



photo & videography

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In contrast to color photography, black and white photography requires that you work primarily with natural light instead of flash

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Even in the digital age, black and white photographs are still viewed as art. In this edition of my underwater photography series, I'll give you an introduction to contrast imaging.

All those fantastic colors you find underwater are still the main goal for underwater photographers. On other hand, the black and white medium gives you an great opportunity to get creative.

The black and white photographer has four different venues to explore. First of all there is, obviously, using black and white film. Secondly, you can use color slide film and convert the images into black and white after scanning. As a third option,

there is shooting in black and white mode using an underwater digital camera; and fourthly, changing your digital color images into black and white with your image processing software.

The difference between color and black and white photography lies less in what you are taking pictures of, and more in *how* you take the pictures. In contrast to color images where you always have to primarily consider how to use your flash in combination with the sunlight, black and white imagery requires that you work foremost with the natural light.

For example, if you have too much light, the foreground becomes too bright, the images too hard, and the faces of divers too pale. The keywords for good black and white photography are therefore: light and shadow.

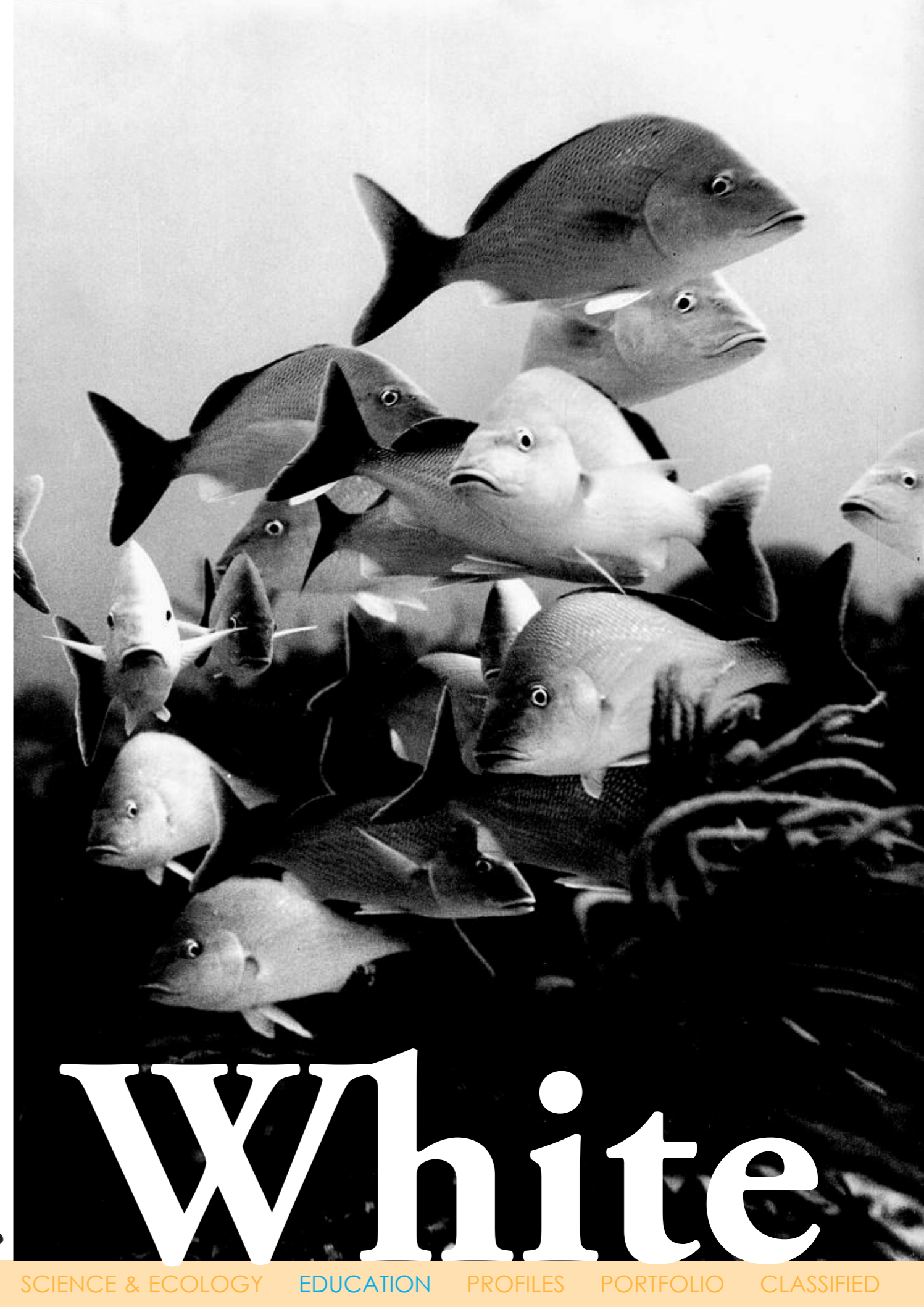
To be able to play with the light and shadow, you need to care-

