# Pacific Northwest Diver

Publication of the Pacific Northwest Underwater Photographic Society
January, 2014

Red Irish Lord | Jim Ramaglia
Nikon D7000 | 60mm | 1/125th | *f* 10 | ISO 125

## More on West Coast Sea Star Die-off


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# Pacific Northwest Diver: In This Issue

North America's Pacific coast is currently witnessing an unprecedented sea star die-off. Last issue carried a brief article on this event, and this issue has photos and a video of what is happening, and the speed at which species are disappearing. Preliminary contest rules for October's Salish Sea Celebration: PNW Underwater Photo and Video Festival are also released for review and comment this month. Our featured photographers are long time Anacortes photographer Jim Ramaglia, and recent new shooter Jody Lynn Clark from New Westminster. This issue's featured operator is 49th Parallel Dive Charters. The Technical Corner discusses Display Colour Calibration, often overlooked by photographers. Akira Tateishi, pioneer Japanese underwater photographer, is our Archive Corner subject.

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If you have any questions about subscribing, please contact publisher Dan Clements.

## Archives Corner: Akira Tateishi (1930-)

Japanese Underwater Photography Pioneer

Born in 1930. Since 1950 he has contributed his energy to shoot underwater photography and movies around the world. He created a sensation in the photographic world when he published his artistic underwater photography, and established the new field of "underwater photography" as art.

In 1969, Tateishi started Japan's first scuba diving magazine "Marine Diving" and to further promote underwater photography with his love of art and his passion for the ocean. This magazine with his photography triggered scuba diving & beach resort boom in Japan, and it has insisted on the importance of Marine Environment Protection for over 40 years.

He expanded publishing business, and started new magazines, such as Travel Diver, Diving School, Marine Photo, which are specialized in beach resort and scuba diving skills and underwater photography. He also fabricated housings for many cameras. As a result of all these achievements Tateishi come to recognized as a leader in underwater photography boom in Japanese scuba diving field.

In 2004 at Cayman Islands, Tateishi inducted into 'International Scuba Diving Hall of Fame' which was given to people who have been leading the scuba diving industry in the world. Also Tateishi was honored by the Commissioner for Cultural Affairs for his longtime distinguished underwater photography in 2005. In 2006, the 50-year anniversary of his creative activity, he was conferred of the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays by His Majesty The Emperor of Japan.

- International SCUBA Hall of Fame

# Pacific Northwest Diver: Salish Sea Celebration Contest Rules

## Salish Sea Celebration Preliminary Rules

The Salish Sea Celebration is a photo and video event whose purpose is to share the beauty, wonder, and variety of our underwater world. Winning entries will be shown publicly at the Town Hall in Seattle, Saturday evening, October 4, 2014. Below are the preliminary rules governing this event.

### Eligibility

All underwater photographers and videographers are eligible to submit entries. There is no entry fee.

### Categories

There are three categories each for photo and video: Showcase, Educate, and Inspire. Below are the definitions for each category.

- Showcase. Entries in the "Showcase Category" will showcase the work of a particular photographer or videographer. This is the "open" category.
- Educate. Entries in the "Educate Category" will be judged on how well the submittal educates the audience about marine creature(s), life cycle, interaction, or marine environmental issue.
- Inspire. Entries in the "Inspire Category" will be judged on how well they inspire an appreciation of our marine environment. Entries might motivate others to take underwater photos/videos, learn more about our underwater world, encourage species preservation, or improve our marine environment.

You may submit up to two entries in each category. Since there are three photo and three video categories, the maximum number of entries is six.

### Rules for Photos and Videos

Several rules apply to both photo and video entries.


These are:

1. All photos and videos need to shot in the salt or fresh waters of Alaska, British Columbia, Washington, or Oregon.
2. All photos and video footage needs to have been taken after January 1, 2013.
3. Submissions, along with completed entry form for each submittal, must be received no later than August 1, 2014.
4. You retain all rights to your work. You give us permission to use the material for the presentation and promotional purposes. We reserve the right to use up to 20 seconds of each video for promotional purposes.

Because of different formats, there are several different requirements for photo and video entries. These are outlined below.

### Photo Specific Rules

1. This is a photo contest, not a photo editing contest. Allowed post processing techniques are limited to: white balance adjustment, color correction, backscatter clean-up, exposure, and sharpening.
2. Macro and wide angle submittals are acceptable for all categories.
3. Submitted photos should be 1080 pixels, long edge, JPG quality "High" or 8 with meta-data included.
4. You may be asked to provide a RAW or original image to verify compliance.
5. If your entry is selected, you will be asked to provide a photo of yourself that will be used as part of the presentation.

