



October 2017

Nautilus SCUBA Club Newsletter

Cairns QLD Australia



**Dive Trips
Club Meetings
Guest Speakers
Trip Reports**

Editor: Phil Woodhead

Cover photo: Phil Woodhead

Local dive trips and get together information

*Please note that the news letter does not publish prices on trips offered

October 2017						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
30	31					1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29



For our October Trip we have provisionally reserved 12 places on Tusa 6 on Sunday 15th.

Tusa does not reserve a spot until payment has been made in full.

To pay and book, or for more information, call Tusa directly on 4047 9120. You will need to be at E Finger of Cairns Marina at 7:40 for an 8:00 departure.

Remember to tell them you are a Nautilus member.

Once you have booked, please let Mark know so he can keep track of who is going. markearney54@gmail.com NB Tusa allows unguided diving, and they also have Nitrox tanks on board (subject to availability).

Club meeting

October meeting guest speaker is going to be a bit of surprise, so come along and see who turns up!

Social dinner at the Aquarium restaurant, Aqualuna, seems a good time was had by all, many thanks Shey.

November 2017						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

For November club dives check your emails and the club web-site, (link is on the cover)

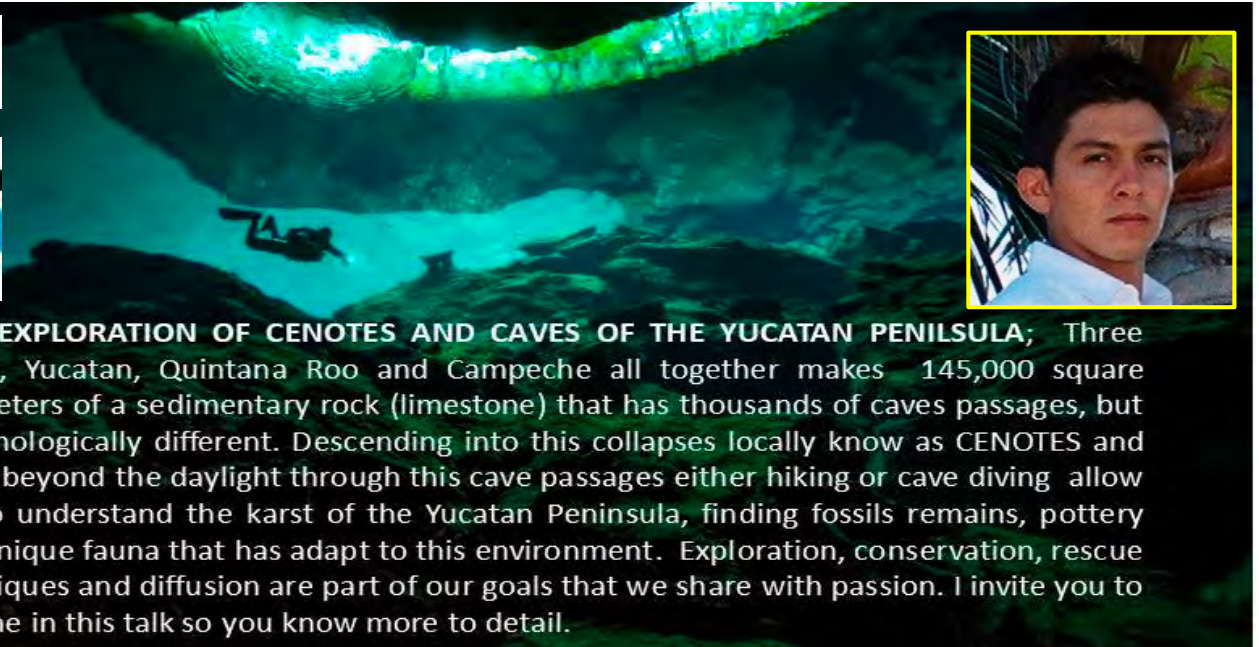
Club meeting

Special dives will be organised in addition to the regular monthly day trips, these could be with Reel Cray-Zee, Rumrunner, and could be day trips or weekend trips to the reef or the Yongala. Better watch your emails for future announcements.



