



ANIMA MUNDI

Adventures in Wildlife Photography

Issue 12, Year 3 - 4th Quarter, October 2013

In This Issue:

SCOOP Meet the Magnificent Mako

ISLANDS IN THE SKY The Paramo del Antisana

THE RIVER OF LIFE Borneo's Kinabatangan - Part 2

IN COLD BLOOD The hidden beauty of herps

AT THE WORLD'S END A portfolio by Vaclav Silha

Look into my eye!
Malaysian Horned Frog
Megophrys nasuta, one
of the wonderful subjects
of our visual tribute
to the much-maligned
cold-blooded tribe.
Matthijs Kuijpers' photo
essay starts on page 84.



ANIMA MUNDI

Adventures in Wildlife Photography

A trip round the world

Welcome to a new wonderful issue of ANIMA MUNDI - *Adventures in Wildlife Photography*! Putting it together was harder work than usual - as we toiled in the sweltering heat wave which swept Northern Italy during the summer months - but mixing and matching its wonderfully varied contents delivered quite a satisfying punch in the end, so it was really worth it - as usual!

We start on page 4 with a dizzying dive in the Atlantic Ocean and a dazzling date with the toothy, lightning-fast Mako sharks - "Blue Dynamite" for those in the know. We are very proud and happy to publish Bill Fisher's photos and story and to introduce shark documentarists Joe Romeiro's and Brian Raymond's *Pelagic Expeditions* to our readers - the sleek elegance, unique looks and raw power of the Mako earned it - at the very last moment - the cover of this issue.

From the cold waters of the North Atlantic we then take you to the lofty heights of the Ecuadorian Paramo del Antisana - discover the icy charm of the Andean volcanic plateaus and explore these remote "Islands in the Sky" under the watchful eye of the Condor! Endless landscapes, seas of grass, towering ice-covered volcanoes and a scarce but impressive fauna are the hallmarks of this unique, extreme environment. Our high-altitude mountain trip - under our World Wide Wonders heading - starts on page 11.

From page 32 and on, it's then going to be a free fall from the thin, cool air of the Andean paramo to the humid, steaming, equatorial, jungle-clad riversides of the mighty Kinabatangan. Enjoy Part Two of our extensive and heavily illustrated expedition report to this "dream date" of every serious wildlife photographer and nature lover! You'll be dazzled - once again - by the stupendous fauna which inhabits this remote and yet surprisingly easily accessible corner of Malaysian Borneo. Proboscis monkeys, Pygmy

Bornean elephants, Rhinoceros hornbills and Saltwater Crocodiles are waiting for you - this is the stuff of exotic adventures and ancient legends!

From page 84 we then take a slight and rather diversion from our well-trodden paths - we normally don't publish images of captive animals, nor we condone re-created habitats or situations, but Dutch photographer Matthijs Kuijpers' portraits of studio-bound reptiles and amphibians bring such character and beautiful detail to these sadly much-maligned creatures that we just couldn't resist featuring them on our pages. Maybe some herp-hater will even change his or her mind after beholding such admirable natural creations - the ways of conservation are many, and we like to follow them all.

On page 108, we finally complete this issue's contents with a bang - again, we are exceptionally happy and proud to bring you the truly extraordinary images created by Czech wildlife photographer Vaclav Silha - a true artist of the camera harboring a special love and passion for the remote and desolate expanses of Antarctica and South Georgia. It is rare to have the privilege of admiring such exquisite photographic work - you'll be stunned by his Personal Portfolio.

And then, of course, there's our new, fully upgraded website at www.animamundimag.com, where you'll be able to find summarized versions of our articles, dozens of exceptional wildlife videos from all over the globe, the full collection of our back issues available for free downloading and a lot of other goodies. Visit it and feel free to explore, you'll enjoy it.

In the meantime...

Have a good trip!
Andrea & Antonella Ferrari
www.animamundimag.com

We appreciate your feedback - constructive criticism, useful suggestions and interesting contributions are most welcome.

Please drop us a line at
nautilus@reefwonders.net

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Young male ■
Pit viper
Tropidolaemus subannulatus,
Kinabatangan
river basin, Borneo.

Contents

4

SCOOP

Blue Dynamite - Diving
with Mako Sharks

11

ISLANDS IN THE SKY

Ecuador's
Paramo del Antisana

32

THE RIVER OF LIFE - 2

Exploring Borneo's
mighty Kinabatangan

84

IN COLD BLOOD

The Hidden Beauty of Herps

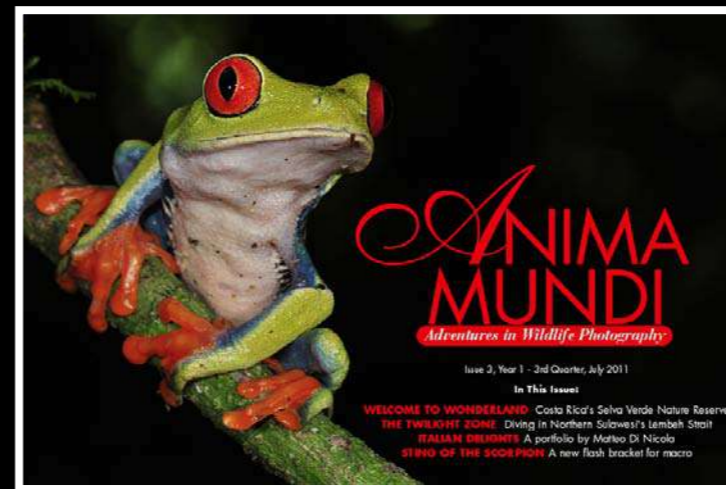
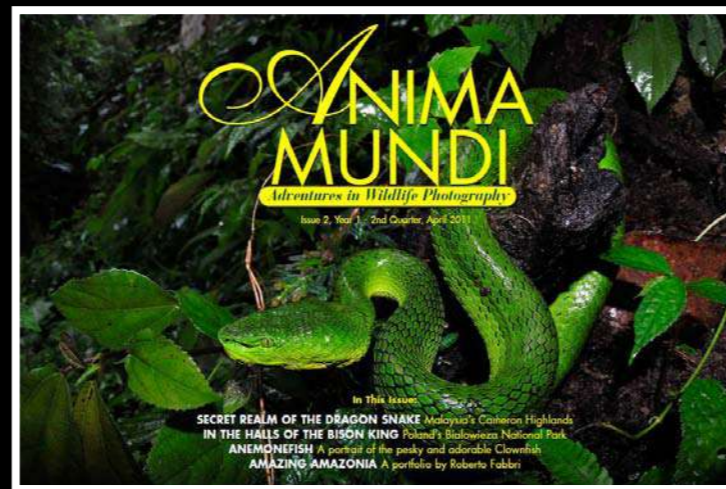
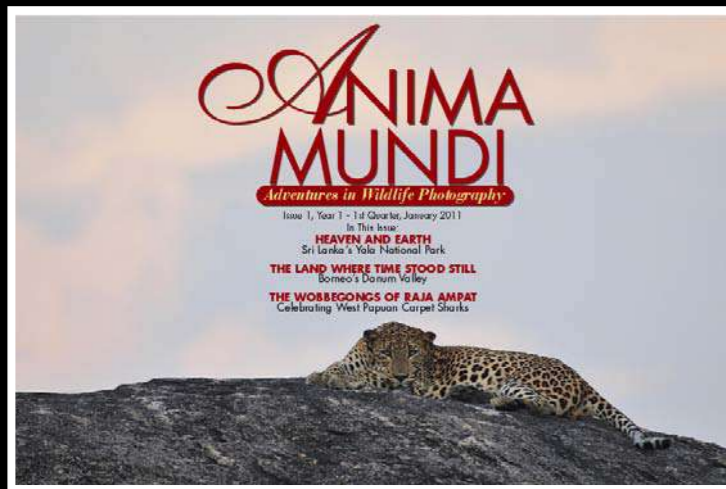
108

AT THE WORLD'S END

Vaclav Silha's
Personal Portfolio

125

THE PARTING SHOT

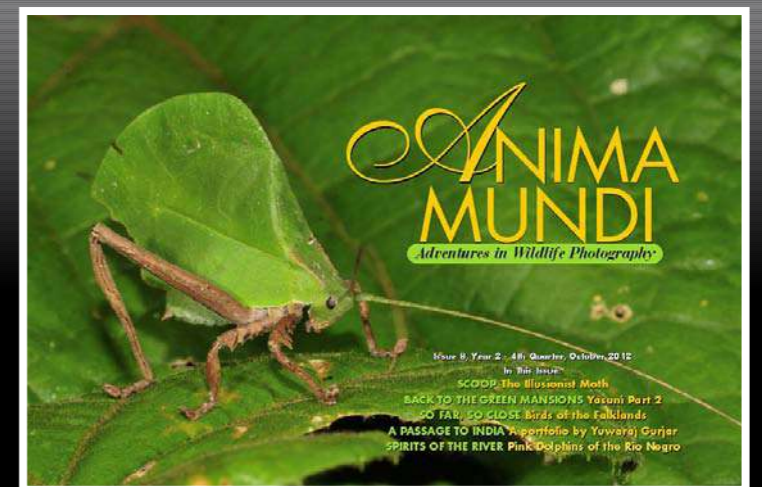
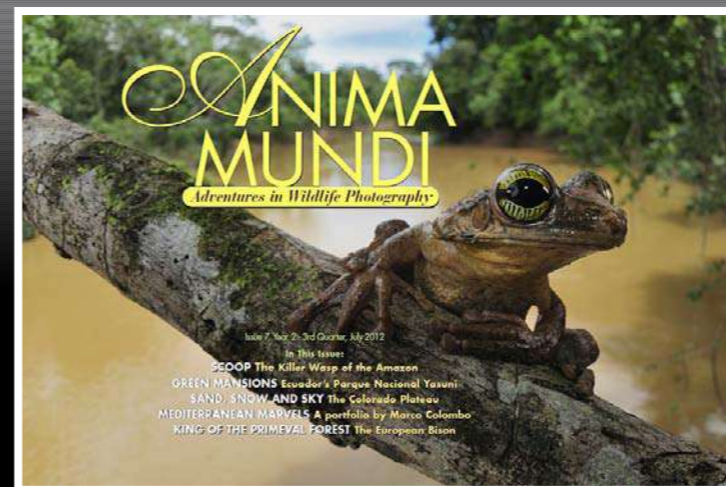
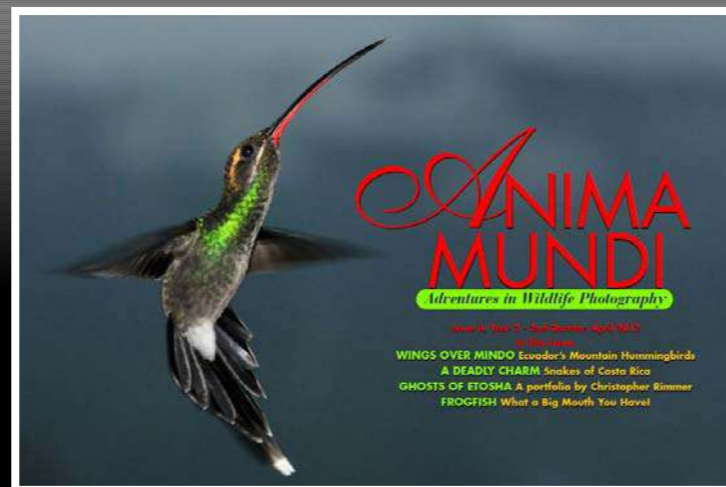


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With more than 15,000 downloads worldwide per issue (as per August 2012), ANIMA MUNDI has seen its readership consistently and rapidly growing in the brief span of only two years and eight published issues. Its authoritative and unbiased travel reports and wildlife articles offer a high level of scientifically-correct information - at absolutely no cost - to thousands and thousands of nature and photography enthusiasts all over the world. Each and every issue of ANIMA MUNDI - Adventures in Wildlife Photography is permanently available for FREE downloading - our mission is the dissemination and condision of information to promote nature awareness and habitat conservation, and we are proud to reach out on a quarterly basis to a world of passionate, highly motivated, seriously interested readers who all share our passion for wildlife photography and travelling. This is a sample - among many others - of what our readers say:

Dear Andrea & Antonella,

I have just finished reading your latest edition of Anima Mundi and I was inspired to write and say how much I am enjoying your publication and following your adventures. My wife and dive/photo partner Cherie and I were so inspired by your feature on Yala National Park that we booked a Safari with Eco Team and we had a fantastic time. It was exactly as portrayed in your article and we also followed your recommendations for visiting the cultural triangle in Sri Lanka. As we were leading one of our dive tours on a live aboard exploring the Maldives last June, a private side trip to Sri Lanka was clearly not to be passed up due to your information. So, I guess it's good news for you both that others are reading and responding to your work. So, we just wanted to give you some feedback, say hello and wish you all the best with your future adventures. Keep up the great work.

Kevin & Cherie Deacon
Dive 2000
Sydney, Australia.
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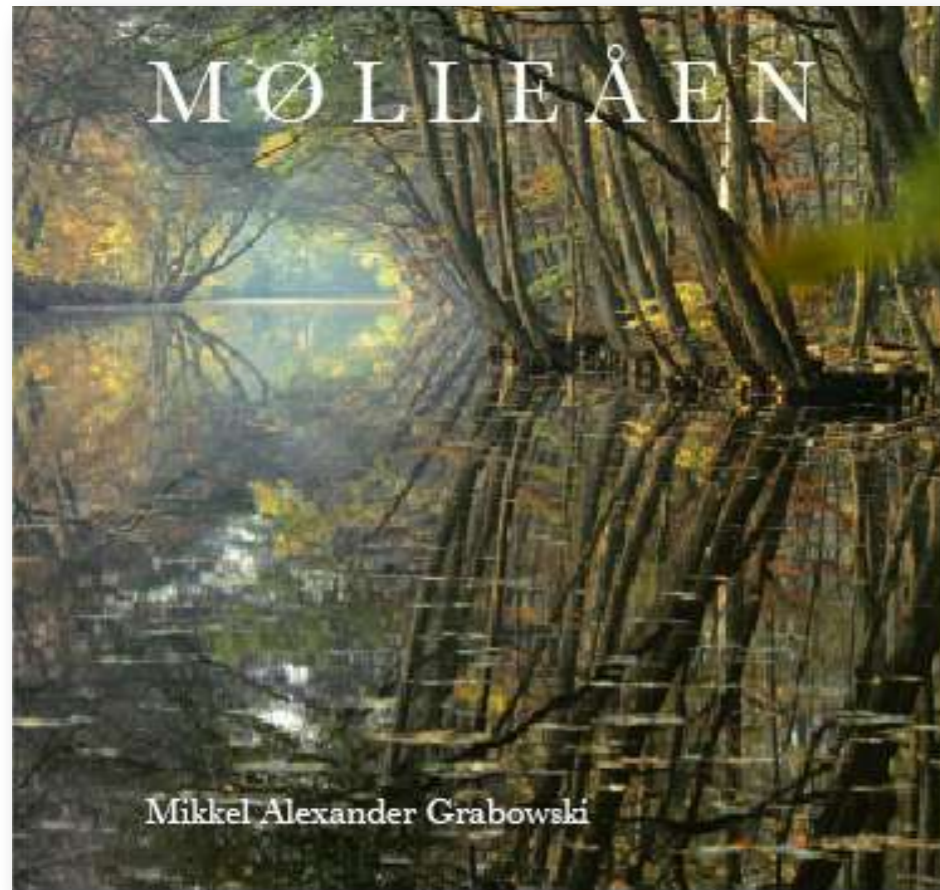
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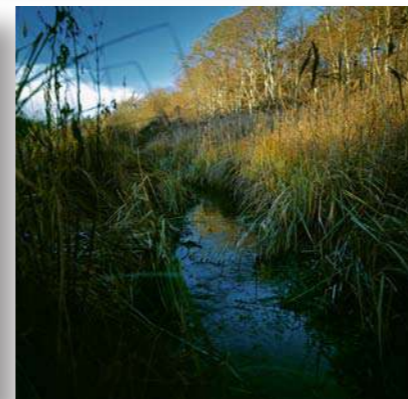
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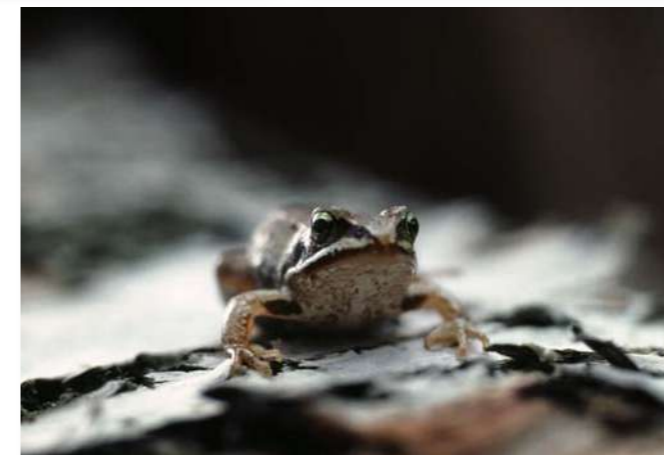
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MEET THE MAGNIFICENT MAKO **BLUE DYNAMITE**

DIVING WITH ONE OF THE
**MOST BEAUTIFUL
SHARK SPECIES**
IN THE TEMPERATE WATERS
OF THE ATLANTIC OCEAN



■ Possessing distinct coloration, unmatched speed and explosive agility, the Shortfin Mako *Isurus oxyrinchus* is often referred to as "Blue Dynamite" by divers and fishermen alike. This is a strictly pelagic, open-water species - good images of wild specimens are much prized by u/w photographers.



