



# AQUATICA™ Digital

You get the picture

We bring it back!

New housing for the Sony NEX 5 cameras

- Compact, yet ergonomic.
- Light, yet rugged.
- Built in optical connector for external strobes.
- 300ft / 90m rating.
- Complete modular port system.

## AN-5



# AQUATICA™

## Digital

Deep down,

you want Aquatica



300 ft depth rating (upgradable to 450 ft).  
Lightweight yet sturdy aluminum construction.  
Optical strobe connectors or Classic wired connectors.  
Hydrophone and moisture alarm included  
Completely modular port system.

## AD7000

Photo taken by Chris Doyal  
with an Aquatica AD7000

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

Chris Doyal



[www.aquatica.ca](http://www.aquatica.ca)

# Contents

- 4 Editorial
- 5 News Travel & Events
- 12 New Products



- 27 **Olympus TG-810**  
by Rob Spray



- 30 **Nauticam Olympus XZ-1**  
by Peter Rowlands



- 32 **Tokina 35mm macro**  
by Tim Rock

Cover shot by  
**Andy Deitsch**

- 35 **Red Sea Relish**  
by Andy Deitsch



- 39 **Going Solo**  
by Alex Tattersall



- 43 **Finland Wrecks**  
by Timo Ahomäki



Underwater Photography  
2001 - 2011 © PR Productions  
Publisher/Editor Peter Rowlands  
[www.pr-productions.co.uk](http://www.pr-productions.co.uk)  
[peter@uwpmag.com](mailto:peter@uwpmag.com)

# Underwater Photography

A web magazine UWP61 Jul/Aug 2011

- 47 **Whalesharks!**  
by Mike Veitch



- 51 **Golden PNG**  
by Julian Cohen



- 56 **Loloata**  
by Nigel Marsh



- 61 **Weedy Wanderings**  
by Mark Webster



- 67 **Philippine Alternative**  
by David Reubush



- 71 **Sydney Muck Diving**  
by Klaus Stiefel



- 76 **Parting Shots**  
by Digant Desai, Tim Priest,  
David Reubush & Alex Tyrell

## Enough's enough

I took a friend diving recently and had a most fascinating conversation about his underwater photo equipment. His name is unimportant but just like the universal soldier I think he may be very representative.

As with all conversations between underwater photographers it doesn't take long to migrate to equipment and, when I asked how he was getting on with his Olympus E-PL1 in their PT-EP01 housing, he said something that I wasn't expecting. I was expecting "It's great but it's a little bit too this and it won't do that" but what he said was "It's stopped me wanting to upgrade" and that's the first time I'd heard that.

What I have heard from other people in the past, and I'm a guilty as the next person, is that, when buying some new equipment, I say "It's got everything I'll ever need" and then to really convince myself and in a separate, single word sentence, I add "Ever". I said exactly that in 1987 when I got my first 20mb (that's mb not gb) external hard drive. But what I've never said is "It'll stop me wanting to upgrade" so when the universal soldier said that, it stopped me in my tracks.

After a short silence and obviously concerned that he had

## Editorial

seemingly physically locked both my brain and my body in momentary confusion, he added "because I'm getting all the shots I want out of it. It's a small neat package (he also free dives a lot) and I don't feel restricted photographically". Luckily for both of us, that unlocked me and I started to move again.

"Wow, that's interesting" I said, stalling for time while the enormity of the response sank in. "So you are 100% happy with it?" "Yes", he confirmed, "100%".

Now that's exactly what the manufacturers don't want to hear and they do their darndest to keep coming up with HD, Full HD, 3D, Supersonic, Turbo etc etc

The skill is to honestly analyse what you are in it for and what you need out of it. If you do that, and do it honestly, I suspect, like me, you'll calm down a bit and give more time to the photography than the equipment and the result can only be better images.

## Britain's Secret Seas

Here in the UK we recently had an eagerly awaited 4 part series entitled 'Britain's Secret Seas'. The schedulers gave it the same Sunday evening slot as Top Gear so they obviously thought it would have a wide appeal and it probably did.

Unfortunately my idea of creating wide appeal differs considerably from the producers of this series. I prefer my general appeal bone to be tickled by the animals themselves and much more importantly by the stories that their lives generate.

A well written and narrated script is a thing of great beauty generated by quiet confident knowledge. I don't need a bouncing puppet presenter telling me it's awesome when the cameraman has produced average footage which could have been so much better if he hadn't been strangled with the rope of Health and Safety and it's an obvious sign that they've not got enough good material to fill the slot when they start featuring the film crew and the clipboards in the background.

But the thing that amazes me the most is how many meetings there must have been during the production process in which everyone was so busy agreeing with each other that they completely forgot how thin the

whole premise was but by then, I guess, it was all too late.

As with all things corporate the real talent i.e. the cameraman is burdened by producers chasing their careers. Gone are the days when Keith Scholey was in charge of the Wildlife on One slot and he would say to Peter Scoones "Here's £XXX,XXX. Go away for as long as you like and film whatever subject/story you want but you must be back in time for the editing which starts on such and such a date.

Such confident commissioning produced masterpieces such as 'Malice in Wonderland' and 'Reef Encounters' both of which had not one second of surface footage during the entire riveting 30 minutes apiece and most importantly no idiot in frame in a communication helmet wheezing how awesome everything is and how the producer is soooo brilliant.

The corporate cow is so fat it can't see its limitations but when the quality of it's output is questioned it comes up with every reason under the sun why it was the best. Well you would do if it was your job on the line, wouldn't you?

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

# News, Travel & Events

## Nauticam Demo Days aboard the M/V Spree 1st - 6th August 2011

Join us this August for a 5 day trip to the Dry Tortugas aboard the Mighty Vessel Spree. The trip includes 5 days of diving in the Dry Tortugas Ecological Preserve, the Fort Jefferson National Park, and the USNS Vandenberg. We'll have plenty of Nauticam demo gear on hand to try at no extra cost, nightly seminars, a nightly photo presentation, and an opportunity to show off your images. Whether you are well versed in all things underwater photo and want to try the latest Nauticam gear, or are a novice interested in getting started, this trip is for you.

Chris Parsons/Nauticam USA, Paul Barnett/Light & Motion, and Ryan Canon/Reef Photo are your hosts, not to mention the fine crew of the MV Spree.

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



## World Festival of Underwater Pictures 26-30 October 2011 Palais du Pharo, Marseille - France

The World Festival of Underwater Pictures will take place for the third successive year at the Palais du Pharo in Marseille, from 26 to 30 October 2011.

Japan will be honored all along this edition.

**ENTRIES FOR THE 2011 COMPETITION ARE NOW OPEN**

<http://www.underwater-festival.com/Reglement-en.html>

The "Photo-Trio" category, launched last year was a great success with more than 100 competitors. This competition asks photographers to enter three digital photographs without any limitations on style. It's open to everyone, professionals and amateurs, as are all the Festival competitions, but it is aimed more specifically at amateur participants who don't have the possibility of entering a series of ten images each year, as required by the Portfolio category.

Participants in this new competition may also participate in



other competitions in the Festival, as long as their images do not appear in two different categories.

The last date for receiving entries, 15th September

[www.underwater-festival.com](http://www.underwater-festival.com)

## M/V Paisabatu II , Sulawesi

MV Paisubatu II is a comfortable 77 feet traditional Sulawesi wooden boat launched in 2006. She receives a maximum of 10 guests in 5 double cabins all equipped with their own private bathroom. Her large open deck area and her cozy wooden cabins are very appealing and relaxing. She



cruses together with our 55 feet dive boat that carries the compressor and the diving equipment. Two local dive guides and a western dive instructor are on board to care of you and show you the wonders of Sulawesi diving.

Our dive cruises offer various itineraries from 9 to 11 days in Sulawesi. You will be able to dive 3 to 4 times a day among the best dive sites in the world, enhanced by dreamy anchorages, terrestrial excursions on the islands, peaceful evenings at sea and nights of thousand stars.

[www.wallacea-divecruise.com](http://www.wallacea-divecruise.com)

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or e mail  
[peter@uwpmag.com](mailto:peter@uwpmag.com)



Issue 61/6

# DiveQuest

THE ULTIMATE IN DIVING HOLIDAYS



*OUT OF THE ORDINARY  
INTO THE BLUE*



U.K: [www.divequest.co.uk](http://www.divequest.co.uk)  
U.S: [www.divequest-travel.com](http://www.divequest-travel.com)

For the finest tailor-made underwater photography holidays and  
group trips worldwide phone

U.K 01254 826322 or e-mail [divers@divequest.co.uk](mailto:divers@divequest.co.uk)  
U.S toll-free 1-877-660-0193 or e-mail [divers@divequest-travel.com](mailto:divers@divequest-travel.com)



## The HUGYCUP 2011 Dahab Egypt 4th of September to 23rd of October

Over 30000 euro in prizes will be attributed to the winners competing in 10 different photo categories and 2 video categories.

The HUGYCUP is also a unique opportunity to meet other photographers and videographers and to share ideas.

During the HUGYCUP there are several workshops every week about underwater photography & videography.

Special guest will be René Heuzey, chief cameraman during the shooting of the film 'OCEANS'.

He will conduct two 'one week' workshops between the 25th of September and the 9th of October.

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

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

## Oonas Paul Duxfield Red Sea uw photo week 26 July to 2 August 2011



Oonas Dive Club has teamed up with underwater photography expert Paul Duxfield for a great value Diving and Photography Week.

So many divers are now enjoying the art of underwater photography but on a normal diving holiday, how often do they get the opportunity to take advantage of the full potential of their equipment and enhance their skills?

That's why we have teamed up with Paul Duxfield to provide a great value diving and accommodation package for photographers of all levels.

The package is priced extremely competitively at only 449 euros for the week,

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

## Ned and Anna DeLoach - first seminars at NEC Dive Show 22 - 23 October, 2011



This October's NEC Dive Show, Birmingham, welcomes Ned and Anna DeLoach, authors and photographers of the most popular series of marine life field guides in the business. Meet and have your books signed by them at the Eco Divers, Manado, at stand No 823.

For the first time, guests can attend the acclaimed seminar, Coral Triangle Diary, chronicling a 15-year quest to document marine life inhabiting the epicentre of marine biodiversity.

The image-rich presentation profiles the region's beautiful, bizarre and rare marine creatures and seldom-seen behaviour, with amusing insights into how the rare images were captured.

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

Check out Maria's Tips in UWP Issues 47, 48 and 49



## Celebrating 5 years of award winning course guests

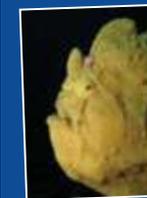
**NEW, NEW, NEW ..... The Photobus has arrived!**



Now offering even more personal courses at your chosen venue at dive sites across the UK. Comfy white leather sofa, view your photos on your own LCD TV Screen, fresh hot chocolate or cold refreshes from our fridge.

Keep your camera handy! Snap a photo of "Thomas" at a UK dive site and WIN a holiday!

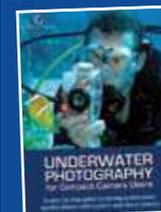
Homely, friendly one day courses in London and Leeds with private 32 degree heated pools or at your very own dive club!



Join our small, friendly photo expeditions at beautiful underwater photography locations:

- Costa Blanca, Spain
- NEW - West Palm Beach, Florida
- Nuweiba, Egypt
- Lembeh Straits, Indonesia

**Over 10 prize winning guests in the UK & Bonaire**



**Buy your signed copy of the award winning book**

"I LOVE your book. Thank you so much for your help and the kind words. If I run into anyone with a compact camera I will direct them to your website."  
Meredith Hoag, Michigan, USA

Book of the Year '10

**Tailor-made courses just for you all  
with the special personal touch**



Contact Maria Munn for your FREE personal tips NOW

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

Issue 61/7



## Maria Munn's 5th Anniversary

Maria Munn is celebrating 5 years since launching tailor-made compact camera underwater photography courses with a new range of one day workshops.

Tailor-made workshops for all makes and models of compacts are now available in both London and Leeds at personal venues with 32 degree heated private indoor pools. Free to attend montly Demo Days are also available at both venues where guests are welcome to bring their own camera equipment and practice. Strobes and lenses are also available to use.

Brand new for this summer, a new Volkswagen Splittie photobus will also be travelling around the UK. Especially designed for underwater photography, this newly refurbished bus comfortably hosts two guests on a white leather sofa with their own personal LCD TV Screen to download and view photos. The bus will offer an even more personal tailor-made course at a variety of dive venues. Fresh hot chocolate is offered as are cool refrescos from an onboard fridge. If you see a photo of "Thomas" at a dive site, don't forget to grab a photo and upload it to the Ocean Visions Photography Facebook page to be in with a chance of winning a holiday.



For those wishing to develop their underwater photography skills further afield, newly developed courses are available at the spectacular dive locations of Nuweiba in Egypt, Lembah Straits in Indonesia and new for September this year, a series of two day workshops in West Palm Beach, Florida.

Maria also offers personal tips for all kinds of compact cameras, so do get in touch with her.

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

FANTASEA line  
Presents  
Nikon P7000 / Fantasea FP7000  
Available Now  
PERFECTION  
www.fantasea.com | info@fantasea.com

The advertisement features a black Nikon P7000 camera with a Fantasea FP7000 housing. The camera is shown from a front-three-quarter view. The Fantasea logo is visible on the top left and bottom left of the housing. The Nikon logo is on the right side of the camera. A yellow banner in the top right corner says "Available Now". Below the camera, the word "PERFECTION" is written in yellow capital letters. At the bottom, the website and email address are listed.

Wallacea  
dive cruise  
RAJA EMPAT - SULAWESI - KOMODO - INDONESIA  
10 divers, 3 dive guides. Simply dive  
www.wallacea-divecruise.com

The advertisement shows a large blue and white cruise ship sailing on the ocean. The ship has multiple decks and a white superstructure. The sky is clear and blue. The text "Wallacea dive cruise" is written in a stylized font at the top. Below the ship, the text "RAJA EMPAT - SULAWESI - KOMODO - INDONESIA" is written in white capital letters. At the bottom, the text "10 divers, 3 dive guides. Simply dive" is written in white, and the website "www.wallacea-divecruise.com" is written in yellow.



## Ocean Geographic Cenderawasih Bay (West Papua) Expeditions 2011



Copyright © Ocean Geographic



Copyright © Ocean Geographic



MSY SEAHORSE.COM

Download our online brochure  
**HERE**

Based on information from our Indonesian associates, an Ocean Geographic team conducted a reconnaissance to West Papua in November 2010; the focus was on the regular appearances of four to five whale sharks up to 11m in length almost all year round. These sharks are supposedly residents of the bay and are very tame and allowing people to swim in close proximity while they consume fishes from the fishing pontoons. Over the course of just two days in water interaction at one pontoon, 21 sharks were encountered in 13 hours. In conjunction with Ocean Geographic's SOS's projects, two expeditions are planned now for Cenderawasih Bay in 2011.

Though the expedition is predominantly a survey of coral reefs and muck sites for critters such as pygmies, tiger shrimps, frogfishes and octopi we will also explore a few

well known wrecks - WW II ships and planes! However without a doubt, the highlight of the expeditions is to locate the bay's resident whale sharks that have learned to feast upon fish nets filled with ikan puri – small anchovies around fishing pontoons (bagans in local language). It is our intent to learn more about the resident population of whale sharks and as well ensure meaningful conservation effort to protect the wellbeing of both fish and local stakeholders.

Expedition Platform – the exquisite fine diving & fine dining live-board - MSY Seahorse; expedition staff comprise of photo pro and researcher. Limited spots available; USD 3680 per person twin sharing.

[expeditions@OGSociety.org](mailto:expeditions@OGSociety.org)  
[www.msyseahorse.com](http://www.msyseahorse.com)

# Hasselblad uw fashion/art photo workshop

## Boca Raton, Florida

August 14-19 2011

There is something very special about fashion and fine art photographs taken underwater. The images are enchanting, peaceful, surreal, dreamlike, graceful and simply beautiful. This is your opportunity to create your own artistic images in an underwater studio using Hasselblad H4D



cameras and lenses encased in the Ultima Digital underwater housing.

We will supply the Hasselblad H4D cameras, lenses, housing, lighting, models and props; you just bring your imagination and talent.

This underwater workshop is for divers and non-divers alike.

Your instructors will be Hasselblad photographer Peter Lorber, underwater photography specialist Phil Rudin, and post-production specialist Courtenay Gilbert. They will teach you tips, techniques and trade secrets. This is a 4-day/5-night workshop featuring the Hasselblad H4D digital camera system.

Workshop cost - \$4150.00 per person (with hotel), \$3650.00 (without

hotel)

(If a guest not attending the workshop will accompany you, there will be an additional \$300.00 fee.)

Workshop 2 day boat dive extension - \$850.00 (Friday, 8/19 & Saturday, 8/20) Two days of two boat dives per day using a Hasselblad H4D camera and housing, and two additional nights at the Ocean Lodge Hotel. Extension is for certified divers only.

Not included in Workshop - Transportation and Airfare

Contact Addie Lorber at

[addielorber@gmail.com](mailto:addielorber@gmail.com)

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



## Underwater Photo Discovery Program at Rosewood Little Dix Bay on Virgin Gorda, B.V.I. with Deborah Liljegren November 15-20, 2011

Five-days of instruction, seven dives and luxury resort accommodations puts the beauty of the Caribbean in focus,

Amateur shutterbugs will have the opportunity to go deep in the Caribbean this fall with the new Underwater Photo Discovery Program at Rosewood Little Dix Bay on Virgin Gorda, B.V.I.

The workshop will be led by photography instructor, Deborah Liljegren. Based in New York City with 12 years of diving experience and over 20 years of photography experience, Liljegren's photos have been featured in editorial and commercial work. She also created a limited edition series of her underwater work which has become part of numerous private collections.

The package starts at \$4,225 for single occupancy; \$5,025 for double occupancy with one diving participant; and \$6,025 for two diving participants, in a Garden View room

[www.littledixbay.com](http://www.littledixbay.com)  
[www.deborahliljegren.com](http://www.deborahliljegren.com)

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



Issue 61/10

## DSLR Housings for

### CANON

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



### FUJI

S-5 PRO

### NIKON

D80  
D90  
D200  
D300  
D300s  
D700  
D3100  
D7000

### OLYMPUS

E330

### SONY

α33, α55 SLT

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

## DSLR Housings

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

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

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



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



# New Products

## New Ikelite Tray and Handle Assemblies for Digital Housings



Aluminum trays with release handle(s) provide stability underwater and attachment point(s) for external lighting and accessories.

The new unique Ikelite release handle allows easy attachment and removal of arm components at the touch of a button for added convenience above and below water.

Placement of release handles does not interfere with the opening and closing of housings.

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

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

## Nauticam Panasonic GH2 housing



Nauticam proudly announces the NA-GH2 for Panasonic Lumix DMC-GH2, the newest addition to the Nauticam family of innovative, ergonomic, high-quality camera housings.

Rated to a depth of 100m, the new NA-GH2 is a rugged aluminum housing that continues the Nauticam tradition of ergonomic controls and innovative thinking. This housing puts all of the important controls on the camera within easy reach, and even makes some of the controls on the housing easier to manipulate than on the camera itself. From the sculpted shutter release to the knurled zoom knob, this housing features all of the controls an underwater photographer needs to drive the GH2.

The port system for GH2 expands upon the existing port system for the NEX-5 housing, adding additional ports for the superb Panasonic Lumix m4/3 lenses. Olympus m4/3 lenses and Leica m4/3 lenses can be used with this camera as well, further expanding the lens choices.

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

## EdgeDiveTech Ultra video lights

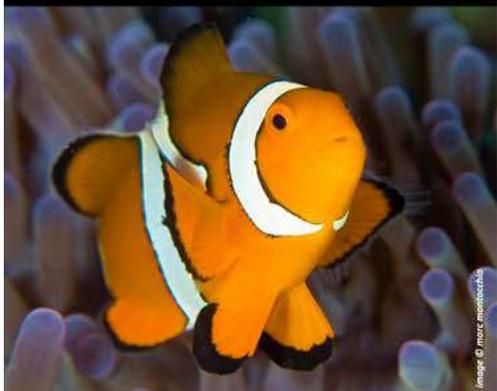


For those that thought the Ultra Series video lights from EdgeDiveTech couldn't get any better, think again! Originally introduced at DEMA 2010, the Ultra Series video lights quickly shot to the top of the wish list for any serious videographer. In an ongoing effort to push the envelope in light design we are proud to announce the option of a second dimmer knob on the canister. This will allow the user to control the brightness of each light head independently.

