

DVD reviews

CS4 is for UW Photogs

by Tim Rock

The first time I heard of Doug, I was a judge at The First Annual Palau Underwater Photo Contest. He image had taken first prize but wasn't there at awards night to get his award. He was the working photo pro on the Palau Aggressor and had guests. The effervescent Lorenza received the award in his place. Lorenza is a stunningly beautiful ball of energy as has worked on photography with Doug since they first met. At the contest, I was intrigued by the creativity of some of his entries and later did get to meet him and learn of his dedication to the profession.

Over the years, his work has gotten better and better as he has moved seamlessly from film to digital photography.

He and Lorenza worked many years in Palau and the South Pacific. A few years ago, they moved to the States to start a family and he has been doing magazine assignments and stock work. He currently is a featured imaging tutorial and field editor through Scuba Diving Austral-Asia. But when he first moved to the U.S. and found himself landlocked, he said this would give him the chance to come up with something everyone needed and could use. Toilet paper, I thought? No, it was the first instalment of Photoshop for the Underwater Photographer (for Photoshop CS & CS2). This DVD was a breakthrough concept and it has kept him busy giving workshops and seminars across the country.

Now, in itself that was a great DVD and I

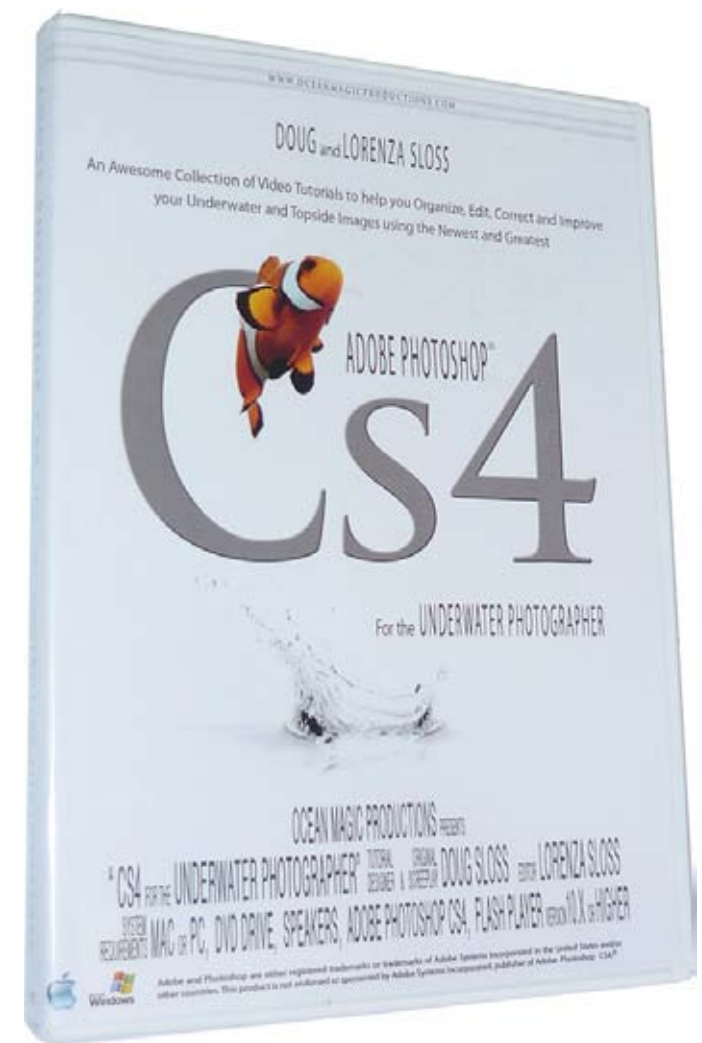
learned a lot from it but Photoshop and especially RAW photography have evolved so much, I couldn't wait for Doug to do the upgrade in the subsequent release of Adobe's CS3 and CS4. Well, it's out now. And it was certainly worth the wait.

I have always known CS4 and its RAW converter were powerful tools that I was pretty sure I was under-utilizing. Still, I read a lot about editing images and talked to PS pros. I thought I was pretty good at this stuff. But after a few sessions with the new DVD, I found that I was really barely scratching the surface. I now am working on organizing, editing, correcting and improving my files. That includes workflow and sprucing up both undersea and topside images using the superb suggestions I've been watching on this DVD.

