

**NORTHERN UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY  
GROUP**  
**NUPG NEWSLETTER Issue #19, May2006-Aug2006**  
**S U M M E R I S S U E**

NUPG Web Site: [www.nupg.org.uk](http://www.nupg.org.uk)

Pauline Blackie, winner of the May 2006 Image Competition, Hermit Crabs.  
Taken with an Olympus 5050 Compact Digital



**This Issue:**

- Meeting Information
  - Meeting Dates
  - Meeting Reviews
- Reports & Handouts
  - SUMMER SPLASH-In
- Web Links

**Date for your Diary:**

**NEXT MEETING: Monday September 11<sup>th</sup> 2006, A VENUE, at 1930.**

Editor: Tony Gilbert, e-mail: [Info@Nupg.Org.uk](mailto:Info@Nupg.Org.uk), for the Editor ☺

## **MEETING DATES & EVENTS for your diary**

Pass on the dates to your friends & colleagues who may fancy joining the club.

# The Northern Underwater Photography Group

## Contact information, meetings & events.

The NUPG meets regularly throughout the year to increase experience and knowledge of underwater photography. It's fun, informal, informative and fishy!

Date	Meeting place	Time
Monday Sep 11 <sup>th</sup> 2006	See Website for Venue	19.30pm - 22.00pm
Monday Oct 16 <sup>th</sup> 2006	See Website for Venue	19.30pm - 22.00pm

To contact or find out about NUPG, meetings and for further information,  
See the NUPG Website [www.nupg.org.uk](http://www.nupg.org.uk)

**Note: Meetings usually start 1930 and finish at 2200 at the latest.**

**Welcome to the last NUPG Newsletter for this outgoing NUPG Year, our 6<sup>th</sup> successful. Within this issue, the AGM is covered and the May meeting. The AGM covered a range of subjects and proved to be a very positive meeting. Please read it thoughtfully as there is plenty of information.**

**Check out also the NUPG ANNUAL SUMMER SPLASH-IN, results and pics in this newsletter. See the web site for further details on both the summer splash-in and PRINT COMPETITION.**

**STOP PRESS!**

**Also, check the NUPG Website and lookout for E-Mail announcements.**

**The Venue for the forthcoming meetings may change.**

## **MEETING REVIEWS**

**May 15<sup>th</sup> 2006**

Lots of people and lots of ideas! 20 members attended the NUPG AGM, and it was quite a busy night, with much discussion on NUPG matters.

### **Image Competition: Hermit Crabs**

A variety of hermits grace the silver screen, strutting their spindly stuff, not many entrants, around 10, considering that these creatures can be seen the world over. Nevertheless, there were a few UK and Ireland crabs as well as some warm water types, a mixture indeed. It was interesting to see some of the different types of hermits, with the anemone hermit, others carrying huge shells, about 3 or 4 times their size!

Joint 3<sup>rd</sup>      Tony Gilbert, Lanzarote

Joint 3<sup>rd</sup>      Mark Thomas, Connemara, Ireland

2<sup>nd</sup>             Derek Haslam, Lewis, UK

1<sup>st</sup>              Pauline Blackie, Dominica

Well done to Pauline and all for submitting some interesting imagery.

## **1<sup>st</sup> Pauline Blackie, Dominica**

**A slight scream of admiration was uttered from the back of the room as the winning image was displayed. Pauline's shout of exclamation and surprise is well deserved, with this image of a large warm-water hermit crab crammed into a purple Caribbean barrel sponge, with a set of dandy red legs dangling precariously out.**

**How the crab got in there was a mystery (probably fell in during the night dive), quite how it's going to get out is another!**

**Well done to Pauline, and the image was taken on an Olympus 5050 compact digital, and now graces this newsletter's front page.**

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Derek Haslam, Lewis, UK**



**Derek's shot was also slightly mystifying, with a butterfish/gunnel of sorts slightly wrapped around the shell of a small hermit crab, shot around Lewis, we think off the small island of Geile Sgeir.**

**Here was a bug hunt that Derek didn't want to do at the time, but once he'd done it was very pleased with his results, as you can see from this excellent shot.**

