, it was meticulously scoured by avid divers from the local resort. After brushing off the excess growth, enthusiasts were flabbergasted to find the complete unbroken plane body before them. Since that time, divers and photographer from all over the world have come to inspect this relic of what was once considered cutting edge technology, a Japanese creation that was thought be able to shift the balance of power during the war.

The dive is suitable for all experience levels. As she sits so near the shore visibility can vary, but the 9.9 meter craft (with a 12 meter wingspan) is usually entirely visible for photo opportunities even on murkier days. Marine life hovers about the wreck, taking refuge in every concave and crevice; pipefish glide over the body and schools of juvenile cardinalfish dart to and fro. Behind the pilot seat in the cockpit a large anemone houses a family of pink anemonefish . The nearby bommie is also a haven for marine life and fascinating for divers to observe,

(Left) A model of a Japanese Mitsubishi A6M Zero given to the owner of Walindi Resort by a Japanese amateur historian.

(Above) View from above of the wreck. – Nikon D200, Subal housing, Tokina 10-17 @ 10mm Manual exposure, One ikelite ds125 one 1 ds160- F8, 1/100 iso 320 strobes off.

(Right) The cockpit is shrouded in glassfish. . – Nikon D200, Subal housing, Tokina 10-17 @ 10mm Manual exposure, One ikelite ds125 one 1 ds160- F8, 1/80, iso 200



(Above) A diver sits where Tomiharu Honda once did. – Nikon D200, Subal housing, Tokina 10-17 @ 10mm Manual exposure, One ikelite ds125 one 1 ds160- F8, 1/80 iso 200 strobes off.

(Left) Diver inspects the nose of the Zero. – Nikon D200, Subal housing, Tokina 10-17 @ 10mm Manual exposure, One ikelite ds125 one 1 ds160- F8, 1/80, iso 200

Being shallow, the wreck affords long bottom times and every inch can be inspected by divers. – Nikon D200, Subal housing, Tokina 10-17 @ 10mm Manual exposure, One ikelite ds125 one 1 ds160- F8, 1/80 iso 200 strobes off.

harboring glassfish schools, mantis shrimp, nudibranchs, gobies and all kinds of other critters – one dive in Kimbe Bay is rarely enough for the enthusiast. The diving is conveniently located, the conditions are excellent, the marine life diverse, and amongst it all, one of the most mysterious and well preserved wrecks from WWII. To experience a piece of history, Kimbe Bay and the Mitsubishi A6M Zero is a must do for any diver heading to Papua New Guinea.

For more information visit www.Walindi.com

Photographs by
Christopher Hamilton
Text by Leah Sindel &
Christopher Hamilton

www.chphotographic.com

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Things that glow in the dark

by Alex Tyrrell

The term 'boys and their toys' spring to mind when I think about my underwater photography equipment. We all love new camera gear to play with, whether it's a lens with a different perspective, snoots on our strobes, or even a completely new camera system. I am certainly no different when it comes to new gadgets! As I do nearly all of my photography where I work, which happens to be the beautiful location of Dauin just outside the town of Dumaguete, on Oriental Negros in the Philippines, my portfolio is not quite as varied as a travelling photographer. Mind you, the diving here is superb with an abundance of macro critters that will appear on most underwater photographers wish list. But I am always looking to try something different to give my shots some variety from the normal images that you get from the standard macro lenses. This is my justification to myself (and my long-suffering girlfriend) for the need to continually purchase new 'toys' for my camera. In reality, this is a fairly poor excuse, but it's lots of fun trying out new gear and techniques!

My most recent venture into the 'something different', has been capturing images of marine creatures that fluoresce at night when illuminated by the correct type of light. The 'correct' type of light being either Ultra Violet, also known as 'Black Light' as humans do not see this wavelength, or a specially blue-filtered light developed by Dr. Charlie Mazel. Charlie originally began building underwater ultraviolet lights in the mid-70's as a hobby and it eventually turned into research and the founding of NightSea (www.nightsea.com) who are now the leader in scientific study into underwater fluorescence. Over the years Charlie developed his fluro-lights, moving away from UV and onto a specially filtered blue light, which

All shots taken with Nikon D200 in Subal ND20 housing with twin Inon Z240 strobes set to full power. Nightsea BE3 Excitation Filters used on both strobes and BB62 Barrier Filter used on lens. Custom Excitation Filter on LMI Sola focus light.

Lisa's Mantis Shrimp- Nikon 60mm ED, f/6.3, 1/250th, ISO 400

gives a much-enhanced fluorescent experience. I have tried both the Nightsea and UV lights side-by-side and can honestly say the Nightsea Light is the superior.

What is Fluorescence?

So I am guessing you are wondering exactly what fluorescence is and how it occurs? Well, fluorescence is the name for the absorption of light at one wavelength and its re-emission at a different wavelength. Therefore, some things will glow when you shine the right light on them. When we view a marine creature that fluoresces, it usually emits only a narrow range of colours so it appears to glow. This is in contrast to viewing a marine creature illuminated by white light, which contains all the colours of the spectrum.

You may well have seen things glow on previous night dives you have done, however this is normally from single-celled organisms called Dinoflagellates. There are however a number of other marine critters that can make their own glow, such as Lanternfishes. The light is produced by a chemical reaction called bioluminescence, the same way that Fireflies and Glow-Worms light up. Most organisms emit light when physically disturbed, so the motion of a diver through the water can set them off. Bioluminescence and fluorescence are both forms of luminescence; the big difference between them is that with bioluminescence everything needed to glow is already contained in the organism, whereas for fluorescence, you have to stimulate them by shining the right type of light on the subject.

Fimbriated Moray Eel - Nikon 60mm ED, f/6.3, 1/250th, ISO 400

Golden Mantis Shrimp- Nikon 60mm ED, f/11, 1/250th, ISO 640

History of Underwater Fluorescence

Underwater Fluorescence is not a new discovery. The first printed record found of an observation of fluorescence of a marine organism dates back to 1927. Mr. C. E. S. Phillips was walking along the shore in Torbay, England, and noticed that the anemones in a tide-pool seemed to be an especially bright green. He collected several specimens and used a light with a Wood's glass filter (a filter that absorbs visible light and transmits ultraviolet) to confirm that it fluoresced under ultraviolet light. Further discoveries of Fluorescence were made through the 50's and 60's and even the legendary Captain Jacques-Yves Cousteau mentions the use of ultraviolet light underwater in The Silent World.

