

# *Pacific Northwest Diver*

PUBLICATION OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY  
BRITISH COLUMBIA | WASHINGTON | OREGON | SEPTEMBER, 2011



Brooding Anemone | Marli Wakeling

# Pacific Northwest Diver

BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE & WEB SITE PROMOTING UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY, EDUCATION, & TRAVEL IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST | SEPTEMBER, 2011

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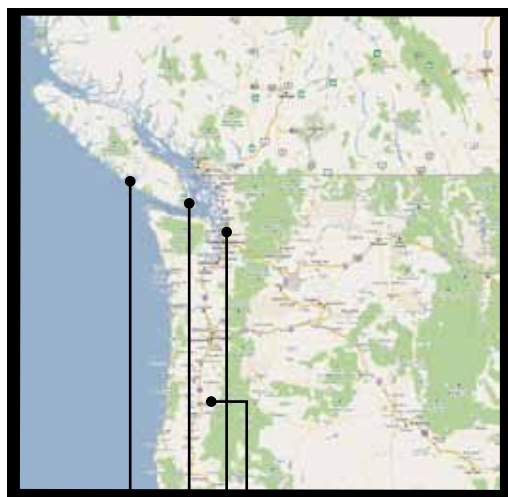


# Pacific Northwest Diver: In This Issue

Welcome to the launch issue of Pacific Northwest Diver! We have started this e-publication and companion web site to in order to provide a venue for underwater photographers and videographers to showcase their work and share ideas on photography, diving, and travel. We also hope to increase awareness of our region's diving resources by featuring Pacific Northwest dive operators/resorts and dive clubs in each issue.

Future issues will showcase a photographer/videographer, who will also appear on the PNWUPS web site. But for our first issue we thought it would be instructive to run "words of wisdom" and photos from the Pacific Northwest Dive crew (see pages 5-8).

## In this Issue: Underwater Archaeology to Altitude



Eugene Dive Club  
(Springfield)

Salish Sea Explorers  
(Everett)

Shipwreck Exploration Team  
(Victoria)

Rendezvous Dive Adventures  
(Port Alberni/Barkley Sound)

For September coverage ranges from the west side of Vancouver Island, to Victoria and Seattle, to over 5,000 feet in southern Oregon.

## To Subscribe: PNWUPS Membership



Pacific Northwest Diver is a publication of the Pacific Northwest Underwater Photographic Society (PNWUPS).

In order to subscribe to this e-publication, please complete the [Subscribe fields on the PNWUPS home page](#). Membership is free, and e-mail addresses are not shared with other groups or businesses.

We are all over-loaded with e-mail, tweets, etc, so communication from Pacific Northwest Diver and PNWUPS will be limited to one or two e-mails per month.

If you have any questions about subscribing, please contact publisher [Dan Clements](#).

## From the Archives: Underwater Photography in 1964



[Dr Manu Prakash](#) of Stanford University came across the video above in MIT's archives, and thought it would be of interest to underwater photographers in the Pacific Northwest.

If you think today's DSLR and high definition cameras are heavy and cumbersome, wait until you see the 300 pound rig with strobes that look like artillery casings.

Also of interest are the references to a young Captain Cousteau and his development of cameras for use below the waterline.

It is remarkable how modern electronics have made underwater photography so much more accessible for divers.



# Pacific Northwest Diver: Our Team

The Pacific Northwest is a large, diverse region with diverse interests in underwater photography and videography. In order to make it easier for you to submit information about photographers, dive clubs, and operators/resorts in your area we have key contacts for British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon. Since we are all volunteering our time and efforts, we also hope to spread the work-load so we will all have ample time for diving and photography.

Below are the contacts. If you know a photographer, operator, or club that you would like to see covered, or an idea for an underwater photo topic in our area, please either get in touch with one of the regional contacts listed below, or contact editor [Dan Clements](#) directly.

## British Columbia



Marli Wakeling was certified in 1994, and teaches photography. She took up underwater photography while volunteering on a CEDAM International Conservation project in Akumal, Mexico. She has been named Photographer of the Year by the Canadian Underwater Images Competition.

Marli's photos and articles have appeared in numerous texts, and in publications as diverse as Scuba Diving, Sport Diver, FiNs, Tauchen, Canada's Diver, Caribbean Travel and Life, Blue Planet Quarterly, and Natural History.

Although much of her diving takes place in the Emerald Sea of British Columbia, she uses her "teacher vacations" to dive the far corners of the globe.

604.549.0095 | [scubamarli@gmail.com](mailto:scubamarli@gmail.com)  
[www.marliwakeling.com](http://www.marliwakeling.com)

## Washington



Jim Boon is a dedicated green water diver and photographer. He has followed the traditional route, going from picture taker to image maker, first with point & shoot cameras then migrating to DSLR. After several years using Nikon point & shoot, Jim migrated to Nikon D60 in a Sea & Sea housing. Jim started 2011 with a new Nikon D7000 in a Nauticam housing. Jim shoots a wide variety of lenses. His "go to" lens is a Sigma 17-70 but his wide angle lenses are never too far away. His favorite photography work is wide-angle close up.

Although green water photography is his passion, Jim also finds time each year for blue water photo shoots. He says "you have to have balance in your life" so mixing a little blue with the green water is good for the soul.

206.947.0297 | [jamesboon@me.com](mailto:jamesboon@me.com)  
[www.jimboon.com](http://www.jimboon.com)

## Oregon



Steve Billings has been diving since Nov. 2000. Steve started underwater photography in 2001 with a trusty Sea&Sea MX-10 which served him well.

In the fall of 2003 he began to put together a digital camera setup using a Nikon Coolpix 995 in an Ikelite housing, now it has grown into a Aquatica housed Canon 20D with two Ikelite strobes. A slippery slope it is.