The features that the Ultra Series lights possess are the most advanced on the market today. With 18,000 total lumens, dimming capabilities, and a sophisticated battery gauge, the Ultra series lights remain the brightest and most advanced underwater light available on the market. And with its sleek design, any videographer is proud to own an Ultra Series light. With the announcement of EdgeDiveTech's first ever 'Trade-in' program, owning a set of your own has never been easier.

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

**SEA&SEA**  
THE UNDERWATER IMAGING COMPANY



**MDX** D7000  
7D

**Machined Solid Block Aluminium**  
**Corrosion-Resistant Coating**  
**Ergonomic Design**  
**Anti-Reflective LCD Window**  
**Takes optional VF45 Viewfinder**  
**Port Locking Mechanism**  
**Locking Latches**  
**Built-in Leak Detector**  
**Fibre Optic Cable Socket x2**  
**100m Depth Rated**



**Quality Camera Gear for all**  
**underwater photographers**

**www.sea-sea.net**

01803 663012 info@sea-sea.com

## Acquapazza APOL-XZ1 housing for the Olympus XZ-1

Japanese housing manufacturer Acquapazza have made an aluminium housing for the Olympus XZ1.

The APOL-XZ1 continues the colour trend by having 5 stock colours – Black, Red, Violet, Bright yellow and Blue with 9 other colours available on a built to order basis. The double O ring sealed housing has 3 tripod sockets and an M67 threaded front port as standard.

The zoom control is ergonomically placed for right thumb control and there is a wide range of options for mounting strobes and focus lights. The housing is supplied with a lanyard and a side strap but there are four strap holes to suit all needs.

The important control ring around the lens which can be customised in the camera is controlled with a large knurled knob on the right hand side. INON, Olympus or Sea & Sea strobes can be triggered optically. The Olympus XZ-1 camera is different in that the output of the built in flash can be manually controlled right down to 1/64th power resulting in much faster recycle time and far less battery drain.

A rail is incorporated on the rear of the housing to take the UN LCD



magnifier.

The APOL-XZ1 is tested to 100 metres and rated to 50 metres and will be available towards the middle of July.

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

**Nauticam**  
USA

## Nauticam Olympus XZ1



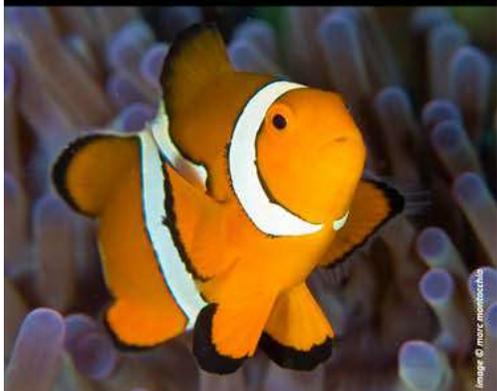
**“Total control”**

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

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

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

**SEA&SEA**  
THE UNDERWATER IMAGING COMPANY



**YS-01**

**Compact & Lightweight Strobe  
DS-TTL & Manual Control  
110° Beam Angle (with Diffuser)  
Built-In Modelling Light  
75m Depth Rated**



**Quality Camera Gear for all  
underwater photographers**  
**www.sea-sea.net**  
01803 663012 info@sea-sea.com

## Sea & Sea MDX-D7000 DSLR Housing for the Nikon D7000



The new MDX-D7000 housing boasts a compact and ergonomic design which features the usual Sea&Sea refinements such as a built-in leak detector, camera mounting tray, port lock and locking latches. The housing is depth rating to an uncompromising 100m (330ft).

The housing is machined from a solid block of aluminium for ultimate precision, ergonomics and performance and finished in a highly corrosion resistant black anodized coating.

Simply by connecting the Fibre-optic cable (L-type) to the connector, the camera's built-in flash is used to trigger an external strobe. This is considerably less complicated than setting up a hardwired sync cable. It also eliminates any possibility of leaks when the connector is submerged in water.

Almost all functions of the Nikon D7000 can be operated underwater and it is equipped with the Optical Viewfinder 0.5x as standard. The optional interchangeable 0.66x and 0.8x viewfinders can also be used as well as the VF45 angled viewfinder.

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

The MDX-D7000 is shipped from the factory without a strobe bulkhead. The optional Sync Cord Connector/N can be fitted by the user who requires hardwired strobe triggering.

Dimensions (WxHxD):  
336x197x123mm. Weight: Approx.  
2,700g (Housing only). Suggested  
Retail Price is £2,9421.95 (inc. VAT)

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

**Nauticam**  
**USA**

**Nauticam Olympus  
E-PL2**



**"Top of the Class"**

E-PL2 shooters now have the option of stepping up to the durability and functionality of a rugged aluminum housing for their camera. The NA-EPL2 housing from Nauticam delivers the advanced functionality of the E-PL2 in style and with the ergonomics that people have come to expect from Nauticam.

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

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

# There's a **new** kid in town!

The **Hugyfot Nikon D7000** housing is now available at your local dealer.

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- 'dovetail' adjustable handles
- Nikonos 5-pin bulkhead
- fiber optic connection



www.hugyfot.com  
Since 1953

Picture: Luc Eeckhaut

## Ikelite Panasonic Lumix TS3, FT3



The Ikelite ULTRAcompact digital housing really delivers when performance and durability matter. The ULTRAcompact housing is high quality, 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 200 ft. (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, rotation-free attachment of optional trays and lighting accessories.

Includes one 1cc tube of silicone lubricant, flash diffuser, flash deflector, vinyl port cover and break-away lanyard.

[www.ikelite.com](http://www.ikelite.com)  
[www.camerasunderwater.co.uk](http://www.camerasunderwater.co.uk)

## Dyron Fisheyes 8mm for Recsea/Seatool G10/11/12 housings



Unique and innovative, this lens is designed for the Recsea/Seatool G10/11/12 housings instead of the original port

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Delivered with protective cap, neoprene dome cover. Reflection-free, no image-destroying flare or reflections

Use in Air and Water, and for air/water split shots

High grade optical glass elements for sharp, crystal clear high resolution images

Full zoom through capability (180° to macro)

[www.dyron.fr](http://www.dyron.fr)

# Nauticam USA

## Nauticam NA-NEX5 Sony NEX-5 housing



### "Back to the future"

The Sony NEX-5 provides DSLR image quality with the full HD video of a camcorder in a compact size.

The Nauticam NA-NEX5 extends that capability with a form fitting aluminium housing and a full range of ports from fisheye to macro.

But the most innovative twist is a port adaptor to use Nikonos lenses from the pin sharp 15mm UW Nikkor to the super macro combination of 35mm and extension tubes.

For decades the Nikonos range of lenses were world leaders but the advent of digital saw them put on the shelf. Now we can use them all over again to benefit from the past with a camera for the future.

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

## Olympus PT-EP05L & PT-EP06L



Olympus have announced two new 4/3rds cameras which will be available in August with 45 metre housings.

The new lightweight PT-EP05L houses the E-PL3 and the PT-EP06L houses the E-PM1.

Both cameras are a significant development of the interchangeable lens 4/3rds format which is gaining a significant market share with customers who want SLR quality without the bulk and weight.

Both cameras now offer full HD video recording and one of the primary areas Olympus concentrated on when developing these cameras was the AF (autofocusing) system. The result is what they claim to be the world's highest AF speed, faster than any traditional SLR with mirrors.

The housings launch with a powerful new feature: The "Target

Light", which is built in to the lens port and produces spotlighting that is targeted directly at close-up subjects - making it the new best friend for underwater macro photographers.

For fans of wide-angle photography, there is also a wide conversion lens available, which attaches to the front of the lens port.

With the optional PTMC-01 Macro Converter, you can turn your E-PL3 to an underwater macro camera for stunning photos of the world under the waves.

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



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

## Sea & Sea RDX-600D DSLR housing for Canon EOS 600D



Sea & Sea Ltd is pleased to announce the release of new RDX-600D DSLR underwater camera housing.

The new RDX-600D housing boasts a compact, lightweight and ergonomic design which features the usual Sea&Sea RDX refinements such as a camera quick-mounting tray, port lock and large locking latches, all at a remarkable price! It is the heart of a system that can be tailored to your underwater shooting needs. The housing is depth rating to 60m (200ft).

Mounting the camera is a breeze! The housing includes a Quick Shoe for easy mounting and removal of the camera. You need only to slide

the camera quick shoe into the slot, up to the designated position. There is almost no need for complicated position and gear alignments. Simple, even for beginners!

There are Two Fibre Optic Cable Sockets which allow DS-TTL and Manual slave control of external strobes. The housing comes fitted with a bulkhead blank from the factory but for those who require a hardwired bulkhead options are available..

Dimensions (WxHxD):  
200x190x139.5mm

Weight: Approx. 2,000g  
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Issue 61/17



### Small ads



#### **SOLD! – Ikelite housing for a Canon 5D MKII**

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

Your advert could be here instead for just £5.00



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

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

Email: [maddox666@gmail.com](mailto:maddox666@gmail.com) [Ref:c147]



#### **SOLD! – Subtronic Nova analog version no ttl converter**

Subtronic Nova analog version no ttl converter

The strobe is 3-years-old in good condition

All sockets in S6

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Rudolf Solböck

Ref C146

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

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

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

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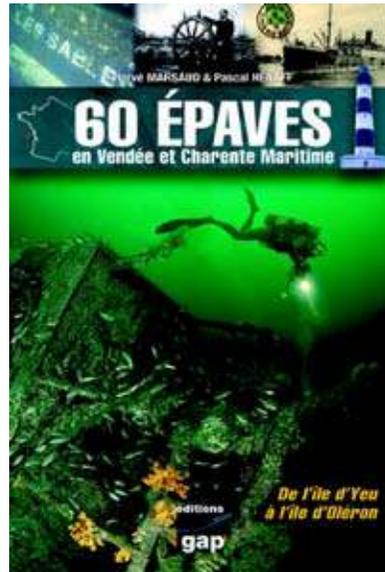
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et Charente-Maritime**  
by Hervé MARSAUD et  
Pascal Hénaff



A new book about the beautiful shipwrecks lying in the Bay of Biscay off the Vendee, France is now available.

Even if you do not master the French language, the numerous illustrations, pictures, drawings and technical informations are easily understandable by all.

An indispensable guide for all who want to come taste the sweetness of summer of the French Atlantic coast.

[www.editions-gap.fr/catalogue/livre.php?id=99&rubrique=plongee](http://www.editions-gap.fr/catalogue/livre.php?id=99&rubrique=plongee)

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## Ikelite Canon EOS 1100D Digital Rebel T3

This heavy-duty clear polycarbonate case is contoured to the camera, durable, and completely corrosion free. A clear view of the main o-ring seal, port o-ring seal and camera controls provides ease of use and confidence. The housing is fully functional to a depth rating of 200 feet (60m) and only slightly negative in fresh water depending on choice of lens port (lens port required, sold separately).

Controls are provided through the housing for every camera function except the diopter adjustment dial and kept water-tight with Ikelite pioneered Quad-Ring seal glands—proven to be the most reliable method of sealing controls. A large zoom control knob



can be comfortably reached without removing your hand from the handle. Recording start/stop while in video mode is also accessed effortlessly from the handle by the thumb of your right hand.

[www.ikelite.com](http://www.ikelite.com)  
[www.camerasunderwater.co.uk](http://www.camerasunderwater.co.uk)



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## Ocean Leisure Cameras London from July 18th

Duxy, Dave, Jussi, Mario and Steve (all ex Cameras Underwater) have stubbornly refused to leave their Embankment lair underneath the arches inside Ocean Leisure.

Recently 'redundified' and left to wander aimlessly around the area bothering the pigeons and tramps, they felt drawn back to the familiar sights and smells of the counters and cupboards that they had called home for the previous six years.

So, in a great display of compassion and good business sense they have kindly allowed them to continue to dish out help and advice on all things aquatically optical to the patrons enjoying the many delights on offer inside Ocean Leisure.

Rest assured that they will be kept to their own little area that they have always occupied, but now they will be known as Ocean Leisure Cameras, or OLC for short, imaginative eh?

Seriously though, the very best advice in underwater photographic imaging and sales is not going anywhere and Duxy and the team want to ensure that their loyal customers and friends that they have made over the years pop in and say



hi. They also welcome with open arms new clients that want to take photographs or video in any sort of difficult or camera hazardous conditions. So if digital imaging is your thing; on, under or in the wet stuff, then they are the team to count on for the best, unbiased advice.

With solutions ranging from Digital Compacts and the plethora of cool accessories that are available for them nowadays, to the very latest in Digital SLR's, MicroFourThirds and Video Cameras, they will have something to suit all pockets and abilities. Most importantly though they all have extensive real world

experience of using this equipment so are, without doubt, the very best people to help and advise you on your requirements.

Ocean Leisure Cameras opens on the 18th July with a grand opening sometime in August.

Ocean Leisure Cameras can be found within Ocean Leisure, which is London's premier watersports superstore. With a huge and diverse range of stock covering everything from sailing to diving, surfing to water skiing, it's your one stop shop for all your aquatic needs.

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

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## FIX Aquavolt 5000

Twelve high luminance white LEDs are together delivering up to the 5,000 lumens brightness. Approximately 120 degrees wide light beam without the center spot makes the Aquavolt 5000 an optimal and powerful light source for any professional underwater photographer or videographer.

The power switch, light intensity dial, status indicator, remote controller connector and power supply connector are located on the rear panel.

The Li-Ion rechargeable high capacity batteries are capable of up to 75 minutes of continuous lighting and no discharge, nor battery refreshing procedure is necessary. The Aquavolt 5000 is constructed with the tight flying regulations in mind and the batteries are easy to detach so the light can be carried in the on-board luggage.

The batteries can be recharged directly via the connector located on the rear panel even while installed inside the body of the light. The worldwide power adapter is attached to cover the range from 100 to 240 volts.

The corrosion resistant aluminum alloy body is rated to 100 meters. Smooth finishing gives the Aquavolt 5000 sharp and elegant look and



the double o-ring joint is added to increase the protection against the flood damage.

The Aquavolt 5000 can also be operated via the optional remote controller. Same as the main light intensity dial, the remote controller gives you the step-less control of the light output intensity. One remote controller can operate two lights simultaneously.

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“Less is more”, reduction to the essential at quality on highest level is the idea behind the new SEACAM prelude housing series.

With the new SEACAM prelude you will profit from the user friendliness of our devices and you will be convinced by the clear SEACAM functionality. The equipment includes the most important transmissions for the camera adjustment in ergonomic arrangement, 2 flash connectors, arm mountings and an acoustic and visual leakage warning. Included in the delivery are the handles which can be removed for transport, the accessories set, a detailed instruction manual and an interchangeable standard viewfinder.

[www.seacam-prelude.com](http://www.seacam-prelude.com)

## Sealux Nikon D7000



We have designed the precision-fit CD7000 housing, so as to provide full underwater camera use for your Nikon D7000.

Safety, ease of operation and minimal dimensions are the hallmark of the CD7000 housing. Large O rings, double seal shafts and keys sealed even fourfold guarantee the maximum safety possible. The camera is precision-guided on a special slide and fitted inside the front part of the housing, thereby excluding fitting errors. To replace the memory card the camera does not need to be moved.

The grip is now mounted at the front and is adjustable. The camera is mounted on a new slide system.

[www.sealux.de](http://www.sealux.de)

## SeaLife Dive & Sport Camera - Mini II



Compact, rugged, easy to-use-the Mini II is ready for adventure

Depth tested waterproof to 130 feet, rubber armored for a sure grip and shockproof tested up to 6ft/2m. Made for SCUBA divers, snorkelers, boaters, hikers, paddlers and any fun-seeking adventurer.

Large, wide-spread controls for easy operation and no complicated menus. The Easy Setup on-screen guide ensures the camera is set correctly for great pictures on land or underwater. No more blue pictures with the Dive and Snorkel modes with underwater color booster.

As easy to expand as it is to use, for breathtaking panoramic shots, add the optional wide angle lens which allows close up pictures to within 1ft / 30cm and increases the shooting angle by 33%. To bring vibrant colorful pictures while diving, add the SeaLife Digital Pro Flash.

[www.sealife-cameras.com](http://www.sealife-cameras.com)

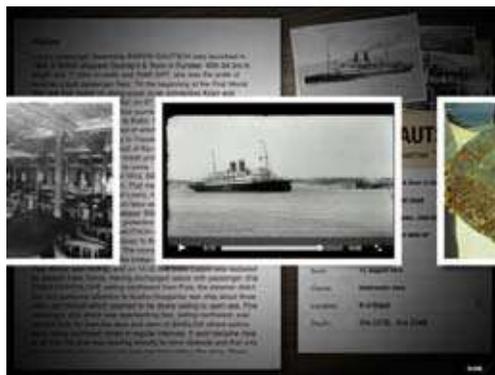
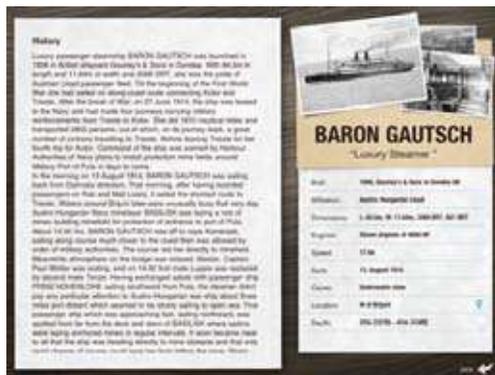
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[www.nauticamuk.com](http://www.nauticamuk.com)

iApp  
**Wrecks of the Adriatic Sea**  
 by Grega Verč



Grega Verč has launched an interactive iPhone/iPad guide to the Croatian wrecks of the Adriatic. It is designed to offer a virtual tour of nineteen wrecks for visiting divers and also offers wreck photography from Danijel Frka, Grega Verč and Marino Brzac.

The graphics are excellent with links to underwater photos and a detailed text description of the wrecks history including video clips where available.

The whole package of 19 wrecks is extremely well laid out and is a must for any wreck diver planning to visit this area.

The app is available now on iTunes for a limited amount of time for \$4.99. The regular price is \$9.99.

<http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/wrecks-of-the-adriatic-sea>



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With Peter Lorber  
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**AUGUST 14-19, 2011**



There is something very special about fashion and fine art photographs taken underwater. The images are enchanting, peaceful, surreal, dreamlike, graceful and simply beautiful. This is your opportunity to create your own artistic images in an underwater studio using Hasselblad H4D cameras and lenses encased in an underwater housing.

We will supply the Hasselblad H4D cameras, lenses, housing, lighting, models and props; you just bring your imagination and talent.

This underwater workshop is for divers and non-divers alike.

Workshop cost - \$4150.00 per person (with hotel), \$3650.00 (without hotel) (If a guest not attending the workshop will accompany you, there will be an additional \$300.00 fee.)

Workshop 2 day boat dive extension - \$850.00 (Friday, 8/19 & Saturday, 8/20) Two days of two boat dives per day using a Hasselblad H4D camera and housing, and two additional nights at the Ocean Lodge Hotel. Extension is for certified divers only.

