



## ScotSAC's new National Diving Officer

Nigel Spike is a real Scottish diver at

heart. Preferring what our homeland

coastlines have to offer - you'll often

find him out and about in search of nudibranches.

### ■ WHERE DID YOU LEARN TO DIVE?

● At Moray House branch in Edinburgh when I was 'doing' teacher training after university; there were only two stalls at the the Freshers' Fair: Sub-aqua and women's lib - so I tossed a coin! Thanks to the late, great John Arrowsmith I was hooked, even if my first dive was in Dunbar, in winter, wearing a two piece 4mm Tarzan wet suit with a pullover underneath for warmth - I saw a sea urchin and was bowled over.

### ■ WHAT TYPE OF DIVER ARE YOU?

● A relaxed one: underwater photography and an interest in looking for nudibranchs mean that I'm usually grovelling around lumps of rock or wreckage and not exactly racing along.

### ■ WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE PIECE OF KIT?

● My digital camera: I still have a Nikonos rig, but I reckon I can get as good, if not better, results, with a unit I can stick in my BCD pocket.

### ■ DIVE-BUDDY - WHO DO YOU ENJOY DIVING WITH MOST?

● Anyone, really, providing they don't mind me travelling at the pace of a geriatric snail, lingering lovingly over something hardly visible to the naked eye. My daughter does allow me to pay for the odd diving trip abroad for her as she gains another PADI badge.

### ■ FAVOURITE DIVE-SITE?

● I just like getting into the water; there are very few dives where I can't remember at least one thing that sparked an interest. Yes, there are the likes of the *Elphinstone*, but I'm quite happy to visit Finnart on a regular basis - it's different every dive if you look closely.

### ■ BEST COUNTRY VISITED?

● Sorry, but it has to be Scotland, with all its infinite variety of sites, scenery and life. On a fine day - and we do get them occasionally - there's nowhere better.

### ■ WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO GO DIVING?

● The relaxation, the peace, the sense of looking forward to the unexpected even in the familiar.

### ■ DREAM DIVE BUDDY?

● More of an artificial construct really: anyone who will help me into my kit, deposit me gently into the water, act as a 'spot' for myriad nudibranchs that even Jim Anderson hasn't seen before, keep an eye on me ...

### ■ DREAM DIVE DESTINATION?

● St Kilda: for some reason I haven't made it out there - yet.

### ■ BEST DIVE BOOK EVER READ?

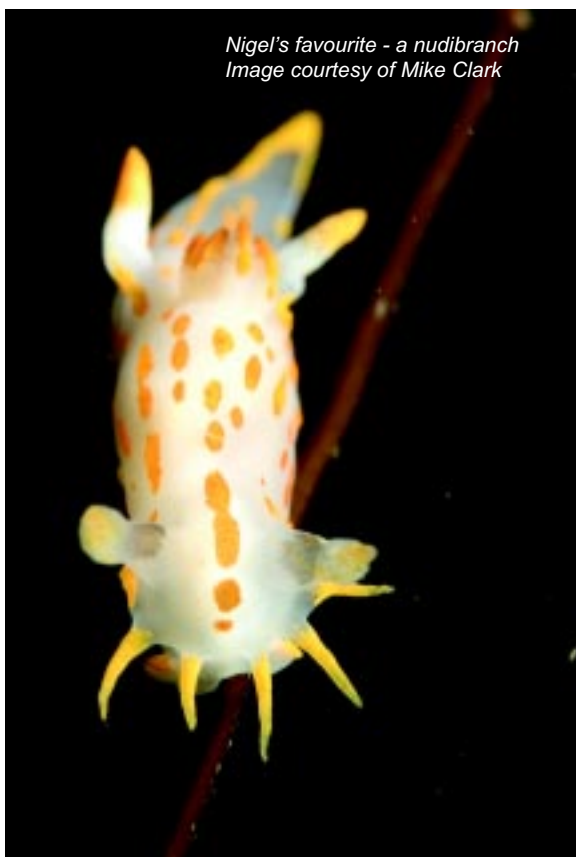
● 'Deeper into Diving' - a classic.

### ■ WHAT BUGS YOU MOST ABOUT DIVING?

● What, apart from politics? People who 'cover territory' on a dive, or who like depth for its own sake - why? Divers who love to add bits of shiny new kit to an already impressive collection, without really assessing the benefits - or otherwise - of doing so. People who are reluctant to adopt new advances in technology and ideas about diving. The rant could continue!

### ■ HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE DIVING TO NON-DIVERS?

● Sensational, in all senses of the word.



*Nigel's favourite - a nudibranch  
Image courtesy of Mike Clark*