Almost all of his diving is in the chilly waters of Washington State's Puget Sound. Photographing the marine life in the Pacific Northwest is challenging, but very rewarding. The diversity and intriguing critters is always fascinating.

503.452.5197 | [stevenbillings@yahoo.com](mailto:stevenbillings@yahoo.com)

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/55273250@N00/>

# Pacific Northwest Diver: Marli Wakeling, British Columbia



Marli Wakeling

When I switched to digital from shooting film for many years, I still found myself shooting 30 to 45 photos on a dive, although that has changed a little...I now average about sixty.

Other photographers that started underwater photography with digital technology were shooting hundreds of photos on their dives because they could, yet were disappointed with their results.

A good photograph, whether on taken on land or underwater needs to be well composed.

Although we would all like to find a Giant Pacific octopus, wolf eel or six gill shark to photograph, stunning photographs can be taken of the critters we see commonly if thought is put into setting up the shot.

I still find that the first capture in a series is often the one that I like the best, because the concept was there to begin with: I had imagined what I wanted to accomplish ahead of time.

Try shooting as if you have limited number of shots; think about angle, settings, viewpoint and lighting.

Practice on the subjects that don't run away, like nudibranchs, anemones, and crustaceans.



**Decorated Warbonnet, Quadra Island, BC. Nikon D200, 105 mm lens. 1/125<sup>th</sup>, f 25, ISO 100. Sea & Sea YS 90DX strobes.**

Get to know your subjects, and unless it is a rare day with amazing visibility, get close and move slowly...you will find so much more of interest to photograph.

For post processing, Marli uses a PC with Lightroom 3 and Photoshop CS5.



# Pacific Northwest Diver: Jim Boon, Washington



Jim Boon

I've pushed myself over several years to spend as much time underwater as possible. Each dive is another step in the process of moving from 'picture taker' to 'image maker'. To make each dive meaningful, I have made a few rules for myself that are worth sharing:

- I never go in the water without my camera. Managing a camera underwater is an added task load for a diver. Bringing my camera on every dive makes it feel like another familiar piece of dive gear, my task load is not elevated and my breathing remains controlled for good bottom time.
- I always take a test shot before I walk into the water or stride off the boat.
- My camera is set to shoot manual, shutter is set at 1/125, aperture set at f/8 and ISO is 100 to 200.
- As soon as I descend I take a test shot (or several) to make sure I like the image and that my lights are positioned as needed for the clarity of the water.

With my gear operating as desired, I can shift my attention over to the 'big three'; 1) subject, 2) lighting, 3) composition.



**Ling Cod, Edmonds, Washington. Nikon D-7000, 12-24 mm lens at 18mm, 1/180<sup>th</sup> shutter speed, f 9.5 aperture, ISO 100.**

After following the steps opposite, I am ready to photograph any subjects I encounter. I am ready and my camera is ready. Any small adjustments to shutter speed or aperture are easy because I'll work from my basic settings; 1/125th & f/8. Throughout the dive, if my elevation changes 10 or 15 feet (up or down), I will take another test shot and adjust shutter or aperture as desired, always keeping my gear ready for the next opportunity.

After the dive my images are processed on a Macbook Pro with Aperture 3 software.

# Pacific Northwest Diver: Steve Billings, Oregon



Steve Billings

I find it essential to know what I am shooting and have worked at learning the names and habits of the fish and slugs in our area. This makes it much more enjoyable for me and helps when I find something special. I make an extra effort to capture these critters.

Two great books on Pacific NW fish are Humann's [Coastal Fish Identification, California to Alaska](#) and Andy Lambs' [Coastal Fishes of the Pacific Northwest](#). Another great resource is [PNWSCUBA.COM](#). Their REEF based fish identification classes make it easy and fun for all to start learning about fish and critters. Check on-line for up-coming web based classes.

For information on the invertebrates, I use Gotshall's [Guide to Marine Invertebrates Alaska to Baja California](#) and Behren's [Pacific Coast Nudibranchs](#).

These are all great resources. Bring them with you and reference them immediately after the dive or when viewing your photos.

Soon you will be able to stroll through the Seattle Aquarium and call out the names of the critters to the admiration of bystanders and be able to answer the people on the beach who ask 'What do you see under there?'



**Candystrip Shrimp on Painted Anemone. Cannon EOS 20D, 160<sup>th</sup> at f 9, ISO 400. Lens 18-55 mm, set at 38 mm.**

Many new cameras are point and shoot these days and are simple to use, with great results, but even so, if you are interested in improving your technique and composition, check out these books: [How to Photograph Underwater](#) by Norbert Wu, Howard Halls guide to [Successful Underwater Photography](#), and [Digital Imaging for the Underwater Photographer](#) by Jack and Sue Drafahl.

Also, learn to use Photoshop or Photoshop Elements. Even simple commands like color and contrast correction and auto-levels can make big improvements and bring out some 'pop' in otherwise dull pictures. No book can replace real experience. Always take your camera and practice above and below water. When you look at your pictures later, think about what would make them better. Look for interesting poses and backgrounds. Try new angles and compositions. I use a "no-name" PC and Photoshop CS to process my images.



# Pacific Northwest Diver: Dan Clements, Publisher/Editor



Dan Clements

Underwater photography is one of the most challenging and rewarding activities I have ever tried.

For newer photographers and those thinking about taking up this endeavor, my "words of wisdom" be:

- Calibrate the color on your computer monitor and/or laptop.
- Master basic SCUBA skills such as buoyancy control before taking pictures.
- Know your subjects and their "flight zones" so you get close and personal with your subjects.
- When you find a cooperating subject, take the time to set up your shot and "work" it.
- Try to shoot correctly the first time, and keep post-processing "corrections" to a minimum.
- Photographers do not make for good dive buddies. Set your dive plan and gear for possible self-supported rescue.

