

TIPS AND TRICKS NO 4.

Get to know Your System

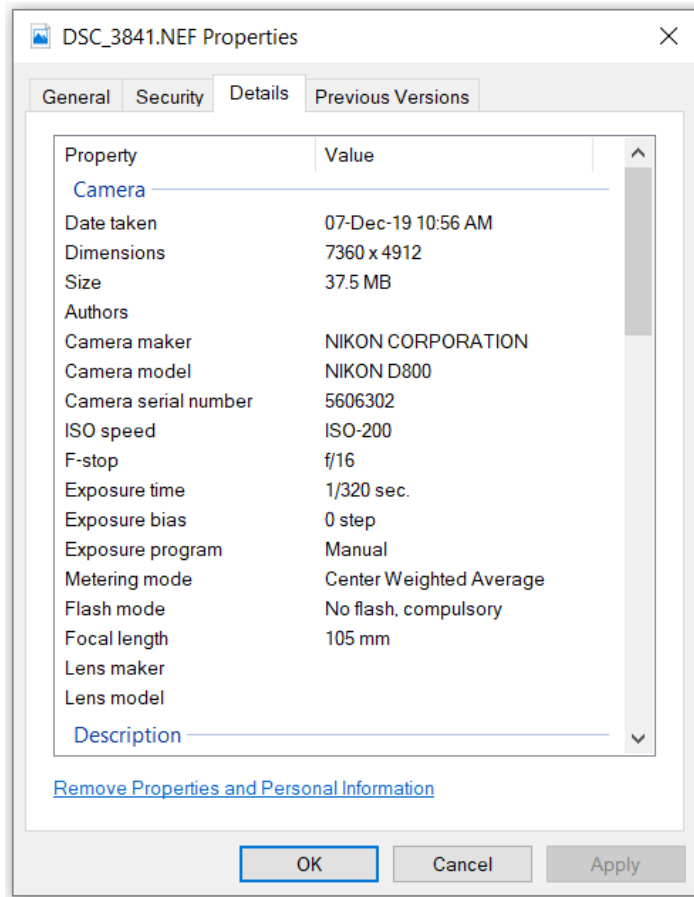
To be a good underwater photographer one must never stop learning.

Underwater photography is all about technique, not technology. Technology is only the enabler. It is your technique and artistic talent that creates great images, not owning the best, most expensive camera. On an Edithburgh underwater photography workshop I conducted a while ago a participant was using a digital point and shoot camera system from circa 2005. The participant managed to get some amazing shots with this camera despite its age. However I wasn't really surprised because in its day it was a good camera and the participant has had it since new and knows it backwards including its limitations.

It is very important to know your camera system well, and how to access all the various functions through the housing. If you haven't used your camera for a while, before you dive next time put it in the housing and practice with it on land to familiarise yourself again with all its various functions.



As a keen diver you no doubt read numerous dive publications and advertisements both in hard copy and online. Also there are numerous underwater photography pages on facebook. Take time to study the photos you come across. Think about how the author created the image. Think about what is good and bad about the photo. Ask yourself how would you capture such an image or how could you make a better image?



More importantly, learn from your own efforts. Be your own worst critic and develop your own technique. One important thing to consider is the image's metadata. This is data stored with the image that includes information about the creation of the image such as shutter speed, aperture and ISO. Review this data when you review your images.

I have kept all my images from my early days in underwater photography. I used to think such early underwater photography efforts were good. Now I look back and think OMG, was I really happy to put my name to that. For me underwater photography is a journey and I am constantly striving to improve.

Even if your photography is not this extreme, there is still value in learning from your own previous efforts. Go back and look at your past photographs.

Think about what worked and what didn't. What would you do differently next time?

So get to know your system very well and think about all those images you see including your own, and start your own underwater photography journey.