

NORTHERN UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

NEWSLETTER Issue #9, May 2003 – Nov2003

NUPG Web Site: www.nupg.org.uk

Mark Thomas: May NUPG Meeting, Mark's Top 5

Cock-a-doodle-do.

Check the BIG Eyes! Sea Hen taken in difficult conditions in a May Menai Straits outing.



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Issue Contributors: Mark Thomas, Lucy Kay, Tony Gilbert.

Date for your Diary:

NEXT NUPG MEETING:

Mon DECEMBER 1st 2003, Swan Inn Bucklow Hill, nr Knutsford at 1930 prompt.

Editor: Tony Gilbert, e-mail: NoDecoWarrior@hotmail.com

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 - October 2003 to March 2004.

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	
Dec 1 st 2003, Monday	Swan Inn (A556, between M6/J19 & M56)	19.30pm	Members Meeting
Jan 19 th 2004, Monday	Swan Inn (A556, between M6/J19 & M56)	19.30pm	
Mar 22 nd 2004, Monday	Swan Inn (A556, between M6/J19 & M56)	19.30pm	

To find the venue please use an A-Z or road map

For further information contact 01248 681361 or 01274 852361 or 01253 395746 and our web site

www.nupg.org.uk

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

1st DECEMBER 2003

Xmas meeting is our members meeting, a little change to the normal format, with more member talks. Calling all NUPG members, help us please, we would like you to volunteer to do a short 15minute talk on whatever you like, preferably photo-diving related. If you are interested for this meeting, please let one of the committee members know straight away.

Speakers : 15minute member talks.

Competition Theme : [Best of 2003 \(open slides of 2003\)](#)

Let's have a look at the images you've produced this year, maybe some great ideas for others to think about. This evening slide competition is slightly different. You enter up to **2 Slides per Category**. There are 4 categories.

Categories: i) Temperate Wide-Angle, ii) Temperate Macro, iii) Tropical Wide-Angle, iv) Tropical Macro

MEETING REVIEWS

12th MAY 2003, AGM

Tonight's meeting was well attended with around 25-30 people, making up the bulk of the current NUPG membership, and this meeting was sadly the last in the current venue of the Windmill Pub. The format of the meeting started with AGM business, closely followed by all the regular features we've come to know and love, along with a modicum of audience banter, however, no technical talk this evening.

AGM

This meeting is the Annual General Meeting, a chance for all members to voice their opinions, elect new committee members and shape the future of their club. It is also useful for suggesting further guest speakers & technical talks, perhaps some other activities or trips we haven't yet done.

Maybe YOU would like to give a talk as either a technical or guest speaker or would like to become part of the committee, or help out with events organisation. If you do, contact Lucy, you don't need to wait for the AGM to do this!

Our long standing Club Treasurer and Membership Secretary Lucy started initiated the proceedings, closely followed by Tony (editor extraordinaire) who presented...

Review of the Past Year, May2002-May2003

This last year has seen all the meetings brimming with subject matter, talks, slides, and great attendance, so much so, several items of each meeting have had to be carried forward to others.

Meetings

Not only was the venue changed, the committee moved around a little with kids on the block, Jason Gregory, Tony Gilbert, Colin Samuels, and the Top 5 introduced.

Guest Speakers

External Guest Speakers have been small in number, with Brendan o' Brien, "how to get into magazines", Ken Sullivan, "equipment matters", and finally Alan Mildren's audio-visual outing.

"Home-Grown" Guest Speakers have been Steve Smithson with "Manado surprise talk" and Tony Gilbert, "MotormarineII Camera Systems".

Technical Talks

These seemed to have been postponed more than others, however, those talks remaining provided some really useful insights and tips we call all still do with. Paul Kay gave us "What Print, What Film", Mark Walker, "How to Avoid Floods", Steve Smithson, "Wide-Angle Lighting". In addition a few highly successful "doctor's surgeries" were run.

Slide Competitions

The committee were able to think up some awkward subjects for members to toil over, proving very popular with members. The cast of questionable characters included "Cephalopodia", "Wet Camera Images", "Colour Green", "Eyes or Mouths", "Water", "Crabs & Lobbies", the latter of which had an outstanding 11 winners! There certainly some interesting slants on the chosen subjects, and we also had a "Best of Year 2002" at the Christmas meeting. Well done to all, and we'll endeavour to think up some more tricky subjects!

Mini-Talks at Christmas 2002

It was refreshing to see 4 talks conducted at this meeting, and if anyone else would like to do a talk, please let one of the committee know. Roy Cash on "Western Manado", Dave Buckley "Great Whites of S.A.", Derek Haslam "this n' that", Neil o' May "Doctors Surgery".

Splash-In & Exhibitions

Over the course of the NUPG year, we've had 2 splash-in's, Winter in Capernwray (thanks go to Ken Byrne), and the Summer Splash-In & Print Competition (thanks to Paul & Lucy), held in Anglesey during the Holyhead Festival.

AND, so it was, one year on, we were looking to NUPG's future, and 4th Year in existence...

Report from the Treasurer & Membership Secretary on the Club's finances and membership

Lucy presented the year's annual financial returns and finances, as well as a run through of membership numbers etc.