There are a number of sections each with at least ten easy-to-follow lessons. In all, ten hours worth of spoken and illustrated instruction. They include: The CS4 Interface and The Bridge, Camera RAW, Retouching and Enhancing (this is a large section), Getting Creative, Cropping, Resizing and Sharpening, Automation and Output, Underwater HDR

Since I use Adobe's Expression Media, I perused the thorough Bridge section. I know others use Lightroom and even Aperture or iPhoto for the interface, but as a former Bridge user, I can see where many of Doug's suggestions would really improve initial review and cataloging.

Where I stopped and started going lesson by lesson was the Camera RAW section. Doug personally narrates each lesson in simple English and you can see exactly what he does as he is doing it. He often gives keyboard shortcuts for both MAC and PC and provides more than one method of achieving an edit. His videos are clearly explained



and designed in a way that let the user follow along at whatever pace one chooses. Skill level really isn't a major concern. If you need to stop the lesson or go back, that's simply done. You can follow step after step until you've got the adjustments down.

RAW's tutorial started with setting up the Preferences and then moving to the Essential Adjustments, retouching without using actual

Photoshop, filtering, cropping, sharpening and even creating black and white imaging. By the time I was done, many of the images didn't even need to go into the Photoshop mode as they were ready to save and file or print right out of the RAW converter. There were many revelations for me here, with one of the most useful being the retouching tool and the adjustment brush. This saves me tons of time having to open up and work on images in the usual Photoshop window using items like the clone tool. The proper adjustment of Curves was also a great help.

Truth be known, I am still working my way through the DVD as I really got into doing and re-doing some of my humpback whale photos for this year's trip to Tonga. The enhancing section deals with correcting monotone blue images, something one gets easily when trying to film a whale on snorkel using no strobes. The tutorial allowed me to remove reflective scatter from the sun, bring out the true color of the whale and make the image sharper and higher in contrast.

I am, so far, very happy with what I have found and started using so far. I keep exploring more of the DVD on a daily and weekly basis. Were I Bill Gates, I might be wealthy enough to take a couple weeks off and just play around with this DVD.

As a working stiff, I am going lesson by lesson and enhancing some of my favorite images in the process.

It helps to have Adobe CS4 installed to take full advantage of the lessons. It requires Flash. A Flash player can be downloaded free from the web. This really isn't for total novices, but with just a little Photoshop knowledge, you'll get far. As a matter-of-fact, it has such good set-up and workflow suggestions, that it is ideal if you're just getting into underwater editing. It will help you get started the right way and learn without developing bad habits and time consuming extra steps.

It's not an exaggeration to say this DVD has "set me free". If I keep up with all the tips I may become "almost famous" someday.

In my work, I spend a lot of time daily using Photoshop and this Sloss DVD has been a revelation that has been somewhat life changing. I can highly recommend this. Not only are Doug and Lorenza great folks, but Doug is a fine teacher who has really hit the mark with his CS4 for Underwater Photographers offering. The ten hours of tutorial is really about the content of a week-long seminar as far as tips and content goes. Where else can you attend a week-long specialized seminar for \$99?

It can be used on Mac or PC and

all you really need is a fairly up-to-date computer with a DVD player and speakers.

You can get this DVD here:

www.underwaterphotoshop.com

or see Doug and Lorenza's work:

www.oceanmagicproductions.com

Tim Rock

www.doubleblue.com



TAKE DIGITAL EDITING TO THE NEXT LEVEL WITH THIS AMAZING DVD!

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Suitable for CS3 users too!

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DVD Review

Lair of the Waterwolf

by Dean Burman

by Rob Cuss

Dean first sprung to attention in 2005 with a film about the wreck of the Syrian registered oil tanker the Um-El-Faroud, which is now a popular dive site in Malta; brining him six international amateur film awards. But it was in 2007 that everyone really had to sit up and watch, with his short film “Lair of the Waterwolf” which netted him a further 8 international awards and acclaim from his hero Peter Scoones at the British Underwater Film Festival.

Footage from this film was used by the world renowned BBC Natural History Unit in their series The Nature of Britain and they even made a 10 minute short documentary of Dean called “Dean the Diving Decorator”. When these were aired in the UK they were watched by 2 million viewers, bringing one of my favourite subjects into the mainstream.

