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Size & Weight

5.5" wide x 4.25" high x 3.0" deep
(including controls and lens port)

14cm x 11cm x 7.6cm

Less than 1 lb. (0.45kg) above water

Neutrally buoyant underwater

PRO-V8 LED Video Lite

Specifications

Intensity 15 watt high intensity

Beam 45° diffused spot

Lamp Three 5 watt LEDs

Brightness 510 lumens at peak

Color Temp 5000-5500K Daylight

Batteries 8 alkaline or NiMH "C"

Burn Time 10 hours max intensity

Weight in air 1.2kg (2.2lb.) w/ batteries

Size w/o handle 8x17cm (3.1x6.7in)

Depth Rating 90m - 300 feet



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

www.ikelite.com

Contents

- 4 Editorial
- 5 News & Travel
- 14 New Products



- 23 Sea & Sea YS-01



- 24 Best P&Ss 2010



- 31 REDSEE housing



- 34 Gates HF-S11



- 38 Dive a plane



- 40 Meet Mr Nauticam



Underwater Photography
2001 - 2010 © PR Productions
Publisher/Editor Peter Rowlands
www.pr-productions.co.uk
peter@uwpmag.com

Underwater Photography

A web magazine UwP54 May/June 2010

- 45 Dory Story



- 50 Triton Bay

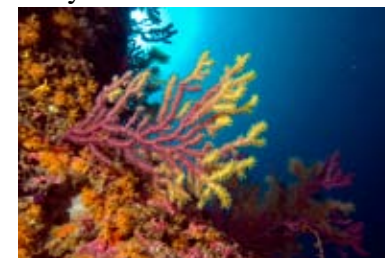


- 55 Philippine hopping



Cover shot by
Dan Bolt

- 60 Medas Islands



- 64 Florida muck



- 67 Tulamben wrecks



- 71 DVD & Book Reviews
- 80 Parting Shot

by Joseph Tepper

On our doorstep

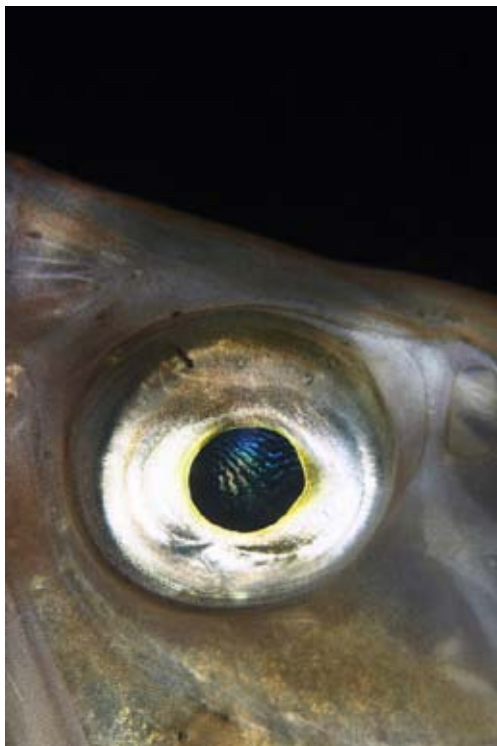
Dan Bolt's excellent article in this issue about a John Dory cleaning station he has found is really exciting for several reasons. Firstly it is nice to have a homegrown, temperate water story rather than the usual exotic blue water spectacles, secondly it was discovered on a simple shore dive and thirdly it confirms that there is still so much more to discover and photograph even in temperate waters where the conditions may be less attractive but the stories are just as fascinating.

Flipping heck

I have always had a great sense of pride in the consistent quality of our front covers and Dan Bolt's close up shot of a John Dory is no exception. However I thought you may be interested to know that it actually started its life as a vertical shot but by rotating it 90° clockwise I think it creates a much stronger impact with the 'forehead' now at a more menacing angle while the eye detail evokes the definite feeling of an alien encounter.

Today's digital capability is always being quoted as to how much easier and quicker everything is but in this instance in the good old days of

Editorial



film and slides it was actually much, much quicker to rotate and flip an image.

When you have a spare moment try rotating some of your shots and see what difference it makes. The majority will look no doubt look worse but, who knows, every now and then you might stumble on a front cover!

Sunny skies

In these days of charter flight jet travel to almost anywhere, it was great to see the pace slow down in Europe recently when a volcano in Iceland sent a huge cloud of ash into the atmosphere and the aviation and government authorities over reacted and closed most of Europe's airspace for several days.

True, the result was catastrophic for those trying to get home but, for those lucky enough to be at home and especially for residents of large cities, we were treated to a few days the like of which has not been experienced since the advent of mass air travel. The noise levels plummeted, birdsong emerged and the sky became clear of vapour trails.

It was a time to reflect on the pace of a past world and wonder whether jet travel brings satisfaction or whether a slower pace would make the journey more enjoyable. It was certainly an interesting few days but judging by the criss cross of vapour trails down here in Plymouth, UK the day after the flight ban was lifted, it seems that those few days were soon forgotten.

Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

Something for everyone...



Advanced Compact
Fisheye FIX Canon G11



Digital SLR
Aquatica Canon 7D

See our review of the 7D with pictures and HD video shot with this camera at:
www.backscatter.com/7d



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News, Travel & Events

Dominica 17th Dive Fest July 9-18th 2010

Dominica and the Dominica Watersports Association, promise to deliver an action-packed program over ten days focused on scuba diving during its 17th annual Dive Fest July 9 - 18, 2010.

As Dive Fest was established to showcase the renowned marine environment of Dominica to visitors and residents, this year's event will provide an amazing dive experience and more for all those who participate.

In honor of the longest running Dive Festival in the Caribbean, Dominica hotels and tour operators are offering a variety of dive packages, just in time for Dive Fest.

For more information on Dive Fest and to view their full schedule of events, visit their website.

www.dominica.dm/site/divefest.cfm

AquaMarine Dive Safaris 2010



(c) *Postlethwaite*

To cater to a growing demand by travelling divers, AquaMarine Diving – Bali has introduced 3 dive Safaris that cover Bali's best dive sites. The Safaris have fixed departure dates, and are guaranteed with just two divers booked and no more than 12 per trip.

The programme comprises three itineraries of 7, 8, and 12 nights. The Safaris include accommodation, diving, all land and boat transport, airport transfers, breakfast every day, and lunch on dive days, plus some land tours to experience Bali's enchanting culture and breathtaking scenery.

The first Safari departs on April 4, 2010, with the final trip being scheduled to leave on December 12.

www.aquamarinediving.com

www.greatsampleresume.com

Sandra White runs a resume writing guide and career website which provides free career information and sample resumes for students and Job seekers.

She has recently created a Photographer Career section which provides useful information to photographers seeking employment and for young people aspiring to pursue a career in photography including job outlook, education and training requirements, job description, salary benefits, job responsibilities and job duties.

www.greatsampleresume.com/Photographer-Career

Shark Diving Expedition In the Bahamas on a Live Aboard



Our comfortable 26 meter vessel leaves from West Palm Beach Florida

Scuba with Tiger, Lemon, & Hammerhead Sharks without a cage

Join professional photographers Gregory Sweeney & Takaji Ochi on this thrilling adventure photographing predators

Amazing Photography!

www.TigerSharkDive.com

January 15 - 21st 2011



PAF Tachov 2010

As every year, this year on 21st-23rd May a show will take place in Tachov, during which we can take a look under the sea, rivers and lakes of five world continents thanks to participation of authors from all over the world.

You will have a chance to meet famous people from diving life, talk to people with the same hobby and get inspired not only for photography and film making but also for your future diving activities.

What else is prepared for you? Fair exhibition of diving techniques, exhibition of photos, exhibition of children's art work and the atmosphere will be completed with author's display of photographs of the Czech underwater photograph Pavel Bohonůk.

Detailed program, rules and festival information including photos from the last year as well as winning photos are available on the web site:

www.paftachov.cz



PAF TACHOV - 32nd year of the International Festival of Underwater Photography Films and Children's Artwork

Prizes in total amount of 10 000 EURO

Czech Republic 21. - 23.5. 2010

Send your photos over the Internet - www.paftachov.cz

The Czech Diving Association logo is visible in the bottom left corner of the poster.

Red Sea Schooling Fish safari

4th-11th July 2010



Red Sea Snapper Safaris and Adam Hanlon have teamed up to offer a unique photographic experience in the Northern Red Sea this July. In the early part of the month, large schools of fish congregate at Fisherman's Shoal, off Ras Mohammed and then move closer on shore to present one of the most amazing spectacles in the Red Sea

The aim of this trip is to follow these schools. Unlike most liveaboard diving trips though, there is no set itinerary, so the charter we will go where the action is! This flexibility builds in the best possible chance of achieving photographic goals. If a particular site is good, there will be the option of staying, rather than having to move on to the next site on the "list" At this time of year it is also possible that it may also find pelagic Black Tip sharks.

The boat is MV Orchid,



nominally with 16 berths, although the plan is to only fill 10 of them. Uniquely, the boat will have camera tables and rinse tanks installed. There will also be computer equipment available for use. Departure and return is via the popular resort of Sharm el Sheikh and the dates are 4th-11th July 2010. Spaces are strictly limited! The plan is to run these annually so if this year fills, feel free to book for next!

For more information, please email Adam at

info@adamhanlon.com
www.adamhanlon.com

www.uwpmag.com

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Group discounts available

Eco Divers' Boutique Lembeh Cottages

Eco Divers' new Lembeh Cottages are the best choice for both a luxury stay and fabulous Lembeh diving.

They are currently offering one night, all inclusive, with up to 3 day dives is just \$165! Each of the cottages accommodates six guests in comfort and is the very best value available in Lembeh.

Elegantly furnished and air-conditioned throughout, each cottage has three double bedrooms with contemporary ensuite bathrooms,

a cosy living room with large TV and DVD player, dining room and Lembeh's only indoor camera rooms for photographers. Meals are prepared by a personal chef offering an array of mouth-watering menus.

Gary Ball from the UK stayed in the cottages recently and had this to say, "...simply fantastic! The standard would put some European hotels to shame...after diving it's wonderful to return for a hot shower and home cooked fresh food. Seeing the true Indonesia from outside of a manicured resort is a must! Simply 5 star service from start to finish."

www.eco-divers.com

They come in **breath-catching colours**; in **shifting shapes**; in **astounding disguises**; **tinchy tiny** or really **rather grand...** and always there is more to **dive** and to **enchant**



Dive North Sulawesi – Bunaken, Bangka & Lembeh

Kima Bajo Resort & Spa is an idyllic setting with a range of villas to suit most budgets. Eco Divers' large, comfortable, fast boats take you to over 30 dive sites with special trips to Lembeh & Bangka also in the frame!

Small dive groups, big experience, warm welcome

Kima Bajo Resort & Spa, Manado
www.kimabajo.com
diving@kimabajo.com

www.ECO-DIVERS.com



Reef and Wrecks in the Red Sea

UW Photo Workshop with Mark Webster

1-8 October 2010



Mark Webster will be hosting a photo workshop on board the MY Blue Planet 1 in the northern Red Sea departing Hurghada 1 October 2010.

The schedule will include the famous wreck graveyard reef of Abu Nuhas at the southern end of the Gulf of Suez. After exploring the big name wrecks of the SS Carnatic, Giannis D and Krisoula K we will visit some of the other classic sites - Ras Mohammed with its spectacular walls, soft corals and pelagic fish action, Small Passage, Shag Rock

and the wreck of the Kingston, the Alternatives etc. These areas all offer excellent photographic opportunities.

The workshop will include daily presentations from Mark, the opportunity to ask questions throughout the day and fun a competition to find the best image of the week.

Please see Oonasdivers or Mark's website for details:

www.oonasdivers.com
www.photec.co.uk



Issue #7 available soon!

Dear UwP Readers:

Now on its **7th Issue**, *Wetpixel Quarterly* brings you the best in underwater imagery in a collectible, coffee-table-worthy publication.



Order issues #1-4 in the Year 1 Collector's Edition while still available!

Subscribe and order back issues online:
www.wetpixelquarterly.com

Cenotes of the Yucatan Photoquest

4th June - 12th June 2011
with Martin and Sylvia Edge

The Yucatan Peninsula is steeped in the history of the ancient Mayans, famed for their pyramids and stone settlements, now preserved as ruins for visitors to explore and admire. Whilst the best 'big animal' diving in Mexico can be found in Baja California, or amongst the Revillagigedo Islands, what is special about a dive trip to the Yucatan is the opportunity to dive the famous 'cenotes' (pronounced 'seh-no-tehs') or underground caves and wells. Most of the best sites are dotted along the Riviera Maya, the stretch of land running from Cancun in the north to the coastal ruins of Tulum further south. These picturesque limestone caverns are known as some of the best in the world for their accessibility and geological splendour.

Most of these freshwater sink-holes are inland, accessible by road followed by a short stroll down a board walk and then splash – into the hole you drop! Some cenotes open up into underground flooded caverns with enough room to surface, while others extend into narrow water-filled passages and yet others extend far underground and back out into the



sea! These cenotes were the key to existence for the Mayan population as they provided seemingly endless supplies of fresh water, particularly during periodic droughts. Accommodation will be in the very comfortable, beachside Omni Hotel & Beach Resort in Puerto Aventuras. The hotel comprises 30 rooms, all with en-suite facilities and television, mini-bar, safe, air-conditioning and coffee making facilities. The rooms all have queen-sized beds and are very spacious so there will be lots of room to spread your camera gear out! Hotel facilities include two swimming pools and a Jacuzzi, a tennis court and a 9 hole golf course.

www.divequest.co.uk

www.uwpmag.com

DiveQuest

THE ULTIMATE IN DIVING HOLIDAYS

Specialists in Underwater Photography Trips

Martin Edge: Raja Ampat, Sulawesi and Mexican Cenotes

Alex Mustard: Sea of Cortez & Komodo and Rinca

Charles Hood: Great White Sharks of Guadalupe

Shannon Conway: Art of U/W Photography in Bali & Raja Ampat



Photo: Shannon Conway

www.divequest.co.uk
01254 826322



BLUE 2010

August 24-29th
Monterey



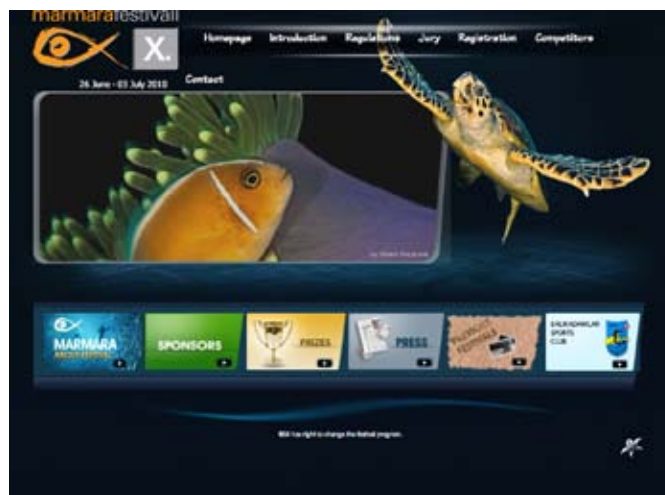
The BLUE Ocean Film Festival & Conservation Summit (BLUE) which had its debut in June 2009 to international acclaim is recognized as a ground-breaking ocean focused event which combines great films, photography, conservation outreach and policy discussions in an engaging & entertaining forum.

This year BLUE'S festivities include:
Screening of 60+ Award Winning Ocean Films
Filmmaker "Behind the Scenes" & "The Making Of" Discussions
Photography exhibits including some of the world's premier underwater photographers
Enlightening Key Note Presentations & Conservation Seminars

www.bluefilmfest.com

10th Marmara Underwater Festival

Istanbul,
26 June - 03 July 2010



We are pleased to welcome you all to the 10th MARMARA UNDERWATER FESTIVAL held by Scuba Divers Sports Club (BSK), Istanbul, Turkey between 26 June - 03 July 2010.

The aim of this festival is to unite international and local underwater photographers and videographers, both professionals & amateurs, through whose productions an awareness of the underwater world could be spread to many people.

The Marmara Festival consists of two contests:
10th International Underwater Photo & Video Contest (requires older photos & videos)

17th "The Living Marmara" Photo & Video Contest (requires on the spot dives on 27 June 2010)

www.marmarafestival.org

Epson Red Sea 2010 Competition

Want to be invited to the Epson Red Sea 2010 Competition FREE OF CHARGE? The compete for the title "Photographer of the Year"!

Between the months of April and August, the Epson Red Sea 2010 online competition will take place. Each month during the competition, amateur and professional photographers from all over the world are invited to submit a portfolio of 3 digital photos. By the end of each month, 3 photographers will be announced as the winners of that particular month, chosen both by the public and by a panel of 5 international judges.

An online competition among all the monthly winners (15 photographers) will then begin on September 1st, 2010. Online voters and a panel of 5 international judges will eventually select one of the competitors as the Photographer of the Year.

The prize: flights, accommodation (BB) and diving costs of the Photographer of the Year will all be covered, in order to enable this winner to participate at the Epson Red Sea 2010 shoot-out in Eilat.

The 6th annual Epson Red Sea competition will be held on November 8-13, 2010 in Eilat. A wide variety of innovative categories and worthy prizes are included this year, which makes it very much worthwhile to be elected as the Photographer of the Year.

www.eilatredsea.com

David Doubilet to speak at WildPhotos 2010

22nd & 23rd October
London

October 2010 sees the return of WildPhotos, the UK's largest photography symposium dedicated to exploring the power of nature photography, organised by Wildscreen. The world's finest wildlife photographers and industry experts, along with host Chris Packham, will inspire and enthuse anyone with a passion for wildlife imagery, whether amateur or professional.

WildPhotos will take place on Friday 22 and Saturday 23 October 2010, at the prestigious Royal Geographical Society in London.

World-renowned underwater photographer David Doubilet (<http://www.daviddoubilet.com>) leads the line-up of speakers. Also presenting their work will be winners from the Veolia Environnement Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition owned by the Natural History Museum, London, and BBC Wildlife Magazine. Winners of the Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition will be announced the day before WildPhotos.



WildPhotos will bring together many other inspirational wildlife, environmental and landscape photographers, plus leading photographic agents, librarians and publishers, to offer insights, tips and inspiration.

The event is programmed by Rosamund Kidman Cox, journalist and former editor of BBC Wildlife, and judge of the Veolia Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition.

Online delegate registration will open at www.wildphotos.org.uk in early June 2010. Further details of speakers will be announced in the coming months.

www.wildphotos.org.uk

www.uwpmag.com



MSY SEAHORSE.COM

info@indocruises.com

Raja Ampat | Triton Bay | Banda Sea | Komodo

Icebox Gallery presents Beneath the Surface

by Rhea Pappas

Minneapolis, May 15 - July 3rd



Rhea Pappas gently submerges the viewer into a quiet world that seems beautifully alien and dream like. Her female models float gracefully without any resistance, others appear engulfed in bubbles as if they fell into a dream by surprise. Rhea photographs underwater in the clean clear water of a swimming pool. Her models look through the water with open eyes and are captured in poses resembling sculptures or angels.

In December 2008 Rhea Pappas, at 22, graduated from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. While in school she received many awards including the Scholastics Portfolio

Scholarship and Advertising Photographers of America best of students first place. While in college she also started assistant teaching at a local high school, community ed programs, and Independent Film Projects.

Icebox Gallery is pleased to begin our 23rd season featuring new photographic work by this promising young photographer. Rhea's fresh dynamic photographs emit energy and emotion. Rhea Pappas has the kind of talent that we enjoy and want to promote at Icebox Gallery.

www.iceboxminnesota.com

Have you learnt something valuable by reading this issue of UwP?
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You can make a donation in either US \$ dollars, UK £ sterling or € Euros by following this link



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Our motive: Your passion

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Designed for hands - made by hands.

^w| www.subal.com

Now available:
SUBAL ND3s for Nikon D3s
SUBAL CD7 for Canon EOS 7D
SUBAL CD4 for Canon EOS 1D MK IV



New Products

Ikelite Canon SX210 IS housing



Dive into underwater photography with this compact and simple to use combination. The Compact Digital housing is high quality, super durable, built to last, and backed by Ikelite's long-standing reputation for excellence.

All camera controls are fully functional through the housing and depth rated to 200ft (60m). Two 12-24 threaded mounts on the bottom of the housing allow for the secure attachment of optional trays and lighting accessories.

www.ikelite.com

Adapters for Inon UFL-MR130 EFS60 Fisheye Macro Lens



Reef Photo & Video and Saga Dive are proud to announce the availability of a full line of specialized FLEI macro ports adapting this unique fisheye macro tool to a variety of popular digital slr housings from Aquatica, Ikelite, Nauticam, Seacam, Sea & Sea, and Subal. Previously only available for use with Inon X-2 Housings, this accessory enables UFL-MR130 to be used with most popular underwater imaging systems.

