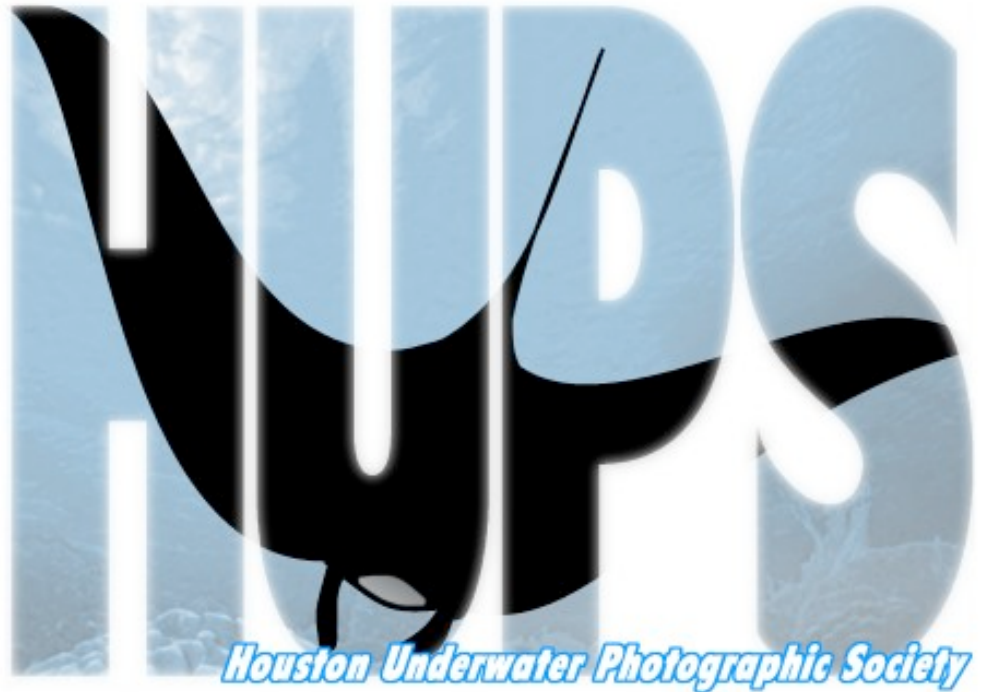


JANUARY 2006

# Underwater Images



Double Feature January 9th

## Great Whites Show Their Teeth by Ned Shimizu & Lembah Strait & Kungkungan Bay Resort by Tom Collier

*By Dennis Deavenport*

So what do diving with Great Whites and diving in Lembah Strait have in common? Other than they are both fantastic opportunities for UW photographers to shoot unforgettable images of world-class critters, not much. The two parts of our January program will be at totally different ends of the scale.

This year's inaugural program is guaranteed to give everyone and adrenaline rush as Ned Shimizu gives us our first program on Great White Sharks. The



*1st place Best of HUPS Ned Shimizu © 2006*

trip took place last October on the specially equipped boat, the Searcher. To get to Isla de Guadalupe where the great whites congregate, it took 22 hours from San Diego. Going for great whites is a lot different than our normal diving.

First of all, it's out in cold blue water and it's all done inside cages (big ones for shallow photos and a small one for deeper work). Ned, a dentist, has a fascination with teeth and where better to see impressive sets of choppers than great whites. Part of his presentation will deal with the techniques he used to take photos like the one that won 1<sup>st</sup> place in this year's Best of HUPS digital competition. Ned shoots with a Nikon D100 in a Nexus housing and on this trip, he used 24 mm and 12-24 mm zoom lenses to capture the action. You won't want to miss Ned's show.

On the other end of the scale, Tom Collier will be giving a short program that will give us a short overview of the incredible diversity of strange critters that make Lembah Strait such a fantastic location for UW



*View of KBR by Tom Collier © 2006*

photography. His presentation will focus on the total experience at the world-class Kungkungan Bay Resort and on some of the underwater attractions that keep people coming back year after year. This will be a great opportunity to see why it would be a great choice to join us in April for the next HUPS sponsored dive trip.

As always the meeting will be held at the Bayland Community Center on Bissonnett. A map can found on the back page of this newsletter. See you there!

December Meeting Recap -

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the December Holiday Dinner meeting. We had some good eats and some beautiful images to admire during the contest.

