

The Surface Times

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Digital Underwater Photography

By Angela Garrett, MSDT

A few years ago, I decided to purchase a Sea and Sea camera and move up from the disposable cameras. Why? Because my pictures were blue and you could not tell what was in the picture. I wanted pictures to share with others and show them what I saw - the camera makes a difference. Once you have a camera with an underwater housing, it now turns back to you to take good pictures. You don't have to spend several thousands of dollars, but you have to do some small technical things right. Here are a few tips to turn your photos into memories to share:

Make sure you change your white balance setting, auto is not your friend underwater - cloudy or manual works well.

Get close to your subject and I mean close, if your buoyancy is not the best, spend time working on it. Your subjects need you to be close and still.

A strobe makes a world of difference, the colors are very different when you properly position the strobe on the subject. Remember your Advanced Open Water Deep Dive when you watched the colors change as you went deeper, the strobe brings them back.

If you want help taking better underwater photos, sign up for the Digital Underwater Photography course and the Peak Performance Buoyancy course.

Note from Judy: Here are some examples of Angela's work with a point and shoot Sea & Sea camera and housing. She is now in the process of upgrading to a Cannon Rebel SLR and housing. We can't wait to see what she can do with that!



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Dive Around Texas

This month our featured location is Valhalla Missile silo near Abilene Texas. For those who want to caravan we will be meeting at We B Divin' and ready to leave by 8:30 am on Saturday August 8.

History

The US Air Force built twelve structures in the steamboat mountain range of West Texas near Abilene in which they housed ICBMs aimed at the USSR during the cold war. These missiles were 10 feet in diameter, 82 ft long, and weighed 260,000 lbs with the capability of traveling 11,500 miles at 15,000 mph. The three engines, two boosters and a sustainer were fueled by liquid oxygen and RP-1 fuel, generating 389,000 lbs of thrust. After only two years, the missiles were removed and the silos were sold for salvage. The Atlas missiles were modified and subsequently used to launch the Mercury Astronauts and over 175 other payloads into space over the next 20 years. Building the silos required moving 37,500 cubic yards of earth and pouring of 7,847 cubic yards of concrete around 1,288 tons of steel reinforcements. The silo construction (4-10 ft thick concrete with 1-4 inch rebar on 9-20 inch centers) was to allow this site to withstand a nearby nuclear strike

and still be able to fire its missile at an enemy. Since being decommissioned, this silo has slowly filled with ground water seeping through the cement walls.

This is Adventure Diving

To really make this a fun and enjoyable dive you should:

1. already have prior deep diving experience, or be in an advanced
2. be correctly weighted with the gear you will be wearing to dive
3. be comfortable donning and doffing your scuba gear in the water
4. make prior dives in cool water
5. be in moderately good physical shape to carry your dive gear to the dressing area and to climb down and up the stairs to get to and from the water.

Diving Procedures

There is a floating platform with a stairway for staging divers. Each diver carries his or her own personal diving gear. This insures the diver has all equipment available when entering water and has hands free to climb stairs.

Divers don gear, do final buddy check and make a fun dive according to their dive plan.

Divers complete dive, doff scuba and exit platform by climbing the stairs.

Diving Conditions

The water is fresh, clear and cool, 58^o-60^oF, 130 ft deep and crystal clear. The silo is 60 ft in diameter. Everything from the dressing areas to the electric gear winch, lighting systems and the actual dive area is 50-70 ft underground. The ambient air is a constant 60^oF air temperature. Divers must climb down a 30 ft ladder to get to the water and back up to get out. There is an electric crane for the diving gear. There is very little ambient light underwater, so be sure to bring a bright primary light as well as backup light and personal marker light for each diver.

Trip Includes

Entry into the silo for one day of diving and Altitude Diver certification.

Fee \$100 or for those who are previously Altitude Diver certified, \$40 per day entry fee.

Camping onsite Saturday night, no utility hookups available.

Full facility campground or hotels nearby, you must arrange and pay for these on your own.



Creature Feature

From last edition.

Frog Fish: There are 45 known species in 12 genera. Generally small



fish, less than 10–20 cm in length, with large globose heads.

They can be distinguished from other anglerfish by the three extended dorsal fin spines on their heads. The first dorsal spine is modified as a fishing lure to attract prey. Frogfishes do not swim in the conventional way; instead, they "walk" on their pectoral fins or use 'jet propulsion' (forcefully expelling water from the small opercula opening generally behind and below the pectoral fins). They are

mostly bottom-dwelling fish, typically living amongst coral, at up to 100 meters depth, where they lie in wait for prey. They are able to change their color to match the background with high precision, and their camouflage is further aided by numerous warts and filaments on their skin, giving them an appearance similar to rough coral.