Dan shoots with a Nikon D300s, Subal housing, Ikelite 125 strobes, and Hartenburger focus.

He uses Photoshop/Bridge for image post processing, and Premier Elements for video. His hardware of choice is a home built "smokingly hot" PC and Vaio laptop.



**Hooded nudibranch on eel grass, Edmonds, Washington. Nikon D300s, 60 mm lens. 1/60<sup>th</sup>, f 20, ISO 200, dual Ikelite 125 strobes.**

Dan reports that shooting conditions on this day were difficult: current, lots of detritus in the water. In these conditions strobes are facing outside the subject to minimize backscatter, while a high *f*-stop helps darken the background to again minimize backscatter.

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# Pacific Northwest Diver: News Corner Corner

## [Optical Ocean Sales: Seattle](#)

Seattle underwater photographer Jack Connick's business finally outgrew his garage and closet space in his house.



So this summer Jack moved his Optical Ocean Sales from the virtual world to a retail shop on Lake Union at 1800 Westlake Avenue North.

Among the products that Optical Ocean carries are cameras, lenses, ports, housings, strobes, lights, trays, arms, and filters from:

- Olympus
- Sea & Sea
- Ikelite
- iTorch
- Nauticam
- Light & Motion
- 10Bar
- Fantasea
- Athena
- Zen
- Big Blue
- Seahorse

Jack has been diving since the late 60's and taking pictures above water for about that long. A few years ago he started photographing underwater, first with film, then point and shoots. Now he shoots with a Nikon D300s DSLR.

Underwater camera housings have evolved greatly, even over a few years' time. But the cost of underwater photography has remained



very high, making it a hobby for well-off divers. Jack has decided to try to find some good quality products that all divers can enjoy. Jack's goal is to help divers improve their photography at a reasonable price. He is accessible for questions, unlike many mail-order and Internet sources.

Underwater photographers have unique needs, and it is nice to have a local source for equipment and knowledge. Ocean Optical also has regular seminars and programs to help improve your photography.

Below is the contact information for Jack's Optical Ocean Sales.

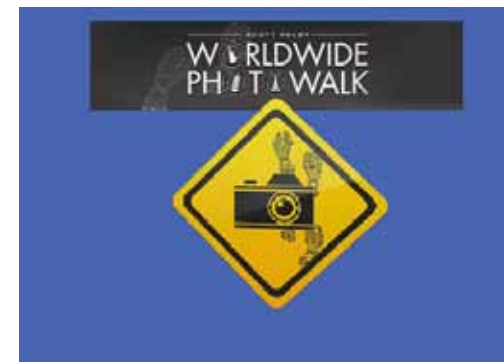
### [Optical Ocean Sales](#)

1800 Westlake Avenue North  
Seattle, Washington 98109  
206.284.1142

[www.opticaloceansales.com](http://www.opticaloceansales.com)  
[jack@opticaloceansales.com](mailto:jack@opticaloceansales.com)

## [World Wide 2011 Photo Walk](#)

Last year we were approved for the first underwater photo walk, part of Scott Kelby's World Wide Photo Walk.



This year the tradition continues on October 1, 10:00 AM, at Seacrest Cove 2.

The basic plan is to make two to three dives with fellow underwater photographers. After some warm up food at the cafe, those who are interested will adjourn to Optical Ocean on Westlake Avenue (see write up opposite), for post processing assistance and up-loading photos to the [World Wide](#) site.

This annual photo event is co-sponsored by Adobe, and there are numerous prizes. To be eligible for prizes, you must register for the event, and up-load photos to a "queue" for our local event.

If the weather cooperates Cove 2 offers spectacular photo opportunities for land based photography, so if you have a photographer non-diving friend or spouse, invite them along for the outing.

We had a great time in Edmonds last year, and anticipate 2011 will be even more fun and instructive.

# Pacific Northwest Diver Operator/Resort Corner

Rendezvous Dive Adventure in Barkley Sound on the west side of Vancouver Island is this issue's featured operator/resort. Owned and run by Peter Mieras and Kathy Johnson, this is one of the most spectacular dive areas in the world, and a photographers dream. This is also one of the few sites where six gill sharks are regularly sighted in late summer.

While the west side of Vancouver Island may seem extremely remote, Rendezvous Lodge is surprisingly accessible. It is about an hour and a half drive from the Nanaimo ferry to Port Alberni. The normal routine is for Peter to pick-up divers at 4:00 PM for the two hour boat ride to the lodge. The map below right shows selected dive sights in relation to the Lodge.

## Facilities

Both the Lodge and boat are well suited for photographers. There is a charging/conference room separate from the main house that is a great place to assemble and work on gear. There is ample room on the 36 foot Rendezvous I for ten divers, cameras, and dive gear.

In the past three years Kathy and Peter have made numerous up-grades to their boats and the lodge. There are five rooms that accommodate two individuals each, along with two rest rooms. Meals are served family style, and are one of the highlights of the trip. Kathy is an excellent chef, and many of her recipes appear in a cook-book she authored.

Power is provided by a generator, and access is either by boat or float plane. The hot-tub is great for post-dive relaxation and kayaks are available for exploring the bay.

## Photo Opportunities

Both Peter and Kathy are excellent photographers, so they are very familiar with photographers needs, and where to find a wide variety of subjects.

Depending on the time of year, it is common to see everything from humpback, gray, and orca, to six-gilled sharks to a wide variety of fish and invertebrates, to giant Pacific octopus to sea lion. Jacques Cousteau rated Barkley Sound as the second best place on the planet to dive: right behind the Red Sea!

