



David Lenderman Dives into Digital February 6th
Bali & Beyond
Plus Digital Wide-Angle Digital Techniques

By Dennis Deavenport

There's a lot to say about David and it's just about all good and worth repeating. However, jumping into the forefront of digital UW photography wasn't on this list until the tail end of 2005. As is typical for David, once committed to a course of action, he digs in with both feet and takes it in big chunks. On last November's trip to Komodo on the Komodo Dancer, he packed a nice assortment of digital still and video gear. His new equipment, a Nikon D100 in an Aquatica Housing (with a 60 mm lens for macro and 10.5 mm fisheye lens for WA) and a Sony PC110 in an Ocean Images Housing for digital video, gave him a good workout swapping back

and forth from one dive to the next. His ambitious presentation will feature a program set to music that incorporates both still shots and video segments. Although this is the first time for David to put together a digital show, we've all come to expect a thoroughly entertaining and educational evening.

As a nice bonus, David has also put together a short program on wide angle techniques. Judging from the awesome WA images that we've seen him produce in 35mm slide format, we should all be in for a special treat. He will discuss some of the special lighting problems that have to be overcome when using a 10.5 mm fisheye lens that covers an angle of 180°. Also on

his list will be tips on selecting good subjects and how to set up and execute "close-focus, wide angle" photos. It will be an opportunity to learn how to shoot wide angle images from one of HUPS' best.

You'll not want to miss this program. It's a dead-solid guarantee to be awesomely entertaining and solidly educational. The meeting will take place Monday, February 6th at the Bayland Community Center. A map showing how to get there is on the back page of the newsletter. Looking forward to seeing you there. As always the meeting will be held at the Bayland Community Center on Bissonnett. A map can be found on the back page of this newsletter. See you there!

January Meeting Recap -

HUPS' 2006 season was inaugurated in high style with a dual program presented by Ned Shimizu and Tom Collier. At the alpha-predator end of the scale, Ned gave us a program that we could all "sink our teeth into". His show featuring the great white sharks surrounding Isla Guadalupe, 22 hours SW of San Diego, was very different in a number of interesting ways. Not only was Ned taking pictures inside a cage but he was out in blue water. Taking pictures of great whites requires different techniques that he was happy to describe. However, the real fun started when Ned, a dentist, started discussing the "gummy grimaces" that great whites display when going for a bite to eat. Obviously, Ned feels that they need the help of a good dentist to fix their nasty smiles. It was good fun for everyone and a chance to see some fascinating digital photographic work.

Tom Collier, with some help with images from Jackie and Mary Lou Reid and Ken Knezick, put together an absolutely top-notch show on the omega-weird critters found in the black-sand waters of Lembeh Straight (Sulewesi, Indonesia). It was obvious from the first that we were in good hands. Tom put together a superb Proshow Gold presentation displaying the sublime pleasures of diving in the waters a few steps away from the world-class Kungkungan Bay Resort. Top-side and underwater, the scenery is awe-inspiring and Tom's program set to music presented it in a finely-crafted show. If you want to experience KBR and see it first hand, all you need to do is talk to Tom about the Island Dreams/HUPS dive trip leaving April 15th. I'm not about to miss the fun and I hope to see you there, too.

President's Message

Dive Safety & UW Photography go Hand & Hand

As underwater photographers we all strive to get that image we are so proud of. Sometimes in the process we lose sight of something very important, safety. One of the first things you learn as a new diver in your open water class is the parameters in which we all learn to live. I remember when I became certified and I expressed an interest in underwater photography, my instructor was quick to point out that first and foremost you need to become a safe and good diver. After you become proficient at that then you can pick up a camera. That has always stuck with me.

Dive safety is always first. Never jeopardize that for the shot. It is so easy to get caught up in the viewfinder and disregard your gauges and computer. This is becoming ever more important with the advancement of Digital Photography. Now that we have, what seems like "endless film", we tend to spend more time at depth than ever before. Where as before, I could shoot a roll of film and was ready to ascend with plenty of time and gas left. It seemed like it wasn't long before I was out of film. Now with the Digital Memory, I went from 36 exposures to well over 150... so you can see where we are headed here... **BE CAREFUL.** Always be mindful of your depth and time. Always allow for a slow ascent and safety stop of at least 3 to 5 minutes. There are plenty of nice things to photograph on your ascent. I always try to stay shallow and plan a profile that allows for a gradual ascent. If I'm going after a pigmy seahorse at 110 ft then I descend to that depth, capture the image and then make a gradual ascent along the wall, stopping briefly to off-gas and shoot that beautiful nudibranch at 40ft. By doing this, you can use your photography to make your dive safer. I also dive Nitrox to make my dive safer. There is special training required to use this blend of Safe-Air but I would highly recommend it. As for me, I am less tired and it adds a little built in safety margin when it comes to Decompression Sickness.

