



WONDERS OF WHYALLA
ROWAN DEAR EXPLAINS HOW
TO SHOOT THE CHARISMATIC
GIANT CUTTLEFISH

TECH: INDONESIA
JOHN KENDALL DISCOVERS
THE WONDERS OF THE
BUNAKEN MARINE PARK

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BO PARDAU SETS SAIL ON
THE LATEST VESSEL TO JOIN
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Taylor Ladd-Hudson explains how she overcame her fear
of **sharks** and is now a champion for **their protection**

+ THE ARENUI, PT II ▶ DIVING WITH ... LEWIS BURNETT ▶ DIAA

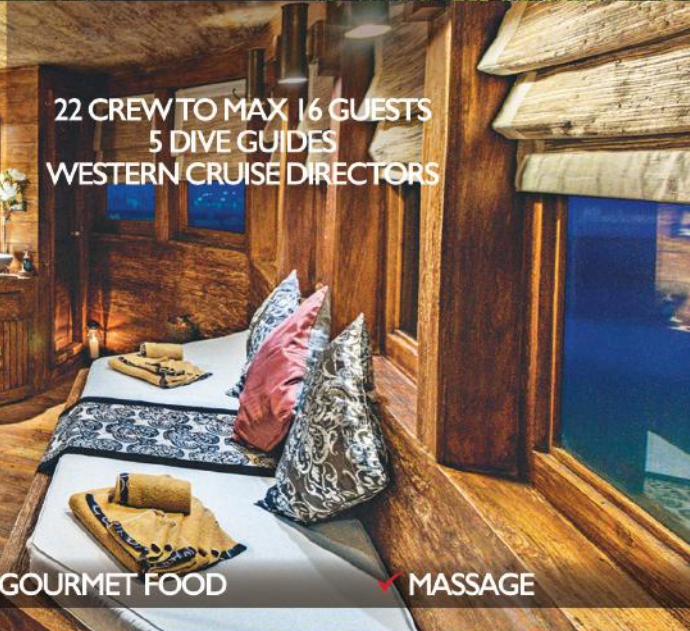
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Times are changing and to keep the magazines free, we're asking dive stores to cover their own postage costs. If you enjoy reading the magazine, think about helping out your centre with a small donation to help cover their costs. Your continued support is most appreciated.



Paranoia about lost hold baggage

One of my biggest fears when flying is having my bags arrive at my destination after me! As a result of this paranoia, I always take my most essential items with me as hand luggage. This means packing a spare pair of underwear, then squeezing all my camera equipment, housing, and accessories into a backpack and shoulder bag, and hoping that these items do not get weighed at check-in, as it is fair to say that they exceed the 7kg limit. So far, I have been lucky and have managed to avoid any horrendous excess baggage charges. What I find strange is that it is possible to pay for extra checked luggage, but I have never come across an airline that offers the option of purchasing additional hand luggage allowance. I would happily pay extra if it meant I did not have to worry about encountering an overly eager airline employee at check-in!

Statistically speaking there is a 6.3% chance that your bags will be mishandled, that said last year my bags did not arrive home with me from a trip to South America, and on a direct trip to Indonesia my checked bag arrived four days after I did, fortunately I was staying in a resort and not on a liveaboard so after a visit to a local souvenir shop, I managed to get the basics, was able to borrow some dive gear, and could dive with my new camera and housing - paranoia vindicated!

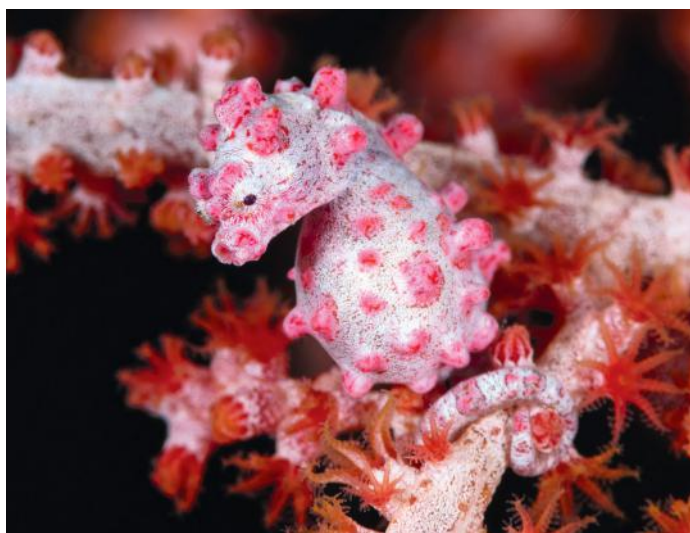
Our first port of call in this issue is South Australia, where Rowan Dear experiences the phenomenal spectacle of mating season for the giant cuttlefish of Whyalla. Across the Tasman, Talia Greis explores the rich waters of the Poor Knights on a liveaboard. Sticking with the liveaboard theme, we bring you part two of the amazing Indonesia itineraries on offer in this stunning region of the world with the Arenui, and Bo Pardau explores the Visayas region of the Philippines on board the new Atlantis liveaboard, Infiniti.

Adrian Stacey, Editor (Australia & New Zealand)



"This is the best diving I have ever done in 30 years of diving. All of the staff are the most helpful and gracious I have ever met in 50 years of traveling. The staff are as magnificent as the reef!"

~ Russell Graham, Dec 2025



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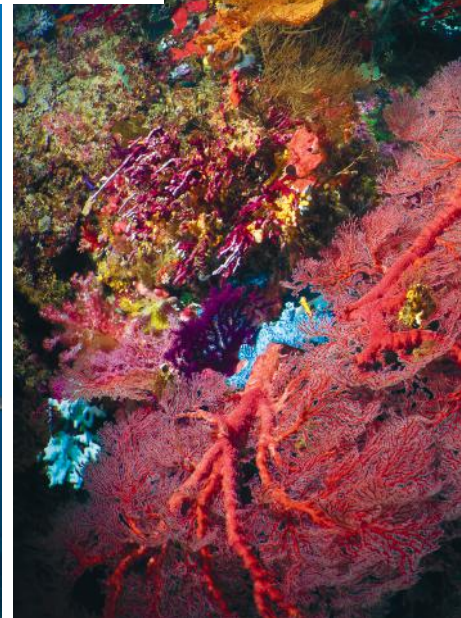
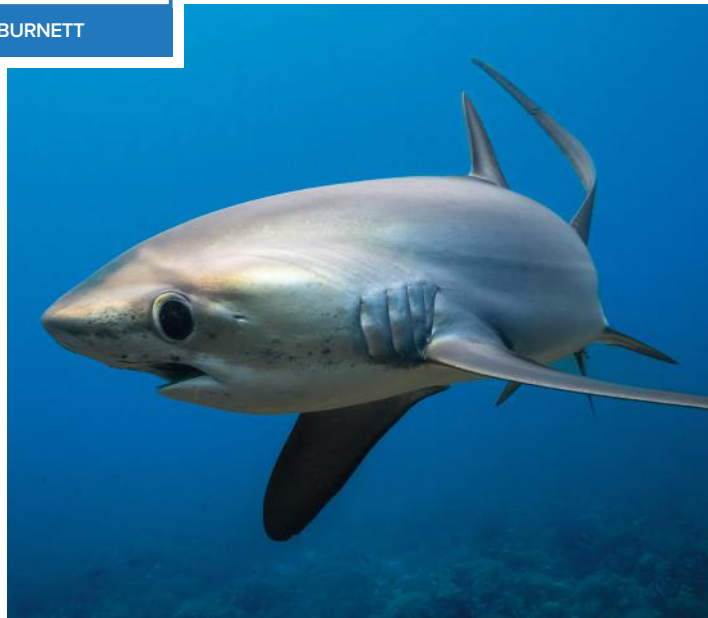


Sharing Our Sea
**COEXISTING
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Taylor Ladd-Hudson explains how she overcame her fear
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PHOTOGRAPH © LEWIS BURNETT



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Bo Pardau says this is how he feels every time he and his wife return to the Atlantis Resort properties in the Philippines, be it Puerto Galera, Dumaguete, or the liveaboard, Atlantis Adventurer, and he was keen to see if he'd get that same feeling on the new vessel, Infiniti.

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Cressi Sub is the oldest diving equipment manufacturing company in the world, and as it celebrates an incredible 80 years in existence, it has released a line of colourful anniversary gear which certainly stands out from the crowd.





INDUSTRY NEWS

Each month, we bring together the latest regional industry news, as well as all over our water planet. To find out the most up-to-date news and views, check out the website or follow us on our various social media channels @divernetuk
www.divernet.com/news



‘UNDERWATER ANYWHERE’: ACE DIVER-CAMERAMAN DOUG ALLAN DIES

Doug Allan, the celebrated wildlife cinematographer and photographer who brought extremes of both the underwater and topside world to mass audiences, died at the age of 74 on 8 April while on a climbing trip in Nepal.

Allan was principal cameraman on acclaimed TV series such as *The Blue Planet* (2001) and *Blue Planet II* (2017) and his award-winning work featured in numerous other programmes seen by millions, including *Planet Earth*, *Frozen Planet*, *Life*, *Human Planet*, *Expedition Iceberg* and *Forces of Nature*. In the course of his career Allan made more than 100 documentary-filming trips, capturing such memorable on-screen firsts as orcas attacking grey whales off California, polar bears trying to capture belugas in a frozen hole in Arctic Canada and killer whales washing seals off ice-floes in Antarctica.

The SSI Platinum Pro Diver had logged more than 8,000 hours under water, some 500 of which were spent working under ice. No details of the circumstances of Allan’s death have yet been issued. His ex-wife of 15 years Sue Flood, also a wildlife film-maker and photographer, stated: “It is of comfort to know that he was doing something adventurous with a dear friend of ours, with whom he’d shared many adventures over several decades.

“Doug was a brilliant and incredibly determined cameraman and photographer, who will also rightly be remembered as the passionate conservationist he was, whose legacy is the incredible body of work which has inspired so many.”



Influenced by Cousteau

Doug Allan was born in Dunfermline in Scotland on 17 July, 1951 and was inspired from an early age to take up snorkelling and scuba diving after seeing Jacques Cousteau’s ground-breaking 1956 documentary *The Silent World*. He graduated with an honours degree in marine biology from Stirling University in 1973 but decided at that point that it was being ‘underwater anywhere’ that would be his main driving force.

For the next three years he worked on jobs ranging from freshwater pearl-diving in Scottish rivers to underwater video work and canal-rebuilding in Germany. He travelled as a research assistant on marine-biological expeditions to the Red Sea with Cambridge University, and in the summer of 1975 ran Bouley Bay Underwater Centre in Jersey in the Channel Islands.

His break came the following year when the British Antarctic Survey took him on as a research diver at its base on Signy island in the South Orkney Islands. He would dive there from boats in the summer seasons and through holes cut into the ice in winter. Allan spent four winters and nine summers in Antarctica over the next ten years, and was awarded the Fuchs Medal and then the first of two Polar



INDUSTRY NEWS



Photography © Doug Allan, Sue Flood and Nick Law

Medals for his work there. His first commercial success using a film rather than a stills camera came while he was base commander at Halley Station and his footage of Emperor penguins was bought by the BBC.

This and his ice-diving experience led him to propose two Antarctic-based films for the Anglia TV series Survival, which he spent ten months making.

Allan had met renowned naturalist and TV personality David Attenborough in 1981, and their chance encounter led to him working on the Antarctic sequences for the BBC documentary series Living Planet and starting to gain his reputation as an extreme-environment specialist.

When filming underwater he would scuba dive, snorkel or freedive, depending on the circumstances. One of many polar experiences he recalled involved a hungry walrus thinking he was a seal and grabbing his legs while he was underwater, forcing Allan to scare it off by hitting it on the head with his camera.

Other activities

As a freelance film-maker, Allan worked not only for the BBC but Discovery, National Geographic and other channels. He would later appear in front of as well as behind the camera, both filming and presenting for the BBC series Ocean Giants in 2011 and the following year for Operation Iceberg. In 2012, his book Freeze Frame: A Wildlife Cameraman's Adventures on Ice was published.

Immersed in nature

"Doug died immersed in nature and surrounded by friends," stated Allan's management company Jo Sarsby Management, describing him as "a true pioneer of wildlife film-making" who had "captured some of the most breathtaking and intimate moments in the natural world" to leave a visual legacy that few could ever match.

"When we think of Doug, we will always remember his unforgettable kindness and his extraordinary talent," it continued. "He was a true gentleman and he will be profoundly missed.

"Our thoughts are with his family, friends, colleagues across the wildlife film-making industry and the many people around the world who admired his work." ■

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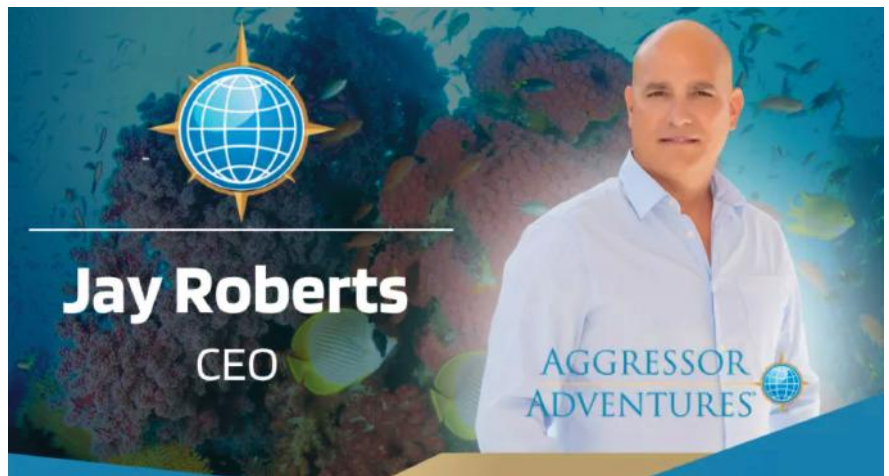
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JAY ROBERTS APPOINTED CEO OF AGGRESSOR ADVENTURES



Aggressor Adventures has announced the appointment of Jay Roberts as Chief Executive Officer, following the passing of longtime CEO Wayne Brown. Appointed by Dana Brown, owner of Aggressor Adventures, Jay steps into this role with more than 30 years in the diving industry and over two decades of leadership within the Aggressor family. As Aggressor Adventures looks ahead to its next chapter, the mission remains unchanged: to deliver world-class adventures, foster exploration, and create unforgettable experiences for guests around the globe. Jay Roberts brings the experience, passion, and deep operational knowledge to lead the company forward while honoring the foundation that has defined Aggressor since 1984.

“Jay has dedicated his career to Aggressor Adventures and embodies everything this company stands for,” said Dana.

Born in Clearwater, Florida, and raised in Dover, Arkansas, Jay developed a love for exploration at an early age. Today, he lives in Augusta, Georgia, with his wife and children, sharing that same spirit of adventure with his family. Some of his most-meaningful memories have happened aboard Aggressor yachts, from certifying his son as a diver to watching his daughter take her first steps onboard. Jay discovered scuba diving at age 19 and quickly turned that passion into a profession. Over the years, he rose through the ranks to become a PADI Staff Instructor and SSI Instructor Trainer and now celebrates 30 years as a dedicated professional in the dive industry.

His journey with the company began in true adventurer fashion and has since spanned roles from Cruise Director to Captain to Operations Manager, and now CEO. What started with that bold introduction grew into a remarkable journey through nearly every level of the organization. Throughout his many roles within the company, Jay has helped shape Aggressor’s global operations through hand’s-on leadership and a deep understanding of what makes the guest experience exceptional. He has led teams across multiple destinations, served as a Relief Captain throughout the fleet, and helped scout and develop new dive destinations around the world. Under Jay’s leadership, Aggressor Adventures will continue expanding its global footprint across Liveaboards, River Cruises, and Signature Lodges while maintaining the standards of safety, service, and exploration that guests have trusted for decades.

“Aggressor Adventures has always been about more than just travel. It’s about creating meaningful experiences and lifelong connections. I’m honored to step into this role and continue building on the legacy that Wayne helped create. Our commitment to safety, service, and exploration remains as strong as ever,” said Jay.

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ABOFA

Aqaba Blue Ocean Future in Action

About the Event

ABOFA – Aqaba Blue: Ocean Future in Action 2026 is a comprehensive international exhibition & experience platform dedicated to Diving, Marine Technology, Water Sports & Adventure, Tourism & Ocean Lifestyle.

Taking place in the heart of the Red Sea, ABOFA aims to transform Aqaba into the region's leading hub for diving, marine innovation, & coastal adventure industries.

The event brings together global brands, innovators, researchers, divers, investors, & marine professionals to connect, collaborate, showcase technology, conduct demonstrations, & engage in Themed Activities & B2C experiences.



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Workshops

50+

Speakers

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AMSA URGES BOATERS TO BE PREPARED - REGISTER EPIRBs AND PLAN YOUR TRIP

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) is urging Australians heading out on the water to be well prepared, ensuring they have appropriate safety equipment and an emergency plan in place before setting off. In the early hours of 13 April, AMSA detected the activation of an emergency beacon linked to a life raft from a domestic commercial vessel (DCV) near Cape Flattery, approximately 56km north of Cooktown.

AMSA contacted the vessel owner's registered emergency contact, who confirmed the vessel was operating in the area with three people on board. A Cairnsbased Challenger aircraft and a QG Air Rescue 510 Helicopter were tasked to investigate. Following a broadcast from Reef VTS, a nearby recreational vessel Starting Over responded. The crew, sighting the distress flare, located the three people ashore and recovered them safely. The Challenger aircraft later located the DCV, which was found to be on fire. AMSA Executive Director Response Alex Barrell thanked everyone involved in the successful rescue and highlighted the critical role of safety equipment.

"This outcome shows just how vital it is to carry and correctly register an EPIRB, and to have visual signalling



devices like flares on board," Mr Barrell said.

"Because the beacon was registered and activated promptly, responders were able to act quickly and coordinate a search that led to all three people being brought home safely.

"Before heading out, take the time to check your safety equipment, tell someone your plans, and make sure you know what to do if things go wrong – it can save lives." AMSA reminds all boaters that preparation and the right safety gear can make the difference in an emergency.

DAN LAUNCHES PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID E-LEARNING COURSE

Divers Alert Network (DAN) has announced the release of a new e-learning course, Surface Support: Navigating Trauma After a Dive Incident. This free online course is designed to provide divers with a foundational understanding of how stress and trauma can affect both themselves and others after a dive incident.

Standard dive and first aid training focuses on the physical management of an incident, such as towing an exhausted diver or administering emergency oxygen. Surface Support's curriculum builds on these essential skills by addressing the mental recovery process that follows a real-life emergency.

"Risk is an inherent part of diving," said Francois Burman, Vice President, Safety Services, at DAN. "While we strive to prevent incidents and train to manage emergencies, accidents do occur, and their psychological consequences can linger long after the moment of crisis has passed. This course provides post-incident support strategies for anyone who may be struggling in the aftermath of an event."