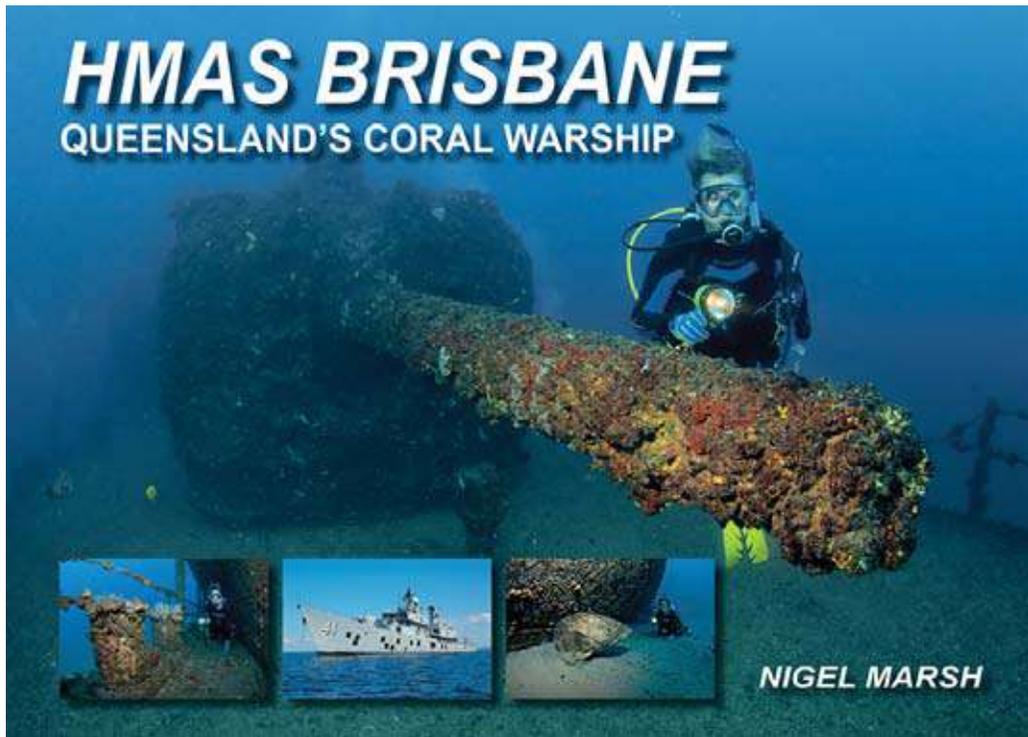
Workshop includes:

- Lodging - Ocean Lodge Suites (Check-in 8/14/11 check-out 8/19/11) (check-out 8/21/11 with dive extension)
- 4 days of underwater studio photo shoots with models and props
- Use of a Hasselblad H4D camera with housing and various Hasselblad Lenses
- Hasselblad camera and Hasselblad Phocus software instruction
- Breakfast and lunch daily
- A print of your best shot up to 40"x60"!

Not included in Workshop - Transportation and Airfare

Contact Addie Lorber at [addielorber@gmail.com](mailto:addielorber@gmail.com) or 561-361-0031 for questions or reservations.

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



Australian underwater photographer Nigel Marsh has just completed work on a book about one of his favourite dive sites, HMAS Brisbane. The book is a photographic exploration of HMAS Brisbane, with details about the guided missile destroyer's service life, retirement, scuttling and the wonderful artificial reef it is today.

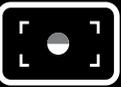
'I have been fortunate to dive HMAS Brisbane every few months since it was scuttled on July 31st 2005' said Nigel. 'Having seen the

ship transform from a stark barren hull on my first dive to the colourful coral encrusted ship it is day has been amazing. The ship just pulsates with marine life and is easily one of the best dives in Australia'.

With a recommended retail price of only \$19.95AUS, the book will be available from the dive shops in Mooloolaba that take divers to HMAS Brisbane – Sunreef and Scubaworld, and also other selected dive shops in Australia.

For online sales visit:

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

FULL  FRAME

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**Dear UWP Readers:**

Get ready for an exciting new era in underwater imagery. Along with a complete redesign, [Wetpixel.com](http://Wetpixel.com) is launching an exciting new photo essay feature called Full Frame. Along with stunning large-format images, photographers will tell their stories through extended captions and interviews.

Look for our launch in late spring/early summer 2011.

**Come join us online:**  
[www.wetpixel.com](http://www.wetpixel.com)

# Olympus TG-810 Review

by Rob Spray

Olympus has been setting the agenda amongst the rugged camera fraternity for a while now and the TG-810 is the latest and greatest. Proof against more things in more ways than any of its rivals – the TG-810 can be dropped from 2m, submerged to 10m, crushed by 100kg, frozen to -10°C and apparently it even resists scratches. At the same time it's crammed to the gills with outdoor extras, so now when the going gets tough the Tough knows where it's going.

Most compacts have been getting smaller but the top Tough has actually been bulking up. It's no lightweight but this palm sized bruiser is muscular rather than flabby. You can even imagine it jostling up to a bar, but unlike bald, stocky Hummer drivers it's amazingly well endowed. It still looks good and can mix with the toffs and the tuffs – it won't look out of place surfing or schmoozing, although it's not as Rolex-like as its ancestors. It's almost a one stop shop for action people and has grown up as a camera too.

If you've met one of the Tough family before then the exterior will be familiar. The signature sliding

metal cover keeps crud and incoming missiles away from the lens when off duty. Although the back panel has regressed to plastic rather than the liberal metalwork of the front and accent chunky end cap, it is dominated by a superb 3" VGA display. One reason for the increased plastic content is that the TG-810 is Eye-Fi compatible. Eye-Fi SD cards are a great complement to the frontierless approach of this camera – but there are so many other add-ons we should save that story for another day!

So it's Tough but what's new? Well, the case reveals one of the major outdoor enhancements without serious searching. The bulge on top shouts GPS so you'll guess that every photo is geotagged (at least outdoors when there's reception) with your location. There's a compass too for old school walking about and a manometer which can tell you how high up you are or how deep underwater you've ended up. It begs a few questions... not the least of which is how soon will one of these carry Bluetooth or act as a phone. Phones packing dodgy cameras have been dogging us for ages but how much better to



have a camera that can call rather than a phone that acts as a half baked camera?

The large single waterproof door has had an extra lock installed since the last generation which provides access to the SDXC compatible card slot, battery compartment, USB/charging connection and micro HDMI socket. The lock lever only turns when the catch has locked properly so you know you're watertight. The new door has two seals; one gasket and one piston O ring – twice as many as the old style Tough which we took to 20m! The controls are small and metallic but you can engage Tap Control if you expect to be wearing gloves or wielding ham fists.

Whether any little camera needs 14 Megapixels is open to question, but that's what the top Tough has so it's up to speed for any spec hunter. It won't break resolution records but I liked the handy 5x lens, running from 28-140mm (equivalent). For a camera



with folded optics it's sharp and fast to focus. I was surprised that ISO only goes up to 1600 when predecessors have gone higher, but I reckon that's just some welcome realism creeping in. I think the ISO is being used to hold longer exposures and collect more light. It has both optical and electronic image stabilisation which did a fair job under some severe duress on bouncing dive boats. Video shooting only uses the electronic version since that's fast enough to steady 30 HD frames per second. I was impressed with the video quality, as were those I shared the clips with, it's not a bad little camcorder and couldn't be easier to use with a



*Geo tagged pictures can trace the path of a day - a walk along a river here - in software like Picasa*

dedicated start/stop button on the back. It shoots 720P HD video in the efficient MP4 format – ideal for YouTube clips of your extreme antics. Video wasn't GPS tagged – or at least not in a way any of my apps recognised.

If you want to track your exploits bear in mind that all GPS systems need some time to get a fix, they recover more quickly if they haven't moved. I found it best to power up before moving off. The GPS isn't very configurable but will suggest local landmarks. Positions are given in old school degrees, minutes and seconds which is easy to covert to other format. Once locked every picture was tagged – with the last fix if there's a break in coverage. On playback you can see where you were and even which way you were facing.

Battery life itself is quite variable. As a plain camera the battery is a decent size (same as in the larger XZ-1) but with all the options on it's under pressure. Running the GPS and compass will shorten battery life, from about 300 to around 200 shots. This is a camera that will use power while it's



*This kind of camera is ideal for underwater nature lovers, this scallop is 10m down*

not shooting too and while there are power saving options, a second battery is a must – like I suggest with all little cameras.

The 10m depth rating is enough to actually start diving, so for a proper test I took it for a dip – much to the disbelief of everyone else on the boat. Underwater the sharp screen is excellent and the manometer keeps track of how deep you are, warning when nearing the 'limit'. We've doubled what's suggested by '10m' cameras but that's silly and there's a matching 40m housing for regular divers. It's worth having as the enlarged controls are easier for cold or gloved hands at greater depth. The joystick particularly needs a deft touch underwater but I was running through all the options which most normal people would set and forget.

The compass works underwater too and there's a navigation mode which can be called up wet or dry which lets you pretend to understand where you are with altitude/depth, heading and position (or the

last fix underwater as there's no GPS for anyone there). The compass works with the camera vertical (like when you're shooting) which feels odd as the responsive needle looks like a real one which you'd use flat.

If you need a Tough camera then you really don't need look any further, by any measure (short of underwater housings) the TG-810 is the toughest Tough ever. The range has a real spread and starts with waterproof enough for any surface use and ends up here with a model dripping with extras. It's not a shoddy snapper and can step up to daily duty for most folk. Even for me whose SLR goes out in all weathers and any topside location there are times when I can't (or won't) put it in harm's way and this is the perfect antidote to photo free peril.

All the bells and whistles simply add to the outdoor credentials of a very decent little camera. To pack everything into the flat case takes folded optics but these are now well developed and the equal of many an expanding lens – I'm sure that's no surprise. I really took to this rugged spring visitor and enjoyed looking at the tracks of my days out and being able to pinpoint views and locations. Not everyone needs all that, but most of us would enjoy it and if you work in the field or spend plenty of time there, it's a great go everywhere companion.

**Rob Spray**

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# Nauticam Olympus XZ-1 housing

by Peter Rowlands



I think it's fair to say that in recent years Canon have stolen the march from Olympus at the top end compact market but their XZ-1 sees Olympus jostling for poll position once again. Combining a small size with an ergonomic design and providing full automation or total manual control together with a bright F1.8-2.5 28mm-112mm lens the XZ-1 looks set to take the Canon S95 head on.

From an underwater point of view the most interesting feature is the ability to reduce the power of the internal flash down to 1/64th so, when triggering external optical strobes, the recycling is very quick and there is far less camera battery drain. This is a very useful feature.

Nauticam have released a

housing for the XZ-1 which follows their traditional design of form and function with a solid aluminium build providing complete control over the camera. The result is reassuringly familiar Nauticam in terms of quality and finish as well as ergonomics.

Olympus have a tradition of launching underwater housings with their new models and the XZ-1 is no exception. The PT-050 is a good value for money housing aimed at the mass market but it lacks a control which the more discerning user might require – the rear command dial. Nauticam, needless to say, has incorporated this in their design.

A big problem with a lot of compact cameras is that their built in lenses are getting wider at the wide end i.e. 28mm is now the norm

whereas it used to be 35mm. This is attractive for land use but in a housing it can be a limitation when you want to add an external wide angle lens. The Nauticam design doesn't solve this limitation but they do have an optional wide angle air lens which screws onto the front port and restores the 28mm angle of coverage.

For wider angle coverage INON have announced the UWL-H100 28M67 and the Dome Lens Unit II for UWL-H100

To be honest, after a while it becomes a bit difficult to review Nauticam compact housings and come up with anything new to say. They

are so well thought out and bullet proof that one almost takes them for granted.

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

*The review camera and housing were kindly provided by Nauticam UK*  
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# Tokina 35mm f/2.8 DX Macro

by Tim Rock

Before the days of various sized sensors, I used to like using my Nikkor 60mm Macro for fish and macro subjects. I still use a Sigma 50mm underwater as it is close to the 60mm focal length. But I also like to shoot models observing macro subjects and have wanted something with macro capability but wide. Until now I have been forced to use the Tokina 10-17mm at 17mm and crop or hope for clear water and use the 50mm Sigma with the model very close to the subject. Although I haven't tried it yet, I am pretty sure the 35mm Tokina will now fill that void. It certainly works well for regular macro subjects.

The Tokina 35mm f/2.8 AT-X M35 Pro DX Macro is a macro lens capable of life-sized (1:1) reproduction at an amazingly close 5.5" (14cm). Designed exclusively for use with digital SLR cameras, this lens features a fast constant aperture of f/2.8, and provides a focal length equivalent to 52mm in 35mm format.

As part of the AT-X line, this lens is designed to provide excellent optical quality, and offers advanced features like the WR (Water Repellent) front element, its One-touch Focus Clutch Mechanism, and a 9-bladed aperture.

Since I bought this lens primarily for underwater use, the water repellent front element is something I hope never gets tested. And the One-touch Focus Clutch Mechanism is actually kind



of a pain. This slips the lens into manual mode. You have to watch that it doesn't pop into this mode while you install it. This cannot be unpopped underwater.

I have heard underwater photogs say they like the 35mm macro as fills a major gap. Nikon's 60mm is insufficient at times when you need to get close to a larger subject, but also require the flexibility of 1:1 on a good macro dive.

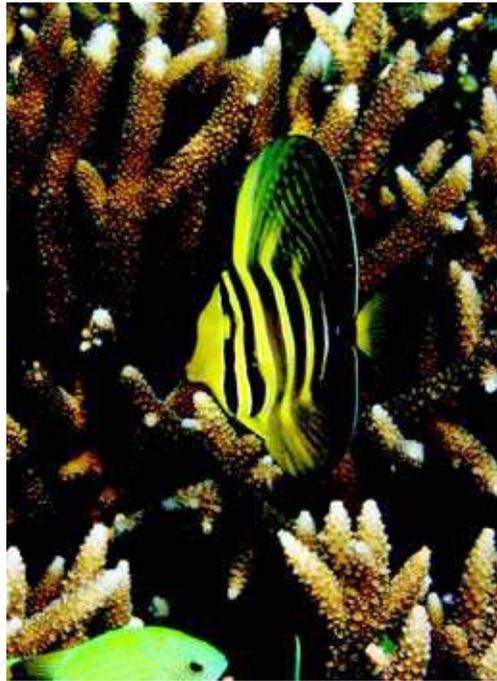
Two things that are apparent are that this nicely priced lens is very sharp. And, the 9-blade aperture makes out-of-focus elements appear more natural. This is an intentional part of the lens design. This lens has very nice bokeh.

Bokeh doesn't mean mojo and or karma. Take any of your macro lenses and find a distant point of light. Try this at night by finding a distant streetlight. As you focus, if you see perfect round disks your lens has neutral bokeh, if you see soft-edged shapes you have good bokeh, and if you see doughnuts you have bad bokeh. Photographers prefer soft out-of-focus areas to hard ones. This way each blur circle tends to be a bright spot that gets



dimmer gradually towards the edges and all the blur circles blend nicely. This lens does that and thus has good bokeh.

I was shooting wide angle at low tide and stumbled across some of those very stunning longnose filefish. They are not that common here in Guam or even Palau and make colorful subjects so I grabbed the 35mm Tokina with an Aquatica flat port and Ikelite strobes and headed back to try to find them. Along the way I shot a pair of pipefish,



blennies, wrasses, Moorish idols at lots more.

The filefish are rather shy and elusive and it took a good hour to get them used to me and to watch them in their habitat. I was able to move closer and closer and got some nice individual, pair and group of four images of these great little fish. The lens focused quickly enough and even though they were small, didn't miss focus very often.

On my way back, I also found a tiny humbug damsel hiding in the feathery appendages of a Christmas tree worm. I was able to get in very close to get the worm and the tiny

fish.

Although I won't be testing it on a model until I get to the Philippines at Club Paradise/Dugong Divers where we will look for ghost pipefish, I think I have found my new favorite macro lens. It is versatile enough for many different sized fishes from macro to hefty, is good for portraits and is small and light and very sharp. In all, this is a really welcome lens to my arsenal.

**Tim Rock**  
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# Red Sea Relish

by Andy Deitsch

I am relatively new to underwater photography having only dived on three trips with an underwater camera in hand. After my second week of underwater photography (borrowing my cousin's kit), I decided this hobby was for me and I purchased a new camera, housing and all the accessories. I was eager to use my new equipment and spoke to my cousin Julian Cohen, to see if I could join him on one of his upcoming underwater photography dive trips.

Initially, I had thought that I would enjoy a trip to PNG to practice more of the macro photography I had been doing in the Caribbean. Julian however, suggested that if I want to learn a lot, and expand my photography skills I should join him for an upcoming workshop in the Red Sea with Alex Mustard which was focused on wide-angle photography.

For me, this would be the first time that I'd be taking a camera with a wide-angle lens and dome port underwater. In this article, I hope to share some of the important early lessons I learned for this technique. I had heard Julian talk about Alex's workshops and I thought it would

be an exciting opportunity to learn from Alex and from the other photographers on the trip, many of whom have had years of experience shooting wide-angle.

The workshop was divided into two distinct phases. The first 3 days was spent diving on the wreck of the SS Thistlegorm, one of the most well-known wreck dives in the world. The objective was to spend a significant time photographing both inside and outside the wreck, learning various lighting techniques (such as rabbit ear and off camera strobe positioning), shooting different aspects of the wreck and identifying subjects within the holds that would make good compositions. The purpose of spending 3 days on the same site was to try various techniques and refine those techniques by learning from mistakes and reshooting the same subjects until we got it right.

The trip was timed for neap

**IMG\_0757-Edit: BSA Motorbike (Ele's bike) in hold 2 of the Thistlegorm. 1/20th sec at f/8.0, ISO 640, Canon 7D, Tokina 10-17mm at 10mm, Nauticam Housing, 2x INON z240**



tides so as to reduce the currents divers typically experience when diving the Thistlegorm. While we did experience mild currents on several dives, the currents became weaker over the 3 days and we were fortunate to have a couple of dives with absolutely no current. On one dive we not only had no current we also had no other divers in the water so we had the entire wreck to ourselves making it much easier to get shots without divers and their bubbles.

The second phase of the trip was spent diving on the reefs around the Ras Mohammed National Park and in the Strait of Tiran. During this part of the workshop we learned among other techniques, how to get a good color blue in the water, how to compose a photograph to show depth and how to use the sun to get nice sun rays as well as silhouettes.

Most days consisted of a morning diving, mid-day dive and late afternoon dive. After each dive, everyone would download their photographs and begin reviewing their images. During this time between dives lots of time was spent sharing ideas amongst the group including ways to improve photographs, discuss post-processing techniques, talk about different angles that could work as well as plans for what we should do on our next dive to improve upon the photos we had taken. This time spent with the other participants of the workshop was extremely valuable and was also where I picked up several tips.

On most days, Alex would give a talk on various topics such as composition and lighting techniques. He timed his presentations so that they were applicable to the dive we would be doing immediately following the talk. We would then try using the newly learned techniques on the next



*IMG\_0770: BSA Motorbikes in the back of a truck. 1/15th sec at f/8.0, ISO 640, Canon 7D, Tokina 10-17mm at 10mm, Nauticam Housing, 2x INON z240*

dive and discuss the results with Alex and the other photographers in the workshop. If the results were not quite what we wanted, we had an opportunity to get feedback on the technique and try again. On most evenings, an image review was conducted where each photographer shared a couple of their images from the week and received feedback from Alex and the other photographers in the workshop; it was a great way to learn and improve.

Having never used a wide-angle lens underwater before, I had a lot to learn. Fortunately, my rookie mistakes were learned early and I had an opportunity to try again fairly quickly. One of the first lessons for me was configuring the settings on my camera to separate auto-focus from the shutter button. The idea being to make pressing the shutter button half-way only meter and not auto-focus. Auto-focus is then connected to the AF-on button. Disconnecting auto-focus from the



*IMG\_1242: Lionfish on lettuce coral. 1/125th sec at f/13, ISO 200, Canon 7D, Tokina 10-17mm at 10mm, Nauticam Housing, 2x INON z240*

shutter is especially important when shooting inside a dark area such as the hold of a wreck because if you don't do this your camera will spend all of its time hunting when you try to take a picture. Once this configuration is set, the trick is to focus your lens on something 3-4 feet away before you go into the dark hold. Once you have this focus, you'll be good for the dive. I made one dive early on where everything was out of focus as I had forgotten to focus before going into the hold. On your camera's small LCD screen everything looks great! It's only after downloading the photos to the computer that you suddenly get a dose of reality.

One piece of advice Alex provided is that when taking photos of subjects within the holds of a wreck, it's important to make sure that the item being photographed is not just random wreckage, but is easily identifiable. You don't want to create an image that requires the viewer to struggle in

order to identify what it is they are looking at. Also key, is to create some depth to your image. This can be accomplished by finding subjects where you can position yourself such that the background of the image has a view of the sea outside the hold. It's also nice if you can get pictures of fish in the photo to help identify the image as an underwater photograph. If there is no way to find some blue outside the hold, the use of off-camera strobes to light up a deeper space within the wreck is another way to create depth. Image 1 [IMG\_763] shows one of my first attempts of photographing a truck inside the hold. This was taken on the first dive before any presentations or advice. It's an okay shot and I would have been happy with it before the workshop. On my fourth dive and attempt, I finally managed to start getting the type of shots I was looking for. In image 2 [IMG\_868-Edit], I've chosen a different subject (what has come to be known as "Julian's truck") that allows me to pick up the ambient light from the sea outside the hold as well as capture some fish in the picture. The trick to getting the nice blue in the background I learned was to use a slow shutter speed. The strobes positioned in rabbit ears (straight up above the camera pointed slightly down) will light up the subject and the fish in the foreground and then since it's very dark inside the hold, you just need to hold the camera relatively still while the shutter is still open capturing the ambient light for the blue background.

