

Watershot iPhone housing

By Sim Chee Ghee

A product development company based in San Diego, CA, Watershot specializes in robust innovative designs for the extreme demands of underwater use. Incorporated in 1995, Watershot has successfully developed a variety of products ranging from high-end custom camera housings for the motion picture industry, DSLR housings, Watershot for iPhone, and superior Strykr LED dive lights.

Committed waterman and company founder, Steve Ogles began innovating housings for surf photography in 1972.

Released earlier this year, Watershot for iPhone is a photo and video imaging solution for water sports enthusiasts who have traded their digital cameras for the simplicity and capability of the iPhone.

Watershot housing is built to live in the water and withstand rocks, reefs, silt, sand and extreme pressure. It delivers flawless performance to 40m/130ft and the Watershot Pro housing for iPhone 5 can even withstand 60m/200ft pressure!

All Watershot iPhone housings are made of injection molded polycarbonate and come with glass lenses for optical image clarity,

lens baffle to prevent backscatter or halo effect, threaded lens bezel for external filters and lenses, integrated tripod mount, adjustable lanyard, lens desiccant and 1 year warranty.

I was able to do a short test dive at Redang Island with the Pro version on my iPhone5 recently.

First impressions are quite good, the housing is very sturdy and lies well in the hand. Watershot offers their own iPhone app, to be used with the housing. There are 5 buttons on the rear/ right side of housing but only 4 are used either with a short tap or tap/hold which serves additional function. The 5th button is reserved for future upgrades. A list of the functions are listed below, a tutorial is also included in the app, free for download at the App Store.

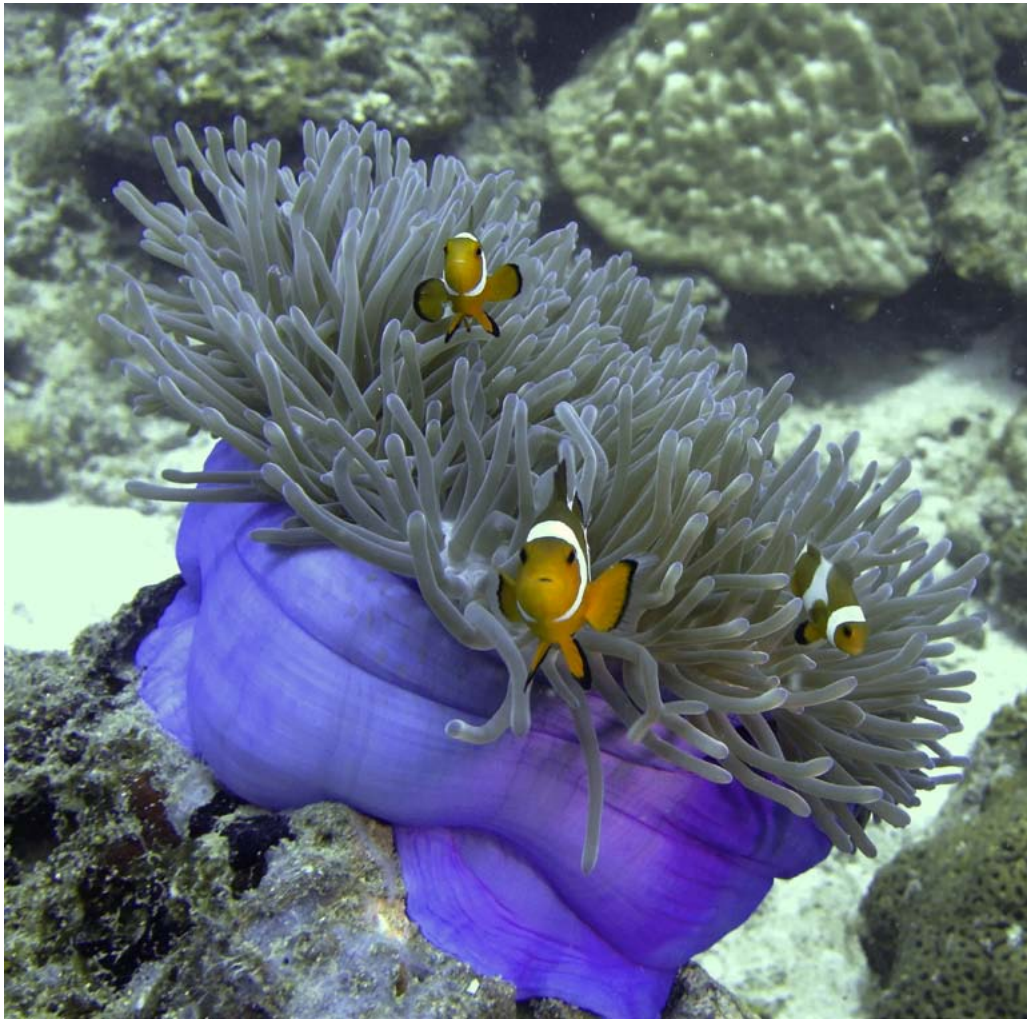
App Functions: For use in the housing: 1.Wake up from power save mod 2.Shutter. 3.Start/stop recording 4.Switch between still and video modes 5.Compass 6.Review images 7.Post to Facebook and Twitter