This lens is specifically designed for use with Canon EF-S Digital SLR Cameras and the Canon EF-S 60mm f/2.8 Macro Lens. Through careful testing, Saga have also managed to pair the AF Micro-Nikkor 60mm f/2.8D with this conversion lens. This adaptation opens the world of possibilities enabled by Fisheye Macro Relay Lens shooting to Nikon DX users!

www.reefphoto.com

Something for everyone...



Advanced Compact
Fisheye FIX Canon G11



Digital SLR
Aquatica Canon 7D

See our review of the 7D with pictures and HD video shot with this camera at:
www.backscatter.com/7d



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everything we sell!*

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Seahorn Snoot for Underwater Strobes



5.5cm honeycomb



2cm macro



1.5cm supermacro

Made from aluminium and PVC and weighing just 242 grams, the Seahorn Snoot is provided with 3 attachments to vary the area of light output, 5.5cm (honeycomb), 2cm (macro) and 1.5cm (supermacro).

The Seahorn Snoot is available for the following strobes:

Ikelite DS-125, DS-160, DS-161, DS-50, DS-51,

Sea&Sea YS17, YS-25, YS-90, YS-110, YS-110 Alpha, YS-250 Pro, YS-01, YS-02

Inon D-180, D-2000, S-2000, Z-22-, Z-240

Patima flash housing SB-800, SB-900, 580EX, 580EX2, SB-80, FL-50, PZ40

10bar flash housing SB-800, SB-900, 580EX, 580EX2, FL-50

Epoque ES-230DS, ES-150Alpha

Fantasea Remora

Seacam Seaflash 150

The Seahorn Snoots cost USD \$ 60.00 plus shipping and are available exclusively from

www.scubasympphony.com

Aquatica Mini Dome 100



This new port is ideally suited for fisheye lenses such as the Nikon 10.5mm, Tokina 10-17mm and Sigma 10mm.

Because of its small diameter of only 100mm (4 inches), its reduced frontal signature means you can really sneak up on a subject and have the extra room to properly position your strobes in ultra close-up wide angle situation. Its miniature size and lighter weight are welcome features by travelling underwater photographer in these days of increased travel restrictions.

Made from grounded BK-7 mineral glass and polished to perfection the Mini Dome 100 will shortly be made available for other housing brands.

Depth rated @ 90m / 300ft. Suggested retail price: 699 usd

www.aquatica.ca



50 years ago underwater photography was something of a dark art practised by a handful of pioneers. Fast forward to today and thankfully things have changed. Now you can capture your adventures in vivid colour with a compact and easy to use outfit that won't cost you a kidney. Where can I get such a wonder? Cameras Underwater of course, we'll even show you how to get the best out of it.

TODAY... ANYONE CAN DO IT



Underwater cameras



Lighting systems



Underwater video

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Olympus PT-048 housing for TOUGH-8010/6020



When the action moves from the beach to the water, your Olympus digital camera needn't be left behind. The PT-048 underwater case has been specially customised for the μ TOUGH-8010/6020 camera and is waterproof up to a water pressure equivalent to a depth of 40 metres. This case is perfect for fascinating underwater photography or capturing the thrill of water sports and activities. With its durable, high quality polycarbonate construction, it protects the camera from water while also cushioning it from knocks and bumps on land. Complete control of photo functions, such as zoom and flash mode, is also permitted.

www.olympus.co.uk

Fantasea FSD-1100 Housing for Canon PowerShot SD1100 IS



The FSD-1100 housing is ideal for outdoor and underwater photographers' needs. Underwater photographers can dive or snorkel and capture all the excitement of this fascinating world, while outdoor photographers also have the option of capturing the action of such activities as white water and paddle sports, sailing and boating, surfing, fishing, hunting, backpacking and camping. The FSD-1100 protects the Coolpix camera from water, sand, dust, and other damaging elements.

FSD-1100 Features:
Double O-ring seal on all controls
Anti-glare hood over LCD screen
Removable flash diffuser
46mm threaded lens port
Depth rated to 60 meters/200 feet

www.marinecamera.com

Keldan lights in the US



Starting in 2010 Nocturnal Lights is the official North/South American distributor for Keldan Lights.

Underwater photographer Lee Peterson reviewed them at www.uwphotographyguide.com and said "I have been testing the Keldan Luna 8 LA-V 2100 lumen LED video light and the color fidelity is the best of any of the light that I have tested."

Please visit their website for additional information or to locate an authorized dealer in your area.

www.nocturnallights.com

**Nauticam
USA**

Nauticam NA-D90 Nikon D90 housing



"It's the future"

- Excellent ergonomics.
- Designed by underwater photographers.
- Patented Locking Port Release Lever.
- Patented Expanded Viewfinder.
- Port Adapters for Other Housings
- Optical Flash Connectors for Nikon CLS, Inon S-TTL, and Sea & Sea DS-TTL.
- Rubberized Ergonomic Handles.
- Proven Construction Materials.

www.nauticamusa.com

SEA&SEA

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Quality Camera Gear for all underwater photographers



www.sea-sea.net
01803 663012 info@sea-sea.com

Ikelite Canon SD1400 IS, IXUS 130IS & IXY 400F housing



All camera controls are fully functional through the housing and depth rated to 200ft (60m). Easy open latch and drop in camera loading make set-up a breeze. Two 12-24 threaded mounts on the bottom of the housing allow for the secure attachment of optional trays and lighting accessories.

Size and Weight. 6.4" wide x 4.6" high x 3.3" deep (including controls and lens port). 16cm x 12cm x 8.4cm. Less than 11lb (0.45kg) above water. Neutrally buoyant underwater.

Dive into underwater photography with this compact and simple to use combination.

www.ikelite.com

Aquatica port adaptors



Aquatica is happy to announce the addition of two new ports adaptors, in what will be an extensive line of accessories to help future user to migrate to the Aquatica system.

The first is to accommodate the Subal older generation ports (type 3), it is made of anodized aluminum and fits inside the Aquatica bayonet, and therefore it does not add any extension and all lenses normally associated with their ports can be used starting from the Nikon 10.5mm and on.

The second will accept Sea & Sea NX generation ports, it is also made of anodized aluminum and due to size restriction it does add a small amount of extension, this was calculated to accommodate the popular Tokina 10-17mm without restriction.

www.aquatica.ca

Nauticam
USA

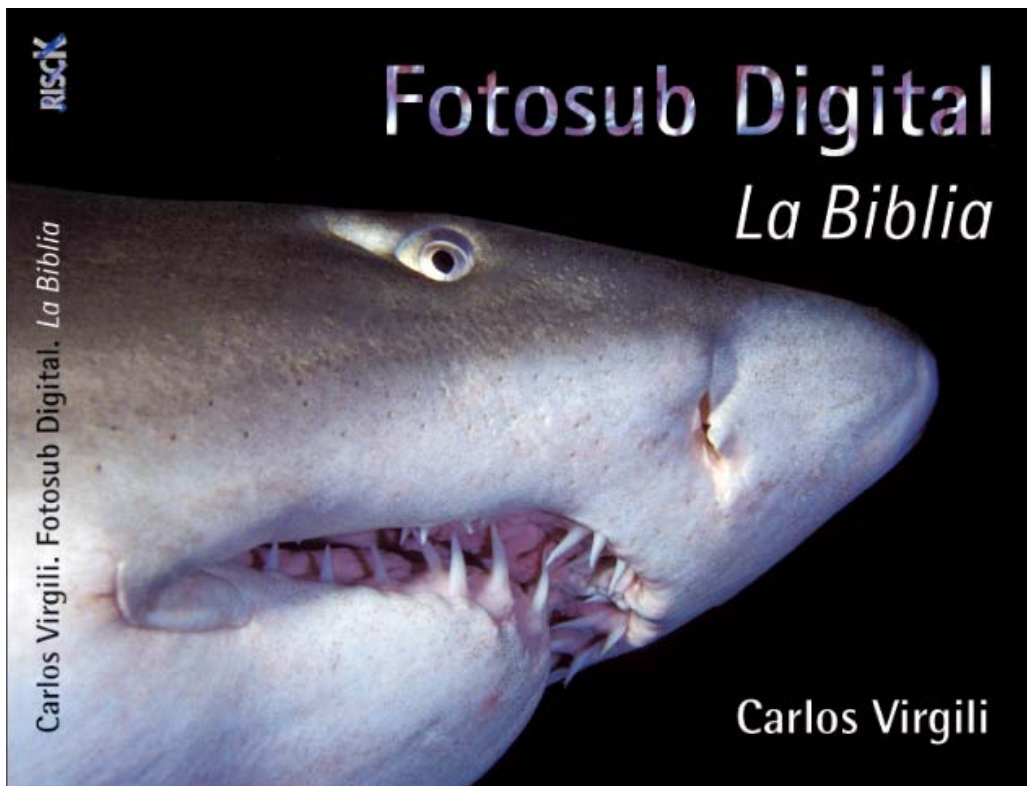
Nauticam Universal optical viewfinder



"Clearly better"

- Available for the following SLR housings:
- Ikelite, Sea & Sea, Aquatica, Subal and Nexus
- 1:1 reproduction
- No color bias
- Low distortion
- Low color fringing.
- It's bright!
- Flexible eyepoint viewing
- External diopter adjustment
- Multicoated glass optics

www.nauticamusa.com



Carlos Virgili, renowned and internationally awarded Spanish underwater photographer, has published recently a comprehensive underwater photography manual titled: "Fotosub Digital. La Biblia" (Digital Underwater Photography. The Bible).

This manual consists of 320 pages, edited in high quality paper with more than 350 pictures and illustrations.

There is a possibility that in the future there will be an English version.

"Fotosub Digital. La Biblia" can be acquired only in the web site www.risck.com (section "Libros" -books-) or in the USA through www.reefphoto.com

www.risck.com
www.reefphoto.com

Aquatica redesigned TLC tripod



This new tripod version includes a pan and tilt head with large easy to grasp knobs and an extended handle for smooth operation when tracking a moving subject.

Made from specially coated hard anodized aluminum, this tripod will withstand the harshest of environments. It's simple and robust design guarantees that moving parts won't seize from the accumulation of sand or grit. The only maintenance required is a good rinse in fresh water.

The Aquatica TLC Tripod is supplied with three 15" TLC double ball arm sections for support. These can be easily removed and replaced with shorter length arms for a lower point of view.

www.aquatica.ca



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www.reefphoto.com

SeaLife DC1200

SeaLife's new DC1200 makes underwater photography it easier than ever before.

Mystical sea creatures, vibrant colorful reefs, or haunting wrecks from a bygone era, the DC1200 is the camera to catch them all. SeaLife's new 12-megapixel camera combines diver-friendly design and four underwater color modes, for sharp, colorful pictures underwater or on land.

SeaLife eliminated the typical button cluster on the back of the camera, in favor of five thumb operated "piano key" controls. The large shutter button extends forward with a fingertip-control lever that allows scrolling through menus or zooming in and out without releasing your grip from the camera. This "Central Command Lever" and the "Piano Keys" are making great underwater pictures and videos easier than ever before.

Expand the DC1200 with SeaLife's popular line of underwater accessories, including the Digital Pro Flashes and wide angle. Automatic focus from 4" to infinity. Record 2+



hours of sharp, colorful video with sound when using a 4GB SD memory card. Depth tested to 200ft. Fully rubber armored for shock protection. Full 1-year warranty covers the underwater housing and camera.

SeaLifes Sea Modes which have built in color correction and External Flash Modes for vibrant color and manual control of the cameras shutter and aperture, round out the DC1200.



www.sealife-cameras.com



5 important reasons to make Reef Photo and Video your choice for underwater photo and video

1 We are divers and photographers

Everyone on our friendly staff is an underwater photographer. We use the gear that we sell, and we keep up with the latest imaging products for both underwater and topside.

2 U/W photography is our only business

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www.reefphoto.com

Nimar housings in the UK



Frogfish Photography has added Nimar underwater housings to their range of underwater photography equipment.

Nimar housings offer an affordable alternative for SLR users with housings, including handles and a standard port, starting from only £799.

Nimar have been established for over 20 years and have been manufacturing housings for both video and still cameras in northern Italy since the early 1980's. They have just introduced a stylish black polycarbonate housing to sit alongside their existing clear version.

Nick Robertson-Brown says "The Nimar Housings sit very well alongside our premium brand Sealux. Adding the Nimar range also means we dramatically expand the number of SLRs we can support with underwater housings." And indeed this is true as Frogfish Photography now offers housings for over 60 different camera models.

Frogfish Photography has a demo model for customers to have a look at and even try in the pool before buying.

www.frogfishphotography.com

www.uwpmag.com

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45 degree finder



Fiber optic sync



D70



D2x



D200



D80



1Ds MarkII



5D

Sea & Sea MDX-7D housing for Canon EOS 7D

Sea&Sea MDX housings are machined from a solid block of aluminium for ultimate precision, ergonomics and performance.

The MDX-7D housing comes with two type-N strobe connectors;_ One 2-pin connector for triggering strobes under manual control and one 5-pin connector for using the TTL Converter. To use two YS series strobes under manual control a Dual Sync Cord/N (#03470) must be used.

A TTL converter connector is fitted as standard._The included type-N 5-pin wired connector accepts the optional YS Converter/C (#50118). The converter works with YS-Series strobes to provide automatic TTL flash adjustment

There are two Fiber-optic cable sockets provided. Simply by connecting the Fiber-optic cable L-type (#50107) to the socket, the digital camera's built-in flash can be used to trigger an external strobe. This is considerably less complicated than setting up a sync. cable and it eliminates any risk of leaking at the bulkhead.

The main features of the MDX-7D housing are:



Every detail of the housing is precision CNC machined and it is ergonomically designed for ease of use.

The housing is protected by a corrosion resistant anodized (black) coating. An optional TTL Converter/Y (#50118) for Canon enables automatic TTL strobe photography.

A 0.5x pick-up viewfinder is fitted as standard. Optional interchangeable 0.66x (#46109) and 0.8x (#46104) viewfinders are also available.

Both the main command dial and sub command dial are operable while holding the hand grips due to advanced ergonomic design.

Most Canon 7D camera functions are accessible and can be operated

underwater with ease.

The quick shoe makes the camera easy to install and remove from the housing.

A port lock mechanism secures the port from accidental loosening.

The locking latches prevent accidental housing opening and a built-in leak sensor immediately alerts you to any water leakage.

Depth rating: 60m (200ft)

Dimensions (WxHxD):

339x185x122.6mm

Weight: Approx. 2,500g (Housing Only)

Colour: Black

The Sea & Sea MDX-7D housing costs £3,038.90

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Sea & Sea YS-01 strobe

by Peter Rowlands

Of all the advances in equipment design and performance, underwater strobes (flashguns) seem to have benefited the most as more and more power can be generated from smaller and smaller units and fibre optic cables make triggering much simpler and far more reliable. The result is most welcome especially for the air travelling underwater photographer.

The Sea & Sea YS-01 is the latest to benefit from such miniaturisation yet it still packs a punchy Guide Number of 20 at full power and should give well over 200 flashes with alkaline batteries and in excess of 300 with NiMh rechargeables. The 100° angle of coverage will light most wide angle scenes and if 2 units were used they would easily light a full frame fisheye coverage of 180°. In addition the diminutive size is just 68 x 108 x 129mm and underwater it is virtually neutral.

A bright white LED target light helps ensure the correct positioning of the strobe head in relation to the subject and would be useful as a night dive spotting light as well. This light turns off when the strobe fires and lights up again when it has recycled.

The YS-01 is designed to be triggered by a fibre optic cable and there is also the provision to fire a second strobe with another fibre optic cable





making creative lighting consistent and effective.

For auto exposure lovers the YS-01 works in DS-TTL mode with either single or preflash triggering or there is a ten level manual output if required so everyone is catered for.

The Sea & Sea YS-01 is solidly constructed and the rotary control knobs are levered and ribbed for ease of adjustment. It can operate to 75 metres and at £344.95 it provides very good value indeed.



Peter Rowlands
peter@uwpmag.com

Best Point & Shoot Cameras for 2010

By Berkley White & Jim Decker

As we did in 2009, the Backscatter team took ten steps back and examined the hundreds of underwater point & shoot camera options with fresh eyes. We focused a great deal of attention on the lowest priced and smallest sized cameras as our goal was to find a high quality camera that fits in a pocket, will survive a beach party, and can produce great images on an afterwork dive.

We gave cameras a nod for their sex appeal. A sexy camera is fun to hold, fun to use, and more likely to get slipped into a pocket for a night on the town. We found ourselves giving some cameras a second chance, but had to vote them off the island due to poor underwater performance, or otherwise not meeting the needs of an aspiring underwater photographer.

If underwater photography is paramount to your next point & shoot camera decision, we're confident that you'll be happy with any of these test finalists on your next land excursion or on your next dive.

Best Low Cost and Automatic Only Cameras: Camera + Housing Price Range: \$179 - \$599



Olympus FE-360, Canon SD-940, Sea & Sea 1200HD

Cameras in this category easily slip into a pocket, but do not have manual exposure control (do not allow the photographer to select both aperture and shutter speed settings). New underwater photographers usually gravitate to automatic exposure, but after 6 months to a year of shooting they discover that manual exposure is actually very easy and produces significantly better results underwater. Despite these limitations, these cameras produce great images and do offer an exposure compensation control allowing the photographer to brighten or darken the image. The most important factor in underwater photography is being in the right place at the right time. If we were on a tight budget, we'd choose these cameras to be at our side when we happened upon the right dive at the right time!



Olympus FE-360: Best low cost pocket camera

This was a surprise winner for 2010. Last year we honored this camera as our staff top pick for best low cost automatic point and shoot. Due to its great features and continued availability it again made our top shelf selection. As with the other cameras in this category, the FE-360 only offers exposure compensation (no manual), but its tiny size and unbeatable price wins us over. You can buy a complete camera and 40m / 130ft rated housing combo for well under \$200 and it blows all competitors away in image quality at this price point.

The Olympus PT-044 housing is also compatible with the Fisheye FIX M46 52 Wide Lens which is removable underwater, and yields a 100 degree angle of coverage. The Olympus FE-360 does not feature a hotshoe (hardwire) strobe connection, thus you will need to use a digital slave compatible underwater strobe. We consider the following strobes to best match this camera in lowest cost and highest quality: Sea & Sea YS-01 Package, Fantasea Remora Package



Canon SD-940: Auto camera with HD movie

The SD940 shares the same impressive histogram and highlight warning display as the more expensive S90 and G11 cameras, and is the only auto only camera in this review to offer highlight warning. This camera shoots great stills, but the 720p HD video quality is surprisingly good at home on a big screen display. Exposure compensation is easy to access and can also be dialed in before starting a movie clip. If your image goals flip-flop between stills and video, this is the camera for you.

Our recommended strobes for this low cost camera include the Sea & Sea YS-01 Package and Fantasea Remora Package. If you're looking to pair this camera with a compact slave TTL strobe, take a look at the Inon S-2000 package. Our recommended wide angle lens for this camera is the Inon 28AD lens. This lens has a 100 degree angle of coverage, and can be expanded to 150 degrees by adding on an optional dome unit. If you are considering this camera more for the HD movie capability, take a look at the Fisheye FIX LED 1000 video light package as your primary lighting system for both photo and video.



Sea & Sea 1200HD: Auto camera with HD movie

The Sea & Sea 1200HD continues on again this year with no changes.

The Sea & Sea 1200HD features 720p video in a tiny camera. While the video quality is not the same as you would get from a dedicated HD camcorder, this camera produces good quality video and makes great web clips for YouTube.

The 1200HD is also compatible with the Sea & Sea 1200HD Wide Angle Lens for an 80 degree view.

If you want a small, low cost camera for video clips, with built in fiber optic and wide angle lens mounts this camera is a good choice.

As with other cameras in this category, you will need to use digital slave compatible strobes such as the Sea & Sea YS-01 and Sea & Sea YS-110 alpha underwater strobes.

Best Intermediate & Advanced Cameras: Camera + Housing Price Range: \$628-\$1598



Canon G11, Sea & Sea DX-2G, Canon S90

Consider these cameras the best in class of all point & shoots reviewed. From top image quality to durability, these cameras excelled over all other models. Not only do these cameras offer easy automatic exposure, they also have intermediate to advanced manual controls for the growing photographer. With the exception of the tiny Canon S90, these cameras won't slip into a pocket as well as cameras in the basic category, but once you get your photo game on, you won't be cussing the camera for lack of control.