Finances

The NUPG finances are quite healthy and the Group is still solvent! At the date of the AGM, the group had about £580 in the current account. The main income to the Group remains the membership subs with additional monies from non-members paying on the door to come to meetings and also the winter Splash-In which made a profit. The room hire at the Windmill had been very cheap so that Group hadn't spent as much on this over the year, and many of the outside speakers who had given talks had only charged costs. The new venue, the Swan Inn, would be more expensive, but the current status of the Group's finances meant that this could be covered.

The membership fee of £20.00 (single), £30.00 (family) is also now due, and Lucy reminded everyone to pay this asap, and help ensure that the group remained financially solvent.

Membership

Membership had remained steady at about 35 members. Some members did not renew their subs for 2002-03, but have subsequently renewed their membership for 2003-04. The Group welcomed a number of new members during the year. Quite a lot of members made use of the new family membership rate. It was important to maintain and expand the membership of the Group and it was agreed that further effort to promote and advertise the Group needed to be made. Offers of help with this always welcomed!

We are also considering the production of new membership cards, and have asked Ken Sullivan to judge a selection of overall slide comp winning slides, and see which will be used in the new card.

It was at this point we all thanked Lucy very much for the hard work she has continued to put in, on our behalf, in order to make this club a success. Thanks.

The Future

Tony, in the absence of Mark, started the ball rolling, making a few suggestions for ongoing support on activities & events, ideas for new material, things that people would like to be discussed. It was also recognised that the NUPG Website is greatly in need of updating, and anyone who wishes to take this on, or perhaps knows someone who is willing to help, please let one of the committee know.

For a second year, the existing committee was voted in, and in addition Mark Wakerly volunteered his services and was co-opted on to the committee.

The NUPG Terms of Reference is attached to the Newsletter, and here is your committee for the forthcoming year. **BUT REMEMBER: if you have any ideas / requests for speakers, presentation topics, travel briefs, technical talks etc or are able to offer your services to the running of the Group, please speak to any of the committee – we'd welcome your input.**

Mark Walker
Lucy Kay
Colin Samuels
Jason Gregory
Paul Kay
Tony Gilbert
Mark Wakerly

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Other NUPG Matters Discussed

Donation to MCS

Paul Kay raised a point on whether NUPG was willing to donate £50.00 from NUPG funds to the MCS towards the promotion of the “Photographic Code of Conduct”, a copy of which is on Paul’s website, www.marinewildlife.co.uk. The donation would assist in producing promo. Flyers, which could include images produced from NUPG photographers. If you require further information, please see the website or contact Paul direct. NUPG members unanimously agreed to make this donation.

Organised Trips

There was some talk around organising NUPG trips, particularly away days or odd weekends, which are little easier of people’s pocket’s and availability. This is something we all need to think about, and any suggestions, or offers, please contact a committee member, to make sure another trip for the same date hasn’t been organised.

Summer Splash-In, Boat

Tony made the suggestion of having a boat for the summer splash-in, perhaps SBS boat charters, run by Aubrey Diggle or Paul Turkentine’s. This would of course depend on availability of boat(s) and numbers attending the splash-in. All seemed ok with Tony progressing this further.

The Nights Activities

A jam packed evening remained and it was surprising we actually got through it all!

Competition Theme : Gorgonia and Sea Fans

This meeting's slide competition was a real draw with 15 slide submitted. It was a difficult subject because sea fans are limited to certain places across the globe and have easy access to the diver. It was inevitable that the bulk of images were from the Red Sea, although a sprinkling from the Caribbean, Far East, and even in home waters off the UK's southerly shorelines, with the rare pink sea fans. Many of the images were of the "Linda Dunk school of composition", and why not!

1st : Steve Smithson. Image taken in Manado.

A great winning shot from Steve, people if not all voted for this one. image of a large sea fan arching with diver in middle ground and background along with Snell's what that is now don't we?).

Taken with a housed camera system using a fish-eye lens.



and I am sure most A well composed off into the distance, bright blue water in the window (we all know

2nd : Derek Haslam. Somewhere in the Red Sea, off a boat.



We all thought it was the Red Sea as well, and there was talk of Chinese divers on the boat. A great composition shot of a fan attached to a vertical wall, looking upwards to the tethered boat in bright sunlight.

Taken with a camera - "oooh, he's so mysterious!!"

Joint 3rd : Charles Wolstenholme. Red Sea Gorgonian with attendant sweepers

A shot of the famous “Gorgon of Ras Mo”, once seen it’ll turn you to stone, as Charles may have explained! Sharm El Sheikh has many a sea fan, but the one at Ras Mohammed possesses many photogenic qualities, which include the colourful fan and attendant billion or two sweepers hovering above it. Charles managed to capture its essence and bottle it in this frame.



Taken with a Nikonos V on Auto. (That’s Nikonos “five” and not some German sounding car name – Von Auto - Voorsprung wet technik!)

Joint 3rd : Derek Haslam. Red Sea



We know this great shot of a deep red fan’s bracts was taken in the Red Sea somewhere, and it was taken underwater with a camera, other than that, Derek explained he was at a loose end as to its whereabouts. Great shot though, with the remainder of the fan in the background, creating a sort of 3D effect.

Taken – by Derek.

Speaker : Dave Buckley on “Diving with Sharks at Walkers Cay, Bahamas”

A “Dive Destinations” talk tonight, given by Dave Buckley. In the true style of Biggles, Ginge jumped into his seaplane and made off to the dive sites of Walker’s Cay in the Bahamas, in an encounter with the underwater Red Baron’s.

