



Gear for all photos: Nikon D500 camera, Tokina 10-17mm lens, Nauticam housing, Inon Z-330 strobes.

Photo 1. (left) Goliath grouper divas. The unusual polygonal framing balances the disproportionate weight of the left side of the photo. Exposure: ISO 200, FL 17, f/11, 1/125s

Photo 2. (right) Snell's window with lemon shark. Sunny days with clear water provide a great opportunity to highlight a subject. Exposure: ISO 200, FL 10, f/18, 1/125s

Photo 4. (below) Whitetip sharks, Roca Partida. The steep one-mile vertical wall, pockmarked with small "cavelets," provides unusual, rocky and colorful framing. Exposure: ISO 200, FL 10, f/8, 1/125s



Framing

Not Your Usual Framing

Text and photos by Gary Rose, MD

Whenever I go on a photo shoot, I consider many factors to highlight my subject and to draw the viewer to the intention of my capture. In addition to lighting, negative space, rule of thirds, the Fibonacci sequence and the law of inverse proportion, I also like to consider framing, when appropriate.

While diving the Jupiter Wreck Trek in Florida during the annual goliath grouper aggregation (end of August to early September), I came across these huge divas (Photo 1). The tilted angle of the wreck and the sandy bottom created a natural stage for this underwater performance. The unusual polygonal framing balances the disproportionate weight of the left side of the photo. Being aware of your surroundings and recognizing these wonderful setups will greatly augment your photographic armamentarium.

As divers, we almost always look straight ahead and downward. It is

important to remind oneself to look up, from time to time. So many wonderful things happen above us. For example, I was able to see this stunning view above me, and capture the brilliant sunburst illuminating a lemon shark—all "framed" by Snell's window (Photo 2). I also added just a hint of light from my strobes, to eliminate any coarse shadows.

When diving on, and in, shipwrecks, there are many opportunities to frame a subject. Classically, we see another diver, or fish, framed by a porthole or doorway. Photo 3 was shot within the confines of the *Hoyt Vandenberg* in Key West, Florida. It is the second largest artificial reef in the world. The "Vandy" has 11 floors and is two football fields long. Do not dive inside this wreck without thorough knowledge of its layout, or without a local guide.

In this photo, I decided to break one



of the rules of underwater photography: "Do not photograph your subject from the rear, as it swims away." In the image, the long, narrow, lightless corridor, with a clean sandy bottom, perfectly frames this diver (my son Ryan) and shows off his wreck-diving skill—streamlined, centered, knees bent, with fins high to avoid disturbing silt with a resultant whiteout. It appears as if he is floating in air.

México's Roca Partida is part of the Revillagigedo Archipelago (240mi

southwest of Cabo San Lucas). One of its many amazing geological wonders is that it is a little over 300ft long and 26ft wide and drops off one mile to the ocean floor. It is a veritable aquarium of blue-water, open-ocean life. One of its key attractions are the multiple "cavelets" that pockmark the steep vertical walls of Roca and are almost

always occupied by whitetip sharks. The rocky walls and dazzling colorful corals create beautiful and varied framing (Photo 4).

It is challenging to explore framing with a creative eye and go above and beyond the usual portholes, windows and doorways. When diving, seize the opportunity to shut off your logical left brain and open your imaginative right brain. Perhaps, you might even improve your frame of mind while diving. Visit: garyrosephotos.com



Photo 3. Inside the *Hoyt Vandenberg*. The narrow and tunnel-like passageways of shipwrecks provide great ready-made framing. Exposure: ISO 200, FL 11, f/8, 1/125s

