



BUPG

NEWSLETTER BRISTOL UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

November 2025

Welcome to the November edition of our Members Newsletter!

Following an extremely busy October, last month's meeting was postponed and so this month, we have two competitions to showcase, plus a great review of a Scottish dive site and several events lined up for 2026. Don't forget if you've got something to share in our newsletter, please email info@bupg.co.uk

In This Month's Issue:

- *BUPG Monthly competition results*
 - *Best of British*
 - *Portraits*
- *Falls of Lora – dive site review*
- *UK Dive trips*
- *Competition Calendar*

October Competition – Best of British

The definition of the competition theme :-

"A portfolio of 3 individual images that showcases both variety and beauty in the underwater world of British waters. Please show a variety of techniques and skills, one wide angle, and one macro image is recommended although not mandatory. The images do not need to work together as a portfolio."

There were 7 portfolios entered on the night, judged by attending members, each casting a vote for their favourite set of images.



In first place was **Dan Bolt** with three fantastic shots all taken around the Torbay area. This includes Cuttlefish ménage à trois, Seahorse posing and Jellyfish sunbathing. Great work Dan!



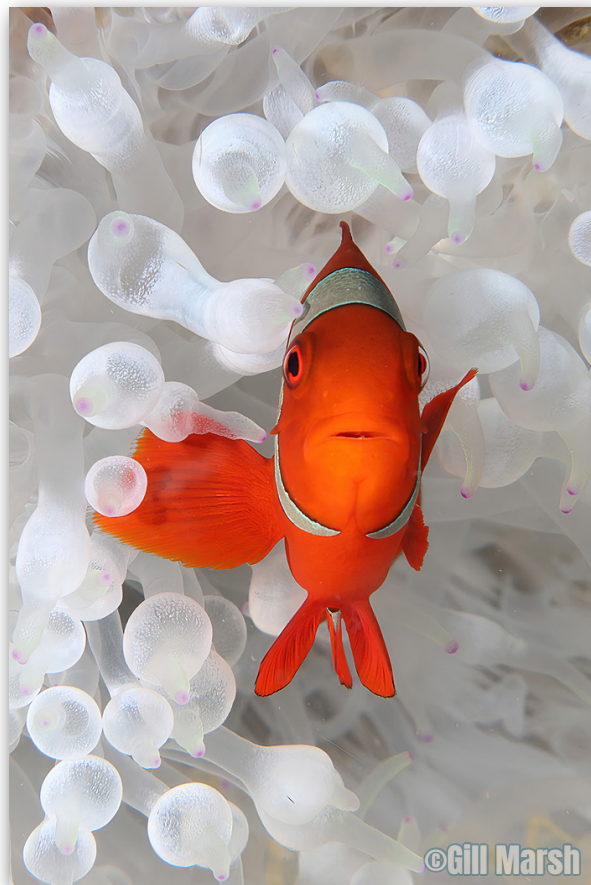
DECEMBER THEME -BEGINNERS PORTFOLIO & PRINT COMPETITION

Three portfolios tied for second place with 2 votes each,
for **Trevor Rees**, **Christine Platt** & **Tom Ingram**.



November Competition – Portraits

Members submitted a single underwater image where the subject fills most of the frame and conveys a strong sense of personality or character. Whether it's a diver, fish, or other marine life, the portrait should offer an intimate connection between viewer and subject.



In joint first place, with 3 votes each, were **Gill Marsh** and **Mark Drayton**. Gill's Anemone Fish stood out beautifully against a bleached host anemone, whereas Mark's unusually coiffured Decorator Crab 'popped' with personality & colour. Mark also won **BSOUP's** Portrait competition with this image, so double congrats to you Mark!



Second place was also a tie between **Trevor Rees** and **Kirsty Andrews**, while third place was a 4-way split between images from **Simon Yates**, **Mark Drayton**, **Kirsty Andrews** and **Lee Stanton**. Well done to all those who were placed and who took part in what was a pretty evenly spread vote this month.

Dive Site Review – The Falls of Lora

By Dan Bolt

I am by no means an expert on this site, having only dived here a handful of times over the past few years, but I can highly recommend it to any adventurous (but cautious) members who are used to Scottish shore diving.

The site itself is in the village of Connel, about 20mins north of Oban, and located in the shadows of Connel Bridge that spans Loch Etive. Famous for its insane tidal currents, standing waves, whirlpools and eddies, 'the falls' are generated when the tide level in the Firth of Lorn drops below (or rises above) the level of the water in Loch Etive.



