

Editorial

Articles in UwP it would appear are like London buses. None turn up for ages and then three turn up all at once. Such is true for 3 articles in this Issue about underwater photography courses.

Regardless of how unplanned UwP is, all of these articles illustrate that there is no better way to improve your underwater photography skills than to go away on a trip with like minded individuals under the tutelage of an experienced pro.

In this issue we feature no less than 5 such courses and all of those who attended the various trips came away with the same conclusion - my underwater photography came on leaps and bounds as a result.

Even if you take the services of a photo pro out of the equation, there is still no better way to improve and enjoy your underwater photography than to dive with other underwater photographers. True, you may never see them underwater but the feedback and conversations in the evening whilst looking at others results could never be achieved by operating in isolation.

Peter Rowlands
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Readers Lives

Complaint

I just wanted to drop you a quick note to complain. Since reading UW P I have been seduced into taking trips to Sri Lanka Dahab Egypt, now Bali on Jan 22. You are costing me a fortune! I have purchased a compact digital housing, (I had a perfectly good film outfit but you convinced me I needed to try digital). This week I purchased an SLR housing and I see new strobes, arms and sync cords in my future. This addiction is your fault. I won't even mention the cost of books, magazines and computer software and hardware. Please stop publishing these articles and pictures that entice me to spend all this money, you're killing me!

On a more serious note, I love the magazine and your advertisers should too! Thanks very much.

David Bethune

Hi David

Many thanks for your e mail.

Here at UwP we always take complaints very seriously but in your case I have no sympathy. You are embarking on a most enjoyable, frustrating, bank balance emptying, inspiring, educating experience. In

addition I'd like to include your letter in the next issue so you have already become a published journalist....

Peter Rowlands

The following e mails were received after my editorial in the last issue UwP46 complaining that the standard of recent BBC underwater series had been severely compromised by following a Steve Irwin type delivery and American financial influence. I was worried my comments might lose our Australian and American readers but it turns out I was pleasantly wrong...

Dumb BBC

After just having read your editorial in the recently released Underwater Photography Magazine issue 46, I must wholeheartedly agree with your take on the whole underwater documentary industry and indeed the whole natural history genre in general.

Yes I am an Australian and I am from an hour south of the now famous or infamous Australia zoo, home of the croc hunter himself. I have a great passion for underwater video myself and long to get in the industry if I can, growing up seeing David Attenborough documentaries

and now seeing the dribble they try and pass off as educational, irritates me to. How is an animal supposed to act as nature intended with some idiot pulling its tail? We are all aware that if u irritate a creature... many will go for you, we do not need to see and idiot almost get bitten every time he is on shot.

Despite him being a fellow Ozzie, I was never a fan of Steve Erwin his shows always seemed to dramatized and pointless. I'd hate to wonder what he was trying to do to that black ray before he got hit. I dive with them regularly and they have never shown any hint of aggression or indeed defensiveness aside from just swimming off if they are not happy with your presence.

I think there is unfortunately a market for this cheap rubbish due simply to those who have no interest or intelligence to appreciate the wildlife that is to be shown.

Watching something like the Blue Planet series is much more to my liking.

In any case, I doubt you will lose your ozzie readership over your comments, I for one am not going anywhere.

Keep up the good work Peter.

Barry Duffill

I just read your editorial and before I could read another page I felt compelled to write and tell you how much I agree with your comments 110% (not a typo).

I think you were brave to sight the ausie presenter but you are completely on the mark with this kind of dumb sensationalising reportage. Bring back more Blue Planet with more technology, not fat Dive controllers making normal diving look dangerous!

More power to your emagazine!

George Day

I recently discovered Underwater Photography and greatly enjoyed the newest issue. I like that you have full exposure and gear details for each photo.

I wanted to e-mail to let you know that I wholeheartedly agree with your editorial. We need more Attenborough- and Hall-style nature documentaries and fewer Irwin-style "documentaries". The latter amount to a "we're so cool, we're so awesome, and look how dangerous this is" approach, rather than (as you say) letting the animals, unique situations, and artistry tell the story.

You're absolutely right to put blame on the Discovery Channel. In general, they make shows to appeal to the lowest common denominator for \$\$\$ sake, and I think they're trying

to compete with dumb male channels like Spike TV here in North America.

I look forward to the next issue.

Ben Speers-Roesch

Couldn't agree more with your editorial. Let the wildlife speak for itself and get the presenter out of the bloody frame!