After the audience overcame firstly the shock of a large frozen chum bucket, and secondly seeing a scantily clad Dave using the rest room as a dark room, we were treated to a series of images depicting the marine life of the area. These included the typical Caribbean style walls and gardens of large barrel sponges, sea whips, sea fans (healthy ones too) and many coral varieties. These were mostly hard corals of varying shapes, sizes and designs, and in addition to these, a friendly barracuda patrolled under their boat. Dave also showed us a very curious shot of a green sea turtle and attendant remora.

Ok, where are all these sharks then?

Well, in 10m of water at a pre-designated place, the boat stops, the sharks know this and come along. The next 20 or so frames were dedicated to the shark feeding experience, where the frozen lollipop of chum is suspended mid-water, and they attempt to rip it to shreds. These are mainly Grey Reef with a light sprinkling of White & Black Tip Reef sharks, along with the odd Nursey, explained Dave. The frenzy, judging by the images, was mainly down to the large amount of snappers & grunts jumping wildly in all directions in their attempts to collect scraps.

The problem, Dave indicated, was to try and take a decent shot without all the chaff in it. Hands, fins, bubbles, divers, shark fins, tails, food bits were all over the place, and it was worthwhile stepping back from the central action. It was very much worth the experience though, and divers were rewarded with discarded shark teeth littering the seabed.

Technical Talk : None this meeting.

My 5 Slides : By Mark Thomas

Mark had a chance to show his top 5, explaining that he had started with photography about a year ago, and all shots were taken with a Nikon F90, Sea & Sea Housing, Fixed Strobe. (PS : No daffodils were harmed when making these images).

1. Connamara was the place of the first shot, that of a pogue. Ugly looking bottom dwelling fish, but like a scorpionfish type.
2. Calve Island, a serious 70m sheer wall just outside Tobermory (and more importantly the Mishnish), has a fair amount of marine life on it. Here Mark was able to take an interesting shot of a sea squirt with lots of latticework design to it. Corella Parallelogram???
3. A couple of weeks before the meeting Mark was able to jump into the Menai during a very competitive slack window, and take a frontal shot of a lumpsucker or Sea Hen as it is commonly known. The large eyes and mottled complexion gave it away, and now graces the front cover of this issue. Wish I’d seen one of these to photograph, and it was along the telephone cable.
4. Another great frontal shot, this time of a lobster with cock-eyes, taken in Porth Ysgaden on the Lleyn. As Mark explained, it was the “peak of the action”, one shot and it was off back down it’s hole!
5. The last dish of the day was reserved for a familiar sight to those who frequent Capernwray especially during NUPG Winter Splash-Ins. It was a shot of one of the ever-increasing number of rainbow trout – yummmie.

Thanks to Mark for a great set of slides.

FUN QUIZ : By, Tony Gilbert

And finally, before anybody could make a b-line for the door, My G. ruefully distributed a veritable War and Peace of Mastermind underwater questions. There were cries of what’s all this then, and we wanna go home tonight, not tomorrow. All hopes of reprieve were however consigned to the scrapheap as pens were distributed and members became quiet as their brains were engaged in the Quiz!

The questions ranged from techniques & science, to history and those films we’ve all watched like Jaws, The Deep, just to catch out one or two wily coyote’s among you.

Eventually all were completed, and the winner was announced as Derak Haslam with 21 points, however, he relented as he had dyslexia, it was 12! So, the winners were the team table of Richard Whiteley, Charles and Jennifer Wolstenholme with 20 out of 24 questions correct, well done. Perhaps next time, we shall have a prize awaiting – eh Derek?

30th JUNE 2003

The meeting tonight, in the balmy depths of summer, came to us from a new venue, The Swan Inn at Bucklow Hill.

In the quite plush surroundings of the Cygnet Room, NUPG members were treated to two travel briefs that revealed the delights of diving in both the northern and southern hemispheres, as well as the slip comp of diver portraits - close up and, to be honest, somewhat startling images of divers faces underwater (or above water for that matter – Keith!).

Lucy followed on with a few items, that we all needed to know, like paying our subscriptions up on time, splash-in money etc.

Paul also commented on the Penrhyn Cadlle exhibition on just how successful it has been with the public & staff alike. Many of us have already visited it, and several images have caught the eye of the public, some of which were not for sale! The exhibition finished on the 2nd July.

Competition Theme : Diver's Portraits (not the whole diver in shot)

Is the most scariest thing you'll meet underwater your buddy? Well, some of the images shown in the slide comp this meeting might have led you to believe this! A wide selection of close-up and personal shots showed that divers' faces underwater come in all shapes, sizes and expressions.

1st : Jason Gregory, Stoney Cove, Leicester



NOT falling into the scary category, Becky Gregory seen here puckering up for husband Jason to take this winning shot. The jaunty angle of the mask in the photo and the lovely smiling eyes made this a favourite.

Taken with a housed camera system using a 60mm lens.

2nd : Lucy Kay, Cathedral Cave, Gozo, Malta



Obviously the day for photographs of spouses, this slightly surreal image showed husband Paul on the other side of a camera for once! Taken on a photo course that Paul was running, the resulting image showed that his course participants sometimes got it right! The entrance to the cave in the bottom of the picture gives a feeling of the image not being quite the right way round.

