



1) Wide Angle

HIGHLY COMMENDED
'Under cover of night'
Egor Nikiforov (Russia)

The underwater life of the Northern seas is very diverse. Many of the organisms living here are much larger and brighter than their southern counterparts. But if life itself in the seas is well studied, the organisms living on the boundary between the sea and land, we rarely notice. But on the littoral and in the littoral baths you can find many interesting organisms that deserve our attention. One of these organisms in front of you-a small almost transparent actinium size of only a few centimeters inhabits the littoral and withstands the monstrous force of the surf wave and strong hypothermia during low tide. The photo is made by a single frame. To shoot this project took a month of work and a lot of luck.

Kola Peninsula, littoral baths of the Barents Sea, Russia

Canon, 5D Mark II, Ikelite 6871.02, Sigma EX 15/2,8 DG Fisheye, iso 2500, f/2,8-22, 30 s, Ikelite DS51

Judges notes:

Split levels are always eye-catching and do well in competitions, but not many incorporate a magical aurora. A real winner and a fantastic achievement.

Alex Mustard

UwP's Top Ten from UPY 2019

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1) Wide Angle

HIGHLY COMMENDED 'Princess of the Underworld' Thomas Heckmann (Germany)

Back in Mexico in 2018, we did a scuba dive in the cenote Tajma-Ha. During this dive, I found this amazing place and the idea for a model shot was born. My idea was "A model snooted by nature" with a touch of external light for the cave. All credit to the beautiful model Sonja and the safety diver. These two did a fantastic job and made this shot possible. Don't try this without a local guide and an experienced safety diver with "full cave certification"...

Cenote Taj Mahal (or Tajma Ha), Mexico

Nikon, D800E, Seacam Silver D800, AF-S FISHEYE-NIKKOR 8-15 mm /1: 3,5-4,5 E ED , iso 800, f/6,3, 1/30, 2 X Subtronic pro 160 with dome diffusers on 1/16

Judges notes:

This extraordinary image resulted from the right idea, the right time, the right model and the right team. It has a mesmerisingly haunting quality.

Peter Rowlands



1) Wide Angle

HIGHLY COMMENDED
'Intense'
Yung-sen Wu (Taiwan)

The Adams River is a tributary to the Thompson and Fraser Rivers in British Columbia, Canada. Beginning in the Monashee Mountains to the north, the Upper Adams River flows mainly southward and eventually reaches Adams Lake. The Lower Adams River begins at the southern end of the lake and flows into the extreme western end of Shuswap Lake. The river is one of the most important sockeye salmon breeding areas in North America.

Adams River, Canada

SONY , A7RIII, Seacam silver Sony A7r mark III, SONY FE 12-24mm F4 G, iso 200, 16, 1/160, SEACAM SEAFLASH 150 DIGITAL

Judges notes:

I see and judge many images of the sockeye salmon but this is one of the best. The alignment of the two salmon not to mention the composition within the frame. The surgy peak of the action is in perfect symmetry with the window which provides the viewer with topside influences of the trees against a vivid blue sky. There is so much image depth in this example.

Martin Edge



2) Macro

THIRD 'Tiger Wave' Henley Spiers (Philippines)

Cardinalfish are famous mouth-brooders, with the male responsible for guarding the eggs until they are ready to hatch. I have long been fascinated by this behaviour and spent three dives with this particular individual, slowly earning sufficient trust to allow me to capture this image in close confines. Inspired by Davide Lopresti's work, and wishing to capture an artistic interpretation of this subject, I used a snooted strobe and slow shutter speed, combined with movement of the camera to get this effect. Putting the technical theory into practice was tricky, as the light was within inches of the subject and the fish was free to swim away whenever he felt uncomfortable. With a lot of patience and perseverance, the encounter is best remembered with this frame.

Anilao, Philippines

Nikon, D850, Nauticam NA D850, Nikon 60mm, iso 200, f/22, 1/3, Inon Z330 with Retra LSD

Judges notes:

I was spellbound by this image and Henley's open homage and detailed explanation says to me that he is a genuine talent with a refreshingly open approach.

Peter Rowlands



3) Wrecks

HIGHLY COMMENDED 'Evening Stroll with Friends' Ken Kiefer (United States)

This shot took place on a trip to Stuart Cove's in Nassau, Bahamas. It was my first opportunity to shoot a model at depth with diver supplied air. The amount of teamwork that it takes for something like this is astounding. From communication and timing, to the complete coordination of safety divers and positioning it's important to have a group of experienced divers on the same page. It was a bit of a stormy day and the backdrop of the shipwreck and sharks just had a Pirates of the Caribbean moody vibe that we were able to capture.

