

July / September 2024

OZDIVER

AUSTRALIA'S PREMIER DIVE MAGAZINE

**CHANDELIER
CAVES****DIVING
ICELAND****TOP 10
DIVE
SPOTS
NSW****MALAPASCUA****GAINIS D****RAJA AMPAT****FREE Digital Diving Magazine - www.ozdiver.com.au**



Andre Cronje

July / September 2024 Edition



Editor's Deco

When I started publishing OZDiver magazine in Australia more than 10 years ago, I have to say that I was very excited. The magazine has done much better than I initially thought and has attracted a huge number of readers from all over the world, especially from Australia.

With the magazine being available online at www.ozdiver.com.au and through apps on both Apple and Android devices, it is really easy for readers to access the magazine and read interesting diving-related articles anywhere in the world.


Remember to visit OZDiver's website

and ensure that you download your free copy of some of my dive books that I have published, as all the hard copies are sold out.

I decided to provide a free digital version for my readers to download as I still receive emails from readers asking me where can they buy it.

This edition is once again full of articles for both beginner and advanced divers.

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But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and... 

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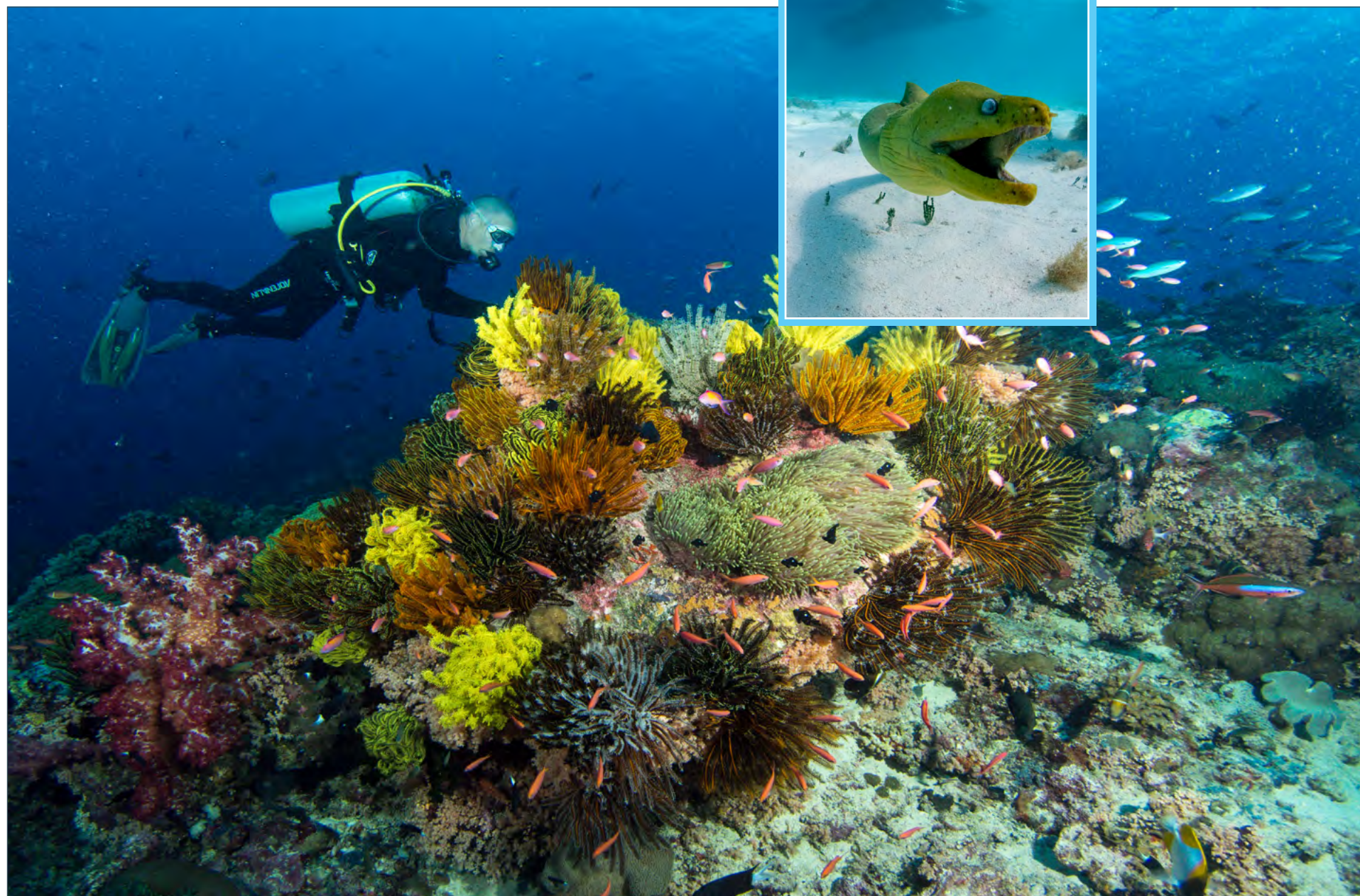
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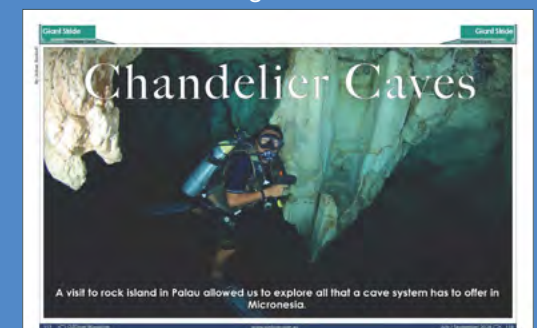
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Don't try this on your Own!

By Nicole Brower

I doubt that this truly qualifies as a close call - no sharks, no pirates, but seeing as I have ONLY JUST started my PADI Open Water 1 course, and have had limited experience, this was the closest call I have ever had!

I ordered my tailored wetsuit from Cressi, just a week before my first pool session. It was a rush for them to get it ready in time, but on the Saturday morning my suit was delivered.

It was magnificent! A beautiful 2 piece, with front-zipping jacket and farmer john, in black and pink neoprene. No shark would mistake me for a seal!

I spend the day happily in the pool, learning the skills and doing the silly things that novice divers do.

That evening, filled with the joys of nitrogen I decided to try on my wetsuit to see what I looked like in it. (There are no full length mirrors at dive pool).

I slipped into it. Okay I grunted and

tugged my way into it, just as one is supposed to. It was great. In the mirror before me stood a 173cm telly-tubby.

Having overcome the trauma of seeing my thighs magnified by the extra layer of neoprene rubber and it being a very warm evening, I needed to get out of the suit. I tried to slip out of the jacket, one shoulder at a time.

It was impossible. The fresh rubber, determined to keep me covered, kept springing back up.

I tried to use a plastic coat hanger to hook the back of the jacket and pull it down.

So much for plastic coat hangers, \$10 for 10! As my frustration and exertion continued, my body temperature rose.

Sleeping in the thing was NOT an option. What if I needed the loo?

I needed help to get out of the suit. What were my options, seeing that

I live alone, short of getting out the kitchen scissors? Phone a friend? It was 11'30pm. Phone the police? (As if they don't have enough to do?) I was stuck.

Finally in a hot and desperate panic I got into my car and drove down to the security guard in the complex. As I neared the guard house I called out of the window, "I need help".

The eager guard grabbed a cane, ready to save my life.

Embarrassed, I stepped barefoot from the car, "Can you help me get out of this thing", I asked. "Okay" said the guard. I asked him to tug the jacket off from behind, which he did.

As the steam escaped into the night air,

he asked, "What is this for?"

I replied, "To swim underwater".

He said, "Okay", KNOWING that there isn't a pool in the complex!

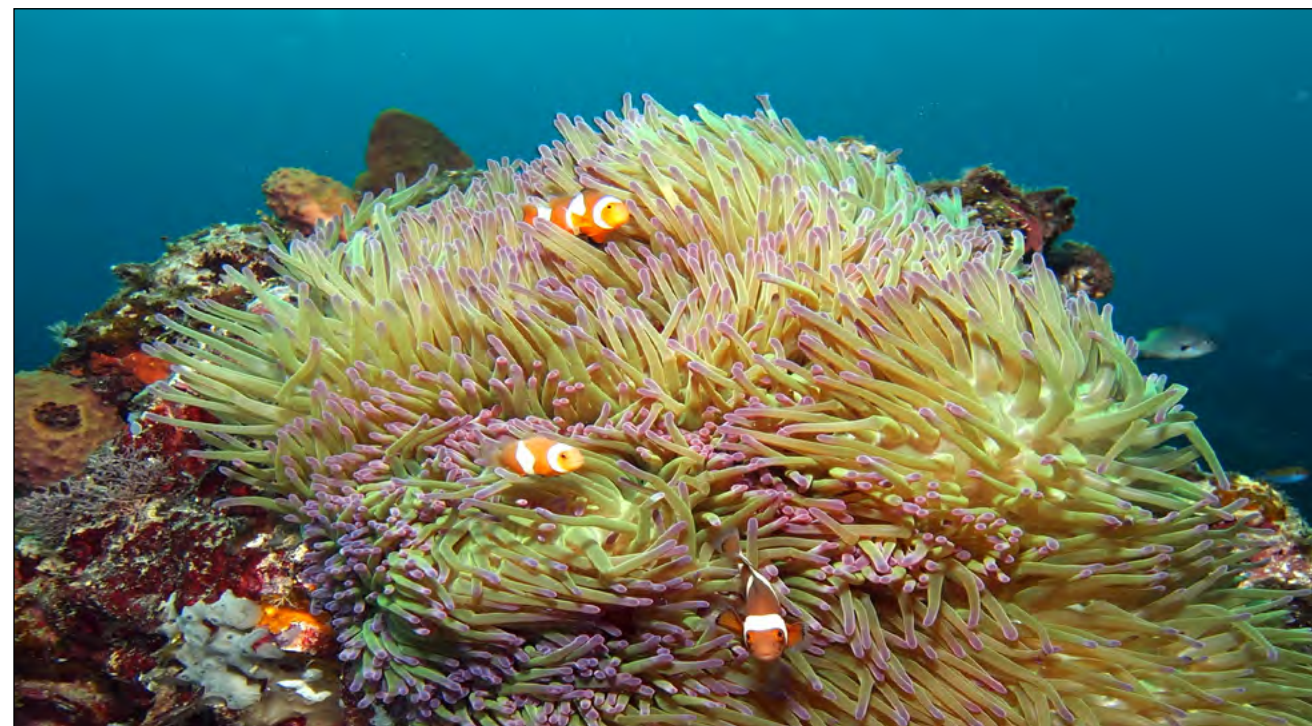
Lessons to be learnt:

NEVER look at your thighs in a mirror when wearing a wetsuit.

NEVER try on your wetsuit when there is no-one around to help you get out of it

NEVER try to use a plastic coat hanger to try pull off your suit.

And last, but not least, NEVER do the above and expect people NOT to laugh at you! 🐠



WIN

Send your letter to us and win a Marine Life Species Guide

Here is a chance to be heard! If you have anything that you would like to share with OZDiver Magazine and other divers, send an email to Log Book at info@ozdiver.com.au. Remember that letters have more impact when they are short and sweet. We have the right to edit and shorten letters. In every issue, the winning letter will receive a Marine Life Species Guide. 🐠



OZ NEWS

OZTek | ADEX ADVANCED DIVE CONFERENCE | AUSTRALIA

Less than a year to the inaugural ADEX OZTek 2025

Australia's brand new 2025 Recreational Dive and Travel Show, incorporating the best of all diving worlds! Watch out for some truly inspirational projects releasing soon

The combination of ADEX's imaginary, recreational extravaganza with the aspirational adventure of OZTek, will set Australian diving on its head.



Come and have fun, be enriched, join in the marine discovery next March 2025 at the iconic International Convention Centre, Darling Harbour - the heart of Sydney's entertainment arena.

When?

March 15/16, 2025
- ADEX Australia recreational dive and travel show extraordinaire in combo with the iconic OZTek Advanced Diving Conference.

Where?

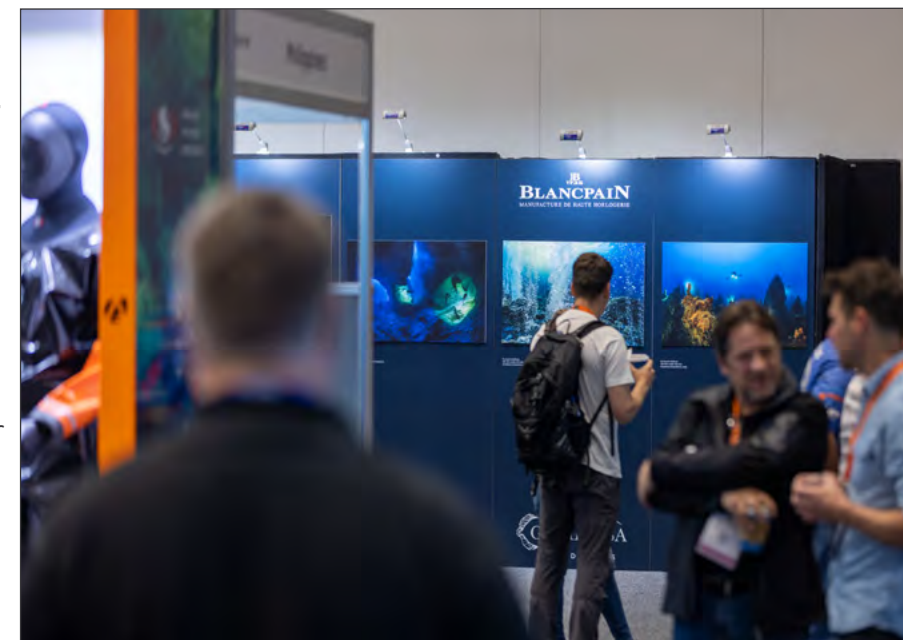
Sydney International Convention Centre, (ICC) Darling Harbour Hall 2, on the foreshore of Sydney City.

OZTek Advanced Diving Conference showcasing latest developments in diving and innovation created by underwater explorers in their bid to unlock the ocean's secrets.

This inspiring 25 year old conference has become interchangeable with diving excitement and adventure. Nothing less than the usual outstanding international cast of speakers - each an acknowledged expert in their respective field of diving expertise. <https://oztek.com.au/>

ADEX Australia, will open its doors to welcome divers, non-divers, students and families, with its specially curated programmes and fun loving festivities designed to entice and inspire more people to love our oceans.

Photography, marine galleries, real and virtual ocean experiences, equipment, jewellery, marine apparel .. it'll all be there.



For an idea of what to expect... imagine ADEX 2023 - with a down under flare https://www.adex.asia/main/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Marketing-Video-FF_Facebook-1_compressed.mp4

Both shows serve as an invigorating platform for the Australian and global diving community - giving them a voice and providing a space to meet, foster relationships, exchange ideas and receive recognition for their achievements.



adexoztek.com.au - March 2025 - Don't miss it.



Dive Schools / Operators / Organisers / Instructors

Do you have any interesting, newsworthy info to share with the dive industry? If so, we would like to invite you to send us your OZ News section for possible inclusion in the magazine (please note that inclusion is FREE of charge).

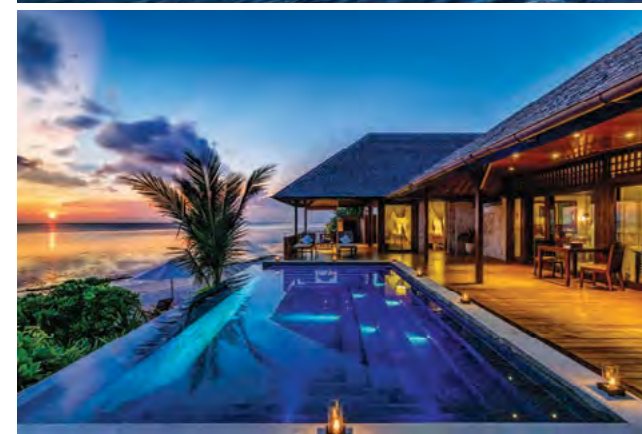
Here's what we need:

- Newsworthy stories (promotional material will not be accepted)
- Word limit: 100 words
- Text prepared in a Word document
- Accompanying high-resolution image(s) are welcome (please supply caption and image credit)

Please send to info@ozdiver.com.au 



"We are thrilled to be returning in a few months! The reef systems here are the most unspoiled we have seen in our travels around the world and the resort is paradise. We can't wait to see all our friends at Wakatobi." ~ Robert and Barbara Hay



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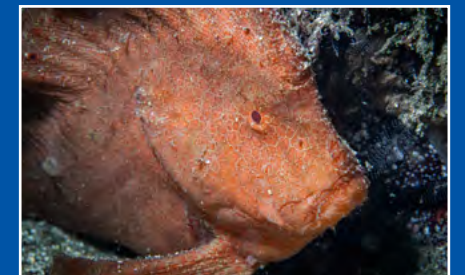
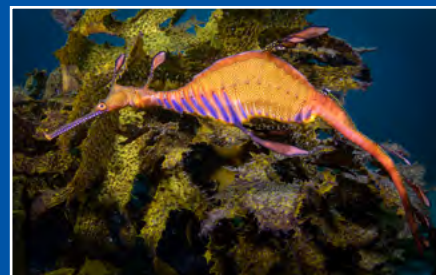
At Wakatobi, you don't compromise on comfort to get away from it all. Our private air charter brings you directly to this remote island, where the indulgences of a five-star resort and luxury liveaboard await. Our dive team and private guides ensure your underwater experiences will create lasting memories that remain vivid and rewarding long after the visit to Wakatobi is concluded. You need only ask and we will gladly provide any service or facility within our power. This unmatched combination of world-renowned reefs and relaxed luxuries put Wakatobi in a category all its own.



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Top 10 Dive Spots New South Wales

Part I



Let's start by saying that most divers will probably agree with 50% of this list, after that the numbers will vary considerably! On its day any dive spot can turn it on. 20 metres of visibility, 22 degrees in the water, a passing Mola Mola being hurried along by a Humpback Whale makes for a world beating dive.

But week in week out what dive spots can you depend on, even if the conditions are not ideal, to provide something for the scuba diver?

Accessibility is, for instance, one factor that has to be considered. If you get to dive, say Pimpernel Rock in Northern NSW you are lucky to have even got out there. It's likely to be a top-class dive if the conditions and transport allow you to get there but you will have had to be very, very fortunate: it's not on the list.

So yes, this list is an author's pick but after diving in NSW for over 35 years I offer that it is probably not a bad list to start with. So, five top spots in this article and five in the next.

I'll start with one dive spot from Sydney, two to the North and two to the South. You can find all of these, and many more, in the book The Dive Spots of New South Wales written by myself and Johan Boshoff.

In fact, I'll reference the page numbers of each dive spot as I write about each spot.

Let's start with something relatively uncontroversial ... Fish Rock Cave at South West Rocks (DSNSW Page 82) about 5 hours drive north of Sydney.

A lot has been written about Fish Rock Cave over many dive articles and they all concur that this is one of the top dives in NSW, and I would venture it makes it into the Australian top 10.

I am also cheating a little because there are two dive spots in the book (The Cave and the Shark Gutters) that you normally complete on the same dive.

In the bottom entrance of the cave, out through the top entrance, turn left, head down through the Aquarium (another dive spot) and come back through the Shark Gutters.

On its day this is a spectacular dive... when it's not its day it is a very good dive. Access is by boat and there are a couple of operators based in the township of South West Rocks.

It is a 20-30 minute boat trip out over the bar (which can be tricky) to the island (Fish Rock). In summary this dive is about two things; the experience of diving in a cavern/ cave environment and the Grey Nurse sharks that hang around in the shallow entrance to the cave or in the gutters outside the cave.

You do not need to be a qualified "cave diver" to do this dive. The guides are very good and the briefing very thorough.

The deeper entry to the cave (the normal route) sits at around 24m.



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You enter, minding the Wobbegongs and Smooth Rays that tend to hog the floor space, and ascend up one of two chimneys into the cave chamber. Mind the Crays that line the rocks on the way up.

As you enter the chamber it is dark for around a further 50 metres (so you absolutely need a torch) before you start to see the light filtering in from the entrance of the cave.

If you are fortunate there will be Grey Nurse sharks circling into and around the entrance of the cave.

Stay low and to the sides, so that you don't spook the sharks, make your way to the entrance, and hug the left-hand side.

There can be a heck of a current in your face as you exit the cave so be prepared to fin hard and hang on to the odd bit of rock. As you 'scale' the wall at the exit you'll drop over into much calmer water into an area called the Aquarium. You can expect Turtles,

Wobbegongs and a lot of shoaling fish in this area as you make your way to the shark gutters that head you back to the moorings at the cave entrance. The main gutter sits at around 24 metres so watch your NDL if you are going to hang around the bottom.

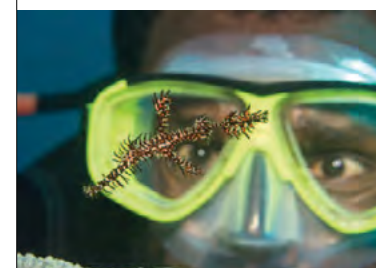
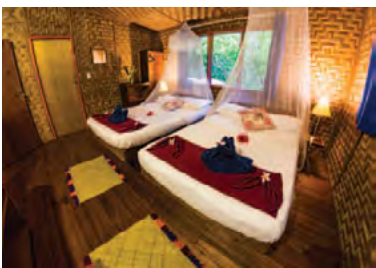
The Shark Gutters are a great dive on their own with the Grey Nurse patrolling up and down them. As with all Grey Nurse...slow movements, stay low, absolutely no touching however close they get and enjoy the moment. Definitely a top 10 dive!

For our second Dive Spot, we are once again back in the boat heading out from Nelson Bay on the Central Coast about 2.5 hrs drive north of Sydney.

North Rock at Broughton Island is the dive spot (DSNSW Page 119).

The boat trip out is around 50 minutes and on the way out you might stop at The Looking Glass (DSNSW Page 119).. both are excellent dives and are Grey Nurse habitats.





Picture a small private island, with white sandy beaches, tall palm trees, beautiful tropical gardens, traditionally-built, comfortable bungalows, magnificent sunsets and fine food.

Surrounding this little hideaway are some of the most healthy & colourful reefs and best fish life this planet has to offer...

North Rock has a maximum depth around the 20 metre mark but most of the Shark action is shallower. I have counted up to 25 Grey Nurse in the same photo at this spot.

