

UNDERWATER WILDLIFE FILMING AND CONSERVATION WITH JEFF GOODMAN

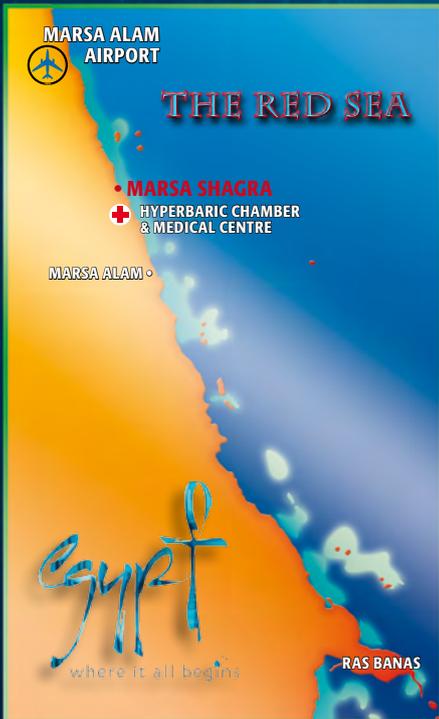
A few years ago when I was first contemplating running underwater wildlife video and editing workshops, I had to decide on a destination. The Red Sea seemed the obvious choice, being relatively close to the UK. Through a series of coincidences, I made contact with Oonasdivers who became excited about the potential of me holding the workshops at their southern dive village of Marsa Shagra.

Marsa Shagra, the reefs, pristine with coral, fish and marine mammals, a true haven from the ravages of overfishing, pollution, boats and uncontrolled diving that tends to be synonymous with many coastal locations around the world. It was a perfect fit for me as their conservation policies tied in very well with the conservation ethos of my courses.

Making good underwater wildlife films isn't just about how to use a camera



at the reef side for the shoal of mackerel to turn and come closer. The satisfaction of getting a lionfish near the top of a reef where you can balance your filming light against the bright sun from above. The reward for patience as the Octopus finally breaks for cover, changing shape and pulsing colour as it goes. All of this to be caught on video and edited into wonderful sequences.



or edit sequences together, it's about understanding the environment in which you are working, the ecology of the habitat, the behaviour of the species, the fragility of delicate food chains. To be a good underwater wildlife film-maker it is necessary to study and be aware of all these things. To capture animals behaviour on video requires patience, careful observation, knowledge of the subject, research, planning, and of course a little bit of luck.

It is occasionally said to me by people that they have no desire to become filmmakers but would just like to make good or better videos to show their families. Definitely not a problem. The courses can be tailored to fit anyone. The key to the whole thing is about having fun, being proud of your accomplishments and best of all, through learning about the reefs you are videoing, helping to ensure their future survival.

During the 5 day workshops the technical stuff is interspersed with 3 or 4 daily house reef dives where the fish are unafraid and the corals rich in colour. The pure joy of waiting

Marsa Shagra, supported and represented by Oonasdivers for over 20 years, has evolved a truly sustainable tourism model, it's one to support, be part of and enjoy. Details of my trips and workshops can be obtained from Oonasdivers by calling 01323 648924, emailing info@oonasdivers.com or checking out their website www.oonasdivers.com

