

PHOTO CONTEST TOPICS	EXTENDED TOPIC DESCRIPTION
2012	
JANUARY Turtles	Sea Turtles, any variety – one or more. Your choice. You've seen them. You know them well. Our air-breathing aquatic reptile buddies with the ancient pedigree.
FEBRUARY Angelfish and Butterflyfish	If you aren't sure, look it in your fish ID book or just ask someone you trust for an expert opinion. If it's platter-flat, colorful, and pretty, it's probably what you're looking for.
MARCH Two or More of a Kind (but less than a dozen)	The subjects must be of the same species. Other things can be in the picture but the main focus should be on the primary subject. We're not looking for a whole, vast school so the count needs to be from 2 to 11.
APRIL Nudibranchs & Worms	Again, this is pretty specific but you may need to check your critter ID book if you're not sure. Worms can fool you sometimes. Who would think that something that looks like a colorful Christmas tree ornament could be a worm?
MAY Real Small Macro (subjects smaller than a chicken egg)	OK, macro comes in a lot of varieties. This variety is pretty small. Limit your subject's size to things that are up to the size of a typical chicken egg you get in the supermarket. There can be more than one subject in the frame but try to keep the overall image close and tight. Wide angle is next month.
JUNE Wide Angle	This is where we talk about what we mean by wide angle. In this instance, it is a picture that is taken with a wide angle lens or a zoom lens set at a wide angle focal length. You can choose a panorama style or use the close-focus/wide-angle approach.
JULY Fish Portraits	Side on, angled views, or face-to-the-camera shots are what we're looking for. You can have more than one fish in the shot but be reasonable, keep it to 2 or less, please. And, of course, we're talking fish here... not critters.
AUGUST Leading Lines (natural lines that lead the eye)	An interesting topic and something that true artists use to point the viewer's eye to the primary "focus" of their work. Elements within the picture (straight lines, curves, spirals, etc.) should be obvious to the eye. You can even use interesting negative space effects if they serve the job of attracting the eye to the subject. Look at your stuff and you'll find plenty of examples. Learn to see and create like the masters.
SEPTEMBER Gobies, Blennies, Jawfish, Triplefins	Some of our favorite tiny guys. The ones that like to hug the reef, hide out in holes, or build their nests in the sand. If you aren't sure if your little guy (or guys) qualify, look it up in your critter ID book or ask the opinion of one or our ID experts. I have plenty of books to look through and Wikipedia is great when I can't find it there.
OCTOBER Cute/Funny (anything that makes you smile)	I suppose that Cute/Funny is in the eye of the beholder. There aren't going to be too many disqualifiers, here. OK, maybe a shark tearing the fin off a turtle might not qualify but Nemo sure does. Put on your smiles and show us what you have.
NOVEMBER Divers & Snorkelers	Air-breathers with feet and hands instead of fins. Yes, those ugly, noisy, clumsy critters that we've all come to love and hate... homo sapiens. Those invaders from above. The despoilers of the environment. The ones that love to visit and see the beauty of the world below the waves. One or more will do, thank you.

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JANUARY Eels (morays, snake, garden, etc.)	There are lots of eels out there. They are pretty easy to spot. Think "snakes with gills".
FEBRUARY Wide Angle Wrecks	This is pretty simple. Any photo taken on a wreck with a wide angle lens will qualify. Ancillary subjects such as divers, angelfish, morays, schools of fish, etc. are encouraged.
MARCH Starfish - All Types (Echinoderms as a species)	Echinoderms: Ah yes, another opportunity to learn something useful. Echinoderms don't always have 5 legs and not everything that looks like a starfish is a starfish. Echinoderms do have 5-part symmetry but you've all seen starfish with less and more arms. The body, when dissected, will always show the basic 5 sections. Extreme examples here are crinoids, crown-of-thorns, basketstars (lots more than 5 arms) and cushionstars that don't seem to have any arms. Same can be said for urchins and sea-cucumbers. They don't look like starfish but they sure are echinoderms. Warm up your critter-ID books and learn something useful.
APRIL Cephalopods (octopi, squid, cuttlefish)	Cephalopods are a sub-group of the phylum molusca (i.e., moluscs). However, we're not looking for snails or clams this month. Limit your entries to our friends: squid, cuttlefish, octopi, and nautilus (if you have any).
MAY Schools of Fish	We're talking beaucoup Pisces this month. Lotsa fish... not critters, just fish. What is a school? Good question. Let's see if we can take a stab at it. How about 12 or more of the same fish.
JUNE Syngnathidae (pipefish & seahorses)	These bad boys are usually pretty easy to identify but not always easy to find. We all have shots of them so dig them out and send them in. If you aren't sure if it qualifies... yep, look it up or give us a shout.
JULY Silhouettes	Silhouettes are interesting in that the outlines and shape of the subject are what is important. A good silhouette should have almost no detail observable in the primary subject. We're talking form and composition this month so see what you can come up with. If you don't have good examples, you've got plenty of time to go try shooting some. It'll be good for you.
AUGUST Sharks & Rays (class: chondrichthyes)	Not that you have to read all of this but it might be interesting: Chondrichthyes or cartilaginous fishes are jawed fish with paired fins, paired nares, scales, two-chambered hearts, and skeletons made of cartilage rather than bone. The class is divided into two subclasses: Elasmobranchii (sharks, rays and skates) and Holocephali (chimaeras, sometimes called ghost sharks, which are sometimes separated into their own class).
SEPTEMBER Juveniles of Any Species	This seems simple but it's not always easy to know when you have a juvenile of a species. I'm really not sure I can offer you any good advice other than look it up or ask someone that probably knows. Anything that's not a mature adult is an operational definition. In reality, we're probably looking for fish or critters that are obviously still maturing. Good examples might be juvenile angelfish that have distinct markings or juvenile spotted drums that still need a while to grow into their fins. You get the picture (I hope).
OCTOBER Ugly Critters	Things only a mother could love (and maybe not even then). Ugly is in the eye of the beholder so I suppose that it's your call. The judges might disagree, of course.
NOVEMBER Close-Focus/Wide Angle	Another chance to learn something useful. This topic is a sub-set of wide angle. The difference is that the primary subject(s) need to be very close to the lens. A typical CF/WA shot will have something in focus in the foreground and a wide angle view of the reef (or whatever) in the background. The nice thing about wide angle lenses is their extreme depth of field that allows you to focus close and still have the background in decent focus, too. You should be using a wide angle lens or a zoom set for wide angle to qualify.