

UPY
2018

Underwater Photographer of the Year 2018
The Yearbook



UPY 2018

Underwater
Photographer
of the Year

The Yearbook

Produced by
Underwater Photography magazine
www.uwpmag.com

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Dan Bolt
Martin Edge
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A detailed close-up of a black Nauticam underwater camera housing. The housing is covered in water droplets, indicating it is underwater. A diver's hand, wearing a black neoprene glove with 'SALVAMARK' written on it, is visible holding the top of the housing. The background is a blurred underwater scene with light rays.

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Underwater Photographer of the Year 2018

Chairman's Report

Hello again and welcome to this year's collection of the best images from UPY 2018.

I hope you will agree it's another amazing selection of images and I'm sure you'll agree with me even more if an image or images of yours are included :-)

When Alex, Martin and I were judging this year something was bugging me as the images flowed past; trying to attract our collective eyes to avoid the inevitable cull that such a large number of entries must involve. And then it dawned on me.

The standard of this year's entries was even better than last year and that should in no way belittle last year's because they blew us away then. This year there was a consistency of quality that was at times relentless because, believe it or not, it's good to have the odd 'duffer' go past to remind you how good the others are but this year there were literally, and I really do mean literally, no duffers. So for those who are disappointed not to have their images included here you should feel no sense of under achievement. That is just the unfortunate nature of competitions.

In today's digital age, images, both still and moving, are everywhere and from everywhere. They are produced and absorbed by everyone and anywhere and it is this dilution through over saturation which has fundamentally changed photography. Images must compete for our attention every day on web sites, social media, printed pages and billboards as our lives spin by.

Competitions, on the other hand, provide an opportunity for us to stay awhile to savour the work of others and let the images perform their magic. Moments in time caught at the peak of the action, nature's characters immortalised and the underwater world shown at its best.

The UPY Yearbook has become an annual celebration of our world and if the 2018 edition is anything to go by, things are just getting better and better.

These 110 images hide nothing. The techniques, equipment and settings are all revealed to give aspiring entrants a valuable insight into what appealed to the judges this year, provide a benchmark for you to appraise your own images

and hopefully inspire you with fresh ideas and angles for next year.

Between us three judges we have over 100 years of image making and appraising experience. We react and revel in being party to emerging techniques, angles and interpretations in all the Categories and we genuinely look forward to our time together with your images.

Hopefully we'll be seeing more of them in 2019.

Once again the announcement of the winning images is also the starting point for us to begin work with over two hundred press outlets worldwide include some of the biggest media corporations with circulations in the millions. UPY has earned a reputation for some of the best presented work in the business and this is totally due to Dan Bolt's web site building skills. Editors are able to view all of the images together with background information and judge's comments in easy and logical to follow folders and databases.

As a result, the coverage which UPY generates on your behalf is second to none; who knows what might happen when a



commissioning Editor from a glossy international magazine sees your work or a travel company might like your style to represent their destination?

On behalf of the UPY team, myself, Alex Mustard, Martin Edge, Dan Bolt and Saeed Rashid, I wish you all the very best of diving and image creation in 2018 and I look forward to 'seeing' you in 2019.

Peter Rowlands
Chairman of the Judges 2018

Judges comments

Martin Edge

If you have the slightest interest in underwater photography I urge you to bookmark this particular edition of UWP right now. Why? Well in my own opinion I do not believe that you will find a better selection of underwater images anywhere else either On-line, in magazines, books, journals or any other publication I can think of.

In my opinion this particular edition is a universal experience in superior underwater imagery. Since the conception of this competition four years ago we have seen a number of groundbreaking techniques, which have inspired and encouraged other creative photographers to continue to push the boundaries.

In my role as 'teacher' I usually 'pick up' on mistakes and oversight. So, for a change I'd like to visit the positives with some examples, which particularly inspired me during the judging procedures.

Macro Runner Up. Songa Cai.

Compositionally outstanding. It's the interaction - the eye contact between the Conger and its prey. The framing between the two balances the eye of the viewer, but there's more! SongaCai has left just enough space in the bottom left hand corner for an escape option. Did the prey take it? We may never know!



Behaviour. Winner. Filippo Borghi

The placement and balance within the frame are perfect. The face of the cormorant is looking towards the left and some would say – looking out of the picture, however the composition and the flash illumination all down the middle and right side of the bird is off set with the sunbeams at top left. The result for me is a superbly balanced composition with the eye, mouth, face and fish in perfect poise.

Portraits. Winner. Tanya Houppermans

Through my eyes everything within this image is flawless. It starts with the dominant and angular shape of the shark and the lack of any eye contact whatsoever which I believe is a major strength of this picture. With the mouth wide open the viewer is left alone to imagine what is surely about to happen. Compositionally, the pattern of the bait ball combined with the flash illumination works perfectly. It's not easy on the eye to step away from this picture it just continues to keep you in there. It certainly did with me. I couldn't stop admiring it.



Up & Coming. Winner. ManBd UiDive

This image in my opinion is quite unique. Hardly ever can I remember a secondary subject to take up at least two thirds of the frame whilst out of focus. We regularly 'bokeh' our backgrounds shooting macro and I'm sure that many of us would have taken one look at the Moray and been disappointed that it was not sharp but in my eyes it's all about the moray and in particular the eye of the moray quietly sneaking up on it's prey. The Hollywood Jurassic Park films spring to mind.



British Waters Wide Angle. Winner. Grant Thomas

A beautiful split shot with the swans coming together at the decisive moment. The split is a perfect curve across the top 3rds line with the blue sky and the puffy white clouds in the background. The eyes have just enough base at the bottom of the frame to look into. Like archways, the curved neck of both swans draws the eye even further into the frame



British Waters Compact. Winner. Vicky Paynter

There were a lot of different subjects in this year's compact competition and it was hard to choose a winner but this seal shot stood out above the rest in my eyes. It was a little different than the others. Shy like and nervous and not so playful as with the majority of other seal shots in the competition. The bright reflection breaks up the view and I believe this was the key to its success. The poise also adds extra depth and keeps my eye in the picture. Yet another example of one particular image growing on the judges during the process.



These are just 5 of the 110 winning images on display here. Savour the remainder too for they represent the highest standard in underwater photography today.

Martin Edge

Alex Mustard

We're thrilled to see UPY's statistics jump up again. Our number of entrants is up over 10% and the number of entries hit 5000 for the first time. In underwater photography contest terms, those numbers are hard to believe. Down the years, I have been asked to judge most of the well-known contests, and even the biggest rarely reach four figures. We're incredibly grateful for your support and we're very happy that UPY is positioning itself as a key event in the underwater photography calendar.

If there is a downside to these numbers, it is that they make being successful in UPY harder than ever for our entrants. Especially because we judges felt that the quality of entries was twice that of last year. If there is a negative to running UPY is that for every image we make a winner, 50 must be rejected and the vast majority of these are fabulous shots. For those that weren't successful this year, I'd like to assure you that we really do appreciate every single entry and unlike many contests you can be certain that every single photo is seen and evaluated by every single judge. Please keep shooting and please keep entering.

As always UPY provides a fascinating window on the underwater photography community and I am always interested in the demographics revealed in our winners. The sharp end of the Macro category is clearly dominated by Asian photographers, while Europeans monopolise the Wrecks category. The quality of all the awarded images in the Behaviour category is truly astonishing, I think any of the top ten could have triumphed in previous years. Portraits was very popular and we were really pleased to see photographers interpreting the theme in a variety of ways.

And I am excited by the variety and standard in our new Black & White category, that is clearly here to stay. As always it is great to see both male and female photographers sharing the spoils and to see winners from so many different continents. We were also encouraged to see a marked reduction in the number of macro entries that have been staged by manipulating subjects.

Finally, I would like to thank the companies and individuals who have sponsored prizes in this year's UPY. If you appreciate what we're trying to do with UPY, then please consider supporting our sponsors next time you are in the market for a purchase – and let them know you appreciate their support of UPY. Running UPY really is a team effort, but we like to think of it as a contest that has come from and is run for the benefit of the underwater photography community, showcasing the year's very best underwater images.



Alex Mustard

Dan Bolt

It is hard to believe that the conversations Alex, Peter and I shared just a few short years ago has grown into such a well-respected and supported annual event in the underwater photography calendar. I have to echo Alex's words of thanks to all of our entrants and sponsors for your continued support and enthusiasm – it makes all the long hours of hard work more than worth it.



I have a unique perspective on the competition because I run the technical side of the awards and can see it growing not only in numbers of entries, but in mega-, and now giga-bytes of image files. The website is a key part of how the competition is run and perceived both by our entrants and the ever-hungry media outlets who adore showcasing your work. Now in it's 3rd incarnation, I think our online presence is reflective of how we want the awards to feel; professional, supportive, and keen to raise the profile of the amazing images (and aquatic diversity that those images highlight) to an ever environmentally aware audience.

Perhaps it's because I'm a bit of a geek, but I do find it entertaining to see the trends of how competitors like to approach entering the competition. There is always a flurry of activity in the first few days, and then a trickle of uploads for the next 3 to 4 weeks with a definite up-tick in numbers beginning 2 weeks before the deadline. The most entertaining day by far (but also the most nerve-wracking for me as the developer of the website) is the final day of the competition. This year we had over 1200 images uploaded in the final 24 hours (that was around 4Gb of data), with the last image being uploaded literally in the last minute before I closed the form... talk about taking it to the edge!

In all you uploaded over 10Gb of image files this year, and I'm just glad that I have a very fast broadband line at home to download them in time for judging – just a few hours after the competition closed.

I consider it a privilege to be part of this team and I am always utterly, utterly stunned by the images we receive; to be honest, I'm glad I'm not a judge!

Dan Bolt

www.instagram.com/danboltphoto

www.underwaterpics.co.uk

Saeed Rashid

I have been diving at just over 20 years and for the last 10 years have been involved with the underwater photography industry, giving talks and running workshops. Two years ago, the team at UPY asked if I would join them and I jumped at the chance.

Thankfully I'm not involved in judging the amazing pictures that you are all entering, I'm really not sure how I could pick between them, nor do I need to look after the technical infrastructure that makes the competition run smoothly. Luckily my role is a simple one, I am responsible for coordinating the prizes that you hope to win.

The modern version of this competition is still in its infancy but the word has got out that this is the competition not only people want to win but also companies want to sponsor. Lucky for you we are picky, and will only bring you prizes from the top Industry leading companies out there. From the start, we never wanted to be one of those competitions that just has page after page of faceless sponsors logos so we have endeavoured to limit those sponsors picking only the very best for you.

The prize allocation is also very different than most competitions. This means that the winners can only win one prize and with a range of items both large and small everyone that has been placed will be out to go home with a prize they will actually use and enjoy, making it much fairer for all. One of the best bits from me is hearing stories of the adventures winners have had with their prizes. So if you are lucky enough to be a winner make sure you tell us your story.

I would personally like to thank both the sponsors that have been with us from the start and those new to us this year for their kind offerings. Without your help and support we couldn't do what we do. In a time of financial uncertainties for many companies, it is a testament to your amazing imagery that many of these sponsors come knocking on our doors year after year wanting to be involved. I am honoured to be part of the small team running a competition by photographers for photographers.



Saeed Rashid

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Underwater Photographer of the Year 2018



WINNER

‘Cycle war’

Tobias Friedrich (Germany)

For a few years now I had had this image in mind as the motorcycles on this truck inside the Thistlegorm lie so perfectly together, but you can only barely capture it because the wall is very close and you can't move backwards enough to capture the whole scenery. As a result I had to create a panoramic image of the same scene to capture the whole cargo deck, including some lights that give the image more depth.

Thistlegorm, Egypt

Canon, 1DX MK II, SEACAM silver, Canon 8-15mm Fisheye, iso 4000, f/8, 1/30, Seacam Seaflash 150D, Keldan Video lights

Judges notes:

This is a quite extraordinary shot which must be viewed as large as possible. The bigger the better. And yet it is of a subject which has been photographed literally thousands of times. The artistic skill is to visualise such an image and the photographic talent is to achieve it. Perfectly lit and composed, I predict that there will never be a better shot of this subject from now on.

Peter Rowlands

British Underwater Photographer of the Year 2018



WINNER

'Love Birds'

Grant Thomas (UK)

I have always been fascinated by over-under photography, connecting the everyday terrestrial world that we all know with the less familiar underwater secrets. I chose Loch Lomond as the location for this shot due to its idyllic scenery, water access and friendly swans. My initial idea was to frame a split shot of one swan feeding below the surface but when I noticed how comfortable they were around me I was confident, with some patience, I could get that magical shot of the two. It was mid-day, sun high in the sky, I waded slowly into the shallow water, allowing the swans to become comfortable with my presence. When they began searching for food below the water line I just had to wait for that perfect moment of synchronicity.

Luss Pier, Loch Lomond, Scotland

Canon, 5d mkiii, Ikelite, Tokina 10 - 17mm, iso 125, 14, 80, 2 x INON Z240

Judges notes:

Congratulations on taking the prize for Winner & British Underwater Photographer of the Year. The judging panel were impressed when we first viewed this image, but as you know, opinions can change. In this case the swans image got better and better over the days of judging.

Martin Edge

Up and coming Underwater Photographer of the Year 2018



WINNER

'Roar'

Man Bd (Malaysia)

When shooting this nudibranch I was focusing on it's behaviour to get just the right shot. While this happened a moray eel suddenly appeared out from the blue behind the nudi. I was shocked for a while but decided it would be a great composition. After a few minutes to my surprise another nudi appeared right behind the other one maybe to mate. I then decided to wait a while longer for the nudi to be in frame with the moray eel roaring behind. It took about 30 minutes to get this shot and it was well worth it.

Yos dive house reef, Lembeh, Indonesia

Olympus TG-4, Olympus PT-056, Built in lens, iso 200, f/6.3, 1/200s, internal flash

Judges notes:

Another of my favourites in the competition. The mouth and head of the moray take up more than 50% of the image frame which is all out of focus but the result is a superb demonstration of blur which I would never have believe would work against the two nudis. The soft left eye of the moray together with the gleaming white teeth towards the bottom round off this image but there is still more to come! The nudis look as though they are planning their escape in different directions. One superb image!

Martin Edge

Most Promising British Underwater Photographer of the Year 2017



WINNER

'How many pike?'

Tony Stephenson (UK)

Living in the East Midlands in England is a long way from the sea and as a result, a lot of my diving takes place in the quarry at Stoney Cove, the UK's National Diving Centre. I love photographing pike and on this particular dive during the Easter holidays, a group of males were looking for a mate. Once they found one they pursued her relentlessly and were completely transfixed on gaining her attention. This allowed me to get close in front of the fish, fill the frame and aim to get lots of good eye contact. I was delighted by the results. I hope that I have demonstrated that UK inland diving can throw up some amazing sights that are a pleasure to witness and photograph.

Stoney Cove, Leicestershire, England

Olympus, OM-D E-M10 Mark II, Nauticam NA-EM10 Mark II housing, Panasonic Lumix G 8mm Fisheye, iso 200, f/4.5, 1/125, Dual Inon Z-240 strobes

Judges notes:

We were not short of Pike pictures to look at but this one captured us all. We did agree, however, that a touch of extra light (or Photoshop lightening) on the central character would have helped even more.

Peter Rowlands



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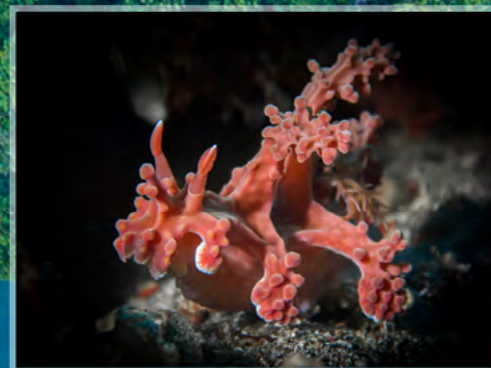
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1) Wide Angle

WINNER

'Humpback whale spy hopping'
Greg Lecoeur (France)

Each year, I go to Tonga to lead a small group of nature enthusiasts to photograph humpback whales. Tonga offers probably the best opportunity to interact with the whales in blue water. This year was very special, with my friends we had some of my best moments in my underwater photographer's life: Very curious and playful whales came to investigate us and adopt the spy hopping posture in front of our masks. Although weighing several tens of tons this mammal showed incredible agility and power in holding itself vertically in the water. It was very impressive and we could feel the power of nature but we were also invaded at the same time a feeling of gentleness. I had the chance to freeze this moment with a split shot to recreate a spectacular moment.

Vavau', Tonga
Nikon, D7200, Nauticam NA D7200,
Tokina 10-17mm, iso 200, f/9, 1/500,
Natural light

Judges notes:

An amazing subject, caught at the precise peak of the action. Greg's split level is an image that truly justifies being a split level. The gesture of the humpback reaching out with its pectoral fin completes the moment.

Alex Mustard



1) Wide Angle

RUNNER UP

'Surrounded'

Fan Ping (China)

Shark behaviourist Ms. Cristina Zenato has been studying Caribbean Reef Sharks near Freeport in The Bahamas for over 24 years. The unique bond between her and the sharks allows her to get really close to them without putting them into tonic immobility, and this has been helping many scientists, photographers and conservationists better understand and protect this beautiful species. Unlike in the movies, sharks in fact seldom attack humans on purpose and humans are not on their menu at all, on the contrary countless sharks are killed by humans just for their fins. Without these ancient animals the ocean will be completely different, and it will eventually become a disaster for mankind.?

Shark junction, Freeport, The Bahamas

Canon, 5DSr, Sea & Sea for Canon 5D Mark III, 16-35mm, iso 100, f/11, 1/2, Dual Sea & Sea YS-D1

Judges notes:

We get lots of stunning images of sharks in UPY, but Fan's shot elevates the artistry of photography on shark feeds. Beautiful and original.

Alex Mustard



1) Wide Angle

THIRD

'Evening Snorkel'

Brook Peterson (United States)

I was practicing sunset split shots in the calm waters around Ras Um Sid when I noticed several people walking down the pier with snorkel gear. My first thought was to wait until they were out of the way, but then I realized that THEY were the story. I wanted to preserve how the colors in the sunset seemed to mimick the colors of the corals so I decided a silhouette shot would meet my needs best.

Ras Um Sid, Red Sea, Egypt

Nikon, D810, Sea & Sea, Sigma 15mm Fisheye, iso 400, f/22, 1/160, Sea & Sea YS-D2

Judges notes:

This lovely sunset split shot is enhanced with the other snorkelers on the pier. Most of us would have avoided them but Brook had other intentions which made for a dynamic different image.

Martin Edge



1) Wide Angle

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Breathtaking'

Tobias Friedrich (Germany)

We found a pod of Orcas that were circling some herring caught in a net. The animals keep circling the net and we could approach them easily to take some close up shots.

Skjervoya, Norway

Canon, 1DX MK II, Seacam silver, Canon 8-15mm Fisheye, iso 2500, f/4, 1/200, none

Judges notes:

This is an image that transports you to a wondrous moment in an extreme location. Tobi had the inspiration not only to shoot the orca, but to also tell the bigger story with the snow-covered mountains surrounding the fjord.

Alex Mustard



1) Wide Angle

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'The real illusion'

Konstantin Killer (Germany)

In my style I put great emphasis on the model and on the background. Everything together must build a perfect picture. A picture must be able to tell a story and have a special effect. Another special feature is the effect lighting with underwater flashes which distinguish my photos from others. I love challenges and especially difficult shots. Most photographers are afraid of these challenges but I'm pretty good here, and this is exactly where I want to be. "Only your own Imagination sets the limit to possibilities"! I am working according to this motto.

Dive4Life Siegburg, Germany

Nikon, D800, Seacam D800, Nikkor 16mm., iso 560, f11, 1/125, 2 x Seacam 100 + 4 x Inon Z240

Judges notes:

I am not a natural fan of model photography underwater but the scale and confidence of this shot from the set to the lighting and the model's pose was hard to ignore.

Peter Rowlands



1) Wide Angle

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Cenote Nariz'

Herbert Meyrl (Germany)

Cenote Nariz is the entrance to a large cave system in Yucatan that I dove for the first time with my 3 buddies Tom Groessler, Rainer Schwanner and Michael Faatz. When I saw this perfect window opening into a large room ahead of us I signaled my team to stop. After mind mapping the spot I swam very cautiously through the window and placed 2 strobes in slave mode on either side behind the opening. Then I signaled my buddies to swim through the opening. 2 divers should be in the picture, catching the light from those strobes. For background lightning each one held a slave strobe and pointed it backwards. One diver (out of sight) fired off 2 more strobes for even more background lighting. After many photo dives together we have worked out our own signals, so they knew what I wanted and they performed perfectly

Cenote Nariz, Yucatan, Mexico
Canon, Canon EOS 5D Mark III, Seacam,
EF16-35mm f/2.8L II USM, iso 800, f/13,
1/50, 2 Seacam seaflash 150 on camera, 4
slave strobes

Judges notes:

We made it a rule this year that the Judges would wait until the photographer had submitted their notes about the image and I'm glad I did with this one. As soon as I saw this shot I was struck by the balanced lighting backed up by good solid composition but it was only when I read the notes that I realised how much work had gone into the lighting. This is teamwork at its very best.