As we began the second phase of the workshop, I had to learn a whole new set of skills. Since we were now taking photos on the reef, there was a lot of ambient light and I had to learn how to deal with this light in my shots. The tip we learned from Alex in getting a good wide



***MG\_0763: Bedford Truck in hold 2 of the Thistlegorm (initial attempt, no blue background, no fish). 1/8th sec at f/8.0, ISO 640, Canon 7D, Tokina 10-17mm at 10mm, Nauticam Housing, 2x INON z240***

angle shot on a reef is to have a good subject in the foreground, something of interest in the background to give depth and have a nice blue color for the water. Getting the right color blue background took a little practice. I had been told by one of the participants to start my camera settings at 1/125th sec, F8.0 and ISO 200 and then adjust from there. That seemed to work for me as a good starting point but I learned another tip from another participant that really worked well for me. Meter the blue and then underexpose by about 1 stop. That tip got me closer to the blue I was looking for. In either case, these tips really are just starting points and what I found was that I needed to take a picture, look in the LCD, adjust the settings, and repeat until I had the right color. Once you like the blue, then you begin adjusting the strobe position and power to light the subject. A nice tip that I learned was the closer



***IMG\_0868-Edit: Bedford Truck (Julian's truck). 1/6th sec at f/8.0, ISO 640, Canon 7D, Tokina 10-17mm at 10mm, Nauticam Housing, 2x INON z240***



***IMG\_1430: 1/250th sec at f/14, ISO 200, Canon 7D, Tokina 10-17mm at 11mm, Nauticam Housing, 2x INON z240***



*IMG\_0974: Stern of the SS Thistlegorm. 1/60th sec at f/8.0, ISO 200, Canon 7D, Tokina 10-17mm at 11mm, Nauticam Housing, 2x INON z240. Converted to B&W using Silver Efex.*



*IMG\_1216-Edit: Soft Coral with model. 1/200th sec at f/13, ISO 200, Canon 7D, Tokina 10-17mm at 10mm, Nauticam Housing, 2x INON z240*



*IMG\_1244: 1/125th sec at f/13, ISO 200, Canon 7D, Tokina 10-17mm at 10mm, Nauticam Housing, 2x INON z240*

you are to the subject, the closer to the camera you should position your strobes and the further away or larger the subject the more distance you want your strobes positioned from the camera.

One way to provide an interesting background is to use a model. In one of Alex's talk on the use of models he suggested that you should instruct your model to look at the subject (even if they are far away) because if the model doesn't appear interested in the subject, why would the viewer – makes sense! Models can appear in silhouette or be lit. If they are lit, it's important to make sure you get enough light from your strobes on the eyes inside the mask. I found this took a little practice. I would use one strobe to light the subject and another strobe to light the model.

Leveraging the sun in our photographs was another lesson in the workshop. Some of the more experienced photographers in the workshop referred

to the sun as the white ball of death which was to be avoided; I quickly learned what they meant. The challenge when taking pictures with the sun in full view is that in many cases, your picture ends up with a cyan halo around the white ball due to the sensor on your camera's inability to handle the dynamic range. To get nice sun rays, one trick is to position the subject so that it is partially obscuring the sun. Another trick is to move the camera so that the sun ball itself is not in the frame but just the rays appear. I played with these techniques and am happy with my initial results.

Overall, I really enjoyed my workshop vacation and improved my photography skills immensely over the week. I even learned things about my camera that will help me with my topside photography. I would highly recommend this type of workshop for anyone interested in improving their photography skills no matter what skill level

they are at. Of course, having as much face time as you need with a professional photographer such as Alex Mustard is a huge benefit but in addition, the experience of being with a number of other accomplished photographers who share their knowledge and provide tips is fantastic. I also found that I became more critical of my own photography as the week progressed. Photographs that I would have been very happy with just the week before were not that pleasing to me even mid-week and I was deleting them from my computer. I hope this article provided some insight into some of the techniques and tips that helped my wide angle photography, the benefits of this type of workshop and I encourage you to try it if you have an opportunity.

**Andy Deitsch**

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# Going Solo?

## Check your insurance policy!

By Dr Alex Tattersall

Readers may be somewhat disappointed to know that I shan't be mentioning Nauticam in this article. No, instead this article contains a very serious message which only came to my notice recently and could have potentially disastrous consequences to many of my UW photographic peers. I felt it my duty to share this with you.

As the hair on my head thins and the tyre around my middle thickens, so intensifies my lovely wife's insistence on larger and larger life insurance policies. We now have a boisterous four year old and ensuring his financial security is, of course, paramount to me as priority has shifted towards the wellbeing of my young family.

When I am testing equipment or feel the need for some 'me time', I will often dive alone. Shock, horror, call the BSAC police, surely solo diving is one of the Seven Deadly Sins, was it not written on the tablet of the Ten Commandments, 'Thou shalt not dive without being in continuous arms reach of thoust buddy'? Solo diving is certainly a controversial topic provoking strong debate in divers the world over. This is not

surprising as traditional dive training from all schools seems from the outset to be so entrenched in diving in a 'buddy' system that it is difficult to counter this robustly inculcated mindset in many fellow divers. Only last week on Swanage pier, a dive site in the UK where you'd need a shovel to get below five meters in depth, did I witness a BSAC diver angrily berating his buddy for leaving him behind for two minutes to take a photo of a blenny. As photographers, the reality is that if we want to get photos with which we are truly happy, much of the time we effectively become self-reliant, solo divers.

I have now done some two hundred solo dives and am quite possibly the worst nightmare of any newly qualified, overzealous divemaster or 'buddy-fixated' dive club. I am now almost pathologically unable to dive with anyone who is not completely understanding of the fact that 98% of the dive I will spend alone, completely absorbed in my passion, with acutely scant awareness of their underwater wellbeing. I'd imagine now that some readers will be thinking 'what a idiot, he's got a



death wish!!' or 'I wouldn't dive with that self-absorbed imbecile'. I expect though that a larger percentage of you will be musing 'hmmm.... that sounds familiar'.

Richard, owner of London's fine inland dive centre on the doorstep of Heathrow airport (Wraysbury Dive Centre, a series of carp lakes and a training ground for most London based dive clubs), following extensive comparative research of potential other options, made the wise decision to purchase a certain housing for his Canon 7D. It was when dropping off his ergonomically masterful, jaw-droppingly innovative, sublimely

stylish purchase that I was alerted to the fact that in diving alone, despite the fact that I am certified to Assistant Instructor level, I was actually diving outside of my qualification. 'Yeah..., and...', I said smugly, safe in the obtusely superior knowledge that my UW photo brethren would stand by me in this misguided arrogance. 'Check your life insurance policy, that's all I'll say' retorted Richard, having seen it all before, clearly several steps ahead of cocky little smartarse UW photographers like me.

Caught up in life's daily toils, it took me a few days to take his advice despite it constantly niggling

at the back of my mind. I thought first I'd email colleagues at Dive Master Insurance (oh, did I almost forget to mention that readers can benefit from a 5% discount on travel and equipment insurance simply by clicking the Dive Master insurance banner at the bottom of the products pages on our website?) who I imagined would have had experience of such enquiries.

'Would I be covered if the worst happened to me and I was diving alone?', I asked. This was the reply, published with permission from Dive Master Insurance:

**Hi Alex**

***Apologies for not coming back to your sooner, I wasn't able to pin Bob down on Tuesday and he was out of the office yesterday so have only just had chance to speak to him regarding the solo diving.***

***For the purposes of insurance it is very clear that you should be diving within the guidelines of your certifying association.***

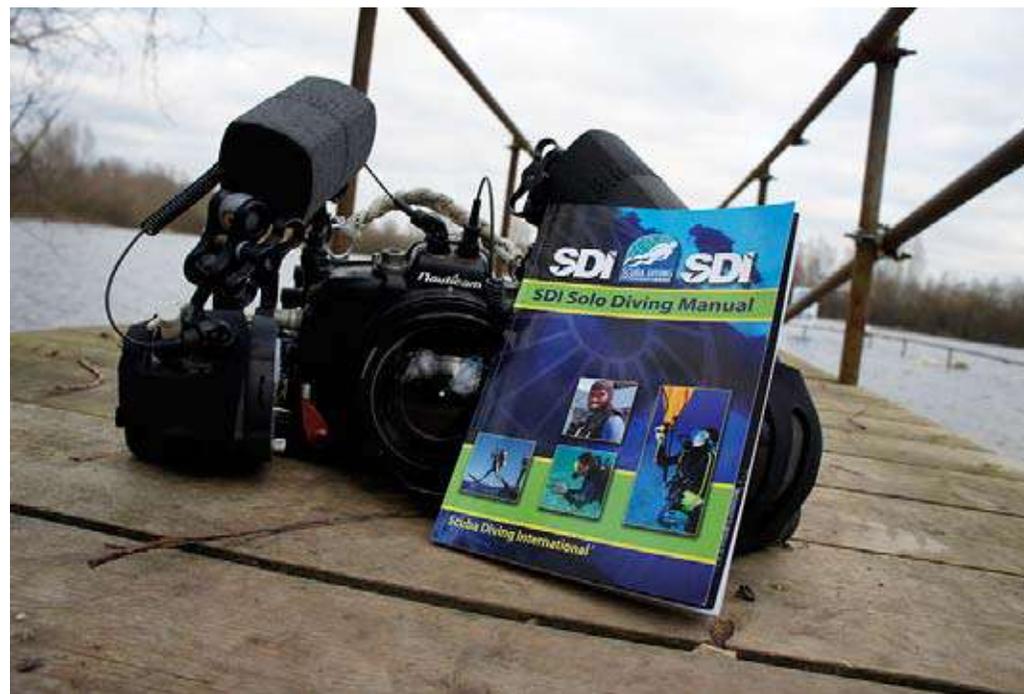
***If someone has the intention of completing a solo dive then they should have the necessary qualification to do this.***

***However if you have gone on a dive with a buddy and whilst on that dive become separated from your buddy this is not solo diving as such. Obviously each person has a duty of care to***

***their buddy and should try and avoid becoming separated but we are aware that this does happen on occasion. In these circumstances we would not consider this a solo dive and would not look to exclude a claim on that basis. I hope this helps with you query however if it raises any further questions please do not hesitate to come back to me.***

Loud and clear comes the message, if the worst were to happen during a solo dive I would be outside of the guidelines of my certifying association and therefore my enormous monthly life insurance premiums would, unless I had Michael Jackson's family lawyer, become totally invalid. Spontaneity being usual in my chaotic existence, a cold January morning saw me, with some urgency, on the phone to Richard at Wraysbury trying to trade in beautifully crafted housing accessories for an SDI solo diving course. The manual arrived in the post the next day for my study and I was booked in for the course the following Friday morning.

I was greeted by thick frost that Friday as I drove North towards the heady lights of the big city. Temperatures were barely above freezing when I arrived and a biting Northerly wind had kindly picked up overnight. As



***The SDI solo diving manual propped up by a Nauticam housing system....***

the only person deranged enough to be diving in a carp lake in such unpleasant conditions, apart from my unbelievably sprightly and enthusiastic instructor, Mark, I was indeed solo on that day: very, very solo.

At that time, in the UK, correct me if I'm wrong, but I think that SDI were the only certifying agency offering a Solo Diving course. I have heard discussion recently that PADI are introducing a 'Self-Reliant' diver qualification in the UK. I spent a bit of time trawling archives for this

article and would suggest that after having single-mindedly, unwaveringly and unrelentingly pushed their 'BUDDY' system on the world diving community as the ONLY way to dive safely, this represents a significant change in stance, the origins for which are unclear to me. The more sceptical among us may consider the pecuniary rewards of a course perhaps increasingly in demand in today's recreational diver. Certainly, one could argue that safety standards in dive equipment have increased since the buddy system was first introduced.

I'd of course arrived well prepared having read the SDI solo diver course handbook cover to cover.

The manual begins in no uncertain terms by discrediting the effectiveness of the buddy system in many circumstances. It argues that often divers who are randomly paired off as 'buddies' are lacking in the competence to assist another in the event of a life-threatening scenario underwater. Some divers have the luxury of diving most frequently with a fellow who is fully aware of their ability level, their focus for being in the watery world, and their underwater style and habits. However, all of us will have experienced being allocated a random 'buddy' resulting in mismatched skill sets, mismatched experience levels and, importantly, mismatched role expectations. The more experienced diver effectively becomes a babysitter and the dive experience is tainted by concern for a random stranger. To combat such eventuality, SDI solo diver certification suggests that the best response is to develop self-reliance underwater. Make no mistake, I am fully aware that diving is a potentially dangerous activity and I am of the mindset that I wouldn't dive if I didn't feel self-reliant in any case. I would never want to enforce responsibility for my wellbeing onto another person, known or unknown.

The course itself consisted of three dives; the first, an activity to enable the student to understand their personal air consumption under different conditions. 2 minutes are spent at rest, 2 minutes with a normal swim, and 2 minutes of heavy exertion. Before and after each activity, a record is taken of the air pre and post activity and it is rather alarming to note how much more air is consumed under more challenging, stressful conditions. At 8 meters in that pea-green, frosty lake (temperature of 3 degrees), this ostensible training dive resulted



*Tench portrait (Canon 7D, Nauticam housing, 100mm macro, 2x Z240, F22, 1/160, ISO 320)*

in a potential life-threatening situation as the near freezing water brought on an aggressive freeflow to my regulator. I made a controlled ascent to the surface but was very glad that Mark was also in the water as I was physically unable to reach over my head and turn my air off at the surface. Those of you who are cold water divers will empathise with the considerable loss dexterity from wearing dry gloves or thick wet gloves and a dry suit and I made a mental note to avoid solo diving in such bitterly cold conditions.

The second part of the course focused on the importance of redundant air sources for the solo diver. I'd always attempted to stay within a comfort zone of a maximum of 12 meters in depth when solo diving in the past. I'd never felt the need to invest in redundant air sources as I considered the diving I was doing was relatively low risk within the bounds of an emergency surface ascent if required. However, the SDI Solo Diving course's

Location	Wrysgby	Exit time	10:45
Date	1/4/10	Max depth	12m
Entry time	10:45	Cylinder size	2x12L
Max dive time	60	Turn time	12-15
Gas in	230		
Turn pressure	100		
Planned route	Slip way by lake South East being to platform + return. on platform for most of dive preparing skills.		
In case of emergency contact			

**'Plan your dive and dive your plan'**

insistence on the importance of a redundant air source implies that if I don't dive with one now, insurance companies may use this as the basis upon which to exclude a claim. I've had to borrow a pony tank from a friend, quite a burden in terms of weight (and a symbol of dubious sexual orientation if you spend any time on the Yorkshire Diver's forum),



importance of alerting a surface watch of details of the intended solo dive. I was required to complete a full dive plan covering planned entry and exit points, planned depth and duration of dive, and emergency contact details. Needless to say I took my camera in with me on this dive, I'd done two dives already that day, indeed the first for years, without a camera and felt strangely lost without my trusty companion. I soon became absorbed in shooting the local tench which looked rather cold and bad-tempered, the next thing I knew my time was up. Regrettably I had to surface just as I'd 'got into the zone' with a particularly curious specimen but if I hadn't completed the dive as I'd planned, I would have failed the course. Under non-exam conditions, would I have changed my plan to get the shot? hmmm... I wonder.

*Cold euphoria.*

but my family responsibilities give me little choice. The second dive therefore required me to demonstrate switching from primary to redundant air sources under various conditions. The second dive in 3 degree water in one hour. I was getting jolly cold at this stage and was starting to lose the will to continue. A cup of tea put me straight ready for the final part of the course.

The final dive was a 'plan your dive, dive your plan' dive carried out completely solo emphasising the

Having successfully completed all the tests and the dives, as I struggled to drag my frozen carcass back to shore, I was told the good news that I was now a certified SDI Solo Diver and I'd earned a cup of coffee and a bacon sandwich. My overwhelming joy, as you can see in this shot was hardly containable.

By way of conclusion then, I did learn a lot that day primarily about the importance of discipline in diving and particularly in solo diving. I was given the opportunity to reflect upon

previously unconsidered eventualities and how to cope with these under pressure. Most of all though, I am now secure in the knowledge that I am diving within the limits of my certification and that my activity in the aquatic realm would not allow an insurance company to exclude a claim and leave my four year old with no choice but to take over the running of the very successful UK side of a certain housing empire to pay the mortgage. For the price of less than £200, the course is certainly something for consideration and I am very grateful to Richard, Jo and Mark at Wraysbury dive centre. I sincerely hope that sharing this revelation may

give readers room for reflection and food for thought.

**Alex Tattersall**  
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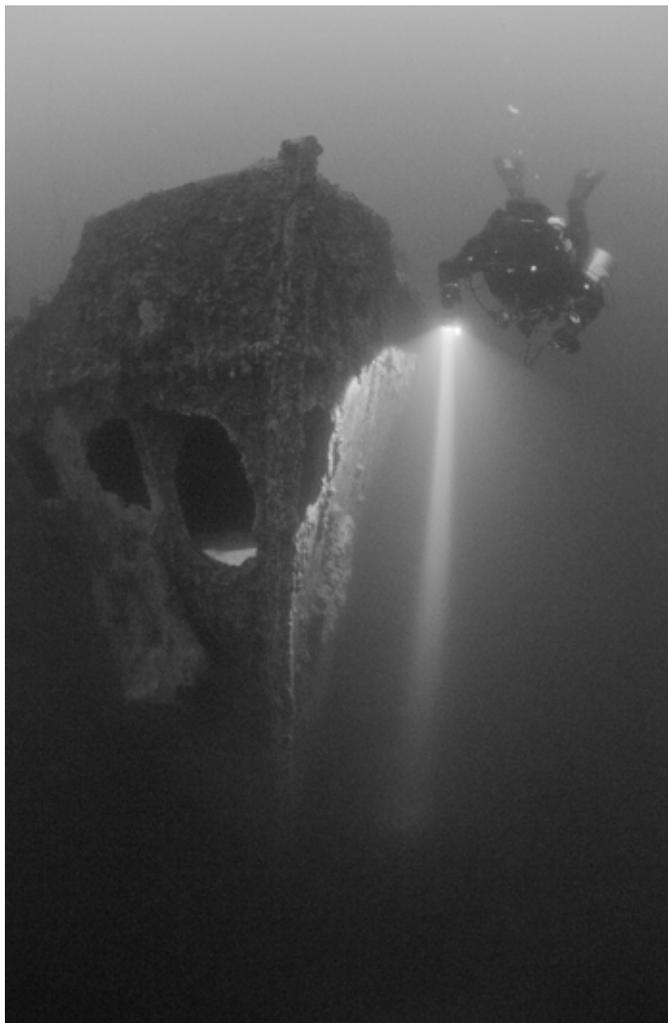
# Finland wreck techniques

by Timo Ahomäki

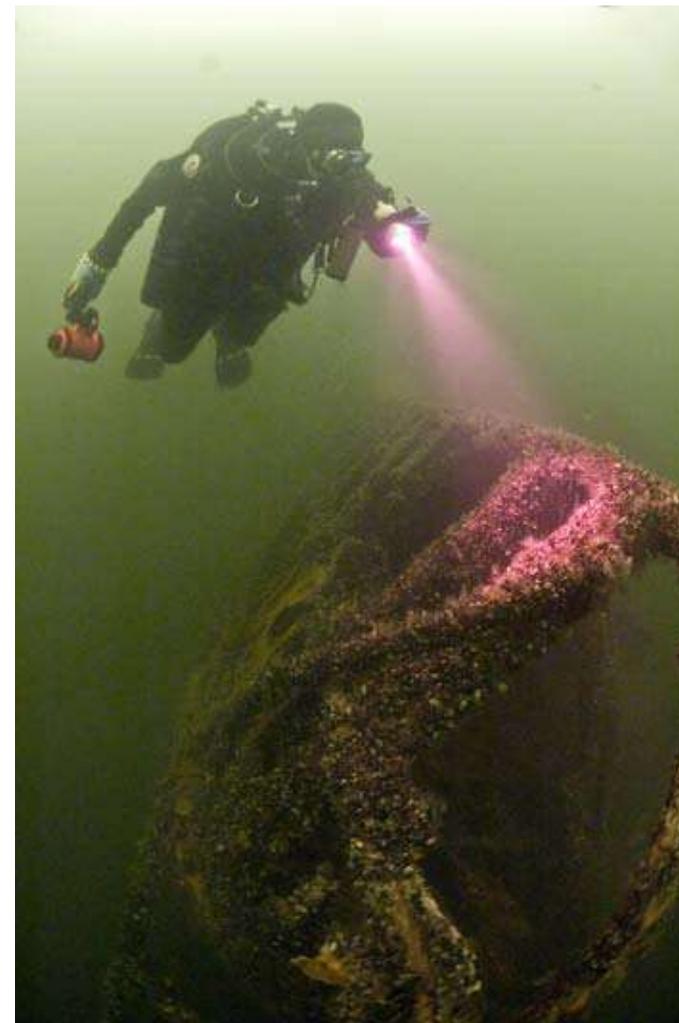
My first real exposure to underwater filter photography was on an Alex Mustard Red Sea workshop back in 2006. Learning the tricks of the Magic Filter occupied me almost totally on this trip, but I could not help but notice Alex and Paul Carre producing some absolutely stunning black and white shots of the Abu Nuhas wrecks using deep red filters. The rather dramatic contrast and almost black water in the background seemed like the ticket to shooting sweeping panoramics of some of the hundreds of wrecks that litter the murky, green waters of the Northern Baltic Sea which I call home. I decided to give the technique a shot when I got back home.