The Shortfin Mako inhabits offshore temperate and tropical seas worldwide. This pelagic species can be found from the surface down to depths of 150 m (490 ft), normally far from land though occasionally closer to shore, around islands or inlets. One of only four known endothermic sharks, it is seldom found in waters colder than 16 °C (61 °F).

TEXT BY BILL FISHER
PHOTOS BY BILL & CATINA FISHER

From the tip of its snout to the crest of its tail, the Shortfin Mako is a living exhibition of hydrodynamic perfection. It is one of the most beautifully designed creatures in the sea, yet at the same time, one of the fiercest looking animals on earth. Even the illusory smile of a Great White seems to win over more hearts than a Mako. Just one look at this wide-eyed, razor-toothed fish, and you know it means business. Crossing paths with one is highly unlikely, unless you know where and when to look, which in most cases will be far offshore. One of the attractions of these sharks is their elusive nature, and finding one requires patience. Unlike other sharks that reside on a shipwreck, or find time to lie on the sea floor, Mako sharks patrol the

seemingly endless open ocean; making them harder to locate than most of the sharks we're capable of photographing or filming. It takes a lot more than a bucket of chum and some wishful thinking; it's more like trying to find a needle in a haystack. It takes time and effort to find a Mako, but if you do, it can be an extremely rewarding experience. The Shortfin Mako is found worldwide from temperate to tropical waters. Unfortunately, there seem to be only a few locations where divers can encounter them regularly, New England is one of them. My good friend Joe Romeiro resides there, and has been diving the local waters for years. A wildlife cinematographer and natural history filmmaker, Joe is an expert in the process of locating

and filming these elusive nomads. In 2009 Joe founded Pelagic Expeditions with fellow New Englander Brian Raymond. They specialize in Blue and Mako shark diving encounters and run charters from June through September out of Rhode Island.

Joe Romeiro and Bill Fisher produce films that help aid in the conservation of sharks and the marine environment through their company, 333 Productions. You can contact 333 Productions for upcoming events & expeditions at: info@333productions. For more information regarding shark diving with Pelagic Expeditions: PelagicExpeditions@gmail.com

Speed and power allow Makos to hunt some of the fastest fish species, such as tunas and swordfish. They will swim deep, then launch a vertical assault attempting to strike the intended prey in the rear quarter. Makos will also feed on bluefish, bonito, cephalopods, sea birds, other sharks and - when fully mature - even on large marine mammals (all photos in this page by Catina Fisher).



■ This is not the kind of sharks you'll see at your local aquarium.

Most attempts at captivity have ended quickly in failure. Of all the sharks placed in captivity, the Mako has continually fared the worst. It seems that nothing can contain them, or even attempt to replace the vast expanse they call home. If you want to see a Mako, it has to be in the wild.





■ The Shortfin Mako is a reasonably large species of shark. An average adult specimen will measure around 3.2 m (10 ft) in length and weigh from 60–135 kg (130–300 lb). Females - as usual in shark species - are somewhat larger than males.



The Shortfin Mako is cylindrical in shape, with a vertically-elongated tail that assists its highly hydrodynamic lifestyle.

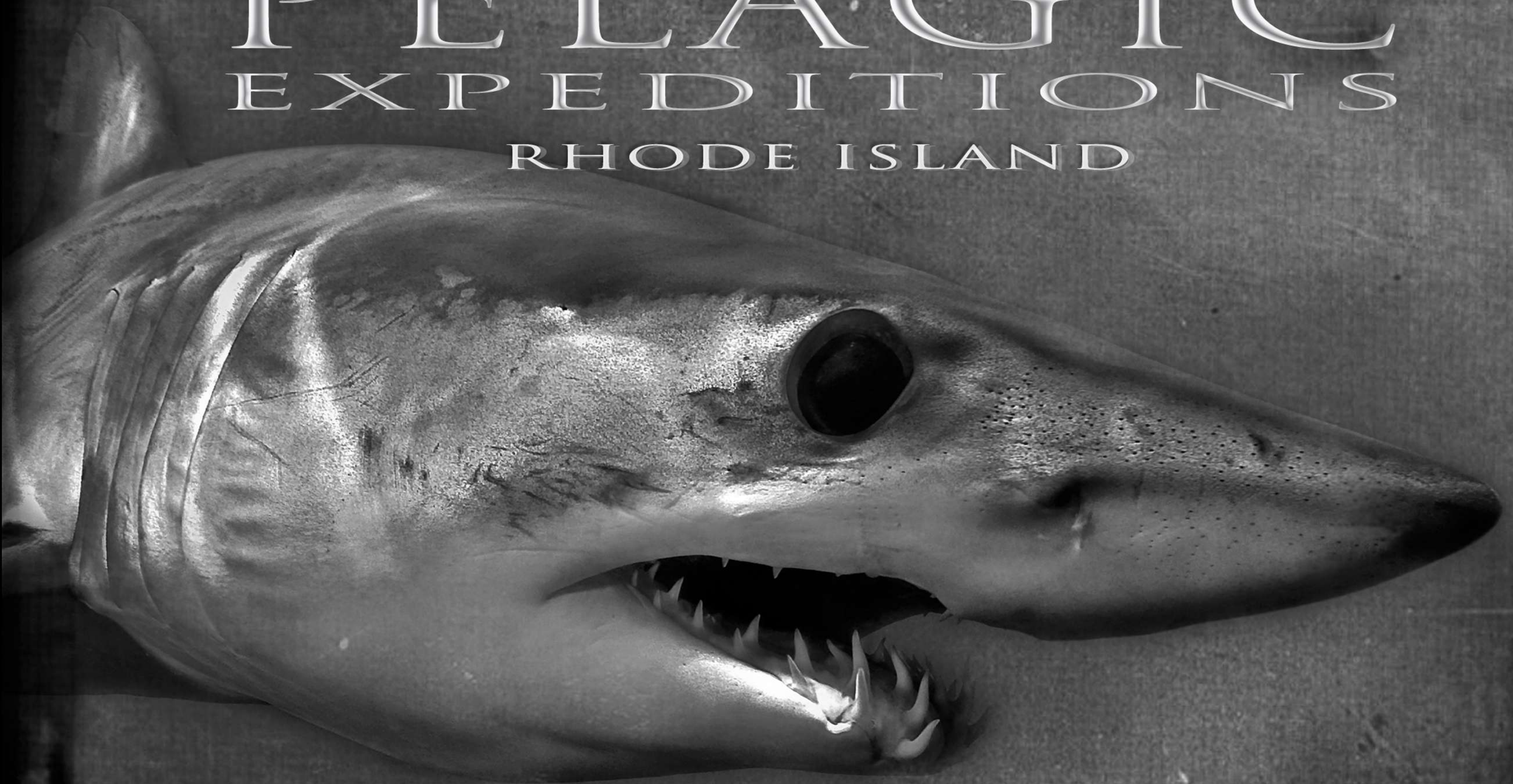
This species' color is brilliant metallic blue dorsally and white ventrally, although coloration varies as the shark ages and increases in size.

The line of demarcation between blue and white on the body is distinct. The underside of the snout and the area around the mouth are white (photo by Catina Fisher).



The Shortfin Mako is the fastest species of shark. Its speed has been recorded at 50 km per hour (31 mph), with bursts of up to 74 km per hour (46 mph). They can leap approximately 9 metres (30 ft) high or higher in the air. Some scientists think that the shortfin mako can swim up to 100 km per hour (62 mph).

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EXPLORING ECUADOR'S PARAMO DEL ANTISANA

ISLANDS IN THE SKY

The barren, high-altitude landscape which lies at the feet of a mighty volcano in the Andes of South America



Paramo landscape at the Antisana Ecological Reserve
High altitude landscape at 4,000 meters with specialized, resilient clump grasses. In the opening spread, the Antisana volcano.



Carunculated Caracara (*Phalcoboenus carunculatus*)
A common raptor and scavenger of the Antisana alpine tundra ecosystem.

TEXT BY ANDREA FERRARI
PHOTOS BY ANDREA & ANTONELLA FERRARI

An ideal day excursion from Ecuador's high-altitude capital Quito, the spectacular Antisana Ecological Reserve covers an area of roughly 1.197 square km (296,000 acres), comprising the Antisana volcano itself, the attendant surrounding paramo and the Condor Bioreserve. The Antisana volcano itself is a large, glacier covered stratovolcano located 50 km located SE of Quito, on the eastern margin of the Cordillera Real, at the latitude where the volcanic chain of the Northern Volcanic Zone is widest. The Antisana is one of the largest volcanoes and highest peaks in Ecuador - its complex contains 2 generations of volcanic edifices, an older volcano cut by calderas and eroded by glaciers, and a young cone. The term "paramo", on the other hand, identifies a variety of alpine tundra ecosystems: however, most researchers classify the paramo according to its regional placement in the northern Andes of South America and adjacent southern Central America. The paramo is the ecosystem of the regions above the continuous forest line, yet below the permanent snowline, and of its three recognized zones (superparamo, grass paramo and subparamo, depending on altitude), the one which can be visited at the feet of the Antisana belongs to the middle one. The grass paramo here extends from 3,500 to 4,100 mt (11,500-13,500 ft), and is composed of mostly tussock-grasses and bunch-grasses. This unique high-altitude environment has a very flat, undulating,

barren appearance and a continuous vegetation and plant cover with a year-round yellowish to brown look due to the combination of dead and living grasses, with *Calamagrostis* and *Festuca* tending to dominate this habitat. Other common vegetation includes large and small shrubs, stunted trees, cushion plants, herbs, and rosette plants. Some animals commonly found in paramo ecosystems include the Andean fox, the White-tailed deer, and the Spectacled bear, which occasionally forages in the high paramo looking for its favored food, *Puya* bromeliads. Amphibians have been well documented in paramo ecosystems, including salamanders such as *Bolitoglossa* species and frogs such as *Eleutherodactylus* species. Sixty-nine species of birds are considered to be "total users" of paramo habitats, with 41 species making it their primary habitat. The legendary Andean Condor, a truly gigantic bird, is strictly protected and can be regularly seen here; other bird families in the paramo include eagles, hummingbirds, finches and flycatchers. Paramos are however isolated habitats with a patchy distribution - truly, immense, lonely "islands in the sky". The sensation of isolation here is unique - the wide, endless expanse of the horizon, the clear sky, the incessant wind and the light-headedness induced in most by the high altitude all conspire to make the Paramo del Antisana a destination the true lover of nature and wildlife cannot afford to miss. ●



Glaciers of the Antisana volcano

A rare view of the ice-covered Antisana summit, which is obscured by clouds most of the time.



Paramo landscape at the Antisana Ecological Reserve

High altitude landscape at 4,000 meters, Paramo of the Antisana volcano National Park, the Andes, Ecuador.



Variable Hawk (*Geranoaetus polyosoma*)
One of the most common raptor species found in the barren, wind-swept environment of the Antisana paramo.



Paramo landscape at the Antisana Ecological Reserve
High altitude landscape at 4,000 meters, Paramo of the Antisana National Park.



White-tailed Deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*),
The vast expanses of the paramo offer little concealment to the few large mammals found there.



Andean Teal (*Anas andium*)
The high-altitude lakes of the Antisana paramo host a great number of migratory aquatic birds.



Andean Lapwing (*Vanellus resplendens*)
An ubiquitous species whose unmistakable call echoes on the vast, apparently deserted expanses of the paramo.



White-tailed Deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*)

At such extreme altitudes this usually wary species can be closely approached - if using some caution and stealth.



High altitude specialized clump grasses
A typical feature of the paramo or South American Andean tundra environment.

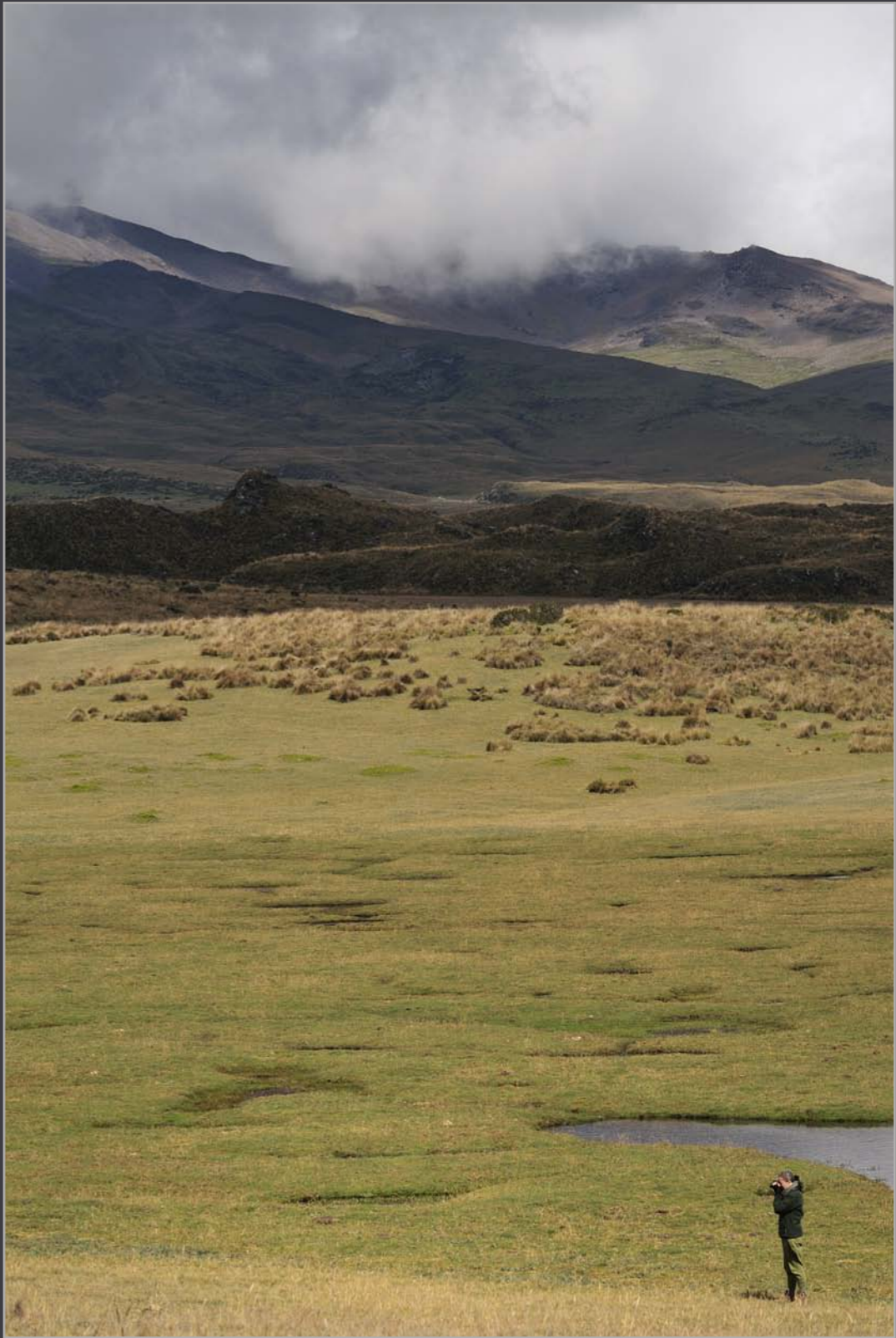


Paramo landscape at the Antisana Ecological Reserve

Photography at such extreme heights requires higher than usual concentration - altitude sickness strikes many visitors.