Ray of Hope wreck at Stuart Cove's
Nassau, Bahamas

Canon, 5DsR, Ikelite, 8-15mm fisheye at
15mm, iso 160, f/7.1, 1/125, pair of Ikelite
ds161

Judges notes:

Look at all ten winning images in this category and they are all significantly different. This shot just had to be there because it was unique.

Peter Rowlands



4) Behaviour

HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Female pilot whale with dead calf'
Eduardo Acevedo (Spain)

Female pilot whale protecting her dead calf for days, unique behavior in the animal world.

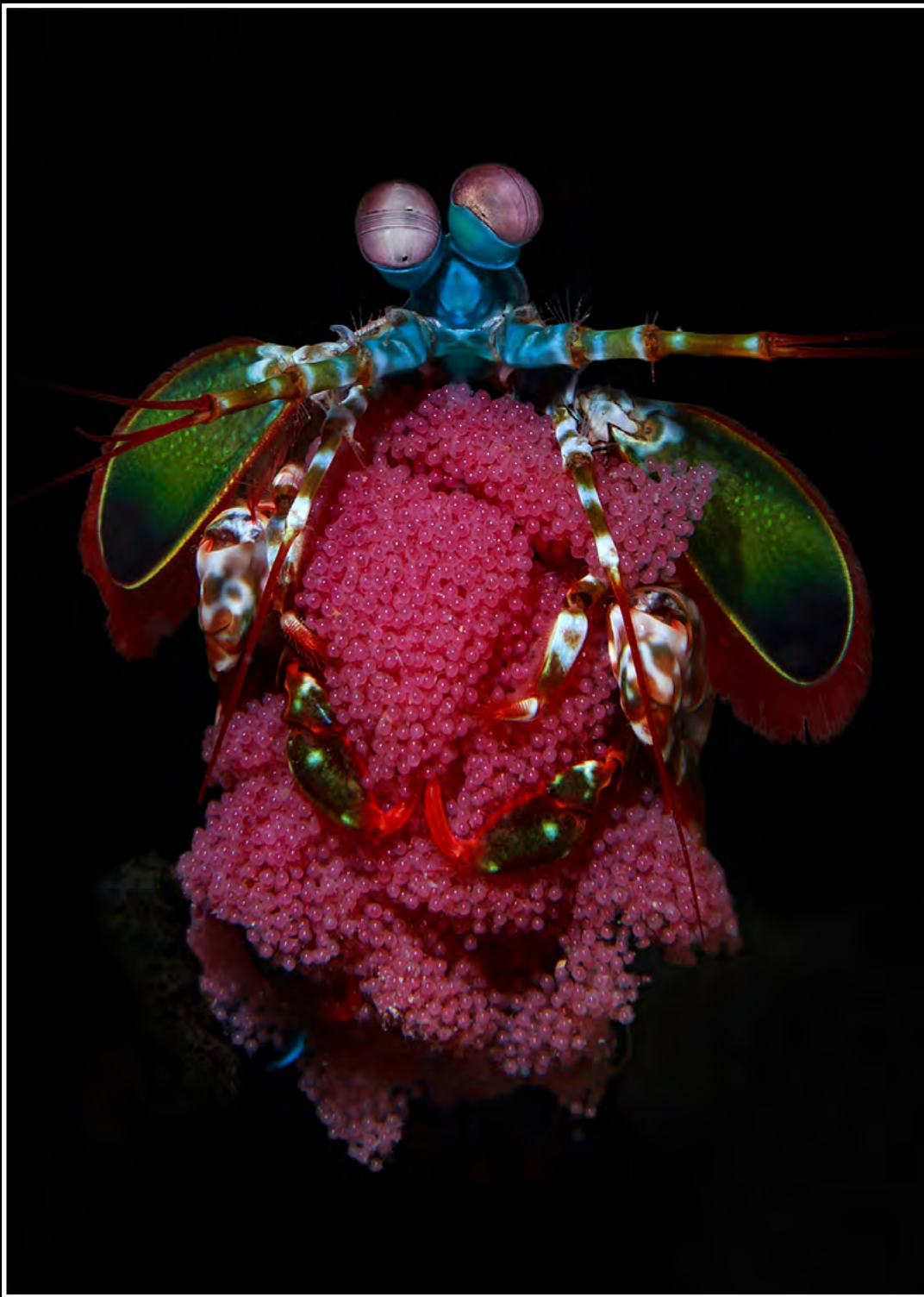
Los Gigantes, Tenerife., Tenerife, Canary Island, Spain.

