



# *Pacific Northwest Diver*

Publication of the Pacific Northwest Underwater Photographic Society  
July, 2013

Sea Pen Detail by Ian Lauder  
Nikon D2X | 5 mm | 1/125th | f 13 | ISO 100

# Pacific Northwest Diver

BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE & WEB SITE PROMOTING UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY, EDUCATION, & TRAVEL IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST | JULY, 2013

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# Pacific Northwest Diver: In This Issue

The featured photographers for July are Ian Lauder, Scott Lundy, and videographer Mike Meagher presenting his new cloud sponge video. Lynne Flaherty writes about her experience at God's Pocket Resort on the north end of Vancouver Island, with Dan Clements describing diving Tremble Island in Nakwakto Rapids, just north of God's Pocket. This month's news corner announces the Salish Sea Celebration, a Pacific Northwest underwater photo and video competition, information about the 2013 Monterey Shootout, and Comb Jelly evolution. The Technical Corner discusses leak prevention systems and Nauticam's newly released Flash Trigger System. This issue's Archives remembers Dr Hans Hass, the Austrian underwater explorer, photographer, film maker, scientist, and first rebreather user who passed on June 16. Hope you are enjoying a great diving summer, especially with our visibility improving!

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## From the Archives: Dr. Hans Hass (1919-2013)

Author, Documentary Film Maker, Rebreather Inventor

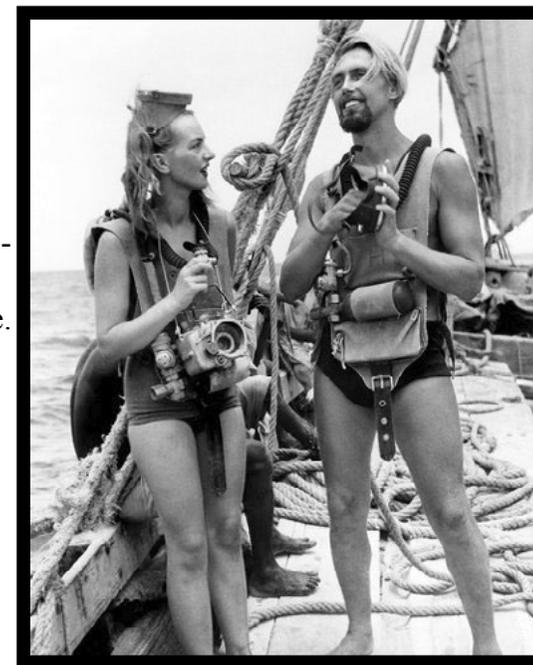
This past June 16, Hans Hass, an Austrian diving pioneer known for his documentaries about sharks, pioneering research/development of the "aqualung" rebreather, his energon theory, and commitment to the protection of the marine environment, died at 94.

This amazingly talented individual, a contemporary of Captain Jacques Cousteau, made 105 commercial underwater films from 1948 to 1960. Almost all featured his wife Lotte.

Before Cousteau, he exposed audiences to a marine world most had never seen or imagined: mountains of coral, clouds of fish, cruising rays and barracudas, jellyfish, wrasses, sponges and Precambrian creatures in their habitats, much of it backlit in filtered sunlight from above. For dramatic effect, the climax of many of the films involved a close encounter with sharks.

While Captain Cousteau Jacques Cousteau became more famous, Hass had many earlier achievements. Hass first used oxygen-delivery equipment (precursor to modern rebreathers) for underwater exploration in the early 1950's, while Captain Cousteau continued using an older technology. Both received international acclaim for their documentary films: Dr. Hass won first prize at the Venice Film Festival for his first feature, "Under the Red Sea," in 1951, and Mr. Cousteau won an Academy Award in 1957 for his first feature, "The Silent World." By most accounts, Dr. Hass developed one of the first underwater cameras. From 1939 to 2004 he authored more than 25 books.

Dr. Hass distilled his behavioral research into a hypothesis he called the Energon Theory, which was the focus of his work in later years. It posits that the behaviors of all life-forms: human, nonhuman animal and vegetable, have common origins. Visit his web site: <http://www.hans-hass.de/>.



# Pacific Northwest Diver: Ian Lauder

## Ian Lauder



- Ian Lauder

Ian was certified in 1997, and took his first camera on a checkout dive in Puget Sound: a small housing for a disposable film camera. Ian describes his development as an underwater photographer, and offers his photo tips.

“I’m not sure if there was ever a time I went on a dive without a camera after that. It wasn’t more than a couple dives later I had looked through the underwater photography books I could find to figure out what camera I needed to get the great shots I saw published in those books.

It wasn’t much longer before I had a couple of the iconic orange and black Nikonos film cameras and had figured out how to take both of them on many of my dives: one with a macro lens and the other

with a wide angle so I could maximize the number of shots per dive.

Within a year I had one of the first underwater photography web sites. My being a software engineer experimenting with web site development when the Internet was just starting to take off made this an easy task. My first publication was a spread in Popular Photography and the publisher was extolling the fact the web site had a stunning 350 underwater images displayed.

Nowadays, with the latest generation of cameras, it is possible to shoot 350 images on a single dive. Being an artist I’ve always gravitated towards making more artistic images. The underwater environment is a wonderful medium for capturing exotic shapes and colors. The Pacific Northwest is particularly good for shooting macro photography like nudibranchs, octopi, and anemones, which are some of my favorite subjects.

I started using a rebreather back when the Draeger Dolphin was the popular model. Then, just like upgrading camera gear each time the next generation comes out it wasn’t long before I moved up to the Evolution rebreather.