White-tailed Deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*)
Paramo of the Antisana volcano National Park, the Andes, Ecuador.



Paramo landscape at the Antisana Ecological Reserve
The clarity of air here affords stunning, far-reaching vistas.



Andean Condor (*Vultur gryphus*), a rare image of a couple in the wild, with male at right
The uniqueness of this image warrants publication despite its admittedly indifferent quality (Photo Carlos Antonio Rodriguez).



Baird's Sandpiper (*Calidris bairdii*)
Waders and waterbirds are common along the shores of the Andean lakes here.



Glaciers of the Antisana
A rare glimpse of the ice-covered slopes of the volcano.



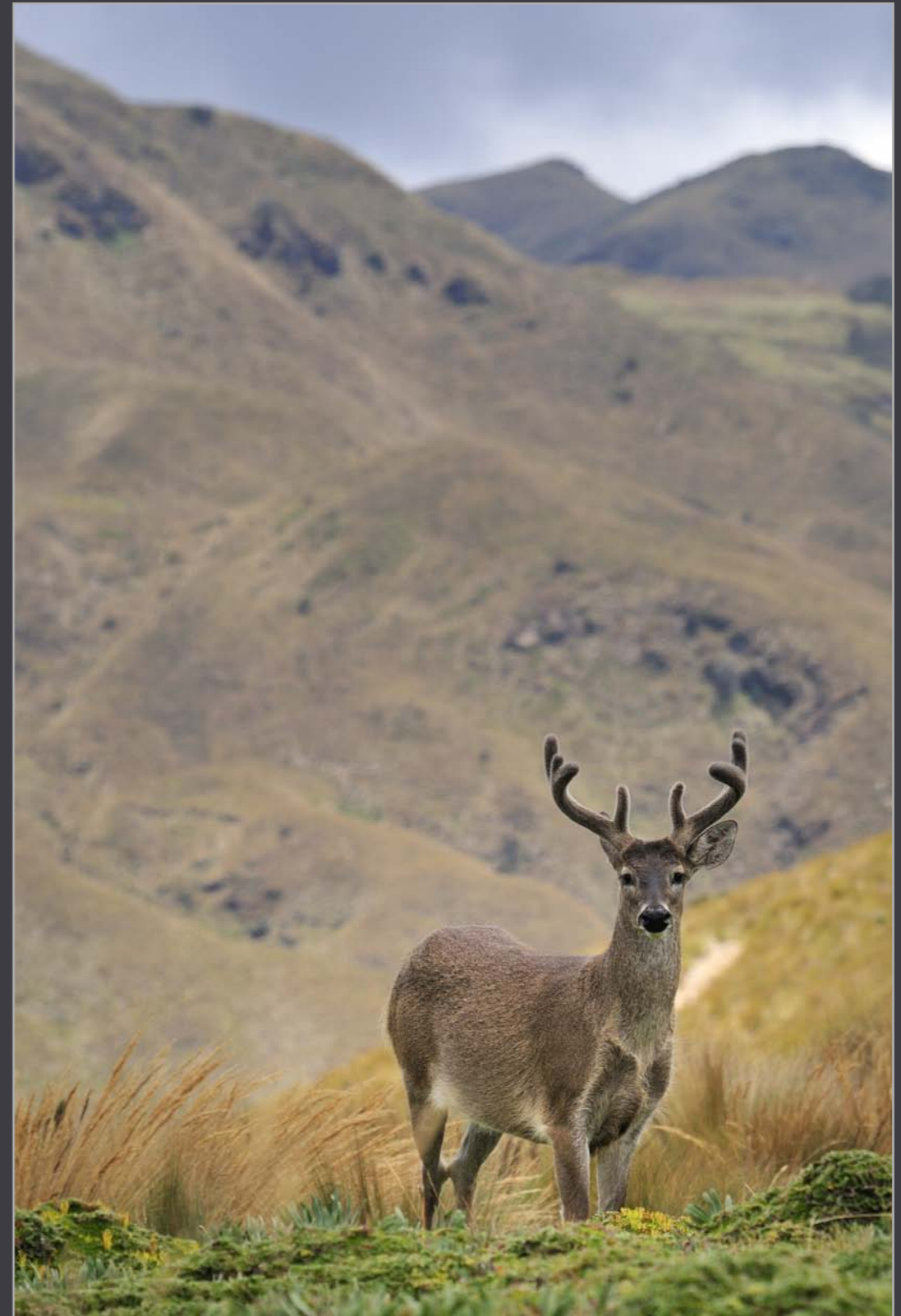
White-tailed Deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*)

The freezing high-altitude lakes of the Antisana - nestled among semi-barren, wind-swept hillocks - often attract small herds of deer.



Andean Gull (*Croicocephalus serranus*)

Even gull species - surprisingly - can be seen at such high altitudes.



White-tailed Deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*)

Large mammals are scarce in the harsh paramo environment.



Chestnut-winged Cinclodes (*Cinclodes albidiventris*)

This unassuming species is feathering its nest. Notice specialized tussock marsh vegetation.



Paramo landscape at the Antisana Ecological Reserve

The Antisana volcano, half-hidden by clouds - towers above the far-reaching horizon of the Andean paramo.



Carunculated Caracara (*Phalcoboenus carunculatus*)
A scroungy-looking juvenile at the Paramo of the Antisana.



Chestnut-winged Cinclodes (*Cinclodes albidiventris*)
A small and unassuming but commonly observed inhabitant of the Antisana paramo.



High altitude specialized vegetation

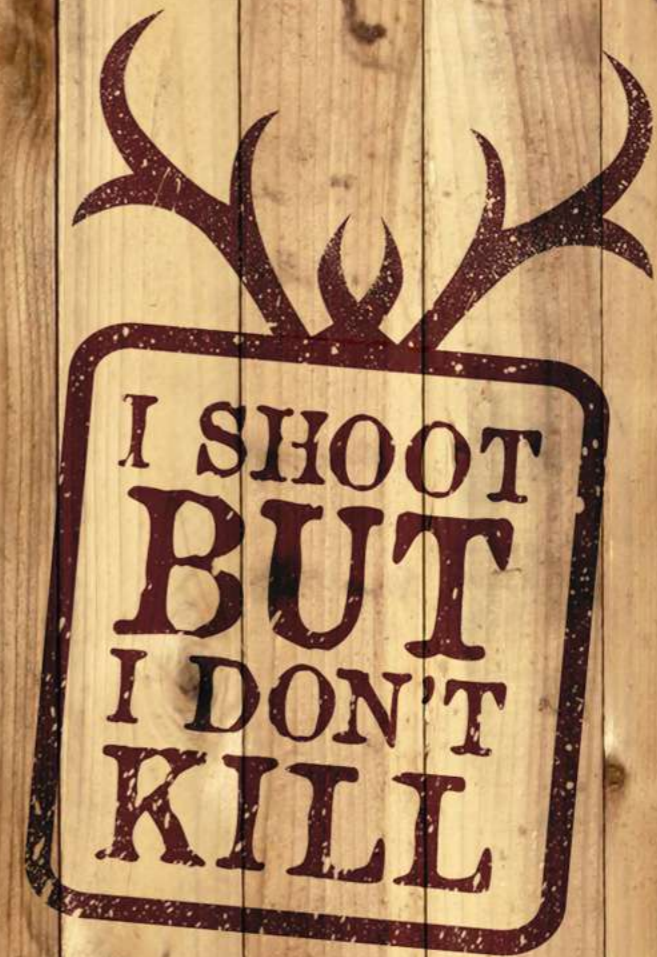
Hardy *Calamagrostis* and *Festuca* grasses dominate the wind-swept, cold paramo steppes.



Glaciers of the Antisana
 The slopes of the volcano are permanently covered in ice and snow.



Andean Condor (*Vultur gryphus*), male in flight
 Soaring Condors are commonly seen at the Antisana, but very rarely this close (Photo Carlos Antonio Rodriguez)



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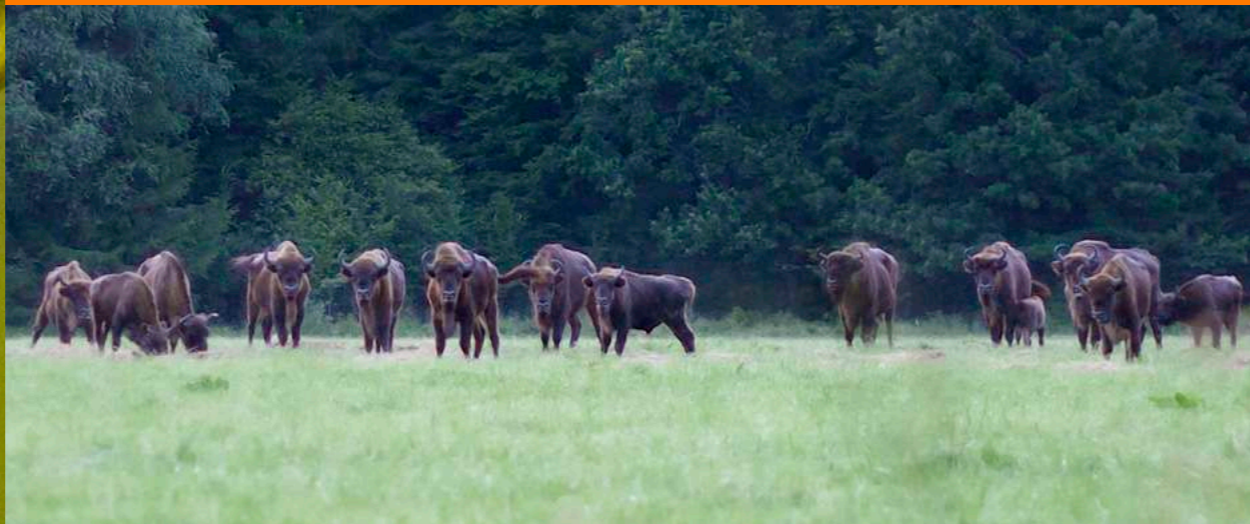
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When Giovanna Holbrook took on the challenge of leading two University of Florida science professors and a group of naturalists to the Galápagos Islands in 1971, she had no way of knowing the lasting impact that experience would have on her life and on the lives of those traveling with her. The group journeyed throughout the archipelago aboard a retired navy vessel, propelled by their spirit of adventure and thirst for knowledge. At that time, the Galápagos was just celebrating its twelfth year as a national park, conservation work at the Charles Darwin Research Station was still in its infancy, and tourism in the islands was virtually non-existent.

More than thirty years later, Holbrook Travel continues to serve the needs of teachers, students, academic institutions, and nature lovers. Although many changes have taken place over the years, Holbrook Travel has taken great care to remain true to its roots. As news of environmental concerns and world conflicts continue to fill the airwaves, it seems more important than ever to help people gain a better understanding and appreciation of the natural world and other cultures through firsthand experiences. In the words of Andrea Holbrook, president: “Our goal is to try to continue the great work my mother started.”

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— A beautiful female Rhinoceros Hornbill *Buceros rhinoceros*, easily identified by the pale blue, red-ringed eye. Males have black, unringed eyes instead.



BORNEO'S KINABATANGAN
**THE RIVER
OF LIFE**

Part Two of our extensive feature on Sabah's Nature Reserve - one of South East Asia's most beautiful and rewarding wildlife photography destinations



The tranquil waters of the Menanggol flow slowly between two thick curtains of vegetation, offering unique vistas and exceptional wildlife sightings.

TEXT BY ANDREA FERRARI
PHOTOS BY ANDREA & ANTONELLA FERRARI

*I*n the first part of our extensive feature about the Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary (see *ANIMA MUNDI – Adventures in Wildlife Photography* Issue 11) we have described in detail its coastal lowland and riverine forest environments, the wildlife which one can reasonably hope to see and photograph there and the general “feel” and atmosphere of this truly wonderful destination, one of South-East Asia’s best wilderness areas. For those interested in the bare facts, we follow up in this issue with a selected series of snippets from Wikipedia

about the geographical and administrative aspects of the general area. This makes for “dry” and rather unappealing reading, but we realize that - for some reason - this part of the world (and Borneo in particular) still seems to be suffering from general preconceptions among the public. The island of Borneo is not peopled by man-eating carnivorous plants or head-hunting, blood-crazed savages: rather, it is a beautiful destination for wildlife and nature lovers, with very good (and occasionally truly superb) tourist infrastructures and very few practical difficulties. Read on...

continued on page 36 ➤

■ Sightings of beautiful Temple Pit Vipers *Tropidolaemus subannulatus* are quite common among the Menanggol’s thick riverine vegetation.





A sub-adult Saltwater or Estuarine Crocodile *Crocodylus porosus* basking on a muddy riverbank during the rainy season.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE AREA

The Kinabatangan district is located in Sandakan Division, in the east of Sabah, Malaysia on the island of Borneo. The district office is located in Kota Kinabatangan. Its population was estimated to be around 86,783 in 2000. Kinabatangan is mostly populated with 'Orang Sungai' (people of the river), one of the Indigenous Group in Sabah. Economic activities are centered around oil palm plantations, forestry and wood-based industries (we might add that palm oil plantations are also a major concern for the welfare of the local wildlife and the general environment of the

Kinabatangan area, and that tourism now plays an important part in the local, small-scale economy, providing jobs to a large number of Orang Sungai). The nearby Kinabatangan River is an area with tropical lowland rainforest vegetation and ecosystems. The area is wet and humid and the swampy lowlands are home to Borneo's indigenous Proboscis Monkey. Other places of interest in the area are the Gomantong Caves. The 78 000 hectares of the Kinabatangan and Segama rivers was gazetted in 2008 as "Kinabatangan-Segama Wetlands Ramsar site". The recognition is significant, as the wetlands comprise rarely found coastal mangrove swamps and peat jungles.

continued on page 38 ➤



The slow-flowing Menanggol is at its atmospheric, mist-shrouded best in the very early morning hours.

■ The large and very active Grey-tailed Racer *Gonyosoma oxycephalum* is occasionally encountered within Borneo in its dazzling yellow color phase rather than its more common bright green one.



THE WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

The Kinabatangan River (Sungai Kinabatangan) is located in Sabah, eastern Malaysia, on the island of Borneo. It is the second longest river in Malaysia, with a length of 560 kilometers from its headwaters in the mountains of southwest Sabah, to its outlet at the Sulu Sea, east of Sandakan. Kinabatangan is known for its remarkable wildlife and fascinating habitats such as limestone caves at Gomantong hill, dryland dipterocarp forests, riverine forest, freshwater swamp forest, oxbow lakes and

continued on page 41 >

■ The Menanggol's thickly forested shores are often graced by the imposing flower of the Simpoh Air *Dillenia suffruticosa*.





■ Primates are very well represented in the Kinabatangan river basin area. Left, Long-tailed or Crab-eating Macaque *Macaca fascicularis*. Right, top, a female Proboscis monkey *Nasalis larvatus*; right, bottom, a juvenile Orangutan *Pongo pygmaeus*.





