

Parting Shot 1

I have yet to shoot the lizardfish with some sort of smaller individual caught in its maw. A photo many of my colleagues have displayed.

Being in the right place at the right time for predation is a combination of planetary alignment and horse shoes. So I search for fish eating fish on dives where I have the appropriate Canon 100mm macro lens or even my new found friend the Sigma 70mm ART macro.

When I am swimming about with my Canon 8-15mm fisheye zoom I try not to envision my lizardfish or the hopelessness I would feel if its mouth contained a soon to be meal.

So it was with great enthusiasm and wonder when I spied this trumpetfish, *Aulostomus chinensis*, off the Kona Coast dart after a small filefish. You would think that it would concentrate on the meal at hand rather than this bubble blowing twin strobed monster bearing down upon it. But no. That was not the case. And as I pursued the elongated oddity it turned briefly just before the final swallow to reveal the last view the small filefish had through the transparent trap of this cunning predator.



*This trumpetfish, *Aulostomus chinensis*, has just captured a small filefish that can be seen through the lower portion of its transparent jaw being consumed, Maui, Hawaii.*

Canon EOS 5D, Ikelite housing and strobes, Canon EF100 F2.8 macro, 1/60th @ F11. ISO 320.

David Fleetham
www.davidfleetham.com

**Do you have a shot
which has a story within a story?
If so e mail it with up to 500 words of text
and yours could be the next Parting Shot.**

peter@uwpmag.com

Parting Shot 2

Labuan Bajo at the moment is growing touristically faster than any other place in Indonesia. The main attractions are the LiveAboards around the multitude of small islands in the area.

The Phinisi is the traditional boat in Indonesia and hundreds of these boats take scuba divers, freedivers, snorkelers and anyone else who wants the peace of mind of cruising this beautiful polynesia.

Among the attractions are stunning beaches, caves, mountain treks and of course great dive spots. The biomass and biodiversity in the islands around Labuan Bajo are extraordinary.

We were aboard the Maipa Deapati, a 32.5m Phinisi with 6 cabins, 12 freedivers and 4 instructors as guides. On the third day we visited the Manta point. As the name implies it is a spot that offers regular encounters with the big Mobulas.

On that day the current was strong but we were lucky because many Mantas were on the reef. We drifted a few times before finding the good spots on the reef. I waited for the current to drift me towards the point where the currents meet and dove down to meet the gentle giants. I was lucky to have 7 mantas in my frame. I have met them before but never had the opportunity to see so many at the same time.

The experience was amazing and the highlight of the trip that included encounters with sharks, turtles and even a dugong.

Samsul Rois
Instagram



The picture was shot on breath hold with Sony A6400 and a Tokina AT-X 10-17mm f/3.5-4.5 DX AF Lens For Canon with a Metabones Canon EF Lens to Sony NEX Smart Adapter (Mark IV). Sea Frogs SALTED LINE Waterproof Housing for Sony A6xxx camera series and a 6" Dry Dome Port. f/9, 1/250 sec , ISO400, A Mode.

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Parting Shot 3

In 2005, I went on my first Liveaboard to Raja Ampat. When we arrived in Sorong, we found that two of the other guests had been delayed by a day. As there were only 5 of us on the boat, the Captain decided to wait for the other two. To keep us amused, they suggested a few dives in Sorong Harbour. This is unusual, as usually boats leave the busy harbour as quickly as possible to the Dampier Strait, or at least to Matan Island.

So off we went. We descended and as I was getting my bearings in the relatively murky water, something in my peripheral vision caught my eye. I looked over, and to my surprise saw this chap walking on the seabed. As you can see from the image, he had little equipment, with a regulator connected to an air supply on the surface, around 10 metres above. He was holding a rock with one hand to keep himself submerged. In his other hand he was sorting through various pieces of junk on the seafloor. It seemed we had come across a fairly niche profession; Underwater Scrap Merchant.

He was friendly, gave a little wave, I waved back. I indicated that I wanted to take his picture and he put on his best pose for the image here.

Swimming away, I was left musing how much equipment he was “missing”. No tank, BCD, spare regulator, wetsuit, safety sausage, booties nor fins, proper weights nor weight belt, and not even a mirror nor whistle. He did, though, have some stylish finger-less gloves.

But I did admire his freedom, and imagined that when he lay in bed that night after his hard day's work, he had a giggle about that namby-pamby tourist he saw underwater and all that junk



Nikon D70, Subal housing, Nikkor 10.5mm F2.8 fisheye, 2 x Sea & Sea YS110 strobes, 1/60th @F7.1. ISO 200

he was burdened with.

He has a point... When I reflect on my most significant near misses that I have had underwater, I know they are all due to my stupidity and dull thinking. I have long suspected that all the gear, videos and lessons I have had gives me a false sense of security and I often fail to just *think* enough underwater. I suspect this chap is well aware of the consequences of dropping his rock or suddenly losing his air supply, if just because those things have happened many times – and he survived!

Colin Marshall
colintrmarshall@yahoo.com

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Marshall's Mysteries - Answers



A Arcturid Isopod (*Astacilla* sp, perhaps *Astacilla spinata*) – one of the over 10,000 species of isopods known worldwide (relatives of woodlice).

The eye is circled in green, just below the antennae on the right.

Astacilla sp also found in deepsea environments, rarely in relatively shallow coral reefs.



B Juvenile Crown-of-thorns Seastar (*Acanthaster planci*) on coral disc (*Fungia* sp).

Adult urchin seen below, having a rest on the sand after devouring some coral.

From personal experience, I can testify that the spines are indeed venomous, causing pain & swelling and allegedly can even result in death by anaphylactic shock.



C Shrimp-like lure of Spotfin Frogfish (*Antennatus nummifer*, previously *Antennarius nummifer*).

The banded “fishing rod” is called the illicium and the shrimp-like bait is the esca. Amazingly, these esca regenerate if bitten off by prey, although the frogfish may go hungry until the esca grows back.

Slightly sneaky as image was just a close-up... Full profile below :



D Seed Shrimp (*Vargula hilgendorfi*), a myodocopid ostracod, ie a crustacean.

Allegedly, there are some ostracods that are bioluminescent, hence also called “Sea-fireflies”, and some, when crushed, give off enough light “to read a newspaper”, but let’s not do that...



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More detail on this Starfish can be found on page 7 of “Starfishes and Other Echinoderms of the Tropical Indo-Pacific” by Andrey Ryanskiy.



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More detail on this Frogfish can be found on page 147 of Volume 1 of “Reef Fishes of the East Indies” by Gerry Allen and Mark Erdmann.

If you think any of the identifications or information above is wrong, please let me know at colintrmarshall@yahoo.com. Feel free to send me any images of anything you’d like some help in identifying – any particularly interesting mysteries may be included in future Underwater Photography issues.

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