More recently David Doubilet published an article with excellent fluorescence photographs of corals in National Geographic magazine in 1997. Doubilet used a high-powered underwater light that required surface power, so he worked off the pier in Eilat, Israel, and photographed specimens that had been collected from various depths and assembled for

ightsea Filters: BE3 Excitation Filter fitted to Inon Z240 (side view), BB62 Barrier Filter & Custom Sola Excitation Filter.

Cuthona yamasui Nudibranch Comparison - Nikon 60mm ED, f/11, 1/250th, ISO 640 (Fluro) & Nikon 60mm ED, f/11, 1/250th, ISO 640 (normal)

his camera. Subsequently, in the April 1999 issue of Skin Diver magazine, Jack and Sue Drafahl published an article on underwater fluorescence. They photographed corals that were naturally fluorescent in daytime, and did not use any special lights for either observation or photography. To get the proper effect on the film they scanned the images into a computer and adjusted the colors with image processing software.

Fluorescent Equipment

Some specialist equipment is required to view and photograph fluorescence. First of all, you will need either a UV light or a Nightsea Light that has their special blue-filtered LED's. Using just the blue light however, will give an overly-blue cast to everything, so this is counteracted by using a 'blue-block mask visor', which is a yellow filter that fits over your mask. This filter strips out the blue leaving only the true fluorescence of the creatures visible. Without the yellow filter, you will not see the true fluorescent effect.

The same is true for photographing fluorescence; you need a source of UV or specially filtered blue light to illuminate your subject and a yellow filter for the camera. The obvious choice is to use filters for your strobes, which is what I have been using and are manufactured by Nightsea. These are available in various different sizes to fit different strobes. The ones I have for my Inon Z240's fit very snugly, so will not slip off even without the use of the bungee cord provided to secure them to the strobes. As a secondary benefit, this tighter fit ensures no leakage of 'white light' that can interfere with the fluorescent effect. Nightsea recommend internal filters for the camera, and like their strobe filters, make them in a variety of sizes, which fit directly to the screw mount at the front of your lens. This means there is no way of accidentally knocking it off during a dive, which would be possible for an externally mounted

filter. This does mean you are then locked into fluro-photography for the whole dive, but my personal opinion is dedicating yourself to fluro-photography for the whole dive is preferable to aid concentration and should lead to getting better results.

Camera & Strobe Settings

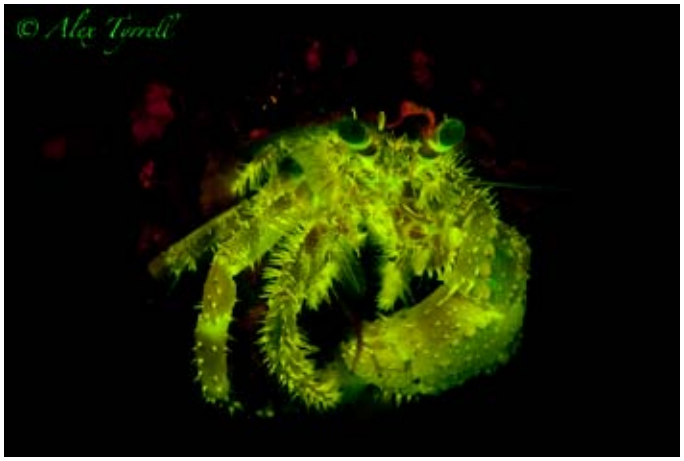
Fluorescence can be a fairly weak effect and once the excitation filters have been put onto your strobes, it dramatically reduces the light output. I found that I leave my strobes on full power all the time and adjust my aperture if I get over-exposure. Backscatter, the nemesis of underwater photographers, is thankfully not something you really need to worry about in fluro-photography, so direct lighting is the way to go. Edge lighting simply does not provide enough power.

Our mantra of 'get close to your subject' is vitally important to utilise every bit of light coming from your strobes. If I need to back off a little to fit my subject into frame, I will push my strobes out in front of the port to cut the strobe to subject distance down as much as possible.

A high ISO is also preferable. I have been using ISO 800 on my Nikon D200, as if pushed any further the noise is unacceptable. Newer cameras with better noise suppression will allow you to set the ISO higher with acceptable noise levels (I'm looking forward to getting my new D7000 in the water for this when my housing arrives!). I have found the Noise Reduction Tool in Lightroom to be great for lowering the noise levels in my fluro-photos.

As would be expected, based on the previous three paragraphs, shooting with a fairly wide aperture is required to make the most of the limited light. If you can set your ISO higher than I can, this will allow you the use of a smaller f-stop to gain more depth-of-field. This will be advantageous for fluro-macro imaging.

Orangutan Crab- Nikon 60mm ED, f/8, 1/250th, ISO 400



Hermit Crab - Nikon 60mm ED, f/9, 1/250th, ISO 800

As our sole light source is the (filtered) strobes, shutter speed is not so important as your strobes will fire quicker than most shutter speeds that you will use.

Subjects

Macro photography will give you the best chance of decent results, as the area to be illuminated by your strobes is much smaller than in a wide-angle shot. I have yet to try lighting for wide-angle, mainly due to only having two excitation filters for my strobes and I think I will need a couple of off-camera strobes to adequately light a reef scene for fluro. Plus being able to use a higher ISO than what my D200 allows would really benefit for wide-angle. Lenses I have successfully used so far are the Nikon 60mm and the Sigma 28-70mm, but I have plans to try the Nikon 105mm VR and the Tokina 35mm Macro soon, which should both work very well.

Subjects are not too hard to find for fluro photography, as when a creature fluoresces, it generally stands out from its environment in quite an obvious manner. This makes finding the smallest of Nudibranch's possible, even to the untrained eye! My favourite subjects so far have been Mantis Shrimps (Lysioquillidae maculate, lisa and mapia) and Fimbriated Moray Eels (Gymnothorax fimbriatus), but there are many other subjects from tiny Nudibranchs through to Magnifica Anemones and huge colonies of Hard Corals, where nice abstracts in psychedelic colours can be found. In a tropical environment you will not be short of subjects. Even on muck dives there are numerous Sand Anemones, Hermit Crabs, Shrimp and Nudibranch's that fluoresce, however, initially you will find a reef environment more rewarding.