Education Honor Roll for 2009

Seal Team

Lain Bickley, April
Scotty Landers, April
Christopher Repko, April
Brandon Snow, April

Open Water

Mark Richardson, January
Tyler Sparkman, February
Meredith Schaefer, February
David McGregor, February
Jordan Carroll, March
Annalene McKenna, March
Kristen Belcher, March
Ryan Nichols, March
Logan McKenna, April
Ali Garrett, April
Tyler Hart, April
Danielle Heinrich, April
Kevin Ogle, April
Brenton Sambay, April
Amber Allred, June
Kevin Kleibrink, June
Joseph Gray, June
Stephen Nelms, June
Chris Gradidge, July
Teresa Gradidge, July
David Lopez, July
Jim Calkins, July
Steve Griffith, July
Brandon Boyer, July
Gloria Boyer, July
Kyle Boyer, July
Traci Blevins, July
Rachel Jefferies, July
Melleni Jefferies, July
Jeremy Kiss, July
Misty Parsons, July
Bobby Goodson, July
Susan Pino, July
Kathryn Wattenbarger, July
Jimmy Wattenbarger, July
Donna Wattenbarger, July
Theron Jackson, July
Christopher Tyrone, July
Tom Candalino, July
Jared Dorman, July
Jeff Day, July

Advanced Open Water

Michael Harris, April
Jessica Patterson, June
Mike Patterson, June
Gary Blanton, June

George Ogle, June
Christopher Lohman, May
Llonda Bins-Lohman, May
Michelle Baviera, July

Adventure Diver

Sydney Seeley, May
Craig Brooks, July

Specialties

Project AWARE

Nick Dyer, January
Sydney Seeley, May

Boat Diver

Paula Dorn, July

Computer Assisted Diver

Scotty Ford, June

Coral Reef Conservation

Nick Dyer, January
Scotty Ford, January
Sydney Seeley, May

Deep Diver

Kim Alloy, July

DPV Diver

Nick Dyer, July

Dry Suit Diver

Blake Dorman, February
Nicholas Dyer, February
Manuel Marquez, February
Brandon Wood, February
Mark Richardson, February

Digital UW Photophraphy

Greg Baviera, July
Nick Dyer, July
Craig Brooks, July

Enriched Air

Scotty Ford, February
Danny Shirley, February
Kevin Guiles, March
George Ogle, March
Gary Blanton, March
Michael Harris, April
Craig Brooks, May

Fish ID

Kim Alloy, July
Zac Alloy, July
Alex Alloy, July

Peak Performance Bouyancy

Nick Dyer, April
Michael Mooney, June

Jim Ely, July

Night Diver

Nick Dyer, April
Kim Alloy, July
Zac Alloy, July
Alex Alloy, July

Emergency First Response

Scott Ford, March
Jennifer Ford, March
Michael Harris, March
Keith Holt, April
Blake Dorman, May
Brandon Wood, May
Mark Richardson, July

DAN DEMP

(O2, AdvO2, AED, HMLI)

Blake Dorman, March
Brandon Woods, March
Nick Dyer, March
Dave Seeley, March

On-Site Neuro

Scott Williams, March
Nick Dyer, March
Dave Seeley, March

Dive Medicine for Divers

Tim Landers, April
Mike Manila, April
Nick Dyer, April
Dave Seeley, April
Angela Garrett, June
Scott Williams, June
Paul Skinner, June

EFR Instructor

Karen Bostic, February
Scott Williams, February
Gregory Baviera, February
Michael Turner, February

OWSI Instructor

Karen Bostic, May
Rebecca Shannon, June

DUP Instructor

Mike Manila, April

Dry Suit Instructor

Mike Manila, April

Equipment Instructor

Mike Manila, April

UW Navigator Instructor

Mike Manila, April



Trips for 2009

Cozumel

Aug 14-17

Diver \$792

Non Diver \$652

Staying at Hotel Cozumel with an all-inclusive package this time. The trip price also includes round trip airfare, transportation to and from the airport, 2 dives on Saturday and 2 on Sunday. Most trips the group opts to add dives so many times we do 3 dives on Friday, 3 or 4 dives on Saturday and the 2 dives on Sunday.

St. Lucia

September 12-19

\$1665Dvr,

\$1305NDvr Seven nights in an ocean view room, airport transfers, all taxes and services. Basket of local fruit, breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea, dinner and non-alcoholic beverages provided. Sailing, windsurfing, snorkeling, tennis, beach chairs and towels available... AND 12 boat dives, 2 night

1 Left



St Croix

December 5-12 \$1410+ air

Nekton Live aboard

Nitrox available with up to five dives per day. If you have never taken a dive vacation on a live aboard you have not lived! Make this your first.



Training Specials

Learn to Dive Package

A whale of a deal, tell your friends.

Group Class Tuition, Student Materials, Personal Gear (Mask, Snorkel, Fins, Boots, Bag) chosen from a wide variety of options, and a shorty wet suit. Upgrades are available should you desire. \$695

Trip to Missile Silo

August 8,9

This is a must have in your dive log! Get Altitude Diver certified and Deep Diver certified while enjoying a truly unique location.