fully observe your chosen subject from all sides and angles. Because different angles of incidence of a shadow in a photograph may have a completely different impact on the viewer.

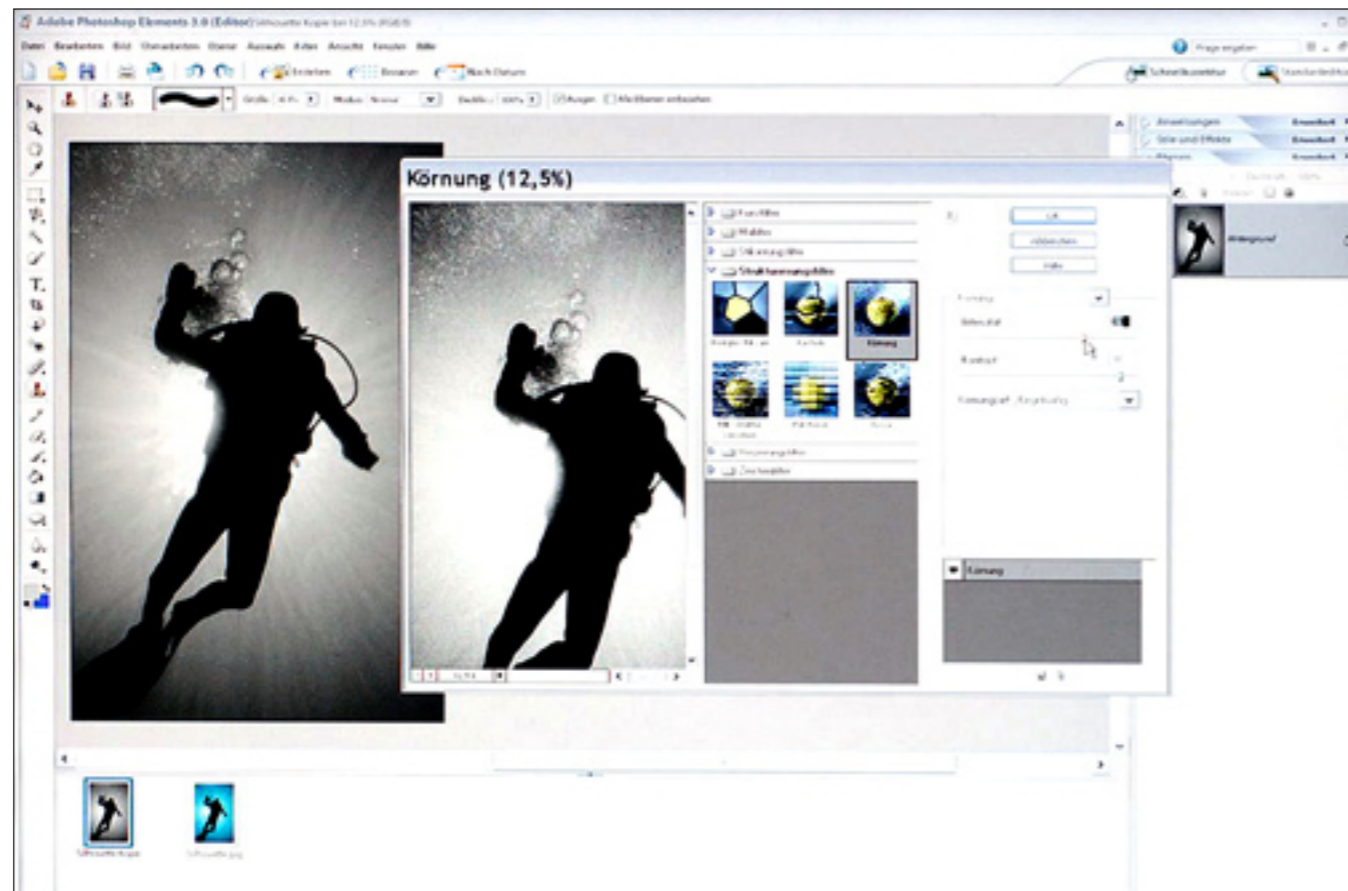
Also of importance is the choice of subject. Subdued color tones, which work beautifully in a colour image, will not have any effect in a black and white image. The keyword here is contrast. For a black and white image to work, you need sufficient contrast between the subject and the foreground or background.