*Stormy skies - heralding frequent
and violent downpours - offer
uniquely dramatic vistas along the
Kinabatangan forest-fringed shores.*

brackish mangrove swamps near the coast. The ecology of the upper reaches of the river has been severely disrupted by excessive logging and clearing of land for plantations. However, the original lowland forests and mangrove swamps near the coast have largely survived, provide sanctuary for a population of Saltwater Crocodiles (*Crocodylus porosus*), and contain some of Borneo's highest concentrations of wildlife. Of special note are Borneo's indigenous Proboscis

continued on page 45 ➤

Slowly and silently cruising along the Kinabatangan offers frequent, close observation of large Saltwater or Estuarine Crocodiles *Crocodylus porosus* from the relative safety of a small boat.





Left, a tree-dwelling Grey-tailed Racer *Gonyosoma oxycephalum* in its yellow phase; right, the Buffy Fish-Owl *Ketupa ketupu*, a relatively common denizen of the riverine shores at night.



At dawn and twilight the pygmy elephants emerge from the forest

■ *Bornean Pygmy Elephants*
Elephas maximus borneensis, an endemic subspecies, are best observed as they feed along the river's edge.





■ The shores of the Kinabatangan are a true birdwatcher's heaven. Far left, Rhinoceros Hornbill *Buceros rhinoceros*; left, Grey-headed Fish-eagle *Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus*.

Bornean Pygmy Elephant ■
Elephas maximus borneensis -
despite its relatively small size,
this species can be
occasionally aggressive and
should always be approached
with extreme caution.

monkeys, Bornean orangutan, Asian elephants, Sumatran rhinoceros and the endemic Borneo river shark. The area is also known for its great variety of birdlife. Each year, the lashing rains of the northeast monsoon cause the river to swell rapidly. Unable to discharge into the sea quickly enough, the river frequently overflows its banks and spreads across the flat land of its lower reaches, creating a huge floodplain. The lower Kinabatangan teems with animal and plant life, making it the best area for viewing wildlife, not just in Sabah but all of Southeast Asia. In 1997, 270 square kilometres of the lower Kinabatangan floodplain were declared a protected area, and in 2001 this designation was upgraded to that of "bird sanctuary", largely through the efforts of NGOs. Further efforts to have the area declared a Wildlife Refuge or even National Park had been however opposed by oil palm plantation owners seeking to expand their cultivated land. By August 2006, following media attention after a decapitated elephant's head was found floating down the river, the area was

continued on page 49 >



*With the coming of the rains
reptile life literally explodes
all over the river shores*



Very large Water
Monitors *Varanus salvator*
can be often observed as
they forage on the river's
muddy shores, especially
during the wet season.



■ Herping heaven!
 Top left, Mangrove snake
Boiga dendrophila;
 top right, Harlequin Tree
 Frog *Rhacophorus pardalis*.
 Bottom left, Borneo Spitting
 Cobra *Naja sumatrana*;
 bottom right, a rare
 Slender-tailed Wolf Snake
Lepturophis borneensis.





The Kinabatangan is one of the best sites anywhere - outside of Australia - to see the Saltwater or Estuarine Crocodile *Crocodylus porosus* at close quarters in the wild.



■ A pair of Stork-billed Kingfisher *Pelargopsis capensis* photographed on their perch at night.

gazetted under the State's Wildlife Conservation Enactment of 1997 as the Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary. It is now under the purview of the Sabah Wildlife Department. Currently, most nature tourism is concentrated around Sukau, accessible by road and offering comfortable accommodation to visitors prepared to pay for well-managed tours. The most populated area and also the Central Administration for Kinabatangan is Kinabatangan Town, along the Sandakan-Lahad Datu highway and about 90 kilometers from Sandakan Town. The largest cave system in Sabah, Gomantong Caves, can be found in this region.

GETTING THERE

For centuries, the rare treasures of Borneo's forests acted like a magnet for traders in search of edible bird's nests, rhinoceros horn, elephant ivory and hornbill casques for the Emperor and the wealthy mandarins of China. They also sought a hardwood resin, damar; flexible rattan vines; beeswax to make candles; fragrant woods and oil-rich illipe nuts. Today one can fly from Kota Kinabalu to Sandakan on Malaysia Airlines, whilst those from Kuala Lumpur can take direct daily flights to

continued on page 52 >



Top left, Sphynx Moth *Daphnis hypothous*; top right, an unidentified species of Pyralidae. Bottom left, Assassin bug *Eulyes amoena*; bottom right, Sphynx Moth *Ambulyx substrigilis*.





■ A rare encounter with the mildly venomous, tree- and ground-dwelling Black-headed Cat snake *Boiga nigriceps*.

■ The strange-looking *Penthicodes farinosa*, a rare Fulgorid planthopper which is occasionally observed on tree trunks in the riverine rainforest of the Kinabatangan.



Sandakan on AirAsia. Alternatively, one can take an air-conditioned coach to Sandakan or Lahad Datu from Kota Kinabalu. One can also take a ferry to Sukau from the Sandakan harbour. The Kinabatangan region can be visited all year round, though it is often flooded during the wettest part of the year in December and January. The main flowering and fruiting season, from April to October is generally fairly dry and a good time to spot many birds and animals. During the northeast monsoon, from November to March, there are often heavy showers during the afternoons, particularly during December and January. During the rainy season, however, it is possible to negotiate many of the river channels leading into the oxbow lakes, where there is a greater concentration of wildlife. ●

Life in the tree-tops.
Left, Orangutan *Pongo pygmaeus*, an adult female with her baby;
middle, a female Rhinoceros Hornbill *Buceros rhinoceros*;
right, Long-tailed or Crab-eating Macaque *Macaca fascicularis*.





A large Estuarine or Saltwater crocodile *Crocodylus porosus* lurks among a patch of the introduced and highly invasive Water hyacinth *Eichhornia crassipes*.



Large Cat snakes ■
belonging to the
genus *Boiga* are
very common along
the Kinabatangan's
forested shores.
Left, a stunning
Mangrove snake
Boiga dendrophila;
right, a Dog-tooth
Cat snake *Boiga
cynodon*.



Observing at close quarters the Smooth Otter *Lutra (Lutrogale) perspicillata* is largely a matter of luck - and perseverance. This is an exceptionally active and inquisitive riverine species.






■ Top left, Colugo or Flying Lemur *Cynocephalus variegatus*; top right, Stork-billed Kingfisher *Pelargopsis capensis*; bottom right, Black-and-red Broadbill *Cymbirhynchus macrorhynchus*; bottom left, Temple Pit viper *Tropidolaemus subannulatus*.



*Prehistoric-looking
giant reptiles ambling
along the riverbanks*

The Water Monitors 
Varanus salvator sub.
macromaculatus of the
Kinabatangan river
basin can reach
a remarkable size
(often over 200cm)
and a very heavy weight
(more than 20kgs).





Left, Rhinoceros Hornbill *Buceros rhinoceros*; middle, Great Egret *Egretta alba*; right, a Crested Serpent Eagle *Spilornis cheela* with its snake prey.





Estuarine or Saltwater crocodile *Crocodylus porosus* are best observed when basking on mud riverbanks exposed by receding tides. Low water levels are supposed to be ideal, but we had some of our best sightings at the peak of the rainy season in January.



The best wildlife viewing opportunities are offered when exploring the waterways in very small groups and in a private boat.



■ Left, a subadult male Temple Pit viper *Tropidolaemus subannulatus*; right, a female Long-tailed or Crab-eating Macaque *Macaca fascicularis* with her day-old baby.



Absolute silence and ■ floating noiselessly downstream with a switched-off engine are mandatory if one wants to approach really closely the Estuarine or Saltwater crocodile *Crocodylus porosus* of the Kinabatangan. In a few instances we have actually got within touching distance of these truly impressive predators.



Bornean Pygmy Elephants
Elephas maximus borneensis
can also be approached
very closely by boat when
grazing by the river's edge.

*Face to face with
the endemic Pygmy
elephants of Borneo*





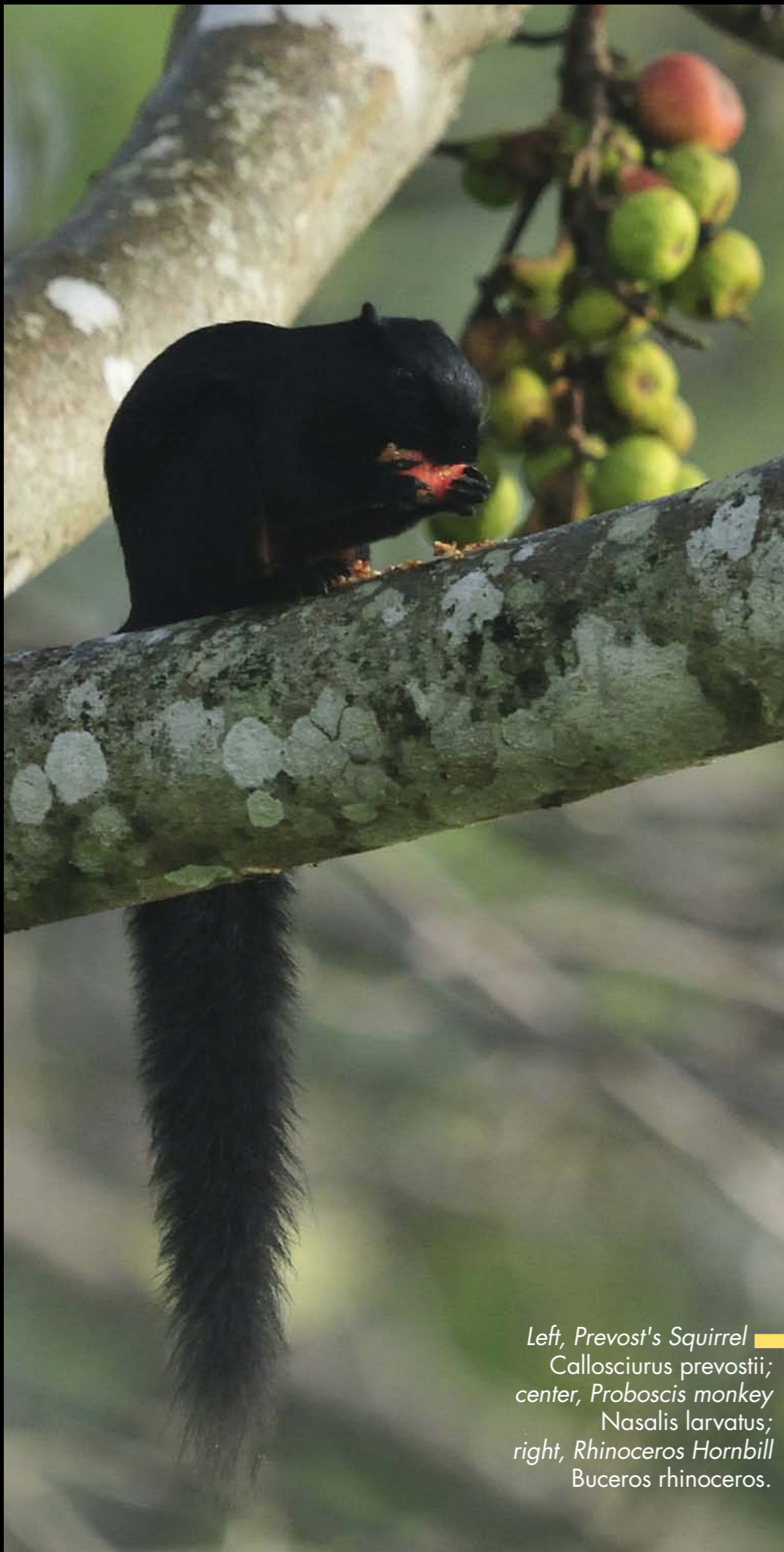
Top left, Prevost's Squirrel
Callosciurus prevostii;
top right, Harlequin Tree Frog
Rhacophorus pardalis.
Bottom right, Blue-eared Kingfisher
Alcedo meninting;
bottom left, Harlequin Tree Frog
Rhacophorus pardalis.



Large Water Monitors ■
Varanus salvator can often be approached very closely as they forage for frogs and crabs in shallow water by the river's edge.

A cosmopolitan but nevertheless impressive and very elegant species, the Great Egret *Egretta alba* is often observed at the water's edge.





Left, Prevost's Squirrel
Callosciurus prevostii;
center, Proboscis monkey
Nasalis larvatus;
right, Rhinoceros Hornbill
Buceros rhinoceros.





*Dark, deep waters where
great Saltwater Crocodiles
lurk in silent, patient wait*

The Kinabatangan is one of the last - and possibly the most important - strongholds of the Estuarine Crocodile *Crocodylus porosus* in Borneo.



■ The human-like, penetrating gaze of an adult male Proboscis monkey *Nasalis larvatus* - this is the Alpha male of the troop, easily identified by the large nasal appendage which has suggested its popular name.



Strictly herbivores, ■
Proboscis monkeys
Nasalis larvatus can
however display an
impressive set of canine
teeth, especially prominent
in mature males. Notice
the bright red penis of the
specimen, which in males
of this species appears to
be permanently erected.





■ Sexual dymorphism in the Proboscis monkey *Nasalis larvatus* is particularly accentuated, with adult dominant males (left) sporting huge nasal appendages and round, protruding bellies. Juveniles and females (right) are slimmer and with a much smaller nose.



*The exquisite elegance
of the Whiskered Tern
in the oxbow lagoon*

*Whiskered Tern *Chilidonias*
hybridus, a simply elegant bird
which seems almost out of place in
the general visual exuberance of
its exotic brethren in the area.*





Two more portraits of a Proboscis monkey *Nasalis larvatus* Alpha male show to advantage the range of facial expression and the exquisite coat of this extraordinary primate species.





Quiet, dark corners where forest and river meet along some of the Kinabatangan's smallest tributaries offer great photographic opportunities. This is an Estuarine or Saltwater crocodile *Crocodylus porosus* basking on muddy riverbank and being reflected in the still waters of the Menanggol.



A close-up portrait of a large Water Monitor *Varanus salvator*. The fly perched on the back of its neck gives a good idea of the large size of this impressive, fast and agile reptilian predator.

A portrait of Bornean
Pygmy Elephants *Elephas
maximus borneensis* as
they graze by the
Kinabatangan's shore in a
late May afternoon.
By careful and very
cautious manouvering one
can get within touching
distance of these
impressive animals,
but one should never
underestimate their
irritability and offensive
potential - safety always
comes first!





— A large and possibly gravid *Trimeresurus subannulatus* female - the most common of Borneo's Pit vipers and an amazingly beautiful species.



■ Night walks in the Abai area - when feasible - offer wonderful macrophotography opportunities, despite the omnipresent (but harmless) leeches. Left, a large Stick Insect; right, a dangerously venomous Giant Centipede *Scolopendra sp.*, whose bite invariably causes excruciating, long-lasting pain.



■ At the end of the rains, in April-May - juveniles of all species abound. This is a very young Striped Bronzeback *Dendrelaphis caudolineatus*.



■ The lazy, sprawled posture of this basking Saltwater crocodile *Crocodylus porosus* belies its lightning speed in attack and flight alike. Never try to get close to one if you are not on a safe boat with an experienced guide.



At-a-glance travel guide

COUNTRY OF DESTINATION: MALAYSIAN BORNEO



USEFUL TIPS FOR YOUR EXPEDITION

Some simple, common sense, field-tested advice and information to make the best out of your trip and avoid hassles, worries and problems

ROUTE: You will probably arrive in Kota Kinabalu - Sabah's capital city - with a flight originating from Kuala Lumpur or Singapore. From KK it's a short 45 mins domestic connecting flight to Sandakan, the coastal town on the Sulu Sea where you'll be spending one or two nights to recuperate before moving on - by car or boat - to the Kinabatangan. Once in Sandakan you might also want to stay longer and visit the Sepilok-Kabili Forest Reserve, which hosts an Orangutan Rehabilitation program.