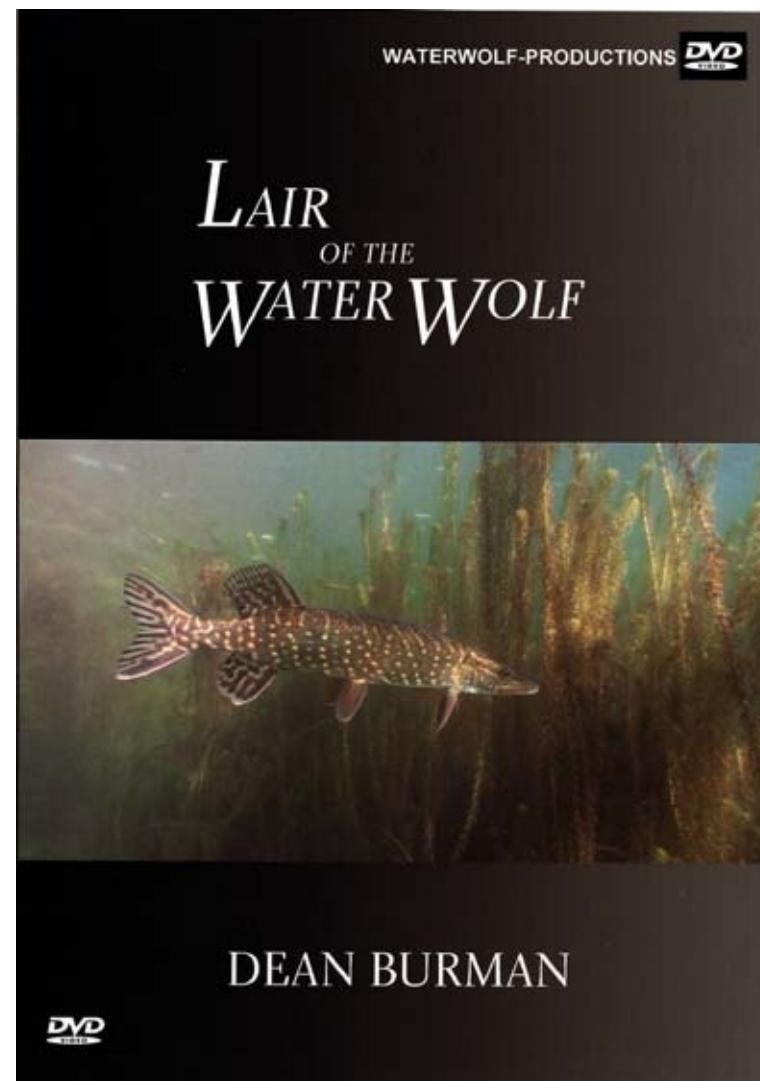
Three years on and Dean has expanded his short film into a 27 minute feature. From the opening sequence it is obvious this is a labour of love and the hours of dedicated diving in the cold inland waters of the UK will be lost on most viewers. The documentary starts with a wonderful collection of topside material that sets the scene really well. The majority of the footage is filmed in the British inland diving site at Stoney Cove. This is a heavily used training centre for budding divers and I can guarantee that most of the visitors

to Stoney Cove would argue vehemently that this was filmed elsewhere. Such is Dean’s skill that he has seen many behaviours that I haven’t seen before, even though I am also a regular visitor to the site. He has skilfully brought together footage of the Pike (the Waterwolf), Perch, Roach, Carp, Crayfish and Canadian Pondweed to tell a compelling story of the freshwater environment common in the UK. Dean has learnt well from the BBC and this film would not be out of place on broadcast television; a high achievement when the credits role and you see what a one man effort this spectacular is.

Also on the DVD is a 10 minute piece called “Dean the Diving Decorator”. I nearly didn’t watch this assuming that it was from the BBC, but Dean has made his own version. You cannot help but be taken in by his enthusiasm for freshwater diving and his love of the Pike. The man behind the lens story is really well put together.

“Lair of the Waterwolf” is a well crafted documentary that deserves to be seen on the international stage. The lack of filler material and the natural behaviours Dean has captured in the challenging waters of the UK makes this an interesting watch, not just for divers but for anglers and the general public alike. I showed the DVD to my partner and she really enjoyed it, which, as she doesn’t dive and isn’t really into natural history films, is a high accolade indeed.

