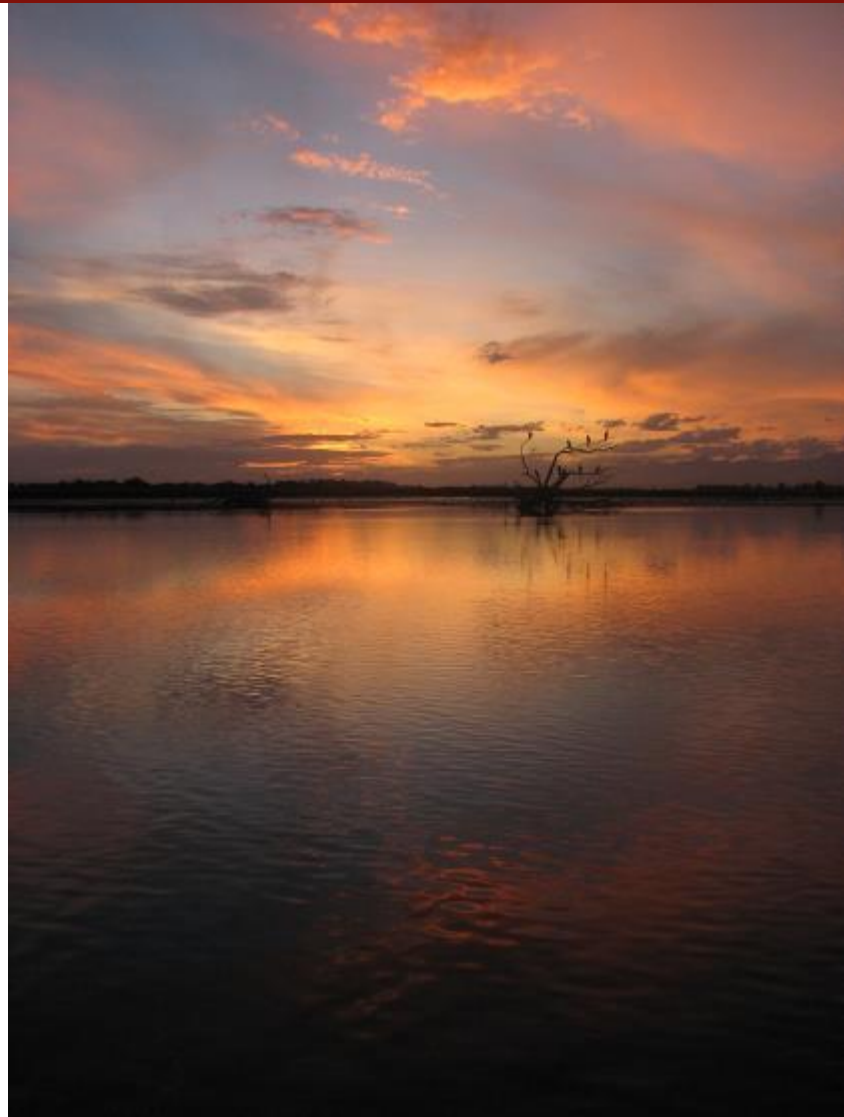


A belated Happy New Year to Camera Club members. We hope you've all had a good break, and have been taking lots of fantastic pictures for the coming competitions year. The set subject for the February hand in is 'Before & After', but there's the Open category if you've nothing to suite the set subject.

Committee member Emily Burgess, has put many hours of work into a complete rebuild of our website. We hope you find it easier to locate information, in its new cleaner interface. If you have not accessed the site since last year, the address is still the same, but you may need to do a hard refresh (Ctrl F5) to force your browsers to download the new pages. We have heard that some members have had a few problems, but try the hard refresh, or a different browser. If you still have problems, contact me.

We are always asking for content for Photo News from Camera Club members, and this month we have a travelogue and a tale of woe from Ann Bigley-Scott ([page 9](#)). So if you have been on an interesting trip, or having anything photography related, why not follow Ann's example, and write it up.

