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Underwater Photographer of the Year 2020 Yearbook

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Foreword by David Doubilet

The Underwater Photographer of the Year 2020 Yearbook is a striking testament to the passion, perseverance and devotion to the art of underwater photography. What is photography if it is not passionate? I explore these images and I am astounded by the marriage of the creative and technical vision, incredibly intimate yet almost scientific in detail. I am inspired to stop, linger and read the captions hoping to get to a glimpse of the photographer and who they are within their own words and descriptions.

The world is getting smaller by the moment, more accessible to our human eye through portable remotely operated vehicles sent into the depths, drones in the air and now beneath the surface, endoscopes documenting the invisible, infrared, UV, video and audio capabilities. Alas a smart phone camera in nearly every hand in nearly every corner of the planet and rather than recoil we should rejoice in this because we are creating generations of defacto documentarians but more importantly the world is now more focused on the power of photography more than ever before. Images are created, shared, devoured and there is collateral learning that occurs with this exchange.....What is that I am looking at, where does it live, what does endangered mean and most hopefully, what can I do to make a positive difference.

Underwater image making is smashing ceilings. In every category I see a combination of curiosity, ambition, talent and technology at work. Photographers are descending into midnight seas creating images of the deep scattering layer and vertical migrants that invertebrate scientists can only dream of and the photographers themselves wondering every minute, I wonder what is below me. You have gone past the floe edge to beneath the sea ice and below icebergs giving the rest of the world a priceless perspective. You are plunging into freshwater systems bringing back images that are often overlooked in favor of something more exotic. You are creating complex studio lighting inside shipwrecks, illuminating coral reefs and finding those elusive Henri Cartier Bresson moments in the sea. Personally, for me, the black and white images are some of the most compelling. To succeed they need to capture the elements of light, shadow, motion and gesture. These black and white images are defining moments, they have more than succeeded.

Our photographic IQ has rocketed in less than a decade. Images are stronger, more sophisticated and impactful. Pictures have a few seconds to grab and hold the viewers' attention, to draw them in and engage. I was excited when I first began looking through the 2020 Yearbook because the images do just that. They do more than engage– they inspire. In the face of global climate change and an all-out assault on the environment photographers are telling the most important story on Earth – They are telling the story of Earth itself. Keep Shooting.

David Doubilet



Underwater Photographer of the Year 2020

Chairman's Welcome

Welcome to the best UPY collection to date! As always the category winners are jaw-dropping, but this year every single image in this Yearbook is phenomenal. Please don't just flick through the pages once, but give yourself time to revisit each of the shots and immerse yourself in these remarkable photographs. There is much to learn, much to savour.

UPY always aims to showcase the diversity of disciplines and photographic styles that comprise 'underwater photography' and we love seeing photographers pushing the technical and artistic boundaries of the genre. We also appreciate classic images, when taken to new heights, and I am thrilled that UPY 2020 contains such a diversity of photos taken in waters from the polar oceans to the swimming pool. With the winning photos coming from photographers in a remarkable, 28 countries.

2020 was another record breaker for UPY with entries rising to 5500, up from an average of around 5000 for the last three years. The number of photographers also jumped to 500! And we had thought that we'd pretty much reached everyone who wants to be part of a contest such as this. Thank you to those who continue to support UPY as well as those entering for the first time. We appreciate and enjoy seeing every image we receive. We were also pleased that the Underwater Photography Book of the Year category was the strongest yet, with a very tight field of excellent submissions. Check them out, they would be a worthy addition to any underwater enthusiasts book shelf.

I believe the biggest reason that UPY

has quickly gained the status it enjoys is that we're trying to do our best for this community and that photographers appreciate it. Whether it is having entry fees way lower than many, providing a huge selection of prizes from the best brands in diving (46 different photographers went home with a prize), or having a website and entry system that is easy to use and reliable, we try our damnedest! I am particularly proud of the press coverage we generate and how this has already transformed the career and life of several past winners.

The effort we put into judging UPY is the cornerstone of the contest and a responsibility that we three judges enjoy, but take very seriously. When it comes to photo contests nobody is judged as closely as the judges! As Chair, I see my role in protecting the rigour of the process, I still enter photo competitions myself, so I know that these things really matter. My role is also to get the best calls out of the three of us and making sure every decision is thoroughly considered. I may hold the mouse – but I am sure that Martin and Peter would agree that it is a true team effort with all of us having an equal voice, thoroughly respected by the other two. Sadly, too many underwater contests have a poor judging processes, where entrants who have paid plenty to enter, never have their images seen by the big name judges whose opinion they signed up to hear. Instead the majority of images are dismissed by the 'organisers' long before the named judges see them.

In UPY we've always tried to be as open as possible about the whole process. All the judges sit together and see all the images on the same screen. We have lots of time to look, to discuss, to look again, to argue, to look again and make those tough calls. Our job is to judge and we won't shirk the decisions, even when there are tight choices.

Our process is simple: see all the pictures multiple times and slowly make decisions. We always try and make positive choices – what to keep, rather than what to remove as we slowly whittle the numbers down. Round after round we keep the images we love the most and allow others to fall away. Repeating the process until we have our finalists and then try and squeeze those favourites into our top 10s. I think the quality of this and the previous UPY collections is testament to this process.

We've always framed the rules of UPY to promote and not stifle photographic innovation. And we encourage our entrants to push the envelope when it comes to creativity. However, occasionally it means we get images entered that are within the rules, but demand us to tweak the wording for the following year! But please, please keep innovating and pushing the boundaries of underwater photography – UPY is far from a simple underwater wildlife photography contest, or a simple artistic image competition and we're proud to celebrate underwater photography in all its forms, and whatever it means to you.

I am especially proud of our results system, which is possible because of our rigorous judging process and, to be honest, is a lot of hard work – it is no small job providing this information for each of 5500 entries. Thank you to all of those who have taken time to write in and tell us how much you appreciate it. The nature of competitions is



that the vast majority of images entered do not win, so we hope that this system helps make being part of UPY worthwhile even when you miss out on the winner's circle.

Finally, I must finish with some thank yous. A big thank you to our generous prize sponsors, some of the best brands in diving, for supporting what we do. Thank you to the team at Go Diving for hosting our award ceremony and to the Crown Estate for sponsoring the print exhibition there. Thank you to everyone who supports UPY with their fabulous photography.

And finally, I must stress that UPY is a team effort: Peter Rowlands, Dan Bolt, Saeed Rashid and Martin Edge – and all this wouldn't be possible without lots of expertise and hard graft from all of them. As Chair, on behalf of all the entrants, I would like to thank them sincerely.

Dr Alexander Mustard MBE

Martin Edge

There is always much learning during a weekend together with Peter and Alex.

Once again there was a considerable amount to critique and judge. We (the judges) get to see every single entry which is submitted but with so many images to pore over during the first round, your images have to be nothing short of eye catching, stunning, remarkable and extraordinary all rolled into one. If possible, before you enter, share your 'selects' with a trusted photo friend. A friend you know and trust to tell you the truth through their eyes. Only this sort of standard will see you into round two. When you get there you should make a point of congratulating yourself for your achievement. You have done very well indeed!

Peter Rowlands

Just when I thought it couldn't get any better, and I thought the same the year before and the year before that, you have produced images that have left me, quite literally, lost for words. You've gone and done it again; raised the bar, hit new heights and created a set of images that we, the underwater photography community, should be justifiable proud.

I think I would be right in assuming that the vast majority of this year's images were shot within the past 12 months and, if I'm right, it shows that we are in a very good place.

The lengths you go to envisage, plan and execute such world class images and then grace us, the judges, with your talents is the highlight of my calendar.

I stand, applaud and salute you.







Dan Bolt

In the weeks running up to the 2020 competition, I was busy commissioning a new server for our website & Competition Management System (CMS). After transferring and fully testing the site and CMS, it was ready to go with just a couple of weeks to spare before we opened the 2020 contest.

I was very glad to see how well the new kit coped with our record numbers of entrants this year. But with those increased numbers comes the huge task of providing feedback for each and every one of the 5500 images entered, somehow that doesn't seem to get any easier!

Putting on my underwater photographer's hat; I am extreamly happy to have won the British Waters Living together category, as well as 3rd place and two Commended images in British Waters Macro.

I submitted some photos for which I had high-hopes in the competition. Sadly they didn't make it very far which just goes to show that you can't pre-judge the judges!

www.underwaterpics.co.uk



Saeed Rashid

Time flies when you are looking at amazing underwater images doesn't it? and what a year it's been. This is clearly evident in images selected in this year's competition.

I feel very fortunate working with such a great team ,each of them bring their unique set of skills enabling UPY to be a Premier League competition. I have probably the easiest job, I source of prizes you all desire to win. Each year this job seems to get easier as well with sponsors flooding my inbox wanting to be part of UPY's story. Luckyily for you, we are a picky bunch and we only accept the very best and hopefully you all agree.

I would personally like to thank all of our sponsors - those that have been with us from the beginning and those that have joined us along the way, thank you! Without their help and support we could not do what we do and in another year of financial uncertainty for many, it is a testament to your amazing imagery that many of these sponsors come knocking on our door year after year.

Underwater Photographer of the Year 2020



WINNER Wide angle 'Frozen Mobile Home' Greg Lecoeur (France)

Massive and mysterious habitats, icebergs are dynamic kingdoms that support marine life. As they swing and rotate slowly through polar currents, icebergs fertilize the oceans by carrying nutrients from land that spark blooms of phytoplankton, fundamental to the carbon cycle. During an expedition in Antarctica Peninsula with filmmaker Florian Fisher and freediver Guillaume Nery, we explored and documented the hidden face of this iceberg where crab-eater seals have taken up residence on icebergs that drift at the whim of polar currents.

Anarctica Peninsula, Antarctica

Nikon, D500, Nauticam NA D500, Tokina 10-17mm, iso 250, f/9, 1/250, x2 Ikelite DS 161

Judge's comments:

The balletic rhythm of these crabeater seals and the ethereal landscape of the pitted iceberg creates a composition that draws you into a corner of the world that few people have witnessed. The multiple subjects take my eyes on a journey through the frame and into the icy ocean of Antarctica. A deserved and unanimous winner which combines photographic beauty, composition, exquisite light and delicate colours. Perfect poses from the seals make this a celebration of natural life and a most enduring image. A stand out winner from the very first time I viewed it. The positioning of the seals could not be surpassed. Each of the four compositions are superb in relation to the image frame. 'Peak of the Action' at it's very best.

Up and Coming Underwater Photographer of the Year 2020



'Shark nursery.' Anita Kainrath (Austria)

The Bahamas has been a shark sanctuary since 2011 but Mangroves aren't protected yet and that's where these lemon shark pups spend the first 5-8 years of their lives.

I was standing in knee-high water, trying to hold my camera still, waiting for the sharks. Trying not to move when you have mosquitoes and sand-flies buzzing around you was probably the part I struggled with the most at this moment.

After less than one hour the little predators came closer and finally swam around my feet and my camera, bumping against me and trying to taste my strobes. They are curious little fellas but you need time to gain their trust and I love observing them in their natural habitat and that's what I wanted to capture.

They are such characters and we need to protect their nurseries in order to make sure their population is not declining.

Eleuthera, The Bahamas

Nikon, D300s, Nauticam NA D300s, Tokina 10-17, iso 200, f/13, 1/200, Sea & Sea YS-D2

Judge's comments:

As someone who is adored by mosquitoes and sand-flies I have to applaud Anita's tenacity first and then her imagery in equal measures. Her perseverance has definitely paid off with a beautifully balanced and observed image. It's an image we dwelt on for quite a while; not because we were unsure about it but just because we liked looking at it.



British Underwater Photographer of the Year 2020

Highly Commended Wide angle 'Rabbit Fish Zoom Blur' Nicholas More (United Kingdom)

I have been taking motion blur pictures for a few years now. I like how the technique adds dynamism to pictures. The picture was taken in Raja Ampat, Indonesia in November 2019 and I spent the morning taking fish portrait images. I came across a school of very friendly Rabbit fish under a jetty and took lots of schooling shots. I started using the extensive zoom range of my Sigma 17-70 combined with a slow shutter speed to create zoom blur images. The picture came together when the school bunched tightly together in a vertical tower with them all facing onto the camera. I hit the shutter and zoomed in at the same time, the flash freezing the central fish with the ambient light creating a Pop-Art like effect.

Raja Ampat, Indonesia

Nikon, D500, Nauticam, Sigma Zoom 17 - 70mm F/2.8-4.0, iso 200, f/20, 1/8th, Inon Z330

Judge's comments:

I would like to thank Nicholas More for the in-depth narrative regarding how this particular shot was taken. He has explained in detail from start to finish. For those viewers who are interested in the camera settings, they were 200 ISO, f20, 1/8th sec. Superb underwater imagery.

Martin Edge

Most Promising British Underwater Photographer of the Year 2020



'Commotion in the Ocean' Nur Tucker (United Kingdom)

This image shows my very favourite of the species, the thorny sea horse. Over time, I have tried many different techniques, with varying degrees of success, including backlighting, side lighting, snooting, panning, double exposure and silhouette shots. I love experimenting even if this comes at the expense of a wasted dive. On this particular dive, in Dumaguete (Philippines), I was keen to aim for something different and potentially offbeat. I began with a panning shot of the sea horse, captured with a 1/4 second shutter speed and a small, f/25 aperture. Then, I used the same settings to capture a panning shot of a shiny scouring pad, carried in my pocket. Both images were merged, in-camera, for the resulting double exposure shot. I must have repeated this sequence 50 times before eventually achieving this one when he made eye contact, which pleased me.

Dumaguete, Philippines, Philippines

Nikon, Nikon D500, Subal for Nikon D500, Nikon 60mm AF-S Micro Nikkor f2.8 G ED, iso 80, F25, 1/4, Inon Z240 at full power

Judge's comments:

An arresting image that draws you in with its mix of shapes and textures. The effect in the background elevates this image far beyond a standard portrait, creating a feeling of movement and for me makes me want to savour the eye contact before the moment is passed. I love the texture and muted colours that blend perfectly in the frame.

Marine Conservation Photographer of the Year 2020



WINNER 'Last Dawn, Last Breath' Pasquale Vassallo (Italy)

This winter, I went diving with some local fishermen. At 6 in the morning I was already in the water, as the nets were raised at first light. During the dive I followed the path of the fishing nets from the bottom to the surface. As the fishermen quickly hauled on the nets, I tried to take some shots of trapped fish still suffering in the mesh, such as this tuna (Euthynnus alletteratus).

Tyrrhenian Sea, Bacoli, Naples, Italy

Canon, Canon 5d sr, Seacam Canon 5dsr, Canon 8/15, iso 200, f/14, 1/320, Inon z240

Judge's comments:

If a picture paints a thousand words then a great one asks a thousand questions. You know those questions; so do I. All we can do is show the truth to those who live above but can't envisage the world below and hope that they too start asking questions.

Peter Rowlands

For wide angle images shot anywhere in the world. Open to all.

WINNER

'Frozen Mobile Home' Greg Lecoeur (France)

Massive and mysterious habitats, icebergs are dynamic kingdoms that support marine life. As they swing and rotate slowly through polar currents, icebergs fertilize the oceans by carrying nutrients from land that spark blooms of phytoplankton, fundamental to the carbon cycle. During an expedition in Antarctica Peninsula with filmmaker Florian Fisher and freediver Guillaume Nery, we explored and documented the hidden face of this iceberg where crabeater seals have taken up residence on icebergs that drift at the whim of polar currents.

Anarctica Peninsula, Antarctica

NIKON, D500, NAUTICAM NA D500, TOKINA 10-17mm, iso 250, f/9, 1/250, x2 Ikelite DS 161

Judge's comments:

A deserved and unanimous winner which combines photographic beauty, composition, exquisite light and delicate colours. Perfect poses from the seals make this a celebration of natural life and a most enduring image.





RUNNER UP

'Fotteyo overhangs ' Oleg Gaponyuk (Russian Federation)

Fotteyo overhangs, with golden bunches of soft corals that you can see in this picture, is a rather famous place in the southern Maldives. It is impossible to cover the cave even with a fisheye lens due to its small depth. That's how I decided to create a panorama of this place. It was my first underwater panorama created with the use of lighting and I am so happy that such technologies push the boundaries of underwater photography.

The Maldives are experiencing difficult times as the

temperature rise has led to the death of many hard corals. It is sad to see how splendid coral gardens have turned into graves of the hard pebbles.

Nevertheless, there are places that have preserved the pristine beauty, and I am happy to share it with my spectators.

Fotteyo overhangs , Maldives

Canon, Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, Nauticam housing 5D4, 15mm Fisheye, iso 800, 8, 125, Inon Z240 strobe Judge's comment:

One of my favourites from the entire competition. The idea of a panoramic frame to present this image is very forward thinking. The even spread of light from all four corners, top to bottom is superb. The lighting in particular, very subtle indeed. Last but not least, the outline of a diver and torch way behind in the blue water background. All of these elements together create huge depth perspective throughout. I find this particular image nothing short of magnificent!

THIRD 'SUB ZERO'

SOB ZERO Tobias Friedrich (Germany)

During an expedition in East Greenland under the ice, one diver took his video lights with him to swim underneath the iceberg. The water was minus 2 degrees with outside winds up to minus 27 degree Celsius, in which we sometimes only could do one dive per day. The whole fjord was frozen with the icebergs frozen into the surface. We had to get our gear on a snowmobile and man-powered sledge every day to an iceberg we thought could be nice and made some holes around it. Only in the water could we see the real dimensions of the whole iceberg.

Tasiilaq Fjord, Greenland

Canon, EOS 1DX Mark II, SEACAM Silver, Canon 8-15mm Fisheye, iso 800, 4, 1/60, SEACAM Seaflash 150D

Judge's comments:

A perfect example of contrasting sizes creating impact. Without the diver we can only guess how big the iceberg is but with it we have an image in awe and wonder of nature's effortless beauty. It also reminded me of the alien ship in Close Encounters :-) Finally a big credit to Tobias for his dedication to producing world class images in all temperatures of seas.





HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Underwater Fashion' Wayne Lai (China)

To be honest. I was not a fan of underwater model photography before taking this photo. During our trip to the Garden of Queen, our group leader Michael AW fancifully dressed up Jessea who is a professional freediver. When I was just about finishing my dive, I suddenly spotted a visually attractive picture of her flicking her sleeves on a crystal clear blue background with a beam of sun rays. Several reef sharks swim outwards as if she is in full command of them. For the first time, I realized that humans and nature can be harmonized in fashion. I couldn't resist the temptation of getting closer to capture this beautiful moment.

The Garden of Queen, Cuba

Canon, Canon 5DSR, Sea & Sea, EF 8-15mm, f/4L Fisheye, iso 400, 13, 1/160, Ikelite DS160

Judge's comments:

Producing a model shot down on the reef is a tough challenge for the entire team involved. To capture such a perfect pose of model and flowing dress requires real skill from the photographer. And then fill the composition with perfectly aligned reef shark, well then you have a winner.



Highly Commended and British Underwater Photographer of the Year 2020 'Rabbit Fish Zoom Blur'

Nicholas More (United Kingdom)

I have been taking motion blur pictures for a few years now. I like how the technique adds dynamism to pictures. The picture was taken in Raja Ampat, Indonesia in November 2019 and I spent the morning taking fish portrait images. I came across a school of very friendly Rabbit fish under a jetty and took lots of schooling shots. I started using the extensive zoom range of my Sigma 17-70 combined with a slow shutter speed to create zoom blur images. The picture came together when the school bunched tightly together in a vertical tower with them all facing onto the camera. I hit the shutter and zoomed in at the same time, the flash freezing the central fish with the ambient light creating a Pop-Art like effect.