### Video/Multi-Frame

1. Videos will be limited to 5 minutes. They may be shorter. Please record or add a one second black lead in at the front of your video.
2. 50% of the video will be shot below water or over/under.
3. Submit your entry as a high resolution 1080 video H.264 file that has been either archived (copied) to a thumb drive, or uploaded to the contest DropBox or other cloud location.
4. Photos presented in a video style presentation are eligible.
5. You will be asked to verify that you have permission to use and music included in your entry.
6. If your entry is selected, you will be asked to provide a photo of yourself that will be used as part of the presentation.

### Submittals & Due Dates

As noted above, submissions must be received no later than August 1, 2014. Each entry must be accompanied by a completed entry. There is no fee to enter a photo or video.

If you submit your entry via physical delivery (mail, UPS, FEDEX, etc), do not sent originals, as submissions will not be returned.

Entry applications and additional FAQ's will be available March 31, 2014.

## Sea Star Wasting Disease

Andy Lamb

The marine environment of the Pacific Northwest is one the planet's epicentres for sea stars. This coastline, from California to Alaska, has the greatest number and diversity of temperate water species as well as the greatest total mass of sea stars. The number of species, depending upon where exactly the geographic "line" is drawn, is in the neighbourhood of one hundred. Several of these are also amongst the largest and fastest-moving in the world.

Including even the youngest children, most divers and ocean oriented folk who travel to the west coast are familiar with sea stars. On any given low tide, at least six sea star species are exposed in abundance along these shores for kayakers, beach combers and others to easily encounter. On the most extreme spring low water events, an additional four or five are occasionally exposed to view. For the recreational SCUBA fraternity, at least 20 different sea stars inhabit readily accessible depths where paths may cross.

Biologically, the iconic sea stars are amazing life forms that possess anatomical features and behaviours that are most unique. Rather than attempt to provide details here, I will simply refer the reader to two excellent publications by two outstanding local sea star authorities: Sea Stars of British Columbia, Southeast Alaska and Puget Sound, by Philip Lambert, and A Field Guide to Sea Stars of the Pacific Northwest, by Neil McDaniel.

Suddenly, late this past summer the recreational dive community began noticing an alarming mass mortality of sea stars in Howe Sound, the fjord adjacent to Vancouver. Nearby Indian Arm was also hit hard. The catastrophic event initially seemed to target two large and obvious species, the giant pink star *Pisaster brevispinus* and the sunflower star *Pycnopodia helianthoides*. Later reports and photography have documented two other species, the mottled star *Evasterias troschelii* and the morning sun star *Solaster dawsoni* as being involved as well. Affected specimens simply seemed to totally disintegrate after severe internal disruption. This phenomenon is being referred to as "sea star wasting disease".

More and more such observations from concerned divers were reported electronically, resulting in considerable on line conversation. Eventually, the media became aware of the situation and organizations such as the Vancouver Aquarium, The University of B.C. (UBC) and the Department of Fisheries (DFO) and Oceans became involved trying to address the growing concern. What is happening? What is the cause?

As of this writing, the centre of this catastrophe continues to be Howe Sound. However, divers have apparently found more affected sea stars in Indian Arm, along the Sunshine Coast, off Victoria, in Sechelt Inlet, and off Saturna and Savary Islands. As of the first week of November, Seattle Aquarium divers have found a similar outbreak in their area. This was the first report of "sea star wasting disease" in Puget Sound and Washington State.

A return to the site is planned to collect samples for scientists at Cornell University, New York to investigate. Even more recently observant divers found/photographed an afflicted specimen at Day Island, near Tacoma, further south in Puget Sound.

During the second week of November, Peter Luckham (49th Parallel Dive Charters) and I found many affected specimens on shallow reef next to the Boeing 737 artificial reef, near Chemainus, Vancouver Island and our Thetis Island home base.

Some initial samples sent to DFO and UBC have not isolated a specific causative agent for this sea star die off. More samples are being collected and additional test will be conducted. A definitive answer will eventually arrive -- hopefully.

As distressing as this event is for those of us in the Pacific Northwest, similar events have occurred elsewhere over the last 30 years. Sea stars have perished in alarming numbers in Mexico, California and other localities. In some cases, the particular causes still remain a mystery.

As noted above, amateur and professional SCUBA divers – our "connection to the underwater world" have become very involved as "citizen scientists". However, as mentioned already, several of the particularly vulnerable sea stars are intertidal. This situation provides beachcombers, kayakers and other surface-based naturalists an opportunity to help too. The Vancouver Aquarium has established a link to their website. For a broader Pacific Coast perspective, try the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) site.

Neil McDaniel has kindly let us use several of his photos to show what sea star wasting syndrome is, and how rapidly it progresses. Following these images is a video taken by Peter Miras of Rendezvous Dive Adventures of a single sea star event in Barkley Sound, 2011, prior to the current die off, and not currently impacted by the present event.