Problem being, of course, it does not work at home. For the first the water is green, not blue, and second, the real problem is not that of colour manipulation but in stead desperate lack of contrast. Basically the huge amount of suspended plankton in the water acts like a gigantic softbox, creating a non-directional and almost shadow-less light. This combined with the often quite bad visibility tends to create an environment perhaps perfect for portraiture, but much less so for dramatic shots of sunken ships.

So if a red filter does not deepen the background like it does a blue sky topside or the deep blue Red Sea water I needed to find a better one. Peter Rowlands kindly provided me with some prototype material used for the Green Magic filter



*A handheld shot of the bow of s/s Belliver lying in 37 meters of water outside the Märket lighthouse in Åland. While visibility on this wreck is often excellent, the depth makes it a very dark affair. Shot just weeks after this 1911 wreck was found in 2009 with a Nikon D300, 10.5mm FE, 1/10s, f2.8 ISO3200 and a weak magenta gel, probably around 20cc. This is one of the shots that really would deserve a tripod treatment one of these days.*



*A diver at 22 meters at the wreck of s/s Skiftet in Rödhamn, Åland. Shot in natural light using a NikonD70s, a 10.5mm FE and a Green Magic filter. 1/10s, f4.8, ISO1600. Visibility is about 5 meters and you can already see the fins starting to disappear into the mist.*



*The spare anchor of the Kronprins Gustaf Adolf with the massive stock bent by the fire that sunk her. The left hand image is practically straight out of the camera, white balance and all, as for once my filtration matched the conditions perfectly. Shot with Nikon D300, 10.5mm FE and 70cc of Kodak Wratten magenta gelatins. Exposure was 30sec, f11, ISO 400. Converting the shot to black and white (right) improves the apparent contrast.*

which worked quite well in good conditions for colour shots. However, this material did nothing to help the contrast, not to mention it did not help producing the dramatic black backgrounds I so desperately wanted.

After a fair number of theoretical dead-ends, lots of trial and error with available materials and more than a few emails to Alex and Peter to solicit comments and to check my assumptions I started to square on a combination of magenta and red filters. Lots of them too. However, another problem surfaced during my

test dives. The plankton-saturated water of the Gulf of Finland changes colour dramatically with the amount and direction of sunlight as well as with the amount and probably even type of plankton suspended in the water. After trying many different combinations of red, yellow and magenta gels, it pretty soon became evident that there would not be a single, easily reproducible stack of filters to suit all locations on all days. Not even most locations on most days. Which would really not be that much of a problem, really, since I was all the

time aiming for an end result in black and white. This would give me much more leeway to use a "good enough" solution to make things practical. I could therefore concentrate more on achieving maximum contrast in stead of perfecting the colour reproduction.

With this primary need for contrast in mind I soon simplified my filtration to just different strengths of magenta, the exact amount eyeballed pre-dive on a case by case basis to achieve a pretty OK fit. As an example, using a 70cc stack of Kodak magenta gelatins I get a borderline

tolerable 30 second exposure on f11 and ISO400 at 21 meters of water on a good day. Needless to say a tripod is the name of the game here, combined with a home-cooked remote release allowing me to use the bulb setting for the longer exposures. You will need a lot since in this low light with this much filters the viewfinder is completely black and the only real way to compose if to shine a light on some of the relevant features in the frame in turn and use these spot checks for reference in composition.

For a tripod I use the standard

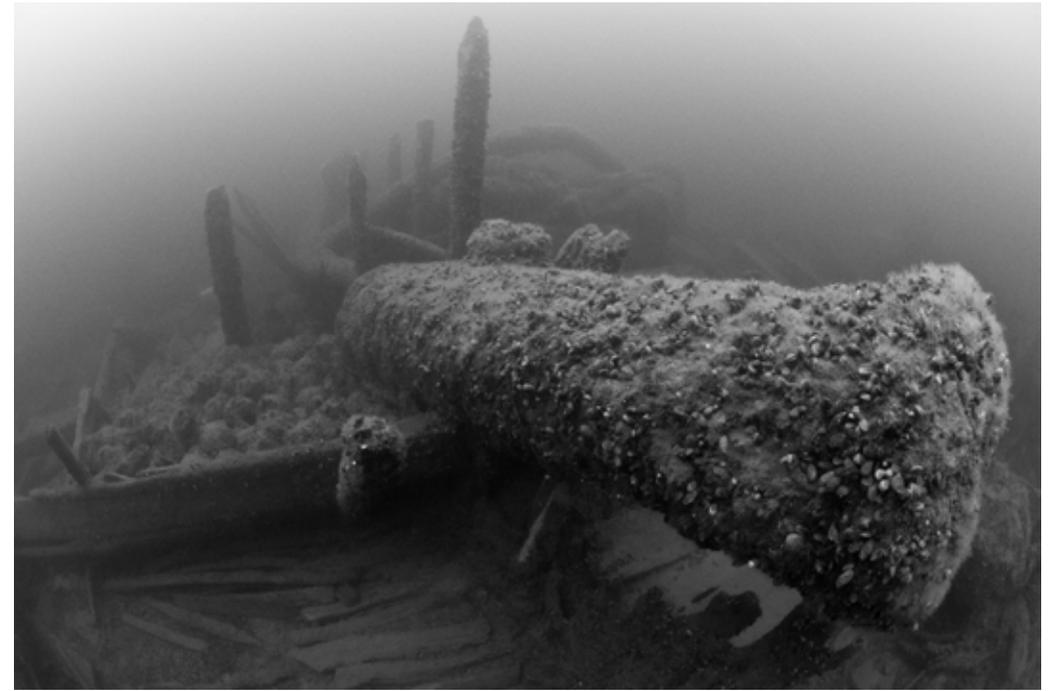


*A diver at the main top of the three masted barque Plus close to Mariehamn, Åland. Shot in natural light using a Nikon D300 and a 10.5mm FE. 1/8s, f4.5. Depth of the main top is about 18 meters and to add to the pain this has to be shot against the sun to get the desired composition.*

Manfrotto 055 with a ball on top to accept standard strobe arm clamps for mounting of the housing. The tripod is rigged like a stage tank when not in use. As I often carry actual stage tanks too, the tripod goes outside all the stages and an extra brick of lead to keep the tripod steady clips to the scooter D-ring in the crotch strap where it is easily accessible.

Naturally, this level of kitting up, not to mention the stupefying boredom of multiple 30 sec exposures

of the same subject, do not go down that well with dive buddies. So for more leisurely type of diving I'm these days using just 20-30cc of magenta gels. This typically gives me exposures in the 1/10 sec range with f2.8 or f4 at ISO1600 or above, which is just hand holdable. The resulting images are often a bit on the soft side and - especially if my exposures are not spot on - reasonably noisy. But I recon it's often better with a soft image than no image at all.



*The business end of a Swedish 36 pound naval cannon with a magazine of cannonballs in the background at the wreck of the Kronprins Gustaf Adolf. This Swedish ship-of-the-line that sunk in battle in 1788 in 22 meters of water outside Helsinki has been my main laboratory for filter experiments due to easy access and tons of subject matter. This image was shot using a Nikon D300, a 10.5mm FE and 70cc worth of Kodak Wratten magenta gelatins. Exposure was 15sec, f11 at ISO1600. The picture actually reproduces objects far beyond what could be seen with the naked eye in the 6-7 meter visibility.*

So, why all the fuss? Why not just shoot with strobes and forget filters if it's so difficult? Simply put, I like to show a lot of the wreck and in these conditions balancing strobes with natural light can be really difficult. Not to mention that all the plankton around you tends to creep into your pictures too in the form of backscatter or even worse, as light

clouding around the strobes. Plus, there's so much less to go wrong without all those cables, arms, clamps and battery doors.

**Timo Ahomäki**

# Queen of the Mantas

**Faces of the Sea**, was formed by a small dedicated group of divers who for years have been passionate about travel and scuba diving. Having lived, worked and dived some of the world's best locations, we bring together our experience and share it with you. We specialize in touring to remote and exotic destinations off the beaten path and untouched by the wake of commercial tourism.

We also put together unique and exclusive dive trips that we hope fire the imagination of those that look for something extra special. One such trip is the first manta ray research liveboard trip in Raja Ampat. We have chosen the Arenui as our base as there is no better dive liveboard operating in Indonesia today. The trip will be led by **Dr Andrea Marshall**.

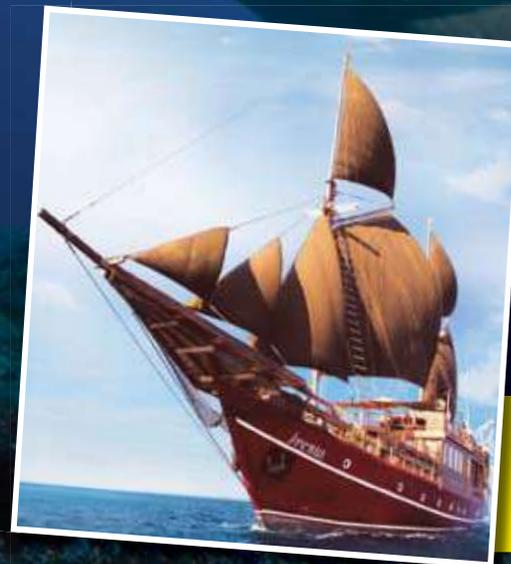
Andrea was the first person in the world to complete a PhD on manta rays and aside from dramatically increasing the level of knowledge of manta rays themselves, Andrea's discovery of a new giant manta ray in 2008 was one of the largest new species to have been described by any scientist in the last 50 years. Most recently, Andrea's work was highlighted in the BBC Natural World documentary "**Andrea: Queen of Mantas**". Andrea also featured in the ITV documentary with Martin Clunes "**Man to Manta**".

"To live up to the Arenui's motto of being **"The Boutique Liveboard"**, attention has been given to every aspect of the Arenui to ensure that it fully embodies the owners philosophy of providing a unique dive holiday experience, giving you the best there is in terms of diving and leisure activities, without sacrificing any of the comforts and luxury you would expect to get from a top-notch hotel on land.

Each of the Arenui's cabins have been decorated and furnished in a stylish and inspirational manner according to a specific theme. The Arenui can host a maximum of 16 passengers who can luxuriate in exceptionally spacious cabins that are tastefully furnished with exquisite handicrafts from each of the Indonesian provinces. Each cabin, which far surpasses anything one would expect to find on a liveboard (starting from 17 square meters), has a private en-suite bathroom and individually controlled air conditioning. A king-size bed and separate salon area assures our guests' comfort. The Arenui can be your private sanctuary and second home, but one located amidst a constantly changing tropical landscape!



Dr Andrea Marshall



## While on board.

**Services and facilities.** On the Arenui, all amenities, such as a full range of massage and spa treatments, are included with the intent to make you feel as comfortable and relaxed as possible at all times. We constantly strive to ensure that our service is attentive yet relaxed, and never intrusive. We believe that this individual service and our personalized touches on board will make your holiday an unforgettable one.

**Meals.** We have given the same attention to making our meals extraordinary, from the setting to the décor and choice of dishes. Rather than the typical dive liveboard buffets, you will be able to choose from our daily A la carte menus. Our food is plentiful, fresh, and centered around local and flown-in ingredients and our internationally trained chefs then add in their own touch of magic, drawing inspiration from local and international cuisine. Even lovers of gourmet cuisine are sure to discover new taste experiences.

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# W.W.W.W.W.W. Whaleshark!

By Mike Veitch

In the dive industry, it seems there's a new "hot destination" every couple of years that everyone is chomping at the bit to visit. The Mantas of Baa Atoll or the Sailfish of Isla Mujeres are two recent examples of this trend. Although I work in diving, I always seem to be on the opposite side of the earth from the latest and greatest new locations and have yet to be one of the first to scout out the "hot spot". And when I finally do get to that location it's years after the fact and the location no longer lives up to the hype. In March of 2011 though, I was involved in a trip that had the potential to put me in the right place at the right time. Yes, that's right, the newest hotspot in diving is right in my own backyard.

Close to the town of Nabire in Cendrawasih Bay, West Papua, Indonesia, a very special phenomenon occurs between local fishermen and the largest fish in the sea; the Whale shark. In an interesting twist, fishermen have built a series of fishing platforms called "bagans" that have nets strung underneath them to catch baitfish. It is the presence of these "bagans" that have created the consistent presence of the whale



sharks year-round. As the story goes, the fishermen believe the whale sharks are good luck and have nurtured a relationship with these giant fish that come to the "bagans" in search of a free meal. The fishermen have a set of powerful lights they illuminate at night in order to attract small fish into their nets. The whale sharks have



*All the underwater shots were taken with a Nikon D90 in an Aquatica housing with a Tokina 10-17 lens nearly always at 10mm. Manual exposure mode at 200 ISO.*

learned that the bottom of the nets house a layer of dead fish mush that they can suck out of the bottom, a regular fast food takeout for hungry predators! The fishermen will also scoop out handfuls of small fish literally straight into the whale shark's mouths as they come to the surface. For about a year this phenomenon has been known to a select group of people around Nabire and a few insiders to their program and word has been slowly leaking out to different parts of the world. And it was for this exact reason we planned a trip of over 800 miles to get there; to see if the whale shark hype was real. Could we dive with gentle giants of the deep who had fostered a relationship with fishermen and were there just waiting for divers to jump in the water? Or were we destined to be disappointed with yet another story that proved to be a disappointment when experienced in real life?

As with any fairly new location, there is always a touch of trepidation that upon arrival it won't live up to the pre-billing, this trip proved to be no different. I was joined on the extravagant Dive Damai live aboard by 8 folks from Austin, Texas who were on a trip of a lifetime from Kaimana in south Papua all the way around the western end of the province and scheduled for departure in Nabire 15 days later.

This ambitious schedule took us through Triton Bay, Raja Ampat, and the World War Two wrecks of Manokwari, before arriving at the whale shark area for two days of whale shark encounters. We had some great diving on the way with blue ring octopus in Triton and beautiful soft corals and schooling fish in Raja Ampat. However, all the talk for 12 days kept coming back to the whale sharks and what were the chances we would see them? None of the guests or crew had ever been there before so we were relying on second hand information given to us by folks who had been there in September. How would things be six months later? Would the weather be all right? Would the whale sharks be there in March? Would we only get a fleeting glimpse of them like they do in Donsol? Of course I said: "don't worry, there will be lots of whale sharks and we will have brilliant encounters!" However, as I hadn't been there either, I wasn't 100% sure if that would prove true or not, but don't tell them that.

Once we reached Cendrawasih Bay, a ranger for the national park joined us for the remainder of our trip. He was there to smooth the way with the local villages as unlike many of the popular areas of Indonesia, Cendrawasih only has one or two vessels visit per year so the locals



are not used to divers in the area. Once we arrived at the whale shark area, the ranger went over for a brief consultation with the fishermen and came back to inform us that two whale sharks were currently swimming under the platform and that he convinced the fishermen to give them more fish in order to keep them around for our arrival. Enough said! It sure didn't take us long to suit up and get on the dive skiffs for the short trip over to the "bogon". Not entirely sure what we were supposed to be doing when we arrived, it didn't really matter as all we had to do was look into the water and there they were!

Two giant sharks cruising just under the surface at a leisurely pace right under our boat. As could be expected the boats were empty within seconds and we were soon cavorting with not just two but rather three 18-foot whale sharks.

The fishing platform has a large net suspended underneath it and the sharks never strayed too far from it so it was easy for us to remain close to them at all times. The best place for interaction was to the side of the net where the ranger sat on the platform and continually poured a bucket of water into the ocean. For some reason, the sharks have decided they

really like this stream of water and perform a type of “tail-stand” with their mouth protruding from the surface and drinking the seawater. As soon as he started scooping and pouring the water into the ocean the whale sharks made a beeline to the spot. Talk about a Pavlovian experiment come to life in a non-scientific setting!

The sharks were certainly not shy amongst divers or snorkelers either. For a full two hours we dived and swam with these gentle giants and they showed no fear or nervousness around us. In fact, they were well aware of our presence, as they would veer at the last second to avoid colliding with a diver in their path. Although the fishermen stopped throwing fish into the water within 30 minutes of us getting in, the whale sharks stuck around for hours. I have encountered whale sharks in the Galapagos and French Polynesia and have heard stories of encounters with them in places such as Ningaloo and the Philippines but never anything to rival this. Not only did we not have to chase a photographic opportunity with the sharks, all we had to do was remain in place close to the net and the sharks would continually swim within arms length. At one point, I placed myself a little too close to the pouring water and not one but two sharks bowled me over trying to get to the stream. As dwindling air supplies forced us to surface after two hours of continual whale shark interaction, nary a soul had a frown on his or her face. In fact, it was the easiest group to convince of doing the same thing a second time!

The following day we decided to try the same dive again and were greeted with four whale sharks from the first moment that we entered the water. If anything, the second day proved even more incredible than the first. The four sharks remained



close to one another and gave us a constant show with close passes and eager feeding at the surface. One of the sharks spent a good ten minutes sucking on the net trying to get to the dead fish that had pooled to the bottom. We even had two unexpected visitors below us as both a blue marlin and a sailfish appeared and took advantage of the free meal of baitfish that the fishermen were dropping over the side. Although these fascinating fish proved more fleet than the sharks, several members of the group



were able to capture good photo and video as well.

On this second day, we spent a total of over four hours underwater intermingling with the sharks and never tired of the encounters. We knew more of what to expect than on the first day so our experience was much better planned. We also think that three of the four sharks were different from the previous day; meaning we had a total of six different sharks swim with us varying in size from approximately 14 to 20 feet long. At this stage,



no one knows how many sharks live in the region or if it's a nursery or perhaps even mating area. All of the sharks we encountered were what I would call "teenage" individuals, as they were not fully-grown but were larger than juveniles. It's definitely a phenomenon that needs more study and I think it's safe to say that the sharks are there all year long as that is what the fishermen told us first hand.

As we departed the whale shark area and headed to Nabire for departure from the boat, all anyone could talk about was the whale sharks. No one mentioned the first 10 days of the journey through Triton Bay or

Raja Ampat! It was like the rest of the charter was something that happened years in the past. For a group of divers with over 10,000 dives between them, it's not often that a dive experience can be so jaw dropping that everyone reacts like a kid in a candy store. I too was flabbergasted by our two days of fun, to the tune of over 1000 photos! Finally, I had arrived at a new dive location and found that not only did it live up to the hype; it exceeded it by a nautical mile.

**Mike Veitch**



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# Golden PNG

by Julian Cohen

The dive industry seems to me to be very faddish; dive areas come and go with the fashion. When I first started diving in the mid-nineties, nineteen nineties that is, places such as Sangalaki, Derawan and Sipidan were the most popular places in Asia. There were only two dive centres in Manado, Lembeh Straits area and Raja Ampat wasn't even discovered yet. Many of the generation of divers before me had cut their diving teeth in Papua New Guinea, which was really the only place to dive in Asia during the seventies and eighties. Places like Walindi, Kavieng and Milne Bay provided the cover photos for the diving magazines. Then people slowly stopped going to PNG as other places were discovered and became more heavily publicised and attractive. For the dive operators in PNG this was not a great thing, but for us as divers it was wonderful as the reefs didn't get worn and tired from being over dived. It has kept the number of operators to the few that run an efficient and well managed business and when you go on a live aboard you don't see any other dive boats.