Problems & Solutions

Photographing fluorescence does take a bit of practice; so don't expect perfect results on the first dive! You will need to spend a bit of time getting used to this style of photography and work your subjects to get the best results. It's not simply a case of attaching the filters to your camera system and off you go! From personal experience, the following are problems that I have encountered and the solutions I have found to them:

Autofocus – with dramatically reduced light the autofocus on your camera can struggle to lock onto the subject. Newer camera models than my D200 should be much better at this, but your lens will still 'hunt' at times. Solutions I have found to this include getting a good fluro-focus light (more on this next), use manual focus if your system allows this, or lock the focus at the required distance and then rock back-and-forth until the image is sharp in your viewfinder/LCD. Alternatively, you can set your focus with the subject illuminated by white light and then switch to 'fluro' when shooting. Whichever way you choose, being patient and taking your time is also necessary.

Focus light – my initial set up was with a UV focus light, which certainly worked, but it had some shortcomings. The beam pattern is a tight spot, so every time you change camera to subject distance you need to alter the angle of the focus light, which I found quite annoying. My solution to this was to have a special blue filter made for my LMI Sola 600P and then adapt a dive computer boot to hold it in place. This is a temporary measure until Nightsea send me the prototype of their LMI Sola Adapter, which I am planning on using with the Sola 1200 for additional power.

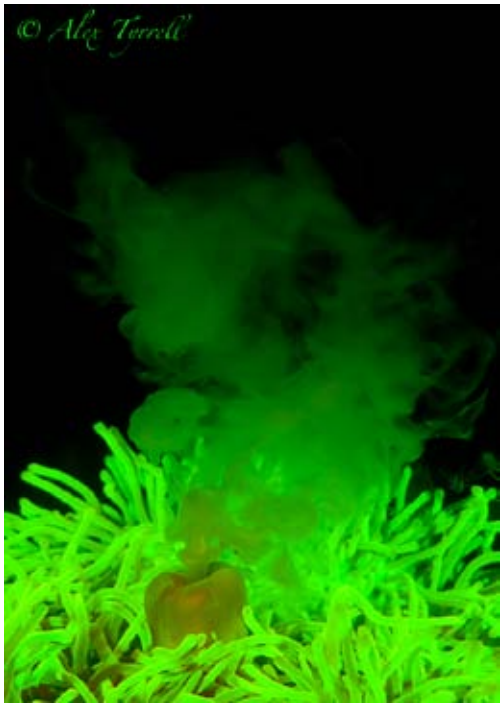
Colour Saturation – as previously mentioned fluorescence can be quite a weak effect in some marine creatures, so follow my advice for strobe positioning and make sure you are very close you your subject. Even taking these steps, I have found that a bit of help from Lightroom to boost saturation, increase the exposure a little and using the 'blacks slider' to darken the non-fluro element of your image, will give a more dramatic effect.

Mask Visor – for us to see fluorescence we need to use a yellow mask visor, but when looking through your viewfinder or reviewing your images on the LCD you need to take it off. Otherwise, it will look like you have underexposed the shot by quite a bit. So you have to use the mask visor when looking for subjects but remember to push it out of the way when shooting or reviewing. It's quite easy to forget you have the mask visor on and then be left wondering what you have to do to your camera settings to get a decent exposure!

Summary

My ongoing experiments with fluorescent photography have all been in the tropical waters of the Philippines, but I am sure there are many other subjects that this technique will lend itself to in temperate waters. Being based in the Asia my access to temperate water means a long flight, so I'll leave someone else to look into this (plus I don't like the cold!).

If you are planning on trying this out for yourself, don't expect perfect results first time out. It is a little trickier than normal underwater photography and like anything in life, the more you practice, the better you will get. You need to be patient and able to spend time on a subject. You should be very familiar with your camera controls, as adjustments are normally made in very limited light conditions. Also, you need to be very comfortable in these low light conditions; this isn't for anyone afraid of the dark! Perfect buoyancy control is also a prerequisite to ensure you are not damaging the marine environment while diving with minimal light. So for an outlay of approx. $500 you could be capturing some unique photos to spice up your portfolio, and maybe even an image of fluorescence that is a new discovery!



Spawning Magnifica Anemone- Sigma 28-70mm at 28mm, f/6.3, 1/80th, ISO 500

Alex Tyrrell
www.atlantishotel.com

Alex Tyrrell is the Photo Pro/Dive Instructor at Atlantis Dive Resort in Dumaguete. Atlantis are the only dive operators in the Philippines that offer the Fluro Night Dive experience, which can be done at either the Dumaguete or Puerto Galera resort .

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Slugs and Snails

by Mark Webster

Most underwater photographers are internet savvy (or you would not be reading UWP!) and are likely be familiar with the website Dive Photo Guide which is full of useful news and tips. One series of articles I enjoyed reading there is by Mike Bartick extolling the attractions of the nudibranch population on his local Californian dive sites. He also made a visit to Scotland and seemed surprised to find healthy populations of similar species there. So, I felt it was a good prompt to make an expose of the nudibranchs and some other slug varieties and the technical challenges for underwater photographers visiting Cornwall or the south coast of the UK.

This group of invertebrates includes some of the most exotic and colourful creatures to be found in British waters and they compare well with their tropical cousins. However they are often missed as most are of "macro" size, but once you have slowed down to look for them and learn a little of their habits they become easier to spot and rewarding to photograph.

There are more than one hundred species of nudibranchs, sea hares and flat worms to be found along the English channel and Atlantic coasts. Although many are vividly coloured they are easily missed as the colours and patterns often blend in with their immediate environment. Many are found in similar habitats in shallow waters but each group has its own feeding patterns and habits, which makes them a little easier to track down.

These critters are often much less than 12mm

Flabellina pedata – When breeding this species is often found on kelp in pairs and small groups. This shot is in fact a double exposure on film which is fun to try on film or with image overlay with a digital camera. Nikon F90X, Subal housing, 105mm micro and 20mm with star burst filter, Sea & Sea YS50 flash gun, Elitechrome 100 f22 1/250 and f11 1/125.

Aplysia punctata – Sea hares have acquired their common name due to their (some say cute?) rabbit or hare like ears, particularly when viewed head on. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 60mm micro, Sea & Sea, ISO 100 f11 1/30.

