
Water Column

FEBRUARY 2016 ISSUE 6

Western Australian Underwater Photographic Society's Bi-annual Underwater Journal

Lord Howe Island

Cenderawasih

Dive the Lena

Mexico



PIXELS winners

Member profile

Creature feature: Sponges and sea squirts



FORMER GOLD MEDAL WINNER - BEST ADVENTURE TOUR IN WA!



SWIM WITH A WHALESHARK EXPERIENCE WONDER!

FREE SCUBA DIVE/TRY DIVE
DURING YOUR TOUR!

www.ningaloowhalesharks.com

FREECALL 1800 994 210



Underwater Photography

Courses
Equipment
Live Aboards

www.ReefWreckandCritic.com

PERTH SCUBA

Underwater Photo & Video Equipment
Scuba Dive & Snorkeling Equipment
Dive Courses - Beginner to Instructor



WAUPS Members receive 10% discount on scuba diving equipment purchased at Perth Scuba on presentation of their current WAUPS member card.



Professional advice and service on all of your underwater photo and video needs. Why go to the internet when you can build your system in store, work out everything you need and pay the same price in Perth? No waiting or freight costs!

We carry a huge range of Nauticam & Aquatica housings, ports, zoom gears and accessories, Sea & Sea strobes, housings & accessories, Inon strobes & accessories, Light & Motion Photo & Video lights, GoPro & the full GoPro accessory range and Ultralight Systems.

4/180 Bannister Rd Canning Vale WA
08 9455 4448 info@perthscuba.com

SCUBA

Imports



scubaimports.com.au

WaterColumn

February 2016 ISSUE 6



Contents

- | | |
|--|--|
| 4 Editorial
by Viv Matson-Larkin | 12 Mexico
Cenotes and more |
| 5 Dipter comparison
Chandy de Wit | 16 Diving the Lena
Wreck off Bunbury |
| 6 Novice Portfolio winner
Leanne Thompson | 18 PIXELS and MEGAPIXELS Winners
Last six months of results |
| 7 Member Profile
Leanne Thompson | 20 Creature Feature
Sponges and sea squirts |
| 8 Cenderawasih Bay
Bird of Paradise Bay | 22 Parting shot
Rusty Geller – Sea lion |
| 10 Lord Howe
NSW island in the sun | 23 Asymmetric strobe lighting
Using one or two strobes |

Cover by Yuri Verbaan – Hairy lobster - Cenderawasih Bay

EDITOR'S BUBBLES

We saw out the last month of 2015 with a club dive on the Lena off Bunbury instead of the usual local dive and bbq. Some stunning images and scribe about that dive trip included in this issue. The New Year is well on the way now as we head towards autumn. We hope you got your share of good diving no matter where you went.

There have been quite a few photographic competitions on the go since the last issue of the Water Column – the Novice Portfolio, WAPF Underwater Competition, and the monthly Pixels and Megapixels. Congratulations to all those who won a place, your images are up on the WAUPS web page for all to view, and a huge thank you to all our sponsors.

Soon the call will go out for submissions for the WAPF Interclub competition - colour and mono images. The entries can be taken anywhere in the world, above or below the water so get out there clicking.

This year in lieu of the annual Rotto Day Dive Photographic Competition we are trialling a totally different format. The plan - a shoot-out starting 5pm Friday 18th till midnight the 20th March within a specific area in Geographe Bay.

Start looking through your catalogues for something suitable for the Wayne Storrie Humour Award. Up to your imagination, even computer enhanced images are allowed in that competition. That same month is the Image of the Year. Both will be judged at this year's AGM. Note the AGM has moved from May to June to line up with our new constitution.

The WAPF UnderWater Competition is another we encourage our members to enter, with entries due in July. This is the only underwater photographic competition that is wholly Western Australian based – submissions must have been taken in the last 2 years. A huge thank-you to Karl Fehlauer who represented WAUPS on the WAPF committee for the past 3 years. Gary

Browne has now stepped in as our club representative to ensure this competition continues.

The inaugural Golden Snapper Award was fittingly won by Danny Messom, a well-deserved win. Based on member participation throughout the calendar year this award is a great way to acknowledge everyone's involvement in club activities.

Our other monthly meetings have been very interesting and we are extremely grateful to all our guest speakers and club members who put on these presentations, help out with critique nights, etc. Our sincere thanks to the external judges we use for our competitions, the members behind the scenes who organise the monthly dives, help with the scoring of the photography competitions, outings, etc. We certainly have had a very fun filled dive year so far due to the exceptionally warm weather.

Keep blowin' bubbles

Viv

Golden Snapper

Congrats to Danny Messom who was awarded the inaugural Golden Snapper Award. This award is all about club participation, not winning, and Danny has been a wonderful club member by attending meetings and monthly dives, volunteering, participating in competitions, bringing his images along to meetings and generally just being a great contributor.