A Major Dive Event for FNQLD: "Diving the Yucatan"

Following the outstanding success of last year's program with Namibian cave diving expert: Don Shirley, the CDAA is pleased to announce cave diving maestro; **Michel Vazquez Robles** is now coming to Cairns. All the way from the Yucatan Peninsula, Mexico, Michel will deliver a unique and exciting presentation to divers, cavers, their families and friends.



CEM EXPLORATION OF CENOTES AND CAVES OF THE YUCATAN PENINSULA; Three states, Yucatan, Quintana Roo and Campeche all together makes 145,000 square kilometers of a sedimentary rock (limestone) that has thousands of caves passages, but morphologically different. Descending into this collapses locally know as CENOTES and going beyond the daylight through this cave passages either hiking or cave diving allow us to understand the karst of the Yucatan Peninsula, finding fossils remains, pottery and unique fauna that has adapt to this environment. Exploration, conservation, rescue techniques and diffusion are part of our goals that we share with passion. I invite you to join me in this talk so you know more to detail.

Wednesday, 1st November, 2017.

Junior Eisteddfod Hall,

67 Greenslopes St, Edge Hill.

The **Cairns Nautilus Scuba Club** will provide a **free Bar B Q** from **7:00 p.m.** so you can have a bite to eat and personally 'meet & greet' Michel. **The presentation starts at 7:45 p.m. Sharp** (Closing around 9:30 p.m.).

We are asking all attendees to contribute to the hall hire by giving a donation of \$5 on entry.

Everyone will be entered in the multiple **lucky door prize draws** and have the opportunity to support the evening by contributing to our super raffle with amazing prizes donated by our sponsors.

Contact: Terry Cummins, CDAA QLD Representative, on: 0439 945 123 or email him at: terry@tc-ibc.com

RSVP is essential to reserve your seat and to assist catering (Note: last year this event booked out).

A big Cairns thank you to our CDAA Organising Committee, our Patron and wonderful sponsors.



Patron: The CDAA is a 'non-profit organisation' dedicated to cave diving safety, education and training and has kindly met Michel's major expenses to make this happen for you in Cairns.

Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors



Bronze Sponsors



www.tc-ibc.com

DIV TEC

Next year, Fiji anyone?

Fiji Diving Adventure 2018

7 nights 2-9 May 2018

Volivoli Beach Resort & RA Divers

This trip is filling up fast, so if you want to go get a move on and contact Akiko.
overseastrips@nautilus-scuba.net
Prices available via club emails



Optional SHARK DIVE ADD-ON

9-13 MAY UPRISING RESORT Garden Villa, AQUATREK
4 nights, 2 shark dive days, bf, transfers

Included:

Volivoli: 7 nights Ocean View room (double/twin), roundtrip airport transfers from/to Nadi, full meal plan (3 meals daily with juice and milk at breakfast, drinking water, coffee, tea), 3 days x 2 tank and 2 days x 3 tank boat diving (12 dives each), tanks, weights, dive guide, air fills, unlimited shore diving on day of arrival and dive days (reserve tanks 24 hours prior), beach BBQ on the final night with drinks and nibbles provided, welcome foot rub and ritual, traditional meke performance, free use of kayaks and participation in a variety of complimentary resort activities, Fiji Government taxes

Extras payable locally:

Nitrox, dive gear rental, bar bill, tipping, optional tours/activities.

Contact for more details:

Akiko overseastrips@nautilus-scuba.net or

Dirk dirk@diversiondivetravel.com.au



The #1 Online Dive Travel Agency

FREECALL 1800 607 913 www.diversiondivetravel.com.au



A close-up photograph of a squirrel standing in a forest floor covered with fallen autumn leaves. The squirrel has grey and brown fur, a bushy tail, and is looking directly at the camera. A large, white, tilted rectangular box with the word "SECRET" in bold, black, serif capital letters is superimposed over the center of the image, partially obscuring the squirrel's body.

SECRET

Diving Scapa Flow in September 2017

By Michelle Barnes

In September I finally got to do a long time bucket list dive trip – the scuttled German WW1 fleet in Scapa Flow, the Orkney Islands in the north of Scotland. I had dived in Scotland before and with a few drysuit dives this winter in Lake Eacham to become reacquainted with my suit I felt well prepared. After a 5 hour drive from Glasgow, past Inverness and through Caithness to the charmingly named Scrabster I drove onto the Northlink ferry to cross to Stromness, the location of the dive shop and my accommodation at the Ferry Inn. As I was diving alone I had booked a 4 day guided dive package with Scapa Scuba who came highly (and justifiably!) recommended.