Sea Star Die-off in Photos: Note the before and after photos of Boulder 1 near Croker Island. Total devistation in less than 3 weeks. The lower two photos show examples of stars in later stages of the disease: initially losing and arm, then wasting away to nothing.





Sunflower Sea Star Wasting Disease
Barkley Sound, 2011
Courtesy Peter Mieras | Rendezvous Dive Resort
Subvision Video Productions

# Pacific Northwest Diver: Jim Ramaglia

Jim Ramaglia lives in Anacortes, and is an instructor with Anacortes Dive and Supply. Russ Rockwood photo.

I was born, raised and lived in Kodiak Island Alaska most of my life. Living and working near the water I always wondered "what was under there?", but my question did not get answered until I was in my mid thirties. I was certified as an open water diver on a vacation in Hawaii. Upon returning home to Kodiak I decided if I was going to dive I needed to dive where I lived. This was the beginning of my fascination with cold water diving.

Even now after more than 28 years and 1,800 dives later, each trip beneath the cold waters of the Pacific is an adventure filled with new wonders. I am happiest poking along the bottom looking for tiny critters to capture with my camera.

My interest with photography began at about age 8 or 9. In high school I was the school photographer and spent many hours taking pictures and processing the black and white images in my darkroom. When I began diving, underwater photography soon followed with various Sea and Sea Motor Marine cameras. When I "discovered" digital photography, it opened new dimensions in underwater photography for me: unlimited images and instant feedback. After many generations of Nikons my current camera is a Nikon D7000 in an Ikelite Housing.

My favorite type of underwater photography is close-up/macro. Most of the time I'm in the water, there is a Nikon 60 mm macro lens mounted on my camera. When shooting Macro the closer to the subject, the better, reducing the amount of water between the lens and the subject helps reduce backscatter. Many of my photos are taken as close as my camera can focus, the critters are within inches, sometimes touching the port.

I read somewhere that photography is "writing with light." If you think of taking pictures as managing how light hits your camera's sensor it will help you get your best image. Understand what your camera LCD screen is showing you. Are the whites "blown out", is the image too light or too dark? Is your subject in focus? If you don't see what you like, change how the light hits the sensor by dialing the F stops up and down. Do the same with your strobe intensity. Strobe placement is important: aim your strobes so the flash lights the subject, not the water between the lens and the subject.

Take lots of images. You can get everything technically perfect. Lighting, composition and exposure. But the difference between a so-so picture and a great once can be the flick of a tail or a turn of the head. Once you have that special subject in your view finder shoot as many images as you can to get that special pose.

My favorite dive travel destinations include Barkley Sound (The Rendezvous) and Port Hardy B.C. (Gods Pocket). Locally the Keystone Underwater Park is my all-time favorite. After more than 400 dives there I am never bored there is always something exciting at Keystone.

I first began processing black and white images with toxic chemicals in a darkroom decades ago. Now with a computer and mouse and Photoshop so much more is possible. Sometimes I will spend great amounts of time getting an image perfect removing each tiny speck of backscatter and debris using many layers getting everything about the image just right.

Most often though I use just 2 tools. 1) Levels: to adjust the dark, light and mid tones of the image and 2) Smart sharpen: To make the image a bit "crisper". Post processing allows the modern underwater photographer to take a good shot and make it a winner.

e-Mail: ramaglia@comcast.net
Web: http://www.ramaglia.org/

Gunnels by Jim Ramaglia
Nikon D7000 | 60 mm | 1/125th | *f* 11 | ISO 125

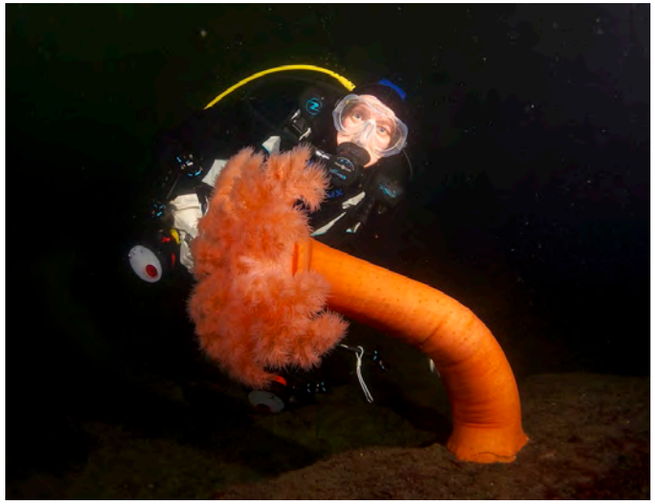
Opalescent Nudibranchs by Jim Ramaglia
Nikon D7000 | 60 mm | 1/125th | *f* 11 | ISO 125

