Cover Shot by September Featured Photographer
David Gross

Featured Contents

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2015 SFUPS Board of Directors

President – Sam Hodge  president@sfups.org
Vice President – Phil Rudin  vicepresident@sfups.org
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Event & Programs – Angela Smith  events@sfups.org
Newsletter Editor – Ana Zangroniz  newsletter@sfups.org
Membership – Linda Ianniello  membership@sfups.org
Webmaster – Susan Mears  webmaster@sfups.org
Audio/Visual – Jim Mears  audiovisual@sfups.org
Merchandising – Suzan Meldonian  merchandise@sfups.org
Social Media Director-Jason Spitz  socialmedia@sfups.org

2015 SFUPS Committee Chairs

Welcome Committee – Carol Schurtz
Club Historian – William Lipscomb
Website Support – Patrice Marker

2015 SFUPS Sponsors
Hard to believe the Summer is over as we start Fall diving season. It has been an interesting year for diving here in the Atlantic given the Pacific El Niño event. NOAA Coral Reef Watch Coordinator, Mark Eakin, tagged an interesting article on Facebook comparing this year’s extreme El Niño event against six other seasons. Notably 2015 will likely go down as the warmest year on record but also with anomalous heavy moisture in the Eastern Atlantic states and drought conditions in the Western Pacific states. Many divers and photographers experienced the season having documented heavy coral bleaching throughout the Keys as we wind down with our hottest summer days. We hope you all continue to monitor the reefs through your great imagery.

October also brings about cooler weather which initiates the start of manatee season in November. The politics around diving and imaging manatees is a war brewing between interest groups ranging from extreme opinions in making it illegal to be near or swim within feet of a manatee to others who feel the population is on the road to recovery to lift as an endangered species. It’s likely the one thing we as photographers can count on this coming season is more blurry and ambiguous rules that change depending on the person you ask. In listening to the accounts of many from the prior season I suspect the joyful interactions will be far and few between going forward. That said, Goliath Grouper season was another great success with many capturing even more intimate moments with these behemoths of the deep. It’s wonderful to see so many take an interest in protecting this species.

As an organization, we too find ourselves rounding the corner to November with the nomination procedures of our 2016 Board of Directors. Per our previous announcement, we welcome the role of the new Social Media Director along with Jason Spitz to fill this important position. Members will vote the 2016 Board nominees in November’s general meeting. Those who are new to our organization, I encourage you to read up on our Bylaws and Constitution to get familiar with our traditions. Stay tuned for more information on the 2016 Board nominees.

Finally we encourage you all to SAVE THE DATE for December 6. Our annual Holiday party will be rather lively with a few great surprises for every one in attendance. Naturally, we’ll have another great raffle with over $1500 in gifts to give away. Let’s also not forget the crowning of our newest SFUPS Photographer of the Year. Registration for the Holiday Party is now officially open—https://sfups.org/sfups-2015-holiday-party/.
It started with my first camera before I was five years old. As a young idealist photography became my life’s mission. The transition to the underwater world began innocently while on vacation in Maui, Hawaii with a Discover Scuba experience in 1990. Diving became a passion-turned-obsession and quickly the marriage with diving and photography emerged.

The evolution of photographic equipment for me was starting with the simplest Sea and Sea Motormarine into the digital revolution over the next 20 years. My current system is Nikon D600 with a Nauticam housing and an array of lenses and ports.

Recent participation in a Stephen Frink Digital Master’s course was first, an awesome experience and second a confidence booster. My new confidence has allowed me to share my photos beyond the safety of “friend and family” to joining SFUPS.

The Florida Keys life provides a plethora of interesting, unique and curious creatures posing for the shutter. Along with my wife, Patti, I am involved in a number of local volunteer organizations that present compelling targets for my lens. Most notably, we dive (and I photograph) the activities of the Coral Restoration Foundation (www.coralrestoration.org).

I am looking forward to becoming an active member of SFUPS in order to improve my underwater photography skills as well as to connect SFUPS members to some special opportunities to dive and photograph the beauty of the Upper Florida Keys.
October Guest Speaker:
Lee Burghard

My love for underwater imaging began after my first dive back in 2008. I was overwhelmed by this whole new world I’d discovered and all of the wonder it held. The moments I’d had during my time diving were often hard to put into words, but with a camera in my hands all of that changed. With that discovery, my newfound passion for underwater filmmaking and photography began.

