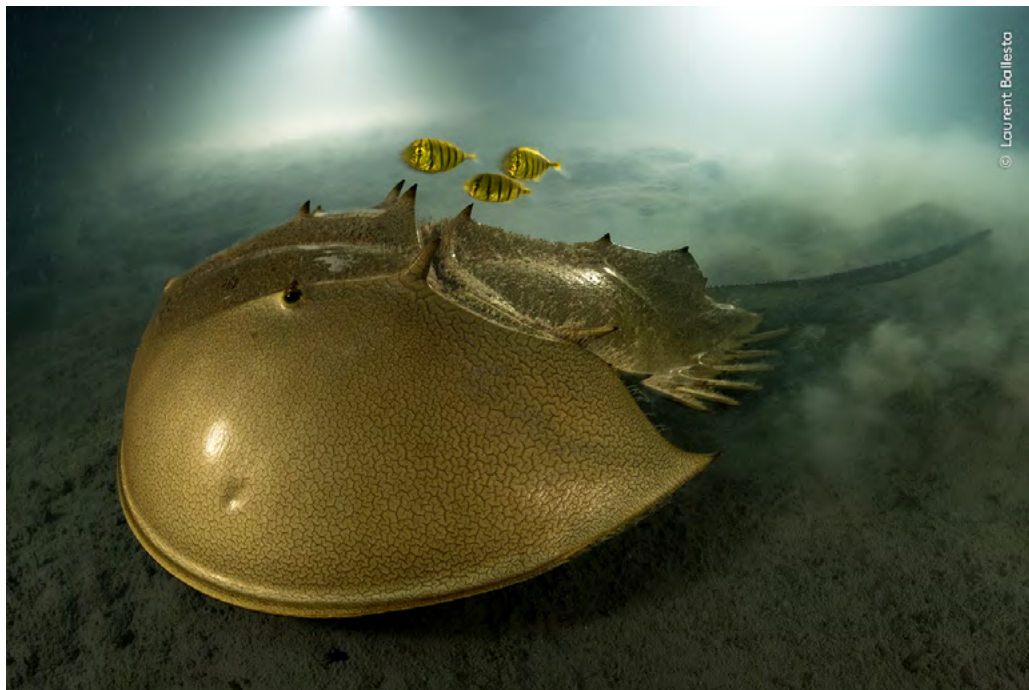


Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2023



The ancient mariner by Laurent Ballesta, France
Winner, Portfolio Award

A tri-spine horseshoe crab moves slowly over the mud. Its golden protective carapace hides 12 appendages. Above the horseshoe crab, a trio of juvenile golden trevallies are poised to dart down for edible morsels ploughed up by its passage.

Laurent Ballesta went looking for horseshoe crabs in the protected waters of Pangatalan Island in the Philippines.

The tri-spine horseshoe crab has survived for more than 100 million years but now faces habitat destruction

and overfishing for food and for its blood, used in the development of vaccines. But, in the protected waters off Pangatalan Island, there is hope for its survival.

Location: Pangatalan Island, Palawan, the Philippines

Technical details: Nikon D5 + 13mm f2.8 lens; 1/25 at f22; ISO 800; Seacam housing; 2x Seacam strobes



Hippo nursery by Mike Korostelev, Russia
Winner, Under Water

Mike Korostelev reveals a hippopotamus and her two offspring resting in the shallow clear-water lake.

For over two years Mike has been visiting the hippos in this lake and knew they were accustomed to his boat. He spent just 20 seconds under water with them – enough time to get this image from a safe distance and to avoid alarming the mother.

Hippos produce one calf every two to three years. Their slow-growing

population is particularly vulnerable to habitat degradation, drought, and illegal hunting for meat and ivory from their teeth.

Location: Kosi Bay, iSimangaliso Wetland Park, South Africa

Technical details: Canon EOS 5D Mark III + 17–40mm f4 lens; 1/320 at f7.1; ISO 640; Seacam housing