In black and white photography, it is much easier to get the correct illumination by using the available exposure margins. For this reason, you can confidently work with the camera in auto mode.

Another tip is to set the shutter speed on automatic. The camera then chooses the correct speed according to the light conditions.



Black & White



Workflow

The result of your photography totally depends on how you process your negatives or digital images. The sensitivity of a black and white film is in the range of 100 and 200 ASA. A perfect negative is the basis for a good photographic enlargement. Therefore, you should always, if possible, develop your own images. The necessary technical equipment is not very expensive and can be easily obtained. To make your underwater black and whites better, try to underexpose by a third, and prolong the developing time by a third also.

The digital photographer doesn't need a photo print shop. Just preset your camera to black and white mode or take the pictures in RGB. In contrast to color images, you can now set the sensitivity to 400 ASA without any problems. The grains that often appear in color images with this setting doesn't affect the black and white images in a negative way.

To process your images, you should get software like Photoshop. Then, you can apply a huge range of effects,



Underexposing by a third and prolonging the developing time by a third helps make your underwater black and whites better. LEFT COLUMN: Digital photographers can preset cameras to black and white mode or take images in RGB to be processed later using software like Photoshop

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR BLACK & WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY

Black and white photography demands that you are very precise in the relationship between light and shadow.

Even though we see everything in color, you need to think black and white. Choose subjects that offer good contrast between the dark and the light.

A subject with a well defined structure and intense side light, like a wreck, offers good contrast and makes a dramatic impression.

Depending on how you angle the shot, the effect from the light and shadows will also change.

In black and white photography, flash is redundant. It will certainly always affect the natural light and make the subjects appear too strong. If the contrast is too strong, then you don't have any leeway when digitally processing your images.

The wide range of natural light available combined with the lack of flash, allows you to work with different aperture settings.

In contrast to flash photography, the shutter speed decides if your subject is not sharp. I therefore recommend that you don't go below 1/125 in shutter speed.

In a low light environment, you should set the camera at 300 ASA for 200 ASA film. Don't forget to apply this when developing the film. On digital cameras, set the ASA to 300 or 400. The better the camera, the higher you can go, e.g. 800 ASA.

Working with black and white digital files demands the same as colour files (jpg). Change as little as possible in the image. Because every time you change a pixel, the new data will diminish the quality.

If you don't like black and white, you can always use sepia toning to change the image into a classic brownish color.

