

CAPTIONS: Ocean Photographer of the Year

WINNER

Aimee Jan

A green turtle, surrounded by glass fish. “I was out snorkelling when one of my colleagues told me there was a turtle under a ledge in a school of glass fish, about 10 metres down,” says photographer Aimee Jan. “When I dived down to look, the fish separated around the turtle perfectly. I said to her: ‘I think I just took the best photo I have ever taken’.”

Ningaloo Reef, Western Australia

SECOND

Henley Spiers

“Diving in amidst the barrage of gannets, I witness the violent synchronicity of these impressive seabirds as they embark on fishing dives,” says photographer Henley Spiers. “They hit the water at 60mph, an impact they can only withstand thanks to specially evolved air sacs in the head and chest. The bird’s agility transfers from air to sea where it also swims with incredible speed.”

Isle of Noss, Shetland, UK

THIRD

Matty Smith

“A hawksbill turtle hatchling just 3.5cm long and a few minutes old takes its first swim,” says photographer Matty Smith. “It had emerged from an egg just minutes earlier with approximately 100 of its siblings. They quickly made their way into the ocean to disperse as rapidly as they could and avoid predation from birds and fish. I had to work quickly for this shot.”

Lissenung Island, Papua New Guinea

CAPTIONS: Female Fifty Fathoms Award

WINNER

Renee Capozzola

A lone blacktip reef shark lines up its dorsal fin with the setting sun in Moorea, French Polynesia. “This over-under image was achieved by using a wide-angle lens, a large dome port and strobe flash to illuminate the underwater portion of the picture,” says photographer Renee Capozzola. “Sharks are plentiful in French Polynesia due to their strong legal protections and are a sign of a healthy marine ecosystem.”

Mo’orea, French Polynesia

SECOND

Aimee Jan

A manta ray feeds in calm waters. “We were out on a humpback whale tour when manta rays were spotted line feeding, swimming back and forth on the surface scooping up huge mouthfuls of plankton,” says photographer Aimee Jan. “On this day there was no wind – we call this a *glass off* because the surface of the water looks like glass. We got in for a swim and it was just beautiful. I took a few photos. This one was my favourite.”

Exmouth gulf, Western Australia

THIRD

Emily Ledwidge

A leopard shark slowly swims away on the Ningaloo Reef. “In this chaotic world we should be taking the time to consider what is important,” says photographer Emilie Ledwidge. “What is important to us? What is important to Mother Earth? Sharks continue to be fished, finned, culled and hated by much of the world’s people. Their populations continue to fade and yet this is one species that we as humans cannot live without.”

Ningaloo Reef, Western Australia