Canon, 5D MK IV, Seacam., 15mm, iso 200, F/9, 1/125, No light used.

Judges notes:

*Such a delicate image yet so full of emotion.
There are times when there are no more words
needed.*

Peter Rowlands



8) Up & Coming

COMMENDED

'Mother'

Igor Bogachenko (Ukraine)

My dream has come true. For a long time I wanted to have a photo of a praying mantis with caviar in the archive of my photo shoots. For a long time, watching the behavior of this crustacean, I managed to wait for the moment when the praying mantis female became interested in its reflection in the lens glass and climbed out of its full-length refuge. And this was my only chance to make this shot.

Lembeh strait, Indonesia

Canon, Canon EOS 70D, Nauticam NA-70D , Canon EF 100mm f/2.8L Macro IS USM , iso 200, f/20, 1/125, Sea & Sea YS-D1

Judges notes:

As a subject we have seen our fair share of these colourful characters but this one shone through and the eggs almost look as if they have been individually lit!

Peter Rowlands



9) British Waters Wide Angle

RUNNER UP

‘Grass snake swimming along a garden pond’

Jack Perks (UK)

I’m always on the look out for unusual freshwater subjects and grass snakes are a species I’ve been after for years. I was told about a pond used for natural swimming and the odd grass snake that hangs around the lilly pads for frogs. I put my Hammond drysuit on and got into the water and could see one slithering along the surface. Slowly making my way towards it with my head only just poking above I got the spilt shot. Many people don’t realise how aquatic grass snakes are and often spend time by the water, it was a picture I was chuffed to get!

Nottinghamshire, United Kingdom

Nikon, D500, Ikelite , Tokina 10-17mm, iso 800, f10, 1/640, None

Judges notes:

Superb image with a perfect line across the split. Good exposure both above and below the water line and such an ideal subject to cap it all off. Excellent work.

Martin Edge



9) British Waters Wide Angle

COMMENDED

The Loch Garden'

Mark Kirkland (UK)

Living just an hour away from Loch Long I made a last minute decision to go for an evening snorkel when I saw the beautiful summer light developing as I drove home from work. UK split shots are a rarity yet I see them as the pinnacle of connecting non-divers to the underwater world.

Split shot ideas have been infiltrating my dreams for months so I got in the water specifically to experiment - not easy with a 4 inch dome port. I eventually settled on an embankment which offered a line dropping from the trees, to the seaweed and into the dark depths of the Loch. Balancing the strobe lighting with the developing sunset created an image which I hope caught the atmosphere of that night. It's fuelled my determination to turn other split shot ideas into reality.

Loch Long, Scotland

Olympus , EPL-5, PT-EP10, Panasonic
Lumix 8mm Fisheye, iso 200, f14, 1/40, 2x
Sea&Sea YS-110a

Judges notes:

This is a subtle image with light and detail that are a delight to explore. The sunset, trees and underwater scene combine to create a wonderful feeling of the place. We particularly like how the composition allows the line of the shore to be continued underwater by the seaweeds.

Alex Mustard



10) British Waters Macro

THIRD

‘Proud Parent’

Mark Kirkland (UK)

With a short window of just a few weeks in early spring to catch Common Frogs spawning, I was disheartened to spend many an evening staring at empty ponds, often returning the following evening to waters full of frogspawn but without a frog in sight. Using research papers to identify potential sites, I eventually came across Malls Mire; a small area of Wetland in Glasgow. Situated between a housing estate, a supermarket and an industrial estate it is an unlikely haven for wildlife. I spent six glorious hours lying in the mud photographing huge numbers of increasingly curious frogs. This photograph, one of the last that day, was taken as the early evening sun was setting behind the trees. A day well spent.

Malls Mire, Glasgow, Scotland

Olympus , EPL-5, Olympus PT-EP10,
Olympus 14-41mm , iso 200, f14, 1/80, 2x Sea
and Sea YS-110a

Judges notes:

Character, behaviour and technique all wrapped up in one striking image. We love images like this, which show the very different kinds of pictures talented photographers can produce in the UK with an underwater camera. Frogs are much more cautious than toads and are therefore much less frequently photographed.

Alex Mustard

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