Rob Cuss



*Lair of the Water Wolf is available for purchase from
www.waterwolf-productions.co.uk for £14.99 + P&P
and can be purchased using PayPal*

www.waterwolf-productions.co.uk

Book Reviews

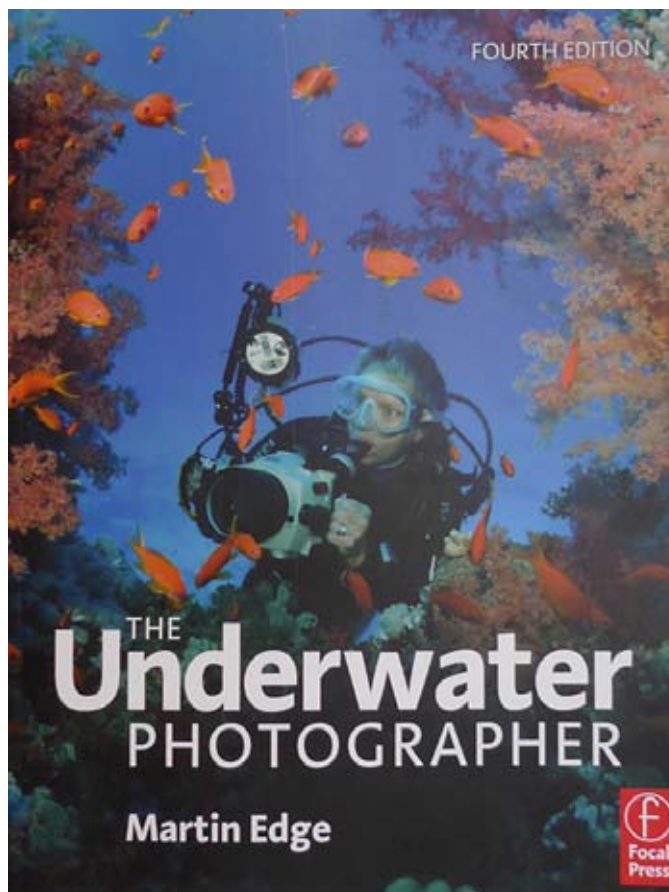
Martin Edge's The Underwater Photographer Fourth Edition

Review by Steve Williams

We live in fascinating times. For about 26\$ (US) you can own the accumulated knowledge of underwater digital photography. A mere pittance really when you consider the value. So let's get this out of the way right up front. If you're at all interested in taking a camera underwater, go get your hands on a copy. Since the last edition was released in 2005 much has changed and evolved in the underwater photography world. In his fourth edition Martin brings us along with his wife and son and a whole host of friends to explore what's possible today with both digital compact and SLR cameras. With over 500 pages, the book covers the whole spectrum, from the fundamentals of cameras to developing an individual style.

In writing this book, Martin brought together some key individuals in the community of divers to support him and bring their own special gifts to the party. The book is a collaboration of authors and a special sharing of knowledge and ideas. The contributors include Mark Koekemoer, Shannon Conway, Alex Mustard, and Stuart Gibson, all of whom wrote whole chapters. Major contributions are also included from Steve Warren, Keri Welk, John Wallis, and Peter Rowlands.

Many of you own a dog-eared copy of the Third Edition and I am sure you are wondering



whether to update your bookshelf. I was initially hesitant to purchase the fourth edition of a book I had studied cover to cover countless times. What could be that new? I quickly discovered that a lot has changed in five years! First, with one noted exception, all of the images are completely new. This version is entirely devoted to digital photography, no more switching back and forth between film and digital explanations. Martin doesn't even use the term DSLR. We shoot with SLR's and compact cameras now. If film makes a comeback we'll call them FSLRs.



This new focus required a more thorough discussion of how digital cameras collect light and Martin's explanation in Chapter 3 has forever changed the way I expose an image. For me the core of the book is all about light; natural light, strobe lighting and importantly the successful combination of the two. Martin shows us both his recommendations and some very new and interesting unique ways to position strobes. I can't wait to try them out. There has been a revival of interest recently in Close Focus Wide Angle (CFWA) and super macro, the increased awareness

of both techniques the result of equipment improvements that make it easier now for photographers to attempt. Martin was ahead of us and the book includes new information devoted to tools and techniques needed for these types of images. Suffice to say that this book is a total rewrite with more than enough new information to deserve your attention.

The keys to underwater success haven't changed though and Martin continues to hammer them home. First and foremost, protect the reef. His belief that over 70% of our potential subjects are not in a position to shoot safely should be stenciled on every dive boat the world over. The book's photos of divers contorted into odd positions clearly demonstrate that often the comfortable position is not the best for getting the image we want. The "rules" of composition, making the most of our opportunities for macro and wide angle, aren't new subjects to some of us, but having the chance to read what Martin has learned over the last few years is enlightening.