MEANS OF TRANSPORT: The Kinabatangan is reached by private car or by river launch and is mostly explored by river boat, with a few occasional

short forest walks thrown in (especially at night). All riverside lodges in Sukau offer boat trips (in groups), but if you are serious about your photography rent your own river boat with a private guide and an experienced boatman - it really does make a difference. For all bookings we can safely recommend our friend and professional photographer **Cede Prudente's** company **North Borneo Safari**, the most reliable and experienced wildlife tour operator in town.

CURRENCY: Malaysian Ringgit, but USD and Euros are widely accepted by most tour operators in Sandakan and by most riverside lodges.

ACCOMODATION: The Kinabatangan river basin offers a large number of basic, no-frills campsites and several more expensive lodges, both in Sukau and in Abai. Lodges proper are usually very comfortable, spotlessly clean and just by the river's edge. We can safely suggest the lovely and very comfortable **Bukit Melapi/Proboscis Lodge**, where we usually stay when we visit the area.

FOOD: Malaysians - and Sabahans in particular - love to eat! You'll have lots of fresh vegetables, great tropical fruit, tasty fish soups, plenty of squid and prawns (try the local river variety - you'll also support the local economy) and lots of steamed/grilled fresh

The lifelong dream of all wildlife photography lovers come true



seafood. Food is perfectly safe (and not too spicy, if you're squeamish about that aspect - we aren't!).

LANGUAGE: Bahasa Malaysia and English, which is perfectly spoken in all lodges and by all guides.

WORRIES: None whatsoever. Borneo has a romantic film-image of steaming, forbidden jungles and savage head-hunters, but in fact the Malaysian states of Sarawak and Sabah (which are part of the island of Borneo together with the Sultanate of Brunei and the Indonesian region of Kalimantan) are well-developed (some might say too much) and well-organized. Crime is almost non-existent, food is wonderful and tourism is very well cared for. Once in a few years there are spats of spasmodic violence (mostly kidnappings) in the coastal islands by pirates from the Sulu Sea, but these occurrences are rare and there are Army detachments to stand guard.

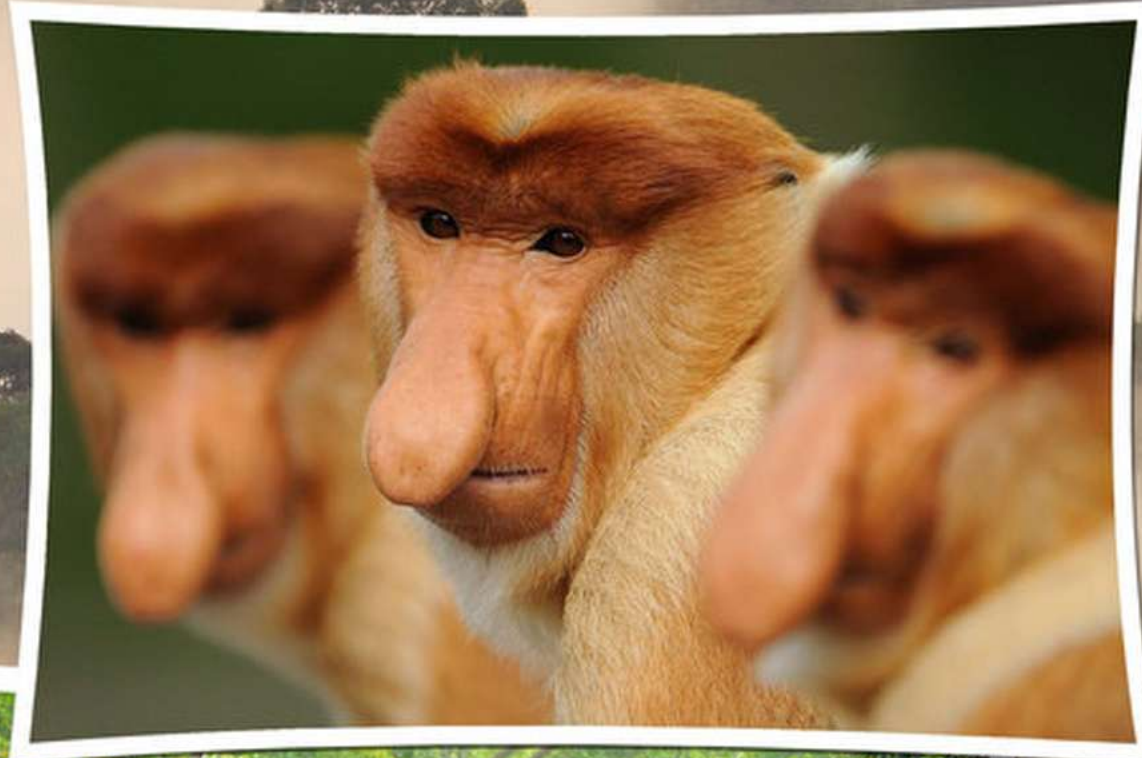
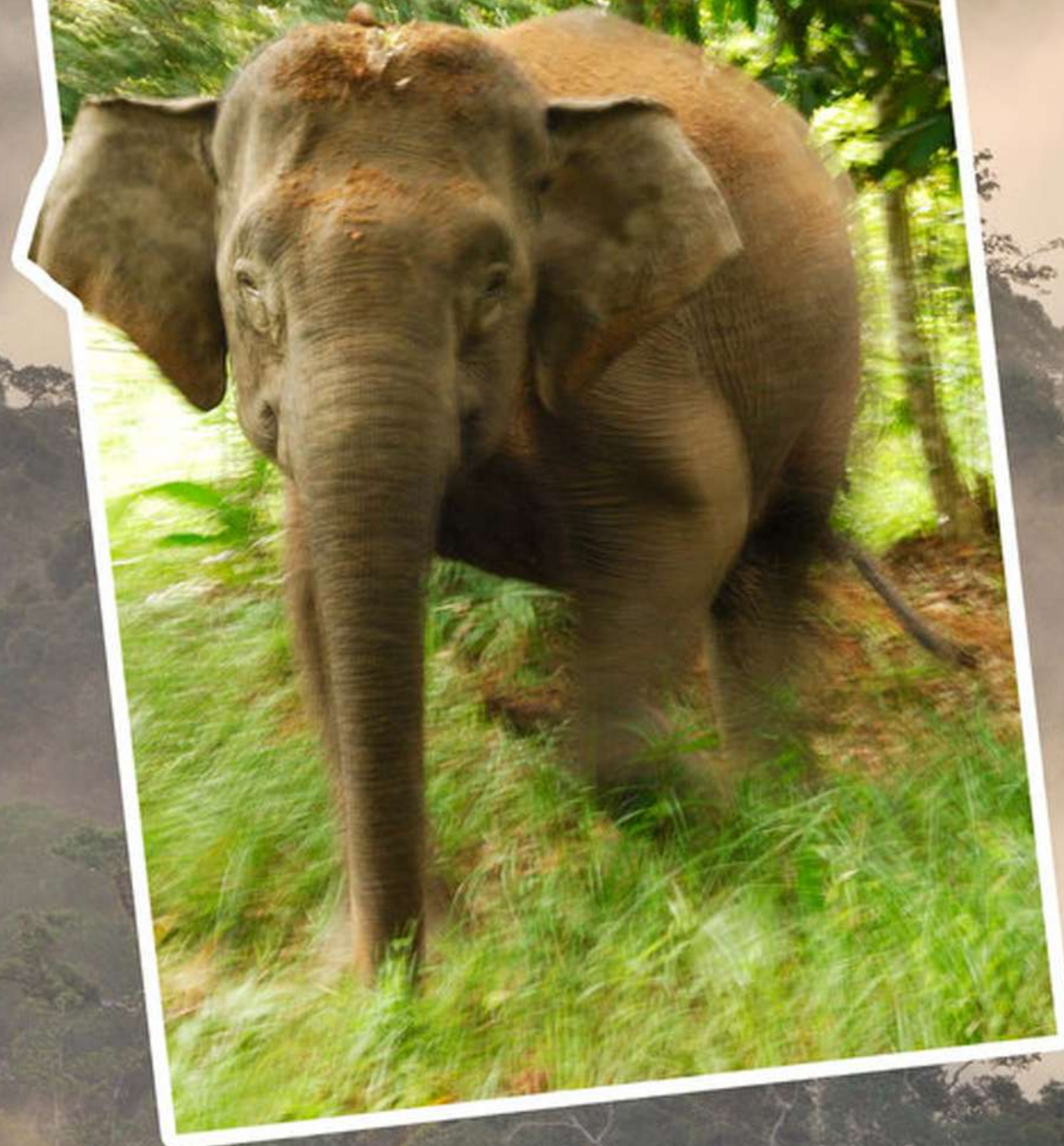
HEALTH: We have been visiting regularly Borneo for the past twenty years - sometimes twice a year! - and we haven't been sick once, despite having been all over the place and having been bitten by scores of mosquitoes. Leeches - in case you worry - are perfectly harmless and do not transmit any dangerous tropical disease. Just be careful with the sun (one can get easily sunstroke if going on long boat trips without a hat) and follow the usual precautions regarding street food and drink. Water served in the lodges is usually perfectly safe to drink.

CLIMATE: Equatorial lowland coastal forest - very humid, occasionally extremely hot, with frequent torrential downpours and extensive flooding during the rainy season from November to March. Nothing to worry about anyway, as you won't be doing too much walking in the forest - river trips in the early morning or at night can even be surprisingly cool.

BESIDES: Sabah has much to offer to the adventurous traveler and the wildlife enthusiast - we usually suggest to pick a destination and stick to it for at least a couple of weeks, but if you want to squeeze the most out of your stay (and your international flight) you might want to visit several other National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries - such as the demanding and exhilarating Mount Kinabalu (near Kota Kinabalu), the pristine and remote Danum Valley (see our feature on issue 1 of ANIMA MUNDI) or Tabin Forest Reserve. Opportunities for wildlife photography enthusiasts are endless! Sabah also boasts some stunning seaside locations - one can indulge in world-class scuba diving at Pulau Sipadan, Pulau Mabul or Layang Layang atoll, or opt to relax by the beach on private, exclusive islands such as Pulau Lankayan or Pulau Mantanani. Whatever your decisions will be, you won't be disappointed - this we can guarantee! ●

Wild About Sabah...

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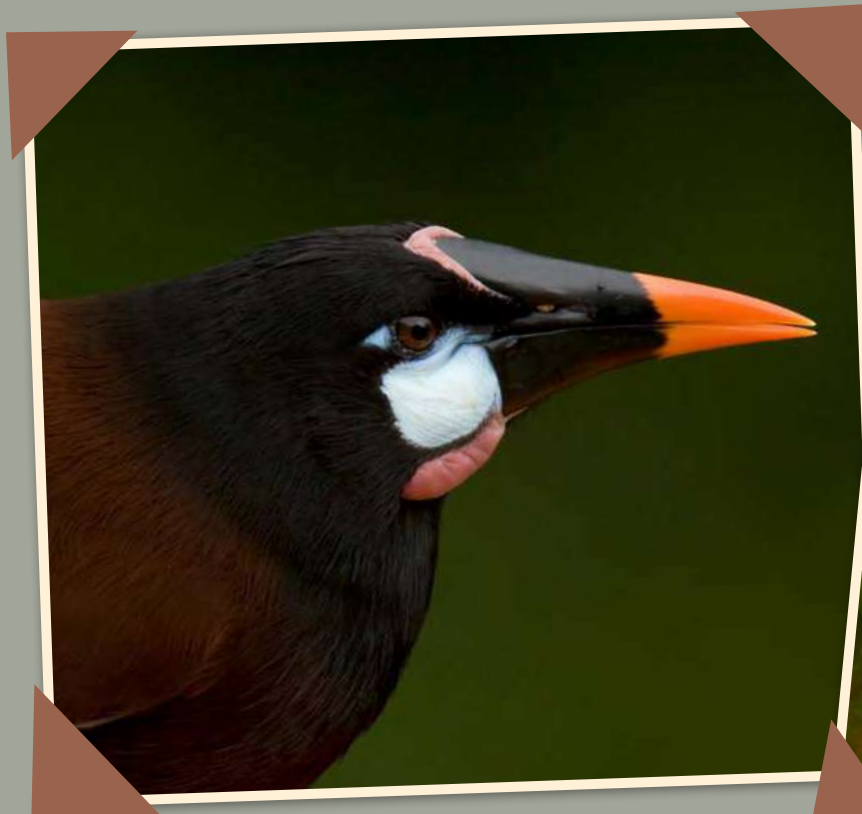
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Beauty of the Beast

A VISUAL TRIBUTE TO HERPS

IN COLD BLOOD



Vilified, feared and often persecuted, the snake, frog and lizard tribe finally shows its extraordinary beauty in a gallery of mesmerizing studio portraits



Dendroaspis angusticeps

The Eastern Green mamba is a large highly venomous arboreal snake from East Africa. These snakes are considered to be some of the most intelligent snake species. On the opening spread, *Lepidobatrachus laevis*, Budgett's frog. This is an impressive mouth on tiny legs - these voracious ambush hunters are native to the dry Chaco region of Paraguay, Bolivia and Argentina, where they inhabit stagnant water pools.

TEXTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS
BY MATTHIJS KUIJPERS



Trachycephalus resinifictrix

The Amazon milk frog is found around the Maracana river region in Brazil. These large nocturnal tree frogs are active hunters in the humid rainforests.

Many years ago, when I was young, it all started. At age 3 my first Guinea Pig appeared in the house. Soon followed by a hamster, a parakeet, some fish and another Guinea Pig. I started horse riding, and at age 9 through one set of circumstances my first pet snake appeared. A mate for the snake appeared soon after, and at age 10 a second terrarium appeared. At age 11 another two, age 12 another four and at age 13 I had a room full...you get the idea.

I was hooked on animals, and reptiles and amphibians in particular.

It itched - I wanted to see, observe, photograph and discover these wonderful animals in the wild. As soon as I turned 18 I scraped my few earnings together and left Europe for Madagascar with a little old camera.

I lived and worked on this mystical island for some time and made Tv documentaries with the NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corp.) I finally got a decent camera from my Japanese friends instead of my fee, a Nikon F4 which I still have, and

started to photograph in earnest. I was infected by the photo virus. I met some of the foremost wildlife photographers of that time and I was able to travel with them and see and learn.

Soon I jumped island to the spectacular rain forests of Papua New Guinea, from there to the dragons of Komodo, went around Africa, back to Asia, into the deserts of Australia, North Africa and Namibia and so on. Photos started being sold and my specialization with reptiles developed and took shape.

I wanted different photos of these often strange creatures with bizarre shapes, cryptic or mind blowing colors and unique adaptations. Photos that highlighted those shapes and minimize their surroundings. Shots that highlight the animals and do them justice.

A world of cold blooded animals that have colonized the planet and that never finish to amaze me up to this day.