While the main reason for my first rebreather was shark photography, I did find that it improved my diving and photography here in the Pacific Northwest.

The main reason for using rebreathers was to improve my photography results, and it did. I now think of the rebreather as part of my Pacific Northwest photography equipment. I get longer dive times, stay warmer, have better motor control, and

move closer to some skittish critters: all of which results in more and better shots.

To get good underwater photographs, you first have to be a good diver, be able to dive under control and make fine adjustments with small fin movements and breathing: know where you are in relation to your environment. You can’t get good shots if you are flailing around destroying everything under your fins.

If you want the best control and the least disruption (i.e. bubbles) consider using a rebreather. A rebreather will allow you to have longer dive times, and the lack of bubbles allows you to get closer to your subjects. Rebreathers also make for finer control over your movements in the water column: you won’t be rising and falling with each breath while trying to focus on a super-close macro shot.

Once you master control of your diving, get close to your subject. For macro shots you need to be within inches with a macro lens. Wide angle shots mean getting close to your subject with a very wide lens, as even the biggest strobes will only have limited range.

If you are shooting in the Pacific Northwest you have to learn how to work with backscatter. Get your strobes out to the side at an angle and you can get good shots even in a plankton bloom “whiteout”. If you are getting big white spots in your shots, consider adjusting your strobes so they are not pointing straight out.”

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[www.ProposalKit.com](http://www.ProposalKit.com)



Basket Star by Ian Lauder  
Nikon D1X | 60 mm

Sea Lions & Diver by Ian Lauder  
Nikon D2X | 10 mm | 1/100th | f 6.3 | ISO 400





Brittle Star on Urchin Tests (Shell) by Ian Lauder  
Nikon D1X | 60 mm | 1/60th | f 22 | ISO 100



Puget Sound King Crab by Ian Lauder  
Nikon D2X | 60 mm | 1/125th | f 8 | ISO 100

# Pacific Northwest Diver: News Corner- Salish Sea Celebration

Get your cameras out and start working on entries for the Pacific Northwest underwater photo and video festival called the Salish Sea Celebration!

It will be a photo and video competition featuring Northwest subjects. That's correct: only photos and videos taken in the temperate waters of Alaska, British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon.

There are two main goals for the Salish Sea Celebration. The first is to provide a venue where Pacific Northwest underwater photographers and videographers can share their work.

The second is to help educate and inspire the non-diving public with the beauty and diversity below our waterlines. The event is being modeled after similar contests in San Diego and Monterey.

As part of showcasing our amazing marine environment, we also plan on honoring our First Nations people for whom the Salish Sea was named. Their language and traditions will be incorporated into the Celebration.

More contest and event information will be available this Fall, but the culminating event, presentation of photos and videos, is set for Saturday, October 4, 2014, at [Town Hall](#) in downtown Seattle.



Kwakwaka'wakw Sisiutl Orca Mask, Oscar Matilpi

## Salish Sea Celebration

łʷjuʔiltxʷ čəxʷ ti ʃʷəlččəl

Pacific Northwest Underwater Photo and Video Contest  
October 4, 2014 | Town Hall | Seattle, Washington



Contest & Event Details Available Fall, 2013

Showcase | Educate | Inspire

# Pacific Northwest Diver: News Corner, cont'd

## [Monterey Shootout 2013](#)

NCUPS, August 9-11



You don't need to be a pro to have fun and win big in the Monterey Shootout competition. You just need to get in the water! The 32 hour photo and video competition has categories for beginner, intermediate, and advanced shooters with great prizes. All competition entrants must register for a full weekend pass to enter. Weekend competition passes start at \$75. [Register here!](#)

Entrants can choose to compete in the Video Competition and/or the Photo Competition. The Video Competition has one skill level. The Photo Competition has three skill levels: Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced. All participants can elect to compete in a higher skill level than their qualifications. For the first time, no pro competitors.

New underwater shooters will enjoy the introductory seminars held on Friday. All skill levels will get inspired with more advanced seminars held on Sunday. Come meet fellow enthusiasts and learn from the professional presenters. On Saturday night internationally renowned film makers Howard & Michele Hall, Bob Talbot and Shawn Heinrichs showcase some of their recent underwater cinematography at this year's Monterey Underwater Film Festival.

Join other Pacific Northwesterners at this great event!

## [Comb Jelly Genetics May Redraw Tree of Life](#)

Amy Maxmen, [Science News](#)

Comb jellies are gelatinous like jellyfish, but the similarity ends there. In body plan, jellyfish resemble the largely sessile, almost plantlike sea anemones, corals and other cnidarians: a group that dates back at least 550 million years. While jellyfish and other cnidarians have nerve cells that form a loose network in their bodies, comb jellies have a more sophisticated nervous system with a rudimentary brain and cellular connections called synapses that are also found in flies, humans and most other animals.

Yet, detailed looks at the genomes of two species of comb jellies suggest, surprisingly, that they are the more primitive animals, and not the jellyfish, sea anemones or corals, as has long been thought. It's even possible that the sophisticated comb jelly lineage may have evolved before the brainless, gutless, muscle-less sea sponges.

It is not just their appearance that is wondrous: Slice a comb jelly embryo in two and you get two half-adults that can fertilize themselves and give birth to a perfectly whole offspring. Some can reproduce while they're still larvae. Though jellies lack eyes, scientists have discovered proteins that comb jellies use to sense light. Comparative biologists like to joke that on the eighth day, God created comb jellies. Photo credits: L.L. Moroz & M. Citarella/University of Florida; William Browne/University of Miami.