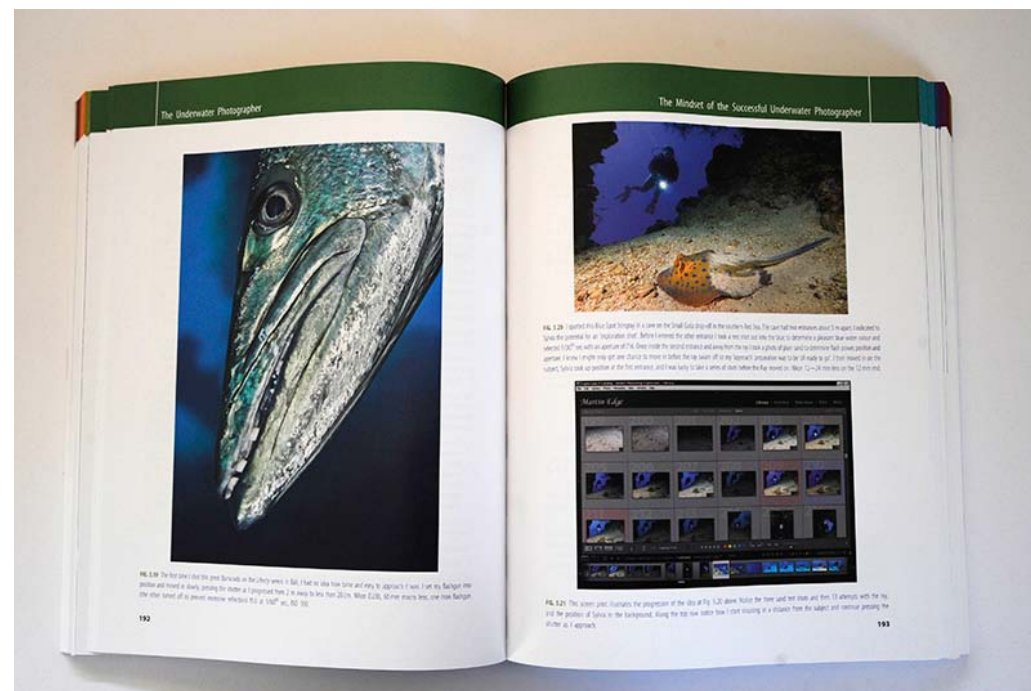
All photography has always been about the ability to combine the art and the craft (the technology) successfully. It's easy for many of us to get caught up in the technology especially when it's changing so quickly. A careful read through Martin's book reminds us that it's a

combination of the technology and the artistic mindset that gives us the best opportunity to capture the photos we set out to make. Many authors speak in ways that separate these two things. Martin has a way of combining them into a way of being underwater, which represents a true picture of what it takes to be successful.

One caution, read carefully. There are a few pictures scattered throughout which demonstrate how not to position your strobes or which illustrate what happens when you do something not quite right. Martin clearly put this book together to teach not just to impress us with his skill.

My impression upon opening the book for the first time was that there was a lot of open white space, some might say negatively so. The layout is not crowded. On the positive side this layout does provide room for Martin's larger images and the copious notes and abundant tips he provides in the margin. My copy is full of sticky notes marking where I want to go back and study or jot down important tips to take with me on a dive trip.

Martin's photography adopts a mindset of never being satisfied. Even on his best images the sand isn't quite the right color or that little fish doesn't belong in the frame. He is always looking for ways to improve. It's one of the things that keep him motivated and what keeps us coming





back to see what he has learned.

In Stephen Frink's forward to the book he writes that, "Martin is a master of the facts and techniques presented, but he doesn't preach or pontificate. He has the rare ability to make you feel like you are learning from a dive buddy. It is probably his passion for diving in general that comes through first, but make no mistake this book is all about underwater photography."

Stephen's words really resonated with me. After reading this book, I'm left with the same feeling I had when completing the third edition. I'd love to go diving with this guy.

Steve Williams

<http://thefinfoundation.org>

Steve is a passionate amateur underwater photographer who switched over to digital after reading Martin's third edition in 2005. He has been shooting underwater since 1972 and is the founder of the Fin Foundation Images website that supports the education of young people throughout the southwest US on the importance of protecting the ocean environment.