**No wonder he's going back to Lewis for more!! Fuji S2 housed digital camera system**

### **Joint 3<sup>rd</sup> Mark Thomas, Connemara, Ireland**

**Carpet Crawlers! Quite what Mark had photographed was interesting in its self.**

**An Axminster Carpet of a sea mouse of sorts, with two small crabs sat on top of it was one thing, in the middle ground, but a hermit crab sat in front of it was another.**

**Quite what these creatures were up to he didn't know, perhaps it was a gathering of the Irish clans! Scanned in image from slide, Nikon SLR Housed Camera system.**



### Joint 3<sup>rd</sup> Tony Gilbert, Lanzarote, Canary Islands

Tony's "big red one" jumped out on screen, and he told a tale of fields of tube anemones, with crabs scuttling around on this particular night dive off Lanzarote's Playa Chica.

The image was of a large anemone crab, taken in 6m of water, using a Sea&Sea MotormarineIIEx, 3T Macro framer, slide file ASA/100, F16, 1/60<sup>th</sup>



## Destinations Talk: New Zealand, Paul Kay

Paul & Lucy disappeared off for several weeks recently, on a trip over the other side of the world, to New Zealand, to mainly check out the diving over there. They visited both north and south islands, and experienced diving in sub-tropical and temperate waters, varying in temperature between 18 and 20C.

This was their experience of the type of diving and the marine creatures they encountered.

Looking up at a huge waterfall through the eye of a camera must have been spectacular, at Fjordland, which is situated at the far south west corner of the country, practically inaccessible by road, but with better access by boat.

The light levels & conditions around here change very quickly, sometimes without warning, and several shots showed the weather changes; they were dolphin watching.

### Northern Diving

The diving started off, at least on the images, in the warmer waters of North Island, and the wreck of the Rainbow Warrior. The image was taken with ambient light, to show how good the light levels were at 20m, closely followed by a large hogfish bumbling around the wreck. The bowsprit is completely covered in NZ's equivalent of jewel anemones, which seem to be slightly bigger and very vivid in colour.

### Southern Diving

Fjordland seems to be the place to dive with temperate conditions. An aptly named site was dived, awash rock, and the water was very clean & clear. Paul explained their group went in search of leatherback turtles, and they found some really superb cold water corals, particularly a magenta red coloured "red coral", as the Kiwi's call it. It turns out to be an hydroid and not a true coral, but with a background of green, this vivid striking colour stands out really well.

Bright yellow, and large, Zooanthids by million were carpeting all the rocks around in a dive site of The Gut, which is a very high-energy site diveable only on slack. With vistas of pure yellow interspersed with green encrusting sponges, it made for good composition imagery. He recounted the skipper indicating that one could see the black corals from the surface, and Paul looked down to find he was right! The "black corals" are white. Acinorothoe (sagartia type anemones) were also around, a different construct to their UK cousins, whereby these had longer and different coloured stems.

### Strange Creatures

It all made for fascinating listening, as we visited Stewart Island and a strange looking pig fish, about 5 inches long, pretty squat & butt ugly, with brown & black stripes. Another strange critter was the "Jock Stewart" a sort of blennie – come scorpionfish mix.

### Poor Knights

One of the most famous places around the world, and probable the most famous in NZ, is Poor Knights, where tompot blennie varieties could be found. Fish here, in the marine reserve were not afraid of divers so much, and scorpionfish and triplefins could be easily photographed.

## **More Strange Creatures in Fjordland**

The last series of images now presented themselves, and some interesting shots, both for the unfamiliarity of the creature and the good image composition.

### **“Oblique Triple Fin”**

This little fish was perched on a “serpent star”, which was itself wrapped around a pure white, black coral. The suggestion was that a “mutual-istic” relationship existed.

### **“Striped Serpent Star”**

This creature was fascinating, with its black and white rings, it looked more like a sea snake of sorts, but coiled completely around the white coral. Paul went to explain that the relationship could be one of cleaning, and that the star keeps the coral clean in return for particles of food etc. Those black coral specimens without serpent stars were in worse condition with slime on them, in comparison to the very clean ones with stars on them.

### **“Triple Fin”**

Very close up shot of a triplefin, taken with a 100mm lens.

### **“Tiger Moray”**

Very difficult to spot, especially around lava, a tiger moray found at Poor Knights.

