

Marelux Smart Optical Flash Tube (SOFT)

by Dan Bolt

The new Marelux Smart Optical Flash Tube (SOFT) landed on my doorstep with a hefty thud only a week ago, and right on queue the weather turned foul and ruined the visibility in all my local dive sites. Typical.

However, that didn't stop me having a good look at this well engineered snoot. The first impression you get when opening the carry-case is that this is a very well-built product. Once you attach the mounting ring (called the Dock) to your strobe (all major brands are catered for), it takes just a simple, but positive, click-and-twist operation to mount and dis-mount the SOFT. It literally takes just one second.

This is a powered snoot but the battery is for the aiming light and not the actual photographic light – that still comes from your strobe. That built-in aiming light not only shows you where your strobe light will hit, but it also mirrors the size of the light spot. The SOFT allows for a beam diameter between 8mm and 50mm at working distance of 130mm from the end of the snoot. The action of the 'Beam spot adjustment knob' is reassuringly positive, and easy to use even with 5mm gloves on.

I'm a huge fan of snoots and use one on at least 30% of all my dives. And so like a kid with a new toy I did manage one dive in the crap vis (it was literally about 1m) and these images are the result. The subject was a 5cm long Variable Blenny, tending to his eggs inside an old oyster shell.

I can't wait to use the SOFT in good conditions, I've a feeling we're going to be very good friends.

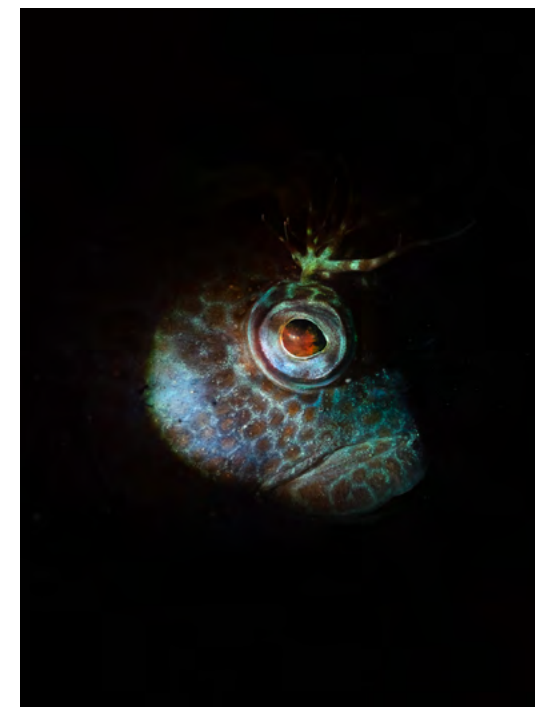


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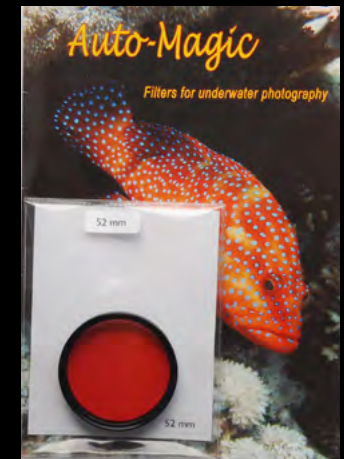
www.underwaterpics.co.uk

*Olympus OM-D E-M1, Panasonic 45mm macro,
1/320th, f/11, iso320.*

*Aquatica AE-M1 housing, Sea & Sea YS-D1 strobe,
Marelux SOFT.*



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