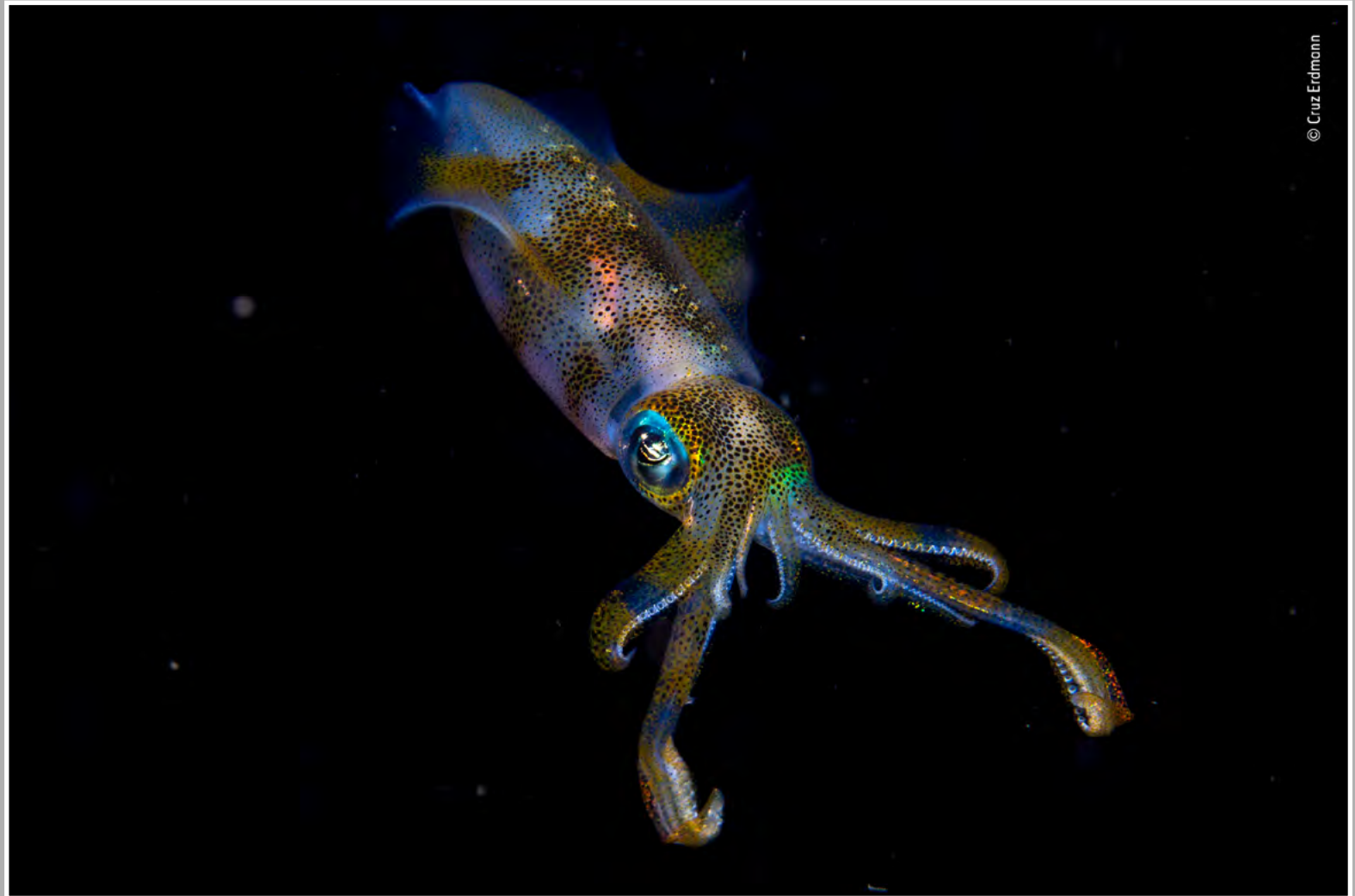


Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2019

Young Wildlife
Photographer of the Year
Grand title winner:
Night Glow
by Cruz Erdmann,
New Zealand

Cruz was on a night dive with his dad when he saw a pair of bigfin reef squid in the shallow water. One swam off but Cruz quickly adjusted his camera and strobe settings, knowing that the opportunity was too good to miss. He shot four frames of the remaining squid before it too disappeared into the inky blackness.

Bigfin reef squid are masters of camouflage, changing their body colour and pattern using their reflective and pigmented skin cells. They also alter their appearance to help them communicate. During courtship, males and females display complex patterns to indicate their willingness to mate.



*Canon EOS 5D Mark III + 100mm
f2.8 lens; 1/125 sec at f29; ISO 200;
Ikelite DS161 strobe; Aquatica 5D Mk
II Pro housing*

<https://www.nhm.ac.uk/visit/exhibitions/wildlife-photographer-of-the-year.html>

Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2019

Behaviour: Amphibians and
Reptiles:

Winner

Pondworld

by Manuel Plaickner, Italy

Every spring for more than a decade, Manuel followed the mass migration of common frogs. He took this image by immersing himself and his camera in a large pond where hundreds of frogs had gathered. There he waited until the moment arrived for the picture he had in mind – lingering frogs, harmonious colours, soft, natural light and dreamy reflections.

Rising spring temperatures bring common frogs out of their winter shelters. They head straight to water to breed, often returning to where they were spawned. Though widespread across Europe, their numbers are thought to be declining due to habitat degradation from pollution and drainage of breeding sites.