Taken with a Nikon F60 in a Subal housing with a 20mm lens and single flash.

Joint 3rd : Paul Kay, Aran Islands, Galway, Ireland

The whiskery old sea dog in this photo was none other than Alan Mildren who had given a spectacular audio-visual presentation to the group only a few months back. Rarely one to return from a dive with shots still on the film, Paul had taken this photo to use up his film at the end of a dive!



Taken with a Nikon F80 in a Subal housing with a 60mm lens.

Joint 3rd : Lucy Kay, Cathedral Cave, Gozo, Malta

Another shot taken on the same photo trip as the picture of Paul in Cathedral cave. Adrian Brookes who had to get used to photo course participants eager to get video camera.



This time, the man in black was being followed around by an action photo of diver with

Taken with a Nikon F60 in a Subal housing with a 20mm lens and single flash

Dive Destinations : Tony Gilbert, on Diving Eastern Mallorca

Mallorca / Majorca, Tony described the type of diving, which may be had on the eastern coastlines, at popular tourist destinations. A show of hands indicated not many had visited Majorca, and of those only two had dived there, one of whom, Antonio, is/was a resident for 25 years!

Many people don't dive the Mediterranean, or dive Malta for the wrecks instead. Others who venture to Turkey or Greece are sometimes disappointed, and therefore venture further afield to more exotic climes. Majorca, in the Balearics, off the coast of Spain and France, is just one of the three major islands here.



All these islands of limestone exhibit similar characteristics of craggy weather beaten coastlines, full of potholes and caverns.

Left: Diver inspecting wreck. Above: Parasites infesting a swordfish at Sa Galena Reef.

Tony, through a selection of colourful slides, went on to describe the varied and plentiful static and mobile marine life, the many colourful sponges & tube squirts, as well as the many different photo opportunities that the caverns, swimthroughs & ridges provide. The NE

coastline of Cala Millor / Cala Bona, moving deftly on to the SE at Cala d'Or / Cala Gran. Clear blue water, tall pinnacle reefs plastered in colour, a small collection of wrecks, sponges, shoaling barracuda, octopus, morays, scorpionfish were just some of the marine life to see. A finale of images showed in the dark mysterious inside of a once dry cavern, of water bound stalactites & stalagmites.

Also covered, the beach area of bikini clad bodies (well spotted audience), the boat access points, and the snorkelling areas available. Aug-Sept are the hottest months, with an air temp. 30C+ & water 25-29C, a mere 2 hrs flying time away.



Dive Destinations : Mark Walker, on the Sardine Run.

Around usually June through to early July, with a water temperature of approximately 22-24C, a phenomenon occurs in the waters off the coast of South Afrika, more specifically the surf bound shoreline of the Umkumbati Nature Reserve (hopefully I've spent this correctly). Located south of Durban, the deep water harbours one of the greatest spectacles on Earth, the Sardine Run.

Mark Walker gave us a very informative and interesting talk on his organised visit a little while ago. Sardines by the billion move in unison in a long huge processional column of many kilometres. A veritable food chain, ready for the waiting species of fish & bird life that prey on them. Mark spent several weeks on a Tony White tour, but they didn't have all their own way!

As Mark explained, weather, specifically the wind & surf conditions, play a key role in whether you are going to go out that day or not. Many of the days were spent onshore, waiting, however, all was not lost though, as the nature reserve has much to offer. They explored finding many rare species of animals, like the snake catching bird. Many species of monkeys were also present, along with a bee catching bird.

Once the surf calmed down, their powerful twin engined RIB made short work of the foam as it sped out into the open sea, to play a waiting game. A microlite is sent up to patrol the area in search of tell tale signs of impending sardines. Once found, the RIB speeds over to the site in an effort to reach there before the sardines are all eaten. Many bottlenose & common dolphins edged their way to the area in pods numbering between 5000 and 7000!

The dolphins roll the sardines up into bait balls, pushing them to the surface. It is here that waiting masses of gannets dive in taking their fill, whilst the dolphins do so underwater. Sharks, mainly brown whaler, then come in to clean yet more up in feeding fest, and finally Orcas come in to the lowering visibility to eat the dolphins & sharks!

Photography in these conditions is unpredictable as massed movements of speeding mammals pass by, fish are thrust in all directions, and shots must be on fast shutter speeds. It is better suited to videography; much of the day is spent snorkelling rather than with SCUBA equipment.

It was on one such occasion on this particular trip Tony White became enclosed by a moving sardine bait ball, and a brown whaler mistook his left elbow for a sardine. Luckily the bite wasn't fatal and Tony has thankfully now made a 98% recovery.

The photography was made in difficult conditions, as everyone there went much for the awesome experience of it all. On the last non-diving day as they flew over yet another congregation of sardines, it was announced the "big one" had finally arrived, but it was not to be for Mark and his friends!

The meetings of the 18th August 2003 and 20th October will be featured in the next newsletter.

NUPG MEMBERS NEWS

Jason Gregory and his wife Becky have given birth to a baby girl, congratulations to all, and hope mother & baby are doing very well. Nappy changing is just like film changing, eh Jason?

FUTURE SPLASH-INS & Events

Well winter is upon us more or less and there was one day of warm sunshine that signalled the start and end of summer, only joking! Watch this space for your regular photographic winter-warmer, the 2003-2004 Winter Splash-In. Where shall it be this time, the "Depths of Dorry", the "Wilds of Wigan Pier", the "Lakes of Liverpool's Albert Dock", or could it be in Red Sea?