Its sensational enough with a muppet "pimping my wildlife encounter". Its almost got to the point where I will write off any "wildlife" broadcast that does not feature the venerable Sir David. It seems he's the only one who can direct and produce the producers/directors to deliver a product that accurately reflects what the TV guide says. The only conclusion I can make is budget. It's cheaper to film an "on camera" piece with a human telling us why something is special or important that it is to actually shoot the creature and add a voiceover later. I have seen plenty of humans but not many six gills...would rather see the shark in its glory than hear about the dangers (sic) of diving at night and in a current. No offence to the presenters or safety bloke Richard Bull, but they are very much secondary to the actual subject/ interest and should remain off frame.

Simon Brown

Just a note of support for your editorial in Uwpmag46. I daresay you will come in for a great deal of stick for your views but most divers I know fully agree with your sentiments about recent TV programmes. It may hearten you to know that last year we (Durham University) awarded Alistair Fothergill (Producer of Life in the Freezer, Blue Planet, Planet Earth etc) an honorary doctorate in recognition of his vision in making the type of wildlife programmes we are not ashamed of.

Many thanks for your inspirational Uwpmag.

Dr David Hyde

I have to say its been a while since I had such a giggle. Been waiting for this bomb to burst for a while as there is nothing worse than watching a program shot in some of the most gorgeous dive locations with rare and awesomely stunning marine life just to have it stuffed up by a poorly directed show where you see more of the host than the marine life.

Thanks for taking the time to vent and truth be told this should have been done a long LONG time ago !!!! Now lets hope the studios wise up and give divers what they want and entice the non-diver to take up the sport.

Ian Keller

I am sorry you have had to jeopardise your magazines coverage but I think you are right in your comments. Not a novice but a newcomer to diving I have had the same conversations with my wife (a complete non aqua person) The continual hyping up of the danger aspect the diving was totally unnecessary and detracted from the coverage. Anything that dangerous if you believed the commentary should not have been undertaken let alone filmed for the possibly gory outcome (bring on the real gladiators)

Anyone who was in the middle of their training and watched these so called experts go against all the safety lectures that they were going through must have wondered what was going on.

Obviously the new motto for TV diving if its really dangerous , carry on anyway and for good measure film it. Unless perhaps it was not quite that dangerous and they were trying to kid everyone (I am a cynic.)

John Bettle

Just read your editorial "Dumb BBC" issue 46. I could'nt agree more, you hit the nail on the head as they say. The programs you mentioned were an embarassment to anyone who has dived and loves the underwater environment. Why can't they find a diving David Attenborough, I am sure

there is one out there. It seems that anytime an American is involved in these programs, it turns into sheer sensationalism, everything seems to be focused on the presenters, and how they are risking life and limb to bring us these shots of marine life. I am not interested in the dangers they are facing, I have dived for years and know the dangers, I just want to see the marine life and hopefully see something I have 'nt seen before, and empathise with the presenter when I see something familiar. Thanks for the frank content of your editorial, and I am sure you have spoken for a large portion of the diving fraternity, especially in the U.K.

Kevin Monaghan

I'd like to voice my support for your comments on the 'quality' (in its most exact sense) of the programmes! You're not alone!

Whilst I'm joining you on your soap-box, I'm also dismayed at the various dull paper-based dive magazines - they seem to be the very quintessence of repetitiveness! I only have a soft spot for Asian Diver - though that's really due to the quality of the photography! There! I feel better now...

Keep up the good work!

Mark Atwell

No chance of losing your Ozzie readership with your comments in the editorial of edition 46. Many Ozzies like myself are tired of the Irwinisation of many programmes and also the association of Ozzies attitude to be similar to that of the late Mr Irwin, of which most of us are not!!!

I would hope that the collective us (your readers, divers with a mutual respect for the diving environment) with help of quality publications like yours shall show that the only interaction required is that of our fingers on the shutter release.

Keep up the great work with the publication of UWP mag.

Corey Pollard

Just a quick note to say how much I enjoy and appreciate UWP, and also to assure you that you won't be turning off many Australian readers with your critique of the 'Steve Irwin delivery' - the man was far more revered in the USA in particular than in Australia, where he was widely regarded as an (admittedly somewhat loveable) embarrassment. He made a career stirring up animals for entertainment and apparently, sadly, died this way.

Anyway, congratulations on your magazine, always look forward to the next issue.

Regards from an Aussie,

Pij Olijnyk

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