### **“Blue Cod”**

This fish was the most friendly fish of all, being quite inquisitive and not afraid of divers.

### **“Cray fish”**

Commonly known in NZ as rock lobster.

### **“Brachiopod”**

Not a bi-valve but looks like one, these are very large specimens compared to those found in the Menai Straits a mere 1.5mm across!

### **“Seals”**

Sea Lions are seen, but you're more likely to see a fur seal. Paul showed a series of delightful shots of fur seals diving down to look at the divers and the dome ports. They spin around as they dive creating a whirlpool effect. Some just hung in the water upside down and looked on.

All in all a great place to visit and photograph.

## **AGM**

The main “event” of the evening was the Annual General Meeting, a chance for everyone to influence the way NUPG runs. This evening’s AGM was very good with many people expressing opinions & ideas. The current committee was “sworn” in again, and will take these ideas on board for the future, very useful indeed.

### **Resume of the 6<sup>th</sup> NUPG Year, 2005/6 – Tony**

The meeting started with a resume of the previous year. Although it didn’t seem busy, in actual fact the committee were very busy in just keeping the meetings running, newsletters, web site, splash-in’s. All of this activity does take up a lot of time in ones already busy social & work schedules.

#### **Summary**

- Corbans as the new venue appears to be a success
- Meeting frequencies changed last year, to exclude summer months, is working well.
- Meeting attendance was on average around 20, except for Mar which seemed to dip to 12.
- Speakers have been mainly home grown, with few guest speakers.
- Subject matter was more orientated to diving destinations, rather than technical.
- Image competitions worked well, both with slide and e-images, an interesting range covered.
- Fave5 suffered a little due to re timing of the meeting and content.
- Newsletters and Website continued to produce good quality NUPF information.
- Activities included Dive Show, 2 splash-ins (print comp) and a week UK live aboard trip.

#### **Finances – Lucy**

This last year saw a growth in the finances and we’re still in the black. This is due to less outside speakers, and therefore less expenses. Also, both splash-ins and print competition brought in revenue, which as slightly off set by the cost of a plastic box – for the projection equipment!

#### **Membership – Gail**

The membership remained buoyant at around 35-40 members, with some leavers and joiners throughout the year, some joined from the Dive Show stand or from NUPG website hits. Also, the “.cc” list remains reasonably constant – these are people who visit occasionally and are copied in on announcements etc.

#### **Committee – Lucy**

The current committee is willing stand for a further term of office, but has asked for further volunteers to help with meeting organisation. Specifically the post of “General Secretary” is needed. This would involve the incumbent sending out meeting notes, general NUPG communication work etc., rather than the secretary, who current performs both jobs!

## **Events for this coming year – Tony**

**This was the part of the meeting that every wanted to discuss – and a good thing too!**

**Tony & Lucy introduced the subject matter and basically the meeting discussed these and any other subjects that came up afterwards.**

### **Dive Show, Birmingham**

**This year it is October 14/15<sup>th</sup> (Sat/Sun), and volunteers were asked for, none forthcoming at the meeting, so to all, have a think and get back to the committee if your willing to spend a half day or more on stand. It is very rewarding.**

### **Blue Planet Aquarium**

**A new one for this year, the Blue Planet Aquarium at Ellesmere has invited NUPG to have a stand at an open day, which is 19-20<sup>th</sup> August. The stand is likely to have images from NUPG, taken by members, with SLRs, compacts and wet camera systems, a small portfolio of images and NUPG flyers. The intention will be to interface with the public on the aspects of photographing marine creatures underwater.**

**Volunteers will be needed to “man” the stand. Pauline Blackie volunteered, well done Pauline!**

### **Website & Wet Pixel**

**A few ideas were put forward regarding the use of the website, and having a “chat” area or a blog was suggested. It was pointed out that the hyperlink from NUPG website to Wetpixel, went to the NUPG Forum web pages on wet pixel, which is in effect the “chat room” of NUPG. Not many people use this at the moment, so it’s worth other NUPG members logging in.**

### **Weekend workshops / Digital weekends**

**Something that keeps cropping up is the need for an NUPG away day. The committee recently discussed this and Colin has put forward a suggestion to use HMS Indefatigable on the Menai Straits for a short weekend, starting on a Friday evening, through Saturday, leaving Sunday morning. The place is cheap, accessible, and the Menai Straits nearby for diving.**

*Committee is currently looking at something in Autumn, but will need firm commitments from all wanting to attend.*

### **Dive Trips**

I think most people recognise that many of the members are already very busy with their domestic, social and work aspects of their lives, and that it is sometimes difficult to arrange NUPG trips for members. Also geographically it can be logistically challenged to sort these things out as well.