Since 2009, I have dedicated myself towards perfecting my skills and learning as much about this art as possible. My willingness to learn and drive to excel within this field has brought me to where I am today.

I am an award winning filmmaker, proud co-owner of Wild Shutter Imaging, and equipment specialist for Reef Photo & Video. I specialize in capturing video from challenging environments, whether they are miles into the wilderness, or a hundred feet below the surface. My opinion is that this type of profession is all about continued growth and creativity. I’m always pushing myself to try something new, unique, and different with my work. I look at every new project and challenge as an opportunity to further enhance my skills.

My hope is my work will inspire people about exploring and seeing all of the beauty and wonder within our natural world.

Interested in seeing more of my work? Visit me at:
Homepage – www.wildshutterimaging.com
Facebook - facebook.com/wildshutterimaging
Instagram - instagram.com/wild_shutter_imaging
Announcements

- **SFUPS gives a warm welcome to our newest members joining in September 2015:** Rhea Zabell and:

  [Image of Rhea Zabell]

  Patti Gross

  [Image of Howard Ratsch]

  Howard Ratsch

  [Image of Chris Schenker]

  Chris Schenker

- The annual SFUPS Holiday party will be Sunday, December 6. The cost is $39 for adults and $15 for children. To register, please visit [here](http://www.sfups.org/Newsletter.html).

- Calling all videographers! Start your editing! The November SFUPS Wide-Angle Video Contest is open for submission, it’s time to start thinking about your entries. The entry deadline is midnight on Saturday, October 31. Two entries allowed per person. Entry rules are found on by going to the contest "Enter and Vote" page and clicking on the “November W/A Video Contest” button.

- SFUPS is looking for new still and video galleries! Take advantage of this membership benefit and submit your images or video files/links to Susan Mears: webmaster@sfups.org.

- REEF Photo & Video will be hosting several trips later in 2015 and in early 2016:

  2. [Anilao, Philippines, April 9-16, 2016](http://www.sfups.org/Newsletter.html).

- **At the November meeting, SFUPS will be nominating the 2016 Board of Directors positions.** The positions are: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Events & Programs, Webmaster, Newsletter Editor, Membership, Audio/Visual, Director of Social Media and Merchandising.
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<td>6.) 6pm Force-E Pompano Go Pro Basics</td>
<td>7.) 6pm Force-E Pompano Advanced Go Pro</td>
<td>8.) 7pm Force-E Riviera Fitness &amp; Diving</td>
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<td>10.) 7:30am Pompano Dive Center Shark Tagging</td>
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<td>11.) 7:10 Force-E Blue Heron Bridge night dive</td>
<td>13.) 6pm SFUPS Social 7:20pm SFUPS September meeting</td>
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<td>15.) 7pm Force-E Riviera Lobster Facts</td>
<td>16.) 6pm Pura Vida Divers Pumpkin Carving Contest and Halloween Party</td>
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<td>24.) 7:30am Pompano Dive Center Pier cleanup</td>
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<td>25.)</td>
<td>26.) 7pm Force-E Blue Heron Bridge night dive</td>
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<td>28.) 7pm Force-E Boca A Night With Avionics</td>
<td>29.) Force-E Riviera A Night With Avionics</td>
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<td>31.) 8:30am Force-E Halloween Dive</td>
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<td>Pura Vida Divers Underwater Halloween Costume Contest</td>
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Club Members in the News

- Ann Cabot had an article on Raja Ampat village homestays featured in September’s International Travel News magazine. See “Featured article.”

- In the Florida Skin Divers Association UW Photo and Video Contest, the following club members placed:
  - Judy Townsend: 1st place Macro Photo “Reflection,” 3rd place Lionfish Photo “Here’s Looking at You,” and Honorable Mention Wide Angle photo “Mating Green Turtles.”
  - Heidi Thorict: 2nd place Lionfish Photo “Tiny Juvenile Lionfish”
  - Mike Miller: 1st place Wide-Angle Photo “Friends,” and 3rd place Macro Photo “Creature of the Night”
  - Diane Randolph: 1st place U/W Video: “Net of Wonder” See her winning video here.