Raja Ampat, Indonesia

Nikon, D500, Nauticam, Sigma Zoom 17 - 70mm F/2.8-4.0, iso 200, f/20, 1/8th, Inon Z330

Judge's comments:

I would like to thank Nicholas More for the in-depth narrative regarding how this particular shot was taken. He has explained in detail from start to finish. Superb underwater imagery.

Martin Edge



HIGHLY COMMENDED 'Beneath Starry Skies' Sean Landsman (Canada)

The rainbow smelt is an anadromous species of fish that spawn in freshwater and grow in saltwater. Smelt enter coastal North American rivers and streams in early spring as they head toward their spawning grounds. Unfortunately, dams can impede or outright block access to these areas. This species' movement patterns, their nutrient contribution to stream food webs, and the ability of fishways to allow smelt access to habitats above dams was the focus of my PhD research. Smelt tagged with small microchips also revealed that their upstream movements often occur at night, which this image accurately represents. It is a double exposure made in-camera and taken at the same time and place. I was inspired by Audun Rikardsen's incredible portfolio, including many of his split-level double exposure images. This image has significant personal meaning as it embodies years of research during my PhD and many milestones in between.

Pisquid River, Prince Edward Island, Canada

Nikon, D500, Nauticam NA D500, Tokina AT-X 10-17mm f/3.5-4.5 AF DX Fisheye Lens, iso 800, f/7.1, 1/125, Single Inon Z240

Judge's comments:

It is nearly always best to write judge's comments after the photographer has submitted their back story but with this shot it's interesting that all the judges could feel the effort that must have gone into this shot. It is perfect reportage in a single image.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Zapote Bells' Pekka Tuuri (Finland)

The Zapote Bells are unique bio chemical formations and they are found only in Cenote Zapote. The first time I saw the bells I knew that I would make a picture presentation of them. Not only are they very photogenic but their narrative is also very interesting. I shot the bells in many different ways on 10 dives I made at Zapote. The bells were formerly known as "The Hells Bells". To imitate the hellish environment my dive buddy hid behind a big bell and lit the scene with red (and one blue) torches. I am proud of this creative picture, but even more so of the picture presentation I was able to make!

Yucatan, Mexico

Canon, 5D mk III, Subal, Canon 15 mm, iso 6400, 2.8, 1/20, Inon Z240 fill in flash Judge's comments:

Caves provide one of the most visually appealing underwater environments. Here we were excited to see a photographer experimenting with technique and challenging our expectations of what can be achieved in this environment with this beautiful frame.

Alex Mustard



COMMENDED

'Her' Jingle Guo & FDB (China)

I have wanted to take a photo like this since the first moment I went underwater. The unprecedented quiet and solitude, and the feeling of mother nature's embrace is what being underwater emotes in me. The aim of this photo is to express this, a feeling of being in the universe, like a baby in mother's womb, when we're underwater. The photo was taken at a diving venue in FuZhou, China. I used back lighting, which when it touches the tiles on the wall, creates a beautiful effect.

NetDragon Websoft Inc's diving pool. Fuzhou. Fujian Province, China

Sony LICE-7RM2, Angle, Nauticam 17420 NA-A7II housing for Sony A7 II/A7RI, FE 16-35mm F4 ZA OSS , iso 800, f/4.0, 1/60, No Lighting

Judge's comments:

A graphically powerful and original image that stood out from the crowd throughout the rounds of judging.

Alex Mustard

COMMENDED

'Dragon Split' J. Gregory Sherman (United States)

While Komodo Dragons are primarily land reptiles, they will venture into the water if something warrants investigation.

For this image we went out in a RIB to take a look at the Dragons and I had brought along my rig "just in case". One particular Dragon came out and repeatedly got VERY close including trying to climb on and into the RIB on several occasions. I suspect that he has become habituated to humans and was looking for a handout.

In hindsight I'm not sure it was the safest thing I have ever done so I'd have to add the caveat 'Don't try this at home!"

Komodo, Indonesia

Canon, 5Ds, Subal, 8-15mm, iso 400, f/22, 1/200, S&S YSD2

Judge's comments:

Sometimes the sheer reputation of a creature makes you forget to look photographically. That's a Komodo dragon! In the water! Once the initial surprise had settled down we saw a perfectly composed, well lit curling split with eye and claw to the fore topped off by a distant spreadwing bird. Powerful subject, powerful shot.

'Over the Reef' Nadia Aly (United States)

I had just descended and was getting myself sorted. I had not even turned my camera and strobes on, when I saw this octopus crawling over the reef. The visibility was superb, the guides said it was the best they had seen it in a while. I quickly turned my camera gear on and took a few shots, before this octopus started hunting and moving quickly between the corals.

Evans Peak, South Africa

Canon , 1 DX Mark II, Nauticam, 8-15mm, iso 200, 8, 160, Sea & Sea YS-D2

Judge's comments:

How often do we descend to find ourselves with an excellent opportunity before us. Nadia work very quickly to achieve this image. I often suggest when entering the water to turn the camera 'ON' and set an aperture of f 8 or f 11, at 250th. Just in case! I'm sure that there are many 'shooters' out there who have been in this situation before. I know I have.

Martin Edge

















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WINNER

'Goby Goodness' Hannes Klostermann (Germany)

During the dive that I took this image on I swam a grand total of about 30 metres. I dropped down from the surface and descended towards the shallow, pristine coral reef in the Cayman Islands when I spotted this little fella posing right at the top of a coral head. I noticed the purple sea fan in the background and suspected it would look pleasing with a shallow depth of field, a look I really like in macro photography. After I had taken the first image and reviewed it I knew I would spend the entire dive with this goby, as the complementary colours of the fan and coral head worked very well together. Thankfully, the goby really seemed to enjoy the prime spot at the top of the coral head so it kept coming back to have its picture taken, not minding my close approach one bit.

Little Cayman, Cayman Islands

Nikon, D500, Nauticam NA-D500, Nikon 105 f/2.8 VR, iso 64, f/4.8, 1/250, Two Inon Z-240

Judge's comments:

This image was a winner right from the outset. The bokeh is nothing short of outstanding. The balance of the colours are superb, the eye contact is perfect, but what really caught my eye was the composition! Let us ask ourselves, How many of us viewing this image right now would have had the fore thought to place the subject in the very bottom left hand corner? One of my favourites from the entire competition.

RUNNER UP 'Eyes'

'Eyes' Keigo Kawamura (Japan)

The Unicorn shrimp usually inhabits around 200 to 300 m deep, but they rise to about 40m due to breeding behavior. There are thousands to tens of thousands of shrimps but there are only a few suitable places to shoot them. The direction and density of the tide may vary depending on the direction, strength, and brightness in the ocean. I went there many times because I could only stay for 15 minutes once a day. I was lucky to be able to find and shoot the ideal situation.

Izu Oceanic Park, Japan

Canon, 5Ds R, Zillion ZAP-5DsR, EF24-70mm F4L, iso 400, f/22, 1/200, Sea&Sea YS-D1

Judge's notes:

Producing a visually powerful macro shot is difficult enough when working with a single subject, but it is a fabulous achievement with a scene such as this by accurate framing and exact lighting control to emphasise all those faces and whiskers in the dark.

Alex Mustard





THIRD

'Favorinus Pigging Out' Jack Israel (United States)

This was my 3rd trip to Tulamben. I noticed several large egg ribbons on rocks at about 15 meters, and on this day, three hungry favorinus munched away. The rocks forced me to take a landscape image, but I imagined the composition as a portrait and hoped it would turn out.

Tulamben, Bali

Nikon, D750, Ikelite, Nikkor 105mm, iso 100, F25, 1/200, 2 Inon Z240

Judge's comments:

The macro category, in the main, tends to be single subjects in incredible, colourful detail. Make that three contrasting subjects framed delicately and lit softly; the winning enclosure door will open.

Peter Rowlands

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Lemons' Mika Saareila (Finland)

I wanted to photograph a Lemon fish couple with backlight and bokeh balloons. The Dive into Lembeh dive guide found a suitable target and placed the light behind it, and I could take the picture I wanted :) Background backscatter and backlighting did add nice bokeh balloons to the picture :)

Lembeh, Indonesia

Canon, 7D, Subal CD7, CANON EF 100MM F/2.8L MACRO IS USM, iso 100, F13, 1/90, Inon 240/SS mega snoot/ backlight underwater torch

Judge's comments:

Beautiful image and very well executed. What draws me most is the subtle lighting of the two lemon fish. Great eye contact and perfect exposure in the immediate foreground. The bokeh balloons in the background are also perfectly illuminated.

Martin Edge





HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Amphipod in HD' yatwai so (Hong Kong)

Both amphipods and pteropods are quite common subjects on blackwater dives. Occasionally, we find the crustacean attached to the mollusc to help it get around. I am always keen to shoot this odd couple because it is such a funny behaviour. However it is difficult because it is small, normally less than 5mm. For this shot I used a 100mm focal length macro lens and a wet lens to get a highly magnified image. Even so, I had to take around 70 frames to produce an image of optimum quality. The key to taking this photo is precise and stable buoyancy and effective finning for manoeuvring around this couple with my eye always in the viewfinder.

Anilao, Philippine

Canon , 5Dsr, Sea & Sea, 100mmL Macro, iso 320, 16, 200, Ikelite DS161 dual

Judge's comments:

With hundreds of blackwater shots entered in to UPY, they can become repetitive during the judging, so it takes a truly special shot to stand out. But the balance between this amphipod and its ride and the detail, so perfectly captured, really set this image apart. We had no idea it was quite so tiny and challenging when judging.

Alex Mustard



HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Blennius ocellaris' Alessandro Grasso (Italy)

After the death of "Pinna Nobilis" that hit the Ligurian Sea and large parts of Italy, this "Blennius ocellaris" took advantage to create its ideal breeding place by laying eggs. I used a snoot to completely isolate the subject from the background, some very long dives were necessary to obtain this result.

Capo Noli, Italy

Canon, 5D Mark IV, Isotta Housing, Canon EF 100mm f/2.8L Macro IS USM, iso 160, f/22, 1/125, One Sea & Sea YS-D2 with lardino snoot.

Judge's comment:

A great choice of lighting to produce a strong image with dramatic diagonals and captivating eye contact. The long dives were worth the final image.

Peter Rowlands



HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Dancing in the Dark' Katherine Lu (USA)

This shot was taken during my very first Blackwater dive trip in Anilao, in water over 200m deep. Every night the great vertical migration occurs in the ocean where creatures that live in the deep mesopelagic layers migrate up to the shallower epipelagic zone, returning to depth before dawn. I was very fortunate to have a rare encounter with the diamond squid also known as the rhomboid squid (Thysanoteuthis rhombus). This squid was not very large, and was perhaps a juvenile, but incredibly beautiful as it put on a show of lights and colours for me. While my encounter was very brief I was lucky enough to be able to capture this image before it disappeared into the darkness.

Anilao, Philippines

Nikon , D850, Nauticam NA D850, 60mm, iso 320, f25, 1/250, Sea & Sea YS-D1

Judge's comments:

A beautiful, beautiful creature captured in exquisite detail and colour. A simple, stunning photograph.

Alex Mustard



COMMENDED

'Aegires sp. nudi crawls to a clubs shaped bryozoan' <u>LudovicGalko-Rundgren (France)</u>

Tulamben is dense with tiny critters, and I mean really tiny. At first, it was the clover shaped bryozoan that attracted my eye while my guide Ajiex was showing me a small lump that was actually a nudi slowly moving towards its meal. I pulled out my SMC1 lens and asked Ajiex to help with the snoot. As per our usual routine we tried various light positions but the slight backlight became obvious with that composition . Probably the most difficult thing to achieve was to get the sharpness right on the 5mm nudibranch.

Tulamben Bali, Indonesia

Canon, Canon 70D, Nauticam NA-70D, EF 100 USM macro, iso 125, F/25, 1/200, Retra flash and LSD snoot

Judge's comments:

An interesting behaviour photo of a feeding nudibranch, rendered in a limited palette of pinks, with the lovely lophophore details of the bryozoan revealed by precise backlighting.

Alex Mustard

COMMENDED

'Bling' Lilian Koh (Singapore)

It is a slow black water night in Anilao where there is not many subjects in sight and mostly not suitable to use this foreground bokeh technique. I was drifting along the current until this juvenile wunderpus octopus (wunderpus photogenicus) came along at around 25m depth.

Anilao, Philippines

Canon , EOS 5D Mark IV, Nauticam NA-5DMIV, Canon EF 100mm f/2.8L Macro IS USM + Kenko 20mm Ex, iso 200, f/20, 1/250, INON Z-330 & Orcatorch D900V

Judge's comments:

There's no doubt that black water images are very appealing visually but after you've seen dozens of them they can look very similar so this very clever take lifted the judges eyes and got it promoted.

Peter Rowlands



COMMENDED

'Torpedo attack' yatwaiso (Hong Kong)

I found this kind of larval porcupine fish twice within a week when I stayed in Anilao. As I know from the adult porcupine fish, they only inflate when threatened but as I observed, both larval porcupine fishes were always inflated so this looks like its normal state (is it a kind of baby fat?). I also found this larval porcupine hunted the plankton when I was taking this photo.

I have stopped down the aperture and lowered the strobe power to avoid over-exposing its eyes. I got some frontal shots showing its funny face but this shot showed the plankton and the larval porcupine fish and its intention is hunting.

Anilao, Phillipine

Canon , 5Dsr, Sea & Sea, 100mmL Macro, iso 100, 20, 200, Ikelite DS161 dual

Judge's comments:

Very strong image. The two eyes are immediate and In my opinion it's the composition together with the eyes which work so well. Their is space around the behaviour which is clear to see.

Martin Edge







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For wide angle to macro images shot on wrecks. The wreck can be the main subject, or simply the setting for a marine life, macro or diver photograph. Photos can be taken anywhere in the world. Open to all.



WINNER 'The Engine' Tobias Friedrich (Germany)

Panoramic image of the engine room of the Chrisoula K. with six video lights placed behind the engines. I went there on several trips with a liveaboard, being able to check out the possibilities of creating some different lighting in the wrecks. But usually the boats do only 1-2 dives per wreck, so I had to be quick in decisions. The space between the engine inside the wreck is very narrow and the angle for a single photo was just not enough, so I thought it was the best idea to create a panoramic image to display the machine room in one shot. Placing the lights took some time as well to find the right mix of ambiance and light from the outside. Because the wreck is dived a lot in the Red Sea I had to wait for a good slot when nobody was inside it.

Chrisoula K., Abu Nuhas, Egypt

Canon, EOS 1DX Mark II, SEACAM Silver, Canon 8-15mm Fisheye, iso 3200, 4, 1/40s, KELDAN & SeaDragon Videolights

Judge's comments:

One amazing panoramic image. The consistency of light and shade is stunning. The blue water colour in the far background gives the viewer a huge sense of depth perspective. The eye becomes absorbed by the panoramic from left to right with all the machinery of the wreck in full view. When I first set eyes on this image I knew it would go far in this competition. A most deserved winner.

RUNNER UP

'Saudi Titanic' Renee Capozzola (United States)

This split shot of the Georgios shipwreck was taken in Saudi Arabia in the area of NEOM, along the Gulf of Agaba in the Red Sea. In 1978, this large cargo ship became stranded on a bed of corals and then had a large fire. The wreck is now known by many locals as the "Saudi Titanic" and sits halfway out of the water at the bow and in roughly 80 feet of water at the stern. There is a large school of tiny fish that live inside and there is abundant coral growth on the ship itself, which now serves as an artificial reef for many marine organisms. I wanted to capture this wreck as a split to highlight more of the ship but at the time the light hit the port side, it was a bit wavy so I was fortunate to have gotten this shot!

NEOM, Saudi Arabia

Canon, 5D Mark III, Nauticam, Canon 11-24mm, iso 500, f16, 1/100, None

Judge's comments:

A split level creates an enthralling view of this impressive wreck, captured in beautiful light, with perfect technique in challenging conditions. View this shot as big as you can!

Alex Mustard



THIRD

'Dead steel resurrection ' Pier Mane (South Africa)

The lively deck of the Kt Mawar becomes a nursery for several species among which are yellow juvenile snappers and silverbacks. The fishes find the metal frame and its interior hull a refuge from the surrounding predators circulating in mid water.

The large trawler now finds its new purpose, transforming from a deadly fishing instrument and deadsteel grave into a lively underwater reef - remote lighting on the bridge and the central deck depicts its resurrection.

Kt Mawar, Trois aux Biches, Mauritius

Olympus, EM-1 M2, Nauticam NA-EM1M2, Olympus 8mm, iso 200, f/4, 200, 3 x Z240, 2 x YS-D2, 2 x Subtronic Alpha,

Judge's comments:

The already powerful angle of this shot is superbly brought to life by subtle lighting creating a depth and ghostly atmosphere.

Peter Rowlands





HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Panorama' Taeyup Kim (Korea, Republic of)

This is the famous airplane wreck in Aqaba, Jordan. I tried to think how to put this big subject in a good composition after the first dive at this point. Despite being a clean environment with more than 20m visibility, the distance was troublesome to capture this large subject. So, during the second dive, I was able to capture a clear plane image using the Panorama function and by post-processing from various angles.

C130-H, Jordan

Nikon, D850, Nauticam NA D850, Nikon 8-15mm Fisheye, iso 400, f/16, 1/125, Ambient light

Judge's comment:

There were more panorama shots than ever entered this year and it is the perfect technique for such large objects like a C-130 Hercules! The exhaling diver confirms the huge size and contributes significantly by being small and well positioned in the frame.



HIGHLY COMMENDED 'Badai Wreck' Yen-Yi Lee (Taiwan)

The underwater panorama photo comprising 10 images shows the magnificient Badai wreck.

In 1983, the rough seas caused by a typhoon heavily damaged a Korean cargo ship near Lanyu, Taiwan. The ship was abandoned and finally sank in 40 meters in Badai bay. After more than 35 years, the wreck has turned into a wonderland for sealife and is also one of the most famous dive sites in Lanyu.

Lanyu, Taiwan

Canon, 5D4, Nauticam, Canon 8-15mm fisheye, iso 200, f9, 1/100, Natural Light

Judge's comments:

Panoramas make it possible to capture a scene which would be impossible with just a single shot. This it the right choice of technique for this subject; add a distant diver for scale and you have a world class image.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

'A glance of deep sea exploration' Pier Mane (South Africa)

A 7.5m, 10 seater submarine is exploring the wreck of the Star Hope cruiser was sunk in 1988 on its port side on a sandy bottom at 36-40m depth. A typhoon in 2010 severed the wreck into two pieces. I timed the dive so that the small submarine would be on the same wreck, it was the first time I dove with a submarine next to me. This beautiful wreck is now home a giant Javanese moray.

Star Hope Dive Site, Grand Baie, Mauritius

Olympus, EM-1 M2, Nauticam NA-EM1M2, Olympus 8mm, iso 64, f3.5, 1/30, Natural Light

Judge's comments:

So very atmospheric. In particular to set up this particular image when the submarine was on the same wreck. The composition between both wreck and sub are evenly positioned. The author has captured the peak of the action with the sub looking as though it is surveying the wreck. Natural light with a slow shutter speed of 30th sec.

