

A Diver's Guide To The Art Of Underwater Photography

By Andrea & Antonella Ferrari

Reviewed by Alexander Mustard

Great art is not created by committees or consensus, but by passionate individuals with vision and desire. The Ferraris' Guide to the Art of Underwater Photography is as personal and as opinionated a book on the subject as you are ever likely to read. And it is all the better for it.

This book gives us a rare insight into the mindset, dedication and imagination involved in creating magnificent underwater images. Although he always seems keen to modestly deny it, Andrea Ferrari is an excellent underwater photographer. While you may not always agree with his well argued opinions, all of us will benefit from reading them. I get the impression that the author does not expect us to agree with him all the time, anyway.

Although this book gives advice on many technical aspects of underwater photography it takes a more philosophical approach to the subject and is a motivational manual that encourages you to strive for better images. It shows you the path.

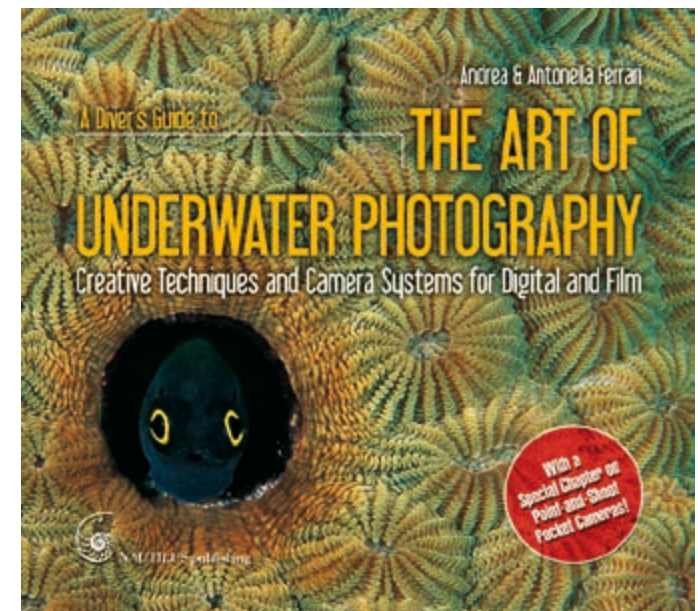
Ferrari's text, perhaps prose is a more apt word, is individual, warm and highly entertaining. I sat down and read this enjoyable book from cover to cover. The lack of techno-talk makes it a very accessible method to improve your photography. Particularly for the non-technical minded. I really enjoyed Ferrari's original take on the difficult subject of composition. By drawing comparisons between famous scenes from the silver screen and

underwater photos he demonstrates how the shared compositional elements work to communicate consistent messages and emotions.

The images are some of the finest you will see in a guide to underwater photography. About half are the very best from the Ferrari's own collection, while uniquely the other half come from a cast of 21 guest photographers that includes the likes of Doug Perrine, Tony Wu, Eric Cheng, Charles Hood and Stephen Wong. Some of the guest photographers are good friends of the authors (I'd count myself in the that group) while others the authors contacted after seeing their images in books, magazines or the internet. All the images are very well reproduced, which will not come as a surprise to anyone who owns any of the other books by the authors.

The guest images almost make this two books in one. They are ordered to fit in with the themes of the chapters and interspersed with the main thesis of the book, but each is captioned as a standalone. Reading Ferrari's comments on why each is effective is fascinating stuff. I would have found the book easier to follow if the guest photographer pages were more differentiated visually in the design (perhaps with a different font or background colour) because I found it was easy to lose the main text and accidentally slip into reading about a guest image as I turned the pages.

As an underwater photographer myself, I would have liked to see more technical information about the images, at least including shutter speeds and apertures, which are fundamental tools that contribute to the artistic process of image creation. Also this is a book straddles the digital/film divide offering real world advice on how to manage the switch. The evidence I see on diveboats is that most have switched and this element of the book will be



fastest to date.

