

Underwater cameraman Doug Anderson, recently shared with us some of his amazing experiences filming for the BBC's Frozen Planet series, to be screened in the autumn. A full house on the Our Coast course was held spellbound by the beauty of Antarctica's icy scenery and footage of animal behaviour rarely scene, made all the more dramatic by our growing awareness of the challenges facing the cameramen.

Startled as we were the by man-sized volcano sponges, the colours of the voracious starfish, and the intriguing ice phenomena of brine pipes and anchor ice, it was the whale behaviour new to science that captivated us. In unique footage we saw a small group of Killer Whales dislodge a Weddell Seal from the apparent safety of an ice floe. By co-ordinating their swimming the whales were able to build up a wave that eventually broke, tipping the ice and dislodging the seal.

As Doug memorably put it "The family that slays together, stays together, and after the kill the seal was shared within the group. A hitherto unfilmed successful strategy had been captured for the first time to the delight of the crew and the scientists involved.



Courtesy Mark Haworth-Booth

Coastwise is grateful to Doug, a marine biologist, and supporter of COAST (Community of Arran Seabed Trust), who for no other reason than to encourage a like-minded group found time for us in a busy filming schedule. He gave us a privileged glimpse into the making of a superb series and answered a mass of questions.