A lot of you will know that Club member Gordon Walker moved up to Northland recently. Unfortunately, Gordon managed to fall from a ladder while tending his new garden, and broke some ribs and punctured a lung. This was a few weeks ago now, and Gordon is on the mend, but I am sure you'll all wish him well.



This coppery sunset was taken by Will Parson, who has kindly allowed us to use it in the opening sequence for the Convention promotional video.

Our new Camera Club season kicks off with a bang this year with our Field Trip to Pelorus Bridge following soon after our first meeting on Thursday 14th. The Field Trip will be just three days later on Sunday 17th. More details on [page 15](#). Please note this will be an afternoon trip leaving the railway station car park at 2:30^{pm}.

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Liz Davidson



Here we are, at the beginning of a new Camera Club year! Let's make it a good one

I have just come back from holidaying in Kaiteriteri for three weeks. That may sound very slothful and idyllic but I can assure you it was full-on with family and friends coming and going. Time went by so fast I felt I needed another couple of weeks to just chill out. I got in quite a bit of photography whilst over there. A good photographer friend stayed and we had some excellent sessions together. We travelled to Golden Bay for one particular trip, staying overnight at Pohara Beach Camp to save a long trip back to Kaiteriteri. This is because in the past we have travelled back late at night all the way from Wharariki Beach, arriving at Kaiteriteri well after midnight.

The last two years in a row we went to Wharariki Beach, arriving there in the early evening. The idea was to trek over the tracks to the actual beach in order to photograph the Archway Islands and beach area at sunset. There are wonderful sunsets to be captured in that part of the world, facing into the west. Alas, we missed out two years in a row as

the weather closed in to dull grey clouds and drizzle which really put a dampener on our creativity. This time we struck better weather there. It didn't look too good to start with and we did not get any decent late light on the Archway Islands. The tide was just coming in so we managed to get

some nice shots looking to the west where there was a bit of a gap in the clouds. I put one image up on www.blipfoto.com/lizimagiz and got some positive comments from folk in the Blipfoto community.

There is nothing like going out on these sorts of forays with another photographer or even more than one! We totally lose track of time as we are so absorbed in capturing the perfect image ...or one near enough to perfect. That is why we encourage our Camera Club members to go on our Club Field Trips. Those trips are fun and a great way to learn from each other and to keep expanding our photographic horizons.

Remember that we have a Field Trip this coming Sunday the 17th of February. We are going to Pelorus Bridge but will be leaving town at 2.30pm rather than having the usual morning start. This is because we want to catch the gentler late afternoon and evening light at Pelorus Bridge. I am looking forward to this trip and I hope to see lots of our members take the opportunity for some relaxing, absorbing time together. So please come!

Liz





GETTING TO GRIPS WITH THE LITTLE CRITTERS (Macro)

By *Roger Thwaites*, APSNZ

There are a myriad of different insects out in the native bush, and having had the good fortune to be on holiday out in the Sounds for two weeks recently, I have seen a lot of different species on the wing in the warm temperatures of Summer. The difficulty with insects, is that there is never an easy way to find them when you want a photograph or two, but one method that I have found to be very effective, is to leave an outside light on at night, and it will attract all sorts of moths, wasps, and beetles to it, as well as cicadas and giraffe weevils...the more lighting, the greater the variety of insects that are attracted to it. It's a bit like setting an insect trap, without any netting or an enclosure to trap them in. Just so long as the light(s) are glowing, the insects will continue to be attracted, and

will stay within the lighted area. Of course, come daylight, most of the insects will have disappeared back into the bush from whence they came.

Photographing live insects is an art form within itself, and takes an awful lot of patience to set up the shots. Shooting insects with digital cameras at night, is difficult at the best of times, as the insects are usually "quite excitable" and tend to be on the move continually. I find that the best thing to do is to trap the insects in separate jars, ensuring that a properly ventilated top is used, to allow the insect (s) to have a good supply of air available. I have found that it is best to leave them like this for the next day and night, and then get them out for the photo shoot,

Figure 1



first thing in the morning. (If you keep them in the dark during this period, you will find that it takes a while for them to 'wake up' when they emerge into the daylight, and they will tend to stay still for the photo-shoot, and you will find that you will be able to manipulate them into a good pose, without them wanting to run away).