I have also been lucky enough to have 20 metre plus visibility which makes it even better. The Sharks are very chilled and cruise up and down a quite broad East-West gutter but there are a couple of very good overhangs where the sharks coast in and out of the shoaling Pomfrets and Mado.

I reckon it's like a snack bar. As mentioned before, stay to the sides, stay low and move slowly and you will have a great dive.

If you have not stopped at The Looking Glass on the way out...try and stop there on the way back.

The Looking Glass dive can be a touch surgy...but that is half the fun. As you drop down and approach the 'slot' if you head down to the right there is a cave at around 22 metres which

sometimes houses Eastern Blue Devil Fish. Have a quick poke around before heading along to the 'slot' itself.

Make sure everyone is ok with a bit of surge...are you just going to go with it...are you going to hang on to rocks and then kick when the surge takes you forward...are you just going to try and power through.

As you do all that keep a look out for the large Rays and Wobbegongs that hang around on the bottom and then look through the slot to see if the Grey Nurse are patrolling.

Best to head up the left-hand side in a line so that your bubbles are not creating a curtain to put off the Grey Nurse. Up on your left as you go through there are often shoals of Pomfret, Yellow Tail and Mado... sharks have to eat after all.

Things get calmer as you move through the slot and now you know what to expect on the way back. A great dive and a fantastic combination



along with North Rock.

For our third dive spot we'll head to Sydney and head to The Steps (DSNSW Page 202) at Inscription point in the Kamay Botany Bay National Park for a shore dive. Again, one can get two for the price of one and either add in The Leap (DSNSW 203) or The Monuments (DSNSW 201).

You can do The Leap to The Steps one way and get out at The Steps or the Steps to the Leap and turn back (No good spot to get out at The Leap) or The Steps to The Monuments.

Whatever you choose they can all be good dives. Maximum depth about 22-23metres unless you head out into the open sea.

To enter at The Leap or The Steps the conditions need to be reasonable...a decent swell makes them impossible. Rather than just getting in please have a good think about how you are getting out.

If you feel the Steps will or has become too difficult then you are up for a paddle round to the Monuments where you will be able to exit safely. If you are going to dive the Leap to the Steps, or The Steps to The Monuments you might consider leaving a car at your exit point...if you have the luxury of two cars.

The trek down to the entry points at The Leap and The Steps is not as tiring as the hike back up the cliff post dive! Having said that the steps down to both sites are sturdy and well-engineered.

What can you expect to see here? The unexpected is certainly one possibility. There have been reports of Humpbacks coming into this area and also Mola Mola! Have to say I have never seen either of those in this spot...but the fact that both The Steps and The Leap are on the Western edge of the open sea means anything could swim past.

More likely suspects are Weedy Sea

dragons, Frog Fish and The Sydney Pygmy Pipehorse.

If you think Frog Fish or Weedys are hard to find...wait until you try and find the Pygmy Pipehorse (normally 3-4 cm). Still, it's worth looking and this is truly unique to Sydney.

In addition to the Pygmy Pipehorse there are normally a fair range of Nudibranchs on these sites. The dives themselves have pretty simple navigation and you can follow the sand line North West or South West or come a bit shallower and follow the rocks along.

For Dive number four we will head south and return to the Grey Nurse theme and do a shore dive, or snorkel, from the only place that I know on the NSW coast where Grey Nurse are all but guaranteed on a shore dive: Bushranger's Bay at Shellharbour (DSNSW Page 222).

Bushrangers is about two hours South of Sydney and is an aquatic reserve. You can park in close proximity to the access point which is a well-constructed set of steps down to the bay.

There are quite a lot of them...and rather like the Steps there seem to be more of them on the way back up. The beach access is across uncomfortable cricket ball to football sized rocks so keep your boots on.

Head out towards the entrance of the Bay and anywhere from 4 metres depth onward you'll be joined by the Grey Nurse. They tend to hang around the Southern side where there is a nice gutter.

You will often see the Grey Nurse dip down and scrape themselves along the gravel bottom to try and clear off annoying parasites.

Head out, keeping to the sides of the channel, and sometimes there are more Grey Nurse congregating down to 20 metres. Often the real action is

in the mouth of the Bay itself and at depths no deeper than 14metres. This dive is accessible, great for beginners and Grey Nurse are as close to guaranteed as you can get...it has to be in the top 10!

Next, for dive spot five, we will continue heading South, from Sydney for about 5hrs to Narooma. to Montague Island and The Seals (DSNSW Page 266), are about a 35-minute trip out from the mainland.

For full coverage have a look at the OzDiver July-September 2023 edition https://ozdiver.com.au/viewmagazine/38_OZDIVER_Jul-Sep-2023.pdf.

This is a greatdive that you can definitely also snorkel. I think diving gives you more scope, but I have done both...and enjoyed both.

If you are a good freediver that's probably the best of all possible worlds...if you are an occasional


snorkeller then you are better off diving.

There is no dive plan as such, other than watching your air, Maximum depth sits around the 10-metre mark. The seals (mainly Australian Fur Seals) are playful and very inquisitive.

If you act like a drunken acrobat underwater, then the seals will react.

The seals often come towards you at quite a pace, flippers out like a jet fighter and pull up at the last second watching you with their big eyes.

The small pups are very cute if they are flopping around on the rocks and the big males are quite impressive. The kelp in the area gives you some nice backdrops for your photographs.

If it is the right time of year you will see, and hear, Humpbacks as they cruise North or return South with their calves. 



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Spawn Ribbons

Nudibranchs, or sea slugs, are found in all of the world's oceans.

All nudibranchs are hermaphroditic, in other words, one animal can act as both male and female, making simultaneous fertilisation possible.

However, they are unable to self-fertilise and must find another mature animal in order to mate. Reproduction organs are situated on the right side of the neck.

Nudibranchs line themselves up next to each other, facing in opposite directions, and exchange sperm packets. Nudibranchs are able to store the sperm until it is required to fertilise their eggs, which they lay in a mucous matrix on a substrate.

These egg masses vary in size, shape and colour. The majority of nudibranchs lay their spawn ribbons in a spiral shape. 



Coral Bleaching

The harsh reality

Coral bleaching is a term all of us have heard before. It usually goes with the words global warming, rise in sea temperature, stressors, zooxanthellae dying, mass coral deaths... How does it work and is it really that bad? To answer the first question we have to go back to Biology 101.

Coral bleaching occurs when zooxanthellae (unicellular microscopic algae) living in the tissue (polyps) of corals is expelled from the coral host due to stress. This causes the coral to turn 'white' because photosynthetic pigments of the zooxanthellae give corals the beautiful colours we see underwater.

Without these unicellular algae the tissue of the coral appears transparent and the host's white skeleton is revealed. This symbiotic relationship provides the coral with up to 90% of its energy and therefore corals begin to starve once they bleach.

If the stress persists, these bleached coral often die and bleached reefs can take years, and in some cases even decades, to recover.

There are a number of factors that can induce stress on corals, including a change in water temperature,

increase in solar radiance, ocean acidification, overfishing causing a decline in zooplankton levels resulting in starvation, sedimentation, pathogen infections and salinity changes.

Prolonged, unusually warm sea surface temperatures (SST – often a result of global warming), are believed to be the biggest stressor to coral reefs around the globe. An increase of only 1-2°C in temperature, lasting between six to eight weeks, is enough to trigger coral bleaching.

If the rise in temperature persists for more than eight weeks, corals begin to die.

According to an Australian study in 2008, rising carbon dioxide levels from human CO2 emissions ending up in our ocean (contributing to water acidification), could have a significant impact on a coral reefs ability to withstand climate change. The combination of this acidification and rising sea temperature, increases the rate of coral bleaching, kills reef building organisms and results in entire reefs being destroyed quicker than what was previously believed.

In an article published by ScienceAlert, Professor Ove Hoegh-Guldberg from

the ARC Center of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies (CoECRS) and Queensland University says, "The results, frankly, are alarming."

They clearly suggest that previous predictions of coral bleaching have been far too conservative, because they didn't factor in the effect of acidification on the bleaching process and how the two interact."

In an experiment on Heron Island, Australia, the CoECRS team erected large aquaria (30 in total), and created an environment with CO2, temperature and sunlight conditions believed to be the same for the middle and end of this century based on forecasts by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. For eight weeks the scientists studied these combined effects on several different reef organisms.

"We found that coralline algae, which glue the reef together and help coral larvae settle successfully, were highly sensitive to increased CO2. These may die on reefs such as those in the southern Great Barrier Reef (GBR) before the year 2050," said the study leader Dr. Ken Anthony according to ScienceAlert.

The most extreme global occurrence of coral bleaching due to a change in sea surface temperature happened in 1998. This catastrophic bleaching event was sparked by an El Niño (sometimes referred to as a Pacific warm episode) weather pattern and caused 16% of the world's reefs to die. Today almost all reefs show some form of coral bleaching.

The last site I dived, less than two months ago, was Sodwana Bay and there were clear signs of coral bleaching. We all know how long it takes for coral to grow, let alone for a whole reef system to form. So to get back to the question of whether coral bleaching is really that bad. Coral reefs are home to 25% of all marine life, including many species not yet known to science. The death of a reef will result in the disappearance

of hundreds of thousands of species of invertebrates and fish. The economic effect therefore on communities and countries that depend on this form of sea life can amount to billions of Rands. Although the direct threat to coral reefs by humans is far greater than that of coral bleaching, it too, indirectly, derives from human activity. There is no need to sell your dive gear on eBay just yet though.

In their efforts to monitor reefs along the coast of Madagascar, a survey team, funded by Conservation International and led by the conservation groups Blue Ventures and the Wildlife Conservation Society, found corals on small reefs that appear to be resilient to rising sea temperatures. Some areas had lost almost 99% of their corals due to coral bleaching along this coast.

A similar phenomenon happened in the Keppel Islands in the southern part of the Great Barrier Reef. This part of the Australian reef suffered severely from the 2006 coral bleaching event, and yet certain corals were able to recover and re-establish themselves in record time.

Only the future will tell us whether these recoveries were once-off occurrences. We still have so much to learn about the sea, the environment, corals and coral bleaching. It's a fact that coral bleaching is real and corals are dying.

Even with rare occurrences of corals surviving we need to make a conscious effort to leave a greener footprint if we are to leave one at all. The fact is that our children may not see the reefs we so often dive. And that because half of the carbon dioxide emissions produced by humans end up in the ocean.

That is an alarming amount. We do not know what the next study will reveal, and yes the topic of coral bleaching is still relatively new to us, but this should not stop us from living more 'green'. ■

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Marine Biodiversity

Is recreational diving really a threat?

Recreational diving (SCUBA-diving) has become a popular leisure activity in many parts of the world. This means that popular diving destinations are visited in ever higher numbers, which is good for the diving tourism industry and for the local economy. However, is it also good for marine biodiversity, the number and variety of sea life (plants and animals), that's found within it? If the answer is no, what can be done about it?

For some time, recreational diving around the world was considered a non-destructive activity that benefited local communities with little thought on the impact it may have on marine life, however several concerns has since arose. For example, coral reefs are affected by divers both by accidental and intentional actions (e.g. through direct contact, and breakage of upright corals

are responsible for this as experienced divers who are more proficient at diving cause less damage on reefs than inexperienced divers. While photographers need to be particularly careful as they have also been observed touching and holding on to reefs more than other divers.

Although corals may look like hard non-living structures, they consist of a layer of living tissue draped over a stony skeleton or sometimes rock. This layer of tissue can be easily punctured when a diver bumps against it with his/her fins, tank or any other equipment, effectively causing a wound like a person being cut. This increases the vulnerability of corals to infections which may be caused by bacteria, fungi or algae entering the wounded area. Although

corals have the potential to recover from minor bumps, accumulation of numerous intense bruises caused by divers and other sources (e.g. fish) may lead to a lethal situation for the reef. Another threat related to recreational diving is boat anchoring which has been proven, through long-term monitoring, to cause damage and loss to sensitive habitats such as seagrass meadows.

For those of us who are passionate about diving, it's hard to imagine life without it. However, recreational diving would not be nearly as fascinating without the marine life that captivates us and keeps us coming back again and again. So our challenge is how to maintain our diving experience without compromising marine life. Scientific research has shown that educational campaigns to increase diver awareness are viable methods for lessening diver impacts. Divers are reminded of the importance of controlling their buoyancy beyond only for their safety.

Efficient movement under water and well-controlled breathing patterns may seem insignificant but are good practices for a sensitive and technically sound scuba diver. If these techniques are adopted and practiced effectively, most divers will be more mindful of their potential effects when underwater.

Advanced technology and consequent safety improvements to diving equipment have been attracting increasing numbers of divers. This has sparked widespread concern on the impact of recreational diving just by the sheer number of divers now coming into contact with corals and other sensitive marine habitats.

The impact on marine biodiversity by recreational diving cannot be compared however, with more large-scale influences such as from trawling, mining, oil spills and increasing sea temperatures as a result of climate change. Regardless of this, the devastating fact is that 27% of the world's reefs have already deteriorated. As divers we need to make sure that our role in this is reduced as far as possible. Every scuba-diver


can become an ambassador for the ocean and convey a message of awareness and responsible use of, our marine environment by adopting the following guidelines:

Do's:

- Have a general understanding of the marine life that you might see while diving.
- Know about the maximum distances to which you may approach with sea life.
- Be a mindful diver and comply with safety measures.
- Ensure that you and your buddy are conscious of your impact on sea life.

Don'ts:

- Touching any objects, plants or animals while diving.
- Allow your buddy to touching or coming into contact with sea life
- Allow your diving equipment to hang loose while diving.

Let's ensure that the places we love to dive in remain healthy and pristine so not only ours but the next generation can also enjoy and appreciate our amazing marine biodiversity. 



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SCAN FOR MORE INFO

GLOBAL NEWS



DAN's 1,000 Safety Initiative

As part of an initiative supported by the Ministry of Tourism Indonesia, DAN has an objective to train 1,000 dive professionals in basic life support and emergency oxygen administration to enhance diving safety across Indonesia.

The initiative brings together all the training agencies and during May the DAN Team, supported by NAUI and PADI Instructors, completed free training to local dive guides, boat captains/crew, LOB crew, lifeguards, dive helpers, and local dive center staff in Labuan Bajo, Sanur, Amed, Tulamben, Pemuteran and Nusa Penida.

DAN Receives NAUI Innovation Award

Every year the National Association of Underwater Instructors (NAUI) recognises individuals and organisations that make significant contributions to advance the sport of diving and have a noteworthy impact on the dive industry.

DAN received the Award for Innovation, which NAUI presents to those who provide significant innovations to diving and dive education.

This prestigious award recognises DAN's longstanding commitment to diver safety and education. It also demonstrates the positive impact DAN continues to have on the dive community through pioneering and developing safe diving practices and education.

"We're grateful to NAUI for this recognition," DAN President and CEO Bill Ziefle said when receiving the award on behalf of the organisation. "Over the past few years we've made progress in key areas to make our products and programs more widely available — and to make diving safer for all. We're gratified to know divers and dive operators appreciate these programs."

An Afternoon with DAN at the Go Diving Show Sydney

On Sunday September 29th from 1pm on the ANZ stage at the Go Diving Show, Vice President of DAN Medical Services, Dr Matias Nochetto, will present common diving injuries (symptoms, first aid, treatment), remote diving accidents (challenges and case examples), and more!

Keep an eye out for more information regarding this event as we get closer to the show, which will also be shared on DAN World's Events page. [▶](#)



Treasures, Shipwrecks and the Dawn of Red Sea Diving

A Pioneer's Journey by Howard Rosenstein

With Forewords by Sylvia Earle and David Doubilet

Howard Rosenstein wasn't just opening the first dive school in Sharm El-Sheikh; he was cracking open a hidden world in Sinai. This true story dives headfirst into those groundbreaking times, where celebrated guests, uncharted dives and historical discoveries became the extraordinary routine.

It's a tale of grit, where resourcefulness and connections fueled Howard's pioneering spirit. From Roman coins glinting on the seabed to the dark, unmapped depths, his dives unveiled sunken treasures and secrets of the past. But these weren't just underwater adventures—they were tightrope walks between nations still at war. He braved floods, aided grounded ships, and even braved the depths of Mount Sinai itself.

Howard's journey wasn't a solitary one. He rubbed shoulders with underwater legends, bestselling authors, true photography greats, and even world leaders. He navigated murky shipwrecks, charmed amorous sharks, and found himself a player in the delicate dance of peace negotiations.

'A captivating voyage through the exotic wonders of the Middle East'— Amos Nachoum

'Howard Rosenstein had a dream that he made a reality – he built, and they came'— David Doubilet.

Through his dive centers, first in the Mediterranean and then exploding onto the Sinai scene, Howard became a pioneer of recreational diving. He shared the magic of the underwater world with a generation, igniting a passion that would forever burn, his only desire that it would never end. But peace, like the tide, comes with a change.

- The extraordinary story of the entrepreneur who pioneered Red Sea dive tourism with a cast of unforgettable characters.
- How a dive school in a train carriage at the edge of the desert became a global destination.
- A journey of success and purpose, illustrated with 200 images by the author and others, inc. renowned underwater photographer David Doubilet.

About the author

Howard Rosenstein is a one-off who was inducted into the International Scuba Diving Hall of Fame in 2009. In this memoir, he shares the more surprising as well as his favorite stories from the early part of his long diving career.

The book

Release date 2 July 2024

RRP GBP £30 | Hardback | ISBN 978-1-909455-53-5

208 pages | 1st Edition | 240 x 159 mm

Available from Divedup.com, online and from retailers

Praise for Treasures, Shipwrecks and the Dawn of Red Sea Diving

'Once in a great while a book comes along that combines masterful storytelling, riveting adventure, charismatic characters, and meaningful messages that will continue to haunt you long after the last page is turned. For me, Treasures, Shipwrecks and the Dawn of Red Sea Diving is that book... I urge readers to dive into this book for vicarious adventure, for insight into a life well lived, for reasons why you, too, should succumb to the urge to submerge, and for unbelievable stories that are most wonderful because they are true'

Sylvia Earle, Oceanographer, Founder of Mission Blue (from the Foreword).

'A rollicking fun tale... scuba divers worldwide are indebted to them'
Kathy Sullivan, history-making astronaut and oceanographer.

'A fascinating story. Howard's diving life took him from ancient history, to being among the first to see sharks mate in the wild, to world politics as his pioneering efforts helped make the wonders of the Red Sea available to divers from around the world.'
Marty Snyderman, underwater photographer, author and photojournalist.

'A captivating voyage through the exotic wonders of the Middle East, above in the Sinai desert and beneath the cobalt blue waters of the fabled Red Sea. His ability to traverse cultures and disciplines while remaining true to his vision is inspiring. This book records one man's adventures pioneering scuba diving during high politics in the Middle East and is a testament to the transformative power of curiosity, determination, love for the ocean and the desert, and respect for the world around us. I urge you to pick up a copy and embark on this thrilling journey'

Amos Nachoum, award winning nature photographer and diving travel pioneer, BigAnimals.com

HOWARD ROSENSTEIN

TREASURES, SHIPWRECKS & THE DAWN OF RED SEA DIVING



A Pioneer's Journey

Raja Ampat

The Four Kings

Raja Ampat is definitely one of my top five places to dive and retains the number one ranking for underwater biodiversity in the world. The locals tell a tale about a woman that found seven eggs. Four of the seven eggs hatched and became kings and occupied four of Raja Ampat's biggest islands namely Salawati, Batanta, Waigeo and Misool whilst the other three became a ghost, a woman and a stone.



Raja Ampat is in the eastern region of Indonesia and situated on the newly named West Papua province of Indonesia which was formerly known as Irian Jaya.

This stunning archipelago, comprising of four main islands known as Salawati, Batanta, Waigeo and Misool, has over 1 500 smaller islands, cays and shoals making Raja Ampat the largest marine national park in the entire Indonesia and is largely uninhabited.

The archipelago is located on the equator; some of the islands are in the Southern Hemisphere, with a few small islands northwest of Waigeo such as Sajang Island in the Northern Hemisphere. Some of the islands are close to the northernmost parts of the Australian continent and encompass more than 40 000km² of land and sea. Diving

The Raja Ampat archipelago contains the richest marine biodiversity on earth; marine surveys suggest that the marine life concentrations are the highest recorded on earth. The reason for the vast amount of marine life is strongly influenced by its position between the Indian and Pacific Oceans and also due to the fact that it is part of the Coral Triangle.

The Coral Triangle is composed of Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and East Timor and is the heart of the world's coral reef biodiversity.

The sheer amount of coral reefs attracts reef fish which in turn attracts pelagic's. During a Rapid Ecological Assessment by Nature Conservation's Indonesia programme, the renowned ichthyologist, Gerald Allen, broke the record for the most fish ever recorded on a single dive – 283.

His mate, coral expert Charles Vernon, recorded more than 450 species of hard corals.

It can be clearly seen from this that it is a highly effective marine

protected area with more than 1 500 species of fish. Five species of rare and endangered sea turtles including the Hawksbill sea turtle, 600 species of hard corals, 75% of the total for the entire world, 13 marine mammal species including the Dugong are also found here.

In short, there is a lot of everything everywhere and this makes it the best dive site in the world, especially if you are into photography.

The best way to explore the islands of Raja Ampat is by liveaboard and my recommendation is Sea Safari Cruises that operate all over Indonesia. Sea Safari Cruises is one of the top operators in the area and has the largest fleet of luxury liveaboard vessels in Indonesia.

Scuba diving with them is a tremendous treat, with experienced dive guides and crew making sure you'll have all you need on the trip. You will kit up once when you get on the boat and then the friendly dive guides and



crew sort make sure that your tank is filled and your gear in place. The ENOS satellite tracking system is used for safety for all divers, so if you by chance lose the dive guides or group, the boat will be able to find you wherever you are, which is a big relief, as there are so many islands and strong currents running through them.

The vessel's public areas are spacious and well-kept with everything you need to enjoy your adventure. The crew is always helpful and friendly, trying to make your stay as pleasant as possible.

They have a couple of different itineraries around Raja Ampat and I enjoyed a six night safari with them. The itinerary for the week is packed full with three dives a day, finishing the day a night dive, and to complete a fantastic day, you have top class meals and snacks between or after every dive.

On your first day of the safari a representative will either pick you up from the Sorong Airport or from your

hotel and will escort you to the boat. Welcome drinks are served followed by a full safety briefing, cabin allocation and ship orientation. Afterwards you will get your gear ready to do a check out dive just outside Sorong. It is a very nice dive with a lot to see, just to get you excited for what is yet to come.

