



The OrcaTorch D570 (right) has a green laser beam that is bright and easy to see (far right) and the unit works very well as a dive torch on deeper, darker dives (below).



Review of the OrcaTorch D570

Text and photos by Kate Jonker

How many times, whilst diving, have you seen the most exciting, unusual or incredible critter and wanted to show it to your buddies? You have finally managed to grab their attention and pointed at the critter, only for them to look in the direction of your pointed finger and then stare blankly back at you. You point closer, you waggle your hand and still they don't see it, by which time, the critter

has disappeared, your buddies have given up the search, shrugged their shoulders and swum off.

This can be really disappointing and sometimes happens to me when guiding customers or diving with buddies who are not accustomed to our marine life. I realised that to prevent any future disappointments, I needed to find a noninvasive way of pointing out those critters. I am not keen on pointers or muck sticks after seeing a few over-enthusiastic divers knock or

dislodge creatures from the reef with their sticks.

Enter the laser pointer

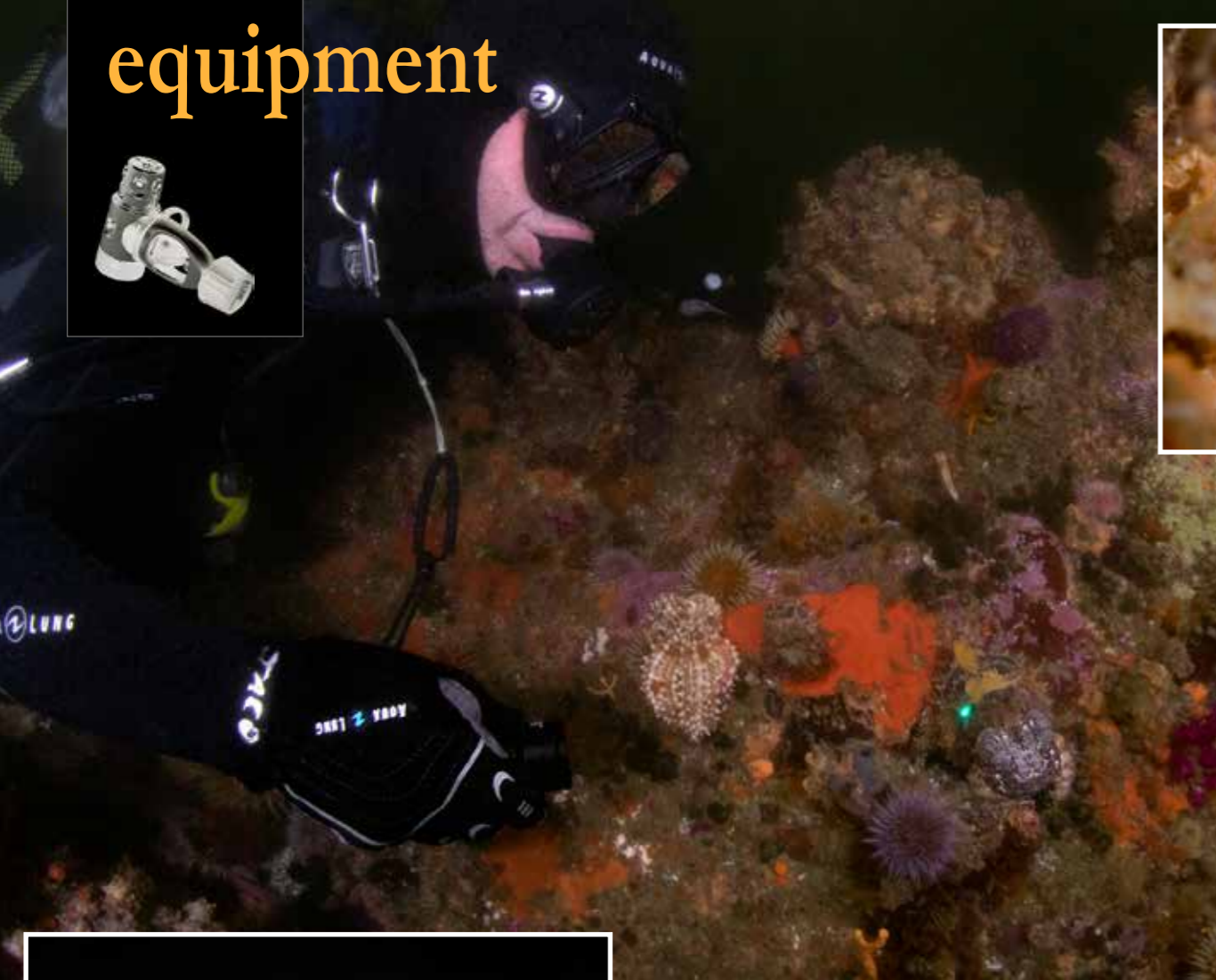
I had heard about laser pointers, and they sounded like the ideal solution, but as I already dive with quite a bit of paraphernalia attached to my BCD (including a torch), I was not keen to add yet another item, or have to fumble between laser pointer and torch depending on what was needed at that moment in time.