I signed up to do a three week trip with Tony Wu on Golden Dawn,

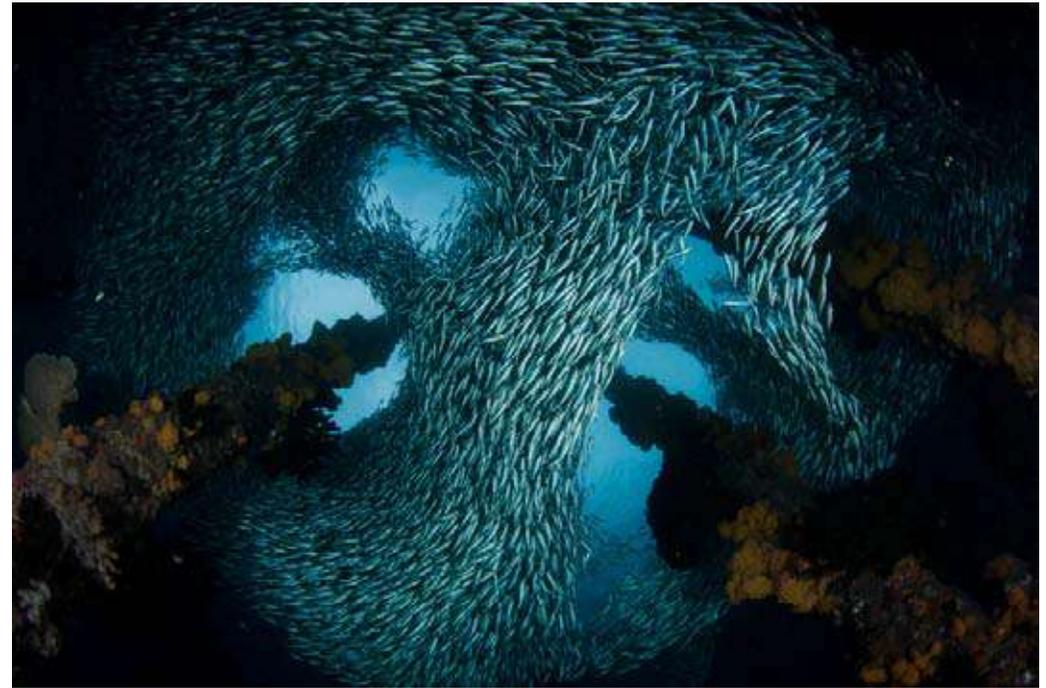
run by Craig de Wit, with a special guest appearance by Bob Halstead. I have done many trips with Tony before and count him as a friend; there is even some evidence that the feeling is mutual. Craig is one of the original skippers in the region and has been adventure diving in PNG for over twenty years. Bob is a legend in diving circles. Inducted into the International Scuba Diving Hall of Fame in 2008, alongside such luminaries as Stan Waterman, David Doubilet and Jacques Cousteau. One of the first to dive Papua New Guinea, author of eight books on diving and fish identification, contributor to myriad magazines and teller of many tall stories, as well as being in his

*I spent many dives photographing the ever changing patterns of scads under the pier*

*1-200 sec at f8.0, 10.0-17.0 mm f-3.5-4.5@10 mm, ISO 100, NIKON D7000, Spot-Meter Mode.*

*This pretty anemone has been on a few magazine covers in the 80's*

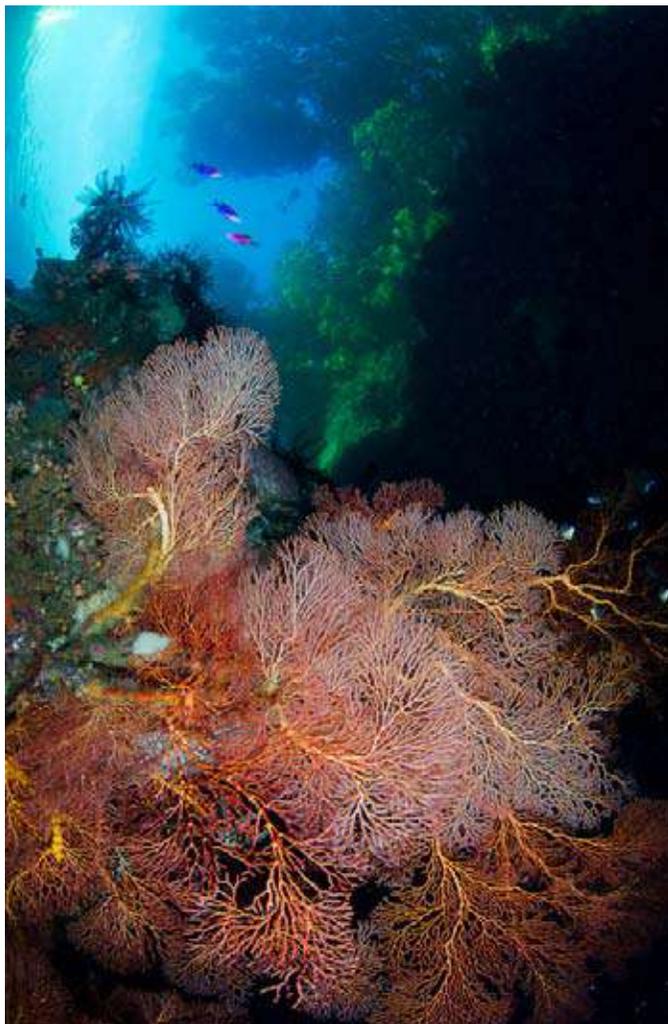
*1-160 sec at f10, 10.0-17.0 mm f-3.5-4.5@10 mm. ISO 100, NIKON D7000, Spot-Meter Mode*



own words ‘a manic compressive’. He is a man I have long admired and wanted to meet, so the opportunity to dive the areas that he explored, with him personally as a guide, was too good to ignore.

Notice I said adventure diving, as this type of diving is not standard package fare stuff. You are going to places that may not have been dived very often and there is no guarantee that any particular animal will turn up. That is what real life is like. There’s no point turning up with a wish list of critters you want to see and then getting all shirty if it doesn’t get fulfilled. If a dive site is not working then it’s up anchor and go onto the next. If a site is pumping then stay until the media cards are full or you run out of air, whichever is first, come up, change cards, fill the tank and go back in again. That’s the wonderful thing for me, not knowing what you’ll find when you get in the water.

We started in Port Moresby and ended in Alotau, the first week was cruising the coast between these two spots, the second week spent more time in and around Milne Bay, and the third week, ten days actually, was more along the northern shore going up around the D’Entrecasteaux Islands. I was diving with a new camera, a Nikon D7000, as my D3 was nicked in a burglary from my house. I was also diving with a new housing, the Seacam Prelude for the D7000 and the less said about that the better. I’ll just say that amongst its many faults is a lack of focus control, and although I am quite happy to shoot macro with manual focus, it does preclude fish portraiture with a shallow depth of field for anything but a stationary subject. So I spent the majority of my time with a Tokina 10-17 on the camera. Since wide angle is my first love, that is not too much of an encumbrance to me. Often you read in photography manuals about



*Orange sea fans at Deacon’s Reef. 1-40 sec at f 9.0. 10.0-17.0 mm f-3.5-4.5@10 mm. ISO 400. NIKON D7000. Spot-Meter Mode*

an exercise of keeping one lens on the camera and then going out to look for images. So I decided to do just that. For three weeks. I was helped in this by the fact that this lens is really just the complete all round underwater lens. It focuses almost on the



*Bob Halstead looking at the bubble baths. Notice the housing he is using, a twenty year old Aquatica for a Nikon F3. 1-80 sec at f 10. 10.0-17.0 mm f-3.5-4.5@10 mm. ISO 100. NIKON D7000. Spot-Meter Mode*



*Sea Jellies come to the surface in numbers during a night dive. 1-40 sec at f 9.0. 10.0-17.0 mm f-3.5-4.5@10 mm. ISO 1000. NIKON D7000. Spot-Meter Mode*



*Samarai Wharf, not named after anything Japanese even though it sounds like it. 1-100 sec at f8.0. 10.0-17.0 mm f-3.5-4.5@10 mm. ISO 400. NIKON D7000 Spot-Meter Mode*

dome port for close focus wide angle, and you can zoom into 17mm for shooting subjects further away.

I love diving on the Golden Dawn. The boat is perfectly set up, with a knowledgeable and friendly crew as well as great food for the eating part of the 'eat, sleep, dive' mantra for live aboard diving. Often we would stop at a site, such as Samarai Wharf, where the action was continuous and there was always a great photo opportunity, and the dive deck would be open; go in and out as often as you like. I didn't have to

worry about looking in the rubble for critters, as I couldn't take any photos of them anyway. I did relent on one dive and went in with a 60mm macro lens. After five minutes I saw a wobbegong swimming towards me beautifully framed by the jetty. I went straight back to the boat with the hump and changed back to wide angle. This is really the best way to get the shots that you want, as in between dives you have the chance to review your efforts over a cup of tea, and then work out what, if anything, was going wrong and go back in



*The 10-17 is perfect for larger subjects like this rhinopias aphanes. 1-250 sec at f-8.0. 10.0-17.0 mm f-3.5-4.5@13 mm. ISO 160\*\*NIKON D7000. Spot-Meter Mode*

straight away to improve on them.

Diving Dog Passage has an underwater ridge with a large arch completely encrusted with fans and soft corals. I noted in my diary 'Anthias billowed all over coral, the current was running but not too strong to swim against. There was a leopard shark resting on the sea bed and Bob saw an eagle ray; it's what diving should be like all the time.'

Black and Silver is a very large bommie dropping down to below forty meters. On the side protected from the current was a forest of black

coral trees, mainly white but also some brown and red. I have never seen that many in one place before. We found a beautiful black and yellow lacy scorpionfish (Rhinopias aphanes), which was a perfect subject for a close focus wide angle shot. I'd never seen one that colour before and it's something else to strike off my bucket list.

Deacon's Reef is a relatively shallow ten meter ledge up against a wall with trees overhanging the water. Just further out the drop off goes to a couple of thousand meters so there's



*Fans on the Dog House at Diving Dog Passage. 1-60 sec at f9.0. 10.0-17.0 mm f-3.5-4.5@10 mm. ISO 400. NIKON D7000. Spot-Meter Mode*

meters of water, sulphur dioxide and carbon dioxide gases rising from the magma below bubbles up through the reef. Although mostly sea grass and mud where the larger geysers are, there are some areas of normal coral reef with gas bubbling up around the corals. It is possible to swim straight over the top of the bubbles and feel the difference in water temperature. It is quite astonishing to see a profusion of life in what one would think would be such inhospitable conditions.

Dropping down onto an unnamed reef in the Nuakata area, Craig pulled out his trusty shark attractor. Basically a plastic water bottle, if scrunched and rubbed the right way the sharks are drawn to it. Craig saw a large grey reef shark on the edge of visibility and as soon as he started to rub the magic bottle the shark immediately reacted and came straight over to us. When she got within a couple of meters of us she changed course to swim back to the reef but as Craig rubbed the bottle she was instantly drawn back to us almost as if she was on a wire. Hovering next to Craig I could feel the vibrations in my chest so to the shark it must have been overwhelmingly irresistible, like a siren's call.

The reefs in Nuakata are only partly explored. Black and Silver and Lynda's Reef are known and were extraordinarily fishy reefs. A large area of pavona coral on Lynda's Reef was swarming with literally millions of anthias. Yellow, purple and green clouds pulsing in and out of the protection of the reef as larger fusiliers and jacks swooped above. There are many more reefs to explore in the area

always a chance of something big turning up. I spent the whole time in five meters shooting Bob's coral garden. These are the orange red sea fans that over the years have been broken by careless divers, and Bob has wedged the broken pieces into the rock and they have carried on growing there, just like a frangipani tree would on land. He has created this beautiful site, with the blue sky and the trees just above your head.

On the island of Dobu is a dive that can only be done in a very few places on earth. In three

and the promise of great dives on unexplored sites.

Some of the dive sites we visited are named after the giants of the dive industry. Humann's Colour Book is a spectacular reef packed with soft corals and fans, named after Paul Humann, the first man to run a live aboard dive boat and coauthor of the fish identification books many of us use on a regular basis. Doubilet Reef, Bob's Knob after Bob Halstead, Calypso, Waterman's Ridge, Deacon's Reef after Kevin Deacon, Carl's Reef and Sea and See Pass named for Carl Roessler. For me this trip was like watching Jacques Cousteau's documentaries when I was a small boy, except I was living the dream.

When I think back on it, I can't understand why everyone is so hell bent on going to Raja Ampat or where ever the new in spot is, although I'm glad that they are. The diving in PNG is just as beautiful, and while they are all over there, I can be in PNG with a few friends diving with no one else to disturb us.

**Julian Cohen**

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# Loloata Lacy's and more

by Nigel Marsh

I am sure every underwater photographer has their wish list of subjects. One of those subjects on my list was a lacy scorpionfish - the amazing Rhinopias. On a recent trip to Loloata Island Resort in Papua New Guinea I got my lacy on the first day, but on the last day of our trip I got something much higher up my wish list that was entirely unexpected.

You don't generally associate the capital city of most countries with great diving, but the Papua New Guinea capital of Port Moresby is ringed by coral reefs and offers some of the best diving to be found in the country. Diving Port Moresby is centred around Bootless Bay, where the wonderful Loloata Island Resort is located. The resort is only thirty minutes from the airport and was established over thirty years ago by one of the pioneers of diving Papua New Guinea, Dik Knight. Dik still manages the resort, with the assistance of fifty staff, and is a wealth of knowledge about local diving. The resort is a little piece of paradise off Port Moresby and features 23 cabins, a conference centre, bar, shop, large dining area and dive centre.

The dive centre on Loloata Island

is managed by Franco Tolewa, with the able assistance of Roy, Kity and Henry. From the minute you arrive on the island the dive team look after you and your gear, you only touch your dive gear to put it on for a dive. They operate two 10m long Reefmaster dive boats, each catering for ten divers, and with padded room for cameras, and have over thirty dive sites for divers to explore around Bootless Bay. Diving is possible year round in Bootless Bay, during our stay we enjoyed 15m to 30m visibility and the water was a lovely 29°C.

I was very impressed by the diving around Bootless Bay from the very first dive at Suzie's Bommie, the main problem I had each day was deciding on which lens to use. This wonderful dive site is a tower of coral, rising from 40m to 12m and

*Loloata Island in Bootless Bay, Nikon D90, 18-55mm lens, 1/400, f10, ISO 200.*

*Colourful soft corals decorate the reefs off Loloata Island, Nikon D90, Ikelite Housing, 10-17mm lens, 1/100, f9, ISO 400 and single Inon Z240 strobe.*





*A yawning lacy scorpionfish at Baldwin's Bommie, Nikon D90, Ikelite Housing, 60mm lens, 1/125, f13, ISO 200 and single Inon Z240 strobe.*

covered in colourful gorgonians, soft corals and sponges. I went with the macro lens on the first day as I was after my lacy scorpionfish, which meant I missed out on photographing the Maori wrasse, groppers, white tip reef sharks and schools of trevally, fusiliers and diagonal-banded sweetlips. But the macro lens was perfect to photograph leaf scorpionfish, porcelain crabs, anemonefish and clingfish sitting in featherstars.

After photographing olive sea

snakes, long-nose hawkfish and a snowflake moray eel at The Big Drop we had an afternoon dive at Baldwin's Bommie. Franco had promised me a lacy scorpionfish at this site, so I couldn't wait to get into the water. This bommie, like all the sites we dived in Bootless Bay, was covered in wonderful corals and reef fish. The top of the bommie is at 14m and this is where I spent most of my time as here were anemonefish, nudibranchs, octopus, gobies, blennies, hawkfish and two very colourful stonefish. But



*A long-nose hawkfish at The Big Drop, Nikon D90, Ikelite Housing, 60mm lens, 1/125, f13, ISO 200 and single Inon Z240 strobe.*

the highlight was the spectacular lacy scorpionfish. Our guide Kity had to point the lacy scorpionfish out to us or we would never have seen it with its very cryptic camouflage. I was even lucky enough to capture a yawn only a minute after I started photographing this amazing fish.

The next day it was time to bring out the wide angle lens for a dive on the Pacific Gas wreck. This 65m long ship was scuttled in 1986 and varies in depth from 45m under the stern to 15m at the bow. I did three

dives to explore the ship and was amazed by the corals and fish life on the ship. But of the three dives the night dive was the best. Descending on the bow we turned off our torches for a very special experience that no camera could record. Gathered around a hatch, where an unearthly glow could be seen, I peered inside to see countless flickering lights ñ flashlight fish! For the next five minutes I was mesmerised as the fish slowly emerged from the hatch and spread across the ship lighting it up like a



*Olive sea snakes are common on the reefs off Loloata Island, Nikon D90, Ikelite Housing, 60mm lens, 1/80, f13, ISO 200 and single Inon Z240 strobe.*



*A snowflake moray eel at The Big Drop, Nikon D90, Ikelite Housing, 60mm lens, 1/100, f14, ISO 200 and single Inon Z240 strobe.*



*Exploring the stern of the Pacific Gas wreck, Nikon D90, Ikelite Housing, 10-17mm lens, 1/50, f8, ISO 800 and single Inon Z240 strobe.*

Christmas tree. A truly amazing experience that I will never forget.

During the week I was at Loloata Island Resort I dived a wonderful variety of dive sites. At End Bommie there were white tip reef sharks and a huge collection of anemones and anemonefish. Another impressive site was Di's Delight where row upon row of spectacular gorgonians are found, at this site I also saw a pygmy sea horse and a leopard shark.

One of my favourite reef dives was Lillian's Patch, which had coral gardens and masses of sea whips. Kity found three pygmy sea horses here, but I also photographed nudibranchs, octopus, a crocodilefish and a pair of parrotfish having a fight. I enjoyed this reef so much that I returned at night to see its nocturnal critters. Crabs, shrimps, moray eels, cuttlefish, slipper crays, leaf scorpionfish and epaulette sharks were the highlights of a very memorable night dive.

For a bit of muck diving I did a few dives

around Lion Island. At a site appropriately called Lion Island Muck, we searched the sand and sea grass beds and found mantis shrimps, bobbit worms, razorfish, sea pens, shrimp gobies, snake eels, upside down sea jellies, sea stars and numerous anemones home to anemonefish and shrimps. Lion Island also has two wonderful wrecks, the former tug boat MV Tuart and former trawler MV New Marine 6. Both these ships are now covered in corals and home to a range of critters; including pipefish, nudibranchs, flatworms, moray eels, shrimps and numerous reef fish. On the sand around this wrecks were also crocodilefish, gobies and even a cockatoo waspfish.

Another favourite site was the MV Pai II wreck, a prawn trawler that now rests in 27m. There is plenty of structure to explore on the ship, but the colourful corals and marine life are its most memorable features. I landed on the stern of the ship to find a fat tasselled wobbegong shark

lazing on the deck, then ducking under the stern to encounter a large estuary groper and a Maori wrasse. Throughout the rest of the dive on the wreck I saw batfish, mangrove jacks, fusiliers, lionfish and numerous long-nose hawkfish.

I had hoped to see another lacy scorpionfish before my week was over, so on the last day had put on my macro lens once again. We then headed to a site called The Finger and just before we entered the water Franco informed me that this was a sharky spot, but also prone to currents. He was right on both counts.

