

Some initial thoughts on the Canon 5DSR

by Wade Hughes

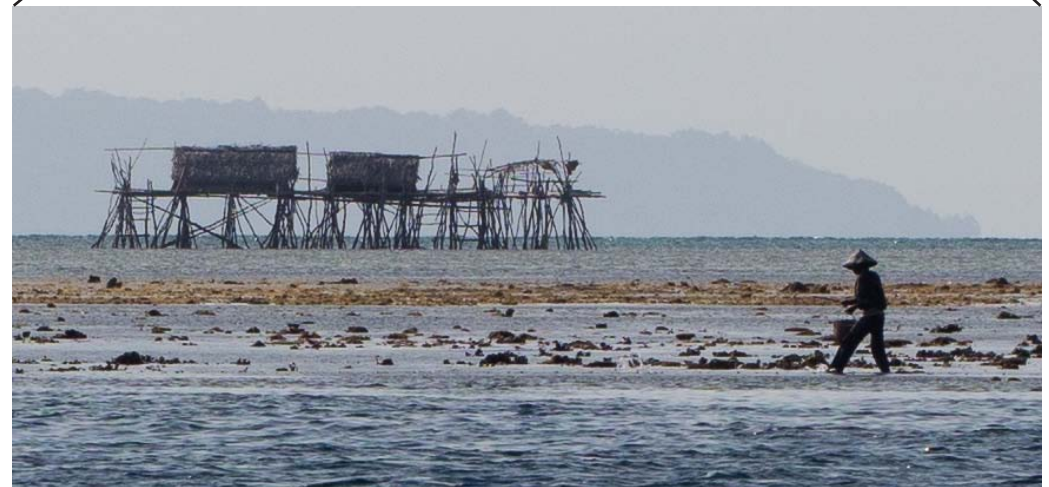
Canon's release of the 50 megapixel twins, the 5DS and the 5DSR has made high resolution digital photography far more accessible, although at \$3500, still not cheap. For underwater photographers, there is an added bonus in the fact that Canon installed this added grunt into camera bodies identical to the current 5D Mk 111 and so, the new camera slipped right in to my Nauticam Mk 111 housing. After so many upgrades requiring the additional expense of a new housing this was good news indeed!