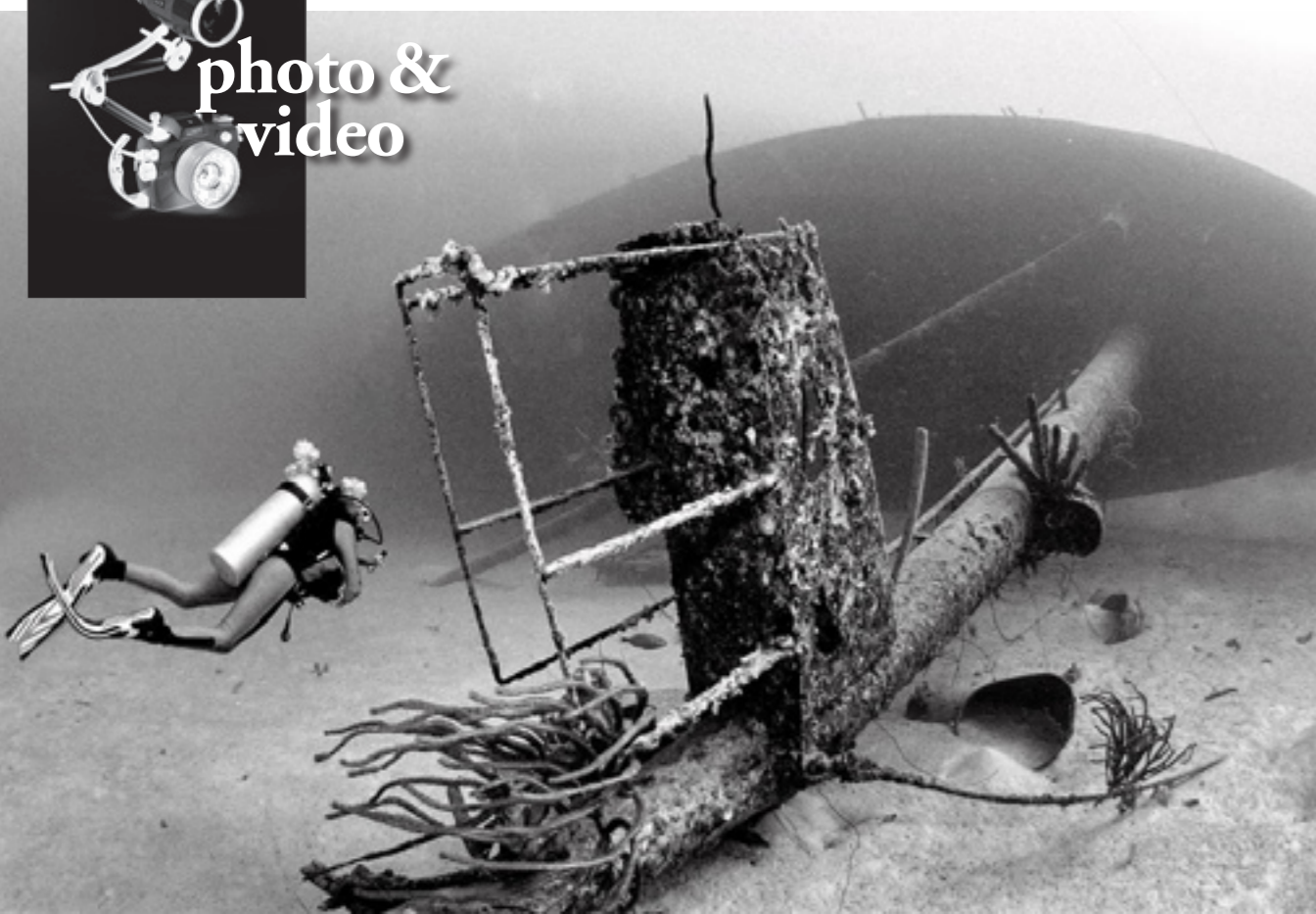
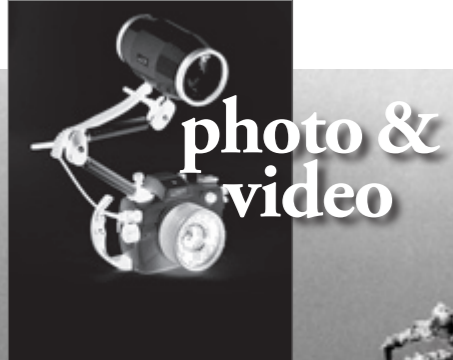
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Black & White

comes from the name of an artists' pigment made from the Sepia cuttlefish.