Peter Rowlands



1) Wide Angle

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Cooking Sausage'

Pekka Tuuri (Finland)

This image was created from scratch. I went to a quarry and had the usual cavern and cave pictures in mind but I wanted to make something different, too. I thought of playing with dry ice to see how it behaves underwater. It bubbles violently and dies off quickly. A piece of orange gel was fixed onto a torch which created a virtual "fire" with the right colour temperature. After a few experiments we were ready for the real picture next day. We had bought sausage at a gas station and hammered together a few pieces of firewood. The rest was easy: a good model, natural light under the ice cover, the right shutter speed and a few shots. I am proud of this image as it is the result of our own innovation and not copied from somebody else!

Kaatiala quarry, Finland

Canon, 5D MIII, Subal , Canon 15 mm, iso 800, 5.6, 1/40, No flash

Judges notes:

This is such a creative image and I'm so impressed with the time, effort and most of all the imagination which has gone into it. Fire and Ice! Story telling in pictures. Brilliantly executed.

Martin Edge



1) Wide Angle

COMMENDED

'Blacktip Rendezvous'

Renee Capozzola (United States)

In French Polynesia, there is a healthy shark population thanks to their strong protection. It is my favourite place to photograph sharks as they often frequent shallow waters, which are perfect for split shots. It was my intention to go out at sunset and try to capture an over-under of the sharks. This shot was challenging as there was only a short time period when the sun was at the horizon and it required multiple attempts over several days. A small aperture, large dome port, and flash were used for this image. Sadly, up to 100 million sharks are lost every year, mainly due to overfishing and the high demand for shark fin soup. Sharks signify a balanced marine ecosystem. It is my hope that images such as this will capture peoples' attention and help raise awareness for sharks and other marine animals throughout the world.

Moorea, French Polynesia

Canon, 5D Mark III, Nauticam, Canon EF 16-35mm f/2.8 L USM , iso 500, f18, 1/200, Sea & Sea YS D1's

Judges notes:

A beautiful sunset and shiver of reef sharks. What more could you cram into a stunning frame?!

Alex Mustard



1) Wide Angle

COMMENDED

'Tannic water at Cenote Carwash '
Tom St George (Mexico)

Maybe once a year due to prolonged and heavy rainfall the water at Cenote Carwash can become very tannic; meaning the water is stained a reddish brown by the tannins from decaying leaf and other organic matter in the run-off from the jungle. As soon as we dropped down through the water it was clear that things were very different from a usual dive at Cenote Carwash. It was extremely dark due to the tannic water filtering out a lot of the light (hence the high iso). The light coming through the water was very red and a bit like diving on Mars! I knew immediately that I wanted to take the classic 'Cenote Carwash entrance' shot but with this very different background with the intense shades of red.

Cenote Carwash, Mexico

Olympus, OM-D E-M1 mk II, Olympus PT-EP14, Olympus 7-14mm f2.8 Pro, iso 6400, f/3.5, 1/15, Natural light

Judges notes:

I really like this image. There are so many layers of interest to stimulate the viewer. The vivid colour of red, the depth perspective combined with good use of the dive light. It certainly is a classic Cenote image and one to be remembered.

Martin Edge



1) Wide Angle

COMMENDED

'Down the stream'

Wendy Timmermans (Netherlands)

Visiting the Mexican Cenotes was like a dream for me. This picture was taken with natural light and on one breath only, while freediving. Arriving in Mexico, our disappointment at finding 'The Pit' closed for freedivers instantly disappeared when we discovered the remote Cenote Nah Yah. A hypnotizing bundle of sunbeams lightened up the crystal clear water into the depths, contrasting with the darkness. In this picture fellow freediver Guillaume Bihet is descending into the deep. Together we create our images and share them as Seadrops Photography. Inside the Cenote the water was completely still and silent. But the small water movement resulting from the descent created a circular pattern on the surface, beautifully contrasting with the straightness of the beams underwater.

Nah Yah, Mexico

Sony, a6300, Nauticam NA a6300, E 10-18mm F4 OSS, iso 640, 4.0, 1/125, none

Judges notes:

Graphic simplicity combined with a graceful pose produces an image which immediately demands the attention of a judge's eye. The dark corners concentrate the eye without taking away for a lovely sense of calm which this image portrays.

Peter Rowlands

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2) Macro

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2) Macro

WINNER

'Seahorse Density'

Shane Gross (Canada)

The pond I was in has the highest density of seahorses on Earth, but I've never seen three together like this before. I was camping on shore and had all night to shoot with the idea of backlighting a single seahorse, but finding three together was a real gift. I was super careful not to disturb them because they will swim away if they've had enough. I had my off-camera strobe and an underwater flashlight on a small tripod which I placed behind and below the trio. Then I waited for them to all turn in way that you could see their silhouette. The sun was setting and as it got darker the plankton really began to pile up. When the seahorses ate some of the plankton I could tell they were relaxed. We are still working on getting this special place protection so I cannot reveal the exact location.

It's a secret for conservation reasons,
Bahamas

Nikon, D500, Aquatica AD500, Nikkor
60mm Macro, iso 100, f/25, 1/15, Sea & Sea
YS 250

Judges notes:

There is no denying that this UPY judge has a soft spot for seahorses, but Shane's captivating frame offers a really fresh interpretation on this iconic subject, with three individuals silhouetted in a soup of prey, against a carefully exposed backlight.

Alex Mustard



2) Macro

RUNNER UP

'Friend or Food?!'

Songda Cai (China)

I've had many encounters with this conger eel and I've have taken a few photos, but never have I seen it in such a picturesque manner as this, As if drawing you in by coiling its body and at the same time darting its eyes on a lone prey - it is because of breathtaking sights like this that I fell in love with underwater photography and to do it justice I really aimed to capture the moment in perfect detail. To capture the intricate details of the subject, proper strobe positioning was the key factor in getting the shot that I wanted as even a little error in lighting would rob the picture of its immaculacy.

Anilao Batangas , Philippines

Nikon, D850, Seacam Silver Nikon D850, 60mm Macro, iso 400, 25, 1/320, Seacam 150D

Judges notes:

This image ticks all the boxes for me. The eye contact between the eel and its prey is awesome. It's hard to pull your eyes away from this shot. Outstanding and one of my favourites of the competition.

Martin Edge



2) Macro

THIRD

'The Shadow'

Kenji Cheow (Malaysia)

Creating shadow for underwater images is always challenging. When I found this goby on a halimeda algae on the sand, I knew it would be a perfect subject for my "Project Shadow". I began with slowly placing a white slate behind the subject, shining my torch to get the angle for the shadow and then another torch to light up the subject. Then, patiently wait for the moment.

Anilao, Philippines

Olympus, Olympus EM1, Olympus PT-EP11, Zuiko 60mm f2.8, iso 200, f/3.5, 1/1250, Scubalamp MS20, Scubalamp MS30

Judges notes:

In a category like Macro you have to be different to stand out and here is a good example of a straightforward subject lifted to the winner's enclosure by very imaginative lighting. The goby opening its mouth is the icing on the photographic cake.

Peter Rowlands



2) Macro

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Ghost'

Davide Lopresti (Italy)

The idea was to try and transfer a sense of movement to the image; to be able to capture movement frozen in an instant.

Lembeh, Indonesia

Nikon, D600, Nimar, Nikon 105 macro, iso 400, 22, 1/8, Inon Z240 + Retra snoot

Judges notes:

Davide has stuck to the winning formula that saw him named as Underwater Photographer of the Year 2016, creating another technical marvel, combining a snooted subject, a long exposure and panning.

Alex Mustard

2) Macro

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Pretty lady'

TianHong Wang (China)

This is a Japanese pygmy seahorse. A lot of creatures in order to protect themselves, will stay in their own and similar color environment, so the adjacent color in the natural color will be easier to find. When I took this shoot, I used a large aperture and tried a variety of different combinations of lighting methods to blur the background to highlight the subject, but at the same time using the adjacent colors in the background, and then vivid contrast in harmony. The purpose is to make it a more unified background and subject, with a pink background to set off the subject, can make it a lovely character, give a better impression

Kashiwajima, Japan

Canon, canon 5d mark 3, Sea&Sea 5D3,
canon 100mm f2.8 L IS, iso 100, f 5.6, 1/200,
Inon z240

Judges notes:

Pastel soft complementary colours set this pygmy seahorse apart from many others. I really like the shape and angle in which it is positioned. From a compositional point of view the pygmy eye dominates the frame. I also like the slight tilt of the head which lines up the eye looking towards the bottom left corner. Follow the contours of the pygmy from the end of its tail to the eye and notice all the twists and turns.

Martin Edge



2) Macro

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Blue fish'

Ace Wu (Taiwan)

It is not easy to combine blue light in a traditionally lit image. You need to make the subject pop up while integrating the blue light into the photo naturally.

Lembeh, Indonesia

Canon, EOSiD X Mark II, Seacam silver
Canon EOSiD X Mark II, Canon EF
100mm f/2.8 L Macro IS USM Lens, iso
1000, 1/8, 1/250, Seacam Seaflash 150 Digital

Judges notes:

Using different coloured lighting to enhance an image is nothing new but this combination of blue and white light is a well chosen and very effective combination. Choosing a photographically harmonious subject within a complimentary frame produces a very classy result.

Peter Rowlands





2) Macro

HIGHLY COMMENDED

‘ Black-Saddle Snake Eel

Periclimenes venustus’

Marchione dott. Giacomo (Italy)

TK3 dive site, looking for some organism to photograph, when from the sandy bottom comes the muzzle of a eel Moray eel (Black-Saddle Snake Eel (*Ophichthus cephalozona*) and around her a shrimp scavenger (*Periclimenes venustus*). The shrimp rises on the muzzle of the moray eel and balances like an acrobat on it, for a unique photo and for a unique duet.

TK3, Indonesia

Nikon, Nikon 800E, Seacam for 800
Nikon, 105 macro Nikon, iso 100, f/22,
1/160, Sea and Sea 120Ys with snoot
Retra

Judges notes:

Snake Eels are common around Lembeh, Shrimps also. It get's better when the shrimp is around the Eel. Even better when it reaches on top. But then, not only does it give the viewer perfect eye contact..... It goes on to dance for it's supper. I'm quoting the shooter 'A Unique Photo for a Unique Duet'. I'm sure much patience paid a part with this image.

Martin Edge



2) Macro

COMMENDED

'Lovers on the bridge'

Yatwaiso (Hong Kong)

This photo was taken by in camera double exposure in shallow water around 7-8 meters. The biggest challenge was capturing the moment both needle shrimps faced each other and the sunlight colour and size suited the mood in two consecutive shots. First, I calibrated my camera setting to properly expose the sunlight. This was done by adjusting the shutter speed since the ISO could not be changed between shots. I had to memorise the best shutter speed for the sun at this particular depth and the position of the sunlight for the second shot. It was also important to study the motion of the sunlight; the light rays were moving with its rhythm when observed through the viewfinder, the size and shape of sunlight in picture would greatly vary.

Anilao, Philippine

Canon , 5Dsr, Sea&Sea, 100mmL Macro,
iso 400, 20, 200&1000, DS161 + LSD +
Sunlight

Judges notes:

*A most successful, and well-judged use of a
double exposure.*

Alex Mustard



2) Macro

COMMENDED

'Blue nudibranch'

Ace Wu (Taiwan)

It is not easy to combine blue light in a traditionally lit image. You need to make the subject pop up while integrating the blue light into the photo naturally.

Lembeh, Indonesia

Canon , EOSiD X Mark II, Seacam silver
Canon, Canon EF 100mm f/2.8 L Macro
IS USM Lens, iso 640, 22, 1/250, Seacam
Seaflash 150 digital

Judges notes:

Dual colour lighting, if badly employed will come across as a gimmick. Entering several shots using the technique also risks boring the judges but when it is done right, as it is here, it produces an image of arresting beauty.

Peter Rowlands



2) Macro

COMMENDED

'Bubble'

K.Zhang (China)

I shot this photo in Yakushima Japan, there are lots of rock pools, and many blenny living inside. In fact, I specifically went there to take reflected photo of blenny there. Photography in a rock pool is a very interesting experience, you must know the tide time there, and reflex photographs can be taken only at low tide. Because only at this time, the water surface closest to blenny to form a reflection. When I was taking this photo, a bubble that may have been released from photosynthesis by algae floated near the blenny, and it seems to be looking at the bubble. In order to keep the surface calm, I held my breath, kept myself still, took this picture. I am so happy to record this interesting moment

Yakushima, Japan

Nikon, D810, Nauticam NA D810, Nikon 105mm Macro, iso 100, f/8, 1/160, Natural light

Judges notes:

This is a fine rock pool image with a high key feel throughout. The pastel colours of both the blenny and the shallow water all combine, not to mention the tiny bubble which provides a resting place for the eye of the viewer.

Martin Edge

Worldwide Dive and Sail (WWDAS) has been offering high-end dive liveboard holidays since 2004 and has expanded over time to encompass the entire world. It all began with three Siren Fleet yachts in Southeast Asia and The Junk in Thailand. 2014 saw the inception of Master Liveboards and the addition of even more world class dive destinations. Currently, WWDAS owns and operates yachts in 12 of the best dive destinations around the globe.



SIREN FLEET



THE JUNK
JUNE HONG CHIAN LEE

For years, Siren Fleet has been a recognised and spearheading factor in the dive industry offering and setting new standards for luxury dive cruises in the best dive locations in Southeast Asia. The outstanding personable crew service combined with high quality accommodation and facilities are the reason guests return time and time again. Her three sailing yachts ply the crystal clear blue waters of Palau, Indonesia and the Philippines.

Master Liveboards proudly presented her first vessel M/V Galapagos Master in 2015. Ever since, it has rapidly grown by adding 5 vessels to the Master Liveboards fleet with the new Bahamas Master to begin operations in March 2018. Master Liveboards' dive destinations are currently: Bahamas, Bikini Atoll, French Polynesia, Galapagos, Maldives, Papua New Guinea, Red Sea, Solomons Islands, and Truk Lagoon.

The Junk, an old Chinese merchant vessel now converted into a liveboard offering cruises the Similan & Surin Islands in Thailand. Even though the diving is amazing, the cherry on the cake is the incredible food on board. Add the cordial, cheerful atmosphere on board to the mix and you have a perfect holiday!



Indonesia



Bahamas



Philippines



French Polynesia



Palau



Truk Lagoon



Thailand



Galapagos

Contact us for further information
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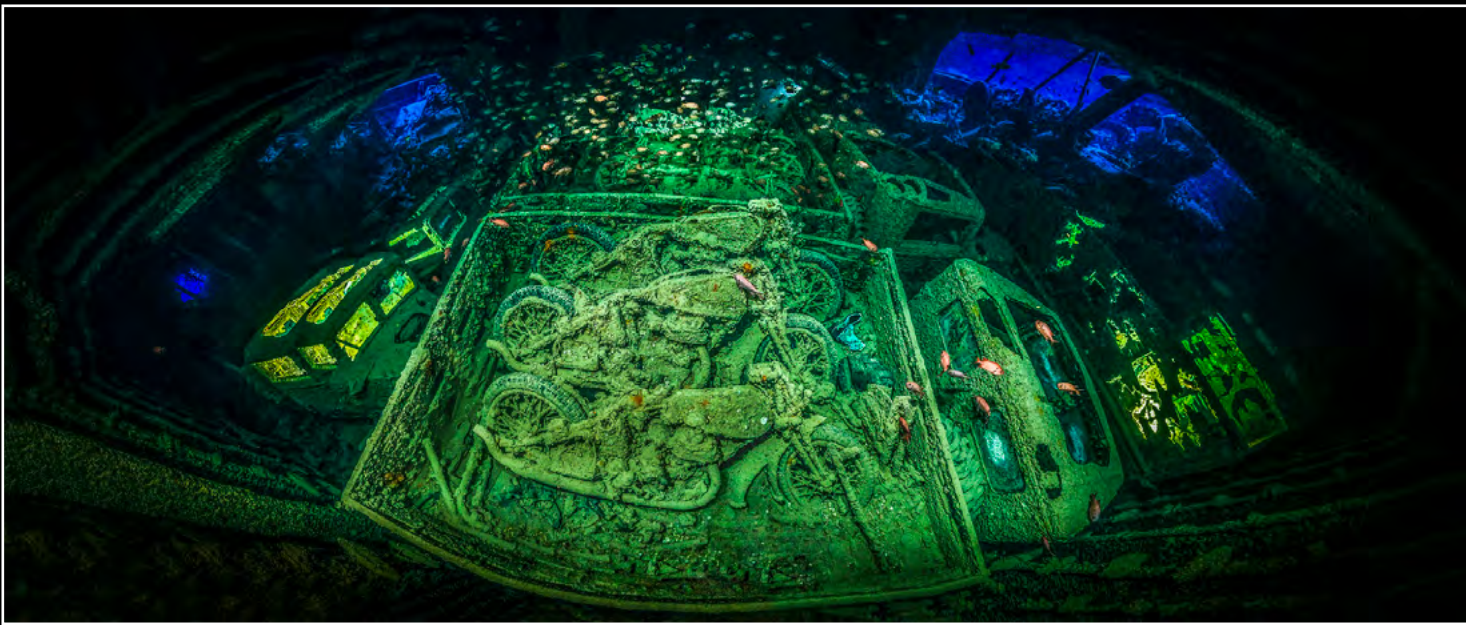
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3) Wrecks

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.



3) Wrecks

WINNER

'Cycle war'

Tobias Friedrich (Germany)

For a few years now I had had this image in mind as the motorcycles on this truck inside the Thistlegorm lie so perfectly together, but you can only barely capture it because the wall is very close and you can't move backwards enough to capture the whole scenery. As a result I had to create a panoramic image of the same scene to capture the whole cargo deck, including some lights that give the image more depth.

Thistlegorm, Egypt

Canon, 1DX MK II, SEACAM silver,
Canon 8-15mm Fisheye, iso 4000, f/8, 1/30,
Seacam Seaflash 150D, Keldan Video lights

Judges notes:

This is a quite extraordinary shot which must be viewed as large as possible. The bigger the better. And yet it is of a subject which has been photographed literally thousands of times. The artistic skill is to visualise such an image and the photographic talent is to achieve it. Perfectly lit and composed, I predict that there will never be a better shot of this subject from now on.

Peter Rowlands

3) Wrecks

RUNNER UP

'Safe Navigation'

Gianni Pecchiar (Italy)

The concept of the picture has been developed on two halves/layers. A half below - radial inside lightening with four flashes wired together. The difficulty was in the upper half, that is, to give the correct position of the three tec-divers with scooters, and to expire the bubbles approximately at the same time. Not to disturb the sediment, there was only one chance to get this shot. As for me, a great team work!

Rijeka - House reef of Diving Marco Polo , Croatia

Nikon, D7200, Seacam Silver Prelude, AFS 10,5 mm F2,8 fish eye, iso 200, f/13, 1/100, 4 x Seacam seafish 150 wired with cables

Judges notes:

This shot lept out from the screen right from the start and stayed as a favourite whilst other images were exiting the judging in their hundreds. A strong image must withstand scrutiny throughout the judging process and this image was always pushing us to choose it.

Peter Rowlands



3) Wrecks

THIRD

'Truck-Nobia'

Tobias Friedrich (Germany)

The Zenobia wreck still contains about 100 trucks that sunk over 30 years ago, when the ferry sunk very near to the city of Larnaca. To capture the truck I placed an additional strobe inside the cabin and into my buddies hand to create some atmosphere of this very special dive site.

Zenobia wreck, Larnaca, Cyprus

Canon, 5D MK II, SEACAM silver, Canon 8-15mm Fisheye, iso 1600, f/10, 1/15, Seacam Seaflash 150D, Nikonos SB-105

Judges notes:

Very well lit and composed. Composition balances out the frame and the light from Tobias's buddy gives it that touch of class. A very good third place in this years wrecks category.

Martin Edge





3) Wrecks

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Perfect Wheel'

Pekka Tuuri (Finland)

The German ship Klaus Oldendorf went down in 1942 after hitting a mine. Today she is a very interesting wreck at 30 m depth to the deck. This picture was actually already planned on the deck of the dive boat. We were a team of three and all had been to the wheel before. We went through the photo plan thoroughly. First we took pictures with a top light (torch) and then with backlight. I took pictures with both flash and no flash and liked this one without flash more. It was important to balance the light correctly as I wanted to have the natural faint green glow in the background. This picture is a panorama of two images.

