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UnderWaterWorld 2019

Front page: Magnificent anemone – *Heteractis magnifica* – Red Sea, Aquarium, Egypt

The magnificent anemones are found in the Indo-Pacific. They usually grow on exposed areas on large coral blocks. The anemones provide a habitat for various small fish. This coral block with beautiful anemones grows at a depth of 22 meters.

January: Variegated lizardfish – *Synodus variegatus* – Red Sea, El Quadim Bay, Egypt

The variegated lizardfish lurking, often in pairs, on corals in lagoons and outdoor reefs. Comes from the Red Sea to Polynesia. Lizard fish feed on small fish such as reef perches, gobies, wrasses but also shrimp or squid. They can snap for prey to their own size.

February: Spotted eagle ray – *Aetobatus narinari* – Red Sea, El Quadim Bay, Egypt

The spotted eagle ray occurs in all tropical and almost all subtropical seas and lives mainly in flat coastal waters such as bays and coral reefs, either near the water surface or near the ground. He feeds mainly on mussels but eats as well shrimps, crabs, cuttlefish and worms. Larger specimens eat mainly fish.

March: Purple-eyed Goby – *Byaninops natans* – Red Sea, El Quadim Bay, Egypt

This goby lives in shallow lagoons, hovering close to table or small corals to catch zooplankton in the current. It is found from the Red Sea to the Cook Islands.

April: Spotted porcupinefish – *Diodon hystrix* – Cathedrale, Indian Ocean, Mauritius

The spotted porcupine fish occurs in both the Indo-Pacific and the tropical and subtropical Atlantic and the Mediterranean. He is solitary and nocturnal. During the day he hides in caves and crevices or in the open water high above the ground. It feeds on invertebrates such as snails, clams, sea urchins, crabs and hermit crabs.

May: Ornate ghost pipefish – *Solenostomus paradoxus* – Red Sea, El Quadim Bay, Egypt

The ornate ghost pipefish or harlequin ghost pipefish, lives in the Red Sea and the tropical Indo-Pacific from the coast of East Africa to south eastern Australia, New Caledonia, the Fiji Islands, Tonga and north to southern Japan. He lives on coastal reefs mostly between gorgonians, algae or close to hair stars, where he is well camouflaged. He feeds on small crustaceans.

June: Stella Maru Wreck – Indian Ocean, Mauritius

The Stella Maru, a 42m long ship wreck, is a Japanese trawler that was sunk in 1987 by the Mauritius Conservation society to create an artificial reef. It lies upright on a sand bottom, next to a rocky reef at an average depth of 23 meters.

July: Arabian angelfish – *Pomacanthus maculosus* – Red Sea, El Quadim Bay, Egypt

The Arabian angelfish or halfmoon angelfish lives around the Arabian Peninsula, in the Red Sea, in the Persian Gulf, in the north eastern Indian Ocean as far as East Africa. He lives mostly alone and prefers coral-rich regions. It feeds on sponges, sea squirts and moss animals.

August: Soft coral – *Dendronephthya* – Water Lily Wreck, Indian Ocean, Mauritius

The soft corals are animal colonies that consist of many single polyps and occur in the Indo-Pacific and the Red Sea. *Dendronephthya* are usually stately yellow, orange or red coloured and feed only on phytoplankton.



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September: Female Australian sea lion – *Neophoca cinerea* – Indian Ocean, Western Australia

They live in small colonies along the coasts of Western and South Australia. They are usually found on small uninhabited islands along the coast. The bulls are up to 2.5 meters long and weight 300 kg. Cows are with 1.8 m and 100 kg much smaller.

October: Jewel fairy basslet – *Pseudanthias squamipinnis* – Red Sea, El Quadim Bay, Egypt

Fairy basslets live in tropical and subtropical seas. Usually the fishes live in large swarms of hundreds to thousands on the outside of the coral reefs and feed on animal plankton.

November: Giant barrel sponge – *Xestospongia muta* – Pleasure Reef, Florida Keys

The giant barrel sponge is the largest species of sponge found growing on Caribbean coral reefs. It is common at depths greater than 10 metres down to 120 metres and can reach a diameter of 1.8 metres.

December: Sea squirts – *Ascidiacea* – Menjangan Island, Bali Sea, Indonesia

Sea squirts are found all over the world, usually in shallow water and are sessile animals: they remain firmly attached to substratum, such as rocks and shells. Sea squirts feed by taking in water through the oral siphon and filtering out the plankton from the water.

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