

## TIPS AND TRICKS NO 3.

### Know Your Dive Site

It is natural to be envious of the interstate or overseas opportunities of others, especially when our next dive will be at our local site, where we know we will see the same things we have seen over and over again. But this is a good thing. One of the greatest assets an underwater photographer can have is familiarity with the dive site.



It may not sound exciting to dive somewhere for the 100th time but it often provides for great images. The key is that to know the dive site intimately, and more crucially, it is a site where you have already photographed the subjects extensively. For me such a site is Edithburgh Jetty. At the time writing I have logged 157 dives there. Yes I know the dive site very well. But I never get bored with it and am always looking forward to my next trip there because I know the site

and the underwater photographic opportunities that may present.

Before you head out to dive your favorite local site do some preparation. I don't mean getting the camera and dive equipment ready. I mean start planning some creative images in your head. Think about the site and the marine life you are likely to encounter. Think about the last time you encountered these creatures and how you photographed them in the past. Go to your computer and look at the photos you have taken at the site. What didn't quite go right? What worked? How can I improve on what worked? Is there anything I can do differently? You should be able to be creative, you know this site like the back of your hand.

A while back I went to across to Victoria to dive with a couple of other photographers. As part of the trip we spent some time at Rye and managed to dive the pier 6 times in 2 days. This was a new dive site to me. It was the last 2 dives where I got my best images. This is because I was familiar with the site and how the creatures there behaved. I had time to think about it beforehand and plan in my head the photographs I wanted to capture.

So don't be bored with your favorite local dive sites that you dive all the time, exploit them to your advantage. Plan potential images in your head, then get in the water and go capture them.