The journey starts with sailing across the Dampier Straits to the islands.

This stretch of water is a well-known highway for cetaceans. Its well worth relaxing out on deck and keeping your eyes open for Bryde's whales, Sperm whales and Pygmy sperm whales, Short-finned pilot whales, Orcas, False killer whales, Pygmy killer whales, lots of different Dolphins and even Blue whales!

Just after sunrise the next morning I walked out of my cabin and the view was breath-taking; small islands, formed and curved years ago by the tectonic forces of Mother Nature, were everywhere.



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On the first day's diving menu was Penemu Island with Melissa's Garden, Barracuda Reef, Galaxy, and to top it off a night dive on Anita's Garden. Around the islands there is plenty to see and explore underwater.

There are soft and hard corals all over, which are patrolled by various schools of fish from the Fusilier family. A Blue-spotted ribbon tail ray sought peace and quiet under one rocky shelter and Harlequin sweetlips stopped off for a dental clean from a cleaner Wrasse.

The shallows that get most of the stronger currents are littered with stunning yellow and orange Gorgonian fans with pretty Anthias and Damselfish milling around them dizzily like living sequins.

After the night dive we headed to Yanggefo Island. The next day we had something special; dive sites with vibrant orange soft corals and hard corals, schools of Barracudas, Bumphead parrot fish and Sea snakes.

The area offers schools of Bat fish, Surgeon fish and Snappers with the occasional Wobbegong sleeping under the coral heads. At the end of our last dive we had the opportunity to go into the mangroves which offered some stunning photo opportunities, as when the sun is low in the sky it shines shafts of light through the mangroves.

Day four was manta day. Around Airborek Island are a couple of Manta dive sites; Manta Sandy and Manta Ridge are two of the most reliable Manta congregation spots in the Dampier Strait.

Here you can just lay back and see these majestic animals somersaulting through the water while they are cleaned by several species of Wrasse and even Butterflyfish.

Dampier Strait was on the menu for day five where we could explore Swingkrai Mikes Point, Sardine Reef, Mioskon and Friwinbondan. The reefs was packed with hard and soft corals



and surrounded by fish of various sizes, from schools of brightly coloured Anthias, silvery Fusiliers, Horse-eyed and Bluefin jacks, to Spanish mackerel, Batfish and some solitary Dog-tooth tuna. Whitetip and Blacktip reef sharks patrolled the lower areas and a resting Wobbegong can often be found.

The last day of diving on the boat before we headed back to Sorong was definitely my favourite location; diving around Kri island was amazing and after we dived a pinnacle called Blue Magic we told the dive masters that we wanted to change the schedule and we want to dive it again.

Blue Magic is a pinnacle which stands up from the ocean floor in the middle of nowhere and it is a giant Manta magnet. This was the site where the most amounts of fish species were counted on a single dive.

Diving down to 30 meters, we saw Barbigant's pygmy seahorses and a decent school of Big-eye jacks, large schools of Barracuda, Surgeon fish,

Bumphead parrotfish and many friendly turtles. Regular sightings of sharks such as Wobbegongs, White tip reef sharks and Grey reef sharks can be expected during your dive.

After we had seen all the great marine life around the pinnacle we went to the reef top at 10 meters and stayed there, hanging back from one of the cleaning stations. Within a few minutes, a black Oceanic manta turned up and just kept circling. After the first dive here, I just wanted to keep coming back.

Raja Ampat diving is breathtakingly spectacular and truly unforgettable. Diving conditions

The conditions are usually very good with flat seas and water temperatures are about 28 °C all year around.

Visibility is mostly outstanding, but you can expect anything from 10 to 30 meters depending on the dive site. The current varies from none to very strong depending on the location. Many dives are drift diving between small islands to great wall dives with depths



Dive the World

Raja Ampat

By: Amilda Boshoff

range from 10 to 40 meters.

Climate

This is an all-year dive destination but the best time to visit Raja Ampat is during the dry October-April period, which is by contrast the rainiest period in western and central Indonesia.

Because of Raja Ampat's tropical climate, rain can fall unpredictably, although much less frequently during the dry season.

Temperatures remain consistent throughout the year, averaging 25-32° Celsius, but humidity may make it feel much hotter.

Culture

The people live in a small colony of tribes which spread around Raja Ampat. The main occupation for people around this area is fishing since the area is dominated by the sea. Although traditional culture still strongly exists, they are very

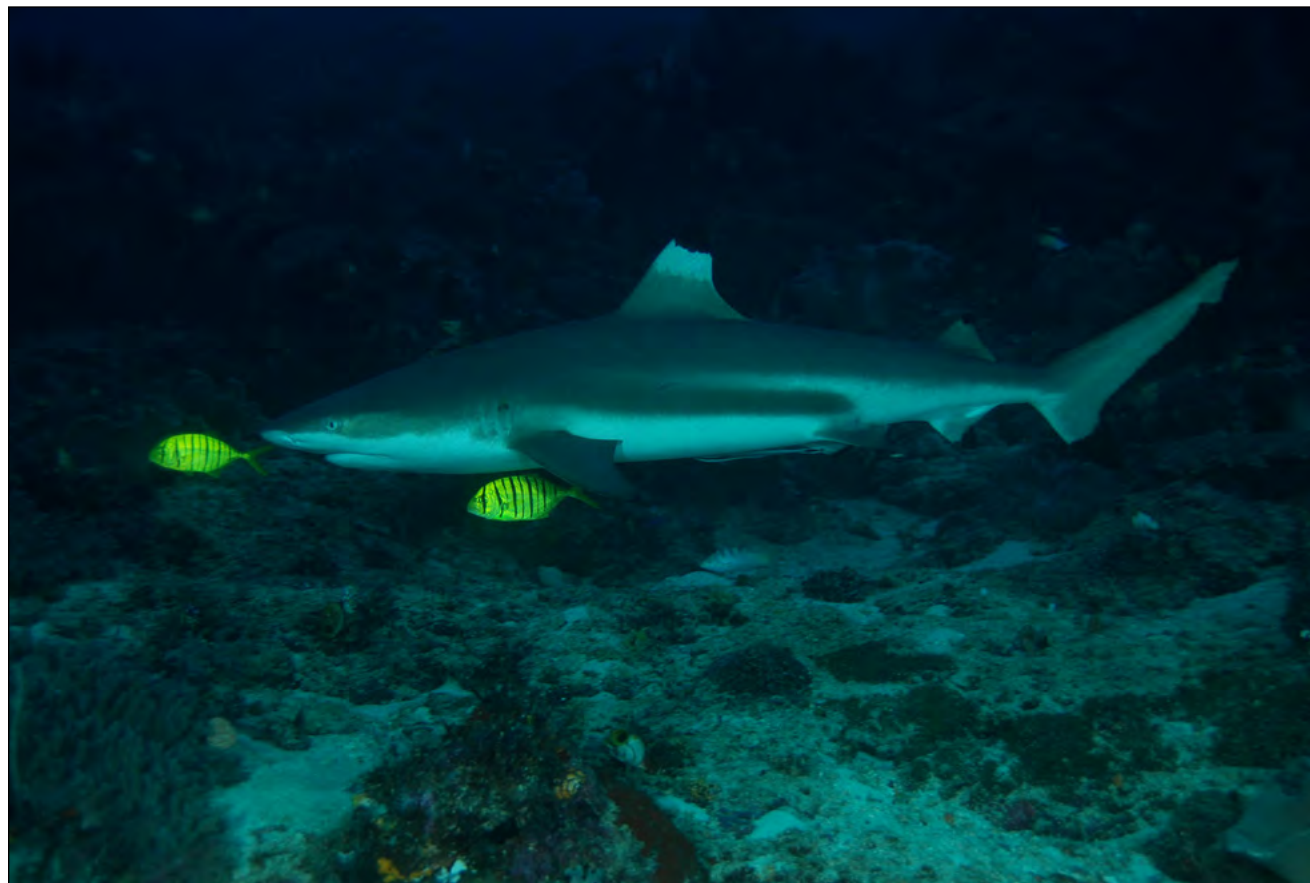
welcoming to visitors. Their religion is predominantly Christian.

Getting there

We travelled from Perth Western Australia to Bali and stayed the night at hotel close to the Airport as we had to get a flight to Jakarta that evening and had a 2 hour layover in Jakarta before flying to Sorong.

On our last leg from Jakarta to Sorong, our seats couldn't recline (emergency seats for extra leg room- Yay!) and boy is it hard to get a shut eye if your head keeps bobbing as you can't use a neck pillow being in the upright position! The main ports to Sorong are Jakarta, Makassar or Manado. Garuda operate regular flights to this region and allow you extra weight for your dive gear.

We were quite tired after all the travel and got a taxi from the airport in Sorong to the Swiss Bell hotel. They were so kind to let us book in early and have breakfast. Tired was an



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understatement, thankful for a full belly and a comfy bed we had a shower and a long nap before exploring the hotel and had a very nice buffet supper.

The next morning after breakfast and checkout, we were picked up by representatives of seasafari cruises and took us to the port where a zodiac took us to the boat.

Time Zone

Indonesia has three Time Zones, so please be aware of this when booking domestic flights. Eastern Indonesia (Raja Ampat): GMT +9

Marine Park Fees

1,000,000 Indonesian Rupiah (about 100 dollars) per person payable in cash on site. You receive a tag to attach to your BCD and it is valid for one calendar year.

Contact Service Provider to confirm as it might have changed in the mean time)

Currency

Indonesian rupiah, and new US dollar notes can be exchanged.

Topside attractions

Raja Ampat offers very little for the non-diver, but birding and fishing are available.

Language

Bahasa Indonesian; English widely spoken.

Visas

Required. Some nationalities may purchase a 30-day visa at the airport, so check with your embassy.

About Sea Safari Cruises

Sea Safari Cruises provide leisure expeditions to all of the out-of-the-way islands to the east of Bali. From the very moment that you step aboard one of their wooden schooners you will know that you made the right decision by booking with them.

There vessels are luxurious 35+ meter Phinisi style wooden schooners. They

offer you plenty of choice to visit Bali's neighbouring islands for land tours including bird watching, trekking, waterfalls, volcanos and world class snorkelling.

The vessels of Sea Safari are as simple as they are attractive. Your home-away-from-home is a spacious sailing vessel and you have a comfortable cabin with your own en-suite bathroom. Sit back and relax while their attentive but discrete crew take care of everything.

Destinations Sea Safari Cruises offer Komodo, Raja Ampat, Nusa Lembongan, Labuan Bajo, Lombok, The Gili Islands, Sumbawa, The Spice Trail, Ambon, The Forgotten Islands, Flores, Alor or suggest an itinerary and they will work on it for you.

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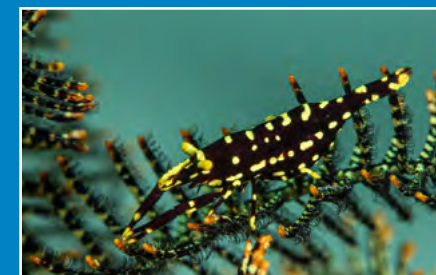
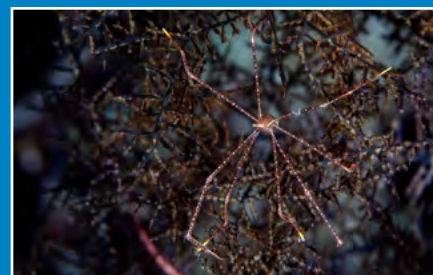
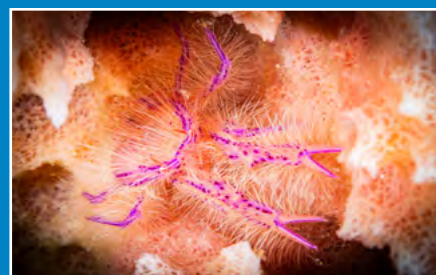
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Malapascua



Malapascua magic...diving with the Thresher Sharks



I was with a 'bubble' (collective noun?) of divers from Sydney, Melbourne, and London in March 2024 and Malapascua was the final stop on our dive trip.

We had just spent 7 days diving at Moalboal, Magic Island Resort, and given we were in the vicinity we thought we would add on Malapascua as an extension.

I have included a few shots from Moalboal because it is worth a visit and the diving was good.

To get to Malapascua is around a six hour drive up the West coast of Cebu Island and a 30-minute boat trip across to the island itself.

As a bit of a hint do not wear your Sunday best for the trip to and from Malapascua.

It can be a touch choppy, and you will probably have to walk straight off or on

to Bangka boat onto the beach which, depending on the tide, can mean a bit of a wade through the shallows.

We checked in at Thresher Shark Divers along the front, completed the obligatory paperwork and then headed off to our accommodation.

The island was very full so don't be tempted to just turn up without sorting out your accommodation first. I suspect getting onto a dive boat might be slightly less of an issue.

Before getting into the Thresher Sharks, I should mention that they are not the only diving you can do from Malapascua.

It is the only diving we did however so I feel as though I should mention Gato Island, Lighthouse, and Nunez Shoal (amongst others) but we did not dive there, and you will have to check them out yourself.



Thresher Sharks are one of the somewhat boringly named order of Lamniformes or Mackerel Sharks. Nothing boring about that group of sharks though given they include Great Whites, Makos and Megamouths to name a few.

There are three Thresher Shark species (possibly a fourth in the offing) and rather like many of the sharks are all listed as vulnerable.

The sharks off Malapascua are Pelagic Thresher Sharks (*Alopias pelagicus*), as opposed to Bigeye or Common Threshers.

There is one feature that is immediately distinctive about Threshers. That is its large tail or caudal fin which is about the same size as the shark's body.

There was conjecture for a long time about what the primary use of the tail was for. Scientists thought it might be for feeding in some way, but it wasn't until relatively recently (mid 2000's) that divers observed the Thresher sharks using their tails to hunt.

This was observed at Malapascua. The shark flicks its tail forward in a 180-degree arc in less than half a second in a similar action to that of a scorpion. The head dips down about 45 degrees and the tail whips over the top, stunning or hitting sardine or mackerel like fish.

Scientists do not know if this is the only way these sharks feed and the only reason it has been observed in shallower water is most likely the fish stocks at deeper levels have been depleted.

The Threshers have relatively small mouths, suited to sardines, small tuna, mackerel and the like.

There have been no known cases of a Thresher Shark biting anyone other

than the one person deserving of it when they decided to pull the shark's tail.

My observation was that the sharks were quite skittish, and they are much more likely to cut and run rather than head towards you. The Thresher Sharks are in much more danger from humans through overfishing than we are from them...much more.

The shoals off Malapascua are, to my knowledge, the only spot in the world where you can almost guarantee Thresher Sharks. We did five dives on Kimud Shoal and saw Thresher sharks on every dive.

We did one dive on Monad Shoal and saw none. That's why you go to Malapascua....and currently Kimud Shoal.

It used to be the case that you saw the Threshers at Monad Shoal and your chance to see them was limited to the hours around dawn. If you didn't depart from Malapascua at 5 am you were not going to see the Threshers.

It seems that for the moment two things have happened. Firstly, the Threshers have moved (a COVID thing apparently) and are now seen at Kimud shoal not Monad Shoal. Kimud Shoal is approximately 45 minutes gentle 'chug' from Malapascua.

Monad was only about 20 minutes. Secondly, the Threshers have increased their hours and we saw them through from 7:30 am to 1:30 pm, on every dive. Despite their propensity to live at depths of 100-300 metres these Sharks stuck with us right up to the safety stop.

We did not see any examples of them feeding but we did see them being cleaned at various cleaning stations on top of the Shoal.

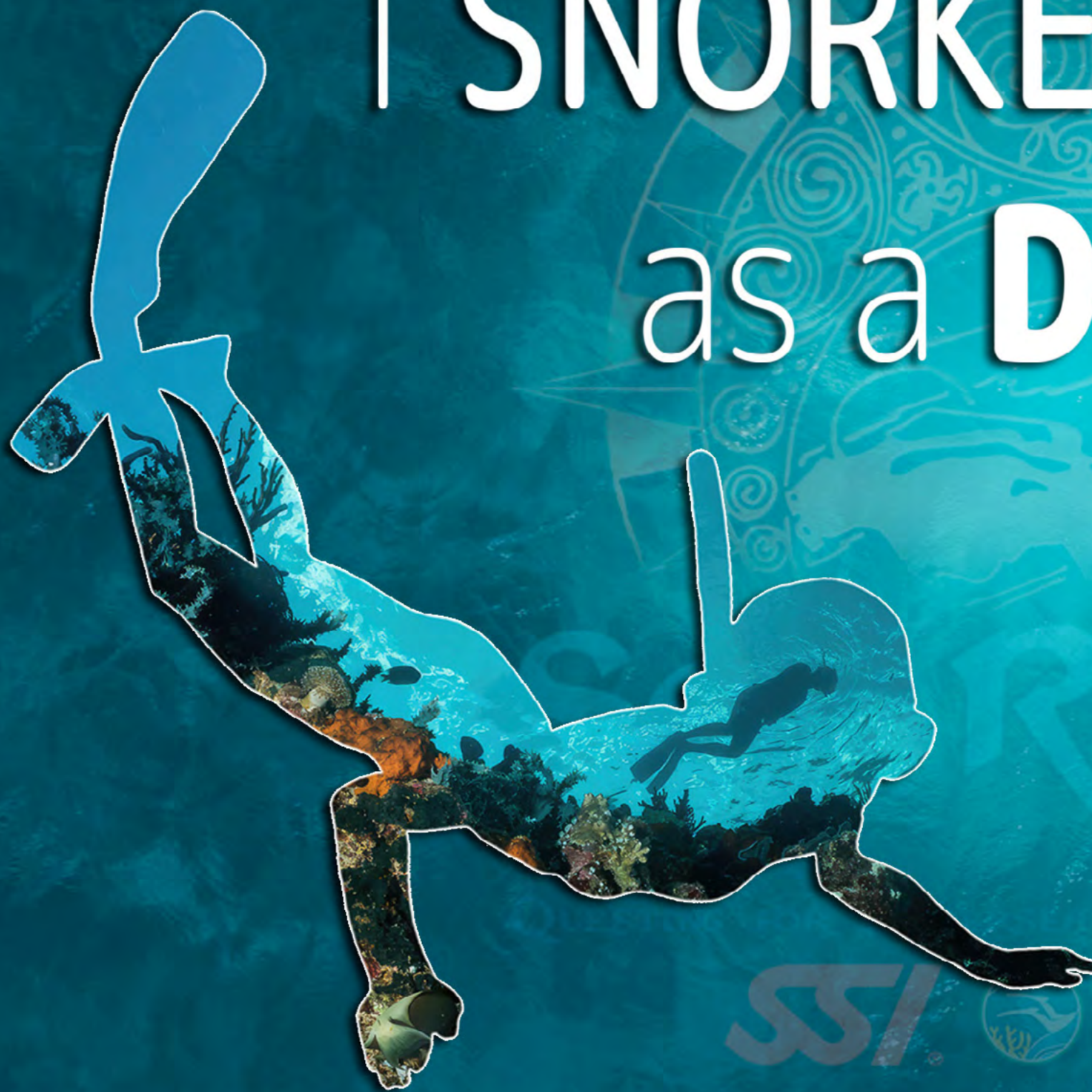
On day one we headed out to Monad



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Shoal because even though the Thresher Sharks had moved there was a chance to see Tiger Sharks and Bull Sharks.

We didn't see either of those and, with nothing much of any larger fish species (my logbook tells me I saw one White Tip disappearing into the distance), it was a very average dive.

The Shoal tops out around the 25 metres and is pretty devoid of corals, sponges, or other interesting fish life. We did one dive there and all agreed we should hightail it to Kimud Shoal rather than try again.

Kimud Shoal tops out around the 12-metre mark and then drops off around the sides to 200 metres or so. The Thresher Sharks tended to hang around close to the edges of this seamount.

My computer tells me we went no deeper than 24 metres, but you could comfortably hang around at that 18-metre mark if you are Open Water certified.

Apart from the obvious attraction of the Thresher Sharks, Kimud Shoal is a better dive site than Monad Shoal.

There are some corals around the edges and a few more species of fish hanging around on top of the Shoal. You would feel cheated if you didn't see a Thresher, but you could still have a half decent dive on this site.

The shallower depth, compared to Monad Shoal, means longer No Stop times, less Nitrogen build up over your dives and more natural light.

You must shoot using only natural light because of the Thresher's sensitivity to light. Given the sharks largely live at depth, they have relatively large eyes for their size and are very easily

spooked by strobes or torches.

One of our number forgot to turn off their flash on their Olympus compact (having had an interesting Nudibranch pointed out to them) so when they took a shot their flash fired, and the Thresher moved very quickly out of range...very quickly.

Now this was only a compact camera flash so goodness knows where the shark would have ended up if you were using double strobes.

Luckily the sharks continued to hang around and of course that person acquired the nickname 'Flash' for the remainder of the trip! I counted up to 17 boats on the shoal at one stage...that's probably up to 100 divers in the one area. Having said that it didn't feel like that.



For a start the various boats disgorged and regained their divers at different times...so some were on a surface interval, some were on their safety stop and some were underneath.

The other thing is that the shoal is reasonably large so although we did come across other divers it did not feel too crowded. Yes, there was the odd occasion where you wanted a diver with an action camera mounted on a long stick to get out of the way and stop sticking it right in front of the sharks but overall, it was pretty good.

Unlike some dive sites you were not necessarily hanging around in the same spot to see the Sharks. They seemed happy to patrol around the rim of the shoal and come in from time to time for a clean or a look.

In case you are wondering nobody is feeding the sharks...well not that I observed anyway. Our boat was also right onto the no flash and neutral buoyancy briefing.

I found the sharks quite curious and if

you stayed low didn't flap around and controlled your breathing, they would come a little closer with each pass. They probably came within a metre or two on a couple of the passes they made.

They even followed us up to the safety stop. So, despite their reputation for only appearing in the dim light of dawn they seemed perfectly happy in the relatively bright conditions at 5 metres.

Thresher Sharks of any family are relatively rare for divers to see, and we probably saw 6-10 of them over the 5 dives. I can't help feeling we were very lucky, certainly our Dive Guides told us we had a very good encounter.

They are beautiful sharks with a shimmering silvery blue body accentuated by their white underside.