The Baltic Sea, Cape Porkkala, Finland

Canon, 5D MIII, Subal , Canon 15 mm, iso 1600, 6.3, 1/25, No flash

Judges notes:

Cold, dark waters hold some of the best wreck dives, but aren't the easiest places to shoot. This image creates a graphically powerful composition out of simple elements, to produce a frame filled with atmosphere.

Alex Mustard

3) Wrecks

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Stuka'

Pekka Tuuri (Finland)

This is an often photographed aeroplane in just 23 meters of water. The photo was already planned on the surface. I guided my models to the right places by shouting as we were all on rebreathers. An overcast day gave a soft, nice and not too bright light. I have about 10 different photo versions of the plane with the divers (closeups, strobe, no strobe etc.). This is the one I liked the most. The picture is a panorama of two images.

Close to Kornati, Croatia

Canon, 5D MIII, Subal , Canon 15 mm, iso 500, 9, 1/80, No flash

Judges notes:

I have to admit that I have a soft spot for available light wreck shots augmented by strategic additional lighting but I can't help but feel that a higher shooting angle would have added the power that this shot needed to push it up a few places.

Peter Rowlands



3) Wrecks

HIGHLY COMMENDED

‘Unusually Parked Car’

Pekka Tuuri (Finland)

This car went through the ice but luckily nobody was hurt. My friend dove the car and told me that it was a perfect photo subject. I drove four hours to get there on a sunny day. We cut a hole in the ice 20 meters away. When I got to the car I could not believe my luck. The car was perfectly placed on a slope and in shallow water so that I was able to get the icy ceiling in the picture. The picture is a manual blend of two images

Lake Saimaa, Finland

Canon, 5D MIII, Subal , Canon 15 mm, iso 250, 6.3, 1/8, No flash

Judges notes:

The golden colour jumped out of the screen and the simple yet strong composition lit up what can be a quite sedate category.

Peter Rowlands



3) Wrecks

HIGHLY COMMENDED

‘OCD Diver Tries To Right Shipwreck’
Susannah H. Snowden-Smith (Cayman Islands)

For six years, the 251 ft long ex-USS Kittiwake sat upright where it was sunk as an artificial reef. On October 8, 2017, it was discovered that powerful surge from passing hurricane Nate had rolled the ship onto its side. I raced to find a dive operator to take me out there, and was able to dive and document the shipwreck the very next day. I was showing those initial photographs to my husband and my friend when I had an idea: “Wouldn’t it be funny if a diver with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) was so bothered by the ship being on its side that they tried to right it?” The idea for a photograph was born! My friend Simon Claeys modeled for me in the photograph. In order to make it look authentic, Simon actually ‘attempted’ to push the ship upright. The bubbles in the photograph are from his effort.

Kittiwake dive site, Grand Cayman,
Cayman Islands

Nikon, D500, Subal, Tokina 10-17mm, iso 200, f/11, 1/80, n/a



Judges notes:

The Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) works a treat with this particular image and it's an ideal example of why we judges like to know the 'back story' before we go to press with our comments. Susannah I am so pleased you gave the game away or I could have been very embarrassed with my comments. I should also mention that apart from the irony, it is a very well executed and clean wreck shot. Very well done and an example to others that judges can enjoy a laugh!

Martin Edge

Marcus Blatchford (UK)

Gozo, Malta

Judges notes:

Alex Mustard



3) Wrecks

COMMENDED

'Bells 'n' Helms'

Kieran Hatton (UK)



The diving in the Baltic Sea offers a very different prospect when compared to the UK. Its still dark and anoxic depths preserving wood in a way that is hard to imagine, let alone explain! In shallow water it is quite green with lots of particles (I visited in the summer), but by approximately 30m you have passed through the last of the thermoclines and almost all ambient light is left behind. The Balder lays in 50-55m of cold, dark but very, very clear water. Arriving on the aft structure the sight of the ship's wheel and bell together offered up a unique opportunity. I tried a few different angles both with and without a passing diver, but really like the effect of the wheel backlit. Bells 'n' Helms, how to keep a wreck diver happy! I can't wait to go and try again now!

SV Balder, Åland - Finland

Sony, A7rii, Nauticam NA-A7II, 16-35mm, iso 800, f8, 1/80, 2 x Inon z240 + 1 x Kelden

Judges notes:

The ghostly backlighting of the ship's wheel combined with a wreck diver's dream of finding the bell perfectly captures the excitement of both wreck diving and photographing them.

Peter Rowlands



3) Wrecks

COMMENDED

'BSA M20 Motorbike'

Anders Nyberg (Sweden)

I have dived this wreck several times and I never get tired of it! This is a well known subject, a British World War II BSA M20 motorbike inside Hold 2 (port side, upper level) of the wreck. Usually I use strobes for this kind of shoot but I had to try this with two video lights, I think the result works well and the lights are useful, specially when you as the photographer can see how the light is shaping and working.

Thistlegorm, Egypt

Nikon, D500, Nauticam, Tokina 10-17mm, iso 200, f/4.5, 1/30, Two BigBlu VL15000P-PRO MINI video lights

Judges notes:

There's no doubt this is a visually striking image but it is of subject and using a lighting technique which we have seen so much of recently. Striking, yes but not original enough to go any higher.

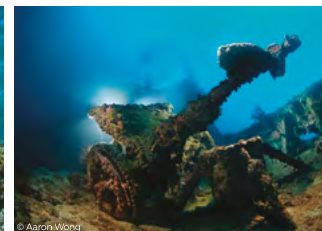
Peter Rowlands

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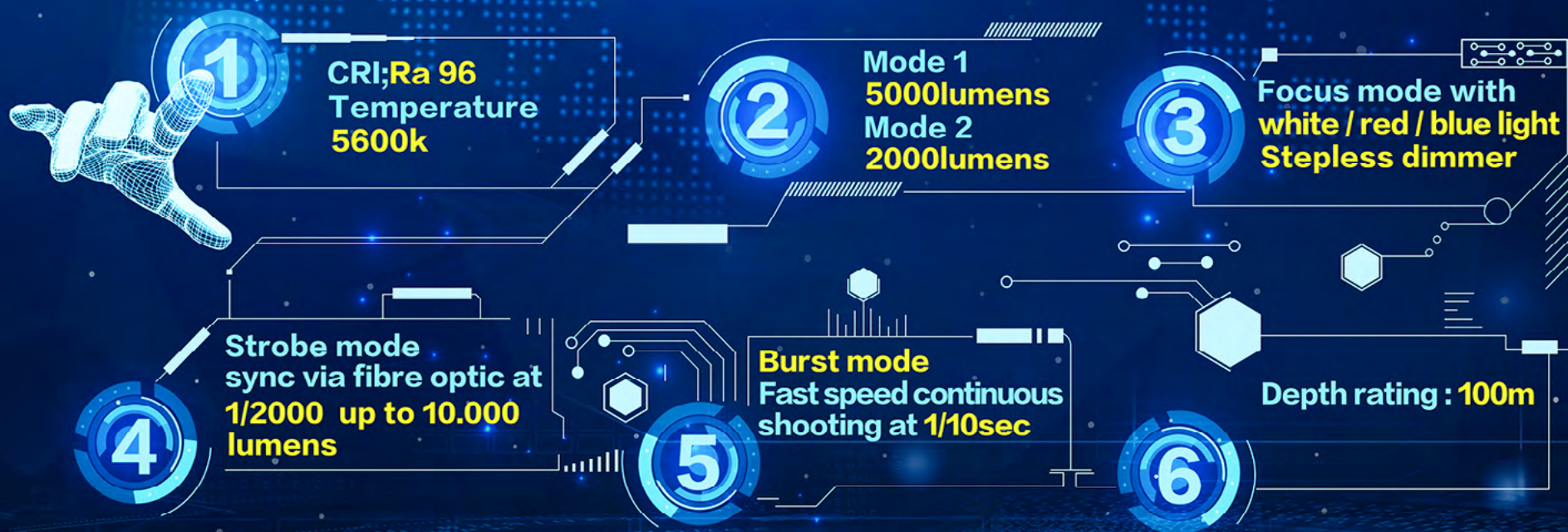




P53 (Silver)



P53 (Black)



4) Behaviour

for wide angle to close-up and macro images showing interesting natural behaviour of underwater life. These images can be shot anywhere in the world. Open to all



4) Behaviour

WINNER

'The fisherman'

Filippo Borghi (Italy)

In winter time in the Izu peninsula in tokiio area the asiatic cormorant stop for couple of month before moving to China. So this is the best moment for try to shoot this amazing sea bird during diving and fishing. I Was in this area and I spent two days in a very shallow waters from 5m to 8m waiting for the opportunity to take a right moment for have this photos. Luckily four birds for two days stay in this aera in search of sardine and don't care about my presence during his diving session give me the chance to sort it.

Osezaki , Japan

Nikon, d800E, Subal, Tokina 10-17mm, iso 400, f 14, 1/250, Ikelite ds 160

Judges notes:

Filippo, this is one of my top four images in this years competition of UPY. Flawless in every way. Congratulations!

Martin Edge

4) Behaviour

RUNNER UP

'In Hinding'

Scott Gutsy Tuason (Philippines)

Taken at a depth of 15 meters in 200-250m deep water. Towards the end of the 'Blackwater' dive, Edwin, one of our divemasters, called me over to show me this beautiful Jellyfish, for me only to realise it had a juvenile Trevally within it, and to my amazement, it was wedged between the bell and the tentacles! I had seen many Jack and Jelly combos before but never like this. I shot around 20 frames and right on the last few frames it turned towards me to give me this very unusual portrait of a behaviour I had never seen before.

Janao Bay, Batangas, Philippines

Nikon , D5, Nauticam, 60mm, iso 640, f/25, 1/160, INON Z330

Judges notes:

The behaviour category was outstanding this year, as this image demonstrates. Gutsy won the Underwater Photography Book of the Year last year with 'Black Water, Open Blue and this black water shot not only shows remarkable behaviour, but also has so much character, it could have won in Portraits too!

Alex Mustard





4) Behaviour

THIRD

'Gannets feeding'

Greg Lecoeur (France)

I captured this image in Scotland during summer time. Gannets hunt pelagic fish like mackerel by diving into the sea from a height of 30 meters, achieving speeds of 100 kilometres per hour as they strike the water and pursue their prey underwater. With the decline of fish stocks, gannets have to fight against food competition for their survival. They have learned to catch dead fish spilt overboard from fishing vessels and from bird watching boats that take advantage of this to attract them. I was able to realise this image thanks to a fascinating and talented local photographer who shared me his favourite playground in all humility. All honour goes to Richard Shucksmith whom I thank deeply.

Shetland, Scotland

Nikon, D7200, Nauticam NA D7200,
Tokina 10-17mm, iso 200, f/11, 320, x2
Ikelite DS160

Judges notes:

We have seen a great many images of Gannets feeding in UPY over the years so it takes a special one to impress the judges and here it is.

Peter Rowlands



4) Behaviour

HIGHLY COMMENDED

‘Nurse shark mating is no gentle affair.’
Shane Gross (Canada)

I had seen courtship behaviour at this South Eleuthera site in 2015 so I made a plan to try to capture it in 2016, but the weather didn't allow it. Luckily I got my chance in 2017 by camping out for 3 days at a beach nearby. On the second morning I woke up just before sunrise to the splashing sound of mating nurse sharks just 50 steps from shore in 2 feet of water. I had to calm myself down, get my camera settings where they needed to be and then watched and slowly approached on foot. The males came over to check me out and once they saw I wasn't a female shark, turned away. Once the males were locked on to the females pectoral fins they were so distracted it was like I wasn't even there.

Eleuthera Island, The Bahama

Nikon, D90, Aquatica AD90, Tokina 10-17mm, iso 400, f/14, 1/50, Sea & Sea YS 250

Judges notes:

Wow mating sharks! But Shane hasn't just captures rarely seen behaviour, he has also recorded the critical moment, with the male chomping onto the pectoral fin of the female for a better grip. I love how his composition also includes the third shark, slinking off, let out from the action.

Alex Mustard



4) Behaviour

HIGHLY COMMENDED

‘The birth’

Filippo Borghi (Italy)

I went to dive this site to photograph Mediterranean black coral but during the dive I discovered various shark egg cases in different stages of evolution. Unfortunately I had a wide angle lens on so it was not possible to get the right shot. The next day myself and the dive guide went back with a macro lens and during the session he called me over because one of the egg cases had started to hatch and a baby shark was emerging! I took some photos as fast I could of this incredible moment.

Tirrenica Sea, Porto Santo
Stefano(grosseto), Italy

Nikon, d800E, Subal , Nikon 105mm VR,
iso 100, 18, 123, Ikelite dsi60

Judges notes:

A wonderful moment, perfectly captured. Not easy to take when these things happen fast and at depth.

Alex Mustard



4) Behaviour

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Tiger sharks feeding on sperm whale carcass'

Chris Burville (Bermuda)

A fisherman called. My friends and I mobilised. 28km offshore, drawn in by the stench, we found the Sperm Whale's remains. Unable to resist, we slipped into the endless blue, 2000m above the ocean floor, to witness this natural wonder. Tiger and Blue Sharks casually paraded in and out of sight, occasionally feeding as the great carcass bobbed at the surface. The scene felt eerily calm, save for the excitement in our eyes. One Blue delightfully clung to our group like a curious puppy. I had to remind myself to stay vigilant, avoid photographer tunnel vision. Half an hour later, when a large Tiger became too curious and received a nose bump from my camera, we took our leave. Back on board with the camera on a pole I composed these close up images of the action. To me this photo naturally personifies the sharks as no feeding shot could.

28km offshore, Bermuda

Nikon, D700, Aquatica, Nikon 16-35mm, iso 800, f/7.1, 1/500, None

Judges notes:

This is a great behavioural shot from the main feeding shark to the circling one below while the tail in the distance and the foreground teeth leave us in no doubt what is happening here.

Peter Rowlands



4) Behaviour

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Honu Love At Dusk'

Renee Capozzola (United States)

Just after the sun had set, I was about to get out of the water as I had been photographing the green sea turtles during sunset but I then noticed a large turtle underneath me swimming very fast. I assumed it was chasing another turtle, so I quickly dove down to see what was going on and then saw two turtles come together and flip upside down. As I tried to capture a few shots of them, the turtles then rose to the surface and started mating there. I quickly changed my settings and proceeded to try and get an over-under shot of this unique behavior which was a challenge as the turtles were splashing about and spinning in a circle. This is the only time I have seen turtles mate although there are many turtles in Hawaii thanks to their strong protection under state law.

Napili, Hawaii, USA

Canon , 5D Mark III, Nauticam, Canon EF 16-35mm f/2.8 L USM , iso 400, f16, 1/200, Sea & Sea YS Dr's

Judges notes:

Whilst the behaviour between the turtles is very interesting, it's the backdrop of the scene which caught my eye when we first judged this image. The angle of view with the cloudy night sky on the horizon provides so much depth to this shot. The split works so well with the dip of the water providing a small space for the left eye of the turtle. The eye contact continues. Notice the eye of the back turtle which follows through to its mate.

Martin Edge



4) Behaviour

COMMENDED

'Spinning Anthias'

Anders Nyberg (Sweden)

Me and my guide from the dive centre at Mimpi Resort were looking for some Ghost Pipefish when we stumbled on these two lovely fish (*Anthias. pseudanthias squamipinnis*). The two fish were fighting; spinning around and around and just ignored us.

Drop-Off, Tulamben, Bali, Indonesia

Nikon, D500, Nauticam, Nikon 105mm, iso 640, f/36, 1/15, Two Inon Z240

Judges notes:

Anders hasn't just captured two beautiful male anthias fighting, his use of a long exposure has given the image an ethereal glow and tangible energy. First class photography.

Alex Mustard



4) Behaviour

COMMENDED

'Hippocampus guttulatus coupling dance'

Adriano Morettin (Italy)

This photo is part of a series of seven consecutive images that I took of an exceptional and very difficult scene to be seen concerning the coupling dance between two seahorses of the Hippocampus guttulatus species. The whole phase of the coupling lasted 15-20 seconds.

Gulf of Rijeka, northern Adriatic Sea, Croatia

Nikon, D800E, Seacam, Nikon 60 micro, iso 100, f/22, 1/250, 1 flash Seacam 150

Judges notes:

I really like this image, which ever way it was taken it has great impact. The eye contact between the two holds the eye of the viewer and the placement within the image frame is perfect. Very well done.

Martin Edge



4) Behaviour

COMMENDED

'Attack'

Mika Saareila (Finland)

It took a lot of time and effort to get this picture. I backlit the fish with snooted flash and another close to the dome port. In addition I used another flash for overall lighting. I shot the crab feeding for some time and then it attacked the camera dome!

Vuoksi river in Imatra, Finland

Canon, 7D, Subal CD7 /4 minidome,
Tokina 107 fisheye 10mm, iso 200, F20, 1/13s,
2 inon z240 11kelite 125

Judges notes:

*This is a very powerful, well chosen angle with,
as the caption reveals, very effective lighting.*

Peter Rowlands



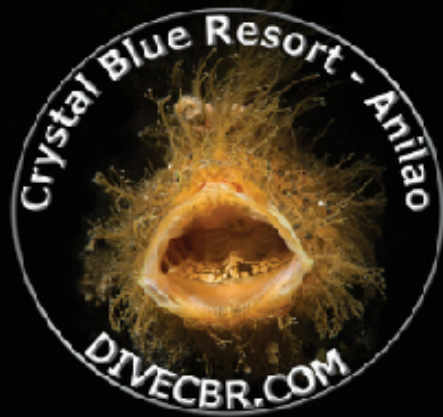
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5) Portrait

for wide angle to close-up and macro images depicting a sense of character of the chosen subject. These images can be shot anywhere in the world. Open to all.



5) Portrait

WINNER

‘A sand tiger shark surrounded by tiny bait fish’

Tanya Houppermans (United States)

I always look forward to diving the wreck of the Caribsea and seeing the fierce-looking, but docile, sand tiger sharks that frequent the wreck. On this day as I descended to the wreck, I couldn't believe what I was seeing. Millions of tiny fish, collectively known as 'bait fish' were grouped together in an enormous bait ball above the wreck, with dozens of sand tigers lazily meandering among the fish. As I slowly swam to the center of the bait ball, I looked up and noticed a sand tiger a few feet above me. I swam on my back underneath her, trying not to startle her. As I moved with the shark through the water the bait fish parted way, giving me a clear shot of the underside of this beautiful shark, and also one of the most incredible experiences I've had yet as an underwater photographer.

Wreck of Caribsea, North Carolina ,
United States of America

Olympus , OM-D E-M1, Nauticam NA-EM1, Olympus 8mm f/1.8 Fisheye, iso 320, f/3.5, 1/250, i-Divesite Symbiosis SS-2

Judges notes:

Tanya, Congratulations, this is one of my favourite images from the entire competition. Beautifully cropped. Stella shot.

Martin Edge



5) Portrait

RUNNER UP

'The nose'

Mike Korostelev (Russian Federation)

The picture was taken in Kuril Lake - the place with the highest concentration of bears on our planet. The bears here are not hungry (due to the annual mass spawning of sockeye salmon) so they get used to people and do not feel danger from them. I used a remote control system with a 10 meter cable. I left the camera in the shallow water in the river next to the path that bears regularly pass and hid 8 meters from the camera. This day my camera was spotted by four cubs, which were walking along the path with their mother. The mother stopped and began to look out for the fish in the river, and the cubs saw the camera, they were very curious and began to play with it.

Ozernaya river, Kamchatka, Russia

Canon, 5D Mark IV, SeaCam, 8-15, iso 640, f/22, 1/250, Inon Z240

Judges notes:

I have to admit that I chickened out with this image. It is without doubt heart stopping but I could already hear the whining it would generate that there wasn't sufficient of the frame underwater. As a result, and in hindsight I agree, it would definitely have won with just slightly more underwater.

Peter Rowlands



5) Portrait

THIRD

'Under The Wave'

Rodney Bursiel (United States)

I have been traveling with musician and professional surfer, Donavon Frankenreiter for about four years now. On a recent surf trip to Tavarua, Fiji I captured this shot of Donavon playing under the wave at Cloudbreak. When shooting surf photography I love being under the wave. There is just so much more going on there. Seeing the power of the wave from below and watching the surfers dive below it. It's the side of the wave that you don't get to see from the shore.

Cloud, Fiji

Nikon, D800, Ikelite, 16mm, iso 2000, f22, 1/500, Natural light

Judges notes:

We're keen that photographers interpret this category their way. This picture doesn't just perfectly capture the briefest of moments in challenging conditions, it is also a masterful portrait of a subject in its setting, a composition reminding me of the work of Annie Leibovitz.