# Pacific Northwest Diver: God's Pocket Resort



- Bill Weeks & Annie Ceschi

Lynne Flaherty, photos by Scott Lundy

Way off, at the far north end of Vancouver Island, beyond the reach of roads, is a region where the diving rivals anything you will see in the tropics, for color, dramatic topography, and density of life. As part of a trip there in October, I expected superb diving and glorious scenery. What was unexpected and amazing was to encounter concierge-level service in a resort in such an isolated and challenging place.

Originally operated as a fishing lodge with minor dabbling in diving, God's Pocket Resort was bought by the current owners, Bill Weeks and Annie Ceschi, in 1998. Their goal was to create a beautiful and hospitable resort for divers, and to do it in an environmentally conscious way. They have succeeded admirably on both counts.

We were introduced to Bill in Port Hardy, where one boards the boat for the roughly 40 minute ride to the resort proper. Although our group had unloaded a mountain of gear from cars and trucks, it

vanished quickly and efficiently onto the boat. The planning with which this was done was to carry over into everything that happened for the next four days.

Arriving at the resort, on the hilltop, I could see a windmill, which is visible evidence of Bill and Annie's quest to increase their use of renewable energy. Since they bought the property, they have installed a system of inverters and high capacity batteries, so power is available 24 hours a day, without requiring the generator to run at night. With the installation of hot water underfloor heating as well, they have reduced their diesel requirement from 21,000 liters per year, to 6,500, and they are hoping for even more improvement with the windmills. And it's utterly delightful to step out of bed in the morning onto a warm floor!

We unloaded suitcases, dry suits, and gear bags onto the dock, and dry bags were temporarily staged in the dining hall, which smelled enticingly of butter and garlic. In fact, food was to be one of the high points of the trip. Trevor, the cook, produced amazing results from the small kitchen. Competition over the mini-scones, which melted in your mouth, at times nearly came to blows.

Once we had our cabin assignments, we carried suitcases across the big, wooden decks, which are decorated with the works of local artists. Whimsical driftwood furniture sits next to big, dream-catcher structures, strung with glass beads and fishing line. A tiled fire pit awaited better weather, but even in the rain, the cabins, painted in cheerful, vivid colors, reminded me of the Caribbean and made the day seem a bit brighter.

Once we were settled, we met in the common room for a resort briefing. This is a cozy, warm room, furnished with sofas and overstuffed chairs, and holding an amazing collection of diving-themed reading material. Critter ID manuals and coffee-table photo books ensured that, if you weren't diving, you could be thinking about it . . . and the wide-screen TV allowed review of the day's photographs and video. We didn't have to settle for doing our dives once; we could enjoy them again and again!

The following morning, we assembled our gear on the boat, where it remained for the rest of the trip. Diving could not be simpler, or more convenient! Fill whips from the dock reach the decks, and the boat also carries a bank of T-bottles for surface interval filling during the two-dive outings. Nitrox is available, and argon, if it's requested in advance.

Bill pointed out the big cooler of hot water on the forward deck, to warm gloves and hoods between dives. I looked into the cabin, which has plenty of seating and heat, but it's a good question whether the divers in the cabin are there to get warm, or



# Pacific Northwest Diver: Operator- God's Pocket Resort

for Trevor's outrageous cookies and snacks. Tea, coffee and hot chocolate sit in thermoses, awaiting cold and thirsty divers. And each person is met with a small hand towel, ideal for wiping faces and drying hair.

But the most amazing amenity on the boat isn't the hand towels, or the cookies – it's the elevator! There is no struggling to drag cold water gear up



- Dan Clements

an uncooperative ladder here. You merely swim over to the platform, make sure your fin tips clear the frame, grab the hand holds and give a signal, and the elevators whisk you to the dive deck.

It's difficult not to giggle at how delightfully easy it is – but the elevator was not installed for diver comfort. In keeping with the overall level of thought that has been put into this place, it was constructed with an eye to easier extraction of an ill or injured diver from the water. The enormous feeling of self-indulgence enjoyed by the able-bodied diver is just a delightful secondary effect.

Bill had explained, the night before, that we would do three boat dives a day, divided into two trips, determined by the tides. For our dates, that meant

a single dive outing in the morning, and a two dive trip in the afternoon. It also meant very reasonable wake-up times, which was fine with me!

The diving is primarily in the area around Nigei and Balaklava Islands. The channels are studded with small, rocky islets, topped with conifers, and descending in sheer rocky walls to the water. Similar structure continues beneath, with the rock descending either in tiered ledges, or in places in sheer, massive walls. The currents can run fast and strong here, feeding a huge variety and density of marine life.

High-current walls are thickly studded with *Metridium senile*, and more protected sites are coated with soft corals and sponges in rainbow colors. Camouflaged among the sessile organisms are brilliantly colored sculpins, comical warbonnets, and prehistoric Puget Sound King Crabs. Schools of black and yellowtail rockfish float contemplatively in the clear, green water, and brilliant blue-and-yellow China rockfish spectacularly fail to be camouflaged anywhere. Shallower sites, and ascents, allowed beautiful views up through the bull kelp, through water sparkling with small jellies.

There is a surprising variety of diving here, though; it is not all high-current walls. In one protected bay behind Hussar's Point, one finds an absolutely astonishing concentration of hooded nudibranchs, coating the rock and kelp strands in the thousands. Nearer the mouth of the pass lies the wreck of the *Themis*, a freighter which came to grief on a submerged rock, and was subsequently dynamited as a hazard to shipping.