I recently came across the OrcaTorch D570, a two-in-one dive light, which has a 1000 lumen torch as well as a laser pointer. This sounded like the perfect solution, and I decided to try one out for myself.

The torch comes in two versions: the D570-GL, which has a green laser; or the R570-RL, which has a red beam. I ordered the D570-GL.

OrcaTorch products are internationally available and my torch arrived very quickly from my local supplier.

equipment



My dive buddy used the OrcaTorch D570's green laser pointer (left) to show me a well-camouflaged cuttlefish on the reef. It can also be used as a spot beam for underwater photography (right), which I did to capture the frilled nudibranch (above) using ISO320, F5.6 and 1/125.



Ease of use

Operating the torch is incredibly easy. To use the laser pointer, you hold down the button and to turn it off, you simply release the button. To switch on the torch beam, you double click the same button. It then stays on until you double click it again. As the two light sources can be controlled independently, you can even use the laser pointer whilst the torch is on.

It arrived nicely packaged with a rechargeable battery, a lanyard, USB battery charger, warranty card, two spare O-rings and a user manual.

Quality

Upon unpacking, the first thing that struck me was how well-made the torch was. According to OrcaTorch, it is made from aircraft-grade aluminium and coated with a diamond-grade, hard-anodized finish to protect the torch from seawater corrosion. It is built to withstand a drop of 1m (great for clumsy people like myself) and can be taken to depths of 150m. It is sealed with two O-rings.

Measuring 134mm in length and 26mm in diameter and clocking in at 225g in weight, the torch felt very solid and compact in my hands. An added bonus is the battery level indicator that lights up around the on/off button to ensure that you will not be left in the dark on a dive!

I have used the OrcaTorch D570 for a couple of months now, and it does everything I hoped it would—and more. The beam of the torch has an eight degree angle, is nice and bright and has been very useful for scouring the reef on deeper, darker dives—and for signalling to wayward buddies. I love the green laser pointer as it easily picks out the critters on the reef. Using the torch is very simple and totally fumble-proof.

Battery life

The battery life has been very impressive and not once has the torch ever let me down. OrcaTorch specifies a 111-minute run time for the torch. I do charge the battery every evening, just to make sure

it has enough power for the following day and have not yet experienced the "low battery" warning.

Although not sold as such, I have even used it as a source of constant lighting for underwater photography. With a bit of joggling of camera settings, the results have been more than satisfactory. However, there are other OrcaTorches, such as the D900V, that work really well for photography, but it can be done with the D570 if needed!

Recommendation

Would I recommend the OrcaTorch D570 to my dive buddies and fellow dive guides? Absolutely. It is the ideal underwater tool—whether you want to use it as a torch or to point out critters, it does the job perfectly, and with its sturdy build, gives the impression that it will last forever. ■

Kate Jonker is an underwater photographer and writer based in South Africa. She teaches underwater photography, is an assistant instructor and dive boat skipper for Indigo Scuba in Gordon's Bay, Cape Town, South Africa and leads dive trips across the globe. For more information, please visit: katejonker.com.



I used the narrow beam of the OrcaTorch D570 to photograph this common octopus with a snooted effect, using ISO320, F8 and 1/160.

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