For ten minutes we struggled against the current trying to reach a string of bommies at the end of The Finger, but eventually had to turn back and retreat to the mooring. We were just about to abort the dive when Franco indicated for us to head over to the other side of the reef. This we did to find little current and a very pretty wall. In only a few minutes gliding along this wall we had seen a white



*Numerous lionfish are found on the MV Pai II wreck, Nikon D90, Ikelite Housing, 10-17mm lens, 1/100, f8, ISO 320 and single Inon Z240 strobe.*

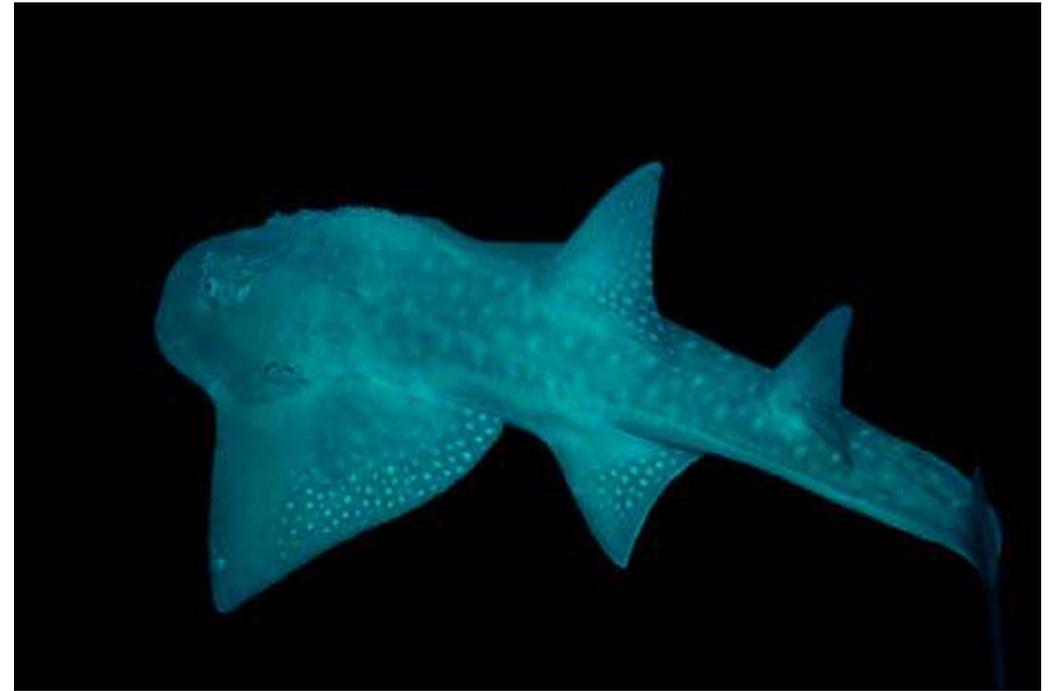
tip reef shark, a spotted eagle ray, trevally, mackerel and a Maori wrasse. A curious grey reef shark also buzzed us for several minutes.

Then the unexpected happened, up ahead we could see a shape cruising along the wall. At first I thought it was a hammerhead, then I suddenly realized it was something much rarer, a shark ray or bowmouth guitarfish! I was stunned, this ray was top of my wish list, very few divers have ever seen one and only a handful of pictures exist of one photographed

in the wild.

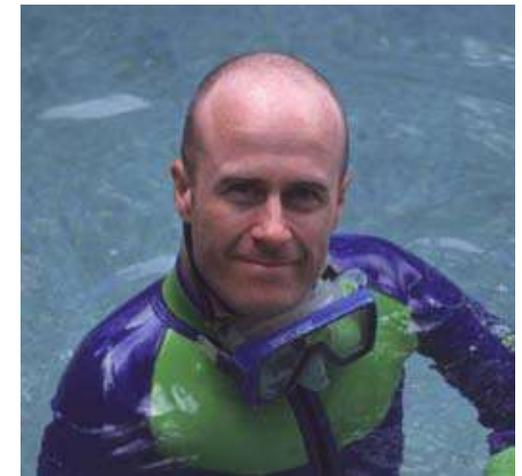
The ray was around 2m long and looked very primitive with its round head and thorny ridges, and it was heading straight for us! It was at this point I almost cried, why had I put my macro lens on today. Damn! But I wasn't going to let this creature just swim by, I quickly dropped my f-stop and shot two quick images as it glided by and disappeared into the blue.

We all surfaced from that dive on a high, none of us had ever seen a shark ray before and we had some 10,000 dives between us. I also



*A cleaned up image of the shark ray we encountered at The Finger, Nikon D90, Ikelite Housing, 60mm lens, 1/100, f7.1, ISO 200 and single Inon Z240 strobe.*

discovered that I had missed seeing the two great hammerheads that buzzed Franco, but I didn't care as I had seen a much rarer shark ray. The two images are not the best, lots of backscatter and poor composition, but they bring back memories of a wonderful week of encounters at Loloata Island.



**Nigel Marsh**

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# Weedy Wanderings

by Mark Webster

If you live near and dive in the temperate areas around the globe you will be familiar with the sight of sometimes dense seaweed particularly in shallow waters. Giant kelp is a well known example found off the coast of California which grows in deeper water and has an appealing reputation amongst underwater photographers as it is relatively easy to penetrate and explore. But in the UK and other northern European locations many divers just regard seaweeds as a nuisance that have to be negotiated on the way to a better dive site. This of course may be a suitable attitude for a hardened wreckie or deep diver, but for discerning photographers these seaweeds offer another habitat to explore for subjects and if you have ignored them until now you are missing out on some excellent imaging opportunities.

It is much easier to swim over or around weedy areas particularly when faced with dense kelp. So you need to first adjust your mindset to dealing with slow progress and accepting that you will not move very far during your dive. Slow movements and patient threading of both body

and equipment through the weed will pay dividends as you will begin to see more detail and not alarm any potential subjects. Sometimes you will become frustrated with progress and often when I reach this point I force myself to relax and concentrate and often will be surprised by a subject like a scorpion fish or tiny nudibranch which has been right in front of me!

In my locality we have seaweeds year round although much of the growth will be destroyed by winter storms and end up on the beaches. The most abundant time of year is the spring and early summer when growth can become extremely rapid with just a small increase in water temperature. We have three quite distinct habitats which all offer something a little different. The first and perhaps most obvious is the hardy kelp species which grows in dense forest like communities and clings to the reef top and is clearly visible from the surface particularly at low tide. The second group of what may be regarded as floating or buoyant weeds can also form impressive forests. These are normally rooted in the gravel and sand sea bed in the shallows and comprise



the Jap weeds, thong, boot lace and buoyant bladder wrack species. The third are the weed species that congregate on the sea bed and shallow reefs and rock pools which include the lettuce weeds in various hues, toothed wracks, sugar kelp, wire weed and calcified weeds.

You can shoot macro or wide angle in weed, but you will want to make your system as compact as possible and keep flash arms short and folded in to the housing until you find a suitable subject. Your flash position might then be dictated by the weed and stipes around you, so look out for elements that can block your flash and cast shadows.

In the spring time as the Jap weed and boot lace forests begin to grow and thicken they provide protection for numerous juvenile species that are also beginning to appear. Schools of tiny three spot gobies and sand eels will look like backscatter in your pictures, but as the summer approaches they will attract predators which are much more attractive subjects. For me the apex predator of the weed world is the John Dory which has the profile of an emaciated super model and almost perfect camouflage. These fish thread their way through the weed and strike at their prey with fantastic speed using an extendible jaw very similar to a frog fish. Even when you are looking hard for them they are incredibly difficult to spot and they will often suddenly appear briefly as they turn to stalk prey. I find that they are very sensitive to eye contact and if they think they have been spotted they will begin to move off and you will find that they have an impressive turn of speed if chased. It is better to keep your distance for a while and move in parallel to the John Dory until it becomes absorbed with the hunt again and then begin to make a slow approach. Occasionally you will find an inquisitive example



*A photographer contemplates a mixture of sea weeds before beginning a search. Be prepared to move slowly and carefully and use your lens magnification to examine potential small subjects. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, Inon Z240 strobes, ISO 200 f8 1/60*

that will pose and you should then make the most of the opportunity.

The weed on the sea bed and the lower elevations of the Jap weed are attractive spots for amorous trysts between sea hares. Sometimes the breeding population runs into thousands and often you will find positive orgies of sea hares in tight knots containing up to a dozen. Apparently each can act as male or female when mating in these groups but it looks pretty confusing for the participants. When the activity is less frantic you will find pairs gently mating on the weed and up in the branches of the Jap weed where they will weave their colourful egg strings.

When looking for sea hares you will also begin to find a number of nudibranch species. Most of these are very small, perhaps only 10mm in length



*The John Dory is perhaps the apex predator in the weed world. They have fantastic camouflage and are difficult to spot as they are easily spooked. When you find one you need to watch them for a while before making a slow approach. Nikon D200, Subal ND20, 12-24mm zoom, Subtronic Mini strobes, ISO 100 f11 1/60.*



*The Jap weed forests attract a wide range of species including sea hares which congregate in the branches to lay their egg spirals clear of the sea bed. Although this pair seems to contrast well with the weed, without artificial light they blend extremely well. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 105mm micro, Inon Quad flash, ISO 100 f11 1/60.*

and so you need to look patiently and also use a macro lens with high magnification or add a wet lens or teleconverter to capture the detail. You may spot fine trails of eggs first so then concentrate your search in a small area around carefully lifting bits of weed and eventually you will come across the perpetrator. Some are brightly coloured and contrast well with the weed, whilst others will blend well and so are more challenging to isolate from the background.

The seabed weeds are also home to common pipe fish species – the greater pipe fish and snake pipe fish. Both species like to weave their way through the weeds whilst feeding and will appear every now and then seemingly to have a look at you. They are quite fearless and will hold a pose for



*This fifteen spined stickle back behaves a little like the pipefish remaining in the weed for most of the time but emerging from time to time to investigate an intruding photographer. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, Subtronic Mini strobes, ISO 100 f11 1/60.*

some time, but it is often difficult to get more than a head and shoulders image with a macro lens without pulling back too far. These fish are also joined by ballan wrasse feeding and also corkwing wrasse which are often looking for small bits of weed and debris to build a nest. These bigger fish can be more skittish but a patient approach will eventually pay dividends when you subject makes a pass for a closer look at you.

Lifting weed carefully may also reveal one or two bottom feeders such as flounders, plaice, hermit crabs and the occasional stickle back and sleepy dog fish. Whilst on the seabed also look at the purple calcified sea weeds which often have the purple flabellina pedata nudibranch feeding on them, but can be difficult to spot as their colouring and the



*Lobsters are usually seen peering out of a hole in the reef, but they do venture out during the day under the protection of the kelp. They will often approach close enough to reach out with their feelers and touch the camera housing. Nikon D200, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, Subtronic Mini strobes, ISO 100 f11 1/60.*

white tips to their cerata match the seaweed very well.

Venturing into the kelp is a little more challenging, dependant on the spacing of the stypes. You can either start from the reef edge and work your way in slowly, or swim over the kelp looking for a small opening and then just dive in. If the kelp stypes are particularly dense then the latter may be the only option and you can then just explore a small area at a time before emerging and moving to a new patch. Inside the kelp forest lies a very rich mixture of marine life including numerous sponges, anemones, hydroids and ascidians or sea squirts to name just a few. These subjects are predominantly for your macro lens but there may also be wide angle opportunities and I often encounter sea



*Ballan wrasse love to forage in the gravel and sand under the weed beds and if you are patient you will be rewarded with a curious approach which permits at least a couple of frames before the subject moves on. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 12-24mm zoom, Subtronic Mini strobes, ISO 100 f11 1/60.*



*The UK has its own species of anemone crab – the Leach's spider crab that lives symbiotically with the snakelock anemone. The anemones are commonly found clinging to kelp fronds at the top of the canopy together with their resident crabs. Nikon D200, Subal ND20, 60mm macro, Inon Quad flash, ISO 100 f18 1/60.*

urchins, spider, edible crabs and the occasional lobster out from the protection of its lair.

The holdfasts are the root system of the kelp and between the roots you will find other invertebrates species filling the gaps, such as sponges and anemones including the pretty daisy and jewel varieties. Small hydroid beds also thrive in the shelter of the kelp and are a favourite meal for several species of nudibranch

will remain with the nest for perhaps three weeks, but it may be a challenge to find the same patch of kelp twice!

On the way in and out of the kelp don't forget to check the kelp fronds for subjects as well. Snakelock anemones commonly attach to kelp fronds and provide a symbiotic shelter for the attractive Leach's spider crab. You will also find other species of nudibranchs feeding on bryozoans and laying their eggs, together with

particularly the exotic looking Janolus cristatus which also lays its eggs here. Small sessile fish also enjoy the shelter of the kelp and you will commonly find scorpion fish, two spot gobies, butter fish, black faced blennies and the occasional tompot blenny exploring outside the safety of its refuge in the reef. Early in the year you might be lucky to find a lumpsucker nesting between the holdfasts nursing his eggs. These fish

more sea hares and if you are very lucky tiny juvenile lumpsuckers clinging on for dear life in the swell. Finding a subject like a nudibranch high up on the fronds may also give the opportunity to practice your macro and balanced light skills if there is not too much water movement. Try a slightly faster ISO and slow shutter speed to record the ambient light behind the subject.

When you plan to emerge from



*(Left) There are many floating species such as this thong weed that can make attractive wide angle compositions on their own with a touch of Snell's window to add to the negative space. Nikon D200, Subal ND20, 10-17mm FE zoom, Subtronic Mini strobes, ISO 100 f11 1/60.*

*(Top right) Moving through the kelp can be awkward and frustrating and I often stop just to re-focus my mind on the task. Frequently I find that I have been almost on top of a subject like this golden coloured scorpion fish that was inches from my hand. Nikon D300, Subal ND20, 105mm micro, Inon Quad flash, ISO 100 f25 1/125.*

*(Bottom right) Dog fish are night hunters that like to rest during the day and will often move under the weed to remain hidden. They are normally very patient and approachable and will just stare you out until you are finished. Nikon D200, Subal ND20, 12-24mm zoom, Subtronic Mini strobes, ISO 100 f11 1/30.*

the kelp look above you carefully first as there are often bass, pouting or pollack cruising close by which are less nervous than when you make a free swimming approach. Jelly fish are another potential subject in the summer and during some years there can be high numbers of these in the shallows. Look out for the lions mane species which may host juvenile fish in the mantle, but also have long fine tentacles that can give you a nasty sting!

You may not move far during your weedy wanderings but it is satisfying to track down some subjects that are hidden from view or that you

may not encounter on the reef edge. Exploring the weed is perhaps another way of adding variety and challenge to your photography and will improve your stalking skills and encourage you to exercise the patience required to find the less obvious subjects. The weed season is at its best in spring and summer but is worth exploring at any time of year.

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# Philippine alternative

by David Reubush

For most divers, Indonesia is “the” place to go for all things tropical: hard and soft corals, large and small fish, and all sorts of wild and wonderful reef creatures. All of the well-known locations and many that have yet to be discovered are photographer’s delights. However, “Variety is the spice of life.” is a truism that also applies to diving.

The Philippines were not on my diving radar screen until I met a couple on a live-aboard in Indonesia a few years ago. They raved about a place called Dumaguete and said that they visited several times a year for a month at a time. What really grabbed my attention was their enthusiasm about the critter diving (aka “muck”) at Dumaguete since I also love critter diving. When I got an email flyer from Rick Heydel of Bluewater Scuba in Franklin, Tennessee, who I had traveled with before, offering a trip in February, 2011 to Atlantis resorts in both Dumaguete and Puerto Galera I jumped at the chance.

The trip was almost a photographic disaster before it started. While packing I discovered that the flash tube in my trusty Ikelite SS 200

strobe had died. I frantically called every regional dive shop to find a replacement - all to no avail. I finally contacted Ikelite to inquire if they had a dealer in Manila. They referred me to Jovic Santos of Splash Underwater Imaging, who I contacted by email. Jovic had a DS 161 strobe in stock and we arranged that I would arrive at his shop at opening time the morning after I got in. At the hotel I engaged a cab to take me to the shop, wait while I bought the strobe, and then take me to the airport. The congenial cab driver even accompanied me into Jovic’s store to make sure I didn’t get lost and translate if needed. The cab driver was typical of the friendly, helpful nature shown by all the Filipinos we came in contact with the whole trip.

Both Atlantis resorts, although totally different in location and design, shared a number of similarities. The food was good, not gourmet, but better than a lot of places I have been and there was always plenty of it. The rooms were comfortable, the a/c worked, and the showers were hot. Not luxury, but more than sufficient. The price was also good for what



*Dumaguete Camera Room – Nikon D7000, Nikon 18-70mm lens @ 18mm, F3.5, 1/40 sec., ISO 400*

*Boxfish at Puerto Galera - Nikon D7000 in Ikelite Housing, Ikelite DS 161 strobe set to TTL with a -1 setting on the housing, Nikon 60mm macro lens, F22, 1/100 sec., ISO 200*

we got. You can do up to five dives a day, but we generally only did four. For photographers, both resorts have large, dedicated rinse tanks for cameras, and both have just renovated their camera rooms to include lots of storage and more than enough outlets



for battery charging. One of the most outstanding assets for both resorts was the people. Everyone you came in contact with; the dive masters, wait staff, and front desk personnel knew your name within the first 24 hours, and all were very friendly and helpful.

Dumaguete is located on the island of Negros about 75 minutes by air south of Manila. The Atlantis resort is located outside of town, adjacent to a marine protected area and has a lot to recommend it. The diving just off and near the resort is mainly critter diving. The bottom is a dark brown sand/silt. Negros Island has a large, dormant volcano just inland from the resort. There had been rainstorms the week before we got there and, as a result, the water was full of silt washed down from the volcano. Visibility was typically about 30 ft. Plus, I was diving with a group of 12; which was split into two groups of six. There were a number of critters that I had never seen before (e.g. tiny half inch long frog fish). However, there were not huge numbers of any of them so, even with only six, the bottom got stirred up quickly when we stopped to look at something. I would recommend that it would be best to go as a couple (and there were couples there with their own guides) to help avoid the silt problem. One day, we motored about 45 minutes to Apo Island for



*Dumaguete Jawfish Altercation - Nikon D7000 in Ikelite Housing, Ikelite DS 161 strobe set to TTL with a -1 setting on the housing, Nikon 60mm macro lens, F22, 1/100 sec., ISO 200*

three dives (two in the morning, a BBQ lunch on the boat, and 1 after lunch). Apo has beautiful coral gardens and 60+ ft. visibility. Another day we motored about an hour to Siquijor Island which has about the same visibility as Apo, coral gardens, interspersed sand flats, and a lot of interesting things to see. The dive/lunch routine was the same as at Apo. For Apo and Siquijor I would recommend gloves as there are typically mild currents and lots of stinging hydroids. I got stung when

I tried to two-finger steady myself on dead coral to take some photos in the current. At Dumaguete the only issue I have is with the dive operations. While the resort handles getting your tank/BC on and off the boats you have to schlep the rest of your gear from the dive shop, down the beach, and through the surf line to the boat. While the beach is brown sand there are rocks at the surf line that you have to negotiate and, at high tide, you often have to wade through chest deep water to get to the boat ladder. There



*Stargazer with Crab at Puerto Galera - Nikon D7000 in Ikelite Housing, Ikelite DS 161 strobe set to TTL with a -1 setting on the housing, Nikon 60mm macro lens, F22, 1/100 sec., ISO 200*

may or may not be one of the boat guys to help you with this process. If you only had to do this once a day it wouldn't be too bad, but some days we changed boats after every dive so, on those days, we had to bring our stuff back after each dive. Having enough boats so that you took your stuff out in the morning and it stayed on the boat all day would have been

better and having a dedicated boat for your group so that you could have taken your stuff out once at the beginning of the week and only brought it back at the end would have been best.

After six days of diving at Dumaguete we transferred to Atlantis Puerto Galera. To get there we flew back to Manila, got in vans, drove three hours south of Manila, and then got on a boat for another hour ride. The resort is on a hillside so you get additional exercise going up and down to your room. Right off the resort is a white sand bottom with some wrecks and lots of stuff to see, especially at night. (I saw my first stargazer. We did three night dives off the resort and saw four stargazers on the first and three on each of the next two.) There are a large number of dive sites within a few minutes boat ride from the resort. Most sites are slopes with coral interspersed with sand patches and have 40 to 60 ft. visibility and mild currents, if any. (We did go for a ride down one channel with fairly strong current and did one wreck with strong current.)

A couple of sites were more like Dumaguete – real critter locations. We took a one day-trip to Verde Island and did two dives on the sea mount off the island. You definitely would have been better off with gloves on these two dives. The current was ripping and the guides did not take the time to ascertain where the lee of the mount was. We just got dumped in and, on the first dive, took off on a ride. The second dive we lucked out and started out in a low current area, but soon swam into another ripping current. (I would not recommend the Verde sea mount to any beginner - otherwise almost all the other dives would have been fine for a beginner.) After these dives we came back to Verde, got off the boat, and had a BBQ lunch that had been prepared



*Juvenile Triggerfish & Cleaner at Dumaguete - Nikon D7000 in Ikelite Housing, Ikelite DS 161 strobe set to TTL with a -1 setting on the housing, Nikon 60mm macro lens, F22, 1/100 sec., ISO 200*

while we were diving. After lunch the choice was to dive the “washing machine” or a coral garden. After the mount none of us was interested in another punishing dive so we did the coral garden, which was a great dive with virtually no current.