Another method used by photographers to slow up the insects, is to place them in a fridge or freezer for short periods, but I do not favour this idea, as it is often too "hit and miss" and could result in the death of the insects. There are too many "unknowns" using this method, and unless you have a very good knowledge of the insect's tolerance to the cold, I would be inclined to avoid it altogether.

Before the insect is released, It is advisable to set up the camera on a tripod with a macro lens, pre-focussed on the proposed release area, and with all the camera settings ready to go. Chances are, that you may not have a lot of time to set things up, before the insect starts to become aware of what's happening. (Better to be prepared, than not!) Focus, Depth of Field, White

Balance, and the correct exposure, are all things that can be pre-set prior to the release of the insect. (Do a few test shots first, to make sure the exposure, colour, and lighting, are at their optimum). Make sure that you have a small reflector within easy reach, if you should need it. This can be handy for lighting up dark-shadowed areas.

A natural looking background of foliage and or wood, (and preferably, a background on which the insect is normally found), would greatly enhance your images. But, keep it simple! Too much background clutter can be more of a distraction, than complimentary. You need to have a plan of how you are going to do the shoot, beforehand, then, it is up to you to stick to your plan and get the shots, and up to the insect to co-operate!

Not all insect shoots are this simple! Some insects, such as the rapacious Tiger Beetles, can only be found during the heat of the day, on open-faced clay banks. They are about 12mm

long, are beautifully patterned and

Figure 2



coloured, but can run like hell, and photographing them can be the most frustrating thing you will ever do! (They can fly pretty fast, as well!) For this seemingly 'hopeless' exercise, I use a 105mm Macro lens with a x2 converter lens. I set the ISO to between 600 and 800, so I can capture the action of these fast movers. Then it's a case of tracking the insect as it moves, and grabbing the shot while it rests for a few seconds. The lens needs to be fairly close to the insect, when you are taking the shot, and I have discovered that these "cheeky" little insects like to look at the mirror image of themselves in the front element of the lens! They also seem to have quite an insatiable penchant for mating activities, and when they are not eating some poor hapless insect, the males are chasing the females all over all the nooks and crannies of the clay bank, and if you are lucky enough catch a couple in the act of mating, then you are likely to be able to take some stunning shots, as the coupled insects tend to remain stationery for quite a while, which is ideal for a photo.

I did get a couple of shots of this beetle, (one of which appears here in Fig.1). It's not the best of shots, but it does show you what this stunning little insect looks like.

Another image (Fig.2), shows a large Huhu Beetle, which was released after being captured while it was flying around the lights at night. It walked out of the jar, then posed like a true professional, before flying off 5 minutes later. (You can see from this, that you don't have a lot of time to get the shot!)

The last of the images(Fig.3) is a "bonus" shot of a newly hatched Mayfly, with the nymph casing right next to it. The nymph was resting on a glass window, but unfortunately it hatched that quickly, that I missed getting the vital photo! (Once again, you have to be quick to get the shot).

There is immense pleasure from getting great shots of insects. It gives a great feeling of achievement, in spite of all the frustrating experiences that go with photographing them.

Roger

Figure 3





BLACK LEVEL

Some photographs have a dense black background. A good example might be a shot of a wild flower, with all the background distractions blacked out. This can be done by moving the subject to a studio or by “gardening” away everything close around the subject and then draping a black cloth over the remainder and blasting it with flashlight. Although these methods may, apparently, be acceptable for “Nature” photography, I fully support David Brinn’s plea to respect the environment and “fix” the background in post-processing. This may mean the image is, paradoxically, ineligible as a Nature photograph. Personally, I now submit my nature images as Open to avoid such issues.