(1/2") long so are not only difficult to spot but also can be difficult to photograph as well. Most images are taken with a macro lens and many will need additional magnification to come close to filling the frame or will require cropping. Personally I use a 105mm Nikkor micro (the older version which sometimes focuses slower than the speed of a moving nudibranch….) often coupled with a Inon wet lens when required which gives close to 2:1 reproduction. For greater magnification you can stack wet lenses, dependant on your choice of manufacturer, but obviously the more you add there is a risk of poorer image quality and depth of field reduces even further.

Another option is to add a teleconverter (with a port extension) to both increase focal length and magnification, but the down side of this is a reduction in maximum aperture which often affects the auto focus to such a degree that a manual gear is needed. You can also consider using dry diopters on the lens inside the port, which work well but will limit the range of focus of the lens at infinity. If you need yet more magnification then combinations of these three options will provide that, but be prepared to practice with this set up as the depth of field becomes wafer thin.

You can of course use a macro lens with a shorter focal length (e.g. 50 or 60mm) and achieve the same magnification but I find that your port will often end up too close to the subject to light effectively, unless you are using a teleconverter.

Focusing on these small subjects can be a challenge due to their size, the narrow depth of field at high magnifications and also due to lens hunting when light levels or contrast is low. A focus light, either separate or built in to the flash, will help the lens focus and lock on or you may need to resort to manual focus. If you do not have a manual focus gear on your lens the alternative technique is to focus (on anything) to the maximum or the desired magnification and then to lock the lens in this position by switching the camera body to manual focus. You can then 'rock focus' and release the shutter when the subject is sharp. If your housing does not have this function then you can try either locking the focus by keeping the shutter half depressed or using the AF lock button – some photographers assign the activation of auto focus entirely to this button for this reason and use the shutter button only to release the shutter.

Compact cameras have a macro setting which on some cameras may once again put you too close to the subject to light it easily and some compact models even disable the onboard flash in macro or super macro mode. The solution is to add a wet close up lens to the housing which then allows good magnification with the telephoto function thus increasing the distance to the subject and allowing good flash positioning.

Flash lighting is essential for these subjects and there is more than one solution to successful lighting. Quite often your subject nudibranch is in a position surrounded by other reef features or marine growth, which are good at casting shadows if you are not cautious with your lighting position. I favour my Inon Quad (ring) flash which often defeats this problem but you can replicate this flat lighting technique by positioning your flash guns alongside your port which leaves you to concentrate on the

Prostheceraeus vittatus – The candy striped flat worm might look like a nudibranch but it is an unrelated worm species. Some marine biologists theorise that flat worms mimic nudibranchs for defensive purposes. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 105mm micro, Inon Quad flash, ISO 100 f22 1/125.

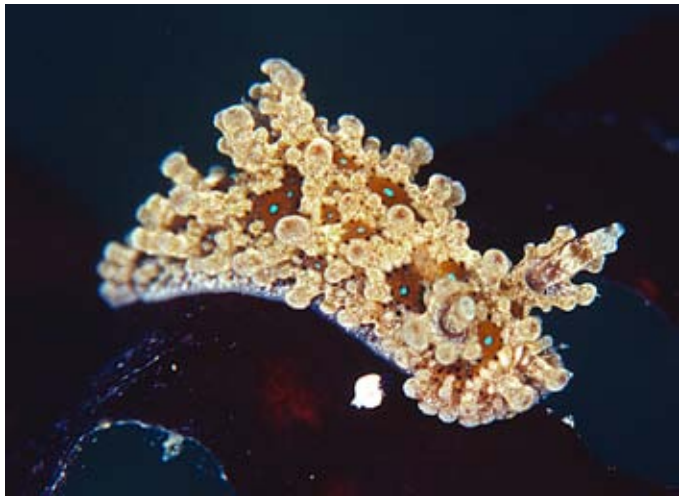
Pleurobranchus membranaceus – The largest sea slug that you are likely to encounter is possibly closer to a sea hare than a nudinbranch. Found in river estuaries and sea lochs in the north it is quite colourful when illuminated and can apparently swim like a Spanish dancer! Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 10-17mm FE, 2x teleconverter, Subtronic Mini flash guns, ISO 200 f11 1/25.

composition. Small guns are best for this technique but you can also use larger guns or a single flash to light the subject successfully. Sometimes strong shadows behind the subject or a black background are just what you need to emphasise the colour, pattern or shape of the nudibranch, so keep an open mind on flash positioning and perhaps consider snoots to vary the lighting techniques.

UK nudibranchs may be small but they make up for this with variety in their colouring, pattern and appearance. There are two major groups to search for; the Dorids, or sponge eaters, and the Aeolids which feed mostly on algae's, ascidians, hydroids and bryozoans.

Nudibranchs are hermaphrodite (both male and female at the same time) and breeding frequency may vary from every month to once every twelve months. However, April and May appear to be very active months in the British Isles when the rocks will be peppered with the egg rosettes and spirals which are often pigmented with the dominant colour of the parent or food source. Once you have spotted the egg clusters it will not be long before you find the parents.

The most common of the Dorids is the 'sea lemon', so called due to its often vivid yellow colouring and knobbly texture which it has adopted to resemble the encrusting sponges which are its main food source. Sea lemons do in fact come in a variety of colours and textures, from smooth grey to orange and purple, dependant on which species of sponge they feed upon. They all rely on their camouflage as their first defence against predators, but apparently are also able to excrete an acidic fluid as well if attacked. Size of this species varies enormously from a few millimetres to 12 centimetres (1/4" to 5") and all have a wide flat



Aegires punctilucens – this is a very small (5mm) and possibly rare species which has excellent camouflage despite the fact that it contrasts well with red seaweed in this image. Nikon F90X, Subal housing, 105mm micro, Inon wet lens, Inon Quad flash, Fujichrome Velvia 50 f18 1/125.

shape developed to firmly grip their sponge and reef habitat. They lay their eggs in very attractive rosettes which vary in colour from pure white to bright pinks, yellows and oranges. The spirals will be seen on the reef surface, kelp stypes, seaweeds and many other stable surfaces. If you are lucky then you will find the nudibranch actually laying the eggs, but if not then search carefully around the area of the eggs and you will soon spot the parent.