Saturday was a scheduled shore dive and after a scenic 20 minute drive I arrived at the Churchill Barriers. Scapa Flow had been chosen as the base for the Royal Navy prior to the outbreak of war in 1914 and subsequently reinforced with the sinking of obsolete 'blockships' in the entrance channels of the islands to deter enemy submarines and ships. Between the wars the barriers were neglected, but after the infamous sinking of the HMS Royal Oak in September 1939 Winston Churchill ordered a series of causeways constructed as well as additional blockships and anti-sub nets. Italian prisoners of war were set to the construction task (in a loophole of the Geneva convention) and the job was completed in 1944.



Diving Scapa Flow in September 2017

By Michelle Barnes

I met Jon McLeod, owner/instructor at Scapa Scuba and was joined by Xav whose partner Fiona was completing her DM traineeship. Scapa Scuba is a popular choice for UK dive training, and I really do admire people whose first forays into scuba are in cold water and a drysuit. It was a bright and sunny morning though windy, and an easy shore entry at Barrier 3. After getting correctly weighted I descended into the clear water and was immediately confronted by a very large crab on the sandy bottom. Quickly giving way I proceeded to follow Jon on our planned route to see the cargo steamers *SS Gartmore* and *Empire Seaman*. While extensively salvaged before and after sinking and twisted by being blasted there were many recognisable features and ample opportunity for swim throughs to tune in buoyancy and trim. Maximum depth reached was 11 meters and I was pleasantly surprised by the water temperature at 13C, which was to remain consistent through the Flow as all depths. As the daytime air temperature was around 15C it was never a 'shock' to splash into the water. There was abundant sea life including many crabs, starfish and wrasse, and the wrecks are covered in soft corals and plumose anemones. On the second dive we returned to the *Empire Seaman* and went on to explore the *SS Martis*. With gear and weighting sorted I was feeling well prepared to dive the German light cruisers in the Flow the next day, and even had time to visit the Neolithic site at Skara Brae before returning to Stromness.

Monday had more typical Scottish weather as I crossed the road from the Ferry Inn to board the *MV Jean Elaine*, a converted fishing trawler. I love the set up on this boat with the spacious deck for kit, nitrox on tap, a drying room for suits/gloves/hoods and a cosy well equipped cabin/kitchen for between dives. Captain Andy Cuthbertson has many years' experience dropping divers precisely on the wrecks (and promptly retrieving them!) and mate Scott always had a hot mug of tea waiting for me post dive so I was able to forgive him for being a Kiwi. But without a doubt my favourite feature of the *Jean Elaine* was the 'dive elevator' that lifts you fins and all from the water, a blessing with the heavy steel tanks and weights required for drysuit diving (see happy diver Stuart from Glasgow in my photo)



Diving Scapa Flow in September 2017

By Michelle Barnes



The events of the scuttling of the interned German fleet in June 1919 is an interesting story but in short the Armistice was due to expire and the war may have resumed. In Scapa Flow, Admiral Ludwig von Reuter ordered the fleet to be scuttled so it would not be seized by the allies and in a matter of hours 52 of the 74 ships sank. Nine German sailors died during the event, including the Captain of the battleship *Markgraf* who was shot in a scuffle with a British boarding party. Over the next 20 years many of the ships were salvaged and now there are 'the big seven' - four cruisers and three battleships remaining that are dived, as well as five torpedo boats and one submarine. The remains at the sites of the many salvaged ships are referred to as the 'scrapyards'.

Over the next two days I dived the four cruisers *SMS Brummer*, *Cöln*, *Dresden* and *Karlsruhe*. The *Cöln* was my favourite, the most intact and resting on her starboard side we were lucky with visibility of approximately 15m. It's a great thrill to see a massive hull appear in the green gloom of the water as we descend the buoy line at midship. At a depth of 34 meters we began to make our way to the bow, stopping to examine the gun mounts and control tower. Covered in white plumose anemones, the bow is sleek and in beautiful condition, bringing reality to old black and white photos of ships of

the era. Moving back towards midship there was opportunity for swim throughs thanks to exposed deck areas, and wrasse, pollock, crabs and sea urchins were seen. All too soon our no deco limit approached and we made our way back up the line.