Long Fin Gunnel with Social Turnicates by Jim Ramaglia
Nikon D7000 | 60 mm | 1/125th | *f* 36 | ISO 160

Puget Sound King Crab by Jim Ramaglia
Nikon D7000 | 60 mm | 1/125th | *f* 14 | ISO 160

Wolf Eel and Leather Star by Jim Ramaglia
Nikon D7000 | 38 mm | 1/80th | *f* 10 | ISO 100

# Pacific Northwest Diver: Jody Lynn Clark



Legal assistant by day, underwater critter seeker by night. I live in New Westminster, British Columbia and my total dive number count is just over 200. I was hovering around 75 a year ago, despite being a solo parent of a four year old future scuba diver princess. Whenever a scuba diver comes on the television, or is pictured in a magazine, she points at it and she says proudly, "That's mommy!!"

In 2008, in my mid-30's, I traded a motorcycle passion for SCUBA, and obtained my Open Water certification, followed by nitrox in Honolulu in 2011, and Advanced in Cozumel in 2012. Until early 2013, I had only returned to the chilly BC ocean to give local diving a try once or twice in a rented drysuit as I mainly focused on travel with the majority of my diving in Cozumel.

In February 2013, I decided that vacation diving just wasn't enough, and purchased a drysuit. My boyfriend, a tech diver who currently lives in Texas, had taken a contract position in the Seattle area, so it was as good a time as any. He loaded his little car with all his dive gear and drove from Texas to Seattle. We met up nearly every weekend to dive: It was on one of these weekends I spotted my very first Pacific Spiny Lumpsucker on a DUI Demo Day at Les Davis Park!

During 2013, I completed about 60 local dives, both via shore and by boat. My favorite way to dive our local waters is by boat as you can get out to some of the more scenic less dove smaller islands out in Howe Sound. Marc Palay owns a charter operation called New World Diving and he takes small groups into Howe Sound or Indian Arm on weekends, weather permitting.

I had been warm water diving with my Canon Powershot S95, without strobes or video light, in an underwater FIX housing for several years. Before a trip to Bonaire in July/August of 2013, I decided to purchase a pair of Inon D2000 strobes and a Nauticam flip diopter for macro use. This is when my love for under water photography took on a life of its own.

I borrowed an Inon UCL 165m67 close-up lens from my boyfriend during our Bonaire dives. He let me to use the macro lens on my camera until he wanted to shoot super macro. He would motion me over, unscrew the lens from my camera and double stack it onto his own Canon G12 rig. We'd then unscrew his two lenses and I'd get my turn with the wee little thing. I returned from that trip with a burning desire to drag a camera with me on each and every dive I made from there on out.

I had a major problem with my Nauticam flip diopter, however. It didn't exactly fit my FIX housing. We came up with a temporary solution in Bonaire by cutting up a wrist seal into the shape of an O and using that to secure the diopter. It was difficult to take the camera apart for cleaning and get it back on properly. We needed another fix.

My dive buddy/boyfriend suggested filing down the metal on the flip: he assured me this would resolve the rotation problem. I was reluctant (you want to file my $300 flip adapter?!), but eager to get things working properly. Trusting his advice, this solution was executed on a hotel patio in Playa del Carmen on another dive vacation. The close-up lens that I had been "borrowing" since Spring was then gifted to me by him on that trip: now it was all mine!

I had also purchased a FIX UWL-28 fisheye wet mount conversion for 52mm mounts (wide angle lens) to take shots of the cenotes in the Mayan Riviera. My first photos with the lens were a lot of fun: I had fallen for wide angle just as much as macro. To round off my camera equipment, I also have a collection of Sola's – a video 2000, Dive 800, Photo 800, and a Nightsea which I won from Light & Motion on my Scubaboard Invasion trip to Bonaire. One of my Sola's can be mounted on top of my FIX housing. The video 2000 has the best battery life, so it is used most often as my primary dive light.

I also use a Nightsea light with a few accessories for night diving: a yellow lens cover and blue strobe cover for one of my strobes, and of course the NightSea light itself. Follow the link to a video I took during Bonaire utilizing the NightSea. I will be taking Nightsea photos on my next vacation adventure to Roatan for two weeks this spring.

My first cold water dive with the full camera setup

was at Tuwanek, BC on the Sunshine Coast in the Summer of 2013. I was able to capture a few of my favorite images of a lion's mane jelly. I had only seen one previous to that, out at Whytecliff, so it was a moment that I would never forget, especially because I got a spectacular picture of it!

My favorite dive of all time was with the sea lions out at Hornby Island, B.C. in November 2013 and although I am new to video (both taking and editing), I only got one dive with them and I didn't want to miss a thing. Click on the link to my dive with the sea lions. There was one special moment where I was almost nose to nose with one of the gigantic creatures: it is etched in my mind forever. We are truly blessed to be able to experience such amazing diving right here in our backyard and I am grateful to be able to share what I see with those who cannot get the chance to do the dives that I have done.