With all of the remote diving locations and Live-Aboards seemingly becoming more popular, it is extremely important to be safety conscious as Recompression Chambers are not always easily or readily accessible. Not only are you subjecting yourself to problems but the others on the trip with you. We all love to show our images and work hard to get them. Just remember to plan a safe dive profile and stick to it as the images won't be of any value if your not here to enjoy them.....

Dive Safe!
Chuck

HUPS Travel Update

By Tom Collier, HUPS Trip Coordinator

April 13-23, 2006

Lembah 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 has a great website, check it out: <http://www.kungkungan.com/>.

New trip extension option: Four additional nights in Indonesia at Gangga Island Resort for superb blue-water diving and wide-angle photo opportunities. This resort is located on a small island a short boat ride from Lembah Strait. Here we will dive sites on Bangka Island, Gangga Island and Bunaken National Marine Park. The resort features a spa and luxurious Minahasa-style bungalows overlooking the beach and neighboring islands. Offered is 8 boat dives + 1 night dive. With this option we will be returning to Houston on April 27th. Check out the website, <http://www.ganggaisland.com/>.

Latest info: Island Dreams has 7 spots open. Call Tina at Island Dreams Travel: (713) 973-9300, (800) 346-6116 to reserve your spot. KBR & Lembah = \$ 2,975.00 + additional changes in cost of airfare. Gangga Island add-on = \$ 765.00.

September 9-10, 2006

Digital Photo Workshop at the Flower Gardens

HUPS will be hosting 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: We have 10 spots available for this trip and they will go fast. (Actually only 9 spots, as James will occupy 1 spot.) If you would like to participate in this workshop please mail your deposit as soon as possible. We will fill the trip on a first come, first served basis.

\$405.00 = Trip cost (\$65.00 extra for Nitrox). \$50.00 = Deposit required to reserve your spot. Mail Deposit = Tom Collier, 1806 Buchanan St., Brenham, Tx 77833.

Summer 2007

The HUPS Board of Directors voted on the Caribbean area as our destination for 2007. We will be investigating both live-aboard and land based options. Suggestions are welcome.

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

Membership Renewal for 2006

For only \$30 per individual or \$35 per family, you can renew your membership for 2006. If there are no address, phone or email changes, just bring or mail a check to Jean Himes, 6723 Imperial Leaf Lane, Spring, TX 77379. **To receive the monthly newsletter, be sure to give your current email address** along with your dues. Renewal forms will be available at the door of the February meeting.

♥ Happy Valentine's Day ♥

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>

February - Red as a primary color of the subject

May - Texture and Color

March -Leading Lines

June - Anemones and things that live in them

April - Put Away that Strobe - Natural Light

July - Shoot your Buddy - Shots with divers

How to be a Good UW Photographer? Part One - Have Good Buoyancy Control

By David Lenderman

Last month I completed a four part series on traits that make up a good photo. The next obvious thing to do is to address what club members can do to get those good photos. So, this article starts a multipart series on what an underwater photographer has to do to get consistently good images. There are lots of things that go into making a good photographer. I will try to cover the points that you MUST do to be a good photographer.

Good buoyancy control - This is a big one and the most important. It is absolutely impossible to get consistently good images if you have poor buoyancy control. Being able to hover without flapping hands or kicking is essential to getting good photos. This is the only way to get close, in focus shots. Many photographer who think they have focus issues actually have buoyancy issues. How can you get properly composed and in focus shots if you are flapping around trying to get the shot? If you have poor buoyancy control you will scare off your subjects, kick up sand and damage the reef. That is not good for your photos, your dive buddies or the reef.

So how do you get good buoyancy control? Part of it comes with experience, but I have seen people that have been diving for years with absolutely no grasp of buoyancy control. The first step is proper weighting. If you seem to be constantly sinking to the bottom or must always kick to keep yourself off the bottom then you are most likely over weighted. Try removing a couple pounds from your weight belt. You only need enough weight to keep yourself neutral on your safety stop with 500 psi in your tank and no air in your BCD. If you find that you need air in your BCD with a near empty tank on your safety stop then you should remove some weight from your belt. The second step to neutral buoyancy is to use your BCD for its intended purpose. When you get near the bottom at the beginning of your dive put some air into your BCD until you feel it very slightly start to float off your shoulders. Please note that I said "near the bottom". Don't wait until you hit bottom to add air to your BCD. As you see the bottom approaching begin adding air to slow and finally stop your descent. On numerous occasions I have seen divers kicking the entire dive to stay off the bottom while all they had to do was add a little air to their BCD. Remember it is called a **Buoyancy Compensating Device**. Use it to do its job.