Canon G11, Fisheye FIX G11, Ikelite G11, Canon WP-DC34 Housings (from left to right)

Canon G11: Best advanced compact in class

Last year we selected the Canon G10 as best in class and this year its sibling the Canon G11 easily won the staff's top pick with superior image quality and easy ergonomics. The most notable changes are a 2.7 in. swing out LCD that allows easy self portraits topside and a reduction from 14.7MP to 10.0MP that gives the G11 less noise at higher ISO settings. We agree that 10MP is plenty of resolution and applaud the effort to clean up high ISO images.



As with its predecessor, the Canon G11 is a pocket filler and most people will likely choose a purse or belt bag for land travel. However, we find its larger size more comfortable for all hand sizes. A built-in 3 stop neutral density filter is great for shooting in high ambient light. Our favorite manual control is the (*) button on the back which activates momentary auto exposure. A quick press of this button will rough in your exposure automatically and then return you to manual mode for refinement. A second great feature is a dedicated dial for exposure compensation. We were really surprised to discover the camera's ability to assign a true 1 touch white balance to the shortcut button. These are features we'd like to see on top end DSLR's.

The 28mm - 140mm lens is great for land use, but the 28mm wide feature will cause vignetting with most underwater wide lenses. The Fisheye FIX G11 housing solves this problem with the dedicated Fisheye FIX Super Wide 165 degree angle port, however it cannot be removed underwater. Fisheye redesigned a few of their controls on the FIX G11 housing over the G10



making it easier on the fingers. The Fisheye FIX G11 is also the only one of two housings in this review machined from solid aluminum and offers depth ratings of 60m / 196ft (upgrade option to 100m / 328ft). The Fisheye FIX G11 also features great ergonomics and is fiber optic sync cord ready out of the box. This housing is best suited for digital slave strobes and produces very accurate TTL exposures with Inon Z-240, Inon D-2000, and Inon S-2000 strobes.

The polycarbonate Ikelite G11 is a larger housing and offers a respectable 60m / 196ft depth rating. Most attractive on the Ikelite G11 is the eTTL electronics and hardwire bulkhead built into the housing. Simply plug-in an Ikelite DS-51 or Ikelite DS-161 strobe for accurate eTTL exposures without the camera battery draining, recycle time eating requirements of fiber optic slave strobe solutions. The Ikelite WD-4 wide angle conversion dome is underwater removable and offers a slight increase in stock angle of coverage. While this system is great for macro, we're hoping Ikelite can offer a wider angle lens solution in the near future.



The Canon WP-DC34 underwater housing is a great low cost option, but its large square lens port limits its compatibility with most underwater wide lenses. The Fisheye FIX Wide Air Lens designed specifically for the WP-DC34 offers 100 degrees of coverage, but the bungee attachment system feels a little awkward. We recommend this housing if you are primarily interested in macro or water sport photography or are on a budget and want to shoot medium wide shots.



Sea & Sea DX-2G camera and Sea & Sea DX-2G housing



Last year we included the Sea & Sea DX1G as a finalist due to its very short shutter delay and good manual control options. The new Sea & Sea DX-2G has essentially the same features, but with a higher resolution 12.1MP sensor and a larger, higher resolution screen. The screen on the DX1G was too dark when shooting in manual exposure mode, but the new DX2G features a consistently bright screen regardless of your exposure settings. While the shutter delay is very small, shooting speed in RAW format remains slower than other cameras in this category. This compact housing is rated to 180 feet and features two built-in fiber optic mounts. The Sea & Sea DX-2G 100 degree wide lens also features a bayonet mount built right onto the housing (no threads means fast removal and replacement). The Sea & Sea DX-2G also has two separate knobs for manual shutter speed and aperture adjustments, giving the user fast access to these controls. We recommend the Sea & Sea YS-01 and YS-110 alpha underwater strobes for this system. Inon strobes can also be used with the XIT404 Inon to Sea & Sea Fiber Optic Cable Adapter.

Canon S90, Fisheye FIX S90, Ikelite S90, and Canon WP-DC35 (from left to right)



We're glad to see the S series of Powershot cameras back in Canon's lineup this year. The S90 packs a lot of features into a small body. It has the same imaging sensor as the G11, but the lens is a bright F2 with a 3.8x zoom. With the shorter zoom range, wet mate style wide angle lenses are an option on the housings for this camera. The S90 has a shortcut button that allows 1 touch white balance, just like on the Canon G11. While it shares many of the features of the G11, a lot of these features are in the menu system or available through the multifunction front control ring, rather than being directly accessible as a separate control on the camera. Such is the price for a smaller sized pocket cam.

The Fisheye FIX S90 housing is machined from solid aluminum and is depth rated to 60m / 196ft. With the precision that can be achieved with machined aluminum, this housing is the smallest and lowest profile of any underwater housing we have seen. Built in fiber optic connectors, and a threaded front port that accepts 67mm, 52mm, and Inon AD mounts allows a wide choice of accessory macro and wide angle lenses. Our favorite wide lens is the 52mm mount Fisheye UWL-04, which produces a 165 degree angle of view. This housing



is also our favorite for controls as it is the only housing to have access to both the front and rear dials of the camera.

The Ikelite S90 housing offers a 200 ft depth rating and has access to the front control ring, but not the rear wheel of the camera. To control the function of the rear wheel, the user must press and hold the shortcut button, then press left or right on the 4 way selector. Due to the position of the shortcut button, this can be an awkward task. The housing has 67mm threads on the front port allowing the use of macro and wide angle lenses. However, due to the wide 28mm lens of the S90, 67mm wide lenses will vignette. This requires the user to zoom the lens in to avoid the vignetting.



The Canon WP-DC35 housing for the S90 has a 130 ft depth rating and access to the front control ring, but not the rear wheel of the camera. Wide angle lens options from Inon are expected as soon as they complete the lens mount base adapter for the housing. The Inon 28AD lens will allow for a 100 degree angle, and an option to add a dome unit will yield 150 degrees. Stay tuned to this article for when this lens mount will be available.



Our favorite strobe options for the S90 are the Sea & Sea YS-110a or Inon S-2000. The YS-110a offers a slave TTL mode along with manual mode and has a guide number of 22. The smaller Inon S2000 strobe also offers a slave TTL mode and manual mode with a slightly lower (less bright) guide number of 20.

Overall System Winners:

Staff Favorite Camera and Housing Combos 2010

As with our previous reviews, a few of our top picks were a slam dunk, others we argued down to the detail. The list below represents our favorite camera and housing combos for new and advanced users. Camera and housing technology is always changing, but these are the solutions we're currently recommending to our best dive buddies. If you're reading this article later in 2010, please give us a call for the latest updates.

We selected our final top picks based on the camera's ability to reproduce the point & shoot images above and asked the following questions: Close focus wide angle lens? Manual exposure control or compensation to make the background bright or dark on demand?

Best Low Cost System (\$179 - \$699) Olympus FE360 Package

For a second year running, the Olympus FE-360 with Olympus PT-044 housing won our top pick in the lowest price category. With its new even lower price it seemed impossible to find a camera that could out shoot it for close to the same price. Its manual controls are limited to exposure compensation, but a new shooter can get a great



pocket camera and housing for well under \$200. We also tested many of the low priced strobes on the market and found the Fantasea Remora Package (with our custom arm and tray) to offer the brightest light and best quality for entry level options. The Fantasea Remora strobe is limited to manual control, but offers great lighting low cost. Many of our customers prefer to upgrade this package to the Sea & Sea YS-01 strobe for a smaller and more automated solution. With the Fantasea strobe a complete system with camera, housing, wide angle lens, and strobe package totals up to a mere \$699.

Best Auto Camera System with HD Movie Mode (\$448 - \$1548) Canon SD940 Package

Photo quality from the Canon SD-940 positioned it as top of the automatic class, but its HD movie quality at this price point was what blew us away. While it's not designed to be a primary underwater video camera, it performs impressively well in situations where a still image just won't tell the story as well as motion pictures. With a 24 mbps video data rate, this camera offers the highest video data rate of any camera in this review and rivals the top data rates of dedicated video cameras. To minimize cost we selected the Canon WP-DC33 housing, but selected the more user friendly sTTL capabilities



and ultra-compact size of the Inon S-2000 with our custom tray and arm package. A complete system with camera, housing, wide angle lens, and strobe package totals up to \$1548.

Best Advanced Pocket System (\$1228 - \$2735) Fisheye CanonS90 Package

The Canon S90 is not only the most pocket friendly of the advanced options, its manual control set rivals the best in the category. We're quite fond of the rugged

aluminum construction and optical choice found with Fisheye FIX S90. It has become the favorite choice of technical divers that want a rugged housing and camera option as a clip off unit. It is also unique in providing access to both the front and rear control dials making it much less of a finger twister for manual exposure control. Base camera and housing price is \$1228. We selected the Sea & Sea YS-110a and Ultralight strobe arm package as we assume this user would also want TLL and a more future-proof lighting system. A complete camera, housing, wide lens and strobe package costs \$2735.



Best Advanced System (\$1598 - \$3230)

Fisheye Canon G11 Package

Following on the heels of the Fisheye G10, the Fisheye FIX G11 takes the top spot this year. The same lenses and accessories from Fisheye that fit the G10 housing also fit on the G11 housing. New shooters that are taking up underwater photography as a serious hobby share the desires of advanced SLR shooters looking for a professional grade compact system. The Canon G11 with the Fisheye FIX G11 housing is a perfect match for both types of underwater



photographers. The image quality of the Canon G11 continues to be the best we've seen in any compact camera and its slightly larger size and button set feel much more comfortable in the hand. The Fisheye Super wide Lens is the only lens available that allows a 165 degree field of view with this camera. The optional depth rating of up to 100 meters has captured the tech diving crowd and when packaged with an Inon Z-240 strobe, TTL exposures are bright, accurate and easy. A complete package of camera, housing, wide port, and strobe costs \$3230, but this solid system will be shooting and diving for many years to come.

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A diver in a desolate underwater environment, viewed from behind. The diver is wearing a black wetsuit, a mask, and two large white scuba tanks. They are standing on a sandy seabed with sparse, dead-looking coral and small rocks. A large, clear plume of bubbles rises from the diver's mask towards the surface. The water is a deep, clear blue, and the overall scene conveys a sense of isolation and environmental degradation.

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Photo by Joseph C Dovala

REDSEE RED housing

by Hugo Fairs

Filmways Ltd have produced the new REDSEE underwater housing for the revolutionary RED ONE High Definition camera system.

Working with experienced underwater housing engineers, Greenaway Marine, award winning underwater cameraman Hugh Fairs has designed a housing for the RED ONE camera system. Built primarily with feature films, commercials, pop promos and dramas in mind, Hugh set out to build a housing for the RED ONE that he felt the camera deserved.

The REDSEE housing is pressure tested to a depth of 150ft and has been designed for use with the excellent 10mm Zeiss and the 14, 16, 18, 21, 25, 27, 32, 35mm Cooke S4 prime lenses. Also the 18mm to 50mm RED Zoom lens. These lenses are available from Movietech Ltd at Pinewood.

Underwater 'wide works best' as it allows the camera to get close and reduce the number of particles in the water column between the lens and the subject ensuring outstanding clarity.

Having used many housings for a variety of cameras over the years, Hugh recognises that control of the camera in the housing, ease of use,

both setting up and underwater, and optical integrity are paramount.

Special optical ports are used with the lenses to bring distortion-free full field of view, compensating for the different refractive indices of air and water. With a flat front port the field of view is reduced by about 25% due to refraction.

Working with the superwide 10mm Zeiss, a large 8" dome port is used to keep the full 100° angle of view. Due to the optical qualities of the port, true 'half and half' shots can be achieved, something impossible with a flat port or 6" dome port.

The dome port gears have been modified to accept the full range of Cooke S4 prime lenses 14mm through to 35mm.

For total reliability, all camera and lens controls are manual, a tried and trusted system much less prone to failure than electronic switches, that are actuated by fingertip controls from the handgrips. Iris, zoom and focus are all controlled via stainless steel rods running through interlocking brass gears to engage flawlessly with the lens gear rings.

Control over colour balance and other picture attributes are



unnecessary underwater as the RED camera uses the RAW file system, so any changes made to the colour balance change the viewfinder image only. What the camera sees, the camera records. All changes to the quality of the image are done in post production. This is because, unlike the Sony and Panasonic HD cameras there is no compression of the video signal.

The 25mm thick Perspex end plate gives clear view of the RED HD 7" colour monitor, which also carries camera information. The housing also has a 2.5" monitor on an adjustable

arm, mounted on the top to aid framing in all positions.

To maintain cool running temperatures, the REDSEE housing is anodised black and then black powder coated externally for further protection. Aluminium has excellent heat dissipating properties and water helps to carry away the heat. The housing is constructed from 10 inch diameter aluminium tube. As such it is 1 inch wider than some of its competitors. This allows extra room around the camera and drive for better convection of heat away from the heat generating areas. A special dedicated



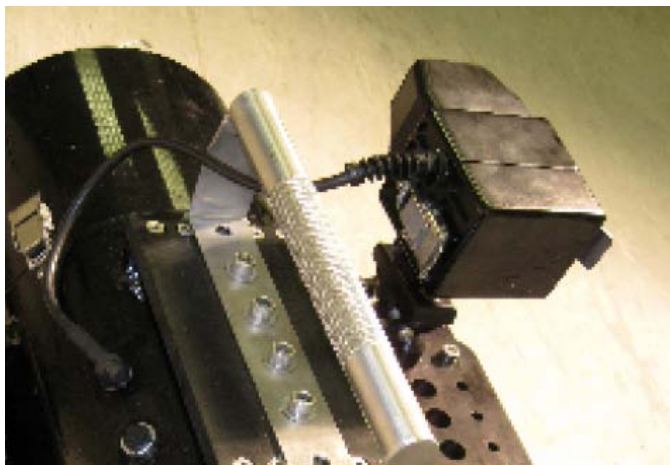
12V fan for the hard drive is incorporated into the design. It is powered directly off the battery and will significantly reduce heat build up in the RED drive

The REDSEE housing has three parts, the interchangeable front ports for the Cooke primes or zoom lenses. The middle section houses the camera body and all controls, and the rear section houses the rear monitor and can be removed and replaced in seconds to change the battery or RED drive without upsetting the camera or lens.

The REDSEE housing assembly is simple and the double O ring construction at each join insures the housing's integrity against water ingress. There are also visual and audible safety moisture alarms integrated into the housing.

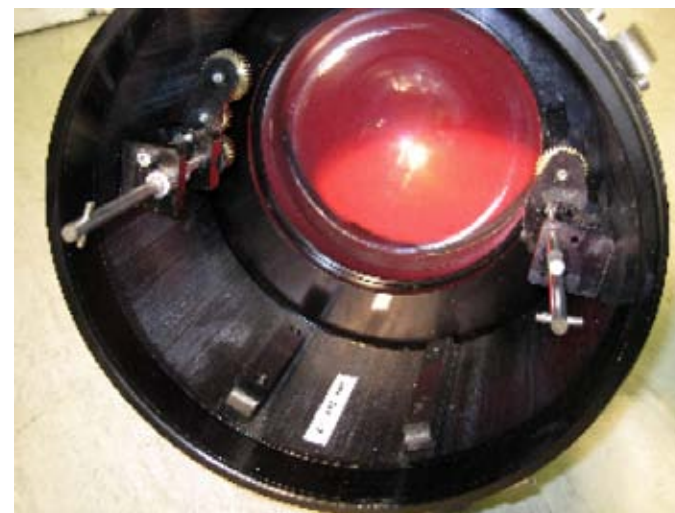
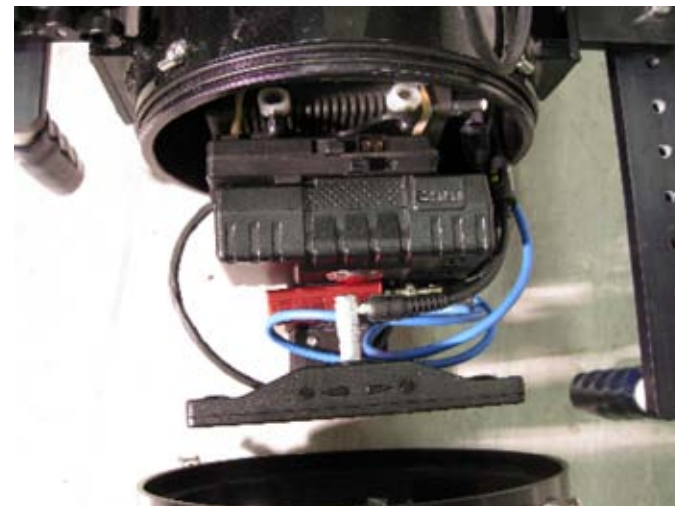
The REDSEE housing also incorporates heavy duty aluminium plates on top, sides and bottom, drilled to accept accessories such as lamps or attachment to remote hotheads, underwater scooters or tripods.

Video-out sockets allow HD-SDI pictures to be sent to the surface via the waterproof BNC cable for the director to see all the underwater action. A further underwater connector aperture is currently blanked off and is available for future development.



Underwater, the housing is weightless and easy to manoeuvre, having a low frontal area for use in strong currents. It can also be attached to an underwater scooter for added mobility. The hand grips are adjustable fore and aft for ease of use and to allow for more leverage when operating.

Because it is modular in construction the housing is easy to modify to accept different lenses, Haydn lens control systems, and can be revised for different shooting environments and allows limitless adaptation to suit any production requirements.



The REDSEE underwater housing is currently available for hire with or without its owner and designer underwater cameraman Hugh Fairs. However we recommend a trained technician accompany the housing as mistakes in assembly leading to a leak could be costly.

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Canon HF-S11 in Gates housing with GP32 wide angle port

By Simon Deane

Simon Deane is a videographer working on the Andaman Coast of Thailand. For the last 5 years he has been making diving and snorkelling tour movies for visitors to Krabi. Most of the tours are daily trips to the reefs close to the Krabi coast and to the Phi Phi Islands.

The marine life in this region is rich and varied and the reefs are generally in good condition with large areas of soft and hard coral species. Simon tries to capture as much of this as possible to produce a new 20 minute movie everyday during the high season. Some of his customers are veteran divers with hundreds of dives whilst others have never seen a tropical fish in it's native environment.

The workhorse for this has been the Sony HVR-A1P camera in an Amphibico housing, a great compact combination providing good access to camera functions and a high quality HDV picture recorded to DV tape.

With business expanding and technology presenting new products a recent purchase is the Canon HF-S11 video camera and the Gates underwater housing. The video camera records pictures using the

AVCHD format straight to memory card. There is built-in memory and a slot to record to a removable SD card.

The Gates housing provides access to all of the camera's functions by traditional control rods and arms and also the novel feature of inserting the camera's remote control into the housing and using it's functions through housing controls.

This report is the first impression following a two dive trip to try out the new set-up.

A short movie of test footage can be seen here;

www.pushingfin.com/galVidGnl0809.htm

The Housing aesthetics

The first impressions, out-of-the-box...everyone that has seen this Gates housing has commented on how good it looks. Not only is it aesthetically 'cool'; the engineer types all appreciate the quality of the finish. Regardless of the fact that it's an underwater video housing or an overnight bag it looks 'cool'....



Set-up & camera installation

I purchased the housing from Scuba Symphony in Kuala Lumpur, despite the initial fumbblings of Sim and I in the shop I am now finding it a straightforward procedure to install the camera.

Initially it did take some experimenting to work out where the on/off control arm was supposed to be positioned for installation and operation but now I know it's easy...

The biggest issue I have with the housing is the mounting screw in camera mount (CDM). The CDM is a plate that screws into the tripod mount of the camera, once in place the CDM is inserted into guides inside the housing so the camera is always

located in the correct place for the controls. The mounting screw on the CDM needs to be retained somehow in the mounting plate as I am always dropping it as I remove the plate from the housing to mount the camera initially. I can see that because the base of the plate has been counter sunk for the screw head it leaves no easy option to retain this screw but it would help.

The CDM is a tight fit into the housing and I did find it 'stuck' when trying to remove the camera after the dives. I'll add a film of silicone and see if that helps, I expect frequent use will also free it up a bit. Other than that, mounting the camera securely was very easy and the housing

controls all operated the camera controls without issue.

Controls & Operation

The 'feel' of the controls is good, matching the look and finish of the housing.