Martin Edge



HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Parat and Fernedale' Pekka Tuuri (Finland)

This is a famous wreck site in Norway. It's possible to see two wrecks (Parat, on the left and Fernedale, on the right) at the same time if the visibility is excellent. The dive team planned this picture on the deck of the dive boat. I hovered at 40 m while my friends dived deeper and visited Parat and moved along the paths that we had talked about. I am very fortunate to be able to dive with competent teams! Plan the dive and shoot the plan, the famous principle of diving adapted to photography!

Gulen, Norway

Canon, 5D mk III, Subal, Canon 15 mm, iso 1000, 4, 1/20, Ambient light Judge's comments:

How do top one wreck? Shoot two in the same frame. This is a masterful composition with the divers lights revealing the detail on the foreground wreck balanced perfectly by the atmospheric second wreck in the background on the opposite side of the frame.

Alex Mustard

COMMENDED

'The Crow's Nest' David Alpert (United Kingdom)

My aim was to light up the wreck at night using multiple sources of light to create unusual lighting effects. Our afternoon reconnaissance dive confirmed my pre-dive info. There was nothing but a few spikes left of her once iconic satellite dishes.

Later, I had the team target the crow's nest. Although the sun had already set there was still a soft blue glow of dusk filtering through the water.

Each diver had at least two flashlights to light up the metal structure, which by now was silhouetted against the fading evening light. The divers, difficult to discern against the black water, added further mystery to the already unusual scene.

Detailed communication underwater was challenging. Much of what one sees was visualised before the dive and discussed on the surface. The team played their roles brilliantly and I thank them for their efforts in helping me produce this shot.

USS Vandenberg - Key West, USA

Canon , 5D MKIII, Nauticam, Sigma 15mm, iso 2000, f/6.3, 1/50, INON Z330

Judge's comment:

Pun intended, this shot shone out with it's ghost-like atmosphere and multiple lights, all of which, without exception, make a major contribution to the final delivery.

Peter Rowlands

COMMENDED

'Tanks' Taeyup Kim (Korea, Republic of)

This is a newly made UW military museum in Aqaba, Jordan. Some people may say this museum is underwater rubbish, but Jordan went through thorough environmental research and post-processing of the tanks to develop this museum site. Visiting this site has given me an exotic experience underwater and I think it will be merged with the surroundings over time to become a more wonderful spot.

UW Military museum, Jordan

Nikon, D850, Nauticam NA D850, Nikon 8-15mm Fisheye, iso 250, 11, 1/100, Ambient light

Judge's comment:

Excellent visibility and positioning. I can appreciate the work that went into creating such a splendid photographic dive/photo site for Jordan.

Martin Edge



COMMENDED

'Mitsubishi G4M "Betty" Bomber' Marcus Blatchford (United Kingdom)

I visited Truk Lagoon for a very specific project. 75 years have passed and the wrecks are now showing definite signs of degradation. The Truk Wreck Baseline Project plans to scan all of the wrecks and create high resolution 3d models by photogrammetry so degradation can be monitored. I asked the other divers on my boat if they would be interested to be part of one of the models - they were all excited to be involved. During the dive I directed the 4 divers individually to lay on the seabed while I scan them as part of the larger model. The image shown was created from 1337 source images and if printed at actual size has a pixel size of 0.847mm!

Truk Lagoon, Federated States of Micronesia

Canon, EOS 5d mk iv, Nauticam, Canon EF 8-15mm L USM Fisheye, iso variou, various, various, Twin INON z330

Judge's comments:

Photogrammetry is such a powerful and exciting tool in underwater imaging and this is a standout example of a classic subject. A photo that is clearly going to be very valuable for the future, as well as stunning to look at.

Alex Mustard





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WINNER

'Octopus Training' Pasquale Vassallo (Italy)

At the end of a session of free diving, I noticed a soccer ball, in the distance and on the surface. Intrigued I approached it, and then I noticed that below it was an octopus that was being pulled along by the current. I do not know what it was doing under the ball, but I think it is training for the next football World Cup! There was time for me to take a couple of shots before the octopus let go of the ball and dropped back to the seabed.

Tyrrhenian Sea, Bacoli, Naples, Italy

Canon, Canon 5dsr, Seacam Canon 5d sr, Canon 8-15, iso 200, f/20, 1/100, Inon z240

Judge's comments:

This image provokes a rollercoaster ride of emotions: at first it makes me happy, then sad. It is impossible not to laugh at this composition seemingly showing an octopus with a ball for a head. Then as you think, you enjoy seeing the cephalopod playfully investigating with this strange object in its environment, happily waving its arms in the water. Then the photo poignantly reminds us that oceans have, for too long, been a rubbish dump for all our old and unwanted trash.



RUNNER UP

'Say me ' Paolo Isgro (Italy)

This photo was taken in Tonga during a Naia liveaboard. On the second day, in the middle of lunch, the cruise director called us because there was a lot of whale action right around the boat. So in a fraction we climb out of the chair, jump into the wetsuit swallowing the last bite and dive into the water. A couple of young whales really want to play with us and minutes after minute they get closer and closer. And it was during a freediving at 10 m that I saw this whale caming so close to me: it looks at me very intensely and says "Hello" in one breath exhaling so many bubbles.

Ha'apai, Tonga

Canon, 80D, Sea&Sea MDX-80D, Canon 8-15 fish eye, iso 100, f/8, 1/125, natural light

Judge's comments:

We get to look at a lot of whale images in UPY, most of which are very impressive but this shot leapt out on several levels. The composition is immaculate, the colours crisp and clean, the eye contact perfect and the bubbles are not something we normally see. A deserved Runner Up.

Peter Rowlands



THIRD

'The birth' Filippo Borghi (Italy)

This photo portrays an incredible moment - the birth of a Mediterranean catshark. To try to make this shot I spent over a month visiting the same egg again and again, waiting for the right day for hatching. Only with patience, passion and willingness can you capture certain shots, which makes them special to take.

Meditterenian sea, Italy

Nikon , 800e, Subal, 10,5mm, iso 200, 11, 1/100, one Underwater

Judge's comment:

Some sharks give birth to live young, some hatch from eggs. Such an amazing moment seeing this cat shark wiggling out from its egg case laid in such a beautiful location.

Alex Mustard



HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Mating Nudibranchs' Steven Kovacs (United States)

Traveling 5 miles off the coast of Florida at night and jumping into the ocean to drift near the surface in 600 foot depth, one can come across many wonderful and strange pelagic animals. One of these amazing animals is this pelagic Nudibranch (sea slug) that swims and lives up in the water column. Just coming across these wonderful creatures is rewarding enough but on one particular dive I was fortunate to come across two of them together. It took a moment to realize that they were connected to each other and were, in fact, in the process of mating. What made this super rare encounter even more special is that in the split moment the photograph was taken, it appeared as if the nudibranchs were introducing themselves face to face with a handshake. A truly unique encounter in an other worldly setting.

Palm Beach, Florida- blackwater dive, USA

Nikon , D7000, Ikelite, 60mm macro, iso 320, f/25, 1/250, two x Ikelite DS160

Judge's comments:

Fabulous to see this incredibly rare record of these pelagic molluscs mating, so alien to us, it could be a photo not from the Gulf Stream, but from another planet. Must have been very difficult to photograph with ephemeral behaviour, in the dark and with semi-translucent tiny animals.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

'A Fever of Cownose Rays' Alex Kydd (Australia)

A rare encounter with a fever of cownose rays on the Ningaloo Reef, Western Australia. This was a once in a lifetime encounter with a species that is rarely documented in this region. We unexpectedly came across the rays whilst searching for whale sharks. The rays were spiralling up and down the water column from the surface to 20 meters for a brief moment until they disappeared into the deep. The images were taken whilst freediving to approximately 6 metres. The rays were circling and rubbing together in a behaviour that is still not clearly understood. It may have been possible mating or a social behaviour. The exact species of ray is still debated, it is either Rhinoptera javanica or Rhinoptera neglecta.

Ningaloo Reef, Western Australia, Australia

Nikon, D810, Aquatica Digital, Sigma 15mm f/2.8 EX DG Diagonal Fisheye Lens, iso 320, f/9, 1/250, Natural light

Judge's comments:

A top down camera angle on the rays has captured the behaviour perfectly. The balance of all four sides keeps the eye of the viewer contained within frame. It's not too tight either, just the right amount of space to admire the spectacle.

Alex Mustard



HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Turtle & Friends' Henley Spiers (United Kingdom)

A large olive ridley turtle rests peacefully on the sea bed as it is manicured by an eager group of reef fish. Turtle shells are often populated by epibionts, or tiny ocean hitchhikers, who use the shell as a home and a way of spreading their gene pool to new areas. They do not harm the turtle in small numbers, but should their presence grow too great, the turtle will be uncomfortably encumbered. To prevent this from happening, turtles have been known to recruit the services of fish, who feed on these epibionts in a mutually beneficial, symbiotic relationship. Even so, this behaviour is rarely witnessed by divers, and I was delighted to find this scene upon dropping in for a dive at Cabo Pulmo National Park, where strict marine protection measures have resulted in a safe haven for marine life.

Cabo Pulmo, Baja California, Mexico

Nikon, D850, Nauticam NA D850, Nikon 28-70mm (@28mm) with Nauticam W.A.C.P., iso 200, 11, 1/100, 2 x ONEUW 160X strobes

Judge's comments:

Turtles quite often stop on the reef for a clean, but we've not seen a shot of these species involved in the behaviour before. Fabulous facial expression too.





HIGHLY COMMENDED 'Emperor among drummers' Scott Portelli (Australia)

An Emperor fish tussles for position among a school of silver drummer fish in the shallows at Lord Howe Island, Australia, competing for prime position to devour any scraps left by tourists visiting to watch this behaviour. The Emperor fish spurts a stream of water out of its mouth in an attempt to distract the other fish from a potential free meal.

Lord Howe Island, Australia

Olympus , EM1-MKII, Olympus, 8mm fisheye, iso 320, f11, 1/500, Natural

Judge's comments:

It was the 'Spurt' which first attracted me to this image. Quite unusual with a wide angle split against the mountain in the background. There is so much depth in this image. Even the clouds in the sky seem very well placed.

Martin Edge



COMMENDED

'The Hunt' Nadya Kulagina (Kazakhstan)

I was hoping to see silversides last summer in Grand Cayman. Some were spotted around Eden Rock and when I went there, there were a lot of silversides but they were outnumbered by photographers willing to take pictures of them. So I went back to Eden Rock early the next day. As the day before, this time the silversides were still in abundance forming clouds so thick I could barely see any light not to mention tarpons hunting them. When tarpons attack silversides, they move through the school at an extremely fast speed. I was very fortunate with the timing of this shot because the tarpon that I first couldn't see swam toward me cutting through the school of silversides, opening up some space behind and letting the *light come through. A yellow sponge in the* bottom left corner added more color to this shot making it more eye catching.

Eden Rock, Cayman Islands

Nikon , D800, Nexus, Sigma FE 15 mm, iso 400, 13, 1/13, Ikelite DS160x2

Judge's comments:

There is so much energy going on in this image. The silversides are thick and fast, from the the very near foreground, right through to the blue water in the far distance. The tarpon close to the lens is key to this entire composition. The eye contact is excellent, sizing up the the silversides balled around the yellow sponge. The lighting is ideal from both front and back and perfectly controlled by the use of two strobes. Great use of depth perspective through out. I liked this shot very much indeed.

COMMENDED

'Great White Bite' Kimberly Jeffries (United States)

For several days we visited the resting site of a deceased sperm whale hoping to capture the natural events that unfolded. We were treated to visitations from some of the most beautiful and threatened species in the world and witnessed incredible and natural feeding events. One of the most memorable visitors was this newly identified white shark. The behavior of each shark was unique not just to the species but to individual and their reactions to various divers all very different. It was thrilling to document and witness these creatures, knowing that these images would go on to help scientists put together new knowledge and understanding to help protect our oceans.

Oahu, Hawaii, United States

Canon, 5D Mark IV, SUBAL 5D4, Canon 8-15mm fisheye, iso 100, 4.0, 1/250, Sea & Sea YS -D2

Judge's comments:

We get lots of great white shark photos entered into UPY, but almost all are portraits of this amazing species. So wonderful to see a natural behaviour shot of this species, showing that like most great hunters, it will also scavenge a meal.

Alex Mustard





COMMENDED

'Together' Nadia Aly (United States)

I was very lucky to see this group of aggregating mobula rays off the coast of Baja, Mexico, on my annual expedition.

A truly lucky encounter with almost perfect visibility. This group was circling for what seemed like hours, ever so slowly and it felt like there could have been 10,000 or more of them.

Baja Peninsula, Mexico

Canon, 1 DX Mark II, Nauticam, 8-15mm, iso 400, 6.3, 200, none

Judge's comments:

Aggregations anywhere, on land or underwater, are visually one of nature's captivating events. Spectacle, scale and sheer numbers combine to create one of life's experiences. Add sunbeams and the falling off perspective and your memory of a special event will last a lifetime.

Peter Rowlands

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- TCLI : 97 R9 : 94
- Weight : 2780g(on land); 600g (Built in with float arm technology design for buoyancy)
- Size :356mm*80mm*96(head)



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WINNER

'Butterfly Effect' Lilian Koh (Singapore)

Having been immersed mostly in creative macro, this is the first time I have used a snoot technique on a larger scale. Maintaining a shallow depth to capture the reflection, the snoot is used to bring focus to the model while the blue light catches the flowing veil that frames around her creating a butterfly effect.

Tulamben, Bali, Indonesia

Canon , EOS 5D Mark IV, Nauticam NA-5DMIV, Canon EF 16-35mm f/2.8L III USM, iso 200, f/6.3, 1/160, INON Z-330 & RETRA LSD & FIX NEO 1200 DX BLUE

Judge's comments:

Some images have instant appeal but it takes a quality one to sustain it. Winning images must continue to grow in appeal through the stages to rise above the pack. This image kept coming back and kept getting promoted for its originality, its perfection and delicacy. Our guidelines say "We hope to recognise and reward excellence and creativity in underwater photography within its various disciplines." This is a prime example and a unanimous winner.

Peter Rowlands



RUNNER UP

'Angry seahorse' Rooman Luc (Belgium)

In June I heard that there was a seahorse at a certain dive site in the Eastern Scheldt, at a depth of 12m. From then on, I went looking for the seahorse every week, and eventually found it in August. It was posing so nicely around a pipe that I had ample time to photograph it with the snoot. This gives the seahorse an angry look, but that is fortunately a mere appearance.

Eastern Scheldt, Netherlands

Nikon, D810, Hugyfot housing , 60mm, iso 100, 11, 125, subtronic pro 160 + Retra snoot

Judge's comments:

It was the two eyes with such menace which first attracted the judges. Stark, foreboding eye contact. The composition is flawless. Notice the thin black space at the top which works well with the weight of the composition.

Martin Edge

THIRD

'Crab-eater Seal' Greg Lecoeur (France)

During an expedition on a small sailboat, Guillaume Nery, Florian Fisher and myself explored the Antarctica Peninsula by diving below the surface. Although the conditions were extreme with a temperature of -1°C, we documented extraordinary marine life in a fragile ecosystem, such as on this image: crab-eater seal. We also saw leopard seals, gentoo penguins, Antarctica fur seals, and Weddel seals. All these marine animals are affected by global warming with the melting of the ice. Despite the name, Crabeater Seals don't eat Crabs. Krill make up to 95% of a Crabeater Seal's diet. Crabeater seals have developed a sieve-shaped tooth structure that filters krill, much like whale baleen. They suck up water containing krill, close their jaws, and push the water between their specialized teeth, trapping the krill inside.

Cuverville Island, Antarctica

NIKON, D500, NAUTICAM NA D500, TOKINA 10_17mm, iso 250, f/9, 1/250, 2 x Ikelite DS161

Judge's comments:

The crab eater seal looks so hungry. Superb lighting with two strobes was just enough to accentuate the teeth inside the gaping mouth. The eye contact adds to the menace. What also makes this image stand out for me is the shape and composition of the iceberg in relation to the seal. One of my favourites from the portrait category.





'High Five - A newly hatched hawksbill turtle.' Matty Smith (Australia)

I flew out to PNG specifically to shoot this image. Upon arrival I knew I would only get one chance to get it right, so I spent the day testing lens & lighting experiments on a small piece of driftwood about the same size as the turtle (4cm) to get my technique perfected before the real event. In the end I opted for a 4"port with the fisheye with 2 snooted strobes. One strobe above the water pointing down and the other underwater pointing up at the hatching. When my chance came to get this shot I had less than a minute to nail it, the extensive preparation paid off.

Lissenung Island, Papua New Guinea

Nikon, D500, Aquatica Digital, Nikkor 10.5mm F2.8, iso 160, F22, 1/125, Inon Z240

Judge's comments:

Some images look simple and their simplicity is appealing but after reading Matty's back story it's how you prepare that makes it look simple. Huge appeal, great composition and eye appeal topped by a kiss of sunburst. A big image from a small subject.

Peter Rowlands



HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Close encounters' Pedro Jarque Krebs (Peru)

The hippopotamus is one of the most dangerous animals because of its strength and territoriality. Approaching a hippopotamus in its territory and underwater can be fatal... Therefore, my photograph was taken with a hippo in captivity, which has ideal facilities with ample space for immersion, so that I could focus on what really interests me in my photography, namely to portray the animals as closely as possible.

I specialize in animal photography and in general my portraits are taken either in a natural environment or in captivity and even in sanctuaries. I try to establish a more intimate relationship between the animal and the viewer, and in general I isolate the animal from any context to avoid distractions. This photograph is one of the few animal portraits I have taken without a black background.

Zoom Torino, Italy

Canon, Canon EOS 5D Mark III, No, Canon EF 70-300mm f/4-5.6L IS USM, iso 500, f/4, 1/400, Natural

Judge's comments:

What a face! Love how it appears through the shoal of African cichlids. We've had previous winners in UPY taken in aquariums, but never seen a face like this pop up!



HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Reflection, Common frog (Rana temporaria)' Mirko Zanni (Switzerland)

In the spring in the small river of the Maggia Valley in the south part of Switzerland, frogs begin to descend from the hills to spawn. They follow small streams as they make their way to the pond to lay their eggs. I was observing them as they followed their journey and in this pool I found this female with especially bright colors, probably due to the mating period.

Maggia Valley, Switzerland

Canon, 5D Mark III, Seacam, TOKINA 10-17mm, iso 640, 16, 60, INON Z-240

Judge's comments:

We look to encourage different definitions of portrait in this category, and this delicately beautiful image is a gorgeous portrait of a pretty frog in its habitat.

Alex Mustard





'Bargi Hope' David Alpert (United Kingdom)

Misool is iconic in the marine conservation movement. Its founders realised a dream to turn this once badly mismanaged and over-fished area into a flourishing reserve.

Pictured here is one of the smaller inhabitants. Less than 2cm in length this Bargibanti Pygmy Sea Horse makes its home within the picturesque Gorgonian sea fan. They are incredibly difficult to spot and tend to shy away from light, making an eye contact shot challenging. One needs time and patience - not abundant in over 20m of water.

The Bargi peering out of the darkest corner is almost a metaphor for the story of Misool. The blue ray of light coming through represents the hope that initiatives like Misool can offer. Large-scale replication will go a long way towards helping preserve the future of our oceans.

Misool, Raja Ampat, Indonesia

Canon , 5D MKIII, Nauticam, Canon 100mm Macro, iso 320, F/8, 1/200, Inon Z240

Judge's comment:

A very different take on a pygmy seahorse. Instead of filling the frame the author has had the forethought to render the subject quite small whilst introducing the delicate bokeh of the pink soft corals. Notice In the far background just the hint of blue water. This creates depth perspective which has the tendency to keep the eye of the viewer in the frame for much longer.





