



## Pairs

Photo 2. (left) *Ghost sharks*. Shooting down on a pair of sandbar sharks. Natural light with a dusting of strobe. Exposure: ISO 200, f/8, 1/125s, FL 17

Photo 3. (below) *Flyby*. I had prepared my negative space for a silhouette and waited for a pair of lemon sharks to line up. The diver balances the tableau. Exposure: ISO 200, f/22, 1/160s, FL 10

Photo 4. (center) *Reflection*. At first glance, this appears like a reflection. Strobe lighting enhances the effect. Exposure: ISO 100, f/8, 1/125s, FL 10

All photos were taken with a Nikon D500 camera, Tokina 10-17mm lens, Nauticam housing, Inon Z-330 strobes. Photo 1. (left) *BFFs*. Pair of adult tiger sharks, Tiger Beach, Bahamas. Natural lighting with a touch of strobe. Exposure: ISO 100, f/8, 1/320s, FL 17

### Tell a Visual Story

Text & photos by Gary Rose, MD

In the past, I have written articles for this magazine regarding enhanced photographic techniques, including the use of negative space, natural lighting, silhouette, framing, shooting up, and shooting down. For this article, I am going to utilize “pairs” as a theme and will be applying, varying and adapting my technique to the ever-changing conditions of the sea, and my oceanic environment. The pairs of sharks in the photos were wonderful models and effectively helped me demonstrate how important it is for an underwater photographer to be flexible and have many techniques at his or her disposal to tell a visual story.

Photo 1 was taken in the warm, clear and tranquil waters of Tiger Beach, Grand Bahama

Island. At any given time, there were 12 to 18 tiger sharks gliding by, and interestingly, these females often swam in pairs. In this photo, I added a touch of strobe lighting, directed at the snouts of this beautiful pair, to enhance the natural sunlight that bathed the reef.

Among the summer sharks at Jupiter, on the Florida coast, I always marvel at the mysterious appearance of our “ghost sharks” or sandbar sharks. They almost always first appear from the dark blue abyss as nearly invisible blue wraiths, ascending to the surface in a slow spiral. To capture this magical dance, shooting downwards, I utilized natural lighting and barely dusted this pair with my strobes to capture their mystical blue coloring (Photo 2).

Upon entry, arriving at depth, and leveling off by controlling my buoyancy, I will always rotate in a full 360° to take in my



surroundings. I particularly love to shoot upwards and will take a few test shots to create the most appealing negative space (uncluttered background) to showcase my chosen subject. Then, I wait. In most cases, the photo creates itself. This pair of

lemon sharks appeared, followed by a diver, and then they drifted right into my previously prepared canvas—the negative space (Photo 3).

At first glance, most viewers think that Photo 4 is a photograph of a lemon shark, with



its reflection illuminated in the inky blackness of night. Then, after a few moments, the viewer invariably realizes that this is a photo of two lemon sharks passing each other at 90 degrees. I always enjoy the exclamation of surprise. This effect was created by vignette framing, that was created with the bright lighting provided by my strobes, bouncing off the reflective surface of the sharks in the center of the photo. All of the remaining light

was completely absorbed by the surrounding black sea.

In addition to having technical knowledge, the underwater photographer will benefit greatly by having a broad skillset. To photograph sharks in the wild, and to capture more than the usual portrait photos, the underwater photographer should become comfortable stepping out of the box to plan, design, set up and tell a visual story. Visit: [garyrosephotos.com](http://garyrosephotos.com)