Peter is also a videographer, so enjoy the six-gills, octos, sea stars, and other Barkley Sound residents in the video that follows. Following are a portfolio of photos taken by Kathy, Peter's Barkley Sound video, and selected photos from Shark Week 2011.





# Pacific Northwest Diver Operator/Resort Corner



Kathy Johnson

In addition to her talents as a hostess and culinary skills, Kathy is an extremely proficient underwater photographer.

Kathy shoots with a Cannon G-11 point and shoot with a single Ikelite 161 strobe. Her post processing work is done in Photoshop on a PC.

To the right are three photos from her portfolio, and they illustrate the versatility of point and shoot cameras with adjustable focal length lenses.

The Three Colored Polycera and Purple Ringed Snails take you up close and personal to macro subjects, while the Cross Jellies floating among kelp makes for a nice wide angle effect.

Kathy states that her goal is to take the photo correctly the first time, so there is as little post processing clean-up as possible.

Kathy is a PADI certified Open Water Instructor. Among her other accomplishments is the receipt of a Laureate Nobel Prize for her work with Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors without Borders).

It is always a treat during meals at the Lodge to listen to Kathy's experiences in Africa and South-east Asia!



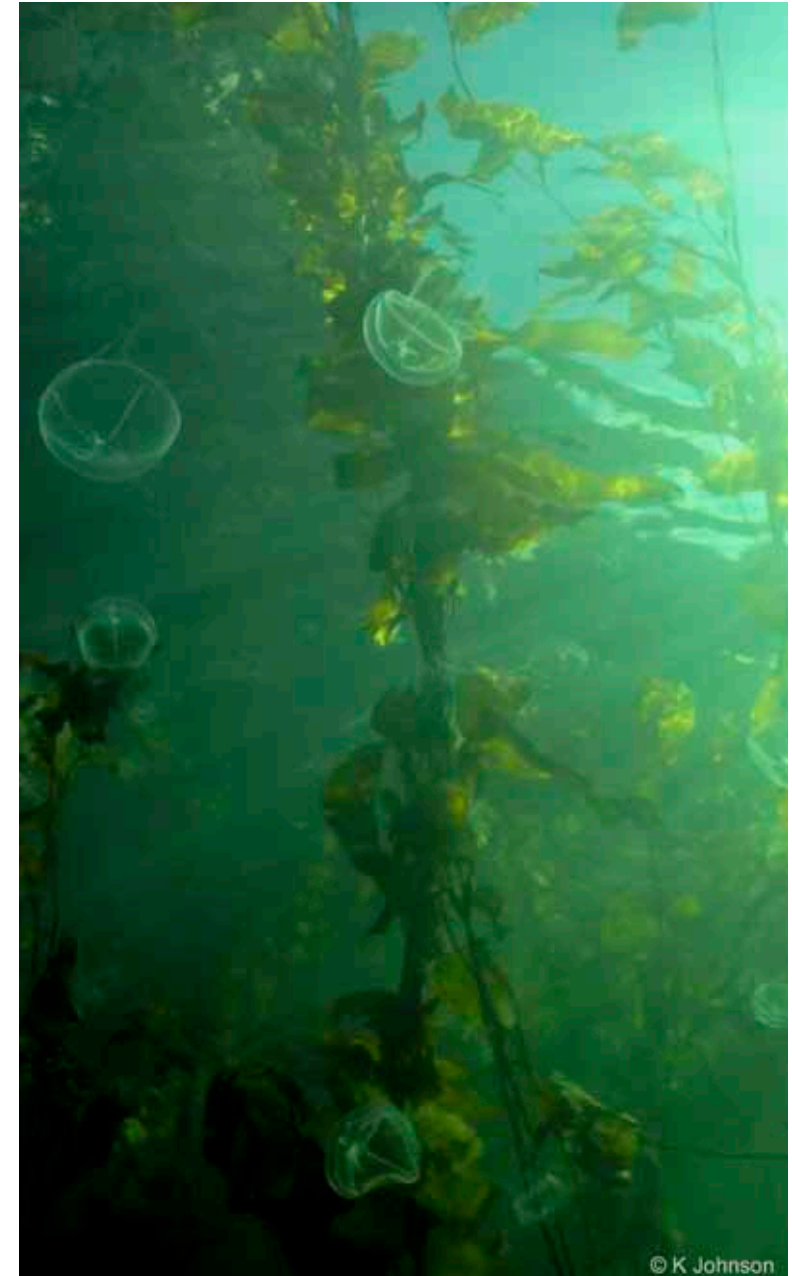
**Three Colored Polycera by Kathy Johnson**

1/60<sup>th</sup>, f8, ISO 200, 30.5 mm focal length, single strobe.  
White Balance Auto.



**Purple Ringed Snails by Kathy Johnson**

1/60<sup>th</sup>, f8, ISO 200, 21.5 mm focal length, single strobe.  
White Balance Auto.



**Cross Jellies in Kelp by Kathy Johnson**

1/200<sup>th</sup>, f6.3, ISO 200, 13.8 mm focal length, single strobe.  
White Balance Auto.

# Pacific Northwest Diver Operator/Resort Corner, continued



Peter Mieras

The other half of the Rendezvous team is Peter Mieras. Born in Holland, Peter can converse in English, Dutch, French and German.

Peter's photographic interests currently center around video. He shoots with a Sony SR-7, with a Light in Motion Stingray Go-Pro housing.

Peter uses twin Ikelites mounted on home-made arms to provide lighting.

For video preparation and editing he works on a custom made PC with Premier Pro software.

Peter became a PADI instructor in 1999, and is currently a PADI Master Instructor. He has a wicked sense of humour, and can recite all episodes of Monty Python when appropriate.