Despite the efforts to destroy it, she retains a surprising amount of structure, and provides habitat for

wolf eels, as well as a large number and variety of rockfish, and large and colorful anemones.

But, of course, the star is the iconic Browning Wall dive. A massive, sheer rock face, falling from the tree line to below recreational depths, it is divided into puzzlingly clear-cut zones. A segment of wall about a hundred feet long appears to be providing perfect conditions for sponges, anemones, and coral, and is thus drenched in amazing, intense color.

On either side, there is an abrupt cutoff and transition to white metridiums. The entire wall is so thickly clad with life that there is nowhere at all to put a finger down for stability (which can be a challenge, when photographing in current!) Zig-zagging one's way up this wall, it is possible to see almost every imaginable creature on a single dive. We dove this one twice, and I could cheerfully have done it again.

Almost everyone in our group was on his first trip to the area, and despite the publicity Browning Pass gets, everyone was stunned and amazed at how fabulous the diving was. Having been there before, I knew – but I was not prepared to be so thoroughly spoiled, as a hardy Pacific Northwest diver. With the lodgings, the fabulous food, the boat's amenities, and the attention to detail, God's Pocket provides both a fantastic dive trip, and an elegant getaway.

Phone: 250.949.1755

e-Mail: [info@godspocket.com](mailto:info@godspocket.com)

Web: <http://www.godspocket.com/>

God's Pocket Resort Location  
(Port Hardy and Nakwakto Rapids/Tremble Island)

Lynne Flaherty

Many thanks to Lynne for contributing the God's Pocket Article!

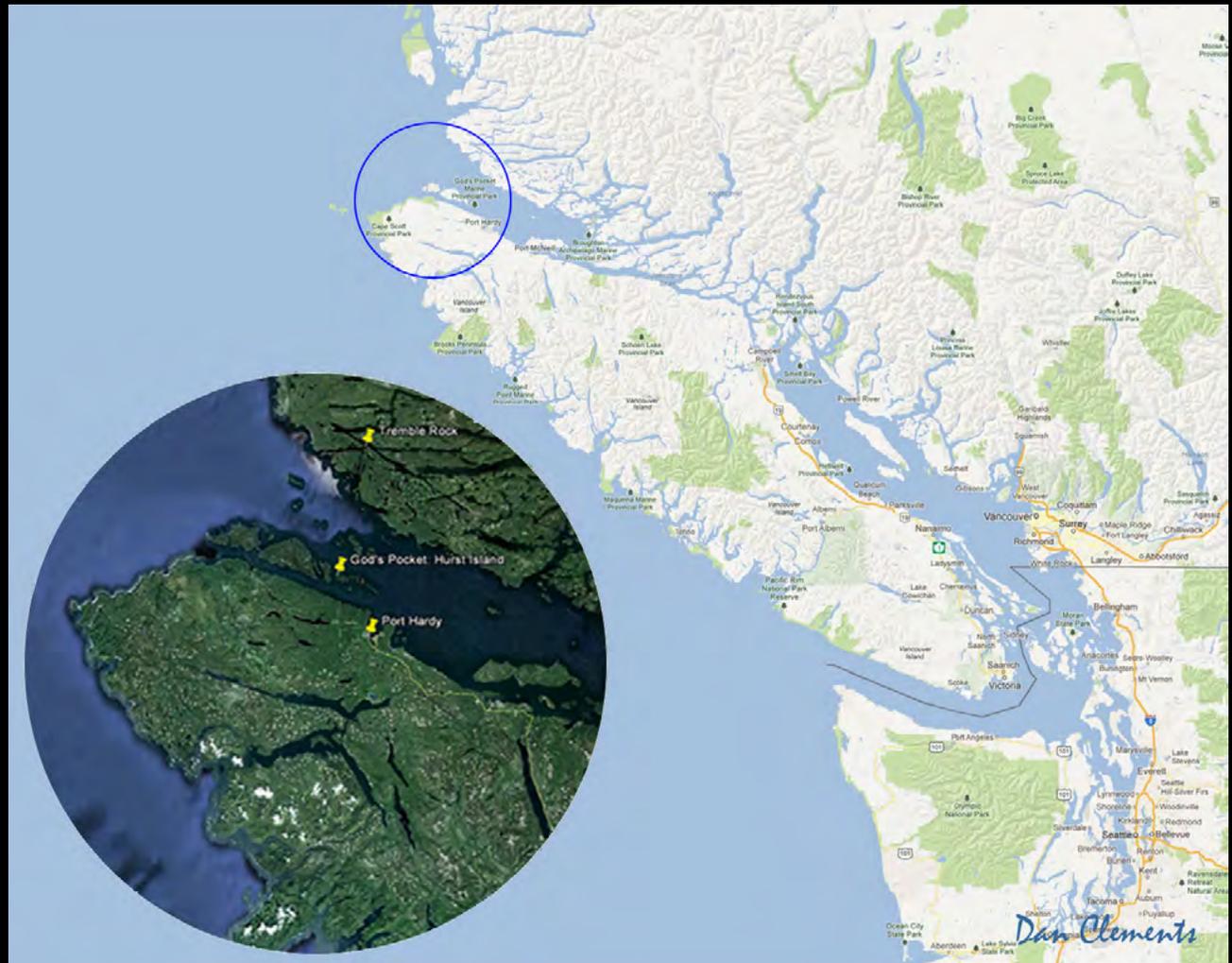
Lynne Flaherty is a 59 year old ER doc who was reluctant to learn to dive and even more reluctant to consider putting a toe in Pacific Northwest waters.