They move slowly and very gracefully through the water until they need to move quickly; then they move very quickly. It was a magical set of dives and I hope you get the opportunity to get to Malapascua for a few dives one day. 🐡



Heart Health & Diving



Scuba diving exposes you to many factors, including immersion, cold, hyperbaric breathing gas, elevated breathing pressure, exercise, and stress, as well as a post-dive risk of gas bubbles circulating in your blood.

Your heart's capacity to support elevated blood output decreases with age and other risk factors. Having a healthy heart is of the utmost importance to your safety while scuba diving as well as to your ability to exercise in general and your lifespan.

Coronary Artery Disease

Coronary atherosclerosis is the result of cholesterol and other material accumulating along the walls of the arteries of the heart.

The result is a progressively increasing blockage to blood flow.

Many factors contribute to the development of coronary atherosclerosis: a diet high in fat and cholesterol, smoking, hypertension, increasing age, and family history. Coronary artery disease is a leading cause of death worldwide.

If you have coronary artery disease with symptoms, do not dive. Coronary artery disease results in diminished delivery of blood — and therefore oxygen — to the muscular tissue of the heart.

Exercise increases the heart's need for oxygen. Depriving heart tissue of oxygen can lead to unconsciousness or a heart attack.

The classic symptom of coronary artery disease is chest pain, especially when it follows exertion. Unfortunately, many people have no symptoms before they experience a heart attack.

Cardiovascular disease is a significant cause of death among divers. Older divers and those who have significant risk factors for coronary artery disease should have regular medical evaluations and appropriate studies such as exercise stress tests.

Hypertension

Hypertension, or high blood pressure, is one of the most common medical conditions seen in divers (and in the general population).

A thorough medical evaluation should be performed to find a treatable cause for hypertension; in most cases, however, none will be found.

In the short-term, people with hypertension have an elevated risk of a stroke due to rupture of blood vessels in the brain. Long-term detrimental effects are more common; they include coronary artery disease, kidney disease, congestive heart failure, eye problems, and cerebrovascular disease.

Mild hypertension may be controlled with diet and exercise, but medication is often necessary. If the diver's blood pressure is under control, the main concerns should be the side effects of any medication they're taking and evidence of any organ damage.

Many classes of drugs are used to treat hypertension, with varying side effects. Some individuals must change medications after one drug becomes ineffective. Others might require more than one drug taken at the same time to keep the blood pressure under control.

Most anti-hypertensive medications are compatible with diving as long as the side effects are minimal and the diver's performance in the water is not significantly compromised.

Regular physical examinations and screening for the long-term consequences of hypertension are necessary. Any diver with longstanding high blood pressure should be monitored for secondary effects on the heart and kidneys.

Patent Foramen Ovale

The foramen ovale is an opening that exists between the right and left atria, the two upper chambers of the heart.

During the fetal period, this opening is necessary for blood to bypass the circulation of the lungs (since there is no air in the lungs at this time) and go directly to the rest of the body.

Within the first few days of life, this opening seals over, ending the link between these heart chambers. In

approximately 25-30 percent of people, this opening persists and is called a patent foramen ovale (PFO).

Under certain circumstances, a PFO can result in shunting of blood from the right side of the heart to the left side.

Innocuous bubbles that may develop in the venous side of the circulation after a dive may be shunted to the left side of the heart and then distributed through the arteries. The result is that a paradoxical gas embolism or severe decompression sickness can result from a seemingly benign dive profile.

Studies of divers with severe decompression sickness have shown a rate of PFO higher than that observed in the general population.

Special Doppler bubble contrast studies can identify a PFO. A diver with a known PFO should be aware of the potential increased risk of decompression illness.

A diver with a PFO who has suffered an embolism or serious decompression sickness after a low-risk dive profile should likely refrain from future diving.

At present, most diving physicians agree that the risk of a problem associated with a PFO is not significant enough to warrant widespread screening of all divers.

An episode of severe decompression illness that is not explained by the dive profile should initiate an evaluation for the existence of a PFO.

DAN is Your Diving Safety Association: For more diving health and safety resources visit World.DAN.org 



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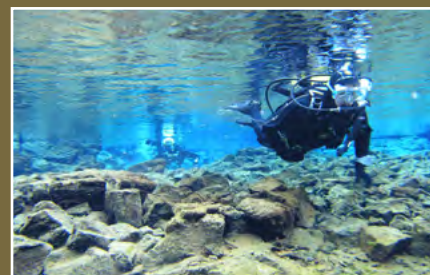
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By: Fiona McIntoch

Diving Iceland

A blackened island filled with volcanoes, glaciers, geothermal pools nestled in lava fields.



Iceland had always conjured up some misplaced romantic appeal... abandoned in the Arctic, a blackened island filled with volcanoes, glaciers, geothermal pools nestled in lava fields, an insane Scandinavian party circuit, the rare opportunity to eat grilled Puffin. One has to admit that it is a strangely unique place.

The prospect of diving the island simply lent to the appeal.

The dive site is that of Silfra, in the unpronounceable Thingvellir National Park.

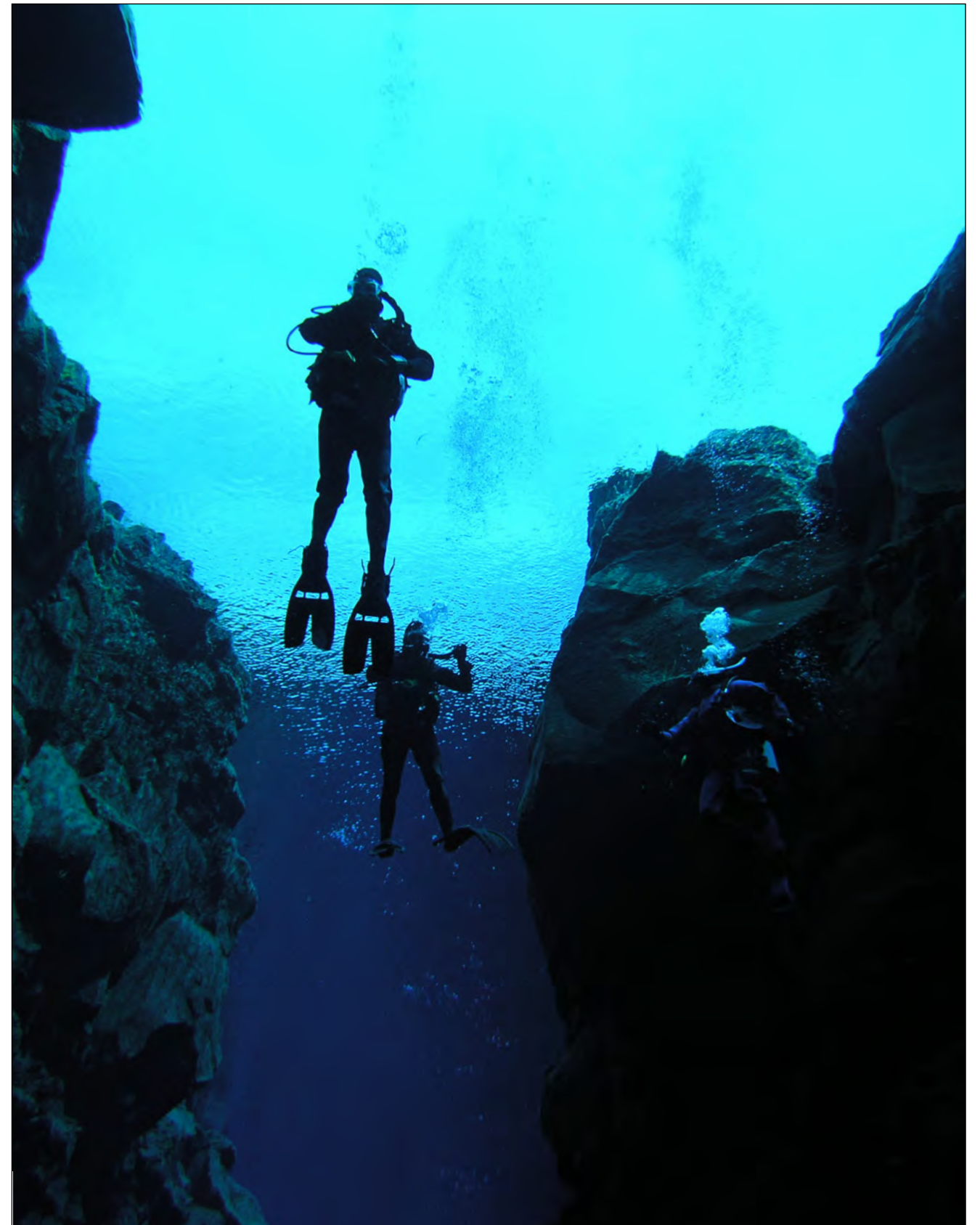
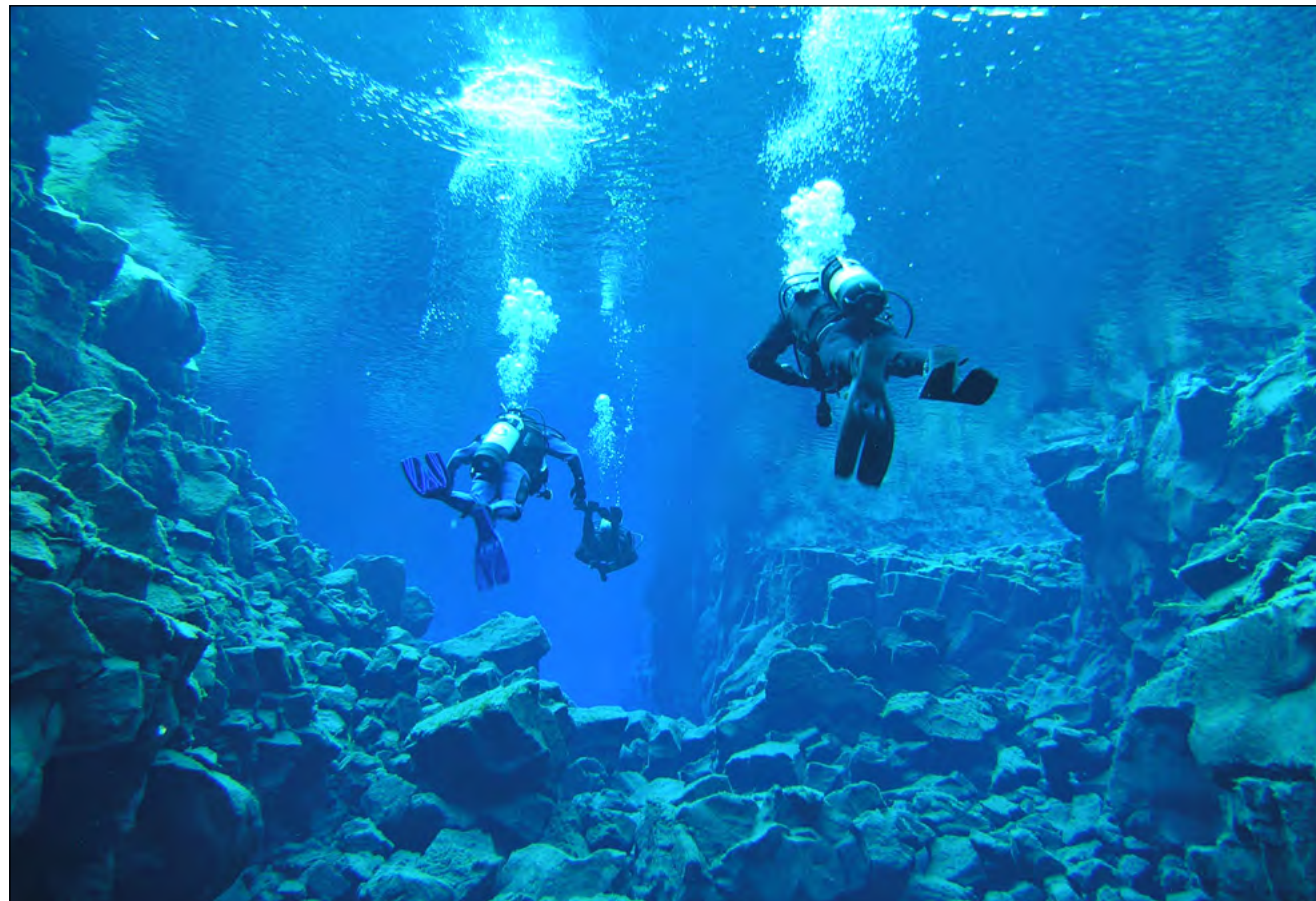
A little background is necessary to understand why this site may be slightly different from any other on the planet.

Iceland has the dubious honour of

sitting on the mid-Atlantic ridge, constantly being torn apart at an incredible 2cm per year as the two tectonic plates, home to the continental masses of Eurasia and America respectively, battle each other.

Ignoring for a second that my knowledge of the fundamentals of geology are probably second only to that of my math, this translates to the constant rupture and healing of a terrestrial fissure, passing through Iceland's western peninsula. "Who cares?" would be my knee-jerk response.

However, land-based tourists arrive at the World Heritage site everyday (probably less in number during the two months of perpetual winter darkness) simply to marvel not only at this geologic spectacle but



Exploration

Diving Iceland

at the incredible landscape... a glacial lake dotted with islands, a horizon littered with dormant volcanoes, glaciers and lava fields, and of course, evidence of the plate activity as fissures carve their way up the mountainside.

Bearing in mind that the geological activity is not merely limited to the landscape, but rather extends underwater, this should pique a little more interest from the diving community.

The prospect of venturing between the continental plates of Eurasia and America (poetic license now tending towards scientific sacrilege) was enticing.

The pick-up and transfer to the dive site had been smooth and professional (although I was still

trying to justify the cost).

We picked up another diver, a British tourist, irked by the fact that one could probably fund a dive trip to South East Asia for the price of a weekend in Reykjavik, together with an Icelandic yoghurt and a banana (I should qualify the latter as my own, and to their credit, it was a very nice banana).

Thingvellir is a comfortable 40 minute drive from Reykjavik. The weather was perfect... a rare cloudless blue sky and a hellish 10°C outside.

It was at the dive site that we met Hedinn Olafsson, instructor and owner of Dive Iceland.

A comprehensive briefing detailed the plan for the two dives.



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Image © Darek Sepiolo

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Diving Kimbe Bay Reefs

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Tropical bungalows in rainforest gardens with waterfront and garden views.

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MV OCEANIA

Our newest dive liveaboard operating out of Walindi Resort since 2019.

Diving Bismarck Sea and Milne Bay

Image © Peter Lange



MV Oceania is a 27 metre catamaran catering for up to 16 divers in 8 cabins. Modern comfort with two guest deck levels.

Image © Grant Thomas



We subsequently kitted up in immaculate Poseidan crushed neoprene drysuits, 7mm gloves and hoodies, and top of the range coldwater dive-gear.

Have I mentioned that the water temperature hovers between a refreshing 1-4°C?

Entry was off a fixed metal platform overlooking the fissure.

Even from the surface one can appreciate the crystal-clear water – being glacial in origin, the viz is constant and never falters below an incredible 50-100m!

It is truly perfect.

Descending the ladder, filled with excitement and trepidation, we entered the underwater canyon.

The first emotion was intense pain as an 'ice-cream headache'

threatened to implode my skull.

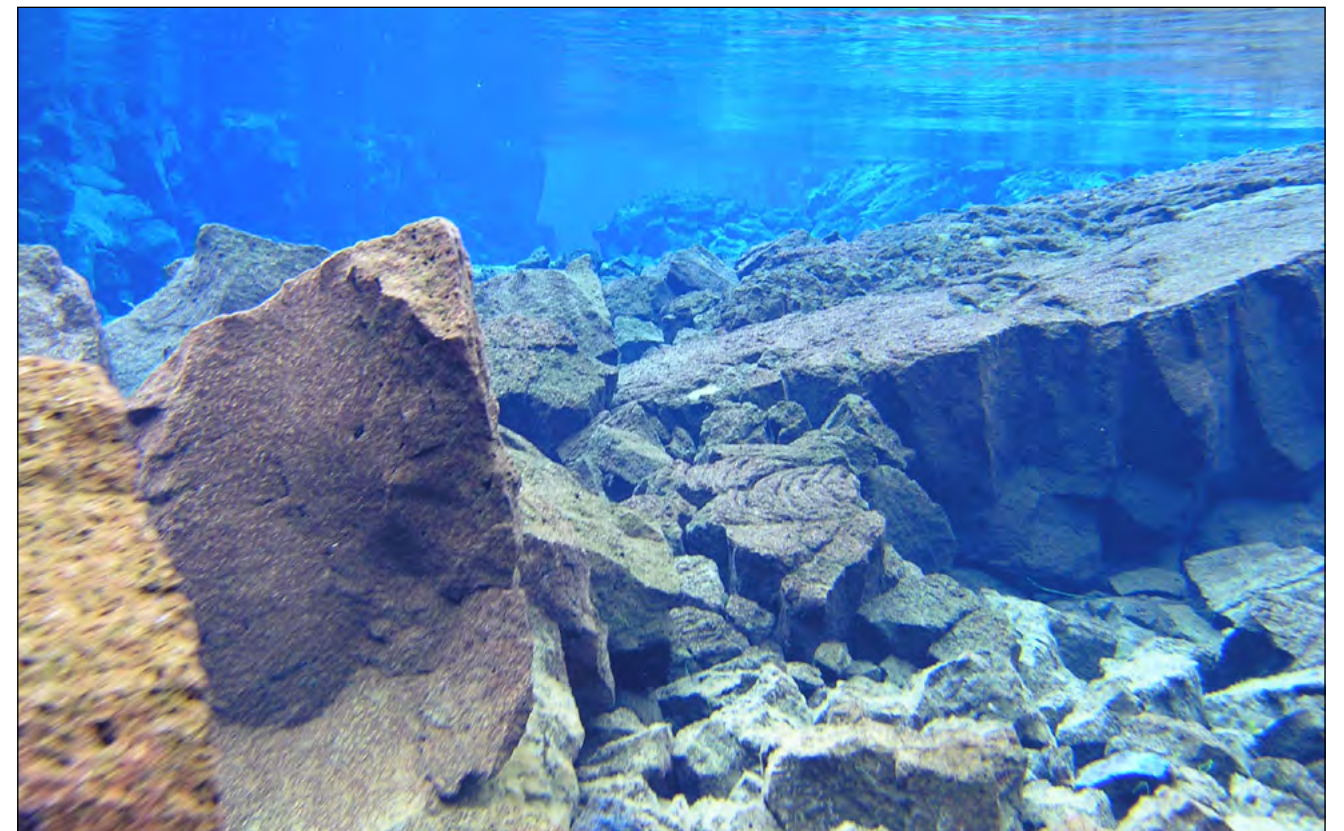
4°C water for those complaining about 19°C at Sodwana (reminiscing back to my previous weekend) is very cold ('very' can be more aptly substituted by your expletive of choice).

Fortunately, the pain settled down to a low-grade grumble.

The canyon is truly spectacular... framed in it's entirety by immaculate visibility, you really gain the sense of flying through the rock falls with a gentle current helping you along.

The depth was set at a comfortable 10-15m... no real need to test the 70m+ depth.

I'm still uncertain as to what extent this marvel has really been fully explored; gazing down one can see stone bridges and swim-throughs snaking their way through the



chasm.

Negotiating some of the shallow rockfalls we descended again to a surreal sand steppe, guarded by the sheer walls of the canyon.

A simple detour brought us to Hedinn's 'Blue Lagoon' (alluding to the contrasting milky blue waters of the designer geothermal spa near Keflavik International Airport), a pool of water only experience can describe.

Of course, by this point in the dive, my hands were so cold it felt like some one had deep-frozen the digits and was now gnawing away at them.

Sorry, I'll get back to the graphic depiction of beauty and natural wonder now... Within the floor of the pool, one could see evidence of the constant geological activity as new cracks and fissures are forming.

Hedinn maintains that these cracks have increased in size since he started diving Silfra. The viz in the pool is even better than that of the canyon.