Well done Danny, that sash suits you!



Diopter comparisons

by Chandy de Wit

Once you enter the wonderful world of macro photography it is easy to develop an obsession with increasing strengths of magnification. As the critters get smaller and smaller, the desire for more detail and to appear larger in your image is easy to get caught up in...

For me this has been a steady progression and I have a pretty extensive diopter collection to choose from, which I do according to the critter size or desired effect.

For this article I have compared four different diopters and included my current favourite combination for the teeny ones.

All photos are shot with the same settings and lighting on my Canon G12 in a Recsea housing with 2 Sea&Sea YS-01 strobes and a FIT focus light, the only variant being the change of dioptre. The images are of course not cropped. The model, one of my latest fun finds, is Germain's Blenny, his head is approximately 6mm in diameter.

Choosing the right diopter for you can be an interesting process to say the least!! I hope to have helped you decide and possibly saved you and maybe even your right elbow. Happy shooting.



Aquako IV : US\$275 - Love at first sight with this baby!! Magnification strength is by far the strongest I have used. It comes as a 52mm diopter with a 67mm adaptor to suit most diopter adaptors, is nice and light and being nice and slim @ 52mm it also makes for easier lighting. Stacking two for critters such as the Ladybug amphipods is a bit fun too, although you are almost that close that the point of focus is inside the diopter.



Dyron +7 : US\$130 - my first & still one of my favourites, it's incredibly versatile and affordable. With lower magnification and fairly clear edges it is excellent for larger creatures and as an addition to a higher magnifying diopter for the teeny ones.



Subsee +10 : US\$225 - I borrowed this one from Bert a few times to play. Very easy to get used to your distances, though not offering amazing amounts of magnification, also fairly heavy for what it does.



Nauticam SMC-1 : US\$480 - What an Amazing diopter!! I have had so much fun with this one and created some amazing images, but considering the price and weight I wouldn't buy it over again. If you are considering this diopter make sure you add plenty of floatation to your rig.



Double stacking of diopters can create all sorts of interesting effects such as an extremely shallow depth of field, extensive blur or bokeh, maybe even a little headache trying to focus. Aquako IV & Dyron +7 : My latest favourite combination, I think the image speaks for itself.

Leanne Thompson Novice Portfolio 2015



Congrats to **Leanne Thompson** who was the winner of the 2015 Novice Portfolio competition. Judges Liz Harlin and Josh Jensen from Undersea Productions said Leanne's entry was a strong and varied portfolio with eye-catching images. The wide angle images show excellent control of ambient light. The macro fish subjects all have clear eye contact with the viewer, and two of the images illustrate interesting wildlife behavior. Backgrounds, foregrounds and main subject are balanced well in all images. Excellent exposure, composition, and colour across the portfolio.



Novice Portfolio Runner-Up

Congrats also to Joanne Watson who was the runner-up and to Mick Lee, Mark Jeffs and Isla Cath for their commended entries.



Member profile – Leanne Thompson

Where, when, how did you learn to dive?

I was on work placement as part of my university degree at a mine site in western Queensland. It was a drive in/drive out mine (none of this fancy pants flying) and I had 8 days off to explore. I was eyeing up this epic 4 day helicopter ride-in white water rafting trip on the North Johnstone River however it ended up being cancelled due to lack of rain.

One of the mine site geologists was a dive master who'd been talking about how much he loved diving; given I didn't have anything else to do I thought I'd give it a go. That was way back when the open water course was a 5 day pool and theory course before you went out for your ocean dives. I did this with Mike Ball in Townsville and my 7th and 8th dives were on the Yongala wreck – an absolutely stunning dive and probably one of the best introductions to diving.

How did you get into diving, UW photography, mentors, and inspirations

It was a couple of years after my open water and I'd moved back to Townsville to work for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. I went to an Olympus showcase evening at the local dive shop and on impulse bought my first camera, a 2MP camera with plastic housing for the bargain basement price of \$1400. I spent pretty much every holiday and every second weekend for the next four and half years diving the length and breadth of the Great Barrier Reef. I was lucky enough to get to some incredibly remote places and occasionally even got paid to dive. I saw some awesome things, none of which I was actually able to photograph well.

Your camera, equipment and toys

It took me a long time to decide to take up photography and I spent over 10 years as a happy snapper because I just wasn't sure I wanted to

be that kind of diver. While I loved the images I'd seen other people take, I didn't want to lug all of that gear and wasn't convinced the money for better gear was worth it. I finally caved and bought a Canon s100 compact with twin strobes and did some dives in Bali with Jeff and Dawn Mullins before heading to Lembeh with Shannon Conway.

That trip to Lembeh cemented my desire to be an underwater photographer. I'd been a land photographer for about 10 years and found myself frustrated with the limitations of the compact. A year after buying the s100 I made the decision to house my dSLR. Today I shoot with a full frame Nikon d600 with the full assortment of lenses in a Nauticam housing and twin Sea&Sea YS-D1 strobes.