COMMENDED

'Chinese Opera Mask' Wayne Lai (China)

I saw a group of cardinal fish not far away from the shipwreck of the Thistlegorm during my first visit to the Red Sea. Some of them were incubating eggs in their mouths. I spent about 20 minutes to get this perfectly symmetrical shot of cardinal fish with eggs. It looks like a Chinese opera mask on a black background.

The Red Sea, Eygpt

Canon, Canon 5DSR, Sea & Sea, EF 8-15mm, f/4L Fisheye, iso 250, 16, 1/200, Ikelite DS160

Judge's comment:

Shooting underwater fish portraits requires endurance and most of all patience, patience and more patience. The author knew in his mind's eye exactly how he wanted the shot to look. This portrait is faultless. The two eyes are perfectly symmetrical. The strobes illuminate the eggs within the mouth and wrap around the entire features of the fish. Fish portraiture at it's very best.

Martin Edge
5) Portraits



COMMENDED

'Close encounters in the Swamps' Mirko Zanni (Switzerland)

During my last trip to Florida to photograph Goliath groupers, I had to change my travel plans due to hurricane Dorian ... so I went to visit the Everglades to be able to photograph the American alligator, it didn't take long to find some alligators of considerable size and not at all afraid of my camera housing!

Big Cypress Swamp (Everglades), Florida USA

Canon, 5D Mark III, Seacam, EF8-15mm f/4L FISHEYE USM, iso 320, 16, 180, INON Z-330

Judge's comments:

In nearly all portraits it's the eye or eyes that count and in this image, despite being upstaged by an impressive set of dentures, it is perfectly composed to take the viewer's eye straight to it. Judge's like images that get straight to the point; this one does it very well.



5) Portraits

COMMENDED

'The White Goby' Nicholas More (United Kingdom)

Swimming slowly over the black sands of the Lembeh Strait, I came across a patch of rubble reef. On one of the boulders was a large leather coral and sitting on the underside of it was a Ghost Goby. I'm always on the lookout for interesting backgrounds and this was perfect for a unique image. I opened my aperture to blur and overexpose the background to give a pure white platform for the bright red goby. I wanted a head-on portrait shot with intense double eye contact and so took my time and edged closer. I managed a few shots, including this before it lost patience and buggered off.

Lembeh, Indonesia

Nikon , D500, Nauticam, Nikon 60mm f2.8 G AF-S ED Micro, iso 100, f5.6, 1/320th, Inon Z240

Judge's comments:

The photographer's expert lighting and precise framing of this ghost goby on a leather coral has produce an image with the feel of a studio portrait, despite being taken in the wild, on a coral reef.

Alex Mustard

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WINNER

'Layered Thoughts' Mok Wai Hoe (Singapore)

The creation of this image was inspired by in-camera double exposure photography. This abstract style typically involves re-exposing the silhouette of a person against a textured background such as urban landscape. I was mesmerized by the aesthetics as well as the extensive possibilities of interpreting this form of visual art. At the same time, I also found no examples of the style applied underwater. Fuelled with inspiration, I spent a year researching and experimenting to marry this technique with underwater photography. This black and white image was made by first shooting a silhouette against a cloudy afternoon sky. The picture was then re-exposed against the image of a coral garden. While this image pays homage to subjects most dear to me, I hope that viewers could find their own meaning as they juxtapose the elements and contrasting textures in the picture.

Komodo National Park, Indonesia

Canon, 5D mark III, Nauticam NA-5DMKIII, Canon EF 24-70mm f/2.8L II + Canon EF 16-35mm f/4L, iso 100, f/9.0, 1/160, 2 x Seacam Seaflash 150D

Judge's comments:

They say the best ideas are the simplest ones and this is a stunning and original photo that is without doubt one of the most memorable in the contest. The minimalism of the concept marries perfectly with the monochrome presentation. An exquisite piece of competition photography.



RUNNER UP

'Constellation of Eagle Rays' Henley Spiers (United Kingdom)

A school of uniquely patterned spotted eagle rays passes beneath me on an unforgettable dive in the Maldives. Like most divers, I have always found these rays to be especially spellbinding, but also highly elusive! This school passed beneath me towards the end of our dive and it was one of those rare moments of huge admiration, as well as immense inspiration. I could visualise the image I wanted and, whilst the rays glided effortlessly, I swam my heart out trying to keep up and unlock the desired camera angle. The rays continued forward and deeper, giving me just a few moments to capture this frame. Scientists have just recently confirmed that the spotting on each ray is a unique identifier, the equivalent of a human fingerprint. I love how black and white reinforces that uniqueness, keenly displaying the distinctive spotting, as well as the subtle shading differences between each individual.

COMO Cocoa, South Mali Atoll, Maldives

Nikon, Nikon D850, Nauticam NA D850, Nikon 28-70mm (@28mm) with Nauticam W.A.C.P., iso 800, 6.3, 60, 2 x Inon Z330 strobes

Judge's comments:

Choosing what converts best into black and white is obviously important but in this perfectly composed image it is the subtle shades of grey which lifted it above the pack and normally it would have been enough to lift the trophy. Unfortunately this year there was a uniquely executed combination image which stole it.



THIRD

'Earthless' Zena Holloway (United Kingdom)

This image takes place in the Ring of Cenotes in the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico where the ancient Mayans believed the underground rivers were a gateway to another world. The Ring of Cenotes were created sixty-six million years ago when a colossal asteroid struck Earth. The impact was so powerful that it left behind a crater 180 kilometers across, and brought about climate change that led to the extinction of the dinosaurs. Throughout this region rivers now flow, deep underground through limestone rock that has, in places, collapsed to leave these remarkable caverns. In 2019 I was in Mexico, working on a photographic project about escaping gravity, inspired in part by the 50th anniversary of the moon landings. Whilst searching for 'another world' I followed Brazilian free-diver and renowned conservationist, Flavia Eberhard, through a dark underwater passage and we emerged into this vast, unexplored space.

Yucatan Peninsula , Mexico

Canon , EOS-1DC, Seacam, 20mm, iso 800, 5.6, 1/125, Sunlight & Ikelite DS 161

Judge's comments:

At first glance a simple image, whose power blooms as you are drawn into the perfection of the details. The geometric precision of the composition, the balletic pose of the model, the flow of her hair, the position of her hand, her intersection with the light. This image discards the extraneous and delivers impact in concentrated form.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Jellyfish' Henley Spiers (United Kingdom)

The long tentacles of a jellyfish trail behind as it swims close to the surface. I am fascinated by the image opportunities just beneath the surface, where the interplay between the elements of water and air is so keenly felt.

On this occasion, I was excited to find a jellyfish bloom as we surfaced from our dive, as they undoubtedly have a graceful beauty which accompanies their painful threat. This image shows the stark contrast between black water and the white sky, with the surface seen through Snell's window, a phenomenon by which an underwater viewer sees everything above the surface through a cone of light.

Although it may seem like Photoshop wizardry, this

image was achieved quite simply by converting to black and white using the elements present, it was also inspired by the the work of Christian Vizl, and I would like to pay tribute to his influence.

Santander, Cebu, Philippines

Nikon, D850, Nauticam NA D850, Nikon 28-70mm (@28mm) with Nauticam W.A.C.P., iso 100, 14, 100, 2 x Inon Z330 strobes

Judge's comments:

First and foremost I would like to commend this image, in particular, for seeing in their 'minds eye' the opportunity to create this stunning black and white. Mono at it's finest.

Martin Edge



HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Suspended' James Ferrara (United States)

We were off the coast in Grand Cayman, on a massive drop off, doing some line diving training (freediving). Once the session was over, Mark Tilley, was having fun blowing bubble rings at about 40ft deep. The way the bubbles and Mark danced through the water was a thing of beauty. I grabbed my camera and dove down as he strung together 4 perfect rings, allowing me to capture this moment of him suspended in space.

Off the West Shoreline in Open Bluewater of Caribbean Sea , Grand Cayman

Sony, A7riii, Nauticam NA- A7RIII , Zeiss 18mm 2.8, iso 1250, 7.1, 1/800, natural light

Judge's comments:

In any category you have to be different to stand out from the crowd. This shot, even in colour, would have been different but it is the decision to deliver it in black and white that makes it even more appealing. Graphically simple, perfectly composed and the right decision.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Light bulb' Filippo Borghi (Italy)

With this photo I wanted to highlight the incredible transparency of this larval form of octopus and give it a different color perspective.

Lembeth, Indonesia

Nikon, D800e, Subal, 60mm, iso 250, 16, 1/250, One Underwater

Judge's comment:

Beautiful rendition of black & white underwater imagery. The composition is perfect, in particular the tentacles reaching out to the top left corner of the image frame.

Martin Edge



HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Enemy Within' Aaron Wong (Singapore)

I was looking into the blue at the outer reef of the pass in an outgoing tide. While the 'wall of sharks' was the main draw in Fakarava, I noticed this lone shark swimming on it's own against a school of fish. I decided that I would capture the moment as a wide shot then waited for the shark to come nearer as the background IS the story. I shot it with ambient light and knew almost immediately it would be perfect for the Black & White category!

Fakarava South Pass, French Polynesia

Nikon , D5, Seacam, 12-24 mm, iso 100, f13, 1/125, nil

Judge's comments:

When you are looking for the peak of the big action it takes nerve to look around for alternatives and spot the simple potential of this sublime shot. The choice of black and white is perfect and sometimes an overall image doesn't have to be in your face to impress. Sometimes less is more.



COMMENDED

'Croc portrait' Jacob Degee (Poland)

This photo presents only the animal's teeth but it is clear that this is a portrait of a crocodile. When printed in big format the subject at first resembles stalactite and stalagmite formations before a viewer delves into the beast's throat. This is another shot from a series of macro shots of big wild animals. Jacob photographs the beauty of nature in magnification and reveals details that have not been noticed before. Jacob's works are printed minimum 3 feet wide, in limited editions and very often in black and white.

Banco Chinchorro, Mexico

Hasselblad, X1d-50c, Custom made housing, XCD120 Macro, iso 400, 11, 1/1000, 2 x DS160

Judge's comments:

As a judge it's great to see a new take on a well entered subject. Crocodile images feature regularly in UPY but only the best or unique ones can get through and this one is certainly unique. The decision to reduce it to black and white was correct as it focuses the eye and the kiss of light into the back of the mouth completes the menace.

COMMENDED

'Turtle Cruising' Michael Gallagher (United Kingdom)

I was scuba diving in the Ngemelis region in Palau in the South Pacific when I encountered this green sea turtle cruising along in the deep blue water just off the wall. It was cautious but curious, and allowed me to swim gently alongside it for some time. I was then able to swim directly above it and take a series of photographs looking directly down at the turtle as it cruised through this remote part of the ocean. Like many divers I know, turtles are a personal favourite of mine and encounters with them like this one are a real privilege.

Blue Holes, Ngemelis, Palau

Canon , 5D3, Hugyfot, Canon 8-15mm fisheye lens @15mm with 1.4x Kenko TC, iso 400, f11, 1/125s, 2 x Inon Z240 strobes

Judge's comments:

A top - down image of a turtle always works well underwater, especially when the fins are visible and in sync. A black and white interpretation adds an 'arty' feel to the shot. The shape of the turtle will also work well in either a landscape or portrait composition.





COMMENDED

'Atlantic spotted dolphins' Galice Hoarau (Norway)

The Atlantic spotted dolphins living around Bimini are usually very curious and playful. They sleep in the shallow during day and move to deeper water to hunt at night. The afternoon, when they wake up and socialize is the best for interaction. This pod was particularly playful, staying with us for over an hour in the warm and clear Bahamian waters, swimming and playing catch with seaweeds. As we were ready to get back on board, this small group checked me up one last time, coming up directly from beneath and into the light.

Bimini, Bahamas

Olympus , Em1-II, Nauticam, Olympus 7-14mm @ 7mm, iso 800, 7.1, 1/320, 2 Inon Z330

Judge's comments:

A perfect formation of subjects, with all eyes and faces clearly connecting with us, and so well suited to the black and white medium.

Alex Mustard

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WINNER

'ULUNA LILY' MANBD (Malaysia)

Uluna Lake in North Sulawesi located 670m above sea level is a place I've always wanted to visit. When I got the opportunity to dive in this freshwater lake at the end of last year, I knew what I wanted to shoot. As I stayed at YOS Dive Lembeh Eco Resort, the journey to the lake took less than two hours. This crystal clear springs lake is famous for its water lilies which only bloom in the morning and blue sky gave a good contrast when shooting. Geared with a mini dome, I did my level best to shoot a split shot and staying very still to find the right angle and moment.

Uluna Lake, Manado , Indonesia

OLYMPUS, TG4, SEA FROGS, INON UWL-S100 ZM80 , iso 100, F/4.5, 1/800, INON S2000

Judge's comments:

Split level shots with compact housings and their small domes are not easy but this perfectly lined split has a freshness and brightness which was always appealing. I have to admit I hadn't spotted the diver (did you?!) but when it was pointed out to me, that was the icing on the cake.





RUNNER UP

'Squid in Disco Fever' Enrico Somogyi (Germany)

Here I tried a slow shutter speed picture of a reef squid at night. I used a flash with a snoot to freeze the motion and then for the colors I used two-colored lights on the left and the right side of the port. After pressing the trigger I intentionally moved the camera to create the patterns. I was happy with the result.

Anilao, Philippines

Panasonic, LX100ii, Nauticam Na-LX100, Inon Ucl 167 +6, iso 200, f/6,3, 1/2, Inon Z240 with optical-iardino Snoot, 2x Lights

Judge's comments:

Beautiful and intriguing the photographer shows a mastery of his medium to transform a common subject into a magic scene.

Alex Mustard



THIRD

'Jellyfish from Palau' Enrico Somogyi (Germany)

For some years the Jellyfish lake was closed. Now it has been reopened . I tried a split shot for this beautiful creature. The ftlash was positioned close to the port and I used a fixed focus, because the autofocus from compact cameras is too slow. I used a small domeport with around 12cm diameter. It was not easy to handle. But in the end I captured it.

Jellyfishlake, Palau

Panasonic, LX100ii, Meikon, Sony Fisheye Converter, iso 200, f/11, 1/320, 2x Retra Flash

Judge's comments:

As I have previously stated, split level shots with compact cameras are far from easy but Enrico has controlled the camera to maximise the possibilities and succeeded very well. The under surface reflections lift the overall effect and the simple underwater lighting has created an almost moon-like glow. The topside being slightly out of focus is good as it doesn't distract. SLR delivery from a compact :-)

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'In my place' Kathrin Landgraf-Kluge (Germany)

I fell in love with the super tiny underwater critters only recently, less than *3 years ago during a holiday to Lembeh.* I soon returned with my compact camera equipment upgraded for super macro photography by adding a 15+ macro lens. It was during one of my first dives with the new equipment when I took this photo. We spotted this tiny Bryozoan Goby and I really loved how he looked like peeking out from a window of his home. I was lucky to get the shot like this! I only learned later that this species was only discovered 7 years ago and that this one is on the list of many photographers which makes the photo even more special for me!

Lembeh Strait, Indonesia

Canon, G16, Fantasea FG16, 5+ and 15+ macro lenses stacked, iso 100, 4, 1/100, Sea&Sea YS-03 and YS-D2

Judge's comment:

A delicate portrait of a recently discovered species, that looks so classy in the limited colour palette. I love the 'fairy lights' effect of the white tips of the bryozoan framing the goby.

Alex Mustard





HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Coconut Octopus' Enrico Somogyi (Germany)

On a sunny afternoon I dived on a sandy divesite in Sugar Beach. There I found a coconut octopus crawling on the sand. When I got closer he started a nice pose for me and I got the shot.

Sipalay, Philippines

Olympus, TG-4, Olympus TG4, Inon Macro Fisheye Lens, iso 200, f/6,3, 1/80, Inon Z240

Judge's comments:

This image jumped out at me but it took a while for the other two judges to share my enthusiasm. In the end I didn't have to champion it, it just grew on them and so kept rising up through the ranks. Pastel colour contrast and a perfect pose with great eye contact. Spot on.



'Corals from Moalboal' Enrico Somogyi (Germany)

In the early morning I was snorkeling on the House reef from the Quo Vadis Resort. Just in front there are beautiful corals.

Luckily I got a nice shot with the morning sun behind.

Moalboal, Philippines

Panasonic, LX100ii, Meikon, Raynox Circular Fisheye Lens, iso 200, f/8, 1/500, 2x Retra Flash

Judge's comment:

The circular fisheye lens has worked well. First and foremost (in my opinion) the lens must not be tilted in anyway if you want the image to look credible. Notice the water line in the distance, it is straight as could be. The twinkle of sunlight evokes the early morn and the light on the corals is perfect. It's very easy to overexpose in these circumstances but the author has kept the light very low key with the use of two strobes each side of the corals.

Martin Edge



HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Deep purple' Andrea Michelutti (Italy)

During my last day of diving in Raja Ampat, I've noticed a colony of yellow arrow cleaner shrimps hovering behind a coral branch. I also spotted, a few inches behind them, some coloured encrusting sponges, perfect as a background.

Two minutes later, one of the shrimps decided to cooperate and struck the perfect pose for me, letting me get the shot I wanted.

Agusta Eco Resort, Raja Ampat, West Papua, Indonesia

Sony, RX100 Mark VII, Seafrogs, Aquatica 10x, iso 80, f/11, 1/500, 2 x Inon Z330

Judge's comment:

Such delicate colours in both the subject and the well chosen and composed background The translucent body of the shrimp completes a well executed, yet natural image.



COMMENDED

'Seven baby seahorses and a baby leatherjacket' Mel Wu (Australia)

Home town diving is cool water, especially through the colder months, but as the water warms up the big-belly seahorse fry start hatching. On the same day, on one dive you can see hundreds, and then an hour later you will see none. On this day I was surrounded by baby seahorses clinging to sea grass near the surface, hunting. They are challenging subjects at 2cm long, moving around in surface swell and current. You can't get too close as the bubbles from your reg easily influence their movement. This photo is a result of specifically going on dives to look for the baby seahorses; about a month after I started doing underwater photography. I fell in love and have now wracked up countless hours underwater always dreaming of the next dive!

Blairgowrie Pier, Australia

Sony , RX100V, Fantasea, N/A, iso 160, F3.2, 1/250, 2 x sea&sea YS-01

Judge's comments:

A herd of young seahorses have found something solid to cling to in the open sea and are accompanied by a young filefish. A fascinating and balanced composition that must have been very difficult to frame and focus.

Alex Mustard

COMMENDED

'Corals in the morning' Enrico Somogyi (Germany)

When the tide is low the corals from Moalboal are just under the surface. This makes a perfect place for split shots. This picture was taken early in the morning with beautiful coloured clouds in the background.

Moalboal, Philippines

Panasonic, LX100ii, Meikon, Sony Fisheye Converter, iso 250, f/8, 1/160, 2x Retra Flash

Judge's comments:

Once again, the author has used the light with total perfection. The clouds of early morn, the reflections on the undersurface, the perfect ark of the water line across the image and the light on the hard corals beneath. This kind of image needs to be early morning when you can shoot towards the rising sun and clouds without over exposing.

Martin Edge





COMMENDED

'Garden eel in the Sun' Enrico Somogyi (Germany)

Normally the garden eels will disappear if you go to close. But this one was very relaxed and allowed me to come close enough to take some pictures. Here I was using the double exposure technique with the settings in the camera. The first shoot was in the beginning from this dive, near the surface. Then we found the relaxed eel and I had the chance to complete my double exposure.