EXHIBITIONS

None currently planned, however, if any of our readers have any suggestions they would like to make, exhibition venues perhaps, or even organise an exhibition, don't hesitate, contact a member of the committee.

REPORTS & ARTICLES

Official Summer Splash-In and Print Competiton Report, by Lucy Kay

The 2003 NUPG Summer Splash-In attracted a record number of entrants. Twenty three people braved more favourable weather conditions than we've had in past years to hunt out potential competition winners around the north and west coasts of Anglesey. We were pleased to welcome visitors Ken Sullivan and Alan James who took part in the Splash-In this year.

Many opted for shore dives, but there were the more intrepid souls who organised boats and went a bit further offshore. Whilst the majority of people chose to shoot close up, there were several who decided to embrace the challenge and use wide-angle set ups.

It was a hotly fought challenge with two shots placed in each of the 4th, 3rd and 2nd places. But there was one clear overall winner - [Dave Buckley](#) with his neat shot of a tompot in a tight crevice.

The only slight hiccup was the event organiser forgetting to bring the trophy to the evening event (a ploy to keep the trophy in Wales that didn't work at all, as it has remained in Cheshire for another year!).

Well done Dave, and thanks to everyone who took part and supported the event.

Splash-In winner 2003: Dave Buckley

Joint 2nd : Mark Walker & Tony Gilbert

Joint 3rd : Neil Morris & Lucy Kay

Joint 4th : Alan James & Colin Samuel

Summer Splash-In Print Competition

As well as the Splash-In itself, there was a print competition held on the same day. The two categories 'tropical' and 'temperate (cold water)' attracted a good number of entries.

Congratulations & the Splash-In print comp trophies go to:

Ken Sullivan for winning the Tropical Print section with a lovely image of a porcelain crab photographed in Indonesia.

And

Lucy Kay for winning the Temperate Print section with a close-up of an angler fish's face.

Thanks to Mark Walker for organising the print comp, and thanks to everyone who put prints into the competition - a chance to see some excellent images.

Tropical prints:

1st Ken Sullivan

2nd Mark Walker, a bubbleshrimp photographed at Bunaken

3rd Ken Sullivan, a blenny on red coral photographed at Sipadan

4th Bill Sanderson, a Batfish photographed in Ghana

Temperate prints:

1st Lucy Kay

2nd Paul Kay, a plaice's face photographed in Ireland

3rd Ken Byrne, a tompot blenny photographed at Porth Ysgaden, North Wales

4th Mark Thomas, a prawn photographed in Connemara, Ireland

4th Lucy Kay, a dogfish photographed in SW Co. Kerry, Ireland

Summer Splash-In – a Photo-Divers Tale, by Tony Gilbert

Firstly, a big **thank you** to Paul, Lucy and Mark for organising this year's very successful Splash-In & Print Competition, I am sure that you'll agree it's well deserved.

The 4th NUPG Summer Splash-In & Print Competition was held at Trearddur Bae and nearby hotel in the evening, on Anglesey, North Wales. The weather this year turned out to be very rainy, storms and high seas. Sorry, I was reading the forecast for South America, but in Anglesey, hot sunshine, flat calm seas prevailed!!!!

On the Day

At the early hour of 0800 a flurry of activity occurred near the lifeboat station car park, where Lucy busied herself throwing films to eager divers, bit like throwing fish to seals. With a flick of a pen they were booked in, and in true Artful Dodger style, money deftly extracted! No sooner had a madding photo-crowd gathered, than a clanking of car doors signalled the start of "wacky photo races", as the happy snappers went for it.

Let's get the Winning Shot

Some were fortunate to have their club RIB(s), others had managed to grab what space was available on charter RIBs, namely run by Digsie of Anglesey Dive Charters, and many had elected to just jump in around the nearby corner, or over to Bull Bay.

Slowly, as the morning wore on, photographers drifted back, as the sun grew hotter towards midday, their wet dishevelled heads hanging wearily, with cameras jangling loosely by their sides, spent and out of ammo. A sorry sight indeed – but was it worth – of course – wouldn't have missed it!

As it was such a nice day the afternoon could be spent in many different ways, some with their families, others with their beers (or someone else's beer), and some like a few others (myself included), on another two boat dives.

The Evening's Festivities

Nosebags hastily placed over the mouth ensured all were well fed & watered prior to the evening's activities, held in the Penrhos Room of the Trearddur Bay Hotel.

It was packed out with an mixed audience of divers, friends & families, and a whacking 23 entrants cut their two favourite slides for the judging, jostling for position over hot light boxes. As well as the slide competition several tables had been arranged with the Print Competition Entries, categorised into "Tropical" and "Temperate", for further judging.

Twas a tense moment amongst the barracking from the audience, as the placings were announced. There were gasps, guffaws and some interesting/choice comments as each person was announced. Keith Lloyd (a.k.a Chubby) was the keeper of the prizes in a goody bag, who hung on to it like these were the last blank films in the world. Each winner/runner-up rose to claim their prize, until at last the goody bag was exhausted as were the participants, and it was time to call it a day and night, safe in the knowledge that we can do it all over again, next year!