If you are struggling with your buoyancy take a buoyancy class at a local dive shop or resort. A quick glance at the PADI website shows they offer a specialty called Peak Performance Buoyancy. Your photos will improve, your air consumption will be

better, your dive buddies will love you more and the reef will be healthier. What more could you ask for?

Monthly Contest Results

January: Real Little

Digital - Advanced

1st -David Lenderman

2nd - Mary Lou Reid

3rd - Tie - Ken Knezick, David Lenderman

Digital - Novice

1st Dan Brady

2nd Jim Mensay

3rd Anita Brady

Slides - Combined

1st Mary Lou Reid

2nd John Ringrose

3rd Jackie Reid

Red - Like a Valentine Heart

Because the month of February includes Valentine's Day we thought it was fitting to have the color red as our contest subject this month. So if you have some images that you love with all your heart of subjects that are primarily red in color be sure to enter them in the contest.

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 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 or 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.

Travel Tip

When flying try to carry on your camera gear. You can always rent scuba gear or even buy new clothing at your destination if your checked bags are lost by the airline. Camera gear would be the most difficult and expensive to replace at some exotic locale. You would be surprised how much photo gear will fit into a rolling carry on bag.

Selective Enhancement of Images - Part II

By Pat Miller - HUPS Webmaster

Now, let's get to a more interesting, "artistic" application. Say I have a picture of a blue ribbon eel from the muck at the bottom of the Lembeh Strait in Indonesia, a little guy just a couple of inches long. And I feel like the picture could benefit from de-emphasizing the sandy bottom near the eel, trying to make that space more negative in relation to the primary subject. Here's an image after just a little application of **Levels** to brighten the mid-tones a bit and **Curves** to increase contrast slightly:



The first thing I'll do before any more editing is duplicate the layer, and you'll see why in a second. Your image editing application does feature layers like Photoshop and Paint Shop Pro, doesn't it?

Then using Photoshop's Lasso tool I select the left side of the image:

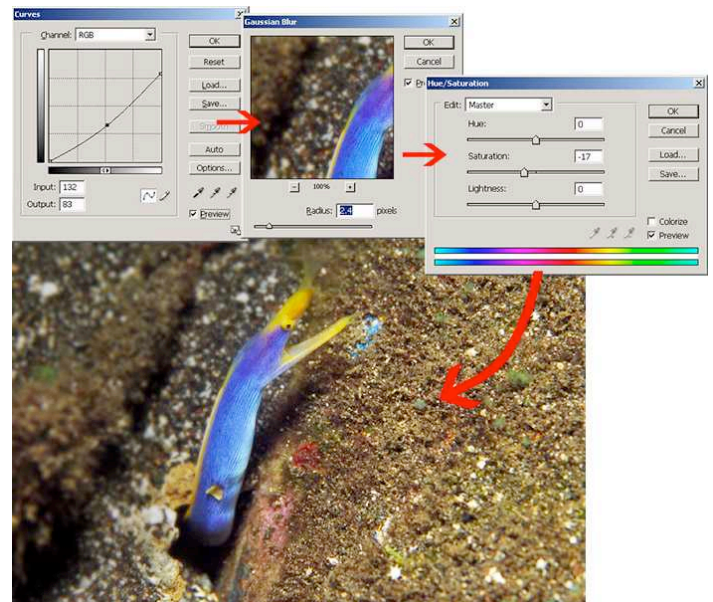


I intend to darken and blur the left side of the image a bit to de-emphasize it, to make it more into negative space, to allow more attention to be focused on my primary subject, the eel. I try to follow along some of the contours in the image so my changes will look natural. I don't need to be too precise right now, and you see my selected region overlaps the eel somewhat, because I am only editing the top layer. You'll see why in a second. If your imaging application doesn't allow the use of layers, you

will have to be more precise and draw your selection away from your primary subject, so you do not edit your primary subject.