Anilao, Philippines

Panasonic, LX100ii, Nauticam Na-LX100, Nauticam CMC, iso 200, f/10, 1/4000s, Inon Z240 with optical- iardino Snoot

Judge's comments:

A double exposure, performed incamera, really tests the technique of a photographer, especially with a challenging subject like this garden eel. Enrico has excelled here capturing only what he wants and every aspect in pin-sharp focus.

Alex Mustard





The sea, and in particular the underwater world, is a tremendously demanding environment for both humans and equipment. As specialists, we are fully aware of the importance of the quality of our equipment. High quality is the most important guarantee of performance, endurance and reliability in a hostile universe. That's why we take the necessary measures at every stage of the design and manufacturing process to ensure our products offer the highest possible quality levels. Though the quality of our products is essential, quality of service is just as vital and we are dedicated to maintaining the best possible relations with our customers and all those who use our products.

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WINNER

'Shark nursery.' Anita Kainrath (Austria)

The Bahamas has been a shark sanctuary since 2011 but Mangroves aren't protected yet and that's where these lemon shark pups spend the first 5-8 years of their lives.

I was standing in knee-high water, trying to hold my camera still, waiting for the sharks. Trying not to move when you have mosquitoes and sand-flies buzzing around you was probably the part I struggled with the most at this moment.

After less than one hour the little predators came closer and finally swam around my feet and my camera, bumping against me and trying to taste my strobes. They are curious little fellas but you need time to gain their trust and I love observing them in their natural habitat and that's what I wanted to capture.

They are such characters and we need to protect their nurseries in order to make sure their population is not declining.

Eleuthera, The Bahamas

Nikon, D300s, Nauticam NA D300s, Tokina 10-17, iso 200, f/13, 1/200, Sea & Sea YS-D2

Judge's comments:

As someone who is adored by mosquitoes and sand-flies I have to applaud Anita's tenacity first and then her imagery in equal measures. Her perseverance has definitely paid off with a beautifully balanced and observed image. It's an image we dwelt on for quite a while; not because we were unsure about it but just because we liked



Runner Up

'Commotion in the Ocean' NUR TUCKER (United Kingdom)

This image shows my very favourite of the species, the thorny sea horse. Over time, I have tried many different techniques, with varying degrees of success, including backlighting, side lighting, snooting, panning, double exposure and silhouette shots. I love experimenting even if this comes at the expense of a wasted dive. On this particular dive, in Dumaguete (Philippines), I was keen to aim for something different and potentially offbeat. I began with a panning shot of the sea horse, captured with a 1/4 second shutter speed and a small, f/25 aperture. Then, I used the same settings to capture a panning shot of a shiny scouring pad, carried in my pocket. Both images were merged, in-camera, for the resulting double exposure shot. I must have repeated this sequence 50 times before eventually achieving this one when he made eye contact, which pleased me.

Dumaguete, Philippines, Philippines

Nikon, Nikon D500, Subal for Nikon D500, Nikon 60mm AF-S Micro Nikkor f2.8 G ED, iso 80, F25, 1/4, Inon Z240 at full power

Judge's comments:

An arresting image that draws you in with its mix of shapes and textures. The effect in the background elevates this image far beyond a standard portrait, creating a feeling of movement and for me makes me want to savour the eye contact before the moment is passed. I love the texture and muted colours that blend perfectly in the frame.



THIRD

'Minke Wave' Ines Goovaerts (Belgium)

You know those moments when you imagine a shot and you hope it turns out as planned, but 99% of the time it doesn't' Well, this wasn't one of those. This was that 1%. While working for a season on the Ningaloo Reef, Western Australia, I had the privilege of photographing heaps of marine life. As a freediver, you mostly use the common angle facing downwards or upwards the subject. This time, I wanted to try something different and let the wave frame the animal. Easier said than done, as open ocean marine life isn't trained very well and doesn't respond to "stay". Yet, very unsuspected, out of the blue, (literally) this pod of 6 Minke Whales heads my direction and starts their investigation. One individual in particular, swims besides me and freezes at the surface. Mesmerized we look into each other's eyes. And there it happened. The click.

Ningaloo Reef, Australia

Canon, Eos 5D Mark III, AquaTech Imaging Solutions Elite II 5D3 for Canon , Sigma 15mm f/2.8 fisheye, iso 1600, f/10, 1/640, natural light

Judge's comments:

Open water pelagic subjects are difficult enough at the best of times but to pull this shot out of the proverbial bag is like a lottery win. A straight split would have been tricky enough but to capture a perfectly composed 'curl' could well be a once in a lifetime.

HIGHLY COMMENDED 'People swim in the "Grotta

Verde" ' Pier Paolo Cito (Italy)

I think that we, as humans, have a very superficial approach to the sea. Unsurprisingly, those who live on its surface may just consider it as a vast surface of water more or less rough. But instead, the sea includes in its depth, a great variety of inhabitants and landscapes, that we rarely encounter. We often experience the sea by merely enjoying its surface without wondering about its rich life under us at that moment.

With this picture, taken in the Souther East Italian sea cave of Marina di Andrano (Lecce) called 'Grotta Verde', my intention is to represent the two coexisting worlds.

Grotta Verde (Green Cave) of Marina di Andrano (Lecce), Southern East Italy, Italy

Canon , Eos 5D MarkIII, Easydive Leo3, Canon 16-35 2.8 at 16mm, iso 1600, f/10, 1/160, no flash

Judge's comments:

I really enjoyed the 'back story' for this particular image. The slice of blue water and just a hint of light towards the top. The position, poise and flow of the mermaid completes the story. Very creative indeed.



HIGHLY COMMENDED 'Bait Ball of Life' Emilie Ledwidge (Australia)

Ningaloo Reef is home to an array of unique marine animals, including numerous species of sharks such as this grey reef shark. When I found this bait ball I dove down, holding on to some rock to stay steady and motionless hoping that I would go unnoticed by the many sharks surrounding the reef bommie. As I held my breath, seeing nothing but a wall of tiny fish, I hoped that one of the sharks would go straight through and over my head and sure enough one did.

It is moments like these that I am forever grateful for sharks to exist. As the apex predators of the reef the grey reef sharks balance the ecosystem; feeding on the dying, weak, injured and slow fish so only the strongest survive. Without sharks, without healthy fish populations and without an ocean full of life who knows what the future looks life.

Ningaloo Reef, Western Australia, Australia

Nikon, D7200, Nauticam NA D7200, Tokina 10-17mm Fisheye Lens, iso 125, 7.1, 250, Sea & Sea YS-D2

Judge's comment:

What an action-packed scene with the reef shark charging through the middle of the baitfish. A tough shot to capture both getting the shark to come directly to the camera and to handle the exposure so precisely.
HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Tiger Splitting Jacks' Richard Condlyffe (United States)

Upon entry to the water I was greeted with the adrenaline rush of a female Tiger Shark circling me! On the previous dive I had observed schooling Jacks beneath the boat and a composition idea had formed in my mind. So as I descended for this dive I turned to the fish... and my plan came together!

The Tiger continued to circle and then cut through the fish, repelling them with hypnotic rhythm, creating a wonderful shape around the shark. This image was taken at "Tiger Beach" in the Bahamas; a special place for seeing these majestic apex predators up close.

Through underwater photography we can help drive awareness to the importance of protecting these beautiful creatures, all sharks and their ecosystems.

Tiger Beach, Bahamas

Sony, a7Rii, Nauticam NA-A7II, Sony FE 16-35mm F4 ZA OSS at 23mm, iso 400, f/9.5, 1/500, Ambient lighting

Judge's comments:

A graphically simple shot putting the subject in context. Normally images try and impress by filling the frame with this majestic creature but sometimes it's better to observe from further back and take it all in. Photographically it's 'overblown' bottom right but it's spot on where it matters and that's what matters.



HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Milky Way' Goh Yen Ting (Singapore)

Tiger shrimp (Phyllognathia ceratopthalma) is skittish by nature and sensitive to heat emitted by torches hence its always a challenge to get close enough for a shot. After getting the perfect framing, the torches are then directed onto the critter. To add on to the challenge, I have decided to add on the creativity element by using crystal ball to create the milky way.

Tulamben, Bali, Indonesia

Olympus, TG4, Minigear TG4 Aluminium Housing, Nil, iso 100, F/3.2, 1/500, Minigear MS03 and Jaunt A6F

Judge's comments:

We love seeing photographers step beyond standard macro, and adore the celestial feel that the photographer has endowed this picture with. Excellent work

Alex Mustard



COMMENDED

'Crab on a Sea pen ' Marina Deriglazova (Russian Federation)

Sea pens are stunningly beautiful, and I've been hunting for a good shot of one for years. However, the results always seemed to lack something, a detail that would tie the whole thing together.

It was a lovely morning in the Lembeh Strait, and I had just begun my dive when I stumbled upon this magnificent sea pen. I approached without much hope, just to admire its beauty - and found a minuscule, 7mm-wide crab perched on its tip. It was a surprise; sea pens are home to many marine creatures, but they usually hide between branches and inside folds. I scrambled to light the scene.

I wanted to emphasize the texture of the sea pen, so I placed a light behind it while shining another one on the crab to balance things out. I only had time for one shot before my model felt shy and went back inside.

Lembeh Strait, Indonesia

Canon , 5DsR, Sea & Sea MDX-5D Mark III ver.2, EF100mm f/2.8L Macro IS USM, iso 250, f/14, 1/125, No flash, 2 torches: i-Torch Pro6+ and SUPE MS10

Judge's comments:

This image is about a Sea pen and a crab. However without that 'kiss of light' it would look flat. The beautiful colours backlighting the crab are superb. Once the viewer has indulged the light, the way in which the Sea pen flows from top to bottom, takes the eye of the viewer towards bottom right and out of the frame.

COMMENDED

'Heading for home' Francis Glassup (France)

This fascinating Marine Iguana is found only on the Galapagos Islands off the coast of Ecuador. Whilst the Marine Iguana has been well photographed underwater, I was keen to capture a photo of them in a slightly different light. In this photo the Marine Iguana is on his way back to dry land to bask in the afternoon sun. It took me close to a week of hanging around for the right conditions, sometimes the journey gives as much reward as the result.

Santa Cruz Island, Galapagos, Equador

Nikon, D800, Hugyfot for D800, Nikon wide angle 16-35mm, iso 566, f/9.5, 1/750, Ambient light

Judge's comments:

Bravo! An ambitious vision and the end result was well worth the effort. The split captures movement and perfectly exposes the dorsal spines. A real achievement.

Peter Rowlands



COMMENDED

'Dancing mantis shrimp' Pascal Rusch (Switzerland)

This shot was actually taken on one of my very first black water dives 2019 in Tulamben (Bali/Indonesia) approximately 300 meters from the shore and 10 meters below the surface.

Since my wife and I started diving 4 years ago, we have always been fascinated by the special personality of mantis shrimps and I was lucky enough having this little fellow dancing right in front of my lens for several seconds.

Tulamben / Bali, Indonesia

Canon, 5D Mark III, Nauticam NA-5DSR, Canon EF 100mm f/2.8L Macro IS USM, iso 400, f/11, 1/160, Inon Z-240

Judge's comments:

Over the past couple of years black water diving has become very popular and we had so many entries to choose from that, myself in particular, had difficulty separating the best from all the others. However this image stood out for me in particular for the composition! It's got space in the composition to breathe, whilst some we judged were placed too tight within the image frame. It also looks as though it has somewhere to go. Study the eyes carefully and you will see what I mean!

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WINNER

'Jewel Reef' Arthur Kingdon (United Kingdom)

The Isles of Scilly offer underwater photographers some of the best opportunities for wide angle photography in the UK so I was determined to make the most of it when I visited for a week in September 2019. T

his image was shot at a site whose location is known only to the excellent skipper of Dive Scilly and it proved to be a stunning site with jewel anemones everywhere. This was the first dive of the week and it was my first dive with my new camera and housing. After a shot to check exposure and lighting, I took this one and it proved to be the best of the week! I was helped by some fine modelling by Paula who had opted to leave her camera behind on this dive. Her offer to model was very gratefully accepted.

Isles of Scilly, UK

Nikon , D500, Aquatica AD500, Tokina 10-17mm, iso 200, f11, 1/30, 2 x Inon Z240

Judge's comments:

This year's winner combines familiar subject matter to last year's winner of this category, yet there was no denying this impressive capture from the title. It celebrates British Seas, packed with colour, texture, depth and perfectly posed model. Exemplary.

Alex Mustard





RUNNER UP 'Big Mouth, Small Prey' Will Clark (United Kingdom)

I still find it extraordinary that it is possible to snorkel alongside the world's second biggest shark just off the west coast of Scotland. Each summer these huge animals usually gather in large numbers in the waters around the Inner Hebrides archipelago. Basking sharks offer no threat to humans - their food is mostly animal plankton funnelled through their enormous mouths and strained through specialised gill structures.

To photograph basking sharks, you must first spot one feeding, then get in the water as quietly as you can, some distance away in its direction of travel. You watch for any change of direction as it approaches and move accordingly. When it gets nearby you have to lie quietly at the surface with your fins up, so as to resemble a floating log. Make one wrong move such as a splash then the shark closes its mouth and dives deep below you.

Isle of Coll, Scotland

Canon, EOS 5D Mark III, Nauticam NA-5Diii, Canon EF28-80mm IV behind a Nauticam WACP, iso 1000, f/16, 1/160s, Natural light

Judge's comments:

A fine image with the gaping mouth behaviour. The composition is sound with plenty of space for the shark to swim into. The under surface reflections also add to the shot.

THIRD

'Fireworks anemone sunburst' Trevor Rees (United Kingdom)

This fireworks anemone (Pachycerianthus multiplicatus) was photographed at the head of Loch Dutch in Scotland at a depth of 15 meters. The water was dark and peat stained. It is a favourite subject that I have photographed many times before but this time I aimed for a different look and feel to the subject. I used the 28mm wide end of my zoom lens and positioned the anemone to the bottom right hand side of the frame. To complete the image I added a sunburst taken by shooting towards the surface on the same dive, this time using the 70 mm end of the same zoom lens. It is a double exposure using in-camera image overlay. It is a somewhat surreal view of this subject as these anemones normally live quite a bit deeper and capturing a sunburst in the same frame is almost impossible. That's creativity eh?

Loch Dutch, Scotland, United Kingdom

Nikon , D850, Nauticam NA D850, Nikkor 28-70 f3.5-5.6 zoom + Nauticam WACP , iso 200, f22, 1/1000, Inon S2000

Judge's comments:

Creativity it indeed is Trevor. Whilst I have seen this image many times elsewhere, I still find it stunning. It's the sunbeams with the water line at a diagonal. The firework anemone is the perfect shape to reach for the beams and (in my opinion) is the diagonal sweep between the water line and the sand. The anemone seems as though it is reaching out to the sun with five fingers but cannot quite grab on. Stunning and one of your best ever.





9) British Waters Wide Angle

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Cuckoo in the blue (male cuckoo wrasse with kelp)' Simon Temple (United Kingdom)

This image was taken at around 20m on a reef to the east of the Eddystone Lighthouse in September last year. The day's diving was arranged by Devon Searchsearch and was my first invitation with that group. I went prepared to shoot using a Tokina 10-17 and a Kenko 1.4 teleconverter thinking this would give me lots of possibilities depending on the group's chosen dive sites and a variety of conditions. Luckily, the conditions underwater turned out to be exceptional! The visibility was in excess of 18m and with a little sunshine, the water appeared a wonderful shade of blue. Overwhelmed with possibilities I decided to take advantage of the common and very obliging cuckoo wrasse who, by defending their territory, return again and again to the camera. I wanted to capture the rare deep blue of this offshore site so opted for low strobe power and a higher ISO.

Eddystone Lighthouse, Devon, United Kingdom

Nikon, D500, Aquatica AD500, Tokina AT X107 AF DX 10 - 17mm F/3.5-4.5, iso 320, f/8.0, 1/125, 2 x Sea & Sea YS-110

Judge's comments:

It is hard to succeed in competitions with subtle pictures like this, which can get overlooked in favour of more obvious thrills. But this picture is beautifully crafted, the rich colours of the wrasse glow like a jewel against the muted hues of the kelp fronds.



'British Waters Wide Angle' Ian Wade (United Kingdom)

Just down the road from where I live is a brook which runs parallel to a pond. I had been looking to use my camera to photograph the water just above the surface when I spotted a frog swimming towards an object to rest on. I grabbed my underwater housing and put my camera inside and moved towards to object. On closure inspection, the frog was resting on a rusted old skateboard truck! I wanted to photograph the frog split-level and also show the trucks and a beautiful environment. The frog stayed on the trucks for an hour enabling me to capture an arrangement of images.

Nightingale Valley, Brislington in Bristol, Great Britian

Canon, Canon 5D MKii, Tteoobl housing, 17-40 L Canon, iso 400, f/4, 1/60 Sec, Jessops Flash

Judge's comments:

This is a fantastic photograph, telling revealing tales from British rivers. We love the shallow depth of field that is generally underexploited in underwater photography.

'Octopus and the sunstar' Mark Kirkland (United Kingdom)

This was my first ever encounter with an Octopus and it couldn't have happened in a more beautiful underwater landscape. I was on the liveaboard MV Halton, exploring the crystal clear waters of the far north coast of Scotland when we dropped onto the reef walls of Eilean Nam Ron. The visability and abundance of life made wide-angle photography a dream. I kept my distance from this small curled octopus as it traversed the reef wall. It kept it's gaze on me as I followed it before it eventually stopped and changed from bright orange to pale yellow to blend in with the surrounding soft corals. I took this as a hint that I was outstaying my welcome and took this last photograph before leaving it to it's day.

Eilean Nan Ron, Sutherland, Scotland

Olympus, OMD EM5 mkii, Olympus PT-P13, Panasonic 8mm fisheye, iso 200, f11, 1/20, Two Sea and Sea YS-110a strobes

Judge's comments:

The Octopus takes centre stage against everything else. The wide angle vista is very well lit with just a hint of green water at top right. The more I look at it, the more the green water colour comes into play. It gives the viewer a sense of depth which keeps their eye in the picture.



COMMENDED

'Blue Shark in Motion' Henley Spiers (United Kingdom)

A blue shark captured as it swims by at speed. These sharks will cruise enormous swathes of the ocean in search of food and company. For a few years now, a population has been reliably spotted off the British southwest coast, having crossed the Atlantic to get there. A trip to swim with these charismatic animals has become a staple of the British summer for underwater photography enthusiasts. I used a slow shutter panning technique to capture an artistic rendition of this individual, as a well as a tribute to the high speeds these sharks can achieve. The work of Nick More deserves mention as an inspiration for this image.

Penzance, Cornwall, United Kingdom

Nikon, D850, Nauticam NA D850, Nikon 28-70mm (@28mm) with Nauticam W.A.C.P., iso 64, 22, 1/8, 2 x Inon Z240 strobes

Judge's comments:

It takes a special image to attract the judge's eyes when a tried and repeatedly entered technique is used. There's absolutely no doubt that slow shutter panning is very effective with fast moving subjects, and long may it continue; but please accept that when faced with half a dozen to judge, more often than not, there can only be one that goes through. That's the unfortunate truth and here, it seems, the apprentice has topped the master and nice to see credit where credit is due :-)

COMMENDED

'A Bridge not far.' Dave Peake (United Kingdom)

I live near this location in the Dartmoor National Park. Norsworthy bridge is a favourite with visitors to the nearby Burrator Reservoir which the River Meavy feeds into. In the Winter the water can be very cold but clear. I have been experimenting here with split level techniques but I really wanted to capture some snow in the image. The roads were covered in snow and I parked the car nearby and walked in a dry suit to the river and waded in. This was the best of several attempts.