The invisible trophy (conspicuous by its absence) was duly awarded to the winner of the splash-in event, Dave Buckley, who had taken a shot of the last remaining tompot blennie along the Anglesey shoreline!

Penrhyn Castle Exhibition, a “Fish-Eye view” Report, by Tony Gilbert

15th June, midday, fantastically warm & sunny; breakfast over with, for all the hangers on from the night before, the family primed and ready to go, somewhere.



All loaded into the car, we made our way to the M56, dodging the still bustling traffic of the Chelford Car Boot Sale. As the miles clocked up, the traffic began to drop away, the open motorway passing Frodsham, Runcorn, Stanlow, weather now very muggy, but we were relaxing in the a/c controlled interior of the Jaguar XJR Sport, as it purred along at a steady rapier pace.

As Penmaenmawr came into view, the odd cloud showed its ugly head. I reminisced of the many times I have stopped here for bacon & coffee at some ungodly hour of the morning, prior to diving the briny off a windswept Anglesey, within the depths of a freezing winter! With camera in hand I've braved the elements, which sometimes turned into nasty icy squalls, and for what? Well, my efforts along with many others were being rewarded just 20 minutes away from here.

With time marching on, no time to stop, we cantered along the near empty A55, marvelling at the backdrop of the Snowdonia Mountains & Puffin Sound in the distance across the bay. Finally a signpost to Penrhyn Castle, I thought we'd missed it, it was difficult to find, and after showing our special pass, printed in full technicolour the day before, we were allowed into the neo-Norman realm by The Gatekeeper.

After parking up in a seemingly busy car park, a gaggle of summer camp students congregated around the base of one of the castellated towers, all bedecked in harnesses, helmets and other climbing accoutrements, more suited to the nearby Snowdonia Mountain range. What were they all up to, it was exciting them no end, the thought of throwing yourself off the tower hanging by a mere thread of nylon, to abseil down.

My family of 5 total, including myself, ambled around to the main entrance, marvelling at the classical architecture, with its battlements, turrets, towers, interesting shrubbery & trees, set in the beautiful Y Eifl foothills. Unfortunately, our destination was around the other side, so back again, this time to the exhibition hall and up a flight of stone steps that passed a now defunct stables area.



A coolness of atmosphere descended into this interior warren of corridors as we made our way along them until a large wooden floored room opened out. You could hear a pin drop, and an attendant sat quietly at the other end, reading a book. A glistening array of colour and form was arranged in a geometrical pattern around the walls; **hang on a moment**, some of this is familiar, from glories past. Here, hung the fruits of our groups labour, many images most of us have already seen in the numerous slide comps, fave 5's, dive talks, Xmas talks. This was our NUPG heritage, a temporary trophy room containing the crème de la crème de imagery (ok Gilbert, don't get too carried away)!



Familiar to some a Great White, Lion's Mane Jellyfish, Snakelocks Anemone, Cuttlefish were present in the first room. But wait, there was more, yet another room full of images from around the globe, a Sea Wolf, Grey Seal, Thistleworm Wreck, Schooling Jacks, Queen Scallop, John Dory, Shrimp. 74 images in all graced these walls, in a perfect line of colour and form.

As we gently moved around the rooms, inspecting as we went, our concentration was broken by the excited gaggle of an ambling mass of straps, harnesses, boots etc. as another group of pioneers made their mark on the world; these however were



content to all walk into a turret room at the end of our room, never to be seen again...

The day was almost complete, but not before the traditional visit to the NT shop, to pick up last minute bargains, or the café for a swift one for the road of caffeine. Some two hours later, it was now time to amble back along the scenic route through the Snowdonia mountain range, with vivid memories of the wonderful underwater visions we had just left, and with many ideas of ones we would like to take.

A huge thanks to the exhibitors, listed below, and well done to all for the time & effort, in particular Lucy & Paul for organising such a prestigious event.

Cast in no particular order:

Richard Lockett, Rohan Holt, Paul Kay, Richard Whiteley, Fiona Black, Antonio Sanchez-Capuchino, Tony Gilbert, Steve Smithson, Ken Byrne, Fraser Durie, Paul Webster, Bill Sanderson, Roy Cash, Dave Buckley, Lucy Kay, Mark Walker, Jason Gregory, Mark Thomas, Colin Samuels, Derek Haslem, Mandy McMath.

ARTICLES

If you have a small piece you would like to see included in the Newsletter, please send it in .rtf format to the Editor and maybe a selection of images. It can be humorous, something about underwater photography, an interesting slant on diving, whatever really.

LINKS

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



Dedication, American Style: www.webshots.com

A friend who likes desktop wallpaper showed me this one, and I took a look at it. It's an American website by the looks of it, and contains a stunning array of images, both terrestrial and marine. The "Oceans" section is vast, and seems to have been populated by a small selection of dedicated American underwater photographers. There are some really great composed shots, I liked the one of the vast green brain coral with staghorn as the foreground, sunburst background, diver with lantern in middle ground. There are also clichéd shots, like the clownfish.



A familiar web site to some of us: www.marinewildlife.co.uk

Paul Kay has an excellent web site for not only supplies of equipment etc.; the images both terrestrial and underwater are well represented & presented.

I do like a number of the Snowdonia shots on here, mostly taken in winter by the looks of it. Please don't forget to look at the "Photographers Code of Conduct" section, since we've just made a donation regarding it. I found the web site easy to navigate through, quick with the image loading, which is always a plus point.



