

FIX Neo Mini 500

FS light

by Phil Rudin

In the world of underwater photography the focusing light has become an essential tool for both wide angle and macro photography.

The focusing light is most useful when ambient light drops as the result of low visibility, depth, subject placement, during night dives and because of equipment shortcomings like slow lens apertures.

The focus light assists in finding hard to see subjects, lights help to create contrast which increases auto focus speed, focus lights can be used to signal a dive buddy or the boat and much more.

Top rated focusing lights all have several basic essentials that make them stand out from the common dive light. First you need a light with a beam angle wide enough that you can position the light to cover the angle of view for the lens you are using and never need to move it again during the dive. The light also needs to have a red and a white beam. Red is the color of choice for night photography because it is far less likely to frighten marine life and it won't blind other divers when inadvertently shone in their direction.

A focus light should be small, light weight and rechargeable for best results when traveling or shooting locally. Many of the current offerings have become bigger, brighter and more costly as focus lights have become more mainstream among underwater photographers.



FIX Neo Mini 500 FS

The FIX Neo Mini 500 FS is breaking the bigger is better trend and going back to basics. The Mini 500 has been billed as “The next evolution in focus lights”

The Neo Mini 500 is both an economical and purpose built focus light with many advanced features. With the Neo Mini you can switch between white and red light with a single push of the on/off button. The white light works best in daylight for subjects that are at a distance or when a brighter



light is needed. The red light again is the color of choice for night diving.

Both beam colors have programmable output controls that allow you four levels of control, full, 75%, 50% and 25% output. The Neo Mini also has

a distress signal and an auto detect flash shut-off mode.

The auto detect shut-off mode (ASO) senses when the strobe fires and shuts the light off so that the photographer does not need to dim the light when shooting, a very nifty feature indeed. The light stays off for about a second and then turns back on so that you can continue shooting.

With a fully charged battery the easy to see status indicator glows green, then turns to red and then flashes to indicate the remaining battery run time. The Mini uses two common CR 123 batteries which are charged using world standard Micro-USB connectivity. The charger can be used with a number of different international plug types.

The Mini can also be used as a light source out of water as well. The Mini has an automatic power reduction mode which reduces output when the light starts to become hot so that the light will not be damaged. The Mini has a standard mounting point for ball head attachment or direct attachment to any housing system. The mounting attachment can also be removed depending on your personal needs.

The white light is 500 lumen and the red light is 100 lumen. Burn time is 120 minutes for the red light and 60 minutes for the white light. Charge time is two hours maximum at 1 amp. The Mini is rated to 100 meters (328 feet) and has a weight of only 160 grams or (5.64 oz.) The battery is charged by removing the threaded light head to access the battery pack. The battery pack can also be easily removed for shipping and travel.

In the field

In use the Neo Mini does an excellent job both as a day focusing light and as a dedicated night



diving light. With the ASO color shift does not occur in night macro shooting. No more red tinted images as a result of a bright red light that does not turn off at the time of capture. Zoom lenses with a maximum aperture's in the F/5.6 to 6.5 range on the long end now focus more quickly and with better sharpness of focus. This light is more than adequate for a two tank night dive. Best of all this excellent little focusing light retails for the bargain price of \$249.00.

Contact your local FIX retailer for your Neo Mini 500 FS. Thanks also to Reef Photo for technical support in regard to this review.

Phil Rudin

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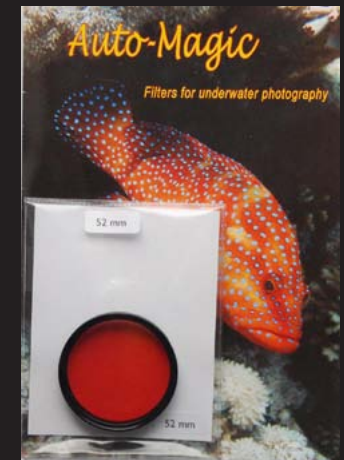
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