Being a new underwater photographer, I don't feel as though I have much advice to give at this point. I try to get as close to my subject as possible to minimize the particulate in the water between my lens and what I want the photo of, and I try to not disturb any of the beauty that I wish to capture in photos by my visit to that spot.

I only hope new divers and those considering photography consider the delicate UW environment, make sure they have good buoyancy and general dive skills under control, that they are able to be a good buddy to their dive partner first and foremost, and that the photography only comes second to that.

e-Mail: jodylynn007@hotmail.com
Flickr: http://www.flickr.com/photos/jodylynn007/sets
YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/user/r1girl007/videos


Red Eyed Medusa by Jody Lynn Clark
Canon PowerShot S95 | 6 mm | 1/60th | f 5.6 | ISO 250


Frosted Nudibranch by Jody Lynn Clark
Canon PowerShot S95 | 6 mm | 1/60th | f 5.6 | ISO 250

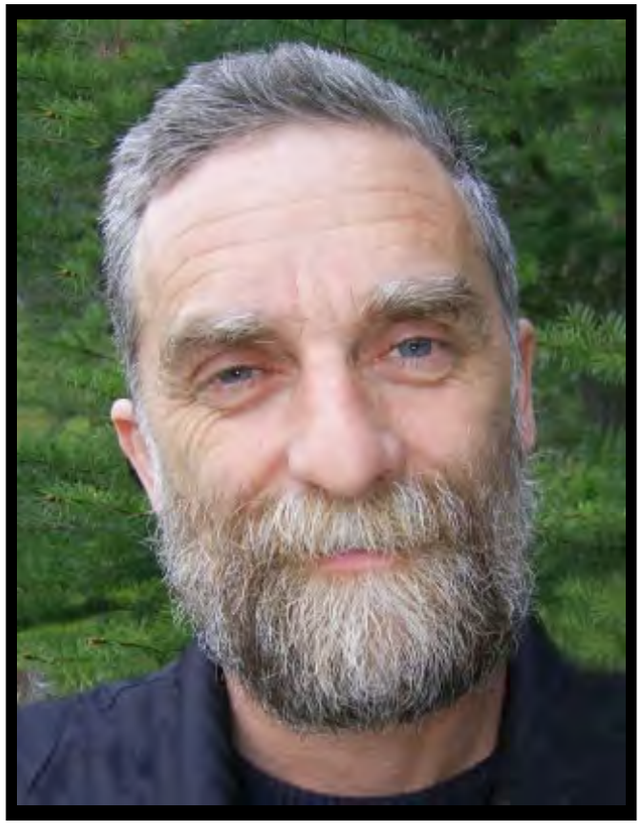

Lions' Mane Jelly by Jody Lynn Clark
Canon PowerShot S95 | 6 mm | 1/60th | *f* 5.6 | ISO 100


Red Flabellina Nudibranch by Jody Lynn Clark
Canon PowerShot S95 | 6 mm | 1/60th | *f* 8 | ISO 100


Giant Nudibranch by Jody Lynn Clark
Canon PowerShot S95 | 6 mm | 1/60th | ƒ 8 | ISO 100


Hornby Island Sea Lion Video by Jody Lynn Clark
Canon PowerShot S95

# Pacific Northwest Diver: 49th Parallel Dive Charters



-Peter Luckham


Thetis Island is home base for 49th Parallel Dive Charters. It is the only operator who explores and dives the Stuart and Trincomali Channels off Vancouver Island on a weekly basis. Peter Luckham

Stuart Channel dive sites feature reefs and pinnacles that are home to cloud sponge, octopus, wolf-eel and abundant rockfish, some unique species include black rockfish, brown rockfish, tiger rockfish and vermilion rockfish. Seals are often observed on some of our haul out reefs.

Pick-ups can also be arranged at Chemainus on Vancouver Island, as well as some of the surrounding Gulf Island ports.

Trincomali Channel has many current dependent dive sites including Porlier Pass, Alcala and Galiano Wall. With the strong tidal exchange, there are many species of rockfish, giant lingcod, soft corals, nudibranch, sea star and anemones.