Oceans 11, Down Under: www.oceanwildlife.com

The site contains some interesting altered, digitally enhance or composite images. Also on here are various galleries containing a variety of photos. Looks like New Zealand based site. Check out the black and white photo of a mangrove tree through Snell's window – nice one.



All things fishy: www.fishbase.org

Not sure whether I've mentioned this one before, serious amount of fish species are featured here, and plenty of photos to go with it! It's world fish species, I didn't know we had so many types of mackerel!

Cyclopterus lumpus, well that's there – that big ugly lumpsucker.



All things sluggy: www.seaslugforum.net

This site is a massive collection of every sea slug and nudibranch going! A huge amount of images several for each of the little critters, some very good ones. At least it'll help you identify those that you may not have been able to so far. There is a search engine, and it helps to know a bit about nudibranchs. Invaluable database resource.

ADVERTS

If you have any equipment for sale and would like to advertise, please let us know.

Handouts & Attachments

Northern Underwater Photography Group

Constitution and rules

These rules regulate the structure, administration and activities of the Northern Underwater Photography Group (hereinafter called 'the Group').

The aims of the Group are:

- To promote underwater photography in all its aspects;
- To provide a forum at which presentations can be made and discussion held on topics of common interest to promote a wide exchange of knowledge and experience; and
- To collaborate and co-operate with other individuals or bodies which can help the Group achieve its aims.

1. Membership

- 1.1 Membership shall be open to all persons interested in underwater photography.
- 1.2 There shall be one type of membership: Ordinary Members, who agree to pay the annual subscription.
- 1.3 An Ordinary Member shall retain his or her membership until he/she has resigned, or is deemed to have resigned as the result of his/her Group subscription being two months or more overdue.
- 1.4 The Committee may terminate the membership of any member who, in its opinion, brings the Group into disrepute. Any member removed from membership in this way shall have the right of appeal to the membership at either the Annual General Meeting (AGM) or at an Extra-ordinary General Meeting (EGM). In the case of an upheld or unchallenged termination of membership no refund of annual subscription will be payable.

2. Subscription

- 2.1 Subscriptions shall be paid annually on the first day of May, at a rate to be agreed by the members present at an AGM.

3. Management

- 3.1 The affairs of the Group shall be managed by a Committee consisting of the Officers of the Group and up to four ordinary members who shall be elected at each AGM. The Committee shall have the power to co-opt additional members.
- 3.2 The Committee will hold office following its election at an AGM until its dissolution at the next such meeting.
- 3.3 The Committee shall hold and administer for the benefit of the membership all funds, equipment and property owned by the Group.
- 3.4 The Officers shall consist of Chairman, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer.
- 3.5 The Chairman shall normally take the chair at all meetings of the Group and of the Committee at which he/she is present, and his/her decision on matters of procedure shall be final. The Chairman shall have a second or casting vote if a situation so requires it.
- 3.6 The Secretary shall record the Minutes of all meetings and shall conduct the correspondence of the Group. The Minutes of Committee proceedings shall be open to inspection by any member who approaches the Secretary to do so.
- 3.7 The Honorary Treasurer shall be responsible for all monies received or paid on behalf of the Society, after authorisation by the Committee. All cheques issued on behalf of the Society shall be signed by one out of three nominated Committee members, one of whom shall be the Honorary Treasurer. At the close of each financial year the Honorary Treasurer shall prepare for consideration by the Committee a statement of Income and Expenditure to be audited by a nominated person or persons, and submitted to the AGM.
- 3.8 Candidates for election to the Committee shall be proposed by one fully paid-up member and seconded by another. All Officers and Committee members are eligible for re-election each year at the AGM, but they shall not serve longer than three consecutive years in any one officer unless at the discretion of the membership.

4. Meetings

Annual General Meeting

- 4.1 The Annual General Meeting of the Group shall be held during the month of May each year. Notice of the meeting and the Agenda shall be sent by post or otherwise transmitted to all paid-up members at least twenty-one days before the meeting.
- 4.2 The Notice shall identify those members of the Committee who are standing again and shall request nominations for Officers and other members of the Committee. Committee members standing again shall be deemed to have been nominated by the Committee.
- 4.3 The Notice of the meeting shall also include the text of any motions proposed by or to the Committee. Any member may propose amendments to such motions and may propose any further motions for consideration at the meeting. However, all proposals for consideration must be received in writing by the Honorary Secretary at least seven days before the date of the meeting.
- 4.4 The Officers and other members of the Committee shall be elected at the meeting by a show of hands or, at the Chairman's option, by ballot. If a Nominee stands unopposed, he/she shall be deemed to have been so elected.
- 4.5 The quorum at an AGM shall comprise a minimum of ten per cent of the paid-up members.
- 4.6 The Agenda at the AGM shall include:
 - a) Apologies for absence
 - b) Minutes of previous AGM
 - c) Matters arising
 - d) Chairman's report
 - e) Honorary Treasurer's report
 - f) Other reports, as relevant
 - g) Election of new Committee
 - h) Proposals in respect of which due notice has been received
 - i) Any other business

Extraordinary General Meetings

- 4.7 An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Group may be called at the discretion of the Committee, providing that a simple majority of members then serving on the Committee so requires.
- 4.8 Alternatively, the Committee shall call an EGM upon receipt of a request to do so signed by no fewer than ten per cent of the members of the Society, provided that the request states the reason for the meeting and contains the text of at least one motion proposed for consideration.
- 4.9 The business of an EGM shall be that for which it was convened and no other.
- 4.10 Members shall be given a minimum of fourteen days notice of an EGM and the proposals to be made.
- 4.11 A quorum at an EGM shall be ten per cent of the membership.