Toning can be simulated digitally, either in-camera or in a later post-process. The in-camera effect, as well as beginner tutorials given for software like Photoshop or The GIMP, use a simple tint, which is usually a poor imitation. More sophisticated software tends to implement sepia tones using the duotone feature. Especially wreck images are nice when sepia toned.

For more information on Kurt Amsler and his photo workshops, please visit: www.photosub.com ■

which you can apply to your images such as grain size, contrast and resolution.

Try out different settings and combinations for the best result. Always work with copies and keep the original image untouched. Make notes of the settings you apply, for later use. When you have found your style, you then have all the necessary tools available and ready for other images.

Sepia toning

For those who like the old classic look on their images, there is the possibility of applying sepia toning. The term *sepia*



Special effects such as Sepia toning can be accomplished in-camera or post process using computer software like Photoshop or GIMP

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ET DE CHRISTIAN ESTROSI,
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Ikelite for Sony a350

Ikelite has introduced a pair of affordable underwater housings for the Sony Alpha-series of Digital SLR Cameras. The clear polycarbonate construction enables unhindered visibility of o-ring seals and can be used up to depths of 60m. Controls are provided for every camera function and Ikelite's unique Quad-Ring seals ensure watertight operation. A full range of dome and flat ports is available to accommodate most macro, wide-angle and zoom lenses. www.ikelite.com.