# President's Message

It's a New Year

With the Holidays coming to a close, it brings us all to a new year in the realm of Underwater Photography. HUPS has some new and exciting changes this year and I am very glad to be at the Helm. HUPS has really grown over the years and to this we owe a deep gratitude to the people who have made this organization possible. They are the many faces you see month in and month out year after year. I am excited to take over as the 2006 President and want to let everyone know that I am there for them if they need something. We have a great core of officers this year with a wealth of knowledge in the underwater photography world. When I joined HUPS 5 years ago, I was passing through the booth at SEASPACE and saw some truly amazing images. It was then I knew I wanted to create images like that one day and capture the underwater world on film. I was totally in awe of the talent in this group. How cool would it be to do that, I asked myself.

Dennis Deavenport was kind enough to offer me a membership application and I attended the next meeting. I have been involved ever since. I owe gratitude of thanks to David Lenderman who was my mentor and put up with me. He taught me all the basics. To Jackie and Mary Lou for doing the same. Joe Nicklo and Dennis have helped me tremendously as well as countless others. My point in all this is that you don't have to know anything about underwater photography to step up and get involved. 2006 will bring about a few changes in the club. The Digital world has taken off and film has diminished greatly. This has created some new talent and educational aspects. We have some workshops planned this year that will be geared towards that. I am a big proponent of education in the club. I think the contests are great and we all love to see our stuff on the screen but equally important is how we captured those images. I know we have new members that really want to be able to do the same. I feel that it is our job as an underwater photography club to offer education opportunities for them on how to accomplish this. All of the amazing images can be a bit intimidating to a new photographer. I know this, I was there. I think we need to reach out and really help the newer members feel comfortable with their club commitment. If anyone has any ideas or request's for the new year please don't hesitate to call me 281-446-6070. I would love to hear them. 2006 promises to be a very exciting year for HUPS and I cant wait to get it kicked off

Lets Dive,  
Chuck

## HUPS Travel Update

*By Tom Collier, HUPS Trip Coordinator*

**April 13-23, 2006**

**Lembeh Strait, North Sulawesi, Indonesia**

Six days of diving: 3 boat dives per day + 1 boat night dive + 1 shore night dive + unlimited day shore diving on the house reef at Kungkungan Bay Resort. KBR is nestled on the site of an old coconut plantation on the North Sulawesi coast of the Lembeh Strait. The resort is very camera friendly with spacious and secure camera room containing ample space for camera storage

and working on your equipment. Dive guides are assigned to groups of approximately 8 divers to maximize your photo opportunities. KBR has a great website, check it out: <http://www.kungkungan.com/>.

Informal evening workshops will be arranged to review photos on a digital projector. The participants can display photos and solicit comments. The group discussion is designed as an opportunity to develop and enhance your u/w photography skills

**Latest info:** We now have 8 confirmed members who have submitted their deposits and several more individuals who are interested but have not committed. Island Dreams only has 8 spots open, don't be left behind, it is a fantastic value. If you are thinking about going, call Tina at Island Dreams Travel: (713) 973-9300, (800) 346-6116 to reserve your spot.

\$ 2,975.00 total trip cost from Houston. A \$500.00 deposit is required to hold spot. HUPS contact is Tom Collier. Send Tom an email if you are interested in this trip.

**September 9-10, 2006**

**Digital Photo Workshop at the Flower Gardens**

HUPS will be leading a Flower Gardens digital photography workshop in September 2006. James Wiseman will be presenting a series of lectures covering digital photography topics such as gear selection and setup, digital photo underwater techniques, topsides image processing, and image archiving

**Latest info:** Now that our application for 10 spots has been accepted and our dates assigned by Gulf Diving LLC, we will be able to calculate the trip cost and start accepting deposits from interested club members. This information will be posted in next month's newsletter.

HUPS contact is Tom Collier. Send Tom an email if you are interested in this trip.

**Summer 2007**

I have received three suggestions for the 2007 trip: Shark Dive trip in the Bahamas, Aggressor live-a-board trip and a Red Sea live-a-board trip. All are 7-10 day trips and all are doable. If you have a suggestion, send it to me via email, I will check it out and present it to the HUPS Board of Directors.

We are working on scheduling at least one trip a year for HUPS travel. Discounts for group travel can be obtained, depending on where we go and the size of our group. Your suggestions for future trip locations are welcome.