The Aeolids adopt a different defensive strategy and aim to be seen as clearly as possible by their predators. They come in a quite surprising array of shapes and colours which advertise the fact that they are poisonous, sting or just taste unpleasant. This group feeds on bryozoans and

Polycera quadrilineata – These small nudibranchs (15mm) are often seen singly in early spring, but come together in large groups during the summer months to breed. The groups congregate on kelp fronds where they lay their egg spirals and feed on sea mats. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 10-17mm FE, 2x teleconverter, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200 f16 1/25.

hydroids especially, which have there own stinging cell system, and occasionally on the eggs of other nudibranch species. The nudibranch is able to ingest the stinging cells and then store them often in the tips of their cerata (the spiky filaments on their backs) which they shed and regenerate if they are attacked. Some species are also able to graze upon the stinging cells of anemones for the same purpose. These species are generally quite small, perhaps 5-25mm (1/5" to 1").

I find that looking at the preferred food source is often the best way to spot these species which are not always obvious despite there bright colouring. So begin by looking for colonies of ascidians, hydroids and bryozoans and then look closely over a small area. You will also find bryozoans growing on seaweeds and the nudibranchs will often be found feeding here or laying eggs. On the reef itself these species are also seen when moving between feeding areas and this makes them easier to spot and also offer an opportunity to photograph from a variety of angles.

There are a couple of sea slug species which are somewhere between a nudibranch and a sea hare. One example is Colpodaspis pusilla which is considered rare in UK waters but this maybe because it extremely small (5-10mm) and not often spotted. When looking for this species and other very small nudibranchs I normally concentrate on any white spots on the weed, then look through the lens and quite often will be surprised that it is a slug on the move. This species has a small internal shell which is covered by the mantle and there are two prominent head tentacles. The tentacles, tail and mantle are almost pure white in colour and all have a textured appearance.

Similar but much larger is Pleurobranchus membranaceus which is perhaps the biggest sea slug we are likely to see in UK waters and again is maybe closer to a sea hare than a nudibranch as it retains a small shell hidden in the mantle. They are supposed to like muddy or silty environments and in fact I have only seen them in the Helford estuary amongst the eel grass. The average size of these slugs is 10-15cm (4-6") and I generally spot their large inflated egg spiral first on the sea bed and it you look carefully then the Pleurobranchus will not be far away, but they are often covered by silt unless they are on the move or feeding. When illuminated by flash they are quite brightly coloured in red or orange with a white or creamy spotted mantle. They can also swim like Spanish dancer apparently, although I have never seen this behaviour myself. To capture an image of one or more of this species together you will need a wider lens, perhaps a short range zoom like a 12-24mm or a fish eye zoom with a teleconverter.

Tritonia nilsodhneri – This tiny (5mm) nudibranch is only found on the orange sea fans found mostly on offshore reefs. Their camouflage is excellent and you will need additional magnification to fill the frame. Nikon D100, L&M Titan housing, 105mm micro, Inon wet lens, Inon Quad flash, ISO 200 f18 1/125.

Lomonatus genei – This is a splendid looking quite large nudibranch (40mm) which is found infrequently but is well worth looking for. More often found on reefs which are exposed to strong tidal currents. Nikon F90X, Subal housing, 105mm micro, Inon Quad flash, Fujichrome Velvia 50 f16 1/60.

Sea hares are also very common and some of the more colourful varieties are often mistaken for nudibranchs, but they are in fact closer to their snail ancestry as they retain a small shell on their backs covered by a mantle, which also covers the gills which are exposed on a nudibranch. There are four species of sea hare

Aplysia punctata – Sea hares are close relatives of nudibranchs but retain a small shell under their mantle. There are three or four species found in the UK and they are generally much larger than their close cousins. Nikon D300, Subal ND2, 10-17mm FE, 2x teleconverter, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200 f11 1/50.

found around our coasts which all have a large pair of tentacles which look a little like rabbit ears which leads to the common name. Colour and pattern varies markedly and is often affected by the food source, but some also have extremely good camouflage and blend well with the colour of the seaweeds. The average size is between 2cm to 12cm, but there are occasional visits by larger species from warmer waters. During 2007 the late summer and autumn had been very warm and unusually calm and there was an invasion of hundreds of the large (up to 30cm) sub tropical species Apylsia depilans. Whilst these monsters were not particularly colourful it was an impressive sight to see the seabed so well populated with them and their large coils of pink and orange egg strings.

Sea hares feed on seaweeds almost exclusively and are often found on the red varieties. They have very strong jaws and are able to shred and ingest even the toughest of green seaweeds. Once again these animals are hermaphrodite and have the unusual habit of mating in chains of individual animals, each fertilising the one behind, which in human terms might be described as an orgy. They then lay clusters of several million eggs wound in a tortuous ribbon around the base of seaweeds and on the reef. These animals also carry a toxin (opaline) which they will release in a dark purple coloured ink if disturbed or stressed.

Flat worms are another very attractive little reef animal which are often mistaken for sea slugs and it has been suggested that they mimic nudibranchs for defensive purposes. They are however a totally different species and are more closely related to the thread worms and segmented worms. The most common is the Candy Striped Flatworm (Prostheceraeus vittatus) which are seen in profusion during spring and summer. These animals normally between 25 mm long and 12 mm wide (1" x 1/2") and have two 'horns' at their head end. They are so thin that they seem to glide, sometimes quite quickly, over the surface of the rocks and sea weeds as they search out tunicates to feed on.

So, although we might lack the extensive number of sea slug species that populate the Californian coastline, we do have enough variety here to keep our cameras and macro lenses productively employed.
Each breeding season can produce variations and different species so you can never be certain what you may see.The hunt for nudibranchs and their relatives requires a slow and focused approach but is very rewarding when you succeed and they are fantastic colourful subjects that demonstrate the diversity of the marine world.

Mark Webster
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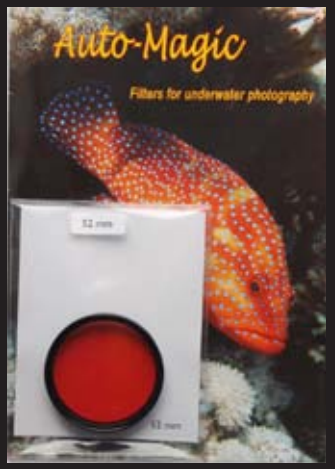

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Stormclouds over Eden

by Wade and Robyn Hughes

Thunderclouds, and the first pelting raindrops of a tropical deluge, blocked our view as we approached the islands of Raja Ampat in the Ceram Sea.