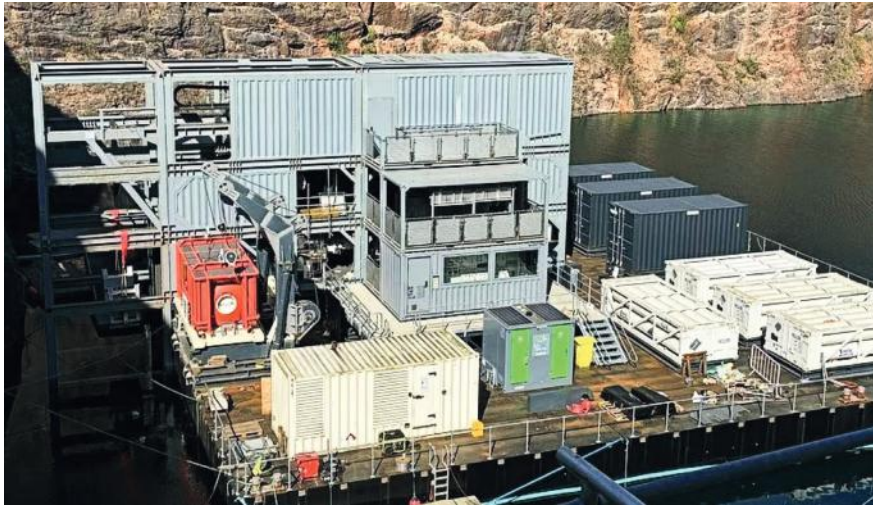
By adding psychological first aid to their toolkits, divers can prepare to navigate the emotional impact of an



emergency — whether they are an injured diver, a rescuer, or a bystander. While not intended to replace professional mental health care, this course is designed to be practical and informative for divers of all levels, from open water students to dive professionals.

Surface Support: Navigating Trauma After a Dive Incident is now available to all DAN members via DAN E-Learning. dan.diverlearning.com

DEEP INVITES APPLICANTS FOR SAT-DIVER TRAINING



The most-advanced closed-bell diver-training system in the world, and the only one of its kind in the Northern Hemisphere – that’s the claim for a new pathway into commercial saturation-diving now available in the UK.

The DEEP facility in Gloucestershire has just opened applications for its UK HSE Closed Bell Diver training courses, a qualification it says is essential for sat-divers working in offshore oil, gas and renewable-energy projects in the North Sea and elsewhere. The three-week courses, priced at £30,000, are designed to equip those who already have at least 100 hours’ experience as offshore surface-supplied divers to make the move into closed-bell diving.

The programme combines classroom-based theory with hands-on practical training, covering closed-bell operations, life-support systems, transfer under pressure and emergency response procedures. The initial courses this autumn have already been allocated, so new applicants will start their training from next January.

Making humans aquatic

The DEEP ‘campus’ is built on a barge system in the 80m-deep Dayhouse Lake near Tidenham formerly known as NDAC (National Diving & Activity Centre), which closed to recreational divers in 2022. The facility describes its mission as being ‘to make humans aquatic’, developing subsea habitats as well as training ‘to enable a continuous human presence in the ocean’.

For the sat-diver courses the facility provides a six-person living chamber and a three-person bell, with the sheltered environment said to enable ‘safe, controlled training conditions year-round’.

“The course is ideal for divers who have completed surface-supplied training and gained industry experience, and who are now looking to take the next step in their career development,” says DEEP Institute CEO Dennis Nelson.

“Longer-term, the application of the saturation system will be broader – from habitat diver training to providing a pathway for experienced divers from scientific, research, military and other communities to develop the skills needed to work underwater for extended periods.”

The UK HSE Closed Bell Diver certification will be the highest-level professional commercial-diving certification issued by the UK Health & Safety Executive for saturation and mixed-gas bell diving, says DEEP, and a qualification recognised worldwide. DEEP also currently offers training for recreational divers and others, including Closed-Circuit Rebreather, Diver Medical Technician and Submersible Search & Rescue.

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30X30 MARINE PROTECTION. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? AND HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Australia's dive industry is uniquely positioned to become a leading voice for marine protection as momentum builds around the global '30x30' campaign — the international commitment to protect 30% of the world's oceans and land by 2030.

Across Australia, from the Great Barrier Reef to Ningaloo, divers witness firsthand the importance of healthy marine ecosystems and the growing pressures they face from climate change, pollution, habitat degradation and overuse.

The Australian Government has committed to achieving the international 30x30 target as part of broader 'nature positive' goals. Recent marine park forums and conservation discussions have highlighted increasing recognition that marine protected areas must be scientifically managed, adequately funded, and strongly supported by local communities and industries to succeed. This creates an important opportunity for Australia's dive industry.

Dive shops and operators are among the most-credible advocates for ocean conservation because healthy reefs and marine ecosystems are essential to the future of dive tourism. Every dive charter, snorkelling tour and training course creates an opportunity to educate divers about marine protection and inspire environmentally responsible behaviour.

Many dive operators are already leading by example through practical sustainability initiatives. Dive operators can also support marine conservation by encouraging customers to become informed advocates for the oceans. Divers often return home with a deeper understanding of marine ecosystems and can become powerful ambassadors for marine protection within their own communities. Importantly, sustainable business practices are increasingly becoming a competitive advantage. Travellers are actively seeking tourism operators that demonstrate genuine environmental stewardship, and accreditation programmes such as Green Fins and PADI AWARE provide practical frameworks for businesses wanting to improve their sustainability performance while strengthening customer trust.

The Dive Industry Association of Australia (DIAA) is helping provide national leadership in this area through its Environment Sub-Committee. The committee's mission is to support Australian conservation programs and lobbying efforts while promoting sustainable practices and environmental stewardship throughout the dive industry.

Through collaboration and education, the DIAA aims to help dive operators across Australia become active



participants in marine conservation. The DIAA also works to connect dive operators with conservation organisations, scientists, marine park managers and policymakers to address environmental challenges collaboratively.

Five Actions Dive Shops Can Take Now

- **Adopt recognised sustainability programmes**
Join initiatives such as Green Fins or PADI AWARE to benchmark and improve environmental practices.
- **Educate every diver**
Include marine conservation briefings on every trip, covering responsible wildlife interactions, buoyancy control and reef-safe behaviour.
- **Reduce operational waste**
Eliminate single-use plastics onboard, encourage reusable water bottles, and switch to environmentally friendly products wherever possible.
- **Support local conservation projects**
Participate in beach and underwater clean-ups, citizen science initiatives, reef monitoring programs and local marine park consultations.
- **Advocate for marine protection**
Use your voice within local communities and industry networks to support science-based marine protected areas and sustainable ocean policies.

The success of the 30x30 campaign will ultimately depend not only on government policy, but also on the support of industries and communities that rely on healthy oceans every day. Australia's dive industry has a unique ability to bridge tourism, education and conservation.

For more information on how the DIAA Environment Subcommittee can help magnify your environment message, please contact Deborah@diveplanit.com www.diveindustry.com.au



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Giant cuttlefish, sometimes referred to as ‘the chameleons of the sea’, are the largest cuttlefish species, and are found in great numbers in the waters off southern Australia. One of the best places to see them is in Spencer Gulf, near Whyalla in South Australia.

Each year, from May to August, thousands of giant cuttlefish gather here for their incredible annual migration and breeding event, known as the cuttlefish aggregation. This natural spectacle is known to be one of the highlights in the Australian marine environment; and indeed, attracts divers and marine enthusiasts from around the world who come to witness, film and photograph their vibrant displays of colour and complex mating behaviours.

The dive site at Whyalla is one of the most easily accessible dive sites around. A 20-minute drive from the town, and a short walk over some large flat rocks from the car park, you put your head under the water and instantly (visibility depending) you will see hundreds of cuttlefish scattered around in water that is around 4-5m (depending on tides). If you are by yourself then you can arrange for a guide from the Whyalla dive shop, or go out with one of their many tour groups which dive and snorkel most days during the season, or it is incredibly easy to dive with your buddy and not get lost.

They have a glass-bottom boat tour which runs, so you need to be careful which parts you swim in, but signs are up, and if you wanted to stay and do another dive instead of heading back to the town then Whyalla Dive Shop now has a full set up for gear hire, tanks, as well as changing rooms.

There is also now a lovely fire which will help warm you up before your next dive. The water temperature is around 11 degrees C, and air temperature in the mornings can be as low as 2 degrees C. As the site is so shallow, you could spend easily up to 2 hours down there on one tank, but the biggest limiting factor is the cold. The first year I went there, my wetsuit was a very old 7mm and I would last one hour before having to get out, last year in a good quality 8mm I was able to last 90 minutes.

In this article, we’ll look at how to get great underwater images of this charismatic, colourful and engaging species, and this unmissable underwater phenomenon. ▶

Did you know?

Every winter, tens of thousands of giant Australian cuttlefish migrate to the rocky shallow reefs of Point Lowly near Whyalla, for a unique, intense breeding spectacle.

This is the only known mass spawning aggregation of cuttlefish in the world.

“ Giant cuttlefish prefer rocky reefs, seagrass beds, and sandy seabeds, where they can hunt and use their impressive camouflage to hide from predators ”



GIANT CUTTLEFISH *of Whyalla*

Rowan Dear explains how to get great underwater images of this charismatic, colourful and engaging species, and what it is like to witness this unmissable underwater phenomenon

Photographs by Rowan Dear

Having grown up watching wildlife documentaries and thinking the scenes were so far removed from anything I could ever see with my own eyes, Whyalla allows you to live out that dream.

In shallow water, right here in Australia, you can see thousands of giant cuttlefish as far as the eye can see - you are spoilt for choice on which group to swim over to first. As you scan around, you might see a lone male swimming around looking for a mate, or a group of ten-plus with some locked in a mating embrace and others fighting with each other and smaller more-timid cuttlefish just sat there, watching. So, the trick is: to take a breath, wait and see which group you want to go and view first.

Giant cuttlefish behaviour

Giant cuttlefish prefer rocky reefs, seagrass beds, and sandy seabeds, where they can hunt and use their impressive camouflage to hide from predators.

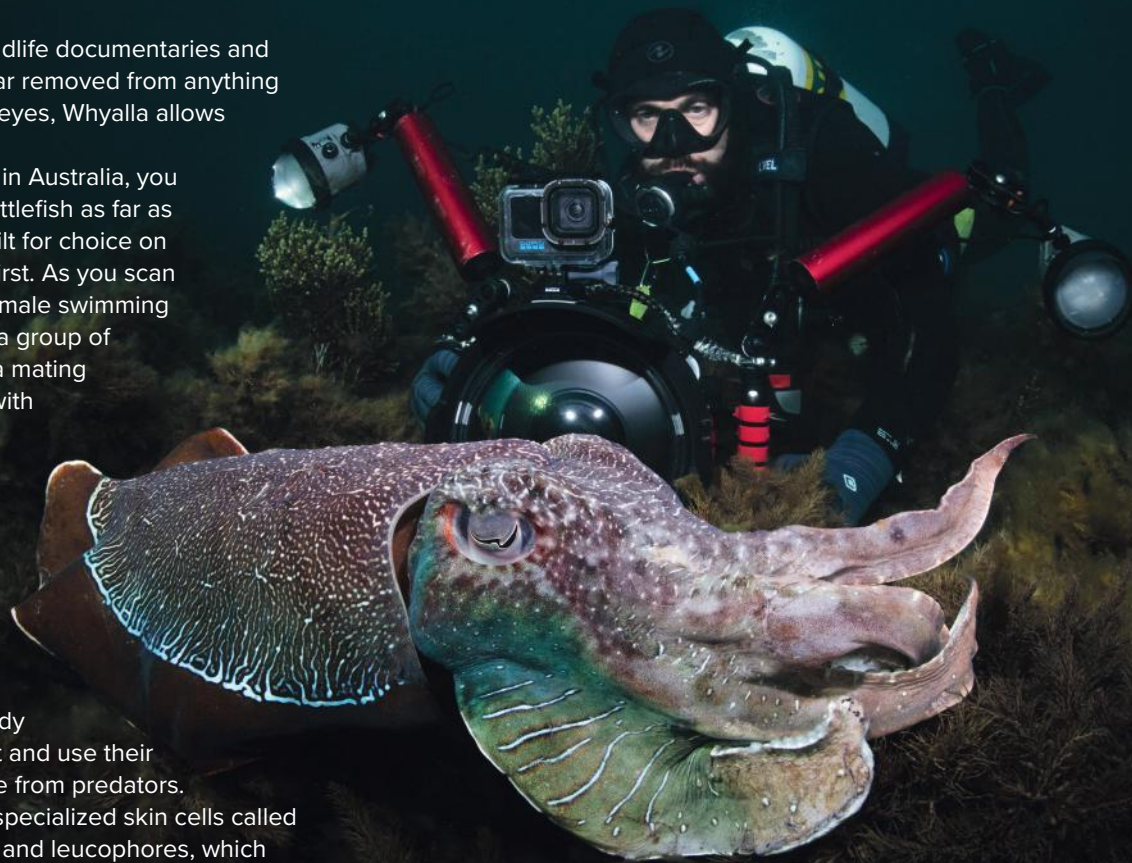
They change colour using specialized skin cells called chromatophores, iridophores, and leucophores, which expand and contract to reflect and absorb light. These rapid, dynamic colour changes are used for camouflage, communication, and intimidation. If you spot a cuttlefish displaying this remarkable ability, it's a perfect moment to get your camera ready!

Giant cuttlefish are among the most-fascinating marine creatures to dive with. Their ever-changing colours and shapes make them a captivating subject, especially during their breeding season. Below are a couple of their most interesting behaviours:

“ Giant cuttlefish dives often occur in shallow waters, typically less than 5m deep, making it easier to use natural sunlight to illuminate your shots ”

The Mating Dance: Time to Do Battle

During the breeding season, male cuttlefish typically outnumber females - sometimes by as much as 11:1 in places like Whyalla. This leads to intense competition for mates, which often involves spectacular displays. Male cuttlefish will engage in what looks like a dance, flashing their skin in pulses and extending their arms and tentacles to appear larger, hoping to outdo their rivals. In many cases, this visual display is enough to intimidate other males, but occasionally, it leads to physical confrontations. During these battles, cuttlefish may grapple with their arms and tentacles, sometimes losing limbs in the process. In such encounters, cuttlefish may also use their ability to squirt ink to escape if the fight becomes too intense.



Mating cuttlefish



Displays can get quite intense



The Mating Process

Giant cuttlefish mate 'head-to-head'. Males use a specialized arm to transfer packets of sperm (spermatophores) into a pouch near the female's mouth. Smaller males may use cunning tactics, such as disguising themselves as females, to slip past larger rivals. After mating, the female lays fertilized eggs in crevices or protected areas.

Even during mating, competition persists. Sometimes, other males will attempt to break up the pair and take over, leading to intense and visually stunning moments - an ideal opportunity for photographers.

New Life and The Death Of A Giant

The giant cuttlefish will lay around 100-300 eggs in small white sacks under the ledges of the rocks to help protect them from predators. Whilst the female isn't maternal and won't look after the eggs or the young once they are born - image four gives you an idea of what to look out for. The giant cuttlefish only live around one to two years, and often around the bay you will find dead cuttlefish floating on the surface with predators like birds, seals and dolphins coming in to eat the remains - the seal and dolphins will also come in and take live ones as well. Image six shows a southern eagle ray feeding on a dead cuttlefish before swimming away with its catch floating in the water. Image five shows a headless male floating on the surface and is the final act of the cycle of the life of these incredible animals.



The cuttlefish are oblivious to divers

You will find yourself in the midst of the action



Inking provides a smoke screen effect to ward off predators



Dead cuttlefish on the surface



Inking

During battle with each other or to ward off predators, the cuttlefish just like other cephalopods will squirt ink into the water to help confuse their opponent and help make their escape acting as a smokescreen.

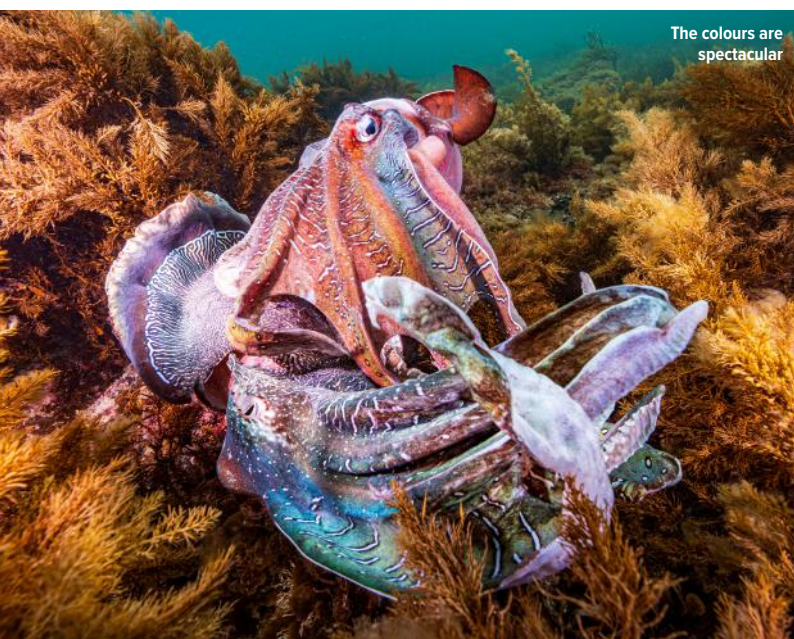
This behaviour can create some very cool images with the slightly viscous like ink hanging in the water column for a while after the inking has occurred, often in small balls of ink that disperse when disturbed.

Top Tip for Photographing Giant Cuttlefish in Action

- **Avoid disturbance:** When scuba diving, be mindful that bubbles can disrupt cuttlefish, causing them to swim away.
- **Patience is key:** Let the cuttlefish focus on their own activities, whether mating, fighting, or hunting. Once they're immersed in the task, it's safer to move in for those perfect shots.
- **How close can you get?** If you pick the right moment, you can get as close as you like and the cuttlefish are completely unperturbed by your presence, and you can fire away your shots (I have never noticed any change in behaviour from them while using strobes).
- **Positioning is key to frame your shot, and this may change given the height and penetration of sunlight.** ▶



Cuttlefish mid-display



The colours are spectacular

Tips for Lighting and Composition

Giant cuttlefish dives often occur in shallow waters, typically less than 5m deep, making it easier to use natural sunlight to illuminate your shots. Here are a few setup suggestions based on lighting conditions:

When the cuttlefish is fully extended, they can reach up to one metre in length, while more often than not they are smaller and not fully extended, a wide-angle lens is better to capture the potential of larger numbers and still show off the background. As you can see in image eight where you have four large males in full shot, and with the sunlight rays still coming down.

Fisheye Lens (for bright, sunny days) - Set your shutter speed around 1/200 to 1/250. With an aperture of F14 and ISO 400, you can capture stunning sunbeams while keeping the cuttlefish well-lit. If lighting changes due to cloud cover, quickly adjust your aperture to maintain optimal exposure.

16-35mm Lens (for cloudy days) - On overcast days, when natural light is dimmer, switch to a 16-35mm lens for closer, more detailed shots. Drop the shutter speed to 1/60 to 1/100 (when using strobes) and keep the aperture around F13 to preserve detail and depth of field. By adjusting your settings and lens choice, you can capture the magnificent behaviour of these giant cuttlefish in all their vibrant glory.

Strobes or no Strobes? On a sunny day, with it being so shallow there you can get plenty of sunlight coming in that you could easily take great images without the need for

strobes (particularly if you are freediving, they could be quite cumbersome) However to get the most-detailed shots and to use the light coming through to frame the images I would recommend strobes. For placement of your strobes, I would keep mine wide at the 10 to 2 position and for the fisheye lens I would keep them a lot higher and wide and pointing more downwards so you can still get close and illuminate the cuttlefish.