\$100, one-day entrance & Altitude
\$200, two-day entrance & Deep Dvr
Books not included

WBD Season Pass

Take any or all of the 38 PADI/DAN specialties offered at We B Divin' in a 12 month period. Up to 3 crew packs included.

Get your PADI Master Scuba Diver and your DAN Diving Emergency Specialist.

\$699 — Unbelievable!

Divers Alert Network

DAN Travel Insurance

This is Dan's newest product. I am sure that I have not reviewed every Trip Cancellation and Interruption policy available out there on the market, but this one is very competitive in benefits as well as cost. Also, of course, when we

use this product we are supporting DAN which is always a plus.

Travel insurance is good for those who want to plan a trip but have pending concerns like the health of a loved one. It is very valuable when planning a BIG trip like Galapagos. Many times trips like this

must be planned far in the future and we simply cannot know what life will put on our plate in the interim. So this type of insurance protects us from a total loss.

Check the details from our web site by clicking here

DAN Dive Insurance



A Word from Our Sponsors — Reminder, expires Aug 31



- Kronos & Kronos Supreme
- Tungsten XTX
- Tek 3 Regulator Set
- XTX200 • XTX100 • XTX50
- XTX50/DS4 DIN
- XTX STAGE 3 SET
- XTX40/DS4, DIN - Oxygen

Free Airsource

Purchase an Aqua Lung or Sea Quest BC, regulator, Suunto computer and take any scuba training course and receive a free airsource.

Offer valid through 31 December 09.

**Dive the Best for Less
Save Up to
\$100 Instantly**

The Offer:

Regulators with a MSRP of \$500 or more receive a **\$100** instant rebate.

Regulators with a MSRP less than \$500 receive a **\$50** instant rebate.

Qualifying regulators includes:

- Titan LX & Titan LX Supreme
- Mikron
- Titan

Qualifying regulators includes:

- Legend LX & Legend LX Supreme
- Legend & Legend Supreme
- Legend Glacia



GEAR UP & GO!

With your purchase of a qualifying BC, regulator and computer, you can save up to \$1,550 on a dive vacation. Destination options in Wakatobi, Palau, Grand Cayman and Bahamas. For more details visit www.aqualung.com/gear-up-and-go

New Products

Mares X-Stream Fins

Mares has always been on the cutting edge of fin technology. The Quattro line of fins has provided reliable power for divers for years, then the Raptor split fin came on board to fill the need for those who have a desire for power with an easier kick.

Now the X-Stream is the perfect marriage of qualities. It has more power without added torque.

X-Stream fins are available in blue, black, yellow and red. The MSRP is \$220.

They should start coming into stock mid to late August.



Divers Alert Network

Membership

DAN is the only organization I am aware of that is actively pursuing medical dive research. They provide assistance to all divers (regardless of membership status) through 800 phone numbers and will accept collect calls from anywhere in the world. This alone

is worth our support with membership fees of \$29 per year. The included subscription to Alert Diver is just a bonus.

Dive Insurance

This is the best option for Medical Dive Accident Coverage that I have reviewed. There are three plans from \$25 to \$70 per year covering

not only medical coverage for a dive accident but extra transportation, extra accommodation, lost diving equipment and much more.

I cannot stress enough how valuable it is to have this coverage. Check the details from our web site by clicking here

[DAN Dive Insurance](#)



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The Surface Times

We B Divin' is your personal resource for scuba training (PADI), equipment sales, service, and travel.


We pride ourselves on individualized training, especially for people with water related anxieties. Our rental gear includes SeaQuest weight integrated BCD's (women's and men's), computers, and regulators for state of the art training and the ultimate in safety.

Remember, enjoyment and safety are enhanced by comfort and proper fit. We will personally fit you, whether your primary interest is diving or snorkeling.

We offer both group and individual travel opportunities. Both singles and couples are welcome. Singles may ask to room share or can choose the single supplement option. Everyone is welcome - divers, snorkelers, non-divers, shoppers, etc.

Think Outside the Bowl!

There is much to learn, many places to go and much to see.



Come learn with us, go places with us and see with us.



Fraudulent Inmate Phone Calls Watch Out!

If you receive a telephone call originating from the Harris County Jail, from an unknown caller, who requests you call a number from him/her preceded by *72 please hang-up immediately!

While the caller may seem genuine and may even say something to the effect of, **“Please help, I’ve been arrested for traffic tickets. I was supposed to pick up my children from school, this was my only phone call and I dialed the wrong number. Please dial *72 XXX-XXX-XXXX for me so I can check on my children.”**

This is a common call forwarding scam. If you follow this procedure, your phone will be ‘call forwarded’ to the number provided by the inmate. All future calls to your telephone number will bypass your phone

and ring at the number you entered after dialing *72. The inmate will now continue to dial your number but your phone will not ring. All inmate collect calls, accepted by the person at the other number, will be charged to you.

What you should do

- Immediately dial *73 to cancel “Call Forwarding”
- Contact your telephone service provider and report the fraud to them
- If you desire, contact SBC at 1-800-984-8800 to have calls originating from the Harris County Jail blocked.