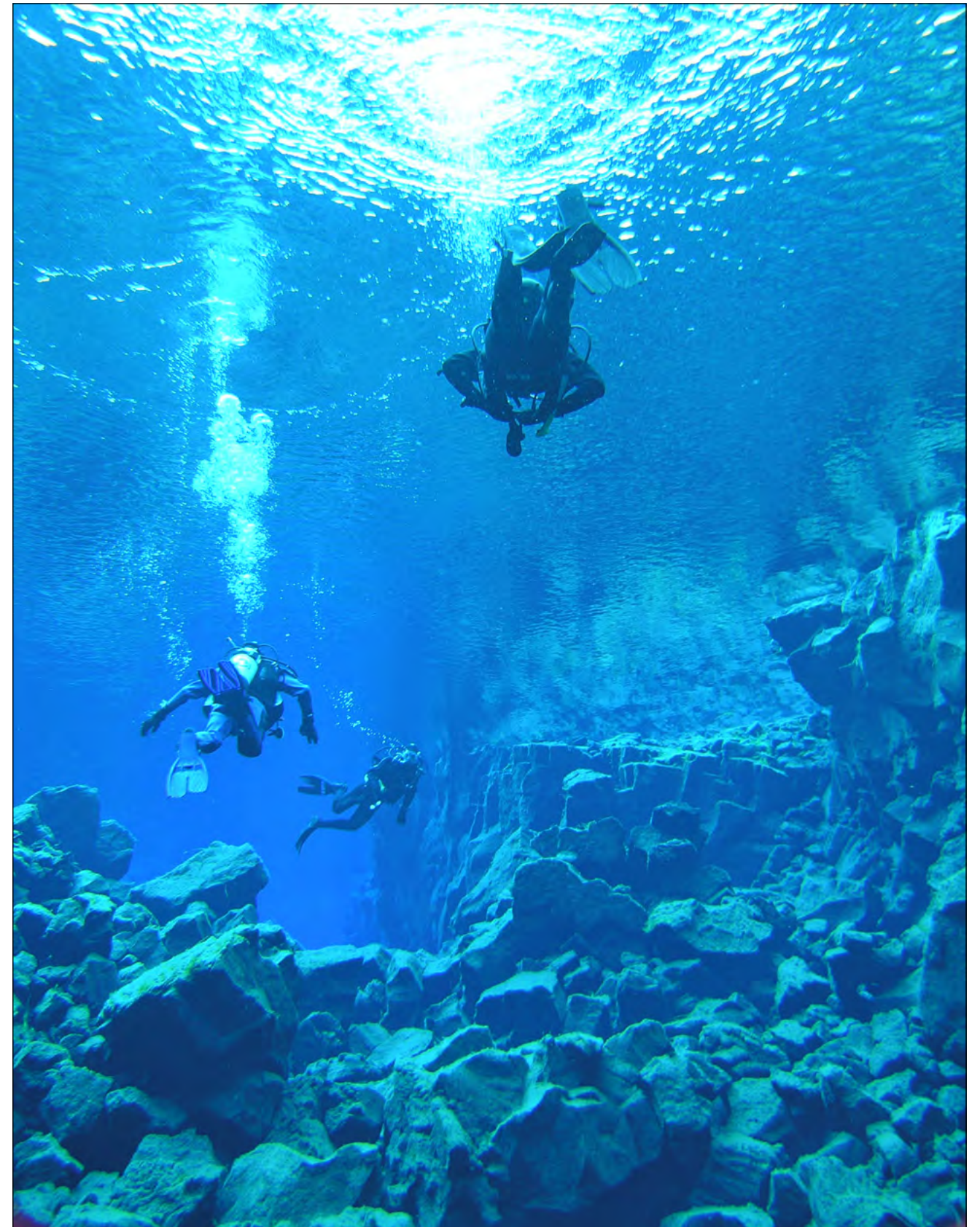
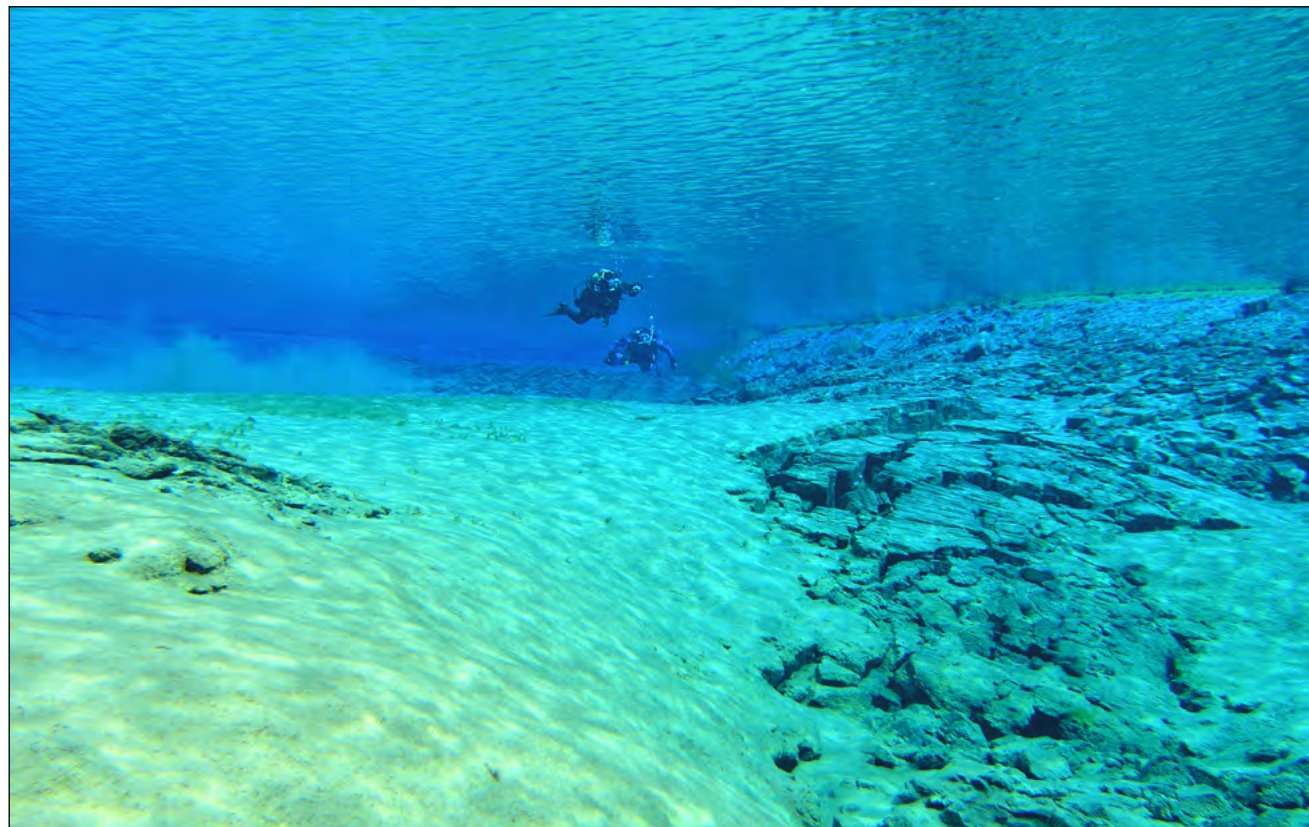
After 31 minutes I surfaced, greeted by glaciers and a volcanic ice mound with snow on the horizon.

I bobbed clumsily on my back while attempting to dispense with my fins using popsicles as instrumentation.

Thus began the hike back to the vehicle. I could only smile.

No, really, I could only smile as my face had adopted this disturbing, fixed-frozen clown-face.

After an hour surface interval spent discussing Icelandic adventure options, a seemingly endless list of extreme activities, we returned to the same entry point for our second




dive. This would, however, be different, having now acclimatised to the frigid water.

Initially following a similar path to that of the first dive, the road less travelled soon diverged, and we found ourselves traversing tunnels and swim-throughs, snaking into some of the collapsed rockfalls within the chasm.

Emerging after 28 minutes, I have to say that I was not done – it was fantastic – the rockfalls have created a near-labyrinth. In contrast to many other dive sites, one is unrestricted in one's view of the spectacular surrounds.

The experience was certainly unforgettable, and one which I will repeat in a heartbeat. T

he dive site, boasted by Hedinn to be one of the world's greats, really lives up to it's fabled reputation. My only regret is not having stayed longer to take in the many wonders of this strange island. 

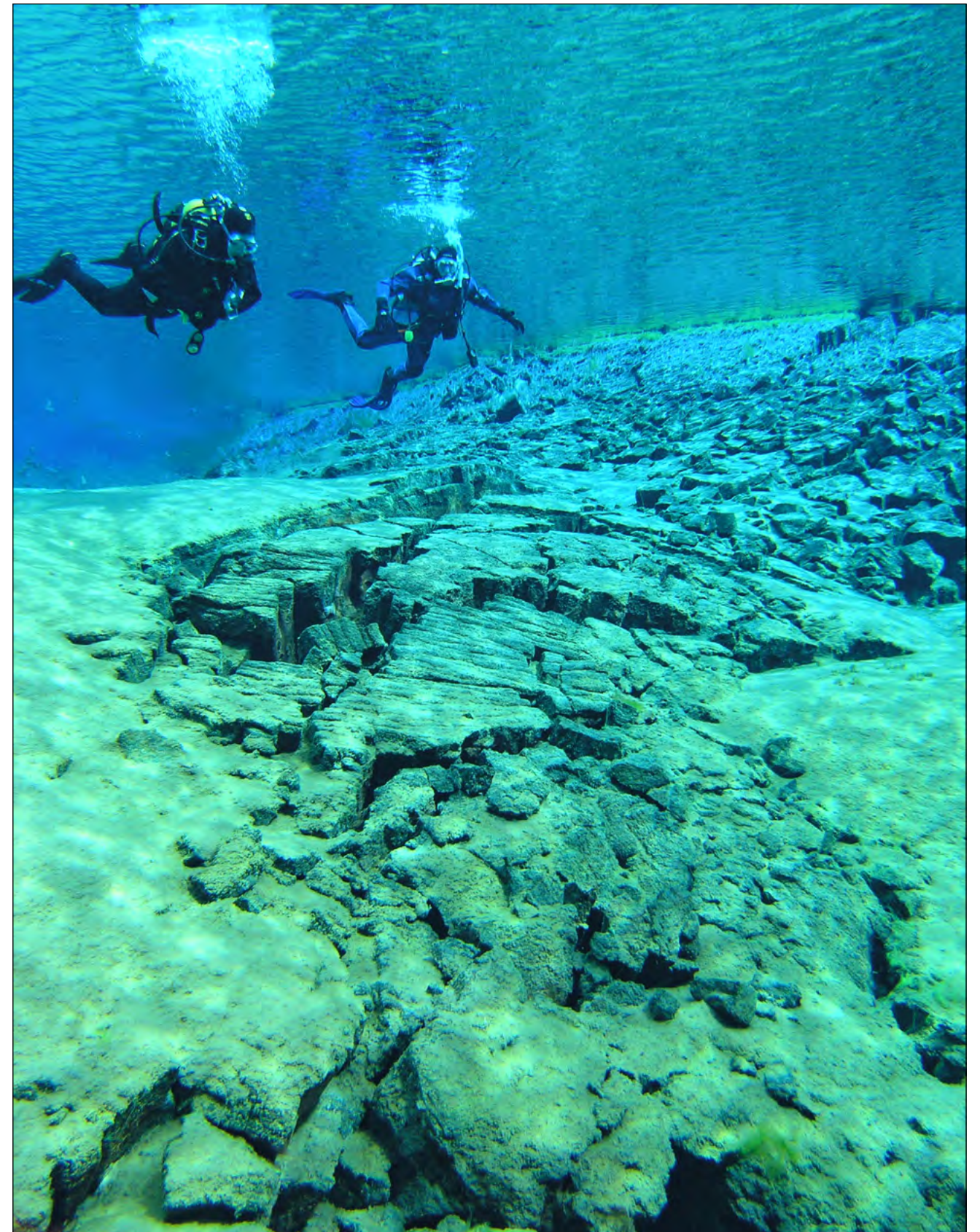
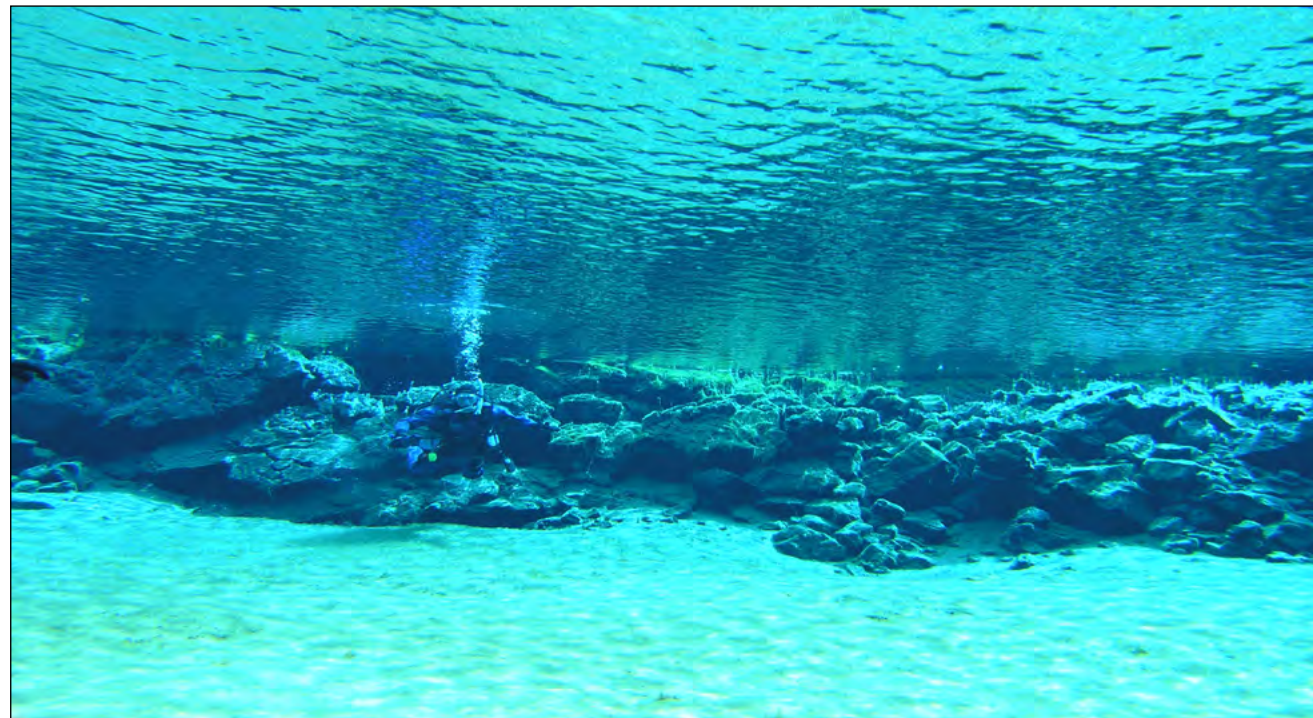
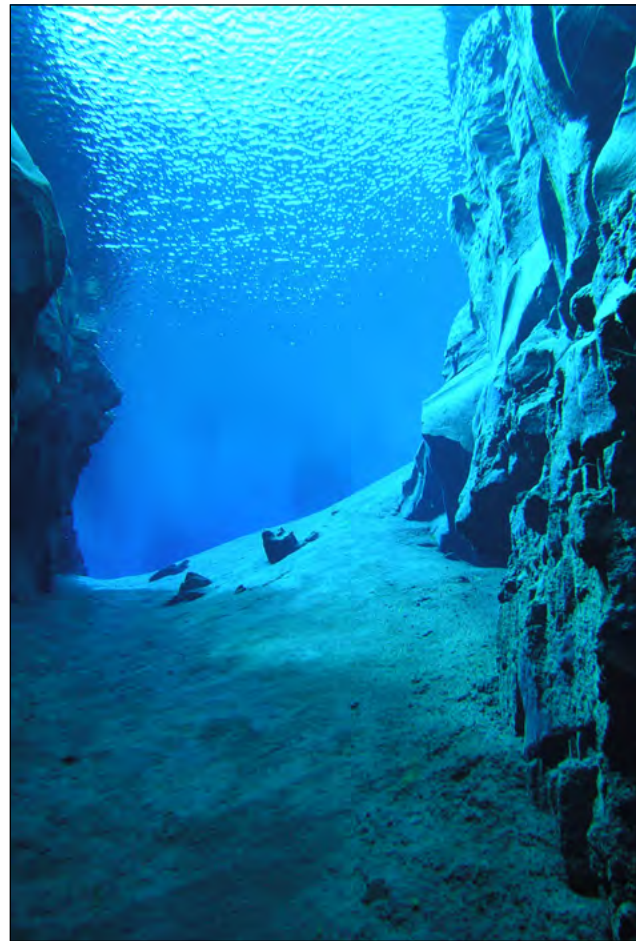


Photo School

Changing the Angle

Have you ever paged through magazines and wondered how professional photographers can take striking photographs of ordinary subjects? A few simple techniques can easily change your picture from being good to being surprisingly great.

There are a number of simple techniques which photographers can apply to significantly enhance their photography. One of these techniques is changing the angle of the shot or switching between landscape and portrait views.

Changing the angle of your shot is a simple, yet effective technique to take interesting photographs and allow you freedom to control the impact of the subject. There are a number of different angles from which you can take pictures; these angles are those taken from an eye view, elevated

heights, lowering your angle, bird's eye view and a slanted view.

Eye-level pictures are most common. It is basically the view of a subject as seen in real life. This is the normal, natural way of taking pictures. Although great pictures can be taken from this angle, it's basically the view as you would expect.

To create an interesting image with a different impact, you can take pictures from elevated heights or by getting lower than the subject. By taking pictures from elevated heights, you can make images appear insignificant or submissive.

Getting lower than the subject, especially in underwater photography, is an excellent way of creating majestic images of bigger subjects such as divers, dolphins, sharks,

turtles and rays. Some of the most beautiful underwater pictures are taken from angles lower than the subject, typically a picture taken from a deeper point towards the surface.

This angle creates an impression that the subject is more powerful and dominant. It can also create amazing silhouettes by using sunlight penetrating the water from the surface.


A bird's eye view is where the photographer gets on top of the subject and takes the picture from above. This is a view to give you a completely different and unnatural effect. Slanted views are any view that is purposely tilted to change the horizon to a tilted angle. This can also give a dramatic effect.

A great advantage of this technique is the fact that it gives you the ability to change the background. Often, great subject disappears or loses impact in a busy background, for example, taking

a picture of a subject on a busy coral reef. You can control the background of your picture by taking the picture from different angles.

Landscape and portrait

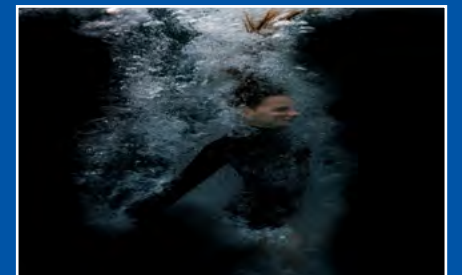
There are two general orientation options of your camera; vertical and horizontal. When we shoot vertically, it is referred to as 'portrait' and horizontal images are referred to as 'landscape'. Camera orientation is also another very important technique to keep in mind.

There may be a number of things which you would like to do with the photographs after your trip – always bear in mind that magazine covers are mostly in a portrait layout, whereas digital photograph frames, postcards and canvas prints are mostly in a landscape layout. It is always good to take a picture in both the portrait and landscape format to ensure that you get the best angle and composition as well as options for photographic usage after your dive trip. 



Nays Baghai

A journey through the Lens



How did you get started?

When I saw The Blue Planet for the first time as a kid, I immediately knew I wanted to combine diving and cameras for a living after seeing the image of rebreather-clad divers filming massive hammerhead shark schools.

I had no idea how to combine the two until a decade later while I was a film school student, shooting the underwater sequences for a short film.

I will never forget the moment when the click of my GoPro's shutter reverberated into a much bigger click throughout my mind and body; I had found what I wanted to do with my life, and I wasted no time enrolling in every scuba diving and freediving course I could find.

At the time, there were no educational programs on becoming an underwater creative, so I created my own program that complemented what I was learning at film school.

What do you love the most about underwater photography?

So many things. The weightlessness and silence of the water.

The astonishing marine life and locations that few people get to see and the environmental awareness that comes with it.

The yin- yang relationship between creativity with a camera and technical precision with gear. The rich psychological side of it and the mentally beneficial habits you pick up.

What are your favourite subjects?

Given I shoot exclusively on wide-angle lenses, my typical subjects are either freedivers or big animals, both of which I adore working with. Sharks are easily my favourite animal, but I also love gloomy octopuses and giant cuttlefish.

Where's your favourite dive site?

Within Sydney, it's easily Shelly Beach, but if we're talking about New South Wales as a whole, I'd think the Ex HMAS Adelaide and Fish Rock Cave are

both all-timers. Outside of Australia, the Galapagos Islands easily takes the cake as the best dive destination I've ever been to.

What was your most memorable dive of all time?

Being in the middle of a 200+ school of hammerheads whilst diving at Wolf Island in the Galapagos and capturing it on camera. It was the moment I had finally accomplished my childhood dream. The final cherry on top was riding the underwater currents and flying past the massive cliffs like I was Iron Man.

What camera equipment do you use?

I use a Sony A7SIII with a 16-35mm F2.8 G-master lens inside an Isotta housing. It's the most versatile setup I've ever owned, especially in terms of the 16-35mm focal length and alternating between photos and videos at whim. I also own RED Gemini and a GoPro Hero 8 with their respective housings, as well as a pair of Weefine Smart Focus 2300 video lights.


Do you prefer freediving or scuba diving to get the shot?

I deeply love both equally, but it depends on the shot. For deeper dives or working with benthic animals, I will insist on scuba. Whereas for shallow water dives or documenting freedivers, I prefer to freedive for greater manoeuvrability. I also use a JJ-CCR rebreather in case I need longer bottom times, absolute silence, and flexibility for deeper dives.

Who are some of your clients that you're most proud of working with?

Rolex, Sony Alpha, Tourism Australia, Destination NSW, DeeperBlue, Molchanovs Freediving, Rodney Fox Shark Expeditions, TUSA, Dive Spear Sport, the Pressure Project, and my alma mater, AFTRS.

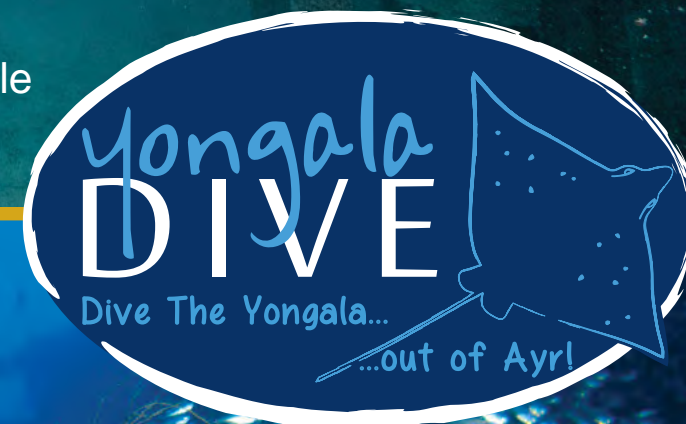
Where can people see more of your work?

I'm on both Instagram and Vimeo as @naysbaghai. 