In Conclusion

As an underwater photographer, the best animals to photograph and to dive with are the ones that have the biggest personalities and really allow you the time to spend with them to be able to see and document their behaviours. To that, giant cuttlefish are my favourite animals to photograph as they tick every box, and so much more and in an environment that is so easily accessible that you can dive many times with them. ■



Cuttlefish gang



Rays will feed on cuttlefish



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“ Dive sites in the Forgotten Islands are in the Banda Sea and are particularly noticeable for the crystal-clear blue sea, deep walls and huge sponges. The stunning walls of the Banda Sea are beautiful and healthy due to the isolation of these areas ”



PART TWO

All aboard the **ARENUI**

The Arenui boutique liveaboard is one of the most-luxurious diving vessels plying the waters of our blue planet, and it offers a spectacular array of diverse itineraries taking in Indonesia's diving hotspots, as well as some relatively unknown gems

Photographs by Arenui Boutique Liveaboard

Aside from the well-known diving around Komodo and Raja Ampat, the Arenui also specialises in heading to more-remote areas, many of which are overlooked by other diving operations yet yield fantastic diving for those with an adventurous spirit.

Alor and Flores

Other itineraries include one centring on Alor; and Selayar and Taka Bonerate, which goes up from near Alor towards South Sulawesi. As well as being one of the best-kept secrets for diving in paradise, including rare finds like the beautiful rhinopias, but also plenty of pelagic action, this area boasts stunning topside scenery and impressive volcanoes.

Cruises in Alor and Flores offer widespread muck diving, sharks and large schools of fish, untouched reefs and unexplored coral gardens, magnificent soft corals and stunning hard coral formations. The Arenui also visits the famous Pura Island villagers, who splash out of their wooden dugout canoes and dive underwater with home-made goggles fashioned from wood and glass bottles.

Located in a highly volcanic region, it's no surprise that the scenery is superb and dramatic but sailing through these remote waters also brings you face-to-face with one of the country's most-active volcanoes. It erupts every 30 minutes

and makes for fantastic photographic opportunities, as you take a relaxing break from the fascinating underwater world.

Most cruises that cover the Alor or Flores area start or end at the post of Maumere, on the northern coast of east Flores island. This region is home to a world record, established when a scientific expedition recorded 1,200 species of fish, including some new to science, all found in Maumere Bay alone!

Take time out of diving for some land excursions here; trekking through the park to find 'Varanus Riungensis', another giant lizard, slightly smaller and brighter than its cousin on Komodo. Another unmissable land tour is a visit to the traditional village of Bena, where the population has maintained their original way of life, preserving their buildings (such as megalithic tombs) in keeping with their ancient customs.

The Forgotten Islands

For itineraries offering something different, check out the Central Forgotten Islands, which explores the southeastern cluster of islands; Southern Forgotten Islands, which takes in the chain of islands running from Alor into the heart of the Forgotten Islands; the Forgotten Islands and Triton Bay, which heads the other direction, northeast; and the North Forgotten Islands, which heads up towards Maluku and the Spice Islands. Diving in the Forgotten Islands, you can expect to find plenty of rare and unusual critters and stunning corals, but you will also have fantastic opportunities for pelagic sightings and schools of larger fish, such as barracuda and mackerel, as well as the chance to meet schooling hammerhead sharks.

Dive sites in the Forgotten Islands are in the Banda Sea and are particularly noticeable for the crystal-clear blue sea, deep walls and huge sponges. The stunning walls of the ▶



The reefs teem with marine life

Did you know?

The Arenui also offers two trips that take in the island of Borneo - there is Best of Borneo and West Sulawesi, which takes in two very different islands during its trip; and Best of Borneo, which does a route covering all the hotspots on the northeast coast of Borneo.

Banda Sea are beautiful and healthy due to the isolation of these areas. The sunlight in the shallows of the dive sites light up the dancing anthias that really look like someone is throwing up 'confetti fish'.

Dawera Island is a definite stop on a Forgotten Islands itinerary. As well as the diving guests can visit the isolated tropical island village nestled on a beautiful white sand beach and sheltered by a line of palm trees and a bamboo forest. There is a seamount off this isolated island, which the Arenui team counts as one of the best dive sites in the world! The local villages don't even fish there because they can catch all that they need from the surrounding area. It has hardly been dived either, hence an immaculate, untouched reef so full of fish you don't know where to look. On the current side the entire reef is covered with pyramid butterflyfish and when they mix in with the hundreds of neon fusiliers and surgeonfish, the colourful effect is striking. There's a resident school of thousands of big-eyed trevallies that zoom back and forth across the dive site. A big school of batfish also make this pinnacle their home. Whitetip reef sharks, eagle rays, grey reef sharks and, most excitingly, silvertip reef sharks can be spotted here.

The Forgotten Islands are fast becoming famous for the schooling and individual hammerhead sharks that can be seen there. There are several areas where the sharks have been seen - at Dusborgh, Nil Desparandum, Manuk and in the Banda Islands. Dusborgh and Nil Desparandum are seamounts far from any islands and are surrounded by very deep water. Manuk is the most-eastern volcano in Indonesia. Here sea snakes are abundant and very curious. Diving here you will soon get used to the snakes coming at you from all directions to take a sniff at your fins, or even your face! Manuk attracts frigates and brown- and red-footed boobies, so surface intervals can be spent watching these birds souring above the volcano.



Anemonefish

Always a very popular land excursion with guests is the tour of Banda Neira in the Spice Islands. You will visit the Banda Islands during the North Forgotten Islands cruise. Disembarking by the old colonial balustrades of the seafront hotel, you feel that you have stepped back in time. The clean, quiet streets of Banda Neira are a pleasure to stroll around. The quaint little museum is the first stop on the tour and an old diving helmet is one of the other artefacts on show there. A short stroll up the hill takes you to the old Dutch fort with wonderful views over the harbour and to the neighbouring volcano. The town is so peaceful and undeveloped that it feels like the view really hasn't changed in centuries.

Back down the hill on the other side and through a nutmeg plantation, your guide will demonstrate how to pick the ripe nutmegs. With the clove and cinnamon trees, the fresh smell of spices assails your nose. The final stop on the tour is at the plantation owner's house for a mid-morning snack of cinnamon tea and nutmeg cake and jam under the shade of the cocoa tree. ▶

The Arenui level of service

The Arenui's slogan, 'The Boutique Liveaboard', expresses the team's vision of providing the highest quality in everything they do – from diving to dining, from leisure activities to the exquisite accommodations – and, above all, providing outstanding service at all times to their guests.

As an example of this philosophy, the crew offer guests the choice of both comfortable indoor and outdoor areas for relaxing and dining. During meals, there is always an extensive selection of dishes, and a tantalizing list of fine wines. The food is plentiful, fresh, and centred on local and flown-in ingredients. Arenui's internationally trained chefs add their own touch of magic, drawing inspiration from local and international cuisine. In addition to mouth-watering buffet spreads, they also offer a-la-carte choices with daily menu changes.

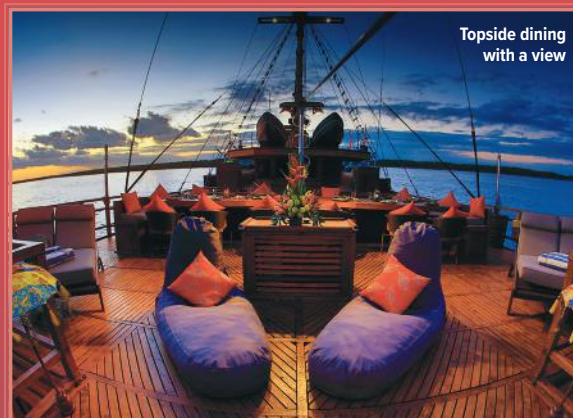
When resting in between dives, guests also have the possibility of indulging themselves in a relaxing massage on deck. Make the most of your non-diving time and indulge yourself! The team have included a full range of massage and spa treatments on the Arenui with exactly this in mind. You'll even have a choice of location to enjoy your luxury treatment; relax in seclusion under the Spa Tent, or why not 'be at one with the elements' out on the deck where you can listen to the tranquil sounds of the sea splashing on the hull.

For those who are looking for simpler pleasures, there are also deck chairs and sun loungers on the sundeck as well as in the outdoor lounge. The team recommends taking some time to lie back and soak up some rays, or sip a cocktail, while watching the sun descend below the horizon across the calm waters of the Indonesian archipelago. A variety of other activities are also available to help you forget all your cares and revitalize your body, mind and spirit, such as two-person kayaking, visits to local villages, and trekking across the island wilderness.

Given the stunning dive sites and topside landscapes, Indonesia is a photographers' dream destination. Arenui is well prepared to host photographers and their assortment of gear, with charging stations for all their equipment, extension cords and adaptors to cater to different systems, and plenty of table space for using their own laptops.

The Arenui crew aim to offer a truly exceptional service to all on-board, and in this respect, they believe that individual service with a personal touch makes all the difference. This personalized service, and the attention given to even the minute details of all aspects of the operations, are what differentiate the Arenui from conventional liveaboards.

www.arenui.com



Topside dining with a view



Twin share cabin



The food presentation is exceptional

“ The Arenui also visits the famous Pura Island villagers, who splash out of their wooden dugout canoes and dive underwater with home-made goggles fashioned from wood and glass bottles ”



Indonesia is not greatly affected by seasons that prohibit diving, so instead it is more important to factor in the weather and the calmness of the seas in terms of enjoying the crossings, when planning a trip to this remote archipelago. There are usually calmer seas between September and November, so Arenui's cruises are scheduled to fit within this window. Any earlier in the year can be affected by strong winds, but then any later into December or the early months of the year can be prone to monsoons and the rainy season.

Maluku and the Spice Islands

A little further north, there are a selection of itineraries around Maluku and the Spice Islands, and Halmahera. These include Halmahera to Misool to Banda, which sweeps around the island of Seram.

Unlike other areas, with high populations and subsequent pressure from fishing, the Bandas' relatively small human population has been a blessing for divers – offering a vibrant, healthy reef system with fish life in incredible numbers along with huge gorgonians and sponges and some truly monumental hard corals. Expect plenty of pelagics, widespread muck diving and unexplored coral gardens, as well as a rich colonial heritage on land.

Cruises that take in the Banda Sea often start or end at the famous port of Ambon, offering the chance to dive with the unusual critters of Ambon Bay. Ambon is roughly 830 nautical miles north-east of Bali, situated within the Maluku Islands archipelago (sometimes seen labelled as the Moluccas or the Spice Islands). Ambon Island lies off the south-west coast of the much-larger Seram Island and consists of two territories – Maluku Tengah, and the main city and port of Ambon, which is also the capital of Maluku province.

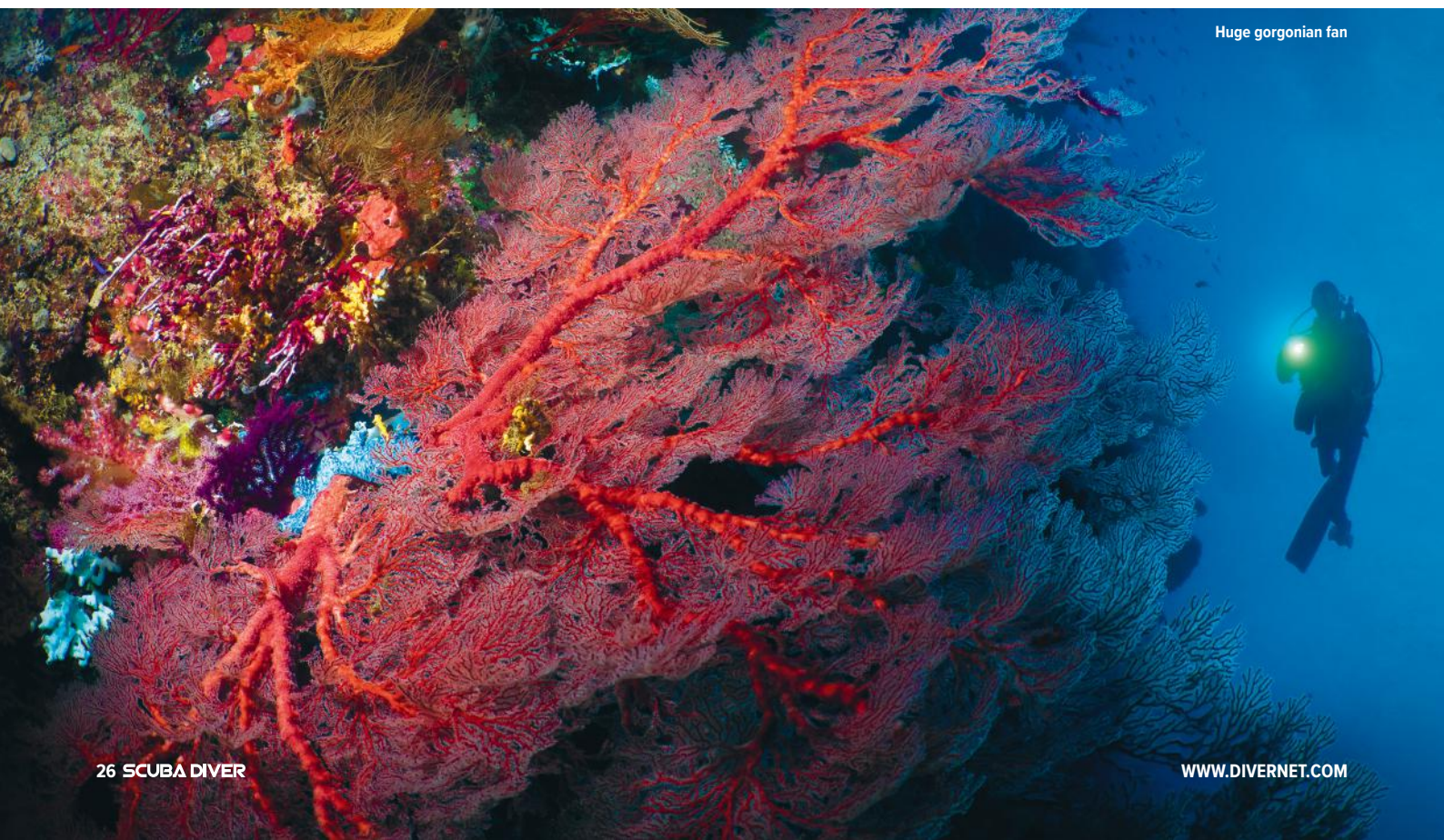
Diving in Ambon Bay is at the top of most people's to-dive list. The Laha sites are a hidden treasure of amazing critters, including the recently discovered species of frogfish (the psychedelic frogfish) but also rhinopias, mimic ▶



Whale shark



Coleman shrimp on a fire urchin



Huge gorgonian fan

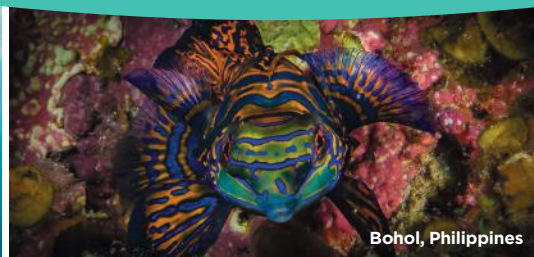
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Manta ray



octopus, zebra crabs and dozens of different nudibranch species. A very popular find is the eponymous Ambon scorpionfish in differing hues of red, pink, green, yellow and orange. Keep an eye out for many other members of the scorpionfish family too, including the spiny devilfish, stonefish, zebra lionfish, ragged-finned lionfish and leafy scorpionfish – all venomous, but gorgeous! For those who want a change from nosing around after tiny creatures, a shipwreck covered in deep pink and purple soft corals offers a great alternative and is an irresistible lure for the profuse amount of fish in the area.

The Banda Islands are most widely known as one of the main stops along the old spice route. The remoteness of these islands, in the midst of the wide expanses of the Banda Sea, has given it a fascinating, colourful history, including the fact that it was once a home to exiles of all sorts. The Banda Islands themselves are also renowned for presenting picture-perfect views topside.

These rarely visited seas claim some of the world's richest marine environments, making them a macro-lover's paradise due to the number of rare and new species found here, but the region is still home to many pelagics and schooling fish.

A very popular dive area is found at Nusa Laut, which showcases the positive effects of a village taking care of its habitat, where the reef remains as unspoiled as it was hundreds of years ago and a favourite of many dive enthusiasts. We also visit Hukurila Cave, to experience a dive site located underneath two rock arches. These natural formations can be seen from the surface and lead to a swim-through covered in sponges and soft corals, making for a great descent into your dive. This site is quite an unusual dive, offering the thrill of making your way through twisting passages and caverns and canyons swarming with life.

One of the major highlights for this trip is the island of Manuk, which offers delights above and below. Topside, it is possible to revel in the spectacle of thousands of seabirds, including comical yet beautiful frigate birds and boobies. The sight is unforgettable. One of the few phenomena able to rival that display is the vision of a dozen sea snakes undulating and swimming underwater. Some divers have even been lucky enough to watch them hunting in a pack. It is thought that the warm geothermal vents present in these waters attract these cold-blooded creatures in large numbers. ■

Over and under shot



Pink dorid nudibranch



Hairy frogfish





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THE TRAVEL EXPERT

Each month dive travel expert Deborah Dickson-Smith of Diveplanit Travel offers hints, tips and advice to help you plan your next trip!

TOP 4 WHALE ENCOUNTERS IN AUSTRALIA

Australia is one of the world's great whale destinations, offering everything from close humpback encounters to rare opportunities to swim with whales in tropical waters. Whether you want dramatic orca action in Western Australia or peaceful interactions with humpbacks in Queensland, these are the four best whale encounters in Australia.

1. Swim with dwarf minke whales — Northern Great Barrier Reef, Queensland

Swimming with dwarf minke whales is one of Australia's most-unique marine wildlife experiences. Every June and July, these curious whales migrate through the Ribbon Reefs north of Cairns. Unlike many whale interactions around the world, encounters are passive and natural. Guests hold onto ropes in the water while the whales circle gracefully, sometimes staying for hours.

Why it's special

- The only place worldwide to swim with dwarf minke whales
- Suitable for snorkellers and divers
- Intimate and often prolonged encounters
- Incredible underwater photography opportunities

Best time: June to July

2. Orca encounters — Bremer Bay, Western Australia

Bremer Bay has become internationally famous for its extraordinary orca encounters. Between January and April, killer whales gather in the deep waters of the Bremer Canyon, creating one of the most-thrilling wildlife spectacles in Australia. These apex predators are often seen hunting in coordinated pods, alongside sightings of pilot whales, sperm whales, dolphins, and seabirds.

Why it's special

- One of the best places in the Southern Hemisphere to see orcas
- Dramatic open-ocean wildlife encounters
- Excellent opportunities for photographers
- Frequent sightings of multiple whale species

Best time: January to April



3. Humpback whale encounters — Hervey Bay, Queensland

Hervey Bay is widely regarded as the whale watching capital of Australia. Each winter, humpback whales stop in the calm sheltered waters between K'gari (Fraser Island) and the mainland during their migration south. Mothers and calves rest and socialise here, making encounters relaxed, playful, and often incredibly close to the boat.

Why it's special

- Calm waters ideal for whale watching
- High chance of seeing mothers and calves
- Long whale season
- Whales are known for approaching boats curiously

Best time: July to October

4. Swim with humpback whales — Ningaloo Reef, Western Australia

Ningaloo Reef offers one of Australia's most-exciting in-water whale experiences. During humpback migration season, selected operators offer guided snorkelling encounters with these gentle giants in the clear blue waters off Exmouth.

The experience combines stunning coral reef scenery with the chance to witness humpbacks underwater in their natural environment.