Favourite dive site, WA, interstate/overseas location, dive buddies and accessories

I've been to some random places in the world diving, such as Tanzania and Iceland, but big animals are what I love the most. Some of my favourite locations are the Galapagos Islands, Isla de Revillagigedo in Mexico and Tiger Beach in the Bahamas.

Most memorable underwater moment

Seeing a great hammerhead in 12m of water while getting paid to dive definitely ranks pretty highly – I did the squeal and underwater dance and everything. However I think the most memorable was my first ever sighting of a scalloped hammerhead. I was diving at Osprey Reef in the Coral Sea with my original little Olympus. I remember looking up and seeing this magnificent animal swimming close by. I pointed the camera but couldn't see anything in the screen. I tried again, still couldn't see anything. I gave up trying to take a photo and after the animal had swam past I looked to see what the problem was with my camera – the lens cap was still on – the red plastic lens cap that sat on the housing. Oh well.



Cenderawasih Bay

by Yuri Verbaan

Teluk Cenderawasih (Indonesian for: Bird of Paradise Bay) is a large bay in the northern Province of Papua and West Papua New Guinea, Indonesia.





Quick Facts: Cenderawasih Bay is Indonesia's largest Marine National Park, with 1,453,500 hectares of islands and reefs. It was declared a National Park in 2002.

There are large numbers of fish species that are only found within this bay as is believed to been isolated from the open ocean in times past for long periods. Many fish species have evolved in new forms and colour variations. The bay became famous around 2011 when it was discovered that local fisherman were visited by resident whale sharks that fed off the small baitfish spilling from their fishing nets.

On September 14th 2015, a group of keen divers joined Jeff and Dawn Mullins in Manokwari on their photo-excursion to Cenderawasih Bay with 7 days of diving on schedule, nice weather and great warm water promised. We all stepped on board the MV TemuKira, a 33 meter wooden schooner, and started our journey to the southern part of the bay. This is where the whale sharks reside.

These first two days we dived some fantastic dive sites, with wrecks (like a Ki-43 Japanese Fighter plane) and beautiful sites with colourful coral. The evening of the second day we arrived in Kwatisore, where we anchored for the next 2 days. In that time we did in total 6 dives with the whale sharks, in the range of 5-9 metres.

It's quite impressive to see these magnificent animals coming up from the deep, sucking in the small bait fish. This arriving (and departing) and feeding of the whale sharks gave us some superb photo opportunities – and funny moments. A 8 to 9 metre whale shark less than half a metre away from you is pretty awesome. With that many dives, and small groups, everyone had a fantastic time with the whale sharks, and many, many images were taken.

We then started our casual way back towards Manokwari, diving various other spectacular spots. Beautiful sites with soft and hard corals, plenty of macro opportunities and another great ship wreck. In Manokwari we visited the local markets and had a quick look around in the harbour, getting an impression of how the locals live there.

We then all had to leave the ship and start our long way back to Denpasar, where we said goodbye. All in all, a fantastic trip, on a great boat, with super staff and beautiful food. Not to forget the once in a lifetime experience to dive with these magnificent creatures, and the good care of Jeff and Dawn.

