

Field Testing in the Bahamas and Alaska

FUJI SUPER HG 200 & 400

by Jack and Sue Drafaahl



Fuji's latest additions to its expanding film line, Super HG 200 and 400 boast a new kind of inhibitor that will surely heat up the competition between the world's two largest film makers. Along with some new emulsion technologies, Fuji has created films that have what they call "Clearer Colors," and reproduce greater fine-line detail and sharpness.

SUPER HG 200

Super HG 200 is a new color negative film designed for normal lighting situations where subject action or depth of field may require a few extra stops of film speed to guarantee a sharp, high-quality picture. This 14-layer emulsion takes advantage of Fuji's new RIR (Reactivated Inhibitor Releaser) coupler, which works similar to a DIAR coupler. When development starts, the inhibitor migrates to its designated layer without being active. When the inhibitor reaches its designated layer, a second reaction releases the inhibitor. This selective inhibiting of each layer creates extremely sharp edges between adjacent colors, producing "Clearer Colors."

Fuji has also improved its sensitivity speck formation technology (size of silver halide crystal). These specks have been reduced in volume and yet remain just as sensitive as before. This is accomplished by changing their shape so that the emulsion is thinner. By using the RIR couplers and the new sensitivity specks, the images from Super HG 200 have clearer colors, sharper detail, and a tighter grain pattern.

SUPER HG 400

Of the four Fuji films we have introduced in this issue, we feel the Super HG 400 is by far the most impressive. Super HG 400 is designed to give enough extra film speed so that the photographer will have less trouble with fast action, extreme depth-of-field, and low-light conditions. All this is possible while maintaining a level of image quality similar to an ISO 100 film. The RIR couplers and improved sensitivity speck formation found in the Super HG 200 are also used in the new Super HG 400, allowing for the same high quality. Fuji's target for this new technology is the point-and-shoot autofocus photographer who may have had problems with camera shake, flash distance range, fast-moving objects such as children or pets, or focusing.

FIELD TESTS

A trip to San Salvador, in the Bahamas, seemed perfect for field testing Super HG 200. The island was in the midst of preparing for the 500-year anniversary of its discovery by Christopher Columbus.

We were able to capture on film the friendly, easygoing lifestyle of the San Sal natives. The residents are a deep, dark color, and the sun is hot, hot, hot; yet we found the Super HG 200 able to capture the extreme contrast range.

No trip to the warm, blue waters of the Bahamas would be complete without discovering the beautifully colored fishlife. We have found that for some reason, the underwater world records better on color nega-

Our field test of Super HG 200 took us to the island of San Salvador in the Bahamas. Whether underwater or on land, we found Super HG 200 to yield high color saturation and resolution, and a grain pattern more like ISO 100 film. An interesting discovery is that negative films, such as HG 200, when used underwater, produce startlingly clean renditions of fish and marine life. We're not sure why, but the overpowering blues and greens associated with using slide film underwater were absent in our Super HG 200 underwater tests.

tive film than on slide film. It has something to do with ultraviolet and how it records on film. We found that when these color negatives were reversed onto print film, these new "slides" were dynamite!

Looking over the processed film, we noted that Fuji's HG 200 had saturated colors, high resolution, and a fine grain pattern. After making a few prints, we noted that the printing pack was very close to what we had used on other Fuji films. Prints were easily made from negatives that were from one stop under to two stops over without any loss of quality. One interesting change in the new HG films is the use of computer exposed frame numbers and color bar codes on the edge of the film.

From the warm sun of the Bahamas, we headed to face the grizzly bears of Alaska to field test Fuji's Super HG 400 film. We went to McNeil Game Reserve, where huge numbers of bears gather at the waterfalls to eat their fill of spawning salmon. After the first day's nearly five-mile hike through rivers and over hills to see these great beasts, we wondered if this was really the place to test Fuji's




Super HG 400!

Weather conditions constantly changed from cloudy to rain, and occasional sunshine. And, of course, there were the grizzly bears. You don't just tell a grizzly to hold still while you take its picture, so you do the next best thing: use a film that has enough film speed to stop the action, yet maintain the color saturation and grain pattern required to make large exhibition prints. A review of the resulting images demonstrated the film's ability to stop the constant action, hold the subtle colors of the grizzly fur, yet show a sharp color separation of the bear and the background. The grueling hike was definitely worth the final



At Alaska's McNeil Game Reserve, home to a large population of grizzly bears, we isolated this mother bear teaching her two cubs to fish. Super HG 400 performed more like a medium-speed film than a high-speed one, delivering excellent sharpness, minimal grain, and purity of color with excellent color contrast.

photos.