How can I get those dark backgrounds without “gardening”?

There are three simple ways to darken the background.

The first method works only with very high contrast subjects, such as that in *Figure 1*. This scene was heavily over-exposed in the camera and is shown here straight from the camera (not even

straightened!).

Most of the time, though, the scene does not have such a large difference between the brightness of the subject and the brightness of the background. For example, what can we do with *Figure 2a*?

We could create a higher contrast, by exposing for the subject and then using the contrast slider in the develop module of Lightroom or in ACR (Adobe Camera Raw) in Photoshop Elements or CS.... However, that is likely to increase the brightness of the subject, which we have exposed correctly, so it starts to get complicated. A better approach in this instance is to change the black level.

The black level is the maximum brightness level that is indistinguishable from true black, in the displayed image.

Figure 1



Figure 2a



Figure 2b



In this image, any pixel with a brightness level below the black level will display as pure black. Any pixel with a brightness level above the black level will show up as brighter than black.

Thus, if we increase the black level, those pixels with brightness initially just above the black level will become "submerged" by the higher black level and appear as pure black, creating our black background.

We change the black level with the "Blacks" slider, in the 2012 version of Lightroom or ACR. (*The same thing can be achieved with a Levels or Curves layer, but I prefer the simpler approach here.*) Figure 2a shows an unprocessed image with the black level left at its default position; figure 2b shows the same image with the "Blacks" slider moved to the left, which raises the black level. Raising the black level "blacks out" the original darker areas. This single adjustment changes the image dramatically.

There is also an obvious difference in contrast between figures 2a and b. The difference is due to the fact that we haven't changed the black level of the display but rather reduced the brightness values of the pixels in the processed file. To understand this, let's say the original image had all its pixels with brightness between 0 and 255. In this case, the black level is 0. If the display matches the processed file, then 0 will show a

true black but everything else will be brighter.

Change the black level by moving the "Blacks" slider partway to the left, which changes the brightness levels in the processed file. Now all the pixels that were at the new black level or below, in the original file, will become true black (zero) in the processed file and the brightness of the remaining pixels will be spread out over the whole 0 to 255 range. Consequently, brightness *differences* among the remaining visible pixels will be amplified. In other words, the contrast increases.

An interesting variation on this theme is to desaturate individual colours; compare figures 3a and b. This shot was taken in the Marlborough Sounds; figures 1 and 2 were taken in the Inside Passage, near Vancouver, Canada, and in Yosemite Valley, California, respectively.

The black level is always my "go to" slider to darken the background but sometimes I need a bit more flexibility. In this case, I will move the exposure slider to the left to get the background dark enough and then "rescue" the subject by painting back the original exposure with the adjustment brush. But that would be another column. Let me know (harry@harrymatthews.name) if you would like me to do that column and/or one on desaturating, as in Figure 3.

Harry

Figure 3a



Figure 3b





DUMB THINGS I HAVE DONE

by Ann Bigley-Scott

Over the years, I have taken a camera with me just about everywhere I go, and luckily have had no real disasters, until my last trip away. Hopefully, the old saying of “*things go in threes*” is correct. A day before departing from Christchurch for 5 weeks in Australia and then 3 weeks in Scotland, I gave way to temptation and up-graded from my Canon 400D to a 650D, but got the body only. My plan was to use the old kit lens from the 400D, and then update the smaller lens at a later date, seeing as I had already splashed out and brought a 120-400mm Sigma lens a few months earlier.

First disaster! My normal method of uploading my photos to the computer are to connect the camera with the cable and download each day, usually all into one folder. But with a big card now (32GB) I thought I’d leave it for a few days, and then catch up. I was shooting in jpg & RAW, so there were 2 files for each photograph, which proved to be my downfall. I just transfer the photos from the camera to folders when I am downloading to the Netbook. I usually



Loch Asiar near Tarbert, after deleting previous days photos. (Canon 650D)

put about 200/230 photos in each folder, otherwise the poor little Netbook throws a bit of a hissy fit when trying to open a large folder.