A Diver's Guide To The Art Of Underwater Photography is a large format (25x23cm) 360 page feast of fabulous images with thought provoking and enjoyable writing on how to take pictures in the ocean.

If you were only allowed one book on underwater photography, I would recommend a more technical tome than this. However, if you already have a book or two on the subject then this is the perfect accompaniment. I'd go as far as to say that whatever books you already have, then the originality of thought in this volume, allied with the photographic quality and Ferrari's engaging writing, means this one deserves its place alongside them.

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Marine Life of Bootless Bay Papua New Guinea

By Mark Baine and David Harasti

Not only is David Harasti a marine scientist, he is also a superb underwater photographer. Combine the two and you have a great recipe for a book. Dave has spent many hours co-producing this book and the results are fantastic.

It is full of amazing images, information and a great aid to help local communities understand the ocean and its importance.

The 'Marine Life of Bootless Bay - Papua New Guinea' identification guide by Dr Mark Baine and Dave Harasti is the accumulation of 18 months work and several hundred hours spent underwater photographing and documenting the marine biodiversity of Bootless Bay, located just outside Port Moresby.

The 152page full colour book released in February 2008 contains approximately 900 images of over 850 species, accompanied by introductory information on all major marine taxa such as corals, echinoderms and fish.

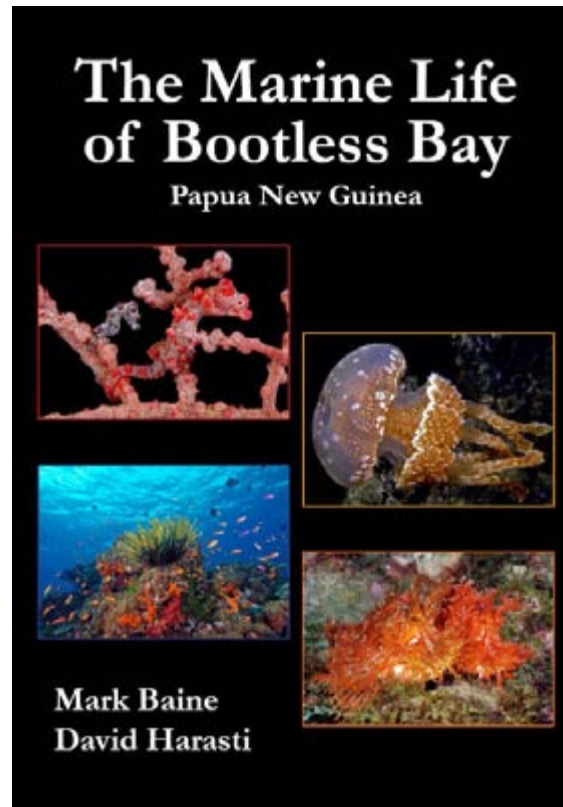
The book is not just for scientists but is also a must for divers and photographers who regularly visit Loloata Island Resort, situated in Bootless Bay and world renowned for www.uwpmag.com

its scuba diving.

The diving throughout Bootless Bay is so diverse. Diving varies from coral reefs, shipwrecks and muck diving through the mangroves and seagrasses. One of the most fascinating sites in Bootless Bay is 'Suzie's Bommie', famous worldwide for its incredible life that varies from giant hump-headed maori wrasse to the cryptic pygmy seahorses.

An example of the diversity of the guide is that it contains images of 335 fish species (including rare species such as the lacy scorpionfish *Rhinopias aphanes* and halimeda ghost pipefish *Solenostomus halimeda*), 145 mollusc species, 88 species of echinoderms (seastars, featherstars, urchins etc) and many other critters commonly found throughout the Indo-Pacific region.

