

North Devon Coast

I have been exploring the North Devon coast for the last three years. My study is of the hidden coast found only through a vertiginous climb down a cliff path or by leaving the sandy beach and trekking over seaweed strewn boulders at low tide. This is a wild coast, unpopulated by holiday-makers, the domain of seagulls that can make you feel quite unwelcome. It is also an historic coast where millions of years can be seen in the layers of strata of an eroded cliff face and the more recent past can be found in smooth rusting ship parts, in memorial of hundreds of wrecks, littering the rocky shore.

The Constructed Image

These photographs have only been made possible through the technology of digital imaging. To hold the bright highlights and dense dark shadows in these caves I have taken up to 100 photographs then combined them together to make the finished print.

All frames photographs are limited to editions of 50 and printed on archival matt paper with pigment ink. The frames are solid oak. £125 each

The print on canvas, *Merlin's Daughter, Tintagel*, is an edition of 10. £299

Baggy Point



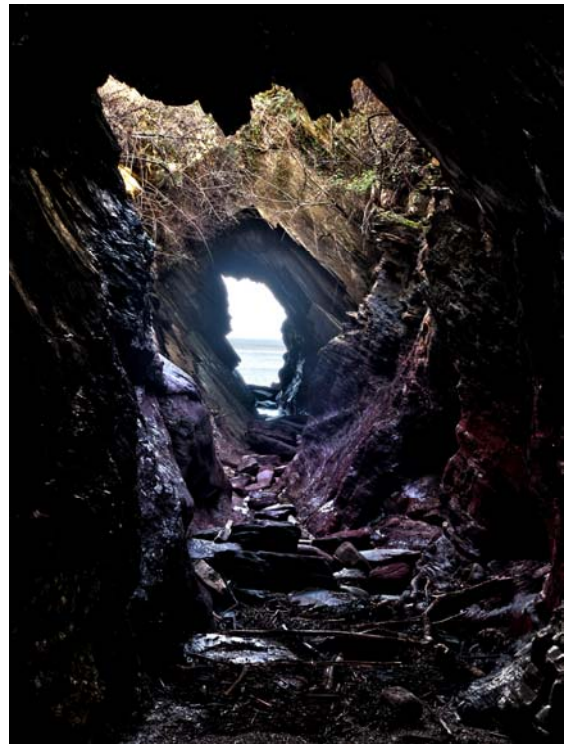
Baggy Point, the headland on the east of Croyde in North Devon derives its name from bag, meaning hole or cave. The headland is full of caves, and February's extremely low spring tide lured me to explore **Baggy Hole**. This photograph was made from 75 separate frames, then stitched together in Photoshop.

The image shows how heavy threatening and foreboding the place is. It's no wonder that there have been tales of ship wreck, smuggling, mermaids and secret passageways associated with Baggy Hole. Baggy Hole is the largest of the sea caves in Baggy Point. This was our first destination and involved a slippery descent down a little used fisherman's track to the beach, a scramble over wet boulders; then a climb up, over and down a 'camelback' of rock to another beach, the entrance to the cave. The cave, unseen from the cliff path, is huge it's entrance must be 50ft or higher and the distance from front to back must be 100ft + but I'll get these confirmed and update once I know. I just wanted to get as far into the cave as possible and see the full extent of the cave from it's dark depths.

Secret Cave



Secret Cave is truly special, everything you might want of a cave, lot's of passages, a huge skylight, opening to the sea with small beach, and a large lake-like rock pool. You might want to live here if it didn't fill with 30 feet of water twice a day. This image shows the scale of Secret Cave with the skylight top left.



Most photographers will look forward to sunshine, the weekend, or a time of day like sunrise or sunset. I look forward to the full moon and the new moon and note these in my calendar. A day or two after these moons heralds the highest and lowest tides, or spring tides, which occur every fortnight. A spring low tide, which always falls around 1 or 2pm in North Devon, gives me access to places at the waters edge that would be impossible to get to on any other day or time; places which are often totally hidden under the waves.

At the end of April on such a tide I went to the Combe Martin coast. The inspiration for this image was an old postcard of Briary Cave at Watermouth. Postcards of caves are rare, this being the first I'd seen, and although I'd photographed this cave before I find that every time I explore a space the image comes out differently. Often this is because of that ever changing tide, light, season and the wave action on the interior of the cave.

Dame Hole



Dame Hole, the name given on an OS map, not my own, is situated on the Hartland peninsula equidistant between Hartland Point and. It is a narrow tunnel, barely wide enough to squeeze through, inside the castle-like finger of rock, clawing out into the Atlantic, Dame Hole Point. At high tide most of the cave is filled with the sea, and the parts not underwater are hammered by the swell. I had attempted to photograph this cave many times before but the lack of light and the darkness of the matt stone surface had left me unhappy with the results.

On September 6th 2006, I entered Dame Hole again. On this occasion whilst the tide was just receding, I intended to capture a still wet hole, fresh from the high tide.

Hopping from boulder to boulder and hoping not to be caught out by a larger wave, I squeezed inside and positioned my monopod and camera. 25 pictures were taken in total, each one of a different part of the symmetrical ribbed organic structure, focusing for each shot and adjusting the exposure to blend the extreme brightness from outside with the deep dark of the interior. The smooth, seamless joining of the different layers of images on the computer, through PhotoShop, took months, and this finished image was made for the Appledore Visual Arts Festival in June 2007.

Shipload Grotto



Shipload bay is just to the east of Hartland Point. Once a popular hidden sandy beach, accessible by a wooden stairway down the steep 300ft cliffs, it is now officially closed but reachable down slippery broken steps and a fisherman's rope.

Shipload grotto, my name, is a sea cave on the right hand side of the bay. This image is a composite photograph made up of 51 separate pictures. Each was taken from the same place, at the back wall of the cave, under a small 'skylight'. The reason for the multiple frames is for exposure and focus: the dark areas of the cave can be made brighter and the light areas, including the entrance, can be made relatively darker, producing a final image for akin to how the place was remembered. The original frames were shot in August 2006 after a spring tide had retreated.

Bird Count



My friends Kester and Liz Web do a bird count on this small remote peak on the Exmoor coast once a year, counting mainly Guillemots, razorbills, fulmars and kittiwakes. The 'rapture' like scene outside the cave is of Guillemots, Kester's name for unidentified black flying seabirds, returning home to their cliff edge nests.

This image is taken from the same beautiful Wringapeak cave that I showed in Schooners this time last year. A place I wouldn't recommend anyone trying to find if they have any fear of dear ticks, and the bracken of the precipitous goat track we followed to get here was full of them.

For more information about Dave Green's photographs and for details about workshops that he runs please go to his website www.greengallery.co.uk

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