5. Voting

- 5.1 Voting of any given motion at a general meeting shall be by show of hands or ballot, as the Chairman may decide, and motions shall be carried by the affirmative votes of a simple majority of voting members.

6. Committee

- 6.1 The Committee shall meet not less than four times a year.
- 6.2 A simple majority of voting Committee members then serving shall form a quorum for a meeting provided, however, that no quorum shall be formed without the presence of either the Chairman, the Honorary Secretary or the Honorary Treasurer.
- 6.3 No resolution may be adopted by the Committee unless it has the affirmative votes of a simple majority of those members present and entitled to vote. In the event of an equality of votes, the Chairman shall have a casting vote.
- 6.4 Committee vacancies occurring during the year may be filled by co-option, and these co-opted members shall have full voting rights.

7. Dissolution

- 7.1 The Group may not be dissolved except as a result of a vote taken at a General Meeting.
- 7.2 A proposal to dissolve the Society shall be subject to a ballot and, in order to be carried, it must receive the affirmative votes of two-thirds of the voting members of the Group who are present at the meeting.
- 7.3 If the dissolution of the Group is voted in accordance with the preceding provisions of this Rule, the Committee shall proceed without delay to realise the property of the Group and to discharge the Group's outstanding liabilities. Any net assets remaining shall be distributed to such recipient or recipients and in such fashion as the Meeting shall have decided.

8. Amendment of rules and matters not covered by them

- 8.1 These Rules may only be amended at a General Meeting in accordance with the affirmative votes cast by not less than ten per cent of the Members of the Group entitled to vote at a General Meeting.
- 8.2 The Committee shall have the authority to decide any matter not covered by these rules.

Underwater Photographer's Code of Practice

Most underwater photographers are concerned to protect the environment in which they take their pictures and to avoid stressing marine creatures when they are taking their images. This is good for the marine environment and leads to better photographs.

This Code sets out good practices for anyone who aspires to take pictures or video underwater. Many aspects are also applicable to the general sports diver.

- No-one should attempt to take pictures underwater until they are a competent diver. Novices thrashing about with their hands and fins while conscious only of the image in their viewfinder can do untold damage.
- Every diver, including photographers, should ensure that gauges, octopus regulators, torches and other equipment are secured so they do not trail over reefs or cause other damage.
- Underwater photographers should possess superior precision buoyancy control skills to avoid damaging the fragile marine environment and its creatures. Even experienced divers and those modelling for photographers should ensure that careless or excessively vigorous fin strokes and arm movements do not damage coral or smother it in clouds of sand. A finger placed carefully on a bare patch of rock can do much to replace other, more damaging movement.
- Photographers should carefully explore the area in which they are diving and find subjects that are accessible without damage to them or other organisms.
- Care should be taken to avoid stressing a subject. Some fish are clearly unhappy when a camera invades their "personal space" or when pictures are taken using flash or lights. Others are unconcerned. They make the best subjects.
- Divers and photographers should never kill marine life to attract other types to them or to create a photographic opportunity, such as feeding sea urchins to wrasse. Creatures should never be handled or irritated to create a reaction and sedentary ones should never be placed on an alien background, which may result in them being killed.
- Queuing to photograph a rare subject, such as a seahorse, should be avoided because of the harm repeated bursts of bright light may do to their eyesight. For the same reason, the number of shots of an individual subject should be kept to the minimum.
- Clown fish and other territorial animals are popular subjects but some become highly stressed when a photographer moves in to take a picture. If a subject exhibits abnormal behaviour move on to find another.
- Night diving requires exceptional care because it is much more difficult to be aware of your surroundings. Strong torch beams or lights can dazzle fish and cause them to harm themselves by blundering into surrounding coral or rocks. Others are confused and disturbed if torch beams or lights are pointed directly at them. Be prepared to keep bright lights off subjects that exhibit stressed behaviour, using only the edge of the beam to minimise disturbance.
- Care should be taken when photographing in caves, caverns or even inside wrecks because exhaust bubbles can become trapped under overhangs killing marine life. Even small pockets of trapped air which allow divers to talk to each other inside them can be lethal for marine life.
- The image in the viewfinder can be very compelling. Photographers should remain conscious of their position and of the marine life around them at all times. In sensitive areas, they should avoid moving around on the bottom with their mask pressed up against the camera viewfinder.
- Areas of extensive damage or pollution should be reported to the appropriate authorities.

Today, when so many more divers are taking up underwater photography, both still and video, it is essential that the preservation of the fragile marine environment and its creatures is paramount and that this **Code of Good Practice** is carefully observed.

*** This Code of Good Practice has been introduced by the Marine Conservation Society with funding from PADI's AWARE project. It is endorsed by the British Society of Underwater Photographers, the Northern Underwater Photographic Group and the Bristol Underwater Photography Group as well as being supported by the Sub-Aqua Association, the British Sub-Aqua Club and the Scottish Sub-Aqua Club.**