I happily selected 260 **files** and downloaded them, then made a new



Dunnottar Castle – both taken with Sumsung smartphone.



folder, and started at photo **image** number 261, and downloaded the remainder. I figured there were approximately 600 - 700 photos on the card, and was a bit puzzled that I only had two folders. I looked at the first folder, and there were 260 files in it, so then the next photograph image had to be Number 261, so thought I had downloaded them all. Then I made the biggest mistake, I couldn't find the 'erase' on the menu of the new camera, so used 'format' instead to clear the card. (my understanding of this is, that you can not get back any files after doing this)

It wasn't until a week later when I was trying to find some photos to email home, that I realised that I had missed downloading files numbers 131 - 260! I had counted the number of **files**, not the **image numbers** of the photographs.

Second disaster; A few weeks later I was in Scotland with my daughter, and my next 'senior moment' (well, that's my excuse & I hadn't had any wines the night before, or maybe it was because the Midges were trying to eat me alive) was on our first morning on the Isle of Harris. The day before, we had driven from Fort William across to Skye & then took the ferry to Tarbert, to the Isle of Harris & Lewis. Both of us are very keen photographers and had taken lots of stops to get photos. The following morning, I went out to take pictures of the Loch with the heather reflected in it, as I had been told that it was unusual to see the reflections like that, as there was no wind. I thought to myself, "I downloaded yesterday's photos last



Pete swimming across Barnett River. (Canon 400D)

night." Then deleted them!!! It wasn't until that night, that I realised what I had done. Don't know why I did that, as it is something I have never done before, without checking that they were on the netbook or computer.

The final disaster (& worst!) Was when my daughter was driving through Fort William and we saw the Ben Nevis whisky distillery.

"I want to see what Whisky glasses they have!" she said. (she had been collecting the different shapes/types of whisky glasses) So on up the road, and back around the round-about and into the car park. I knew I didn't need my camera in there, so took it out of the bag, and put it on the floor of the car. As I got out, my foot caught in the strap, and then next thing was a very big crash as the lens hit the tarseal. Panic!!

"My camera or my daughters?" I was thinking.

Mine. Result – my Canon 18–55mm lens smashed. Front of lens & filter bent, and it rattled around. Tried taking a photo but got a message telling me that the lens couldn't communicate with the camera!! I had to borrow my daughter's 75 – 300 mm lens to go onto the camera, but that wasn't always the best to use. Only good thing was that I hadn't broken the new camera, only the old lens.

On asking around, was told I would have to go to Glasgow or Edinburgh to find any shops that would stock lens. We were headed for Monifieth near Dundee and I thought I would be able to get something in Dundee but the shops only carry a limited range, all DSLR equipment sold as kits. Rang around trying to find a second hand lens, but nothing available.

A cousin who has a photography business said that they buy all their cameras and gear on-line. She said they have found that as most people are buying their new and used equipment through the internet, the shops are no longer carrying the variety of stock.

I spent a week without the smaller lens, and ending up using my Samsung Galaxy phone, which proved to be better than nothing. The day before we departed, we went to Edinburgh where I bought a Tamron 17-50mm F2.8 lens, which I am very happy with. In hindsight, I should have just brought a compact for the rest of the trip, and brought a new lens back in New Zealand. (prices are much better) The compact would have been very useful to keep in my handbag..... always on the off-chance that there was something that I needed to photograph.

The only major panic session I have had, was when Pete and I were doing the Gibb River Road, in Western Australia in 2009. We stopped at the Barnett River and decided to walk up to some falls. We a choice of walking the long way around to cross the river by a ford or else load our gear into a polystyrene box and swim across the river. We opted for the swimming option. That worked well on the way over, but coming back, I asked Pete to swim out with the box so I could get some photos. This time the box was smaller and the things were loaded higher in it. After taking the photographs, I put the DSLR into the bag, and off he went. Next thing the box had tipped over, and everything was either floating away or rapidly sinking, including my glasses. A quick recovery of everything, and luckily the plastic bags had managed to keep the water of everything except for a compact camera getting a bit wet. Took out the battery & card, wiped it down, and it's still working.