HUPS Trip Coordinator: Tom Collier, [tom@tpixs.com](mailto:tom@tpixs.com)



*Best of HUPS Novice Caribbean 2nd Place - Dennis Vernon, © 2006*

# Upcoming Monthly Photo Contest Topics

Each month we will have digital and slide contests. For complete contest rules checkout:

<http://www.hups.org/contestr.htm>

January - Real Tiny - smaller than a chicken egg

April - Put Away that Strobe - Natural Light

February - Red as a primary color of the subject

May - Texture and Color

March -Leading Lines

June - Anemones and things that live in them

## Monthly Contest Results

### December: Best of HUPS

#### Digital - Open

1st -Ned Shimizu

2nd - James Wisemant

3rd - Tom Collier

#### Digital - Creative

1st Dennis Deavenport

2nd Dennis Deavenport

3rd Dennis Deavenport

#### Slides - Advanced - Gulf/Caribbean

1st Dennis Deavenport

2nd Dennis Deavenport

3rd Dennis Deavenport

#### Slides - Advanced - Indo-Pacific

1st Dennis Deavenport

2nd Dennis Deavenport

3rd Dennis Deavenport

#### Slides - Novice - Gulf/Caribbean

1st Dennis Vernon

2nd Dennis Vernon

3rd Dennis Vernon

#### Slides - Novice - Indo-Pacific

1st Dennis Vernon

2nd Dennis Vernon

3rd Chuck Jensen

## Smaller than an Egg

You may be asking what is smaller than an egg? Well the answer is all the subjects in the January photo contest. The topic for January is "Real Tiny - things less than the size of a chicken egg". Everyone has photos of something smaller than a chicken egg. Pick them out and submit them for the contest. You can't win if you don't enter.

At monthly meetings we will have both slide and digital contests. Entries for the slide contest should be brought to the meeting. Entries for the digital contest should be emailed to [photocontest@hups.org](mailto:photocontest@hups.org) at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. This mailbox is reserved for entries only. If you have a question regarding the digital contest email [ddeavenport@houston.rr.com](mailto:ddeavenport@houston.rr.com) or [james@reefs.org](mailto:james@reefs.org). Complete contest rules can be found at <http://www.hups.org/contestr.htm>. If you do not follow the rules for digital entries your images will not be judged.

## New Novice Digital Category

You have been asking for it and now you have it. A NOVICE category for the monthly Digital Contest. You no longer have to compete against the big guns. Anyone who was competing in or qualified to compete in the Advanced Slide Category will automatically be moved into the Advanced Digital Category. Don't be shy. Show us your stuff. This new category will see some heated competition in 2006. Everyone has a chance to win!

## What Makes a Good Photo? Part Four - Impact or Wow Factor

By David Lenderman

*We have all seen underwater images that we really like. Viewers may be attracted to images for different reasons. Some may like the subject, some may admire the difficulty of the shot, some like the pleasing composition. So there are tons of reasons to like a particular image. In this series of articles I plan to discuss several traits of an attractive underwater image. These are things I feel an image has to have to be considered a "good" image.*

Impact or Wow Factor is something that makes an image stand out. It is that something extra that immediately grabs the viewers attention and makes them say WOW! It can be the subject(s), the action, the negative space, the lighting, the composition, but most often it is a combination of these things.

Let's look at Ned Shimizu's shot on the front page of this newsletter. To me it has Impact thanks to several things. First is the subject. A Great White - Wow! Add to that there is a sea lion that appears to be chasing the shark - Wow! The shot is nicely composed. The sea lion and shark's mouth are close to the third marks and the shark is slightly diagonal in the frame. There are no distracting elements in the negative space - just water. This clean, simple negative space makes the shark really stand out. All these combined create an image that has impact. Wow, wow, wow.

Don't worry it doesn't take a Great White to have impact, even a little goby can have Wow if you shoot it right. When shooting think about what you can do to create more impact in your shots.

## Travel Tip

When traveling by air wear a shirt with big pockets. They will come in handy storing your passport and boarding pass as you travel through security and onto the plane.

# Selective Enhancement of Images

By Pat Miller - HUPS Webmaster

Hey, remember some articles about Digital Image Editing – Parts 1 through 5 in HUPS newsletters? The series started in the February 2005 newsletter (<http://www.hups.org/2-2005.htm>) and part 5 was in June 2005 (<http://www.hups.org/6-2005.htm>); they are also on my web site (starting with <http://www.netbetter.net/imaged1.htm>). Well, I'm ba-a-ck. I'd like to share a few more image editing ideas with you.



