



**innovative tray
& arm systems**
Unsurpassed Quality Crafted in the USA

June 2013, Volume 1, Issue 1

UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO EQUIPMENT • 909.633.2887

What's Hot, What's Not by Shawn Gibbs

Listening & Developing!

Part of running any successful business is listening to the needs and wants of the people who are the intended users, the underwater photo community in this case!! That being said at DEMA 2012 last year I had a few people ask if we made a flex arm with a standard 1" ball end, at the time the answer was "NO", but since then we have come up with a very nice design. We have two models to choose from #FA-14-BMA 14" long MSRP \$59.95 and #FA-21-BMA 21" long MSRP \$69.95. These arms are very light weight, they travel well and the best part is all you need to connect them to your tray is a standard 1" arm clamp. Flex arms give the photographer more versatility in positioning there lighting, which helps create more artistic shots. With the use of a triple clamp you can use both strobes and video light on each side or just double the amount of light! No matter what kind of shooter you are at Beneath the Surface we make a arm to fit your needs, if there isn't a arm already being made for your needs please let us know and we will look in to building one or we can build you a custom pair for to fit your individual needs. Custom arms start at \$150.00 per pair. Contact us at shawn@beneaththesurface1.com for more info.

Tips and Tricks by Andy Sallmon

Clamp Down!

As an underwater photographer I am always looking for new ways to do things better. Whether it's a new dive destination, a fresh perspective on an old one, or just a new piece of equipment that makes my system easier to use.

A few years ago I came across Beneath the Surface Products (BtS) a new company that manufactured innovative strobe arm and clamp systems. My "old" arms were causing me grief because they wouldn't support my heavy pro strobes, instead letting them drop to the deck whenever my camera was lifted. Their clamps needed to be screwed down so tightly that the stainless steel bolt holding the two clamp halves together bent. So, I got the new arms and tried them out over the next few months. Here's what I found.

First, the new arms would hold my heavy "Pro" strobes when topside. They no longer toppled to the deck when the system was lifted. Second, the clamps did not require the extra force to stay in place, just strong even "finger pressure". Third, the clamps almost seemed to be "metered", so that loosening them just a bit once underwater was all that it took for them to be moved freely, yet still maintain position.

From a working photographer's perspective and one that moves his strobes frequently, these are the finest arms and clamps that I have ever used. I highly recommend them.

If your "old arms" are driving you crazy, then check out a set of BtS arms and clamps. They are made in the USA with superior holding power, bulletproof design and a lifetime warranty. You can't go wrong.

From the Lens of our Product Ambassador Gayle Van Leer

“Bad” vis? There is always something to photograph!

Here in Southern California we consider coastal near shore conditions with 20’ of visibility a good vis day. Anything more than that is a treat indeed and a joy to break out the wide angle lens. We have plenty of 10’ vis or less days too so as a photographer who takes her camera on every dive, I have learned to be creative and try to make a great shot happen despite looking in every direction and feeling surrounded by a conspiracy of floating particles just waiting to make that brilliant shot turn into a blinding snow storm of backscatter.

There is always safety in close ups, abstracts and macro, and it does not have to be tiny macro just a small object that mostly fills the frame so you can hide from the ruination of so many great underwater shots, backscatter. You may have to think outside the box like I did with the abstract of the sunflower sea star. I recall the day I shot that as being particularly dark and dirty water and yet I still end up with a shot that has some merit and might be best described as rivers of lava running down a mountain of through snow covered trees as dust. Shooting with continuous lighting lends itself perfectly to the close up environment as I can keep moving my lights until I see the backscatter “disappear” in my display.

Getting close to small objects in tight spots is another place where the compact Beneath the Surface tray and arm system excels. So many of the smaller critters, like the shrimp are going to be hiding in some tight place where you are just not going to be able to get with a large camera system. I have been able to squeeze my camera into some fairly tight spots to get up close.

Another subject that I seem to rarely pass by without grapping a few photos of are the tube anemones. No two photos come out the same as they move in the “breeze” of the surge or a current. You can come in close and get just the center or move out a bit. Here they also seem to come in a wide variety of colors from the one pictured that is multi colored, to the dark purple and bright peach. They make interesting photo subjects because you can shoot them from many different angles and come up with entirely different effects.

And lastly don’t forget to look in the sand! You may think it is just sand but it is teeming with critters if you just stop and look, including large ones that bury themselves such as the banded guitar fish whose eyes only were the only thing exposed.

So “bad vis” does not have to be a bad photo day!

Happy shooting!

Gayle Van Leer is a So. Cal. Diver and Photographer. She utilizes BtS gear and contributes product evaluation and articles.

To see more of her beautiful photographs and articles click here: [Testimonials](#)





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Let's Talk Shop by Randy Kinzer

Product Development!

Everything we make at BTS from an idea based on our own personal diving expertise or from feedback from our customers. Our parts are modular to make them interchangeable with all our products. We design our products to be durable and light weight by using the best materials available. We work hard at keeping our product cost effective for our customer without compromising quality. We start by making prototype of each new product that way we can evaluate each part and make changes if necessary. We make drawings to scale with all dimensions. We then make a small quantity of each part, followed by testing our assembly of the product or parts. We also test everything in the ocean environment to identify any problems. We also have customer test our products for feedback on what they think of our designs. Only when everything checks out do we go into production.

Are you a photo pro interested in becoming a BtS test diver to evaluate dive gear?

Please find more information here: [photo pro test diver](#)

BtS is proud to be a part of SCUBA SHOW 2013 and we look forward to seeing everyone there. Please stop by and check out our new products, discuss your underwater photography and video interests or just hang out and talk diving after all that's what we all enjoy.



SCUBA SHOW
THE DIVING EVENT OF THE YEAR!

We look forward to seeing you at booth #707 in the Image Resolution Center.

[SCUBA SHOW booth plan and floor layout](#)

This year there is a free mobil app which allows you to plan your entire SCUBA SHOW experience. Check it out in iTunes or Google Play by searching for SCUBA SHOW!

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