The record on/off requires some pressure but is a distinct and 'positive' feel. The zoom control is great as the long lever gives a good degree of control. However I did find that zoom-in would stick. After I released pressure from the lever the camera was still zooming-in so I had to touch the lever back. Zoom-out however would stop zooming as soon as I released pressure from the lever.

All the other controls worked as I expected.

The remote control operation is straightforward. I'm glad I had a few hours to the camera on land previously or the menu options may have been difficult to remember and navigate while underwater.

Accessing and using the pop-up menu is a little bit easier via the remote control than it is using the camera's joystick directly – so that's a bonus.

The GP32 wide angle port

The wide angle port is wider than the Amphibico WA port I am used to using; significantly wider so I actually got my fin tips in a shot that I was not



expecting.

Despite it being wider there's no noticeable fish-eye like 'bending' of the picture or any distortion at the edges. At the other end of the scale the close ups cannot match the set-up I have with the Sony.

I had discussed the optics with Pam at Gates before purchase and her information was accurate, zoom through holds focus to between two-thirds and three-quarters of the camera's zoom range.

In the movie see the shots of the small grouper (white tip), the flounder's eyes, the scorpion fish, the feather star and the anemone fish.

You will also see with the scorpion fish sequence and the black and white (Clarks) anemone fish the use of the camera's 1.7x magnify feature. Here I used the zoom to the maximum the port would allow then

used the camera's 1.7x feature.

Feedback from Gates is that this camera has used a different optical set-up to any other camera on the market. This GP32 port is modified but essentially 'off the shelf'. It is likely other wide ports will be introduced that allow more zoom through capability.

For those who need macro, a flat port is already available and this allows for diopters to be mounted too.

The dome of the wide angle port is from optical acrylic. The information that comes with the housing recommends using air to clean it as this material can scratch easily though Gates also assure me it has been coated to makes scratches from normal cleaning unlikely.

Housing ergonomics

Holding the housing steady underwater is something I still need to get used to. My other housing is narrower and I use the viewfinder so my position gives a third point of contact with the viewfinder up against my mask and my elbows tucked in against my chest.

This housing doesn't allow that position, being much wider and there's no viewfinder to use in that way. So initially I was finding it hard to hold the housing steady laterally. I felt I was tilting left and right, up and down, like steering a car down a

bumpy road.

You will see stability problems in the scorpion fish sequence as this was filmed in surge on the reef top too.

Having said that, it's more a case of getting used to the camera's balance and my position. The final shot of the bubbles and water surface was filmed one-handed as I had already deployed my SMB.

I'm not sure I'll ever be able to hold the camera steady to record and use the remote control buttons or the assign control at the same time but practice makes perfect...

Overall I'm very happy with the housing. It looks good and works well.

Camera performance

I am also impressed with this for such a small camera, it's performance is very good.

While using the camera on land I have been surprised by the sharpness and detail in the picture; underwater I'm still impressed.

Focus

I'm used to using the Sony A1P which is also a small camera but not renowned for good low light capability.

You will see in the footage that the first dive was not well lit. It was overcast with light cloud and the dive site was in shade. If I was shooting



Auto white balance

Manual white balance



with the A1 I would lock focus otherwise I would see occasional focus hunting.

Since I was testing the HF-S11 I went without focus lock most of the time and it did not focus hunt at all that I can see. Even with fast movements and low light.

White balance

The camera required the red filter at a shallower depth than my Sony but once in place it

had no problem finding a white balance.

The red filter is built-in to the housing and is moved into place or removed using a lever on the front of the housing.

After pressing the MWB button via the remote control the camera found a white balance whether it could 'see' the white slate or not. I will have to experiment more with this but initially it seems very easy and 'clever' and gives good results.

Custom control

I had the camera's custom button and control set to manual focus, this will take some getting used to or it may be useless. The camera does not display the focus distance until you reach it's limits of infinity or minimum focus distance and the control is not sensitive so it takes a lot of twirling the control to see the focus move. This is a problem on land as well as in the housing.

Being able to lock focus is very useful to avoid focus hunting and for ensuring the subject is in focus and not the background but this can also be done via the camera's pop-up function menu.

I will practice more with the custom control and also try it set for exposure and see which will be more useful day to day.

Photos

During the dive I experimented with the camera's dual-shot mode which allows you to capture high res. photos while recording video at the same time. The feature works well and may allow me to offer additional products on the day trips. However dual-shot mode sets all functions to auto including white balance so I end up with clips with different colours as some were with manual white balance and some with auto. Correction 'in post' is

possible but not ideal.

Nonetheless the photos are good quality.

Summary

I'm happy with this package and am beginning to see the future of recording to digital media. I use the Edius video editing package and their latest version makes native AVCHD editing possible even on a two year old dual core PC. My equally as old laptop can almost edit the files, but not quite, so a new laptop should be able to cope.

For shooting and making 'dailies' time is always an issue, a huge benefit is the time saved in quicker than real time footage acquisition. It also frees-up the camera and gives more available time to capture 'more of the action'.

So no more DV tape but a lot more hard disk storage.

For the price of the camera I'm impressed with it's performance and picture quality and combined with the housing and the ingenious use of the full-function remote control it's a great solution for me.

Thanks Pam at Gates and Sim at Scuba Symphony for your time, advice and service if you have any questions or would like more information let me know.

Simon Deane

simon@pushingfin.com

With thanks to:

www.scubasympphony.com

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Dive a plane at Capenwray UK

Many of the visitors to Capernwray Diving Center near Lancaster, UK over the past eight or so months will have noticed that there was what appeared to have been a sizeable aeroplane crash in the top corner of the car park!

It all started a bit like a blind date; a call asking us if we would like an aeroplane to put in the quarry, followed by visits to it, a ridiculous amount of planning, and a long and tortuous journey up the motorway. The tail section and wings had to be removed to fit under bridges, which made for a total of four abnormal loads causing traffic chaos throughout Lancashire!

The winter passed by with a massive amount of work being carried out,; removing fluids, snagging hazards and re-attaching the wings. It is now rumoured that Capernwray has a specialist aeroplane-mending department! The entries and exits were enlarged, and the cockpit (with most of the controls still intact) closed off with Perspex. She is G-BVOV a Hawker

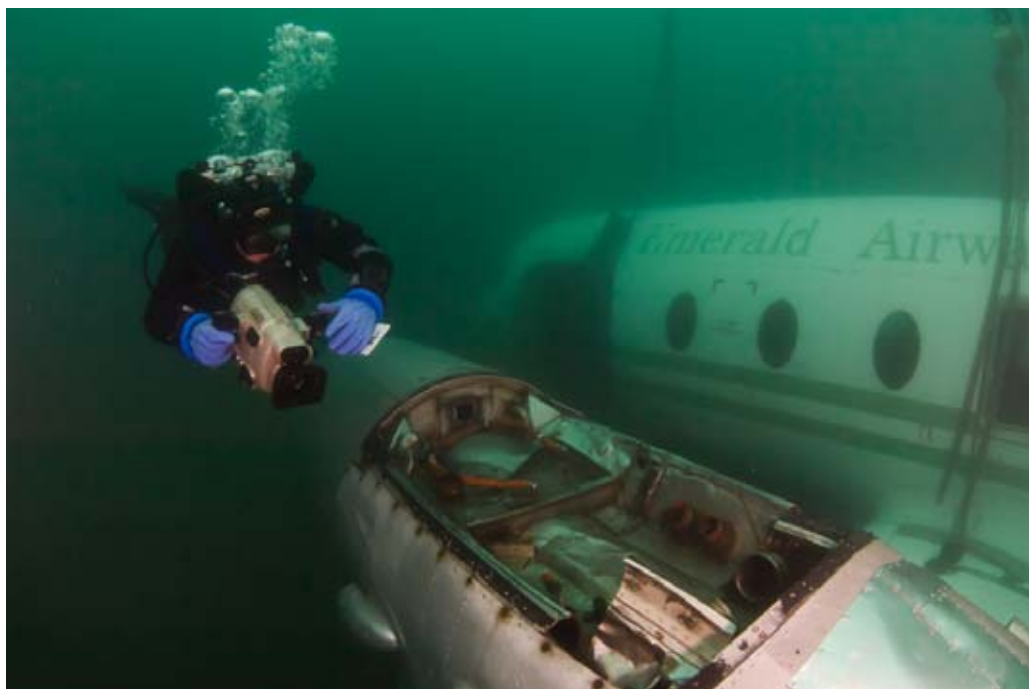
Siddeley 748 turboprop forty-eight seat passenger aircraft. She flew between Lisbon and the Azores, before being bought by the now defunct Emerald Airways to fly from Liverpool to Jersey and was scrapped in 2006.

On Monday the 29th March, we hired the biggest mobile crane available, and watched by the press, very gingerly lowered G-BVOV into the water. She made a textbook water landing, despite giving us some last minute angst by threatening to nose dive!

She now sits on a clear bottom with her wheels at 18m and the top of the fuselage at 12m. She is completely intact, with landing gear down, and wings in place. The tail and fin are intact but separate, which allows for a safe and easy entry into the cavernous fuselage.

Her cockpit faces almost due East-and gets the full force of the morning sun. Leaning in through the open windscreens you can shoot the cockpit controls and interior. The first impression on diving is





how big and quite unlike any other wreck she is. This is due to how high she stands and how intact she is. It really does look like a movie set, and is a real treat for videographers. For still shooters, the fall of light through the portholes (?) from the inside makes for some real cathedral lighting effects, particularly on a bright day. It is also crying out for some off camera strobe effects with a willing model inside! The wreck is so big that lighting it is a challenge, although green water Magic filters can help for wide-angle shots. As is often the way, the schools of resident fish in Capernwray are adopting

www.uwpmag.com

the wreck, with a large group of Perch already ensconced close to the nose wheel, which will add another dimension to subject choice.

Reaction from the diving public has been very positive, and with Charles Hood hosting the Visions in the Sea "Wrecks of Capernwray" event on the 8th/9th May, it is likely that it's image will be featuring in quite a few portfolios!

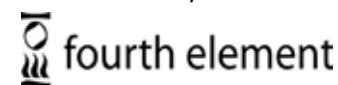
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8th & 9th May 2010



Charlie Hood – Underwater Photography Workshop
 The Wrecks of Capernwray

Itinerary:

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Mares will have equipment available to try throughout the weekend, Fourth Element will donate a Capernwray entry pass to each participant and Capernwray will be providing the classroom facilities for us. Your entry fee will also allow you to enter your 2 best photos taken on the day. The winner and runner up will receive prizes.

Tickets cost £30

Limited Places

For more details or to book online:

www.visionsinthesea.com

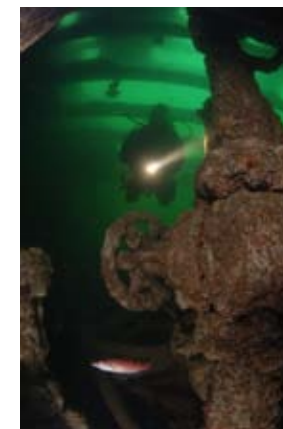
Charlie Hood is one of the world's foremost wreck photographers. His work is widely published and has taken him all over the world. He is also a correspondent for Dive Magazine. Charlie has also received many awards and accolades for his underwater photography. Charlie also has his own RIB charter to get photographers close to the UK's best sea life including the Basking Shark, Seals and Mola Mola over the summer months. His guidance over the weekend will be invaluable to improving your underwater photography skills.



"The Visions in the Sea Summer Series encapsulates what underwater photography in the UK should be about – getting in the water and having a go!"

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Capernwray – is the premier inland dive site in the North West. It offers excellent training facilities and is a great place to do some underwater photography. Those joining us on this weekend will be some of the first photographers to have the chance to photograph the new airplane sunk in April this year. Other attractions are the HMS Podsnap, Cessna and 2 helicopters. There is also plenty of fish life with Trout, Roach, Perch and the impressive Sturgeon



An Interview with Mr Nauticam

By Dr Alex Tattersall

Recently I made the long trip to the town of Tangxia in Guangdong Province, Southern China to visit the manufacturing facilities of Nauticam International Ltd., and to meet the driving force behind this wave-making new brand, Mr Edward Lai. Brimming with infectious, creative enthusiasm and animated excitement, Edward was only too happy to share the story behind the Nauticam phenomenon with me. I took the opportunity to ask a few questions:

Where did this all begin?

Definitely with my father. He started a Hong Kong based injection molding company in the 1970s producing small household products. It was his influence that led me to start my own business in the early 1990s, despite his discouragement that the economy at that time was in decline. I have always felt the desire to strive to produce higher and higher quality products and we enjoyed much success for 2 decades attracting a range of very prestigious, premium-end clients including Nokia, Gillette, Microsoft and Compaq. Their demands for exceptional precision allowed little tolerance in our manufacturing process and we made major investments in state-of-the-art high precision machinery.



How then did you develop the idea of Nauticam?

Like many other companies, we were hit hard by the recent economic downturn as many of our customers began looking for ways to cut their costs. As we are from Hong Kong and we operate manufacturing plants in China, from a political perspective, we are in some ways treated as foreigners. For this reason we are unable to enjoy the government support and preferential treatments which are available to Chinese-run companies and ultimately we became uncompetitive. I have four daughters, all of whom were studying in the UK at the time and we were no longer receiving any substantial orders for our premium products. These were very difficult, worrying times for us and we needed a new strategy.

I have always loved photography and had recently discovered the pleasure of combining this with another of my passions, diving. Before I conceived the idea of starting Nauticam, I always questioned the ergonomics of the housing in my hand, and continuously thought I could perhaps provide a better solution. I always seem to do



Mr Nauticam, Edward Lai (centre), and R&D team consider new solutions. (photo courtesy of Kenji Ohmura)

Jacqueline Lai developing a 3D model. (photo courtesy of Kenji Ohmura)



this, look at a product and think about the design issues, even when I am brushing my teeth. I realised that we have the resources, machinery and workforce available to produce such a housing to an exceptionally high standard and so began the



Terry, head designer for Nauticam, considers a new style of strobe mounting

Nauticam journey. In fact, our machinery works to tolerances which far exceed those required for underwater housing manufacturing enabling us to produce the high build and finish quality which can be seen in our products.

What is the source of your innovations and how are these realised in the product range?

I do have to modestly claim ownership of many of the ergonomic innovations incorporated into the Nauticam product range but I must also acknowledge the huge amount of input from the many dedicated underwater photographers I have had the pleasure of meeting in recent years. They have continually provided us with essential, invaluable feedback which we have, as far as possible, incorporated into the improvement of our designs. I'm also lucky to have a competent and dedicated design team, many of whom have been with me since I started in the 1990s, who take the concepts and develop them into a tangible reality.



High precision machinery in the manufacturing process

There are always areas for improvement and I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome any feedback or suggestions for improvements from any users of our products. As we have the complete manufacturing process at our fingertips, we can afford to be creative and continually implement any suggestions from our end users into our new products. Being open to suggestions and reactive in this way to our customers is an enormous part of our business philosophy.

Did you expect your products to receive the attention that they have?

We were, of course, always unsure about how the market would react to our products. I remember when we were preparing for DEMA 2008, where we first showcased our initial prototype of the white balance port, we really had no idea what the reaction would be. The people we met in the industry on that occasion though really seemed to appreciate something new, something



High precision machinery machines housings from a solid block of aluminium.

innovative and we met lots of the people at DEMA who are now our business partners. We are, of course, absolutely delighted with the reaction to our products. In fact, I have to say that the demand for our products has been unexpectedly high and we have had to modify our production



Quality control is something they have always prided themselves in.

process and employ new staff in order to meet customer demand. I should also point out that our customers should be assured that the quality of our products will not be compromised as a result of this significant demand. It has been an invigorating yet tumultuous couple of years but I think now we are learning from our experiences, both good and bad, and settling down into a more mature and efficient production process.

Can you tell me a little about your production process?

We use Unigraphics CAD (Computer Aided Design) for 3-D product design and CAM (Computer Aided Machining) to generate our machining programs. These are used to operate our high precision CNC (computer numerical controlled) machine tools. Basically this means that we have a seamless computerised process which takes the initial product conception, through product



Checking the dome ports

design to product realisation. This also means that we have the flexibility to make modifications to product design as feedback from consumer use and our own product testing is given to us.

Quality control is something we have always prided ourselves in and each individual Nauticam component, of which there are more than 400 in each housing, goes through strict quality and measurement control. We currently have more than 70 staff involved in the company, the majority of whom are directly involved in the manufacturing process. As a boss, I invest as much as possible in my staff and I'm also happy to say that Nauticam has recently become a real family business. My second daughter, Jacqueline, has recently returned from the UK after successfully completing a degree and Master's programme in Mechanical Engineering at Imperial College, London. I'm very proud of her achievements and am looking forward to her input into the company, I hope I can get a good return on my investment (laughs)....



NA-D90 prior to anodising

Canon or Nikon?

No comment... (smiles) ... actually, I am a man who is fascinated even perhaps a little obsessed by ergonomics. I do feel that the Nikon is more ergonomically thoughtful than the Canon. I sometimes say to people that the Nikon is a camera



Lens and port combination testing chamber.



Almost ready – the assembly line

designed firstly by photographers whereas the Canon is a camera designed firstly by microchip engineers. The end results are of course comparable but I think I'll always be a Nikon man primarily for their ergonomics.

What are your plans for Nauticam in the future?

We will continue striving for

greater ergonomics on our housings and incorporating the ideas and feedback of our end users into our designs. We think there is still much to learn in this respect. The next Nauticam model will be for the Canon 550D which will introduce many new innovative solutions. We are also working on a very exciting solution to the problem of camera flash recharge time. We can't have Dr Alex Mustard missing his seahorse birthing shots

again (see Nauticam D700 review by Dr Alex Mustard on Wetpixel).

When our feet touch the ground and we move into a more established production process, we also have plans to invest in anti-shark finning campaigning. We feel that as one of the few underwater photography companies fully based in China, we have a responsibility to this cause and we hope to be able to use our status to contribute to putting an end to this barbaric tradition.

I think it is fitting to end this

interview by saying that we know, as a newcomer to the underwater housing market there has understandably been some speculation as to our longevity and commitment. Indeed, we all see underwater housing manufacturers come and go, I just wish to reassure our current and future customers that Nauticam is a product range that is absolutely here to stay.

Alex Tattersall
www.nauticamuk.com

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Dory Story

by Dan Bolt

It's 7pm on a still autumn evening and our breath hangs on the crisp air as we discuss final plans, exchange signals and descend into the inky blackness. I am in Torbay, south west UK, with my buddy Paul. Our dive has one aim: searching for the enigmatic John Dory.

My eyes scan the gloom straining for that distinctive profile, but almost before I've settled into the dive I see Paul's torch flashing in my direction. The beam dances frenetically and I know exactly what that means. Once again, he has spotted the first fish of tonight's dive. We can only come here for a couple of months towards the end of the year and with precious few weather windows I was concerned that we may have missed the action. I needn't have worried because this year's autumnal gathering is in full swing.

'Saint Peter's Fish' as they are sometimes known, can be seen all round the UK in both shallow and deep waters, happy to be around wrecks or in amongst the weed. With their upright dinner plate body shape and characterful face there is no mistaking their identity when you see one. Typically they tend not to allow



Canon 1000D, f/13, 1/200th, ISO100, Epoque ERX-C1010, 2 x YS-110a strobes on manual, Canon EF-S 18-55mm at 18mm

you to stay close for long and most encounters last for only a minute or two before the fish decide they've had enough. Unless you are very lucky...

It's 7:30pm now and I am finning slowly, scanning the site. We're doing well, Paul and I are already up to two fish each, but the real discovery is still to come. I stop to check my compass and spot the 5th John Dory of the dive. To see five individuals in one night is amazing enough but there is something different about this one. The fish is hardly swimming as



Canon 1000D, f/11, 1/200th, ISO200, Epoque ERX-C1010, 2 x YS-110a strobes on manual, Canon EF-S 18-55mm at 55mm

it slowly weaves towards me through the tall weed. As I edge closer it turns side-on and the reason for the behavioural change is clear: this fish has a scorpion spider crab clinging onto the side of its body which appears to be cleaning parasites off its skin. I only have a few seconds to take a couple of photos before the crab leaps back into the safety of the weed. But there were two of us to witness it and the moment was captured both by camera and indelibly in our minds. Wow!

To see 5, 6 or even 7 John Dories in one dive is highly unusual and to be able to repeat it consistently over an 8 week period is getting on for unique. But no matter how amazed we were at the size of the gathering, it was being overshadowed by the 'cleaning' activities we had seen on a number of the dives and we needed to clarify our ideas with an expert pair of eyes. Not knowing if this was a commonly reported behaviour I decided to enlist some help.