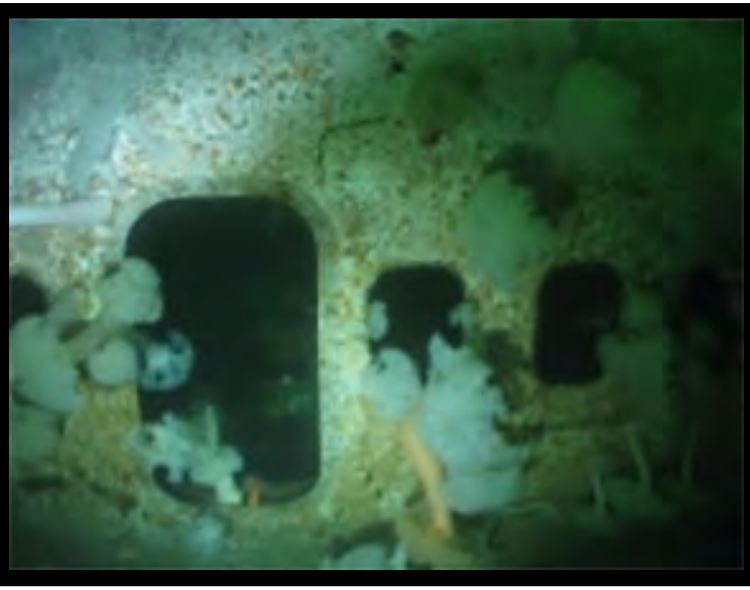
The dive platform is "Fat Cat," a four diver catamaran that can cruise at 20 knots for quick transit to dive sites. There is ample room for dive gear and cameras.

Trincomali Channel has many current dependent dive sites including Porlier Pass, Alcala and Galiano Wall. With the strong tidal exchange, there are many species of rockfish, giant lingcod, soft corals, nudibranch, sea star and anemones.

If you are interested in wreck diving and photography, the historic 1868 Del Norte wreck, and 737 airplane that was sunk in 2006 off Chemainus will keep you well occupied!

Overnight accommodation is available at Cedar Beach Ocean Lodge as well as at various B&B's in Chemainus on Vancouver Island.

Phone: 250.252.0758
e-Mail: letsdive@divemaster.ca
Web: http://www.divemaster.ca/index.html

Large Puget Sound King Crab, Sansom Narrows

Moon Jelly, Sansom Narrows

Kelp Greenling, Black Rock, Porlier Pass

Slime & Blood Sea Stars, Black Rock, Porlier Pass

# Pacific Northwest Diver: Travel Corner

**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.

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**Monterey/Pt Lobos Kelp Forest** | May 11 - 16, 2014 | Trip estimate $800

Join the annual trip south to dive the kelp forests in Pt Lobos and Monterey. This year we are planning a meet-up and boat dive with the Northern California Underwater Photographic Society. Costs include Pt Lobos fees, lodging, and at least one day of boat diving. Remainder of dives will be shore based. The timing also coincides with Cooking for Solutions event at the Monterey Bay Aquarium, May 16-18.

Objectives: Harbor seals, sea otter, sea lion, rock fish, macro subjects.

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**Cabo Pulmo & La Paz** | October 25 - November 1, 2014 | Trip estimate is $1,100

We head back to 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 Cabo or La Paz.

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

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**Raja Ampat on the Damai II** | January 11 - 22, 2015 | Trip estimate $6,600-7,100

Join Optical Ocean's Jack Connick and Martin Heyn for 11 days as we dive and sail beautiful Indonesian waters onboard the Damai II liveaboard, one of the most luxurious liveaboards catering to diving photographers. Either click on the link, or call the shop at 800.359.1295.

Objectives: Mantas to pygmy seahorses, and everything in between.

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**Anilao's Crystal Blue with Marli Wakeling** | March, 15-25, 2015 | Trip estimate is $1,965

Critter expert and outstanding underwater photographer Marli Wakeling is combining forces with Crystal Blue's Mike Bartik for a Philippine adventure in the Spring of 2015. Price includes food, lodging, diving, surface transportation from Manila to the resort. Not included are air to and from Manila, and alcoholic beverages. A $500 deposit is required to hold a spot. If you are interested, please contact Marli Wakeling.

Objectives: Nudibranchs, frogfish, mimic octo, blue-ring octo, wonderpus octo, blue ribbon eel.

## Astounding Anilao: Critter Fest!

Marli Wakeling

Dreaming of warm water and palm trees? At this chilly time of year, thoughts turn to planning a respite from the rain and snow. Last Spring, I had the pleasure of experiencing the wonders of diving in Anilao, while staying at Crystal Blue Resort which is managed by underwater photo pro Mike Bartick.

You may have seen Mike's great photos and articles in Sport Diver and Alert Diver lately; he is extremely knowledgeable about both photography and the underwater critters that live in the area. The resort has been designed with the underwater photographer in mind, and certainly did not disappoint. As an addict of Lembeh Strait, I was skeptical that another dive destination could compare.

The dive sites of Anilao and Crystal Blue Resort definitely rank highly on my list of dive destinations for photography; as a result, I have organized a group trip for March 15th-25th of 2015, allowing plenty of time to save and plan for a great dive experience. Trip fees will be divided into three payments, with a $500 U.S. deposit required to hold your spot.