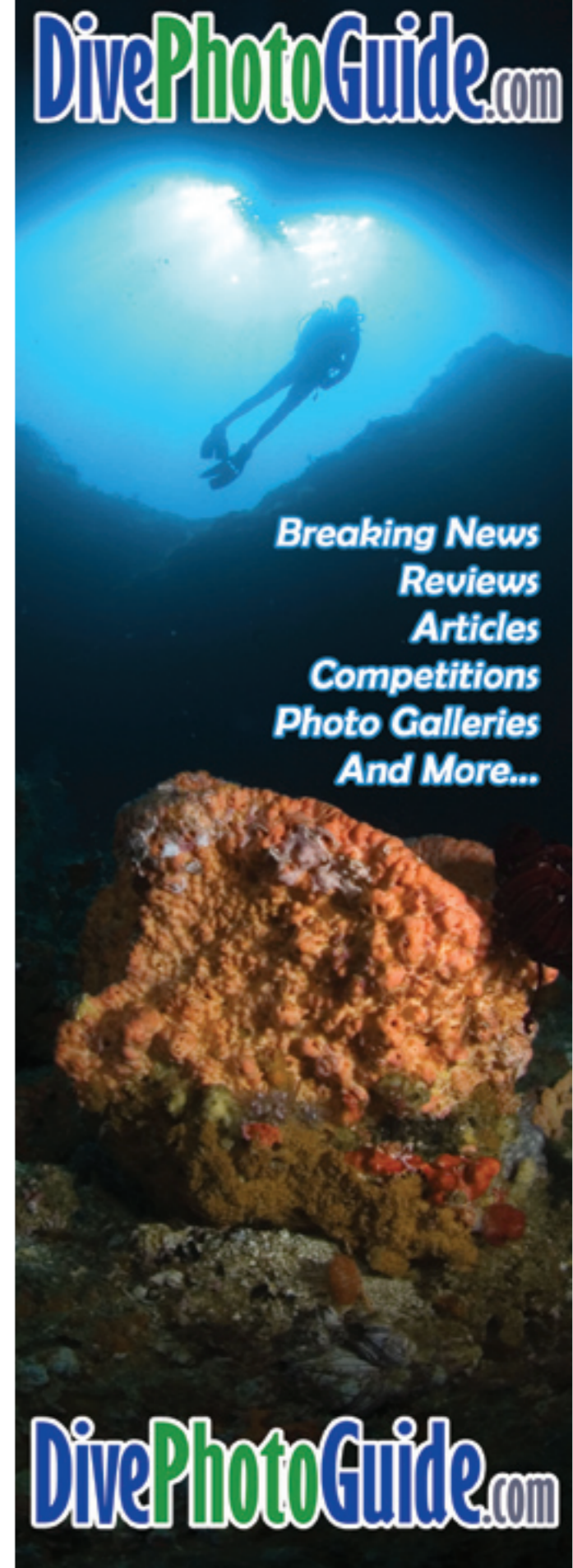


The Strobe Cover D/Z is made from neoprene for use on land and underwater to protect your INON strobe during diving and transportation. The Strobe Cover D/Z is exclusively designed for INON strobes. The side-slit design allows the strobe to maintain the same cooling characteristic as of a strobe without a cover.

The Strobe Cover D/Z has approximately 96g/0.2lb buoyancy underwater (the deeper you dive the less buoyant the cover becomes due to compression under pressure)

INON S-2000

Inon INC has announced the release of its newest strobe, the S-2000. Billed as the world's smallest, the compact size utilizes four AA size batteries and is an ideal match for compact digital cameras and SLR's alike. The ultra sensitive slave sensor enables highly accurate wireless operation as well as wired capabilities using existing Inon optical cable connections. For further information, contact Inon America or an Inon America Authorized Dealer. INON America, Inc.
Tel 763-559-1212
Fax 763-559-5236
Email: info@inonamerica.com
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Hugyfot have announced their upcoming housing for the Canon EOS 450D / Digital Rebel XSi. Hugyfot housings are milled out of solid aluminum blocks and can be used to depths of 100 meters. The lightweight construction allows easy one-hand operation. Available in July 2008, the HFC 450D underwater housing without port will be priced around 2000 euro.



PT-E05 housing for E-520

Customized for its new E-520 camera, the new Olympus PT-E05 housing is constructed from durable high quality polycarbonate and able to withstand depths of up to 40m. Underwater photographers will especially like the camera's Live View function, utilizing a large 2.7"/6.9cm LCD. Flash connectors allow the use of two UFL-2 underwater flash units. Five interchangeable lens ports are available including 8mm Fisheye and 50mm Macro. The E-520 and PT-E05 and will be available in summer 2008. Email info@olympus.uk.com

Sealife DC800

SeaLife's new DC800 8-megapixel camera comes with five new dive-specific color correction modes, the DC800 makes it easier than ever to take sharp, colorful underwater pictures. Set the camera to Sea mode to restore lost colors typical for underwater pictures. www.sealife-cameras.com



Amphibico Phenom Z7LE housing for Sony HVR-Z7U

The new Phenom Z7LE underwater video housing for the Sony HVR-Z7U HDV camcorder is now available from Amphibico. This electronic and mechanical combined housing allows complete camcorder control. Three port options are available, including a standard dome, flat port, and 94° wide-angle port. The introductory price, including a 2-year Amphibico warranty, is CAN\$ 4795. Ports are not included. www.amphibico.com



Sea & Sea YS-17

The YS-17 strobe is the smallest of the YS-series of strobes. With the unique TTL circuitry, you can shoot TTL images without complicated operations. Your compact digital camera meters the brightness of your subject and the strobe, through the TTL function, automatically controls the amount of light emitted for the correct exposure. In addition, the strobe can be switched from TTL to manual modes (full/half) and vice versa. Guide Number (land, ISO 100/m): 14. Beam Angle: 70°x 53°

www.seaandsea.com

Light & Motion's Sunray 2000 Now Shipping

Light & Motion is proud to announce that the new Sunray 2000 LED Video Light System. Smaller and lighter than its closest HID competitor, the Sunray 2000 is the brightest solid-state underwater lighting system available to the consumer market with a remarkable burn time of 75 minutes on high. All Sunray 2000 light systems ship with memory-free NiMH batteries enabling 65 minutes of run time on high. The included charger can replenish discharged batteries in only 1.5 hours. Price: \$3799.00. For more information, visit www.uwimaging.com or call (831) 645-1525.

