



Winner 2016
Under Water
Tony Wu, USA
Snapper party

Tony was surprised there weren't many photos of the two-spot snapper mass spawning – until he hit the water. The currents were strong and unrelenting and his first attempt failed. But by positioning himself so the action came to him, Tony captured this dynamic arc of spawning fish in the oblique morning light.

Thousands of two-spot snappers gather to spawn each month around Palau. Tony was intrigued to see the usually red fish rapidly change colour during mating to a multitude of hues and patterns. Predators will soon arrive to take advantage of the bounty, but strong currents will drag a few lucky eggs into the open ocean.



Technical specification
*Canon EOS 5D Mark III; 15mm f2.8 lens;
 1/200 sec at f9; ISO 640; Zillion housing; Pro One
 optical dome port. Tony Wu, USA*

<http://www.nhm.ac.uk/visit/wpy.html>

Since 1995, Tony has combined his love of visual art with his interest in the marine world through underwater photography. He has recently focused on cetacean photography and documenting mass spawning aggregations of fish. Tony uses his photographs and writing to encourage others to appreciate and protect the beauty of the oceans. He is also a frequent public speaker.

www.tonywublog.com



Finalist 2016

Under Water

Geo Cloete, South Africa

Tentacle tornado

Geo had encountered large numbers of jellyfish before, but this time the numbers were astonishing. 'I was captivated by the rhythmic contractions of their bells as they danced up a storm,' says Geo. For once, the visibility in these cold waters was reasonable, and he captured this spectacular column against the sunlight.

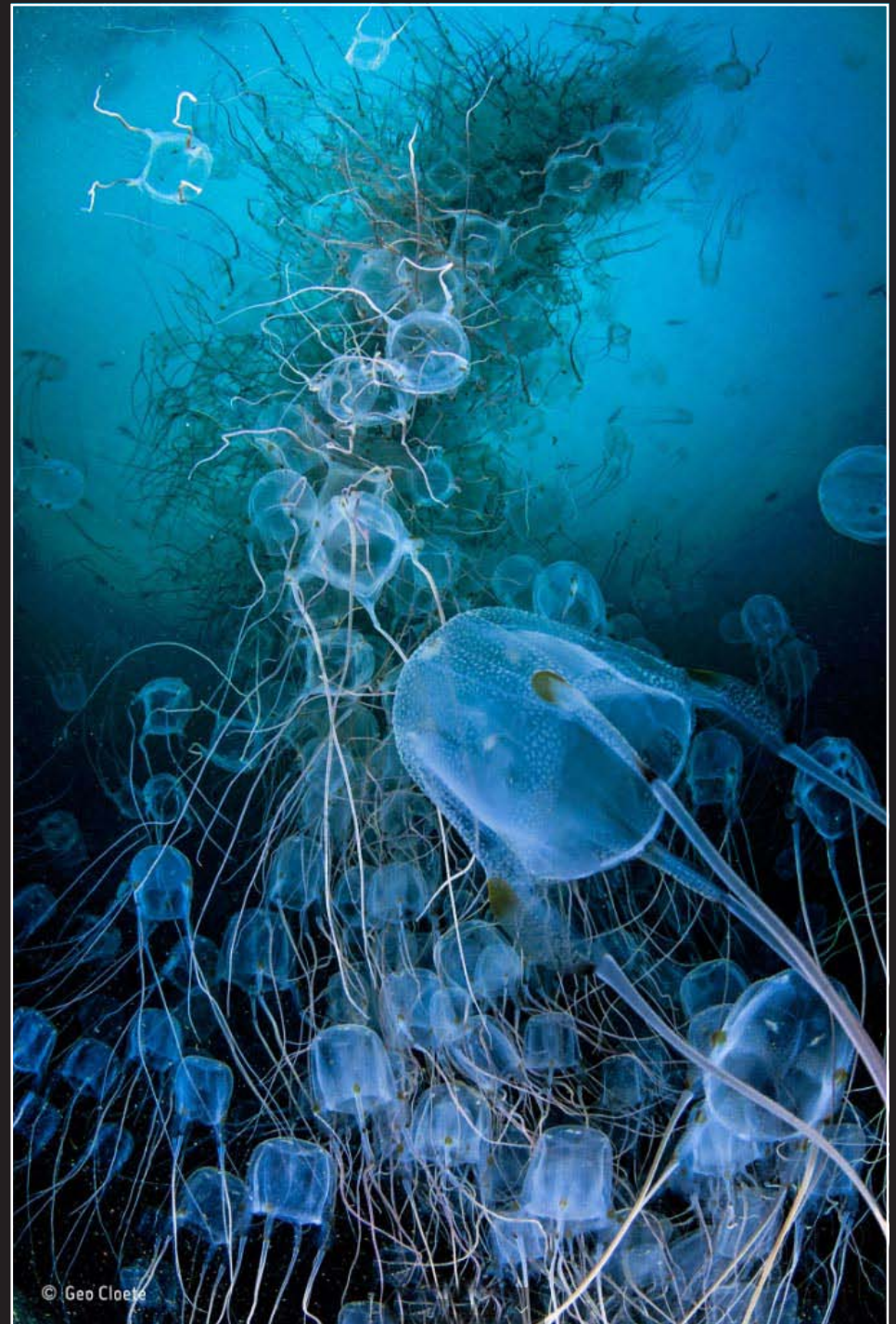
Thousands of Cape box jellyfish form several columns that are linked deeper down by a thick swarm. Box jellyfish are known to gather in large numbers to mate, performing elaborate courtships. However, the numbers of individuals tightly packed here is unusual, revealing there's still a lot we don't know about life in the oceans.

