NATURALLY BUOYANT MEDIA

Photo & Video Submission Specifications

A practical guide for contributors providing usable, accurately credited, accessible media for the Naturally Buoyant Media collection.

BEST PRACTICE: Send the original, full-quality file. NBM can create optimized website versions while preserving the master for future use.

THE DIVER'S RESOURCE

1. Video Specifications

Use these standards for hero backgrounds, gallery encounters, interviews, educational clips, and longer editorial features.

Category	Preferred	Notes
File type	MP4	MOV and WebM are also accepted. Original camera files may be accepted by prior arrangement.
Video codec	H.264	A widely supported delivery codec. Send a higher-quality master when available.
Audio codec	AAC	Use 48 kHz audio for spoken narration or natural sound.
Resolution	1920 x 1080 minimum	4K is welcome. Do not artificially upscale a smaller recording.
Orientation	Landscape 16:9	Keep important subjects near the center to support desktop and mobile cropping.
Frame rate	24, 30, or 60 fps	Preserve the source frame rate whenever possible.
Color	SDR / Rec. 709	Natural underwater color correction is welcome when animal coloration remains realistic.

Recommended lengths

- Hero background: 12-20 seconds, with gentle movement and a smooth loop.
- Gallery encounter: 30-90 seconds.
- Educational or narrated feature: 2-4 minutes.
- Interview or documentary: longer material may receive a dedicated page.
- Social-media preview: 15-60 seconds.

Video quality

- Submit the original before editing whenever possible.
- Avoid digital zoom, excessive stabilization artifacts, extreme filters, and repeated re-encoding.
- Do not burn in titles, captions, logos, watermarks, or credits; NBM can add consistent presentation elements.
- Keep the primary animal, diver, wreck, or subject away from the extreme edges.

FILE SIZE: A website hero is normally optimized below 25 MB and gallery clips below 150 MB. Do not reduce the master merely to meet these targets. Contact NBM before transferring an individual file over 500 MB.

2. Audio Standards

- Provide clearly recorded natural sound or spoken narration when available.
- Avoid clipped dialogue, heavy wind noise, distortion, and unnecessary noise reduction.
- Provide a version without music whenever possible.
- Do not include copyrighted commercial music without written permission.
- Include music-license information when licensed music is used.
- Provide a transcript for narration or interviews when available.
- Silent footage is welcome and may be presented muted.

3. Photograph Specifications

Category	Preferred	Notes
Preferred format	High-quality JPEG	PNG for lossless detail; TIFF for archival originals; RAW files by prior arrangement.
Resolution	4000+ px long edge	Minimum recommended: 2400 px on the longest side. Do not upscale.
Color space	sRGB	Preferred for finished website images.
Hero orientation	Landscape	Portrait and square images remain useful for galleries and detail panels.
Editing	Natural correction	Avoid excessive saturation, sharpening, denoising, artificial blur, or undisclosed composites.
HEIC	Include JPEG export	Provide the original HEIC plus a full-quality JPEG when possible.

Cropping and safe areas

- Leave space around animals, divers, boats, and wrecks.
- Avoid tightly cutting fins, tails, hands, tanks, or equipment.
- Provide an uncropped version whenever possible.
- Tell NBM if a photograph requires a specific crop.
- NBM may create separate hero, card, thumbnail, and mobile crops.

4. Information Required With Every File

IDENTITY + LOCATION	CONTEXT + RIGHTS
- Contributor's full name - Preferred public credit - Email address - Capture date - Dive site or general location - Country, state, or region - Species or subject - Wreck, vessel, aquarium, operator, or event	- Short factual description - Names of identifiable people - Camera and housing, when useful - Lighting used - Editing disclosure - Source or collection name - Usage restrictions - Safety or historical context

SENSITIVE LOCATIONS: Provide coordinates or specific locations privately and clearly state whether they should be withheld from publication.

5. Captions, Descriptions & Accessibility

- Provide a short title and a factual one- or two-sentence caption.
- Add a longer encounter story when useful context is available.
- Supply the correct species identification when known; state uncertainty rather than guessing.
- Provide a concise accessibility description for visually impaired visitors when possible.
- NBM may edit captions for clarity, spelling, length, accessibility, and consistent style without changing their meaning.

Recommended filename

location-subject-photographer-date-number.ext | Example: caribsea-sand-tiger-scott-carroll-2026-01.jpg

- Use lowercase words separated by hyphens.
- Avoid special characters and duplicate filenames.
- Keep the original camera filename in your own archive if you rename the delivery copy.

6. Rights, Permissions & Credits

The contributor must confirm that:

- They created the media or are authorized by the copyright owner to submit it.
- The submission contains no unauthorized music, artwork, photographs, or footage.
- Identifiable people have provided appropriate permission.
- Required model, property, operator, or event releases have been obtained.
- The supplied credit, source, and usage information is accurate.
- NBM may crop, resize, caption, transcode, and display the media for the agreed use.

COPYRIGHT: Copyright remains with the creator unless a separate written agreement states otherwise.

7. Wildlife, Diving & Historical Ethics

NBM favors media created through responsible diving and wildlife practices. Do not submit material produced by:

- Touching, chasing, riding, feeding, baiting without disclosure, or restraining wildlife.
- Harassing an animal to force a photograph or surrounding it so it cannot leave.
- Damaging coral, wrecks, artifacts, archaeological material, or aquatic habitat.
- Entering restricted areas or presenting unsafe diving practices as normal behavior.
- Removing historical objects or disturbing protected, nesting, breeding, or resting animals.
- Misrepresenting aquarium, controlled, staged, or baited encounters as wild.

Clearly identify aquarium, professionally managed, baited, controlled, staged, or reconstructed encounters.

8. Delivery Checklist

[ ] Original full-quality media	[ ] Title and factual description
[ ] Photographer or videographer credit	[ ] Capture date and location
[ ] Species or subject identification	[ ] Rights and permission confirmation
[ ] Music license, when applicable	[ ] Transcript, when applicable
[ ] Usage restrictions	[ ] Contact information
[ ] Wild, captive, staged, or baited designation	[ ] Backup retained by contributor

FINAL REVIEW: NBM may review submissions for technical quality, factual accuracy, accessibility, ethical practices, copyright, privacy, and suitability. Submission does not guarantee publication.