Ahead, in this eastern-most region of Indonesia, awaited reefs that comprise more than 500 species of corals - more than 60 per cent of all known coral species on Earth.

Around 1100 species of fish are known to inhabit these reefs. Likely, more are yet to be discovered. Countless other life-forms bejewel the underwater eco-system. The area is truly a sea of Eden. But for how long?

After the United Arab Emirates, this is one of the world's major sources of shark-fins. Fuelled by the ignorant belief that shark fins are somehow nutritious, hold magical powers, or are even flavoursome-none of which is true-Asian markets pay high prices to middle-men who in turn pay subsistence wages to reward local fishermen who scour their reefs for sharks and rays. Dynamite fishing - wasteful, catastrophic and inefficient adds more relentless pressure to the reefs.

The result is mindless extermination of the sea's essential apex predators. systematic destruction of the marine web of life on which they depend - and on which so many people depend for food. Ignorance and poverty are perpetuating the impoverishment of people, and the marine environment.

But, at Misool, in the islands of Raja Ampat, the clouds are lifting.

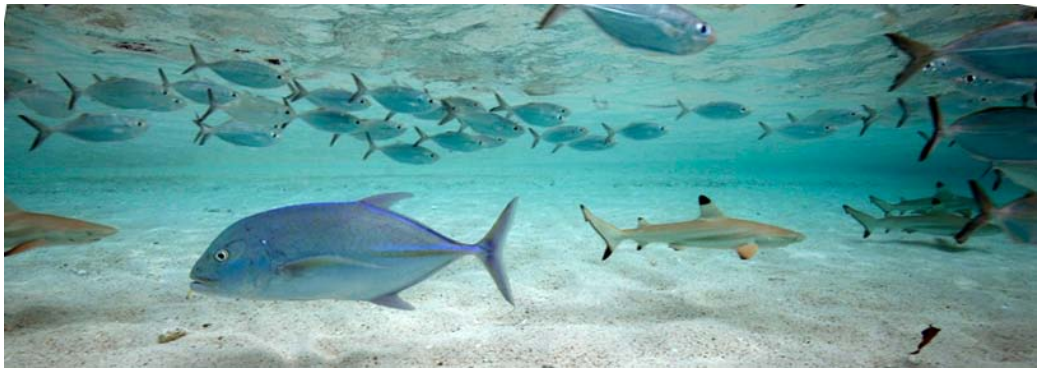
Often, what is perceived as an Earthly paradise is simply a picturesque mask, shrouding from view the impoverishment of the underlying eco-system. Such is the case globally as humans everywhere change, exploit, and extract from the natural environment the resources we need for nourishment, shelter, and material advancement. How much we should take is often a question left to Nature. When there is nothing left to give, we move on in search of easier pickings. Picture postcard views of cherished landscapes – for examples, the Norfolk Broads, the New Zealand Alps, Australia's South West, the Greek Isles, Chesapeake Bay, and the idyllic islands of the Pacific and the Caribbean – all serve to distract us with their sunlight and gloss from the painful reality that their

Trawlers at Sorong, on the western tip of Papua, reflect the realities of life in developing economies.
Scant resources are available for securing the basics of life for the people within these economies. Little or nothing can be devoted to improvement in the quality of life, and the development and maintenance of the knowledge, skills, infrastructure and systems necessary for supporting it. Inevitably, as a consequence, the environment suffers as it sinks in priority against the more urgent need to provide food.
Just four hours by boat from Sorong, Misool, has created an economic base on which local communities can restructure their small society to sustainably exploit their environment, create a role model for similar initiatives elsewhere, and work towards a better future for themselves. We are all part of the environmental problems confronting planet Earth.
At places like Misool, for the time spent there, it is possible to start becoming part of the solution.

Surveying the past; swimming into the future: big-eye jacks patrol over what was once a productive staghorn coral reef demolished by dynamite fishing. (Right) Chain link fencing, an inexpensive, effective means of stabilsiing dynamited such rubble-slopes and encouraging regrowth of corals. While Robyn (Bottom right) swims over a test bed designed to monitor establishment and regrowth rates of hard and soft corals. Under, and around, the test bed, fish and invertebrate marine life gather in dense profusion. Altogether, this simple tableau offers a degree of reassurance that, given a place to call home and respite from over exploitation, the natural fecundity of the sea is capable of generating substantial recovery and repair.

natural abundance has been denuded.

At Misool Eco Resort, in the archipelago of Raja Ampat, Western Papua, Indonesia, the pattern of exploitation is changing. What was a shark-finners' beach camp, is now an exclusive resort, bringing to the local economy a steady stream of employment, revenue, and opportunity previously unavailable to the islanders. The resort lies in the heart of a 1200 square kilometre



Baby black tip reef sharks, like excited, ambitious, but uncoordinated puppies, dash about, snapping up scraps left by jack-attacks on schools of baitfish in the shallow waters off Misool's protected beach. Whelped here, in the relative security of the bay, the sharks will spend a year, growing in the company of their siblings, before heading for the open reefs. There, they will hunt and swim, without rest, for their entire lives. (Below) Robyn (153) plays Gulliver to the Lilliputian sharks.

Designed to conserve and recycle resources, while offering comfort and privacy, and enviable access to prolific coral reefs, the Misool Eco Resort justifies its claim to being sustainable development. Constructed largely from sustainably sourced and recycled material, the resort even captures and recycles nutrient from human waste through garden beds integrated into the architecture of each individual Water Cottage.

marine sanctuary, leased from and policed by, the locals themselves. The motivation is simple and effective: the marine life is worth more alive than dead.

After four years' operations, the effects of this commitment to, an experiment in, economic, social, and environmental sustainable development, are already strikingly evident. Misool's reefs are alive with some of the most prolific marine life in the world. Serious divers can come here and enjoy reasonably priced, and very well managed diving. Boat dives rotate through a variety of interesting and spectacular sites. But the house reef, an easy swim from the steps of most of the private Water Cottages is capable of supporting weeks of studious exploration and and photography in its own right. Snorkling in the lagoon is a delight in itself.

Although a turtle swims in search of food across an area of reef once devastated by dynamite fishing, even areas such as this are beginning to heal. It is a clear sign that humans, with the will and imagination to do so, can prosper in the midst of the biodiversity on which we all depend.

We are all part of the problems facing planet Earth. We all consume natural resources, and exert pressure on the natural systems that create and provide them. At places like Misool, we can become part of the solution, and thoroughly enjoy doing so.