To her amazement, not only did diving become a passion, but after eight years and over a thousand dives, she remains convinced that diving the Eastern Pacific is the best open water diving anywhere.

So do we!

e-Mail: [lynne@tsandm.com](mailto:lynne@tsandm.com)

Web: <http://tsandm.com/>



# Pacific Northwest Diver: Scott Lundy

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## Scott Lundy



Scott Lundy is the owner of Rapture of the Deep Photography ([www.raptureofthedeep.net](http://www.raptureofthedeep.net)). He began his photography journey at the young age of 15, when he acquired his first Nikon film SLR.

He quickly became entranced by the artistic and technical nuances of the discipline, and his quest for photographic perfection combined with his love for scuba diving and led him to the underwater realm, where he has primarily focused his efforts for the past 10 years.

His work has been featured in a variety of both digital and print media, including the Seattle Times, MSNBC, Yahoo News, Scuba Diving Magazine, Northwest Dive News, The Weather Channel, and others. When he isn't exploring the cool waters of the Pacific Northwest, Scott is hard at work completing a combined MD/PhD program at the University of Washington.

For shooting, Scott uses a Nikon D7000 in Nauticam housing. Primary lenses include a Tokina 10-17mm for wide angle, and Nikkor 60mm and 105mm macro lenses for macro photography. Ikelite strobes are used to light up subjects.

Scott offers the following shooting tips.

“Taking underwater photos is a bit like sending two friends on a blind date. First, you must know what each of your friends (the underwater world and the nondiving general public) looks for in a potential match. Then comes the magic: you must find a way to establish a connection between these two worlds without them ever actually having met.

This might be through focusing on the eyes of the underwater subject or finding a playful aspect to the photo that the public can relate with. Successfully crafting this link between audience and subject is perhaps the most important part of taking truly moving underwater photos.”

Enjoy Scott's photos from the God Pocket area!

e-Mail: [slundy@gmail.com](mailto:slundy@gmail.com)

Web: <http://www.raptureofthedeep.net/>

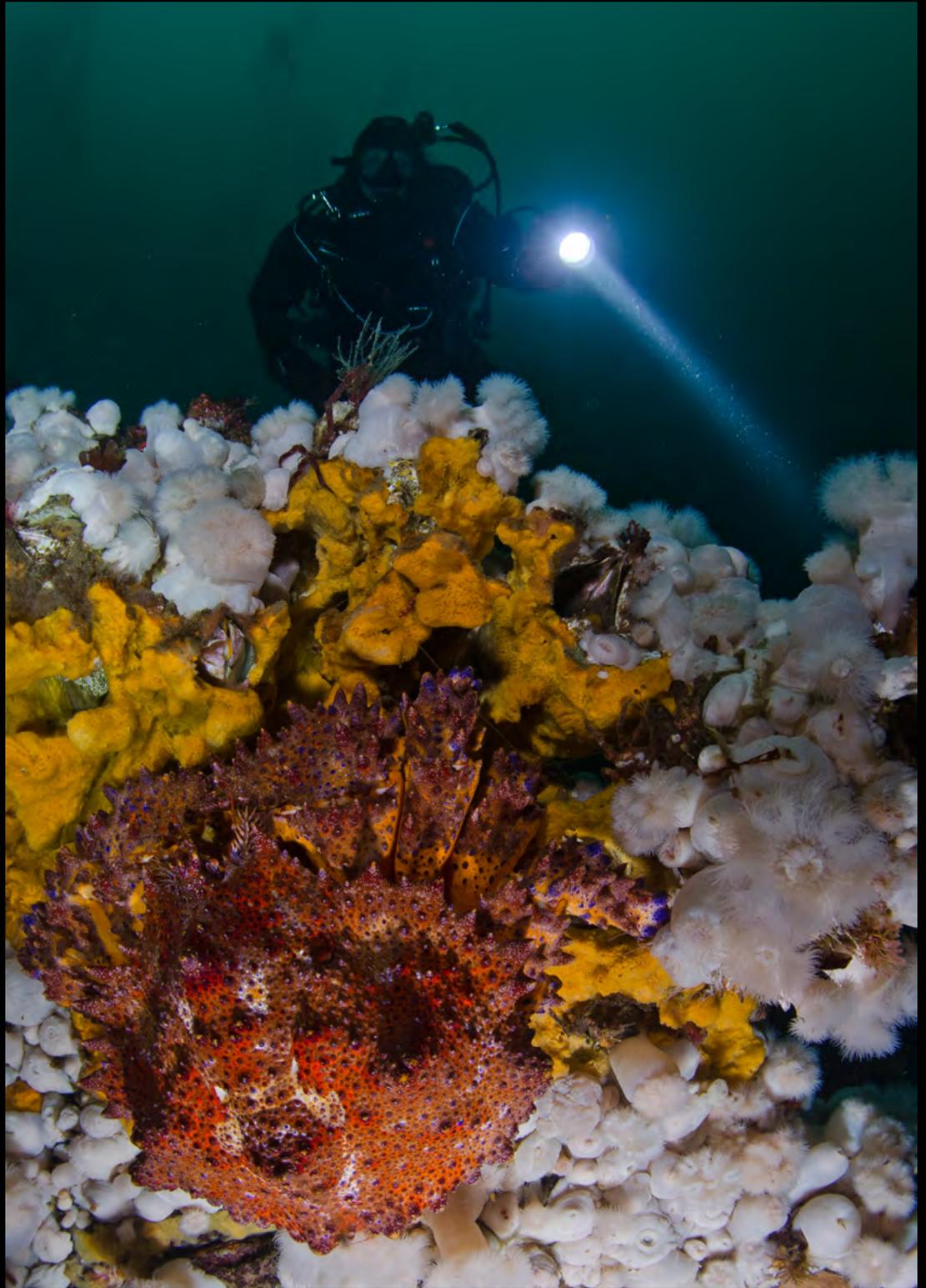


Rose Anemone by Scott Lundy  
Nikon D7000 | Tokina 10-17mm | 1/60th | f10 | ISO 200