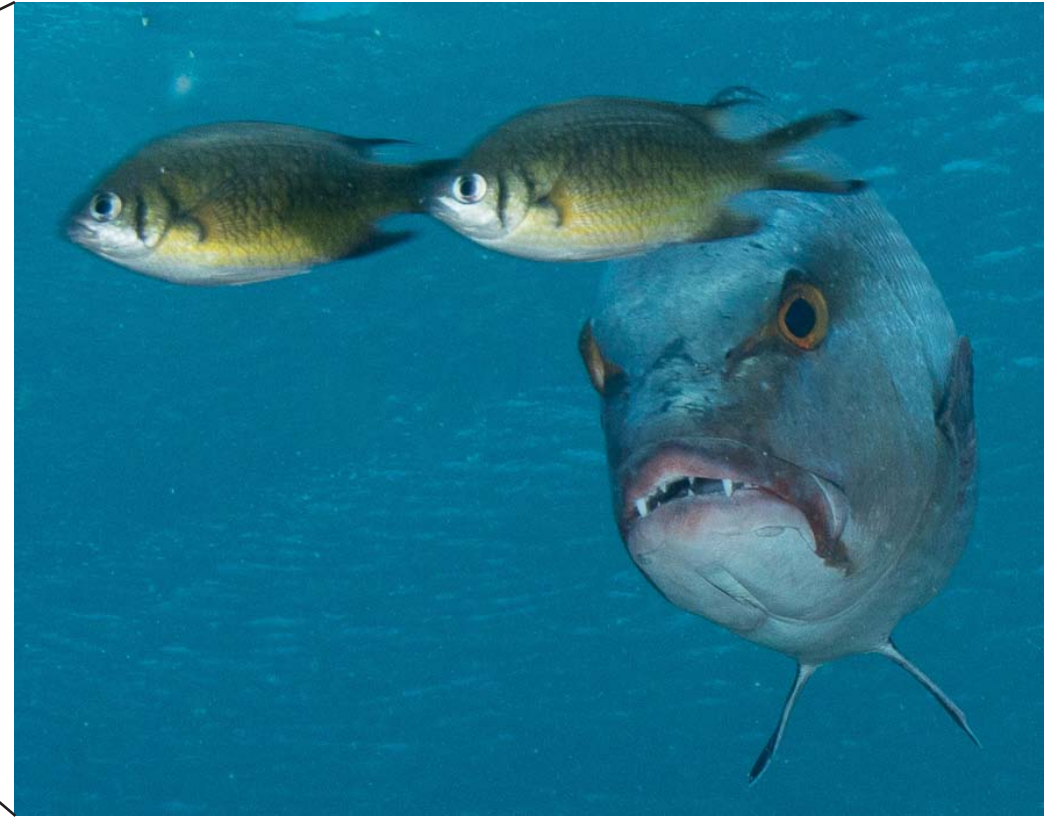
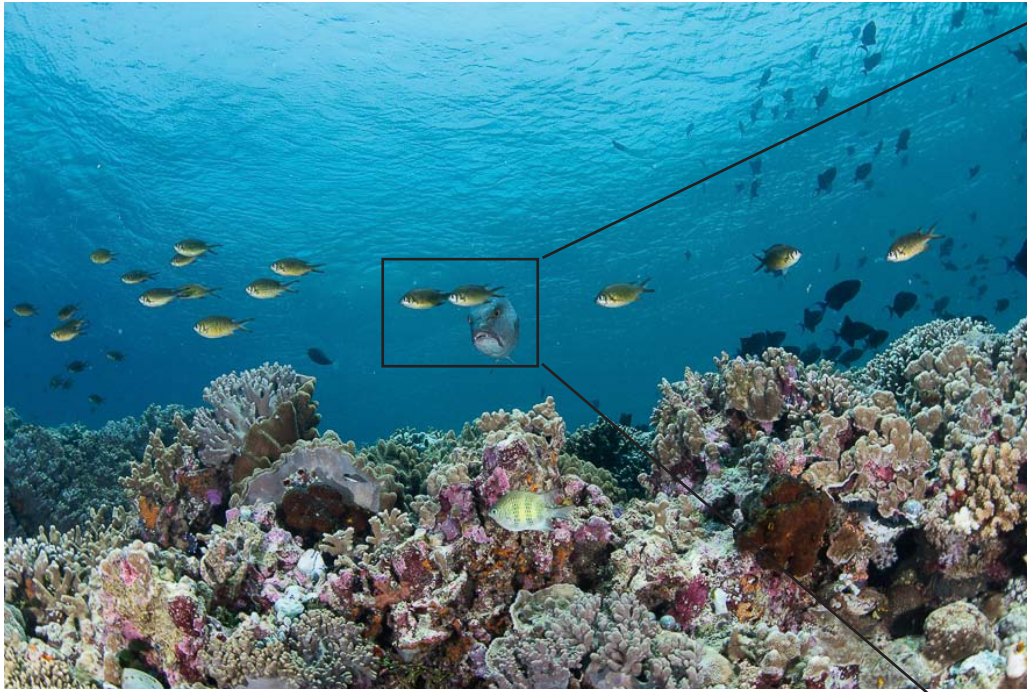
Auto focus in the water appears at least as good, if not a little better, than the Mk111 but, as always, is assisted significantly by the addition of a focusing light. Using the super macro SMC wet diopter, I lock the focus at the closest focusing distance and rock the camera back and forth to achieve something resembling focus. The 5DSR is unforgiving when it comes to sharpness. Images that are sharply focused are breathtakingly sharp. Those that are slightly off,



appear disproportionately soft.

To appreciate the 5DSR's amazing resolution, though, look at the 100mm shot of the exposed reef-top and the fishing camp erected beyond it, and then compare it with the centre-frame crop. Similarly,





with the 8-15 mm reefscape and the centre frame crop of the damsels and lurking red bass. Downside is, of course, what appears to be backscatter throughout the frame. In fact, this is simply the camera seeing and recording the finest suspended particulates in the water. The monochrome of the sponge, with the camera securely settled on the sand, and the scene carefully lit with twin Inon Z240 strobes, resulted in a delightfully sharp still life; and an hour or so of removal of pin-sharp,

pin-pricks of white specks in the negative space.

The dynamic range appears to be very good, but underexposure quickly generates murkiness and noise in the shadows. The sensor seems far happier with 1 to 2 thirds of a stop overexposure.

So the 5DSR strikes me as being a specialized tool, better suited to specific shots where definition really counts, and adequate lighting is available, rather than being a general purpose camera. It appears to be

unforgiving of imprecise focus, of camera shake, and underexposure. But, within those boundaries, it seems to be a tool with enormous potential.

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