

Bob Watson Photography

Reflecting the Spirit of Nature
NATURE • WILDLIFE • LANDSCAPES

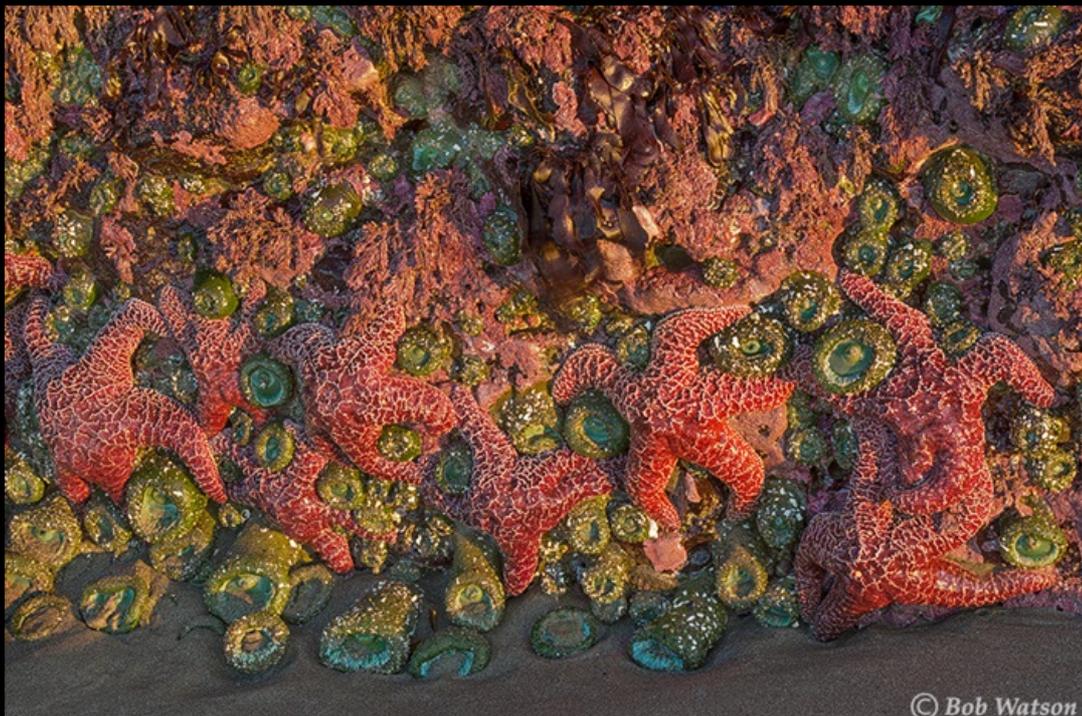


This March I'll be photographing on the east side of the Sierra Nevada region of California and Nevada. I'll be hard to reach and may not be able to return emails in a timely manner, but I'll respond just as promptly as possible.

Since I won't be returning until March 30th, any Featured Photographs from this trip will appear in the May 1st issue of my Newsletter.

Starfish Are Dying and Nobody Knows Why

Featured Photograph No. 1



© Bob Watson

Ochre Sea Stars and Anemones at Bandon Beach, Oregon

My Featured Photographs this month are examples of healthy starfish called sea stars by marine biologists. These shots were taken last October on the Oregon coast at Bandon Beach. The sea stars had attached themselves to seascapes near shore at high tide.

Little did I know at the time that these beautiful sea creatures, important species and symbol of the sea would start to die in record numbers.

In June 2013 the first case of what has now been dubbed “Sea Star Wasting Syndrome” was found in a tide pool in Olympic National Park. Since then, the disease has killed massive amounts of sea stars up and down the west coast, as far south as San Diego and some reports as far north as Alaska. Certain areas have completely been wiped out. At this point, Scientists don’t know the cause.

At the risk of being a little too vivid, the first symptoms of the disease are white lesions that appear on the surface of the sea star and spread rapidly, followed by decay of the tissue. The starfish’s body breaks down, its arms twist and fall off, and it dies. All of this happens in a very short period of time - - between 24 hrs., and a few days.

Pete Raimondi, a marine ecologist at the University of California-Santa Cruz, and one of the lead researchers in an international effort to track the disease, states, “It’s widespread, it’s very virulent and it’s unlike anything we’ve seen in the past”.

The National Science Foundation has given rapid response research grants so that many prominent marine biologists around the U.S. and Canada could intensely study the problem.

This is a hot topic right now in the news. It appears that I was fortunate to get these photographs when I did. Let’s hope researchers are successful in their efforts.

Featured Photograph No. 2



© Bob Watson

Ochre Sea Stars at Bandon Beach, Oregon

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These photographs will remain as "Featured Photographs" available for special pricing until you receive another newsletter.

I invite you to visit my website at BobWatsonPhotography.com. My more recent photographs may be seen in my [New Images](#) section.

If you have any questions (i.e., additional description, special sizes, print paper, etc.) about the Featured Photograph or any photographs on my website, please email me. Don't hesitate to email me; if just to say Hi.

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Thanks for letting me share my photography with you.