Norsworthy Bridge, River Meavy, Dartmoor National Park, Devon., England

Sony, Nex5, Nauticam NA-NEX5, Sony 16mm with fish eye attachment, iso 1600, F11 , 1/125, Natural Light

Judge's comments:

This image really stood out both for the subject matter and the classic composition. The snow is the icing on the photographic cake.

Peter Rowlands





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10) British Waters Macro

For close-up/macro images shot anywhere in UK waters. Open to all.

WINNER

'Like Water for Silk' Laura Storm (United Kingdom)

Over the past couple of years, I've been photographing British freshwater habitats underwater. One of the stories that has captivated me is that of the Common frog. During its lifetime it has an estimated 0.25% chance of survival. It morphs like no other creature and along the way, experiences the most fantastic journey.

This tiny Common froglet is less than 1cm in length. It is so weightless it can balance on single, silken stands of Spirogyra. These algae filaments, an abundant and vital first link in freshwater food webs, reproduce rapidly leading to thousands of individual strands. They are a simple life form which combine into a tangled labyrinth known as water silk.

To highlight the water silk habitat, I used two off-camera lights strategically placed. One to help light the tiny froglet and the other to allow the tangle of algae strands to shine through.

Urban wildlife pond, Surrey, England

Canon, EOS 550D, Sea and Sea RDX-550D, Canon EF-S 60mm f/2.8 Macro USM, Nauticam SMC1, iso 100, f/8.0, 1/200, Light & Motion SOLA 800 + 1200, 2 x INON s2000's

Judge's comments:

Flawless composition, the eye of the frog and the back left leg illustrate the time old 'rule of thirds'. But you have gone one step extra by using your two off- camera lights to creatively light both the frog and the algae all at the same time. Very deserved winner of British Waters Macro.



RUNNER UP

'Cuckoo wrasse head on' Trevor Rees (United Kingdom)

Of all the fish in British Waters, a male cuckoo wrasse (Labrus mixture) takes some beating for its striking blue and orange colouration. They are therefore always a favourite subject and this one proved a cooperative individual. The Plymouth Mewstone on England's south coast often guarantees seeing and getting close to these charismatic fish. I aimed for a straight head on composition with maximum symmetry. It took a few frames to get both eyes facing forwards and nicely in focus. Job done!

Mewstone, Plymouth, Devon, England, United Kingdom

Nikon , D850, Nauticam NA D850, Nikkor 28-70 f3.5-5.6 zoom + Nauticam WACP , iso 640, f14, 1/100, dual Inon S2000

Judge's comments:

The perfect position with both eyes in absolute symmetry. The tight crop works for me with the hint of the tail sticking out behind. Flawless.





10) British Waters Macro

THIRD

'Elegant Elegans' Dan Bolt (United Kingdom)

This gorgeous Okenia elegans nudibranch is considered to be a rare species in the UK, but can be quite common around Torbay in south Devon. I came across this one crawling along the edge of a kelp frond which gave me the perfect opportunity to find angle that best shows off their outlandish colours.

Beacon Cove, south Devon, UK

Olympus , OM-D EM-1, Aquatice AE-M1, Olympus 30mm macro, iso 320, f/16, 1/320, Sea & Sea YS-D1 with snoot

Judge's comments:

British Seas are often thought of as lacking in colour. This spectacular portrait of a nudibranch is brought to life by the razor sharp lighting that transforms a potentially average scene of slug on kelp into an unforgettable celebration of colour.

Alex Mustard

'Atomic' Laura Storm (United Kingdom)

This image took many sessions of working in a shallow pond to perfect the technique, background and lighting for this artistic expression. Tadpoles are both the cutest and cruelest of subjects when shooting Super-macro. They're born to wriggle! So many times I would have all the elements aligned but the star of the show had other ideas. Often they would swarm over my off-camera lights - the ones placed with obsessive precision. So while they basked in their new-found LED luxury, I'd be trying to encourage them to move along without knocking anything out of place or stirring up the water. For the background I designed a series of creative slates to bounce light off and then experimented with an extremely shallow depth of field. My ultimate goal was to make a contemporary image. Something refreshing that might inspire, renew or ignite interest in our endangered freshwater environment.

Urban wildlife pond, Surrey, England

Canon, EOS 550D, Sea and Sea RDX-550D, Canon EF-S 60mm f/2.8 Macro USM, Nauticam SMC1, iso 100, f/3.5, 1/200, Light & Motion SOLA 800 + 1200, 2 x INON s2000's

Judge's comments:

Love the subject, but love the background even more. The light and colours in this frame transport me straight to spring.





10) British Waters Macro

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'European Squid' Paul Pettitt (United Kingdom)

Chasing European Squid on a blackwater dive

Newtons Cove, Dorset, UK

Nikon, D500, Nautcam, 60mm, iso 320, f/13, 1/320, 2x Inon strobes

Judge's comments:

Blackwater and UK. Not two words that have been used very much before but hopefully they will be more from now on.

Peter Rowlands

'Scillonian Beauty' Malcolm Nimmo (United Kingdom)

The reefs of the Isles of Scilly are covered with an abundance of marine life, including colourful anemones, soft corals and hydroids. Such diverse ecosystem supports a wonderful variety of colourful nudibranchs. Nudibranchs such as Coryphella Browni make interesting photographic subjects. Natural colours may also be used to enhance the subject's background. For this image, the coloured backdrop is derived from a colony of purple jewel anemones on the reef behind the subject. Applying a relatively narrow depth of field ensures that the background is out of focus, producing an even, soft coloured texture.

Isles of Scilly, United Kingdom

Nikon, D7200, Nauticam, Nikon 60mm, iso 100, f/14, 1/160, INON 240 and Sea and Sea YS110

Judge's comments:

Current trends in macro photography underwater have seen an explosion of 'special effects' backgrounds produced by placing various light and colour reflecting background materials to great effect but how impressive is it to see one done not only 'au naturel' but also in British waters with great vision, execution and photographic clarity. A breath of fresh air.





'Bobtail squid' Atanas Petrov (United Kingdom)

I regularly dive the wrecks and reefs on the east coast of England, and I heard from fellow divers that bobtail squid (Sepiola atlantica) had been seen very often on the reef at West Runton, Norfolk. I wanted to observe and take photos of this charming little marine animal and managed to organise a few night dives in the summer of 2019 in the area. On the last dive, I had not just enjoyed an abundance of their presence, but also managed to take this photo.

West Runton, East coast of England, United Kingdom

Nikon , D7200, Subal ND7100, AF-S Micro NIKKOR 60mm f/2.8G ED, iso 100, f/14, 1/320, Dual Inon Z240

Judge's comments:

Without reading the authors 'back story' I would have assumed this image was taken somewhere in the Pacific Ocean. Not so! How wrong would I be. Norfolk UK! The square crop is perfect the squid lighting and composition likewise.

COMMENDED

'Leopard' Cathy Lewis (United Kingdom)

Leopard-spotted gobies (Thorogobius ephippiatus) generally hide themselves away in holes and crevices. I came across this one on the wreck of the Cita in the Isles of Scilly. He was either curious or territorial, standing his ground just long enough for me to get this head-on shot.

Isles of Scilly, UK

Nikon, D7000, Nauticam NA D7000, Nikon 105mm, iso 200, f20, 1/250, Twin Sea & Sea YS-D2

Judge's comments:

The two eyes make this image, in fact it is all about the eyes. They are perfectly symmetrical and they need to be. I like the tight composition and the balance of the image around the frame is perfect.





10) British Waters Macro

COMMENDED

'Sea grass slug' Dan Bolt (United Kingdom)

Torbay's sea-grass beds form part of a wider Marine Conservation Zone and are a haven for many different species of marine aminals. In certain months many different species of nudibranch can be found living, feeding, mating and laying eggs on the seagrass. The gorgeous, almost reflective colour of the seagrass always gives a huge hit of colour to any photographs taken there, and finding this Polycera quadrilineata in just the right position was a real bonus.

Beacon Cove, south Devon, UK

Olympus, OM-D E-M1, Aquatica AE-M1, Olympus 30mm macro, iso 320, f/16, 1/160, Sea & Sea YS-D1 with snoot

Judge's comments:

It is an unfortunate fact that the judging process is cruel. Dog eat dog, nudibranch eat nudibranch. The other unfortunate is that an honest judge can admit that, having had a week's respite from looking at images, when I look at this one again it has grown and I now think that it should have moved up several places. That's just unfortunate unfortunately.

Peter Rowlands



10) British Waters Macro

COMMENDED

'Stalker in the meadow' Dan Bolt (United Kingdom)

It was a real surprise on a late November dive to come across large numbers of these Stalked Jellyfish on one of my regular shore-dives. Usually I only ever see two or three in a year, but on this occasion my buddy and I counted well over 20 individuals all firmly holding onto blades of seagrass. Quite why so many were there at the same time remains a mystery to us, but sadly the weather stopped further diving activities before I could make more observations.

Beacon Cove, south Devon, UK

Olympus, OM-D E-M1, Aquatica AE-M1, Olympus 14-42mm, iso 400, f/18, 1/200, Sea & Sea YS-D1 with snoot

Judge's comments:

You have taken every advantage of turning this jellyfish into a work of art and in my opinion this is what Underwater Photography of the Year is all about. The Stalked Jelly fish is most eye catching and many underwater shooters would 'home In' every time but you have decided to venture one step beyond and minimise the green blades of seagrass. Great use of compositional colours and very 'Arty' indeed'.

THE CROWN CLOCKED ESTATE

This category is sponsored by The Crown Estate.

The Crown Estate play a role in managing activities on the seabed around England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and wanted to create a category that showcases the coexistence of nature and human activities on the UK seabed.

We were happy for photographers to interpret the Living Together theme in a broad fashion in the first year of this new category.

We were looking for strong, striking images (both macro and wide angle) that show the value of natural and/ or man-made habitats in British Seas, particularly offshore renewables. Open to all.

WINNER

'Pier nursery' Dan Bolt (United Kingdom)

This image shows how important man-made structures can be for marine life. Paignton Pier, in South Devon is no exception. The pier legs are home to many sponges, anemones and molluscs, while in the summer months many hundreds of juvenile fish use the structure as shelter from larger predators. Diving under the pier with the sun shining through the shallow water it can be hard to believe you're in the UK!

Paignton Pier, south Devon, UK

Olympus, OM-D E-M1, Aquatica AE-M1, Panasonic 8mm fisheye, iso 400, f/7.1, 1/100, 2x Sea & Sea YS-D1 strobes

Judge's comments:

Great use of wide angle underwater photography. The stanchion itself and the shape of the Pier legs provide so much depth in this image. It appears circular and once the viewer has followed the school of fish, I too begin to follow them around and around, again and again. All of this is made possible by the circular position of the stanchions.



RUNNER UP

'Cone Home' Kirsty Andrews (United Kingdom)

It's never nice to see discarded manmade items on the sea floor, but in this case, a common lobster (Homarus gammarus) was taking advantage of the situation. A traffic cone provided a handy vantage point to overlook the seabed as well as a large lobster-sized shelter on an otherwise relatively flat landscape.

Inveraray, Loch Fyne, Scotland, UK

Nikon, D500, Nauticam NA D500, Tokina 10-17mm, iso 640, f14, 1/50, Sea & Sea YS-D1 x2

Judge's comm<u>ents:</u>

Great colours indeed. The bright green water is the background. The colours continue with the rustic circular traffic cone hosting what looks like a sizeable lobster. Once again a good degree of depth perspective from the front to the green water background.



THIRD

'Lucky Escape' Shannon Moran (United Kingdom)

The popular dive site Silver Steps is located in Falmouth and is often covered in long strings of lobster pots. The shallow rocky reefs, kelp forests and sand flats are home to a wide variety of marine life. Over the course of the summer the pots seemed to edge closer to the reef until many of them lay on top of the rocky reef and only a few metres away from the shore. This particular spider crab had a lucky escape, I watched on as it clambered over the pot for a few moments before moving away towards the reef.

Falmouth, Cornwall, England

Nikon, D500, Nauticam NA D500, Tokina 10-17mm fisheye (17mm focal length), iso 100, f/8, 1/125, 2x Inon Z330

Judge's comments:

I like how this picture creates drama by showing the spider crab climbing nonchalantly across the creel, oblivious to how one false move could seal it's demise.

Alex Mustard





'Swanage Pier spider crab' Andy Pearson (United Kingdom)

Visibility was exceptionally good during an early morning snorkel at Swanage Pier, Dorset. I noticed a spider crab attached near the bottom of one of the supporting leg structures. I free dived to the seabed so I could capture a photo of the spider crab with the pier leg towering upwards towards the silhouette of the pier in the background.

Swanage Pier, Dorset, UK

Nikon , D7100, Ikelite 200FL, Tokina 10-17mm lens @10mm, iso 800, f/14, 1/60, Ikelite DS51

Judge's comments:

I have to admit it didn't occur to me that this was taken while snorkeling and it makes no difference to the judging process - an image is an image. But now I know I take my hat off even more to Andy for a great composition and a powerful shot with a message.

Peter Rowlands

'Shipwreck Shelter' Shannon Moran (<u>United Kingdom)</u>

An Edible Crab (cancer pagurus) finds shelter within the broken wreckage of the F2 escort boat in Scapa Flow, Orkney. This wreck is often the second dive of the day on a Scapa battleship week, due to how shallow it is. Lying in 17 meters of water this wreck does not disappoint. Ling, crabs, pollack, anemones and seals now call this shipwreck home.

F2 Wreck, Scapa Flow, Scotland

Nikon, D500, Nauticam NA D500, Tokina 10-17mm fisheye (11mm focal length), iso 500, f/8, 1/80, 2x Inon Z330

Judge's comments:

The underwater world judges not. What, how or why an artifical reef arrived is of no interest. It very quickly gets colonised by marine creatures of all shapes and sizes. This clear composition is well lit and the diver is the icing on the message.

Peter Rowlands




Film - No Filter No White Balance

Digital - No Filter Manual White Balance

Magic Filter Manual White Balance

Digital cameras have opened up new possibilities to underwater photographers. For available light photography manual white balance is an invaluable tool for restoring colours. But when you use it without a filter you are not making the most of the technique. You're doing all the hard work without reaping the full rewards. These three photos are all taken of the same wreck in the Red Sea. The left hand image was taken on slide film, which rendered the scene completely blue. The middle image is taken with a digital SLR without a filter, using manual white balance. The white balance has brought out some of the colour of the wreck, but it has also sucked all the blue out of the water behind the wreck, making it almost grey. The right hand image is taken with the same digital camera and lens, but this time using an original Magic Filter. The filter attenuates blue light meaning that the colours of the wreck are brought out and it stands out from the background water, which is recorded as an accurate blue.



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For wide angle or close-up/macro images shot in British waters with a compact camera (includes stills from GoPro and other action cameras, does not include interchangeable lens mirrorless cameras). Open to all.

WINNER

'Smile' Colin Garrett (United Kingdom)

Early in April 2019, sightings of a lone male Bottlenose Dolphin had started to be reported in and around Portland Harbour. I had been out on a local wreck dive with Dale Spree and Jessica Hannah and had had a strange feeling beforehand that the chances of meeting him were quite high. The dive itself came and went with no sighting. But fortune was to be on our side, for on our return across the harbour Dale spotted the distinctive dorsal fin. As the animal approached us, Jessica and I slipped in with just snorkeling equipment and waited, hoping... It turned out he wasn't nervous in the slightest and swam straight to the camera. I cannot recall who's smile was the largest. His or mine?

Portland Harbour, Dorset, UK

GoPro , Hero 5 Black, Telesin Dome Port, GoPro, iso 219, f/2.8 , 1/125 , Natural Light

Judge's comments:

Quite simply a shot that anyone who takes any camera underwater in British Waters would be thrilled to produce. Dolphins often move fast and are actually a real challenge to produce such sharp images of in dark green seas.

Alex Mustard

RUNNER UP

'Fluo fireworks anemone' James Lynott (United Kingdom)

Over recent years underwater fluorescence photography has become a passion of mine, particularly in British waters, and I now find myself choosing my fluorescence gear over my 'normal' kit more often when diving. I never know quite what I'm going to find that will fluoresce under the blue (near UV) light but on this dive in Loch Fyne I had one target in mind and that was fireworks anemones. There were dozens of anemones at this site all with varying patterns on their tentacles which also translate to different fluorescence patterns when viewed under blue light. This particular anemone really stood out in the darkness as it's fluorescence was so bright.

Loch Fyne, Scotland

Canon, G7X MkII, Fantasea FG7XII, N/A, iso 640, f1.8, 1/60, FireDiveGear/Riff TL Azur

Judge's comments:

Fluorescence photography is not easy, but is hugely effective on this anemone, revealing a mix of beautiful fluorescent colours and hiding the muddy seabed from view. Excellent photography.

Alex Mustard



12) British Waters Compacts

THIRD

'All in a good claws!' Martin Edser (United Kingdom)

The many shipwrecks in the English Channel give wonderful opportunities for British marine life to seek shelter and thrive. It's amazing that these scenes of once destruction now provide a foundation for new life. As a regular UK diver and underwater photographer I find them fascinating areas to find and photograph marine life. The conditions can be challenging, but for me this adds to the fun and sense of achievement.

This 'common' lobster was photographed on one of the biggest wrecks off the Sussex Coast - the wreck of the Alaunia. This specimen was in prime condition and clearly telling me with its impressive claws that this spot was taken! Getting low and close with a wide angle lens gave me the opportunity to capture the striking pose and detail of these fascinating creatures from prehistory.

On the wreck of The Alaunia off the Sussex coast, UK

Canon, G7x mark 2, Nauticam NA - G7xII, Fantasea UWL 09F, iso 125, f/4.5, 1/200, 2 x Inon s2000

Judge's comments:

An ideal shooting position to photograph this lobster. The light could look harsh in some positions and sympathetically soft in others. The author has balanced the soft and hard very well making a strong portrait of the Lobster.





'Sea loch specialty' James Lynott (United Kingdom)

Sea loch anemones are one of my favourite photography subjects and I am always on the lookout for one on its own in the perfect position isolated from any clutter or background. This one happened to be sitting perfectly by itself on top of a rock so I couldn't pass up the chance to try and get a nice image of it.

Loch Leven, Scotland

Canon, G7XII, Fantasea FG7XII, N/A, iso 125, f6.3, 1/100, Scubalamp Pv22

Judge's comments:

Your isolation of the anemone is why this image works so well. I like the base just below, not too tight but enough to give it some space. By shooting at an upward angle you have elevated the strength of this image. I like the black background and I do believe it would also work with a green water background.

Martin Edge

'Million Miles Away' Martin Edser (United Kingdom)

Diving with seals is always a privilege and I love the opportunity to photograph them. Like us they have different characters and moods. Trying to capture some of these traits in a photograph is what I have tried to accomplish this year on my visit to the Farne islands. Wide angle and ambient *light is my preference. The water was clear* enough here to take a picture at some distance and capture this seal in what seems to be a moment of far away contemplation. The lighting, haziness of the water and surrounding fauna help to give, I believe, an ethereal quality to the image adding to the 'million miles away' look. The reality is of course this seal is being very attentive of me and choosing to keep its distance!