Why it's special

- Ethical in-water humpback whale encounters
- Crystal-clear visibility
- Possibility of seeing whale sharks and manta rays
- One of Australia's most immersive whale experiences

Best time: August to October ■

From the tropical waters of the Great Barrier Reef to the wild Southern Ocean off Western Australia, Australia offers some of the most unforgettable whale encounters on Earth. Contact the team at Diveplanit Travel for more information: Diveplanit.com

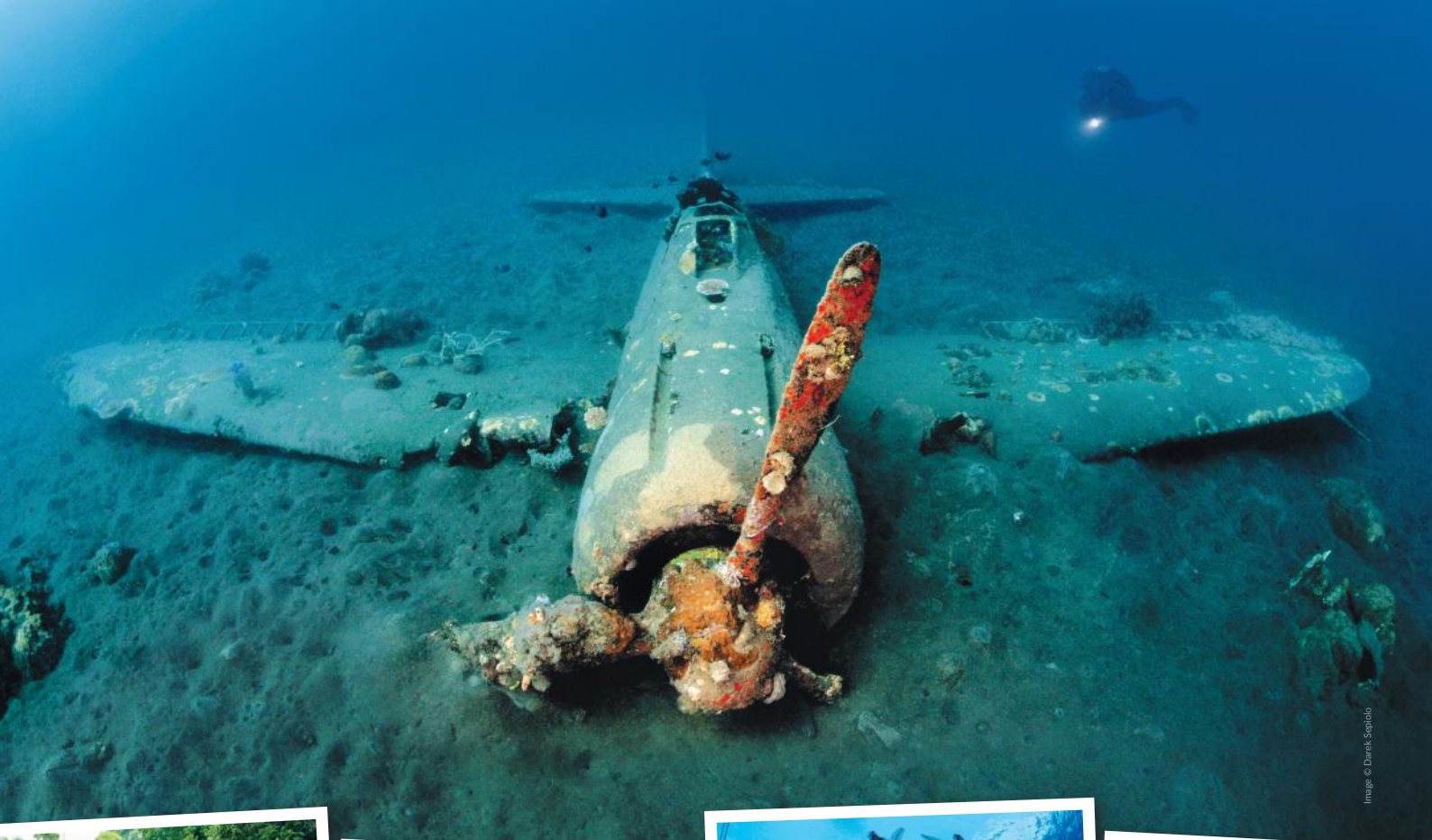


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MIDDLE-EAR BAROTRAUMA (MEBT)

Middle-ear barotrauma (ear squeeze) is the most-common dive injury. It occurs when pressure in the air space of the middle ear is not equalised to the ambient pressure. It can cause a ruptured eardrum and can happen either while diving or flying.

Mechanisms of Injury

The air pressure in the tympanic cavity — an air-filled space in the middle ear — must be equalised with the pressure of the surrounding environment. The Eustachian tube connects the throat with the tympanic cavity and provides passage for gas when pressure equalisation is needed. This equalisation normally occurs with little or no effort. Various manoeuvres, such as swallowing or yawning, can facilitate the process.

An obstruction in the Eustachian tube can lead to an inability to achieve equalisation, particularly during descent, when the pressure changes quickly. If the pressure in the tympanic cavity is lower than the pressure of the surrounding tissue, this imbalance results in negative pressure (a relative vacuum) in the middle-ear space. It causes tissue to swell, the eardrum to bulge inward, leakage of fluid and bleeding of ruptured vessels. At a certain point an active attempt to equalise will be futile, and a forceful Valsalva manoeuvre may injure the inner ear. Eventually the eardrum may rupture; this is likely to bring relief from the pain associated with MEBT, but it is an outcome to avoid if possible.

Often the injury is serious enough that it causes rupture of the eardrum, tympanic membrane rupture or inner ear barotrauma. Factors that can contribute to the development of MEBT include the common cold, allergies or inflammation — conditions that can cause swelling and may block the Eustachian tubes. Poor equalisation techniques or too rapid descent may also contribute to the development of MEBT.

Manifestations

Divers who cannot equalise middle-ear pressure during descent will first feel discomfort in their ears (clogged or stuffed ears) that may progress to severe pain.

Further descent only intensifies the ear pain, which is soon followed by a serous fluid buildup and bleeding in the middle ear. With further descent, the eardrum may rupture, providing pain relief; this rupture may cause vertigo and hearing loss. Exposure of the normally sterile middle ear to infection from a mixture of pathogens from the non-sterile contents of the ear canal and surrounding water may result in a middle-ear infection.



Prevention

- Do not dive when congested.
- Refrain from diving when feeling popping or crackling in your ears, or if you have a feeling of ear fullness post diving.
- Learn and use proper equalisation techniques.

First Aid

- Use a nasal decongestant spray or drops. This might reduce the swelling of the mucous membranes, which may help to open the Eustachian tubes and drain the fluid from the middle ear.
- Do not put any drops in your ear canal.
- Seek professional medical evaluation.

Implications for the Diver

- You can consider a return to diving if a physician determines that the injury has healed, and the Eustachian tube is functional.
- Do not neglect these injuries. Some of the complications could negatively affect you for the rest of your life.
- Return to your physician if you have worsening pain, fever or discharge. These may indicate a middle-ear infection.

Fitness to dive

Do not dive until swelling and inflammation have resolved, and you can adequately equalise. Assess why the problem occurred (lack of training, allergy, etc.) and address each factor. If you are unable to equalise, then you may consider ENT consultation. The inability to equalise properly is disqualifying. ■

Note: Do not dive with earplugs, as this may cause external-ear barotrauma.

Learn more about various conditions at World.dan.org/health-medicine/health-resources



EVERY DIVER SHOULD BE A DAN MEMBER



Michael Au

Author, Explorer,
Conservation Photographer

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From the DAN Medical Line

DAN medical information specialists and researchers answer your dive medicine questions



Bipolar Disorder and Diving

Q: I am a dive instructor but have not dived for five years. I have been diagnosed with bipolar disorder. Can I dive safely with the medicine I take, or will it be dangerous even if I dive in shallow water?

A: Generally speaking, both bipolar I and bipolar II disorders are considered relative contraindications to diving, meaning that people who have this disorder need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis for their fitness to dive. Many divers have found ways to manage their condition and enjoy diving, but each person should discuss the possible implications of diving with their physicians. DAN medics are available to consult with your health care providers.

Some severe symptoms of bipolar disorder may be a contraindication to diving, and we recommend avoiding diving while in either a manic or depressive state. Manic episodes bring the potential for bad decision-making and engaging in risky behaviours. Depressive episodes can cloud our judgement and produce circumstances that may leave us prone to accident or injury.

There has been little research into the effects of barometric pressure on specific medications. In general, we are most concerned about the underlying conditions that the drugs are treating and the potential side effects of those drugs. Lithium is a common medication used to treat these disorders, but its use comes with significant concerns. Lithium can become toxic if a person is dehydrated or if sodium levels drop. Diving is a diuretic, which can complicate the situation.

The side effects of some drugs can alter a person's mental capacity or make them drowsy, neither of which is compatible with diving. Some medication side effects — such as fatigue, dizziness, anxiety, blurred vision, and headaches — can mimic symptoms of decompression sickness (DCS) and complicate a DCS diagnosis.

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Z 8



“The Nikon Z8 paired with the NIKKOR 14–24mm f/2.8 is my absolute dream underwater setup for producing insanely sharp and vibrant professional photography.” — *Evie Hall*



Mustard's MASTERCLASS

Alex Mustard explains why it is imperative that photographers wait for the opportune moment to squeeze that shutter release

Photographs by Alex Mustard

There is always something to learn from the great photographers, even if our work never comes close to theirs. I'd never encourage you to become a photo-copier, but all successful photographers get ideas and inspiration from looking at the work of others.

I've often thought that this works best for underwater photographers when we look beyond the sea. Not only does getting inspiration from land photographers make it impossible to fall into the trap of duplication, it also infuses the genre of underwater photography with really fresh ideas.

Legendary French photojournalist Henri Cartier-Bresson's work became celebrated in the 1940s and 1950s and he is championed as the master of capturing the decisive moment in his photographs. Although his most-famous medium of black and white street-photography in post-War Paris seems far removed from modern underwater photography, I think that all our images have much to benefit from being influenced by work, while not attempting in any way to copy it. And I plan to show how universal his lessons are by talking about the branch of underwater photography that is perhaps furthest from his work – shooting colourful underwater scenery!

Photographs are at their most powerful when a single image tells a story and leaves the viewer in no doubt why that specific moment has been preserved forever. Seek out Cartier-Bresson's street photography and you will see compositions that are timed to perfection capturing fleeting situations, one-offs that give the feeling that they could never be repeated. This is what draws us into his pictures. Most underwater photographers can produce a decent picture, but a sharp, well-exposed photograph has little value if it lacks a moment that gives it the narrative or emotional power to connect with a viewer. In other words, timing is everything.

Cartier-Bresson's next key attribute was clarity of communication. When you look at his pictures you know exactly why he took that photo. This isn't necessarily because he captured some great

spectacle, but because his images tell complete stories. In his pictures every noticeable element within the frame earns its place, guiding the viewer's eye and reinforcing why that moment was worth preserving, worth showing. Strong photography leaves no doubt about its purpose through images distilled to pure and powerful compositions.

The Frenchman also demonstrated that it is often the small details that can elevate an image. A subtle gesture, a glance, or the positioning of a hand could transform a standard scene into something extraordinary. Learning to observe patiently, rather than constantly shooting, allows photographers to anticipate when these fleeting details will appear. It is a hard skill to develop. Too often the photographer chat I hear on dive boats revolves around camera technicalities. It is always 'how many frames per second can your strobe do?' rather than any discussion what the decisive moment is that they are actually hoping to capture!

Wide angle scenic shooting can often feel like landscape photography as we perfect our composition of a static scene. Underwater we're fortunate that we can move in three dimensions and even small movements of our wide-angle lens make large differences in the arrangement of the foreground and background elements in the frame. Add in a zoom function to the lens and we can make these elements grown or shrink independent of each other. For example, back off and zoom in and the foreground will stay the same, but now the background will be much larger in the frame. Surely, all this is enough to be grappling with?

Cartier-Bresson would implore us to push further. Once the basics of the composition are assembled it is time to turn to our power of observation. The corals and the position of the sun are not moving, but many other elements in our wide-angle compositions are constantly changing, and in this is where we can find the magic of gestures and memorable moments.

For example, if the sun is intended as an eye-catching element of the composition then there is ▶

Scenery doesn't move,
but fish do. Time your
shot for the peak position





Ordinary subject matter can produce powerful images when we avoid compositional distractions

“ In a close-up shot this might be an eyeline that reinforces the subject, or in a more-distant composition this might mean bending their body to mirror the curve in the main subject ”

definitely a rhythm to tune into as the waves focus and blur the beams. We want to time our shot for the peak of the rays. I also like to wait until a wave runs right through the sunball, splitting the light and making the exposure easier to manage. If we are including people in the composition, particularly distant silhouette models, their shape in the picture is another source of the decisive moment. We should always watch their form and click the shutter when they are at their most elegant. When divers fin their legs straighten and their silhouette becomes more attractive, this is the ideal time to shoot. Experienced photographers will often encourage models to react to the scene they are in. In a close-up shot this might be an eyeline that reinforces the subject, or in a more-distant composition this might mean bending their body to mirror the curve in the main subject. These are details that give compositions power.

Marine life is always on the move and the most-common source of gestures and decisive moments in scenic compositions. There are endless options, but most universal is elevating a scene by timing the shot to catch small fish in just the right places. It is the shots where the fish is so perfectly positioned that it looks like it was placed there, which really resonate.

Look up Shunsuke Nakano's black and white winner from this year's UPY contest for a perfect example, which particularly being black and white oozes with Cartier-Bresson's photographic DNA, both in terms of a decisive moment and a clarity of vision.

Next time you are shooting reef scenery see it as a two-stage process. Stage one is dialling it in, where you optimise the main compositional elements, get settings correct and perfect the strobe powers and positions. Stage two is about observation and timing, searching for exactly the right moment to preserve forever and sprinkle some Cartier-Bresson stardust into your photography.

Ultimately, what underwater photographers can learn from Henri CartierBresson comes from adopting his mindset. I am not suggesting you start shooting black and white people pictures underwater. Instead learn to value observation over haste, timing over spray and pray, and dare I say, the end result over the equipment used to create it.

Memorable photos should not come easy, first we need to ensure they are technically correct and then through detailed observation we can include that momentary gesture or decisive moment that makes imagery unforgettable. ■

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DIVING WITH... LEWIS BURNETT

PT Hirschfield chats with the award winning nature photographer about his extensive travels and how to he creates such intimate wildlife portraits above and below the water

Photographs by Lewis Burnett

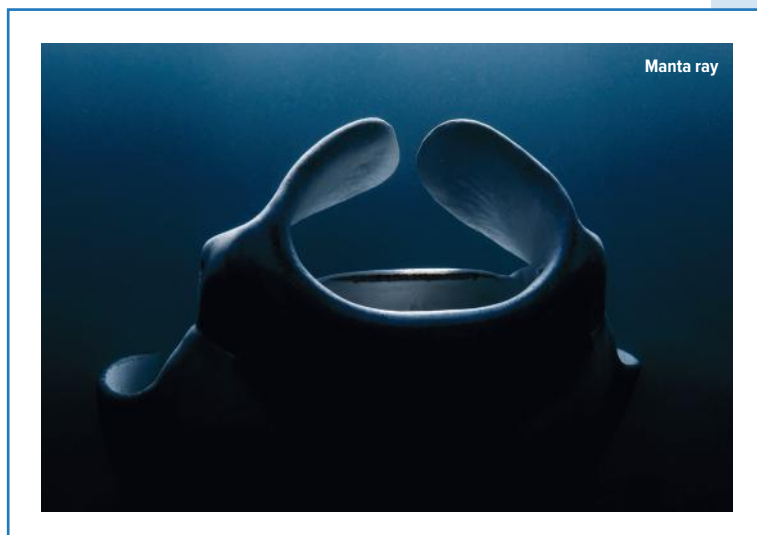
WA-based Lewis Burnett's diverse collections of terrestrial wildlife and marine animal portraits, landscapes and astrophotography are truly sublime. He was awarded the 2023 Australian Geographic Nature Photographer of the Year Portfolio Prize for his entry titled 'Aerial Oceans'. Lewis also received the 2023 Sony Alpha Awards Grand Prize and was the winner of the Nature category (2023 and 2025) for his portrait of a squid.

'I've always been obsessed with anything to do with the natural world, from the biodiverse wildlife to the stunning landscapes it inhabits.' Lewis spent his first 12 years in a tiny town at the edge of the Scottish Highlands, before emigrating with his family to Western Australia. His first scuba dive was at age 14 in preparation for a Great Barrier Reef vacation. Lewis' Christmas gift from his uncle of a first-edition GoPro Hero film camera ignited his passion for documenting the wildlife he's encountered through a lifetime of extensive travel. Now he shoots with professional camera rigs and drones.

In 2023, Lewis and his fiancée spent eight months exploring Southern Africa from a four-wheel drive and tent: 'From the freezing cold kelp forests of the Cape region to the tropical reefs of Mozambique, from the curious cow sharks of Cape Town to the schooling hammerheads in the warm tropical currents of the Agulhas, the diversity really impressed me.'

His 'Hunting for Paradise' website showcases separate ocean and terrestrial portfolios focused on Australia, South Africa and Southern Asia. Terrestrial folios also open windows to Antarctica, Europe and South America.

Lewis' masterful wildlife portraits convey tender reverence of animals during quiet moments in their natural habitats. Intimacy is often created by separating the subjects from their bokeh, black, blurred or diffused backgrounds.



His expansive collections abound with orangutans, kingfishers, vipers, crocodiles, squirrels, forest dragons, buffalos, flamingos, lions, hyenas and more alongside all the usual - and unusual - megafauna and macro underwater subjects. Beyond blue whales, hammerheads and seven gill sharks, Lewis shares an encounter with a great white shark, minus the luxury and safety of a cage during his work as a photographer in Coral Bay, Ningaloo Reef.

'The boats I worked on shared the use of a spotter plane that went up each day to search for wildlife.' One pilot revealed the location of a white shark. 'It took the best part of an hour motoring alongside this massive animal before I managed to convince the skipper to let me swim with it. The outline of a massive shark appeared slowly out of the edge of the vis line. As I approached, it barely changed its behaviour: no angled pec fins, no gaping mouth, no erratic movements. Just a large shark and me swimming alongside.'



Lewis with the tool of his trade



Huge bait balls attract attention...



Giant Australian cuttlefish



Sevengill shark

'I dropped back and signalled for the boat to pick me up, wanting time to think about the behaviours displayed, to assess whether it was safe to try again for a better photograph. Once back onboard I asked the skipper if this time he could drop me in front of the shark, to allow a better shot of its face.'

'I quietly entered the water, right in the path of the shark. It slowly changed its trajectory off the bottom of the sand, up towards me on the surface. My heart was in my mouth as it glided past, less than the length of a car's distance from me. It wasn't till it began to swim away that I even remembered I had a camera in my hand.'

When Lewis later submitted identification shots to a global database, there was no recorded match: 'I named her Majeet after the local indigenous word for shark. Hopefully she's still out there swimming today.'

Traversing a delicate line between dynamics and stillness, Lewis' photographic style speaks to the uniqueness of each animal and each gentle captured moment, inviting viewers to reflect within a context of celebration and conservation.

