

PRESS RELEASE

Swallow-tailed gulls swoop to victory in 2023 Galapagos Photography Competition



Overall winner: 'Aerial attack' by Claire Waring

One of the Galapagos Archipelago's less celebrated species, the swallow-tailed gull, dominated the winning entries to Galapagos Conservation Trust's 2023 photography competition, featuring in all three of the top-rated images.

The overall winner this year was Claire Waring from the UK, with her dramatic shot of a swallow-tailed gull and a juvenile great frigatebird mid-fight. Frigatebirds exhibit a behaviour known as kleptoparasitism, harassing other seabirds and forcing them to regurgitate their recently caught food by grabbing their tail feathers and shaking them, then catching the regurgitated food before it enters the sea.

The competition judges were impressed by the clarity and definition of this difficult shot to pull off, with BBC wildlife producer and director Jo Haley describing it as "full of energy and action", while Galapagos naturalist guide Water Perez commented that the image "shows that paradise can turn into hell".



Swallow-tailed gull with chick © Martín Narváez / Swallow-tailed gull close-up © Tim Karels

Second place in the competition overall was awarded to Martín Narváez's image of a swallow-tailed gull tenderly sheltering her chick under one wing, while third place went to Tim Karels for his remarkable close-up shot of a swallow-tailed gull.

This year's judges were award-winning writer, TV presenter and wildlife photographer, **Mark Carwardine**; *Blue Planet III* producer and director, **Jo Haley**; Galapagos naturalist guide and professional photographer, **Walter Perez**; and managing director of competition sponsor Mundy Adventures, **Edwina Lonsdale**.

The categories this year were Animals in Action; Birds of Galapagos; Coastal and Marine; Landscape; Up Close and Personal; and Urban Life. There were over 400 photographs entered this year from nearly 20 different countries, and a selection of the best images will feature in GCT's 2024 calendar.

You can see the full collection of category winners and runners-up online at: <https://galapagosconservation.org.uk/support-us/galapagos-photography-competition/photography-competition-galleries/>

In addition to the winners selected by the judges, there is also a 'Public Choice' category which you can vote for here:

<https://galapagosconservation.org.uk/support-us/galapagos-photography-competition/photography-competition-public-choice/>

The 2024 Galapagos Photography Competition will open in autumn 2023.

NOTES TO EDITORS:

- The annual **Galapagos Photography Competition** has been run by Galapagos Conservation Trust since 2001. Find out more here:
<https://galapagosconservation.org.uk/support-us/galapagos-photography-competition/>
- **Galapagos Conservation Trust** (GCT) is the only UK charity to focus exclusively on the conservation and sustainable development of the Galapagos Archipelago. We deliver programmes that fill gaps in scientific knowledge, fund local scientists, NGOs and community groups, and partner with Ecuadorian authorities. To find out more, visit:
galapagosconservation.org.uk
- **Mark Carwardine** is a zoologist, TV and radio presenter, wildlife photographer, best-selling author, wildlife tour operator and leader, lecturer, and magazine columnist.
- **Jo Haley** has been making documentaries for 12 years, working on landmark wildlife programmes including *Planet Earth 2*, *Dynasties* and *Seven Worlds: One Planet*. Her next venture is the BBC's forthcoming series *Blue Planet III*.
- **Walter Perez** has been working in Galapagos as a naturalist guide for over 15 years. He is a certified photography instructor, a professional photographer and has published two books, *Galapagos: Life in Motion* and *Two Together*.
- **Edwina Lonsdale** is co-owner and managing director of Mundy Adventures, a London-based travel agency specialising in small ship expedition cruises. Edwina's distinguished 40-year career in travel has taken her to incredible wildlife destinations including the Galapagos Islands.

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Hi-res photos from the 2023 competition are available on request - please email hannah@gct.org