Wade and Robyn Hughes

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Back to the Future

by Mark Webster

Some people say that you should never re-visit your past as often things are never quite as you remember them and inevitably you are likely to suffer some level of disappointment. This philosophy can easily be applied to popular dive sites which once discovered can suffer from the increased diver traffic which can take its toll changing the appearance and quality of the marine life inhabiting the site. There are many in the Red Sea which I can recall first diving in the late 1970's which are now a mere shadow of their former glory.

So where are these musings leading to? In fact they lead to our revered editor who now operates a boat charter (MV Magic) in his spare time for obsessive UW photographers like me. He recently invited me to dive a special site called the Crown Jewels in Plymouth Sound which he assured me had spectacular marine life on it. A little detective work revealed that this site is in fact a portion of a former gas production rig (WE platform from the West Sole field) which was decommissioned around 1980 and had been placed near the Breakwater Fort to be used for commercial diver training. I recalled that I had in fact first dived it commercially when it was complete and operating in the southern North Sea, when it was covered mostly in heavy growths of mussels, and then secondly when it had recently arrived in Plymouth and I was taking NDT (Non Destructive Testing) assessments. My recollection of the second visit was of barren steel rusting tubulars and, although I expected some marine growth since then, I was somewhat doubtful of our revered editor's enthusiasm and assurances. I should of course have known better!

But firstly a few comments about the boat and the operation in general. You can of course get the full technical low down on MV Magic from the website (www.magic-charters.co.uk) but from a practical point of view the boat is well laid out for small groups (max five) with plenty of room on the deck for kit and a warm dry cabin for camera preparation or just to get out of the weather. The deck is level from bow to stern which makes movement around the wheelhouse very easy and allows the group to divide and use both areas for kitting up. There

(Above) HMS Scylla – there are many different species of fish on the wreck and some like this Pollack do not show their normal wariness of divers making them perfect foreground subjects. Nikon D300, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 250, f8 1/25.

(Right) HMS Scylla – shooting up from inside the wreck against open water helps minimise the effects of the silt and having a cooperative and graceful model to pose for you completes the image. Nikon D300, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 250, f11 1/80.

MV Magic on the pontoon at Dry Stack Marina. Nikon Coolpix S3000, auto.

www.magic-charters.co.uk

Peter Rowlands – MV Magic skipper, UWP veteran, guru and model. Nikon Coolpix S3000, auto.

You will find the white species of dead men's fingers (Alcyonium digitatum) all over the wreck with the occasional colony of red men's fingers (Alcyonium glomeratum) which stand out amongst the others and seem to extend and feed during slack water conditions. Nikon D300, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 250, f11 1/125.

is all the normal navigational and communication equipment plus 240v power for laptops and batteries and even a fridge for chilling drinks or in our case chocolate biscuits due to the warm weather! There is a stern platform to drop in from and an open rung ladder that you can climb with your fins on at the end of the dive. The boat operates from Dry Stack marina which is easily accessible without passing through the centre of Plymouth and has plenty of free parking. Either through innocence or ignorance the name of the marina meant nothing to me until I arrived to find that the boats here are literally dry stacked on two or three levels in large warehouse structures. When you want your boat it is lifted on a very large fork lift and delivered to the pontoon for you to board in a matter of minutes - all very high tech.

Although I used to dive in the Plymouth area frequently I had not done so for perhaps ten years. During my absence things have of course changed and one of the additions is HMS Scylla which was sunk as an artificial reef in Whitsand Bay just a twenty minute steam from base on the MV Magic. So in order to build my anticipation for the second dive at the Crown Jewels we dived here first in near perfectly calm surface conditions and bright sunshine. The Scylla was the last Royal Navy Leander class frigate to be built at the Devonport dockyard in Plymouth and so it seems suitably poignant that she should also become the first artificial reef (wreck) to be sunk in the UK close to her home port in 2004. The wreck sits upright on the seabed and has been well prepared for diver access prior to sinking, so it is easy to swim in and out of various parts of the wreck. It would take a few dives to become familiar with the layout, so ideally your first dives should be with someone familiar with the layout of the wreck. The visibility

The walkways on the lower deck of the frigate offer a good opportunity to frame a diver and include some receding perspective. Nikon D300, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 250, f8 1/25.

Breakwater Fort Plymouth Sound. The Crown Jewels lies a few metres from the fort wall in the centre of the picture. Nikon Coolpix S3000, auto.

The Crown Jewels – although the water can be quite green here, particularly during a plankton bloom, the structure is shallow enough to see the sun on the surface on a good day to add to the composition. Nikon D300, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200, f11 1/25.

on the wreck is rarely stunning due to the soft silty seabed conditions in Whitsand bay which are further exacerbated by dredging spoil from the Plymouth docks also being dumped in the bay. We had perhaps 6m of visibility during our dive with a heavy green cast due to a plankton bloom which gave the wreck and resulting images a moody atmosphere. The wreck is now completely covered in marine life, predominantly dead means fingers (soft corals) and plumose anemones which were mostly closed during our dive due to slack water conditions. Nevertheless, the impression is one of lush growth and colour and there is a good variety of fish life on the wreck which are very accustomed to divers and therefore excellent subjects for photographers. There are endless photographic opportunities on the wreck particularly if you have a diver to pose for you in the shots. It is a good idea to dive the wreck with another photographer and you can then alternate posing for each other. I was particularly lucky to have a cooperative and graceful model for my dive who also knew the wreck well.

Following a civilised lunch break on the foredeck we moved on to the Crown Jewels location which is adjacent to the Breakwater fort at the entrance to Plymouth Sound. The fort itself was built as part of the coastal defence system proposed by Prime Minister Lord Palmerston in 1860 and was operational in 1875 and completed in 1880. Military use of the fort ceased in 1976 and from 1978 it was used by Fort Bovisand and Plymouth Ocean Projects for commercial diver training. During that period a number of structures were placed on the seabed including the section of production platform mentioned above.

The Crown Jewels – there are healthy colonies of sea fans (Eunicella verrucosa) around the structure growing alongside a wide variety of other filter feeding marine life. Nikon D300, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200, f11 1/125.

The Crown Jewels – this shot from inside the structure shows the complex array of horizontal and diagonal braces which opens up a variety of unusual compositions not normally seen with plumose anemones on the reef. Nikon D300, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200, f11 1/30.