Alex Mustard

5) Portrait

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'A reflective green turtle hatchling'
Matt Curnock (Australia)

This green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) hatchling was photographed in the world's first turtle health research facility. The facility caters for the needs of turtles under near-natural conditions and enables researchers to study turtle health up close. This healthy hatchling was playful and inquisitive, frequently approaching and nudging the camera, myself, and other objects in its temporary home. When relaxing at the surface, hatchlings will tuck their front flippers behind their back changing their silhouetted shape from below and potentially reducing the likelihood of being noticed by predators. It was a wonderful opportunity to observe and photograph such a beautiful creature this closely, while learning about the research and efforts to protect turtle populations facing global environmental change.

'Caraplace', James Cook University,
Townsville, Australia

Nikon, D7200, Nauticam NA D7100,
Tokina 10-17mm fisheye , iso 100, f/11, 1/250,
Inon Z240 x 2

Judges notes:

Notwithstanding where and how this was taken, you have captured a beautiful portrait of this green turtle. The eyes are particularly strong. Very well photographed.

Martin Edge





5) Portrait

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Pretty In Pink'

Nicholas More (UK)

The pristine reefs around the Jardines de la Reina on the south coast of Cuba are littered with colourful corals and sponges. On this particular dive I had chosen to shoot macro and I slowly passed over the reef looking for all manner of small critters to use as potential subjects. I was lucky enough to come across this small juvenile grouper hiding within a pink sponge. Although a common fish on the reef, the pink sponge made a perfect background, so I opened my aperture to blur away the detail in the sponge and waited patiently for the fish to turn and look straight down the barrel. A few frames later, I had my shot.

Jardines de la Reina, Cuba

Nikon , D500, Nauticam NA-D500, Nikon AF-S Micro 105mm f2.8G IF-ED VR, iso 200, f/6.3, 1/320th, 2 x Inon Z240

Judges notes:

This is an example of an image which I refer to as Immediate! There's nothing more to discover within the frame, it just hits you straight between the eyes. Stella eye contact, beautifully coloured pastel blur background. No wonder it stood out to the judges.

Martin Edge



5) Portrait

HIGHLY COMMENDED

‘One of the last ones’

Robert Marc Lehmann (Germany)

This is one of two Asian small clawed otters which I followed for a couple of days in their rewilding training in the jungle of Palawan, Philippines. They were rescued as babies and people are trying to release them back into the wild after extensive training in the sea, the jungle and various freshwater areas. As these creatures are super agile and fast it was very hard to get a satisfying image. I had hundreds of bad images out of focus or just half of one otter in frame. It was horrible! The river might be in a tropical region, but the water was just 10°C and after long hours without moving I was close to hypothermic, but the final image was worth it. This species is facing extinction in the near future due to habitat loss. I hope there is still time left to save these incredible animals.

Jungle of Palawan, Philippines

Canon, EOS-1D C, Seacam , Canon 16-35mm 4.0 L , iso 800, f/16, 1/80, 2x Strobes (Subtronic Fusion)

Judges notes:

This is certainly a characterful portrait of a rarely photographed subject underwater. Mischievous, inquisitive and endearing - all in 1/80th of a second.

Peter Rowlands



5) Portrait

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Oceanic white tip shark'

Greg Lecoeur (France)

In recent years, oceanic white-tip sharks have become rarer in Red Sea but they are back around the offshore reefs of Egypt. Diving with these magnificent predators is a privilege and offers incredible photographic opportunities and to witness the symbiosis with pilotfish. Curious, confident and inquisitive they do not hesitate to approach the divers and I was able to capture this image on our decompression stop.

Small Brother, Egypt

Nikon, D7200, Nauticam NA D7200,
Tokina 10-17mm, iso 100, f/9, 1/200, x2
Ikelite DS160

Judges notes:

An excellent shot of an iconic creature. Well lit and framed. The small fish bottom right and the faint sunlight top right all contribute.

Peter Rowlands



5) Portrait

COMMENDED

‘Imprisonment ‘

André Musgrove (Bahamas)

My friend David and I created this image at an abandoned coral observatory off Nassau, Bahamas. This site had the perfect structure we needed to portray the idea of underwater bondage and imprisonment. With the jail cell like design of the overhang barriers of the dilapidated structure, it made the perfect underwater studio. It took about an hour and a half to create the shot with the use of a scuba regulator for assisted breathing and bubble making for special effects. The challenge was to time the perfect moment for the bubbles to be arranged around David's face. The result is something we are both proud of.

Coral World, The Bahamas

Canon, Canon 5DMKIV, Nauticam NA 5DMKIV , Canon EF 16-35mm f/2.8L III USM , iso 400 , F/2.8 , 1/160 , Ambient Light

Judges notes:

It is interesting to have mix of human and wildlife portraits in this category. This picture is so well executed by both the photographer and model.

Alex Mustard



5) Portrait

COMMENDED

'Australian Sea Lion'

Greg Lecoœur (France)

Interacting with sea lions is a great experience, they are curious and playful with divers. In this picture we can see an endemic sea lion from Australia who was having fun standing on the sand posing in front of my camera. The conditions that day were excellent for making the image with the sun's rays piercing the surface.

Julien Bay, Australia

Nikon, D7200, Nauticam NA D7200,
Tokina 10-17mm, iso 100, f/16, 1/250, x2
Ikelite DS160

Judges notes:

Such a beautiful portrait. The composition of the sea lion and the balance of all the other elements within the image. The space beneath the feet and the bottom frame, the angle on the facial features with superb and direct eye contact and to top it all the radial sunbeams which seem to wrap around each and every feature of the subject. Great shot!

Martin Edge



5) Portrait

COMMENDED

'Jump'

Davide Lopresti (Italy)

Tritone Alpestre, belonging to the family of salamandrids, mate and lay its eggs underwater in small lakes, only in this short time of the year can they be found underwater.

La Spezia, Italy

Nikon, D600, Nimar, Nikon 105 macro, iso 200, 22, 250, Inon Z240 + Retra snoot

Judges notes:

Very strong portrait with superb eye contact. I like the way the background falls off with both blur and brightness.

Martin Edge

DIVE

Anilao is only 2.5 hours drive from Metro Manila and has long been a local Dive Destination in the Philippines, with its good mix of reefs, sandy slopes, caves, and piers. In recent years, Anilao has experienced a boom in UW Macro Photography tourism. There has been an influx of foreign divers visiting Anilao in order to photograph its diversely rich underwater subjects and seascapes. This led to the discovery of unique critters such as the Rhinopias and Sea Dragons, which are now regularly spotted in these waters.

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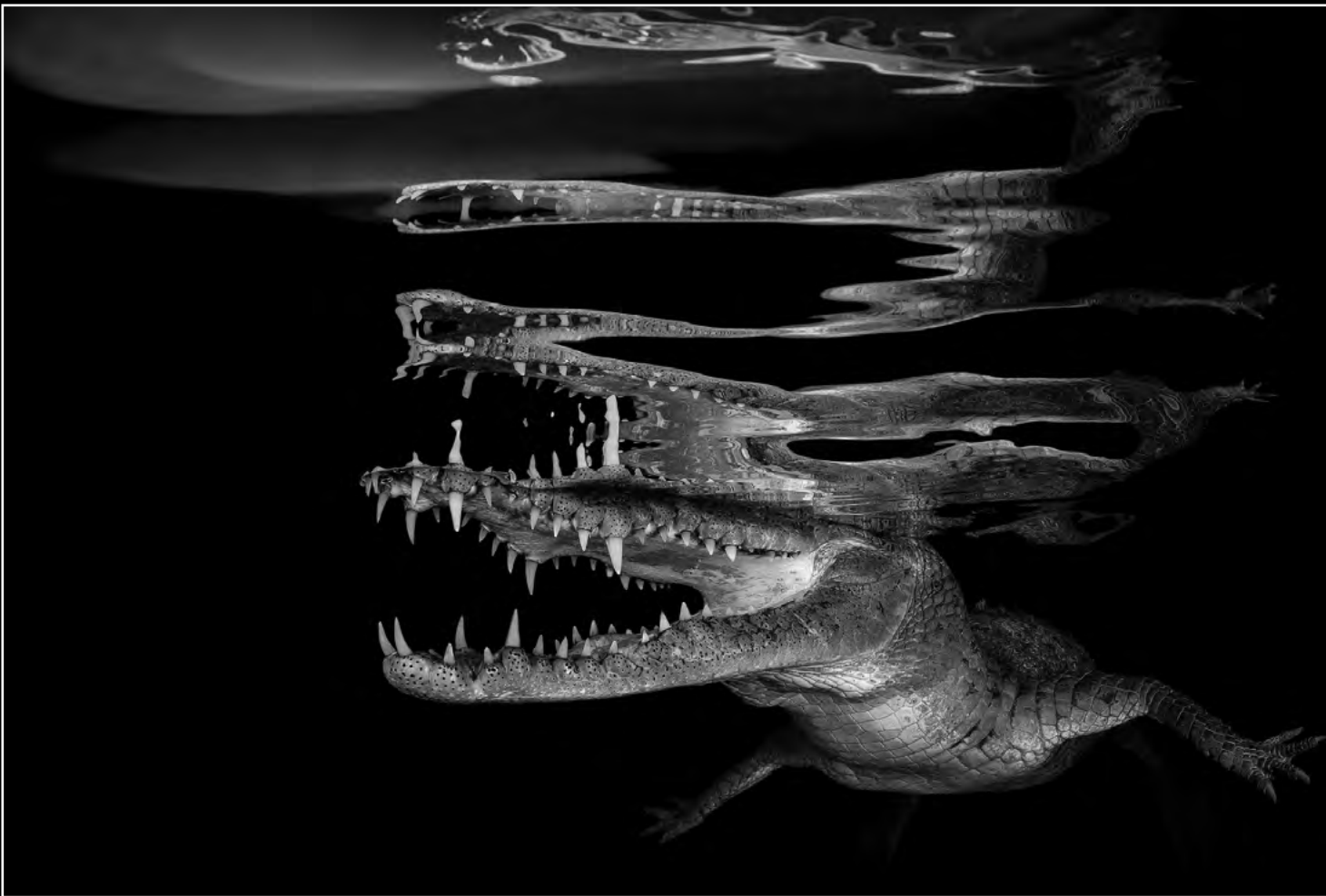
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6) Black & White

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of any underwater subject
(macro or wide angle) shot
anywhere in the world.
Toning and tinting is
permitted. Open to all.



6) Black & White

WINNER

'Crocodile reflections'

Borut Furlan (Slovenia)

When diving was finished for the day, I asked the divemaster to take me back again to a place, where seawater crocodiles are usually seen. I wanted to shoot them in low evening sunlight, when the sky turns into warm colours. When we arrived, the sun was already on the horizon and it was very dark in the water. I pushed ISO settings high to get some warm ambient light into the picture and set the power of my strobes low. Fortunately the crocodile was very cooperative and since we were both very calm, beautiful reflections appeared on the surface. I shot many images with his reflections and this one was my favourite. Since there is a strong graphic element in this picture, conversion into black and white made it even more powerful.

Jardines de la Reina, Cuba

Nikon, D800, Seacam, Nikonos RS 13mm
f/2.8, iso 800, f/16, 1/10, Seacam 150

Judges notes:

Crocodiles are popular subjects, their jaws are both eye catching and graphic. Borut's image perfectly suits black and white, with the sinuous reflections on the surface of the inky water.

Alex Mustard



6) Black & White

RUNNER UP

'Graceful manta'

Sylvie Ayer (Switzerland)

Diving with a manta ray one is always full of emotions. One of the best places in the world to dive with them is the Maldives. You can even meet them on a night dive just off the back of the boat. The manta come to feed and do some looping just at the surface. It is just fantastic !

Fesdu Lagon, Maldives

Nikon, D90, Subal, Tokina 10-16mm, iso 320, F/3.5, 1/800, Inon Z-240

Judges notes:

The perfect choice for black and white; exquisitely framed with the split level angle completing the powerful package.

Peter Rowlands

6) Black & White

THIRD

'Angels of the Deep'

Santosh Shanmuga (United States)

These sandbar sharks are all male and have probably come together to feed or spawn. A school of females may join them later in the season but in the meantime, they must establish a hierarchy. Sizing each other up, the dominant sharks attempt to secure the better spots nearer the surface.

Hawaii, United States

Nikon, D4, Nauticam NA-D4s, Sigma 15mm f/2.8, iso 1000, f/7.2, 1/200, ambient light

Judges notes:

A captivating frame of a spiral of sharks, drawing the viewer deeper and deeper into the image.

Alex Mustard





6) Black & White

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Nohoch Na Chich'

Herbert Meyrl (Germany)

Nohoch Na Chich is the name of a cenote which is the entrance to one of my favourite caves in Mexico. I knew this spot from previous dives and wanted to take a picture of a diver in the background, dwarfed by the huge decorated column on the left side. I placed 3 strobes to light the column and model. Another diver, hidden behind the model is helping out in the background with more light, pointing a strobe towards the camera. My two on camera strobes bring only some additional light to the foreground, their main purpose is to trigger all the slave strobes.

Cenote Nohoch Na Chich, Sistema Sac Actun, Yucatan, Mexico

Canon, Canon EOS 5D Mark III, Seacam, EF16-35mm f/2.8L II USM, iso 400, f/8.0, 1/50, 2 Seacam, 3 Nikonos, 1 Subtronic

Judges notes:

I can't help but think of Ansel Adams and his sublimely toned black and white images of Yosemite National Park. This is up there for me.

Peter Rowlands



6) Black & White

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Gravity'

Miguel Pereira (Portugal)

Corveta General Pereira d'Eça (CORDECA) was a Portuguese corvette that the Navy donated to be sunk and turned into an artificial reef in July 2016 in the island of Porto Santo. The boat lays in about 30m depth, in an area completely devoid of life. I managed to dive this site three times before life started to colonise it. On my second visit my wife modelled for me and allowed me to carefully compose this view of the bow, getting this nice perspective that together with the black & white processing and the absence of sea life makes the boat look like it's in the middle of nowhere and thus telling its story. The preparation for this shot included the use by the model of a bright orange lycra suit on top of a wetsuit, guaranteeing a high contrast in the blue water.

Porto Santo - Cordeca, Portugal

Nikon, D800, Nauticam NA-D800, Sigma 15mm f2.8 Fisheye, iso 200, f/10.0, 1/125, Subtronic Alpha Pro (x2)

Judges notes:

Graphically simple with a pleasant symmetry, this clean shot would have been higher with a more defined background.

Peter Rowlands



6) Black & White

HIGHLY COMMENDED

‘The Talk’

Rodney Bursiel (United States)

When I originally booked my surf trip to Fiji, I didn't realize how close Tonga was. I had always wanted to go to swim with the whales so I made a last minute adjustment to my flight and jumped over. Everyone I talked to strongly advised against going to Tonga without a guide lined up but I figured a bad day swimming with whales was better than going back home. As luck would have it I found a group that was leaving early. I was able to take their spot on a boat with just one other diver and it was just us hanging with this mom and her calf. The calf was a wild one, breaching and tail slapping all over the place. I love this photo because it looks like mom is giving the baby a talking to about straying too far from her.

North Shore, Kingdom of Tonga

Nikon, D800, Ikelite, 16mm, iso 320, 7.1,
1/200, Natural Light

Judges notes:

The silent rapport between mother and calf comes over to the viewer with ease and in my case, initially, I was quietly fixated with the interaction between them both. That's when the reflections kicked in and my eye circled the image over and over again and again. The composition of the behaviour and in particular the reflections could not have been better and the choice of a mono conversion was the cherry on the cake! A lovely image.

Martin Edge



6) Black & White

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Morning flight'

Filippo Borghi (Italy)

During spring time from April to June on the coast of Baja California we can witness one of the most impressive migrations of the sea. Thousands of mobula ray's migrate along this coast. I try many times to find this incredible behavior but some how this has not occurred. This year, during a morning safari on the sea we saw a different group of beautiful mobular. I jumped in the water and we followed them for a couple of hours and during this time a small group moved into a shallow area where I was able to shoot in great light.

Cabo san lucas, Mexico

Nikon, D800e, Subal, Sigma 15mm, iso 250,
f 9, 1/320

Judges notes:

Your patience paid off and you put yourself in the best light possible. It's the sunbeams bursting through the morning surface which attracted me to this image which works well in black & white.

Martin Edge



6) Black & White

COMMENDED

'B & W Goby'

Anders Nyberg (Sweden)

A whip goby on a whip coral with some bokeh effect in the background made of a slate with glitter to reflect the light from the strobes.

Coral Garden, Tulamben, Bali, Indonesia

Nikon, D500, Nauticam, Nikon 105mm, iso 100, f9.0, 1/200, Two Inon Z240

Judges notes:

Original and very well executed. I particularly like the balance of the circles and the isolation in black running from top left to bottom right of the frame.

Martin Edge



UPY 2018 - 90

6) Black & White

COMMENDED

'Hypnosis'

Wendy Timmermans (Netherlands)

I'm a freediving Vice-World Champion and can dive up to 83 meter while holding my breath. But diving deep is only one small part of my passion for the underwater world and for me, freediving the Mexican Cenotes has been a dream for many years. As freedivers, we explore the abyss on one breath only, in its purest way. It allows us to move gracefully through the water and makes time stand still for a moment. The calmness, beauty and serenity of this remote Cenote magnified the state of tranquillity inherent in our sport. The picture shows fellow freediving underwater photographer Guillaume Bihet. Together we create our images and share our work as Seadrops Photography. Freediving gives us the perfect tool to move around freely and improvise. Taken with natural light only, in Nah Yah Cenote, Yucatan Peninsula, Mexico.

Nah Yah, Mexico

Sony, a6300, Nauticam NA a6300, E 10-18mm F4 OSS, iso 400, 4.0, 1/125

Judges notes:

A simple composition, but a fabulous idea by Wendy to show the freediver clearly as their shadow. Elegant photography.

Alex Mustard



6) Black & White

COMMENDED

'Seal'

Sylvie Ayer (Switzerland)

It was the first time in my life I had dived with seals. There are so funny. Great memories. Los Cedros is in Baja California, somewhere between Guadalupe and Socorro. We were there specially for the seals. This was shot in the morning and the sun was shining.

Los Cedros, Mexico

Nikon, D810, Subal, Nikon 16-35 mm, iso 100, f/8.0, 1/160, Inon Z-240

Judges notes:

The way that Sylvie has combined the sea lion, kelp and sunlight brings to mind the work of Ernie Brooks. There are few greater compliments to pay an underwater photographer working in black and white.

Alex Mustard

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is that of anticipation.



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Open to all. Entrants to this
category will only be accepted
from photographers who's
only underwater camera is of a
'compact' type.



7) Compact

WINNER

'Dancing with the giants'
Simone Matucci (New Zealand)

Escaping the New Zealand winter for a magical week in Tonga's underwater dreamland dancing with whales, my wife and I spent 5 days and nights at sea, sailing the Ha'apai islands & swimming with humpbacks. Not another single boat was in sight all week. The beauty of the encounters that we had are truly transcending. These two adult humpbacks had such a connection with us in the water, literally "dancing" .. it was the most wild & incredible thing I have probably witnessed in my entire life. Humpback whales are such a magnificent species and they need our protection. The entire ocean needs our help. Now is the time more than ever, before it is too late .. before we lose it all. I hope that my photography brings out the ocean conservationist in all of us and helps to spread awareness to help save the ocean!

Ha'apai, Kingdom of Tonga

Sony , RX100 Mark 4, Aquapazza housing,
Wide angle Dyron, iso 100, f/7.1, 1/400,
natural light

Judges notes:

What better example can there be of the old adage "F8 and be there" except that today's compact cameras are so capable (and this takes nothing away from the photographer) that it should now be "Be there and press the shutter".

Peter Rowlands



7) Compact

RUNNER UP

'Flower power'

Jack Berthomier (New Caledonia)

Having been a free diving underwater photographer for 8 years, I swim many hours, every week looking for uncommon subjects to shoot. My preference is pictures made under the surface with reflections . A lot of creatures (mainly juveniles) are found there day and night looking for spots (floating sargassums, flowers, leaves and miscellaneous objects) on which to stay. This picture shows 3 blennies that gather by the dozen under a sheltered spot. In this image, they are hiding under a floating hibiscus flower.

Ouemo bay, New Caledonia

Sony, RX100, Nauticam NA RX100, None, iso 200, 7/1, 1/800, None/ internal flash

Judges notes:

Fantastic subject matter makes this image. Algae blennies associate with any object floating near the surface, you will often see them on dive site buoys. But this hibiscus flower is an attractive alternative, framed against the trees.

Alex Mustard



7) Compact

THIRD

'Frogfish Illusion'

Ipah UiD (Malaysia)

To achieve this image I had to use a couple of props for effects . Two items were used to create this shot. A Cokin Filter and a plain old CD. Being a compact user I love experimenting on new techniques. One of them was using a CD as the background to create a prismatic effect. I discovered that the colours changed every time I moved the CD, hence the background behind the goby giving it an illusion of a frogfish ! As the goby is the most common critter and the most well behaved I'm glad I managed to give a wow factor to this little fella.

