

Parting Shot(s)

by David Fleetham

Diving in Tulamben, Bali, Indonesia, often means navigating over expansive stretches of dark volcanic sand—a unique seascape that hosts a wealth of fascinating macro subjects. Among the most iconic are the shrimp-goby pairs: a symbiotic relationship in which a watchful goby stands guard at the entrance of a burrow that's meticulously excavated and maintained by a nearly blind snapping shrimp. These partnerships are common across the sloping black sand plains and make for classic behavior shots.

On several dives, I encountered small groups of redspot dartfish, *Ptereleotris rubristigma*. Typically skittish, they would scatter as I inched closer, making them a challenging subject to photograph. However, on one occasion, I followed a lone dartfish as it hovered momentarily above a shrimp-goby burrow. As I approached with my camera rig, the dartfish suddenly darted down into the shared burrow alongside the goby and shrimp, all three disappearing into the sand in a blur.

Until that moment, I had assumed these burrows were the exclusive territory of their primary tenants. But as this encounter reminded me, the underwater world is full of surprises—and sometimes, the phrase “any port in a storm” applies just as much to marine life as it does to sailors.

David Fleetham
www.davidfleetham.com



Shot with a Canon EOS R5 mirrorless in an Ikelite dry-lock housing with a Canon RF 100mm macro lens, 1/160 sec, F14, ISO 1000, 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.)

peter@uwpmag.com

UwP146
Sept/Oct 2025
will be available on 1st Sept 2025

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