Farne Islands, UK

Canon, G7x mark 2, Nauticam NA - G7xII, Fantasea UWL 09F, iso 400, f/4.0, 1/100, ambient

Judge's comments:

The natural tendency with seal photography is to get as close as possible to those puppy dog eyes for judge appeal. Take a step back however, as Martin has done here, and suddenly there's atmosphere, there's context yet still the character comes across but in a much more understated way. This is a moment in time which is very easy on the eye.



'Underwater sunset' James Lyno<u>tt (United Kingdom)</u>

The Falls of Lora has a bit of a reputation of being a bit of a scary dive and given that that tide races through creating upwells, whirlpools, and standing waves, you can understand why but done at the right time it is an excellent site and somewhere I love to dive. This dive with Dive Oban & Argyll was on LW slack meaning the falls were flooded with the dark orange/golden water of Loch Etive which, when I looked up, caused an eerie glow around the sun. Part way through the dive I decided I wanted to try and capture something together with the unusual water colour, there were lots of shore crabs clinging to the gully walls and this one happened to be in the perfect spot to get the sun in frame behind it.

Falls of Lora, Loch Etive, Scotland

Canon, G7X MkII, Fantasea FG7XII, N/A, iso 125, f2.2, 1/80, 2 x Scubalamp Pv22

Judge's comments:

A well balanced wide angle shot, packed with life and completed with a tannin rich water colour, which is part and parcel of British diving on some sites. Great scene.

Alex Mustard



'Saint Peter's fish' Colin Garrett (United Kingdom)

John Dory's visit Chesil Cove every Summer and are a favourite subject of mine, particularly on our many night dives here throughout the year. The idea of the back-lit shot was nothing new to me, as I had taken one before in 2016 and had always liked it, but also knew it could be improved on if I could just get the light in the correct place. In October 2019, whilst diving with my fiancee Sarah and good friend Alex, a team effort finally managed to capture several images that I was more than happy with. This one became one of my personal favourites.

Chesil Cove, Portland, United Kingdom

Olympus, TG-5, Olympus PT-058, Backscatter M52 wide lens, iso 200, f/2.8, 1/60, 2 x F.I.T Pro Flare 2500 video lights

Judge's comments:

It's not what you've got, it's what you do with it, as the old saying goes and never more true for this shot. Colin has played to the camera's strengths and the dramatic backlight of a semi transparent subject lept at the judges. Simple and simply effective.

Peter Rowlands



COMMENDED

'Time and Plaice' Martin Edser (United Kingdom)

Drift diving is one of my favourite types of dive. Diving on the Ledges at Brighton is one I have done many times and in varying conditions. It normally gives an opportunity to come across a variety of the UK's marine life. This was taken in mid-summer with a fair degree of Plankton in the water causing visibility issues and a green background. Spotting this Plaice sat on top of one of the ledges gave a brief opportunity to take an unusual angle of a fish that is normally only seen from above. My buddy in the background helps to give drama to the shot. I try to photograph common species in unusual angles and I love the look of surprise on the fishes face with the diver looming over it. Using a wide angle lens really helps in these conditions allowing me to get close to the subject.

Ledges off Brighton, English Channel, UK

Canon, G7x mark 2, nauticam NA - G7xII, fantasea UWL 09F, iso 200, f/5.6, 1/125, 2 x Inon s2000

Judge's comments:

It just goes to show that great images are possible in limited visibility. The water column between lens and subject is kept to a minimum with a wide angle lens and even though the background diver is masked in plankton his light is perfectly placed. It's easy to leave the camera behind if the viz looks bad but this shot encourages otherwise.



COMMENDED

'Fluo baby shark' James Lynott (United Kingdom)

For some time now I have been aware that fluorescence had been shown in catshark species from the western Atlantic and eastern Pacific (chain catsharks and swell sharks) and over the last few years while experimenting with fluorescence photography in Scottish waters I was pleased to discover that our native species, the small spotted catshark (dogfish), also fluoresce. On this December dive in Loch Long I wasn't really expecting to see any catsharks but to my surprise there were many guite docile juveniles just sitting on the seabed. Finding these sharks is not always a certainty on a dive so this was the perfect opportunity to collect some images of these baby sharks fluorescing and make my last dive of 2019 a memorable one.

Loch Long, Scotland

Canon, G7X MkII, Fantasea FG7XII, N/A, iso 400, f2, 1/80, FireDiveGear/Riff TL Azur

Judge's comments:

I didn't know that sharks could be fluorescent. A real wow image. Would love to see it repeated with the face of the shark filling more of the frame.

Alex Mustard





12) British Waters Compacts

COMMENDED

'They're back.' Colin Garrett (United Kingdom)

The mighty Barrel Jellyfish to the best of my knowledge, had not been seen around Portland since the Summer of 2015. Myself and some diving friends had waited year after year for their return, as they make in our opinion beautiful subjects to photograph. Within the first few months of 2019 the wish became reality and I sighted my first of many. Snorkeling above this beautiful creature in clear blue water I snapped and snapped away taking seemingly endless photos. Reviewing them later, for me at least, one photo truly stood out... this one.

Chesil Cove, Portland, UK

GoPro , Hero 5 Black, Telesin Dome Port, GoPro, iso 100, f/2.8 , 1/250, Natural Light

Judge's comments:

The author has made the most with this image. The water colour is ideal against the subtle orange of the barrel Jellyfish. Very clean with the hint of sunbeams towards the top. Compositionally, it sits perfectly within the four corners of the frame.

Martin Edge

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Underwater Photography

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Jan/Feb 2020 Issue 112

Marine Conservation Photographer of the Year is open to both underwater and "above water" photos. Open to all photographers (even those who are not underwater photographers).

This category has a separate entry system. This is a single image category and photographers may enter up to 5 images. Photos can be taken underwater or above the water but must highlight a marine conservation story (both positive and negative stories are eligible). Freshwater themed images are not allowed. Images will be judged without captions (but entrants can assume that the judges will be aware of most major marine conservation topics). The winning images will, however, be displayed with a full caption.

WINNER

'Last Dawn, Last Breath' Pasquale Vassallo (Italy)

This winter, I went diving with some local fishermen. At 6 in the morning I was already in the water, as the nets were raised at first light. During the dive I followed the path of the fishing nets from the bottom to the surface. As the fishermen quickly hauled on the nets, I tried to take some shots of trapped fish still suffering in the mesh, such as this tuna (Euthynnus alletteratus).

Tyrrhenian Sea, Bacoli, Naples, Italy

Canon, Canon 5d sr, Seacam Canon 5dsr, Canon 8/15, iso 200, f/14, 1/320, Inon z240

Judge's comments:

If a picture paints a thousand words then a great one asks a thousand questions. You know those questions; so do I. All we can do is show the truth to those who live above but can't envisage the world below and hope that they start asking questions.

Peter Rowlands



RUNNER UP

'Double Trouble with a glimmer of hope' David Alpert (United Kingdom)

In this double exposure, the base picture is from Hong Kong's dry food market - a prominent outlet for shark fins. Overlaid is a blacktip reef shark in Misool - a former shark finning station. Through a private initiative, this once devastated marine ecosystem turned into a poster child for marine conservation.

Owing to sensitivities, the HK shot needed to be speedy and discrete. No time to change settings or compose. Misool was the opposite. The skittish blacktips avoid divers. No bait was used and I waited almost an entire dive to get this picture.

The juxtaposition of the starkly contrasting scenarios highlights the need for urgent action to address trade in exotic marine foods and increase the number of marine protected areas before it's too late.

Dry Food Market Hong Kong and Misool in Raja Ampat, Indonesia

Canon , 5D Mk IV and 5D MKiii, Nauticam, Canon EF 16-35mm f/2.8L and Sigma 15mm Fisheye, iso 500 , F/5.6 , 1/200 , none / Inon Z240's

Judges comment:

A double exposure is used perfectly to transform a reportage image into something eye-catching and artistic, as well as challenging us to think about how we treat sharks.





THIRD

'Tradition kills' Scott Gutsy Tuason (Philippines)

I went to Kei to shoot leatherback turtles. On the first day out, our boat happened to witness the local villagers hunting this turtle with a harpoon. They speared it and battled with it for at least an hour. The weakened turtle was then brought near the boat, where it was bludgeoned over the head. Local law permits the killing of leatherback turtles only for subsistence and limits harvesting to one turtle a week, which is an unsustainable and unacceptable practice considering the leatherback's endangered and protected status.

I asked permission to jump in and photograph the hunt, which used to be associated with traditional beliefs and rituals, but now mainly serves as a food source for the growing population of islanders.

Kei Archipelago , Indonesia

Nikon, D5, Nauticam NA D5, 15mm Sigma fisheye, iso 500, f/14, 1/400, Inon Z330

Judge's comments:

A very graphic image which although 'sad to see', the world needs to become more aware of this.

Martin Edge

'Cormorant caught in a net' Kim André Sund (Norway)

Whilst on a wreck dive on the "Øygard" outside of Ålesund (Norway) I found a fishing net stuck at the aft with a lot of dead fish and crabs.

When acsending to the upper deck, I found the cormorant dead in the net. It is a common problem that fishermen place their nets on the wrecks and the net gets stuck. After the picture was taken, Norwegian media got interested and it all ended up with the Norwegian coast guard cleaning up the net a few weeks later.

Shipwreck, Ålesund, Norway

Canon, 6D, Ikelite, 8-15mm@15mm, iso 1250, F9.0, 1/40s, 2x Sea & Sea YS-D2

Judge's comments:

Whilst it is a very sad story the author was instrumental in bringing this to the Norwegian media's attention.

Martin Edge





'Great White Necropsy ' Charlotte Sams (United Kingdom)

A small great white shark (Carcharodon carcharias) was found dead on the shores in South Africa. Reported by Lower Breede River Conservancy then recovered by Dyer Island Conservation Trust, this small, young shark was then analysed, along with the South African Shark Conservancy.

This was taken during the necropsy where the scientists had to cut into the shark to examine all parts of it to try and determine the cause of death. They spent hours looking inside and at her organs but no definite cause of death was found on this day. Her body did not go to waste, as scientists make sure that by collecting samples, numerous studies and research projects can be supported. Though limited with my equipment I had on me, I documented this striking activity as best I could, focusing here on the head lying apart from the body.

Near Gansbaai, South Africa

Nikon , D800, -, 70-200, iso 400, f/22, 1/160, -

Judge's comments:

Having read Charlotte's back story, this image is not as we first imagined; mindless slaughter etc etc but actually this is a positive image. Visually it creates a negative reaction but, as always, there are two sides to every story.

Peter Rowlands



'Net Loss' Simon J Pierce (New Zealand)

Runde Island off Norway is a seasonal home to over half a million seabirds, including these northern gannets. The gannets normally build their nests from seaweed and grass floating on the ocean's surface near the island. Increasingly, the seabirds are instead using discarded netting, ropes, and packaging straps from fisheries into their nests. This fishing waste is becoming more common than the natural materials they instinctively gather. A recent survey at Runde found that 97% of nests contained man-made debris. Newborn chicks, and even adult gannets, are routinely entangled and killed in these tough and nonbiodegradeable materials. Reduced fishing pressure near nesting colonies has been shown to lead to fast and measurable declines in the number of affected nests, pointing to a range of potential solutions: reduce pollution from the fishing boats, minimise net fisheries in the local region, or create protected areas that allow the ecosystem to recover.

Runde Island, Norway

Sony, A7rIII, N/A, Sony 100-400 mm GM, iso 800, f/6.3, 1/2500, N/A

Judge's comments:

We have given them no choice. Their natural materials of seaweed and grass have been smothered by indestructible ghost traps which fishermen have lost or intentionally discarded. We, and the fishermen especially, should hang our heads in shame and then do everything in our power to reverse this.

'Unnatural habitat ' Shane Keena (United <u>States)</u>

The unfortunate reality is that human impact is found everywhere... even on the tiniest and remote of islands amongst the smallest of critters.

Here, on Peleliu Island in Micronesia, a hermit crab has made use of a discarded metal can from Asia as a temporary, yet very unnatural home. Sadly, this is not the first encounter I have seen on these islands where these hermit crabs use discards for shelters and have seen them using human discards ranging from plastic Kurig single use coffee pods, to old metal bolts.

I hope images like this bring a greater awareness that there is no "away" and helps to foster a new attitude towards becoming better stewards for this beautiful planet.

Please recycle and love our planet...it's the only one we have.

Peleliu, Republic of Palau

Canon , EOS-5D3, n/a, Canon 16-35mm f/2.8, iso 250, f/2.8, 1/400, Natural

Judge's comment:

Comical, but with a serious message about the proliferation of litter in the oceans.

Alex Mustard



COMMENDED

'The Cry for Help' Nadya Kul<u>agina (Kazakhstan)</u>

As a person who loves water and spends quite a bit of time in it, it hurts me to see how disrespectfully we treat it. In our everyday life, we tend to forget the role of water in our lives, how much we depend on it and where the life on earth came from. The idea of this shot was to bring people's attention to the problem of plastic pollution. Action needs to be taken to raise people's awareness of the problem. David Langlois, a professional model, agreed to pose for me for this shot. I think it is because of his love for the oceans that this image turned out so full of energy calling out to everyone that the fate of the oceans is in our hands, and that little steps pave the way to a healthier future. No plastic bags were left in the water after the photoshoot ;)

Bimini, Bahamas

Nikon , D800, Nexus, Nikkor 16-35, iso 160, 11, 250, n/a

Judge's comments:

We love that this category attracts such a range of imagery and photographers use their passion for ocean conservation to inspire a whole range of imagery about our relationship with the underwater world.

Alex Mustard





COMMENDED

'Turtle Haven' Theresa Guise (United States)

Thirty turtles basking in a sunny bay is not a common site. We stumbled upon this large group soaking up the sun in the bay of Punta Vincente Roca, while returning from a dive to photograph the mola mola. The tiny bay was so thick with Galapagos green sea turtles that they clumsily bumped into each other. With only a few minutes to take some images, we slid into the water and began shooting. These beauties were not what we set out to photograph earlier, the shy mola mola in the dark, cold morning. Instead, we witnessed a stunning example of successful marine conservation. The Galapagos Marine Reserve, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is one of the largest marine protected areas in the world. The diverse population of ocean life thrive in this protected space. Turtle haven illustrates why we must protect the ocean and make it a life-long commitment.

Punta Vincente Roca, Isabela Island, Galapagos

Canon, 5Ds, Subal, EF8-15mm f4L FiISHEYE USM, iso 320, f/13, 1/100, Ikelite Ds161 x2

Judge's comments:

As the popular Johnny Mercer song from 1944 says: You've got to accentuate the positive, Eliminate the negative, And latch on to the affirmative, Don't mess with Mister In-Between. Mr Mercer was obviously ahead of his time.



The tuna fisheries in the Straits of Gibraltar are emblematic fishing spots. All animals that come into the Mediterranean come through the Strait so usually anything can be seen in these places.

I was able to visit the fishery during the day when they are lifting the nets in order to get the fishes inside,. Places like this fishery in Ceuta are aware of the importance of taking care of the environment and fishes that are not useful such as sun fishes or turtles are thrown away or taken into a dedicated center in order to heal them.

It was impressive to see all that movement and be surrounded by hundreds of fishes, but the best thing was to see fishermen taking care of animals that were not edible in the middle of all that chaos, a clear message of how things can be done right.

Ceuta, España

Nikon, d850, Isotta D850, Nikon 8-15 mm, iso 640, 18, 250, 2 Sea & Sea YS-D2

Judge's comment:

This is marine conservation at it's very best and the author's words will go 'a very long way'. The image itself is first-class. The split is pin sharp from front to back.

Martin Edge



WINNER AQUA, mysteries of the underwater world: by Pietro Formis

A book dedicated to water: the source of all life and mother of every creature on the planet.

This is a journey through light, shapes, colours, and the behaviour of aquatic creatures - from tropical seas, to the Red Sea and the Mediterranean – an examination of the uncertain future of the oceans and of our planet.

Light, source of energy for the ecosystem and the creator of spectacular effects.

Darkness and its mysterious creatures.

Colours and communication codes of a complex and wonderful world.

Shapes, forged by evolution, illustrated in an almost indescribable variety of functional solutions.

Anthropomorphic masks of seemingly monstrous but incredibly fascinating beings.

Life and death, closely linked: the investment of a species in its own future; from the parental care that some parents dedicate to their offspring, to the extreme sacrifice of the individual that gives up its life for the new generation.

Predation, universal law of the natural world - eat and be eaten.

Survival: surviving and adapting to the most greedy, cynical and determined predator of all – man. An animal among animals, predator among predators, that has forgotten the purpose of equilibrium with the



environment in which it lives.

This publication is not only a collection of beautiful images but also an educational tool for raising awareness of the marine environment which, for many years now, has been suffering considerable damage due to humans activities.

Featuring 128 pages with 110 photos is written Italian and English and is distributed in bookstores and available online

www.danielemarson.com

A 15 year-long commitment to observe and record the behaviour of whales in the wild, the book combines monochrome fine-art and documentary photography, with informative and entertaining texts.

Curiosity prompted Wade and Robyn Hughes, the authors—to go, as Jacques Cousteau observed, "looking through a keyhole, the keyhole of nature, trying to know what's going on."

Inspired, informed, and guided by the work of leading whale researchers, they set out to contribute their observations, authorship, and photographic art to the evolving body of knowledge of these mystical

beings. That they succeeded is underlined

by pre-eminent sperm whale researcher Dr Hal Whitehead's *Foreword *in which he comments on "remarkable photographs" and extraordinary insights" and credits the work for having shown him the "importance of sensing skin on skin" within sperm whale society

'Looking for Whales', published by Halstead Press and endorsed by Australian Geographic, is a book for every whale enthusiast.

www.wadeandrobynhughes.com/book/#order-now

LOOKING FOR

Wade and Robyn Hughes

GEOGRAPHIC

WHA

At the end of WWII, around 150 American airplanes, all veterans of the Pacific war, were dumped in the lagoon of Kwajalein Atoll, Marshall Islands.

Brandi Mueller has captured rare images of these forgotten war birds, many looking as if they could still take off and return to the war-torn skiest. Encrusted in coral, these haunting aircraft are now home to a colorful array of tropical Pacific marine life, including fish, turtles, and even shark.s Discover the stories of these historic aircraft, their heroic role in the Pacific Theater of WWII, and how and why they ended up here including the remains of Douglas SBD Dauntless, Vought F4U Corsair, Curtiss SB2C Helldiver, Curtiss C-46 Commando, Grumman F4F Wildcats, Grumman TBF Avengers, and an astounding eleven PBJ-1 Mitchell Medium Bombers.



The haunting images are accompanied by a text that includes a historical account of the aircraft by military historian Alan Axelrod.

Join award winning photographers Henley Spiers and Jade Hoksbergen as they introduce you to their home waters around Cebu, Philippines. From the legendary thresher sharks of Malapascua, whale sharks at Oslob, millions of sardines swarming in Moalboal, and plenty of bizarre critters; this area has some of the greatest marine biodiversity on the planet.

The book covers 52 sites, spanning Cebu's most famous diving hotspots, as well as unveiling some little-known underwater gems.

The second installment in the Let's Go Dive series, this guide takes you right into the action. Packed with 280 stunning images shot on location and fun, narrative text that takes you along for the dive, this guide is a must have for any diver or snorkeler interested in the waters around Cebu. There are even underwater photography tips to help you have a productive shoot!

Produced in association with the Philippine Department of Tourism, this is your essential guide to Cebu."





