



SPLASH-IN SPECIAL

Despite tricky conditions, this year's Splash In competition again showcased the talents of photographers old and new. Completely digital for the first time, competitors maintained the high standards of previous years ...



Sunshine For Splash-In

AUGUST BANK Holiday Weekend saw St Abbs & Eyemouth Marine Reserve hosting its 23rd annual underwater photographic competition – the Splash In, organised by Liza Cole, National Trust for Scotland Ranger for the Reserve.

Things were a little tense running up to the competition, as the weather was less than clement. Torrential rain in the middle of the week and grey tossing seas topped with white-caps being the order of the day on the Friday.

However, Saturday morning dawned with blue skies and the sun glistening off a calm sea. Never the less, conditions were still challenging for the 35 entrants as there was still a fair swell running and the rain had carried a lot of soil into the water so reducing its clarity.

The photographers had the whole of Saturday to capture what they hoped would be a prize-winning image. The competition has three categories: Marine Life Portrait (close up images of the Reserve's amazing marine life); Reserve Atmospheric (wide angle shots showing the stunning underwater landscape); and Most Humorous Shot (where the photographers use their imagination in an attempt to raise a titter). The winning images were then chosen by the audience of a slide show

on the Sunday evening.

Although the conditions were tricky, the competitors took some fantastic images. The Marine Life Portrait category was a close run thing, with David Stephen's image of a velvet swimming crab and a dahlia anemone (image above) just pipping Cathy Lewis' close up shot of a prawn on a dahlia anemone to the post for first prize. Third prize went to Jason Gregory for a picture of a scorpion fish and 13 year old Robert Grieves was awarded the prize for best beginner. David's image was so well liked by the audience that it also won the prize for best image in the whole competition.

It was a good day for Cathy Lewis, as she also came first in the Reserve Atmospheric category with her shot of a diver looking at a sunstar on a reef. Richard Hall took second with an image of an oval window in a reef festooned with sealife, and Shane Wasik was awarded both third and best beginner for his moody shot of a swim through dive site called the letterbox.

As usual, the Most Humorous Shot category stimulated some most entertaining entries. Mike Clark won with his image of an underwater gardener, Sam Bean came second with her 'Fun Down Under' and Shane Wasik took third (and

his third prize) with 'Starry Eyed'.

Apart from the prestige of taking a winning image, there were nearly £1,500 worth of prizes to fight for; anything from a romantic meal for two to dive equipment. All prizes were generously donated by local, national and international businesses and were presented by Sarah Goldie (the most humorous shot category being in memory of her dad).

Marine Ranger, Liza Cole said: "The Splash In not only provides a fantastic opportunity to promote the work that has been going on in the VMR for over two decades, but also highlights the beauty of the underwater world to those who are not able to go and see it for themselves. Participants come to St Abbs from all over the country and the event is an enjoyable weekend for participants and locals alike.

"The unique thing about the St Abbs Splash In, compared to similar competitions, is that young beginners like Robert compete alongside experienced photographers, some of whom have won national competitions. And because the winners are chosen by the audience of the Sunday night slide show rather than expert judges, images that are pleasing to the eye have as much chance of winning as those that are technically excellent."



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MARINE LIFE PORTRAIT WINNERS



Above: MLP 1st - Velvet swimming crab & Dahlia anemone by David Stephen; left: MLP 3rd - Scorpion fish by Jason Gregory



Above: MLP 2nd: Prawn on a Dahlia anemone by Cathy Lewis (this edition of SCOTTISH DIVER's cover image); left: Best Beginner - Robert Grieves

COMPETITION WINNERS

> Marine Life Portrait

- 1 David Stephen
Velvet swimming crab & a Dahlia anemone
- 2 Cathy Lewis
Prawn on a Dahlia anemone
- 3 Jason Gregory
Scorpion Fish

> Reserve Atmospheric

- 1 Cathy Lewis
Diver looking at a sunstar on reef
- 2 Richard Hall
Oval Window in a reef
- 3 Shane Wasik
The letterbox

> John Goldie Most Humorous Shot

- 1 Mike Clark
Underwater Gardener
- 2 Sam Bean
Fun Down Under
- 3 Shane Wasik
Starry Eyed

> Best Beginner

- Marine Life Portrait - Robert Grieves
RA - Shane Wasik

> Best Image in Competition

- David Stephen
Velvet swimming crab and a Dahlia anemone

THE CROWN
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SPLASH-IN SPECIAL

MOST HUMOROUS WINNERS



MHS 1st - Mike Clark



MHS 2nd - Sam Bean

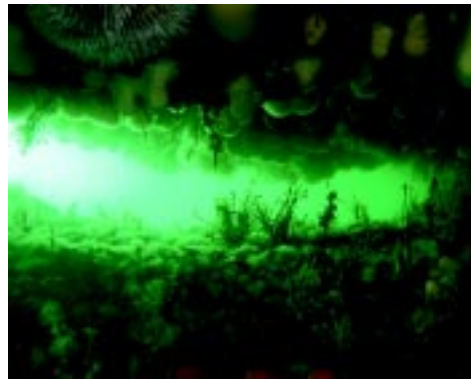


MHS 3rd - Shane Wasik

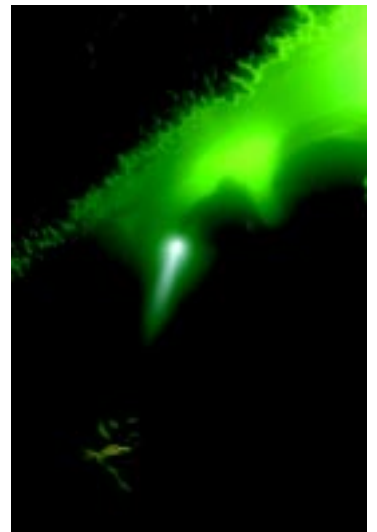
RESERVE ATMOSPHERIC WINNERS



RA 1st - Diver looking at a sunstar on a reef
by Cathy Lewis



RA 2nd - Oval window in a reef by Richard Hall
RA 3rd - The Letterbox by Shane Wasik (image right)



SPONSORS

The Anchor Inn, Coldingham	018907 71243	Marine Quest & Harbourside, Eyemouth	018907 52444
Apeks	01254 692 200	National Trust for Scotland	0131 243 9300
AP Valves	01326 561 040	Newcastle Dive Centre	0191 232 7983
Aquapress	01702 462 466	Rock House Dive Centre, St Abbs	018907 71288
Aquastars Dive Centre, Eyemouth	018907 50904	Scoutscroft Divers, Coldingham	018907 71669
Beaver Sports Ltd	01484 512 354	SDS Watersports	01142 488 688
Creels Restaurant	018907 71338	Springbank Cottage Tea Garden, St Abbs	018907 71447
Edinburgh Dive Centre	0131 229 4838		
Rhona Goldie - Lazy G Diver, Coldingham	018907 71525	St Abbs Boat Charter, St Abbs	018907 71681
Marine Conservation Society	01989 567 807	Suunto	01420 587 272
		Topline Charters, St Abbs	018907 71945