Need photos for commercial use ? Photo courses ? Go to www.reptiles4all.com Want to see daily updates ? Follow me: www.facebook.com/reptiles4all



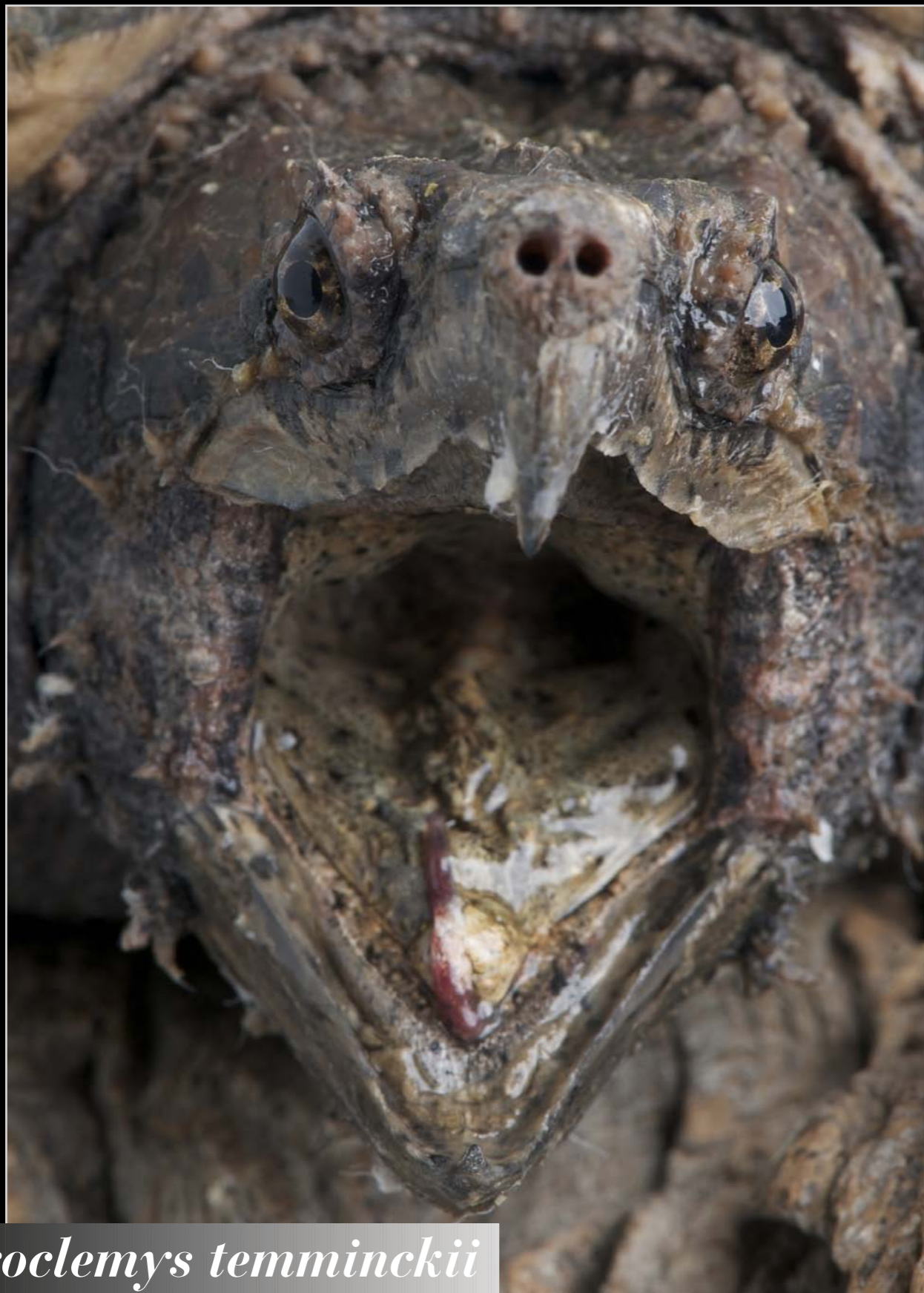
Trioceros jacksoni xantholophus

The Jackson chameleon is native to the cool, humid montane rainforests of Kenya and Tanzania. These animals are livebearing due to the cool climate they live in. The males have some impressive horns which they use for fights with other males.



Bitis nasicornis

The Rhinoceros viper is a big viper species from the rainforest floor of Central Africa. The spectacular colors of these snakes are actually extremely good for camouflage on the forest floor.



Macroclemys temminckii

The Alligator snapping turtle is one of the biggest freshwater turtle species in the world. These turtles are by far the most aggressive and most dangerous of all freshwater turtles.



Bitis gabonica rhinoceros

The West African Gaboon viper is the heaviest viper species in the world. These snakes also have the longest fangs and highest venom yield of any venomous snake.



Dendrobates tinctorius

The Dyeing dart frog is native to Guyana, French Guiana, Suriname and Brazil. Across this range these large dart frogs display a huge array of spectacular color forms.



Calotes mystaceus

The Blue-headed agama is a dragon like arboreal lizard from the tropical forests of Vietnam. These lizards are capable of fast color changes.



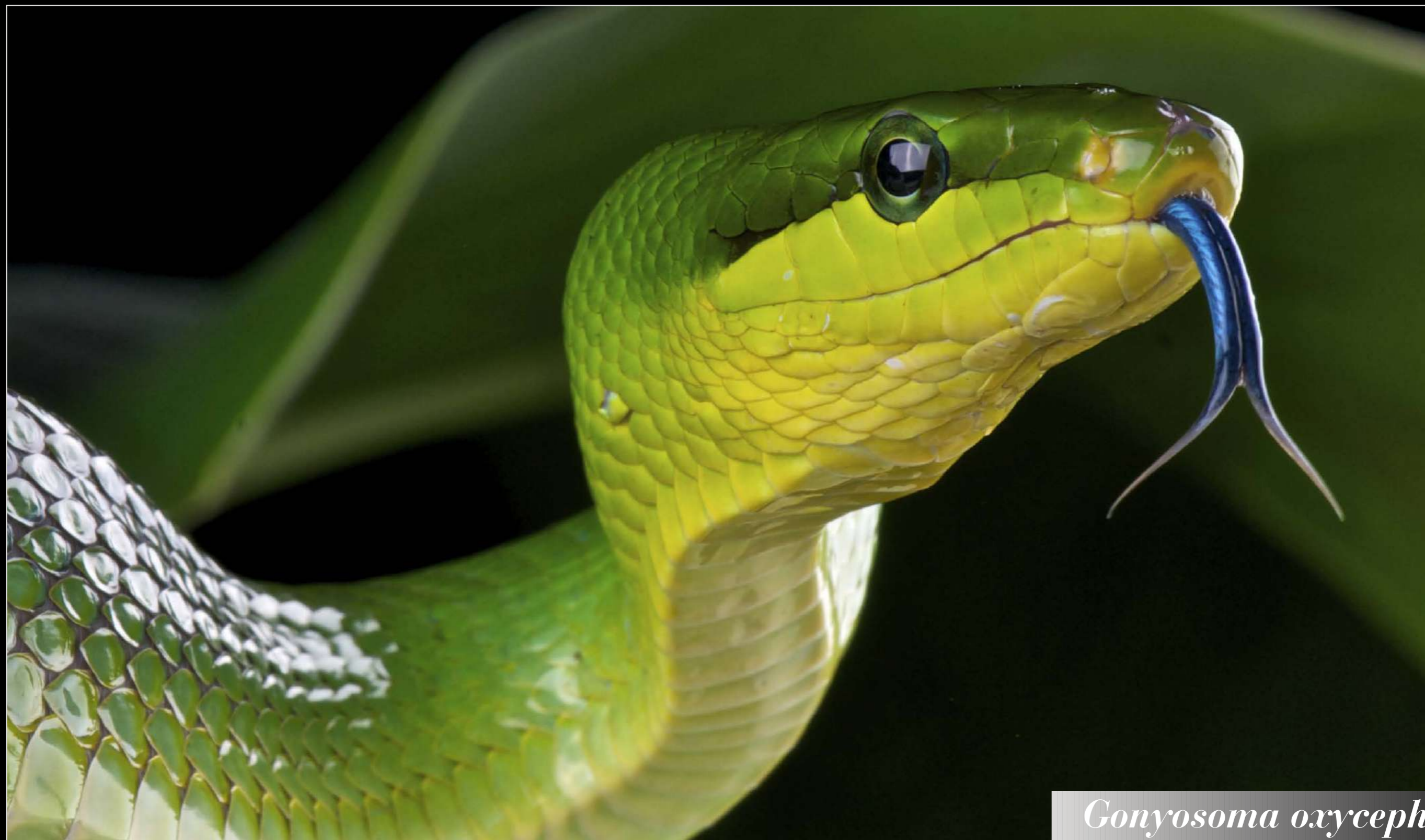
Cerastes cerastes

The Sahara Horned viper is a spectacular viper species native to North Africa and the Middle East. These nocturnal vipers are able sidewinders.



Dracaena guianensis

The Caiman lizard is a large semi-aquatic lizard and a specialized snail eater. Native to the rainforests of Peru up to Brazil.



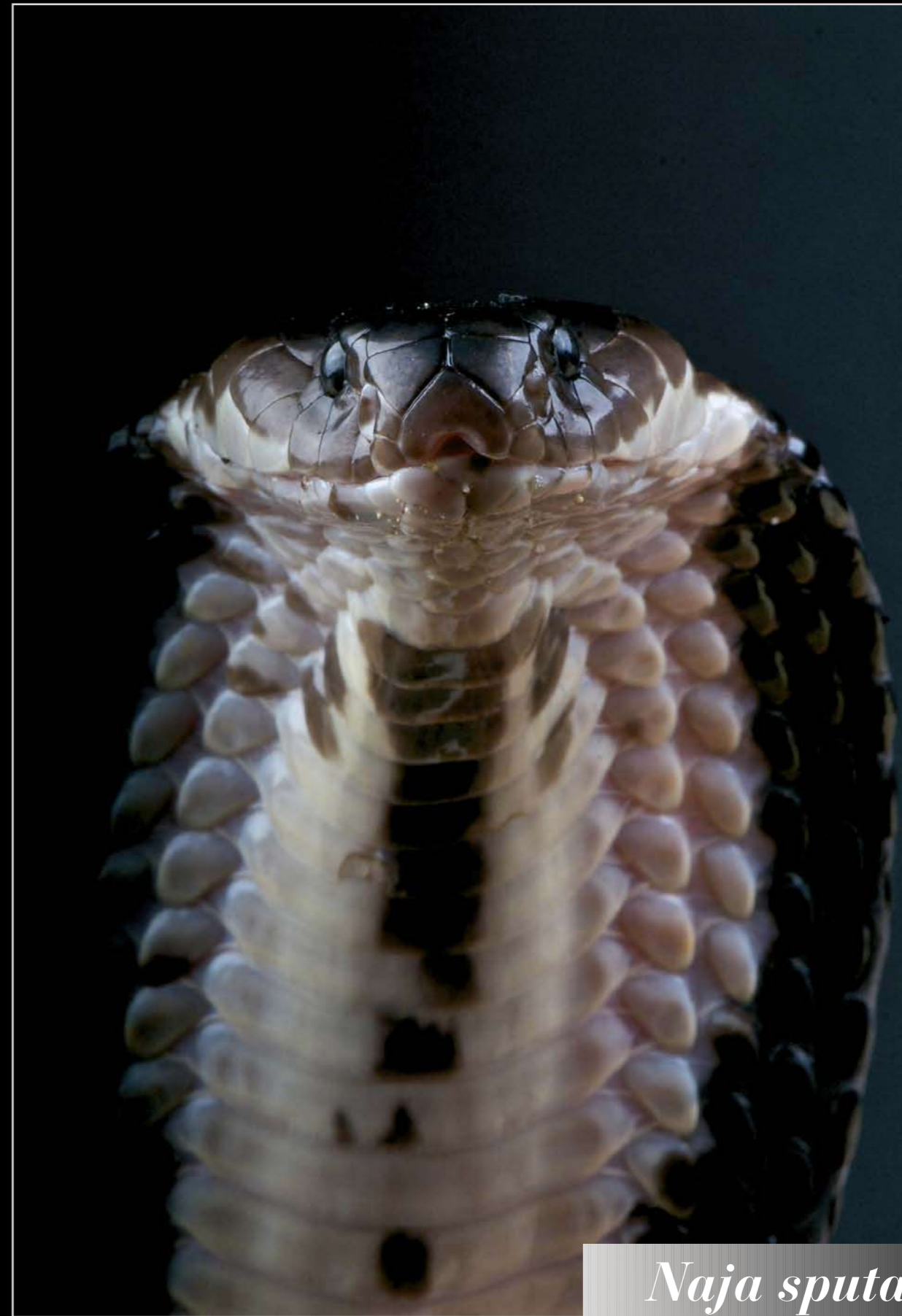
Gonyosoma oxycephalum

The Red-tailed Green ratsnake is a arboreal highly aggressive, non-venomous snake species from Southeast Asia.



Bitis peringuey

The dwarf adder is a perfectly adapted ambush hunter. These snakes spent hours buried under the sand in the Namib desert, waiting for prey to pass by. In order to attract prey they use caudal luring. These snakes are also capable of sidewinding.



Naja sputatrix

The Javan spitting cobra is a highly venomous snake from Indonesia. These snakes are endangered due to the snake leather trade and are currently included in Appendix II of the CITES convention.



Naultinus elegans elegans

The Auckland green gecko is a rare and elusive day gecko from Northern New Zealand.



Oophaga sp “Escudo”

The Escudo dart frog is a spectacular frog discovered in 2007 and which is endemic to the tiny island of Escudo de Veraguas, Panama. It is thought to be part of the Strawberry frog family / *Oophaga pumilio* complex.



Phrynosoma platyrhinos

The desert horned lizard is a specialized ant eating lizard species from Arizona up to Texas. These lizards display some prehistoric spines and spikes. As an ultimate defense horned lizards are capable of squirting blood from their eyes.



Naja nigricollis

The Black spitting cobra is found over large parts of Africa. Feared for its spitting abilities, the fine jet of venom it sprays can reach a distances of 1,5 metres.



Gonyosoma oxycephalum

The Red-tailed Green ratsnake is a arboreal highly agresive non venomous snake species from Southeast Asia.



Gonocephalus chamaeleontinus

The Chameleon Agama is a highly sexual dimorphic lizard species which is found on Sumatra, Java up to Malaysia. The lifestyle of these reptiles resembles those of African Chameleons, slow moving, cryptic hunters.



Dendroaspis polylepis

The Black mamba is a large highly venomous terrestrial and semi-arboreal snake from East and South Africa. These fast, inquisitive snakes are considered to be among the most intelligent snake species.



Crotaphytus bicinctores

Native to Arizona and Texas, USA, the Collared lizard is the *Tyrannosaurus* of our time. Voracious and able hunters, they will eat anything they come across - including other lizard species.



Abronía graminea

The Blue Bromeliad Alligator lizard is endemic to the cloud forests of Veracruz and Puebla in Mexico. These lizards are severely endangered due to habitat loss.



Petrosaurus thalassinus

The Baja Blue Rock lizard is only found on the southern part of the Baja California peninsula. These are very active, fast moving lizards.



Boiga dendrophila

The Mangrove snake is one of the biggest members of the Cat snake family, reaching 2,8 metres. These large aggressive arboreal snakes are native to Southeast Asia.



Varanus macraei

The Blue-spotted Tree monitor is endemic to the small Indonesian island of Batanta, part of the Raja Ampat archipelago in West Papua. It was only described in 2001.



Xenosaurus grandis

The Knob-scaled lizard is a terrestrial temperate (mountain) rainforest dwelling lizard from Guatemala and Mexico. They are only found on rock outcrops. Habitat destruction is the biggest survival threat for these lizards.



NATURE'S PHOTO ADVENTURES

Photographic Learning Travel Adventures

"Our goal at Nature's Photo Adventures is to lead instructional photographic workshops to the some of the world's most beautiful and unspoiled destinations while providing a rewarding and educational learning experience".

"We strive to exceed your expectations, taking you on an adventure and a once in a lifetime experience. Explore nature, share, learn and develop new levels of photographic skills and leave with fantastic photographs and wonderful memories and new found friends."