'I hope through my work that people can begin to understand the majesty of our wild world and treat it with the respect and reverence I believe it deserves. Lewis has worked as a tour guide and co-founded Outbound Tours, hosting land-based and underwater tours for photographers to destinations including Western Australia, The Northern Territory and most recently, Antarctica. ▶



Leafy seadragon



A surprise encounter with the ocean's apex predator



Lewis is a keen macro photographer

“ Beyond blue whales, hammerheads and seven gill sharks, Lewis shares an encounter with a great white shark, minus the luxury and safety of a cage during his work as a photographer in Coral Bay, Ningaloo Reef ”

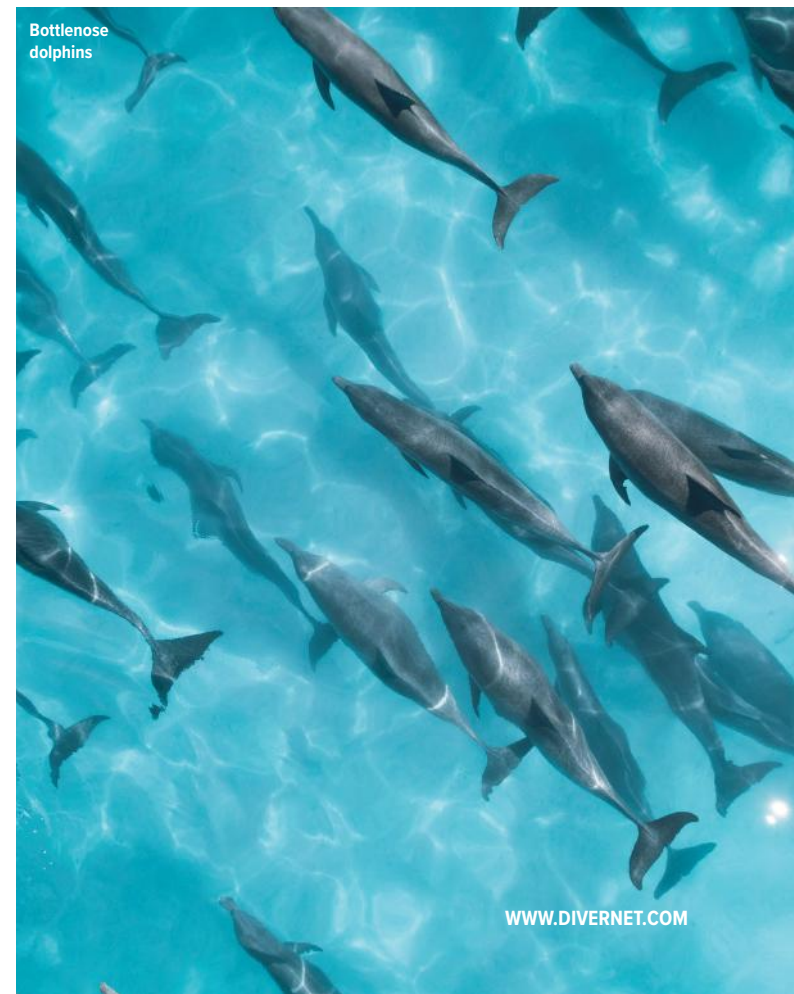
‘When working as a tour guide, I was able to time with people, exploring the amazing natural world and helping them learn all about its wonders. By the end of a trip, I would see a definite shift in their attitudes.’

Regarding what regions like Kakadu, Ningaloo, the Red Centre and South West WA have to offer divers and nature lovers, Lewis says: ‘At the moment, we still have intact regions of abundant wildlife, both above and below the water. That is definitely a sentence that becomes harder and harder to say as each year passes.’

‘We’re certainly beginning to notice the impacts of careless environmental stewardship. But for now anyway, we are still the lucky country, from the megafauna of the Ningaloo Reef to the macro critters of the Southern Ocean’s kelp-lined shores.’

Reflecting on his local diving, Lewis admits: ‘Diving in South-West WA can be a bit hit and miss. It’s very weather dependant. With the coastline getting battered by winter swells and winds, diving is pretty much not possible for six months of the year.’

‘But when it’s good its good, with plenty of macro critters like nudibranchs and cephalopods. I’m hoping to explore diving along the Southern coast a lot more in the coming years. There are a lot of amazing reports of potential coming from local divers in the smaller communities there.’ ▶



Bottlenose dolphins

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Inspired to make a difference, Lewis admits: 'Easily the most enjoyable part of my career as a wildlife photographer has been my partnerships with different NGO's working across our country to help conserve our biodiversity and wild regions.' He's been involved with campaigns by Greenpeace, The Wilderness Society, Ocean Conservancy, Sea Shepherd and many more: 'Mostly on assignments to create portfolios of meaningful and impactful imagery in under-threat areas, for use in political campaigns and media.'

His most-recent assignment of this kind was in the Kimberley region of Western Australia, providing imagery for an upcoming film on the threats the Martuwarra River faces from private enterprise, and the potential environmental degradation that such activities entail.

'This project was memorable for several reasons. Most notably, I was able to have a brief but amazing encounter in the Fitzroy River with a critically endangered freshwater sawfish. Coming face to face with such an ancient-looking predator in the murky, crocodile-inhabited waters of the Kimberley was a moment I'll never forget.' Reflecting on ocean health, Lewis confesses: 'I constantly have to avoid taking a pessimistic approach on this one, if I'm honest. I know that if we are to have any chance of reversing the already almost insurmountable damage to our oceans, then we must have hope.'

'I find hope in the remaining patches of healthy oceans. I find hope in the glimpses of humans doing good for their environment, regardless of the financial cost. I find hope from the countless individuals dedicating their lives to fight for meaningful change in our political systems. But most of all, I find hope from the millions of weird and wonderful creatures out there that call our oceans home.'

Having already encountered and photographed a vast number of land and marine species, what's still on Lewis' dive Bucket List? South American kelp forests, Malawi's mouth-brooding cichlids ('and the chance of seeing a crocodile underwater gets me very excited to get back over there!') and the Alaskan salmon run: 'The interaction between the wildlife and their environment fascinates me there. Not just the salmon, but the bears, rivers, eagles, wolves and forests.'

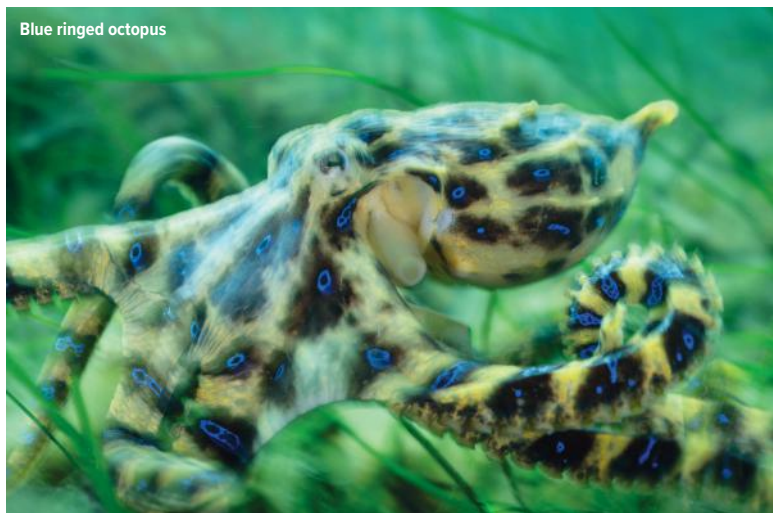
You can dive deeper into Lewis' exceptional wildlife and marine portfolios at huntingforparadise.com and huntingforparadise on Instagram. ■



Long necked turtle



Whale shark



Blue ringed octopus



Frogfish



Aerial shot of a green turtle



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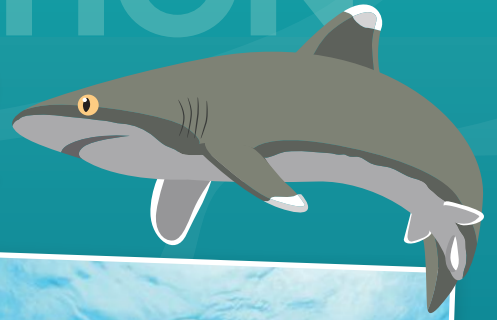
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Sharing Our Sea: Coexisting with Sharks

Taylor Ladd-Hudson explains how she overcame her fear of sharks and is now a champion for their protection

Photography as credited

Growing up on the coast, many of us learn the rules of the ocean from an early age. We're taught to read rips, navigate dangerous swell, treat jellyfish stings and even handle encounters with snakes or spiders. This education gives us confidence and keeps us safe, shaping the way we interact with the natural world. Yet one of the ocean's most-iconic and essential species is often left out in these conversations. And even fewer people are taught how to safely coexist with them.

I grew up fearing sharks, like the broader public. Believing that they were mindless man-eating killers portrayed in movies, media and myths. However, after swimming with my first shark at the age of 12, I realised this couldn't be further from the truth. They weren't monsters, but misunderstood animals.

They play a critical role in keeping ecosystems healthy, regulating populations of other marine life, acting like the white blood cells of the ocean, and helping create thriving environments. Understanding them isn't just about safety; it's about respect and connection to these keystone species.

Facts Vs Fear

While sharks are often feared, the statistics tell a very different story. Australia is a nation of beachgoers. Surf Life Saving Australia's national Coastal Safety Survey, Australians made over 600 million visits to beaches in the past year alone. With thousands of people entering the ocean every day, interactions with marine life are inevitable. While shark encounters often dominate headlines, the actual risk is extremely low.



© Daniel Ladd-Hudson



© Ruby Ladd-Hudson



© Taylor Ladd-Hudson

“ According to the Australian Shark Attack File over the last decade, there have been an average of 20 shark incidents per year, with 2.8 attributed to fatalities and seven incidents where the person was uninjured ”

According to the Australian Shark Attack File over the last decade, there have been an average of 20 shark incidents per year, with 2.8 attributed to fatalities and seven incidents where the person was uninjured.

In 2023, there were four fatal shark bites in comparison to 125 coastal drowning deaths and 1,266 road fatalities occurring over the same period.

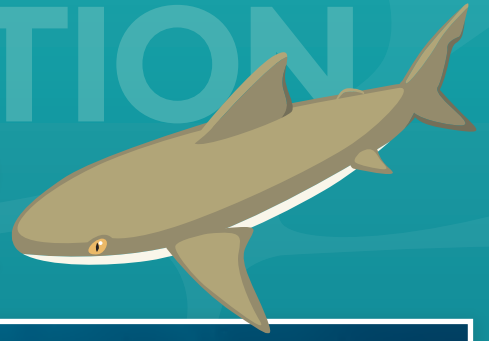
These numbers put things into perspective; whilst shark encounters are rare and can be very serious, they are far less common than other everyday risks on the coast. Recognising this shapes fear into respect, encouraging awareness and informed decisions when sharing our ocean with sharks.

Shark Smart Tips

Sharing our ocean with sharks shouldn't be built upon fear but awareness, observation and thoughtful behaviour. Here are key tips to reduce risk and enjoy the water:

- **Avoid areas with feeding activity:** Stay clear of bait balls, birds diving, or areas where fish are being fed. This activity is known to attract sharks into the area.
- **Stay clear of river mouths after heavy rainfall:** Nutrients run into the ocean and attract fish and other animals to feed, which then can attract different species of sharks (especially bull sharks). Additionally, the visibility of the water after rainfall can rapidly decrease, which is ideal for ambush predators like sharks to hunt.
- **Avoid drop-offs or deep-water edges:** Drop-offs, edges of kelp forests and sandbank channels can be prime hunting areas for sharks while they wait in deeper water to surprise and ambush prey such as fish, seal or turtle as they pass through the area.
- **Leave shiny jewellery on land:** shiny objects can resemble the flash of fish scales underwater and act as a point of interest for sharks to explore, attracting their attention.
- **Stay in groups:** Sharks, like most predators, are more likely to investigate a lone individual. An inquisitive shark can usually be discouraged if you are in a group of people. Being in a group also increases awareness of what's happening in the surrounding water.
- **Watch your surroundings:** Sudden changes in the behaviour of marine life around you, such as dolphins, ►

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schools of fish, or seals, can indicate that a predator is nearby. If marine life is scattered or acts unusually, it's a good idea to leave the water.

Furthermore, if whale carcasses and animal remains are in the vicinity, their decomposing bodies will attract predators to the area.

- **Time of day/overcast conditions:** Many sharks hunt during dawn, dusk and overcast times, when low light levels give them a visual advantage over their prey. Fish are also highly active during these times, which can lead to increased predator activity.
- **Trust your instincts:** if it feels 'sharky', it probably is. If conditions seem unusual (eg, murky water, bait activity, strange wildlife behaviour), it's best to be safe and exit the water.



Coexistence Isn't a Choice; It's Necessary.

The lessons we learn growing up about rips, stingers and the hazards of nature prepare us for life in the water. Learning about sharks simply completes that education. It empowers the educated to approach the ocean with confidence, curiosity and respect.

While reminding us that we are visitors in their home. Education transforms fear into understanding and understanding into action. It inspires us to protect what we love and share it responsibly with those who inhabit it. Because at the end of the day, sharks don't need us, but we need them. ■

About the author

My name is Taylor Ladd-Hudson (@taylor_x_ocean), and I'm 17 years old from Queensland, Australia. I'm a freediver, surfer, scuba diver and spearfisher and most of all an ocean lover! Since the age of 12, I've dedicated my life to protecting and conserving the world's most-misunderstood species - sharks. We as the next gen are ready to protect what we love! I hope these tips and tricks help make you fill you with the confidence to safely co-exist with these keystone predators!





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BUBBLE

in Bunaken

John Kendall discovers the wonders of diving in the Bunaken Marine Park in North Sulawesi, and is blown away by the welcome he received at the Bunaken Oasis Dive Resort

Photography courtesy of Bunaken Oasis

I've known Simon and Elaine, the owners of Bunaken Oasis Dive Resort, for many years, often bumping into them at various dive shows and events around the world. However, until recently, I'd never actually had the opportunity to visit the resort itself. When the Halcyon Symbios chest-mount CCR was released, Simon and Pete (a different Simon entirely) got in touch with me about taking user training on the unit, with a view to eventually becoming instructors. Here, finally, was my excuse to head out to Bunaken and discover what all the fuss was about.

Getting there

There are several different ways to reach Bunaken Oasis depending on where you're travelling from. My own route was fairly straightforward - British Airways from London to Singapore, followed by a Scoot flight from Singapore to Manado in North Sulawesi. While it's certainly not a short journey, the connections worked smoothly and the final destination is more than worth the effort.

The experience really began the moment I landed in Manado. I was met at the airport by one of the resort staff, who immediately took charge of luggage and logistics, allowing me to simply relax after the long flights. From the airport it's a relatively short drive to the dock, where one of the resort's seven custom dive boats was waiting for

the 45-minute crossing to Bunaken Island. Even during the transfer, the atmosphere changes noticeably. The busy roads and city noise gradually disappear behind you, replaced by calm seas and views of lush tropical islands.

It's a peaceful introduction to the resort and a good opportunity to start slowing down into 'island mode'. The five-star service started from the moment they met me at the airport and continued consistently throughout the entire trip.

Location

Bunaken is a small island located off the coast of North Sulawesi in Indonesia, surrounded by the 900km² Bunaken National Marine Park. The area has become famous among divers for its dramatic reef walls, steep drop-offs and canyons, all packed with marine life. The reefs are volcanic in origin, creating spectacular underwater ▶



ESS

“ After each dive, hot towels appeared almost immediately, followed by fresh fruit, snacks and drinks while the crew prepared equipment for the next dive. It’s the sort of seamless service that allows divers to focus entirely on enjoying the experience ”

Did you know?

Bunaken National Park is a world-renowned diving destination in Indonesia, famous for its vertical coral walls, high biodiversity, and consistent turtle sightings.



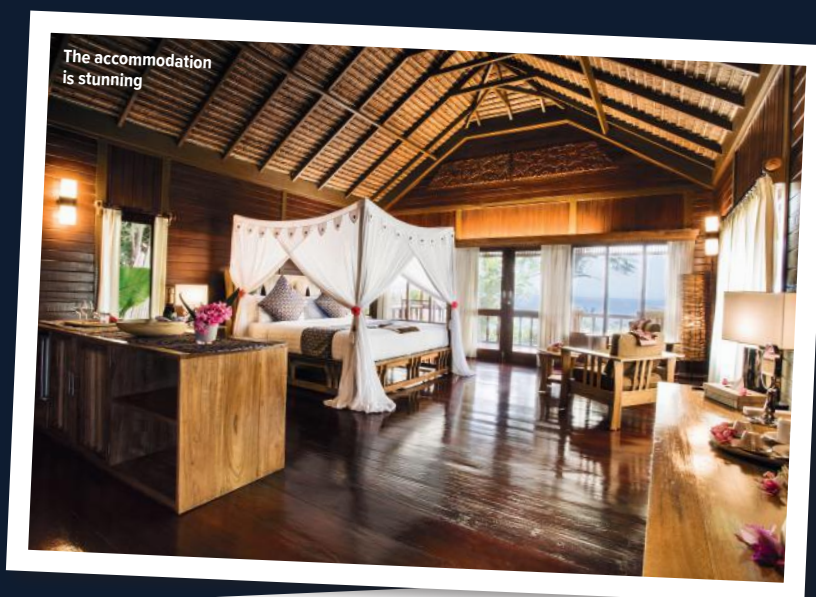
topography that disappears far into the blue. The marine biodiversity here is exceptional. Colourful coral gardens sit alongside huge barrel sponges and giant clams, while turtles seem to appear on almost every dive. Schools of reef fish swarm around the walls, and it's not unusual to encounter reef sharks cruising in the distance.

Bunaken has long been regarded as one of Indonesia's premier diving destinations, particularly for wide-angle photography, though macro enthusiasts will also find plenty to keep them occupied. What struck me most was just how healthy many of the reefs looked. The water clarity during my stay was excellent, and there was a noticeable abundance of life everywhere we went.

Resort

On arrival at the resort I was greeted by Simon and Pete, introduced to the front-of-house staff, and immediately handed a fruit juice cocktail while check-in was handled. After a long journey, that level of hospitality makes a real difference.

The reception area itself is large, open and beautifully designed, with plenty of sofas and seating areas. It serves as both a welcoming social space and a practical area for dive briefings, training sessions and simply relaxing between dives. I was then shown to my chalet, where my luggage had already been delivered by the resort staff. The accommodation is genuinely impressive. The rooms are spacious and beautifully finished, with polished wood throughout, a large four-poster bed, excellent air conditioning and a balcony overlooking the ocean. Small touches really stand out - a bowl of fresh fruit waiting on arrival, a Bunaken Oasis water bottle to keep, and a chilled water dispenser in the room to help combat the tropical heat.



The accommodation is stunning



Pool testing puts the rebreather before heading offshore



Rebreathers can be front or back mounted

One particularly appreciated feature was the included laundry service. Simply leave dirty clothes in the laundry basket when heading out in the morning, and by evening they return clean, folded and neatly arranged. For divers travelling light, especially on longer trips, this is incredibly useful.

The resort also has a well-stocked bar offering a decent selection of beers, wines and cocktails, although these are not included within the all-inclusive package. The restaurant serves a varied menu with daily specials alongside a range of staples available every day. The food throughout the trip was consistently excellent, with a good balance between local Indonesian dishes and more-familiar European or international options.

What really elevates the experience, though, is the staff. Every member of the team seemed genuinely invested in ensuring guests enjoy their stay. Within a day I was being greeted by name each time I entered the restaurant or bar, which quickly created a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere. It's a small detail, but one that makes a resort feel personal rather than corporate.

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Topside testing
before a dive

“ From the moment you arrive in Manado to the final boat ride back to the mainland, the level of service, attention to detail and overall professionalism are consistently excellent ”

trimix blending and dedicated oxygen filling for rebreathers. It's rare to find this level of infrastructure in such a remote island setting. There's also a dedicated photography room, complete with air conditioning, charging stations and plenty of workbench space for camera assembly and maintenance. Underwater photographers are extremely well catered for here, and judging by the amount of expensive camera equipment I saw during my stay, the room gets a lot of use.

Dive facilities

The next morning Pete gave me a tour of the dive facilities, starting with 'The Stables', the resort's equipment storage area. Each chalet has its own dedicated storage space, including room to hang wetsuits and organise personal gear. Everything is clean, well organised and clearly designed by people who understand divers and the practicalities of dive travel.