Lessons learnt!! Don't top-load the polystyrene box next time..... and plug those little plug things back into your camera body (where you connect cables to), they are there for a reason – to keep dust & water out.

Ann Bigley-Scott



'Entrances'

Judged by Shona Jaray

Projected Images

A Grade

Honours

Will Parson *Where Are You*

Merit

Gordon Walker *Sawcut Gorge*

C Grade

Merit

Ann Bidlet-Scott *Hermitage — Dunkeld*

Mark Dix *Just Let the Bag Go!*



Where Are You? by Will Parson



Just Let the Bag Go! by Mark Dix



Sawcut Gorge by Gordon Walker



Hermitage — Dunkeld by Ann Bigley Scott



'Open'

Judged by Shona Jaray

Projected Images

A Grade

Merit

Gordon Walker Pukeko

B Grade

Honours

Emily Burgess Embrace

C Grade

Honours

Chris Steadman Cloudy Bay Around the Clock

Paul Leeds Into the Blue

Merit

Jan McCullum Defying Gravity

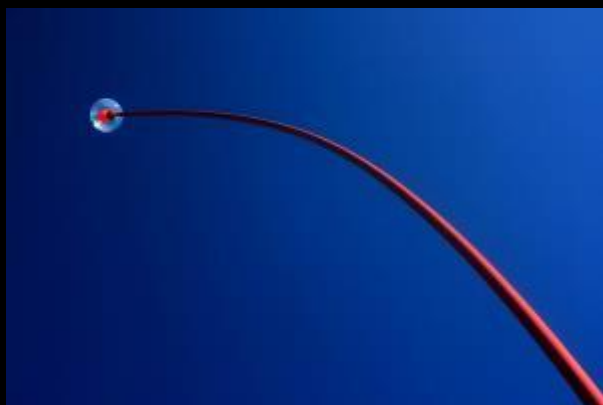
Chris Steadman Painting With Light



Pukeko By Gordon Walker



Defying Gravity by Jan McCallum



Into the Blue By Paul Leeds



*Cloudy Bay Around the Clock
by Chris Steadman*



Embrace by Emily Burgess



*Painting With Light
by Chris Steadman*

NEXT MEETING: Thursday 14th February 2013 at St Mary's Parish Hall, Blenheim, starting at 7.30pm. Doors open by 7pm

What's on:

Results of — **Tranquil**

Hand In — **Before & After / Open**

Maximum 1 print and 2 projected images.
Maximum of 2 images in either category.

7:30 Club announcements

7:40 **Competition** results and Judge's comments for Tranquil

8:20 **Walk Through** of our latest website design by site builder Emily Burgess

8:45 A discussion about possible **Field Trip** locations for this year. Put your thinking caps on before Thursday.

9:15 **Supper**

4th
THURSDAY

28th February 2013

How to make Triptychs

Nelson Camera Club's National triptych competition, which was held

for the first time last year, proved to be extremely popular, with a large number of entries. Don Pittham came to Marlborough to demonstrate how triptychs might look, so what we will do in this workshop is demonstrate some techniques for producing digital triptychs. This will be demonstrated using Photoshop, but any image editor that supports layers and layer masks will do.

Trevor will going through a step by step process, and you can bring your laptops and work along at the same time if you like.



Competitions — A Reminder

If you are entering our monthly competitions, then please make sure you understand the basic [rules](#). You are allowed to enter:

A maximum of ONE print

& TWO Projected Images

If you enter three images, then **only TWO** of them may be either the **Set Subject** or **Open**.