Technical specification

Nikon D300; Tokina 10-17mm f3.5-4.5 lens at 10mm; 1/160 sec at f14; ISO 200; Seatool housing; two Sea & Sea YS-250PRO strobes.

Most of Geo's work is created along Cape Town's coastline - but his love of exploring and discovering the unknown also leads him to work in far-off places. His work has allowed him to document previously unknown animal behaviours. He strongly believes that sharing the beauty and wonders of the ocean will cultivate the awareness and love that the ocean and its creatures deserve.

www.geocloete.com





Finalist 2016

Under Water

Joris van Alphen, Netherlands
Current riches

In the strong current, with sea bamboo reaching up behind him, Joris struggled to keep the elements lined up. Eventually, a few seabream passed by completing the composition – their silvery forms singing out against the turquoise, nutrient-rich water. ‘I also liked the shape and colour of the split-fan kelp,’ says Joris.

False Bay is where two formidable currents meet, warm and cold swirling together creating a unique ecosystem. Once teeming with a diversity of fish, populations have collapsed after years of exploitation. Hottentot seabream are among the few fish that are still easy to find in this boulder-reef community.

Technical specification

Canon EOS 5D Mark III + Sigma 15mm f2.8 lens; 1/60 sec at f14; ISO 400; Nauticam housing + dome; two Inon Z-240 strobes.



<http://www.nhm.ac.uk/visit/wpy.html>

Joris specialises in stories about nature and science. Growing up with biologist parents, he embarked on his first field trip to Africa at the age of three. He went on to study biology, but abandoned a career in science to become a full-time photographer. His work has since spanned five continents. Joris is a Fellow of the International League of Conservation Photographers.

www.jorisvanalphen.com



Finalist 2016

Under Water

Audun Rikardsen, Norway

Arctic showtime

Audun wanted to juxtapose the peace above the water with the playfulness below. But he faced a considerable challenge. The light is so low during the polar night that normal underwater housings will not work for split-level pictures. So Audun developed his own. Then, it took patient planning to capture this moment.

Before migrating south, humpback whales begin to play and sing more intensely in the bays around Tromsø. It's thought the males are serenading the females ahead of the forthcoming mating season. With their wide, powerful tail flukes and long flippers, these 40-tonne animals launch themselves out of the water in a graceful arc.

Technical specification

Canon EOS-1D X; 11-24mm f4 lens at 11mm and 1.2 Lee filter; 1/100 sec at f5.6; ISO 1600; custom-made housing.



Audun grew up in northern Norway, and has always been fascinated by the Arctic coast. He is a professor of fish biology at the University of Tromsø, and most of his images are taken locally or on field work. He has won several awards, including Arctic Photographer of the Year in 2014 and the WPY Portfolio Award in 2015. Audun hopes his images will help inspire nature conservation.

<http://www.nhm.ac.uk/visit/wpy.html>

www.audunrikardsen.com



Winner 2016

Reptiles, Amphibians and Fish

Marco Colombo, Italy

Little treasure

Marco had to stay focused on the European pond turtle as it glided swiftly across the shadows on the lookout for prey, stirring up clouds of mud. As sunbeams fell through the gaps in the riverside vegetation, Marco captured this atmospheric portrait. 'Conveying a sense of place was essential,' explains Marco.