Each guest is assigned a personal crate labelled with their chalet number, allowing staff to efficiently transfer equipment to and from the boats every day. As with many high-end dive resorts, the staff handle almost all the heavy lifting, which is especially appreciated when diving CCR.

The gas room was particularly impressive. Bunaken Oasis clearly caters not only to recreational divers but also to technical and CCR divers. The facility includes multiple large compressors, a membrane system, gas boosters for

Boats

The resort operates several custom-built dive boats, each designed for small groups of around eight divers. Space onboard is excellent, with plenty of room for kitting up and moving around comfortably. The boats feature large covered seating areas, which become essential under the Indonesian sun. The crews were consistently excellent throughout the trip — polite, attentive and highly efficient without ever being intrusive. After each dive, hot towels appeared almost immediately, followed by fresh fruit, snacks and drinks while the crew prepared equipment for the next dive. It's the sort of seamless service that allows divers to focus entirely on enjoying the experience. ▶





The boat rides themselves are generally short, with many dive sites located only ten to 15 minutes from the resort, meaning more time underwater and less time commuting.

Diving

Most of the diving around Bunaken centres around reef walls beginning at around 10m before plunging dramatically into the depths below. The volcanic origins of the islands create spectacular underwater landscapes, and visibility during my trip was consistently excellent. Despite the complete absence of rusty wrecks and twisted metal, the diving here is hugely enjoyable.

During the CCR training we were limited to a maximum depth of 30m, but even within those limits the dives were packed with life. We encountered turtles on almost every dive, several small reef sharks, huge schools of fish and endless colourful reef scenery. As someone with very limited fish-identification skills, I can confidently confirm that there were lots of extremely colourful fish everywhere.

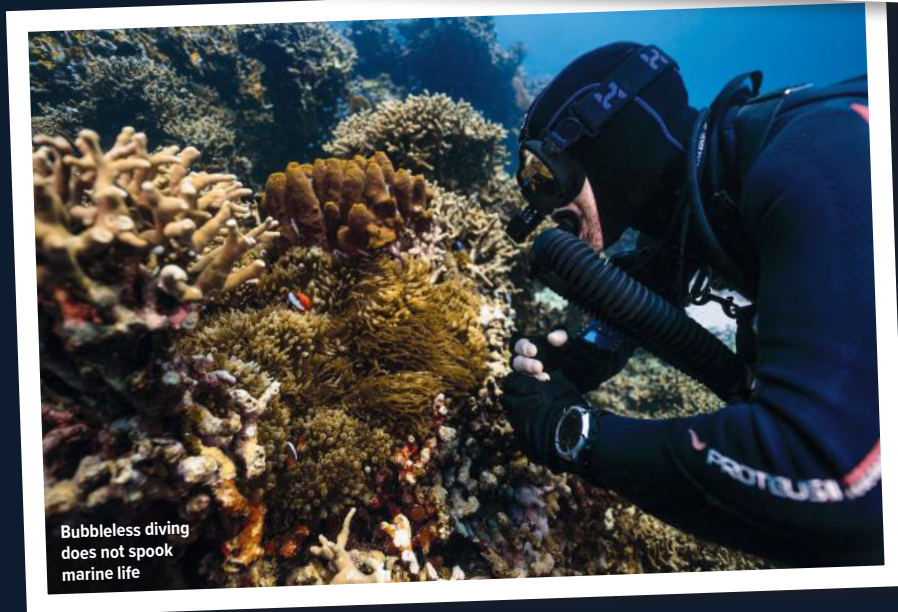
Over four days of diving we visited different sites each day, giving a good sense of the variety available within the marine park. Currents varied from gentle drifts to slightly more-energetic conditions, but nothing particularly challenging during my stay.

For underwater photographers, Bunaken offers excellent opportunities for both wide-angle and macro work. The walls themselves make dramatic wide-angle subjects, while careful inspection of the reefs reveals endless small critters hiding amongst the coral.

Perhaps the most-intriguing aspect is the unexplored potential of the deeper reef sections. Much of the area beyond recreational depths appears relatively untouched, and it's easy to see why technical divers are increasingly interested in the region. Even after just a few days, I found myself already thinking about a return trip — ideally with more time, and perhaps a little deeper exploration on the CCR.

Summary

Bunaken Oasis Dive Resort more than lives up to its reputation. From the moment you arrive in Manado to the final boat ride back to the mainland, the level of service, attention to detail and overall professionalism are consistently excellent. The combination of luxurious



accommodation, outstanding dive infrastructure and genuinely world-class diving makes it an easy destination to recommend.

What really sets the resort apart, however, is how effortlessly everything works. Whether you're a recreational diver, underwater photographer or technical CCR diver, the operation is clearly designed by people who truly understand what divers need. Add to that the spectacular reefs of Bunaken National Marine Park and the warmth of the staff, and it becomes very easy to understand why so many guests return year after year.

For me, the trip answered the question of what all the buzz was about — and also guaranteed that this won't be my last visit to Bunaken. ■



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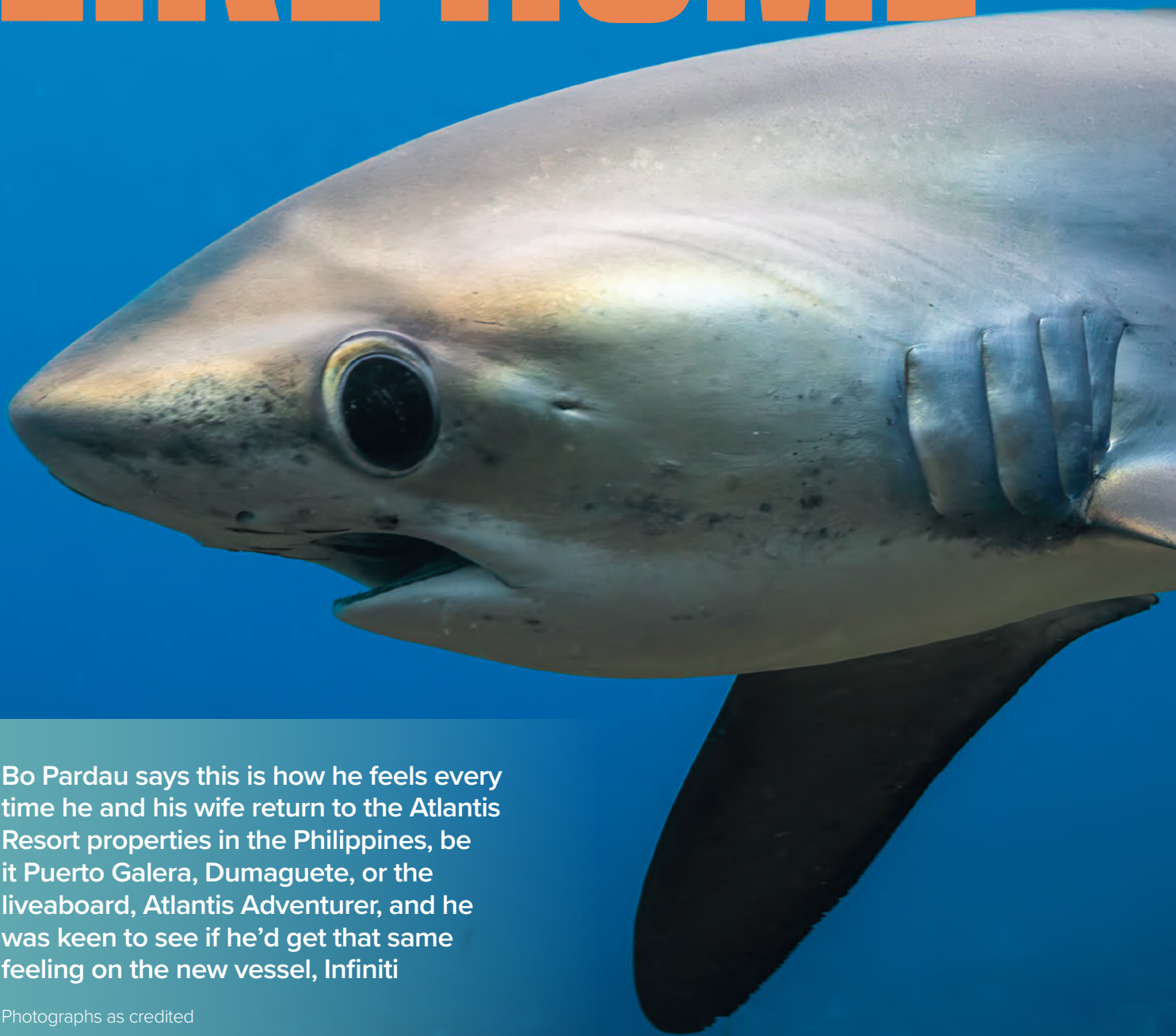
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'THERE'S NO LIKE HOME'



Bo Pardau says this is how he feels every time he and his wife return to the Atlantis Resort properties in the Philippines, be it Puerto Galera, Dumaguete, or the liveaboard, Atlantis Adventurer, and he was keen to see if he'd get that same feeling on the new vessel, Infiniti

Photographs as credited

Thresher shark
© Shireen Shipman

PLACE

Having stayed at both resorts multiple times since 2010, and experienced the same level of excellence and caring (they all know your name from the first day!) on the Adventurer liveboard at Tubbataha, we were delighted to see that Atlantis had acquired a new boat, the Infiniti. We jumped at the chance to try it out and explore new (to us) dive sites.

The Infiniti currently offers three routes and I was interested in the Visayas North Route that would include a chance to dive with thresher sharks, a long-time bucket list item I wished to fill. As any seasoned traveller knows, it is a risk to anticipate that all air travel will go as planned. If you are at a land-based resort, it is disappointing to miss time at the resort and dives. Missing a liveboard is on the next level of despair, so I would recommend the easy solution of booking a few days in advance at the Atlantis Resort at Dumaguete, where the Infiniti departs from on Visayas routes. You will get the chance to reset your internal clock, enjoy the local ambiance and food, and some of the finest muck dives I have experienced.

There is a good chance of seeing flamboyant cuttlefish, blue ring octopus, mimic octopus, pipefish, shrimp and so many varieties of nudibranchs.

After a couple of final morning dives in Dumaguete, the crew took the guests and our belongings out to the ship to get oriented and settled into our cabins. As we came on board we were greeted by the cruise director, who we first met in 2010 when he was the first dive guide we met at the Atlantis Resort in Puerto Galera.

The Infiniti can take up to 25 guests spread over 11 cabins, all with en-suite baths and wonderfully warm showers. The premium deluxe cabins were roomy with plenty of storage. The rear of the main deck offered ample space for the storage of scuba gear at individual stations. Once your gear was set up, you were done handling it for the week. The Infiniti offers four dives a day, and a night dive as a fifth dive when possible. After your dive, a favourite feature was the roomy swim step, complete with three warm

Did you know?

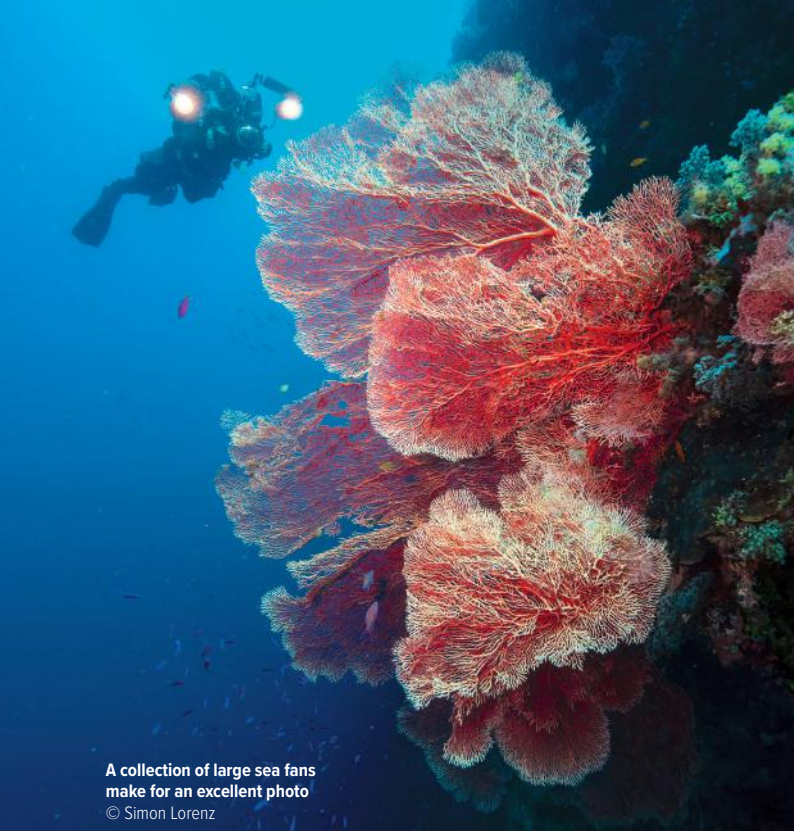
The Visayas North Route in the Philippines centres on the northern Visayan islands – mainly Panay, Romblon, Masbate, and Cebu, offering a mix of top-tier beach destinations, vibrant festivals and incredible diving opportunities.

Did you know?

Thresher sharks use their long tails to whip and stun fish (like sardines and mackerel) by striking the water, acting as their 'secret weapon'. Their tail can make up to 50% of their total body length. Despite their size and power, they are shy and harmless to humans.

showers and several feet of hanging space, so wetsuits could be removed, dunked in the always-fresh rinse bucket and hung before ever leaving the deck. The wetsuits were in full sun so they were, if not dry, at least warm for the next dive. Stepping up to the main level after a dive, you were greeted with a steaming hot facecloth and your own warm dry towel. After the crew retrieved and dipped your camera you could take it to the camera room, which is roomy with plenty of stations, and storage space for all of your equipment. There was 110v and 220v available at each station.

The main lounge was where most everyone gathered when not diving as there was plenty of good food and drink throughout the day and evening. There were movies that ▶



A collection of large sea fans make for an excellent photo © Simon Lorenz



Colourful nudibranch © Bo Pardau



Frogfish © Bo Pardau

could be shown on the large screen, but I never saw anyone take advantage of that. True to the Atlantis motto, 'Come as a guest, leave as a friend', the first evening was spent getting to know one another - crew and guests - then we all just hung out and told tall tales, typical diver lore. We were all eager to see new places and after travelling through the first night, we woke up at our first dive site full of excitement.

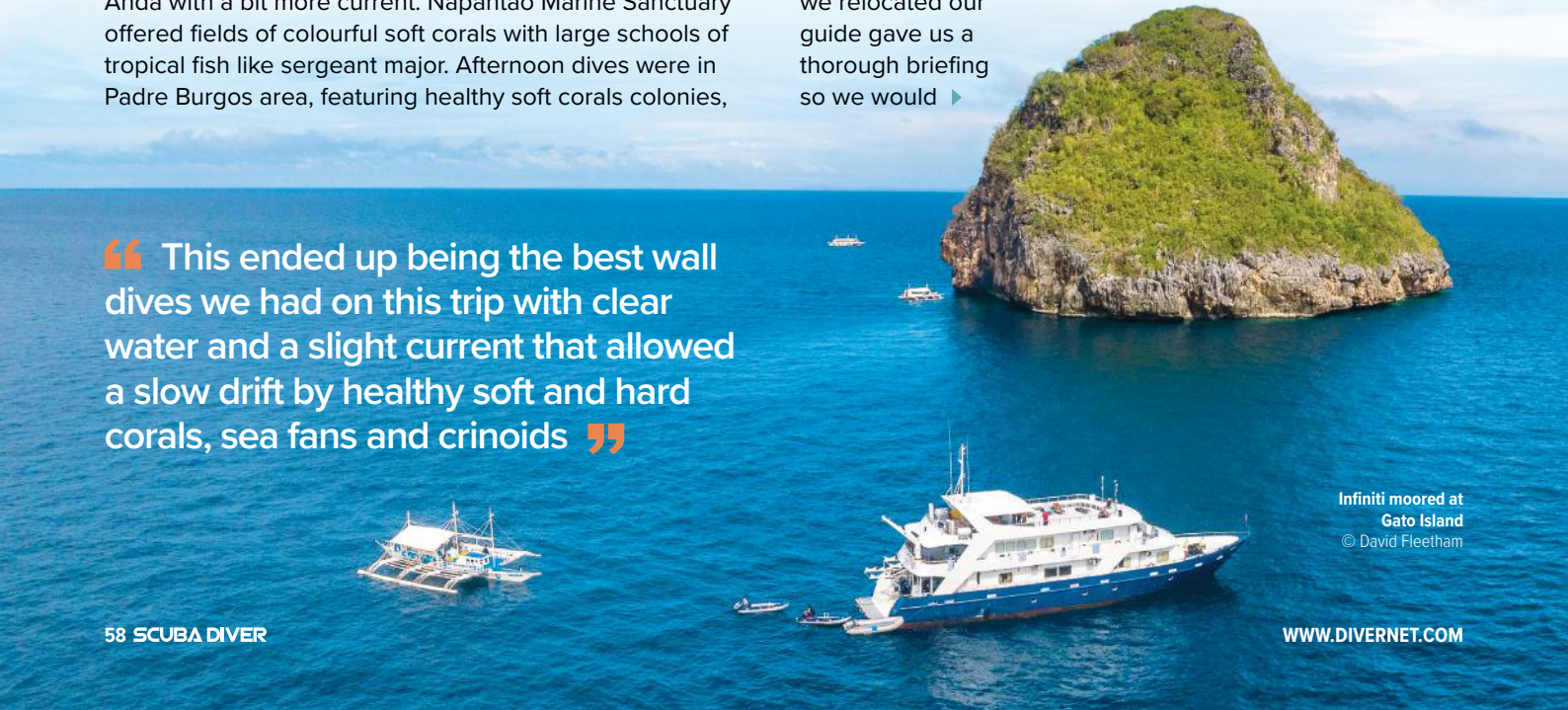
Our first stop was Pamlican Island on the southwest tip of Bohol where we dived Spanish Tower, Pamlican Cliffs, and North and South Haunted Island. There we saw multiple turtles, Sea kraits, nudibranchs, and frogfish among soft, hard, and table corals. This was a great way to start! The second day found us at Anda on the southeastern point of Bohol where the reefs were a mix of steep drop-offs and slopes with incredibly healthy coral reefs teeming with marine life, large and small. At one point there was a large school of jacks passing by and, lucky me, I had my macro lens on.

The third day was spent at Sogod Bay in Southern Leyte. It is more remote than other sites, making diving off a liveaboard ideal. This location mirrored the reefs at Anda with a bit more current. Napantao Marine Sanctuary offered fields of colourful soft corals with large schools of tropical fish like sergeant major. Afternoon dives were in Padre Burgos area, featuring healthy soft corals colonies,

incredible green sun corals and an abundance of orange anthias swimming around. By this point we had settled in to wake up calls of soft music, hot coffee, fresh squeezed juice, yogurt, and cereal for the pre-breakfast knowing that, after the first dive, we would have our pre-ordered hot breakfast served within minutes. Lunch and dinner were buffet style, including different protein selection, an abundant salad bar, bottomless soup tureen and dessert, plus beer, wine, and distilled liquors when your diving was done for the day.