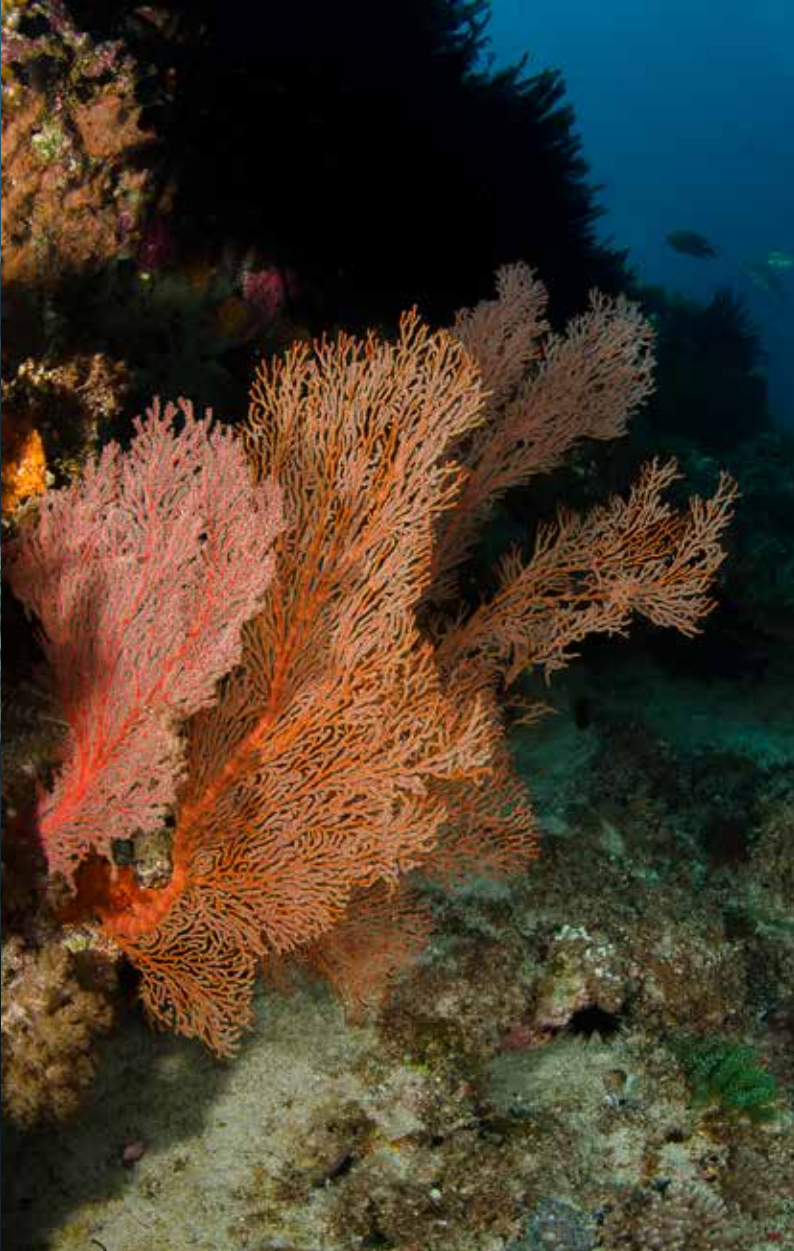


Lord Howe Island

by Mick Lee

From misty mountains covered in moss, drop down to the thicker forest, and save for a couple of houses and cleared areas of the township of Anchorage and the Old Settlement, this place is pristine, just like you would expect from a World Heritage site.





Dropping down over the Pacific Ocean after a 2 hour flight from Sydney the imposing Balls Pyramid rises like a monolith from the azure ocean. The Fokker Dash 8 banks and Mount Gower comes into view, a wall of volcanic rock protecting the lagoon of Lord Howe Island. Looking down the colours change from deep blue to amazing emerald greens and turquoise blues. Nothing welcomes you to Lord Howe Island better than nature itself.

I was apprehensive stepping off the plane onto the tarmac, not for what I would find above and below the waters, but if all my bags would arrive together. The checked in baggage limit is 14kg, yup underwater photographers that's 14kg checked in. I had 3 bags at 17kg which I checked in at Perth so the hunch was all would get through. Thankfully it worked as the trailer pulled into the carpark. This was going to be a good trip.

Lord Howe Island is a large ancient volcano shaped over millennia by the seas and weather. Here the rainforest truly does reach the reef. From mist covered mountains covered in moss drop down to the thicker forest and save for a couple of houses and cleared areas of the township of Anchorage and the Old Settlement this place is pristine, just like you would expect from a World Heritage site.

The dives of Lord Howe Island vary greatly. From shallow reefs within the lagoon to deeper blue water systems outside there is something for all divers to see and enjoy.

Inside the lagoon the waters are shallow and sheltered when the winds and swell get up which obviously can happen in such a remote location. Dives such as Le Meurthe and Comets provided a great start dive to iron out any creases in gear and settle in. The highlight

dive for me in the lagoon as was North Head Cave which is part of the front reef. This is a massive gutter full of schooling fish and the occasional turtle leading into a cave a stunning dive.

Further around is Malabar which are located under the sheer 200m cliffs that rise from the ocean floor. These dive sites are stunning. With crazy blue water visibility can be as much as 40m. The marine life is as diverse as the site itself from tiny nudibranchs through the endemic Galapagos Whaler Shark. Black corals and massive fans dot the reef system that seem to just sit in clean white sand.

Across from the cliffs are the Admiralty Islands, which again offer wide angle and macro opportunities. There are so many opportunities swimming through the gutters around the islands.

The main diving prize however is Balls Pyramid 20km off the Lord Howe Island. This massive monolith rises from the depths like a stone pillar surrounded only by reef and the East Australian Current. Unfortunately I did not get the chance to dive there due to weather conditions, but I will.

Lord Howe Island is a true gem and easily the most beautiful place I have ever visited in Australia. It is not an easy trip to plan with logistics and costs involved but I thoroughly recommend it if you get the chance. I dived only 4 days with 2 dives per day, which didn't seem as many as for normal dive trips but with lots of land activities I wanted to experience as much as possible. The local knowledge based on 20 odd years experience from Howe Dive allowed for the best spots for the weather, which really only blew up on the first day.