When I start editing an image, I may apply some degree of exposure and/or color correction to an entire image. I may use the **Levels**, **Curves**, **Color Balance** or **Hue/Saturation** tools singularly or in combination on the entire image – “global” changes. Then sometimes I might want to fiddle around with one or more isolated parts of that image. I'll concentrate on a particular area and make whatever corrections I think are needed in that area. I may want to darken a part of the background to shift attention to the primary subject. And/or I might brighten or increase contrast and/or color on the primary subject to give it more emphasis in the photo.

I apologize for using “and/or” too many times in the above paragraph. But the nature of image editing is that it's subjective. It depends on your judgement and taste regarding any particular picture. A certain image may only need a little judicious exposure correction – say, the foreground is a bit overexposed. Or it may need just a taste of color enhancement – you may have a butterflyfish whose color is a bit muted. Or it might need more – maybe you have a muted-color butterflyfish, a really overexposed foreground and a distracting rubble background to boot. So of course there is no firm step-by-step procedure that you can use on every image. It takes practice and judgment gained from experience. Yes, you too can now spend hours in front of a computer monitor!

I might mention a professional computer term here (kids, don't try this at home): GIGO, short for Garbage In, Garbage Out. I mean you shouldn't expect to wind up with images to rival James Watt if you start out with crappy pictures. If you are in love with a crappy picture you took of a manta ray because you never took a picture of a manta ray before – keep it to yourself, okay? Don't waste too much time in your image editor trying to make it presentable. If you have to go to editing extremes trying to make it look nice, it's probably not going to look natural when you're done – it will look “Photoshopped.” This also takes practice and judgment gained from experience.

Another comment before I get started: I can't guarantee the suggestions below will fly with the HUPS Photo Contest rules committee. . .

A typical application of editing only certain areas of a picture is removing or de-emphasizing elements which distract attention from your primary subject(s). Like what specifically? Backscatter is a problem in underwater photography, and digital cameras also sometimes put down specks due to dust on the sensor or other digital noise. To remove backscatter or other specks you basically have to cover the little bastards up. Usually you have a blue water or other mostly solid color background, and you use a tool that copies pixels from that region and then paints them over the speck. Use the **Clone Stamp**

tool  found in many applications including Photoshop and Photoshop Elements. Or use the **Healing Brush**  or **Spot Healing Brush**, which is easier and gets better results usually than the **Clone Stamp** when you have an area that's mostly a consistent color such as a blue water background, because the **Healing Brush** attempts to blend automatically.

You want to set the diameter of the brush just slightly larger than the speck of backscatter, and then sample an area of unblemished background right next to the offending backscatter, so when you paint it over the speck the copied pixels blend imperceptibly. Sample on a spot by pressing the Alt key and clicking with the left mouse button in Windows, or Option key in Mac OS. Then left-click on the backscatter to get rid of it. Short dabs (clicks) with the **Clone Stamp/ Healing Brush** tend to blend better than swiping away at it like a paint brush.



This month we kept it very simple. Next month we get into a more interesting and challenging application of selective image enhancement. Stay tuned...

## Quick Tip

Trying to find the perfect music for your slide show? Most everyone knows about iTunes. It's Apple Computer's music program. It has an online music store that lets you listen to 30 second clips of songs before you buy them. It's a great way to shop for songs.

An even cooler feature of iTunes is the radio feature. It lets you tune into one of hundreds of online music channels for free. Just poke around the channels until you find one you like. Listen to it while you work at the computer. When you hear a song you like look at the the displayed artist and song name. Then you can go to the iTunes music store and buy that song. For slide show type music I like the “New Age on SKY FM” channel found under the heading of International. Listen for while and you are sure to find some suitable tunes.

If you have a tip that would be of interest to other HUPS members please send it to David Lenderman - [underh2o@ev1.net](mailto:underh2o@ev1.net).

## Photoshop CS2 Seminar

There is an upcoming Photoshop seminar being offered at the George R. Brown Friday January 27. The seminar will be taught by Ben Willmore. Ben has published several book on Photoshop including How to Wow - Photoshop for Photographers. The class will include sessions on: starting your digital workflow, the secrets to image quality, color & tonal manipulation, Photoshop Image Ambulance, Ben's Workflow & Power Tips. Although this is not an Underwater focused seminar there will be tons of valuable information for underwater photographers.