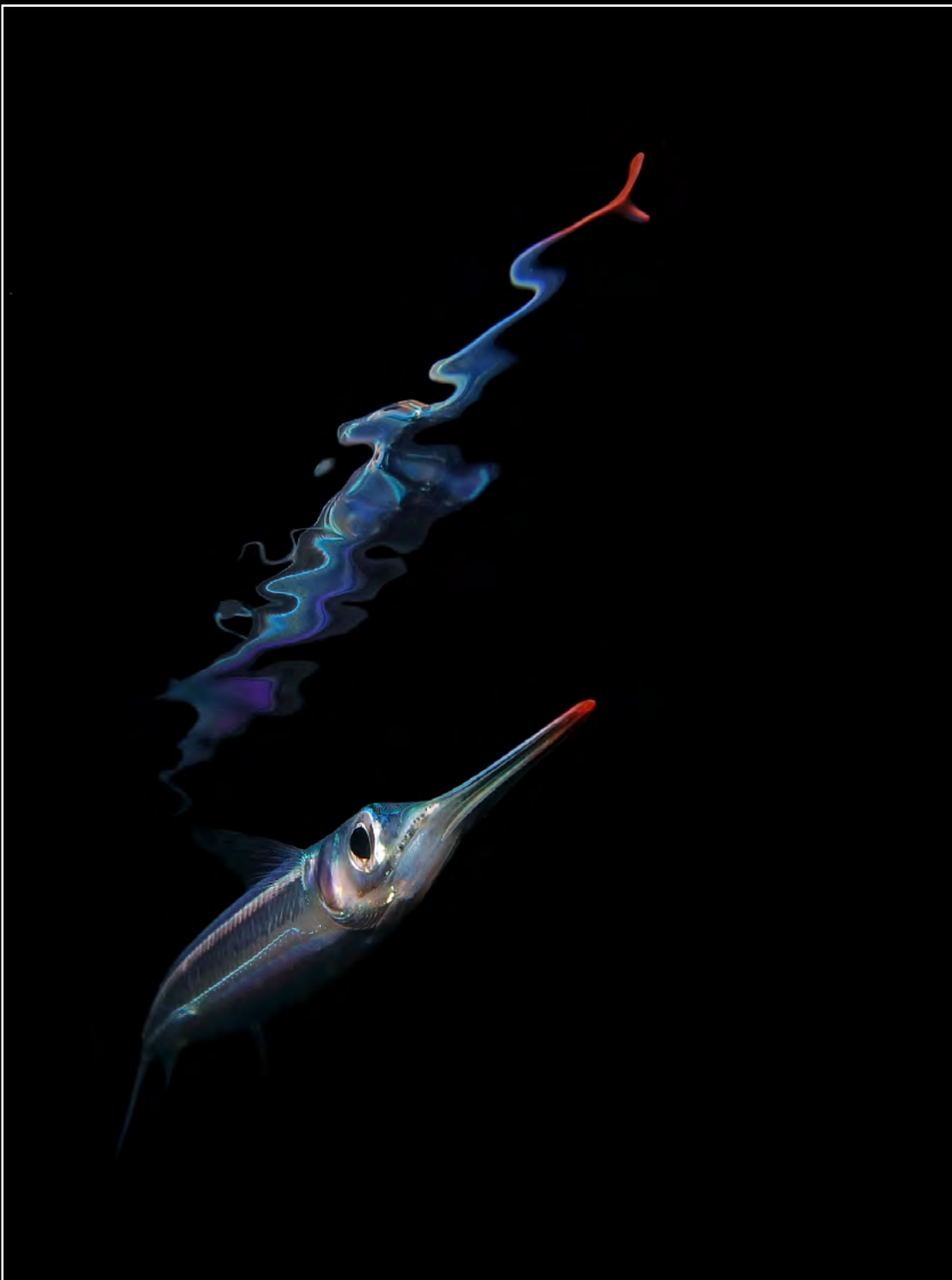
Raja Ampat Dive Lodge Housereef, Raja Ampat Indonesia

Canon, Canon Powershot G15, Canon Housing, Subsee +10, iso ISO80, f/3.5, 1/125s, Inon Z240

Judges notes:

A psychedelic abstract image of a goby. We loved the colour and idea of this frame. A slightly better pose of the goby could have seen it place even higher.

Alex Mustard



7) Compact

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Night reflection of a juvenile garfish'
Jack Berthomier (New Caledonia)

Red nose juvenile garfishes are numerous to hunt for prey among Uitoe bay. To make the shoot good, you have to get near to the fish for the light not to dazzle him but you need enough light for the focusing.

Uitoe bay, New Caledonia

Sony, RX100, Nauticam NA RX100, None, iso 125, 7/1, 1/1600, None/ internal flash

Judges notes:

It's was the reflection which first attracted me to this image. Stark black background with a diagonal lilt to both the garfish and it's reflection in the surface water. The eye dominates the frame but the reflection is longer and very well lit. The reflection is even more luminous than the fish itself. I really like this image.

Martin Edge



7) Compact

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'At the Surface'

Stephen Holinski (Canada)

Diving off of Hornby Island in British Columbia offers thrilling and highly interactive encounters with stellar sea lions. After spending some time trying to shoot a group of these sea lions directly below the surface, I descended a few feet below the chaos of this group to try and shoot through snell's window. Luckily, one of the sea lions was facing the camera (more, I think, due to the shove of his friend than interest in me), showing the playful nature of these wonderful juveniles.

Hornby Island, Canada

Sony, RX100 Mark I, Ikelite, UWL-04 Wet Lens, iso 200, f/9, 1/160, Dual Sea & Sea YS110a

Judges notes:

It's the light and shade of the sea lions which first attracted me to this image. Snells Window is at it's highest and Stephan's camera angle has managed to frame the commotion by shooting directly upwards. It appears that just a small 'splash of flash' has also lit the sea lions which has put the finishing touches to this image.

Martin Edge



7) Compact

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Crop Circle'

Ipah UiD (Malaysia)

I was still a newbie when I took this photo. At that time the hype was the emperor shrimp on sea cucumber or any moving nudibranch. When my guide Jandri showed me the nudibranch it never occurred to me there would be a tiny shrimp on a nudi the size of your palm. I was more surprised when there was about 5 of them it. What caught my attention was the circle of sand stuck on the Pleurobranchidae nudibranch . It was a shape of a crop circle ! I waited about 15 minutes for the emperor shrimp to position itself on the nudi and quickly took the shot I wanted. Patience was indeed required since it is so small ...

Pantai Parigi, Lembah, Indonesia

Canon, Canon Powershot G15, Canon housing, Inon UCL330 Stackup 2, iso ISO 80, f/2.8, 1/400s, Inon Z240

Judges notes:

It takes a great eye to see shots with extreme macro and subtle lighting and exposure has highlighted the subject yet left a hint of background.

Peter Rowlands

7) Compact

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Kootenay Lake'

Stephen Holinski (Canada)

I have been visiting Kootenay Lake, and spending time on its rocky beaches, for the past 5 years. During these years, I have spent a few evenings trying to capture an over-under that showed the beauty of this wonderful mountain lake with clear mountain skies. To-date, the skies have yet to be clear on a night while I was shooting! In the summer of 2017, when this photo was taken, there were a number of forest fires burning in the region which provided the misty and beautiful pink hue to the skies.

Kootenay Lake, Canada

Sony , RX100 Mark I, Ikelite, UWL-04
Wet Lens, iso 200, f/11, 1/30, Single Ikelite
DS-161

Judges notes:

At first glance a subtle image, but one that required real precision from Stephen to produce. Especially when you consider the challenges of shooting split level images with a compact camera.

Alex Mustard





7) Compact

COMMENDED

‘Tres Amigos ‘

Sarah Vasend (United States)

This was taken on the last day of my trip to La Paz, Mexico. Los Islotes is one of my favorite dive sites, well known for its sea lion colony. This group of three were some very friendly juveniles that were playing in a cave. These pups are easily amused and make for cooperative photo subjects! Make sure all equipment is firmly attached, there may have been some lens covers lost in the taking of this photo!

Los Islotes , Mexico

Sony , RX 100, Recsea, UWL-04 fish eye lens , iso 125, f/8, 1/250 , Dual Sea & Sea YS-D1

Judges notes:

There is so much eye contact between the pups in this image, it's hard for the viewer to look anywhere else but around the three sea lions over and over again. I also like the final shape of them combined as they come close together.

Martin Edge

7) Compact

COMMENDED

'Elvis'

Stefano Cerbai (Italy)

I went on holiday in Lembeh Strait, Indonesia with the aim of taking pictures of 4 subjects and one of them was the Hairy Frog Fish. I was excited to find one after a few dives. Once I had found it, I dedicated the whole dive to capturing it. I took several shots using two flashes, but the best result was the one using a snoot, as you can see in this picture.

Lembeh Strait, Indonesia

Canon, G12, Isotta, 15, iso 250, f/8, 1/1600, Inon Z240

Judges notes:

Captured as if in the glare of a spotlight the black background highlights the bizzarely shaped subject and the eyes complete the delivery.

Peter Rowlands





7) Compact

COMMENDED

'Manta Frenzy'

Ali Shujau (Maldives)

On the day after a full moon in July 2017, we got lucky with about 80 manta rays converging on the plankton-rich Hanifaru Bay in Baa Atoll, Maldives. Personally for me, it was challenging to get a good composition with multiple mantas in the frame whilst balancing the ambient light cast from the sun through the rough-weather choppy seas at the bay, all the time fighting against the surface currents and trying not to get too overwhelmed by the mesmerising beauty portrayed by these beautiful creatures.

Hanifaru Bay, Baa Atoll, Maldives

Sony, RX100iv, Nauticam RX100iv,
9-26mm @ 10mm, iso 160, f/4.5, 1/160,
Ambient light

Judges notes:

An amazing scene and a fabulous capture with any camera.

Alex Mustard



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8) Up & Coming

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8) Up & Coming

WINNER

'Roar'

Man Bd (Malaysia)

When shooting this nudibranch I was focusing on it's behaviour to get just the right shot. While this happened a moray eel suddenly appeared out from the blue behind the nudi. I was shocked for a while but decided it would be a great composition. After a few minutes to my surprise another nudi appeared right behind the other one maybe to mate. I then decided to wait a while longer for the nudi to be in frame with the moray eel roaring behind. It took about 30 minutes to get this shot and it was well worth it.

Yos dive house reef, Lembah, Indonesia

Olympus TG-4, Olympus PT-056, Built in lens, iso 200, f/6.3, 1/200s, internal flash

Judges notes:

Another of my favourites in the competition. The mouth and head of the moray take up more than 50% of the image frame which is all out of focus but the result is a superb demonstration of blur which I would never have believe would work against the two nudis. The soft left eye of the moray together with the gleaming white teeth towards the bottom round off this image but there is still more to come! The nudis look as though they are planning their escape in different directions. One superb image!

Martin Edge



8) Up & Coming

RUNNER UP

'The Hammer'

Jacob Degee (Poland)

It was the last day of the Enigma Team shark expedition to Bahamas. The last day and I was still missing a shot I came here to take. We went down. The day before there was a storm and we did not see anything. But they were back. Glorious, mighty, curious but shy four meter long ladies. The Great Hammerheads were slowly circulating around us. It was my last chance. The last opportunity to do what I had in my mind for months. "Stay calm, be patient" was constantly echoing in my mind. Sitting on a soft sandy bottom, facing against the sun I could have only waited. And there she was coming directly at me...

Bimini, Bahamas

Canon, 5Ds, Ikelite, EF14mm f/2.8L II USM, iso 400, f/11, 1/125, Ikelite DS160 x2

Judges notes:

Heaven knows we'd seen enough Hammerhead shots so it took a great one to impress us with it's power, symmetry and originality. This is it.

Peter Rowlands



8) Up & Coming

THIRD

'Migration'

Austin Ferguson (United States)

Every year in the Pacific Northwest of America, wild Pacific Salmon make an epic migration from the ocean up the same rivers and streams that they were born in, sometimes traveling over a thousand miles inland to reproduce. Salmon are a keystone species here as much of the surrounding flora and fauna depend on them for survival. However, Pacific Salmon are in a precipitous decline due to overfishing, dams, salmon farming and deforestation. Over the course of three months, I spent countless hours in 13°C water photographing this incredible migration. Eventually, my patience paid off when I captured this image of a male Pink Salmon fighting his way back upstream to continue his species and nurture the surrounding ecosystem.

Washington State, USA

Nikon, D7200, Nauticam NA-D7200,
Tokina AT-X107 DX Fisheye 10-17mm F3.5-
4.5, iso 320, f/8, 1/40, 2 x Inon Z240 strobes

Judges notes:

Austin's is a fabulous wildlife image, the bubbles communicate the vicious flow of the river, that this male salmon has fought against to reach his spawning grounds.

Alex Mustard

8) Up & Coming

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Synchronised ballet of bull sharks'
Sylvie Ayer (Switzerland)

Mozambique is one of the best places in the world to dive with bull sharks. I was there specially for that. Diving with them is a guarantee of adrenaline. The visibility was great. Only blue....and bull sharks. For a few seconds there was plenty of them around us and I tried to my best.

Ponta Del Ouro, Mozambique

Nikon, D810, Subal, 16.0-35.0 mm, iso 320, f/10, 1/250, Inon 2X Z240

Judges notes:

Sometimes one and one does indeed make three! This exquisite capture of a split second in time becomes natural beauty and compositional ballet with everything contributing to create more than just a fleeting moment.

Peter Rowlands





8) Up & Coming

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Coloured'

Hannah Nies (Germany)

I was 18 at the time I took this picture in July 2017. My Dad was teaching everybody in the world how to take good pictures underwater, but not me. So I asked him to give me theoretical lessons and input. He offered me to lend me one of his housings (he sells them) and got to go to Komodo with him to take pictures. It was my second holiday for underwater photography. A good friend of his (and now of me too) let me use her backgrounds and help me getting better, because she is an excellent underwater photographer as well. So, I was able to take this picture.

Gili Lawa Darat, Komodo, Indonesia

Nikon, D810, SEACAM D810, Nikon AF-S 60mm 2,8, iso 200, 20, 1/160, SEACAM Seaflash 150D

Judges notes:

It's always good to hear of underwater photographers helping others in what can be a competitive hobby and if this is the result, co-operate more please!

Peter Rowlands

8) Up & Coming

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Hummingfish'

Brian Eckstein (United States)

Anyone who has spent time on a boat has probably looked down to see a flying fish gliding above the surface. They leap out of the water and fly through the air before dropping back into the ocean and swimming away. This is what one of those flying fish looks like from below. This image was taken during a blackwater dive off the coast of Palm Beach, Florida. Typically, these dives are spent anywhere between 20 and 60 feet below the surface looking for tiny critters in the larval stages. However, when the conditions are right and the wind is calm, a whole new cast of characters near the surface comes into focus. Although I've seen flying fish in other colours such as white, orange, and yellow, the blue and silver is certainly my favourite.

Blackwater dive, USA

Nikon, D7100, Ikelite, Nikon 60mm 2.8 G, iso 160, f22, 1/250, x2 Ikelite DS-161, x2 iTorch Pro 6

Judges notes:

A simple composition capturing the intricate beauty of this flying fish in all its stunning detail.

Alex Mustard



8) Up & Coming

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Whale shark and remoras'

Marchione dott. Giacomo (Italy)

Evening, anchored in the lagoon on the motoryacht that hosts us, lights on at the stern, suddenly a great whale shark appears from the obscurity of the seafloor, completely surrounded by remore. Immediately I take my derailment with my camera and slide slowly into water . I begin to take many photographs of this beautiful animal made even more fascinating by the remors that keep him company. It continues to swim around the boat in search of plankton, giving the impression of a large spaceship traveling with its guests

Huvadhoo. South atholl, Maldives

Nikon, Nikon 800E, Seacam for 800 Nikon, 17-35mm Nikon, iso 1600, f/8.0, 1/60, Natural light

Judges notes:

I really like the contrasts between the dark blue water and the light emanating off the remors. The compositional weight of the whale shark within the frame works very well. Also, the author has not been a slave to the aspect ratio of the image. It becomes a square format which also works well and I commend him for it.

Martin Edge



8) Up & Coming

COMMENDED

'Beautiful'

Rupert Cornelius (Mozambique)

Since I started to take photos I have worked hard to photograph smaller creatures with my wide angle lens. This is not that easy as it's hard to get the lightning right. Some times the results are rewarding, as in this case, where I managed to captured the seahorse and my wife in the same photo. She actually photobombed my scene! She is lucky it turned out well....

Stables , Mozambique

Sony, Nex - 5, Nauticam Nex -5, 16mm
f2.8, iso 200, F9, 1/125, Inon D-2000

Judges notes:

This wide angle macro image has so much depth which originates with the seahorse in the foreground and in particular with the clean eye contact of the seahorse. Notice how the soft coral curves back towards the top middle of the frame. This has the effect of taking the eye of the viewer and the diver with it. The fin now becomes a continuation of that curve and the diver silhouette with torch in hand continues the theme with the small coral growing to meet it. Compositionally, I was in two minds about the leg merger of the diver but the more I look at it the easier on the eye it becomes.

Martin Edge





8) Up & Coming

COMMENDED

'A lagoon glimpse'

Romain Barats (France)

Mid September, the perfect season to get whales in Polynesia, having a rest after their great migration...A sandbank in the middle of the lagoon of a peaceful island accessible by kayak... After close to 2 hours, to wait for the right time, all the actors were finally in a row for the shot. Sharks and rays belong to the same family despite their differences. A curious sting ray is showing off, creating a perfect foreground, requiring a focus on her (autofocus continuous AF-C with 51 points on my camera). But I wanted sharp sharks to create a good background, so needed at least f/8 but not too close without artificial light in order to avoid having to turn ISO up (I hate noise on pictures). A full frame with a wide angle lens allowed me to realise the composition.

Moorea lagoon, French Polynesia

Nikon, D750, Nauticam NA D750, 14-24mm f/2.8 Nikkor, iso 125, f/9, 1/400, natural light

Judges notes:

This is such a competent, confident image. Knowing when the elements might come together yet having the patience to wait until they precisely did.

Peter Rowlands

8) Up & Coming

COMMENDED

'Ruby'

Clarissa Ace (Indonesia)

It was an early morning dive at Adonara Island, Indonesia. Shortly after descending, a coral banded shrimp near a patch of reef caught my attention. She was waving her long white antennae leisurely, confidently advertising her presence. I had seen a number of interesting mirrored images produced by senior photographers and wanted to create my own. My idea was to accentuate the contrast of the translucent body against the opaque ruby head. I slowly closed in down to her eye level and took my shot as my subject continues to wave, seemingly unbothered.

Waiwawong, Adonara Island, Indonesia

Sony, A7R II, Seacam Sony A7 II R, FE 90 mm F2.8 Macro G OSS, iso 100, f/10, 1/100, Ikelite DS161

Judges notes:

A fun, effective and inventive treatment of this common subject, mirrored in Photoshop to create a startling face.

Alex Mustard



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Manual White Balance



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Manual White Balance

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9) British Waters Wide Angle

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9) British Waters Wide Angle

WINNER

'Love Birds'

Grant Thomas (UK)



I have always been fascinated by over-under photography, connecting the everyday terrestrial world that we all know with the less familiar underwater secrets. I chose Loch Lomond as the location for this shot due to its idyllic scenery, water access and friendly swans. My initial idea was to frame a split shot of one swan feeding below the surface but when I noticed how comfortable they were around me I was confident, with some patience, I could get that magical shot of the two. It was mid-day, sun high in the sky, I waded slowly into the shallow water, allowing the swans to become comfortable with my presence. When they began searching for food below the water line I just had to wait for that perfect moment of synchronicity.

Luss Pier, Loch Lomond, Scotland

Canon, 5d mkiii, Ikelite, Tokina 10 - 17mm,
iso 125, 14, 80, 2 x INON Z240

Judges notes:

Congratulations on taking the prize for winner & British Underwater Photographer of the Year. The judging panel were impressed when we first viewed this image, but as you know, opinions can change. In this case the swans image got better and better over the days of judging.

Martin Edge



9) British Waters Wide Angle

RUNNER UP

'Shark Speed'

Nicholas More (UK)

Each summer, I make a pilgrimage to Cornwall for a chance to interact and photograph Blue Sharks, as they seasonally visit UK waters. Ten miles out into the Atlantic, from Penzance, the sharks are attracted to the boat using 'chum'. Once around the boat they are bold and love to interact with snorkelers. On this particular day we had overcast conditions which allowed for slow-shutter speed 'panning' shots to capture the beauty, grace and speed of these charismatic predators, resulting in a dynamic portrait of these stunning animals in their open ocean environment.