A few ideas were sent around, with suggestions for day boats. Al Gray's Shearwater was mentioned (although the boat has to be booked). {Incidentally, talked to Al Gray the week after the meeting, he's fully booked and probably not taking any further dive trips this year}.

Lucy re-iterated Seasearch trips are wanting people, and this could be a great way to sign on (individually, but preferably in buddy pairs). Seasearch trips are being run from various boats around Anglesey and Lleyn and are not full with seasearch members, so divers have been invited to join to make the numbers, enjoy themselves, and it allows the trips to go ahead without cancelling. See [www.seasearch.org.uk](http://www.seasearch.org.uk) website, Paul Turkentine is the North Wales coordinator and contact.

This year also, the very popular live aboard trip to Lewis on m/v Cuma is being repeated again, sadly its full! But, perhaps next year has possibilities.

If you've any ideas on dive trips, would like to organise one for NUPG members, or have a dive trip that needs "bums on seats", then don't hesitate to send a note into [nupg, info@nupg.org.uk](mailto:info@nupg.org.uk)

### **Splash-Ins**

Paul stressed that the rapid demise of film cameras is putting pressure on the NUPG summer splash-in, and feels this year is likely to be the last year that film will be used at this splash-in. NUPG is paying a sum of money to Cambrian Photography for the privilege of E6 processing on Saturday of this years splash-in (22<sup>nd</sup> July), otherwise film would not be processed at all.

This year's splash-in, Gail has kindly volunteered to do the "Cambrian" run, thanks Gail, it is most appreciated. (Paul & Lucy have done it every year so far).

After some discussion, a suggestion was to borrow / hire E6 processing equipment, and perhaps do it ourselves, paying only for the processing materials.

Pauline Blackie has access to E6 processing, has used it before, and is willing to think about carrying out the processing. It was agreed to leave things as they were for this year, however Pauline's suggestion (and thanks to Pauline) may be taken up for next year. Pauline stressed she's not a wizard at the E6 art of divination, but is willing to do it, and there are no guarantees on the images processed 😊

*Committee has taken this on board.*

### Meeting Talks

The meeting noted the majority of talks last year were on dive destinations and few were technical or guest speaker.

We all agreed with this, and in the recent committee meeting, this was also recognised. {The committee strives to organise meetings as best as possible, and sometimes guest speakers are not always available on the NUPG dates}.

As for technical talks, it was offered out to the meeting on the likely subject matter to be best covered in future meetings, as the committee is currently organising next years meetings. This is an ideal time to suggest!

*Technical talk subjects that people would like were:*

- ✦ Compact Digital cameras, getting the best out of them.
- ✦ Using Photoshop, ie hints&tips.
- ✦ Composition

*Guest Speaker Suggestions were:*

- ✦ Alex Mustard
- ✦ Martin Edge (Pauline & Neil offered to contact Martin)
- ✦ Linda Pitkin

*Committee have noted these down.*

**If anyone is willing to organise a meeting, just for the experience of it, then please let committee know. Keith Lloyd, Mark Thomas & Derek Haslam put forward that they may be interested in organising/running a meeting – well done lads!**

## **REPORTS and HANDOUTS**

### **NUPG 2006 SUMMER SPLASH-In**

**Organised by Lucy & Paul Kay, the ever popular summer splash-in and print competition just got better. Last year's was a resounding success however, this year proved to have all the right ingredients, that is flat calm conditions, excellent weather, light levels and great visibility.**

**Of course no splash-in is complete without having competitors, and there were around 20, mostly NUPG, but a few non-members also. Let's hope that succeeding years of splash-ins are well attended if not more so (come on NUPG members support your club for a day), and have these conditions.**