The shy European pond turtle, which spends most of its time submerged at the bottom of muddy waters, is threatened by water pollution, habitat loss and invasive American red-eared terrapins. Populations are also threatened by the pet trade – their bright yellow- or gold-flecked shells are attractive to collectors.

Technical specification

Nikon D90; Tokina 10-17mm f3.5-4.5 lens at 10mm; 1/60 sec at f11; ISO 400; Isotta housing.



<http://www.nhm.ac.uk/visit/wpy.html>

Marco works as a naturalist, wildlife photographer and science communicator. His photographs have won several awards and, along with his papers, have been published in several magazines. He is the author of several books - his latest is *I Tesori del Fiume*. Marco also leads photo workshops to increase knowledge of species behaviour and identification.

www.calosoma.it



Winner 2016

Invertebrates

Angel Fitor, Spain

The dying of the light

Struck by their uniqueness, 'like a living island,' Angel waited three years for a lone jelly on a calm night, when the sunset was at its best. A bubble of trapped air under the umbrella of this one, from being flipped in the wind, meant it couldn't dive and so wouldn't survive for long.

Barrel, or dustbin-lid, jellyfish swarm in shallow summer waters, moving in from the open ocean to feed on coastal plankton blooms. As the season turns, cooling water and autumnal winds blowing across the lagoon of Mar Menor wipe out most of the barrel jellyfish that swam in to feed over the summer.

Technical specification

Nikon D800; Sigma 14mm f2.8 lens; 1 sec at f18; ISO 50; Nexus housing; Inon Z-240 strobe; Retra uTrigger; Manfrotto tripod.



<http://www.nhm.ac.uk/visit/wpy.html>

Angel work focuses on marine and freshwater environments. His images have featured in titles including National Geographic and GEO. He has contributed as both photographer and natural history advisor to many broadcasting companies and scientific research teams, including the BBC Natural History Unit, Silverback Films, and the Fish Evolutionary Lab of the University of Basel.

www.seaframes.com



Finalist 2016

The Wildlife Photojournalist

Award: Single Image

Audun Rikardsen, Norway

Splitting the catch

United by a shared appetite for herring, whales and fishermen have a unique relationship. Fishermen follow individuals like this killer whale to find fish and in turn the whales seek out fishing boats, having learnt to associate the sound of fishing nets with a free meal. Audun wanted to show this relationship from both perspectives in this dramatic split-level picture.

At first it seems like a win-win relationship, but this can be detrimental to the whales. Sometimes they will try to steal the fish, entangling themselves in the nets with potentially fatal consequences. The fishermen are so concerned about how frequently this is happening that they are searching for solutions.



<http://www.nhm.ac.uk/visit/wpy.html>

Technical specification
*Canon EOS 5D Mark III; 11-24mm f4 lens
at 11mm and 1.2 Lee filter; 1/200 sec at f6.3; ISO
640; custom-made housing.*

Audun grew up in northern Norway, and has always been fascinated by the Arctic coast. He is a professor of fish biology at the University of

Tromsø, and most of his images are taken locally or on field work. He has won several awards, including Arctic Photographer of the Year in 2014 and the WPY Portfolio Award in 2015. Audun hopes his images will help inspire nature conservation.

www.audunrikardsen.com



Finalist 2016

Birds

Alex Mustard, UK

Rig diver

Diving beneath the oil rig, Alex had to anticipate when the cormorants would burst through the fish shoal. The birds hide behind the legs of the rig after they plunge into the dark waters, gaining the element of surprise. Alex used an underwater corrector lens, which allowed him to use his land lens underwater.

Drilling for oil is not generally considered beneficial for wildlife, yet oil rigs can provide shelter and a rich food supply for many animals, including Brandt's cormorants. These birds are skilled pursuit divers, crashing into the water, their strong feet propel them forward so they can chase shoaling fish.

Technical specification

*Nikon D4; 20mm f2.8 lens; 1/250 sec at f10;
ISO 800; Carl Zeiss underwater corrector lens;
Subal housing; two Seacam 150 Seaflashes.*



Alexander been taking photographs for over 30 years, and his work has won several awards. In 2013, he was named European Wildlife Photographer of the Year, the only time an underwater photograph has won the award. He has also been a judge for Wildlife Photographer of the Year. In 2016, he released two books - Underwater Photography Masterclass and Secrets Of The Seas.

www.amustard.com

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