- Pompano Dive Center and Guillaume Bach have a photograph from Florida Springs featured by PADI on the PADI website in the “Dive Across America” section.

- During Reef Photo’s “Focus Grand Cayman” trip, Chad Williams took 3rd place overall, and 1st place in both the video and “Topside” categories, and 2nd place in the highly contested macro division. During the same event, Bill Williams got 6th place overall with placements in the “Topside” category. The full results can be found here.

- Tom Hayward had an article published about black water diving in X-ray Magazine.

2015 SFUPS Contest Categories

https://sfups.org/2015-contest-subjects/

*entries due by midnight, Saturday, November 7, 2015

November MASTERS-Portfolio-Your three favorite shots taken anywhere this year. We will be checking the dates on the metatag, less than 20% crop.

November CHALLENGERS-Big Fish Portrait-Wide Angle. Eyes must be looking at us. Examples are: barracuda, sharks, grouper, whale sharks, stingray, eagle rays, sunfish.
September Masters – “Underwater Model”

2nd Place — Zarina Staller

3rd Place — Wayne MacWilliams

1st Place — Walt Stearns

4th Place — Susan Mears

5th Place — Suzan Meldonian
September Challengers – “Portfolio”

1st Place — Walt Stearns

2nd Place — Richard Lazenko

3rd Place — Kelly Casey

4th Place — Heidi Thoricht

5th Place — David Gross
Global Underwater Photography Contest Calendar

- Facebook Bluewater Photo contest month’s contests  
  (Monthly)
- Monthly Dive Photo Guide Contest  
  (Monthly)
- Guy Harvey Outpost Photography Contest  
  (Weekly, Monthly)

Club Travel Exchange

Want like-minded company on your next trip? Send your travel plans to newsletter@sfups.org. The trip details will be published in the newsletter for other members to see. Any members interested in a trip can send an email to newsletter@sfups.org and the groups will be connected.

Join SFUPS for the next meeting  
October 13 at 6:00 pm  
for social hour, drinks & dinner  
Meeting will start at 7:20 pm  

SFUPS Meeting Location  
Courtyard Marriot Ft Lauderdale North  
2440 W. Cypress Creek Road  
Ft Lauderdale, FL 33309
More than 40 years ago my father responded to a letter of mine by admonishing me to stop telling of my shark encounters because it worried my mother. I could not in my wildest dreams have imagined what has transpired since.

1974. Two years of diving in Hawaii and I had yet to see a shark. Enewetak Atoll, a former nuclear test site in the Republic of the Marshall Islands was very different. With the human population exiled for 28 years and the nuke tests over for nearly 20, the reefs had returned to their pristine condition. The food web was intact with abundant apex predators. Gray reef sharks (Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos) ruled the lagoon and upper reef slopes. They were often territorial and aggressive. On more than one occasion, we were obliged to leave the water. Whitetips (Triaenodon obesus) were curious but kept their distance. Reef blacktips (Carcharhinus melanopterus) were skittish and fled – except on the flats at low tide when all they saw were our feet. More than once, one swam right between my legs in pursuit of prey.

Bull sharks (Carcharhinus leucas) are a different story. 1975, summer of “Jaws”. The events of nearly 60 years earlier that inspired the novel and movie were in reality the work of the bull shark, not the great white. Unlike the smaller reef sharks, the large and stocky bull sharks are aptly named. They are responsible for more unprovoked attacks and fatalities than any other species except great white and tiger sharks. The Bull shark is a coastal species that travels great distances in pursuit of prey and enters rivers to give birth. It is generally absent from oceanic islands and coral atolls and not a concern in Micronesia or Hawaii. Fiji’s large, high islands have the rivers and coastal reefs where bull sharks feel at home.

Today it is hard to imagine that the gray reef shark is the same species as that of decades ago. In most places accessible to humans, they are either fished out or, where protected, have grown accustomed to the bubble-blowing intruders who do them no harm. Where free lunch is provided, the grays as well as whitetips and reef blacktips have become attracted to divers and are approachable even when no handouts are to be had. By the turn of the century, shark feeds featuring these species had become a routine part of ecotourism. Even then, I would not have imagined that any sane person would willingly place oneself in the vicinity of up to 50 larger and dangerous bull sharks swarming a trash bin full of tuna heads. On dives conducted at Shark Reef, Fiji by Beqa Adventure Divers (BAD), however, this has gone on for many years without serious incident.
and has become “routine”. 