Fuji's Super HG 200 and 400 films provide advanced techniques in precision chemistry in order to meet the evolving needs of photographers everywhere. The film war rages on, with Fuji creating higher ISO films to capture the action, while yielding results previously associated with ISO 100 films. Keep it up Fuji! 



ALL PHOTOS BY THE AUTHORS






Super HG 400!

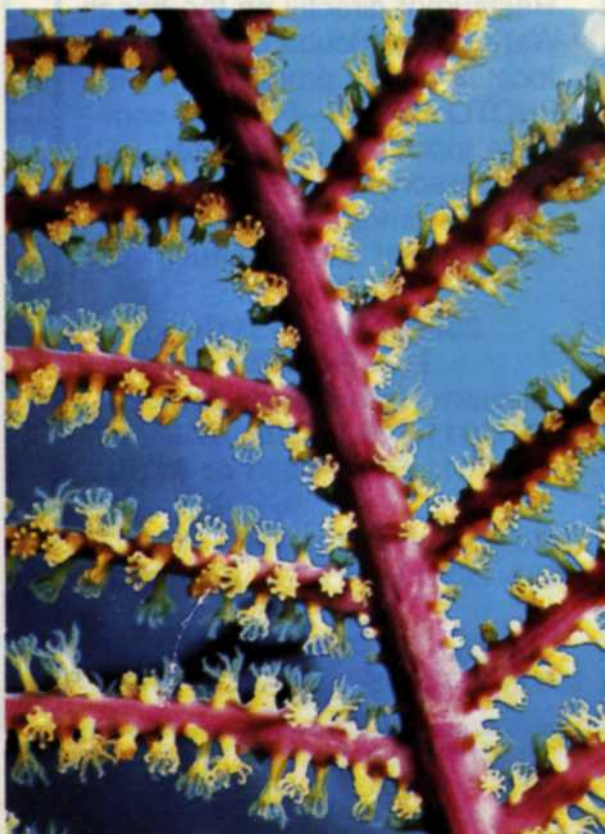
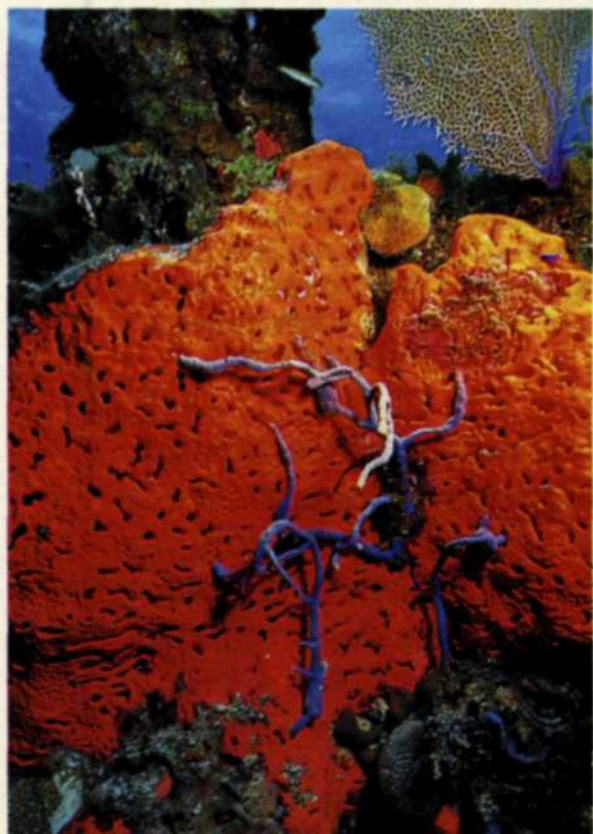
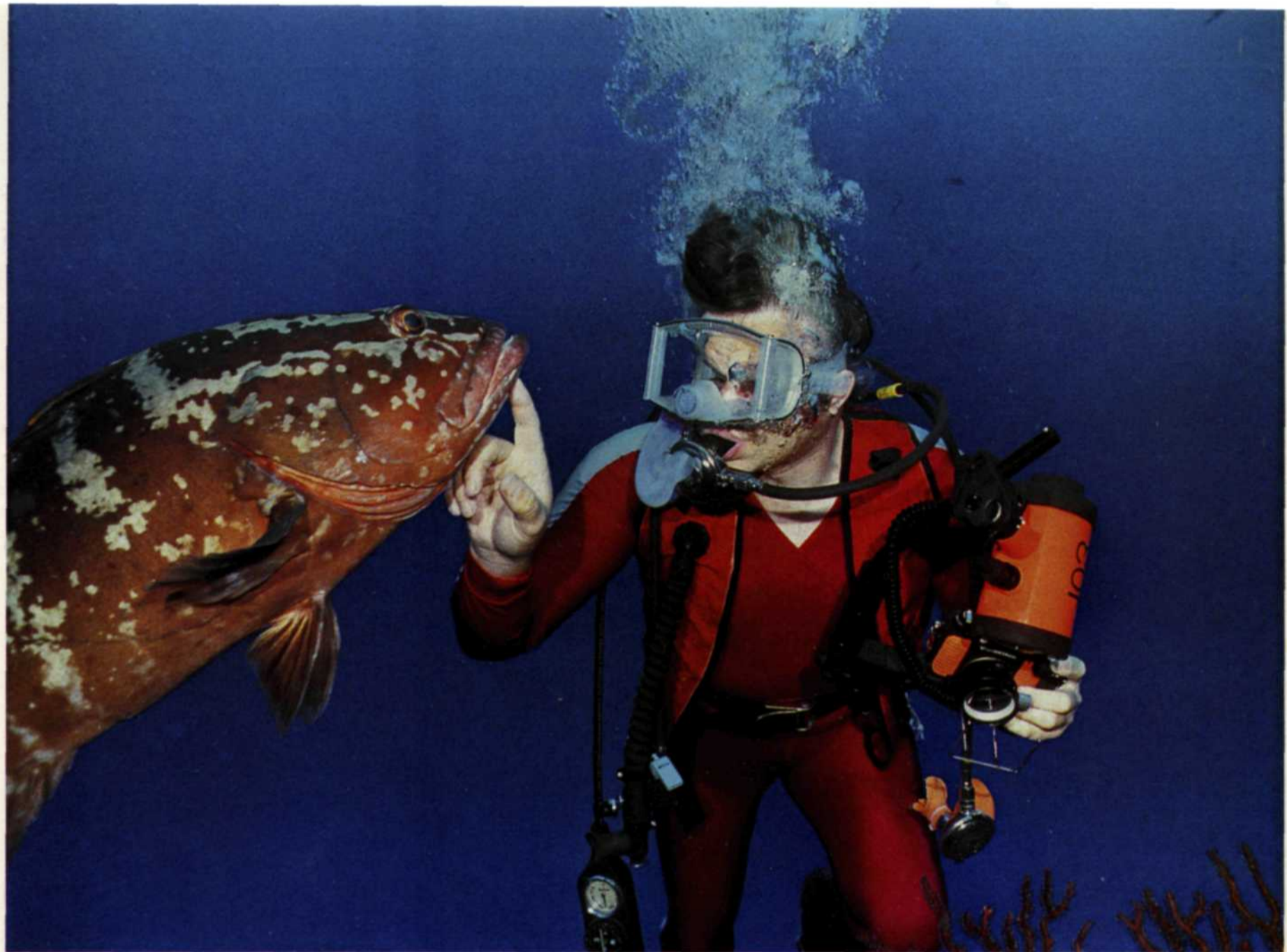
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If you need extra film, batteries, or camera gear, there are several stores in Bridgetown and around the island to satisfy your needs. One-hour film processing is available throughout the island for color print film, and several hotels will arrange for 24-hour processing of film dropped off prior to 9 a.m. Also, 24-hour turnaround is available for slide film on a limited basis.

Whichever island you select, you will be guaranteed a unique photographic experience—whether you're a nature lover, historian, photojournalist, or amateur just eager to capture some memorable shots. Just remember that the climate is very hot and humid and proper care should be taken to protect your camera gear and for storing your film.

Very informative reference books that give detailed descriptions of each island are *Fodor's 89* and *Caribbean: The Best of 27 Island Destinations*. You can also write any of the island tourist boards listed within this article. They are always eager to provide vacationing photographers with brochures and information about their respective islands, as well as details about unusually photogenic areas. ■