Putting my reputation on the line



Canon 1000D, f/11, 1/200th, ISO100, Epoque ERX-C1010, 2 x YS-110a strobes on manual, Tokina 10-17mm at 13mm

I invited regular UWP contributor, photo-guru and marine biologist Alex Mustard to join us with the lure of a guaranteed encounter with a John Dory. Our first dive was during daylight and for over 80 long minutes we cover the exact area where all our sightings have been at least three times and don't see a single John Dory!

A little concerned that I was wasting Alex's time, we chatted in detail about the 'cleaning stations', hypothesising that, because the cleaning crabs only climbed up onto

the weeds at night, it made sense that we would only see the behaviour after dark. A night dive, a few hours later would put our theory to the test.

That evening, and now joined by Paul and his massively bright Halcyon torch, we set out again. Sadly the visibility is a poor 2m but it isn't long before I see the first signal coming from the gloom, which starts the action rolling. It is a fantastic dive; not only were we able to give Alex his first UK night dive, but his British John Dory count goes from zero to 7 specimens in less than an hour. Best



Canon 1000D, f/9, 1/200th, ISO200, Epoque ERX-C1010, 2 x YS-110a strobes on manual, Canon EF-S 18-55mm at 18mm

Canon 1000D, f/10, 1/200th, ISO200, Epoque ERX-C1010, 2 x YS-110a strobes on manual, Canon EF-S 60mm Macro

of all we saw two fish that were being cleaned by the spider crabs; further convincing us that this is the reason that they were coming into the bay in such large numbers.

To watch Alex formulating a plan to get the best out of the



atrocious visibility and making full use of the cooperative nature of the fish was like being in my own personal master-class. I made plenty of mental notes about strobe positioning and how to approach a subject from a different perspective than the one that immediately presents itself.

Photographically these dives were a real challenge. Not only was all the action happening after dark, but being quite a silty site the visibility was often only 1 or 2 metres and easily made worse by poor buoyancy/finning technique! Dealing with each of these problems in turn throws up its own challenge, but nothing insurmountable especially as I had a number of weeks to perfect my approach to this set of difficulties.

The biggest problem on these night dives was not getting the camera to focus. My Canon 1000D managed surprisingly well, but ensuring the focus was on the exact spot I wanted for the image was essential. Key to a successful critter or fish shot is to have the obvious focal point of the image in pin-sharp focus. Because I was trying to highlight the crab on the body of the fish this was to be the critical spot but getting it exactly right proved to be a little tricky. To help the camera to focus we used decent torches to illuminate the scene and these helped greatly to improve the speed and accuracy of the camera's



Canon 1000D, f/10, 1/200th, ISO200, Epoque ERX-C1010, 2 x YS-110a strobes on manual, Canon EF-S 60mm Macro

AF system. The HID lamps we used put out light with a different colour temperature to my strobes (Sea & Sea YS-110a, triggered optically) and can produce odd-looking images if both light sources are in the image. The self-quenching Fantasea Nano Focus Light I have is great for macro work but is simply not powerful enough to cut through a few metres of murky water.

In the end it was the John Dories themselves who presented the solution to this dual light source issue. Not only do they go into a kind of trance when the crab is providing its cleaning service but they also seem to be attracted and mesmerised by torch-light - think rabbit & headlight. With practice it was possible to attract a fish towards you with the torch, focus the shot, and just before pressing the shutter whip the torch away to take the photo. It takes some perfecting but was a surprisingly effective technique.

Another approach which proved useful if the fish wasn't being quite so co-operative was to close the aperture and raise the shutter speed to such an extent as to render the torch light ineffective on the CCD of the camera. This in turn required pretty



Canon 1000D, f/10, 1/200th, ISO100, Epoque ERX-C1010, 2 x YS-110a strobes on manual, Canon EF-S 18-55mm at 36mm

strong strobe output to light the scene and always we had to think about the terrific backscatter which was lurking out there when not positioned perfectly.

Working in the cool autumnal waters of the UK also meant that the strobe batteries didn't take too kindly to working so hard and the re-cycle time



Canon 1000D, f/11, 1/200th, ISO200, Epoque ERX-C1010, 2 x YS-110a strobes on manual, Canon EF-S 18-55mm at 55mm

on my YS-110a's dropped dramatically half-way through most dives. In fact I missed a couple of fabulous behavioural shots because of non-firing strobes but that is just part of the cold-water game I suppose.

Knowing that the fish would be around for a 6-8 week period meant that I could try out different lenses & really get the feel for which works best with these creatures. In such low vis conventional

wisdom dictates working with the widest possible lenses. For this my glass of choice was the Tokina 10-17mm fisheye which was great for taking 'Diver with fish' shots. But even after plenty of time trying different strobe positions I found lighting these images properly was a real challenge and I've got plenty of dud shots in my computer's recycle bin. We had lots of fun trying to position both the diver and fish for suitable photos, and on more than one occasion the camera got forgotten because it was just so amazing to be this close to a normally shy creature.

Following some very wise advice from Mr. Mustard to take images which would cover all aspects of the enfolding story, one evening I decided to take in the Canon EF-S 60mm Macro to get some images of the parasites - what a giggle that was! As many folks know this is a fantastic lens but taking macro shots of a moving fish in the dark and with

low vis was almost more than it could handle. Again getting enough light on the subject to allow fast and accurate focusing was an issue but when it did work I got the photos I wanted for the article, and some fabulous close-up shots of the John Dory's eyes and stunning skin patterns.

After a few dives it became apparent that the real star in my camera bag was actually the cheapo 'kit' lens that came with the 1000D. The trusty,

and now image-stabilised, Canon EF-S 18-55mm f/3.5/5.6 was the perfect tool for portrait work with these amazing creatures. Using it behind a flat port did give me some soft corners at 18mm, but nothing too drastic, and the low light and vis levels meant that there was often nothing of interest in that part of the image anyway! This lens isn't touted as having macro capabilities but its minimum focusing distance of 25cm from the focal plane meant that I could take real advantage of the close proximity I was enjoying with the fish. That said, there were plenty of occasions where the fish were simply too close to photograph, and one even let me scratch its chin after coming to investigate my torch.

The dives I had with these fish were amazing, and the 2010 gathering is something I am looking forward to very much. I just hope the location remains under-wraps because being such a delicate site it will suffer if too many photographers turn up!

Dan Bolt

www.underwaterpics.co.uk



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Triton Bay

Lost in the Past

By Carlos Virgili

After a day's navigation in the Moluccas we reached what was formerly known as Irian Jaya and whose name, even today, is still unclear to the locals. Well anyway, in this part of the Indonesian Republic, Papua, or however you want to call it, on the most eastwardly corner of its vast territory, tucked away, is a small but priceless treasure called the Bay of Triton or, just for friends, Triton Bay.

Diving is relatively new to this area, just to give you an idea, since the beginning of this new century only a few cruises have ventured there due to its remoteness and the complexity of stocking up on provisions (in the town of Kaimana). It goes without saying that the Ondina, the King of all Indonesia, is one of the chosen few. Word has it that there is project to convert the area into a National Park, however, at least for the moment, a special permit is still required to be able to dive in the Bay.

On a typical day on 'Odina' everyone wakes up to the clang of the bell at 7am and the deck gradually fills up with divers from every corner of the world, far and beyond, not of course forgetting Spain. It goes

without saying that the Ondina is one of the few diving cruise vessels flying the Spanish flag.

The briefing takes place on the stern where the diving area is located, each diver has a basket for their things, their own shelf for storing torches or strobes, a towel with a number and a BCD with a tank mounted, for the whole trip, etc.

On this particular trip we didn't have the pleasure of the regular cruise director, the well-known Ricard Bux, but with a man named Celso and his charming partner and dive master, Mrs Whan (alias) Obi-Wan-Kenobi. What can I say about them? The truth is they are both very laid-back and their style differs greatly from ... how can

Carlos uses a Nikon D300 in a Subal housing and either dual Inons, a Nikon SB800 in a Sealux housing, Subtronic Nova or Sea & Sea YS 90 strobes.

Diver and coral 12mm lens, 1/80th @ F8, 200 ISO



I put it ... the 'vigorously dynamic' Ricard, and this doesn't mean in any way less efficient. But you do get the impression that before coming on deck in the morning they have already had a session of yoga/tai-chi and Zen relaxation, such is their serenity and control. They literally glide along the deck.

Celso and Whan gives the briefing to the anxious divers. Lazily we all get dressed, while the local crew members (from various different parts of Indonesia, but above all from Sulawesi, where the 'pinisi' was built) start lowering the dive gear into the two dinghies. Like a gentleman, one descends the steps to sea-level (watch out if it's choppy) and with a gracious hop you find yourself in the craft. If you don't want to lug the bottle down yourself, you'll find it waiting for you in the dinghy.

The cruise to the dive-site is usually short and the mother-boat either drifts or anchors nearby. On reaching the site, fins and masks on, we all fall backwards on the dive master's cue. Once beneath the surface only one thing remains to be done: enjoy it like a hog wallowing in mud.

If you are an UW photographer it's better to go with one of the expert guides on board (yes, yes I agree that the tendency is to flee like mad from any kind of group diving, but they

are the ones who will spot the pigmy seahorse hidden in that dull sea fan that you just passed by without seeing a blooming thing!). Take my advice; if Noldi is on board, he's an absolute ace at finding whatever you ask him for. Don't give him the Latin term as he's not too up in this language, he's more into Greek, say it in English or if not just show him a photograph from one of the identification books in the ship's library and he will find it for you!.

When you are out of air (yes, I do know all about the 50 bars and all that stuff) we emerge to the surface where the boatman, who has been skilfully following our little bubbles, is waiting for us. Once dried off, it's breakfast time. You can choose between either Continental or a traditional one. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are served in the lounge situated on the main deck or, weather permitting; you can eat around the large, glass table at the stern of the ship. In the lounge there is a flat screen TV and a DVD and the best thing of all is... they work!

Breakfast over, the photographers head towards the ship's stern where the camera rinse tanks are stored. We take the equipment out of the water and place it on a table protected by rubber. Underneath there are shelves with little baskets to store more stuff and a towel for each 'fanatic'. A great



The head of a ghost pipefish taken with a 105mm lens, 1/125th @ F32, 200 ISO

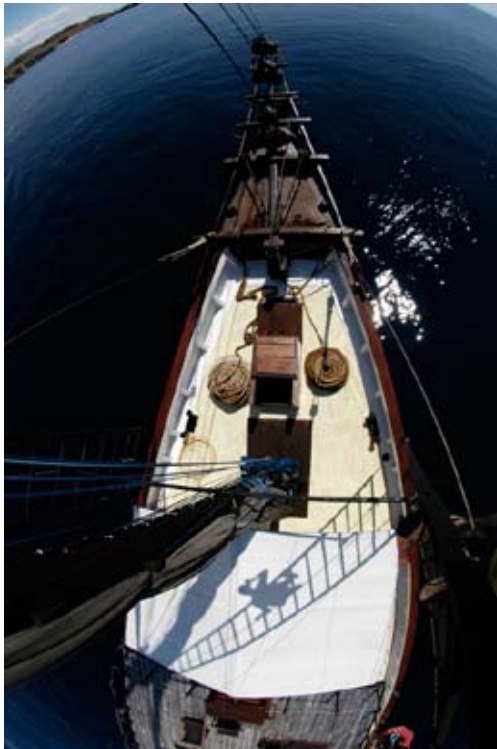
idea! Open up cameras, memory cards out, recharge flashes etc And then when you least expect it, the bell sounds again. Off we go, down again! Ugh, Neptune...my God! What stress!

There are on average three or four dives a day, plus a night dive if we're not sailing and the maritime conditions are good. Not to mention the land trips which the cruise boss has planned for us and which I strongly recommend you do not miss. In Triton Bay, one afternoon



A small goby in some whip coral 105mm lens, 1/125th @ F25, 200 ISO

we sacrificed one of the dives and in the two dinghies made our way into the enormous and intricate bay. There are enormous islands scattered in the bay as a result of erosion and its worn seabed is totally covered with vegetation. On one of the islands you can even find hanging carnivorous plants. If you have seen pictures of some areas of Vietnam or Thailand, or one of the James Bond films, you will no doubt find certain similarities. In one of the multiple canals we came



*A small spider crab on whip coral. 60mm lens, 1/100th @ F45, ISO 200
Carlos uses a Nikon D300 in a Subal housing and either dual Inons, a Nikon SB800 in a Sealux housing, Subtronic Nova or Sea & Sea YS 90 strobes.*



A small crab on soft coral at night. 105mm lens, 1/125th @ F32, 200 ISO

across a family of Papuans who make their living by cultivating Sargasso on board their canoe. Using sign language they explained to us how they did this by hanging cord from one island to another, most probably in the same way as their ancestors had done hundreds of years before. It was like getting into a time machine and going back to the year 1000.

Back to the underwater world and visibility is not generally good especially in comparison to the rest of Indonesia, due to the incredibly nutrient-rich water, but is, at worst,

like the Mediterranean on a normal day. The first thing that strikes you is the sheer amount of life in and around the reef. Never and I repeat, never in my life have I seen such a large quantity of fishes and creatures spread over such a vast area. (In some specific areas I have in fact found a similar range and quantity of biodiversity, but not over an extensive area). The seabed is generally carpeted with incrustive orange coral, whose open polyps are a magnificent spectacle.

The first dive is one of the best: Black Forest owes its name to the

black coral which truly resembles a forest on the slopes at this particular point of the dive-site. In all reality it should be called White Forest given that the polyps of the black coral in this area are really white; it is the skeleton which, once dried, gives it this colour. It's difficult to focus with a wide-angle lens, such is the myriad of crystal fish swarming in the zone that the auto-focus is driven mad. The water is about 25C and with a 3mm or Lycra suit with a fleece lining, is easily bearable. On this dive, good old Noldi found me pygmy seahorses of

two different types while I dedicated time to shooting all the strange little animals that came into range. Sea-snakes (the notorious *laticauda colubrina*), frogfish, nudibranchs which don't figure in any of my guidebooks, etc etc.

Another dive which just cannot be missed is White Falls, a true Paradise for macro shooting and the location of our night dive. On one single dive we found the following: a leopard shark, two kinds of seahorses, ghost pipefish, minute cypraea which live in the soft coral, dwarf cuttlefish,



14mm lens, 1/80th @ F8, ISO 200

thousands of nudibranchs or gobies of different species. It is not at all unusual to find more common fishes but in larger numbers and sizes than usual, like different species of sweetlips, Jacks, big groupers, rays or bat, butterfly or lion fish, and yes, enormous schools of Spanish (of course) fusiliers, swimming madly in all different directions.

It's also quite common to find sleepy Wobegong sharks not too far from the surface and with a bit of luck, on the night dives, the oddly strange walking shark; but in a

place of such biodiversity, don't be surprised if you hit on a new species without even knowing it, lucky diver!

There are about 20 different dives and most probably many more will come to light, it's just a question of time. But don't miss out on Larry's Heaven, Tanjung Aiduma or 7th Heaven for example. (Bear in mind that depending on the cruise and because these are such recent discoveries, they may have different names and that in the majority of diving guides they are not even mentioned).

It goes without saying that on a Spanish ship, something as traditional as the Siesta could not be overlooked. Great invention, yes siree! With the soft humming of the air conditioning you can dribble to your heart's content on your pillow as images slip through your mind, becoming more and more of a blur, of pygmy seahorses, nudibranchs in 3D, enormous sea fans swaying to the rhythm of the waves and some fishes which you still have not been able to find in the numerous marine life books which are in the lounge. Will they really be named after me?

After the soothing Siesta comes the last day-dive and then dinner. The real fanatics review their torches and flashlights for the night dive while a delicious aroma of spices comes lingering from the kitchen. When we get back after the dive, wrapped up in warm blankets which, I swear to God, are handed to you as soon as you step out of your wetsuit, we'll find out what the chef has prepared for us.

Night comes to an end with a good old lively chinwag at the stern or in the lounge, full of 'lies and exaggerations' typical of frogmen and with a video or photography session organised by Whan

(Photo pro).

One night while we were having dinner, we all ran to the bow alerted by one of the crew. (What on earth was causing such a rumpus?) Drawn by the lights of the ship an enormous snake, more than 3 metres long was slinking around the hull raising its head and part of its flank. Undoubtedly it was taking advantage of the fact that the light was attracting small marine creatures which would be its main course. What a monster! Luckily, we didn't come across it on one of our dives and more so, that it is not a known predator of divers - although it is believed to have a weak spot for tasty Spaniards!

Carlos Virgili
www.risck.com



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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.

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Island hopping in the Philippines

by Alan Larsen

It is 6.30am; we have been waiting for thirty-five minutes at twenty-one metres looking intently into the blue. Our air and no-deco time are low – and our spirits are sinking. We decide to ascend when at last we see a long shadow coming towards us from the middle distance. As it draws closer, we see the unmistakeable long tail and large eye of a thresher shark.

This is what we have been waiting for – and our luck is in: behind it is another. For the next five minutes we watch as they circle close to us, their dull grey bodies turning bright silver when caught by the early morning sun. Getting up at 4.30am has suddenly become worth the effort!

December 2009 and we were at Monad Shoal off Malapascua Island in the Philippines. The plateau we had settled on is in fact the top of an underwater island, now famous as an early morning cleaning station for thresher sharks.

I had my camera with me – and my buddy his video; but just after dawn at a depth of twenty metres in

average visibility are not the ideal conditions for photography, especially as flash is not allowed either. But there are times when the experience of just being there and watching a rarely sighted pelagic shark from a few metres away compensates for having to settle for a few ‘snaps’ of the subject.

It was day two of a three week trip to the Visayas Islands in the Philippines – day four if you count the time it takes to get there from London. And even though I was still tired and jet-lagged from the travel, those five minutes reminded me why I make the effort: sharing the space with two thresher sharks for that short time was exhilarating.

Diving at Malapascua is not only about thresher sharks. At nearby Gato Island and Chocolate Island we dived along walls covered with soft corals: pink and red ‘broccoli’ coral (*dendronephthya*), mushroom soft coral (*sarcophyton*), and ‘grasping’ coral (*goniopora lobata*) were particularly prevalent, punctuated by colonies of disc-like *protopalythoa*.



Thresher Shark at Monad Shoal, Malapascua. Nikon D200 in Subal ND20,, Nikon 12-24mm at 24mm. 1/30 @ f4 Manual, ISO 100 No strobe

These sites were a good introduction to the biodiversity of the whole area: from the more common scorpion fish, several species of nudibranch, seahorses, and banded pipefish, to the more exotic harlequin shrimp, mantis shrimp, and blue ring octopus.

The water was thick with plankton at that time of year, so visibility wasn't great at around fifteen feet; but the plankton soup gave the water an unexpected green tint, which was unusual for me as a confirmed warm water diver! It also meant that the soft corals were



Traditional banca dive boat

actively feeding on the plankton, their motion creating an elegant, if hyperactive, backdrop as we moved along the walls.

When my buddy had first suggested a trip to the Philippines, my initial research indicated that we would need to be a bit more specific about where to go. The Philippines is a vast scattered archipelago of over 7,000 islands forming the northern apex of the Coral Triangle. The rich marine biodiversity makes it an excellent dive destination. It is also a large country with several dive locations to choose from.

We decided on the Visayas, the central island group of the Philippines. And to give ourselves the opportunity to experience several locations, we arranged our trip with Sea-Explorers, a Swiss-owned and run outfit with five dive centres on different islands throughout the area. Sea-Explorers advertises ‘island-hopping’ around their dive resorts, with transfers between most of them by banca – the traditional timber and bamboo outrigger – allowing you to dive on the way. This means that you can maximise the number of diving days, and you don’t have to pack wet dive gear each time you move on as it stays in your dive box.

We chose four locations over 18 days covering the length of the Visayas from north to south: Malapascua Island, Cabilao Island, Alona Beach (on Pangalao Island) and Dauin/Dumagete (on Negros). The diving transformed along the way from lush reefs and walls, to sandy slopes and pure muck diving; and the subjects we saw encompassed a vast range from thresher sharks to pygmy seahorses.

The topography of the dive sites along the coast of Malapascua, Cabilao and Alona Beach are similar. Typically a sandy/rocky plateau at about five metres, a reef or wall down to about twenty metres, and a sandy bottom sloping gently away, punctuated by coral heads, rocks, and sea fans. Each section was full of interesting life in its own



Orangutang crab on Bubble coral. Nikon D200 in Subal ND20, 2x Inon Z-240 strobes. Nikon 105 VR micro. 1/90 @ f16 Manual, ISO100 Inon Z-240 strobes

way.