How could anything top a week on a liveaboard in Galapagos? Here we dived with dozens of hammerhead sharks, sealions, marine iguanas and 14 metre whalesharks at some of the world's most iconic dive sites like Darwin's Arch and Wolf Island.

So our expectations of Mexico weren't high but it seemed a nice little add-on trip on the way home from Ecuador. We arrived in Cancun on the Yucatan Peninsula via Panama and after a delay at the airport while the sniffer dogs went over everyone's baggage, we hit the road to the Maya Riviera region. It took us a day or two to get into the swing of the all-inclusive Catalonia Resort but we soon found the best bars and restaurants and steered clear of the poolside dance classes!

We were in Mexico to dive the cenotes, a unique ecosystem of crystal clear, freshwater underground caverns, tunnels and chambers. More than 300 miles of interconnected passageways have been explored and each cenote is different - some with stalagmite and stalactite formations, others with fallen trees and lily pads and some with openings to the sky allowing shafts of light to penetrate through the water column.

Mexico's hi

by Tammy Gibbs



Hidden gems



Tammy Gibbs



Tammy Gibbs

Our diving was through Dive Aventuras, an outstanding dive operator with excellent, fully cave certified dive guides. Nothing was too much trouble and they organised everything from our dives to transport to lunch if we were hungry. Our main guides Mario and Jose kept us laughing all the way through our surface intervals too. Cave certification is required for divers who want to penetrate the caves, while recreation dive certification is all that is needed to explore the cenotes.

To say the cenotes were mind-blowing would be an understatement. They are truly stunning and offer some of the most amazing photographic opportunities. We dived some of the well-known cenotes like Chac Mool, Kukulcan, Garden of Eden, Tajma Ha, Gran Cenote, Dos Ojos and Carwash. They all offered unique photo opportunities and our guides were surprised when we asked to visit the same cenote for a second or third time. Mario and Jose were also incredibly patient with us, swimming back and forth past the walls of sunlight as our models and not bothered by the fact we didn't stray more than a few metres from the cenote entrance as we chased the light.

The cenotes are challenging to photograph. Balancing the bright streaming sunlight against the dark shadows isn't easy and in some cases we were cranking our ISO into the thousands to shoot into the pitch black. But the results were spectacular and we all walked away with some awesome photos.

For me, Mexico's cenotes did top Galapagos! This seems like an astonishing thing to say but for me it's true, probably because the cenotes were completely different from any diving I had done before. Diving in freshwater feels clean and comfortable with less weight needed than in the salty ocean. And the light was stunning, leaving us speechless after some of the dives.

If you get a chance to dive Mexico's cenotes, do it!

Mexico's Caribbean Diving

By Maryann Evetts

Some of us dragged ourselves away from the Cenotes, and yes that was really difficult as they are truly amazing, but I couldn't miss the opportunity to dive the Caribbean, as it is most unlikely I will return.

I'm not sure what I expected but it certainly wasn't what we got. The Caribbean always conjures up images of bright colours and lots of physical activity. We dived just off shore from Cancun where we stayed (Bali on steroids!!), a ten minute boat trip to the reef. Dive Adventuras took us out on our own or in groups. The water was warm and clear and everything was beige with a tinge of purple. I can see now why American divers love our waters. Most of the soft corals, sponges, gorgonians, tunicates and reef critters were beige. It was however really beautiful. Tall soft corals rose off the reef dispersed with sponges. It was very peaceful and interesting to see the variation in the structure of the reef from those around Australia.

There wasn't a great deal of fish life. Liz Davey had a close encounter with a huge turtle, and we found small spotted morays and a couple of scorpion cod fish tucked in amongst the reef. The Caribbean has been overrun by lionfish, so an official Lion Fish Hunter joined us spearing and removing any lionfish he found. I chose not to be anywhere close by and I did sneak a photo of a lionfish.

There were some interesting algae that look like little green cabbages which sat on purple sponges and small cities of tube sponges which rose off the substrate in patches. Encrusting

coral oozed over the rocks and then rose like stalagmites in little globules. Really fascinating!

So if you get to Mexico, do try a couple of reef dives. I went back for a second dive because I was so intrigued.



Maryann Evetts



Maryann Evetts

Diving the Lena

by Amanda Blanksby

I always look forward to driving down to Bunbury for a dive on the Lena. In December 2015 WAUPS booked Octopus Garden Dive Charters vessel 'Cross Country' for the whole weekend and seventeen of our members made the most of the opportunity to dive on some rusty metal. It's about a half an hour boat ride out from Casuarina Bay in Bunbury, with vessel being captained by the owner, Kim Royce.

Out of the two days surface conditions on the Sunday were better than the Saturday with lighter winds and less surface chop. However underwater conditions were perfect both days, with less than 1m swells so you could relax and just float around, exploring the ins and outs of the wreck.