Shark Reef is near the mouth of a deep channel seaward of one of Fiji’s rivers, on the migration route of local bull sharks. It consists of a steep slope from about 4 to 30 m (12-100 ft) above a flat sandy terrace, the ‘arena’, followed by a deeper slope into the channel floor. Feeding stations have been set up at five locations. At the base of the slope at 30 m, a low rock wall behind which divers kneel faces the arena. At 24 and 15 m off to one side there are narrow flat terraces paved with concrete slabs on which divers lie flat in front of lower rock walls. Above the arena, a large trash bin full of tuna heads is lowered by a diver stationed above using ropes to operate the lid and dispense the heads. This is where the bull sharks are fed. At 10 m there is a narrow slightly flattened terrace where divers face the slope in a semicircle around the feeder. Here, gray reef and whitetip sharks are fed by hand from a PVC tube. At 4 m the guests face the reef top behind a fixed rope and the feeder positions himself in a surge channel on the opposite side of the rope. A smaller channel, the ‘hole’ can be used by one guest in a position a meter to the front side of the feeder. Here, reef blacktips as well as whitetips are fed. Recently gray reef sharks have intruded and occasionally bully their slightly smaller cousins.

In order to keep the sharks and divers safe and ‘under control’, shark feed dives are well-regimented semi-choreographed events with several safety precautions enforced. The primary feeder wears chain-male gloves. Numerous guides armed with aluminum poles for pushing away overly-excited sharks place the guests in safe positions. Everyone must be dressed in black wetsuits with black hoods and gloves. No brightly colored accessories and no snorkels are allowed. At the bull shark stations divers are directed to keep their heads down, and arms down at all sites. Each feed lasts 10 minutes followed by a quick retreat upslope. Further safety time can be spent on the mooring lines as divers exit the water. At any point in the dive, a guide will escort any diver having trouble safely to the surface.

In addition to the aforementioned ‘regulars’, tawny nurse sharks (Nebrius ferrugineus), an Indo-Pacific lemon shark (Negaprion acutidens), zebra shark (Stegostoma varium), silver tip shark (Carcharhinus albimarginatus) and/or tiger shark (Galeocerdo cuvier) occasionally participate.
Fiji Shark Diving by Robert Meyer continued

The tiger shark is massive and dwarfs all others. A massive Giant grouper (Epinephelus lanceolatus) of perhaps 360 kg (800 lbs) also lives in the area. When it shows up, even the bulls move out of the way. The bull sharks roam widely so are not always present. During our first visit in late November, 2010 very few showed up and only one approached to be fed. At that time most of the pregnant females had moved up-river to pup. During our last trip, March 2015, there were more than 40, mostly females but a few males as well. At other times upwards of 100 may show up. Whether one or 100, when on the reefs, the bull sharks in Fiji prefer deeper waters and leave the scene when their feeding time is over. Even in the arena, on a non-feeding day during our November trip, none were to be seen.

Beqa Adventure Divers (BAD), represents ecotourism at its best. Senior shark feeders Rusi (Rusiate Balenagasau), Papa (Manasa Bulivou) and nearly all of the staff are from local villages so the economic benefits remain local. The once-depleted local reefs are now healthy as they benefit from the spillover of the enhanced fish populations of Shark Reef which has been a preserve for many years. Thanks to the efforts of BAD, in 2014 Shark Reef Marine Reserve was designated Fiji’s first National Marine Park. Also perhaps unique for a national park is the partnership in which the public sector has conferred the park management to a private entity. BAD has also become a well-established shark research organization. Over the years they have identified and keep data on at least 160 individual bull sharks. They routinely insert acoustic tags, devices that emit a signal picked up by an array of receivers that track the movements of the sharks. Tissue samples are also taken to determine the genetic identity of the Fijian population.