Both he and Kathy are dedicated to preserving the unique marine life in Barkley Sound, and participate in several regional conservation programs.

Each year in the late-July to early September time frame Rendezvous sponsors "Shark Week," with the goal of seeing six gill sharks. Enjoy some of the photos from Shark Week 2011, along with a video Peter produced to show off some of Barkley Sound's outstanding marine life.



**Shark Week 2011 Participants after Successful Sighting**

Dan Clements  
Nikon D300s



**Six Gill Up Close by Jay Sprenger**

Olympus E-5, Nexus Housing  
1/60<sup>th</sup>, f11, ISO 160, Olympus 14-54 mm lens, dual Ikelite strobes  
Shark attempted to swim through Jay's legs.



**Barkley Sound Marine Life by Peter Mieras**

Sony SR-7 Video Camera  
Light in Motion Housing  
Twin Ikelite Strobes



**Six Gill Up Close by Jay Sprenger**

Olympus E-5, Nexus Housing  
1/60<sup>th</sup>, f11, ISO 160, Olympus 14-54 mm lens, dual Ikelite strobes  
Shark after being boinked on nose by camera housing.



# Pacific Northwest Diver Dive Club Corner: British Columbia



[Shipwreck Exploration Team](#)

In 2009, the Shipwreck Exploration Team (SET) of British Columbia emerged from a shared passion to explore, document and simply dive the numerous wrecks lying in the waters off British Columbia, Canada.

Shipwrecks in the coastal waters of B.C. deteriorate relatively quickly. Our goal is to locate, and document these wrecks as they are at the beginning of the 21st century using marine archaeology techniques such as surveys, video, and still photos.

While interested in all B.C. wrecks, our team focuses on working closely with the Underwater Archaeological Society of British Columbia to locate and explore deep or otherwise challenging wreck sites. The Shipwreck Exploration Team strives to document these many wrecks in the safest, most efficient and most ethical way possible.

The Shipwreck Exploration Team is an affiliate of both the Underwater Archaeological Society of British Columbia and Global Underwater Explorers. To be a member of SET, a diver must also be a member of our two affiliate organizations. Continuing education is central to our success. GUE Instructor Guy Shockey is our Director of Training. We currently have around 20-25 members.

Since our inception, we have located and explored a number of previously unknown, or forgotten wrecks. These wrecks have ranged from 19th century sailing ships to barges of modern

design. The wrecks we have explored have been located in water that ranged between 80' and 240' deep.



[Dirk De keersmaecker](#) is the Director of Videography for the Shipwreck Exploration Team. He is a Belgian living in Vancouver, Canada and has been diving since 2003. Most of his diving is recreational, with regular steps into technical diving.

Dirk dives year round, winter and summer, and makes most of his dives in British Columbia. Both on shore dives or charter dives, wall dives or wreck dives, he enjoys taking pictures or video. This is his way of sharing his experiences and helping to document wreck exploration.

The videos to the right were taken by [Laurynn Evans](#). She shoots with a Sony HDR CX550 with enhanced optics, Light in Motion Housing, and Light & Motion Sunray LED lights. Laurynn uses Final Cut Studio/Pro on an Apple platform.



## SET Links

- [Vimeo Video Site](#)
- [Vimeo Ship Wreck Site](#)



Sealing Schooner by [Dirk De keersmaecker](#) (Click on image to view video)



Vanlene: 1972 Wreck by [Laurynn Evans](#) (Click on image to view video)

# Pacific Northwest Diver Dive Club Corner: Washington



## [Salish Sea Explorers](#)

Salish Sea Explorers is a 40 member dive club associated with [Evergreen Dive Service](#) in Everett, Washington.

Club meetings are the first Monday of every month, and there are standing Thursday night dives at the T-Dock in Mukilteo. The club also sponsors two to three dives per month at other local dive spots.

Underwater photographers in Salish Sea Explorers include Mark White, Ryan Berg, Ryan Philips, Alex Cornwall, and the father/son team of Chad and Adam Kent. Aaron Moser is the club's videographer, and does he have a way with octos (see video to the right)!

The star performer in the two still photos is the juvenile wolf eel in Mukilteo. Adam captures the orange brown coloration in the photo to the right, and Chad was able to catch the young one snuggling up to his son.

Aaron's video set-up includes a Cannon Vixia HV-40 camera, and Ikelite Halogen lights. Editing is done on a Windows box with Windows Live Movie Maker.

The Kent's shoot with a Sony Cyber-shot DSC-W55, Ikelite housing, and internal strobe.



**Swimming octo video by Aaron Moser. Sund Rocks, Hood Canal**  
Cannon Vixia HV-40, Ikelite Halogen Lights  
Windows Live Movie Maker



**Juvenile Wolf-eel by Adam Kent. Mukilteo T-Dock**  
Sony Cyber-shot DSC-W55, 6.3mm Focal Length  
1/40<sup>th</sup>, f2.8, ISO 320, internal strobe, auto white balance  
Ikelite Housing



**Adam Kent with cuddly wolf-eel by Chad Kent. Mukilteo T-Dock**  
Sony Cyber-shot DSC-W55, 6.3mm Focal Length  
1/40<sup>th</sup>, f2.8, ISO 400, internal strobe, auto white balance  
Ikelite Housing



# Pacific Northwest Diver Dive Club Corner: Oregon



## [Eugene Dive Club](#)

Moving to the southern end of our region, this issue highlights [Jake Andreason](#), an instructor with Eugene Skin Divers' Supply, and their affiliated Eugene Dive Club.

The club has several excellent photographers, including Jim Pendergrass, Reed Grossnicklaus, Charlotte Fentress, Paul Furnari, Vince Furnari, and Randy Tyle.