The vessel is a 50m long, with a bottom depth of 18m at the propeller. Perfect for diving and there is plenty of wide angle and macro photography to enjoy. Shoals of bullseyes congregate at various locations both outside and inside the wreck. Crayfish like to sit just underneath the wreck knowing they are in a sanctuary zone and can't be grabbed. Generally the hull exterior is abloom with the white telesto corals, but given low swell and no current the white coral buds were tucked away. There are patches where all the coral has been scrapped of, by whales during the spring time, using the vessel as a rather large scratching post. It is easy to access inside the wreck for some natural light photography, or you can simply hang out with the batfish around the crows nest or off to the side of the wreck.

Kim is developing a list of various marine creatures spotted on the wreck and has nearly hit the 50 mark. Not bad for an artificial reef system, located in an area that would normally be quite barren of marine sea life.





PIXELS winners

July to December 2015



October – Batfish *Danny Messom*



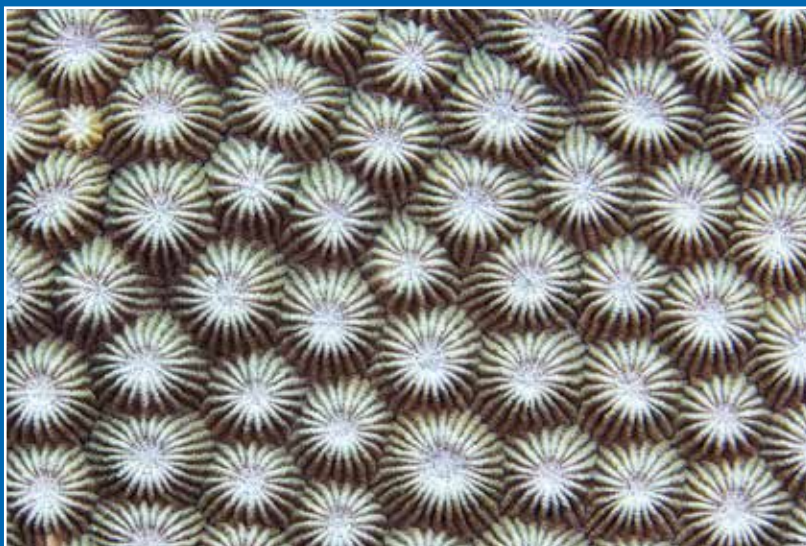
August – Schools and Shoals of fish *Mark Jeffs*



July – Backlighting *Maryann Evetts*



November – Into the Blue
Janet O'Brien



September – Polyps *Mark Jeffs*



December – In the Sand *Mark Jeffs*

MEGAPIXELS winners

July to December 2015

September – Polyps *Amanda Blanksby*



November – Into the Blue *Amanda Blanksby*



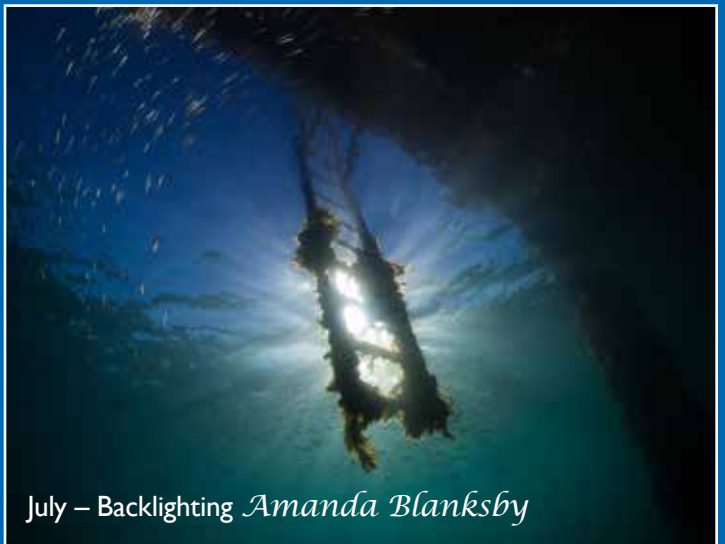
August – Schools and Shoals of fish *Daniel Lloyd*



October – Batfish *Bert de Wit*



July – Backlighting *Amanda Blanksby*



December – In the Sand *Jenny Ough*



December – In the Sand *Bert de Wit*



Creature Feature

by Sue Morrison



From Simple Sponges to Superior Sea Squirts

Solitary sea squirt Polycarpa species, Sue Morrison



Although many sponges and sea squirts are difficult to tell apart, they could not be more different on the evolutionary scale. Sponges are very 'primitive' and sea squirts are surprisingly 'advanced'.

Sponges

Sponges are the simplest animals that lack a backbone (invertebrates) and have many cells in their bodies (are multicellular). Despite being multicellular, they do not have organs or true tissues. Instead sponges keep their shape with simple skeletons of either spongin (a fibrous and pliable substance -sometimes used as bath sponges) or spicules (needle-like rods - these can embed in your finger if you touch these sponges with bare hands). Some species can have both.

