



Bars and Bands, on a young male tiger shark (above). Exposure: ISO 200, f/8, 1/200s; *Bands of Light*, from a lemon shark (top right). Exposure: ISO 200, f/11, 1/125s; *Sun Dappling Light Patterns*, on a lemon shark (bottom right). Exposure: ISO 100, f/11, 1/80s. Gear used for all images: Nikon D500 camera, Tokina 10-17mm lens, Nauticam housing, Inon Z330 strobes

Starring Sharks

Text and photos by Gary Rose, MD

Perhaps like many underwater photographers who are asked to consider the theme “spots, stripes and stars,” I immediately summoned up visions of the living reef with shoals of fish rhythmically moving with the gentle surge of the sea. We have all seen thousands of photographs with the myriad of patterns and colors that our coral reefs have to offer—a photographer’s dream. Rather than repeating this notion with my own repertoire of reef photos, I decided to share with you the “spots, stripes and stars” found far offshore, in the deep blue water column.

Bars and Bands is a photo of Patrick, a young male tiger shark, who is a frequent visitor to the local water column off the US East Coast. The image beautifully demon-

strates the transitioning of “young bars” to “maturing stripes” on tiger sharks. There is nothing like the thrill of swimming with tiger sharks and observing their slow serpentine propulsion.

The photo, *Sun Dappling Light Patterns*, very clearly captures the beauty of natural sunlight creating an abundance of visual light effects. I love to watch the lemon sharks follow divers to the surface and play with small pieces of sargassum seaweed. The added benefit was the wave patterns that formed on their reflective skins.

Bands of Light is a photo rulebook no-no: “Never shoot down,” they say. To capture this panoply and admixture of light, I chose to shoot straight down through the dark-blue water column. This special effect of the light rays, seemingly emanating from this lemon shark, is one of my favorites.

Visit: garyrosephotos.com

