

Nikonos Land Photography

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JACK AND SUE DRAFAHL

Just imagine yourself on the bow of a speeding boat taking action shots when all of a sudden a wave crashes over the bow. You may get wet but your Nikonos V continues to work without fail.

In previous SKIN DIVER articles, we mentioned the Nikonos V can also be used on land. In fact, this newest addition to the Nikonos family has features that make it better than many land cameras. Before you scoff at this statement, read on. Nikon saw such a demand for the Nikonos V as a land camera they devised a 28mm lens just for that use. This lens offers high quality optics providing great wide angle photos, even in a rainstorm!

The Nikonos V can be used for such activities as backpacking, camping, cross country skiing, rafting, biking and boating. Mud, rain and severe camera vibrations seem to be common in these sports but the Nikonos can withstand it all. But, best of all is that divers taking trips to distant exotic locations need not take along two camera systems: One full underwater system is all you need. It is easy to take your Nikonos out on the dive boat, make several dives with it and a few hours later use the same camera to take scenic island photos.

Focusing with the Nikonos on land is somewhat different than with SLR land cameras. Instead of looking through the finder and focusing on a subject, you use the focus scale on top of the lens. Again you scoff! How can you get sharp photos? Well, depth of field with the 28mm land Nikkor is so broad that focus need not be absolute. At f/22 with the lens set for four feet, everything from two feet to infinity is in focus. At f/11, with the lens set for eight feet, everything from four feet to infinity is in focus.

Depth of field with the 35mm lens is not as great as it is with the 28mm but is still broad enough to capture most every scene. At f/22 with the 35mm lens set for six feet, everything from three feet to infinity is in focus. At f/11 with the same lens set for 12 feet, everything from six feet to infinity is in focus.

In order to maintain small apertures, a medium speed film is recommended. Kodak and Fujichrome ISO 100 and 200 films have medium speed and excellent quality. The best part of all, however, is using the Nikonos V camera to take outstanding close-up pictures on land! If you have ever tried using underwater macro framers on land, you found they don't

work. But, if you use specially made land framers, they work great! These framers look like those used underwater with the 35mm lens, except they are about 30 percent shorter.

The 1:3, 1:2 and 1:1 framers have their own extension tubes, while the 2:1 framer uses the 1:1 and the 1:2 tubes



Top: The Nikonos V takes excellent scenic photos with the amphibious 35mm lens. Above: In-air extension tubes and framers. Framers left to right: 1:3, 1:2, 1:1, 2:1. The system works well with the SB 15 flash.

stacked together. The framers are mounted onto the extension tubes.

The advantage to using land framers for close-up photos becomes obvious on your first hiking trip. For some reason, most close-up photos are not in convenient locations. The best looking mushrooms are on the underside of logs and the most beautiful wildflowers grow high on the side of a muddy hill. With a normal land camera you might have to lie on the ground for that great mushroom photo, but with the Nikonos and framer, just reach down, place the mushroom in the framer and shoot. A close-up of that wildflower high on the hill or in the middle of a stream can be easily captured with the camera held at arm's length.

When looking through the finder of a normal land camera a two dimensional image comes into focus when you turn the lens barrel. It's pretty simple to frame, focus and photograph when a subject remains still, but what about a fast moving subject? With the Nikonos and land framers, you have the ability to view and photograph three dimensional subjects from any angle. Land framers allow you to follow moving objects and keep them framed and in focus. With the Nikonos land framer system, when the subject is inside the wire framers, it is in focus.

The Nikonos V amphibious camera offers fully automatic exposure control and through the lens (TTL) metering. It has two separate light sensors—one for available light and one for flash. Both sensors meter the light directly and provide accurate exposures even when using extension tubes, filters or when unusual lighting conditions are encountered.

The various underwater flash systems used with the Nikonos camera underwater could be used on land, but you might find them heavy and bulky. That's where a special TTL land sync cord comes in handy. This Nikon cord connects the Nikonos to a topside flash the same way it does underwater strobes. Nikon's SB 15, 16 and 18 flashes, as well as a variety of other flashes, are designed to work in the TTL mode with the Nikon FG camera. (Nikon FG and Nikonos have similar TTL sync systems.) These flashes can be fitted on macro brackets that make a very light and efficient close-up system for outdoor photography. If inclement weather is encountered, a plastic bag over the flash will give the extra protection needed.

It seems obvious that no matter where your interests lie, on land or sea, scenic or close-up, the Nikonos V is your answer. Why take two different camera systems on your next sporting vacation when the Nikonos V system will do it all?

The list price for the Nikonos V with 35mm lens is \$645.50; the 28mm LW Nikkor lists for \$245. Both are available from your dive shop or camera store. 🐠

Editor's Note: The underwater extension tube and framer set for the 35mm lens (three tubes, four framers) is available from Image Concepts for \$105. The set of four land framers for this extension tube set is \$60. Call or write Image Concepts, 2575 N.E. Kathryn, Unit 16, Hillsboro, Oregon 97124; (503) 648-3311.

The Nikonos V system is perfect for topside scenics, such as the sunken ship at right (35mm lens) and for close-ups, such as the colorful frog below (1:2 extension tube) and everything in between.



With the special 28mm topside lens, the Nikonos V can take wide angle photos of excellent quality such as the lighthouse below. The snake at right was photographed with a 1:2 extension tube and the super close-up of the bee below right was shot with a 1:1. Combining the 1:1 and the 1:2 tubes allows magnification up to 2:1. Not only does the Nikonos V have the advantage (over SLR systems) of being dust and splash proof, but with the close-up framers there is no need to focus.