Many local clubs and dive operators dive in the shelter of the breakwater when conditions are too rough outside the sound and consequently do not see this area at its best. Peter's philosophy is to explore the structures when the weather is good and thus enjoy the best visibility which of course is exactly what we desire for our photography. Having a little bit of current running here is also desirable to ensure that all the filter feeding marine life is out and also that any disturbed silt will clear quickly for the next shot. The bottom depth at high water is around 12-15m and the structures stand between 3-4m proud of the seabed. At the end of the dive you can ascend slowly up the fort wall where there are also numerous subjects, so the dive profile is close to perfect.

Approaching the structure I could immediately see that things had changed dramatically since my last visit here. The entire structure is now covered with colourful plumose anemones, jewel anemones, dead men's fingers, sea fans (gorgonians), hydroids and sponges. The structure comprises vertical, horizontal and diagonal tubulars which provide numerous compositional choices with a wide angle lens when visibility is good, or you can concentrate on the smaller life with a macro lens. The dense growths of hydroids are apparently very good for nudibranchs in the springtime as well.

I spent most of my dive working my way around the structure looking for the best angles to include the marine life, structure and a splash of sunshine from the surface. I could have spent the whole dive here but I wanted to also explore another cylindrical structure at the foot of the fort wall which is covered in sea fans (Eunicella verrucosa). These gorgonians are more frequently seen in deeper water, perhaps 15-20m and beyond, so it was a real surprise

to see such a healthy collection of colonies in such shallow water. In fact they are growing as shallow as 5m on the western wall of the fort which I can only assume is due to darker conditions due the shadows cast by the fort for most of the day. Perhaps a marine biologist out there can enlighten me if they read this. I spent some time also looking closely at the sea fans for the Triton nudibranch (Tritonia nilsodneri) and false cowrie (Simnia patula) and would have returned with a macro lens but I was out of luck or their camouflage was too good!

You can finish your dive with a slow ascent up the fort wall which has numerous subjects in addition to the sea fans on the west side. The large granite blocks of the fort wall have deep fissures between them which are ideal homes for tompot blennies, shannies, squat lobsters, prawns and small crabs. There are also healthy colonies of fan worms (Bispira volutacornis) which seem to be unusually tolerant of a close approach by a noisy UW photographer. As you progress towards the surface the kelp canopy starts to dominate mixed with ascidians and sponges which provide cover for small scorpion fish to ambush their prey. At the end of the dive it is safest to surface by the fort wall to check for boat traffic and make sure that your own boat has seen you before swimming out for pick up.

So was our revered editor correct in his prediction and does the MV Magic measure up as the ideal platform for photographers and film makers? You make suspect a certain degree of sycophancy as I have known our RE for quite some time and write often for this magazine. However, I have tried to be as objective as possible and in my professional life I assess all sorts of marine operations for efficiency and safety and on that score would have no doubts if you

(Left) There are healthy colonies of sea fans (Eunicella verrucosa) around the structure growing alongside a wide variety of other filter feeding marine life. Nikon D300, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200, f11 1/60.
(Right) this structure started life as a part of a gas production platform that was decommissioned and now offers a fascinating combination of shapes to compose around the marine life. Nikon D300, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200, f11 1/125.

are considering a charter on MV Magic. As for the two sites that we visited I would say they offer fantastic opportunities for photographers and videographers and you could happily spend several days on each. But Plymouth as a base offers so much more a little further offshore when the conditions are good with sites like Hands Deep and the Eddystone a relatively short run from shore with a fast boat like MV Magic. So if you are keen on temperate diving then you can build a very varied itinerary for a few days or perhaps a week or more and have the great advantage of being able to return to a site with a different lens or technique in mind.

Dive sites are not normally like fine wines improving with age, but artificial structures are often an exception to this rule. Although I did not see the Scylla when she was first sunk, she certainly started her final life as naked steel and has been quickly colonised and transformed as an artificial reef. The Crown Jewels is also an exception to the rule and I was amazed at the variety of life now on the structure. I will certainly be making a return to both with a few shots planned!

Mark Webster
www.photec.co.uk

(Above) MV Magic on the pontoon at Dry Stack Marina. Nikon Coolpix S3000, auto.

(Left) Breakwater Fort – the wall of the Breakwater Fort also has very healthy colonies of sea fans (Eunicella verrucosa) which can be as shallow as 5m when the tide is low. Nikon D300, Subal ND2 housing, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 flash guns, ISO 200, f11 1/60.

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

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

www.magic-filters.com

Guidelines for contributors

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

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

Uw photo techniques - Balanced light, composition, etc
Locations - Photo friendly dive sites, countries or liveaboards
Subjects - Anything from whale sharks to nudibranchs in full detail
Equipment reviews - Detailed appraisals of the latest equipment
Personalities - Interviews/features about leading underwater photographers

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

How to submit articles

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

1. The text should be saved as a TEXT file and attached to the e mail
2. Images must be attached to the e mail and they need to be 144dpi

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

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

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

Parting Shot 4

Canon Rebel t1i, 55mm, 1/250sec, f8, Ikelite DS-51 strobe

When I look through the pictures I've taken on a dive, I always try to be critical and only post the very best ones. Although it is difficult to play judge, jury and executioner with my SD memory card, it's essential when each dive yields upwards of 200 images.

Although I think it's important to be critical of your own work, there are many times when I have pictures that I would love to share, not because they are 'good' but because they have a story behind them. The two images below fall into that category.

Let me provide the necessary background to allow you to appreciate these shots. On my last dive in Riviera Beach, FL, I saw what can best be described as some commotion on the seafloor. Going down for a closer look I saw a large peacock mantis shrimp (Odontodactylus scyllarus) clearing out a burrow. Always interested in reef invertebrates I was excited to find such a large, active mantid. I immediately began adjusting my camera settings as I approached the burrow in anticipation of getting a few good shots. However, as is often the case in underwater photography, this did not work out as I had planned.

I was only able to get one or two shots of the mantid up and out of his burrow because each time he came up he would throw a perfect sphere of sand and mud at the dome port of my camera. (In the first picture, you can see his ammunition, ready to be launched. The second picture is his projectile in motion.) I would then pull back, clean it off, and go back in for another shot. This back-and-forth dance went on for several minutes before I finally gave up and left in hopes of finding something a little more photogenic.

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