

how do i get PUBLISHED

Getting your Story in SDM!

I guess you could say we are in a fortunate position. Every week we get potential articles from our readers, but the unfortunate fact is that we simply can't publish them all. So which ones do we publish? The very definitive answer to that question is...it depends!

Here are some of the guidelines that might help you get your tale to the pages of Spearfishing Downunder Magazine.

Location

Generally, in each issue, we like to have a geographical spread for the articles so that we have a nice mix from around Australia and occasionally overseas to give the magazine an international flavour. If you write an article from a remote location, or somewhere where very few people have been, there is a good chance we will publish it as it will be something a little different and generally of interest to most people. That's not to say we won't publish an article based in the waters off Sydney or Melbourne. There just few a items you need to keep in mind – read on!

Photos

Basically, it doesn't matter if you are William Shakespeare, if you send in bad photos we probably won't publish your story. We are continuing to run our photographic column to give you some helpful pointers for taking better photos. There is some good advice in there for both above and below the waterline.

Be creative with your photographing – use different angles/locations, eg underwater (if you have an u/w camera), from the boat whilst the diver is still in the water, etc. Choose a nice background like an island or a headland if applicable.

IMPORTANTLY don't just limit your photos to fish photos. We'd love to see some of the location you are diving in, Islands, headlands, local people and culture, landmarks, etc so when people are reading your article and viewing your photos they get a sense of location – not just boat, fish and diver!

Photo Format

Please ensure that your photographs are sent at full resolution and completely unedited. If you send the photos straight off the camera that would be perfect (generally speaking about 1Mb in size)! If you are sending multiple photos you might need to break them up over a number of emails (say 3 per email). Make sure you clearly stipulate in your email subject how many emails we are to expect, so we don't miss any of your photos.

Text/Content

Be imaginative, creative, whatever it takes to make your article stand out from the crowd. Avoid using slang or offensive language. You don't need to be the best writer in the world, but make it entertaining. Thousands of people will be reading your story so you want them to enjoy it right?



Try to convey to the reader the feeling you had when you were out there spearfishing. Try to convey that sense of passion that you have for spearfishing!

Be informative – if you use a certain technique that might help a more inexperienced diver then share it with us. If you have specialised equipment, or you've come up with something "out of the box" then spell it out, take some photos. All these things will help you get your story published.



The Journey – it's all about the Journey

Essentially you are trying to take the reader on a journey. Try to make your article 2000+ words long (about 4-5 pages of standard 10 point type). We do run some shorter one page articles but generally we give preference to articles that take the reader on a well-scripted journey. That said, don't waffle on aimlessly in an attempt to make it 2000 words either.

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Include points like how you got there, facilities, accommodation, local industries, was there a Marine Park where you dived, issues other divers should be aware of, etc, etc!

Don't forget to include some photos that show us WHERE you are diving so the reader feels like he/she is immersed in your experience. The best examples are those articles that make the magazine. "On the Hunt" by Paul McKeown (page 36 Issue #12) is a great example of what we are looking for from a photographic and textual perspective.



What will I get for my articles?

We appreciate that a lot of time goes into taking photos, scripting text, editing and rewriting. To be fair we believe that if your article is good enough to go into the magazine you should be rewarded for that great effort in some way. Generally that entails gift vouchers or merchandise. There is no hard and fast rule and this is purely done at our discretion. Note – we do not pay for Letters to the Editor. It is an unbiased forum in which people can freely express their views about anything they like, providing it is relevant. Paying for it would be unethical.

Fair is Fair

If you send in an article that has already been published in another magazine it is very unlikely that it will get published by SDM. The reason for this is obviously that people don't want to spend their hard earned money on an article that they have already read. So be fair and only send your article to one magazine for publication. We do make exceptions to this rule occasionally, but it is usually under exceptional circumstances.

In a Nutshell

I hope that these few guidelines will help you in putting together an article and supplying some photos that will help you make the pages of SDM. Please note - if your article doesn't show up in the current issue it may mean that we have held it over for the next issue, so don't be discouraged. If we do not intend to use your article now or in the future we will let you know why we won't use it and how you might improve on future submissions.

John Featherstone
Editor