Although at first glance similar to Malapascua, Cabilao – our second location – was subtly different. The reefs were just as lush, but the subjects were more abundant and varied, demonstrating the biodiversity of the area. There are apparently at least seventeen different species of anemone fish in the Visayas. We regularly saw at least three of them: tomato, common, and false clownfish – and we usually saw others too. Pegasus sea moths and robust ghost pipefish became a common sight on every dive; along with several types of cowry and nudibranchs in abundance.

Here we also started to see regularly what became for me the ‘signature’ subjects of the trip: crinoid shrimps and squat lobsters. Both are highly photogenic, but each has its own challenges.

Crinoid shrimps are perhaps easier to photograph; they are usually more accessible as



Family of clownfish (amphiprion ocellaris) in host anemone. Nikon D200 in Subal ND20, 2x Inon Z-240 strobes. Nikon 60mm micro. 1/250 @ f16 Manual, ISO100

they loiter at the edge of the crinoid. But because they are the same colour as the host crinoid, the challenge is to make one stand out against the background.

Squat lobsters strike dramatic photogenic poses with their long chelipods projecting forwards and often have vivid complementary colours to the crinoid. But they generally hide near the centre of the crinoid, or rush there for protection when they spot a camera approaching.

To add to the challenge, crinoids dislike the close interest of a photographer and a gently coaxing dive guide; objecting to the attention, they start to close. But the wide range of colours and poses of both makes them well worth spending time with.

We had arrived at Cabilao on Christmas Eve and after a festive dinner, we were treated to a show put on by the staff – singing, dancing, and cross-



Diver and soft coral on Balicasag Island. Nikon D200 in Subal ND20, 2x Inon Z-240 strobes. Tokina 10-17mm at 11.5mm. 1/45 @ f8 Manual, ISO 100



Crinoid squat lobster (Allogaiathea elegans). Nikon D200 in Subal ND20, 2x Inon Z-240 strobes. Nikon 60mm micro. 1/125 @ f16 Manual, ISO100



Ornate ghost pipefish. Nikon D200 in Subal ND20, 2x Inon Z-240 strobes. Nikon 60mm micro. 1/250 @ f9.5 Manual, ISO100



Clown frogfish. Nikon D200 in Subal ND20, 2x Inon Z-240 strobes. Nikon 60mm micro. 1/125 @ f19 Manual, ISO100

dressings for our entertainment! This was as lively as it got though, as the resort was secluded and otherwise peaceful.

In contrast Alona Beach is more like a miniature version of Naama Bay in the Red Sea. The beach is lined with restaurants, bars and dive operations as it is a local holiday destination as well as being on the itinerary of most backpackers visiting the area. Perhaps not what you want for the whole trip, but good for a few days.

Underwater is different too. The first impression is that it is much less vibrant with less soft and hard corals;

even a bit dull maybe. With a closer look however, there is plenty to see.

Our first dive was typical: on the sandy plateau at around twenty metres we saw mantis shrimps, nudibranchs, various types of cleaner shrimp (three in one place!), crabs, ornate ghost pipefish, crinoid shrimps and more. In the shallows there were more nudibranchs, a yellow leaf fish, scorpion fish, whip coral gobies and

frogfish.

A forty minute boat ride away is Balicasag Island, a marine sanctuary that usually dived on a two-tank boat and a contrast to the semi muck diving of Alona Beach. Wide angle is a possibility here, especially on Black Forest, a dive site named after the swathes of black corals covered with feather stars. The visibility was better too, but the overcast late December

sky did not really provide enough light, so for the second dive I changed to the 'all-purpose' 60mm macro lens.

This turned out to be a good choice. The dive site was Cathedral City – a wall with abundant coral and many overhangs, caves and ledges. The highlight of the dive was a clown frogfish. A true joker, it had decided to make taking photos as difficult as possible by hanging vertically on the



Turtle and diver on Balicasag Island. Nikon D200 in Subal ND20, 2x Inon Z-240 strobes. Tokina 10-17mm at 10mm. 1/90 @f8 Manual, ISO 100



Crinoid shrimp. Nikon D200 in Subal ND20, 2x Inon Z-240 strobes. Nikon 60mm micro. 1/250 @f9.5 Manual, ISO100



Adams' urchin crab (Zebrida adamsii) on Fire urchin. Nikon D200 in Subal ND20, 2x Inon Z-240 strobes. 60mm micro. 1/125 @f16 Manual, ISO100

wall – directly behind a vast two-metre gorgonian fan! Getting a good angle from underneath, whilst trying to avoid being carried into the fan by the current, was challenging. Well worth the effort though!

The rest of this dive was excellent with much more to see. The wall was covered with feeding soft corals, especially the grasping stems of the goniopora lobata. A large school of jacks circled lethargically just off the wall in the blue, and the caves and ledges revealed ghost pipefish, nudibranchs, orang-utan crabs, scorpion fish and more. We dived Balicasag again on our transfer to Dauin/Dumagete; it is definitely worth two visits – and I got a second go at the frogfish!

The grey skies and rain on the long banca ride from Balicasag on New Years Eve were not going to dampen our spirits. Good natural light is not essential for macro and muck diving. And Dauin is a muck diver's paradise!

The apparently lifeless sandy bottoms are home to a myriad of critters, most of them highly photogenic. And much effort has been put into creating artificial reefs to attract more critters and fish. 'San Miguel Point' has a well established reef made of old tyres. 'Banca Wreck' and 'Car Wreck' are self explanatory.

On our first two dives in Dauin my logbook lists the following critters: devil scorpion fish; ornate ghost pipefish (singly, and in twos and threes); robust ghost pipefish (singly and in pairs); filefish, crinoid shrimps and squat lobsters; crown crab; a shoal of catfish; cuttlefish; thorny seahorse; mantis shrimp; several frogfish (black, white and more); baby stargazer; and a weird spider crab that looked like a green leaf.

These are only the subjects I spent time with! Our local guide Jesse pointed out many more. In fact I needed to curb his desire to show me everything in his enthusiasm to demonstrate his vast

knowledge. I wanted to take several shots of fewer subjects, rather than a couple of shots of everything. For me 'less is more' underwater.

Nearby is the famous Apo Island, listed in all dive books as a 'must see'. I found it a bit disappointing. On Cogon we had a good drift over great reef with numerous huge barrel sponges. The current was too strong for photography though. The reefs were excellent on the next two dives as well – and there was no current. Photographically I did not find them very productive though. Perhaps it was because I had to work a little harder at identifying suitable subjects for a change...

Choice of lens can be a difficult decision in an unknown location. The local guides and dive travel guidebooks can help make a choice; on balance I found the guides more reliable. In Malapascua and Dauin I mainly used a 60mm macro lens on my DX format Nikon D200. In Cabilao and Alona Beach I mostly used a 105mm macro – with my excellent



Alona Beach at sunset

new StiX buoyancy floats making focusing and framing significantly easier.

'Island hopping' is a great way to experience some of the variety that the Philippines can offer. Sea-Explorers were efficient throughout: the dive centres were highly professional, the resorts comfortable and transfers prompt. The mainly local guides were excellent and 'photographer friendly'; we rarely dived with more than two other divers – and we often had a guide to ourselves, even if only one of us wanted to dive.

6.30am in early January 2010. I'm back in London and I've been scraping snow and ice from my car in the airport car park for five minutes. The temperature is minus four and, tired after the long journey, my spirits

are just as low. As I heave my bags into the car, I'm lifted by the thought of well over two thousand images to review. The experience of the Visayas will be with me for a long time to come...

Alan Larsen

www.alanlarsen.co.uk



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The Medas Islands

An underwater refuge

by Francesco Ricciardi

“Do they really become THAT big? I can’t believe it!”

Usually, this is the first question you ask your guide after your first dive at the Medas Islands. A Marine Protected Area since 1983, this group of small islands (the biggest, “Meda Gran” is only 1.8 km²) hosts incredible marine diversity, and the complete protection from every fishing activity permits the “inhabitants” like the famous Medas groupers to reach probably the upper limits of their body size. If you’re lucky enough to dive during a day with good visibility (and it is not so uncommon, especially during summer months) you can really enjoy probably one of the best dive-spots in the whole Mediterranean Sea.

L’Estartit is a small fishing town located in the northern part of Catalunya, North-East Spain, where only a few diving centres have the rights to approach the Islands. The boat trip is very short – maximum 10 minutes – and every diving centre has a schedule in order to avoid too many people diving at the same site making some areas more crowded than the Ramblas in Barcelona. A big shared compressor located directly on the harbour provides tanks for almost every diving center in L’Estartit. Nitrox tanks are always available: I definitely suggest using it, as you don’t need to go deeper than 30 m to enjoy the best of the Medas Islands.

The number of people that can dive in the Medas water is strictly controlled – and some



*A friendly Dusky Grouper (Epinephelus marginatus)
(Nikon D80 in Sealux Housing, Sea&Sea Strobes.
Nikon 18 mm, 1/125 f/9.5 ISO 200*

spots of the Islands are completely forbidden – this precautionary policy is showing advantages. Fish don’t feel threatened and it’s relatively easy to approach big dusky groupers (Epinephelus marginatus) without feeding them, as was quite rare until few years ago. Don’t be surprised if they stay close to you for quite a long time as they are quite





*A bicolor variation of the gorgonian **Paramuricea clavata** (Nikon D80 in Sealux Housing, Sea&Sea Strobes. Tokina 11-17 mm, 1/125 f/9.5 ISO 200*

curious.

Large schools of plankton-feeders (anchovies, red anthias, brown damselfish) take advantage of the huge quantity of nutrients – coming mainly from the mouth of the river Ter - which is the basis of the Medas food chain. And, obviously, large pelagic predators like breams, dentex, and barracudas often join the party! It is really a paradise for wide-angle lovers.

Are you in macro mood? Don't worry, you'll have fun too. Have you ever seen red anthias feeding

in the current? Why don't you try to take home a good shot of one of these wonderful little fish with its mouth open? If you get it, stay away from me, please. More than 2 years trying without success, for the moment!

The particular position of this group of islands – something like an arrow heading southwest – with the bigger Island at the bottom and the “Cavall Bernat” at the top, allows diving activities in almost every sea condition. However, the area is characterized by a wind predominantly coming from north



Nudibranch diversity in Medas Island is amazing! (Nikon D80 in Sealux Housing, Sea&Sea Strobes. Nikkor 105 mm micro, 1/200 f/22 ISO 100

(here called “Tramuntana”). When this wind is particularly strong, all the northern part of the Meda Grande is virtually off-limits. And this is a shame, because this zone offers two incredible walls (La “Pota del Llop” and “La Pedra de Deu” – literally “Wolf's Leg” and “God's Stone”) with a maximum depth of almost 50 meters with huge benthonic life,



*A Ringneck Blenny (**Parablennius pilicornis**) (Nikon D80 in Sealux Housing, Sea&Sea Strobes. Nikkor 105 mm micro, 1/200 f/25 ISO 100*

gorgonians, colourful sponges and an amazing view. The canyon located at around 30 m depth in the Pedra de Deu, hosts on both sides red and yellow gorgonians with a diameter up to 150 cm, the biggest size I've seen in the Mediterranean. Directly in front of the Pedra de Deu, a small rock called “Medallot” offers another very interesting dive spot. The southern



A wide cave in Cala Viuda. (Nikon D80 in Sealux Housing, Sea&Sea Strobes. Tokina 11-17 mm, 1/60 f/2.8 ISO 200)



A big school of two-banded breams (Diplodus vulgaris). It is a very common view in Medas Islands waters (Nikon D80 in Sealux Housing, Sea&Sea Strobes. Nikon 18 mm, 1/90 f/11 ISO 200)

part of this “cylindrical” wall is a true “Anemone city”, with thousands of small purple-tip anemones, many of them with their symbiotic crabs.

The Medas Islands are also famous for their caves. Probably the most well-known is called “Cova de la Vaca” – literally, “Cow’s Cave” (name due to the ancient presence in this cave of monk seals, or “sea cows”) - a series of wide tunnels that, especially during afternoon dives, when the sun is lower on the horizon- offers an incredible panorama for backlight

shots! The internal wall of these caves is incredibly rich in benthic life: the Mediterranean red coral, which forms small colonies mainly in shaded areas, is particularly rich and its white polyps often show their beauty feeding on the current. But take care, because not every cave present in the Island is safe for recreational divers – always follow the indications of your guide! Anyway, if you like caves don’t miss the “Dofi”, as well, located on the Meda Xica (“Small Meda”) which offers some extraordinary and

easy-accessible tunnels.

The south-west part of this small archipelago offers other unbelievable experiences. The “Cavall Bernat”, the “Tascó” and “Ferranelles” are the sites where the huge diversity of fish schools reaches the maximum. Take care of the currents, which some days can be very strong, but at the same time permit the coexistence of sea eagles, barracudas, giant dusky groupers and other big predators. Where there are currents, there are

gorgonians and plankton-feeders as well: the gorgonian wall in Ferranelles is really colourful and comparable with those present on the other side of the archipelago.

Moreover, many other diving sites are present all along the northern coast, so there is no need to repeat the same dive, unless you intentionally want to!

It is really easy to arrive in L’Estardit and to dive around the Medas Island. The closest airport



The Medas Islands: this is the northern part with the Medallot and the Meda Gran which is only 18 km² in area. They have been a Marine Protected Area since 1983.

good temperature, and hopefully good visibility. Water temperature on the sea surface ranges from 11 °C during the winter to about 23-24 °C during summer months.

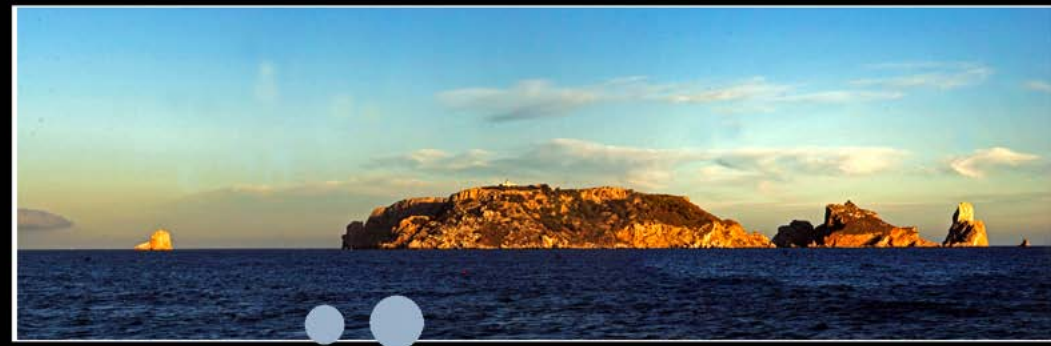
Also if many diving centres have very big boats – allowed to carry up to 30 divers- I would suggest a choice of smaller diving centres where you can enjoy a more relaxed and tolerant atmosphere towards slow and demanding underwater photographers.

is in Girona (about 40 km), an airport used by many cut price flight companies from all around Europe. Barcelona is also not so far away. A taxi trip from Girona to L'Estartit, or just 45 min car driving will take you to this small town on the coast. Choice of accommodation is quite abundant – from hotels (some of them especially adapted for divers) to large apartments.

From a photographer point of view, the best period to visit the Medas Islands is in June and from the end of August to the middle of October: less people in the water,

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Muck diving in Florida

by Kristian Taylor

All too often we read articles about the amazing dive sites found offshore from secluded islands, far removed from the impacts of population centers. Locations such as the Fiji Islands, Roatan and the outer islands of the Bahamas come to mind. Very few of us ever look closer to home for potential dive sites that are only a car ride away. While I am not making the claim that local dive sites might match the water clarity and marine biodiversity found in the previously mentioned locations, all I am saying is that we should never overlook potential muck diving opportunities if they are available.

Let me begin by saying muck diving isn't always easy and glamorous. Muck diving can be difficult, dirty, tiresome and frustrating. It is adventurous. It can be extremely rewarding and can open up brand new diving opportunities. For those of you unfamiliar with the term, muck diving refers to diving nontraditional sites. These include marinas, canals and bridges. (Please note: it goes without saying that the necessary precautions should always be taken when diving areas such as these, and of course to make sure

diving is permitted.) These locations tend to have an enormous human footprint. Whether it is trash thrown overboard from passing boats, or leftovers from fish cleaning stations, the seafloor tends to be covered with debris. Nonetheless, this anthropogenic bottom can produce a unique environment for benthic creatures. In no way am I encouraging trash to be thrown overboard to build a benthic habitat. Rather, in areas such as marinas, canals and bridges, where trash has already been dumped, I think you would be surprised to see what marine creatures have turned it into a home. I have seen eels treat empty bottles as a personal den, car tires filled with spiny lobster, stop signs become a home for stone crabs. Dives like these, while maybe not holding the same color palette as a traditional coral reef, can be done for a fraction of the cost.

Personally, I feel that these

Orange seahorse found in the open, ISO 400, Aperture - auto, shutter speed - auto. Stylus 1030sw, with the Olympus housing (PT-043) and Remora Pro Set strobe.





Banded Jawfish, ISO 300, Aperture - auto, shutter speed - auto, Stylus 1030sw, with the Olympus housing (PT-043) and Remora Pro Set strobe.



Molly Miller, ISO 400, Aperture - auto, shutter speed - auto, Stylus 1030sw, with the Olympus housing (PT-043) and Remora Pro Set strobe.



Stareyed Hermit Crab, ISO 300, Aperture - auto, shutter speed - auto. Stylus 1030sw, with the Olympus housing (PT-043) and Remora Pro Set strobe

unorthodox dive sites offer many scenarios for not only unique experiences but also distinctive photograph opportunities. It's a different brand of diving that I think few even consider, but those that give it a go tend to be pleasantly surprised - depending on where you go, some of the sights might surprise you.

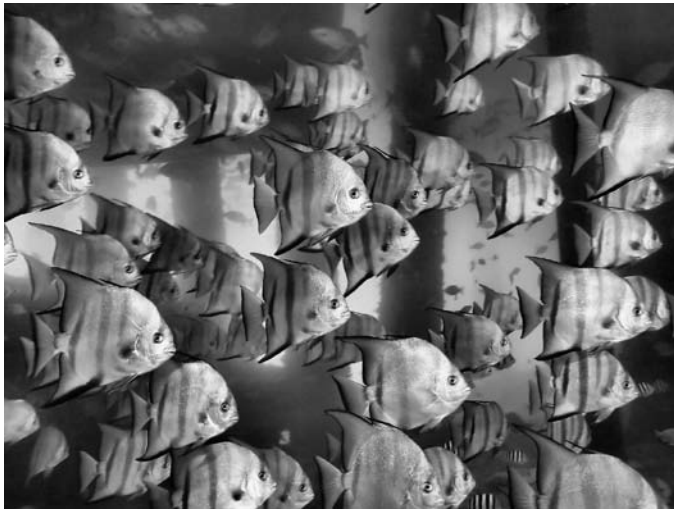
For my most recent muck dive I decided to try something different and went inland towards the intercoastal waterway near West Palm Beach (Florida, USA). Just north of Peanut Island, the Blue Heron Bridge spans Lake Worth, less than one 2 km in from the Atlantic Ocean. This is a unique area in that while it is

separated from the Atlantic by barrier islands, a large cut exists 2 km to the south that provides an exchange of water between the intercoastal waterway and open ocean waters. This exchange provides an ample supply of larvae, and in some cases large pelagics, to populate the bridge environment. The proximity of the bridge to the open water pass produces strong tidal currents in the area. Based on the conditions of this particular dive, it was important to get into the water about one hour before high tide. This allowed for a bottom time of approximately 1.5 hours before the outgoing tide picked up and visibility dropped as interior water

was flushed out.

I heard that this bridge offers a unique muck diving opportunity in an area of Florida that otherwise offers fairly limited diving opportunities. I must confess that the topside surroundings of this potential dive site gave little reason to believe that it was worth my time. The bridge experiences heavy traffic, a local public park was quite crowded, small recreational boats were seen buzzing around slightly offshore and a marina situated along the southeast side of

the bridge seemed quite popular. However, this sight only worked to make the diving all that impressive. Utilizing an available beach entry and approaching the first bridge columns revealed an environment teeming with marine life. Large schools of Atlantic Spadefish were hovering in the main channel along with Bermuda chub as well as the occasional bar jack. Visibility approached 15 m as the tide was still coming in and clear ocean water was pouring through the pass. Continuing eastward along the line



School of Atlantic Spadefish moving under a bridge, ISO 100, Aperture - auto, shutter speed - auto, Stylus 1030sw, with the Olympus housing (PT-043) and Remora Pro Set strobe.

of columns revealed two small wrecks. The two seemed to be small motor craft and must have been down for several years based on the encrustation covering all available surfaces. Hydroids and sponges seemed to add more color to the boat than any paint could provide.