**For all the hard work put in, many thanks go to Lucy & Paul for organising and Ken, Colin & Gail for logistics, without whom, the day and evening wouldn't have been the same.**

**It gets light around 4:30am, I know cos I was eating toast and throwing hot coffee down me in an attempt to kickstart the brain cells into action. After picking up diver buddy for the day, Ray and I hit the road, which even at 5:30 was surprisingly busy. Arriving at the Lifeboat car park at Trearddur Bay, around 7:45, Paul & Lucy were already there eagerly awaiting the entrants.**

**Duly booked in, divers went this way and that, some to Porth Dafarch, some the "the islands" near the Haunted House and others just around the far side of the bay. The majority were on pixel-power, but there were 3 stalwarts of the professional film category.**

**Jason found his niche in Porth Dafarch in a couple of metres of water, with shannies all over the place. We went to Ravenspoint, to find a veritable army of tompots, I think it must have been a tompot hatchery! The visibility was outstanding 8m clear, the water warm enough for a wet suit – eh Lucy – and I think the whole marine kingdom had come out to see what all the fuss was about.**

**The list of bugs n' beasties was huge, with many compass jellyfish in the water column. Aside from the potties, many small edible crabs, shore crabs, velvet crabs, spider crabs, common lobster, some very nice small galathea squat lobster in their colourful blue/red livery – these were not "avin it" preferring to hide away. Tritonia nudibranchs were everywhere, as were huge numbers of eggs, dragonets put in an appearance, and some very colourful topshells.**

**The ledges were adorned with some very colourful shrimps with yellow markings, these wackie creatures just marched up and down the ledges. At one point I had 1 strobe off and resting on rock, whilst the other was off the arm as some of these horizontal fissures were very difficult indeed.**

**Many fish were also in evidence, especially some olive green coloured wrasse matching exactly the olive green colour of the sea grasses, weeds and wrack.**

**There were the skittish amongst the creatures, a particularly tiresome sea scorpion who insisted on moving every time we got into position.**

**The rocks around contained deep cut fissures and gullies, and a shallow ledge nearby was one of the most beautiful & colourful ledges of wrack, weeds and encrusting sponges I've ever seen. With the sun in the east, and the water a clear blue, I could be forgiven for thinking it was somewhere tropical! Then in 2m of water picturesque mermaid's tresses clutched at the watery surface, now mirror calm, and curved in Snell's window, reflecting the vibrant strands – I just wish I'd rigged for wide-angle now!!!**

**With 110 minutes of diving, we had exhausted our time, and rushed back to the meeting point for the collection of sticks and films. Gale & Colin had volunteered to take the films for processing at Cambrian Photography in Conwy, which had been specially laid on for the purpose of processing our precious films.**

**We were lucky today, several like Mick and Helen Hyde had got on Diggsie's boat shuttle at 11am, and also done an early morning shore dive. There was still plenty of day left, so several decided to take a nice relaxing dive with Diggsie on his RIB Cobra out to the wreckage of the Primrose Hill in Abrahams Bosum, near South Stack. This proved to be fruitful, with many lobster, shrimps, scores of candystriped flatworms, fan worms, and even some escapee tompots put in an appearance amongst the rusting metal. 75 minutes later we were coming back into Trearddur Bay, looking at our watches.**

**The “evening” was a mere hour and half away, so our wild bunch jumped off the RIB, quickly retrieved the boat, packed up and whizzed off to the guest house to check in, and have a “navy shower”. It was here we met up with other entrants who had been there for some time, judging by the dishevelled room, cups and laptops, which they poured over.**

**The Trearddur Bay Hotel is a good venue, especially on a day like today. The food is of excellent quality, and good variety, and we took full advantage of this in the time we had remaining before the judging started.**

**There in the corner of the darkened room, which incidentally the a/c had broken down, a rectangular shape stood proud, a shining white light emanated from it, several entrants went over and bowed to the great white box.**

**While the ritual was played out, others looked on at the gloriously colourful array of print images on the two top tables. This was indeed one of the best spreads ever seen.**

**Without further a do, Lucy introduced the evening and we got down to the serious business of judging. There were two sections, one for slide film and one for digital.**

**Of course, the first image out was a tompot, and the quality of images was stunning. Colourful fanworms, shrimps, shanny, compass jellyfish, crab varieties.**

