

HUPS Photo Contest Themes for the Year 2026

Month	Theme	Description
January	Banded/Stripes	A fish or critter that has bands or stripes on their body. Detail: A pattern of parallel bands or lines on a contrasting background.
February	Crustaceans (Shrimp, Lobsters, Crabs, etc)	Just like it says - look it up in the book (crabs, shrimp, lobsters, barnacles, etc.). When in doubt, Wikipedia can help you out.
March	Diagonal Composition	A diagonal composition is employed to arrange elements in an image based on a diagonal line.
April	Gobies, Blennies, Jaw fish, Triple fins	Tiny guys that like to hug the reef, hide out in holes, or build their nests in the sand. If you aren't sure, look it up in your fish ID book.
May	Fish with Spots or Polka Dots	A small round or roundish mark, differing in color or texture from the surface around it, such as boxfishes, coffer fishes, cowfishes and trunkfishes.
June	Eels (morays, garden, etc.)	There are lots of eels out there. They are pretty easy to spot. Think "snakes with gills".
July	Natural light	Use the sun for light (vs strobes), so lighting will be more even. Ideal for large subjects: large reefs, schools of fish, silhouettes, or large wrecks.
August	Odd-shaped bottom dwellers	If it's a bit odd looking and spends most of its life on or in the sand or reef, it probably qualifies. Infrequent-swimmers. Frogfish, crabs, flounder, scorpionfish, toadfish, batfish, lizardfish, crocodile fish...
September	Camouflage	Underwater camouflage is the set of methods of achieving crypsis—avoidance of observation—that allows otherwise visible aquatic organisms to remain unnoticed by other organisms such as predators or prey.
October	Large swimmers (> 4 feet) - not people	A fish or critter that is "swimming" with a length > 4 feet, such as: grouper, tarpon, shark, sting ray, manta ray, dolphin, moray eel.
November	Hawkfish, Drums, Triggerfish	This theme gives you up to 3 possible choices of fish families. If not sure, check your fish ID book.
December	Best of HUPS	NOVICE, INTERMEDIATE, ADVANCED, and CREATIVE contests: First place winners from each month's Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced categories will be entered automatically for judging. The Creative category lets you enter anything you want as long as you do the photography and any special editing.