

SKIN DIVER MAGAZINE

1990

*Bestseller*  
*Series*  
U/W VIDEOS

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY  
BY JACK AND SUE DRAFAHL



# AMPHIBICO VII

**COMPACT, LIGHTWEIGHT AND EASY TO OPERATE**

**W**hen it comes to compact, light-weight video housings, Amphibico, Inc. offers some of the best on the market. Its housings are so efficient with respect to size and weight it's hard to believe you can fit an entire video camera in one. Amphibico's chief designer, Val Renetkins, has more than 20 years of experience and his housings have been the backbone of the video rental industry. They have been used by the National Geographic Society for a variety of pictorials. More recently an Amphibico housing was used in the movie *The Abyss* to take the ROV footage and the images shown on the U/W monitors.

The Amphibian V11 makes underwater videography a real pleasure. Our first look at the outside of this Amphibico indicated it was definitely different than others we had reviewed. As we picked up the white aluminum housing, we noticed

how lightweight it was—it weighs only 15.5 pounds with the camera installed. The handles are extremely comfortable, with deep finger grooves. Each of the handles can be removed by using a special hex wrench, making the unit compact for travel.

By calculating camera weight and

housing displacement, Amphibico has eliminated bulky lead ballast. The housing is designed to be a few ounces negative, balanced to avoid diver fatigue and eliminate the need for wings.

The camera controls are in front of the handles and can be activated without releasing the handgrips. The first control on



Inside of housing

## KEY FEATURES

- All electronic camera controls
- Bayonet mount lens system
- High quality aluminum
- Precision coated optics
- Quick disconnect handles
- External visual recording signal
- Double O-ring seals on all controls
- Sensitive, noise-free microphone
- Pressure rated to 350 feet

## COMPARISON OF AMPHIBICO VIDEO HOUSINGS

Model	Camera	Price	Depth Rating	Length	Width	Weight	Controls	Viewfinder	Materials	Lens Adapter
Amphibian V99	Sony V-99 High Band Ricoh R-800H Kyocera KD-H130	\$1,596	500 feet	16 1/2 inches	7 1/4 inches	20 lbs. with camera	Electronic power, zoom, white balance, auto/manual focus	Magnifier 8X	Aluminum	Wide angle 0.59x nondistortion
Amphibian V11	Sony CCD-V11 Ricoh R-630 Kyocera KD-5010 Nikon VN-9000	\$1,375	350 feet	15 inches	6 inches	15.5 lbs. with camera	Electronic power, zoom, white balance, auto/manual focus	Magnifier 8X	Aluminum	Wide angle 0.5x
Amphibian V9	Sony CCD-V9 Ricoh R-600	\$1,135	350 feet	15 1/2 inches	6 inches	15.5 lbs. with camera	Electronic power, standby, record, zoom	Magnifier 8X	Aluminum	120 degree wide angle, 0.42x
Amphibian TR5	Sony TR-5 Ricoh R-680 Kyocera S-530	\$1,135	350 feet	12 inches	6 inches	9 lbs.	Electronic power, zoom, white balance, auto/manual focus	Magnifier 8X	Aluminum	Wide angle 0.42x
Amphibian F50, F70	Sony CCD-F50 Sony CCD-F70	\$1,135	350 feet	15 1/2 inches	6 inches	15.5 lbs.	Electronic power, standby, record, zoom	Magnifier 8X	Aluminum	120 degree wide angle 0.42x
Amphibian F35, F45	Sony CCD-F35 Kyocera M-710	\$1,135	500 feet	16 1/2 inches	7 1/4 inches	20 lbs. with camera	Electronic power, standby, record, zoom	Magnifier 8X	Aluminum	120 degree wide angle

the right side operates the record function. Pulling the control with your index finger turns it on, releasing the control turns it off. Pushing the control forward puts the camera into continuous record, pulling back turns it off. The second control on the right side requires just a slight pressure down or up to change focus.

Two controls on the left side of the housing operate manual/autofocus/white balance and zoom/macro. Each of the four controls is double O-ring sealed.

All the camera controls are electronic, eliminating any levers or rods. The electronics are maintenance and trouble free and offer greater control over the camera than conventional knobs. If left on standby, the electronics will shut down after one minute to conserve battery power.

The front port of the Amphibian V11 has a unique bayonet mount. Pulling out and clockwise will disengage the port and expose the front lens of the video camera. The wide angle lens adapter is mounted inside the port, which makes changing ports efficient and easy. When you reattach the port you will know it's

secure when you feel it click into place. There is a special accessory port that produces superior macro photography.

An external Amphibico microphone, effective below and above water, is a standard feature of the V11 housing. It adds startling realism to your underwater video through the dimension of sound.

Access to the camera itself is through the backplate of the housing. Two stainless steel catch and strike clasps are recessed on the side of the housing to prevent accidental opening underwater. The latches can be pin locked if additional security (as during rental) is required. A large O-ring is held in place in an angled groove around the inside of the backplate. A corresponding angled surface on the housing ensures an extremely secure, watertight fit. An adjustable 8X magnifier is mounted inside this backplate, allowing easy viewing underwater.

A finely machined camera plate is attached to the inside bottom of the housing and slides out on a grooved rail until it comes to a metal stop. The camera can be mounted with a thumb screw and then

slid back into the housing. The battery can be changed between dives without taking the camera off this plate.

A red indicator light at the top of the housing will blink when the camera is in the record mode. If for some reason moisture enters the housing, a special sensor will start the record light flashing at an abnormal rate and then shut the whole system down after 30 seconds. The moisture sensor comes as a standard feature, but an audible alarm can be purchased as an optional accessory.

Additional accessories include a Nikonos camera mount, video lights, close-up kit and a surface umbilical cable. The versatility and workmanship of the Amphibian V11 housing is outstanding, from the front lens port to the magnifier at the back. With respect to its housings, Amphibico says it best: "State of the art becomes a work of art."

For further information about the Amphibian V11 housing contact Amphibico Inc., 9563 Cote de Liesse, Dorval, Quebec, Canada H9P 1A3; (514) 636-9910. 🐠

Inserting camera



Zoom and white balance controls



The Amphibian V11 housing weighs only 15.5 pounds with the camcorder inside. By calculating this weight versus housing displacement, Amphibico has eliminated the need for bulky lead ballast. The system is a few ounces negative, balanced to avoid the need for wings. The controls operate electronically, eliminating levers or rods.



Record and focus controls



Bayonet mount front port

### OPTIONAL ADD-ONS

Amphibian close-up kit.....	\$349
Flat port .....	\$218
Nikonos mount .....	\$94
Nikonos strobe mount.....	\$39
Audible moisture alarm .....	\$92
Surface umbilical (100') .....	\$315
Video Light PAC I .....	\$595
Video Light PAC II .....	\$875