David Hemmings - President, Nature's Photo Adventures



"My experience was EXCEPTIONAL! The trip exceeded my expectations in all areas. I hoped to get in a position to see owls and couldn't possibly have been happier. It was abundantly clear that David invested significant time and effort prior to the arrival of the group in scouting the area around Quebec and Ontario. He knew exactly where to go to find every species of owl. His knowledge and efforts were very much appreciated by the entire group. My primary objective was just getting in a position to photograph owls and was not expecting much in the way of photographic instruction. I was very pleasantly surprised and was very happy with the instruction. Prior to the trip I had a love/hate relationship with auto focus as it applies to photographing birds in flight. I've struggled with this for years. While I have a lot more to

learn, and need to work at honing my skills, the trip with NPA helped me tremendously in being able to photograph birds in flight. Photographing birds in flight was my main objective. Prior to the trip I was nearly clueless in comparison to my skills after the trip. You can also see from my bird list that I found the trip productive from a birding perspective as well".
Kevin McCarthy, USA

"I recommend NPA workshops! The level of services by workshop leaders was excellent. Quality of photographic instruction was exceptional and they

were always on hand to solve issues that arose, and I had more than my share of equipment issues. Quality of wildlife provided was good and I was amazed at how easily the subjects accepted new setups provided. Locations visited were right on for the species targeted. My most memorable moment was using the flash setups the first time and capturing an image of the Swordbill Hummingbird. I feel that my level of photography has improved with the custom functions that were set up on my camera for me and the resulting images that I obtained. Overall experience and

expectations were achieved and we were fortunate to have a very compatible group on our tour, which made it very enjoyable. This was my first workshop and I would recommend them to friends".
Rosemary Harris, Canada

"Great trip, great experience and great workshop leader. Great opportunity for capturing images of magnificent and uncommon (in southern USA) birds. Organizers contribute to great group dynamics and superb attitude. Cool techniques".
Eric Grossman, USA



info@naturephotoadventures.com

<http://www.naturephotoadventures.com>

Canada: Newfoundland - Puffins & Gannets • British Columbia - Spirit Bears • Alberta - Black Bears & Elk • Churchill - Breeding Arctic Birds and Polar Bears • Ontario & Quebec - Snowy Owls and Great Gray Owls
United States: Alaska - Kodiak Bears & Bald Eagles • Florida - Raptors **Asia:** Borneo - Orangutans, Proboscis Monkey, Broadbills • India - Bengal Tigers and birds **Africa:** Botswana - Chobe River - Elephants and Hippos • Kenya & Tanzania South Africa - African Penguins and the Big 5 **Central & South America:** Peru - Machu Picchu and The Amazon • Costa Rica - Hummingbirds • Brazil - The Pantanal & Jaguars



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At the World's End

Wildlife portraits become true art in the hands and eyes of a great, multi-award winner nature photographer from the Czech Republic - who travels the world far and wide but has a special passion for remote, cold Antarctica

Vaclav Silha: A Wildlife Photographer in his own words

I feel myself always to be very close to nature. Even as a kid I read a lot about animals and attended various children's vivarium clubs. When I later became to be a photographer these two of my interests naturally combined. Initially I focused mainly on photography in Africa where I spent a lot of time working on the annual great animal migration from Tanzania to Kenyan game reserve Masai Mara. Gradually I started to shoot in other parts of the world - from Australia to Alaska. In the last two years I also had the opportunity to organize two boat expeditions which were very important to me. One of them led me to the sub-Antarctic island of South Georgia, the other in Antarctica itself.

I use two cameras - Canon EOS 5D Mark II and Canon EOS 1D Mark IV. The lenses are Canon EF 500/4, 0 L IS USM, Canon EF 300/4, 0 L IS USM, Canon EF 70-200/2, 8 L IS II USM and Canon EF 28-70 mm f/2.8 L USM. Top technology is of course important but not enough by itself. Even much more important is a good knowledge of the photographed animal and its environment. The photographer must have some kind of relationship with the photographed subject, shortly said - he has to like it. Only then he can take photos which have some meaning. It seems to me that recently more and more photographers debate about how many pixels should be in their

cameras instead of talking about the photo itself. What should be a good wildlife photo? I, for example, do not want my images to be only id shots which one could take at the zoo. I search for a story in each picture. Sometimes it can be some extraordinary situation but I also love to take pictures where animals are integrated into the landscape in which they live. Pictures of this type I had a chance to do for example in Antarctica. Animals are not shy there and one can approach them closely. I would like to return into this inspiring cold world again in future...My images have been published in many magazines across the world. I work closely with the British Barcroft Media bank, I am the author of several books, I give lectures and publish regularly in my home country (Czech republic) and abroad. At present I also participate in two film projects from Africa and Antarctica. Together with the travel agency African Way, operated by my wife, I also have been regularly working as a professional photo guide on photographic expeditions in different parts of the world. My work was also awarded some prizes in the past. Some of my most recent successes is the win in my category within the Czech Press Photo competition 2012 as well as the gold medal NSFF which I was awarded within the 16 FIAP International Biennial in Norway in the same year.





Gentoo Penguin chick

(Pygoscelis papua)

The sunset created a stunning scene in one of the most beautiful parts of the Antarctic Peninsula.

Booth Island, Antarctica.

Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 1/320, f9, no flash, ISO 400, Canon EF24-70mm f/2.8L USM.

Icebergs

Icebergs are
an icon of
Antarctica.

To every photo-
grapher they
also offer an
interesting
challenge.

Antarctica.

Canon EOS-1D

Mark IV,

1/1000,

f8.0, no flash,

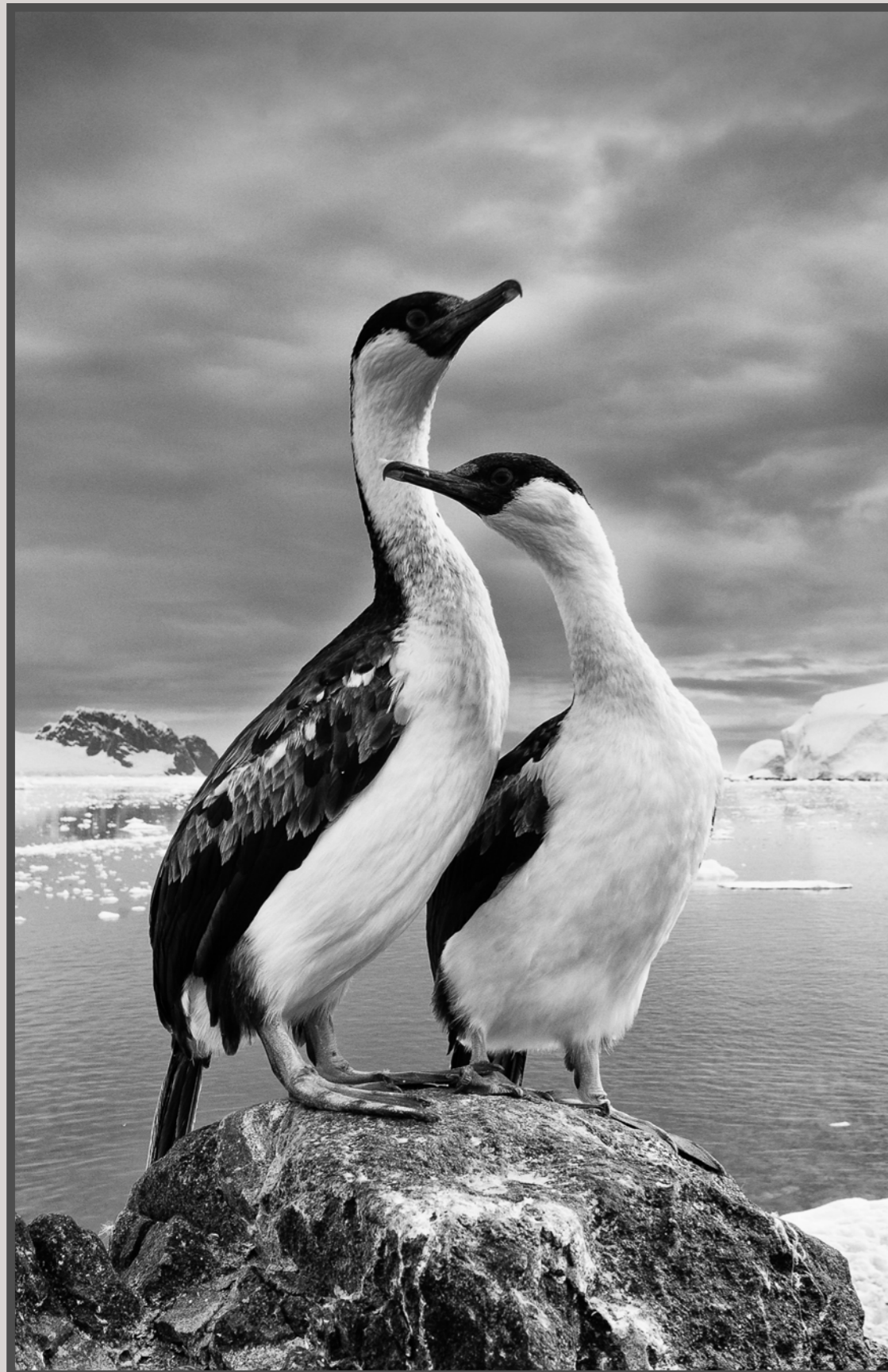
ISO 500,

Canon EF70-

200mm f/2.8L

IS II USM.



**Antarctic Shags** (*Phalacrocorax atriceps*)

A couple of Antarctic Shags in a colony on Fish Island. It is amazing how close one can get to the animals in Antarctica without stressing them. Antarctica.

Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 1/250, f11, no flash, ISO 200, Canon EF24-70mm f/2.8L USM.

Southern Giant Petrel

(*Macronectes giganteus*)

Southern Giant Petrels are constantly on guard in their nest against marauding skuas. Just a moment's distraction and baby birds falls victim to these birds of prey. South Shetland Islands.

Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 1/2000, f8.0, no flash, ISO 400,
Canon EF24-70mm f/2.8L USM.



**Black-browed
Albatross**

*(Thalassarche
melanophrys)*

Black-browed
Albatross above
Elsehul Bay.
Elsehul Bay,
South Georgia.

Canon EOS 5D
Mark II,
1/1000, f8,
no flash,
ISO 400,
Canon EF24-
70mm f/2.8L
USM.





Elephant Seal (*Mirounga leonina*)

Young elephant seal on Possession Bay beach. In a few years it will grow up into a dreaded beach master. South Georgia.
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 1/250, f8, no flash, ISO 320,
Canon EF24-70mm f/2.8L USM.

Grey-headed Albatross
(*Thalassarche chrysostoma*)

Grey-headed Albatross in its nest in Elsehul Bay. South Georgia.
Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 1/3200, f6,3, no flash, ISO 400
Canon EF24-70mm f/2.8L USM.





Weddell Seal
(*Leptonychotes weddellii*)

Weddell seal on
Ginger Island
beach,
Antarctica.

Canon EOS 5D
Mark II, 1/1250,
f7,1, no flash,
ISO 400,
Canon EF24-
70mm f/2.8L
USM.

King Penguin colony (*Aptenodytes patagonicus*)

Every year hundreds of thousands of birds are nesting here. Certainly one of the most powerful experiences in South Georgia.

St. Andrews Bay, South Georgia.

Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 1/160, f18, no flash, ISO 320,
Canon EF24-70mm f/2.8L USM.

**Chinstrap Penguin** (*Pygoscelis antarctica*)

It was interesting to take photographs in the sun with the animal nestled into the landscape. Aitcho Islands, South Shetland Islands.

Canon EOS-1D Mark IV, 1/1600, f8.0, no flash, ISO 400,
Canon EF70-200mm f/2.8L IS II USM.



**Southern
Giant Petrel**

(*Macronectes
giganteus*)

Southern Giant Petrels have a similar function as the vultures in African savannas. St. Andrews Bay, South Georgia. Canon EOS-1D Mark IV, 1/400, f8, no flash, ISO 400, Canon EF500mm f/4L IS USM.

Humpback Whale*(Megaptera novaeangliae)*

Humpback whale blowing, Antarctica.

Canon EOS-1D Mark IV, 1/4000, f8.0, no flash, ISO 500,

Canon EF70-200mm f/2.8L IS II USM.

**Elephant Seals***(Mirounga leonina)*

In October and November tough fights take place on the beaches. Males guard their harems, fights among several-ton monsters can lead to death of one of the rivals. St. Andrews Bay, South Georgia.

Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 1/250, f11, no flash, ISO 320,
Canon EF24-70mm f/2.8L USM.



**Humpback
Whale**

*(Megaptera
novaeangliae)*

I didn't want to photograph a whale itself but also the high mountains in the background, so I waited many days for this picture.

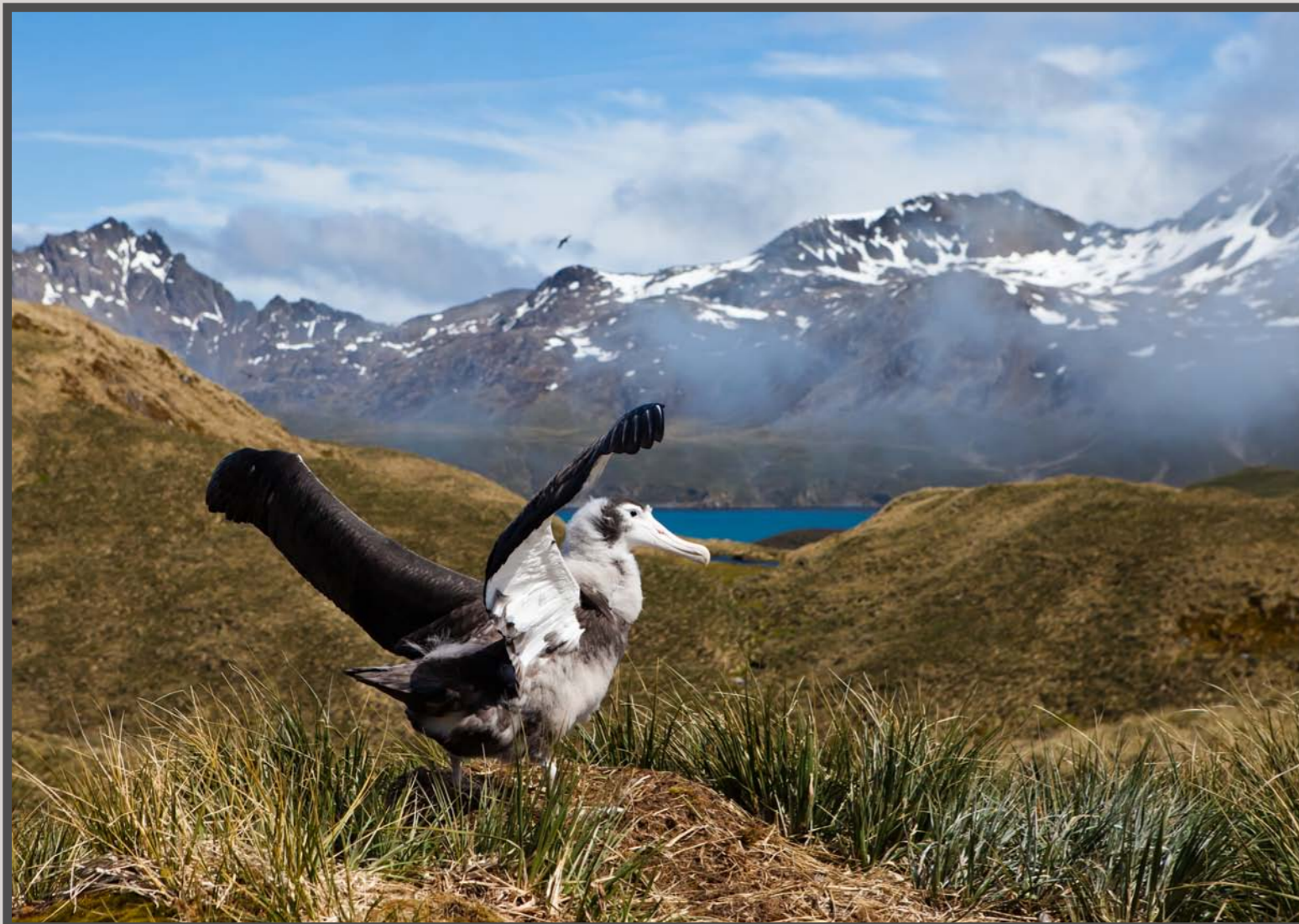
Eventually, I lived to see. Antarctica.

Canon EOS-1D Mark IV, 1/2500, f8.0, no flash, ISO 500, Canon EF70-200mm f/2.8L IS II USM.