Scalyhead Sculpin by Scott Lundy  
Nikon D7000 | 105mm | 1/200th | f9 | ISO 100

Dive & Puget Sound King Crab by Scott Lundy  
Nikon D7000 | Tokina 10-17 mm | 1/60th | f10 | ISO 400



Longfin Sculpin by Scott Lundy  
Nikon D7000 | 105mm | 1/200th | f11 | ISO 200



# Pacific Northwest Diver: God's Pocket Resort- Tremble Island

## Diving Tremble Rock, Nakwakto Rapids

One of the legendary dives out of God's Pocket is Tremble Rock in the Nakwakto Rapids. By way of background, the Guinness Book of World Records lists Nakwakto as having the fastest tidal currents on the planet: 16 knots (18.5 mph). That's fast: really, really, really fast.

So how do you dive this islet in the middle of some of the most rapidly moving water on the planet? First off, you go with a skipper and dive operator who know what they are doing. Bill Weeks and Annie Ceschi, owners of God's Pocket Resort, have been diving the area for years, and offer excellent briefings.

Second, in order to minimize currents as much as possible, divers need to be in the water a few minutes before slack tide, on a day with as minimal a tidal exchange as possible. On our dive there was an 8 knot ebb leading into a 6 knot flood, which is about the maximum exchange divers can deal with.

Third, and this is what is amazing, is the "Triangle of Tranquility", as Bob Scarzafava of Anacortes Dive calls it. Divers enter the water in a neutral current zone near the north end of the island. This no current zone is created at the point where the outgoing tide splits around the rock.

The area is marked on the photo above by the white triangle shape. It is approximately 40 feet long against the rock, and extends to a depth of approximately 40 feet. As the tide begins to change direction this current free "Triangle of Tranquility" gradually shifts clockwise around the islet (see arrow).



If divers stay in this zone, they are treated to a very beautiful 30-40 minute dive. If not, they are swept out into the rapids and picked up down current. We were a little anxious on our dive, and started moving before the neutral zone caught up with us. It was hold on for dear life!

Once we got a feel for the current, the easiest thing to do was watch the kelp. When it was standing vertical, enjoy the sights and move slowly around the rock. When the kelp in front of you was horizontal because of the current, wait for the calm zone to catch up.

The dive ends half way around Tremble Island, across from where divers first entered the water. We either surfaced in the neutral zone to be picked up, or, for those wanting the longest dive time possible, stayed down in the "Triangle of Tranquility" until it collapses, and get popped-up to the surface. So the next question is "Why dive this site in the first

place?" It is not only an impressive site, but it is also home to the Nakwakto red barnacles which only occur here and in one other nearby location. These amazing barnacles have adapted to life in the high current environment by attaching themselves differently to the rock. They are also quite large.

The red color is actually the hemocyanin in the barnacle's blood. The blood is obvious in sub-tidal specimens like these which do not have black pigment, which protects sun-exposed populations inhabiting shallow or intertidal zones. In addition to these rare barnacles there are also beautifully colored feather dusters, sculpins, and if you look closely at the image opposite you will see a small arthropod at the top of the barnacle's neck.

Also very attractive were the brooding anemones with youngsters, especially those anchored to Vancouver feather duster worms (next page).

- Dan Clements



Nakwakto Red Barnacles by Dan Clements  
Nikon D300s | 60mm | 1/125th | f14 | ISO 200



Brooding Anemone on Feather Dusters by Dan Clements  
Nikon D300s | 60mm | 1/125th | f14 | ISO 200

# Pacific Northwest Diver: Mike Meagher

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## Mike Meagher



e-Mail: [mikemeagherproductions@comcast.net](mailto:mikemeagherproductions@comcast.net)

Web: <http://www.youtube.com/wolfeeldiver>

Mike was featured in the January, 2012 issue of Pacific Northwest Diver. By way of background, he is Bellingham based, has been diving for 35 years, and has logged approximately 2,000 dives.

He began taking underwater still photographs at age 16 using a Nikonos III and a Housed Nikon F2, and for five years worked in a dive shop and was a PADI instructor. He shoots with shoot videos using a High Def Sony HC9 tape based camcorder housed in a Gates housing using a quality Fathom wide angle port or a Century Optics closeup diopter behind a flat port.

A few weeks ago Mike sent out a link to a new video he just completed. Shot in Howe Sound outside of Vancouver, BC, it is an excellent example of how underwater videography can be used as an education tool about our marine environment.

Mike says that this is his initial foray into video narration, and we think it came out quite well.

# *Pacific Northwest Diver: Mike Meagher*

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# Pacific Northwest Diver: Travel Corner

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## [BARKLEY SOUND SHARK WEEK](#) | AUGUST, 2013 | TRIP ESTIMATE \$900 US

This will be the third year for Shark Week at Rendezvous Lodge on Barkley Sound. Four days of diving, 2-3 dives per day. Dr. Chris Harvey Clark will return as the shark biologist. Price includes transportation to and from Port Alberni, meals, lodging, and air fills. An excellent video describing Shark Week may be viewed by following [this link](#).

Objectives: Six gill sharks, rays, rock fish, nudibranchs, giant Pacific octopus, humpback whales.