Last March I participated in an IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature)-sponsored workshop conveniently located at a resort near BAD, so Patrice Marker accompanied me and we stayed several extra days for diving. I did 2 days (4 dives) of shark diving and three days of reef/wreck diving while Patrice did several additional dives while I was ‘working’. The first day, conditions were good with sunny skies and a moderate chop. The tuna heads were strategically dispensed so that the bulls were directed to move within a meter in front of the entire row of divers. The action was fast and the scene chaotic with smaller reef fishes of all kinds darting about for scraps. Getting good shots was a challenge due not only to the hordes of smaller fishes swimming about but also to backscatter from numerous food particles. Wide-angle is a must and the secret is to preset an appropriate shutter speed and aperture, position the strobes widely and take as many shots as possible.
The allotted 10 minutes gave plenty of time to get a number of great shots. At the top of the slope I was given the privilege of being placed in the Hole. This was by far the best spot as I was next to the feeder and could more than fill the frame with many of the smaller sharks. The chop made it a challenge but sunny and clear conditions allowed for a great combination of shutter speed and aperture. Here, whitetips and blacktips swam under my camera and arms bumping me as well as the camera with their fins. Occasionally I had to ‘direct’ one away with a quick gentle shove of my hand. On the second dive, at the 24 m station where we were lying flat, the bulls came even closer than they did on the first dive and occasionally bumped into my strobes. Everything went smoothly and we got some great shots of all the shark species.

The following week, Super-Cyclone Pam passed to the west as it hit Vanuatu (our original choice of workshop venue). By the time my workshop was over, the resulting swell breaking on the beach was big enough to body-surf and rain squalls turned the water brown so we skipped a few days. When we finally decided to dive, conditions were considerably worse than the week before with a low long-period swell that pushed us several feet from side to side and persistent particulate matter suspended in the water.

On the final day of shark dives, it was choppier than before as well as cloudy. We still managed a number of good shots despite a greater backscatter problem and less ambient light. Once again, I was in the Hole on the first dive but this time it was a struggle to stay in position while hanging on to my rig. Shortly into the second dive, while lying flat with my eye glued to the viewfinder, I felt a sudden crunch and tug on my left strobe. I held tight as a fin bumped into me. No harm done as the guide quickly repositioned the strobe. ‘Grandma’, a very large bull shark that is blind in her right eye, had apparently mistook the electronic signal from my recycling strobe as a potential meal. She lost a tooth, which the guide kindly retrieved for me to keep as a souvenir. Later, I discovered I had a few shots of Grandma, identifiable by her funky eye. The strobe has a couple of tiny scratches and the strobe arm knob has a small gouge. The delicate fiber optic attachment for the slave strobe remained undisturbed.
Despite an abbreviated dive schedule and less than ideal conditions, we managed to get a number of great photos. On the reef dives, I picked up a couple of new records by photographing at least two species of fishes not yet documented from Fiji. Photographs and video taken by Mike and others are revealing additional new records that will be the basis of scientific papers and a revised checklist of Fiji fishes.

For anyone considering an overseas dive trip I highly recommend Fiji. It has something for everybody. The clearest conditions and calmest seas are far offshore between the main islands, on reefs around and in a deep-water basin known as “Bligh-water”. These are accessible through a live-aboard such as the Naia or resorts in the Taveuni area. For shark and big fish encounters, the shark dives offered by BAD are a must. When conditions are good, local coral and wreck dives can rival those of Bligh Water sites. A two-week itinerary featuring both is ideal. BAD not only has a stellar safety record and reasonable prices but also conducts critical shark research which is supported by your patronage. Special thanks go to Mike Neumann, Senior feeders Rusi (Rusiate Balenagasau) and Papa (Manasa Bulivou) as well as the entire BAD staff for making our dives safe, productive and unforgettable.

Note on equipment: I used a Nikon D90 in an Ikelite housing with two Inon strobes. For shark dives I used an 18-70 lens in a dome port, for reef dives, a 28-80 macro lens in a flat port.
Classifieds

- Zen Underwater DP-230 230mm for Nauticam Housing. Brand new optical glass changed by Reef Photo and Video late July 2015. Receipt available upon request. The dome has not been in the water since the glass change. The housing shows signs of use. MSRP is $1899, my selling price: $1300. Contact guillaume.bauch@gmail.com or by phone 954.614.2633.