Additional App Settings: 1.Rapid fire 2.Use of front and back camera 3.GPS overlays 4.Compass 5.Social media pre-programmed messages 6.Adjustments for sleep, portrait and



Above is the Watershot iPhone and below the Pro. There are plenty of iPhone cases around, so how is the Watershot housing any different? Well, according to Watershot : Cases cover. Housings protect!





landscape mode 7. Youtube upload
My dive was at high noon and with the sun directly above me, I wasn't able to see the screen clearly. However I was able to get a useable shot with the anemone and clown fish. Adjusting to max brightness in the menu would probably have helped but this would have to be done outside the

housing and alas, I was already deep down into the dive!

Focusing is easy by just holding the housing steady and pointing to the subject. Once in focus, simply press the centre button to take the shot. The buttons don't have much tactile feeling in them, ie you can't really feel the shot being taken via

the shutter button like you're used to on the surface. It needs some getting used to but they do work reliably and are well spaced out, handy for those wearing thick gloves.

Tip: Make sure that your iPhone is fully charged before the dive. As soon as the battery goes down to 20%, a warning kicks in the centre screen and there's no way to disable it through the housing. No one would want a button right in the middle of the screen to block the view. Watershot is working on a fix for this, possibly utilizing the 5th button but has yet to announce any updates.

The same issue occurs during video playback, it doesn't work inside the housing. The command to start the playback is again in the centre of the screen and hopefully the fix would rectify this issue. In the meantime, just wait till you're at surface to watch the video playback.

To be fair though, this shortcoming occurs with every iPhone and therefore exists with every available iPhone housing out there.

Also a good idea is to have fully charged portable chargers on board for multiple dives if there are no charging points available.

Watershot iPhone 5 housings (dimensions 16.5 x 8.8 x 4.0cm, 272 gram) retails at USD \$109.00 and are available either in black or white colour.

Watershot Pro for iPhone 5 (16.5 x 10 x 5.1cm, 363 gram) retails at USD \$189.99 and is available in grey with yellow grip (2013 color) and comes with 2 removable lenses (flat and wide), The grip is removable as well for colored grips and accessory grips to include Bluetooth enabled options to optimize housing and app capabilities.

Also available is Watershot iPhone 4 housing (15 x 8.1 x 3.6cm, 227gram), which retails at USD \$99.00 and only in yellow colour.

Watershot is working on housings for Samsung Galaxy S3/S4, release date is expected end of this year.

A variety of accessories are available.

Watershot housings are now available from authorized dealers worldwide and online

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www.scubasympphony.com

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