Southern Giant Petrel

(Macronectes giganteus)

Southern Giant Petrel in its nest, South Shetland Islands.
 Canon EOS-1D Mark IV, 1/4000, f8.0, no flash, ISO 640,
 Canon EF70-200mm f/2.8L IS II USM.



Wandering Albatross *(Diomedea exulans)*

Young Wandering Albatross. Around 4000 pairs of these endangered birds are still nesting in South Georgia. Unfortunately their numbers are still decreasing. South Georgia.
 Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 1/1600, f7,1, no flash, ISO 320,
 Canon EF24-70mm f/2.8L USM.

Killer Whales

(*Orcinus orca*)

Killer Whales are top predators of Antarctic seas.

In this picture is a group of Killer Whales - type A, which mainly hunt whales.

Antarctica.

Canon EOS-1D

Mark IV,

1/1600,

f6,3,

no flash,

ISO 320,

Canon EF70-200mm f/2.8L

IS II USM.



Leopard Seal

(Hydrurga leptonyx)

Leopard Seal in
Cierva Cove bay.

The Leopard Seal is
one of the top
predators of
Antarctic region.

Antarctica.

Canon EOS-1D

Mark IV, 1/2000,

f6,3, no flash,

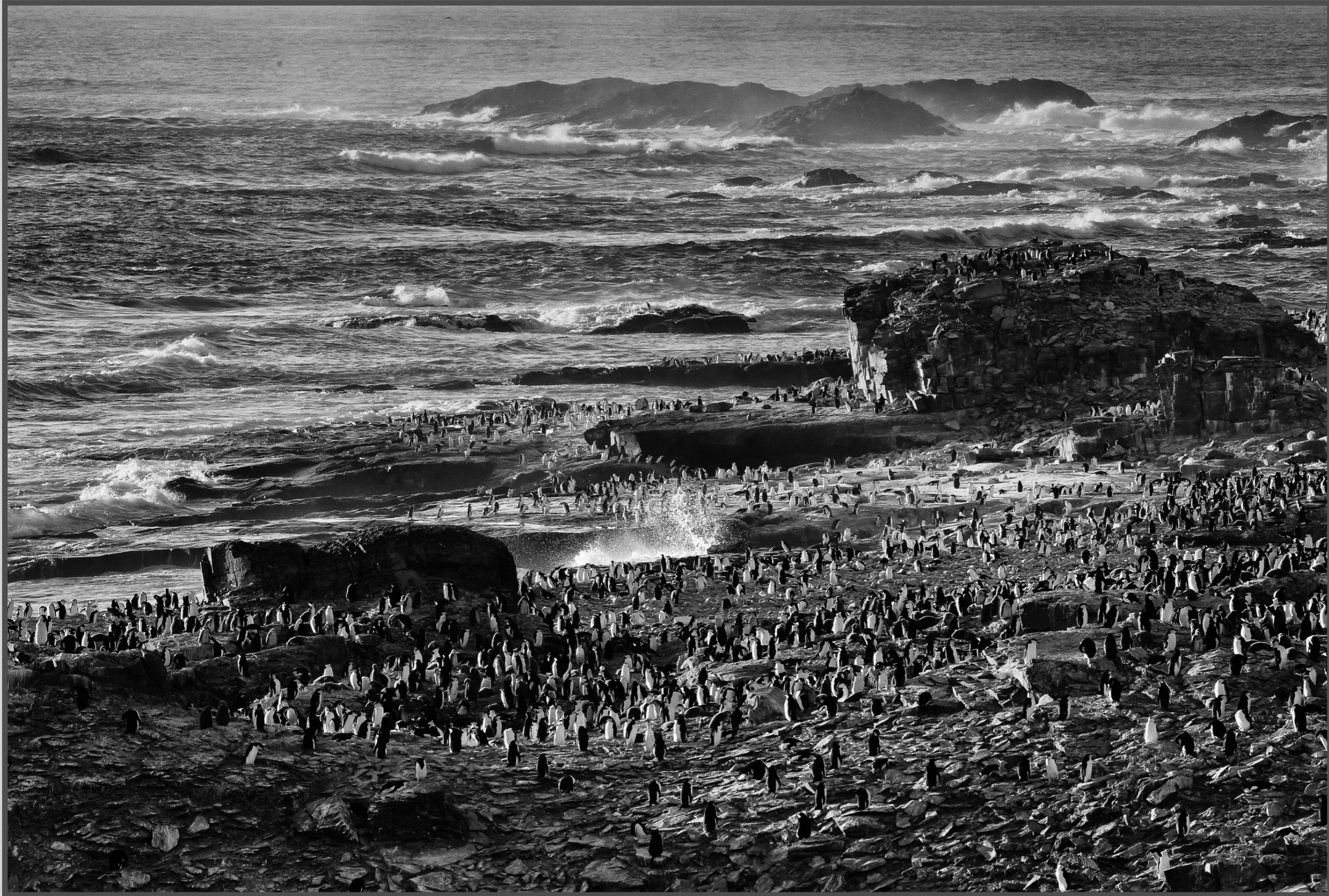
ISO 640,

Canon EF70-

200mm f/2.8L

IS II USM.





**Chinstrap
Penguin colony**

*(Pygoscelis
antarctica)*

Chinstrap
penguin colony
on the shore of
Heywood Island.
Backlight which
slightly illuminates
the waves gives
this picture an
interesting
atmosphere.
South Shetland
Islands.

Canon EOS-1D
Mark IV, 1/320,
f14, no flash,
ISO 640,
Canon EF70-
200mm f/2.8L
IS II USM.

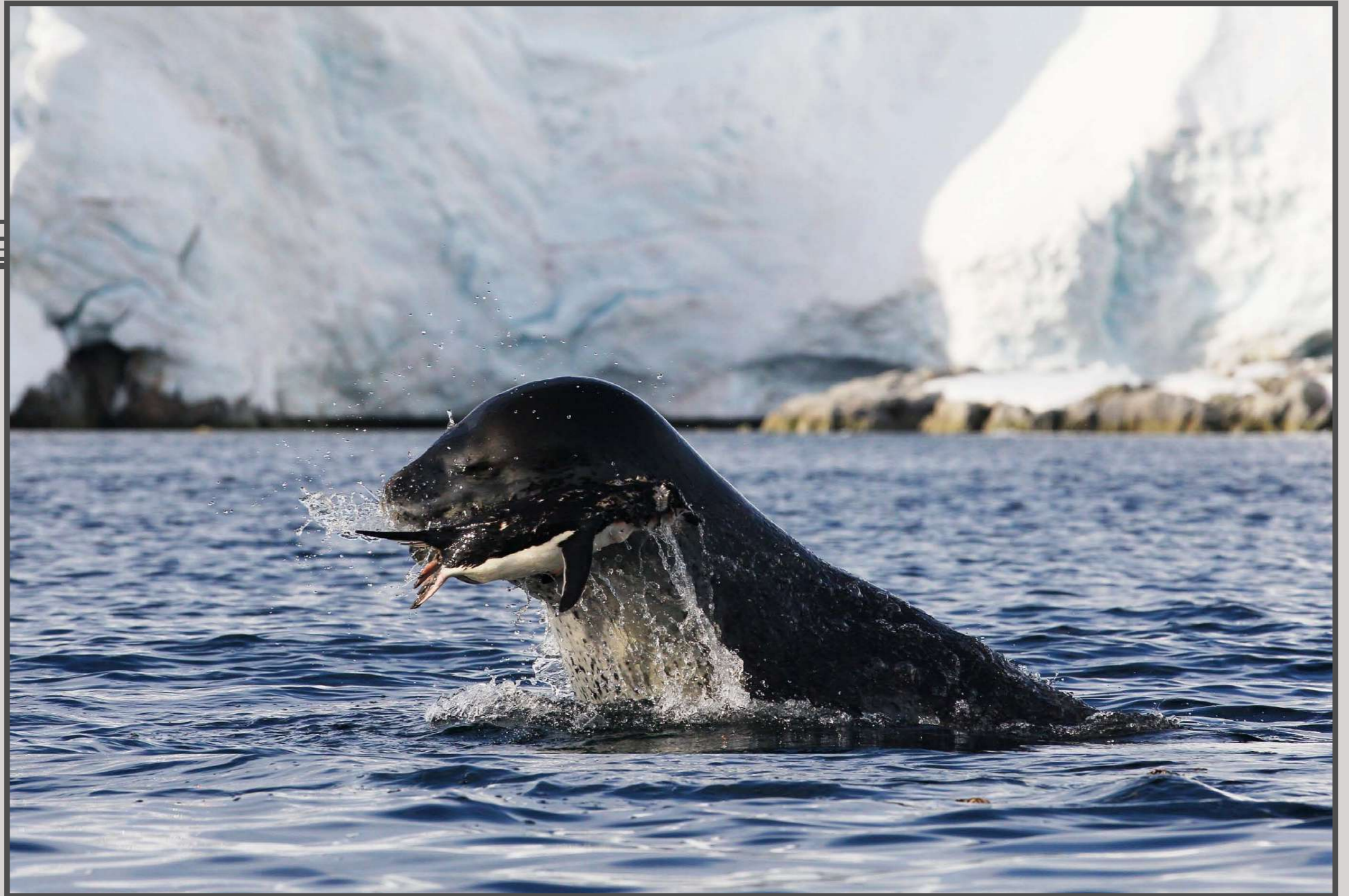
Leopard Seal

(*Hydrurga leptonyx*)

Leopard seals hunt chinstrap penguin. Their body is built for quick attacks and therefore it is not a problem for them catching an animal as fast as a penguin.

Anvers Island,
Antarctica.

Canon EOS-1D Mark
IV, 1/2500,
f8.0, no flash,
ISO 500,
Canon EF70-200mm
f/2.8L
IS II USM.





Macaroni Penguins

(*Eudyptes chrysolophus*)
Couple of Macaroni penguins. They feed mainly on krill and fish and can hunt at a depth up to 80 m. Cooper Bay, South Georgia. Canon EOS 5D Mark II, 1/500, f9, no flash, ISO 500, Canon EF24-70mm f/2.8L USM.

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The Parting Shot



About eight or nine years ago we were busy scouting and researching the shallow waters of the Sugud islands, in the Sulu Sea off the coast of Borneo, as we tried to find and photograph as many fish species as possible for our upcoming (and rather monumental, let me add) book *A Diver's Guide to Reef Life*, which ended up featuring a grand total of 1200 marine species. It was a lovely but eye-straining job, which entailed three or four 90-minute long dives a day, most of the time in very shallow (some-

times less than two or three meters deep) water - perennially looking for some new and usually very small fish which might had gone unnoticed until then, hiding in the maze of corals just before the surface. It was at the end of one of these pleasant and relaxing searches that a glimpse of a tiny fish face looking at me caught my eye - a blenny was peeking out of its lair on the surface of a hard coral, the hole left by a now long-gone boring worm. I happily floated down on the blinding white sand,

made myself comfortable and framed the little character in the viewfinder of my Nikon F4 and my old 105mm. We played hide-and-seek for quite some time, but in the end curiosity proved too much for it, and I was able to capture it as it was looking straight at me. I have always loved the abstract pattern of this image, its queer symmetry and its strong visual appeal - so much, in fact, that I've ended choosing it as the cover image for our book *A Diver's Guide to the Art of Underwater Photography*. ●



MEET THE AYE-AYE
Gentle Ghost of the
Madagascar forest



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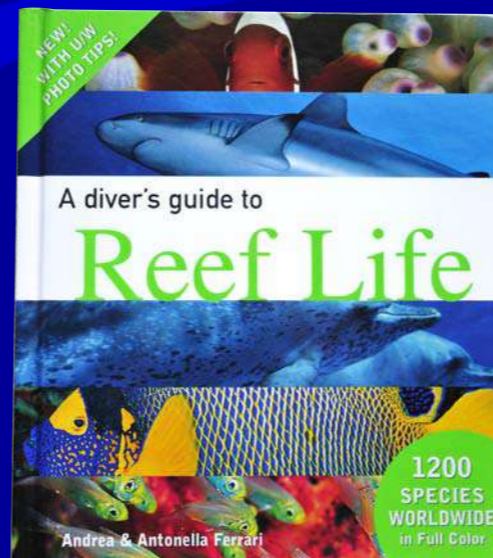
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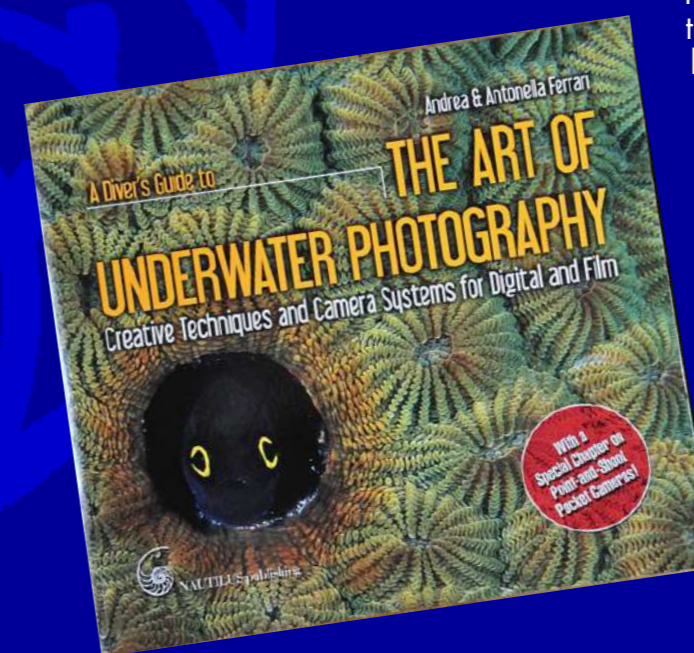
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ALEX MUSTARD, WETPIXEL.COM: This book gives us a rare insight into the mindset, dedication and imagination involved in creating magnificent underwater images. I sat down and read this enjoyable book from cover to cover. The lack of techno-talk makes it a very accessible method to improve your photography. The images are some of the finest you will see in a guide to underwater photography. All the images are very well reproduced, which will not come as a surprise to anyone who owns any of the other books by the authors. A large format 360 page feast of fabulous images and thought provoking and enjoyable writing on taking pictures in the ocean. • UNDERCURRENT: This book is filled with spectacular images, designed not only to offer great technical guidance, but also help the underwater photographer discover and develop the artist within. Clearly the best and most beautiful "how-to" book ever produced. • JOHN BANTIN, DIVER MAGAZINE: With an enviable reputation for authoring fine books on underwater photography, the Ferraris have laced the pages of their new book with juicy pictures.

There is none of the pseudo-art talk that often ruins otherwise beautiful books of photographs. I read it from cover to cover, and it's a great read. The pictures do the talking, and need no talking-up. This 360-page volume doesn't have a weak page in it. • MIKE SEVERNS DIVING: This book is less about the technical aspects of the craft and more about the art and the "eye." This is a big, fat, beautiful, coffee-table-type book that includes 400 photographs illustrating techniques to achieve such effects as artistic lighting and framing. Inspirational as well as educational.



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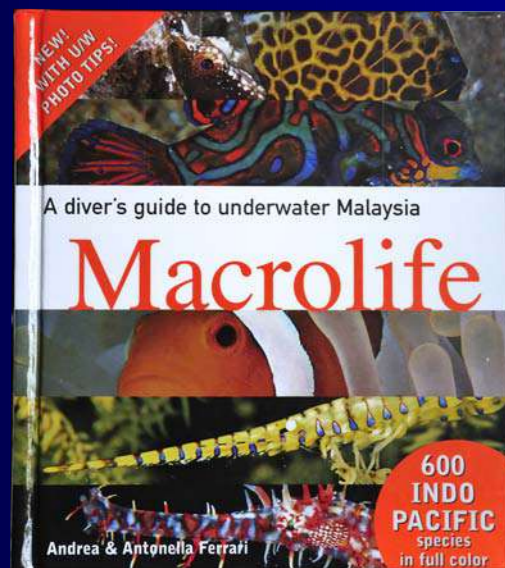
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