To ensure accuracy within the guide, an expert taxonomic review process took place which involved approximately 45 world renowned experts in their fields. Gerry Allen and Rudie Kuiter (fish), Chantal Conand and Anne Hoggett (echinoderms), Jere Lipps (forams), Richard Willan (molluscs),



Daphne Fautin (anemones) and Peter Davie (crustaceans), all prestigious individuals, took part in the review.

The principal focus of the guide is to improve local knowledge of the importance of marine biodiversity and to instil in local communities and villages, a sense of wonder at the diversity of life present in their waters. To this end, approximately 3,000 copies are being distributed to community schools and village communities early 2008. This has been made possible with support from the David and Lucile Packard



Foundation, Project AWARE, the Papua New Guinea Institute of Biodiversity, and the University of Papua New Guinea.

Copies of the book are available to interested parties who visit Bootless Bay. For further information visit the MIRC website

www.mirc.ac.pg

or

www.daveharasti.com

Jayne Jenkins
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Sharkwater

Reviewed by John Wallis

If you've ever rolled your eyes at yet another tabloid misrepresentation of sharks, ever shook your head in despair at phrases like 'man-eater' or 'shark infested waters' this film is for you. Finally, thankfully, long overdue, we have a film out there that begins to right some of the popular misconceptions of sharks; Sharkwater.

Sharkwater makes compelling viewing. At times funny and humorous, packed with the facts revealing the scale of the shark fining trade, and carried along by a dramatic story the film leaves you amazed that the world does not already know about the scale of the problem facing the worlds shark populations.

The story centers on Rob Stewart, a photographer and underwater filmmaker. Whilst filming in the Galapagos he encountered a long-lining fishing boat and saw first hand the destruction wrought by just one boat, on one day. Where many others would have headed home after such a trip, told a few angry stories to their friends, and then gone back to work on Monday morning, Rob decided that the plight of sharks was a story the world desperately needed to hear.

You can count on the fingers of one hand the places where sharks have legal protection. Teaming up with Paul Watson of Sea Sheppard Rob travelled to Costa Rica and Galapagos to join the Sea Sheppard team monitoring fishing bans in these two important reserves.

It's here that the story starts to take a dramatic turn with run ins with the Taiwanese mafia, illegal fishing vessels, armed custom agents and, if that

wasn't life threatening enough, flesh eating tropical diseases.

The style of the film might not appeal to all. Narrating the film himself and telling the plight of the worlds shark populations through his own dramatic experiences it would be tempting to conclude Stewart was more concerned with promoting himself than the sharks. Maybe. However the film industry has created little, if anything, that highlights the plight of shark populations and whilst most of the world is rightly indignant at a Japanese fleet slaughtering a thousand whales, it remains largely ignorant of the millions of sharks that are taken from the seas each year. As divers we have a natural affinity for sharks, we should not forget that the non diving population might need a slightly more dramatic yarn to get the message through. It is this wider audience that the film is clearly aimed at as any change in the way these animals are treated will depend on their awareness and involvement.

Sharks do not seem to engender sympathy in the way whales or seal cubs do. As divers we are one of the few groups on the planet that can speak first hand about how magnificent and graceful these animals are, and how important their survival is. It's the kind of film every diver should see, if only to become more acquainted with the facts surrounding shark conservation. It is also a film we should encourage our friends and family to see.

I was lucky enough to see the film's premier in London and after the viewing Rob came on stage to answer questions and talk with the audience. At the end of his impassioned talk he summed up with a simple statement, "what ever you feel about the film, what ever you feel about me, the important message concerns the Sharks and their conservation.



Please get involved, please help save these amazing animals”.

www.sharkwater.com

John Wallis

www.jwphotographic.com

www.uwpmag.com

Guidelines for contributors

We are always looking for interesting, well illustrated articles about underwater photography and would like to discover some of the new talent out there and that could be you! UwP is the perfect publication for you to increase your profile in the underwater photography community. As a free magazine we have no budget, just exposure!

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

Equipment reviews - Detailed appraisals of the latest gear

Personalities - 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.

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