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## [ADAMS RIVER, BC SOCKEYE SALMON RUN](#) | October, 2 - 6, 2013 | Trip estimate \$1,000

This coming Fall will see several hundred thousand sockeye salmon return to the world famous Adams River. This is an exploratory trip in anticipation of the dominant 2014 run, where several million salmon return. The plan is for three days of 2 tank boat diving with Copper Island Diving, including lunch, with afternoon salmon photography/observation in streams. Price includes lodging at the Quaaout Lodge, does not include transportation to Chase, BC.

Objectives: Sockeye salmon, other salmon species.

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## [LA PAZ WHALE SHARKS, SEA LIONS, & MARINE LIFE](#) | October 19 - 26, 2013 | Trip estimate is \$1,100

We head back to La Paz, Baja California to snorkel with whale sharks, dive with sea lion, and check out eel, blennies, jaw fish, and the other marine life the area has to offer. Lodging will be with Posada Luna Sol, diving with Club Cortez, and whale shark outings with Mar y Aventuras. Price includes lodging, park permits, 2 tank dives on SCUBA days, lunch on diving days, and snorkeling with whale sharks to 1:00 PM on whale shark days. Does not include transportation to La Paz.

Objectives: Whale sharks, sea lion, blennies, eel, jaw fish.

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## [GREY WHALE MOMS & BABIES](#) | February/March, 2014 | Trip estimate is \$1,500

For the past three years we have spent time on Baja's west coast viewing mother and baby grey whales before they migrate north. Viewing will be from boats, but we have applied for permits from the Mexican government to snorkel with the whales as part of an article on their migration. This would be a seven day trip, and would include room, lodging, and transportation round trip from La Paz.

Objectives: Grey whales, mothers "nursing" babies.

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## [FIJI WITH NATURALIST ANDY LAMB](#) | March 14 - 31, 2014 | Trip estimate \$5,500

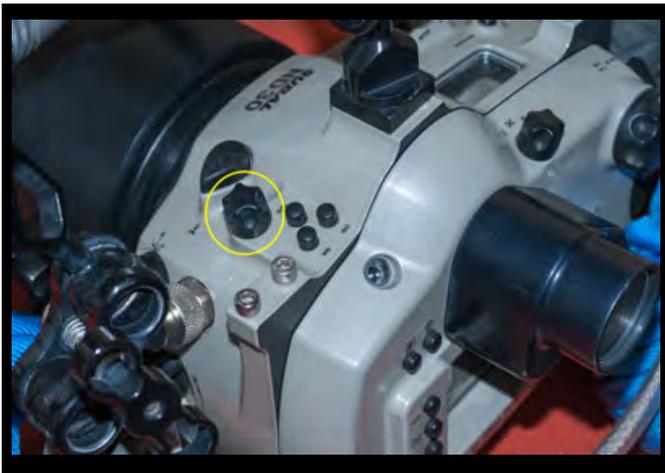
Seven nights at Lalati Resort and Spa (Beqa Lagoon), followed by another seven nights at Volivoli Resort (Bligh Waters). Round trip air from LAX (fly to Fiji together but flexible return possible), accommodation (double occupancy), meals, transfers, ten days diving or resort credits for activities including snorkeling, tours and spas.

For more information contact Andy or Virginia Lamb at 250.246.9770 or via e-mail at [andylamb@telus.net](mailto:andylamb@telus.net).

# Pacific Northwest Diver: Housing Flood Prevention Systems

How much would you be willing to pay for a way of preventing floods in your underwater photo or video housing? How well do flood prevention devices work?

During my last housing service at Backscatter I had a lengthy discussion about the merits of leak prevention systems with the service staff. During a recent trip to God's Pocket I had completed a dive, and everything was fine.



After my housing had been in the rinse bucket for a few minutes, the leak detector started flashing. When the housing was opened, there were about two tablespoons of water inside. What happened, and would leak prevention systems have worked?

## What Caused the Leak?

After examining the housing, the only unusual thing I could find was a slight discoloration behind the glass on the flat port for my 60 mm lens. Everything else looked fine. Next I leak tested the housing with a 105 mm flat port, and no leaks.

Fast forward two weeks to Backscatter Monterey. Service pressure checked the housing and 60 mm

port: no problem. Their feeling was that some sand or particulate matter had worked its way into the rear "O" ring and caused the problem.

Back home I took a closer look at the interior of the housing and saw some tiny crystals below a very rarely used push rotator button on the top of the housing (left). When the housing was placed in the rinse bucket at God's Pocket, I dutifully pressed and turned all the buttons and knobs.

In retrospect, it appears that some sand or dirt was lodged below this push button, and when it was pressed and rotated the seal was broken. Mystery solved (I think), but how could the leak have been prevented?

## Flood Prevention

There are several leak prevention systems on the market, most notably Backscatter's [AirLock Vacuum System](#) (right top) and Underwater Camera Stuff's [Housing Sentry](#) (right bottom). They both operate in a similar fashion: a pump is used to remove air from the housing, creating a vacuum. If the pressure drops after a few minutes, the housing is not water tight.

The vacuum inside the housing also serves another purpose. It helps secure the port and back plate from accidental twists or removal.