Penzance, Cornwall., England, UK.

Nikon , D500, Nauticam NA-D500, Tokina AT-X 10-17mm F3.5-4.5 DX Fisheye, iso 125, f/22, 1/8th, 2 x Inon Z240

Judges notes:

Slow motion underwater photography does not get any better than this. The author has chosen the perfect settings, in particular the ISO of 125, the aperture of f22 and most of all setting a perfect shutter speed of 1/8. It doesn't stop there! Motion blur is all about the speed of blur called 'panning'. The author needs to 'pan' at the right speed. Practice makes perfect, as you can see!

Martin Edge

9) British Waters Wide Angle

THIRD

'Freshwater Otter at sea'

Greg Lecoœur (France)

I was very intrigued by this mammal who adapted to marine life and had in mind to witness of this scene. So I asked to my Scottish friend Richard Shucksmith who knows this species very well to help me to capture this image. During a dive we were very lucky to find this otter who was curious about my lens.

Shetland, Scotland

Nikon, D7200, Nauticam NA D7200,
Tokina 10-17mm, iso 200, f/9, 1/250, x2
Ikelite DS160

Judges notes:

The first photo I have seen of an otter in the sea in the UK. A great achievement.

Alex Mustard





9) British Waters Wide Angle

HIGHLY COMMENDED

‘Courtship’

Spencer Burrows (UK)

The Farne Islands is home to an estimated population of 5,000 Grey Seals. During the autumn months, the water is generally at its warmest and clearest. This is also the breeding season which usually ensures plenty of activity and interaction. During this particular dive, myself and good friend/underwater photographer Rob Cuss noticed a real change in behaviour, the Seals were not interested in us, but much more into each other. This particular pair were highly affectionate and displaying many signs of courtship/mating. This was a show of behaviour we'd not witnessed before. The speed at which they'd change meant to capture this behaviour I needed to anticipate and work at pace. I managed to record a series of images that I was pleased with and felt they managed to really “tell a story” A magical dive.

Farne Islands , England

Nikon, D800, Nauticam, Sigma 15mm, iso 200, F11, 1/100, 2 x Sea & Sea YSD1 Strobes

Judges notes:

Great behaviour captured at the perfect moment by Spencer. I love how the male's eyes are closed as he opens his jaws flirtatiously to the female. Subjects totally relaxed with the photographer's presence.

Alex Mustard



9) British Waters Wide Angle

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Humpback whale'

Richard Shucksmith (UK)

Sometimes you just have to take advantage of a unique situation. A small group of four humpback whales were hanging around the coast of Shetland. The day before we went to see if we could see them. Luckily for us we saw all four with two of the humpbacks coming just off the point where we were stood allowing my one and half year old son to see them. There was a very short weather window so the next day I headed out with a good friend Brydon Thomason to try to shoot the whales for Scotland The Big Picture. Two of the whales were still there. We spent four hours slowly working with the two whales before an opportunity came to get in the water and within seconds they passed within meters of me. I had never dreamed that I would be shooting humpback whales off the UK coast.

Shetland Islands, Scotland

Nikon, D4, Nauticam, Nikon 16-35mm F4,
iso 1600, F7.1, 1/80, Natural

Judges notes:

Sometimes you wait a lifetime for a moment just like this but you still have to get the shot. Perfect timing and framing. A real 'I wish I'd been there' shot.

Peter Rowlands

9) British Waters Wide Angle

HIGHLY COMMENDED

‘How many pike?’

Tony Stephenson (UK)

Living in the East Midlands in England is a long way from the sea and as a result, a lot of my diving takes place in the quarry at Stoney Cove, the UK's National Diving Centre. I love photographing pike and on this particular dive during the Easter holidays, a 'group' of males were looking for a mate. Once they found one they pursued her relentlessly and were completely transfixed on gaining her attention. This allowed me to get close in front of the fish, fill the frame and aim to get lots of good eye contact. I was delighted by the results. I hope that I have demonstrated that UK inland diving can throw up some amazing sights that are a pleasure to witness and photograph.

Stoney Cove, Leicestershire, England

Olympus, OM-D E-M10 Mark II, Nauticam NA-EM10 Mark II housing, Panasonic Lumix G 8mm Fisheye, iso 200, f/4.5, 1/125, Dual Inon Z-240 strobes

Judges notes:

We were not short of Pike pictures to look at but this one captured us all. We did agree, however, that a touch of extra light (or Photoshop lightening) on the central character would have helped.



9) British Waters Wide Angle

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Fried Egg Anemones at 'Pixie Gardens'
Paul Kay (UK)

Last year we spent two weeks diving out of Doune in Knoydart and carried out many of our dives in Lochs Nevis and Hourn. On one dive, in Loch Hourn, we were working our way up rocky ledges whose shallow vertical faces were covered with masses of brittlestars and plumose anemones. Amongst them was this fissure with an absolute abundance of fried egg anemones cascading down it. All were fully open with their delicate tentacles extended and their orange discs displayed. As I was using an entirely new camera type and system with wide angle for the first time on this trip I was more than happy with the results.

'Pixie Gardens', Loch Hourn, West Coast of Scotland

Sony, A7 MkII, Seacam Silver, Sony FE 28mm f/2 with SEL075UW Wide Angle Converter, iso 200, f/16, 1/8, 1 x Seaflash 150

Judges notes:

We're always keen to celebrate all genres of UK wide angle in this category, and Paul's scenic shot shows off the colour and richness of British marine life perfectly.

Alex Mustard



9) British Waters Wide Angle

COMMENDED

'Humber'

Marcus Blatchford (UK)

Image of a Humber car in Vobster Quay. Vobster Quay is an inland dive site in an old quarry. The photo was taken at around 23m.

Vobster Quay, England

Canon, EOS 5d mk iv, Nauticam, Canon EF 8-15mm f4 L Fisheye, iso 800, f6.3, 1/90, 2 x INONz240 and Light-for-me Redstar off board

Judges notes:

What really attracted me to this image in particular was the lighting. Both the natural light, the torch and the flash illumination. The front bonnet of the motor is so moody with the bright highlights and deep shadows and this is what kept me glued to it in the first place. The eye of the viewer, like mine begins to explore the background with the graffiti on the window. The position and shape of the diver with torch against a rich tone of green water completes the composition. A very good choice to keep the silhouetted diver quiet in the background or else it could have been just about the diver instead.

Martin Edge





9) British Waters Wide Angle

COMMENDED

'Basking shark feeding'

Will Clark (UK)

Basking sharks are the world's second biggest fish: they can grow over 10 metres long. Each year dozens arrive to the rich waters off the Inner Hebrides archipelago as part of their annual migration. A bloom in plant plankton occurs in the warming springtime waters, which leads to an explosion in the numbers of animal plankton at the height of summer. Just as these tiny animals feed on the microscopic plants, so the basking sharks feed on the zooplankton, pushing slowly forward with their massive mouths open to envelop clouds of their prey before filtering them out through specialised gill structures. It is possible to sensitively snorkel with these gentle giants. I've learned that the best method is to place yourself some distance in front, stay completely still and hope for the best.

Off the Isle of Coll, Scotland

Canon, EOS 5D Mark III, Nauticam NA-5DMKIII, Canon EF 16-35mm f/2.8L II USM, iso 1250, f/13, 1/320, Natural light

Judges notes:

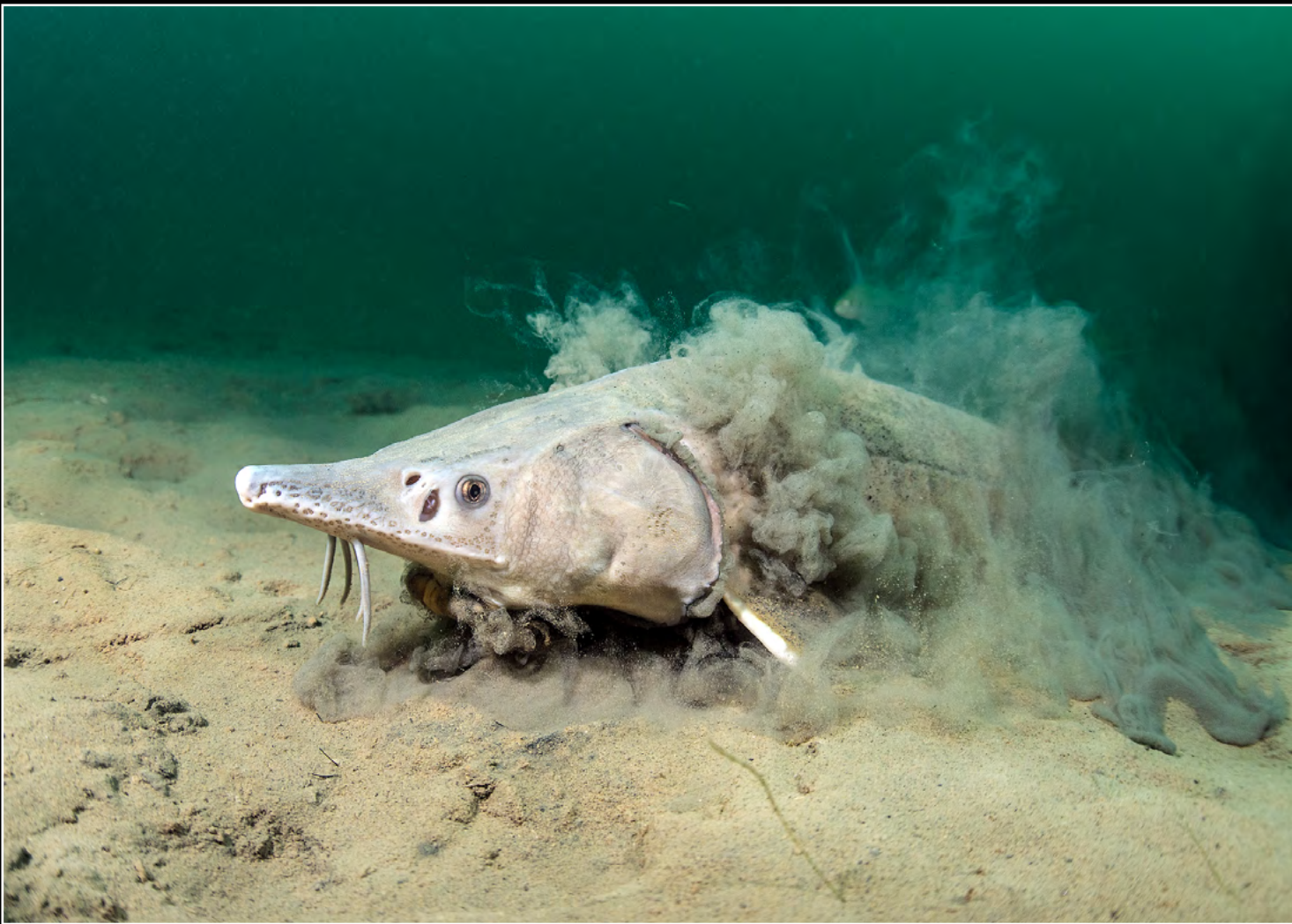
A well composed moving subject with all the necessities in place. Well framed, the angle of view towards the mouth is perfect. Plenty of light within the mouth and enough room in the image for it to swim into.

Martin Edge

9) British Waters Wide Angle

COMMENDED

'Feeding sturgeon in a cloud of silt'
Trevor Rees (UK)



A number of sturgeon can be found at Capernwray in Lancashire. This fish was most likely released to this freshwater flooded quarry a number of years ago, possibly because of having outgrown someone's pond. Nevertheless, as a species sturgeon are actually native to the UK and have survived unchanged for centuries. My photo shows the fish going about its business of foraging for food in the silty bottom of the quarry. They sift through the silt looking for anything that they can swallow and in doing over create clouds of silt. It was a fun winter project looking for this fish and trying to get a pleasing behaviour photo

Capernwray quarry, Lancashire, UK

Nikon , D600, Sea & Sea MDX D600,
Sigma 15mm + Kenko 1.4 x teleconverter,
iso 1250, f8, 1/80, Twin Sea & Sea YS 110

Judges notes:

The judging panel all took to this image and in my case I particularly liked the silty bottom which provided a natural frame for the fish to settle. Very well lit also.

Martin Edge

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10) British Waters Macro

WINNER

'Battle of the Tompots'
Henley Spiers (UK)

Despite appearances, these two Tompot Blennies are not kissing but engaged in a ferocious battle over mating rights. The British summer is mating season amongst Tompots and competition is fierce. I went diving under Swanage Pier in search of these charismatic fish and was delighted to encounter one with the ornate, blue facial markings designed to attract a partner. To my surprise and wonder, he was soon joined by another male and they started tussling. At one point, the dust settled and they remained motionless, jaws locked together, just long enough for me to capture this image. It was a very fortunate encounter and I am delighted to be able to share it through this photo.

Swanage Pier, Swanage, Dorset.

Nikon, Nikon D7200, Nauticam NA
D7200, Nikon 60mm, iso 100, f/4.5, 1/125, 2
x Inon Z240

Judges notes:

*Who says British fish lack colour and character?
This shot has got it right in all the right places.
Sharp when needed and blurred when not. It
concentrates and rewards the viewer's eye.*

Peter Rowlands

RUNNER UP

'Topshell tapestry'

Cathy Lewis (UK)

During a dive on the Manacles I came across a Painted topshell on a furry-looking kelp blade. This fluffy growth is actually a hydroid, made up of zigzag strings of tiny organisms. Both subjects are somewhat unremarkable but I thought there was potential for a simple, graphic shot, using the hydroids to create a textured background. I angled the strobes in towards the camera to create a very shallow beam, allowing the light to reach the shell and hydroids but keeping the drab brown kelp in darkness. The strands of hydroid lit up rather nicely, allowing the colourful topshell to 'pop' from its delicate lacy backdrop.

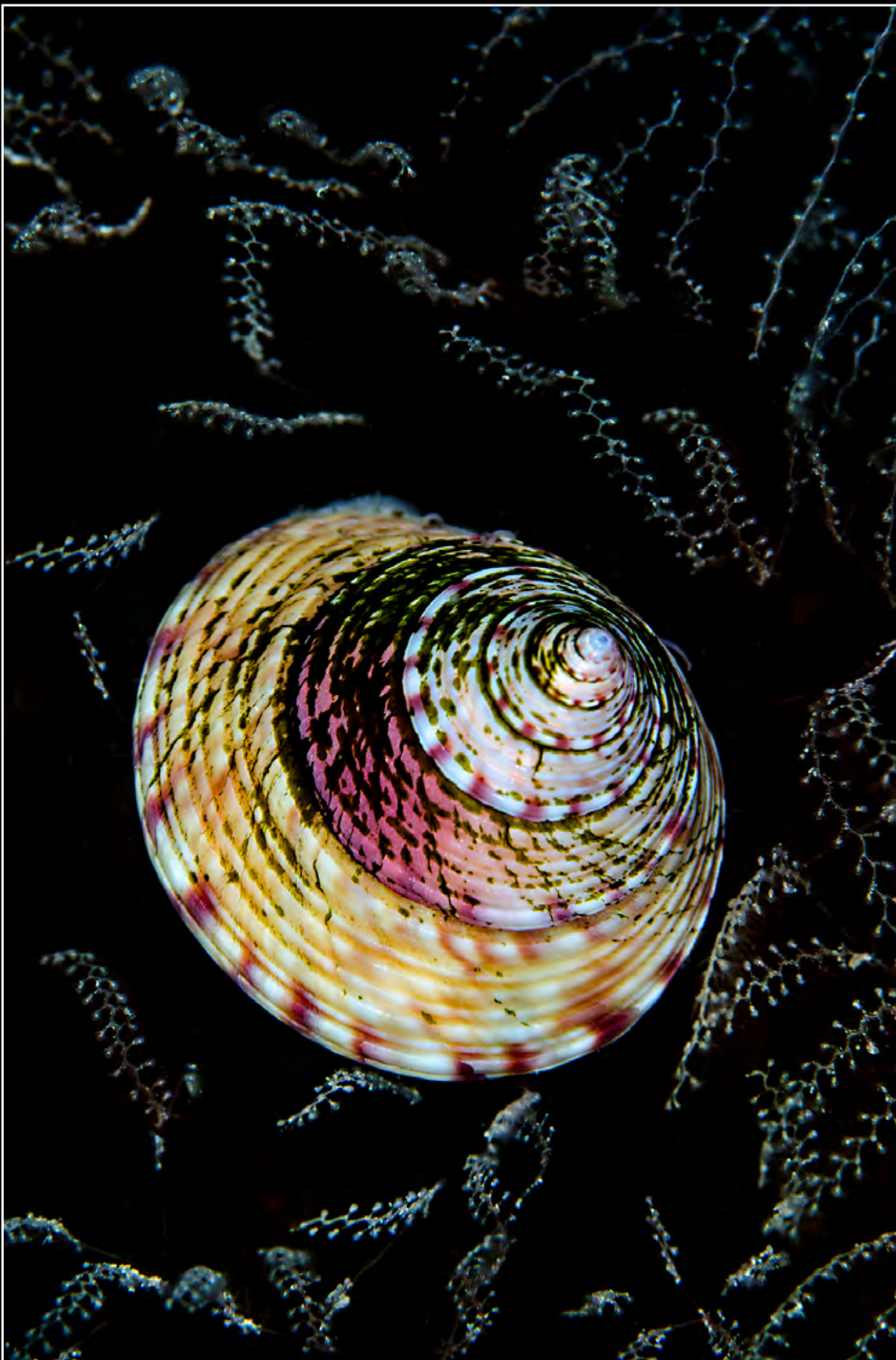
Raglan Ridge, The Manacles, Cornwall

Nikon, D7000, Nauticam NA D7000,
105mm, iso 100, f16, 1/250, Sea & Sea YS-D1

Judges notes:

So simple yet beautifully executed. The angle of the painted topshell within the picture frame is compositionally perfect and there are so many angles in which to approach this. The author (in my opinion) has chosen the best one, which in turn allows the eye of the viewer to sink into the background with the harsh, contrasty, monochrome look. Love it!

Martin Edge





10) British Waters Macro

THIRD

'Colourful Corkwing'

Kirsty Andrews (UK)

Male corkwing wrasse can be stunning and I had wanted for some time to take an image that would show off the personality and vibrant coloration of this common UK critter. However, these wrasse are busy creatures, working hard to build a nest of seaweed, and then guarding it fiercely. I found a corkwing nest on the wall of Bovisand Harbour, a favourite shore dive of mine, and didn't have to wait long for the proud home-maker to appear with a mouthful of weed. He laid it down carefully and bustled away for the next morsel. This happened over and over again, and the most I got was a disinterested glance as he swept past. Eventually after several attempts I captured the characterful portrait I had envisaged.

Bovisand Harbour, Plymouth

Nikon, D7200, Sea & Sea MDX-D7100, 60mm, iso 250, f/16, 1/320, 2x Sea & Sea YS-D1

Judges notes:

The eye contact, the framing, the lighting, all flawless together with a photogenic subject set off against a black background. I'm also drawn to the black, half circular shape of the mouth. The image frame is spot on. I couldn't ask for more.

Martin Edge

10) British Waters Macro

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Moons above'

Lucy Kay (UK)

Part of the joy of diving is coming across the unexpected. This was my first (and, so far, only) opportunity to dive amongst a large aggregation of moon jellyfish (*Aurelia aurita*) in relatively clear water. The swarming mass of pulsating animals, set against the striking emerald green water of the sea loch was quite hypnotic. Although I was set up with a macro lens, I wanted to try to take an image that showed the density of the animals and conveyed the feeling of being amongst them. Looking upwards, animals in the water column were silhouetted against the light from the surface, whilst my single flash enabled me to pick out some of the colour in the individual closest to me. I took several images but this is the one that gave me what I was looking for.

