



WINNER Wide angle

'Frozen Mobile Home'

Greg Lecoeur (France)

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

Antarctica Peninsula, Antarctica

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

Judge's comments:

The balletic rhythm of these crabeater seals and the ethereal landscape of the pitted iceberg creates a composition that draws you into a corner of the world that few people have witnessed. The multiple subjects take my eyes on a journey through the frame and into the icy ocean of Antarctica.

Alex Mustard

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

Peter Rowlands

A stand out winner from the very first time I viewed it. The positioning of the seals could not be surpassed. Each of the four compositions are superb in relation to the image frame. 'Peak of the Action' at it's very best.

Martin Edge



British Underwater Photographer of the Year 2020

Highly Commended Wide angle

'Rabbit Fish Zoom Blur'

Nicholas More (United Kingdom)

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

Raja Ampat, Indonesia

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

Judge's comments:

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

Martin Edge

www.underwaterphotographeroftheyear.com

Up and Coming Underwater Photographer of the Year 2020



'Shark nursery.'
Anita Kainrath (Austria)

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

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

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

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

Eleuthera, The Bahamas

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

Judge's comments:

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

www.underwaterphotographeroftheyear.com

Peter Rowlands

Most Promising British Underwater Photographer of the Year 2020



‘Commotion in the Ocean’
Nur Tucker (United Kingdom)

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

Dumaguete, Philippines, Philippines

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

Judge's comments:

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

Alex Mustard

Marine Conservation Photographer of the Year 2020



WINNER

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

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

Tyrrhenian Sea, Bacoli, Naples, Italy

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

Judge's comments:

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

Peter Rowlands

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2019 Ocean Art Contest Winners

First of all, we would like to congratulate everyone who joined the 2019 Ocean Art Underwater Photo Competition! This competition is one of the most prestigious nature photo contests in the world, and the winning images represent some of the best underwater photographs of the year.

Photographers from 78 countries entered images, and over \$85,000 in sponsor prizes have been awarded, making the Ocean Art prize value among the highest in the world. Our two new categories, conservation and blackwater diving, had an overwhelming response of incredible photos and were two of the highlights of the competition. In addition to the “Best of Show”, we added a new award “Rising Star Photographer” won by Jules Casey who took an amazing photo of six juvenile seahorses.

1st Place Coldwater and Best in Show

Greg Lecoeur

“Crab-Eater Seal”

Greg won a 7 nights liveaboard diving package in Palau with Solitude Liveaboards!

During an expedition on a small sailboat, we explored the Antarctica Peninsula by diving below the surface. Although the conditions were extreme with a temperature of -1°C, we documented extraordinary marine fauna at home in a fragile ecosystem, such as on this image: crabeater seal.

We also saw leopard seals, gentoo penguins, Antarctica fur seals, and weddell seals. All these marine animals are affected by global warming with



the melting of the ice.

Despite the name, Crabeater Seals don't eat Crabs. Krill make up to 95% of a Crabeater Seal's diet. Crabeater seals have developed a sieve-shaped tooth structure that filters krill, much like whale baleen. They suck up water containing krill, close their jaws, and push the water between their

specialized teeth, trapping the krill inside.

Location: Antarctica Peninsula

Equipment Used: Nikon D500 Camera, Tokina 10-17mm Lens, Nauticam NA-D500 Housing, Dual Ikelite DS-161 Strobest

Camera Settings: 1/250 sec, F9, ISO 250

www.uwphotographyguide.com/ocean-art-contest-winners-2019