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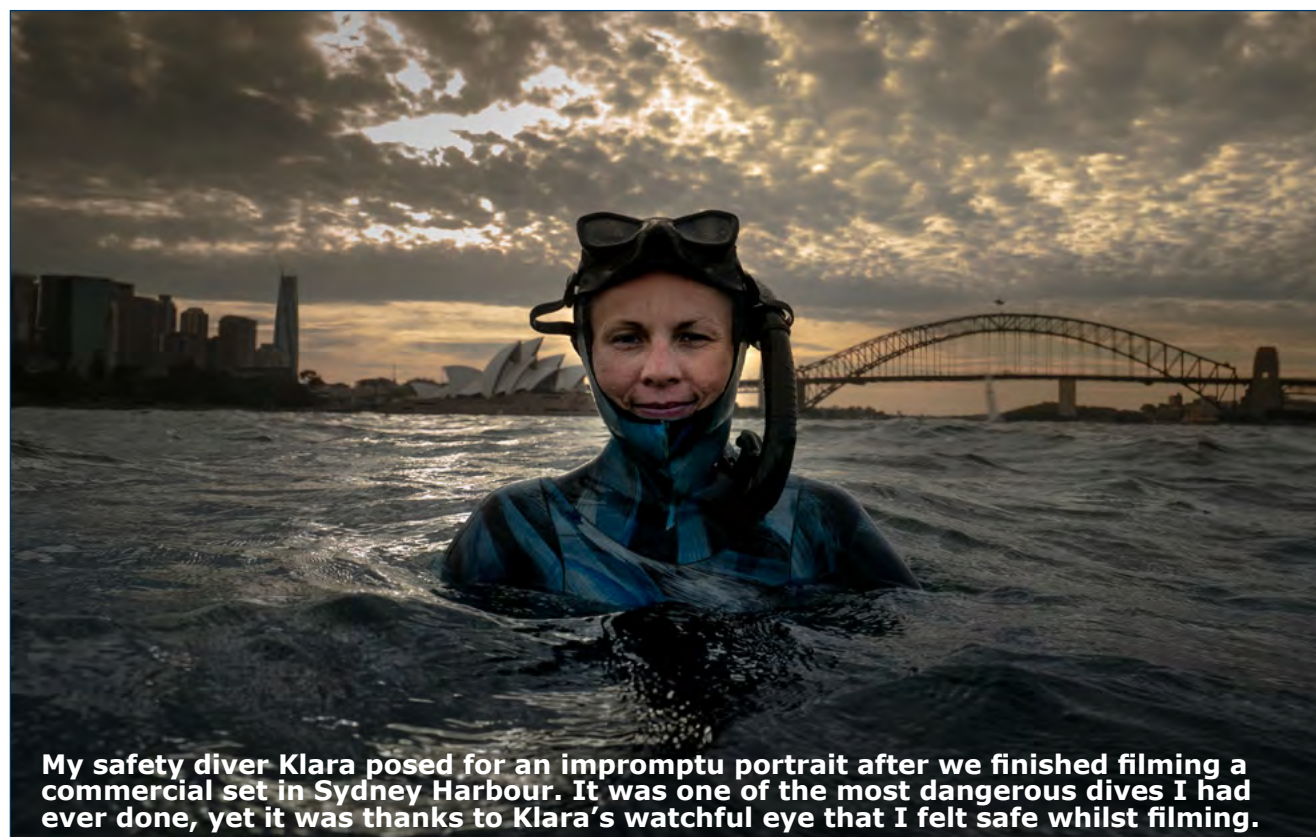
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This shot was the idea of my friend Nathan Watts, which I was very apprehensive about, given the risk of bull sharks in the harbour. I got this shot of Nathan's monofin juxtaposed against the bridge just in the nick of time.



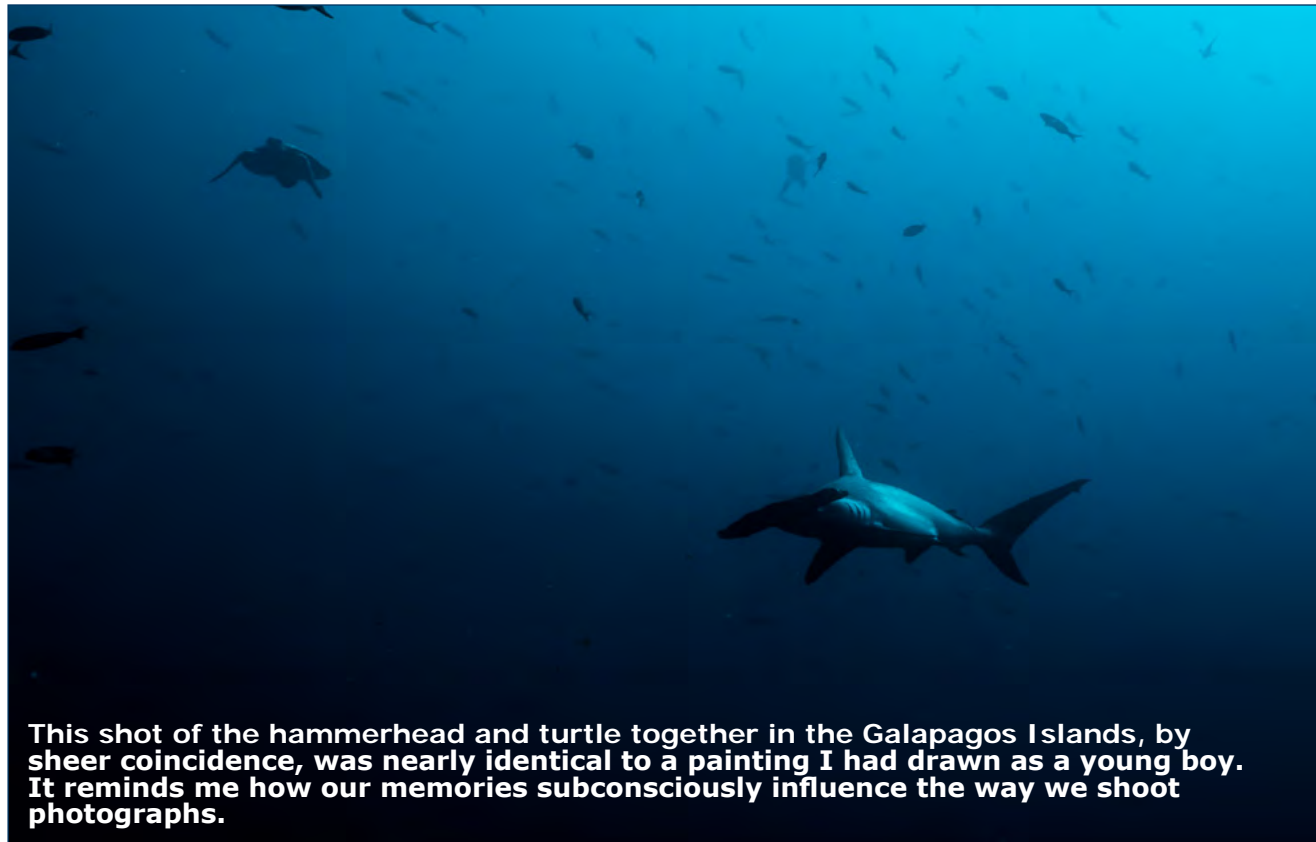
My safety diver Klara posed for an impromptu portrait after we finished filming a commercial set in Sydney Harbour. It was one of the most dangerous dives I had ever done, yet it was thanks to Klara's watchful eye that I felt safe whilst filming.



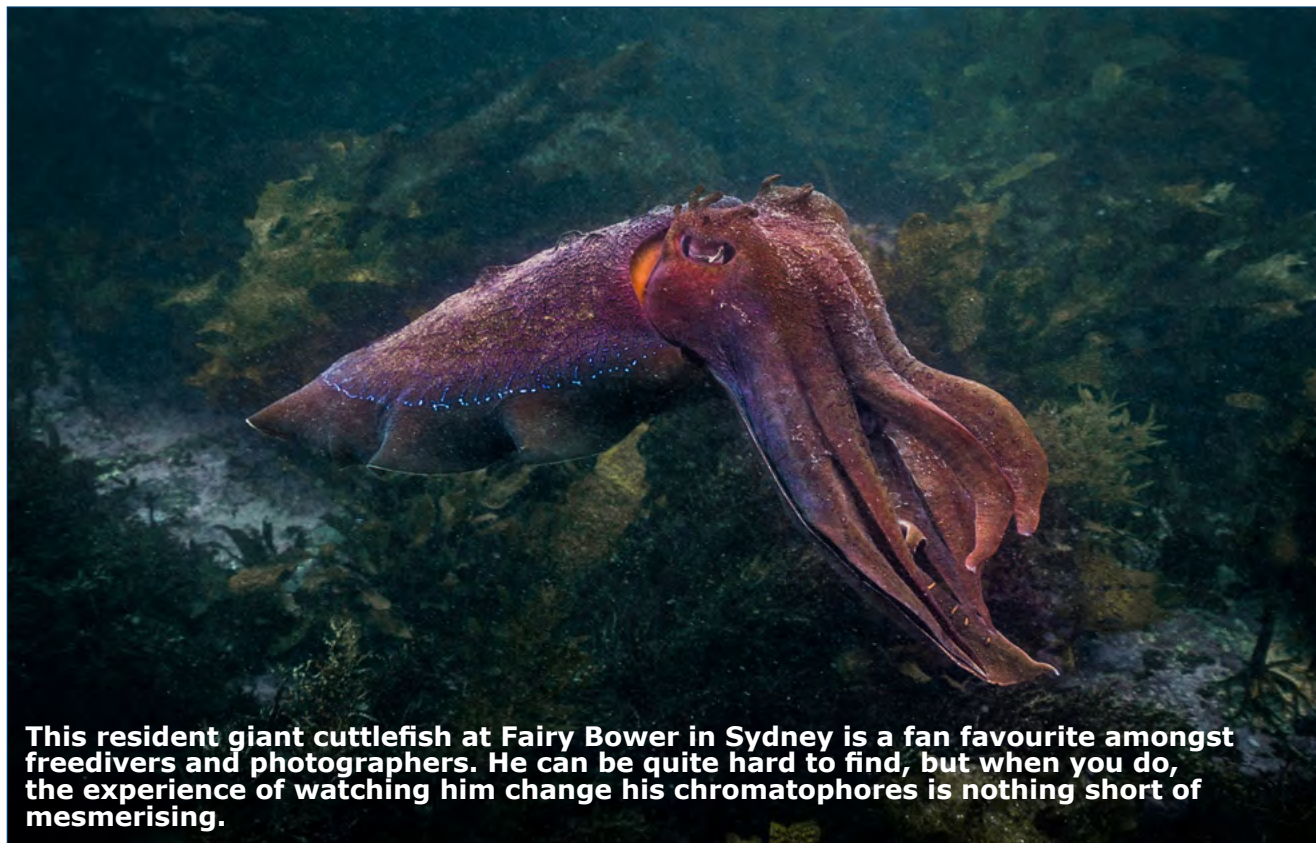
Before all the other freedivers arrived, Kim had just finished setting up the buoy and kindly performed a shallow dive for me to figure out how to capture the light. Ironically, it ended up being better than most of the ones I got later that day.



Through the Lens
Photographer



This shot of the hammerhead and turtle together in the Galapagos Islands, by sheer coincidence, was nearly identical to a painting I had drawn as a young boy. It reminds me how our memories subconsciously influence the way we shoot photographs.



This resident giant cuttlefish at Fairy Bower in Sydney is a fan favourite amongst freedivers and photographers. He can be quite hard to find, but when you do, the experience of watching him change his chromatophores is nothing short of mesmerising.



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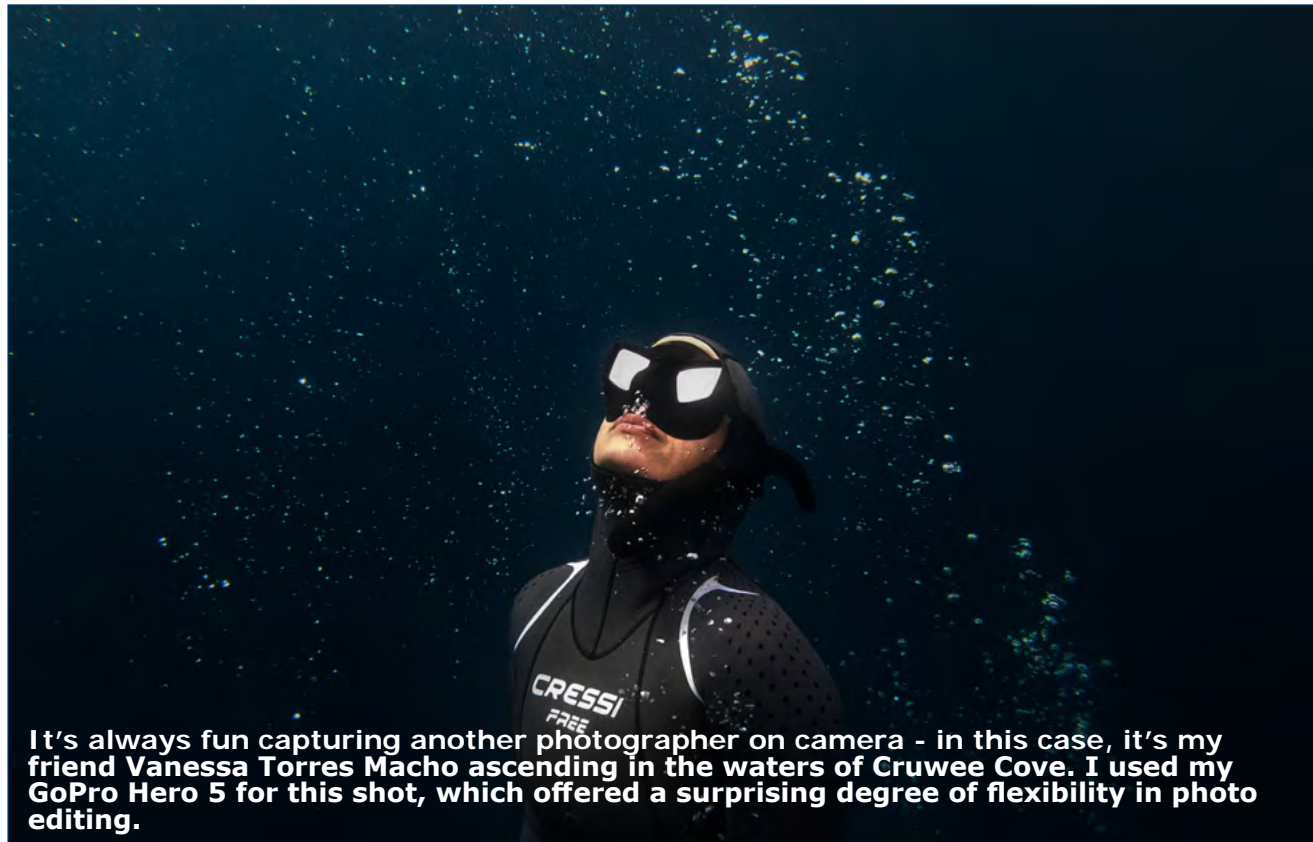


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Through the Lens

Photographer



It's always fun capturing another photographer on camera - in this case, it's my friend Vanessa Torres Macho ascending in the waters of Cruwee Cove. I used my GoPro Hero 5 for this shot, which offered a surprising degree of flexibility in photo editing.



I knew we were going to see sea lions at Isla Isabella, but I didn't know how fast they moved underwater. I almost got whiplash trying to keep up with this acrobatic male that moved like a missile.



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By: Kurt Storms

GIANIS D

Abu Nuhas

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The Abu Nuhas reef in the north of the Red Sea is a ship graveyard. With 4 wrecks that are accessible to recreational divers.

We are one a liveavoard on the route of the famest wrecks in the Red Sea.

I'm diving like always with my Divesoft Liberty SM CCR. Today we dive on one of them, the Giannis D.

HISTORY OF GIANNIS D

The 'Giannis D' was originally launched in January 1969 in Imabari, Japan as the 'Shoyo Maru'. She then became the Markos in 1975 and the Giannis D in 1980.

She was equipped with a 4-stroke diesel 6 cylinder giving a power of 3000 HP and a top speed of 12 knots. The 'Giannis D' had no special task or route, but sailed as it was convenient for her cargo.

The Giannis D was 99,5 meters Long, and 16 meters wide.

THE SHIPWRECK OF THE GIANNIS D

In April 1983 the 'Giannis D' was loaded in Rijeka, Croatia with sawn beams destined for the Saudi port of Jeddah and Hodeira on the Yemen coast.

It was a calm voyage across the Adriatic and Mediterranean to Port Said and Suez. The captain left that part to his helmsmen because he knew that after that there would be little chance of rest.

Once there, however, it was all over. At that time the Arab-Israeli war was in progress and controls were strict and time-consuming. They were allowed into Egyptian

waters and could continue their journey with the help of a lead. The captain remained on the bridge in this busy waterway in the Straits of Suez convinced that he was the only one who could do this. Like so many before him, that was a wrong thought.

He was not the only one still in command even though he was too tired to do so.

As we have seen many times, after leaving Gobal Strait at the point where it seems that open sea has been reached, he hands over command to the helmsmen.

Again not taking into account the dangerous reefs just below the surface, like Sha'ab Abu Nuhas... Sha'ab Abu Nuhas lies exactly on the route from the Strait of Gobal to the open sea, and it is not



without reason that three wrecks have already occurred there... On 20 April 1983, the 'Giannis D' ran full steam ahead into the reef.

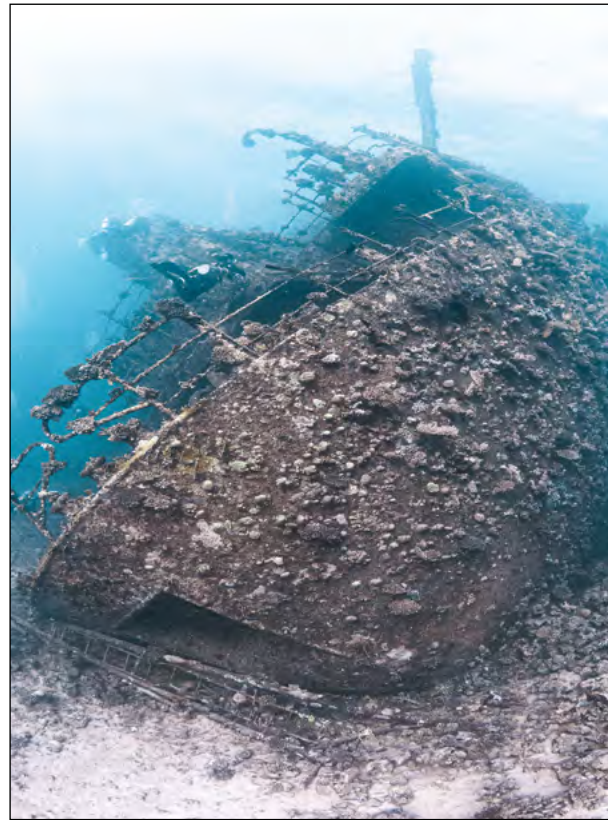
It is said that many safari boats from that time were built with the stolen wood of the 'Giannis D'.

DIVING ON THE GIANNIS D

Abu Nuhas is located just north of Shadwan Island.

It is about 20 miles from the resort of El Gouna and you can also take day boats to it from Hurghada, which is 25 miles away, and even from Sharm El Sheikh if you are prepared for a three-hour boat trip - it is just over 30 miles.

The reef is also a popular stop for liveaboards cruising the northern Red Sea. As the reef is dangerous for boats, most dives take place



from RIBs while the larger boat docks at a safer distance.

The 'Giannis D' can be divided into three parts. The forepeak, still largely intact, the disintegrated middle section and the reasonably intact stern with wheelhouse, crew quarters and engine room. The deepest point is around 30 meters, which makes a longer dive possible.

When descending, the best way is to go in via the bridge. When you get there, you see the stairwell, where the wooden stairs are of course long gone.

Diving through them brings you to the next level.

Here you get a deceptive feeling that something is not right, which

causes dizziness in some divers. Your balance organ tells you that the boat is askew while your eyes tell you it is straight.

One floor down, we find another open space with a passage to the rear on the left.

To the right are storage areas and to the left a door to the engine room.

Everything is open and you can easily swim out.

Once inside, you can see the rockers of the main engine immediately below. To the left is a workshop with a lathe. Behind the engine, we come to the pumps and generators.

There is also a bank of spare



valves, which gives a good impression of the size of the engine.

By the way, the covers of the crankcases have been taken off so that you can see the enormous crankshaft and connecting rods. We can leave the engine room again.

To starboard we find the dining room and behind it the galley. When we leave the engine room on port side, we can go down another staircase and we come to the back of the steering room where we find the steering engine.


Pay attention to the loose cabling here so that you do not get stuck. We also find the remains of various crew rooms, toilets etc. here. When we have looked around enough, we can leave the accommodation at the back and go to the front. It is always impressive to see at

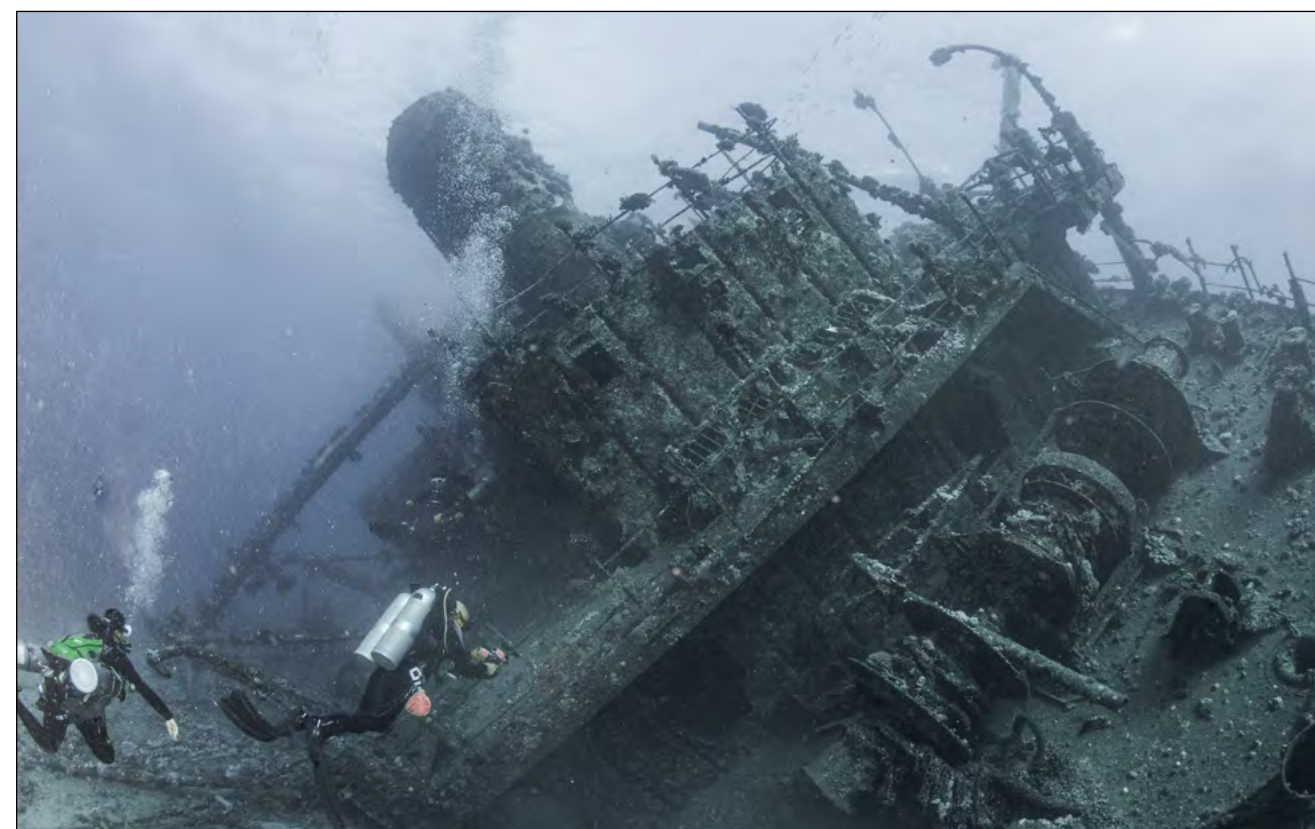
the bottom of the bow how the ship has drilled into the reef and compressed the bottom.