HENLEY SPIERS & JADE HOKSBERGEN

www.jadehoksbergen.com/books www.henleyspiers.com/books Meet the sea's most fascinating creatures see the lives and curiosities of charmers and tricksters—many newly identified and some on the verge of extinction.

From marine biologist, award-winning underwater photographer, and leading expert on pygmy seahorses, comes a spectacular guide to hundreds of the ocean's fishes and coral reefs.

In this richly informative volume, brimming with new discoveries and more than three hundred colourful images, you'll swim in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans; you'll be dazzled in the Coral Triangle and amazed in Triton Bay.

The wondrous creatures inside excel in the arts of seduction and deception, and you'll have the rare chance to see and delight in their antics. You'll also learn what they eat, how they play, and how they care for one another, live on one another, and mimic others when they're afraid. There is also compelling insight into the naming process, which creatures are facing extinction, and how we can help them before it's too late. Copyrighted Material THE WORLD BENEATH The Life and Times of Unknown



www.OceanRealmImages.com/home/boo

"With Blue Mexico, I take you to the very heart of Mexico. Thecountry's waters of a thousand different hues are a place of migration and refuge for countless species. Blue Mexico is the fruit of more than a decade of exploration, encounters and exchanges. It is one more voice in the choruscalling for the conservation of our planet. Through oceans, seas, lagoons and underwater caves you will be immersed in the emotion and poetry of some of my most treasured encounters. Blue Mexico lies at the frontier between the blue of the sky and the ocean - a haven of peace where breathtaking marine discoveriesare made. A frontier whose only limit is the human spirit."



Sitting in the heart of the Coral Triangle, home to the world's greatest marine diversity, Sabah is a magnet for divers from around the world. With its glorious tropical islands, teeming coral reefs, clear warm water and sandy beaches, this biodiversity hotspot is indeed a diver's dream come true. Sensational Seas of Sabah captures the beauty, diversity and breathtaking experiences that attracts people to enjoy some of the world's best diving. Scubazoo will take you on a journey to reveal the amazing diversity of creatures such as the endangered green and hawksbill turtles, countless species of sharks, plus thousands of barracuda and jacks. As well as these large inhabitants of the reef, Sabah offers rare critters such as mimic octopus, flamboyant



cuttlefish, harlequin ghost pipefish, many strange frogfish, sea horses and colourful nudibranchs.

1) Wide Angle Winner - Greg Lecoeur (France) Runner Up - Oleg Gaponyuk (Russian Federation) Third - Tobias Friedrich (Germany)

Highly commended

Wayne Lai (China) Nicholas More (United Kingdom) Sean Landsman (Canada) Pekka Tuuri (Finland) Commended Yujing Guo (China) Greg Sherman (United States) Nadia Aly (United States)

2) Macro

Winner - Hannes Klostermann (Germany) Runner Up - Keigo Kawamura (Japan) Third - Jerome Israel (United States)

Highly commended

Mika Saareila (Finland) Yatwai So (Hong Kong) Alessandro Grasso (Italy) Katherine Lu (USA)

Commended

Ludovic Galko-Rundgren (France) Lilian Koh (Singapore) Yatwai So (Hong Kong)

3) Wrecks

Winner - Tobias Friedrich (Germany) Runner Up - Renee Capozzola (United States) Third - Pier Mane (South Africa)

Highly commended

Taeyup Kim (Korea, Republic of) Yen-Yi Lee (Taiwan) Pier Mane (South Africa) Pekka Tuuri (Finland)

Commended

David Alpert (United Kingdom) Taeyup Kim (Korea, Republic of) Marcus Blatchford (United Kingdom)



4) Behaviour

Winner - Pasquale Vassallo (Italy) Runner Up - Paolo Isgro (Italy) Third - Filippo Borghi (Italy)

Highly commended

Steven Kovacs (United States) Alex Kydd (Australia) Henley Spiers (United Kingdom) Scott Portelli (Australia)

Commended

Nadya Kulagina (Kazakhstan) Kimberly Jeffries (United States) Nadia Aly (United States)

5) Portrait –

Winner - Lilian Koh (Singapore) Runner Up - Luc Rooman (Belgium) Third - Greg Lecoeur (France)

Highly commended

Matthew Smith (Australia) Pedro Jarque Krebs (Peru) Mirko Zanni (Switzerland) David Alpert (United Kingdom)

Commended Wayne Lai (China) Mirko Zanni (Switzerland) Nicholas More (United Kingdom)

6) Black & White –

Winner - Wai Hoe Mok (Singapore) Runner Up - Henley Spiers (United Kingdom) Third - Zena Holloway (United Kingdom)

Highly commended

Henley Spiers (United Kingdom) James Ferrara (United States) Filippo Borghi (Italy) Aaron Wong (Singapore)

Commended

Jacob Degee (Poland) Michael Gallagher (United Kingdom) Galice Hoarau (Norway)

7) Compact -

Winner - Man Bd (Malaysia) Runner Up - Enrico Somogyi (Germany) Third - Enrico Somogyi (Germany)

Highly commended

Kathrin Landgraf-Kluge (Germany) Enrico Somogyi (Germany) Enrico Somogyi (Germany) Andrea Michelutti (Italy)

Commended

Mel Wu (Australia) Enrico Somogyi (Germany) Enrico Somogyi (Germany) 8) Up & Coming Winner - Anita Kainrath (Austria) Runner Up - Nur Tucker (United Kingdom) Third - Ines Goovaerts (Belgium)

Highly commended Pier Paolo Cito (Italy) Emilie Ledwidge (Australia) Richard Condlyffe (United States) Yen Ting Goh (Singapore)

Commended Marina Deriglazova (Russian Federation) Francis Glassup (France) Pascal Rusch (Switzerland)

9) British Waters Wide Angle Winner - Arthur Kingdon (United Kingdom) Runner Up - Will Clark (United Kingdom) Third - Trevor Rees (United Kingdom)

Highly commended Simon Temple (United Kingdom) Ian Wade (United Kingdom) Mark Kirkland (United Kingdom)

Commended Henley Spiers (United Kingdom) Dave Peake (United Kingdom) 10) British Waters Macro Winner - Laura Storm (United Kingdom) Runner Up - Trevor Rees (United Kingdom) Third - Dan Bolt (United Kingdom)

Highly commended Laura Storm (United Kingdom) Paul Pettitt (United Kingdom) Malcolm Nimmo (United Kingdom) Atanas Petrov (United Kingdom)

Commended

Cathy Lewis (United Kingdom) Dan Bolt (United Kingdom) Dan Bolt (United Kingdom)

11) British Waters Living Together
Winner - Dan Bolt (United Kingdom)
Runner Up - Kirsty Andrews (United Kingdom)
Third - Shannon Moran (United Kingdom)

Highly commended Andrew Pearson (United Kingdom) Shannon Moran (United Kingdom)

12) British Waters Compact Winner - Colin Garrett (United Kingdom) Runner Up - James Lynott (United Kingdom) Third - Martin Edser (United Kingdom)

Highly Commended James Lynott (United Kingdom) Martin Edser (United Kingdom) James Lynott (United Kingdom) Colin Garrett (United Kingdom)

Commended Martin Edser (United Kingdom) James Lynott (United Kingdom) Colin Garrett (United Kingdom)

Highly commended Kim André Sund (Norway) Charlotte Sams (United Kingdom) Simon Pierce (New Zealand) Shane Keena (United States)

Commended Nadya Kulagina (Kazakhstan) Theresa Guise (United States) Rafael Fernandez (Spain)

UPY Book of the Year 2020 Winner -AQUA, mysteries of the underwater world: by Pietro Formis

Highly commended Looking for Whales by Wade and Robyn Hughes

The Airplane Graveyard by Brandi Mueller and Alan Axelrod

Guide to Cebu by Henley Spiers and Jade Hoksbergen

Blue Mexico by Fabrice Guerin

Sabah by Scubazoo

FINALISTS

Wide Angle

Nadia Aly. Paolo Bausani. Renee Capozzola. Geo Cloete. Aldo Costa. Ellen Cuylaerts. Carolyn T Davis. Marko Dimitrijevic. Rafael Fernandez. James Ferrara. Tobias Friedrich. Oleg Gaponyuk. Yujing Guo. Torbjörn Gylleus. Alvaro Herrero. Catherine Holmes. Hannes Klostermann. Mike Korostelev. Celia Kujala. Wayne Lai. Sean Landsman. Greg Lecoeur. Adam Martin. Pete Mesley. Nicholas More. Egor Nikiforov. Michael Patrick O'neill. Miguel Pereira. Nicolas Remy. Alex Rose. Virginia Salzedo. Greg Sherman. Henley Spiers. Tom St George. Sean Steininger. Tanakit (Yammo) Suwanyangyaun. Gino Symus. Grant Thomas. Pekka Tuuri. Pedro Vieyra. Lars Von Ritter Zahony. Erica Watson. Steve Woods.

Macro

Sylvie Ayer. Igor Bogachenko. Kenji Cheow. Joe Daniels. Tobias Friedrich. Ludovic Galko-Rundgren. Karyll Gonzalez. Alessandro Grasso. Jerome Israel. Keigo Kawamura. Rustu Kirman. Hannes Klostermann. Lilian Koh. Katherine Lu. Mika Saareila. Virginia Salzedo. Laurie Slawson. Yatwai So. Jenny Stock. Dany Weinberg. Seungchul Yang. Claudio Zori.

Wrecks

David Alpert. René B. Andersen. Nicolas Barraque. Marcus Blatchford. Renee Capozzola. Rafael Fernandez. Tobias Friedrich. Kieran Hatton. Taeyup Kim. Nadya Kulagina. Yen-Yi Lee. Pier Mane. Pete Mesley. Mariusz Milka. Anders Nyberg. Pekka Tuuri.

Behaviour

Nadia Aly. Filippo Borghi. Ellen Cuylaerts. Jacob Degee. Lureen Ferretti. Pietro Formis. Galice Hoarau. Maxwel Hohn. Salvatore Ianniello. Paolo Isgro. Kimberly Jeffries. Lilian Koh. Steven Kovacs. Nadya Kulagina. Alex Kydd. Wayne Lai. Greg Lecoeur. Michael Patrick O'neill. Scott Portelli. João Rodrigues. Henley Spiers. Mayumi Takeuchi-Ebbins. Olga Torrey. Pasquale Vassallo. Chun Zhou.

Portrait

Eduardo Acevedo. David Alpert. Joe Daniels. Jacob Degee. Tobias Friedrich. Marco Gargiulo. Galice Hoarau. Pedro Jarque Krebs. Kimberly Jeffries. Hwanhee Kim. Lilian Koh. Steven Kovacs. Wayne Lai. Greg Lecoeur. Ferenc Lorincz Ifj.. Herbert Meyrl. Lars Michaelis. Nicholas More. Juan Murillo. Luc Rooman. Guerino Salvatore. Rui Shang. Matthew Smith. Yatwai So. Jenny Stock. Nur Tucker. Flavio Vitiello. Wen Chih Yen. Mirko Zanni. Leon Zhao. Claudio Zori.

Black & White

Richard Barnden. Filippo Borghi. Claudio Ceresi. Jacob Degee. Diana Fernie. James Ferrara. Liang Fu. Michael Gallagher. Martyn Guess. Galice Hoarau. Zena Holloway. Hannes Klostermann. Wayne Lai. Pier Mane. Giacomo Marchione. James Mcdonald. Herbert Meyrl. Wai Hoe Mok. Brook Peterson. Marie-Charlotte Ropert. Alex Rose. Jann Rosen-Queralt. Greg Sherman. Henley Spiers. Grant Thomas. Ron Watkins. Aaron Wong. Yung-Sen Wu. Seungchul Yang.

Compact

Man Bd. Jack Berthomier. Mark Cantwell. Marc Casanovas Felix. Yi-Ping Chang. Sunday Delger. Todor Dimitrov. Martin Edser. Alfonso Exposito. Andrea Falcomata'. Alessandra Giordani. Francis Glassup. Yen Ting Goh. Marcus Greatwood. Tomas Hanicinec. Emily Irving-Swift. Lee Jellyman. Vania Kam. Kyungshin Kim. Rustu Kirman. Anthony Laing. Kathrin Landgraf-Kluge. Jin Woo Lee. Kerry Lewis. Michael Loh. Michael Loh. Ferenc Lorincz Ifj.. James Lynott. Andrea Michelutti. Juan Murillo. Ari Nieminen. Jae Young Park. Eser Pasa. Miguel Ramirez. Michael Rechberger. Aliah Roslan. Benhur Sarinda. Tom Shlesinger. Elizabeth Solich. Isabella Sommati. Enrico Somogyi. Sara Strachan. David Strachan. Lorenzo Terraneo. Alessio Tinti. Ipah Uid. Satu Vaarula. Mel Wu. Wenqing Ye. Choh Wah Ye. Marco Zaffignani. Alex Zaytsev. Jingyi Zhang.

Up And Coming

Yousef Alshekaili. Pier Paolo Cito. Richard Condlyffe. Kevin De Vree. Marina Deriglazova. Richard Francis. Stefan Gartner. Francis Glassup. Yen Ting Goh. Ines Goovaerts. Simon Heron. Anita Kainrath. Emilie Ledwidge. Jillanne Mccarty. James Mcdonald. Craig O'connell. Pascal Rusch. Naomi Strong. Nur Tucker.

British Waters Wide Angle

Rick Ayrton. Marcus Blatchford. Dan Bolt. Will Clark. Robert Cuss. Arthur Kingdon. Mark Kirkland. Pete Mesley. Dave Peake. Trevor Rees. Henley Spiers. Johan Sundelin. Simon Temple. Pedro Vieyra. Ian Wade.

British Waters Macro

Dan Bolt. Cathy Lewis. Crispin Middleton. Malcolm Nimmo. Atanas Petrov. Paul Pettitt. Trevor Rees. Laura Storm.

British Waters Living Together

Kirsty Andrews. Dan Bolt. Zena Holloway. Shannon Moran. Andrew Pearson. Paul Pettitt.

British Waters Compact

Martin Edser. Colin Garrett. James Lynott. Guy Mitchell. Tony Reed. Elizabeth Sanderson. Sandra Stalker. Ryan Stalker.

Marine Conservation

David Alpert. Andy Ball. Oliver Barbier. Richard Barnden. Jack Berthomier. Katy Danca Galli. Joe Daniels. Rafael Fernandez. Diana Fernie. Mathieu Foulquié. Marco Gargiulo. Rudolf Gonda. Karyll Gonzalez. Alessandro Grasso. Shane Gross. Theresa Guise. Alvaro Herrero. Maxwel Hohn. Jason Isley. Kimberly Jeffries. Deon Jonker. Shane Keena. Vincent Kneefel. Dmitry Kokh. Nadya Kulagina. Joanna Lentini. Ferenc Lorincz Ifj.. Katherine Lu. Gabriella Luongo. Jeff Milisen. Egor Nikiforov. Anders Nyberg. Thomas Osborn. Cedric Peneau. Simon Pierce. Dimitris Poursanidis. Milos Prelevic. Nicolas Remy. Nathalie Rodrigues. João Rodrigues. Nuno Rodrigues. Alex Rose. Charlotte Sams. Claudia Schmitt. Robert Smits. Henley Spiers. Kim André Sund. Yun Thing. Csaba Tokolyi. Stephen Trewhella. Scott Tuason. Satu Vaarula. Pasquale Vassallo. Tom Vierus. Joseph Woodyear.

Prizes & Sponsors

We at the Underwater Photographer of the Year competition believe that, while prizes are an important part of any serious photography contest, it is the prize that money cannot buy which makes our awards uniquely attractive to underwater photographers. This comes from the worldwide media exposure that we generate for our winners and their photography.

That said, we are very proud that many of the leading companies in the diving and underwater photography world choose to sponsor UPY and we hope all entrants will consider using their products in the future. If your company wants to sponsor a prize in a future UPY, please get in touch.

Placings in UPY get you points and points get you prizes. Each photographer can only claim one prize and the photographers with the most points get first pick.

•Note full terms and conditions of each prize is not listed here.

\$2,000 USD liveaboard voucher, redeemable towards any available Solitude Adventurer itinerary or Solitude One itinerary (excluding Tubbataha) - Lilian Koł \$500 USD voucher for Backscatter.com - Man BD \$500 USD voucher for Backscatter.com - Luc Roo \$500 USD voucher towards Solitude Acacia Resort (Anilao, Philippines) -\$500 USD voucher towards Solitude Lembeh Resort (Lembeh, Indonesia) -£200 GBP Crown Estate Cash Prize -£300 GBP Crown Estate Cash Prize -£50 GBP voucher to be spent on any Magic-Filters.com products - James F £500 GBP Crown Estate Cash Prize - Dan Bolt £75 GBP voucher for Magic-Filters.com -£75 GBP voucher to be spent on any Magic-Filters.com products - Mirko €100 Euro voucher for I-Divesite products bought at Fotografit.eu -

€200 Euro voucher for I-Divesite products bought at Fotografit.eu -€400 Euro voucher for I-Divesite products bought at Fotografit.eu -10 dive package with Thresher Shark Divers, Philippines. -Agulhas House, South Africa, for 2 divers double or twin room, 7 Nights full board, 10 dives - H Aiyanar Resort, Philippines - 7 day, 6 night in resort with 10 dive package -Atmosphere Resort voucher for £500 GBP -Beuchat Focea comfort 6 wetsuit -Blue O Two voucher for £750 GBP – Crystal Blue Resort, Philippines 7 Nights Full accommodation. 6 days x 3 dives -Dive Into Lembeh, Indonesia 6 night stay with 5 days of diving (2 day boat dives per day) -Fourth Element £250 GBP voucher for their online shop - Wi Fourth Element £50 GBP vouchers for their online shop -Fourth Element £50 GBP vouchers for their online shop – Go Agaba – for 2 people, 4 days diving (8 dives), accommodation, and Wadi Rum Excursion with one night accommodation at Rahayeb Desert Camp -Looking For Whales book by Wade & Robyn Hughes -Looking For Whales book by Wade & Robyn Hughes – Looking For Whales book by Wade & Robyn Hughes – S Nauticam CMC-1 lens -Nauticam MWL-1 lens Nauticam SMC-1 Wet Lens - Arthur Kingdon Red Sea Diving Safari - 7 nights at Marsa Shagra, Marsa Nakari or Wadi Lahami, plus 5 days diving. -

Scuba Travel £100 GBP vouchers - Dan Bolt Scuba Travel £100 GBP vouchers - Martin Edser Scuba Travel £100 GBP vouchers - Nick More Scuba Travel £100 GBP vouchers - Trevor Rees Scuba Travel £200 GBP vouchers - Nur Tucker Scuba Travel £200 GBP vouchers - Trevor Rees Scuba Travel £200 GBP vouchers - Trevor Rees Scuba Travel £500 GBP voucher - Anita Kainrath Scuba Travel £500 GBP voucher - Wayne Lai Scubalamp voucher for \$100 USD - Zena Holloway Scubalamp voucher for \$300 USD - Enrico Somogyi Scubalamp voucher for \$600 USD - Wai Hoe Mok Signed copy of Reef Life by Callum Roberts - Kathrin Landgraf-Kluge

Signed copy of Reef Life by Callum Roberts - Simon Temple Siladen Resort, Indonesia 1 person 5 night stay & 10 air dives – Renee Capozzola

Suunto EON Core dive computer - Colin Garrett Underwater Warmer heated vest WL5200FB - Laura Storm With thanks to the media outlets who showcased our 2018 winners, including:





See you all in 2021