After selecting the area I want to darken, I feather the edge of my selection by some number of pixels (in Photoshop it's under **Select -> Feather. . .**). Feathering softens the edge of the selection, and allows the changes I make to be applied gradually from the edge of the selection so it blends with the unselected part of the image. How many pixels you enter as the "Feather Radius" depends on your image and it's size in pixels – how wide you want the transition region between edited and unedited to be. I decide to feather by approximately the width of the eel.

Now, making sure I am editing the top layer, I use **Curves** to darken the selected part of the image. Alternatively I could use **Levels**, but **Curves** gives me more control. And then I use Photoshop's Gaussian Blur Filter (**Filter -> Blur -> Gaussian Blur. . .**). It's best to have the image magnification at 100%, or close to 100%, when you are deciding how much blur to add. And then I use **Hue/Saturation** to desaturate, to turn down the color a little bit. (In Photoshop, I hide and make visible again the selection edges - the "marching ants" - by clicking on **View -> Extras or View -> Show -> Selection Edges**, to help see what the changes look like before I click OK in a tool to apply the changes.)



Since my selection included a bit of the left side of the eel and I feathered by a good number of pixels, I have changed not only the negative space but also part of the eel. But I only edited the top layer "Background copy" in the layer stack-up shown below. I have not touched the original bottom layer.



We will finish up with this example next month.

Quick Tip

When downloading images from your digital camera do you use the little USB cable that came with your camera to connect it to the PC? If so, there is a better way. Buy a card reader and connect it to your PC. Using an inexpensive card reader has several benefits: 1) you don't use camera batteries during the downloading process, 2) you minimize the amount of time your housing has to be open and exposed, 3) it may allow you to leave the camera in the housing while just popping out the card, 4) your camera is available for taking photos instead of being tied up downloading.

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



Novice Digital 2nd Place Jim Mensay, © 2006

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. Expect to see some really nice images from our "novice" photographers in 2006. Everyone has a chance to win!

Check it Out on the Web

Mary Lou Reid sent this website in for a product designed to clean sensors of DSLR cameras. It looks very interesting. I am wondering if they can build a really big one to dust my house or car. Here is the link: <http://www.visibledust.com/>.

Chips and Salsa for Everyone!

Following HUPS meetings everyone is welcome to join us at Don Carlos Mexican Restaurant for a late dinner. I know it's a work night, but we won't keep you out too late. Don Carlos is located on the Northbound 59 feeder road just north of Hillcroft.

Basic Concept of the Month - Shutter Speed and f-stop

It is a bit confusing for newer photographers. How do shutter speeds and f-stops relate to each other. I like the water bucket analogy. You have a bucket that needs to be filled with water. You can either open the faucet wide open for 1 minute or open the faucet halfway for 2 minutes. Or you can use various combinations of faucet opening and time to fill the bucket. Either way the bucket will be properly filled. In photography imagine the water and bucket are light in your image. You need the right amount of light to "fill" your image. The shutter speed is how long you leave the faucet open to let in light. The f-stop is how far you open the faucet. Any given image can usually be created by various combinations of f-stop and shutter speed.

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.

Important Dates

Put them on your calendar

February 6

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

April 3

HUPS meeting - Ken Knezick - How to dive successfully (and safely) with cameras

May 1

HUPS meeting - TBA

March 6

HUPS meeting - Joyce & Frank Burek - Critiquing images

April 13 - 23

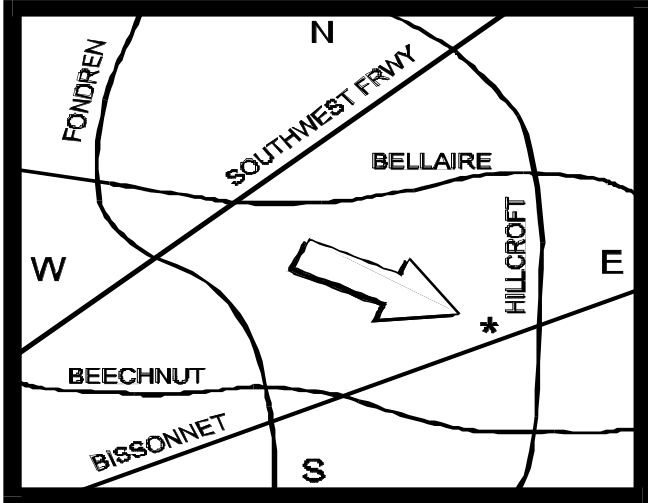
HUPS trip to KBR - Lembeh Strait - contact Tom Collier - tom@tpixs.com

June 5

HUPS meeting - Christa Loustolot - Red Sea Adventures

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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**Underwater
Images**

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