Sponges can grow into upright forms including huge barrel-shapes, fans, fronds, tubes or smaller balls, plates, fingers and cups. However, many species can be flat and encrusting on rocks, other marine life or algae.

Sponges feed by filtering seawater. The outer layer of cells has tiny pores (ostia) which connect to a deeper internal network of canals. Water is drawn in through the ostia, through the canals and is then expelled out via a few larger openings (oscles). The canals contain masses of tiny collar cells that each have a microscopic whip-like structure (flagellum) that beats in unison to produce the water flow. In this process, organic particles and bacteria are filtered out as food for the sponge. Sponges can filter their own volume of water every 10 - 12 seconds!



Purple encrusting sponge, Sue Morrison



Pink sponge, Sue Morrison

Sea Squirts

Sea squirts (AKA ascidians, tunicates, sea tulips, cungevoi), in contrast, are much more complex animals. Surprisingly they are more closely related to vertebrates (including humans) than to sponges! During their tadpole-like larval stage they develop a rod-like supporting structure (notochord) which is a primitive backbone, hence the classification of sea squirts as chordates (most chordates have a fully developed backbone and hence are called vertebrates).

After only a few hours the free-swimming sea squirt larvae settle on the seabed and they develop the adult body shape. In this process the tail and notochord are reabsorbed into the body and the head expands to form a tough sack-like structure with two siphons.

Sea squirts have a diverse range of body forms as adults, from solitary stalked forms to various-shaped colonies. The solitary

species have large heads with an exhalant inhalant siphon. Internally is a large perforated 'throat' or pharynx which filters out food particles pumped in via the inhalant (bottom) siphon. The filtered water and waste is then pumped out via the exhalant (top) siphon. Food particles are digested in the stomach and intestines. The circulating water also provides oxygen to the gills. Sea squirts have a simple nervous system that enables them to close the siphon holes. Individual stalked species are known as 'sea tulips' e.g. the Giant Sea Tulip.

Many sea squirts are colonial, but there are varying degrees of body form. The simpler colonial forms retain their separate individual heads with two siphons (zooids), but are joined at the base e.g. the Blue-throated Ascidian. In other species the zooids themselves are joined together and are known as compound ascidians. Each zooid has an inhalant siphon, but several zooids often share fewer, larger exhalant siphons, e.g. Leach's Compound Ascidian.

Distinguishing between sponges and sea squirts

Encrusting sponges and compound sea squirts are usually the forms that are difficult to tell apart. Both forms can grow on hard substrates, other marine animals and algae. They can also be highly variable in colour, from brightly coloured to camouflaged. The easiest way to distinguish the two phyla is by touch! Sea squirts will retract and close their siphons, (sometime squirting you with water in the process if you are looking in a rock pool), but sponges will not respond at all. We all know it is not advisable to touch and disturb marine life, but if you are gentle you will not harm these animals. Use of a metal pointer or chop stick rather than fingers is good practise, as you will avoid

getting spicules in your fingers or gloves if you touch the wrong sponge (or any other marine life that could be hiding in the sponge or sea squirt). If you have very good eyesight you might be able to see whether the animal has siphons or not, but often the siphons and sponge pores look very similar.



Two species of Didemnum compound sea squirts, Sue Morrison



PARTING SHOT

by Rusty Geller



In the mid-nineties I was living in Southern California. I had my own boat and would frequently run out to Anacapa Island, the closest of the eight Channel Islands. On the south end of the seaward side, just behind the arch that James Whistler made famous with his 1854 drawing, was a sea lion rookery.

On a bright, sunny morning I talked my best buddy Andy Scheer into doing a dive there. Usually people avoided the spot because the sea lions could be such a nuisance. I didn't care, I was working as a stunt-cameraman in Hollywood and was used to getting beat up for a good shot.

We anchored in 8 metres or water over sand just off the rookery. We could see about fifty of the California Sea Lions sunning themselves up on the rocks. Sea lions differ from seals in they have external ears, which is why they are sometimes called eared-seals, and split

back fins they can use to move on land like legs. They are curious and can sometimes be aggressive. I'd never been bit, but my housing had.

The sea lions were sliding off the rocks and heading for the boat as Andy and I rolled over the side and dropped down to the sandy bottom. He didn't have a camera, he was just going to watch. The vis was good, about 15 metres, and there was oodles of light bouncing off the white sand bottom. I carried a Nikon N90s loaded with Fuji Velvia 50 ISO slide film, which was great for nature photography because it had a lot of guts, 5 stops of latitude, brilliant colour rendition and could easily be pushed to 100 ISO. The camera was in a Sea&Sea housing, dome port, Nikkor 24mm and twin Ikelite 100 strobes.