Diving Scapa Flow in September 2017

By Michelle Barnes

My fourth and final day was fantastic. Our first dive was the battleship *SMS Kronprinz Wilhelm*, five times the tonnage of the cruisers. As we descended the line the massive hull covered in brittle stars appeared at only 12 meters depth though she sits in 38 meters of water. The buoy line leads directly to the impressive 12" aft gun turrets under the hull, a real site to behold. The *Kronprinz* turned turtle while sinking, and we followed the overhanging aft deck along the slightly exposed port side which has collapsed in parts. With no deco limit approaching we ascended to 20 meters to examine the imposing rudders that are standing tall, then with only a fraction of the 177-meter-long battleship explored it was over all too soon. Back on the boat regular diver on the site John said conditions were as good as he had ever seen them, and they certainly far surpassed my expectations.

Our final dive was to be the *SS Tabarka*, a WWII era blockship in the Barra Sound to the east that can only be dived at slack tide which was conveniently at 2pm and at a depth of 12 meters was an ideal second dive. Andy dropped us right over her and in the crystal-clear water I made my first negative entry in a drysuit, fortunately not ending up ignominiously feet first at the surface. We made our way into the stern area and the water flow immediately calmed. *Tabarka* has been described as an underwater cathedral which is a perfect description as light streams through the bulkheads. The wreck is split in two with a short swim between them and is home to many fish. Unfortunately, my little Nikon Coolpix had met an untimely end the previous day so I didn't get any pictures of this most photogenic wreck. It was a stunning dive and I could have stayed forever but the current had clearly picked up and it was time to depart. DSMB's were shot and we enjoyed the ride to the surface where we were promptly retrieved, and Andy was delighted by the big grins on all returning diver's faces.

Thanks to Katie McLeod at Scapa Scuba for the seamless booking process and special thanks to Jon McLeod for the perfect itinerary, we had great luck with conditions and I got to see it all. If you are interested in giving drysuit diving a go I could not recommend them more highly. My own attitude to deco diving in cold water has changed from "none" to "okay maybe just a little bit" as I need to go back and see it all again with more bottom time. And there is also the deeper battleship *SMS Markgraf* to explore... ■



Moreton Bay Diving and the Esperance Star

Copy and images Alison Smith

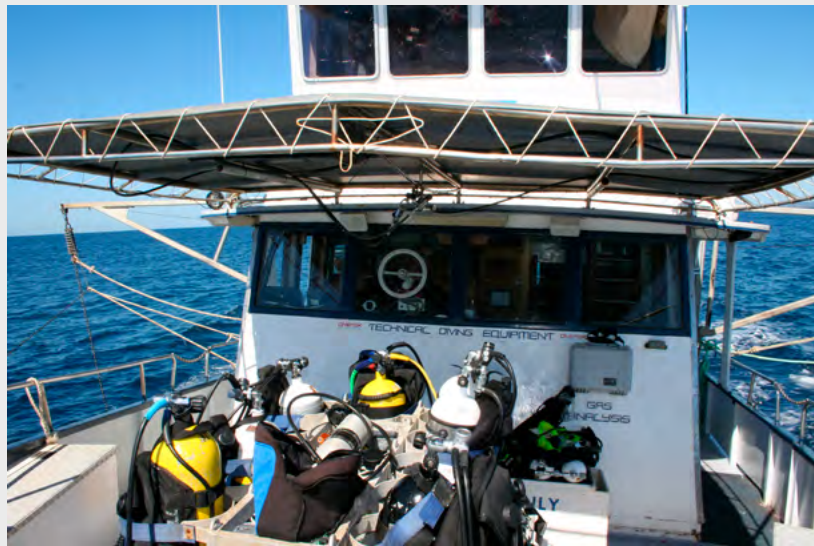
Learning to Dive

What seems like a lifetime ago, Aaron and I were just getting into diving and decided to do our Advanced Course on Esperance Star, a live-aboard dive vessel operating out of Newport Waterways Marina, Scarborough. That fateful decision culminated in us working on as volunteers on board ES (as she was affectionately known) and led to lifelong friendships being formed. Today, six of us live within 100 metres of each other at Mooroolboul, Fiona visits regularly from Townsville and is a Nautilus Club member, and the rest of the bad bunch visit us from time to time, as time and finances permit.