The seminar is Friday January 27 from 9 AM until 5 PM. Price is \$99.00. To register or more information: 800-201-7323 or <http://www.photoshopseminars.com/>.

## Chips and Salsa for Everyone

Following HUPS meetings a number of us meet at Don Carlos Mexican Restaurant for a late dinner. Everyone is welcome. Don Carlos is located on the Northbound 59 feeder road just north of Hillcroft.



Digital Best of HUPS 3rd Place - Tom Collier, © 2006

## Calling all Writers

The HUPS newsletter is **always** looking for articles. If you have anything you would like to share send it to [underh2o@ev1.net](mailto:underh2o@ev1.net). We welcome trip reports, equipment reviews, photo tips, suggestion of underwater photography related websites, just about anything that would interest your fellow underwater photographers. We can't have a successful newsletter without contributions from YOU.

## Basic Concept of the Month - Rule of Thirds

*In an effort to help educate our less experienced members we will try to feature a basic term or concept in each month's newsletter. If you have an idea for a featured concept or have a question you would like answered email it to [underh2o@ev1.net](mailto:underh2o@ev1.net).*

The rule of thirds is probably the most well known rule of composition. The rule of thirds tells us to divide the frame into thirds both horizontally and vertically and place the key subjects on the thirds. This is a very good rule for those of us who may have a bad habit of centering the subject in every image. To apply the rule of thirds imagine lines in the frame that divide the image into thirds both horizontally and vertically. Then use these lines to determine where to place your subject. Placing your subject at the intersection of these lines is typically a good practice. These intersections are often referred to as "power points". If your subject fills most all the frame then try to place some key feature of your subject, like its eye, at one of these points. So you are lining up a wide-angle shot of a sea fan with the sun in the background. Instead of placing the fan dead center in the frame try to position it on one of the "power points". The image will be even stronger if you can compose to place the sun on another "power point". When shooting a mobile subject like a fish remember to give it some room to move in the frame. If the fish is swimming toward the left place it one third from the right side of the frame. Go look at your images and see if you have been following the rules of thirds or have been centering everything. If you need help with this practice on land. You are shooting a boat on the horizon. Instead of placing the boat in the center of the frame place it on the third. And what about that horizon? Surely you are not going to place it across the middle of the photo. Place it on the third also. You will end up with a subject (the boat) on one of the power points. You can even practice in your house. Just shoot ordinary objects all on the thirds giving special effort to place them on the "power points".

## Important Dates

Put them on your calendar

### January 9

HUPS Meeting - Ned Shimizu - Great Whites of Guadalupe, Tom Collier - Lembeh Strait

### March 6

HUPS meeting - TBA

### April 13 - 23

HUPS trip to KBR - Lembeh Strait - contact Tom Collier - [tom@fpixs.com](mailto:tom@fpixs.com)

### February 6

HUPS meeting - David Lenderman - Digital Komodo Video and Stills, plus wide angle tips

### April 3

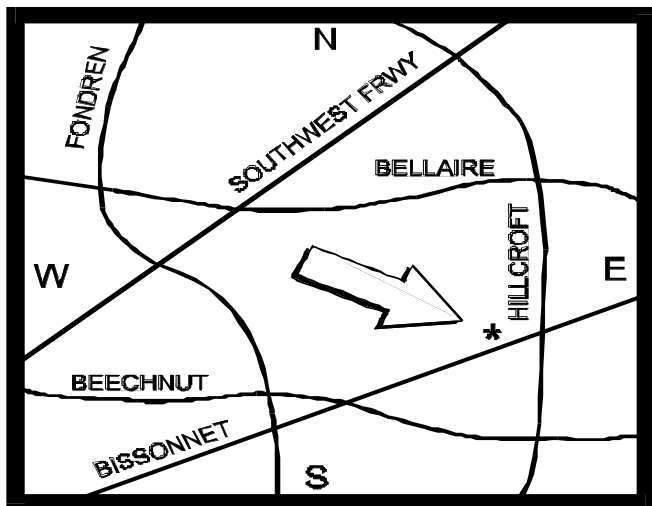
HUPS meeting - TBA

### May 1

HUPS meeting - TBA

*The Houston Underwater Photographic Society meets the first Monday of the month at 7:00 PM at Bayland Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet, near Hillcroft. Social time begins at 6:45. Visitors always welcome*

**\* BAYLAND COMMUNITY CENTER**



<http://www.hups.org>

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