But what caught my eye were photos taken by Jake and several of his students diving in Clear Lake. More about that in a minute. First, a bit about Jake.

Jake teaches underwater photography at the University of Oregon, and he is an instructor with Eugene Skin Divers' Supply. He is a PADI Master Instructor, and in 2011 became certified to teach closed circuit rebreathers.

Jake notes that "CCR diving is a great tool for photographers! It allows you to approach so many more subjects underwater and have the time you need to compose the perfect shot!"

He was born and raised in Eugene, and served in the US Marine Corps. He shoots with a Nikon 200, Sea & Sea YS-250 strobes.

Clear Lake is 75 miles east of Eugene, and sits at 3,012 feet. The visibility is 150-200 feet, and water temps are 33-41 degrees year round. Jake says the best dive months are sunny days in August and September. So give it a shot if you want some viz!



**Clear Lake Visibility with "God Rays" by Jake Andreason**

Nikon D200, 16mm lens  
1/80<sup>th</sup>, f5, ISO 100, dual strobes, auto white balance



**Cold Trip in January!**

Jake is in the dry suit with appropriate camo trimmings.

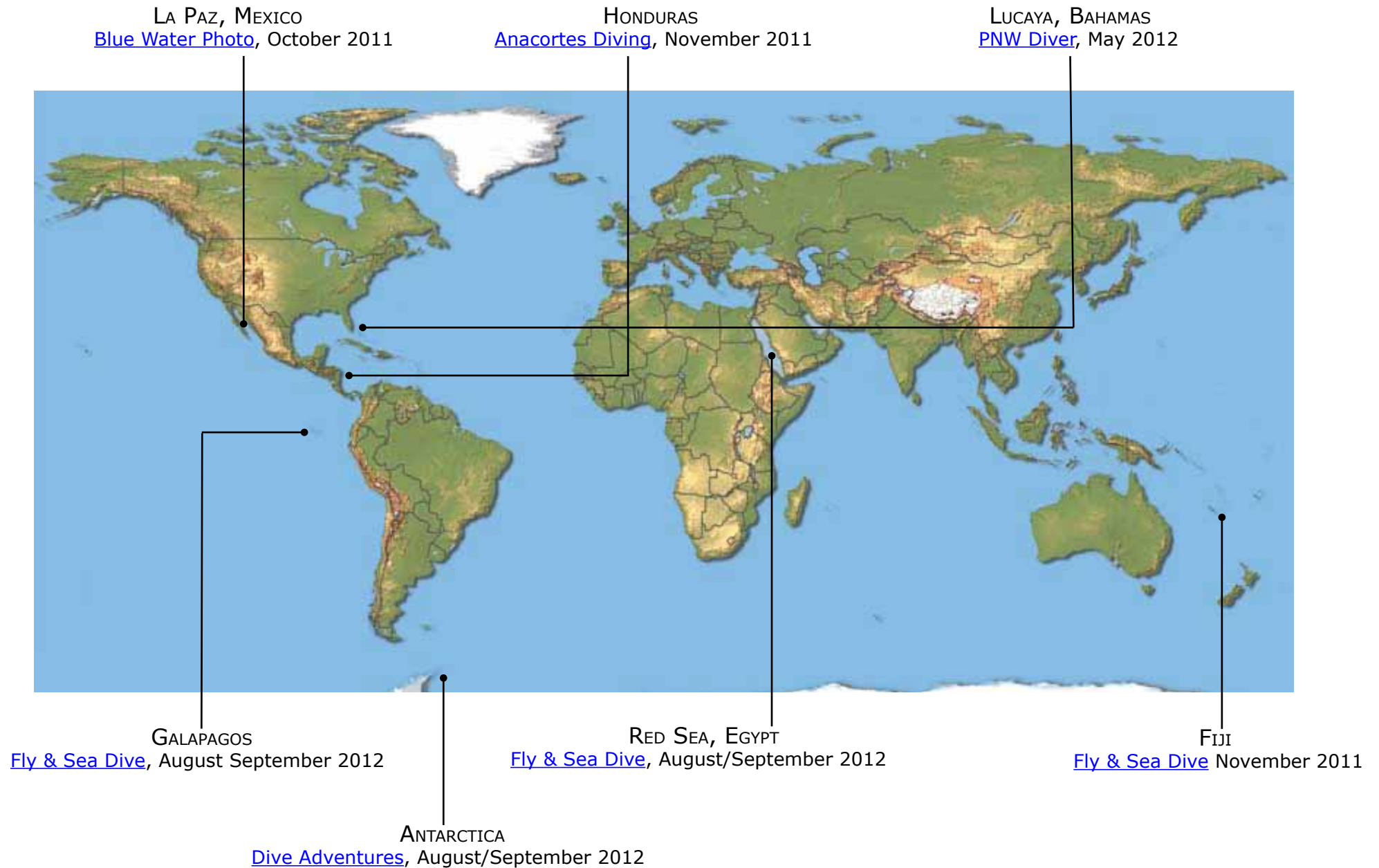


**Clear Lake Photo by Jake's student David Corey**

Cannon 5D, 17mm lens  
1/60<sup>th</sup>, f5, ISO 100, dual strobes, auto white balance

# *Pacific Northwest Diver Travel Corner*

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# Pacific Northwest Diver Technical Corner: "Magic" Image Transfer

Did you ever want to be able to transfer images from your camera to your computer without removing your camera from its underwater housing? Read on, as this has become much easier with SD and mini-SD cards with WiFi capabilities.

I think we have all been on underwater photo shoots where we wish we had the ability to transfer images from our cameras without opening the housing. Concerns about housing floods, bad conditions on deck, or simply the desire to view images more quickly can all factor into this desire.

