

Editorial and Parting Shot

Peter Scoones

1937 - 2014

I was lucky to have spent quite some time with Peter Scoones over the years. He was a very generous man who was a genuine genius.

It is always sad at the end of a life but we still have Peter's stunning body of work to remind us of just how unique he was and why he was such an inspiration to so many.

I'll never forget the day when we watched the Wildlife on One programme about the Great White Shark which he had filmed and it was so groundbreaking that Sir Attenborough himself interrupted the start of the programme to say how groundbreaking it was. Something which had not been done before nor since. Peter's response, at the end of the screening, was to praise the editor for cutting it together so well. Such was the man.

His major input into blockbuster series like the Blue Planet is widely quoted but there was also the groundbreaking "Malice in Wonderland" and "Reef Encounters" for BBC Wildlife on One where the Producer gave Peter carte blanche to go to the Red Sea and produce his magic. The results were 30 minutes

of spellbinding displays where not one second was above water and each sequence was complete from beginning to middle to end and from wide to medium to close and back.

On location Peter was total. He devoted every waking hour to capturing marine wildlife behaviour with maximum quality and his power of concentration and performance underwater was perfect. I was reminded of this quite early on when we were in Eilat for a week filming a particular coral pinnacle from the shore. It had everything from glassfish to lionfish and was an oasis of behaviour.

"What depth is it to the base of the pinnacle?" he asked me one lunchtime. "16 metres" I replied, thinking that he was calculating how long he could stay filming before running into decompression. "Why?" I asked and without a blink he said "I was trying to decide what strength of filter to use for the available light shots".

Goodbye, ole friend.

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