The Fin Foundation
 'Bringing the Ocean to the Classroom'
FinFoundationImages.Com
TheFinFoundation.org



Sharks

Close encounters

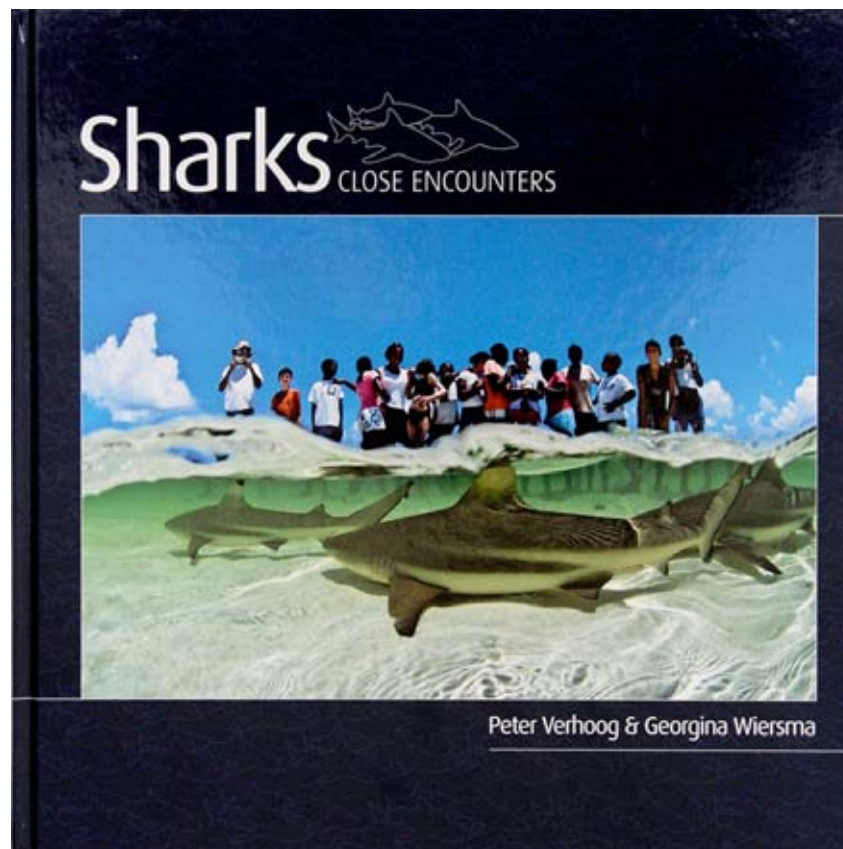
by Peter Verhoog &
Georgina Wiersma

18 years in the making, this 120 page coffee table book is a very well illustrated guide to sharks and rays from around the globe.

The accompanying text is both personal and informative describing how and where the shots were taken together with trip details and anecdotes of the characters they meet along the way.

Peter and Georgina made extensive trips to Sudan, Jordan, Northern Egypt, spent six months diving the Southern Red Sea living in a Bedouin tent on the shores, camped on the Brother Islands in the Red Sea for weeks, and have made trips to countless other destinations like the Azores, the Bahamas, Baja California, Bonaire, Curaçao, Florida, France, Indonesia, Lanzarote, Malaysia, Maldives, Portugal, South Africa, Teneriffa, the Seychelles and Thailand.

Peter and Georgina also organised several special trips to Sudan, focussing on reef sharks and hammerhead sharks, to South Africa to register the breaching great whites and other special sharks, to Mexico to portray the famous Pacific manta rays and California sea lions, to Jordan to document the biotopes of the vast sea grass fields and to Thailand



to take pictures of the graceful leopard sharks and silvertip sharks.

120 pages on high-quality, satin-gloss paper. Large format: 29,5 x 29,5 cm / 12" x 12"

Sharks, Close encounters costs €23.95 +p&p



www.peterverhoog.com
www.underwatermagic.com

New Books from Tim Rock

Tonga, Kingdom of the Whales By Tim Rock with Yoko Higashide



This is the one of the few places on Earth that you can snorkel with whales and see them in their environment. Its an amazing sight to watch a mother feeding a calf or to see a full-grown male completely leave the sea on a massive breach.

This new for 2010 book, with its 303 images and 200 pages, is a visual trip to Tongatapu and Vava'u to see the land, the sea, the coral reefs and marine creatures, the wonderful people and Tongan culture, aerials and overlooks and, most of all, the whales.