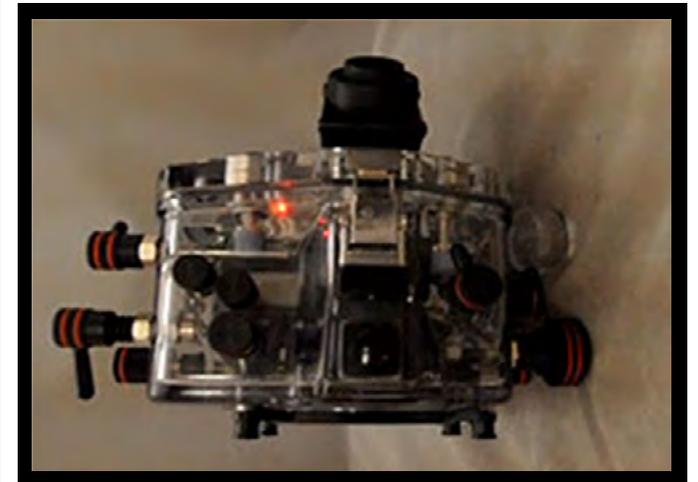
## Cost & Differences

So how much do these two leak prevention systems cost? Backscatter's Airlock System retails for \$399, while the Housing Sentry's cost varies from \$290 to \$699, plus installation fee of \$25 to \$175. Both require the use of a housing port. Backscatter's unit is very easy for a user to install. Both are removable

so that they can be installed on a different housing. The cost difference stems from an added feature on the Housing Sentry. There is a red/green LED sys-



tem that shows when the internal pressure is either below, or drops below, 9.5 in/Hg (photo below).



## Conclusion

While both systems will help prevent the most common types of flooding, I doubt either system would have kept my housing dry. No gauge was hooked up when it was placed in the rinse tank. Excellent for peace of mind, but still not a total remedy.

# Pacific Northwest Diver: Nauticam's New Flash Trigger



derwater, for off-board lighting opportunities. Nauticam fiber optic cables have the highest light throughput of any optical cables on the market, making the Nauticam Flash Trigger even that much more reliable.

The Flash Trigger for Canon works with Canon cameras without popup flashes, like the EOS 5D Mark III, the EOS 6D, EOS 1D X and EOS 1D C, providing dependable, rapid-fire flash triggering over fiber.

In what has the potential to offer underwater photographers an alternative to sync cords, Nauticam just announced release of their “flash trigger system” for a limited number of Cannon bodies.

Flash triggers allow fiber optic cables to fire at motor drive speeds. Since the popup flash is not used, the camera does not have to wait for the popup flash to recycle, meaning faster shooting, less heat build-up, and longer camera battery life. This enables photographers to shoot as rapidly as external strobes can recycle.

Nauticam’s press release lists several advantages to the new system. There are no sync cables to flood or corrode, meaning much higher reliability, and the strobe can even be removed from the rig, while un-

This flash trigger is manual only; automatic flash exposure (TTL) is not currently enabled - a tool for reliable, fast external flash firing. Supported strobes include the Inon Z-240 Type 4, D-2000 Type 4, S-2000, Sea & Sea YS-250, YS-01, and YS-D1.

Sea & Sea YS-D1, YS-01 and YS-250 strobes require the installation of an optional flash prism for reliable triggering.

The Flash Trigger for Canon weighs under 70 grams, including batteries, and mounts on the camera hotshoe, locking in place with a locking lever. It uses 2 CR3032 batteries, which combined with the highly efficient LED trigger lights, provide for thousands of flashes (5000 estimated).

An LED status indicator informs the user that the unit is on and functional. It fits perfectly into the supported housings (NA-5DMKIII, NA-1DX, NA-



6D). Nauticam states that they are developing new housings for Canon SLR cameras will support the Flash Trigger as well.



It will be very interesting to see how this technology develops and is accepted by the underwater photographic community, especially as units and housings appear for different camera models and the size is reduced.

There are currently a few DIY and commercial systems available, and users seem quite pleased with the results. For background, see this [Micro Strobe Discussion](#) on Wetpixel.

# 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 our contacts, please either get in touch with one of the regional contacts listed below, or contact editor [Dan Clements](#) directly.

British Columbia: Marli Wakeling



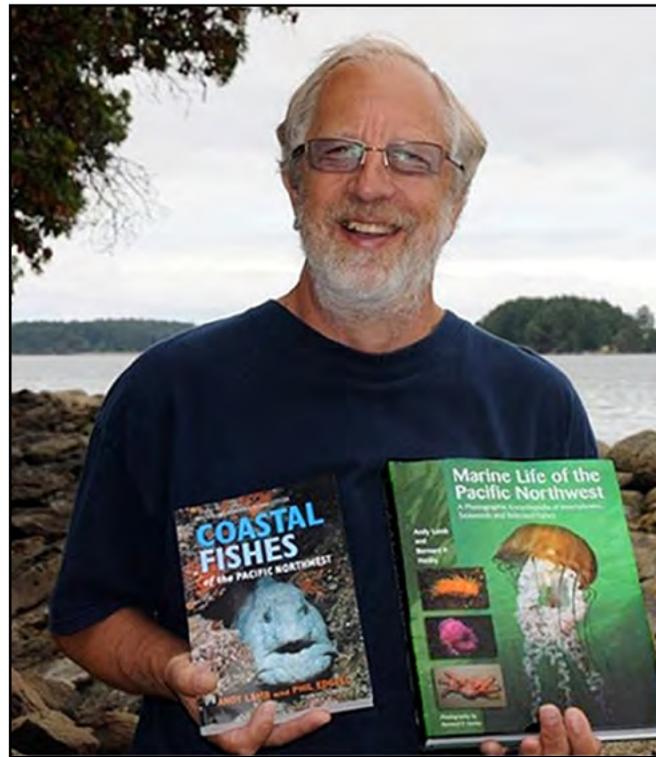
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