

Parting Shot

by David Fleetham

When I first started to see blackwater images of crustaceans riding jellyfish I put these shots high on my bucket list. When I finally came across this combination I shook my head so hard that my mask nearly flooded.

The shrimp is not just riding the medusa, it is driving the pair in nonstop circles that would make any mere mortal toss their cookies.

After twenty shots or so I decided I had better check to see what I had shot to make sure I was getting something. Ikelite's TTL had nailed the exposure, but seconds later when I went to resume pulling the trigger the tiny pair had disappeared into the blackness. Such is the frustration and elation of blackwater diving.

I have encountered more of these swirling partnerships on subsequent blackwater dives and each time I learn a little more of how to shoot this situation. You would think that after nearly five decades of photographing creatures underwater I would have this down, but it turns out that the learning curve is never ending.

Downline provided by the Manta Ray Bay Resort and Yap Divers who regularly take divers out into the darkness. Jennifer and I will be back in Yap for MantaFest 2025. August 23 through September 7, 2025.

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Shot with a Canon EOS R5 mirrorless in an Ikelite dry-lock housing with a Canon RF 100mm macro lens, 1/125 sec, F16, ISO 320, with two very powerful Ikelite 230 strobes set on TTL.

Do you have a shot which has a story within a story?
If so e mail it with up to 750 words of text and yours could be the next Parting Shot.
Images can be any size bigger than 20cm (horizontal or vertical) @ 150dpi saved as jpeg format and about 500 - 750 words would be fine.)

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