*Canon EOS 5D Mark II + 17–40mm
f4 lens at 20mm; 1/640 sec at f8 (+0.7
e/v); ISO 800; Seacam housing*



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Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2019

Under Water:
Winner

The garden of eels
by David Doubilet

The colony of garden eels was one of the largest David Doubilet had ever seen, at least two thirds the size of a football field, stretching down a steep sandy slope off Dauin, in the Philippines – a cornerstone of the famous Coral Triangle.

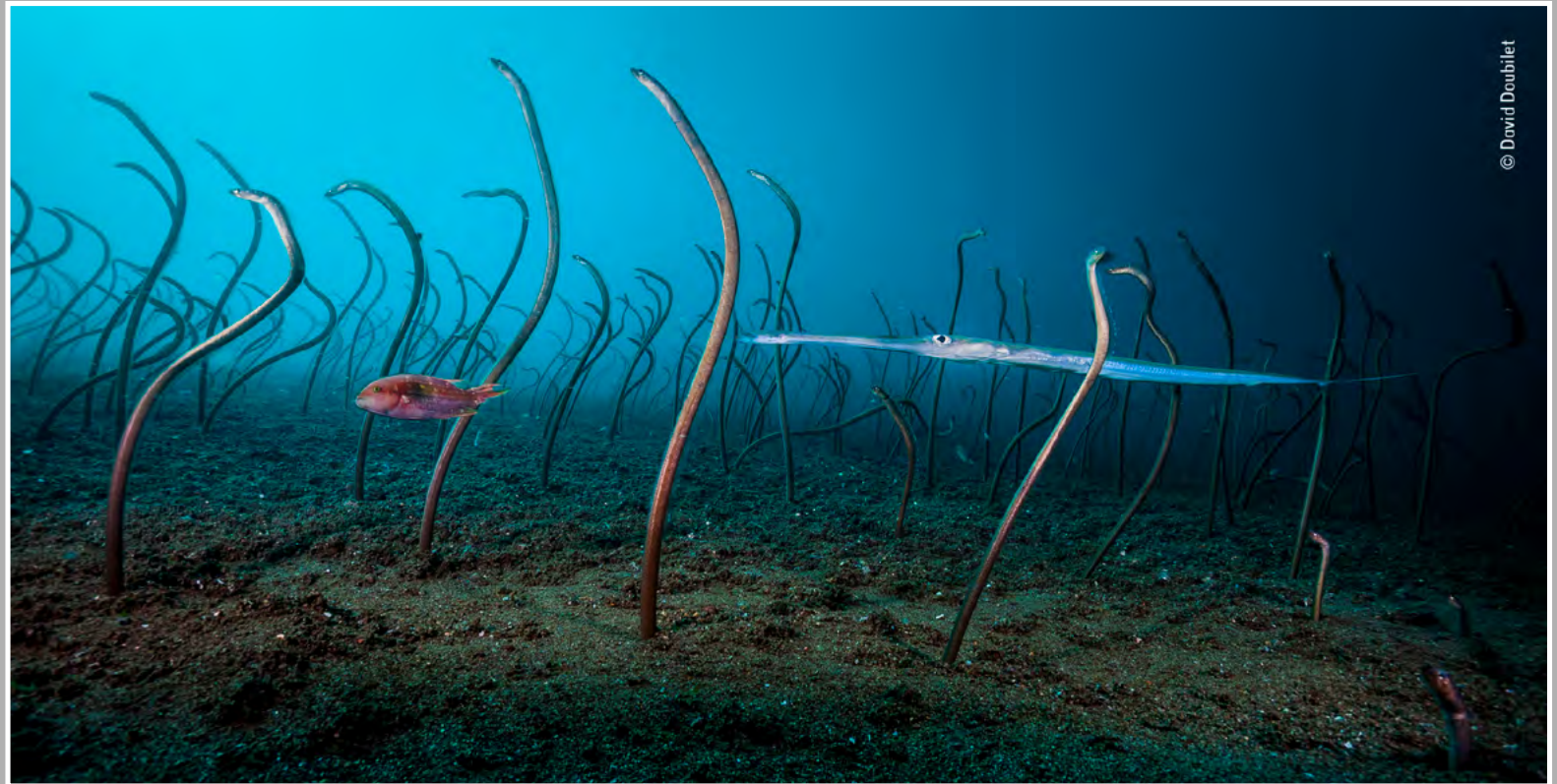
Doubilet rolled off the boat in the shallows and descended along the colony edge, deciding where to set up his kit. He had long awaited this chance, sketching out an ideal portrait of the colony back in his studio and designing an underwater remote system to realize his ambition. It was also a

return to a much-loved subject – his first story of very many stories in National Geographic was also on garden eels.

These warm-water relatives of conger eels are extremely shy, vanishing into their sandy burrows the moment they sense anything unfamiliar. David placed his camera housing (mounted on a base plate, with a ball head) just within the colony and hid behind the remnants of a shipwreck. From there he could trigger the system remotely via a 12-meter (40-foot) extension cord.

It was several hours before the eels dared to rise again to feed on the plankton that drifted by in the current. He gradually perfected the set-up, each time leaving an object where the camera had been so as not to surprise the eels when it reappeared. Several days later – now familiar with the eels' rhythms and the path of the light – he began to get images he liked. When a small wrasse led a slender cornetfish through the gently swaying forms, he had his shot.

Nikon D3 + 17–35mm f2.8 lens at 19mm; 1/40 sec at f14; ISO 400; Seacam housing; aluminum plate + ballhead; remote trigger; Sea & Sea YS250 strobes (at half power).



<https://www.nhm.ac.uk/visit/exhibitions/wildlife-photographer-of-the-year.html>