The third evening while we relocated our guide gave us a thorough briefing so we would ▶

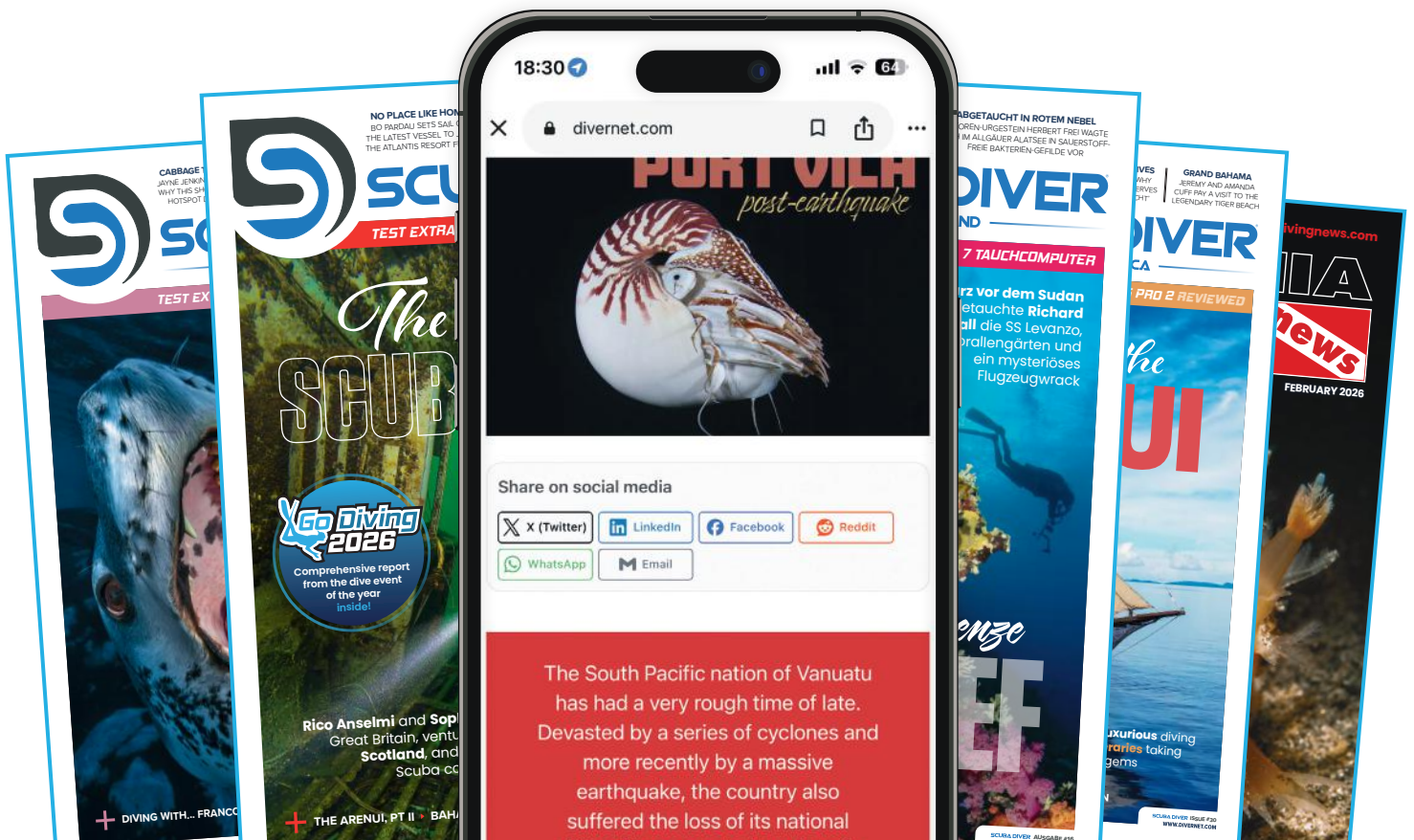
“ This ended up being the best wall dives we had on this trip with clear water and a slight current that allowed a slow drift by healthy soft and hard corals, sea fans and crinoids ”



Infiniti moored at Gato Island © David Fleetham

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know what to expect as we would be spending the next morning diving with the thresher sharks at Kimud Shoal. Waking up in the morning, we found ourselves in open ocean with islands in the distance so we could see the advantage of being on a liveaboard. We were the first ones to arrive and we had less than a three-minute zodiac ride to the drop point. The day boats from Malpascua had a least a 45-minute ride so we were able to have our first dive very nearly to ourselves.

The thresher sharks spend the majority of their time at 182m, hence the large sensitive eyes, but in the past would come to Monad Shoal at 30m to be cleaned. Since it is mandatory to photograph using only ambient light, the images in the past were clearly very challenging. Fortunately for us there has been a shift recently as tiger sharks took over the deeper shoal, so now the thresher sharks have moved to Kimud Shoal, which sits at 15m, offering much better lighting.

This dive was incredible! We hovered off the bottom and watched the parade of sharks go by with some very close passes. The guide took us around to a multitude of cleaning stations and also showed us the edge of this sea mount that drops precipitously to over 150m. Back on the Infiniti between dives we witnessed the vast armada of dive boats arriving so we knew we would not be alone for the second dive. Fortunately, the guides knew how to spin away from the masses and still spend time with the sharks. It was a memorable morning! That afternoon we dove at Isla Del Gato with vertical walls and undercuts, tunnels, and a number of channels to navigate where we found whitetip reef sharks, sea kraits, frogfish, and cuttlefish.

We spent our fifth day at Malapascua Island, which is primarily muck diving similar to Dumaguete with multiple sightings of seahorses, mantis shrimp, nudibranchs, flatworms, and crabs. We also had a wonderful night dive at Evo Reef that was teeming with life among the flotsam and jetsam. Someone also made a concrete thresher shark that might be five metres long and is quite a site, particularly on a night dive. Back to the boat we are greeted with the hot facecloth, warm dry towel, and hot chocolate (with Baileys upon request).

On day six we travelled a short distance to Capitancillo Island, which is truly a unique site. This is a flat plateau covering about 15 acres that barely rises above the ocean level and supports an 24-metre-tall lighthouse. The legend goes that the island was once a



Diver and batfish
in Gato Cavern
© David Fleetham

ship that was cursed because the captain insulted the local chief 400 years ago. This ended up being the best wall dives we had on this trip with clear water and a slight current that allowed a slow drift by healthy soft and hard corals, sea fans and crinoids. We found so many nudibranchs that we would actually let some go by without shooting them. After two memorable dives we prepared for the voyage back to Dumaguete. On our way back we had ample time to dry our gear and reflect on what we had experienced. Diving with the thresher sharks was truly the highlight of the week. Looking back on the trip, as I think of Atlantis Resorts as home, I could consider the Infiniti as my new home away from home. ■



Feeding corals
© Simon Lorenz

About the author

Bo and his wife, Jamie, started diving in the kelp forests of Northern California in 1990 and, surveying the rich diversity and beauty that few get to see, he resolved to bring images to the surface to share with others. He went on to become a NAUI instructor, moved to Hawaii, and began travelling to dive destinations to advance his photography. While wide angle ambient light photography is his focus, he also enjoys macro and blackwater photography. Having travelled extensively to dive destinations, Atlantis Resorts in the Philippines is still his favourite.



Turtle and sea snake
cruising the reef
© David Fleetham

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THE POOR KNIGHTS

Talia Greis heads to New Zealand lured by the promise of world-class diving, and is not left disappointed

Photographs by Talia Greis

“ Exploring the Poor Knights holds a special place in my heart forever, and has given me a new-found respect for temperate diving. I would love to see more people discover one of the world’s most-overlooked dive regions ”

When adventure travellers visit New Zealand, they're often drawn by the thrill of breathtaking landscapes, the allure of its renowned great walks, and the chance to unwind with a relaxing escape through wine country. And although I successfully aspired to tick off all of those things, it was the ultimately the whispers of world-class diving that landed me there in the first place.

The North Island of New Zealand was supposedly where all the underwater action was, and I must admit, after exploring the coast of the North Island, I began to worry I'd sacrificed an undeniably beautiful trip to the tropics for temperate diving with minimal visibility. But it wasn't until I descended into the crystal-clear waters of The Poor Knights that I realised I had found a unique diving experience that would be hard to replicate anywhere else.

The Poor Knights Islands are located approximately one hour off the east coast of Whangaruru, a tiny remote town in the northern part of North Island. In an effort to get in as much diving as possible, I always find liveaboard diving is the way to go, and given the remote circumstances and lengthy travel time, I was over the moon to discover that there was one legendary boat charter that offered a three-day liveaboard – Northland Dive!

Did you know?

The Poor Knights islands, located 14 miles off the Tutukaka coast, are the remains of a group of ancient volcanoes. The formation of the islands boasts spectacular underwater drop-offs, walls, caves, tunnels and arches from 6m to 90m.

This family run dive centre was founded by dive veterans Shane and Julia, who have not only dedicated their lives to showcasing the beauty of New Zealand diving, but were also responsible for the scuttling of the HMNZS Canterbury wreck, which has now become a thriving artificial reef covered in vibrant jewel anemones in Deep Water Cove (another bucket list item I'd highly recommend). Their dive lodge was the perfect home away from home and a tranquil place to gear up, set up the camera rig, and kick back in the evenings with a book and a chilled glass of Savignon Blanc.

The following day we set off on their liveaboard Sun Spy. As we approached the Poor Knights Islands, I was instantly drawn to bubbling on the surface that resembled a pot of boiling water – it was the kind of fleeting spectacle that had me scramble for my gear, convinced it may disappear at any time. I later realised that The Poor Knights was all about 'fish', as this phenomenon persisted throughout our time there – above and below the surface.

As an underwater photographer I'm constantly trying to capture a moment in time that draws the viewers attention to the 'star' subject. But what I found interesting (and incredibly challenging) about photographing the Poor Knights is that you're forced to engage in a different sort of 'fish' photography, where the subject isn't a solitary creature but a vast, shifting mass of schooling fish as far as the eye can see. It sounds simple, but relearning how to see – treating fish as the main event rather than a supporting backdrop – was surprisingly difficult. What made the transition easier, though, was the environment itself. The Poor Knights Islands are the remnants of an ancient volcanic cone which result in towering underwater formations, dramatic swim-throughs, and dense kelp forests swaying in the surge like a slow, graceful underwater ballet. ▶

My favourite sites

Middle Arch – This was the first dive I did on my visit to the Islands and one that has left the deepest imprint on my memory. Middle Arch centres around a vast swim through the centre of the arch, which is peppered with huge clusters of schooling snapper, blue maomao, damselfish, and if you're lucky, an abundance of long and short-tailed stingrays flying in and out of the arch like flying carpets.

A very dramatic scene given the right conditions. Most people turn around at the end of the swim-through and finish their dive by visiting the bubble cave right next to the entrance, where you can actually surface inside and have a peep around the cave. However, my curiosity steered me off course and guided me all the way around the arch, where you really feel like you're at the mercy of the ocean, gazing into the deep hoping for a chance encounter with a large pelagic.

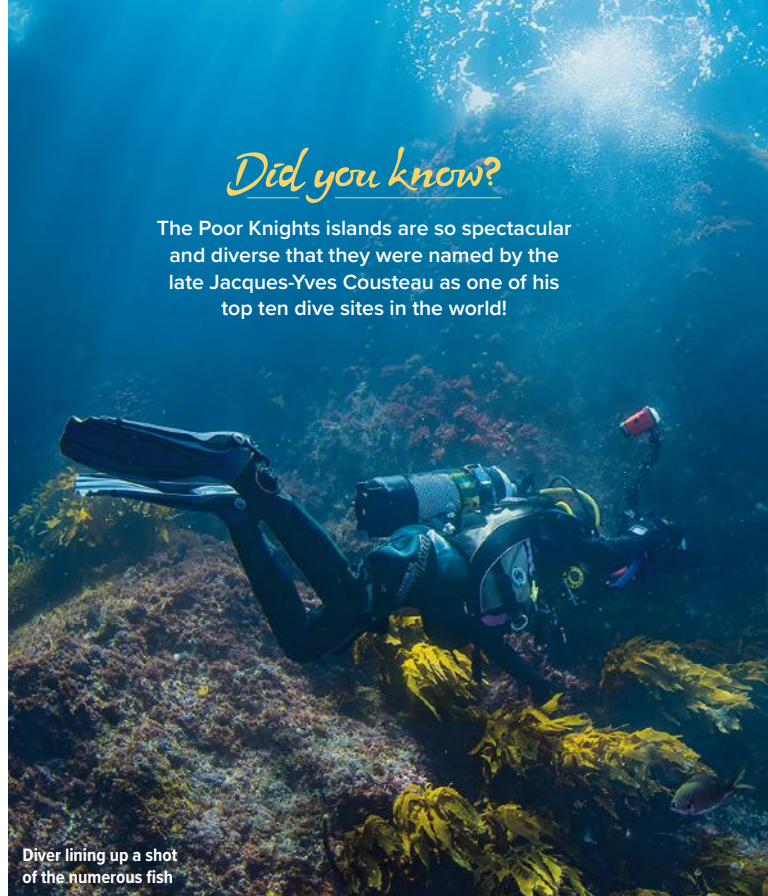
There had been whispers of interactions with dolphins, orcas, and mola mola, but I settled for a huge school of fast patrolling kingfish, whose presence sent the surrounding baitfish into a dazzling frenzy like underwater fireworks. When I managed to pull focus from the spectacle that was unfolding I also noticed an abundance of multicolour seaweeds, algae and macro life that covered the walls – nudibranchs, eels, scorpionfish and more.

North Arch – Without doubt my favourite site in the region and one that is often sidestepped due the potential of raging currents, a hazard which sadly hindered our passage through the arch itself. As the group commenced their dive, I spent a good portion of my time on the surface capturing the largest school of blue mao mao I had ever seen, which was further complimented by the dramatic towering structure of the arch. Split shots are a hard technique to master but even more difficult when you're being sucked into the arch every ten seconds with a terrifying force.

As time ticked on I finally decided to blow some bubbles and descended through the heavy cloud of bubbling fish, only to discover this dramatic archway soared into the depths as far as the eye could see, covered in flowing kelp, soft sponges and vibrant red algae. It was the perfect

Did you know?

The Poor Knights islands are so spectacular and diverse that they were named by the late Jacques-Yves Cousteau as one of his top ten dive sites in the world!



Diver lining up a shot of the numerous fish



Arch split shot

“ Without doubt my favourite site in the region and one that is often sidestepped due the potential of raging currents ”





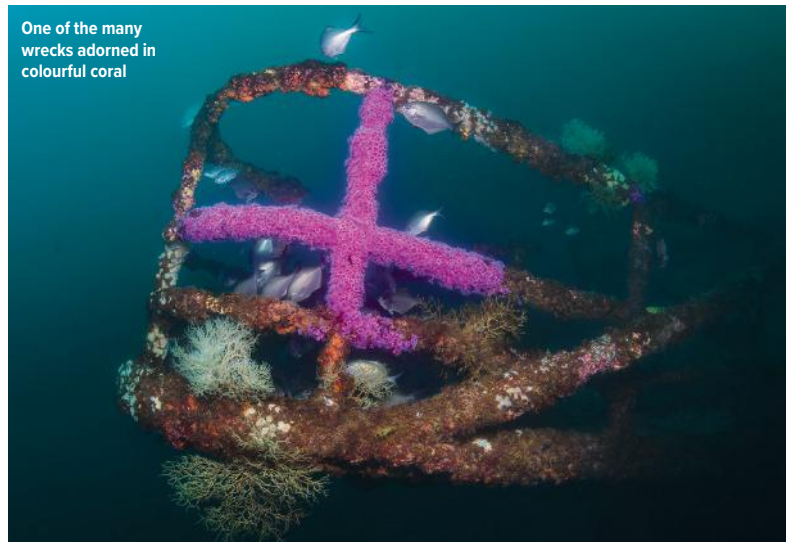
stage to compliment the grandeur of schooling fish that soared through the current in numbers that felt truly beyond measure. I'd describe this dive as a sensory overload - caught between a sheer wall face and a spiralling vortex of fish that all appear to dissolve into the blue.

I felt a sense of unfinished business not being able to dive through the arch itself, where the 70-metre wall face is said to be teeming with life, fuelled by nutrient-rich currents that funnel through the passage - feeding the sponges that cloak the walls and sustaining dense schools of blue and pink maomao that fill the archway. There is also said to be sightings of schooling parrotfish, sharks, rays, and an abundance tiny macro critters.

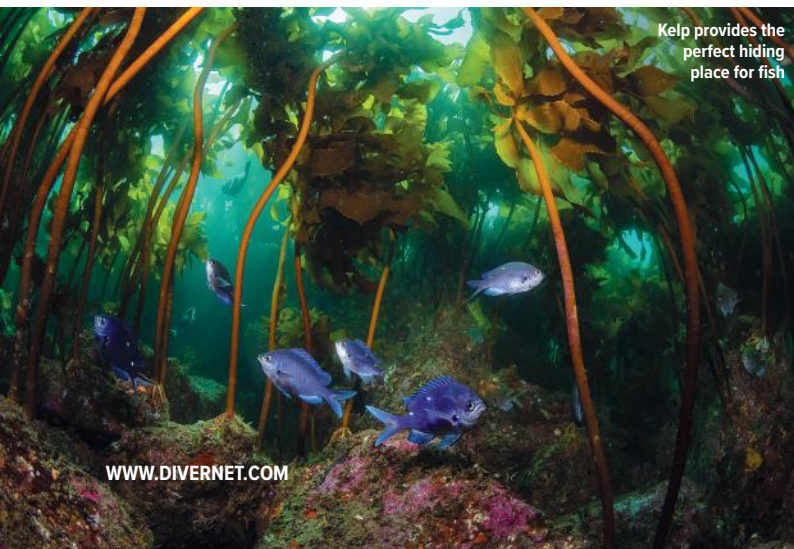
The Lost World – This site was the most unique as far as underwater topography and exploration, evoking a sense of childlike wonder - like stumbling upon a real-life Treasure Island. To find The Lost World you descend down a wall face and head through a tunnel with a rippled sandy bottom. To ensure you get the most out of this particular dive I'd advise taking a torch to explore the walls of the 25-metre tunnel, and to try and dive it on a relatively sunny day so you can appreciate the rays that pour into the cavern at the end. As you approach the sun-drenched opening, follow



The variety of fish species is impressive



One of the many wrecks adorned in colourful coral



Kelp provides the perfect hiding place for fish

the light up to about 5m of water where an oversaturated kelp-covered garden is revealed, further complimented by an abundance of waratah anemones that pepper the surrounding rock walls. At this stage you can surface and take a moment to appreciate the fully enclosed ethereal grotto with walls that stretch up to ten metres high, and a hole in the wall face that has thick green jungle pouring through. This dramatic scene presented another great opportunity for some split shots, as the beauty above and below the surface complimented each other nicely. ▶

The fish are used to divers and snorkellers and will happily get close



“ When I managed to pull focus from the spectacle that was unfolding I also noticed an abundance of multicolour seaweeds, algae and macro life that covered the walls – nudibranchs, eels, scorpionfish and more ”

Final thoughts

The Poor Knights marine reserve offers around 50-60 named dive sites with a diverse selection of arches, caves, walls, swim-throughs, and pinnacles. And although I was only able to see nine of them, it offered me a different sort of dive experience I had never experienced prior. Given the sheer multitude of arches and caves I'd advise taking a torch with you on every dive, and although there is an abundance of macro life clinging to every wall I'd highly advise arming yourself with a wide angle (or even fish eye) lens to capture the world-class dramatic topography.

Water temperatures can run quite low – even in the summer months where we experienced 17 degree C water – so my two cents would be to bring a drysuit with you to extend your bottom time. One of the things I loved about Northland Dive is although they have a Divemaster guide you through the sites, they're also willing to give experienced divers a comprehensive briefing of the site and send you on your way – an underwater photographer's dream scenario. But given the potential for raging currents, be sure to know your limits and always dive with an SMB.

