

Parting Shot 1

After seeing the photos of the Snake Eel in the Nov/Dec issue. I was reminded of a similar experience I had whilst diving with my buddies earlier this year and thought you might be interested to use the story.

These photos were taken in the North East of Scotland on an evening dive at Rosehearty, one of the best sites in the area with a wide variety of marine life and normally good visibility. It's usually on chance encounters like this that you are left thinking I wish I had brought my camera (a Fuji F50fd) but on this occasion thankfully I had.

Normally these scorpion fish are just lying there trying to hide and be as inconspicuous as possible using their colours to blend into the back ground but on this dive we were just returning to the entry site when I noticed a flash of silver out of the corner of my eye. When I stopped to investigate I couldn't believe that a fish the size of the scorpion thought it could swallow a sand eel that size. We watched for a short time and it became obvious that this greedy scorpion had other ideas.

As you can see from the photos it had caught the eel by the tail and eventually manoeuvred it round for

supper. After the last photo we left it in peace so we don't know the eventual fate of the sand eel but things weren't looking good.

Personally I was left thinking of a local saying "Your eye is bigger than your belly", I think the scorpion had bitten off more than it could chew and might have had to admit defeat and just spit it out!

Linda Robertson

**Do you have a nice shot
with a short story behind it?**

**If so e mail me
and yours could be
the next "Parting shot".
peter@uwpmag.com**



Fuji Finepix F50fd, programme mode, built in flash, 1/60th @ F4.5 ISO200



Parting Shot 2

They came from every direction all at once. Over a hundred and fifty living torpedoes darted and zoomed passed us with incredible agility and purpose. They nipped our fins, grabbed our hoods, and tried to make off with our cameras. They stacked up five high biting at our bubbles. Soon my partner and I were separated and I became so dizzy from the pinned dance it was hard to tell which way was up. I had no idea what fate befell my dive partner, but by this time it was every Homo “aquaticus” for themselves. I was near a small crevice and briefly considered trying to stuff myself into it, but I had finally decided to buck up and take it like a man when as suddenly as they appeared - they vanished. The visibility was a good 50 feet and all I saw were a few sea lion hind flippers being swallowed up by the blue void.

Now we were sitting at 65 feet, in Great White shark country, all alone, with only some sea mammal poop floating around wondering about Nature’s “subtle” warning signs of danger. After 20 -30 seconds, which seemed much longer, the reef fishes came out from their hiding places, we regained our composure, and oceanic life returned to normalcy. Although

“Whitey” never showed (or at least we never saw him), our toothy smiles shone from behind our regulators and I was loudly humming “While walking through the park one day...” all the way back to our boat. Seal and sea lion encounters are fairly common around the Southern California off shore islands. Although in over thirty-five years of diving I’ve never experienced anything quite like this encounter.

This was one of the last images I took with film. I made the switch soon after to digital. It wasn’t an easy decision then; of course, now I couldn’t imagine going back. This particular image was taken very quickly without much thought to exposure or shutter speed. As a color image, the washed out looking E-6 slides just didn’t do it. It sat for years in my film file until I started playing with new software called Silver Efex Pro.

Naturally the 35mm slides needed to be scanned first. Once I had them on the computer I could then try and maximize their potential. It becomes quite apparent now, after working in digital for some years, how most film images just don’t stand up anymore to modern DSLR capture.



To name a few, film has grain, very little exposure latitude (especially slide film), a mere 36 exposures per roll, and quite limited ISO leeway. In addition, one of the biggest hurdles of all is you have but one original. Duplicates (or scans) never matched exactly the original image, and often you had to send the only picture you had through the mail for publishing. More than one original was either lost through transport or “misplaced” at the destination. With digital, every time you copy an image you have yet another file as good as the original.

Now that I had the sea lions “digitized” it seemed the best chance

for them to be resurrected would be as black and white images. Once I ran them through Silver Efex Pro, increased contrast, burned a few areas, and then sharpened them up a little, they were ready for viewing. And if they go astray in Peter’s office...no problem, I just email him another one.

Joseph C. Dovala
www.jcdovala.com

Parting Shot 3

It's early afternoon 3 miles off the Commonwealth of Dominica on an oil slick calm day and we're all psyched, loads of encounters with Sperm whale in the morning, however with limited in water success has got us all scanning the horizon. We are searching for Scar our Sperm Whale supermodel, rescued by a local whale watching vessel almost a decade ago as a young calf entangled in a net and emaciated, he has remained offshore with the resident females ever since. An encounter with him is usually unforgettable, from him putting his melon on the transom to say hi to "smiling for his paparazzi" in the water.

We finally get an encounter with a pod, calves, Scar and a large female, the group had him interacting for about 15 minutes when responding to clicks from below he decided to swim off, taking his possible siblings with him sensing his direction I swam on ahead and waited, eventually they caught up with and passed me, slowing down about 200m ahead. Socializing.

I managed to catch up and just hung in the water (catching my breath)... a pod to myself, this lasted only about 5 minutes before

the boat caught up with me but was worthwhile just hanging out with these amazing animals.

Realization suddenly struck that I have a 30 ton supermodel all to myself, and he doesn't take direction, the camera!!! Press the damn button... this sort of thing happens a lot when faced with the very large in the water (Peter excepted), one forgets to press the shutter as all thought disappears in that prolonged "Wow moment".

The smallest of the three in this photo is probably a month or so old, abdominal folds are still visible, the main attraction is Scar, and the part of a tail showing is one of the calves from last year. Dominica has little to no continental shelf on its Caribbean side, and there are 16 species of marine mammal documented here, Sperm and Humpbacks being the largest. It is one of the few places worldwide where there is a resident population of Sperm Whales and this group is the most widely studied of all pods, all told 235 animals have been identified.

Arun Madisetti

www.imagesdominica.com



Olympus 5050, Inon UW100 wide angle and Dome port, 250th second, -0.7 EV, Auto (200) ISO, F 3.2 This kind of interaction is permissible only with a license from the Fisheries Division, and is strictly controlled. Arun Madisetti or "Izzy" as he is more widely known is a marine biologist and a director of Images Dominica, a stock photography agency based on Dominica. They can arrange permits for legitimate photographers only.

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