This task has been made much easier with SD and mini-SD cards that are WiFi enabled, and contain storage for shots and video. I just finished transferring images from my Nikon D300s to my Vaio laptop while the camera remained in a Subal milled aluminum housing. Here is how it works, and what you will need.



My process was to purchase an 8 gig Eye-Fi card (about \$100), install the photo transfer software on my laptop, and create a "peer to peer" network using Windows 7 network configuration: >Control Panel >Network & Internet >Network & Sharing Center >Set Up a Connection or Network >Set Up ad hoc (computer to computer) Network. The entire process took about 15 minutes.

For Macs', the process appears very similar: >Choose Create Network from the Airport status icon > Give the network a name and select a channel from the pop-up menu (default is 11). As of this date, I have not tried to get the process up on Apple platforms.

The Eye-Fi photo transfer software is easy to use, and a USB reader ships with the card for those with computers without appropriate SD card reader slots. The card is easily configured. The photo opposite shows photos being downloaded in the back seat of my Touareg.

In my experiment, very few negatives were encountered. Eye-Fi documentation states that there is a Lightroom plug-in, but since I quit using Lightroom a year or so ago, this does not help with Bridge/Photoshop image transfers. In the coming months, I plan on seeing if a Bridge upload protocol can be developed.



The other slight negative is that the image transfer rate is slower than a USB or internal card reader. Transfer rates also appear to drop as the distance between the camera and computer increases. My understanding is that the maximum range for ad hoc networks is 30 feet (10 meters).

In the limited testing I have done so far, the WiFi card did not appear to be a terribly heavy drain on the camera battery. My plan is to verify this on future test shoots in the field. It is also interesting to note that I have not been able to find a WiFi enabled CF card with storage for photos and video. There are WiFi CF cards, but these do not appear to contain space to store images. All in all, this is a pretty slick process, and one I will be using more in the future.

*- Dan Clements*

# *Pacific Northwest Diver Technical Corner: Safety*

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This article by Dr Alex Tattersall originally appeared in the July issue of Underwater Photography. Alex gave us permission to reprint it here, as it is a wake-up call for underwater photographers about how we dive, and what steps we should take to help insure our safety.

As the hair on my head thins and the tyre around my middle thickens, so intensifies my lovely wife's insistence on larger and larger life insurance policies. We now have a boisterous four year old and ensuring his financial security is, of course, paramount to me as priority has shifted towards the wellbeing of my young family.

When I am testing equipment or feel the need for some 'me time', I will often dive alone. Shock, horror, call the BSAC police, surely solo diving is one of the Seven Deadly Sins, was it not written on the tablet of the Ten Commandments, 'Thou shalt not dive without being in continuous arms reach of thoust buddy'?

Solo diving is certainly a controversial topic provoking strong debate in divers the world over. This is not surprising as traditional dive training from all schools seems from the outset to be so entrenched in diving in a 'buddy' system that it is difficult to counter this robustly inculcated mindset in many fellow divers. Only last week on Swanage pier, a dive site in the UK where you'd need a shovel to get below five meters in depth, did I witness a BSAC diver angrily berating his buddy for leaving him behind for two minutes to take a photo of a blenny. As photographers, the reality is that if we want to get photos with which we are truly happy, much of the time we effectively become self reliant, solo divers.

I have now done some two hundred solo dives and am quite possibly the worst nightmare of any newly qualified, overzealous divemaster or 'buddy-fixated' dive club. I am now almost pathologically unable to dive with anyone who is not completely understanding of the fact that 98% of the dive I will spend alone, completely absorbed in my passion, with acutely scant awareness of their underwater wellbeing. I'd imagine now that some readers will be thinking 'what a idiot, he's got a death wish!!' or 'I wouldn't dive with that self-absorbed imbecile'. I expect though that a larger percentage of you will be musing 'hmmm.... that sounds familiar'.

Richard, owner of London's Wraysbury Dive Centre, a series of carp lakes and a training ground for most London based dive clubs, following extensive comparative research of potential other options, made the wise decision to purchase a certain housing for his Canon 7D.

It was when dropping off his ergonomically masterful, jaw droppingly innovative, sublimely stylish purchase that I was alerted to the fact that in diving alone, despite the fact that I am certified to Assistant Instructor level, I was actually diving outside of my qualification.

'Yeah..., and..., ' I said smugly, safe in the obtusely superior knowledge that my UW photo brethren would stand by me in this misguided arrogance. 'Check your life insurance policy, that's all I'll say' retorted Richard, having seen it all before, clearly several steps ahead of cocky little smartarse UW photographers like me.

Caught up in life's daily toils, it took me a few days to take his advice despite it constantly niggling at the back of my mind. I thought first I'd email colleagues at Dive Master Insurance (oh, did I almost forgot to mention that readers can benefit from a 5% discount on travel and equipment insurance simply by clicking the Dive Master insurance banner at the bottom of the products pages on our website?) who I imagined would have had experience of such enquiries. 'Would I be covered if the worst happened to me and I was diving alone?', I asked.

Loud and clear comes the message, if the worst were to happen during a solo dive I would be outside of the guidelines of my certifying association and therefore my enormous monthly life insurance premiums would, unless I had Michael Jackson's family lawyer, become totally invalid. Spontaneity being usual in my chaotic existence, a cold January morning saw me, with some urgency, on the phone to Richard at Wraysbury trying to trade in beautifully crafted housing accessories for an SDI solo diving course. The manual arrived in the post the next day for my study and I was booked in for the course the following Friday morning.

