

The C word

I'm writing this at the beginning of the 6th week of lockdown.

The past is past and the only certainty about the future is that it is totally uncertain and that definitely affects us underwater photographers.

What was the norm of longhaul dive trips is unlikely to be so for some considerable time but maybe, in time, hopefully, we'll look back and be grateful.

In a uniquely short space of time I am told that our atmosphere is so much the better for obvious reasons. We're not moving about anywhere near as much by car or aeroplane, the market for fish is a shadow of it's former and the demand for fossil fuels is nearly negative. That means less exhaust pollution, a chance for the marine world to regroup and much less need to extract oil and coal.

It would be nice to think that all of these benefits would have a long lasting, perhaps permanent, effect but I suspect, when all this lifts, even though it will be many months and possibly even years, we'll be jetting off as never before and once again we will have squandered a unique opportunity.

Here's hoping not.

Editorial

UwP back issues

I've not broadcast this before but a while back I changed the policy of keeping the latest issue of UwP free but charging a measley 99p for each back issue. True it generated some income but nowhere near enough to become a sustainable business model so I opened up the gates again and all 113 back issues are still available for free.

They provide a possibly unique record of underwater photography equipment and images over the past nearly 20 years and it has been my pleasure to work with so many time generous and talented contributors.

What it also does in this time of lockdown is help you fill your time with stories of the past and feed your dreams of the future.

Enjoy.

UP supplement

Keen (or should that be older!) readers will probably know that from December 1986 I published a printed magazine entitled simply Underwater Photography or 'UP' for short.

Published bi-monthly it ran for two years before I expanded it into SportDiver which I sold two years later and it continued with a PADI alliance from then on.

The reason I am telling you this is to explain that the last section of each UwP issue for the next two years will include an issue of UP from way back then.

It's the perfect way to recycle them and provide another unique insight of what underwater photography was like well over 30 years ago.

Looking at the first issue the thing that hits me is how bad the quality of the images were; not photographically but from a printing point of view. It was always a problem with blue water backgrounds and then there was the fact that I could only afford to have every other spread in colour! Having said that I think there is a certain warmth to the delivery and it is a definite reminder that the underwater photography world was much smaller in those days.

Savour.

My backyard

Little did I realise how timely it was to encourage readers to stay local for once and take in the dives which are a short distance away rather than thousands of miles there and back by plane.

The response has been positive and Dan Bolt's excellent article about his home turf of South Devon is a great example of less is more. In writing it, I suspect, and certainly for me reading it, I got a real sense of love for his locale made doubly so by the lockdown denying him and his buddies access during what has been some of the best visibility we have ever seen in the area!

The old saying 'You never know what you've got til it's gone' is so true but, in this case, it hasn't actually gone; we can still see it but can't immerse ourselves in it.

Dan's article is a great reminder of how much local diving means and how much we miss it.

Hopefully the lockdown will ease slowly and we will, once again, be able to rejoice in the simple pleasures so close to us.

Bring it on.

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