Exploring the Poor Knights holds a special place in my heart forever, and has given me a new-found respect for temperate diving. I would love to see more people discover one of the world's most-overlooked dive regions and be humbled by the sheer abundance of fish life and biodiversity within this remarkable, remote marine reserve. ■



Nudibranch among the seaweed

Stunning sunset over the islands

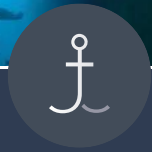


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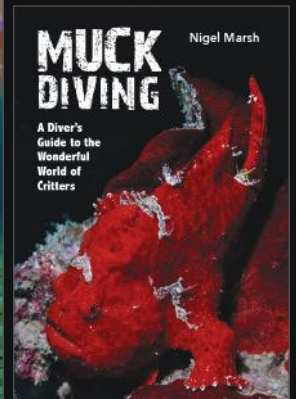
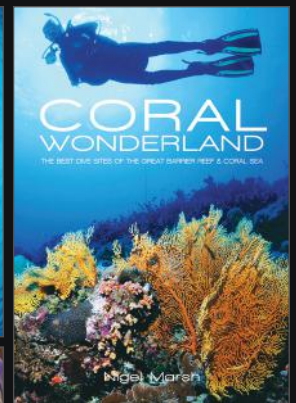
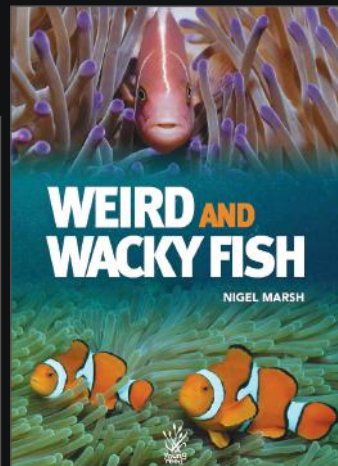
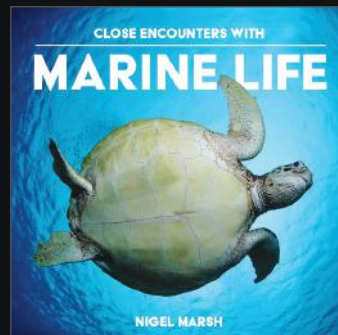
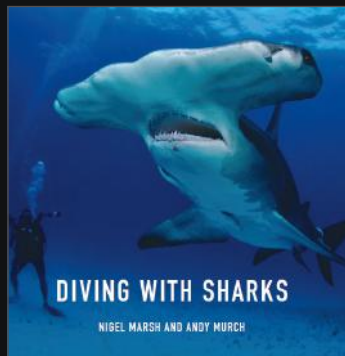
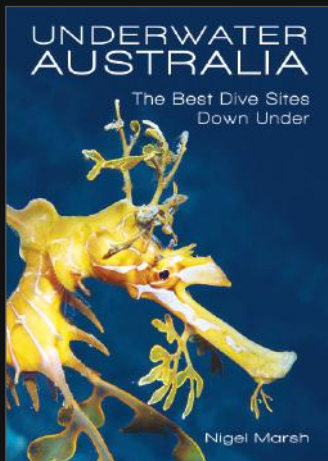
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Nigel Marsh is an Australian photojournalist, underwater photographer and author. Working with New Holland publishers, Nigel has produced a number of guide books for divers and snorkelers, and also a series of children's books with marine related themes.

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CRESSI SUB – CELEBRATING 80 YEARS WITH SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY LINE

Cressi Sub is the oldest diving equipment manufacturing company in the world, and as it celebrates an incredible 80 years in existence, it has released a line of colourful anniversary gear which certainly stands out from the crowd.

Brothers Egidio and Nanni Cressi started to handcraft the first masks and spearfishing guns way back in 1938, representing the humble origins of Cressi Sub. In 1943, the first 'Cressi' mask, the Sirena, was hand-crafted, and remained in the catalogue, with various updates, for more than 30 years. It wasn't until 1946, though, that the Cressi company was officially founded in Genova, Italy.

In 1952, Cressi released the Pinocchio mask, the first to offer the ability to equalise – a major innovation in the 1950s. Regarded as the world's most-famous and sold mask, it is still included in the catalogue! The Rondine fins made their first appearance in 1953, and have been much-copied over the years ever since. In 1965, Cressi opened one of the first workshops specialising in producing optical masks, meaning though with visual defects could now have full enjoyment underwater. The year 1965 saw the Polaris 4 Professional regulator introduced to the line-up. This two-stage unit for the ARA, the air rebreather, was equipped with a piston first stage and a chromed brass second stage. This became a huge success due to its robust build quality and minimal need for maintenance.

In 1970, the Equi-vest made its debut, a futuristic jacket that attached to the cylinder and draw air directly from the first stage. With its arrival, Cressi Sub became the first manufacturer to release what ended up being the first incarnation of the modern BCD.

The Rondine Long fins also appeared in 1970, and these rubber fins enabled Jacques Mayol to go on to achieve his astonishing freediving records.

In 1979, the Rondine Gara fin made its first appearance, featuring a reinforced nylon blade. Decades later, the line started with the Gara is still going strong and is popular with freedivers and spearfishers the world over. By 1990, Cressi products were distributed in over 90 countries worldwide. In 2000, the Cressi Big Eyes mask was a world first, featuring raked lenses with an upside-down teardrop shape, an innovative form that gives the diver a complete view of all of their equipment. Showcasing how far ahead Cressi were in their design department, this mask became one of the most-widely copied and imitated masks in the world, and its legacy lives on in virtually every mask you see today.

In 2011, the Leonardo dive computer was launched, the first of the line of products designed in-house by Cressi Elettronica in order to guarantee optimum quality, safety and reliability. In 2013, the Giotto dive computer made an appearance, which featured the Cressi RGBM algorithm, and could process data from repeat multi-day dives and gas mixtures other than air. The advanced Quantum mask made its debut in 2022 – this was among the most-complex masks on the market at the time. The Cressi company is still entirely owned by the Cressi family, which carries on with the same passion the work started by brothers Nanni and Egidio. Its spirit lies in the manufacturing tradition, with a clear preference for the conception and realization of its products in-house, from the initial design through to the smallest details.

In 2026, the year of the 80th anniversary of the company, Cressi released a limited-edition Dive Yellow collection, that pays tribute to the history of the business, and embraces the vibrant colour that best represents the brand. It also features the original Cressi logo.

www.cressi.com

CRESSI THOR EBS FINS – 80TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

Brand new design for this extremely effective and yet very easy-to-use fin. The special arched profile of the fins combined with the two central ribs promote a significant flow convection effect, known as 'spoon effect', which stabilises and boosts propulsion. Two lateral holes discharge the negative forces typically associated with this area and at the same time make for enhanced stability.

The blades are moulded from two different materials for improved reactivity, and the bungee-style heel strap has a large loop that make it very easy to locate and grab, even wearing thick neoprene gloves in cold waters. These fins are perfect for scuba diving, whether you are an experienced diver or a novice, and come in four sizes – XS, S, M and L.



CRESSI NEON COMPUTER WATCH – 80TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION



Whether you're a scuba diver, freediver or spearfisher, the Cressi Neon is a compact dive computer that's smart enough to wear to the office. Monitoring your dive data is simple and intuitive; a clean, edge-to-edge display allows you to see your stats at a glance and you can switch between four different modes: Air, Nitrox, Gauge and Free.

Providing real-time data, including dive phase time, ascent speed and a customisable PPO2 range, the Neon's adaptable Cressi RGBM Algorithm supports multi-day decompression diving and Technical Features, an adjustable deep stop and O2 toxicity monitoring for enhanced safety. You can manage two Nitrox gases during a dive and even switch between Air and Nitrox modes between dives, a feature that is often missing on other similarly priced dive computers.

For freedivers and spearfishers, the dedicated Free/ Apnea programme displays vital metrics like maximum depth, dive count and surface interval timers. The Gauge mode provides depth and bottom time tracking without decompression calculations, ideal for anyone needing a backup computer for technical diving. The Neon's durable build and mineral glass screen ensure lasting protection, while a battery life indicator and user-replaceable battery keep you dive-ready with minimal downtime. Built for comfort, the Neon's low-profile design makes it ideal for daily wear and dive adventures.

A scratch-resistant mineral glass screen protects your computer dive after dive, and optional Bluetooth connection for Mac, PC and smart devices means you can analyse and store your dive data in the Cressi app.

CRESSI NANO MASK – 80TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

A mask for advanced freediving and spearfishing, designed to offer an extremely hydrodynamic and compact shape to help divers cut through water and aid movement in small spaces. The minimal internal volume – it is just 85 cm sq - does not require intentional equalization, and the angled lenses and thin frame optimize visibility. Swivel buckles, on the anatomical strap, are equipped with micrometric adjustment.

CRESSI Z2 MASK – 80TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION



The Cressi Z2 diving mask is manufactured through an advanced moulding production process to achieve a state-of-the-art frameless structure. The Z2 offers a wide and distortion-free field of view, allowing divers to enjoy a clear and panoramic view of their surroundings. Made of high-quality silicone, it adapts perfectly to the face, ensuring lasting comfort even during prolonged dives. Its single-lens frameless construction makes it exceptionally light and easy to handle - reliable, high-performance and comfortable, the Cressi Z2 mask is the ideal choice for keen divers who want a high-level underwater experience.

CRESSI GARA TURBO IMPULSE FINS – 80TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION



Following the Impulse project, Cressi have successfully transferred the same design parameters for S-shaped undulating deformation to this innovative fin. This particular movement permits a notable accumulation of elastic potential energy in the blade, which is released in the return kick, transforming into thrust. The thermoplastic rubber used for the water channelling rails is extremely flexible and soft so as not to undermine the intrinsic characteristics of the blade, which is made of elastomerized technopolymers developed by Cressi.





GEAR WHAT'S NEW

Each issue, the Scuba Diver test team bring you the latest product and equipment releases from the dive industry. Cannot wait for the next edition? Keep up-to-date with all the latest gear news and reviews by heading over to the Scuba Diver YouTube channel!
www.youtube.com/ScubaDiverMagazine

CRESSI T10 SC PVD + MASTER REGULATOR – 80TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION



The Cressi T10 SC PVD Master is designed for divers who expect high levels of performance in demanding conditions. The T10-SC PVD first stage has a hyper-balanced diaphragm that adjusts airflow to match ambient water pressure for improved breathing performance at depth, even as cylinder pressure decreases, while the environmentally sealed design keeps water and debris out to prevent the risk of freezing or contamination. A conical first stage filter offers a large surface area for the efficient filtration of impurities from the cylinder. The conical shape means that the filter can handle more contaminants before needing to be replaced.

This high-performing first stage is finished in a super-tough PVD titanium coating that will keep your regulator looking good for years, and features two high-pressure ports, and four low-pressure ports, which are arranged in a T-shape to optimize hose routing.

The Master pneumatically balanced second stage features a premium laser-etched titanium front cover and the elliptical design fits naturally against the diver's face. The elliptical diaphragm has a large surface area, which reduces the effort needed to inhale, especially in high-demand situations or at depth. Cold water performance is further improved by the Master's internal heat exchanger, which uses warmth from the diver's breath, or the surrounding water, to stop ice from forming inside the regulator.

A large adjustable venturi maximises airflow in dive mode and prevents free-flows when the regulator is on the surface, even when wearing gloves, and the Master uses Safe-Flex hose, which is incredibly flexible compared with traditional hoses.

CRESSI COMFORT 5MM WETSUIT – 80TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION



The Cressi Comfort 5 mm is a one-piece wetsuit designed for water temperatures between 16°C and 24°C. Made from high-quality 5mm neoprene, this cosy and exceptionally stretchy wetsuit offers superior insulation and comfort.

The outer lining is 100% super-elastic Ultra-Span, while its X-Plush inner lining is soft and quick-drying, improving thermal retention before, during and after the dive.

X-Diamond reinforcement fabric protects high-wear areas, including the shoulders, shins and buttocks. The knee and tibia areas have elastic Tatex anti-wear reinforcements, offering protection from abrasive surfaces, without compromising stretch. The anatomically considered collar design has a 120° preformed cutaway, allowing for a more-natural fit that reduces pressure on the neck when looking down to adjust equipment or check gauges.

A high-quality YKK zip runs vertically on the back of the suit and a large thigh pocket on the right leg has two compartments and an integrated D-ring for securing accessories. A dedicated hood holder keeps your hood safe between dives (hood sold separately).

With its ergonomic cut and 100% stretch neoprene, the Cressi Comfort 5mm offers a tailored, anatomical fit for all-day warmth and comfort in temperate to warm water. The Comfort 5mm is available in male and female versions.

CRESSI AQUAWING PLUS BCD – 80TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

The Cressi Aquawing Plus is a one-size-fits-all donut-style BCD. Featuring Cressi's industry-leading Modular Adjustment System (MAS), the Aquawing Plus offers a custom fit for both men and women - the continuous weave harness system allows you to fine-tune the adjustment of your harness so that it fits snugly to the shape of your body. Simply tighten the shoulder straps by pulling the waist straps, then loosen them in seconds by releasing the waist buckle and pulling up on the shoulders. This impressive adjustment range means you'll always get a perfect fit, whether you're drysuit diving or T-shirt diving.

Compact and streamlined, the Aquawing Plus is exceptionally stable underwater thanks to the donut shape air cell, which allows air to migrate evenly for consistent buoyancy and precise trim control. A crotch strap ensures the BCD stays in place during your dive, for precise trim and balance in the water.

Integrated weight pockets are securely attached to the lightweight anodised aluminium back plate, and weight pockets on the cylinder band allow for further adjustments to optimise buoyancy. An optional 2.5kg backplate bar is also available, helping counterbalance the forward-leaning tendency of back-inflation BCDs.

Cressi's innovative Air-Net material lines the shoulder straps and covers the back plate. Soft and padded, the material drains quickly and is neutrally buoyant. Four pre-bent stainless steel D-rings and a convenient pocket for your Surface Marker Buoy ensure easy access to essential gear. The Aquawing Plus is ideal for divers seeking a compact backplate and wing configuration.



CRESSI QUANTUM MASK – 80TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

The major innovation with the Quantum masks is that as well as offering enhanced downwards vision, it avoids the fogging phenomenon through the internal thermoregulation of the warm, damp air exiting the nose. This air is channelled by a system of membranes set in the moulding around the eyes and nose and deviating the flow towards the rubber skirt rather than the lenses.

The external part of the skirt features a cooling system composed of two small heat exchangers that act as radiators. The effect is that the temperature inside the mask drops, coming closer to the external temperature, and the droplets of humidity are trapped before the air reaches the lenses, preventing them from fogging up.

Despite the presence of the small internal membranes deviating the air flow and the external heat exchangers, the body of the Quantum mask is nonetheless compact and represents the most-advanced design offered on the underwater vision market. The lenses are not treated chemically and it is also always useful to use saliva as a surfactant before every dive.



CRESSI NEPTO COMPUTER WATCH – 80TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

Designed with freedivers and spearfishers in mind, this easy-to-use freediving watch offers core functionality in a compact, streamlined profile that is perfect for daily wear. Using Cressi's advanced Taravana Risk Reduction Algorithm, the Nepto enables divers to select one of eight surface recovery settings. This ensures safe intervals between dives and helps reduce the risk of Taravana, a form of decompression sickness caused by rapid, repeated breath-hold dives.

The Oedema Protection Algorithm lets divers set progressively deeper warm-up dives to gradually acclimatise to deeper depths. This supports lung health and reduces the risk of oedema, which is essential for freedivers and spearfishers looking to responsibly push their limits.

From customisable alarms to precise data sampling every 0.5 seconds, this device captures and stores comprehensive dive data. Essential metrics like depth, time and water temperature are easily viewed on the high-contrast, backlit display, which remains legible in low-light conditions.

The user-replaceable battery and hydration reminders are added conveniences, making the Cressi Nepto as functional as it is dependable, even during demanding repeat dives.



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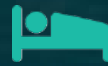
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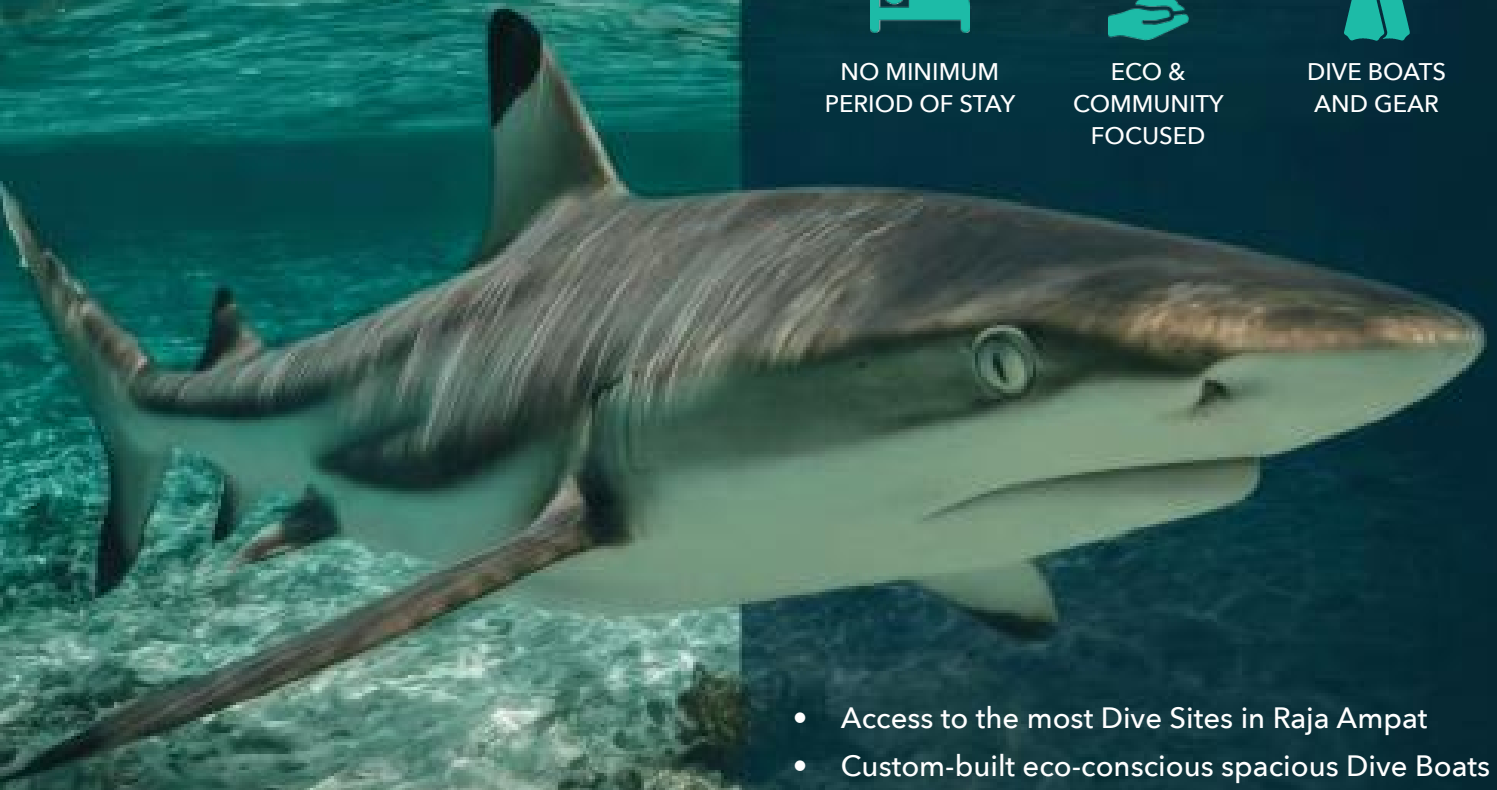
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