Owned and run by Trevor Jackson, now a skipper on Mike Ball's Spoilsport, Esperance Star ran live-aboard trips to Curtin Artificial Reef in Moreton Bay, Flinders Reef, and in good weather, the wrecks and outer dive sites around Moreton Island. Aaron and I would work our week-day jobs in Brisbane and then shove the bags in the car, eat Subway in the car on the way up to Redcliffe, throw on our crew shirts and be ready with a big smile for the boarding passengers. ES would steam



Stern Post of the St. Paul



across Moreton Bay on a Friday night and the diving would start early Saturday morning. We would finish diving around lunch time Sunday and steam back across the Bay, arriving back at Newport Waterways around 5pm on Sunday. When we got home on a Sunday night at 8pm we would be absolutely shattered, and would still have to clean our dive gear.

Aaron and I were pretty green back then, but quickly built up our experience by doing additional courses and watching and listening to the divers that came from all over Australia to dive on ES. Tech diving, twin tanks, rebreathers, deep diving and wreck exploration were the norm, meaning we ended up being certified as Deep, Wreck,

Moreton Bay Diving and the Esperance Star

Copy and images Alison Smith

Aaron got his twins!



Rescue and Solo divers. Aaron acquired his Twin 7's and I got a pony bottle and we dived any time we could. Some of my favourite dive sites were the wrecks in and around Moreton Bay, including the Aarhus (where I saw my first Tiger Shark), the St Paul, the Cementco and some of the larger and older wrecks on Curtin Artificial Reef, like the Etmoor, and the Melbourne. Moreton Bay diving could often be challenging. Any time there was bad weather in some distant place like Fiji, Flinders Reef and the northern wrecks would experience big slow swells, and inside the Bay the tides made drift diving and live boat pickups a regular occurrence. The only time I

have ever felt sea sick was in the galley of ES trying to cook lunch for 17 people in 3 metre swells, with the boat doing a slow repetitive roll.



Grouper on the St. Pauls

Moreton Bay Diving and the Esperance Star

Copy and images Alison Smith

I like to think that Brisbane diving “toughened me up” and made me adept at assessing conditions and knowing my personal limits. How to get in and out of the water quickly and unassisted, how to get to and from the dive site and do a safety stop in strong current, and what to do when you see a Tiger Shark when your alone at 20 metres on a wreck - these are all things you need to know when diving in Moreton Bay. Crewing on ES also taught me a lot about boats, the sometime strange behaviour of other humans, and how to think outside the box when things don’t go according to plan (which was often). We all make decisions in our lives that can sometimes completely change how we live. Learning to dive on Esperance Star was one of those, and I am so glad we made it.

Aaron rocking the wreck

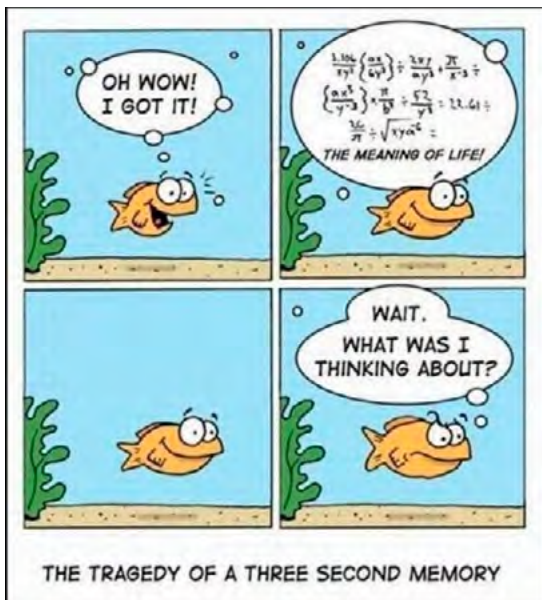


Fun times



Esperance Star Crew

THINGS YOU MAY OR MAY NOT NEED TO KNOW



The 2018 Nautilus calendar is available from the Nautilus pop up shop.