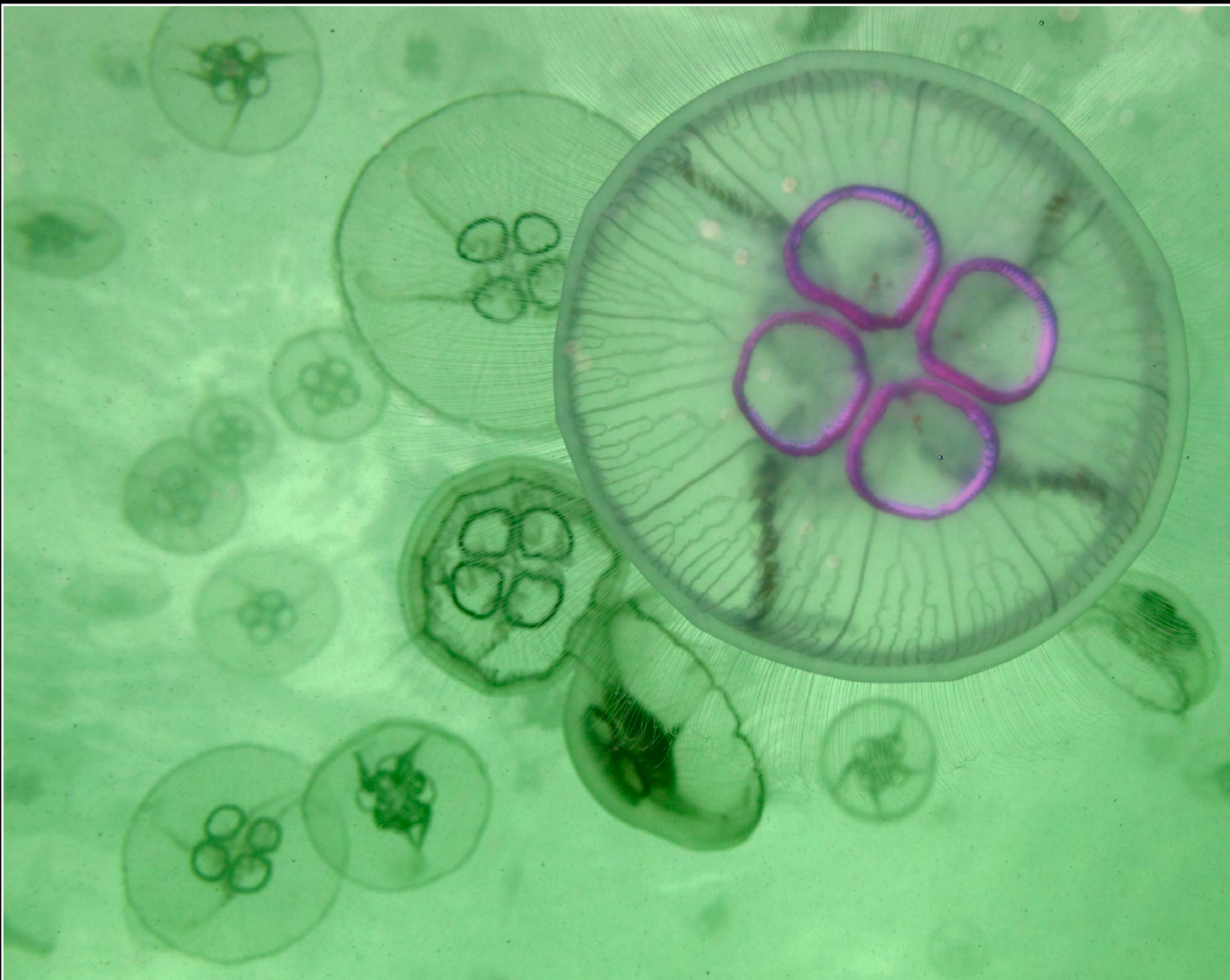
Gilbert Goudge Guddle, Loch Hourn, Scotland

Canon, 5D Mk II, Seacam Silver, Canon EF 50mm f/2.5 Compact Macro, iso 100, f/16, 1/60, 1 x Nikonos SB105

Judges notes:

Lucy has produced a soothing and graphically fulfilling image, with the ever decreasing circles created by the moon jellyfish bloom.

Alex Mustard





10) British Waters Macro

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Leopard-spotted goby'

Trevor Rees (UK)

The leopard-spotted goby (*Thorogobius epiplatys*) is a distinctive and rather attractive goby but such a skittish little fish. I have loads of side on shots of them and the harder I've tried to get them face on, the more twitchy they seem to be. Frequently, as I try to inch closer for a frame filling shot, they have the tenacity to turn their back on me, ready to beat a hasty retreat to some crevice in the rock. I had luck with this particular individual in a Scottish sea loch and managed one frame with the fish head on and both eyes facing forward before it quickly darted out of sight. Despite being a very common species all around the British coast I think I'd have trouble repeating this simple composition.

Loch Carron, Scotland, UK

Nikon , D600, Sea & Sea MDX D600,
Nikkor 60mm, iso 400, f22, 1/200, Sea &
Sea YS110

Judges notes:

A characterful and razor sharp portrait of an often uncooperative subject. I love how the symmetry in the composition is enhanced by the positions of the pectoral fins.

Alex Mustard



10) British Waters Macro

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'In a sea of squirts'

Paul Kay (UK)

Velvet swimming crabs, with their red eyes and blue pincers are a popular subject. This one caught my eye not because it was in itself photogenic, but because it was hunkered down on a rocky reef dominated by vase sea squirts (*Ciona intestinalis*). Whilst these sea squirts are common enough in sea lochs, in this particular spot they were really clean and about as abundant as I can ever remember seeing them. So, for an animal which mostly tries to be relatively inconspicuous, this one had failed pretty miserably. I was very fortunate as the visibility was good enough for me to back off with the 50mm macro lens so that I could take this 'view' including the crab, rather than simply take its portrait.

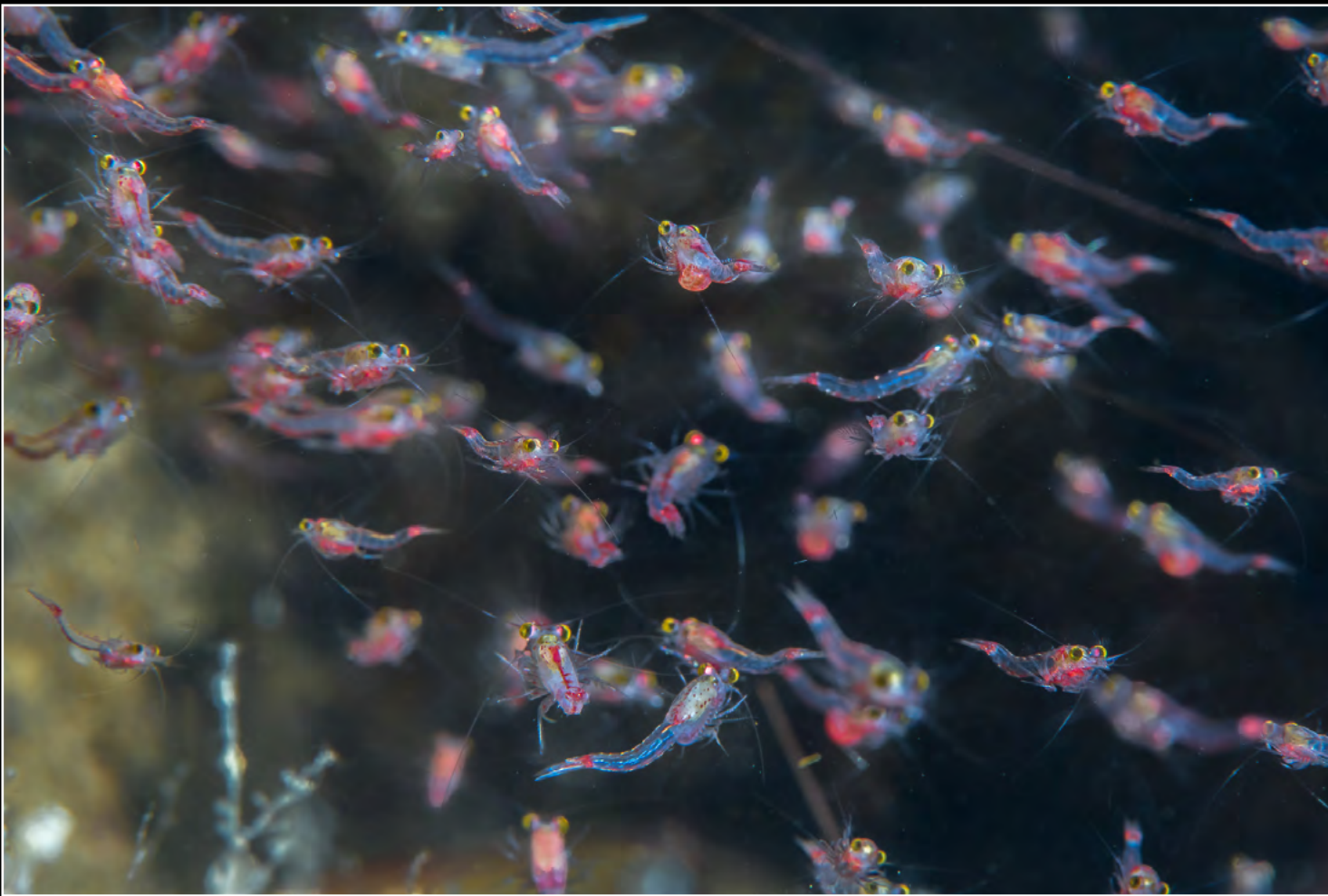
Easter Stoul, Loch Nevis, West Coast, Scotland

Sony, A7 MkII, Seacam Silver, Sony Fe 50mm f/2.8 Macro, iso 100, f/16, 1/100, 1 x Seacam Seaflash 150

Judges notes:

Beautifully soft lighting has captured the subtle colours and textures resulting in a celebratory vibrance.

Peter Rowlands



10) British Waters Macro

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Swarm'

Rick Ayrton (UK)

I had been under Swanage pier for over an hour, I was getting cold and making my way back towards the entry steps. A little before getting back to the harbour wall there was a piece of the old pier with a hollowed out end. My eye was caught by movement within, a multitude of very small creatures moving fast to & fro. I had little time available and I fired off a few shots hoping the Nikon focusing would do its job. I had no idea what I had captured until I downloaded the images for review. I cannot say precisely what it is other than saying it is larval forms of a marine critter. I had a slow shutter speed dialled into the camera but the dark scene was frozen by the light from the flashguns. This is definitely a subject I would like to return to.

Swanage Pier, UK

Nikon , D500 , Nauticam NA D500, 105mm,
iso 250, f20, 1/5, 2 x inon Z240

Judges notes:

A fun and different style of UK Macro image, showing a chaotic aggregation of mysid shrimps, with pink marsupium pouches.

Alex Mustard



10) British Waters Macro

COMMENDED

'Blenny and brittlestars'

Cathy Lewis (UK)

Just off the shore in Loch Carron is a spectacular bed of brittlestars, a writhing mass of millions of fragile, snaking arms in astonishingly vibrant colours. The bed is quite dense in places, with dozens of brittlestars stacked one on top of the other like a giant echinoderm duvet. It makes an excellent habitat for other sea creatures and I enjoyed spotting crustaceans and fish hiding amongst them, including this Yarrell's blenny, easily distinguished by the comical quiff over its head.

Loch Carron, Scotland, UK

Nikon, D7000, Nauticam NA D7000, 105mm, iso 200, f16, 1/125, Sea & Sea YS-D1

Judges notes:

Ah, Loch Carron, Scotland. Surely Britain's Port Hardy with its profuse covering of healthy life and this shot captures that density, colour and character so well.

Peter Rowlands



10) British Waters Macro

COMMENDED

'Nudibranch across the kelp'

Trevor Rees (UK)

This nudibranch (*Flabellina bostoniensis*) was spotted in the shallows of Loch Fyne. The simple kelp background interspersed with small white worm casts made for a pleasing picture. The lighting effect was enhanced with a home-made bottle snoot on my flash gun to help render a dark background and leave my subject in the spotlight. This species is quite large for a British sea slug at around 3cm long. The somewhat pastel colours and long cerata make it one of the prettier species in my opinion. Accurate focus to ensure both rhinophores were sharp, together with careful composition and the shot proved straightforward enough to execute.

Loch Fyne, Scotland, UK

Nikon , D600, Sea & Sea MDX D600,
Nikkor 60mm, iso 400, f25, 1/200, Single
Sea & Sea YS110 with home made snoot

Judges notes:

The author of this image says it all in his bio above..... The somewhat pastel colours and long cerata make it one of the prettier species in my opinion. Accurate focus to ensure both rhinophores were sharp, together with careful composition and the shot proved straightforward enough to execute. I couldn't have put it better myself!

Martin Edge



COMMENDED

'Firework fountain'

Cathy Lewis (UK)

Fireworks anemones can reach around 30cm in height and live in long tubes buried in the substrate. They are quite rare in the UK but can be found in the silty depths of some protected Scottish lochs. As you swim down into the darkness they loom up out of the silt like fountains. I like to photograph them against a dark background to give them an ethereal quality, so I angled the strobes in towards the camera to create a narrow beam of light, keeping the muddy seabed in darkness and lighting up the anemone's delicate tentacles.

Loch Fyne, Scotland, UK

Nikon, D7000, Nauticam NA D7000,
Tokina 10-17mm, iso 320, f16, 1/250, Sea
& Sea YS-D1

Judges notes:

*Judicious lighting and an angled composition
have captured this appropriately named
subject just right.*

Peter Rowlands

"I BET HE HAD PROPER BRIGHT STROBES"

- NON UPY WINNER

"I STILL SHOOT GOOD OLD 35MM FILM"

"IS THAT A NIKONOS?"

- NON UPY WINNER

"EVERBODY ALREADY FOUND NEMO"

- NON UPY WINNER

"IF MY HOUSING DIDNT LEAK I'D HAVE WON"

- NON UPY WINNER

"THEY MUST HAVE USED LIKE 50 MACRO LENSES"

- NON UPY WINNER

"WHO HAS THE TIME FOR SPLIT SHOTS"

- NON UPY WINNER

**" I COULD HAVE SHOT THAT
IF I HAD A BIG CAMERA"**

- NON UPY WINNER

"FXXK ME, HOW WIDE IS THAT LENS"

- NON UPY WINNER

"I WISH...."

- NON UPY WINNER

"UGH, I CAN ONLY GET TO LIKE F/5.8"

- NON UPY WINNER

"MY CAMERA DOESNT EVEN DO RAW"

- NON UPY WINNER



NO MORE EXCUSES

UPGRADE YOUR CAMERA GAME AT



PROUD SPONSORS OF THE UPY 2018

11) British Waters Compact

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.

11) British Waters Compact

WINNER

'Scratchy Seal'

Vicky Paynter (UK)

I had a free weekend so took-up a last minute space on our club trip to The Farne Islands. The Farne Islands are home to thousands of grey seals (also known as Atlantic seals), and each autumn hundreds of pups are born here. We'd arrived just before then but there were still plenty of younger seals keen to interact and explore these strange bubbling divers. This picture was taken on the 2nd dive of the day, when my 2 buddies acted as seal magnets and we had some glorious encounters. This seal obviously had an itch to scratch, as at one point he lay on his back waiting for his belly to be rubbed and as we were leaving him he was giving his tail a good scratch, pulling some interesting shapes in the process and which must have led to the satisfied grin he appears to be sporting!

The Farne Islands, UK

Canon, Power Shot S110, ikelite: Ultra Compact Housing 6242.11, N/A, iso 160, f/2.8, 1/500, N/A

Judges notes:

A very well executed image in the British Waters compact category. The lighting, focus and composition are very well done. I'm drawn to the reflection on the back of this seal. A worthy winner.

Martin Edge



11) British Waters Compact

RUNNER UP

'Intertwined Mute Swans'

Ian Wade (UK)

I've been photographing mute swans underwater for a few years now in different locations in Bristol & Somerset. I wanted to achieve a split level shot with entry-level equipment. On this particular day two mute swans came over to investigate me on a pontoon. Visibility isn't great at this location so I had to find an area of shallower water to start taking pictures. I put my camera half above the water and half below to get that split level effect and started taking photos. Luckily for me, the two swans intertwined their necks as they were feeding and I managed to achieve an intimate shot of swans underwater in an urban location.

Bristol Harbour, Great Britain

GoPro, Hero 5 Black, Telesin 6 inch Dome Port, GoPro Lens, iso 100, f/2.8, 1/266, Natural Lighting

Judges notes:

I'm drawn to the depth in this image with the close dominant swan almost popping out of the frame. The harbour wall provides additional depth perspective as the contours of the wall recede into a moody grey sky. A very strong image in the British water compact category.

Martin Edge



11) British Waters Compact

THIRD

'Curled Octopus'

James Lynott (UK)

This photo was taken during a fantastic day diving at St. Abbs. The dive had started at the large gully at West Hurkers and we were making our way towards the Anemone Gullies when I spotted this octopus nestled amongst the soft corals which cover the boulders and bedrock here. I only had time to quickly compose and capture this single image before it shot off, passing underneath my buddy and disappearing into the distance. Most of my diving is in Scottish waters and I had never seen an octopus here before so spotting this one and being able to capture this single shot made it a really memorable dive.

West Hurkers, St. Abbs, Scotland

Canon, S120, Recsea CWC-S120, 5.2-26.0 mm, iso 160, f/2, 200, 2 x Light&Motion GoBe 850wide

Judges notes:

What a fantastic scene with an octopus sheltering in colourful deadman's fingers. Very well lit by James.

Alex Mustard





11) British Waters Compact

HIGHLY COMMENDED

‘Smile please!’

Martin Edser (UK)

The waters around the Isle of Man are a fantastic place to dive, see and photograph British marine life and The Burroo is no exception with its gullies full of diversity. I came across this dogfish on a morning dive and I could see from the way it was resting in the features of the gulley I had an opportunity to place my camera slightly under the front of the head to get all the head features framed. The challenge was to get close enough without disturbing the fish. Slow movements, patience and luck paid off, but try as I might I could not get the subject to smile!

Burroo, Isle of Man

Canon, G7x mark 2, Nauticam NA - G7xII, Fantasea Big Eye Lens M67 Mk2, iso 200, f/6.3, 1/100, 2 x Inon s2000

Judges notes:

It's great to see a fairly common subject captured from a fresh angle. Lighting has separated and isolated it from a potentially distracting background.

Peter Rowlands



11) British Waters Compact

HIGHLY COMMENDED

‘Octopus vulgaris ‘

Guy Mitchell (UK)

We headed over to Brixham in the hope of spotting an Octopus as it's a species that's avoided me in the UK . There had been lots of reports of recent sightings by local dive guru Baz Drysdale so we were optimistic . The dive turned out to be a classic with three different octopus among many other species . Having not encountered one before I was surprised at how it seemed unaffected by our presence and willingly seemed to pose for photographs . This shot was one of about 30 I took of them that night and it seems to capture the octopus regarding me and my camera with great interest . Taking pictures underwater in the dark is always difficult but it does help if the subject is cooperative and I was really happy with the way this one came out .

Breakwater Beach - Brixham, England

Sony, DSC-RX100, Recsea WHS-RX100, standard, iso 200, f/8, 1/160, Sea & Sea YS-D1

Judges notes:

A great shot of these enigmatic creatures which are being seen more and more on the SW coast of the UK. Sometimes, less is more.

Peter Rowlands



11) British Waters Compact

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Squat Lobster '

Paula Bailey (UK)

We dive Eyemouth every year because there is such a great range of life. Many subjects suit a compact user there, like the wolf fish and lobster but I was looking for something else on this trip, On this particular dive there were squat lobsters everywhere and this one was a little bit braver and a little more accessible than many of them . I love their bright colours and beady eyes!

Eymouth , UK

Canon, S100, Fx, On board at 17mm, iso 640, F/8.0, 1/60, Inon s2000

Judges notes:

A striking portrait, particular because Paula has framed the squat lobster against the black of its burrow.

Alex Mustard



11) British Waters Compact

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Out of the Darkness'

Guy Mitchell (UK)

We headed over to Brixham as there had been a lot of octopus sightings at the time and we were lucky enough to come across three on this particular dive , which was amazing . We also encountered two of my favourite John Dory's amongst other species so it ended up turning into a dive which won't be forgotten easily . I'm still trying for a front-on shot for this species but haven't found one willing to play ball... yet ! Have seen over half a dozen of these over the year which is very promising and showing that the Marine Conservation Zones are clearly having an effect .

Breakwater Beach - Brixham , England

Sony, RX100, Recsea, Standard, iso 200, f/8, 1/160, Sea & Sea YS-D1

Judges notes:

This shot shows how effective a compact camera with a single strobe can be. A larger more obtrusive twin strobe set up would more than likely have resulted in a tail shot.

Peter Rowlands

11) British Waters Compact

COMMENDED

'Peek-a-boo!'

Martin Edser (UK)

It's always fun to dive with and photograph seals but this encounter was extra special. I had not seen any on this dive probably because it was late afternoon and they were enjoying a sensible nap on shore. I was beginning to lose hope when out of nowhere a head popped up out of the kelp and gave me an inquisitive stare. It disappeared again as quickly as it appeared only for the head to pop up again a few moments later in what I can only describe as a game of 'Peek-a boo!' The water was murky and flash was not really an option, but we were shallow and it was a bright afternoon so anticipating where the head was likely to appear and using a wide aperture and as fast shutter speed as I could, allowed me to capture this memorable experience and the face of my playmate.

The Puddle, Isle of Man

Canon, G7x mark 2, Nauticam NA-G7XII,
Fanatsea Big Eye Lens M67 Mk2, iso ISO
20, f/5.6, 1/125, Natural

Judges notes:

What an adorable pose. Need I say more!

