

# Digital Corrections

Two new plug-in filters can fix flaws in your underwater images.

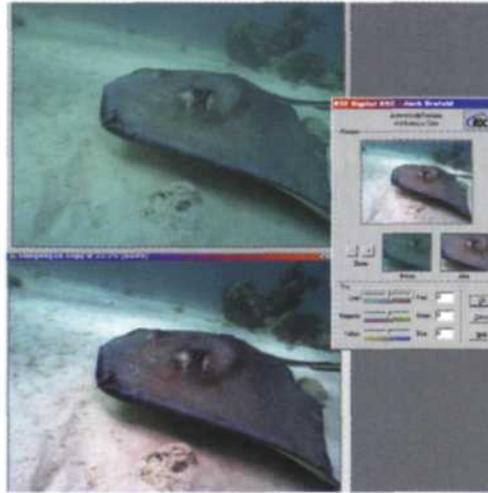
BY JACK AND SUE DRAFAHL

**W**ater prevents the full spectrum of colors from reaching various depths, reducing the amount of light striking subjects in the deep shadows. That's why many wide-angle images lack detail or appear too green.

The best solution underwater photographers have found is to supplement natural light with an electronic flash. This helps in most cases, but there are times when a strobe cannot fully cover the subject or serves only to illuminate particulate in the foreground.

So can anything be done to improve the quality of underwater film and digital images after the damage is done? Thanks to computer technology, the answer is yes.

Editing tools called plug-in filters can help solve many of the problems. These add-on programs developed by third-party ven-



**NOTICEABLE IMPROVEMENT** The Digital ROC plug-in filter fixed color and contrast problems in the original image (top).

dors work in conjunction with your computer editing program. Since Adobe Photo-

shop is considered to dominate the field in photo-editing software, most plug-ins are designed to be Photoshop compatible.

To use a plug-in filter, simply load the problem image into your editing program, go to the filters pull-down menu, select the appropriate filter and apply it to the image. Many of these plug-in filters produce special effects, but others are designed to help correct image problems.

Applied Science Fiction has just introduced two plug-in filters that work well for underwater photography.

Digital SHO analyzes the highlights, mid-tones and shadows of the image and then makes adjustments so that hidden details become visible. You have the option of increasing or decreasing the amount of fill light (shadow brightness) and altering the



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color saturation (color intensity). We found this filter especially useful on older Kodachrome slide images that lacked detail in the shadows. Thanks to Digital SHO, images that we couldn't use before are now marketable stock photos.

The second filter is called Digital ROC, but we have nicknamed it the Stingray City filter. This filter analyzes highlights, shadows and color balance and then corrects the scene to look like full sunlight or flash fill. When reviewing a batch of test images from Stingray City, we found both our film and digital images lacked contrast and were on the green side. We could not believe how well Digital ROC corrected these problems. The green color shift was gone and the contrast and color saturation were excellent.

Adobe Photoshop 7 boasts some new image-correction features, but we found that Digital ROC and Digital SHO were better performers. To try out these two new plug-in filters, download a trial version at [www.asf.com](http://www.asf.com) or purchase them online for \$49.95 each.

Send your digital photography and editing questions to [digitalduo@jackandsuedrafahl.com](mailto:digitalduo@jackandsuedrafahl.com).

## Ready to Shoot?

TAKE PART IN THE SISTER ISLANDS PHOTO CHALLENGE.

The famed waters around Little Cayman Island and Cayman Brac will be the setting for the upcoming Sister Islands Photo Challenge.

Participants will arrive on Saturday, July 27. Diving and nightly educational seminars presented by *Sport Diver* Field Editor Walt Stearns, Online Publisher Paul Tzi-moulis and freelance photographer Geri Murphy get underway Sunday. The competition takes place during the next three days, with an awards banquet set for Thursday, Aug. 1.

The featured prizes are four trips to the Sister Islands, including meals, diving and roundtrip airfare from Miami on Cayman Airways and Island Air. Other prizes will include regulators and an assortment of dive gear.

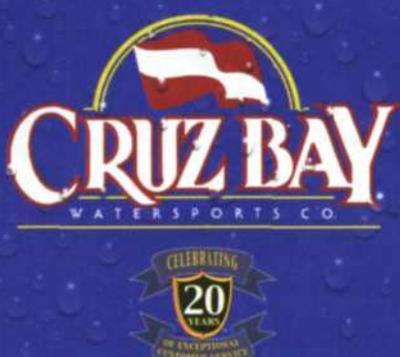
There is no charge to enter and each participant will receive three rolls a film, a Photo Challenge T-shirt and other cool stuff. Entrants also can try out the latest equipment from Ikelite, Mares and Dacor.

The Cayman Islands Department of Tourism, Sister Islands Tourism Association and *Sport Diver* are sponsoring the Sister Island Photo Challenge. Other sponsors

include Cayman Airways, Island Air, Kodak, Mares, Dacor and Ikelite.

Eight-day, seven-night packages start at \$777, based on double occupancy and including meals and diving. Contact the following host resorts for more details:

- Little Cayman Beach Resort** - 800-594-6703; [www.sportdiver.com/ebrochure/lcbr](http://www.sportdiver.com/ebrochure/lcbr)
- Brac Reef Beach Resort** - 800-594-6703; [www.sportdiver.com/ebrochure/bracreef](http://www.sportdiver.com/ebrochure/bracreef)
- Divi Tiara Resort** - 800-367-3484; [www.sportdiver.com/ebrochure/divitiara](http://www.sportdiver.com/ebrochure/divitiara)
- Carib Sands Beach Resort** - 866-THE-BRAC; [www.sportdiver.com/ebrochure/caribsands](http://www.sportdiver.com/ebrochure/caribsands)
- Brac Caribbean Beach Village** - 866-THE-BRAC; [www.sportdiver.com/ebrochure/brac-caribbean](http://www.sportdiver.com/ebrochure/brac-caribbean)
- Conch Club Condominiums** - 800-594-6703; [www.sportdiver.com/ebrochure/conchclub](http://www.sportdiver.com/ebrochure/conchclub)
- Paradise Villas** - 877-3-CAYMAN; [www.sportdiver.com/ebrochure/paradisevillaslittlecayman](http://www.sportdiver.com/ebrochure/paradisevillaslittlecayman)
- Southern Cross Club** - 800-899-2582; [www.sportdiver.com/ebrochure/southerncross](http://www.sportdiver.com/ebrochure/southerncross)
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