Swimming back, we can find enough resting points to make our stops and safely surface. Our guides will be happy to guide you through the different areas of the ship so that you don't miss anything of this beautiful wreck.

FAUNA

In the wreck itself there are often schools of glassfish, but also lemon fish and other species can be found there. As it is quite dark, don't be surprised to encounter a large moray eel somewhere hiding here during the day.

Often dolphins hunt in the opening of the reef towards the safari boats, so you may find them here as well. 



Chandelier Caves

A visit to rock island in Palau allowed us to explore all that a cave system has to offer in Micronesia.

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Within swimming distance of the famous Sam's Tours in Palau on the island of Ngarol you will find one of the best and safest places to enter a world of the disbelief.

Here even open water divers can explore without the hassles and experience that cave divers have to train for many years for to necessitate visits to places of such beauty.

The dive centre at Sam's Tours is one of the top dive centres in Palau, comprising of everything that a diver could ever need, including the Bottom Time Bar & Grill, a cosy waterfront café overlooking the beautiful rock islands.

From there you can either dive with one of the dive guides from Sam Tours or you can rent cylinders and equipment to explore 'the inside

of the world'. The local Palauans call the cave Iiel Temekai, or 'Cave of the Grouper' and believe that Chandelier Cave was quite possibly formed during the Ice Age at a time when the sea level was much lower.

As natural rainwater seeped through the island limestone, it carried with it the calcium carbonate that built up over the years to form the beautiful structures and chambers.

You drop to a depth of 5m and enter through the mouth of the cave.

The darkness can be overwhelming for someone who has not done night dives or dived in a cave before, but as soon as your eyes adapt to the darkness and you start seeing the walls, ceiling and the amazing stalactites that hang in the water, any fears will be forgotten.



In crystal clear, transparent water you start exploring the cave system with your dive guide.

The cave system consists of four chambers, each having air pockets where divers can surface and enjoy the smooth crystalline structures.

While in each pocket the dive master explains to you where you will go next and how you will get to the next chamber.

After the second chamber briefing we descend down through the passage to get to the third chamber.

After we reached chamber number four our dive master told us that we could still continue further to a fifth chamber, but this one he described more as 'dry caving' where we could get out and walk.

Only on the way back did I realise that there was almost no marine life in the caves, obviously due to the lack of sunlight.

It was also then that I saw a halocline – the mixing of salt and freshwater or sediment to create a layered effect.

As you swim back out towards the start of the cave system, the sight of other divers entering is breathtaking.

It is one dive site that I will always remember.

Fascinating fact: There are numerous stories of how Chandelier Cave was first discovered.

The most believable story goes back to the post World War II era when ordinance teams were



combining the island looking for unexploded bombs and ammunition.

A team found three depth charges which can still be seen to the left of the entrance – these are the same type and shape that can be found on the Helmet Wreck.

While trying to remove the depth charges the entrance to the cave was discovered.

Another story tells of a fisherman who was out catching dinner one day.

The fisherman saw a large fish and tried to catch it, but the fish swam toward the island and disappeared into the entrance to the cave.

Who will ever know. 🚩



Cave Diving

It's just too dangerous and needs heavy, specialised equipment not to mention mystical personal attributes. Fact or Fiction ?

For too long the face of cave diving has been that of heavy, intimidating twin sets being hauled around as if they weighed nothing.

Normally by men (well built, fit men) whilst the phrase "If you can't carry your equipment you can't do the dive" is bandied about smugly.

Whilst it might be hard to define exactly what cave diving is, it is easy to define what it is not and that is proving your physical prowess.

This is a team sport which means help is always on hand (50kg's of

equipment is far easier to move with two people).

Nor is there any special attribute set that makes a cave diver - we are made not borne! We tend to be rather normal people - neither exceptionally fit, nor strong nor brave.

In fact, we seldom share much in common, other than a passion for learning and exploration.

All you really need is an insatiable curiosity - the rest comes with training and experience. Along the way you find courage, patience, discipline and yourself.

The secret of cave diving is that it can be anything you wish it to be.

For some it is a safe place that allows them to define who they are; a controlled environment where the rules are known and the only variable is the individual - a place where each individual can choose and define their own limits.

But for most of us, caves are simply our preferred place to be. We are looking for simplicity, safety and fun.

These are not dark worlds, but a rather places filled with crystal light.

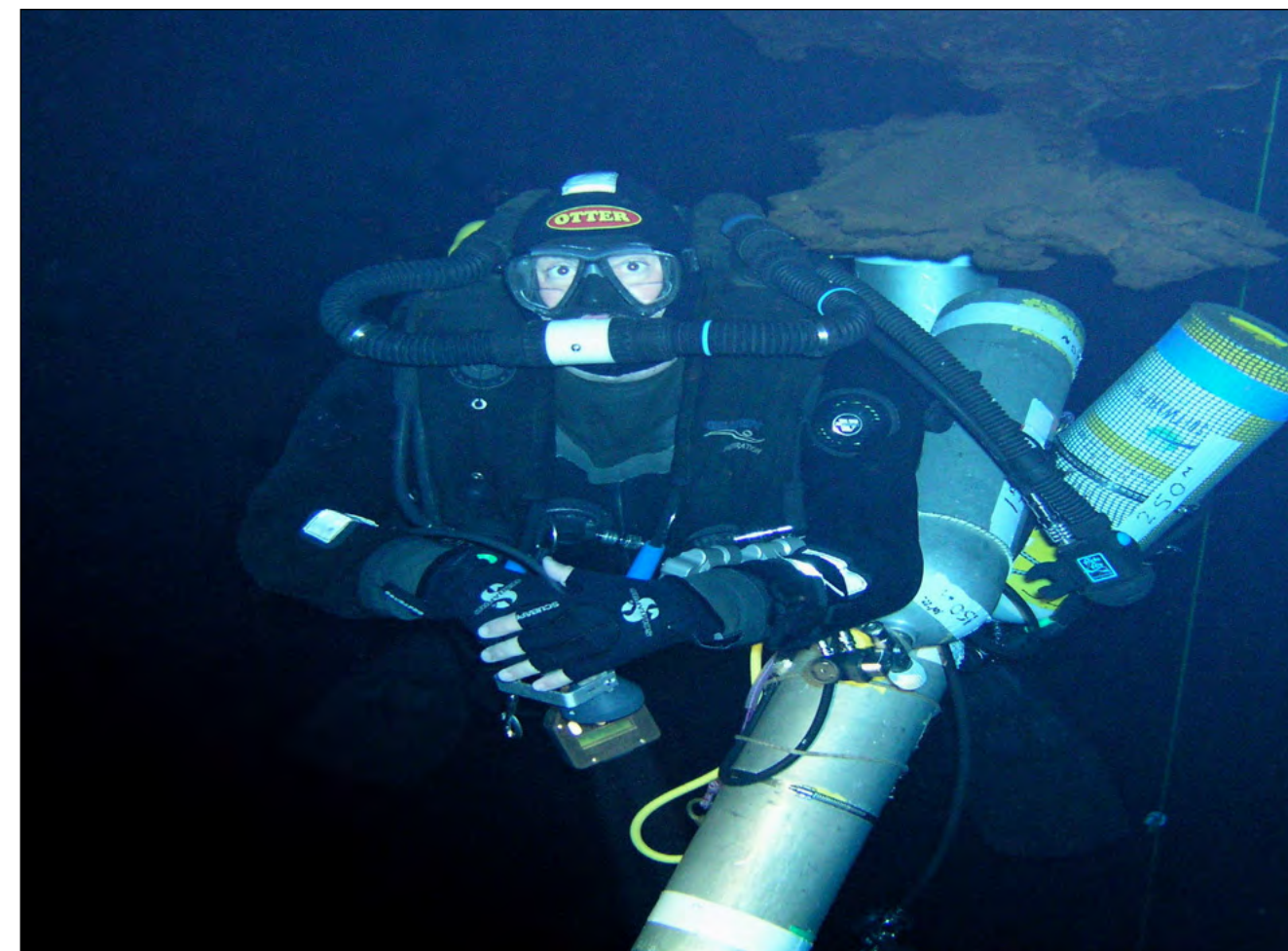
These are the last true unexplored places left on earth, where your torch light focuses your attention,

the walls provide definition. There is no other place where you can be truly in the moment.

So how do you start ? By getting trained! Any time you enter an overhead environment, be it a wreck, a cavern (where there is light but access to the surface is restricted) or the full dark zone, the one thing that will kill you is a lack of training and these days there is simply no excuse not to be trained.

Training is not only accessible, but designed to comfortably extend your limits.

There are many agency's that provide cave certification. Whichever you choose, at the end of your course you should



be totally comfortable with this new environment, the equipment required to explore it and your ability to explore it independently.

In order to understand what it means to dive in a cave you need to acknowledge that once inside, there is no simple access to the surface.

Which means you need to be relatively self sufficient when it comes to equipment. Simply put, your configuration must be redundant – when something fails, you must have another, in particular another source of air and light.

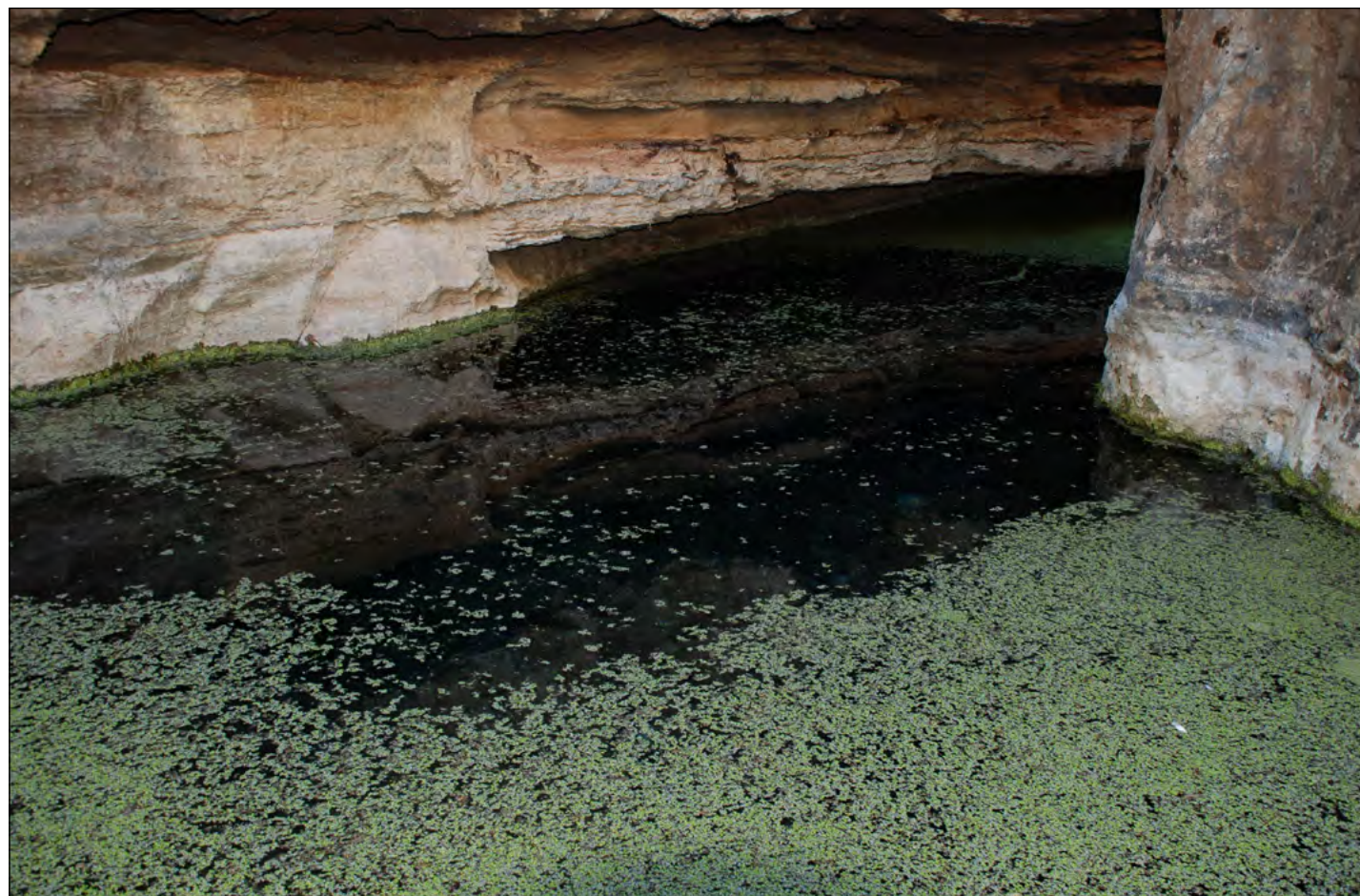
As always in diving, not being able to take the next breath is lethal and with the surface that is no longer an emergency ascent away, you need to have an independent gas supply

at the ready. A simple J-valve will suffice when exploring in the light zone (cavern), but when exploring the full dark zone you must have an isolation manifold and a twin set.

With the sun now far away, torches become essential. Without light you are blind and in order to accommodate Murphy, 3 torches are recommended.

Traditionally in it is mounted on a helmet. The international preference and preferred standard is a single canister type primary torch with two smaller back up torches mounted on your harness.

This is a far more elegant and versatile solution that supports the use of a long hose for your dv, which in turn is a definite must to



have for those unpredictable out of air emergency's that invariably (Murphy again) require you to swim through a restriction whilst sharing. I have used both systems and found little additional benefit to be had from using a helmet.

The other new equipment that comes with caving is reel and line, without which you are literally, lost. Fortunately learning how to reel is not difficult.

A correctly laid line enables you to find your way out of the cave when you lose your visibility (a real possibility).

It is not only equipment that you have to integrate into your diving persona, but also a higher level or proficiency when it comes to skills.



As a cave diver you need to be comfortable in all of the situations that you might find yourself in, especially the one's that frighten you. Training allows you to experience situations that, without practice, could be lethal.

No-one particularly wants to be in an out of air situation, especially if there is no light (it has happened) and on the other side of a restriction, but if you have practiced it, you know that it is not only do'able, but do'able by you.

With time your skills will become invisible, enabling you to truly experience a cave and see its beauty. This is a simple, stark world that simply takes your breathe away (figuratively of course). ◀

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What is your opinion on side mount diving?

Q & A

Nuno Gomes



Side mount diving is not a new configuration – it originated in the United Kingdom in cave diving circles. In the late 1950s and early 1960s divers would simply strap one or two 7/10 litre cylinders to the weight belt, one on each side, and go diving in

caves (at that time there were no buoyancy compensators). The system is very simple, very versatile and very safe.

It also allows a diver to easily remove the cylinders from the weight belt and push them in front when a tight cave passage is encountered. There is also the added safety of having two separate (independent) cylinders, one serving as a redundant air/gas supply.

The system is becoming very popular once again in conjunction with a wing buoyancy compensator. The two cylinders are placed

as side mount stages on the harness but there are no back mounted cylinders – this makes the diver much more streamlined. Back mounted cylinders are often a problem in cave and wreck diving because of the possibility of protrusions on the roof of a cave or the ceiling of a passage in the case of a shipwreck.

Divers have often damaged valves, hoses, first stages or become stuck on overhead obstacles. The problem is even greater when using a scooter in a cave or a shipwreck where equipment on the back can simply be sheared off, on impact, at speed.

The system is very simple and safe to use, I cannot think of any obvious disadvantages other than having to learn a new configuration. I like it and believe that every technical diver should know how to use it, especially those that want to explore small caves and penetrate shipwrecks.

Barry Coleman

I am very much a 'side mount' fan and will dive this open circuit configuration out of choice.



It is so comfortable and underwater provides less 'drag' than the conventional back mounted cylinder.

I enjoy the convenience of the pillar valves under the arm which does not require me to have the dexterity and rubber arms of an octopus to reach

back behind my head to find the valves.

The weight is moved off my back when setting on the side of a RIB because the cylinders lay on the pontoon whilst kitting up, so with a big sea just before a backward roll I do not need to perform circus tricks and balance all the weight while waiting for a person lagging behind to kit up!

They have a safety redundancy with two independent gas supplies (cylinders and valves) and they ensure I know exactly what gas I have.

If a diver requires air, I simply hand off the regulator from the cylinder which has the most gas supply or even hand off the cylinder as well – the diver can then make their own ascent. I sometimes wonder why we do not dive like this from the start?

Pieter Smith



Side mount diving originated in UK cave exploration.

It was designed to pass through confined spaces (advantage) and to traverse sumps and dry cave passages. Cave explorers were more easily able to carry single tanks (advantage), rather than manifolded

tanks to the sumps in the caves. The harness is small or compact (advantage) and easily carried in caves.

Tanks are mounted on the side of the diver under the arm and along the body, making access to tanks valve and regulators easy (advantage).

The system allows a diver to streamline

(advantage) more than back mount configuration. For divers with back problems, side mount allows for a more even spread of weight along the body (advantage), reducing the weight on the lower back.

Side mount configuration offers the diver more configuration options (advantage) in order to adjust according to diving conditions and applications.

Lift capacity for most side mount systems is more limited (dis- advantage) than back mounted systems, which may have an influence on tank sizes. Side mount diving is popular amongst cave explorers and cave divers due to the above advantages.

Pieter Venter

In certain caves side mount diving is the only practical way to dive. Side mount diving was one of the original Wookey Hole cave diving styles and it seems to have gained popularity again.

The advantages are that the cylinders



are normally in an independent configuration and the removing and replacing of the cylinders is easy and under full control of the diver.

The low profile and the removability allows access to caves through restrictions which

would be impossible or very difficult with back mounts or a rebreather.

The system also allows you to balance the system for a good and streamlined trim. Also, with scooter cave diving the risk of knocking the cylinder valves or manifold into the cave roof or wall is virtually removed. The top of your head will then be first to collide with the cave roof... It is probably a good idea, as with anything new, to do a course if you intend to dive with side mounts to avoid accidents and frustration with trim and balance.

It is possible to dive side mount with more than two cylinders, but the capacity is less than with a back mount and side sling configuration. Give it a go!

A full-page background image showing a diver in the lower left, surrounded by a massive, dense bloom of jellyfish that fills the upper and middle portions of the frame. The water is a deep blue, and the jellyfish are translucent with some purple and pink hues.

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Boat Etiquette



Most of our diving is done from a rubber duck and sometimes these vessels can become quite cramped if fully loaded with eager divers and their gear. Although the rubber ducks are rigged to cater for divers and safely store their diving equipment, there is still some etiquette that has to be followed when on a boat.

The first thing is to get the boat into the water. Everybody must assist in getting the boat turned and pulled into the water. Usually tall guys are at the front of the boat holding its nose steady while the ladies board. An important point here is to try and locate your kit before you get into the boat. This means that you can position yourself opposite your kit when pushing the boat into the water and once in the boat you will be close to your gear. This will alleviate the time spent for everybody to move

around the boat when you are at the dive site.

When sitting in the boat it is important to keep your feet in the foot straps and to hold onto one of the ropes on the pontoon, looking in the direction in which the skipper is navigating the boat. Being aware of the ocean you will not be caught by unexpected boat maneuvers or sudden waves crashing over the boat.

Once at the dive site the skipper will start handing out weight belts. Make sure you pay attention to which weight belt the skipper holds up. Once you have your weight belt, put it on and make sure you open your cylinder. Check the pressure and test your regulators.

If needed, now is the time to rinse your mask in the ocean. Do it while

you have control, not when you are all kitted up with your fins on. After the mask treatment, hang it around your neck. The next step is to put on your fins. If you battle because of boat movement, ask someone to help you, but be sure to have them on correctly and tight enough – once in the water those fins are crucial to get you to where you need to be.

Now that the fins are fitted, the skipper, dive master or instructor will assist you in getting into your BCD. Make sure that all the straps are well extended and that all the clips are undone to get into the BCD as quickly and easily as possible. Once your BCD is donned, secure all the clasps and straps and do a last check on your regulators, inflator hose and cylinder pressure. Remember that your kit is your own responsibility.

The back roll is next to follow. Ensure that you keep your right hand on your regulator and mask and your left hand on the inflator button when doing the back roll. Also of importance is to fall on the skipper's 'go'. If you go too

early some divers might fall on you, and if you go too late you might fall on another diver.

After the dive is conducted, there is still the kit off session. The boat will park between the divers for the pickup. This will make getting divers out of the water easier. When at the boat first pass your weight belt to the skipper or persons assisting. Ensure you pass the weight belt up with the belt end and not the buckle end. If any weights are loose the buckle will stop them from falling in to the ocean.

Next get out of your BCD and push it up using the cylinder's bottom when the skipper is pulling it up into the boat. Once you are in the boat, take off your fins and put them away. Try and be conscious of other divers still wanting to get out of the water as well as the people trying to help them.

Back at the beach remember to take your fins, mask, weight belt and camera from the boat. It is not the skipper or resort's responsibility to make sure your gear gets off the boat. ■





Dive Computers

The first thing to get out of the way on the topic of dive computers is the question, "do I really need one?".

Before trying to answer this question, let's take a moment to look at what a dive computer has to offer, for a diver. Most basic models will offer at least the following features:

- Dive time – this will record your dive time during and after your dive.
- Temperature – will display temperature while diving, and record the average temperature of the dive.
- Log book – will record your dives

along with all of the information that your particular computer is capable of.

Some models are able to log more dives than others.



- Nitrox – this setting will enable you to program your nitrox mix into your computer, which will give you your new MOD and NDL.
- Deco stops – the computer will calculate your stops for you, giving the depth to stop at and the time that must be spent at that depth.
- Safety stops – your safety stop will be displayed on the computer with a count down (the times may vary between computers).
- Speed indicator – this function will alert you when you are ascending too quickly.
- Altitude adjustment – the computer can be set to sea level or altitude, some automatically adjust, others have a manual setting.

These are just some of the some of the functions that most computers can perform.

More advanced computers have an array of additional features like gas mixes (for deeper diving), gauge mode (for diving on Trimix), deep stops, NO2 build up, O2 build and PPO2 adjustment, to name only a few.