*Top Right: Dead Man's Hole.
Above: Connel Bridge.
Below right: Abundant Anemone life.
Below: Kitting up area.*



The site can only be dived from shore without boat cover on the smallest of neaps, and at most you'll get a 60 minute window of slack water... or none at all if the sea decides to be fickle. Accepted wisdom puts slack at around 1 hour after HW Oban, or 2 hours after LW Oban.

The HW slack is much more reliable, and indeed on our last trip we had to abort a LW dive because the slack water forgot to show up and conditions were quite dicey at one point! You can check out this tidal flow simulation to see just how much water is being forced through the site: [Click Here](#)

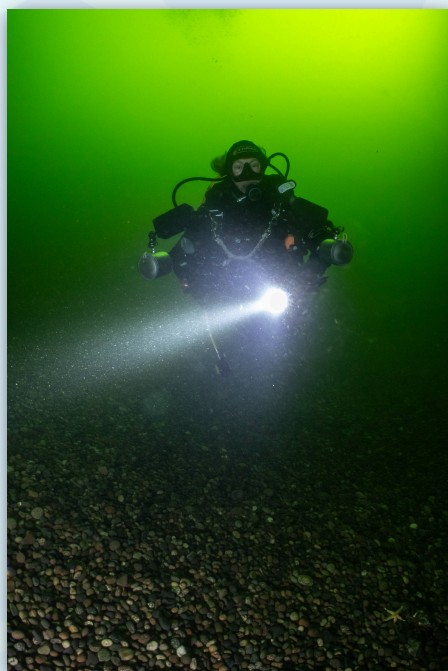




There are numerous routes from the entry-point, but as photographers we always opt for the one that gives us the most time in the interesting parts of the dive. From the car-park to the west of the bridge, you walk over the grassy mound towards the bridge, and enter the water by an old pipe.

At HW you need to swim out and to the left of the pipe by about 7m to find the start of a distinct gully. Follow that and where it opens out to a small plateau, to the right you're at the top of a large hole that will drop down to around 22m... it's dark down there even on a sunny day so torches are a must.

This hole takes you through a gully to another, which is named 'Dead Man's Hole' because there is a man-overboard dummy wedged into the rocks, but don't worry it's not too scary. This is about as far as we go because of the depth and narrow diving window, but this means we can make the most of the abundant anemone life, crabs and starfish that thrive in this brutal environment.



*Top Left: Hydroid close up.
Left: It's dark at 22m, so torches are a must.
Right: Skeleton Shrimp on Hydroid
Below: The beautiful Spurdog*



Back up on the plateau, and at the right time of year you'll find hundreds of hydroids with miniscule amphipods and skeleton shrimp clambering about. It's easy to forget you have a tidal race building above you at this point as the gully lies in a sheltered part of the dive... so don't over-stay your welcome or you'll need a backup exit-plan to follow.

A highlight of this site is the opportunity to see the beautiful Spurdog; so far we've had about a 50% success-rate in seeing them on the dives we've done there. And it's one of the reasons we'll be drawn back there again before too long ... I hope!

Many thanks Dan for penning this really informative review! If you know a great dive spot for photography and want to share it, then please drop me an email.



2026 Dive Trips - Register Interest Now!

Porthkerris, Cornwall – 5–8 June 2026. Last few places. Contact Nick Watson 07798–625832.

Shetland Trip on Clasina – 29 Aug to 3 Sep 2026. Contact Yo Han Cha for details.

Photography Expedition – Skye, organised by Dive & Sea The Hebrides. 12–19 September 2026. Contact Tom Ingram for more details.

Competition Calendar & Programme

2025

Theme

January	Long Exposure – meeting online
February	Super Macro – meet at Severnside
March	Theme Portfolio – meeting online
April	Wrecks – meeting online
May	Underwater Excellence (portfolio) – meet at Severnside
June	Silhouettes – meeting online
July	Nudibranchs – meet at Severnside
August	Sunbeams – meet at Severnside
September	Split Shots – meeting online
October	Meeting cancelled – (Martin Edge Memorial Lecture, Imperial College)
November	Best of British (portfolio) & Portrait – meeting online
December	Beginner's Portfolio & Print Competition– meet at Severnside

Please check the rules before entering any of our competitions – a copy can be found [here](#)

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 16th December

For those that can make it in person there will be Mince Pies and a pub trip too!

Why not submit your tips, hacks or workflow ideas to share and we can publish in future newsletters?

If you have any news, feature ideas, trips or product reviews, then please drop me a message.

You can email info@bupg.co.uk or contact me directly [here](#)

Best regards and Happy Diving!

Mike

Mike Harding



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