

The 'Save Our Seas Foundation' Marine Conservation Photographer of the Year 2022



WINNER

'Season of anchovy fishery'

Thien Nguyen Ngoc (Viet Nam)

An aerial perspective of busy anchovy fishing activities off the coast of Hon Yen, Phu Yen province, Vietnam, many local fisherman families along the coastline will follow the near-shore currents to catch the anchovy during peak season. Salted anchovy is the most important raw material to create traditional Vietnamese fish sauce but anchovies are a little fish with a big impact. When they are overfished, the whales, tunas, sea birds... and other marine predators that rely on them as a dietary staple face starvation and population decline critically. And so far Vietnam is also facing this anchovy overfishing situation, according to the survey results of the Institute of Seafood Research, the reserves and catches of anchovies in the waters of Vietnam have decreased by 20-30% in the past 10 years.

Hon Yen, Phu Yen province, Vietnam

Hasselblad, DJI Mavic Pro 2, none, 28mm
f/2.8, iso 100, f/2.8, 1/60, none

Judges comment:

A stark visual reminder of man's reach and control over the surrounding habitat and its devastating effect on the natural balance.

Peter Rowlands

The following four images are the Editor's favourites from UPY 2022

www.underwaterphotographeroftheyear.com

5) Portraits

THIRD

‘Longevity Meditation’

Daniele Comin (Italy)

I was in a naturalistic day trip in San Cristobal, Galapagos. I didn't expect to get many underwater opportunities but I almost always carry a camera with me. Late in the afternoon we stopped at the famous Leon Dormido Dive Site so I took my camera and I went to do some freediving. Conditions were very bad: no light and dark green water. It wasn't easy to set the camera for a good shot. The purpose of this part of the trip was to find hammerheads underwater. However, instead of hammerheads, I saw a group of Green Turtles. I decided to observe them a little bit. One Green Turtle was "meditating" so I gently approached, trying not to disturb her. I took 3 shots before she seemed to notice my presence and so I went away. She stayed in the same position for another 10 minutes.

Leon Dormido (Kicker Rock), Galapagos

Sony, A7 r3, Nauticam NA-A7R3, sony 28mm f2 , iso 400, f/3.5, 1/80, Available light

Judges comment:

This portrait captures personality perfectly and I suspect a tighter composition would have made it irresistible.

Peter Rowlands



6) Black & White



HIGHLY COMMENDED

'Honeycomb Moray eel moment'
Yazid El Shaari (Oman)

I was telling my friends at the dive center about this idea I had for a black & white image of a honeycomb moray eel and hoping to find one that day so I could try to make it happen. It was my lucky day, this beautiful creature was so cooperative and we got to spend the whole dive together just having fun making wonderful image memories.

Mermaid Cove dive site, Bandar Khiran, Sea of Oman, Muscat, Oman **(MBY)**

Nikon , D-850, Nauticam NA-D850, 105 mm, iso 200, 22, 1/200, Retra Pro

Judges comment:

This stood out immediately and the format choice and composition added to the strength of appeal. Unique and mesmerising.

Peter Rowlands



COMMENDED

‘Hiding lobster’

Saeed Rashid (United Kingdom)

I found this lobster in the shallows at Kimmeridge Bay which is one of my local and favourite dive spots. I was actually photographing the boot lace weed when I noticed an inquisitive lobster popping out of this hole to see what all of the commotion was. He stayed just long enough for me to be able to capture him. If you look carefully you'll see a couple common prawns that flittered around the lobster like attentive servants making sure their master was clean and presentable for the photoshoot. This remains one of my favourite UK wide images.

Kimmeridge bay , England **(MBY)**

Canon, 7d mkII, Nauticam, Tokina 10-17, iso 250, f10, 1/160, Inon z330

Judges comment:

Viewed small this image would struggle to compete but, viewed large, it reveals so much to look at and admire. Good balanced light and a sympathetic composition completes a serene moment.

Peter Rowlands