

Taiji dolphins

I'm writing about the article on the dolphin slaughter in Taiji, Japan that appeared in issue 17. I've lived here in Japan for the last 20 years and have run up against the Japanese attitude towards killing whales since day 1.

I am a lecturer at a university here and from time to time I bring up the issue in my classes to see if attitudes have changed. I showed one class of Japanese freshmen the photos from Sea Shepherd's site and was shocked to find that they were shocked. I was pleased to get questions like "Who eats dolphins?" and "Why are they doing that?"

The Sea Shepherd article is correct in that very few people here know about what is happening. I applaud their efforts to show the world what is going on there. On the other hand, I think fighting with the local fishermen is not a productive way to rescue those dolphins and stop the killing permanently. It only serves to widen the rift and cement opinions. Since the killing of dolphins for Japanese fishermen is primarily financial issue (I think the right wing in Japan may feel that it's also a patriotic issue), I feel that the \$8,000 the two activists were fined would have been better used to "buy" the dolphins. I've read that fishermen receive \$500 - \$1000 dollars per carcass. They could have saved 8 to 16 dolphins with that money.

Sending emails in English and stirring up anger will do little. Sending buyers ready to pay twice or three times the price will change minds in a hurry. It certainly won't be as easy as that. Experience has taught me that doing anything in Japan is rarely easy. But money talks. A worldwide fundraising campaign to buy the dolphins will go far to change minds here and insure that these fishermen can still make a living. Almost no one eats whale or dolphin

Readers Lives

meat here. The article is correct in that whale meat is available in some coastal supermarkets, but is certainly no where to be found elsewhere. This is just a way to subsidize the fishermen.

Terrorism even ecoterrorism can be avoided.

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Digital article complaint

Will Postlethwaite's article entitled, "The great digital debate" (UwP17) gives almost no insight into the true differences between film and digital underwater photography. It is hard enough to make a qualified comparison with properly chosen digital and film rigs; choosing to compare an Olympus C-5050 to a Nikon F90X makes an analysis virtually impossible.

Compared images were framed differently, exposed differently, and generally compared using superficial observations. One of digital imaging's key workflow differences is that the image is not complete after the shutter has been depressed. Most good digital photographers shoot to capture as much raw information as possible, which does not typically yield a perfect, competing photo straight out of the camera (although there are settings that can overcome much of this).

There are many more grievances I have with Mr. Postlethwaite's statements, but it would take

considerable real estate to go through them all. I recommend that he spend some quality time—both during, and after the dive—to learn what his new digital camera is really capable of.

Eric Cheng
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All I can say is that I am willing to learn. I think this IS what the debate needs to be about. What I showed was, as I stated a rough comparison of the sort most people will do. It was never meant to be a rigorous analysis. I have not seen such an analysis anywhere? If there is one then that would be fascinating.

I am happy for you to publish this letter as I think it adds to the debate and the information people have to hand.

Controversy is never really a bad thing?

Will
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Digital article praise

Just a short note to say how much MORE I am enjoying UWP in its new format. I set UWP17 to - fit to width - and I find I can read a whole page without shuffling up and down.

Great Mag and a great innovation.

BTW the article by Will Postlethwaite about digital v Film was one of the best I have read. Completely calm, non emotional and no axe to grind.

I think my Nikon, Aquatica and Velvia is good for another 5 years. Then off to digital.

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Want to have your say?
E mail peter@uwpmag.com

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A View To A Thrill

Photo: 5-inch guns, USS Saratoga, Balint Aotl, By Jim Beasly

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