For those of us on the West Coast, Manila is an easy hop over the pond. Although several airlines fly to Manila via other cities, such as Taipei or Hong Kong, Philippine Airlines flies from your choice of Vancouver, SFO, or LAX direct. This saves on lengthy layovers or the added inconvenience and expense of an overnight hotel stay en route. The resort staff met us at Ninoy Aquino International Airport, and we were transported by air conditioned van to the resort, a trip that lasted about 2 1/2 hours.

The resort is, like most in the area, perched on a cliff overlooking Balayan Bay. The sixteen air-conditioned rooms with private baths have different configurations to suit clients' various needs. The upper rooms do require the climbing of a few extra stairs, but the reward is the spectacular view: sunsets on my balcony were a daily enjoyment! There is even a newly completed spa; massages were a welcome and inexpensive treat.

Meals are served buffet style, and feature a number of choices to suit every taste. Vegetarian and Vegan options are available with advance notice. There is also a bar that overlooks the water to unwind after a great day of diving adventures.

One of the most appreciated aspects of Crystal Blue was the camera room, one of the best that I have found in my travels. Twenty-five large camera bays and four video camera stalls ensure that you have plenty of room to work on your gear. There is even room to store your camera cases under your stall. The dive deck area is well organized, and protected from the sun, which shone daily for our stay in mid-March. There are large rinse tanks for gear and photographic equipment, and many drying racks.

The diving is done from dual outrigger bancas; the normal diver to guide ratio is 4:1. Your gear is handled expertly by the staff; this is true valet style diving, and will spoil you for do-it-yourself diving back home! Most dive sites are a short distance from the resort. The guides are trained not only in finding those unusual critters we travel to see and photograph, but to assist photographers in getting those special captures. They know precisely where

to find those well camouflaged animals that we simply swim right by. You will definitely cross off some of your "wish list" critters, from pygmy seahorses to stargazers to new species of sea slugs.

Anilao is heaven for muck diving: it is what I had traveled for, and I was truly impressed with the variety of invertebrate life and fish. This is not generally big animal territory. There are schools of jacks at Twin Rocks, and one might see a turtle while on the outer sites. Once in a while, even whale sharks have been seen, but the emphasis here is on the weird and wonderful: I found over 80 species of nudibranchs, many that I had never seen, numerous types of cephalopods, including mimic,

blue-ring and wonderpus octopus, bobtail squid and Flamboyant cuttlefish.

On our very first dive, the visibility was great, and I photographed a soft coral crab, hairy squat lobsters, several blue ribbon eels and numerous nudibranchs. Some of the muck dives were reminiscent of Lembeh Strait, with dark sandy slopes and coral outcroppings. Others, however, had far more hard and soft corals and crinoids, and provided the opportunity to see various shrimp, anemone fish, and several different frogfish species, including a particularly hirsute Hairy frogfish that was trolling for prey with its worm-like lure. A pleasant surprise was that Anilao offers more than muck diving: there

are several beautiful off shore sites that are coral reef dives. At Beatrice and Sombrero, we witnessed clear tropical waters teeming with reef fish and soft corals. There is even a sunken barge at Dari-Laut, where there is a resident school of Longfin batfish eager to pose for your wide angle shots. We saw large green turtles on several dives as well. Night diving was fantastic; Anilao pier and Twin Rocks provided great shallow water night diving with cephalopods in abundance, anemone hermit crabs, a xeno crab and numerous warty frogfish along with a surprised couple of mating swimming crabs! Looking back at my dive log, I wrote, "I am so glad I came here; I love Crystal Blue and Anilao diving". The resort and I are planning some workshops, photo shows and fun events that will surely make it a memorable trip for participants.

As this is organized as a group trip, any discounts applied depend on the total number of participants. The group price will be adjusted further if there are more than 8 participants, and will be reflected in the final payment.

The base price for the trip is $1,965, (Dbl. room occ.) and includes up to 32 dives, (max. 4/day) all meals, transfers, park fees, A/C accommodation, Boats and guides, free nitrox, bottled water (X2 daily), free refills, free coffee, bulk water, and tea. Excluded are: air transport to Manila, insurance (trip and evacuation), alcoholic beverages and soft drinks, spa use and gratuities to resort and dive staff. Come join us for a terrific photo trip to astounding Anilao and Crystal Blue Resort. Please see the travel section for additional information.

# Pacific Northwest Diver: Monitor Calibration

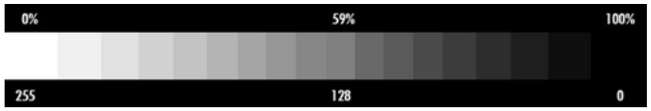
Louis Au
CreStock, Toronto

For any photographer, and especially underwater photographers, the ability to control colours is essential. Getting colours to match between devices, on-line, or making presentations, can be challenging. If your monitor is not displaying colours and shades accurately, then all your efforts to correct white balance and colour will be for naught. The results on-line or in printed media will be unpredictable. And yes, all displays need calibration.