The bottoms of the columns were covered in arrowhead crabs, banded cleaner shrimp and juvenile spiny lobsters. Further out among the muck, and with a careful eye might I add, scorpion fish, batfish and eyed-flounder peppered the bottom. With a rocky flooring covered by scattered debris such as car tires, trash and algae, this area demonstrated the amazing camouflage schemes evolved by the many benthic fishes that call it home.

From a photographer's viewpoint, this dive provided many unique opportunities. As mentioned

before, small invertebrates covered the base of the bridge columns where they plunged into the seafloor. This provided a perfect scenario to use the macro lens. However, the backdrop of soft corals and colorful sponges on the column itself added some color, so too narrow of a field of view would take away from the distinctive backdrop. (I would like to point out though that you should never get too caught up in macro photography: as I was shooting several arrowhead crabs, two large manatees swam right above me on their way down the bridge.) Such challenges are common during a dive that doesn't follow the traditional scope and design of an ocean reef. Lighting issues were ever present as we moved in and out of the shadows cast by the bridge and columns. While this provided difficulties in adjusting for correct lighting, it produced a perfect scene for some great black and white images. Incorporating the bridge columns into wide angle shots only added to the great black and white contrast between the sunlit areas and those under the bridge. As a personal preference, I enjoy

using black and white settings as well to capture the benthic creatures found in and around the trash that is scattered on the bottom. It's important to keep in mind that on muck dives such as this one, the color of the trash-strewn bottom away from the bridge columns isn't the best backdrop for colorful images. Therefore, by switching to black and white I was able to pull out some nice images that show how easily the subject matter blended into the background, without producing an image overly greenish brown.

Shooting underwater on a muck dive requires a little experimentation, and a change from normal procedures. Although color can be found, the hues tend to be more bland as a result of the muddy bottom. Nevertheless, situations like this are capable of producing interesting black and white images and are very enjoyable dives nonetheless.

Kristian Taylor
www.khtphotos.com



Tulamben Wreck Divers

by Ken Hoppen

Several years ago I did a trip to Komodo in Indonesia, and spent five or so days in Bali on the return leg, with the idea of taking some topside shots of the touristy areas of Bali. Whilst I achieved this, I must admit that I was a little bored with the whole Kuta/Legion lifestyle. Not really my thing. I did wonder what the diving was like, but hadn't done my 'homework', so didn't do any dives whilst I was here.

What a waste of time that was.

A couple of years ago I saw some photos taken in Bali from a friend of mine, and they made me begin to wonder what I had missed.

Just last month I managed to return, and I must say that not only did I see just about everything I was hoping too, I wound up with much, much, more than I expected!

Tony and Dot Medcraft and Wayan Ambek of Tulamben Wreck Divers were kind enough to invite me across, so across I went, macro lenses in hand, to see if the shots I had been seeing were really there.

Tulamben is a small village on the north-east side of Bali, which would have to my guestmate about 600-800 people living there, all

dependant on the divers that visit the area. Tulamben Wreck Divers will arrange pickup to and from the airport in Denpasar, making getting here extremely easy. I was picked up at about 2am, so there is not much they won't do for you to make your stay easy. Tulamben is about a two and a half hour drive north-east from the airport, so I don't really suggest you should arrive at 2am.

Tulamben Wreck Divers is perfectly placed. There are about seven rooms at the dive shop resort, starting at about US\$20 per night, and all are very well furnished with air conditioning, a fridge, etc, as well as being very nice indeed. Think very good standard motel rooms. On top of that there is a swimming pool and community area, and you are only a short walk from the dive shop, where you kit up for the dives. For those who come in a small group, there are villas to rent about 500m up the road, which not only have their own pool, but overlook the water, and are very high-quality living at a budget price. They are definitely worth checking out!



This great barracuda is another early morning resident of the USAT Liberty wreck. Nikon D200, Aquatica housing, twin Ikelite DS125 strobes, Tamron 12-24mm lens, 1/125s, f5.6

In the two hundred or so metres of Tulamben there are several restaurants and souvenir shops, and whilst you do get a couple of hawkers floating around, it is not so in-your-face as in other more built-up Bali areas. This place is for divers!

The Diving

Diving here is predominantly from the shore. There are several sites to choose from, and all have a vast array of things to see. Your gear is kept down at the shop, and you are

allocated a dive guide. Now before you say that you do not need a guide, let me say that leading you around by the nose is not their function. They organise your gear, organise it to be taken to the dive site, and work out what you want to see. You can choose how long you want to dive for, if you see something you are interested in you simply stay there and observe it for as long as you wish, the dive guide is there to make your dives enjoyable. The best thing about them is that they know where things are, and are happy

to point them out! Wayan was my dive guide for my trip, and I can confidently say that without him I would only have managed about 1/10th of the photos that I had in the end. I think he has six pairs of eyes, he found so much stuff that I would have overlooked! By the time I had finished on my first photographic subject for the dive, he had already found the next one, and was hunting for the third. I spent my time going from one great creature to the next, no waiting!!

Special mention has to be made to the porters here too. A short walk from the diveshop to the divesite is required, about 75m to maybe 200m depending on which site you want to dive. You do not need to carry your gear though. Local porters take it down, and bring it back, for you. There is a few ways this happens, but the most spectacular is when the ladies put your tank on their heads. Some even manage two sets! How they do this is a mystery to me, and may it remain so!

USAT Liberty Wreck

There are three main sites at Tulamben, and this is the most famous. About 75m from the shop is the Liberty Wreck, a short step off the beach. From about 3m to about 30m of depth, this 120m long WWII wreck dominates the sandy slope. Torpedoed in 1942, it was run ashore to prevent it from sinking. In 1963 however, a volcanic eruption from nearby Mt Agung destroyed a lot of this area, killed over 1000 people, and pushed this wreck into the water. It is now considered to be in the top ten wreck dives in the world, and is probably the world's most accessible shipwreck. It is simply brilliant, and full of life. If you can look past the giant barracuda, giant trevally, bumphead parrotfish and giant maori wrasse, and push your way through



(Above) The USAT Liberty wreck is considered one of the ten best in the world, and probably the most accessible.

Nikon D200, Aquatica housing, twin Ikelite DS125 strobes, Tamron 12-24mm lens, 1/125s, f8

(Top left) A large school of bumphead parrotfish are found on the wreck early each morning. Getting there before the hordes later in the day is best, so staying close to the site is a must!

Nikon D200, Aquatica housing, twin Ikelite DS125 strobes, Tamron 12-24mm lens, 1/125s, f8

(Right) Spectacular life abounds on the wreck. Combine this with great vis, and a depth between 4 and 30m, and it is a dive site you can dive on for many a trip!

Nikon D200, Aquatica housing, twin Ikelite DS125 strobes, Tamron 12-24mm lens, 1/125s, f5.6



the large school of bigeye trevally, you start seeing garden eels, ghost pipefish, mantis shrimp, pygmy seahorses, and jawfish. The life in this area is just astounding. The best time of day to dive here is in the early morning, and Tulamben Wreck Divers are perfectly placed to do this. Other dive places

start coming in mid to late morning, and there can be quite a few divers. A 7am dive removes this problem, and enables you to view the wrecks larger inhabitants.



The critter life in the area is simply spectacular. One creature I was not expecting was this wonderpus octopus. Nikon D200, Aquatica housing, twin Ikelite DS125 strobes, Nikon 105mm lens, 1/125s, f16

The Coral Gardens

A little to the south of the wreck is the Coral Gardens, a long dive on a volcanic sand slope that takes about three dives to cover fully. There are some artificial reefs in the shallows here, and more fish and critter life than you can imagine. You would be hard pressed to exhaust this as a dive site, and we had some wonderful encounters here, with the best probably being a wonderpus octopus. This really is a strange creature. I think you might find this little octopus is very poisonous, it seemed to have that air of confidence a blue-ringed octopus has about it. The sort of look-but-don't-touch air of invulnerability. If you get to see one, check out the eyes. They pulse with a sort of hypnotic suggestion about them. Very spectacular!

The Drop Off

The furthest walk, taking all of around three or four minutes, the sand slope here drops off steeply,



Several species of mantis shrimp are commonly found around the wreck. Nikon D200, Aquatica housing, twin Ikelite DS125 strobes, Nikon 105mm lens, 1/125s, f16

and eventually leads around to a coral reef. This place is home to many cleaner shrimp, morays, Denice's pygmy seahorse, shrimp with their lookout gobies, angelfish, butterflyfish, leaf scorpionfish, and so much more, all with that black sand volcanic background that makes the area special. None of the dives here are your typical hard coral reef, but they more than make up for that in the diversity of life that can be found here. Creatures that I have only glimpsed in the dark recesses of caves and overhangs on the Great Barrier Reef wander about freely here. Keyhole angelfish flit about, one of maybe a dozen species going about their business. Saron shrimp poke out from a hole in the rocks. Masses of Durban shrimp surround cleaner shrimp, all waiting for a fishy customer. A young great barracuda flits about in the shallows, whilst a starry moray wanders past the anglerfish I was shooting. There is just so much life here!

This is just the start of what Tulamben Wreck

Divers have to offer, within ten minutes by car are several other sites, including Seraya Secrets, which are amazingly different to the diving at Tulamben, even though they are just a few kilometres away. This is a must-see dive destination for those of us who love to observe marine life in its multitudes, and see some of the strange creatures that live in it. It is a macro photographers paradise, and the number of people whom I met there that were on their second, third and fourth visits to the place just confirms its standing as the place to be to see a wide range of spectacular creatures!

Ken Hoppen

Contact:

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DVD reviews

CS4 is for UW Photogs

by Tim Rock

The first time I heard of Doug, I was a judge at The First Annual Palau Underwater Photo Contest. He image had taken first prize but wasn't there at awards night to get his award. He was the working photo pro on the Palau Aggressor and had guests. The effervescent Lorenza received the award in his place. Lorenza is a stunningly beautiful ball of energy as has worked on photography with Doug since they first met. At the contest, I was intrigued by the creativity of some of his entries and later did get to meet him and learn of his dedication to the profession.

Over the years, his work has gotten better and better as he has moved seamlessly from film to digital photography.

He and Lorenza worked many years in Palau and the South Pacific. A few years ago, they moved to the States to start a family and he has been doing magazine assignments and stock work. He currently is a featured imaging tutorial and field editor through Scuba Diving Austral-Asia. But when he first moved to the U.S. and found himself landlocked, he said this would give him the chance to come up with something everyone needed and could use. Toilet paper, I thought? No, it was the first instalment of Photoshop for the Underwater Photographer (for Photoshop CS & CS2). This DVD was a breakthrough concept and it has kept him busy giving workshops and seminars across the country.

Now, in itself that was a great DVD and I

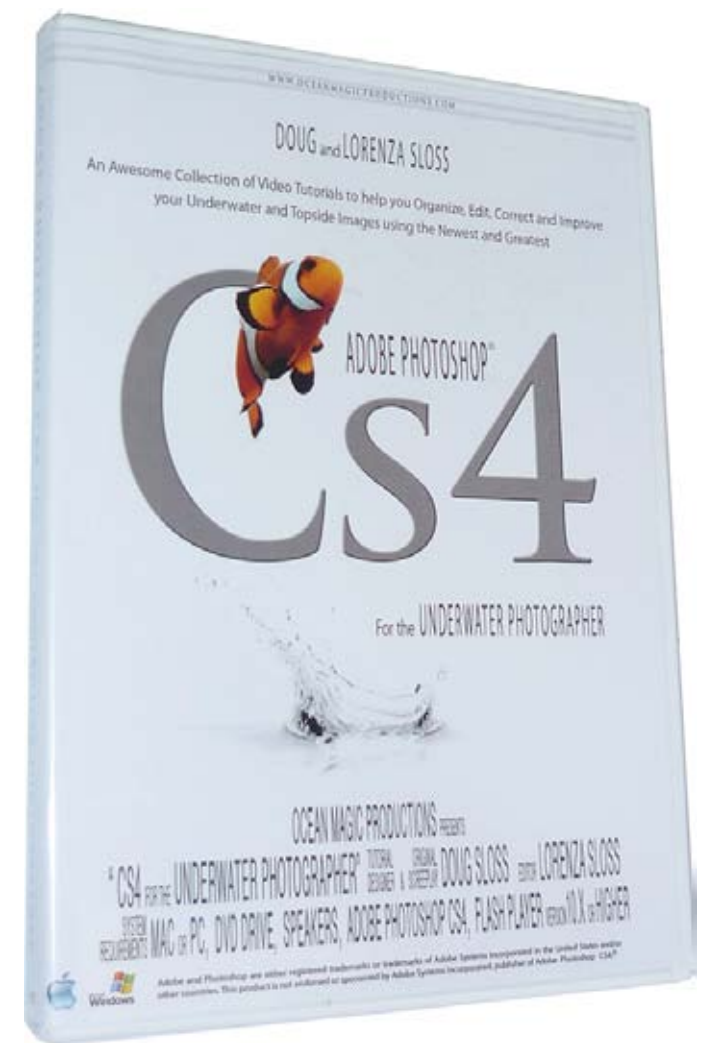
learned a lot from it but Photoshop and especially RAW photography have evolved so much, I couldn't wait for Doug to do the upgrade in the subsequent release of Adobe's CS3 and CS4. Well, it's out now. And it was certainly worth the wait.

I have always known CS4 and its RAW converter were powerful tools that I was pretty sure I was under-utilizing. Still, I read a lot about editing images and talked to PS pros. I thought I was pretty good at this stuff. But after a few sessions with the new DVD, I found that I was really barely scratching the surface. I now am working on organizing, editing, correcting and improving my files. That includes workflow and sprucing up both undersea and topside images using the superb suggestions I've been watching on this DVD.

There are a number of sections each with at least ten easy-to-follow lessons. In all, ten hours worth of spoken and illustrated instruction. They include: The CS4 Interface and The Bridge, Camera RAW, Retouching and Enhancing (this is a large section), Getting Creative, Cropping, Resizing and Sharpening, Automation and Output, Underwater HDR

Since I use Adobe's Expression Media, I perused the thorough Bridge section. I know others use Lightroom and even Aperture or iPhoto for the interface, but as a former Bridge user, I can see where many of Doug's suggestions would really improve initial review and cataloging.

Where I stopped and started going lesson by lesson was the Camera RAW section. Doug personally narrates each lesson in simple English and you can see exactly what he does as he is doing it. He often gives keyboard shortcuts for both MAC and PC and provides more than one method of achieving an edit. His videos are clearly explained



and designed in a way that let the user follow along at whatever pace one chooses. Skill level really isn't a major concern. If you need to stop the lesson or go back, that's simply done. You can follow step after step until you've got the adjustments down.

RAW's tutorial started with setting up the Preferences and then moving to the Essential Adjustments, retouching without using actual

Photoshop, filtering, cropping, sharpening and even creating black and white imaging. By the time I was done, many of the images didn't even need to go into the Photoshop mode as they were ready to save and file or print right out of the RAW converter. There were many revelations for me here, with one of the most useful being the retouching tool and the adjustment brush. This saves me tons of time having to open up and work on images in the usual Photoshop window using items like the clone tool. The proper adjustment of Curves was also a great help.

Truth be known, I am still working my way through the DVD as I really got into doing and re-doing some of my humpback whale photos for this year's trip to Tonga. The enhancing section deals with correcting monotone blue images, something one gets easily when trying to film a whale on snorkel using no strobes. The tutorial allowed me to remove reflective scatter from the sun, bring out the true color of the whale and make the image sharper and higher in contrast.

I am, so far, very happy with what I have found and started using so far. I keep exploring more of the DVD on a daily and weekly basis. Were I Bill Gates, I might be wealthy enough to take a couple weeks off and just play around with this DVD.

As a working stiff, I am going lesson by lesson and enhancing some of my favorite images in the process.

It helps to have Adobe CS4 installed to take full advantage of the lessons. It requires Flash. A Flash player can be downloaded free from the web. This really isn't for total novices, but with just a little Photoshop knowledge, you'll get far. As a matter-of-fact, it has such good set-up and workflow suggestions, that it is ideal if you're just getting into underwater editing. It will help you get started the right way and learn without developing bad habits and time consuming extra steps.

It's not an exaggeration to say this DVD has "set me free". If I keep up with all the tips I may become "almost famous" someday.

In my work, I spend a lot of time daily using Photoshop and this Sloss DVD has been a revelation that has been somewhat life changing. I can highly recommend this. Not only are Doug and Lorenza great folks, but Doug is a fine teacher who has really hit the mark with his CS4 for Underwater Photographers offering. The ten hours of tutorial is really about the content of a week-long seminar as far as tips and content goes. Where else can you attend a week-long specialized seminar for \$99?

It can be used on Mac or PC and

all you really need is a fairly up-to-date computer with a DVD player and speakers.

You can get this DVD here:

www.underwaterphotoshop.com

or see Doug and Lorenza's work:

www.oceanmagicproductions.com

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DVD Review

Lair of the Waterwolf

by Dean Burman

by Rob Cuss

Dean first sprung to attention in 2005 with a film about the wreck of the Syrian registered oil tanker the Um-El-Faroud, which is now a popular dive site in Malta; brining him six international amateur film awards. But it was in 2007 that everyone really had to sit up and watch, with his short film “Lair of the Waterwolf” which netted him a further 8 international awards and acclaim from his hero Peter Scoones at the British Underwater Film Festival.

Footage from this film was used by the world renowned BBC Natural History Unit in their series The Nature of Britain and they even made a 10 minute short documentary of Dean called “Dean the Diving Decorator”. When these were aired in the UK they were watched by 2 million viewers, bringing one of my favourite subjects into the mainstream.

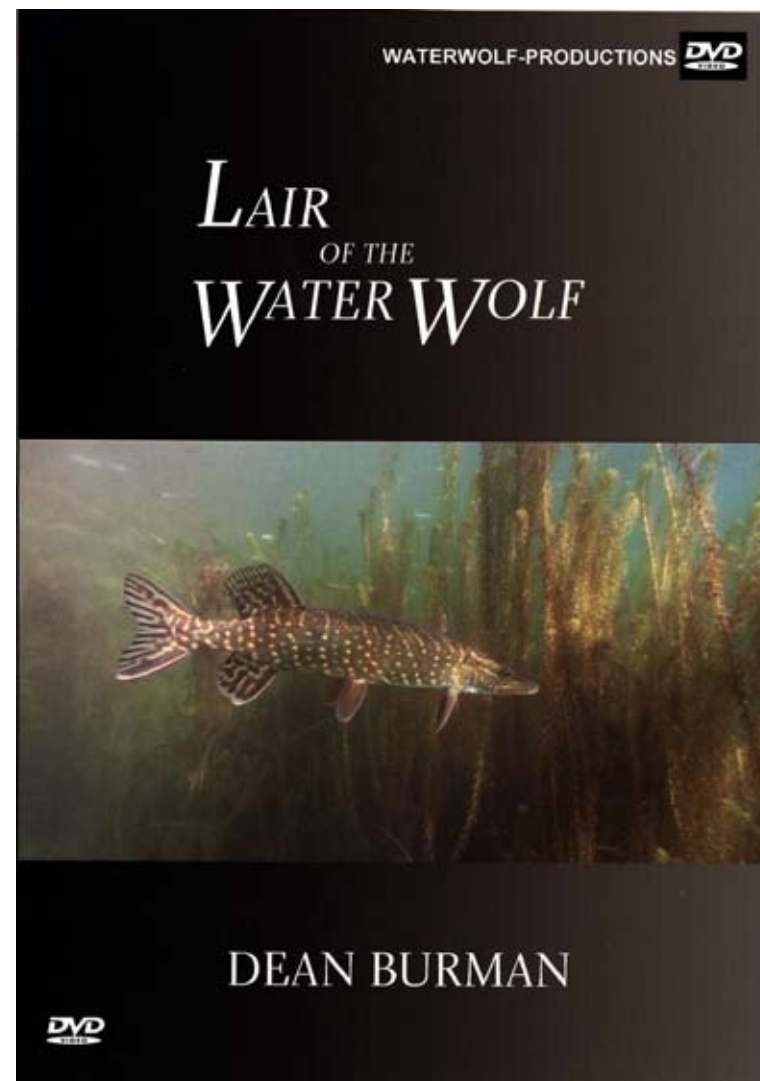
Three years on and Dean has expanded his short film into a 27 minute feature. From the opening sequence it is obvious this is a labour of love and the hours of dedicated diving in the cold inland waters of the UK will be lost on most viewers. The documentary starts with a wonderful collection of topside material that sets the scene really well. The majority of the footage is filmed in the British inland diving site at Stoney Cove. This is a heavily used training centre for budding divers and I can guarantee that most of the visitors

to Stoney Cove would argue vehemently that this was filmed elsewhere. Such is Dean’s skill that he has seen many behaviours that I haven’t seen before, even though I am also a regular visitor to the site. He has skilfully brought together footage of the Pike (the Waterwolf), Perch, Roach, Carp, Crayfish and Canadian Pondweed to tell a compelling story of the freshwater environment common in the UK. Dean has learnt well from the BBC and this film would not be out of place on broadcast television; a high achievement when the credits role and you see what a one man effort this spectacular is.