**It was a tricky decision but the results speak for themselves....**

**Film:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Jason Gregory, shanny over the shoulder shot.**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Jason Gregory, laughing shanny.**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Tony Gilbert, butch shrimp leaning on rock.**

**Digital:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Paul Maddock, compass jellyfish in a reflective mood.**

**Joint**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Steve Bateman, spider crab**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Steve Bateman, with a lump of oddly shaped metal.**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Mark Thomas, candy striped flatworm, the deckchair look.**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Derek Haslam, compass jellyfish pointing the right way.**

**Head-to-Head**

**Overall Winner Paul Maddock**

**Well done to Paul Maddock and to all who entered or participated.**

**NUPG 2006**

**SPLASH-IN  
COMPETITION  
WINNER**

**PAUL  
MADDOCK'S**

**WELSH COMPASS  
JELLYFISH**

**Digital  
entry.**



**Above, cool  
compass reflections  
won the day.**



**Paul Maddock  
receiving his  
award, the “nuts n  
bolt” underwater  
photographer-  
diver, from Lucy  
Kay, NUPG Club  
Secretary.**

**Congratulations  
and well done!**

Here are the splash-in winners and runner's up, starting with

## Jason Gregory's 1<sup>ST</sup> PRIZE FILM CATEGORY

shot of the cheeky little "pint of Shanny"!



Jason taking a bow, and medal for his hard FILM work – on the day.

Well done to Jason.





**Jason's smiling shanny with shiny eyes.**

**Tony's colourful shrimp hiding in a colourful fissure (trying to escape).**



**Mark's "all the fun of the fair" Candy, striped flatworm.**



**Dirk was aiming in the right direction with his shot of a Compass Jellyfish.**

**Steve (Bateman) and his "double-bill" of digital imagery...**

**Spider, spider on the kelp, who is the fairest of them all?**



**Yoh! Ho! Ho! and a bottle of RUM!  
Strange metal goings on...**



## **Print Competition**

The Print Competition traditionally associated with the summer splash-in was very well represented, with many shots for both categories, tropical and temperate. Two long tables were chock full of colourful images from all over the world.

Tropical prints ranged from clownfish, wrecks, macro subjects, whereas temperate prints included coldwater images from the UK & New Zealand. The quality of the imagery was stunning. Many of the images were printed on photographic paper, whereas others were produced in Ciba-Chrome format.

Another high point of the evening was the judging of these prints, and as you can see from the results it was a close run thing!

### **Temperate Prints:**

#### **Joint**

- 1<sup>st</sup>** Derek Haslam, Sea Hen, SW England
- 1<sup>st</sup>** Lucy Kay, Parazooanthids and comber fish, New Zealand

#### **Joint**

- 2<sup>nd</sup>** Derek Haslam, Scylla Anchor Chain, Plymouth UK
- 2<sup>nd</sup>** Derek Haslam, Cuttlefish, SW England
- 3<sup>rd</sup>** Paul Kay, Corkwing wrasse off Sarn Badrig, North Wales

### **Tropical Prints:**

- 1<sup>st</sup>** Tony Gilbert, Sandstar, Night Dive at Playa Chica, Lanzarote, Canaries
- 2<sup>nd</sup>** Paul Kay, Clownfish, Tahiti

#### **Joint**

- 3<sup>rd</sup>** Paul Kay, Parrotfish & Turkish/Ornate wrasse, El Hierro, Canaries
- 3<sup>rd</sup>** Tony Gilbert, small Tiger Clam, Perhentian Kecil Is., Malaysia



**Guests, members and families alike, take to scrutinising the print images.**

Here are the PRINT COMPETITION 1<sup>ST</sup> PRIZE winners collecting their sacks of potatoes, or heavy award shields. Left to Right:

**Tony Gilbert (Tropical 1<sup>st</sup>)**

**Lucy Kay (Temperate Joint 1<sup>st</sup>)**

**Derek Haslam (Temperate Joint 1<sup>st</sup>)**

Well done to all those submitting prints, and the winners & runners up!

(See website for all the print competition winners and runner's up)



## **LINKS**

**If you have any photo-type web links you wish to share, let us know... (Also see previous issue(s) for many others).**