As with Atlantis Dumaguete the staff at Puerto Galera took care of getting your tank/BC between the dive shop and the boats and you carried the rest of your gear. However, Puerto Galera was much easier than Dumaguete. There were more boats, the dive shop was closer to the boats, and the water, even at high tide, was very shallow so it wasn't the pain that Dumaguete was. Because there were more boats, most every day we carried our gear out in the morning and it stayed on the boat the rest of the day. On the last day of diving, even though we were not flying out of Manila until late the next day, all but two of us took off after lunch to pack and visit the two floating bars anchored off the resort. We two



*Half Inch Frogfish at Dumaguete – Nikon D7000 in Ikelite Housing, Ikelite DS 161 strobe set to TTL with a -1 setting on the housing, Nikon 60mm macro lens, F22, 1/100 sec., ISO 200*

die-hards had, perhaps, the best dive of the trip on our last night dive. Among other things; while we were shooting a stargazer it erupted out of the sand to grab a crab that we had not noticed. We also found a tiny crab with eggs that is listed in the new Humann/DeLoach book as “undetermined” and known only in Indonesia.

While not perfect I'd still recommend the Philippines in general and Atlantis Dumaguete and Puerto Galera in particular to anyone looking for good diving, plenty of good food, and comfortable lodging; all at very reasonable cost. I intend to return to sample some other Philippine locations.

**David Reubush**

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# Muck Diving Sydney style

by Klaus Stiefel

I love Sydney, Australia, it's such a friendly and multi-cultural city! And it's a nature enthusiasts' city: the trees are teeming with chattering parakeets, and only 30 minutes by car from the city center there is some great diving in Chowder Bay in the suburb of Mossman. Sydney is located along a large natural inlet, called Sydney Harbor or Port Jackson, and Chowder Bay is located on its Northern shore. It's a popular, but not too crowded weekend destination for the Sydneysiders, and a dive shop, Plunge Diving, is located in a historic building (in Australia that means it's from the mid-1800s) right on Chowder Bay. From there it's only a short walk along a jetty to reach the entry point to a dive site featuring some fascinating Southern-hemisphere temperate marine life.

It's a real 'muck' dive site - not necessarily that exciting on first sight. There are no imposing multi-colored walls of corals like in the ads for the tropical diving destinations, and sometimes the visibility is not that great, but for the patient underwater naturalist and photographer, some true gems lie in wait: Seahorses holding on to sunken wire-mashes,

male cuttlefish fighting over a ten-armed lady, fishes such as gurnards, frogfish, pipefish, morwongs and groups of dancing hulla-fish, as well as curiosities such as a blenny making his home in a discarded bottle. Two wrecks of small sail-boats, the posts of the jetty and some smaller sunken man-made structures act as marine life magnets. Some of the fish found in Chowder Bay, while also found in other spots along the East coast of Australia, were very exciting for me to see since they are endemic to that part of the world. Examples are the old wife (Enlopus armatus; the whole family, the Enlopidae, is endemic to Australia) or the Port Jackson shark (Heterodontus portjacksoni). To top things off, Chowder Bay features nice invertebrates, such as several species of nudibranchs and bright red sponges which often make a nice background for photographs.

As I mentioned above, the conditions for photography are not always ideal in Chowder Bay. Low visibility, a silty bottom which can worsen the viz even more after a few careless fin-kicks, and small, well hidden marine organisms are a challenge to the uw-photographer.



*The Sydney opera house, one of many attractions of this cosmopolitan city. In the waters around it, just across Sydney Harbor in Mossman, lurk many photo-worthy marine organisms.*

*Canon 5D II, Canon L 17-40 mm at 40 mm, pol filter, f9, 1/125*

However, there is so much fascinating marine life to photograph! What were the tricks which helped me to nevertheless take good pictures there? It turned out that a few things, while always useful in underwater photography, took on special importance. They were subject/lens



*Eastern Spiny Gurnard (Lepidorigla pleuracantha). What a beautiful little fish!*

*Canon 5D II, Canon USM 100 mm, f11, 1/200 s, ISO 320*

selection, good buoyancy and fining technique, a good local guide, strobe placement, shooting against a surface, and post-processing.

A site like Chowder Bay will mostly lend itself to macro photography. This usually makes the lens of choice something like the



*Port Jackson Shark (Heterodontus portjacksoni). This is a juvenile. These guys are docile and not easily scared. To feed, they crush echinoderms with their mouth plates. Note the parasitic isopod crustaceans on the shark's head, even on its eye. Ouch. Canon 5D II, Canon USM 100 mm, f20, 1/200 s, ISO 320.*

Canon USM 100 mm which I used. Alternatively, however, a wide angle lens can be used for 'wide angle macro', the technique of capturing a medium sized fish very close to a lens with a large field of view. In my two visits to Chowder bay I always chose the Canon 100 mm macro lens as the piece of glass to submerge with me.

Once this lens of choice was mounted, the camera screwed into its housing and I myself was sucking compressed air, a number of things turned out helpful in my quest for good muck-photography. While in other locations it is sometimes an option to lay down in denser sand to shoot marine life close to the bottom, the fine silt in Chowder Bay gets stirred up too easily to allow that technique. Instead, I needed to hover in place even when taking



*Close up of the same blenny. This individual was highly curious and alternated between hiding in its bottle and posing vertically in front of it in what I believe was a territorial or mating display. Canon 5D II, Canon USM 100 mm, f18, 1/200 s, ISO 320.*

pictures of bottom dwelling marine life. Good fining techniques also go a long way in keeping the viz photographer-friendly. The frog-kick or modified frog-kick, also used in cave-diving for the purpose of minimizing the silting of the water-column, often works better than the conventional alternating kick. In caves, avoiding a silt-out goes a long way in preventing a panicky death while running out of air in zero-viz! It is slightly less crucial than meeting such an end, but still important, to take pictures without too much suspended particles between lens and fish. So, practice your buoyancy and fining!

When not familiar with the marine life in an area, a good local guide is always a great asset to any photographer. This is especially the case since the inhabitants of that corner of the great



*Old Wife (Enlopus armatus). Who comes up with these common names? Supposedly these fishes are named like that because they make a grunting noise when removed from the water. Aussie humor? Ichthyologists' effort at being funny? Shot against one of the small wrecks in Chowder Bay to avoid distracting back-scatter. Canon 5D II, Canon USM 100 mm, f11, 1/200 s, ISO 320.*

Pacific ocean are small and well-hidden. Naturally, someone who has done hundreds of dives at a site will know very well where the interesting fish and invertebrates can probably be found. A novice to the area, even with excellent eyes for marine life, will never do as well. I want to thank my guide Martin for pointing out a lot of interesting organisms to me! I tried, however, not to be a complete 'tourist', and to spot things myself as well; This always works better when reading up on the expected marine life. I always see more if I know what I am looking for. For this purpose I spent an evening with Rudie Kuiters's 'Guide to Sea Fishes of Australia'.

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*Stripey (Microcanthus strigatus). A much better common name. Yes, this is a fish with stripes.  
Canon 5D II, Canon USM 100 mm, f14, 1/200 s, ISO 320.*

*Fan-belly leatherjacket (Monacanthus chinensis). I cleaned out the back-scatter in this picture in the post processing stage.  
Canon 5D II, Canon USM 100 mm, f18, 1/200 s, ISO 320.*

knows that skilled strobe-placement goes a long way in keeping one's pictures free of back-scatter. What I had to avoid is to illuminate the suspended particles between the lens and the object. Normally, this is less of an issue in macro photography, where the distance between lens and object is small. But with the amount of particle in a site like Chowder Bay,

it becomes a bigger deal. An indirect angle, aiming the strobes from a side-ways angle, but not frontally at the subject, can help to avoid unsightly 'snow'.

Another good trick in conditions with lots of suspended particles is to shoot against a surface, such as a rock or the side wall of a wreck.

In this way, the 'snow' will stand out less than when in front of blue or black water in the background. This of course does not substitute for taking care to reduce suspended particles or their illumination, but it can significantly reduce the impact of back-scatter. I learned this trick from uw-photography legend Marty Snyderman.

Finally, you can do some things to improve your photos when your dive gear is already dry. Good post-processing is an even more powerful tool with pictures taken in 'muck' sites than normally. With little natural light and murky water absorbing more of one's strobe light than in the tropics, color correction often restores shots which looked drab coming directly out of the camera. And, post-processing is also the last chance to combat our recurrent enemy, the back-scatter. Removing it with the 'smudge' tool or selectively activating the background (with the 'lasso' tool) and applying a 'Gaussian blur' filter in your image processing software of choice (in my case the shareware program Gimp) can save otherwise successful shots. Another alternative is to crop away regions of your shot strongly affected by evil back-scatter. I always try to get things right when pressing the shutter, but in difficult conditions I have to resort more frequently to software-aided

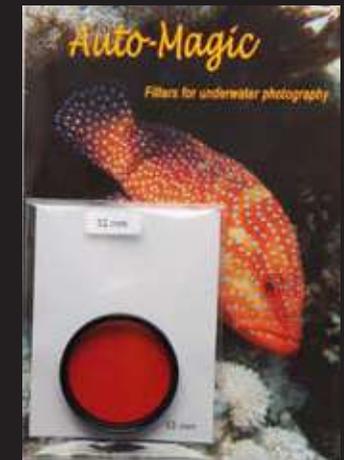
image improvement. When applying a manipulation which affects only a part of an image (such as back-scatter removal via Gaussian blur in the background only), I always state that manipulation when putting the shot on my website or publishing them otherwise.

With these tricks you'll be able to get some good shots and be able to enjoy viewing the fascinating marine life found in a 'muck' dive site later on dry land, and possibly at a high magnification - often a chance to discover detail unseen during the dive, such as the parasites on the Port Jackson shark I shot. I hope I have convinced you that on your next visit to Sydney you will not only enjoy the topside attractions this city is famous for, such as the nightlife, the zoo and the cool scene in Bondi Beach, but will also get wet with your camera. G'day and fairdinkum diving!

**Klaus Stiefel**  
[www.flickr.com/PacificKlaus](http://www.flickr.com/PacificKlaus)

I am originally from Vienna, Austria, and have also lived in Frankfurt, Germany and San Diego, California. I currently reside in Okinawa, Japan, where I am, when not under water, a neurobiologist. I use a Canon 5D II in a Hugyfot housing with two Inon Z-240 strobes.

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

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**If you have an idea for an article,  
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**E mail [peter@uwpmag.com](mailto:peter@uwpmag.com)**

## How to submit articles

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

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

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

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

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

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

# Parting Shot 1

It was with a nervous excitement that we all gathered at the Jetty before our night dive in Tioman, Malaysia. The boat that was to pick us up at 630 pm was nowhere to be seen and over 12 of us were joking about how this operator calculated time just as we do in India, where most people are invariably or purposely late for a meeting or a social gathering. At 7 pm just before complete darkness we could see the dive boat approaching. Once firmly set up against the jetty, we quickly jumped on, checked our gear, torches, signals, etc. Buddy teams were next on the agenda. Usually I was always the last selected to buddy up with, given the size of my camera gear, my ants pace underwater and the role of an underwater nurse that my buddy had to play for me, much to his or her chagrin. Jumping in and moving through the water I quickly found some really interesting subjects, a beautiful crimson and beige goatfish followed by a porcupine puffer and a large filefish. Having shot the last two many times, abstract was in my mind and I was trying to go really close to shoot only the side or the back of these fish with the macro lens in order to get something different. The dive continued at a really slow pace, sometimes with my buddy totally engulfed by the darkness and nowhere to be discerned except by a really dim light in the darkness getting brighter as he came close, banging on his tank to show me something new. This was our understanding underwater, if I was taking pictures, I would have to stay there if my buddy went looking out, till he/she would return! On one such occasion, I saw a sudden and fast movement to my right. Shining my three lamps in the direction,

I saw a small shark going completely crazy over a stag horn coral. It would swim frantically in one direction over the coral and would bounce back in the opposite direction. Some thing was also hanging out of its mouth, which looked like a piece of fish or something similar. I thought it was in hunting mode. As I silently moved towards the coral, the shark was becoming even more frantic as I got closer. Slowing down to a near standstill, I put all but one torch off, so as not to stress out the shark and saw the shark slowly come to rest on the coral breathing really hard. Taking a long detour around the shark so as not to disturb it or scare it away, I closed in from the opposite direction. Alas, much to my dismay and sadness, I realized where the problem emanated from and why the shark was moving only within the periphery of this coral head. It had a hook deeply embedded in its mouth attached to a line entirely tangled in the coral. All the frantic movement that I saw earlier was its feeble attempt to set itself free, injuring itself in the rather one-sided bargain. And the piece that I thought was a fish was in fact a little bit of the sharks flesh dangling at the side. Rather than disturb it, or stress it any further, I took only one photo and quickly gestured to my buddy to follow me to our team leader and instructor, who has far more experience in these matters than myself. And to cut a long story short, he managed to remove the hook and set the coral cat shark free!!! Off it went, at a speed I thought was faster than light, enveloped by the comfort of darkness, free again, with a second lease of life that the species rarely gets in today's ruthless fin hungry world! Some knowledgeable people in the group later told me that sharks have an uncanny and innate ability



*Oly E330 Camera, 10 Bar housing, single Inon Z240 50mm Oly 2.8 Macro lens 1/125, ISO 100, f11*

to heal really fast and that this particular species is called Coral Cat Shark. My prayers were with the shark.

The beers were on me that night and all 12 divers slept in the comfort of the knowledge that a good deed was done.

**Digant Desai**

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# Parting Shot 2

Four dives, three strobes and a flood: that was the cost of these images.

It's no secret that we are in the age of the snoot, but I've always preferred wide-angle photography having started as a British wreck aficionado; it's not too strange that I've ignored snoot-ology in favour of the next big thing - the off-camera strobe.

My first attempts, early last year, were in a cold Lancashire quarry. A certain bug-shaped German car sunk several years ago to attract divers has attracted a truly ridiculous procession of well-known photographers trying to light it in novel ways. I didn't really contribute much.

Playing in a pool, I found that Inon S2000 strobes have very sensitive slave sensors and need to be dialed right down as they are surprisingly bright, even hidden behind the target.

The next time was a dive at the BSoUP "splash-in", when I attached one S2000 to a GorillaPod and hid it behind pieces of wreckage on the British favourite, the wreck of the liberty ship James Eagan Layne. It might have been better if I had been able to persuade a buddy to swim past, but that's competition fever for you...

... then I had the bright idea hiding the strobe in the wreck's donkey boiler to get a jet of light coming out of the interesting holes. This turned out to be a big mistake. Even 70' under the surface there's an English channel swell and I watched the S2000's cheerful red indicator light being swept into the boiler: just out of reach! One day, when the boiler rusts a little more, some diver may have a

pleasant surprise.

I rather like the S2000 for macro photography, so, of course, I had to buy another. It sat in a box, quietly, through the winter. Then a group of us thought that some pool photography with an attractive model and off-camera lighting might be fun. It certainly was...

... until my lovely dome port fell apart, much to the surprise of the photographer below, who watched a glass bowl and some rubber rings drifting past his mask!

I'll save any embarrassment, but the UK agent lent me another dome and I set off a couple of months ago to the Sudanese Red Sea. I'm fascinated by the pioneering dives of Hans Hass on the wreck of the Umbria in Port Sudan, and of Jacques Cousteau at Sha'ab Rumi, and it's a privilege to dive these sites. The Inon S2000 was now firmly mounted not only to its tripod, but also to a 2lb weight. These are the results, inside the Umbria and at the site of Conshelf II.

**Tim Priest**

[www.flickr.com/photos/timsdiving](http://www.flickr.com/photos/timsdiving)



*Fiat cars in the Umbria.  
D300s, \*\*\*\*\* housing, Nikon 10.5mm, ISO200, 1/60 f9.*



*Cousteau's tool shed.  
D300s, \*\*\*\*\* housing, Nikon 10.5mm, ISO200,  
1/200 f11.*

# Parting Shot 3

I have been a fan of Burt Jones and Maurine Shimlock since I bought their book *Secret Sea* more than ten years ago. I finally met them a couple of years ago when they were delivering copies of their new book *Diving Indonesia's Raja Ampat* to the live-aboard that I had just gotten aboard in Bali's Benoa harbor. At that point, after meeting them, I decided that I would endeavor to join a trip hosted by them as soon as I could. As things turned out I got an email from them earlier this year announcing that there had been a couple of cancellations for an April trip to Raja Ampat on the 7 Seas. What could be better than diving Raja Ampat with the folks who wrote the book? So, I signed up.

The trip was everything I expected. We visited sites with huge schools of chevron barracuda, sweet lips, batfish etc. It was like the "old days" before factory ships and reef dynamiting. As I am a real muck diving fan one of

the sites I was particularly looking forward to was the Waigeo pearl farm pier. I dove this site on a previous trip to Raja Ampat and knew that there was an abundance of weird and wonderful creatures that made the pier home. Burt and Maurine were also looking forward to the pier as the 7 Seas folks had found a type of frogfish there that incubates its eggs on its side on a previous trip and Burt and Maurine wanted a shot for a new book to be published later this year. Since the pearl farm is a business with lots of boat traffic the management prohibits diving around the pier until most of their activity has ceased for the day for safety reasons. This meant that we would only be able to do one afternoon dive and one night dive on the site.

There was great anticipation at the beginning of the afternoon dive. Would the frogfish still be there? Will it still have eggs? Will it be in a position that photos



*Nikon D7000, Ikelite housing and single Ikelite DS-161 strobe set to TTL with a -1 strobe adjustment on the housing (Nikon/Ikelite TTL combination seems to overexpose without some adjustment. Doing it on the housing is much easier than trying to change the camera during a dive).*

could be taken? Lo and behold the frogfish was still in the same spot that he/she had been on the previous 7 Seas visit. Unfortunately, the eggs were gone. Burt and Maurine were most unhappy. Discouraged, they decided to sit out the night dive. Things on the night dive progressed

as I expected. There were lots of neat things to shoot. Near the end of the dive I observed lights flashing and heard tanks banging so I swam over to investigate. Todd, one of the other divers on the trip, had discovered another frogfish, and this one still had its eggs as you can see from the

accompanying photograph. Burt and Maurine are going to use this shot in their book and they tell me that Gerry Allen also wants to use it in a book he is working on. Sometimes all it takes is a little luck.

**Dave Reubush**

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# Parting Shot 4

A Striated (Hairy) Frogfish that was about 10cm long took up residence at one of the dive sites in Dumaguete, Philippines, so I set out in the morning with the Nikon 60mm lens to get the usual shots and also took a snoot along with me for some shots with a different lighting style. Once these were in the bag I was thinking of ways to shoot him with a different perspective. I had previously got some good macro wide-angle images using the Nikon 10.5mm fisheye lens with 1.4x Teleconverter behind a mini dome port. This set-up enables you to focus very close to the port, so you retain the detail of a macro lens, but can also incorporate the environment into the scene. To light the subject evenly with this set-up, you need to place your strobes close to the port on either side or you will get a darker patch in the middle of the frame. I have found however that it is very easy to over-expose light coloured elements of the foreground, so I switched the diffusers on my Inon Z240's from the usual -0.5 to a more opaque -1.5 to calm down the light a bit.

When we arrived at the dive site in the afternoon, I started taking some test shots to dial in the correct exposure. An aperture of f.8 provided the depth of field that I wanted and with the strobe power set to low, I got good exposure on the frogfish. I then started adjusting the shutter speed, settling on 1/80th, which gave me deep-blue coloured water in the background. After balancing all the elements of the exposure, I felt there was something lacking from the image and wanted to put a diver into the frame to improve the

composition. But this is where I encountered a slight problem; I didn't have anyone to model for me! I thought back to an article I had read by Keri Wilk where he used the self-timer on his camera to enable him to model for himself and thought I'd give it a go. I positioned my camera in the sand, digging the handle in to hold it in place and set the self-timer to its maximum duration. This gave me 20 seconds from pressing the shutter to quickly swim into the frame. It took a few shots to work out the best position for me to be in, how far off the bottom I needed to be to be and also the distance from the camera, to be nicely placed in the water column. Trial and error eventually got me there, and luckily I was only in 5m of water, so frantically swimming backwards and forwards didn't drain my air too quickly. There were a few decent shots amongst even more that ended up in the trash, where the composition didn't quite work. This is my favourite shot of the series and quite unique, as I don't have any other underwater shots that I have both taken and modelled in!

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