For **projected images**, the colour profile should be **sRGB**. (sRGB is the default setting unless you have changed it)

The pixel size of Projected images should be:

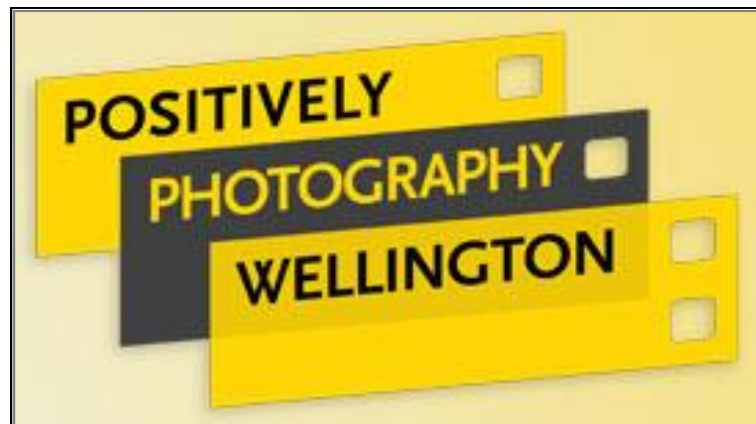
1024 pixels (maximum width)

768 pixels (maximum height)

Projected Image entries should be emailed:

photos@marlboroughcameraclub.org.nz

before midnight on Club night.



This year's National Convention is conveniently located in Wellington. We hope to be well represented so we can promote our own National in 2014. Full registration goes from the 1st to the 5th of May, and it is easy to register via the form on the website (click on the image above). Early bird registration finish at the end of February, after which it will cost a little bit more. Some of the more popular field trips are filling up, so go have a look at the program, and sign yourself up!

Field Trip

Sunday 17th February – Pelorus Bridge

We are going to make this an afternoon trip for a change, to give the sun chance to across to the west and lose its midday harshness. This will also provide better light for anyone who wants to walk up to the west facing [waterfall](#) (see Chook Searles' picture below).

Some people intend to stay into the evening hoping to get pictures of the rare, and endangered, long [tail bats](#) that reside in the area. So if you are sharing a ride, make sure you tie up with someone who will be returning to Blenheim at your preferred time.

Meet at the north end of the rail station car park at **2:30pm** The café is handy for hot drinks and tasty pies.

If you'd like to attend the trip, either sign the sheet on a Club night, or contact Liz Davidson at lizdavidson@xtra.co.nz



New Zealand long-tailed bat (*Chalinolobus tuberculata*)

The Pelorus Bridge Waterfall photographed by Chook Searles



Buddies — people seem to be shy about asking to buddy up, and yet several of the newer Club members I speak to on field trips don't appear to understand how to make the most of their cameras. My first DSLR (a Canon 30D) presented me with a learning curve, and I learned from other Club members, so don't be afraid to ask.

Seniors Expo

Wednesday 20th March

The Senior's Expo is a biannual event that takes place at the Stadium 2000. The camera Club has had a stand at all of the expos to date, and it is a great way to meet and interact with potential new camera club members. Several of our members have joined after visiting our stands at the Expos.

If you can give us an hour or two of your time on 20th of March, then let us know at the April or March club nights. We also need prints to adorn our stand, and we will rotate

them throughout the day so everyone gets a chance to display their pictures.

As well as prints, we have a slide show on a 30 inch monitor, and we'd like your best images for that as well. These need to be the new PSNZ size for digital images — up to 1920 pixels wide, and 1080 pixels high. We would prefer a wee bit bigger so we can scan and pan to make it into a stunning AV of our images.

Please email your pictures to me at trevor.dennis@xtra.co.nz

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Upcoming Events



National Convention

Wellington
1st — 5th May 2013

[More Info](#)



MARLBOROUGH
CAMERA CLUB

17th February — Field Trip
Pelorus Bridge
Meet at the Railway Station @ 2:30pm



MARLBOROUGH
CAMERA CLUB

27th February — St Mary's @
7.30pm
How to Make a Tryptich

4th
THURSDAY



For more news and information visit the PSNZ site
www.photography.org.nz/welcome.htm

[Events](#)
[Competitions](#)

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