We'll follow model Yoko Higashide to the sites above and below the water and see her snorkeling and interacting with the humpbacks.

To see previews and purchase this book, go here:

www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/1152695

Grand Cayman By Tim Rock & Olga Spoelstra



Grand Cayman is one of the most famous for divers and vacationers in the entire Caribbean.

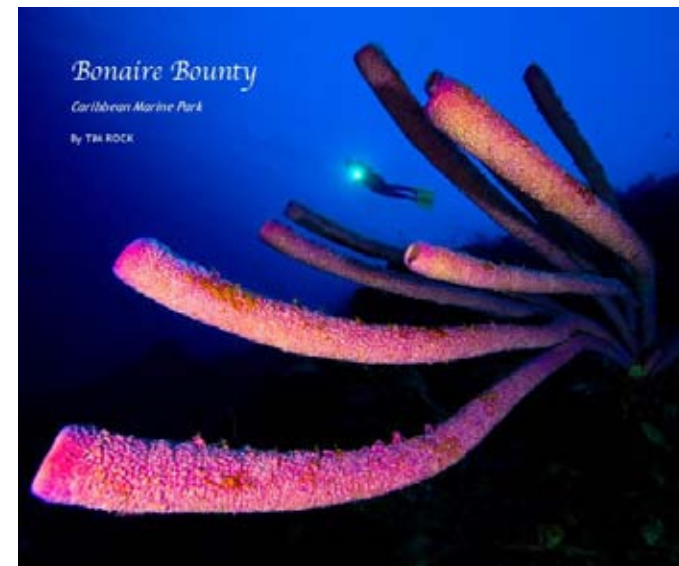
Grand Cayman is famous for its natural attraction called Stingray City where dozen of southern stingrays gather to mooch food from divemasters. Done in anywhere from one to twelve feet of water, most everyone can enjoy watching these rays in the clear waters of the North Sound.

Most every shoreline has numerous dive sites and people use both boats and shore diving techniques to plunge into the bathtub warm Caribbean. The terrain varies from rolling reefs loaded with corals and sponges to broad, sandy plains and then deeper to sheer walls and dropoffs.

We'll follow model Olga Spoelstra around as she explores GC for a look at one of the most famous isles in diving. To see previews and purchase this book, go here:

www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/677645

Bonaire Bounty, Caribbean Marine Park By Tim Rock with Olga Spoelstra



This island is legendary in the diving world. Far-sighted pioneers, led by Captain Don Stewart, ensured decades ago that the reefs around Bonaire would remain protected and appreciated. Every day divers from around the world and the people of the island reap the benefits when they plunge into the gin clear waters to see colorful reef fish, stunning corals and giant sponges.

Part of the island is also a National Park and there are protected salt flats in the south where migrating flamingoes like to gather.

The entire island is great for exploration and watersports.

Enjoy this trip around bountiful Bonaire. We'll follow model Olga Spoelstra around as she explores. To see previews and purchase this book, go here:

www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/678749

Guidelines for contributors

The response to UwP has been nothing short of fantastic. We are looking for interesting, well illustrated articles about underwater photography. We are looking for work from existing names but would also like to discover some of the new talent out there and that could be you! UwP is the perfect publication for you to increase your profile in the underwater photography community.

The type of articles we're looking for fall into five main categories:

Uw photo techniques - Balanced light, composition, etc

Locations - Photo friendly dive sites, countries or liveaboards

Subjects - Anything from whale sharks to nudibranchs in full detail

Equipment reviews - Detailed appraisals of the latest equipment

Personalities - Interviews/features about leading underwater photographers

**If you have an idea for an article,
contact me first before putting pen to paper.
E mail peter@uwpmag.com**

How to submit articles

To keep UwP simple and financially viable, we can only accept submissions by e mail and they need to be done in the following way:

1. The text should be saved as a TEXT file and attached to the e mail

2. Images must be attached to the e mail and they need to be 144dpi

Size - Maximum length 15cm i.e. horizontal pictures would be 15 cm wide and verticals would be 15cm.

File type - Save your image as a JPG file and set the compression to "Medium" quality. This should result in images no larger than about 120k which can be transmitted quickly. If we want larger sizes we will contact you.

3. Captions - **Each and every image MUST have full photographic details** including camera, housing, lens, lighting, film, aperture, shutter speed and exposure mode. These must also be copied and pasted into the body of the e mail.