Alex Mustard





11) British Waters Compact

COMMENDED

'The Plaice to be'

Guy Mitchell (UK)

I came across this beautiful Plaice whilst diving in the seagrass beds off Beacon Cove in Torquay . We had been looking for cuttlefish which had been scarce on this site compared to previous years so were happy to come across this beautiful specimen lying peacefully amongst the grass . I took a few shots trying not to disturb it too much and luckily enough was able to get a good front-on shot and leave without it even moving . Beacon Cove is a fairly shallow dive so more natural light is available making it ideal for underwater photography . It's great to see more and more life starting to appear in these seagrass beds , including quite a few reported sightings of Seahorses.

Beacon Cove, Devon

Sony, RX100, Recsea, Standard, iso 125,
f/7.1, 1/160, Sea & Sea YS-D1

Judges notes:

The criss cross seagrass fronds lift this shot from an ordinary portrait without distracting from the subject whose eyes hold centre court.

Peter Rowlands



11) British Waters Compact

COMMENDED

'Pike Patrol'

Mark Launchbury (UK)

This image was taken at my local dive site. The pike are a regular sighting, but a very unpredictable fish. Often found hovering amongst the weeds motionless, stalking their prey or hanging around inside the wreck attractions such as an aircraft cockpit, or decaying vehicles. On many occasions you can spot them in the distance cruising along effortlessly but as you try to approach they waft their fins and dart away. On this occasion I remained still and observed this fish from a distance and luckily enough the pike slowly swam right towards me enabling me to capture a great close up shot of this freshwater predator.

Dosthill Quarry, Tamworth

Canon, S120, Canon, Inon H100 wide angle wet lens, iso 200, 3.5, 1/80, Inon S2000 single strobe

Judges notes:

There is much going on in this image which goes along way in order to keep the eye of the viewer within the picture frame. The vertical line of the pike is set off with the reeds beside it and the eye is drawn to the surface texture at top left. To top it all, there is just enough space for the pike to swim into. Very well balanced and thought out with much depth.

Martin Edge

MANTA

SECRET LIFE OF DEVIL RAYS

GUY STEVENS • THOMAS P. PESCHAK

Foreword by Sir Richard Branson

Underwater photography Book of the Year 2018

WINNER

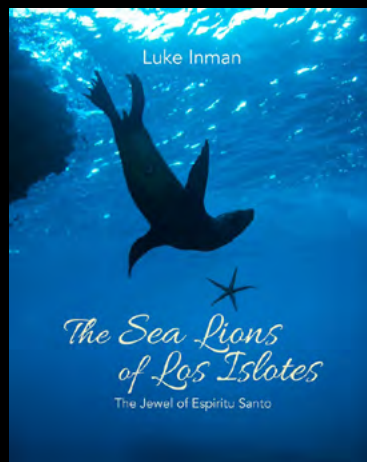
Manta - Secret life of Devil rays

by Guy Stevens & Thomas P. Peschak

www.mantabook.com

A beautiful and insightful portrait of one of the ocean's most iconic animals. The imagery reveals the majesty and the conservation issues associated with the manta. A fabulous achievement."

Alex Mustard



RUNNER UP

The Sea Lions of Los Islotes

by Luke Inman

www.lukeinman.com/book.html

A fantastic insight into one of the wonders of the underwater world.

Alex Mustard

1. Wide Angle

WINNER Greg Lecoeur (France)

Runner Up - Fan Ping (China)

Third - Brook Peterson (USA)

HIGHLY COMMENDED Tobias Friedrich

(Germany), Konstantin Killer (Germany), Herbert

Meyrl (Germany), Pekka Tuuri (Finland)

COMMENDED Renee Capozzola (USA) Tom St

George (Mexico), Wendy Timmermans (Netherlands)

2. Macro

WINNER Shane Gross (Canada)

Runner Up - Songda Cai (China)

Third - Kenji Cheow (Malaysia)

HIGHLY COMMENDED Davide Lopresti (Italy),

Tianhong Wang (China), Yung sen wu (Taiwan)

Giacomo Marchione (Italy)

COMMENDED Yatwai So (Hong Kong), Yung Sen

Wu (Taiwan), Jinggong Zhang (China)

3. Wrecks

WINNER Tobias Friedrich (Germany)

Runner Up - Gianni Pecchiar (Italy)

Third - Tobias Friedrich (Germany)

HIGHLY COMMENDED Pekka Tuuri (Finland),

Pekka Tuuri (Finland), Pekka Tuuri (Finland),

Susannah H. Snowden-Smith (Cayman Islands)

COMMENDED Marcus Blatchford (UK), Kieran

Hatton (UK), Anders Nyberg (Sweden)

4. Behaviour

WINNER Filippo Borghi (Italy)

Runner Up - Scott Tuason (Philippines)

Third - Greg Lecoeur (France)

HIGHLY COMMENDED Shane Gross (Canada),

Filippo Borghi (Italy), Christopher Burville (Bermuda),

Renee Capozzola (USA)

COMMENDED Anders Nyberg (Sweden), Adriano

Morettin (Italy), Mika Saareila (Finland)

Underwater Photographer of the Year 2018

Tobias Friedrich (Germany)

British Underwater Photographer of the Year 2018

Grant Thomas (UK)

Up and Coming Underwater Photographer of the Year 2018

Man Bd (Malaysia)

Most Promising British Underwater Photographer of the Year 2018

Tony Stephenson (UK)

5. Portrait

WINNER Tanya Houppermans (USA)

Runner Up - Mike Korostev (Russia)

Third Rodney Bursiel (USA)

HIGHLY COMMENDED Matt Curnock (Australia),

Nicholas More (UK), Roebt Marc Lehmann

(Germany), Greg Lecoeur (France)

COMMENDED Andre Musgrove (Bahamas), Greg

Lecoeur (France), Davide Lopresti (Italy)

6. Black & White

WINNER Borut Furlan (Slovenia)

Runner Up - Sylvie Ayer (Switzerland)

Third - Santosh Shanmuga (USA)

HIGHLY COMMENDED Herbert Meyrl (Germany),

Miguel Pereira (Portugal), Rodney Bursiel (USA),

Filippo Borghi (Italy)

COMMENDED Anders Nyberg (Sweden), Wendy

Timmermans (Netherlands), Sylvie Ayer (Switzerland)

7. Compact

WINNER Simone Matucci (New Zealand)

Runner Up - Jack BERTHOMIER (New Caledonia)

Third - Ipah Uid (Malaysia)

HIGHLY COMMENDED Jack BERTHOMIER (New

Caledonia), Stephen Holinski (Canada), Ipah Uid

(Malaysia), Stephen Holinski (Canada)

COMMENDED Sarah Vasend (USA), Stefano Cerbai

(Italy), Ali Shujau (Maldives)

8. Up and Coming

WINNER Man Bd (Malaysia)

Runner Up - Jacob Degee (Poland)

Third - Austin Ferguson (USA)

HIGHLY COMMENDED Sylvie Ayer (Switzerland),

Hannah Nies (Germany), Brian Eckstein (USA),

Giacomo Marchione (Italy)

COMMENDED Rupert Cornelius (Mozambique),

Romain Barats (France), Clarissa Ace (Indonesia)

9. British Waters Wide Angle

WINNER Grant Thomas (UK)

Runner Up - Nicholas More (UK)

Third - Greg Lecoeur (France)

HIGHLY COMMENDED Spencer Burrows (UK),

Richard Shucksmith (UK), Tony Stephenson (UK),

Paul Kay (UK)

COMMENDED Marcus Blatchford (UK), Will Clark

(UK), Trevor Rees (UK)

10. British Waters Macro

WINNER Henley Spiers (UK)

Runner Up - Cathy Lewis (UK)

Third - Kirsty Andrews (UK)

HIGHLY COMMENDED Lucy Kay (UK), Trevor

Rees (UK), Paul Kay (UK), Rick Ayrton (UK)

COMMENDED Cathy Lewis (UK), Trevor Rees (UK),

Cathy Lewis (UK)

11. British Waters Compact

WINNER Vicky Paynter (UK)

Runner Up - Ian Wade (UK)

Third - James Lynott (UK)

HIGHLY COMMENDED Martin Edser (UK), Guy

Mitchell (UK), Paula Bailey (UK), Guy Mitchell (UK)

COMMENDED Martin Edser (UK), Guy Mitchell

(UK), Mark Launchbury (UK)

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.

Prize allocation for 2018:

- The Underwater Photographer of the Year will receive the top prize, a \$5000 USD voucher from Nauticam.
- The two Compact Camera categories (Compact and British Waters Compact) have their own dedicated prize-pools and winning images will not accrue 'points' towards the overall prizes.
- All other prizes will be given on a 'points-make-prizes' basis, with each photographer only receiving one prize (with the exception of those awarded in the Compact Categories, see above).
- Please note: physical prizes may incur import duty. Vouchers have no cash value and cannot be exchanged for cash.
- Note full terms and conditions of each prize is not listed here.

UPY Prize List 2018

Underwater Photographer of the Year:

Tobias Freidrich

\$5000 USD voucher from Nauticam, redeemable against Nauticam products at any of their dealers worldwide.

www.nauticam.com

Compact category prizes:

Winner: – Simone Matucci

\$500 USD Backscatter voucher

www.backscatter.com

Runner Up: Jack Berthomier

£200 GBP Scuba Travel voucher &

100 Issue back catalogue of UwP magazine.

www.scubatravel.com

www.uwpmag.com

3rd: Ipah UiD

SmugMug 1 Year Portfolio Account

100 Issue back catalogue of UwP magazine.

www.smugmug.com

www.uwpmag.com

British Waters Compact category prizes:

Winner: Vicky Paynter

£250 voucher Ocean Leisure Cameras.

www.oceanleisurecameras.com

Runner Up: Ian Wade

£100 GBP Scuba Travel voucher &

100 Issue back catalogue of UwP magazine.

www.scubatravel.com

www.uwpmag.com

3rd: James Lynott

SmugMug 1 Year Portfolio Account

100 Issue back catalogue of UwP magazine.

www.smugmug.com

www.uwpmag.com

Prize Pool – Points Make Prizes (in sponsor alphabetical order)

Greg Lecoeur

Agulhas House, South Africa

7 nights full board + diving for 2 people (including 8 reef/wreck dives and 2 baited shark dives). Nitrox included.

www.agulhashouse.com

Pekka Tuuri

Aiyanar Resort, Anilao, Philippines.

7 Day 6 Night Package with 3 Dives a day for 5 Days. Single occupancy Casita accommodation. 5 days diving, 3 dives per day. FREE NITROX. Full Board Meals.

www.aiyanar.com

Songda Cai

Atmosphere Resort, Dauin, Philippines. 6 night stay for one person including 10 day dives.

Including Nitrox, breakfast and airport transfers.

www.atmosphereresorts.com

Gianni Pecchiar

Aqualung Newly launched Outlaw BCD with weight pockets

www.aqualung.com

Tanya Houppermans

Backscatter USD \$500 voucher to be used at Backscatter Underwater Photography

www.backscatter.com

Nick More

Blue O Two – 1000 GBP Voucher to be used against any holiday with Blue O Two (UK).

www.blueotwo.com

Shane Gross

Crystal Blue Resort –

Package: 7 Night, 6 days of 3 tank dives. 3 meals a day, land transfer. Valid until Feb 2019.

www.divecbr.com

Kenji Cheow
Fisheye USD \$600 Voucher for fisheye products
www.fisheye-jp.com

TBA
Focus Visuals
Space on Lightroom Course In UK. Valid 1 year
www.focusvisuals.com

Mike Korostelyov
Fourth Element. New Thermocline suit +
Thermocline accessories + Expedition Luggage.
www.fourthelement.com

Santosh Shanmuga
Fourth Element €100 Life Shop voucher.
www.fourthelement.com

Paul Kay
Fourth Element £50 Life Shop voucher for.
www.fourthelement.com

Henley Spiers
Magic Charters – 2 days of whole boat Blue Shark
photography charter from Plymouth (UK).
www.magic-charters.co.uk

Jacob Degee, Lucy Kay & Richard Shucksmith
Magic Filters - €100, £75 & £50 GBP voucher for
Magic Filters online store
www.magic-filters.com

Grant Thomas
Master Liveaboards – \$1750 USD voucher to be used
against any Master Liveaboard holiday worldwide.
www.masterliveaboards.com

Kirsty Andrews
MV Halton (UK Liveaboard) – 2 spaces for Scapa
Flow charter. Redeemable within 18 months.
www.mvhalton.co.uk

Davide Lopresti
NAD Lembeh Resort, Indonesia – USD \$500
Voucher against stay at NAD Lembeh Resort.
www.nad-lembeh.com

Man Bd
NAD Lembeh Resort, Indonesia - USD \$250
Voucher against stay at NAD Lembeh Resort.
www.nad-lembeh.com

Miguel Pereira
NAD Lembeh Resort, Indonesia USD \$250 Voucher
against stay at NAD Lembeh Resort.
www.nad-lembeh.com

Borut Forlan
Red Sea Diving Safari – Package: 7 nights
accommodation in a deluxe chalet for one person
at Marsa Shagra, Marsa Nakari or Wadi Lahami.
5 days diving. Transfers from Marsa Alam airport.
For one person, valid for 12 months
www.redsea-divingsafari.com

Filipo Borghi
Sea Safari Cruises – 1 trip, 1 person. Any
destination. Valid for 1 year.
www.seasafaricruises.com

Cathy Lewis
Scuba Travel 1 x GBP £750 Voucher against any
holiday with Scuba Travel (UK).
www.scubatravel.com

Brook Peterson
Scuba Travel 1 x GBP £500 Voucher against any
holiday with Scuba Travel (UK).
www.scubatravel.com

Spencer Burrows
Scuba Travel 1 x GBP £200 Voucher against any
holiday with Scuba Travel (UK).
www.scubatravel.com

Tba
Scuba Travel 1 x GBP £100 Voucher against any
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www.scubatravel.com

Scott Tuason
Siladen Resort & Spa, Indonesia. Scott Tuason
Package 5 Nights, 10 Air dives for 1 person.
www.siladen.com

Trevor Rees
Sindbad Dive Club Aqaba, Jordan. 5 Days Dive
package for 2 persons. Nitrox included. Hotel not
included. Lunch, soft drink and hot drinks on our
facilities (Berenice Beach Club)
www.sindbadjo.com/home.aspx

Tba
Sindbad Dive Club Aqaba, Jordan
3 Days Dive package for 2 persons. Nitrox included.
Hotel not included.
Lunch, soft drink and hot drinks on our facilities
(Berenice Beach Club)
www.sindbadjo.com/home.aspx

Sylvie Ayer
Siren Fleet – €1500 Euro voucher to be used against
any charter with Siren Fleet worldwide.
www.sirenfleet.com

Tba
SmugMug
1 Year Portfolio Account.
www.smugmug.com

Herbert Meyrl
SUPE V6K Pro 12000 Lumen Underwater Light
www.scubalamp.com

Rodney Bursiel
Suunto EON Core Dive Computer.
www.suunto.com

Fan Ping
Thresher Shark Divers. 10 Dive package for 1
person.
www.thresherdivers.com

Wide Angle

Taner Atilgan. Gabriel Barathieu. Filippo Borghi. Tom Burd. Renee Capozzola. Pedro Carrillo. Andrea Falcomata'. Rafa Fernandez. Pietro Formis. Tobias Friedrich. Sascha Fromm. Massimo Giorgetta. Tanya Houppermans. Konstantin Killer. Greg Lecoeur. Adam Martin. Herbert Meyrl. Wai Hoe Mok. Nicholas More. Adriano Morettin. Cédric Péneau. Brook Peterson. Fan Ping. David Robinson. J Gregory Sherman. Tom St George. Grant Thomas. Wendy Timmermans. Pekka Tuuri. Michael Weberberger. Lynn Wu.

Macro

Gabriel Barathieu. Songda Cai. Pedro Carrillo. Kenji Cheow. Dennis Corpuz. Dragos Dumitrescu. Marco Gargiulo. Shane Gross. Abdul Rahman Jamaludin. Eunjong Kim. Lilian Koh. Wayne Lai. Frederique Legrand. Davide Lopresti. Giacomo Marchione. Georg Nies. Miguel Pereira. Mika Saareila. J Gregory Sherman. Yatwai So. Johan Sundelin. Peet J Van Eeden. Matteo Visconti. Tianhong Wang. Yung Sen Wu. Jinggong Zhang.

Wrecks

Taner Atilgan. Guillaume Bihet. Marcus Blatchford. Renee Capozzola. Pietro Cremone. Tobias Friedrich. Torbjörn Gylleus. Kieran Hatton. Yenyi Lee. Roebert Marc Lehmann. Davide Lombroso. Anders Nyberg. Gianni Pecchiar. Nuno Rodrigues. Susannah H. Snowden-Smith. Csaba Tokolyi. Pekka Tuuri. Mario Vitalini.

FINALISTS

Behaviour

Romain Barats. Filippo Borghi. Christopher Burville. Renee Capozzola. Marc Casanovas Felix. Claudio Ceresi. Liang Fu. Tammy Gibbs. Shane Gross. Edwar Herreno. Salvatore Ianniello. Eunjong Kim. Noam Kortler. Simon Lambert. Greg Lecoeur. Roebert Marc Lehmann. Peter Mcgee. Adriano Morettin. Anatoli Myshlyaev. Anders Nyberg. Mika Saareila. Yatwai So. Scott Tuason.>

Portrait

Robert Bailey. Rodney Bursiel. Renee Capozzola. Pedro Carrillo. Will Clark. Dennis Corpuz. Matt Curnock. Rafa Fernandez. Pietro Formis. Tobias Friedrich. Marco Gargiulo. Shane Gross. Kaido Haagen. Tanya Houppermans. Mike Korostelev. Steven Kovacs. Wayne Lai. Greg Lecoeur. Frederique Legrand. Roebert Marc Lehmann. Davide Lopresti. Nicholas More. Adriano Morettin. André Musgrove. Leena Roy. Mika Saareila. Santosh Shanmuga. Dougie Souness. Pekka Tuuri. Alex Tyrrell. Allison Vitsky. Ron Watkins. Yung Sen Wu.

Black & White

Sylvie Ayer. Sylvie Ayer. Romain Barats. Athila Bertoncini. Filippo Borghi. Rodney Bursiel. Marc Casanovas Felix. Will Clark. Pietro Cremone. Edoardo Errani. Borut Furlan. Martyn Guess. Ferenc Lorincz Ifj.. Herbert Meyrl. Wai Hoe Mok. Georg Nies. Anders Nyberg. Miguel Pereira. Sergey Shanin. Santosh Shanmuga. J Gregory Sherman. Wendy Timmermans. Nur Tucker. Mario Vitalini.

Compact

Jon Anderson. Andy Bates. Jack Berthomier. Stefano Cerbai. Kenji Cheow. Dennis Corpuz. Andrea Falcomata'. Sandra Haessler. Stephen Holinski. Abdul Rahman Jamaludin. Andrew Leighton. Julio Martínez . Simone Matucci. Ali Shujau. Ipah Uid. Sarah Vasend.

Up And Coming

Clarissa Ace. Sylvie Ayer. Romain Barats. Scott Bauer. Florence Christien. Rupert Cornelius. Jacob Degee. Brian Eckstein. Austin Ferguson. Jo Horrocks. Abdul Rahman Jamaludin. Lee Mansfield. Giacomo Marchione. Hannah Nies. Alison Pettitt. Yun Thing. George Touliatos. Tom Van Hout.

British Waters Wide Angle

Marcus Blatchford. Spencer Burrows . Will Clark. Steve Jones. Paul Kay. Mark Launchbury . Greg Lecoeur. Cathy Lewis. Gillian Marsh. Nicholas More. David Morgan. Dave Peake. Paul Pettitt. Alison Pettitt. Trevor Rees. Richard Shucksmith. Henley Spiers. Tony Stephenson. Grant Thomas.

British Waters Macro

Kirsty Andrews. Rick Ayrton. Robert Bailey. Spencer Burrows . Jason Gregory. Terry Griffiths. Paul Kay. Lucy Kay. Cathy Lewis. Paul Pettitt. Trevor Rees. Henley Spiers. Laura Storm. Simon Temple. Mark Thomas. Elaine White.

British Waters Compact

Paula Bailey. Andy Bates. Martin Edser. Lewis Jefferies. Mark Launchbury . Kerry Lewis. James Lynott. Guy Mitchell. Vicky Paynter. Tony Reed. Ian Wade.

With thanks to the media outlets who showcased
our 2017 winners, including:

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CHANNEL **The Telegraph**

Daily Mail **BBC** **CNN** **la Repubblica** **NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC TRAVELER**

SRF **YAHOO!** **actuphoto** **GEO** **The Weather Channel**

ILTA-SANOMAT **DAILY EXPRESS** **The SUNDAY POST** **NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC** **Irish Examiner**



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