Also on the DVD is a 10 minute piece called “Dean the Diving Decorator”. I nearly didn’t watch this assuming that it was from the BBC, but Dean has made his own version. You cannot help but be taken in by his enthusiasm for freshwater diving and his love of the Pike. The man behind the lens story is really well put together.

“Lair of the Waterwolf” is a well crafted documentary that deserves to be seen on the international stage. The lack of filler material and the natural behaviours Dean has captured in the challenging waters of the UK makes this an interesting watch, not just for divers but for anglers and the general public alike. I showed the DVD to my partner and she really enjoyed it, which, as she doesn’t dive and isn’t really into natural history films, is a high accolade indeed.

Rob Cuss



*Lair of the Water Wolf is available for purchase from
www.waterwolf-productions.co.uk for £14.99 + P&P
and can be purchased using PayPal*

www.waterwolf-productions.co.uk

Book Reviews

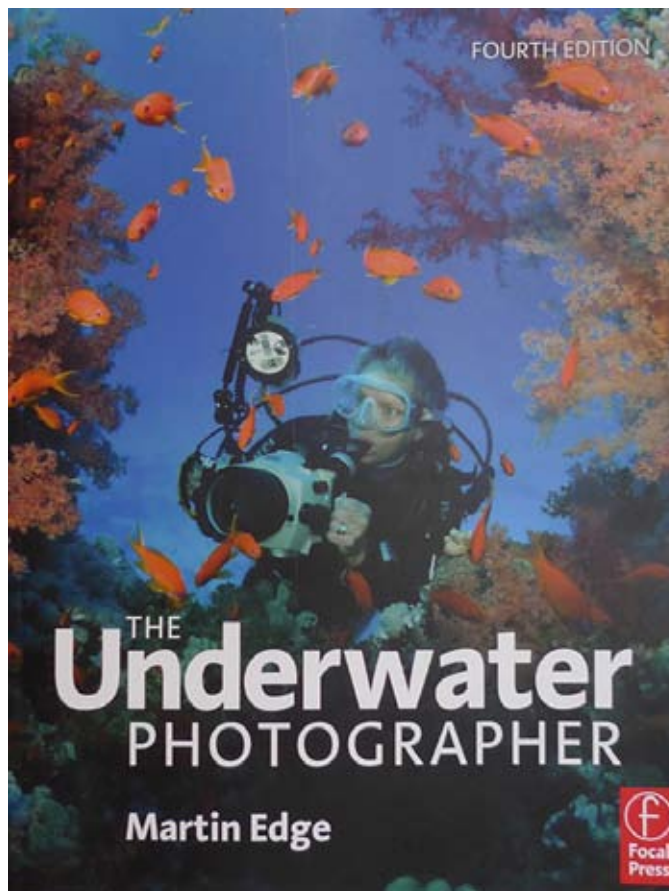
Martin Edge's The Underwater Photographer Fourth Edition

Review by Steve Williams

We live in fascinating times. For about 26\$ (US) you can own the accumulated knowledge of underwater digital photography. A mere pittance really when you consider the value. So let's get this out of the way right up front. If you're at all interested in taking a camera underwater, go get your hands on a copy. Since the last edition was released in 2005 much has changed and evolved in the underwater photography world. In his fourth edition Martin brings us along with his wife and son and a whole host of friends to explore what's possible today with both digital compact and SLR cameras. With over 500 pages, the book covers the whole spectrum, from the fundamentals of cameras to developing an individual style.

In writing this book, Martin brought together some key individuals in the community of divers to support him and bring their own special gifts to the party. The book is a collaboration of authors and a special sharing of knowledge and ideas. The contributors include Mark Koekemoer, Shannon Conway, Alex Mustard, and Stuart Gibson, all of whom wrote whole chapters. Major contributions are also included from Steve Warren, Keri Welk, John Wallis, and Peter Rowlands.

Many of you own a dog-eared copy of the Third Edition and I am sure you are wondering



whether to update your bookshelf. I was initially hesitant to purchase the fourth edition of a book I had studied cover to cover countless times. What could be that new? I quickly discovered that a lot has changed in five years! First, with one noted exception, all of the images are completely new. This version is entirely devoted to digital photography, no more switching back and forth between film and digital explanations. Martin doesn't even use the term DSLR. We shoot with SLR's and compact cameras now. If film makes a comeback we'll call them FSLRs.



This new focus required a more thorough discussion of how digital cameras collect light and Martin's explanation in Chapter 3 has forever changed the way I expose an image. For me the core of the book is all about light; natural light, strobe lighting and importantly the successful combination of the two. Martin shows us both his recommendations and some very new and interesting unique ways to position strobes. I can't wait to try them out. There has been a revival of interest recently in Close Focus Wide Angle (CFWA) and super macro, the increased awareness

of both techniques the result of equipment improvements that make it easier now for photographers to attempt. Martin was ahead of us and the book includes new information devoted to tools and techniques needed for these types of images. Suffice to say that this book is a total rewrite with more than enough new information to deserve your attention.

The keys to underwater success haven't changed though and Martin continues to hammer them home. First and foremost, protect the reef. His belief that over 70% of our potential subjects are not in a position to shoot safely should be stenciled on every dive boat the world over. The book's photos of divers contorted into odd positions clearly demonstrate that often the comfortable position is not the best for getting the image we want. The "rules" of composition, making the most of our opportunities for macro and wide angle, aren't new subjects to some of us, but having the chance to read what Martin has learned over the last few years is enlightening.

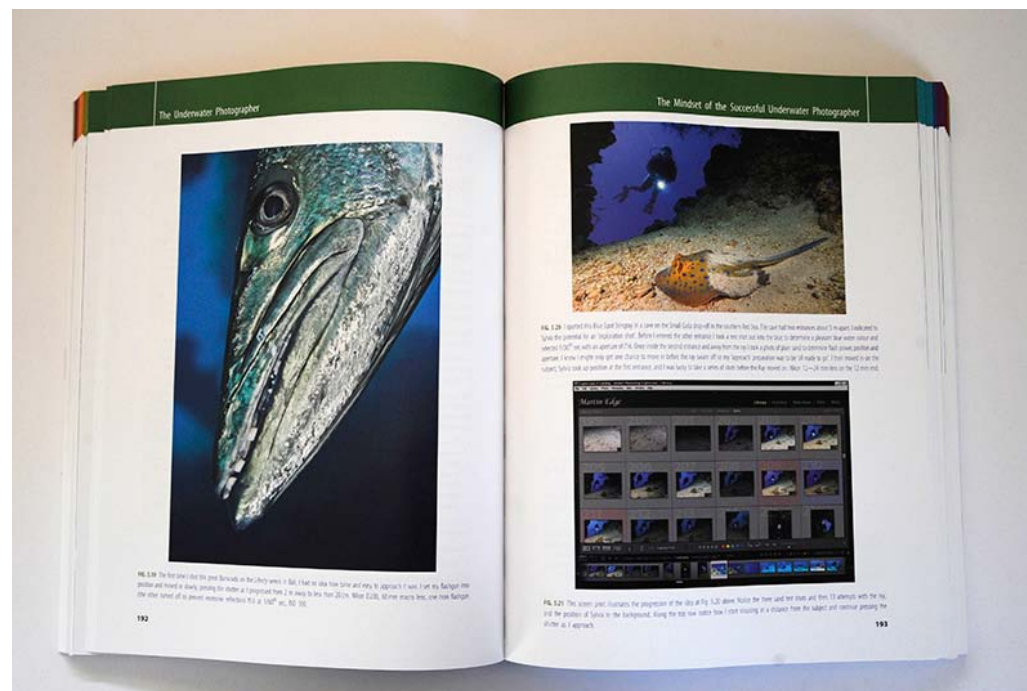
All photography has always been about the ability to combine the art and the craft (the technology) successfully. It's easy for many of us to get caught up in the technology especially when it's changing so quickly. A careful read through Martin's book reminds us that it's a

combination of the technology and the artistic mindset that gives us the best opportunity to capture the photos we set out to make. Many authors speak in ways that separate these two things. Martin has a way of combining them into a way of being underwater, which represents a true picture of what it takes to be successful.

One caution, read carefully. There are a few pictures scattered throughout which demonstrate how not to position your strobes or which illustrate what happens when you do something not quite right. Martin clearly put this book together to teach not just to impress us with his skill.

My impression upon opening the book for the first time was that there was a lot of open white space, some might say negatively so. The layout is not crowded. On the positive side this layout does provide room for Martin's larger images and the copious notes and abundant tips he provides in the margin. My copy is full of sticky notes marking where I want to go back and study or jot down important tips to take with me on a dive trip.

Martin's photography adopts a mindset of never being satisfied. Even on his best images the sand isn't quite the right color or that little fish doesn't belong in the frame. He is always looking for ways to improve. It's one of the things that keep him motivated and what keeps us coming





back to see what he has learned.

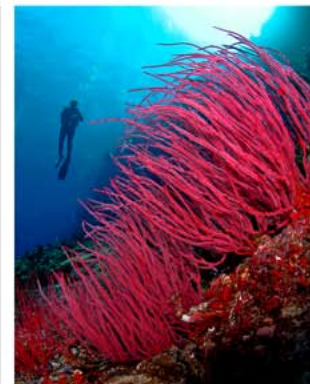
In Stephen Frink's forward to the book he writes that, "Martin is a master of the facts and techniques presented, but he doesn't preach or pontificate. He has the rare ability to make you feel like you are learning from a dive buddy. It is probably his passion for diving in general that comes through first, but make no mistake this book is all about underwater photography."

Stephen's words really resonated with me. After reading this book, I'm left with the same feeling I had when completing the third edition. I'd love to go diving with this guy.

Steve Williams

<http://thefinfoundation.org>

Steve is a passionate amateur underwater photographer who switched over to digital after reading Martin's third edition in 2005. He has been shooting underwater since 1972 and is the founder of the Fin Foundation Images website that supports the education of young people throughout the southwest US on the importance of protecting the ocean environment.



The Fin Foundation
 'Bringing the Ocean to the Classroom'
FinFoundationImages.Com
TheFinFoundation.org



Sharks

Close encounters

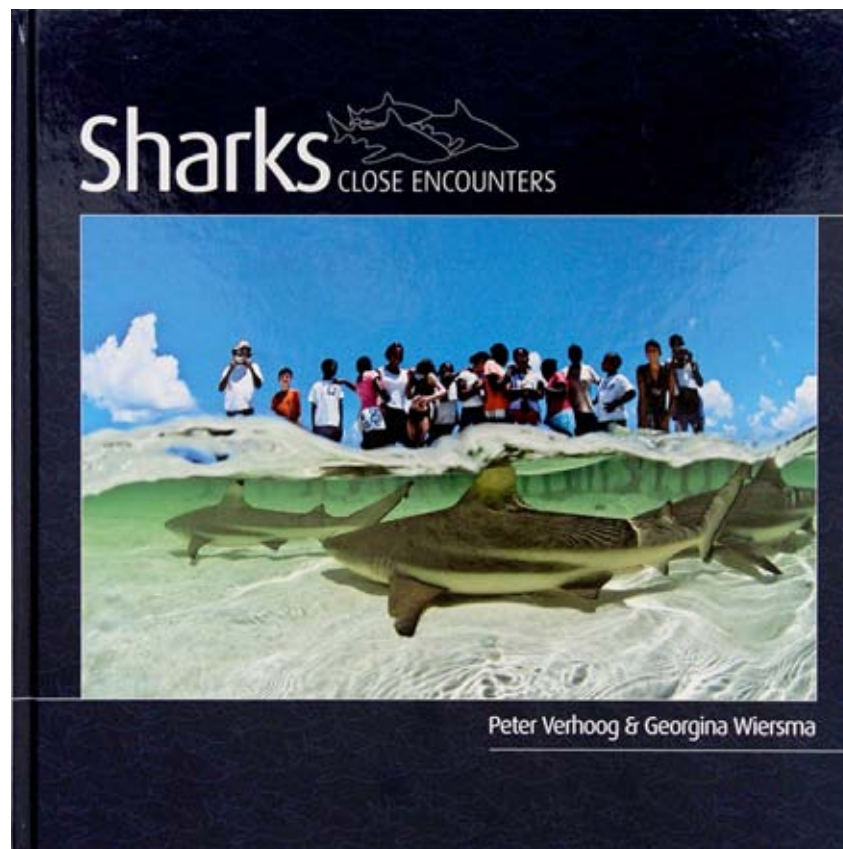
by Peter Verhoog &
Georgina Wiersma

18 years in the making, this 120 page coffee table book is a very well illustrated guide to sharks and rays from around the globe.

The accompanying text is both personal and informative describing how and where the shots were taken together with trip details and anecdotes of the characters they meet along the way.

Peter and Georgina made extensive trips to Sudan, Jordan, Northern Egypt, spent six months diving the Southern Red Sea living in a Bedouin tent on the shores, camped on the Brother Islands in the Red Sea for weeks, and have made trips to countless other destinations like the Azores, the Bahamas, Baja California, Bonaire, Curaçao, Florida, France, Indonesia, Lanzarote, Malaysia, Maldives, Portugal, South Africa, Teneriffa, the Seychelles and Thailand.

Peter and Georgina also organised several special trips to Sudan, focussing on reef sharks and hammerhead sharks, to South Africa to register the breaching great whites and other special sharks, to Mexico to portray the famous Pacific manta rays and California sea lions, to Jordan to document the biotopes of the vast sea grass fields and to Thailand



to take pictures of the graceful leopard sharks and silvertip sharks.

120 pages on high-quality, satin-gloss paper. Large format: 29,5 x 29,5 cm / 12" x 12"

Sharks, Close encounters costs €23.95 +p&p



www.peterverhoog.com
www.underwatermagic.com

New Books from Tim Rock

Tonga, Kingdom of the Whales By Tim Rock with Yoko Higashide



This is the one of the few places on Earth that you can snorkel with whales and see them in their environment. Its an amazing sight to watch a mother feeding a calf or to see a full-grown male completely leave the sea on a massive breach.

This new for 2010 book, with its 303 images and 200 pages, is a visual trip to Tongatapu and Vava'u to see the land, the sea, the coral reefs and marine creatures, the wonderful people and Tongan culture, aerials and overlooks and, most of all, the whales.

We'll follow model Yoko Higashide to the sites above and below the water and see her snorkeling and interacting with the humpbacks.

To see previews and purchase this book, go here:

www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/1152695

Grand Cayman By Tim Rock & Olga Spoelstra



Grand Cayman is one of the most famous for divers and vacationers in the entire Caribbean.

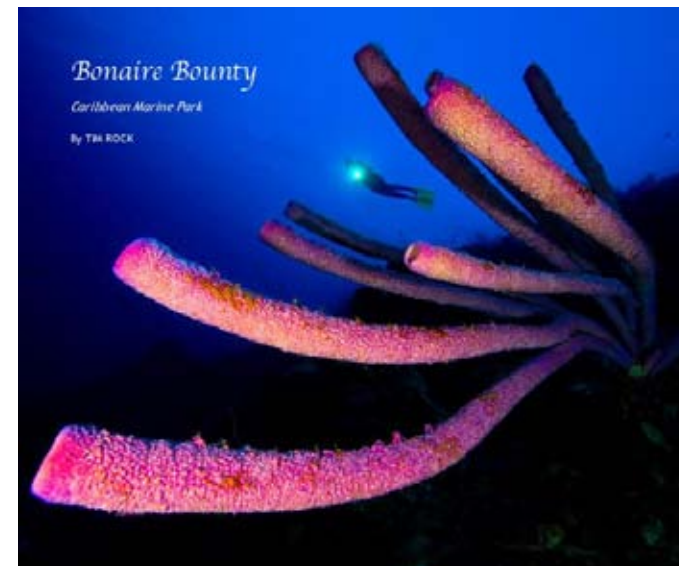
Grand Cayman is famous for its natural attraction called Stingray City where dozen of southern stingrays gather to mooch food from divemasters. Done in anywhere from one to twelve feet of water, most everyone can enjoy watching these rays in the clear waters of the North Sound.

Most every shoreline has numerous dive sites and people use both boats and shore diving techniques to plunge into the bathtub warm Caribbean. The terrain varies from rolling reefs loaded with corals and sponges to broad, sandy plains and then deeper to sheer walls and dropoffs.

We'll follow model Olga Spoelstra around as she explores GC for a look at one of the most famous isles in diving. To see previews and purchase this book, go here:

www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/677645

Bonaire Bounty, Caribbean Marine Park By Tim Rock with Olga Spoelstra



This island is legendary in the diving world. Far-sighted pioneers, led by Captain Don Stewart, ensured decades ago that the reefs around Bonaire would remain protected and appreciated. Every day divers from around the world and the people of the island reap the benefits when they plunge into the gin clear waters to see colorful reef fish, stunning corals and giant sponges.

Part of the island is also a National Park and there are protected salt flats in the south where migrating flamingoes like to gather.

The entire island is great for exploration and watersports.

Enjoy this trip around bountiful Bonaire. We'll follow model Olga Spoelstra around as she explores. To see previews and purchase this book, go here:

www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/678749

Guidelines for contributors

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

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

Uw photo techniques - Balanced light, composition, etc

Locations - Photo friendly dive sites, countries or liveaboards

Subjects - Anything from whale sharks to nudibranchs in full detail

Equipment reviews - Detailed appraisals of the latest equipment

Personalities - Interviews/features about leading underwater photographers

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

How to submit articles

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

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

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

Size - Maximum length 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

We have all seen it: that time-honored image of a tiny fish being eaten by a slightly larger fish, only for this fish to be devoured by the largest fish of them all. While this may be an over-simplified delineation when it comes to illustrating the hierarchy of marine predation, it can symbolize the natural order of the food chain that we may be lucky enough to observe on any given dive.

It was my last night dive on an exhilarating, weeklong live-aboard in Belize and I was eager to make the most of it. Switching on the bright focus lights of my twin Sea and Sea strobes, I began my descent into the black abyss, comforted only by two otherworldly lights echoing down from the hull of the boat nearly sixty feet above. As I made my soft touchdown on the sea floor, I steadied my strobes to light up the reef ahead of me, and before long I had captured the regulars of Caribbean night dive such as a large balloon fish and several spiny lobsters. Impressed by the effectiveness of my strobe's focus lights, I quickly discovered a flaw that couldn't be found at any online forum or magazine review: they began to attract millions of tiny bloodworms. These worms continued to collide all over my body for nearly forty minutes

and soon made me feel comparable to Gulliver under siege by millions of miniature arrows.

Nearing the end of the dive, both low on air and patience with the swarming bloodworms, I found my final subject: a strangely accommodating banded coral shrimp taking refuge on some dead coral. I soon discovered the crustacean's cooperation was the result of the bloodworms' affinity to my focus lights, which the shrimp began to use as a lure for a midnight snack. Taking into account my new resentment towards the swarming worms, I decided to ignore my instincts to "leave only bubbles and take only pictures", allowing the shrimp to continuously to pick the worms right out of my strobe's tractor beam. After returning to the friendly confines of the boat I immediately began to download my images, eager to see the results of the dive.

I was very pleased with this image that perfectly captured my momentary interference with the marine food chain: a shot of the banded shrimp in the middle of ripping apart one of my helpless victims.

As divers we are often reminded not to interfere with the natural order



Nikon D300s, Sea and Sea Housing, 60mm Lens, F22 @ 125sec ISO 200, with dual Sea and Sea YS110 strobes on TTL

of the marine environment. However, when we choose to forgo our responsibilities as "ambassadors to the environment" (even in a moment of weakness spurred on by millions of tiny worms) we can find ourselves in a unique opportunity to view the marine food chain in action from ringside

seats. If we are even more fortunate, we may end up leaving with an image of such an experience that we will not soon forget.

Joseph Tepper
jtuwphotography@gmail.com

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**