- Subsee Reefnet +10 diopter $180. Some minor marks on lens. Can bring to meeting for review or send photos. Prefer cash, will accept Paypal. Contact: John and Kelly Casey at kjcasey@bellsouth.net

- Pair of Inon Z240 strobes, type 4 for sale that I purchased new about 2 years ago. I've downsized to a different rig and switching strobes as well. These strobes have been gently used and well maintained - no floods or problems! In addition to the strobes, I have the original boxes/paperwork, spare o-rings, spare diffusers, and spare battery caps. Brand new Inon Z240's go for between $600-700 each PLUS TAX. Will sell the pair and all listed above for $1000 and buyer pays shipping or can pick up locally in Naples. Will only accept PayPal. Contact: Debbie Wallace at dawallace99@me.com.

- Nauticam macro port 41 for SLR that I've gently used for about 2 years, in excellent condition. It comes with the original box, port, back cap, and older front lens cap (and a brand new snap front lens cap), o-rings (2) and Nauticam silicone grease. Brand new just the port alone (not the back cap or front cap or extra o-ring) is $400 PLUS TAX - I'm selling all for $300. Contact: Debbie Wallace at dawallace99@me.com.

- LIKE NEW Nauticam extension ring 50mm with lock that I purchased from Reef Photo in FL on 7/3/15. I used this on 1 dive trip and now have downsized to a smaller mirror less system and can't use it. Brand new cost $310 - will sell for $235 and buyer pays shipping or can pick up locally in Naples. Will only accept PayPal. Contact: Debbie Wallace at dawallace99@me.com

- LIKE NEW Nauticam zoom gear for Tokina 10-17 lens for Canon (TOKINA LENS ALREADY SOLD!!) for sale that I've had about 18 months but only used on a couple of occasions since I mainly shoot macro. It's in excellent condition! Comes with the original box and zoom gear. Brand new for the zoom gear is $185 PLUS TAX - will sell for $135. I only accept PayPal and buyer pays shipping or you can pick up locally in Naples. Contact: Debbie Wallace at dawallace99@me.com

- LIKE NEW Nauticam zoom gear for the Sigma 17-70mm lens for Canon that I just purchased on 7/3/15 from Reef Photo in FL. Used it on 1 dive trip and now am downsizing to a mirror less system. Brand new cost $175 - will sell for $125 and buyer pays shipping or can pick up locally in Naples. Will only accept PayPal. Contact: Debbie Wallace at dawallace99@me.com
Classifieds

- VIDEO LIGHT - IKELITE PRO2800 LED PACKAGE. Includes NiMH Battery Pack, Quick Charger for NiMH battery pack, power cord, and flex arm. I'll also throw in the pouch and cord for using dual batteries for no charge in case you choose to further upgrade it, even though we lost the 2nd battery. Everything is used, but in great condition. MSRP is $850, so lets do it for $350. Call the Gug Underwater Gallery at 954-579-8096 or email Gug@GugUnderwater.com

- WANTED: Some old Sea & Sea Camera Arms VII. Need two arms 5 or 5.5 inches long with balls on both ends. The ball size is less than 7/8” around. If anyone has some they are not using, I’d be interested in buying them. (Note: these are different than the UltraLight/Nauticam arms with a 1” ball; the ball on these is slightly smaller). Contact: Linda Ianniello: lindai1@bellsouth.net
Yearly dues are $40 for individuals and $55 for families; we’ve made it effortless to join online and pay via credit card.

For complete instructions, go to Click here to go to Join SFUPS page

Membership benefits include:

- Access to the industry’s most talented insight, experience, and knowledge
- Networking with members with the same interests and opportunities to enjoy underwater photography
- Receive accolades and peer recognition by participating in and potentially placing in Intra-Club contests
- Opportunity to showcase your images in the SFUPS monthly newsletter
- Free Member Gallery on the SFUPS web site - Get seen and publish your work
- Learn from your peers and cut down on the underwater photography learning curve
- Receive insight into global photographic expeditions and exotic locations from member presentations
- Special Club dives specific to underwater photography
- Eligibility for special raffle prizes with your participation at monthly Club events
- Advertise pre-owned gear for sale
- Sponsor benefits w/membership: Discount air-fills, access to 2-tank $55 discounted dives throughout South Florida