It didn't take long before the first sea lions arrived and started diving on us. Shooting film means you are limited

to 36 shots, 37 if you loaded it right, so you didn't just shoot everything, you waited and timed each shot. Obviously you couldn't check your shots right after you'd taken it, so you had to know your film and exposures and how to balance your strobes to the ambient light.

Soon there were a dozen young males flying past like forty-kilo birds, swooping closer and closer from all directions, in front, above, to the sides and from behind, seeing how close they could come without bumping us. After 10 minutes of being kamakazied, Andy'd had enough and ascended to the boat. I knelt on the bottom and panned with the sea lions holding each shot to the last moment to fill the frame and make every frame count. When I ran out of film I just sat there and enjoyed the show. It was one of the most fun and exciting dives I've ever had.

ASYMMETRIC STROBE LIGHTING

by Ian Robertson

For the past year I've been blasting away with two strobes, set to equal power, and GENERALLY getting good results. On a recent dive, I came across a rather neat sponge with a nice three-dimensional structure. I took a photo (Figure 1) - it was rather flat.

So I turned one strobe off (Figure 2) - the 3D structure came up OK but the lighting was really hard, with little detail in the shadows. Naaah!

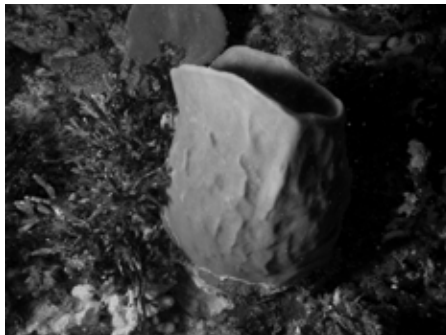
So I turned the second strobe back on and wound its power back quite a bit and tried a third time (Figure 3). MAGIC -

there was the 3D structure with the detail in the softer lit parts. Much better!

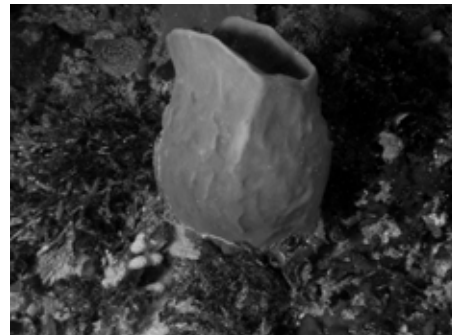
Soooo.... I'd found a whole new world of asymmetric strobe lighting, using the light to suit the subject! It just requires a bit of thought and experimentation. I'm sure others have used this before but it was new to me!



Two strobes – equal power, flat result



One strobe – hard lighting.



Two strobes, one on reduced power – a nice compromise.

Sponsors

We sincerely thank all of the sponsors who have supported WAUPS over the years. Please remember the WAUPS sponsors below when you are thinking of your next purchase.

Perth Scuba

generously provides prizes for competitions and discounts for members (with your current membership card).



Scuba Imports/Dive Tub

generously provides prizes for competitions and discounts for members (with your current membership card).



Ningaloo Whaleshark Swim generously supported our 2014 PIXELS monthly theme competition.



Mike Ball Dive Expeditions

generously supported our 2013 PIXELS monthly theme competition.



Jeff and Dawn Mullins, Reef Wreck & Critter - generously supporting our 2015 PIXELS monthly theme competition.



Breeze Photos Tweed Heads

– Discounts for members. Just email Ross at ross@gudgeon.id.au and let him know you're a WAUPS member.

Fitzgerald Photo Imaging

generously provides prizes for competitions and discounts for members (with your current membership card).



Paul Gammer of Chameleon WA Pty Ltd

- software development, graphical design, web hosting. Email Paul at paul.gammer@mac.com .

Dolphin Dive Fremantle

provides a reduced rate for our Rottnest day dive and discounts for members with your current membership card.










WESTERN AUSTRALIAN UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

waupsnews@gmail.com

The Western Australian Underwater Photographic Society (WAUPS) is a non-profit organisation, which was established in January 1984.

The aims of the Society are:

-  To promote an improvement of underwater photography amongst its members.
-  To promote underwater photography in the community.
-  To encourage an understanding and preservation of the marine environment.
-  To promote an exchange of skills and ideas from within the society and from external bodies.
-  To have fun and enjoy socialising, diving and photography.

WAUPS holds monthly meetings which include guest presenters on a range of photography and diving topics along with a digital show-and-tell of images from members.

We hold an annual Rottnest day dive shootout, a monthly themed photo competition called PIXELS, monthly photo dives, annual portfolio and image of the year competitions and a range of trips and social events during the year.

WAUPS members also get membership to the WA Photographic Federation and can participate in their events and trips.

Anyone interested in underwater photography is welcome any time including all levels of experience.

**WAUPS meetings are conducted at 7:30pm
on the FOURTH TUESDAY of every month.**



Find us on Facebook

www.waups.org.au