The question, "do I really need one?" should be easier to answer now.

If your needs regarding the above mentioned aspects of diving are satisfied without the use of a computer, maybe you need to ask another question – "Isn't it about time I made things a lot easier and safer for myself?"

In the display area, we have compiled a list of computers that are available along with the various functions that they are able to perform. This should assist potential buyers in choosing a computer that will suit their particular diving needs. █



OZ DIVER



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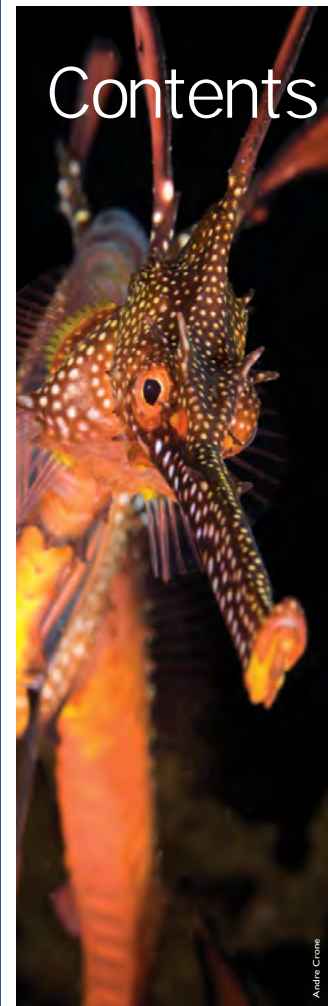
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Gear, books, software, apps and scuba diving gadget reviews.

Here is a chance for your diving gear, books, software, apps and gadgets to be reviewed. If you have anything that you would like to share with the OZDiver Magazine and other divers, send an email to Log Book at info@ozdiver.com.au.

OZDIVER

Marine Species Guide

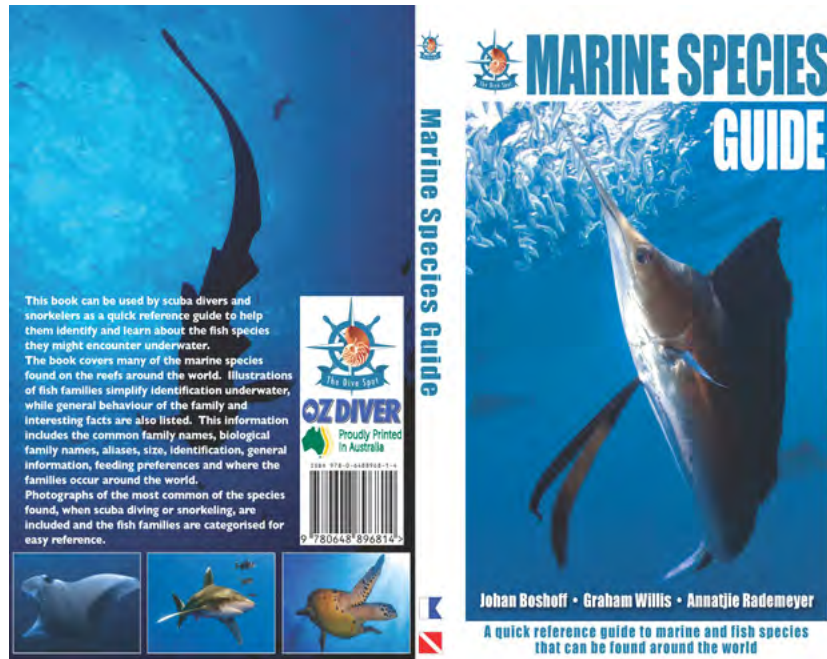
This book can be used by scuba divers and snorkelers as a quick reference guide to help them identify and learn about the fish species they might encounter underwater.

The book covers many of the marine species found on the reefs around the world. Illustrations of fish families simplify identification underwater, while general behaviour of the family and interesting facts are also listed.

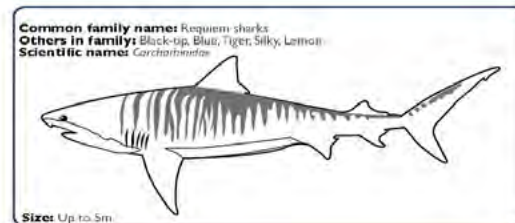
This information includes the common family names, biological family names, aliases, size, identification, general information, feeding preferences and where the families occur around the world.

Photographs of the most common of the species found, when scuba diving or snorkeling, are included and the fish families are categorised for easy reference.

To buy your copy for \$ 25, visit www.ozdiver.com.au or email info@ozdiver.com.au



Requiem sharks



IDENTIFICATION
Tiger shark (*Galeocerdo cuvier*): Greyish upper body with distinctive darker 'tiger-like' stripes. Up to 5m long, average 3m.

Black-tip shark (*Carcharhinus limbatus*): Snout is pointed, long gill slits. Black tips on dorsal, pectoral, pelvic and caudal fins. Up to 2.8m long, average 1.5m.

Blue shark (*Prionace glauca*): Long body, tapered at each end. Very long pectoral fins. Top of body darker blue. Tip of pectoral and anal fins are black. Up to 4.5m average 1.5m.

GENERAL INFO
Family consists of 12 genera and 59 species. The teeth are blade-like with a cusp. The sharks have five gill slits. They have a nictitating eyelid (third eyelid to protect the eye). Potentially dangerous.

FEEDING
Feeds on fish, seals, birds, smaller sharks, squid, turtles and dolphins.

DISTRIBUTION
Widely distributed in all of the tropical oceans of the world.

Common species:

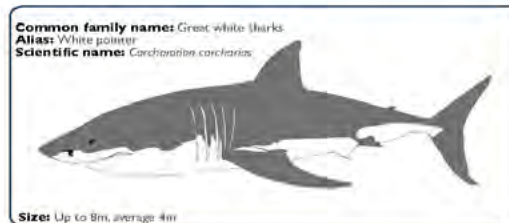


Tiger shark
Galeocerdo cuvier

Black-tip shark
Carcharhinus limbatus

Blue shark
Prionace glauca

Great white sharks



IDENTIFICATION
Large spindle-shaped body with a blunt, conical snout and large, triangular, saw-edged teeth. Large half-moon dorsal fin. Prominent black eyes. Lead-grey to brown or black above, lighter on sides, white below.

GENERAL INFO
Lamnidae family consists of 3 genera and 5 species. The Great white is the only surviving species in the genus *Carcharodon* - Megalodon is extinct. The Mako, Salmon and Porbeagle sharks also fall under this family. Upper and lower lobe of the tail is nearly the same size. Females are generally larger than males. Weighs up to 2,200kg. Ovoviviparous. Potentially dangerous.

FEEDING
They are carnivores and eat primarily fish, but are also opportunistic feeders. They will eat rays, dolphins, whales, seals, turtles, sea otters and penguins. Hunt with ambush technique.

DISTRIBUTION
Occurs in all subtropical oceans of the world.

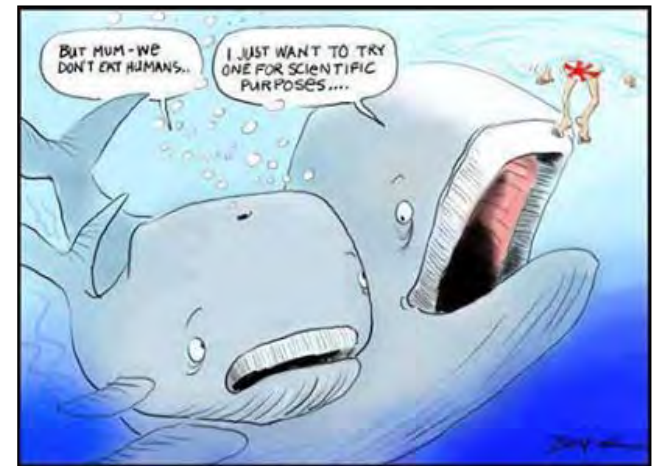
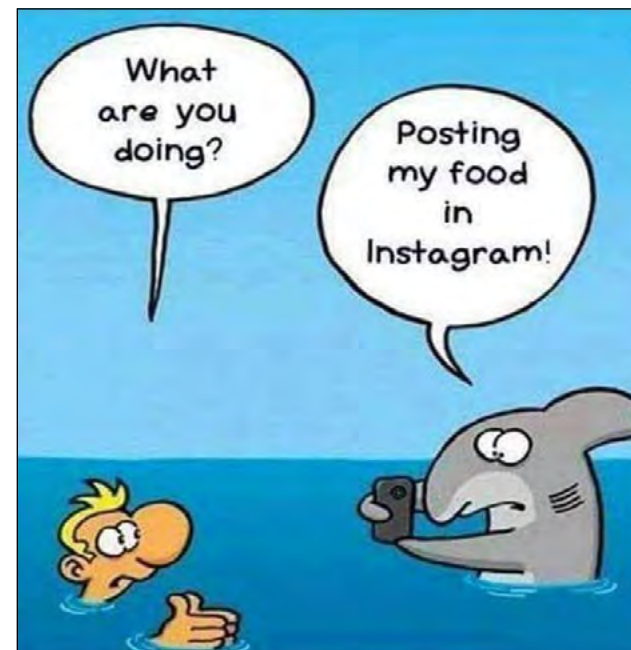
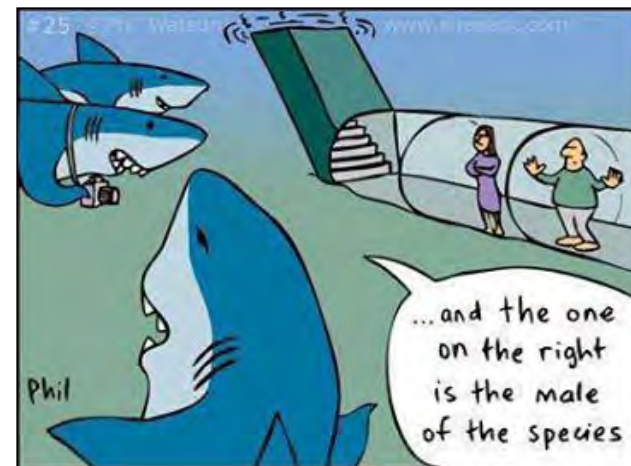
Common species:



Great white shark
Carcharodon carcharias

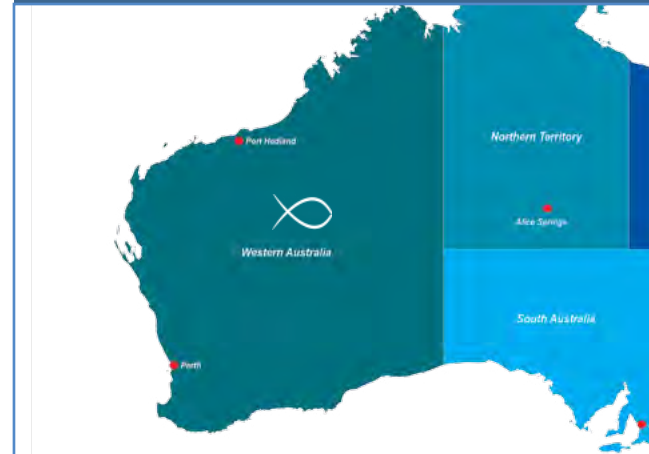
Great white shark
Carcharodon carcharias

Great white shark
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Mail: troy@perthdiving.com.au

Web: www.perthdiving.com.au

Diving Frontiers - Perth



For ALL your Scuba, Spearfishing and Freediving needs! Our SSI Instructor Training Centre teaches courses from Scuba Diver, right through to Instructor. Let our friendly and knowledgeable staff ensure you get the best quality service, at the best possible price!

Phone: +61 (0) 89 240 6662

Mail: mail@divingfrontiers.com.au

Web: www.divingfrontiers.com.au

The DiveTub - Bibra Lake - Perth



Since 2007 to service the Australian Dive Industry with the best scuba equipment available. We offer high-end gear, including recreational, technical and commercial equipment. Wherever possible we'll price match any online dive store to ensure you get the best deal!

Phone: +61 (0) 8 92400163

Mail: info@scubaimports.com.au

Web: www.scubaimports.com.au

Western Blue Dive Charters- Mindarie



We are the only dive company north of Fremantle that operates seven days offering double dive charters, returning before lunch, and allowing you to catch crayfish if you wish. Being a small company we offer a personalised service at an affordable price

Phone: +61 (0) 40 954 5553

Mail: info@westernbluedive.com.au

Web: www.westernbluedive.com.au

Blue Destiny Boat Charters - Fremantle



Blue Destiny is a Perth's premium dive boat for day trips to Rotto and Carnac Island. Our 68 feet catamaran is a stable and very comfortable boat. Departs from Fremantle daily for 2 dives with a full cooked lunch included.

Phone: +61 (0) 43 934 2522

Mail: info@bluedestiny.com.au

Web: www.bluedestiny.com.au

Mandurah

Oceano Dive Centre



Welcome to Oceano your local dive shop. We have the friendliest staff best price, awesome range and we proud our self's for the excellence in training. We provide full support for all your dive needs!!

Phone: +61 (0) 85 352 047

Mail: info@oceanodivecentre.com.au

Web: www.oceanodivecentre.com.au

Bunbury

Octopus Garden Dive Charters



Just 1.5 hours south of Perth is Bunbury, home of the Lena Dive Wreck (18 metres) & abundant local & coral reef(0-33 metres), including "Blade Coral"—photographers paradise. Small groups -experienced & personalised service. Comfortable, enclosed diesel powered vessel.

Phone: +61 (0) 43 892 5011

Mail: kimroyce@gateway.net.au

Web: www.octopusgardendivecharters.com

Geraldton

Albatroz Scuba



Albatroz Scuba offers internationally recognized NAUI and SSI scuba diving courses. Small groups ensure personal attention during your training. We also have an active social club for after course adventures!

Phone: +61 (0) 45 828 5497

Mail: scubageoff@yahoo.com.au

Web: www.facebook.com/AlbatrOZScuba

Dive Ningaloo - Exmouth / Ningaloo



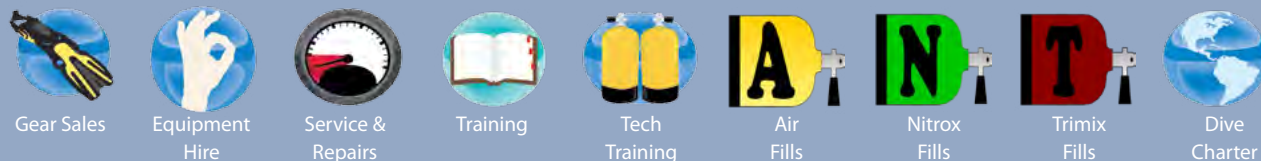
Dive Ningaloo has the exclusive licence to dive the Exmouth Navy Pier - top ten dive site!

Dive the Muiron Islands and Ningaloo Reef in comfort on the Ningaloo's largest dive boat, but with small groups. Learn to Dive PADI courses.

Phone: +61 (0) 4 567 02437

Mail: info@diveningaloo.com.au

Web: www.diveningaloo.com



Albany

Southcoast Diving Supplies



Diving Albany means experiencing anything from Wrecks to Reef. The "Perth and Cheynes 3" are two well known dive wrecks and the spectacular reef dives ranging from 3-50 M plus offers a diverse choice to a wide variety of divers

Phone: +61 (0) 89 8417 176

Mail: whale@divealbanys.com.au

Web: www.divealbanys.com.au

South Australia



Port Lincoln

Calypso Star Charters - Port Lincoln



Calypso Star Charters is an iconic charter company providing guests with the opportunity to dive with Great White Sharks or Swim with Sealions. With market leading vessels, Advanced Eco Certification and Eco Guides we are the forefront of tour provision.

Phone: +61 (0) 86 82 3939

Mail: info@sharkcagediving.com.au

Web: www.sharkcagediving.com.au

ND Scuba - McLaren Vale



We are a small business that go above and beyond. We pride ourselves on providing safe and fun-filled courses at affordable prices. You get trained on a more personal level through to one on one, or small group tuition.

Phone: +61 (0) 88 323 8275

Mail: barrettn80@hotmail.com

Web: www.nbscuba.com.au

Adelaide

Diving Adelaide



Diving Adelaide is Adelaide's newest PADI 5 Star Dive Centre. We run all PADI courses as well as Leafy Sea Dragon Tours. Diving Adelaide is located next to the tram and bus-stop in Adelaide; easy to reach with public transport.

Phone: +61 (0) 8 73 250 331

Mail: info@divingadelaide.com.au

Web: www.divingadelaide.com.au

Underwater Explorer's Club of SA



The UEC is the oldest recreational scuba diving club in Australia, established in 1954. We do regular dives at locations within metropolitan Adelaide and have frequent trips to regional South Australia. Why not come and join us for a dive.

Phone: +61 (0) 417 838 387

Mail: secretary@uecofsa.org.au

Web: www.uecofsa.org.au

Glengowrie

Downunderpix



Downunderpix is an underwater photography business established in South Australia. We provide all things underwater photography to the local, national and international markets. This includes supplying a range of underwater photography services as well as selling underwater camera equipment and scuba diving equipment.

Phone: +61 (0) 41 981 9083

Mail: info@downunderpix.com

Web: www.downunderpix.com

Victoria



ausdivinginstruction- Geelong



Learn to Scuba Dive in Melbourne & Geelong @ Australian Diving Instruction Geelong's only PADI 5 Star IDC Facility, Offering Charter Boat, PADI Specialties Courses including Tec 40>45>50, Trimix 65, Trimix Diver, Accommodation, Local/International Dive Trips, Dive any of the 4 WW1 J Class Submarines the HMAS Canberra, and Ships Graveyard of Bass Straits.

Phone: 0408365216 or 0352722181

Mail: steve@ausdivinginstruction.com.au

Web: www.ausdivinginstruction.com.au

Bay City Scuba



Bay City Scuba is Geelong's premier dive shop. Offering all levels of training from Freediving through to Technical training and offering a huge selection of equipment to your diving needs. A RAID training facility offering extensive technical OC & CC rebreather training.

Phone: +61 (0) 35 248 1488

Mail: info@baycityscuba.com

Web: www.baycityscuba.com

The Scuba Doctor Australia



The Scuba Doctor is an online and in-store dive shop stocked with quality brand recreational, technical and commercial diving products. Low prices on scuba, spearfishing, freediving, snorkelling and watersports equipment, plus Air, Nitrox and Trimix fills.

Phone: +61 (0) 3 5985 1700

Mail: diveshop@scubadoctor.com.au

Web: www.scubadoctor.com.au

Dive Victoria Group



Our Training, Dive Charter and Group Accommodation services cater for local, interstate and international divers. On our doorstep we have amazing wall dives from 10-100m that we can dive every day and wrecks 8-80m in the Ships Graveyard

Phone: +61 (0) 3 5258 4188

Mail: info@divevictoria.com.au

Web: www.divevictoria.com.au



New South Wales



Sydney

Frog Dive



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Phone: +61 (0) 2 9958 5699

Mail: john@frogdive.com.au

Web: www.frogdive.com.au

Southern Cross Divers



Southern Cross Divers is best known for rebreathers and "tec" diving – we do nothing else but "tec". We will not stock a unit unless we can offer the customers a complete solution to all their CCR needs. We are Australia's CCR specialist store.

Phone: +61 (0) 2 9969 5072

Mail: barry@southerncrossdivers.com.au

Web: www.southerncrossdivers.com.au

Erina

Dive Imports Australia



Dive Imports Australia located in Erina for all your training, servicing, equipment hire and air fills. Your local PADI 5*IDC Centre and closest shop to the HMAS Adelaide wreck. Boat dives to the wreck available 7 days a week.

Phone: +61 (0) 4 1844 8652

Mail: chris@scubaholics.com.au

Web: www.diveimportsaustralia.com.au

Nelson Bay

Feet First Dive



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Mail: enquiries@feetfirstdive.com.au

Web: www.feetfirstdive.com.au

South West Rocks

South West Rocks Dive Centre



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Phone: +61 (0) 2 656 66474

Mail: info@southwestrocksdive.com.au

Web: www.southwestrocksdive.com.au

Queensland



Sunshine Coast

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Mail: rob@scubaworld.com.au

Web: www.scubaworld.com.au

Brisbane

Ozaquatec- Brisbane



Brisbane's largest dedicated scuba service centre, Ozaquatec has all of your servicing needs in one place at competitive rates. Our fast, friendly and professional customer service gives you, the diver, complete peace of mind.

Phone: +61 (0) 7 3399 1413

Mail: admin@ozaquatec.com

Web: www.ozaquatec.com

Gold Coast

Devocean Dive- Gold Coast



Devocean Dive is South East QLD's Premier PADI 5 star Instructor Development Centre. We offer unsurpassed service is a safe, fun environment with qualified, experienced Instructors. We look forward helping you achieve your SCUBA diving goals.

Phone: +61 (0) 75 528 0655

Mail: admin@devoceandive.com

Web: www.devoceandive.com

Tasmania



Bicheno

Bicheno Dive Centre



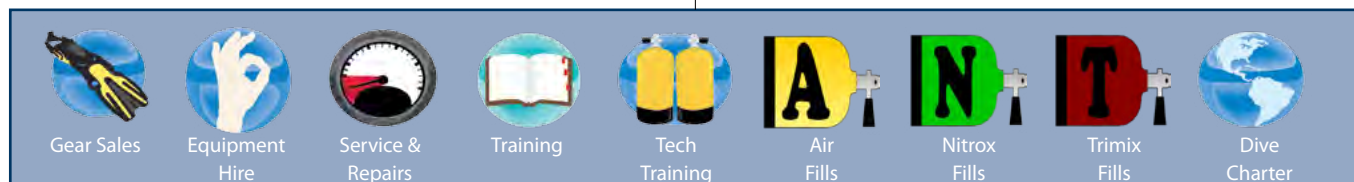
Tasmanian diving at its best 32 different boat sites 16-40 meters 8 different shore dives with max depth of 20mtrs Boat travel time under 5 mins.

Home of the weedy sea dragon.

Phone: +61 (0) 3 6375 1138

Mail: bichenodivecentre@bigpond.com

Web: www.bichenodive.com



The background of the entire cover is a close-up photograph of a sea urchin. The urchin's body is dark brown and covered in numerous sharp, light-colored spines. It is positioned diagonally across the frame, with its arms extending towards the top right. The urchin is resting on a piece of light-colored, branching coral. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the urchin's spines and the coral.

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