Good tip.

Take a photo with your phone of your certification and your Nautilus Membership card, you may forget them, but I doubt if you'll forget your phone.

Supporting the Nautilus Scuba Club



Air Niugini



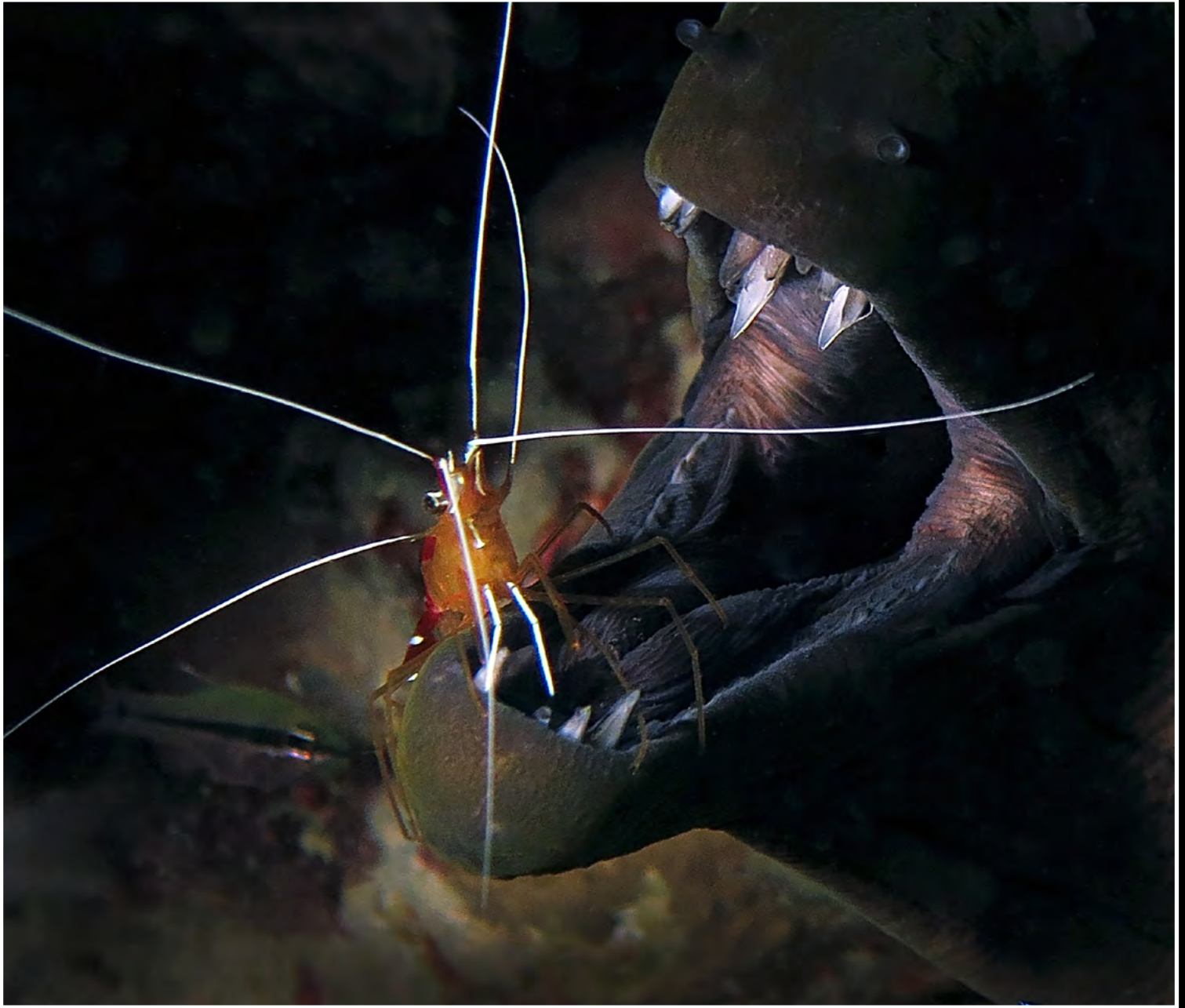
DIGITAL DIVER
• take only pictures, leave only bubbles •



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PARTING SHOT



by Shey Goddard