So, what is monitor calibration and why is it important? Monitor calibration and profiling is the process in which you measure the colour gamut of a particular monitor with a colorimeter (measuring instrument) and produce a description of this information in a profile so that applications like Adobe Photoshop can render the colours on screen accurately.

The goal of monitor calibration is to bring your monitor into compliance with a predefined standard white point colour temperature of 6500 Kelvin. This process helps you eliminate any colour cast on your monitor, makes your monitor's grays as neutral as possible, and can standardize image display across different monitors on different workstations, computers, displays, and projectors.

Having a working environment calibrated to the industry standard will ensure consistency and guarantee WYSIWWG (What you see is what we get). This is arguably the most important step in the colour managed workflow because it is where you make important colour and quality decisions about your images.




If you are unable to differentiate all the steps or seeing a colour bias from the stepwedge above, then you are indeed a victim of bad monitor profiling or worse, a bad monitor.

The easiest and cheapest way to calibrate your display is by using software based tools in making adjustments to the brightness and contrast settings. On the Mac, you can use the Display Calibrator Assistant that comes with OSX. On Windows 7, you can access the Display Colour Calibrator via the Colour Management option in the Control Panel. Please note that these adjustment methods can be crude and inaccurate because they rely solely on eyeballing.

In order to create an accurate and useful profile, a hardware device (colorimeter) is required. All commercial monitor calibration software lets you calibrate and characterize your monitor to a standard and then save the settings as an ICC-compliant profile available to your operating system and imaging applications. The most popular profiling solutions on the market today are the X-Rite Photo ColorMunki and Datacolor Spyder3Elite or 3Pro. The bottom photo in the center column shows the hardware on a display.

Please note that before you invest in any software and hardware solution, make sure it can deal with both LCD and LED display technologies.

Before calibrating your monitor, ensure that you have a neutral gray desktop and your monitor has been warmed up for at least 45 minutes. Your ideal working environment should also have controlled and consistent viewing conditions with subdued neutral lighting.

The frequency of your calibration routine depends on how often you use your monitor. At Crestock, we recommend calibrating monitors at least once a month.

Do not assume that every calibration is perfect. It is important to verify the quality of the calibrated monitor afterwards. The easiest way is to create a grayscale gradient in Photoshop for a quick visual check.

As the above article indicated, having a monitor calibrated to the industry standard is an essential part of your complex digital colour workflow. Accurate on-screen colour ensures what you see on screen is what you get in printed media and on the web.

# 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 critters, photographers, dive clubs, and operators/resorts in your area we have several key contacts. 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.

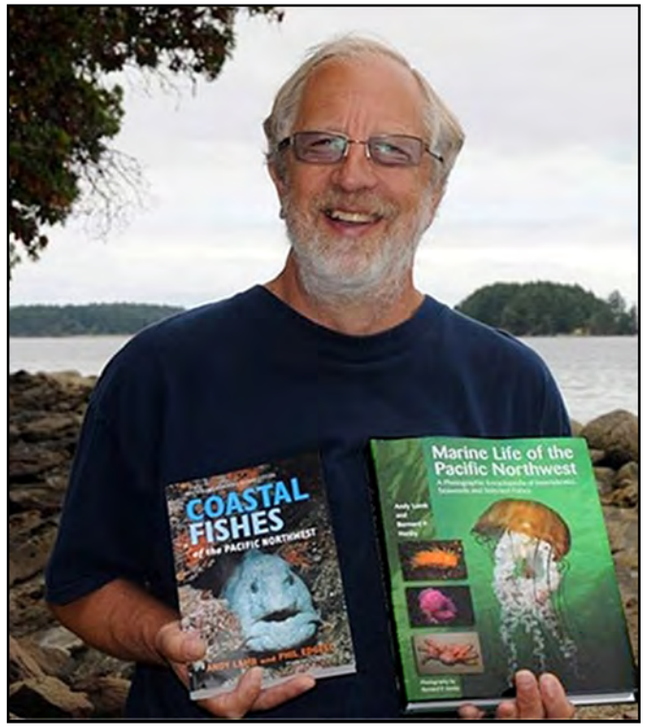
Marli Wakeling

604.549.0095 | scubamarli@gmail.com
www.marliwakeling.com

Jim Boon

206.947.0297 | jamesboon@me.com
www.jimboon.com

Andy Lamb




250.246.9770 | andylamb@telus.net
http://www.cedar-beach.com/index.shtml

Editor/Publisher: Dan Clements

425.418.8755 | dan@e-clements.com
www.e-Clements.com