I was greeted by thick frost that Friday as I drove North towards the heady lights of the big city. Temperatures were barely above freezing when I arrived and a biting Northerly wind had kindly picked up overnight. As the only person deranged enough to be diving in a carp lake in such unpleasant conditions, apart from my unbelievably sprightly and enthusiastic instructor, Mark, I was indeed solo on that day: very, very solo.



# *Pacific Northwest Diver Technical Corner: Safety, continued*

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At that time, in the UK, correct me if I'm wrong, but I think that SDI was the only certifying agency offering a Solo Diving course. I have heard discussion recently that PADI are introducing a 'Self-Reliant' diver qualification in the UK. I spent a bit of time trawling archives for this article and would suggest that after having single-mindedly, unwaveringly and unrelentingly pushed their 'BUDDY' system on the world diving community as the ONLY way to dive safely, this represents a significant change in stance, the origins for which are unclear to me. The more skeptical among us may consider the pecuniary rewards of a course perhaps increasingly in demand in today's recreational diver. Certainly, one could argue that safety standards in dive equipment have increased since the buddy system was first introduced.

I'd of course arrived well prepared having read the SDI solo diver course handbook cover to cover. The manual begins in no uncertain terms by discrediting the effectiveness of the buddy system in many circumstances. It argues that often divers who are randomly paired off as 'buddies' are lacking in the competence to assist another in the event of a life-threatening scenario underwater. Some divers have the luxury of diving most frequently with a fellow who is fully aware of their ability level, their focus for being in the watery world, and their underwater style and habits. However, all of us will have experienced being allocated a random 'buddy' resulting in mismatched skill sets, mismatched experience levels and, importantly, mismatched role expectations. The more experienced diver effectively becomes a babysitter and the dive experience is tainted by concern for a random stranger.

To combat such eventuality, SDI solo diver certification suggests that the best response is to develop self-reliance underwater. Make no mistake, I am fully aware that diving is a potentially dangerous activity and I am of the mindset that I wouldn't dive if I didn't feel self-reliant in any case. I would never want to enforce responsibility for my wellbeing onto another person, known or unknown. The course itself consisted of three dives; the first, an activity to enable the student to understand their personal air consumption under different conditions. Two minutes are spent at rest, 2 minutes with a normal swim, and two minutes of heavy exertion. Before and after each activity, a record is taken of the air pre and post activity and it is rather alarming to note how much more air is consumed under more challenging, stressful conditions.

At 8 meters in that pea-green, frosty lake (temperature of 3 degrees), this ostensible training dive resulted in a potential life-threatening situation as the near freezing water brought on an aggressive freeflow to my regulator. I made a controlled ascent to the surface but was very glad that Mark was also in the water as I was physically unable to reach over my head and turn my air off at the surface. Those of you who are cold water divers will empathise with the considerable loss dexterity from wearing dry gloves or thick wet gloves and a dry suit and I made a mental note to avoid solo diving in such bitterly cold conditions.

The second part of the course focused on the importance of redundant air sources for the solo diver. I'd always attempted to stay within a comfort zone of a maximum of 12 meters in depth when solo diving in the past. I'd never felt the need to invest in redundant air sources as I considered the diving I was doing was relatively low risk within the bounds of an emergency surface ascent if required. However, the SDI Solo Diving course's insistence on the importance of a redundant air source implies that if I don't dive with one now, insurance companies may use this as the basis upon which to exclude a claim. I've had to borrow a pony tank from a friend, quite a burden in terms of weight (and a symbol of dubious sexual orientation if you spend any time on the Yorkshire Diver's forum), but my family responsibilities give me little choice. The second dive therefore required me to demonstrate switching from primary to redundant air sources under various conditions. The second dive in 3 degree water in one hour. I was getting jolly cold at this stage and was starting to lose the will to continue. A cup of tea put me straight ready for the final part of the course.

The final dive was a 'plan your dive, dive your plan' dive carried out completely solo emphasising the importance of alerting a surface watch of details of the intended solo dive. I was required to complete a full dive plan covering planned entry and exit points, planned depth and duration of dive, and emergency contact details. Needless to say I took my camera in with me on this dive, I'd done two dives already that day, indeed the first for years, without a camera and felt strangely lost without my trusty companion. soon became absorbed in shooting the local tench which looked rather cold and bad-tempered, the next thing I knew my time was up.

# *Pacific Northwest Diver Technical Corner: Safety, continued*

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I soon became absorbed in shooting the local tench which looked rather cold and bad-tempered, the next thing I knew my time was up. Regrettably I had to surface just as I'd 'got into the zone' with a particularly curious specimen but if I hadn't completed the dive as I'd planned, I would have failed the course. Under non-exam conditions, would I have changed my plan to get the shot? hmmm... I wonder.

Having successfully completed all the tests and the dives, as I struggled to drag my frozen carcass back to shore, I was told the good news that I was now a certified SDI Solo Diver and I'd earned a cup of coffee and a bacon sandwich. My overwhelming joy, as you can see in this shot was hardly containable. By way of conclusion then, I did learn a lot that day primarily about the importance of discipline in diving and particularly in solo diving.

I was given the opportunity to reflect upon previously unconsidered eventualities and how to cope with these under pressure. Most of all though, I am now secure in the knowledge that I am diving within the limits of my certification and that my activity in the aquatic realm would not allow an insurance company to exclude a claim and leave my four year old with no choice but to take over the running of the very successful UK side of a certain housing empire to pay the mortgage. For the price of less than £200, the course is certainly something for consideration and I am very grateful to Richard, Jo and Mark at Wraysbury dive centre. I sincerely hope that sharing this revelation may give readers room for reflection and food for thought.

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Thanks to Alex for letting us re-run his article. You can visit Alex on the Web at: <http://www.uwvisions.com/>.

- *Dan Clements*

